

Wilderness House Literary Review 4/4

John Raffetto
Star Poet

How do you do it?

I must ask him.

Peering from the roof behind concrete gargoyles

Gaping behind thick oak trunks on the quad,

hiding between wooden pews of Rockefeller Chapel.

How do you do it?

To make women unfasten their brassieres?

They're lined up now at Mandel Hall

waiting,

longing,

he passes where one by one another brassier drops to the dark marble
floor

all sizes and colors.

I must ask him

What works best

images,

contractions,

adjectives,

which inspires the unfastening of brassieres?

Wilderness House Literary Review 4/4

The solitary Plaisance
suddenly swarm with women
who make their mark
each by dropping a strand of their brassieres.
I push myself through the crowd
approach carefully
and ask him about Prince Edward
where no man is an island.
He wanders by oblivious
as mist drifts from his shoulders,
holding a mirror
that he lifts toward me as I ask
How do you do it?
To make women unfasten their brassieres?

Wilderness House Literary Review 4/4

Endless Time Vacant Time

Coral reefs salty tongue of turtle sky

Fishing in a paper sea

As snow melts white into brown into graves of forgotten relatives waiting
to speak

Torn and folded upon

Grey sunsets.

Today is the past, tomorrow is now, the past yet to come

Endless time vacant time

time to render myself with

straw mind

a stuttering blank face through coiled wires

whisper in a child's ear

internal flood of graves

Desire of the dream hangnail

On cloudy toes and

Porcupine legs

sealed shut beyond

satin chain link fence

as wretched wheels skid

slowed by

dry rains and

shallow fears

In burnt fields of prairie sage

under orange vapor of soft planets.

Wilderness House Literary Review 4/4

Venezia

Empty moonlit piazza
smooth grey cobblestone and
ghostly
burnt sienna walls.

A solitary figure, standing suitcase in hand
looks at me
offering no emotion
or quip
near a dim arched walkway by
the narrow canal where an empty boat is docked.

Vaporous opera echoes from a window.
A white haired woman with deep creases on her face
and grey eyes
pierce the night,
as the man with the suitcase vanishes into deep shadows.

Yes

I am here tonight
and the next day
staying in a tight pension
where sensuous moans
emanate from the next room.
A reminder of someone in their prime
captivating the dark avenues under a lone streetlamp
where the scent of espresso warms the night.

I will return in thirty years
when I am alive.