

## *Microwave Popcorn*

ACE BOGGESS

in the movie theaters of my childhood  
I learned to love the dark

before the first flicker  
before the spaceship cowboy man with a golden gun

smirked cynically into existence  
as even family dissipated into unreality

it was only me & the void &  
the bucket of popcorn buttery & lukewarm

oily fingers touching salted lips  
teeth crunching tree limbs & brittle bones

I made myself boy king in the land of shadows  
collecting my tribute by handfuls

now I place my booty in a little metal box  
punch a few numbers then listen

for the hum & for loudspeakers  
from the beta-test room at the fireworks factory

the freedom darkness brings &  
the anticipation are gone

cinematic majesty & magic  
disbanded in favor of the parceling of pixels

only the corn remains  
an artifact from a bygone culture

homogenized standardized bastardized  
the way vitamin tablets replace the haloed orange

I'm glad you are dead Orville Redenbacher  
you have stolen my youth &

here in this emasculated imagination of middle age  
I curse each grain I swallow

then beg forgiveness  
for the terrible damnation taken in