

# Memory of America

by Richard Stimac

My father's body is the memory of America:  
thin limbs; swollen belly; weak and resigned,  
stored in an institution away from public sight.

My father's body is unexploded munitions  
buried in a farmer's field. One day, a plow,  
a tire, a foot will find it. We will not hear of that.

My father's body is an artifact  
only academics and clinicians probe  
for secrets. They will publish their findings.

My father's body is a documentary,  
in many parts, shown consecutively.  
Critics and viewers alike praise it.

My father's body is a family photo album.  
There he is, shirtless, in a bunker near Saigon.  
Here my mother, with me, in Illinois.

My father's body is a relic I contemplate.  
He feels himself barely more than an object.  
My father's body is the memory of America.

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**Richard Stimac** has published a poetry book *Bricolage* (Spartan Press), two poetry chapbooks, and one flash fiction chapbook. In his work, Richard explores time and memory through the landscape and humanscape of the St. Louis region.