

## Ray Filip / TWO POEMS

### APSARA

All paths folded at her feet,  
She sings.  
Saturated with Vietnam specials  
And Dainty Rice commercials,  
We sit  
Cynical and tacit  
In a United Church basement.

Khmer Rouge on her lips,  
I remember the coffin of that Canadian Dan  
From high school killed in Laos—  
His seat still warm from history class.  
The entire school filed by his bier,  
Mournful multiple exposures of students and teachers.  
Memory resurrects the silence of our winter boots  
Soundlessly passing the infant infantryman.

The vocal silence of that funeral  
Counterpoints her voice seeking serenity.  
Her empty hands gesture with offerings,  
A celestial dancer trapped  
In stone tapestry of defaced temples,  
Or in front of an alien audience.  
Some spiritual principle makes  
Of the world a chaste waste.  
A woman,  
A goddess of nothingness,  
Bows without blessing,  
In her lonely curtsy through eternity.

## HAPPY MASKS COST MORE

Hollow Hallowe'en,  
Basement of *La Baie*,  
One-faced people shuffle  
Mass market masks  
To a symphony of sniffles.  
Ugh ugly Bozo wigs  
With zaftig blue hair,  
Darth Vader death masks  
More vulgar than Agamemnon's,  
René Lévesque false fronts  
With rubber cigarette  
On which one joker wrote "prick."  
A stock of smiles for extended wear:  
Smiles like surface-to-surface missiles,  
Smiles while your heart is breaking,  
Smiles like cracks between buttocks.  
Think of egos with swell heads  
More frightening than these grosbeaks.  
Grin only for your toothbrush.  
Cackle into loud crowds,  
Careful not to lose your mask.