

Don Byrd / from THEOGONY: 2000 A.D.

Quiet afterglow of apocalypse,  
*poco a poco*, palaces, calypso,  
solace, Pelops, payola,  
forgotten,  
not forgotten.

1. THE MUSES

The walls are high, the sun drips from the office building.  
The gnarled lilac gathers time.  
The garden walls enfold the hymn. They are here.  
They are here, daughters of Mnemosyne, mothers of the data banks.  
Old-style one would say, "It is spring."

They rise with light feet in veils of hovering mist,  
making commodious time.  
where they play singing games and bathe; in time they bathe.  
They breathe with my voice to tell of things long past  
and things to come, of the unmarked space,  
the generations of gods and humans and robots,  
the inner-life of semiconductors,  
the war between the humans and the machines—  
lies, mostly lies and sometimes true,  
thickening the time now: of the first distinction, of Gaia,  
drawn in the chasm of the unmarked many and the unmarked more,  
finite, restless, steady unsteadiness.  
And they taught me, these teachers of word-craft, to sing of deeper spaces,  
of Gaia groaning and giving birth to Ouranos,  
the tropes of Being thick with themselves, the distinctions

making the universe being the universe.  
Rocks and trees, big bangs and black holes are not my themes.  
The god-haunted garden rings with the telling  
of the sacred numbers of generation,  
and the bureaucratic towers resound as the universe cracks open.  
They are here,  
they are the satellite dishes on the office building,  
they give me not a laurel branch in bloom but an Internet nipple.  
And the crows, the crows, crow.

The data flows from the sky, filling the time,  
and the poet finds these hidden places—urban gardens,  
sacred rocks in the mountains or by springs  
where water cress grows,  
and the poet drinks with the virtual water snakes.  
The muses are appalled at our appetites and sagging bellies,  
but I learned, despite their insults, to synthesize the bleeps and blaps,  
to recollect and tell the cumulative wisdom of the gods, mostly lies.

Let me follow the injunction of the muses,  
who recall the words and the word bodies  
to fill the time with unwavering measures.  
I call (nervously) the form of the first distinction 'the form.'  
Gaia is born of the chasm by recursion  
and Ouranos of Gaia by recursion,  
foundation and closure together a beginning by recursion,  
and then the generations of repetition,  
the Titans, the Olympians, the humans,

until now, the humans recur  
and enter the vastest Bus Terminal of the Soul,  
where they express themselves with their fares  
and in the video games they play while they wait,  
bound to earth by clearness of attentions alone,  
gathering up similarities, up to isomorphism,  
beyond which the bird of forgetfulness disappears into forgetfulness.

The earth has not been thought  
yet  
time has not been reversed  
now  
what would you do if someone you loved asked you  
to turn yourself inside out?

Somehow near now time now is not now either  
it is a thought

Some near now is not how either  
but a thought lost  
or was

measure this:

## 4. Gravity

William James on Nitrous Oxide, 1874:

“There are no differences but differences of degree between different degrees of difference and no difference.”

I	keeps
go	it
to	hot
the	
edge	thoughts
of	approach
this	these
thought	words
and	“no
can't	differences
fall	but
	differences...”
from	
its	no
ledge	ideas
it	in
all	things
counts	
even	the
the	butterfly
empty	just
space	lights
	on
	the
a	thistle
thermos	
of	this
time	●