

*AMY UYEMATSU*

**This Thing Called Infinity**

“Then again, a very different sort of infinity may well be freewheeling you.”

Natalie Angier, “The Life of Pi, and Other Infinities”

Impossible to grasp yet I'm sure it exists,  
sure as the fact that I won't be around by 2047 -  
which would make me a century old -  
and my little grandsons close to middle age.  
I know about infinity whenever I admire a passion flower,  
feel myself pulled into its oddly perfect symmetry.  
Or ponder snowflakes, shooting stars and soap bubbles.  
Scientists tell us there are different kinds of infinities -  
some are flat, others hunchback, inflating, explosive.  
Mathematicians are the real jokesters when it comes  
to playing with the mind - how counting from 1 to forever  
is somehow smaller than the set of all values  
between 1 and 2, or as I used to ask my students,  
take half of a half of a half and never stop.  
Some notions of the infinite can rattle the nerves -  
like the possibility there are many earths  
and someone exactly like you or me  
with a totally opposite or identical life,  
or there are galaxies of multiplying gods,  
planets that will never be at war.  
And what about time? These last hours I count  
in my brief life - the way grief can make time endless  
and delight mere seconds which tickle and tease us  
in unending supply. Old Man Pythagoras  
was insecure about the whole matter -

deeming the finite masculine and good,  
while infinity was feminine - both had to be  
subjugated - as if either could.

I rather like being a woman who tries  
to embrace the ever emerging infinite, especially  
when it comes to love and my own unfolding  
of wonder after wonder.