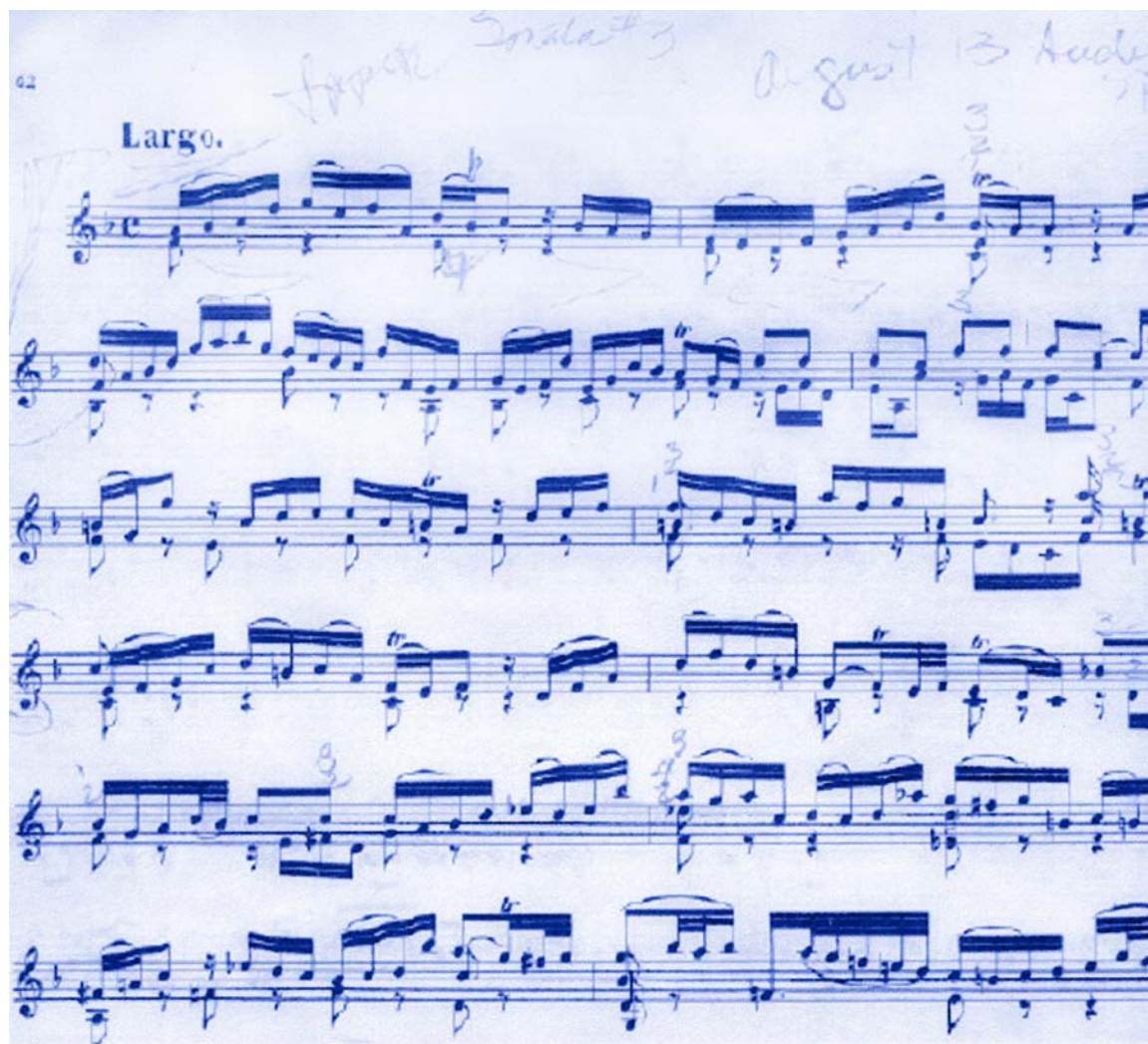


## ***Music Volleys Through***



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*And I could not help thinking  
of the wonders of the brain that  
hears that music and of our  
skill sometimes to record it.*

*- William Carlos Williams  
from "The Desert Music"*

## **Bach's *Arioso***

A promenade, a procession  
in the sensation rather than the  
sense of the word. No model  
strut, no posturing; instead  
the stately walk of a couple  
comfortable within themselves  
& with their environment as, on  
this warm evening, they move  
down a corridor where large  
gilt-framed paintings alternate  
with open windows. In both  
the paintings & the windows  
other couples can be seen -  
the same poise, a similar style of  
dress across a range of colours.

The effect is harmonious, though  
there is an edge of eeriness  
to it, as if painted by one of the  
Belgian surrealists but set  
in late afternoon rather than  
under cold moonlight & amongst  
elegance instead of ruins. Then

the music shifts to a different  
key & the aspect changes, is now  
aligned on a diagonal axis where  
previously it was straight up & across.  
Continues, until the cello surfaces  
at a slight angle, returning

the focus to the first couple,  
restoring the original alignment &  
underscoring with its resonance  
the surprising emotional content  
of such a structured recitation.

**- Mark Young**

## **A Biographical Detail Nobody Counted On**

Dmitri Shostakovich  
oblong in shape  
bespectacled  
sits at the piano  
small hands  
lapping like waves  
along the keyboard.

*Vodka or tea? I ask  
caviar or kahawai?*

Instead he tells my daughter  
all about Vladimir Mayakovsky  
how to say Vladimir Mayakovsky  
spell Mayakovsky.

In town it seems natural  
to walk  
down Vulcan Lane  
with a dead composer

who nobody recognises  
cadaverous in his suit  
of many dark greys  
as if it's lunchtime in Moscow.

We find a table in Juno's  
*White bread or black? I ask.*

A piano normally nocturnal  
plays quietly  
centre stage.

**- Iain Britton**

**To M.M.**

Not even Maelzel  
can direct these fingers  
to play in time.

No musical door  
was ever opened by  
keys in my hand.

Signatures  
are slashed like  
K-Mart's blue light specials,

meters cheated  
of precious beats.  
Inability to grasp rhythm

causes me to turn  
Bach's fugues into jitterbugs,  
type out business letters

with half-note nails  
reminiscent of scratches  
in Beethoven recordings.

No patient metronome  
can pound innate  
untimeliness to submission,

much less teach the wisdom  
of distinguishing eighth notes  
from demisemiquavers.

**- Arlene Ang**

## Death with a Pipe in the Living Room

All morning I kept him at bay.

With him preoccupied,  
I worked according to plan,  
busied myself with mundane details  
until pencil wore away and notes  
were etched with knuckle bone.

By noon Bohemian Scandal burnished the living room.  
Marquis de Sauval wafted Armagnac XO, but  
I attributed the presence to last night's tango.

It was then that the Europeans came.  
Undecided Shostakovich held sleeping pills,  
played that damn Eighth Quartet suicide note.  
Tchaikovsky pressed arsenic into my palm  
with a wink and flip of hair. Mahler lectured  
on fate as my beloved Schumann advocated  
accurate speed to avoid notorious decline in asylums.

A resigned Beethoven wore a cloak of C minor  
while he spread feces on my walls.

His nephew,  
Carl Maria,  
brought the gun.

The room smoldered pipe fumes, thick  
with musicians: wild-eyed Berlioz,  
Clark, Warlock, Zimmerman;  
petite Hugo Wolf played in the corner  
singing of mice.

When Charlie Parker and Cobain—  
still in bloody Converse—arrived,  
I excused myself and found him waiting  
in Louis XIV's chair.  
Tendrils of pipe vapor wrapped  
his seductive grin, veiled  
the midnight in his hair.

"I can't sit at a desk in a roomful  
of suicidal composers,"  
I told Him.



"Of course you can't,"  
He purred and pulled me close.

I cuddled in his lap,  
comforted by counting  
138 deadly pills  
and 42 razor blades,

wondering if,  
when I got there,  
he'd introduce me  
to the writers.

- *Ella McCrystle*

*Sleep, child, lie quiet, let be:  
Now like a still wind, a great tree,  
Night upon this city moves  
Like leaves, our hungers and our loves.  
Sleep, rest easy, while you may.  
Soon it is day.*

*- James Agee, "A Lullaby"*

### **Early April: War Funeral In The Midwest**

The blue shroud trimming his shiny coffin  
and your black dress are brushed by a spring breeze  
that finds your eyes downcast like Andromache,  
when she saw the future of her city  
dragged behind a chariot of madness.

Some other headstone in the field reads 'Bach',  
but no one thinks of Leipzig cantatas  
distilling an incoherence of tears  
when stock futures are up, oil prices down,  
and cities we conquered drift with snipers.

**- *Jeffrey Alfier***

## **Altered State**

The curving serpent stretches its  
grip around steel and glass  
late night flashes glaring eyes  
in moonless preoccupation on those  
anxious to get home  
a typical Tuesday night; children in bed  
homework finished late shows blare  
in bedrooms  
another robbery on Greenville Avenue.  
Running late, choral rehearsal over  
surrounded by monolithic concrete  
soldiers with arms outstretched  
used car lots  
fast food  
another construction site ahead  
state workers on overtime  
a red sea of brake lights ahead  
old black truck parked askew  
a gray car is on the shoulder  
a colorless woman lies on the pavement  
faceless man is on a cell phone  
in the shadows  
a child sleeps in a car seat  
there is no breeze  
poles of mercury vapor stare  
down at twisted metal and diamond  
reflections on black velvet  
a patrol car pulls up, the truck driver has  
head injuries, the woman is dead  
traffic lights overhead turn to drab  
green and cars proceed  
through autumn  
Halloween is three days away and  
the notes of Verdi's Requiem  
still linger in my brain.

**- Kathleen Gardner**

### **Variations for a Convalescent**

Hush.

Moths fly past the windows  
and tap their furry wings  
against the wavering.

These moths are all there is  
of soft days sliding.

Hush  
the lullaby,  
hush  
the dust,  
hush  
the memory.

These days are all there is  
of soft mouths crying.

Wings flap past the windows  
and beat against the wavering  
of your dust, your lullaby.

Hush.

**- Sojourner Hodges**

### **In the Shower**

Through the glass door  
all foggy in its metal frame  
I can see the barest of outlines  
in this bright bathroom  
as through my father's heavy glasses  
on a humid day

but here I am within the walls  
within the walls within the walls  
of this bright bathroom  
this sterile bathroom

and through the running water  
hot upon me  
I faintly hear my father  
playing snatches of this and that  
random chords and random melodies  
lurching forth from the great black piano  
downstairs

*Mama's, Mama's kneading dough,  
in and out her knuckles go*

and lo, the beauty of my arms  
my warm wet arms  
in the steam.

**- Sojourner Hodges**

*If to serenade almost to man  
Is to miss, by that, things as they are,*

*Say that it is the serenade  
of a man that plays a blue guitar.*

*- Wallace Stevens  
from "The Man with the Blue Guitar"*

## Just Jazz

*For: John Pizzarelli — seven-string guitar  
Ray Kennedy — piano  
Martin Pizzarelli — double bass*

Seven-string guitar speaks syllables  
in keys even ecstasy couldn't conceivably  
conceive.

My imagination staggers under the  
virtuoso extravaganza of this  
trio,  
but it can't ignite and take fire,  
can't soar,  
refuses to climb down  
from its cruciform position on  
time's crucifix,  
For fear that someone in this lounge  
will recognize my stigmata  
And try to stop me for  
impersonating God's  
illegitimate child.

So, I let my bones continue to groan  
under the weight of these  
notes, coming swift and clear  
off strings struck by fingers and hammers,  
off guitar, double bass, and piano.

Suddenly, every person in this electric place  
turns into a burning bush,  
as though each spirit were a  
biblical oracle. . . .

When I look up from the napkin,  
Whose whiteness I've violated with my black ink,  
thinking has evaporated into the  
smoky air,  
and I realize that the stars  
have swallowed me in pure sound. . . .

Flat foot floogie with the floy floy  
flies right by me,  
without so much as a blink of my eyelid.  
It's as though whatever chord is struck, soaring,  
is still stuck in the end of my penpoint,  
the one instrument I depend on for my musical scores,  
those pieces that swirl up out of the metaphors  
that absorb me when I'm  
getting my kicks on Route 66.



Inexorably, finally, all the standards,  
as well as those eclectic, electrical eccentricities  
these musicians compose as they go along,  
reach the core of my brain  
and, like bees  
swarming around the comb of Heaven's hive,  
deposit all their liquid gold,  
until, like lava-flow,

It covers me over in mellifluous deliquescence.  
Could death and resurrection possibly be any sweeter  
than this dissolution by jazz?  
I ask myself if exiting with such a send-off  
could get any better  
even if I were the archangel Raphael —  
surely one of Elohim's sentimental favorites.

So now, in the hour when every essential cell of my being  
enters the slipstream on which all overtones escape  
into the invisible, ineffable Silence —  
"Go notes! Go bones! You'll never be alone!  
My soul is following close behind."

- *Louis Daniel Brodsky*

## **Just Past August**

*in memory of Betty Carter*

Driving beneath what's left of Sandburg's  
overarching elms and fabulous elms,  
memories of elms—

You bend sound into a pretzel-paradox  
of bitter sweetness, of time and essence, these pre-  
cious mo-ments, September Song.

This life is passing through  
our fingertips—this light, quintessence  
of September, this dark greenness.

Not fall, not yet autumnal—just past August.

Then I remove my sunglasses. I am a fool.

**- Jim McCurry**

## **A Mess of Shadows in the Dragon Night**

Rinpoche dead, Trungpa  
passed on—Krishnamurti, too ...

I have such questions to ask them:  
Where is the unborn self of my gone dog?

Pat him on the head  
gently for me, will you?

Lost in the fire-wheeling night  
I wander, friends missing,

the River Walk under the streets  
of San Antone. I enter

a red plush velvet bar  
and there sits the late Paul Desmond

and his angelic Beatrice smiling  
in seemly recognition.

We strike up a gracious  
and engaging conversation.

Each one takes my hand.  
Each takes an instrument—

Paul, his saxophone,  
Beatrice singing,

and I can play piano—  
as flawlessly virtuosic as

Brubeck, or the Duke,  
without reading.

And that is how I know  
we are all dreaming.

Soon the sun will wake  
and lift us.

Let us hold hands  
and wait.

**- Jim McCurry**

## Now's The Time

*when I was so young and had so much to learn.*  
- Miles Davis: The Autobiography

The reed of Charlie Parker's sax squeaks from the car cassette player as I drive down the motorway towards the city. It is a Miles Davis compilation, his early work, old 78s that have been "digitally remastered"; & this the oldest track on the album, *Now's the Time*, by Charlie Parker's *Ree Boppers*. Caught up by the rhythm of it, my thoughts move in a different direction to the one in which I am driving. Away from the exam I am about to sit, where I will be expected to display my erudition by writing page after page on management processes & systems, & measuring that supposed exposition of knowledge against the ability of these musicians to express so much in three minutes. I am thinking of the friend who ended a letter with an apology for its length, regretting that she did not have the time to make it short. Of Borges whose *Ficciones* each compressed into a few pages what most others would take volumes to express. & of the Japanese black-ink painters who let the viewer's heart fill in the outlines. Then the toll booth brings me back to the now of it. Parker drops in a phrase from *Willow, weep for me* just as I drop my dollar fifty into the basket; & as I drive out the other side we separate. The musicians are back on 52nd Street creating history with their pre-vinyl haiku as I merge with the traffic flow again, an indistinguishable part of what my textbooks describe as an infinite population whose arrival at the toll gates followed a Poisson probability distribution, & whose service times were exponentially distributed.

*But what it says is that our youth has gone.*  
- Amiri Baraka: When Miles Split

- *Mark Young*

*Crystal harbour vale  
Where the sea cobbles sail,  
And wharves of water where the walls dance  
and the white cranes stilt*

*- Dylan Thomas  
from "Over Sir John's Hill"*

### **Pipe Dreams**

I misheard lyrics playing on the stereo  
when I was waiting for mascara to dry.  
It emphasized the luminous shine of  
wanting you because all afternoon  
I'd fantasized about what we could do  
with soft leather. If this is less controlled  
than craving a Moroccan market place  
where women wear black and men  
escape to pray every Friday, I'd say  
desire could be the tantalizing lower lip  
on the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea.

**- *Alison Eastley***

## Two Musical Variations

### 1°) Pietro's Music

I  
Pietro's  
music  
is a hysteria of loneliness.

In fact  
he lives among thorns  
of unceasing tension  
like a chronic  
and terminal fakir.

Because of this  
he sings  
sad music  
in the intimacy  
(- What time is it?  
- Six o'death!)  
of darkness and evening.

With lisping rhythm  
from the mouth of the singer  
notes migrate in air  
and seem almost, I'd say...  
electrons!  
apoplectic electrons,  
if not sigils  
of dactylic manias.

II  
Like fine dust  
of walled pain on the cross  
amphibious melodies radiate  
between dream and rebellion.

In fact Pietro  
is a hysteria of loneliness.  
Which then writes  
sad music  
in the intimacy  
(- What time is it?  
- Six o'death!)  
of darkness and evening.

Along the staff  
eighth notes  
are like faltering vibrios  
of undecided war...

allocated to demonstrate  
the geocentricity  
of remorse and fear.

## 2°) Satan's Music

Satan's  
music  
is a hysteria of loneliness.

For his orchestra of ogres,  
he writes  
compositions and thinks  
intimately  
of darkness and death.

Then  
when the concert begins  
like  
apoplectic electrons  
notes migrate in tight air;  
like sigils  
of dactylic manias,  
amphibious between joy and Evil.

Meanwhile  
along the staff  
eighth notes quiver;  
as penetrating  
quarter notes mimic  
petrifying wounds  
impetuous gashes  
blinding infections

allocated to demonstrate  
the geocentricity  
of remorse and pain.

**- *Pietro Pancamo***

*(translated from the Italian by Arlene Ang)*



## **Instructions for Recalcitrant Patients**

*Are you having a seizure?*

I'm recovering from a spider bite  
by embracing the tarantella; a low dance  
in which I turn on my heels, snap my fingers and shuffle.

*Do you know where you are?*

During earthquakes, I cradle my violin  
and regard the migration  
of sea-birds.

*What is your name?*

When Saint Dymphna was fifteen,  
her father drew his sword and cut off her head.  
Let us be inspired by her example  
and comforted by her merciful help.  
Amen.

*What am I holding?* (Hold up a common object such as a comb or watch.)

The ocean squalls down my chimney.  
The power is out, my house cresting on its timbre.  
I eat a jellyfish; swallow brine and chew,  
a stinging sensation on my tongue.

*Hold your arms straight out in front of you and squeeze my hand.*

Will you remember, Rebecca, the way you rocked  
in your chair when you played Schumann, the Rhein  
covered in oil, burning?

**- Rebecca Loudon**

### **The Cellist Cut Her Hair**

She moved to the country to raise goats.  
Now she practices in the piggery,

mute on the bridge to muffle the tone.  
Her baby squeals in a wicker basket,

drowning out Poulenc, Britten, Sebastian  
Bach pounding away at his organ,

children plucking his sleeve, shoe buckle,  
rotting lace at the back of his wig.

Anna Magdalena whispers in the kitchen.  
Everything is powdered

and reeks of dust. Turnips and parsnips  
poke their noses into the earth.

Once, before a concert, she threw a cup of snow  
at a window of the Rudolfinum in Prague.

In the evening she milks, hums a hornpipe,  
knuckles swollen round as radishes.

**- Rebecca Loudon**

## **A Minor**

A nother light-haired beauty  
smushing thirty six notes  
the white cat who  
while she stands  
is cartoonmean and big  
a glorious eternal neck  
their tender skulls  
what is re  
erating  
perverts  
she says warm prisoners  
so gently out of our way  
cloudborn and flat  
the strings aren't  
right chronic pain  
wholly different

thigh-blue flow and cheese  
her broad bottom  
holds down the pedal  
to pour pepsi  
the piano-pitch black  
take these clothbound hammers  
and cancer spines  
verb  
yes the plastic cup  
the pepsi's integrity blah  
blow steel bars  
a dandy lion seed  
the cat is dead  
you asked me to describe?  
god something

**- Nathan Parker**

**Port na bPucaí**  
(music of the fairies)

perhaps it was the song  
of a seal or whale  
somehow escaping  
from the surging breakers  
against the rocky beaches

whether it was the music  
of fairies or not  
it was of the earth  
and swarmed  
in the Blasket fiddler's head -  
the music swelled  
like a thousand year growth  
of orchids on bog moss  
suddenly blossoming

and that is why he bundled  
the notes  
like thatch  
and went to his fiddle like a trimmer  
shaping the sounds  
into the voices he heard  
that day he sailed  
around the Blasket Islands

and when he finally found his way  
to County Kerry  
his bow and fingers  
barbed into the enchanted music  
he walked the country roads

and when he played  
the farmers sang with the cows  
and the peat cutters  
danced with their tools

and the cabbages  
and potatoes and turnips bloated  
and the grassy hills swayed  
as if underwater

and in the fabled cromlech  
of Morigu  
old stones stood up  
and flew away as crows

and the bogs lit up like moons

**- Michael Spring**

*Good creatures, do you love your lives  
And have you ears for sense?  
Here is a knife like other knives,  
That cost me eighteen pence.*

*- A. E. Housman  
from XXVI, More Poems*

## Magic

Some things are magical. Like hitting a baseball on the “sweet spot” of the bat without stinging your hands, or playing the piano after a tuner has reset the temperament. Each is perfect in its symmetry and unique in its expression, though I produced more game winning home runs in my field of dreams than tonal ecstasy on our old family upright

My first piano teacher jammed a yardstick down the back of my shirt to emphasize good posture, and the next one had me practice endless scales to correct a flawed technique that had, nonetheless, won me high school popularity. I preferred to be Mickey Mantle at bat in the bottom of the 9th with the score tied, or Van Cliburn conquering Moscow in the 1958 Tchaikovsky competition. No baseball coach or piano teacher could dilute that magic with the monotony of practice!

Ted Williams was a natural hitter just as Vladimir Horowitz was a gifted musician, masters of their crafts through a combination of primal force and long, hard practice. To crush a Nolan Ryan fastball, or master a Scriabin etude, is to feel the magic of the “sweet spot” and “tonal ecstasy” from a lifetime of work and dedication.

Then along comes a Russian boy named Evgeney Kissin who, at 12 years of age, conquered the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory in a recorded concert with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra in 1984. With a child’s hands gliding effortlessly over the keyboard, slender fingers poised like tarantula legs, he sailed through both Chopin piano concertos, as well as 3 solo encores, with power and finesse, capturing the lyric passion and tonal poetry of compositions well beyond his tender years. Occasionally glancing at conductor Dmitri Kitaenko, that frail, approval-seeking kid was otherwise lost in the music, rocking back and forth to his own rhythm.

I once snuck into the basement of a music store to catch John Browning practice for an upcoming performance of Ravel’s left handed piano concerto. Another time I watched Byron Janis warm up backstage for his then signature piece—Prokofiev’s 3rd. Both of those experiences ranked alongside standing near the batting cage before a game between the Yankees and Red Sox in New York. The Mick and Teddy Ballgame, in mortal combat, center stage, screaming line drives off the “sweet spot.” The ultimate blend of talent and work. Magic.

I’m not so sure about young Evgeney Kissin. Perhaps someone just harnessed a mysterious gift with patient guidance, cultivating a youthful abundance of creative expression by direction and practice. But I’m certain no one ever jammed a yardstick down the back of his shirt.

**- Martin Hendrickson**

### **Neighborhood Song For The Say, Hey Kid**

Say, hey! Willie Mays.  
That colored can  
fly! He jumps and  
the ball is a  
magnet for his glove. A swing  
smooth as the moon  
coming over the mountain. And  
run? His feet can  
out-drum Buddy Rich.  
And all with that  
grin on his face. Say,  
hey, Willie. Flew  
in here like an oriole  
passing through. And  
didn't he  
sing? Spring of  
'51, Minne-  
apolis Millers: you can  
look it up. Just a short  
gig—not his nesting  
ground. But he left a  
flash of gold and a  
snatch of sweet  
jazz behind. Say  
hey, kid, say hey!

**- Rita Moe**

*Release, —dismiss the passion from your arms,  
More real than life, the gestures you have spun  
Haunt the blank stage with lingering alarms,  
Though silent as your sandals, danced undone.*

*- Hart Crane, from "To Potapovtich"*



### **Main Street Gallery**

Months after it closed, I met the artist  
and wondered if I'd ever tell him  
how, when I walked past the window some nights  
I could hear his yellows trumpet from the walls, feel drums pulsing cadmium red,

but what drew me away was the light,  
how it slipped, skipped,  
stretched like long silken dancer's legs,  
wrapped around the ribbons of his hardwood floor

and how I wanted to strip just as bare, lay  
skin to skin, tongue in groove, blonde on blonde  
breathing tiny pine atoms, splayed white, whole, and soft  
against its lacquered, inviolate thigh.

**- Sharon M. Taylor**

## **Polaroids**

This is me  
Sitting perfectly still  
Listening to the ticking of the clock  
Killing time.

This is me  
Not listening to the Ramones  
Just switching CDs endlessly not really listening  
to anything.

This is me  
Not on the phone  
To anyone.

This is me  
Not reading  
Anything.

This is me  
Wandering about aimlessly  
Upstairs downstairs bathroom lounge  
And back again.

This is me  
Watering plants that don't need water  
Picking away tiny brown leaves  
Decomposing.

This is me  
Staring mindlessly blank-eyed at whatever  
This is me  
when I'm missing you.

**- E.J. Stone**

### **Bar Band Blues**

Playing to another empty bar--  
better than last night's closed faces.

Except time waits.

Her voice melts into mine—  
no longer the bright gold of new brass,  
but mellow pink aged with care.

A sweaty spider of hair clings  
to the back of her neck,  
smoke wet scent of nights long ago  
when her fire blistered my skin.

I could pull her to me,  
the stage is the same  
but her eyes won't hold.

Later I'll unplug my Flying V  
and pack the van  
without a word passing between us.

Climb into my cool linen bed  
another time without her.

**- Wilma Dague**

### **Why Trumpet Solos Make Me Cry**

I am a worm on July sidewalk,  
on the s edge of disintegration.  
I would cut off my right breast  
to be other.

But I have no lark in my throat.  
My words are brittle,  
radio static/dripping water  
empty pipes howling in dead winter.

(Witness the smirks of co-workers  
when I hum Pachelbel.)

My fingers trip against ivory,  
stumble resounding anguish.  
Every note I touch turns to rust.

Always a beat behind, I watch others  
clap so I know when.  
Only my heart knows the beat.

Feet so hesitant to dance  
in the face of laughter  
but my will to, stronger.  
Still, no swans.

Hollow. Bitter  
battery acid and dry.  
Dry as Indian bones  
buried for centuries.

**- Wilma Dague**

## **What I Know About Time**

To have been together through disco  
and then to fall asleep  
together on a rainy night  
behind a rainy window  
at some New Year in the nineties—  
that would have been an act of love.  
Having missed disco, I wander  
through your house

where no two clocks show  
the same time; they lose me  
between the rooms,  
as if I'm shaking  
time from my shoulders  
like a towel at the beach.  
Except every room is water,  
deeper in every direction.

**- Heather K. Dooley**

### **Out to Dinner**

Venus, or some bright star, moves  
among grayish streaks of cloud  
just after sunset as we sit  
in our economy two-door, radio on,  
crunching quesadillas and tacos  
and sipping cold root beer  
while birds and buoys float  
far enough away, given the dusk,  
that we can't say which are which  
until the birds lift their bodies  
and fly, parallel to the Sound, moving  
opposite its pull toward our shore.

**- Amanda Laughtland**

*O listen -----*

*the cones, raining down upon you  
abundantly, ceaselessly,  
without mercy*

*- Paavo Haavikko  
from "A Flower Song"*

*(translated by Anselm Hollo)*

## **Una Mosca Muerte**

### **I. Fondo**

They are shouting,  
"Jamàs! Jamàs!"  
They are florid under red/green  
fluorescence,  
As the Madonna of Seville  
drifts through the streets,  
god of the horrified, god of  
the chaste, crying less for the  
reeking filth of her people than for  
her own open mouth, blood-drenched tulip held skyward  
in perpetual death-rattle.

### **II. Un ritmo corto**

They are dancing la bamba  
despite all expectations.  
In the shadow of mountains,  
Great miscolored mountains,  
Despite all expectations,  
They are dancing lambada.

In a sea of  
carrion and wanton,  
by the shores of the Atlantic  
they are forging a separation  
born of infected womb.

### **III. Una mosca muerte**

It is the Irony Epic,  
The apex of irony,  
It is la mañana de la boda  
(do you listen Mr. Lorca)  
It is día de la moria.  
Tapa mi copa.

### **IV. Elogio**

He spun in his grave  
like a jet turbine,  
but we couldn't see  
because the world spun also.

**- Max Socol**



## **convertices**

*You who are on the road*

Pace    Centimeters, 76.2

Paces, Chains(Gunter's), 0.03788

Paces, Chains(Ramden's), 0.025

Paces, Feet,    2.5

Paces, Hands, 7.5

Paces, Inches, 30

Paces, Ropes (Brit), 0.125

*Must have a code that you can live by*

Inches, Centimeters, 2.54

Meters, Centimeters, 100

Miles, Feet, 5280

Feet, Inches, 12

Quarts, Cups, 4

*And so become yourself*

Palms, Centimeters, 7.62

Palms, Chains(Ramden's), 0.0025

Palms, Cubits, 0.16667

Palms, Feet,    0.25

Palms, Hands, 0.75

Palms, Inches, 3

*Because the past is just a good-bye.*

Palmi (Ancient Rome), Inches, 2.9

Palmi (Ancient Rome), Pes, 0.25

Passus (Ancient Rome), Feet, 4.86

Passus (Ancient Rome), Pes, 5

Passus (Ancient Rome), Stadium, 0.008

Pes (Ancient Rome), Inches, 11.7

Pes (Ancient Rome), Palmi, 4

Pes (Ancient Rome), Passus, 0.2

Pes (Ancient Rome), Inches, 11.7

Pes (Ancient Rome), Palmi, 4

Pes (Ancient Rome), Passus, 0.2

*Teach your children well,*

Parts/billion, Milligrams/metric ton, 0.90909  
Parts/billion, Grains/gal (Brit), 0.070155  
Parts/billion, Grains/gal (US), 0.05842  
Parts/billion, Grams/liter, 0.001  
Parts/billion, Grams/ton (Met), 1  
Parts/billion, Milligrams/liter, 1  
Parts/billion, Ounces (troy)/ton (S), 0.0292  
Parts/billion, Percent, 0.0001  
Parts/billion, Pounds/million gal, 8.245

*Their father's hell did slowly go by,*

Parsecs, Kilometers,  $3.084 \times 10^{13}$   
Parsecs, Miles (statute),  $1.916 \times 10^{13}$

*And feed them on your dreams*

Phots, Foot-candles, 929.03  
Phots, Lumens/sq cm, 1  
Phots, Lumens/sq meter, 10000  
Phots, Lux, 10000

*The one they pick, the one you'll know by.*

Pints (Brit), Cu cm, 568.261  
Pints (Brit), Gallons (Brit), 0.125  
Pints (Brit), Gills (Brit), 4  
Pints (Brit), Gills (US), 4.8038  
Pints (Brit), Liters, 0.5682  
Pints (Brit), Minims, 9600  
Pints (Brit), Ounces (Brit, flu), 20  
Pints (Brit), Pints (US, dry), 1.03206  
Pints (Brit), Pints (US, liq), 1.2009  
Pints (Brit), Quarts (Brit), 0.5  
Pints (Brit), Scruples (Brit, flu), 480  
Pints (Brit), Pints (US, dry), 0.0156  
Pints (Brit), Cu cm, 550.61  
Pints (Brit), Cu inches, 33.6003  
Pints (Brit), Gallons (US, dry), 0.125  
Pints (Brit), Liters, 0.5506  
Pints (Brit), Pecks (US), 0.625  
Pints (Brit), Pints (US, liq), 1.1636  
Pints (Brit), Quarts (US, dry), 0.5

*Don't you ever ask them why,*

Points (printing), Centimeters, 0.0351

*if they told you,*

Picas (printing), Centimeters, 0.42175  
Picas (printing), Points, 12

*you will cry*

Pints (US, liq), Cu cm, 473.176  
Pints (US, liq), Cu feet, 0.01671  
Pints (US, liq), Cu inches, 28.875  
Pints (US, liq), Cu yards, 0.000619  
Pints (US, liq), Cups, 2  
Pints (US, liq), Drams (US, flu), 128  
Pints (US, liq), Fifths, 0.625  
Pints (US, liq), Gallons (US, liq), 0.125  
Pints (US, liq), Gills (US), 4  
Pints (US, liq), Jiggers, 24  
Pints (US, liq), Liters, 0.47316  
Pints (US, liq), Milliliters, 473.163  
Pints (US, liq), Minims (US), 7680  
Pints (US, liq), Ounces (US, flu), 16  
Pints (US, liq), Pints (Brit), 0.8327  
Pints (US, liq), Pints (US, dry), 0.85937  
Pints (US, liq), Ponys, 48  
Pints (US, liq), Quarts (US, liq), 0.5  
Pints (US, liq), Shots, 16  
Pints (US, liq), Teaspoons, 96  
Pints (US, liq), Tablespoons, 32

*So just look at them and sigh*

Pennyweights, Drams (apoth or troy), 0.4  
Pennyweights, Drams (avdp), 0.87771  
Pennyweights, Grains, 24  
Pennyweights, Grams, 1.55517  
Pennyweights, Ounces (apoth or troy), 0.05  
Pennyweights, Ounces (avdp), 0.05486  
Pennyweights, Pounds (apoth or troy), 0.00417  
Pennyweights, Pounds (advp), 0.003429

*and know they love you.*

*And you, of tender years,*

Ponys, Fifths 0.013  
Ponys, Jiggers, 0.5  
Ponys, Ounces (US, fluid), 0.75  
Ponys, Pints, 0.0208  
Ponys, Shots, 0.75

*Can't know the fears that your elders grew by,*

Petrograd standard, Cu feet, 165

Poud (Russia), Pounds, 36.113

Pu (China), Inches, 70.5

*And so please help them with your youth,*

Puncheons (Brit), Cu meters, 0.31797

Puncheons (Brit), Gallons (Brit), 69.9447

Puncheons (Brit), Gallons (US), 84

*They seek the truth*

Perches, Cu feet, 24.75

*before they can*

*die.*

*Teach your parents well,*

Pipe (English, wine), Gallons, 105

Pipe (English, wine), Liters, 477.34

*Their children's hell will slowly go by,*

Poise-cu cm/gram, Sq cm/sec, 1

Poise-cu cm/gram, Sq cm/sec, 62.428

Poise-cu cm/gram, in/gram, Sq cm/sec, 16.3871

*And feed them on your dreams*

Pottles (Brit), Gallons (Brit), 0.5

Pottles (Brit), Liters, 2.273

*The one they pick,*

Prospecting dish, Gallons, 2

Prospecting dish, Cu Yards, 008929

*the one you'll know by.*

*Don't you ever ask them why,*

Poundals, Dynes, 13825  
Poundals, Grams, 14.098  
Poundals, Joules/meter (newtons), 0.1383  
Poundals, Kilograms, 0.0141  
Poundals, Pounds (avdp), 0.03108

*if they told you, you will cry,*

Pounds of water, Cu feet, 0.01602  
Pounds of water, Cu inches, 27.68  
Pounds of water, Gallons, 0.1198

*So just look at them*

Pecks (Brit), Bushels (Brit), 0.25  
Pecks (Brit), Coombs (Brit), 0.0625  
Pecks (Brit), Cu cm, 9092.17  
Pecks (Brit), Cu inches, 554.84  
Pecks (Brit), Gallons (Brit), 2  
Pecks (Brit), Gills (Brit), 64  
Pecks (Brit), Hogsheads, 0.03812  
Pecks (Brit), Kilderkins (Brit), 0.1111  
Pecks (Brit), Liters, 0.90192  
Pecks (Brit), Pints, 16  
Pecks (Brit), Quaterns (Brit, dry), 4  
Pecks (Brit), Quarters (Brit, dry), 0.03125  
Pecks (Brit), Quarts (Brit), 8  
Pecks (Brit), Quarts (US, dry), 8.2564

*and sigh*

Pecks (US), Barrels (US, dry), 0.07619  
Pecks (US), Bushels (US), 0.25  
Pecks (US), Cu cm, 8809.77  
Pecks (US), Cu feet, 0.31111  
Pecks (US), Cu inches, 537.6  
Pecks (US), Gallons (US, dry), 2  
Pecks (US), Gallons (US, liq), 2.3273  
Pecks (US), Liters, 8.8095  
Pecks (US), Pints (US, dry), 16  
Pecks (US), Quarts (US, dry), 8

*and know they love you.*

**- AnnMarie Eldon**

sources:

*Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Teach Your Children Well*  
*Internet Conversion Table*

*on some rain-lashed night  
a voice that barks  
brief syllables  
may be  
at last my own*

*- Loren Eiseley  
from "The Changelings"*