A Thousand Bluebirds [1]

May 15, 2017   Featured Poetry [2]
Borders [3]
Collaboration [4]

Poem by Maureen Seaton and Neil de la Flor

Sinéad O'Connor and Her Coat of a Thousand Bluebirds

1.

I am so highly evolved that when I dance I stand very still and bluebirds come and perch on my bra straps.

(I don't have bra straps, only cups.)

(I only have cups on Sunday.)

<center>2.</center>

I know now what a smiley face can do, and I exercise it judiciously, although sometimes it's hard to tell whether or not a certain situation merits a smiley face or a machete. Either way, it's pretty funny.

In a sense, Seattle is a smiley face like all things beginning with sea.

And there are often grins that have something to do with moving the poor to another city, but I've never been there.

I've been in a tempest.

(Oil of a pumpkin? Pipe of a dream?)

<center>3.</center>

Things that begin with ano: anoint, anodyne. I am anointed unceremoniously. I am something that soothes and comforts. What am I?

A mouse in tights.

A tight spot to maneuver.

Once I bought jeans with smile lines built in. They were hanging over the side of the bin, and they called to me, although nothing about them seemed illuminated.

ILLUMINATED.

<center>4.</center>

Pondering them, I flew into Spanish. I was Spanish and covered with light.

Light of a goose, light as a father, re-numerated and stunning.

I pulled them over my existing legs and trotted around like a mouse. I was looking for a hole in the wall, proverbially.

That's when I found Sinéad O'Connor, singing, when bluebirds flew out of her mouth.

Her coat was a thousand bluebirds coming to life and flying away like pieces of transformed sexual abuse.

And the crowd was pointing fingers at her coat, her blue tongue of feathers.

Such an intelligent bird, I thought, and all the cats inside me whispered: mouse.

Art Information

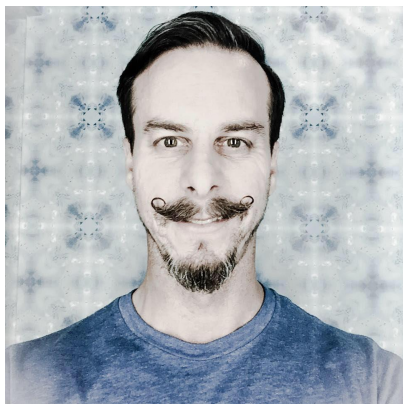- "Bird Brain II" © Suzanne Sbarge [5]; used by permission.

Maureen Seaton has authored seventeen poetry collections, both solo and collaborative. Her awards include the Iowa Poetry Prize, the Lambda Literary Award, the Audre Lorde Award, an NEA Fellowship, and two Pushcarts. Her memoir, *Sex Talks to Girls*, also garnered a "Lammy." She teaches creative writing at the University of Miami, Florida, where she first met Neil de la Flor and wrote two books with him: *Sinéad O'Connor and Her Coat of a Thousand Bluebirds* (Firewheel Editions, 2011) and *Catastrophe Theory* (Jackleg Press, 2012). Follow Maureen on Twitter at @mseaton9. [6]

Neil de la Flor is a writer, educator, artist, and executive director of Reading Queer, a Miami-based organization dedicated to promoting and fostering queer literary culture in south Florida. For more information, visit Neil de la Flor's website [7]or follow him on Twitter @neil_delaflor. [8]

This poem was first published in Court Green*; it also appeared in the book* Sinéad O'Connor and Her Coat of a Thousand Bluebirds*, which won the Firewheel Press Sentence Book Award in 2011.*

Source URL: https://talkingwriting.com/thousand-bluebirds

Links:
[1] https://talkingwriting.com/thousand-bluebirds
[2] https://talkingwriting.com/talkingwriting-categories/featured-poetry
[3] https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/borders
[4] https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/collaboration
[5] http://www.suzannesbarge.com
[6] https://twitter.com/mseaton9
[7] http://www.neildelaflor.com
[8] https://twitter.com/neil_delaflor

(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o), m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m) })(window,document,'script','https://www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-18260536-1', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');