

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## ATTENDANCE: July

Rachel & Rocío · Wednesday, November 30th, 2016

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**Attendance** is documentary poetry by Rocío Carlos and Rachel McLeod Kaminer, who are collaborating on a book length manuscript for the duration of one year.

As we stand in relation to plants and animals—and one another—we are not exempt, but alive as creatures in and of the world. Taking attendance, and attending, alters\* our writing, bodies; places—city, land, wilderness; times—past, present, future...

\*fucks up / fucks with / plant sex

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## Rachel

### Poems

human mammal bodies include this  
bright head wound up in the back of your eyes

machines and bodies don't belong  
corps and carne  
lose, loose, loss

human contact  
I want to get fucked up and I do  
swimming in the dark  
the end of every other  
night, that, and then fire  
how the night lasts us

but it is a body in the dark  
*a kind of theft without names*  
vow intensity and urgent

*fated to pluck things and grow them inside me*

no animal hot morning gloom  
*I've had things die on me*  
 nothing about the datura

*jimson weed*  
*moonflowers*  
*vespertine flowering plant*  
*toloache*  
*toloatzin*  
*witches weed*  
*poison*  
*desert thorn apple*  
*delirium*  
*tropane alkaloids*  
*wasp honey toxin*  
*photophobia*  
*heliophobia*  
*death*

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### Notes

1 July A friend of your dead friend sees a black cat pass on the street  
 Silent birds in the bamboo; no hummingbirds yet; a baby praying mantis

6 July No animals on Alameda, 7th, or Los Ángeles in the hot morning gloom.  
 Pigeons—palomas—in the air over Sunset. Tails spread to land. Feathers intact.

“I’ve had things die on me.”  
 No writing nothing about the datura

from 8 July [SLO to Monterey]  
 These wrecks.  
 And behind them,  
 behind, ahead miles, everywhere on the underneath surface  
 this cauldron full of what if not blood, anger, love  
 a clarity that this time will not discard itself?  
 A condor. Giant gulls. The memory of the condor  
 is the deck over the cliff into the air over the ocean.  
 With S. The stars. (The *will we or?*) The biggest brightest starburst  
 far cold burn

our human bodies, mammal creature bodies,  
 how do we hold each other, shield from spectacle, hold one another,  
 this death and grief writing and this finding actions, acting,

this gather together that changes our grief, that changes our bodies, that changes the sea tide, that  
protects and serves our bodies...To revere one another bodily...I don't know.  
 The birds weaving wheels over Morro Rock, and loud

The turn of the summer into wreckage is wreckage

17 July [PDX to SEA]

I barely look out the window. Ravens ravens only ravens

24 dark dim comfort quiet cool and not cool

End July

The palms flocking together in the cool of the morning (short cool of the morning) and the cool of  
 the evening (long low light, and after)

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## Rocío

### Poems

#### **Interior**

The day after the full moon  
 the pillowy lining arrives like leaves  
 that fall out of my clothes when I've been working outside/  
 watercolor blood blooms sharp with iron—  
*bottles empty/ bottles make music*  
 drink enough to fill a vessel  
 the size of a pear (or is that a closed fist).

(when we were young and reckless you would toast  
 to the vacancy of that place, a place which  
 a doctor pronounced perfect)

A birth day somewhere, King David's song:  
 something about rocks and enemies something  
 about the cleanness of hands.

\*

#### **A paper gown, a flower of a kind**

You wonder where in nature is symmetry  
 when the touch is touched there is touching and Scoliosis,  
 one arched brow, one lazy eye, a shoulder, one hip, a breast, etc  
 this is the lay of a land how it lays now lay down  
 the wound on the leg still care-ful:  
 butterfly the name of closure without thread (or also of slicing open).

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### Notes

I used to like July.

Etiological (a story of why/ of causality)

The blue flower: plumbago auriculata: raceme/a short stalk/a spiral arrangement

\*

You are still away: the lair all me, full of longing. I sleep tucked into a pocket of bedding. So much room to fill with the light in the trees.

My scar not a bright red eye covered in white butterfly, now a thin red slit- an angry mouth Unamused. (always bruised/injured)

In Karineh's front yard—a pomegranate, a citrus, a kumquat. The paver stones wind like a spine through the gravel. The dry hot. The fruit trees stand in the heat, trembling.

### **July 9**

A live oak hand fast. What vows are what eyes say. Wolf clan stands as witness. The dry field, a coyote. The jacket of an eden, the white space between flora and fauna. Earlier I ovulated sitting at a manicurist's station I stole a plant/snapped off the purple labial succulent with sprouts. I tucked it under my shirt near my navel.

Kitten goes to the sea

### **July 12**

Un paraíso interior/ my landscape a wilderness I cannot map. In my life I have been cartographer. My small hands mapping my small body (mother walks in says "I'm going to tell your father.")

At the doctor you are comfortable with your nudity. You quickly undress. A paper gown a flower of a kind. The doctor purrs at your perfection. How curious, that place you can't look at.

I don't want (that I don't want—you switch to Spanish)

Needle- the tech looks like Lenny from Laverne and Shirley

The blood drawn- this is sacrifice. It hurts and keeps on hurting. Three vials later. The sigh shudder and loosed tears- the self care after: sushi and pinot grigio before twelve noon.

To walk down the street triumphant, unable to tell everybody. And yet, nothing has been accomplished. Except not atrophy. Somewhere in you the twinge of hope (is this possible).

\*

*Another lover another mother maybe a mother that would love like*

\*

The truth is I never stopped thinking about a child

Unalloyed, perfect, perfection/*she purred*

Perfect: is me at 16, in costume, the balancing fire on my head.

*What a wonderful sentence/you make me feel like a wonderful sentence*

Such palms and sycamores. Magnolias.

### July 23<sup>rd</sup>

The morning of ash. The fires north of here. The orange haze . The smell of smoke the burning fields after the cotton harvest.

A daughter names the silence on your tongue, fluorescent at the end of green-lit linoleum corridor/the hovering bloom in a dark room/clean feet on clean floors hands hold onto doorways (My mother walked me to the Guadalupe in red brocade).

### Ornament (2)

I rise to attend to be attended to your teeth in my clavicle in my hip how delicate your teeth fine as keys in the mornings you can't even make a fist but your teeth are always ready for me

When you grow accustomed to her bed the nightmares come so you seek other beds each time a sorceress casts her net over you and it works for a time until the breath stops the breath is what makes the spell you see and water always comes burial always comes but you never do.

*As if nothing happened at all* (portal to death and life)

To a baby: The best thing I can give you is no memory (take away the grief of happiness). The alternative is that the good days become a nostalgia, which is a wound and the other days are wounds opening and closing and opening like eyes.

The blue light at night. The lair alone. The AC. The body. Absent of song.

### Sunday July 31<sup>st</sup>/ La palabra:

Up. Water/ bless. Observe. The house alone. Sweep the corners. Wash sheets. Clean feet on clean floors. A kitten returns with the road on her. It rises from her like vapor. Face the train tracks, the road of dust that kicks up. Across the tracks, a family plays summer jams and fills a plastic pool.

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