

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Lauren Camp: Three Poems

Lauren Camp · Wednesday, November 11th, 2020

### Leather World, This Bird, This Sky

I came here from temporary  
and perpetual rages—the whole sky  
of wind. Secret birds  
take the ruin of garden.  
Hail carefully cuts out  
the unseen side, the open veins.  
Dirt offers its fragrance  
through flooding.  
When the nest falls,  
I open the twigs and find only  
crickets with their gasps  
and clicking. For 19 years I have been  
driving toward reason—or into  
the sinews of city: the pile-up  
on the interstate, the drums  
of hydrochloric acid  
near intersections, the suspicion.  
Where does it end?  
I've always understood  
what can't be said, but the man  
who complained of kindness  
had to apologize. There's almost  
no dialogue between life's  
various promises. Such endeavor,  
all of these seasons.  
Wind pulls on one wing  
then a next—and a raptor flies  
crooked through its mandolin language.  
Suddenly everything verified:  
cloud without end.

\*

## Juice and Distillation

We sat shoulder to shoulder over the sugared  
cuisine, and the raw and the salted.

*I love you, I do*, he said, and I sighed.

If I was nectar, he was parched,  
a body without doubt, and later, tasting

with the sharp knife what had been unseeded.  
The harvest was plentiful that year.

\*

## Best Portrait

*Inspired by the photography of Annie Liebovitz*

In the morning  
with her largest lens, each frame  
allows a sudden opening. She climbs the ladder—  
eyes, shoulders, skin.  
It is a long walk to the end of a face.

In the afternoon,  
image becomes excursion, the pleasure  
of finding the shape of a stranger in the curve  
of a lens. Nothing shelters the shot.  
No distraction.

Each gesture is bundled  
in whispers. The evening's penitent  
light, and the hard eye  
of flash leads to rumor.  
Then the picture spills out by itself.

*(Author photo by Bob Godwin)*

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