

The Prince Room at the Palace of the Governors

By Casey Frank

The room was draped with garlands of red roses. They hung from the ceiling, they encircled the large window, and they presented beauty and maturity. There was a picture of a man, bearded and in still black-and white. Immortalized within a room of decorum long passed from the modern, he looked to the side of the picture, and not directly into the camera. I wondered what was there to the right that he was looking at, if the portrait was concealing a background of potential excitement. The picture frame was covered with sheets of lace, as was the window. Lace is so transparent, I think, so easy to be mistaken as covering the present, instead of the past preserved in this “prince room.” Clarity blurred, yet the beauty of the lace’s adornments compels me to look at it, instead of through it. It took focus, but I saw past it. I saw the sun: its menacing light, the destructive fear that I had long associated with its rays.

I want black curtains in my princess room, even though the sky is only as dark as the room condemning it to separation from human existence. I want black roses in my room, I want beauty to be merely implied, merely radiant only to the appreciative onlooker. I want no pictures, I want no reminders of what has been, and instead focus on the reality presented to us now.

There were chairs, facing the center of the room, which was covered with a red rose-decorated rug. Two walls were inhaled in the chairs’ old breath, and the chairs concealed the fireplace, the lantern, the candles. See, I want my flames to be real, and want the light to be artificial. I want the comfort and the power to distinguish vision. I want that lantern, that fireplace, that candle to thrive, and then perish under my own control.

Behind the chairs, there was also a bookcase, filled with horizontally arranged volumes—significant, I’m sure, to the time. The walls were decorated with religious art: Santa Maria, los angeles, Jesus Cristo, and the triumphs of the entity known as God.

This “prince room” was exquisite in detail, and I’m sure very expensive at its time. In my room, though, the wonder would seem moderate, as if it represented a world-wide equality of economy.

It conjures within me the dreams that I contemplate: the dream of community and commune, respect and quality of life for all. Expensive, course, was the room, but I didn’t mind; instead the antiquity inspired within me, not only a sense of past frivolity, or the future’s potential, but the importance of right now, that the past relies on our interpretation and remembrance of it, and the future depends on what we do to shape it. And the present, well, is a vehicle of change, and constancy.

Museum As Muse

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