Elegy For Ezra Pound

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ELEGY FOR EZRA POUND

Who is there now for me to share a joke with?
Upon hearing of Ezra's death

Youth has flickered from youthful words
And self-sprung osmatics of rhythm
Have wombed and wined and autumned a self
So danced and dawed and forming (like Plato)
And bleeding an act of oblivion.
The time in thy throat
The breath on thy hands
The sad hours scarcely move.

Like Heraclitus, an old woman who
With knowing eyes
Wep, wep for beauty lost
And feared tomorrow's face
Silent as curtain and sunbeam
Your flames have winked the wind.
But retina-poised in nighted skies
One tear shall hear from listening eyes
Shall hear and shall stare, shall flicker and stir
Shall hid and shall lay, shall quicken and try
The self-conceiving Epiphanies of ashes
In the molting heath of words.
My words are flames—you are a told old tail of a comet
My words are waves—you are a crumpled old bill of a poet
My words are tears—you are a frozen old Proteus of a god

The pages of your gaze.
Quicken camera cadence:
The fragments of your cantated ways
Fuse pinched fragrances
Your memories suspended by dreamed yesterdays
Peddlers bundled events
Your partial visions pressed between crossed Gethsemanics
Musae symboled silence.

by Jim Hall

You are the lost Odyssey
In your own litany
You are the re-occurring weariness
Of your own pain.

Where children leotoned over broken walls
To wind themselves through labyrinths of pleasure
You saw the bondage of action
The heritidge of pain, the corpse of time.
Your community of years starved
The ribboned voice of afternoon thought
The legacy of weary-eyed love
And startled the ghost by inches.

Your aging is a redemptive act:
The minutes are splinters of pillars.
You are your own embers:
The fired, spored Babylonian tongues
You had beautiful things to say
From the halo of your wished force—tumbled chapel words
You had beautiful things to say
From your tortured martyrdom of glances—stern rubric lines
You had beautiful things to say
You were the instant prophet in this chant of dust
Your poems cauldrons your words our relics
Your staff the wand of our wonder.

Bishop of Tradition:
An everliving god
You are the plastic Christ
The Winding vision of your antique world

The flash of a Chinese lantern tongued the prism of music
A violin low across your nerves.
The rubes of subtle exile bit the lyric of your lirality
Within your disson of horns.
The trumpeted sounds scarlet no more.
Along the notes, across the seconds, out of the West coasts
The swan goddess: There for you to share a joke with.

Somnolent home the swan to sing.

Through my fornication of metaphor, false labor pains of meter
I tremble paint and stumble probe your sheer white song of mind
And blind I find I know thee
And I, too, participate in thy dying

JIM HALL