A Kind of Ars Poetica

ADRIAN MATEJKA

Another Sunday morning, unbuttoned & carousing, the usual suspects in the usual get ups—spritzes of colognes, big block letters on sweatshirts. The church bells ring periodically in the distance, reminders of the church pew I’m supposed to be parked in. Slick shoes on, a couple of bright chains tangling around my neck as I try to outrun myself on a brick street lined with museums. Antiquity on every floor, persistent as the bells that keep clanging. This is the old me: just dumb enough to expect my escape plans might work because they were my plans. The me who mistook fall plumage in the periphery for the replicated Van Gogh in my mother’s garage, hours practicing a French horn out there to twirl in the hero line. Those days, when I was high minded & wobbly, French horn handed, I wanted the same things Van Gogh did probably, only in decibels. Pigment & lasting dye, everything bright & forgivable.
About the author

Adrian Matejka is the author of seven books, most recently a mixed media collection inspired by Funkadelic, *Standing on the Verge & Maggot Brain* (Third Man Books, 2021) and a collection of poems, *Somebody Else Sold the World* (Penguin, 2021), which was a finalist for 2022 UNT Rilke Prize and the Indiana Authors’ Award. His first graphic novel *Last On His Feet* (Liveright, 2023) was selected as one of the ten best books of 2023 by the New York Public Library. Among Matejka’s other honors are fellowships from the Academy of American Poets, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Lannan Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, and a Simon Fellowship from United States Artists. He served as Poet Laureate of the state of Indiana in 2018-19 and is Editor of *Poetry* magazine.