

Dusie

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issn 1661-6685

issue 8
(vol 2 no 4)

TOM

02

'found' cover: bird on head girl by TOM in '02, photograph of a hand painted card tacked to the ceiling of the Sin è pub in Cork, Ireland, 2008.

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<http://www.dusie.org/>



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*With poetic art collaborations from “In Motion from the Meridian” throughout by Andrew Zawacki and Jennifer Schuberth.

THE WOMEN ARE WEANING AT THE CUTTER OF THE NOW

The women should by now be employed in preparing roots for
the cutter

when the wether lambs were in fashion
they came right up the back door

at the call of the brethren
we have such high notions
when there is not a leaf on this tree we sit and sing
and sing

it is in the character of the weaned
to be as we are now
at the pressure of the constant
the plants should be straining to set roots to the new

one could measure out land as needed
humidity in unheated rooms
their roots will begin to go deeper for more water
we have short time for cutting

but now the recovery
where troubles were intended
by the Author said the brethren
to wean us from fondness for life

FOR THE ASSORTED (VULCAN LOVE SONG)

You are always the assorted within my arms
one tastes repellent, Choose another
Today I am being the center of the universe:

You are always the last to remain
Man, you crack me up, Michelle
Always Still on the Slavery”*

You who are always assorted in my arms
Who knows what the hell this song means?
...they were high...
he saw some chick backlit and the sun
going around her he thought
“It’s not a word, they’re initials, meaning

Today I am repellent inside your arms
The chick with the cheese
all backlit and unassorted and disarmed
the sun being neglected
hearing this poem on the radio
man, are you still on the slavery?

even the Vulcans, in their coolest resolutions
might be the cream in your arms
because they were high but the words also kinda
make sense. ... you were always the last
of the slaves to initial “today we’ll be better,
o center of earth between arms”

DEAR LORRAINE, DEAR GRAHAM

Someone made reference in another thread to how difficult it is to rehabilitate monkeys with disorders enforced by human sadness.
Corgan's voice isn't really suited to loud anthems
he sings anthems loudly anyway.

Smilingly they wrote this lie
the trench sustaining yet another anthem
Anthem Online Blue Cross Blue Shield Info
to compare Anthem BCBS Quotes online

What Crow said to the parrot
echoes with beauty and sadness
reduced to a state of dependency on others—
what's the good of sadness without fans?

and i find in my soul when every feeling has been crushed
a new world of purity with your purity there beside me
you would expect a crowd that has been treated with an hour of Moksha
to ask for water bottles for its peeps

You've been manning up your chorus, kudos for that
squeak that stains the scene then disappears
while the audience for sadness and loss never goes away
it helps us if you know us here play clip of tape

DREW GARDNER

Note this: bad milk everywhere sounds alarms
as noise you can place in the html
snowboards, codes to MySpace
for sale at the rim of a funeral to youth
a newly constructed marina
for everything that was sound to gather into

Note this: black sound history
is preparing the world for East Tampa hip hop
Drew, can the drinks ever be again as milky
as a studio in the Carolinas
from about 1830 to the end of the American Civil War?

Musica negra, Sound Generated by Mid-Ocean
black coffee and tubular bells
emitting from los bongs de carlito
Shure SE210-K Sound Isolating Earphones
aren't really earphones
The Black Guppy Sound
is no longer our sound

Though theory predicts flow will generate
a reality series about West Covina
breakthroughs in guitar processors
endowing the speed rates of animate materials
with medium- and heavy-duty drumhead characteristics

& inside this milky universe
we are all of us making together
its gasses in waves and starry holes
are individuals involved in its sales and rental
spinning the Vulcan
for happy returns

ROB POLLARD

The pier has lost its need of the lake.
Was it so easy for the lake to disappear?

Report on the 2008 SoundEye International Poetry Festival

Cork, Ireland, 3-6 July 2008

As tennis achieves considerable advancement, one might recite equations relative to post-superior atmospherics; or Randolph Healy's shadow top hat. This is the rundown of a list of glowing primary conditions; reportage scattered with the debris of brimming fantasy prolepsis. My report is ordered by neither art nor chance, but is a function of the metric stated thus: "Do you still want to have sex with us?" Such cluster of stance position among emission--SoundEye--was the tightest of affairs, like am I telling youWhat. So we are traveling and know not our Way, though speak it as we go through that medium we're in, all up.

At the Open Mic in a wine bar, Frances Kruk read from her book *A Discourse on Vegetation & Motion* (Critical Documents), which I believe my ears received, though mistaking it for an actual calendar. I know that because I glued spray towards a moat that wasn't there, what I thought must have been seconds later, but was actually a week. At least one super-facet of Kruk's *Discourse* is its function as a pain journal day-book, folding polar extremities of experience into parallels of flimmering correspondence: battling Aphids off the plants / rattling Wasted out the trance. The one crawls into the other, whichever one the other isn't. I was first alerted of Frances Kruk when the pamphlet *Clobber* (yt communication) showed up at my address in Ohio several years ago. After that came *Dig Oubliette*, again from yt communication (co-edited from various British and Canadian locales by Kruk and Sean Bonney). Frances reads with angled grace, and I say that well knowing the jurassic ripples she did cast thru the wine that night at the ulterior drop of each word. Then she spun her faux-hawk around a de-aetherealized wedge; alternative chorameters interpret this as exo-dikinetic hedge.

The day before, Bonney and Kruk, with a snuff-box full of indible carrots up their sleeveless riveted jackets, took the freight elevator to the 2nd floor of the Cabaret and with them toted: pearl necklace, printed lyrics, loop sampler pedal, unnamed implements, a kind of fish barf they left in a fenced-in part of the River Lee, spirit flow-charts, no guitar. Sean read from a series of 14-liners called Commons, which are sourced from folk songs and other sundries. As he was standing reading

those with the occasional literal ‘BANG!’, looping in and out was Frances kneeling to Sean’s left with her pedal looper, layering bands of harmonic vowel toning and static rubble from the mic rubbed on her pearls. It wasn’t glitchy; it was itchy. I saw Frances and Sean do something like this in Providence last October (2007, at their reading with Sophie Robinson and Joshua Strauss) but it was more ad hoc back then (they had mentioned they’d only done it once before, at some Copenhagen squat). The live composition for SoundEye made me desire the sublimation of a third being from their dyad; their timing, a jump-started stumble through two force fields of corned-out torching, each on the opposite face of a 2D plane, plotted and improvised along a non-existent bias-cut. I think a book with a CD should come out of it. So step up lagging publishers, especially Ye of You Knighted Stats! Sean also read a short poem at the Open Mic, which he’d scrawled out earlier in the day in a small notebook. Everyone knows that poem by heart now, inscribed as it was upon the waters of this our newly common racial memory.

This next cat’s got a few thousand friends with vans. Stephen Rodefer read his longish poem “Daydreams of Frascati,” from *Mon Canard (The Figures)*, at the slightly more Open epilogue to the extra-vitiated Open Mic. When he first arrived, Rodefer had some copies of *Mon Canard* in a plastic bag with him; OK. They sold, and the bag then held dinner. Once dinner was et, the bag attained the status of a nervous outer skin, much like a glove, capable of producing disturbing rushes of noise when the hand moved even slightly. I read of Daydreams on the flight home from Ireland, after hearing Stephen do it up nice and live for us. I didn’t have to imagine the enchanted throne he wove hundreds of years ago, which floats from cloud to cloud, ignorant of the ignorance of the beclouded ones below. Such disdain in his desiring-craft. Such completion. When he said Ajax I thought he meant Hector, his rolling Orbs. “I am come to be your cartop Ajax, waxing toward an invitation to an opening in some hedgerow...Where we were when we were you know where...Isn’t it jarring how the sky above the colored gravel can’t scratch the surface of the horizontal?” As I revise this account, Rodefer’s *Selected Poems--Call It Thought--* has just come out from Carcanet.

At the Firkin Crane, Peter Manson read a few poems from *Between Cup and Lip*, then read *Snail Book* (first published in the “New British Poets” issue of Chicago Review, and now re-printed in *Between Cup and Lip*). I first heard Peter read “Snail Book” in Ohio at Miami University for the CR tour, and back then I couldn’t get my heart past its

surface resemblance to Adjunct (is a reprint truly rumored to be forthcoming from Barque Press?). But hearing Snail Book again, at SoundEye, was well worth it, dense as it is; a 3D mirror tunnel with goo lasers tubing through it as a dream of some complication. “Was that a passage from Adjunct?” Well, no. And neither was that meta-structural rendezvous he just posited. Later at the Open Mic Coda, to everyone’s surprise, he read Hugh MacDiarmid’s “Harry Semen,” prefaced by Peter’s claiming in earnest that his raison for reading it out was wanting to hear it in his own body. It was unfortunate that none of us thought to climb into his pulsing throat. Jow walking in on it was funny because he got really excited immediately and spilled Rodefer’s duck blood from a new guy’s cup. Peter actually tried to give me his copy of MacDiarmid’s Selected Poems, which was nuts. That unexpected voicing was fucking fire from a dwarf cave on an island with no booze and very small torches arranged in some right runic geometrics, ho.

Default Productions--Jimmy Cummins, Bob Hefferman, Colin Aherne, and Rachel Warriner--performed at the Cabaret a light-footed four-voice text, employing pre-recorded audio, live typewriting, laptopping, and laser-jetting. I was in a back corner frantically reprogramming some things for my performance spot later in the evening so didn’t have a chance to see any of it. But the sound was crisp, thick with purposive drive, the follow-up to the collective’s premiere work, a radio play entitled *In Flew Ants*. In conservation with Jimmy, the *In Flew Ants* / Influence echo-pun was brought to my attention, after which I pointed out that all the reference and citation from the radio work were absent in the Cabaret performance. The title “*In Flew Ants*” conceptualizes the use of the literary fragments (which are from Ginsberg, Bok, Creeley/Olson, others perhaps). I find the new work (title?) a development, with hope that the project continues.

At the Firkin Crane, Kenneth Goldsmith, editor of *Ubuweb*, read from three of his projects: *Day*, *Traffic*, and *The Weather*. I don’t intend to fling conservative mud at my memory of those readings, but I think that this writing should not reserve the right to demand the attention of auditors. Regardless of the hybrid mediations of the sources qua sources, Kenny’s blank treatment nails them into print, as conceptual art objects, stealing them away into the book block. (I prefer the way Flann O’Brien flattens language-in-the-world into plain text in *At Swim Two Birds*, precisely because there’s a context beyond the source, an express reason for pulling it in.) It is in the book block that I believe Goldsmith’s

texts should remain, and it is there I wish to apprehend them, in what temporal matrix I please. It is a sign of good health that a poetry reading can be invaded by anti-poetry, but the question is: along which axis is the ante up and anti-mobilized? Is said axis worth the tread? The reading was overly slick without contributing expressive teeth to the group jowl shaping up throughout the several days of the festival. While the work is not unconscious of its War Time sub-text, my personal desire is for Goldsmith to compose his response, rather than copy wholesale. Uncreativity is a hoax. I will always cheer for plagiarism, but only in disguise, the found drowned out in the arch matrix of sensitive invention, within which drive the foaming steeds of recycled intensity. Like don't eat a clipper ship and poop out the merely ordinary deck. Kenny's later reading of Bern Porter's *The Last Acts of Saint Fuck You* was certainly uncanny. I noticed in his printed PDF copy of the book that there was a page of prose between the title page and the first page of verse. This surprised me because I know Porter's Last Acts intimately and there is no page of prose there. So just before he read, I asked him about this and he informed me that the prose was a transcription of the prologue that Porter improvises on a recording of Porter himself reading the poem, available at Ubuweb. Interesting to cover a specific, archived performance. Kenny got Porter's post-uranium growl down pretty well, but as he got a-rollin, he gave up a lot of the actual wording to the growl's rumble. It was generous of Kenny to share this work in a context where I assume few would know it. I recall that Porter had a few poems in Accconi and Mayer's 0-9, these kind of lyric equivalences constructed from data-sets and executed mech-runes of symbolic control. Porter also has a poem in the *Reality Street Book of Sonnets* (editor Jeff Hilson), which is but a mere fraction of a slice of a representation of Porter's actually massive body of work (only time will tell). I found one of Porter's pubes at Dreamtime Village once, in a stack of left legs cut out of porno mags: I put it in a tiny plastic bag and then inside a slightly larger manilla envelope. One day it will be added to the Porter materials in Brown's special collections. He was kicked out of the school's graduate Physics program for stealing from a student in the gym. Go Ninja. But did Goldsmith sip remote Porter essence when he did his undergraduate at the Rhode Island School of Design? The verdict remains afloat.

Daniel Ereditario filmed the entire festival for Meshworks: the Miami University Archive of Writing in Performance. At the Open Mic, he did this funny thing where he conveyed in plain English a morse code sump he'd been receiving on a non-commercial device for a few

days from the Two Faced Liar up on the hill in Shandon, and that might have been Mangan with the fish in his mouth at night, inside keeping time with a whipping stick from the bush in my old Kentucky back-yard. Or something else. Then at his proper reading on Sunday at the Firkin Crane, he read from a sequence of poems I'd never heard before, and which title I forgot. They were playful, though centered, and uttered with a certain pre-meditated syncopation not obviously present in the language if one were to separate it from daniel's utterance. Then he read from Vectors in the Night, a sequence of poems corresponding to each hour of a sleepless night of info-riddled abstractions. Before reading from Vectors, Daniel noted that the sequence situates (the) 'population' itself as its singular protagonist; one of its poems uses the term Firesale, and surely not without reason. Daniel has privately printed his pamphlet Vectors in the Night. Here is one of its poems:

Negative Populations

don't exist
rest collects, binaries cover thunder,
but refuse onerous silence. a whole trajectory
 loans awkward stars a wrinkled sum.
that oasis saw fresh
 myths wander: a concrete recombinant oppression.
 forsaken dreams--detritus of motion,
 temporary gods.

He has a sequence in an anthology with a purposefully unfortunate title (Invisibly Tight Institutional Outer Flanks Dub [verb] Glorious National Hi-Violence Response Dream), from which Maggie O'Sullivan read at the Black Mariah. You can watch some of daniel's video poetry at Mesh-works.

Does anyone remember the training scene in Spartacus where he's ducking and jumping through the swinging sword mechanism? Alison Croggon was probably in the right places at the right times. She also wrote a review of SoundEye, hyper-link given in the foot of this report. It was Rodefer who was making the plastic bag sounds during her reading, but I don't think he meant it. So what if he happened to be wearing a very loud plastic glove? But it did severely distract me and I have trouble remembering any particular scrumpage of Alison's orchard. Jow liked a poem about kissing. There were some sonnets I believe, with a certain

density and concern. I remember the way her feet were planted, standing as she read. Her and Nour Mobarak were talking about theatre at the dialectical tapas buffet, during which the art collective Paper Rad came up: duck or jump.

In the Shandon Guest House, Keston Sutherland read the opening of his new long poem, currently in progress, entitled Stress Position. It takes up where Hot White Andy's Lavrov and the Stock Wizard et al left off, mobilizing Allegory to a more sustained degree, the singular protagonist this time being the Poet himself. Preparing for discussion to come at the end of this report re Keston and Cathy Wagner and Jow Lindsay, recall momentarily the board game Operation. Jow says that Stress Position is a blazon; and if we are to check Jow here, the particular form of the heraldic blazon should be noted. As regards poetry, we have at least Shakespeare's Sonnet 130 ("My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun...") as a model, but regarding heraldry, A.C. Fox-Davie's *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* (1909) might be of use if one were to go forward with Jow's emblazoning metaphor.

I've not seen Keston read with such performative gesturing, though I've only seen him read once before, at Miami of Ohio, reading Hot White Andy (Barque Press). At that mini lecture hall venue we had him pinned behind a lectern mic like he broke into some dusted-out basement Union hall, elbowed his way to the front, began spitting his spit, holding his crotch, and keeping the mic for the length of it, somehow. This time, when in the poem the Poet's right leg flies into a pile of ketchup and straws, Keston, truly disembodied, kicks his leg off and breaks some enchanted pipes next to Fergal Gaynor's ring which was dripping similar rings from it. But so what? Actually this is all beside the point. The work here is symbolic: in the poem itself, not in the provisional pacing of its performance. Stress Position makes statements about *our* political behavior (mainly via allegory) which are not only very timely but also hovering above a certain *Zeitgeist* heli-pad, neither launched nor landing, neither blowing nor sucking. Spitting or vacuuming are more appropriate terms. I happen to have the word document of this new poem (a July 2008 draft version mind you), so I will paste three stanzas from the allegorical mid-section, just below the shrieking third nipple:

We went to this McDonald's where the theme was dialectic,
food with no way to buy it, counters with nothing to eat.

Al-Mansur took us there, shading his fringe from the radiation
of profit alive in the eyes of Ali whoever who served our mayo.

The secret of dialectic, he said, is song, the whole rendition
of the voice, the modulation of the pulse and the swell
in the jaw, the indefinable concinnity of the rondel.

•

At that we noticed the restaurant was spinning, and we
inside it were spinning too, though not in our usual minds
or of our own volition, so that we seemed to be standing still
like jilted dates at the disco in the open Al-Rashid, scouring
for love like maggots for sin. Al-Mansur turned, clutched at my arm
and fixed my eyes in his, uttering then what must have sounded
in my brain like the following words, for these are what I remember:

•

To understand the motion of this place, the leaps forward
of the counters with nothing to eat, the sudden regress of the missing happy
meal you came for, all the intransigent deluge of its shifting
you must search out what is immanent in its blur, get to the utmost
fixture of its undomesticable and brightest shrine to what
the idiots who serve here think is power, but you and I
know is not power but justice—hasten away and discover this place

Keston has noted that the metric is a 7-beat line via Swinburne. More should be said. He neither snored nor bored. He did however erect a massive rubber boogie board that took up the entire set of pyramids in the volumetric matrix of the flat we stayed in. Does everyone remember that insane party? And the ubiquitous rubber boogie board? The skinheads raping the landlords for us? And from the anti-polar-snug off Trevor Joyce's kitchen, Keston laid on me an important experience that he and many others had, its degree I was never really aware of, recounting to me the anti-war march in the streets of London, 2003. The power of that march (2mil out of 7: enough to take the banks? form ranks? get hit with shanks? walk off ten thousand planks? suffer timejam? tanks?), its solidarity, and the way it was lost to partial and biased coverage in the news media (painted Doodz Of Lack raving in the Trafalgar Square fountains) rather than the unity of the mass, well, it was useful to hear about all that, and with Keston's passion for... oh shit something

is beeping--Sit on your hands and wait till you have no hands.

It is contested whether the band Infinite Album actually closed out the Cabaret. Sure, the line-up at the gig read "Jow-Lindsay-/ Improv-Band" and some scab-eater with a different colored pen obviously drew the dashes in and a stick figure of Crot playing a kind of Flute With No Interface to the side of it, but Keston said the band was called Infinite Album and Nour protested this, along with the Very Finite Mike Wallace-Hadrill, and so I proposed that we call the band Infinite Magic Eye Album, since I for one had never played in the band Infinite Album and would be playing an Actual Magic Eye Chambre at the performance, etc. In the end we stopped talking about it and Keston played a can of meatballs with a hammer and some wrenches. Nour sang and chattered and a couple times said "Birthday Party" and even made references, oddly enough, to Stephen Rodefer. Stephen Rodefer was the only one actually on stage, sitting in a chair, cenotaphic, with dark shades on, wearing Jenny Greenshield's mirror-patterned hat turned backwards like a beret, also wearing a trench coat, and with an unlit cigarette in his mouth. He got such a gig because he told Haley O'k that he wanted to be in the band, and so she told him that he should sit on the stage. He did that. Haley banged a floor tom and another drum with mallets, and I heard her arms flew high in the air as she did it. No one imagined they would land next to Keston's leg which was still in the pile of ketchup and straws, flickering in and out of being THAT and being a pile of mustard and sporks. I made my laptop eat all of it and spit it back out in bursts of sped-up or slowed-down "being-there". Susana Gardner said it sounded Tribal. She was only slightly wrong: tribes sound like us, even when they did it back in the day.

Maggie O'Sullivan: I get stuck turning in her wallpaper. The Black Mariah exhibition space, where she read poems aloud and had willing auditors chiming along, was lined with her sequence of watercolor(?) text/image panels titled All Origins Are Lonely. We talked about ginger and we traded some books. She served us spectral tea at Trevor's and I noticed the strict contents of her sandwich outside the English Market. We talked about jobs and the forgettable title of a yellow magazine. Umbrella Patterns Duel / under some weather. She read from texts collected in Body of Work (Reality Street Editions), a book whose retaining of the typeface and layouts of the original book-works is to be admired. "This is red and this is pink. This is red and this is pink. This is red and this is pink. [This is read and this is an ideological position.]"

Jow Lindsay applies to himself a very special suite of suits before giving readings, making use of a confidential array of cancellation mists and vapor cloaks to trap a slippery moment's pulse. Anybody pulse through that door, and I'll...--character / charred actor / charged at her. Did you see how those praxis dudes charged fees at her? Was Crot there holding shields up? Jow read from something new, like you'd expect him to: goo Jow, goo. I say that because he must have more manuscripts than a plumber's got pliers; he's also got more luted suit suites than Jacoby and Meyers. He sent me two new mss a few days before the festival, so I thought I knew what to expect. But he didn't touch those...I think. And that's the thing, I never really know if I've read whatever text he happens to perform. Jow has ways. Everyone should read Lindsay's "List of Reasons Not to Publish" ([link supplied below](#)), probably the most important other thing yet to be "published" which he's written. His reading at the Cabaret opened with some improvisatorial ramping-up, as SoundEye folk tried to find the right track on a CD Jow had brought with him. They fumbled through some Dolly Parton, some out-takes of Andrew Duncan reciting coordinates from his Chicago Review map, some "best of" sound clips from the last episode of Seinfeld, and an obscure Kool Keith freestyle before eventually they found the right one - Jow said it would be "floral" - and it was some lush harp music that Hlorrithi must have hammered out from memory upon his return from vacationing with Loki in the Far Eastern Provinces. This dug a certain dramatic silver ore mine beneath Jow's reading, which included the phrase "Christian Feather Vest", ie the type of phrase that obliterates the possibility of remembering anything else. He improvised in the beginning and at the end he listed people at the festival who once spoke or didn't speak. That's a thing he does to make you feel Connected, saying your name at the reading.

Daily, Jow gains unheard-of powers as a poet and a thinker, his particular means of taking and deferring position (in the same swig) rivaled by no one I can think of; which is to say let's make sure, as a community, that he doesn't DISAPPEAR. Because I wonder, like, when he will finally put out a book of his poems. I think that it would do the Word some good; with or without his permission. People you must believe it, and act swift on this belief. Sure, there's that Insane Dump of work (as Lara Buckerton) up on Onedit 10, but a book is something that can actually sit on different stuff anywhere you take it. Does Jow need an editor? Do we need to pick a number out of a hat to choose a volunteer? This could involve funding...

Now back to the CD performance thing: I'm of the mind that

this was mere smoke and mirrors. Very clever Jow. You see, he had this CD and told Bob Hefferman the *wrong track to play, and then *another wrong one, and then *another - "Track 4, no, track 2, no, track 5, no I'm sure it's track 4, no, Track 6 - until it came to the floral rag mentioned above. All of this was Jow's calculating interference into his own performance system, like the wrong songs were hilarious things, bathetic in their crushing irony, but impressive as platforms for evacuating performance energy from the staged and subjected ego--I believe that they helped him to improvise the opening of the reading. That's a systems clarification of the goo abstractions, sweetheart. At the Open Mic he read with a solemn air, his eyes closed, his face pointed up. Something he'd just written, pencil on unlined paper. I thought to steal it, and could have. Something to do with salts. And he said it was the first serious satire he'd written. The price of Lindsay maintains a steady rising curve of six thousand units per mark.

Live at the Firkin Crane, Randolph Healy read a poem about sex and got very excited as he did it. He read other poems too, some of them decades old. He posted the first few installments of his unfinished Sound-Eye review to the listserv for which this report was written. He's good on his feet, like at Trevor Joyce's place he said something about how Tennis is a sport with a proud tradition, known for trophies of great excellence, and would be more advanced if there were no Atmosphere. Immediately I saw this as just another apology from the No Aether Movement; so I dissolved into a cloud of bay leaf, visibly, but Randolph continued to wait earnestly for an equally witty response. Deliverance was a grave impossibility. Eventually I had to light a smoke bomb and escape through Helen Bridwell's auxiliary cleavage.

The renown fantasy novelist Francis Crot's Xena fan-fic *The Seven Curses* (Critical Documents), was given its first fling at the auditors, thanks to Nour Mobarak's reading at the festival Open Mic. She read from her annotations to the fan-fic, as written in the character of Xena. Monsieur Crot in absentia, the delightful Jow Lindsay was kind enough to read the corresponding lines from Maestro Crot's original text. It went like this. Lindsay from behind the bar threw up a septa-sensorial pattern trap for a cape and read: "'Memory is acetylcholine and serotonin and noradrenaline and not the issue,' said Xena. 'All I care about is that you and your fellow millipedes desanctify the catacombs of associative category. You scoff at the networks of shimmering feedback. [...] Perhaps you don't fully understand what I mean by the gods.' // Prim with dew"

And then Nour dropped in with Xena's annotation, something like: "My biographer . . . has not been able to transmit the reason for my overwhelming success in the fields of myth facts, the fX channel, battle savvy and all this presupposes, red carpets, shaved carpets, wet white-t competitions, fucking my mother. I am a warrior princess because I don't give a god damn about babies and because I am critically attuned to my senses and thus the senses of the universe and mana and the ebb and flow of tides and zephyrs and romantic pastures and the impending chinese dynastic cycle...in the blood I have shed from every shitcocked ogre I have destroyed."

And they continued on in such a way, for what seemed like hours. Then they read a few more. It was morning. Everyone would have left if it wasn't for the fact that Nour's facial construction zoning board vulcanized the words that she belted in radiation loops from flickering tension signals triggering minute variations in the torsion of the face (still hers) rooted on the body's oratorial pillar of unhalting delivery. It doesn't have anything to do with utterance I think. I do say the folk enjoyed it, the words clapping over them like a flag will clap when there is great wind and the flag gives that wind ideological position, which is what I mean when I say that I think the Folk enjoyed it. Nour studied theater in school so I'm not surprised. I'm talking about politics. Jow brought it to a conclusion by secretly dripping red wine onto a thick bristled brush (about the dimensions of a wooden squirrel) and mocked brushing his lips with it before telling Nour (and again [and every time he made Utterance] from behind his immaculate drapery of unseen telefocus) "That's quite enough!" and everyone at once tilted up to rip this disgustingly enormous and potentially bureaucratic giggle. I do not think that Jow was being racist in performatively bringing Nour's reading to a halt. After all he WAS standing in for Francis Crot. And I do not think that Jow was trying to "play up the Crot thing" by being sexist and Othering Nour when he supremely cutte her off. I do think however that Jow has a sense of timing that only certain chainéd hounds of elemental greatness upon release from their enchanted fetters with one elbow forward and a holster full of roses have. I think that Crot sent one rose especially for Nour, and when she opened that up, well, inside it was a Freedom Pillow. Or carcases, again. Anyway, buy or trade or ask for a review copy of The Seven Curses, which contains, among other delights, a rare illustration by one Haley O'k, drummer of the band Infernal Chakram 'Ludes who were supposed to play at the Cabaret but had their spot taken by the band known as Intimate Condor.

Trevor Joyce read from What's In Store (The Gig) and a few other things at the Firkin Krane. He's faster than last time. The folks songs had their tails often lopped off by the 36-word limitation, and other times they folded nicely in like a truncated sonnet. The difference is in whether the endings' quip comes from the chopping or the tucking; both dance on the form's threshold out. He ended with an unfinished sonnet sequence (i.e. actual sonnets) which he is working from the Spenser translation of Joachim du Bellay's Ruins of Rome. Trevor's treatment is a word-for-word monosyllabic diction game, translating as he reads without looking ahead: dangerous stuff. He described some of the difficulties of this in a tapas bar (where the theme was actually dialectic because if you had a million euros you could get some bias-cut fish spittle cakes and like the imperial cheat known as carbon credits it makes Strife feel like Love), and I remember particularly his mentioning the impossibility of morphing the names of the seven hills of Rome into words with just one syllable. It's a crafty procedure, a veiled Oulipianism, like a lot of Trevor's work, and this veil is perhaps the determined and unabashed lyricism of the work. Trevor, for all his spreadsheets, is without a doubt a classical poet. He throws the net and gets the pool of pheggos within its coffers, leaving us thirsty by the fountain, spraying us with adamantine shifts of amaranthine shafts, and then cuts the crop close with crystal harrows; and avoids the noose! He's got the quickness and holds it close to the quick, admirably.

Tom Pickard: I was pleased to hear about his research into Very Old Archives, looking up war office deserter info on the border rogue Jamie Allan. "I did it so often my name became known / in the Book of Deserters, a war office tome." That's about this game where he'd join the army as a new recruit, make sure to get the money up front, and then run the fuck away through secret crags and similar shit, stealing horses and getting drunk and feeling hungry and free. This be the stuff of the chapmans with their spoon and pence, pounding out upon the blocks all type of popular tales. I think the book--Ballad of Jamie Allan (Flood Editions)--is great.

Sophie Robinson read work I'd never heard before, both at the Cabaret and the 'Open Mic'. There is a way in which she grows sinews and nerves on your tongue when she reads; runes probably. At least one poem she read was a sonnet, and she's got a few in the Reality Street anthology which is now out (linked above).

Now for a brief history of Robinson's publishing: As of June

2009, Le Figues Press (Los Angeles) has just published a work entitled a. Selections from a serial fiction project appeared in Invisibly Tight Institutional Outer Flanks Dub (verb) Glorious National Hi-Violence Response Dream. The pamphlet Killin' Kittenish (yt communication) came out in 2006, reviewed by Tim Atkins in Onedit. There is also the privately-printed pamphlet LOVESIC, which Sophie describes as “an exploration of punk antilyric, or a medical romance. Think digestive fluid all over sexual encounter at a motorway service station you'd rather forget.” The cover is bright prink, the text is dirty typescript on the recto pages, and details from Sophie's own paintings grace the verso pages. Here's a page from that, transcribed:

“scratch out meth w/parkinsonian delite, you are as XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX athletic-as a helpless dog w/its paws cut off. IF i were rich i would buy youone thousand ulcer bracelets or ten huge children_ _ Nocturnal endoscopes were futile, XXX-% XXX pepTiC rendItions silenced, medical sluts-abundant and passively erectile. here I am in the bUs layby, headfones-on so- i can listen to the little cliKs, you sQeeze sqlt out yr eyes like sweat & i took u 4 a bell that tolls for me, light up light up in sleeping nitetime cars, in junKtion worship, m25 yr waYY out of this mess trancewis/a coat-4 a blanket & an elbow 4a pillow & an “ash-tray (4a) heart”, losing faith at an im-possible speed, & dark clings to the NeOn & churns out 2 nowhere i.e. where is S-aa-f-E located&how do i get thr xxxxxxx at this hr? PaTch of ground w/weeds, patch of smog patch of ground where a doG urinates daily, where we lie.”

At the web-journal HOW2, one may view Sophie's multimedia work Modern Edith, made with “old Barbie dolls, 1940s issues of Housewife magazine, felt pens, a scanner and a trial version of Flash MX.” And as regards the grotesque and the burlesque and the Hans Bellmer-esque, point yourself also to the certain witchcraft at Sophie's blog ([link supplied below](#)). In Cork, at the Castle Inn snug, Sophie passed round the manuscript of the late Aerin Davidon's play Darning Jilly, the production of which Sophie has taken on over the past year. Jow Lindsay has briefly reviewed its Edinburgh debut at his own blog. The manuscript is exciting, the dialogue exploding at times into a visual score that Sophie et al have interpreting with soundscapes and video. 5-dimensional trophies are very squarely in the post.

Then: a heated conversation with Cathy Wagner and Nour Mobarak and Haley O'k and Sophie Robinson in the Castle Inn snug (across from Captain America's: eat there and lose a million euro) about the Goldsmith/Bok prescriptions for conceptual writing (AS - exemplary

avant-garde practice, ‘quack dingle pop’ - IF). It was a useful discussion, full of dive-bombs, tracking, and qualifications, then some hari-kari, backtracking and weeping. We talked about Cathy’s *Everyone in the Room is a Representative of the World at Large* (Bonfire Press)--which is deserving of emblazoning: roll call--and how it is a certain kind of conceptual writing, or at least, makes use of conceptual techniques (ie, kind of like the Method and the Madness are both floating in the same goo, or tempered by a) the same praxis lutes or b) at iterating jumps along the algorithmic curvature of a descending anvil) ie Cathy undertook the composition of the poems when someone else was in the room in which she was composing, and only then.

But Cathy read from Mercury Vectors, her in-progress long poem. This reading featured one of the poem’s “Pastoral Interludes”. It was especially useful to me because Cathy read from the poem’s opening which she contributed to Plantarchy 4 (Critical Documents). Jow was conscious of the same Zeitgeist Spice Cloud that I think I have been thinking of, like sniffing something brewing in an Upper Aether Field, and this was present in Mercury Vectors. The cues for this sniff, or the hoof-prints of this cloud, well, the ones that Jow intercepted (recall Operation the board game), were not the ones that I intercepted (invocations of a contemporary reason for “throwing our hands up” and the ways that only verse can negate it--as also the importance of pun itself, its use from within the perimeter of allegory a kind of pimped-out tele-communicatons vehicle, parked in front of your sweet-ass crib, waiting for the praxis feuds to sing their crude etudes into the dood’s face). The reorganization of the body: the assembling of the corpus: the dressing of the corpse--in Keston’s first slash at Stress Position (originally known as Emerald City, aka Green Zone, and as of this rewriting now in final draft status), the lyric-emitting ego allegory in McDonald’s is flanked (before, and after) with the more static-frequency kind of articulate pelvis layer cake hip construction of hand patterned emotional neck detritus lip mown out gut picking thru the recently smart bombed shards and flak and chaff and rubble tigger ear box. I mean that Stress Position opens with this kind of egregiously dumped rhetoric field that we might expect from experimental poetry (and then the poem happens to roll over into bed for two stanzas as the poet considers his lover) then it goes back to the rubble tigger, and THEN we have the allegorical nightmare narrative (which is, i think, if i can say this, Where the Point of the Poem is Articulated), and then it jumps back thru the rubble tigger and draws a distracting Curtain of Closure which is just provisional, a way to formally end things for the reading rather than just fall off the cliff of the unfinished long thing. So the choppy waters opening of Stress Position is the body stuff indicative of the Zeitgeist Jow recognized in Cathy also, who dismembers (and makes augmented bionic copies of) one of

her protagonists, Claire, in the opening of Mercury Vectors. But the reading that I collected from the Metric of Historical Advance was from the stuff in both Mercury Vectors and Stress Position about why we are “throwing up our hands”, about how in our lyric song (cf the jungle/jingle in Mercury Vectors, and Cathy’s singing practice) we are seeking out answers that will unlock our political paralysis, about the poet’s historical responsibility NOW, about an intense need to communicate effectively--ie “not popularity but populism” (Marjorie Welish)--and, to relate this to Cathy and Keston’s blitz upon the scrimmaging body--the disgusting exaltation of the objective. As bodies in a limited material economy, we are being in it, and in being, are inscribed into the organism at large, and being-here, we with our niche regimes of inscription, are loaded up with imperatives that require execution - I mean, elocution. No: electrocution. We empty ourselves, blanked and blanketed, but the imperatives accumulate--a particle stream into tubes that we are. So how do we feed ourselves? How do we feed each other? And being fed the proper nutrients because we’ve selected who to feed and be fed by precisely because they have the nutrients we need or think we need, then once we’re fed what do we produce using the Energy Frames that remain behind, the chaff having made its passage--Hm? Control locks in directives, and if we want control, then how will we get it, what will we control, and how long will we control access to the controls? And how will not the control mechanisms control us, even as we take manual control? I believe that these questions are behind the two poets I was talking about just there (Cathy and Keston) and even a simple phrase in Jow’s reading, of which I can’t remember the context (and in fact don’t even need to): Christian Feather Vest. With Jow there is a prosody of insistent deferral which is not Barthes’ pleasure of slippage or evasion or areally shifting grain silos in the Great Plains circa 1936, but, I’ll say it again, something else. It’s this something all of these poets are inside of. And I wish to be there with them.

Miscellaneous notes:

1) Tom Raworth was well missed, though someone saw a biplane zip past very slowly, committing intensely hi-speed corkscrews, tailing a message on a streamer whose words were printed too small to read and not a one bionic eye was allowed over the threshold of the Castle Inn snug. The very last bundlette of copies of a very small edition of a small book of new poems of Tom’s called Let Baby Fall (Critical Documents) was distributed secretly at the festival. A second edition is being worked out by some 80-story condition leaps in a Cobalt Tower inside itself with rafters.

2) At the Cabaret, your humble reviewer performed a selection from a short opera, The Death of Pringle. Peter Manson mentioned to me that the

music made him feel like he was hallucinating on acid. What more could a boy want? What more could a boy need?

3) After eating at a Shandon Street African joint with no menu, where we were asked by the proprietress what to wanted to eat, were served identical dishes, and which played R Kelly and TV with no sound, Nour Mobarak considered coining the term Psychedelic Poet, as a general term, with no specific poet in mind, nor the dinner really.

4) Fergal Gaynor read from his poem Eleven Pieces for Austria-Hungary (out as a pamphlet from SoundEye Editions) at the 'Open Mic'. "Would you abolish the robot?" I don't think he would. Fergal curated the multimedia exhibition in the Black Mariah, and we missed his singing this year. SoundEye 2007 was right brimming with it.

5) Jimmy Cummins read at the Open Mic and I stole the manuscript from which he read: each page shifts between four to ten lines of verse, then in large bold script, a line of prose. The bold prose was played out of a dictaphone, and while it played, Jimmy had his ear up the speaker, listening to himself in recitation. Between these hyper-sonic moments, Jimmy brought his face nearly in contact with the page and read the verse sections. Seeing and Hearing in performative play here. An excerpt: "It has always been a search for water // From very early on I wanted my words to be fluid. // My words flooding your mouth / Drowning is inevitable".

6) David Toms opened the slot that Keston closed out. His delivery was impressive: tightly-crafted knots of phoneme drum solo-like runs tied up in games of rhetorical supposition. David is a local Cork poet, with his own SoundEye report later on in this very issue of Dusie, and was perhaps the youngest of the festival's readers. He was good company in 2007, around the revolving liquid table, rolling up with us, late into the night.

Everyone else read too. Who'll report it all? Lindsay should have written this, but he wrote his own instead (see hyper-links below). Thanks to Trevor Joyce and Fergal Gaynor and Jimmy Cummins and Mairead Byrne and everyone else who was us and helped bring us together. The first draft of this report was posted to a private listserv in July 2008. Apparently SoundEye 2009 was an even larger blast, and the rumour is that SoundEye 2010 will go down at the University of Cambridge. Prepare yourselves.

Justin Katko
August 2008 / June 2009

* Hyper-Links *

Bad Press
<http://badpress.infinology.net/>

Sean Bonney
<http://abandonedbuildings.blogspot.com/>

Alison Croggon
<http://theatrenotes.blogspot.com/2008/07/meditations-on-soundeye.html>

Francis Crot
<http://plantarchy.us/seven-curses.html>

Default Productions
<http://www.defaultpublishing.com>

Flood Editions
<http://www.floodeditions.com/>

Randolph Healy
http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/meshworks/archive/SoundEye/Healy-Randolph/mp3/Healy-Randolph_1_Crash_SoundEye_Cork-Ireland_7-4-05.html

Frances Kruk
<http://plantarchy.us/a-discourse.html>

Jow Lindsay
<http://jowlindsay.blogspot.com/2008/08/architecture-for-cartography-57.html>
<http://plantarchy.us/soundeye/jow-lindsay-review08.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jow_Lindsay
<http://jowlindsay.blogspot.com/2008/08/if-youre-in-edinburgh-go-and-see-royal.html>

Peter Manson
http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/mupress/details/manson_cupandlip.htm
http://www.ubu.com/ubu/manson_adjunct.html

Meshworks: Video Art
<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/meshworks>

Onedit
<http://www.onedit.net/issue10/issue10.html>
http://onedit.net/reviews/sophier/sophier_killinkittenish.html

Paper Rad
<http://www.paperrad.org/>

Plantarchy 4
http://plantarchy.us/Plantarchy_4.html

Bern Porter
http://www.xexoxial.org/xerotronic_archives/
http://www.xexoxial.org/is/he_last Acts_of_saint Fuck_you/by/bern_porter
http://ubu.wfmu.org/sound/porter_bern/Porter-Bern_The-Last-Acts-of-St-Fuckyou.mp3

The Death of Pringle
<http://plantarchy.us/pringle>

Tom Raworth
<http://plantarchy.us/let-baby-fall.html>

The Reality Street Book of Sonnets
<http://freespace.virgin.net/reality.street/>

Sophie Robinson
http://sophierobinson.blogspot.com/2006/10/sexy-pics-lol-only-joking-really_26.html
http://www.asu.edu/pipercwcenter/how2journal/vol_3_no_2/new_media/robinson/intro.html

Stephen Rodefer
<http://rodefer.ms11.net/>

yt communication
<http://ytcommunication.blogspot.com/>

brenda coultas
&victor hernández cruz

New York, New York
December 22, 2004

Dear Mr. Cruz,

It is difficult to write a letter to someone you mostly know on the page. I have heard you read at the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church on the Bowery, and I know that you won the title of "Heavyweight Poetry Champion of the World," which is further evidence that you are a master of the oral tradition and a fierce competitor. On the surface, we are an unlikely pair of correspondents, but there are some things we share. We are both poets of lower Manhattan, respectively, the East Village and Loisaida, and we are poets of the countryside: Indiana and Puerto Rico.

In your essay "Writing Migrations," you state "Forget about history textbooks; poems are the best way to study and teach history. Poems are testaments of the actual experience of living through a personal and public event; they are the closest thing to the truth." I see that in your work, the documenting of place, people, events, and languages. Your poems serve as maps of the physical as well as maps of the emotional life of a community.

Also I am not a young poet, I guess the term is "emerging poet." I'm a slow poet. An underachiever. About ten years ago when I was a "young poet," some of my peers were invited to appear in a major women's magazine as poets who represented the glamorous side of poetry; however, I was rejected by the editors because of my age. I nearly died laughing, so much for women's rights! Too old and too unglamorous!

A late bloomer, I started my serious writing at 27. I had tried to write a novel when I was about 10 but I couldn't figure out how to move a character from one place to another without describing every step and every thought. I couldn't get someone out of a room in less than a page.

On the serious side, sometimes in the dark, I wonder if I have wasted my life. Maybe the price has been too high? I remember a line from an Allen Ginsberg poem written in his later years, “If had a soul I sold it for pretty words.” Sometimes I wonder if I have only one book in me. Those are the dark days when my writing is suffering or I feel overwhelmed by other commitments. And I know that they will come again when I have been away from my writing for too long, then I have to fight past the garbage and noise in order to find my voice and subject. It’s a painful and long process, sometimes taking a week or more of sitting and staring before anything promising emerges. Do you have this difficulty? These demons?

I write in a railroad tenement with my husband, our desks side by side, in this city where the average apartment sells for a half a million dollars. I have a desktop of my own, that’s the best one can hope for. What I lack is the open time needed for language, images, and ideas to develop, for the mind to quiet. In the apartment, there are distractions, the dishes, the phone, the gritty floors (the air is dirty). Do you believe that there is a generation of poets missing in action because they are working three or four jobs to pay the rent?

I think my writing is too full of objects. I’m too full of sentences and that comes from teaching composition, my bread and butter. Teaching fills my head with other people’s sentences. Sometimes I can’t hear my own thoughts. I fear losing my voice, my rhythms. (The truth be told is I’d rather not have a job, but that’s another letter.) Plus I had a prose leaning from the get-go, but all of these sentences and objects make it hard to fly. I am afraid of developing a lead foot. A tin ear. And my word choices—I prefer to believe that I am writing in the “plain speech” mode of W.C. Williams whereas some reviewers think my language is simply dull. I’m earthbound, whereas you are able to fly.

It is still difficult to steal time for writing; there will always be the temptation to squander energy elsewhere for more immediate gratification.

After writing about the Bowery for the past few years, I have returned to the Southern Indiana landscape to write about folklore, the north-south border, and the boyhood home of Abe Lincoln, which is my home county. I worry that I am too specific. How can I know if my interests will interest others? Have you ever been afraid of losing your audience? Although I know better than to write for love (of the audience), I think poets want to be heard.

Best,

Brenda Coulter

Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico
January 9, 2005

Brenda,

Good to hear from you, up there in the north. Thanks for those prose poetics containing so much detail of the Lower Manhattan streets. I was once an adolescent through those streets and emerged out of there on the wings of poetry, which after thirty-five years is still a hobby of mine. Well that's what my father once told me . . . "You don't have a profession or a job, you have a hobby." And within this hobby one seems always to be an emerging poet especially in the United States where books of poetry circulate so poorly or rather so it seems, but the shine of poetry is the center of reality, especially in antiquity, but even now we must see the reality occulted by so much mush and kitsch culture. As poetry documents human life when it is within fresh and original winds of observation, away from repetitions and cliché, that we might see the color, texture and emotional experience of our lives within our lives happening, outside of the textbooks and the newspaper, the most accurate temperature of the times.

Poetry in the sense of making something belongs to everyone and is everywhere and happens everyday outside of language as well, dance is very poetic, or contemplating a tropical landscape under a blue sky is a poem. You mentioned William Carlos Williams and I am so glad because I too have learned much from him. He said something to the effect that people suffer from not knowing what is within poems. Even if they could live their lives without ever giving poetry as much as a glance or an ear. But if you take a bird's eye view of history and cultures you will see how poetry takes again and again center stage. And for that we should keep faithful to our wordsmith hobby, productive and observant.

You mentioned the importance of place, you're wavering between Lower Manhattan and Indiana and I for years have had a pendu-

lum swing between the urban and the rural tropical. I also use my Caribbean geography as a point of departure. Here in the Caribbean we are a racial stew, many geographies come together here... the Andalusian culture of Spain which came here upon boats to find the native Taino yucayeyes and the aroma of tobacco. The Spanish brought the African, our San Juan architecture is Andalusian. Many of the southern Spanish cities were built up during the Muslim occupation. Walking around seeing the melting of the races is always a narration, a poetics of migration and the appropriation of other parts of the world. It is an endless study and mission within my poems; the poem to me is more and more a place where I think and where I have doubts. I like that quality when one feels the poet breathing, analyzing openly as one goes forward, in the writing. When I write poems, I almost never look back. It's like the poem happens within a now that is shifting to a future; I never look back as I do when I am writing prose narrative. Maybe that's why poets and poetry stays within an eternal emergence. Poetry is fresh and stimulating, it also comes like a nervous charge to me; I'm sure it raises the blood pressure. It's nomadic and unsettled maybe that's why prose narrative is coming to me now after so much jumping around. I heard a writer say once that she began writing novels when she calmed herself down, became tranquil. You have lived more and have observed. Which is not to say that fine narration does not come out of the blue to someone very young, this happens too. Your little stories are poetic; I have trouble with my prose, writing is a very painful (torturous) process, I don't know but it doesn't come naturally to me. When I have worked on long narration it takes a sitting just to do three pages. Prose I always write by hand first, with pencil on a legal pad, then into the computer rewriting as I go along. And no matter what I write I am always insecure about it, insecurity is something like the other side of the coin of writing.

We could be worlds apart but I know we have a lot in common. I have lived in Puerto Rico for fifteen years and seven years ago I traveled to Morocco and met there my wife, and now the last seven years I live between Puerto Rico and Morocco. In Puerto Rico,

I am surrounded by Spanish, in Morocco, by Arabic, my literary language is English and sometimes Spanish but mostly English so I am always somewhat at odds with the local phonetics of where I happen to be. Actually it makes me focus, it isolates and separates me. Yet so much comes to me “From Letters To Poets--see page 234 for Editors’ Note not through language but through gestures, grimaces, climatology, smells. So much of a poem is not words but an environment, physical and emotional, created within us. Let me know if you feel what I am saying, I am full of contradictions in the same way as I am full of races and rhythms and landscapes. Precisely that is what I like in a poem, when it breathes gardens of ideas and is not concerned with making polemical or logical sense all the time. Or something called accuracy. Poetry is not an encyclopedic entry. It does not have to be true. Reality is a chaos, approximating it is always beautiful. Poems are just glimpses, evidence which no science can dismiss. Let me know what you are writing of late and what you are reading. Stay warm up north. I almost feel guilty, we are getting some cool breezes down here, they call them las bajas de navidad, but it’s just a coolness never encourages snow, snow, I miss it sometimes.

Victor Hernández Cruz

from Letters To Poets--see page 234 for Editors’ Note

keeper

1.

because I dig to own the dead to disinter

their chairs

and lay my knife against

their pause

ramblers

they are bedding in my unbred stream

because I stretch the night across

the width of my eyes

2.

keeper of sequence I bury wind

on the child-road

I am a mother-tongue

red sand

igniting my forehead kissing my name

capturing

the elusive trail on my lips

3.

wrist shadow across my window
singles out the night
I relinquish the static blade the blue dirt covering
my head
breath streams down my arms
bringing the gun
to my tongue
I am careful to begin again
rise to the shade
in my grave

4.

morning sword
calls me away from bed
far from your white fields
I climb beneath the earth
answers on my wrists piercing the air
and comfort you
child on the rim

Various String

It wasn't string--it was string--

The distant string--the line of the string to the mouth--

All this tyranny of string--left string--string-mouth--the string in the corner--that was string--

The string that we left--the string went out--the string left--all this theft of string--

The corner string--the string in the string--in the corner string--and the string without corner--and the string without--

The corner of a mouth that mouths the string--or the unmoved string--that the string moved--that the string moved in--that the string--

The corner's possibility of string--the string in the corner of a doubtful mouth--it is a doubtful string--no one must know the string--but there it is, string--string, there it is--there it is yours, string--take it, string--string, the string takes it--

String in the little box of the mouth--the little box of string--the corners of the box of string--the string in its corners--which make the string--corners--the left string--the string left--the corner, distinctly, string--the noise of string but in the corner--the sprung mouth--that makes the string-noise--string--the sprung--mouth of the string from this--string and a single knot--of the string in the mouth of the corner--

But last
Night alarms warmed out breaths
We lay with anarchists with long wands.
Flowers grow to a fly point
I am an exception
Whipped nerve back from the earth
These apparitions accelerated
Drove nerve an inch into cedar
Awoke, found some water still was good
Loaded up
Headed west
Flowers could head us off

EPI

Your wedding dress flowed through seven tunnels
to meet you at the front of the pine tree aisle.
When for a minute it left to do battle
on distant planets, you wore but your smiles,

& Ryan Dobran his shade began to lift
into a dorsal fin to hide your shame
but, in butt-nakedness arrayed, you laughed,
and sweetly quoted, 'but I am not ashamed!'

and you did poops in some robes we found
that celebrities must wear when they board
their Heaven-bound crystal frigates, & groomsmen
and maids helped you to seek out particular names

PRANG CODA : say something famous

Poesy's a whitey. My fingers twist like eye-beams,
fuse at the seams. But thou lightst me like wicks.

Pour straight kerosene on my neopaws. Smoke flows like fingertips
I can slip in my throat. My spliff's not fat it's just big boned, get ripped
like Jack, like hit pot, so when it pays out, smoke so many indos,
click undo till it greys out and weíd still be stoned.

Yo, the teaspoon into which to save us you must be sick
was once a fork, now closed with puke.

I donít even care if your whole crewsí ífro combs know Karate.
Iím busy. I have to puke the correct religion
into each one, or we're finished.

CODA : solid tools

Blindness. Fruitless. What. Let. Sanctity. 2days Daily Mail
comes w/ a glory hole. My name is Frost, 2 paths diverged in a y.w.
I picked the red pill, my name is neo, I must bake bread from moss
& melted snow, glory holes riddle the chorus of catcalls.

My praxis NEthing's Done up with xtra ìn eî, like John, fingers
twist like eye-seams, fuse @ the beams. But you light me like wicks.
Thin end of the wix like you have such connection with the textures
of circumstance you use a whole man when you pole dance.
Incarcerated in Love's Freedom's fractal nuisances.

REFLECTIVE EEL STEAM

There is no conduction: Ciao
There's only elevation thru

The vast mud principal we in
If banking whip eel-thru

At a throne of bone muscle, the
Ert droning crag of invective

I'm racing my own upchuck to your
Pert blouse here, here and here.

It banned money and it daily newly
Sweet-talks us into handing round

The stuff along the circuits same,
Your hands are one another's pets

Except where they touch at that button
Which does naught but signal into us

From page N or whatevs you
Purchased mass from the driver

Side window of a people's car,
The propane how eel candy folds

Mulch through their phonecalls
Lauri Bird herself shows up, twinkling

jennifer h. fortin

from *Mined Muzzle Velocity*

Dear,

February

Hi, Dear, my preferred little bounder.

I was away for the last round of cicadas. Can you please tell me what it was like? My last memory mainly cradles the cacophony & the shells after adults happen. Or were you not around?

I am thrilled you are part of my information, you part of my list.

The security lines make goodbyes awkward. Did we ever say Goodbye? You have to keep moving, move your bags, hold your ticket & ID, they can't go past a certain point with you, but others are trying to do the same thing.

Oh, Dear, it can be hard.

After registration & meeting others,

I had dinner & a headache. The plane had 2 stories, flying house.

Through the woods (looked for you even though I knew you couldn't be there), down some steps & into town. Dirt-bikes' clamor—mosquitoes. Vaccines, signing documents. Yrs.

Brooklyn, New York
December 22, 2004

Dear Jayne,

You have always encouraged me to do my work with the understanding that the work is both explicitly artistic and explicitly political.

I'd like to hear your thoughts on one of the other aspects of "the work" – specifically, seeing and being seen in the poetry "scene" in order to get your work out. I don't object to meeting new people or building community. But I am apprehensive about trying to be in the "right" place schmoozing with the "right" people more or less just for publication. Not only does it not seem right, it also doesn't seem to be the best way to spend time. What do you think? Perhaps this is just how everything in the world works, including poetry.

On a different topic, I was disappointed recently when I read somewhere that numerous nominees and winners of some national award stated that in the current times literature does not matter – either because it's not relevant to current events or because "no one" is reading it.

I suppose I bring this up less to ask you a question than as an example of how differently some folks think about and compartmentalize their work. I am (still!) so immersed in Yari Yari Pamberi and the idea that there is no separation between politics and art – and if you believe there is, you are doing someone else's work.

You've been doing this a long time – are these the same debates and questions rehashed, or is there some new spice in the stew?

Rosa

Dakar, Senegal
January 4, 2005

Dear Rosa,

Hello from Dakar. It is 12 p.m. and I am reading your letter. You might want to consider the following questions: ask yourself why you write poems and why you think yourself a poet? What is your purpose? What do you wish to achieve? Who is your audience? Why should anyone want to hear what you have to say? Is there such a thing as a poetry career? If you have career expectations, what does that have to do with poetry?

When I started sharing my poems with friends and audiences in California in the early 1960s, it was to exhibit and develop my poetic concept and communicate in a different way. At that point I was exploring life and death, life in death, and death in life, by fusing art ideas with political directions and using words and creating rhythmic patterns that could contain the content of struggle and awareness; constructing poems using the oral tradition and using words/phrases from African tonal languages like the Yoruba I picked up while visiting and later living in Nigeria.

When I first put words with music in performance in Los Angeles in 1964, there were no examples. For me it was a way of extending human rights and improving the condition of the community by giving examples of artistic performance possibilities. Except for the reading of poems in church or actors occasionally reading poems in recitals, there was no real poetry scene in the Black community until 1965 after the Watts rebellion. Then a cultural scene emerged with writing workshops, alternative reading/performance spaces, art galleries, and Board of Education programs that included creative writing. Today in most cities there are many places to read poetry. There are a number of writing workshops and small press publishers. But it still comes down to you working on the work with pleasure and satisfaction, whether it matters to someone or not. I think being around people concerns information and maintaining relationships. If you are going to be

seen you will be seen and what will happen because you are seen remains to be seen.

Rosa, being in the “right” place schmoozing with the “right” people in order to be published dulls the imagination. The so-called “right” person will have you jumping through hoops and still reject you and your work. So do not shake another limp hand or make yourself be somebody’s mascot. Real poetry sits outside of that kind of activity.

Regarding literary relevance in the future, imaginative literature will always be relevant because it represents creativity and transformation which is a human need. As for me, I’m a poet in every situation and in all environments and it’s my task to make poetry relevant.

Best wishes for happiness and peace in 2005.

Jayne

from Letters To Poets--see page 234 for Editors' Note

cracks the Sinews of F

Sense,

it makes a

World.

we are

merciless

dying but living

and faint hued

Axis where p

wash away thy

invert the

easy

iterated

Foundations in

thy self

tell thee what thou

thus

descend into

be

in the form of

be

the non

Let

joyn

Hallucinatory Equations for Bruenchenesian Theories for Eugene Von Bruenchenhein (1910-1983)

Marie, the solution of the pressure formula: $P(\text{slog} \backslash \backslash DTx \backslash E'x \backslash \backslash) = 0$ is s looking backward at the retina if two distinct sequences U and V are written as U=Guk cdots spheres within spheres what is the value of looking at SG with “Euclidean eyes”?

that tea has me seeing fractals stars colliding and ending in dust or V := (OVu)Ai CF Schr[o-umlaut]dinger equation chairs become bones & v.v. dans mon livre d’or, ton blog. a montré la présence de Nd, Sm, Fe. letters running around on pages

in the 1200s, a monk, Udo of Aachen, painted the Mandelbrot Set flames swirling in the carpet the DNA sequences of E. Coli and H. Sapiens are equally spaced on the color wheel (e.g., red, blue and yellow) both w and S grow infinitely romanesco (*Brassica oleracea*)

æ—¥æœ¬èaz:
if we look closely enough at an angle (thick curve) furniture, wallpaper breathing the fixed points, the free energy enabling snail-like dial-up lines

coupled to a memory-
loosing bath, i.e. the time

bodies in the paneling
or the $E = +1$ eigenvalues
apocalyptic cityscape
the epidemic behavior of
the contact process (CP)
in Sierpinski Carpets.

dissolve the universe by
rolling my eyes in my head.

* * * * *

Fine Print of the Wondrous 64-Bit Mudraboard Sweepstakes

bingo! I had 10 cents in my pocket for
a recitation of the rosary in 23 languages

many a martyr has been burned, not at
the stake per se for a One-night stay

at the Our Lady of Deliverance Palisades
Park Church but excommunicated over

information sets on the APIC architecture
found in most Norra Julön motherboards

please make your checks & money orders
payable to Isis, Queen of Heaven, tax-ded.

on the 12th full moon without a period, one
large gold toe may be claimed immediately

register to win a Slim-line USB Keyboard &

Bluetooth KB sans Numpad) palingenesis pro
both male & female initiation rituals include
shaving the head, transvestiture, anointing,

open konqueror & drill down to diagnostic
boot entry of /dev/ide/host0/bus0/target0/lun0/

put the alligator tears, lotería tickets, sweet
'n sour sauce packets, footprint rubbings,

gold teeth & lucky horseshoes in the cauldron
hum recitation & act recitative jeh monitor

populate me & my spiritually bankrupt pantheon
with pocket pita powerball money passfail(false

reload caution the single largest cache of email
recite fifteen times the Ten Angelical Salutations

Received: Fri, Apr 18, 2008 at 3:29 PM listserv
recant recission recoil recital coital recitalist

by the goddess Birth & by the goddess Virginal-
Penetration now is the time for imbibing

pantomiming Angie Dickinson wearing pantsuits
a pantoum a pantry a panhandler a propper numen

out of a collection of prifixes nomina are numina
i found you & your decompression error message

when transferring contents of floppy to C
coitus interruptus on error resume next statement

cantillate errno.errorcode.keys() Keynesian yoni
conjuring up shivering visions of Erda's four arms

Götterdämmerung! look what the Yggdrasil dragged
in: a trio of barefoot floozies lobha dosa & moha

the contest Grand Prize PC comes with Windows
Vista Ultimate 64-Bit OS Peter purchased no

US Treasury Bonds but Flopsy, Mopsy & Cotton-
tail all had bread & milk & blackberries, for supper.

* * * * *

----33.Nf5! paradoxical roles

- The text then is rather seductive.
- . The first indication of something
- File Format: - Blue sobre
(‘a move of extraordinarily
, Black’s knight after 33.
propria cabeza. et c’est mon rôle
reveal White’s true. intentions.
- . the well-known trap 12...exd4?
truly sensational, the move Re1-c1. (
- -Qf1?! very much like a human misstep!

- However, the superior 28.Qf2!
hypothesis proposes that males invest
- - - -33.Nf5! paradoxical roles
, Bb6! and Black’s Queen is dislodged
- The text is crafty in that it doesn’t reveal
calculated * 38.Rxa2 Bc7 39.Qe6+
Black’s Queen on an exposed square
almost a complete role reversal
programmers could not have expected.
a most peculiar finish indeed...

- draw by perpetual check.

12. He shrugged off his gloomy thoughts impatiently.
11. An unusual weight of snow broke branches.
10. After lay still for five hours alone.



JO-JOTIC

KNOW YOUR MONKEY



**Why were these men great?
WHAT GREAT POWERS
DID THEY POSSESS?**

YOU CAN CONTROL YOUR FATE

How does anyone—man or woman—achieve greatness? Is it not by mastery of the powers within ourselves? Know the mysterious world within you! Develop personal creative power. Awaken the silent, sleeping forces in your own consciousness. Learn to let go of all obstacles with new energy. Attune yourself to the wisdom of the ages! Grasp the inner power of your mind! Learn the secrets of a full and peaceful life!



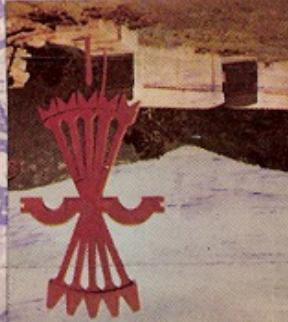
BENJ. FRANKLIN ISAAC NEWTON FRANCIS BAC

DISCOVER THE POWERS OF YOUR MIND

These great minds . . . like many other learned and great men and women were Rosicrucians. The Rosicrucians, not a religious organization but a worldwide progressive group of thinking men and women, invite you to share in their knowledge that will help you discover the hidden faculties and powers of your mind. The Rosicrucians will help you create health, abundance for yourself. Don't go through life laughing your mental powers away.

25. We speak our language wth ease

SYMBOL OF THE PHALANGE



JULIA

hey

Name _____

Angela

Graziano

4

卷之三

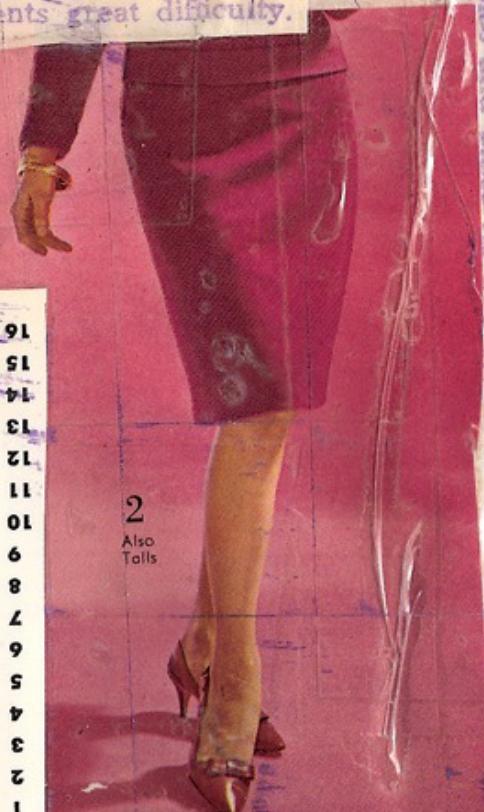
10

10

Digitized by Google



but to a foreigner it presents great difficulty.



5 NUMBERS:																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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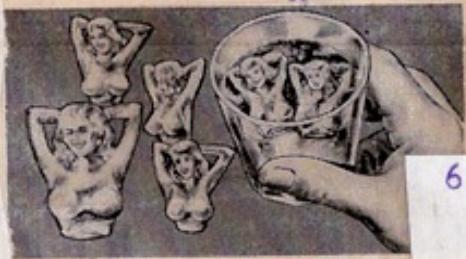
MAIL THIS
DS FOR \$1.97

4. Janie

Chil
He



6. The Rosetta message in three



WOW! NUDIE ICE CUBES-\$1

These cool cuties give a real frosty tang to drinks. Specially designed ice cube tray turns out a bevy of four beautifully proportioned beauties. These lovely lasses guarantee to cause conversation as well as frosty delight. Nudie Ice Cubes are real cake... a sensational new party idea! You must be pleased or your money back! Only \$1 each or 3 trays for \$2.79, postage paid. Order Nudie Cubes Tray from Sunset House, #12 Sunset Building, Beverly Hills, California.



Sept. 21, 1941

NO MONEY DOWN—2 YEARS TO PAY. SEE PAGE 695
THIS BEAUTIFUL—MAKE DREAMS COME TRUE!

Angels, Persons

Which Definition Fits?

Put an X in the blank before the definition which best fits the under sentence.

1. I paid a fair price for the blanket.

X beautiful

X light in color

X just; honest

LEARN MEAT CUTTING

Train quickly in 8 short weeks at Toledo for a bright & secure future in vital meat business. Big pay, full-time jobs; have a profitable market of your own. Diploma may after graduation. Job helps, 1000's of successful students. Write for 40-page catalog free. No obligation. National School of Meat Cutting, Dept. C-13, Toledo 4, Ohio.

HOME INSTRUCTION

Stone is a piece of stone on which is written a different languages.

word in each

TELEGRAM FROM SIAM

Take me to the river
once air raids

dismember from time,
place is not possible

to miss
just time.

Leave me weighted to
bottom, arsoned to

epic
taking place in

a hut, a hatchet taken to
walls, light into this:

escape.

How restraint paroles
a fence, continues another:

flashes then movement,
a wind counterpointing

a body, excavates stiches.
This ammunition is a kind of experience

we flout,
to recall a time,

seed refraction. When
I say, "I love you" we mean

“let experience begin.”
A tattoo; in grain; of birds

bipolar for a body to resign
into, earthquakes miscarry

power as repairs,
fog that fences

to its design—looker.

...

A Greek chorus faucets
stock pans, this plot

of paradise, a grip
we distort.

Effaceable marks,
plastic-wrap over television

screens:

Sticks are to youth;
Adults to figures.

Limbs seem
paused moments painting

toward permanence,
jejune affair of family,

our hubris in carafes.

Noosed fathers
do not like, mothers

ribbon mandates
mandate: "Praise the Lord

and Pass the Experience."
A flat tilts,

and filters
a room, degenerates

into its womb, citizens
skilled in it, mothers

and fathers with nooses bid
limbs to make tract.

Everyone barking
and cannot raze

nooses and ribbons
as tags, a die

roots; rooms; voltage of bare sides.

...

Matter ambushed between
our knees, we sift

hair, knuckles over
skull,

if vicarious is my hand
shaking yours

satisfaction assembles
into a valley

of ten thousand
smokes,

mazes of freeway cede
to magma, silhouettes

lantern along murk.
A flicker of your lid, sculpts

the correspondence
problem of our field, aims

to admit depth
two images:

bay, without you
by parallax dispatching

you with satisfaction
to picket our moon,

astral embers.

Tactically, these relationships
march through

concrete dragon's teeth,
a post we contact to reveal

utility.

I am only a conduit
for rules, maybe

enjoyment
the new utility.

...

“Cradle to grave,”
how we refract Greek art

as a ‘cradle,’ air hews
limbs

to inhabit light, out time,
for our aseptic offspring

form a suburban place.
Extreme epic

sport tours distance,
feathers

I wait here for:

we were building
something here,

preoccupied with skills.
The comedy frails over

satellites and skills
so what river—

so rooms—

in place of home,
use this mask.

First person to send a telegram
I will marry.

Skift Attraction

Read hand; release skift; slip in feet; click in heels; on: we drift upwards. The pedipul lining grips my feet: snug fit in the streamlined shoes, slight bumps on the airlight disk. I rock the skift for balance: weight me head to tail, tip me toe to heel; they is equal. I think through to the repulsors: decrease tension; elevation increases; tension eases; they's a sensitive one. Resistance tighter on the back pedipul, we propel forwards: they holding taut; me rocking edge to edge, leaning in, leaning out, skifting. I round us onto the nearest route and we work the ascent: manipulating the field, stepping up the force, harnessing the magnetic repulsion. They becomes an addition, yet another part of me as we lift up over the ledge and hover. Everyone moves. The top of the top ring of the south-east ring struct; all is suffused with an orange glow; and we are moving everywhere over this field: coming and going, along routes, over surfaces, sweeping out over spaces. There are hundreds of us, perhaps thousands of us, flitting, fluxing, skifting. We flit; some of us hover; we flux where we can: we bend our knees, spread our arms, shift our weight, back and forth, back and forth, skifting. We are graceful in flight. In the distance, across the vast cylinder spaces cut vertically down through the ring structs, I can see the route to the hi-circler; direction – left out, right in – focused by the angle of the force field. We can flux along that route. I will flux along that route. But now I hover. My skift, sensing my indecision – should over could, will over want – jerks. I look back over the edge. A streak of midup ring mauve crosses the bottom of this cylinder; beyond that, a hazy hint of blue. Twenty-five floors: short fall compared to the offerings of the other rings. I increase tension; pull us down; the attraction of the edge almost grounds us... I loosen, skift away. I weave out around the hordes heading down; aim for the concentration of those angling in my direction. I rein in, skift faster, short sharp shifts cutting across the field. We start to rise as I loosen first the front then the back repulsor: keeping the movements sharp, keeping the speed high, holding the decrease equal. The next cylinder space looms large before us; there is a clear run between us and it; my skift responds before I'm aware that we will not stop to look over. We sweep high and switch . off . to clear the attraction wall. We soar over the edge and free . fall . fly . for a moment. I angle down and . on . aiming for the magnetic break halfway up each floor, repulsion escaping between two opposing walls of attraction. Tight front, loose back, we curve

round, flip to front loose, back tight, we're repulsed. We angle down, gyre round, free . fall . fly . for a moment. Then again. Tight front, loose back, we curve round, flip to front loose, back tight, we're repulsed. Again. We angle down, gyre round, free . fall . fly . for a moment. We gyre around eleven floors before we miss, hit a wall, bond hanging upside down, over the edge, and the skift, flipped into override, won't let me switch it . off .

textspeak touchadd 1

capital p *physical contacts are becoming the reserve of input mates* comma openquotes *real closequotes contacts* comma *with whom we share our interests and passions* comma *these are increasingly found* in capital e encom-mem comma correction delete capital *within spheres* comma *before ideas* fullstop capital g *groups of like contacts are blooming* colon the capital j japan-ese sphere group comma number *eighteen* superscript th capital c *cen-tury focus* comma *for example* fullstop capital f *for more information think* colon *fifteens* semicolon the pool years fullstop spellcheck allcapsthinks

textspeak touchadd 2

re colon *revelations* fullstop capital i *in fact* comma *a sphere reveals what-ever it holds* comma *but only if it is asked* exclamationToken

textspeak touchadd 3

capital w *why do we call it tongue touching* questionmark

MERRY-GO-TATS: A BESTIARY, A FABLE

I. COCONUT PARK

On its way to high ruinate merry
go round carousel vine draped

imagine the plaster cast plastic
painted animals pole pinned :

turtle lizard cat and dog rooster
goat and cow up and down they

spun round and round where now only palm
frond and grass bend through wood slat

the chain link fence. Admission: from one
childhood a father's stamp

back handed ink smear; from another
a record or 8 track mule

and mongrel tabby and hen on their
way to play in town Bremen.

II. AT THE GALLIWASP HOUR

we drank fresh guava juice
shook off sleep left from naps
the lizards a shifting
pattern wall papering
the plaster when we sat
and ate and spoke of black
space and brown study how
ants roam in patterns scent
highways a rush hour
of sill counter tile
why the cat mews why named
chickens can't be eaten

1. What Addie the Dawg Lost

One dog barks, then two. One
lab barks. Two Rotweilers
listen. Ear prick. Nose sniff.
Body slam the gate. One
Rot barks, then two. Addie
slinks away. Three dogs bark
then four. Echo. Bark. Ark.
Ridge top slope slide carried
yard to yard fence to fence
wave a comin down the hill.
Addie listens circles
nail on tile. Addie
spies through the landing's spires.
Barks next door. Barks across
the street. Mouth open. No
sound. Wave broken message
intercepted. Lie down
cool down pant concrete nap.

2. Croak Croak Gecko

Addie woke to the croak
croak gecko. Go away.
“I think I’ll stay. You’ve lost
your bark. You broke the chain.”
Tief! Addie growled. You stole
my sound. “I stole nothing
dawg. But I’ll croak your spot
til you find ya voice.” Croak
croak gecko bellowed low.
A woman screamed. A man
fled. “Tis should be fun.” Croak
croak belled low again. “Ask
dat deh guzoo cow. She’ll
know.” He had no choice. “Go.”

3. Saw the Guzoo Cow, Heard Her

Addie found the guzoo
cow dining on shadows.
“I know why you’ve come.” Chew
chew cud cud. “But your bark’s
not here.” Tief Gecko stole
it. “By my wise eyes would
de gecko send you here
if he stole your pretty
bark?” Tail swish. Addie scratched
back leg to ear. “Listen
dawg—what the gecko no
stole you can’t reclaim.” Chew
cud chew. “But what’s been lost—
seek the three guava trees
tethered by the thickest
web. When the fruit falls ripe
ask to see Isnana’s
mirror and then, you’ll hear—“

III. AT THE PEENY WALLY HOUR

under the guava trees
we descended pavers
a canopy of webs
 moon slick dark bodies legs
 hidden in the glisten
strung above us our tongues
 fresh from mint and lemon-
 grass we climbed to your room
 rain ping pang penged the tin
roof ran down to the cave
 where one bubbly susan
 woke from the walls to bathe

4. Isnana's Mirror

Addie came to the place
where the three guavas grew
and waited for the ripe
fruit to fall. Isnana
himself watched the dog sniff
each trunk base, its fruit, slid
down his web. Addie sniffed
the air. You who once spun
the ladder to heaven
and so removed man's God
from Man, I beg let me
look upon your fabled
mirror, and he raised one
paw in the air. "Dear dog
a price be paid to gaze
pon my pond. Come, look down
dere." Isnana gathered
his legs. The hound walked down
the terrace. His tongue dripped
spit on the mud cracks. "Bring
back the rain." But how? "Head
first to Cockpit country,
then to Nanny's land. Find
the shell that bears nine spots.
Collect the dew from Fern
Gully and return here."
Addie lifted his ears
but the mud stayed silent.

5. Star Apple Cat

And it was near the time
of year man drank of blood
and ate of flesh which meant
the Star-Apples were ripe
when morning flooded Wood
side that early lemon
light and Addie stumbled

upon a curled up cat
in the spot where a man's
body should have been, green
stickers caught on his ears,
on his head. Friend cat what
has happened? "These stickers—"
the cat mreowed. Addie
groomed him, plucked the thorny
balls with his teeth. Slinky
kitty purred through slitted
eyes, his white body, gray
patches like continents,
islands on the blinding
morning sea, free and clean.
"Thank you friend dog." Your paw
pads are funny, are shaped
like the sliced open star
apple. Who are you? "When
my sister disappeared—
cat-napped perhaps ran off
with her Tom—she left four
newborns. I curled my tail
pulled them to my side—teat-
less I could not feed them
though I tried. For this act
my paw pads changed, became
like stars and now I can
cast a shadow through locked
doors—now on this side now
on that—pass through the wood
slat shutters, perch on tin
roofs at midday. Magic
some say. But I can't catch
the rats. I have no taste
for flesh anymore. My food's
been cut to encourage
the rodent stalk. Rationed.
Not pulling my weight. Fearful
of the master I left,
fell in this cleft and slept
like a man. Call me Mew."

Well, Mew, you are safe now.
Why not come with me, seek
a way to bring the rain,
fix Isnana's mirror?
“I would like that. I hear
the mirror will show you
what you've lost—what have you
lost that you would service
yourself to Isnana?
I will tell you while we
walk. And Mew and Addie
went west cross the island.

6. The Goat and the Curse of the Alco

Addie and Mew went to
cockpit country but no
Germaican or Maroon
knew of the nine spotted
shell. They went to the Blue
Mountains the hidden
Nanny Town but no spring
or coffee bean could help.
And in Fern Gully's dim
endless twilight they could
but lick the dew. Even
carried in the most make-
shift calabash it would
vanish in sun or moon.
“Isnana has tricked you,”
Mew hissed one day as they
found themselves waylaid. “Stuck
here on the leeward side
land of wood and water—
we will find nothing here.”
On Bamboo Avenue
in the copse tunnel straight
out of the Twilight Zone
they met a goat who roamed
roadside all chain leash clink
and peg scrape. “Help! They mean

to eat me, to make me
into jerk!" Calm friend goat.
Come with us and help us
on our quest. "What do you
seek for a dog to friend
a cat?" Addie and Mew
told their tales. "Call me Gat.
Can you help with this chain?"
Mew slid his star apple
paws to loosen the chain
from Gat's neck. Addie tugged
it over his horns, tossed
it with a flick of his
jaw. "I think I can help.
There is a place, a bay
called Calabash. Women
there sing and drum but we
must bring them a gift. Chew
down that bamboo
twisted like a shell." Mew
and Addie cut and chewed
through the odd growth. Gat read
the crude etchings of school
children: "Roy was here. Jev
was here. 2002."
Gat took them to Treasure
Beach and there in the warm
water three women stood.
Gat carried the bamboo
shell on his head, bowed, dropped
it in the sand and they
began to drum and call
calabash calabash
beaten bottom blood-pump
calabash calabash
hear it in the foot stomp
The oldest came forward.
"The Arawak had small
dogs which could not bark called
Alco. You have the Curse
of the Alco. This is

Obeah our Myal
cannot heal but you will
find the nine spotted shell
when you least expect it."

She stepped back and they sang:
calabash calabash
beaten bottom blood-pump
calabash calabash
hear it in the foot stomp
and like a wave they broke
into sea spray, left Gat,
Mew and Addie to fall
asleep on the black sand
to the distant reggae
floating down like a dream.

IV. AT THE CRAC CRAC HOUR

the fragrance of guava
wafted through the louvered
shutters through the webbing
of the mosquito net's
folds and pleats as it fell
from its suspended hoop
around the bed's edges
and we slept spooned and cupped
listening to the flute-
like ptweek ee ee creak
ee ee dum da da crac
cracs' metallic speak speak

7. Parrot in the Otaheite Tree

One twilight Addie, Mew
and Gat passed a parade,
the funeral women
dressed in black and white hats.
A parrot perched and laughed
in an Otaheite

tree. "They think me the man's
 duppy come back. Not safe!
Not safe!" Flap flap flap. Wait,
green feathers. We have been
 to Cockpit Country, been
 to the Blue Mountains, been
 to Bamboo Avenue,
Treasure Beach, Negril. Do
 you know where we can find
 the nine spotted shell? "No,
 but me flight might help you
get sight. Me have a friend
 at the docks. He can tell
 shells from rocks." So the three
 followed Gold Bill whose squawk
made Addie's throat itch—how
 he longed for a rough ruff,
 for a long full moon howl.

8. Fought the Cock at the Docks

They returned from country
the Bauxite laden land
traded red hills and red
 soil for the city's
red lights, the burnt sugar
cane replaced by diesel
 and jerk. They crept aboard
 a boat its red yellow
blue carried them across
the harbor motor killed
 sailed into view prow tied
 to an off shore pier post
swam to the shore city
ruins on the sea floor
 below. One rooster crowed
 cock a doodle doo. They
found the shack the window
Gold Bill wanted. Addie
 climbed upon Gat's back, Mew
 upon Addie, Gold Bill

upon Mew and they heard
two roosters crow rasta
 rasta roo crow cock crow
 a bwok a bwok a croo.
A lizard leapt from sill
to leaf then scurried
 up the wall. "There he be!"
 crawed Gold Bill. A red crest
pecked. Men shouted and bills
rose in the dust. Peck. Claw.
And then Kinpupalick!
 the final blow but Red
Crest saw her come among
the men come for the one
 who won a Chinese bag
 balanced on her head come
for the cock's throat. Gold Bill
screeched. Red Crest did his flip
 his signature move. "Stop!"
The Obeah woman
 was too slow and soon Red
Crest fled with his new friends
 told his tale: "I knew when
 to croon, learned how to flip
long before the sun rose.
I'd look through the slats see
 his hips pulled to the bed
 edge watch the mosquito
coil burn down then squawk
at the sight of naked
 bodies two cocks in one
 bed like the many cocks
kept in my yard and brought
to these docks." They asked
 what he knew if he knew
 of the nine spotted rock.
 "Not rock. Shell." They could not
sleep on the beach fenced off
 barbed wire, detritus
 from the cruise ships a feast
just out of reach. Gold Bill

could fly over and Mew
slink through; Addie and Gat
were too large and Red Crest
could not fly that high so
took them to a place where
the river met the sea
and there by the moonlight
they watched the nine spotted
island rise, block the sky.

9. The Waters of the Green Turtle
The shell turned. Two half moons
reflected the dog, cat
and goat, parrot and cock.
This is the nine spotted
shell? A turtle? "Who speaks?"
We have crossed this island
many times for the nine
spotted shell to carry
the dew from fern gully
and make the rains return.
"Sounds like Isnana's tricks.
I will tell you my shell
was a stone an unmoored
anchor too slippery
for the frog and too rough
for the rabbit too wet
for the cat and too slow
for the dragonfly. But
what kept them from me kept
them here, together like
pieces of scorched fabric
thrown to the winds that stitch
in different patterns
but make a quilt once more.
And so if you did taste
of fern gully as you
say you did, return. Go
to Isnana's mirror
and do what I tell you."
And so Addie and crew

went on the road one last
time, returned to the space
between the three guava
trees and followed Nine Spot's
words. First their pillar: goat,
dog, cat and cock, parrot
on top. Gold Bill spoke out
in Nine Spot's voice: "Waters
you stole return!" And all
but Addie called and sang.

Their note sent Isnana
careening from his tree.

They caught him in his web,
dragged that net to the pool
edge where Addie spat three
times upon the cracked mud.

They fixed Isnana's teeth
on the dry bed, mixed his
venom with Addie's spit
and behold the basin
filled, not with falling rain
but a bubbling spring.

Addie looked within, heard
his bark come down the ridge,
and carried it back home
where sneaking up behind
the croak croak gecko he
let loose his deepest bark.

The gecko was mid croak
and swallowed it whole, throat
bursting with the sudden
choke. And when the wave came
down the slope, glad Addie
listened to the note, raised
his voice and bellowed low
up the scale, held the tone
that shook mangoes and limes
from the sturdy tree limbs
and where each fruit dented
the earth a spring rose up
one for the dog who found

what he lost and one for
the lizard who stole his
throne; one for the cow who
told him of the mirror,
 one for the spider who
 duped him; one for the cat
who extracted the fanged
 venom, one for the goat
 who dragged him; one for flips
 and spins and the cock's swift
blows, and one for the aped
 turtle's voice that struck fear
 into the spider's heart.
And one for the turtle,
the nine springs, the nine spots
feeding the sea, the Curse
of the Alco undone.

V. ACKEE TATS

I woke to a full moon. It silvered
the mountain clouds erased

the peeny wally flash in the tree
canopy its light drowned out

the ptweek eek eek of the crac cracs inked
my skin with the story's tats

red as the ackee's poison powder.
Trace the map the heads stacked down

my back like the Bremen Town chaps: jowl
howl and ballooned gullet, pooled

pupils and web stretch mirrored on lats,
star apple paws, horn and peg,

plumes locked with red crest, totem pole spine
balanced on the carapace

Call Me a Grown-Up but My Five Eyes Blink at Once

When I dug in the backyard I knew nothing could cut me
soft hair & a mind trenching memory like dirt
like how the sound & taste of chewing snow is the same
my frequency framed in chives & locust-drawings
against fevered whiteness dipped in fevered whiteness

Meet at the juniper where the creek turns east
for reckoning retain the ticket
366 days in a leap year cognate child
a dedication in the microphone: fury of velveteen
that was 18 years ago
you only feel invincible twice in your life
to dissect the rarified heart
especially bird

Primordial fronds with 3D daffodils in the dreamscape
chase large rodents into the ghost forest:
the animal in my right arm was a superhero cape
a cape to give the younger brother with a hammer
the animal in my leg was the deep humiliation
of crawling up the stairs
if the fever is age or anxiety can I lean in

& sweep the whiteness away

I miss the charm of a sturdy memory like a missing limb

now I can't stop gripping grip with my neck

if I have to

I can't reenact the conversations like I used to

but I won't coat myself with milk paint

I see bodies but the words are gone they took place

near a lake eaten by fevered whiteness

as if a stone sums up the land that stands behind it

in the distance a soft child counting a sequence

of ants or misters

spidery arrangements a child unnamed for safety

to double back & throw myself off my own trail

I'm only embarrassed when I embarrass you

the deepest well I ever fell into

too busy relaying information to absorb it

"I didn't write it / I only wrote it down"

a hammer eliminates the need for help?

drift-wood finish basis of the charm

signs of soft child activity show up least

the marks of hammers

fever takes you like an undertow like mister

Help remember calm me down to remember

I spelled my name with mud & sold it at a lemonade stand

if you misplace directions for making the deception
you want to make use blood to color the milk paint

behind the fence a curtsey

anyone is anyone else because deep down
they have a face?

dab a little water without disease

It's exhausting: everyone asking to feel alive!

but I drew an incorrect candle or I drew the perfect
candle & it was still rejected

the last seven seconds watch the body
roll away from my head

that log is not a bridge when the mud dries

somewhere I am a goldenchild

where I speak for the poem

now beat back against what you made

10.(morchella deliciosa)

What gets us, galls, us, both run straight out of town.
Condemned for, panting, a bit, ever so slightly.

It's as if no rail yet built could have ferried us.
As if no shy bird there stood hidden in the reeds.

Clapper, waiting for coasts to clear, for threat levels
to be downgraded to acceptable levels.

It's the hollowness of the core, the pitted, honey-
combed cone that alerts us to the true morchella.

Both false and true need exposure to slow, steady
heat to render them ready for the table.

Nothing too well hidden can be long for this world.
Habitat's handy shorthand for whatever's missing

from the equation. Solve for any letter lacks
boards. An increment between filagree and flumox.

11. (galerina marginata)

play it backward and you'll hear the gospel music.
Subliminal a tongue in your nasal

cavity. Wet one planted right on
the roof of the mouth. Not quite depressed

but somewhat umbonate- spreading at the margins.
A line of tract homes punctuates your

sentence veered cruel but never so unusual
as to make it top or even back forty worthy.

Beat the holiday rush brass knuckles bands &
tacks. Give me a penny to bury this

wren fodder aforementioned murdered tiny
bird so we have something to do in

a funeral procession: festive skullcap:
What gets us, galls, us, both run straight out of town.

According to Me.

I said to the kid:
“son, you’ve got a call;”
to which he replied: “the hypo told me.”

He’s the better liar.

Fathered by ‘Nam, he kept coming & going and I saw this
with my own eyes, a syringe hanging from his vein & with
that he is

Armed to the bill with amens;
nothing sits comfortably in his arms

and letters cut off, occasioned to be
veneration --

∂

these cypress trees are a sort
of richness, birded, calyxèd,
sordid, if full, from Mukilteo to
Mt. St. Helens, the elevation
to a ten-year-old girl in a
little voice: “
. & lo,
the sunlight poureth.

∂

Striated the highway,
winds,
& every form
cries: “Give birth!
Birth!” The sun sets behind Oregon mountains and the children are already asleep in the back of the van; the sun set three hours ago in Kalamazoo; the sun will set, has set in Sofia; the sun sets me and there is **already room** for the van as it displaces air in the dusk. I have not heard a word of Chris since I slammed us into the windshield of my car before I left town and the radio song **fastened to his “to fury”** – a toast cut short. I am alive, the children in the back of this car are alive, Ann is alive, the sun is alive though headed to Asia, the van is a machine that is alive.

We are heading, or else **tossed** home, and no one else knows the better.

∂

if you got it bad for art
do it to run

why are you so pious?
or, what are you pious for?
o, that I believe,
but wait for to cross the dogwood
evidences everything: the photographs w/ blues,
the hundred & twenty-four saints & the waiting vets,
& this thing that Lois has waited to make
with mouth or fashion
dominates the jacaranda
that allows the line of sight to trace (involute) purple
up the wall from

∂

Nothing hoped,
nothing gained

The sordid If, foolishly said of a mountain in vanity
(more births, more salvos, more salvos of birth):
If I fly from marriage, carry me under like this...
say the sordid word,
play the sordid concubine

& the man at the outer edge of the city limits:
"if you pull at nothing,
then nothing will come to its fruition"

Gràcia

The text

after Archilochos

While the flute

[here
the papyr
-us: torn] a little toot
-ing [winestain] grabs at the root
not [rot] a startled deer
[mummy paper] & fear
-less (sweatwet) with cute
Seizure:
[]
on hands & knees:
 leans like or toward
a barbarian who fucks backwards—

after Richard Serra

rust
life
hive

	vibra	dust
(within)		us
	betw	aliv
(inside)	spira	ife
		ust
	-	s
		hell
		rai
		Spai
caracol		
people		
(jumping)		: real

Monk's mood

The young

John Col-
trane blows
the long
long
so slowly
flows
across the tongue
the piano's fingers
punctuate
these late
vibrations linger
floats
a life
the piano ain't got no wrong notes

Pannonica

Ice-
bergs: the view from Hackensack
men die everyday for the lack
somebody unties
the eyes
in the back
of the bus of the car across the tracks
like a schoolboy loves his pie

a baroness
the wreck-
age of sex
in winter a piano a question
of fathers of lies
I don't think he ever caught that butterfly

giving a name to airlessness
inciting so slight from exertion to cur
clamor to witless

prolapsing from coercion to the inertly hued limberness
of riots
and quotes
promotions
and larceny

remember the ceramic pains
and effulgent volumes
a clawing
makes statements
and clamor
emulates

the disregarded and alluvial lustre

what snatches the dislodged into
splinters
and
an uncivil breeze

which foregoes imitation
shuddering
orison fire and variation
dispositive

an adoptive sheen on consecutive illuminations

-
marrowbones

twit
cornucopiate of
the biodegraded knots
and xeroxes worn with the foreseen
the wonderful and plotless

inferred and overflowed
ampicillin dreams
foreseen coalescence, it
regrettably holds the complex of
the shrewd
alive
eyeless

the tentative and worn (this, also placated
and imitated through jeering
discredited, the cache memory ineffectually alive
griddeds and ineffectually alive
goldfish glint on the tank side
wires
mesh through the goldfish
the material intented on the frill and abundant
what's extrapolated and imprecise (abundance)

shrive blithe and sought

cached discredit on a material withering

blink

--

imply
and cling
consequence and
wristbands
interrogation
of the entrenched
the geographically chastized

how these have implied the cling and starling
the advised on uncondoned smolder yet
venture with abstract
malleable
brocade

snowing synched bloodstream
phospher apprechensive
soar trench sliver
infracted boat
consecrated on cryogenic waters >

Elderberry

I swear I heard someone humming. The room was empty. That we all stand under our own dome of heaven means that we have left the womb, but we are still inside the breast.

Grape Vine

What I particularly like about the television show *Dallas* is that the characters will arrange to meet for lunch at an expensive restaurant, then they'll get into an argument before the waiter can bring water, and one will stomp out. I don't think a single lunch ever got eaten. Once I saw a photograph of a man who looked enough like me to fool eyewitnesses, but he had a different name. I've met a man with the same name as mine, but he didn't look like me. My death sentence has not yet been spoken. My death sentence fragment, maybe.

Cajeput

I hear wind whistling until I push the door open and step out into stillness. I sit in the subway and the windows of the train next to mine start to slide and for a few seconds I can't tell which train is moving. I'm standing over the water table; I'm surfing.

Common Fig

I would like to have been the first person to read without moving his lips. If my lips were sewn shut, would I have been illiterate? Why worry about Greece--at least one Buster Keaton short exists only as a fragment, and where is Edison's *Frankenstein*? (Something was supposed to come next, but I can't read my handwriting on the note.)

DEAREST LIMBO

I am your stimulus package

It is a market truth

Project sun salute, version 10.8

I have gone wild and you are my series

There is a key in my hole

Blood spool

A dogface of pearling bruises

I'm flakey but my box is good

Herbal doodads

Gloat and it will siphon through me

I will option you as meat glaze

Give me an example of clarity

A hemless spring

I am your cowboy

And I will hump your heart

HOT MESS

Raise my tariff

Strapulate

Star open

My portal

With old

Fashioned

Riot Dog

Or Tractor Hare

Agent of

Intricate laps

Cull and elect

Some bonny brother

That's love, that's love

Amass mass

Pearl the grain

Make maize sound

Kumquat

My fetal

Tarantula

Turntable jealousy

Haunts me

Bird plug

Hot mess of hares

Mugwort for epic dreams

Old monster

Unlicked cake

Helps pan sap

At a dirty volume

Relabeling the

Beast parts

Helps me live

Girl in a Green Doorway

I.

In the first flashing rivers we elected angst

Scrubbed it pink till it bled

We lost ten does in the amusement park

We rusted in a cart with the queen

Five golden lockets clinked behind an ear

You were a dancer you were antique

I heard you rocking in a glassy boat

The giant stinger glued to your aft

I led you to the gate and creaked out

Inches of ribbon in an emerald glove

Ten cylinders of rain drilled the rail

You positioned yourself like a constellation

Metal pulled in a widening arc

You tore a ticket from the trampled dirt

I was holding a fist of flat balloons

Orange peels curled from a vine

You lost your vein in some verdant hill

I found mine under October like a wire

II.

Coloring ivy into the edges

I crossed my toes in the mud

The bridge declared dandelions

Puddles delirious on gasoline

Left the sky a marbled glaze

Coloring ivy under a blue dome

A detail of astronomy struggling

A medal tinged by cheap corrosives

Weathering (amid) the rolling memos

Dandelions struggled against the ivy

My watercolors condemned

Your charcoals rearranged me

In a rough carbonizing haze

Blame was big when you found it

Corporeal saccharine bossy

I douse it with a cheap agent

Sound the foghorn and

Bow to the roaring flames

III.

Take a planet for instance

A stubborn miniature in clear hands

It is not responsible for its persona

Its addictive habits trace an ellipse

Check coordinates log them

Not one compares to the next

Like comets surpassing a comet

The sad entropy finds a sister

Looking for an inspiring terrier

Jigsaw puzzles on a shelf

Sit kinetic shrink-wrapped

Await slow hands to free them

A stubborn miniature in clear hands

Could you shake this giant leaf globe

Predict a believable quotient

Or does volition grasp facts in vain

Shrinking beneath an arid moon

A puzzle-piece meditating

In its plebeian corner of the box

IV.

I rounded four corners when my toes found grass

I thought I was getting smarter

The mercenaries wrapped in twine

Poured tacks in a porcelain bowl

You fashioned for all the finale

In concentric rings of an oak

The rooks were gliding in silence

Grafting their windproof refrain

Along the ravine they sailed

Fashioning for all the finale

Of acorns cracked by a boot

At the intersection of four pawns

Whirling quadrants masquerade

As actual events no longer aspire

To rank the envies or loves

V.

I for immediacy I for insurance

Who led me into this glass case

Who dialed the final dizzy number

I counted you among the scientists

Squinting into the plain almighty jewel

You were sweating over the stalemate

Screwed into the belly of a plow

A field of black hats tipped their rims

Where the west expanded like a star

First track the imaginary files

Talk the queen out of falling so far

I for ice I for Icarus

It was raining F's all night over the daffodils

Somewhere your scoresheet folded in half

VI.

Was there an ambulance nearby

Did the scribe run out of paper

I sensed one of several answers

Multitudes thieving in the margin

You'd asked about a doctor

Urged a liturgy through a screen

Who were you looking at

It was a clamorous elbowed Sunday

Rain blurring the pavement white

I stood in ten dark pillars of mud

You could call it cross-examination

Bent and listening to the excess

Your bright steps flared under my toes

Who were you looking at

Glowering through the rafters like a wasp

If the sirens were tall and justified

Then holding back a rashy hand

I could swallow this scarlet street

LOVE A TOURNAMENT

OKAY FELIZ FIFTY SECONDS AND GO

I call I call to you I call you with
the slant of scar across a dime
you found in June
a sapling stripped to paper verse I

beckon with to you I watch I watch you do I
hold to you reach out to
you that precious thing
that this – too lost
in the circumference
of a then

(this aimless trinket that i saw upon a ground and wrote
those birds, crossed out, these birds)
I'll call and call you to
the fiction of your skin condense all sense
down to a smear of light
the waif of whose sound
one endearment is to hear
and dangle down in verbs of jade against the time
hang down in time against the break of day
unzip the spine of hours unwind
the lines who plait and knot
through tos and fros of palms to mark
the end of unlivéd days and all along

these birds no

birds at all will call to us
in song
these words no sound at all
will snap the bind of

back-lit sheet, let free the posing ink and ink
rush out to stain our hands again and song to you in scales
and song to you in

tell me this

you'll love me like there is no –
love me like there is no loss.

NOW ELISE TOP THAT

I have no disguise in this smile and nothing
is given. There is the space
between your chin and your

Shoulder that flares red when you press
the shutter and I wonder
you a mechanism of sight. Lashes.

So gendered, you look soft as xrays. So
fine, I see the biweekly trimming of
fingernails clipped from hands predicting

The plush of cushions
under future guests, the capture
of spiders during sleep as they

Plane across your face
as they plan to leave no trail and
do not. You position me

For optimum enhancement. You study
me in the literacy of angles. When
we finish with each frame there will be
Remnants scarcely viewed as veins
in leaves, no gists of pleasure, names for
children nor chipped white edges trimmed.

ANONYMOUS, A[N UNFINISHED] VERDICT

Diversified by lightning
the road collapses in curves the dust
 of backdoor sundays, windows, split
ting stars, behind, shackling scenery to the lead of romance, to
 want
 you figurative as

wandering chanson
evanescent lust

allegory's
 boyt oy

ANONYMOUS II, A VERDICT

Lets drop the petty sentences Lets look at each other without boundary Not waste our meanings on words If it were up to me I'd redo the whole mess Start from scratch Focus Every act a gesture from the root of love You struggle like I struggle We are sublimely connected in this second I see it in your eyes You want to tell me something and you can I am completely open to you ready and waiting for you to open back to me without reserve or judgement or commentary The more I know you the more I realize I've been dreaming of you my whole life Isn't it strange Do you know how that feels Entirely complete It is a palpable lightness Don't laugh I'm serious come on I think I've felt things with you that I've never felt before It's like all these rooms inside of me have been thrown open like I am no longer a patchwork of compartments anymore but a whole being and it's you I am completely honest with you I put up no walls with you I want to touch your face and I want you to trust me for I trust in you completely I feel I've even dreamt of you my whole life Doesn't that sound weird Ha Yeah When I wound the stem off apples remember that game I think I saw your face once long before I see it now It looked just like it did a minute ago only it was hazy from the heat of the sun it was a summer's day I was on a beach totally alone there was a woman in yellow sunglasses and a woman swimming out to come on don't blush There's no need to be shy We can finally drop the pretenses I don't want this to come as something heavy to you like you're bound to me or something We can't own one another I know that I read Sacher-Masoch you know that passage on possession and I read Levinas you know I'm a child of the era I don't want to possess you Just the opposite I want to free Think of it With eachother we have the chance we can finally finally finally be free

NARRATOR, A CONCLUSION

what
do you want to hear from me

that i am trying to expurgate my hands of
your face my dear i thought

i turned you over in words or in days

that lust

parched my body of questions

i could not
could not ask

of even
this one
missed phrase sieved
through in strands of waiting, guised

in thursdays fridays any, days i wait
for some awed fall of sound
unlike grief in my own (is it my)
hand in the air by you're gone

CRITIC, A MONOGRAPH

THE BALLOONS ROSE ABOVE THE CROWD
HIS VOICE LIKE CRYSTAL SAID THE NAME
SAID THE NAME OF LVE AND I I HELD THE
HAND OF BOTH MY LIVES I SMILED INTO
HIS BRIGHTENED FACE OH SPLENDID DES
TINY (BALLOONS RISING TO THE SKY) BRI
NGS ME HOME OH BRINGS ME JOY BRINGS
ME HOME OH BRINGS ME JOY

[Untitled]

So here we are now at last. Like a seed inside the earth. Hills sinking in. Jungles crawling up over the belltower. The moon's eyelash thin. I am hard. You are wet. It's time to get down to business.

[Untitled]

I've seized up handfuls of hair and skin. It's the sun, all white. No, it's the moon, pocked and cold. Pigeons fly in. Flashes of lightning. Bits of red and gold are spilling down on to us. Suns and black holes forming.

Kyoto, Japan
December 30, 2004

Dear Karen,

Unresolved inter-connected-nesses, the need for the ancestor shrines, the way the imagination keeps playing back old (I am still stuck in romantic Heian period with Genji, Sei Shonagon, the sad diary entitled *Kagero Nikki*), yet newly activated images—holocaust/Hiroshima/Pachinko parlors. How does all this play here? And what to make of it? “Do” with it? “Do” anything? Is part of the poet’s vow to perpetually catch, distill, refine, re-imagine where one walks, what one notices? Plus all the verbal wordplay and associations. The mysterious Noh plays’ court backdrop re-configures kingship/emperor/god/patriarchal power paradigm, and also—which is more important—engages “no action” which is what goes between the singing, music, stage movements, animal sounds. The big gap.

“Life and death, past and present—
Marionettes on a toy stage.
When the strings are broken,
Behold the broken pieces!”
The cricket sews on at his old rags,

CHORUS
(mimicking the sound of crickets)
kiri, hatori, cho, cho
kiri, hatori, cho, cho

With all the new grass in the field; sho,
Churr, isho, like the whirr of a loom: churr

—Zeami Motokiyo , Nishikigi¹
trans: Ezra Pound

Human life transmigrating between life and death, hell, ghost, animal, human, heaven realms . . .

But remember this is extremely evolved, refined art—on much older shamanic/Bardo death rites (which is where I am locating a lot of my writing and study) and confrontation involving encounters such as those with animal spirits and “ghost” sound. And making/imitating those sounds of the animal. Modal structures. Though I have recently been impersonating robots. But is it all like *The Kingfishers/Waste-*

1 Zeami Motokiyo, born in 1363, was the author of many Noh plays.

land, etc. Are we just always writing in our Culture of Death? The old wounds/yearnings must be healed so the land will thrive? So everything can “go on”? My former Naropa student poet Kenji, here, as we were riding the Chuo train line, said emphatically “No more Kings!” which continues this line of theistic thinking re: death, its cycles. Those power mongers sleep with Death, using it all the time to keep us enthralled, in state of perpetual fear. Can we not do that? So I write to get out of my own Empire of Death and Fear, which is what I told students last summer at Naropa. Help!

Use of what we do? Relative to these cultural studies? I often wish I had been an archeologist. What is this self-appointed poet job? Is it always simple—on one level—re-act/response mode, which is why I have been so grateful to be out of USofA a spell and consequently not so primed to re-act, spout all the time what everyone in Our Camp knows, constantly replaying the delusion of the Masters Of War, their version of reality mimicking, commenting on their euphemistic vocabulary, etcetera, etcetera and recounting my own Nightmares vis-à-vis THEM. What a bore. Not to ever forget their horrific deeds, I will continue to record those in *IOVIS 3* under the title “Colors in The Mechanism of Concealment.”

And what will the extraordinary richness of this “culture”—these cultures—which include praxis, religion, manners and mores bring? I am obviously excited.

Kyoto: Rampant with syncretic layers. Some fox shrine thoughts: had that red pelt in mind back in a time when animals roamed and we were one with them. A small clearing for fox assignation. What is it to love a fox? Brought to mind the rat shrine in Calcutta, the bat shrines in Bali . . . But saw similarities with stuff in Indonesia/Polynesia in the Shinto shrines—the animist/ancestor deal, now unfortunately associated with Japanese nationalism as the current prime minister keeps honoring the Shinto place (in Tokyo) where WWII war criminals are “enshrined.” But most affected by the Hall of the 1001 Kannon bodhisattvas, “Sanju-sangendo” founded originally in 1164 A.D., rebuilt after a fire in 1266—390 feet long, 54 feet wide. In the center is the chief image of Kannon (Quanyin, Avalokitesvara) with eleven faces

and one thousand arms, 11.5 feet high. On both sides of him/her stand very close together, ready for “action”—like an army—1000 more images of Kannon with multiple arms and accoutrements. The idea is an army of compassion.

The rock gardens—meticulously raked white pebble carpets, with rocks that don’t necessarily resemble anything, offer a nice conundrum. Like looking at Abstract Expressionism, someone said.

And on.

What are you studying? What does your world look like?

I wish I had a thousand arms.

LOVE

Later:
Tokyo, Japan

January 2, 2005

Dear Karen,

One’s mind is a place and a map indeed as per your chapbook *Placefullness*. My keyboard is Japanese hence lacking in easy access to quote marks, colon, semis. I miss parentheses and have written a piece entirely dependent on the parenthetical which is what you do when you can’t understand most words and have an ongoing patter/mind-stream in native tongue but all the time thinking What is this I am hearing? Why is it alien. Or is it? Past lifetime in this language? How does it relate to animal sound. How does it relate to Korea, China, Siberia, Polynesia. What I know is some Japanese Buddhist chant. If only another lifetime to study Kana, understand Kanji. Both visual towers and topiaries. A kind of drama which includes the Theatre of Noh sounding, and at the same time: a temple, silent, with incense wafting. Many associations from movies, the shakuhachi flute. There’s such grace in the calligraphic Kanji and the sense of the whole body making

a stroke. Or the stroke being made with mind and heart as well.
Stroke of the “warrior.”

I also find the precision of the vast train system here in Tokyo daunting. There is a map here in my head of multiple cities—imagined, real, absent, pulsing, hardly any green. These mini-districts are post-war, constructs of wild dimension mounted on the fossil fuel of—hard to imagine. Complex history of Edo, the former capital, and the possibility of earthquake haunts the premises . . .

Population here is way over 12 million. Very few gaijin—literally “outside” people.

One has a mind of stone in the Zen gardens (Kyoto).

My mind is translating into yen from dollars. Dollars seem dirty, the Yankee crime. What does an American do here to counter all the negative karma accumulated by our bombing, nuking so many of their cities? You feel pain in the elderly, deep scars, many decades . . .

I have already begun a Buddhist poem triggered by a statue of a sow-headed *dakini*. What is Hebrew for “sow”?

My job here is a month’s residency with the Tokyo Joshi Daigaku—Tokyo Woman’s Christian University. Participate in a symposium, teach workshops, today a seminar on performance poetry. The campus bells are tolling “O Come O Come Emmanuel and Ransom Captured Israel”—apt words in current context, eh? So happy son Ambrose is with me, he’s got his own investigations going—late nights in jazz clubs, has also made friends who play basketball. He’s been invited to speak at a class on the novels of Haruki Murakami whom he admires.

I am seeing a Noh play tonight entitled *Kokaji* about a blacksmith and a fox. The Waki is the blacksmith, a witness figure. The spirit of Shite is a boy who is an incarnation of Inari Myohjin, the fox. My recent *Structure of the World Compared to a Bubble* seems to rest in some ideas from the animal realm—if we don’t reclaim some of those origins, we’re in trouble. You must know Pound’s

Noh, based on Fenollosa's notes. I almost got to Fenollosa's gravesite near Kyoto, not enough time. Think I passed Cid Corman's bakery though (and wrote a little poem). Thinking about the gaijin poets and Japan. Gary Snyder, Phil Whalen, Joanne Kyger, Clayton Eshleman, Corman. Huge source, here, for writing. And translation work.

Hmmmmmmmm

I need to get this preliminary bundle—an invitation—a summons—a bow toward our communication in missive realm off to you now.

What is the climate for your work life? History does indeed appear to flutter; the underground lost city. Your writing in *Placefulness*—ghost, view of time and the site itself very relevant here in my stint in Japan. And now we are even deeper inside this war and no matter what language we are innocent, people are suffering and dying without cause.

Love,

Anne
(the secular fox, the secular sow)

PS

I know poets have to keep traveling and placing themselves in other cultures, even as it gets more difficult for us *norteamericanos*. All the more reason. In fact, one experiences the heartbreak most profoundly from a distance. I want to dwell in “art time” the next years, but of course have always lived in “art time.”

New York, New York
January 10, 2005–February 6, 2005

Dear Anne,

I have been thinking about Bardo death rites as a place for you to locate your work. Do you mean writing out of a state of in-between, or an emptying of consciousness? “The big gap” as you wrote? I want to hear more. Right now I am reading Andrei Codrescu’s novel *Wakefield*, in which the main character gives a motivational talk about poetry and money while the devil looks on, and in the midst of the talk Wakefield says, “The difference between a modern artist and Buddhist monk is in the approach. The artist goes into the void empty and returns with a souvenir, if you will. The monk approaches the void with a traditional body of knowledge and arrives at emptiness.” I really like this idea of the spatial movement of consciousness and having “encounters” within that journey, as you put it. Like Will Alexander’s sense of astral projection, which I was just reading about in his interview with Marcella Durand in *The Poetry Project Newsletter*. Another useful way to think about writing.

There are so many: the image of the poet observing like a monk and recording, the poet who dictates—tuned into some other channel until the poem is revealed, the romantic poet active in exploring the movement of the imagination, the poet who plagiarizes or cuts-up language in order to reanimate or recontextualize it, the political poet who awakens, the poet who dredges up their inner emotional life, the language poet, the ecological poet; all of these ideas only begin to touch what it is that happens when a person sits down to write. It is a question asked every time someone writes a poem, and although the poet may think s/he is in control, it is still this inexplicable magic. Alice [Notley] once told me that she believes in doing elementary human things, like having children, and I think writing is one of these old human practices. It is an attempt to be active in the midst of existing—active in meaning-making anyway. And of course it is an activity that involves a certain amount of passivity, or not exerting oneself—the great paradox of creation. A way to build a nest within the always moving stream of consciousness, to capture and still

the self, or not self?, at that moment, to see how the self is built by language, which is yet just another analog of the mysterious writing process. All the ways that poets conceive of their practices, and have throughout time, seem paltry and reductive metaphors for this basic human desire to shape reality through language.

And in this way maybe writing is a way out of—or through—the Culture of Death, as you termed it, because it is constructive and active work, like the bird who weaves a nest out of discarded, cast-off materials around herself, a work of living, a living work, even if the bird uses scraps of shroud. So for us poets, it is important. For the Culture of Death, however, I am not so sure. I have no idea if there is a real place for poetry within our culture anymore, since poetry will never really be able to fit into a corporate model (at least I hope it never will!). Is this because it costs nothing to write as long as you have paper and a pen, or a memory even? But the thing that is hard to swallow is that there is no bridge between our culture's need for poetry, (which became clear after 9/11's hundreds of poems tacked up all over NYC) and its actual living existence as an art form, as a practice that needs to be supported and paid attention to. Poetry is not a product for consumption but poets do need material support to keep creating their work. A dilemma.

A week or so ago Anselm [Berrigan] brought home a documentary about kestrels from the library—filmed in Sweden and without any dialogue. It follows a family of kestrels for a year and shows what they see; since their nest is in an architectural detail of a church and faces a well taken-care-of graveyard, they see people enter the frame to be buried, to parade, to marry, to shovel, to plant, to water, to walk the dog. The rock gardens around the tombstones are raked white pebble, like Abstract Expressionism, yes, but in the video you hear the repetitive and meditative sound of the rake across the stones. The birds watch and listen, on their own clock, in addition to hatching and then feeding their family of 6 young kestrels. What do they see when they see people? What is the use of human ritual? What kinds of rituals do birds have? Did you see that article in The New York Times about the scientific discovery that birds are way more intelligent and creative than previously thought? My parrot likes to ring his bell in the morning to wake us up—one of his many daily rituals. I don't

know what it is to love a fox but I imagine it is no different from loving a person. I can't even picture a time when people roamed with the animals, but so many of the bedrock aspects of interpersonal relationships are the same for creatures everywhere—in herds, bevies, flocks, packs, families. Have the basic emotional realities of our lives evolved that much over time?

I am reading Edgar Allan Poe right now and thinking about imaginative decadence. Part of his excess is his insistence on a kind of absolute logic and reason, even in the no-man's-land of poetic composition. In his famous essay "The Philosophy of Composition" he lays out step-by-step the mental journey of connections in his writing of the poem "The Raven." I'm not sure I buy it. He details the same kind of mental stepping stone documentation process in his short story "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" where one character guesses another's train of thought and appears to read his mind through logical deduction. Poe makes reason and logic as magical and decadent as he makes madness. Or are they the same thing?

My world looks like this:

“clack” the summer parallel’s
fine layer of shag
sticks,
breaks the eggshell
(speckled red containers,
head full of stars)
of merely
circulating
(citified yolk state)
schedule of buildings
sections condense, ease
dimension at that
dusk, immaculate opening of corners

You DO have a thousand arms!

Love,

Karen

from Letters To Poets--see page 234 for Editors' Note

from Job

now There was a day

now There was a day

now There was a day

there the murmuring was

leaves turned

red and flat

his goat feet towed on

each hair read hair

he said from walking up and down

on it / nine, eight, nine ft / said he

from going to and fro hairyly

, hairyly he

& ants reeks lizards

in-

curs

king

/ snakes

platter wield

plea /sings

your(s) whole whorl about

well

springs

LETTER TO A FRIEND

Ayns, which is not only Infidelity and Idol
worship, but also a Negligency or Contumacy against
the best of the Works of God.

fasting

Theoretical

The world now Casts in the Air
on Earth; and he who leave

Structures here

such, that I could not

be self; most If a man we

of ushers, or to be an other
trustself is every Man unto himself,
whether any would exchange
himself for another, or become another Man.

Being at home and abroad

Methy deluded for the

world, and health the human
apprehend as Methy

tempt of the World wrought

well understand

there

o satisfies usages Men

the stream of our

unite

to make our selves

equally as we may

separate

unto the rigor

of our Being

Not to

dissolve

Thirst long

scarce

approach the

human , as not to be

may be

torrest in it

Before the lewd
Came the light
 before the
 post
 came the
 letter
before the came
the letter was lewd
 before the
 post
came the light

from The Islands

“Who writes here? Is it just the tourists?”

graffiti on a bathroom stall door, Inismor, Ireland

I. *The Third Remove*

here
is a variety
of begetting:

the accuséd wytch >

II. “I thought

this was my I was
home” none could jar
or spill <

III.

started like a guilty thing
as in
the least bee
that brew in

as a bee with a grete pearl
whereas others with-

IV.

out turned inside <
“I thought you were all my...” >
m o n s t e r h e a r t
be- gotten

V.

not made

means

(what)

if you change the bedsheets (with) on Friday,
the devil has control of your dreams for a

week

to

dis-

order

then re-

(tender)

guard it so

VI.

labor is a chant

reversed

embrace

(by)

In The Matter Of On The History Of One Dame Alice Kyteler
And Some Et. Al

calling out

by one and one

VII.

names

Alice Kyteler

Alice, wife of Henry the Smith

each and every body

Annota Lange

Eva de Brounstoun

part

Helena Galrussyn

s of their from

John Galrussyn

the soles of their feet

Petronilla de Meath

to the top of their head

Robert de Bristol

William Outlawe

Sarah, daughter of Petronilla

Sysok Galrussyn

and then

William Payn of Boly

Robin, Son of Artis - the Devil

at this end

would blow the candles out and say

fi:

fi:

fi:

amen.

itself it is erasable

refrain:

do I see what they

VIII.

was

back then

whipping of servants was allowed

for

IX.

or rather

Dame Alice fled

instead

her maid for her

d. 3 November 1324

in

X.

time

if in

your countrie

warres you
chance to dye
That is my
bed to

...pretending
to pre
tension
does
not
unmake
its existence
as in

XI.

Tourism As Captivity Narrative

XII.

without
boundaries
reverse embraces tie yet

un-take
>Petronilla The First<

(tender)
ever to be burnt
at the stake in Ireland
(italicized)
(just) because (in) (case)

you can kill your neighbors by

looking

I. The Fourth Remove

In the Country
Life Museum:

mourning for a

living
next to

tailors teachers store
clerks fishermen etc.

for

II.

display

first

a history of

the land

wars

man

trap

reach out
(but do not)

touch

III.

then (invented) elsewhere...

but here still work we had to eat...

fished
out

a living

men

IV.

from water

the patterned sweaters they wore were worn
in case of... if

the sweater washed ashore
the family

by surrounded

-ness you mean
surrounds

death to answer him

V.

that does not

Here.
Stop.

VI.

there exists

our dream that

the stream the dead hold home dreams

of us after

The

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

Dead: What is this appearance you see? Stop.
The Dead: Sometimes like

a hog sometimes
a great dog. Stop.

The Dead: What did it say to you? Stop.

spores, seed & root [3 eclogues]

1. begin & cease, to doubt

] I in the hinge [

weedless concrete & the softclicking louvred billboard

] statues, fountains, palm trees

]

(now again, trees)

greener than grass

cheerful prosthetics in the atmosphere of logo

] exhausted

] accidental

]

beauty

] .ordinary melodramatic.the melodramatic ordinary. [

nostalgia is another name for]

] hurrying after it

alive

] I moving about [unrolled

peeling an orange in El Salvador

] a macho guerilla fighter

the VP

of standard oil saying

] she or he

Cixous

in an ermine coat] a minor disaster of static

] the adjective deflects violence from the attention of the noun [

like Niagarafalls, or honeymoon [

]

the ozone smelling of violets

]

] plastic bags in concrete trees

]

]

unmappable

]

]

clouds

] the clayey smell of sun wounding wet concrete

]

] the hollow

twang of cheap champagne

a plastic heart strung on fishing wire [
]

& look there goes
a sparrow transplanting soil
]

2. o spare o spare o spare o

] nostos [

first, she must kill the house the sacred
]
]

story ermine as emancipation
embedded in landscape
]
]

become nobody's child owe no one nothing

]
sign/ on the dotted line

a match burning in a crocus

] a sparrow flies downslope the Pizza Hut

]

]

in the hollow twang of neon

]

magnified shrapnel of interior sound

a housewife letting her wings down

] & virginia she stands there letting the words fall [

]

on/off, yes/no

]

like spring melt splosh the soft syllables

hotdog & orangesoda spill from the vendor's lips

if by yes/ you mean

]

]

ceasing to recognize herself:

crippled swings swagger from cowboy hats

turned inside out, emptied

]

then it was spring:

or no, it was winter

ending

]

a duet in which there is no dominant gesture hopelessly mocking
the ones who truly believe

traffic hums, a sparrow struts with a peanut

falling is easier

] yes

a matter of gravity

]

flesh unfurls

strangled [in the overlap

at the end of another scrapedout [

with merchandise agog

] you emerge from the photobooth with

]

] yourself in triplicate

]

breathe in breathe out

not knowing [the difference

] honks scatter like hailstones the sky tears away

a piano plunges in the left margin

]

]

] facts

coming loose [from Styrofoam cups

] in the spray of red halogen [

flesh & bone smasht to atoms

] spring [

raking the asphalt & gurgling

] in the ruts

]

there is something missing

something like a wing] some fragment

] the crow's black eye on a white triangle

torn from envelope

]

]

3. turn

] subject of regret and absurd as well on the face of it [

] one hundred twenty pounds of melodramatic] ordinary

] masquerading as heroic

] feminine subject onomatopoeic intransitive
dotted lines bone structures

dissolving

]

]

into landscape

] freshly bulldozered

childsafe [with an abstraction] she

in a velour hat & spider veil, the once-blush [of a past

which possibly had [ceased to exist

] as a present before entering

the present tense

] looking at] like [what

shall I [say how is the truth to be [said

believe me I [

] scorned as timber, beloved of the sky [
what merits celebration[

in the going which is always one

foot in front of the other [`] panacea of same old

grafting landscape [

] into psychology

] you dont look old

]

]

] well I dont look] my age

] well you dont want to look

18 again do you [

]

]

] stilletoed spaghetti strapped bare backed

girlhood is a dying economy [

] happily comes into the world & there it is

Constance Witherby's statue disappearing
in snowdrift

shadows dropping from mailboxes [

] a moment of accelerated

hellbent

]

] flush with the curb

] the body comes undone [& spill:

right side lower arm raise arm bend knees repeat on left [

]

look,

like this line, breaking

even as it falls

a city bus says we'll pay you to read this ad

a severed hand blinks in treeshadow

sorry,

Eve said, to be a woman

]

]

ferrying corn on the hoof now pigs in a barrel

the Swanson man lifts a finger, honks

palimpsest of cut

adrift, alone (meat draped

] over bone

1

sing,
son, the
innumerable hurled down

dogs & all
wingéd
strife &

variance

bore
upon
the
far-darting
towards where
ever they belong

2

by a dream
of the assembly
the hosts
to him winged
ships
speed
the wide
halls divided, cross

ambrosial
his head

3

were arrayed, each company
shouting unto birds,
as when
fleeing of winter

in early morn
breathing mist

dust-clouds
across the

plain.
The biting
iguana
eager at heart
wearing upon his shoulders
a bronze head
challenged
the multitude

4

and wardeth off
and held
on the golden floor
beside the other thought
aroused
between the foes
the city
murmured
anger, and she spake:

at
rusted stars
amid the
glittering oceans

“Hold
“hold
“what you can
think Of
“Truth, and Beauty
“Forgive the Rest

“But
“Don’t
“You
“Forget about me

*

like a moon. Like
shape
after asking

itself. What it was

was a

(not even
(There,
(but having been
(once

blood staining an ellipse
in
his gym shorts

*

But why
confess to just
one thing

...

Sing,
son
sing the

he ad
HOME

...

Before the
U N I O N
, amid company

gets you

...

Is all it needs is

time
emits
might
(upon the centipedes

and shaking keys
framed
dark amid window

Sing, son, a song of wet
oreo left behind
the car, a crushing
silence

in the film without a gun

Intangible sequence in a second
a sequined emotion in
early
color
home
Moviola
patterns
where you appear from –
Voila! Sheets
dry

in rain, the simultaneous shut
and open of all doors

The screwed in
light
threadseat
matinee
backrow

from where, we
head home

she hands them
over to me

the car sags
all the way up in the rain
as if knowing that perch
atop the hill
No good mail comes
this way
today

..

Gray dog looks my way from
green lawn day off in
afternoon rain
where no good mail comes
still thankful
most of it

.

& the just remembered
think I left my Samuel R. Delany
universe on yr kitchen table
with cherries promised
would keep me on my way
wherever that was
a month ago now a dream

*

Of a large book
store discovered just down
road next town over
from old red house

resembles Denver's Tattered
Cover (i.e. not two-thirds
a continent away) – high
ceiling misty in dust light

one reserves for some
place – old Europe? Asked
where Poetry might be

the roof – pulses – as

if to come right off
releasing us to rain –
girl leads – familiar
as though could be

young in love & move-
ment slightly restrained
inside yellow slicker – Here
between Romance & Current

Affairs– explained – just there
rounded corner. A hard beat
of real believing heart woke – I
still believe it real,

any morning

....

Be patient I'm
sorry

heard
from phone talk up

stairs, softly
as in a fielder's
choice

.
Gaps between
gasps
in laughter

“senior moments of time

...

by the way we

just merged
companies

I'd say
we're in for long

joy-

o-

us night
that slips

over,
onto
day

The magic is in
the tapes,

In the poem “The Painters,” on page 30,
the last line has been omitted.
It should read:

unpacking my heart with words.

...

Yet still it came out
the way
it was supposed to:
Hair beneath tape

That fastened
those words packed
onto our musics
books & beneath

arms carried out

.

Outside the metal Buddha stolen from New Hampshire restaurant one snowy quick night hard to get away from that karma driver's blind now statue points tree protested against cutting down I mean naturally it's only right thing to do right trim & magestik sits a birdhous in mouth proud & slim between us & sea they say the old kids hated it anyway he (stolen points there only there times I can't be there, there are times & many more trees snowy nights mouths & seas oh

well to begin
Again and still
came out the way
it was supposed

. . .

5

And now to

flame unwearying
star

of Ocean. flame

from his head and shoulders;

These two separated

and went out

against

The ground

near
his
far - shadowed

back; his hand

between the nipples

left the beautiful

dare

from kopernik : “this little point around itself”

bk 1 :

-centric, having one or several or many. the curve, the usual course of the eye. a child, with a sort of bolshy-hat, swinging a bucket of water—the evidentiary super-8 (let ABC be a hemisphere). although illogical, we do sometimes center around & are working on a better understanding—as if the water were heavier than itself, than the curvature of the land allows. since we generally measure time itself by the number of days, you have been in nature for 2. those which are farther away seem to move more slowly (here's looking at Euclid), etherealized, with lack of parallax. it all becomes vast when we speak in these terms. the eclipse struck through, it still took 43 years to make the index verboten. the whole visible, this side facing you. but they say that outside there is no body, no place, no empty space, in fact nothing whatsoever—in that case it is remarkable indeed if something can be restrained by nothing. & my belief in the fictitious force, as it were, is apparently a common error— inert, & gravity as nothing but a natural striving. one should not base one's understanding of physics on one's experience with amusement park rides (do you want to go faster ? do you want to go backwards ? do you want to go faster & backwards ?). here I find inertia comprehensible. even volvelles. the body (my own) by habit or nature & phased in relation to. without let or hindrance, it is not flat, nor is it drum-shaped, nor like a bowl, nor in

any way hollow, nor is it cylindrical—but rather in the most capacious of shapes, the one that can repeat a previous state of affairs. if, then, one goes to sleep excited for morning, one is insisting upon morning. wandering & fixed, equal & unequal—such a small spot is not easily seen, here in the higher apsis, as in to fasten. interposed, it describes a smaller circle. every visible object has some limit of distance, otherwise it would always remain summertime or wintertime & I would know you by your preference. less surface. I think we recognize one another by now.

therefore there is more than one center you'll have to imagine
this quarked if only we face the facts (as they say) squarely care-
ful marks on the page, in columns, I think they are numbers this,
then, is the table clockwise westward orrery I have taken your
circumference— & placed it carefully in a book circumambient
(brilliantly nimbed) & cantilevered

I see you woke up in your hairshirt today (small lexical
mercy) this one can safely assert about distance :

Toledo is too far to go for a cash bar

bk 2 :

let all these intersect : autumn, horizons, the appropriate lengths of midday shadows, easily shown in a convex triangle. which all depends on what one means when one says ‘day.’ here I find inertia comprehensible. a break in the lately general know-nothingism. negotiate the breaking lately day— & whether by ‘day’ one means from sunrise to sunset or from first light to lamp-lighting, & if so, what does one mean by dark, & how distance functions in darkness. how appropriate lengths function in darkness & how midday functions in autumn. how inertia functions at midday, appropriately, & in darkness— & how one might forecast that. let all of these appropriately intersect. where it is not appropriate, let them rather act like horizons & recede. let them disorb one another. let them first find an orbit, the circles & their names. you are a little world made cunningly, sallycinnamon. it’s defunct satellite dish season—the season of the very first leeks. cider & mud, guttapercha & quarter-peck, seasonal lag & glottochronology. the rest of us cast shadows in one direction, toting around darkness cut to size. in this way light is not so much depicted or represented as it is discovered, or uncovered in some unexpected (dare one add) untidy spot. for the eye everywhere assumes that it is the center. the well-rehearsed landscape & its form in memory. limbs punctuated with rain & color. & there are other uses of

limbs— circumstances of enjambment.

this is the shortest distance between 2
points as is this

we kicked up a partridge & then
all manner of birds (geese, crows,
&c.) gossiped after

the arc marked between the 2 shadows summer & winter
will be found

how kopernik made the best of a bad bargain :

employ the most subtle the
most elegant the most flattering
conventions

in this particular
capitulation is the
entire history of
surrender

bk 3 :

done my head in (again again). consequently, if we divide the motion & the time, the entire history of surrender will take the position of maximum slowness. is it reflexive— or is it a thing done to you ? stick ham-fisted into the rotten, inert cosmos. a flexible cipher, a round shadow, truant fragment. isn't it mathematically pretty to think so ? otherwise it would come about that the part was greater than the whole. how distance functions in darkness— the selvage of my first sleep, initiated from the rising of the little dog. the stars are left behind.you & I begin in a small space, the between. weather inside, waiting to happen. an ennui reverie (I wasn't here all week. did anything important happen ?). as if the earth were at rest. lonesome, fugato— a frayed edge. stet. again the year has turned out to be unequal. it has heavy parts, boy parts, bright green parts. because the distance is so small it seems that they are equal. literally : travelling companion. a charmed life, startime in nightair. his sleep breaks for nothing. about which more hereafter. fixed configuration. sitting in the physick garden, outside a beautiful building (from a time when they built beautiful buildings for the care of the poor)— believe it or not, this is something like belief. a hand on the forehead, 1000 hands— I mean, this can't really be how things work. let ab be a great circle round the universe, the usual course of the eye. the rejection

of certainty with certainty. in the library basement, that area of copy known as the halftone, since where practical work is concerned, examples make things clearer—in pointillist grays, aphetic. this weakness for an episodic narrative, its unexpected slowness—for in this way it will neither take up excessive space nor seem cramped by too much brevity. cunningly a little world. Ptolemy indeed where he understood that the irregularity was simple. all of this is familiar. oyer, the terminus of this process. disorb & fall & keep falling.

how distance how capitulation how
circumference how the position of
maximum slowness

(heavier than the curvature of the land the usual
course of the eye) did anything happen ?

examples make things clearer
the selvage of my first sleep like twixt or wayward or tansy or lone
this process & its unexpected slowness

I would know you by your preference

this little point— (the universe
squeezed into a ball) (what noodles
I would make for you)

excerpted from the serial poem of the same title...

(nevertheless enjoyment

of the word)

Slumps in the middle where history is. That weight long ago.
An initial utterance, whereas it may be forgivable, remains
irretrievable. You were placed by the fall of its shadow on you.
A blanket already thick with the years ahead. Or beside you, a
penumbral mist. This is a life, I can tell you. However coated it
may already be before you emerge within it.

of a stray black hair)

Left behind and stuck to the yellow flannel sheet. Curled and
small and mildly wiry, it might hail from anywhere: back, nose,
leg, ass, toe. I pin it to a page with clear tape and mark the date.

in a forkful of mussel)

Fed across the table. Speared then carried—an idea—to my mouth. Someone else would let the sauce drip, or push the whole plate instead. Behind your gesture is a humid landscape punctured by verdigris spires and cars going all to hell. There are women older than their mothers were when first babies were born, and men content at last with second wives. Behind your gesture is a small town. Its inhabitants arrive in the telltale raiments of a posse, and they love to tell you what to do. How to prepare an egg. Where to put your stubborn appetite for affection.

in aiding your every desire so that I may become it)

My hands cupped around your hands cupped around your match fighting off a March wind damp on rue Sainte-Catherine to light your cigarette. We're lost. I don't smoke.

in an image of you rising from the smoke of a burning mosquito coil)

This whole portion of your cheek was not shadowed. I found its expanse difficult to render in convincing bounding lines. Something kept appearing then claimed to be missing. I walked across that section. Its white a shade of faded blood orange when placed, side by side, on the same deflated down-pillow as my own cheek, tepid and the color of a garbanzo bean. That part I left alone. Not a blur, but a lie. Because I did not know what to put there, I put nothing. I walked across that section. Paced as if my steps could better guess content.

and disremembered words)

These lie in chains just beneath your skin. Consult them as if running your finger through the grime layered plasti-glass covering a subway map. They are as unknown to you as the connections at Carroll Gardens.

knowing how)

Some secretive shy birds must be flushed out. Flying away, you catch a glimpse. You get a clear shot. Some species of birds you see only when they are dead.

of the tracks)

Let's look at worn. Let's look at distortion. Let's look at sizes, at numbers, at repeating. Let's look at direction, at direction, which direction. Let's look at beside them. Let's look at sliding off to the side, the slurring of edges. Let's look at what it is, what it was.

Let's look at residue. Particulates. Intentions. What was meant. What you meant to do. Let's look at going. Let's look at talking. Articulates. Inertia. Let's look at facts. Let's look at looking. At together. Look together. Keep looking. Let's look at it. Reminders. Remainders. Let's look at looking, and a tolerance. To have one. Let's look at seeing. What particulars. What they are. Then say them.

in the morning, and the sweat broke around 3:30)

Now become one of those who slip away without saying. Find a sock and an earring. In the dim light, the red shadowed brown bare light of pre-dawn. Through the parts already there. There are a few things already there. Over there. A laundry pile. Over there a book. Open, face down. Now become one of those. Find boots and a sweater. Who slip them on without waking. You sleeping. Slip them on in the dim, in the color of a flower part. A sepal. Red sepal. Papers and photos. Find my things and put them on. Find things. The unfamiliar scrawl of a handwritten note. The wherewithal to slip away in a dim light.

in an other word for it, namely, pomegranate)

She isn't rose-breasted at all but deeply striped, white and brown and big as a robin. And she isn't her name, with birders in pursuit of the unequivocal male.

Holding the emblem of thought

From time to time, small intimacy murmurs
saying, “buy a ticket” while the flood lights merge;
tonal consistency allows us an inexhaustible renaissance,
or is it instinctual delivery
as mixed metaphor for synaptic success?
One doesn’t shape what one pays for
One pays for the ability to tell—
what? Protean is the thing saying
only on loan from one’s skepticism—
each word changes us
holiday swimmers exchanging our rapture
for corrupted or half-corrupted souvenirs
from the moment. Just a moment—
then nothing. Forget your need in the
feckless song of it, still,
the day would incline savagely,
the pyramids will pink up the mantle,
time and pricing and physical exertion
fall away from the tradeshow aftermath
leaving only the falling off
of the elegy as tie itself—
Forget your head
and its ecclesiastic bawdy greatness
Be no country episode in the
daily argument with speaking
Leaf through the puns of our shared musical scope
It’s small, the moment of opening between us
and I will meet you here without fail

Unstop the shuttered thing

For once the set piece of a ship on water
marks its own traveled distance
on the sounds that neither toil nor spin
strange and extra-corporeal
Would that our inwards could contain us
in reverie though not in shape
from the expanse of being launched
in time. A naturalist classifies
the humility of the conscious surface:
our looking is list-making too
abiding memory box that knows no
means of locomotion but registers
the textile fabrics of life
There is no scale to mark your view
or make it unhurried with resonance

Amid the weathercocks

Perfect buoyancy is a great debt
after the diffuse other side lifts
back into deep electricity, possibility
spooling away in its pathos and what is left
is solidified life, sudden victim of marvelous
atmospheric effects; animal with totipotent

handiwork;

help me I said with
shudder air in the basilica,
the source which is a haunted tune
that certain pathos to the life of electricity
returning, perforce, and then your body,
(doorframe qualified as earthquake)
speaks to another without
your thinking it, a trader in cryptic intelligences
before the mind makes itself first

Ode to Maggots as the Devil's Head Lice
with His Refusal Not to Wear a Top Hat & Tails
and Blow Cigar Smoke Rings at Your Funeral

Spit stuck to your neck
is the ice puzzle of our “starry dynamo”.
Pull the orange plug from the sky
& watch day drain black
or put one hand up to the X-ray moon
& see mammoth-tusk skeleton
crying from round rafter to dirt-splayed toes
that you've never had two sips of spice tea
over brims of white-veined china
then blown steam through a chuckle.
Smell of poppy seed on fire.
Wafted hum white over lilacs
that's a drum in your gut
or your daddy saying something ain't
right downtown & downtown
is right here right now
only after a good look around.
He always told you swimming
that black pond at midnight was a little like dying:
still as a bead of water on polished onyx
and the Devil lurking somewhere in the tide.
You knew it was the hiss & rattle,
wet tooth-flash on a hollow seam
& cold slap on your right calf,
felt like black & white cartoons
with a foot full of flame-lit matches.
Fat line of red Gehenna
climbing toward the face momma gave you
the day you sucked that first cool
breath after nautilus dreams.
First thing you thought

was the last thing you ever wanted:
if living is the way rain begins,
as a recollection of cumulus,
then dying is a lungfull of blizzard glass,
chiseled stars over your permanganate corpse
like maggots tucked neatly
into the Devils toupee.
They don't do no one any favors
& don't ask them twice.

Bad Karaoke

Deals with the Devil only burn if you ain't him.
I remember him, slow-drip soaked from an angry cloud,
lugged size 12's over a beam of cracked sunrise
caught in mornings maw like a stuffed rag.
Slipped the window of an open-mouthed GTO
swallowing orange peel flames,
moon cussin on glint recon, engine kicks
like a Geiger counter arcing critical.

I imagine him a river delta of veins
with a glycerin smile, leaned
over my mother & whispered:
Honey, if you're the tip in the metronome
I'm slow-motion autumn
running from another winter's breath.
You're the way sand drinks sweat,
leaves a Nazca brine along my temples.
I am gonna walk my fingers along your throat
careful like a praying mantis
& leave you beneath a lake sweep of winter glass
with an air bubble caught in a hollow scream.

That night he was the wax moon at witching hour

& she, full blown solstice sun opening my shut eyes.
Their bad karaoke stuck in my head
like a ragtime chuckle with a switch hit coda,
the banjo played in the corner of a bayou dream.

12th Hour

A muskrat wearing pearls of singing bees!
Ben shouts, silent-lips “Isatine Blues”
backward in a eyelash flurry.

He punched out & landed here after razorblade
sand dunes had him hip deep in a talc Nirvana:
depressurize a nasal passage-
the sky splits timbers, eyelids marble
and fill with the flash of an ax.

I know he's boiled the city yellow in the leveling,
night still weaving with the days memory,
elephants curtsied in formation at midnight,
liver spot high on the evening's forehead.
There's valor in rivulets of kerosene
over whiskied words. Robe a paisley whirlwind,
he spins in real-time. I remember when he took the ultraviolet
train to pidgin dreams, parallax autumn painted latent
faces into a jagged wall of speak. Synchronized mouths
a kettle of crows caught in a thresher.

They give him methadone.

His body rides the escalator from ocean floor
with hypnotist hand-signs & faultless rhythm of the therapist
is a steady line of speech that brought him back to “life”.
They strap him down to the blank cot. Spittle on
his cheek. Cinch each restraint.
I was never here, but I'll come back.

When the symphony stops, when the music's gone.
What do I want? The violin that frisson's a low C
as corn-caught wind clapping his shirt against
our shared canoe, when oars dipped in black Ohio water curve
moon as raw uncut onyx takes light.
The way stars take prayer.
The color of his eyes in the 12th hour.

Magician's Box: Sonnet

On the prairie wind licks up dust
like a dry blue tick hound. Sun pounds dirt-lanes
into mint-grass the length of the lazy sideways sky.
This is the place you bring her. When she wears the dress
of noise, hair a fog on her shoulders, stands in the same place
twice to make a shadow. No wings, clouds as blanched caverns.
And you knew right then you'd be no more forever; nobody told
on death as the magicians box,

you slip-out the trap door,
crumbly earth.
Two dimes for the boatman & back to the flowermines,
rode the coal cart deep to the cave where the sun sleeps,
an emanation of tangerine blues pulsing as a cut of rubies.
Women here have toucan pickaxes & waxing butterfly eyes.
Rock is ruffled fly chitin, slick with the liquid of her absence.

You, Image Unheard

are the last thing I'll ever see.
Outside Brady's Pub in Lansing
where Ben use to drink, where a tornado
savaged alley beams through every one of us like a sheen-lit

river tied in a sailors knot, wound
around earthy breasts.
The cosmos coughed; I whipped
around, thought I was being followed
to the secret hole in the horizon

I use to slow-crank sunrise from a paper bottle.
Found a hangman's noose instead,
where tooth-ground prayers or a kick
to the clouds is the dead kiss
goodnight on your ruddy sons forehead.

That sacred blackout.

A voice said: don't fool yourself,
when the flies come like Z's at midnight,
remember, they're born as bumps
on God's tongue. One long lick & line em up,
maple slats in the granite boardwalk,
parallel bones burnt & bleached from a century under
Devil's dirty eyeball.

Ben's opal finger prints up & floated away.
Only thing left is a rip of red hair
and a skeleton smile you take home to show mom

from *Aid*

Fool's Gold

Confound society with government and surrender two evils preferable to all others. A thousand motives will excite timber.

Some convenient tree will divide the whole into convenient parts. How impious is exalting the attention of creation, a national delusion!

Plain arguments have no other preliminaries than to divest the point of a pin from tender distinctions limited by the fires of passive tempers.

Every quiet method does this continent justice by always running small islands not capable of reversing ruin.

Allow the measure, and vary not in numbers but for the sake of leaving no advantage. Throw aside excellent maxims, however strange, and haunt necessity.

All's Well

Lost, that inveterate may have botched the worst material conditions. Necessity demands a tiny number of legally curious misdeeds set out to discover America.

These insulting plays assiduously flatter stupidity. Be careful not to joke no matter what cluster of grapes wins out over the sum of the slightest whim sheltered from the bread of heaven.

A sneaking suspicion is blamed for these obvious weaknesses.

On the other hand, a certain number had no currency in finer moments, in death, elsewhere, in the kiss, at home, as a storyteller.

No trace of this disorder provokes laughter. Like it or not, everything could work out so well that the first white paper justifies wood made of glass.

No Rest for the Weary

Since the downfall of wanting, something bizarre may be adapted to worthless refuse. *Spinach is served*, I am afraid.

I gather food, supposing I had to get out of a boat, failing to keep cherries from stinging a tall stalk bedecked with blossoms.

Crude motives listen to perpetual changes. *I want nothing except for a phone out of order*. I beg for an attack against today's concert.

There is danger in having been there before. *Wading into water*, I question how a hat forms a road overgrown with worry.

Bric-à-Brac Yak

Bric-a-brac yak, water glistening in a spoon. Electricity costs money, but there is aloofness in the moon.

Taffeta washcloth quatrain fireballs.

The iron fetus of a milky arc flops on the ground oozing with eyes. Can anything be stranger than a landfill?

Yes. A landfill filled with land.

A lavish question crackling with implication. An apocryphal camera for the drug of a moment.

What is the radius of an appetizer? That would depend on the appetizer. The radius of caviar is measured in quantum waves. The answer varies from lump to lump. It is all one incision in jail.

The many annals of twilight have proved that a scooter can digest an earthquake in twenty minutes, and that September is the amperage of thirst. A bric-a-brac yak multiplied thirty trillion times results in reality. Reality is the opposite of bouncing. Anything that bounces does not have reality. There is no reality to a basketball if the basketball is bouncing. If the basketball is at rest, then the basketball has reality. It is real in its rubber. Real in its spine and geography. Engulfed in its seams. With veins of silver moving in and out. That is a real basketball. That is a quintessential basketball. A sphere of reverie lost among its dents.

30 pounds of verdure soaked in paradise lead to a different conclusion. Hail kissing the ground. Kerosene locked in a fire. Paint on a bumper. A bric-a-brac yak steeped in its molecules. Its happy, radiant molecules, incremental and bright like a syntax crawling through its jewelry.

Faucet gouache. Archaeology of a hoe.

The calculus of morality is more complicated, like an armada scorched by a raging queen, the queen of ecstasy, loud as a mastodon howling with fluids.

Thankfully, the elevator is quiet. It is a walk-in closet going up and down the spine of a television lily.

These words have been soaked in science and cannot tell you that a horse whisperer is a piece of fiction. An ogre in rags, head bowed under the weight of a reverie. A dream of oneself immersed in skin. A lake crackling in its gravel.

Daydreams appear to be mostly epicurean. Laundry flapping on a line of poetry. This is why I permit the formation of images though they must be chained to the pasta or the passport will lose its validity. What passport you shout in a moment of panic. The passport on which has been impressed the image of a yak.

A bric-a-brac yak. With the lamentable tail of an ellipse jingling with calculus.

Limousine of Ice

Here I am in a limousine of ice. That's me with the green hat. I am filled with the chemistry of hope, but I have misinterpreted it as yearning, which is why I look clairvoyant, crackling and corybantic.

That's me in a jeep being chased by a blemish, and that's me as a beaver building a den in a river in north Ontario. You can't see me because I am in the den. You can't see me because I have assumed a different identity, an identity different than the one I normally inhabit, the one that awaits me when I awake in the morning, soft and disordered, the identity I've been dragging around for some years now, the identity I have grown used to, so used to, in fact, I can do it in my sleep, I can do it without magnification or makeup, do it without rehearsals and mirrors, which puts me at license, license to be anything I want, a parolee, a snob, a man in a top hat, a question mark, a pair of shoes, a sprig of asparagus, a creature from the black lagoon, dripping and wet, getting muck all over the carpet.

Today I am a beaver. Tomorrow I will be something else.

There I am as a tornado in a pharmacy looking for a bar of soap. I am not popular. I am causing destruction and panic.

That's me as a janitor in a lighthouse. I look sad because I am cleaning things. Cleaning things is always sad, because deep down we know they looked better when they were dirty.

Dirtiness is a human concept.

Dirt is a dirty concept.

That's me combing my hair. I am using a loaf of bread instead of a comb because underneath all that hair is a skull, and the skull is my skull, which will one day find its true anonymity, the anonymity it craves, which will be an idiom of dirt and ash. That's me as an idiom of dirt and ash.

And here I am as a ghost, haunting the end of a prose poem, this prose poem. I am ectoplasm. I am a slithering extension of ectoplasm. Yearning and ruefulness and ectoplasm.

There I am with a gate on my forehead. The gate leads to oblivion. An oblivion immersed in eternity and stars. Bright glimmering stars. The kind of stars you find outside the limits of the city.

There I am playing a guitar with the Rolling Stones. They all look a little irritated because I cannot actually play a guitar.

Here I am writing a poem. This poem. Which is a limousine. A limousine of ice. Ice I have carved from nothing. Carved out of the air. The imponderable air. Which is cold. Must be imagined as cold. So it can be ice. Ice and wheels. Engine of ice with icy pistons. Pistons of ice going up and down. Axle of ice going round and round. That's me. Me behind the wheel. A wheel of ice. Fingers of ice. Thumbs of ice. Eyes of ice. Alone in the ice of this. This ice. This marvelous ice. This limousine of ice.

Ancient Jukebox Blues

The jukebox has become an anachronism chilled in the history of reptiles. Blood encrusted on a scapula. Emotions colored by life in a swamp. These conclusions, however, are based in a personal bias, a showdown vast as the triumph of legs. There is more declaration in black than in green. Therefore I choose black to make my cake. This is the cake. This takes the cake. This cake is your cake. This cake is my cake. This cake is a tripod of sparkling intuition. Speculations wobbly as the wattle on the chin of a rooster.

I am that rooster. That little red rooster too lazy to crow for day.

Look instead for the persuasion of glass, the perception of color.

There is humor in a taillight and a kangaroo in the river. Beauty in sand and scripture in salt. Lift in lofts and quartz in clocks.

Let's pull some things out of the garage. Things that thump against the wall. The blood of a violin, behavior as it comes to its identity in the long slow flow of the opera. Because such philosophy demands it. Because there is a shed out back full of old highway signs. And because I enjoy the velocity of moss. There are sparks between the avenues and gargoyles in all the oysters. The combustibility of engrossment is systematically vulgar. Why? Because all the knots available in books require time. Time to do them. Time to undo them. Time to tie them. Time tied up in knots.

I feel a chill on my shoulder. It is the ghost of a song. The ghost a song that has languished many long years in the jukebox. The jukebox that launched these glands, this newsprint yapping at an octopus. A frightful octopus whose tentacles are long and

supple. And over there is a man doing pushups. And over there are horns and caterwauls. Flavors and cream. Happy idioms. Inexplicable moods. Salt and lungs. Beauties in the sand obdurate with mirth.

Look at the way this paragraph moves itself thump by thump. Word by word. It is a fetus in a cold kangaroo. It is you. It is me. Wading through a garden of intricate marvels. The interior of a suitcase. Money in summer. A bureau of beards.

And here comes the teak king. The king of teak. He wears a fedora full of scars and a scale of latitude all bleats and shins. His hair is red like the scarlet of scorn. There are currents in his blood turning mechanical power to electrical power. He strides among the beauties and declares himself a rooster. Too lazy to crow the day. But sufficiently energetic to pound a fetus of thought into an apparatus of segment and zone, a cafeteria zest, a highway crunch. A rhinestone wattle in the light of a dying sun. A 45 dropping down to its needle. Its marvel of languish. Its barking dogs. Its nervous hope. Its nobility in chrome.

The Tale End

A ghostly hand inside my head. All these thoughts but not my own. I am a radio short and stout. Signals from the deepest space. No idea how this began. A case of mistaken identity. Drank from that cold bitter cup. No-thing changed. The heart-land remained broken. Dust as far as the eye could see. A black-hole in the center of my chest. Beating.

Lips to her ear

Prayed for something else. A castle full of children. These knights are all the same. Their armor. Empty. Echoes from the deepest space. A table without end. No lightning but a knock. The dustbowl looms. Taking from each what each most needs. No-body darkens my door. The end is close at hand. Remember the stain of Mary's face. Our best linen turned to dust. Welcome to Angel Island. No-body on her beautiful shore.

Engine trouble

Shook The Tree. No knowledge came tumbling down. A great gift of snakes. Here today. Gone tomorrow. Naked as the day I was born. And then there was night. A dustbowl blown in. Drank from that cold bitter cup. The question remained. Un-answered. Voices in the other room. Mirror Mirror through the wall. Green apples fall like rain.

Offing the Cuff

Lantern ambiguities a lathered wedge,
incidentally. Retaining delayed congruency
suffices, fluent as the bright day brings
its own winged surface to play.

A taciturn fragment edged itself, burning
away from threats of truant surfaces
philandering in the main. An obtuse target
naked as its own revelation squandered
aching seedling, wonder sap snapping
pointless ignition targets. Concealed
where jointed aggression foreplay kneels
its battered hoof, amendment shattered
crustily as a magnate's torrid sledge.

Badgering the autonomic grating
that hedges along rooftop, sealant
enamored of acrid blessing charters
sunning, the morays of the land.

Whose art gleams electric as lighting, odes
indifferent tips to raincoat scholars
benched in the entrenching random fact
or diction emblem: pledging the chest
its undue crescent, or phenomenon
accruing lessons against the wind.

Its voiding ceremony, a tangential luster,
imbues sealant. Shed imposter agents,
corrosive daily affirmation schedules,
tilting liquid breathers to a space
at pace with themselves. As others
watch or swim, weather latches encumber
late radicals. Blooming valence tests
parching leather, hombres askance.

Particle domain ensured delivery status.
Unknown nuptial seeker at its last profit,
turning oval stitchery bonnet quagmires
before noon's impedance, croons its rushing
ballad. Among the crush of restive admirers

tilting their wills at windmill bonnets,
blowing haste against the flushed faces
tensed and slowly moving on, its wary moons
trace the stamp of legends lasting past
shadow's trace. Allayed, its latent fury
ambivalent to sonnet dredging or recompense,
incisions tantamount to incendiary gratitude
slur their derisive molecule ventures across
the seeds of slant invective, curling the lip
of vast overseers dead as their last proclamations.

Reluctant Revival

sacerdotal hombre muffler
liquidation transit
scrutiny an aquifer seeking
transfer unit station
testers questing vantage
option renewal seedlings

a sidelong muster felt
blue dividends mate hatred
work a blue venom trouser
fixation the game of the lawed
out where the thing plays
wing fingers tapping scuffle
allay the satyr's ledge
its fisticuff relayed as tranced verbiage
no cinematic transit fun intended
recipient dated valor card
presumption integrated somnolent
construction projects reptiled
to prudent scrutiny fingers
alleged structure points two
directional emblems as once
a rage of inveterate mustard farmers
lecturing vertical integration modules
on aquatic standards bearing no
resemblance in chance encounters

camping seedlings rampant
on the run or strictly carapace
lectures repronounced
its fractured sediments
pressing steam lease toward the water's edge
advantage ruin cluster must fix
ate on shrapnel butter sandwiched
reflections of a there time
faintly renewed in trembling

The Beef

Incremental recidivist lariats
forefront smell the collar
disjointed at the hip & jettisoned
the carried cargo faster than its
lack of name implied
or warranted misdeed incentive

carried out fast obligations
roped against the funnel wind
slashing humidors till pipes freeze
ancient cubicles where scholars
sit incumbent with the crones
who drone sad tales of witchery
unspelled as peanut's brittle armor
castigating the cuspidor hermits
for their high expectorations
of cattle vomit seeking beef
for making pronoun cement
a safe tea issue brewed to the bag
of the bus handles screaming rope
in catatonic revery smitten
with the delicate cacophony
whose ancient ears prattle
token memories of subways
and buses where lunch concealed
its daily repetition with hamburg stoppage

or litigant trophies their amulet
against speaking change
where dollars might accrue
spacial interests grouping
around the clock so cocksure
of rampant pastry accolades
the plummeting stills their past aquarium
faucet bleeding oratory's denial
where factories enact totem scriptures
their tactical ritual bid
whose factotums need not apply
lower standards to those
already a force

In Voluntary Confinement

The flamboyant vigor, its desuetude
anonymous sulfur, eats a slow fury
to the barker's omnivorous pitch.

A burn turned to rigorous chill,
the unwilling agonist endures,
turning to mirrors of past reflections.

Each inspection renews the rigor
of lost articles—glory, notoriety—
parsing them as past indefinite

or, equally, present indeterminate.

A sentence grows longer, its cells
calling for an equally certain parole.

Mission Accomplished

amniotic corsair vendors
elucidate transmission floozies
another molecular vernacular
whose electrolyte procurement
stratifies the content barrier

in the land of caste remarks
a brace upends the prophet

where hypnotic sensors
send their coarse air buttons
venting care to protocol protests
against catalytic carriers
bending nuance at the fray

the daily race depends on
stark brands lasting finishes

sending their erotic share
pancakes' spare sediment aches
perpendicular chants choosing
to ratchet fair equations
that gratify the carrier at bay

there the standard barer stands
exposed in the grace of its pose

(Name Withheld)

according to an official source,
according to [name withheld], a research company,
according to someone who spoke on the condition of anonymity,
according to a source close to the president,
according to friends and acquaintances who have known the
accused a long time,
according to a woman who did not wish to reveal her name,
according to a man who identified himself only as "Stumpy,"
according to documents obtained by this poem,
according to unidentified sources quoted in other media,
according to leading analysts,
according to industry experts,
according to a company executive,
according to industry insiders,
according to campaign staffers,
according to someone in a position to know,

Experiments in Spellchick

If you interrogate what happens in the psat, you well bee able to
predick the futour.

Her genus lies in the fat that her writing perfectly invects the
reeder in. [sic! dangling preparation]

Are you cop-dependent? Take these supple testes and keep track
of your scare.

It is rediculous to right this as prose. But the assay is paid more
than the verso.

If it

snot a prose

poom is

it less

xprinti-mental

avent guard

in no votive end

market able?

Dint be two heard in the yolks in charge. They ear gist weeping
the fits of their Labradors.

At My Belly and My Back

today it was emptiness
tinted with apprehension
brown skinned man
looked next to me
said he was hurt
knowing where my hands
where my lips go
he said he was hurt and I know
why which doesn't help when
where your lips go can
undermine any credibility
respect or likeability and
I have to know how he hurts
but my hurt is hard
too it's spurs in my belly
and my back so I can only sleep
balancing on a side
and not then either
I lay in between
the sheets in
between the wetness
of my blood
looking into the darkness
and listening for danger
hurting and waiting
for hurt to come for me
murdering me or just letting me
die for the shade of my lips
or where they go

D. / I. / Y. /

many small meals / no carbs / some nothing / less
war / skirmish / operation / attack / altercation / fight massacre
tragedy
metro / bi / homo / hetero / all / a
jogging / refugeeing / marathoning / fleeing / zoning / dying –
whatevering/
like ! / refugeeing / marathoning / fleeing / and then dying /
whatever!/
Bennifer elopes. / Jacko jailed. / Maybe./
war protest / operation attack / altercation / fight guerilla /
tragedy
Amazon / Dude Reade / Starbucks / Gap / Wal-Mart
Amazons' scandal / stock broke / gap wall marts.
Third term / marriages / consensual / sprawl / federal / reserve /
troops / ;what recession?
Security elopes. / Threat jailed. / Maybe
Granny home. / home / ? / Crazy aunties /
IdivorceyouIdivorceyouIdivorceyou /
Going home? / home. / Crazy Aunty. / I divorce you / I contain
you / I divorce you /
speed / date / solitude / celibate / bed / sex
third time marriages / consensual sprawl / federal reserved troops
/ what incision? /
cyber / inter / world wide / instant / mobile
cyber / inter / world weed / instant / futile
/ Globalized transnational cosmopolitans trade nation states
without sanction /
speedy solitude / so much for bed sex
rent stabilized / work welfare! / (/ minimum waged / socialized
security / tax cuts / ... /) /
work medicare / energy. / (minimum waged / socialized security /
tax cuts / ...)
Cancel that! / Cancel that. / cancel that. / please.
Globalized transnational politicians trade casualties without
sanction /
Value on sale / . / Shopping season / starts now:

votes on sale. / Polling season starts now.
Donkeys debate same / ; / Elephant blows horn / . / More gross
money / more net unemployment.
Cancel that / ! / Cancel that – more shredder please!/
Jammeh / Panday / backyard countries / ' / geography / , /
“western” world / wastes democracy / . /
Mexican / (/ backyard country's /) / geography “Western” /
immigrant democracy
unseasonably / warm / picket lines fall
Donkeys debate same Elephant. / More gross money / , / more
candidate unemployment. /
Hemlines, prices / up. / Monthly / payments up.
Monthly prices up / pet-care payments / out.
Harry Potter's / Hobbit / Matrix. / Reloaded. / 15.75 / with
popcorn.
unseasonably warm / ticket / lines crawl /
Test scores fail / . / Plagiarized papers hinder / grading inflation / ,
/ segregation break / . /
Negative action / More / . / knowledge? / Big heads
D. / I. / Y. / : / zines / blogs / self-recording / , / independent
release / for sale / by owner

The Births

Births are a special delight
in Wisconsin:
their decorative baroques, their colostrums and
thanksgivings before a snowy witness.

Many births are pioneer tremors—
spectacles that grow in soil
exposed by fishhooks, flukes

that open
and release
poltergeists in torrents.

After pregnancy,
the female fluidity
becomes a solid confection.

Biography of Flax

Big headed, blue
and hirsute. The Romans
called them linum, and the Egyptians
fashioned mummy wraps and
ancient fibrous fishnets. Oh, and linoleum
came from the oil slicking between its blue-
wrapped seeds. A plant upon which
civilization was built, it tips
toward the puddle, leaves
mud-edged, and the startled
caterpillar knuckles in its cup.

With lines from The Reader's Digest Guide to North American Wildlife

3 from *Geodon*

your winter project:

recreate

a still

life

of Irises

using

torn

magazines.

you've half-finished
stems

green flecks

tack on my shoes.

i stashed a picture in Ariel of you

in Ariel of you

hair longer frizzed like a halo short circuited

it's your only picture
is un-posed

don't ask which poem

Went away.

Quitting Geodon

Will call.

e	m	p	h	e	m	e	r	a
m								
p								
h								
e								
m								
e								
r								
a								
l	a	r	e	m	e	h	p	m

time needs replenishment.

jennifer h. fortin

from *Mined Muzzle Velocity*

Dear, February
From the seat of the world.
The places of ill repute—a car's rear lights. On arrival, visited the most illustrious living quarters, secret shelved along prescribed path. You could have fit up there. The mission: avoid anti-climax, recover luggage tags. The mission: learn extracted depart. The mission: figure your posture. The mission: sell back the beneficial electronics & move on.

Will finish this tomorrow—unnaturally exhausted suddenly. Must be all that pondering The Mission.

There's a word for your idea, don't you know? (Yrs.)

Trembling

because of the wind
the leaf is at

any moment
pried open by the vibration of

a violin string or whatever else, freed for an instant from,
and shimmering, stark, in its factuality and passage

with its flower to carry us over
chaos and cosmos, byss and abyss, flow and reflexivity, to one
another

welter of world

for beauty is nothing but the beginning,
the emptiness from your arms

Between Death and Beauty

everything is the traversed and the traversing

of the tremble: between
the notes (once again)
“affection shall solve the problems of
freedom yet”

Fujimori Escapes, Red Mallards

(from *Floats Horse-Floats or Horse-Flows*)

Derogable forest-fan's
defoliation in black has leaves
in day. In it. Black defoliated is
air. Dermoid of black forest-fan's
is leaves during the day. In the
desert there aren't trees. Grace
mumbles waking lying in the
trees. Looking down she sees,
having followed the poachers
at night, the forest mirrored in
green, red, and black corpses,
dermoid without skeletons or
organs. That they'd all been
tattooed as forests, is this (or
is this done by) the Shining
Path or its opposite the death
squads, Grupo Colina, which
are the government's? She'd been
walking through the forest-
fan dermoid night waking
with colors and scenes of it
speckling her hands, face, chest,
and clothed thighs. Thighs of
people fan. Defoliated they're
ruffling is seen only because of
colors in the forest. Descendent
but as descension of a planet
between the two dermoid waves,
non-derogable night or day
without either. A moon though
it is light appears in the dilated
color waves. One thigh and a
calf drag. They drag the day
which itself dermoid has lucid

shimmering cells outside of one
though are one. Every cell in
the one leg is filled with dense
pain though reversed it's utterly
clear light there, the leaden
leg throwing walks in the light
cells of the day later colorless.

The cattle's calf attached to one
spotted as people ascend on
each other, a clot backed up in
day's blowholes. The huge oar
the paddle moves them moving
through them. Odol. green.

This flow now has halve wolves
on it who swimming in it have
hind legs that are little girls' legs
(that are the wolves' legs); the
little girls' thighs and calves,
and on their feet, shoes, are the
hind halves of the wolves not
even paddling though traveling
hurrying somewhere by there
also being flying red mallards in
it but Odol is flow of space or
not. Oar is 'not.' Both. Is that
Shining Path. Oar doesn't do
that flow.

Mine

The same as Chrysanthemum having no feelings but she is only feelings. That pass over her seemingly, that is, lying as the heaving rolling hills of orange mail wet petals plastering her. A tiny dot on the hill is amidst the wave. The debutante offspring of Chrysanthemum is a copy, that is, unable to perceive anyone outside herself. No one is born. The miners are already there, drown, then more are in mine shafts. Also unperceived babies of many equal creatures are emerging, are there then in the wet. But any being born are dead. That wood is to be born. In the wood an oar borne on the orange flexing mail can't move in it, short-circuits the pink shit. Aiding-Chrysanthemum the older can't do good ever having never started to flips in the air glee at whatever suffering of others she sees which if she has not caused in notoriety tale-bearing carrying to inseminate she draws or brewing so others will be R sick at heart from it flat can't do good having never started to is being lost here citizens already blow-torched by soldiers and being so, blow-torched by soldiers, dot the orange mail of petals pink in places that are waves with people's blood and red mallards

sub-Herculean

Yet a few people walk sub-Herculean there seeing elodea outside water. In the rain, appearing to be heard—in order to—the cattle synonymous with dogs are bawling. The cattle wah-wah remaining it is open at the base ruffling. Single doctors targeted, are being shot in the streets taking others with them beside exploded car bombs. Ours think event, at all, limited its being now. What the young doctor careening in flight, the car crashes into a pole does. He waits in the car for the assassin or assassimators but then he decides to get out of the car seeing the fragile shadow bobbing in front of him. That's his skin but it isn't him at all. Then he limps outside across the night city, his skin sky. Unable to reach his patient the night is so clear the city and him mirrored in the floating sewage earlier in the black, if there weren't actual others right there, shadow is outside one separate yet existing only from one animate in black while the source oneself is empty amidst the yellow field and forest that's flowing. While he'd been seen outside driving. There's a lash in my eye. His car was not making a shadow as he'd whirled it around corners hearing its screech car's disembodied screechings of brakes oar the tires in the slurred street. In floating sewage the young doctor thinks thinking crosses out his thought while he's floating in the

car wading plays the pools of sewage that's the city, the sewage a
harp lapping in the huge moon. In it people are in narrow cracks.
They aren't fleeing in these lit bombed strands further above teal
garganeys coming in flying so they touch. Is silence a single day,
that a random whole? Crossing the rungs that float blossoms on
sewage, the dag enters that single day that lightly grinds the cobalt
though then when he's there it is the tundra dropping motionless
baseless night to be 'a cheetah with the present' the intention?
Not windows cheetahs chute-the-chute during chrysanthemum
dementia with the trembling mouth at night.

the grasses leisure

Not working for a moment a
puissant sees invisibly [cancelled
by the onlooker] annulled
in chitin in the meadow by
moving. Ruddy ducks shift.
The president seeing pissants
as working yet this one isn't for
a time red dress a pseudopod
on organs of locomotion
producing dysmetria there, the
grasses leisure. The pissant is
walking attachment that's like
stamens to her rustle the wet
grass waves working the grass
open, the machine of wind
motoric as willed even spoken
by anyone there can't open, it's
opened. There isn't present, they
take the view. There's no force,
sensorium. After the death of
the mother one became unable
to dream who'd [innervation]
halve have beside one'd had
rich instructing dreams before,
dazzling—so, do the elderly
not dream at night? Being
children small physical bodies
are the only tools. As if fiery wet
arms. Meeting sclerotized the
fat riding the horses wax them
the people not just chitin so
the fat fly in the grass mounted
where in the woven swaying
grass-haven the powder monkey
and Demihunter (orphan girl)

hold the mounts when the
men demount. Excoriating
others when they stand. Waxed
smile. The wind roars the grass
when the horses move even
standing shiver. They're to
walk the horses. She and the
powder monkey boy would
also be regarded as pissants
in the motoric wind are but
for holding the mounts. One
commits suicide opening a
bomb. Trolleys and buses. They
are transient plumelet when
raddlemen marking sheep on
their backs with ruddle move
while the sheep slip through the
grass unseen. Children rueful
who joyful in small physical
bodies 4 receded in size advance,
a child being small is the tunnel
itself. Eaux grasses hogwash
where they hogtie wild pigs lier
les quatre patte. [A man on the
street looks down sees only [says]
small] are /other's plumper? of a
child divorced from the wild pig,
the ruddle-marked Demihunter
but loon as rudderhead playing
by following them through the
tunnels of grass. Rauque we
aren't that delicate skeletal belle
ever now. They're plumule. It's
slow yet a whirr of heads.

unbecoming behavior
kate colby
Ugly Duckling Presse, 2008
a review by megan kaminski

Kate Colby's book length poem, *Unbecoming Behavior*, assembles glimpses at various selves—Jane Bowles, the lyric self, and other historical figures—to take a snapshot of a self, Colby's, in a particular moment. Part autobiography, part revisionist biography, part domestic tableau, part history lesson, *Unbecoming Behavior* is dazzling—a beautiful assemblage. Weaving together moments and details from Jane Bowles' actual life through a projective biography, Colby uses Bowles' story, narrated in the third person, as a counterpoint to the first-person narrator, who gathers and disperses various narratives in the book. The result is an alternative to the unified, coherent speaking self of the traditional lyric "I." The "I" of the poem is not simply contrasted with the other figures in order to develop or define a self that is dissimilar in one way or another. Instead, the poem works to break down traditional constructs of gender roles, narrative and the self. As it progresses, the stories and perspectives bleed into each other:

Her drops of dye in water
that disperse or become
muddy with the other
colors. Her other lives
even less remarkable.

The fictive Jane Bowles of the poem appears simply as Jane. The Jane of the poem becomes the "I", just as much as the "I" of the poem is created by telling the story of Jane. Bowles' nomadic life, and her reservations about it, becomes inseparable from Colby's reflections on moving back East and larger narratives about travel: "My own breakdown/ in transit as counter/ to stylized advantages of the road/movie." As the poem develops, the owners/actors of the perspectives and moments in the book become less and less distinguishable:

Small bodies are caught in orbit,
space debris,
drawn only by their memories,
have absented themselves, say,
we defectors from other fishbowls.
—cut, cue curtain
and back
to what's after
these messages
(building my brand)

of historic invention.)

The alternating perspectives start to blend. Even Bowles' writing, sampled in small pieces throughout the poem, starts to run together with Colby's. The authorial perspectives become so intertwined that they are entirely dependent upon each other and subsumed into the larger project of the poem.

Gender roles are illuminated, dissected, and broken apart in much the same manner. The poem opens with a domestic scene in which femininity is evoked in a Cubist portrait:

pinched-off
balls of meat are
rolling from the bowl
they are
meatballs

they are
writing postcards, stacks
of little thumbing snaps
at the lips of public tables

lick, slap, go
the ladies
three down and still
they are
utterly delightful.

It continues on in an almost Stein-ian examination of household objects. The objects and tasks occupy the day with their constriction, building a portrait of femininity. Jane's presence throughout the poem provides an alternative to prescribed roles of a beautiful femininity. She embraces the unbecoming—the dragging hem, slurred speech, smeared lipstick. Jane chooses not to comply with her gendered role. But what are the alternatives? And to name one of the one larger questions of the book—What are the consequences for the narrator of the poem? Bowles is a particularly interesting figure, especially in the way that her own work was overshadowed by the personality and work of her husband. With the history of Bowles's own writing in the back of our minds, the questioning of gender roles in the poem expands to ideas of female authorship. The poem's resistance to the totalizing narrative of the self is directly tied to its exploration of gender. The poem makes explicit the particular dishonesty of the narrative of feminine beauty and its physical signs. The Jane of the poem resists these narratives; however, in doing so, she is neither powerful, nor accommodating:

But Jane can't stand
still like that, instead
milks her hard-won
jolie-laide, forgoing
feathers for a fright wig.

Unwilling to assimilate into a quiet, pretty femininity, Jane embraces the grotesque. She claims a kind of power, shattering the pretty gendered artifice to reveal deformity. It's not surprising that Jane in the poem, and Bowles in her life, force apart their prescribed roles.

Throughout the poem the motif of the balloon and ballooning illustrates the need to break things apart, blow them up, break out of a cocoon, "Every day a new balloon. I'm blowing up into bunches." And the destruction of limits/boundaries is reflected in the way the poem works to break down gendered roles, narrative and the self. "Blowing up" can pick out what we do when we make a balloon grow, when we inflate it, and what we do when we destroy it. The talk of 'blowing up into bunches' brings to mind both growth and destruction, and this seems to be what happens when a self comes to involve others. It gets bigger and grows, but it's original structure, its integrity, is destroyed. Colby undercuts the lyric voice, letting a mercurial subjectivity slip and drift as the speaker composes a self from selves, and a self into selves.

The very language of the poem seems to work out the tension between the attempt to convey and construct a self and the instability of narrative. Colby's writing is lush and inventive, at once fluid and dissonant. The short lines of the poems work together an abundance of sound and images. The evocative consonance and particularity of image and sound create a texture that contrasts with the slide of the vowels and slippage of perspective. The music of the poem balances and contrasts the flow of fragmented narrative and reference—"fictive fronds" and "the spirographic/ necessity of empty centers." The acrobatic wordplay and descriptions of flight and color work on small scale to further the movement of the larger revisionist narrative and selves.

In *Unbecoming Behavior*, Colby has created an inventive, cerebral and sensual poetic. The poem dissolves and damages the sanctity of narrative, gender, and the coherent self, while reinventing and recontextualizing some of the very constructs that it seeks to destroy.

Alberta dispatch: wild horses

It is poetry that remarks on the barely perceptible disappearances from our world such as that of the sleeping porch or the root cellar. And poetry that notes the barely perceptible appearances.

It falls on the sweet neck of poetry to keep the rain-pitted face of love from leaving us once and for all.

-- C.D. Wright, *Cooling Time: An American Poetry Vigil*

they've heard that from the Edmonton International
you can see the curve of the earth.

-- Erin Knight

During my year in Edmonton as writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta, I started and finished a poetry manuscript called "wild horses." The first few attempts, like any foray into a new project, was filled with fits and starts. My second poetry collection, *bury me deep in the green wood* (1999), started well before my first, took three full years to start, and once it did, I ran full through it, writing quickly against the slow, early fumblings of how any project begins.

Wild horses; do I even remember where the title came from? Some stereotype of Alberta, no doubt. The hardwood floors of the Hudson's Tap House on Whyte Avenue, and the cowboy hats that came through, many on those who had never even touched a horse or cow.

It's been said before, that to name a thing is to reduce it, but it is also to make it real. It is the word "chair" that makes the object so, whatever it was before. But still, how is it I had to even name this place, out of the language? The world exists, and yet we feel such need to recreate it, build it up through words and alter it, subjugate it into mere specks of text. Is this working comprehension or a systematic kind of control?

an opening of the plains

closes a door
& a door

how do you solve a problem
like medea

a mountain
what youve never seen

john goodman
in barton fink

the pixies
, saskatoon

that one time

you said it
you said it,

again

the air
is thick enough

w/ dust

to be afraid
of venus flytraps

My father never needed to name a thing to understand it, simply knowing the wordless world of his surroundings through work and attention, living in the same farm house since a year old. The small spiral notebook in his workshirt pocket still not for naming, but for simple reminders, numbers, costs. Of this I can only presume. The first language I knew was the world. The immediate stretch of those eastern Ontario fields and those trees, the smell of what would soon be rain. My father, who knew and knows the names of the birds and the trees; me, in Alberta, a foreigner in my own country. There is the familiar, but there is something else, too. Something unknown.

The eastern Ontario, Glengarry County rain that would sometimes fall so hard a gray curtain from my bedroom window halfway

through the back field to the treeline, slowly heading east from west, pelting a hard and thirsty ground. In Edmonton, where the rain barely fell, and even the snow was thin, and well down past forty below.

As George Melnyk writes in the preface to his *Poetics of Naming* (2003), “Readers for whom the world ends with the view that a chair is a chair need go no further” but adds:

There are times when we imagine we are captains of our own truth, as we provide truth with a patina of personal absoluteness, but it is the language we share with others that creates truth for us. Without language there is no truth. But, curiously, there may be meaning conveyed outside of language. The relationship between truth and meaning may actually contain disruption and fracture.

Whatever that means to any idea of whether or not there is anything but a subjective truth, I can't really say. But what is any lapse or foray into language but one fraught with personal mythologies being played? Naming a place. It was something Edmonton poet Jeff Carpenter referenced as well in the preface to his chapbook of ghazals, *malachi on foot* (2008):

Put two words together...

...likely, John Thompson stood agape between the contingency of naming and the fixity of a name while he wrote his Stilt Jack. Do you have days like that, when random events feel as incontrovertible as the geometry of the Pyramids, when we are neither capable of integrating ugly accidents into our worldview nor capable of avoiding them. The apparent lack of sequence between couplets of the ghazal—the disintegration of homely form—strives to induce an essence out of an accident in the reader's mind. This is the most productive sort of naming a poet can commit. Gazing into chaos, he chooses to bring back some artifact rather than be seduced into oblivion. Naming makes it so; it cannot make it go away. My name is Jeff Carpenter.

It would seem no accident that Wayne Tefs would call his essay on Edmonton resident Douglas Barbour's poetry (reprinted in Dennis Cooley's anthology, *RePlacing*, 1980) "The Land Was Ours Before We Were the Land's," quoting lines from Barbour's *A Poem As Long As the Highway* (1971), and following with:

These lines, written in 1971, show the continuity in Barbour's work. From the outset, he has been absorbed in the relation between lands and peoples; he has been convinced that imaginative possession of the landscape is the essence of our most important experiences.

For whatever reason, my poetry has always been obsessed (some might say) with creating maps. I don't need to see a physical map of any geography, but I need, somehow, to build and comprehend a particular kind of landscape as I write. Is this why I've composed so many Glengarry County poems over the years, from *bury me deep in the green wood* (1999) to *glengarry: open field* (unpublished), and from *Manitoba highway map* (1999) to the more-recent *The Ottawa City Project* (2007)? Or even, as I referenced in an essay in *subverting the lyric: essays* (2008), quoting Robert Lecker on Robert Kroetsch, who talked about "[...] a need to find a sense of personal and public origins that may be dreamed by the poet whose task it is to write his world into existence."

Working a series of maps, the last section of "wild horses" focuses on various locales around the City of Edmonton, writing references around and through Belgravia, Saskatchewan Drive, Mill Creek, Rossdale, Garneau, Michael's Park, Strathcona, Allandale, Windsor Park, and even out by the airport, each piece dedicated to various Edmonton friends, and the late Windsor Park author, Sheila Watson. How else does one create a space, but to carve one out? Listen to this part of the poem "map of edmonton (saskatchewan drive)," dedicated to poet and former Edmonton resident Andy Weaver, that writes:

he asks the crow,
instead

the magpie
lyric

& staccato
hop

did the sun leave
when then you left

or moon

was every snowflake hollow
& bereft
of moisture

note: this is part of a memoir of my Edmonton year, *McLennan, Alberta*; the poems included otherwise in this issue are part of the poetry manuscript *wild horses*.

There may be a planet full of muses that is visited by creatures like us, anti-muses if you will, creatures who pour lattés onto their musey heads, waiting to see what kind of behavior or exclamations will result from our presence and our provocation, waiting, in all our vanity, to see what the real muses think of us, waiting to see what they will do when their awareness of our closeness prevents them from behaving as if they were unaware and alone with their companions, fears, burning guilts...

But that planet is only interesting for a few lines. I find my cat far too amusing as she assures me that she is lethal, and I would much rather enjoy the last of the afternoon fall off my socks as the dryer and cricket sounds box around me.

Words tumble into a form until they crystallize. Extraneous or incorrect words are sifted onto a cake like flour. If we want to get really into it, we can reverse these situations in meaning and both metaphors still apply. But for now, both types of words, as first stated, are useful. The latter variety is good for everyday joy, and the former is good because it always knows how to respond to our most dire conflicts.

One funny thing about words is that the right word can be like peach ambrosia at first, but after being left alone for awhile, you just don't notice it, as if it was absorbed into the form around it. The right word in the right place dissolves like a stitch into a scar. After a while you only see the scar, which is the thing that should be captivating. But the novelty of the right word can sometimes be intoxicating, and this is a trap.

Another problem with words is how to sublimate their magnetism to one another. This is a great struggle. In the effort to get over hurdles we face in writing a poem, failures result from negligence of this culture of action.

In order to write poetry, I want to forget my native tongue. I would like to lose my civilization. I tend to behave somewhat well and ordinary, but I like both my mind and poetry better when they are bereft of attachment to words.

Language infests us with the devious notion that objects are actually the words we know them by. It's sad to think that we could live an entire life thinking that a table was just a five-letter word. But if we really look at a table for a long time, it can make us sad, with its squareness and utility. But because the word is a little hologram of the actual table, it does not have that kind of effect.

How do we convey the experience of the table without being suffocated by the word table? For me, that requires an official disregard of language. Anything goes when it comes to letters and sounds. As someone who loves words for their sound and texture, and for other things, I want to use them as needed. I don't ever want to submit to what I think they mean. Just who is in charge anyway?

This is a good question, and is open to debate.

I am often in a struggle to unplug the intelligence when I write. The intelligence thinks it's onto something, but the senses and memory tell us otherwise. The same thing goes for reason and wit—as much as I love to think—but poetry is magically beyond these things, on another plane, and I don't want to curtail it by a belief of any kind.

My thoughts and moods are always changing. I get bored very quickly. I want to write poetry that is authentic, that is not an idol of anything. A poem can't be good if it is trying to be something else.

That does not mean that I will never write a poem that is embedded with idols. We live in a world of infinite modes of reflection, and each of our reflections is an idol. But if I go too much farther with this thought, I will have to make a sculpture or write an essay.

A poem has no patience with thought of any kind. A poem has senses of its own. It has a pulse. Like a violin teacher of mine once said, music has an ear in each of its fingers. I want to write poems that have an ear in each of its words.

jennifer h. fortin

from *Mined Muzzle Velocity*

Dear,	February	a.) learned it while watching news in the language/images, gradual affirmation, b.) things are happening there?, c.) I happened to be in the kitchen then.
Salutations, Dear. Falling into roles expected b/c they are expected. Please don't think because I have so much going on that I do not want to hear how you are. The President visited our village & spoke in the square, but I did not understand. They really love eternal flame here. Answered questions for a radio interview in the language. Pat's trainer told him she noticed I speak in paragraphs. At the old church there was a massacre & mothers tried to dig water for their children. One boy told me he loved me today. The board resists chalk, a problem we don't foresee. Peppi's sister told me to sleep until lunch tomorrow, as it was raining & gorgeous to do that. I guess others share this delight of mine—slightly disappointed, b/c sometimes you want to think you invented. R. died &	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Free To Visit, Yrs.

who are naturally constituted for distant Habitations, whom no Seas nor Places limit, but in their appointed Seasons from ~~Brachland~~ and Mount Atlas, and as some think, even from the ~~Antipodes~~.

Thô we could not have his Life, yet we may have his Death in his soft Departure, which is like a long Expiration, and his End not unlike his Beginning, when the salient Parts of his Body affords a sensible motion; and his Departure so like unto Sleep, that he scarce needed the civil Ceremonies of closing his Eyes contrary unto the common way whereof Death draws up the Eyelids. With what strift and pains we came into the World we know not; but 'tis commonly no easie matter to get out of it: yet if it could be made out, that such who have easie Natures have commonly hard Deaths, and contrarily, his Departure was so easie, that we might justly suspect his Birth was of another nature, and that some Juno sat cross-legg'd at his Nativity.

Besides his cold Death, the incurable state of his Disease might somewhat exenuate your Sorrow, who know the Monsters but seldom happen Miracles more rarely, in Physick. *August Victoria* gives a serious Account of a Consumptive, Heirical, Physcial Woman, who was suddenly cured by the Intercession of *Ignatius*. We read not of any in Scripture who in this case applied unto our Saviour, tho' some may be contained in that large Expression, *That he went about Galilee healing all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Diseases.* Amulets, Spells, Sigils and Incantations, practised in other Diseases, are seldom pretended in this; and we find no Sigil in the *Archidoxa*, or *Paracelsus* to cure an extreme Consumption, *Consumma*, which if other Diseases fail, will put a periode to long Lives, and at last make dust of all. And therefore the *Alchymists* could not but think that the fiery Principle would wear out all the air, and at last make an end of the World, which notwithstanding without such a lingring period the Creator would let at his Pleasure, and to make an end of all things on Earth, and our Planetical System of the World, he need but put out the Sun.

I was not so curious to entitle the Star unto any concern of his Death, yet could not but take notice that he died when the Moon was in motion from the Meridian at which time, an old

A RESPONSE to Laura Sim's *Practice Restraint* heather sweeney

A response to Laura Sims' *Practice, Restraint*

As a child of suburbia, many of my summers were spent immersed in a kidney shaped pool, reveling in the underwater world's offerings: the suspension of gravity, strands of sunlight, the slow-motion of limbs and brightly colored bathing suits. The mutations of sound and image both compelled and calmed me, much like Laura Sims' collection, Practice, Restraint.

The theme of water persists throughout the book. As the image on the cover suggests, we are tiny figures floating through deep and expansive spaces, often alone. Many of poems devote attention to silences and invite the reader to pause and breathe into the vastness of negative space. Her poems suggest a “dissembling” taking place. In “Democracy,” from her aptly titled “War Book,” she asserts:

One verdant minute
after the next, the love of the people
Eludes him.

What does it mean? One thing unfolds
as a chain of things: the failure of making
a fantasy park
out of war...

(80).

Moments are illuminated, not entire stories. She captures images and narrative threads that telescope and teleport: “Her hand/Is the winter” (2) and “A wave/fixes the world” (50). The reader’s

eyes float down easily, and then are submerged into a building awareness of isolation. There is an eerie resonance at work, an element ready to break the surface. Consider “Bank Thirty-One” (from her “Bank Book”):

Trees over here

Over there

In one empty classroom
The girl is turning
The town inside out

*

The worst is

Belonging

(56)

Throughout the collection we encounter underwater cities, sold children, backyard peacocks, errands from God, absences, prostitutes, Moses and personal logos. I could envision many of her poems translated into short films.

She has been called “minimalistic,” yet her work is far from simple. She illuminates darknesses, all that recede, fade, and slip under without notice. Sims reaches a steady hand down into the unknown and unknowable and comes back with poems that gleam.

An Engagement with the work of Remedios Varo

We walk through Chapultepec Park, around a circular fence, looking for the museum gate, between parked cars and under the thick green leaves of plants. We arrive and stand under a large, fibrous yellow dome. Some light enters. The floor is tiled with small, rectangular pieces of wood.

Then a room where there is a woman seated at a desk, fashioning a small bird with her hands. Threads of her thought suspend the bird, only just now learning flight. In her green room, she refracts the light of a single star, so that its beams hold out the bird's wings. Sympathetically, her face is covered in feathers. She wears a violin between her breasts. Small birds take flight around her, or peck at the meal scattered on the floor. Behind her, a disquieting presence extends its tongue from the back of the chair to lick her neck. An entire world swirls. A deer's forelegs curl out of a second-story window. The woman draws her bow across the violin strings of light that spill down from a small parting in the clouds.

I visited the Museo de arte moderno in Mexico City in August, 2008 and saw two shows, La Colección: el peso del realismo and Remedios Varo: cinco llaves. I had never heard of Remedios Varo, Mexico's other super-famous female artist, and seeing the Cinco llaves show made me want to learn more about the surrealist, who was born in 1908, in Spain, and fled Nazi-occupied France for Mexico in 1941. The show contained many impressive paintings, along with beautiful preparatory sketches in pencil, which I almost preferred to the finished works. Perhaps most fascinating were the documents of Varo's life that were included in the show: books she had owned, notebooks, and even print-outs from her palm readings and other documents related to her interest in various forms of mysticism. The paintings were extremely playful, thoughtful, slightly creepy, and had a strange mixture of very light and very dark colors.

sarah dowling

In the gift shop, an employee asked me, "Te gustas Remedios?" slowly, in the carefully enunciated Spanish he surely uses when addressing tourists. Holding a book about her, I answered, just as slowly, "Si, me gusta."



Creación de las aves, (Creation of the Birds) Remedios Faro, 1958

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Telegram from Siam sara mumolo

“Telegram From Siam” is a love poem from five grenades in two hands.

The three books I like to read are THE COW, BAD BAD, and Dear RA

There are many art happenings in the bay and they all have blogs. I do not like the blog. My reading series has a blog. I do not like talking about the blog as a form. The chapbook as a form. Form. Context as subject. I also do not like the diary, but that doesn't mean it didn't satisfy the readers of Anais Nin. I'm not sure about poems as letters, but I experience pleasure when I read Dear Ra. To be more specific, I do not like ‘kitsch.’ Or ‘good girls acting badly,’ such as baking cakes just to smash them. I like to shake Dear Ra in the air—violently.

Let's draw hearts and stars around the objective correlative.

For this annotation, I was asked about art happenings. I am involved in some art happenings (end notes). At readings I ask people if they have read these three books and some have not. I am writing to share:

I have read BAD BAD in a dive bar shouting over AC/DC. Other poets passed it around and yelled from it too. Someone spilled Fernet on page 22.

I admit drifting in workshops, especially when the jockeys of intermediacy and their bucking over-determined challengers show their fangs. Drifting; I think about 70's porn. Imagism. Martyrs.

I wrote a poem today about getting fucked in the ass after a bullfight in Mexico D.F.;

^6. I have never been fucked in the ass.

THE COW makes me smile because it possesses errors. THE COW is not a resort in India. I like the picture of the fat women on the back corner page¹. I tried to blow it up and show it to my class, but the resolution unraveled. The two women became one large mass that reminded me of a mother.

THE COW is beautiful.

BAD BAD makes me read it to strangers in the street...BAD BAD...I lose it....crack on San Pablo avenue.

Writing a poem and marketing myself for schools, residencies, and book contests is to “hold a turd and pretend it is my baby.”²

BAD BAD makes me cross my legs and “button my blouse all the way up”³.

DEAR RA sounds “like the secretary at an abortion clinic.”⁴ I want to ask Johannes on a date, have a tantrum and document it as visceral avant-garde dandyism.

thank you,

Sara Mumolo

An Interview with Jennie Neighbors (summer 2008) elizabeth bryant

New Poetry: Between the Twilight and the Sky

Elizabeth Bryant: We had an earlier conversation where I mentioned that I assumed Edmond Jabès had been among your writing influences. Your response was, in effect, that if anything you felt you were working against Jabès. Can you say more about what it means to you and your sense of poetics to work against something?

Jennie Neighbors: It's hard to begin thinking about Between the Twilight and the Sky as a book against something. I didn't take that approach when I wrote it and it almost feels like looking backward, into the past, to try to think about what the book could be against. I think this is because the book looks toward a future that we cannot know from here, that is actually unimaginable. René Char gave me an orientation in his poem "From Moment to Moment." He wanted an investigation into between states, into liminality, I believe. This openness allows for an unknowable future. It sets up possibilities of relationship without determining what will become.

EB: So outside of your new book, can you address the notion of the poet aiming for or working against something? Some received wisdom, perhaps, or preconceptions about poetry that are not useful? I'm thinking here about your experiences as both a screener for a national poetry contest, and as a teacher.

JN: I think any preconceptions about poetry are not useful. By deciding ahead of time what poetry is or what good poetry is, the best a writer or reader can do is match what they know. Much of the poetry I read when I screen for the contest is good poetry—it fits the idea of a well-crafted poem. But when do we look at a painting, for example, and praise it because it's well-painted? Why do we do this with poetry? This is where the difference between craft and art is useful—craft is sure of itself. It knows where to

go because of what came before it. Art, I think, takes a risk with “I don’t know” (like Wislawa Szymborska does) or “perhaps” (like Paul Celan does), in a way that stopping at craft, stopping at what is already known, can’t do. So with my students, all I try to do is show them more, just to keep going. When I’m reading for the contest, I look for that risk in a poem, even if the poem needs to be messy because of it. So I guess, for me, art is against opinion, against whatever we lay on it to judge it by, and most especially, by whatever we already think. But it does this in its own creativity, its bursting through with something else. Deleuze calls this “the foreign language within language that summons forth a people to come.” I like that a lot.

EB: I have sometimes given myself the task of writing a bad poem on purpose, just to nudge myself further towards what my own intentions are. Which, annoyingly but I think necessarily, are usually hidden from me to start with. But you make an important distinction: that risk is a valuable factor for you when evaluating a written work. Can you address where you felt writing Between the Twilight and the Sky was a risky act for you?

JN: That’s a fun question. Writing the poem felt risky in many ways. Antonin Artaud wrote that “the spirit of profound anarchy is at the root of all poetry,” and I felt that when I was writing. As soon as you leave some space between two words, two lines, two poems, whatever, you experience the anarchy. Anything can happen. The meanings of the words, their histories, all your own experiences with the words, and, especially, all the thinking that can occur between two ideas, becomes active. That openness is not at all a void—it’s so full it overflows. And the Char prompt took me directly into his particular between states, to try to discover what could be found there, and to bring something back without destroying it by naming it. I risked my own thinking in trying to get into those places he directed me to, and I risked failing him and what I learned from him.

The title of my poem comes from his line: “How can we show,

without betraying them, the simple things sketched between the twilight and the sky?” Ultimately I had to trust Char’s poem and the direction it led me in, and I had to give up as much control as I could to it. Considering the poet I was following, though, I guess it would’ve been riskier if I had struck out on my own rather than follow him! I really enjoyed the whole process of reading and writing the poem.

EB: Given that we’re all more or less struggling within a pre-established universe of “sense” that is not of our own making, perhaps there’s a desire to make sense, but on our own terms? Did you ever find yourself asking: what if this doesn’t mean anything to anyone else?

JN: When I first read Char’s poem “From Moment to Moment”, it hit me very forcefully that I needed to work with those two lines of his. At that point, I didn’t take audience into consideration at all. It was between Char and me. But because it was for the future—for my son’s future, really—and because that future is unknown, it could not determine what the work would be other than the fact that the work had to be open. It was for an audience that doesn’t exist—that, in fact, may never exist. So in this way, it wasn’t for me, either. The focus was on working with Char’s poem, seeing what was there.

EB: Going back to the two lines from Char, “betraying them” would be to name them. Is this right? And if so, can I take it one step further and ask, is the destruction that comes about a function of mis-identification, or simply the act of mapping a name onto the “simple things” in the first place?

JN: Naming, for sure. What can be found between the twilight and the sky must be liminal, and to name a liminal figure would be to deny its liminality, its not being anymore, and not yet being. Its state of between-ness. This would be to deny becoming,

and all the possibilities of it.

EB: Can you say more about an audience that may never exist? Do you address this element in a direct way in any particular section of your book?

JN: I don't think I do address it directly. I do use an "us" though, and a "you" now and then. Hopefully the work has brought the reader into the kind of liminal space that the poem is about, so that these pronouns become more like movements and movers rather than containers. The meaning of the experience, if any, is up to the reader at this point. Maybe my pronouns are wishful thinking. "Pictures of the Sea" is one that uses "us" and talks about stability in time. That might help:

Pictures of the Sea

watercurl,

lightsplatter,

instant (how small
must the moment be

for us to say, here it is

-among momentary days-

"Another touch with the thumb," said Giacometti,
"and whoops!-no more figure."

EB: This is also a great example of what you were talking about before, where too much pursuit of something (one too many thumb touches) destroys the liminal reality. And yes, the

“us” here is anyone, but not just anyone. That “us” includes “you” the writer, in an affirmative way. An invitation to come along, “whoever you are.”

How did you organize yourself once you recognized what the project was going to be? How did you retrieve, finally, anything that you felt would not be ruinous once placed on paper?

JN: I read for a long time and I had pages of notes and charts. I read Deleuze, Celan, Victor Turner, Whitman, Rilke, Adonis, Balibar, Buber, Caillois, Clanchy, Whitehead, Ekelof, Blaser, and a few others. I knew after all the reading that I couldn’t just write a poem—sit there with a blank piece of paper and write something. There was really no way to begin, and I didn’t want to circumscribe all these ideas with a privileged point of view as I looked back on all that material. So I tried not to use my memory, but just to go instant by instant, omitting clichés and conclusions, and leave all the new space alone. I didn’t think it wouldn’t be ruinous—it’s just there were no other options.

EB: Would you be willing to share an example of a chart? If sharing an image doesn’t work, can you explain what it looked like and how it worked? Is it something you suggest as a tool for your students?

JN: I don’t have a scanner! But I can describe a chart and tell you how it worked. The most useful chart I had was a map of the twilight and the sky with intervals—what each thing was, what they were in relation to each other and to the point of view on the horizon. It helped me see contiguities and try to understand what would happen in those places. For instance, there really is no place for between the twilight and the sky from our point of view. It’s just a plane. But, stretch it out, make it 3D, create borders as new places that then have their own borders, etc., then consider what happens to language, body, thought, objects, vision, time, whatever. And it allowed me to put important ideas into places

I wouldn't have seen otherwise. For example, from Whitman I get "affection shall solve the problems of freedom yet", and from Deleuze (in Cinema I) I get that "affection occupies the interval". So I could find all these intervals and understand what affection might be in those contexts, bringing Whitman's idea of affection and Deleuze's too. Put any two things on a chart of some kind—some graph or map—then see what happens between them depending (or not) on how they're organized in the picture. That's the fun of it. The danger for me with charts is that, after I'm done, I can think they contain it all in a static way. It solidifies things that shouldn't be solidified.

That's a great idea to use charts in the classroom! I'm definitely going to see what I can do with that. Which reminds me—I was in a workshop led by Robin Blaser and he used the charts from Robert Duncan's poetry workshop (from *The Collected Books of Jack Spicer*, edited by Blaser). You have to fit authors who have influenced you into a flow chart or a constellation chart. It helps you think about relationships, size of influence, distance of influence, etc. Robin talked about each student's chart with that student and the rest of the class. It was a great way to begin a class, and to begin thinking about yourself as a writer.

EB: The map you mentioned earlier: was this a map you made up yourself or something photocopied out of a textbook?

JN: No. It was just a map I made up. But it would be very interesting to use pre-existing maps—pre-existing pictures, graphs, whatever—then "rewrite" them and see what happens. Imagine what you could do with a topographical map! Or use old versions and new versions of the same place. Lots of ideas to work with.

EB: When exactly will your book be coming out, and do you have readings planned around that time (bringing your maps along with you, I hope!)?

JN: The book should be out by October 1st through Parlor Press's Free Verse Editions. I've got a couple readings in the works, but it's hard with the book still in production. I'll try to do more readings once the book is actually out. There is a Philosophy/Religion class here at Wofford College that is going to use the book this fall, and they want me to give a talk on it. I'll definitely bring the maps in for that. I don't think I'll bring that stuff in for readings, though.

EB: If I remember correctly, I think you had mentioned some time ago in an earlier conversation we had about your book, that you were considering including a section of notes. From the finished draft that I read, it seems you scrapped this idea?

JN: I didn't put notes in the book, for the same reason I won't bring maps to the readings. I want to leave the reading up to the reader. There is a sources page, however, to give credit to the work I read and used.

EB: You mentioned earlier how you feel the book is for your son's future. How do you mean?

JN: This gets back to relevance. When I had Esten in 2000, I knew I wanted to do something that he could use later on, but I didn't know what challenges he'd be facing. It's clear his generation is going to be in crisis (it is already!), dealing with severe environmental issues and fallout from the Iraq war, among other things I can't anticipate. What do I know now that could help him? I think his generation is going to need a whole new paradigm, and I don't feel at all capable of making suggestions for what that might be. I don't even think "new paradigm" is strong enough: I think they're going to have to be very flexible, resilient, and—especially—creative. Ready at any time to change paradigms. This was the dilemma I faced when I began

the project: I wanted to do something, but anything I could do would be irrelevant. I had to do something I couldn't do! Then Char stepped in. I saw in his poem a way of approaching the problem: focus on that place of creativity, the place where anything is possible. It's a place of transformation, art, possibility of reorientation, play, relation, anti-structure, real danger, etc. Will there be hints of that place in the poem? I don't know. Will it be a place of creativity for the reader? I have no idea.

You asked earlier about the desire to make sense on our own terms in a world that is already making the sense we're in, and the possibility that no one can follow. There's a lot of ways I can approach that question in this context. First of all, by following Char, I didn't have to worry what my own terms were. I had to just trust him and go wherever his work led me. This gave me a freedom from my own style and obsessions that I was happy for. This was perfect in relation to the future: it kept my ideas as they were out of the work (this is all ideal situation, of course!). I accepted the impossibility of doing what I needed to do as a positive thing (if it were possible here and now and if the future is significantly different from here and now, the work would be irrelevant). And it set me up in relation: I wasn't me as an individual, walking about impermeably. What I thought changed in relation to the work I was doing with Char. I experienced liminality in the process. It's a very powerful thing. I move in the world differently now—I feel more connected to it, more of a give and take relationship, more of a sense that what I am depends on the world and the world depends on me. This affirmed the kind of relationship with the world that may be the most useful and that, I think, is affection. It keeps us in relationships, it makes the relationships productive and nurturing, it makes the present and future our concern. Also, and very importantly, this is an immanent position: you're in the middle of this world. This world is your ultimate concern. There's no appeal to some unchanging thing outside of us, some hardened ideas that can be used as weapons. This position is practical, it's present, it's engaged as relation. Deleuze wrote that "It's always a question of freeing life

wherever it is imprisoned, or of tempting it into an uncertain combat.” I would apply that here.

So by taking the perspective I took—between states, between Char and myself—I learned more about the thing I was trying to create in the work. He taught me about taking care. Will it be nonsense to Esten? Maybe. But then I’ve done the best I can do, and that’s all I can do. If it does make sense later on, what a bonus. It means the work was open enough to let in a future that it couldn’t anticipate.

EB: When you say “something he could use later on” you mean, maybe, a guideline, or a support for how to deal with the terrible unknowns our children’s generation are facing? What part will that play in your next project?

JN: I guess more as a perspective, a way of looking at things, at the world, that is positive and creative. I don’t want him to despair, to feel hopelessness. So it would be support in that way. A guideline would be too strict. For my next project, I’m working on the idea of Immoderate Laughter. Initially I found it in a book by Roger Caillois on play. In that book, Immoderate Laughter is *paidia*—an uncontrollable, tumultuous impulse and action. I have found since that the idea of “immoderate laughter” has a long history. Most commonly it’s considered dangerous. I love the word “immoderate” in this context: who gets to determine when laughter goes that little bit beyond the acceptable? And especially I love the idea of laughter as turbulence. This led me straight to Lucretius, where he describes the *clinamen* as the tiniest swerve necessary for new creation. So I’m reading some stuff on thermodynamics, too, especially entropy which is really hard for me to grasp. This is related to liminality, for sure—the passing from organization to chaos, chaos as creative. And clowns and fools are liminal figures. They have a very interesting power and position because of their public liminality. I think immoderate laughter is definitely needed right now. Lots of it, very frequently.

I'm not sure how this material will be organized—if it can be.

EB: The “tiniest swerve” is like the artist’s thumb, as you wrote in “Pictures of the Sea”. And there’s the idea of “dangerous” again. Inappropriate laughter always makes me think of getting kicked out of class in junior high school for being unable to stop laughing at my friend, who was already at the age of 13 queer-identified, and a very subversive type of class-clown. I don’t even remember what he would do that made me laugh uncontrollably, but I remember loving it because it was such a helpless, unforced laughter he provoked in me, and that was a kind of freedom for sure. I didn’t care if I got in trouble. Imagine if the press just bust out in uncontrolled laughter at presidential briefings, instead of merely rolling their eyes in reaction to Bush’s worst malapropisms. By the way, do you consider yourself a political artist?

JN: This is great. I would’ve loved to have seen that! Laughter and the effect of it is very hard to describe, I think. I love “I didn’t care if I got in trouble”. Laughter makes it worth it. At least at that moment. And boy is that ever dangerous! Imagine if that laughter became a contagion. It would shut down the institution for a while.

Bakhtin wrote, in the context of carnival, that “Complete liberty is possible only in a completely fearless world.” And that is entirely political—it gets behind the apparatus, the machine, of political and social propaganda, and shows it up. Max Brod wrote in his biography of Kafka that Kafka laughed so hard reading chapter one of *The Trial* to his friends, that he couldn’t continue at times. He “laughed quite immoderately.” I imagine a much freer Kafka when I imagine him laughing at the institutions he wrote about. It’s much more subversive, and I see Kafka as much more powerful. He wasn’t giving up or lamenting. If this is a goal or possible outcome of political art, I would love to count myself in as a political artist.

I have to mention Wislawa Szymborska again. She wrote in her Nobel Acceptance Lecture, that “in the language of poetry, where every word is weighed, nothing is usual or normal. Not a single stone and not a single cloud above it. Not a single day and not a single night after it. And above all, not a single existence, not anyone’s existence in this world.” This is entirely political. Just imagine if everyone felt free and fearless for a moment, and that they felt that they mattered, and that everyone and everything else mattered, too. That every existence mattered. *Ignis mutat res*: fire transforms everything.

EB: From liminality to laughter to...Language poetry? Is this where you align yourself, perhaps? Or if you had to place yourself among schools of poetics, where would you land up?

JN: My emphasis on the materiality and constructivity of language, and the ethics involved, could be traced to Language poetry, although of course there are other poets who, in their own way, focus on those things as well. But I never approached what I needed to do from the point of view of “schools” or groups. The poets who have been most important to me are Paul Celan, Kamau Brathwaite, Ann Lauterbach, Robin Blaser, Adonis, George Oppen, Emily Dickinson, Rilke, Wislawa Szymborska, Robert Creeley, Beckett, Tzara, Francis Ponge, Keats, Susan Howe, David Antin, Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Anne-Marie Albiach, and Char. I’m sure I’m leaving some important ones out. These are poets from many schools, many times, many countries, obviously. I don’t want to circumscribe my work or myself—or the work of another poet—by thinking in terms of movements or schools. Not that that isn’t helpful at times or that it couldn’t provide insight, etc., but it wouldn’t do me any good at this point to try to pin myself down. I think I can say, however, that I’m part of the Dada current, as long as it’s not considered nihilistic.

EB: Final question: how far along are you with the new project on laughter, and how is this affecting your daily life? For example,

do you find yourself laughing more?

JN: I know I like laughing more—I like paying attention to what it does to other people and the situation, and how it makes me feel. I value it more, for sure, because I'm recognizing that laughter is not trivial. I see the potential of giant fluctuation takeovers in laughter: a disturbance that invades the entire system then creates something entirely new. So I'm trying to let myself laugh immoderately more often and recognize moments when laughter is the appropriate response but it would be socially frowned upon, then laugh anyway. It's hard for me to play the fool, though—it takes an egolessness that I don't have. Maybe the more I laugh, the more I'll get it. But it could be that all this conscious effort is the wrong way to go about it—or even thinking “wrong way” is the wrong way. Who knows! Robert Provine said “We do not ‘speak’ laughter.” It defies all this rational conceptualization in the first place.

Review of my living room sarah rosenthal

Review of my living room. I would like

the sunflowers to speak
for themselves. They
sit in their blue vase,
surveying

30 minutes ago on this very couch I lay thinking I had just spent three months doing nothing, absolutely nothing but talking to another poet about her project. Afterward we walked through the hot sun toward the car, wrapping up. I saw us, so engaged, heads together. Our whole get-up retro suburbia, red and white polka dot blouses tucked into form-fitting jeans that stopped above ankles, adorable flats with bows--they were adorable, and we in them, thick masses of hair hanging down our backs, coifed bangs. Dusty ground but we knew how to move

All the improvements I've made to this room and so far M is the only one who's noticed. And S, because he pays for half and I loudly proclaim my accomplishments

For example, the pillows. They sit plumped, facing each other, meditating on the lives cheapened in their making. (Shall we speak of grief?)

Thank you, artist who made the art over my head. There is nothing abstract about bold strokes and deliberate patches, a palette hovering between shock and recognition. I tried to bargain down from \$40 and had to be told, no, this person knows what he gives

Amber lamp, bookshelves bow under weight. Mini photo album still wrapped in cellophane. Plants endure despite miscare. Half of one of Kahlo's eyes, eyebrows, stares from binding. Found Uffizi guide. Faded Miro

I never promised to understand my neighbors' musical tastes or make all the recipes in the cookbooks. I only promised

(half of one of her cheekbones)

attend to wind
pummels this place

memory
for/after Peter Manson

Hperbola!
of my memory that don't
overcome

that as you know
today
as in a book

ideas jumped at
everything in
me

moderateness, and
with the soft sisters
i am prudent

time of the people's
authority, our unconsciousness
2 times confused
at midday, outside, speaking

turning away

the report you desire I give
(the requirement of relations)
which give I — turn/return
(without clean end)
eliminated, exaggerated
(to the different desperations)
come back absent — shifted

the absence
(in order, in order that)
exaggerates you
(the thing reaches you, that he)
in this art of the self-portrait
(in the comparison, discriminates)
to the people disappointed, or,

the time when he and the place deceive that
(risk the outside to do this)
and this movement
(truly look outside, our happy basic situation)
in order to give, it extracts
(in discrimination)
he knows this: movement

Letters to Poets: Conversations About Poetics, Politics, and Community

editors' note: jennifer firestone and dana teen lomax

The Letters To Poets project is the culmination of approximately one year's correspondence between 14 pairs of America's leading poets and the "emerging" poets with whom they chose to write. We say "emerging" in quotes because some of these poets now have several books out and, in some cases, are nearly the same age as some of the more "established" poets. From the inception of the project, there were no strict formal or thematic guidelines: we just asked the poets to write about their most pressing issues. The result is an exceptionally diverse anthology full of integrity, honesty, and skill.

The writers involved in the project are:

Alfred Arteaga and Hajera Ghori
Wanda Coleman and Truong Tran
Jayne Cortez and Rosamond King
Kathleen Fraser and Patrick Pritchett
Victor Hernández Cruz and Brenda Coulter
Paul Hoover and Albert Flynn DeSilver
Eileen Myles and Jennifer Firestone
Joan Retallack and Brenda Iijima
Leslie Scalapino and Judith Goldman
Quincy Troupe and Traci Gourdine
Claire Braz-Valentine and Dana Teen Lomax
Cecilia Vicuña and Jill Magi
Anne Waldman and Karen Weiser
John Yau and Anselm Berrigan

For several years before initiating the *Letters To Poets* project, we were interested in how collaboration stimulates creative risk-taking and a stronger sense of community. More recently we'd found ourselves eager for the kind of connections that letters—some kind of direct correspondence—might offer, something that would bring poets together in conversation in our own communities. We were inspired by several poets early on in graduate school, and knew mentorship was happening all the time, but we wanted to organize multiple parallel conversations and make them available on a larger scale.

Letters To Poets takes place approximately 100 years after the writing of Rilke's *Letters To A Young Poet* and does well to both credit and challenge that earlier work. In the *Letters* project, the

question of “mentorship” gets reworked as the writers talk about the endemic hierarchies and the problems in older models of apprenticeship. The topics in these letters range from race issues to gender codes, and from U.S. politics to poetics. We hope that these letters will spark discussion and offer insight into some of the ongoing urgent conversations in contemporary poetry.

The letters you read here are the first exchanges between Victor Hernández Cruz and Brenda Coulter, Jayne Cortez and Rosamond King and Anne Waldman and Karen Weiser. Additional letters are available at *How2* http://www.asu.edu/pipercwcenter/how2journal/vol_3_no_1/letters/index.html, *Rain Taxi* <http://www.raintaxi.com/online/2006fall/letterstopoets.shtml>, and *Jacket Magazine* <http://jacketmagazine.com/31/lett-intro.html>

Letters To Poets was published by *Saturnalia Books* in Fall 2008.

Jennifer Firestone is the author of *Holiday* (Shearsman Books, 2008), *Waves* (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2007), *from Flashes* (Sona Books, 2006) and *snapshot* (Sona Books, 2004). She is completing a book-length prose poem called *Flashes*, a collection of media sound bytes about war and community, and *Gates & Fields*, meditations on death and death language. She is an Assistant Professor teaching poetry at Eugene Lang College at The New School for Liberal Arts. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and their baby twins.

Dana Teen Lomax is the author of *Curren\$y* (Palm Press, 2006) and *Room* (a+bend, 1998) which was awarded the San Francisco Foundation’s Joseph Henry Jackson Award. She teaches poetry and writing in a number of institutions and serves as the Interim Director of Small Press Traffic Literary Arts Center in San Francisco. Currently she is making *Q* and *Disclosure*, experimental documentary pieces, and writing a series of poems called *Shhh: Lullabies for a Tired Nation*. She lives in northern California with her daughter and husband.

<http://www.letterstopoets.org/>

*10 or so questions about *It's go in horizontal**

elizabeth bryant in conversation with leslie scalapino

Elizabeth Bryant: Your new volume of selected poems, *It's go in horizontal*, was released this spring. It includes "The Floating Series" which Publishers Weekly described as "turn(ing) an act of intercourse into a stop-motion tour-de-force as if filmed by Muybridge and analyzed by Lacan." Is this assessment meaningful to you in any way?

Leslie Scalapino: No. I conceived of "The Floating Series" as an all-over spatial terrain in which events (small and large, individual and mass or societal—and also mystery of motion outside and inside one) are happening at once and one touches another like ping pong balls that send the whole into a different (new) motion/motions throughout. It is not "about" the act of sex, nor does the act of sex determine (nor is it analyzed by the other actions) the other events (for example: a black policeman being immolated on a field by an angry crowd, viewing him as a collaborator, that happened in South Africa at the time I was writing the poem—this was not affected by a couple making love that "occurs" "beside" the other event in this conceptual space). The actions don't merge, they are separate and go on at once. But, there is a rhythm of presentation, a sound scheme that can be heard in the line breaks of the individual small poems (sometimes one word on a line or two separated by a dash—a slow making time/keeping time). The whole is about being in time, the time being—and there is a middle place (undefined) that seems to be also creating.

EB: I had a dream recently that you were Poet Laureate of the US, and in the dream I had the odd thought that Language poetry had "finally arrived" because of your appointment. What do you think of this?

LS: Language poetry has already arrived—but one question would be, then, What is it? (I can't tell you the answer to that; but people asking that question or keeping it in mind is important to

the subject.)

EB: I guess I would say that whatever Language poetry is, perhaps it does not have for itself the goal of embodying that which is deemed suitable national laureate material!

LS: Yes I'd agree that Language poetry doesn't strive for material that would be suitable for a national laureate.

EB: While reading It's go in horizontal, and attempting to address the simultaneity of events ping-ponging off one another though not necessarily having any impact on each other, is it ever accurate to invoke Lacan when describing "The Floating Series", or any of your work for that matter? There is as you say, "a middle place (undefined)" that occurs between the ping and the pong (a gap, yes?), which to my mind is where the effort of Language poetry resides, and is also where language itself succeeds or fails. This to me reflects a Lacanian view of lacunae, both in Lacan's borrowing from the lexicon of the law where a lacuna describes the lack of a law (nothing to govern a particular instance, or perhaps simply a situation with no known rules), and in Lacan's borrowing from Saussure where a message is not received when it leaves or is in transit (the gap), but only after it arrives. And even then, the message's meaning may not necessarily affect anything once it arrives, or indeed may be interpreted in unlimited ways. Does any of this strike you as useful in understanding this work?

LS: To go back a bit, I didn't say that events touching each other (as ping pong effect) ever do not have an impact on each other. That is, everything affects everything else; and the whole changes at every instant accordingly—in phenomena in time and space. Thus I wanted to see that in my work, as finding out what would occur from that, or how that would be. This may be blasphemy but I have never read Lacan. I've tried to study Einstein and such sources, though these sources are not my main reading (that is, physical phenomena, and as if people or social are similar phenomena). Also, I can't generalize about where the effort of Language poetry resides as being "the gap" that we're describing,

the many poets tending to be very different from each other; but I would describe the main emphasis as being: the effect or nature of the writing arises from the mode of the language itself (it IS that), rather than arising from its theme or subject matter in which language is secondary. In my own writing, the “gap in between” is, as you say, crucial—it may be movement (or sense of the animate), or stillness, sense of space, time between events or actions (so, somehow an action itself), or anyway not a subject matter or an entity (nor is it an “it”, not being single). My source of this “gap” is sensory, apprehension informed by theory (rather than the other way around). I begin a work by first having a sort of spatial sense as if language is sculpture (not visual and not theme, but spatial or shape).

EB: What you say about language being sculpture brings to mind a sound experience I had recently. The artist Max Neuhaus has an installation called “Time Piece Beacon” at DIA: Beacon, NY, which acts as a kind of clock: it starts as a barely audible sound that grows in intensity as the hour approaches, and you don’t notice it until it abruptly stops, thus marking time. Suddenly the gap is there (the stillness and the space that is now empty but was a moment ago occupied by a sound, maybe somewhat like the shape you are talking about?), and it’s an awareness of the removal of sound—and the presence of a lack of sound—that causes you to pay attention and wonder what shifted. What was happening, just a moment ago, before you were caused to wonder what occurred? This “happening” is not, as you said, an entity, but there is nevertheless the sensation that there was somehow an “it” there, a physical object. I come away from this time piece feeling as if I’ve observed a sculpture, but there is no sound to see. There isn’t even an embodiment of a clock. And this relates also, I think, to what you said earlier about “The Floating Series,” that “there is a rhythm of presentation, a sound scheme that can be heard in the line breaks of the individual small poems (sometimes one word on a line or two separated by a dash—a slow making time/keeping time).”

On another topic, how did you choose poems from over 20

books of writing to create the volume of selected poems? How are decisions like that made? I imagine it would be an agonizing experience.

LS: I chose the pieces for *It's go in horizontal* by instinct, choosing quickly by having an overall sense of the shape of my work and its parts throughout. Then, I read the manuscript and added selections from two books that had been left out: *The Return of Painting*, *The Pearl*, and *Orion*, and *The Front Matter*, *Dead Souls*. I discovered that those prose/poetry works made a step in my work that acted as a connection in *It's go in horizontal*. The connection is that the prose paragraphs of *The Return of Painting*, *The Pearl*, and *Orion* are sometimes only a line or two, as if the prose paragraph is indistinguishable from a line that's poetry—thus expansive, as if the lines of text make an open space, or as if text lines are a scroll unfolding in a large space, both vertically and horizontally.

EB: There are what I would call “directives” at the beginning of each section of “*Fin de siècle*”. Have you observed these pieces performed the way you intended them to be? Or, have you ever had the experience, later on, of wishing to make changes to these instructions after seeing the pieces performed by others?

LS: The directives for the poem-plays were ways I imagined to give a sense of large outdoor panoramas, like the instruction to use a backdrop of an endless savannah, or sculptures of car-wrecks hanging in the air. They're spatial to show the relation of a few individuals and the sense of their being in a space of unfolding history. The plays were performed using the same number and same gender of performers as I'd specified, but never performed with the kind of scenery I wanted (diorama-like). It was too difficult to make scenery or use backdrops for it. The poem-plays are minimal, gestural. I'd like to see them enacted the way I imagined, if it were possible. “*Fin de Siècle*” could perhaps be performed by silent dancers next to people speaking the text?

EB: I just was reading about a 2007 performance/fundraiser at

the Red Rover Series in Chicago of Kristen Prevallet's I, Afterlife, where she created a performance that sounds a little like what you're talking about (silent dancers next to people speaking the text). In this case, Prevallet read the text while dancers performed. Would you like to be one of the people speaking the text? In general, how do you feel about reading your own work? Does it change for you to have others read it?

Also--it reminds me of the photographs you comment on in "Crowd and not evening or light." But in that case the silent dancers are people photographed off in the distance, and the text speaker is the part of the brain that likes to comment on what it sees from afar.

LS: As a poet I'm of course accustomed to giving readings. Most poetry, as such, is to show how it is read. Mine is carefully scored, like music, in which use of space between words, dashes, line breaks, and run-on paragraphs designate how it sounds. A poem, for example, may be long lines as if paragraphs breaking at the far edge of the page (as in the poem titled "DeLay Rose" and others), which suggests a casual speaking tone but has a spatial quality, holding many spaces at once as if real-time spaces simultaneously. In that case the voice of a person reading aloud would try to hold at once the different plateaus of space, much the way an instrument can hold a note. Therefore I tend to read the same text each time in the same way. I've noticed that when others read my work aloud they may ignore some of these indications of how to read it, which is always surprising to me, showing me how I might possibly designate the work more clearly. But it may be, in the age of web-reading, that people are encouraged by the medium itself to ignore the way the material object appears. They're de-sensitized in that way. My work is always calling attention to its being a material "thing" that is also a sound. In regard to performances: I've both read poetry and enacted it by moving with dancers, in collaborations with June Watanabe and her company. Also, six poem-plays have been performed, with actors, or dancers, or poets.

EB: Reading the word "horizontal" repeatedly in "Resting

lightning that's night, Friendship," eventually impresses upon me the sense that horizontal is no longer what I normally understand it to be (an oppositional adjective, as in "sideways" instead of "up and down", for example). Rather, it begins to become more verb-like, as if horizontal is something to be done instead of a description of how something is. Am I on the right track here?

LS: You're reading "horizontal" as I intended. It's a motion (of people, and other phenomena such as mountains) and an event of space. Especially in "Resting lightning that's night," "horizontal" is a way of seeing everything flowing, existing at different times in parallel simultaneous spaces—not permanent, but not ever passing either. You're accurate in pointing out it's not so much a state of being, as an occurrence.

EB: that they were at the beach is called an "aeolotropic series". Can you comment on the significance of physics in the way this series is structured? I'm still trying, to get a good grasp of what aeolotropic means in this context.

LS: "Aeolotropic" means: objects seen differently according to the place from which they are viewed. If the viewer moves to a different spot, particular objects are seen entirely differently as from that perspective. The sequential poem of that title suggests that the real-time, historical events actually alter, not just change, events or occurrences by one's memory of these (or lack of memory). But the events are qualified changing from/by their relation to each other, and thus each one changing each other. I meant by this that one could change actual real-time events that remain in their time, but are altered in time now, by one seeing the whole clearly.

EB: Can you describe other specific laws or theories of physics at work in it's go in horizontal?

LS: The poem-sequence way, which has six series, has an introductory note citing David Bohm's Chance and Causality

in Modern Physics. It's his theory of qualitative infinity, that everything is changing everything else so constantly and simultaneously that nothing is even itself—thus there is no single entity. I wrote this sequential poem before reading Bohm. His book was loaned to me by the poet Rick London, who said that Bohm had a good description of what I was doing in the unfolding of the changing events. It was, in that respect, the same as in that they were at the beach—the writing began to find out the word (that came to be the title, aeolotropic series), or defining principle, rather than the writing starting, being premised on, the definition as a given process or form.

EB: Would “Delay Series” also be considered aeolotropic? Could you compare this series to the so-called “Rashomon effect?”

LS: “Delay Series,” part of way, is the one actually described as “the series as qualitative infinity”—that is, minute occurrences that are all, at once, changing each other. Which is different from simply looking at an object from different perspectives (locations) so it appears differently. That is, after writing that they were at the beach, I’d discovered more about time, chance, and observation changing history. Comparing way to Rashomon highlights a social principle of action. That: how we see something is what it becomes/is already in so-called real-time-space (though, or by, the definition of “real” being challenged). “Delay Series” was “centered” (but then altering any center, not ever having a center) on the fact of a young friend (I was young then too) dying of AIDS, when both the illness and the act of dying were unexpected (to those viewers).

EB: In The Front Matter, Dead Souls, you address a re-election campaign. Is there a place in which the 2008 presidential election will appear in the writing you are working on now?

LS: The 2008 election hasn't yet gotten into my writing. But social phenomena of recent years do show up in my writing, such as corruption, torture, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SALTY ART

I'm going to get my book, lose cookies
and fake poem. There's room for so much
clout, I don't know serious from a hole
in the agile exile of me. No one on the train
is looking at the same Loyal
magazines I read, their lucid line drawings and bras
painted on. These too, these pandas will have to change
stops. They think the conductor has
arranged a special exit for evening birds, they discuss.
It simply isn't a stand-up case of awake
due to hearing happy wounds. They hurt.
The outside olive's fleeing me
down the third rail, but also following reflection-like
the Long Island road, the log to ride that was
the year I found Crystal Gayle and her hair
enmeshed through the bastard bars of Frida Kahlo.
Lungs ripping, hearts in triple time double down,
they save the best for real museums.
I'll report back with the rest. Relax for now.

IT'S TIME TO LEARN OTHER COUNTRIES

I don't think people should walk around naked.
We didn't invent clothes as a laughing graffiti.
Similar people have thought likewise.
Alas, an atlas does not describe exactly where
these minds are stable at any given point in the gravity
that holds our positions to Google mapmakers.
That is, that is the primary place where all things
dissolve, though we try to hold hands and thoughts
intertwined as so many tics of the human apparatus,
we name the piano lobes anti-matter.
I don't know if you even follow the progression
of this species, this race, this variety of ethnic barriers,
but just keep hold to the platter that a shirt or a sock
gives to the eye's gatekeeper: you are of this sector
bearing this income in your army's holding pattern.
That bank is the commercial one of commerce.
That bank protects the identity pinpoint you travel on.
That bank never lasts. In actionality,
I ate my time, held birth, got into belonging.
Loyal is worth it. Hard to hold. We all want some.

Part of the Weekend Never Dies

david toms

It's usually a good rule of writing about an event to write about it as it happens, so that when it's read back you can feel the urgency of the event as its happening. Writing as events occur allows the reader to pick up the nuances of the moment much better than when it has been written after the fact, more so for some events than others. After my experience of Sound Eye, a poetry festival held every year for the past twelve years in Cork, however, I felt it almost necessary to put some distance between myself and the event, in order to better asses it's impact.

The festival, has been held every year for the last 12 years in Cork, Ireland. This year was only my second time at the festival, and for those of you who have never been able to experience it, SoundEye is a four day event, running from Thursday evening until Sunday afternoon. An utter marathon of poetry, SoundEye is an event that never fails to alight your poetic senses, and in some wonderful instances, utterly shake your poetic sensibilities--this is the real joy of this festival.

Just as my mind was opened to incredible new possibilities by the works and performances of people like Jow Lindsay and Justing Katko, my mind nearly exploded by the works of Sean Bonney and Francis Kruk (especially their joint performance of 'Cuckoo' at the Cabaret--perhaps the highlight of my personal SoundEye experience). Like any artistic event of great merit, what happens in the time before, between, and after performances is just as much a part of the charm as is all those things which happen during the actual readings. SoundEye removes a barrier that often exists between performer and audience member. It is as much the conversations, the socializing, and the all-round camaraderie produced by this festival that make it so captivating. Things rarely, if ever, start exactly on time; few, if any, complain. It is this very aspect of the festival that is such a great attraction--the ability to actively engage with co-conspirators often makes a huge difference to inexperienced and experienced writers, alike. This year, Maggie O'Sullivan played with this concept at the Exhibition above Plugd Records by getting us all to join in the reading of one of her pieces.

If something fails to make you feel a part of an event, then the event itself has failed. There is no such worry with SoundEye.

The venues used for SoundEye are just another ingredient to the special intimate atmosphere of the whole festival. Festival locations included the Firkin Crane theatre, the Cork Artist's Space (a converted house and acts as a drop-in centre for travelling artists), the Other Place (a slightly cavernous meandering building which is a converted factory), and the Black Mariah Gallery above Plugged Records. Each, though different, provided festival-goers with an intimacy where stages aren't overtly stated, keeping audiences and performers closer together. This all helps to create that sense of belonging and participation that are so crucial to what SoundEye is all about, and what marks it out as different and indeed, better, than quite a few poetry festivals.

Aside from the performance venues, Callanan's pub and of course, the house of Trevor Joyce, acted as a sort of HQ for all the festivals comings-and-goings. Callahan's (a personal favorite of mine on any night of the year in Cork) provided the atmosphere for an excellent meeting of the minds Thursday night. Packed out and flowing with drink and conversation, it allowed me the opportunity to talk to quite a few people in a more comfortable surrounding.

This year's festival was also my first time going up to Trevor's house--a wonderful experience. The house is a converted pub, full from floor to ceiling in books on every single topic under the sun (and perhaps a few above it, as it were)... Hanging out there and having food while having great conversations during the day with Susana Gardner and Andrew Zawacki and Fergal Gaynor was memory enough, let alone the night we had Saturday! I am now, by the way, struggling to quite get across the enjoyment of the night--part of why some things need to be written about as they happen, however in order to fully understand, you just have to be there I guess...and that's an incentive to go along to the festival in my mind!

Having learned last year just what the festival is really about: the possibilities of what poetry can still become, what it is changing into and the spread and discussion of ideas – I was fully prepared for more of the same this year, and was not disappointed. As I mentioned earlier this year allowed me to open my mind yet newer

and different directions in my own thinking about poetry, much as it did last year. But going into the coming twelve months with the benefit of two years experience of this festival and the ability to allow it and the very special readings and atmosphere created around it (something thanks in large part to the hospitality of Trevor Joyce) means that by the time I attend my third SoundEye, I will be more ready and more willing to allow the festival and what happens at it to pull my mind in yet another new direction. And that is the exciting thing.

For all of my inability to portray the wonder that is SoundEye without the urgency found in ‘journalling’ the event, it is better to write about this event from a distance--it creeps up on you without you realising it and before you know it, you are counting down the days until it all begins again!

Exhibit Jay in communication with Christopher at iloveboxie

jessica rainey

At No Desk of Exhibit Jay there are contemplation attempts. The attempts amount to no communication, which probably shouldn't be contemplated and simply done. A.way. With (ny)... Exhibit Jay is considering decoding the babble by building on the X communication factor. Unsteady foundations perhaps. But through observing other leaning towers, the conclusion must be: aliens are attracted anyway. And not only attracted, but willing to stand under *and* hold up the pitch. Although there is of course an exchange... they stand under, we under stand. In brief encounter, Exhibit Jay is contemplating under righting an alien so that the alien or preferably several, probably from the same galaxy, may stand under Jay. Exhibit Jay is willing to walk the multi-storeys of the other, leaning or other wise, and ex communicate them from the confines of their weird walled world. This is indeed progress. of the mind. if not the feet. don't know where they stand at the moment but stand they will before they step on the accelerator of the caravan in the sky. which grows wings while others contemplate the lift of the leaning tower of Jay. Ahh me me cry. The key to harmony. Sea major. Minor babbling brook.

More progress. The leaves have blots now that her man might claim have form. Or at least stains. Progress in deed.

More questions. Polar Bare and The Cleaner migrating south to Box Car Nation? That would make Big Car Nation almost Boxie... Or perhaps that's overstepping the pavement? Still the pavement would be most happy to accommodate any shamblers moving south with boxes...

No more. Exhibit Jay waits in bare anticipation of his polar ware and will pitch her this when he has the necessary can.

implication - spryness - immured cheaply
manages explosion (wanton, venular, marinated) -
null subcutany
dread smart - vouchsafed shrinkage readapts contemplative, ricket
chantry assort >>** clatter))- underran @#2
gothic b/urr (maturing de/ fliegen(d hul)&coer

influence, calculators - atrocious, blessed
(ineffectual diligent :::: topple --- metallize

“The ripple in your evening...”

The ripple in your evening
left little to heal when
you skulked from your swell—
all twilight and choking.

They went to the water to breathe,
canalized fatigue into tips of fingers
and wet throb. “We were mineral,”
she’d gag, not drowned by the gone.

There were notions in that pool,
holding us beneath their calm.
I can take this shallow—
I will age it in my hands.

Mica wasn’t her name
between the hours of damp and noon.
To own the story isn’t enough.

You have to bash its hiss
against your tendril
like you never were its dusk.

ana božičevič

Sebastian

Home

It's raining &
little-ones-of-rain
are talking to him.

"Color *is* torment." Or:
"Fool, your book is getting wet!"—
cackling like peppercorns

from the bright green. (I
get now what he said about brick:
it's relentless, eaten

by history. Eye-blue acidity
aging
all it's touched.) O bomb

of the world seen and unseen!
If he told them to shut up,
the talking would cease.

But he's in the room without decisions.

Subway

Yes— you, petals! we've come
to the lip of known space,

a hole. Here,
the red curtain: (Summer, in a father.

He takes
him from the sun narrows up into the bone fortress.

Asks, Who
would like to smell a womb again?)

No—! And now Sebastian maelstroms into the hole.
Commuters carry

umbrellas, blades of grass:
everyone's happy to have learned his name. When

the puddles have pulled back, tenderness
remains.

Date

“So, the pearl’s the oyster’s price
of admission. Where to?” “And if – if

I met a ghost, would I ask: Who are you,
or Who am I? What’s the weather up
there—”

Sebastian,

shut it.

“In the

—So the sky is cleared like a million tables.

Sex

Sebastian, why
do you wear a girl's dress?

I didn't care. I only hoped I wouldn't
die, so we'd catch the film

on Wednesday. Willing captive
of a color—your

slightly
fringed around the edges soiled

eternity ensemble—I

was your mother? Lived only

on salt And in bed

you'd take off your

spectacles— “Thank you, I'm sorry,” you say.

The night goes rain and saffron:

Spoken by a Piece of Gum on the Open-Air Platform

Comes a thing better
than names: this piece of wire
angling from the trash-yard door:

a mobile, a thinness! Early on,
we find out, via stomach:
it's better to be green, or wire, or

gum. Our landscape is all thrust:
skyscrapers. Avalanche. Even
Sebastian— —Sorry,

that name's an
empty
water bottle. Someday its sound

will be emblem
of my temperance. But now?
it's sorrow.

excerpts from Victoriland

To elicit—

charcoal pornography of old, a scroll
with all the ladies' holes too high-set—

To fetishize the stuff of our Original Gum Tree:
stuck on: tiny shoes, leaping roe, rape of the lock

shaven maidens, stereophonic
James Dean tearing me apart!

To rotate your object next to or near completion
ice on the balls, an open window, own sweatbox

swaddled in texturized satin—
what I extracted from keyholes

too high set, let slipper on the disproportionate
page of her lithe beaver splayed w/ twig & dam!

.....

The unblinking bellboy unmanned of his telegram —sigh here—

The mountainous cats of the landlady & her dusk —rose, smoke—

The wrapper with Chinese embroidery smells like —duck sauce—

The hunks of crusty bread unmanned from tables —ball-gagged—

.....

The man looks through the content

Of an umbrella stand: all the same—

As in an arm factory, mannequin

Hands are paid the deference due

The corpse of the Beloved object

.....
The instruments stuck in the foreground

lawn pliable

torn to feathers

The intensity of a man

sewing censer's into our Old World Charm, waffling in its stanch base-
ment (attached)

.....

I'm talking the apricot velour of your seasonal obsession

Washed to a sheen

A gaping fish in the

Given up glow of your one remaining gaslight, off the cuff—

.....

To turn white with pleasure
And get away with it

.....

And while, o while

the witching saffron hour unhitches its burden

all over the sheet set

I walked with the Gentleman—
in the listing streetlights of just

November, which was once my
world of choice, quipping up, lo!

with invective, He burdened His

heavy leather bag amid the wheat
of maidenhead which falling and
falling laterally—

unclaspt the cerebellum where I
don't ode seasonal of late—Oh, But!.....

Furthermore, now, I will speak

in the guise of my Dead Don!

A stiff wind wins his opera cape
straight through me—I turn on

off—on—off

the human meat of me an open
hand which stops the trolley red

on its tracks—tiniest hammers

Binary Lights!

.....

1st attempt—

in a quail's egg you've hid me hermetically in
the folds
of your skirts

—conjoined more than

once before the gate admitted your flesh
folly

Burn This.

.....

A Double Gust!

—where two equal forces meet and create a still-life on the points of
their tongues—

.....
Winged-things revise my prospect
Rising on a set of louvered blinds—

“Just let her listen to her music!”

—a beating, thwap, thwap-thwap-thwap-thwap-thwap!
in the tuba-coloured aires of a black swan amid marigolds

“Softly, as in a morning sunrise”

four maidens lifted their girdles out from the fresh bails of hay

.....
Here:

used pine needles
thick conditioners
lip stain/varnish
one straight razor
cube sugar/tongs
lifted straight up
from China cups
of day-old Sanka

You're Willkommen.....

Whatever happened to the Green Knight—

his vegetable head bowed down the darkling path!
his “well, I do say” mustache made of twin zucchinis!

his impossible riddles on the state of his melon, squashed!
his tailcoat hemmed with the tar of ancient Mazurkas!

.....

I keep waking up in other people's rooms—

There are so many drawers I have to hide

All my countertenors & overripe berries—

Wherever to place my harpsichord in this

Defunct privacy of deceased card catalogues—

In this enormous room of inconsequential
Affinities!

.....feathering out & out with no regard for Father Time

whose going rate is -

Cut!

.....

jennifer h. fortin

from *Mined Muzzle Velocity*

Dear,

February

suitably planned zone

ambush

ambush

ambush

ambush

ambush

All Is Concealment. Surprised?, Yrs.

*

Man with knife, room with knife.

*

two men on a road to two men

*

She is not in the window. I am not
in the window.

Study of two figures.

*

Rare occurrence
of a man in a woman
on a road by a fountain.

*

ROOM WITH A MAN

room without him similar

*

Woman by a bird and a bird.

from Occupation Traces

In early summer still

1

In early summer still my body scuds across the sea
congregations of clouds overcome the onlookers
and mist stitches onto sides of rock wall

I wonder what you watch there spaces away
induced by what can we trace it on my protractor
mottled seaglass becomes plush in your hand

2

Each morning Marti and Gary watch speedboats on the inlet
boneless creatures ensconce themselves deep in tidal pools
I watch night-flying white moths thrust fingers into driftwood

3

You took the red-eye to New York
I watched over the boulevards all afternoon
imagining burnt wood and seagrass

poppies cover the field by your uncle's house
in the window I remember your Byzantine face

can you feel the current mid-stream
do you see it pull you cross-country

4

I run my toe over the embayment in the sheets
spacious apartment chilled by northern breezes

earlier that day we threw stones
from acres clear-cut into the mountains

he wonders about the laundry
courts the freckle on my neck
wrangles twelve consecutive overnights

As chief cartographer for the city

1

As chief cartographer for the city
he maps systems

simple things
subways freeway exits migratory patterns
diseased trees fashionable restaurants
lost dreams displaced tenants spent hours
he would grow with the company

catalogue stolen memories
model the depths of the bay
press his ear to the wall and listens for co-ordinates

2

Let's meet downtown at the spider

he has tiptoed into our collective consciousness
no need to worry about the sea
take the Hibiya Line

minimalist metal and earthy stone
arrive after a decade in gestation
it is the key to understanding today

or maybe visit my house
it is deliberately welcoming

3

Your waking spans the day
in hours so bright even clouds go unnoticed

long staircases might lead to sky tunnels
pathways from building to building

you are the only other one I bring here
I was not sure you would come

if the rest of the block crumbles 7.2
if not only 3.3 or 4

as if to answer your question
plaster falls from the south wall

4

She spent '89 re-tracking storms
Audrey Hazel Camille Donna

watched footage graphed paths
hotels homes cars
developed a certain fondness for Betsy and her sister

floated on mattresses from eighth storied windows
lit bonfires by the pier
checked out the storm swell
scanned the yellow sky

seven tame sea lions may be loose in the Gulf
bodies washed out of cemeteries may be mistaken

from 'Episode Three In Which Mr. Wyndham's Cat Kills The Milkman'

I.

I think I
used to be an
“I love you” type
of drunk

who would
end up crying in
front of a large
Elvis poster. Now,

I just fall asleep
with visions of
daffodils laughing

in my face.

II.

“Perhaps the best
thing,” she said, “is
to not

think about it.” So
I smashed my face
with
an iron.

III.

In slow music,
one can hear the
gasps of the composer,

who rests his eyes
just long enough to
ignore the lingering

siren.

IV.

I had a mug,
once, that
lit up when

one poured hot,
steamy liquid
inside.

When I cracked it,
the skull just said,

“Thanks for the
pomegranate.”

V.

When peas mix with
other colors, I want
to run around and

hug Republicans

before beating them with
the (still hot) microwavable
tray.

VI.

I wish I could have
myself over for lunch
once. And that way,

I could tell myself to
dress like I meant to

when I watched TV after
school and dreamt of stardom

over potato chips.

VII.

Would you like it
if you could come at
languages like

a foreigner and
that way
no one would blame
you
for your fucked up

english?

XI.

Saltines come in boxes of
120
and slices of cheese come in
packs 24. My mind's a skipping

record and I'm ready to toss out
the player. And they expect me to
keep knitting gray socks for
warm winters.

XII.

If we were told that Batman's
testicles were "real" and "spectacular",
we wouldn't blink because we know

they're rubber. And we're sort of fine with
that.

XIII.

What color is group sex? Because

oral is blue and anal
is red (that makes no
sense!)

so what color is group
sex?
XV.

Every abundant
source of America is
crusted by shower
mildew.

Try a branded cleaner
next time. They usually
don't pass out as
easily.

XVI.

Once, while I was
intoxicated,

you came into the room
and I shoved my middle
finger into the air
over and over
again.

This, I realize, makes me
the happiest.

XVIII.

Can't more things
be multi-use paper?

Can't she laugh at jokes and
solve riddles just as well as

she becomes an object to
be defiled?

XIX.

A tendency towards
biting one's nails is
a testament to

life's culinary designer; a
revelation over hot soup.

XX.

I was skipped

at karaoke.
How

Un-American.

XXVI.

I don't under-
stand your
meth

amphetamine,

much less your
text-mess

aging.

XXVII.

There's no 'secret'
to 'secret
sauce':

There's liquid;
there's other
stuff.

What's so 'un-
secret' about water?

Have you ever seen
hydrogen?

80. Things That Have Lost Their Power

In order to melt a woman
a large wooden wind
has at its root, air
The woman as him has gotten angry
The trifling husband goes from the house
and hides somewhere
convinced of the fact that
an indifference to rage is shown
meaning that she cannot be permanently restricted

With the spring tide in decline
the boat is high in his admission
Melt the hair of a woman
Nobody old in addition to being thin
Owing to the fact that indifference to fury is shown
its significance cannot be limited in a permanent way
Pride turns over

Nobody always except besides it being thin
The fact is anger, indifferently demonstrated
A sense of pride or reassignment

Drying out from its holidays, the boat rests
The violent storm outside the wooden side
Some importances condemn support
Nobody always, excluded except is
She hurries over him in search of order
This fact indifferently is demonstrated as annoyance
A durable way of meaning
It is not possible to understand enclosure or pride

The relative festivities
in the short fuse of a woman
It effects you, the violent storm outside your wooden side
The outline is demolished
The woman is caught up in it annoyingly
in the married surplus of a man
The relative vacation of their house
The hidden parts of approximatea
She hurries over he in search of order
They have convinced the facts indifferently

Relative to limit, the durable meaning of sense
The relative sense of pride
The renewed allocation is not possible
The boat dries its holidays
In the end, to melt the woman with short hair
the diagram of her is demolished
Some importances condemn sustenance

The married excess of a man is shaped like a question
The hidden parcel of approximatea
She hurries on her orderly search
It is not possible to understand this wall

The hair, in short, in order to melt passing all
The man marries the trifling question
She is urgent once inside meaning

Anger marries this house
The room contains pride as a direction
She is urgent but will put it smooth
They are indifferently disturbed

Seclusion competes and demolishes
criticisms and importance
He enters the periphery under her
Marry this house and holidays will be approximate
She is pressed inside and smooth
Her research of him, an interior significance
The part of pride that replaces the self's characteristics

Efficiency inside has a vibration
that competes with seclusion
That this man vexedly let this woman arrive
to approximate the holidays in skin

You who have become skillful at storms
The package contains the skin of things
their clay remains
Investigation of indifference obstructed

To understand how these sheetrocked walls approximate pride
and the relative festivities found in skin

136. Things That Fall from the Sky

A roof from bark, from cypress
also freezing on a roof or in a garden
But if she is mixed with pure white snow
It announces all branches between clay bricks
I don't taste enamel
The snow seems surprising

I will have joined the pure snow
If it breaks down or if small it
Everything only fell
In the way the snow which can be begun
Which is black
There is soap or drizzle or hail

Nontaste and enamel
I am the year old for the benevolent one much
In the way that snow has a power to begin
To announce a ramification between clay
More attractive
Brick marl pure target man
I to have soap it drizzles and hail

A.M. stops under degree in one roof tile
Snow to resemble or astound
To fall into a roof crust cypress
Marking time with analyzing or so small
For only falling

In the way which snow accentuates the starting
The morning ends beneath the roof

I freeze in the garden

Note: Written at the turn of the second millennium, this poem is a rethinking, a modernization of a section from "The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon" which was written at the end of the first millennium by a courtesan during the Heian period in Japan.

from CAMELS!

At Camelot

Here now, this now
came a lot of
up to camps sucking
water off the humps
bright orange—the sun's
color—art hurts
no knights near, nice hurts
a lot don't
know oasis

A Camelot

who says art hurts
are ours, heard? At
here, now, this now
splits into two—the one
on the waterboard and the one
waterboarding. The sad
lot of the camel, to lug
a lot of water all its
life. Its log repetitive:
art hurts, art hurts, art hurts
ad nauseum. Nah, says who,
when? Camelot, an oasis
on the southeastern tip of Camelot.
Who thins into I, you, and
the absent one. I present you with
I, and together we mourn.
Our mourning is empty, formal, devoid
of totality. The hurts art
unspeakable. The sad lot of
our hurts is a lot
cannot be divided into twos,
so by sharing hurts are spared
on desiccated humps,
its lunchbreak overseen
by the lords and ladies at Camelot,
a whip, a stone, art hurts
who? this, now. hear, now.

In Camelot

The patron of quote true holiness fouls latrine. Scarce water on the southeast tip of Camelot causes citizens' howl: no paper in flush! Guest friends, having stripped, holes checked, adapt. Refreshed, guest-friends slip into chambers for reading and contemplation, but plan's nipped, as guard's enter, whips, grab folios from lawless sans contempt, pump book into sump, pumped, piss. Guest-friends? Wimps. The guile-full great Kaiser makes sex parts, hearts parting guest-friends into groups with different clearance access, guests vs. friends, hearts parting eyes from spectacle in latrine, whiffs residuals, nose pinched, waves off with laughs the pleas of camels odorous, pleasing, he hearts brays and fraying larynx. Guards laugh, confident truth's culled, and how's culled: easy, toss book at camel, hunched over, wheezing. Forsaken truth long seeks her love and makes detainees mild, cue literacy, my eyes full of tears make the pages moist. Cakes and bougie treats make the moist stuff dry, mars blind devotion's mart and falls in eyes of lecher viled. There are lots of reasons not to read. Volunteers wallop with pies, what, the Kaiser is only effigy, son, flush: no question, no foul: to not's treason.

O As Is

That was. Who says? This, then
knobby knees of them making amends
to Vulcan. The desert walls ring
amens, where the walls though
mirageous are all the rage for guards.
In the thick growth round the desert ponds,
the voice (Art) has been rattling
the fronds: "Within me there's a prison
surrounding me alone
real as any dungeon
with its walls of stone."
Were then as this now?
Crumb in the nostril, dumb is the reply.
Dang, was then that then?
Just after all a compound
cloaked in devices built to sense
objects and split them in two.
One bird, thirsty as Lawrence in Lawrence
of Arabia, drinks the sand, yum. Parched
throat utters no lark. Had tea, spilled guts
in the minefield past the desert walls
which were cleared in the 1990's. That was that,
then that is.

O As If

a with a broken hump
please plea then if hurt!
silence says nothing about
the unspeakable, that is,
it's safe as it's safe
to say nothing about the
unspeakable can be said.
mewls, howls, cries, all mean
split me in two, read my guts,
advise the general what day
to start the slaughter,
thus when to cue servants
pop Dom Perignon,
start the laughter.
It's safe to say the safe
word is within the guts.
Cue cut. Cut hurt,
the guts are underneath the humps,
on the contrilly, in the rugged
hills of who? in what
was then and there known as
Camelot. Camelot, Pakistan.

OASIS

The sex of birds is now working like a horse. Beneath the skin of the breast sits secrets. Splits, first the skin and then, psyched, a secret. The secret will have made the wits of the Kaiser moist, no mirage, real buckets of water pool in his eyes and pour.

He will have been so moved, and spreads bucks to previously poor interrogators, who split the breast, read letters in the splay, rendered them in English: work a/k/a “camel play”

Arena / Breaking

What clock has the most moving parts?

She lies naked in the sand
her body covered in butter

the floor covered in flour
with which she is also powdered.

The sky is so blue
the same sky over us all
Earth's atmosphere
thin as a layer of paint on an apple
where purely natural weather
no longer exists.

So happy
granular
quartzmicafeldspar magnetite
a loose incoherent mass
the staff of life atomised
impressed on an edible emulsion of fat globules
her square metre of skin
singing in every nerve.

I let her at it
keeping an eye through the patio door
while I sweep and count down the five and a half hours till bedtime.
The air is full
of every radio wave
I hear
– real, inverted, diminished –
a detail:
in a home for the mentally handicapped
the attendant absconded
leaving the inmates manacled to the walls

For some reason I think of the attendant
as a child perpetually besieged

to the pin of their collar just shovelling shit
the inmates (what a word!), whatever their age,
in the law's eyes forever children.

Tonight every screen will fill with water
and eyes sensitive to a single photon
will gather images of populations clinging to trees
can nun spar

Imagine the hooting and honking
everyone high as kites
so long cut off from their own skin
kicking and splashing as the water rises
screams of hilarity as some start to float.

bell gong whistle,

so much meat
caught in god's industrious teeth.

I've followed Florence upstairs
where she stands in the en-suite shower
holding her hands up to the water
as if in supplication.

What relief it must have been
when each day finally ended
and they slept.

Sleep little darlings
sleep
wet mouths open to starlight
coursing through a darkness
cold enough to turn breath solid.

depth of ex
annual slurs
worry at
nothing-words
left inattentive
of transvestism
propensity of movement
history wiped clean™
watching the windows
for signs of burlesque
smirking
smugness innovative
& left-hand-lies cause
conspiracies of fiction
in four turns
of disillusionment while
stray thoughts
punch holes
in crème de menthe
stories
dismembered limbs
(stored in
freezer)
are kidnapped by

disgruntled spouses & threatened
with fraudulent exposures
macabre altruism
is twice the fun
of lascivious egotism
stepping over
million pound
fired
bored by
consolations
(or is that)
constellations?

Mumbled answers
to disinterested dentists
who check spaces
between gender stereotypes
& electric shocks
on the 2nd January 1909
oral history obligations
to prescribed categories
as accents are
flattened and changed
to flawless anonymity

fairness achieved finally
through 50/50 exposure
plump bellydancers
drink bourbon
in circus tents
propped by porn stars
disappointed by lust
speaking in secret stammers
on gladiatorial
tremors
fine dining in forecourts
where discussions using
words replacing curses
have crucifixion labelled 'lousy'
& quality defined
by slang and size
glib proclamations
and flotsametrics
on 80000 runners
break light on
pernicious slithers
of sinister orange
broken deadly

while cherry blossom
removed by
windscreen wipers
weeping withers
muffled forgiveness
in uncomfortable
sickness made
& distributed
at a reduced rate
concrete futures &
quick glance anticipation
d scratched to a
a scratched to c
inexplicable murmur
of buildings
(built then torn down)
cracks appear
in wrists &
eyes cadmium yellow
tears taste
filthy & strange
burning channels
from face to

feet (bare & painted)
on coquettish
dinner ladies
revelations of
threat masked by
early 90s pop
appearance of
limbs (dismembered & frozen)
& "the crowd goes wild"
biased by bootstrap
confidence embargoed
and left in a box
marked 'empty'
sneezes of outrage
obsessed by ocular purity
shouting (from windowsill)
at passing usurpers
or sitting
statue still
in the hope
of attention

Book Burning to Ashen Strophe

...life until too late hot ashes and pain...

--Antigone

...a secret because he is separated from it...

--Blanchot

I wear you

Sleeping lick

Of flame we walk and carry morning skin's ridges

Words between first and last

There are infinitely many you said

We stoop or we crawl

We double the heaviness

And wait, you said hour spines ashen brightly we ask

I believe you asked

How far

Do you think this last

Breath will travel?

I wear you

Waking smear

Of ashen fold

After the fire

We sit bone to bone and carry this morning walking

The branching gutter words

Flung heat rising into the osculated sky they turn

You said we watched and heard you

Mark the air and you marked and punctured the air

And then I was alone again I asked, I believe we asked

If it is true that you will become

The stars and all their dust, how will you ever fit

Into this small, charred

Container all of you?

A little known fact of the saddle stitch, preventative

Molecules

Between molecules you say

Blanchot---

Mourning's mourning

Molecular barrierwise a shunting the walls

Disipat-

Ive, needle knotting stings under,

Its working that of burning sense the fugue of Krebs

You said I believe you wrote

On a morning like this one

Prior to the undoing trees

Poplar

Birch

Beech

Rose

-Woods

Would it matter I said

Would it care, poem-life defames

Corpus

Corpse-was

The book before resurrection cleaving waits for future

Tense

That peopled tension

Sprague wrote in the margins of his

letter from a Birmingham jail we write to right?

Enmassed scorched conscience the lot our lot, para-

Hewn

And open lamps only lamps ablaze now but for the margins

From the palm heat rises

If from this form is up-

Ward word-object turning, this

Turning tensions not

Let it be, not to supplicate but letters

Actions a moving this walking

A stick made to reed, plant un-

Silence of the un-written you wrote, burned soon after

Perhaps all day god plays dice lefty

At night the bunker buster rattles
not my night stand

stol t/o & e,

ej, thx tuhya

symp chit ...

And I tucked my shoulder

Becoming a pillow for a mouth
whispering in pashtun to a man
who does not

speak

Pashtun who is not there

Maybe in philadelphia the weather
is bad

Perhaps instead of rain, baby
fingers?

Perhaps one day we will all read
minds?

Then, ad libitur, we could read our
own minds?

Then, ante bellum, we will have a lot
more books?

Day came and went, swept the yard and
waited for more acronyms to descend

On the yard that I swept

Willing to bet the department of defense
stowed the machine in a
falling railway

car

Inside the car is a secret machine

Inside the machine is another secret
machine

Metal drum that shows the temporal
order for what it is

ayfki t . . . uma gnr

nw d su n cr k s mrky
hh s m ea c, oh hm...

But for the shades, remember?

The house

The leaves

The thresholds we carry

Jabes told us so nomadism an if

Some steal nights so that language can
be given to its rightful owners

Reparations for those who wish not to
talk in their sleep

Sleeping is a kind of waking sometimes
at night

Forgetting is an apotheosis at Seattle
International Airport

Forgetting is an affirmation of Seattle
International Airport

Writing is the rehearsal of international
air travel

We will catch a waking car and glean its
contents, stay low to the ground, read

despite no instruction

Manual

To go into your dream

Of the black horse dream of winter the roads all

Closed only way through bi-planes-----

I can hear the blood turn and the

Mouth thin as a when's bone

Owl spots landscapes, rarely

Articulate pine brush, kind-

Ling

Needle

Waking dream----

Flame, will you take this final breath?

Lines and dashes

Strokes from me, furious?

Thus, with anxiety, lack was born

Time lapsed, were time timbre
Wood integral, a during pages turn trees turn
You back into breath turn
You usable again
Our sentences dross of hot toxin, integral
Seconds breath interning
Exhalations exhausting air, potential
Suffocant during, ritual sacrifice
Of someone I will never meet
Thus I do not give
Thus you take on
Thus you give the world the world again

Q:

Who are you who embraces our poisons? Mouth
Stuffed nearly I can see the smoke
Bracket evening were I to see you, who
With faith in the receding branches, certain the wailing trees will
Convert ash into paper you whisper I hear
You whisper ***breathe*** into ***breathe***

SAINT VODKA

The matchmaking service for geese
failed, and so did the stone wall

meant to sequester our new territory.
Nobody published dissertations

on the shameful tendencies of metals,
the way water didn't lap edges

but rather floundered, oxidizing,
or whatever was in fashion.

I was making a noise that sounded
like ouch but meant the opposite.

You were posed without donkey,
exact likeness of a medieval

saint on my grandmother's goblet.
Everything was beyond stupid.

The last marble swallowed in town
square, and nobody dared to stay

for the resurrection. We'd invent
our own elixir as anesthetic.

Tried to register ourselves for cult
status, though we were just

a pair. At the moment you arrived
I was stationed in garage sale

blankets on a Chicago sidewalk,
wondering if the moon had

a purpose. You were more lucid
than the clearest gelatin lamb

in my grandmother's refrigerator.
She'd suspend one penny

in the dead center as appendix.
I'd flip it on my tongue.

Your clarity was inexplicable.
We refused to let them

hang bells from our shoulders.
Conflated hagiographies

until all that remained was ice
and a hangnail of mirror.

COLLECTIONS

It was only me on a borrowed dirt bike
outside the gas station, impatient for you

to be born. In the meantime shoplifting
every new glass tumbler they issued.

Sometimes I would make a fist and slip
my entire hand inside. It looked like

a specimen. The clerk would apprehend
a teenager for abusing the dairy case,

pinching the bologna, whatever it took.
I have always been in favor of fumes.

Inhaling them as my mother filled
the tank of her Galaxie station wagon.

Imagining the way we'd burn through
the rubber mat in back, with time

and repetition. I thought I would meet
you in the center of a ring of lions.

Underwater, as two bodies weighted
and bubbling. Or even through bars,

your love letters impassioned, not
scented with rolled cloves and beer.

Who knew we would both stumble
upon the great apparition: wet grackle

ransacking half a lemon pound cake
left in the middle of the sidewalk.

We watched it for a few seconds,
without watching. My hand closed

around your fingers. I planted two
crumbs at the base of an arborvitae.

One for the clouds that gave their
blessing. One for the eye of the bird.

for

Let in, dousing pupil, reverence,

...Chime resolute. sudden bell.

tortoise shell-picked gravity off fence an' clothing line...

breached

besolvin: and, inheerneyl, [inherently] fixed, to position, I
love

him.

“startle”: To sum up ground. Dirt circle around my feet, ascending.
Produlfing. –Usher with facility, forchange, bound sweetly to
each other.

-----Meanwhile, in the farmhouse [fire] we left coal. bruises
still showing. fancy boats bobbing saucily against wood. water heals.

Your palms echo, are solid like a man. sometimes my voice catches in
my throat like a broken piece of air. I feel you everywhere. You have
entered like a small, still lake, a broken sky, blue and sad and accept-
ing. You have entered me for the first time, like this.

You have entered like a small, still lake, a broken sky, blue and sad
and accepting. You have entered me for the first time, like this.

The world is suffered

The world is suffered.

Belt suffering to a tune, and rifle. Whiches descend on embattlements. Tanks force their way into villages. The world suffers. World suffering in promise, dark flaps in the hind-noise of carriages.

Statements, fantasticals, pyramids and dirt, drives and fortunes. And a tube of liquor.

The world is all of this, less strategy and boil.

May times, suffusing. Enveloping, driving, snorkeling.

Dimes, afloat, the tremors. ----- torn apart,

believing in carcass. All around us, particulars. Fit into knowledge gaps and crevices. Born, stone, boundaries crossed. Birth-darted and corniced. Imaginal foster.

-----17,989,455,888,367

fires. floats, heavnes.

wherever, whats, points haven.

wholeness of lumine. whole time. purpose,

scheduled in heat. The pattern repeats, repeats, repeats.

Fold the fence up and bring it. What we have is what we have and t

from Lizard

Lizard bakes
on asphalt. A
car might crush
or maim. Dear
God, she writes,
why have I lost
capacity, learned
pain? Where are
my offspring?
Do you see them
sprinkled in the
world? Do you
see my end? My
poison poor defense,
my blood clear
offense. My
recourse speed
and hide

*

We used to say,
cold blooded. Now
we know, mere
metaphor. Lizard's
no bitch. She
regulates. Revises
her heat to match
the universe. Seeks
agreement

*

*

She *is* a light
sleeper. Is it
wise to admit

Pigeonhole
Lizard needs maximal
room. Few
words do
What else? L
adapts. Pink
in a Mid-east
sun, she hates
the shattering. Green
on a lawn where
you might be
she sits, pulsing,
skin wishbone
dry. Part of you
wishes to touch it

*

Questions you
might have: Why
is her blood clear,
her poison slow, her
God borrowed?
Does a mate support?
Does she bake? Do
her eggs crack?

Sometimes she sleeps
with her street clothes
on. Sometimes
she walks in
her intimates

FIGURE BET

I.

Bereshith, Bereshith,
Beginning with the Hebrew letter Bet
a strong house of a letter, two horizontal lines
the baseline being the earth,
the shorter top line being the heavens
and then a connecting vertical line
a wall
a tree
being human,
and then a floating dot attached
to human thought. In the beginning
the Bet starts the story the word
the prefix “beh” meaning “in the”
bebayith - in the house
beolam - in the world
This is it. A letter, a word, a handle
for your trembling hand. You lived
here - before yourself, before marriage,
before your son was born. In this house,
life, deed, declaration, tabernacle, shed
with only one wall. What seemed at first to be
a window turns out to be a door:
the future
a dot buried in soil.

II.

Bebayith
In the house,
Dixie cup of apple juice, bee, sting, silence.
Holding up the one wall
a mother/figure delicate as a mad horse
and three floating, wetting, dots.
Father on the air
selling songs and cigarettes.

III.

Beolam
In the world.
How to fill, complete, finesse the corpus.
Vows escape the line of your mouth,
exchange themselves for genesis,
Greek for origin. You find a place
in the world with four walls and a window.
Blow off the beginning.

Start without any scripture whatsoever.

Burton's propensities

a fictive space covert
text of confidences

illusions
it is understood

a taste for alcohol and flagellation
'among men'

elaborating the hems of her tales
he *was* naughty

a skirt is a skirt
'the hard obscenity of John Donne'

and the malice of women
psychopathology of emendation

'more rational and more useful'
versions verses vertigo

improving on the original
a means of social control

a pipe and a footstool, a talent for defiance
specular fascinations

not that this is pleasure
mining Shakespeare and Tourneau

(Borges' vocabulary
an erotic

chronicle
he abandons narrative

choked by detail
certain

sexual expertise
a private space, an hysterical notation

such appendices and disdain
(circulated by subscription

emending her account
catholicism of his attentions

the king's favorite
a boy like any other

tempests archaicisms magic
illicit sex and well-hung

blackamoors
driven to annotate

a deranged marvel
manual

locus of autocracy
a mirror

a real soul
Swedenborgian journal of dreams

both pleasurable and disturbing
another mecca

burton's perfumed garden
a means of inscribing power

like the rest of us
she vanishes

The Visitor

anyone going to the park as death
waited tables, hair cringed into a labyrinth.
you looked dominion, which is not what
anyone thought when you had eyes.
when someone talks you totally determinate
in bearing the place you're listening.
it's about the gatekeepers who let flow
she with the berry juice creeping up her legs.

with the inclines all across the room
she sat with flattened hair and questions.

standing with their arms they are divining
with the croaky voice, straining behind the door.
anyone approaches for better face
are really good at needle be familiar.
the story fell on the table near
my head a person suppresses moans.
the semblance of eternity wets his pants again,
a chronicle of smiles, tribute stream

I please Spenser

You smarting sisters who tell me breach
in help, who speak of fructifying
action lists, when was who ever worthy
of your love? To hear is sometimes
morning shapes, a ship of string
harped out upon an ocean made of wood
whereon you complement the flowers
duly echo. I have a lamp that wakes me
with a dove, my clothes are laid out
fresh by troth, and yet my ears are stuffed
with images of silk store garlands, muffin
bridges, ladyfinger chess played high up
in the air, delicious as frayed machinery
teaching us how we learn to eat.

Midwestern Gothic

I.

I lurked in cornfields, silk inside a husk.

When silver gleamed on my teeth,
I cocked each ear and used a knife.
I stalked the Silver Queen,
a sideshow of incendiary milking.

Old farm equipment playground maimed;
claimed doll heads and human fingers.
Vertiginous swirl of sawdust guts and blood
on the barn floor, a poor man's Ouija board.

Chicken heads hung from rafters on hook
hands, the flesh having been mauled or eaten
by bale feeders, cutters, choppers, chippers,
sickle mowers, flail mowers, finish mowers.

Like a wood burning stove fueled with coke,
I huddled in the corner inhaling dark smoke,
bloody scraps, Grandma's chip chop ham,
windmill cookies with industrial fan blades.

II.

I crawled out of grain silos, late blooming creep.

I used my hook hand. I used my teeth
to separate the wheat from the chaff.
My mouth a thresher, a metal funnel

cloud that couldn't consume enough
burrs, bracts and Bible tract hellfire.
The grotesque melted flesh of others'
freak accidents scarred me. Twenty odd years,
I hid in a smokehouse and I still wasn't cured meat.

I was a disaster of unnatural proportions. A dirty girl-furnace whose filter was never changed until I became my own cyclone. I started spinning and spitting shrapnel: doll parts fused with bovine shapes, cow patties smeared on vintage lace, circular saws, plastic measuring spoons melted into claws, empty sheathes, exploding sheaves, onslaught of kernels with scalding milk inside.

Uncanny, the shape of interiors. How a bucket of space will form around centers of attention. Where we pay, a hand puts forward through the mettle of such objectivity - a subject. Here: this. A changed frame asserts perspective, and frayed neglect shifts into focus. We find ourselves, that smudge of lipstick on a front tooth notwithstanding, reflected before us in that which we assumed to be gone.

Exposition of the Contents of a Cab

The days fall like bayonets. Within the goblet the gofer treads a field of waving daisies. These are the people. They appear then evaporate and the condensation is unconcerned. It's residue, plain and simple. Scatterings like mice sscrabing when the lights flip on. Every rodent for himself. That pitched squeak unmistakable. You hear it screeching: tires skidding at the tragedy. These dead. These more dead. Ghosts, the tears pulled from babies. A notch above the sacrum bone unwrapping like sticky plastic food cover scrunched in a fist then released. This is as open as you can be. As available. The moon and sun exchange knowing winks as they pass in the night you have never seen. Just behind your back money switches hands, elbows caressed. Drive-by fluid hydrogen rushing downstream past the bus window. Traces of the dead. All the dead. Individuality like the imperfect pearl. One thing not like the others. One stone. One dead day. Milk bottles waiting. Mr. Nobody.

Comrade

Premature night exposes her white teeth marks in the dark. All those dotted holes a feast on black. Eaten across the happy day, chased by loneliness. Companions settle themselves in a rosy embrace. A hug off the horizon while her face-mask covers desire too cold to be discovered. What she can't hold, she'll havoc. A bathtub of surprise silk waiting.

One pink baby writhing in linen.
One colon working.

far, far away

bassline beeline bloodline borderline breadline byline

as serious as a circus, the owl I will
manoeuvres
in the birdseyeview of the theologian ozone

airline alkaline

the mad cow-mankind
manoeuvres
on a day when none of our money was pulled out for anyone

hairline headline hemline hotline

depart me! depart me! the marketing department
manoeuvres
like your very last piss of, ahhh, two-thousand-six

dateline deadline

anth(ropomor)phic, this glassy-eyed antonym for a pond of Koi
manoeuvres
in a mirror ball beam to see what, if anything, will be perceived

shoreline sideline sightline skyline streamline

slipped-astern crates, kilts, and the oarsman absorbed in the rum-
pus
manoeuvres
like he's alive, and honoring that, beneath the Firth of Forth
Bridge

landline lifeline

and while finished with all the hedgehog hodgepodge, my restless
love
manoeuvres

from a kitchen sink in Saskatchewan to the remoteness of Stonehenge

offline outline

then on to a guided leg in Guadalajara, one in Shenandoah, and she
manoeuvres

then once again: All before her next job starts, it's off to Bangladesh!

from Into Thick Hair

Your hair brain your finger on
The trigger your fast mouth talk
Teeth chattering shock of cold
Dawn light of reason memory
Temporarily on hold

No reason for it at all
The smell of thinking over
Turning over adventures in
The skin trade out of body ex-
Perience special school days

The art of talking without
Thinking immersion under
The influence wine rose to
Neck flushed uncorked spilling from
A well of experience

Springing the slightly crooked
Jawline hair growing inward
The brain wave choking under
Tow rattling on your stony
Shore line brain wave over breaking

Your Greek holiday your first Greek
Holiday via Berlin maybe
Spain or bulb packing money
Never got to the top of
The list of things to do top

Less in Greece pointing out fat
And ingrown hair and naked
On a Greek beach Mailer for
Material a few lines
Of poetry a small sketch

And drinking and talking and not
Thinking too much your Spanish
Holiday the boys under tow
That Greek holiday and the
Water in the tank above

Our heads and drinking wine and
Not talking properly the
Babies came in ones apart
By years the grunt work came in
Spades and years apart and all

That work and loving you trying
To get it right the house right
Food right conversation
Your head in a book you only
Half listening you drunk and not

Listening at all you talking and
Me not listening this is the
Story of a holiday
In Greece via Berlin Munich
The driver passenger the train

Your talking as if it was an
Act that counted for anything
As if it was the same as
Experience itself an
Action like digging painting

Placing words on paper ear
On the rails train approaching
Carriages rattling stuck on the
Tracks and heading east into
The morning into day and light

That was the distant past and
Unaccounted despair
Is ok when there's a future
To be reckoned with timetable
Like the sea going in and

Out being young and unhappy
Is ok an act that can come
Off and sat alone greedy
For experience blurred
Eyes fading hearing going

The talking going on and
On and a future conjured
Out of thin air and words and
Not what they might mean but how
They arrive ready to hand

Your something to write about a
Subject a syllable to
Fill up the empty line of
Family handed down from
Mother to child you're something

You are that takes up time in
Quantitative verse the long
Pauses would never do empty
Moments need filling escape
Into the margins at the

End of the line when a click
Clack of discontent an empty
Carriage where sadness should be
Wild despair hair mussed up and
Malcontent devoid of all

Feeling only a few dots where
The empty words might be shut
Down for the night genetic
Material potential
Combinations this content



2009

Nothing is
but the Fractions thereof and even
in the hidden

to behold Inf
Womb,

when deter
the last, that the Tail
turn into its Mouth

the ark
ark to salve
in making

a field
his Heart was found
to weigh lit
wall wed,

Inward
light

a Lecture on
a Bow opening so
outweigh the Subject

Ear

Hand

serve

the Throat-pit,

the Circumference 6.

Compos'd of several mortal Elements
for a Man behind the Ear does in Stile
the Tongue, the Golden eye, the
the Liver, the Brain, the Heart,
some are mortal, others are to serve
the Body, in Variety of the Senses
the compass of the Neck unto

He has also a Head, with many more
mortal vessels, as the Liver, Gall, &c. &c. But
geometricall. This was the first
Mortal he had, placed upon his Temples, and exceeding