

The Sound and Sense of Leaves

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at George Mason University

By

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DEDICATION

To Robert and my darling son, Niccolo

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ABSTRACT

THE SOUND AND SENSE OF LEAVES

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This thesis finds a means of unique operation through the use of some rarer vocabulary found in the *Oxford Dictionary of Difficult Words* so that any readers of this manuscript would in fact find some edification in the reading on not only a technical level but also an inspirational one--as Bach was known to write many such inspirations, i.e. etudes, for students of the Clavier, for instance, but which are still considered aesthetically pleasing in their own right. This collection also contains a handful of classic forms, i.e. the sonnet, rondel, acrostic, etc., and is made up of contemporary, individualized rhythms, rhyme, hyper and hypotactic grammatical texturing. Although elements of confession and autobiography are a necessary part of the endeavor, the work in its complete form should not found to be too general as to provoke monotony, or boredom. Philosophy, history, and an otherwise multidisciplinary approach towards the thematic content must work together to create interest therefore. The writer directly

addresses the audience and asks the reader to question the nature of things and the natural world, the outer and inner workings of the universe.

Short Rondel

Riven is the wood split by the woodsman.
Raven is the stone fired by a mason.
A bloodless blond is singing salmagundi.
Arctic as the lizard's singing glibly.
Desiccated by heat, so the firewood.
Riven is the wood.

Atavistic are our cunning brothers
and sister jewelers, whittlers, carvers.
Stirred and driven by an ancient ritual,
they make their mark quite agile, nimble.
By this tree tempted, we pleaded, planted.
Riven is the wood.

Governance

“The real problem is not whether machines think, but whether men do.”

B.F. Skinner

A flower and a saint have their own stigma,
but cybernetic materials are not
always so beautiful, and a robot
does not procreate through smegma
or swallow with the help of the medulla
oblongata. But many times have souls besought
a flower and a saint.

No dead relatives of robots seek a stela;
nor do cyborgs seek a stemma. Haute
bourgeoisie of a family tree allot
a fair plot at their betters fiat: not
a flower and a saint.

Never the Twain

The harridan had a harrier who wouldn't hunt.
The hound had a lame leg and the lady a lament.
They languished over truth and love wherever they went;
their cries were like a halting-gaited limpkin, plangent;

it was a great mystery what had caused their ailment;
so from the birch the touchwood grows and fires foment.
The harridan had a harrier who wouldn't hunt.
The hound had a lame leg and the lady a lament.

Knock on wood they would, but to no purposeful advent;
so still they rove the town, two flummoxed, smarmy vagrants.
Fogey and foibled, their welcomings were contingent
on flummery and froideur. Coldness made them pleasant.
The harridan had a harrier who wouldn't hunt.

4 Haiku

Footprints line the fence.
Florescent streetlamps pique our
plantigrade crossing.

+ + +
Azaleas greet us
with pollen and politesse,
lacy pink ruffles.

+ + +
Rubescent roses
cool fluvial dreams of fish.
We drape wet denim.

+ + +
Gargoyles frighten me.
you look for bats in the cloak
of a Gothic mist.

Thief in the Night

I dispossess
the vegetable of its skin, and
I dispossess
the lamp of its jinn. I redress
asparagus letting it stand
upright in the pan—a brigand
I dispossess.

Double Dactyl for the President

Higgledy-piggledy
Barack H. Obama
perorates bi-partisan
health care reform.

Prevalent attitudes
of this res publica
must make our prize-winning
Kenyan careworn.

Elegiac

for SWR

Entropy sets in. The autumn leaves fade as they must, and the flowers,
laughing a few last laughs, die, duskily bright; so the sage in
ecstasy, gathered from winnowed leaves, witnesses fruit born in gloom; and
Philomel, night-weary, moans; sunny birds plaintively warble.
Humoresques fail to improve my unwieldiest moods, and caprices,
appall this glum heart, whose loss, beats out in minor;
nocturnes twinkle, light as champagne.

t
i
n
e

Early a song of sorrow is born,
lumbering

e
g
i
a
c

Reflections on Childhood

Our whole life is but a greater and longer childhood.

~Benjamin Franklin

In full spate, my three year old body twirled
about under the stars to the voice of Sting.
I wouldn't have traded time for all the world,
even with parents parsimonious as a shoestring.
Life was young for all of us and sanguine;
the future stretched like the interstate before us.
We kicked our feet and reveled in high dudgeon
or ran into the ruddy sunset flushed and capricious
as a rose; the yards before us beckoned;
their breezy bracts and fronds were cloudy castles;
the heights of rocks and hills became our legends;
we were scribes and what we wrote was never doggerel.
Dominion, then, was a box of granulated sugar,
sweet as a scallion, life sung semi-quaver.

+++

Every summer we made our way up to
Dennis, to a small beach town on the Cape;
there my love for the wet sand would accrue
and temperate winds would tussle both seascape.
and landscape. Pine trees whispered hidden tales
of others long since. I claimed it as my own
but only for a few hours, to possess it; so impales
the mighty monster claiming its game; so atones
the sanctifier through bloody restitution.
The hammock, glider, set of rocking chairs,
too damp to gather any threat of arson,
were gathered together with the bugbears
of our bequest, and in dream-worlds, imperiled,
in full spate my three year old body twirled.

+++

Among the many places cherished by aunts
and uncles was a farm and a little house
in the woods, where blustered the descants
of the tall oaks. Near the fireplace, a playhouse
was set up; my mother tried to tell me something
about the gift; she hung a copper kettle over
the fire. That must have been winter waiting.
and we were waiting there in the forty acre
wood; our lives idyllic and unsustainable.
Memory, now, is nothing but a shapely schema;
and dearth of prospect made me too amenable.
I wanted to be like the music box's ballerina
like a story woven, a spinning top, dancing
about (under the stars) to the voice of Sting.

+++

And one weekend in the summer, my father
used a plough and tractor to grow high corn
and heirloom tomatoes; indoors my mother
read a book; the small brick house had forsworn
its previous tenants, a host of black snakes,
harmless but conspicuous, hanging from
the kitchen ceiling like dark and handsome sheiks.
Our clannish cadre had built it with aplomb—
a rustic dwelling. But my play dough sculpture
was lacking inspiration: my mother shaped
a cube with the colors swirled; and my ardor
for art began: paper doll cut outs japed
at Barbie, embroidery threads were deftly burlled—
a fair trade could not be made even for the smallest world.

+++

When nightmares first occurred, leonine in scope,
under the coruscate cosmos, couldn't I see
beyond the cycloptic black walnut, its myope-
fruit greenly falling far too far from the aerie
of the red-tailed raptor? What hawk boded
the garish sights of a nighttime's autonomic
vision? Chthonic, the red room, kept by a Druid
abetted by the great behemoth, Coptic,
reoccurred three times in succession, chronic
and circadian. The size of a cinema, all the wall
a mirror framed in gild, a custom kept relic.
The mirror reflected the eye whose original
body was not visible; so thrilling were the evenings
even with parents parsimonious as a shoestring.

+++

Hollywood rock stars, paparazzi parents,
aromatic rice and four-ply acrylic plastic,
axiomatic, isn't it? To clamantly say, claimants,
every little thing you do is magic...?
my mother loved the Beatles and Tom Petty:
my father loved Kraftwerk and the Police.
Their mutual mid-life crisis contained no alchemy
for their impending separation. What caprice
caused their bohemian downfall? What dogma
of church or state reasoned their resistance?
They were yet my heroes, my holy ayatollahs,
famous and sagacious as Newton's diffidence.
For a child of seven, they were worthy bastions;
then, life was young for all of us, and sanguine.

+++

Our yard at Poplar Drive was equally
capacious as the yard that came before;
meanwhile trust funds became increasingly
pernicious. On the porch I watched the rain pour,
stood under the narrow awning, ran from end
to end, first one way and then the other.
The broadcaster was saying "Let's emend
deficit spending." "Strong drink is a brawler
raucous as a caucus of republicans."
I bit into a carrot and remembered horses;
I imagined I was impoverished in a Brahman
universe. It was before my parent's divorce.
The kids across the street and I took life gratis.
and the future stretched like the interstate before us.

+++

We should not remain in one place or repress
our dreams. The road to freedom rests in reprieve.
Sometimes a girl, commanding as a prioress,
takes orders, and wears Dockers like a steve-
dore. Polish as a longshoreman, her piscine
day clothes and awareness sport a salty visage;
perhaps she fits into an evening dress porcine
as a sausage. In short, she's no naive ostrich.
She's left the fairy tales of her infancy behind;
and in apoplectic adolescence, the cadet
baby sister travels and so expands her mind.
All once wild children, we killed joy and wet
blankets, but weren't we good curmudgeons,
when we kicked our feet and reveled in high dudgeon?

+++

And in our sock feet, we skated through the halls;
our feet were even warmer in pajamas
with footies. Why were we crying? What dolls
did we care for or admire? The auras
of our inexperienced emotions, the mystique
and charisma of a doll's fitted clothing...
Sharing, at first, meant suffering moral critique,
our consciences cracked as an artist's crazing;
pliable as pottery, our hearts sought direction.
Our tasks at school in retrospect seem facile
but at the time brought fear and frustration;
too early, Sunday school taught us we were fallible.
But, in our resilience, we discovered heedlessness
and ran into the ruddy sunset, flushed and capricious.

“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle”
~Philo of Alexandria

As a child, how did cookies make you feel?
Vanilla Wafers were a communal
affair, but not to share like Peter Schlemiel,
not to sell our shadows to the Devil,
is another matter altogether.
Do we perceive ourselves as commonplace?
Let's take our part and sing like good cantors
Now you and I are looking for a bookcase.
knowledge has its limits, so also money,
power, honey, etc. But love is
endless, and our limits make us canny.
As children, every room seemed capacious.
Don't you remember that, in spite of the ego's censor,
Dominion, then, was a box of granulated sugar?

Aubergine

Architectonic ventures proved the fields
of our fathers who built burgs and bridges
before we knew the light of day. Repeals
in the Senate might cut down a distant copse,
but Virginians love their trees; a dogwood
is a man's best friend, and I have always admired
a cardinal. In a modest yard, my childhood
seemed to take shape. Tulips and crocus transpired
as spring gave way to grandmotherly picnics.
Born Janet Ameda MacDonald of Somerset,
my grandmother served deviled eggs, tomato aspic,
and toast. She kept her house like a pretty soubrette.
But whether or not her life had much romance
I may never know, only that she loved eggplants.

Painkiller

Arcana tarred and feathered under a somber ceiling knows
nirvana must be achieved through conscious feeling;
obelisks, years beyond their whys, obfuscate and objectify
disconsolate bedclothes and a mattress, waking wary sleepers' frowns.
Yammer, yammer, yammer, the loud hammer sings:
numerology is not present in the number of church bell rings;
equivocal music makes the medicine go down.

Blizzard

Baffled sound distinguishes each instrument.
Oblational as bread and wine, the symphony is offered up
Dalliance with obligatory matters has no place here.
Abiotic as a stone, the tone still is lively:
cabaret saxophone and trumpet indiscretion.
Ides have fallen mid-month and have suffered calculation.
Obligated to time and place are both: one to measure, one to once-
upon-a-time Rome. But there comes a time to take this concert home: to
sacrarium penates, to modern modem or cellular phone.

Bagatelle flurries left us in the first watch,
abject as the weather, we would venture out
laggardly snow snail; we trail along our paths.
Dal segno, the sound of a century repeats and we turn back,
ecosystems in place, to curbs and driveways. What were we
railing about with one another or is it still against fire?
Damascene inlay—a letter comes from my friend in Syria—
awe overtakes us. It doesn't make sense.
Sacred opposes secular in ancient song, in the
here and now. Suburbia. It doesn't make sense.

METUS EST PLENUS TYRANNIS

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown”

~Shakespeare

Caledonian orogeny
obliges tectonics.
Damask roses die by
Damocles’s sword.
Lacuna attempts to
evoke fear with fish.
Dander rises; and

crosshatch kettled
occludes tea parties.
Dandled, mild is
immolated nettle in a
fine fettle. Child’s
immunity exempts.
Cantilevers bridge.
Absinthe transforms.
Teetotalers resolve,
indigent inter se.
Opaque as their onus,
nihilists live in fear.

Inviolable Ingots

Dragons are deeper and more complete than you or I.
Existentialism proves this, our human lives
replete with the hemoglobin of beef and venison.
Insatiate, people are always wanting something.
Venomous orisons proffered up by reptiles, on the other hand,
atrophy the muscles of the unsuspecting.
Talons, like undealt cards, await blood.
In the shadows of Arcadia, claws clutch the branch of an ancient evergreen.
Vagaries of the weather, blow the creature volatile,
easterly or westerly, according to the wind, the sky

deeper than the deep blue sea. Only
existential acts of will will save you, and only
sometimes, if the beast be defiant; but if he be
cordial, let him bring down the rain and help us
answer ten thousand riddles.
New Ager beware: this fiend may be unlucky.
Tellurian, guard the earth and let gold abandoned be.

Open Sky Interstate

Ecstasy does not play into this road trip;
dank socks we left in the dryer. I
abjure this boredom, all part of the holiday rush.
Cabochon rubies were not on our shopping lists.
Idiographic details of scientific discovery seem
oblivious to this machinery and paved world.
ukase edicts seem closer (somehow) in all this snow.
Sacrilegiously, the crowds and season progress.

Ectomorphic, your body leans over the steering wheel;
danse macabre playing with your box of cigarettes.
Idiopathic conditions, their causes unknown, are my worst fear;
fabricated in my uterus, some reported growth I cannot see or feel,
idiosyncrasies of the health care system (are) still obscure.
(Cabotage does not concern us on this lengthy stretch of road.)
Ectopic abnormalities happen however, and we need doctors.

Christmas --2009

Fictitious Firmament

Fabulists were never reported to make great boyfriends,
idiot savaunts of romantic deception suave as a
cabriolet or convertible but unfaithful. The girl
tries another tack, changes her course in her quest for true love.
Idolatry of men will severely limit anyone, so
cacoethes impels her to rush away, to “throw caution to the wind.”
Idylls of the highway? Only in car commercials.
On the road to find out, she finds out the world, and a life beyond her own.
Sacristan, she returns to confession. The

façade of housing facing the open street is nothing to look at.
Idiom of architecture, vinyl siding, this narrow, cropped village
railroads neighbors into one another’s doorsteps.
Machinations crop up in her mind. She imagines her husband
at another woman’s door. Ablation began after the first snowfall;
machismo doesn’t cut it for her anymore. The snow melts.
Ecumenical tasks do provide a temporary distraction, but
nationalized theological doctrines don’t cut it for her either.
Tacky as wet paint, her heart sticks to the heart of her traveling husband.

Black Widow

Gravitational interaction, action and reaction, by natural
order and purpose, science tips religion: the wave lengths of
sound and light opposite on this gossamer planet, (address of insects.)
Semblance of silk and ruff or shroud, each web opposes gravity.
Arachnid, once anansi, as if you had hid all wisdom in a vegetable,
modiste and milliner of a tall shrub, pretty branch, or high corner,
equipoise of forces steadying each delicate costume apiece,
rid earth of every metaphor therein. You have outwitted us again,

Great Scot! You'd have us, were it not you were so easily outwitted in return.
Ruck crowd of flies beware, it's no wonder you've been so likely to scare us;
a very tailor you'd make, were it not for your venom, a veritable dressmaker.
Dowager, what property have you that you would not have had past your better half?
Ilk of the eight-legged, also, and ignominious, as though other arachnids had cast you off,
eidolon of evil, no spider-man, you've been cast from their race, a spinning contest,
nocturnal time-keeper; in such rubiginous hour, who doesn't need religion now?
Take your time, pest-killer. We'll keep you in our garden but only for mutual benefit.

Double Helix

Helix unfurled, unraveled into a line, corkscrew and staircase straightened,
evening draws nigh on Mt. Ranier, as if the weather could be any wetter.
Unreal in this surreal world, the mountain in the mind is bending, (like Dali.)
Rollicking hills wind up in spiral fashion, like the rim of the Van Gogh's cut ear.
Incensed by no lovely scent, but by his once favored doxy or his colleague, he
sloughs off the now dead skin as though the lobe could be reborn,
tears it from his body in an act of lunacy; or was it cut off in an untried brawl? If only
incense could sweeten that bloody smell. About what could the friends
converse from that point onward but maybe the converse lobe still held in tact?

Hope sinks beneath the weight of suffering; there is no way into the mountain, no
entrance except by runic lettering and moonlight, and the hero in his armor,
tears streaming down his cheek, faces the wind of the snow-covered peak,
entranced by its tentacles, mesmerized by the effects of at least one avalanche,
refuses to back down or leave the mystical rock before him, still flinching,
original sin neither entity nor object; there is no thought except victory,
number now that the foothills are so far south; the frostbitten wind pierces his skin,
yeti of a winter morning, abominable snowman; there is no mind of winter, only
minutes before the pilgrim—a minute pinprick on the edge of the universe—might die.

Idiomatic Indemnity

Igneous, this sapphire bracelet was born of fire, and
defeatist, I accept the mountain's future eruption,
ignoble ambitions relegating me to a sofa cushion.
Obloquy follows politicians, but we escape such recognition,
macho moments reserved for muscle men and comic book characters.
Ablutions of the morning, aftershave and Ivory,
take the place of heroic tactic. We watch TV.
Ignominious defeat does not enter in our morning ritual,
cache of hair product, unfolded socks and ties, and make-up mineral.

Ignominy might meet us yet, as we shuffle out to the mailbox.
Native American creeks have been obliterated by driveways.
Daub on a little bit of hair gel and brush your teeth.
Ecumenism, in the name of unity, will drag us out to church,
macro lens photos of our double day of rest make moments a little Kodak.
Nativism serves tradition and through such our interests. We go out--anywhere.
Ileum stages of breakfast or lunch will find us walking in the park.
Tact will find us yet and make us better men. Give us a
yeoman job, and a solid piece of work; (and we will go far.)

In Memoriam, Sir Walter

Jealous gods in their Roman attire
encircle him in their holy light;
jealousy wears its emerald crown,
unaccustomed to a darker sight;
neither gold nor silver will stay their power,
east of Eden, west of hour.

Jeune heroes find themselves detained by Circe's wild enticement,
and wiser ones follow fair Diana's virtuous advisement;
raging clouds run before the wind and come to naught;
grumbling and ghostly like false love they've left him;
Olympian heirs and heiresses foraging for their flock, so find the
nautically-bound bard, bent on leaving to seek new worlds for gold.

Joy, like a wounded vassal, has swum out past the breaker,
all for the unrequited, whose pulse grows daily weaker.
Ubiety waxing philosophical, sets the sailor at ten o'clock,
niveous banks that were a season, send rivers down a mountaintop.
Tears shed in secret are so, like a flood of sorrow and woe in spring.
Years beyond his prime and infancy of love find him in his dotage.

Jeremiads, long and plaintive, all that's bereft him, vie with eulogy,
elegy, and the lie that's left him. Ill-born, he finds himself,
unblessed and pathetic, now one who would be beheaded.
Destiny has bought him a cursed love only, though it were sweeter,
erring yet never erring, while it did last; cursed is he who embraces now a body
stranger, returned to dust, such scorn burnt to embers with the ashes his sorrow's lust.
Perjury was never his *modus operandi*, his vow, his name, beyond reproach.
Raleigh, death is proud, avenge not, fear not, the advance of death's wailing coach,
insomuch that you've been faithful and true, justice is sure to right you.
towers of treasure, and the milk of Gods was yours, while love was with you.

Angelic Cynthia never fails the sea.
Nighttime sailors seek a course by such brightness and the stars,
days are no less, though it may not be apparent.

Jesus and jellyfish could never have been seen to walk on water,
erstwhile heaven could not see to see.
Truer words could not have been
spoken. You are a poet of an silver
age. Though stabbed in your bravery your soul lives on; thus
moonlight beckons all of us to shuffle likewise on.

Argument

for S. P.

Katabatic, the cool air, drives the kite to a disappointing end,
anticlimactic as the desultory weather. Just now
the black rook does not wait for the sun's descent
arranging his feathers like a pack of cards;
but the seer stands and waits for a sign by sun and nascent moon;
apprehension rises at the spin of every star.
Tranquil is the black bird, who would overcharge us
if he had a mind toward money and, for its brilliance,
cheat us of a dime.

Kites would cheat us too if they had the time,
impolitic as fools, disintegrating in the rain.
Sage as fate, the wind moves, meaning nothing;
macabre as murder, the seer soothes, meaning
everything and nothing; but so do sophists avoid
torpidity and some hold stock in revelation.

Invective for a Star

Lurid colors versus lymph in
your imperfect nodes and limbs
rile bile but look lovely in theory.
Instead mark the pink-legged veery,
cinnamon and white of feather.

Love: the deadly nightshade weather,
unctuous eggplant, purple flower,
marigold rose, and azure amber,
ichor godly, blood celestial,
never-failing, thoughtful thistle,
alkaloids in every form. They
right you, wrong you, thus transform
you. Luminary, wake and send us.

Middlebrow Media

Macrocosmic, the pool table witnesses planets at war
 pocketed into the outer reaches.
Illuminati of such physical properties as are found of wood
 and green felt, the two young men gather that there will be a
dead reckoning. They come to a point where they agree
 amidst their parlance.
Dearth of competition makes the game
 a way to kill time while we wait for
laggard acquaintances.
 Then forcing our winter bodies into the January cold, we
effectuate ourselves, pulling open
 the door, putting one foot in front of the other.

Bagnios began innocently, were a means
 of cleanliness and were then adapted by the Turks.

Raison d'état overrides the medieval concept
 of one power through one universal emperor and pope;

obscenities of way are thus avoided
 through the agency of Richelieu.

wan as the lustrous sea,
 your smile today seems.

Macroeconomics is now overtaxing your brain,
 and interest rates squirrel around unreasonable
effete in our over refined artistic endeavors
 we can barely afford to pay the national debt much attention,
debacles such as the current financial crisis
 and the Great Depression.

Illusions of Friday night have given way to daylight
 and the football games of Saturday and Sunday.
Abolishers of the holiday overextended,
 we take down the lights and put the Christmas tree on the curb.

C-Span Senate

November 21, 2009

Naif, some American people, believe in some sudden panacea;

Obbligato lines of music decorate their melodies, while nurses

vaccinate a host of maladies. Late, late on Saturday night,

Ecdysiasts tantalize their audience,

lachrymose lovers, perhaps, who haven't got a lover.

Necessitous law-making, legislation must move us little.

Embargoes have been virtually banned.

Osseous materials stabilize skeletons, but the republic

implodes. All these things happen simultaneously, a

myriad of politicians talk about what needs to be done; the news

promulgates the new, most recent order.

Rookeries, breeding crows or seabirds, have little to do with it.

Erroneous goods make their way over the China sea on barges;

schlock toys created by monopolies and power-hungry investors.

Sciolists pretend to know but don't.

Inarticulate members of a committee confine themselves to notes.

Off price goods are getting the goods out.

(Nominalism wants to discuss objects and eliminate named universals.)

Inauspiciously, a distant bill is passed to improve the world.

Small businesses suffer. Birds do not consider business but soldiers.

Mordacious creatures bite and require the victim to find adequate health care.

Oppress Oratory

Objectivism tells us that there are things outside the mind.

Pace thinking or feeling, the solar system spins,
pachyderms have thick skin, and

radiographs screen body only (not spirit;)

Eclát, on the other hand, happens through desire, arrives in climax,

Saccharine wishes, peachy and porcelain in their dreams, ask
sacerdotal Americans to love blue jeans.

Objet d'art collectors must love what they buy.

Radiology feels like a cool gel, like

Abecedarian medicine, rudimentary now as an X-ray,

tabular as the table the patient sits

on. Even now

radioscopy calls to my body like a

yawing ship, and I trust my body to the nurse.

Ponderous Portfolio

Plausible pleas of the thrush and skylark
overshadow the purple Rhodora.
No froufrou frippery in architecture or language but
dress confronts this forest, elegant as
Emerson, the stark New England season,
Rhododendron, Silver Birch, and Alder Inquisition.
Ordinary man is beaten by a brave man in less than five minutes.
Urticate needles pontificate on the problem of pain,
such pain as men have need of.

Pulchritude needs no excuse, makes seeing worthwhile, while
oracular goat-people, woodland fauna, guile and beguile.

Redbirds brighten the forest come December,
twittering in the branches, the snow-wiser whistler.
Flora make themselves scarce, even the rose-rival Rhodora.
Offshoots wait for spring to spring and cannot compete with color.
Lucky power of the universe, every living presence equal,
invoke us to invoke them, or perhaps to praise;
or will we not rush inward?

Hound of the Baskervilles

Quagmire of a maniac, where the foot falls,
ubiety dictates that the übermenschen drown.
In a fitful rage he drowns, tweedy and woolen.
Xerox and xeric Xanadu, the villain vanishes,
ontological photocopy of a drier mystique.
Theological reprint of an ungodly mind!
In a stupor, he vanishes, lost to a lesser science,
criminal and depraved, a cruel doctor of magic.

Quizzically the glowing dog must lie
under the scrupulous waylay of the private eye.
Ignis fatuus, the phosphorescent moor did at one time
reconcile us to supernaturalism, until we discovered
empiricism.

Recursive Recension

Renaissance ideals and their universal men
exist for a certain while, but what we feel now we
cleave, splintering wood in a million pieces
until we cannot feel our own hands grinding an axe.
Redivivus, we feel our nerves reawaken,
scour the woodland scene for an out.
Life is ordinary and we cannot reach the stars.
Venus lies beyond us, battles it out with Mars,
exactng from him everything we thought was ours.

Real property is realpolitik and also
exists for a certain amount of time;
catastrophically, the earth's crust crumbles,
effects an irrevocable (or irreversible) change (and it is as if) the land,
nuit blanche, becomes sleepless.
Sapient owls have nothing to offer us;
intellecion thus battles with (us and our) imagination
on top of the world we are and have always been,
nefariously criminal to the end, and afraid to go.
(or leave home)

Estrous

Spring is sexy, a fling, a diamond ring.

Sap rises, pairs prize one another.

Tenable Terminology

Telekinesis pleases us in fiction;
earthbound as an ostrich, the human brain
nettles us into moving objects ordinarily (or manually).
Aspirants of divinity run after supernaturalism.
Brain death is still irreversible. We
limn the way we hover on this planet
eidetic mental images helping us along...

Torsioned wash cloths, dishtowels, dust rags...
emissaries of the household chores,
recondite and little known, they see only a few pairs of hands;
manual labor doesn't seem to fit the bill.
inertia may overtake us in our depression.
Nabobish folk may scold the poor and
obese men and women decline in health.
Lowbrow or highbrow, surely we must (do what we must to) make ends meet.
Onerous are our most difficult charges;
grudgingly we may remember what we came here for...
yellow dog yourself you common curmudgeon...do something
(and be creative.)

Utile University

Useful as carpets are and a downright many things,
thriftiness is better.

I need carpets in my life, however, (and find that)
lackluster furniture must be embellished,
embossed with the help of a cabinetmaker.

Uniqueness improves our lives in such a way that
nacre in-lay might just make someone's day.
Indigo inspiration fires us up,
vivifies the rim of a glazed vase,
electrifies the senses and the human brain. In short, it
revamps. I will I could figure it all out.

Sabbatical graces have been given to the stateliest of.
I have been granted something but it is not that.
Tabernacle dresses, rather, freedom of occupation?
Yes. And what's more? There will be time.

Variable

Vacillating as a tulip poplar in spring, and each green striped poppy
abdicating its throne in the balmy wind, the
raconteur switches his voice back and forth, from
ictus to a weaker beat perforce, his
abdomen a concourse of pipes and cords, expounding breezy syllables.
“Babism is nothing but a country and a gate,” he says,
“Lachesis’s measure nothing if it is not fate, loved only by an
echelon of a society so high it was killed by its own velleity.”

Free Thought

Wadis whiten the national park, a Middle Eastern
icon of well water run dry in an era sans wells.
Labile minds can't make them up in this desert
labyrinth of world-bought religion and rock.
Oaths of solemn allegiance to the gods wane
tabescent in this (one) place brought under scrutiny
habeas corpus, this body of land and cursed pilgrimage
ebullient haji have made—happy in the wake of
wafted incense and short-lived freedom.
Iconic figures line the limestone halls which some
sabotage in their fervor and devoted fury.
Pablum, though cheap entertainment, has little competition.

Wagnerian as a leitmotif, (in this archaic city,)
obdurate as the Dome of the Rock, every imam's
obelus is a doubtful dagger and questions origin.
Lacerated pages of sacred texts are carried by the wind;
gadflies of the Holy Mount are causing quarrels.
Abbreviated footnotes would seem to save time like
tablatures that respond to lute strings,
habiliments of a theoretical, artificial sign system.
Eccentricity of phrase and motive are thus
represented to match our real emotions.
Iconoclasts shatter images and have a Puritan mind.
Naïve as plaster, they look sweet but have no perspective,
gaffe as an upturned glass and dafter.

Dry Copy

Xanthippe, proverbial as a shrew, legend has it,
earthily directed missives at her partner.
Rabbinical law could not be more severe,
if one were to compare. Surely had Socrates a great
cabal, we would not have seen the end of it.

Xeric Xerox of an earlier time, we now
each earthbound as an astronaut returning home,
rabidly support his speculations. Paying
obeisance to an ancient manuscript and stars, electrically charged as a
xerographic printer, we drift in a land of atoms.

Why

Yarmulked men are climbing up a mountain.
Abated by the stunted pines, the heat is lessened.
Racked with the guilt of an age, the men approach the
ebbing tide and make their way along the sea.

Yang prophecies lead them onward toward Jerusalem.
Ebon shadows cast from clouds shield them from the sun.
Abattoir remembrances make them more vegetarian.
Racketeers give them a bad rap, but they persevere; these
Labial utterances of sacred text are unaware of
ichthyological findings' war with
naiades, whose roots prefer their ocean undisturbed,
gabled underwater architecture of the sheltered sea world.

Z

Zaftig as a full-figured woman, the apple
abases itself in a thousand ways. The
nadir of our horizons is interrupted by a branch, and
yahoos of a country preserve it for themselves.
Zeniths, however, reach above them, whether from
Eastern coast or continental apple, a revolution.
Ubiquitarian as a Lutheran, the man in
gabardine bites, swallows the pulp down. He eats to avoid
maceration and the doctor. The universal vegetable is
abashed and blushes at us the world over thus.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Laura Close was born in Fairfax, VA. She received a Bachelor's degree from Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Arts from George Mason University and has now completed a thesis in Poetry in the MFA Program also at George Mason. Having held teaching positions at Northern Virginia Community College and several local schools, she is lecturing at a nearby institute that specializes in Information Technology.