
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Ronald Baatz: Four Poems

Ronald Baatz · Thursday, May 21st, 2015

Ronald Baatz is a poet whose last book of poems, *Bird Standing*, was published by Blind Dog Press in Australia.

Five Small Poems

Its shadow
sufficient to bring
the pear to perfection-
cold sunlight in
a cold window

I am still alone
I am singing like a bird
I feel like a fool
but also like a bird
that is singing like a fool

There's that high
whistling sound again-
maybe the wind passing through
the skull of a
dead bird

Such a handsome river
with a cold wind
glimmering on its back
like cold fire riding
the opinionless serpent

My childhood-
the whole thing made up
one day when I was
an old man
picking irises

Pictures of Her Family

I drive her out to her house.
 When I see it in the trees I wonder how
 a woman can live alone like this, in the
 middle of the cold and snowy wilderness.
 She invites me in for a drink, a fire.
 On the mantelpiece are pictures of her family,
 and when I ask her a few questions she tells me
 a story about every person, slowly, one after the other.
 I ask her why there is no picture of her mother but
 this question is met with only an unreadable silence.
 In telling me a story about her father, it's obvious
 that she was very close to him. She holds a picture
 that shows him standing next to one of his favorite cars.
 This picture she holds up to the light, as though trying
 to look deeply into his eyes. Perhaps they will
 help her remember something that will supply
 a meaningful completion to her story about him.
 After awhile we collapse on the couch like pigeons
 falling out of the sky, only in slow motion.
 I pour more wine. She grows quiet, the night gets old.
 She does not suggest I leave, however.
 I put my arm around her and she places her head
 on my shoulder. She falls asleep. Eventually
 I have to nudge her, tell her the fire needs wood
 and that maybe it'd be best if we both were to
 stretch out on the couch. This idea suits her fine,
 and within moments of lying down she is asleep,
 huddled against me. She murmurs the beginning
 of a dream, maybe about her father, who knows.
 Since my back is to the fire I'm soaking up
 most of the heat. I can only hope that it is
 going through me and reaching into her.
 I put my fingers through her long black hair,
 pushing it away from her face, her throat.
 I wonder if her mother was as beautiful.

A More Private Place

At the reservoir I see a raven I'm not familiar with.

Standing on a very thin, very dilapidated fence,
 it looks out over the cold choppy waves without a
 care in the world. But when it sees me approaching
 it lifts slowly and flies away. It travels along the
 shore until it comes to a more private place
 on the fence, a place I've already walked past.

Just Rest

just rest
 don't think
 of anything

just rest
 under leaves
 falling and

just rest
 under shadows
 falling too

don't think
 don't concern
 yourself at all

with this aloneness
 that has come
 as it has always

don't shed any
 tears or toss
 and turn

don't attempt
 trying to see or
 trying to understand

nothing will come of it
 and only valuable
 sleep will be lost

just rest
 don't think
 of anything

let the leaves

fall and let them
bury you

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