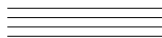


CENTRAL PARK, DECEMBER



B I L L C H R I S T O P H E R S E N

Unfazed by fall's raw
and burnt sienna gouache:
willow's green fountain.

•

Mud puddle: pond scum,
half-submerged leaves, pigeon tracks,
wobbling skyscrapers.

•

A gale cleaves trees, boughs.
Two long-tailed claims adjustors
pick through the wreckage.

•

Bare circuitry of
oak, elm. How long before the
maple blows a fuse?

•

So cold the muzzled
Doberman's nostrils smoke. The
locust's harrowed bark.

•

A warm front melts the
hoarfrost on the tennis courts —
autumn's backhand smash.

•

Beside the lake, a
tossed pop-stick crawling with ants;
Manhattan Island.