

On the Occasion of Attending a Poetry reading in the East End by Janette Schafer

Slick cropped hair bold colors man buns leggings stripes
brightly colored shoes and every poet around me feels
like they just graduated high school and I am the Grand Dame
in the sensible shoes. They scream their words, their pain
they whisper their words, mumble their pain.

I clear my throat. I no longer want to march on Washington.
Can we know the right thing? Can we know our consciousness,
expand it, and then learn to act? My psyche, firmly ensconced
in its middle age wants to wring my hands at the picket lines,
scream at the naughty children: Vote next time, you fuckers!
because I am somewhere between 40 and Get off my lawn!

I watch a girl walk in who looks like Kira before her breasts
were removed and her thick rope of hair circling her waist
fell away in clumpy pieces and her supple soft curves
melted mercilessly in the wake of disease, but I digress
this is not to be about her death, though it saddens me still.

Wave your signs, wave your signs, but do not cry
NOT MY PRESIDENT. He is your Tyrant-in-Chief
and you weep, you type, you do not sleep, you march,
you tweet, you post, you meme, you text, but you do not vote
and that is exactly what he wanted from you.