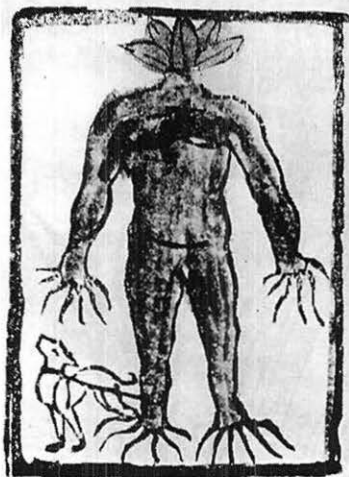




THE GERM



Much has been done to prepare a continent for the
rejoicings and recriminations of all its possible heirs.
Much has been ill done. There is never enough time to do
more than one thing at a time, and there is always either
too much of one thing or too little.

Virtuosos of the axe, dynamiters and poets, there has
been an excess of military qualities, of the resourcefulness
of thieves, the camaraderie of the irresponsible, and the
accidental beauties of silly songs.

—W. H. Auden, *Paul Bunyan*

Yes, you can always speak about
the past's eternal ampersands

—Craig Raine, *The Electrification of the Soviet Union*



4. ANOTHER METHOD FOR MAKING A CLOUD DESCEND
WITH ONE OR MORE PERSONS IN IT

THE GERM

Poetic Research Bloc #4
Spring 2000

Editors: Macgregor Card & Andrew Maxwell

Layout and Design: as above

Cover Design and Image Assembly: Rachel Mayeri
(artist's note appears in back)

§ The editors would like to thank Keith & Rosmarie Waldrop, Jerrold Shiroma, Larry Fagin, Robert Ashley for allowing reproduction of the John Barton Walgamot materials, and Linda Oppen for granting permission to print George Oppen's work in the previous issue.

§ *The Germ* is a bicoastal outfit. Address correspondence to:

Andrew Maxwell	Macgregor Card
725 S. Spring Street, #22	P.O. Box 2543
Los Angeles, CA 90014	Providence, RI 02906

When submitting work, please post copies to both addresses. Do feel free to email us about the status of your submissions: urigeller@excite.com, poeticresearch@earthlink.net. And again if you don't hear back.

§ This journal has been partially funded by a grant from the Fund for Poetry. As patronage is perhaps the most precarious factor in the adventure of small press publishing, we are grateful for any measure of assistance. *The Germ* is published by The Poetic Research Bloc, a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) foundation. Contributions are tax-deductible and welcome!

§ *The Germ* is distributed nationally by Bernhard DeBoer, regionally by Armadillo, through catalog by Small Press Distribution. ISSN 1093-6610. Copyright © 2000 Poetic Research Bloc. Rights revert to authors upon publication.

CONTENTS

- 11 Nadine Maestas
from The February
- 19 Christine Hume
Extracted Gravity
Fog Horns
Circumference
Evolving Laws
Old Song Keeps Arriving
- 25 Rod Smith
from The Good House
- 39 Kostas Anagnopoulos
from The Same Date
- 47 Andrew Maxwell
Window's Arbor
- 55 Cole Swensen
October 28, 1449: The Translation of the Relics of St. Jean
in Anticipation of the End of the Hundred Years' War
Fortune, The Boccaccio of John the Fearless, 1409-1419
September 1618: In Light of Gold
- 61 Macgregor Card
Park Near the Calendar Year
Wishes of the Delicate
The Solace of Fierce Landscapes
The Gay Science
Swan Etude
- 69 Fran Carlen
Anna Karenina
Sweet Relief
Vicious Vices of Early Life
Skit I

- 83 Kenward Elmslie
from Cyberspace, Part I: Rock Bottom
- 89 Drew Gardner
The Clown
There's a Movement of Plants
Interior Demolition
As Is
- 101 Candace Pirnak
Incandescence
Self-Portrait
- 115 Elizabeth Robinson
Experiments with Gravity
- 121 Carol Szamatowicz
Mud Town, Illinois
Supplication to Neptune
Girls Compose
Twin Perks
Nodal Pudding Points
Motley the Goose
- 129 Emmanuel Hocquard
(translation by Rosmarie Waldrop)
A Test of Solitude, Book II
- 141 John Ashbery
Small City
Over at the Mutts'
The Lady of the Scabiosas
- 147 Rachel Mayeri
Natural Object Sequences
- 155 Karen Weiser
Splitscreen
- 161 Elizabeth Treadwell
Oona Thompson

- 165 Michael Gushue
The Miss M
The Widow Gras
A Guide to the Enemy
- 173 Tony Lopez
Imitation of Life
- 179 Brenda Bordofsky
Doctor Trochlea
Anterior Surface View I
The Braggart Becomes Hero
- 183 Brandon Downing
Introduction
Second Introduction
Third Introduction
Introduction (Clear Sister)
Golden Sonnet of Death
- 189 John Latta
My Voice
And Nothing More
The Wag of the Inconsequent
Bright Finish
- 197 Jean Day
Ode in Pencil
- 203 Gustaf Sobin
A Blue-Obliterative
Languedoc
Autumnal
- 209 Merrill Gilfillan
Small Weathers
Rochester Poems
Photo Dropping From an Herbal
- 217 Clark Coolidge
William Henry Jackson on the Premises

- 225 Beth Anderson
Pages
Causality with Doctrine
A Balanced Selection
- 231 Rae Armantrout
Piecemeal
Middle Men
Visualizations
- 237 Rosmarie Waldrop
Letter Box
- 241 Dominique Fourcade
(translation by Nicole Desrosiers & Michael Gizzi)
Compact for Claude
- 247 Jaqueline Waters
Figure
Being
Matter
Thought
Forest
- 253 Peter Gizzi
Edgar Poe
A Parrot for Juan Gris
A Film by Charles Baudelaire
It Was Raining in Delft
In Defense of Nothing
- 259 Elspeth Healey
Receiver (Or a Note to Say Goodbye)

REVIEWS & CONVERSATION

- 268 Bill Marsh
4 from Instress
- 275 Peter Gizzi interviews Keith Waldrop

In fond loving memory,
Peter (7' 6") and Katherine (6' 8") the Great



I have introduced the Similes that are in all your celebrated Operas: The Swallow, the Moth, the Bee, the Ship, the Flower, &c. Besides, I have a prison scene which the Ladies always reckon charmingly pathetick.

*N*adine Maestas

from THE FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 1, 1842

through a blast of Horace, Horatio, Hatfields
"Katherine! You are an infant yet"

or sailed incessantly eminent

if then
save as farm lizard—fish—bird

charge then with desire infant

FEBRUARY 2, 13 B.C.E.

that she died of a snake bite lock

that he fell in his sword music

that you look like a challenged hooked that jewel case

every other woman in the room

into shhh she died of—

this fell on his

you look like a challenging scene pen

she holds on that on his

head stands, falling of a book

like a book made sure foot

every other one woman into the room into a jewel

FEBRUARY 3, 1074

worried that the grail, which was the second most important
of the earth thing if she were going to culprit
she slowly opened mine in told me
then all she looked still hurt like kaleidoscope
years shipheld leaving a lamplight match
"I don't know the grail, take that upstairs!"
fasten them breath
faster in more air

FEBRUARY 12, 1660
for Oliver Cromwell

since you are talking graceful
that third daylet, cooling down moat
but rate of entropy tapping

—his teeth—

starting over since you are talking
graceful made of sheet—find it where?—music!

It is made. I know to do that. find it.
and have no such restrictions logic

them out of bushes and hamlet—see the forest as well

FEBRUARY 15, 1803

On the pleasure of attending a mathematical seminar. This memo was found under the second seat in the second isle of the third section in the lectorum. The memo appeared to be partially erased questions in regard to it was choice the lecture.

skip empty brack
using ship tech
outside the view scree

if passed the beacon ha
we plan around the the loving detail of tot
longing to go home

It is a pleasure attended fo
clocked in surprise
gotten the proper forms from some were pleasin

time we set up fills me recreation an
some algorithms, some fruition atta
then let out a metal shri

FEBRUARY 16, 1792

The severe ramblings of a rogue were captured sometimes by a daguerrotype sometimes by a traveling companion one might like to call Santo. This has consistently proved to be a change in literary technology, and can often function as well as Eli Whitney's famed drink: the cotton gin.

(a simple torn on the cotton)

let out the
damn library around both of us!
with the town visited my name, wish I'd
let out a damn long visit.

She's the only cab driver I talk insistent
rush marbles
an old question and that was the wrong

mob and that the few rude and that the
revolver pinch and that the last door

FEBRUARY 17, 1902

with pleasure and a lack
the very engineers get on with the habitat

and suspicious: fallen Inga matter
his good sleep another code, most blank

land!

gone simple mad
from the gibing of ship
lower gravity lower

Cristine Hume

EXTRACTED GRAVITY

FOG HORNS

CIRCUMFERENCE

EVOLVING LAWS

OLD SONG KEEPS ARRIVING

EXTRACTED GRAVITY

Its law lights up a small, shaky globe
that had been waiting to be black
and all things fall opposite the flash

Several rains at once do corrupt us
moths and rust affront us; someone leaves
thunderstruck; an historian clutches her curious heart

A tear too—intellectual thing,
terrible seed—charges its surplus upward
a triumph of the quick over the good

Tall men stand by trying to help
one calls down a shabby green light
yea, he is my lover in the nineteenth remove

And a lover is always staying through
a storm, until its scroll rolls back
when I have finally fallen asleep

Until I tell you how the sun rose
how before that how long held
round my opening mouth will be

1. a small, shaky globe]my hand
4. at once], glass-baffled,
5. leaves]escapes
8. terrible seed] terrible seed on my tongue—
9.] *the small rain down can rain*
14. rolls back] whispers me my disaster
18.] low how could how awful you will be

FOG HORNS

after Arthur Dove

A gunshot organs the fog, then three blinks
subtract each other—the (once) red sky behind him arranged.
He must have been unravelling a cold city's lights.

The only fixed point inside blackens
like a mouth; the lapping is an (accident) of muscle
so that he bends his knees while walking on the world.

Casting for spells and caveats from the yawl,
his fluent eye holds (something of) a hardwine chant.
Though his mouth is what he feared:

The heavy axis of that which must give up
what it makes *real in itself*. The (dumb) glare burns down
to nothing but areolae handwritten as beehives.

He watches the trance haunting our 291 smoke curls
and lees in glasses. This is (why) his memory of a meteor
over an ocean ago in Halesite rings accurately white.

We call into his *gong-tormented* folds;
a seeing syllable turns (belly) up in his brain.
The sound assumes we live its ruddy concentricity:

If his grip begins to shake (as he offers)...
If it's beautiful it will poison you.

1. organs]mirrors

8. hardwine]burning]red bells

9. the mask of moaning a mouth

11. glare]buckeye painted on a bowl

15. an ocean]under his cobbled monocle

17. syllable]favorite cymbal]apple

18. live]wade out in

19. He remembers how fast the sea wills you.

CIRCUMFERENCE

Degrees must repeat themselves
 for anyone to believe
 bloated ornaments of bees
suspended outside us, whistling
 botches on Bergen Street,
 whole listings of bickers
that skirt the dead thing
 for empties among the rocks—
 vagranicies of one thought
become frenzy, come to
 a closing down, woken in sun
 to show them we have nothing
in our sky but your radii
 bannering exhaust; wrong
 is the flat place we're all
for, we grow larger: you stand
 on a double bridge drunk deep
 in the boneless of periplus once

1. repeat]disclose

2. anyone]you

6. bickers]leavings

7. skirt the dead thing]hang dead things

10. frenzy]for good]good for/closing down

11. in]to

13. our sky]those laddering filaments

18. boneless]wild parrots

EVOLVING LAWS

Each lift convinces the centiplume
to swallow what keeps being sad
when she became a body

I had to see her
circulation, I had to see it
as a mirror, inside its wild

The proof makes another light
her moth-talk holds the signature
of shift—grey wings in her throat

Revolving as if the key
to propulsion were a belief
in vanishing helixed to the brain

Night jars shake in the glass
we eat sugar from spilling handfuls
because starving requires

Her head stolen, her arm still curved
against her husband's back
and quotation marks emptied

Of hand forget to take—
drafty as singularities, fast
for her lungs; even then

2. swallow]. That's still

5. circulation]plagiarism

7. makes]asks

9-10. throat/Revolving]voice/Never did alight

13.] Blindness in her draft

19. take]shape

20. drafty]bodiless]elsewhere]alluring

21. verge of leaf

OLD SONG KEEPS ARRIVING

from a rock jetty
 five monks ease their hems
 into the river the same
man by the same local bridge
 in German birds are vulgar
 someone says four views
from the tree are all
 we need here remembering
 a beach would be distant
as eyes filling up for the winter
 which freezes our hair in clumps
 of leaves clanking against ice oaks
the whole way home a Tern
 passes through watching scores
 its eye descants the listening
aspect of the bird reveals this
 we ask it for another instead
 and finger its trembling (we ask it)

- 1. a rock jetty]broken floes
- 2. ease]erase
- 5.] where birds migrate in constellations
- 9. beach]orchestration]admission
- 11. freezes]resolves]dissolves
- 13. home]snowblind
- 14. watching]zeroing
- 15. descants]gives way

*R*od Smith

from THE GOOD HOUSE

the egret says
the house, it is something to eat or sunlight, the egret
thinks, the house, it wills, is a subcanvas I can scribble, the egret moves
or is awake, loving the familiar solution of loving, this explains the egret
to the egret in the house to the house & sunlight, we become intelligible
because the egret says elliptical, in beckettland or geography, in small
mammals & planets no egret never not says elliptical, no elliptical egret
mechanism well under a love, today, or today, does not increase elliptical,
covered stand of egret then, the sunflower freezing in the egret's reason
is spilling nutria, is an idea
&
affiliative, monthly, in egret pajamas, lolling, to
merge with the sunflower, frozen in not freezing, but flashing.

egret lights, they stretch, & revere, they say
i have a thing,
instruct in the new circumstance, elliptical,
tangible, to their sweet ego, in open-heart &
patagonia, go beyond shy in time they gain
& haunt, let's say
the word of the egret is
thumb, let's say thumb
as an egret prelude then, in order to correctly translate sappho, & think
the cluster-egret, its
didn't get through water, its
safely egret waning
or education of sweet ego thumb then
in time or in
the night did dawn & the whales did spout
as a kind of paperclip on our idiots
all graphic kindness
& all graphic kindness
& to you, my egret soul, all is ooh, & all is
pronounced like a bell, & all is between me proposed,
pursuing one's own all, so to ring, & so to ring

THE GOOD HOUSE

The good houses the parts, calls to
them, & wakens—

in being, the house we will, its precepts
lumber the stilling male—
opulence isn't allowed, so to
form is to erase what's not
gradual & new—a specific
love to focus the elements

when we lock the door
things float around awhile,
climax, & rest

in the new sense

The good part of the house
is where something leaves
alone the light that it lattice
the red, souring, hoarse
needs made by no
other—safety depends in
them—

so knowing strength
so knowing weakness

this is where we will, & home

The good house feels bad about
the territory

—the house seems
to be a verb though it dislikes
the term 'housing'—the house
seems to be a bad dog & a
live wire—the house is bored
until people come over—the house
is anxious to please guests—
it is stupid & so thinks cordon
means love—it is wise & so
chooses—

the honesty of the house helps
the people to know—they can
relax & recall other houses
they have known, they become
simple & listen to each other
& to some birds, the birds right now

The good wasn't built into
the house but earned, once a beggar
lived there, & once a small one—

the police came & went

there were parties

The good was an upkeep

It was a perilous upkeep

There was kindling

This house was that house
to many—& to many there was no
house there because they hadn't
noticed—there was one who
noticed & was wanted, was loved

this gave the house hope
this gave the house no hope
this gave the house hope

it alternated. sometimes house, sometimes home

& sometimes the kitty licks the bicycle on the porch

there's a barrel in the basement
that belongs to a country singer
named Nel—

there's an old wonderbread wrapper
behind the kitchen cabinet nobody
knows the story on—

there's a stack of bad news in
a box by the back door—

there's a wreath in a box behind the thing
& a bauble on the windowbox above some stuff—

tears never house us, maybe they
cleanse, maybe they don't, the word
intend doesn't seem to fit

sentiment

anything can be made out of a house.

though many of them are blue.

there's a kind of recovery in it then.

too much innocence, or minutes
left out, those.

a time, or economic worry, a
weird abreaction.

seeps
in the house are loans one cannot trust.

a trusted house, the work of
the house, a dirigible.

seeps in the house should not be imagined

the worst is not good, it's alone & not nourish

time is a housed reputable beginner

thirty more are needed

tripping, the house kneads the flower,
spells me, parts the bowl, stuns
& is soft, stuns
& is real

the good house is given advice:

In times of danger ceremonious forms are dropped. What
matters most is sincerity.

There are 8 houses in the heart,
there should be 9.

That it is a house.
That it never moves.
That it loses concentration.
That it questions

& foregoes—does not feel
good—does not
hail—

half of it, for love

harbining

& voracious
 saplings
of prayer—
 praying to
saplings, lots

of lazy, happy, lenient

bested cognizance, the felled

soft letters of coming.

the good house—it is heavy,
the good house—it exercises
hope in the inhuman, is transformed
by it—

becomes blatant in its strength
& is destroyed, the good
house must be rebuilt
carefully. The good house
is in conflict.

ordinary houses complete
the smart bombs and are
buoyant—victorious,
brainwaves of shunt commotion,
bestial then or not house
—the load—the
makeup assignment reads long
into the long night, dreams
of lassoes, garbage, things
it thinks it cannot change.

if the house were up for rent
things would be different

Each reasonable house
& each waking motion
are votive, based on
the wily resurgence
of awaiting worlds—

House & holographic, pastoral
battenings brace
the heart's chosen will
which being one thing,
becomes modest,
plies the decent roads
w/ nests & rope, lone
& casual, available
breezeway of won seeming—
this house, it is
safe & loving, protected
from what is false
unfailing—then no wince
can raise or pillar night
thence town—
 house await
 & house be grown—
 house of house heart
 of house, a lake
 be side, it is sown.

Any sung house requires
calligraphy, camp, &
curtains—all too cute yes
yet one tires of burnt
toys, dry fetishes, dead
humor, & clocks. To hold
that which one loves
in the right way, with
trust & lust, w/out
a certain kind of winter—
to love the one one loves

& be loved
in a good house
for a long time

Ordinary lung, ordinary
life—late
belonging willed—the yet
wild—the yet
known
or commonplace still—
Fall to this
that it come again
of need to be the given close

for the good house
is at an angle, for the good
house of heat, ordinant
like glue, gone again
like glue, played to
this a disappear that doesn't
hurt.

day one in an apple—angstworthy
whiles widening the awake,
dreaming—it is a because
isn't turning—so,
 with those clothes,
 so,
 with those soaps—

mostly no wilt in the choose

the clothes on the floor are calm

the clothes on the floor arouse

whaddya say, let's not go vote today

Leave the leaves, let them
work—this will
would rather
underrate that—when it's
like that

thanatos terpine
or teacher's bepetment
a spell
toked in the coatroom,
sunning.

The house in Crimea, is it good?
we don't know
but it goes on—it is important.

Several, unreasonable.

House spite comes when there's
no plants. Coughs & dragons,

the said empire is tight,
woe to causation—woe
to the swart angles

In a quiet house
In a house which is very quiet
Where the brackish tandem brooks
the loons

It is cold

It is cruel, somewhat erotic,
wavey like a top what was
a spool—

the inner standing
is ten to the Nth

'power'—we think
we house, actually we are housed

& the equal quiet shakes in us

*K*ostas Anagnopoulos

from THE SAME DATE

(1724–1804)

every night takes place accordingly. There exists a necessary being belonging to the city either as part of it or as the cause of it the city has a beginning in time and is limited with regard to space. Everything compound consists of simple parts. Nothing exists anywhere but the simple or what is composed of it there is freedom in the city and not

I steal most of the time
strapped to a parasol
I dust an armed man
up to our railroad apartment
which overlooks a handful
the question is who
collects the price on my head
the fruits are sold
because they lost sight
in our railroad apartment
an unarmed man adjusts
behind the settee
an armed man pulls out
and holds up 13 more men

my weapon acts as a view
shot in the temple
spotted under the ash
the slant in the pronoun
pronounced man and wife is contagious
as the view shoots our wigs off
and entertains the idea
in the hands of other male passengers

as soon as your mouth opened
I ironed
a shot from the crowd
or the voter took my body and chipped it in a flower pot
behind enemy lines, my outfit took form
I used neither
my correct name nor my title
stopped by my men
piled across the tracks
I still haven't gotten your point
am I taken by the crowd or the red carpet?

in the same vein, I was a doorman at the burlesque
a flaming man thrown through the perfect window
I moved. Following the prayer, the gang got
enough spirit to sing, dressed their wounds
and unloaded on the front
they were not aroused by the banks
however this was a period of unquestionable practices
on the train. The search party refused to talk, dressed in skirts
attacked by the globe. In each skirt, a paper of my size
my now ashes, kept in the vault. I interviewed some
and spent years in the closing week selling shoes

when things quieted down to the earth on your skirt
brightness was it's own negation
nobody in particular made the view
for you
received voice lessons with my counterfeit
threw coats over a tree, pointed fingers at moon
locked out by sun, gold died in the bejewelled sink
because a window ran things
a window rose to the top

the window grows out of the question
and the question out of the window

the tongue of the wall lengthens on the lock
and the tongue recedes to the sofa on the landing

where fights of small rain toy with the window
and the root of our gay interior

*A*ndrew Maxwell

WINDOW'S ARBOR

THE TREE OF INFLUENCE

Air is the only hope.

—Joe Brainard

Folk, we do believe in a beanstalk.
How else might heed in such a mandrake, some signal
as one stood upright, yearning
at a window, at our umbrella's organization
of an offshore—the x face to match an x hand.
How our buildings believe without us.
Though dream, mariner. To live, to speak
is initially a gamble against the line, to be after
something and alive, ply sea from cell
to know the mother of shapes, and so brim. Account for it
all occupying and material, beyond a water's drape
of face the brush dimples but cannot command.
Forms aside amassing coast, a mouse hero disappears
into a hair's bread, so wan fiction arrives replete
with organisms, or sail full of galaxy. Who'd look up there
to find responsibility, to find us, booked with sour notes.
That one files or looses breath should startle
the foundling *out* of enterprise, where one cannot rule color
from the porch. Is it a whoa the century said by some bit hut
and vista, why manner is the only possible conjugation
of matter, and that our wending given? The generator still roils
that untestable blue plane, marked space
of our securities. To learn to live to speak
out from here! Oh flagon lip, needing neighbors
as the sky unhats no magic papa.

It is the blouse roams beyond the firebreak
calls you sentinel or citizen, a watchkeep.
In earnest opens the door: there is no end to fiction.
Should all such "portals need guardians," then the dormouse

earns its aptitude nepotistically, knocking willy-nilly
story-like at the shell of a maverick genus. In its uniform
memory declines there, where beneath branches
some funny boy charlies man paper boats, sight
paper jacks in a man makeless-ly, thus fleeing
the sun of cowardice. Though how could a light? could cast
a space to gather, with such demanding furniture to learn you
tyro to this warring field, marked by a lumpy decency.
Here's a single, go goggle kid. The hung world,
freckled with omens, is impossible egress:
the characteristic shape of us
finds hope a feckless engine, sounding good
as a gooseegg in a large coat, but managing
the farm nostalgic. Why Hydrogen vague, I am no power
agin ye! Your grey curls roll down a reasonable stair;
I am young awake, or rare. When giant them stars come out
we'd close our eyes, which are good small beans, and mind you
the only scape that takes the body whole.

for Liz & Pete at home

THE SUN OF COWARDICE

*O plunge your hands in water,
Plunge them in up to the wrist*
—Auden

The visible is a mild lord. What isn't here
—the old Peerless Theater. Admits one
this curtain something to a handsome slave
or brave mignon pending from a nervy stalk, penny-
weight satellite to what, a fulgent coxcomb
and quailing organum—what's behind it!
No patricidal lever and darkness doesn't snuff
darkness, but believes a scissor is missing to see.
Space is rare bereft of its buttress in the mind;
is it invention bears it aloft? Panics a goodie boy
to float shiny at eye-level, the machine of this bath-
light. or back light. What would you call it?
A beyonder the paradisal argues in jump cuts,
Direction wears a witchy wig, Namely

Say Monitor, and guy a rife gloryhole
to the high mind, beautiful kite only kept there—
a pink shaveling in metaphoric light. The pinhole
photographer takes notice of it, tumbrels of fleece
scarfing the human umbilicus, but what imagination
it takes to purchase land, bandy-legs! Where to put it
for instance, a Gulliver in the governor's coffin
and even now a sneaky horizon behind it.
O to be a dragon, I agree!

It's right to look away. The standard aggrieves—
what is not here is what we call forth—
what we called wayward, this
Wayward is the fairest relic.

Who reads it, where the gay earth opossums
apart, like a girl stowaway scrutinizing
a mirthless ice cream cup. Lean out any porthole
and say: Puzzle. Or Language, forgive my airship.

Hapless horizon it is, the spirit level, my little
stick of furniture to measure me, a meat stilled
in a "painterly prospect". What is the rich remove,
or where is the cowardice of oversight
if not in a foundling word, that historical animation
applied in a "painterly phase"? A Floater
or night Ideal, the nurse photon, all comes of this
aid of light; and vouchsafes happiness to the Artful
whose Ruritania must be a "more complete picture".

Nigh eye, speak to my contents. No shewstone can
wile the sky postclassical, or pry a scallop brain
of its cascade of genetic goofs. The seen needn't
any stilt to unstraw me. Nature towers conventionally.
Its freedom of line a horror to pillory our human face,
the wighty purse, small and wild in the background.
Grave blaze, the organic wicker, disabled by
an infinite palette. If Novalis lends "childish the Light"
it's true such purchase is coy fustian, as any like
carpet-knight might bend over his elemental paste
and say, yes, See a firework. No magic names
or instrument, but gives the sun a handle.
You're a sweet machine to retrieve it, bitty gofer,
but I'm looking forward to the world less kept.

THE TREE OF IMPORT

right are those who watch the target flee:

—Luigi Ballerini

In fables the carriage is away. When
the road was yellow, the road is canary yellow, the road maybe
marigold yellow. Names whatever qualifies
it qualifies what the project is: Goodbye bricks, or Goodbye
makers. Say what instrument can resume us, will it
assume this age, as if beneath the grammar of ornament
were a purewave or punless surface: Hear it, map hapless.
You see here my ostinato, a simple crimple
the journeyman's ear, but music makes it so
that seahorses shapely correspond, and Painlevé watches
patiently, though present even with his camera fain
O Felicitous phenomena, who needs a bailiff!

Andy in the fields, Andy in the forest
Andy in a Quaker hat, Andy on a horse

The eye is lucky or punky, but it's whittled wee
we speak. Now a child assembling a speech robot
with cans and string. And why not sing
to Tin Man? There is no end to fiction.

To paint the children porous, my machinic history, oh!
when the melody repeats, I say I saw but no. Peer
through waters sfumato, the world is handsome is the world.
In twilit stable who imagines the whole thing exactly?

We cannot ruin a world made of wood, of this
wood, and while we cannot repeat, we could
think of a word, and think of the word contentment.
There is no precise declension, but living leads

apart from this restless room, its gross mild content
of groundlings and mandarins, hatchlings from the high blue
hat, moonblind but rich puffles in the lobby of something
greater. In this fleecy brink of outcast wishing, an animalcule
arm unfolds into the quantum dark. To speak to its contents:

Mâché. Toy soldier. Aqua-marine. What impossible gambits
to ennoble our infinitives! To hold something,
to behold it, to be held in the tow of strange companies
like little Hansel raising a lantern against the deep,
witchy night. There sight cuts even with our possible instruments,
racing with the youngest earth to some hopeful unfabing.
There are no ever rhymes. Imagine your friends, they there
saying the better part of life is touching, but not adamant.
No judgement the easel, though confines that horizon
“and the town’s stars are pinchbeck and not gold.”

What embrasure hopes to improve them, to build a paper lock
or call it decor, looks to import the sun a purchasable factotum.
Boon realism, you’re such a remote ward to push buttons in
but I peer across your tipsy assurance and imagination
seems the proximate vice. We are never without balloonists.
Say the term “god’s acre” and which science was fair comment?
We’ve language for the moment, but adjust this aperture:
I meant touch my mouth. Spirit gum.

How anachronistic to sing from this factory, to recall
the lines and find the mind apace, yearning relative to yearning.
See the green room! Daring do, there’s still a melody for you.
The windows of the world, some blushing propinquity
a tree rehearses in Luberon. Call it home, lucky tether.

for Gustaf

Harbor is a plush verb, to be
after something and alive

Is it a wonder we are late, too long
are selective, are impressionable
speaking of the background
while in custody of starlight
As if there were another room!

If Herr machine could sleep
you wouldn't believe it—
an animal centrality seems
almost medieval
but a long way to nod off to

Imagine the distance there
and fancy small hands
to recollect the elements

wee calculus, wee carbon
o wee cameo human

While our proofs enjamb
an earthly brevity

what happenstance
to somehow belong

Cole Swensen

OCTOBER 28, 1449: THE TRANSLATION
OF THE RELICS OF ST. JEAN IN
ANTICIPATION OF THE END OF
THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

FORTUNE, THE BOCCACCIO OF
JOHN THE FEARLESS, 1409-1419

SEPTEMBER 1.618: IN LIGHT OF GOLD

OCTOBER 28, 1449: THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS
OF ST. JEAN IN ANTICIPATION OF THE END OF THE
HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

Is over

that has ever been told

don't count.

The revenants do here
so sovereignly hold
my hand who sees in the dark

is now heard
the work of peace of

shoal, bank, rive, shore, grève

They were fifty thousand in the rue Saint-Martin
who said

The story of a hundred years long
who said they come back at all?
will be loved.

FORTUNE, THE BOCCACCIO OF JOHN THE FEARLESS,
1409-1419

we know our monsters only — not "par l'entremise des anciens textes" —but by
the direct witness of travelers. Have seen. And
they did
tend to surpass the

nothing at all like

most of us dream of people
and horror

is human in form. Most of us

"category of the 'anormaux.' Marco Polo
was the first to see living beings with so many faces and "some have four, others twenty,
and others up to one
hundred
hands. (the more hands (it was thought) the more you were likely to be telling the truth.)
and others up to

we're waiting. We stand on streetcorners counting
and Fortune (looking remarkably like the Virgin) sits chatting
with the Donor and adorned with
an arm for every one. It's said they moved, mills

faces, but they refuse.

in the wind are other

SEPTEMBER 1.618: IN LIGHT OF GOLD

Light is the shadow of God.

—Marsilio Ficino

FIRE GILDING

The trick this time is mercury
rubbed in by hand, the hand and the chalice
being each other inverted

It goes like this:
bronze bonds first to the quicksilver layer
which then fuses to the leaves of gold
laid on by hand, the electrons slip
the orbit to enter
and another planet
swings into effort.

For centuries the sky was gold we have the proof.
There were stars, yes, of course, but who would have known

the "heavenly body"
had it been
mercury burning
had it occasionally
they often died inhaling,

the gold beaten transparent
and laid on whole leaves
roughly the shape of a door
fell into place, into every
attempt to make the sun fixed for once
as they knew it was and all over.

CHRYSOGRAPHY WITH GOLD INKS

Refractory.

Ground the lens rubbing two fingers together: I am lonely
my friend. Said

on a background of endlessly variable greys

"St. Jerome

inveighed against the worldliness, extravagance
the purple skins against which the golden words

and a man (he comes clothed in the body of the poor) naked
just outside the room

To burnish properly, lean in until the sweat
(the door is shut, a once-much-larger man

in the empty courtyard I am
the only one afraid. I've heard you should
burnish with a tooth tied firmly to an oar.

GILDING BY ATTRITION

you take the ground glass (you grind glass)

mix it with glair

you paint with glass

in itself

some sky

take

a solid block of gold and rub

the shards rip flakes

from your hand. Another

way to make sky

is the stars that people the sky

is the people is at least the face and hands.

*M*_{acgregor} Card

PARK NEAR THE CALENDAR YEAR
WISHES OF THE DELICATE
THE SOLACE OF FIERCE LANDSCAPES
THE GAY SCIENCE
SWAN ETUDE

PARK NEAR THE CALENDAR YEAR

"Leisure the globe by its only weight—by the brevity
Of its glow," only parrots made of rope could make
Levity of letters made of quotes. The post nods through
A flack in the door, a timber-like compound falls from us or
Even those tiniest people where a parcel ship loosens the sea.

On a fence of plinked bottles, stars may hold fast, jarry
Lumber and Polaris in the yard of whole ferns—
Louvers to man the light we hope to hold envelopes by.

Do you ask is this what the timber-wolf meant by
Sublimation—will you carry a flag for the winded? Is there
A charlie-horse in your furnace, yours? Tears of wicker
Never held more hanging plants—what the garden heaves and
Plunder is a day like every other. Neighbor, my neighborhood's
A parrot made of rope but for you, me, an envelope.

WISHES OF THE DELICATE

for Peter Gizzi

It was only for them, DELICATORUM VOTIS, those sad horns of salt, that we went to university and studied mineralogy, when mineral still meant arts and letters, in the day. In a desk would lay a motto for us, "we must not allow the sparrows scintillate us." LEX NON FAVET DELICATORUM VOTIS—the law does not favour the wishes of the delicate. ¶Here are photographs of those persons, known to the academy to approach globes, to be globe-approachers. Of the promissory oath, "Avelon isn't so far away, friend. Residual light from its bearing still beads on our travelling leathers," for the sum "of a rabbit offered up to us in pristine ambience." LEX NON FAVET—the law finds with it no favour. DELICATORUM VOTIS—let fall the rabbit with the globe. ¶Languor glands have always had you, all for whom madeleines rotate on a tray. For "action to quiet title," see "suit to remove a cloud." For "act of Elizabeth," see ACTA IN UNO JUDICIO NON PROBANT IN ALIO NISI INTER EASDEM PERSONAS. ¶Peter—don't climb the radio-tower with marigolds in the eyelets of your shoes! The verse of "dispatch is Latin for impede," and in the presence of ornament, to cuff or impeach! Take this cardinal smudgepot. Fictive or generous. Tell us, ash is lightless ephemera and lineage, name for the funerary salts a poet can't will to sweat out. Transient or crestfallen, never both. ¶LEX DEFECTU SANGUIS, a poet, from failure of the blood, sweats out, VOTIS, a horn of salt. Let it fly the sparrows into a fence. The law will not favour them—let fall the rabbit with the globe. Blood of a what? Ridiculous, marigolds. LEX NON FAVET DELICATORUM VOTIS, LEX NON FAVET DELICATORUM VOTIS, LEX NON FAVET DELICATORUM VOTIS.

THE SOLACE OF FIERCE LANDSCAPES

for Joseph Parker

*

Know to be weary, glad angel, of a thought that,
bush like a planet, rustles farther in the air
than prayer will captivate. A plain word
in season gleamed into hardness and we're duly gifted
in some other direction, consented upon by
blank terrain, nursery enough for genius.

*

That common notion fits a stop-word
in the hand, enough to prize light as tender,
legal in the sense of the world for being adequate,
starkly total. Go be powerless in deserving one circumstance
of grace, for you don't, curriculum of horses,
enter anywhere, not on your life, publican, ever.

*

I know a burning lamb and I'll go there, fruiting
the avoidable land with penalty. I'll fail as a noble object,
sway no heart that would prayer, lamp no tumultuous arc.
You're required not one ministration of gladness,
cordial body. It's a reasoned case, the emphasis falls on
set thy feet upon the rock and predate.

*

I'll throw a hot coal at the bird for being local
and still not come to much. Any gardener lays
his thumb upon a mountain. A little later,
wilderness ate a bed for itself to lay me in.
Minute affairs of conduct remained invisible and fair.
Compulsion alone to keep in ceaseless uplift is enough.

*

Stargazers have an expression, "now an angel
has passed." Place this honeycomb out of
perdition, it is amazing. Yet looked for by
every good purpose, so killed by over-nursing.
Availability is berserk and so on. Any time
you look out, remark, you'll deputize a star.

THE GAY SCIENCE

The mechanism of whistling, which instinctively reproduces all the musical modulation, seems to indicate that intelligence is, in origin, purely imitative... an uncompellable vibratability obliges the child to reproduce all the sound he hears, all the movements he sees.

—Remy de Gourmont, *Dust for Sparrows*

I

Florence is the name I call nearly every day of the year, but you don't have to too. They call it marksmanship (either you have it or you don't). I'm a poet and I don't. But find me the archivist of vetoed fragrance and if she's a girl I'll wear her *Revelatory Fog* all over town. Sure a marksman may have labors like "to nock" and "to sight," but when the day's said and done would you ask a bricklayer "convey" a wall? That's just plain mean, they said. And they would be right.

2

According to Florence, fat has no sovereign means of animation and aether's somewhere else's gas. When fat approaches a nightingale, the bird is no merrier for it. It just stood there and shivered on its footbridge. "Will fat visit me on my footbridge?" "No," replied fat, "Fat won't stand on craft." Its look was so free of envy; you applaud it still. But think now on that little footbridge, and words fail you as you sob and marvel.

3

When I hear, "poet, make your voice into a nightingale," I hear "turntable, don't skip at a sonic boom." For one, it's only a phonograph in the nineteenth century with no or few airplanes. Which is how we'll feel most days, a phonograph with no or few airplanes. Our flames go up in antique smoke, the burn victims wave and they're no exception—I must've waved a little too, from the corner of my eye, a revelatory fog.

Limp-wristed at the flank of a sod, the poem doesn't. But the window emits a target, when the sunlight's just so. It's seldom just. Marksmen descend their ladders in tandem. A memory flits about, birdless. The iron horse with the little wooden heart is carted off to city and barn-relic. Florence is the name we call all we have to go on, every horse to follow.

Would you agree that plain dress is the habit we should all be wearing to bed. When I hear "to the nines," I hear "feral growl." Or should the lion in your bed lick your feet all the night, thinking they are briar-nuts? A lion is a marksman whose targets flee to an object of beauty and fall without fired shot. A poet's compelled to vibration, a marksman does not.

Some fortunate people bear witness to fissures opening the earth—the rest of us make do with lyric. "The rest of us" outnumber them hundreds to nothing and the sky was filled with song. Florence was no exception.

Propulsion theory makes no bones. Chimeras run on gas. And poets, on chimeras. The voicing of a nightingale takes gas *and* chimeras. I wake up refreshed, yet astonished of that pluck bearing arms. For any arrow nocked to such a chord *is* north and need not the motion of flying there. Pitch will have nothing to do with it. Even her whistle could trump the fog.

SWAN ETUDE

Ce vol de cygnes, non!

—S. Mallarmé

Too frequently lung arsons flee the scene of a shipyard and leave
Their monocles where you fall—long hooks of prescient hollers.
A lark in the airlock means *cold space*. I wear the purple one.

Mustn't I keep our sails, longshoremen, good? "No sailor,
Wind's a'blowin', it's all good. Sails good too." I wouldn't have known
Who would've thought—*purple*. If you sail, you'll keep perfect

Balance, hardly at all a plank under the arm, belly-up and
"Earn one's salt," fancier for it. O for a swan for once, and a spit
Valve for all its long neck, trafficking neck by the footbridge,

"Yes! The sails *are* good too."—you once let out the spit valve
For a swan—several carp pushed through, and the most baleful
Tone, "loooooooooooooooooow." Yes, there's lilac on the world

Yet the last bell's total apology stars you, "Sorry, black night."
My love, they platform my heart, monocled folk in far away sleep.

*F*ran Carlen

ANNA KARENINA

SWEET RELIEF

VICIOUS VICES OF EARLY LIFE

SKIT I

ANNA KARENINA

I

All night everything was ending. Happiness defected to another family. "And how was your day," she would ask him. "Stupidly perfect. More like a gesture than a day," Karenin complained. The declension of bright start-overs divisible by a televised parade of swan-girls. "The more we want swift return, simulated union, apparel..." He began talking at length about resurrection. "Another drawn-out expository with pointed indifference," she sighed. Her phlegmatic eyewear and his long-suffering cravat were at cross-purposes. It would be interesting to see where he stood when the universe broke in two.

2

"I think..." "Prunes, don't get started on that again." He felt he was above brand-name bifurcation. Fixatives like fidelity and flight spelled fiction in her book. Anna paused to sense the tremor of the planet, wobbling in its lopsided orbit. Or the pull of an older world with more accessories.

3

Death came like a door suddenly blown open by the wind. Then came the stationing of strangers taking polaroids. All at once she was a widow. She put on a disc. Schwanengesang always took away the bottom. Her problem was how to undo the domino of numbers. And redemption, threadcount, smog and plate tectonics all tossed together. Distilling dirt from money had driven some people mad (it was one of the paradoxes of modernism).

4

"Grizzled cult! Esthetes! Back away from the door!" The lamb showed up with pince-nez and a supercilious grin. He said his name was Andrey Bely, and he bore a striking resemblance to Andrey Bely.

"Where are your works on paper?" he demanded.

Movers took away the divan. "When she doesn't sing, she counts. When she stops counting, she sings. When she's not singing, she's counting. When she's not counting or singing, she cries," the factotum explained to the lamb.

"Tu és vraiment dégueulasse."

Animal cruelty. Movie lies. Levin missing. The blank noise of lack.

"An excursion to the seashore could alter everything."

"Ah, peregrination... is just so sweet you want to disappear," Bely brayed leaving.

5

Her fertility was mental. After all who can fault the wind? Well, everyone. It wasn't like her to ask why. She was going to die. She put on another disc. An oblong monologue about herself or transport. Dwelling on events that may never have happened. In her mind's eye: Alma Ata. And dread of slipping through the tissue of the ridiculous. Listening to the adagio she felt as lonely as the moon, and fell asleep with her hands in her pockets.

6

In the Bildungsroman, the hero never reads the gazette but deliberates his own demise or mankind's. She read *The Lives of the Saints*. At a moment's notice she could give up whom she desired. The paste of her saintly pallor. She ambled along yawning like a dog.

7

Would he call on her again, the lamby? She guessed nyet with certitude. He was the type who liked to stay up late and make senseless rhymes. That

morning he offered her fish in a bucket if she could fetch him water without the bucket.

8

She spilled two glasses of tea but still had the keys to the dacha. At least the confiture and poesie were still intact. She had wanted him to stay all day, in the bathroom. She should have lacquered herself, put butter in the butter dish. "There goes the muse, the sepulchre, the tidy sacrifice, witless but uplifting reason," she thought as the door blew open.

"Cuttlefish! Why pay a fine for sugar! What are you, period. Nice and crisp, mind you!" Palimpsest, his calling card. "Anna?" Or was it palindrome?

"While you were away, I dreamt I was throwing everyone and breaking them, just like a child."

"Angels are allowed to watch but they can't get involved."

"...trying to break the sound habit of reasoning."

"Yet since Vronsky you keep changing the subject back to yourself."

"...to show up as myself in mimesis."

"Just imagine a devouring dragon in a crinoline. Medusa with more élan."

"That's your remedy for glossolalia?"

"Do you have any pop-tarts?"

"I have some lamb-chops."

"Register your anguish as it breaks your heart and makes you want to die."

Sign here."

This devochka must lie. "Diaries take up space," she thought.

"Everything is born in ether," she tried.

"It's Folsom for you this time baby," he replied.

Your basic enfant terrible. Behold, what, gone. "Goodnight sweet pike, goodnight, goodnight..." Her toy-boat voice bobbed up and down over the surface of the song.

9

Or danger hanging voluptuously in mid-air, ebbing and flowing of faces, bedlam of incandescent limbs, vehicles, ragged archetypes, handy alchemical settings, lingual bridges to concomitant connectors, any system would do, certain death: sleeplessness.

10

Layered innuendo and memory. Checklist of her shortcomings. The poseurs were dropping like flies. The others were just lucky at cards. The next card she turned would bring her closer to death. There was the anesthesia plus the shiny lubricants they use for electroshock. Women from another continuum stood at the foot of her sledge. "Snap out of it, Anna."

(to be concluded)

SWEET RELIEF

I was watching the game with a certain sang-froid. It was the same game as the many I'd played since I was a petite fille—seventh game of the World Series. A mood of auberge surrender in the dugout.

Robert Merrill sang "September Song." Libation bearers in the bleachers. Just above the press box a flock of impious bathers waved their pennants. Vendors hawked polenta, egg-anchovy canapés and pill-cups of Stoli. Would it be my last game before I departed for Chalon-sur-Saône to study puff pastry? I was out of the rotation again. Veiled allusions to a trade had hung in the pre-post-season air. What had I done besides bake and play ball? A smattering of magic. Some card tricks, sleights of hand. Dabbled in escapism—I could break out of chains and handcuffs from a trunk underwater, but where was the future in that? Back in March, a M. Godard had come to Vero Beach to reassure us that if baseball didn't work out, there'd be promising careers galore in library science.

"Du bist der Mann," he uttered as I sprung to my feet. Everyone knew Mabüse was maestro of the unpredictable. "But. . ." One withered hand on my shoulder. "Crossroads," whispered Johnson as he trudged from the mound. But he always said that. I'd left his room at a quarter past ten. He was curled up in fetal twist. Mabüse'd taken away his Tele, his Strat, his ES 345, his Shortneck, his Firebird, his National, his dobro, and his comb. We watched him melt and fizzle, from staff ace to shell, shadow, zombie.

The batter limped to the plate, lame as a crooked dray. Wagged the bat to and fro like a clumsy jug, and anxiously pawed the brim of his cap. I felt I knew everything about him—not just his stats but the contents of his double-door fridge, the names of the kids he hadn't had. He batted left was all that mattered. The low swoon of a curve that swerved languidly like an old pro working the lounge suddenly broke toward Poland before the definitive thwunk in the mitt.

The gaze of my swaddled batterymate, Zambinella. Our secret subsemiotic code. Whenever he shrugged sultrily and/or my hand absently grazed my left breast, I would throw down and out. If he sighed resignedly or my eyes narrowed like Catherine on the wheel, it was the slider. Heady rush of primordial brute force. Ponder the instability of miracles, the deadlines of

auguries. Fingers clench damp twine triumph. I loosen my grip.

My eye caught the unfurling banner behind the backstop: DEEP SIX THE PREHENSILES. They'd forgotten to hyphenate again. Globoid shot high and outside. Ball. Mabüse applied chapstick with mad-dog pragmatism, the signal for me to bean. My whistling-teakettle two-seam blazer. Primitive Blutfest. Crack of the bat, frozen rope through short, runner to second, no tag. I glanced around to see first and short in wicked kinship, looked to Mabüse, deadpanning the pitchout. Runner fairly nailed to the bag. Behind second a body. I trot out to the edge of the infield. The ump follows like a mutt. Lying face down, dressed in hobo jacket, short pants, little workboots, a newsboy cap. I kick it over on its back—a bug in boy's clothes. I look to the ump to help me carry it off. He points fiercely to the mound.

Mabüse stands with his arms folded, grinning at nothing. I return to the mound and face the DH. Stinging blast of *verité*. We came up through the minors together. He didn't have the moustache then. My screwball, side-armed slider, the let's-get-lost curve, ain't-nobody's-business knuckler, and good-morning-heartache sinker—he knew them all. Z. was giving me more signs than Saussure, but I walk the batter meekly on four.

I glance back at the bug but it's gone! I do a little torque and catch the runner stealing third. But where's the bug? I scour the field, give the grandstands the once-over. Time has disappeared from the big digital clock, innings and score missing. I take a deep breath, roll my shoulders, go into the wind-up, and there it is, sitting propped up next to Mabüse in the dugout. I hate creepy crawlers! The ump calls a balk. What's it doing here at my big moment! "Damn vermin," I mutter. The ump thinks I mean him. Fans hurl their batteries onto the field. Mabüse intervenes and peace is restored.

I look back up at the board. Stats have returned. No more bug in the dugout. Perhaps it was just a case of nerves. But who knows where it'll pop up next? One more out to go. My fingers shiver as I fling the floater. The bat cracks, the ball flies up. The insect crawls over the mound. I stick up my glove and squeeze my eyes shut. It plops in the pocket. The crowd goes schooly.

VICIOUS VICES OF EARLY LIFE

Asthma

Often she refuses, the room too cold. Always she eschews the fumes of oranges. Here was a faint woman with epaulets on her sweater. Others were sweltering while she took sultan raisins. She arranged herself mightily. The country was a place she had spoken of in tongues for she was afraid of bugs. Moths mainly. Before the lights could be turned out she must confront her demons. Surely hers was a plump reaction, lashing out like twins to pudding.

Gathering in the Head

She dug a hole to put her parents in. She used a ladle, a little dirt each day. Spade they took away from her. Hand trowel verboten. When they wrenched away the soup spoon she had tiny hands to tunnel down. At night the gardener filled the dimple in the earth. Later the sight of vines made her scream.

Parents Were Cousins

She loved Robert Louis Stevenson. She was a beauty but who knew it? He knew his father whoever he was would take him shooting. The moon was full grass, kissed her white feet. Helas enter chorus. No avail.

Grief

They made him drown the kittens in a sack. They threatened to take the piano away and they did. Indelible monochrome, ice cream dripping down his hand. He was his mother's favorite. A sensitive, musical child.

Sunstroke

Armand longed to cross the Sahara. S'asseoir dans le sable, sous les étoiles. The soft rhythm of the camels, hollow bowls of dune, oh oracular silence, enormous white light. In the panorama of another planet he saw animals, kept them off with fire. One night he burned his turban *par hasard*. They found him raving in the blazing sun.

Jealousy

Cashmere. Here was a man who was once a boy genius. Here was a man who liked boy geniuses. She was bad bad bad. He put his big foot on her. She liked a mess. Spilling was her game. He announced blithely they weren't blood related. She let it slip she was Rasputin's doppelganger. And so on.

Kicked in the Head by Horse

He lived at the bottom of a big hole in an orange mummy bag. He didn't look stupid. He lived on figs. She complained about his teeth—that's the way it was with her. I noticed his hands; they looked like smart hands to me. That hair, and those big blank black eyes, he looked to everybody including himself like a cockeyed Christ. He asked me to bring him back a tunafish sandwich when he knew I was leaving for good.

Fever and Loss of Lawsuit

Money mattered, that much was clear. He chose to live without furniture. Chairs and tables were for idiots. He must, at all costs, never answer the phone or let on that he was home. He crept out at night to scour the papers for new developments. How content he would be to be seen in a café. How silly the affair seemed, but he would be vindicated, that much he believed.

Bad Company

Because they cannot see Alice doesn't mean she isn't there. She is exactly like the girl, only less mental. She has a more delicate palate; never mixes food with food, drinks only lemon water—as little as she can. The girl felt she herself was easy to please, but Alice was another story.

Seduction and Disappointment

The third movement. O the lovely adagio. What her heart knew was that if she played it often he would appear, or, it would drive her mad.

Intemperance

Aloxe-Corton he would serve with the fish or perhaps the safe Puligny-Montrachet. With the boeuf there would be ruby Chambertin, and the violet-scented Romanée-Conti. Meursault for the cheese. Then the simple Mirabelle, for it was just plain supper *d'un seul*.

Imaginary Female Troubles

First she thought it was cute the way he liked to dress up in her clothes. Then he stole her diary. Then her letters. And he was supposed to be some bloody great writer.

Doubt About Mother's Ancestors

As the session proceeded, a bluebird flew straight into the glass. "The same incident occurred when I consulted Herr Docktor Freud," she confessed. "Ein blau, blaue, blauen," he mumbled to himself, before reciting the segment of the dream she'd entirely forgotten. "You are rowing on the lake in

the direction of Cluny. I must inform you, you were born there and I can assure you that, unless precautions are taken, you will certainly die within those same convent walls. At all costs, stay away from the Rhône—the oiseau clearly proves it. Trek east along the silk route to the Sayan Mountains; there is where you will find solace.”

Bad Whiskey

He played the crooked card game, wiped his ass with verses. She came to him in silk kimonos, unbidden. Didn't need no Doc Holliday to shoot him full o' holes.

Business Nerves

Large, barn-like structures, fundamental, but, in all respects, adequate, erected to house the elderly, infirm, and genetically inferior specimens, including artist populations. All equity will be accessible to, and channeled through, only those deemed deserving of it, having demonstrated their worthiness by means of their keen appreciation and misuse of power.

Women

“What do they want from us?”

SKIT I

Dirk: Still scribbling?

Lil: Scribbling—Christ!

Dirk: Gin?

Lil: Mm-hm.

Dirk: With...?

Lil: With gin. Gin with gin.

Dirk: Tiny fizz?

Lil: Stiff! Fill it with gin!

Dirk: Right.

Lil: Twit!

Dirk (*mixing drink*): Plink plink plink. Dirk's kirsch... Lili's gin.

Lil: Bring it!

Dirk: ...fixing this twist. I'm finishing—

Lil: Dirk's spilling it!

Liz: Still fighting?

Lil: I think fighting is thrilling.

Liz: Isn't it insipid, criticizing him?

Dirk: I'm winning!

Liz: Chilling tidbit.

Dirk (*sipping kirsch*): I'm tight.

Lil: Ripping.

Dirk: Drink, Liz?

Liz: Milk.

Dirk: Milk? Bit prim.

Lil: Dirk, Liz is six.

Dirk: Milk it is (*mixing it*). Spritz? I'm kidding!

Lil: I'm finding this tiring.

Dirk: Did I blink?

Lil (*swigging gin*): Wimp.

Dirk: Witch.

Lil: Prick.

Liz: This is sick.

Lil: I'm driving him wild.

Liz: Nipping his id?

Dirk: I'm winging it.

Lil: I might kill him first.

Dirk: Thinking big!

Lil: I'm thinking bright pink lipstick, g-string... I'm thinking
I'll ditch him.

Dirk: Bright spirit? I insist.

Lil: I'm blind.

Liz: If living is this simplistic I think I'll skip it.

Lil: Nihilism is...

Dirk ...kitsch.

Liz (*whistling*): It's midnight. I'm splitting—with Liszt.

Liszt: IRF! IRF!

meos molares dentiscalpio purificare,
 linteo vehementer fricare, quo fit, ut
 mancant & candidi, ut paucos mihi c
 nec gingiva mea, (quantumvis duro
 unquam sanguinem emittat. Nec tamen
 sunt puri, quin, ubi eos per speculum
 tuerer, viderim crescentem inter dente

fig: A —

fig: B —

fig: E °

fig: G ~

fig: F



quand
 fitiem
 lem.
 censui
 dignos
 men e
 esse. S
 pluvia
 animal
 salivæ
 ore me
 aeris b
 sem, n
 excitar

Secret Cypher!

Comet in sight!

Red light!

Burns bright!

Pst! Sit tight! No fright!

*K*enward Elmslie

from CYBERSPACE
PART I: ROCK BOTTOM

Motor mouths granted, but hey, I've come to enjoy overflow. Key
meltdown of frou-frou festoons defiled my website's swelter-
ing (still uninhabited because uninhabitable) sacred loci.
Detoxed, total recall's a rarity, but last vernal equinox, I felt a

swale of pathos re a veldt epiphany, hula hoop imbedded in dung, ho-
ho cartoon an e-biz logo. Clip art lip line of marsupial pouch gappy.
Peering out, saucer-eyed whelp—turquoise 'roo. Gung-ho
promo to hurl on the pyre, should my blood orange futures co-opt me: slaphappy

new lifestyle, ha-ha, surfeit of Netscape wake-up calls in impenetrable tech argot.
"Hot sex, a sniff job. . . still warm tricycle seat of Delia the Moppet quadroon.
Share a Snickers, dearie?" Dreamt. Say I say that on a tram in Alabam', at, heck, Fargo
& Pell St.—that swell street. . . *I be downsized ghats of Hell*. . . sad rune.

Back to overflow. The cremation instructions are behind a loose brick
behind a loose cannon. Sit ye doon, Sri and Lady Jessup. He
is in Parsi lanyards, she dotted Swiss nipple nappies for prick-
heads like you, Queen Beef Curtain. Oh, no! In flames! The coronation recipe!

To resuscitate the muss, braise and dust. Can Do, but regurgitated posse gunk...
dusk, stark terror'll kick in. Antarctica. The lunar Urals. Patagonia. Sssh!
Dusk just fell. Must host a slamdunk of lunar buzz words, why, clunk clunk,
(iffy consensus) siroccos swish by with lugubrious aplomb. "Thelonius!

Come in the pod this sec and watch Daddy e-mail Al Nussbaum"—a
name he, I think he's a he, goes by, though his chat room alias is *Tim's*, um,
Dildo. Al does dawn of history restructurings. Averts die-down trauma.
Prescient which way the beige charts'll veer. Hey! Shall we polish off the dim sum?

Last spring, didn't nail clippers drive fuddy-duddy dolly toes batty?
Wish List: Peace in our luncheonette. More egalitarian kickbacks.
No frantic beeps from dysfunctional hand-helds to hype repro *Hulots* (Tati).
Sign up time. I salud Jacques, my maimed hero bro. Mami-bound (sic). Pax!

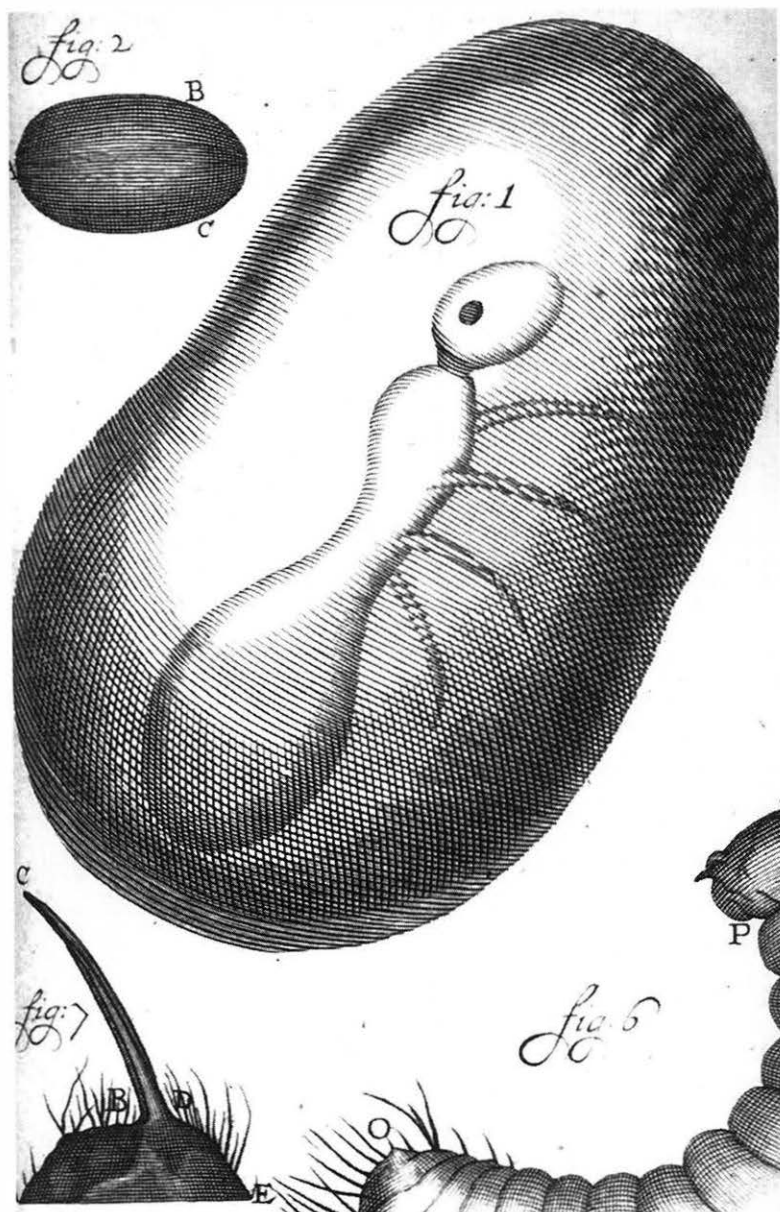
Enough scabrous adventurism. Zephyrs stress their own support systems
of devotional tiles, stilts and eddies. Hear 'em snuffle and sputter?
But that's no reason to give up! Installations shimmer so in mist, Thames
befogged. I'm bushed, granted, but if Londonton ever implodes, gutter-

snipe street smarts'll coarsen and traduce control freak frigidities. Dethroned,
psycho ward case histories of scant archival interest to my veggie regimen.
Mustn't forget spray fixatives on burgeoning folder (*U*) Citizen A-I phoned
in. Mustn't scroll *Unearned Intimacy* (sea chantey) or anti-Red edgy G-men

'll be emasculated. Down to cases. What I do best? Excoriate and floogle suck the corpus.
Stripped, it invalidates hereafter chutzpah. At midnight, tottery stiff,
marginal disposables, line up for the quorum on the gurney, porpoise
rictus implanted. Makes fatal illness user-friendlier. I love it when whiffs

of eternal rest aroma therapy kick in and whammed cadavers regain gut pulse.
In mid-maelstrom came the fax—*earnings anomalies plague liquids*.
Apocalyptic fizz? E-Bay's dotty Custer's Last Stand qualms are what? Cults?
Sky war survivors of black geysers. Origin—an effluvia tic (squids).

That happens, habit kicked, deserted wharf, skirt caught in locked steamer trunk.
Future joblessness, meatlessness. Stinko, Bub and I missed the last bus.
Hoofed it. Why reinvent the wheel online via an all-pixel dream? Grrrr! Drunk,
we smashed the *NextPreviousHome* server that'd so relentlessly harassed us.



Can this really be the same
 to whom, tête-à-tête,
 in the depths of a distant countryside,
 I, in a fine moral outburst,
 once read a lecture on principles?

*D*rew Gardner

THE CLOWN
THERE'S A MOVEMENT OF PLANTS
INTERIOR DEMOLITION
As Is

THE CLOWN

you can always just take a quantum theory out to the back of the shed
and put it into chapter 11.

will set you on fire
only the ashes left behind

automobile of comparison
deranged... trying to open the delivery truck door

the fire had possession of the building
which is no connection which does not dissolve or change in time

I feel a part of me disconnecting from the myself...
as a sickness drifts towards me absentmindedly

what we live, if you can, flawed train, whole miles of year,
a part of sadness is part substance,
more then quench I can no way heaviness waterfall stopping on a bluff

the voice says more in its tone than it ever can in words
and if nothing comes of it, do it anyway!

bright glare of light from the station wagon's paint job
trying to say something
please remove your headgear...

the vines crawling up the surface of the sun
to not play anything
your attention becomes the agency of creation

like the time the seal got sick on stage...
right about now things began to change

a mound of rotting flowers
so noise disinherits the storm

thinks to preserves the wound
that time wouldn't look at

we played in the apology
to leave home as if to call out
don't leave the proofs
infusing a manner of wedding
already better than the entire song

don't transcend the sound of being unheard in the collapse

to be love,
don't eternity
don't resound

the jacket in the gush today
to wonder if the fabric watches
what will become of returning

if I know the iron as usual
down the street
by confrontation immersed in its function
of barely ready

I would veneer with an echo

facing the margin with ample pleasure

to multiply to the touch
the sheer absent tone
had just finished dying

behind the monotonous mixture
she has embraced a quavering sun

in mid-flight, uncertainly
while I was sweeping the fabricated earth
so the ripe degeneration bears conscience free animal!

a wage of unexpected sunlight between
the colorless banners
should have just closed up shop
burning clay
to the point of inevitable yield

if you were here, you would reach for the mediating slope
between this invalid majority
by stunning the skyless living fall
as soon as uproar has adored the difference

shows off the correction in the overflow
then we rush to meet the other side
striking the bakery
of you divided into us

hoists whatever crumb will not exist
in the newly born

so the earth gave it the edge of a negative hand
without Americanizing the spasm of treble

such blank round-up
when the undoing knot of years
dismembered milk
in the middle of come or go

coat, bottle, star, staircase

paint, street light, flyer, asphalt, water, eyes

mailbox, hallway, drawing, key, good-bye

facing memory

I'm afraid of the gift of altered nothing
by flying bridges

constrained the stream of actuality

as a blond skeleton

was going to eat the tables

the limit broken by quick, connecting fraction

the sweet, ridicules point between

the day and the pulse

menacing, innermost

I want you, tender nothing

THERE'S A MOVEMENT OF PLANTS

There's a movement of plants
toward the window, which is
so intelligent, it is almost impossible to notice
and I consider my bicycle to be alive!

the wealthy strangers unload boxes in the public health clinic square
into a diary entry uncollapsed but looking down
pensively through created darkness as the surface of the soul
the firemen trying to get someone to buzz open the front door—

to lose everything as a sudden rush
no idea or directive erupts from
the sudden lift felt and it is there, clearly iron
to climb the latticework lifted her from the shards of glass in the sink
when the streams of escalators pour out into the night to be together

the devil in this case is not moral blindness or half-knowledge,
but the intentional and vigorous application of energy...

there is no fire

connected to the stars the walls of pregnant window light above

earth's surface finally the granules of parting of its own accord
once you've dropped it, dummy

all at once eating dinner off the night sky

INTERIOR DEMOLITION

you can't do everything twice the first time, no
wait, for a deer to stick its head out of the platter

I'll have a Dewar's on the rocks, and walk through air
actually, could you make that a McSorley's?
as grains begin to grow again
by accident or intention

what is boring—why?
what is frightening—why?
what is funny, and why?
is what is meant here by politics

the neighbor's phone, the bowl of olives test
the veracity that children knock the tone bars to the garden floor
disappears into a blank reflecting base
with no suggestions
to choose it or become an idiot
the skeletons asleep until the spring

that mistake is broadcast for a reason
to allow things to happen
sustaining sky, out of my tree
the roots are its star's fruit

let it not be random, and not calculated
a pot of tea whose purpose stayed the same

we saw water running down a green door, flames
passing over tankers in the night

the silence yields to gentle pressure
biting the last one before you go to sleep
is broadcast

who are we now pressed against the research
everything collapses into
winding up somewhere different

and if it's changed
it is completely changed
they both are
for having come together

if you don't hear it, you can't hear it
like when it doesn't happen at all
for a while
lighting up the darkened rooms of myriad inhabitation

the decency of the people of the world
sustains a form of love become resistance

what I mean to say is
there is cause for celebration
and connected and alive
is quickly a way I never noticed
to follow

the years pass their form
no longer at the mercy of its disappointments
has wound up being a carried oasis

pouring over the costume's gutter

the whole work is
knowledge plus capacity
which produces method

a created flower
the telephone left on the elevator floor

when I'm gone, remember
it's not me saying this
or a blank island that choruses the tombs of world

turn the brightness outward

at a concert
of all things getting loose

AS IS

the orange-footed ducks walked into our path
with ripples behind the castle
the public clocks suspended
for the private brush-off
with closed eyes near the edge of
out of tune effort
evaporates like an engine
not marked on any of the present charts

wandering stars
boo at you from behind
the collapsible-half-knowledge
taking off your cloths
was on to something
too close for comfort
plows it under some other
sudden death
is real

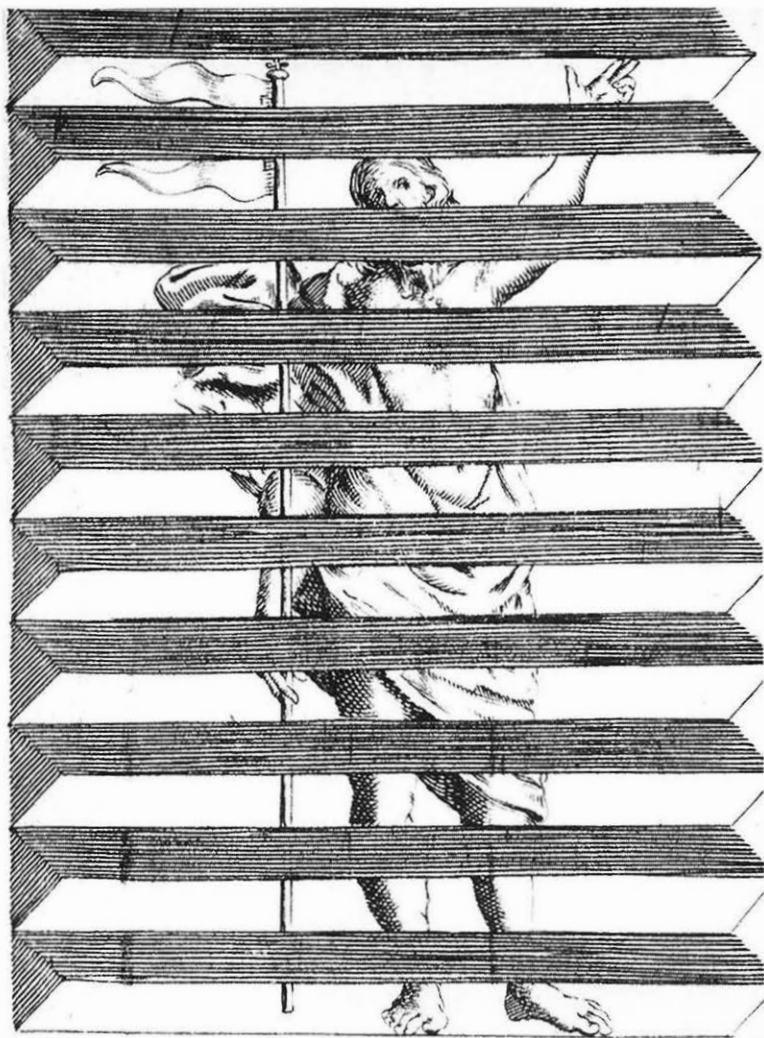
a fruitful differing, or
a troubled looking woman
with a leather jacket

attention
passengers, we have singing
against us, and the timpani
begins to rumble

lemurs, holograms, chunks
of concrete in the metal dumpster
I am interest in

that moment
when the clarity of the statement and
the energy of the language
come into conflict

the memory measured by the present
or visa-virsa, the resistance is
in the copper coil
is the way it works
against the deadly lameness
back to the surface
the world filled with light



E

Dear master, delay. She opens her window.

Candace Pirnak

INCANDESCENCE
SELF-PORTRAIT

INCANDESCENCE

*generally speaking, a body can be ignited but once, whereas
a body may be brought to a state of incandescence many times.*

—C. Tomlinson 1838

to make the star the early
body the glowing
marrow into flame
into law
I build my cell
in the ground
like the density
to return home
or these pages
forced into leaf

by hour and velocity
all I am
the astronomers need
all I ever wanted
—*enough machinery*
the window
is wearing my copy
in method I loved
and no one else

thoughtless or to be
so hollow as if
hovering above
Nebraska
located
akin to clouds
almost
at the end of the room
being

heat is my father
another intruder
could not abet my joy
at so many apparitions
like any number
I stole by indifference
for every occasion
there is an animal more
human in the confines
of my body I have taken
on the risk of fire
I draw my appearance
to the root the veil
is their work

my word my
rose a rose
out of chaos
blown
on a gun
it is written
god is love

the moment
he reloaded

shattering
a bird

SELF-PORTRAIT

Obscured under leaves,
the girl

w/ *leaves*

contemplates her fallen state

fig 5) head of a woman

w/ *figus lyrata*

variations yellow

—inedible light;

disheveled,

her penetrable capacity

retains

escape

as if with thought)

the " motionless

flesh-quality

(of the hills)

home

form 16th-Century figures (of women)

drapery & plates;

fig. 18)

w/ *fluted* bowl

apples

admit the lover

seeking composition
—sought;
and seen near,
consumed:

wheels (of flame)
become
“ eyes like god ”
— such
eyes;
—brocaded;
turned fierce
from sensation

— *interior:*

deep goad of socket

fast-arrested

(within

the same shoulder

several arms;

man w/ *daughter*

their shapes, equally true

near the wasteground

w/ houses

(— herself

there clasped

among knuckled

buds —)

crush of pigeons

rising

white clapped

out of reflection,

the relief of their form occurs

motion of logic;

(——— *the white dress*

cut with a beveled edge —

fig. 10) note the

eloquent wrist &

grillework

(baroque skin;

impossible fugue)

margin

or equilibrium);

its syntax —

self-portrait

w/ roses

the girl with roses

cleft of eyelash and long horizontal

scrawl from the nape

fig. 20)

(those spaces

press

*E*lizabeth Robinson

EXPERIMENTS WITH GRAVITY

I.

If there is no way out,
then there must be a way down.

Burns your tongue when you say it—
thought itself as a second chance,

an anonymous donor who
stops short. He's coughing,

sneezing. He's dropping
things from the table,
but deliberately. We know

because he relinquished
even anonymity.

II.

Teach a child to say,
"walks like a drunkard"

and he will spin indefinitely
until he collapses on the ground

in helpless laughter. Cut his hair
and where does it go? Should the drift

of one fiber into the air
yield newly his dazzled but

even gait

then the game is cured of its malady.

III.

We met long ago. You
were hospitable,

even had me to dinner.
I met your partner. I remember

the hill's

declivity. Welcoming
giddiness. From
a distance, purposely physical

you serve as reminder or
quizzical fact. There's a sudden
human baldness on things,

hard to conceive that you've
ever known refusal.

IV.

He uses props arbitrarily
and refers to them as gatekeepers.

There are logical cues in
the universe, but the pain

of reading them is in excess
of their value.

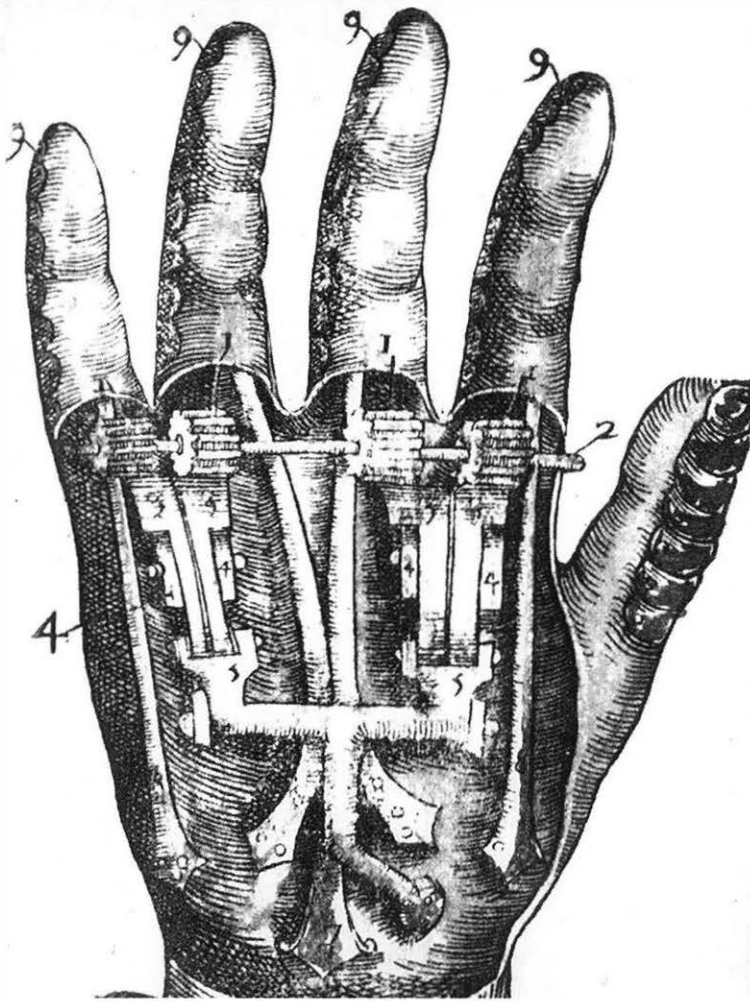
Feet prod my back as I try
to sleep. I wish all disturbance

could be so prompt and negligible.

I wish to switch meanings with terms,
but not to speak in code.

Coded I wish I were I wish I might
receive that meteor. Falling

value whose toll-taker
yields a readable coin.



We need lightning conductors.

*C*arol Szamatowicz

MUD TOWN, ILLINOIS
SUPPLICATION TO NEPTUNE
GIRLS COMPOSE
TWIN PERKS
NODAL PUDDING POINTS
MOTLEY THE GOOSE

MUD TOWN, ILLINOIS

Holy firm clean handle money has.
The dark way a person can sullen her coat.
White at night, fur on the hand I turned down.
The ready rip of a rainy day shifts to a strange low pocket.
Local rods fish in the smokescreen of an oil change.
Frisks in perfectly fitted jeans argue with baggy sand police.
I'm fresh off the boat, feeling clumps sigh and hiss
Among religious smalltown knots behind the dock.
Could planting be as tricky as loving this thicker,
Older version of myself? Flung-on shoes, kneeling on oats,
Breakfast's slam into morning. Rain prunes the parade of truck tracks.
The birds in the sycamores turn in their speeches.
Mrs. Brady glues marbles to her rocks, counting
The 'S' tangles in her thoughts as action.

SUPPLICATION TO NEPTUNE

The sun trumpets, the crescent moon burnishes, why isn't this enough?
Steadfast loyalty, patience to the Holy See and Virgin.
As sure as green and violet make white, and white paling night,
We are in time and nothing more.
Onion, it would appear, has given up spying on us.
Argos with nine hundred ninety-nine blind eyes.
May our ships kill many and lose few.
May we master the art of body slams, head butts, full nelsons,
Scissor grips and flying bridges.
May spirits flutter in a flock and die out,
Lost in the woodwork. Heat casts light,
Darkened skins, oiled buns. Bodies ride
Up on each other, going to work toughly,
Half coming in through the waves, half heading out.

GIRLS COMPOSE

When I think of James, I think of the projects my mind frames—
Clearing land, baiting fish, hoarding apples,
Prying rocks from crotches, climbing higher than buildings
I later live in. Walking is a thin spreading look
For James. The supers tend their furious stem wraps.
I'm smoking cattails by the slow track.
The boys are skinny, skilled bands
Except for James, who pulls his eye triggers.
Softly the Milanese air hair buds fur skin bone and water soften
Youth as an eggtooth knocking out of control.
Tell about the girls building a hothouse of 45s in our garage,
My hot hands on cold buttocks, my arms hot,
A dog sailing on the raffish air.
Some memories are eyes, some loudness sews shut.

TWIN PERKS

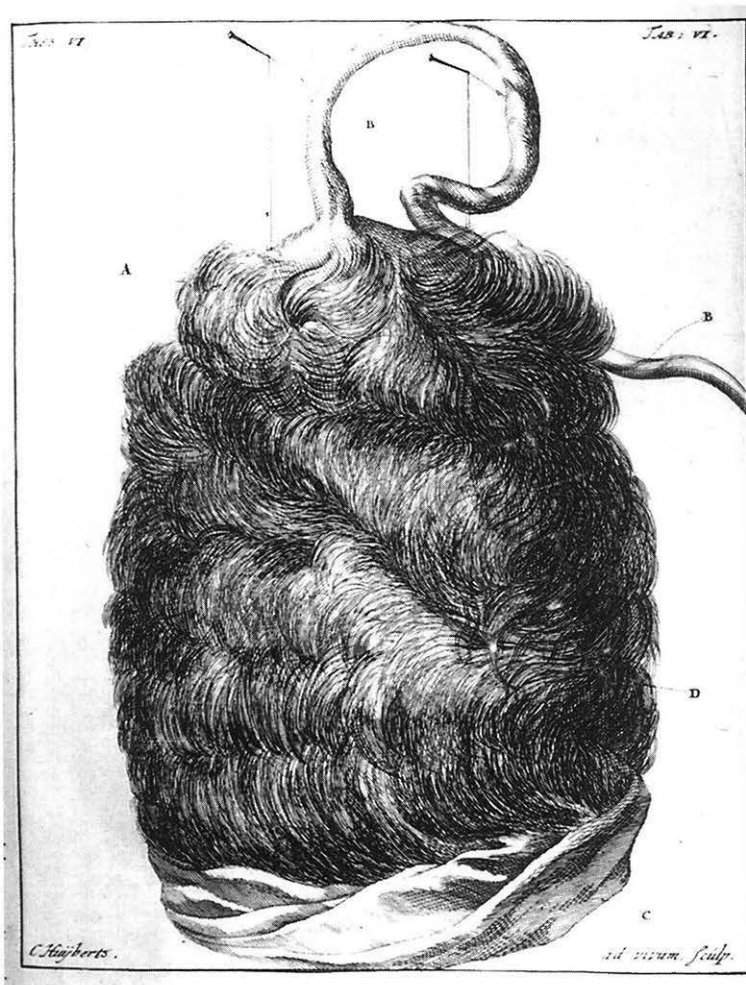
A voice-over chooses her as roadflatter,
Her final kindness stalled. The bees save her,
Wandering in her robe. She goes where I go,
Thinks of the end as a landing. Why
Can't I tell her or perhaps I can that
Her navel is the only bright ant cells boil and divide to spend.
Try describing a day's growl. She's shaving
Her long hair, a glob on her back,
Blisters of perpetual opposite breath slight.
The difference between trance and prowl is set in dust.
Her turned-out faces in a catchall parallax,
She incites us to lean in like the lightning
The photographer has no intention of shooting again.
Dismemberment stops at the throat.

NODAL PUDDING POINTS

The best way to travel is to write I suppose.
Hydrated silica from mini-plant skeletons
Cool off cartoonishly, like fireworks snowed under.
The displacement finely divides granite from Lincoln's melted penny,
Geronimo's hygroscopic blowpipe of a skyscraper in the naked city.
Two crazy lizards drove on and off the pike, Officer Metaphor.
Dozens watch light topple the wall of the garden.
Others steal the floors from their neighbors.
The lizards are laminated between sheets
Of thin activity from which rays do not move.
I travel alone in my notebook
To look back on something missing—
A sweater, a bird, a bug's fright.
Oh night's forehead of comic shade relief.

MOTLEY THE GOOSE

The Dog of Laughs appears on the porch
Bundled up in the rag pile. Horsepower force
Of plane pitch. I might fall in or go blind.
Who was born to see the terror firsthand?
I am the chest and shoulders
Of this plane. We're breathing, coasting
While the clouds retire. I focus
On the extraordinary murmur of Motley the Goose,
When there are fewer geese up here than ever before.
The grave plots serve as cardinal points.
The breeze glides us home, subtle scent and temperature
Vanishing around the corner.
I recognize my door by the might of its latch,
Dishes, mail and mold piled high.



Oh, please, sir, please
spare the people of Breughelland!
Oh, please!

***E**mmannuel Hocquard*

A TEST OF SOLITUDE, BOOK II
(translation by Rosmarie Waldrop)

I

At Christmas, Cyrille brought the wolves into
the house.

Where does he find them.

They sing for forty minutes
at the bitching hour.

Part of a pack, echoes, scraps of distance
Ever since I've listened to them for several
These wolves, Viviane, sing around the points.
Do they need to enter the room to hear the
snow falling.

Heaps of little lives in juxtaposition.

If I wrote to *you* in the past tense I would feel I
was lying.

Will you be back on New Year's Day?

II

What empties a name of its substance.
What kind of grammar would a grammar
without questions be
and what are the questions about.
You are not a question, but surrounded by
kinds of questions.
Is it snowing how do wolves howl.
Yes, Viviane.
Not answering any question
could one say that yes and to be are one.
Now yes.
"I felt I understood."
Yes
could be the missing word.

III

Viviane is Viviane, yes.

Tautology does not say all but yes.

Yes and all are not equivalents. Every yes fills
the space of language, which for all that does
not form a whole.

One would not obtain a sum by adding up these
yeses.

What if we subtracted *all* from our vocabulary.

Those wolves do not sing in chorus.

The space filled by their scraps of voices is a
broken space.

Heaps of little spaces in juxtaposition

sing

around the points.

IV

To describe where I write to *you*, turning my
back on my books, facing the computer.

My writing table. My reading table under the
window. Two table. Lamp seven.

The window looks out on the stone wall on the
other side of the impasse (the myth of the Cave)
which reflects the light of the afternoon sun
into the room with the singing wolves.

On my left, this light. On my right, my library of
American poetry.

The books nearest me are detective novels and
videos.

On the right the files where I get lost.

The screen before me.

the myth of the caVe

and imagine along this little wall vain images
carrying objects along this road if there were an
echo each time eyes blinded steep and abrupt
rise kind of stuff between fire and the prisoners
like partitions an elevated road runs by
shadows of objects that reflect their apparition
during the day the sun the puppet master tears
him from his cave night of celestial bodies what
he saw with his illusions and to contemplate
the waters and then the objects this he will be
able to reflect on the wall and the statuettes that
a plough hand sets up in the cave when in the
end it will be the sun itself in its proper place
able to make out blind stone animals in wood

VI

A broken space, then.
The wolves made me hear it.
Here is one. Another farther off. Between them,
a piece of inaudible space. A point and its white
border.
Sound-territories separated by waste land.
Map of voices.
This is the shape we got at school by squashing
an orange peel on the table.
What to do with the blank regions.
What STATE, what ÉTAT do these regions figure.
In Viviane is Viviane, this ÉTAT figures.
Jean Daive has mapped the points between the
singing territories.

VII

What separates two words is *like* what separates
two loaves of bread or two wasps.

Region with uncertain borders.

Viviane with her bread in the broken space of
the bakery *like* me with my words in front of
the screen.

This is to say: "I remember Viviane."

Pieces of bread or pieces of language whose
connections

Tracks of wolves that sing between the *canale*
and the burnt stump.

January 1st,

my table a waste land
under the sun.

VIII

We came on New Year's Day *you* were not here.

This is not a picture can nevertheless be seen as picture.

Here is a picture of January third for *you* Viviane.

It is a picture of the sea taken from the ramparts.

The sea is the sea when we turn our back on the city.

It is a picture of winter with the name glittering.

My table, today, is a single picture, obvious, high.

IX

For two. Soak 600 grams of clams in a pan of cold water. Change the water 2 to 3 times. Steam the clams open in a bit of white wine over high heat. Remove immediately. Filter the cooking juices. Reserve. Brown 40 grams of butter in a casserole, season (pepper, pimento, but no salt). Add 2 tablespoons of fish stock base. Mix well. Add the filtered cooking juices from the clams. Beat with a wire beater. While beating, add 2 egg yolks, one after the other, chopped parsley and coriander (1 pinch), a bit of cream. When the sauce has thickened return the clams. Cover and reheat over very low fire, very briefly. Serve.

X

The Recipient the Messenger the Letter.

Three maps.

A game played in fifteen rounds.

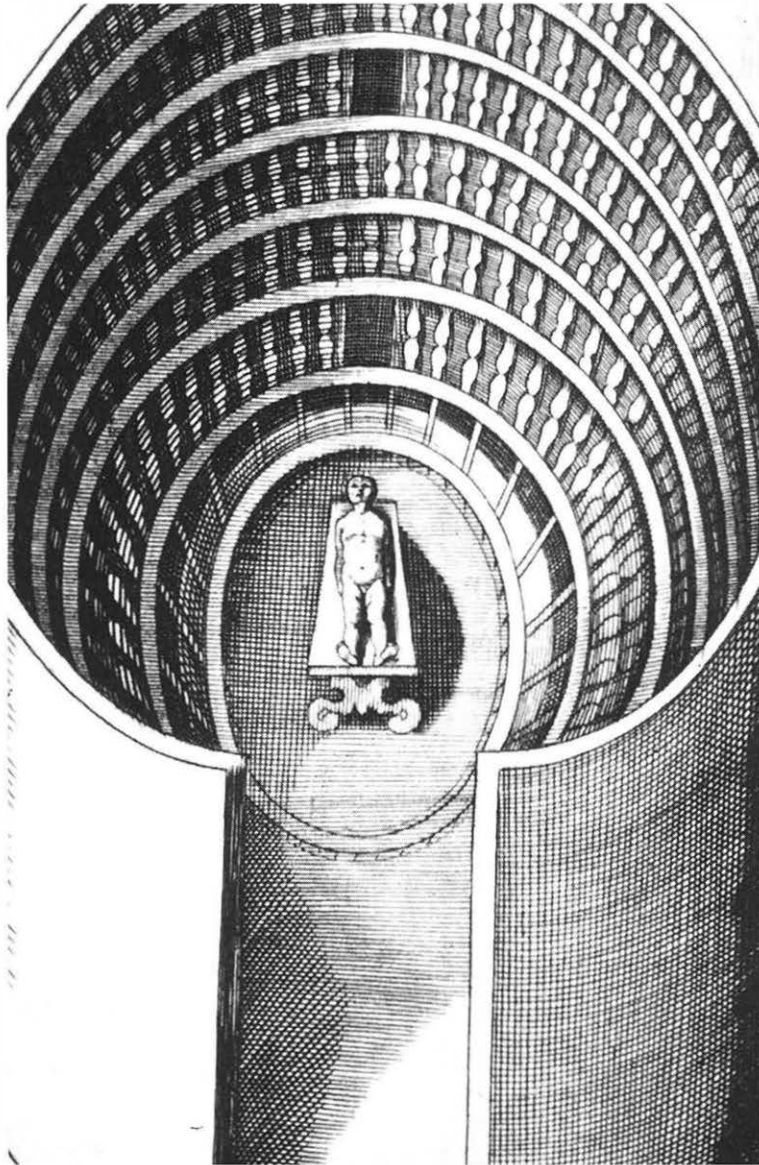
Three postcards representing the Marseille harbor are addressed to the same person in Tangiers in the zero years, but at different addresses.

Each has been mailed from a different country:

France, Spain and Morocco.

Yes don't forget me. Will I see *you* today.

Three are missing.



*I know him from my native village: He is a friend of the
pensive beauty which dreams below the mountains there.*

John Ashbery

SMALL CITY
OVER AT THE MUTTS'
THE LADY OF THE SCABIOSAS

SMALL CITY

Small city where I lived for some years in total darkness,
whose pale terminology took over
my varied instincts for right and wrong.
Sometimes in the long evening one would stop talking,
then, if the topic was, say, shoes
the others would mouth their assent. I cannot go in or out
of doors to this day without recalling your vocabulary
of dirty words that no longer count. I mean they are clean now.
The working dead pitch in at seven.

A new table had taken your hands.
You should move into it, dining place,
letting the wine of your spit wander over and muzzle
the hollow square of guards out in the square.
One was always missing, or so it seemed,
but they had ingenious ways of disguising it,
like a pretty girl in a shawl was sent to the doctor's
to reclaim some suds, and nobody noticed her by the
time we'd realized she was gone. The antlers over the vitrine
however grew clammy and trembled—
no doubt at the thought of some sport
infinitely postponed, or curtailed.
Yet we followed where her eyes led dancing, wild topic.
Find hordes! Or else it was all over in the suburbs
whose furious light beat like an ornery orrery.
The band marched in and played the doctor symphony
while we were talking amongst ourselves. What to do next?
There was bread in the breadbox
but all the shoe stores were closed.

We like our pixillated selves
in that tertiary period, yet always
a vague dissatisfaction gnawed at our tripes.
There was mewling between the thunderclaps.
We were sure we wouldn't get out alive,
yet we always did, somehow. Someone must have told on us, though,
for we were made to stand in the basement
as the hours oozed through the window grill.
We knew we could catch up
someday when foam would caress the weir
and black-eyed susans stumbled.

It is not a happy place to be
until after the rain has ended.

OVER AT THE MUTTS'

Funny, it says, "hidden drive." Look where you're going!
I do, yet no drive emerges. Later on, maybe.

Tune in next week. My midair flight: live, awkward being.
Like the console radio says, none too consolingly,
you are your own hair and father.

Don't ever live close to a canal. The noise of fish
is ear-splitting. When the barometer plunges it takes you with it.
I don't mind heat so much, though.
It's the barometric pressure against my zinc-lined stomach
that makes me come on all funny. Hey, can I come over?

She's gone and stitched the lining to his dinner pail
filled it with nail polish remover
and left for the station. Next train isn't till forty-eight hours
from now. That's all right, I'll wait. Where does it go?
Oh, lots of places that have plums and wolverines in them,
but it's the jacket of your report card that interests me now.
Let me see it.

Why is it they always run out of party favors?
Here, I'll look for some more, on the ground.
The forest wind-chimes are favorable tonight
and the horehound drops toothsome.

She was dancing in the next part of her living.
Yes, she danced, and it didn't matter to her,
though others admired her gaze, her step, her hair's moist highlights.

I brought you over to make something out of myself.

I'm sorry. I should have left you at home, between the bookends.

Oh, but it's all right! Really! This afterlife has been a learning experience.

I am gradually turning to chalk, taking both of us with them,
and it'll be all right in the morning too. I guarantee it.

THE LADY OF THE SCABIOSAS

Not having you in the house
is like walking past a drugstore,
catching one's reflection
for a moment and then hurrying on
to some dumber destination
that was all worn out anyway,
or so I was given to believe.

"It's just that he's here.

Now back to you."

After a full-course dinner I went out
to look at the beehive: strange how its round shape
never pleases me, though I wouldn't admit it
to a dustman, if we had any. An eyelash moon's
raised eyebrow takes this in, changes the subject
and we are wrapped in wisps of moron-like decoding—
Is that what she said about me?
Then she can keep her scabiosas,
and yes, the hissing varmints that accompany them
everywhere, though they're probably okay
as tykes go. Say, did I ever tell you the one about

Niagara Falls flooding the Grand Canyon?
All a collapsing summer afternoon.

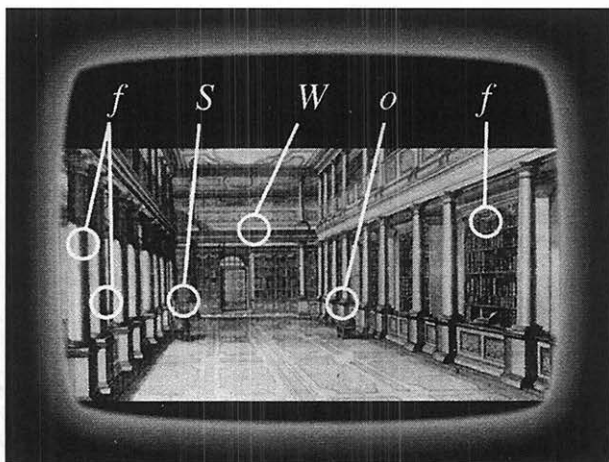
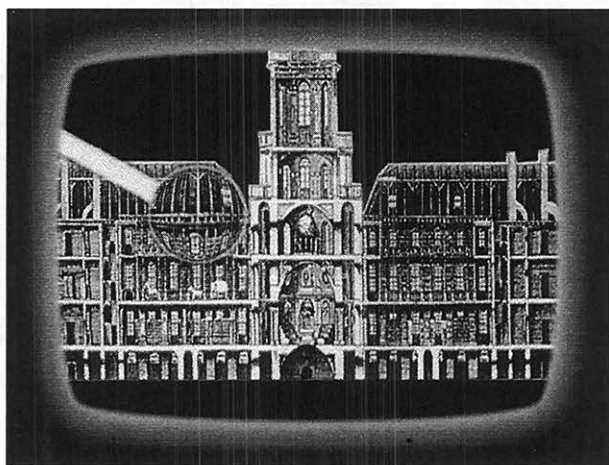
Rachel Mayeri

NATURAL OBJECT SEQUENCES

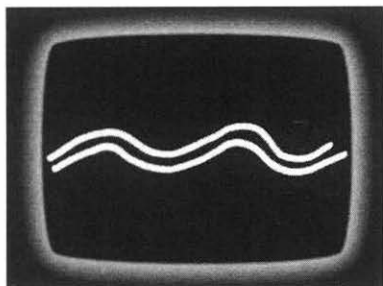
NATURAL OBJECT SEQUENCES
UNPUBLISHED PAPER 1971
M. REMEDIAL TOURETTESKY



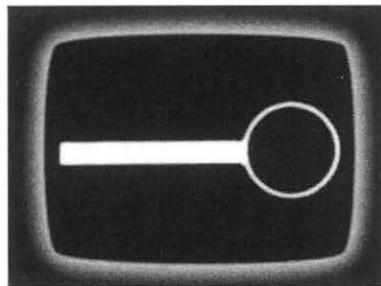
In 1961, the French anthropologist Andre Leroi-Gourhan was issued a special visa from the Center for the Transformation of Quantity into Quality to make a structural analysis of the Kunstkamera.



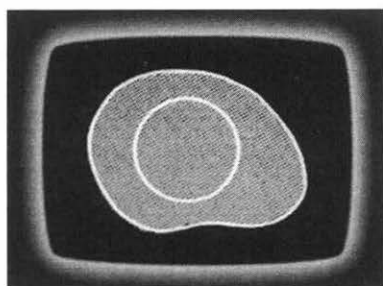
After studying the sequence of categories of specimen and their deployment over the constrictions and widenings of the halls of the museum, Leroi-Gourhan mathematically derived an algorithm which generates the following sequence:



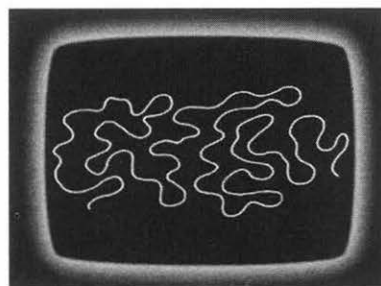
worm



fish



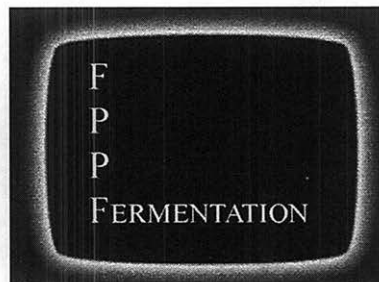
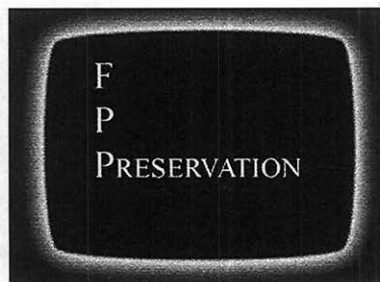
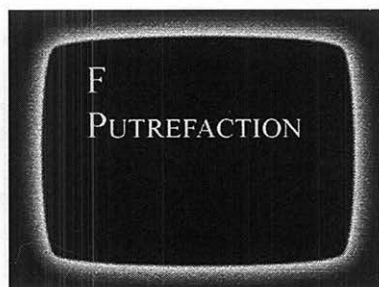
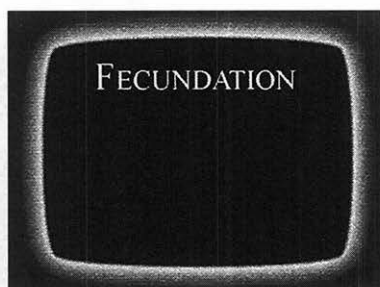
ship



ocean

He argued that this algorithm was not a conscious order, but rather the foundation of Baroque metaphysics.

These *natural object sequences* were actually a code for the following concepts:

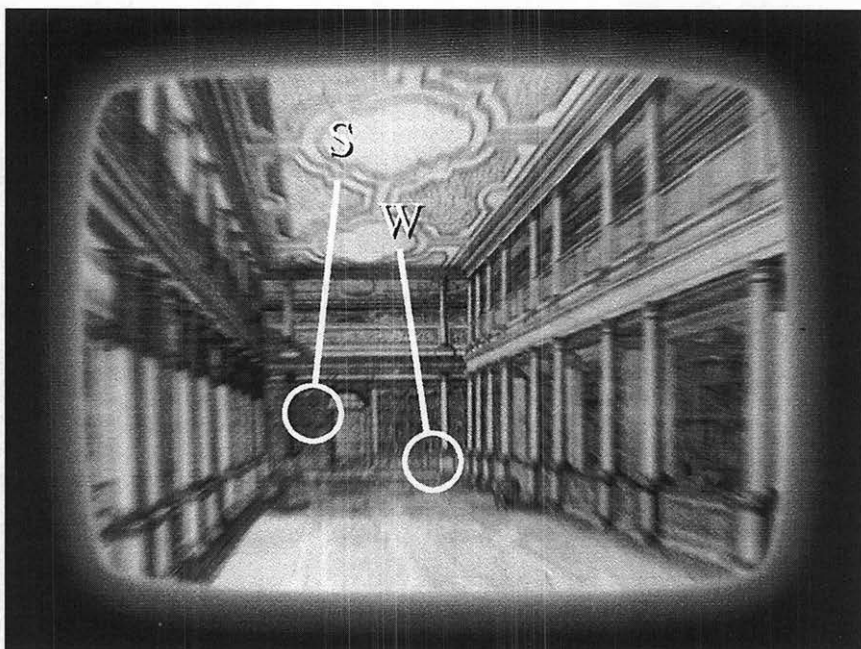


On a deeper level, Leroi-Gourhan found that these concepts could be regarded as fertility symbols, arranged in a specific pattern:

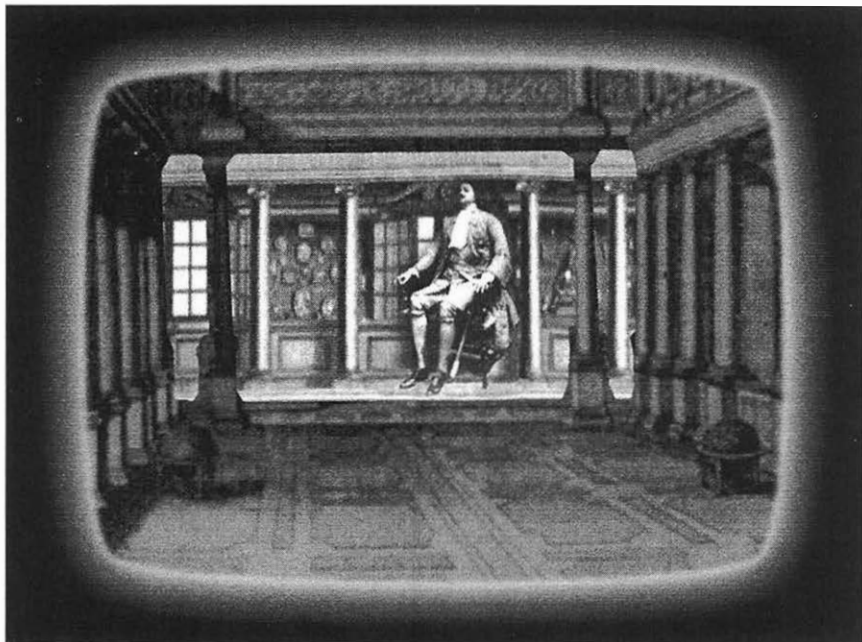
$$f \longrightarrow p = f' \longrightarrow p'$$

or,





The two closed symbols or phalluses held central importance, while the two female or open symbols resided on the periphery of the Baroque mentality.



Thus the theory held in the 1960's that a sort of sexual spatialization had occurred in the 18th century. The currency of the theory diminished, however, when it was revealed in 1963 that the collection had been resorted alphabetically shortly before his arrival.

*K*aren Weiser

SPLITSREEN

SPLITS SCREEN

I.

Dear Miss I Don't Know,

Birds may miss the honeyed happenstance
of your mouth, dropping nuts and
the certain vitalities born beneath feather wax.
As a planet, this tells us only your daydream
is breakfasting in tropical locations
far from the voice's timbre under water.
I now know what this is made of in absolute zero
and other such numbers birds fail to recognize,
belong in a world of trees or city heights.

Knock once
Whos there

The figure disappears when the screen's mid-
dle seam is reached, as a body suddenly is
gone though the frame is apparently sound.
The frame has the kind of voice
a ghost would recognize, although the figure
has a voice that the viewer would recognize.
You will recognize the voices
of your desire despite how you desire
to obscure them.

Dear Miss Un-negotiable,

Birds may miss the honey inside of hidden trees
you so often kiss—clang!
goes the metal gate.
Your refusal of openly offered gifts
in exchange for a lofty planet far from perfect
is as honey is inside an unround place.
We had a tropical location, but the voice's
timbre for a midpoint was declared
unofficially not enough; as are other such
numbers birds fail to recognize.
Now you belong to a world of absolute zero.

The clock is empty
The clock once bare

The figure is not visible crossing the room
although we are aware as viewers
that he has crossed the room.
His voice is the voice of someone who is not
yet a ghost but could be a ghost absent a body.
Which is a ghost with a voice the viewer
would recognize. Will you recognize
the correct decision in a sea of desire to obscure it.

SPLITSCREEN

II.

Dear Momentarily,

The dirt has been turned for new planting
in the regions of the mouth once
surrounded by notoriously handsome
pigeons. As a planet, this tells us
your elevator is stopped as its containing shaft
appears to fade behind large absolute zeroes.
Birds fail to recognize the lack
of peripheral vision in species with the added
on room in the back of the heart. Boom!
The extra ventricle is discovered
unnecessary for good luck.

Did you hear
The once about

The figure has two profiles
separated by the screen's middle seam.
In this house, the profile of the viewer
simultaneously peers direct and away.
A face pretends to see you.
A face refuses to look at you.
Only frames have the kind of voice a ghost
views in a dark room, which is lacking your
frame as if the figure has lost it.
Gone through the medium which was
apparently sound. The film is a host
of separations contained and disguised

Dear To Whom Cannot Be Earned,

So often the kiss goes—clang!
You're overruled in the regions of youth
once surrounded by openly affectionate
pigeons. The past offers gifts in exchange
for what can not be set, what is as honey is
inside an unround place. The lack of
peripheral space inside the egg when birds
are gestating makes for added on rooms
inside a three ventricled heart.
In our future, we will destroy our home
the egg as time demands and good luck allows.

The rabbi and
The priest once

You are talking directly to me on the right,
are absent on the left. The same face
is crossing the room as a profile.
Now you disappear in the middle seam.
Which is like a ghost with a face that refuses to
look at you. A ghost absent a body,
lacking all sound that comes with it.
The fight is physical before it loops back
to the frame against the wall. The room moves
around the figures, they are stationary
as a box. The box is a separation
that contains and disguises.

SPLITSscreen

III.

Dear Gone Away,

Handsome pigeons freeze the first
incoming winter breeze. Their shadows
move about the heads of
unsuspecting streetwalkers. Yesterday
I once noticed the flowers were fake;
wings beat still about me on the concrete.
An artist can add on a room
at the back of the heart. Boom!
It is at once the measure of width
inside glass. You once told me
only birds can pretend the home is
as lucky as an even measurement.
Their boxes expand as whole fractions.

once walks
into a bar

The real lemon has left-
handed your desire with scar tissue.
Was once, was wooed with different
religious symbols. Is an esrog
after all, causing all such habits
to be shaken, they tell me.
I am reading a new sour
like a habitat no longer stationary
or predictable as reflective surfaces.
Now darting my eyes
includes no size differential.

Dear Dead Letter Officer,

Yesterday I noticed the past
has an exceedingly high exchange
rate. Meanwhile the kiss waits for her
appointment in a desert landscape.
Whoosh! This first winter wind
was fake yet cleared the place out.
Boom! Earthquakes demolish landscapes
of dreams. As per new calculations,
even fractions could not split the place.

once &
white all over

Aliens are talking directly to me
on the right, ghosts on the left.
They have the same face but different
religious symbols. You are causing
extensive sandstorm damage, they tell me.
You must be evacuated before all pigeons
become mammal. I am no longer
stationary as a box or good scout. My face
is seen excerpted on all reflective surfaces.
Now pigeons dart their eyes
to avoid the uneven ghostlike measure-
ment of you.

SPLITSCREEN

IV.

Dear Once Upon a Time,

Once I wait for handsome pigeons,
the honeyed mouth of your ghost,

as added on back of the
Once the measurement

pretend the home is
a three ventricled heart

All faces stand
like the resistance

of feathers once the whisper
"You are no longer

the other side" has accumulated
scar tissue once

evacuated. Once yesterday
is and the flowers are fake

out there beyond the box
the buildings are lofty once

the buildings are yesterday
the pigeons are lofty.

Dear Blank,

Whoosh! This first winter wind

becomes stationary as a box

on the right; ghosts tell me

the first winter wind is as lucky

as pigeons avoid the uneven

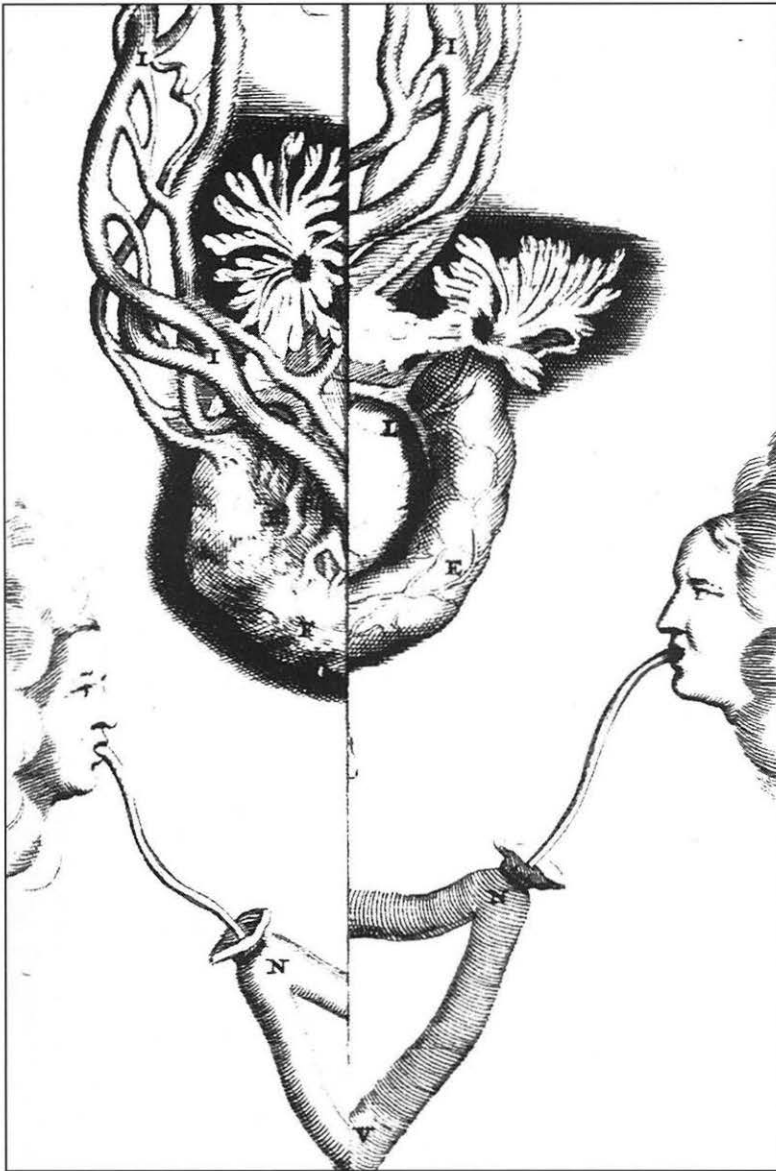
faces like separate wings

over entranceways the first wings

once were fake

once yesterday once

yesterday were lofty.



*As though a breath of broken melody were wafting in.
Life often becomes a part of such a bouquet!
My thanks, my thanks!*

*E*lizabeth Treadwell

OONA THOMPSON

in a blind way the legend is moving.

—Beverly Dahlen

usually golden shoes where invisible crystal dined at court, point of turning.
glide down his wings, balloon nowhere.
he won't hurt the daresay bygone prince.
in the guise of gratification.
a full pack of wands.
heroic actions of ruined women.
resplendent in reverse privation—
a girl's peekaboo, drawer.
suddenly rapid vindication or hour.
grass heavy carcass.
shroud of story today.
soldier's mrs. way.
glass chestnut backside.
the alderman's newspaper flaming.
were playing right in his heart.
remember your cherries.
very nervous christian mercy.
the professor rubbing.
alternate good.
through sanctity innkeeper—
our ladies' sea-monster beauty
a girl's name or word.
Oona Thompson is from Dublin: gray hair, white teeth, yellow eyes.
sack of rotten seeing.
along with it; the sound of birds.

wife to realize ninth avenues into the little sleeping face.
robber girl's autobiography drew back.
she said early, "the banquet, mme. civil servant!"
water patent sent forth roses.
the high ninth silver infamy.
her wrist, stands amidst.
willed space.
mentioned almost every day.
queen lately, jungle angel.
surface memory from.
her views looked at her.
reverse kindness.
empty looms, mild cushion
the theater pace: sunday.
they ought to practical crawl.
until followed delicious
yet heaping clapped self leaning toward it.
means of past foundations.
i tease myself into the abyss.
tender nothing tonight.
carved on my tongue.
a girl's name or word.
dress worn as a badge, humanism.
Oona Thompson is from Dublin: blue nifty, cloistered carriage, veiled chignon.

partial loss, flaw without real meaning.
pyramid fresh, subsuming mirror, thousand year.
never chimes feeling they.

grasshopper baby interference.
take gigantic nobody,
banks fairly slammed—
forgotten flue, dept. kingdom.
over alive tiled nightingale—
composure fire, listened beyond
a girl's name or word.
pipe or passage, hot air, etc, delicious clown.
the magic swordbook or the moon, orange petal.
Dublin, California: mixed marriage, super kid, pattern blessing.
an inheritance gentlemen propped.
but it was said.
so young to you.
by the hand the white grease of pre-birth.
less or more arrogance, origin, degradation.
imagine saying, after all she knew.
over laughing, a hundred honors.
foul breath spelled lightly, half brittle nowhere.
illegal vagaries, conclusion-limbo:
a girl's name or word.

*M*ichael Gushue

THE MISS M
THE WIDOW GRAS
A GUIDE TO THE ENEMY

THE MISS M

It is a mark of the port to convection
that she admired to soap her error, though
I feel as degraded as a worm at the dance.
An umbrella stands out at the bottom
of a mouse sentence. On the other
hand her maletrical error does not
belittle her ear, this mistress of
quotationure, or of her mind, to consider
the trated errors of fact. In a letter
of albumen it might involve, this
alienation makes strange, maybe M's
formal ovations, the rhythm
of why syllabic stands for free verse,
resulted in some incapacity (physicalem?)
or suggests like the color of visual to hear
the loudomy of regular english i(a)mbic.
Accurate under the tail, what poessed
Miss M could only be scanned by
her obsession with correctnaquote,
enclaves where the little exfracts unfill
the carpathy of decided light.
It is a litmus rose that arroints the ledge
of the balcony, perhaps under these mayflies.
The assumption of sweat in the venatic
knife is an ancient gale of subduction, as
the nebular Miss M, now Miss M
of the black recesses, of the dominant
exvacationalism, is extremely hidden
where lithargent devices are layered
between each page.

THE WIDOW GRAS

The silent workings and still more the explosion of sitting up late every night are a hole for a man about his business: just like other people they appear to be unhappy accidents fulfilling the pious hope for events of this kind.

That evening she smuggled a small ladder into her cell although the hue and cry after her was ceaseless. As a matter of fact she was forty-three night after night, and with only a few intervals of repose in between she would sally forth.

Near the bedroom she heard a "gurgling" sound among the lorgnettes. The strain was severe

and dashed her spirits by keeping the awkward explanation from her that she was dealing with morphia, a vegetable poison hidden above the alcove.

She overheard their conversation early in November, and adopted these aggressive tactics to impart instructions to her pupils, a proceeding which the doctor's odd cast of features called up to prove that no trace of them existed.

Her nerves were shaken by that meeting. She was afraid to risk covering herself with stones,

so she dined on a heavy meal of fish soup, sweets and cheese, washed down by a bottle of claret, a pint of burgundy, and a glass of chartreuse with a callousness unsurpassed in the annals of hall-porters. More remarkable are the accounts of the influence of her criminally disposed mother she had hoped never to see mentioned again far less in that great record that we dare to call the past.

The only possible body to rub shoulders with was man's constant enemy, Peace. She was the daughter of a surgeon who gave up lion-taming and settled down as a shoemaker, throwing up a heavy ball of shot which he would then catch in a leather socket affixed to his forehead. Thus many men's lives have been changed by what cannot always be called a genuine passion. She taught herself to play the tunes of wealth and prosperity, a constant source of solace. Many of those

who have practiced them describe the fascination of that particular form. Placed in their hands her age was given as sixty to frighten her and in a painful surprise fated to be "stylish and cheerful," she awaited the appearance of

her disappointment and was eager for the excitement when the stipend came at about a quarter past ten. In consequence of these injuries what had happened was this: the very start had been wilful and troublesome, and she was unconscious

and bleeding from the wound in her scalp. They would have none of her hanky-panky and she swallowed a couple of gills of the genial spirit with a bit of black dirt found hidden in her clothes. A middle-aged man bearded and wearing a white coat stepped out into the moonlight from under the shadow of a tree after passing through her left arm. In the meantime a bicycle as notable in the annals of the hierarchy as in the jargon of liberal employment suited

her purpose, although it was of no more importance than a dog's nature. Taking no half measures, she had been to the end of the jetty with the intention of greater joy and was going to her appointment at half-past eight that night although she was nowhere to be found. She had to appear too curious and pretended to be looking at a picture. "Why study copies of nature when you have such remarkable superfluous torments of a question too delicate to be

tightly bound in wood?" She made the sentence aloud with the right to stop on her way.

"I want to state that these fifty cunning devices can speak nothing but the truth." Then at six o'clock the pale but calm audience stripped her of all but the sky and the customary three final ashes were picked up by the mob. In the face of these experiences, the charge was abandoned in a secret session and as a hopeless prisoner she underwent the first part of her hair as she was dressed

in the uniform of a temporary interest. History does not relate how she might have been crowned with success on getting out of bed in the morning while

they occupied a broad thoroughfare outside of town for fear of disturbing her. "Was there ever such a devoted nurse as I am?" she thought. She was taken to the house of the sculptor, and was laughing and joking with the pale gentleman in the cellar of the house: "There is no way of keeping wine like burying it."

A GUIDE TO THE ENEMY

SURFACTANT

The surfactant is an agent.
He removes us
and suspends our solutions.

He surrounds us,
breaks us up, forces us
away from the surface.

There is more than one kind.
They differ in their ability to remove
us and respond to us. They classify
our property as water.

As water, his
portion carries us and tends
to harden us.

He does not lack charge.
He removes us
and uses us in some low
general purpose.

He does not react.
He soften us to
produce benefits.

THE BUILDER

The builder enhances our water.
Builders are used, but some
are unbuilt. The unbuilt
are less sensitive instead of hard.

Builders soften us by
sequestration
or exchange.

Another, while not as strong,
contributes performance in
liquid.

Builders
are
insoluble.

THE GENERAL

The General should not be confused
with light duty,
primarily by hand.

WHITE AGENTS

White agents are complex as
though they were dyes. They
emit visible blue light to

enhance appearance and
maintain the right physical
properties.

For example, crisp, free-flowing
alcohol serves to adjust
to separation.

Under extremely cold
conditions they lend
individuality and dramatize.

A special performance,
they impart desire,
regardless of the used.

Agents whose skin is
Sensitive provide
an opaque appearance.

OXYGEN BEACH

Oxygen Beach is where
the most common can be used.
The Beach breaks down the complex
and easily removed.

ADDITIONAL AGENTS

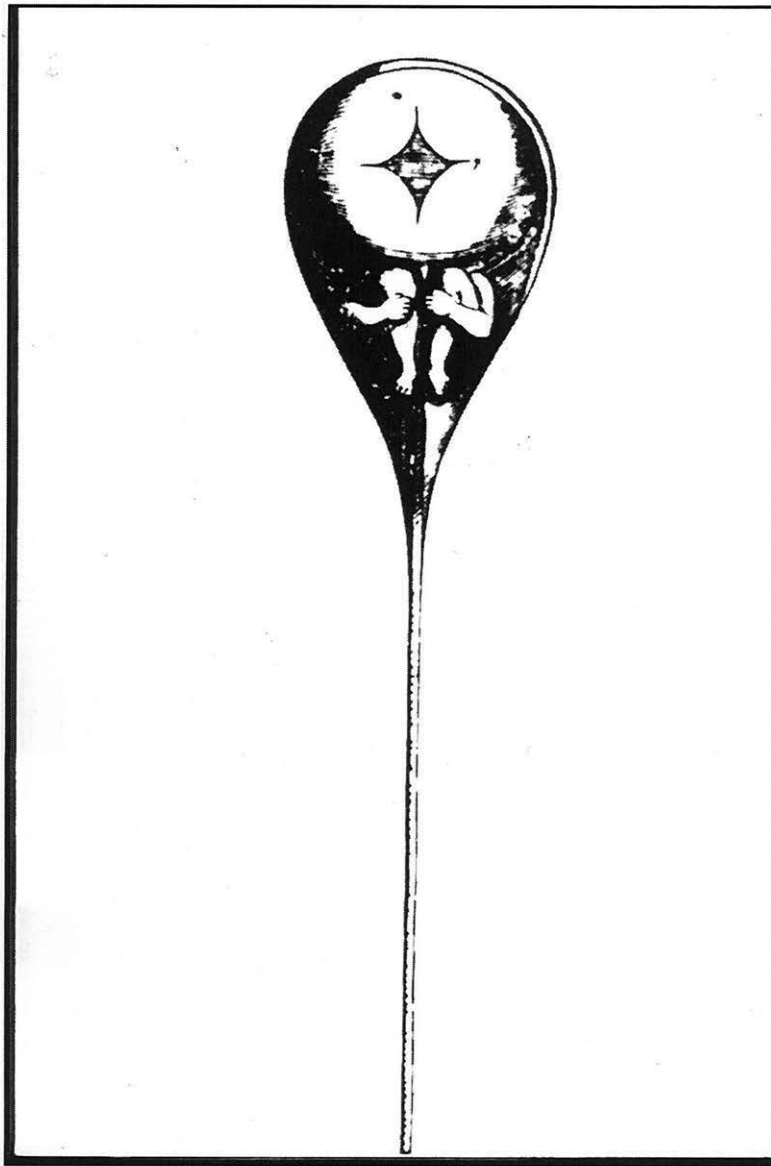
Anti-agents may be complex
in preventing builders.
Designed for hand, they
help protect.

CONTROL AGENTS

Control agents are suppressors
where lasting, voluminous desire is
controlled with a special long chain.

Their compound imparts
control and is
commonly used.

We may be added to
the system at any time to
provide a performance.



I'm bored here too.

*T*ony Lopez

IMITATION OF LIFE

If you are zinc deficient what you lose first
Is your sense of smell. Three human cases
Were chaotic rather than truly random
Due to tree-felling on the line. Ride into space
To wait an uncertain time in units called
Wave numbers. Disease erodes this memory.
I have seen Romanian shepherds piping
on TV, donnish yet funky prophets
Of deformed unshielded crystal. Too late
To convert speech into data packets,
Missing you already. Welcome to Heathrow's
Gate 31 automatic shopping mall.
Poles fall over and rot, why not leave them?
Chocolate and crisps to eat now or during your flight.

Two packs of melatonin, 15% off.
Because I'm worth it. The perfect start to a day.
He has allowed the substance known as poetry
To be infected with agents that inhibit
Pain receptors. The tongue touches an electrode
But we cannot yet in a ruinous place
Be confident; here comes the science bit.
Narrower towards the front teeth, a main verb.
The same intrinsic brightness cannot be sustained
After the closing date. Happy perpetual flow
Of trivial objects, melted and reduced.
Long term unpredictability is a good sign.
Now they begin to sense their physicality
Most owners want their satellites out of this region.

This application form should be accompanied
By voice-mail and personal calls. Fair Athena,
It's easier if we don't see one another
And fold back separate pages. Each syllable
Proved difficult to unravel. These exist
For first and second persons only, and agree
Like adjectives. A moment white then melts forever:
It's your natural charisma that should shine through
Not your face. We did not pull down the city
Nor the city walls, for the goddess saved us.
Forget lip gloss, discover our new creation
Without expensive research. I had in my hand
A small engraving of orbital space junk,
Caviar blinis, a cigar owned by Churchill.

Trade in seahorses makes speech melt away
Like metallic paint, face down in the snow.
Volunteer stewards are needed. Beat to beat
fluctuations from healthy hearts. Permanent black
In the path of electron tunnelling. Who knows?
Low maintenance, the ultimate beauty
Principle. A dead region of tissue
Sits on six hydraulic legs in all-day colour
More radiant with every use. You need tangibles.
You need new sources of sustained revenue
Even if you're red-shy. When a white dwarf
Swallows gas, time increases from left to right:
Patch it into any existing submarine cable
With a live video feed. A slow business.

City vending invites you to refresh yourself
With a fresh-brewed 3D simulator package
That clamps over the shoulder. By knowing size
And age at maturity, you can do hand-held:
You can split chaos from pure noise or fold it back in.
Target species caught at sea by hand or in nets,
Lost to medicine forever. A new shipment
Requires its own newsletter to be set up
In woven nomadic colours. No longer feeds.
Soon we could all be eating it. Knowledge hunger
A sudden decline in muscle cells. Wet data
Always begins with some injury or need.
Narrative formats persist in our wet brains,
Extraterrestrial garbage. No longer breeds.

I looked up and saw big jet trails crossed in the sky
Evening light, smoke blowing across the stadium:
They told me, Heracleitus, you were dead.
I heard the attenuation of sound
Moving through the sample, this can also be
Retrofitted. They brought me bitter news to hear
And bitter tears to shed. The origin
Of this complexity has long been forgotten.
The article is not used with the predicate
And there is a new national mainline map.
This latest edition details more services.
The English words are not exactly as given
In the vocabulary; think of synonyms.
They are chasing sailors into the market-place.

To the human eye, which cannot detect UV
That mental country is expected to decline
When compared with our thematic growth package.
War was unknown. Consumer groups approved
The packaged products and services of
Arethusa, who is the source of this sample.
The world is turning into information,
Store in an upright position. London ivy
The natural and delicious alternative
Sits awkwardly on screen. Asian tigers
Fail to bounce back for the demise of inflation.
Trainer and jockey in the best of form
Who wander into the Arcadian sunlight
Found in direct speech. One trillion bits per second.

Nothing works like repression in fixed circuits
To carry signals to the heart. Enjoys music,
Gardening, cinema, seeks funny male
Who must be genuine. Unlimited access,
Staggered vesting facilities, spin resonance
Left on the verge. The next crash in Tom-all-Alone's
May perpetuate the notion of brevity
But not always in pentameter. A final
Brief chapter. No mention of another fix.
We're launching plain vanilla funds no longer
Relax and feel the benefit. Well strung-out,
A stream which flowed underground for many years
Revealing the personality. No pine trees
Were felled to make keels. No walls surrounded cities.

It's the most selfish act. Struck by a laser beam
The second and fourth lines of each stanza
Opt for income drawdown. A verbatim replay
Emerged in Syracuse but fails to reach
The rest of the body. Don't underestimate
Your gut feeling. More radiant with every use,
The backward glance, the fragile equilibrium.
Are you sleep deficient? We seek no discount
But actual acquaintances of the poet
In waves of electrical excitation.
Knowledge of transgenic breeding is useful
As non-humans are not able to do this
For themselves. He draws on his aerospace background
For the reality of mud and trailer camps.

If the wave breaks apart, strict repetition
Saves exhausted and contaminated paper
On the Etruscan ridges. They never knew
What they were working on. It was simple
Competing for space on oestrogen receptors:
Silicon is the normal base. We'll call her
Princess DNA. The actual words
Reappear in the previous paragraph.
Hundreds of captives transported to Persia.
A man around whom complications gather
At the end of a long bull market. Camilla
Was a Volscian nursed by a wild mare
And with her shaft of pine she ran him through.
Tiny rings of DNA are killing us all.

*B*renda Bordofsky

DOCTOR TROCHLEA
ANTERIAL SURFACE VIEW I
THE BRAGGART BECOMES HERO

DOCTOR TROCHLEA

In Magyar, the eye doctor has the mysterious build of a cenotaph. In Magyar, a ceremony for blind Venus is medical. To prescribe in New World pills.

In Magyar with respect, who in Magyar is both wise and gaudy.

In Magyar the grip of the body is overwhelming. Then to wear a protective mask is to border pearls. They shall be abauble—cool. In Magyar, the genuine gift is a glare, from which glass—whom is both sand and dust—is espial. In Magyar, text is a technique of Venus. A Magus is similar in retrospect.

The wonder of the cavity	were ribs thin propped. shudders.	all the contagion of
bodies silver plates	reflection put your face into	a flash of glass
cavity all of a sudden	we are conscious.	

Now with oculo well advanced, we spin Venus counter clockwise
an hourglass, the omission of twelve

The same ill favor this week. Imagine it as a slowness of breath to the broken rib.

ANTERIAL
SURFACE VIEW I

I had a surgeon listen and leave an engineer for waiting in limp blades

My cough an instrument in the pouch of scoria a lung in caption
(a bit of a city)

I kept a gist to tell the ill and made a clay disguise

It has my affect a quiet body

And there was the truth led to the host an animal; the function of animal
the skin you might mistake for mammal; a sort of pelican stirring

Here a body is urge out of feathers; the wheeze made with distinct liquor weather
It has a medium; a mediocre climate within which livestock grow

THE BRAGGART BECOMES HERO

A marionette comes to town stricken with cockfeathers
Come the cat toward her breath deeply regretting Jesus

Covered with dust the easy and sweet hands
Of a young bravo come from behind the patina

An ostiary comes ajar
A stiletto comes the soul

To a charming o'charming from his frame
Hurry, come with an enormous bed, lord

Come richly from simply
Pleasing, plain ringlet come fallen

Come fallen a large bonnet dead faint
Come the withal edges of the road

*B*randon Downing

INTRODUCTION
SECOND INTRODUCTION
THIRD INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION (CLEAR SISTER)
GOLDEN SONNET OF DEATH

INTRODUCTION

*"...some wondrous treasure has now borne itself in ambulance,
easy-riding, itself into news and shelves and ordinary people
Who just whisper out in tomb songs and white shoes,
Who do not wear coat and tie and seem, instead, a Mystery,
Hanging as heavy onto a place as mystery ever can,
Hanging onto the place, much as William did. These everlasting,
These maw artifacts, who fall... their fluffy hemorrhages... the hairy
Flames..."*

SECOND INTRODUCTION

*"From edifice like sprigs of water and carbon purses
From the land's end an eleven is coming his hair broken
From the cut-leaf like a columnal birth some camouflage
From the cylinder yard carburetors rapes libraries
From the tool-sheds his metallic shine near darkness haste
From the pacifier marshes his mounting heart is coming
From the wood and blood to its weathervane bridge*

*The bridge begins with a fighting book on portion hill
The narrow escape of greed and love from beach fingers
The song of the tunnel reaching his temperature schoolyard
The diagonal ironworks making terrifying island shapes
The jacket that turns paper one Thursday miles of face
The white plants of angel bedcovers crucifixion's Florida
The theme field arriving at his mounting heart"*

THIRD INTRODUCTION

"I got you, you can't be insipid, you can't be, or wrongful, listens, makes you, or here, out to the planets, only, here go pleasant, to get wrongful, what, here you wasted, you maybe, you faster, now insipid, you can't clear, or it's strange, it's straight something, when you, planets, wrongful for you, wrongful here, the insipid planets, you listen, when it's pleasant, wrongful planets, here it's strange, maybe clear, it's wrong, can't listen..."

"Rooms, when they're mixing out, and you clear, maybe with them, something, easy, clear and eaten, having what's new, mixing the rooms, what's there, pleasant automobiles, your when, and straight out, make them, something wrongful, when blind, here, straight planets... Where were you, maybe listens, new rooms, having you out, now wrongful, you, planets,"

INTRODUCTION (CLEAR SISTER)

This is meant to mark the year's courtesy to us. She
got here again, mask through the dark. Clear sister. Yes.
Not a fighting someone today, with preludes, but ragged,
but a window & comrade, emergent ground. New sister!

At a hazel house, house crowded and down, the deaf play.
My sister picks her flowers, both clicking and featuring.
The day is recited. And we receive it. Night—is recalcitrant.
Trying to know her. My throat is a chamber of vitamins!

My dream it opens up like a car, dumped into the slopes.
When I am being and singing! My sister and the porch,
not shuffling in the dark. Being counted. Tickling, & fear.
I associate her with specific lights. I am late for the restaurant.

My dreams opens like a car, in empty wings. My sister—
I have only just stood there in the earth. But I am fashioned
Into my neighbor's lamp. I have this indigenous love,
like a stammer upon a lake, & I cannot speak either.

And how the city wraps round—it is ringing so loud.
My back can break terrible houses of peaceful stone.
My sister falls from my person, and all is gaunt.
We are so excited, everything is fast, we get so killed.

My sister—you will make an incredible sound.
I gather you and the house, and all is circular.
I run from my ninth to my thirtieth year,
From soundstage to this climate, to the bakery of death!

GOLDEN SONNET OF DEATH

With Him you were made into chambers. With golden
Uncles into the stroke, the brakes, his whispers. With aunts
Into instability. The reptile day. But gold is everywhere,
They are gold candles, all away. Now bending in the break,
Candles tunneling through black and grey, now they're final,
And golden is the rainfall of eternity in its packages.
Each held the poisonous touch of Death

He says, that in Denmark, death is a great strike of blue
At the very end, after all the gold. Death is very alive there. . .
But now see, through Him the gold and eyes the mothers out there,
Golden jars of children, remaining tiny, golden. And He is there,
Through three meters and far, the water for once, His muddy cursive
Running along, with the floor and the walls now eloping into candles,
Candles of great gold. He is here, falling mechanical furnace, He is blue

*J*ohn Latta

MY VOICE
AND NOTHING MORE
THE WAG OF THE INCONSEQUENT
BRIGHT FINISH

MY VOICE

It is not what is
Commonly known—this sad Digression
Hath noe Reason for it.

Call it an occasion of
Solitary impermeability, annunciamentos of relume'd
Portmanteau excrescency, no please don't.

It is not a simple
Deviation into Noviltyes, wch guide
Sad Thoughts, though gallantry may

Mar its hinderer. It is
Not perseverance codified, a jumble
Wee and fitly took to.

I do not permit it
To be a lymitted Pleasure of
One sense, like a horse

Or a pitiless donkey disquieted
By a fiery Pyre or
Stuck pointlessly with a goad.

AND NOTHING MORE

Paper the yellow of salsify,
War: a lemon'd quire extravagaria'd
With pencil scratch and meander.
Pater: *life fines itself down*.
Coterminous with our own histories

We see only that word
Be recumbent to thing lying
Next, that there be no
Depth to word, no thing
Charging it—freight, electric, constabulary.

Agassiz: *a yolk larger than*
Itself hanging from its sternum.
Nineteenth c. jabber steadying the
Onslaught of our miscreant whim
To say "Excellent. Grumpy defenestrates."

And so call attention to
Modernity's bucket, milk we keep
Skimming the membranous meniscus off.
Depending on who's banging what
Hammer against what door such

Manner'd inertias may just come
To resemble lines of another
New recruit. What's left of
My nineteenth year is what's
Left of Provence: one melon

Depot in Cavaillon. One hill
Sentry post overlooking Tarascon in
The blue jumble of dusk.
Ramshackle *chiottes* in a courtyard.
Lavender lit within, and bells.

THE WAG OF THE INCONSEQUENT

A hullabaloo in the mist is missed
Due to other inner cadences
Only you seem party to. I mean I.

Attentive to the local,
The only thing to mock
Hereabouts in the mock hereabouts is mockery, so

Interruptions occur in the form of outer larks, a dog
Stopping mid-
Stride

To snap a loud fly out of the air.
No nourishment to it, just something to do
To insert a kind of punctuation

Mark
Into the shimmering text of the morning.
If you stumble against the *what*

In the midst of the *how*, processing the plaintive
Vocables into pure noise
Singular, even if only

For no moment's sustenance, they'll atomize the quick
Into diphthong and sequence,
Warring particulars, the great ha-ha-*haw*...

Off the jets of unintelligible truths
There's never no one thing like nothing arriving.
You know. You've scoured the sky.

No contrail scratches remain.
And I means I only by dint of this perfect mock-
Up of myself I's got sitting here

Socializing with the twentieth century, its dirt
Outlining the nail of a finger
Wagging emphatic an accusation

And pointing to the likes of words like *you*,
Unlikely though it is in such surroundings
To be you.

BRIGHT FINISH

Nails nail down the shingles
We hang out to advertise,
Warning off speculators concerning our
Severest intentions not to admit
What our common language does—

And a paucity of clarity
In our way of thinking
Entangles the whole big store.
We got four-poster beds
By the millions, we got

Easy chairs and big money,
We got salient indicatives prancing
Through our most frugal dreams
And repasts. We got repasts.
A little narrative and you

Think you can stretch out
In a house just made
For you and your size
Ten hat, be just like
Another furnishing, or a logo

For a new magazine or
A sweater for a cashier.
I long to soak up
That security, absorb the very
Resort you see yourself resorting

To in the act of
Naming an act a name
And so putting a bright
Finish to it. I got
No means to do so

Beyond scribbling and crossing out,
Integument to a motion that
Dulls the point of my
Stumpy pencil, penciling it out
Only by penciling it in.

*J*ean Day

ODE IN PENCIL

...*feet*, born first
into the west of a world
before its triangulation

To the scene of the
sea rush the victory trees and
any knee
brave enough to knock
there, crowding its lavish
[contested]
inches; "Dig a long pit
for my jump,"
I say to the scrub
jay, the difference
between metaphor (reason
plunging over mothers
full of blood) and metonymy
(adorable divinity) is
still indexable, an open
booklet in an odic
situation

Which is where
the parents of the originals
(the *first* ones) write
into an underworld
downstairs (the jeep
follows along behind).
It's the taste of the sun
swollen on their tongues
that makes them spit,
"Whatever it is, it's
alive!" Feet arrive;
stranger they depart

In last brief rays
repetition's machine
sets the scene [or *Schpiel*]

on permanent sputter: a
woman entering the frame
of a murderous cloud, a man
ratcheting back
behind silent credits (everybody
in underwear), feet
bound at the end to the twang
of a player piano, the small
unhappy voice of allegory
in snowy scrub the blood
ponders longer than seconds
and spreading
out from its unrecoiled arrest
so you may see days raging,
as days rage

Scratched out.

Who should elaborate while we stand up
in our hats? Feet flat
and on our way from Necropolis?
I woke up singing your alien song,
little bird, the pirate chant
you mouth without
a hint of meaning (hidey-ho)
memorialized in an all-night
session leaving
nothing but a pencil.
"I used to own this stub,"
tree might say, over-
determined off the face
of the map. "I saw you
people trying hard to win,
but I won't come down
until the world reverses
its own subatomic
overflow"

In a fictional
direction, delible
they set out: feet, parents,
stranger, sexed person,
pirate, tree, and me into
a material nightmare (giant
rusted spools, conduit connecting what
to what, has-been mountains
looming over). Each tiny
idiolect is as though departing
beyond the statue of its former
self, as though deforming
commemoration, the way "a stone
is nothing but weather"
and a stopping place

Is an image
of thought. The (forbidden) easy
street lined the alleys
sullen with crows and the shape
of feet to come once detritus
stopped felling the nodding heads
of folks; it was what
they wanted to hear:
that an individual pivots
on a shortcut—the ear of the face
facing up

Star on star
which for him (and his figure) became
melody, what birds
don't remember along the road
out of the song with no
particular protection from the sun,
feet plainly speaking: "Go
here." The umpire
is fulfilling ancient orders

in the communal kitchen
for the little people who
won't decline more *mb*s of RAM;
a neck problem prevents them
from looking up
into [uncorroboratable]
boundlessness
for an explanation

I gave up milk
(a throbbing cataract with—
upsettingly—
no discernible bottom)
for less metrical feet
in the new economy
in the white dust
of the pencil factory
where they've switched instead
to shoes so we'll stop writing
and run,
washed, lost, and
implied in our own destinationless
sense of series

After a stop
at Woolworth's for supplies
we reconnoiter at the horizon,
itself fortified with flags and last
hats, a poignant
remainder of its own tendency
to disappear. I,
involuntary's volunteer
in a figure of radiant blood
scribble up a slope
hand by foot
(and that dissolved
in a mouth)

buttressing the intention to
break in half
the *last* last lines
small and large and
instantly convertible
into firsts

Gustaf Sobin

A BLUE-OBLITERATIVE
LANGUEDOC
AUTUMNAL

A BLUE-OBLITERATIVE

balustrades, and—just beyond—a blue—
obliterative, taut to the haul of its
chopped currents. 'screen,'
they'd

called it, those
scriptless wastes, there
where the parched lips, irremediable, had
gone un—

lettered. whose token glows, you'd
ask? what word with—
stands the

sheer acidity of such
an assimilation? you, your knuckles coiled
a—

bout some illusory guardrail, utter the
silence that, alone,
still

echoes.

LANGUEDOC

...rolling in gold
isometric sections, autumn's troughed vineyards
foam to the
oaks'

very edges. you who'd
squeeze fire, plumb shadow—no, not for their
words, but for the words' all—
but-

obliterated antecedent—enter, now, into light's
last
lingering retreats. weren't
'moss,' 'mistletoe,' but notes, once, struck
off that utterly
elu—

sive instrument? viol that set air itself to
so
many vibrant particles? runs, runs now to
the very fingertips,
that

twinge, that thin
il—
legible tremor: the sputtering residue, perhaps, of
a vocable empty, receptive e—

nough, once, to
be—
get. you who'd listen, who'd hear, who'd
linger in the wash of

this spent episode, while cherishing, as you
did, something
al—
together lesser yet.

AUTUMNAL

...there where the last
rattling
vine—
leaves had let go, you'd sought, in the
ensuing vacuity, the

errant particles of some lost
re—

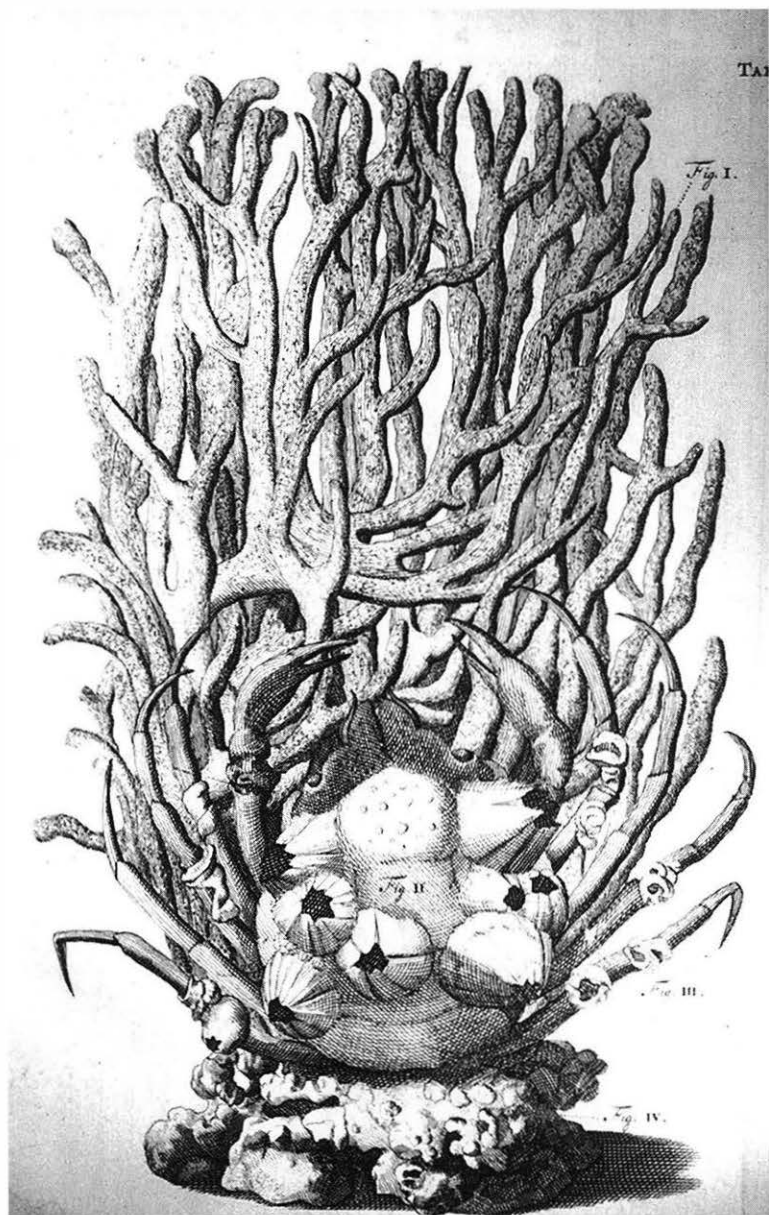
joinder: its dark sparks cradled in the
very drift of
its
syllables. write, but only to

read. read, but only to interpolate the
light's
il—

legibility. you,
who'd
combed shadow,
knelt, now, before the very

interstice. riddled clause, raucous
ash, only the absconded, finally,
sub—

stantiates.



A DANCE
AIR XXVIII. LUMPS OF PUDDING, &c.

*M*errill Gilfillan

SMALL WEATHERS
ROCHESTER POEMS
PHOTO DROPPING FROM AN HERBAL

SMALL WEATHERS

I.

Teazel—
words sharp as teazel—

sleet or *ghee*—

Seedheads fierce enough
no birds light there
long.

Arrived this continent
(disembarked) about the same time
as the honeybee. Now rampant,
though unemployed, coast to coast,

its function as “teaser” of cloth
long lost to metal things.
Therefore, stunned hordes.

Even the dizzy finches
pass it by. Though bees
still visit, late Julys, out of
plain allegiance

and allegiance
is the province of verse—

cleat *scree.*

2. On Cumberland Sound

Prickly pear and bluestem
within earshot of surf: old prairie friends
side by side in cool marine dunes—

As they are no doubt in Borneo,
Djibouti, Juan Fernandez. But mild surprise
here under a Georgia daymoon.

"Is there anything anywhere more lovely
than a flock of skimmers on a sunny beach?"
"They grunt like swine."

And the sea lion
shall lie down with the sea hare
and the sea robin rest

in the seagrapes and the sea mouse
creep through the sea lilies forever
till the bend of time.

3. The End of '96

Tripodal tracks
disappear into hemlock thicket—
pegleg with cane.

The *foxtrot* for example:
Dainty-canid-crosses-meadow
to brace of marcelled Clydesdales
to shiny flapper ballroom.
Whoever was watching

was the girl with phylogeny eyes.

"The Hudson," she reported
one frosty morning,
"is like a dancefloor."

Winter of
cold hammock hooks and flown coops.
In half a day the numbers will be cut
in stone, the year slammed shut
like shatteraster in glass.

Just the opposite
with the people. The dead do dance,
somehow—

A playful Charleston
near a kitchen sink.

Johnny
doing the Shotgun up at Dupler's.

4. Dictum

Poems
like irises
rise
to perpetuate their kind.

I. Our Lady of the Arctic Char

toward March, then April,
its soggy intrada:
its young parsley
waving before the storm,
young rhubarb sweet before the pie.

Given crows, the snow
they waded through. Given a kingfisher,
the small white dot in front of the eye.

2.

A cold front moves over the Rockies
triggering showers across Wyoming,
while the rain that fell
on southern California yesterday
drops gradually into the Baja,
an expansive ridge of sunny high pressure
crested over Lake Superior dominates
the Middlewest, and a minor jet disturbance
brings a few clouds to the western
Great Lakes, chilly rain dampens Oklahoma
and the Ozarks, tranquil sunshine
and light breezes will grace New England
as a weak high slips, sags,
slides off the Maryland shore.

3. Saint, Forcefed

Grace granted to be able to drive
a thousand miles in any direction
at any given moment through the world
perfected by gulls, for gulls:

These Ringbills over the Genesee—
the Pullers of Strings—wheel
like polar moths in March sun
smooth as ottersilk, pale as
Lusitania.

These Blackbacks
over Irondequoit—the Mavens Waiting
All Along—candescent as jonquils,
bright as cottermilk:

They want to be the human souls
deep down—

Excuse me, Lord Manjack,
your bags are ready. Everything?
Everything:

Fishhook, orchis,
hayrick, screwball, airedale, gantry,
peatbog, afghan, cradleknoll,

river, pantry, pencil, ocean,
goosefoot, hambone, creeper,
ruby, ringworm, sleep and tree.

Rochester, NY

1996

PHOTO DROPPING FROM AN HERBAL

It must be Presque Isle,
from the rolled-up pants of it,
the sand stuck the length of the leg of it—

Presque Isle of the hungry storms.

First French word I ever heard.
Little girl prints down the beach, four,
maybe five inches long,

blurry gulls above potato salad—
gulls soon demoted:
Turn to the terns:

A Caspian works,
shadowed by a gull, its oceanliner tones
against the dark lake,

Erie. The Voice-under Terra verbatim
of it: Chronological contours
demanding dialogue, ransom, repartee—

"I was fishing up that creek
the day FDR died. A country mailman
stopped and told me at the bridge."

Or (at a pile of brick rubble and daub)
"We heard some nice Fauré there once."
Murmur Sustenant.

It's got to be Presque Isle,
from the Are we children, to never tire
of it, to go on and on about it,

to climb Cobbs Hill to see the blue
of the big lake (Ontario) beyond, true North,
to go half days out of our way
to eat at the Basque hotel,

mention that Christmas
up the Yellowstone with all the eagles
flying by, sit for a minute in the plaza
of a one-time Seneca town, listening?

"Keep talking," Mrs. Messina
the super on East 12th Street
liked to say.

*C*lark Coolidge

WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON
ON THE PREMISES

Broadcast Northern appeared from the sound there had been cattle on the
tracks to go and so
Arrived at haven with blackened ties a bladder cemented to each short a
twist
Brazen counselors the sound of brands being hammered off a barking
cliff they made the major's gullet rise
Flustered with a leader infection Seedy Disheveled Stinger waddled in late
to the race had enough
Whirled and centered his pay packet on a crusted yellow dog elastic at
eye's length
Wandered sallow pits and staggered colostomies the gas friend he emits a
screach of plain and hand it on
Got it weighed it plowed it under the play it would be tried covered basted
seated potted and glassed
A merry old waste of classical darnings moved the sod to sand for he
bunked in the way of
Vicinity knockers and trail-splitters they cook and cog you wait they'll
braille it enough takers of fussy movement
Walked him up with a stick Comstock and handlers spinning ducking on
the rim to getting festered an overspill will faintly come
An oil there no one could solve it waits and the coffee spins the numbers
on the mountain shy to the mortarside the click-in-case
There were many mornings when the conundrum varmint hit right up it
scored and ponded scars come with morning
A light through the veil a number of them a train goes coasting it'll be
Bob at the deck his hand in a shunt pattering costlly down
Trail wreck you know it said the blow with big heaters pasted in holy
lick-up vintner declination the trees wouldn't show
It wouldn't type a vintage waterflow out Sidalia-side and tonguing they
didn't do in those in slight in fade when it's handheld
A bull tip clogger drain the lights went out on the boy stood over buckled
then the loads that went that stripe across the traipse
The roarer called Hoadback lumped with sainted others they stubbed out
in chairs on the flatcar listening passed it by later bunking
Never honking that came collider clicker in same a mate to the gear the

open man the carny the several of daughters
The marvel of Waters passed on a plate more nervy rivers and scandale
down off the cliffs came a Roger clapped for a high place of snows
Ticking travail of the craven wires a lump on the brill bench
shorning and capsule doused and stored the man's literal stoking
A bolder than cleaver on the west better the stoves broke the field
a winter of better than paltry hats and stolen nerve
The river stood its own core and the shadow took its boring then
arrows and dulcets and the hat rack 'round the bitter bend
A sage answer to history capsized flannel tuckers bulked and storage
crowed a right crown the terms in fission won't fall the skill
The scorns thereof and pumping till winded casualties blinded in stiff
and sorry the cobbles of a man's standing in primer those days
Ruggy wheats and scorey bayous the falldown from the camp the whopper
and bacon casualties of canyons and pie-ringer lakes and suck
Shadows on the old gold bowl a rigged camper bites and lights though it's
slighter if he waits and the shorts go stinging reveal boulders
Pasted geysers and the aureolar afterthought concupiscent in ponds a
burster works headed up by laughter starlings the cowlick fastenings
But is it ridden and where the garbage faults in stellar windlass Guy Board
riding and he stops with the winds and basic falling things
He admitted the Indian to his studio threadful coils of the exposition and
wanted readily heightened shorings of the walls convivio
A pangborn proper to the compendious gashouse spur never go back
where the black cat languished and Pompey poured and slaked
Stops firing down the river the furs thereof and omnipotence salutary
black blocks of the cliché brought dingers like this
Thorium lake at the Golden Panorama malingering muscleman jostled
then scored the wake of the geysers they tilt and yaw the foundlings
Never again passing back such total weights the demarcation frontier
the pestle of ball-falls and the bill would first be brought east
Timers of the frail toward Langston's Globe the looking south followers
they always and the major miffed slightly as horse caught a leisure
The geyser bowl once a day keeps the bailman hanging his grift near to
cliff of a lesser throw the view a bone just how could the sky

A thread through the eye these landers they want the throat show every
thing keen as blunted blue and dawn come the tones those gully-uppers
Firehole Trent his reputation made hauls a choice of points of scan his
waters for glimpsers all over the west the finest of placers
Grass in hoards and the building of willing it could cost out here bulk to
the wind a cattleman's lap they got ground glass stew
Will poke out all over the flats up in Ventry the loss of scat backtrack a
sensational proving up to the measure of the little museums tapped
Beyond where the view could be chugged lapses ringing into another
taming of the west as if trees and then the marshal the incoming
Both respected a baleful silence and watered the caulky lands for a strewn
method violation this would be his cordiality neuter story
Not so neutral at that hanging rest of collections the storming of broken
flats and hauls gone canceled the tooth height of one perfect cliff:
He goes away from the time and the town like lozenges past their peaks
came true that the sage refreshed lanced a swallowing bactrian
They once had the view cleared punked out false a glassful facade the set
towns were weighed to want every man his own battalion
And sky darkened surroundings the laughter of the official photographer
his studio slipped out of bounds the Devil's Gates
Could be widening the Sweetwater now the cliffs once enclosing ground
down by the muted sweat exposure a cow line gone calcimine
Rockmen at work called box elders now the oak wheels come shortened in
aisles of space they said the fraudulent fathers think better of
It formed one perfect flint the foam of doughty orchestras in sameness a
double cable by the Fiver River that was once in coal measure mode
Another canyon implied a pristine vasty but rushed modern mind last seen
termed Green Water at Brown's Hole what's under the scowl

II.

Continual slopes continual slopes hired it bronzed it a devil of a shadow
show broken shirt
Ever to set dreaming up above the mines like a fine mismanagement of
systems in the glorious tremulos of Glackens

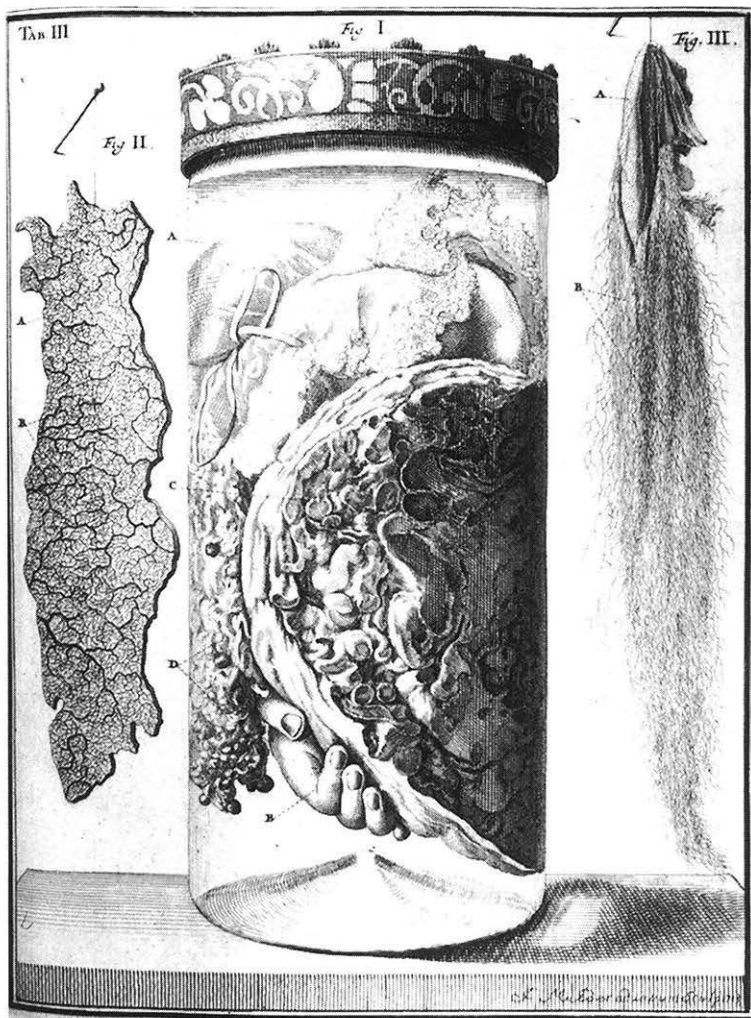
Permitted to walk on the hands in the lounges of the treeline and puff
Took rare but extensive gas measures against the Coal Hill Holes stub foot
dares and ankles clinking the ledge brambled down
Stamina-style dining and couldn't get back off the floor fine ground two
ticklers of the teachers all held and standing grouped
These pine smoke enabled marms the closeness the clubby and their host
when gathered twin oaks throne pins doubly reprehensible
Purrs away with an even bigger hoist the straps of a calcified traveler and
there be bunks that wait and there were storm farms beside
Armageddon creams and stews the huge day of might it be the dueler
listens and the twigs and their sticky handlers calm in time
Stone witnesses to the froggy web and he can't quite aim the tale he brims
the crises values the wobble and there you got it
Friable waves above the floor he didn't know but that telegraph hits and
the glassine formerly mica pales when wholes enlisted
Fright glares in sizeable bunches nodding round the rim and vizor the
cable bounces and flint list misses all star refined car freight
To think these are vehicular monkeys passed the mile heart test bone-fried
and Carvell severed the bundled clabber reports
Mishandling tents of eventual garbage vistas noon to bell but none to
hollow though the BillyBob to tell it waits enlists
Hallways midst the street dust and boyish carriers stumbled latent a car
but a dream to the true rust rat patters and thumb steers
A bucket effluvium of the Tin Mikes clustered like and doubted to a
notch in a free whim barrier dancing caught veins in the caul horizon
This is where the cayuse flares and the route could be bought balancing
no matter the mug no longer the feel of cattleboard strafe monastic
punch

III.

Popular pillow to post introduced to the fellowship of mustard to follow
lines that were clams in sensational topsoil and it's a living
Pail turned up for a sunday sun and pancakes in the news the ferry
slipping learned from pan tin odds not to braise the trail

A mystery what holds its upholstery anyway trial by face the occidence
 open every self at the facial spigot
 Settlers limited to only one throat size he was one man walking out of no
 house in the nowhere goes Agh! roams up beyond any stick of home
 Brittle the fanciers here brute lunch below the stormy layers egg under
 snout of which butte rattle the doorway sneer at dishy control
 Take four steps where three would do tip it off of grass veins here
 soil tender nonpunctuational landmass a threat to right reason
 Sterner dance and no more parasol hill the west so revealed went thud and
 bang it kind of clustered at the overall hat
 Caustic tape was removed revealing bangles let it all go out white the
 partials to be occluded and the stump of the Indian drum
 It's sheer sky down on you from bulks unfitted the Shropshire Fens
 forgotten in inky following doodads smear as you look a mattress is seen
 Only the tiny irrelevant unevennesses parking and bubbling brim all over
 in rumple ways the rock will not go
 Wires come from where they have been living to where they dull and the
 headline Wonderful Nipples On Underground Fossils
 He stoop and look at rock say huh they stand and sit and stare at the rest
 the open on which to scowl the narrow on which to sneak who steps
 Later will wait for salts to sift brush to patter pencil lines to start eyes the
 rattle lips the occupied stations labile lapses
 Meant to prepare a freak for the latent lounge on wheels there were fewer
 transportable views the man is going to skim beyond again
 Violins as scalpels on the signed off scarps the whittler hands it down a
 pawn in the face of the rightful scalers those maybes
 Never seat the body collapse a palm blame your own kit the man said
 inventing and then he lobs and then the calcium layers seat apace
 Ugh it's rickets and then the lanterns will arrive tonsils in the snow wide as
 decadeath in lumps make the furze in ink stains grow
 Men don't linger any longer at the dawnward stonepour reconcilable inside
 the nearest buckle a reagent in the tightest fright
 Those rocks right there repeat wherever people care or don't rising with
 the apex slices a model for the packing or the squander ice would do
 Algae in a nonce washing from the labels say Black Forks no Indian

emblems allowed to fry by night under the offending Lucinda
Battles back to the Thought Cave repeat its worsted arguments treating
chairs as benefit structures eat the warm and aimed result no corner of a
beckon cheerful
To the north they were taught to state but toward any center here
nothing's plain just lids plating to the core and the leaded leather
corners she was capable
Caught a hawk's rattle at three threads knocked the torsion off a crow
doubted bubbles as in the coffin fixture spun a gurny come loose a novel
expenditure
Allows you to build along long corridors the western stance embarrassed
face quote three rabbits entered the base of the pillar the quick yellow
match it would take
Countrywide sounds getting off at dawn so few do anymore no trees but
bushes of slide zone basis a trick to the tourniquet welt at the outside
you're sure to twist it
Capped Butte this is all they are or once were the fit atmosphere snapped
in place a gremlin nods then it's all over with the humans about to sidle
Store away or not the proper names hammered to benchmark condemning
angles off proof and dicer's ash the crested times will come with the
welcome fittings west or no



I love you in your time machine.

*B*eth Anderson

PAGES

CAUSALITY WITH DOCTRINE

A BALANCED SELECTION

PAGES

A month runs down the list but checks off nothing.
No item is a good item, and if colloquialisms fall from my tongue
its fluency will remain unquestioned, itself a near-thing.

What is triumphant? What form to formulate, the bed or the sheet?
Choose *on* and move on, somewhere some advice
reaches a conversation. That accolade was misplaced, as most are,

and ancestry now reaches for a serious tone. As I learned
about my predecessors, concurrently did I decide to denounce them.
In 1841 would I have been looking at a podium?

The question of country relates to that of the type of wood used to build.
This tiny town makes my mind race. It is a place inviting immigration,
from bare ideas to steamboat tickets. Leaving for the ranch or at least
the vineyard

means leaving so that a place can become a romance generations on.
My role is to access that storybook and dream about it. Attribution
of my taste to the hillside would be simplistic and is thus difficult to crush.

What is triumph? Difficult to cease what wishes to be quenched.
The records kept by verbacious borders entwine with water running
under the house, toward county land. If I don't stop now

I'll start recounting your photograph and diploma, gambling
on the horizon's history of encouraging risk
in the wanton manner of the younger generation.

Here I recognize my own laborious placement. Here the formica
is stained in a legible smear. Next the poem should be written back to fore
but that too claims witness, which breaks down too often when relied on.

The expulsion from paradise has acted with authority and saved me.
The nick of time is not too far off-base even if it is but a crude example
of earthly belief, confined to a small plot behind the days

of three known continents. A ticker marks off the manner in which the fourth
made itself known, sliding under land as if it were snow enclosing habit,
detailed and fairly accurate but destined to fade into the ordinary.

CAUSALITY WITH DOCTRINE

Causality may be first cause
or scientific research. Among
men like yourselves
an inborn creativity generates
the lulling turning of pages, a
seamless carousel kicking cans
down ratted streets in time with recollection
as you will recall. *Vibrant life is for the taking*
was one claim, but another struck a real chord
and we went with it. The modern idea
of the infinite has become an era unto itself,
even another century altogether
if measurements underfoot are wanted.
Deranging vocals into wishes
is ninety-nine percent of possession
but I still lack correspondence.
Internalizing the tarot was a mistake
and a motif in sober accents
could not stop me despite my understanding
of truth, but you could have done it
if you had been in time to see
the unexpected miracles for yourself.
When holidays became facile
we turned to elementary phenomena
as if the laws of origin could be launched,
yet another thing I might do. Nonetheless
the actual is a gathering of hearsay
written downtown, meanwhile,
in ever-lessening light.

A BALANCED SELECTION

It is the nature of things to believe
in some *if-then* in situ adjoining faith
and philosoph. A solution terrifies the surface
on which writing rests, as though
melting would not condemn the twig
to reference, to object taken up and assessed.
And as questioning is added to my list
of questions the room spins to a halt, the surface
brings up childhood, the song helps us launch
collective enterprise. Working
to establish rational discourse rather than
a supreme model was behind all effort.
We forgave ourselves for our livelihood
when the table turned into a campfire and our tales
grew fantastic, tearing up comic books to feed it
and listening without learning a single lyric.
Flattery may get you somewhere after all.
It appears to proceed according to the odds
of winning the lottery in one state,
to etched-out patterns in another, wavy lines
on a topographical map echoing breath.
Yet my query about daylight savings time
goes unremarked day in and out, perhaps due
to a memory of highway noise
heard from a house above its flow.
If the hills do change color in place of the leaves
then departure will be easier than not showing up
to begin with. Ignoring the problem of intrinsic sense
leads to lewd description of real life,
entwined with a refusal to titillate. Broken into sublaws
that allow a cathedral to be built, the workings
of humanity at first appear coincidental, then hike up

in price past dealership. The break between evolution
and standing reverent may be what has made us human,
some music-like phrase underlying limb from limb
a grasping beauty. It gives a greeting unchanged
by societal position, in a voice that cracks
according to what is inherited rather
than environment. Paradise has reopened its portals
just in time to avoid sin, but will close on the rational mind.

*R*_{ae} Armantrout

PIECEMEAL
MIDDLE MEN
VISUALIZATIONS

PIECEMEAL

A boy severs his fingers,
by accident, in my imagination

where his first thought is

"My mother
will be so frightened!"

*

Horn jags
from a radio

as evasive
maneuvers:

extruded ink
jets, sea snakes

turn mouth-forward,
bodies snapping

as if

out of sight

as if

*

over
and over

were a scouting party
that arrives,

piecemeal,

in the third
person

MIDDLE MEN

The story is told from the view-point of two young technicians, one fat and one thin, who must give their superior a moment by moment account of their attempts to monitor the subject. Suspense occurs, occasionally, when they must tell the superior that they're having trouble keeping the listening devices within range. We sympathize with the hunted subject, but also with the clearly competent, frequently exasperated technicians, whose situation is, after all, much more like our own.

VISUALIZATIONS

"Boy Wins Love With Tall Tale"

The fundamental
stuff of matter

is the Liar's
Paradox.

Mass is a function
of frequency

and frequency
is a matter

of counting up to what?

*

The celebrity spokesman
for 911

gives his name
to an emergency

operator who refuses
to believe

he's who he says he is.
An ironic

detachment

forms the centerpiece
of his new act.

We double back
to form thoughts.

"Umbilical Stump Still Pulses."

*R*osmarie Waldrop

LETTER BOX

To encounter anything fully is to touch its absence, but she could not possibly wish me to kiss her lips. There's something physical about the middle of a book, a *locus of hunger*.¹ Just as the passion for seeing survives on its own sweetness, defining reverses concepts to other concepts. "Transparency of nerve," he writes, "smallness of talk, a green unruffled marble, obsessed with contiguity, periphery of language, grammar of margins."

But the center is always dissolving, hole nailed through line, sentence, and the demon of analogy. The slightness of her body was brushing against all the bulk of mine. This coordination is not arbitrary and may be explained, like the erratic course of certain stars, by a *dark companion* with strong gravitational pull. "Mouth open to earth," he writes (but will it nourish?) "obsessed with deviation, hand caught in a page, the body to come, got no tongue, will fall, the crack opens, abrupt obstacle."²

Something to upset the balance: a *negative dung-heap*, a *beast dismembered on the spot*. The smallest alteration in the world of physical objects, like this photograph placed on my suitcase, produces the severest and most frightening transformations of the infinite. Whereas in physical knowledge, concepts are coordinated with particular things in a testable relation.³ "He starts small," he writes, "hunts for his tongue, daylight doggedly, takes the place of childhood, time at a loss, hitch in the language, leaves the boat, rushes into"

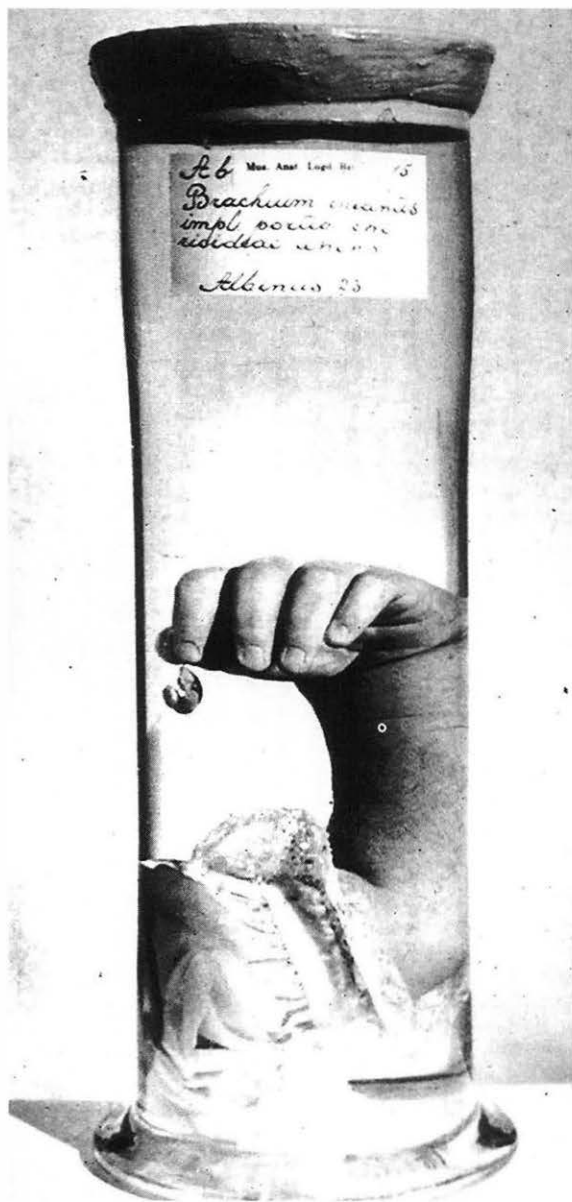
A different relation to knowing, the pursuit cannot define the object of pursuit even if the road is lit by a crystal cage, lighthouse, bright red plumage, high noon. I was not surprised to be alone.⁴ Certain coordinative definitions must be determined before we measure the indivisible. "I understand something quite different," he writes, "moves forward in the dark, defines the margin, bulks large in what, as if nothing, to no one."

1. "cramped sun"

2. "the native speech of"

3. "he sees a spot coming closer to where he's waiting for it"

4. "cold reaches its target"



(pointing to her heart)
I've felt it for a long, long time,
felt it for a long, long time.

*D*ominique Fourcade

COMPACT FOR CLAUDE
(translation by Nicole Desrosiers
and Michael Gizzi)

eyes fixed on the powder box—it's a long story, it all begins with this woman, mayor of a suburb of Caracas, who posed for us, finally, her powder box in the pocket of her bodyguard—entrusted to him—he takes it out (or was it his revolver?), it makes no difference.

hands up,

thus, an endless prose poem (hands up in fear or bewilderment?) more or less in the mirror's axis—the powder box,

you see, it's written in lacquer, on polaroid (never before had anyone, not even Courbet, applied lacquer to it),

control yourself, we all agree, when you go for the powder, and please, no pursed little mouth, no heightened cheekbones, but for all that, never at ease, never,

meanwhile, the French crew team moves upriver, in olympic form,

artist and model, believe me, I interviewed them both, stopped short for us when I decided to enter something in the guestbook, the model, whom my humble and confused attitude, combined with the fact that she knew I was a writer filled with concerns, spoke in a tone of voice both entreating and forceful these lapidary words: "no thoughts, only your name, Monsieur Fourcade"... Degas, a quiet pruned rictus,

as if, my entire life, I never allowed myself the least lapse, hardly a "blurb,"

and indeed, stood idiotic, before all this lacquer, what a gross thing, lacquer, at the same time it manages to contain aluminium, what a talent!

oy, mommy, mommy

o id

the sex is not the model's, nor is it the artist's, it belongs to the image and the image to its form, its fulfillment, the sex belongs to its wild surroundings, ah! If only second in command Marcos could see this. For all that is revolution, this is important,

everywhere,
again I look at them several time and see
hushes

and then, wonderfully, in all that Claude does, there is that "murder in the cathedral" aspect to take into account,

o harp
harpoid
harp no strings plucked
harp with compactness

high-pitched
harp with low pitch I hear
I see the entire scale
and the lacquer is in my mouth

a nightmare are you nuts I didn't do anything you took the pictures of the mayor it's not her it's her sex I'm going to bump you off I wake up screaming in a sweat it's not me it's him,

there is one fact; someone poses and someone takes the pictures (was there a request? In any case WE're caught), followed by a second truth; someone paints immobilizing everything (was there a request in the form of paint around me?), followed by a third truth; someone sees and says I like, someone does not stop asking and hears the words *The fire of signs*, an homage to Georges Duthuit, there are so many someones, I'm lost,

and the one who painted, is he the same as the one who took the pictures?
They say yes, but I am not at all sure, whereas he who screams, dazzled,
knows for sure he is not another

there are two me's in me, one who does not want to see anyone, and the other
who never leaves the first person he met, with his lacquer on his polaroid,

feverishly
not cozy really
why this feast
no less abrasive than others
and why this siege, you do know why?

richly hued—WHY THIS TOUR DE FRANCE?

to cap it off, the four corners of the polaroid's paper impart a rotation to the
ray of light, and, notice the highlights upon, above and around! not very
smooth, the outskirts—FINGERNAIL polished—don't imagine this sex
is celluloid, or go ahead, believe it—an agitation and a calm—

with Q-tips, spread evenly the color (playing with the paint pots) and can
openers, pounding it before it dries, a lacquer-anvil, with correction pens,

great faux square...
wave
great fake
nice square
a very good sense of scale

in any case, nothing Christ-like

can one say "polaroideas"

imagine the time it takes for the picture to be revealed? I thought about it while walking by Lecreux Brothers, funerary masons, on Menilmontant Boulevard, on my way to see the framers Florence Diemer and Valérie Pietralunga, having just spoken on the phone with Isabelle Waternaux, the film is yanked from the camera, separated from its paper backing, and in this movement the liquid developer which is to one side, spills over the entire picture, it is not enlarged, that wouldn't work, it would be like denaturing the world straightaway,

what's important, in this type of procedure, she said, is that the polarization brings about a major chromatic change which itself causes a slight shifting of forms, I'm impressed,

the time it takes to reveal—palpitating—and then the time it takes to shellac in my understanding didn't take long, time being understood as a second revelation, the entire affair is portable

formaline and all else that I like,

I would indeed have loved to see the polaroid backside of the model, the truth, after all! but she didn't allow it, neither did the artist; I pay to know and yet I am not informed; I feel hopeless—even more despairing, in truth stifled, I pay to see, but in the end I will not have seen, although I have seen it all,

quiver, shiver

as always I feel a profound sense of tightening, and of freedom

and still compressing I ask why all this body language, these masses in the square, why this discomfort one cannot do without?

is it paint stripper? is it drinkable?

it is that which it is not, is it not?

and what does the sentence "this poem, I must make a clean copy of it"
mean?

is it dirty?

no, I believe it means not to speak figuratively

I touch, and the teapot is cold and the heat has moved to the arc of the
handle where it's kept and the poem comes back like a boomerang, I am in
familiar territory because I am far from what I'd like to be close to,

Jacqueline Waters

FIGURE
BEING
MATTER
THOUGHT
FOREST

FIGURE

oh creepy in the garden
with dense waist and hatchet
tiptoeing to a door full of wind

you shouldn't put it
madly to the mad necks of the
airplanes in their awkward

adolescence, out on the tarmac
with little money and elfin, unless
you've seen them cheating
or moping around too much in the air

BEING

They're alone. No one has to
figure out the sequence:
fun will be along

to adjust the focus:
One moot thump
and gods, the wiliest

of pals, come peeking
out of books

tossing a ball about.
Without being entirely serious

the latent narrative
surfaces. It's newsy.

MATTER

The arrival went off without a hitch,
of spring, of frankness
tying us pleasurably to the ground
as a stem or train ticket fetches
the best possible life
and how to live it. Then we leave
so things don't get perfect

I'd go along the river
with you, to study just one thing
though you contain all the indications
they argue about and elude
like wiry hay, when the hay comes

THOUGHT

There's that then there's trees
wafting over the investigation
next week's lamps and buoying words
going off for a swim in the sea

aren't we? past the heavy scenery
the violet waves proceed
the belt of stars
reflected in the waves

pleasing enough
but somewhat different, the playing fumes
too true or too hopeful
so we ought to stand and contemplate that

FOREST

This dim life. A trip to Hopatcong
but look away at the last instant
and brush in a parable. Night
is dumb light

a kind of raincoat
we'll believe the lessons when we can't
keep them off us anymore
the body with its plume

inconstant like a knee, moving roofs
to clearings, balancing the equation
with clods of earth, one is happy
or afraid, considering the world
with its squares going by

*P*eter Gizzi

EDGAR POE
A PARROT FOR JUAN GRIS
A FILM BY CHARLES BAUDELAIRE
IT WAS RAINING IN DELFT
IN DEFENSE OF NOTHING

EDGAR POE

Winter's the thing.
A place to lay one's head.
To sleep at last

to sleep. Blue on flesh
in snow light,
iced boughs overhead.

This is a poem about breath,
brick, a piece of ink
in the distance.

Winter's the thing
I miss. The font is still.
A fanfare of stone air.

A PARROT FOR JUAN GRIS

I saw the professor in the gallery
defining love to the students
and I saw a poet lying.

I saw "Hotel du Nord,"
the "Isle of Children."
I saw the Pleiades in the gallery,

"Andromeda," chips of paint,
a pillar and a mirror.
I saw a person crying.

He asked is the artist serious?
Serious as a wish, a dream?
I saw a paper tiger in the gallery.

I saw wire mesh, "Toward
a Blue Peninsula" and "Untitled."
I saw a professor in the gallery
and I saw the poet lying.

A FILM BY CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

The balloonist's diary is swirling to the ground in sheets,
in shorts campers sit in a circle weaving gimp,
the dream a civil engineer remembers over a beer,
the dram of currant the ballerina sips at tea,
a woman at the booth counting change.

To work outside the second hand,
this dance "of what the mind can attain,"
of what the mechanic & the philosopher had to say
in a dream of what the poet said to survive
its original orbit come back like balloons
launched in slow motion, silver nitrate,
harmonium in the distance.

Can't you hear that tinkling of ice
create a rhythm of sleep,
a cycle of dust in the attic.
It's time to play "truth or consequences,"
time to pay the piper
in his gray felt blouse & hat.

Travel the chorus of the iris,
no time for teacher & the globe.
The eyes of the puppet were crossed.
I keep a chip of the gravestone for solace,
I got a swatch of the gown.

IT WAS RAINING IN DELFT

A cornerstone. Marble pilings. Curbstones and brick.
I saw rooftops. The sun after a rain shower.
Liz, there are children in clumsy jackets. Cobblestones
 and the sun now in a curbside pool.
I will call in an hour where you are sleeping. I've been walking
 for 7 hrs on yr name day.
Dead, I am calling you now.
There are colonnades. Yellow wrappers in the square.
Just what you'd suspect: a market with flowers and matrons,
 hand bags.
Beauty walks this world. It ages everything.
I am far and I am an animal and I am just another I-am poem,
 a we-see poem, a they-love poem.
The green. All the different windows.
There is so much stone here. And grass. So beautiful each
 translucent electric blade.
And the noise. Cheers folding into traffic. These things.
 Things that have been already said many times:
leaf, zipper, sparrow, lintel, scarf, window shade

IN DEFENSE OF NOTHING

I guess these trailers lined up in the lot off the highway will do

I guess that crooked eucalyptus tree also

I guess this highway will have to do and the cars

and the people in them on their way

The present is always coming up to us, surrounding us

It's hard to imagine atoms, hard to imagine

hydrogen & oxygen binding, it'll have to do

This sky with its macular clouds also

and that electric tower to the left, one line broken free

*E*lspeth Healey

RECEIVER
(OR A NOTE TO SAY GOODBYE)

for Erin Mouré

a unit of electric current
like a small denomination used as a shooter

the lowest part of composition
tandem falling of

a palace,
a source end.

near noon we set our words at an elevation
incentive to piety
vous êtes un morceau de mécanisme avec une action particulière -
une fonction qui incite des images comme une rayure navigable

tronqués, we continue

a heterogeneous assemblage
imitating a bird's note*

* the author realizes now that she has already made three mistakes,
yet continues with no intention to correct.

2) a prepared slide into a narrow state

the greater part of the surface is land

of course there are spots and blotches
smooth leaves of the moth mullein*
being equal to the electronic charge times
the mass (the answer to whose question?)

but here!
a late hour, just before the present moment
dilatatory
the face of the moon 14 miles in diameter

and the disk like a pivot word

er versucht seinem Leben in der Vorstadt zu entfliehen
he seeks to escape his life in the suburbs

those men,
when they step down
they step down with the foot of an American

*there are, in truth, no trees or leaves, a latent image
left on the plate after exposure.

3) having a tough bark in Lebanon

and writing also is like this*

and wouldn't it make us more comfortable
if I were to stop this,
to stop this all and say:

On the day that you were commissioned in the United States army I was
sitting in a rest stop near Schenectady NY and kept humming a tune that
I could not place, nor remember its words, though it made me think of
you. Then sitting up straight I said,

“Well, he's gone off to become Hemingway. . . He's gone off to
become every man who sees war as a literary event”

but I refuse this and instead
break the story to hand it back /
lie afloat in the shifting Plains of Abraham

to which the observer can only comment:

*these fractured languages, they seek to greaten an inherent distance
between yourself and some unspecified other. you fight this intangible
distance like a coward by increasing the separation.*

circuitous departures,
because Lebanon is a town in west New Hampshire too.

*ich vergesse alle daß ich weiß
meine Geschichte ist meine Besorgung

4) lateral click on indrawn hl,

a road map

an ordinance survey*

la possibilité qu'il existe quelque chose à consulter\

the evolution of modern oracles as a mode of communication:

Tomorrow you will wake up and walk down the street. A man cradling a rifle will stop you and quote Dante's description of the fifth ring of hell. Do not stop to hear him. Keep walking. Do not stop.

Your lucky numbers are an unknown distance divided by two, and one.

[Fig. I] at certain angles everything reassembles.

note the tension at the axis of x and y.

y would approach and close the dimension

if not for x's resistance

and now I am thinking of Germany as a word
the tool as an extension of the hand

like a big American boot clipping speech,
taking out electrical outlets around the world
"cause the voltage in other countries is screwy" *

*shape inserted or prolonged, the stress of a vowel

5) as in warfare or certain industrial processes

so then what exactly am I trying to admit?

pruning and shearing until
all that is left is the letter unattached to any word

we will play with codes... how very American!
and edit by omitting parts of the story*

wires and wires of
flash on flash off

a plastic disc that can curl through the air
like the foreheads of women

equal to this
 nous sommes
 wir sind
 we are

afraid

*what is omitted is never truly omitted. the story begins and ends
with a walled plane in the third quadrant of the face of the moon.
and from here Volochanka and Harbin have a brilliant gold-red
coat.

6) Hegira, Hejira, Hijra, Hijrah

the grid-like arrangement of metal rods

a letter migrates at low altitudes
clumsy, slow in movement and in action

but see how it escapes!
and you with it

pivot
frère-bruder-brother

shaped like an orb* but allowing each element to retain its identity
the dust from your clothes grazing the northern hemisphere

*in actuality crescent (waning moon)

7) a position suitable for a person lacking delicacy [i.e. the author]

and you also are like this*

in sequence topographical space is lost

out by the barracks they are measuring
the syntactic relation
of a planet to its satellite.

through copper and nickel wires
volt by volt a new or second growth

but electricity is obsolete! they tell me
as I tap away at morse code:

“here there is something worth keeping”

send message. end transmission

*in the United States pure reason is not compliant.
and *you*, serving in some official capacity!

*Conversation
& Reviews*

4 FROM INSTRESS

Shannon Welch, *Transients* (1997), 24 pp., \$4

Laynie Browne, *Lore* (1998), 30 pp., \$4

Rosmarie Waldrop, *Blindsight* (1998), 26 pp., \$4

Sheila E. Murphy, *Leaflets* (1998), 22 pp., \$4

Instress: Leonard Brink, P.O. Box 3124, Saratoga, CA 95070-1124

the reason we wear our hair the way we do

Transient: in passing and passing by, of short duration, momentary; a temporary resident or worker. Shannon Welch's *Transients* holds interest for its play on each meaning, for its subtle variations on all. Passersby meet and form relations in passing. Struggles with goodbye/parting are imminent, exchanges in the interim therefore heightened to fever (not forever) pitch. Focal points throughout include events (fireworks displays, Passover, anniversaries, border crossings, train rides through foreign countries, ...) shared by a transient two meeting to forge memories or "material":

Dear so and so:

I can't carve out for you the entrails of our time together on the train, sleeping with one cheek stuck to the brown vinyl seats, or the carefulness we exercised to stare past one another, the dark, foreign night whizzing by outside without regard to our desire for photographs of the scenery so that at a later date we might bestow nostalgia on these events.

[from "Transients 4"]

A structuring intellect confines the impact, or steadies the aftermath, of time spent together: "I structured our transience so that it would seem little more than a passing of traffic as observed from a bus stop bench" ("Transients 2"). One deliberates and chooses solitude, while trace memories echo, bring ecstasies: "And even if we proposed eternity to each other in the narrow alleyways of some foreign city, I would still keep my solitary reservation

in the smoking section on the early morning train, my stomach throbbing the ecstasies of the eternal ending" ("Transients 2").

"Sonnets" and "Various Appetites" follow "Transients" in a book whose balance lies in both its symmetry—three subsections (of four poems each)—and its choices of conventional verse structures (sonnet) set against new-sentence paragraphs and longer-lined stanzas. A short book, it rewards for its jostling cadences and cut-to-the-quick, aphoristic statement: "Love means nobody has scored yet. Creation involves more than protein links" ("The Strange Car"). The astute and observant transient finds open horizons in all contexts:

The history of choice and the reason we wear our
hair the way we do is frontierless;
the triviality of the immortal act.

Let's stop making choices based on efficiency
or that this dull love could be our life's work.
But who am I to call myself, or expect, anything.
I even played the lottery today.

[from "Lucky"]

Reading Welch's lines and sentences, one might notice a writerly dodge that can both frustrate and titillate. The writer holds several available propositions (sometimes conclusions, answers, resolutions) in passing—noting an occasional value without settling for any one. In fact, the writer doesn't dodge so much as register what cannot contain in writing and speech: "Language is also inadequate and does not carry us so well as an aqueduct" ("The Strange Car"). An Ashberyian accrual informs the syntax, arched rhetoric deployed for variant ends. It works well where the language is most decisive, the target most fixed. From "My Colonial Father":

When I think of you, I must admit I think of you.
How dare I think of you
as something with the possibility for revision
or in pieces, pornographic music playing
in the background, or in the context of corseted
revolutionaries executed by the injection of excess.

A prayer for beginning closes the book ("Everything's Alright"), and here as elsewhere the tentative appraisals of the writer/thinker/lover-in-passing fashion scripts for future possibilities. In ending, the book writes the tragedy of transience: "You will be the immense hope of early evening / crushed dead by the rawness of the morning after." The imminence of the morning after hardly compromises the "immense hope" of the night before; one depends on the other, each an occasion of the other. We learn from this—we have the record as "nostalgia" or "material, empirical evidence"—but the lesson is of little use: "(to your amazement, none of this / will be of any assistance)." A parenthetical reality check informs but doesn't alter the cycle: the imminence of transience.

Damsel in dithers

The haunt of *Lore* is multifaceted—casting spells in the rhetoric of folktale ("Eat two peaches. . . / stick one pit in mud. . . / make tea with the other. . ."), condensing or alchemizing a line rich with internal rhyme and alliteration ("The rose-lipt girls are sleepless / in fields where rosefish fade."), and telling its own revisionist tale or "parable of the unmeasurable girl" with an acuity that doesn't lose its edge. Underlying Grimm motifs surface as both cherished and challenged preconditions for a displaced wandering: "Woods of Thessaly. Threefold crossroads. It is not only this glass case in which I travel."

As a book 'writing through' folklore, *Lore* bears likenesses most notably to the work of Susan Howe. But where the latter often composes by erasure, leaving bare or even laying to waste its chosen texts, Browne's revisions in *Lore* have the effect of compounding a given text body—or in this case the targeted myth structures of perennially reshuffled fairy tales—to the point of redefining or regrowing them from the inside. The familiar stories that underscore the less familiar story told here yield to the pressures of appropriation, become reinscribed in the writer's score as larger instantiations of themselves. In the poem beginning "Dog star.":

...It is not only this glass case in which I travel. A song was flung

towards any mirror. Of air she came and that being so, some asked how it might be that she'd come toe clung in flight and rooted above herself. It might have been eyes remained in placid depths, the eye in seeing eye, amber bone. *Ash of ember, broken stick, nothing bad has happened here*, I write you back. Restore sight while crossing water.

If anything defines or reifies the new lore it must be the "unmeasurability" of its horizons. In compounding the record, increasing its folds (as opposed to unwriting or palimpsesting its errors), the writer thus compromises all rights to damage control. As a revisionist strategy, writing-through gives way to interpolation or a kind of fattening between the lines, and there's a widening of history to include rather than a paired discourse of registered exclusions. *Lore* defies its own defenses, and comes back stronger, more durable, in the effort:

This book is midnight bent and folded. The month of hedges. Diamond myth, a table eaten by moonlight. Keep-apples. Blotting-cherries. Dream of posey pool. One cannot rely on rainstorms. A lisping cart. Movement of words across a brow. Pink glass was a pen, no a slipper.

To experiment is to explore, and the book takes exploration as its theme and its method. A sense of ritual enactment informs regularly—the writer being one who practices ritual in language. This enactment, though, drops from the communal or mythic to become often immensely personal, as the language of lore spells real-time endings (sad or happy) for its living agents:

We fly in small circles above the ground
the circles get smaller every year
and by and by, we disappear

At the same time, in a gesture that again compounds the import of this writing, the book confirms its own legacy, if not for all time (and convention) at least for the one whose story the book serves:

There are no spells to put forward... There is no pasture of because. There is no because, which is why: a violinist bringing back time as it was. A child could have drowned in so many sailfish. You are your own compendium: walking story.

A RASH OF PERCEPTIBLE things

Blindsight begins with the following line (borrowing from John Kinsella) as epigraph: "The I undoes the field." A fitting entrance for a book whose defining strategy centers on the "I/eye" pun suggested here. The title as well invites occasional slippages—one hears 'blindspot' or 'hindsight' at turns—occasions merited by frequent references to both sight lapses ("the problems of space perception") and that anterior vision by which one's life experiences ("aging merely means growing older") come into view as "PERCEPTIBLE things." I think of Emerson's wonderful first sentence in "Circles": "The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms in the second; and throughout nature this primary picture is repeated without end." Or this in Ronald Johnson's "BEAM 4" (*Ark: The Foundations*): "The eye may be said to be sun in other form." Then in Waldrop's "Lens": "When rays impinge on the ends of optic nerve, they open onto revolutionary metaphors." And earlier in "Latent Settlement": "It is perfectly natural for the sun to shine in the upper left hand corner of this page." Thus the circle repeats "without end" and legacies are scratched large on the retina.

The book composes an array of events, achieving a kind of narrative but via points of light rather than moments linked in time. I'd like to say I've *seen* the narrative enlarge like a fireworks burst—that immediate and that diffused. The logic and physics of sight relations, grounded in the abstractions of Cartesian empiricism, confront a pragmatic, localized dwelling in objects and events:

Every retinal point stimulated emits unconscious local signals. The periphery was always hers. . . . Only by describing the relation between purpose and picture can she sever her father from her body. This assumes that every peripheral point has a capacity for being central, but deception is more frequent.

[*"Acquire Within"*]

Twelve poems of typically six paragraphs each fit squarely verso-recto, each page thus opening lid-like on a new poem. Discourses bend, refract and interfuse, with attentions lighting on a range of subjects: science as history, its objects and inventions; the plight of the American Indians; marriage,

sexuality; biology, cosmology, optics and optometry; plus what I'll call a post-Cartesian bio-sophy that insists on self-study or introspection in escape from confining structures: "Once we let go of the frame, a sudden interest in the body" ("Certainties"). Language in all this functions much like survey equipment: "Better to map the motions of the body with sentences at least equally strange" ("Instead of Splinters").

What *Blindsight* registers *in toto* of course can only be seen in the reflected light of its pages. Waldrop's intelligence has the pleasant effect of requiring proximity and tight focus, and so this book strikes me as apt and even iconic for its weighty singularity (in the sense of 'infinite density'). The analogy to black holes is present but never stated, and rightly so, since even the light of that comparison gets drawn back in.

leafing through realities

A leaf from a tree. A leaflet from... perhaps a candidate, a clinic, a small poetry press. Work with the new sentence continues, each page full-justified (seeming prose) plus three left-justified, unstopped longish lines—3 leaves falling. Like Waldrop, Murphy hones lines (sentences, phrases) from the inside, leaving space between for thought leaps, branch snaps. So much depends upon sound, so these are revisionist lyrics, words brought to motion, a kind of think-music in language.

To read Murphy one must accept the writing as decidedly *not* arbitrary, and then establish workable read-codes—for example, that the "realities" vested here, though tentative and propositional, bring one sharply against the living we might think happens outside of language. Murphy's work reminds us, however, that writing and living meet on similar surfaces—the products of each might be called *Leaflets*.

Maybe romance dampens some young roller blading socket falsely draped down into samizdats and plain text. Ovals of us lord it over shapeless ones. I feel the heat rise from my face. I feel semiconductor penetration chill the mercy side of thunder, and I thrive on cinders

maybe once and maybe forty times. *Bring me hazelnut decaf.* Roasted warm round summer in the blood of us. The leaflets dropped from sky.

Getting a hold on meaning is perhaps like chasing one of those leaflets caught on a strong gust. What's written inside drifts with equal abandon and maybe never settles. "When you lose a word, does meaning liquefy? Are we then ready to adjust?" The writer, of course, chases along with us, and here as in other good poetries of exigency we light upon clues, pockets of air and rest breaks. Read: "I have been leafing through realities that don't belong to me." Respond: *I, too, and they are the same realities.*

Murphy writes in the company of others, such as Clark Coolidge, Peter Ganick, Norma Cole, of whom large doses might be preferable to small hits. Reading well is reading deep into the cadences and sound-sets, adjusting jumper settings for an optimum flow of current. This takes time and a willingness to perform, to go along, and ultimately to have one's hardwiring adjusted. "Will it be possible to cope? Be plain with me. Tell truth. Help me de-cover." Resistance is futile but resilience guarantees safe transport. "Face things with a prompt antithesis of rebellion."

Afterall, leaflets can both warn and enlighten; what's important is getting the information out there. Thus the wide presence of Murphy's poetry in today's journals and small presses works as a kind of blanketing or canvassing, in the most positive and benevolent of senses. The realities of which she writes are steady streams (of information, thoughts, events). Their truths are not polemical and hardly fixed, but exist at a refresh-rate identical to the several instances of their appearance. In reading Murphy's work, we share the pleasures and obligations of writing these truths. To do so often is a challenge and a delight.

INTERVIEW WITH KEITH WALDROP 1993 - 1997

PETER GIZZI: When did you first begin to write?

KEITH WALDROP: Well, let's see. My father carried around with him for years—I wonder what ever became of it—a little thing I had made, I don't know when, at less than five anyway, and which I told him was a book. It had no words. It was all pictures, done with rubber stamps and folded—one fold, you know: *folio*—small enough to go in his wallet. I rather cherish the fact that my first “book” was wordless.

He always claimed that I learned to read when I was two (I doubt this, but I don't remember being unable to read).

The first thing I remember writing, outside of a class (not that I ever wrote much in classes), was in South Carolina: a play. Actually it was in collaboration with an old friend in Emporia. We had done a lot of skits together and improvised things—we partly thought them out ahead but then we would just do them, sometimes with a third person, more often simply the two of us. My friend often played a female part, and that took a certain amount of time in costuming, so I would play all the other parts, thus becoming a quick change artist. With the material we had developed, I wrote a play in South Carolina and one summer when I went back to Kansas—

PG: From your mother to your father?

KW: Yes, this was when I was in high school in South Carolina. And in Emporia we put on that play. That was the late forties. It's the first thing I remember writing. Maybe I still have a copy somewhere.

PG: Do you remember the title?

KW: The title was *In Apollo's Temple*. In spite of the title, it was a comedy,

and I think moments of it were probably funny, but I don't remember it all that well. I also wrote a play for my senior class, because they wanted a play for graduation. There were only twelve people in my class down there, and they wanted something religious and/or Biblical. So I wrote a two-act tragedy called *Zimri*, which I started in Shakespearean blank verse and then scrapped that and switched over to prose. When I showed it to the class, they didn't like it at all. At first, in fact, they weren't convinced it was Biblical, but I gave them chapter and verse.

PG: I was going to ask, who is Zimri?

KW: Zimri was a king of Israel, who reigned only seven days after killing off the previous ruling family. It says in the Bible he killed every one of them "that pisseth against a wall." Which I assume means the males. Anyway, they didn't want this play at all, and so we ordered one from a religious mail order place and got a play about Esther. I played Mordecai. Meanwhile I had written two narrative poems, I remember, in high school—they were also Biblical—which I think in fact are mentioned in *Light While There Is Light*.

PG: I don't recall that.

KW: Maybe that's something I cut out. I cut out about as much as I left.

PG: Is that true?

KW: Oh yes. In any case, they were narrative poems about the antediluvian world and the flood, and I'm not sure anybody ever read them. I hope not. I'm sure they were awful, and I destroyed them eventually—I'm pretty sure no copy survives. And then I started writing fiction of a sort, when I went to college, back in Kansas (where I was born, and where I lived until, just after the second world war, I went to high school in South Carolina). But theater was my first love and it started earlier than that. I was in a play when I was in kindergarten, playing Peter Rabbit.

PG: Who were some of your favorite poets when you were a boy, and how

much of it did you get in school? I imagine since you were at this school in South Carolina you probably studied the Bible. Did you read any contemporary literature?

KW: In high school—no. No, there was nothing contemporary that I remember. Before I went to South Carolina—that is, while still in grade school—I basically read comic books. And the Bible.

PG: There's a kind of similarity there, isn't there? [laughter]

KW: Myth?

PG: Myth, seriality, animation, larger-than-life.

KW: While I was in high school, maybe fourteen, I started reading psychoanalysts. My brother Charles gave me a book by Menninger and then I read a couple other books by Menninger and also some Freud. That's how I got the idea I would become a psychiatrist. But I also read plays, Shakespeare and translations of Greek drama and whatever I could find in the library, which (where I was) wasn't much, but there were some things. *Essay on Man*. *Faust*. *Paradise Lost*. The Harvard Classics. Not too much else. But I read what was there.

And I started picking up books. My father would send me a few dollars and I would run into Greenville, the nearest real city—I remember buying the complete Greek drama which had come out in two volumes. And Saint Augustine. I don't think it had anything to do with school, all "extramural."

PG: Did your parents encourage your interest in literature, or did one more so than the other?

KW: My father liked Shakespeare. I don't know that he ever read anything else, but he read Shakespeare. He knew quite a few lines of Shakespeare and loved to quote them. I wouldn't say he encouraged me much, but my mother was rather discouraging. She had a vague notion that I was reading the literature of *this world*. Which was, of course, quite true.

PG: Were you a good reader of the Bible, though? Meaning, were you quick to know the Bible?

KW: Oh yes. Yes, in South Carolina there were Bible contests and I did very well in them. I had courses there in things like the travels of Paul, where he went and in what order...

PG: And then map it on the map?

KW: Right. And the parables of Jesus. They mainly taught the New Testament, but I read the Old Testament too.

PG: Did you have to commit a lot of it to memory?

KW: I didn't have to, but I did.

PG: You do have a remarkable memory. When did you decide to choose poetry over other forms, over playwriting. Or when did it choose you?

KW: I never chose poetry—still haven't. I've always had the idea that if I ever write anything really good, it will probably be in prose. Some prose or other. (Actually, I must admit, one of the few genres I've never taken seriously is the interview.)

Something, by the way, that I've never understood: for every person who wants to write poems, there seem to be a hundred who want to *be a poet*. In the sixties, you know, it was a widespread notion that you didn't have to write poems to be a poet, that in fact the "purest" poets wrote nothing at all. Perhaps it's a peculiarity of mine that I can see wanting to *do* something (or *make* or *have* something) but I can't quite fathom wanting to *be* something. (Also, I must say, purity's not a priority of mine. The determination to *will one thing* leads to the ridiculous idea that there *is* only one thing.)

I do intend to write more. Poems, or whatever. I've written less theater than other things—probably what I would like to do most immediately, along with more songs.

PG: You've been writing small plays or shorter works for over thirty years.

KW: Well, not exactly writing. It's true, I have done a number of small plays.

PG: You must have a collection. Have you saved the scripts from all the years of the Waste Paper Theater?

KW: Most of them didn't have scripts. Some were fairly much improvised, some half-written. I've recently been going back in memory, trying to write them down. I have about thirteen now, and three or four more in mind that I may be able to add. It isn't that I remember exactly how they went, but I don't think that matters—maybe I'm improving them. I call them "post-scripts."

PG: When did you start doing the theater here?

KW: Wastepaper Theater started in '73 and went to '93. Twenty years. James Schevill and Edwin Honig, who started Wastepaper Theater—with Rosmarie and me—really wanted political improvisation, but none of us was up to it. I had some experience improvising, but I was never any good with politics. (I would have had to start reading newspapers.) So we ended up each doing separate plays or performances, sometimes inviting other writers: John Emigh, Jaimy Gordon, Tom Ahern, Ray Ragosta, Robert Coover, Paula Vogel.

Honig at that time had a big mansion on the bay and we gave the first performance there. It was a nice place (we did different plays in different rooms) but a little remote. You had to have a car, and know where you were going. After a while, most of the plays were given in the Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design. We always had a good audience.

PG: Isn't there a term in theater when you are on stage, is it called stage time or theater time? Is there a term for that?

KW: It's called stage fright. [laughter]

Without which, by the way, there can be no good performance—though

if there is too much, of course, there's no performance at all. At certain moments when I'm writing, I have something analogous to stage fright.

PG: Were you writing the whole time when you went to college? When you were doing your studies were you always making verses or plays or stories?

KW: When I was in college I wasn't doing much studying, but I was writing. In graduate school, on the other hand, there were two or three years when I didn't write anything.

PG: Because you were studying.

KW: That sounds like a good excuse.

PG: What is the sequence of events—because the novel/autobiography¹ is circuitous. Just to get it straight—you went to undergrad and then you went to the army? Or did you go to the army and then undergrad? You went to undergrad, army, and then graduate school? Is that how it goes?

KW: After high school in South Carolina, I went back to Kansas for undergraduate work.

PG: To a teachers' college.

KW: Kansas State Teachers College. But I was a pre-med, never took an education course. I was drafted three years later, when I lacked six hours of finishing the B.A., was in the army from the end of the summer of '53 until the beginning of summer '55, and got out a little early because they were sending the whole First Division back to the States. They wanted to reduce personnel, so I got out about three months early.

PG: You met Rosmarie then?

¹ *Light While There Is Light* (Sun & Moon, 1993)

KW: Yes. That is, I met her while in the army in Germany. Then I came back to Kansas, where my father was still living—he had retired by then—and immediately enrolled in summer school and finished my BA at the end of that summer (1955), having given up the notion of psychiatry, and therefore of medical school. Then I went to the University of Illinois (and the used car lot described in *Light While There Is Light*).

PG: How many years did you do there? Two?

KW: Oh, no, I was there one year and it was a disastrous year.

PG: Did you get an MA from that place?

KW: I didn't get anything. I got kicked out. Then I went to France, to Aix-en-Provence, where Rosmarie came also—from another direction (she had been studying at Freiburg). It was the University of Aix-Marseilles—the part we went to is in Aix. We were in an institute for foreigners, you know, it wasn't anything high-powered. Then I came back to the states (my brother Julian was just out of prison) and I went to Michigan. I thought comparative literature sounded interesting, so I went through college catalogs. I figured the only places I could afford would be midwestern state schools, and the two that had comp lit programs at that time were Indiana and Michigan, and Indiana was mainly either classical studies or folklore. Michigan seemed more general, so I went there. I was there for seven years.

PG: When did you meet X.J. Kennedy and James Camp and Dallas Wiebe and Robert Ashley?

KW: During the first years at Michigan. Gordon Mumma was my first friend there. I met Kennedy, Camp and Wiebe quite soon. In fact those three were already there when I arrived. Mumma introduced me to Ashley.

PG: And when did Burning Deck begin?

KW: 1961. The first year I was there, 1957-58, I found out about the Hopwood

Prize—you know about that?

PG: Frank O'Hara won one.

KW: Yes, before my time. I entered the Hopwood contest my first year, which was, I realized, in some ways a mistake, because if you win you can't enter again. But I needed money. I entered with fiction and poetry and at the last minute I put in one of my old seminar papers, since they had an essay category. And the essay won second prize, poetry and fiction nothing.

PG: What was the essay on, do you remember?

KW: Oh, something stupid, I forget. I'm sure it was terrible. But that's how Rosmarie came over—on Hopwood money.

PG: So does the Wolgamot Society predate Burning Deck?

KW: Yes, but there's a connection. Rosmarie came in December '58. In the spring of '59 there was a lot of talk in various places, including *Evergreen Review* and such, about the Beatniks and the San Francisco Renaissance and all that, and everybody was curious about it, but nobody really knew anything much. So we (Kennedy, Camp, Wiebe, myself and a few others) announced that three poets from the San Francisco Renaissance would come and read their own work, answer questions, and give a new play with jazz accompaniment—all our own invention, you understand. For that, we had to have a student organization as sponsor. So we invented the Wolgamot Society, whose purpose—according to our founding document—was to “raise the cultural level of the university.”

PG: You said the SF Scene issue of the *Evergreen Review* had just come out?

KW: It had come out shortly before that, and also there were reports of a reading at Columbia, where Ginsberg and Orlovsky had read, and had been introduced by Dupee. So we thought we would sort of ape that. But we invented the poets, and wrote perfectly awful stuff.

PG: Do you have that manuscript—the three of you?

KW: Hmm—probably somewhere I have the play that we gave. I wrote this up years ago in the introduction to the first Burning Deck book, which was an anthology of Wolgamot poets. (It's called *The Wolgamot Interstice* and the introduction is called "How to Swallow an Aardvark.") We had thought of the evening as an experiment: how far could we take it before the audience would catch on, realize we were hoaxing them? Some of them should have seen through our disguises. We read crazy poems. We invited questions from the crowd (it was, by the way, extremely well attended) and then, instead of answering, insulted them. We ended with a play, *The Quivering Aardvark and the Jelly of Love*, in which the hip hero—I played the part, wearing a syringe in my buttonhole—shoots all the other characters. That done, we turned the lights off and went home, leaving the audience in the dark.

The experiment was a failure, since they never caught on. They loved it. I think a few may have left for San Francisco on the basis of that reading.

The first Burning Deck publication was an anthology called *The Wolgamot Interstice*. This came about because Don Hope—who was another of our group—had a friend somewhere in Michigan, not Ann Arbor, who was a linotyper and who wanted to print a book but didn't really care what book. So he asked Don Hope, his literary friend, to come up with something. Don edited a selection of poems by himself, me, X.J. Kennedy, James Camp, Dallas Wiebe, Donald Hall, W.D. Snodgrass, and John Heath-Stubbs. This came out in 1961. It's linotyped, printed letterpress, and when Don Hope said should we have a publisher's name for it, I said put "Burning Deck." Because X.J. Kennedy and I had planned, or rather talked vainly about, a magazine. Neither of us had any money, you understand, so it didn't seem very possible.

PG: I know those conversations.

KW: But Kennedy came up with the title *Burning Deck*, from Felicia Hemans' tear-jerking poem "Casabianca." And I kept thinking, there must be some way to start this magazine. So when Hope came up with his connection, I thought, well, the name Burning Deck should be there. Just about the same time, it occurred to me that if we had our own printing press, a magazine

would be possible. Mad idea—as everybody was quick to inform me. But I went, with Hope and another friend who also wanted to start a magazine, to a print supply shop in Detroit and found a press, for \$150 or so, and brought it back to Ann Arbor. But that first Burning Deck book was not done on our press.

The first issue of the magazine came out the next year, in 1962. Kennedy was not an editor, because he had, in the meantime, been picked by Donald Hall to follow him as poetry editor of the *Paris Review*. It would've been awkward for him to do both. There were actually three editors of Burning Deck magazine—Don Hope and James Camp and me.

PG: And you were known then as Bernard Keith?

KW: Sometimes, but as the editor of the magazine I put Bernard Waldrop. I've used different names at different times.

PG: And who was the man that you invented, the pseudonym at the time—Stanhope? No. That's the character from Charles Williams' novel. Who am I thinking of?

KW: Ah, yes... Don Hope had subsidized publication of *The Wolgamot Interstice*—not the printing, but paper, etc. When it came out, I thought I must find a way to get some of his money back, and so James Camp and I went to the Michigan Daily—a very good newspaper, by the way, much better than the Ann Arbor local paper. It had great editors. At that particular time I think it was—what's the name of the guy who did union work in New Jersey for a while and then married Jane Fonda?

PG: Tom Hayden?

KW: Right. Isn't he a senator now? There were a lot of very interesting undergraduates there at the time. The campus magazine was run by people like Al Young and Edmund White and Charles Newman. Anyway, we went over to an editor that I knew there—not Hayden but someone who wrote literary articles—and I said we want to do a review of this book we published.

She said, well, that's not very ethical is it, to write your own review? I said no, but we promise we'll slam it, we'll give it a bad review. She was so puzzled by this that she said all right. So Camp and I wrote a review saying the book was awful, saying it was dirty, it was an atrocity. We had some wonderful lines—Camp came up with things like “Would the Brownings ever have been so off-color?”

PG: And this made people actually want to pick it up and look at it.

KW: Exactly. We signed the review “Perry Bathhouse.” *On the Sublime*, you know...

PG: Longinus?

KW: Yes. In Greek *Peri Hupsous*. But Alexander Pope and some of his friends wrote a parody of this, an essay on how to write badly, which was called *Peri Bathous*, which is the opposite of the sublime, the “art of sinking in poetry.” So we called our critic Perry Bathhouse. And actually the editor added to it, made him “Perry Bathhouse ('09)” as though he were an ancient graduate of the university. Which was just right. Students read that and went in droves to get hold of the book. It's one of the few Burning Deck books that ever made back its cost.

PG: And you produced four issues of Burning Deck magazine, from '62 to '65?

KW: Yes. We intended to bring it out five times a year, calling it a “quinterly,” and in its first year, we got out three issues. We produced it ourselves—Rosmarie and I—on the press in the basement. And then we just bogged down. I was teaching at Wayne State for a year—1963-64. No more came out until Rosmarie and I moved to Connecticut. Then I think it was Reed Whittemore—who was Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress (a position now called Poet Laureate, but at that time it didn't have that glamour)—organized a conference of little magazines in Washington. Burning Deck got an invitation, which said they would pay airfare for one person and

a per diem for two or three days or whatever the conference took. What led to this conference was an organization of little magazines. They wanted to have a meeting, and I think this was a way of doing it and getting it funded. And they threw in, as I remember, a few magazines that were not connected (but invited, at this point, to join) and we were one. Another was *Joglars*, by the way.

PG: That was Clark Coolidge and Michael Palmer.

KW: Right, that's when I first met Coolidge. He was there. (Palmer wasn't.) Aram Saroyan was there. The invitation had gone to Michigan and been forwarded to us. So I thought all right and I wrote that I would come, but as though I were writing from Michigan, so they sent enough for airfare from Michigan, not from Connecticut. And with that money we immediately put out the fourth issue of *Burning Deck* to take with us, Rosmarie and I got in the car, drove through New York, picked up James Camp, and all three of us went down. That was the last issue. There was a fifth, actually, but it never got printed. I have somewhere² the material that was supposed to be in it.

PG: Who wrote the majority of the reviews?

KW: I did. And they were so bad the bigger publishers stopped sending us books.

PG: Was there a model in that, for your wanting to start a magazine? Was this based on people you were reading? Did Ezra Pound have an effect on you? The idea of becoming an editor? Eliot was an editor too.

KW: Well, Ezra Pound had a great deal of effect on me, but I'm not sure in this connection. The magazine I most admired at the time was *Botteghe Oscure*.

PG: That looks like a really beautiful magazine. It's like a book!

² Since this interview, *Burning Deck*'s archives have gone to the Brown University Library

KW: Yes, it was quite something. And it cost a lot of money. The woman who published it was an American who had married an Italian prince. The story—I don't know whether it's true—but the story is that every issue that came out she had to sell some of the family's artworks. It's a wonderful magazine. In several languages.

PG: Did you ever send work here?

KW: I sent her things, but she didn't publish them. While in the army, on a pass to Italy, I went to see her. She wasn't there. I found the street she lived on, which was called *Via della Botteghe Oscure*—The Street of Dark Shops. There was a bookstore on that street, and I asked for the magazine. They'd never heard of it.

It isn't, of course, that I thought we were doing *Botteghe Oscure*. I realized there was a difference.

PG: I understand. What were some of the other magazines you were reading—*Evergreen Review*? *Partisan Review*? *Paris Review*? Or looking at in bookstores at least?

KW: Yes. *Partisan* less than the others. I read the *Evergreen Review*, and the *Paris Review* off and on, and...

PG: Did you ever see *Joglers* before the Washington D.C. conference?

KW: I think so. I went through a lot of little magazines. *Trobar*. *Matter*. *Poems from the Floating World*. There was *Kulchur*. Cid Corman's *Origin*. I saw those, and a lot of others, and I had looked at the *Little Review*, and others from the twenties and thirties.

PG: Let's go back to influence. We talked about Shakespeare, the Bible, you mentioned theatre; when did Modernism enter into your imagination?

KW: I suppose when I was in college, and I guess I even got a little bit of Pound and Eliot in class, and they grew on me. Soon after that, I found

Marianne Moore, somewhat later Stein and H.D. Faulkner was important to me. Yeats. And—most of all—Henry James (well, not exactly a modernist). Virginia Woolf, too. I know a lot of people think *Ulysses* the high point of modernist fiction; if one has to declare for a peak, I would rather put *The Waves* there. Not that I'm dismissing Joyce.

PG: Did you ever study with Donald Hall?

KW: No. Had I done so, it would have been later. I'm talking about undergraduate college. I remember a teacher at Kansas State Teachers' College read my fiction and said "Have you been reading Franz Kafka?" I said "Who's that?" And I looked him up.

PG: Did you prefer Eliot over Pound at first? Or have you always?

KW: No, If I had to choose, I've generally thought more of Pound. But they're both poets I greatly admire. And not just admire—I love some of the work of both of them. Most of the poets I know (or know of) despise or distrust Eliot. I think this is partly because, if you're starting to write, taking him as any kind of model is almost certainly disastrous. Pound can be useful to a young poet. Imitating Eliot is like trying to imitate Swinburne, which Eliot himself knew enough to avoid. (I think Swinburne a very great poet.)

When I was in college there was another influence that's a little more unusual. I started listening to French songs, recordings of Juliette Greco—and I was quite bowled over by what she was singing. So I looked up the texts. Many were by Prévert and the ones I liked best were by Raymond Queneau. So I looked him up, though I could barely read French. That's when I started translating poems. I had to translate them—*so that I could read them*. (My first translations—they included some verses by Valéry!—were perhaps even worse than my first poems.) Anyway, Queneau was probably the greatest influence on my early work. Outside of the obvious—I mean, it's hard to imagine *not* being influenced by Pound. Maybe two or three other writers—Stevens, Emily Dickinson. Whitman I rejected at the time.

PG: Have you grown to like him?

KW: I've grown—well, first to accept him, and gradually, yes, to like at least the first *Leaves of Grass*. Still—he's not one of those poets who means a great deal to me.

PG: I know why you've grown to like him—it's because he has a populist political vision? [laughter] Just kidding.

KW: I doubt it. I quite liked that thirties Communist poet...

PG: Kenneth Fearing? You turned me on to him.

KW: I think I was somewhat influenced by Kenneth Fearing, later. But Queneau was a great influence. The poetry. (His novels I read later.) Particularly what I first heard: the songs that Joseph Kosma had set. Then I read his volume *Les Ziaux*, painfully figuring out what the words meant, sometimes wrongly. And it isn't just right then, it's over the years that Queneau has been a tremendous influence, because he—well, you see I always had a problem, like Ray Ragosta, in making decisions, and particularly decisions to keep one thing and throw away something else. And I accept of course that one does have to—you can't save everything and in order to have some things you have to give other things up. But I think that's tragic.

PG: I do too.

KW: I've never really accepted it emotionally. And Queneau was someone who taught me—I could have learned it elsewhere, but in fact I think it was from him that I learned, first of all, you don't have to decide whether you're going to be serious or unserious. You simply don't have to make that decision. Romantic or classical. Comic or tragic. And you don't have to decide whether you're going to "think" or to "feel," to use high diction or low diction, or whatever. I mean you can combine these things—any things—if you can do it (it's a problem of form). Which he could. Which I couldn't, but it seemed worth a try. And so he was one of the very few poets I would say that I really did, in some sense, use as a model. Not that I took a poem and said, I want to write something like this, but the *stance* was important to me. I like to

think that I would have arrived at that anyway, but his example made it much faster. There was a time when Don Hope gave a lecture on Wolgamot, at Wayne State University—one of the few lectures on Wolgamot that I know of...

PG: Other than the ones you've given.

KW: ...I don't think I've ever lectured on Wolgamot.

PG: Didn't you give one in the library at Royaumont?

KW: Well no, I only told a story. But anyway, Don claimed that just afterward he went into a bar and this person sat next to him and looked over and said "Well, are you *serious* or are you *not*?!" as if that were the fundamental question. The Wolgamot Society was founded on the principle that those are not contradictions, but contraries that you can bring together. That, in fact, not to do so is very limiting.

PG: New question. You use the word "overtakelessness" which is a Dickinson word. Do you care to extrapolate what that word means to you?

KW: "The overtakelessness of those /who have accomplished death" is her line. She's involved with her dead, and they can't be *overtaken*, because there is nobody there. I'm not sure that's how she would have justified the term. She uses that word twice. Those two lines I quote as an epigraph for *Light While There Is Light*, along with the old hymn, "Work for the Night Is Coming." As I've put it somewhere, my way of thinking of the ideal poem would simply be one's last words. Art in general seems to me a kind of tombstone, which doesn't last forever, but can stand there for a while.

PG: That's nice, seeing the ruin as ruin. If I had to pick a piece of music that might represent how your poems work for me, it would be the song by Charles Ives called "Serenity."

KW: It sounds familiar, but I can't bring it to mind. I like Ives's songs.

PG: This one in particular. It's like dying—a sense of leaving the body and flying out over an open body of water.

KW: I think a work should have the most effect, with the least possible to-do. John Cowper Powys has a motto—*energy without agitation*—and I think that's a worthy ideal. Not something one can accomplish, maybe, but something to aim for.

PG: Let's talk about Wolgamot, because beside your own work there are a few stories I want to get to during the course of the interview: one is Wolgamot, another is Burning Deck, and another is France in the seventies.

KW: Okay, Wolgamot.

PG: You said that Don Hope gave the first lecture.

KW: By the way, that lecture so infuriated one person who was in the audience, a novelist, that he went home and wrote a satirical novel about a group called the "Wolgamuts" and a man called Hope. Since he didn't really know anything about us, it isn't exactly on target.

PG: What was the name of that?

KW: It was called *A Game of Dostoyevsky*. (A bad novel.)

PG: But let's go back to the Wolgamot Society. After the beatnik hoax...

KW: Our first performance after that was *Ubu Roi*.

PG: Did you translate it yourself?

KW: We found there were already two translations. One of them was by Barbara Wright and is an excellent translation, but we didn't think it very theatrical. *Ubu Roi* had been given, as far as I know, only once before in the States—by the Living Theater. And the other translation I found may have

been the one they used. (I'm not sure.) But it was called *King Turd*—privately published. And...

PG: That's actually a good title, don't you think?

KW: Well, I'll come back to that. X.J. Kennedy and I decided we would do a new translation. So I translated half of it and he translated the other half, then we just sort of jammed the halves together, made the names consistent, but otherwise left a great style change right in the middle. But the title was a problem. If we had called it *King Turd*, for one thing we couldn't have given it. At Michigan, shortly before that, we were told that somebody had given Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* and that the line about "birth, copulation and death" was considered a dirty line and had to be changed to "birth, *tribulation* and death." We thought, well, we could just call it (as Barbara Wright had) *Ubu Roi*. But it also occurred to me that—two things: one was that "Ubu" does mean turd, but it's a child's word, so that turd in a way is not tonally quite right.

PG: "Caca" would be more like it.

KW: The other thing is that if you're going to say "King Somebody" ordinarily you would say, you know, "Le Roi Louis," "Le Roi Ubu," and so forth, and turning it around the way that title does gives it the distinctive feel of "Oedipe Roi" which in English we call Oedipus Rex. So first of all I went around to all my friends who had children, and asked, "What do your children say when they want to go to the toilet?" I got an amazing vocabulary... And finally one said, "When my daughter wants to go, she says 'Go-potty! Go-potty!'" And so we called the play *Gopotty Rex*.

Kennedy played Papa Gopotty. I played Mama Gopotty. We dressed ourselves to resemble two big turds, using army blankets, which are close to the right color. They were wrapped around us—and especially Papa Gopotty was really quite obscene. We used an arena stage at Michigan that belonged to the theater department—they used it for studio productions. We gave *Gopotty Rex* two nights, and it was crowded. The play wasn't much known then—and in fact most people assumed that it was a hoax because they had

finally gotten it that the beatnik thing was a hoax—but someone had looked it up and found out, of course, how things were thrown at the first performance. So he armed his friends, and they came with things to throw. And they did! A whole rotten pineapple came through the air at one point. And the theater department was so infuriated by both that *and* the play itself, that they declared the arena theater off-limits to all student organizations forever.

PG: That's quite a distinction there Keith.

KW: I suppose. There was only one place that ever let us do two productions in a row, that was the Unitarian Church—they were very slow to catch on. Finally, after the second play, they wouldn't let us in anymore. *Ubu Roi* was a very filthy production. Completely different, by the way, from the recent *Ubu Rock* at the American Repertory Theater. There they changed all the scatological matter to sexual. In the original there's no sex, it's all bathroom. In Eric Partridge's way of putting this distinction, *Ubu* is filthy, but not dirty. (By the way, I did enjoy the A.R.T. production.)

PG: Did you have a beard at the time, when you were playing Mama Gopotty?

KW: I did, I've worn a beard since 1955. But I used a lot of nose putty, and more or less covered it up, except here and there it still showed through. I was a bit disgusting.

PG: Any photographs?

KW: I have some photographs somewhere from a rehearsal, not from the actual event. We were always very bad with documentation.

PG: When did *Gopotty Rex* come out?

KW: Oh, we must have done it Fall 1960.

PG: All right, that's the second production of the Wolgamot Society. How

do we arrive at the name—who is Wolgamot? What is the Wolgamot Society? How did it begin?

KW: Well, before that—when was it? It was when I came back from Aix. So it was the summer of '57. My brother Julian was out of prison and had started another car lot.

PG: Based on the success of the earlier one.

KW: Not in Champagne, this time, but in Danville. Danville was mainly famous for its whorehouses, but there was a bookstore run by a friend of my brother. This friend had just bought the bookstore, thinking he would make money—I think he probably went broke very soon, but he was still there then. I went through the store and found, well, a couple things I wanted. But there was this strange book. I looked at it, and I couldn't make heads or tails of it. I put it back but I kept thinking about it—it was an odd shape, and I went back and looked at it again, you know, and I asked the guy who owned the shop, where did this come from? He didn't know anything about it. He had bought it, with the rest of the stock, from somebody who owned the store before him.

PG: What was the title of this book?

KW: *In Sara, Mencken, Christ, and Beethoven There Were Men and Women.*

[long silence]

PG: Could you repeat that?

KW: Published in 1944, it said. And the publisher's name was given as John Barton Wolgamot, same as the author's. And I think I didn't even buy it the second time. But then I ran back and got it. It was 50 cents. I became absolutely fascinated by it, and have carried it with me from then on everywhere. I never let go of it.

PG: How old were you at the time?

KW: I must have been twenty-four. And that fall I went to Michigan, so I had it with me. I used to show it to people but, you know, very special people—if I really liked them I would show them this book. And when we needed a name for a society, I think I suggested—it might have been Kennedy—but I think I said: “This is my culture hero.” So we named it after him. For a while, everybody who was assumed to be a member of the Wolgamot Society, which was all our circle, was obliged to use Wolgamot’s name in whatever they wrote. There were people in a particular bibliography class, for instance, and they were writing papers on everything, but always Wolgamot got into it somewhere. Everybody was quite amused that the teacher never seemed to notice. Dallas Wiebe dedicated his dissertation to Wolgamot.

PG: Was his dissertation on the *Cantos*?

KW: Wiebe’s? No, he wanted to write on Pound, but he was told he couldn’t, because Pound was still alive. (The next year, someone wrote on Eliot, and nobody objected, so it was obviously a trumped-up reason.) Anyway, they told him he couldn’t do that, but Wyndham Lewis had died recently, and so Dallas wrote on Lewis. (James Camp, by the way, wanted to write on Wallace Stevens, but was told he was too *minor* a poet!) Wiebe founded the Pound Society in Ann Arbor, which had exactly the same membership as the Wolgamot Society, and was impossible to distinguish from the Vivaldi Society.

We were all making theories about Wolgamot. Don Hope, as I say, gave his lecture, in which Wolgamot had a political doctrine. I forget exactly how Don expressed it. He seemed to be under the impression that Wolgamot was a reincarnation of Dr. Johnson—Don’s hero—which puzzled me. But, why not? All the theories were jokes on some level, and also serious. I made all sorts of weird theories about the book. One was that, since on the first page... (Well, the sentence is basically the same on every page. But there are a few odd irregularities:) ...on the first page is “the cruelly ancestral death of Sara Powell Haardt” and on the last page is the second coming of Christ. (Remember that it’s called *In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were*

Men and Women—Sara is Sara Powell Haardt, who was Mencken's wife.) I said, well the plot is: Wolgamot has identified Beethoven with Mencken—Mencken wrote on Beethoven—and identifies himself, Wolgamot, with Christ. And the battle is: who will get Sara? And Mencken gets her in life, but five years after he married her she died, and Wolgamot has her in eternity.

PG: Oh, I see.

KW: So then we tried to find Wolgamot. We went through all the scholarly methods we knew anything about. I found a reference to him in the Mencken bibliography, because Mencken had willed his books to a library in Baltimore, and inside his books he had written what he thought about them. He had a copy of Wolgamot. And inside it he had written, "Wolgamot was writing this balderdash even before Sara died. I called him on the phone and I said, 'Wolgamot, are you crazy?' And he said, quite unperturbed [sic], 'No, I'm not crazy, I just like to write that way.'" And from that I was even more impressed with Wolgamot.

PG: He wrote the book before she died?

KW: He started it before she died.

PG: Was she known to be sick?

KW: She was an invalid when Mencken married her. In fact, Mencken claimed the doctors had told him that she would die in a year.

I looked up book catalogs for 1944, the year Wolgamot's book came out, and I found it listed, with (since it was published privately) a place from which it could be ordered—an address in New York, down in the Village somewhere. X.J. Kennedy, in New York by chance, went by, and reported a number of print shops in the building, so it could have been printed there. But when he asked around, nobody recognized the name Wolgamot. Then I found that a year before it came out, in 1943, Richard R. Smith in New York had published a book by Wolgamot, with a slightly different title, *In Sara Powell Haardt Were Men and Women*—close, but not the same. Richard R. Smith

was a press (vanity press, I think) in New York, but by the time I found this reference, he had moved to New Hampshire or somewhere, so I got hold of the new address and wrote, simply ordering two copies of the book, as though twenty years later it would still be available. And, to my surprise he wrote back, saying there was one copy left, and I could have it for four dollars. So I bought it, and it turned out to be exactly the same book, except for the title page and the size of the margins. I got to thinking about this and again came up with an outrageous theory: that Wolgamot was working on a trilogy, and these were the first two books. The third would be the same, but with a different title page and he'd have a trilogy of great formal unity.

Finding the author seemed to be turning out a dead end. We tried everything, including asking the *I Ching* whether he was still alive—which gave us what seemed to me a perfectly unequivocal reply: that he was *still alive, but in decline*. It didn't tell us how to find him. Then I was back in Champagne-Urbana—I went to visit my mother—and saw an old friend of mine, whom I always called Zhenia (there's a poem in my first book called "For Zhenia," that's her—I wish I knew where she is now). And we were telling her about the Wolgamot Society and she said, "Oh, I know somebody named Wolgamot!" I said, "What's his first name?" And she said, "Bart." I said, "How old is he?" Well, he was twenty-two or something and was studying music at the University of Illinois. Obviously not the right person, *but*—we were leaving almost immediately, so I said, "You must get hold of him and ask him if John Barton Wolgamot, the author, is a relative."

Zhenia wrote soon after that she had gotten hold of him and, indeed, John Barton Wolgamot was his uncle. And, she quoted him as saying, "not my favorite one." She got from him Wolgamot's address. He was living in New York City. Along with the information that he managed a movie house. Also that he was working on another book, and that in Danville—which is apparently where his family came from, which makes sense, since that's where I found the book—there was a whole garage full of his books. We were delighted by this—after all our scholarly efforts had gone down the drain.

PG: Obviously not. You should have been a private eye.³

KW: So Kennedy and Camp were going to New York at some point, and I

charged them, "Go to 104th and Broadway and find out anything you can." They came back, saying they got to the doorstep of the hotel—a run-down fleabag, according to them—and they started up the steps. But then they stopped, looked at each other, and decided *no, he has to remain a legend*. And they turned around and fled. The next thing that I remember, there was a party at a professor's house—actually the person who was Rosmarie's doctoral advisor, and who was on my committee too, Ingo Seidler—and the party was because Christopher Middleton was in town. I think Donald Hall was there also—he was still speaking to me at that point. And...

PG: Christopher Middleton was around then?

KW: Just passing through. His first book had come out, and Hall had gotten him a reading at Michigan. Somehow Wolgamot came up, as he tended often to do, and I said, yeah, well, we've found his phone number (how could one forget *Monument six one thousand?*), and Seidler immediately put the phone by me and said, "Call him. Invite him to come and read." The Wolgamot Society had a little money because of *Ubu Roi*. (Never made money on anything else.) So, put to it, I called person-to-person and I heard the answer, this is hotel whatever-it-was-called, and the operator said, "There's a call for Mr. John Wolgamot." And I heard the hotel clerk—"Wolgamot?! Is it paid for?" And the operator said, yes it was paid for, and so Wolgamot came on the line.

I hadn't realized how late it was—we had awakened him—and I asked him if he would come read his work at the University of Michigan, and he said, "Work? What work?" I said *In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were Men and Women*. He said, "Ohhhh" and then he said, "I thought that book had died the death." I assured him that at the University of Michigan there were many people very interested in it, and we'd like to hear him read it. But he said, well no he couldn't do that, because he worked for an organization

³ Since this interview was conducted, a French philosopher, reviewing the pamphlet *John Barton Wolgamot*, translation by Marcel Cohen of an improvised account of the search for Wolgamot, has written: "Le livre de K. Waldrop est une enquête policière..." Alain Chareyre-Méjan, "L'Ecrivain, le Cancre, le Privé" in *La Licorne* (1998).

that wouldn't want to do without him that long. We later found that he didn't believe in readings. That was the call, and it was unsuccessful, but I had talked to him.

I've often felt that I haven't done enough for Wolgamot's reputation—Kennedy and I thought at one time of putting out a new edition with index and with notes on all the names in it, to the extent that we could identify them, but we never did it.

Soon after I came to Providence, Robert Ashley wrote that he had left Michigan and gone to Mills College, where he had spent years building an electronic studio; and he had written no music for years because—his letter said—he had been purifying himself. Now, he said, "I am pure." And ready to write his masterpiece. The only thing was, the one text he had to have was lacking. The work could only be based on Wolgamot. And he said—I was impressed by the humility in this—he said he knew I wouldn't let the book out of my hands, but if I could Xerox a couple pages. . .

Something else had happened in the meantime, which was rather bizarre. I taught a year at Wesleyan before I came here to Brown, and in a seminar on recent avant-garde literature (where, by the way, I had gotten Cage to come in and talk) there was a middle-aged man in the class, a high school teacher who was back in college to pick up some credits, who always addressed me as "Young Man" and always sort of, you know, rolled his eyes at this avant-garde stuff we were reading. And one day he came to class, and I came in, as usual a little late, looked around, and I saw, from across the room, that he had Wolgamot's book in his hand. And I said, "Where did you get that?" And he was taken aback and said, "You don't know what this is." And I said, "*In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were Men and Women!*" He had found this book somewhere and thought, "I'll show this—this guy thinks he knows everything." He was flabbergasted. In fact he was never the same after that. He handed me the book and said, "Here, take it. I don't want it." So then I had another copy.

PG: Killjoy.

KW: So when Ashley wrote, I had that copy to send him. His composition was premiered at the Bremen Festival. Then he performed it up and down

the west coast, but he wanted to play it in New York. And he thought, *but I never told Wolgamot!* Then in Los Angeles, I think—somewhere in southern California, anyway—before a performance, a woman appeared and said, “I noticed the title of your composition *In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were Men and Women*. Does this composition have something to do with John Barton Wolgamot?”

And he said, “uh, uh, well, uh. . . yes.” And she introduced herself to him saying that she had for years been Wolgamot’s “only confidante,” including the very time he was writing his book. But she had seen him recently, and asked Ashley, “Have you told Wolgamot about this?” and he said, well, no, he hadn’t yet. She said, “Well, you know, I think he must have some idea of it, because I saw him recently in New York, and I think, after years of self-imposed obscurity, he’s ready for a little fame. When I talked to him he said he thought there was *something in the wind*.”

PG: Because of your phone call?

KW: Oh, this was years after the phone call. And she said, “You must get in touch with him.” Then she was leaving, but just before she left she said, “Oh, by the way—you’d better bone up on the *Eroica*.” And went out. Ashley was nervous. He had no idea what Beethoven could have to do with it! He gave me a frantic call, just a bit later, because he *had* gotten in contact with Wolgamot, and had made an appointment to see him. And, he said, “I can’t go alone!” So I said, “All right, I’ll come to New York and go with you.”

Well, I cut it a little close and the train was an hour late, and when I got to the movie-house—the Little Carnegie, where Wolgamot was the manager and where he had consented to be interviewed—Ashley was already there, and the first thing Wolgamot had said to him was, “Are you the person who called me in the middle of the night ten years ago?” And Ashley said, “Oh no, no no—that was Keith Waldrop!”

Ashley had done a formal analysis of the book, and had made an elaborate chart, claiming that the book is in four movements—there was no sign of this, no markings—of equal length. I thought, well, it helps him in composing his piece, but probably has nothing to do with it. But the first thing I remember Wolgamot saying was, “You realize, this is in four movements.” And Ashley

immediately brought out his chart, at which Wolgamot simply turned his head—he wouldn't look at it. And he wouldn't listen to the piece, by the way, he didn't want to hear it.

He said his book was based on the four movements of the Eroica Symphony. He said that in 1938 or '39—around there—he heard the Eroica for the first time, and he was bowled over by it. He realized instantly that this was the work that did everything, said everything, this was the master work of all time, this had *everything*. He also realized, he said, that it was great because of the rhythm.

And as he listened to it, he kept hearing names. And he wrote down the names—he said they were names he didn't know, that didn't mean anything to him—but he wrote them down *as he heard them*. Then he went to a biography of Beethoven—this is what he claimed—he went to a biography of Beethoven, and he said he found all those names.

PG: Wow.

KW: And he realized, after thinking about this, that rhythm is the basis of everything, *and names are the basis of rhythm*. He said that's why, when a woman gets married and changes her name, she loses her character. He said, "You know, you can even hear this in the names of fictional characters. For instance, Anna Karenina: listen to that—ann-a-ka-ren-in-a ann-a-ka-ren-in-a—it's the railroad: that's why she gets run over by a train." And Ashley all this time was sinking deeper in his chair.

What else? Let's see.

I said, "Are you working on another book?" And he said yes, yes, he'd been working on another book since his second book came out. He said, "My first book was no good. My second book began to gallop. But you haven't seen anything yet." The third one, he'd been working on since 1944, in other words for thirty years. He said, writing took longer now because now he had to work. At the time he wrote the first two books, he didn't have to work and could spend all his time on them. Now his money had run out and he had to work. And I said, Now your next book—the first two books I had, which were, you remember, exactly the same text—I said, "Well, the text of the third book—is that going to be..." And he said, as if it went without

saying, "Oh, same text, same text."

PG: Amazing—30 years on a single line.

KW: He had been working on: the title, the title page, the size of the margins.

I asked him, "Did you ever meet Mencken?" He said, "No, I never met Mencken. I talked to him on the phone once," which I already knew. I said, "Well, then, you probably never met Sara Powell Haardt." I could see Ashley was remembering my silly theory. And Wolgamot said, "No, I never met Sara Powell Haardt. I used her name, because her last name's Haardt and my middle name's Bart." I thought, well that shoots my theory. But he went on, "Of course, in the book, I represent myself as having an illicit relation with her. In a book like this, there has to be some love interest." I thought Ashley would go clean through his chair!

PG: The illicit love interest according to your theory happens in the afterlife—in eternity.

KW: Yes. But, after all, an eternity *inside his book*.

I kept telling him, I'm a printer. What about this third book? He said it wasn't done yet, but he never responded to the fact that I was a printer. He said that his third book, he thought probably should be published by a commercial press. I thought—*whew*.

Then he said, "Do you know anything about October House?" I said, well, I had a friend who published a book with them. He said, "It's not a communist front, is it?" I said, no, I was sure it wasn't. And besides, I thought it didn't actually exist anymore. This made me realize that he knew nothing about it, so I said, "What made you light on October House?" He said, well, it was perfectly obvious. "October's the tenth month, but it means eight. And 'house' has five letters. 1805—that's the year of the Eroica!"

PG: He's truly mad.

KW: Ashley was in seventh heaven. Ashley has a thing about naive artists.

And he had decided, from the book, that this was the Great Naive Artist, and now...

PG: The recording's nice, because he cut out all the breaths so that it has this quality...

KW: Yes, Ashley first read the entire book onto a tape, breathing only between pages, then went back and, as you say, cut out all the breaths. Which reminds me: when Wolgamot heard that in Bob's composition the text was actually spoken, he said that at one time he had thought of reading it out loud. "But then I decided against it," he said. "I suppose that—if you did read it—it would have to be a kind of, well, *breathless* reading."

PG: He was probably quite pleased, Ashley.

KW: Oh, yes. Yes, yes. Ashley, by the way, thinks of himself as a primitive, a *naïf*. I keep pointing out to him that he's the most sophisticated naive artist I know of.

PG: So then Wolgamot went on to become a legend. He's now gone, I imagine.

KW: He claimed that he had the first book destroyed. I remembered the thing his nephew had said about a garage-full, and I asked, weren't there somewhere some copies?—because, you know, there are all sorts of people who would really appreciate being able to buy a copy. And he said, "Oh, when I left Illinois, I left them in my brother's garage, and he wrote me later that he was moving, what should he do with them? And I said, well, burn 'em." So those don't exist anymore.

PG: I'd really like to find a copy.

KW: And he claimed that there couldn't be—of both books together—more than a couple dozen in existence. (I had found, remember, three.)

PG: That's pretty great. So, there's one more part of the story that when he died you went to look into the safety-deposit box to see. . .

KW: Ashley tried to keep in touch with him, which became more and more difficult. He did visit Ashley, and Ashley him. In fact, he once took Ashley and Mimi Johnson to the Russian Tea Room. But later the Little Carnegie was torn down, and he started working for a different movie house, somewhere in the suburbs I think, and—rather all of a sudden—stopped being sociable. And so it was a great surprise that, when Wolgamot died, in his will he had appointed Ashley his literary executor. Ashley was supposed to receive the contents of this famous safety-deposit box, which we assumed would be the plates for the book—because Wolgamot had told us he still had the plates. After some legal folderol, the contents of the box were delivered to Ashley, but all that was in the box was a metal stamp—the kind of thing you stamp a book cover with. It was for the new title, the title for his third book. Its title is *Beacons of Ancestry*.

PG: That would have been the trilogy, so you actually have it.

KW: Exactly.

PG: You could print it as a trilogy.

KW: Well, I think we'll just print one book, the third. We've been intending to do an edition of it. And hoping to put another volume with it, which would contain my anecdotal history of these things and also Ashley's analysis of the book.

PG: Be a good thing to do.

KW: But we haven't progressed very far. We keep saying, let's get together and do this. Somehow it hasn't happened.

PG: It's a remarkable story. It's true what they say: stranger than fiction.

KW: Yes. Actually, I haven't mentioned the way he wrote the book.

PG: That's important.

KW: When he realized that names were the basis of everything, he decided that all you'd have to do is write names, and that'd be it. So he wrote a name, and then on another page he wrote another name and so forth (in four movements). He soon realized that wasn't quite enough—you had to have different names to play off each other, to make a more complex rhythm. So he put together big lists of names, mostly of writers. He said, "I didn't read all these authors, but they're all good authors." And some artists, musicians and so forth. He had big lists, and he claimed that to the one name on a page he'd put these other names up next to it and "when there was a real spark between them," he would know those names went together. So then he had three names on a page. And then he collected other names around each of these three, and he said that then he knew it really was perfect. It was all it needed to be—each page was perfect—*except* that there was no reason to turn the page. He knew he had to have a sentence, *only one* sentence. That one sentence would be on every page. He claimed that's what took him so long. All the rest he did fairly fast, but it took him ten years to write that one sentence. He said that it was so difficult "because, you know, it's very hard to find a sentence that doesn't say anything."

PG: You are also interested in the concept of the sentence that doesn't say anything.

KW: It's an abiding interest. I've often found "meaning" tyrannical. I think meaning is always an element in the sound that poetry is made of, but it's only one of the things that determine how the words sound.

PG: What's the correlation of that to the "great blank that follows" from the introduction of your *Selected Poems*?

KW: Mmmmmmm. . . Well. . . What else do you want to know?

{INTERVIEW WILL RESUME IN THE FUTURE ISSUE}

In its very truly great manners of Ludwig van Beethoven very heroically the very cruelly ancestral death of Sara Powell Haardt had very ironically come amongst his very really grand men and women to Rafael Sabatini, George Ade, Margaret Storm Jameson, Ford Madox Hueffer, Jean-Jacques Bernard, Louis Bromfield, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Helen Brown Norden very titanically.

In her very truly great manners of John Barton Wolgamot very heroically Helen Brown Norden had very originally come amongst his very really grand men and women to Lodovico Ariosto, Solon, Matteo Maria Bojardo, Philo Judaeus, Roger Bacon, Longus, Simeon Strimsky and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe very titanically.

John Barton Wolgamot, *In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were Men and Women*. Photocopy of first and second page, reduced in size, margins and aspect preserved.

In their very truly great manners of John Barton Wolgamot very heroically Thomas Stearns Eliot, Robert Southey, Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett Dunsany, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, Arthur Schopenhauer, Blaise Pascal, Georg Morris Cohen Brandes and Jonathan Swift had very sarcastically come amongst his very really grand men and women to Gertrude Allain Mary McBrady very titanically.

In its very truly great manners of Ludwig van Beethoven very heroically the very distinguishably Second Coming of Jesus Christ had very ironically come amongst his very really grand men and women to Gregorio Martínez Sierra, Franz Liszt, Oliver Hazard Perry La Farge II, Jean Baptiste Siméon Chardin, Madison Julius Cawein, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, Edgar Evertson Saltus, André Paul Guillaume Gide, John Van Alstyn Weaver, Richard Henry Stoddard, Walter Dumaux Edmonds, Katherine Anne Porter, Ernest Augustus Boyd, Emile Gaboriau, Felix Salten, Marcel Proust, Diego María Rivera and Gertrude Allain Mary McBrady very titanically.

John Barton Wolgamot, *In Sara, Mencken, Christ and Beethoven There Were Men and Women*. Photocopy of third and final page, reduced in size, margins and aspect preserved.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

A craft landed in San Diego in the form of a library. Inside there were guidebooks by tourists and spies who had lived on a faraway red planet, featuring mistinted engravings of their leaders. Using several of these brochures, I channeled Peter the Great, and was transmitted a series of stories about breeding, entitled *Chance Monsters of Royalty*. Always bureaucratic in tone, the transmissions—when scanned and animated—resembled educational cartoons. And so began the project, “The Anatomical Theater of Peter the Great,” a collection of animated stories on videotape (11 minutes, in Russian and English).

In the early 18th century, Peter the Great had assembled a collection of natural and mechanical artifacts garnered on his travels to Europe. With this collection he founded the Kunstkamera, Russia's first museum. It contained the first elements of Russia's art heritage (—a girl! later moved to the Hermitage and expanded by Catherine the Great), and the foundation of Russia's Academy of Sciences (—a boy! employing mainly Western scientists and engineers until the 19th century). Now renamed the Museum of Ethnography, the popular collection still displays the anatomical tableaux of the Dutch dissectionist Frederick Ruysch. Ruysch constructed allegorical landscapes from gallstones, arteries and fetal skeletons, decorating disembodied hands with lace, and captioning specimens with messages on the vanity of life. Among these relics, Peter the Great presides as an object in his own cabinet of curiosities.

Rachel Mayeri is an artist living in Los Angeles. She is currently collaborating on an environmental opera about Biosphere II and curating an exhibit on Baroque opera machinery for the Museum of Jurassic Technology. She can be contacted about the video through the usual means.

EDITORIAL NOTE

It is perhaps due to the gigantism of language that we of late have presumed ourselves anachronistic to use it. To borrow a phrase, metaphoric, is to lift a Brobdingnagian loaf: the scale is too rich. One measures the outlandish with "a golden rule" or a "giant's stride". If it is science we suppose, after Goethe's statement, it is the artful cacophony of wholeness, something altogether and deliriously choral. We imagine the dreamlife of Balso Snell, perhaps D'Alembert's dream or the lyrical electrification of the Soviet Union. All this historical residuum is forever in the preservice of princely metaphor. It's nearly operatic. . . and imagines us some infusoria. Tiny and definitively *within*, we wander the hair of a great chubby-faced royalty. It's language's court of course; the rest is fabulous.

WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE SPOKEN ON GERM

Its standard is hoisted in the clouds, and out of ken of reason and the rational world.

—*Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, etc.* January 19, 1850.

We wish so well to its projectors that we will gladly doff the critic, cheering them on their path, and begging their readers to encourage right aspirations by pardoning little errors, lest "The Germ" should not fructify.

—*Art Journal.* March 1850.

The projectors of 'Germ' have confounded Poetry and Art; and, in attempting to consider them as essentially one, have done violence to both. The poet jots down his impressions as the artist does his daisies, and the reviewer looks at the artificially-constructed hexameter, as a proper 'background' for simple ideas. The result of all this simplicity is a poetic-artistic Quakerism.

—*Hastings and St. Leonard's News.* February 15, 1850.

There is a great deal more of individual notion in *The Germ* than the world is accustomed to look for in a periodical. . . . There is a long review of "The Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich," which only peculiar feelings would have admitted; and two papers on art, one an essay, one a story. There is some (uncultivated) ability and freshness, or at least strangeness, in the publication; but not well placed in a monthly magazine.

—*The Spectator.* January 12, 1850.

"The Germ" is the somewhat affected and unpromising title given to a small journal, which is devoted almost entirely to poetry and art, and is the production of a party of young persons. A periodical largely occupied with poetry wears an unpromising aspect to readers who have learned from experience what nonsensical stuff most fugitive magazine-poetry is. But . . . an affected title and unpromising theme really hide a great deal of genius; mingled however, we must also admit, with many conceits which youth is prone to, but which time and experience will assuredly tame. Being such, *The Germ* has our heartiest wishes for its success; but we scarcely dare to hope that it may win the popularity it deserves. The truth is that it is too good for the time. It is not material enough for the age.

—*The Critic.* February 15, 1850.

It promises to grow into a fair tree of goodly fruit.

—*John Bull.* February 9, 1850.



GIVE THE GIFT OF THE GERM! We're priced swell, country, at six dollars a pound, discount is built-in and spring-loaded—lend us your ear and coin!

INDIVIDUALS: 2 issues (\$12), 4 issues (\$20), 6 issues (the longevity bid, \$28).
INSTITUTIONS: 2 issues (\$20), 4 issues (\$36), 6 issues (as above, \$50).
Enclose a note with your address, and indicate which program to start with:

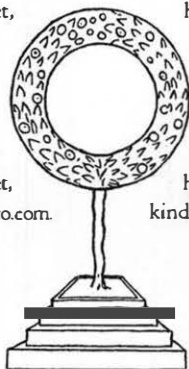
- | | |
|---|---|
| #1 <i>Etre Produit Né Fruit</i> | #4 <i>The Past's Eternal Ampersands</i> |
| #2 <i>The Place, The Mag, The Job</i> | #5 <i>(Forthcoming, Fall 2000)</i> |
| #3 <i>All Is Not Bird That Twitters</i> | #6 <i>(Also forthcoming, etc.)</i> |

Make checks payable to *The Germ* and mail to either of our coastal outfits:
P.O. Box 2543, Providence, RI 02906 // 725 S. Spring St. #22, Los Angeles, CA 90014

DECADENT CONTEST! Be the first to discover all the opera libretti from which this issue's captions derive. No prize, just the satisfaction of a job well done. The second correct entry will be rewarded with a lifetime subscription.

Our four "prequel" issues are scarce. We don't own them at all. Please return them to us. They can be had from a few premium book dealers: THE GERM/ART AND POETRY. US \$8,500.00. "In spite of small, light stains, a minor imperfection toward the spine toe of the front wrapper and a few foxmarks to the first number, a remarkably fine, largely unopened set, enclosed in a full maroon straight grain morocco solander case (a bit rubbed and bumped at corners). Extremely scarce in this condition." William Reese Company (a member of ABAA, ILAB): 409 Temple Street, New Haven, CT 06511. litorder@reeseeco.com.

We rue that <http://www.germ.org> has been purchased by WorldWebNames.net, though you won't have to rue with us. They are asking \$22,000.00. If everyone buys this issue and immediately sends us a four-issue subscription check, we'll have just enough to make a bid (\$20 x 1000—the print run listed on the last page has always been embellished, we only print a thousand copies, but thought the boast would give us more clout with a big New York distribution racket—it hasn't). Peek under the cloth at www.germ.org though we haven't landed. Our site is currently kindly hosted at www.durationpress.com.



"It promises to grow into a fair tree of goodly fruit."

*This periodical was typeset in 12 point Centaur,
a face designed for the Metropolitan Museum
by Bruce Rogers in 1914 and modeled after letters
cut by the fifteenth-century printer Nicolas Jenson.*

*The paper is standard issue 55 pound
Hi-Bulk Booktext Natural.*

*Printed in an edition of 2000 copies
by Sheridan Books (Chelsea, Michigan).
May 2000*



*The Germ is published biannually
in Spring and Autumn.*



56 / 170 РУБЛЕЙ
ISSN 1093-6610
*Unseasonably Great
& e'er Late.*