

"Words' Worth" Poetry Readings

Poets at the Culture, Arts, and Parks Committee of the Seattle City Council.

My Map by John Olson

Let me tell you about my map, my genetic map: over here is Mount Predilection and over here is Lake Peculiarity. This is the hyperborean flower garden of my great neurotic lilies and my subtle obsessive mosses, my melancholy babies and my electromagnetic begonias.

Here we have a Polynesia of Jingled Personal Wounds and this is an archipelago of Contradictory Ganglia.

Here is an archway embellished with small carvings of extraordinary impulses. Thousands of blocks of stone etched with careless remarks and imprudent gestures await enactment in the Hall of Foolhardy Acts. They've survived air raids, poachers, and Martha Stewart.

This is the Rock of Abnormality. It is burned in a Kiln of Indulgence to produce hydrocarbon and peals of laughter.

This is a gene for brooding and this is a gene for lewd and indecent body hairs. This is a gene for pausing to stare out of a window and this is a gene for enhancing thickets of industrial indolence.

These are my Caverns of Regret and this is my Swamp of Remorse. This is a spiral of chromosomal chamber music and this is a fragment of celebrity DNA going haywire in a Macedonia of kinship roots.

This is my capacity for confusion and this is my genetic code for translating bubbles as they dance on the edge of oblivion.

Here is the Inner Mongolia of my predisposition to seclude myself from the twisted iron of history and this huge expanse of glittering jelly is the Aral Sea of my candy-colored volatility genes.

Here is my aptitude for fruit, my penchant for indirection, my twin blue socks and my ancestral irises, my uncanny knack for getting lost and my acidic disposition toward Florida lemons.

This is my Tropic of Delinquency and this is my Continent of Gross Incontinence. This is the Land of the Ordinary Nose and this is the Land of the Normal Adolescent Fears.

This is my Botswana of Biodiversity and this is a grove of fever trees. This is a pool of Swedish genes and this is a kaluga sturgeon filled with 400 pounds of caviar.

This is my Cretaceous half century of caterwauling and this is my Mozambique of Big Browsers and High Expectations.

This is a gene for never remembering to buy batteries and this is a gene for bad ideas.

This is a gene for going to market and this little gene ran all the way home with a dark parka of molecular relics.

This is a pyramidine and this is a tranquil bay. This is a fertile bottomland and this is a rocky outcrop of empty slabs of fate.

This is a Family Tree and this is a fragile thread of Africa.

This is the Sea of Metamorphosis and this is a barge of Junk DNA.

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