

# The Inaugural Poems



John M. Bellinger

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Locofo Chaps is dedicated to publishing politically-oriented poetry.

Chicago, USA, 2017

## **Inaugural**

to have my name out there/up on top the tower how  
beautiful/ the light/New York in every high place/in every  
land and this is something I promise myself that down each  
corridor I command-it will be just perfect/shoes never  
dirty/no outdoors let in/it will be clean. The maid will come  
and she will be perfectly formed and will be a Tuesday/  
my god is it only already Tuesday. There is no need to  
know about the war when there is so much to matriculate.  
You see it is like building the perfect building – you hire,  
you plan, you destroy to build, you build to lay something  
down, the graves of our sons and their fathers, money in the  
vault, the last sympathy given, last broken lock in the  
chain. You all talk holocaust as if it was free dinner  
at the legion, a fond remembrance of railroad cars, a bad  
rained-out picnic in the woods of Europe. People like you  
never take the devil at his word,  
the old liar.

## **Press Conference**

There is no way to get around it, the tie is too big, it presents itself first as a warning before he even enters the room.

He: Not large, but loud, ideas like overstuffed furniture: Difficult to move; easier to burn.

## **Inaugural Too**

there will be a time when you remember bad things,  
the worst things, You could not have imagined anything  
worse. You will recall the way it felt, so grimy, so dirty,  
unsavory is the word, as unsavory as a caterwauling dusk,  
a clown with an oxygen mask, sinister, filthy propositions  
on the internet, thick fingered perverts hiding behind  
the bathroom door, an oily, flat sound of guns discharging  
in urban neighborhoods, broken English and strange  
food, lottery vendors, check-cashers, pay day loans.  
Of course, it had nothing to do with you, you double parked  
and left, sent postcards from home, drove out of town.

You will live your life in a different city. The best city.  
Everyone you know will be there, and everyone you want  
to know. I told you we would build a wall. I told you  
we could keep them from ruining the Party.

## **Thirty-three years Late**

The problem is not what happens here –  
the cheap distraction of grown  
men and women mumbling on the Senate floor,  
hiding their faces with their fingers –

the problem is  
the dark room  
somewhere in  
Fort Washington,  
or was it  
St. Everyplace,  
where all the locks have changed  
and everyone there  
already knows why.

## **Inaugural Three**

Wires are not only the past wires are the future wires  
are a part of the future and the future belongs to those who  
hear what goes on between the wires be it bearded men  
huddling over radios or silent mumblings in the walls and  
crawl spaces of Washington. I need to be unfettered I need  
my own guard my own station my own secrets my own  
soldiers without color. I need protection. the world has  
gone crazy. It is the media, it is the internet. People  
are spreading lies as thin as skin. People are hatching  
hatchimals \and they will not hatch. They swear  
in their sleep. Children are tickling Elmo. Al Gore.  
The soul of earth gets under your nails. It feels  
unpleasant, like it is raw,  
and wounded.



**He told her to wear the Kennedy Dress,**

the one that made her head seem to float  
on the curve of a butterfly wing—  
a nearly American perfect face—

matching gloves.

He would speak to her later in the car.

## **Inaugural For**

For me. For you. For all those times you have waited in line, left your best shoes out in the rain, have punched your best years into a series of ever-better clocks while boys with new ties counted your hours, laughing over hot coffee in appropriately furnished rooms. You are the corrosion that never sleeps, the thing sprung up between the cracks in the everywhere concrete. I see you, hear your buzzsaw voices in the dream that I am living in. I bend my delicate ear to the shuffle and sound of your shoes, worn thin, wearied, grievous with intolerable sadness. This world, lined with patterned gold, this is never to be your world, this is the reason you are angry, these fixtures, polished until the gleam hurts your soul, this unknowable decadence, you want to own it - the obscure wines and the tiny plates holding the flesh of unknown species. I can hold this out. A shiny object in the middle distance. No one will ever tell you that you can't get there. You have to work for it. This is a race. People will fall. You have to keep going. Someone is bound to get stepped on. Ignore the sound of breaking bones.

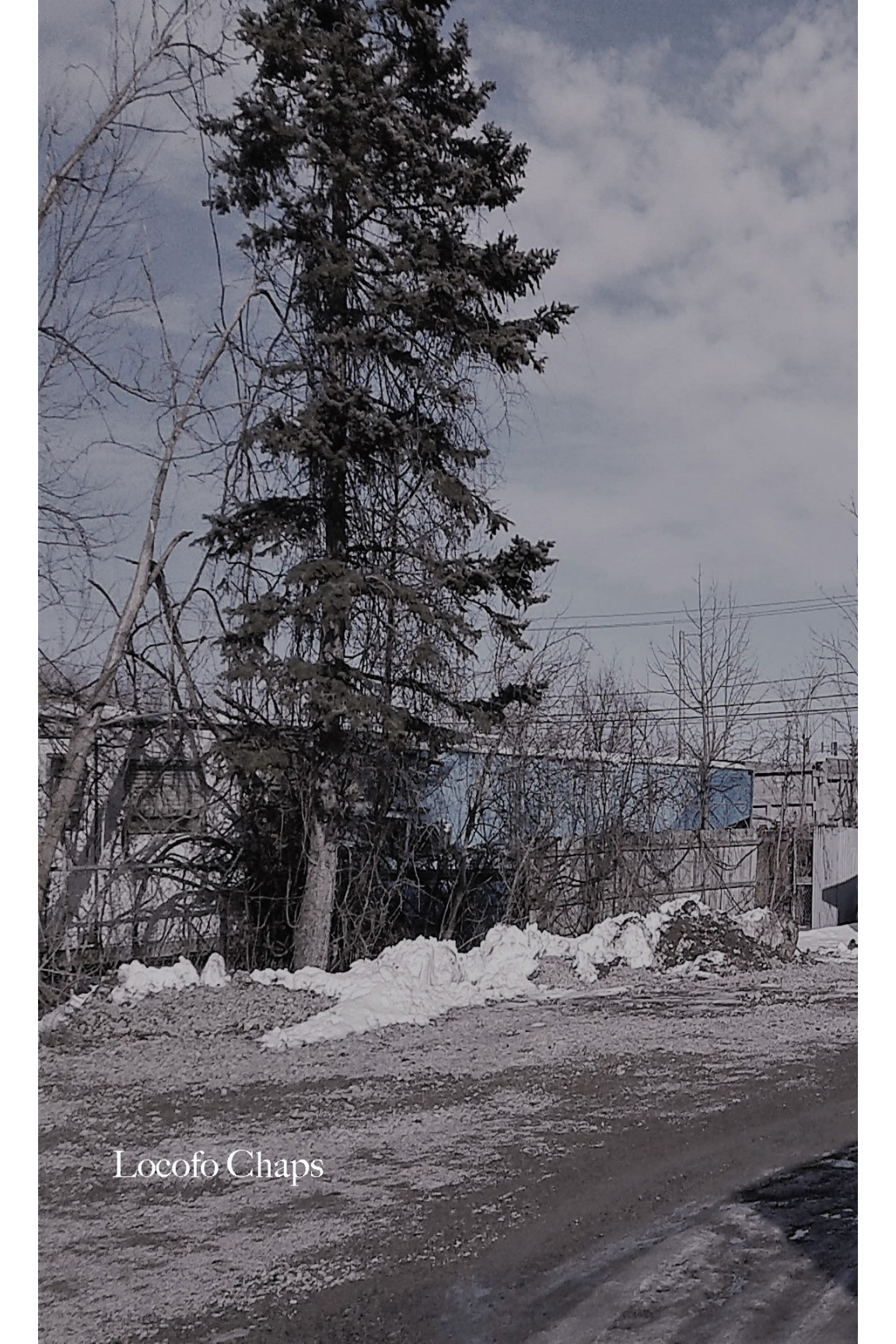
## Locofo Chaps

2017

Eileen Tabios – *To Be An Empire Is To Burn*  
Charles Perrone – *A CAPacious Act*  
Francesco Levato – *A Continuum of Force*  
Joel Chace – *America's Tin*  
John Goodman – *Twenty Moments that Changed the World*  
Donna Kuhn – *Don't Say His Name*  
Eileen Tabios (ed.) – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry*  
Gabriel Gudding – *Bed From Government*  
mLEKAL aND – *Manifesto of the Moment*  
Garin Cycholl – *Country Musics 20/20*  
Mary Kasimor – *The Prometheus Collage*  
Iars palm – *case*  
Reijo Valta – *Truth and Truthmp*  
Andrew Peterson – *The Big Game is Every Night*  
Romeo Alcala Cruz – *Archaeoteryx*  
John Lowther – *18 of 555*  
Jorge Sánchez – *Now Sing*  
Alex Gildzen – *Disco Naps & Odd Nods*  
Barbara Janes Reyes – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 2*  
Luisa A. Igloria – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 3*  
Tom Bamford – *The Gag Reel*  
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Humpty Drumpfty and Other Poems*  
Allen Bramhall – *Bleak Like Me*  
Kristian Carlsson – *The United World of War*  
Roy Bentley – *Men, Death, Lies*  
Travis Macdonald – *How to Zing the Government*  
Kristian Carlsson – *Dhaka Poems*  
Barbara Jane Reyes – *Nevertheless, #She Persisted*  
Martha Deed – *We Should Have Seen This Coming*  
Matt Hill – *Yet Another Blunted Ascent*  
Patricia Roth Schwartz – *Know Better*  
Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Petty Poetry for SCROTUS' Girls, with poems for Elizabeth Warren and Michelle Obama*  
Freke Rähä – *Explanation model for 'Virus'*  
Eileen R. Tabios – *Immigrant*  
Ronald Mars Lintz – *Orange Crust & Light*

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Colin Dardis – *Post-Truth Blues*  
Leah Mueller – *Political Apnea*  
Naomi Buck Palagi – *Imagine Renaissance*  
John Bloomberg-Rissman and Eileen Tabios – *Comprehending Mortality*  
Dan Ryan – *Swamp Tales*  
Sheri Reda – *Stubborn*  
Christine Stoddard – *Chica/Mujer*  
Aileen Ibardaloza, Paul Cassinetta, and Wesley St. Jo – *No Names*  
Nicholas Michael Ravnika – *Liberal elite media rag. SAD!*  
Mark Young – *The Waitstaff of Mar-a-Largo*  
Howard Yosha – *Stop Armageddon*  
Andrew and Donora Rihn – *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*  
Reshmi Dutt-Ballerstadt – *Extreme Vetting*  
Michael Dickel – *Breakfast at the End of Capitalism*  
Tom Hibbard – *Poems of Innocence and Guilt*  
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Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*  
Marthe Reed – *Data Primer*  
Carol Dorf – *Some Years Ask*  
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