

Midwest Writing Center
Davenport, IA
www.midwestwritingcenter.org
© 2014 by Caroline Crew
ISBN 978-0-9834116-9-7

Formatting and Cover Art by Sliced Moon Designs
www.slicedmoondesigns.com

All MWC programs are partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency through federal funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.



Midwest Writing Center Press

Midwest Writing Center is a nonprofit literary organization located in Davenport, Iowa, primarily serving western Illinois and eastern Iowa with a mission of "Fostering appreciation of the written word, supporting and educating its creators." We promote new literary voices as well as work from previously published writers. MWC is a resource for readers and writers alike.

Mississippi Valley/Susan K. Collins Poetry Chapbook
2013 Competition Winner

THE POLYCHROME CLINIC

"Colour is the first revelation of the world"

-Hélio Oiticica

Huge thanks to the Midwest Writing Center and Ryan Collins in particular for making this real, and to Gale Thompson for kind words, amazing smarts and the best eye I could ask for.

As always, thank you to Chris Emslie for everything. Thanks, too, to Annie May Taylor, Thom Harmsworth, and Rebecca Hardie for giving me the months to write in. You made the yellow year have a little light in it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Poem For The Black Life That Never Bloomed," "Biggest Cupboard" and *"Blind #1"* previously appeared in *redlightbulbs*, thanks to Russ Woods.

"What we don't see in the snow," "Purple Tyrants Vainly Groan," and *"Below the Asphalt"* previously appeared in *Smoking Glue Gun*, thanks to Blake Lee Pate.

"Rubies for Dorothea Lasky" previously appeared in *Nashville Review*, thanks to Sara Strong.

"The Creator has Given the Maximum" previously appeared in *Two Serious Ladies*, thanks to Lauren Spohrer.

"International Klein Blue is a Lie," "stock epileptic trees" previously appeared in *Cloud Rodeo*, thanks Matt Burnside and Jake Syersak.

"Never Gilded" is part of a postcard series from *Damask Press*, thanks to Toby Altman.

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| we have whites in our eyes because | 1 |
| we are social animals | 1 |
| Poem For The Black Life That Never Bloomed | 2 |
| Not Everyone Is Singing | 3 |
| The Creator has Given the Maximum | 4 |
| What We Don't See In The Snow | 5 |
| International Klein Blue Is A Lie | 6 |
| Never Gilded | 7 |
| Dame Fortune Don't Take \$50 Bills | 8 |
| chlorophyll wasn't always number one | 9 |
| Purple Tyrants Vainly Groan | 10 |
| On the Asphalt | 11 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Blind #2 | 12 |
| October | 13 |
| Ember Development | 14 |
| how I remember I am a farmer's daughter | 15 |
| Biggest Cupboard | 16 |
| stock epileptic trees | 17 |
| Blind #1 | 18 |
| Rubies for Dorothea Lasky | 19 |
| all fool's gold on board | 21 |
| Below the Asphalt | 22 |
| Poem for Cézanne, I Guess | 23 |

Poem For The Black Life That Never Fully Bloomed

for Chris Emslie

Rendered in the soft memory it's sunset time.
The bleach starts to smell good, the air
is slowly pixelated. The floor is an envelope
for you. Where do you want to go? I don't
have a home town. Not that I wasn't born
it just didn't happen all at once,
the co-ordinates are fluid. Take one:
grey ocean. Take two: grey ocean,
black rock. This continues with occasional
green flair, one time with towering
glass. Cut the montage. What life is so
loudly soundtracked? Solar flares crack
the radio, the news is broken science.
You make science come alive and Alice
it won't go back in your pocket.
If there's an apocalypse, good luck.
But we make our own luck, and the bet
is whether we are imploding or exploding.

Not Everyone Is Singing

It's true that my red throat speaks differently
to my blue throat. You say that song
is just sound, molecules moving
but tell me movement is neutral
and you're wrong. Think the same neon
of an avalanche and dogs in recognition
of fight. You think of the afterimage of planes
as white despite the pink miles of atmosphere
our insect eyes ignore. Trust me, I spend
a lot of time looking up. Someone told me
ideology is really a term for things
outside of this physical space. Another time
he asked whether Viagra really colours
your vision blue, or if any blue can be this literal.
When have you opened to your mouth
in a true canvas of emptiness. A clean throat
still burdened. I can't answer with chords this colour.