

Joel Savishinsky

The Death Of Rhetoric

When the rhetoric
dies and the silence
lays down its shroud
pinning it with stars,

you can stare at the face
of the nighttime sky, close
your eyes and listen to
the songs of animals,

weapons, and warriors just
beyond reach, each of those
constellations dancing to
the drumming of fingernails

against the ether, claiming
the music of long-dead suns
and six planets' protest against
the insincerities of memory.

Joel Savishinsky is an anthropologist and gerontologist: his books include *The Trail of the Hare: Environment and Stress in a Sub-Arctic Community*, and *Breaking The Watch: The Meanings of Retirement in America*, which won the Gerontological Society of America's book of the year prize. His poetry has appeared, or is in press, in *The Avocet*, *The Berkshire Review*, *Blood and Thunder*, *Crosscurrents*, *PageBoy*, *Passager Journal*, *Starfish*, *The Pharos*, *Third Eye*, *Windfall*,