

Segue

online literary journal

SHARON SUZUKI-MARTINEZ



© 2009 *Segue* online literary journal
ISSN 1939-263X

All rights reserved. This publication may be freely distributed only in its entirety and without modification, and only for private use. It may not be sold for profit. Excerpts may only be reproduced and distributed with permission from the copyright owners, except for classroom use or in the case of brief quotations used for book reviews and interviews. The creative works published in *Segue* do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of its staff or of Miami University.

Issue 8 Fall 2009

Editor: Eric Melbye
Managing Editor: Michelle Lawrence

Segue is published once a year in August. We accept submissions of high quality fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction between January 1 and April 30 (closed May through December), and writing about writing year-round via email. Before submitting, please read past issues to understand the sort of work we publish, then read our submission guidelines.

Segue
www.mid.muohio.edu/segue

Miami University Middletown
www.mid.muohio.edu

CONTENTS

The Way of All Flux	4
So Much Revealed and Even More Hidden	5
Dragon Flight	6
Author Notes	7

The Way of All Flux

It's fusty,
I told him, but
he staunchly denied the existence
of such fugly descriptions.
That dew point didn't help.
Fisticuffs prepared
to rear its ugly head
or heads
in our midst
or mist but missed the
boat or a beat
or both completely.
Such was the flux of the day, but
O the humidity! To survive
we made up
songs in the city
streets about desire
undiminished by arson
or horse-and-buggy malarkey.
The people listened
and embraced us and tolerated each
other in large numbers much
like ladybugs.
This started a party
we sought to escape from
in the trees where dripping
with ambiguities we discovered
fresh wings.

So Much Revealed and Even More Hidden

There was a woman who adored
a man from afar and then farther and farther
until he was no more
than a fossil
perfectly crystallized in a worm-riven underworld.
He was the buried treasure,
the sweetest jawbreaker,
of a congenitally loopy Medusa. And then she thought,

*in every revolution of the earth, there's
so much revealed and even more hidden.
Even now, look:
an ant's antennas speculate
from its secret tunnel. How deep does it go?
How many more ants
wistfully sigh within its curvilinear passageways?*

And then the ant, in turn, thought
it detected death
among other great things
towering brightly above, spiraling out of control.
All of its friends instantaneously agreed.

The man of stone, on the other hand, mused
about three angry rivers of magma
that, in turn, collectively dreamed
of a woman who loved
the child she cut from the lucid heart of an onion.

Dragon Flight

A dragon flies for the first time
 on a major American airline.
 It's a jeweled winter's morning tinged
 with raw significance.
 The dragon feels happy
 at its window seat bestowing names
 upon random puffs of animal-shaped clouds.
 Happy, in spite of its evil-
 tasting snack-box, inadequate tail room or
 that wily passenger trying to set fire to
 his shoe with two little sticks. It's a typical journey
 according to the sayings on the Web and TV.
 The dragon joyously christens a turtle-shaped cloud
 "Jesus," for its own particular reasons and
 "Hoo-ha," similarly
 to a cumulus hoot owl silhouette. When out of
 the blue, a gremlin
 scampers across one wing, leaps and
 pratfalls over to the other side.
 The dragon fears for the worst and
 considers confessing its unconditional love of
 prophecy over the intercom. Too late—the plane
 lands in Phoenix, sans further razzamatazz.
 That, however, enchants the dragon.
 At the baggage-go-round it reflects:
Sometimes a gremlin is just a gremlin.
Sometimes a coyote is a super genius, or not.
But wherever the dragon flies, so will the mind
and where is the danger in that?

Author Notes

Sharon Suzuki-Martinez grew up in Kaneohe, Hawaii, but now lives in Tempe, Arizona. Her poetry has or will appear in Columbia Poetry Review, Snow Monkey, Spooky Boyfriend, Tryst, Hawai'i Review and other journals. She is the poetry editor of Bosphorus Art Project Quarterly, works as a copywriter, and enjoys feeding wild animals.

About the Work

Writing and reading poetry feels like skydiving. It gives me a sense of exhilarating freedom and the poetic process is all about falling (don't laugh) in love. I'll fall in love with a line I've seen online or misread along the road or dreamt or said or overheard or heard in my head while cooking dinner. Let me show you what I mean through my three poems in *Segue*.

One humid summer day, I noticed an odd cave-like smell in the apartment and told my husband, "It's fusty." He didn't believe "fusty" is a real word (it is!). This sparked both an argument and the first line of "The Way of All Flux." The rest of the poem is a celebration of life's unpredictable fluctuations and perhaps unsurprisingly went through over a dozen revisions. Like most of my poems, it was fun to write and it shows. At least I hope so.

"So Much Revealed and Even More Hidden" came to me as I was in my kitchen preparing some Japanese chicken curry and shooing away ants. Had I been cooking something simpler, like a frozen pizza, I probably wouldn't have written this poem. The sparking line that drifted into my thoughts as I tearfully chopped onions was: "There was a woman who adored a man from afar." I wrote the poem from several simultaneous points of view to create a world that increases in both fullness and mystery. I wanted to play with the idea that the more you know, the more you realize—you don't know.

I heard the first line "A dragon flies for the first time on a major American airline" in my head while riding the bus to work. I was thinking about a trip I'd just taken to Phoenix. It was a typical, bright-frozen, winter's morning in Minneapolis. As the bus crossed over the Mississippi River, I felt happy. I became the dragon or the dragon became me. By the time I reached my office, I had a rough idea of what would happen in "Dragon Flight."

I know I have a poem when I can't stop spinning a story-song around my first line. Next, I write down my thoughts and obsessively read aloud and revise until the poem feels three-dimensional: alive with a body, spirit, voice, and a world all its own.

My poems are out to seduce readers into having a soulful good time as they open themselves to worlds lush with unexpected possibilities. I want people to understand that even when a poem is funny, it's never frivolous (unless it's a limerick). Poetry is like skydiving and knowing you can grow wings or sprout balloons or become a thundercloud or be rescued by Zeus or be saved by Sasquatch before reaching the ground. I love William Carlos Williams' line: "It is difficult to get news from poems yet men die miserably every day for lack of what is found there."

Sharon Suzuki-Martinez on the Web

www.bapq.net/

spookyboyfriend2.weebly.com/sharon-suzuki-martinez.html

www.tempe.gov/arts/events/Poets/09Poet.htm

www.mtn.org/accesstoart/archive/ep5/index.html

www.leftfacingbird.com/LEFT%20FACING%20BIRD/LEFT%20FACING%20BIRD.html