

Mayakovsky in Toronto

for István Zelenka & Francesco Gagliardi

passing under the bridge
A hundred and forty suns in one sunset blazed,
I detect many signs of boredom.
With far-flung steps I crumple miles of streets.
I'm staging my final performance
People sniff

You, too, who leaf your lips like a cook
turns the pages of a cookery book.

Rain has drowned the sidewalks in sobs;
A train likewise speeds to a station.
The Frenchman
chasing after you from city to city.
we alone shall remain:
like "take it or leave it!"
Oh, for wine
I am punctual
nail me to paper.
We warmed up
To both the sky,
Men,
the earth fades into tundra,
I shall forget the year, the day, the date.
This day, on visiting you,
love has already worn him out.
We return to our destination.
carry the grand piano
you saw a mere boy.
Behold what quiet settles on the world.
allotted to Paris.
Myself a garden I did plant,
a freshly laundered shirt.

Hurricane,
fire,
water
surge forward, rumbling.

in my notebook.
Cars
torn by insomnia,
in the depleted cashbox

barely moving
my machine parts.

Look—
You shake your head, curly locks?
and with such wines we'll grace the table
has finished its dance
a paw which a train ran over.
In silence the street pushed torment.

Upon every achievement
I stamp *nihil*.

books were made like this:
twentytwo year old.
and frame it as a freak of this age!
But I pace about in peahen colors,

Agitprop
sticks
in my teeth too,

take off your bicycle glasses!

this is
just one more case
of robbery and embezzlement
among the frauds rampant in the country.

In hopeless debt.

take a line of verse
from its proper frame
and bring back time!

here's my pen.
a lasting wound—
a swarm of problems;

cottage,
 pond
 and meadow.

When in mounds of books,
Past one o'clock. You must have gone to bed.
 a certain champion of boiled water,
I stroll about,
into the depths of a yard
in the fogs of bourgeois vulgarity
And before this miracle
homeless,
Adults have much to do,
Staring at the daily sun,
I stood hunched by the window,
against a burnt-out sky
by the coffee houses!
this is the helter-skelter of mad thoughts
The vision of your bereft countenance rose;

Whether
 I'm self-exiled
 or sent to mamma—

as an aqueduct,
Years of trial
socialism
"swine,"
as "prostitution,"
an austere disposition

so,
 from this bridge,

 the household ghosts
 here trains
and arias
and picture your future as academicians

Have you seen
a dog lick the hand that thrashed it?!

on the sunlit gold of my coins
Where shall I go, hiding within me hell?

of ornamental vases made of tortured Sèvres.
as a poet fears to forget

A bird

Public squares begin to buzz;
in ecstasy.

myself I hear:
all the hundred volumes

among
the poorest

I can barely move.
I can talk your head off—
Our dialectics
not as a worn penny
carriages roll past;

and loudmouthed;
enters a drawing room.

I'm in no hurry; with lightning telegrams
I have no cause to wake or trouble you.
the machine of the soul.

and smoke
In our idiom

Consider my traveling expenses.
my machine parts.

my canvas
is unobstructed,
as it stretches on cables of string

—Yonder paw
and slouched about, goggle-eyed.
the overfed,
grasps at a book,

for a yellow patch
of light jumping on the wall

Do you understand the idiom of tramcars?
Memory!
like a dog
worn in forty years of wear and tear—
Night came.
I am exhausted by lyricism—

“give us new forms!”
We warmed up
“Am I an elegant dancer?”

I shall rage on raw meat;
or, as the sky changes its hue,

I love to watch children dying.
The moon—
and the inspired fool burst into song—
“Let’s go and guzzle!”
in choirs of an archangel’s chorale,
crossing the mountains of time.
the sun was tenderly
Strollers, hands from your pockets—
in one corner—rounded eyes:
will dance a thousand times
on the path to my father’s house.
darkly and dully,
and of placing human notes on the piano
But I’m in the mood for the rosy pulp
the gaping hollows of two deep graves.
on the sunlit gold of my coins
Paint this day a bright holiday.

In what delirious
and ailing
night,

I so large,
look at things more simply!
and flowers

 in graying evening
 the pen to be on a par
 of a delicate nature:
but it’s a tight fit—
In your idiom,
 curly-ringed

and how much I spend
 on materials.

I unfolded myself to sun and puddle.
roaring everywhere.

my legs

in the lucid glow of its windows.
being cleared into a cupboard.

By the cables
to yank

you highbrow,
beneath foreign rains,
in my idleness
to lean over the thought of the age.
repeating the syllables

I am

indebted

a hundred cigarettes
for table salt—
amortization
posthumous balance!
you discover by chance the iron filings of lines,
from bedsheets

is to profit
remembering you
Look here—

Suddenly,
the clouds
and other cloudy things in the sky

Not a sound.
The streets are too narrow for the storm of joy.
in smoke oblivions it was blue,
redhead

I sensed
something wrong in the house.

she's dead, dead, dead!
Watch out lest she float away.
do your creation.
his cities,
What's money to the soul?
then I would whine
I used my vast voice,
why not come down to tea

I'm finished!
His eyes were in the garden now.
A commotion of verse and light—
sell yourselves openly,
Staring at the daily sun,
the tail
my state of mind?

Years:
 distance.

or in being burnt
 I am not twenty—

its aura of miracles
 be a petrified corpse
 are drivers of the pen
I rush around

For every gram
 you work a year.

in the Union
 scribbling

from bones
like dishes
 here trains
give us a new form of art—
with oversized rations.

have shaken those dens called theaters
with the arias of Romeos and Juliets.

A wall of shadows,
Give me tea, poet,
"All right,
Confusion broke the barrier of reason
I'm now in the running

mark so
9-18 X 2016
Toronto – Syracuse