

Listening

by Lorenzo Sewanan

I listen to the poetry of Brooklyn and Queens.
Today, I listened every intently to colors,
Yellow, black, brown, red, white, and the un-quantified variations in
between—
To language and sayings for telling of the worlds,
Each people a local people,
Every person a version different of his own people.
I am diversity, he/she/you/it is diversity, confluent and collusive,
New York, the city,
Mine and ours, inclusive, definite and conclusive.

The grass is soft and slowly seeping.
The dampness of a fertile ground, irradiated even as it was,
Into the folds on my jeans, cold chilling,
Like an impotent sperm bank, broken,
Uncomfortable. Awaiting and awakening
I listened, soft words, softer breeze,
Light sprinkling in the spout of a passing boat,
Springing. I keep alert, vigilant,
Poetry beguiles and bewitches the mind,
Numbs the fires and feelings of the outer body, even hunger,
Even anger! Even sleep,
Into the dream of the stories we told and heard in too many words,
Too many marks of punctuation, too much of a pause.

I forget to forget.
My mind opened, like a broken vessel,
A shattered dam, spilling
The life that wants to be lived.
I remembered every noun and matching verb,
Simple sentences only, two words divided by a line,
For action is poetry, immediate instrument:

Poems do,
poems make,
poems write.

