

“Birchbark Face”
by Rob Rogers

Look close enough and you
can see where fires slithered through
blackened lines, still scorched years later
beneath a too-heavy blanket of snow
powdering the edges of the over-folded map
of the thousand threadlike bare canals
the smoke-greased hump of broken ridgeline
the overgrown valley of tangled brows
decades of stubbled switchback
and the opening, jagged, still unexplored
whose depths go endlessly into the earth.
Two ways to make a poker face:
young man’s blank canvas, absent
of stories, or mine carved by
all of them.



“Pattern”
by Pat Calabro