
October

Wayne-Daniel Berard

October 10th

People
did not come to Jesus
for the miracles,

Neither did they
seek the Buddha
to hear the four noble truths,
leading to the eight-fold path,

nor dare
the formidable Prophet
(Blessed be he)
or the
granite Moses
for benefit of law
or Paradise.

Rather,
it was because
 their holiness
was

an October tree
releasing into fluttering
cool flame
that of themselves
which had always opened out
to warm nourishment
from above,

turning,
now instead,
toward the dark feast
willingly
beneath and within,

turning,
for a glorious while,
each self-abandonment
into tall sabres of standing light,
removed from barring Eden,
colorizing death.

While we
who gather leaves
and press them carefully
into books,
wonder why they fade so quickly,

and why we
do not burn.

Wayne-Daniel Berard is an associate professor of English and Humanities at Nichols College in Dudley, Massachusetts. He is a peace chaplain with the Peace Abbey in Sherborn, Mass., and a student at the School for Judaic Studies in Worcester.