

Like the Rains Come

Also by Mercedes Roffé:

In Spanish:

Poemas (Madrid, 1978)

El tapiz de Ferdinand Oziel (Buenos Aires, 1983)

Cámara baja (Buenos Aires, 1987; Santiago de Chile, 1996)

La noche y las palabras (Buenos Aires, 1996; Santiago de Chile, 1998)

Antología poética (Caracas, 2000)

Canto errante (Buenos Aires, 2002)

Memorial de agravios (Córdoba, 2002)

La ópera fantasma (Buenos Aires, 2006)

Milenios caen de su vuelo. Poemas 1977-2003 (Madrid, 2006)

In French:

Rapprochements de la bouche du roi (Montréal, 2008.

Translated by Nelly Roffé)

Définitions mayas et autres poèmes (Montréal, 2004.

Translated by Nelly Roffé, with a Preface by Hélène Dorion)

In Italian:

L'algebra oscura (S. Marco in Lamis, 2004. Translated by Emilio Coco)

In Romanian:

Teoria culorilor (Bucharest, 2006. Translated by D. M. Ion)

In English:

Theory of Colors (chapbook. New York, 2005.

Translated by Margaret Carson)

Trial by Ordeal (chapbook. New York, 2002.

Translated by Janet Greenberg)

Like the Rains Come

Selected Poems 1987-2006

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from
The Lower Chamber

Without the A there is no concert
just Solos
Transit
Scene of return
The angel comes to transfix a lung addicted
to the literary tradition
The whitewashed tradition of a convent
You confuse a headquarters with a convent
the same
as your
daughter's
mother's
grandmother's house
Orthopedics
WANTED
The mirror
Your fate on a piece of paper
A convent, wants
A white enclosure in which
to be
traversed
transfixed
wedded to
Father and master
You, who fears the lyre
sing to me
tell me
make me
endow me
cover me
He who fears the lyre
the music of the spheres
Won't arrive
Slanting view
Father

Mother
Uncle
Aunt
What am I doing here?
I run away to a party
A party
 quickly!
 A party
Remember me
 It's me
 I'm here
There is no party without gods
A fellow called . . .
 A fellow called . . .
Mesié Fifi!
 Mesié Fifi!
Oh flame of love
The king dies
The king has died
Long live the king

He said:

“too pointed a discourse”

And the green elf sang in falsetto:

“Be sharp, darling! immortalize
this Ianthean silhouette

Don't be
a bad girl,
eh?”

She said:

“Be more yourself”

And the green elf choked on the wine

It's been two years
assuming that it . . .
Two years of what?
It was cold
Two years ago it was a title for a poem without name
and the open sheets among Rilke's shrouds
All the amber
Me
All the amber from afar that came in ships
Like me
Amber like the eyes of the sirens
She isn't a siren
But
All the amber had come in ships for the feast
Oh night sweeter than the dawn
Transfigured night
The waiting
So Parisian!
The beret with a visor and the scarf
A melancholy, little, trembling pimp
A betrayal at the hands of *the-much-awaited-one*
The beloved with the beloved
The beloved transformed in the beloved
So Parisian! It flies away
Her face appears on the walls of an office restroom

like obscene, political graffiti – X loves – Death to the
traitors – Barbarians – and the dead – X loves – 781-1452
– Spitting forbidden – Screaming forbidden – Speaking
forbidden – The two names together forbidden – The
one who squeals is – the one who doesn't

Her face on the wall
of an office restroom
of a bar

a school

The little school, yes

The grapevine

It was easy for me then

It was not necessary

It was not necessary to tell you I hate you

I didn't have to say

I didn't have to look, listen, know

that all the sirens' eyes

are the color of amber

I didn't

have to come on that ship and then

perhaps I would have never ever

Transfigured night x Night in the Gardens of Spain

Today, like today

like that night

a night

a night all filled with murmurs

all of it

all of it

dance for the big toe of the right foot

trembling dance for the little pimp

It was cold

Shivering underneath an embroidered shirt

Shirts worn by grooms at their weddings
Embroidered shirts
Shirt underneath the bullfighter's vest
Shirt the priest
 the surgeon
Shirt
Shirts worn by pimps at their funerals
and berets with visors
Parisian
It was cold in the open sheets of
Me—the beloved in the beloved
Dawn
The night transfigured in forgetfulness
Never more
Here nothing has happened
It was for thee
For thee it was
which dog will lick what you leave
Agape
Without gods there is no party
Trembling
Poor little one, the scrounger
almost flying
It was the music of wings
It was amber