

**2012 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest
Honorable Mention: Gisele Papo**

Boy

He, like music rushing through bodies, bopping
Feet and shaking big hips, he moves you. Jumping,
Running, throwing all of himself all over.
Will he sit? Ever?

Even still when anger nears tongue a crooked
Spitty, wet smile pleads while small skinny arms wrap
Me and I can't speak what I feel when he says
I love you so much.

Love and ache for goofy smile, slightly crossed eyes.
This boy that at six has endured so much pain.
I hope that he won't change but after dactyl
Always comes trochee.

Gujar Girl

Ancient buildings lean and look down
upon us from all around and
it's like we have been transported back to another time.
Right off the street, vendors sell their bright orange, red, green fruits,
strange exotic fruits I have not seen before.
Outside of their stores butchers hang their bloody cuts
from the legs
while flies buzz and land all over
the pale meats that look as if they have never held life.
People running this way and that,
shouting this and that
above all the others who yell.
The city is the same
the same as it was a thousand years ago.

My cousins and I sit in the back of the bright red jeep
making faces at the people who would be staring anyways.
They always stare.
I see a young Gujar girl in brown dirty rags crossing the street.
She crosses with her brother
whose legs are folded in ways
they should not be folded.
The girl looks at me with her sad hazel eyes
that do not register the greeting of my own, but are
bloodshot and unaware.
As we pass her my oldest cousin sees and says
“How sad it is what people do to these
children.
They know they make more money when addicted or deformed.”

Young Thoughts

With their idle flat talk,
They stand in front of us as
A prophesy we so dearly wish
To subvert.

They have a colorless constancy,
Attained not out of
Sparkling serenity but
Of gray contentment.

The brilliant auroral flame,
Hidden deep within the velvety
Rich petals of the once
Lush rose, is now
Extinguished or denied.

We, vernal seeds, look upon
This daunting view with a disdain
They could not fathom.
They could not understand, even with a translation
To our language.
A language that
used to be their own.

However, never idlers,
As our blossoms bloom magnificently
Our flames will not be muted,
But remain incendiary.
Triumphant we will be
Over this dull presage.

Oranges

Orange, small and juicy

Is this bright sun-kissed fruit.

Waxy and moon-like, the brilliant skin is so enticing,

A white oleander with its sweet look and bitter taste.

Noises of ripe paper being ripped, the skin is peeled from the body.

Sweet nectarous smells fill the air.

I separate one of the carpels with great attention

Careful not to puncture the gentle surface of the veiny brain

So that no sticky delectable intestines may escape.

Cool, syrupy nectars gush through my mouth to the frenzied buds of my tongue.

Ancient Olmec Drummer

Thwat dadada ba bong
Rumble tumble boom
Thwat dadada ba bong
Rumble tumble boom

Can you hear that?
Can you hear the deep rhythms of those drums?
As each beat dances and moves with those around it.
How the drums come together and talk in tune, in beat, in rhyme?
A small man learns over his drum
His hands soar this way and that
Making a deep pulsation that runs deep
through his core
so much more than stone
through his people
people of *castilla elastic* rubber and calendars
through his land
of Coatzacoalcos, swamps and volcanoes.

A man of his people, a man of the jaguar.
But even he cannot change
when the rain and rivers stop.
Blood from obsidian blades is burnt and sent to gods
In vain.
For cultures will always lose to
The changing of the rivers.

But can't you still here those drums of our ancient marred Olmec?
As each everlasting beat dances and moves with those around it.
How they talk in tune, in beat, in ruins?
Thwat dadada ba bong
Rumble tumble boom
Thwat dadada ba bong
Rumble tumble boom....