

DANIJELA KAMBASKOVIC

## *De Vita Sedentaria*

*Petrarch's house, Arquà.*

Your chair,  
carved out of walnut,  
looks uncomfortable,  
but photographs really well for its age.

Mine is new,  
ergonomic,  
streamlined,  
with a spectacular padded seat,

but will probably be quite scruffy  
in seven hundred years.

## *Power*

*Giotto, "The Slaughter of the Innocents", fresco  
in Capella degli Scrovegni, Padua (XIV c)*

By what administrative process  
did Herod execute  
his order to slaughter the innocents?

Through what rational channels  
did his order filter down  
to move the hand around the sabre?

What was the seal,  
what fear,  
he used to convince his men

that a generation of one-year-olds  
threatened his throne,  
threatened their lives?

What was the opiate  
that could erase the little bodies  
and the mother's three-dimensional tear

from the memory  
of his Lieutenants?