Ill-Advised Love Poem

By John Yau

Come live with me
And we will sit

Upon the rocks
By shallow rivers

Come live with me
And we will plant acorns

In each other's mouth
It would be our way

Of greeting the earth
Before it shoves us

Back into the snow
Our interior cavities

Brimming with
Disagreeable substances

Come live with me
Before winter stops

To use the only pillow
The sky ever sleeps on

Our interior cavities
Brimming with snow

Come live with me
Before spring

Swallows the air
And birds sing

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Source: Further Adventures in Monochrome (Copper Canyon Press, 2012)
Born in Lynn, Massachusetts in 1950 to Chinese emigrants, Yau attended Bard College and earned an MFA from Brooklyn College in 1978. A noted art critic and curator, Yau has also published many works of art criticism and artists’ books. His first book of poetry, Crossing Canal Street, was published in 1976. Since then, he has won acclaim for his poetry’s attentiveness to visual culture and linguistic surface. He teaches at the Mason Gross School of the Arts and Rutgers University, and lives in New York City.

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