

## Doug Holder

### Meeting Allen Ginsberg ( Buffalo, NY. 1975)

A middle-aged Jewish uncle  
his bald dome  
framed by graying locks  
a tangled tapestry  
draping below  
his ears.

The rhythmic slap of his hands  
on the drum  
his head raised to the ceiling  
addressing some light  
that only spoke his name.

" If you want to live, live."  
" If you want to die, die."  
"If you want to make love, make love."

The college radio manager  
told me that he was a prophet  
that I should interview him,  
a boy with impossibly rosy cheeks  
a faint mustache  
the like that I have seen  
on my maiden aunts.

I walked up to him  
my shambling gate  
the gone-to-seed  
crowd around him  
snickered at this  
not yet defiled cherub  
as I shook his hand  
a hand I  
never,  
really  
let go  
of.

**Doug Holder** teaches English at Bunker Hill Community College. He is the founder of the Ibbetson Street Press, and is the arts/editor for *The Somerville Times*. His latest book of verse is *Last Night at the Wursthau* ( Grey Sparrow Press)