1-1-2007

The Third Hour: Pray

James Bradley Wells
Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvr

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvr/vol31/iss1/20

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Grand Valley Review by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.
The Third Hour: Pray

I love my mouth filled with the taste of you and to chord your flavors in a quiet voice. Then my after-clothes catching your hair score the day to “The Decree is a Lily.”

Or memory of how sunlight was etching your shoulder, and lyrics in *The Book of Praises* divine the rotered movements of necessity:

*I work the lifting fields of shulam / its pastures
inhabit my eyes / a dawn undresses in my mouth /
your body’s scent kneads above my lips.*

These incantations by the murmuring sons of Korah convert the loss of morning into official inflections for our small hours away.

Presenced grains of moment,
the orbiting churn of swallows,
the faces in it,

they have lutes for tongues.
They incise an Easter for the history of hips.
Amen.

though nature’s murderous urges doom even our sun.
So grades of entropy ultimately preserve our conversation.

Will some baffled curriculum keep these eventual ashes in the urns of an expert’s balanced assessment?

Will this America turn out to be a watershed,
not a Dark Age under the ponderous tyranny of the digital idea’s consummation, deleting human polyphony into bytes of android voices funneled through flattened out, broadband creative writing degrees?

Imagine later scholars of this quilted language, with its cold origins, and unromantic, so American arts and letters, something more than its combustion engine designs or genetic, atomic, wireless wreckage of the morning when first the eyes are.

If today were in time like what can be so worth a Periclean Athens or Medicean...
Florence, forget that media and technology aspire
to throw-away arts, forget the academy’s surgical
removal from that morning, and still there is nature’s murderous
urges.

What matter is Divinity to this?
Merely a metonymy
for heavy paradoxes, an index of what’s not to be proofed?

Something that palpitates in the cosmic ebb utters one equation:
given infinity, all instances, contacts, breaths, every
outer space hurtling behind every pair of closed eyes
and every pair of closed eyes itself—
these are infinitesimally possible.

God is that possible in a way that contradicts
distinctions between surface and depth and source and confluence,
and is less mystery than the science that life occurs admits how Beauty
is recognition—
and this text of hours officiates the mornings we know.

The future
was a palsied blade of grass,
but mercy is history’s monument.

James Bradley Wells is Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics
at GVSU. Also a poet, Wells is seeking publication for his
first collection of poems, Registers of the Autograph, where
this poem appears.

On BE
The first time
in a rented
ready to learn what
myself to see for myself TV and read about
and drove my mouth
into the sidewalk
Out into the lane

My dad had
traveling much
as an auto exec.
said it all: he was
atauties, spoke at auctions,
the global public.
I didn’t get to see
would call an id.
things about war
around the track
brought me down
Dale Earnhardt
me dive into the
t off my bike, but
and the fourth

tire spinning in
box to make sure
and I was glad for
neither of us was

As far as I
lower middle class
born to an imm.
childhood of ice
as everyone in the
drawing a horse
“Pots mended. I
black and white
outfit—complete
back of a shagg:
I noticed the ed
out. In this pict
navy whites. He