

O MAGNIFICAT **By Linda Rogers**

When the voices are as many
as burning cars filled with boy
sopranos driving themselves
through the holes in ruined
cities, singing O magnificat,
St. Anselm's proof for the
existence of God; then our
tongues begins to look for
gaps in our teeth to fill with
words that fall silent as snow.

The tongue magnifies, our
dentist tell us; in every crack
and crevice a story is hiding,
waiting to come out and frighten
anyone who won't believe
the sum is always greater.

The sum of what, we ask,
greater than what, O magnificat,
there are so many voices every
one of them hungry, every
one of them calling for help.

Fill the crack in the earth that
swallowed the leg of the young
ballerina in Sichuan province;
fill the tears in the veil worn by
women stoned to death in Kabul;
fill the empty stomachs of children
starving in the wastelands of Darfur;
fill the time between gunshots
where children soldier in jungles,
fill the treble holes in the ocean
vacated by singing mammals.

O magnificat, it is human to
magnify gaps between molars,
holes in the ozone, caveat in kisses,
and the holy emptiness of longing.
That is why, after all this time,
we are still speaking in tongues.