**Buhi**

Arthur Altarejos

*buhi’ adj alive.*

*buhi’ v /mag-, -an/ to set free, to unhand, to ignite as of firecrackers*

*—Motus, Cecile L., “buhi”, Hiligaynon Dictionary,*

*University of Hawai’i Press*

My people,

Say ‘buhi’

Do we not invoke entire lifetimes of man

And every manner of creature

That crawls on the cold earth?

Do we not bring forth voyages through time

From seed to shrub to flower to fruit to seed

To the insistent standing of trees?

And

Do we not pronounce the flight of the arrow,

Waking the air like shattering glass,

As it leaves the hunter’s hand?

Do we not confess to unbridling the horse

To let it run and run and run to rapture

Its muscles pulling themselves apart with purpose?

How then, my people,

can we speak of living

If we dare not strike at our chains?