

JONATHAN BOULTING, SIX TREE POEMS

DURAMEN

for Nicole d'Amonville

Olive acacia fig orange
banana pine cypress lemon
palm carob holly-oak --
the truth about trees is this
(in summer especially):
unless, inescapable,
one comes to pluck, prune or hack,
their interests lie elsewhere
-- in air, in light, in other
trees ever so courteously
threatening to encroach upon
their mother territories.
Graceful their vigilance, who
grow in prayer beyond their self-
possession into a self-
stewardship, their Divine Right
martyrdom to times, seasons,
noisy seas. They will present
the fruits of their patience to
no One in particular - the
wind.

Disinterested, do
they challenge us to a purely
vertical aspiration,
play at seducing us from
responsible horizons?
Their rooted vigour expires
heady odours, inspires silence.
They are the keepers of distance,
the birds their interpreters.
Red and gold and all purples,
occasional dragons blaze
in their branches. They are at home
to or within the impossible.

Llucalcari, Mallorca

Note: Duramen: "heartwood of exogenous tree" (OED)

BARCELONA TOBOROCHI

poetry has a way of happening
on an afternoon in early autumn
so almost disregardedly as to imply
courtesy is grace, grace courtesy.
a Japanese lady, all elegance
and two adolescent sons, en route for
the shore, encounter the silk floss tree -
a Para-Uruguayan kind of baobab.

tentatively, they've paused mid-traffic
to pay their respects to her prickly
nipples sullen alembic of a trunk,
her flowers, their lyrically orgiastic pink.
quietest of hostages, discreetest host,
she forbids the obtruder, sisters the guest.

SONNET SENZA SESTET

'relatively' peaceful, perhaps, these
woods, sounding their green dissonances,
golden here, dark there as loser gods,
drawing us from now into where we feel
absences restless on forest floors,
predator confounded and prey.

amen.

branches threaten branches, flourish foliage,
root steals on root in under doom.

WISTARIA XXIÈME

for Béthsébée Beau

wistaria makes of this Paris corner
an option - a temporary arbour
for those who under this hot city air
follow sidestreet pavement wherever.

the fragrance, a purple blue, is desire
as it might or should have been, were there
no history, and the Grande Mère a girl
still, and the only story me and her, here.

JACARANDA

for Laure Klarwein

do all ands end at the sight of
jacaranda blossom, so
heavily joyful, a blue
floating the afternoon plaza,
place of warm light, of shadow?
I wouldn't go so far as to say
it silences the languages –
it offers a suggestion
of a fatefulness fragrant
to one who has yet to forget
the weight of self-exiled feet;
ineluctably gentle,
soundlessly, a tolling of bells -
a blue elephant treading air

YACARANDA

for Olivia Casanueva

many the modes of mauve against the sky, echoing
to a frostiest freshness in the thick of the day -
celestial blossom, shadow down the Raval,
a no less hopeless love than any other love,
knowing to know her was knowing nothing more
than Paradise, the blissful fall into The,
blur or factual heat of It, the definite
contours of the mediterranean tristesse
June afternoons bequeath to July's afterwords:
saddening pleasures and the human summer
coming to yesterday one night of always all.

or blossom high in the sun and Andean shadow,
a mauve like lilac if you like, or lavender -
a violet ultramarine - a tune for alto,
clarinet, viola – song for the flowing blue
September spring delivering the lovers
- the old men too, their shout bald in the wilderness,
their nothing left to sing and trumpeting it.

many the modes of mauve, mortal all of them.

Tarija, Bolivia

JONATHAN BOULTING has published widely but infrequently, including with 'Magenta' (Dublin); 'Tagus', 'Poetry in Translation' (Oxford); 'Temps des Loups (co-editor with Josée Lapéyrère, 'Po&sie' (ed. Michel Deguy), 'Altaforte', 'Discours Analytique' (Paris); 'Trafalgar Square' (Barcelona), 'Matador' (ed. Miquel Barceló, Madrid); 'Linos' (Rio); 'Amereida' (Chile); 'Trabajo del Poeta' (Mexico); 'Serbian Literary Magazine', 'No Rules' (Serbia). *Selections*: 'Sur Watar' (Paris); 'Trala Trelew' (Valparaíso); 'London Plane[Belgrade sonnets]' (No Rules e-book). *International 'poetic acts'* ('Phalènes'), including Amereida, New Moon Carnival Royal Albert Hall, Barcelona Carrer de Paradis. *Translations*: Robert Marteau, Nicole d'Amonville, Fabrice Gravereaux, Pere Gimferrer, Gerardo Melo Mourão, Victor Obiols, Miquel Bauçà, Blaise Cendrars, Miodrag Pavlović, Kosovo Ballad (Radio Belgrade). *Translated by*: Robert Marteau, Edison Simons, Nicole d'Amonville, Tedi López Mills, Alvaro Uribe, Gerardo Melo Mourão, Victor Obiols, Marija Puslojić - including 'Ode to the Black Goddess' (Spanish, Portuguese, French). *Criticism*: Introduction to 'D'amor: Trenta Poemes. Robert Graves' (Edicions 62); 'El Tórtolo y Fénix' (Herder), with Robert Marteau – esoteric dimensions of Shakespeare's 'Phoenix and Turtle'; 'Los Leprosos de Europa' (Lateral); Marvell's 'Iron Gates' (Belgrade University Philological Faculty website). Teaches Literary Translation (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona).