

# ON BELLE GIRONDA

KATIE YATES

A gloss of Belle Gironda's poems across two decades reveals that a conversation about conflict is the focus of her inquiry followed quickly by intuitive-like-certainty or might we say her writing offers simply an accurate graph of emotional life? Both. No doubt her work is serious-minded like that of Rachel Blau DuPlessis (Draft 85) while maintaining the delicacy found in Ann Lauterbach's essays.

*From now on  
use knives only as mirrors.*

*I won't say the best time is at dawn (c. 1987)*

Happily, Belle's writing is experimental and trans-genre, surviving the transparency of any single such experiment. Her vocal tracks in the sound mixes of *purkinge* (c. 1994) resonate with emotional clarity in a rhythm rare in acoustic mélange of this kind and then her video/text poems don't hesitate to come off as raw and complicated.

*one wants to claim:  
there is almost no geography anymore (c. 2000)*

So if she does, as she says, following the exhortations of a "poetics of the field" (Charles Olson/Don Byrd), for poets to know something, then, she succeeds in a complex political landscape such is the present. One wonders what there is to know that would be of any help and then Belle's poetry reminds us. Without such writers I wonder what I would have but ginger recipes for despair.

*First, the broken sleep of caring and tending  
There the tenderness of reaching*

*Quiet sounds of simmering, under long  
bands of horizontal light*

*"Look, I want to say. . ." or, just, "Look." (c.2008)*

What I relish in Belle's work is a strength beyond exhortation that propels me into thinking outside my own taut circumstances: I feel awakened. As in haiku, her poems bear the suggestion that we consider what it is we are doing and perhaps to experience a genuine resolve.