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Channeling Isadora Duncan

My Gaia

You,

Isadora,

whose father was a poet,
whose mother was a musician,

are my apparition.

My feet turn away from one another
while my hands seek one another:

this representation
of your great art

that was misunderstood
on the stages of Chicago
and followed you back

to some boarding house
where your mother was

unable to move

because of the starvation.

Your hunger fills me up

and this bare floor is the earth,

my Gaia.

arrange my bones
into the shapes
you saw when you
painted the stage
with your form.

Mica and Ivory

This ghost
fast forwards into me
and I am

above

looking down
holding strings
attached to my limbs--

We line the mirrored walls
of Studio C

the stick hits the floor
and lights go out.

We grapevine--

backs elongated,

ribs rising and holding.

Bodies of
shadow and light
pulled at,
lowered to
the foot stained floor.

Isadora Duncan
moves
along the back wall
in mica and ivory,
her chiffon gown
and bare feet

sparking--

to the tinny arias
of an orchestra

and Sergei Yesenin says to her

You are the movement of my words

rising, falling

around

the ether
that connected
Isadora and Sergei
on May 2, 1922

when she became
his Greek Revival bride
till the twelfth moon.

Gypsy

With your hair down,
you laid
 by the light of the fire
and lovers would
 recite
Nietzsche, Moliere...

 and you followed the maps
found in books until
you ended up in some
fishing village in Greece

building a house of stone
on the side of a mountain

until you heard your spirit
singing a song
you had to choreograph to
for some stage
in Budapest or Berlin
where people cried
Eljen!

and when I read these
words in your diary,
something in me says

you, too, must go.

Upon Watching my Husband Take Our Son to his Father's Grave

On Memorial Day
we walk through the Garden of the Apostles
and my five-year-old son
asks if the people here
live in the sky
and my husband says yes.

They walk ahead of me,

moving like Isadora did
to Chopin's Funeral March
on that stage in Saint Petersburg in 1913,
the year her children died
in that watery grave in Paris.

Are there children in the ground?
Yes, we say.

The Seduction of Isadora Duncan by Heinrich Thode

Your spirit hemmed Isadora behind, before, inside
when she found you looking into her window
and she met you under the trees when birds still hide

their songs and lullabies reverse themselves.
You followed her into the villa, creating a crescendo
of your spirit hemming Isadora behind, before, inside.

In that moment she was Santa Clara and you were St Francis
dancing on a wire in bare feet. Was this chronology tango
begun when she met you under the trees when birds still hide?

She sat in the darkened theatre and listened to the Prelude of Parsifal,
your fingers played on the surface of her bones
as your spirit hemmed Isadora behind, before, inside.

Your visitations became a foreshadowing
of her art's starvation and life deceived
because she met you under that tree when birds still hide.

You close your jade eyes and her body lapses
into earth's lap, and you hallow
Isadora's spirit behind, before, inside
as she met you under the trees when birds still hide