

# The Muffled Lips of Apollo

a poem by

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*Hyperion*, Volume V, issue 1, May 2010

A close-up photograph of a marble bust of the Titan Hyperion. The sculpture features thick, wavy, curly hair that frames the face. The eyes are closed, and the lips are slightly parted, giving the figure a serene or perhaps somnolent expression. The marble has a warm, aged tone with some darker staining, particularly around the eyes and on the nose. The bust is mounted on a simple, cylindrical base.

# HYPERION

On the future of aesthetics

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### *For J, of the invisible choir...*

I found Apollo deathly pale,  
his hair cut from his skull;  
his body, like the bow of a ship,  
hammered by an indifferent sea.

Bound, not free to roam  
under the blazing stars,  
arrows lay at his side  
like flightless birds.

“What has become of your bow?”  
I asked, carrying his slain body  
in my hopeful arms.

“*It is useless,*”  
he gently groaned in my ear,  
“*there are no more Olympians.*  
*Never before have I bent*  
*back my bow to come to . . .*”

The sun fell from the sky  
like a cold and barren rock  
as Apollo’s lips muffled  
these last words into my heart:

“*Destruction!*” he cried. “*You shall know*  
*it as never before—man.*”

Staring into his deathly eyes,  
I heard music pulsing in his chest,  
his ivory pupils as pallid  
as the moon’s eyelids.

“*I blot all stars from the sky,*”  
the weary god clamored furiously,  
collapsing at my feet.  
“*I render music senseless*  
*to your insensate ears,— —*  
*I cast you into pitch!*”

“But Apollo,” I implored,  
“what of us who urgently go down,  
what of those who incubate  
and hunt after the moon,  
knowing time is but vapor?”

Deep within my propitious eyes  
he peered, yet did not speak;  
his breath whispered  
as if to say *good night* ~

**Head of Apollo, recalling the Apollo Belvedere. Marble, Roman copy of ca. 120-140 AD  
after a Hellenistic original. From Rome. British Museum  
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**published in *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics*, a web publication of  
The Nietzsche Circle: [www.nietzschemuseum.com](http://www.nietzschemuseum.com), Volume V, issue 1, May 2010**