

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Margaret Randall: Power's Golden Crown

Margaret Randall · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Margaret Randall is a feminist poet, writer, photographer and social activist. Born in New York City in 1936, she has lived for extended periods in Albuquerque, New York, Seville, Mexico City, Havana, and Managua. Shorter stays in Peru and North Vietnam were also formative. In the turbulent 1960s she co-founded and co-edited EL CORNO EMPLUMADO / THE PLUMED HORN, a bilingual literary journal which for eight years published some of the most dynamic and meaningful writing of an era.

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## OTHER STORYLINES

What screams from the window  
of the car idling beside yours  
cannot be described as sound,  
music's history  
stuffed deep in frayed pockets.  
Aroused only by whip and chains  
she claims she is in control.  
All other storylines  
whither in memory  
or cower beneath the bed.  
In the torture chamber  
he is detached,  
keeping his *right* and *wrong*  
in clear perspective,  
his prisoner an afterthought.  
The suicide bomber straps  
and buckles his bulky vest,  
closes his eyes  
and utters his last sad words:  
*I matter.*

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## THROUGH MUD OF WAR AND MUCK OF PROMISE

A fan of interlocking scenes

etched on the underbelly  
 of expectation:  
 third from left  
 has an ever-rising sun  
 and dependable climate.  
 I must reach to glimpse  
 farthest to right,  
 its mirage of answers  
 so far beyond their questions  
 the space between  
 swells in perfect labyrinth.  
*Take all of me* pleads my life,  
 still urging  
 holistic solution.  
 We are more than the sum  
 of paltry choices  
 available at birth.  
 Minutes dance to a beat  
 surprised  
 by unexpected quarter notes,  
 Harmony enters  
 only where something stolen  
 is replaced by risk.  
 We hurry to follow those tiny arrows  
 stitched to the underside  
 of eyelids  
 or along the heart's retaining wall  
 through mud of war  
 and muck of promise.  
 While the rhythm of lockstep  
 and resignation  
 holds out its cajoling hand  
 a new wind invites us  
 to make one last chance  
 our first.

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## UP THROUGH THE CLOUDS

Purposeful, blindered, this  
 regiment of minutes  
 ticks along  
 behind my wary eyes.  
 They are my minutes  
 and only I see them.  
 When they come upon others  
 they quicken their step.  
 The arrow says *one way only*  
 and I fear

the tiny increments will obey  
as long as they are able.  
Only the softest shadow of regret  
might cause them to stumble  
and fall,  
move backward in disarray  
or climb up through the clouds  
and disappear  
like those buffalo in the  
Barry Lopez story  
witnessed by a party of Cheyenne  
camped on the Laramie Plain  
near the Medicine Bow Mountains,  
winter of 1845.  
It is all about direction  
and language:  
the expertise of feet,  
how one sound hides within another,  
how nouns and verbs  
spar or dance together.  
People between two rivers  
situate their adjectives  
with care.  
A female word  
must run to catch up  
with power's golden crown.  
It takes the perfect storm of  
happenstance and disbelief  
brought together  
by one too many lies  
woven into the texture  
of our lives.  
It takes horror disguised  
as life as usual.  
Time's forward motion  
stops, shifts,  
leaves you peering at 1491  
with a 2013 promise on your lips.

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