

## RANDALL EXON

*Ventilator on Darlinton's Barn, 2009*  
oil on canvas, 57 x 57 in.



COURTESY THE ARTIST

## KEVIN PILKINGTON

### A Church on the Edge of the Bed

There was a fire in the church  
uptown near the tracks that destroyed  
everything except for a shell of walls  
and a few prayers that floated  
away now that the roof is sky.

Passing by it on the train  
reminded me how it looked  
a lot like Billie Holiday's voice  
on her last album.

I had to turn away  
when it began to resemble  
my father sitting on the edge  
of his bed, after the stroke, alone  
for the first time, hanging on  
after years of stone and wood,  
out of prayers and waiting for no one.

**Kevin Pilkington** is on the writing staff at Sarah Lawrence College. His latest collection, *Where You Want to Be: New & Selected Poems*, was published by Black Lawrence Press. His novel *Summer Shares* was recently reissued in paperback.