

Timothy Gray

Saint Clair

In dreams I swim the murky sludge of Midwestern waterways.
Times show they are no longer the thoroughfares natives knew.
Like citizens, they simply muck along, the sinister sheen
On their milky surface the diffused gleam of old industry.

Floating there, I'm a sick reflection of what's ailing Michigan.
Disused factories line concrete shores, their time clocks ticking idly
As lonely night watchmen throw light on vermin too hungry to care.
Rusted barrels of chemicals rupture; my blood laps rotted stanchions.

Rolling out of sweaty sheets, I glimpse what sink and mirror hold,
Then go crashing back into our room, stretching out my curved arms
Like a breaker on Great Lakes, or an ancient hero on high seas
Seeking the siren call of your beautifully ignorant snores.

Timothy Gray is author of *Gary Snyder and the Pacific Rim* (2006), *Urban Pastoral* (2010), and *Reading Roots Rock Writing* (due 2014), all published by University of Iowa Press. His poetry has appeared recently (or is forthcoming) in *Willows Wept Review*, *Pirene's Fountain*, *Hobble Creek Review*, *Turning Wheel*, and *Valparaiso Poetry Review*. He teaches at City University of New York.