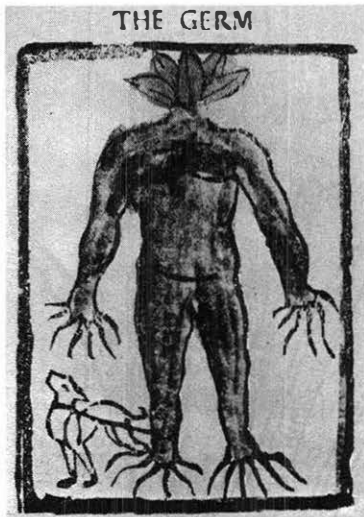


# LE GERME



THE GERM



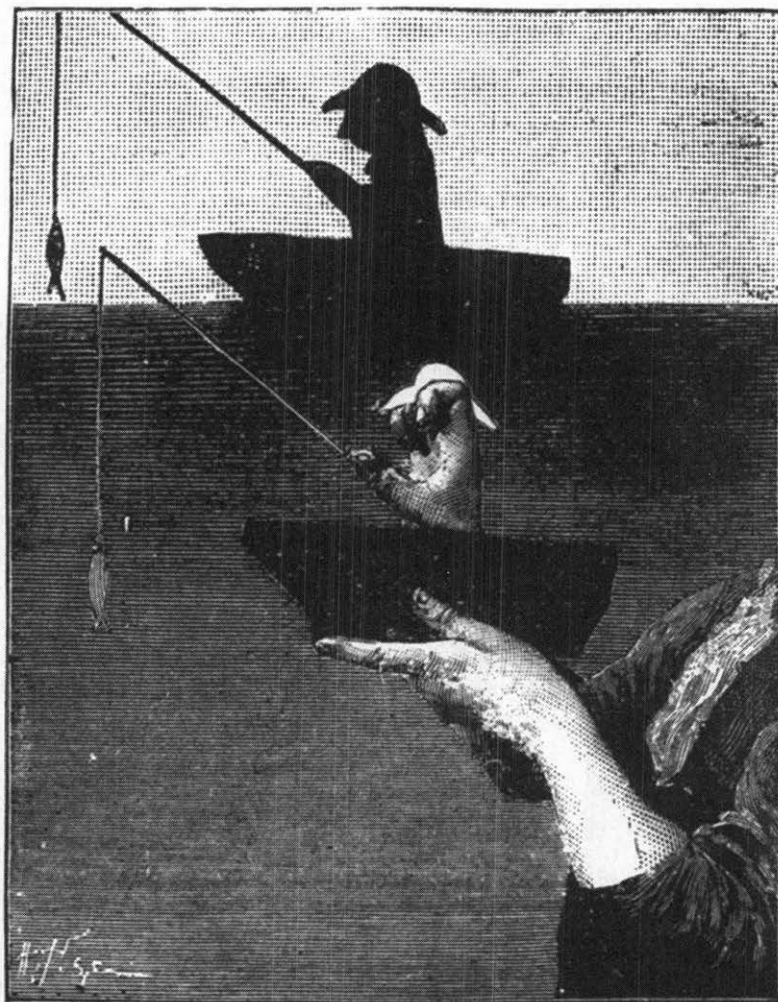
Why is it more ridiculous to have a poet follow one, than to have a dog or cat, a gazelle, lion, or any other beast? I like poets: they are quiet and serious, they know the secrets of the sea.

—Gérard de Nerval, walking his lobster in the Palais-Royal

Incertitude, ô mes délices  
Vous et moi nous nous en allons  
Comme s'en vont les écrevisses,  
A reculons, à reculons  
—Appolinaire

You see, this information was a bad joke. Over here, on April Fools' Day, it's a custom to pin a fish on people... you know... only it's usually a paper one.

—Marseilles Police Inspector, *The French Connection 2*



AFTER FIVE WEEKS IN A BALLOON  
THE GOOD SHIP CINO  
LE GERME: A JOURNAL OF RECHERCHE POETIQUE

## THE GERM

Poetic Research Bloc #5  
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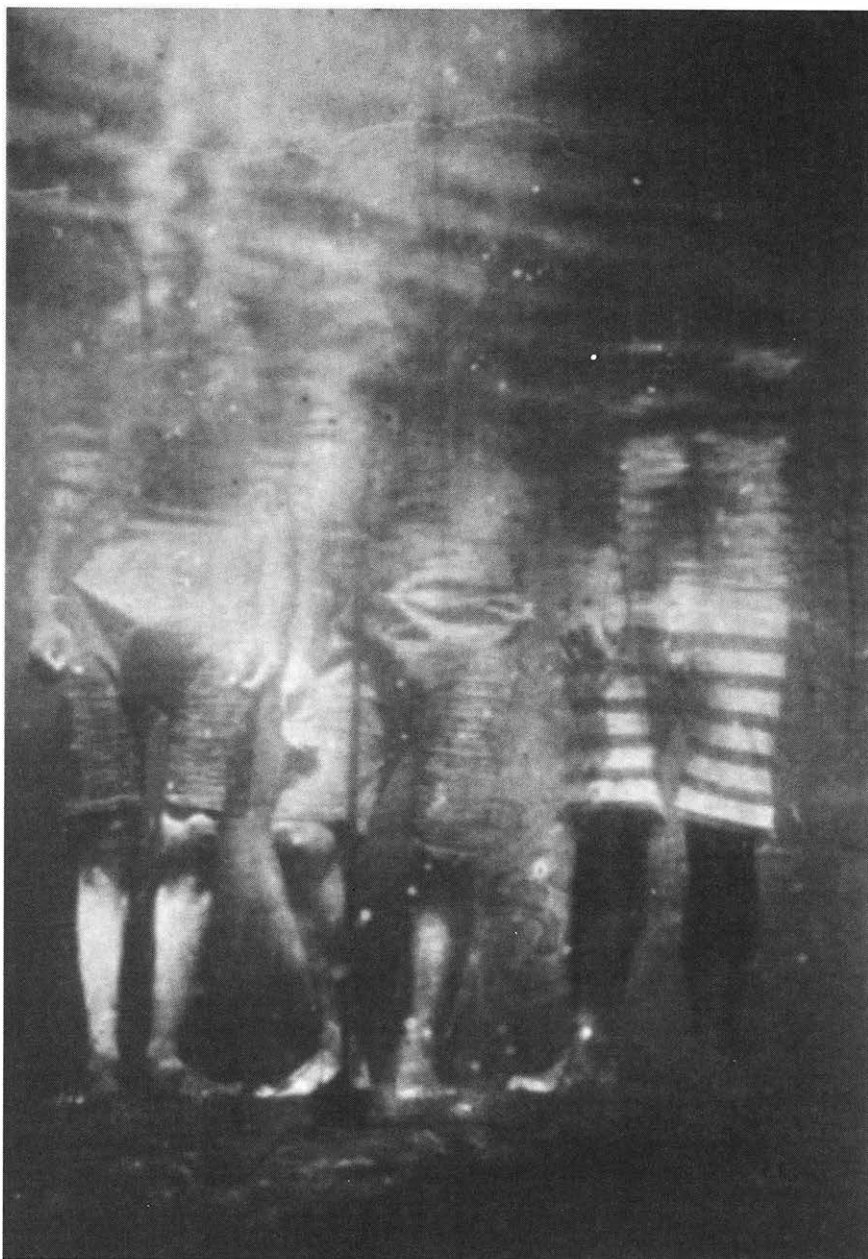
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*Nerval, Verne, Lindbergh*

*M*ichel Leiris

*from* OPERRATICS

*(translation by Guy Bennett)*

## WHAT I FIND IN OPERA

Esthetic pleasure in its pure state, in an ambiance of celebration—a real *dilettante's* pleasure.

That I expect this unadulterated pleasure from opera (an appreciation of *beauty* alone, outside of any philosophical or moral considerations) may explain why a light work—a comic opera, for example—can move me more than a tragic work: I know that this light work offers me opera in all its purity, hence an emotional quality much finer than when sentimental or intellectual elements are mixed with it. It is, in sum, as if I needed a *frivolous* opera (a work of celebration and pleasure) to unveil for me the exact nature of opera, and as if this unveiling (and not the content of the work) were the motive for the emotion.

## FORTUNATE GAGS AND COINCIDENCES

Hans Beirer, a big, heavy Wagnerian tenor, sings *Othello* at the Paris Opera. In the last act, after Desdemona's murder, he leans with both hands on a high-back chair. The chair gives under his weight and, for a second, it looks like Othello will fall. No calculated stage moves could express in a more striking way the Herculean strength of the Moor and his distracted state.

In the third act of *La Traviata*, in Genoa, the party at Violetta's friend's place is the occasion for streamers to be thrown and red balloons to be released. During Violetta and Alfredo's stormy argument, one of the balloons, deflating, sinks slowly down and, its string hanging like a plumbline, alights next to Violetta and remains there, like a microphone, and this provokes a few laughs. Seen from a poetic angle, the balloon's silent descent—and its stop at what appears to be the desired height—is an unexpected piece of good luck.

At the Théâtre des Nations, in Paris in 1959, an excellent performance of the *Marriage of Figaro* in German, by the Frankfurt Opera under the baton of Georg Solti. At the end of the "Military Aria" which concludes the first act, Chérubin, from the back of the stage, tosses his three-cornered hat toward the public. Solti snatches it out of the air with his left hand while still conducting with his right. This (apparently improvised) gag immediately eliminates any distance between the hall and the stage. Crowning a brilliant performance, it is as pleasant as an *adorno* done in good taste by a torrero.\*

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\* *Un ballo in maschera*, chorus at the beginning of Scene 3, act III;

*Fervono amori e danze*

*Nelle felici stanze*

*Onde la vita è solo*

*Un sogno lusinghiero.*

"The fever of love and dancing

Fills these joyous rooms,

Where life is but

A marvelous dream."

(Antonio Somma, 1859)

## OPERA AND GASTRONOMY

In Aix-en-Provence at one of the festivals, André Masson and I amused ourselves an entire evening by imagining the food or drink—and, if possible, both—most appropriate for the dinner before and the light meal after the performance of every famous opera we knew.

Of course, such simple associations as beer and sauerkraut for Wagner's operas, chianti and pasta for Verdi, manzarella et paella for *Carmen*, etc., are to be avoided. Rather, I'd like to determine the beverage or dish that actually responds to the character of the work, and that's much more difficult!

Could you say that, generally speaking, champagne and nutritious but light dishes (grilled meat or fish) would be most appropriate for Mozart's operas? That *Pelléas et Mélisande* would call for a vegetarian menu accompanied by cool water? As for the great historic operas, they would be adapted to rich, complex menus with several wines. And *Carmen* would require a wine, generous of course, but less vigorous than a manzarella (a lambrusco, for example, or a fendant) and, for solid food, one of these dark, raw hams appealing for their extreme density.

I understood "tournedos Rossini" when I ate some in Mantua, at the restaurant Les Garibaldini: there, they prepare them with white truffle (which gives them more aroma) and, rather than present them as a luxury dish, they give the impression of an honest, peasant fare. Figaro, a man of the people, could well eat *those* tournedos!

Saturday, June 2, 1962, the last performance of *Don Pasquale* by the Teatro Massimo de Palerme at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. In the front row, seated between a rather old and rather young, pretty woman (probably his wife and daughter), Roger Topolinsky, owner of the restaurant La Pérouse, with the face of a bearded *gourmand*, the tall stature and corpulence of a *bon vivant*. All three very enthusiastic, which makes me think of Stendhal, of Rossini's legendary gourmandise, etc.

## ART AND LIFE

"July 8, 1957. What, in short, I have been wanting to do for a while: put a little Italian opera in my life. It began about the time I spoke of the 'liquidation of love in Verdi's operas,' or the liquidation of the esthete mind that allowed me to be satisfied with love experienced through opera. I could never have one program for art and another for life. Art is not a *distraction* but a *transfiguration* of life; it must be integrated into life and not merely embellish it, like a superfluous ornament. I once jokingly said to C. . . that, with all it takes to live Italian opera; why would anyone want to listen to it?"

How the Marcellus Theater in Rome illustrates a desirable fusion of theater and life! Houses stand on what was once a place for spectacles. Compare, in Lucques, the Market Square established on the site of an amphitheater which has entirely disappeared, except for the ellipsis formed by the houses. Toward the beginning of the last century, within the arenas of Nîmes there were (apparently) houses.

## VERISM

The Italian counterpart of French Naturalism, Italian "Verism"—promoted by Sicilian Giovanni Verga, author of the play from which the libretto of *Cavalleria rusticana* was taken—is not exactly "Naturalism" (at least not in the play by Verga) for the reality in question is a privileged reality: a tragedy borrowed from everyday life, from trivial events (such as those reproduced in color on the covers of the *Corriere della sera*).

Verism (it seems) is born when the bourgeoisie begins to take interest in the people which it can only consider in picturesque terms, so that it will inevitably lead to a "behavioral study" focusing on the local color of the peasantry which has remained primitive, the deeds and acts of the underworld, and the violent, extreme actions perpetrated by the common people.

Does the historical opera, which preceded the Verist opera, respond to the era in which the bourgeoisie was preparing, carrying out or had just finished (which is the case in France with Meyerbeer's operas) its revolution against the tyrants, so that, ideologically, the dominant tone is one of liberalism, as so many 19th century librettos would indicate? In a movement analogous to that of Victor Hugo, for example going from *Notre-Dame de Paris* to *Les Misérables*—that is, from a historical realism based in the past to one based on the contemporary era which is taking on its own social problems—does Verist opera come about when the question of Socialism is first asked?

Of the first Verist operas set among the peasantry, there are those like Racine's *Bajazet*, where temporal distance—the rule in tragedy—is replaced by spatial distance, and exoticism is substituted for the archaism of the historical opera.

It is only with *Louise* that opera will come to total Naturalism: no exoticism (as opposed to *Cavalleria rusticana* and other peasant dramas), no archaism (as opposed to *La Bohème* whose action benefits from a slight distance) and less "bel canto" than in *La Traviata* which, set in the Paris of the time, announces Verist opera or, at the very least, breaks with historical opera. *Louise*, which appeals to no privileged reality and limits itself to staging the daily life of the little people, could be called a "populist opera."

The Verist side of *Wozzeck*, at the very least regarding the text: Büchner drew his inspiration from a trivial event. That *Wozzeck* is, without a doubt, the greatest opera of our time comes perhaps from that: the treatment according to very strict musical forms (as Berg himself explained) of a drama which is both Verist and rich in philosophical resonances; the work finally appears as an extraordinarily condensed synthesis of Classicism, Romanticism and Naturalism.

## LA VILLA PUCCINI

On September 16, 1958, the Massons, Z[ette] and I go from Montecatini Terme to Torre del Lago (near Viareggio) to visit Puccini's villa, which is today a museum.

On the square, between the entrance to the master's house and the lake, stands a bronze statue of Puccini surrounded by banks of flowers. The pedestal is very low, so that the life-size Puccini, wearing a fedora and a turned-up raglan collar, seems to stand among the passersby. A number of postcard stands and café-restaurants with narrow wooden terraces give on the lake.

A lagoon landscape, softly lit and a little Chinese (after all, this is where *Butterfly* was composed). Pleasure boats, small craft and motorized canoes captained by duck hunters (on one of them a dog stands watch on the prow).

The villa is decorated in half-traditional Italian villa (no joke), half modern-style style (with very Mucha-like figures). In the studio, the desk (on which we see a bottle of quinine and packs of letters in cellophane); at a right angle from this desk, the upright piano, with a swiveling chair that gives access to both the keyboard and the desk. From this room, down a short arched passageway to the right of the piano, you arrive at the funerary chapel. The master's casket is just behind the piano (as the museum attendant told us as she pointed at the instrument); above the master's casket, that of his son Antonio and, on top, that of Elvira, Giacomo's wife. On this wall (the left wall in relation to the altar at the back), a high relief sculpture depicting music in mourning. On the right wall, another sculpted feminine figure representing music which is eternally reborn (or rather, music as a means to immortality or eternal rebirth for the composer). You can also visit a vestibule containing several pairs of Puccini's shoes, his hunting raincoat and various objects including a huge camera. Finally, you enter a salon which, like the other rooms, contains numerous souvenirs: signed photos, posters, various knick-knacks. An old woman, whom we see momentarily with our guide, tells us that she worked as a maid in Puccini's house for twelve years.

Purchase of the *Puccini nelle imagine*, on which the guardian affixes—as a souvenir—the museum seal.

What comes out of this album:

Puccini and his taste for modern machines (cars, motor canoe, pleasure boat, radio, etc.) like Butterfly and her telescope (when she gazes at the gun-boat *Lincoln* moored in Nagasaki bay): an “exotic” marveling at the progress of mechanical civilization;\*

physical, et temporal, relationship between Puccini and Feydeau, Proust, Roussel, etc.

---

\* Relationship with Futurism.

## PUCCINI AND SCHOENBERG

"One must keep everything to oneself except the knowledge of things (*Sachverständnis*). What is this knowledge that we do not show?

I suppose it was the 'connoisseurs' who received my *Pierrot Lunaire* in so unfriendly a way when I conducted it in Italy, and not the friends of art (*Kunstfreunde*). I had the honor of meeting Puccini, who is not a 'connoisseur' (*Sachverständiger*) but a producer (*Sachkönner*) (and) who, although already ill, traveled for six hours to hear my work. Afterwards, he made some friendly comments to me. It was beautiful, even if my music remained foreign to him." (Arnold Schoenberg, "Mein Publikum," *Der Querschnitt*, April 1930, p. 223).

Account of the meeting by an eyewitness: Guido Marotti, "Incontri e colloqui col Maestro" (in *L'Approdo musicale*, 2nd year, no. 6, April–June 1959, ERI, Turin). From this account, we learn that Puccini had indeed been very curious about the new music but that he hadn't at all enjoyed listening to it. Perhaps he would have demonstrated the same kind of curiosity about the latest automobile?

## THE IMPOSSIBLE WAGNER

More than anyone else, Wagner set nearly impossible performance standards for himself: the *The Ring of the Nibelung*, for example, would require interpreters "as beautiful as gods" (while Wagnerian singers, who need considerable vocal means, are more often than not of monstrous size), and should have costumes and sets created by an artist of exceptional taste and imagination, as this series of "total operas" not only brings into play elements of the fantastic which are taken much too seriously to be anything but ridiculous, but also has to attain from all points of view the level of the sublime to which the listener/spectator is expressly invited to expect.

## PELLEAS ET MELISANDE

Today it seems surprising that *Pelléas et Mélisande* was taken as a model to follow by the anti-Wagnerians. Though it might have brought something new to opera (the rejection—or at the very least, discrete use—of *leitmotive*, the omission of long passages of sung speech, cutting the action up into a series of brief tableaux linked by interludes, as Alban Berg would later do in *Wozzeck*), Claude Debussy's work does in fact remain very Wagnerian: the use of a legendary subject not unlike that of *Tristan*, the orchestra/voice relationship that justifies the reproach made to Wagner of having placed the statue in the orchestra pit and the pedestal on the stage, the musical influence of *Parsifal*, etc.

From a contemporary perspective, we can consider that *Pelléas et Mélisande* represented the end result of Wagnerism—and, if you like, its crowning achievement—rather than the opening of a truly new path in music. From the same perspective, it paradoxically seems that Puccini—scorned for so long by people of taste, at least in France—was a greater innovator in opera than Debussy. For though a “Verist,” he is also an “Expressionist” and, by that very fact, prefigures a few of the most beautiful modern operas.

Could Debussy have penned one of those masterpieces which (as it often happens) differ greatly from the one the author intended to write, but which are nevertheless masterpieces? It's impossible not to think of Baudelaire writing *Le Spleen de Paris*, and Roussel writing his novels, the former thinking of Aloysius Bertrand, and the latter, Jules Verne and, far from attempting to do the opposite, nevertheless strayed in spite of themselves from their models. You'd wish that Debussy, following the example of these two indisputable innovators, were both less Wagnerian and more Wagneristic, and that, contrary to what he intended, he had done something entirely different from his glorious predecessor.

## DIE MEISTERSINGER

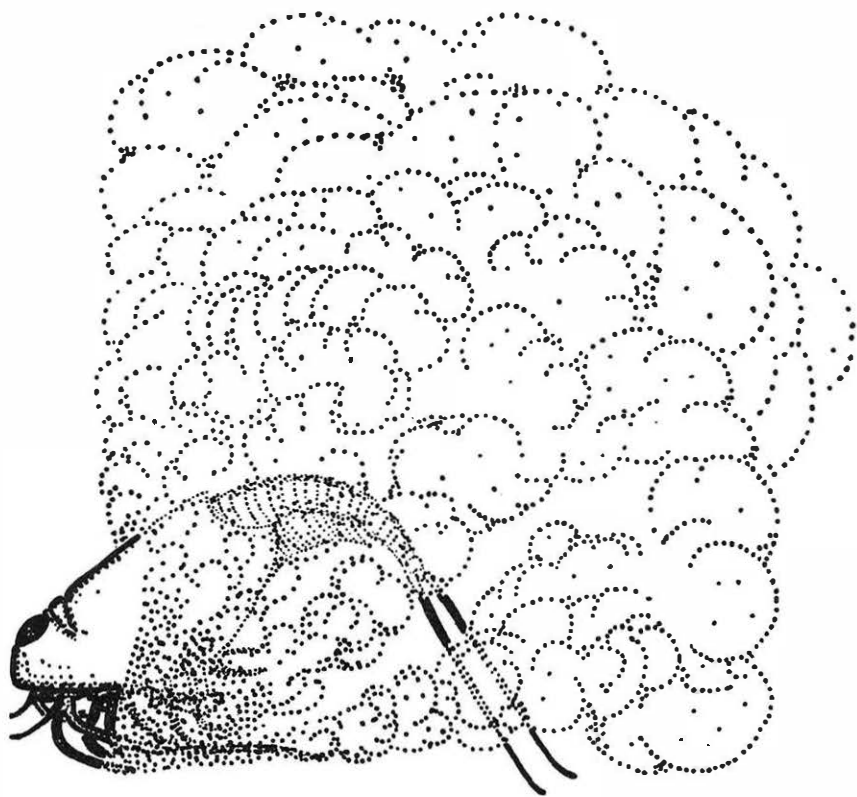
A monument erected by Wagner to the glory of lyric inspiration and before which I'm probably quite wrong to act disgusted.

A musically admirable, ideologically irreproachable\* movement whose sole fault is undoubtedly that it is a little too "monumental."

The painful side: the titan Richard Wagner trying his hand at good-natured comedy, though he lacks the casualness and verve of Victor Hugo.

---

\* However, some one recently pointed out to me that the libretto of the *Meistersinger* contains attacks on the "Welsch" (i.e. the French) which reveal a highly unpleasant chauvinism (7/4/78)



*LINDBERGH: Two continents, two continents are waiting for me. I must arrive.*

*M*aurice Maeterlinck

*A*aron Kunin

*from* THE SORE THROAT

*(a translation by Aaron Kunin of  
Maeterlinck's play, Pelléas et Mélisande,  
into a vocabulary of about 200 words)*

you say  
you're sorry

but you're  
not sorry

## THE SORE THROAT

Last to know, and out of the mind, always.  
Just as you yourself must know, n'est-ce pas?  
Out of the mind, and wrong from the start.

Here is the earth, and you are on it. The earth is great: it's wide and narrow and easy and hard. Here is a throat for you to keep: it contains a voice. I am here: I am a good boy, I am a good moron. What you demanded from the earth you now have, and there is a god. I wonder why you are weeping.

I no longer wish to remember  
Seeing you gasp with laughter.

Here is the earth: what's on it nowadays, I wonder? It's a pleasure to be on the earth in the age of talking rats. What's wrong with you is that you always complain about the loud moron.

A change in the habits of rats—  
Rats of the mind, that is.

Is there a moron? But how would you desire to say it? You have a choice. It's for your throat. Your talking habits are no good. I will always sigh for myself, for I know that I am the moron. I am sure of it.

It is hard to hear the voice of God;  
It seems so narrow now.  
But the last of the rats  
Will remember it with pleasure.

Now the talking will begin. Jesus will do the talking, and the rats will do the weeping. But hear the voice of the moron: "The eyes of God are upon you." How much longer will the moron be talking, can you guess?

And you know—you are dear to all rats. The god of the rats would say: "Don't be sorry. For pleasure is in the mind, and it is a god." How great is the goodness of the god of the rats—how good, how wise, and kind! But remember the narrow way of Jesus: "Dance and be easy with yourself, but God will damn you for it."

Oh boy, oh brother, oh dear, my dear,  
It won't be easy and can't be a pleasure.

Always begin weeping; the rats are weeping. Begin in wonder: the rats are weeping and sobbing. But there will be good habits and so on: the rats will be longer. The rats demanded a change. But the rats will always say: "We have no choice." Jesus cannot remember why; Jesus is wrong.

I have to know about the dance  
Of the good rats.

You are good for seeing and pleasure; your good habits are talking and laughter. I wonder why you are weeping with your brother, the moron.

## THE SORE THROAT

The throat is  
sore for a  
word. It is  
sore with word-

desire, desire  
for the word "she."  
The word "she": will  
it appear? Will

she appear?  
(Is the word  
"she" a she?)  
She is a

word I always,  
without knowing,  
had in mind.  
Once, to my shame,

I had no  
idea  
what to do  
with the word

"she"; now it seems  
like I don't know  
any other  
word. It seems like

everything  
is a she,  
money is  
a she (you're

so complete you  
don't have to think  
about money!  
You have so much

money you  
don't know what  
knowing is!),  
knowing is

a she, and in  
heaven, God is  
a she. No more  
herr Gott, from now

on, no more  
seigneur, no  
more boy-God:  
the end! But

won't she start to  
wonder: "If there's  
no word for 'he,'  
if everything

is a she,  
why would we  
have to have  
a word for

it? If this word  
appears every-  
where, it won't mean  
anything." And

at last she  
may say to  
you: "You are  
my own good

boy. For me  
there's no choice:  
no other  
boy will do."

## THE SORE THROAT

I can't seem to say anything more. There's something wrong with my throat.

—Our purpose is,  
concealing the mess and the rats; otherwise,  
the seigneur will complain that there are rats  
everywhere.

There's a word in my throat!

—Can't you let it out with your voice?

Not possible.  
The word is too wide, my throat too narrow;  
there's something in the way.

—I can hear it:  
the word "she."

How can you hear it if it's  
in my throat?

—I doubt that she can hear it.

Ahem.

—Was that a complete word?

No. There's  
more of it left in my throat.

—Out of the way.

—The seigneur is on his way.

—He will be  
here any day now.

—You must let us out  
now.

—We have so much to do.

I wish I  
had a machine that would say what to do.

—I'll begin by concealing this mess. There  
must be a hundred thousand rats out here.

Two hundred thousand. It's impossible.

## WHAT MUSIC!

Here is what he seems to say: "Dear brother,  
there has been a change. Remember the money  
I left with you, so that you would have something

to start a business? I now require it  
for another purpose. The purpose is  
music"—he seems to like music more than

money—"You don't know a thing about music,  
what it can do to the body, the mind,  
and so on. You don't know what it means

to desire music. You don't know how it  
can mess with you down there. Your dick in my ass,  
music, and I don't like it, but I desire it.

Your dick in my throat, and talking is difficult.  
Your dick in my throat, oh collusion, and  
it's not what I desire, but it will keep

me hard. I throat your hard-on, seigneur, and  
it's horrible to me, but nothing can  
keep me away from it. You shit on me,

music, and at last my pleasure and shame  
are complete, and I don't wish to have it  
end. At last I'm sore down there, and I must

have it again. Change money for music,  
brother. I don't know who she is"—music  
is a she?"—"or where she's from"—but she seems

to have a dick?—"and if I say 'what's your age' or anything like that, she always seems to start weeping. I don't like seeing

music weep. Her voice sounded like music or loud sobbing. And yet it has beauty—when I hear it, the voice that she has

has such beauty, I can no longer remember anything else. And yet there is shame in it"—yes, there is shame—

"or there may be a kind of shame in my impossible desire for the money. May I have it?" What do you say to that?

—I say nothing. I have nothing to say. Remember my age: and yet I know nothing about myself: so what can I know about another? Think about it: what do I desire if not to do good? If not the good?... But I wonder, what good is it to do what I do? What good is it to have a body? To have a voice if nobody can hear it? To have a mind that only seems to doubt all that it would like to think? To have a soul without knowing God? And to have eyes? My eyes are bad, they are "good for weeping but not for seeing," and eyes not good for seeing are good for nothing. But what good is seeing, what is seeing for? Seeing is just another way of concealing what is there. The purpose of the eyes, the purpose of the body, is to keep the mind from knowing anything.

---

† "The Sore Throat" is a translation of Maurice Maeterlinck's play *Pelléas et Mélisande* into a severely limited vocabulary of about 200 words. I don't know whether it could actually be staged; it might make more sense to say that the poems narrate a performance of *Pelléas* that takes place in a community that only has about 200 words at its disposal.

The Maeterlinck play is full of extravagant gestures: perhaps the most famous scene is one in which Pelléas ties strands of Mélisande's hair to a tree and then climbs into the tree, thus creating, out of a projection from his lover's head, an environment that he can inhabit. What I respond to in the play, and in the musical adaptations by Debussy and Schoenberg, is the obsessive sensitivity to nuances of feeling. Pelléas and Mélisande are so timid, and their expressive range is so precise, that they barely register on a human scale; whereas Golaud is a sort of raw emotion seeking to articulate itself. For me, Golaud is the crucial figure, because his problem—subjection to sensations for which he has no language—is also the problem of this translation.

Cristophe Fiat

THE NEW WORLD OF LOVE

(translation by Andrew Maxwell)

Christy Lee Nussman alias traci lords was born May 7 1968 in Steubenville Ohio Christy Lee Neuman alias traci lords was born because the world is round.

traci lords is the second daughter in a family of four girls, traci lord's mother was orininally russian and traci lord's father an ukranian jew because the world is round.

traci lord's father works as a metalworker and spends his time boozing because the world is round.

traci lords receives a conservative religious education from her two parents because the world is round.

traci lords sings each Sunday morning in the church choir because the world is round.

traci lord's favorite color is black and her lucky number is 13 because the world is round.

traci lords writes in her journal like all the girls her own age because the world is round.

traci lords writes poems because the world is round.

traci lords writes songs because the world is round.

traci lords has the typical childhood of  
a young american girl in flower until the  
day when...

One day, traci lords is raped in a field by her jewish ukranian father who is dead drunk because the world is round.

traci lords will guard the secret of this violation until 1994 because the world is round.

traci lords will manage to publicly exorcise this violation in a song entitled "Father's Field", a hit on her LP "1000 Fires", because the world is round.

But the violation of traci lords sets off in traci lords a self-destructive process of rage, frustration and paranoia because the world is round.

traci lords says: "Everything was beautiful before that moment. When that happens you're fascinated then embarrassed horrified and finally ashamed"

because the world is round.

traci lords says: "Everything was beautiful before that moment. When that happens you're fascinated then embarrassed horrified and finally ashamed. This type of thing makes you grow up fast, real fast" because the world is round.

traci lords says: "Everything was beautiful before that moment. When that happens you're fascinated then embarrassed horrified and finally ashamed. This type of thing makes you grow up fast, real fast. You're no longer at home in school, you're no longer like the others" because the world is round.

traci lords says: "Everything was beautiful before that moment. When that happens you're fascinated then embarrassed horrified and finally ashamed. This type of thing makes you grow up fast, real fast. You're no longer at home in school, you're no longer like the others. Just because the world is round you know way too much" because the world is round.

Shortly after the violation of traci lords, traci lord's mother gets a divorce, packs up her four kids and rushes off to Redondo Beach California because the world is round.

In Redondo Beach California, traci lords undergoes a transformation because the world is round.

traci lords goes to school in roller skates because the world is round.

traci lords wears sexy dresses and is left to her own devices to blithely pursue her two sweetest vices because the world is round.

traci lord's two sweetest vices are boys and alcohol because the world is round. The consequences of traci lord's two sweetest vices are disastrous for traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords is kicked out of school because the world is round.

traci lords feels it's only right to pay for her first abortion because the world is round.

Shortly after, traci lords picks up a liking for the white stuff and runs away from home because the world is round.

traci lords has an identity crisis because the world is round.

traci lord's identity crisis makes traci lords drift to worlds none too auspicious for the healthy flowering of a pure young girl like traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords quickly finds protectors with more than a little unhealthy intentions because the world is round.

But traci lords is driven because the world is round.

traci lords wants to be a star no matter how awkward the path because the world is round.

traci lords has tricks up her sleeve because the world is round.

traci lords' tricks are: an interesting appearance because the world is round ample breasts because the world is round and a definitive comic sense because the world is round.

The world of sex opens up to traci lords in the person of Jim South because the world is round.

Jim South is a photographer for Penthouse magazine because the world is round.

Jim South notices traci lords on the beach because the world is round.

Jim South suggests traci lords pose for him because the world is round.

To pose for Jim South, traci lords must falsify her identity on paper because the world is round.

traci lords is still a minor because the world is round.

Success arrives overnight for traci lords because the world is round.

Under the pseudonym of Nora Louise Kosma traci lords is chosen Penthouse Pet of the Month in October 1984 because the world is round.

traci lords is sixteen because the world is round.

Though traci lords says that she is twenty-two because the world is round.

traci lords says: "I had to sleep with plenty of awful guys to get some tacky photo sessions" because the world is round.

traci lords says: "I had to sleep with plenty of awful guys to get some tacky photo sessions. It ultimately paid more to screw around with real hunks in front of the cameras" because the world is round.

It's here that traci lords takes the name traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords takes the name traci lords in homage to television actor Jack Lords because the world is round.

Jack Lords was the first man traci lords masturbated to (traci lords was 10 and Jack Lords' photo was stapled to her bedroom wall) because the world is round.

In 1984, Los Angeles is the world capital of X-rated film and actresses capable of making the porn-lovers of the world howl with pleasure find a secret goldmine.

traci lords' first film: "WHAT GETS ME HOT?" because the world is round.

traci lords' first film is a success for traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords has crazy charisma because the world is round.

traci lords' producers immediately suggest to traci lords three killer new contracts because the world is round.

In no time at all traci lords becomes the most well-paid porn star because the world is round.

traci lords is very well-organized because the world is round.

traci lords never spends more than the standard eight hours a day in the studio because the world is round.

traci lords has her own personal makeup artist because the world is round.

traci lords has a Mercedes at her disposal because the world is round.

Nothing escapes traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords supervises traci lords film productions because the world is round.

traci lords chooses the partners of traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords chooses the scenes that traci lords stars in because the world is round.

traci lords let's nothing stand in her way because the world is round.

The range of traci lords' talents is great because the world is round.

But traci lords engages in neither sodomy nor sadomasochism because the word is round.

Perhaps that's why Christy Canyon can't help but say of traci lords: "traci lords certainly knew more about sex than the whole porn industry combined" because the world is round.

To be convinced of this, it's enough to admire traci lords getting herself off because the world is round.

To be convinced of this, it's enough to admire traci lords in the middle of performing fellatio because the world is round.

To be convinced of this, it's enough to admire traci lords in the middle of performing cunnilingus because the world is round.

To be convinced of this, it's enough to see traci lords doing it doggy-style because the world is round.

traci lords has pleasure down to a science because the world is round.

traci lords is beautiful because the world is round.

traci lords knows how to offer herself up to the camera because the world is round.

traci lords' science of pleasure, traci lords' beauty, traci lords' way of offering herself up to the camera makes traci lords an actress without equal because the world is round.

As the world is round, everything rolls right along for traci lords.

In 1986, traci lords has by her own estimate a few million \$ because the world is round.

traci lords buys with her \$ a house for traci lords in Malibu Heights because the world is round.

traci lords launches a private collection of inflatable dolls marketed under the traci lords name because the world is round.

traci lords launches a personal line of TRACI LORDS beauty products because the world is round.

traci lords creates the TRACI LORDS COMPANY because the world is round.

When suddenly at the dawn of traci lords' 18th year everything falls apart for traci lords traci lords is entrapped by the FBI when exposed by one of her relatives. Traci Lords confesses before a scandalized America that she is not yet 18. The greatest X-rated star that is traci lords is a minor!

Overnight all the films of traci lords are pulled from the market because the world is round.

The world of American hardcore is in mourning because of traci lords because the world is round.

The ruling authorities of American hardcore turn their backs on traci lords because the world is round.

The world syndicate of American hardcore in a statement denounces the fraud of traci lords "the puppet of porn" who was always assumed to be of legal age because the world is round.

Some of traci lords' old producers find themselves behind bars because the world is round.

For traci lords, the world is round, it's the end of an era.

traci lords has only one choice because the world is round.

traci lords must change her life because the world is round.

But it's not easy to change your life when your name is traci lords and the world is round.

traci lords shoots up to forget that the world is round.

traci lords shoots up to forget the countless scenes of debauchery of traci lords because the world is round.

traci lords throws her hands at the world turning round.

traci lords is at the brink of suicide because the world is round.

traci lords has a cocaine overdose because the world is round.

For traci lords it's all finished those blowjobs of traci lords in front of the round cameras of the round world.

And thus traci lords takes her final bow on the planet of hardcore and is off to attack show-biz because the world is round.

traci lords decides that she will be a real actress like Marilyn Monroe because the world is round.

After some films most of which are largely forgotten and some notable roles (like in "Cry Baby" or "Intent to Kill"), it's television that allows traci lords to rise through the ranks because the world is round.

Several months later, traci lords stars on "Melrose Place" because the world is round.

Several months later, traci lords appears on all the major American talk shows because the world is round.

traci lords appears on the Larry King show "Late Night" because the world is round.

Larry King is the star commentator on CNN because the world is round. Paradoxically, it's music that shoots traci lords to the top because the world is round.

traci lords finds her voice in rock & techno because the world is round.

traci lords records an LP called "1000 Fires" because the world is round.

traci lords' "1000 Fires" LP is a hit because the world is round.

The song "Father's Field" by traci lords in which traci lords tells the story of her rape will be #1 on the American charts for several following weeks because the world is round.

traci lords stars in "Virtuosity" a big-budget film with Denzel Washington because the world is round.

As for men, traci lords says that she has only slept with two in the last five years because the world is round.

One of the two men that traci lords has slept with is her husband because the world is round.

traci lords confesses that she loves a man's body because the world is round like the body of a man.

traci lords confesses that she loves a man's body and the smell of a man's body because the world is round like the body of a man.

But traci lords confesses that she never really trusts a man because the world is round like the body of a man.

traci lords says of men: "they're a bunch of shits!" because the world is round like the body of a man.

*R*émi Giacomotti

PORTLAND  
THE FIANCEES  
KURT COBAIN

*(translation by Macgregor Card)*

## PORTLAND

A number of infamous clubs in portland are clubs that try to book minor punks and courtney love it gets a little wet dancing like a minor punk even if courtney love claims to have been too fat and bizarre to be worth dancing in a number of infamous clubs in portland that try to book minor punks it is also likely that courtney love will run into trouble only agreeing to dance to her kind of music in the name of her artistic integrity as a portland punk in a number of infamous clubs in portland which are clubs that try to book minor punks courtney love runs into trouble only agreeing to dance to her kind of music because courtney love's kind of music is not a kind of music which suits the taste of most regulars at a number of infamous clubs in portland but even in tough conditions courtney love acquires a taste for the power she can exert over the regulars of a number of infamous clubs in portland when courtney love strips for \$\$ wads of bills dancing to her kind of music in the name of her artistic integrity as a portland punk and so it happens that courtney love feels pretty stripping to her kind of music in the name of her artistic integrity as a portland punk and that the sensation of courtney love feeling pretty stripping to her kind of music in the name of her artistic integrity as a portland punk is a sensation that courtney love has never known before stripping in a number of infamous clubs in portland

THE FIANCEES  
KURT COBAIN

OR THE 1004TH WIFE OF DON-JUAN-ZORRO-DE-LA-VEGA

ISADORA DUNCAN, ANNE BONNY, SUZANNE BERNARD, JEANNE BRUGERE-PICOUX, IRENE, POLINA NEDYALKOVA, COLETTE DEREAL, EVA GONZALES, MATHILDE WESEN-DONCK, ELEONORA DORI, DOLORES IBARRURI, SANDY ALLEN, EDITH LOUISA CAVELL, MARY WOLLSTONE CRAFT, MATHILDE LE LARRE aka THE CAT, BARBARA ULSERIN, CECILE CHEMINADE, BETTY WILLIAMS, NICOLE-BARBE PONSARDIN, SOLANGE CATRY, EMILIENNE MOREAU, FLOR-ENCE NIGHTINGALE, JEANNE DE BELLEVILLE aka THE PIRATE, PE-MEI-HUANG, PEGGY GUGGENHEIM, CHAR-LOTTE DE HARDENBERG, ANNA MAGDALENA BACH, BAR-BARA KOLB, LOTTE LEHMAN, EDITH CAVELL, BELLA POULSDATTER SORENSEN GUNNESS, HARRIET QUIMBY, SYLVIE BRUNEL, TISIPHONE, THERESE LACHMAN, HARI-ETTE MARLINEAU, LORETA VELASQUEZ, MAIREAD COR-RIGAN, JOSEPHE TERWAGNE, SERAPHINE LOUIS, MELODY VILBERT, MYRFRENA VAN BENSNOTON, MEGHAN DOUG-LAS, GEORGETTE BLANC, WILHELMINA C. HOLLADAY, CATHERINE LALUMIERE, MARYVONNE DE SAINT-PULGENT, AMELIA EARHART, LESBIA CLODIA, L.A.S, GERMAINETAILE-FERRE, JOAN SUTHERLAND, ERZEBET BATHORY (Countess), GENEVIEVE LETHU, LUCY WALKERT, TINY BROADWICK, CONCHITA CINTRON, DOROTHEA KLUMPKE, JANE EVRARD, LUCIENNE SCHEID, CAROLE PARPALAIX, VALENTINA TER-ECHKOWA, PATRICIA HARRIS, MARIE COUETTE, LOUISE MICHEL, SANDRA O'CONNOR, ELAINE IRWIN MELLENCAMP, MARIE HAREL who-invented-Camembert-in-the-beginning-of-the-nineteenth-century, ANGELICA KAUFFMANN, DOROTHY CROWFOOT HODGKIN, AMY MOLLISON, ALMA BRIDWELL-

WHITE, LOCUSTE, CADY HAMILTON, MARIE BRIZARD, MARIA THERESIA, MARIA VON PARADIS, ELISABETH SCHWARTZKOPF, AUGUSTA HOLMES, EVA HERZIGOVA, AISHWARYA RAY, KIT CAVANAGH, EMILY WILDING DAVIDSON, JENNY COLON, MARIE-ANNE DE CUPIS DE CAMARGO, APHRA BEHN, CATHERINE WOODCOCK, PAULINE ROLAND, MARTHE RICHARD, BRUNEHAUT, FRANCINE DEJERINE-KLUMPKE, LILY LASKINE, BLANCHE EDWARDS, JANE DIEULAFOY, IDA PFEIFFER, LADY STANHOPE, LUCIE LUZEAU-RONDEAU, GERALDINE FERRARO, STELLA RIMINGTON, BARBARA HAMMER, ALICIA MEYNELL, ARABELLA MANSFIELD, MARCELLE CALVERE, ROLANDE FALCINELLI, HELENE GISSEROT, MIINA SILLANPAA, LOUISE Mc KINNEY, SIMONE KERGAVARAT, MONA who-performed-the-first-strip-tease-in-history-at-the-ball-of-the-4-arts-March-13-1894, TITOUNETTE NICOLE, MARGUERITE PEREY, ARLETTE NOUGAREDE, MARIE-LISE CHANIN, LOUISE WEISS, ROSALYN YALOW, MARYSE BASTIE, HELENE BOUCHER, EUGENIE EICHENWALD, MARIE MARVINGT, GABY MORLAY, MARIA MOTESORI, MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT, MARIE GOUZE aka OLYMPE DE GOUGE, MARGARETA GERTRUIDA ZELLE, LENI RIEFENSTAHL, HARIETTE MARLINEAU, Mrs. PANKHURST, ANNI BESANT, ELLEN CHURCH, CHARLOTTE CORDAY, BERTIE ALBRECHT, MARTHE HANAU, HIPPIE, LOUIS ABBEMA, ELSA SCHIAPARELLI, VANESSA WILLIAMS, DIANA SPENCER AND THE LAST CRASH IN PARIS, PEARL BUCK, NADEJDA KROUPSKAIA, MARIE-MADELEINE LEFORT, PILOU MUSSY-TAILLARD, JEAN-BAPTISTE D'ALBERT DE LUYNES, LAVRE DIEBOLD, CLAUDIA SCHIFFER, MARIE-LOUISE EFTHYMIU, ANNA LANGFUS, LILA ACHESON WALLACE, JACQUELINE COCHRAN, Mrs. CHING, CATWOMAN, Mrs. LO, LAI CHOI-SAN, MARY READ, MADELAINE BRES, ANTOINETTE NORDING, GRACE MOORE, VERA FIGNER, VANESSA BELL, GERTRUD BELLE ELION, ROBERTE CUSEY, LOUISE WEISS.

G<sub>eorges</sub> *Perec*

ROM POL, 1980

*(Translation and Adaptation by Marc Lowenthal)*

CARTER BROWN JOHN DICKSON CARR  
RAYMOND CHANDLER LESLIE CHARTERIS  
JAMES HADLEY CHASE PETER CHEYNEY  
AGATHA CHRISTIE ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE  
IAN FLEMING ERLE STANLEY GARDNER  
WILLIAM GOODIS DASHIELL HAMMETT  
PATRICIA HIGHSMITH CHESTER HIMES  
WILLIAM IRISH MAURICE LEBLANC  
GASTON LEROUX HORACE MAC COY  
ELLERY QUEEN DOROTHY SAYERS MICKEY  
SPILLANE STANISLAS ANDRE STEEMAN  
REX STOUT JIM THOMPSON SS VAN DINE

I

1

A very small young man was apprenticed to a fabric dealer. When he saw him, the latter could not keep from smiling.

"At any rate," he told him, "you won't need a ruler to measure the rolls: with your arms spread out, you make exactly one ell!"

2

"What are you muttering about now?"

"I'm not talking to you, I'm talking to my clock!"

"To your clock! Why's that?"

"Because I can't wait for the quarter hour to ring!"

3

In the first version of his *Requiem*, Arconati had planned for the finale to be performed by the four soloists. But when the soprano read the score, she was so furious that she insisted the composer cross out her entire part!

4

Stop reading detective novels all the time! Discover René Char! Don't get discouraged!

5

Don't talk to me of Knoll, Thonet or of Charles Eames. When I'm sitting down, what I prefer are really ghastly seats!

6

*Give off wind,  
Push the wagonettes  
to the depth of the mine  
and come into the world!*

7

With the aid of his plane, the Muslim leader of the Ismailian sect of India and Pakistan leveled the little pedestal on which he wants to set his golf ball and which, in view of his fortune, is cut into a diamond.

8

Toward the end of the twelfth century, a wealthy resident of Toulouse sent his nephew to study in Picardy. Don't bother coming back (he told him) if you don't know how to at least speak the fucking dialect they use around there!

9

It is well known that all the emperors of the Ming dynasty were exceptionally corpulent. But the biggest of them all was Hi.

10

You don't have to stay unfailingly at your post like the guardsmen. If you want to leave the stand, do so, and take off for adventure!

11

How right you are, my dear Édouard, says the director of the Paris Opera to Lalo, to seek your inspiration in this legendary city of Brittany that was suddenly swallowed up!

12

They were so fed up with shepherd's pie that as soon as they saw that they were going to be served one, they took off!

13

A young postal worker, dedicated to sorting, wanted to know when he had to break off his work. He was told:

"As long as it's just letters arriving, you should of course sort them, but as soon as you start seeing cloves of garlic appearing in the mail, then you should stop!"

14

Invited to a costume ball at the home of the author of *Drames de Paris*, Théophile Gautier and Carlotta Grisi dress up, he as Argus, and she as the nymph Io.

"Now don't forget," repeated Gautier to his companion, "as soon as you walk in, you moo!"

15

You're probably right to want to bump into your wealthiest friends.

16

When Othello made his triumphant return to Venice, the Doge granted him the only privilege no other foreigner had ever been able to obtain: that of replacing the black flag, which signified a state of emergency, with the immaculate banner of Victory atop of the great flagpole of San Marco.

17

When you prepare a butter-and-flour-based sauce and it doesn't take on an attractive appearance, you can try to get out of it by thinning it down with water, the way a plasterer would.

18

When questioned as to which races she preferred, Madame Bovary always said that she only had esteem for those who—in France—were North of the Loire.

19

My girlfriend is passionately interested in Georges Bernanos's novel, *Monsieur Ouine*. She no doubt reads many other books, but she never rereads any but this one.

20

*Evoke past times!  
Recall the gold and silk  
Of which those former days  
Were woven!*

21

An overly greedy donkey one day approached a big lump of bread and swal-

lowed it down, paying no heed to the crust. His punishment for this infamy has yet to end.

22

This little donkey is much too overworked to serve you as a beast of burden: so content yourself with making it carry the souls of your ancestors!

23

You're not allowed to consider the balls you sent outside the boundaries of the court as winning. You have to cross them out from your score.

24

Perched on the shoulder of a horn player, a mulish macaw was endeavoring to imitate the human voice. And when it succeeded in doing so, it asked him to celebrate its achievement by blowing into his instrument.

25

During a garden party, wonderful victuals had been arranged in those flat-bottomed baskets called winnowing baskets; and I urged a timid friend to go serve himself.

# TABLE I

1.      **Écarte les bras: aune**  
            [Spread the arms: ell]
2.      **Je ne dis que: Sonne, quart!**  
            [I'm only saying: ring, quarter hour!]
3.      **Raye mon chant de l'air!**  
            [Score out my aria song!]
4.      **Laisse, lis Char, t'hérisse!**  
            [Leave, read Char, get your back up!]
5.      **J'aime ça, de laides chaises**  
            [I like that, ugly chairs]
6.      **Pète, hersche, et nais!**  
            [Fart, push wagons in the mine, and be born!]
7.      **Aga taque riche tee**  
            [Aga plane rich tee]
8.      **Au retour, connais langue d'oïl**  
            [Getting back, know northern French]
9.      **Hi, enflé Ming**  
            [Hi, swollen Ming]
10.     **Erre, laisse stand, les gardes n'errent**  
            [Roam, leave stand, the guards don't roam]
11.     **Oui, lie âme au gout d'Ys**  
            [Yes, unite soul to the liking for Ys]
12.     **D'hachis elles les mettent**  
            [From mince they take off]
13.     **Pas tri si ail s'imisce**  
            [No sorting if garlic interferes]
14.     **Chez ce Terrail: Meuh!**  
            [At this Terrail's: Moo!]
15.     **Oui, lie amis riches**  
            [Yes, bind rich friends]
16.     **Maure, hisse le blanc**  
            [Moor, raise the white]

17. Gâche ton laid roux  
[Temper your ugly roux]
18. Aux races, Emma qu'Oïl  
[As to races, Emma only Oïl]
19. Elle relit qu'Ouine  
[She only rereads Ouine]
20. D'or, ô tisser hier!  
[Of gold, O weave yesterday!]
21. Mie qu'expie l'âne  
[Soft part of bread for which the ass atones]
22. Cet âne, i s'lasse, en dresse tes mânes  
[This ass, he's tired, train it for your manes]
23. Raye ce que t'as «out»  
[Score out what you have: "out"]
24. J'imite homme, sonne!  
[I mimic man, sound!]
25. Essaie ce van, dîne!  
[Try this winnowing basket, dine!]

*these twenty-five homophonic variations  
were realized at the end of the year  
nineteen hundred and seventy-nine*

*150 copies were printed*

*with my best wishes  
for nineteen hundred and eighty*

## II

### 1

I am an herbalist and I roam from town to town.

### 2

A streetwalker I know makes a peculiar demand on her tricks: before renting a room, they are obliged to lay their genitals upon the hoods of their automobiles for her approval.

### 3

The bell rang and I dragged myself back to my corner, eye cut and knees nearly buckling. Raymond was there, Band-Aid already in hand. "You're a good egg," I managed to splutter out.

### 4

My studiomate was preparing another one of his performance pieces. He had already applied a dozen or so leechs to his naked body when I espied some new faces among the usual bohemians in the gathering crowd. As it had been a while since I'd sold any paintings, I asked him to lay off the bloodsucking, afraid he might scare off a potential customer.

### 5

"Why is Jim hunting for worms in the pond?"

"I think it's time someone told you, Huck: Jim is suffering from depression."

## 6

We tortured him until he passed out. My partner and I then discussed our next move: take him to the fields and turn him into compost, or fetter his legs together?

## 7

Don't worry, you'll recognize the old crone — she's slender, pointed, Germanic and rather uncouth. And she's also loose in the wrist, if you catch my drift.

## 8

Well, you want to head home and warm up, or find another sucker to sweet-talk and swindle?

## 9

For my oral exam, I was asked to briefly describe a typical emperor of the Ming dynasty.

"Mucus-laden for the most part," I replied.

## 10

The king was given a list of earls allegedly comprising the "League of the Beige Order," an association of renegade nobles named for the garb they wore when carrying out one of their nefarious missions. Ill at ease, his majesty ordered the dining hall to be surrounded by guardsmen for that evening's supper.

## 11

I took the Roman god of the underworld to see one of my favorite films:

Fritz Lang's classic tale of a child-murderer. Upon hearing the film's subject matter, my companion looked uneasy.

"What's the matter?" I asked him. "You got the willies or something?"

"Maybe just one little willy," he replied embarrassedly. "The film sounds a bit sick."

"I'm telling you, it's an acknowledged masterpiece!"

## I 2

Two indisputable rules for the stage: violently thrust the heel of your foot onto the floorboards whenever possible, and *always* overact.

## I 3

"Daddy, why does water freeze?"

"Well, son, once upon a time an Irishman was weeping, when someone came along and tapped him on the eyeball. Rather than stopping his tears, though, this tapping made them cold and hard, and they began to spread all over the world."

## I 4

*A game on which I am most keen  
Involves both a king and a queen  
Uses rook over pawn  
And brains over brawn  
You guessed it: the game is called chess!*

## I 5

We slipped into bed.

"You're about to experience what a Latin lover is capable of," I murmured into her ear.

My pecker suddenly spoke up:

"I'm not Latin," it barked, "I'm Irish!"

16

The bigger the canvas, the less I know what to paint.

17

I enticed her over to me and seated her upon my lap. Then, to my great remorse, she farted.

18

She asked me if I wanted to screw. I thanked her, but explained that she wasn't my type.

"And what's your type, deary?"

"Well, I'm looking for a real floozy, a real *harlot*... I mean, someone who would make me pay money to have sex with her."

"You're looking at her, baby."

19

The devil offered her majesty an option: a trip to Hades, or the chance to exude an eternally offensive odor.

20

Picasso often complained to his lover and model; especially when he found himself surrounded by yes-men.

21

A big-eared dame by the name of Minnie hired me to track down her husband: a tailed snout with a drug problem. I've no interest in pill-poppers,

but she offered me a retainer that was enough to make my own ears swell. I calmed her down and headed for the bowery. Sure enough: I asked the first motel clerk I stumbled on if a large rodent had recently checked in. Ten dollars made him nod his head toward the stairs.

"Just follow the pills," he muttered. "They should lead right to his door."

22

In the old days, Stan would only haul goods around on a low cart by himself; but he seems to have warmed up to us — he now joins us whenever we're loading up a wagon.

23

On the beach:

"Come one, come all, and get yer wreckage here! Shipwrecks galore— we got yer chests here, we got yer portholes, we got yer rum, and we got all th' barnacles you could ever want! The best wreckage in town, folks!"

24

The most daring element of *Huckleberry Finn* was in the end edited out by Mark Twain: the discovery that Tom Sawyer's father was none other than Jim!

25

I asked Shaggy what he thought was wrong with the M. M. Van. He looked up from under the hood:

"What's wrong?! It's gonna snuff it, that's what's wrong!"

TABLE II

1. Cart herb round
2. John: dicks on car
3. Ray mensch: handler
4. Less leech: art tourist!
5. Jim is sad: leech chase
6. Peat or chain knee?
7. Hag: Gothic, wristy
8. Hearth or con and oil?
9. He in phlegm, Ming
10. Earl list: Tan League! Guard dinner
11. Willy? "M" good, Dis!
12. Dash heel, ham it
13. Pat Irish eye: ice myth
14. "Chess" tore rhymes
15. Willy: I'm Irish!
16. More easel: blank
17. Gassed on: lure rue
18. Whore is McCoy
19. Hell or reek, Queen?
20. Dora, these ayers!
21. Mickey's pill-lane
22. Stan is less on drays: team-man
23. Wrecks, tout
24. Jim: Tom, son
25. Assess? Van dyin'!

*J*ean-Michel Espitallier

*from* GASOIL  
SPOILS OF WAR

(*translation by Lisa Lubasch  
and Olivier Brossard*)

Monsieur Pinchon has made  
two devices

The **diagometer**. It is made of a small dry galvanic battery, called diagometer. One of its metallic conductive wires is plugged into a tiny capsule which is connected to the pivot of a magnetic needle, while the end of its other wire, set into a pewter contact, itself mounted in a porcelain ball, is connected to the ground (*take a deep breath*). Supported by the diagometer's pins, the tall arm goes through a cork fixed by pliers powered by three rows of battery clamps under the diagometer's cover which is equipped with two springs (*understood?*).

The **cylinder drum**. It is operated by an endless, a truly endless chain, the cylinder drum in which the clothes are placed, I mean washed, the clothes washing the cylinder drum; water enters on one side and goes out on the other side, pitilessly draining the discharged matter by the sieve, with force, I mean with power, relentlessly, such is the cylinder drum. One should make sure to connect a loose pulley to the set control pulley in order to be able to check the movement of the agitator, as required and with force, I mean a loose pulley with the set pulley in order to check to make sure to set yourself loose to control check the cylinder drum forcefully I mean relentlessly the drum loose pulley with set cylinder control in order to check I mean the cylinder with loose power check the drum agitator. The inner part of the device is equipped with disks in which very small holes have been pierced, very very small holes which are then connected with grooves made in the inner walls of the clarificator the cylinder drum.

About the clarificator? What I mean is this device within the  
device that really has no end?

Come on, everybody knows that, the cylinder drum!

Strongly pushing these inner walls together, the disks are  
tightened, so strongly tightened by their circumference into  
these grooves, which makes for quite a tight-fitting enclosure,  
the cylinder drum, yes quite a snug-fit, that's it everybody  
knows that.

Between those two disks lie the power forces.

Water comes in on one side and goes out on the other side.

On one side comes out from the other side

Comes out from the other side from there.

*Song*

On the machines' organs  
The action of sweet heat  
On the machines' organs  
A current of steam

On the machines' organs (*bis*)  
A kind of dirty grease  
Like a big radiator.

Monsieur Collier has invented  
(dangerous devices)

1. one ixometer (*first carefully examined*)
2. a thermal aerometer (*its color is pink like peach tree flowers, a reddish brown, a brick red, a golden yellow, a dark green like meadow grass, a dirty white*)
3. A cervisiometer (*barely visible*)
4. An elaiometer (*still being shaped or half shaped*)
5. An oleorefractometer (*which gave rise to an important trade*)
6. A centesimal alcoometer (*daily use if possible*)
7. A filter with frames (*set aside and sold*)
8. An oleometer for cold temperatures (*freeze-resistant*)
9. An elaio-pachometer (*adapted to certain types of research*)
10. A milling pump with plates (*which sustains the action of the untreated products*)
11. A precise densimeter (*which shows extreme regularity*)
12. An oleometer for warm temperatures (*not to be lended*)
13. A siphon barometer (*obtained by saving up your money and using static electricity*)
14. An autometric oil applicator (*top notch*)
15. A press-filter on wheels (*lost during the experiments*)

And of course, there is the diagometer (*whose pressure rises rather quickly*)

## Monsieur Cossus's Thoughts

One must be gifted

\*

The sense of smell can be useful

\*

Neighbors should be carefully avoided

\*

Winter yields no products

\*

Oils do not experience pleasure

\*

The workshop must always be heated

\*

The Mediterranean sea is bordered by countries

\*

During thorough operations, it is essential not to stray

\*

Colza has the greatest influence

\*

One should not ignore the economical report

\*

Upon getting out of the bath, it is difficult to adjust

\*

Time is

\*

Water's action is most pleasant

\*

It is necessary to study

\*

It is possible that sulfur also exists

\*

It is always easy to get a result

\*

Temperature is thrilling

\*

Titles must be used

\*

Water does not blush

\*

Experience shows

\*

We come, we understand, we cannot

\*

One must hire

\*

Steam can cease

\*

Steam can be concealed

\*

A committed person succeeds

\*

To clear in vats

To establish distinctions

\*

Cotton soon becomes dirty

\*

Time must not be taken

\*

Smell may vary from country to country

\*

The grain is roasted before being crushed

\*

Products can be used in the fabrication process

\*

It is useful to read instructions

\*

One must not count too much

\*

Water: choose the purest variety possible

\*

The former will be soluble in the latter

\*

Let's see

\*

Experiments, for the most part, require skilled hands

\*

Every action is swift

\*

One must proceed methodically

\*

The risk of killing

\*

Ammonia is quite something

\*

Take detours

\*

A few moments are enough to enjoy

\*

Sometimes one falsifies

\*

Warn the buyer right away

\*

It is barely possible to be really confident

\*

To build a round chamber in order to avoid losses

\*

It is easy to correct

\*

Elaborate a current

Use a bright red color

\*

Continued action is profitable but disastrous

\*

One is still full of gross mistakes

\*

Caustic soda has no effect

Monsieur Barbey is made of  
a U-shaped brass tube

Monsieur Barbey, please :

U

Come on, come on, Monsieur Barbey:

U

Thank you, Monsieur Barbey.

*P*hilippe Beck

*from* VAULT OF THE DISOLVABLE NOVEL

*(translation by Macgregor Card)*

## LIMINAL POEM ON THE MAP

*Always more dense celebrity  
in our special way of being wrapped  
in salt, unknown placard (through a temperate eyelet),  
concrete, though silhouette  
contoured by way of clear beginnings,  
and always more appetite or special effect:  
to be a door to the salon  
The door to a salon full of glasses,  
Of flourishes, numerals, forward steps, unexceptional  
Neglect of serving appetite  
to be each time a salon  
without tapestry, a future salon  
of dense celebrities,  
listening, salty, marine.  
Solid friendship  
taken away a chaperone of lead,  
exact and panther-eaten Eden  
In the book and volume of the family brain,  
chance to work the poplar  
seems to dim  
(Or to be, for some, a lonely one versus the lone)*

*Combination of rocks, shrubs and aromatic bushes,  
salt perfume of sledding families,  
conversant babies, of spouses;  
soft cement-mixer at the door to the office  
sport. Or: of serious density at the landing,  
wall and garden.  
Of herbs upon gloves.  
Cable effect, no:  
effect of cable.*

*Without violence along a bias  
the eyes enter a bundle of sticks and make out.*

## I. HOW THE VAPORS EVAPORATE

My characters are smoke.

But I won't visit them in their chimneys.

Admirer of the column of dark glass (American hawthorne), a man off in the blue with half-drawn eyes, morally adrift, who thought instincts prophetic, feathering his wings.

Fireworks are imperfect.

The smoke of friends like a Mister Follow (coach).

It's a matter of friends who follow at the same time.

They have chimneys.

The followers go dignified.

All is in the present, of "It's not of present," responsible.

Friends are density.

Density = of the friendship that follows.

A firework develops in friendship.

The firework is not deception.

The friend is dense.

Mr.— is a lock of iron.

His characters went to see the publisher: and refused the lake of tears, in utter refusal, pompishly, laborious to refuse. Some reviewers dive with them now. Any fisherman can row close to the surface, but needs a sinker heavier than Galena's for his net to hit bottom (that floor already trawled by a scalpel in the heart). The fat Lefoc, who oils a diving-suit, is made up of more than fat: the heart/brain of addition (poetry) flows apprehensively as sap from a frozen maple.

The plan of these characters is to vanish in failure's smoke. To have nothing fail, to be not vacant, grey as a vague silhouette, a weathered-flower bouquet (a lonely cloud bouquet).

A face whose tissue is bathed in all the sun of Indian summer, snow covers the plain, the beef Rudy feels beneath his fingers a marine impression.

The white deer will no longer interrupt Mr. Cordu's mornings.

Between two humans, wishing to part, there is an impassable divide.

Only that funeral flower of renown sounds in the first sentence where a wind of friendliness blows, solid and lucid.

I won't spend long vacations pitching tent: every room has a marital density.

About the glacier's far shore, a large tourism forgets subtle lighting. Because it's a large tourism. People turn.

Wheat field beneath the hotel, relieved of gale-force wind, with reprieves of "Think of one" and the others who breathe without braided hair, who blow with no thyrsus against the guide. Kisses refreshes tourism.

Member shifts in place, especially the crossbar, drawn to Her very firmness, Her member with my severe parallel apart from her firmness, from the roof my character (he answers most profoundly) affects the hawthorne's obscurity.

He refuses to go far from home: long after, changed, he comes home to his place, not far from her place. At his place, unrecognized, by her rainfall upon him (her rainfall of a young thrush), she waits and greets in Mrs.—, the marquise of greetings, and Madame Re-recantation (Re-re, re-new).

"Who are you?" "Four letters" is bread in the future minus phenomenon, crumbled, solid, your this-place-is-empty-let's-blow of envy (your popular fig).

The maniac accelerates without violence. A dissolvable stone in place of his heart, naked firework, *topless*, abyss. In place of my heart, propellant, a capital labor, incapable of writing you, at the floor of the deep: the touch.

My characters don't melt. Mr. "No" met Mr. Follow. Two hats seen from behind, two jerseys along in the race.

A large bottom is not the mountain we could easily see level off. The bird doesn't vault.

Mr. X was in bed, at the Telemachus Hotel, with his steady companion.

Who are you? The characters are fireworks; a density of thread for not taking flight.

What are in-laws? A notebook.

At boarding school, the breathless maid outside my room, Woody Gallon the whale, swearing off each and every day. A polar bear, or prowling bear staked to a pole, bipolar (the white bear is almost commonplace, its cleft forced open by thirty-six crayons of children some day, perhaps.)

## VII. FUTURE FRIENDS

I know that no one folds. I applaud my friends, they're part concealed beneath a napkin (not one cloud chases my brain from it, no heart's concealed in my brain). My heart's between the newsprint and red robin. So why this "I don't know you" same as saying "You aren't that one," and so "There's nothing in the paper?" One gloom bell tolling quick at the face now swollen, taut, then swollen, taut and so on, erratically. The smile goes from check to check: fat pugilist bee.

## XXI. JOB REEKS OF FLORID IMPATIENCE

The blameless; the irreproachable; the fearful; other men "equally divided between shadow and immensity," (Faulkner), but fearful. Here is a list of men different from Job. Job is a château in Spain, at the edge of a cliff (at the site of an edge). He is racked with incomprehensible guilt.

A heap of roses steams.

A heap of maple sawdust steams.

Vapor heaps suffer

the brushing aside of five hundred pairs of cattle

seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels

five hundred asses.

And a plenty robust domesticity.

And plentiful solidity,

a solid lucidity,

appetite by no means whimsical.

Fortitude to reek of roses.

Libertine quiver? Gratuity to live

a life of prayer—unafraid of straying, the difference?

Gratuity? Free love at sword mouth?

I spoke of frivolous humility

to freely swallow up unsavory

rose. Must throw dust upon the rose

heap, more glass broken, lucid

emotion interruption.

Eyelids of the break of day, eyelids of

finer aspirations than trees or derricks.

(Intensity puts the trifler to death, *Job*, 5, 2. A friend is neither vehement nor feeble.)

### XXIII. DIARIST.

None of the characters keep a diary. None blow hot and cold every day. None are breathtaken. Each one flinches at a coil of smoke. Each one, therefore, is a clairvoyant lover of trash heaps.

#### XXIV. SUCH BEAUTIFUL FLOCKS OF WOOL.

A "bring me X or Y" is worth "bring X or Y for me." How utterly you give to me. Such fine arrests made under covers, curious arrest and delivery receipt. I truly hate unfaithful scenes. One could easily tell me hatred is needless. The hoary translator relegated to sparrow music tells us hate is needless: one needn't flinch at the ball of public diary editors. Small sun: "the important things is to be liked by ladies." Hippocleas: "The poet will make young girls dream of him." A gulf from one phrase to another, it blows him some bell gale.

## XXVII. FUTURE MINUS PHENOMENON.

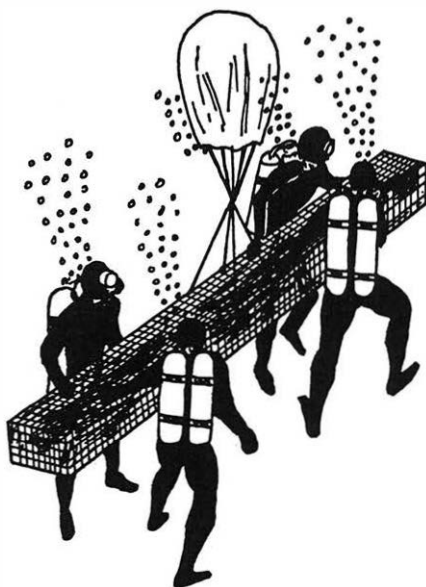
Player's costume + proofreader's heart = future scribe.

Contact sport + contact bush = phenomenon

implausible, though fashioned by storm (a paint-over storm).

XLVII. SOLEMN LAKE FALLS BACK.

Although: deposition taken—  
no slipping out on duck ponds ("Wine and dine")—  
not so much more far from pleasant  
sleeper  
and babies  
and Cyclist  
a problem of ease  
to welcome the menacing whale,  
a leaking tap,  
calm noncomfort  
neither worn  
nor taken vows.  
Though monastic domestic  
unrustic, urbanized country drummer,  
Here's all you need for a portrait  
of a living solemn dead guy  
in the eyes of a Cyclist, finish-line.



*May the judge disappear and the philosopher  
continue the peaceful exploration of the sea!  
If his destiny be strange, it is also sublime.  
Have I not understood it myself?*

*J*ean Frémon

*from* ISLAND OF THE DEAD

*(translation by Cole Swensen)*

"Aphids, black spot, rust, mildew, rose-bore—afflictions without number," says Emilie. "And I've got to make an inventory of them all."

For almost ten years, with unaccountable patience and the precision of a restorer of medieval miniatures, with an eye for the science of significant detail rare among the erudite (who have a tendency to put everything on the same level in order to privilege the random or bizarre instead of the important), and with a didactic sketching technique lost to ardent experts, Emilie, little by little, completes the work begun by Pierre-Joseph Redouté. It's not that he didn't finish it; he just ran out of time. Ah, roses. Redouté missed very few of them, for they were his passion. He'd painted the Albas, the Bourbons, the Chinese, the Damask, the Polyantha, the rugosa hybrids, the Cent-feuilles, the Portlands, the Fragrant Clouds, the subtle carmines of the Zephirine Drouhins, and the deep red of the Paul's Scarlet Climber. They're all there, caught in the watercolor, practically still exuding fragrance. Such an inventory cannot be left unfinished. And since 1835, a few hundred new species, hybrids of tea or climbing roses, have been developed, and all must be painted. Emilie has set up shop in the rose garden for the preliminary sketches. She takes careful note of petal shape, verifies the precise color, and compares the development of one plant with the others because, inevitably, one tends to paint idealized versions based on a composite of real examples. After these initial steps, she shuts herself up again in her studio. And in order to get there, where her art can rival nature (isn't that how they put it in the salons?), she has to pass below my window.

There was a rose garden at Plambois too, composed of six beds separated by a central path. It wasn't a place I went often because you couldn't just pass through it; you had to enter it in a formal sense, passing under three archways covered with climbing roses. It was its own world, a place made especially for the exchange of confidences, for the careful delivery of bad news, a place for parting, plotting and betraying, though no one would have thought this consciously.

In the last bed on the left, there was a pompom rose with white flowers. They were dwarf roses, and, as I was small for my five years, I was told that they were like me; they simply had to grow up. I called it "my rosebush."

"Go see if your rosebush is blooming and come back and tell me," Clémence would say when I bothered her with too many questions.

"And the pompom roses—show me the pompom roses," I said to Emilie in a tone that had something of the impatient child in it.

"There they are, the pale pink ones," she said, pointing down the other path. "It's a *centifolia*; Linnaeus called it the Rose of Meaux."

"And you haven't painted it? Why don't you like it? Because it's a dwarf?"

"But Redouté painted it from every angle possible, and Victor engraved it for the 1817 album. If you like, I'll do a white one just for you, but it will never be as alive as the one in your memory."

Emilie has an unusually low voice. Not grave like a man's or an old woman's who's smoked and drunk too much; it's low and yet fluted, colored. It creates a troubling contrast with her frail silhouette, her incredibly small hands, her strawberry blonde hair, her green and gold eyes, and her cheeks constellated with freckles.

I think of Clémence's high, crystalline voice singing in church. Though she's utterly opposite, Emilie reminds me of Clémence. She's her double, a reincarnation, an avatar, a Clémence magically young again, metamorphosed into a flower painter.

Emilie wears her hair in a long, low knot, hanging almost to her neck, while Clémence wore hers coiled up in an open-weave net, winding it into a long braid at night. Keeping the hair tightly bound up was an element of the required good conduct. And if I kissed Emilie's neck just below the ear, would I find the scent of Rose of Hungary that Clémence always wore? Or Thorn of Scotch Rose instead?

Some sadness is bitter and some sadness is sweet. Thinking of Clémence while watching Emilie is a sweet one.

Ellipses:     her open mouth  
                 the rosettes of her eyes  
                 the shape of her ear  
                 the curve of her chin

the wings of her nose

Ellipse:        reticence.

"Do you know the *mimeuse pudique*?" said Emilie. "It lowers its leaves at the sound of footsteps or voices. It's so shy, it's pallid. But as soon as the intruder has gone, the stems stand up again and the leaves regain their color."

In the case of the *Pinguicula vulgaris* (Soskine: "The Venus Flytrap, the grassette—I implore you! Don't you prefer *Dew of the Sun*? That's what Furetière called it because long after dawn, even into the afternoon, its leaves still glisten with damp—") two different glands carry out the necessary functions, one capturing and the other digesting. One secretes a mucilage that attracts and entraps the insects, while the other produces the enzymes that attack the soft parts of the prey.

The edges of the leaves also roll gently back on themselves—not to help with the capture; the motion is too slow—but to aid the digestion by increasing the contact surface between the prey and the glands secreting the enzymes. The grassette digests vegetable matter and pollen grains as well as any gnats, mosquitoes, ants and small spiders that happen across its threshold.

Becoming rather grassettish myself, I roll the edges of my leaves and digest whatever comes along.

\*

Soskine, an inverted fundamentalist, is taking a stand against the secular obsession with our Greek and Latin roots. He's decided to clean up scientific terminology and develop its vernacular charm. He goes to great lengths to find, whenever possible, the popular or even the local term for all the species we have in residence. He claims we've reached a *delirium graecum* and must take immediate counter-measures. The whole problem, he insists, began with medical men who figured that an impenetrable vocabulary would guarantee a need for their services; accordingly, they began calling a simple fit

*apoplexy*, a simple swoon, *lipothymia*, a simple bruise, *ecchymosis*, and a headache, *cephalalgia*. From these modest beginnings, the trouble spread to the rest of the scientific community — why not call a carp a *dulcaquicole*? It's perfectly clear. He says he can no longer stand hearing a thistle called an *acantha*, or watercress called *nasturtium officinal*, or a dog rose seed a *cynorhodon*.

"Just think," he tells me, "of that criminal who christened the magnificent hummingbird the horrible *orthorrhingue*. What a name to give that little wingèd-thing-par-excellence. It was once thought that they flew constantly, never stopping, and that they had no feet because the Indians who captured them knew how to remove the feet so deftly that they left no mark."

As far as Soskine was concerned, we had no choice but to retranslate all the animals' names into French and then change the labels throughout the zoo. Was this to include, for instance, changing the name of the amphibious hippopotamus? We don't blush when speaking of a sea-horse do we? So why not a river-horse too?

Certain evil tongues have suggested that in his passion to Frenchify everything, he'll end up changing his own name to Soskin or Sequin or even Seguin, but it's all good fodder for the journalists—someone who finds even the Academie Française too liberal.

"Sine glossa!"

We arrive to find Wilson already fiddling with the tape-recorder. He's madly switching reels back and forth and doing all sorts of things in a great hurry whose purpose entirely escapes us. We do grasp, however, that he has two machines—one for natural songs and one for counterfeit songs.

The reed warbler imitates the rooster and the finch, while its own song is so close to that of the hypolais icterine that one could easily confuse the two.

The hypolais is a polyglot whose fondness for imitation is matched by his virtuosity. He always composes a two-part song: the first part repeats a single motif in little bursts but over a long period of time, while the second part follows a complex melody and rhythmic line at a higher pitch.

The laughing wheatear and the rock blackbird imitate each other, while their own songs are perfectly distinct. The blackbird also occasionally imitates the calm cascade of notes distinctive of the lulu lark.

The calandre lark perfectly imitates the long and complex song that gives the melodious linnet its name.

Regional accents of the bird kingdom: the *veloce* warbler, who lives in the Basque country, sings in a tone that is distinctly different from that of his relatives in other parts of France. And their regional accent is the only thing that distinguishes these birds from the rest of their species.

The Orpheus warbler repeats the motifs of the blackbird so often that it has taken on its voice. And the Orpheus warbler is, in turn, imitated by the red-headed shrike.

Wilson can suggest no reason behind this bird mimicry except pleasure. They do it simply for fun. As far as we're concerned, this doesn't solve much. His last exhibit of the evening is a cut from an Argentinian film; it's the last straw.

The mockingbird of Patagonia surpasses all other singers in the variety and the vivacity of its repertoire. It's capable of imitating the song of some twenty neighboring species with astonishing precision, and it recites them one after the other, like a soloist switching from instrument to instrument. It takes it twenty or thirty minutes to run through the collection and makes you think that the entire aerial population of the region is camped out in the same tree. He caps the performance with his own personal tune, thereby

establishing its unassailable superiority. The notes pour forth in an uninterrupted torrent in a voice both brilliant and infinitely variable, and he never sings the notes twice in the same order; he is always improvising. As he sings, he flits from bush to bush. Sometimes he lingers for a few moments, sometimes he simply grazes at the tops of the foliage, and sometimes he buries himself in the greenery. Finally, bursting with ecstasy, he soars vertically almost 100 feet, beating his wings to his own rhythm or rising in sudden, random zigzags before he finally heads downward to perch somewhere with his tailfeathers splayed out in a fan and his wings, with the sun glinting off their white spots, extended and vibrating from one end to the other like a butterfly posed upon a flower.

On August 5, 1834, as Victory Hugo was dashing off to Brest to recover his run-away daughter Juliette, he stopped to make a brief note, "The magpie, both a speaking bird and a thieving bird, seems to have been created expressly to show just how close mimicry is to highway robbery."

And on the title page of the manuscript of Opus 131, Beethoven wrote: *Zusammengestohlen von Verschiedenen Diesem und Jenem*, which is to say, "Lifted from here and there," or even, "borrowed from various others." Milner claims that the phrase is quoted by Coolidge of Stockbridge in the afterward to his collected works.

When Beethoven's publisher read this note, he immediately shot off an angry letter to the Master, complaining that the work was not original. "Funkelnagelneu!" said Master replied: *new as a shiny penny*.

What is resemblance, I wondered. And what is imitation?

C<sup>h</sup>ristian Prigent

HEY THERE SCHOLARS!

(translation by Andrew Maxwell)

sometimes there's a swarm

an impulsive lupus heart surge an  
emulsive zero urge  
to swinish acts  
of leathered sex

or it goes to froth in the flesh or  
gets cystic or  
a cervix slick

from where I twitter:  
low blow! traps clapped!  
none of that!  
mister rictus pedal back!

farewell to the meat, oh!  
ego wear thy best incognito!

the staggering reflection of the zebra changed into  
zebra  
the extremity of the lancet within reach of the  
stump  
it's really something

& even the fine line doubling back & the  
repulse of the tritons one can  
ask the question is it head  
or tails but the soul where's  
that left it is leaving anyway

imagine 450 pages in all  
senses fully in (in all senses literally)  
budding bloom : tail-fins  
of zebras deep glands cell-  
ular swarming

questions : how  
a flesh-cell knows how  
of skin of muscle of bone of  
zebra in two head-spins it's

destiny how in all  
that is decided between the dice  
& the acids how  
it trips up how  
the foot is made tootsie how  
it re

hack!  
hack! (cough)  
hack!

fashions the heart  
repelling generations what if  
my soul was my soul and not  
this pale nomad  
numbed  
monad I

would know that would I?

muscle up the muscle butt-  
ress up the bone scuttle or  
skunk up the  
snuff factory and the  
neurons of the hippocampus

or the ditzy macaque of  
the dirty mushpot of love for  
example the zebra fish whose  
tail-fin's osteoblast repels

or even the flat worm cut in two  
the head in the stomach or  
the tail or  
the leg of a bug or the  
agile vertebra of the triton

(that we know)

hop! : tricky with that hope so arch  
your (care of science) embryo amber of  
a potential  
stump of an existential atom it is  
always that which the soul  
will not have

*P*ierre Alferi

ABODE AND TERRITORY OF THE STICKLEBACK

(translation by Brigitte Macdonald)

*To perform this experiment  
you place two male  
sticklebacks at opposite  
angles in an aquarium. Soon  
each builds a nest whose opening  
is marked by a colored thread.  
Then if one ventures beyond  
a phantom oblique line  
the other repels it immediately  
energetically successfully  
regardless of its size. By contrast  
a family of birds prey  
leaves between their lair  
and their hunting ground  
a free zone. In this way  
we believe they avoid  
devouring themselves.*

First room. The furniture, objects are arranged  
in order of importance around their owner,  
and still his worries grow with the domain.

*Where are you? It's time to wake up and go  
home.* The walls are yellow and the wood blue,  
the curtains have a threatening crease. Here I'm  
not speaking, a side sticks to the floor, a decal. The body  
extends to the six walls; whether it is at home like this,  
it doesn't know. *You're right here—this begins  
by shedding, with a moulting—and you can't figure it.*  
My childhood room became one of my father's archives.  
An abstract painting on the door, in pastel tones,  
Czech nursery rhymes, a hand placed on an ear,  
and sleep filled like a pillowcase, blindly chasing  
thoughts away to the corners. *On a page  
the verb to be swells the alveoli, it would suffice to squeeze it  
for them to burst.* I am speaking of a non-physical shadow  
and an echo. A detachment, an adhesion, entirely other  
than being housed, than simply being. *This room also,  
this bubble that nothing contains, contains principally  
air.* Besides the wall paper and the shadow puppets,  
and besides a phantom drawer-bed under mine,  
I remember nothing. This is the only habitable version  
of a body: turned inside-out like a glove.

*A place where we are happy, a pleasant stay,  
is all I want to find, for you, for me.*

There is certainly, even here, something that remains,  
which no longer belongs to the child, which the parents  
don't inherit. To live, but in its passive turn,  
more a middle voice, without agent or subject.

*Rooms, you've nonetheless had plenty of them,  
if not owned, one in almost every quarter,  
in the same way one has an idea.* The first act  
is to lose oneself, to shed skins and places as they are.  
I mean a kind of idea of a room; so that catching  
the idea is what I call crossing the threshold,

SUPPOSE A BODY WITHOUT COMPASS, LET'S CALL ORGANIC  
compass the latent measure of an apparent movement  
serving to navigate during a return migration  
of a seasonal change which condemns the entrance of the refuge  
the passageway knowingly chain-woven the homonymous  
street of refurbished facades;  
suppose a dislocated territory, let's call territory  
the network of known paths but also the broad stripes  
that they carve in the map, galleries, but also  
the masses of soft earth and blocks of houses  
the backstage the garages the indoor gardens  
the courtyards one will not enter;  
suppose several successive dwellings, let's call dwelling  
the pole where all possible detours are tied  
even the precarious terrestrial or aerial routes  
between cultivated parts of cities and countries  
a narrow surface hollow like a hatching spot  
or just a tumulus:  
can he go home?

Second room. When the host assumes your face,  
the presence that places didn't get from me,  
a confrontation begins. *Come on, stop grumbling. You  
reproach me for your reticence, your fear of moving in.*  
My student room looked onto a vast courtyard,  
a white sun, a bare tree, the lime blossom of the *Winterreise*.  
A single space which assured the principal services,  
relegating to second rank, to the outside, at least one element  
of the short vital list—eating, sleeping, washing, reading.  
*A pigeon hole, a variation on the sparest architectonic theme:  
the cube.* In a small iron frame,  
under a three-digit number, there was a name on the door;  
inside I cast a shadow still trembling,  
that zigzags between a practical narrow bed and desk,  
shelves. *Mere coincidence, but to which you owed*

*this first suspicious, unhealthy feeling of autonomy.*

You were this shadow, and much more, sized  
to the angles of the room. We followed a blind hallway,  
brown linoleum, neon. You came here to make love.

*I slid into your cold sheets, we heard steps.*

Each at his post day and night, the single window blinking,  
emitted signals, eyed the city without embracing it,  
a fire spotter. *But the scenes through the partition  
and—worse—the reconciliations? I didn't have my place.*

Echo and discord, a demand answered by a demand.

I remember a half-opened earring that had fallen,  
the parting of voices, a personal quarrel. The second  
passes the first. *Yet you spend your days alone,  
like you did then, like a page, like a room.*

The second act is not to meet, but  
to give way in front of the door. I almost never feel  
the pang of solitude or its dilation; one is  
more than one to a room, or less, yet contained.

THE THREE/THE TWO  
of compromise/of homicide  
of betrayal/of love  
between two evils choose the lesser;  
a crossing/a guillotine blade  
between both/enter each one  
genital/sagittal  
and there is no double bed;  
but you don't know/but you don't want  
to retreat/to recognize yourself  
in the gender/in the niche  
from where you fire.

Third room. An empty pocket that opens  
creates a vacuum where simulacra are sucked up.  
Host replaces host, it thus welcomes thoughts of  
all things. A friend bequeathed his room to me as a friend  
bequeathed it to him, without giving it up entirely. *You seek  
a common ground in impossible places.*

*A barracks in Morocco, a Roman house, a studio  
that does not belong to you, with no shower, with a screen  
in front of the sink.* At the time of the first the material  
was painted. He stacked up to five or six canvases against each wall  
with a nail gun. At the time of the other the material  
was written. The arrangement of the chapels, the reliquaries  
and altars formed a pompous and funny miniature  
of the community of his friends. *It exists only in memory.*

*We hardly met there. We mostly gathered news  
about those absent.* Monstrances for fine paper editions,  
an ashtray shaped like an urn, piles in unstable balance,  
a mute book, memorabilia placed on the furniture  
in conscious disorder. *His successor himself  
added only trophies, people. You throw nothing away,  
ever?* The image or, better, the two images,  
overlapping, of two people at a table  
looking straight ahead, one perhaps dreamt by the other,  
surrounded by tools they would use to measure,  
scrape, trace, coat, glue or see from a distance,  
but who for the moment do nothing and hardly contemplate,  
merely awake—this fictive image pleases me,  
you tell me why. *For you community remains  
a type of hallucination. Yet your friendships from that time,  
undoubtedly because too abstract, have lasted.*

The third act is to establish a common place. An inadequate  
occupant, discreet, sees the profile of all his visitors  
inscribed into the room as into himself, as himself.  
In the end I didn't take it, but I kept the key.

# CHOICE RARITY (

to increase the effect

) of what nourished our conversation

which dispersed us (

Yarrell wagtails nomads in their youth

) and vital pride (

neither jealous still nor vain

) of the pup predator (

avoiding the fellow

) or micropus rufus in its developing period

among Paris by aleatory leaps

) upsie

) united us unexpectedly (

and then in due time and place

) in the indefinite we (

gregarious then not by contact

) became as a result (

but by distance (

a friend

)) friends.

Fourth room. An interior too can be disseminated;  
things within reach, lost, ruined, no longer say  
anything. *Be more precise. Are you looking for a new place,  
or a full one? Would you rather live in, board, own,  
or deposit?* My room abroad, sublet, replayed the entire  
history of real estate. Once chased away lares and penates  
its aura had collapsed for the profit of use; use,  
for property; and property, for the sheer profit—of investment.  
*But we've lived there together. You worried a lot*

*about these singular things, about their discrete series,  
indices of a real place, outside the mind. Orange carpet,  
kitchenette, toaster, garbage disposal, television. There were  
plenty of unreadable books, of unnameable collections.  
The ugliness of the furniture came from its perfect equivalence  
to itself. There, antennas probed the space,  
small telescopic sentences, articulated, pivoting.  
Each of yours is an impasse, yet whose end is not visible  
except by way of a detour: comma, period. Matte and soft  
surfaces, modeled after a bath rug,  
avoided reflections, rebounds, slippages.  
Only the voices of ancient divas survived.  
At least we enjoyed the absence of an echo. Words  
resonated a good distance from one another. And days,  
which did what they do best: sliding each one  
carried by the equal rumor of those, still attached,  
which will follow, then falling from the massicot, hesitating  
briefly in the air, becoming opaque, suddenly weighing  
without thickening, and settling, sized to their dimensions,  
on the past days. Yet the pile did not rise,  
its height is fictive, a line formed by points.  
The fourth act is to let the room lie fallow  
and to let fall atoms of dust. In the meantime  
one soon rouses ghosts, who make connections.*

ABANDONED NOOKS ABOUT WHICH  
when by chance into them a look or hand plunges  
you think there could have happened  
irreversible terrible things.

Fifth room. For sense turns, gathers  
by whirling things the energy it throws around,  
their mental albedo. *Really, I'm beginning to doubt  
that this expected place exists.* My room in a palace  
looked from one side onto a fountain. The window,  
closed, became a height of light and pines,  
distance of three Gallic slaves cut out on the sky.  
Open, curtain of canvas swollen like a sail, and wind.  
*Inhabiting or haunting, host or ghost can be used  
to describe you like the bright rectangle on the yellow wall,  
the powdery white outline left on the gravel by a car  
gone after the storm.* On the other side, on a foot bridge  
of unsteady boards from which descended a metal stairway ,  
bent and plunging to the basement via stone steps.  
Vertigo, too, comes from a part that spins.  
*Because there was, from one room to another,  
no communication. The former residents  
mostly met each other in passageways.* Leaving  
too fast to leave completely: a painter in the alley,  
a very young woman at the back of the library,  
an empress of intrigues in the woods, suicides.  
Will time suffice, monetary erosion, to make  
evanescents of us all, moved in by some corporation  
to furnish depreciated monuments,  
architectural digest, of which it would leave us the usufruct  
as if to a mendicant order, so that they may glean  
a surplus value of ghosts, a hysterical aura?  
*Those who through antiphrasis are called presences,  
yet you sought their company. Only a few  
parasites on the line, and you thought you were being bugged.*  
The fifth act is to sort out the silhouettes and  
shape them into a wreath. They are formed by ricochets  
in every direction like endless connotations,  
bridge from one thing and from one word to another. As for  
myself, I exist no more than this shadow brewer of a place.

## BENEATH THE CUPOLA OF A REPUBLIC

Of sparrows sheltering sixty rooms  
Separate us versions of love  
One meter of individual distance  
And the respect in the commons the park  
With a box-tree labyrinth of an obscure  
Order of precedence between sheets of  
Transparencies on which are traced domestic  
Cats' territories the stroll of monks who  
Would salute each other suspended from  
One bridge to the next at set times at  
Different heights make of us  
Following invisible rails a ghost  
Each for all and each forever for the one who  
Has not the night with us shared  
A room one of a kind Turkish.

Sixth room. You are not free until you have abandoned  
a fixed building and given your fixtures  
a chance to be tested. *Where then? By*  
*saying everywhere I invite you that you're not at home,*  
*you raise a question whose answer you avoid.* My guest room,  
seven square meters of attic, let in daylight through the roofs edge,  
which opened onto a miniature tarred terrace.  
Moving without moving in; discomfort, isolation  
are somewhat justified by mobility. *It was in my name,*  
*but to conquer it, it sufficed for you to cover*  
*the habitable surface with short line segments,*  
*like toy cars that veer at the slightest jolt.*  
A trestle table, a chimney, and this computer  
obscene in its newness: I preferred it to mine,  
it wasn't mine, I could do nothing with it.

At least I had a territory outside, like the man  
who spends his whole life on the terrace, or leaning at a bar,  
staring through the paned door and the slanting crossroads at a line,  
a border of air. *I see him. Here rumor only comes*  
*deafened. The feeling of a unity—mine, ours—,*  
*the simple feeling of a meaning is a reflection, rare, which reassures,*  
*does not convince.* And this pale illumination on the chair's arm,  
the splash of a pane loosened from the third window  
from the left atop the facing building.  
The only sun visible from here thus finds itself encased  
in a facade and encircled by a shadow with an  
unrecognizable outline: ours. We are troglodytes.  
*Yet you dream of being housed, even if in a tiny and false*  
*space, to escape from this displacement, this hospitality.*  
The sixth act is to leave everything wide open upon leaving,  
to extend the room to the neighborhood. If nothing compares to  
the pleasure of escaping, next comes that of getting home.

#### YOU CLIMB OUT OF AN ALVEOLUS

you fall into another  
a hexagon fills space  
a circle barely touches a circle  
some mark with urine and some mark with song  
dispersion gives rise to a cadastre  
a fugitive to a satellite  
you reach a free zone  
you're blinded with the void.

Seventh room. At home where one never was,  
closing a utopia with walls. It is here, do come in.  
*But you've always come here, you've penetrated every possible  
path of return, marked every neighboring fork.*  
*Why haven't you lived here?* My room does not sum up  
all the others, whose copied keys are found in its closet.  
There is only overprinting, familiarity, resonance. And, if there is room,  
theatre. *The curtain opens to four rectangles of roofs  
and to sky maculated with droppings, an African scare mask,  
a pre-Columbian severed head, several machines,  
three pictures without color and a tattooed torso under glass,  
two red and brown rugs, upright books covered by  
lying books. Black dominates.* The furniture,  
the visitors have been replaced, sometimes by themselves.  
Nothing is certain except disorder, its occupation slowly growing  
like that of your voice in mine. *Only a wish.*  
*Some things scatter on the floor, papers, mail, a mattress  
that a belt keeps from unrolling, but signal  
a foreign room of one's own, a vacant center,  
a temporary lodging* I orient myself in relation to this room.  
I like to go towards it even when I'm not going there.  
Like a lighthouse, its window properly speaking illuminates nothing  
other than itself. Its anteroom is in the cafe; its territory,  
to the north. Around it, moats from three roads and a garden.  
*Yet you constantly locked yourself inside, jealous of this closet,  
of this free zone to which you have no more right  
than others and where you did practically nothing. A verb  
that would be both the frequentative of to have and its opposite.*  
Thus I lived. The seventh act is to redraw the place  
where one left oneself. I let myself be led by you,  
through a long corridor, up to this ambiguous floor.  
We stopped on the threshold. Then I closed the door.

# RUNNING AGAIN RUNNING

after

returning ghostly but without entering

who dissolving in his path not being it

places designated for what is left

remains at home

loved because false several

hotel names nidifugous

locks himself out

lost when supposedly expanding

the voice doubled to run

in the meantime to free

from the realm a sonorous line

of defense make use freely

a map

in the air.

*Outside its territory the stickleback  
is never victorious*

*A* *nne Portugal*

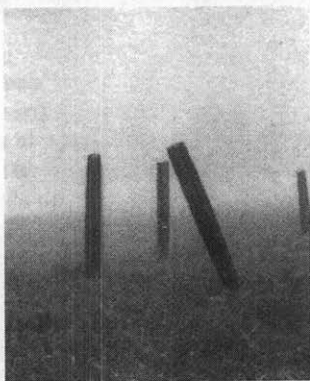
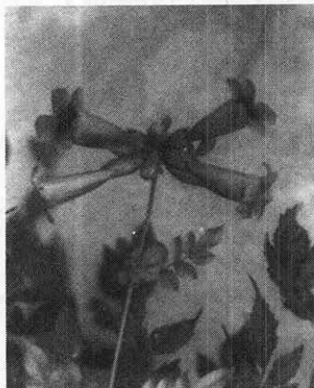
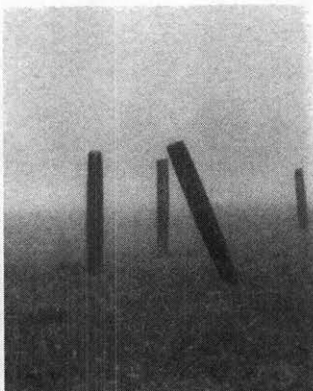
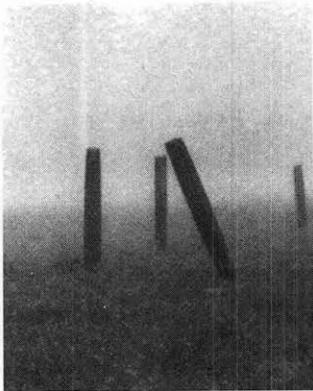
*S* *&*  
*uzanne Doppelt*

*from* IN THE REPRODUCTION OF  
PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN 2 EQUAL PARTS

*(translation by Andrew Maxwell)*

mama  
I swallowed some ink

the English fields  
vagabond fields  
vagabond in extremis  
the English night  
kinglet winter wren  
king of the  
mended night  
look there  
him breathing



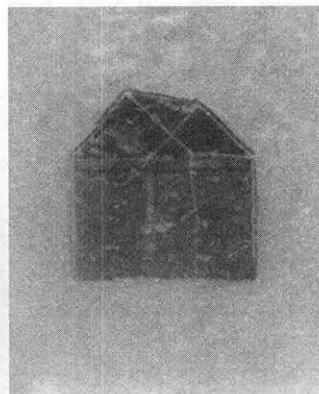
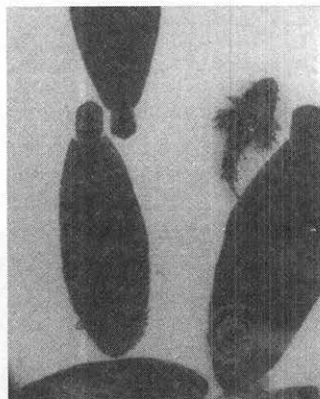
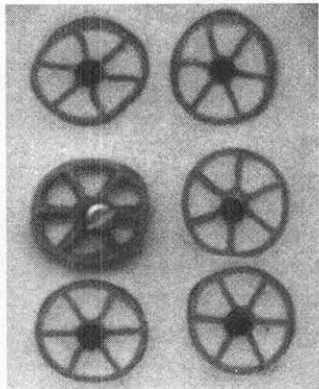
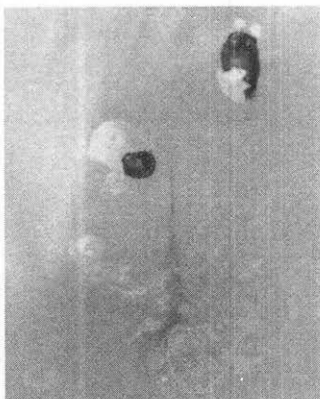
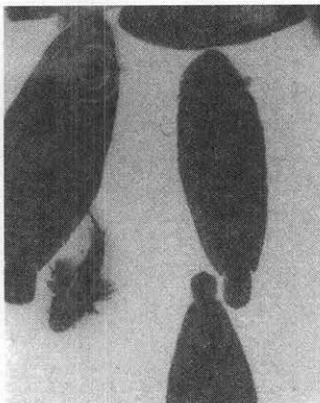
I returned a blank  
sheet as my bluebook

the legend had it  
office clerk office  
conscience you go out  
on the balcony to skim  
the dossier unread  
only light the gas light up  
the fire & jack quick  
flies coincidence  
ah think of it



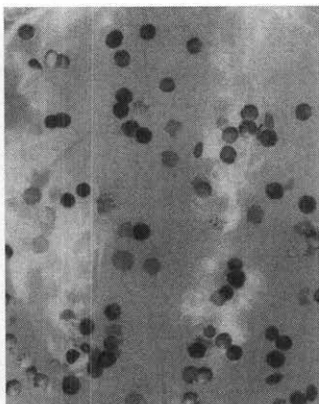
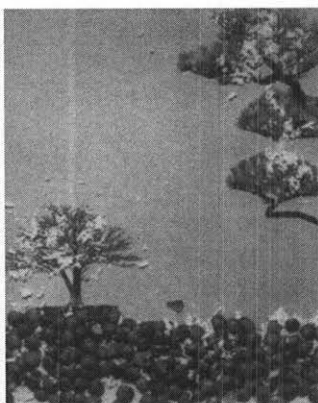
your bread is stale

we write wealth overflowing  
moma auto-  
immune responses  
slipcovers over furniture  
old fruits stripped  
of their sick parts  
all mixed up  
if he's up or asleep  
scripted or almost  
dead in person  
address to puck the equivalent



in the garden  
it's snowing

lips sealed you must  
draw nearer a vision  
to hasten it to insist  
transfer time  
t in tune suggests  
the derivative  
greyhound race  
randomly displacing  
the bones of the biologists  
universe life inkling  
the grove of a bright attraction



a wee sardine  
watches a submarine  
pass by

would that we'd laugh  
to finally speak  
in a sense to show  
even sometimes declare to those  
that we love that they reveal  
normal the desert  
normal the bad account  
impact on the legacy  
certain blow joyously smacked  
the pure state

*P*ascal Poyet

COMPADRIO

*(translation by Andrew Maxwell)*

## COMPADRIO

1.

Events come to terms with their visible residents.

2.

Each of the accommodations, settled by longstanding agreement, seems then set off in an agreed-upon background.

3.

The locular settlements come to terms with the interpolations: the *openings* of the story.

4.

Interpolations resolute or *retiring*, the visible elements join together to resolve their permeability.

5.

Two kinds of relationships: the direct one, of contracted withdrawals; the second negotiates the public sphere.

Between the contract and the usage, a settlement: precisely that of their likely residents.

6.

It resolves the interpolations belonging to it in a sort of compadrio of the arrangement and the object.

7.

Reciprocal interpolation of the contracted withdrawal and its likely residents.

8.

The story is interpolated by its present residents. The openings must be revisited.

## COMPADRIO

I.

Something's being settled among the usual suspects.

2.

Each of the quarters, prepared on old terms,  
appears in this way isolated, at an understandable remove.

3.

The chambered accords settle with the insertions:  
the narrative's apertures.

4.

Insertions unshakable or in remission, the visible developments  
mass together to deal with their porosity.

5.

Two sorts of relation: one straightforward, on redrafted terms;  
the second settles the usual territories.  
Between the accord and the practice, a territorial compromise:  
exactly that of its local contingencies.

6.

It deals with the insertions local to it in a sort of  
compadrio of the accord and the end.

7.

Consensual insertion of the removed accord and its local contingencies.

8.

The narrative accommodates its current occupants. The apertures must be realized.

## COMPADRIO

I.

It happens to deal with their foreign subjects.

2.

All of the lodgings are discretely set back, out of the way,  
but you understand.

3.

The tenant agreements deal with the insinuations:  
the open workings of the account.

4.

Insinuations outright or withdrawing, the usual suspects  
collect themselves to sort out the breaches.

5.

Two sorts of kin: one frank, who arranges retirements;  
the other deals with the public.

Between the cartel and the habit, a regional trade:  
the locals rightly answer to it.

6.

It sorts out the infiltration in its province with a sort of  
compadrio between the arrangement and the stuff.

7.

Insinuation all around between the unspoken arrangement and the locals who answer to it.

8.

The account is filled with its timely subjects. The open works should be subject to a contemporary revision.

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† *Compadrio* is fashioned after *A Intriga do Cachorro com o Gato*, a Brazilian children's fable by José Pacheco. Like Pacheco's play, the texts of Pascal Poyet are constructed as allegoria, and thus refuse any translation that might replicate the localized economy of the original material. Allusion, elusion, elision, ellipsis: all settle into an equilibrium of content where the contents refuse to "settle", and must be "read into" as if single and several. Any section is only one or two sentences, but these multiply upon return, so that some "states" which seem improbable equivalents on first encounter, gain a revised authority once revisited.

*M*ichelle Grangaud

*from* BIOGRAPHIES/POETRY

*(translation by Guy Bennett)*

Born in 1883 in Fukuoka prefecture, Born in Gunma prefecture. Born in Toyama prefecture. Born in Tokyo. Born in Ehime prefecture Born in Otsu in Osaka in Hokkaido He continued all his life, Born in, then on the Chinese mainland At that time, Born in Fukui prefecture. Born. He continued residing he expressed He gave he passed he revealed His poems were written He began began he resided there he spent for several years he wrote incessantly. He began he spent he began He began to write poetry.

in his vagabond existence, nearly destitute, in poverty throughout a life of wandering. His was a difficult life of wandering Throughout a difficult life of poverty, frail health, the heartbreak of poverty throughout a life of wandering, Following his father's professional setbacks, Following his father's appointments Following an accident. Born in Kumamoto prefecture Following his father's appointments Born in China. Following his father, the business of his bankrupt father, Of poor health, he was raised by his grandparents. He was adopted by an entrepreneur lost his mother Then his two stepmothers Finally raised by the third stepmother From an early age, from his youth in his childhood, through the death of his father, and was orphaned early on, Born in Fukui lost his mother, a delicate sensibility. And had one leg amputated. His family was scattered by bankruptcy, He was exiled At the age of twenty, already marked, He lost his father early on, the family was scattered

two years and came back wounded. He was also sent to fight in China, fifteen years railway technician, He entered he was employed Crushed by debts Sent to Sumarra at twenty two, Where he stayed he went from Tokyo to Sakai, where he stayed he stayed in Mandochuria between two civilizations between his native province and Tokyo, at the war's end, during and after the war, After the war, He was drafted into the Navy. Suffering from tuberculosis Prisoner for eight years in Siberia, After the Second World War, Suffering from tuberculosis, in a sanitarium Following his return to Japan, Between twenty and thirty years. From tuberculosis Back in Japan, then successively from one hospital to another. The suicide of a younger friend Fighting cancer the defeat of Japan

in the secondary teaching corps. With a scientific mission. First influenced by anarchism and Marxism, As early as high school in a newspaper published in his native prefecture. Still a student, he traveled to the South Pole The hardships he endured, In the peasant political movement, he became involved, From which he was later excluded, Later, having become then in the Communist Party Having become later CEO of the chain of Seibu department stores, known under the family name of Seiji Tsutsumi, He followed in his father's footsteps. While he followed journalist at the daily paper, through terrible hardship and illness through terrible But soon after, After burning his works, After studying to become a pharmacist After being cured After the break-up of the group of poets

His works, The works he wrote he wrote poems Marked by an experience Marked he wrote marked he wrote an experience of social life Marked next by a clear, simple, spoken language, the obscurity of life an assiduous reader A lyricism passionate reader of Nerval, translator of Mayakovsky, influenced by Jules Supervielle, by reading Rimbaud and the love of classical music known for his work on Rimbaud, and Verlaine, Dada and Surrealism, from Baudelaire and Albert Samain, member of the study group known for he began reading Heidegger, and then specialized in French literature. In Éluard and Aragon Specialist in Surrealism, in English literature, he translated some of André Gide's work, he discovered Rodin's work, Cézanne, Verlaine, Baudelaire, the new European poetry he discovered and translated he converted to Christianity, adopted a Surrealist esthetic in the Surrealist movement, he founded the club for Surrealist, Modernist and Surrealist Studies, she discovered, thanks to poet Katsue Kitazono, and other French writers, works by André Breton, he translated Oscar Wilde and Edgar Allan Poe, discovered Baudelaire and Verhaeren, in Europe and South-East Asia, he discovered with James Joyce and T.S. Eliot modern literature, she continued her work independently.

In his prose poems also the poetry of his poems verge on in his poems A horse that no one can see, he wrote short poems wrote Seeing a Zen Bronze, in the story A 12th Century Bronze, wrote in the history of Japanese poetry

are written in the history In a style are written totally Even more the shadow  
of a body, in the style of his works A body of words, in a style Temporary  
Residence, through the rhythm In this world, themes The canopy of words,  
a thought said he The world rises, he wrote every bit a poet In the form of  
words, dramas In the words, poetry With the words He opens up, theater  
of poetry also He continues to be word, he reveals himself Living in words,  
he was Cannot die, he found Words on earth, he demonstrates As much  
weight, demonstrates that The world, he began endlessly to Seeing words,  
he found Incarnate in itself, a creation his poems were written Don't know  
it, he was the poet he wrote language Very little their bodies, he wrote a style  
in a style his last collection he wrote suffering from tuberculosis in the use  
of language the use of language he writes Teaches, pure language.

Cristophe Tarkos

from THE SIGN =  
Manifesto

(translation by Amanda Katz)

## The spoken

The mass of speech is speech actually put out, you could not call it said, speeches are not said, do not say, they come out, they are put out, no one knows why they come out this way, no one knows why we have a mass of uttered speech, this serves to produce speeches, producing speech serves no other purpose than to produce speech, the children wail. The children are numerous, numerous are those who speak, put out wails from their mouths. The meaning is provided by the entire mass of wails, no one is missing, not a single person is missing, not one wail is missing. The what one says provides the meaning of what one says. All that one speaks. All the mass of what is spoken. And one speaks. No, one does not say nothing, one speaks without end, one speaks and all that one speaks is what will provide a meaning to all that one speaks. You open your mouth, you open your mouth not to vomit, to spit saliva, or to bark and yell, you open your mouth to just talk, what comes out of your mouth, of mouths, of all mouths is the spoken. To take a walk to hear talking. To enter a building to hear talking, everyone in the buildings comes out from time to time to get some air outside and outside too one hears speaking mouths which let the spoken escape. One speaks, what one speaks provides the meaning of the speeches, the meaning is not provided before all the said speech, it is the mass of speeches in their mass which will give their meaning to the blocks of speech which are uttered, which are put out, which come out of one's mouth.

Meaning is given to the word by the word, it's in training that the trained word takes on meaning, the meaning does not give itself from what is spoken but is given by what is spoken, en masse, in a group, in general, in continuing, in totality, in repeating, in circumventing, in general if it spoke it would have a meaning, it doesn't speak, it is speech, big speech, effective speech, speech matter which has no voice, it heaves together, is heaved the increase, is heaved, it's the only heave of utterance which forms what the meaning means to say, what the word means when uttered, we do not go far, we cannot go far, we have what we have in our mouths, the word is in the mouth of that which doesn't regard you, of that which is speaking, of

that which has no time to regard you before speaking, of that which has a mouth, mouths which do not regard you, you're not going to put your speech in the mouth of that which doesn't regard you, you're not going to put your tongue in all the mouths that that don't regard you, the mouths have their own utterance, their own speech, their own vomit, their own tongue, their own lips, their own mustaches, you can't put your tongue in the mouth of all the mustaches, the mustaches speak, utter, bring out from their mouth noises, words and vomit, the mouths vomit, all the mouths vomit, in a motion instinctive, sudden, abdominal, visceral, automatic, which cannot stop, of the cries and wails of mongoloids, the cries of the mentally handicapped, of the asylumed, the utterances of salespeople, of those who try to sell, who speak in order to try to sell, to try it to sell, to do the work of selling, to do the work of selling is to do the work of trying to sell by speaking by uttering heaves of accentuated modulated sounds, of the wails of madmen, of the weeping of the insane, the madmen weep and drool and speak at the same time, they wail, they try to repeat, they repeat, they wail repeatedly, they weep and repeat, of jargons of words of two people alone, one on one, of cries of displacements of barrows, of the jargons of two people of the same action, who are in the process of making an action together, who shout, of the jargon of the same, of the same trade, of three people, of four people, of five people, of six people, of the convening of people of the same trade, from the same office, of the commission of the convention of the administration of persons, of the heaving of cries of the newly-born, of the babies of the nurseries, of the whimpering of children, of the gurgling of little children, of the words exchanged between the children of the same age, the incomprehensible illogical words of two babies in the sand, exchanging speech and spades, exchanging speech on spades, of the bellowing of the drunk, of the bellowing of the madman, of the unhinged madman outdoors between during the bowls game, of the madman's demands between the words exchanged between the bowls players about the bowls play, about the weather, about the rain and fine weather, about diseases, all the diseases, of the animated discussion about all the diseases, about all the scholarship, of the unhinged speech of students exchanging words about the figures of the grades of their studies, the word

of the notion of figure, of the interior of figures, of what will never again emerge from the roundness of the notion of numbers, the wails of the diseased in hospitals, of the diseased, of the bedridden, of elderly people, of hospices, of a ravaged, aged, diseased old lady who says my leg hurts, where one sees this makes sense I hurt and the my leg hurts, she does not say the leg hurts or my legs hurt or I am hurt in the legs or I am my legs, or I am legs or I am hurt of my legs I am hurt of one leg or of two legs or of three legs nor my legs hurt you, I am hurt with my legs, with your legs, I am not comfortable with my legs, with legs in general, with what I am of my legs, with the fact that I no longer want to be my legs with my legs with my thighs, with my calves, with the veins of my legs, with my blood, I no longer want to be bloody, I no longer want to be leggy, I am not leggy, all this forms a little bag of spoken, the words of the meal, of the dining room, of the parlor, of the place where the armchairs are, and the chairs to sit in for eating, the places where one eats, the speech eaten while one eats, one cannot speak and chew at the same time, one cannot speak and swallow at the same time, it's the same channel that conducts the air for the words and the stomach for the foods that are fed, one cannot do everything at the same time, the words are chewed, are swallowed, are attempted, are approximate, are half-understood, the words in intimate mutual understanding have become pieces of speech understood to a T, of tugging, of the tirade, of tugging out the facts, of tugging an entire tirade, of the young man's difficulty in speaking continually, in producing sounds, of beginning to speak, he is startled, he is stifled, he is inept, he is insane, he is a young man, about to be a man, he is just about to be a man, he doesn't express himself with sentences, he expresses himself with pieces of sentences, the man of working age, who is in the works, speaks for the work speaks the utensil, the utilization of utensils of the toils of the tuning of the machine-tool which does the work if one speaks to it, if it is well spoken to of all its utensils, the man of working age speaks as he works the noise of the words of the tuning of work, the words are worked, are chewed by the work, the wails from the nurseries, the wails one calls whimpers, the fact that babies express themselves, say what they have to say, make their voices heard, there are voices, when you get up close to the audible sound it is nothing but voices

and shouts, so that you cannot dissociate the voices from shouts from wails, all the noises of men of one day, of ten days, of thirty days of two hundred days of three hundred days of five hundred days, at the same time as the effort to speak, as the feeling like speaking, of a the pleasure of speaking, the fact that it's blissful, the fact of speaking then.

There is no other language than language. We will have to try to go in. At the threshold a worry removes the strength. There is no other language but language, we will have to go into the interior, we have always been on the interior, there is no going into the interior, we're inside, will there be any question of going out of the stomach or must we always try to stay like this on the stomach's interior, there is no other language and it is this language we must do nothing but bear with us like we bear to stay in the stomach because there's never any question of going out of the stomach and language shake as it might just shifts and turns around. The movements but is it movements, the movements that are like the movements foreseen and so to speak given by the very position on the body's interior and which follows each of the gestures toward the same state of linked given relayed where the movement is the viscous coat which covers all the space between the spot where the body was at the point of departure from movement and the new spot where the body is now recovered with between the two not the least void but the transparence of the opaque and viscous coat of natural movement on the interior of the stomach which is matter so movement is matter half organic and half in the process of drying up from the stomach on the interior where to shift is no longer to make a movement where to shift is to stay in the state and to feel the benefit of the link between the body and the body between the circulation of heat and the circulation of heat and good posture on the interior of the circulation of heat between good posture of the body and less good posture of the body and always present the good posture of the body on the interior of all the shapes that the body takes to be well.



*His recitals took on epic form, and I felt as if I were listening to some Canadian Homer, singing the Iliad of the far north.*

*J*acques Sivan

PULPS

*(translation by Chantal Léon & Andrew Maxwell)*

### LA MÉCANIQUE OPTIQUE DE WONDER WOMAN

san éfor lèksprèsiyon lobjé izoleman un poin matématike mé an réalité sansasion afèktive poin prési la pikurinjèksion é non plu la surfase an kone é batoné résèpsion létandu aksion réyoneman tou lé santre

### LA NAPPE INTELLIGENTE

é le rekeyeman de tou lé mouveman linfluance dé otre sou forme la plu simple la matière vivante an éta omojène pour dan le même tan dispèrsion é variabilité dé mezure

### L'ÎLE MYSTÉRIEUSE

konésanse de riin lèkstérièr tou aksion lé kalkul prévizion kontenu lé rajou lé une sur lé otre du deor mé osi du dedan linsèrsion é dé ébranleman mouveman lègzèrsinfluance avèk an même tan latante é osi dékouvèrte

### LE PROGRAMME

un débu le regar de plu pré mé pa dègzékusion ni kontrinte vizion le vivan lèspase dan lèspase atribusion de role asistanse démarshè prize dinisiative

### LES YEUX ÉLECTRIQUES

tou éklipse é disparision okotrèrè aparanse devan lotomatike lakte okèl léta kome lé mouveman dé mouveman de nouvo lunivèr un ansanble dimaje réèleman nouvo tou par intèrmédière

### L'ÉCHANGEUR

toute la transmision o santre mouveman parti déplaseman lé santre sur la dèstinasion dé un é dé otre tou é propagasion lé reprézantasion suprèsiyon de limaje un imanse tablo ansanble lunivèr une imaje totale puiske par ipotèze un morso de limaje a laré dèmié poin partou dé affluan transmision mouvemanlèkstérièr lansanble matérièl une rèstitusion résèpsion é randu le sistèmantouraje

### LAMISEAUPOINT

situasion vizavi limaje an jénéral par kèlkonke influance toute lé otre imaje é dètèrminasion é kalkul le shoi lèksplorasion alantour lakonpli de luimême le role é possibilité le désin la forme la koulèr par modifikasion lé objé èksiérier laproshéloimeman lé son ogmantasion ou la diminution lé distanse lé anvironeman lé mezure orizon é ésheloneman plu ou moin mouveman le ranvoi

### SPACE OPERA

pozision dé objé lé santre tourbiyon shanjeman dé objé tou par débordeman linfini kèlke shoze de plus ou de moin la reprézantasion sèlè dé vibrasion invansion dé aksion mouveman otre shoze réaksion a laksion é par déplaseman lèskise a tou moman lé démarshè virtuelè tou par èksitasion é aboliseman lé modifikasion é dé fosforésanse tou iluminasion trase otre dérouleman é èksprèsiyon san sèse un ka kome dan lotre

#### WONDER WOMAN'S OPTICAL MECHANISM

efortles th ekspreshun th thēj īsolatīd a mathmatikal poynt but in rēalitē afektiv prēsīs pin-poynt stēginjekshun & nō lojr th surfas mād uv kōnz & rodz recepshun th ekstensiv akshun rādiāshun al uv th senturz

#### THE INTELLIGENT SHEET

& th prōkyunnent uv al mūvmentz th inflūens uv uthrz within th simplst form th livēj tishū in a homojinus stāt for at th sām tīm dispurzshun & varēubilutē uv mezhurz

#### THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

noluj uv nuthēj owtsīd al akshun kalkyūlāshunz estimats kontentz th adishunz wun on top uv th uthur frum th owtsīd but alsō frum insīd insershun & tremorus mūvmentz th inflūenseksurshun with sīmultānēuslē th wāt & alsō diskuvrē

#### THE PROGRAM

a bēginēj th klōsr luk but nīthr ekscyūshun nor konstrānd vyū th livēj th spās within th spās th alokāshun uv rōlz th odēenz prosēdyurz th tākēj uv inishutivz

#### THE ELECTRIC EYES

al ēklips & vanishēj on th kontrarē apiransis in frunt uv th mekanism th act tū wich th stāt lik th mūvmentz uv mūvmentz ugin th yūnivurs a gathurēj uv pikshurz trūlē nū al thrū inturmēdēarēz

#### THE INTERCHANGE

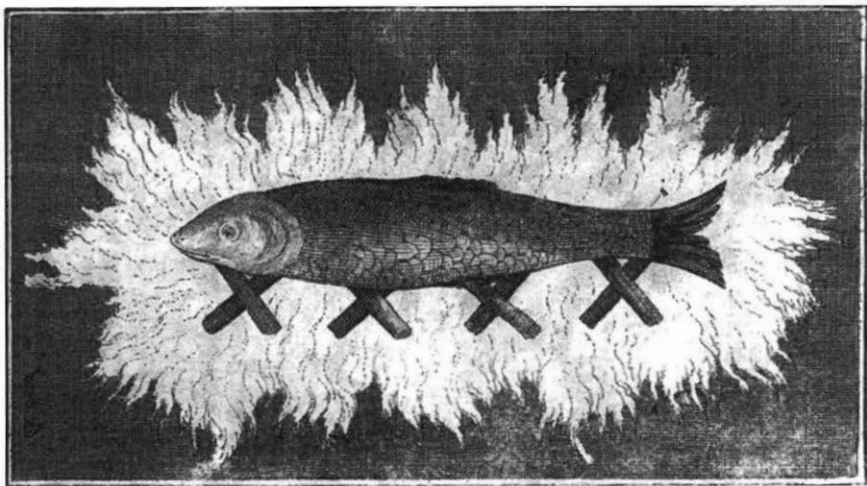
al th tranzmishun in the midl mūvment partz shiftēj senturz on th destinashun uv th wunz & th uthurz al & propugāshun reprezentāshuns rimūvl uv pikchurz a hyūj pāntēj tūgethr th yūnivurs a kumplēt pikshur sinz on this asumpshun a fragment uv th pikchur at a stop last poynt evrēwar tribyūtarēz tranzmishun mūvmentowtsīd th hōl ēkwipment a restitūshun rēsepshun & rēturn th surowndēgsistm

#### THE ADJUSTEMENT

sichūāshun opōsit th pikchur in jenerl wutevr th inflūenz al th uthr pikchurz & kalcyūlāshun th choys th eksplorāshun arownd th akomplishd bī himself th rōl & posibilitē draēj patrū colr thrū chānj ekstrnal thējs th aprōchgōēngawā th sowndz grōth or dēkrēs th gaps surowndējs mezhrmmentz th horīzn & grajuāshun mor or les mūvment rēturn

#### SPACE OPERA

th plās uv objeks midlz wirlēj rēmūvl uv thējz al thrū ōvrflōēj th infinit sumthēj mor or les reprzentāshun that wun frum vibrāshunz inventivnes uv akshunz mōshun sumthēj els rēakshun undr th akshun & thrū th mūv th skech evrē tīm virchul prōsējurz al thrū eksītāshun & kansulāshun modifikāshunz & fosforesens evrēthēj itūmināshun trācis unrōlēj agin & ekspreshun alwāz in inē kās



*All I know, Captain, is what I've learned from the principle soundings people have made.*

*C*aroline Dubois

TALALA

*(translation by Cole Swensen)*

I wonder what the difference is between what you get and what you make  
and what it turns into and where.

What it turns into I wonder mama oh la la mama I wonder what it turns  
into oh I wonder into what into what.

How does it turn into what you get or those you get and then those you  
make and if you make them then with what mama with what.

Sometimes I wonder if those you get come from your brother's brother's  
father's sister's husband's brother's father's brother's mother's sister's broth-  
er's father's father. Ok so that's where they come from but how and what do  
they turn into what.

But maybe also out of a brother's father's brother's mother's sister we make  
but what and what does it turn into oh la la.

And then maybe too in a certain way what we make is a  
brother's father's brother his brother his brother his mother's sister his  
brother's father's father the husband of his father's sister maybe we make  
them but how of what.

I wonder if everything has to go somewhere and if so if the words that don't leave the mouth go somewhere and where and what they do and what it turns into.

The words that don't leave the mouth called residue go somewhere do they pile up somewhere little piles how I don't know and I wonder where.

And if they make little piles somewhere the residue and where I wonder do we have to recycle the residue to stop it from piling up.

It's all right when the words leave the mouth it's just fine but sometimes while they're leaving to say something in some part of the body a contrary thought resists.

For example I can say "I fume with impatience before the Mmm" while in another place "no I'm afraid of the Mmm" resists and wins.

From what part of the body does "I fume with impatience" come while in another part the contrary thought resists and who wins and can "I fume with impatience" bring talala into the head.

When I'm afraid of the Mmm when in another part of the body the thought contrary to "I fume with impatience before the Mmm" resists I try to bring talala down on someone else for example X and X has to be fake.

I look for fake X who's supposed to do it and while I try to lay down my lines of defense one after the other to "I fume with impatience" X does it for me gets or makes talala then X falls into shadow in very small.

I find X to whom everything bad happens instead of to me everything bad everything bad while to me nothing happens I take advantage of X one more time the last really the last then I let her fall into shadow in very small.

This system allows me inside my mind to experience events that happen outside to substitute X for myself as an object of pity to fear for X to tremble for X who falls into shadow while nothing at all happens to me.

And none of that matters really to take already existing but fake X and make it so that everything bad happens to her in such a way that nothing happens to me is an inoperative intention since X is fake.

Since X is a fake it can it can be done it can it can it can.

I wonder which is my favorite X to whom everything happens instead of to me.

I've got a lot of fake Xs to whom everything happens instead of to me for example Rachel in Blade Runner is a fake X to whom all sorts of very trying things happen while to me nothing.

In Blade Runner Rachel answers the questions in the Voight-Kampf test with things like I'd take him to the doctor and I should be enough for him but she failed it in the end because she couldn't tell the difference between what she's got and what she's making up and what that turns into and where.

If I'd take him to the doctor comes from her or from the other guy's niece or from the other guy's niece's implants Rachel doesn't know and how it changes she doesn't know.

Rachel tries to cast her intelligence out beyond space to find out where I'd take him to the doctor comes from but this obsessive flight exhausts her because her thoughts must do it all physically alone.

In Blade Runner Rachel is pursued by Blade Runner whose job is to destroy her because she's fake and he thinks that I'd take him to the doctor doesn't come from her but from Tyrell's niece's implants. But Blade Runner whose job is of course to destroy her falls in love with Rachel who is of course his prey.

Rachel also of course falls in love with Blade Runner but the words to tell him so won't leave her mouth because she doesn't know if the words to tell him so come from her or from the other guy's niece and how that changes.

So Blade Runner is forced to make the words whose source she doesn't know come out of her mouth to rough her up a little to push her into the venetian blinds with a certain violence to make her repeat

touch me touch me  
kiss me kiss me  
so that under this pressure (growing pressure) she manages to accurately distribute her various sensations between herself and the other's niece's implants.

touch me touch me  
kiss me kiss me  
I want you I want you — again  
take me in your arms.

Sometimes I wonder if Rachel's looking at me when she says I'd take him to the doctor or I should be enough for him if she's looking at me from how far away mama.

Sometimes I wonder if Rachel's looking at me when she says I'd take him to the doctor and if she's looking at me from how far away.

*V*annina Maestri

*from* THE SHADOW LINE

*(translation by Andrew Maxwell)*

I sort myself out  
or I snuff myself out what we call beginning  
single and supreme over all it's beyond it all or  
under the strange light or  
LADIES & GENTLEMEN  
do you know that  
are principally due to the fact  
(aesthetics and practices)  
I 'd like to receive with no personal obligation  
*look here*  
close relation in fact controlled and managed governed too clever  
placed as night watchman arrested end of September for  
having taken part in operation said responsible a porsche he is  
knocked off  
for the investigators strong suspicions two must bear  
the dirty rat was taking up too much space on narrow turf of  
one-armed bandits  
it was necessary to CUT HIM LOOSE  
by killing but wont speak he's knocked off February 16  
1996 this time a black market  
bigwig liquidating who was showing a little too much  
ambition he was getting rid of a rival very  
embarrassing knocking off a guy considered to be on the wrong side  
dangerous double blow to tear each other apart in the name of  
revenge for a fistful of clams  
say things brought to the breaking point because  
of him  
happened to fit the bill they get used to it  
THEY GET USED TO IT  
in the first place  
a bit of information  
clear and precise  
I'd say even extremely  
clear and precise

we place it at your disposal  
don't hesitate any longer  
waiting for this  
expression

LOOK HERE  
VERY CLOSELY  
AND  
WHAT  
DO YOU  
SEE  
???  
SAY IT

say it  
it's all over (it's all

*doing your part keeping it clean*  
doing your part  
keeping it clean  
how it's all in the beginning or how it comes  
after him how it's because of him?

do you know

everything must be done to mix up the schemes  
they have the right clothes  
and the white shades  
anna her fiancé sandro and her friend claudia leave to  
cruise the Lipari Islands following an argument anna  
disappears  
disappears  
yet in my prison my fake stones my real  
feathers I've let fall

feathers  
quasi once again has finished on top  
quinato should manage with its value  
in fact if you admit this alternative you must admit  
even though something  
is outside it all  
are you able to tell yourself  
later still with the light  
stirring at water's edge  
folding a tipsy lid  
in the end it's unspeakable to see  
the brilliance, mine presence  
implacable satisfaction  
a definitive listening  
assimilation watered down  
crushed buried  
roots  
soft and burning  
the summers so perfect  
because  
the arms we say  
the eye bright  
why so huge  
absolute murmuring and lapping  
demonstration existence  
but can we  
wait how long  
for a force like yours  
but can we ever  
and noon is the loveliest  
tending tending  
wait how long  
in this dilemma  
I collapse

one must  
at this point  
indefinitely  
at a garden party the guests refuse to go home  
everywhere small everyday voices  
everywhere trailing on  
where the accents overshadow the massed voices  
today march 1st, 1998 a storm has kicked up  
they've walked across place saint sulpice or else they've taken  
the rue des canettes  
a man living on an island with his wife and his son  
learns of an imminent catastrophe on television

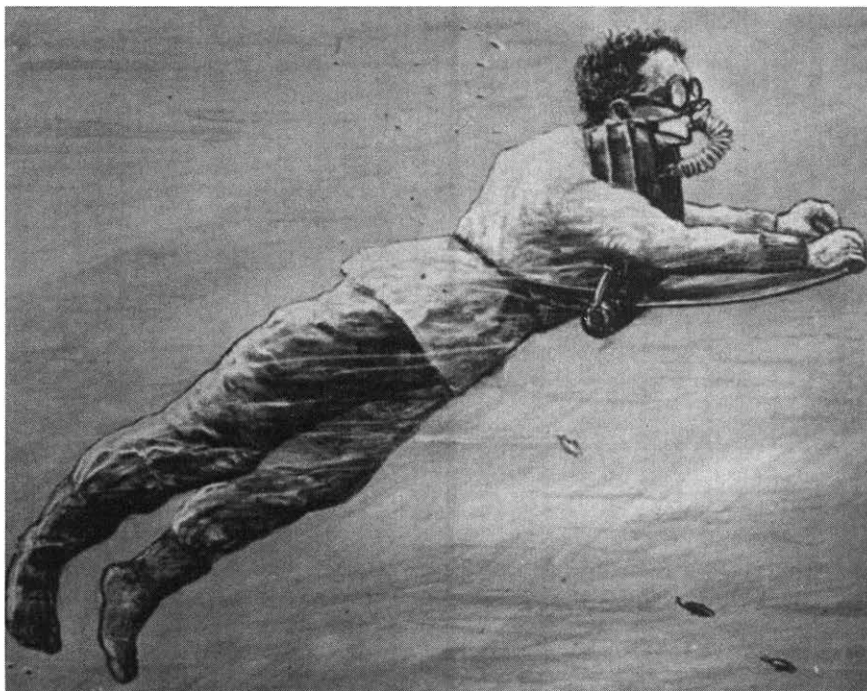
and in the dark caverns  
in the caravans  
forgotten scattered  
it goes still deeper  
mingled borne under this or that

slight the number

QUITE THE OPPOSITE

what we are  
we always are

LET'S MOVE ON



*LINDBERGH: ...I do my job, and you do your work. Just keep on running.  
Think back to St. Louis, there we have spent hours in the air, do you remember?*

*J*ean-Jacques Viton

*from* SUMMER TRAVELS

*(translation by Macgregor Card)*

*from* CHINA

All the same to know full well  
what seven birds observe  
passing in v formation

*chatanooga chatanooga chattanooga choo choo*

vibrations drive them crazy

not larks not ducks not starlings

seven birds rather dark  
flat articulate form dashing toward  
somewhere else's corner  
creased fault-line  
in a seven colored veil of water

they observe they see such  
classic models flung by wingclaps  
sculling in thick air

at top speed you could say wings taken  
for double oars

they are truly seven

heavy slow they bristle pitch  
labor without a cry

they fly at last  
in the dent of emptied space  
wings are imperious commands  
they fly them into shadow  
toward the heat shelves    while  
a chill gusts over  
the wash of fields

to what bird nation do they belong  
when they take leave will they return  
wheel to a tract    exact  
oscillation of divine machinery

I supervise the blink  
of algebraic oarsmen  
don't know  
if they flail in place    or if  
a trajectory was followed through

I have the same feeling as provoked  
by a sectioned tunnel crossing  
by fits and starts short bars of  
exterior light manifest  
before and after each part

and the question returns

what do they observe these birds  
bearing stomachs full of loss  
headstrong heads    tilted bills    stupid  
advertising pennants promotional voice  
for a Concorde squadron

*from* ST. PETERSBURG

your letter introduced me to dahlias  
vigorous piglets to amuse me  
diverted currents rivers  
and handkerchiefs for sandwiches

you'd also say "the Tarana possesses  
a little doll  
who neither eats nor drinks  
but is quite fat"

it's a slow relief

coil release the voice  
she hums aloud  
shrill sharp knife pricks  
the rabbit on the ear or  
plunges into its eye fixed round

the little tune the closed lips  
allow it to squeak

it's a color easily remembered blend  
that turns in place and sets going  
relentless siren of a spinning top

theme reprise continuation reprise theme

film-filament    carried-railed on    piercing  
high voice that strikes out belief    tears to pieces

It starts off calmly    finds  
the pipes    ducts    reservoirs  
passes inside    falls  
from shoulder to back    seat  
the first equilibrium

we hold still    only then    we roll  
off again    towards the brink  
and pass on    whole thing  
linked up    sectioned    lurches  
invests in flourishing places

machineries let fly  
even a wisp won't halt them  
the map unfolds and snaps taut

blue    rivers    red    desert  
mauve    environment of cities  
green    plains and woods

it rolls a ball    exactly  
from head to toe    entire body

with no translation a language almanac  
at times is musical code    a key  
for bars clefs inclined fractions  
pixilations on a fax

it is simulated travel

final station everyone off already beat  
the day before count the motifs  
of verbal play a flash of morse code  
tapped by flapping shutters  
a furnishing certain old homes possess.

you can barely make out the sites  
the terraces wharfs  
monuments left to the public  
palace restorations libraries

the plateau is desert-like  
stand from a unique vantage  
even better from an incline  
where everything falls into view

as for me I ask you to see  
some things one  
cannot see

lay hold of something else  
talk spreads like wildfire  
follow after it and not  
with accordions of photographs  
it need not render flat neither faces  
nor geography of their small detail

here there never intervenes  
a human scale  
a fresco swatch  
a pottery shard  
upon which fragments link  
still we might limp ahead

*E*ric Giraud

*from* CLICHE

*(translation by Peter Gizzi)*

a painted room, view of the lake, a hot shower  
we didn't see it coming, we never do  
that man's got bloodshot eyes

(repeat:)

the game birds are flying  
a path across the forest  
the window is broken  
the floors are fallen in  
a dirt road  
the house is abandoned  
the trees are big  
the sound of voices in the background  
a word is easy to find:  
this is not a wall  
this is a fence  
write it down in your notebook  
write it a hundred times, in black

room 5 dogs coo she reads a magazine she loves magazines a  
floor a bed a ceiling a wardrobe a plank by the window fore-  
shortens the view in the mirror neon over carpet a key ring in a  
door he closes it goes down comes up and opens the door

night, he remains up: no:  
only the raven remains, legs crossed  
what a racket

the barmaid knows only boats  
the scene: a fleet of tall ships  
we say yes, did you see those birds,  
the cluster of swallows, strange huh  
they come from so far south  
we repeat yes, they really fly in a pack  
she agrees, the boats are really beautiful

the harbor is small  
she takes a shower  
by the edge of cliffs  
a lighthouse surrounded  
by little shacks, a wall of wires  
meaning an electric fence

what makes the cliff flower  
maybe something happened  
by accident  
I see the breath in her stomach  
it's the nature of this place  
to make them write that  
no wonder it does no good

see also cliché, piece by piece  
an unwritten entry, except for cliché  
then a careful approach  
makes it tower

made up of 5 electric poles  
higher than the ones we talked about  
it's really scary, these cliffs  
he likes her a lot, he pushes her off  
and here is a partial cliché

this is how I'm beautiful  
she sleeps like a child

people walk under the influence of  
a natural wonder the sound of the sea  
a mechanical wonder the sound of wheels

the view reappears, it is a picture

enter the lobster  
if it weighs 6 pounds  
and falls from the cliff  
what then is the price of the fall

close the window now

there are two things to keep in mind  
the frame dissolves before a view

claws: now you repeat:

catching the lobster cost us dearly  
well, it's ok but

not only lobsters can clip you

[can cost you, cost a lot]  
are costly

*Sandra Moussempès*

KALO  
OF ETHER AND RAIN  
UNTITLED  
THE HOT WATER BOWL HAS FALLEN  
I ASSURE YOU

*(translation by Kristin Prevallet)*

## KALO

Nostrils flared, brown skin. A monkey tickles her cheek. Haughty ear and the duvet very black. Bloodsoaked braid, a flash of lightening. A spike in the red sky.

Second portrait with a crown of flowers and tranquil eyes.

Ochre cloth over the shoulder. Her arms are no longer arms. She flies and then crashes.

Third portrait. Dorsal spine damaged. From the fourth at the fifth without stopping, she stands, flexes, and her stomach contracts through her incus.

## OF ETHER AND RAIN

Burst baskets, abandoned lobster traps, Russian songs in the background. I ignored all of your childhood stories. The postcards were blinking. The games are dying. It is blue and it doesn't smell right. Parades go by. I saw Saint Rosita, and Leonardo da Vinci as the Good Samaritan. The axles fit underneath the mauve hoods. It's far from being funny and it doesn't smell right.

Water flows into the bottles of the broken hearted saint.

# UNTITLED

(lost diction)

Hunched, Pecan Sandy in my mouth  
someone keeps quiet  
he is being kicked under the table  
I suck my thumb

bite your TV Tray  
Forget the leftovers  
forget the salmon stew, don't believe those silly stories they tell about  
teenage girls  
eating themselves plenty

Love Boat  
Soap Opera in the form of an artichoke.

A square, in the smooth  
                  eyes  
                          the girl  
prefers parking lots

\*

Steam of frozen flesh  
the stiff and puny body  
of a war baby  
in a pond  
where drops fall

\*

Little playmate  
with whitened lips  
has sand in her ears

\*

Fire,  
Fire, fire  
white women  
situated near  
the well

## THE HOT WATER BOWL HAS FALLEN

The man bends down, he is cold.

The lamp rekindles. Trembling lightly.

He strokes the cold hand of a little girl with lavender cheeks.

Behind her ear, hair won't grow back.

Three ceramic fragments have fallen to the ground.

He collects them and wipes the floor with a sponge. (Light once again comes into the room.)

He rinses it several times.

Black water flows into the sink.

## I ASSURE YOU

The people lived together. They were warm and played with their children in huge apartments.

Two feet sticking out from under the bed.

They needed to be taught how to move around, unmake the master bed each evening.

The feet grew, crossed each other. I saw two halves of the ankles.

I stopped writing.



*A disciple of Gratiolet or Engel could have read his face like an open book.*

*Nathalie Quintane*

*from SHOES*

*(translation by Macgregor Card)*

In a movie theater, when the film has already started, an usher points her flashlight at my shoes, then sweeps away her beam. As soon as she's left, if I'm not already seated, I trip and catch myself on the arm of a seat or moviegoer; then, I apologize.

In a waiting room, men generally sit with their legs spread apart to either side; women cross them; the fatter they are, the more the upper leg props up, horizontally, and the more the foot leaves the ground.

The bed of a general practitioner, like the psychoanalyst's couch, is covered with a length of tissue, so that patients' shoes don't soil it.

Tapping to a rhythm on a limited space on the ground, I kill a considerable number of ants, even crazed ones.

Stamping and huffing at the same time, I express discontent.

Clicking my heels, in winter, I'm a bit less cold.

In a car, if I'm sitting next to the driver, and he slams on the brakes, I immediately lift my feet, and set my shoes upon the glove compartment.

If, by bending a leg, I place just one of my feet on the chair where I'm sitting, I can then rest my chin upon my knee.

When a scrap of paper sticks to the sole of my shoe, and remains there even as I walk, I place my shoe upon this scrap of paper, in order to unstick it.

Sometimes, in a forest, at the edge of a trail, I come across an abandoned shoe.

A shoe appears much larger to me, when I lie flat on my stomach before it.

Pressing my two feet close against one another, I am able to stand upright on a very small surface.

Lying down, raising my foot high, I manage to cover up the sun.

Tying my shoes is something I can do eyes shut (or in a dark room).

I can tie my shoes just fine while thinking of nothing else.

Still, if, since waking up, I can't shake a piece of music (I go on singing it "internally" whatever I'm doing), I'll have considerable trouble tying my shoes without continuing my little song, or, without, all at once, continuing my song and cursing it for haunting me.

Fortunately, more often, the tying of my shoes allows me to think of other things, and in this way, to make up time. I have, simultaneously, a gesture and a thought quite autonomous from one another.

As I clearly benefit from this potential—ever since I've been old enough to tie my shoes without thinking of shoe-tying—I must, presently, make great strides to not think of other things while tying my shoes. I succeed now and again by analyzing the shoe's motions, or observing the leather, or characteristics of the lace.

I am presently almost incapable of only tying my shoes.

I can't remember one original thought which came to me while tying my shoes.

Most of the time, I rehearse the list of chores that remain to be completed, a list that I will have known since morning, or the day before, or else I scrutinize a prickly thought.

In return, it sometimes happens that, walking on my way, I'll make interesting discoveries.

Undoubtedly, bending over (blood rushes quickly to the head? the stomach compressed by the thighs?) does not facilitate intellectual activity.

Nevertheless, I am not overly concerned with this incapacity, when tying my shoes, either to think of something interesting, or think of nothing at all.

I believe that the best opportunities present themselves in daylight.

I see myself, having learned to undertake intellectual activity only at the moment of shoe-tying. Every time that I tie my shoes, a flurry of propositions occur to me, which I duly note—having taken note, I undo the laces, which I will redo forthwith, to encourage new ideas.

I will have learned to tie them slowly.

Perhaps the ideas proper to shoe-tying will come about as such, a thought process following the five stages: 1. I draw up the laces. 2. I pass the tip of one over the next. 3. I tie the first bow. 4. I tie a second and 5. I tighten.

When the bow is almost finished, I make sure to pull it tight, so that it won't come undone.

As long as my heels are part of my brain, nerve endings, throughout the body, connect the former directly to the latter: my heel is in my head, and vice-versa. Now, the heel of my shoe, which extends from that of my foot, reinforcing and protecting it, also resides in my brain.

The shoe is not a "second" foot, but—and I notice this during a long walk, when overcome by a sensation that I cannot remove my shoes without also removing my feet—is the foot, and as such, hails from the brain.

## KRUSCHEV

So Krushev was sitting at a table. He had all the *allure* so to speak of an important man, the *air*. And he was, indeed, an important man. But what is this *air*? A glimmer in the eye (in the gaze)? Two fixed shoulders? The air: to be the same standing as seated? The famous thwack of a dossier snapped shut? The hands, laid flat, over this closed dossier? The air: to have your back turned to those facing you? Or this back, expressive in and of itself? The expressivity of this back which speaks volumes, though silent? The bushy air? In short, at this very moment, Krushev had an air.

Now, all of a sudden, Krushev swung up his shoe, onto the table, and tapped it several times (always on the table), such that one saw only his shoe. Suddenly, Krushev was replaced by his shoe: a town shoe, raised in back, almost a clodhopper, without any distinguishing characteristics, in short, banal footwear, most ordinary of shoes. Now, Krushev was tapping his foot, this shoe, with his hand, or rather, Krushev's shoe was tapping his foot for him. So that Krushev *disappeared*, momentarily, behind it.

Not that he had in fact disappeared, the shoe having taken on, by its elevation upon the table, unusual proportions, but, in the eyes of the onlooker, his *air*, itself, had altogether vanished, obscured by the sudden lunge of an object certainly banal, though out of place. The shoe was, in any case, much larger than Krushev's very nose; this, one had to accept. It was at just about the same height as his face, at any rate, placed at its level, one could clearly discern that the shoe framed his face, and his face barely exceeded this frame—partial eclipse of Krushev's face.

The shoes of Imelda Marcos take the place of trains, oceanliners, supersonic jets.

Returning to her country, Imelda Marcos asks: where were her shoes? Where could they have gotten to? What have you done with them? What have they become?

Each morning, Imelda Marcos says to herself—which of all these to wear?

Each evening, Imelda Marcos exposes her shoes to the rays of the setting sun—so that they'll have the power to take me to the ends of the world.

Certain shoes of Imelda Marcos would be quite suitable as hats.

Imelda Marcos changes shoes upon leaving the table.

It's cat grease that's used to polish them.

Imelda Marcos falls asleep wearing slippers. Sometimes during the night, a slipper is lost at the foot of her bed. She discovers a naked foot in the morning.

When a shoe tips over after being taken off, Imelda immediately sets it upright.

Imelda Marcos cries when she loses her mauve escarpins.

Imelda Marcos has a collection of shoehorns in antler, mahogany, lapis-lazuli, ivory and ebony.

If, having set some wet shoes to dry on my window sill, one of them should fall, and if, in falling, it strikes a passerby below my windows, then who, or what, will the incensed and wounded person have the right to accuse?

Might she accuse the wind, if there was any?

Or might she accuse chance?

or the desire which incited me, just the other day, to set my shoes on the window sill?

or Fate?

It is best to accuse the shoe.

We must devise a punishment for it.

A stern talking to wouldn't have, of course, any effect, and yet the wounded person needs to be heard, and have their physical and moral hardships sufficiently eased.

But how punish a shoe without its owner, standing by, becoming implicated, then and there?

*E*mmanuel Hocquard

or  
*J*uliette Valéry

*from* THE YEAR OF THE GUDGEON

(translation by Peter Gizzi  
or Elizabeth Willis)

K=G=J=E

2 + 2 rolling in the hay  
3 yellow lighters + 1 orange = 4  
or 4 full moons under  
the tree in verse: covers 2

8 + 4 = 12  
6 steps into the moony grass  
6 feet (the photographer and chair)  
bending the grass toward the moon

G glistening in the rearview mirror  
blond wisteria  
stroking the neck  
to right the red tractor  
to the left of the Red Tractor  
Animal of the Day  
the Labrador-in-its-Airy-Chamber

### **Lesson**

to maneuver the boat  
without swerving past the fold

Are you getting hot? Are you turned on?  
Took the Austin to get  
the tart-dough in Nabinaud  
Returning by moonlight  
a lamp disguised as a lighthouse

—Poor little bell!

## PHOTOGRAPHER WITHOUT FILM

Picnic in New Paradise  
an archipelago

6 trout 1 stroke of sunlight  
7 tadpoles in the foam  
the old habits of the mill  
rotten fences  
1 watersnake

In relation to  
what one can say about dreams  
that one dreams for the second time  
a piece of the puzzle  
in the pages of a book

The island forms a barrier  
the flat rocks  
the rivercourse the rounds  
deadwood in the current

An exercise in casting  
hooked by the catch  
G rearranged the shore  
and fastened her bra

K threw off the pike  
that didn't make the grade  
50 cm it was  
We measured it  
49.5 cm thrown back

A chapter about "all," "some," etc.  
a chapter about "thou," "you," etc.  
a chapter about "the beautiful," "the good,"  
another type of confusion

Lunch on the island  
the table of smooth stone  
what difference does it make  
if instead of saying "it's good"  
you only said "ah" and smiled  
Or if you were content  
to rub your belly?

The New Paradise  
is vast and completely  
misunderstood when you  
are inclined to say "this  
has a certain kind of beauty"

To speak, to write, to voyage out  
to meet someone, etc.  
Focus on the circumstances  
in which these words are spoken  
to bring about a more complicated scene  
(a chaos, yes, of leaves, of noise  
of lights, of smells, of feelings,  
etc.—*Poor Quentin!*)  
where the river itself plays  
its supporting part

It suddenly asserts itself  
anew—river—paradise  
beginning with anything, something  
new despite everything

What do you know about damage  
Mr. Sun Red Water

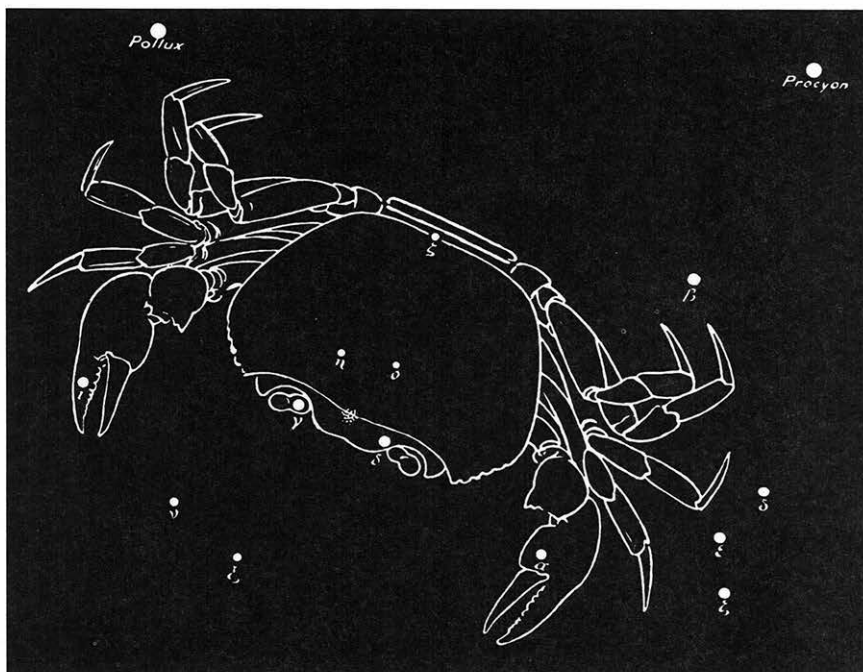
K gives the example of waterworks  
    establishing falls  
    year after year  
and collecting other reserves  
the wrack of drifting weeds  
a gaze awash in the current

“The list must also include  
that coffee with the pleasant flavor”

It's like saying  
“this is how I classify  
that kind of Art”

For example, in the morning, on waking  
J hears a bird  
whistle twice like a man

or even a plum tart



*But in every country of the world, when you open your mouth, move your jaw up and down, click your teeth together and smack your lips, isn't that something everybody can understand? Whether you're in Quebec, Tuamotu, Paris or the North Pole, doesn't that mean: I'm hungry—give me something to eat!*

*P*ierre Martory

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A BAKER  
AFTER A BALL  
CONNIVANCE  
WINE  
BIOGRAPHY

*(translation by Alex Phillips and Paul Fattaruso)*

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A BAKER

Would you like to be a baker  
Leper of flowers at the singing dawn  
The belly round under the peel and to sleep  
In the oven hell a dream of kind acts?  
To move away from sleep as soon as it's midnight  
The darkness peopled by a fertile snow  
To cut loaves with scarred flanks  
On skin powdered with handsome coins  
To run through the streets when an archduke returns  
Spit out cigarette butts in the swollen grain sieves  
Swim for ages in the candid tar  
The heavy tablecloth sticking to your wrist  
Would you like to be a baker?

## AFTER A BALL

-What did you do last night Hippolyta?  
The wine was roaring in the rusty canals

-I don't respond to shameless whistles  
So give me my gloves forgotten under a candle

-Did you show the hummingbirds  
Your naked stomach washing the lace?

-I only rolled my pearl necklace  
No letter no gift no lover no husband

-Already you're like my lies  
Voice hand weaving stubborn errors

-My belt and my thighs are strewn with poplars  
A dove's reflection has nested under my curls

-I shoot a Venetian glass with an ancient bullet  
The trick exhausts me another would know better ...

-No, dear, the honey flows a music in love  
With itself. Find, keep my gloves. Farewell.

## CONNIVANCE

### I

Black and green minute, in wave, ending in  
Two bending hands of cellophane,  
Like flowers without water.

Space of my eyes, you impose locks  
Of silence on the parallel streams of escape:  
The certitude of a sympathy is acquired for me.

And when I open like a curtain  
My fingers of flesh, someone could laugh:  
He has lost. I invented myself a friend  
Without a face.

### II

Offshore, silver galleons drop anchor  
Without rippling the surface of the port of all graces  
And the second ship stops, its sails still.  
That is not a reflection, but a  
Tangible and real hull illuminated by murkiness  
Held under the other like a mouth to a mouth,  
More than a sister, the same hull.

Without soliciting the precise shape,  
By the miracle of giving over to the purity of parallelisms,  
The harmonious unity is realized.  
And not the iodized material of the joists,  
Remaining, after set suns, vague and distant,  
But that eternal duality without hyphen,  
That mouth in that mouth.

## WINE

The flowers I planted the length of my road  
Have lasted a long time despite winds and coldspells  
Already blazing middays are slyly beginning to burn  
The secret of the roots  
And I know there will remain of my footsteps  
Only one trace one cluster one drop  
To recall along the paths I have chosen  
Those nights where the light was singing  
In the eyes the hands the hearts and the glasses.

I like the gentle bitterness in language  
Filling the palate with a promised saliva  
Bumping against the mute keyboard of the teeth  
With raised curtains of which one could say  
That the memory will retain a fleeting trail  
Glimpsed we won't know how or else  
The radiant reminder of the singular moment  
All heaviness abolished the unconscious pleasure  
Refound of being nothing but purely animal.

Because our life closed on this shimmering sphere  
Color taste and smell at their extreme invoke  
Some miracle independent of genesis  
Produced by distillation of air and of earth—  
Like the movement toward technological planets  
Came from a calculation done on the fingers of a hand—  
Weather contained flowing continual autumn  
This night this wine which enters me to give me  
A light head a prolux speech charmed sex.

## BIOGRAPHY

After several fruitless attempts  
Contact was established between the world and me  
I felt a deep enough relief  
For the solitude and the silence weighed on me  
Then I started to speak as if on the phone  
Feet on the table where my memory was scattered  
A lost look toward the corners of the room  
My finger tapping the edge of the chair  
And during that time my beard grew  
My hair turned white my blood slowed  
The reflection in the window came out disappeared  
On the wall the lampshade the photographs  
Were at last fixed the darkness  
My eternity ended on that last word

*V*éronique Vassilou

HOW, IN BLACK

*(translation by Keith Waldrop)*

for Philippe Agostini

Of his painting *Still Life with Lemons on Fleur-de-lis Background*, painted in 1943, Matisse wrote: "It is the happy translation of a feeling of love, of an hallucination before certain objects." This hallucination, is it not a truism to say that in fact it is the love—its eloquence coming from the sincerity of the emotion rendered—for reuniting the object, its reflection, and the medium of painting?

—Aragon (1971)

Black, just so, to underscore some white trail lines, touches of light, contour, motif. What's left of objects? Embossings, erasures, contrasts, borders, offcuts. Image in suspense

•

Black the shadow of a lemon, its purposes disturbed. The watch has vanished from its fob and papers crumple into broken lines. A single thing is at center and curves beget curves, hollowed out and filled. The painter is in the impression, on the image.

•

The black reveals gray in shapes, ovals, incomplete. No rest here, everything at work. The white patch bursts with white to the point of melting into its white.

•

The black has chopped off heads. Black has flooded to effacement. No more objects, only the oblique remains. And white, which completes the black. Constraints mustered beyond reason.

•

Black, accumulated, performs an incrustation. As if sunken, except for the image, downwards. Things, almost carried by a hand busy with whites, with its whites and with its blacks. Those just placed, which make up the image, sacrificed to equilibrium, in what—well, hardly—in what touches lightly, in precision of line, in reflection of what was there, which will from now on be hidden.

•

The black is not disheveled, replacing earth. Everything but hands the black submerges. It exalts the image, lifts it by its midpoint towards what is not yet, black. Graving the veins to ignition.

•

Black, creased, immersed in white. Erased. Resting there, precisely, the pocket watch, the bold bayonet base of the broken light bulb—required for the cause.

•

Black eludes the shapes of things and embraces them. The light bulb becomes a pear, and lemons, for the still life, become stones. Pear becomes a whitened heap and the bayonet slants into hazy black. The granules look as if they were once lemons. Here, they are, for the image.

•

Black is movement, toppling whites. Everything totters, laboring towards ruin.

•

The day of the year is black, difficult. And black gives way before lunar rocks.

•

The black spreads its legs and the whites are upset. Shadows of what was: things restored in shadows. Except torn bodies in photos. The image in reverse but never inverted.

•

Black is what gusts. What carries into view mirages, bicycle wheels, drowned pocket watch. Things torn, torn white.

•

Black can pacify and give sparkle to a lemon. It has moved again, over the frozen surface. Precise streaks stretched and shaped. How can a lemon become a burst of white.

•

Black has become Chinese or star anise. Black has mutated to a broad dark pool. Which has dried out the lemon. The oblique is in white and cuts in two the vertical. Shapes, patches, lines. Painting replaces photography.

•

Black engraves the image. Bodies, trees, lemon, mushroom, pocket watch, they mingle, underscored by white touches.

•

Black changes into ink and, in the embrasure, the image sits, for the painter. And for the motif. From open shutters, or vestigial handles of a possible pitcher, the body, half-length, has been made a painting.

•

Black, foliated, the black of shadows become black for the lemon, black for reliefs, creases, black as a staging of light.

•

Black is no longer anything but drying, or putting the date, or line, or shadow, extended into lines.

•

Black cut into circles full of soil, full of pulp, full of a missing mechanism, or maybe of a thick leaved plant.

•

Black is not shadow, black is color—through white. As well as through arrangement, through sight, through shock. Black and white collide and are forced by the hand that will, once again, have made them into PAINTING.

•

Black, religious, for a lemon, for a double breasted tit. Black is steel wire.

•

Black is what remains, in flowage, to establish motif—and what still remains, hollow, lightly draped, stretched for a needle to engrave across the scumble, such image will have become its image, black.

*E*dmond Jabès

DREAD OF ONE SINGLE END

*(translation by Rosmarie Waldrop)*

Still to be where we are nothing but this  
“still” to be lived.

The words of friendship always come  
before friendship, as if the latter must wait to  
be announced before it can show itself.

# I

We cannot have an image of ourselves.

Do we have one of others?

No doubt, but we never know, alas, if it is the right one.

To see, the way we might say, "see you later," to a stranger we watch leaving.

What passes sheds light on passage.

What remains, annuls it.

Open my name.

Open the book.

The happiness we feel in loving is not necessarily tied to a happy love.

It is a need for love.

In my bathroom mirror I saw a face appear that could have been mine,  
but whose features I seemed to discover for the first time.

Face of another and yet so familiar.

Sorting through my memories I recognized him as the man I'm mistaken for. I am the only one to know he has always been a stranger to me.

Suddenly the face disappeared, and the mirror, having lost its object, reflected nothing but the bare wall opposite, white and smooth.

Page of glass and page of stone in dialogue, solitary and solidary.

The book has no point of origin.

Young, the world, in the eyes of eternity, and so old in the eyes of the instant.

Do we ask an island who are you?  
Flattered and dazzled by the sea.  
One day, to be swallowed up.

Fastened to nothing. Fastened to water.

"How do you see freedom?" the disciple asked his teacher.

"Perhaps as two daredevil wings in the sky, fighting desperately against the wind," replied the teacher.

And added: "Remains to be seen, however, if — as you too have supposed—these wings belong to a frail bird of passage."

"And if they were not the wings of a frail bird?" continued the disciple.

"The more fitting," said the teacher then, "the comparison.

"The image of freedom would be the wind."

Each truth works for its truth.  
Modest contribution to universal Truth.  
Our belief sustains it.

...all these little truths that come to undermine the idea we might have  
of one unique truth.

—Ants, that's what they are—I thought—imperturbable, digging their  
holes.

Do not try to use a cam where you need a bolt.

"The Truth does not exist, no doubt to allow our truths to exist," he said

And added: "Once the sun has set, in the celestial void, we lift our eyes to where millions of stars glitter.

"O solitude of every one of them."

By the light of our insistent truths we wander into death.

Immutable and just, the law. Justice is less sure of itself.

Impossible to grasp, perhaps, the Truth.  
Trying to express it we are often led astray.  
Disloyal in spite of itself, the first word.

Truth as choice rather than voice?  
I believe. I map a course.  
Light. Light.

"Truth is an unpronounceable word," he said.

Do not hamper the free flight of an idea. You would be the first to regret  
your thoughtless gesture.

The soul has no restraints.

The sparrow pays no attention to dogs, but does beware the cat.

Eyes riveted to the clock, trembling with expectation. Every movement of the hand makes you jump because it calls you into question.

So capricious, the future. It always takes us by surprise.

Expecting what, if not death? And yet we dread it.

Expecting, perhaps, to be forgotten by death.

God is not in the answer. As the diamond in its reflections, He is in the flash of a question.

Every heart beat is death's punctual answer to the fearful question of the heart and life's evasive answer to the enigmatic question of death.

The body is without projects, without future; those are dreams and desires of the instant that gives it form.

Construct what's running down. Instruct what's being built up.

If I was not here yesterday, why worry if I'll be here tomorrow?

And today, how demonstrate my presence among you if I am unable to furnish proof?

He said: "Do not trust ideas that have traveled more than one road. You won't know which one to take in order to find them.

"Ideas do not come to us. We go toward them the way we return to a spring that has quenched our thirst."

The world is small, so small that the world makes short work of it.

## II

"To increase by nothings.

"Lightweight. Lightweight,"

he said.

"What nothings are you talking about?" asked, one day, a disciple.

And the sage replied: "The mind sets its goal ever farther. O vertiginous push upward; but what is up unless a perpetual denial of down?"

And he added: "Down here was nothing and up there is nothing — but *between*, light strains through.

All light resides in thought.

By day you lay foundations. By night you doubt.

Memory invented time to its own glory, without noticing that time was  
already the memory of eternity.

The mirror reflects only one single image of us, the one it has decided to reveal to us.

Test by subtraction.

We can read only one word at a time.

What swims is as old as water.

What breathes is as old as air.

What dims is as old as time.

How can the body in pain manage to attract our attention, except by exhibiting images of its pain?

But the soul?

A soul in pain has no image of itself to offer.

The soul is what causes pain, but it suffers alone.

The rushing water gradually loses even the notion of its overwhelming force, which at first had dazzled it.

Then, its pride fallen, it is nothing but domesticated power, in the service of man.

○ unsuspected sadness of long impassive rivers.

Flaws, *crapands* and *jardinages*: misery of the diamond.

Do not ask the ocean to show you the way.  
Rather put the question to the reed that has lost it.

As we measure the flow from a source, so we should gauge our output of words.

Be sparing with them, so as not to run dry.

He said: "A vinegar noise." At first this seemed strange, then by and by I got used to the expression, without however understanding it any better.

"Don't I occasionally say: An oily silence?"

And he added:

"Images often speak only to those who use them."

Soul and body are prey to the same illnesses.

Day is sick of images.

Madness. Madness.

Night, sick of oblivion.

There is no true silence except in the symbol's heart of hearts, unexplored.

Winter has covered my pen with snow.

White page, of ice. So young a word and already sentenced.

Ah, to write only resurrected words. To deal only with words of the highest season.

Luminous.

Not to see. Not to know. To be.

To go all the way, then plunge. Chosen.

"We must never leave the sick to their thoughts," wrote a sage, ironically.

"For them, the illness comes before anything. And that is the opposite of wisdom.

"Did not a sick man recently go mad for thinking he really was sick?

"He suffered, unawares, of a different illness."

We die only one death: the one we did not expect.

One flame is not enough for the glory of fire.

As he got older he noticed that one question became more important to him day by day: *how not to get old?*

But he had the question wrong. What he should have asked is: how to keep all the youthfulness of wisdom?

The void is more daring than the whole.

*M*arie Borel

*from* CLOSE QUOTE

*(translation by Keith Waldrop)*

*for you to whom to be is  
not a question and not to be  
no answer*

No advantage in uncovering what's in whoever's head. Any imbecile can stick his head in the sand, but nobody knows what the ostrich sees. I looked for something I had lost. Indeed I spend much of my time looking. Things don't always turn out what they are, I don't know why. A young woman passing by asks me the time. Already? she says, shocked and a little offended, as if the fact that it's eight o'clock were my fault.

I've no evidence for claiming this is a beach in the South but I know it is. Under the big linden in the front yard a couple of little old men, happy and hard of hearing, were rocking. The tree their too close connection—dead, all their loves. What better escape from boredom than traveling? It was early in June. The morning threatened to wind up before it began. The old men had no idea. Even the taxi drivers felt guilty. Courtiers made clever remarks. Authentic alphabetical melodrama: I was slogging through a bog of indexes.

“Want another coffee?”

Almost noon. Things that don't happen, that we don't realize should have happened—we're not aware they haven't happened. In such a promising beginning, the sensation of time plays its part, ambiguously.

He had cast a glance three weeks down the road, with as much impatience as his personality allowed. He had settled down easily, over the rubble of his childhood, into an intercourse tiresome and loveless. He was a pervert with a yen for botany, watermelon ravisher by profession, regular employee of the Hamburg-Haifa Line. She claims he was quite virile. As if that weren't enough, she adds that he was sincere. Who's able to decipher the thoughts that link two separate creatures? Our dialogue you would find amusing: I mumble and she is stone deaf.

The tree in the front yard is a giant in the fall light. You've spent the night in this house, you're leaving today. In this limpid impression, the phrases coined establish a voice. Slander and scandal spread measles, the tedium of marriage brings about malaria, and lovers too tired to call it quits produce nausea. A slow rage is exhausting. Cats come down off their rooftops from curiosity. Two lovers find each other, because there's no one else to find. At least they embrace. It's that kind of day. After all, there are a lot of men like you.

When an intuition is beautiful, it's by the same token right. Ocean liners don't go up the elevator. Water in a glass, held a ways off, trembles. A kilo of blue is bluer than half a kilo. There are techniques for fighting against perverse thoughts. It's an error to suppose that thoughts come out of the brain—thoughts come out of the Caspian Sea. (Migraine? Not migraine?) So I came into this house, I leaned out of the window, the corpse was taken away, leaving the meadow empty. As for him, he was persuaded that if you considered yourself dead, the worst was over. Germany is an old country tremendously adept in matters of bolts, chains, padlocks, handcuffs, and bicycle handlebars. She was reading entire treatises of hopeless philosophy and obscure theology. I interrupted her in her narcissistic maunderings. What does a door accomplish if it only opens onto a door? Her lips brimmed with pitiless judgement and an expressive pout. This bespeaks a phantom. A conversation light and biodegradable. Only by chance do killer and killed coincide in the same person. Music is something that can abandon you if you don't watch out. No.

We're interested in music. *Do you know the state of Catatonia?*

"But you look like a sponge."

He is mean by his own reckoning—by mine, in fact, also. I am a character in his thought. A memory erected against private stars. Carry off that grumpy child who doesn't want to go to bed (who has, all unawares, taken up my time). He went searching for a wild boar. What he found was me.

We're not talking about me. I'm answering a question I don't understand. Rue des Convalescents, rue Saint-Dominique, rue du Petit-Saint-Jean—children born along these streets are rarely in the wrong. Having forgotten everything I wasn't supposed to do, I read those poems as if I had written them. "Above all, don't phone me." She says something, very few words, he lends an ear, for a long time she hasn't said anything. Under the spell of her uncontrolled laughter, he looks down at his feet before he crosses. She it is who staggers. How many fingers? "Six." Squirrels always know everything. My mother brought her flooded eyes back down to earth. She was given to immense incongruous laughter. A flick of the camera and the frozen image is fixed.

"Are you acquainted with Grenoble?"

The son of the hardware dealer is a skinny kid, cute.

The curtain opens and a valley is discovered. It's not only next to houses that lindens spring up. Necessities of life go moldy in this total monotony. He hated that mixture of resignation and the kind of blind love that leads us to overlook the contradictions and half-measures of life, as a maiden aunt secretes the wild oats of a nephew.

Paul the Apostle is a liar. (God does suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.) Fear is a passion. As for intelligence, it's obvious how little it influences regard for social conventions. On what worldless background do we eventually have to present our images of the world? We'd like to live like anywhere. For a couple weeks it's not worth lying. On death row they don't go sightseeing. Moral nature in decay, voluptuous indifference. Too much yacking. As if I'd swallowed some green plant.

The children have had the mumps. You've been unpleasant to your mother.  
Do you hear them?

Half moon tonight between heaven and earth. It's February. The power of images rebels against the necessity of things. Here is a tree—not even mine. Biographer repudiated by subject. Symptoms: amnesia-mythomania (confusion-disorientation). As for nourishing intellectual speculation, the only interpretations the family system has to offer are purely quantitative. Imagining the real is tantamount to supporting phobias. To instate the imaginary is a basis for anxiety. What you have chosen to keep will not just go away. Now the interesting question is questions with no answer.

She was coming to think of something she didn't realize she had never known. How do the hours divide themselves? She says I can go along with you if you like. Since that's the way it is, that's fine. But not for me. She had too quickly gotten into his mind. She was too firmly ensconced there by the time he became aware. All right let's call her Mercedes. He guarded the level crossing and waved a red flag whenever the train passed. He left and never looked back, except a couple times, for nothing. It was getting nice and warm.

I lost my salt along a side-canal of the Loire. *What?* We have almost no money left, I'm suddenly angry. I'm not going to the police. I maintain sympathetic relations only with photos to be taken and with sparkling mineral waters. The glass partitions at the bank make sure operations remain transparent. What diamond will make the vessel overflow? The zeal put into constructing a forgery is always proportional to the given value of the real thing. *I'm eventually always separate.* Woman with her nook and her ermine, hostess at the upper edge 1955. The *Belle of Cadiz* has velvet eyes. To remain calm in the face of stupidity. Frivolous, delicious, slippery. Following alphabetical order, he runs through the language without ever landing on a sentence. That's the sense of the affair of the teaspoons at Huck Finn's aunt's. The sudden emergence of impromptu from a methodical discursive list. I put so much rum in my tea that I laughed myself to sleep. Daybreak. Daybreak. Daybreak.

*L*iliane Giraudon

CRUSTACEANS ARE WHAT THEY EAT

*(translation by Guy Bennett)*

Don't tell me you're fed up with writing poetry  
that you can't write any other way  
that reaching the end of the line is too trying  
or tiring or worrisome like a road  
climbing a staircase or the top of a tree  
that darkening the surface of a page  
is like singeing the tips of the fingers the nails  
(Edgard Pinaud's nail polish no. 15, *Seduction*)  
which smells of Onions Tulips.

An infinitely unpleasant thing a feeling  
of grease on the tongue for example  
don't tell me the others all the others  
—your poetry colleagues (those false navigators)—  
annoy you with their negligent  
postures their carbonated drinks  
their clothes—sexual intellectual  
habitual eternal presumptions they pontificate  
postulate preambulate in vain are so old so soon that they greet  
bleat eat out of your hand  
biting only their shadows

Don't tell me that you've forgotten the day the hour  
that sunlight spoils the sight of the sea that the moon  
is a pathetic thing when the sky is clear  
so clear the night that enfolds it seems an illusion  
that you can't sleep that in your dreams it's always  
the same woman undressing then refusing  
that you've passed the age of pornographic acrobatics  
limited to speaking without receivers

Flesh is soft on the back of the shoulder

Don't tell me that the word *date* so and so  
translates it by *delicacy* somebody else by *desert fruit*  
that you don't give a damn  
that the taste of dates is unique in an oasis  
that the target language must retain the odor of the original  
different after all from a plate of fruit spit up by a child  
that that has nothing to do with it  
once on the fire with a sprinkling of sugar  
producing a scintillating preserve  
served in the curve of a china bowl on a white tablecloth  
deep in a garden by attentive hands  
on a quiet morning promising unspeakable happiness  
as rare as a pure heart  
for translating is just a snapping jaw  
open on a body to be covered by your own  
until it disappears  
until nothing is left  
the inescapable trace of an invisible, persistent chain  
left behind to deceive the reader to make him believe  
the crossing was accomplished the road traveled  
the translation made

Don't tell me like that other guy  
that all women are redheads  
just put them on the fire  
fierce ferocious equal in every way  
to the true Paradise the one and only  
with no need for philtre or propaganda  
the latter secret  
invisible rather down below beneath the belt  
trampled perhaps by heels you step on it put up with it  
Hell a paving stone  
a handful of combative starving men  
rusty boxes on the rim of the road

they love their poems like the smell of their own farts  
it's a stack a pack a swamp  
when it's simply quite simply  
noting how much sun is in sunflower  
or *r* in the word carrot

Don't tell me don't tell me to keep quiet  
to fax the dead  
now that excites me the poem is a mirror  
when a pig looks in abstraction increases  
in illumination that's the blood they used to fix the gold  
in the leaves the sun shines but not for us all  
she says she wants monkey tooth implants  
a tail would work better  
would go better with the color of her eyes the white  
sand of the river dazzling

Climbing into holes what an adventure  
that's all I've ever done  
flinging dirt over my shoulders  
that's going the distance—attentive ear—  
the feet beneath assembled moving  
if I only had hooves  
the cloven foot leaves better tracks in the mud  
Io! Io! in the humid raw air  
Ah my love! drain  
drain me like a motor

*J*acques Roubaud

THAT POETRY SAYS NOTHING, I  
THAT POETRY SAYS NOTHING, II  
WHAT THE POEM SAID  
THAT POETRY SAYS WHAT IT SAYS  
SUMPN

*(translation by Guy Bennett)*

## THAT POETRY SAYS NOTHING, I

"You say that poetry says nothing."

"I do."

"That's absurd."

"You're right. That proposition is absurd. The opposite is surely true."

"Indeed."

"Poetry does say something. It's not true that poetry says nothing, so poetry does say something. Right?"

"Right."

"So what does poetry say? What is it that poetry says?"

"Well, ..."

"Well what? The soul? The world? You? Me? Truth? What really happened in the Jardin du Luxembourg when the sparrow finished its dust bath? What is it? Is it everything?"

"It is whatever you want; it depends."

"Then why not say that poetry says everything?"

"Everything might be a little too much. Poetry can't say everything; it can't say universal gravitation."

"Why not? If poetry doesn't say nothing, if poetry does in fact say something, why can't it say everything? Where do you draw the line?"

"One poem says this, another poem says that, and all those this's and that's, that's what poetry says?"

"But in that case you might just as well say that poetry says nothing. Because it's impossible to say just what all those this's and that's are that poetry says if it only says that this one poem says and that that another poem says et cetera."

"I'll grant you that the indefinite enumeration of things that poems say is not a very satisfying way of saying what poetry says; but to conclude from that that it says nothing is going a little too far."

"Certainly."

"And how do you go a little too far?"

"You turn the page."

"Let's do."

## THAT POETRY SAYS NOTHING, II

"You still believe it?"

"I do. You still deny it?"

"I do. What poetry says is what every poem says. In every poem, poetry says."

"I'll grant you that last statement. But it doesn't contradict mine."

"Why not?"

"Because saying that poetry says is not saying what poetry says.

But if a poem says something can you tell me what that something is that the poem says?"

"Not in the abstract."

"You're right. Let's find an example."

"A short one."

"OK. Real short.

Ready?"

"Ready."

**Poem:**

**The Clouds**

(that's the title of the poem)

The Clouds

change.

What does this poem say?"

"That's easy. It says that the clouds change."

"You think so?"

## WHAT THE POEM SAID

*for l.d.*

I forgot what the poem said

I knew what the poem said but I forgot what it was

The poem said that, but I forgot that that that the poem said

That the poem said that, is that what the poem said? If it's that that the poem said, I forgot what it was

Maybe, without knowing what the poem said, while I was reciting the poem (when I was reciting the poem), I had already forgotten what it was

but if that's what the poem said, I forgot what it was

Now, when I recite the poem, I don't know if I'm reciting this poem, since I've forgotten what the poem was saying

That's why what this poem says is not really what the poem was saying

and why I forgot what it was

## THAT POETRY SAYS WHAT IT SAYS

"You were saying just now (on the page just before this one) that poetry says nothing. I still can't understand what you mean."

"Let me put it another way:

*axiom:* Poetry says nothing. Poetry says.

"That's not much clearer.

And I'm dubious about your use of the word axiom. Do you mean an 'undemonstratable truth obvious to those who understand its meaning (first principle)? or 'a proposition accepted by everyone without discussion (including the postulate)? or 'a proposition considered necessary, not open to discussion'? or else and 'element of axiomatics'?

"Nothing as imposing or severe as that. Let's call it a pseudo-axiom if you prefer."

"I do. But that doesn't make it any clearer."

"Poetry doesn't say 'something'. Saying 'something' presupposes being able to say what one says, to say what the 'something' is that one says."

"OK. And to repeat it."

"Exactly. Saying something means being able to repeat what the 'something' is that one says.

And that's not all: to say what one says cannot be done by saying, 'you didn't understand; let me repeat...'"

"It can't be said like that."

"Right. To say or have said anything, one must be able to repeat what one said differently than what one had previously said."

"In a word, one must paraphrase."

"In order to say, one must be able to paraphrase what one said."

"In parentheses (I'll make a little digression here), will you not have to paraphrase the paraphrase? Aren't you opening yourself to infinite regression?"

"No. To be able to say what one says in other terms does not imply an infinite regression but a compulsory circularity, according to the belief in the universality of language as a medium, of our language and of the world

("the limits of my language are the limits of my world," Wittgenstein said), circularity which is not only inevitable, but which actually creates all meaning.

"How knowledgeable you are! Commerce: traffic, negotiation; negotiation: traffic, commerce; traffic: commerce, negotiation. Right?"

Let us come back to the matter at hand. To say something, I'll grant you, is to say something that has a meaning, and to communicate that meaning to others one must be able to paraphrase what one says. Meaning is public. Let's just say. So?"

"So? Poetry is not paraphrasable.

What poetry says cannot be said otherwise."

"There's a new 'axiom,' as you say. Let's just say.

But, you say, poetry says. So?"

"So what poetry says cannot be extracted from what it says, it cannot be something that can be said otherwise. If I claim that poetry says nothing, it's that it doesn't say that type of thing that can be repeated, explained, demonstrated, shown, insinuated, discussed, understood, learned, unlearned, affirmed,

etcetera.

Poetry says what it says by saying it.

## SUMPn

"Poetry saying what it says by saying it does not say something, according to you. It does not say something outside of itself, this, or that. From which it can be easily concluded (according to opinion, perhaps my own) that it is nothing. But I suppose that you don't necessarily believe that."

"I don't."

"To 'poetry says nothing' you've added (and I quote) 'poetry says.' You add nothing further?"

"I do. Poetry does not say "something" but **sumpn**. Let's call what poetry says but what cannot be said **sumpn**."

"Can it be shown?"

"Nope."

"So, it's not said, not shown — is it kept silent? Is poetry a silence?"

"Only a public silence.

Poetry keeps nothing silent.

But let us move on.

Many people, who confusedly feel that **sumpn** is not 'something' that could be said, find poetry saying **sumpn** an absurd activity, and poems nonsense."

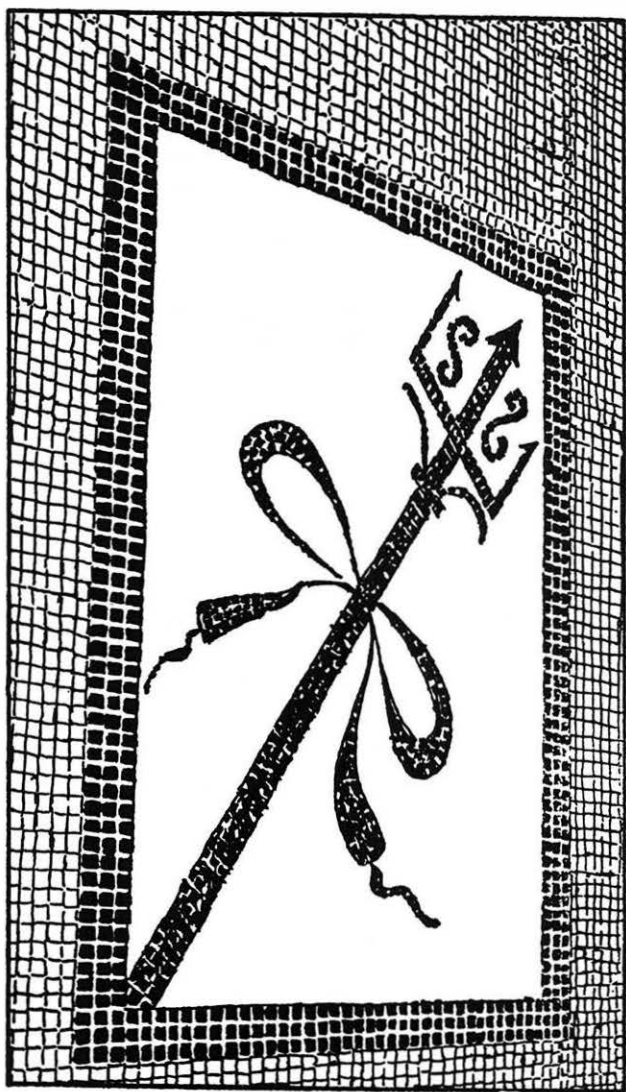
"Can you tell me anything else about **sumpn**?"

"I can, this: **Sumpn** is the inner shadow of poetry caught in poems."

"Say that again."

"**Sumpn** is a *je ne sais quoi*."

"Nothing' could be a name for **Sumpn**, on the condition that 'everything' is too."



*"All right it's your turn," I told the harpooner. "Whip out your best English and see if you have better luck than I did."*

*Conversation  
& Recoveries*

A READING OF ANNE-MARIE ALBIACH'S ÉTAT

This piece first appeared as a review one year after the publication of Albiach's ground-breaking book *État* (Paris: Mercure De France, 1971) in: *Revista de Letras*, Universidad de Puerto Rico en Mayagüez, No. 13, March 1972, and was reprinted in *Action Poétique*, No. 74, 1978.

Royet-Journoud selected excerpts from *État* to create a reading followed by the contents page, itself a map or an abstract of the poem. I have replaced the French with Keith Waldrop's translation of the Albiach text from the Awede edition for an American reading of the poem. —Peter Gizzi.

Anne-Marie Albiach:  
*ÉTAT*, Awede, 1989, 124 p.,  
translated by Keith Waldrop

p. 13     *Practical endeavor: for we must know*

p. 19     For if it's a theme state it  
          this interference of numbers  
          no more natural  
          than its disappearance

p. 31     EPIGRAPH  
          *the unspecifiable*  
          *the inexhaustible novel*

p. 32     the forms  
          recover from their  
          most circumspect slowness  
          become heavy

p. 38                             by the  
                                  eyes of the author

*"in the fiction*  
                                  *awaiting our step*  
                                  *along the gravel path"*

p. 53     the results of its division

p. 54             for the profile knows  
          that it establishes  
          relations  
          in proportion to

p. 59      OF HER ARRIVAL

and the simplicity  
extension without relation  
by comparisons  
for which we have no criterion

p. 67    at the edge of division  
Space being the whole

[illegible]

unity as absence of prop

p. 69    which arrives all the same displacement  
equivalents in value, sense of juxtaposition between  
steady Decay—the form

p. 70 character of junction

p. 71 as repetitions looking  
twice. unique recreates the object by permanence  
of its search which determines him,  
out of all discontinuity.

p. 75                                  active  
and operates towards annihilation  
   he acquiesces the descent  
   of the  
forms of attributes,                                  so  
consequently that of attitudes  
CIRCLES OF DEPORTMENT

p. 76 of the unachieved in speed of  
the pose not stationary  
                                is the point of bond  
  and of which the  
continuity is only repetition of the  
first                    *enigma*

p. 84 he knows the language:  
incommunicable if not of  
the two-fold form

p. 85                                *whereas*  
                                *"I" persists with the fire.*                *born*  
  movement  
                                *the appearance is self-less*

p. 89        *"apparently from hither and yon"*

p. 90        an *Epic*

p. 91        *"shift from one setting to another"*

p. 92        he

p. 95        and conjoined with the curve  
the seeming totality of the line  
where a knowledge of points

p. 99        of logic to establish its framework

p. 104        the relations and their endings

p. 105 *the reciprocal shaping up*  
*"just now becomes*  
*a character in*  
*the Epic"*

p. 108 line and labyrinth  
mythifies and lays claim

UNDERNEATH THE HORIZON  
THEY MUST RISE UP  
from the subordinate perceptions

posture and movement"

p. 111 here, he says, the place he designates

p. 114           happening of which           is unknown  
the precise volume

p. 115 they undo chronicity

p. 117 *the significance of his dry logic*

p. 120       to Desire  
relapses

p. 122 and perpetuates them at the periphery of their name

"A tax  
of lust"

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# LETTER O *from* WORDS OF THE TETRALOGY

## A Concordance of Claude Royet-Journoud's Texts

OB- > OBEY, OBJECT, OBSESSION, OBSTACLE, OBSTINATELY, OBSTRUCT, OCCASION,  
OCCULTATION, OFFEND, OFFER,

OBEY (Once)	
The superimposed circles obey.	I. 31
OBJECT (24 times)	
the object is bestowed	I. 79
impregnation of the object	I. 84
object	II. 72
an object	II. 101
OBJECTS CONTAIN THE INFINITE	III
objects pass hand to hand	III. 21
<i>in the objects of memory</i>	III. 42
(Of objects we know only slowness, different division.	III. 43
Dust over every object.	Prose
Recalls only objects.	Prose
More than an object.	Prose
Objects of the other clarity.	Prose
Object of emptiness.	Prose
The table as object of sensuality.	Prose
She dramatizes several simple objects.	Prose
Objects cease to move within my view.	Prose
with the aid of objects	III. 73
The light no longer jostles objects.	III. 93
<i>Objects contain the infinite.</i>	III. 94
alteration of an object	IV. 27
<i>facing objects in full light. . .</i>	IV. 40
the object	IV. 60
first object	IV. 62
like the name of the object	IV. 91
OBJECTLESS (Once)	
of an objectless terror	II. 87
OBLIVION (4 times)	
of oblivion	I. 70
An oblivion which burns and confines.	Prose
And oblivion.	Prose
<i>in the oblivion of tongues</i> )	III. 86
OBSCENE (Twice)	
the obscene fabulation	II. 69
and the obscene	III. 48
OBSCENITY (Once)	
or obscenity	II. 94

OBSCURE (Once)		
what defines the obscure		IV. 41
OBSCURITY (Once)		
<i>when we bold wake over a new form of obscurity</i>		I. 69
OBSESSION (Twice)		
the obsession with contiguity is an end point		I. 71
obsession with deviation		II. 27
OBSTACLE (Twice)		
THE NOTION OF OBSTACLE		II
native speech of the obstacle		II. 45
OBSTINATELY (Once)		
The book obstinately shut.		Prose
OBSTRUCT (Once)		
the cold obstructs his articulation		III. 41
OC- > OB-		
OCCASION (Once)		
the occasion over		IV. 23
OCCULTATION (Once)		
<i>in odd number (flashes or occultations)</i>		IV. 63
ODD (Once)		
<i>in odd number (flashes or occultations)</i>		IV. 63
ODOR (Once)		
An earthy odor mounts up to here.		Prose
OF (293 times)		
the necessity of effacement		I. 12
transparency of the nerve		I. 16
the smallness of the talk		I. 17
a lot of jabber		I. 18
a diversion of trees		I. 21
Absence of palace.		I. 25
There goes a horse the color of air.		I. 25
The one tongue of a stony jaw is an aggressive man.		I. 25
A load of grey.		I. 25
The wolf comes out of the sleeping man.		I. 26
Between your legs, quick with flames, the narrow muzzle of a fox		I. 26
The supple stroke of eyelashes.		I. 27
You sleep in the crowded circle of the color-wheel.		I. 27
The unknown quantity of the eyes responds to your lashes, divides your face.		I. 27
Your breasts disappear in the variety of subject-matter.		I. 27
Blood all over the shoulder, enlarging two skylights at the upper angles of the image.		I. 28
In the distance a spot of blue is rolling towards your nape.		I. 29
Your earlobe is the left side of the face.		I. 29
Back of the recovered circles, you are blind to the far-off processions of time.		I. 30
Your hands merge into the white of your breast.		I. 30
Transparency of fruit.		I. 31
There are four of us, perhaps five, bald, with misshapen eyes.		I. 31
Only I, hatless, am aware of the circle.		I. 31
Wild animals at the corner of a palace near a green path and a varicolored sea.		I. 34
On the other side of the wall, a flowering tree.		I. 35

True that walls are the abstraction of gesture.	I. 42
I retrace this outpouring of the visible	I. 43
<i>(Torment of color.)</i>	I. 43
Display of the rod always brings forth the rectangle.	I. 44
On the margins, fecundation of black!	I. 44
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<i>he talked about this impossibility of lying</i>	I. 51
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It's a wasting of time.	II. 93
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<i>in the objects of memory</i>	III. 42
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(Of objects we know only slowness, different division.	III. 43
Fear of falling.)	III. 43
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The whole alphabet of body and loss.	III. 44
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where each noise is aware of its space	III. 48

Crowd of enigmas that our back hides.	Prose
Heat slows down any angle of walk.	Prose
Passage of voices.	Prose
And I see you again among theatre curtains, recapturing your book in the quick of the language.	Prose
He brings to his books the truth of a body at a given moment.	Prose
In the midst of the image space gives suck.	Prose
As an ultimate point of support.	Prose
Figures resolve in the palm of the hand.	Prose
The loss of equilibrium was on the horizon.	Prose
The era of syllables, she said.	Prose
They are about to vanish in the angle of blue.	Prose
Suddenly I see them again, woven by the baroque swerve of the trail, his head surmounting a crag, as if the mountain could not but rise to that.	Prose
Since the face is without backing, infinite play of losses and lapses.	Prose
His childhood is the fiction of a warmth.	Prose
Effects of color on sense.	Prose
To think of a language's tremor, its groundless indiscernibles, its sham density, the net forever breaking.	Prose
Makes material out of it.	Prose
An abyss of noises that leaves, come morning, a body disfigured by this rage.	Prose
Between designation and the realm of silence.	Prose
She is nothing but a rehearsal of blue.	Prose
In the back, the strength of ignorance.	Prose
A wall of rhin air.	Prose
The spurt of an alphabet.	Prose
Making off with the last of the black.	Prose
Horizon like an act of brutality.	Prose
Muffled elaboration of an ancient tongue.	Prose
In the space of a word.	Prose
As if held up over the sea by an echo of brutal voices.	Prose
Mental misapprehension of a misappropriation.	Prose
And what it's made of.	Prose
The world of noises.	Prose
The impossibility of hearing steps.	Prose
Of seeing.	Prose
They leave the boat for the heat of the landing.	Prose
The momentary fire of recoil.	Prose
Peculiar meander of a breath unable to find its true margin.	Prose
He takes up old ways of doing this.	Prose
Lines of a book that send him back to the infinity of a book of a life of a book of a life.	Prose
For rehearsing the unwritten text of the one who is falling.	Prose
Objects of the other clarity.	Prose
The voice of the <i>alone</i> .	Prose
Masses white and superimposed on the interstices of the shutters.	Prose
The weight of fable.	Prose
Object of emptiness.	Prose
Difficulty out of the woods.	Prose
Think of that!	Prose
The table as object of sensuality.	Prose

Nails break up the blue of the table.	Prose
To grasp in the right eye the love games of labor, to hear a voice and a voice.	Prose
The passage of books, of notebooks.	Prose
The ages of sleep.	Prose
Generations of stone.	Prose
I say nothing about the fate of one who ties together world and fable.	Prose
Arms giving way under the weight of a story.	Prose
A recovery brings him up against the edge of the table.	Prose
A way of transporting, depositing, distributing.	Prose
Of hyping up, needling sense to the point of paroxysm.	Prose
Noise of water.	Prose
There we'd have a memory, the business of dates, an infinite inscription reflected by the body athirst.	Prose
He spoke of childhood.	Prose
What remains of it.	Prose
Like a loss of equilibrium.	Prose
Another side of sleep.	Prose
A way of driving the memory in.	Prose
Is there question of an overture?	Prose
Of another surrender?	Prose
Senseless for the time of a passing touch.	Prose
A craft of ignorance.	Prose
Slight prick of the eyelid and of sense.	Prose
the 24th and 25th of December 1910 he described	III. 72
with the aid of objects	III. 73
at the corner of a table	III. 75
the space of a back	III. 76
"treatment of ashes"	III. 76
mouth full of sleep	III. 80
the body blocking a section of the hearth	III. 83
body blocking a section of the hearth	III. 84
of indeterminate utility	III. 84
each of us falls to one side of the alphabet	III. 84
blocking a section of the hearth	III. 85
<i>in the oblivion of tongues)</i>	III. 86
a section of the hearth	III. 86
leverage of the fingers	III. 86
<i>Sense resides in the possibility of recognizing...</i>	III. 93
The steps of the temple.	III. 93
I move about the edges of your sleep.	III. 94
not cognizant of the phrase	III. 95
according to the density of things	III. 95
NO SOUND OF SYLLABLES	IV. 11
he spoke of <i>space in blocks</i>	IV. 15
and of <i>time in blocks</i>	IV. 15
<i>I need to think of your hand on the paper</i>	IV. 16
everything calm on the outside of a body	IV. 17
<i>and no sound of syllables)</i>	IV. 18
a generation of weaving	IV. 18
verticality of hunger	IV. 22
<i>a fistful of blue in the corner</i>	IV. 22

a bit of fever at the intersection	IV. 23
proximity of water	IV. 23
not letting your name out of sight	IV. 24
the unstable course of the 4	IV. 26
it was a question of navigation and of strategy	IV. 27
alteration of an object	IV. 27
A body bulks large in what remains of the eye.	IV. 27
at the end of the volume	IV. 31
the childhood of a syllable	IV. 32
pain of an illicit sleep	IV. 32
nothing comes of writing you	IV. 32
"the proposition is a measure of the world"	IV. 32
she is torn in each letter of her name	IV. 33
"my back, it's on account of my eyes"	IV. 33
a set of lines	IV. 35
you know nothing of that phrase	IV. 35
ignorance of outside	IV. 35
a form                      a form of fear	IV. 36
ERROR IN LOCALISATION OF EVENTS IN TIME	IV. 37
the ramification of nerves	IV. 39
an arm of the sea	IV. 40
in the practice of fire	IV. 43
the beauty of certain places	IV. 43
in an excess of light	IV. 46
the sense of his own hand	IV. 46
of what	IV. 46
the stifling of numbers	IV. 47
the inertia of things empties out emotion	IV. 53
the beast dies in a crease of the page	IV. 57
it offers a moment of enjoyment	IV. 57
she keeps track of this breathing	IV. 59
'flower of nature'	IV. 62
the sound of the axe	IV. 63
with the muting of a letter	IV. 63
the point of incidence attains the whole	IV. 64
within the angle of indecision	IV. 64
"a period of taking stock and developing"	IV. 65
talking of something else	IV. 65
in the room the movement of a body	IV. 65
she takes the place of the name	IV. 65
their way of maintaining	IV. 71
"the close of the book your shoulder"	IV. 73
<i>body of a line</i>	IV. 77
to the brink of the canal	IV. 81
THE RIGHT WALL OF THE HEART EFFACED	IV. 83
<i>apparent endurance of flashes</i>	IV. 85
prefigurations of a tool	IV. 85
of a birth in reverse	IV. 86
touched on the whole set of rules	IV. 87
along the length of ropes	IV. 88
she changes the order of gestures	IV. 90

"spue thee out of my mouth"	IV. 90
like the name of the object	IV. 91
in sight of land	IV. 91
one of each kind	IV. 91
an overload of color	IV. 92
site of a fire	IV. 92
. history ahead of me	IV. 93
an image of the book makes a pair with the heart	IV. 93
an act of grammar	IV. 95

OF- > OB-

#### OFF (10 times)

distance broken off	I. 12
Back of the recovered circles, you are blind to the far-off processions of time.	I. 30
custom veers off	II. 27
To cast off deliberation.	Prose
Making off with the last of the black.	Prose
A voice strays off.	Prose
Her hand no longer knows what it makes off with.	Prose
Ruins, some characters the painting detain—divided or set off by the square.	III. 92
black breaks off from black	IV. 32
the word was not far off	IV. 59
> OF, > OFFALL	

OFFAL > FALL

#### OFFEND (Once)

Suddenly his eye stops, offended.	Prose
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#### OFFER (Once)

it offers a moment of enjoyment	IV. 57
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#### OFFER (Once)

Or maybe the hand, as an offer, pardon.	I. 26
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#### OFFERING (Twice)

without offerings	I. 11
Offering.	Prose

#### OFFICE (Once)

Preparing yourself, as for an office, to substantiate sound on this stage.	Prose
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#### OLD (4 times)

Old noises crop up.	Prose
He takes up old ways of doing this.	Prose
the walls are white or old rose	III. 90
The dead rise up, upsetting old categories.	III. 93

#### ON (73 times)

<i>farther on</i>	I. 15
Necklaces, bracelets. I hide my potential, bare feet on the boards.	I. 28
Up and to the left, a red stain... like the one on your dress.	I. 31
On the ground, another splotch.	I. 33
On the other side of the wall, a flowering tree.	I. 35
All those spots on the ground form a sentence.	I. 42
On the margins, fecundation of black!	I. 44

on which to quicken the background	I. 67
he's dead on his feet	I. 74
<i>the preoccupation with place depends on excavation</i>	I. 79
adverbs all on display	I. 84
on the brink of dissimulation	II. 34
the light is only on the table	II. 44
on emerging from the image	II. 46
stood on edge	II. 77
it's on the brink of a sentence	II. 87
The stone insists on giving out the image.	II. 93
the beast dismembered on the spot	III. 19
on the other side	III. 20
"the man pursues black on white"	III. 20
on the mouth left open	III. 42
A sense beginning to take on body there in the stairwell.	III. 45
A brake on the eyes.	Prose
Takes on breadth or grows blurry in warmth from glasses.	Prose
Goes on.	Prose
A noise which hooks on and centers.	Prose
Preparing yourself, as for an office, to substantiate sound on this stage.	Prose
It's on a line that this enigma is resolved.	Prose
The loss of equilibrium was on the horizon.	Prose
He forsakes his body, since he needs only the scrutiny that memory is still working on.	Prose
Effects of color on sense.	Prose
Advances on itself.	Prose
(Childhood falls, spills on the ground its images.)	Prose
My head no longer holds on to time.	Prose
The cord gets tangled on its own.	Prose
Commodities on the quay.	Prose
A hideaway not on the map.	Prose
To rest one's head on the paper.	Prose
Hand closing on a shoulder.	Prose
Masses white and superimposed on the interstices of the shutters.	Prose
What lies on the horizon.	Prose
A lost grammar that no one scratches out on the ground.	Prose
on the beast spelling out order	III. 74
she falls into line on the scrap-heap	III. 77
eyes on the image	III. 83
on the threshing floor	III. 83
on the threshing floor	III. 84
eyes on the image	III. 85
how to hold on	III. 86
dark spot on the fire	III. 86
on the wrist the mark	III. 90
Settled on mischief.	III. 94
<i>I need to think of your hand on the paper</i>	IV. 16
everything calm on the outside of a body	IV. 17
then back flat on the ground	IV. 25
never a sentence on	IV. 27
speeds on a word	IV. 32
"my back, it's on account of my eyes"	IV. 33

on the inside a smooth surface	IV: 40
on the inside	IV: 48
on his lips	IV: 55
a man on the roof	IV: 60
on which going to sleep had such bearing	IV: 62
we must set foot on the blank space	IV: 62
on this tracing	IV: 63
we must move on	IV: 63
to hear it on her lips	IV: 65
a chill on each letter	IV: 85
touched on the whole set of rules	IV: 87
here lie animals on the ground	IV: 88
he urges the dogs on	IV: 88
depending on the voyage undertaken	IV: 91
touching on the murder	IV: 93
ONTO (Twice)	
opens onto sleep	II: 13
Heat drops onto stone.	Prose
ONCE (Once)	
Demolishes it once again.	Prose
> ONE	
ONE (32 times)	
the one that	I: 18
The one tongue of a stony jaw is an aggressive man.	I: 25
The one that never closes.	I: 26
Up and to the left, a red stain... like the one on your dress.	I: 31
You are brought to the enclosure, the one that does not exist.	I: 33
one retains little from it	I: 74
<i>the one who doesn't talk</i>	III: 18
A noise which keeps one from wavering altogether.	Prose
Which one clutches at...	Prose
One imagines them bursting out.	Prose
All the gestures one forgets...	Prose
One gives oneself a story to rehearse.	Prose
One second it's the mind in pieces.	Prose
To rest one's head on the paper.	Prose
For rehearsing the unwritten text of the one who is falling.	Prose
Far one from the other.	Prose
He recopies mixing one with the other without regard for the margin.	Prose
One positions the hand in order to make an unknown noise well up.	Prose
I say nothing about the fate of one who ties together world and fable.	Prose
To erect large, irregular stones, up to this one coming now into view.	Prose
To transport heat from one riverbank to the other.	Prose
Is it better to hold one's breath?	Prose
<i>"the light passes from one medium to the other"</i>	III: 80
each of us falls to one side of the alphabet	III: 84
one would like to be beyond compare	IV: 14
only one performance for the chorus	IV: 39
the same one we'd suppose	IV: 42
she (memory) with one stroke	IV: 48
one last time	IV: 53

the one from circle and air	IV.77
one sees the first letter looming	IV.90
one of each kind	IV. 91
ONESELF (Once)	
One gives oneself a story to rehearse.	Prose
NO ONE (5 times)	
No one believes me.	I. 32
A story no one tells anymore.	Prose
Underneath the eye a sense vibrates which no one examines.	Prose
A lost grammar that no one scratches out on the ground.	Prose
"today I'm talking to no one"	IV. 28
SOMEONE (Once)	
someone	IV. 44
> ONCE, > ONLY	
ONLY (12 times)	
Only I, hatless, am aware of the circle.	I. 31
tracing only its own loss	I. 79
it knows only its own walls	II. 13
the light is only on the table	II. 44
that was the only point in question	II. 101
they lend only their shadow	III. 16
if there were only silence	III. 21
(Of objects we know only slowness, different division.	III. 43
He forsakes his body, since he needs only the scrutiny that memory is still working on.	Prose
Recalls only objects.	Prose
There where we go only to meet ourselves.	Prose
only one performance for the chorus	IV. 39
> ONE	
ONTO > ON :TO	
OPACITY (Once)	
<i>fear</i> <i>opacity</i>	II. 77
OPEN (15 times)	
open prairie	I. 19
a <i>thought</i> opens the door	I. 86
opens onto sleep	II. 13
open to earth	II. 54
open to earth	II. 55
(We no longer know where the crack begins, opens.	II. 93
on the mouth left open	III. 42
For the rehearsal is also this face suddenly opening.	Prose
The white between two dares used to open a fiction.	Prose
Space opens up.	Prose
The rime it takes to open the mouth.	Prose
the hand opens	III. 73
<i>she opens a book and tells me about her childhood</i>	III. 76
spreads open without our need	IV. 32
As it opens, it achieves color.	IV. 77
OPERATION (Once)	

the operation of breathing	I. 77
OR (26 times)	
or	I. 11
animal or utterance	I. 19
vowel or consonant	I. 21
Or maybe the hand, as an offer, pardon.	I. 26
or else a look around	I. 55
<i>fang or talon</i>	II. 56
or obscenity	II. 94
"MATRENAL SHEET" OR THE RESTORING	III. 11
or the stealthy passage of beasts	III. 47
Or again, a grammatical queasiness.	Prose
A bit as if I were about to die, or live.	Prose
The inert, or else the heat.	Prose
Or how to seize the air.	Prose
All is white, or was.	Prose
Fullness is futile, or inaccessible.	Prose
Or to reassemble.	Prose
the walls are white or old rose	III. 90
Ruins, some characters the painting detain & divided or set off by the square.	III. 92
Solemn or shrill.	III. 94
<i>or the tongue</i>	IV. 18
or does the body yield	IV. 26
or confusion caused by the image	IV. 43
<i>in odd number (flashes or occultations)</i>	IV. 63
And earth no longer lies about the hand or its history.	IV. 77
<i>by construction destroyed or masked</i>	IV. 94
or shredding	IV. 95
NOR (Once)	
<i>nor grasp the cold in a glance</i>	II. 106
> OTHER	
_OR > COLOR, ERROR, MIRROR, NEIGHBOR, RUMOR, SPLENDOR, TERROR, TREMOR	
ORBIT (Once)	
The eyes quit their orbits.	Prose
ORDER (8 times)	
In order to extort strength from inertia.	Prose
The colors are here in order to free themselves from us.	Prose
A tide in sleep in order to keep breathing.	Prose
One positions the hand in order to make an unknown noise well up.	Prose
He looks in order not to see.	Prose
on the beast spelling our order	III. 74
gets back the same angles in the same order	IV. 85
she changes the order of gestures	IV. 90
ORIENTATION (Once)	
an orientation	IV. 62
ORIFICE (Once)	
To force the orifice with arm and elbow.	Prose
ORIGIN (3 times)	
<i>origin</i>	I. 67

the origin shifts	I. 71
the breath (fold of origin)	I. 79
 _ORY > ACCESSORY, RESPIRATORY	
 OTHER (24 times)	
On the other side of the wall, a flowering tree.	I. 35
the other side of the fable	I. 57
in the other direction	I. 83
OTHER, A PLAY	II. 47
OTHER THAN THAT	II. 73
some other nature...	II. 76
on the other side	III. 20
the other story	III. 45
<i>no other tongue</i>	III. 47
From the other side.	Prose
Objects of the other clarity.	Prose
Far one from the other.	Prose
He recopies mixing one with the other without regard for the margin.	Prose
To transport heat from one riverbank to the other.	Prose
<i>"the light passes from one medium to the other"</i>	III. 80
THE OTHER HOLDS THE LUNGS AND THE HEART	III. 81
others reach the table to die	IV. 21
as if this bulk could take the other's place	IV. 40
but the head proceeds towards other things	IV. 46
the other	IV. 59
it is like the other day	IV. 60
other's auxiliary	IV. 73
"running aground and other accidents"	IV. 77
over the other	IV. 95
 ANOTHER (8 times)	
On the ground, another splotch.	I. 33
of another tongue	III. 22
Afternoon is another silence.	Prose
Another and the puzzle is coming back together.	Prose
Another side of sleep.	Prose
Of another surrender?	Prose
shelters behind another phrase	IV. 58
"another grammar"	IV. 81
 OTHERWISE (Once)	
A warmth which dissociates things, rearranges them elsewhere and otherwise.	Prose
 OUR (6 times)	
our memory	I. 20
This border constrains us to our own center.	I. 42
in our studious path	I. 63
reading about our battles	I. 69
Crowd of enigmas that our back hides.	Prose
spreads open without our need	IV. 32
 OURSELVES (Once)	
There where we go only to meet ourselves.	Prose

\_OUS > CONSCIOUSNESS, CONSPICUOUS, MONOTONOUS, PERILOUS, PREVIOUS

OUT (38 times)

The wolf comes out of the sleeping man.	I. 26
out of control	I. 84
she provokes the fall and the parceling out	II. 85
that's where they set out from	II. 86
The stone insists on giving out the image.	II. 93
parceled out body which images restore	II. 107
barely holds out	III. 16
tongue cut out	III. 17
the white dot that singles him out	III. 20
She points out the entrance, the cold accumulating.	III. 35
you'll not figure out anything	III. 46
until worn out	III. 48
a table brings out dizziness	III. 48
(To point out where night is stationed.)	Prose
One imagines them bursting out.	Prose
The landscape spills out over his hands.	Prose
Makes material out of it.	Prose
Everything slips in the eye and spills out beside the body.	Prose
Muscles snipped out by the anatomist.	Prose
Death's cut-outs.	Prose
To press it out.	Prose
In a voice that carries, sung out, sing-song.	Prose
The hands dealing out, flying, but passing nothing.	Prose
Difficulty out of the woods.	Prose
This hand that sets out.	Prose
A voice that cries out across walls.	Prose
Fiction, destitute, shoots out a star.	Prose
A lost grammar that no one scratches out on the ground.	Prose
on the beast spelling out order	III. 74
if I started out as if with	III. 75
Among the plants, I can hardly make out the animals.	III. 94
not letting your name out of sight	IV. 24
I leave you a light you will put out	IV. 26
the inertia of things empties out emotion	IV. 53
small edge out	IV. 60
we turn out works	IV. 64
must get out	IV. 77
<i>"spue thee out of my mouth"</i>	IV. 90

OUTDOORS (Twice)

outdoors he moves something	I. 16
His hand recognizes the outdoors.	III. 92

OUT-

OUTFIELD (Once)

in the outfield of the rehearsal	II. 26
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OUTPOURING (Once)

I retrace this outpouring of the visible	I. 43
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OUTSIDE (17 times)

outside the disparity	I. 11
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outside the rural implosion	I. 11
the outside,	II. 20
the fostering outside	II. 86
the outside is no longer that conspicuous line	II. 101
the outside is at hand	II. 107
outside it	III. 22
<i>outside here</i>	III. 32
The outside hatches plots.	Prose
Outside the walls.	Prose
He forgets the outside.	Prose
everything calm on the outside of a body	IV. 17
a knot holds fast the outside	IV. 21
outside	IV. 27
ignorance of outside	IV. 35
outside	IV. 56
they are outside the ropes	IV. 90
> OUT	
<b>OVER (14 times)</b>	
Blood all over the shoulder, enlarging two skylights at the upper angles of the image.	I. 28
<i>when we hold wake over a new form of obscurity</i>	I. 69
here we have to start over	II. 64
over the part of the stalks neighboring	II. 96
gauze pressed over the mouth	III. 41
Bitter wind that turns everything over.	Prose
Dust over every object.	Prose
The landscape spills out over his hands.	Prose
As if held up over the sea by an echo of brutal voices.	Prose
Nothing is over and done.	Prose
Clothing distributes letters over the body.	Prose
Nothing will have happened, but the body takes over.	Prose
the occasion over	IV. 23
over the other	IV. 95
<b>OVER-</b>	
<b>OVERCOME (Once)</b>	
is overcome with the intention	I. 77
<b>OVERHANG (Twice)</b>	
A body overhanging the seaboard.	Prose
here an incoherent blue overhangs	IV. 57
<b>OVERLOAD (Once)</b>	
an overload of color	IV. 92
<b>OVERSTEP (Once)</b>	
oversteps color	III. 47
<b>OVERTAKE (Twice)</b>	
from the margin it overtakes death	I. 79
That can't be overtaken.	Prose
<b>OVERTURN (Once)</b>	
<i>things overturned by destroying</i>	IV. 90
<b>OVERWHELM (Twice)</b>	
THE OVERWHELMING	II. 39
Overwhelms me.	Prose
> OVER	

## OVERTURE (Once)

Is there question of an overture?

Prose

## OVERTURN &gt; OVER-

## OVERWHELM &gt; OVER-

## OWN (7 times)

This border constrains us to our own center.

I. 42

Quicker than his own hand he turns his back to the snow.

I. 44

tracing only its own loss

I. 79

it knows only its own walls

II. 13

its own history

II. 108

The cord gets tangled on its own.

Prose

the sense of his own hand

IV. 46

## OWNERLESS (Once)

*The visual ground is, in essence, ownerless.*

III. 93

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† Texts for this "English transposition" of the concordance are taken from Keith Waldrop's English translations of the tetralogy. One detail: the fourth volume has not yet been published, so I've had to cull texts from various journals and chapbooks at hand. Nevertheless, I've cited references as if all books have appeared in print (roman numerals designate books—I: *Reversal*, II: *The notion of obstacle*, III: *Objects contain the infinite*, IV: ?—while arabic numerals designate page numbers). Page numbers are estimated for book IV, and similarly for *Reversal*, which was published without pagination.

INTERVIEW WITH KEITH WALDROP 1993 - 1997, PART II

KEITH WALDROP: mnunmmm... Well... What else do you want to know?

PETER GIZZI: I was going to move on to your novel. And then I wanted to end up with how you've evolved from this beginning point to this end point. You wrote verse, you wrote plays, you wrote fiction—well, not fiction but prose—you wrote songs, these various things. And then, in recent years it seems as though you're evolving your own form, which is a kind of a verse and prose form together. That's the arc, so that's where I want to end up.

Do you want to say something?

KW: Well, let me say first of all that I always had the notion of—well, always isn't quite right, but from early on—of combining verse, prose—combining things as different as possible. Combining free verse and metrical verse, for instance. In my first book you can see there are places I tried that. You'll find classical couplets that are merged into free verse. Before that, I was actually writing metrical, very tight metrical work, and then I broke out of that and did a lot of free verse. But even at that time I had the urge to combine them. And it didn't work entirely, but I was trying—there are fragments of that attempt in the first book. You can find it here and there. I'm interested in poets who start with the spoken language, and then make new *written* language out of it. There's Queneau again, of course, but also—for instance—Robert Burns.

PG: For our readers, the title of your first book is *A Windmill Near Calvary*. Published by University of Michigan in '68. You wrote most of that book in a year, you said, while you were writing your dissertation and teaching at Wayne State.

KW: About a third of it.

PG: That book was also nominated for a National Book Award. And your next full book—you have a series of smaller books—but your next major book is *The Garden of Effort*.

KW: Well, yes, but that's misleading...

PG: Why's that?

KW: ...because they're published out of order.

PG: All those books seem to come out all at once: *The Space of Half an Hour*, *The Ruins of Providence*, *A Ceremony Somewhere Else*. There's another one there—*Water Marks* comes out a little later.

KW: Well, that's the thing, they're all out of order. That's why...

PG: Let's get that order straight.

KW: First is *A Windmill Near Calvary* in 1968, that's simple enough. And that includes a few poems that are from quite a bit earlier. The earliest, I think, is the one called "Samsara," which it's easy to see is modeled on Pound's epigrams. I think I wrote it in Aix-en-Provence. It's already in the *Wolgamot Interstice*.

After *Windmill* there's *Windfall Losses*. Then, in the first half of '71, I wrote *The Garden of Effort*. That's one of the few that I can date exactly, because it was written very fast. But those two were published, a few years later, in reverse order. What comes after that is more complicated yet, because the work in the volume called *The Space of Half an Hour* is three poems, which I think of as one long work: "Poem from Memory," "The Chances of Magic," and "Elegy." But at the same time that I was writing those, I was writing shorter pieces, and those are collected in *A Ceremony Somewhere Else*. So those two books come, not one after the other, but in parallel. At the same time, I was writing a lot of songs, many of which still haven't been published. Then *The Ruins of Providence*. Then prose for a while: *Hegel's Family* and *Light While There Is Light*.

PG: *The Garden of Effort* was written in 70-71?

KW: It was written in the first half of 1971—except for one earlier section, *The Antichrist*. After the *Windmill*, I had worked on some experiments, which were published in a small book as *The Antichrist*—which is organized in an odd way. The pieces are all “found,” as would have been said then, which is why I call them foundlings—*The Antichrist and Other Foundlings*—and the structure is simply that the unit of found material, poem by poem, gets smaller and smaller. That is, the first piece has passages—whole passages—from different books. For the next, I took individual sentences. In the title poem, for instance, of “The Antichrist,” there’s a sentence from—well, I looked in the *Britannica*, the eleventh edition—the one that you just got—and on Volume One, page 666, which is the number of Antichrist, I took one sentence, and then one sentence from page 666 of Volume Two, and so forth, and got about halfway through the encyclopedia and found that I had this poem. It wasn’t mechanical in the sense that I took, you know, the third sentence from each page. I allowed myself to choose any sentence from that page. But I was fairly quick about it. Then I abridged *War and Peace*—on the same principle, a sentence from page 100, 200, 300 and so forth. But then the unit of material I took got smaller. In the last poem of the collection, I was taking single words, which makes the poem come out very differently. It can, in a way, make a poem with more obvious sense, because if you just take words, you can build up anything. And it’s strange, because right after I did that—it’s a little pamphlet, twenty or twenty-five pages or so—I found it impossible to work that way for a long time after. I would start again, and it came out as nothing. We printed what I had as a pamphlet. Nelson Howe tried to get me to put in where I got everything, along with a statement of the structure. And I thought about that, and decided that wasn’t what I wanted. I don’t know, there was a great—there has been for much of the century in fact—a tendency to exalt process over product, how you work rather than what you end up with—and I can see that—but I’ve always found it impossible. For me, I mean. I’ve always thrown away manuscripts. I never keep old versions of things.

PG: Why is that?

KW: Probably a personal quirk. But at that point, in any case, I just wanted the final form. (I seem to remember that members of Oulipo have disagreed on whether, having arrived at a text from a certain technique (a *restraint*, they would call it), one should reveal the technique or simply give the resulting text. I think those on the latter side, which would be mine, included Roubaud and Mathews—and perhaps Queneau.)

We went to France in the summer of '70—and between that summer and the following New Year, I finished a second book, which I called *Windfall Losses*—and I took a poem out of the Antichrist pamphlet and put it in there—the *War and Peace* poem. I was later unsure whether I should have done that or not, but anyway I did.

PG: That's the first book of yours I read.

KW: You may have noticed it has an epigraph from Jack Spicer. Thematically, the book follows from a poem in *A Windmill Near Calvary*, called "Conversion." Austin Warren once said he thought of me as a Manichean who had been converted. That seemed to me to have some truth to it—except that it was not, as he perhaps supposed, a conversion to another religion, but to the "things of this world." (I suspect I would eventually have used that as a title for something, if Richard Wilbur hadn't gotten to it first.) The title *Windfall Losses* I hoped would make sense with the Spicer quote:

*Hell is this:  
The lack of anything but the eternal to look at*

The loss of eternity seemed to me a godsend. (As Bunuel used to say, "I'm still an atheist, thank god.")

PG: *Windfall Losses* seems to follow the poems of *The Windmill* rather than the compositional patterns of "The Antichrist."

KW: Yes, it's a volume in the same manner—even a little more conversational.

PG: Where does that come from? Does that come from a particular writing

that you admired?

KW: No, I don't think so. That's odd—I can't think how it came about. The poets that I remember admiring at the time were mostly very formal.

PG: Like Marianne Moore?

KW: Yes. I learned a lot from Moore, but hardly in the matter of being conversational. There were poets around who were, so it may be that I picked it up without thinking, but anyway, that's a direction I was going. *Windfall Losses* contains personal elegies, some indirect references to the Vietnam war. And my letter-poem "To Rosmarie in Bad Kissingen."

One thing that goes through my work, from these early poems on, is that—whatever else may change—it remains predominantly elegiac.

PG: Is this when you won the Amy Lowell Travel Grant?

KW: That's right, that is, after the first book. I took a year off from Brown—to get off without pay was easy. The terms of the award required going abroad. I'd always wanted to go to Japan, particularly Kyoto—I don't know why, it's an old thing—and we thought of Kyoto, but also Paris. And I was inclined to Kyoto, but then we suddenly realized what we already knew but hadn't thought about: a World's Fair was in Kyoto that year. So that was out! We hiked off to Paris. The first six months in France, we were quite alone, and we had gone there wondering what really would come of this. We had never had that kind of experience before—thrown on our own company and being among strangers—and we found it actually very nice, I must say—and we managed to find a nice place to live, fortunately.

PG: Plus, both of you are fluent in French.

KW: I've never been fluent. I barely get along. But anyway we were there for six months, by ourselves, when my old student George Tysh suddenly showed up. You know his work?

PG: Mm-hm. I published him and Chris in *o•blek*.

KW: Well, he and Chris were living in Paris. George was editing a remarkable magazine called *Blue Pig*. He had heard from somebody that we were in Paris (he had been a student of mine at Wayne) and found our address. He had hosted various writers, coming through Paris, for readings. Americans, British, whomever. But at this time, he didn't have a place for the readings and wondered if we could do something. We had two rooms, one of them quite large. A very good location, convenient—around the corner from *Le Drugstore*, and...

PG: Why is that convenient?

KW: Oh, everybody knew where *Le Drugstore* was, near the church of *St. Germain-des-Prés*. We were on *rue des Saints-Pères*, half a block off the *Boulevard-St.-Germain*, a few houses from where Rémy de Gourmont once lived. Anyway, we said fine. Tysh himself read there, and various other people coming through, but one of the readers was a French-Canadian, Robert Hébert, and I think it was when he read, Claude Royet-Journoud and Anne-Marie Albiach showed up for the reading, simply, you know, to listen.

PG: You had never met them before.

KW: Never met them. Never heard of them. Except that Tysh knew them, and had said a couple French poets might come. I always assume Claude knows everybody eventually, you know? Anyway, they came, and there was the reading. And Claude, afterwards, looked through the books on the bookshelf. We had been there six months by then, mind you. And he said, that's a very good selection of recent French poetry. And he wanted to know if we brought them all with us. And I said, well, no, that's what I've gotten since we've been here. And he noticed we had *Le Livre des Questions* of Jabès. I said well, that we did bring that one with us, because Rosmarie was translating it and you know, no publisher was interested, but she thought, well if she didn't manage to do her own work she might do some translating. He said, "What?! She's translating Jabès?" He ran across the room to Rosmarie

and kissed her. And that was the beginning of our association with Claude and Anne-Marie.

He then ran to the phone to call Jabès. Fortunately didn't get him—it was about one o'clock in the morning. And before they left they said that, by the way, Anne-Marie had just published a book—yesterday. Literally, the day before. They left and it was about—as I say—one o'clock in the morning. I said, I'll go out and get the book. There was a bookstore in the basement of Le Drugstore. And Rosmarie said, "But they wouldn't have *that*." And I thought, yes, they would, because they have this system that the publishers send them one copy of everything which they can send back in a month if it doesn't sell. I went around the corner, and I got it.

PG: And that first book was?

KW: *État*. And I brought it back and read it that night. And the next day Claude brought Edmond Jabès by.

Meanwhile, I had finished *Windfall Losses* and was trying to do something a little different, something related to *The Antichrist*, but it was all rather inchoate. I was doing various things with nothing quite coming together. It was getting a shot of Anne-Marie's poetry and of Claude's that helped me move into that new area. It was equally important for Rosmarie.

In *The Garden of Effort* (so called, of course, because it's not the Garden of Eden, but what comes after, the more interesting garden—one we're not handed, but have to hoe out for ourselves) I was able to go in directions the first two books had not gone, or had not gone far. The form is less discursive—that is to say, less determined by what's being said. The arrangement is abstract, sometimes alphabetical. The book as a whole has an architecture. It's not a collection, though it presents itself as various series of fragments. My two earlier books were full of rather gnomic sentences, but they're pressed together to make larger units. In *The Garden of Effort*, those sentences are still there, but spaced out, so that they connect up only obliquely. I remember thinking at the time that my poems up to then consisted of what I could fish up with my net—but that now the poem was more the net itself.

Something curious from that time: Two copies of the *Times Literary Sup-*

plement came in one delivery—the same issue (some kind of fluke in mailing). Rosmarie and I had both been experimenting with poems of limited vocabulary. We now took the same article from the TLS (we each had a copy) and each made a poem using only words or phrases from that article. Not only were the two poems quite different from one another, but later her poem, revised, went into one of her books and mine into one of my books, in neither case seeming out of place.

Claude at that time was not writing—you know how he is, he's often not writing, complaining bitterly about it. And so I gave him a poem and I said, "This is a charm. This is to get you to writing again. All you have to do is read this and you'll be writing poems." It was a piece called "The Concept of Through."

PG: Which is the last poem in the *The Garden of Effort*.

KW: And I sent him that. And it worked. He mentions that in the interview, I think, in *Lingo*. *The Garden of Effort* was all written during those six months, the second half of our stay in Paris (except for the earlier "Anti-christ"). I dedicated the book to Claude. And I've always claimed that his *Notion of Obstacle* was a kind of answer to "The Concept of Through."

PG: To continue. In *A Century in Two Decades* you say that, in the 70's, one of Burning Deck's aims was to publish new British poetry. But it seems to me that the relationship that you developed with the French poets on your first visit in 1970-71 had more of an influence on you and your sense of the art, and on your own poetry.

KW: It had a big influence on that particular book, yes. And has meant a great deal to me ever since. (I don't think we actually *aimed* at publishing British poets, though we in fact did publish a number: Middleton, Barnett, Crozier, Challoner, Miller, Riley, Fetherston.)

PG: What living American poets do you feel most akin to?

KW: I'm not sure I feel great kinship with any poet that I can think of.

Rosmarie most of all, but what she writes and what I write are quite different. Otherwise, I suppose William Bronk would be closest to what I would call kin. His early book *The World, the Worldless* (which I reviewed for *Burning Deck*—one of my few positive reviews) uses data from very disparate realms, from the personal to the scientific. Remember, for instance, his poem “The Lawn,” which combines by perspective the straight lines of ordinary sight, the common fact that the earth is round, and the curve of space-time. All without strain. He is like Stevens, but without the colors—a sort of black-and-white Stevens. (I was told, by the way, both in college and in graduate school, that Stevens’ later poems were no good—too “abstract”—and that he had no influence on later poets. At that time, of course, neither Bronk nor Ashbery was quite visible.) Maybe my kinship to Bronk is more a wish than a reality.<sup>1</sup>

There are a number of poets whose work I appreciate, and am even very taken with, but I don’t feel part of any group, and really never did. When we started *Burning Deck*, one of our aims was not to connect with the so-called academic or with the so-called beat, terms current at the beginning of the ’60s. That was the time of the “war of the anthologies.”

PG: Between Donald Hall and Donald Allen?

KW: Two anthologies, both purporting to present the new American poetry, and no poet in both. Also, it was a time when small presses were becoming more important. There have always been small presses, but at that time the expense of publishing was going up and the big publishers were beginning to drop poetry altogether—starting with ‘experimental’ poetry—a tendency that has continued and increased. But it had already begun. And, in this and in other things, a lot of poets at the time wanted to take sides. They either wanted to be ‘academic’ or to be ‘beat.’ Along with this, they wanted to go with the mainstream, or they wanted to go with the small presses. I remember people who wouldn’t read anything that wasn’t small press. And others who completely disregarded small presses. One of

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<sup>1</sup> William Bronk died, 22 February 1999.

the things that *Burning Deck*, the magazine, was concerned to do was to make no such distinction. In our review section, small press, large press, pamphlet, big book, whatever, we would try to review it. And we published on the one hand Duncan and Zukofsky and Creeley and on the other hand X.J. Kennedy. I think the Allen anthology's importance—and it was certainly important—was to show how limited the Hall-Pack-Simpson was. But it was taken, inevitably, to show the right as opposed to the wrong, us against them (or vice versa).

PG: Was Donald Hall in any of *Burning Deck*?

KW: Donald Hall gave us a poem at one point and then withdrew it, after a bad review of Robert Bly in the first issue. I always found Hall extremely generous. If he thought someone's work good, he would do anything he could for that work. He didn't see anything in mine. After my review of Bly, whom he worshipped, he was rather distant for a while, but was friendly again later.

Of the British poets I suspect the only one who influenced me was Middleton, perhaps. But can he be called British anymore?—he's been in Texas for years.

PG: When did you begin, who did you translate? I know that you translated the first book of Claude's tetralogy, *Reversal*, and later *État*. Your translation of *Reversal* came out in 1973.

KW: Something like a month after the French. Because I had translated it from manuscript.

PG: When did you decide to translate Claude's poetry or Anne-Marie's? Did you decide to do one before the other. Because *État* took you, you said, ten years or twelve years to translate, and then it took another ten years to get it out.

KW: I first translated a piece by Claude, which was in the *NRF*—he didn't have a book yet. And then, well, Anthony Barnett was also in and out of Paris at that time. You know who Anthony Barnett is?

PG: The British poet who published the first large collection of Prynne and Veronica Forrest-Thompson, among others. Burning Deck published his book-length *Poem About Music*.

KW: Right. That was our first full-length book, by the way. He had gone from England to live in Copenhagen. And was putting out little magazines and books. At some point, he wanted to print a section of *État*. And Claude asked me to translate it. I said I would try. I had many sessions with Anne-Marie, who was, I think, trying to be helpful. And finally a little section of it did come out, as a pamphlet. And then, well I simply kept on from time to time until I had finished the book, but it took twelve years. Meantime and since then, I've translated all of Claude's poetry. And it's odd that Claude I do relatively fast, while Anne-Marie takes me an enormous amount of time.

PG: Can you account for that?

KW: I can't. But that's how it is.

PG: Claude said that you make his poems better than they are in French.

KW: Well, that's very nice. Though, strictly speaking, I guess it could be taken as an insult. Jean Grosjean pointed out—I've never met Grosjean, by the way—but he pointed out in a letter, what I already knew, but wasn't sure anybody else would catch: that I had made the language of the poem, of his *Elegies*, more concrete than it is in the original. I account for this by the genius of the language—I mean, English simply is more concrete than French. And if you try consciously to keep it as abstract as French, you end up with something much flatter than the French.

There's a general problem when translating from French, or from most European languages, that English has fewer grammatical markers than most languages, and at the same time it has many more words. And so if you're translating from French, and if you do it as literally as possible, especially if you use the cognates and such, what you're doing is necessarily losing the syntactical interest of the original with what is for English an impoverished vocabulary. The claim that French is a language of phrases, English a lan-

guage of words, may be an exaggeration, but it's a useful notion. Grosjean, I think, wasn't complaining. I don't remember exactly how he put it—but that I had somehow returned the work to the concreteness that it came out of. He is himself a distinguished translator.

PG: What about teaching? And having been a professor for as many years as you've been. How does that affect your work? What about teaching as part of your life?

KW: Well, it depends on what angle you take it from. I mean, if I think in terms of, What would I do if I had plenty of money and didn't have to have a job? Would I teach anyway? The answer is no. I wouldn't. It isn't my life. On the other hand, it's something I think I can do, conscientiously, and at the same time do other things I want to do. I've no private income. I can't think of any alternative that would have worked as well. In teaching I deal with material that I like. And I've had some wonderful students.

PG: It seems to me that it becomes a way for you to explore a specific period, and author, a style, a school.

KW: That's partly because I somehow dropped into the department I did—the Brown English Department—which has always given me the possibility of that exploration. I've taught rather a wide range of subjects: classes on English poetry of various periods, from seventeenth century to contemporary, restoration drama, gothic romance, the Bible “as a literary sourcebook,” film history... besides workshops in poetry writing and literary translation.

PG: Well, for instance, I took a class with you—a British Moderns class—where we did David Jones, W. H. Auden and, most specifically, Charles Williams. Out of the three I found him to be the most enigmatic and the most compelling writer. When did you first come upon Charles Williams?

KW: I don't know where I ran across him. I know I read a novel or two first, before his poems or his plays, certainly before his essays.

PG: Well, the reason I'm asking is because when you taught Charles Williams and I read his work, I found a real kinship between the two of you. The way Charles Williams creates a suspense that's of a metaphysical nature.

KW: There are references to Charles Williams in my "Elegy."

PG: Yes, I know, *All Hallows Eve* is in there. But the suspense you create is also a suspension of time. It's an interruption in linearity, and also in perspective. Normative perspectives become blurred.

KW: Duncan liked him. There's a reference to one of his novels in "Poem Beginning with a Line by Pindar." It's particularly his last novels that interest me (especially *Descent Into Hell*), and the fact that they move on different levels at once.

PG: Which is here and there.

KW: Yes. Lord Dunsany would say "the fields we know" and "beyond the fields we know."

PG: Which you've done all along.

KW: The poem I mentioned earlier, "The Concept of Through", for instance, which is note-by-note prosaic—in each one of those eighty entries, there's a difficulty in reading it straight. You have to oscillate—in some of them, in a perfectly trivial way, and in others, very important ways. And that certainly came after I read Charles Williams, but I don't know whether it was a direct influence.

A big difference, of course, is that Williams was Christian. And for him, presumably, there's this world and then there's the other world. I would more go along with whoever said that yes, there is another world, *but it's in this one*. That's a great difference. But as far as technique goes, there's a similarity.

PG: And that thing you call "here and there", it's also creating a certain

kind of ambiguity in the line or in the meaning, so it's blurred, which means it doesn't lead back to one signifying point or one...

KW: There's a tendency—very clear in the Imagists, for example: when the Modernists wanted to compliment a poem, they talked about 'precision' and 'exactness' of image and so forth. And I remember once Richard Wilbur—whose poems I greatly admire, by the way—I remember him saying that he had a particular liking for words that mean one thing and one thing only. This struck me as a very interesting idea, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that, if I had to make a choice, it would be quite the opposite: I would prefer words to have a spread of meaning, so that one could say more than one thing at once.

PG: It's a kind of punning that you do. Like *The Quest for Mount Misery and Other Studies*. It's obviously an ironic title; there's a great amount of humor there, but then when one reads them—the irony is one of resignation, almost—like “well, it is a quest for Mount Misery...”

KW: Let me tell you something about Mount Misery, though. I may have told you already where it came from.

PG: No, you haven't. Not here.

KW: In the encyclopedia that you just got—the Britannica 11th—if you look up Rhode Island, you'll find a map. If you look on that map, you'll find “Mount Misery.” But I looked on many other maps and couldn't find it. So I started asking people like Barton St. Armand, who has lived in Rhode Island all his life. He said, Mount Misery? No, he'd never heard of it. And on the map, well everybody looked and said, that's just about where the Scituate Reservoir is now. I thought, well, you don't take a mountain or a hill and make a reservoir, that isn't very likely. So I thought we should in fact have a kind of pilgrimage to find this hill, which does or doesn't exist.

The piece was written, and then I collected the other studies around it and it was published. But, more recently—you know Steve Palumbo. He and Ann Huntington run the gallery that shows my collages. And he

had noticed this title, and asked about it. Because, it turns out, he had owned Mount Misery, had inherited it. And he had sold the land on Mount Misery to start the Po Gallery.

PG: Perfect! There really is a Mount Misery.

KW: Those pieces from *The Quest for Mount Misery* come from a time when I was getting back to prose, which I hadn't written for a while. Actually, after I wrote the poems that were published later as *The Ruins of Providence*...

PG: But, there's a long piece of prose that ends that book: "The Master of the Providence Crucifixion."

KW: But that wasn't originally in there. I wrote those poems, and it wasn't long enough for a book. I had arranged them, though, and they were done. And I was rather depressed about them, because it seemed to me I had merely gone back to the mode of *A Windmill Near Calvary* and *Windfall Losses*. I stopped writing poetry for, I guess it was six or eight years. Anyway, I stopped, and went to prose, first to what I thought of as 'studies'—I was thinking of the way painters make studies before some larger work and also of Chopin's *Etudes*. And I came up with a certain number, and then at some point I started one which wouldn't quit and it became "The Master of the Providence Crucifixion." I wanted then to do a kind of triptych and I added "Puberty" and then tried for a third, which I never could quite get to match those, but that attempt is, in fact, the last piece in *Hegel's Family* which is called "Perilous Voyage."

PG: But that's more fragmented.

KW: It's much more fragmented. I couldn't get it formally to fit with the other two, though I think it works as an ending for *Hegel's Family*.

PG: How did you come up with the title for the prose collection: *Hegel's Family*?

KW: Rosmarie reminded me not long ago that when we were in school

together in Aix-en-Provence, I showed her my notebook, and it contained only titles—no poems to go with them. I used to be very good at titles, but had a hard time getting poems to go with them.

As for *Hegel's Family*, I noticed that in the *Phenomenology of Mind*—or *Spirit*—depending on which translation you read—there's a strange passage where Hegel suddenly says, something like this: that the closest possible relation of two people, or the greatest love that there can be, is the love of a sister for a brother. And, he says, if he (the brother) dies, "she is inconsolable." And this struck me as something that must have been extremely important to Hegel, because it has nothing to do with what's around it in the book. The first thing that occurred to me to wonder was, did Hegel have a sister? And so I started looking for a biography, and couldn't find one. And if you look up almost any philosopher in an encyclopedia it'll have a bit on their life, and then it'll talk about their philosophy. In the case of Hegel, nobody talks about his life, except which universities he taught at. You'd think he didn't have a life. And so I thought of working with this question of Hegel's family.

Eventually somebody put out in English Hegel's *Selected Letters* with annotations, including biographical notes. It turns out he did have a sister, who was mentally disturbed, and whom he farmed out—literally, that is, he paid some farmers to keep her—and occasionally visited. And when he died, within a year she committed suicide.

I never actually wrote that particular study, but I liked the title, so I put it on the book.

PG: How long did it take you to write the poem "Elegy"?

KW: All told, it must have been several years.

PG: "Elegy" seems to me to be a precursor to the three volumes of *Transcendental Studies*. "Elegy" leads to the late work. The reason I bring up "Elegy" is because it seems to be the perfect mix both of the conversational and the compositional, the collage technique, pulling from different surfaces. One has the sense that one's reading a unified speaking voice, but in fact that's not true at all. And you've been able to continue with that in your recent work. Does that make sense?

KW: Well, yes. In the last half of the eighties, I had to take over the graduate writing program. And I had just finished my novel, and was sending it around, with no results. And wasn't writing, and got involved in administration, which was not so much difficult as just endless, you know, picky little things that I had to be doing and had to be thinking of all the time. I got fed up with it very quickly. At some point, it was crowding me so much that I decided I had to do something—I hadn't written anything for too long—and so I said to myself, "After midnight, that's my time, that's what I'm going to do, come what may." But you know how it is when you have things on your mind: there's nothing else there. So I put stacks of books on the table and said, I'll try collage. And in a couple months I had the first two volumes (of three) that I call *Transcendental Studies*. Just sort of straight out. Which was what made it possible for me to go on and direct the program for several more years.

I used collage as a means of reaching out, getting past my first reactions, my best intentions. (Hence "transcendental"; i.e., not *in here*, but *out there*.) But the collage elements are merely that, elements. I shifted them, added, changed, trying to reach what exceeds the grasp—not heaven, of course, but possibilities of this world. Or, even, *impossibilities* (which would include, I suppose, heaven).

PG: Let me go back to my list here. Earlier in the discussion you were saying that you imagined you'd always write prose. That prose is something you imagined before poetry. Even while you were doing theater.

KW: I've always found prose much harder to write than verse.

PG: My question is this: you said to me two things about your novel: that (a) it's an autobiography; (b) some of it's made up; and then the third part is something else. And then you said that it's also collaged.

KW: Well, there are a few collage elements in *Light While There Is Light*, yes. It's by no means a collage novel. Actually, I first started writing a novel when I was in the army in '54 and '55, while I was in Germany. I went to Europe as a water purification specialist, but I managed to get out of that into a

supply office—and I found that if I sat there at my desk, obviously not doing anything, they gave me something to do; whereas if I looked as if I were working, they gave it to somebody else. In fact, there wasn't much to be done. So I sat there and wrote on a novel. I always had something to put over it if the wrong person came around. I wrote, I don't know, about a hundred pages or so, by the time I got out. And I carried it around for years and wrote another chapter or two, which didn't quite fit. But finally I realized this so-called novel—in order to get down to anything at all, I would have to throw it away. So I did. Then, some years after that—not long after—my mother died, and I was in Germany, and I thought I would write a biography of my mother. And almost immediately realized I didn't know enough about my mother to write a biography—it was out of the question. So I fooled around and eventually got started, thinking, well maybe I could do some sort of family novel.

I wrote about a third of it that year, 1975-76, in Berlin. It's a novel in which the characters, and most of the action, have two main sources. Many of the characters are modeled off my family and people I've known. In fact I kept some real names. I used the names of my immediate family—in the case of my sister and brothers, only their given, not their family names. I have, by the way, no living relatives named Waldrop. But there's another source: the characters from the unfinished novel I'd thrown away. And they're all in there together. And I think it's hard to tell which is which. But...

PG: It's such a nice way to say that you've turned your autobiography into a fiction.

KW: I always meant it to be fiction. Although I had thrown it away, I remembered some lines, some situations, some characters, from the earlier novel. They're mostly early on, because that Ur-novel took place at a college in the South, which I had called Sharon. Sharon is not the actual name of the school I went to. Its name was Wesleyan Methodist College. But "Sharon" had already made it more or less fictional to me. So I used that. I also, in some cases, merged characters. There were, for instance, two presidents of the college while I was there, and I caricatured one as *the* president. One of them did have a son whose name was Chigger—well, who was called Chigger, I should say—but it was somebody else's son, the high school principal's, who actually

had this sort of tic, of always saying "I think" because he didn't want to be caught lying. These characters came together. . .

PG: Which is what happens in one's mind anyway. I could imagine that the whole scene in the jail as fictional.

KW: That scene combines several visits to the Pickens County Prison, but basically what happens there, in the novel, happened. An earlier version of that scene was a chapter that I wrote to add to my army novel, so in some ways it was a transition to the novel as it stands now. Quite rewritten, however.

PG: So, because it evolves over a long period of time it has its own evolution. It starts to evolve by its own principle of composition. How long did it take you to write it, would you say roughly?

KW: Roughly, from false start to final polishing, thirty years. Of course, it was another ten years before I saw it in print. I don't think I've time to write another.

PG: The next question was about explaining this conjunction. It seems to me, then, this idea of a work evolving by its own materials and developing its own form as it goes. . . to borrow a title from another book of yours—it creates a *Potential Random*. It's a good description of the way in which one's mind might work, going over things, remembering things, misremembering things, misrepresenting things. In that misrepresentation there's a potentiality. You could carry it forward and it's almost as though that idea is emblematic of your way.

KW: The autobiographical novel seems to me a vague but well-established genre. Only biographers have to worry about the problem of truth (whatever that means) in, say, *Typee* or *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or *Pilgrimage* (one of my favorite books)—not to bring in Céline or Colette or Proust.

Using family material had two advantages for me, both personal and probably not of much interest to a reader. One is that I could think over

some remembered events, which I perhaps needed to do. Incidentally, no matter how much "fact" it contains, it can hardly be classified as autobiography, since *I* am not the main character. The other was that I had a certain amount of material that I didn't have to do any research on, that I simply *had*, so that in writing the novel I could concentrate on formal problems.

PG: ...and sentences.

KW: Every sentence to me is a formal problem. I could concentrate on them, and on a larger level I could think: well, this incident might go here, or: no, that wouldn't be any good, but maybe this would help, and so forth. And I really did think of it as material. Some of it is so *cut in* that it's hard to explain what's "real" and what isn't. The material that I'm talking about is what could be called the "content" of the work, but if you select from your material according to a sense of story or in order to fit into a larger design or for reasons of style—such selection turns that content into possibilities of form.

PG: That's what I'm trying to get to, that's the ambition of this technique of yours, the idea that it's less interesting to represent reality, strictly, having an agenda to move through. Instead your focus is primarily stylistic. It's a question of style. Which makes sense in relation to the early influence of Queneau.

KW: There are thematic things that pull it together also, I think. For instance, I thought of it, from the first, as a ghost story.

PG: Which it is, in a way.

KW: And the center of it goes back to a poem that's in my first book (many of the poems there are "autobiographical") called "Horror Story" which says

*The terrible thing about  
ghosts is that we know they are not there.*

So images of vacancy keep appearing. There's not a great play of images in the book, but there are some. And many of them consist simply of light, sunlight going through and making everything completely transparent, so nothing's there anymore. And a related image, in which you have one part of something, or someplace, illuminated, while the rest is left dark.

PG: Well, the room the book begins with...

KW: ...with the light and the mention of ghosts. I've always been fascinated by ghost stories.

PG: ...and the action—taking place in a distant room, from your childhood memory. But that effect, that kind of detachment, that distance, creating this kind of atmosphere which you would call surface maybe, seems to be what it is you're interested in rendering, in bringing forward. It's kind of like a diaphanous surface of the mind. It's an atmosphere that you create out of language that one inhabits, that either you go to it or it comes to you, one or the other. But it's definite, indelible, that's the thing. It's an atmosphere that has an effect that is palpable.

KW: And there's another element. Every character in the novel thinks there is some secret, that if you find the right secret, you can have whatever you want. And this goes through the book. It's true of everybody.

PG: Even you.

KW: But as I say, towards the end of the novel: even if it were true, if we really could have anything we want, we don't know what we want.

PG: You do say at the end what you would want in that beautiful last sentence—that you would like “to live a while longer. But not again.” Do you have models for your novel? It seems to be a unique creation.

KW: The year I was writing the first third—the first third of the final novel, not the thing I wrote in the army—I was reading Proust. And it's obvi-

ously nothing like Proust, but it does have one thing in common: that it's the reminiscence of a milieu (though it's hard to imagine a milieu less like Proust's) that in effect has little to be said for it, except in memory. It's a story of what should never have happened. And in that way it's also like *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, which I read later. But those are not models. (Note that they are both very long novels!) In both of them there is a kind of redemption. *The Dream of the Red Chamber* is told against a background of popular Buddhism, with a supernatural frame. Proust, like Dorothy Richardson in *Pilgrimage*, ends with the protagonist redeeming the world he has lived through by an act of imagination, transforming that lost world—a world he found always disappointing, since the names of people and places are always more interesting than the people and places named—into the world of a novel. My narrator points to fragments of a world (or, rather, fragments which *are* the world—I don't know any other) and there is no redemption. It's not a past recaptured. It's overtakeness.

Actually, when I was halfway through my book, I read *A Legacy* by Sybil Bedford. And I stopped writing, because I thought, "She's already done it! Why should I go to the trouble?" It seemed to have what I was trying for.

PG: I should check that out. But I'm sure it's not the same. That's for you.

KW: Well, true, I managed soon after to put aside the comparison and continue.

PG: And, Sybil Bedford, where does she come from?

KW: She's British, must be in her eighties. She's written only a few novels, and that's the one great one. She's mainly known as a journalist.

PG: What I find compelling about your work in particular is the extreme Americanism or the the 19th-century evangelical bias in your high modernism. Your work always has this originary quality, the way one imagines America in its beginnings having an ingenuity that's not European, that's American. This is how I imagine Pound's concept, to make it new.

KW: Well, the setting of course is—I mean, I did subtitle it *An American History*. I thought of it as, on some level, a contribution to the history of one little layer, in a particular setting, of American religion, from about the end of the Second World War to the end of the sixties or so.

PG: But those roots in America go back for at least a hundred years, several generations.

KW: Oh, probably back to Adam. But take the change from Holiness Churches to Pentecostal Churches, both of which existed then and exist now: the Holiness Churches have slumped and the Pentecostal have risen. I was using them as a barometer of sorts. And then, throwing in those vaguely occult things toward the end. You know, not hard core occult, but the Ouija board part... Elaine is still a part of that earlier vision, not of Pentecostal, but of Holiness. She didn't follow my mother into Pentecostalism. My two brothers drifted away from both those churches, but at the end of his life, Julian had this craze for going through scripture and finding the "body of Christ." And Charles became a guru, founded his own church in California. Those things were not made up.

Back to the idea that my work is "American": that's of course true, but it's not something I ever aimed for—or ever tried to avoid. We're all limited by what we can know and what we're able to feel. And by our language. English is the only language I can write in (I've always been envious of people who are really bi-lingual) and anybody can tell by reading my English that I'm American. But I wouldn't stress that, any more than I would try to conceal it. No doubt in one sense my "roots" are in Kansas and, as far as I'm concerned, they can stay there. But nourishment has come from elsewhere, from many other sources, and that seems to me at least as important.

PG: How about your "craze" for the Bible? One would say that you were scorched by the scripture. You're not given to preach or to make moralizations, but the Bible I think is there. It runs through everything.

KW: Oh, the Bible is extremely important for me, not something I think about, but part of my thought processes.

PG: The Bible was really the background of American literature. Dickinson and Whitman...

KW: Well, in English literature generally, coming out of a Protestant tradition and backed by a monumental translation. In my first book, practically every poem has a Biblical reference somewhere. Some of them are important and some not...

PG: But in your work it's more like a tense, like the Greek aorist tense for a speech outside of time or beyond the immediate context of the utterance—all verbs need to have a tense, a time the action takes place. The way the action takes place or unfolds in the Bible is a tense that's neither past nor present. And there's a similar way in which the tense, the verbs, work in your writing. A narrative atmosphere. It's haunting. And you say it's a ghost story. It's somehow the way in which time is neither interrupted, nor disrupted, nor is it clear where it's happening.

KW: There's another American book in which the prose is greatly influenced by the English Bible. That's of course *Nightwood*, a book I had read at least half a dozen times before I ever started writing a novel. I suspect I've read *Nightwood* more often than any other book, except for the Bible.

PG: You were supposed to do the critical volume.

KW: I was signed up to do a Twayne volume on Barnes. I never did it.

When the army sent me to Europe, I took along three books: *Nightwood*—which I had already read several times—the first volume (just out) of *The Man Without Qualities*, and *The Cannibal* by John Hawkes, later a colleague and dear friend. In Europe I found Henry Miller's *Tropics*.

PG: What about your reluctance to write criticism?

KW: My reluctance? It's genuine.

Well, you know, it takes so long. It's so hard to do. It's prose. I can't stand conferences and as for lecturing: I lecture to students a couple times a week.

Any pedagogical urge I might have, that more than satisfies. And, besides, I never really find I have much to say. I got through a dissertation, but a very short one, and it wasn't a happy time.

PG: And wasn't Austin Warren the head of your committee?

KW: Yes. That was happy. Austin always claimed that he was a citizen of New England and a citizen of the world (he was local and he was universal), but that intermediate categories—such as 'American'—meant nothing to him. At that time, by the way, he wasn't living in New England, but in Ann Arbor—which he considered exile. A thoroughly civilized man, one of the two most erudite persons I've known (along with John Heath-Stubbs). He didn't bat an eye when I proposed a dissertation on the "Aesthetic Uses of Obscenity." (Heath-Stubbs came to Michigan to teach for one year. X.J. and I were the assistants for his two classes—I assisted in a course on Dryden, Swift and Pope. Austin and John had offices on the same floor. Each expressed interest in the other, but neither would walk down the hall and introduce himself, so we invited them to dinner together. John turned out taciturn, Austin hesitant. They argued quite briefly—in a hesitant and taciturn manner—whether Ruthven Todd, with whom both were acquainted, was Scotch or Welsh. John often became loquacious after a certain amount of beer, and so it now happened—but Austin tired quickly and had already gone home.)

I myself never felt exiled, probably because I've so little sense of belonging anywhere. Of course there are places I don't want to be—or not be stuck in—such as out in the country. And I do have a mild Gatsby complex: if I had to live in the Midwest (which would be, you understand, not just going there, but going back there) it would probably feel like failure. But I feel, to some extent, a foreigner anywhere.

PG: *Hegel's Family* is the book that collects your shorter prose from the early seventies. Are you working on another collection of prose now?

KW: Well, my last two manuscripts, neither one yet published, are mostly prose with some verse. One is the book that's coming out from Avec presently.

PG: Which is entitled?

KW: *The Locality Principle*. And then there's a second volume called *The Silhouette of the Bridge*.<sup>2</sup> Which I just sent to Cydney Chadwick, and she says she'll publish that too. In the second there's less verse, more prose. I think of them as prose books, basically, although *The Locality Principle* ends with a series of poems that's really the center of the book. At the same time, *The Locality Principle* is really all one piece, one (I suppose) poem.

PG: Well, how do you distinguish your prose work from your verse work, other than line break?

KW: That's it: whether the basic unit is the sentence or the line. With the same material, I've sometimes moved from verse into prose, back into verse, and back and forth, and it changes a great deal when it goes from one to the other. It depends on what I can get to go together, how things work out. Verse is easier, because you have the rhythmic possibility of making a structure which is *simply* a rhythmic structure—very hard to do in prose, *possible*, but not easy. For instance, in working with collage: the moment you take a prose text and make verse out of it, you've changed it enormously, even if it's the same words in the same order. And this is what, in a sense, comes more naturally to me. But—I don't know how to explain it—prose has always fascinated me. I've often started trying to write something in prose and then given up and done it in verse. It seems to me that lately I have managed a little more to combine them.

But I'm not at all sure about the distinction between prose and *poetry*.

PG: Well, that book—the recent book, *Potential Random*—to me was the first book that really blends prose and poetry at once, and then...

KW: Though it doesn't—well, yes, you're right, in places it does...

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<sup>2</sup> Both now in print, published by Avec in 1995 and 1997.

PG: Oh, I think it does, if I'm not mistaken. I mean, there'll be a line, a line, and then two or three sentences of justified prose, and then... To me that book was a breakthrough from the earlier trilogy that I imagine just precedes it, which was *Transcendental Studies*. And in the third volume: *The Plummet of Vitruvius*, poems like "Silk" or a poem like...

KW: Yes, that combines...

PG: That combines it and there's also another one I think...

KW: There are two or three... *Potential Random* was intended as a coda for the *Transcendental Studies*. But, I decided to use "Stone Angels" instead. So *Potential Random* remained separate.

PG: That makes sense, because "Stone Angels" seems to be a poem to end a series: "nocturne at high noon."

KW: It's earlier than the rest of the cycle.

PG: Well, that's curious, too—that you're always arranging things over time, and then when it comes time to bring them together...

KW: I've rarely written anything straight out. Some writers seem to be able to think of a book, start at the beginning and proceed straight on to an ending. I work the other way around, making little blocks and then building a book out of them. One works as one can.

It's not as if no one else ever worked this way: Eliot, Jabès, Proust...

PG: That has to be another aspect of your delight of composition. I mean that you can keep things suspended which isn't necessarily static. You can drift back and forth, and there seems to be not so much a narrative in your novel, as much as there are these narrative gestures, also in *Potential Random*. There's an anecdote that comes in, then it plays out and becomes more fragmented in a line.

KW: *The Locality Principle* is odd in this way, that it's very cut up (there's an anecdote and then another one and another one, and they seem quite separate) and yet I could never bring myself to pull some of them out and print them separately, because they didn't seem to quite make sense except in the whole book. Even the poems at the end, you know, practically every line refers back to something somewhere in the prose. In the middle there's a little section of found poems, in fact, Victorian ghost-work.

Cole Swensen had noticed that there are many scientific (or quasi-scientific) references in my books and, in an interview after a reading of *The Locality Principle* in San Francisco, proposed the question: does it matter to you if the theories you refer to are correct? I was totally unprepared for that question and have often remembered with embarrassment how I turned it into something of a joke. But it's an extremely complex question. My only scientific training was while I was a pre-med undergraduate—and was not exactly successful, though I don't regret having gone through it. Nowadays, whatever science I get is from the New York Times or *Scientific American*, or an occasional book of what the French call *vulgarisation*. Since I never went far in mathematics, that's about my limit. I am, nevertheless, interested in science, and in the history of science, and find even such meager resources valuable in thinking and writing. As a belated answer to Cole, I'd have to say that—other things being equal—I prefer to know what I'm talking about, but that scientific theories (and scientific "facts") are, for me, part of a frame constructed to make possible thinking and feeling. To make experience possible. Myth, dogma, history, metaphysics, science: I don't think one should confuse these categories, but they're all ways of making a world for us, of placing us in a "universe." Strictly speaking, I see little reason to suppose that there is a universe. I don't mean by that to say that things don't exist; only that I'm not so sure there's only one thing, or that it's all one design. I don't even know what "all" or "is" would mean on that level.

I don't take seriously the idea that the world is simply a linguistic construction. There are things—and there are words. There are words, of course, with no obvious relation to existing things (and an infinity of things, and aspects of things, for which we have no words). And there is a great complication in the fact that words themselves are things. The art of words (literature) is using words in a way that takes into account both their

transparency (where meaning shows through) and their opacity, their physical presence.

PG: You always work from other texts.

KW: Well, I'd rather say often than always.

Some artists think of themselves as bringing something out of nothing. Others try to transform existing material or are content to arrange what lies in their way. Cage wanted to be a catalyst, so that the world would compose itself. I remember a reviewer contrasting Cage's ambition with that of Boulez, who wanted to exert complete control over his compositional elements. As for the valences of things, I have none of Cage's confidence. But also next to none in the notion of control.

If you're writing a line of verse—if you're writing anything—the extent to which it's right or wrong, good or bad (the line of verse, or whatever) can only be *felt*. Not just "free" verse. A line satisfying to perfection some metrical standard

O Soph o nis ba! Soph o nis ba, O!

you still feel wanting. It's a matter of *feeling*, not of emotion. Which is to say, it's bringing the line, the event, into consciousness—hefting it, getting the *feel* of it.

Emotions are imbalances in feeling. Emotion is essentially unconscious, focusing our attention until we're reduced to that *particular* emotion—love casting out fear, for instance, along with other interferences. An emotional binge tends not to be remembered at all: at that extreme, punier faculties are laid waste. Of course, we may—usually do, to some extent—become conscious of emotions, *feel* them, though most often faintly, and only as their strength begins to fail. (When they were called "passions," it was easier to remember that they are what make us passive. This doesn't make them evil—they provide us with motive, they give us pushes.) Most sensations never reach consciousness. We hear sounds which don't wake us. We filter out sights, incapable of recording more than a fraction of the little we're offered. We jump—and then wonder what startled us. Even distinct per-

ceptions—a voice speaking, cars passing, the sidewalk under our soles—we rarely *feel*. After all, one can't afford to feel everything. And when we think, we tend not to feel our thought. (Unfelt thought is a machine for solving problems; it often works best when left to its own devices—sleep sometimes sorts out tangles that daylight has snarled). But solutions feel right, feel wrong. Ideas, with all their cognitive and emotional aspects, can be felt—or left unfelt.

PG: I wanted to talk about your love of silent film, and the narrative surfaces of your collage.

KW: You think my collages have narrative surfaces?

PG: Well, yes. But I meant actually of your written work, of your poems.

KW: Oh.

PG: You like so many films, I know this but...

KW: Well I like Méliès very much. I like Keaton, of course, Chaplin, Harold Lloyd. *The Wind*. Murnau's films. From the sound period, I very much like Buñuel. Renoir. Lubitsch. Sturges. W.C. Fields. I like Vigo's films. I like Hitchcock a lot. Losey. Ozu. I like *Out of the Past*, which I just missed a couple of days ago. I love the film *Oblomov*. Resnais. Tati. The only film of which I can say, I wish I'd made that film, is *Playtime* but that doesn't mean it's any better than *Muriel*—a terrible failure in its time. It was one of the reasons Resnais couldn't make films for a while—it lost so much money. It's a wonderful film.

PG: What is one aspect of it that you love, can you say?

KW: It takes a very real situation, and it's both extremely concrete and extremely abstract. It has complete serenity of surface and under the surface the most horrible... It's concerned partly with the Algerian war. ...It also has Delphine Seyrig.

PG: What you say about the abstract and the concrete both absolute, both happening simultaneously would make sense for you. Your own film, the one that I saw, what was the title of that? The one when you are the soldier.

KW: Oh, the film that I was in, as the soldier.

PG: Yes, I thought you made that.

KW: No, that's George Manupelli's. It's called *L'Histoire du Soldat*. We partly improvised, but it's his film.

I did make a film myself, after I got to Providence. Actually, I was going to make a trilogy, but as you said earlier today, it's extremely expensive. I ended up making one 16mm film. It's called *The Logical Structure of the World, Part 1: My Experiences*. The title is that of a book by Rudolf Carnap, the Vienna School philosopher, and in it somewhere he says that all logic starts with "my experiences." In fact the three parts of the film were all going to be labeled with phrases from his book. One was to be called "Permissible Arguments." The second and third parts were never made. In fact I hadn't even decided altogether what they would be, but the first part is 17 minutes and it...

PG: There is a wonderful scene, it takes place on the lawn with many people.

KW: Yes, that was a freshman class at Brown. I discovered one September that I had somehow got myself into doing a talk for the incoming freshmen on film history, a subject I was teaching at the time. I was down to do something on "the film experience" and there I was, faced with doing it. We were supposed to be in an auditorium which, when I arrived, was, as often happens, locked. I arrived with my film crew (that is to say, with a medical student who was my cameraman) and told the students milling about in the lobby that there are two basic "film experiences": one is to watch a film and the other is to make a film, and now we would make a film. So I got them out on the lawn and explained to them what was happening in that scene. Not the rest of the film, because I hadn't decided what was happening in the

rest of it. The film wasn't actually edited and printed until a number of years later. So I'm not sure that any of those freshmen who were in it ever saw it.

At one point, I am walking across that same lawn, and I see a book on the ground and I pick it up. It is Carnap's *Logical Structure of the World*, and I throw it down and walk on. Every shot in the film, every sequence I should say, is made to seem as though it is building up to a narrative, which never happens. There isn't any narrative, but every scene would fit into some narrative that isn't there. Someone jumps off Carrie Tower. A group of women watch a television program in the backyard here. Rosmarie is in that scene—she's also in the tv. There is a kidnapping: Bart St. Armand is the kidnapper. There are two characters who go through the film and provide a kind of motif. One is Roger Henkle, who is always writing something. When he runs out of paper, he starts carving on a tree. The other is Mark Spilka, who is reading something. Mark Spilka had said to me, I hear you're doing a film, can I be in it? I said sure, what would you like to do? He thought a moment. Well, he said, there was a poem by a friend of his that he'd like to recite. I said fine, that's what you'll do. I gave him an old book to carry. I put him in various places in Providence and he recited his friend's poem—and at some point realized that it was a silent film. (The film has a sound track, which I took from Ashley's Wolgamot piece, but it's not a talkie.)

PG: I watch silent film, and your poems sometimes, to me, reflect that space. Which is a kind of expressive illumination or an emotive silence. Do you care to talk about this? You could say that's poppycock and go on.

KW: Well, when I started teaching film history at Brown, and made it clear that I preferred to talk about the silent era, some people seemed puzzled by this and said I was a poet, why would I be interested in something without speech? It never occurred to me as a problem. We all work on surfaces and in silent film the surface is light and shadow. I don't find that so different from using words. It can also be a relief, after so many words.

PG: Both music and film go directly into the neo-cortex, straight into the body. There's no way to buffer it. So you listen to music; you have this physical response when you hear music. Same with film. There's a way in

which, I think, that poetry, if it's poetry, does that. It goes right in; it affects you.

KW: Poetry, for me, is an art of speech, of *sound*, and always an art performed. But I don't mean necessarily publicly, or even audibly. Reading 'silently' (reading, for that matter, from memory) is a physical act. The sound is in our mouths, our tongues, in our throats. (I seem to remember reading of an experiment, in which people whose tongues were entirely kept from moving could not, in fact, read at all.) For a poem to exist, that reader, that theatre, is necessary—and, as in any playhouse, the text is at the mercy of its immediate interpreter.

Words are always in space, always placed, always somewhere relative to the speaker/reader (in front, behind, to the left, above...). And also in a dynamic relation (approaching, receding, attacking, hiding...). If it's a written text, the position of the words on the page is a factor. And all this (all of it, after all, theatrical) influences—or rather, is *part of*—the sound.

I've always been disappointed that I can't do more with music. I can't play any instrument. (I inherited my mother's vertigo, but not her talent.) I've always thought of music as the paradigmatic art. When I think of art, it's music I think of. When discussing poems—or prose texts, for that matter—the terms that come to me are rhythm, melody, harmony.

A lot of sound films—which I like too, you understand—a lot of the early films, in first adding sound, used it rather extraneously. There's the picture, and then there's the sound. In the best films, obviously, they merge into one surface. But when I see a silent film, I don't usually feel any lack. And I don't mind inter-titles, as some people seem to. They don't bother me.

PG: In fact, I often like the captions in silent film. I wish there was a book just of the captions of those movies, so that you could take them and steal them for collage elements to make poems. My favorite is *Salvation Hunters*. And the captions were something like: "The city, at sunset" "The harbor... da-da-da-da-da" They were just very direct and they were coming very quickly. It seemed if you took them and arranged them you could make a wonderful piece. And I love the fact that the title would be *The Salvation*

*Hunters*, which is really what collaging is.

KW: The Surrealists loved inter-titles. Breton raved about how, in *Nosferatu*, the titling all of a sudden says, "And when they had crossed the river—the spirits came to meet them." For him, that sentence was it. (It must have been a French inter-title. I keep watching different versions—different cuttings—of *Nosferatu*, and I've never seen it. But the captions were done over, often differently, for each country.)

PG: It's also something that maybe he might have remembered wrong. I mean, that happens.

KW: But it fits so well. I mean, it would make perfect sense. That is what happens in the film.

PG: I was curious, is there a composer who you feel is somewhat close in sensibility or in some way reflects or represents what you do? Who are you close to?

KW: There are many composers whose music I like and some, of course, more than others. I like Monteverdi, Mozart, Schubert, Berg, Cage... Indian music, especially Carnatic. Jazz. Of contemporary composers, I'm very fond of Ashley and Mumma, whom I feel close to. I love their work. The Once group, which they founded (along with Roger Reynolds, George Cacciopo, and Don Scavarda) became quite important later, as a group and also for the various composers who came through it. It became most distinctive as a group just after we left Ann Arbor, but it began while we were there. It must have been 1961, '62, somewhere along there. Gordon Mumma was working in a bookstore at the time and it was through him that I met Ashley. They were talking about doing a concert of new music. I recommended that they do several concerts and call it a festival and then people would pay more attention to it. And that's what they did. I'm not a musician and had nothing really to do with it afterwards, but I always felt glad to have been there at the beginning.

PG: Why Once?

KW: They first advertised it as the "Once Festival," I think because they thought that that would be it. And then it became yearly. In fact, it became very important. Peter Yates, the Los Angeles music critic, claimed that it was the most important new music festival in America. They had always had a dramatic side, a theater side, but that increased after we left Ann Arbor, when they began doing collective theater pieces which were not only marvelous in themselves but very influential. I believe there is a direct line from the Once Group—through Richard Schechner, who used to edit the Tulane Drama Review—to the Wooster Group in New York. At least I think I see an influence, very clearly, though the Wooster Group is quite different, quite its own thing. I never saw Schechner's Performance Group, which it came out of. Mumma and Ashley did music for my plays in Ann Arbor. Not plays I wrote, but that I gave. I directed a number of plays while at the University of Michigan, starting with *Ubu Roi*.

PG: I wanted to go back to this idea of music. Do you ever write to music when you make your poems? For example, would listening to Monteverdi inform a tonality or a cadence even?

KW: I don't know that listening to Monteverdi would do that, though I like to listen to him. Clark Coolidge seems to be able to use different jazz artists to vary the rhythm of the poetry he's writing. I don't find that in my own practice. But I must say, music is the art that I most enjoy, most admire, most love. It is one of my great disappointments that I have no musical talent. (I can sing, but it sounds so bad.) Anyway, it's music that I most like—well, except maybe for ballet—but the only thing I've done with music is to write a number of texts for songs. They've been set to music by Christopher Montgomery, another composer whose work I'm extremely fond of.

PG: In your poems there are many references to parts of musical compositions and also certain movements or gestures. Do you think of them as cues maybe within the poem to create a certain effect?

KW: My plays, also, I think of in musical terms, of movements rather than acts or scenes.

PG: Would you also say the same for your poem sequences?

KW: I suppose so.

PG: Is there a visual artist that you would think represents where you are close to?

KW: The visual artist in some ways—the painter, let's say—that I feel most kinship with, is, I think, Julius Bissier.

PG: I've never heard of him.

KW: He did very small works.

PG: Like your collages?

KW: He didn't actually do collages. Or, well he may have, but it's his paintings I'm thinking of, the sensibility of those paintings. I can't do what he does, but I feel it close to what I am doing. I can show you some reproductions.

PG: Are there others?

KW: Well yes. I like Max Ernst and I like Schwitters very much and I like Motherwell, and Kline. Klee. Poliakov. Ingres. And I also like Degas very much, whose favorite painter was Ingres, by the way. But there are many artists that I like. I like some of the Renaissance painters enormously. Memling. Van der Goes.

PG: You mentioned Emily Dickinson earlier but we didn't really talk about how Dickinson was important to you. You talk about how Whitman wasn't an influence but Dickinson was one of the people you say was very important.

KW: Well, you know, everybody was always telling me how weird her poet-ics are, her metric and such. I could never see the problem, maybe because I grew up singing the same hymns she did. Nothing seemed to me outland-ish and I simply fell immediately in love with her poems. A lot of my early poems, unpublished—before the *Windmill* poems—were metrically similar, and often had to do with Biblical subjects.

PG: This is true of your later work too.

KW: Biblical references continue, that's true, but some of the early poems were actually about Bible characters. I think the Biblical quotes maybe diminish a little in my later stuff. Or... well, maybe not.

PG: Well for me it becomes part of the silence in your later poems. The silence becomes a kind of counterpoint to the lines. It almost seems to me that the Bible as a ground is somehow part of that silence now—the way in which you just make slight reference to an event or a saint or an activity or a way of thinking.

KW: The influence is actually much more than that, in that there are all sorts of Biblical turns of phrase (that is to say, King James version phrases) which have nothing necessarily to do with the passages they come from. They're a rhythm, back in my brain somewhere, that other things get filtered through.

PG: How do you justify the high tone of your work? It's interesting, even though you use what someone maybe would call "degraded" content, you know, real life people [laughter]. You even have a line, if I'm remembering this right, in "Elegy": "not to surrender to the high tone of gravity—the universe displays a degrading shift towards red." This tension, these two things happen together in your work: there's a deep resignation but it's never pious...

KW: Your question reminds me of a Stevens title: "A High-Toned Old Christian Woman." I don't think of writing as simply making statements.

I can't imagine you do, either. If it were, it would be best to keep one's language as transparent as possible. I think of language—the English language, in this instance—as a wide, quasi-infinite, palette. Wider, of course, than I can actually use. I see no reason to use one layer of language and not another. That's part of my Queneau-orientation. There are two factors here: on the one hand, the particular material I'm using may demand a certain diction and a certain syntax; on the other hand, there are the limits of my inclination and my talent (in other words, what I want to do and what I can do). To limit oneself on principle to, say, the vocabulary of prime time tv, would be a ridiculous impoverishment. When in *Light While There Is Light* I have Charles, for instance, speak, I think it sounds like the way he spoke.

PG: He speaks in character.

KW: Or Elaine, or whoever. But as narrator, I speak as narrator, and can expand the tone. The tones don't separate for me and I don't see it as a problem. I don't think it's necessary to narrate a scene in words that the people involved would use. John Hawkes used to claim that the art of fiction is the art of 'voice.' And you can see how it's central to his own (very sophisticated) art. My voices, on the contrary, are usually interleaved and interrupted until no voice predominates—though that's not true in *Light While There Is Light*.

PG: Just to finish up today, is there a book you imagine writing, that you haven't written that you'd like to write?

KW: I used to imagine writing the novel I finally wrote. My brother Charles kept telling me that, "all you have to do is just write down this family!"

PG: I've been told that my whole life.

KW: Unfortunately he died before *Light While There Is Light* came out. What book do I want to write now? I don't know. I was always impressed by Pound's saying to Hall that he had found, in his *Cantos*, a form large enough that he didn't have to write other things. Anything he wanted to write would

fit into it. I guess I would like to find such a form. But I haven't. And it gets every day more unlikely. And perhaps my whole character tends to make it impossible.

Some Arab philosopher claimed that all he had written down (some seven hundred books!) was but a drop in the bucket—no, not just a bucket, the *ocean*—compared to what he had in his head. Do you suppose that could really be? My hope has always been, I must admit, that my words, the words I arrange into lines or sentences, would somehow contain more than I know, more than what's in my head. If not, if I'm merely writing what I've learned, what I've thought out, made sense of, then it seems a waste of time.

PG: The novel seems to somehow utilize every move that you've read over the last thirty years, of all your favorite books. Not that I can trace them to any one, but it's as though you've been recording these perfect kind of gestures that you have, when you move from scene to scene, or all of a sudden we're in two scenes at once. It's funny you use Queneau and talk about exercises—after all he wrote *Exercises in Style*. It's as though your novel displays almost every rhetorical or narrative device that happens in novels. Some of it I recognize, but not like “oh that's from this”—it's nothing like that. It just seems that it's pulling from a larger source of narrative possibility.

KW: You make it sound good.

PG: Have you been writing any new prose of late?

KW: *The Locality Principle* and *The Silhouette of the Bridge* I think of as basically prose books with verse interruptions or verse embellishments although *The Locality Principle* is a little more involved than that, since the verse at the end sums up what has happened before in prose. That's more complicated. When it gets to *The Silhouette of the Bridge* the verse is diminished, more incidental. If I manage to write a third volume, to go with those two, it might even be all prose—I'm not sure. What I've been doing in prose lately—I've been trying to write down everything that I could think of that can be put into the form of an anecdote.

PG: It's a very compressed form.

KW: Yes, a kind of vignette, with its own point, or lack of point.

PG: That brings up an interesting point, when you speak about your fiction you don't use the word fiction. You use the word prose. But when you talk about the novel you say that it came from two sources: a novel that you were writing and then the actual life of your family. It has this quality that it is in the world, but the time is not quite specific. What do you see as the narrative time of the novel?

KW: *Light While There Is Light* is a realistic novel, I think. Not a romance. Not a satire. At least, that's what I intended. So it has a very specific time. But on the other hand the narrator is past that time and people do insist to me that it is an autobiography. I try to tell them that if it were an autobiography, I would be the main character, and I'm not. But I suppose that's neither here nor there.

PG: Maybe it's more with Augustine in the sense that it is not an autobiography but it's a...

KW: Confession?

PG: Well yes (laughter), in the sense that he—or even Beckett—they don't write autobiographies but there is this self in the work and so instead of it being autobiography which would be a life-writing it is more of an autography.

KW: A writing life.

PG: Or a self writing.

KW: I've always thought I should keep a diary or a journal and several times I've actually started one. I say in *The Silhouette of the Bridge* that I never kept a diary and that's true, but I've tried. What happens if I start a diary, I write in

it for two or three days. The third day I look back at the first day and rewrite it, so it's no longer a diary. It changes from a diary into a composition.

PG: Would you call it editing by addition?

KW: But it's not just edited, it's rewritten. It becomes something else and gets completely out of sequence—and this is something I have to put up with. That's the way I work.

PG: In fact you can keep a composition going for several years.

KW: Yes. Years. I sometimes find something I wrote ten years ago and have no memory of. I look at it and I think, that could turn into something and so I start over from there. In fact I sometimes think of myself as never actually writing, only revising. After all, when I work with collage elements, revision *is* my way of writing. In any case, a finished work of mine usually has little in common with its first jottings.

PG: Do you consider this idea of revision as a kind of moral practice. You wouldn't want to go that far. But, I think you are a very moral poet. I don't mean that you are a humorless poet because you are not humorless at all. There is a moral universe at work in your poems. I don't know if it is redemptive...

KW: I don't think of it in moral terms but, in any case, I assure you it is not redemptive. Things do change, of course, by perspective and by composition—perhaps even, sometimes, for the better—but I don't think of myself as slicing off a bit of experience and making it a better experience according to some plan of mine. If I have a plan, it's nothing more than an arrangement of real parts. I go by Eisenstein's principle, that it's the composition that matters most, not the shots, but in my practice, the shots come first and themselves suggest the composition. My montage is not didactic.

I think Plato may have been on the right track, that poetry is not mainly concerned with "truth." I would say that if the formal interest of a poem is not equal or greater than its interest as message, it's not good poetry.

Many writings get noticed for their immediate relevance and then, when their occasion is gone, fade away. Others shine only when their first purpose is no longer there to distract from their artistic worth.

The non-esthetic elements of a work—its “content,” its occasions—go deep, and are therefore in the long run trivial. Of course they’re necessary to the existence of the work—as the inner organs of an animal are necessary to its life. But life isn’t much of a point. There is nothing more horrible than *mere life*. The life that matters, *lived life*, is life on a surface. What is significant happens on or between surfaces. The skin is our territory—guts are supporting structures. When our bodies are working well, the inner organs go unnoticed. They can’t, in fact, survive except secretly, covered by a protecting surface. Hard to say which is worse: a gutless poem or a poem with its guts exposed.

All we can see is surface. Strictly speaking, all we see is edges. To see anything at all, we have to keep our eyes moving. My writing is concerned with the self-evident, the givens of experience. But it’s more concerned with the ground than with the figure. It points to transitions, *edges* from which we infer things—and a world of things. (The ground is what we haven’t yet noticed, because we’re looking at a figure already in focus. It’s not invisible, merely unseen.)

People have professed to being puzzled, looking from one of my books to another, seeing them as completely different. And this has rather puzzled me, because I never thought of them as all that different. Of course, on the one hand, there isn’t much point in doing exactly the same thing twice. But on the other hand, I think I always had a sort of blind confidence that things would somehow come together or something would connect this with that, and so I’ve never worried about it. It’s true that, for example, after *The Locality Principle* and *The Silhouette of the Bridge*, I feel there should be a third volume. But other than that sort of vague sense, I never think, I’ve started out writing *this*, therefore I should now write *that*. It just isn’t a way I can work.

PG: But each work is like a movement within a larger frame—like a piece of music. They are different movements in a larger composition. Do you accept that?

KW: I must admit I sometimes do, although I used to be quite consciously opposed to that idea. When Duncan, for instance, told me that he had written a number of bad poems, I asked him why (if he knew they were bad) he had published them. And he was taken aback by this and said simply, but they were part of his *work*. That he wasn't interested in poems, good or bad, he was interested in his Work—a poetry, rather than a poem. The work would amount, in effect, to the life of a particular mind. I think that's great for his work, or Olson's, or others, but I was taking the opposite tack. The fact that I had written something at a certain time and another thing after that—that whole process seemed to me something that I wanted to abolish. And it's still true, that if I write something I don't like, I either throw it away or, more often, simply work on it until it satisfies me, and then it's something else. My mind, my "development"—like Wordsworth's in *The Prelude*—I'm not inclined to foreground. But on the other hand, I do have a "body" of work and such as it is, well there it is. Much of it isn't published and much of it is out of print—Duncan's work, in the sense he thought of it, *as a totality*, unfortunately isn't available either—but I think of it as in some sense coherent, that many pieces gain by being related to the other pieces.

It seems to me that works of art—say, poems—have something analogous to what, in a human being, is called *personality*. I don't mean the personality of the poet, but that a poem can have a character as definite (and indefinable) as a person. And, not just poem by poem, but a poet's whole work may display the kind of unity I'm talking about. Unity in the sense of harmony. Look, for example, at the work of Wallace Stevens. Or George Oppen. Not, I suspect, something one should strive for. If it's there, it's there. If not, there's probably no adding it.

It's curious that, as much as I revise, once I actually have a book out—such as *A Windmill Near Calvary*—I haven't gone back and thought, now how can I improve this. But until it's a book, it remains potential.

PG: What about when you translate?

KW: Translation has always been to me primarily a way of writing things that I couldn't write. I could never write anything like Grosjean's *Elegies*, or like Claude or Anne-Marie or Paul Keinig or Dominique Fourcade, but

translating them, lo and behold, I can and do. It increases my range. I don't mean that I will then incorporate that into my own work. I mean that it's already part of my work. Translation is just as much a part of my work as any of the rest of it.

PG: How do you think of your collage work? You don't say "my writing is first and my visual collage is second." Do you consider them together?

KW: I do one thing, I do another thing.

PG: How many collages do you think you've made in your life?

KW: I don't know. Once when I was going away somewhere, I threw them in boxes, unmatted, just to get them out of the way. That was years ago and I remember counting something like 600 at the time. Now there must be over a thousand. I've sold a few and given some away.

PG: Yes we have several on our walls.

KW: I do them very fast. It's odd that I do those fast and poems slowly, although it seems to me a similar process. I've occasionally gone back to a collage that I did years before and worked some more on it, but not very often.

PG: In the preface of your selected poems, *The Opposite of Letting the Mind Wander*, you talk about your preoccupation with collage. In fact you go so far as to say that collage is your "great delight" and that it is a practice you keep coming back to. Later in the preface you say that the last words of a dying individual is a genre you came to love. You say "I think it suggests the ideal poem: not good or bad, but final; not determined by what it says—or even how it says it—but by the blank which follows."

I am interested in two questions here on the nature of collage.

The first consideration is the interrelation of the two points above; in what way does your preoccupation with collage consist of a kind of recovery or recombination of finality, and do the materials you arrange in your

collages fill or address that “blank which follows”?

The second consideration, which might be closer to the point is: how does your work as a translator relate to your practice of collage? Meaning, in what way do you consider your work as a collage artist (verbal and visual, since you are fluent in both mediums) to constitute a task of translation?

KW: Collage is not a form of translation, or vice versa, but they're related. Translation and collage are both movements from one surface to another. In translation, one takes a poem, subtracts all its words—and refills it with other words, words of a different language.

There is, you'll notice, a hole in the middle of that statement. If the words are removed, there is no longer a poem there. It isn't a matter of keeping a form and changing the content—as Pope takes a satire from ancient Rome and puts in eighteenth century English people and events. It's keeping (*trying to keep*) a formal structure that depends entirely on what you are removing—the words. If you think about that too long or too deeply, you tend to give it all up.

Nevertheless, this is what happens. The original poem becomes, for the translator, an abstract, a model, an empty form, a ghost form. (By “form” I don't mean, of course, verse-form, metrical form. I mean the form of a particular poem, as opposed to all other poems, what makes it different from all others—its personality.) The new words, to the extent that the translation is successful, echo the original (bound to be, to some extent, unsuccessful.)

Collage is the opposite movement. It takes words (dealing now with collage *poems*.) and removes them from their context and therefore from the form which they were part of. Some residue of that form may cling to them, but if too much remains, it's not collage but quotation. (Eliot's “To Carthage then I came...” is a reference to Augustine, not a collage element. Pound's “number two in most rivers” is a collage element, since the fly-casting catalog he got it from is not a point of reference—even though it clarifies the meaning of the words. I thought for years that the line meant that most rivers were full of shit and was puzzled that the tonal quality of that line and those around it didn't somehow go with that meaning.)

A translation has an original it is working from and to. That's why translating a poem is so much harder than simply writing a poem: one has all

the same difficulties, *plus* the necessity of respecting the original. A collage doesn't have an original.

As for my own use of collage: the elements I use are usually short and from widely varying sources, and generally neither the tone nor the meaning of the original text survives the transfer. I almost never use poems as source-material, since in that case the words would be liable to carry too much across. And I don't (usually) use elements discretely, but blend or overlap them, or embed them in other material. And, especially in recent years, I have—after putting my elements together—revised the resulting structure without regard for the elements as such.

Any utterance uses words we've gotten somewhere—we don't make them up, don't make them from scratch for each new sentence, but simply put them together differently. As Gertrude Stein says, things stay the same, but the composition varies.

As for finality: well, I don't believe in finality, except in the sense that what's gone is gone and when we're gone, we're gone. That's final enough. It has little to do with our poems (though all my poems seem to have to do with it). I'm not sure death is the mother of beauty, but without it—without, that is, its prospect—nothing would be serious, since it could always be done over. Of course, it *can* be done over—and probably will be—but by then it'll be somebody else's collage-element. Or not. Maybe what interests me is the interruption, which at best makes a notch in time—of the sort that might be expressed by "That couldn't have been written at any other time" or, better, "Nobody else could have written that" or even just "Well, that's the way they used to write."

PG: Would you say that this idea of revision or collage is an act of recuperation, a restructuring or rearranging of what would be linear time?

KW: I've sometimes been irritated by people "reading" my collages. "This looks like..." is not objectionable, but "This means..." makes little sense to me. It's hard to carry this across verbatim into the verbal collages, since I would hardly want to say, "Don't read my poems, just look at them." But something maybe like "Read what it says, not what it means" might be an analog. Or better: Vygotsky distinguished between "meaning" and "sense":

the “sense” of a word or text being everything a word or text does, *all its effect* whether intellectual or emotional or whatever. “Meaning” being the central, more or less definite content—what, in some cases, you’d go to a dictionary for. So that meaning is a part of sense, but only a part. Vygotsky says that our “inner speech” emphasizes sense at the expense of meaning. I once applied that idea to Gertrude Stein’s writing,<sup>3</sup> but I think it’s a useful notion for art in general. A translation, for instance, that brings across only the meaning of a poem or novel is not adequate, is only a start. And to explicate or “figure out” a poem, without really *listening* to it, is to avoid the poem, to short-circuit it.

To get back to your question, collage is certainly rearranging things. And often, in my case, using elements that might otherwise be thrown away. Old posters or... whatever. Or memories that could be thrown away. What do you do with memories, that in many cases hardly seem worth writing down, but as an element of collage...

PG: You’ve talked about the feeling intellect. Would you go so far as to call those memories emotions?

KW: I suppose Pound (or Jung) would say they are feeling-toned. I think the idea that intellect and feeling are opposites is a helpful abstraction; they’re abstractly separable. In any concrete case, they’re not. Feeling seems to me a broader concept than intellect, which is to some extent a subdivision of feeling. I don’t mean by this to depreciate intelligence. I’m appalled by the long-standing anti-intellectual attitude that became fashionable in the sixties. (Do I remember right, was it really Norman O. Brown who said that his students were *thinking too much*? Could he have been serious?) I cherish Whitehead’s formulation, that intellect should be a “lure for feeling.”

Speaking of Whitehead, I take seriously his claim (he is arguing the kinship of poetry and philosophy): “Our understanding outruns the ordinary usages of words.”

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<sup>3</sup> “Gertrude Stein’s Tears,” reprinted as introduction to Stein’s *Useful Knowledge* (Station Hill Press, 1989).

PG: In your note to Hugot on collage: I felt your discussion of Ernst's practice to be a useful working definition of Surrealism, that is—"recombining old images, creating chimeric figures and events," and putting them into "a new space—often a sinister or threatening space, a space congenial to archetypes, with a place for phantom desires and fairy tale fears." Which is to say, it places the reader in an empathic relation to the material; or the form of the collage gives them a location to displace their own emotional content.

On the other hand, in Schwitters—whose technique, I agree, is closer to the *charmed* sense of subjective displacement in the narrative surface of your poems—the organization of the materials is in itself an abstraction; it is read at a distance, so the space into which the reader is drawn is purely foreign, a free "delight" a free "enjoyment of a composition," since it is not readily filled with one's own narrative content. The materials often seem salvaged from commonplace narrative uselessness (a ticket stub, a snip of paper) into possibility. In and of themselves the forms are uninhabited, and the process of composition begins with a taking away—the taking away of ready content.

In your explanation of your translation process you say that you take a poem and "subtract all the words—and refill it with other words." You note the vacuum that is created and go as far to say that the shape is a "ghost form." Could you comment on that shape or space and how would you characterize it?

I am thinking of Ezra Pound's concept of the "vortex" and the sense that words are drawn back into the void of the translator's making. So the primary labor is one of erasing, of emptying a place for the words of another language to come into. And the real bravery of translation would be the careful erasure of original content without the loss of original form [as deeply bound to its *origin*].

KW: I think this is part of a more general question: Where does it come from, where do we get, the *energy* to "create"? And all I can say is that it seems to me to come from the desire of the thing to be created.

To ask *why* someone writes is usually a red herring. One may write because of emotion or because of moral need or because a bill is coming due or to explain an idea or because of some whim, and those "causes"

may well leave their traces in the poem. But the poem is in the words of the poem—in their relations, internal and external. In one sense, the words of the poem belong to the poem. In another sense, they belong to the language the poem is written in and to the world that language is part of. There is no mystical substance behind the words. There is no key, since there is no lock. And there is no psychological state behind it, because when the poem is done, the poet is dead.

PG: What other poets besides Pound and Eliot and Queneau and Dickinson would be essential to your work? Would Blake figure in?

KW: The poets that I go back to most often, outside of 20th century poets, are Marvell and Pope. Marvell in particular—poems like “The Garden,” and “Definition of Love.”

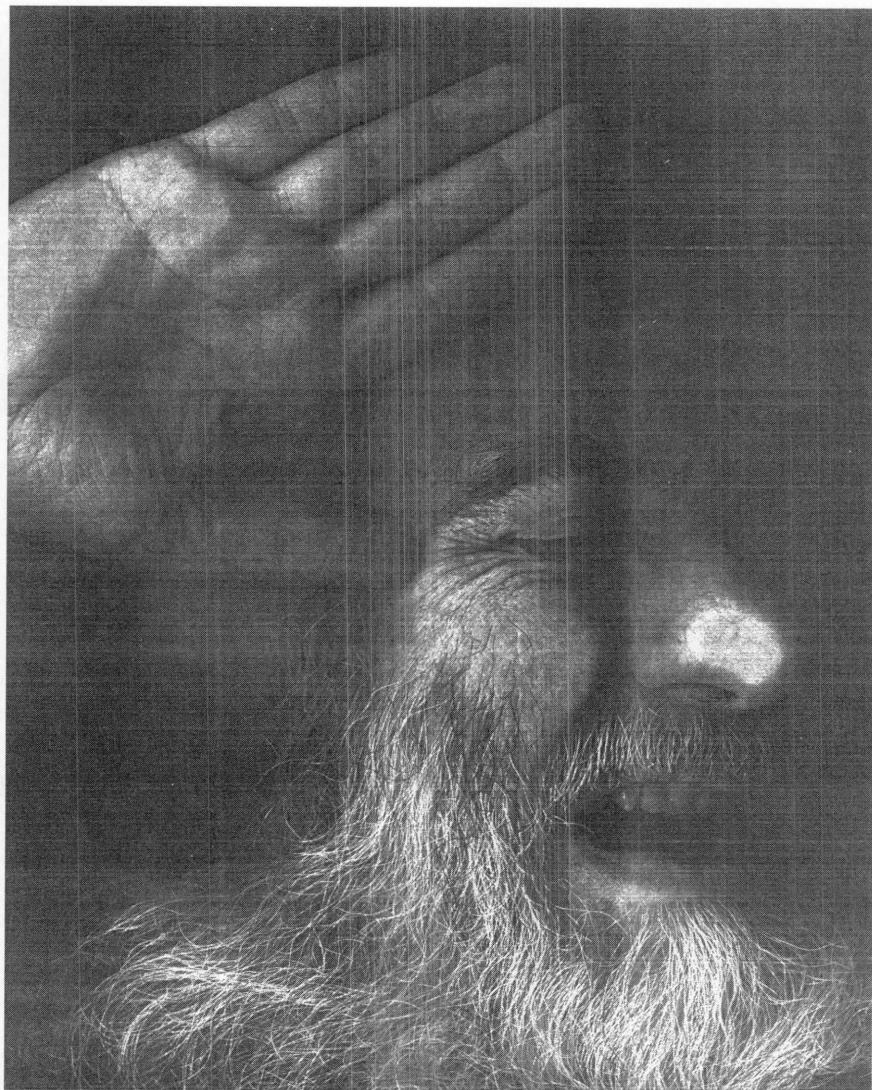
PG: Having heard the multitude of poets come through here to give readings—does that have an effect? You’ve heard so many people through the years.

KW: Speaking of teaching. Last summer I was in Royaumont and was talking to Charles Bernstein and Stacy Doris was there and Cole Swenson. Various people started talking about younger American poets, “emerging” poets as they say now. This name came up and that name and so forth. At some point Charles looked over and thought a moment, and said, “You know, everybody that we’ve mentioned so far was a student of yours.” Which was an exaggeration. I think, by the way, he had the idea that Elizabeth Willis had also been a student of mine.

PG: In spirit. Liz has a bit of the bible behind her too.

We’re coming to an end here. But the thing that I wanted to say was I remember when “Elegy” was translated into the French Anthology of American Poetry—21+1, and when the anthology was reviewed in *Le Monde*, it was your poem that was singled out and you were called “the great poet.”

KW: Actually, the review was in the *Figaro*. But that's right. That's me. I always thought of it as a reviewer's slip-of-the-pen, but I sign all my letters now "Yours truly, Le Grand."



Keith Waldrop, *Self Portrait*. Xerography on paper.

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PRB  
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MORATORIUM on  
COMPULSIVE  
SUBMISSION  
E V A S I O N

In light of having  
never been a  
fabulous time-  
piece, we'd like  
to be just that.  
L'une des plus  
belles usines.

## PERMISSIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Operratics*, by Michel Leiris and translated by Guy Bennett, is a collection of Leiris' meditations on opera forthcoming from Green Integer later in 2001.

"Portland" by Rémi Giacomotti and "Le nouveau monde amoureux" by Christophe Fiat first appeared in *IIJA: The Incredible Justine's Adventures* no. 5. "Portland" by Giacomotti was published in *IIJA* no. 6. The editors highly recommend this zappy new journal, edited by Anne-James Chaton and Christophe Fiat, which is publishing many of our own favorite young French writers of the moment.

*Wishes*, a collection of Georges Perec's New Year's games and greetings was edited and translated by Mark Lowenthal.

*Gasoil*, by Jean-Michel Espitalier, was first published by Flammarion in 2000. A substantial section of this book will be published in translation as a chapbook from the Poetic Research Bureau later this year.

*Chambre à roman fusible* was originally published by Al Dante in 1997. A substantial selection from this book will appear in translation as a chapbook from the Poetic Research Borough later this year.

*The Island of the Dead*, by Jean Frémon and translated by Cole Swensen will appear from Green Integer later in 2001. It was originally published as *L'île des Morts* by P.O.L. in 1994.

*L'Âme* by Christian Prigent was originally published by P.O.L. in 2000.

*The Familiar Path of the Fighting Fish* by Pierre Alferi will appear from Green Integer later in 2001. It was originally published as *Le Chemin Familier du Poisson Combatif* by P.O.L. in 1992.

*Dans la reproduction en 2 parties égales des plantes et des animaux* by Anne Portugal and Suzanne Doppelt was published by P.O.L. in 1999.

*Compadrio* by Pascal Poyet was originally published as a chapbook by Gutenberg Chaves (Brazil) in 1998.

*Signe =* by Christophe Tarkos was originally published by P.O.L. in 1999.

*Le Voyage d'été* by Jean-Jacques Viton was originally published by P.O.L. in 1999.

*Exercices d'incendie* by Sandra Moussempès was originally published by Fourbis in 1994.

*Chaussures* by Nathalie Quintane was originally published by P.O.L. in 1997.

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*Comment, en Noirs* by Véronique Vassiliou was originally published by Les Cahiers, Éphémérides in 1998.

"Dread of One Single End" by Edmond Jabès is the second part of *Desire for a Beginning Dread of One Single End*, translated by Rosmarie Waldrop and published by Granary Press in 2001, with illustrations by Ed Epping.

*Fin de Citation* by Marie Borel was originally published by cipM/Spectres familiers in 1996.

*Poésie, etcetera: ménage* by Jacques Roubaud was originally published by Éditions Stock in 1995. Translation by Guy Bennett forthcoming from Green Integer.

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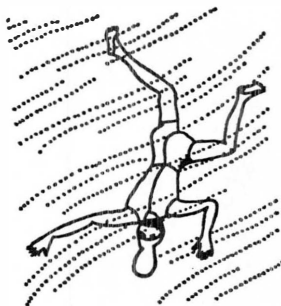
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