Lying by the Lake

John Wojtowicz

The luminosity of Venus reminds me
of the solar neighborhood
as I strap a hammock
around dense pines
locally grown on Earth.
I settle into a goose-down
sleeping bag
and hum “Mr. Tambourine Man”
after a long day
of hopping westbound
trains. It’s my father’s birthday.
He grew up among
quahogs and cranberry bogs, helped me
come out of this world
so I envision a fireplace,
scratchy Dylan records.
Beneath the water’s
surface, a blue sturgeon moon
seems about to emerge,
pummeled to perfection
by other-worldly
asteroids. I nestle near one
of its craters and sing the trees to sleep.

John Wojtowicz grew up working on his family’s azalea and rhododendron nursery and still lives in the backwoods of what Ginsberg dubbed “nowhere Zen New Jersey.” Currently, he teaches social work at Stockton University. He serves as the Local Lyrics contributor for the Mad Poet Society blog and has been featured on Rowan University’s Writer’s Roundtable on 89.7 WGLS-FM. Recent publications include: Rattle, Split Rock Review, Soundings East, West Trade Review, and The Ekphrastic Review. He is the author of the chapbook, Roadside Attractions: a Poetic Guide to American Oddities. Find out more at: www.johnwojtowicz.com

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