

## Rebirth

- Jahan Khalighi

If poets are the midwives of reality  
Then musicians must be magicians of time  
Carving flutes from hollowed bamboo shoots  
Blowing ballads into our bendable spines  
Fishes that play scales of the rivers they once climbed  
Like a church that's built of chimes  
Against the distress of the mind  
That shutters like lovers who are drunk on too much wine

If I had a penny for every time I failed  
I would melt them down to copper  
And build a citadel of brail  
So we could understand each other  
By touching fingers behind our veils

For every step that we take  
There's a memory that comes  
Only dance to this body in between the beating drums  
Excavating amber stories that exist inside our lungs  
Like the earth when she receives  
The light gifted from the sun  
I write with the wish that our bliss could be sung  
And search for a thread when the yarns been unspun

In the name of Ginsberg, Gaudi and Gibran,  
Saul of the Solstice and the mystery of dawn,  
In the name of Malcolm, Mahatma, Mingus and Miles  
Babatundi Olatunji and the rhythms he compiled

From a grandmother's spindle to a woodcarver's knife  
To the darkness transformed when we lean towards the light

In the name of Mandela, Basquiat, Beethoven, Bambatta  
From the peaks of Mt. Tam to the ghettos of Gaza  
From the tips of our tongues to the dreams that we alter  
Let our stories be sung, let our grief be unmasked  
let our prayers be an offering,  
surrendered and sworn  
for every midwife knows that not until  
a mother's womb has softened from the pain of labor  
will a way open and an infant be born

I celebrate your birth as I'd commemorate my own  
And water every seed like an ancient stalk of corn  
To remember what's been dismembered  
And mend what has been torn

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