

CHANGMING YUAN

Seascape

So heavy has the night grown
The horizon sags deep, deeper
Into the heart of the ocean, where

A new sun is slowly reacting, rising
As if to push up the entire world back
High above the morning

Helleh

While all my fellow humans hope to
Enter heaven after they die, I am alone
Living in paradise already:

An earthly realm I have built myself
With the light from Lapland, where the setting sun
Shines with the morning glows above golden snow

The air from Shangri-la, where the yin
And yang are in pure and perfect balance with
Each other in every grass, every cloud

The water from Waterton Lakes, which
Reflect the mountain of trees as clearly
As the mountain reflects upon the clear water

That's all my spirit needs, not the fragments
Of the meaning about Eden long lost
But the whole backyard within my solitary heart

Frogs in the Fog

For the past half century, I have never seen
A single frog in this city, not even in the whole country
But there are four big-mouthed frogs leaping around
Afar in a ricefield of my native village, four frogs
Squatting under the rotten bridge on the way leading
To my junior high school, four frogs playing on a big

Lotus leaf in my heart, four frogs calling constantly
From the dark pages of history invisible at midnight
Four frogs meditating under a puti tree transplanted
In a nature park, four frogs swimming into a fish net
Like bloated tadpoles, the same four frogs whose
Monotoned songs resonating aloud in different tongues
With different pitches, yes, the four frogs still there

Music

Ancient Indian legend has it
That the origin of music
Was an *om*, supposedly the very
First and the most primitive note
(Whose frequency can cause resonance
If you adapt yours to it)
While most educated people today would say
It is the big bang
That has been pushing its sound waves
Farther and farther
Beyond the boundaries of the universe

A fundamental feature
That can offer profound pleasure to any human
Ears anywhere anytime
Is this silence, a blank absence
Where the yin and yang reach
A higher balance within
A meditating mind

A sound of silence
A note whose frequency resonates with your inner being

Seasonal Stanzas

July

Dogs are making human history (right)
When humans deal with dog days (right)
When the sullen, sultry sky witnesses:
Fraud, fervor, frenzy -- yes
It is our inner heat that has been
Warming the whole atmosphere
Like Julius's inflated heart

August

With stone fruits
Like plums, apricots, peaches
Ripening rapidly
In this month of the sickle
It is high time to cut open
The secrets of sunlight
In their hardened hearts
Wrapped with the fleshiest
The juiciest season

September

In the open fields
Nothing, not even a wish is left
Except bare stems
Deep holes, bald twigs
But behind each closed door
Is a cozy room
private or public, full of
Colored fruits, plump seeds
And overflowing minds
As if all ready for the new school
of thought

Changming Yuan, 8-time Pushcart nominee and probably the world's most widely published poetry author who speaks Mandarin but writes English, grew up in a remote village, began to learn English at 19, and published several monographs before leaving China. With a PhD in English, Changming co-edits *Poetry Pacific* with Allen Qing Yuan in Vancouver, and has poetry appearing in 899 literary publications across 30 countries, including *Best Canadian Poetry* (2009;12;14), *BestNewPoemsOnline* and *Threepenny Review*.