

Carol Burdick

Angeline on Ossabaw

Her Shadow form across the hard white sand
indicates the pattern for a dance. Island music—
wind and wave and high sweet curlew call—
accompanies each leap and turn along the empty shore.
Laughing, she pirouettes and climbs the air,
using all the stage a dancer needs—
and still her shadow leads.

Fixed to their footsteps, the older women watch,
lightened by her exuberance and skill.
They know that she may never occupy
a more congenial or a safer space—
and they know too, as sure as tide recedes,
a shadow always leads.

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