

Universal Geometry

Take a walk
through stars and your mind,
stretching fingers wide
as your arms reach towards
distant pricks of light
against an infinite black

Gravity and reality limit you –
so take flight from harsh certainty
and blow past physics
with its silly string
theories and quantum boundaries

Let the Milky Way
be the torch lighting your path
as you stroll across the stars,
dancing along the edges
of its solar systems

Just be careful to skirt
the edges of black holes,
those irresistible wells –
unless you want to take a dive
into an abyss and see
what comes out the other side

No one can hear you scream
in a vacuum but you can
(and should) listen
to the cosmic vibrations
with every atom of your body
every molecule of your soul
to the music of the spheres
and rejoice in the symphony

Play your fingers along rings
and orbits, push planets
along like beads
on a child's toy
or an abacus counting to infinity

Come back to Earth
and return to your body
refreshed, a new perspective,
with the knowledge
that problems are
dust motes in a ray of light
and that universal geometry
is a beautiful thing

Ash

Gatlinburg, TN 2016

A gray caterpillar inches
along, its head consuming

mouth of fire burning
paper and leaves

dragging down to
a mouth in a beard

belonging to a craggy face
looking at a mountain range

A similar worm
of far greater proportions

burns its way along
the teeth, the spine

of a granite ridge
dotted with cabins

and old growth forests
now furious candles

The taste of smoke
and hopes and dreams

of burnt out houses,
their blackened wood

bones, blistered paint
like skin peeled back

Your feet making clouds
of ash on the floor

Ode to a Pebble

after Pablo Neruda

Remnant
of mountains past,
broken bits
of majesty
reduced to scree
to gravel underfoot

Reminder of mortality
to the highest peaks –
You can and will
be brought low
crushed, crumbled A slave
riding behind a Roman general
whispering humility

As many shapes
and forms as
individual stones
littering the earth,
no two
quite the same

Tumbled, polished
smoothed
by water,
wind, wear,
the constant
grinding movement
of earth against itself

Or fragmented
edges, sharp
jagged teeth
on a saw,
diamond pointed
cutting, slicing, separating

The minute texture
a landscape
within itself
reflecting the journey
the nature
of its stony soul

Colors beyond
enumeration
a million minerals

shot throughout
a stone
of mere millimeters

Quartz in varied aspects
rose, distinct and separate
from pink,
smoky, blue, green
even colorless

Geode caverns
of exotic amethyst
home of fossils
slices of agate

Reflecting light
on faces
or angular facets
to bring out
every color
within

No Quarter Given

A portrait, sinister,
of an honest politician
who hated cherry trees and
surprised Germans at Christmas

I sleep here,
he said, pointing to
his sparsely furnished bunk
This is my whole world.

Wallace was hanged first,
castrated, his guts removed,
before being beheaded
and ripped into equal pieces

A self-aware poem,
four stanzas of equal length,
each trying to break
the wall to the audience