

Friday, January 28, 2022 at 8 pm

Cycles of Resistance, commissioned and curated by Chelsea Hollow

Chelsea Hollow, *soprano* & Taylor Chan, *piano*

Texts & Translations

秋海棠

Qiu Jin (1875–1907)

栽植恩深雨露同，一丛浅淡一丛浓。
平生不借春光力，几度开来斗晚风？

满江红

Qiu Jin (1875–1907)

小住京华·早又是中秋佳节·为篱下黄花开遍·
秋容如拭·四面歌残终破楚·八年风味徒思浙·
苦将侬强派作蛾眉·殊未屑！

身不得，男儿列，心却比，男儿烈！算平生肝胆，
不因人常热。俗子胸襟谁识我？英雄末路当折磨。
莽红尘何处觅知音？青衫湿！

De zachte krachten zullen zeker winnen (1918)

Henriëtte Roland Holst (1869–1952)

De zachte krachten zullen zeker winnen
in 't eind -- dit hoor ik als een innig fluistren
in mij: zo 't zweeg zou alle licht verduistren
alle warmte zou verstarren van binnen.

De machten die de liefde nog omkluistren
zal zij, allengs voortschrijdend, overwinnen,
dan kan de grote zaligheid beginnen
die w'als onze harten aandachtig luistren

in alle tederheden ruisen horen
als in kleine schelpen de grote zee.
Liefde is de zin van 't leven der planeten,
en mense', en diere'. Er is niets wat kan storen
't stijgen tot haar. Dit is het zeeke weten:
naar volmaakte Liefde stijgt alles mee.

Autumn Begonia

Qiu Jin (1875–1907)

My love, planted and watered together with rain and dew.
One shrub—clarity. Another shrub—density.
In this one life, I will not borrow power from the light of Spring.
Blooming on my own and fighting the night wind.
Rain and dew — no — power of Spring.

River of Blossoms

Qiu Jin (1875–1907)

A brief stay in the splendid big city, it is already The Mid-
Autumn Festival. Under the fences, yellow flowers are blooming
away the visage of autumn, as if freshly washed. From all around
there is song and celebration, an abrupt shift from the pain of
war. The distinct taste of 8 years at war still lingers; all the time
longing for Zhejiang (her home). But at home, I was forced into
the role of the beautiful, unyielding housewife and that life
destroys my essence.

My female body may not be the form of a warrior; my heart,
however, is the very form of the fiercest of them all! I am more
than just the body you see; we all are. How can such
unimaginative minds really understand me? A hero must
withstand persecution, in the end. In the thick weeds of
humanity, where can I find my soulmate? My uniform is
drenched in tears.

The gentle forces

Henriëtte Roland Holst-v.d. Schalk (1869–1952)
translation by Anthony R. Green

The soft powers shall certainly win
in the end - I hear this as an internal whispering
in my soul: if it is silenced, all light will darken
all warmth will freeze from within.

It shall with great effort overcome
the powers that still shackle love;
Then great salvation can begin;
we'd hear it rustle, like the ocean

in tiny seashells, if our hearts
would devotedly and tenderly listen.
The deep desire of celestial bodies,
animals, and people, is love. Nothing can stop
the thrust towards it. This is certain:
everything moves towards all-encompassing love.

Ma'agal (1943)

The Girls of Room 28 (1943–1945)

Věříš mi – věřím ti, víš a vím,
 buď jak buď, nezradíš –nezradím.

My chceme jeden celek být
 chceme se vesměs rádi mít
 chceme a budem,
 přišli jsme a půjdem,
 chceme se domů navrátit.

My půjdem proti zlému
 klestíme cestu dobrému,
 my zlo zatratíme,
 dřív se nevrátíme,
 pak zazpíváme píseň svou:

Ma'agal musí zvítězit,
 nás k dobré cestě obrátit,
 ruce si podáme,
 pak si zazpíváme
 hymnu našeho domova.

Nun danket alle Gott
 mit Herzen, Mund und Händen,
 der uns von Mutterleib
 und Kindesbeinen an

Islamic Prayer of Peace

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Ma'agal (Circle/Perfection)

Translation by Michael Wiener (2020)

You believe me – I believe you. You know what I know,
 Whatever may happen, you won't betray me – I won't betray you.

We want to be united,
 To stand together, to like each other.
 We have come here, but our hope,
 A hope that shall come true,
 Is to return home again.

We shall do battle with evil
 And forge the path to the good.
 We shall drive every evil away
 And won't go home until we have.
 And then we shall sing:

Ma'agal (Circle/Perfection) must triumph
 And bring us on the path to good.
 We clasp each other's hands
 And sing
 This anthem of our home.

Now thank we all our God,
 with heart and hands and voices,
 Who from our mothers' love
 and in their kind arms.

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be with you.

Living Water (2020)

Lauren McCall

River flow, a story to tell
Little did we know what you contain;
Turn of a switch, a toast to change,
—but at what cost?

Winter of '14, summer of '15,
we suspect there's poison in the water.
Fall of '14, spring of '15,
What will it take to be heard?

River flow, a story to tell
Little did we know what you contain;
With the signing of a pen, our lives were changed.
Why does it come to this cold hard cash?
Can you hear our cries?
Fall of '14, spring of '15,
What will it take to be heard?

Winter of '14, summer of '15,
we suspect there's poison in the water.
What does it take? What will it take to be heard?

River flow, a story to tell,
Leaching lead into our bones

She doesn't trust the water.
Weariness echoing, like my voice within.
"I don't want it, mama."
Is that her voice or the one inside?

Days roll by, but still
I remember how officials say it's clean;
Still my baby struggles to breathe.

She doesn't trust the water.
Weariness echoing, like my voice within.
"I don't want it, mama."
Is that her voice or the one inside?

Days roll by, but still
I remember how officials say it's clean;
Still my baby's so ill.

I don't trust officials, or the water.
This is my voice, same as the one within
We want clean water. Our voices sing as one.

Time passes by but still I remember.

Let it start with my steps, let it begin.
I will walk beside you through the troubles and pain.
Let us walk Living Water, strength never failing;
Fountains will never run dry;
A reckoning Living Water, strength never failing;
Inequity, rectified.

Let our lives be redemption to the neglect.
Let our lives speak volumes, our actions justice provide
Let us walk Living Water, strength never failing;
Fountains will never run dry;
A reckoning Living Water, strength never failing;
Inequity, rectified

Your struggles, your pain
will no longer be ignored,
we'll keep walking 'till justice is restored.

Let us walk Living Water, strength never failing;
Fountains will never run dry;
A reckoning Living Water, strength never failing;
Inequity, rectified.

I Could Not Allow That to Stand (2020)

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Two days ago I was walking up the steps of the capitol,
When Representative Yoho accosted me.
Put his fingers in my face;
He called me disgusting.
He called me crazy.
He called me out of my mind.
He called me dangerous.
And I quote, "a fucking bitch."

These were the words that Rep. Yoho levied against a congresswoman.
The congresswoman that not only represents New York's 14th congressional district,
But every woman in this country.
Because all of us have had to deal with this
In some form, some way, some shape, at some point in our lives.
Representative Yoho's comments were not deeply hurtful to me
Because I have worked a working class job.
I have waited tables in restaurants.
I have ridden the subway.
I have walked the streets of New York City.
I have tossed men out of bars.
This kind of language is not new,
And that is the problem.

Mr. Yoho was not alone; he was walking with Rep. Roger Williams.
This is not about one incident; It is a culture of impunity, of accepting violence and violent language against women,
And a structure of power that supports that;
Because not only have I been spoken to disrespectfully by members of the Republican party,
But the president told me to "go home to another country."
Governor DeSantis called me a "whatever-*that-is*."
Dehumanizing language is not new; incidents like these happen in a pattern.

I honestly thought I was just going to pack it up and go home. It's just another day, right?
But then yesterday Rep. Yoho decided to make excuses for his behavior; And that I could not let go.

I couldn't allow my nieces—
I couldn't allow the little girls that I go home to—
I could not allow victims of verbal abuse and worse to see that excuse,
And to see our congress accept it as legitimate.
I could not allow that to stand.

I will not stay up late waiting for an apology,
But what I do have issue with is using women—our wives and daughters—
as shields and excuses for poor behavior.

Mr. Yoho mentioned that he has a wife and two daughters. I am someone's daughter, too.
My father, thankfully, is not alive to see how Mr. Yoho treated his daughter.
My mother got to see Mr. Yoho's disrespect on the floor of this House towards me.

In using that language in front of the press, he gave permission to use that language
against his wife, his daughters, women in his community;
And I am here to stand up to say, that is not acceptable.

I will not allow people to create hatred in our hearts.
Having a daughter does not make a decent man.
Having a wife does not make a decent man.
Treating people with dignity and respect makes a decent man.

The Beauty of Disability (2020)

Judith Heumann, Marco Grosse, and Molly Joyce

I encourage you all to recognize
that disability is a family
that you can join at any point in your life.

There is nothing uniform
only diversity
but there is commonality
of humanity
of plurality
of one minority
of disability.

What does it mean to be the same,
or different?

What does it mean to be looked at,
as not the same
by them.

Looked as an illness
not as a disability.

We are denied opportunities
based on perception of who we are.

There is commonality
of humanity
there is one plurality
of minority
of diversity
of disability.

Won't you come join
at any time?

Won't you come join
in your life?

Al Kan Kuşak (2020) text by : Didem Gülçin Erdem (b. 1989)

Kararsın diye gözleri durup bekleyen kadınlar tanıdım
Çıkılacak sanıyorlardı kuyudan derin söyledikçe
Evlerde işe yaramayan şeyler vardı
Mandal takımları ve ipler ve anneler
BİLMEKLER, GİTMEKLER, ÖLMEKLER
Bir evin yüklüğü olmak nedir, bildik.

Benim adım Zeynep.
Ben Zeynep, annemin gölgesinden doğdum
Babamın dinmez öfkesinden
Bir kadının yedinci kızı olarak doğdum
Aldım annemin gözlerini kendi yüzüme koydum
İnsanın içi durmadan nasıl kanar, bildim

Annem limon kabuğundan kendi Türkçesini yapıyor
Henüz eklem ağrısı yok (ondan bunca morluğu)
Bir kadın en fazla beyaz olabilir
Faytona binmişse, yelkovan.
YANLARI AĞRIYAN BİR DÜNYA KADINDIR
"İçim ağrıyor!" diyen de annem

Benim adım Ayşe.
Ben Ayşe, penceresi göğe açılmayan Ayşe
Ne istediği hiç sorulmayan Ayşe
Kırk kat perdeyle örttüler üstümü
Herkes bir avuç toprak attı yüzüme
Toprak kanla nasıl renk alır, bildim.

Ben de eskiden kız çocuğuydum bacakları olan
BEN DE ESKİDEN BİR SAK SI BİR ISIRGAN
Beni siz üfleyip soğumam için hanım hanım
Sabah uyanmaklar, akşam neredesin'ler
Dur o kuşağı beline o kuşağı geçmişine ve de
Dur ben canımı boynuna
Dur canım burnumda ve de
BEN DE BİR KADININ BOŞLUĞUNDAN DOĞDUM
Kendimi biraz suladım, mor menekşe oldum.

Benim adım Fatma.
Ben Fatma, iri, kara bir el kapattı ağzımı
Göğsüme ölüm çullandı
Daha göğü emzirecektim, daha kendim büyüyecektim
Kendimin kırkinci katından içime atladım
Tıknefes bir hayat nasıl yaşanır, bildim
Daha göğü emzirecektim, önce kendim büyüyecektim

Bir Anadolu kadınına güneş dedim, boynundaki ortaçağı gösterdi
SEKİZ TONLUK AİLE SAADETİ
ALTINDA EZİLDİ BİR BAŞKA KADIN

— Gülünya, İpek, Ceylan
Birden bir yoksulluk oldu sonra ekimin sekizi şubatın yirmi sekizi gibi
— Yasemin, Hande, Canan
Hiç topuklu ayakkabı giymemişinden
— Hülya, Gamze, Özgecan
Hiç heves etmemişinden, Hiç heves nedir bilmeyeninden
Yoksulluk en çok kadına olur bildim.

The Bloody Red Belt (2020) Translation by Didem Gülçin Erdem and Chelsea Hollow

I've known women who had to wait for dark to escape.

As deep as they were in their wells, they still thought they could get out.

At home, there were things that didn't work:

clothespins and ropes — and mothers

KNOWING, GOING, DYING.

What it is to carry the burden of a house, we knew.

My name is Zeynep.

I am Zeynep, born from my mother's shadow;

born of my father's unrelenting rage;

born the seventh daughter of a woman.

I took my mother's eyes and put them on my own face.

How it feels to live with the pain of internal bleeding, I knew.

All my mother knows of the world, she squeezed from lemon peels.

She doesn't yet have joint pain, but so many bruises;

She's never received gratitude or praise — besides the fact that her white body will bring white children.

But if she rides that carriage too soon, she's promiscuous.

THE WORLD IS FULL OF WOMEN WITH ACHING SIDES!

"It hurts me!" moans my mother.

My name is Ayşe.

I am Ayşe, a never-opened window, Ayşe.

Never once asked for anything, Ayşe.

Forty layers of curtains kept me hidden from the world

Before everyone threw a handful of dirt,

Threw it on my face.

What color you get when you mix dirt with blood, I knew.

I used to be a girl with good legs

I USED TO BE A HOT TEA KETTLE, BREWING PASSION

You blew on me to cool me off — "Be more ladylike!"

Waking up fresh in the morning, being interrogated — "Where were you at night?"

Stop with the chastity belt; stop binding me to your past;

And also, stop strangling my life; stop suffocating me;

And also, I WAS BORN OUT OF A WOMAN EMPTINESS!

Little by little, I watered myself and became purple violet.

My name is Fatma

I am Fatma.

A big black glove shut my mouth.

I felt the weight of death ravage my chest.

The only nourishment I could suckle was from the sky.

My depression dropped me from the fortieth floor to the basement.

How to live a breathless life, I knew.

I pointed out the sun to an Anatolian woman;

she pointed out her middle aged neck.

ANOTHER WOMAN CRUSHED UNDER EIGHT TONS OF FAMILY SUFFERING!

— Gülünya, İpek, Ceylan (names of murdered Turkish women)

Suddenly there was poverty like the middle of winter...

— Yasemin, Hande, Canan (names of murdered Turkish women)

She has never even worn heels...

— Hülya, Gamze, Özgecan (names of murdered Turkish women)

She is passion—unrealized, undeveloped, un-nurtured passion.

Destitute was all a woman could be, I knew.

Vedic Chant of Peace

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः
पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः ।
वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः
सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om, may there be peace of sky and peace of space;
Peace of earth, peace of water, peace of plants, trees, vines;
Peace in the heavens, peace of Brahma;
May everything be at peace, even peace itself.
Come, may peace return even to me.
Om, peace, peace, peace.