

Singing Stone

By Kelly Vande Plasse

She hasn't spoken in fifty years.

Voice silenced by steady drone of
tempered air. A controlled environment.

Corralled as an object of beauty, of desire.

Within her are desert and river and ridge.

Bright veins of azurite and copper. Voices
rattling all about. She stands alone.

The height of a human. They say,
she once sang when air grew moist
and when it grew sere. Sang of heat
and cold, deluge and drought - a whisper,
a whistle through her copper phloem.

Perhaps her song was not so melodic.

It matters not. Release her voice -

Let her speak for herself. Let her sing of water-
trickle drip dripping through limestone clefts,
acids that opened her body to colors of earth above –
azurite sky, beebalm green of malachite.

Let her sing of wind sluicing through tunnel
and shaft, rattle of mine cars boring through dark,
echo of drills and dynamite blast, voices
of men from thirty-four nations calling out

in thirty-four tongues - seekers of silver, of gold,
permeaters of calcium crystal, crack
of hammer and chisel that cut her out of
raw ore in 1895 in Bisbee, Arizona. The unnatural
history of the earth. Stewardship. Subjugation.
Debates over definition of Dominion. Oh,
how she must have sung that day as she was lifted
from dank earth into glare of Arizona sun - her song
rising to the clear sky with those of Trogon, of
Montezuma Quail. They say her voice was
high-pitched, Bald Eagle's call – perhaps
not pleasant at all. I too have made of myself
a stone and still I could feel. Release her voice,
let her speak for herself.