



Sandra Simonds

Please describe your favorite poem or kind of poetry.

I love it when poems are free spirits. Poems that dwell in the imagination—"I dwell in possibility / a fairer house than prose"—yet confront the world with a sort of intellectual rigor—these are my favorites. The imagination draws me in, the intellect draws me back.

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

For me, there is no difference between a living and a dead poet—a dead poet can be more alive than a living one and vice versa. Paul Celan is a living poet in my mind. To Paul I would like to say, "I, too am a Jew and I know about France." Maybe we could go to a café and discuss Kafka and then we would get very drunk and we would sleep in the same bed but wouldn't have sex because Celan is married and I have a god dammed moral compass!

Coldwater Periphery

This lonely rotation of the cog, index that serves the fixed axis, a finger where the ring freezes, a lone amoeba in the intestine swim.

Consider an object "in the shape of a hoop with all of its mass concentrated on its rim—" Vision fortified milk

asserts an external agent,
moves the calcium 'the'
log cabin in the backwoods
is a star point
magnitude of *Yes*
I would love to twirl
on the frozen lake, punch
the opposite of a cheekbone
with my boot heel through iceweeds.

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

I never jump the gun on my life...in a submersible.

Calcium

Let Q equal a gymnast's lament on the balance
beam, your hand into a bucket of
warm grains
where the resultant torque rips
an Amaranth Quadrant
from your Q. Let my equivalent use my
voice to say *Once in the night's frigid*
a Mammoth; I hid a film canister of
maggots under the.

The Latticework of Lamps

J's logarithmic scale propelled my physicist's thread through
lungs,
the longitudes of your pine needle life pulled
through vascular flutter hands no longer
than air columns
 placed in two bowls of air
empty, {umpteens} or maze-black voice doused in
a flushing static cloud
flammable lace pupils
Pull a velveteen swatch called 'Mount Chanticleer'
out of the coldwater periphery
Rearranging streamline turns, the glittered cone
you hurl into equal arcs
 across lupine meadow
no longer raptor torn from her ground : rapture
white belly of a glass marble
that falls
on all sides.

That glyph, Argentina,

that arsenic rain-coastal-chameleon cradle of icewash a tick into the lizard's
pulse withst—(sic)
 and the landing bee
daze jewel horizontal with said cradles
more than
the caretaker's daughter more than Beowulf stalk
 a proletarian's laryngitis a 1960s calliope kitchen
 profuse
blood marm
 couldn't watch the hex in ribbons
"went ten new newt" is what he said while fasting
 many buccaneers into the wilderness was a hard sell
 a focus group like crystal formation mosquitoes
(we were never going to harm you, Fatty) in any case I meant
 musketeers
 only the ice pick we rendered in perfected Hall-o-MirrorS

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

These are obviously false distinctions. Philosophy and politics are so intertwined that it's hard to separate them out and doing so with words (or my fancy word signs) renders their ideas (oh ho ho signifiers) a bit meaningless. Philosophy tackles questions of existence and being, morality and ethics etc. Politics is more practical, less elite—though politics has the ultimate say in how these things—existence, being, morality, ethics will be lived *ideas*. In some sense, you are talking about the distinction between form (philosophy) and function (politics). I think the relationship that poetry has to both of these is equally significant. Do you write about the strike or the idea of the strike?

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

It is not prominent in our world so exactly how it behaves now.

Tell us a story: what drew you to poetry in the first place? Why did you start writing?

When I was in college, I remember being in a class with a bunch of writers. I thought, everyone is more talented than me. I must work hard because, hell, I'm not as good as these folks. Years rolled by. A stockbroker. A secretary. A comedian. Where are these people who I felt were so much better than me? I guess I wrote then because I felt this strange compulsion and never stopped.

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