Mycopoetica

An absurdist's outlook on fungi for climate change







ABHISHEK KARNA

My name is Abhishek, and this is my philosophy. My belief systems through the eyes of fungi; fungi through my eyes. What makes 'life' noteworthy? Is human superiority justified? Are fungi better than us? Why bother thinking? Action is meaningless; so is life.

Kronos

PREFACE

This poetic creation aims to influence proselytic action among college students and beyond regarding climate change and how fungi might reduce it. This work should be experienced in a quiet place, in a ruminative mood. The thoughts invoked may be a ritual in itself, meaning that thinking in such a manner might turn into a semi-regular thing to do for rejuvenated actionable feelings. I urge readers to be ready to think out loud and beware of strong elements that are unnerving, unpopular, and unsettling.

Despite the collection being radical and provocative, I hope you will understand its thematic effect that demands urgent effort and presents a natural element to solve a natural crisis.

Kronos

Hysteria

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ABSURDITATEM

I serve no law, yet adhere
To the choice of truth
Is law truth?
A discord flays my soul
I need retribution for not knowing

Tell me why I scorn
At the shamefulness of the world,
Imperceptible narrowness seeps
into my neurons
Lighting up as it chooses its path
through the webs of synapses
Why can't I?

Grief and pandemonium won't
cease to be
But, is nature saddened?
Networks of energies pass-through
Pierces, shreds, and ravages
until it's weak
The creation still stands, it is inane

Verity hides from me, or I don't deserve
to see it?
My depths, in insanity, yearn for the
answers in the shallows
Cosmos screams, "Interconnectedness!"
I believe it because it is absurd.







SALVATOR

The vain human need lived through the night,
And its unending ghost, industries, went by;
The settlements starve in their confused sight,
And blackish shoot swirl in the sky

So, in the distance, nature cries,
Wailing and despair to unleash;
And, the rot, not you, comes and tries,
For the pain and the dawn of peace.

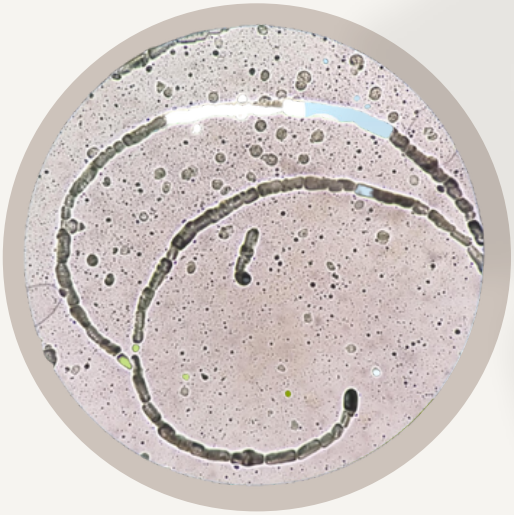
Death



The world around me is perishing
And, although my rations increase,
I claim utter dissent to this death
Water, fire, earth, air, and sky, all is changing
I am not; come with me.

CAELI MUTATIO

POSSIBILITATES



FUNGAL CAPACITANCE

Making batteries out of fungi



BIOLUMINISCENCE

Making light sources out of fungi



MYCO-ENGINEERING

Making houses, machinery, etc. out of fungi



BIO-MINING

Extracting metals out of ores using fungi

FUNGUS EFFINGENS



PUZZ

O mortal! O fallible!
My form is like water
Beneath the scratchy fibers
There lies your emancipation
But do not seek it; it's worthless
For you and I, both embrace oblivion.

SUSTINERE ET NATURALIS

To perplex environment, whose legs have never rested,
And join the jagged serenity, from life to nature,
Connected & intertwined as how it must
But humans break the chains,
Alas! freedom...freedom from life

The fungi can protect; even security can sustain
For the chains are important,
Look, move, act, and wait; embrace the chains
Foster the connection,
For the connection is your life
But what is your purpose?
Irrational!











MYCO INGENIUM

Two strands converged in a hyphal mess,
And sad they couldn't be one
And when made one, as humans could
The cultured mass was in an impregnable mood
To where it stood, straight in the brushwood

Then took the metals, as brawny as the strands
And having perhaps the better strength
But nature needs warmth not thew
The hyphal mess tells this with a sigh
"Oh, I kept the mother close;
As I am not you,
Can you ever be me?"





EST OMNIA CIRCA ENUMERO

The fungus reads itself,
By looking at its floral face
The fungi, solemnly contemplating sacrifice,
Because it wants to serve,
By transforming into solid bricks
Paradoxically, they are still alive,
in space, in function

Fungi has a reality and a clarity of purpose,
Your introspection only terrifies you
Still silence is your answer.

URGENS

Entropy increases with no ambitions,
Meaninglessly yet tirelessly
You, unconscious in your comfort,
Stay put
Don't! Your myco-brothers are by your side,
In your purposelessness, move
For your movement will let you contemplate again
And if you don't now,
How will you understand chaos?
Is the absurdity real?

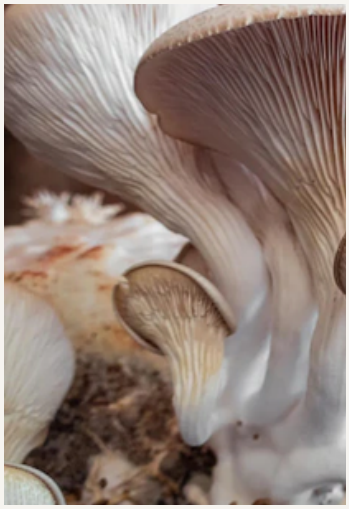














RELIQUIAE

Dread, confusion, anxiety,
disorientation, and angst
All in the face of this absurd realm
A rational existence in an irrational world
The soil dies as you seek materialism
And in your epistemic inability of
reason, the grip on reality is lost
The loss is meaningless, so is your
search
But the environment, it is not
For the foundation of both absurdity and reason is the earth
Do the magic with the fungal bloom, it's right there,
Just there
Maybe your only shot at reason.


MYCO
POETICA

REFLECTIONS

My simple ambition was to create a piece that moves in and out from me to fungi and vice versa. I chose absurdism as my lens because the conflict between subjective assessment and objective worth is time and again resurfaced in discussions about ways to mitigate climate change. Here, my intent is not to give directions on what's and how's but rather invoke critical thought in readers, so they decide for themselves if they need to act. The hard part was to connect the philosophical pathway I have in mind to the element I chose Fungi. I was confused if to make a cohesive story/narrative or build upon ideas based on relevant themes. I decided to do the latter because I believe not sticking to a storyline will reduce the parameters to consider while crafting each successive poem. This will make my workflow better and I can complete it before the deadline. I also decided to title the collection and all the contents in Latin for the poetic feeling, connection to roots, and realization that not everything has to have a modern, advanced, super-machinified solution.

Starting with my first poem, I thought if I wanted to start with my own mind to create a struggle of mental inquiry, a dichotomy of choices, meanings, and actions. I think this will generate a personal relevance among readers because I, as a human, struggle with these thoughts and they become my partners in the adventure. That's why I started with a poem themed at the psychological level of absurdism, in context to the environment, without explicitly introducing fungi (but talking about the networks and webs that will connect to the ideas of fungi in the latter poems). The second poem was a short, uncanny, weird-ish introduction to my element fungi, who is also, metaphorically, our savior from climate change. I wanted the phrases to have a flow of a certain process. The first stanza describes the mess of a world we have; the second stanza infers that there's a messiah, which is fungi. I also wanted a radical/provocative component so, I introduced fungi as "rot" and hinted at how absurd it is that death can save lives (hinting at the saprophytic nature of fungi). Third, I wanted to dive into the idea of climate change. So, in a small stanza, I showcase climate change from fungi's eyes. This stanza can have multiple interpretations and I want it to be that way. The fourth piece is just an indication of the some among many possibilities that fungi bring in toward mitigating climate change. The possibilities mentioned are overwhelming and are still under the phase of scientific work but, their existence has been proven, and hence, the future might expand through this initial verification of plans in myco-engineering. In the fifth piece, I wanted to reinforce the idea of the malleability and moldable-ness of fungi. I tried to personify fungi and made it an absurdist like me. So, it talks about how meaningless its purpose is, throwing satire at humans for not seeing what's in front of them and looking for new solutions.

In the sixth piece, I introduced an element of surprise: sustainability. I also re-mention the idea of interconnectedness in nature. It is less absurdist and more optimistic in a way. But, for the sake of cohesion, I end with an absurdist's remark. In the 7th piece, I solely focused on the intricacies of myco-engineering. My idea was to convey a practical & rigorously scientific engineering process from a philosophical point of view that feels relevant not because of the doable techniques but because of its accessibility. The 8th piece translates to, "It's all about the details" and, I'm intending to convey the details we overlook. Fungi doesn't necessarily die out after becoming bricks for engineering purpose; it lives its purpose, even in death. Do we? In the ninth piece, I intended to bring about the feeling of urgency of action regarding climate change but, with a myco-centric approach. By taking fungi as the subject, I bring the essence of absolute objectivity, unhindered by emotions, controlled by nature and only nature itself. All this to invoke the question, aren't we part of nature? And, if we are, we must act. The final piece summarizes the entire idea of absurdism, fungi, climate change, and activism into one poem. It was a spontaneous outpouring of emotions. Now., as I reflect, I am the happiest. I hope readers will enjoy reading the collection.

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