Image from Musée de l'Orangerie

Donna Pucciani

Two Poems

O Stars

you grab the edge of Brooklyn,
whose foggy moon settles over the alleys,
a monocle on the cheek of night.

You are a gallery of strangers
arriving from Paris and Hong Kong.
You convene above the faded brownstones

for feasts and funerals, or a drink at the corner bar.
Fully the fire of other suns,
you die before you reach our hungry eyes.

What do we seek
in your little gems of brilliance?

We point and stare, your blinding paradox

reconstructing the scientific puzzles
of the heart. A theatre of the absurd,
you spin myth and enchantment

into the sobering reality
of your secret cave, where curiosity
becomes unquenchable desire.

Trees and Houses
(*after a painting of the same name by*
Paul Cézanne, c. 1885, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris)

The bare branches seem furred
with the strange substance of dawn,
more like sleeping animals than trees,
reaching across each other to screen
the house in the distance.

A stucco cottage emerges from the meadow,
its red-tiled roof and dark stump of chimney
blessing boarded-up windows
that dream of their own emptiness.
Perhaps some human presence
haunts what used to be a home,
an old woman at a kitchen table
eating the last of the cherries,
an old man unwrapping a triangle
of cheese he has kept in a handkerchief.

Through the scrim of darkly naked limbs,
a golden light patches the brown lawn with green.
The closer we get to the house,
to its phantom inhabitants,
the farther away it looms, backing up,
staring with lidless eyes
like the lost future we chase.

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Donna Pucciani has published poetry worldwide in *Poetry Salzburg*, *Istanbul Literary Review*, *Shi Chao Poetry*, *Acumen*, and *Journal of Italian Translation*, and elsewhere. Her work has been translated into Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and German. She has won a number of awards and has been nominated numerous times for the Pushcart Prize.

Former vice president of the Poets Club of Chicago, her seventh and most recent collection of poems is *Edges*.