**The Tempo of Gratitude**

*―spring walk on a country road*

Jeannie Roberts

The drab stubble of corn fills farmer's field. Winter's sleepy

call still stalls the Earth. Runoff flows slowly. The creak

of pine and poplar call to cattail, where bouffant batons

conduct an amphibian serenade. Ephemeral ponds swell

and hum, brim and thrum with breeding-hymns, prelude

to the rise of life.

*L. sylvaticus* chatters, while *P. crucifer* trills in high-pitched

refrain. As if thankful, the emergence of warmth shapes

awakenings, sets appreciation to song.

Can you feel its tempo, its beatitude of beat?

There are drums. They are pounding. Convey your gratitude,

now repeat.