Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Shawnte Orion: Three Poems

Shawnte Orion · Wednesday, August 16th, 2023

Whale Watch Frequency

The day after meeting my father
we boarded a harbor ship
and drifted into the Pacific

Once away from the island
a microphone was lowered below waves
so we could listen to whales
sing in a language that defied translation

We waited for humpbacks to surface
as my thoughts sank to the ocean floor
remembering what I read about seahorses

How prehensile tails
clasp weeds to resist currents
how independent eyes
simultaneously look forward and backward
how males bear the young
but only one in a thousand survives
how they can’t be heard
or seen from the deck of a boat

Facing starboard
I snapped photos of a baby whale
swimming next to its mother
juvenile flippers
splashed silent reflection of clouds

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Mona Lisa Belongs To The Blank Generation

Size of the crowd says rock star sellout
farewell stadium tour
but the smirk says post punk indie

parent’s garage

power chord brush strokes
out of tune with the religious
chorus of her time
the loudest canvas in a solemn Louvre

strobelit from the speedcore flash
of expensive cameras raised
high above heads as the mosh pit
surged against barricade

smirk for dropped iPhones
bootstomped to the beat
contaminating the dust of our
ancestors and other allergens

smirk like theft brings fame
smirk like function is off key
smirk like you already know
there will be no encore

*

Not That Anyone Asked For The Entire 1987 Arnold Schwarzenegger Film Predator Translated Into Convenient Haiku Form But

ain’t got time to bleed
one ugly motherfucker
get to the chopper

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Gravity & Spectacle by Shawnte Orion & Jia Oak Baker

Purchase *Gravity & Spectacle* by Shawnte Orion & Jia Oak Baker

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