2015 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest
Fourth Place: Antonina Malyarenko

Metaphor

Euphoric and morose, you juxtapose, make poetry into prose
Or do you just find words, reclined, enraptured and intertwined
In combinations that have the prompt luxury of being pre-defined?
No, you never misidentify, never create a fix that fails to adequately
Personify the trail-mix in my head or the inexplicable thought-thread
I can never quite deny. By design you’re invincible, infallible, since
You bring to life the latent meaning in my otherwise hapless prints
Yes, I’ve got it, now I’ve won; you exist to light the sun when candles
Break, shake, suffocate without oxygen in this intoxicated 3D world
In the fabric of space-time you’re the quantum, the small, the nuclear
Oh, let me remain in your atmosphere for just a little while, my dear
I’m aware
That you’re proof of the extension of the mind beyond dimension
You allow creation of this sentence to stir recognition devoid of pretense
Could a sentence stir anything without you? Could a word ignite you?
If what were logically true were all it took to fully explain this life
I’d be a tautology. I am not a tautology, won’t partake in ignorant strife
I refuse to be reduced to something algorithmic when I’m rhythmic
So inherently contradictory, structurally malignant, morally indignant
You leave room for all my burning incense, pinch the blooming pigments
In the palette that my paintbrush yesterday ignored when it found
New meaning elsewhere to explore. Oh, I can see how you adore
Mocking me, seducing in dissonant disharmony because you see
I’ve reached a point where I can assess the depth of the chasm of
My ignorance.
Don’t leave me now though now’s the perfect time to leave me
Turn out your pockets and let me perceive me, grant me reprieve
In these last seconds when no one believes me, don’t you see
I can’t prove anything but I know you’re the past incarnate, concept
Dolorous allegory, poetic diction will always reduce the friction
Between nature and man, mythology, whispers of doubt in human
Psychology. Lexical meaning aside, words have depth, substance
Inner sustenance outside of our minds, heavily lodged in the networks
Of time, rhyme, of bread and wine. It’s ancient and contemporary
But never temporary.
These words were never mine.
These are the things you wish you wrote
One, to the boy with sapphire eyes-
The gold in your armor really offset
The blank, frank, palpable regrets
That glossed your worn demeanor
Yeah, live a little
Shake off the sick enmeshments that
Bind you so stiffly to the quick maelstroms
Of the sea, the sand, unyielding, knees
Skimming, rocks and pebbles that have been
Worn down, for months and years, like
The synaptic junctions of your being
No one can do it for you.
Two, to the girl who is ostensible
Your very existence caught unquestionably
In mortal synergy with mine
Thick cataracts of misconceptions
Yeah, they peel with age, with time
We glint, we glow, we watch, we grow
We’ve reached a point and we now know
There is too much to know
But still
We learn, we learn to love and lose
To trade, to choose, to give the parts up
For the wholes
The very universe is throbbing, full of these
Cravings, dreams and nightmares in our souls.
Three, to him, thanks
For showing me the way,
With my own hands, to change the world I see
For proof that true beauty
Is fleeting, unattainable by nature, truly free
For wanting to skip dinner,
Skip out on jealousy and prayers for
Absolution, in favor of intrusion of a
Different kind.
Half our opinions come from our first loves
But no one person ever fills
These gaps, breaks in the lines
Of paradigms.
I tell myself that timing isn’t everything
That echoes aren’t instant pressure from an unseen source
I know you’ll never come to trap me the way she can
The way she had her sordid, selfish grieving way with you…
There wasn’t anything for us, I know, I knew, but still
My mind is fluctuating
Full to the brim with frothing thoughts, with worthless molecules, at your discretion
If you were wondering, it was your eyes that blinded me
Slick whirlpools of serenity and pain that arced in cadences
When I smeared on my chap-stick
In one fell swoop, a jagged line across my waiting lips
How blue, how mercilessly indigo, then violet
The spectrum thick, a signaling cascade that merged from one iris to the next
Like calcium-calmodulin
I knew that my unwitting hook had brushed your stitches
The ones you tried so hard to mask but ended up engulfing
In liquid obsolescence
I told myself I knew your fears, mistook your pain for fervor
Transcendence that you didn’t have, hadn’t tapped into yet
But timing isn’t everything
Unwittingly I shut myself out
Poured out lies upon lies in search of the correct dynamic
I’ll never learn that once my fingers hit piano keys
There’s nothing I can do to stop the slew of sound
Vibrato whispers send us, quivering
In periodically hushed sequences, the aftermath of an explosion
A padded hammer strikes steel strings, heartstrings
Another signaling cascade makes love with thirsty metronome
Thirsty for minutes, hungry for seconds, starving for a way to harness time
Not a subunit, instead a submachine
Embedded systems reeling in a new regime
But I’ll admit
That one mistake, one soft discordant note
A flitting insecurity
Could be enough to fuel the ruin of a melody
A quiet misstep, a vulnerable fumble, another way to stray from the meridian
If fate existed it would laugh at us right now, caught in a maze
Musical haze
Feverishly reading between the lines, inky on note-paper
Stifled by the grand staff, suffocated with treble trembles
Making decisions with nuclear consequences
But timing isn’t everything.
Delirium

Perched at the window waiting for rain to come
When it has gone we’ll be alone again
Disquieted by this, by us, but not by you, yourself
By all the unknown brilliance we will create together

Your pillowed arms covet a steadfast core
Solemnity becomes your green, expressive eyes
Our seasons bring well waters’ crested rise
Our whispers break veiled shuttered prison bars

In colored flares the scenery is swiftly shed
Unnerving crispness blankets scents of change
To lie on trains these stormy daiquiri days
With fingers knotted in bouquets of lavender...

It’s venerably quaint and thoroughly elusive
But time can never firmly tell us no
The way we feel is malleable and mobile
And now our thoughts are littered with the ghosts of then

We’re inked in paths that end in arrowheads
The quickenings, the in-betweens, the roads less traveled by
A line is just a circle at infinity
Therefore we know, beginnings never end