

PROTEST IS USELESS

These performativities
achieve nothing—
except
revealing a
handful of souls
who haven't given up;
filling the streets with
fanfare in the oft-forgotten
name of justice;
bringing crowds to tears
as they realize
the blaring noise of
megaphones and distorted
speakers is nothing
compared to the thunder
of bombs or the cries
of hungry children;
transporting hearts
from quiet frustration
to boisterous empathy;
giving people a chance
to raise sticks in the air,
bearing underappreciated truths
and cartoon satires
of our dreadful ruling puppetry;
beating drums that otherwise
sat in garages, gathering dust
on Saturdays as we streamed
the latest distraction;
reminding those watching
local TV—who through illness
can no longer leave their chairs—
that the walkers still walk
with purpose;
informing adults, sheltered
by big-screen news,
via pocket-sized leaflets,
of other injustices bound up

with those that once made them
raise fists at the empire;
collecting scattered streams
into a single raging river
that carves through
city avenues preferred
for sales and silent consumption;
refreshing the truth
that despite all
that may be taken from us,
the one thing that should never,
ever, be surrendered is the voice—
to name our greatest loves, fears,
frustrations, anxieties, aspirations,
ideals, and the endless threats against
the immeasurable humanity
buried deep within our hearts;
striking fear in those
gloriously moneyed tyrants
who would love to fool us
into believing
protest is useless.