

## The Return to Mia

As I drove into Mia and went through the town ---  
The parking lot's there with leaves all around.  
I walked in the front door – Chihuly above –  
And there were some guards in the place that we love.  
A glance at the watch, I don't want to be late,  
Just whip out your ticket, and waltz through the gate.

The steps were in front – the restrooms were right,  
It was Mia, for sure, it's cheery and bright.  
To the left there was coffee. The Cargill was there.  
I went straight ahead – almost ran up the stair.  
A bodhisattva and more Buddhas with labels,  
I sped passed the chairs and the low hallway tables.  
I passed through the gate – what an ancient embrace!  
A few feet through the portal – a faraway place!  
The camels were there and they're not in a hurry.  
Humps? Two for the Bactrian! One? Dromedary!  
If you're feeling quite low and way down in the dumps,  
Just talk to these friends and count all their humps.

Go on through the garden and don't stop to think.  
There's much more to see – you're just on the brink,  
Of the new Asia galleries with walls red and blue!  
The processional swan is welcoming you.  
The Cambodian lion – strong teeth in its face –  
Has moved just a little – it's found a new place!  
The mountain of jade with its kayaks of wine,  
I would say, it seems timeless – almost a shrine.

The rotunda's out there, and I'm eager to see,  
That Greek sculpture in stone who greets you and me,  
Who once lost an arm, but now tall and proud,  
Losing things that a guy would protest out loud.  
But the hall now is quiet, and Doryphoros – – – gone!  
Did they move him or dump him right out on the lawn?  
Oh, he's found a new home, and I hope that he's happy,  
And the rest of my poem might start to sound sappy.

I wondered how others at Mia might be,  
Now that Covid has changed the way that we see.  
I went through the halls and I sought out some guards,  
“What do you see? Don't try to be bards.”  
Their answers were varied, some smiled as they spoke,  
And others were mum saying, “Who is that bloke?”  
That night on the email some friends I had asked,  
“Is the time here so different now that you're masked?  
It's not VTS, but . . . what's going on?  
Is the art still so vital when the people are gone?”  
I promised their words would be used without name,  
No bother, no contracts, no payment, no fame.  
I'll tell you their words and I won't take the credit,  
For the insights and feelings. So here's how they said it:  
(By the way, all their words – they are printed “as is”,  
If they are goofy, it sure ain't my biz.)

It is cavernous, empty, and cobwebs abound,  
Chiaroscuro is here and it's making a sound!  
So now stop all your crying – enough with your huffing,  
It's a plague for us all and it's better than nothing.  
This place is a treasure that brings us great art,  
It's fun and it's hopeful, great thoughts to impart.  
My friends are all worried and, wow, they feel stressed!  
They come here, relax, and renew their life's quest,  
To expand their long days, and if they had their druthers,  
New life and enjoyment for sisters and brothers.  
I've gone now to virtual and feel apoplectic,  
I tap dance and stutter and look ill-equipped.

But in true Mia style, things are done with panache,  
Spend time with each object, don't make it a dash.  
It's a new world that's open for me and for you,  
You can stop, you can muse, see a new point of view.  
Take a ride on the Zoom Tour and give me a wave,  
Just have a good time, and learn to behave.  
As you put on your mask and stand two feet from art,  
Stay six feet from people, that really is smart.  
Anapestic tetrameter's not my forte,  
This is the end – that's all I can say.  
Quarantining is hard. We all know that's true.  
Happy New Year today, and peace be with you.