

GLOSSOLALIA AND THE METAL TASTE  
INSIDE THE OWL'S MOUTH

I would · Yes · I would hold you—how a tree bark centers and wraps the rest of its body in manicured rings of twist and expanse · I would hover over you like the night's inked skin and awaken my forgotten geometries of bone and bird intuition · On the day your mother died you knelt in front of a capiz moon—waited for the midnight church bells to atone the tears of your pride · After the ringing stopped · Father Ignacio came over and held you like a hammock · We watched you mew into the sleeves of his black cassock. Your hands of four-shades to white · petitioning a prayer reserved for *The Children of the Pallium*—those tidal orations of hum & abalone refrains · those minuets echoing in domed corridors of salt-skeletal parishes · I would · Yes · I would · turn you over like pages made of leaves collected from the peppermint years of tea drinking and front porch stories about Uncle Valentino · his star charts and good-eye view of neighbors who undressed each other like tortoises · I would · Yes · I would · unfold your paper dresses before I burn them · unlearn the way your spine moved as I fastened you inside of them · fit your feet in flats to move you from room to room like a moth's tongue igniting satin fires on teeth-stitched brocades ·

## THE REQUATORIST

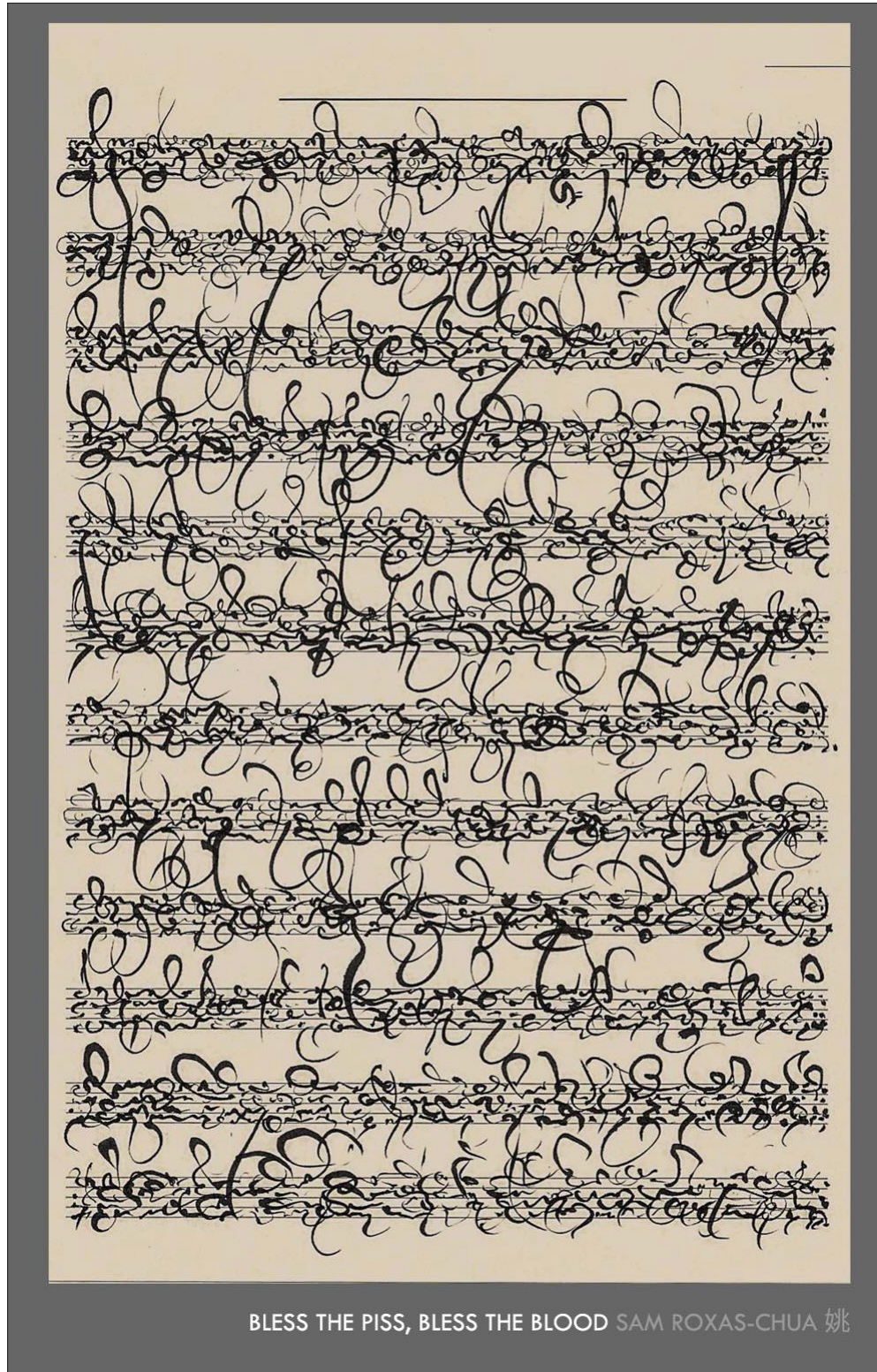


## GRANDFATHER AS ETHER

Last night I heard one of those songs that held me in the library of my being · Yes · last night I became the boy standing in the rain holding a cup of light to the sky's dark mouth · I don't lie after 5PM anymore · My third rib rubs like dull-thorn when I wake to move from sleep to the water jug that sits sweating at room temperature at our house in Manila · When I cup my mouth to its pinched ceramic lip · I drink the thick voice of my grandfather · And I remember his fingers going through each drawer of the medicine chest—catalogs of torn eucalyptus leaves · sea plants · and eye bones plucked from fathom swallowed creatures · I am those fingers now looking for the sugar in dry petals & rind · I want to wake my holiest ghost and scratch my nail to the back of long drawers · *Be good* were his last words to me · Outside · the ocean ·

## BLESS THE PISS, BLESS THE BLOOD

From the poem "A Collection of Eyelashes on Paper"



BLESS THE PISS, BLESS THE BLOOD SAM ROXAS-CHUA 姚

## YOUNG SNOW ON WALDO LAKE

A paw pushed deep  
shapes the foot of dog.

The ears of young snow—  
the crunch songs

and the howls resting  
in cold caves, quiet now.

My body is a bell  
when my mind is behind

your unfurring.  
I sniff a carve

at the bottom  
of the catalpa

where I found you  
listening for the small

mammoth buried  
beneath mushroom

and mound. I walk  
these same woods

now, slow-leaving  
hand scent on trees

holding your blue collar  
and my brass compass.

The night I measured you,  
elbow to tip

of index finger,  
you took your

last growl looking  
at an open window.

I heard the dark bark  
of dogs call to you.

I now know  
why snow falls

with its mouth  
closed.

ANINO



EATING ALL THINGS  
MADE ALIVE WITH ONE BREATH

*Swim to me, let me enfold you.*  
—Tim Buckley

I will attempt to write the poem that will kill death itself, again. I will fail each year, and with each failing I will have tried to gouge the eyes of that gargantuan thief, that anchor-hooved horseman, that urchin, that black coral piercing my foot—my blood eaten by salts and blue fish. I will tear at its neck and scream the names of my dead over and over that God himself will awaken from his cloud-tomb and pull my head apart to ask me what I know of being alive. And I will tell him I was sent by a poem that he once tore into pieces. A poem about breaking death's salty head. He will not be happy. He will take my ears and pull them apart like *pigling and mother*. He will bite my lips and my lips will turn into scrolls of that poem he refused to read.

*Father, it says. Lazy father,  
seed of Goliath, do something*

*about your dreams that have come true.  
They are eating all the things you made*

*alive with one breath. Give me the names  
I want back.*

A list so long the gold in his throat will tarnish by the time he finishes reading the poem. Yes, him. The one who took Lazarus from the dead leaving him to die, again.

*Dear Cruel. Dear Giant. Dear Father,  
Dear Father, Dear Father. Stop*

*your black fish from swimming  
in the passions of life & vein. Tired*

*are the seas in constant prostration  
to you. Father, Dear Father, let me*



*write this poem because the lips  
I have kissed weigh more than ash.*

*My birdhouse is singing and you are not  
the home, you are not the perch.*

## A STORM'S EARLY COMPOSITION

From the poem "The Adoration & Mystery of the Fifth Thorn"



## SAM ROXAS-CHUA 姚

Poet Tyehimba Jess describes **Sam Roxas-Chua's** work as, *Surreal yet rooted in palpable color and history, this poet's vision transcends oceans, blends geographies and bleeds a multi-tongued heritage for us to better find ourselves. We need more maps like this in the world, and cartographers of language like Sam.* His publications include *Fawn Language*, *Saying Your Name Three Times Underwater*, and *Echolalia In Script – A Collection of Asemic Writing*. His poems and visual art folios have appeared in various journals including *Narrative*, *december Magazine*, and *Cream City Review*, and his collection of poems, *Diary of Collected Summers*, won first place in the 7th Annual *Missouri Review* Audio Competition in poetry. Recently an essay/review of his works appeared in *The Georgia Review*. An interview in *Gulf Coast Journal* is upcoming. Sam lives in Eugene, Oregon.