

Ideas and My

by Jeffrey Burghauer (January 2018)



The Poet Sabartes, Pablo Picasso, 1901

Ideas

“Ideas are real,” he said long ago,

“As an embryo, or as the grave.”

However, the minor poets know

That a *perspective* is all we have:

Lamentia the Esoteric,
Betjeman, Brainard, the fully fair
Laughlin, Day-Lewis, Housman, Herrick,
Stevie Smith & Walter de la Mare.

An approaching locomotive's sound
Spreads before me like the swash & face
Of a northern beach whose heavy ground,
Rain-soaked, slides into littoral lace.

A perspective should be dressed in frocks,
And chaperoned like a ballot box.



Mother with Two Children, Egon Schiele, 1917

My

My eldest, three, talks like a river
Half-iced in late fall's spare clarity.
Kids are like poets: They were never
Really meant to be listened to. We

Emulate the company we keep—
Saints or assholes, dentists or pagans;
The newborn has, in its ghastly heap,
Spent nine months with internal organs.

My youngest, not even a month old:

Nacreous throat, yet unpinched, and hence

The sound he's too feeble to withhold

Sounds like feebly hindered silence.

And thus a voice grows—to the full, fair

Ineffectuality of prayer.

Jeffrey Burghauser is an English teacher in Columbus, OH. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo, the University of Leeds, and currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have previously appeared in *Appalachian Journal* and *Lehrhaus*.

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