

Cargo

By Morgan Ray

We released you today, sending
you forth in frosty vessels,
so lovingly made in pans
and milk carton molds.

A flotilla of ice boats
embedded with flowers
from our gardens and filled
with a cargo of ash.

Six middle-aged women wading
into the Russian River, forming a circle,
for a recitation of poetry
to send you on your way.

I imagined you leisurely floating past
rock and redwoods, our flowers parting ways
with you as our boats melted,
you slowly disbursing into the current,

drifting by your house in Guerneville
then on to Duncans Mills where you'd wish
you could stop for a latté like we used to do
on our way to Goat Rock.

But you had other plans.
You sank to the bottom.
Freed yourself from our holds.
Relieved us of duty.

Our poem cut short,
icebergs bobbing in the water,
you hastened to the open sea
in a bloom of grey silt,

rushing,
to that special place

where waters mingle,
fresh into salty.

Saving Seeds

By Morgan Ray

My grandmother saved seeds,
spooning the slippery innards
of cantaloupes, cucumbers and tomatoes
into a strainer.

She rinsed some, fermented others
then placed them on paper to dry.
It's how she guaranteed next years' garden;
fed her family.

She'd be shocked at how we've transformed
the earth into a commodity; privatizing
and modifying seeds until they are no longer seeds
but intellectual properties.

How did we determine that seeds
could be patented and owned;
that our interconnectedness should be
through greed, not seed?

As a kid, Monsanto dazzled me at Disneyland,
riding in an atommobile through the tunnel of inner space.
In Tomorrowland, everything seemed possible,
better living through chemicals and master molecules.

Turns out, it's all a lie; this mono-Monsanto culture.
It's starving us to death.
The honeybees were the first to know, first to go,
but can we be far behind?

If tomorrow is always built on today,
like the voice in the tunnel said;
is it too late to save the seeds,

to save ourselves?