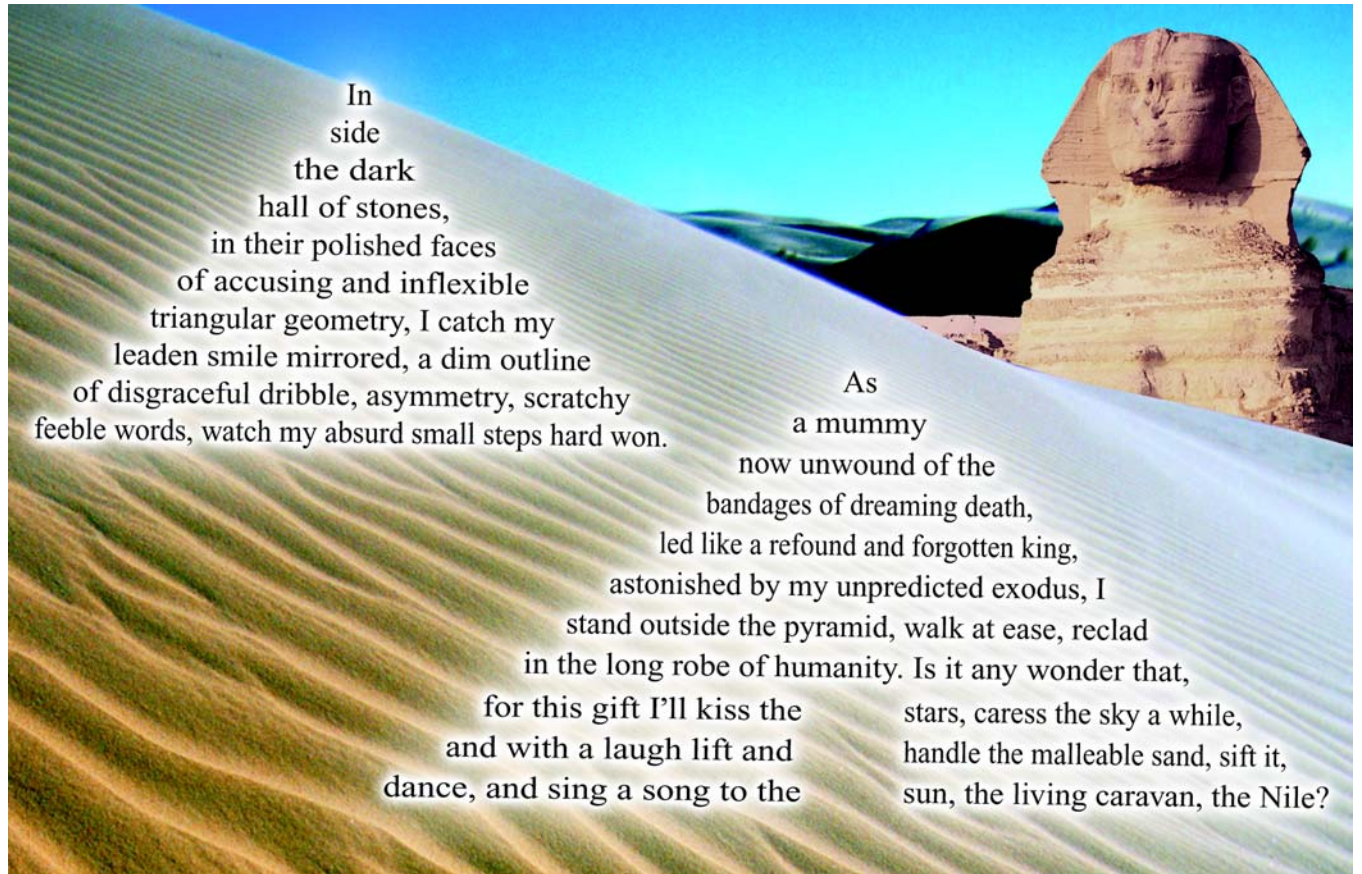


Outside the pyramid

First used in 1967, the drug levodopa has rescued many patients with Parkinson's disease from silence, rigidity and tremor. Parkinson's disease is called an extrapyramidal disorder. It results from damage to black brain cells aggregated beside the pyramid-shaped tracts of motor nerves.



In
side
the dark
hall of stones,
in their polished faces
of accusing and inflexible
triangular geometry, I catch my
leaden smile mirrored, a dim outline
of disgraceful dribble, asymmetry, scratchy
feeble words, watch my absurd small steps hard won.

As
a mummy
now unwound of the
bandages of dreaming death,
led like a refund and forgotten king,
astonished by my unpredicted exodus, I
stand outside the pyramid, walk at ease, reclad
in the long robe of humanity. Is it any wonder that,
for this gift I'll kiss the
and with a laugh lift and
dance, and sing a song to the
stars, caress the sky a while,
handle the malleable sand, sift it,
sun, the living caravan, the Nile?

Stephen Leeder, 26 February 2004