

ROBERT HAYDEN  
On Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1906



MONET'S "WATERLILIES"

*(for Bill and Sonja)*

Today as the news from Selma and Saigon  
poisons the air like fallout,  
I come again to see  
the serene great picture that I love.

Here space and time exist in light  
the eye like the eye of faith believes.  
The seen, the known  
dissolve in iridescence, become  
illusive flesh of light  
that was not, was, forever is.

O light beheld as through refracting tears.  
Here is the aura of that world  
each of us has lost.  
Here is the shadow of its joy.

(1985)