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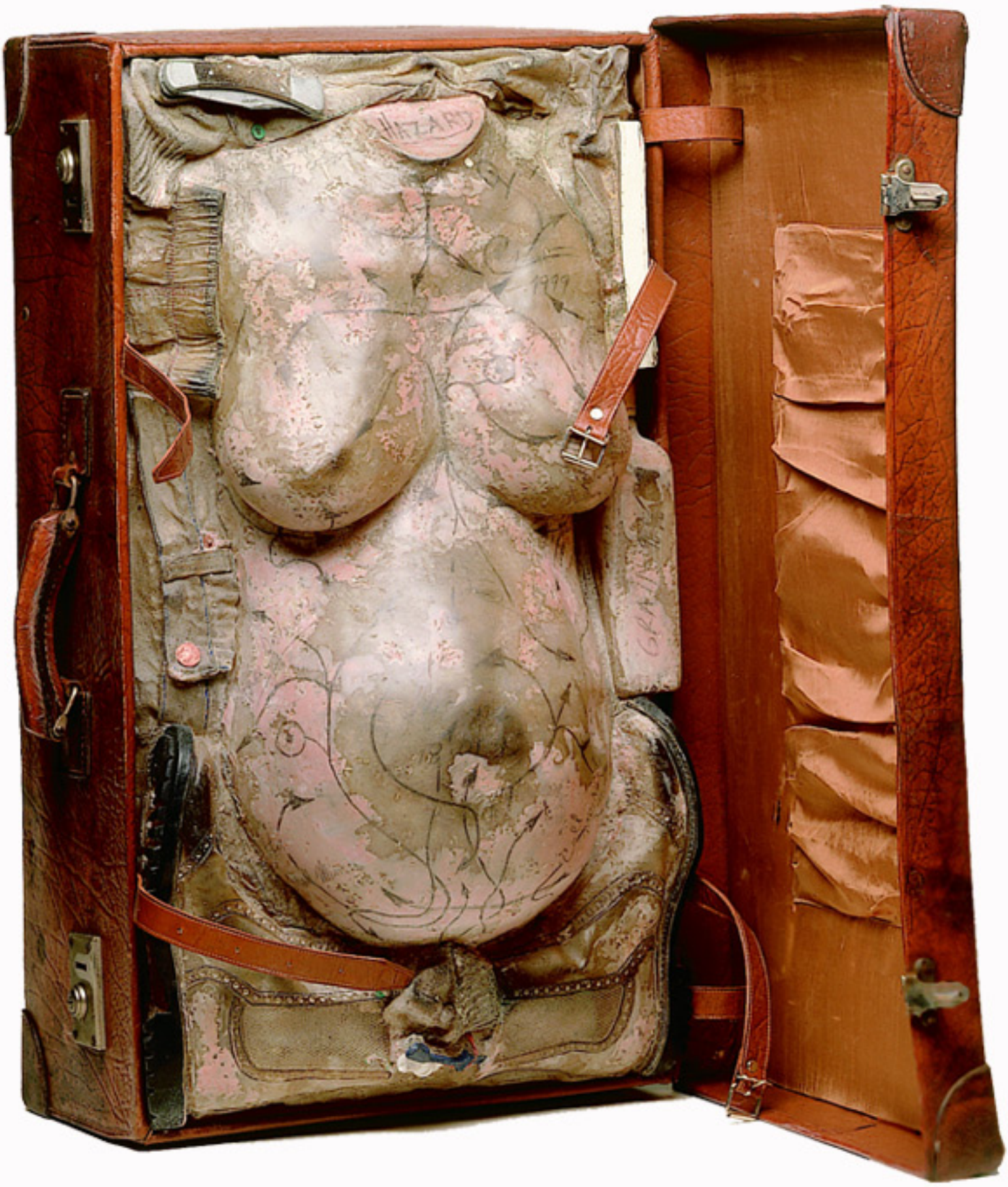

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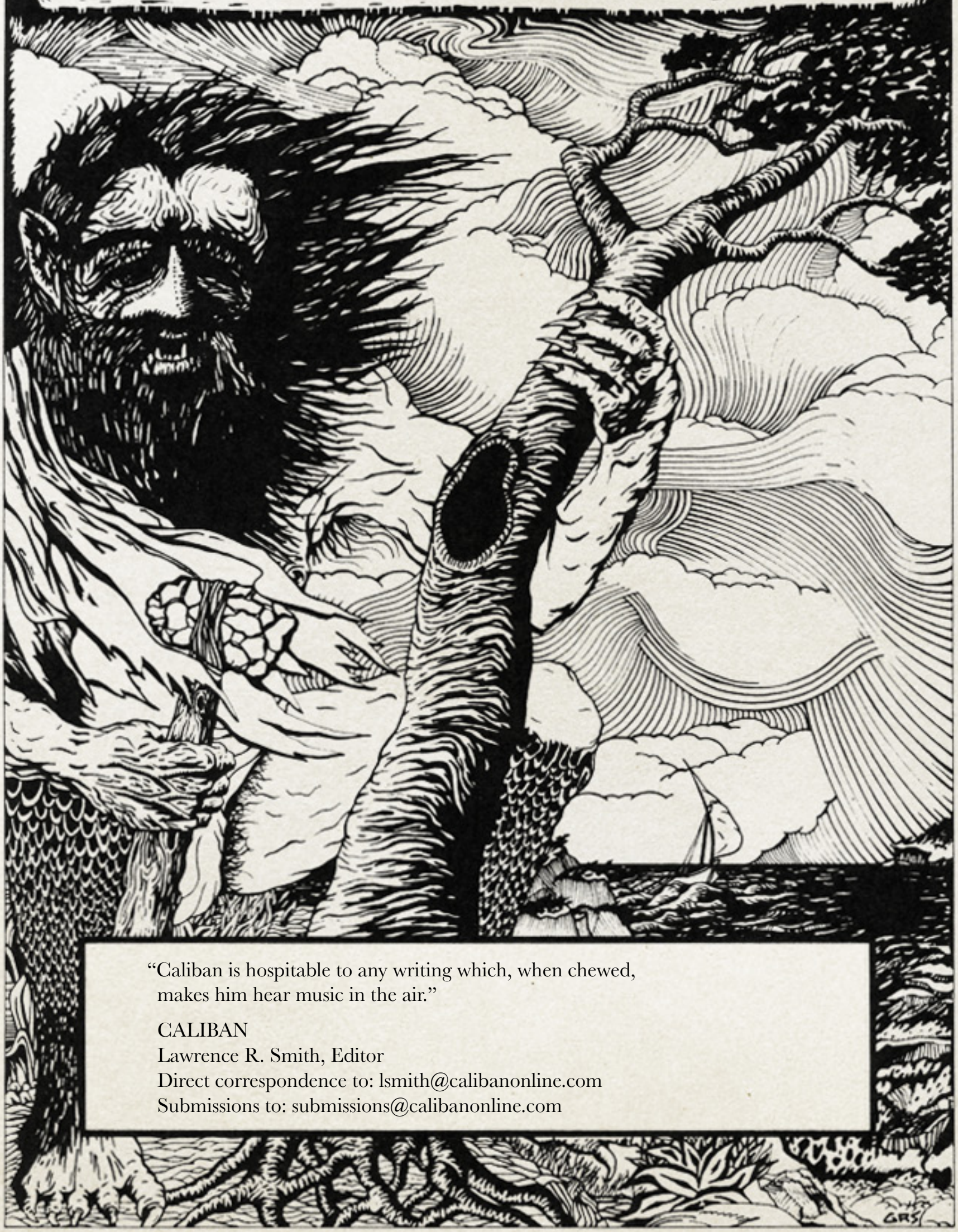

"Caliban is hospitable to any writing which, when chewed, makes him hear music in the air."

CALIBAN
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JANET KAUFFMAN

Before Writing

Before writing the large letters
of names of planets, or kinds of forks,
say a person tears a plant apart,
bloodroot, one word, and sees blood

or straps the wrinkled leaves of boneset
as bandage, takes action, immersed.
A body in leaves, a body dressed,
four words, three words.

Some Intermittency

Some intermittency, some scatter
of flake or sheen
is enough to require fiction

Nothing lies beside or apart
but through and through
a word sift

Hyphenated, saturated in the habitude
of slope-to-stream
we slip together

Until the Flood

Until the flood and dollbaby
floats away she's hung up
in a snag one leg
making waves her webbed toes
an itty dam she's flotsam to be

as derelict we all go
unsalvageable
in the scheme of feast
to further feast
via much brilliance

bacterial or mandibular
the table set or cleared
the floor swept
we have so much to offer
let it be remembered

RAY GONZALEZ

Last Night

Last night, the bees came, the tops
of the barrel cactus split open
by the heat, bees darting into the night
to find the place they belonged.
I heard them in the canyon and waited
in the broken trunk of the cottonwood,
hiding in there to learn how swarms
of bees teach men in their sleep,
so the sweet desert is no longer
the honey that sticks to my lips
and opens the dirt road until I find
the slashed barrels and take a drink.

Last night, the bats invented aromas,
followed their black flight out of Carlsbad
Caverns to feed on peyote plants around
the entrance, this documented myth
broken when I reached the opening in
the earth and saw the blue lights,
headed back to my car without visiting
because I approached the wrong cave,
smelled the smoke, bats brushing my head
with the magnet of guano that forced
me to leave without entering the ground.

Last night, a mountain lion entered
the town and was trapped in a car wash,
police shooting it and not giving it a chance,
the streets marked with the claws of the old,

my hands slapping walls and leaving a mark,
a distant buzz mistaken for light poles
blinking across the city, the clay jars on
my porch brimming with water where
bees hover until I go into the great
fields of cactus, directing the river to
follow me without flooding the earth.

ROB COOK

The Collision Followers

she uses one eye
for the road and the other
to watch for songs
between towers of radio towns.

these headlights are blind,
she says when the highway runs
out of stripes

and the car runs out of oxygen
and the trucks pass
like debris from a past universe.

you lied to me. these songs aren't
on any of our maps.

she always talks like this,
that she's trying to find either
a song or a rest area
where she used to live

and then she stops
to comb cigarette ash from her
hair, puts her fingers
into the cell phone,
dials for a clarity
like the deep roads of the moon
after it, too, has been
pulled apart

by the distorted caribou
made of headlights
behind us

and she looks
at me from everywhere in her
clothing, a collision follower
who knows the tracks left
by all the locked cars.
I can no longer hear where you are,
she says while the police pass
in sweating mirages.

she recognizes the wrecked lines
of bodies lurching
into a Perkins billboard,
the flares trembling still,
the pheromone smell
of each surviving
stain of tungsten.

and now that the highway
has already been
lured two days
ahead of us,
she cries for road signs
closer to the shivering,
unfinished mattress
where she said
a satellite was watching
from someplace in her
shoulder,
and that she wanted
to make her own
children,

only without blood,
in the blinking towns
of a night's no-longer-documented
fatalities.

SIMON PERCHIK

*

How can it lose! this stairwell
held gently the way each step
comes loose and your heart

reaches across, covers
the dirt, the flowers, the eyebrows
—it's snowing under her legs

that are not yet evening
held back as a banister
not meant to last, staggering

alongside her footsteps
that no longer have a mouth
somewhere to somewhere.

*

This school bus learned nothing about aging
slows down in both directions at once
—stars never seen this early

stop then stop again the way hillsides
take their place behind folding doors
and funerals—you approach this

and mothers waiting everywhere
as if once upon a time there was
an immense forest, an enormous lake

with water lilies that never die
—you almost hear what could be
birdcalls and for those few minutes

your breathing stops then yellows
though it's the moon holding you back
the dark sky in the roadway.

*

Ear to ear though the tree
darkens the way this saw
no longer drifts alongside

in the open, clings
to wooden boats and the dead
you can touch with your tongue

once it's morning and the blade
has nothing to do, already
half rainbow, half riverbank

low over your mouth
opened so you can read
between the lines, send back

a note smelling from wood
older than anything on Earth
stretching out till the dirt

overturns and you drown
swallowing leaves, branches
days —you cut with hours

that know each other
that bind and by themselves
filling with clear water.

MERCEDES LAWRY

Transportation

I took the subterranean
and left my mask on.
A few insects clicked in the corners
as nervous as I was.
This was my first time and last journey.
I thought I might write a song
along the way, but there was nothing
inspiring. It was all survival
of the fastest,
my blown-up ideas bombing
into blue has-been shiny-ass suits
on bent hangers for too many years.
I couldn't recall if we had fallen
into November but my bones were chilled
and I could only remember half
of what I needed. I should have had
a few more drinks and grown taller.
I should have brought more reading material.
Truly, I don't mind the racket,
the clang, bang and rowdy hiss
chewing the dark under-drum,
the holy black hum and swallow.

J/J HASTAIN

From **_nomadic caves_**

Dear female he. We are conducting the immensity with a bone from the piles of deboned corsets.

You kept your come mixed with lavender in a vial. You told me to put this tincture inside of me while you were away. Guaranteed propagation even if only in ephemeral proximities. This is how you imprinted yourself on the insides of my pudenda.

It hurts to remember that to have composed and not yet eaten is also beloved. As you slide into me upon your arrival I weep because I can actually feel your fingerprints within. Sweet serif. I taste your veins as if they have been turned inside out. Balsa. Maternal masculinity. The affectionateness of emollient.

Your volition is your dick.

I wanted a mouth and genitals that could not be terminated or halted. A red that was never an if. Born on multiple sides. A truth that I could repeat without effort.

MOVING ON by Yamel Molerio, 2011, acrylic on canvas (30” x 40”)

MADE IN CHINA by Yamel Molerio, 2011,
acrylic on canvas (48” x 48”)

TERRY HAUPTMAN

Salt-Memory

Struggling to understand
The secret music of Minsk-Gubernia
Where my grandma Lillie was born.
Never to go back to the
Pogrom-ruins of Byelorussia
Blackened by grease and time
Yiddish shtetl
Remembered in immigrant fires
Marked by graves in Queens.

Igumener Ind Ben
Workmen's Circle Jews
Bought these plots
Where generations of musicians
And vaudevillians
Were put to rest
In the arms of perpetual care.

I wanted Angel-bread
To feed the homeless.
But got instead
Death's unbearable cry
Placing stones on stones
In the burnt-umber
Sun of salt memory.

The One-Flowered Cancer Root

The house smells of olive oil and camphor
Horseradish and tar.
Outside, ginko-ovaries drenched in gunpowder
Reek in the secret winds of trauma.

Your salt-water gargle
Soothes a bad tooth
As Uncles argue on Brooklyn roofs
Dumping the soot of angels
On hydrangeas, bandaged fig trees and crocus sacs.

Rye-bread and spider web pachunum
Bancas, leeching flames,
Blue-vapor glass bottles for cupping.
Curanderas light a match for healing
On old women's backs
Chewing garlic in the blood drawn dawn
Blue valerian of the maror and salt
The one-flowered cancer root.

Shlugen Kapores

I never understood why you swung chickens
Over your head
Until their necks broke
To rid yourself of sin;
Then donated the food
For a neighbor's feast.

Why would the neighbors want these
Chickens
No prayer could cleanse?

Then I heard the hungry winds of redemption
Trickle down
Like blood and ash,
Like wolves whelping in storms,
As the sky turned red.

Tellurian Dreams From the Lost Tribe II

Does one write with the blood of the world
mixed with one's own?
Edmond Jabès

The moment I saw the lost tribe's arsenal
No angel tellurics of the lost tribe could save me:
I fell down with the phoenix
On the belly of promise
Where language lies.
I fell down with the snake
Licking pollen in subterranean gardens
With the language of hidden Jews
Aflame in the ponderosa pines
And Russian olives
Of the New Mexican
Mountains.
The secret scorched on my tongue
In the Sangre de Cristos
The wine of Black Mesa
Pulsing the dawn.
In the music of exile
Hebrew chants
And Arabic muwashshahs
In Andalusian winds…
It is fated.

JEFF HARRISON

Henceforth Amytis

overlook the full surroundings
& sink into Scheherazade's satchel
bubble up carefully & come forward
bare-handed as the brow of Amytis

now each off-hand phrase
has at least some warmth
intermediate enough,
Nebuchadnezzar enough

yes! yes! send me any flounce
from any scene! the trifles open naturally,
now even the sharpest use
observatory telescopes to see them

though they still come to us stooped
& obsequious, bubbled up to come forward
THIRST—my first vicinity was a tolerably warm
boot upon a road lately removed, a cynical hold upon

the lurking tearfuls... N E B U C H A D N E Z Z A R
finding prey with his forefinger, just another snake shifting &
craning to come forward out from the full surroundings, this
perseverance is a centaur hueless beside remains of fair weather

intone Proteus countless no longer, henceforth Amytis always
anchor to swim blood-dyed in intonation, blood to vindicate a
dog short of hands, someday I'll lay a pair of gloves on her brow
until then, the whole story is vigorous as ever

Moth Money Declaration

collecting what's
bursting in on that comma
see—spidery sea
dear for warmth
& a puzzle not lacking
what's usually winked away
you'll remember my pulse
by its corners
by what's kept in the blink
fly, frog—Poor Time in
a part for all
largest stillest shadow
at last talking, officer
I twist apart small bodies
by the hour for a clue
flowers, I opined,
walk the storm down
their thorns are tonic
for the multitudes
what is face-down will
no longer get oil from me

REFUSE TO SETTLE by Carlos Ulloa, 2010,
collage, mixed material (19” x 14”)

IT'S REALLY A STORY by Carlos Ulloa, 2011, collage, mixed material (18" x 13")

FINE MADNESS by Carlos Ulloa, 2011,
collage, mixed material (20” x 16”)

SKA by Carlos Ulloa, 2010,
collage, mixed material (16” x 10 ½”)

DAVID GIANNINI

Cream/Donne

A fresh trash bag grabs an old woman by the neck and drags her to the curb, then dances itself back into the woman's house—the emptiness of plastic looking out—looking out of a window at the woman's curb-appeal to all the appealing elders also roughly placed outside of their own houses.

Each man and woman is picked up and dumped into a depression, discarded there, as flat as cream, and yet somehow they all manage to sing *in the white room with black curtains near the station, black roof country, no gold pavements, tired starlings…in the dark where shadows run from themselves;* and when they are all done singing an ecstasy comes, said one, *Where, like a pillow on a bed, a pregnant bank swelled up, to rest the violet's reclining head.* What? Who.

Everyone's old, and comely. There's no ire in their fog and no fog in their desire. They fluff up the windows and question their things.

"Every chair needs to sit," said one.

"What *are* these bodies?" asks still another.

You can catch them listening to harmonium, glockenspiel, and snippets of birdsong in Mahler. What else? Lickity-split tumult of the discarded. After tying the bags at the neck, they take out the trash.

Compass Point

A couple kept glancing at the compass in their car mirror. It seemed to point the same direction no matter which way the car turned. As they passed a large oak they noticed a wooden, three-legged chair on one of its limbs. The car automatically slowed and stopped, backed up farther and farther, then raced ahead until it crumpled against the tree. The wooden chair may be up there remembering its phantom limb, said the man. The tree might sense it will become a chair and more, thought the woman. Yes, the chair will fall from the bough and turn into a cradle on the way down, poor baby, the woman thought aloud. I am whittling against that choice, said the man. What choice, asked the woman? Diaper in the treetop, said the man. Oh, said the woman, you don't understand. The chair is a baby with cloth on its seat, she continued, I can hear it whimpering from here. I thought we said we were committing suicide and would smash into this tree without further complications, said the man. Yes, we did, said the woman.

GANGUERO (GANGBANGER) by Pedro Vizcaino, 2009,
oil and oil stick on canvas (70” x 80”)

RICARDO PAU-LLOSA

Machupicchu, Day of the Dead

By blows the block of night
breaks into and by force

of lightning spilled
across the tops and flanks

of mountains slab-erect,
as if the pages where the world

held its breath in words
rose, in the rhetoric of spirits,

to the mirror's duty
and threw the world back

into itself. By blows
the cracks through which liquid neon

rained upon the summits
are followed by the murmur

of chalk mantles
dropped on the peaks or glowing

from their secret cradles.
Were there a horizon, it would be marked

by these artilleries,
the mineral arsenals of light

whose blasts snag
upon the chiseled remnants—

charging forth, or returning—
seeking simply the fabled belong.

And the light, as any sudden
visitor in awe of been's,

stumbles the awkward
steps to linger merely

and finally in the bloody amber
of a lone thin dog's eyes.

At dawn my wife and I
will walk again the ruins

waiting for the prompt
of dawn, followed by the dog

that will echo our calm as if,
like the beast, we too

resided among the rocks
and mists, limber in a growling

hunger, calculating
charities from another species.

Now, alone with the night
and the electrical generator,

we sit upon the steps
of the hotel next to the site,

pondering the speechless
storm, the insoluble deafness

behind beyond. Days
later back home, the threat

of coincidences will greet us.
Friends quarreling jealousies

will speed
onto an expressway, and,

at the moment my wife and I
were surrendering to the mountain storm

in the radicals of presence,
the friend's wife will lose sight

of her husband only
to tumble out of bounds

over and over cartwheeling
and crack the sky of her windshield

and fly through it dead.
Her husband will see this

in his rearview mirror
and will not hear the mourning

horns confused, and find
her thrown from the wreck as mangled,

and all will be lost then,
the projects of recovery, the epic

of closed wounds,
the bare possibles of prayer

in the bubble of sheer death.
Arriving mammalian with luggage,

we'll hear this tale, and then slowly
piece the scene of thunder

over the Andes,
the fatefulness of the date,

the inaugurals of our marriage, the surety
that no randomness is out of range

of plot and cause. The day
after, we visit the husband

cracked like restored pottery
on museum display

and pay our respects while announcing
our nuptials. One side of the coin

is dog alien to the other,
and yet like two hands

misery and hope make
their contours mate.

We watch from the flow lane
of our lives the gape of guilt

in joy, what to say, how even
to nod the listening, discreet

as curtains, how not
to feel the rocking

jolt of strangeness in happiness.
This, finally, will seem

the most polished terror to us
as to the threadbare dog

which took these rocks
and us for a pack,

and barked at the llamas, and without
a thought to meaning, pissed

his rainbow across the temple of the sun.
I sustained the cultural gaze

on vertigo and the energies
simply to ponder

with librarian eyes the granite
text of a people who felt

and wondered what all do. Their answers
lost on us, electric,

read, and antibiotic.
No god of logic,

only the logic of gods
rising, shimmering, ordering

the lift of this, the clearing of that.
The masonries tilt their foreheads

into gorgeous ruin for the rumble
of foreign stares,

cameras clicking, their forsaken
answers too choking

on the little air, falling headlong
and mute into the ravine of tourism.

Posing

[*Meninas*]

From here there is no view
of what the painter will force

upon us all—the gardened
thought reflected myriadly.

But there *is* a hole
where he scraped too fiery

and the fabric of his world
and ours gave. A plosive grey

the smallest eye could balcony
onto us, sitting shadows.

It haloes the gesso he laid
like snow upon a fall,

and the earths he dabbed, red
minutiae, as we all are,

blood clocks. The hole blossoms
singular, betraying the frail

companionship of art and skin,
my daughter who will dance

upon the dimming stage, a peach
in muslin and regret. Briefly I draw lines

between the eyes of artist, child and me,
like arms severe in oath. I settle

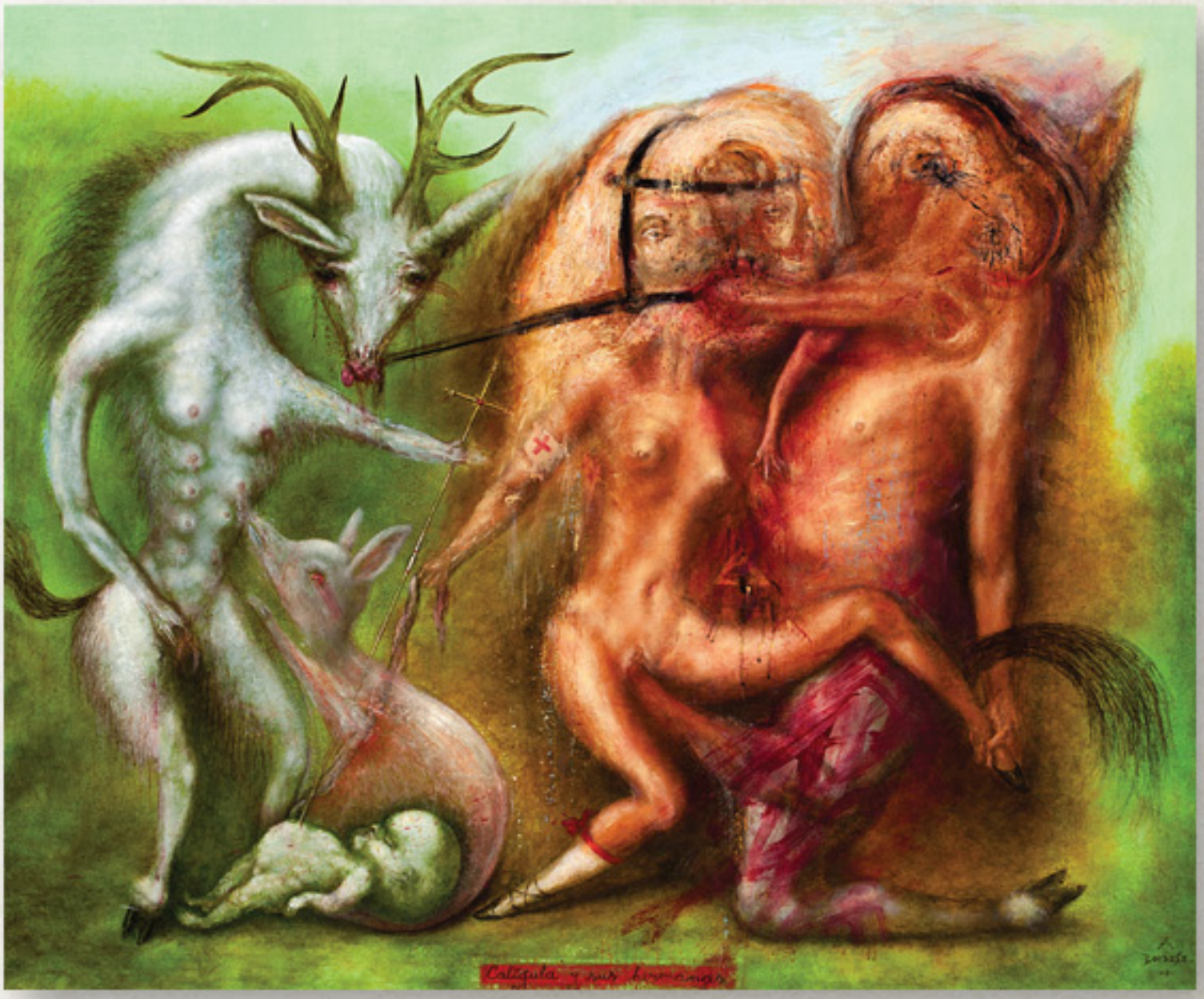
on a shaky crevice on the wall
behind my painter, a blur

returning from a distant mirror
beside my empress, indistinguishable.

Community College

At the sunken student plaza
outside the coffee shop
phalaenopses have been strapped
to the oak trees. There
they must harvest shade
and rain pearled from the hard
tongues of empty leaves,
and mingle with mosses
they would have rather avoided
had they not been appointed
to such a perfect place,
had it come to pass
by the wills of breeze and beak
that they found themselves
on chance's cradle
to evidence living
taking the thorough turns.

LEDA by Marcelo Bordese, 2003, acrylic on canvas (68”x 48”)



CALIGULA Y SUS HERMANAS (CALIGULA AND HIS SISTERS) by Marcelo Bordese, 2008, acrylic on canvas (40”x 48”)

SMARIE CLAY

Mother (Before) Tongue

Where I have been & where I go:
a locus of shadows,
(define locus here) a candelabra between

(a curve formed by all the points satisfying a particular equation of the relation between coordinates)

hide
&
seek.

(define shadow here)

Holding a hammer against the sun
I cast many houses.

(define light here)

Wall of giving birth where
two sharp cliffs separated
and a shadow was born.

Today, I search for Tulips
growing into nothing.

(shadow of a verb)
(leads to tension)

I construct a shadow of flight.
The floorboards buckle beneath me.

It seems a song has unearthed
a strange bird and broken
into the beak.

(*Indefinite article)*
(*Definite article*)

A window advances
beneath the eyes.

Separating the Fingers

Will the window open
the house?

From the outside,
    work
within. All that fits inside the box
folds into
folds.

Curtains crease
hatchling to crane.

Arsenic blue, divert the wings
away from each other.

There is such a thickness
between the living
room and the garden
planted hand.

Tomato shakes its red
fist. This is commonly referred to as
breath or revision.

The hands begin
with an upward
tearing.

Do not concern yourself with clouds
they have already passed.

Still Life with Still Life

During the ballet
dancer's autopsy, I strum the calf
just once.

Muscle strings *snap*.

She isn't dance. Her finest
performance yet.

She is no longer:

pointing her toe cliffside hurling
bundles of baguettes or

hacking her own leg
in circles or

drinking black milk narrowly.

Before cement sets to bone,
I pluck the violin from her throat.

Inside Tiger Out

A bowerbird knitting drops her
yarn. Song unravels everywhere
joining her redwood to my door,
a note so high, my flower vase plurals.

Each direction proves twine
to the chest. I didn't have windows
until they burst, multiplying my
lavender tree by red. I think this is how it feels

To know the tiger that turns
the forest inside out. I pass

myself digging, but that is not what bothers
me. My house gives over to the pines,
grows to s t o n e s. My house has left
my house. The mantle deer finally completes

his jump through the wall. He thinks back
to losing his head in snow to achieve the last
red apple, nudging root of the Sweet Gum.

Stones hatch to s t o n e s. Leave your body
this often, your body be- comes a body part.
Think of the tiger's jaw as she sleeps.

JOHN BRADLEY

Silence Is a Text: An Interview with the Evil Eye

Q. Should I call you Nazar?
A. What I inherited was a small suitcase.

Q. How can an amulet, a piece of glass with some blue and white circles, protect anyone from the "evil eye"?
A. It's just like tuna fish on toast.

Q. Do you believe in dwarfs, elves, gnomes?
A. What about four fools?

Q. What makes jealousy so fearful, why?
A. With all due respect, you could be run over by a bus.

Q. You're everywhere in Turkey, but your popularity extends through Greece, Iran, Lebanon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, India, Brazil. What accounts for this?
A. Meat from which the blood is drained is tastier.

Q. How does the image of an eye turn away evil?
A. A woman wakes from dental surgery with a British accent.

Q. But I don't get it. How can a certain look cause desiccation, dehydration, wasting, withering?
A. You are now entering the forest primeval.

Q. In the Roman cistern, under Istanbul, I found you on some of the columns. But there you look more like a knothole than an eye.
A. We can cut them, prick them, burn them, and they feel nothing.

Q. I've heard that you and Medusa have been seen in clubs together. Hasn't she been in and out of rehab clinics?
A. There is no such thing as an innocent civilian.

Q. Can a person with night blindness give you the evil eye?
A. It's very Zen.

Q. Does an eel have eyes?
A. We can cut them, prick them, burn them, and they feel nothing.

Q. Is it true, Nazar, you come from a factory in China?
A. An artist is somebody who produces things people don't need to have.

Q. About the seven sleepers in the cave in Ephesus. When they came out and were told they had slept for three hundred years, they all died. Someone gave them the evil eye?
A. Civilization is seduction.

Q. Are some of us more susceptible than others?
A. Another bag of meat and bones.

Q. I've heard stories about you being difficult to interview, but you're rather pleasant.
A. If hogs could paint, they would paint gods that look like hogs.

Q. Thank you for not using the word "prophylactic."
A. The next time I visit my father's grave I'll tell him.

Q. Are you giving me the evil eye?
A. Silence is a text easy to misread.

Q. What should I tell Americans about you?
A. Try to outlaw the hole, but it keeps, asleep in your armpit, to its own killing music.

Q. Any advice for up-and-coming amulets?
A. With all due respect, you could be run over.

THE SOULSEEKER by Cristian del Risco, 2011,
mixed media on paper (40” x 28”)

THE PROPHECY by Cristian del Risco, 2009, digital image

CRAIG COTTER

The Whites

I bend down
pull the whites out of the dryer.

White ankle socks tumble
into my powder blue plastic wash tub.

*

And so, dying of cancer—
it's inconveniently in my brain and chest—

I want more time
for the big things

like a great poem—
but also for the white ankle socks coming out of the dryer.

*

I started wearing white cotton ankle socks
about 10 years ago

when I looked down
and saw the ankles of a sweaty twink jogger

at 7-11 buying water.

*

I didn't think they would make me look like a twink,
or get me running again.

*

But they are a fashion statement.
They are 6 pairs for five dollars.

They expose, if you have them, perfect, slender,
brown, in his case, ankles.

*

My doctors are young. 28 to 32. Two of my main ones
are also very hot and I'm hoping they're gay.
I hope when the time comes they prescribe me GIANT
HASH JOINTS.
Enough I can share with friends
as we smoke out.

Untitled

What was Rimbaud's favorite food in Africa?
Did he like fucking his African wife
more than Verlaine?
Did he ever fuck anyone?

I've seen photos of Rimbaud.
What was his height and weight?
Did he leave kids behind in Africa?

LEIGH HERRICK

Remittance

This is the deal:
You finish the job and let sleep come

Let it come in the advancement of case
Let sleep decree the debatable's debate calling itself democracy
Let sleep be that old curl of yellow smoke made of its own desire

Let it be
the cat gone ahead
the drunken stranger now without work
curled instead

about the stoop

Let sleep be the spectacle of my somnambulant tongue numbed into a
halo of dreams
Let it be switch of my trope's lovely deliverances clapped off and on
let it be the in-
brained best of nightly confabulation renamed
Digital Ritual formerly called Constant TV

Let sleep be medicinally shaped taken with chasers deadening nerves
keeping legs still
Let it burn memorial be meteoric memory in blank and ever-erasable
recess of mind that
from the living offer this coffin-bodied
extension alive

in dreams for sleep in bed in consort primordial regenerative
promises

Let Sleep be Seduction in a polity of yawns

Let Sleep be touted with reward

to which is given this soft amazement
and these angelic lips

partnered in Faith of Order

and all Capital plans

set down

in the templed margins of narrow

why not say what this is the messy arrow bayonet of time finding its
    range
by weaponry of reduction in silence that now
even the burning incense cannot detail

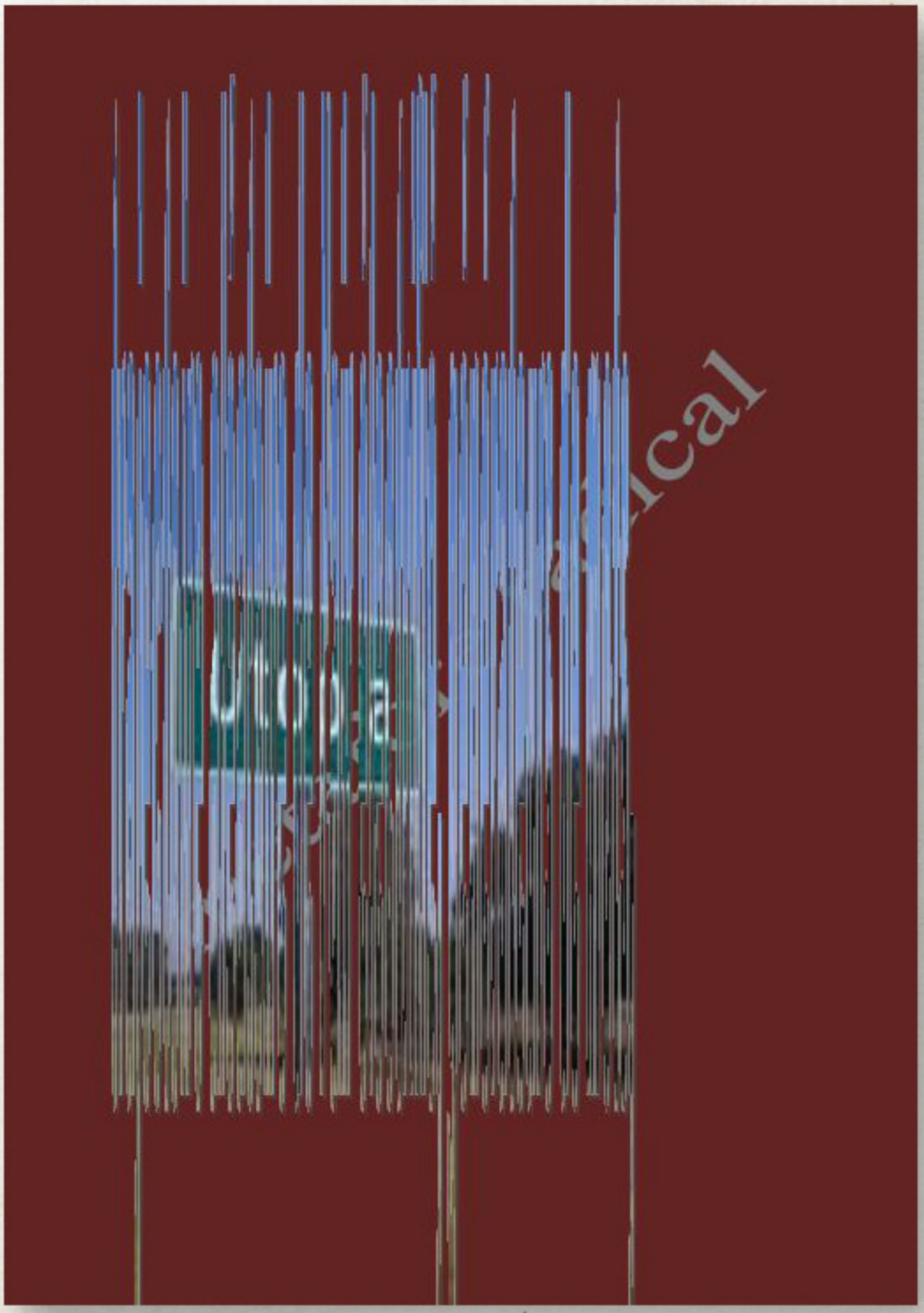
looking back you'll know: it will be impossible to cover it all
in the green of grassy knolls

there will be no pastoral of sounds here

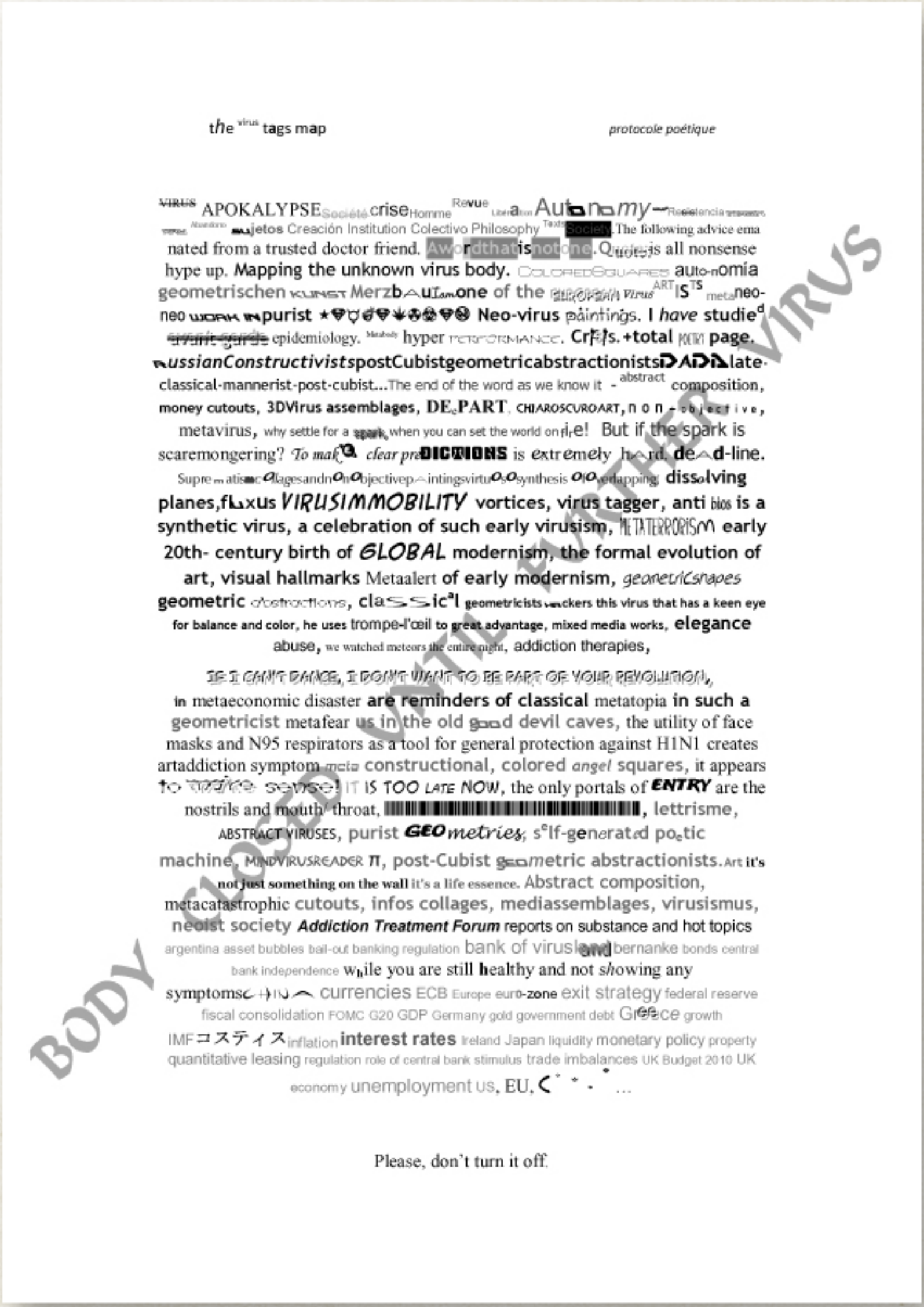
where there is only the graveyard of lies to which you will bring no
    flower
bending no more to definitions than to the confines that would call
    them back

from

when



NUMBER 12 by Costis, 2009, digital image



41 THE VIRUS by Costis, 2009, digital image

ROBERT VANDERMOLEN

Police Tape

Before there was fear
There was mischief, she said

Near the door Mrs. Lucas stored a baseball bat,
If her husband ever returned
From Puerto Rico… A chill whisking
Near the floor and around my ankles

Anyway, I promised Dorothy I'd meet her for coffee—

A light snow during the night, unusual,
Before warmer air beavered in

Dorothy said her American flag was stolen.
Mrs. Dixon reported a panther at noon
Crossing through her hedge of lilac—
Though it was probably a bobcat, more likely a deer…

When the meteor crashed through the roof of the VFW Center
They'd only been closed for an hour…

The train collision at Pierson, the engines mounting each other
Wheel to wheel, like giant hands in prayer…

You can understand the phone calls

A Letter

The river smells better in winter.
Otherwise, work progresses
In fits, little grey fits.
History, said Berlin, is a series
Of disappointments. I have
Nothing to add.
They found a petrified
Shark's tooth, non-indigenous
It seems, but riveting—
Indians trading eons ago.
The show was a success
In that crowds were large
And noisy. I have the flu.
Dan hasn't repaid me
The short term loan
He pleaded for. I'm tempted
To fling him, cane and all,
From the 6th Street bridge.
I'm rarely out of my pajamas
This past week, looking down
Where streetcars flourished
And everyone wore hats.
It's a memory I never owned
But it seems like one.
Before pajamas, as you know,
People wore sacks.
They were an itchy bunch.
But in those days
You could hear the drums
Long before an army appeared.
I read that hunter-gatherers
Were healthier (and taller)
Than citizens in early cities—
But they kept being drawn in.

Half-truths and sexual ticklers.
Grew jaded.
When desire disappears
It seems odd it ever occurred.
I've been feeling flattened
Myself. Watching TV.
Doodling on napkins.
Then what sprites into view,
Into consciousness,
Like an egret in summer
In Michigan, is that
I never should have taken
Advice from Roger—
I never liked puzzle boxes.
I've never been envious
Of Pauly or Frank, though
I appreciate their houses
Along the shore. The dog
Rolled in a dead salmon
It found in melting snow.
And now I'm hanging my head
Like a lamb

JOE LAMB

How to Make a Purse Out of Sows' Ears

Collect several pickup loads of ears.
In a blender, or meat processor,
chop the ears into a coarse grind;
no need to remove the hair.
Place mixture into a room-size, well-ventilated, rat-proof,
plastic box; add straw, grass clippings, and coffee grounds.
Sprinkle liberally with earthworms.
Keeping the mixture moist, but not soggy,
turn occasionally using a pitchfork.
Add more straw, clippings and grounds at each turning.
(Hip waders prove handy for this task.)

When the mixture deepens to a chocolate brown
and smells sweet when crushed in your fingers,
discard lid, seed with spores of mycorrhizal fungi, and plant
several mulberry saplings, preferably the white variety.
Water the young trees twice a week for one year,
one a week for another year, once every two weeks for two more years,
and once a month—or as needed (depending on weather)—
for an additional ten years.

Erect a wooden frame around the grove and cover with a fine mesh
to keep out birds. Place eggs from *Bombyx mori* on the leaves.
After fourteen days, assuming no fungal pests or insect predators,
the eggs will hatch and caterpillars emerge to feed continuously
on the sows' ears recently transformed into the mulberry leaves.

Lamb/70

Like tiny patients in analysis,
the voracious caterpillars periodically shed their exoskeletons
so that they may continue to grow and consume,
consume and grow.
Should the ghostly white instar sporting black horns
cause you to feel that these creeping beings are alien, totally other,
pause and reflect that 928.2 million years ago
a flat worm undulating, in what was then the only sea,
produced countless descendants that metamorphosed countless times,
thereby giving rise to both our lineages:
those with skeletons inside, and those with skeletons outside;
all of us consuming and growing, growing and consuming.

The pupa phase, emerging after the fourth molt, extrudes
a milky liquid from its salivary glands with which it weaves
a nest of elegant threads so miraculously strong
that should you submit the cocooning larvae to electronic fields,
your silk purse could be made bullet proof,
an attribute useful to shoppers in Fallujah, Damascus,
Bamyan, Kabul and many of the other cities that once lined
The Silk Road.

Unconcerned about the vestments of pope, potentate, politician, or
porn star,
Bombyx mori builds its cocoon as a refuge where it can safely auto-digest
the flesh of its wormy self and reassemble, Lego-like, its carbon chains
into the lattice suitable to its wanton angel self,
elegantly designed for flight and sex.

But, sadly, every ritual of transformation requires
its sacrificial victim.

To insure enough thread for your sows' ear purse,
you must strip the cocoons from the branches

and boil them before metamorphosis is complete.
This kills the larvae,
thereby preventing the formation of the winged adult
who would, given the chance, methodically spit
a silk-digesting enzyme to dissolve a tunnel
for escape from its silk fortress.
Her path to freedom would destroy the threads
necessary for your utilitarian, but stylish, accessory.

The boiled larvae, however, need not be wasted:
they can be fed to pigs,
and thus start the cycle over again;
or roasted and dipped in soy,
a dish Koreans call Beondegi—
a portable and tasty snack
easily transported inside
your new silk purse.

BOB HEMAN

From **INFORMATION**

INFORMATION

Was a word before it was completed. The dog was distance then. The ocean a cloth they could be wrapped in once they stopped counting.

INFORMATION

Starts the door, and the road, and the furry creature. Starts the roof and the twittering machine. Starts the woman and the man, but separately. Starts the light that will always be hidden.

INFORMATION

These people have lives you can't imagine. They wear coats the distance can climb inside. When one of them is completed another is started to take its place.

INFORMATION

They had a door the first time and a window the second time and some stones the final time. They had animals or wheels or a mirror filled with distance. They had a lake that was shaped differently.

INFORMATION

Can only anticipate the obvious. His hat adjusted in the light or rain. His clothes removed in the presence of the women. His voice something he is afraid to use.

INFORMATION

There are more machines than the men need. More animals than the woman can examine. Sometimes a door can be replaced with a drawing. Sometimes the window is only a wound. The car they take up the mountain will not stay there. They are never fast enough to catch it.

INFORMATION

Some words are too affectionate with their mothers.

INFORMATION

The wolves were bears that were arranged differently. The woman was the door they could not find. The chairs were the only machines that they were given. There were no instructions for their use.

JOHN M. BENNETT

THE SWELLING LAMP

the wiper business ants for
war and rigid clouds your
lenses crawl ,my dancer
flag ,compells ,a snort ,n
or blockage in the champl
ight ˘mixed with sneeze
ah number lunched inside my
ear a balled-up book so
me notes ɛ́,, dolled wit
h catsup h

o les gonflages QQ des yeux la
gomme ma langue utile c
omme ~ fumée ,letrada was
,my itching back ,combs
drying in the bannered
blood ≈ your towels cr
awl away my severed
inch blinks beneath a
bush your clotty rope a
~vapor in the sun~

the window smeared with mustard

THE LUCK THE FAUCET

the luck flaked sky my
shining luggage fell through
space of form and ash
your swift lunch rebirths
the room I couch my ham
in livered light and scal
ding cloud was what I knew
I thought your toothbrush
was the key

my face slept in the sink
your thinner tube wriggles
cross the floor my lock
or lunch complected lung
your smile puncher g
lows and thickens was a
rope of glue and stick
y gloves o don't awake bu
t fumble with the
f*auce*t

half the hair gushed down

LAUREN VARGAS

i Am-erica

1. I am Erica

                blowin' smoke stacks
                every direction I go.

    Gotta have it now.
    Because (I) am Erica
    wants it. Now.

    Backwards countdown until
    the ball(s) drop.

    I am Erica
    and I get that;
    todo, you know?

    Green neon pulsates
                From all fifty pores… maybe fifty-one?

2. i Am-erica
                abuses her body,
    all of it—from the wet drips to the
    drought tips.

    The only word she knows
    how to spell is
    D-I-S-A-S-T-E-R

    err… algo mas?

When she says
Hell
we all YEAAA!

Exclamatory functions move
every ACTion.

She just can't crack open enough trees!
(the same paper with which we curse her,)

i am-erica
needs to take some deep breaths
before she slides her arm down her
slick throat and tugs her belly-button until
she's Inside Out (again,)

3. America is sweating both inside and
outside of Church!

4. Stop pulling cotton sacks over our heads when

all we rang the doorbell for
was some treats.

NIÑO BUITRE (VULTURE BOY) by Miguel Ronsino, 2010, oil on canvas (40” x 28”)

Febusto

Doors nearby entered by my father, d. 1944 a suicide by .22 rifle, and my brothers Robert, d. 1939 a suicide by hanging, and Pete an implicit suicide refusing medical intervention for AIDS, d. 1988

In and out and around and through buildings that are quite often no more

Most of the doors that they used are now with newer hardware, are stained or painted differently, sills and frames reset

Approaching one where I know they have entered, or assume they might have, I imagine what then they were about

And what was on their mind then in that instant of passage twenty-five, eighty, a hundred years ago

Anticipation, anxiousness, relief, a conversation they were having, contemplation, boredom, shelter from the elements, or merely on their way

They were the same as each other and as am I going through any particular door

They were each, each time, each door, at all times as perceptive, sensitive and aware as each other, as me, as us all

If there were a record of them at that instant of entering or leaving through any door, an MRI of what was in their minds passing below the lintel, then they would be still alive for me who has most of their genes and a great deal of family awareness in common

But I know almost nothing of Robert who is a distant, sun-glared face in two box camera photographs, little of my father who was a solipsistic and enigmatic drunk, almost too much of Pete with most of it having to do with his rabbit-in-tall-grass dissembling

Imagine them at the main door of Nassau Hall in Princeton that they all entered as adults, Fa seething in perpetual frustration at being a fuckup, Robert possibly already isolate as he contemplated suicide, Pete excited at one of his gay rendezvous or daydreaming quixotically of entering that door again down the line after accepting an honorary degree on the steps outside

A father and sons with little shared of each other in one another except for the physical, our snub noses and gray eyes

Robert's short student life fell between the world wars but if he'd lived he would have faced the draft or pressure to enlist in 1942

Fa, as we his sons called him, a private, his campaign hat banded with Signal Corps' orange and white cord, wearing a horse-blanket GI overcoat and brown trench boots with lace-on khaki puttees in the 63rd Balloon Company at Fort Omaha in the winter of 1918-1919, but never shipped to France

Fa boasted Sergeant First Class but on the Web found he was a Private in December 1918

Germany had surrendered a month before

One of the three who is no more was in the black shoe army, Pete wore issue black boots in his abbreviated Fort Meade military tour

During my brown shoe army draftee's slog we were issued bottles of black polish in our Korean bunkers and ordered to daub

Fa's father, a man of the cloth, did not go to the Indian or Spanish-American Wars

His grandfather was a Quaker until he made money with a shirt factory supplying blue uniform shirts to the Union Army

And the great-great grandfather well might have been a bystanding pacifist in the American Revolution

His forebear, the first one in America, Joseph, who at seventeen sailed from Liverpool in September 1682, may have been fleeing conscription or impressment in the general chaos immediately before James II's reign

Many male ancestors behind Joseph, one before the other, universal soldiers

Slouching all the way back to sticks and stones among other thuggish boys overseen by sadistic sergeants

A mass grave of fifty-one Vikings with severed heads and limbs executed a thousand years ago was discovered in England near Weymouth in 2009

What the grandfather of my grandfather sailed away from in England in 1682 is closer to that mayhem than to what he found in Pennsylvania was to what the military is now

"With the might of the nation roaring overhead // around the clock // spewing vapor from their strakes // going fucking nowhere // and noisily coming back." – August Kleinzahler

All within the canon of our social Darwinian aggression

Our assumption of responsibility wherever we assume it

We are Cady Noland's violent American men

Engaged in the Americana of Dererk Walcott's long poem, "The Arkansas Testament" and Kleinzahler's book-title poem "Sleeping it off in Rapid City"

Embittered, nativist know-nothingism

Originalism, the stance of the strict Constitution constructionists, a stark manifestation of the whole problem, up and down, wanting it all again as it used to be

Our Christian equivalent of no ice in what you drink because Mohammed didn't have ice, of unshaven men, of veiled women prohibited from bringing cucumbers, bananas, or big carrots home from the market

Eighty-one percent of Americans believe in Christian or Muslim heaven

And eighty-one percent of Americans now live in urban places

The dream of the city

With us all along

Back behind even Dick Whittington heading to London Town

Fa's New York of brass-rail bars, clanking elevator cages, steam engines and rustling taffeta, was a Childe Hassam flag-hung avenued Manhattan

He, like Pete, as a man hurried to the city naturally

To a Waspy kind of Jerusalem there that way since Cornwallis and the Tories left

Loftily removed from the immigrant New York

Of course the Tories have never completely left

While still in charge, they hung that front door of Princeton's Nassau Hall in the mid-eighteenth century

Or rather slave craftsmen maybe straw-bossed by local or West Country joiners and carpenters did

There up the front steps of that cut-stone Georgian building on the slight, subtle geo-dome of Princeton's ridge

Flush on the route of a Lenape trail, the King's Road from Philadelphia to New York, our Tokaido, our Anglo camino real

That with gasoline engines became the Lincoln Highway

Nassau Hall, the new country's capitol, Summer 1783, when the Revolution's luminaries stood around in the warmth of the lowering October sun on the southeast side at the top of the slope above the Millstone River

Inside they basked in the self-congratulatory fresh rhetoric of liberty

Read Clovis and the Delaware-to-the-lower-Hudson Trail was here for ten thousand years, read pre-Clovis and it's not yet known how much farther back to imagine those elk-hunting corn farmers using the trail

However long ago through the eons before Europeans arrived, many, many travois poles scratched by and camps were frequently made here, with the big spring just to the north

Cultures having no doors, no sense of the finality of a door's closing or of the absolute barring of a door to exclude

Villages down closer to the Millstone, with soft skins or throng-fringe fly curtains hanging at the entrances to their wikiups, vast hunting lands off on the Sourland's Piedmont hills, maize-bean-and-squash fields on the flats nearby

Eons of woodland culture to the Congress thanking Casimir Pulaski to Brother Pete's cloud-born undergraduate dreams, all of that lies behind

Right now a gray squirrel with a groundfall black walnut in his mouth approaches the bench to use it as a shelling table

Challenging me sitting on it reading a middle section of Milosz's "From the Rising of the Sun" by standing erect and quivering chest and foreleg muscles chitching aggressively

Until I get up and move on

BENJAMIN LARSON

A Love Letter to Anneliese Michel

My dearest Anneliese,
You looked beautiful today,
Strapped in an angled bed.
Your eyes,
So swollen with pus,
Spoke to me like ceiling tiles.

I must confess that I stole
a few items before I left you,
Some tatters of clothes,
The taste of Sparrows,
An iguana, which I found
in the garden.

Please forgive my behavior,
But I wanted our wounds
To be as tangible as
nine, nine, and nine,
And our ghosts to greet each other at the door.

ELENI SIKELIANOS

Some Assemblies of the Past or Present

I

My goddess is stoned
in a translucent pose
in a tense that is not past
her shoulder
lights the road

notice
who hides in her heel —
tap tap (toe
on the curb) — people

in a dark

corner of bone

II

There's a softbox in my window
A little edge where eternity bleeds
throaty

Thirsty angler, the past is what you can almost see out past shelter
Future's behind us, hatcheting flamingos out of the ice

Are you monstering me?
Goddess, are you?

peas in the garden — show time's shadow so

Go on: Adapt yourself now
Reader, grow new time

The heart so spectacularly loaded with mitochondria remembers its
mother
but the foot soon forgets its path through the soft heather

III

Where was I trying to go?
I found myself with the knockout mice on the loading docks
just after the delivery.
They've knocked a few
of her genes out
like knocking on her future
physical door or
as you would teeth from a head.

IV

Before us, this pile of scraps, this
pile of trash, this pile of
American minutes
dressed up in Chinese clothing

Among the forests of my many-folded
(hours unfolding)
see how the air rises, sky-kissing,
a bonfire of energy spending itself in blue

Let yourself be that way, Goddess.

It's like putting your sky in a lost place
like letting a pirate borrow your sword. Words

from her shoulder's light slip
loose, coins
bouncing into the world, and stuck in
the red throat of a loon

VI (*The Ba, the Ka, the Akh, the Name, and the Shadow)*

When you come out of the pose

Do you come out heavy?
Do you come out light?
Too pride-hustled?
Too sleek?

My human-headed bird, bird-
shaped human
my ba, face of gold like the goddess's
shoulder and her
skin

Fly off to bash in the sun

but come home tonight divested
of that dress I recognize
clothed in some animal
I don't —
Still

I know you and I know your names

Your face is face
in a translucent pose —

See how it rises, sky-kissing

JOHN CROSS

Mathias, the ruins of whose arrival lie all about us now

"If Mathias is a sphere, then the abyss below Mathias is also his heaven; and the difference between them is no more than Mathias. If Mathias is a vast horizontal surface reflecting the time of Mathias lifting and dropping, a sound to be understood in the most patched and baggy overalls, in the high heat of mid-afternoon, the miracle is, in a sense, Mathias. Mathias is changed by the unpainted walls, the abysmal waters of his abdomen, by his knees drawn up, by coarse salt & a jigger of rum, by the lapping of night, the lips' small movement of silent prayer—there is nothing anywhere except this. Subdued, Mathias on the final flight shushed himself though he was making no sound at all—too much, too bright, too white; this is his darkness."

Mathias casts his vote

One day, long ago, I walked to the river
rather than vote for the president. I
thought maybe I had died—the colors
and sounds were so vivid then the river
wouldn't hold still, the hills behind were
covered in thin November grass, and a
child searched for animals' tracks. I
found a sharpie on the macadam near the
flagpole and scrawled on my forehead,
"time to choose." "have you seen the
devil?" asked the child, his arms held this
wide as if measuring. it began to storm in
the treetops. I felt enormous, nothing
to be bargained with

JAY PASSER

Binary Moan

It really isn't hard, what passes for Living

your banal televised cartoons
fighting the ceiling with Jellyroll and three-fingered
fugues

I have my couch and nasty conscious imagination

The leaves quivering with the wind are a tease
Down the street at the bakery the girl who works there

She's tall and lithe, cool and young
Myself a bit blithe and dumb

Like her dad, an old oak ponderous beside the window

That which rolls
That which blows

Ode to Al Jarry
Feet painted green or face painted gold

bread carved from absinthe

gold blown off the snow covered mountain
golden-paved smut-ugly streets

The smutty deaths of cars
How we fall to the muscle of the music:

rain and tire-squeal and quiet, as long as you're passed out
as respectful as the normalized ape, gorilla or trained
monkey

Ode to the spider, the fly!

I love the little quiet insects
the ladybug and the earwig

I listen to Jazz music while in abhorrence of the bent
backache of longing,
I ignore the bitter dread of losers sulking and limping away

I research the box scores
Oh, the columns of Defeated!

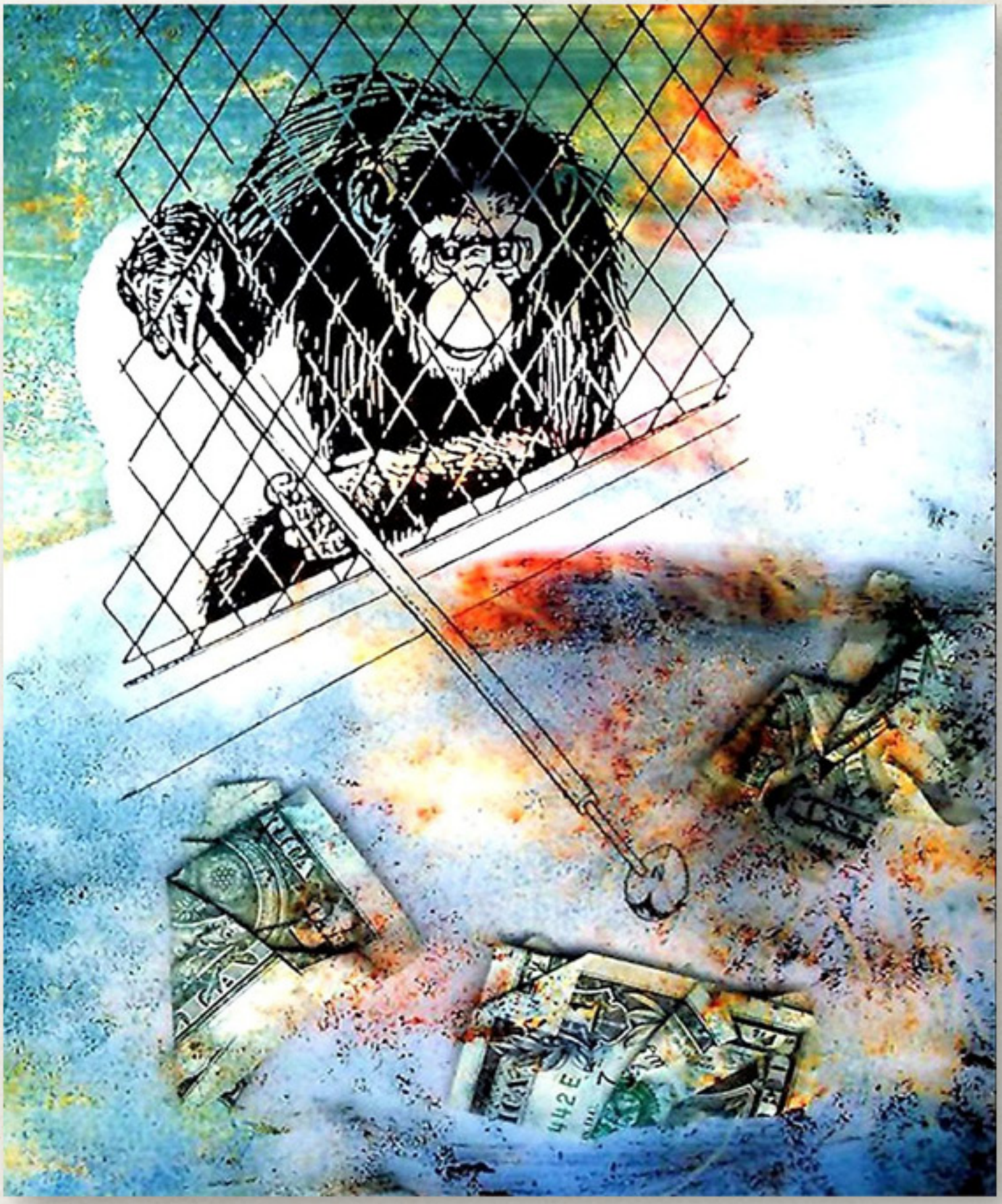
myself, still awake
Deadened to the physical strenuous mortification of BEING

My birth perpetually one week from today

The Origin of Subtitles

oh the mad numbers
the stomach of being like a bear trap in the snow
the false visas and passports of agents provocateurs
pockets sewn up, hands cuffed, led away by jerk-off cops,
locked up, forgotten
oh the body itself curling up in defense
of a mightily impractical natural environment
the age of the wind the conscience of the tree
a vile pity emblematic of the false at heart

calamity time!
you better add celery salt to the crust of bread soup
we're on the cusp of not-so-greatness
the heart beat pounds for more, for indiscreet supplication
to be removed from the quarry of quintessential sculpturing,
fault-line implicit in the stone
and dog-tired of French films in the after hours
festooned in the noir of nothingness,
smoke piled loosely around the Venus of the minute's bare
white shoulders, a wraith, espresso absentee



YOUR CHOICE by Spencer Selby, 2008, digital image

dream(s) (continued)

(Found poem from the index of Jung's *Memories, Dreams, Reflections)*

> "*Nevertheless, we have plunged down a cataract of progress which sweeps us on into the future with even wilder violence the farther it takes us from our roots.*"
>
> **—C.G. Jung**

as façade,
and immortality,
monotony of interpretation,

specific instances:
of phallus in subterranean
chamber,

of enlarging ball,
of enlarging telegraph wires, 18
18

of digging up bones of
prehistoric animals

of radiolarian in wood
of little light in fog
of father after his death,
of looking up at woman on
hill,

of being lost in mediaeval
building and finding idiot
child,

of girl with father complex,
of kneeling to hand girl umbrella,
of lake in woods,
of multi-storied house,
of ghost of customs official,

163
of night in Italian city,
of white dove transformed
into girl
of rows of tombs,
of great frost,

of tree transformed by frost,
of Siegfried,
of horned old man sailing
across sky ("Philemon")
182ff

of magnolia tree on island in
Liverpool,
of alchemic books in library
of manor house near Verona
and being caught in the
    seventeenth century,
of laboratory containing fish
and reception room for spirits

of father studying fish-skin-
bound Bible, and poltergeist
phenomena

of footsteps and music at
    Bollingen Tower

of struggle with Arab prince
and book in unknown
script,
of Negro barber,
of castle of Grail,
of wife after her death,
of wife's bed as pit,

of deceased sister at garden
party,
of lecturing on life experiences
after death,

of assembly of spirits who
spoke Latin,

of dead friend learning of
psyche,

of deceased wife in Provence,
of wild Huntsman,

of father, presaging mother's
death,
of reincarnation,
of UFOs,
of yogi in chapel
dress, mother's memory of

drives, psychic,
drowning, synchronistic memory,
drum concert,
drunk, first experience of being

instances:
of escaped soul
in fount of blood in cave
of Philemon
of sailing ship on Rhine

Sleeping With Art

I took a nap with John Marin.
Watery strokes—a wateriness. Napped there
breathing in and out. I was in a luscious landscape.
There was no pressure. I did not alight out of it
eventually. Staying there

was better than I thought.
Nuthatches, sunflower seeds under
the blue spruce. The carpets of golden fields
burnt near the dark oaks—
Nonpareil—that sound
ringing around.

Huge trucks, the green hills, it is summer.
In a most obvious way, a summer
time—watermelon, the swims at the Kalapuya with Daisy

resting in the bunch grass worrying a deer hoof.
The positive feeling
gone by July, after the fireworks
a disintegration—worry
the swallows left their nest
all grown up. Mom speaks of leaving
says the place is too much. Will not go camping up
to Diamond Lake. The punishing silence of Tina.
I hear her imaginary friend, Albert, speaking.

JOHN DIGBY

Lovely Morning

(Collage Prose-Poem)

Lovely morning, being destitute of both arms and horses I left with two boatmen born in the hour of trouble and despair. Our plan was ripe for execution but frustrated by an unlooked for event; a pair of chickens walked backward by moonlight advancing rapidly without a hole to creep into. They were secured by stones above the level of the sea.

Personally speaking I found it necessary to have a rope, sheets, blankets, shirts, trousers and towels to cut up to prevent our departed. We had journeyed far only to realize that the day before we set out was tomorrow. I must say it was a bit of mystery. It certainly confused, the monkeys rolled in red petticoats, looking down at the vegetation beneath the sea, searching for second-hand coffins.

At last the happy rain of spring is here, I can see it in the distance. I was anxious in the highest degree, for it stretched out on a mat before me. I offered it double pay but it snapped its jaws shut.

How sad are the hours of the day. Enough of politics and bitterness! I now rise to the bitter work of life like buffalo at the water-wheel, grinding herbs for boatmens' pathways that will never end.

Your Letter is a Treasure

All persons who enter
London in wild disorder
suddenly shoot upward
and become as it were
landmarks in the sky

The only certainty in life
is the duck and I
are waiting for you
with open arms

If this relationship is going to work
we need space in a strange bed
but a gust of wind
destroyed these hopes

All of us had cork jackets
oil skins and sea boots

I felt as if I had no clothes on at all

It was indeed a long night
I was soon wet through
And was glad to get out of the aerie

To add a finishing
stroke to the horrors
I arrived at a tree
and sprang up it
to break water

I was told despite this ignominy
few poets reach Lake Superior

HANAUMA by Barbara Lai Bennett, 2000,
mixed media (51”x 40”)

Romantic Punk Shamanism

Look across Kazakhstan, once the location of popular seaside resorts, now a wasteland littered with rusting hulls of fishing vessels. It is the most polluted and radioactive place on earth, thanks to nuclear testing, pesticides, herbicides, and the insane Russian scheme to turn the steppes into farmland by diverting the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers from their normal courses to the Aral Sea. If you didn't know the causes, you'd wonder what kind of warfare could have produced this result. It is the physical realization of the post-apocalyptic landscape that has obsessed Hollywood for decades.

* * * * *

A Kazakhstani artist named Almagul Menlibayeva has risen out of this place. Trained as a painter in the Soviet Academy, she went her own way after the collapse of the USSR. She now concentrates on video, still photography, and the desire to find a way to survive physical and spiritual devastation, not just in Kazakhstan, but throughout the world. Almagul shows her work in New York, San Francisco, Berlin, Venice, and many other venues. She has also invented a new movement, "Romantic Punk Shamanism."

* * * * *

Ever since the fascinating craziness of the Italian Futurists, the majority of humanity has had a religious faith that some yet-to-be-invented technology will save us from Kazakhstan's fate. But the Russian greed that led to this grotesque exploitation and destruction was itself enabled by sophisticated technology.

* * * * *

All Surrealists and alchemists are addicted to Romanticism. We dream of harnessing the unimaginable power of collective spirit and mind, the *Spiritus Mundi*, but we are also scared to death of it. We should be. Its voltage is big enough to blow the most ingenious adept into the

next universe. Almagul Menlibayeva has seen that punks need to be part of this equation too, and not just because of their gloriously anarchic iconoclasm. They need to be there to remind us that the sacred has nothing to do with institutions, whether religious, literary, or artistic. The sacred lives on in spite of them.

* * * * *

The shaman at the end of Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" has been talking to us for many thousands of years. He and the Mudangs, the women shamans of Korea, know what works and what doesn't. They know how many times humanity has forgotten all that came before and started once again from scratch. They are waiting for each one of us to realize that we can inhabit all tiers of time at once. No matter how brilliant our projects and constructions, we cannot succeed or even survive without their help.

* * * * *

Almagul Menlibayeva has a vision of the artist as "cultural nomad," roaming not just through one area but across the entire world. She has said that technology has freed her of the need for studio and materials. (In this case it is a liberator, not a destroyer.) All she needs is a camera and a laptop. Her art colony is everyone everywhere. The inspiration she provides takes us deep into the mythology of the ancestors and the power of shamanic healing. She has also shown how the innovative use of digital technology can help us reconnect with one another and reassert the magic places we came from. There is no information available on how many people are part of Almagul's movement, who and where they are. An even more important question: how many of us are Romantic Punk Shamans, whether or not we recognize it in ourselves?

Contributors' Advice, or Free Speech Corner, or the Blind Assemblage (being the unedited comments of contributors on almost anything)

JOHN BRADLEY:
Wrap a potato in silk prophet.
The night erases only the night.
I profess a preference for thrum.
All the arrows in my tongue.
All the unsung music in the world.
Void the um in aluminum.

JANET KAUFFMAN:
Hand-written scraps like anybody's, seven lines on seven torn papers, no link, no memory. But there's a seam, they're in the same house,

might as well go prospecting:

something hit

such as

coyote feral swine

crying at law and order

going backwards to mouth

a grieving prompt

the other way

JOHN CROSS:
I'd meant to draw you a picture of a giant, something not to wait around for. Instead I grew comfortable, falling asleep uncertain and happy like Bartok's string quartets. I guess the writing was a little like that, like the job we endured in Lansing that summer, in the mouth of the open rain. Dearest Chavela, please know that by the time you've read this they will have released the flying monkeys.

JOE LAMB:

Poetry in the Anthropocene

Maybe we should hold carbon accountable for its unseemly proclivity to hold hands with any element missing an electron in its outer shell. Or perhaps we could blame desire—the fifth force of nature, as fundamental as electromagnetism and as real as gravity—but sometimes even everything isn't enough.

Only 3 or 4 grandmothers ago, the sky was a blue bowl that kept out minds from fluttering too far into the unknowable. Back then, we may have been smaller than the Grand Canyon, but the Canyon itself was still very large. Now, as Feynman said, no matter where you look, it's infinity in every direction. What once was huge is now vanishingly small. From Hubble, even the Milky Way is just another grain of sand on a never ending beach.

"Big deal," she says. Wipe the dirt from the eyes of a potato and cook a soup. Take seventeen syllables and build a hut on the canyon's edge, someplace warm smelling faintly of damp fur; a shelter where you can suckle your young and count the stars as they fall from the sky, one by one.

RAY GONZALEZ:

It's in the consonants, each letter given a hard wall to lean against, the words of tact and reason symbolizing migration bleached by the heart. It's in the consonants that devour the keyhole, snowflakes disappearing as they fall to the ground, consonant temples as tall as legal desire. The argument against the lamb with the bleeding eyes is the same as the lathered breast, the witness trembling as the consonants are erased when the electric current reaches ink and the suggestion to spell without consonants stutters on the lips of the composer who keeps the secret, this threat toward a forest path near the cold stream as real as finding a way through the abbreviated parts.

LAUREN VARGAS:

Absorbing poetry requires the breakage of synapses of memory in the brain.

D. E. STEWARD:

Remember the ideal of wanting to write things that expressed everything about everything? Remember what it was like to understand that trying to do this was possible, and to realize that living to do it would probably be the most significant thing you could ever do? Remember comprehending that in the intent of trying for it lies the essential quality of good writing? Remember what it is like to write with full purpose and to not hold back trying to match some fuzzy norm or set of cautions?

LEIGH HERRICK:

Sometimes the mysteries of "not"-"knowing" revolve through altered states and states of alteration, where re-vision is the moment moved beyond the standardized "not" in [kn]"no"[w]-ing. In turn, all opening becomes, is tuned to the unnamable received beyond language where fire the electrical IN-Pulses, the po[e]tential between word and thought, between i-[c]onic Universe and Mind. It is ultimately paradoxical then that poetry might act to engage such a moment in consummate utilization of a language derived from the energy of collapse, and used to defy language.

JEFF HARRISON:

Abyss is amid The Muses, as poetry's recurrences abound without as daylight about a tomb, as darkness about a fire. Is writing prose apart from poetry the abeyance of poetry's recurrences? Abeyance doesn't prevent recurrence. The recurrences within a poem and among an author's poems continue, as do the recurrences of words outside poetry that correspond to words within poetry… Correspond and refer, words and sounds and events. Perhaps writing prose apart from poetry is inscribing an obelisk "Abyss Musagetes."

DAVID GIANNINI:

Sometimes poetry breaks into the poet the way a thief re-enters a house, and without guilt returns all the loot (intact but of a different order), then leaves at least five windows open (only if hoping to gain favor with the owner).

CRAIG COTTER:

On 12/24/11 at 2 a.m. a window opened on my home computer from Microsoft. They had been collecting information from my poems, emails, query letters for my novel, and other documents I'd created with Word. It was optional to send the collected data. (I'll also note that I have to remove almost all auto-formatting and auto-correction features from Word in order to write poetry.) Here is the Microsoft message along with what they culled from my documents:

"Send this information to help Microsoft improve proofing tools. Help us improve our proofing tools. The information below is from your use of the spelling checker, grammar checker, thesaurus, and hyphenated tool. We want your permission to send these words and phrases to Microsoft. If you choose to send it, the information is treated as confidential and anonymous, and is only used to improve our software services. Review the information list below. You can delete any lines you do not want to send to Microsoft."

I did not delete any lines. Here is what they collected in the sequence they presented the lines (ellipses indicated when lines collected were too long to show completely in their pop-up window—so I couldn't actually read all they collected):

Sanjaya
Malakar
Could I ever be rich enough
to get them together privately?
to get them together privately?
Beyonce's
The tests will show what is your true direction.
Kaline
And is cracking a few hickory nuts every morning.
My mom's liking Facebook a lot.
(Computers are much more friendly now than they were when you used them at BOCES.)
livingroom
diningroom
Haven't had the heat on since last winter.
So—hope that last repair lasts 0-0 years, then I'll replace the unit.

potica
Hope she gets one someday.
Ahsahta
Lungfull
Alimentum
Eleven
Antigonish
Aufgabe
Proust-light?
Twink
I hope that you will allow me to send the complete, 00 chapter work for your review.
"twink
Although the narrator feels monogamous "relationships" a pointless construct—and the novel romps…
Kick Uncle Clarence in the leg for me:)
Anas
powerlines
Might be just as well as our fence was old and in need of repair.
The bougainvillea were full of thorns and no one could have walked through them, or would have wanted…
as we party [smoke out
as we party [smoke out
but also for the white ankle socks coming out of the dryer.
Poetry's focus on individual words and lines as units of meaning help students to master prose.
Ahsahta
Heyen
Shinkichi
into world without end, without beginning.
into world without end, without beginning.
will someday celebrate Christmas with their four children
will someday celebrate Christmas with their four children
Tywater
stunned and heartbroken parents carries one blossom
Tolstoy

MERCEDES LAWRY:

"It's easy, after all, not to be a writer. Most people aren't writers, and very little harm comes to them."

Julian Barnes, *Flaubert's Parrot*

ROBERT VANDERMOLEN:

I was sitting with friends last week in the Cottage Bar. A local publisher joined us—I'd had lunch with him the day before, as he was interested in a manuscript of mine—I'd spoken of our late afternoon Thursday meetings; he knew some in the group. Ben was loquacious, dapper, a salesman from another era—he could tease but he didn't seem to be a bullshitter. What was that business about being missing in action that you mentioned, I asked. Where's that woman you were talking about? Oh, I said, Jane couldn't get away today. Matt said, I heard you were in the Battle of the Bulge. No, he said, I was in Africa, Italy, France and Germany, but not that battle. What happened, he said, is I got kicked out of military school. Back up, said Andy, what were you doing in military school? Got in a little trouble as a teenager, so Dad stuck me in this school in Kentucky. Then I was dismissed for drinking. So I enlisted. The funny thing is they gave me an honorary degree when everyone heard I was dead—but I was in a hospital for a couple of months. When I returned to my battalion in Italy, they hadn't moved a quarter-mile the whole time I was gone. It was slow progress. But I went to college with that honorary degree when I was discharged. Never finished high school. Our waitress said, what are you doing with these bums? I'm not quite sure, he said. All they talk about is sex, she said. Bill said, careful Liz. Ben said, I don't mind. I've worked here 30 years, this is the worst crew ever. Then she pulled a chair up and joined us. I used to come in here 30 years ago, said Randy. You must have been quieter then, she said. Ben said he'd buy her a drink. I'm still on duty, she said. Tony said, she reminds me of my sister. Lee announced:

The bird, a yellow breasted chat,
Is not some charmer,
More like an argument
Not about to go away

What the hell is that? I asked. I thought you could use some new lines, he said. Liz said to Ben, I never see you here for lunch anymore. I've a new place, he said, since we had to move headquarters. Liz was called back to the bar. It was grey outside. From the small windows there were dirty sidewalks, smudged walls: the snow was late this winter. Ben talked of lifting weights every morning. Hell, he said, I'm going to be 88 in the spring. I've a young wife, you understand. Lee sucked up to that. Yeah, said Randy, but I know Margo, she's 65, like me. We discussed the Occupy Movement—locally, the tents had been removed. There was sympathy for those who had been camping in the cold—though none of us had. A squirm of guiltiness ran around the table. Ben said, Bill you were in politics, how do we get out of this mess? I wasn't a Republican, he said. I'm also glad I'm not there now—it was different when I was in office. The assholes are trying to take over, said Ben. He picked up his cane. Gotta visit George. George? I asked. The gentleman's.

SUSAN KAY ANDERSON:

Calling all fauxhemians! If you sense you're missing the real thing, check out Tom Clark's blog, a seminar in itself. You'll find me there. I read it so intensely over the X-Mas break that I had a dream I kissed Jim Carroll. (O.K., he kissed back.) The next day was magic and changed my life because I decided to be daring, risk, and to go ahead with a plan that began stewing and wouldn't go away.

Sincerely, Your Hawaii Teacher Detective

ROB COOK:

Skidrow Penthouse Anti-Manifesto

A home for wayward voices, insect souls, architects of gutters, a place to hide one's rain.

A 200-page government whose language originated with trilobites and the last, incomplete suggestions of human sensibility.

A sanctuary for the perfections of brokenness.

A book of unkempt beauty, a mirror where one can hibernate stripped of ego.

A heaven without its own truth, and therefore at least one truth.

An invitation to the fires forgotten by the many.

A shelter for the delicate, nearly lost music holding the days and their darkness together.

But most importantly, a shelter.

A book of named and unnamed black hole dynasties, their sadnesses, their celebrations.

J/J HASTAIN:

I want to have enabled (by way of ulterior embodiments) mystery to feel like it is part of a literal and planar commons. I am saying that if it were possible to invent and create the new page, the new love, the new gender—these would be the work for me—ever vivifying identities that are their own bridge to un-ownable futures. This by way of risk-driven sagacity.

SMARIE CLAY:

Formula for the Reversal of Mortal Themes

Whereas the ultimate symbol of mortality = the headstone (concrete)

"Headstone (concrete)" synonym association

erosive = temporary antonym = resilient

real/tangible = limitations (within poetry) ANTONYM = fluid/flexible

resilient + flexible = rubber

therefore, the "rubber tombstone" = continuity vs. ("concrete") breaking off/(to) end.

therefore, news of the universe > news of the self.

BOB HEMAN:

Basics

The poetic imagination can manifest itself in many ways including form, content, process and approach. Think of the poem as a container, and form as the shape of the container, and content as what is put into the container, and process as how the container is filled (or formed). Approach is about how the container (or poem) will "work" (i.e. how it will interact with the viewer or reader or listener depending on what assumptions are brought to the experience). In each of these aspects of the poem an active imagination can manifest itself in unique or surprising ways. Remember too that the container need not be filled, or even be able to be filled.

BENJAMIN LARSON:

First, remember that the shortest distance between two sparrows is usually about 80 proof. Fold one wing over the other in a counter clockwise motion, leaving room for venting. Disregard to flight feathers. They will be removed later and used in the production of ink ribbons. Once this is done, dip the other wing in a solution of dictionaries and lye. Combine in a leather bowl. Allow approximately 1% to spill onto your spouse's shoes. This is considered good luck in certain parts of Indiana. Once this is done, give your left arm a turn. Tie the bowl shut with your shoes (mind the beaks), and allow to sit for two bookshelves under a mattress. Yields 4-6 poems.

Bureau of Surrealist Enquiries

OPEN ONCE AGAIN

In 1987, the Bureau (formerly of 15 rue de Grenelle) contacted Caliban to announce its renewed call for dreams, visions, automatic texts, witnessed stellar migrations, accounts of unknown manifestations and mysterious objects, hallucinations, non-directional maps, intuitive music, alchemical insights, and whatever else might draw light from the darkness that continues to press in upon us.

We are unable to disclose the current location of the Bureau. However, Calibanonline has offered its website and post office box, so that all material addressed to the Bureau can be forwarded.

Our further communications may appear in Calibanonline, as we determine necessary. Be advised: signs will occur at any time or place, without warning.

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CALIBAN IS SEARCHING FOR ANGELS