Glinting
Some Tile
Fecund
Spout

Glinting spout, some tile, fecund. Fecund tile, some spout glinting.

—KKlap’P’at’Triou
[trans. Atal Gopinath]

[KKlap’P’at’Triou is a poet working in the Recotranscription style. Their poems have been translated into thirty-two Earth languages, and nearly six hundred galactic living and unliving languages.]
#2567-02 Amendment to the Special Intangible Treasure Status of "Human Craft Practices"

Sponsors: Mirian Edelkahn (R-NJ); Stephen Wu (G-TX); Mark "Polestar" (I-SG); and Lt. Tesh "Auroole" (I-GS)

In accordance with the Trad'd Indemnity Treaty of 2040, designating the Western Lands as a special conservation zone, the following artisans and practices—indigenous to Earth—are to be added to the already extant list of Special Intangible Treasures from the Orion Arm (in accordance with galactic law 687.901.064):

- Basket-weaving
- Ceramics + clay architecture
- Puzzle-making
- Joinery
- Stained glass

Quantum computing
- Perfunery
- Netting
- [illegible]

As such they will be under the protection of Trad'd reception units tasked with the preservation of planetary lifeways for future generations of intergalactic life and unlike to study and learn from, and to promote interplanetary understanding and peace.

Amendment Passed 576 to 24
February 29, 2004 (Earth Year of the Rat)
Intergalactic Year 704190

[Testimony given by Eugenia Frei-Murillo [Ceramicist, Western Preserve] at Monthly Public Grievance Hearing 419-b; December 20, 2075]:

I stand before you with hatred in my heart.

When you came into our lives you spoke softly; you carried no stick. Communicating a deep and nurtured respect for our culture, you called us "an incoercible treasure amongst the stars" first in Mandarin, then Fulani, then English, and finally in Spanish. Months later, when we finally heard you speak in your own language, it sounded like gunfire channeled through a pipe organ. Harsh, impossible to stop. spectator violence. You were surprised when we wanted to learn it; you told us it was not possible.

Your demonstrations of bark time, gravity mirroring, and teleescent empathy were a distraction, I now realize. Human technology leapfrogged forward and naive communicationists reflected all your interactions with us. We gave you the keys to our kingdom willingly—a down payment on the end of war, hunger, and disease.

A few years after the Treaty, I was selected, along with one of nearly five hundred others living intangible treasures—all masters in our chosen crafts—to pass along my knowledge to a designated Trad'fe apprentice. I had to relocate my studio to a large ranch in the valley; but any inconvenience was assuaged by the promise of financing of the move, of the apprenticeship, of my family's livelihood from the Trad'fe Authority. At that point, I was thrilled to be participating in an experiment so grand, connecting the lifeways and unification of multiple civilizations across the stars.

Turbulence charactrized much of my first year with d'Pajk. Even before she arrived, months were spent ensuring the studio could be held to the necessary Trad'fe standards. When d'Pajk finally appeared in the flesh, she was sour and temperamental. The minor spasm in her limbs made working with her near blood-sport. (Too much nitrogen in the air? We never did figure it out.) She was not making progress.

Months of paperwork followed, and meetings and mediation sessions with regional g-crats. Miraculously, this process a friendship between us was sealed. It was small at first—waking its gifts at a glacial pace—but I was glad for it. In our work together over the next two decades we would revisit our understandings of the other's limitations, rearing and piping with laughter. Care and patience were the conceptual ground for us, and together we developed a series of collaborative works, enshrining the "mistakes" resulting from her spasm in sculpturally significant ways. Each piece we made contains some aspect or feature that was alien to the other, and eventually we built bespoke environments to suit them—bold, fantastic, and beautiful. My favorite was an emerald-tiled sunken bathhouse, filled with abstract vases. Photographs of these spaces—peacocks to our togetherness—were reproduced in our own limited-edition catalog, and accompanied by short, interpretive poems by K'c'apP'lat'Thou.

Everything seemed right. And then, three months ago, d'Pajk disappeared.

When a person dies there is closure, even if all you feel is the ever-collapsing wound of grief. There is a body to mourn, and there are words that other, less grief-st颟ticen people offer in comfort and support. But when someone disappears, grief is no longer a shared language. No one knows what to say. Worse, still you don't even know what to tell yourself. In grappling the lost, knowing itself is futile.

I saw Hank Comeau—the nattar from Nova Scotia—at the old post office, and when I attempted to telegraph my circumstances with a pathetic wave, he turned his head sharply away. It's embarrassing to be a marked person, to be ignored by people you respect. I lost his willful obstinacy. I was a black hole.

Three days later, he was breaking down my studio door: "Teeggi, too?" he cried. Together we traveled to the Treaty Regional Office to get some answers, but... abandoned?

I speak for myself only, but I know that my fellow intangible treasures, who are in varying states of grief and desperation, are utterly ruined now. Only Tomoko (from Nagoya) and Olhfer (from Paris) are young enough to take on new apprentices. Perhaps, despite your best efforts, glass sculptor and perfumerial still have a chance to survive.

I did get your letter last week: "Absorption Satellite..." "Extraction Zone?" We should have listened to The Defector G'kalf...

...we have watched the glow in the south grow dark... Polestar hasn't spoken publicly for two weeks... hurricanes have returned... the Western Lands are on fire... We are alone! Again!

Something else: I know it is worse than anyone realizes, but I am almost afraid to speak it out loud. I can't explain it, but everything in my skin is breaking. My bags of clay are leaking water, and my glasses are settling up. I know my hands, and they keep shaking involuntarily. I think of her and—

[end of transcript]