

Louis Plamondon

A woodpecker kept him awake.
The persistent gnaw
of a cocooned butterfly
worked its way out of his eyelid.
This drove him
to step into the heart
of the country.

He waited patiently
as he listened to the patrons
ordering from their menu
in halting French.

He resolved....
Language would not be buried
where the soil of his ancestors lay.
They witnessed the unity of all
who stumbled and floundered.

To be mute was not his game.

And so...
He entered the arena.

The argument solid on his feet.
Like the Cree, the Iroquois, Hurons,
Anishinaabe, the Blackfoot, Lakota,
and Inuit
the boulders etched with pictographs
reminded him,
language too
will survive.

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Parliamentary Poet Laureate**