



Image from The Coloradolady.

Jesse Minkert

Three Poems

Mouth of the Sea

The somnolent giantess
won't relax her grasp on the gulf.
One may never know her caress

but imagine instead the millennia
of sediment spilling from her hair.

She swims to Latin rhythms
no farther than her measure
of terrors in her wake.
One may slap stomachs,
play reeds of cellophane
inserted in a crease or fold
or elbow to welcome her ashore
to call her water nymph
reborn within the tide.

Outside the air is chill.
Leaves are red and brittle.
Paint flaking from
the frame around the windows.

Outside a ferret-headed deity
reflecting on the panes
hot spots on a cold dark canvas.

Above the plinths
more curled caressing
accents of breath
stink of motors
and pinching rubber fingers
with fasteners of brass
splintering in the silence.

Phantom Limb

This thin cotton garment ties at the neck
goes into the bin by the window.
Take this yellow plastic bottle. Push the button,
and most of the time someone will come.

Pain once born won't die.
Our most corrupting spells
have lost their victims.
Nights illuminate by satellite.
Days darken in the mists of heat
beneath the sky and the lake.

We find rest on the ocean floor

where freighters drop their ballast.
We oxidize, deposit sewage,
release our clouds of methane.
We set the beltline of the globe afire.
We try to keep our footing
at the edge of the fissure.

We are juice afraid of our own pulp.
The comforting chaos of charity,
the crescent's peak,
the reign of trembling swallows,
the salt of the cupola's cover.
Live bait writhing in time with the radio,
bare foot stinging in the water.

Singularity

Wherein all is not one, nor any number,
but a muddy arena packed with gopher traps
smooth cheeks of Jesus
mustache of Mona Lisa
relativistic tunnel effect
reorganized collection of matchbook covers.

Four blocks east, feral mutts in gutters
catch the scent and keen.
Elastic bands twang out of tune
stretch the rubber
slap the rubber cover.

Move the muscles out of your mouth
make your larynx hum; with shape
and tone make air emerge.
Your voice will rattle the mesh
oscillate crucial plazas
as if time were an unclosable hall
or windows full of ecstasies.

A moist confection glistens.
Wet damp viscous-skinned clay.
Tape breaks along a seam
like door slams on a porch
softening under the canopy
hoping to slide between drops.

Lumps appear in ether
a curve that buries avenues
parabola
bell.

On the surface oceans tremble.
Continents devour each other.
Bugs swarm your face.

Monsoons answer your muttering
with coarse hands.

Niney-one percent alone.
Daddy's footsteps shuffle
in the dining room.

Jesse Minkert's work has appeared in *Paper Nautilus*, *Mount Hope*, *The Chaffin Journal*, *The Minetta Review*, *The Georgetown Review*, *Randomly Accessed Poetics*, and elsewhere. Wood Works Press published a collection of his microstories, *Shortness of Breath & Other Symptoms*, in 2008. He lives in Seattle.