

# CONTENTS

*Preface* xi

Xu Bing's Flying Phoenixes 3

## I WORKERS AND MIRACLES

John Henry Sleeping in High Grass 7

Where the Steel of Ploughs 8

Preachers 10

Houses of Ice, 1969 11

The Lay of Paradise, 1970 16

A Baby in the Crash of '29 17

Mass Production 19

## II THE WHEEL

Spirit Boxing 27

Morning Shift 28

The Good Traveler 29

The Bluesman Speaks on Original Man 31

Ivory Soap, a Whiteness 33

The Worker We Named Freight Train &  
His Revelation of Ezekiel's Vision 35

When They Fired Our Magician 37

Knowledge of Silk	39
Beatitudes, the Merciful	40
Handling the Heaviness	42
How to Use a Buck Knife	43
Beatitudes, the Peacemakers	44
When Hard Men Love Each Other	46
Freight Train Returns from the Hospital	48
Black Scab	50
A Truck Driver from West Virginia	53
The Good Job	54
The Winepress	56
Freight Train Watches Me Do My Taiji	58
In Mencken's Neighborhood	60

### **III WHEELS INSIDE WHEELS**

When the Farms Give Out	65
Walk On, Walk Away	66
A Postscript to <i>Giant</i>	67
Interiors, a Miner's Home	68
Grabbing Lunch in the Morgue	69
A Nation of Hands	70
Ode to the Wheelchair	71

Get on Up, Now	72
Whole Cloth	73
A Legacy, Southern Kin	74
The Gray Mare	75
Blood of a Union of States	76
Mr. Fugg's Hardware Store	78
Making Soldiers	80
Ode to the Hard Men	81
The Hipness of Hips	82

#### **IV CODA**

Repack Room	85
Where No Good Can Live	86
The Architecture of Factories, 1985	88
Ode to the Righteous Union	90
Dear Mystical Reader	93
<i>Notes</i>	97
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	99