

# The Art of the Ruin

*by Gary Hardaway*

Ruins are always provocative.  
The imagining eyes  
rebuild the colonnade,  
the wall, the roof, and pediment.

The toppled stones  
speak of time and fortune  
and the calamity a moment  
or millennium can bring

to human art and industry.  
The ghosts run before  
attacking horsemen. A heart  
is ruptured by a spear.

A small dog chokes  
on ash and noxious gas.  
A body decomposes  
having fallen to disease

interpreted as a god's curse.  
Even the print-shirted engineer  
from Springfield, Illinois,  
with his Instamatic hanging

by a nylon strap around his neck,  
will shudder as he sees himself  
stretching arms around his children  
as the shockwave flattens Nagasaki.

