Copper Town

A half green, half rock canyon
leads to topography planned
by architects of gravel, who took

what they wanted and left the rest
in stacks of slag
erosion turned
into a model of the badlands.
A squall

washes smoke to earth
from smelter chimneys and a sky
divided between light

and storm. Rains bed down
the terraced waste; wind
stirs and blows it
through a town set deep
in realigned hills. Connecting

copper to the clouds, a rainlit arc
beams out of the shattered ground.

David Chorlton was born in Austria, grew up in Manchester, England, and lived for several years in Vienna before moving to Phoenix in 1978. His newest collection is Bird on a Wire from Presa Press, and The Bitter Oleander Press published Shatter the Bell in my Ear, translations of poems by Austrian poet Christine Lavant. He will soon have a new book, Reading T. S. Eliot to a Bird, from Hoot ‘n Waddle, based in Phoenix.