

## *Two Poems by Tomas Unger*

### THE PIANIST

When my right hand—  
When the hand that had been mine—  
When I found that hand  
curling inward stayed  
curled

protestations meant nothing; prayers.  
Thinking, not thinking—  
nothing.

But there was a literature  
for the left hand, there was someone before—  
his arm blown off in the war.

And what was over was not  
what I thought was over—

from the beginning, my relation had been  
to music, not myself the player—

Incurable, desire  
that survives as devotion  
no disfigurement can cure.

I became a teacher.

Hand placed over—  
Sometimes I place my hand over  
the hand of the player

very gently or  
forcefully, in sympathy.

L A T E S E L F

*Rembrandt, 63*

The surprise always  
something has not abandoned us,

the way, standing there, another's  
expression as you realize  
has become yours—

Self given, self seen—

Suffering composing  
itself is compassion.