

*The Empress / Being With*

Into wild open space                      Rigor fades  
We're in the echo                          Sage & stone  
We return to the trees                      to remember how to breathe

Beneath the redbud & over serpentinite  
Understory & mapped by its leaves  
A cast of veins across our cheek

Awake & rippling with light  
There at mountain base                      A single buttercup  
Blur of yellow across the sky                      A single buttercup

Bright and waxy flowers                      Stems eaten fresh  
The Pomo gathered these seeds for pinole, left an offering  
Acorns cast like stars

On a path                      is it  
The right one  
Toyon and tan oak                      Healed by the hush

Coast redwood                      Covered by your canopy  
We have so much to learn We add another curious layer  
Wave of the sword fern

On the cusp of wisdom and will we are summoned to withstand  
This virus this mechanism of destruction alienation and catastrophe  
Fear tries to eviscerate the heart of justice                      it is a calling to breathe into the

Soreness    stoke the fire                      take in what's broken                      & salve  
& salve its fractures                      the work is ongoing                      there is no prize but the self  
Which is a world of healing

Eye of curious bark  
Tough wonder of meaning  
Might and bloom

Sedge of the gentle bristle heart  
Mycelial ancestor  
Hum to undo harm

Where we fold within  
Xylem and phloem constellate  
Mixing of absolute sugars

We are with the grasshopper the reindeer lichen the bee and opossum citrine & jasper  
apical meristem  
the Manzanita – a bird in profile about to ascend

Cob & thorn  
Gentle whistle of conifer

To be with the foliose to be with the crustose the seastar cockle & abalone  
Angelica Amanita muscaria to be with its sadness

To be with the gray willow The California buckeye Blue Elderberry  
Tarweed & Madrone Valley Oak & Wild Rose

The white root sedge the white root sedge (Carex Barbarea) how you continue  
Xylems and scars

White sage & black walnut  
Bulrush (scirpus robustus) the dark rhizome may you continue (dig roots in fall)

In relation with The Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog The Alligator Lizard  
The rattlesnake

In relation with redwood mixed evergreen oak woodland Douglas fir  
Chaparral coastal scrub grassland & coastal strand

Yarrow and thistle sandstone and shale  
a song and lyric both

We thrum and chortle  
We are in and with  
Fold in and be with