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## Three Poems for Booth

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## Three Poems for Booth

### Abstract

Three poems, including "Meditation on Subjects," "The City Experiment," and "Fabulist Trees in Chrome Landscape."

### Keywords

John Gallaher, poems, poetry, meditation, city, trees

*John Gallaher*

## meditation on subjects

*So it seems the body is this tent  
you stand behind. You walk around a bit  
and the body is just standing there.  
You come back renegotiated  
and the tent's moved to the front yard.  
The neighbors will see. They're sure  
to call someone. And you know  
you're still talking about the body,  
it's still your body. Call the street  
"Cat's Game" and the city "Robot Hands." Call your friends  
and they're talking  
from behind tents about Cat's Game  
and Robot Hands. How long has it been like this,  
and does it mean you do or don't get to sleep with the pretty people,  
when they've all become so ungainly, so  
kind of charming and such odd things  
to count on? So it seems*

*you're suddenly so perceptive  
you maybe should try some profession soon,  
or board game. Begin anywhere. Walk up the street to the left,  
and it's a tent in motion. A list of fragments  
you have to recite when you come across others.  
Luckily, you don't have to know what the words mean  
in order to say them. Like "there are a lot more afternoons  
and sensible investing." And reasons for subjects,  
when they contain their opposite,  
as all things do, or are said to.  
Can you contain your opposite then,  
and coast all the way down?  
Luckily, it's not a real question. And it's not  
a real tent. And the weekend is almost always on its way  
with its own hollow places  
of easily painted landscape over crowds of people.*

## the city experiment

*There were other things we liked, of course,  
 when it wasn't important to be careful, and the weather cooperated,  
 with the knowledge that this moment  
 is going to be repeatable, and more comfortable than better things, but still  
 that light strain that maybe it really isn't all that repeatable after all,  
 at least not with you, and even this has to end, and rather soon,  
 but at that moment cocktails arrive  
 so we can crest, and whatever we say fits  
 or fits well enough. Yes to the cocktail, because we're polite, then yes again  
 to sudden comments regarding next time.  
 We spent all night on the city experiment, but the whole thing  
 barely moved, and now we're worried,  
 though the formula looked good in the congratulatory lighting,  
 and we had this feeling that we might be able to push through  
 to the other side of what this is,  
 and it'll turn out to be a movie set, and you'll be walking the carpet*

*to an award show. Yes,  
 you immersed yourself in that role. Yes,  
 so that you believed that you were indeed that person over there,  
 and thank you, it sure was something, and you're going to miss it a bit  
 now and then, but next season it'll be a museum  
 or some people digging in a field.  
 That's the point where it always spills all over the table.  
 We're starting to get desperate. Wasn't it warm in the sun  
 through this window in winter, the snow outside? I'm sure it's something small  
 we've overlooked. What type of cocktail, perhaps. Perhaps survival  
 is a state of mind, in your floating future, there in the experiment,  
 on the ride into the city, past the tennis courts  
 and trees, and an old harmonium someone put out by the curb,  
 a trace of broken china, a fleeting study  
 of a figure in a field, until you're writing notes on a napkin  
 that blows into the lake, and you're hearing the flat echo,*

## fabulist trees in chrome landscape

*Your life is on the other side of a fence  
throwing things over the top at you.  
Every now and then  
it peeks over to see what you look like  
in your new hat. Your new shoes.  
I hate it when the city gets this way,  
when everything sparks  
unexpectedly. Too many reflections  
of hats. Too many catalogues.  
And clowns in the trees,  
so that you may almost glimpse them.  
One could think,  
perhaps, that they're trying to sell you a uniform,  
but subtly,  
as they're neither speaking  
nor holding uniforms.  
And all around you  
a series of lines indicating movement  
radiates.*

