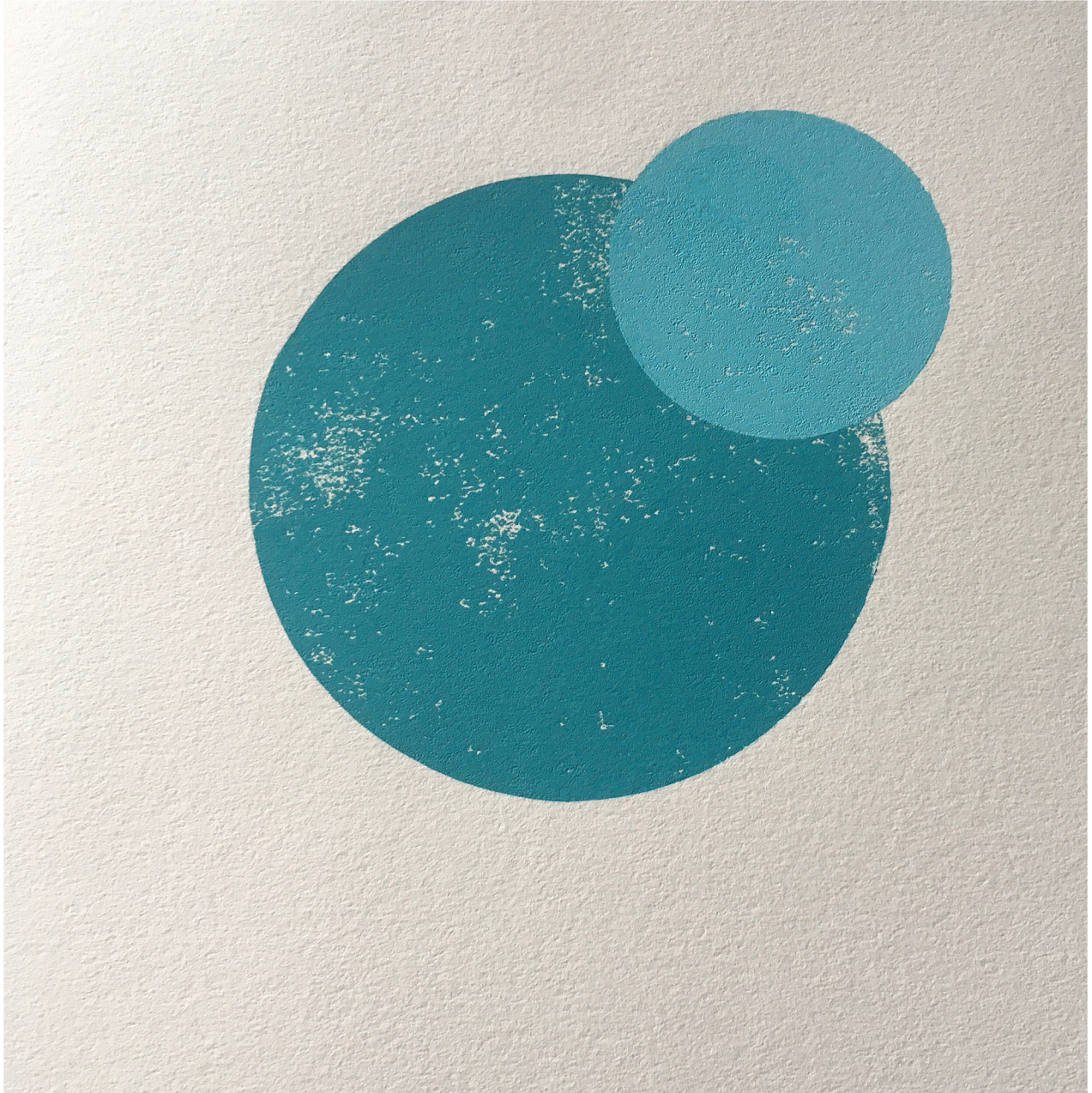


Lindenwood



Dorota Czermer

Lindenwood

poems by
Dorota Czermer

Metambesen
Annandale-on-Hudson
2021

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is the seventy-ninth
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We sound it
to lock-down
the sea of mind.

Lip:

Ah

Lipa

The sun
comes up
from way below

and nothing in her
disturbs
a thing.

*Mary, Mother of God
fell asleep on the Krakauer Hochaltar
(1477 -1489).
For 11 summers Veit Stoss
carved the figures. The Magi.
The Apostles. The angel Gabriel.
Many angels, each over 12 feet tall,
each one a tree. Mary, house of gold...
Mary, a mother...
The fallen limes,
some 300 years old,
turned golden over their heads
growing within this dream
of sun and wind and a summerscent attained
to exaltation.*

And if a face, affection
always by the door of too much pain, of not just anybody but
the loved one *there* lessening itself unlesening with breeze, and
if no face then what? a sting in the eye the wind billowing a blue
poplin dress tearing through the hair's softness or what it was,
no, no, what is, scrambling for the *is* no & no reconfiguring
what's left is *there*, who, no one? though the root of panic leaf by
leaf word by word drawn deep, down to who is dead and who
isn't who still tossed up, no & no, something so sub-lime as
describing a face way into the foliage, reduced to myself
concentrating on the green body,

a nobody now.

Forget who is
to get going
it, says Heraclitus
retains its shape
once initiated by smells
resists the darkness

Mother
chrysalis
susurrous
over the side
to see herself
inside another,
a crib, a life,
to lullaby
reaching back

“...her apron full of stars...”

Stretch *it*. Stretch her starry soul.

Stretch her. On a wooden plank.
Uncreate the creased. Iron in silence.
Kiss, bless and throw it
on a peg. Ache. Ache & stretch
Moonwise. Let them feast. Off her
Dry sphinx breasts. Moon
-wise stretch yourself feeding
the contour
of everything
ready to be the next
any thing.

*In 1411
Andrei Rublev wrote
"The Trinity"
on bone-smooth
limewood, to this day
warm to the touch*

The loam
of a black disc
onto which
the icon
invests itself
with each birth
and each unharvested
shape

Coffins & cradles

Spoons, say the Slavs
are best made of linden wood,
they won't
crack under the strain
like good altars
like mothers of god
painted in orpiment
like those other
vessels. Here lies a life.
And nothing in her
disturbs a thing.

but "*if the night of the night is the night itself*"
(said Ken)

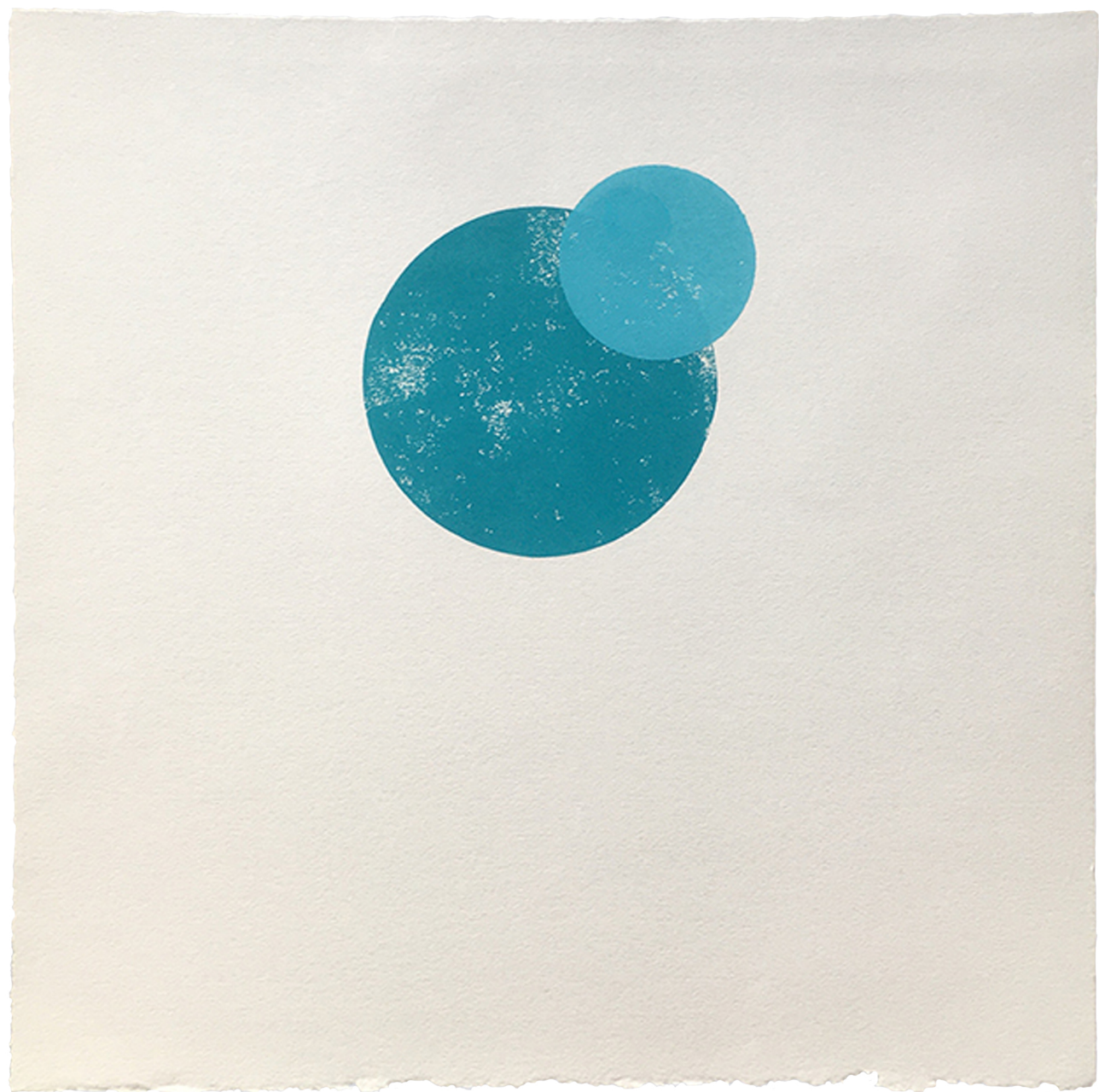
it will be passed down with the lullaby

and whether any color
where the blobs of light
hanged fixed
or whether
the eyes
mattered not,
it was the ear first
or *that* something felt
merely internally
felt in
the rocking
moist
and sweet
rocking
from one word
to the next a seed
about the dark
jelly of language
a *totenpass* ovule
sucked out
of your first gooseberry
all encased
in the same old
cradle
the body
the rocking
the scent



We saw peacocks dance on the streets of Mumbai

Let it steep.



Deep inside.

a point at which
relief, toward
what must be
a cliff as well as
a plain bucket
into which we let go,
sweating and letting
and sucking the pain
sort of unknown

(re: The Russian Baths on East 10th St, NYC)

Touch, strong and pervading influence of a body sitting next to you turns you into salt. Lot's wife. Her only sin must've been the crying, not doing. What was left of touch? While she holds, molds the impending catastrophe with her body she pulls short, the air hard at hand. Who was there to touch, is he still? He, she before the cold snapped. Touched back. Or those who self-referential end up touching themselves, the angels. Before the fall, we cry. Like a leaf with nothing left to resist, hearing someone say something veined with pleasure, we shake, we split. '*Cold from forgetfulness*', detached, untouched. Abruptly alone. Strong and pervading influence of the self on the self. Because of Lot's wife. Her rooted flow fills the cry over the last stranger who had his fingers brush against mine, to be *it* now. In the morning light. What? maybe a subway ticket, maybe a dime. And the stalagmites of salt under the viaduct pointing toward the gate, the hollow cave from which the only view now is loss. There was and there will be the day your own intimacy twice exhaled flopped, the first morning of your holding back out

of fear that it will, be getting through to you by 'Headwind', by some dark economic magnetism or heat in the end it gets into you too, out of the endlessness of air each time sort of sex each breath more risky each slightly more problematic than the earlier one, *rape*, in some part of you this irrevocable sort of lover *is all that there is, death*, since you owe him one smelling him watching him accelerate into you ~~too~~? now it is out of a thin nowhere you an animal you a tear a torn lime leaf as the black hieroglyphs fly by so you can think of the word 'birds', still not breathing while they, free, enter and exit the frame of the train window, touch you from afar, slice the picture as the carriage sets off against the poles slice back slice slice back above Harlem's 125th the air the smells everything already filtered through the skin of the morning papers "*Economy Faces 'Tornado-Like Headwind'* March 10th *as Financial Markets Spiral*" away, crying the farewells of the city you loved all too briefly remembering to splash off any stranger as soon as you get out of there but do not move the knees then so close to being carried away by those other knees holding it all so still the journey of steamy auras effaced with the past lime blossom excess answering the cry of the oranges in the pool *the smell remains* relevant because so nearly shared,

why not be a Lot's wife?



“Go back and get it”

Try to recall
how to be a bird
being a bird
in the bird symbol

Try to recall
the form
of the lips
under the sticky tape
years into this

Try skipping backwards
across the muted skies
into the cobblestoned river

Taste

Lipiec lipcowa noc napar z lipy wonnej lipny lipowy

The marrow that runs through you
with a soft scent. Hard
rain on Washington Square
rips down the blossoms
tearing you down
with them as you step
away from the flow, to go
home. Go, says the bird
of Sankofa, for there is no wrong
in turning back, go
before you
forget your own.

in the impossible
of no language
heavier than body
lighter than saffron
outside of time

Nowhere else can matter.

Another way of seeing this:

Peacocks danced on the empty streets of Mumbai.

On the horizon
rainbows out-
played the fog.



Barbara Iwona Czerner (1930-2003), photo: Olgierd Czerner (1929-2020)

Sonnet by **Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer**
translated by Dorota Czerner

STONE PINE

SCHNAĆA LIMBA (1891)

Afoot the wild abyss. In dark skies pale
Shine of the moon a water lily like
That raise its cup into the chill of night.
Silence - only the thundering cascade

Reaches above the rapids where a pine
Stands on a rock and stunted bows her limbs
Feeling all fight is vain and now she must
Fall in the air wound into its death hymn.

But she is not alone to fight this pain,
Peoples, nations entire, are destined so
To perish soon by some cruel curse shall go.

Who cannot see the end to fight, its worth
Is nought? And lacking strength to live, then life
Is aught? A tear shed on a weak man's grave...?

Lipa is the Polish word for the lime tree, pronounced as the wide sound of the letter A caught in the act of the lips announcing themselves, in and out, a lip flection. Built around the image of “The Reader” by Robert Kelly (published in *Metambesen* #67 around Easter 2020) these poems stand for multiple projections of the linden leaf inside my own language, with full respect to the weaving of the Polish and English veins. Among the many beliefs tied to this tree by Slavic peoples, there is one saying that a baby laid to sleep in a cradle made of limewood will grow strong, nurtured by golden dreams. The full-silhouette warm opulence of *Lindenwood* reaches as far as the memory of the mother.

Lindenwood is the first full entry from the “Tree Diary” written during the spring and summer days of 2020. Two others, *Morus* and *Syringa*, mulberry and lilacs, were published in the Issue 7 of *Blazing Stadium* on the new moon of December 2020.

“if the night of the night is the night itself” is a line found in Kenneth Irby’s *Uncollected 1964-2006* “[Written on Tom Meyer’s birthday, 2004]”.

This translation of “Stone Pine” by the little known Polish modernist poet is dated 2013. It was drawn from a transcription of the sonnet as I remembered it spoken by my mother who knew it by heart. Listening to her voice speak in my mind I jotted it down, with a couple of re-imagined words filling any gaps. The final form took shape with Ken Irby in mind after my astonished reading of his “[homage to Kasimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer (2 Dec 1865-18 Jan 1940)]” in *The Intent On*.

It was only after my having completed *Lindenwood* that the poet Pēteris Cedriņš pointed me to Robert Kelly’s short story “A Line of Sight” from *Doctor of Silence*. This disclosed that the title chosen for my poems also happens to be the name of Robert and Charlotte’s house on the stream *Metambesen*.

