

Poems by *H.L. Hix*

“The Fury of a Hermetic Language”

- *Cy Twombly*

Because what we hear and see so vastly exceeds
anything we can understand. The wordless heat
of the body and the mumbling cold of the mind.
Any measurement more accurate or patient
than fence rails in mist darkening down. Where leaves land
when they fall and the infinite patterns they create
going down, for one moment freer than the birds.
Sliver of moon, and Venus shining to match it.

Ardently attentive to the world, like a cat
worshipping birds. Flicker on a branch stump, leaning
over, pecking upside down. From a bluff's dry dirt,
growing horizontally, fifty red saplings.
Leaning from the garbage truck as from a sailboat.
The gods no longer speak to us, but they still sing.

H.L. Hix

***“The Shadow of the Machine has Drifted
Past” - Karel Appel***

The old man's left index finger has a bent last joint, but he still makes the bar chords. More evidence that our world is cursed with repletion, blessed with waste. The blind boy beside him with a pack of Winstons taps time to “Foggy Mountain Breakdown.” A man stakes a sign with his heel: *For Sale Rides Real Good*. Cell phones through open windows, and a mockingbird imitates their ringing. A box turtle gets stuck at a fence.

The grass has already lost but the war goes on between the clover and the dirt. Two goldfinches bob to the seed with one rhythm. Line of trees in a light fog at sunrise change colors by distance: green, blue, silver, white. And in Newark a dozen ships' ghosts sunk in mud rust into dark outlines.

H. L. Hix's recent books include *Wild and Whirling Words: A Poetic Conversation, As Easy As Lying: Essays on Poetry*, and a poetry collection called *Surely As Birds Fly*.