Confession: after decades of loving you, 
I'm done with artful dodges, 
lust-fueled storytelling, 
and brash-as-Saturday-midnight masks. 
You've been a cockeyed crush, a nemesis, 
and every color and feisty persona in between— 
On my top-secret Lancelot's quest to impress 
dear forceful, prismatic you, 
accuracy has become my Camelot. 
For example, in A Streetcar Named Desire, 
delusional, always pipe-dreaming Blanche Dubois 
gladly insists on pinpointing 
a robe's inspiriting hue 
as not lavender but “Della Robbia blue,” 
“a light blue redder and deeper 
than the color of forget-me-nots,” 
an epiphanic, 15th century blue 
the painter Luca della Robbia,
Florentine master of terra-cotta,
replicated time and again in stellar ceramics—

Regarding our silver anniversary,
it would be autumn-time perjury

or sheer hyperbole to insist
I could never manage without you;

love-maker, perennial rascal,
let me be precise

as razzle-dazzle, bull's-eye Blanche
or fiercely unerring,

diligent della Robbia:
don’t let me live without you—

II. Madonna of Telltale Blue

\textit{Madonna del Parto}
\textit{(Monterchi, Italy)}

As if the blue maternity cloak
Of the luminous painting were tantamount

To a comic strip champion's thought-cloud
Or a Buddhist's river-current mantra—

In praise, at vespers in Castrabecco,
I install a passable facsimile
Of Piero della Francesca’s long-prized
Monterchi madonna

Directly above my escritoire,
Linking my writer’s inmost quest for meaning

To innumerable co-yearners, supplicants,
As adamant and footsore

As the gift-bestowing Magi,
Hardy sages resolute to seek and ask

Prescient Mary and the star-cloaked
Christ-to-come,

Still ensconced beneath her phenomenal,
Hallowing dress:

Lovely virgin of myrrh and circumstance,
Madonna of telltale blue,

What is this new-minted marriage
Of God and flesh?

Tell us, when will we truly live?
When will we touch our divinity?
About the author

Is There Room for Another Horse on Your Horse Ranch? (Four Way Books: March 2024) is Cyrus Cassells’s latest volume. Everything in Life is Resurrection: Selected Poems, 1982-2022 (TCU Press) and Lorca to the Umpteenth Power (3: A Taos Press) are forthcoming in 2025 and 2026. Among his honors: a Guggenheim fellowship and a Lambda Literary Award. The World That the Shooter Left Us was a Houstonic Book Award finalist and The Gospel according to Wild Indigo, a finalist for the NAACP Image Award. His two books of Catalan translations, Still Life with Children: Selected Poems of Francesc Parcerisas and To The Cypress Again and Again: Tribute to Salvador Espriu, both received the Texas Institute of Letters’ biennial Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translated Book. The 2021 Poet Laureate of Texas, Cassells is a Regents’ and University Distinguished Professor of English at Texas State University.