

ORGANIC, INORGANIC

for Anna Valentina Murch

I've been watching the planting
outside your window, Anna, the one
Chris worked on for two days. He
surrounded each bush or flower

by a circular earthwork to hold
water; it's wet right now,
but John says this place is
about water. If you watch

for a while you spot some lizards
and though I've never seen more
than two at a time, I imagine
there is one in each plant, and

that they crawl between, quickly
crossing the exposed space. So . . .
let's find a flat field (that will
be difficult) covered with the four

grasses that grow here. We'll
remove all the grass from some
roughly circular areas. The ground
will be brown underneath, it

can be raked smooth. A little way
out of each circle the grass
will be down a few inches
(this must be done by hand).

In the middle of each clearing
we will build a pyramid of one
of the elements in its natural state:
yellow crystals of sulfur, native

copper, white phosphorus, anthracite
more stable than diamond. Oxygen
will be in a balloon the color
of arterial blood. In the grass

between the circles I see connecting
channels of light, water, radiation,

wind, fire. . . the forces that tear,
tear to build. To be gentle on this land

we could use ribbons, a linked chain
of mirrors, plaited shades of blue
and green, taut violet wires, a strand
of naval flags. These we'll string

low in the grass, so that as you
and I walk through, one or another
ribbon will be seen. And we'll come
back and watch the weeds grow in.