

Oblique in an Acute New Century

by Gary Hardaway

No New Pictures, Please

My photogenics went to hell
in 1999. The cameras

ever since have pictured me
with too much resolution and fidelity.

My old face couldn't face
the new age with cheerful acquiescence.

Cultural Conspiracy

It is a small life, circumscribed
by debt and income, age and infirmity.
The Hidden Hand thrusts its middle finger
high. Fortuna spins her wheel and cackles.

His Allergies Are Bad Today

Variety, spice, life—
ingredients of a vast despair
if allergic.

Juggler

Fatigue already lowers the amplitude
of the five cleavers circling between

myself and the audience of bored strangers.
They remain, in hope of a little spatter

when entropy predominates
and the whole little enterprise ends

with accelerating disorder
and stillness.

Discomfiture

The places I can be and want to be
diminish. Chairs no longer fit.

The morning slash of sun
burns the retinae. Faint

and unfamiliar noises portend
calamity. It may be time to leave.

