

The Great Exalted Orange One
by Professor Mark DeFoe
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“And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?”
- “The Second Coming,” W.B. Yeats

Bozo the Clown and Alfred E. Newman,
a preening buffoon, he hides in his hairdo.

Snake-oil salesman, flam-flam man, he punishes
those we believe have wounded us. A Robin Hood

who steals from everyone, convincing all
his disease is both blessing and a hoax.

He is swampy with fraud, casting blame across
the land like manna. He puckers his lips, curls

tiny fingers round our delusions. We pledge
alliance to the greatest ego of all egos.

He has plopped his ample ass on our couch.
The Great Orange One has come to leer, to grab

our nasty women by their nether parts,
to fondle our sacred truths. Slant-eyed, he pushes

our buttons. A perverse boy scout, he proclaims
his innocence. We are clay on his wheel of spin,

our gullibility his merit badge. We sway
in the sweep of his Machiavellian blather,

his bombastic and poisonous wind. He coils,
awaiting his moment. Democracy trembles

in a distant corner of the Republic.

Mark DeFoe, now retired, is a former chair of the English Department at Wesleyan. His work has appeared widely in chapbooks, anthologies, and textbooks in the U.S., Canada, and abroad, and in *Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *The Yale Review*, *Reed*, *The Sewanee Review*, *The Anthology of Appalachian Writers*, and many others.