

## **William Wolak** – Two Poems

### Love Apples

For Elizabethans, the mere fragrance of perfume  
seldom aroused intimacy's most erotic sentiments.  
Rather, they craved the sultry, pungent odor  
of rank sweat exuding from the pores of a lover's skin.  
A whiff of the naked body's most unabashed aroma  
excited them more than any artificial tincture of musk and flowers.  
To capture the unique scent of her voluptuous flesh,  
a woman would wedge a peeled apple under her armpit  
until her perspiration saturated it with her unmistakable bouquet.  
Then she would offer it to her lover as an amorous keepsake—  
a fleeting olfactory memento of her body's secret pleasures.

### The Library of Abdul Kassem Ismael, 10th century CE

During his expeditions as a warrior or statesman  
wherever he traveled, Abdul Kassem Ismael,  
the Grand Vizier of Persia, transported  
his entire library of 117,000 books.  
A lover of learning, a diligent reader, and a bibliophile,  
he was never parted from his beloved tomes.  
When journeying from city to city,  
he had his precious volumes  
loaded onto a herd of four hundred camels  
that he trained to follow him in alphabetical order,  
so that his camel drivers could retrieve  
immediately any book in his library  
that he needed to consult.

**William Wolak** has just published his third book of poetry, *Archeology of Light*.  
Recently he was selected to be a featured reader at the 2011 Kritya International Poetry  
Festival in Nagpur, India.

