

# OIL SLICK RAINBOWS

by Matthias Regan

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and poems are small and tied and gasping they eat  
gasoline, they all ate gasoline and died

—William Carlos Williams

THESE POEMS ARE FOR RAE ARMANTROUT  
IL MIGLIOR FABBRO.

## **Like Frozen Water Drops**

a double scene as though seen  
through another body's eyes

as though to quote people  
from across the room

filling in blanks  
as blinks & banks.

\* \* \* \*

I'm reading both screens at once  
I'm getting insects in profile  
speaking on cordless phones  
I'm getting the way he sits next to her  
cross-legged gauze softly fluttering  
to the sound of small hammers clinging

## Confessions Of A Word Processor

Looking for the tip  
that will let the words out  
she scrambles under the covers  
long legs squirming—  
“running in air”  
or how a turtle or rat  
or cat or mouse or man  
will flair screaming  
when grasped by a superior.  
The rhyme is obvious  
perhaps inferior  
as a result. The little  
cursing bar sits waiting  
on the screen  
impatiently winking.

## **Poem**

Our cat  
was a flowerpot  
than a cat.  
Things  
will do that.  
& cats.

## **Treasure Island**

The British reform  
themselves within  
the grocery bag  
of canceled virtuosity:

a cloudy zone.

Topics as eruptions.

Many parting songs.

“Knock me up”:

a side attraction

in the painful show

of rhythm & lights.

Volcanic words’ night.

## Heaven

It's nothing. Really. Hanged figures  
dance among the walls & clamber ever  
toward us along the twisted balconies.

\* \* \* \*

A man in the desert smelling flowers now smells a lady's shoe. He  
plucks another from among the rocks. A pearl colored slip-on with  
moderate heel. He holds his nose to its inside, grizzled chin caressing  
the glossiness. Heavy gloved hands hold it. A finger-thick coil of yellow  
rope that twice encircles his hat, to hold it on against the wind, holds it.

\* \* \* \*

Bandits hacking at small animals near the fresh graves  
blow their noses on pages torn from the holy book.

\* \* \* \*

A toucan you can  
hardly see into  
the image of. Cocked  
faces. A filmy  
posture. A  
thought bubble.

\* \* \* \*

the future discussed as a time when your attempt to make time your own  
to make your own time  
pays off

\* \* \* \*

We're hanging out in the traverse.  
A low slow long stagnate zone.

## **“All The Garbage The Sea Brings Ashore”**

The sun in a double veil of cloud  
pale reflection of itself in a lens  
a retreating shroud  
to be replaced by another

\* \* \* \*

you have to have it  
to break it  
or  
break it you  
bought it

\* \* \* \*

that we throw into the room  
what we're talking about  
flashed assumption

## Vacancy No Vacancy

“Did you ever even watch cheerleaders at a game?  
The dancing is great. Plus a cheerleader can be standing  
next to you on the street & then back flip across traffic.”

“What about women doing exercises in perfect synch?  
Its a fact that women cheered on the youth brigades!”

\* \* \* \*

The dummy torn open, the ventriloquist  
peeling away its face to find the man beneath.

\* \* \* \*

Ass crack gluten exchange  
plentiful folds of skin  
cast in iron for clarity. The spinning circles  
pretentious & beautiful  
symmetries slightly  
less than accidental  
as the back of this  
foreground suggests.  
Texture reduced to attitude.  
A have to have to  
man only really have to  
right on!

\* \* \* \*

the world enhanced by being stretched  
there are a number of important warnings  
that operation is currently prohibited

## **Difficult**

The lights flicker.  
Time goes by.  
I have my doubts.

She embraces either  
side of her neck  
stroking the stylish  
outerwear. Is that  
moon or sun? Difficult  
to know. Bony  
knuckles clutching.

## Knocked Up

Sexy sailor getting smoked:  
success in the sex academy  
in the area of canceled virtuosity

\* \* \* \*

An architect doing  
just whatever. The other guy  
hates architecture.

An absolute character.  
“Facing the future”  
instead of rehashing.

Conclusion as “balance.”

\* \* \* \*

This one a  
hero or oh well  
maybe not.

\* \* \* \*

For love  
he would make  
the earth more beautiful  
to make a new form  
as the goal. The center  
as an ego.

\* \* \* \*

Tom of Finland explains his name.  
He is not happy to represent Finland  
but the name adheres.

## **Firing Range Victrola**

In the desert  
he shoots a rock  
water pours out  
& away they go!  
on horseback  
again  
the  
patient horses.

\* \* \* \*

Awaiting a signal  
that doesn't come  
instead they find  
a ruined stage  
on which a man  
w/out legs  
strapped to the back  
of a man w/out arms.

\* \* \* \*

They cross the stage  
lantern & gun  
time to get  
on the horses again.

## **Verbatim**

You want to know what's wrong with being a muse? The recon.

## Healthy Sheen

Black pastor's shirt  
scratching it slightly  
here & there across the library  
pauses to rest an arm  
on the mantle, poses  
beneath the torrid phantasm  
of a painted cathedral  
hands like a rabbit's paws  
opening the door

\* \* \* \*

grim angel in a business suit  
hands clutched like he'd smack you  
if he wasn't holding them down

\* \* \* \*

They turn toward each other preparing to leave;  
they linger. Then he sends her on her way again.  
A further politeness—beyond that, perhaps—  
a kindness. The man gains a new gleam.

\* \* \* \*

thick beading between the panes  
a candle shaped gas lamp  
impasto portrait's dull flame

## **Pied**

Sequined slate rubber  
knee highs topped  
w/ faux snow

leopard & rubber-  
heeled, their  
cheap seams

giving in the first  
week of the holiday  
season. Yellow

paste spots reveal  
where the first lost  
sequins were.

## Still Waiting

The musicians get to work:  
flipping pages, reading passages  
flex their fingers  
getting ready to con-cen-trate!

\* \* \* \*

“there’s no reason to leave”  
he says  
“death is forever  
I have no fear”  
he’ll take the cat with him  
we guess

\* \* \* \*

catching bottles  
before they fall

## Hold Up

William Burroughs or someone is hiking toward us  
he's got a gun & a small plastic horse

he draws a calender  
with months like Pullman cars:

a lot of steam & iron as the train jolts away  
he ends up right next to us on the trail

w/ a newspaper from the train still in his hands  
"Howdy," he says "there's nothing here to save but time"

\* \* \* \*

David Niven's been slung to the side of the screen  
but here he is on the telephone ordering  
everything spicy except the fried rice  
which sounds pretty good to me

\* \* \* \*

this landscape is like Scott's shirt:  
green & crumpled

& beneath them both  
lurks a raging beast:

be still, oh mountain!  
& be still, Scott, be still!

## Quickly

what you have  
available that's  
what comes out  
  
the constraint  
of seeing, even  
w/out disruption  
from the image

\* \* \* \*

Rotate. Stop. Rotate back  
moving into caress  
  
they embrace again  
walking, white tennis  
  
dress bright against  
spare brown ground  
  
horses trotting  
through barred shadows  
  
two or three  
flailing tassels

## Later

W/ his big fur cap  
& little ruck sack  
the teenage partisan  
paces a wasteland.  
You throw an arm  
around the back seat  
twisting to face the kid  
whose future, you'll say  
in a later scene  
was decided long  
before we found him  
here. "Shut up!"  
you snarl—casual  
but sinister. Everyone  
turns to watch  
more partisans  
as they slog along  
a narrow track  
in the muddy fields  
visible only  
by the pattern of past  
feet slipping in  
prior attempts  
to ascend the hill.

MATTHIAS REGAN is an poet, educator, playwright, community organizer, and a tireless advocate for sustainable beef production. He divides his time between his cattle ranch in Chaseley, North Dakota and *lederundlinsenhaus*, a communal house for radical filmmakers and leather-tanners in Bad Vöslau, Austria. He is the author of many chapbooks, including *Queenie & I, PG-14* (with Amos Bunn), *Tramp Steamer Days*, *George Herbert Liposuction Bush*, *Pork* and *Pork II: Pork Shank*. His play *Drunk Moms Are Sexting (Again)* is being staged by the Chaseley Community Players this fall. His first novel, *Some Other Motherfucker*, will be published in 2013 by Spinal/Flu-Id Press.

