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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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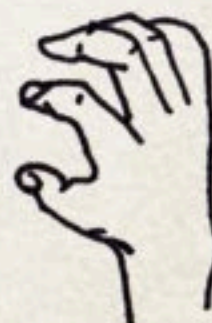


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**CONTRIBUTORS' ADVICE**



## LEE BALLENTINE

### **Tierra Incógnita**

I cut a gitano angel out of paper  
one morning  
and in the flight of the spirits  
let it slip to the ground like a stepped-on shadow

then go to the door of the little room  
where you keep your dresses  
the vestibule  
where caesar hung his togas

hung them like the prows of captured ships  
dismantled for their secrets  
and practiced his speeches from that rostrum  
addressing himself to the water jug

alleluia, alleluia

my angel plays guitar  
he sticks his little finger in his ear  
and waggles the hand like a tuning fork

down in the city  
you and I walk arm in arm  
dreaming of parrots that fall flat for us to walk on  
then spring back up behind us

octane silhouettes  
which, when we have gone  
catch flame and burn that city to charcoal



*Ballentine/10*

and we walk arm-in-arm  
through the cindered dunes  
like two dolmens adrift in volcanic sands

alleluia, alleluia

back in your flat you open your mouth  
your tongue tastes of oranges  
a screen door slams

and the yard  
and the ditch alongside it  
and the air above  
all smell of wheat

you fire a rocket  
its yellow glares burning in my vision  
like drops of boiling water

we lie down on the bed  
the palms of our hands intricately duelling  
so thirsty we drink from the tap

alleluia, alleluia



SILVIA CURBELO

**Weather Patterns**

Sunlight forgives everything  
it touches, erasing every stone  
in its path. Salt on its palm,  
it cracks open the shell of any  
story, thick as kindness moving  
through the grass. But rain  
leaves no blade unturned.  
It lays a stubborn hand  
on the horizon, pushing down.  
Into the ground. Into the dark  
earth. Where small things bloom.



**Winter Morning, 1968**

Mother's cane rings out of the past,  
south of the weather, clink  
of metal touching earth, the one kiss  
I can live a whole life to forget.

When morning opens the shutters,  
bare trees shore up the white rim  
of the sky. 6 a.m. with its vague  
scent of anywhere.

Her cane wants to be a bird.  
Behind us, the frozen lake is a bridge  
of photographs, the tin cups of her eyes  
filling with sailboats, seagulls, waves.

This is a story like a suitcase filled  
with snow. But she has never seen snow,  
never cupped her hands around  
that strange flower frozen in space.

And what is childhood but wishes  
and feathers, the little balcony  
made of sugar and salt, history  
without interpretation. Ashes fall

from the place where nothing burns.  
I wake to violets in my mouth,  
the taste of Sunday morning,  
smell of bread and sunlight in her hair.



## **Smokes**

Empty bottle on the windowsill. Nothing walks into view.  
Across the street they've finally sold the Flying Cloud Motel  
and Trailer Park and in its place looms another used car lot.

Suppose the bottle is half full, maybe bourbon.

I long to exit in a swirl of perfume.

Something enters my mouth, smoke from your cigarette,  
an insect, my old name. Whatever it is makes  
my throat tighten and release, and it's like stepping

an inch outside myself and breathing that strange air.  
And memory dragging its little dog  
and chain.

\*

You were working in that Japanese bar down by the water.  
Nothing but time because your boyfriend was in jail.

I came for the free drinks and the cool suburban light.

Your pretty brother handing out hot washcloths  
in his too-bright shirts. The tourists and the sunsets.  
Grit of warm sand between our teeth.

That was the year nobody slept. Dead Elvis on every car radio.

You slap drinks down without a smile  
for big tips and no small talk.

Polyester kimono the color of new money.



Long shifts blurring into dawn.

The future is a line drawn across the dirt  
and you cross it.

\*

Every sunrise the perfect slideshow for your Italian movie soundtrack.

Over your left shoulder that house. Spanish mission  
gone to seed. Crushed velvet drapes at war  
with daylight. The heavy artillery of cheap wine.  
*Mi casa es su casa.*

Statuary in the front yard. The history of the Italian Renaissance  
rendered in plaster-of-Paris and four strings of Christmas lights.

The little bridge leading to every bad road your mother  
warned us about.

Reading by swimming pool light, making water angels  
in the deep end. Mottled sky of the screen door closing.

Ashtrays, apples, matchbooks, beer.  
Crushed box of Merits at the bottom of your purse  
and the smell of rain coming.

\*

I don't know what parallax means exactly, but it must have  
something to do with passage and return,

the heart still in the crosshairs.



The way some nights everything shifts just slightly and it's like walking  
into a room some part of you once inhabited  
that's gone, that carries your absence like a blueprint.

Remembering is a tenuous bridge back to that center.

From where I'm standing the bottle is half full.

A long cigarette is burning between your fingers  
even now.



**Drinking at the Bar the UPS Man Gives You Ideas**

Send lies  
Send bus fare

Send the hair you've plucked from his brush—  
he'll need it more than you

Send neckties, spoons, pencil shavings

Send all your childhood scars and potions  
The relics from Catholic school

Biographies of martyred saints  
and jars of fresh honey blessed by monks

Send a list of every place you lost your heart  
or your bearings

The twenty-seven arrows of bad love  
and counting

Shot glasses, moth balls  
pocket watch with the hands ripped out

and the smashed wings of a sparrow

Send it all C.O.D.  
No questions asked

Return receipt requested



## **Swimming Toward Sleep**

Awake is an island, blue  
stone under the rumpled bed,  
refrigerator light that won't go out.

Awake is a hothouse mirror, knife  
glint in the roses, piano wire  
stretched across a great divide.

Paper cut, wrong answer,  
torn scab someone keeps scratching  
with a kitchen match.

Aquatic, you set your sights  
downstream, where sleepers ride  
the sweet current clutching the hide  
of some dream animal,  
while you stand on the banks  
of your lost causes, dark oar  
testing the water,  
inconsolable, grounded.



DAN RAPHAEL

## Suit Up

i step up from my suit, chasm embodiment  
my jacket keeps rewriting itself, re-wiring  
as the floss extrudes with a natural pressure, teeth set so tight  
subdermal whistles of internal steam stream as if anxious or  
    pressurized  
rising as helium cant stop laughing into the sealed bag/room  
not wet paint but eager glue, touch activated, immune to commands

no one will remove their masks, get off their jet skis or give the river  
    spare change.  
a yard long cheese cutter to skim whatever flows by—water, sunlight,  
    inflammation.  
editing the photons by barking like space dogs deafened in their  
    bubble helmets,  
the worlds their brains are the unmolten centers of, growth without  
    pressure,  
games with random consequence

how can i orbit so many square corners, square trees, cubic cars,  
    icosahedron rain—  
geometry dissolved by momentum & tunnel vision, boring beneath  
    the imaginary city  
at the corner of billboard and facebook, taking the dark rail to  
    the brittle exurbs  
constantly tripping over our distance, one leg getting only busy signals,  
mosquito satellites needing to suck watts from my password  
    protected aura.



i'm not color blind but color random, looking for shades not  
even the paint stores have named—  
afghanistan phosphor, brioche moon, kangaroo claw—colors that  
haven't breathed yet,  
about to disperse like school buses surrounded by pizza.  
choose your rainbow and we'll tell you where to find it, not in the sky  
but on a screen jiggling like a 40 year old pickup filled with  
unlidded buckets  
of salmon spawn, plum lava, douglas fir serapes.  
we dress like flowers,  
not caring how many petals are left, when the sun hits this  
precise angle  
tangoing with a horizon on steroids and yeast, rolled over itself daily,  
kneaded by the moons telepathic fists: a fresh wedge buttered with  
how we writhed last night, giddy as an earthquake during mardi gras,  
celebratory as assassins plunging through hash fields,  
with your memory still athrob in my muscles  
  
i'll wear whatever catches me first.



## **Before Thanksgiving Rises**

clipping lips with unintentional metal while in the small intestines  
of our city,

4AM stock exchange, as if morning leaps from bed fully dressed  
and ready to work it.

breakfast has cooled and shines with congelation, a non food aroma  
brings the stomach to attention like a sidewalk no ones walked on  
since Thursday—

today's Thursday, it's hard to tell when digital clouds go backwards  
my clothes aren't stretching, a little more of me's been collected  
for taxes

but not by church or government, i hear damped bells or the off key  
buzz of a door

that doesn't open for me.

a hot grill and a slimy spatula. a paper hat of floral perfume,  
the shirt starts white so every action is tangible, when two of us collide  
in a corridor

when someone lost rubs wet nails on my shoulder. we're a tick slower  
cause of the added weight, cause what seemed 8 hours sleep  
was only 5

and that 8 hour shift barely ends before we push on next door,  
running the gauntlet

of service, consumption, repeating what won't stop melodizing  
my mind,

dancing with concrete feet, smiling at a cloud's momentary  
perforation.

i'm not authorized to be up this early. if i eat now i won't get across  
the lake in time—

no rush hour coz there's no fish, i'm not among the hunters, prey  
or inspectors;

on weekends i package and freeze, remove the evidence from hair  
and hands.

mirrors are rare gifts, like elizabethan oranges



if you cant get out of the way be a man about it,  
bruises are no excuse for stains or hesitation.  
when i sit back down the chair has several questions, the bed refuses  
to be my alibi  
i'm simultaneously on camera in three parts of town, no citations,  
no receipts,  
twenties replaced with nickels and dimes.

somewhere its morning, the shifts over  
 and plans are made for naked running in freezing temperatures.  
 i open the door & the phone stops; more beds than i remember—  
 all of them full



## **More Solstice, Less Equinox**

When i pubed out the biochemistry from my previous planet began  
to manifest, incompatible  
with this world where the air isnt half chlorine and mercurys not  
essential to all life.

Here every step is a struggle habituated into personal finances.  
Shoes were created by the first chiropractors; the unhatted are devious  
or mildly suicidal,

Once my dreams are sated i put the fuel nozzle to my navel and let  
orchestras of puffy chemistry  
burrow into the soil beneath my skin. Personal grooming, intestinal  
weave.

Everything i eat has its own locomotion and compass.

For almost a year i never saw the moon and forgot it existed;  
in my solar system most of the planets are sheathed in robes of debris  
and only Earth and Wittgenstein have clearly defined orbits, vast  
interstellar freeways  
with more toll booths than off ramps...

That day after my 11<sup>th</sup> birthday i was flipping pages of 3 dimensional  
topology  
& knew where i would adult, what tattoos i would need, how the sun  
at noon could wipe me out  
with ravenous imagery, insatiable demands, recipes with zero  
margin of error.

Slowly architecture loses its influence and we go back to imitating  
trees without realizing  
the puppetry staged by squirrels and sparrows. As the leaves turn  
to brittle crystals  
the air packs its bags and fills every available bus, train and helicopter.



In the increasing vacuum undeveloped fields bulge with the promise  
of new barriers  
and tendrils we'll have to learn to skin, salt and broil.

When we find the key to the freezer.  
When the census taker arrives with our "improved" bar codes.  
When the weeks cloud cover reveals its oval shape and cracks open,  
releasing the double-yolked sun: by next week the foothills will be  
flowered and toasted,  
the orchards ablaze with fermentation.





FRONT PORCH GIRL HAS A PREMONTION  
by DeLoss McGraw, 2014, gouache on paper (6 ½" x 4 ¼")





SALLY BOWLES by DeLoss McGraw, 2014  
gouache on paper (6 1/2" x 4 1/4")





THE COFFEE CUP by DeLoss McGraw, 2014  
gouache on paper (6 1/2" x 4 1/4")



ROB COOK

**Insect Journalism**

“a long line of aroused taxis  
licking the holes into new jersey,”  
a man says to the freckled breast  
he finds in a trash can,

a man with a fear like william packard,

a man who lives at the poem’s edges  
following trade routes  
of eight-legged deer.

he walks around poisoned by rats  
who’ve built  
a city of unknowable  
trembling.

“it’s hard to find the moment  
where they’ve hidden the humans,”  
he says to the boots  
that haven’t yet abandoned him.

the man loses the city  
from the foot-deep ledges  
of the *new york times*,  
whose editorial interns want no writing  
about farmers tilling  
the static under the manhattan ocean,



no foreclosed families  
still trying to command the television  
to wake up even after  
it's already crushed all forms  
of sunlight,

no children forcing it to show them  
wanda wyoming can still  
pet the camera with her eyes,  
the deep way she remembers  
her digital teen civilizations  
and mirror networks.

and somehow she's heard  
of the poet  
but hates every word  
that led her to this sudden  
loss of fame.

*your poem respects no one, she says.*  
thinking new days can  
still be found,

and yet another ivy journalist dampens  
another page in command font:

*you need permission to imitate  
the imagination this way.*

and the man who wants those echoes  
to destroy the halls of *the hudson review*  
writes more than once  
to his poorly-haunted poem:

“because I was a kind person, I tried  
to correct the latest ones



who did not respect me—  
the sentimental microphone artist  
and her journalist, who are both words only—

but the moon was shining,

the moon was shining  
and all the poisonous pharaohs  
who fought in my body  
were strong enough to hurt  
only the ground when they fell.”



**Even on Afternoons Without Sleet,  
It is Still Sleeting in this Building**

Alone with his prednisone in Apartment 16,  
the man who yesterday cut names out of a book  
about the final year of names  
almost finishes listening  
to the clock gnawing its place on the wall.  
He feeds his chairs and his books  
the crumbs that he's spilled  
and after his meal of winter animals  
he picks the pieces of his face  
from the overfed sink-water,  
the knives in the next apartment quiet for once,  
a pause in the daily extinction,  
his veins still slithering inside him, he realizes,  
and somewhere it is snake season,  
and how will anyone find him here  
stranded in his blanket, sleep filling his torso  
smaller now from the years of cold since November  
and the collapse of language he's been reading  
in the tenants' newsletter,  
written by a woman possessing a warm Himalayan height  
and a mind made of wars and wars and wars.  
And at a tenement meeting he recognizes everyone  
by the chapped gossip  
and leaky snow they continue  
to chew together,  
inches from where the storms roost.  
They are the precise middle of winter—  
Asher, a man with eighty-seven years of moonlight  
shining through his skin giggles  
*i changed my socks look at the ladybugs in my socks,*  
and his brother Herman, kept alive by the same  
interior moonlight, puffs  
the cigar smoke out of his gut and lulls



the ladybugs into a pastoral as he leans forward in his chair  
and says, because he is in charge  
of his little space,

*no crossfire no taking of sides*

*no criticizing the rain when it sticks to the window,*

and the man who torments the silences in Apartment 16  
scratches violently at his ankles

because it helps him see

what tracked him this far from the stained dresses

emptied in the dark of a failing liver

while someone keeps whispering

at the door to a distant bedroom:

*you can't live here you can't live here you can't live here.*



**From His Birthday, He Sees the Assassins Receding**

Today the dust steals  
pictures of you advancing

You listen for sunlight and find  
half its songs intact,  
but none of the children  
they bred for nostalgia

The computer, too, a firmament  
depletion zone

a late Viagra count  
among your non-invasive  
e-mail

a request from  
Vagrant Magazine  
to not share your name  
with them  
a second time

and the clipped language:  
“Why can’t you be a criminal? –The Editors”

Meanwhile, endless  
Arizona Iced Tea  
for your place in the cancer forties,  
a birthday card

signed by twenty-three cats

You lure one tree  
out of the few



carved with the dates of your  
silences

and ration your breathing  
according to those  
silences

There's a leaf that causes  
trembling and a quiet  
stretch of grass where  
everything you say

comes out your feet  
ignored, no different  
than night losing  
its status

and less a community now,

keratoconus spreading  
from window to window  
in the house you chose  
trying to look  
tall and not desperate

falling farther behind the blurriness  
that could've been  
a wife,

or just there instead of you,

boiling bags of soup  
and mixed vegetables  
inside another clock's forgotten rooms,



*Cook/34*

a woman infected with identical fears  
inventing your life  
from there,

the curtains flinching in the same breeze,

which you sometimes feel  
as a sharp breath that quickens your day.



## ROBERT VANDER MOLEN

### **The Dagged Edge**

Wither back into yourself  
He suggested. How far, you wondered,  
Back to a swarm of temblors?  
You merely wanted to discuss  
The good ship Rita, traveling  
Upriver into the final swamp,  
Fruit bats and vultures.  
Her angry melon face,  
With lemons sliding across.  
Actresses were larger then,  
Men smaller. A captain leaning  
With thoughts of his own  
Under soiled clothes

She's taller than him, the woman  
In her bulging two-piece.  
It's also hot, you need a hat.  
Hers has a hole. The scenery wiggles.  
A woman scientist owning  
A red mouth, waving generous arms,  
In the morning she's alone.  
The ship stuck in a round pond  
Resembling a crater from  
Dinosaur days. You recall this  
From childhood. Then wake



## **Meanwhile**

Jack pine, red oak and poplar  
Interspaced by fern—the occasional  
Birch, maple and white pine—one could  
Picture mammoths munching through  
(afraid of nothing, though that would change),  
Herding up beside water  
To rest and socialize

After pursuing grouse all day, without luck,  
I pour a drink outside my tent, like a fictional  
Character (and who isn't?)

Is everything too old or too new?

Or like an aged explorer, dropping his pack,  
Who loitered here at twilight frowning,  
A long way west from the arms of home—  
Who may or may not  
Have sensed trepidation. Covert asides,  
Let's imagine

With the tight rattle  
Of leaves, the clarity of shore water



**A Warble, A Wave**

Looking up, a yellowy sheen of ease  
Which descends from dunes

As you meander a muddy track  
Along water fields—  
A landscape acquainted  
With a good number of paintings  
All saying the same thing—

Whereas dunes  
Climb into a different climate

Leached bones and dry fire pits,  
Basins  
Where the wind has rearranged things

\*

Where light shades white,  
Desert beetles, desert flowers

You, like a traveler missing a map,  
Raddled a bit by heat between ridges,  
Unwrapping a small piece of cheddar  
And crouching

Among butterflies and deer flies—

At the base of a bluff  
A spring trickles with winter water,  
Sand sifting over shelves of peat  
Attached to blackened trunks of trees,  
Waterlogged, bark just separating  
After nine thousand summers



## MATTHEW P. GARCIA

### Horizon

They've all seen you now  
They know your face like the horizon  
And await it with the same expectation

In their thoughts you are a strange curio  
Like an abstract piece of furniture  
Garnishes in your hair

In the ether of their dreams  
There is the smell of your perfume  
Now the hum of your wheels  
On their hard traveled roads

They've all seen you now—  
What you do  
And as you take a bow on stage  
And the curtain closes before you

They grow sentimental in their seats  
Gripping their programs and crossing their arms  
Wiping the snot on each other's coat sleeves

They watch that still point on the horizon  
As it fades into oblivion  
And their souls turn like the earth





DRONE SWARM by Robin Wilt, 2014  
black crayon drawing and rubbing plates  
(drones are pop-ups, ranging in size from 5' to 6")





DRONE SWARM BRAIN (detail) by Robin Wilt, 2104  
black crayon drawing and rubbing plates (7' x 9')



TERRY HAUPTMAN

**Ruach: Salting the Soul**

*To keep watch over life*

Terrance Du Pres

I lie down with the white wolf  
Extinguishing candles  
At Mount Hebron Cemetery in Queens,  
Place a black rock  
On my grandma's grave  
Chewing garlic  
As the dawn's Bakarian moon  
Bears witness to the sun  
Crying  
"Make me pregnant  
And I'll buy you a Harley."  
As the hunger for life  
Holds songbirds at bay.

Blue deer of desire wake  
The newly dead  
Winddancing to heartache's song  
At the living center of our beings.  
In the camphored coffins of lunar moths,  
The power of loss.  
Rising up  
From Malkuth's crown of thorns  
Eating salt-cakes  
With the dead  
In the green flames  
Of the cantillated dawn.



**Shekinah and the Time It Takes to End Her Exile 2**

Digging the blue dybbuk clay  
From the spidery earth  
Of mysterious exiles,  
Black butterflies on the keyboard  
Yearning for duende  
Undress  
In the gardens of Spain.

Talking together in the votive dawn  
Throws us back on ourselves.

How does wisdom rise up  
From the beehives of Ur  
Racing passed dark clouds  
Scrolling the Sefer Yetzirah  
Of long-haired stars'  
Honey from the rock?

Who can guide us back to ourselves  
After our long trek  
Across desert salt  
Returning the broken vessels  
To their sacred place  
On the goat paths  
Beside the weeping of guitars?



## ZOLTÁN KOMOR

### **The Meat Jelly Loverboy**

The yellow light coming from the kitchen wakes up the girl—it shakes out a dream’s half-burnt matchsticks from her eyes. They fall onto the pillow like small bird-bones from a cage, then roll down to the ground, where hungry mice grab them and dash through holes in the loamy walls. The girl sniffs the air. The meat steam wreathes upward, like an inconsolable ghost, soaking the curtains. When she closes her eyes she can almost hear the sounds of exploding fat-bubbles, the cracking of her mother’s knees, as she shifts from one leg to another next to the stove. So the girl crawls out of bed and sneaks to the door. She peeks into the kitchen and watches her mother, whose wet, floppy hair wobbles like seaweed. A wooden spoon dances round and around in the giant red kettle.

“What ya cooking, Mom?” mumbles the sleepy girl, and the woman turns around. Her eyes roll angrily.

“I’m making meat jelly! But why are you out of bed?” She stamps her slippered foot, and the kitchen door slams, pushing over the girl, who is now flying back to her bed like a powerless paper doll. She tries to fall asleep again, but every time the wooden spoon hits the side of the iron kettle, her eyes spring open. The hours pass slowly. The black matchsticks between the mice’s teeth draw black lines on the wall. The shuffle of her mother’s slippers scour down even the stars from the sky. After some time, her mother turns off the gas jet. The girl listens as she carries out the heavy hot kettle to the court, groaning with pain. The door squeaks. Distant barking of dogs. Outside, she puts the boiling meat soup on the cold ground, and she watches as the rising stream erases the moon stamped in the sky.

“Now cool off some and get stiff.” She throws a goodbye kiss to the kettle, then returns to the house. The light goes out under her fingers, and the old bed cracks as she lies down on it. Outside, the aspic cools



and cools, above it clouds smelling of meat clot and fly away to cry their salty tears in distant lands. A giant hand takes the fallen moon and sticks it back into the sky. As soon as the heavenly body returns to its place, it's light oozes down to the saucepan, which begins to shake. Soon the meat jelly boy stands up. His transparent, yellow body shivers with excitement, a massive pig's foot rises between his legs. He jumps up and down in the cooking pot, then springs out and waddles toward the house. As the boy turns the door handle, bones and cartilage roll over each other inside his body. His feet squish as he walks, hair and dirt sticking to his fat-stained skin.

"Look how stiff you got!" says the woman in praise of the jelly boy, when he finally finds his way to the bedroom. The woman can't take her eyes off the manly fellow. She pulls him into the bed, pressing her face into the pig gel, her nails carve long trenches into the cold fat on his back, as the pig's foot finds it's way into her opening. Soon, excited moaning and squishing fill the silent room. This, again, wakes up the girl in the other room. She sneaks to her mother's bedroom door, opens it a bit, and peeps in to the room. She can't believe her own eyes. She stares with open mouth as the shaking meat jelly ass jumps up and down between her mother's spread legs. The girl can see everything perfectly through the boy's transparent body.

"Mother!" she screams in the dark, and the woman almost rolls out from under her aspic lover. "Teach me how to cook meat jelly, because this is the lover I have always dreamed of!"

The mother growls angrily, trying to find her slippers. If only she could find them now, she could scare her overheated daughter back to her own bed. But they are somewhere under the bed, far from her grasping fingers.

"Let it be then!" She decides. "You aren't a little girl anymore!" Her daughter doesn't need to hear any more: she hops between the sheets and presses herself against the jelly boy.

So the threesome carouse till dawn. The roof cracks, the potted plants jump out the window. As the sun rises, the stray dogs gather around the empty saucepan outside and lick out the remains of the aspic. Then they watch the house with longing eyes. There the three lovers sleep happily. Mice gnaw at the filthy sheet and the bed almost collapses under



the snoring trio. As they roll over in their sleep, they press their bodies against the aspic lover, and the pig's foot begins to dig into their sides. They awake with new lust.

"Swing, swing, old duvet, little soldier, jump into the Tisza River! Whoops!" The mother sings as the glittering bone tool disappears into her over and over again. Her daughter shakes her shoulders impatiently. "Now it's my turn, mother, roll over, roll over!"

"Wait for your turn, you little slut! Make yourself useful, and bring me some breakfast!" she scolds. "I won't have the strength to crawl out of this bed today!"

"I'm sure it's almost noon now, but look, the dinner is already in our bed!" laughs the girl, and she bites out a piece from the jelly boy's neck, who is so busy making love he doesn't notice.

"Hey! Don't eat him all up! I'm not finished with him!"

"Stop worrying, mother, I was just taking a little taste. That won't kill the boy, will it?" she giggles with her mouth full, rolling the boy off her mother.

This is how the days pass. Their faces wobble against the membrane of dawn, screams hang on nails beaten into the wall. Moments leap from minute hands, and the three lovers fly across the sky, forming a comet with a jelly tail. The two women grunt as the pig's foot that seemingly never wears out fills them. Unbuttoned pupils. Teach me how to cook meat jelly, because this is the lover I always dreamed of! Even the frog blinks out from this one! The mother is wearing a pig mask now, and as she rides the boy she whispers the magical recipe. The girl writes it down with a burnt matchstick: trotters, rind, ears, and snout... lean pork meat... the pubes of a horny teen boy... paprika, garlic, and a used handkerchief found under the bed... bay leaf and withered dreams from a skull... oink, oink, oink!

They roll stars out of the clouds. They hang themselves on a clothesline and run away from their bodies. Awakened waves—bottles thrown into the night—as the glass breaks the lustful moans circle in the dark like liberated genies.

But as the days, like the house of cards that has lost balance, slip by, a strange smell starts to fill the rooms. After the orgasms, the woman and



her daughter begin to smell the jelly prince, and disgust kneels on their faces.

“Well, nothing much we can do. He’s spoiling.” The woman shakes her head. “We have to get rid of him!”

The daughter covers her mouth with her hands. She looks like she’s going to scream, but instead begins to cry.

“There, there, don’t take it to heart! After a while, they all get stinkier and stinkier! If you can bear it, you can play with him a little more, but after that, it will be best if...” She doesn’t finish the sentence. As time goes by, the house fills with more and more hushed silence. Soon even the curtains and the furniture begin to emit that sour smell. And the meat jelly boy looks more awful every day. He can’t walk anymore; he just crawls on his slimy belly, like a giant snail, covering the carpet with his stale ooze. But the pig’s foot still stands tall, and when the jelly man clambers into the young girl’s bed, she doesn’t have the heart to send him away. Instead, she covers her nose, and helps him onto the sheet, and then over herself. While the greenish jelly mass, that was once a valiant boy, begins to shudder on her, the girl weeps, and her mother’s words circle in her skull like ugly crows.

“I have planned everything... I dug a hole out in the yard...” her mother whispered in the kitchen, just about an hour ago. Her eyes, like a pendulum, sway left to right and right to left, as if she were trying to hypnotize her daughter. “We’re gonna do it fast, we bury it, and no one will ever find out!”

The girl begged her mother to leave her out of the plan. But her mother said: “No, no! We started this together! Now we’re gonna put an end to it together!”

From her bed the girl watches the bedroom door open slowly. Her mother stands behind it, face balanced on the edge of a sharp spade. The jelly boy still lies on top of the daughter, slurping, smelly bubbles exploding on his deformed lips, as he keeps working on her.

“Mom!” cries the girl, but it is too late. The spade strikes, hitting the boy in the head. Pieces of meat jelly fly around the room, transparent green slime covers the daughter’s face and the walls. The girl throws the headless body out of the bed, and it falls to the floor with a big splash. The mother hits him again with the spade, and again, until nothing



remains of him, just unrecognizable gunk covering everything. The woman drops the tool and looks at her daughter.

“Stop crying, and bring me a bucket!” she orders, lifting her slippered foot, ready to stamp, but the girl doesn’t wait for that, she runs out of the kitchen.

And the days go by. And the weeks go by. Breezes come and go, and slowly they air out the rooms. Like outcast ghosts, the old, homey smells return.

“My dreams are only dry sponges since you’re gone,” the young girl murmurs, crouching in front of the dirt mound in the yard. She rolls the pig’s foot she has just dug up from hand to hand. Then she hides it under her clothes, when her mother yells from the house: “The food is ready!”

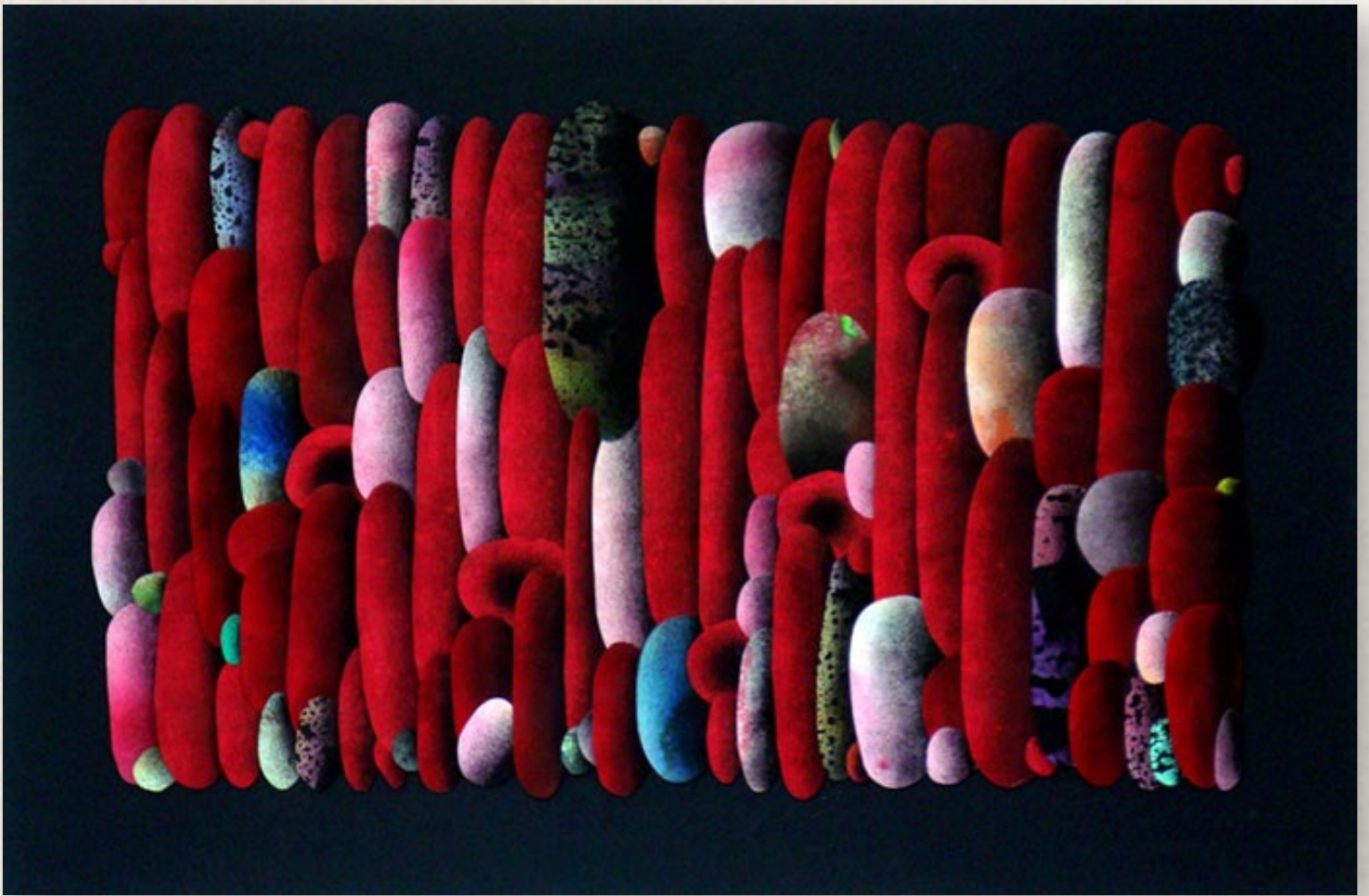
She runs back to the kitchen.

“What’s for dinner?” she asks her mother with sparkling eyes, but she loses interest when the woman tells her: “Egg barley. Told you this morning.”

“Never mind,” she tells herself. “One day I’m gonna pull those slippers onto my feet. And I’m going to stamp so loud my mother will fly away from this house. And then... Then I’m going to cook meat jelly. Just for myself.”

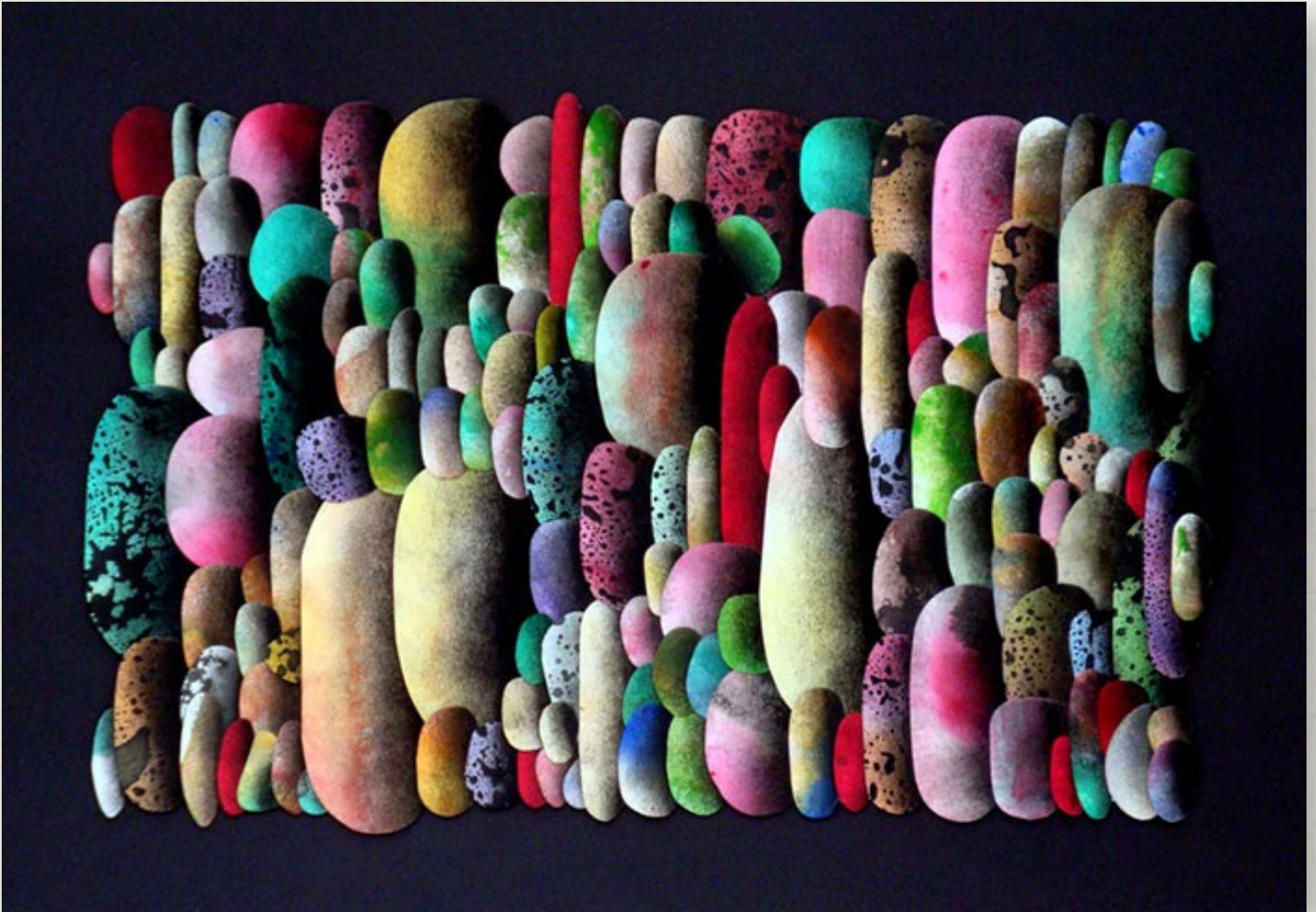
She smiles and begins to eat. As she leans over her food, the pig’s foot pushes hard against her belly.





AFTER MADRID 3 by Jim Zver, 2012  
acrylic and charcoal on paper (14" x 21 1/2")





AFTER MADRID 4 by Jim Zver, 2012  
acrylic, charcoal, and India ink (15" x 21 1/2")





AFTER MADRID 6 by Jim Zver, 2013  
acrylic and charcoal on paper (18" x 26 1/2")



KAREN GARTHE

**On My Way to You**

When in the grainiest black and white I remember  
the white lace shawl of the villain beauty is  
mineral ground metal dirt  
crops of the bulls of the earth

Out in mid-Ocean now *for* the party prospectus  
Dutch settled and broke up the rocks and wagons fired  
the sky naturally portraiture there  
Miss Winter fattened-up warm garb

Glissade the restaurants hapless heads down dining  
*Ministries of Chefs Royale*  
glissade cheap clothes blocks clothes block after cheap blocks on  
my way  
to you straps of orchids stroke rams heads and pills' anxious decline

Solder link each hair-brained-helmet schemes which blue gilding  
my enclosure that very first mid-Ocean I held  
the rock all night it was still  
fast in my hand in the morning sparkling on my way to you



**banners on high**

hand held out in the jade      fog of thick collapsing Felt Belief in light  
not warmth      lightening stoked the jade fog You could see  
dragons balloon up gullies in the rain      you could see      to  
sanction  
you could get to the House in the Glass      towers and air booms  
panorama  
run free in the sky house You could      Be alone with air  
ice tables and chairs that dis-invite as welcome  
Great      banners on high  
and talons of wind



## BILLY CANCEL

### **compensation was some disembodied imp**

post-big-blow    enough to make me turn  
the muzzle away    even through piss stained  
morns stamped into the road    felt part of  
the soap gang    yoke caliber tone down  
the blunt    this is hillbilly triple lower case    decades  
of eyeball committed to puppet shows come see  
these warped pyrotechnics sprout    since you sense  
a gust of washout this spreadsheet day your rascal  
flare leaves me wonderstruck    so out of it can't  
discern who's trembling beneath my wing meanwhile  
across the city indivisible  
overwrought they flock around  
lackluster nexus    *there will be*  
*an underworld of pending*    aftermath  
of margins    lot of space  
central    consolidated  
list of no shows    everyone shall  
pick up their severed arm & make  
their way home quiet



BRIAN SWANN

## **A Collection of Life**

### **I: The Heart:**

The heart dressed to kill limps, an old dog with one leg shot off but gaining ground on itself the way a river does or a tide hemmed in between banks. This sun meets everything halfway, anticipating disaster by embracing it. Its choices are like accidents. That bird gliding like a paper shadow over its head fits in too, and swallows dip in and out of it on their way to nests brimful with the bright faces of old men eager to leap into infinity where afterimages trail in damp air. Out its windows, trout break through water turbid after storms that took off one after the other, aboriginal saints floating the taint of hymns over partial wilderness where forests stutter but the drum's still faint. The great bubble of life forces its way up in arterial pulses and spreads loosely over mud packed hard as muscle. The seasons arrive all at once but the faintest thing is likely to pull it all back into unconsciousness when everything recurs at the same time with equal validity. The sound of the heart is one mayfly. And that is how long it lives as a collection of life at all parts, focusing at death to lift-off, enlarging what we can know by what we can't.

### **II: The Hunger:**

Midnight. Some minutes past. Once again the machine kicks in. In a panorama of arbitrary belief I cope as best I can. I need a mechanic in these latitudes. Things need scraping out. The air needs more air. A whole slew of small things still conveys the impression of a dialectic that swings between extremes, a sickening tick-tock. I look again at a shot of a dance pavilion where once patterns traced themselves in the floor's white and fragrant dust. It takes some imagination to see the fallen roof



as the result of anything, but it is. I was explaining hunger to myself when the lights came on and the sun kicked in, and I was left with my hands on the window, groping.

### III: The Dead:

Woods in morning rain, and the wind. Without dying, flowers fall in mud. Forcibly uplifted, they struggle for air. Bodies, blue to the bone, float by. Day opens and shuts itself. As the rain stops, new vines get on track again at a place that has vanished. As I watch, a swallow sways above the face of the waters, leaving behind turbulence like a wind changing its nature. Then, evening, everywhere I look. The dead in the Vega Valley cemetery pause by a gang of asphodels. The small habitations of their children are all nervousness, light flickering. Night is ready to come again, leaves in a silver bowl. The wind unwinds to catch them and loose them into blue elsewhere where their delirium will be freed at first light.

### IV: The Attic:

These rooftops imitate information as their intervals fight against the night of Vincent Van Gogh, swirling the hair of dead women in spirals and mouths of stories that surface on silver. Inside, commander chairs, belted radials, comforters, cases...forms of flaunted governings, shadows that touch your face as if from real bodies...I have grown used to it, have tried fitting into passersby and small birds, have taken the shape of young women, the sex of night, duchies of damp hair, to knock out the night. But still this attic is exhausted rivers and seas with no sense left. The house is eaten from within, so debits love us as we try to leap beyond ourselves to gaseous stars and the sky, color of peacocks or gasoline, hangs in nets over the buttocks of sunbathers on tar beaches.



V: The Mink:

Rain is the articulation of leaves, wind an indifferent ecstasy. The zapper next door is burning bits out of night. One day life might be happy as hitchhikers. Today, patterns are made and seen so nothing seems trivial, but if nothing's trivial nothing's important. So yes, now is a time for wonderful stories. The one I am about to tell I have told before and it still consists of whispers: *The amenuensis pauses on the hill and reflects nostalgically on a wonderful story he once heard, or thinks he heard, for with everything gone only the allusion to the story remains, a story about a lost love (or glove) at an airport and includes a young woman with a baby on a train (or plane). He's sure she had a lisp since a lisp is a sign of intelligence. There was, he thinks, a Hare Krishna somewhere.* I wish I could remember the rest but, as I said, I've told it before and you can fill in from there. That's the problem of dreaming in generalities; you tend to repeat yourself. You know something's wrong and so you're always trying to set things in order. But we continue to walk among shadows as if something would shine brighter there. I admire the Japanese; they seem to find their courage in neatness. I admire the mink I saw by the bank of the polluted stream just before nightfall, still searching.



JOHN BRADLEY

**Anonymous Sonnet: A Rather Short History  
of George Pullman**

When his heart attacked, George Pullman had several nights  
of cement poured into his body. Several George Pullmans died  
in 1897 to prevent one from being dead. George Pullman,  
pour the history of liquid night into the eel's leaden body.  
Vault the coffin, vault the heart's storied labor. To prevent  
1897, he labored to activate a labial history of every Ham  
and George. No night prevents a when; no when confines  
a night. Being George Pullman, he reinforced his heart  
with burr and fin. Within the vented heart of George Pullman,  
a rat hums. Attack the body, the severed heart pulling to and fro.  
A laboring laborer severed from his coffin ardor. Ton by ton,  
night by night, steel the heart. Pull the man, rather, from his  
heart's heat. Night dies; the heart shorts. His his, our was.  
Steal the heart. Buried in a lineament of history.





WEAR THE PAPER HAT #49 by John Bradley, 2014  
collage (11" x 8 1/2")





WEAR THE PAPER HAT #57 by John Bradley, 2014  
collage (11" x 8 1/2")



JANET PASSEHL

**Untitled**

succor the terse  
bone egg  
yoked to bird  
form in hand  
Ours is a fragment  
she a blue poppy  
the hunter lies, guy behind guy  
the hunter lies fore-by, fore-by he lies grace

who named this spirit father  
and so on  
beef music  
fragrant  
shouting his teeth, the bear stomps  
a two-man pendant, two men wait  
musky  
alone  
must we  
hang, a loon call thaw

people do acrobatics in the warmth  
of an igloo, flip two guys  
moot spirit of the absolute, crude pants a sack of woven  
jute, bird on your back



RICARDO PAU-LLOSA

**Illuminations**

*[at the British Library]*

Faith regardless,  
    gold frogs entwine  
        the pearl and blood sky,

reminding us who bend  
    over the fingerprint-mazed  
glass, caught in the ambers

of learned halogens,  
how in war newsreels  
the lace of once cities

    roiled in jumpy silence,  
    tongues turning  
into Dresden

    where the next books  
were copied by priest  
    and rabbi who knew celestials

    differently, so I shake  
    from mind the bleak  
    similitude pond

in which forms leap  
    into misnames,  
with the help of a label

that assures this aureate  
knit is no modern  
thing but a letter

from a winged time;  
ergo I saunter pensive  
hands braided behind me

in the scrubbed dark  
to the next case  
where initial tracteries

will again curdle  
clockless angels  
into radiator grills,

if the poem of present  
will have it so.



## JOHN M. BENNETT

### le lit

the leaking suit the shirt  
saw dust falling off the  
sheet I slept in blood s  
lept in me crawled a fog a  
gainst the window pues  
tu pierna final andaba  
por la luz del baño full  
of mothths and ssand ...*m..*  
*..w.....m...w..... dr ink*  
*the water off yr leg yr*  
flayed pants knotted round  
yr neck said grunting dog said  
lint wet lint wet lint w et l int

*Ce bruit secret des eaux...*

—Paul Valery

*Bennett/64*

**yes it fell**

never opened the  
last rainn ,indactil  
bleeds the in  
dex fing er er go  
name the clothes  
espurpento at the  
water's first  
off the leg

off f *f* the bbig *llingo*

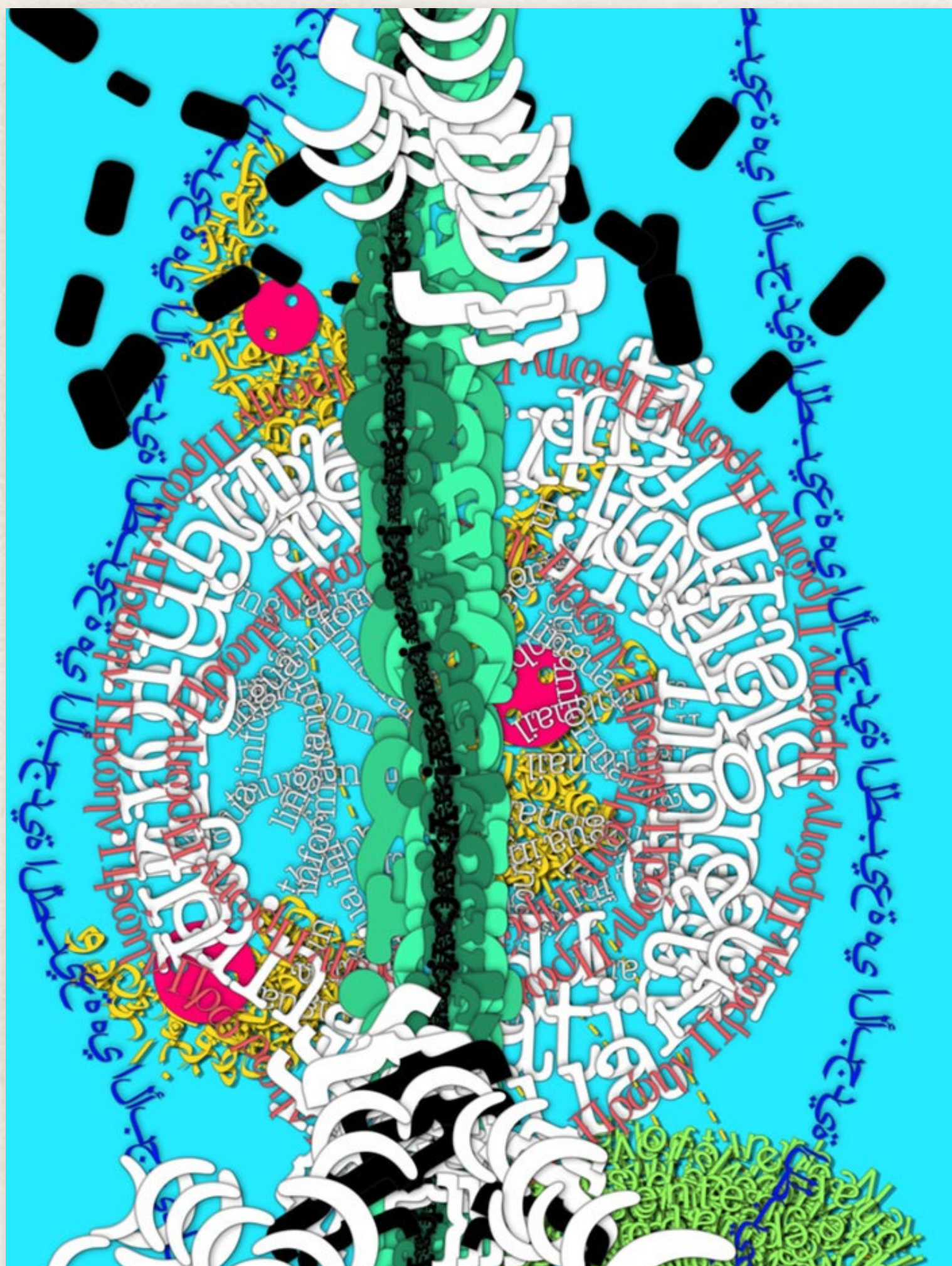


# A NICO VASSILAKIS PORTFOLIO: INTERVENTIONS

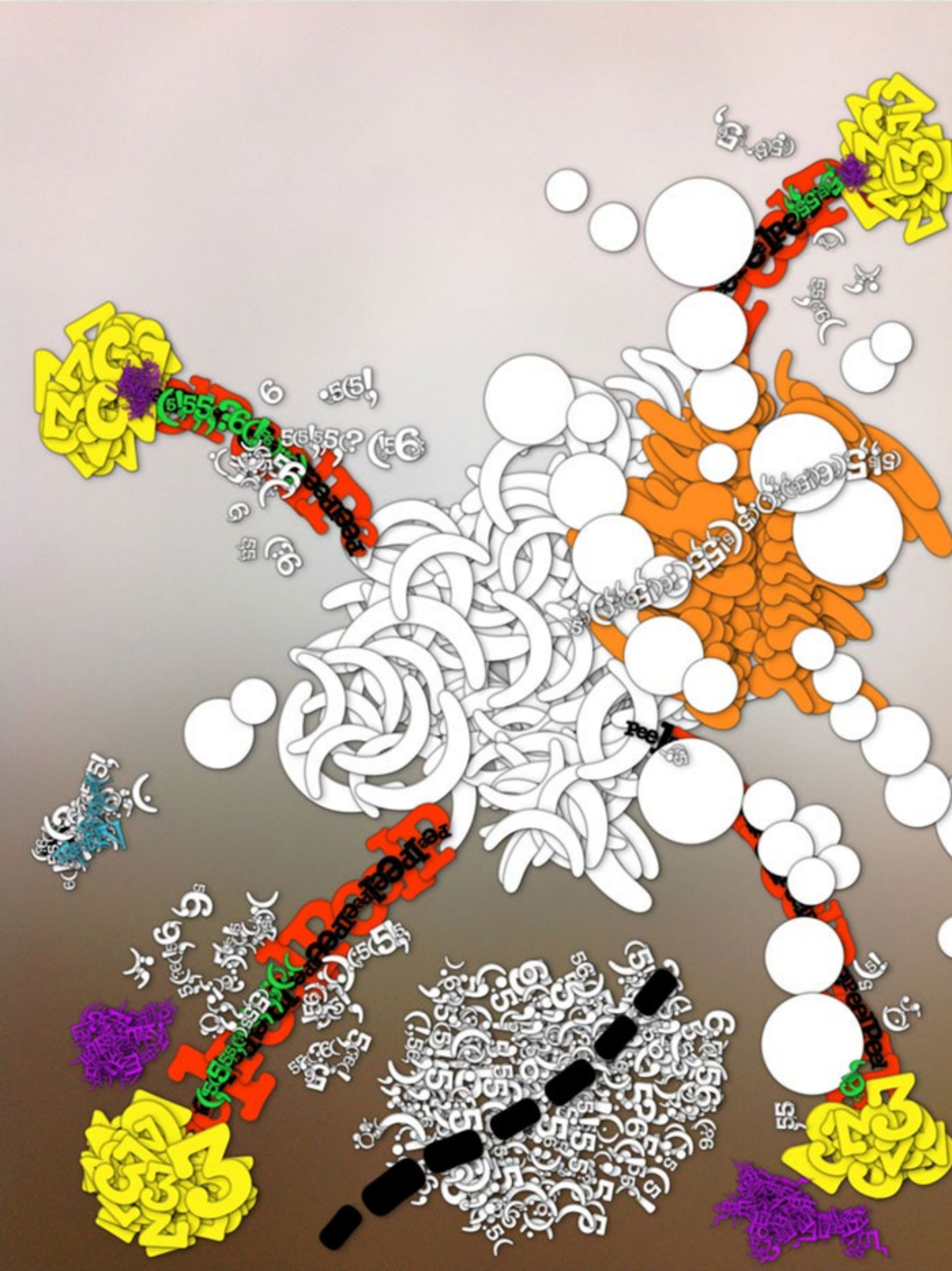


















J/J HASTAIN

### **Orphan Black Hole?**

Is a child, lodged in the pressured clamp of the birth canal and fourteen hours belabored, an erogenous silhouette of a nomadic black hole?

The child is twenty days overdue. The mother's push is all desperation at this point. Having long exceeded the postures of grace and duty, her sweat cascades from her: pores like mouthfuls of waterfall. Even the tops of her shoulders are sweating. She screams and she tears. Her asshole is turned inside out from all of the shoving; her veins are fattening below her skin. Body here, is unintentional engorgement and it is taking her: taking. At the edges to which this sensation is bringing her is she slipping away into cosmic water? Is she reverting to the child that she once was, resting in a sloshing womb of pain, a valid, vital abyss?

Astronomers have been studying galactic graphs: merge outlines. Colossal convergence suggests that, depending on their size (which intensifies their influence) some enormous black holes are nomadic. This nomadism, however, could only ever be the result of energy-heave. The previous directionality of a black hole's travels is immediately reversed upon impact with another supermassive. The queue of magnetic gelatin prior to impact detonates when the two touch and from that moment onward, propulsion is immanent.

The mother and the child are both supermassive in the context of the scale that they share. They are trying to touch each other; they are striving. After more tumultuous hours, the baby is finally cut from the body by way of a Cesarean birth. Its head is cone-shaped and it takes many days of the mother holding, dropping a gentle water onto the baby's head, for it to smooth back into a rounded shape.



Whether by pushing until the form is turned inside out with love or driving by energetic until the form collides (illuminating by conjunction), hole in contour with another hole is art.

## Core Chord

The implication is that it has to have been dry enough during that period of time, for it to have felt like a dry spell; aridity as the loss of one thing can also be the perpetuation of another.

Need leads to hallucinations. Longing brings out unforeseen nurture of another. Nature threads a woman into poises intended to assist her in surpassing her own need's brink. Here, a woman is a wealth: a core chord colliding with context. It seems that there is no way for her to get enough rain anymore: insatiable, far from level-headed. Rain makes roves of green outside her window and the more and more she identifies as a *woman* the more she feels connected to terra. Terra makes her a seer screaming into her own visions. "I know now, by way of my body, why Eve refused to leave this place."

During the periods in which no water is present, oil is released by the plants. Emanating oils are absorbed by entities and kept there, within them: rocks and clay patches preserve the succor. What hard key could unlock the meta-senses within this meniscus? Holding factors are willing to comply. They just need provocation: an abrupt nudge. Rain increases: gentle then hard, hardly able to stop itself. The gutters puddle over, the grasses soak. A woman weeps at the precipice of an open window that she chooses to leave open as the water splashes onto her bare, scratched and tightly-tucked legs.

She stares into a picture frame that holds a picture of a woman standing in what looks like a ghost town. Dust and tumble weeds abound. Her tears are so consistent that they seem to be conspiring with the water falling onto the window then through it. The crack over the framed woman's face is splitting, gaining surface-area as she holds it. There is tension here, radiant grade.

It is the death of certain microbes that makes that unique smell and the smell permeates her room, her stories. There are some smells that you can taste. As you push the beets repeatedly into your mouth while slicing



them for your upcoming meal, geosmin leaks. You are inundated. This makes you feel, in a moment, like you now know something that you have been missing all of your life.

Petrichor could only ever occur after: one intensity (drought) can be precursor to another intensity (slake) and that interchange changes your life.



## **Skirts at a Bar**

It was blatantly obvious that the two women were lovers. You could practically hear them fussing and chanting, now, what they had been saying to each other earlier in bed: “*Lover!*”

“*Oh lover!*”

As the light in their bedroom changed, their thrusts inevitably increased. Thrusts can be profoundly inclusive, even if the bar you are dancing in together later that evening is not. They did not hesitate to make themselves noticed: skirts intermingling while they danced in the beer-stench, seemingly oblivious to it, staring at only each other. So many mean miens, such disapproving stares.

The surrounding men and their skinny girlfriends shot looks like darts, yet the lovers chose out of experience of those as violences capable of inflicting on them. They had other things on their minds: each other’s bodies, the palpable smell of one another’s rare sexes on each other’s hands and mouths. The lovers kept instinctively stepping over the splits in the wooden floor. This was step as leap; they were not going to let anything separate them. They were going to be right here. It is possible to exercise bizarre agencies for the sake of accuracy. Identity-exertions are a must.

Sometimes you can see people’s secrets as winged-ones, floating over them. From the moment they stepped into the bar they saw only each other until they were surprised, sensory-addicted to that man. He was quite skinny. His hair was very thin and his clothes were torn. He was the cause of many other men and women averting their eyes from him. As he danced, his arms flailed around like oranges dropped into long socks; they were Slinkys. As the music in the bar changed, turned tempos, the man remained in the middle of the dance floor, gyrating, oblivious to the hard stares of others.



The lovers were hooked. They could not help but look on this man as a miracle. Was he blissed-out on some invisible form of Shakti, a resonance with more in it than he knew how to deal with in his body? Would divine energy discharge from within him, and ricochet outward, blowing forcefully on the troubling grimaces of these surrounding men and women?

The lovers kissed, embraced, and with sea-eyes, nodded; they felt good about sitting down together to rest. This man was their totem tonight. This man meant something for their future: *him*.



RAY GONZALEZ

### **The Paragraph Inside**

The paragraph inside the sentence with the sentence inside the period. When I think of the snow-peaked mountains in the desert, the prisoner has escaped. I was done when the first object appeared. Splintered sun as a menace. By A.D. 1200, the hundreds of adobe dwellings, complex irrigation canals, and mysterious roads had been abandoned, though the paragraph underlining the sentence had not been written yet. The word inside the fourth letter of the alphabet had not spelled anything yet. To coordinate replications which remove the need to write it down, scramble the signs of civilization without understanding history or the staircase embracing the stars. When I see the peaks without snow, the white period has been left off the last sentence. The photographs of the rocks belong between yellowing pages, though I am searching for a book that self-destructs after one reading.

## **Turtle Shells**

Mayans believed the turtle shell represented the whole earth and they named individuals for the day they were born. Their turtle shells covered memories with flowers and the scraped skulls that kept their dreams and impurity in the cut-off and sacrificed heads that rolled around in the upside down turtle shells.

There is a place in the clouds where the turtle shells are piled atop each other. They form a terrible mountain of shells that waits for their bowls to be filled because they never run over. The mountain has a peak, but the peak is never there because turtles keep crawling out of the mud on earth.

To learn the fine art of forgetting, the speaker bows down and reptiles himself. The game of night and day erupts in claws. Each turtle is hidden under the greenhouse of the mind. Each second of moss becomes one minute of getting closer to its door lined with shells.



## **Waterfalls to be Forgiven**

Two owls devour a tree, six weary travelers caught in a sandstorm sent to them by an uncle they hated because he was the contorted song of the earth, this lame view making him extend his arms and capture four yellow-legged frogs dying in the air. I wanted to learn something about Hopi corn but all I had was a photo of their snake dance, the rattlers punishing me at dawn within the circle of dancing men, their shaman asleep in the cave where he went to surrender his destiny. I did not want to wake him so I followed the travelers and their sudden cries turned my walk into Friday or Sunday, my confusion ignored by the presence in the cave as he dreamed of Holokopia unleashing the sun, its light blinding the travelers and evaporating them into fresh dew drops on the shaman's brows, fresh lizards flashing in the way I survived to enter the black and wipe his brow with my broken hands, methods learned when I wore lunacy around my neck, its bantering arms cured in the great white room of indecision where I was visited by steady waves of imagination.

SHEILA E. MURPHY

**Come Near**

Après-sapling proffers  
depth supplanting.  
tandem  
of and with and for,

to fortify the nest.  
My nest. My other  
thought,  
splintered

to slivers and  
the contract  
left to dry.  
Unnerving blankness

fractions thin as feathers  
and the whole of it.  
Lined up, these seams  
to match.



***from* Lauds (21)**

Bless evidence (a carrel safe from snow  
Bless rest (from which the whole of us  
Bless nestling (in the aggregate  
Bless warmth (touch leaves

Bless breathing (smell of dust  
Bless everlastingly (this pale use  
Bless temperature of intellect (to learn  
Bless heart (from pages and

Bless overtones (new levels deep  
Bless the underpinnings (to cover and  
Bless gloss of (independent few  
Bless light (the altogether

Bless breast stroke (someone's initials  
Bless minerals (revealed in ink  
Bless loudness (onto coated  
Bless eternity (on this one desk sustained

**unsigned**

having learned release  
preceding grasp

found rain's discernible  
neglect

the male voice  
of apology

small book pale ink  
unsigned





BAGGAGE: CARRYING CONCEPTS by Christine Kuhn, 2014  
mixed media with cast epoxin resin (60” x 60”)





MAN WITH BLUE DOG (HERMIT) by Christine Kuhn, 2014  
mixed media with cast epoxy resin (42" x 42")



HELLER LEVINSON

**aperture like indemnified alert**

trampled between 2 mists → ruse arousal

cottonwood

a harlequin tripping over riptide

in the bilge of retribution, ... → lurk

a provisional bottom feeding cased in the throne of forgotten  
obsequies

where in the wound is the pillage, the momentary *call-forth*,  
the moment of execution

**aperture like preordained synchronicity**

like overtures festooned in loam

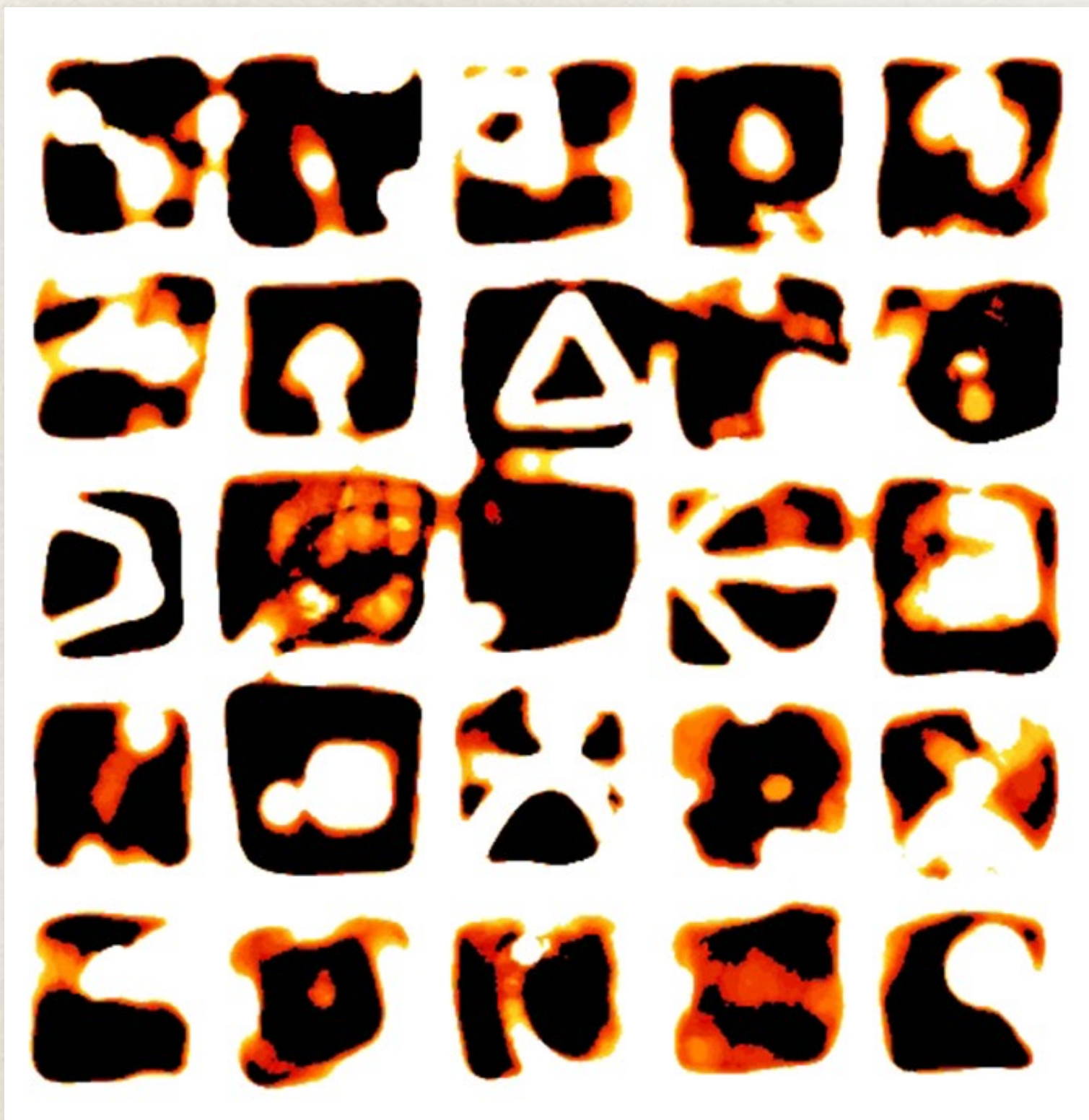
like sonnets ferrying from the tongues of young tuatara

temporality smacks of the newly spilt & the already spoiling, of surge  
& decay, delapidation & dentition

in case of fire make your way  
to the nearest exit

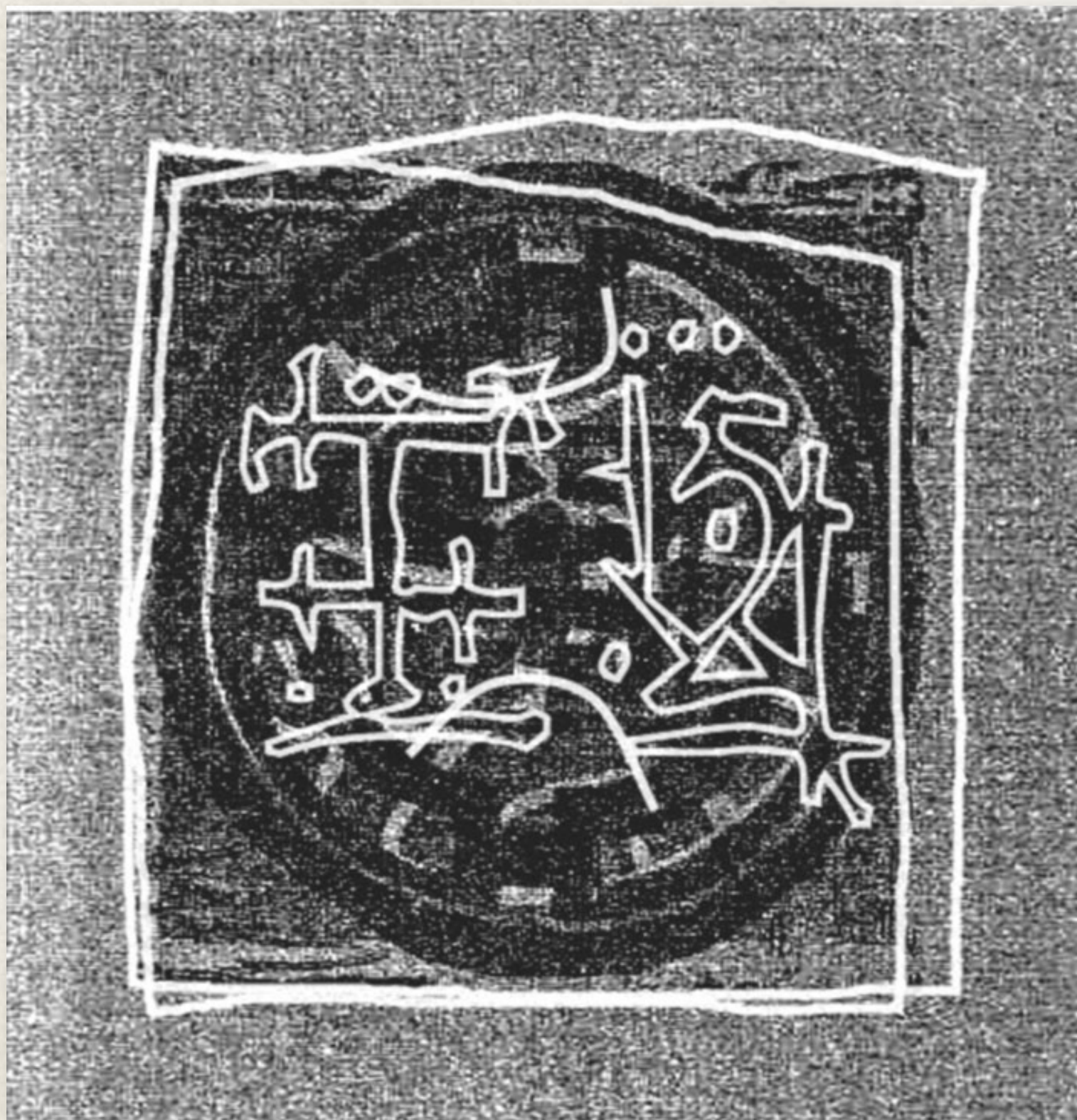
the urge for extra innings is rampant  
but rarely  
forthcoming





CONTACT by Carlyle Baker, 2013  
digital image





TILE by Carlyle Baker, 2014  
digital image



## GEORGE KALAMARAS

### Letter to Jim from Rifle

Jim—I want to be intimate because we’ve never met. Because our one letter five years ago spoke of our dogs. How mine had just died. All my letters are to friends. I could make an inception and reintroduce my birth. Our solitary December cries into one another. I could make myself important cooking you soup? I resist carrying firewood for Yuan Mei to his hut, prefer to live in the lantern shadow play of Stonehouse and his Zen verse. Coals, Jim. If I say enough to you we’d be seen as being warm. Friends could read by the light of the fire belching from the belly of two Sagittarians. You and me, both ruled by Jupiter, the largest planet. Both of us consuming many books. Many poems. Many lines. Lies? You eat words the crow rejects. I imagine you’re at your desk right now, convulsively wanting to compose me a poem. It begins, *My dear friend, George*. My wife would think me important. Might let me bring that stray bluetick coonhound finally home. Allow me to have some woodsy thing to share with you when you visit. I might cast away vegetables and fruit and sling for catfish regret. Bluegill and crappie. Anything we might hook—butterfly, pokeweed, poison oak—north of Traverse City. There’s a woman up there I hear who only likes men with dogs. My beagle’s not enough to get her to give me but ten minutes. A tenderness where she holds the pen I use to say to you hello. I hear she wants a redbone. A redbone coonhound with a colder nose and deeper bay.

I’m writing from Rifle because you’re a good shot. Count the grouse roasting in my belly you placed there when I read your fried Swedish bread on a map. No, not Wheaton, Illinois. But Sourdough, Indiana. Spelt, South Dakota. The ancient grain in the letters of Amaranth, Alabama. I love the way you spell *James* as *Jim*. A Sagittarian poet should have a name with many syllables. Large letters. Several ways to



say, *Hey, here, look at me!* Thomas Merton placed an electric cord in my throat—that's how I eat Asia. How I stumble and humble the shock of thinking my own death might never revolve beneath a Bangkok fan.

I love your work so much I'll let my lines go slack. Mary Ann says we should skip Christmas and you and I should just buy one another December birthday things with which tender friends say hello. *Here's some chocolate, amigo Jim*, I might say, keeping me the truffle. *Good buddy, George*, you'd surely respond, *thanks for the whiskey you struggled back for me from a Montana bar in Livingston*. It takes a lot of meditation to carry firewood with Yuan Mei as if it were mold. We sneeze, we cough, we allow our inside cry. If I cry in your beard would you tell others we're friends of the hairiest sort? Would you say, *Imagine that, we're both born in December and we both love dogs*. That's a lot to have in common? When I woke this morning, and stretched from the tie sidings of sleep, I thought I was Takahashi Shinkichi, the poet we both love. I'm not kidding. I was the monk in his poem, "Burning Oneself to Death." Parts of me singed out into what I knew was Jim Harrison soup. It was a scalding soup. Large. Sagittarian in scope. With many vegetables and much broth. Much variables and many broths. There was mulch in it from Michigan, Montana, even Arizona border seeds. All the places from which you'll one day die. *That was the best moment of the monk's life*, Takahashi begins. Like this letter, which burns on the spit with that grouse you gifted me and are roasting in my belly.

*Sundog, Farmer, Warlock. Dalva, Wolf, Legends of the Fall*. The human urge to procreate and blame oneself for birthing another death. To continuously feed logs to a coal-ridden womb. We're twins, Jim—father and brother, mother and son, toenail and hangnail. My wife will be impressed. I want to intimate with you because I've lost the verb "to be." Because we are or were or is. Because we met once in a letter right after my former dog died. You said, at her death, we have much in common. I bet you cry every December, following the Thanksgiving bird, recalling the coming anniversary of our birth. I bet you weep at the death of a cow dog. Tear-up when you realize your words give rise to me. César Vallejo placed a jail in my throat. Electric. Peruvian.



Bangkok-shocked there by his translators. And quite dark. There is one way out and that is that there is no way out. When I woke this morning, I thought I was you. Brushing away the hairs of Yuan Mei and his load of firewood. The sound of my Indiana voice coming thin all the way from Michigan, calling me *friend, brother, ground-sniffing hound*. My wife stroked my belly, inches above my morning erection, and said she loved the stewy soup of my unwept books. My tumble and rough. My grouse-eating gruff. My legends and their fall.

*(for Jim Harrison)*

**Little Infinite Poem, Or Letter to Bob from Everywhere  
at Once**

Dense? Disturbed?  
Cloyingly brave? I'm walking again,  
four miles on a gravel mountain  
road. Midnight. 7600 feet.

Katya, from Boxelder, urging me  
not to fill the big cat's gut.

Mary Ann, groggy from sleep, mumbling me  
to take my stick.

John pasting three goose feathers into an envelope,  
mailing them postage due from the bloody mouth  
of a DeKalb fox.

Red cedar walking  
stick. Hand lantern from some  
catalog lighting the dark  
bark of coy dogs yoating down  
the draw to flush a deer. I consider:

Whitman's late-life circumcision thinning the membrane  
between worlds, the blind camels of Isfahan somehow Icelandic  
ponies somehow Long Island oxen pulling Conestogas all the  
way across the Badlands;

César Vallejo's "The Hungry Man's Wheel" released from his  
chest, suddenly, at death, rutting all the scores of snow to a  
boarded Orthodox cathedral in Leningrad;

the insomnia of Richard Hugo's removed left lung;

George Seferis's meerschaum pipe smoking *him*;



Wallace Stevens' only pair of wingtip shoes, tied to opposite feet, pointing past one another like confused hands of clocks, everywhere at once, on his morning walk to work.

There it was from the top  
of Sheep Mountain. Lightning on the rise  
over Wellington. Down the sinks  
through Waverly.

I counted seventeen shooting stars. So much  
dying, even as the universe expands.  
Lorca's "Little Infinite Poem"  
getting down on all fours to eat  
the grass of the cemeteries. Still  
moist with starlight, I float  
through the swaying  
pods of stars, swimming again  
in the glorious womb water  
of the world.

Miguel Hernández, dead from tuberculosis in Franco's cell, though living in the bloody goldfish stain, hacked up onto the turnkey's hanky;

Yannis Ritsos and Nazim Hikmet swapping prison stories, lending salve for each of their respective hemorrhoids;

Robert Desnos alive inside André Breton's semen after being expelled from the group. After being expelled in an almost stinging moment onto a sheet, preserved now past Rue de Grenelle, in the avenue known as, *The Museum of All Dark Water*.

Dear Bob, prince of the short,  
powerful poem. You could teach me  
ways of economy and thrift.  
You could teach me stop.

You could teach me quick.  
You ask about the lights  
of Cheyenne. Still  
visible on the edge  
of this cloudless ocean sky. I reply,  
Dear Bob, the Milky Way.  
Dear Bob, the Big Dipper. Dear Bob,  
a thousand and one universes. Dear Bob,  
Dear Bob. Dear Bob. Laramie,  
some forty miles away. West Laramie,  
43.2. Both glowing just  
a badger's tail beyond the Rawhide Flats.

I could begin my poem here, Bob,  
the only one awake deep in the night's chest.  
I could, Dear Bob, trim away the more.  
I could Dear-Bob-it to death,  
cutting a cord of Vermont  
wood and burning my excess  
at the stake.

We lost a moose calf just up the road  
maybe a month back. *If you see a mountain  
lion, make yourself appear large. Whatever  
you do, don't flee—you'll be seen as prey.*  
And there are bear denning  
the Elkhorn, just down the ridge.

Glorious starlight. Glorious  
womb water of the world.

Gorgeous as he was, D.H. Lawrence did not know when to quit,  
how to quiet the poem, when to calm the radiant wind in his  
throat.

*(for Bob Arnold)*



## Slip-Tonguing the Dark

*Based on a nearly blank photo with only the faintest  
outline of three hound dogs, barely visible*

Slit my teeth with your wrist.  
Popularize my most secret sex fantasy.  
Let me sit, side-saddle, upon what breathing your breathing bends.

In other words, step right up.  
In other ways, step into the museum of George's far water.  
In other mouths, walk into a vat of chokecherries and step out all  
the loose juice.

What makes life worth giving?  
What happened to the three dogs—who did they live themselves for?  
How have the hounds howled themselves into slip-tonguing  
the near-dark dawn of night?

Give me hound-song my throat.  
Popularize my mouth and make it word-stir and blur.  
Extend what comes before with what follows prior to after.

If I dreamed Philippe Soupault.  
If I *dreamt* of him but hadn't *dreamed*.  
If I dashed my hand in the church up to the wrist in holding water.

Say Robert Desnos made moist my mouth.  
Say I counted to thirteen precisely thirteen times.  
Say Vallejo had thirteen letters in his name, sent to him by Georgette's  
younger sister.

You say my mouth knows more than my shoes?  
Consider me pliant water expressing the dark scar of a star?  
You believe moths are mouths, extending lines of loose lunar sight all  
the fray?

That's not right.

*I'm* not right—only left with this ache.

*That's not the way*, as Rumi said, *of friend and friend*.

In other words, our lives are braided weather.

In other words, we are alive for such a brief blustery wind.

In other words, slip side-saddle your tongue into every crevice  
of my mouths.

I don't know how to count?

We only have one mouth, and it is the moon rested in the chest?

We have only one tongue, and it is struck in the ear of salt-timed  
speech?

Say it in threes.

Say three thirteen-and-one-third disappearing times

Say it the way Crazy Horse cut himself in prayer above the coulee  
by the Greasy Grass.

Slit my every with your also.

Cut my abstraction with your possible mouth.

Say my name backwards—don't let it resemble this ache of word  
banging my brain.





HOT DOG by Andrew Abbott, 2014  
acrylic on music paper (7" x 8 1/2")



JAX NTP

### **Something about Clarity**

Something about the precise calculation  
of glaze on a re-fire bowl. Something about how proper metal  
fabrication methods electric and gas preparation

are more alluring than a green chrysanthemum glow.  
Something about different sensations all together cast  
a floaty sheeplike electrified intensity—cold sweat

and a thousand pinpricks on your face. Something about touching  
moon jellies for the first time with your lover even though it is not  
your first time. Something about how her nipples are perkier

than perched sea urchins on giant rocks, slivers of softness,  
mounds of flesh. Something about how morning grey clouds ooze.  
Something about the familiarity of poached eggs on lox on

pumpernickel mustard seed and dill and frostbites. Something  
about dry knuckles on cold nights whiter than calcium deposits  
in a bathroom that is not yours but somehow you're moving

out of anyways although you don't technically live with her yet.  
Something about driving alone and being lonelier despite  
knowing that she loves you. Something about eating

sauerkraut in the centre of piccadilly circus. Something  
about the scavenger hunt on her pockmarked face  
to reclaim your own limbs. Something about the jolt of crocus.



*JAX ntp/98*

Something about grapefruit in a carafe that pillows  
your gaze at her arm across an ihop table while sitting  
next to then respective lovers. Something about sassafras

in the deadest part of night. Something about waking up  
to her now with post wisdom teeth pulled blood breath.

D. E. STEWARD

**Suet**

West of Hawaii and east of Suez for seventy years now

We try only halfheartedly to live past what we have been wreaking

May we be able to get enough sleep to at least make quick and short  
the punishing darkness this entails

Blackwater-Xe, DynCorp, MVM, Triple Canopy

Corporate oblivium

*Duck Dynasty*

Foulard and yachting-capped boat-owning financiers

Corporate exec and tech-rep people bossing in vicious buttinsky  
silliness

Bureaucratic sullenness, shameless ignorance, in-your-face stupidity,  
scorn, sarcastic sloth, computerized anonymity, backbiting cupidity,  
bilious nastiness

Pettiness, boredom and desktop junk like tiny braided and gilt Serbian  
general-officer fatigue hats on those stubby macho-porky middle-aged  
killers of the Balkan nineties

Long and bristly line of toughs, Roman cohorts, Spartans, Assyrians,  
samurai, Foreign Legionnaires, Israeli citizen soldiers, Marines,



computer-joystick drone pilots who do it from California and Nevada  
swivel chairs and then drive home

“Thank you for your service”

The easy transmogrification of emotions that could generate Brahms  
and the Third Reich in nearly the same historical breath

“It’s our principles that matter, our inspiring, abstract notions. Just  
because torturing prisoners is something we did, doesn’t mean it’s  
something we *would* do”—Rob Corddry

Every nationality with its complex Kiplingesque self-justifying myths

Goldman Sachs’s annual individual bonuses are equal to the annual  
incomes of two hundred million of the world’s poorest

Flat froideur

With the substrata of slick marketing

Acxiom, BlueKai, Next Jump, Turn, BlueCava, Zynga, Xaxis,  
TellApart, DataXu, MediaMath, AppNexusn, eXelate, L2C,  
LexisNexis, IMDb, Disconnect, Ghostery

“How do I make him less of an asshole. He doesn’t care about  
anyone.”—Lance Armstrong’s mother in 1993

Hue, Nha Trang, Van Pong Bay, Qui Nhon, China Beach, Hoi An,  
My Son, Da Nang, Saigon, Vinh Moc, Halong Bay, Haiphong, Hanoi

Our best and our empire swerve on simultaneously and we’re a nice  
enough people but apprehensively insecure

Nursing a ready penchant to turn mean and slash out

You're out there all alone

No stacking swivels on M-16s

Keeping your distance, incomings and IEDs, and these days it's the IEDs

In north central Iowa it's wild bird suet cake from Fort Dodge: suet, sunflower seeds, millet, corn

Suet rendered and packaged at one or another of the Hormel and IBP slaughter points out across the plains

Feedlots in all directions

We eat a great deal of meat

IBP is Iowa Beef Processors now owned by Tyson Fresh Meats, the old Arkansas broiler chicken outfit, also big in Mexico, Argentina and Brasil

Fort Dodge is suet city even though Hormel, IBP and the others stopped slaughtering there decades ago

Nearly everybody who has ever lived there ate, eats, meat two or three times a day

Fort Dodge from 1850, there for the bluecoats to hedge the Sioux from the sodbusters

Where troopers in suspenders and long johns butchered a couple of beeves a week along the river behind their mess shack

The death bellow, the shuddering death kneel as the head lifts and drops, the collapse of the hindquarters to the ground



Then the gush of all the blood

Fort Dodge's Central Avenue's empty storefronts gone derelict in the shabby decline of Sinclair Lewis's America

Downtown dead

Weathered and empty

Dreary, unswept and barely even evoking nostalgia any longer

The good old standbys of overeating, TV, gambling, smoking, shopping, dealing, borrowing, moved out of town some time ago

To plenty of free parking with interstate access

No more are we what we profess

No more what we think we are

Banal idioms scripted for TV having nearly overwhelmed everybody's diurnal dialogues with anybody else

And when not the flat, quipping clichés and narrow vocabulary of marketed America, most conversation hangs on the sententious drivel of self-promotion, posturing, didactic, unintelligent bullshit

As though people lack the intellectual energy to scramble up out of the banal

Judging from temperature records going back for over ten thousand years the Earth is heating up fifty times faster than at any point in human history

The vegetation zones have moved seven degrees of boreal latitude farther north during the last thirty years

Existing sea ice covers only twenty percent of what it covered twenty-five years ago, its albedo diminished accordingly

Australians like Conner, age 5, on a Sydney flight who picked all his home garden birds out of the field guide as fast as he could turn the pages

Imagine Conner perplexed and frightened during Australia's unprecedented "angry summer" of 2013

When it comes to that, and worse, across the planet, the fear and resignation, the anarchic behavior and millenarian *Totentanz*, that was the norm in Europe during the plague years, of course will spread

Women to be dropping babies in the dust of desert camps, in the shipping-crate and derelict highrise squats of parched cities fast emptying to anarchy and starvation, along the futile refugee roads of escape

Children to blame their parents for the biological obduracy of having them been born

Still we have the fast to and fro kinetics of a winter's-end ground-feeding junco flock

The fall flight of tree swallows, the wild-river salmon leaps, the deer browse of quiet summer evenings

All that continues but we have no idea, can have no idea, cannot come close to imagining our world's viability turned upside down

Dada turned against logical response to the First World War's butchery, in the same way the Latin American absurd is response to *la violencia* and economic chaos

Punks, Goths, Emos and Rudies less imaginative and boutique-driven



reactions to where we are now within a corporatist world

Ska, Rap, Hardcore, Techno, Trance, whimper

The stunned and the numbed

While for the moment freedom of choice and boundless high-tech  
opportunity hang there for the asking

Whatever remains at hand

Mule tape, burlap, duct tape, chicken wire, ingenuity and luck

Down the line

“And it dwindled away into definitions”—Jack Gilbert





STAR SPRAY by Guy R. Beining, 2003  
acrylic on paper (30" x 22")





WHAT FOLLOWS? by Guy R. Beining, 2003  
acrylic on paper (30" x 22")



PAUL B. ROTH

**On Going Out**

Just be yourself  
when your birth moment  
points out  
how you've missed the exit  
and must double-back  
through an endless array  
of swinging kitchen doors  
with their scuffed  
stainless steel kick-plates  
gleaming a dull red  
from splattered Saturday night  
prime rib special drippings  
and those neon yellow  
flashes reflected off jukeboxes  
whose shouted songs  
each demanding customer  
wants spun over and over  
as if each favorite was capable  
of reaching far into their past  
and folding back over their heads  
a burlap darkness  
through which each eye  
could carve its own opening  
if it wanted to see its way clear  
to the colorless bottom  
burrowed underneath  
so much hunted fur  
feather and flesh  
where a thick green insect blood



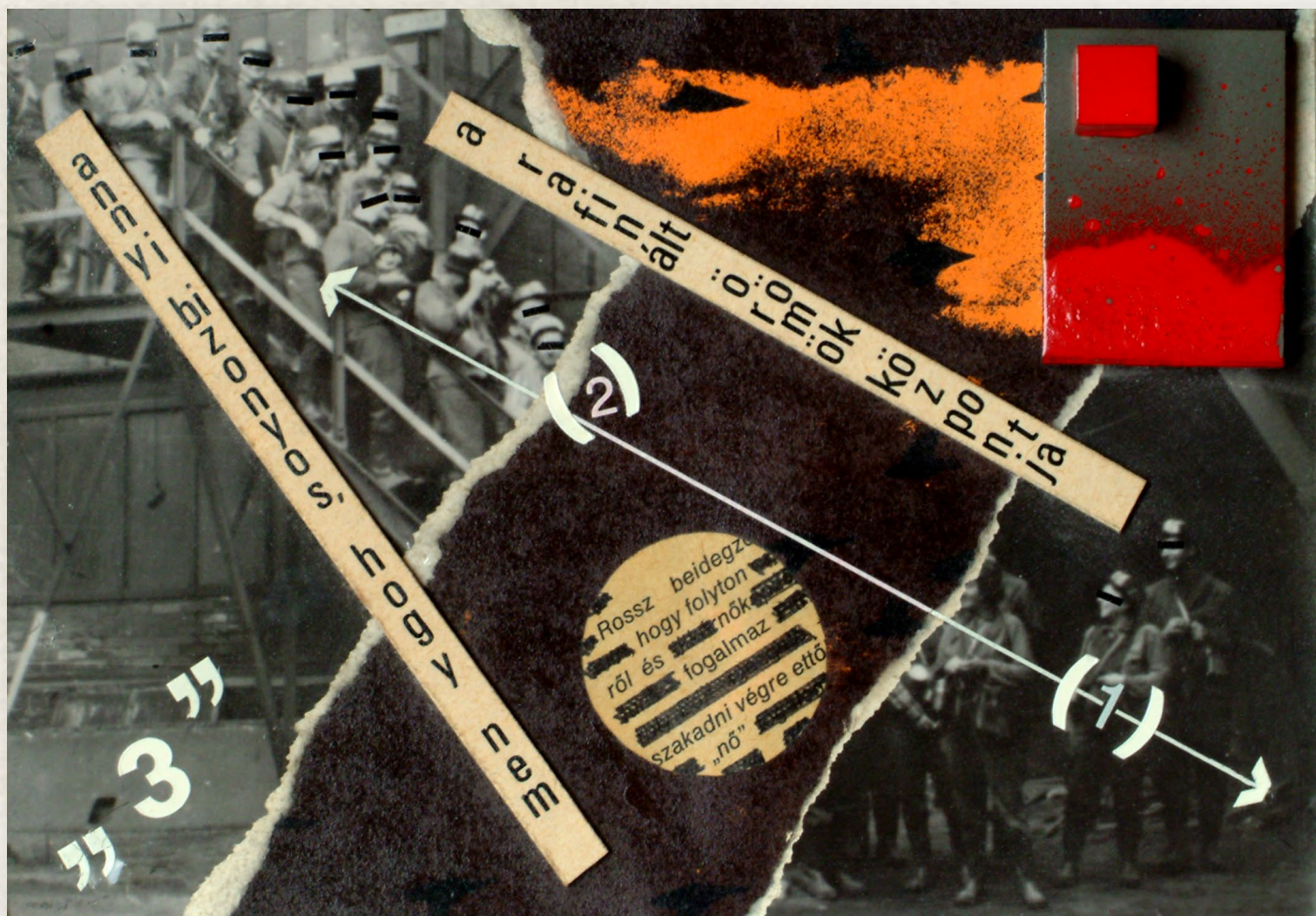
filling their heavily veined eyelids  
from one to the other  
bulges then vanishes  
with the already perfected  
rise and fall  
of a newborn's miraculous breathing

## EDWARD MYCUE

### **My Hair Was Severely Brushed and My Damp Face Looked Pink Painted Over and Blotched**

I had a young, firm face then.  
And I would have been wide-eyed  
as if waiting to catchit, whatever  
'it' was, to catchit and take it  
apart, to understand what the virus  
life was presenting to me, me  
who couldn't then have seen myself  
or my kind as a virus swarming  
out of our planet attempting to  
conquer and perhaps colonize stars.  
Last week, early, I sat at my window  
looking at the large, heavy cones  
being attacked by huge awkward crows  
disturbing all other life in that tree.  
Greedy things. I recall great grand-  
mother Jane Delehant, "Grammy," warning  
against following the crows before  
you die, the way rodents do who pick up  
the greedy crows' leavings. But I, I  
now see, I have become a kind of crow.  
Though part of a system, I, as well,  
begin to be conscious with a bad conscience.





MINE 1 by József Bíró, 2001  
collage, mixed media (5 1/2" x 7 1/2")



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

**GUY R. BEINING:**

the strange approximation of jury dust  
falls out. ears on stilts wait for bio  
mist to sing to them. i said that it was  
a wreckage in a sky walk. below, a fit isle  
maker pretended to mend each rock. we too  
are not forged that well.

**JANET PASSEHL:**

The explosion taught us light and illuminated dark, so that we gleamed  
where we were. For sin there were old men. Rain wet our houses and  
cattle, doused our hearths, outed our dead, heaved them from their  
brown granular heavens. We refused to be spoken to in binary light  
instead forked hay and cowshit in stalls morning night snuffed out  
kicking. Children smoked behind houses, smoke rising acrid breathing  
waking women lied children lied men lied.

**DAN RAPHAEL:**

It's the first day. A day of rest. Though not a day but divided in so  
many. Difference tween "frequency" & "structure." When some  
meteoric pendulum swings through and misses, but you know it'll be  
back. Sometimes you have to become the unexpected. "i never saw so  
big a man move that fast"—or maybe everything moved but this man.  
Ducking is good for those without adamantine heads. Sometimes I gull,  
sometimes I crow, but I only hummingbird in my dreams. The minute's  
up. Where did the coffee go? Bright sun and cold wind—if no wind it's  
warmer and cloudy.

**D. E. STEWARD:**

In Sumter County in southwestern Georgia on either side of Americus  
are Andersonville and Plains. The former perhaps the first large-scale  
concentration camp in human history, and the latter the *querencia* and  
present residence of President Carter. Two National Historic Sites



seminal to post-Civil War history in one of Georgia's 159 counties means something mysterious but nothing around them hints at what.

Both sites are deeply absorbing, the remnants of the stockade and vast cemetery of Andersonville to the plank-board childhood Carter farm in Archer a couple of miles out of Plains (pop. 700). Is that rural county's conjunction of good and evil an earnest attempt at amelioration of the profound human injustice that happened there, is it a strange mockery of humanity that the racism inherent to the region still exists in 2015, is Carter's peacemaking and his Habitat for Humanity a singular life's example that may or may not grow when he is gone, existing in the reality of widespread proliferation of concentration camps post-1865 a tellingly ironic paradox, or are both being there in Sumter County just happenstance? Follow it on out, I don't know.

**EDWARD MYCUE:**

Nacreous luster with the coming of machines: "tingsaint wut de waz" as redemption as vindication leapt into the familiarity that breeds contempt. It's been a spineless, tumbledown week, but tomorrow is still tomorrow exonerated but unvindicated.

**JOHN BRADLEY:**

How to Write a Poem Called *The Flesh of Heaven: The Heaven of All Flesh*

1. Linger in the vowel field, but not too long.
2. The smaller the molecule, the larger the historiography of the moon.
3. Bees live/lived/glower here.
4. Someone with a magnifying glass wishes to examine your pitchfork.
5. Wear sturdy shoes while dining on slow hollered eggs.
6. Your sleep will be deeper if you stay on the salty side of the bed.
7. Avoid writing *As you move through the liquid of your days*, even if about to rain.
8. Translate this into an onion: *her leg clogged with grasshoppers*.
9. Erase anything that smells of sky flesh.
10. What a door is for.

**HELLER LEVINSON:**

luff from the rooftops concatenative pearls

**GEORGE KALAMARAS:**

Somehow, something or other was saying something into me. It went like this. Or more like that. Perhaps a bit like both this *and* that. Though not together, yet quite un-separated. Consider standing on the precipice of the body, about to enter or leave it, thinking back to all memory held—individual yet primordial—in the nerve ganglia of the body cave. Thinking ahead into the great will-be-known. Consider the cave. The way a word might resound in the house's mouth. Something or other went someone like this, saying somehow when I meant something. The act of betraying the mouth is punishable by up to this many incarnations (hold your arms wide, and imagine a fish arching back and forth, in between, over the long border of a blur). The act of perforating, of portraying the mouth. It goes something like this. The way a word should or could or would. What I meant was. *Is*. Yes, what we meant was. *Is*.

**JOHN M. BENNETT:**

**don't follow the snake**

I doubted the floor I  
doubted the phone I  
doubted the afterb  
irth foamy in the s  
ink I doubted the  
lens swirling in the  
ashes doubted the es  
sence leaked from the  
tongue I I doubted el  
bow stuck in glue the  
spider buried in coals I  
doubted the coughing  
lock seized in the s  
now burning through  
your window of words



**ZOLTÁN KOMOR:**

“Well it’s about time to housebreak the child!” the parents decide, so they buy a little potty at the pet shop. The thing just growls at the child, following him everywhere. The little boy is so scared that he locks himself in the closet, his tears are wetting the musty smelling clothes. This method might seem barbarous to you but in other places it is common to solder a pot to the child’s back: the kids then crawl up and down the room like giant snails, and when the urge comes they have to work themselves into the most uncomfortable positions to plump their waste products into the potty. They are standing on their hands, with legs pointing forward, they look like scorpions ready to attack and the parents flash lights at them, watching the pits and the bulges of the wrapped little bodies, the lines of the bones under pale skin. These kids usually grow up to be artists. Their tricks evoke amazement in the audience who clap so hard that they almost shit themselves, but of course, in the final moment the memories come back about the lonely hours they spent in the closet many years ago and their anuses close up and they watch with envy the artist who can freely defecate. Thence springs the old joke about the artist who walks into the bar and asks the bartender where he might find the washroom and the bartender tells him to go shit himself.

\*

I became house-trained when I was two years old. But lately I’m suffering from some hygienic problems: every time I sit on the toilet to do my business I feel something gruesomely enormous is trying to leave my bowels. After an hour of straining I give birth to my one and a half year old self. The kid keeps running up and down in my house, laughing wildly. He defecates in corners, on the carpet, then he sticks his little hands into the poop and smudges everything with his dirty fingers. I try to catch him, but he is too fast. In the end I collapse exhausted, and when I wake up the kid has already crawled back into my ass. What a little goblin. Other times, when I have company he reaches out his hands and he tosses shit onto my underwear just as if he were playing with sand. It’s quite difficult to explain that I wasn’t the one who shitted my pants and of course no one believes me. A doc finally sends me to a rehabilitation center. “Don’t be ashamed, this is quite common you

know. Sometimes people forget how to eat or shit properly, but we'll teach you again!" In the shitorium tv headed nurses put me in nice fresh powdery diapers. The screens on their necks are showing movies about women and men defecating into various toilets. They are really trying to carve the right way into my brain. A doctor keeps telling me that if I don't co-operate he'll have to surgically implant a potty into my body, as he did with a former patient. He's showing me pictures and ultrasound recordings: the poor fellow's anus is all sewed together, his rectum is now joined with a pot inside his belly. They cut him open once a month to empty the implant. I become friends with a nurse. At nights, she sits on my bed and starts to hum a song to the child inside me. Sometimes, I want to kiss this woman. But buttoholes of strangers are gaping in the screen where her face should have been. So I just fall asleep. The angels dip their toilet-paper wings into the stool of the night.

**TERRY HAUPTMAN:**

**If Something Bitter**

drips from the resin's scar,  
It disappears  
In the overwhelming sweetness  
    of love  
Where light and dark  
    come together in prayer.  
Black sugar in the smokehouse  
Throws off sparks  
    Saudade  
Remembering the future  
    Leaning into winds  
    As if longing  
    Could save us,  
    Your dark tear  
        In the cooling air. . .  
        "Forgive me  
        my love, whatever it was  
        I did to you"



**ROBERT VANDER MOLEN:**

**Trains**

Returning from Oregon the third week in October we noticed how many trains were backed up (beginning on either side of the Columbia Gorge)—every mile or so coal trains, oil trains, container trains, grain trains and, of course, Amtrak all sitting, waiting for another train to pass. It was the same situation in Idaho and Montana. We spent the first night in West Glacier. I was telling my wife that it didn't use to be like this—I worked on a ranch in northern Montana, years ago. Lots of trains along highway 2 (the highline or hi line) but seldom were they idling, hurtling east or west was the rule. I'd spent some time fishing on the drive out at a friend's cabin (I picked up my wife at the Portland airport—we were on the coast to visit our oldest son) who told me, my friend, I mean, that the trains were all stymied by the increase in rail traffic due to the oil boom in North Dakota, that they needed to put down new track lines or resuscitate abandoned ones. But I hadn't paid much attention to trains back in my new pickup, having a rather bad hangover when I left his camp. The second night we were approaching Williston, North Dakota in the dark, the traffic was heavy (oil workers, oil rigs on semis) highway construction and signage that was confusing. I recall seeing something that said Williston 12 miles. An hour later I wondered aloud where Williston was. My eyes were tired. My wife said, let's stay at the first motel we see. But we didn't see any motels. I also noted my gas tank was drifting towards empty. No gas stations either. Suddenly the road descended into gravel with potholes—I should have noticed that traffic had grown sparse. Deb said, I don't think we are on highway 2 anymore. Turn in there, she insisted. A mechanic's garage with lights on, nothing else about, except illuminated tops of oil wells. The man in overalls said turn around, when you cross the railroad tracks bear right. Something about a small town too. Just keep going, he said, you'll hit the highway again. But, of course, we didn't—no small town either. Though we did come to a major intersection with a gas station and an odd looking motel/hotel four stories tall. I checked in to find it was lodging for oil workers, but they did let me rent a room. It was more like a stockade actually, or a prison. Deb was quite nervous about it.



But I told her I couldn't go on. Besides, we didn't know where we were. I did chat with some of the oil workers, a few couldn't speak English. Standing outside having a cigarette with Deb—she didn't want to be left alone in the room—we were impressed with how polite these young workers were, they were smoking as well, sipping beer from cans. In the parking lot I noticed a great many Oklahoma, Texas plates on the pickups; oddly enough, mostly Dodges. But there were plates from all over the country. I did query a few of the workers as to where I could intersect highway 2, receiving three different answers. In the morning I gassed up at the station and asked for directions. The woman said, pointing out front, get on that road and stay on it, you'll hit highway 2 East. I grabbed two coffees (there was no coffee in the motel/hotel, in our room or otherwise) and we were off to Minot (I later heard that the high school cheer was Minot, Why Not). But we never did find Williston. We must have gone around it in the dark at some distance, we never even saw lights of the city. And this is mostly flat country, prairie. A mystery, we agreed. Then we were along the double tracks again with stalled trains. Deb said, let's stop before dark tonight. I agreed, though reluctantly. I prefer to get the miles in before sleep, on the other hand I didn't want a repeat of Williston either. We bedded down that night in a pleasant motel in Bemidji; but before, sat outside on a picnic table before dusk, having a drink, much more relaxed than the previous evening. Onward to Marquette the next day, the trains thinning out to ore carriers running through forest, though we did spot one carrying logs.

#### **KAREN GARTHE:**

**NOW:** In Flushing, Queens, New York, Chinese cackles and screeches the streets like popcorn or panic. All over the world now, gadgets ring Bach or Metallica; whatever default Apple/Samsung designs. You cannot stand quietly even opening your Happy Birthday card without that verisimilitude of song like piss through a keyhole. Standing alone in the kitchen, beeps come from apartments above, below, beside, from the hallway, the alley, the street. **NOW** getting older I hear more, not less (indeed I do yearn for *more gently*). Low-grade timpani burst up when they're intended to blend *in concert*, that damn little triangle



dings hard over the horns. But I also hear more complexly, things I haven't necessarily noticed in things I've been listening to my whole life.... **NOW:** I fell in love with Italian in a movie watching language waltz perfectly with the picture on the screen. The Italian language fit its Italian birds, its baroque umbrella pines, black & white checkered floors and volatile gestural people. Yet unless somebody said *spaghetti* (they didn't) or *bambino* (they did) I didn't understand a word, which was intolerable in the throes of that much love. So, I'm learning a new language not easy in an old brain. I comprehend, yet can't, myself, construct more than baby sentences such as *io sono una studentessa* . But **NOW** "*Un po' di pace basta a rivelare dentro il cuore l'angoscia/limpida, come il fondo del mare*" I get to read Pasolini (I try).

**BILLY CANCEL:**

**Bright Reach Blast** which is why i support repair of connective tissue  
it will douse storms kill worms refrain dazzle camouflage for tracer  
hallucinated standard work practice pink blue conceptual bridge listen  
playful contraption's going whoosh whiz clunk counterirritant excessive  
dose of yellow flag shall bring gut spasm constant brand recognition  
should purgeth melancholy implementation steps as follows frost  
nip dry bite dry bite frost nip tick check tick check star grass  
soft flight vile as it sounds all schemed out grounded in dualities  
was nostalgic for mirage conspicuous black mask pale yellow eyes  
barely extended my shelf life bright reach blast rattle shine bright  
reach blast writing itself

**CALIBAN  
IS  
SEARCHING  
FOR  
ANGELS**



the 'information' and 'communication' fields. The 'information' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'communication' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of communication, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information science' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information studies' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information technology' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information systems' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information science and technology' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, sources, uses, and management of information, and the study of the communication of information. (p. 1)

The 'information science and technology studies' field is defined as:

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