lined in palm-smear
   &  ghost-breath

I stood  Potient-ly
       in a toe willing July

with freaks who all freak
   in verbatim under the M train

   ( in a K2 and kim-chi stained air
        bodies learn to ferment )

above Kosciusko a train  yawned over the already shoe sound of hip hop walking
on back beat of New York

I saw a man take off his high hat and symbol— when a deep sway with braids.  so beautiful
   car washed down the street

the braids saw me standing there and whispered a humid “HI” with a sun oil voice
   undressing out of a pour’d bottle

I tried to walk  but fell face first into the braids slipping off the topple side of a teeter heavy
decision—  sliding back into a time

where soiled hands dug at the end of pivot queens weaving maps with fingers harp ready
   and bigger than spirit. their hands

swung like young girls using DNA strands to dubble dutch thru fields of wild hair—waving off
   contests of evil

this poem is for the women I saw, who during slavery, braided maps into and with each other’s hair
so when they would run from plantations they always had a reference for where to find
freedom and beauty Alternate title… Psychic Cartography

I saw thumbed crossovers sing
       “we can and do need each other”

Once over the other
       the other over the other
tuft
soft with praise mosaic with promise

I saw their hands myth into future-saluting limbs
saying thank you

I saw women using their clairvoyance
like flash lights for the no doubt
and soon already come darkness

it’s the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen

Basie Allen