

**collage/cantata for pittsburgh, louisville, and gaza**

for JVP gathering 11/1/2018

*[with credits/annotations in italics]*

rosza daniel lang/levitsky

The world is full of loss; bring, wind, my love,  
My home is where we make our meeting-place,  
And love whatever I shall touch or read  
Within that face.

Lift, wind, my exile from my eyes;  
Peace to look, life to listen and confess,  
Freedom to find to find to find  
That nakedness.

*muriel rukeyser, "Song" (nyc jewish feminist poet/organizer)*

eris  
mi Única avla/  
no sé  
tu nombri/

eres  
mi Única palabra/  
no sé  
tu nombre/

you are  
my only word  
i don't know  
your name

*juan gelman, from "Dibaxu" (argentinian jewish poet/organizer; from a bilingual book written in ladino and castellano while in exile in spain during the dictatorship - english by RDLL)*

wounds bleed in Pittsburgh,  
time ripens enemy years to their last breath.  
ONE fire ignites all struggles  
from New York to the Scottsboro jail.

s'blutiktn vundn in pitsburg  
tsayt rayft soynes yorn fun gesise

EYN fayer tsindt on ale kamfn  
fun nyu-york biz skotsborer tfise

*betsalel friedman, from "Scotsboro" (nyc yiddish communist poet/educator; collected in the  
"Proletpen" bilingual anthology of yiddish radical poetry - english by RDLL)*

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*JG, from "Dibaxu"*

Even during war, moments of delicate peace  
Arrive; ceaseless the water ripples, love  
Speaks through the river in its human voices.  
Through every power to affirm and heal  
The unknown world suggests the air and golden  
Familiar flowers, and the brief glimmer of waves.  
And dreams, and leads me always to the real.  
Even among these calendars of fire.

*MR, from "Letter to the Front"*

Where do I listen?  
The harp broadcasts  
Runaway sensations            Without roots  
  
Shades of a night blue  
Between the two of us:        Explode

*myriam moscona, from "Negro Marfil/Ivory Black" (mexican jewish poet from bulgarian sefardi family -  
english by jen hofer)*

la muerte no sabe nada de vos/  
tu pie tiene hierba debajo  
y una sombra donde escribe  
el mar del vacío/

la muerte nada sabe de vos/  
tu pie tiene hierba debajo  
y una sombra donde escribe  
el mar del vacío/

death knows nothing of you  
your foot has greenery under it  
and a shadow writing  
the ocean of emptiness

*JG, from "Dibaxu"*

As continents broke apart, we saw our fearing  
Reflect our nations' fears; we acted as changing  
Cities at home would act, with one wish, fighting  
This threat or falling under it; we were keeping  
The knowledge of fiery promises; this country  
Struck at our lives, struck deeper than its soldiers.

*MR, from "Letter to the Front"*

In the center of the country (Displacement  
Rupture)  
So as to go up Lava in friction  
Enflamed Further inside  
In the ear  
Delves  
Red lightning flashes phosphorescence  
Burn (says)  
And the answer returns to the question

*MM, from "Negro Marfil"*

There is much to fear, but not our power.  
The stars turn over us; let us not fear the many.  
All mortal intricacies tremble upon this flower.  
Let us not fear the hidden. Or each other.

To be a Jew in the twentieth century  
Is to be offered a gift. If you refuse,  
Wishing to be invisible, you choose  
Death of the spirit, the stone insanity.  
Accepting, take full life. Full agonies:  
Your evening deep in labyrinthine blood  
Of those who resist, fail, and resist: and God  
Reduced to a hostage among hostages.

The gift is torment. Not alone the still  
Torture, isolation; or torture of the flesh.  
That may come also. But the accepting wish,  
The whole and fertile spirit as guarantee  
For every human freedom, suffering to be free,  
Daring to live for the impossible.

*MR, from "Letter to the Front"*

Te echas el miedo

You take the fear  
upon your shoulders  
you take it for a ride  
you fly steadily without  
anyone seeing you  
in the territory  
from which you've been evicted  
by pure terror  
where since time ago  
you've disappeared  
with your body at the discovery  
over the edge of your desires  
enduring the gravity  
of your illusions  
with that discarded fear  
fallen to disuse  
and without force  
among which you live.

*esdras parra (venezuelan trans woman poet; english by jaime berrout, who is preparing the first ever translation of her complete poems - details easiest to find on her twitter @jaimeberrout)*