Sound and Color: Poets and Visual Artists in Exquisite Exchange

Description: Over the course of ten days, five pairs of poets and visual artists from varied backgrounds exchanged work in the style of a cross-disciplinary exquisite corpse. The resulting collaborations are premiered in this panel, with reflections on the process by poets (in person) and artists (by statement or video) exploring the potential of ekphrastic exchange to nurture relationships, urge work in new directions, and expand our understanding of sound, color, and other tools of our respective crafts.

Event Category: Poetry Readings

Event Organizer/ Moderator:
Emily Van Kley is the author of The Cold and the Rust and Arrhythmia. Her work has been awarded The Iowa Review Award, The Florida Review Editor's Prize, the Loraine Williams Prize for Poetry, and the Lexi Rudnitsky First Book Prize.

Event Participants:
Claudia Castro Luna is an Academy of American Poets, Poets Laureate Fellow (2019), WA State Poet Laureate (2018-2021), and Seattle's first Civic Poet (2015-2017) She is the author of Cipota Under the Moon, Killing Marías, One River, A Thousand Voices, and the chapbook This City.

VI KHI NAO is the author of Swimming With Dead Stars, A Bell Curve Is A Pregnant Straight Line, and the play, Waiting for God. She was the

Sun Yung Shin is the author of 4 poetry collections including The Wet Hex; editor of 3 anthologies: What We Hunger For: Refugee & Immigrant Stories about Food & Family; A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota; & Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption, & author of two picture books.

Maya Jewell Zeller is the author, most recently, of "out takes/ glove box," chosen by Eduardo Corral as winner of the New American Poetry Prize, and "Alchemy for Cells & Other Beasts" (an interdisciplinary collaboration); she is Associate Prof. at Central WA U and Affiliate Faculty for Western CO U.

Opening Moderator Remarks and Housekeeping Announcements

Welcome to Sound and Color: Poets and Visual Artists in Exquisite Exchange. A few reminders before we begin:

For those needing or wishing to follow along to a written text, please raise your hand or otherwise indicate and (panelist) will come to you with a printed copy of our presentation. Because the poets and visual artists on this panel are presenting work created especially for this event, we ask that you not share or reprint anything in your packet in a way that could cause the work to be considered “previously published,” unless you have that participant’s expressed consent (this includes social media).

Please make sure that spaces marked for wheelchairs remain clear of chairs or other barriers.
Treat service animals as working animals and do not attempt to distract or pet them.

Be aware of those with chemical sensitivities and refrain from wearing scented products.

Please be aware that our fellow attendees may have invisible disabilities. Do not question anyone's use of an accommodation while at the conference, including for chairs reserved for those with disabilities.

My name is Emily Van Kley. Again thank you for being here, early(!) at the very outset of your AWP. We made it, some of us well-caffeinated (I definitely am), and I’d like to say I hope this is the beginning of an inspiring and fruitful gathering time for each of you. We’re so glad you’re sharing this part of your morning with us.

In the opening lines of the Alabama Shakes’ Grammy-award-nominated album, Sound and Color, Brittney Howard sings, “A new world hangs/Outside the window/ Beautiful and strange/ It must mean I’ve fallen away/ I must be/ Sound and Color.” Today, my fellow panelists and I reflect on the beautiful and strange worlds cross-disciplinary collaborations call into being, how they transform they way we use the tools of our crafts (sound, color, and the rest), and perhaps even ourselves as practitioners. Over the last few months, I’ve had the honor of working alongside Claudia, Vi, Sun Yung, and Maya as we’ve each exchanged work with a visual artist. We are thrilled to present the results of those exchanges today. Each poet/artist pairing has created a series of five images and five poems, with the structure of their exchange left entirely to the participants. I expect the diversity of approaches will be intriguing, as unique as each practitioner and the alchemy their relationships represent.

Format-wise, we’ll start by introducing each other in the order we’re seated, and then get right to the presentations: each poet will take about 12 minutes to introduce their artist collaborator, present the ekphrastic series
they created, and offer brief reflections on the process, including statements by the artists, who aren’t able to be here in person.

We hope to leave about 10 minutes at the end for conversation, including any questions you might have for the panelists.

Anything I forgot?

**Introductions**

**Participant Readings/ Presentations**

Each participant presents for 12 minutes, responding to questions including the following:

Please introduce your visual artist and their medium(s). What drew you to work together?

What structure/ pattern did you use for exchanging work? How did you come to choose this structure/ pattern? How do you see this shaping the resulting work?

What themes emerged between the collaborators’ work for this exchange? How do you see your work for this series in relationship to your wider body of work/ usual writing practice(s)?

Did you notice anything new or interesting in the way you engaged with the tools of your craft during this exchange? Give a specific example.

Please share any written or video statement your artist has provided.
Q & A

Thanks to all the panelists, and to all of you for your kind attention! We now have about 10 minutes for conversation, which can be formal or informal. First, does anyone have questions for the panelists, either someone in particular or the group as a whole?

If not, we’ll stick around up front until it’s time to clear out for the next session, so feel free to ask any questions you might have, or just come say hello and let us know what you thought of the panel etc.