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## Two Poems by Gary Lai

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## The Snowstorm

The furry baby penguin  
searches among the huddles  
of its kind,  
looking for its father.

The snowstorm grows stronger,  
the search more futile.  
Animals have a way of  
finding their own.

The little one stumbles,  
but, getting back up,  
continues.  
The taller penguins look on, or  
turn away  
when it approaches.

Cut scene to the motionless bird,  
snow-covered,  
lying on the fringe of this large colony in Antarctica.  
The *hidoi*<sup>1</sup> documenters from the TV show,  
rolling the camera all this time,  
should have known better  
and helped.

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<sup>1</sup> Japanese, roughly meaning “cruel”

## **General Relativity**

The Sagrada Família rises high above  
the Comital City, but not so tall  
as to surpass the Montjuïc hill. It is,  
after all, God's creation.

The unfinished basilica is filled with  
reminders of nature. The Passion facade  
is supported by columns styled after  
sequoia trunks and bones.  
Inside, more jugged high up  
in deliberate, geometric codes  
amongst hyperboloid structures.  
Mathematics is part of nature, and  
the glorification of nature must include numbers.

The craftsmen left behind their signatures,  
from the initials of Gaudí on the door to  
the cypress representing the tree of life to  
the holy words etched in different languages.

It is, like Einstein's theory,  
encompassing and the most beautifully crafted –  
incomplete, but unveils a new  
universe from the minute to the very grand.

**Gary Lai**, a former resident of Vancouver and Edmonton, is currently based in Hong Kong. He was the runner-up in the 2021 Mensa International Poetry Competition. He is an alumnus of USC, University of British Columbia Allard School of Law, Columbia University, and the University of Hong Kong.