**A Child in an Expanding Universe**

Liona Burnham

I shut my eyes against the stars.

My father drove, and no one spoke.

I sank into the orange Pinto’s bucket seats,

ages before booster seats,

and the heaters roared.

The grandeur and glory of my first symphony

still tingled in my fingertips and sizzled across my scalp.

I opened my eyes and tilted my head back.

I tipped backwards into the vastness of bright stars

in the dark depths and distance,

one after the other,

each star a whole solar system,

each solar system in a galaxy

and then always another,

more and more distant in time and space.

The edges of the back window

fell away, and I shrunk into tininess,

an Alice in Wonderland moment,

and floated without a line, without an edge to grab,

reaching, reaching, reaching,

a nothing in a universe so huge and breathing.