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Poems

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Poems

Abstract

Gypsy fire, wood Mountain, and Aide memoire

Glen Sorestad

GYPSY FIRE, WOOD MOUNTAIN

The leap of flame, crack of wood essence
bursting in the burning, the sparks
thrust from the fire's core
like satellites spun through the night,
these hold us here, gathered
around the late night fire circle.

We talk. Or we may lapse completely
into the long silences of fire-watching,
watching ourselves becoming the first
fire-fascinated people crouched
around the first dancing flames.
We read our history in the firelight.

Look closely into the flicker and whirl.
Somewhere in the fire the child stares back,
all that you have been. All that you've known.
Look closely. Each moment is there
lingering on the edges of the fire dance.
Know yourself if you would. Look again.

AIDE MEMOIRE

The world begins and ends in memory
What I remember is what I am.

My memory is imperfect, so am I.
I would not live with all I have known.

Did that blade of grass I plucked
as a boy to vibrate with my breath

really burst the air with shrillness?
Or does the sound it may have made

or even the soundlessness really matter?
A remembered world holds a reality

and a truth far stronger than echoes.
In the cupped hands of remembrance

the thin green reed of what we are
trembles with a rare sound that is ours.

JOHN THIEME

Robert Kroetsch and the Erotics of Prairie Fiction¹

Literary forms are products of the particular soils in which they have grown and new settings may be expected to germinate new species. At the same time the notion of 'regional' writing frequently elicits a contrary set of expectations: literature which is seen as characteristic of a particular locality habitually evokes the specificity of its landscape and society through modes which are akin to traditional classic realism. The Canadian Prairie novel is clearly, like most New World literary forms, the product of cultural cross-pollination, and yet seminal twentieth-century examples of the genre, such as Sinclair Ross's *As for Me and My House* (1941) and W.O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen the Wind* (1947), do little to upset the conventions of classic realism. Their focus is primarily on the small town and, although tension is generated by the exploration of its