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## Suffering the Legitimacy of Aesthetics

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# Suffering the Legitimacy of Aesthetics

James M. Magrini

## *The Poet's Vocation*

**The poet's glance** traverses the distance between Heaven and Earth, and back again.

**As imagination bodies forth**, the forms of things unknown, the poet's pen turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing a local habitation and name.

**With the distant storm**, comes the poet's vocation: To share with brethren the divine truth of Being. History opens with the seduction of Holy Word.

**As Demigod**, between the time of Earth and Heaven, the poet is thrown, alienated, and beholden to art's task. In the emptiness of the night, singing the song of Fate unto others, he foretells what is yet to be.

**Bowing to Nature's Omnipotence**, in the presence of Helios, his soul is consumed by the white light and heat of a thousand suns. Struck and blinded, he is driven to madness. The receiving and giving unto others exact a high penance.

**"I would gladly turn homeward,"** laments the poet, "for what harvest but pain have I reaped? Can I return to the gods of my childhood and expect the same peace as before? Can my art balance life's suffering?"

**Poetizing is a striving for atonement**, a longing for a purified return to the hearth, to the feast, in communion once again with the gods at their banquet table.

**The poet's song relives** the ancient, torrential event of history's eruption, when Kronos tore from the womb of Mother Earth and language usurped the reign of Chaos.

**Awaken us, poet**, we who slumber, give us laws and give us life! Venture into the eye of the storm that rages of the clashing of World and Earth, where light and shadow dance over victory and defeat, blessing and curse, master and slave.

**The poet creates**, but his letter kills, suffering the legitimacy of aesthetics, his spirit to spirits gives vigor and new life.

**A Fire divinely gleaming** wells up for you, poet, and with great pain, yet quick with desire, you hurl yourself headlong into Aetna's furnace . . .

**And once again the cries of celebration** resound and the aroma of sacrifice permeates the aether.

**Gladly, did not love** restrain me, deep as you plunged down, I would follow.