

If you could spend a day with a living poet you admire, what would you do together? What might a passerby overhear?

laura mullen. this is lame, because i fairly regularly have the privilege of spending the day with her. all the same, now that i've left baton rouge, hardly a day goes by where i don't think of her. a passerby would overhear us failing to accept each other's compliments. although there are plenty of poets i admire who i have not yet had the good fortune to meet, i'm sure i would not trade laura mullen for all of them put together.

If you were able to place poetry in the world where it does not seem prominent, how would it behave there?

is there such a place? is art not as inescapable as philosophy/politics? if poetry is not prominent in a place, it's only because people have not opened their eyes and hearts enough to recognize it. in which case, i suppose the poetry would behave "deliberately." that is, it would make an extra effort to be philosophical/political so that people could not escape noticing it. the poetry would create a ruckus--it would trouble, as all inescapable things do.

Which relationship is more important: a) poetry and politics or b) poetry and philosophy? Why?

before getting my mfa, i began as a phd in contemporary american lit and critical theory. i believe that art cannot escape philosophy/politics and i believe in making art in response to art. i am a theory junky, so for me, this question contains both a false dichotomy and a dirty trick. false dichotomy because politics and philosophy are the same thing, and dirty trick because importance is not a value it is necessary to ascribe to something inescapable. possibly you could say i am agnostic on this question, though i do believe that the smartest art is one that is deliberately philosophical/political.

Where will we see you and your work in five years?

i will still be found in atlanta, hopefully with a few more books on the shelf. i published two collections this year because i was pent up, and do not plan to work at quite so rapid a pace as that for awhile. i'd like to have time to tour again. also, i'm seriously entertaining the idea of starting a small press. if it happens, it will certainly be within the next five years.

meeting of the unavailables

there was no turkey
when influential solitude coughed
gently from the corner
to represent the fact of her being
not only awake but attentive
everyone present suddenly concluded
the party could not be defeated

this was despite the funding moat
and wild gesticulating from a future book
which was said to live off meat

the table was headed
a chronically lachrymose member of ohio
a pepper that grew in the swamp
a third person
snap shirted thumbsucker by her side
and the bill was always coming
yet these four reindeer were ozmidable

hanging jorie graham

this is not a labor of love
it has cost fifteen months
orange american poetry review
photograph by jim harrison

tacked the black and white countenance above the desk
praying that finally it would be born or that it would die
it simply lingered there neither touched nor untouched
creeping creeping we wish to say it could drive us mad
to murder with the precision of several hot word darts
material for a poem stealth built hiding in those pages
politely smiling from the sky blue velour corner chair
we folded it in half but saw the thing under our eyelids

she is not a ghost to us
taking a false idol down
paper hardly matters now
she is living here a feral cat

the old switcheroo

she was never killed because she didn't die
this is what we said about the narrator
everyone on the razor edge of new york
understood quite plainly secret political agendas
cross-dressing
as objects as objectivities as safe deposit boxes

when meanwhile in london
another we who knows better than we do
was gluing a handle onto an envelope
inside of which was a rejection letter
pertaining to garnering a granting on writing
o tautness of logic

naturally we didn't dream of killing her
because she didn't die as she
o tautological also the narrator
reported it with us
and we in our collegiate innocence
we let her live and we were royalty

because she was never killed
there was a briefcase to keep her macguffin safe
and in lieu of flowers for the big dumb object
she chose rubber duckies to orbit her head
making bird noises for at least fifteen minutes
if we really wind them up and promise not to criticize

Amy King - editor in chief
April Carter Grant - producer
Didi Menendez - publisher

MiPO *esias* 

www.mipoesias.com

definition

the leopard skin waited
at the corner for a yellow car
the baseball cap of which then learned
that his passenger wish to see
paintings hung on well lit walls

in other words
the fur coat lady
called a cab
to go to the museum

the leopard skin is the fur coat lady
a yellow car the baseball cap is a cab
paintings hung on well lit walls is the
museum
the fur coat lady
a cab
the museum
are not surreal
the leopard skin
a yellow car the baseball cap
paintings hung on well lit walls
are not surreal

in the horizon
dividing intent and translation
is the lair of nonsense
but then nonsense does not exist
intent does not exist
translation does not exist
intent is the leopard skin
translation is the fur coat lady
intent is a yellow cab the baseball cap
and so forth

nonsense is the fact
that we have so far
neglected to mention there is the piano
but then the piano is surreal
and surreal is nonsense
which does not exist
and so fortunately
the piano does not exist
unless it drops on the fur coat lady
which is like a cartoon
and cartoons assuredly exist

rob friedman, 2007



MEGAN VOLPERT

Megan A. Volpert holds an MFA from Louisiana State and currently teaches high school English in Atlanta. She is a board member of Poetry Atlanta and has been in competition at the National Poetry Slam. She published two collections in 2007, "face blindness" and "domestic transmission," and has also toured half the country in support of her spoken word CD, "no morning after."