

LATE ARIA

Surely this show was over
 when we invented plastic bouquets,
ceramic seashell soap dishes, decorative wheat.

 Those or profitable dentistry, that
or just its paper cups:
 conical & disposable & crafted
to sip mouthwash & leachates
 alike. Or it was over

upon the creation of calculus
 workbooks; not the mathematics, see,
just the mess of thin
 paper, problems manufactured. Or perchance
news itself cued our curtains,
 a knowledge of the blur
that veils life with its
 many velocities. But believe me

when I say it wasn't
 Mike & Ikes that marked
the Rubicon on civilization's map,
 nor paper towels, nor imitation crab,
though I could be mistaken.
 Someone must've swerved, once: glistening

in antiquity under avant-garde visions
 of Quikrete & theme parks
maybe, when extinction's protocols sounded
 far-sung, when we first imagined
a mortal omnipresence and put
 him on tomorrow's to-do list.