

Restricted

by [Susan Shea](#) (October 2024)



Poppies (John Singer Sargent, 1886)

I can't even appreciate the weeds today

meant to be flowers in season
to look at me, one by one, assure me
beauty is reliable, wonder is allowed

tell me that I have been given eyes to see
every individual blossom, colorful and
free in its turnings

instead, they are strangling each other
in a mass, overcrowded, thrown together

by a selfish wind of this time, lied to
told they will not choke each other out

but they have lost their room, their shapes
they can no longer move or whistle
their own songs in the breezes

they have become a dump
of useless idiots cramped into a dark lot
that does not fit their destiny, left
with no ground for their seeds to flourish

while a radical violinist serenades them
telling them that she and her handlers
have reinvented sight and sound, wind, and fire

telling them they are better off with less
while they watch her take all the sun
she needs to mock us and to cackle
on her man-made mountaintop

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Susan Shea is a retired school psychologist who was raised in New York City, and is now living in a forest in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Since she has returned to writing poetry this year, her poetry has been accepted in a few dozen publications, including *Feminine Collective*, *Ekstasis*, *Persimmon Tree Literary Magazine*, and *The Avalon Literary Review*.

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