

The Somnambulists

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With childlike anticipation, admission paid,
you enter the fair of black and white tent tops,
coveting the world of jagged shapes and forms,
off-kilter and with its never-ending whirling.
Step right up, you too can be a winner!
Pick your sideshow, rush in with the restless.

Each dark landscape is a bleeding vignette:
the university embraces the indentured.
Will you be a writer, an athlete, a director?
There is persuasion in the barker's pitch.

There is fast murder in the city.
There is slow murder in the farmland.
There is treason in the barker's pitch.

A bride is promised moneyed devotion
but cannot lift the weight of her veil.
There is brutality in the barker's pitch.

The medicine man will save you;
take his elixir to smooth out the edges
and doze inside a dreamless sleep.

There is a man living on the moon and
he wears a top hat and carries a cane.
Uncover his diaries hidden in the library;
recognize the weapons of the perfect enemy.
There is smoke in the mirrors.
The flaps are unhinged.
The clouds collapse behind false fronts.
Your face reacts in silent film.

Can you follow the light outside the painted canvas?
Can you shed the shadow living in the straight-jacket?
Can you hear the formless silence between your
thoughts?