

Two excerpt from *Beyond Elsewhere (Plus loin qu'ailleurs*, Éditions du Cygne, 2013), a long prose poem by Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac, translated from the French by H  l  ne Cardona

The first love wards off the specter of a world inhabited by rusty winged adults with collapsed dreams, whose automated arms open before you but no longer close. It takes the place of worldly theater, of a societal lie, of a future with deserted temples and a wrinkled forehead. Curtain. Give way to the sun. To all the rising suns.

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I light the lamp of the invisible: she is here. Even invisible she is here; between words, in them, through them. She covers the entire page in shadow, ink and light.

She is the rumor that rumbles at the bottom of the seashell stranded on the beach. Her beauty comes from elsewhere. She's the sun's song, the moon's sighs, an endless dream springing from the depths of another dream with a woman's bust and eagle wings: her, then me in her; her, then light.

She torments me, entrances me, she is the still virgin lover, the immaculate seat of an absolute vow that nothing earthly can fulfill. Even after starlit millennia within starlit millennia, she still is virgin, every day reinvented by the formula beyond the grave that lights the gold of time and the flame of our intangible bodies.

BIOS

Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac is the author of the acclaimed *Beyond Elsewhere* (Éditions du Cygne, 2013). He has been published in numerous anthologies of short stories and poetry, including *Petite anthologie de la jeune poésie française* (Éditions Géhess, 2009), *Le livre de la prière* (Éditions de l'Inférieur, 2013), and literary and philosophical journals, notably *Les Citadelles*, *Poésie Directe*, *Littérales*, *Polyglotte*, *Recours au Poème*, *Testament*, *3è Millénaire* and *L'Opinion indépendante*. He contributed to the book *Irak, la faute*, with Alain Michel and Fabien Voyer (Éditions du Cerf, 2000). Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac graduated from Sciences Po (The Paris Institute of Political Studies) and holds a Master's degree (Master 2 Recherche : *Fondements des Droits de l'Homme*). He studied English, philosophy, and Eastern poetry. At first a Zen practitioner and avid martial artist, he then became fascinated with Advaita-Cedânta Hinduism and the history and ideas of Asian religions and their poetic expression in particular, which led him to India.

Hélène Cardona is a poet, linguist, literary translator and actress, author of *Dreaming My Animal Selves* (Salmon Poetry, 2013), Pinnacle Book Award & Readers' Favorite Award winner, *The Astonished Universe* (Red Hen Press, 2006), *Life in Suspension* (Salmon Poetry, 2016), and *Ce que nous portons* (Éditions du Cygne, 2014), her translation of *What We Carry* by Dorianne Laux. She holds a Master's in American Literature from the Sorbonne, taught at Hamilton College and LMU, and received the Poesis Award of Honor and fellowships from the Goethe-Institut & Universidad Internacional de Andalucía. She is Chief Executive Editor of *Dublin Poetry Review* and *Levure Littéraire*, and Managing Editor of *Fulcrum*. Publications include *Washington Square*, *World Literature Today*, *Poetry International*, *The Warwick Review*, *Irish Literary Times*, and many more. Acting credits include *Chocolat*, *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, etc. For *Serendipity*, she co-wrote with Peter Chelsom & Alan Silvestri the song *Lucienne*, which she also sang.