

*AMY UYEMATSU*

### **The Meaning of Zero: A Love Poem**

*And Is where space ends  
called death or infinity?  
Pablo Neruda  
The Book of Questions*

A mere eyelid's distance between you and me.

It took us a long time to discover the number zero.

John's brother is afraid to go outside.  
He claims he knows  
the meaning of zero.

I want to kiss you.

A mathematician once told me you can add infinity  
to infinity.

There is a zero vector, which starts and ends  
at the same place, its force  
and movement impossible  
to record with  
rays or maps or words.  
It intersects yet runs parallel  
with all others.

A young man I know  
wants me to prove  
the zero vector exists.  
I tell him I can't,  
but nothing in my world  
makes sense without it.

From *Stone Bow Prayer* by Amy Uyematsu, Copper Canyon Press, 2005,