

Racing to Measure the Immensity

Racing to measure the immensity of the Yuma desert
Like a trim long-distance runner, the train presses on
Its windows flooded by heroic images.
The eye is assaulted with
Irregular masses, undulating plateaus
Depth in space undreamed of under ordinary lamp-light
Uneven contours
Rocks exposed to the blugeoning of time
Hollowed masses gnawed by wind and water.
Wild organisms thirsting for life
Pitted against the harsh odds of time.
The sheer scale, immensity, awesome mass
Of the topographic settlement
Thrusts its own drama upon the eye.

In the city we have become accustomed to
Tamer shapes, dimmer lights, thinner sounds.

(10 September, 1962)

