

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Florence Weinberger: Three Poems

Florence Weinberger · Wednesday, May 4th, 2016

Florence Weinberger is the author of four published collections of poetry, *The Invisible Telling Its Shape* (Fithian Press, 1997) and *Breathing Like a Jew* (Chicory Blue Press, 1997), and *Carnal Fragrance*, (Red Hen Press, 2004), and *Sacred Graffiti*, (Tebot Bach, 2010.)

Twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize, her poetry has appeared in a number of literary magazines, including *The Comstock Review*, *Nimrod*, *Poetry East*, *The Literary Review*, *Solo*, *Rattle*, *Pacific Review*, *Askew*, *Calyx*, *Jacaranda Review*, *Manhattan Poetry Review*, *The River Styx*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *The Pedestal* and *The Los Angeles Review*. Poems have also been published in many anthologies, including Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust, Truth and Lies That Press For Life, Invocation LA, The New Los Angeles Poets, Ghosts of the Holocaust, Grand Passion, The Cancer Poetry Project, So Luminous the Wildflowers, and most recently, *The Widows' Handbook*. She served as a judge for the Pen/USA Literary Awards.

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## Kim

A double helix nicks the begotten  
and kicks out Kim  
pervious infant inquisitive kid a teen  
too soon self-inventing  
from genetic bequests  
tattooed friends on the block  
the arc of her eyebrow grandfathered in.  
Hope is the thing with feathers  
that keeps its love while she flies out of  
the baby pics I kept.  
The sliver of silver piercing her nose  
gleams like a bead of snot.  
Her body serving a practiced sulk  
sticks pins in itself  
like map locators pin-pointing pain  
postponed for the future.  
Her tongue stuck with its brash harm  
flicks the small groove above her lip  
stitched over a new vocabulary.  
A toe ring augurs a path

of lost resistance.  
 Indifference has no better choir  
 but I am the fool who mothers faith  
 she will one day know the gospel of the navel  
 marvel of the body that came out of mine.

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## The Sun Sets Miles From the Rothko Chapel in Houston

Something's different this time. The setting sun's become  
 a deep amber seam between a teal-colored sea and a smoldering sky.

Makes me think God's finger's marking some intention  
 or granting wishes, like the green flash, the auroras

Rothko's paintings showing how the heart melds  
 what is clearly incompatible

how you can sit inside Rothko's blacks and purples  
 until night falls and levels everything.

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## The End of Strife in a Single Word

Coming from the country of insufficiency  
 where scant grasses and chicken feet could be a meal  
 my mother, undaunted by the way her languages  
 were sometimes not enough to make a hearty sentence,  
 stuck together syllables, phrases, breath and alienation.  
 On days it rained hard hours on her marketing rounds,  
 she pictured clouds so laden with water  
 that when they cracked open would empty  
 and empty and finally empty so completely  
 it would never rain again, it would be done,  
 and for that she had a single word, *ausgereigent*, hard g's.  
 Now you might want to know what this has to do with pogroms  
 and words like *kike* or *spic* or *chink* that get under the skin like ticks.  
 Maybe nothing, maybe everything, that's the way of translation,  
 a woman turns a cloudburst into bliss, drains it like a boil,

paints it into a blue sky, a clear day, stilled water drying in the sun.

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