

Bren Simmers Poetry

From Hastings-Sunrise by Bren Simmers (2015)



Landscape formed by bright awnings:
Hong Hong Bakery, Pies 2 for \$7,
Keys Cut Here. On Mr. Donair's spit,
the earth rotates. Papal smoke emits
from Polonia Sausage, semis shunt
downtown, second-growth steel glints
in the distance. This two-storey strip,
fat quarter of blocks still a livable scale
in a city where cranes hoist the skyline
toward Shangri-La

Learning new streets on foot,
how long to grow routes, wear paths
from green grocer to deli, dim sum to tailor.
beyond address, habit, what makes
home? Surely not the sour waft
of rendered chicken, nor the caged budgies
we watch waiting for a #14. People
who perch at our perimeters define
our edges. At work, I record

when the tree swallows return, the first
salmonberry pickpocketed by temperature.
From a third-storey apartment, park
uniform shucked, I survey shipyards,
the North Shore. Find the rhythms
of street trees, swing sets, glimpse
a larger pattern - the phenology of
panhandlers, brunch crowds, for sale

English 11 Honours

Ms. Shin

signs, my life reflected in what
I choose to record.



Local mascots, the wooden mannequins
in front of Laughing Bean Coffee
change their position daily:
foxtrot, karate chop, strut Canucks
jerseys on game nights, high-five
commuters who slow to read placards:
his *Freshly Baked* and hers
I love his hot muffins.

Milk steaming at espresso machines,
the barista asks the next line,
What'll it be today, Henry?
A simple question triggers
envy. To be known, a regular
drinking chai and playing Scrabble
with my love, to let down
my guard long enough
to be seen, called out
of anonymity.