

D.E. STEWARD

Octubro

A sharp-shinned hawk flares across ahead ramping high on a cold gust that lifts it through the yellow fall leaves into the top of a big sycamore

Midday during the same colding-down, spot a bald eagle high in an off-white flat stratocumulus sky

Watch it for many minutes

Only the manner of its wheeling silhouette, perhaps a quarter of a mile high, makes it an eagle among the turkey vultures swinging across much closer in

Above a world as violent now as the world has ever been

Having to do with widely applied electronics, extremely efficient transportation and air support, teenage troopers recruited from deep poverty, and impacted religiosity

Pigu'a, the Orthodox teams arrive immediately to begin to collect pieces of the remains while the cell phones of victims lying there go off as friends and family call

The military retaliates immediately and the Palestinian families enshroud their dead

Sumoud, Palestinians and Israelis alike, retaliate, retaliate ad infinitum

Each incident each time answered with violence, becoming less intense only farther from the cauldrons of belief

Mostly religious, mostly urban, somewhat solely ethnic

The earnest Bali bombers lacking even the savvy to distinguish
between occidental shades, went after Americans and killed
Australians

To them we all look alike, and to us they all—even the goofy shoe
bomber—are beginning to look the same

Marxism is nostalgia, nationalism the new parochialism, and
Sharia by all rights should be as much a curiosity as the Talmud

The Mishna and the Gemara. Maliki, Shafii, Hanbal, and Hanafi

Angels through the needle's eye, bread and little fishes, pork and
beef, wine and water, heaven and hell, anxiety and ignorance, slash
and stomp

Why can't we all just get online and hang out at the mall spending
plastic and yakking on cells dressed as Banana Republic provides

Why can't we all go Shanghai

Go Fun City

We plod through our time alive, mostly achieving little and leaving
nothing

"...the day of the mule // with no age to it no story no reward..."

While we should be interested in everything

Fix dates, ride the continuum of decades, flush with euphoria
recalling the music of times past linearly laid

Music being like unpunctuated poetry

Emerging serially through the enormous condescension of posterity

Chechnya and some other absolutist incursions aside, Russia has been living a complex and mostly successful Eurasian synthesis since even before Peter

As the galloping theme of Glazunov's ballet, *The Seasons*

Authenticité

Lifting on crests of a natural avant-garde in the way that the dissonance of the violins and violas in Tchaikovsky's *Little Russian* is dramatically modern

Woad blending within the milling of the immense crowds a splendidly coruscating moiré Columbian blue

The Yungas just north of La Paz is one of the most attractive regions in South America, green slopes of Andean wonder

Where natural rubber and quinine came from a century ago

Humid and torrid, *muy indio*, covered with rain forests, cacao, coffee, and all imaginable tropical fruits

Text as drawn-out echolalia, written words enhanced, used, through a culture's history, scarcely original, marginally unique

Somos marginalistas

Only poets and other marginalists tired of the mundane have much concern with poetry

The market likes plots, fantasy sex (often Gothic), extreme behavior and flying bodies

“Stories are told and last lines fetchingly delivered. It is like producing a pre-Impressionist landscape and asking that it be admired even though the date beside the signature is 2002”

No Simon, Duras, or Handke is commercial in North America

Dead-eyed flat American “Hi” out of the same selfish impersonality as Northeastern states’ cagily averted eyes

Ukkusiksalik in Nunavut

The Torngat Mountains in extreme northern Labrador

The Mealy Mountains in southeastern Labrador

Manitoba’s lowland forests

Nunavut’s Bathurst Island

The East Arm of Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories

The Gwaii Haanas Islands in BC

The Southern Strait of Georgia in BC

The Gulf Islands in the western province of BC

Canada on its ancient empty and immense Precambrian shield

La vida nortea

Shawms, tenoroons, quartfagotts, Heckelphones, Sarrusophones, pibgorns, and all the other oboesque double reeds

A French military bandmaster named Sarrus replaced the delicate *bois* of the double reed with brassy marching brass and so Sarrusophones

Hautbois of the sixteenth century French school, phonetically in blunt English to oboe

“...the familiar Bartók arsenal of leaping, ‘barbaric’ melodies, vigorous dissonance, ostinato patterns, instrumental effects.”

A proportion of Nantucket’s plentitude of hogwagons, the Lexi, Landrovers and the like, appear every morning downtown for newspapers and breakfast bread, park with their engines running, windows up

Waspy docksiding adenoidal blazer blue

Debussy almost visited North America before he died in 1918

Saint-Saëns died in a bicycle accident in Algeria in 1921, landed on his head without a helmet

Mendelssohn wrote thirteen string symphonies in his apprenticeship

Probably the best is the Eighth, finished when he was twelve

He died at thirty-eight after a series of strokes

The goal of any composer, poet, or artist logically should be to employ the carefully honed perception, that often goes along with the territory, to above all stay alive

Black locust twigs coated in silvery woolly hairs in late spring that drop and leave the new growth pale green, then in late summer the small paddle-shaped leaves become reddish brown and flecked with small, scattered, pale lenticels and in fall are some of the last to go

Three female gadwalls dappling as dusk falls on the marsh

Tundra swans during migration frequently stop in the river above Niagara Falls where some are caught and swept over the nappe

“You who harmed an ordinary man . . . , do not feel safe. The poet remembers. // You may kill him—another will be born. // Deeds and words shall be recorded.”

Remember that, plus or minus, ninety percent of Italian men live within fifty kilometers of their mothers

Sampling credits to W.S. Merwin, Patrick Smith, Nathan Randall, and Czeslaw Milosz's Poeta pamieta.