

## *excerpts from Pistorius Rex*

### *Author's Note*

*Pistorius Rex* is a libretto-in-progress that overlays the tabloid story of Oscar Pistorius's murder trial with the apparatus of Greek drama, in order to investigate questions of justice, gender, ego, power, privilege, the state, and fate. The Frog Chorus serves as the Greek chorus, jury, paparazzi, audience, and citizens of Thebes. This piece opens the opera.

### FROG CHORUS:

The day is a bullseye, a burst bubo, blackt out thing  
a depression where the skin punch took its sample  
it's round as the Globe Theater and deep as a poisoned well  
An endocrine disrupter, drilling down  
this day's a smear on the shoulder this day's a sigh a  
dried-out drainage ditch where  
amphibia kick their desiccated limbs  
frog tissue and gesture will be outlined on the blacktop  
by the sun's authority, in an hour's time  
a modern choreography, in which the diaphanous froggies  
are Grecian Isadoras, friezed in time  
A fire pit  
A failed vaccine  
A kicked-out window  
A kicked-in shin  
A hot head  
That can't remove the ox-mask  
or mask its bovine feelings  
and the victim's shrieks escape through melodious pipes  
this is called a "brazen bull"  
a torture device  
a truth-telling machine  
birds arise that want to pick at frog legs  
bulls sound that want to low in vials  
and wear  
white smocks  
and stand  
in cold labs  
and synthesize

testosterone  
to be smuggled over borders on milk trucks  
it's dawn  
in this locality  
the malformed juvenile mink frog is hugging his five legs  
and the malformed leopard frog dashes his extra eyes  
into the pavement because his head is too heavy  
because it is too light  
and hot in the light  
for his ichor  
evaporating  
like I-taste-a-lichor-never-brewed  
like I-hath-fed-on-honeydew  
on the other side of the world  
where it's night  
the drone pilot heads to the breakroom to microwave a burrito  
But here on the eye-side the eye wakes to a world still wearing its  
makeup  
its worldly habit, its mantle of *things*  
cindered material  
pushed to the edges of crash site the world  
still wearing  
its wreckage like wedding jewelry  
its rank indicia  
its staved CD  
its urgent care facility its  
anchor desk its  
insurance rep its  
bottomline its  
hairline its  
redline its  
debt its  
better business bureau its bitcoin its SUV its  
diadem of debris