

## *Three Poems*

Stuart Blazer

### **Shopping after hours**

Night walk, old Porto, birds suddenly lit from below, a silver as with olive trees when wind  
turns them.

Ruined buildings high above the street crumble in place, crumbs for the birds,  
& this cement is made  
from moldy bread, faded tiles  
giving it that greenish yellow blush.

The Douro rises as mist, spreads grey wings then flies through my skin, its chill covering a  
cold sweat that wears me, my new coat.

**Casa da Música***Nuno Ventura de Sousa, piano*

This painted black lid prised open on the Steinway grand presents a coffin in which the  
composer rests until reanimated.

An audible hush lasts as long as the piece is played, performed as it is by sleight of hand in  
that each trained artist tricks its audience.

If he or she who wrote these notes are still alive then our idea of the classical is for the  
moment interred

as fingers & wrists extend, lift, while a forearm or elbow swoops like a bird of prey.

Seated, dressed in black, the pianist conducts his memory  
as electric current, alternating & direct.

For the duration of the recital we can explore degrees of surrender as our attention gathers  
its coiled strands, woven  
through us to create a breathable fabric.

Recall, if you can, what thought felt like in that room when air was material  
like marble or wood, glass or color, a place

where you could stop thinking if you so chose, long enough for Haydn, Messiaen, Franck,  
Chopin

to haunt us, guests  
in their land of ghosts.

## Separation of church & state of mind

“... it is a question of letting yourself become  
impregnated with things that are invisible but  
are in the air.”

Álvaro Siza

Igreja S. Francisco, Porto. This mix of old with new, monk's chant then baroque piped in, a  
little gold-leaf for the ears  
to help polish the interior, lavish detail hovering over literal bare bones at rest beneath  
wooded slats.

And that Jesse-tree rising from the poor prophet's belly supporting a whole litany of  
religious figures  
culminating in the celestial. Why was he chosen to receive such a gift, or what did he do to  
incur such wrath,  
inseminated by grace, a living catheter inserted by heavenly decree.

O Lord, protect me from such bliss.  
Don't let my spirit  
or body become alien.  
I need to pee & think for myself. Amen.