

ANNE-MARIE THOMPSON

*Dear Keats*

She's nothing like a gypsy any more.  
Tired of those cattish games—slipping unpet  
from an expectant hand, playing demure  
until the moment someone turns his head,  
flirting, then rubbing other neutral shins—  
she's lately stripped off all that changeling fur  
and dances unabashed in candid skin  
which she'll readily press against each cur  
that stands half-panting in a sweaty line:  
each shaking hand and every bulging crotch  
gets 15 Min., as promised on the sign.  
So step in close (she likes it when you watch),  
don't push—the whole world's welcome at her door  
now that she's set up shop as *Fame, the Whore*.

*Student Seating*

He saw *The Ring* at Bayreuth years ago—  
at least, he heard it, stuck on the back row  
behind a pillar for the slow duration.  
Depending on his sound imagination,  
he tried to visualize the leitmotifs  
from chords alone, since every glimpse was brief,  
but without full advantages of sight  
he never truly knew the Valkyries' Flight.

Remember him when you remember me,  
the stupid things I said so carelessly  
that still replay, unchanged, inside your brain.  
Know that if I could, I would explain  
those little words away, explain that you  
saw a small piece—you had a partial view.