

DEAR PERSON,



Issam Zineh
poems

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Notes

“Form & Occasion”: “the special now of the lyrical moment” riffs on Jonathan Culler’s “special ‘now,’ of lyric articulation” in *Theory of the Lyric* (Harvard University Press, 2017).

“Meditation at the End of December”: “Something extraordinary has happened on this dull earth” is not quite, but almost, a verbatim quote attributable to Lisa Yuskavage, who was talking about cangiantismo in an interview with Laura Allsop (2017).

“Imagination” makes reference to Sharon Lockhart’s *Pódworka* (2009).

“The Last Time I was at the 7-ELEVEN”: The last few stanzas borrow phrasing from something I heard Jess Row say in Q&A after his lecture, “Friend to Friend in the Endtime: Imagining Solidarity, Writing the Future” (2021).

“No Man’s Land” is the title of a painting by Lisa Yuskavage. The poem is informed by my encounter with the exhibition *Lisa Yuskavage: Wilderness*, Baltimore Museum of Art (2021).

“Notes on a Friend’s Poem”: The phrase “dissolution on an endless plane of Byzantine blue” is from Henri Cole’s “Cape Cod Elegy.”

“Occupied Territory” is a cento with lines (in order) from Donald Justice, Federico Garcia Lorca, Jane Kenyon, Zuhair Abu Shayib, Richard Wilbur, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Venus Khoury-Ghatta, and Czesław Miłosz.

“The Last Poem I Write” takes its penultimate line from Wade Davis’s *The Wayfinders* (House of Anansi, 2009).

Acknowledgments

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AGNI: “Against Rhetoric,” “Ars Poetica,” “Dear Person,” “For My Father and His Tender Heart”

Allium: “Occupied Territory,” “Turbulence”

Columbia Journal: “FYI”

Gulf Coast: “Eulogy,” “The Last Poem I Write”

Pleiades: “Beach Reading (Summer)”

Prairie Schooner: “A Certain Kind of Resilience”

The Rumpus: “Beach Reading (Winter)”

The Yale Review: “Meditation at the End of December”

Tinderbox Poetry Journal: “When We Look at Ancient Mesopotamian Myth”

Parts of “Dear Person” were published in *AGNI* as an epistolary response to Carrie Cogan’s “Dear Person Who I Loved, Back When I Mistook Letters for Love.” The poem is, therefore, indebted to Carrie Cogan for its inspiration and some of its phrasing, borrowed with her consent. “When We Look at Ancient Mesopotamian Myth” received the 2024 Majda Gama Editors’ Prize from *Tinderbox Poetry Journal* whose editors I would like to especially acknowledge for their support.

“*Lamium Purpureum*” is for Maryama Antoine.

“Steadfastness” is for Joseph DeRoche *in memoriam*.

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