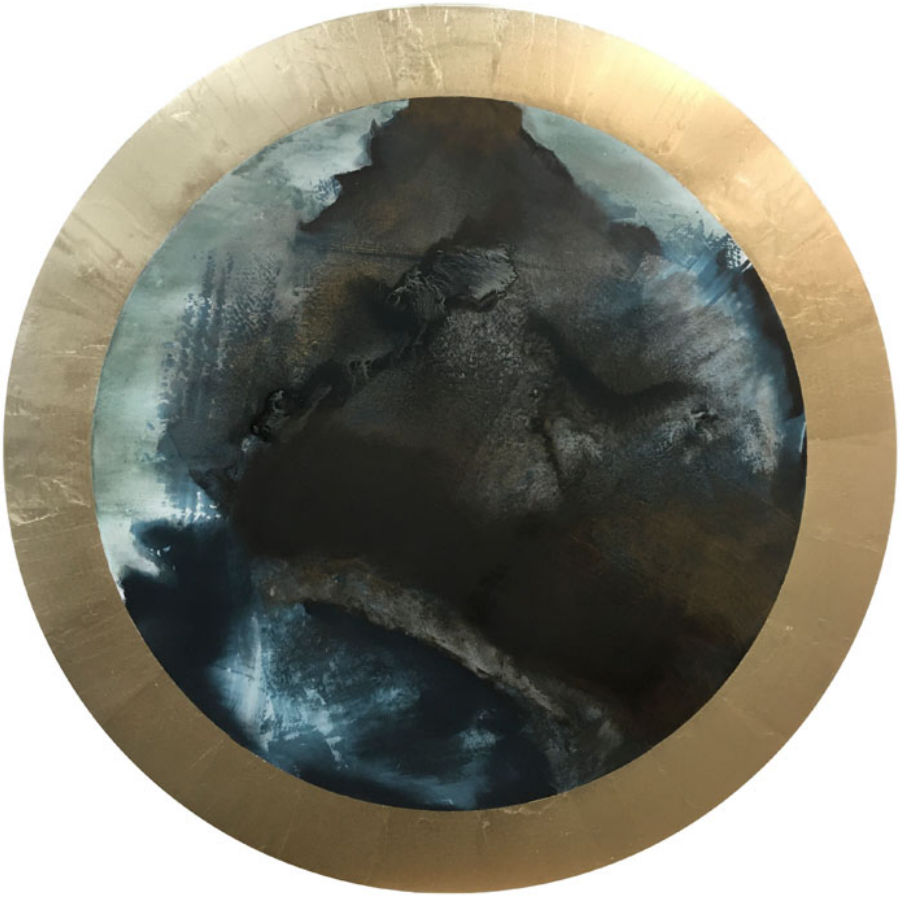
POETRY

The Particulars of Time

by Lyde Gerard Villanueva



"The Going Away Mountain" by Karen Fitzgerald

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When I think of immortality,
it makes me want to disregard time as a concept,
something imagined that is measured in numbers.
I turn off my phone, remove my watch,
hide the clock on my laptop.

The Amondawa tribe waits for the seasons to change.
They don’t have a word for time.
No age, no birthdays, no Tuesday, 9:25 in the morning.
An infectious prion can sleep in a body for decades.
No incubation period can tell when the Kuru disease will attack.
Limbs will suddenly shiver and tremble, signaling the body’s demise.

In 1965, in a TV show called I’ve Got a Secret,
young Ray Kurzweil played a short musical composition
on a piano. A former Miss America
asked him if he composed it. Ray answered no,
but actor Henry Morgan guessed the secret right.
A machine composed the music.
Several decades after, Ray appeared on TV again,
with a thinning hairline and rustic voice,
and claimed that by 2045
humans would achieve immortality.
When an anthurium closes its petal—
glossy and heart-shaped, sometimes velvety—
it is anticipating the coming of rain.

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