

## UNKNOWN FACES (Pogon, Poland 2000)

In Pogon, on a sunny day in August  
58 years ago  
Not far from Auschwitz  
My mother was screaming  
In front of her home,  
When wind swept away  
To the stomping of feet

On the streets we now walk.  
We see a corner brown house  
Drenched in the summer smell  
Of ragged lawn blotched  
And stained by oil  
From a mower in the hands  
Of a man who smiles at us  
With slight shoulders  
And curved eye

And greets us through a fence  
With trembling hands  
And whose angular face  
Leads us into the house

Where „the rooms are different,  
Smaller, dirtier”, my mother says,  
Inching along the corridor  
Trying not to awaken the dead  
Stopping once to press her hands

Against musty wallpaper  
Full of printed flowers,  
Pulling at the edges sticking out  
As if peeling skin.

(Steven Pelcman)