



Mark Saba, *Self-portrait*

YOU AND I

Had we the power to see our inner core
we'd see that we are from another place.
We're mixed today. But we were mixed before.

So I'm still Irish as in days of yore
but sport as well a half Italian face
and feel some German genius at my core.

What, after all, are our forebears for
but to assist us as we try to trace
the mixed ingredients we were before?

And so, Italian, I sing and soar,
but at an Irish river-dancing pace,
with Prussian power pressing at the core

as chords progress. The purity is poor,
perhaps, but we've an intergroupal grace
mixed in, since what I am, you were before,

and vice versa: Neanderthal—and more:
of African descent. Of every race,
say scientists who've seen our inner core,
all mixed today, as we were mixed before.

—James B. Nicola