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buffalo bob

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buffalo bob

Gerald Locklin

buffalo bob

's defunct,
who never shot pigeons
just like that or
anyway at all.
who never shot anything.
and with him went
clarabell the clown,
princess summerfall winterspring
(who sang her didn't, who danced her did),
phineas t. bluster,
dilly dally,
chief thunderthud,
trapper john,
and flubadub.
what poetry in those names alone.
i won't attempt to gild those lilies.

i'll just recall an era when,
every afternoon at five,
for every kid in the great american peanut gallery,
the time it was was howdy doody time,
the can-can re-orchestrated out of offenbach
into a ritual of exhilaration,
from a time-out-of-time that it's
now difficult to believe ever existed.

Long Beach, California