

Wisdom of Solomon VI.

1. Study Monsieur X and Mademoiselle O:–
Note their harmonization.
2. Custodians of melodies, orators of faultless prophecies,
Holiness is their defence.
3. Scorning sinners and daemons who contrive perils for saints,
who can deny their *Piety*?
4. Ivory be their robes, their cloud-crafted offices,
their snow-bright abodes;
white is their wine, their rum, their water.
5. Sunlight—endless and endlessly refreshing—is *Wisdom*.
The radiance of *Holiness*.
6. Vigilant is *Wisdom*, inspecting every thought.
7. Want *Immortality*? Get thee *Wisdom*,
which is God's prerogative to bestow.
8. (Never be as detestable—debatable—as poets.)
9. The wise ruler inhabits Utopia.
He becomes as deathless as light.
10. *Wisdom* is flagrant, showy, ungovernable.
11. *Envy* flees from *Wisdom*.

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Wisdom of Solomon VIII.

1. Those who hate *Wisdom*, love *Death*.
2. Cosmopolitan is *Wisdom*,
but thoughtlessness is provincial.
3. *Wisdom* is as vivid as the grotesque
and as indelible as the beautiful.
4. *Wisdom* casts *Labour* as *Art*.
5. *Wisdom* is the *bibliopole* (bookseller) whose shelves
oppose the legislature.
6. *Wisdom* quakes kings.
7. *Wisdom* is *not* the lion-tamer tumbling the poodle-walker.

8. *Wisdom* applauds the seagull perched atop the umbrella.

9. *Wisdom* lauds the extemporaneous birth of a galaxy
as raindrops splatter upon an overhead awning.

[Ottawa (Ontario) 10 *mars* mmxvii
& Kelowna (British Columbia) 16 *mars* mmxvii]

Wisdom of Solomon IX.

1. *Wisdom*'s fool, I know only what God assures:
I will die, and I am weak.

2. A king, I'll build a temple and an altar in a holy city.
Let only the sun blind my towers!

3. Architecture must remember the grave.

4. Thus, my blueprints allow space for *Error*,
make room for *Disaster*.

5. Let us not be *plumbean* (stupid):
Wisdom is building—
with vacancy allotted to pastures, to gardens.

6. *Labour* is the limit of *Thought*.

7. Beware: *Painting* is easily *Blasphemy*.

8. Inadequate *Complexity* bedevils
the verse of the Ivory Tower poet.

9. To cure *Imbecility*, eat a monkey.

[Ottawa (Ontario) 10 *mars* mmxvii;
& Kelowna (British Columbia) 16 *mars* mmxvii]

* Cf. X's *Autobiography* and O's *Histoire*.



*The 4th Poet Laureate of Toronto (2012-15) and the 7th Parliamentary/Canadian Poet Laureate (2016-17), **George Elliott Clarke** was born in Windsor, Nova Scotia, in 1960. A pioneering scholar of African-Canadian literature at the University of Toronto, Clarke has taught at Duke, McGill, and Harvard. A prized poet, his books have appeared in Chinese, Italian, and Romanian.*



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