

durations of flamenco

by strannikov

yes! folks risk seas as needs arise
walk worlds entire under moons
from between two lands to between two seas.
Zyryab stirred hot earth and found hot roots
his strings tuned to sustain pitched
strumming fury to elicit hot heat.
a five-stringed oud if it were
some of Baghdad's fierce spare heat
carried in Zyryab's oud to Córdoba
to the Umayyads of al-Andalus.

his songs sank their roots in the hot dirt
whose thirst fed the hungry roots
not only across his decades and years:
his memory his children his school
his folks sang his songs till death
their children sang his songs until they died.
through centuries beyond a thousand years
songs in living voices sing—
these songs still live: folks play them
till (singing, playing) they find time to die.

(torrents of rhythms each other chase—
the depths at which these roots swim in hot dirt!
what these roots extract from shimmering depths!
whatever we conjure in earthly grace
lives in these records of solace and grief
voice emerging from long memory's speech.
rigors of discipline met where they lead
shoulders in wild balance sequence of hands
memory's centuries voice found in voice—
furious flurries flying to beyond—

no departures from decorum poise found here.)

his music spills deep inside hot lives
no matter the worlds or seas.
you hear? cataracts of rhythms now roar
now hush to voices of clapping palms
to anvils hammered with heels
to burning blood pouring through all who play
no more proud than any horse
thousands of hot days of songs
songs from fears wonders beauties hungers pain:
thus are lands and souls strummed from age to age.

every clap each heel every chord each note
stolen from death—music tuned to lived life
thieving from death time for perception poise
skill and memory for throats fingers feet
all from hot earth that gave birth to them all
and each—all who play clap sing dance each one
who thrills to hear see feel this music of hot
blood pulsing hot through every moment alive—
thus is life conjured with music: human life
with human music human souls human earth,
hot souls the cherished fruit of the hot earth beneath.

