

Text by Athena Whitney after John Luther Adams's "The Wind Garden"

"Song of the Anemoi"

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In Greek mythology, the Anemoi are the four wind gods that belong to each cardinal direction: Boreas the North Wind, Notus the South Wind, Eurus the East Wind, and Zephyrus the West Wind. This wind garden serves as an instrument for the Anemoi to communicate with us in the form of music. The trunks of the eucalyptus trees are like a harp frame, grounding the leaves that the Anemoi weave through as if they are strings.

When I am here I am transported
To a time before grades meant
 Success
 And money bought
 Intelligence.
My worries are wiped away
 Like a fogged mirror.
 My doubts are lifted
And carried east by Eurus,
 He melts the grove
 From the chill of Zephyrus
Which had blanketed the warmth of
 Spring.

This grove of eucalyptus trees sits on the edge of southwest campus. Existing in the theatre district is a form of artistic existence in itself, as the wind fuels the music resonating amongst the trees. If the traffic from North Torrey Pines Road is especially quiet one can hear the distant roar of the coast down the hill. The Wind Garden pulls one in if walking along the perimeter, and taking that first step onto the uneven wood chips ties one and Mother Earth together, knotted by the breath of Anemoi.

One scorching day I leaned
 My weary head against
The peeling bark of a eucalyptus tree,
 Perhaps it was shedding
 The grey echoes from its shell,
 Just as I was planning to do
Having left behind the familiarity of
 Lecture halls
 And
 Dormitories.

The hum of the sea drifts by,
 And the lilt of others

Float past my ears.
Bark steeped in sunlight
Becoming spotted and speckled,
These trees become my company
As I find myself returning to this garden.

Wind weaves through the canopy
That exists above my head like a halo
Its invisible fingers pluck
The strings of nature's harp--
Boughs have been bent and twisted
Song after song.
Sage colored leaves drop from above
And dance
To the Anemoi's music.

Shadows of branches
Sway across the garden floor,
And sigh in salty air.
The leaves look as if
They have been kissed by
Boreas,
A waxy coating of frost ashing
Their subtle green.

Gale hugging the trunks of the trees
Deliver the world's symphony to my core.
These trees are the Amenoī's clay,
Waiting to be carved
And Shaped
By the breath of
Their gusts.

Time makes us breathless, and it's okay to step away from the perception that time is finite.
Time is endless. And I am endless with it when I am here.

I can't help but notice
This copse is a pocket
Tucked away at the earth's edge,
A haven to let my heaving lungs rest,
A piece of peace.

How many people like me
Lay their head on this wise brittle skin?

Do they wonder about the past just as I do?
Do they fear for the future?
I hope they sit with Mother Earth and
Hear the Anemoi's song
Just as I am.
Listen close,
The earth's harp is lulling you to sleep.