

Wednesday, April 16
Period 7: 2:22 – 3:15 PM
Science Conference Center
@ Bellaire High School
5100 Maple Street
Bellaire, TX 77401



Lynn Xu

Born in Shanghai, poet Lynn Xu earned a BA from the University of California at Berkeley and an MFA at Brown University. She received a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship for her doctoral studies at the University of California at Berkeley. Xu is the author of the collection *Debts & Lessons* and the chapbook *June*, and her work has been featured in *Best American Poetry*. Her interests remain with nature, poetry, poetics, and their due trespass into philosophy and psychoanalysis. Xu composes poems engaged with structure on an intimate level, simultaneously unraveling and accruing. Her honors include a Fulbright William L. Magistretti Fellowship.



Yang Lian

Yang Lian was born in Switzerland in 1955 and grew up in Beijing. He began writing when he was sent down to labor in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. Yang Lian accepted invitations to visit Australia and New Zealand in 1988 and became a poet in exile after the 1989 Tiananmen Incident. He has since published seven volumes of poems, two volumes of prose, and many essays in Chinese, and has been translated into more than twenty languages. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature, and in 1999 he was awarded the Flaiano International Prize for Poetry.

Two selected poems by Yang Lian

Travelling With the Stars

at either end of the refugee horizon the stars
a crystal tempest in time with you
half the sky like harvested fields
you are a grain of corn grinding in the mill
you scan the scene the way that enemies yearn for each other
a man walking through a century in time with the stars
drinking water on that seashore
hearing that drum beating from the forehead to the back of the brain
stabbing skin chiseling bones one by one into silvery white
looking at the stars you too begin to float
floating inside yourself
time differences decaying along with the body
only in starlight does the golden ocean disclose its flesh-eating processes
half the sky the depth of remaining life
falls
you are the other half that is chosen
when you can't help shining you can't help falling apart

Shadow Play

pain is like beauty with the self as the aim
the wall is an arena for a walking cat
and the dance is third-person kitschy red & green
backstage a hand throws down the setting sun between the shadows
organs in love hold the bat-squeaks tight
breaking up dusk dances on the fleshy mat of a palm
in the cat's eye each instant is leaping
skin bearing the weight of the cut-out hometown

captured in the tattoo's bud
a role is endlessly skinned into theatre
lamplight skinning the gloaming catching reality turn itself half over
shadows raggedly wear personalities
laugh the laugh sewn together daily backstage
the murderous hand responds under the cat's claw
all setting suns lapping their own bloodlessness
supporting each other into the blackness of applause, asleep cuddling gifts

Two selected poems by Lynn Xu

Earth Light: I

Doors open and shut.
We've come to the place where nothing shines.
I hear eternity
Is self-forgetting. Interiors warm with the nightmare of guests and poetry
And you. Everything darkly
Reverent years of reading about death eluded.
Bled
Back from the ear sidestepping your bullets bloom in on ye lay
Rock. Rud. Spread
So swiftly tastes like mud. Dredged mud off
The corpse sled hushed down woodsmoke.
Said the stars thrum on Marie
Marie. Hold on tight.
In the depths of outer space
Is man.

Lullaby

For Hart Crane

Are these pillars or are these waves
Slicing my cheeks like scuds of wheat
Eyelid by eyelid dividing me
O thou O hear

These thornless stalks of air
There is no time to lose
No keeping more obscene
No do not shout like that

Upon the sunlit limits of the night
Blindly pass
No work of words
Survey the senate of our minds