

Wilderness House Literary Review 7/4

Reza Tokaloo

The Language We Use

Art is not God.

It is the language

That God uses

To see us.

And we use to

See God.

Wilderness House Literary Review 7/4

Like Heads of Broccoli and Old Phonographs

A golden swan swimming in a peppermint
Jumpsuit explicit fog happening
All around my brain a heavy sort
Of pain circling like the rings of Saturn
On a Sunday morning when I took
A walk to the Mystic River
Where I could hear the traffic laughing
Hoarsely at my torn shoes walking
Like the footsteps of a cautious pigeon
With a jagged beak from pecking
Against stained bricks under azure twilight
Blinking at the faces of other
Social machines hoping to sneak by
A predator and spawn a few generations
Before dying quickly like toast
Burning in a toaster oven
On a sink sleeping below a cabinet
Of silver and moss where we can
Find all our lost trinkets
And ornaments we've collected
Like heads of broccoli and
Old phonographs.

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Stamped on Coins

Rotten from our idle loins.
Sidewalks curse at passing feet.
Tears fall like viscous sleet,
From the sockets of old faces stamped on coins.

Empty pockets – a phantom’s treasure.
The hoard grows with every lost hour,
That can be counted by a withering flower.
Angry rockets – a tyrant’s pleasure.

Rain drowns every brow’s crystal time.
Tombs of glass wandering children shatter,
Slicing their pale hands, but hands do not matter,
As winter women sing sweetly – lucid and sublime.

The skull below fluttering candle inspecting shade;
Hollow sockets deep and blinking,
Like some pale poet thinking,
About the last debt his pen has paid.

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Hidden in the Azure Depths

**A poem about Breughel's "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus"*

I see a little boy
Drowning in the harbor.

Can you see him?
Do you see him?

His tiny legs beating
Against a smothering wave.

Can you see him?
Do you see him?

His frantic breaths
Hidden in those azure depths.

Can you see him?
Do you see him?

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Bed, at the End of Life

Until autumn breath is no longer found,
And winter breeze makes not a sound.
Every drunken brow will find,
A warm bed deep below the ground.