

On the Origins of Speech

by Laura D. Weeks

Soil is all language
 Damp, intractable,
 Until the developer comes
 Slashing the tense, fibrous sod
 And sowing verbs—
 Pale livid bulbs
 With threads of thought still hanging.

They thrust upward,
 Their vulgar little noses
 Pushing, probing,
 Splitting the skin
 To reveal
 Mouths wide open in surprise.

But the grass is master of semantics,
 And of the pregnant pause.
 Delaying its grand entrance,
 It sends out little tongues,
 Moist, pointed,
 To interrogate the weather.

Grass is all eloquence—
 Pure sweet-talk,
 Even as we bruise it.