

## THREE JAPANESE EDO PERIOD POTS

### Bowl 1

Witness to old fire,  
you beg to be picked up  
and returned  
to human hands.  
And turned...  
my controlled combustion  
pressing warm life  
into your creamy glaze  
which, once viscously boiling  
in 1629  
congealed  
into pocked perfection.

### Bowl 2

Lead-glazed raku,  
black, not just dark  
but no less comely.  
And the sheen of the  
night kiln's fire is  
in your smooth parts,  
in your rough.  
then...a cleft  
through which the unglazed  
clay, your solid soul  
emerges.

### Bowl 3

Three bands - mauve, gray, mauve.  
In balanced contention the caught  
but rising matte gray conspires  
with the pot's rough rim  
to ride me over the edge, where  
I see the green froth of  
ceremonial tea.

### All three

You are not a circle, but its end,  
the genteel force that makes us turn, turn, turn

in echo of your creation.  
In flows of glaze, crackles ceramic,  
dimples, burrs, ridges and scratches,  
the way ash fell,  
textural evidence to chance.  
Cultivated - I see heaps of shards -  
imperfection, to reveal to refractory  
man the perfection sought  
in the potter's mind.

And now placed into my hands.  
So few things in this world  
were really meant to be held...

Before ever again I  
call a rough object imperfect  
I will remember Koetsu's bowls.