

“The ear of language rests
on the breast of the world,”

writes the poet Robert Bringhurst,

“unable to know and unable to care whether it listens inward or outward”



An underwater scene with light rays filtering down from the surface, creating a serene and ethereal atmosphere. The water is dark blue, and the light rays are a lighter, shimmering blue.

I am convinced the ear of language is formed in the

w this chamber
where life splits
itself and as it does
all conceivable
need is met m b

Call it the
discourse of grace.

A river of grace through
a cord, a basin of grace cra-
dling the form—consciousness
awakens within this conversa-
tion from which words will
someday ring forth.

“The world is immense,”

marveled Rilke,

“and like a word that is still growing in the silence.”

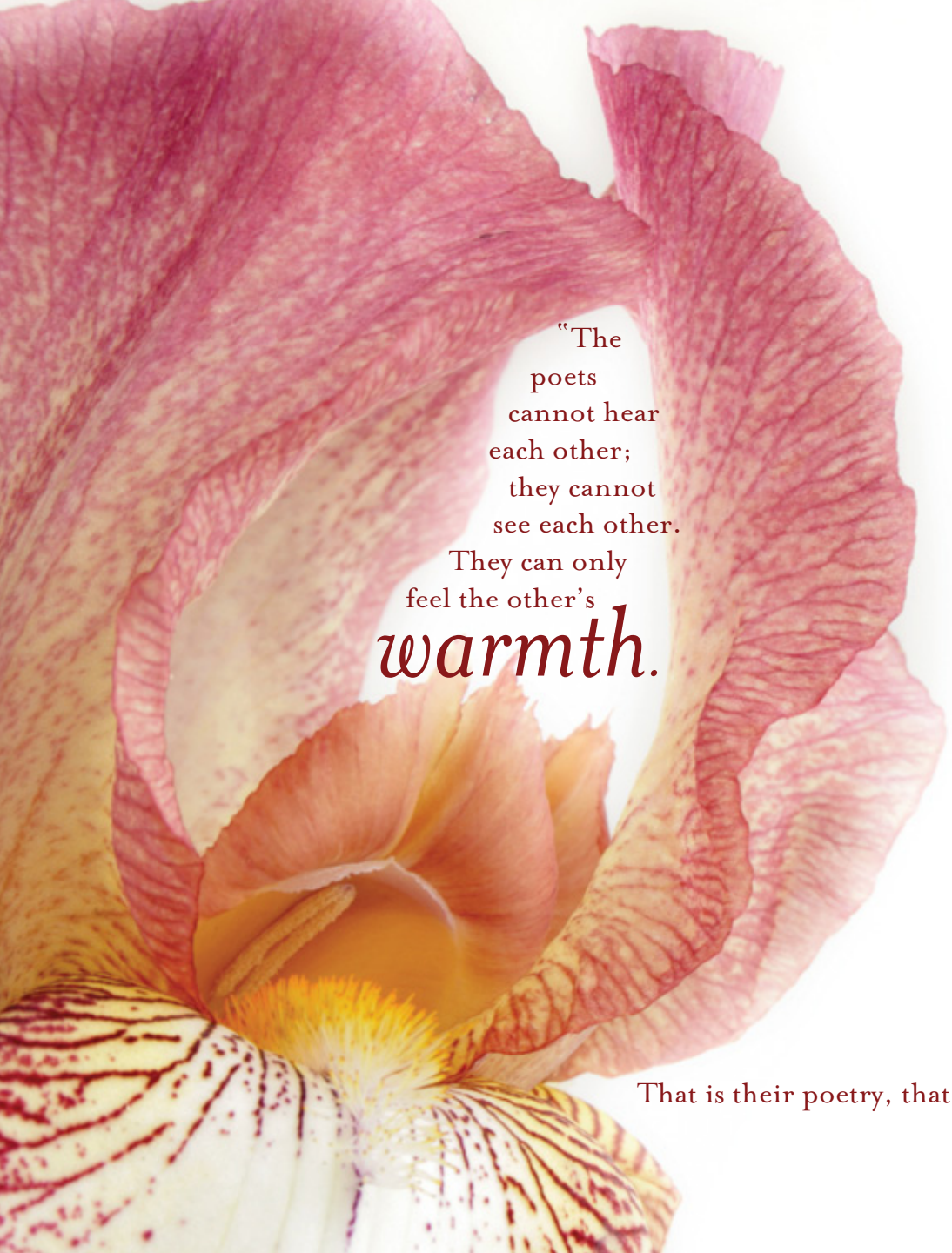
The **Word**
growing in silence in the universe we call womb

In a brilliant riff on “therolinguistics” (the language of wild things),
novelist Ursula K. Le Guin gives us a feel for this uterine Word.



“I say,
imagine it: the
ice, the scouring
snow, the darkness,
the ceaseless whine and
scream of wind. In that black
desolation a little band of
poets crouches. On the feet of
each one, under the warm belly
feathers, rests one large egg,
thus preserved from the
mortal touch of the
ice.”

（ In this instance not uterine,
but avian—the Emperor
penguin of Antarctica cradling
its single egg. ）



“The
poets
cannot hear
each other;
they cannot
see each other.
They can only
feel the other’s
warmth.”

That is their poetry, that is their art.”

Le Guin’s genius is to equate warmth

—**the warmth of touch**—with language.

She calls it poetry.

“Like all kinetic literatures, it is silent; unlike other kinetic literatures, it is all
but immobile,

ineffably subtle”

“The ruffling of a feather;
the shifting of a wing;
the touch,
the slight,
faint,
warm
touch
of
the
one
beside
you”



"In unutterable, miserable, black solitude,
the affirmation"

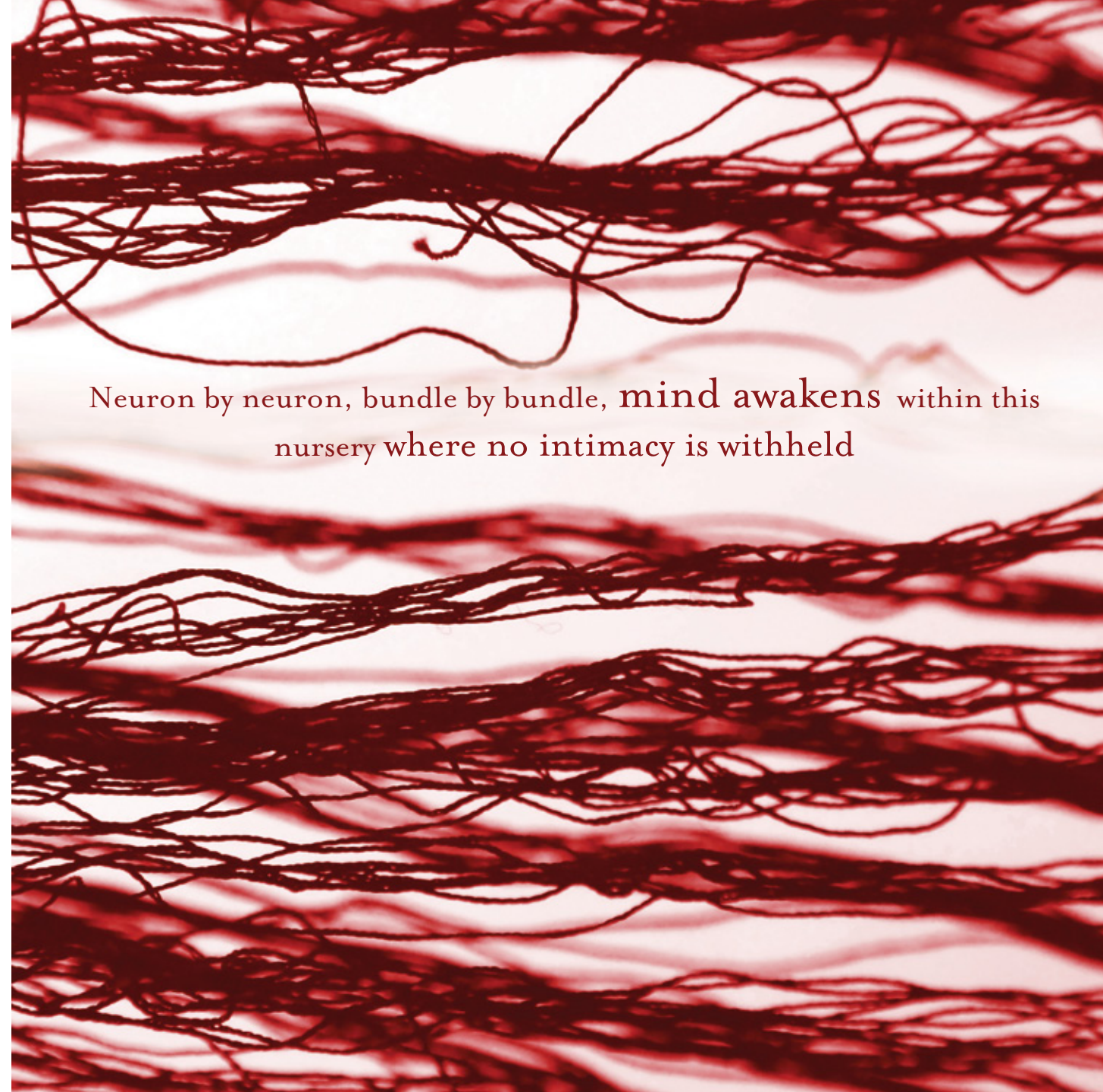


"In absence, presence. In death, life"

In the womb, the poets—

mother

—touch one another



Neuron by neuron, bundle by bundle, mind awakens within this
nursery where no intimacy is withheld



“I was before the world,”
softly speaks “the voice of those who nurse”

“The earth has let me in on it, how it comes forth
with the seed,
that it is one. Oh evenings of confidence, both of us
rained,
soft and May-like, the earth and I in our womb.
Male! how could you know how deeply at one
we were. The silence of the universe
will never be divulged to *you* the way it closes
around a growing thing.”