



I Am the Illusion of Fireworks: Four Poems by Sybille Rembard
Translated from the French by Emily Vogel

We're very excited to share with you these four poems by Sybille Rembard translated from the French by the poet Emily Vogel. Lyrical and personal, their length belies their depth, and they often pack a punch. They are thought-provoking as they sing. Let us know how you like them: tag us on Twitter [@TranslateMonth](https://twitter.com/TranslateMonth) and share using #NTM2018 and #TranslateMonth2018.

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—*Claudia Serea and Loren Kleinman*

Translator's note

I discovered these poems on an arbitrary internet search. I found the “skeleton” of these poems to be very inspiring and dramatic, and it was a challenge to translate these poems in terms of phrasing, and synonyms which heightened the meaning and tone of the poems (as well as the rhythm), while still remaining faithful to the original work. These poems had much potential for English translation, as they provided something beautiful and basic which worked well for the “re-visioning” of them.

—*Emily Vogel, translator*

Incendiary Summer

On the shore, the closed parasol points to the firmament.
My tongue savors the grains of salt on my wanting lips.
The sand ensconces my feet,
the eye of sleep hovering
on the threshold of dreaming.
The sun perpetuates the infinitude of my thoughts.
I am an iteration of myself:
I hallucinate the verses you have written for me,
amid the star-canopied evening.
Under August's singular star
I revisited our love: drunken column
of the temple of eternity.
Season overflows into season
like a terrible swelling,
and me:
I am the illusion of fireworks.

Execution

The wrecking-ball acquiesced his spirit,
his pupils dilating in the face
of his executioners,
a tributary of blood diluting his words,
awakened by a galvanizing,
sudden revelation,
mediocrity.

It was in the month of May
during a wild spring,
a bird doused itself in
reddening pond,
and with wet eyes, he looked at the men,
careening in drunkenness.
Any semblance of beauty
had dissolved from them.
They were merely puppets
in the consuetudes of war.

Actor of Temporality

Progressive flow of things,
alternative meandering:
Wear me, like the unraveling of this thread,
yesterday, today, tomorrow's
glad evacuation.
I have idolized you
in spite of this necessary treachery.
I am loose as the betrayal of this thread.
Riveted on myself, I felt your breath
gathering more and more
expanding against my skin,
so that I died, only in order
to survive.

Inequality of the Superfluous

Desire reels
perpetuating a glad decadence,
rheumatic humanity,
possessions
dazzled by light.
Ectoplasms in transhumance
let themselves be guillotined
by materialistic orgasms,
sick herd of wealth,
Little Red Riding Hood
of our petrified society.
The Wolf Jubilee
devours your brains,
regenerates itself
at the fountain of worldly impulses.
I do not participate in collective suicide.
I'm going to be a vacillating star
immured like the firefly
in dreaming.

About the author



Sybille Rembard was born in Turin, Italy on June 21, 1966. With a French father and Italian mother, she lived a childhood and a peaceful adolescence built in the multicultural universe of a family with many roots. Her free spirit has been nourished by the books of the family library and, in particular, by the vast collection of poetic works of which she was fond of her early years. The debates and exchanges, in a family very open to the world and to others, forged her personality and her thought. After studying literature, she went to discover the world. Today she has planted her roots in France, making her passion for words and writing her job.

About the translator



Emily Vogel's poetry, reviews, essays, and translations have most recently been published in *Omniverse*, *The Paterson Literary Review*, *Lips*, *City Lit Rag*, *Luna Luna*, *Maggy*, *Lyre Lyre*, *The Comstock Review*, *The Broome Review*, *Tiferet*, *The San Pedro River Review*, *2 Bridges Review*, and *PEN*, among several others. She is the author of five chapbooks, and a full-length collection, *The Philosopher's Wife*, published in 2011 by Chester River Press, a collaborative book of poetry, *West of Home*, with her husband Joe Weil (Blast Press), *First Words* (NYQ Books), and recently, *Dante's Unintended Flight* (NYQ Books). She has work forthcoming in *The Boston Review*, *Fiolet & Wing: An Anthology of Domestic Fabulism*, and *The North American Review*. She teaches writing at SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College and is married to the poet, Joe Weil.