

theatre of the apocalypse: the dinosaur spirit performs the epilogue

The curtain is drawn. The audience has dispersed. The ghosts of the theatre linger:

DINOSAUR SPIRIT:

Let us use the geometry of burning mirrors,
to catch fire the geometry of me
reaching out to you. In a wooden o,
the circuitous nature of us
is illuminated. How we end the world
is ours to calculate and define.
If all the world's a stage,
who catches us when the curtain falls?
The Greeks built themselves
into the ground, east to west
to escape the wrong kind of sun,
the English built themselves
roofless, mimicry of the great globe
to grab at the right kind of sky.
What do you and I build, in these revelation times?
The sky is burnished armageddon
orange, and the moon is too shy to bow.
Are we to stand with the poets now?
*Is the hurly burly done? Is the battle lost
and won?* What will outlast us?
Shall we create curving seashell mirrors
and aim them at the ships in the harbor
to burn their masts (*the topless towers
of Ilium*), the better to be remembered by?
What a thankless pageant this life is,
all posturing, all festooned with false finery:
when I die, it will be black box, underground—
avant-garde, and my only audience shall be the worms
and their blind lovers. *Sans teeth*, I cannot bite,
be not afraid, *sans eyes*, the worms and I will
still find reason to cry, *sans taste*, I will remember
the bite of you, *sans everything...*
The night sky is my ghost light. It will flame

long beyond our days.

The ghost light shivers as the DINOSAUR SPIRIT flows past. Apocalypse undone, undoing itself. This is the performance of emptiness, the living void. No one is listening. The great beast's song continues on.

end of play.

Author's Note:

This poem was written after I helped a friend gather research for their honors proposal. We found an article about theatre lighting in the ages before electricity titled "The Geometry of Burning-Mirrors in Antiquity," and before I knew it, I had a poem. This piece is an epilogue for the chapbook I created in the capstone class, which is in part a script for a play that can never be performed, in part a concept album with no music, and all outline for an Armageddon I hope never to experience. "theatre of the apocalypse" is also a love poem about theatre. It is a patchwork quilt of plays I have fallen in love with, and plays I hope to write someday. As I wrote this collection, I learned: even in the end of the world, we will be performing. It isn't about the audience. It's about the act.