Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Rikki Santer: Two Poems

Rikki Santer · Wednesday, May 29th, 2019

Wig of the Bride of Frankenstein

That wasn't the end at all…imagine yourselves standing by the wreckage of the mill.
— Mary Shelley to Lord Bryon and Percy Shelley, *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935)

My Depression era stopgap
My sequel stellar
My genre playroom
My silver-streaked testimony
My drag queen minions
My Hays code coding
My camp conquest
My no name naming
My Elsa uncredited
My teenage heart timpani
My seismic charge
My dazzling hilltop tower
My *kites were ready*
My long electrical shaft
My mummy birth
My close cut eyes
My demented doctor bridesmaids
My same sex parents
My *it's alive alive*
My Nefertiti echo
My beehive electric
My pompadour jazzed
My hairline caged
My no wig at all
My mouth wadded & stuffed
My robotic bird head
My jaw scar map
My baroque camera angles
My chiaroscuro gods
My screeches played backwards
My angry swan hiss

My *stronger than a pretty love story*
My refusal to comply
My wedding night imploded
My bride of fire
My imagine yourself standing by the wreckage of the moon
My *you know how lightning alarms me.*

*

Launchpads

Before he died at the age of thirty-one in a fire in Amsterdam, Donald Evans had painted and catalogued almost four thousand stamps…issued by forty-two countries he conjured in his imagination. — Willy Eisenhart, *The World of Donald Evans*

So much seemed to depend
upon your chickens, each
of their many breeds praised
within perforated borders
of your miniature worlds.

Spider sense of rhythm
in your catalogues, your
autobiography crosshatched &
postmarked onto tiny ledges of
plot. You cradled gallery exhibits

under your arm & tempered
your philatelic obsession
with melancholy climates &
currencies rendered like jewels—
of plovers' eggs, pears, or

meadow mushrooms, kingdoms
of zeppelins, windmills, & staunch
minarets. Clouds notch your
ether, pronounce gold poppy,
painted trillium, grass-leaved

arrowhead, puffins in flight.
The mortar & pestle of
narrative clicks through
shadows obedient in sheet
after sheet of domino grids.

Your sable brush invented
paper joys, making us
believe in make believe

as we still hover for nectar
from your lilliputian launchpads

that transport us to intricate
nowheres, issued, registered,
then cancelled—smoke vanquishing
your remaining lung, your ashes
pointillism atop an open sea.

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