

# 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

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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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