

Flying through Time

in the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum's Butterfly Room

Cocoons like tiny bats
on sheets of screen
where bloomers flex and stretch

their pleated wings
tear tissue to win release
into the Butterfly Room

flutter colors, blinks and dips,
circles ferns
and forsythia as I

duck the swallowtail's dive for azaleas
and brown eyespots wink
when wings applaud

Ulysses' iridescent blues
flash to cue
a mid-air dance of figure eights over day lilies

chocolate pansies
putter through air
like a pianist's fingers across the keyboard

neon blue morphos
linger on the fruit of cool citrus
sip the sticky of sliced orange

a polyphemus moth
stops on a cement stoop
palm-size brown marbled wings
arch weak with age
antennae wobble

14-day lives
10-day childhood memories

outside, we walk between thick oaks
whose centuries ring
in the confines of hardwood.

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