

THE SHIPS OF AMON-RA

by Cory Collins, St. John's - Senior Division Poetry

are feathering out from great yellow gulches,
whipping the tides with herring bone wake.

They carry kerchiefs made by the Innu,
alabaster plums, narwhal knives,
angular hens, oracular ferns.

Stacked to the brim with topaz and talc
are baskets made in Bournemouth,
powdery, glowing from confetti in Ravenna,
festivals full of much thrown rice, flowers,
cake batter, balloon wheels, and bell trees
that were gifts for Bangladeshi brides.

The sterns are heavy, packed with deer feet,
arrowhead figs, banners from islands
at war with the South, at war with the pigs,
islands where boughs of aspen are eaten for sport.
Hanging over the decks are cherry skins
and squirrel spurs, oranges from Ivrea and almonds
sliding out from piles of fur and flint.
And down below, shelled in rock,
beneath the leopard head and termite tails
are ivory violins with crane fly legs for strings.

All these relics will collide, coruscate,
amplify themselves on summer shores
and distant colonies for trade, for litanies
of brightness, for chieftains, deacons, states.
They will ship and steal and wriggle
from their native splendour until the dynasty dilates,
until it crashes, bucks, wilts into forgotten ages,
fulminates and eats itself and dies.