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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program

Volume 9, Special Issue



Farewell to Black Science Annex

To Black Science Annex

With Apogees to BEN JONSON

Thou were not, Black Science Annex, built for envious show, Of modern stucco; nor canst thou boast a pair polished Chihulys, escalator, or a roof of gold; Thou hast no up-lighting, whereof tales are told, Or code-worthy stairs, or potable water; but thou stand'st an ancient pile, grudged by maintenance headaches but have been revered by us for the while.

Thy front porch has rockers, thy eaves an Earth Flag, under which students do resort; and thy has classrooms within where Kaye, Amy, Pete, Terry, and John their high lectures have made; And nearby the broad maple and the greenhouse shade.

Thy dogwood in the courtyard, which of a nut was set at its great birth, is where Mark Olencki once fed contraband cats— oh Felix where are thou Ebony meows now! Yet there on vacant brick are still persists the painted portraits of disciplinary saints: Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, Carson and Shiva, but they too will be taken by the dozer's dauntless hold.

And once all this is gone like mist on Milliken Pond?

Let Winslow's noble copses rise! (Though planted by the Roebuck nurseries!) Let Chris O's air-traffic control find a new landing suite of offices! Let Ferguson's copious storage find its future off-site home! Let Olencki's vintage Scotches rest somewhere else in safe repose! And Let new dreams soon lift rooftop gardens upward to the sky! Let stories of ENVIS Elysian Fields fill the ears of Jenn and the New John!

Now, Black Science Annex, it is true they will level thee, like other edifices, after asbestos abatement; they will collapse you inward in a pile, but now still before us, we see you—proud, ambitious heap—and nothing else. May we lift a glass or recyclable can to you! May we say goodbye—our department's ten-year humid home—before we dwell in our new sleek sustainable abode!

John Lane
Thirsty Thursday
May 16, 2019



Views of the BSA Courtyard