

RIVER STANZAS
E M E R G E



Wick Poetry Center
College of Arts and Sciences



The Sculptor

by William Donohue Ellis

Even a scant few thousand years ago only the barest traces of a Cuyahoga river course were visible, here a rock tossed by the glaciers to turn the flow, there a valley etched by some river of the past. But until very late, there was nothing to suggest that this stream's headwaters would originate just fifteen miles from the lake into which it should empty [...]

Joyously, the Cuyahoga begins to run at Akron, then leaps into a series of rapids at the Cuyahoga Falls to rush north through the mile-and-a-half gorge. After this wanton leap, the Cuyahoga slows down to meander. The sides of the buried canyon form a margin; the river tries the limits of its prison, touching first one wall and then the other while scooping its own flat bed toward the lake, dropping two feet to the mile. In the final reach, the Cuyahoga leaves the old bed, audaciously looping away to cut a new and kinky path to the lake it has sought for ninety miles.

And now, because it was made as it was, men who live on it, astride it, and beside it, will live their lives a certain way.