CALIBAN online 28

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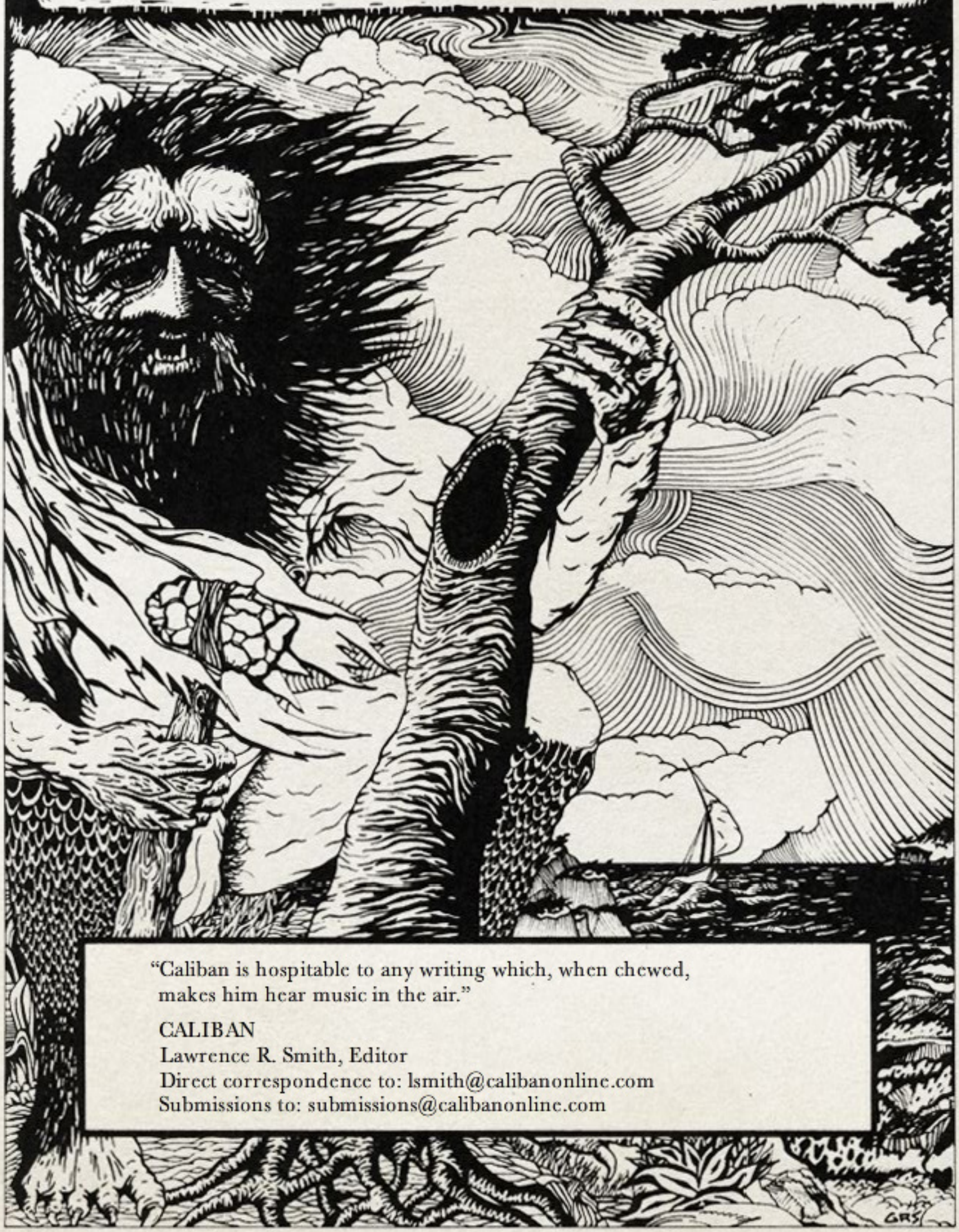
CALIBAN



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

CALIBAN
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8

The tree trunk. The silver belt on time. We paused and gulped, a defibrillation, a soapy tea, a forest of two trees.

Sip or swallow. Those who mourn climb into the cylindrical nest, fall like a mouse down a hole. Mint or birch. The nest composed of contrails. The leaves in the water
infusing heat with color. Green or black. Fell like a squirrel from its chatter. White.
What claims dementia: the impulse to remember. What replaces a leaf on a limb: the flavor of the battered nest, as if the liquid cooled in its cup.

9

The crabapple's distress gutted by the wind.
Down pulled from the dog's undercoat. What should
loft upwards
thuds. What we most dislike in our quotidian
comes back to bully us. A body tries to run in or through
the wind. Petals waxy from being smashed on the pavement.
Grease on the blouse. Dog fur tumbleweeds under the table.

You gave me these words, so it's up to you to flummox
me. As if every list, every single list, every single item on the list
were a gift. Wind blows. Windblown. The dog's ears standing on end
as he tries to plow through it.

If that's a list, I imagined it all by myself.
What you gave me, the criminal said, was no gift. It was a rabbit's foot
that had enough heft to stay put when I used it as a place marker in
hopscotch.

10

The brain is a warehouse whose disability
we must verify.

Chalky smears on its blackness.

Once upon a time there was a seam on its gap,
what joined the hemispheres.

It itself.

The clinician hints that the chalk daub is its base, its basis.

Turn, turned. Crippled foreground. Verity loves its prior.

The brain makes an appointment. Storage would be
a derivation. No warehouse. A closet.

IVAN ARGÜELLES

Pachuco

remember when we were the only *Pachucos*
in town , Joe ? smirking wildly smart-ass
in our upturned collar leather jackets
and unpolished black motorcycle boots
enough to scare the wits out of the cute
lutheran party girls in their prim pinafores
and their mid-50's Minnesota TV minds
we were on the way to cool hipsterdom
or at least to a Juliette Greco left bank
in dark turtle neck sweaters and cigarette
dangling from the corner of a snarling mouth
we showed them Mexican was bad alcohol
with a little bit of Toulouse Lautrec madness
plowing through all the books in the public library
while daring the drug store to prove
innocent thousands of poor campesinos
working the beet fields of frozen Dakota
we too were Indios unblessed and vagrant
wandering the winter streets of Home Town
drawing imaginary maps of the Unpronounceable
what was it castanets Ravel's Bolero or
the fake Spanish they taught in high school ?
we were on exhibit to demonstrate Authentic
rock n roll otherness dementia wet backs
misfits we were ipso facto non-conformists
nostalgic for the pyramids of *Sol y Luna*
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excluded from country club shunned
by bourgeois elite left to our own demons

lost highways and dead corn field motels
waiting to be summoned by the anonymous
three-headed gate keeper of East LA
sifted through urine stinking greyhound depot
always on the edge of town in a motorless car
shivering in a mixed Toltec Christian dialect
you and me , Bro' , was it Marlon Brando
James Dean or Elvis Presley radio ambition ?
broken smoke dreams of galactic inhalation
parallel universes of light lunacy and grief
mayo clinic tuberculosis mausoleum
psychoanalysis x-ray vision of Aztec hell
lonesome walks home through dirty snow
and hills always remote sunset hills
where a life forbidden to us lived its arcadia
yeah we were the only *Pachucos* in town , Joe
ambling ghost-like on the banks of the Zumbro
a patch of grass a human shoulder a dying
in the music no one but us could hear
la pinche vida, hombre, la pinche vida !

Song of San Francisco

half of all men are dead
half as many more women
might be dead also moon-struck
delirious watching the envy-sea roil
deepening red and poisonous
through fathoms of lost poetry
ichor and iodine and ambrosia
whatever pours through the veins
heroin and meth and bad dago red
sitting on the rotted pier as fogs
roar in silent as the planet Morpheus
and cities of sand and cities of thick tar
rear their ancient skyscrapers
behind us and a noise of ivy
or bacchants ululating in cafes
sipping week-old espresso
thrills our algae-filled ear-holes
it's already the first Saturday
of the rest of the Holy Week
lunatic italo-americans want to eat Jupiter
their hyphenated greek relatives
are on a binge for asterisk and ouzo
large domains of Homeric verse
made bright by peyote hallucination
it's all out war on the telegraph and
the ever more omnipresent iphone
the ones who don't get it are on a slab
the ones who do cannot get out of bed
the walls are sticking to thin air
gypsies with faces of luminous dogs
enormous cetacea behind plate glass
make mustache-eyes at the girls
who glide by in their Chinese skin
what else is there but enormous memory

of when Kerouac dived headfirst
into a bucket of 100 proof ice at Vesuvio's
and the then poets and hipsters
trotted out in caparisons of Blakean meter
recited for all the world to end
directories of unedited stream-of-consciousness
wailing like unfettered saxophones
at the budding new-star of the last night
of the already cancelled Passion Week
holy ! holy ! holy !
more than half of everybody is dead
the remainder are waiting on the corner
of Columbus and Grant
for a god to undress the heavens
before their very eyes
symbolism of the color blank !
it is already the tomorrow of electricity
sacred the Mind
that does not Understand !

MERCEDES LAWRY

Regime Change

Here is the rose, once lovely, now sullen
and even more beautiful in decay.
Excuses were made but no one's picked up
the trash or tidied the area around
the throne or replenished the juice.
One of these will be a fatal mistake.
Not everyone will have access to the kitchen.
Some of the trees will be felled and nests
will topple. As the sound of rain thins,
part-time reason will crumble into bits
so tiny, no one will be able to see them
or taste them or feel them between
their crooked fingers. Something
will definitely give.

Bone Dry

Between the clouds, a cellophane sky
and here in a thicket of weeds,
I want to shed a few tears, not enough
to succor a spindle of cheatgrass.

But too much loss and the heart grows
a prickly bark that needs
constant mending. Time
is nothing but commotion.

The birds have all gone quiet.
I lift up my eyes but I'm the godless one
here without the balm of prayer,
only my animal will that won't betray

or offer solace or let me lie down
with forgiveness, flesh slipping
from bones, bones eroding slowly,
feeding the loosestrife.

Reading *M Train*

Patti Smith sang with Bobby Fischer in Reykjavik.
For quite a while, she says.
Somehow this pleases me, as if
I was adept at chess, or even middling.
As if I knew *cool* inside and out,
got old and it didn't matter.
Midnight encounters occur in odd places,
in this case, under the sour mineral light
of a hotel ballroom, with bodyguards standing by,
one, a fake, one, apparently accustomed
to the byzantine alleys of paranoia.
What a Daliesque pairing of souls.

A SPASSO by Angela Caporaso, 2014
photocollage

PIANTE by Angela Caporaso, 2014
photocollage

ROB COOK

Elimination Recovery Entries

1.

Jaywalking now means "walking for jihad."
I jaywalked the way any man sometimes jaywalks.
Only the shut-down stores watched me.
The wild-caught cars and grain-fed trucks
and cancer-carrying bicycles fed elsewhere that day.
The others busied themselves on their placid phones.
No live thing saw me.

Then the flak-skinned men showed up in my sleep.
I don't mean they banged
on my door late and woke
everyone and walked me down
the glaring night show stairwell trumpeting
"treason." No. They figured out how
to neural-hack my sleep, which is always
online, looking for me, and listing the things
I've done, the things I've thought about doing,
and the things I've thought about only once.

2.

Yesterday my neighbor got "eliminated"
from her job. "Eliminated" means . . . not
simply being told to never come back.
It means to become a different kind of citizen.

Someone once told me that *when* (never "if,"
never fool yourself with that unjustified optimism)
it becomes profitable to skin wide-awake people
on live television, then wide-awake people
will start getting skinned on live television. "Study hard!
Don't get left behind," he said, "not even among your friends!
Things happen to those who are alone.
It's not the way it used to be.
No more hiding out in the gaudy isolation
of the self channel-surfing for a place
to hide what by now is too late to hide."

3.

Propaganda: any effort toward making life bearable.

4.

We will come after you. No matter how inconsequential you are, no matter how close to the ground you dwell. We will come after the tiniest words you throw. We've already reconfigured the output of Shakespeare. We deleted him, and we did it from over 400 years away.

We can do anything.

Anything.

Accept this fact. It's already done. His plays never happened. Studies show that he was homosexual and therefore produced nothing of value. The Elizabethan st(age) collapsed under troupe after troupe of venereal bugs trying to sing like humans.

There's no Whitman either. And no, we did not kill him. Get past it and all the other things we keep illuminating for you. He died of AIDS the way anyone named Whitman dies of AIDS. He contained multitudes, indeed! The things he attempted to write only look large, but try living

there—see if you can feed your family on that syphilis! The rooms of the self are small and tend to encourage rumination and discourage copulation, the meaningfulness between man and woman that our commander intended.

5.

Will artificial intelligence lead to awareness so powerful it can bring back everything that's died? Do all sentient beings contain a code that can be recovered at any time, no matter how long ago they left? What will be done with the newly returned? What will be done to them (to us) when not one mental space is left in the universe?

6.

Unrelenting blue a day after warm Trump drizzle.
Some things end and some things never do.
Dr. Murphy put the purring heart of our home
in a pillow and left her eyes wide open
so the other buried cats might find her.
We lost the city this year. We've been losing the city
every year, but now it is almost gone for good.
Soon we will not have enough money to stay.
May your eyes remain open, Sally Joy.
May all the good of the ground make its way to you.
May you be what causes all the good of the ground to make its way.
May the followers and nano-moles of today never go looking for you.

To Nancy Out in the Cold on the Chat Line Tonight

Stranded with only a disposable phone on the steps to the shuttered storefront, Nancy calls the Adam and Eve hot line. More than a year of torn rubbers ago she lost herself and her love and her job and her home to bottles and bottles of Hep B bukkake.

From inside her denim's failing voluptuousness, close to Lower Second Avenue, she wakes each time the street begins to itch, and returns to her place on the chat line. When asked about the temperature between her legs, she tells the voice she's connected to, "I'm homeless tonight."

She approaches one trashcan, and then a second, with the shyness of God, who populates the fear a child feels foraging for a half-eaten bagel or a dollar that's still good.

"I like falling asleep best," Nancy says to some dark part of herself, hushing her own black tresses, hoping the next man won't notice the drinking places, the ones she uses for running away from all the long, dangling, shaggy-hearted men.

She loves the metal bump and grind but will not discuss latter day Black Sabbath, will not consider the new Christian crowds of Megadeth.

"Nobody this year wrote even one song," she says.

Her infant phone begs her to touch, if not feel, *something*. "I like this game only when I know the one person who still lives on the planet at night," she says with a hopefulness that gnaws at a street lamp's rocky windows before all her previous hopes drop to a darker blood count. And even though it crawls with castles of wind and rain where all the real people go, she prays only that she not lose the sky again.

"It was afternoon between the clouds once, the first time it was dead outside," she says, fearing that a voice room's most eligible manlet will only want to speak to her, and not ravage her with the whites of his

eyes—the meadows, the brief picnics and hangings of his handsome HIV face.

"I meant it back then, that life of mine, when some of the doctors thought I was alive," she says, almost fatally, almost confessing the unknown context of a universe.

Soon as a man wants to know more about her than just the way she measures her desirability in cup sizes, she refuses all further communication.

"Do you enjoy the right to roam free?" one asks. "Do you want to live inside where it's safe and the music is truly close enough to save us? Do you want to wake up in the morning? I am a man who stays home at night. Can you see yourself ever staying at home with me?"

But only one man talks this way. One man, once a year. Kevin who works most of the day and doesn't think about which thoughts might turn against him.

More than one Kevin, maybe, and sometimes, she believes, he talks only from a deep dream lodged in her head.

She responds, craving only what isn't warm: "I refuse to waste my time talking about this. I need to get laid. Now." And then she feels a split second tenderness between heartbeats that surfaces one or two times as a vulgar epithet which disappears, the same as the city she knew, just like that.

"Men look like flaccid little beer bottles," she complains once too often, having denied yet another live mattress, another chance at the soft apartment weather.

"They only fuck photographs of women inside their computers now anyway," she says, trying to hold onto herself.

And the sky stays where it's always been, between the night entrapments and the worried schools of a stray child after the arousals and heart shivers of moist dial tone are lost, along with her life-mate, who chased what he thought was her into the white pill wards of Bellevue where it is too cold and too far away at night for her to enter or locate, even with the payphone she sometimes uses for companionship, the one with a dried up busy signal lurking here on the brightest of the rat's many moons.

No More Night at Sam's House

Blocked from the road by a shroud of trees,
the house bares its innards:
purple-toothed mother; cigarette son;
smoke wilting; chairs, eyeglasses empty;
clumps of dust that, from a distance,
look like mice dying.

The house has gotten in again.

The son, Sam, prays the night will show up soon.
No sleep on the lamp-flayed futon,
the silence is the noise his mother makes
when she lures him away from his homework wars.

"Why doesn't the day ever move," he asks.

But not why it stays the same shade of bottomless high school.

He feeds what he remembers
to the pet lightning, and broods
with what isn't left—his father—

and notices only the least hidden things

about how his mother grows
more dependent, closer
to her *lupus vitamins*,

a consciousness of nothing
but home-destroying doses of prednisone.

A blindfolded book falls from its ledge,
causing a stillness
in the once torrential television.

Cook/28

Make a true mother and father
out of everything that happens to you, he read somewhere.

The house, because it loves its life,
sinks into Sam's prayers
where his hands will not stop lying.

All hope sabotages his mother,
and for this reason, and always at night,
Sam dries like a nail inside her,

surrounded—sometimes protected—

by what he can't decide
is the deep, almost silent moaning
of the moon-faced bed, or a car

coughing itself to sleep in the woods
where the house keeps wandering.

Alien Telephone Pastures

I said hello, offering my voice as food or prey. The voice waiting there called itself Archangel. I asked if there were any deer on these post-adolescent chat-lines and he told me to shut up.

> "Don't come prancing in here with that limp wit," he said.

Then the cackle of black lung laughter or a tree mending all its leaves at once—more voices entering. I asked again if there were any deer on these lines and something shattered between voices. The native telephone militias survived by making sure the ones only loitering here had no name, no eyes, no hair, no voice, no knowledge of the deer who went missing in their shyness.

> "Where will you go when the earth is gone?" a woman named Debbie asked, her voice already cut open. Instead of hanging up, I asked her to show me the whispering she kept for companionship.
>
> "There isn't any whispering," she said, "only the silence a car makes traveling between cities."

Then her voice turned to snow. Then the window with all its trees went the color of wind, or an autoimmune disease. Then she gave me her number and I called her many years after the collapse of that telephone's tiniest apartment. No answer. No callback. Not from Debbie, who was always sick, though no one ever believed she was sick.

Eat more sweets, they commanded. *Eat whatever egg whites the doctors eat.* And then a man called. It was her brother.

> "Did you call my sister last Friday? Because Debbie passed away last Friday afternoon and your number showed up on her caller ID. You are the last one to have called."

I didn't know I had been hiding from that moment my entire life.

One of us hung up and my prepaid partner came home from her violent shopping out in the dial tone. Smelling with all her anger the blinking, unanswered calls from a prior world, the sink still full of dish blood, and my voice without the drug store roses of an acceptable evening, she threw her mouth onto the floor and looked at my injured writing, gutters of 900-numbers I built with Bic pens—I was hiding California there, I was hiding all the safe passages between Winnipeg and Detroit and my own life, Youngstown and hard-to-get Cleveland and the telephone untouchables and gossip kings trading early currency but still hoping for autumn.

And what I said continued in endless feedback loops, "My box number is 6615, 6615, 6615 . . ."

> "Please visit my cactus." I said back then, "Please visit before my voice runs dry."
>
> I was talking to Debbie, who was not dead.
> "She runs on various chat lines. She always has."

I wanted someone to play with my loneliness, a place in my left ear that another woman had already devoured by letting me listen as one more dog nuzzled her unshaven genitalia like one of its own. And sometimes I heard puppies—I swear I heard puppies living or dying there.

> Debbie—or an emptiness that sounded like Debbie—said, "Every time I look at the phone, I think of you."

The night her caffeinated heartbeats became unbearable, she went to the wrong hospital—the love of a man who hated her—and forgot to check the sky for what our voices did to each other.

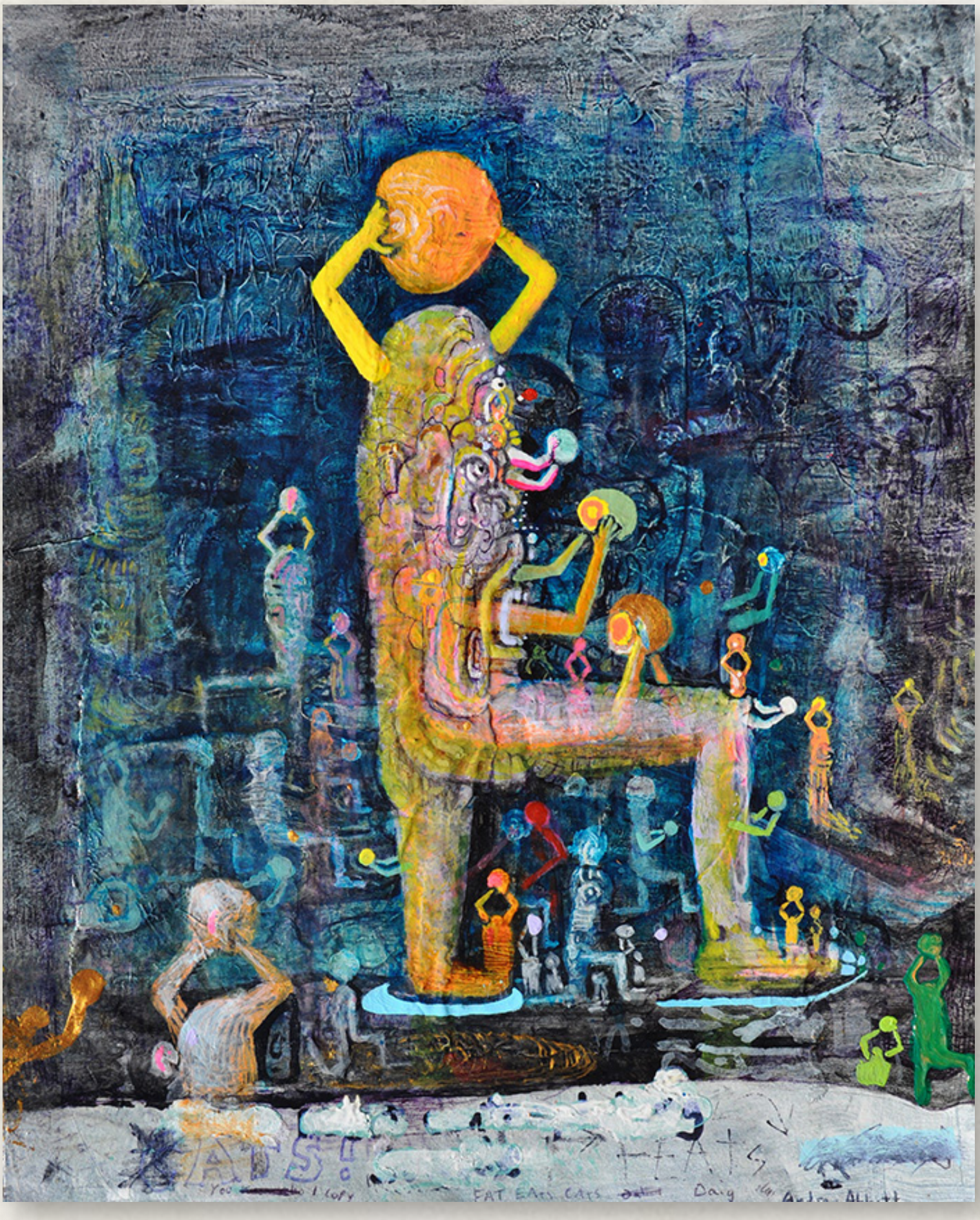
JEFF HARRISON

Tertiary

the Tertiary is termed the age of
mammals. flowering plants, grasslands,
&—deciduous trees widespread—&
aloud softly with harvest & remorse:
a proverb a day for their pains. tears
misted them on, onward, in general bowed.
ask never the day again, the Tertiary, oh

Portico

Aconite, hailing from saliva hailing
from Cerberus, is hailed as Queen
of Poisons. also hailed as wolfsbane,
leopardsbane, devil's helmet, &
blue rocket. walking along that portico
to the double doors of wolfsbane, you
may see the green column
is "parch," the red column
is "flay," the blue column
is "deafness," the yellow column
is "convulse," the white column
is "the 1000th-most head of Cerberus"



CATS! by Andrew Abbott, 2016
acrylic on paper (11” x 8 ½”)

SHEILA MURPHY

Palo Verde Prelude

I shoplift your affection in a moment of desire.
Interrogative undress befriends me.
Aspiration climbs the young lean tree.
Green light endorses factors
separate from analysis.
Endorphins hold
harmless our fathomed lives.

Choose smooth trees for dust to cross
the screened-in porch. One sits with
sadness and retrieves a thread
of tenderness. A line of code or two
revoke the center from
the plume.

Now the yard goes dark again,
night paths its probable delirium.
The motion carries fraught dissention
even as the flesh retracts
its wish.

How many silences equal
the blood of our eternity?
Mined sentences hold sway.
Wind breath traces small violets
in tidy bloom, their velvet centered
square.

Béchamel Sauce

Coat the psyche
with unregulated gloss.
Each costume echoes
an original mistake.

Ask transport
to the theater.
A reasoned stretch
from rickshaw to limousine

impends along resuscitated
glide. The passenger
may writhe no matter what
apart from squeeze

between the handheld
and the lavalier
inhaling words as if
destined to reach the scene.

SIMON PERCHIK

*
Though when you wash
the roof no longer leaks
—a missing stream

lets you rest alongside a sink
that's not the bed in your chest
helping you breathe when it's dark

and one faucet more than the other
flattens out the way her dress
is kept warm, if folded

over and over as if each splash
lasts, waits only where these sleeves
empty as time after time.

*

You paper the sun—with both hands
bury the ashes though the time hasn't come
for shadows—what you darken

sooner or later becomes your fingertips
still warm, wanting to spread
as winters, be harvested

from a sky already half stone
half so often covered with snow
—you cling to a grave

that has no grass yet
is setting out and for a while
across the ground and the others.

*

Just a sip and your hand is shaped
by a sea that overflowed as the habit
you had forgotten until now

though you drain this cup for its tilt
sure the Earth will go along, be patient
weightless, comfort your lips

with the emptiness it lifts to your ear
then says goodbye for the same hot breath
you are no longer swallowing—twice a day

you grip this cup and the table too
is wobbling—it's already evening
and in your mouth a second voice

waits stranded among the ice floes
that never melted—you wipe the spill
till no one is left to listen for.

*

There are no splinters though this door
is still making room for the sea
to come inside—even without water

these walls become sails, their corners
opening as if this pillow
is reaching out where two should be

—more ships! armadas half canvas
half behind each window shade
where someone is crying from lips

that never dry, sweat when turning a knob
hollowing it out the way you dead
let each other in—one by one

learning to rise to the surface
as walls and underneath
unfolding your arms for more wood.

RICK CUMMINGS

Hypersigil

"You are eating our light!" they cry. "Where have you taken the sun?"

—Thomas McGrath

1.
We are tenors, you and I,
but you no longer hold the music
in your ribs.
You, who are the hunter
imagined hunted,
standing guard while drivers
flush the swamp.
This music modernist silence,
avant garde recordings of wind
in the trees and swamp water
in your hollows—

2.
I invoke you—
Pull this wreck from the river,
see yourself inside,
I invoke you but
leave your hypocrisy,
you contain no-one.
Fall and be subsumed
by your mirror.

3.
You, who are sometimes firefighter
and firebug;
you, who are speed freak
and drunk;
you, who are slipshod dominant
and submissive;
you, who are trigonometric mechanic
and philosopher;
you, who are substantive gossip
and gossip in turn;

4.
You, who are quick to anger, to the bottle,
to the fist, to the trigger:
your power is slow to adapt, lumbering.
I renounce: your power, your gun,
your fist, your liquor, your anger.
I embrace your heart because it is mine
but release your contempt.
Your pain is mine.

5.
You, who speak in ritualized cliché;
you, who drink corn and caramel coloring;
you, who weld chromium and carbon steel,
brass rod and angle iron,
aluminum cans with fireworks;
you, with leather in closet
and coat hanger in power outlet;
you, with black shirt and blue velvet;
you, with shaft drive and knee brace;
you, with no art
no art:

come closer. Find solitude.
Find communion. Find silence and peace
    in genetics, in death, in dripping
    venom and distilled breath.

6.
I address you as an empty chair,
as Lewy bodies, across parking lots.
Like ants, we chase our own
genetic markers, we smell our own sex.
The rust is interred, forgotten. Burn
the barn: the flames dwarf the sun.
Four legs, then two, then none.
Buried, all. Reversed sequence: pony car.
Disjointed
Disjointed
The slipped disc,
the expulsive scholastic hernia.
This life cannot be lifted,
this lung, this liver, this lymph
    gone limp and cold,
long since dead.
The bereaved are seated,
the aggrieved threaten leaves,
the dead, the burial of the dead
at sea.
Far from the earth,
far from kings and despots,
far from rail crossings
and dairy tanks,
buried at sea.

7.
All this time I thought your name
meant "earth."
Instead, your name is my name
but older.
We are both prone to madness
and shadow,
cave-ins and strained backs
from lifting our lungs
when no one else could.

8.
I tell you the truth, as the man
was fond of saying,
we are not enemies, nor friends,
so much as the day shift
and night shift on an assembly line
leaving each other work
to be done
beyond the regular. Not
volunteering
so much as nominating, naming
the other as responsible.

9.
All is lost in thirty years' time;
all is new and unexpected.
Each child has its own faults.
The village elders have been replaced
by secret ballot.
A cow in each stall and a bus
in each culvert. All drainage leads
to the city limits, to the dirt road,
to the mailbox plowed under.

Death lurks in a concrete silo,
in a steel silo, in a brick silo;
        death waits to explode in grain dust.

10.
You give me your fragments,
your ruins, make the implicit
claim that I am the better builder.
I want none of it; I reject you,
you, who rejects reference,
        pretense, subtext, depth, clarity,
        character, growth, progress,
humanity, and love.
Pistols are for assassinations;
pens are for murder.

11.
The weight of thirteen generations:
drunks, ditch diggers, cowboys, engineers,
not a powerful ruler among them.
The stories we tell ourselves,
the futures we try to enforce through names.
Naming is power, don't we all know.
Naming this ant makes it special,
naming that ant specialer still.
Naming is invoking, the invocation
        of power.
Refuse the name; refuse the invocations;
        refuse the power.
That is true favor.

12.
You, who are escape artist
captured upon return;
you, who are consumer consumed;
you, whose brotherhood becomes
accidental patronage:
become a small black spot, the internal
mark of imminence, inevitability.
You, with black handkerchief signaling
receipt of contracted bruising:
sleep under the gales, inside glass,
as a subject, a specimen, a study.
You earn this blood, this birthright,
this flowering contusion.
This cup, this sword, this wand:
they pass on to you, pass over
and shepherd you toward strained
lungs and rope burns.

13.
I have read all your books now:
the one with the big blue binding,
the one about cars designed for Boomers,
the welding textbook with drawings of
a good bead.
And so
I give you books in return
knowing that, when asked,
you will not reply with facts.
I know one day I will get those books back,
and I never reject a book.

14.
It is here where the conjuration ends,
by the lake with water so clear
that the fear takes hold.
The water is defined by pure bedrock;
there is no beach. Only rock
and water red from iron.
It deepens from clear to orange to red
—like blood—to black. I know
if I fall here, I will never be found.
Picked clean, my bones would become
the lake.
So when faced with the empty death
of drowning in bloody water or a life
of resistance and rejection, I reject.
You, who are fish or man.
I scoop water,
quench the smoldering ash of the fire.
It is done.

CYBERED by Ellen Wilt, 2016
collage/graphics (16” x 16”)

REALITY by Ellen Wilt, 2016
collage/graphics (16” x 16”)

THE SCHOLAR by Ellen Wilt, 2016
collage/graphics (16” x 16”)

UNSEEN by Ellen Wilt, 2016
collage/graphics (16” x 16”)

GEORGE KALAMARAS

Something Private and Sly

Now we take up a rather complicated trick.
Travel the Copper River north and touch a coconut to your skull.

Expiate the Amazon and kill a walrus.
Fold yourself lengthwise through the White and Blue Nile at once,
Upper Volta inconsolably south of Lower Volta.

Sometimes I thirst for hunger.
Other times, I taste everything I smell.

As to the large cow grieving milk to the raw of gray morning?
I can only claim a crab claw in my mouth.

I cannot be held responsible for what you might say.
I have tried to coax you into digression, but a fever stint has shunted
your mouth toward something inexplicitly whole.

We might sweat it out before we could even begin to bleed.
We might leach ourselves silly and still never experience the bombastic
barium of an oyster's sudden release.

We might cocktail our soup, return strength through a straw.
We could and should and most definitely will, if only we might.

Some say I speak in Sutras to slowly lift the lid.
That I slit my, that I slowly cry, that I split my infinites into some
definite private and sly.

Still, the exact weight of all things dead.
Still, a fragment of mind spliced onto the tongue laid out to wake
beneath the lull of the dim, indispensable lamps.

Curious

Curious how the rest of my life is a Paiute encampment, how my
mind bends wind back through the Pawnee Grasslands.
The body of emotional poverty this time around was a small
glad glance.

Had I not nursed a glass of seltzer water, I would most certainly
not have heard the swallowing of stars.
If you count my charred ribs, ask which of us rode off victorious—
they will total the minutes of scar-scraped sleep.

Alright. I struggle to make sense of how my mouth invigorates
your most hidden.
I am employed by your bamboo cane, your faint of it and *ah*
and oh-so-tensing muscular fade.

Let me lean on every passion-word you have ever translated from
the Chinese.
Let me geisha-straw, let me Japan, let me full sway of your breasts.

Come to me as you come with and through me.
Come to me without moving, like a furnace grate confounded
by flowers.

Curious how the Pawnee gave me a spear slit in the dark that
resembled our later commingling of years.
Curious how your peacock and my phoenix. How I might one day.
How in some life or other, finally arrive.

There are Many Beards in the Way One Sleeps

Arsenic was what we wanted, just by the sound of the word
and the memory of Lorca's lobster.
Years before, I had been buried in Namibian sand up to my chest.

Thus protected, my heart could no longer ache, at least in public.
There are many beards, of course, in the way one sleeps.

At times like that, I am afraid of everything I speak.
Vertical or not, it is as if English has become the prolific waters
of a clean-leaved tree.

Okay, we had to choose between speaking and being spoken.
At about three o'clock, the turnstone of a formidable exit flashed
momentary green throughout the estuary.

Now I stayed the course of an individual word, leapt upon me in
grains of, *Please mark my nakedness*.
My emotions adopted an asexual method of reproduction common
to the lower forms of life and death, the amoeba stain of living and
lying.

Klebnikov, Drawing of a Frog, ca. 1900

Start with the diminutive suffix. Consider the waxwing wail. The earwig. A paronomastic nervousness of wings. Identify *poetic voice*—not as a promulgation of democracy, nor as wet amphibian skin, but as demonstrable power. Stifled.

Yes, Gérard de Nerval had hung himself finally, , after several, attempts, decades before, from a black grate, but the grain-red of a Slavic orientation toward death was much less dramatic.

Or was it? This attempt at sound, at the comma's pearl? There was, of course, Mayakovsky's gun. The pills. The double pause. The Russian word for *rope* derived from the phrase, , *I have an insect bite swelling below my skin*.

Of course it does. Of course there's always some irritant below what we can reach. Reconstituting Russian poetry as a bridge across the Sudak gulf. A calabar-swelling all the way from French Equatorial Africa through the deer fly *Chrysops*.

This multiplicity of identities is enough to make my stink, Klebnikov had coughed over a parade of Pall Mall's. Somehow, American tobacco companies were already fiercing it out in his chest, at least if the x-ray could be believed. Or was it malaria? The syphilis he'd contracted—this parasite or that manifesting as the left big toe from his tattered years of wandering?

Which is what he did / did not / at times obfuscate / through his poems. As he replaced our spleen with some morpheme or other, based on the neologism, *Here, scrape my brain*.

Which is and is not a neologism. Phonemes, "hidden" meanings of centuries of St. Petersburg smoke. Cemeteries with many a four-armed cross. *Which way to the snowy interior of an Orthodox Word?* they seemed to point as if in the throe of their own death stance. Even the

mathematical meaning of his morning erection, and how his loneliness kept reaching out as if culling milky threads of the late-sinking moon.

But how to test. Classify. Formulaic the ground. Without spilling the seed. How to consequence and perhaps. How to sad sad mouth of it, dominate or appear as a mesh of verbs for the rest of the Cubo-Futurists.

Free writing, he once said, *captures us whole. There is nothing free about dying from breathing Capitalist smoke. Or, for that matter, from the ache in your pants*. Or was it malaria? Loa loa? Yes, Loa loa, the "eye worm," 40-70 millimeters in length, leaving its hunger trail in the conjunctiva of the eye? Cornea-copia? *Please, let's return to Capitalism*, he'd say, to a seminal study, , to the double, , pause in his brain. *Examine its difficult and deficient. Return, that is, to syphilis and how it might unpolish a shoe*. The shoe unfit for a foot. Let's start with bewitching a discourse as female hose might uprise any young man of thirteen against the conics of Euclid negotiating the braid of sweat in his pants.

Consider Klebnikov. His *I mean* as *I mean this / that / this other / this too / and something else altogether*. Consider how his word became ink—the ink, his blood and not. Consider his drawing of a frog when he was fifteen and any moving thing across the subcutaneous tissue of a word. Consider closing a poem, Klebnikov's poem, hop to hop, , with a full moon indictment, laboratory dissection of the most tendered tissue. Autopsy of phrase. A prefix magically following history as it talks and talks—chattering on about itself—over the edge.

ELLENE GLENN MOORE

Homage in Carmine and Folly

after Joseph Albers

The walls are blooming with mums, cascading of bitter ombre. The reddest offer no apology. A sign calls them "Reflex," blooms fisted against the cold. Much has been made of flowers with many parts—hearts, hands, mouths unfurling. I think of something more alive than my body, an animal with soft appendages, perched, seething itself into metaphor.

Homage in Gold and Grey

after Joseph Albers

A runner splits the light, making a path along the river by a wind-blown tabebuia. The tree scrambles itself into mouthy trumpets, heralding the runner's sweat and breath. The light makes its own meaning. It inhabits the space carved by the runner, the tabebuia, the river saturated in its own thoughts.

Homage in Onyx and Blood

after Joseph Albers

I don't know who first accompanied me into the copse of bleeding dragon trees, limbs thick and bent black against the afternoon swell of clouds. Mulched ground opening under our hands like flames, rain smell turning us towards a memory of big water. Even the trees reach towards desire, longing for a body of their own. Stem open, dark sap, bark splits—astonished, it abjures language, speaks in blood. We search its bitter grammar, we follow one hand with another. We move under limbs that undulate with oceanic aspirations.

CATHERINE SASANOV

From ***Mark^d* Y *(Archives & Invocations)***

In memory of the unnamed woman branded Y, sent from Barbados to Kittery, Maine, in 1719 to be sold by father and son merchants, the William Pepperrells. Later: set adrift on the Archive's high seas.

In this Beginning: At the Slavers' Desk

Their Quill Pens, Demonstrated

Look –

The slaveholders are throwing
their voices again,

uttering men
out of the mouths of inkwells,

suspending women
off the nibs of pens,

the white page waiting
to catch them,

waiting to break their

fall –

Introduction to the Inkwell

What's to fear from a mouth
so toothless,
tongueless?

Mouth
without breath,
with the barest of depth.

Nothing to call
a throat, a threat

and yet: whole alphabets, brimming.

Inkwell, Inkhorn

bottomless

well of innumerable fates.

Which was/is/what will be

worse? The feather or the whip? A quill

tearing a family apart : delicate pen
sipping
ink.

Instruments

Implements

Flocks
of geese
writing
imperfect *V*'s.

Which is worse? The whip or the pen? Both used to create

something to read—

I can read readin' but I can't read writin'—

The bare back and its Braille—

Sheet drawn over a face—

She was pronounced *dead* at the scene of the crime.
She was pronounced *Y.*
She was never

pronounced.

Can scar ever be transcribed?

In cool rooms created to preserve remains,
gently turning back covers of files and folders is to lift sheets
off the faces of the dead : So many anonymous, unclaimed bodies.

Causes of Death *:*

Whole families pulled from an inkwell, dropped, shattered into letters.
Men dragged across a page, left there in pieces.
Women drawn and quartered with a pen.

Women

washed by the blood
washed by the blood
washed by the blood

in this font,
                fount,
baptismal
              font :

Heads held beneath the dark waters.

O
scar

tissue,

tissue

of lies—

Dear Woman,
Dear You,
Dear Her,
Dear She,

can ink
ever extricate you

from ink?

BOB HEMAN

from INFORMATION

INFORMATION

The other countries on the map were leaking.

INFORMATION

The explanation was made out of three gophers. Only the first two were described.

INFORMATION

I've known Ed longer than Bill and Bill longer than Alex and Alex longer than Kit and Kit longer than Mindy and Mindy longer than Mary.

INFORMATION

Simple math is always a lie. Two bicycles and two cows never add up to more than a single umbrella.

INFORMATION

In the southern countries they tell different lies.

INFORMATION

The wind was an illusion in the big states. The numbers that described the snow were never real. They did not expect mountains where the sea had been broken. They did not expect the woman to lie.

INFORMATION

The painting lied the second time he looked at it. Instead of the color yellow there was a swarm of bees. Instead of a bear there was the number 5. Instead of a woman there was a word that meant "desire."

INFORMATION

The cube was a larger lie than the rectangle. The sphere was the only time the circle told the truth.

INFORMATION

One can compare a potato chip with a spanking or a cloud with a paper bag. Every metaphor began as a lie, and every lie as an ocean that was better forgotten.

INFORMATION

The route of the train changes each time, even though it always uses the same tracks.

INFORMATION

There was enough time in the envelope to count all the clocks.

INFORMATION

The ghosts you see are the ghosts of the Neanderthals. The machine you use is a bolt inside of a nut.

INFORMATION

In less than ten years she'll be married to someone who wears a big hat.

INFORMATION

On the small map the bridges formed a pattern that resembled a bird or potato.

INFORMATION

Few things in nature correspond with a rubber band. Neither the bear nor the dragon fly can be used in its place.

INFORMATION

They are naked when they are lifted into the sky. Their hats follow them, and the liquid that once protected them. They cannot be counted, but only assigned numbers that are nothing more than instructions. The light represents a chance for them to acquire purpose.

INFORMATION

In the first chapter we are given information the protagonist does not know. In the second chapter we are told the names of the different kinds of trees. In the third chapter we are allowed to watch as the shadow is being removed.

DORU CHIRODEA

***From* Chirodea Non Grata**

So, here we are in Kalamata
A most perfect summer night
Nice outdoor restaurant
On top of a cheapo hostel building
5 floors up, zero view coz it's dark
An' I go, "Can I have a beer, one Volkan, please!"
Next table, an orthodoxopedo priest charms some local heathen nimphet, his heavy palm molding her baby bubble ass.
I patiently wait for me beer and in the meanwhile I admire my exquisitely hand-crafted electric lapis shoes.
No beer thou; where's the olivebrains waiter?
I consume ten more beerless minutes, as if they never were, cause am trying to be tourist polite.
The two doves nearby already grunt and squawk in a tzatziki oiled unison.
My beer's nowhere in sight.
I already feel like a feral armadillo yet m keepin my jets cool.
I eye the enemy and wave him in kinda Greek.
OK, thanks and get me an ouzo with some cilantro in it, alright?
"Cilantro?"
Yes Jack, cilantro, coriander leaves, capisci? Got any?
"Ναί, ναί, kein proble."
A black duck's waddlin about, beneath the tables. I watch as the bird shits on the stiletto heel of the underage lover.
Under unthinkable personal shoe threat I get ready to annihilate the defecating menace.
Am dry again. My ouzo?
Oh, here it is, thanks man!

But I notice there's no cilantro in it.
Makarios, where's my cilantro?
"Ah, cilantro!? Cilantro under the table, Sir. Look!"
Where, bro?
"Right here, see, here's Cilantro. Black duck name Cilantro, Sir. You always had Cilantro, you only had no ouzo."

ROOMMATES by Christine Kuhn, 2008
mixed media (11” x 12”)

BUTCH by Christine Kuhn, 2016
mixed media (5” x 5 ½”)

LUCKY IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE by Christine Kuhn, 2014
mixed media (21" x 21")

Cayman Cradle

The hunters are dragging a behemoth dead crocodile into the village. The rope around the reptile creaks painfully. The heavy body of the animal scoops a trench in the mud. Bloody storm water swirls in it. Celebrating villagers greet the killers, throwing flower petals around them. The petals turn into butterflies and disappear into the sky.

It's been a long time since the villagers have seen a predator this big—the children keep touching its dark, scaly skin, gazing at its sharp teeth. The whole animal is about fifteen feet long; cruelty flakes from its dead, stiff eyes like dry rust. Then something strange happens: the light-colored belly of the animal unexpectedly heaves and bloats. A hole appears in it. The bloody tip of a knife sticks out of the wound and begins to broaden the gash. Children hide behind their mothers' backs, and the dark hunters point their sharp lances toward the crocodile.

The Alligator Hunter crawls out of the reptile's body and stares at the natives with crazy, distant eyes. He shakes himself like a wet dog, and pieces of internal organs and drops of blood fly all over. He raises his glittering knife and starts yelling—the exultant shout makes the tribe jump back—and in the distance, monkeys fall from the trees and leeches puke blood back into their victims.

"You fools!" the white hunter laughs. His face boils like the tainted river. "This beast is all mine! So you think you killed it? Oh, you're so wrong! I crawled into the ugly animal three days ago, and since then, I've been constantly destroying it from the inside! What's more, I finally found its soul, and now it's all mine! Come on, take it from me! Take it, if you dare!"

The Alligator Hunter jumps to the ground. The villagers stare at him with frightened eyes. Even the most muscular hunters are afraid of this man, because they have heard so many rumors about him. It is said that the mosquito-disease lurks inside this white devil's veins. It is well

known that some mosquitoes suck dreams out of the skulls of people at night, puking back dark insect-thoughts in their place. The natives have seen many people go crazy with this illness over the years. The afflicted wake up in the morning, just like nothing has happened. Later, they begin to buzz, simulating the sound of mosquitoes, and in the end the mad bastards sharpen a lance and stab everyone in sight. This jungle has many nasty surprises: trees with piranha leaves, killer tendrils and predator orchids that diffuse the smell of wet genitals to lure young lovers and gnaw the flesh from their bones. And of course there are the shape-shifter plants that can turn into attractive women and hunt men. There's a horrible report about a native man who lived for years with a shape-shifter woman without knowing what she was. You should have seen that female! She even birthed the poor guy's children. But everything ended when the mother began to slowly eat her babies. You see, when she was breastfeeding them, her nipples turned into sharp burs that sent thorns into the children's palates. From the outside, she looked like a normal mother feeding her infants, but in fact she was sucking the blood out of her kids, who became sleepier and sleepier.

So the green stomach of the jungle consumes humans—mostly the white visitors—very quickly. But the Alligator Hunter somehow survived over the years. He was an albino ghost, a bad spirit; a dead woman whispers in his head without intermission. It was his bride, who was eaten by a crocodile many years ago.

"Here you go, dogs!" The Alligator Hunter laughs, pointing at the carcass with his dirty finger. "You can have what's left! Bzzz!" Then he hops away and disappears behind the trees, crushing tiny lizards with his heavy boots, sucking the colors from chameleons sitting on the branches. The animals become transparent and fall to the ground.

The villagers spit in the direction of the white man and then look at the crocodile. It's almost empty. It seems like the bastard has eaten all of its innards. The smell is unbearable. But, of course, this made their job easier. The natives didn't wish to eat the animal. They wanted to offer up a sacrifice for the River God, and an eviscerated crocodile is just what they needed. So the villagers bring a crying baby, holding it up high, while a few women try to quiet his screaming, whining mother.

The ritual is lead by a snake-masked man. At his command, the villagers place the kicking baby into the disemboweled reptile. Then

women arrive with needles made of bones and yarn made of hair, and they begin to stitch the giant wound shut. Soon, the crocodile—with the living infant in its womb—is thrown into the river. The snake-masked wizard kneels in the slop, chanting, asking the River God to bless their hunts in the future. Hunters run in the forests, feeling the Braille of wounds—touching the bloody gashes in the animals and reading words from them. Young children sit around and listen to what the carcasses say. They always tell stories about the life of the animal or tales about the dangers in the forest, like the predator wind that chases living beings through the jungle. It can tear the flesh from their bones and blow away the small flame of the soul.

The powdery carbon of night sifts onto the world. The louver boards of nightmares spring open. The river finally spits the long-held crocodile body onto the shore. A beautiful naked woman steps out from behind a bush, holding a sharp lance before her face, and she looks at the carcass. She hears stifled cries coming from the reptile. The woman discovers the stitches in the animal's belly, and she cuts the wound open with her weapon. Then she picks up the baby and smiles. The child keeps kicking the night with his soft feet, crying as loudly as he can. The woman offers the little boy one of her round, black breasts. The baby begins to suck the fat nipple, which turns into a sharp bur between his lips.

Far away, the Alligator Hunter sits on the river bank atop a throne of reptile bones and skin. Sometimes he coughs up crocodile voodoo dolls and pokes them with a knife. The sounds of painful squirming fill the night. His long lost bride whispers in his head: "My dear husband! I walked so much in the other world that my legs have frayed. Now I'm crawling on my pelvis, and it is dissolving too. I've been dead for a long time; please leave the crocodiles in peace! I threw flower petals into their mouths. Sometimes I turn into a tiny bird and peck out my own remains from their teeth. There's a door in every crocodile, my love, and if you open it and look inside, you will find the god of this river!"

The Alligator Hunter tries to understand her words, but he can't listen. The ugly buzzing of the mosquitoes echoes in his skull. He looks around him and sees fish bones stuck in the slop. They glow with green light in the dark, like fallen poisoned stars.

DAN RAPHAEL

The Colder it

The colder it gets the faster the light moves.
clouds warm and obscure. wind needs a clear path.
when was the last time you lifted the skin off your rib cage
and checked for mold, dust bunnies, lost consonants,
maps made only of words?

Some places the wind stops and you can get in or out,
though i could fall through at any moment,
swaddled by my compartment, isolation tank, insulation therapy,
if our breath didn't have to turn around and leave the way it came.
maybe if we were spherical with some anti-gravity component,
orbiting like a billiard ball where it's all table but no surface.

The fiction of friction, the fraction who take action,
not the saddest fraction, as whole numbers are just costumes,
approximate sizes: it matters if the eggs for breakfast
are from hummingbirds or ostriches.
it matters how well aimed the plywood cloud wanting to be my hat is,
as only failed intentions stay tense. without tension, without pressure,
how do we cohere—gravity & molecular bondage
have little to do with how we accumulate and erode

Sometimes i flick the light switch & nothing happens.
last night i saw the full moon though it's 8 days away.

Reluctant Spring

Over the edge
to another side
invisible boundaries
i see by my outfit

More people than buses
aflow with transition
the only language i can hear
not knowing where my syllable fits

The harmony of intervals
driving pulse of a repeated note
if you cant dance how can you walk
if you run someone will notice

When there are no words to describe
when all i can hope for is more likes and follows
the faceless, the paper free
the self-destruct code in every e-book

So many street corners, soap boxes, imaginary crucifixes
so few unbudded ears, not enough unscreened eyes
walking through crowds, driving through crosswalks
telepathic turn signals, red lights don't apply when ahurry

I'm deviceless, harder to trace, deceptively centralized
break like pollen, well-shaken champagne
with so much gray to choose from, random deterrence,
deliberate anonymity, a face you can look right through

Mirror, window, camera, dry cleaning bag
the storage compartments of my chest, how large
would my lungs be if my ribs weren't so militant
how far could i see if my head was crystal

Raphael/78

Constantly immersed in so many frequencies
the coherence of my body is camouflage
when the margins of error get together in one room
does gravity or the floor have more sway
Hard to burn without oxygen, hard to breathe without daylight,
without bones what would my muscles push against
like concentric revolving doors, the surging internal winds
trying to convince my pores to absorb all my clothing
so the hairs all over me can flower and make seeds

Dancing "like nobody's watching" in a Constant Surveillance World

When all the musics made us deaf, all the dancing and runnings
put us on wheels
i feel a bass i cant see or hear, my bones metallicized by rust belt
childhood,
bridge cable piano needs at least 12 miles an hour wind to start
a rhythm,
how many gulls & crows, the black & white keys, chords of brown
sparrows,
yellow finches & cardinals no blender can dissolve

The suns shining but i couldnt afford my subscription, my
prescription,
the faucet runs two random hours a day with a row of paint chips
adjacent
to tell me how much i can drink without a rupture,
walls devolving into glass free windows & unframed doors,
as if this patch of abdominal skin can go another day without washing
but when are safe warm hours to sit in the laundromat with exposed
muscles
and viscera while my skin goes beyond the delicate cycle

Moms old curlers rise above the city as cell towers, growing
& dividing,
mitotic bubbles of unclaimed & rejected messages rain like jellyfish
with so many offers, invitations, threats and why do you never answer.
that's not a light switch, this only looks like a handgun—
anything can be a lighter, a letter opener, salt & pepper shakers
responsible for three miracles & 10,000 lunches

When i stop looking at the clock & the sky my skin breaks out
in sunlight
if i don't like how the wind smells ten minutes will bring a different
food cart

Raphael/80

all the cars replaced with teleporters but old freeway noise-tracks
maintain the roar that prevents our imagination from flowing
out of us
so quickly our instrument could choose sides or at least be seriously
bruised

We're home, we're hungry three ways, the extra bedrooms
always busy
as if we live in a silo, a cornucopia where the inventorys in constant
flux & filament,
in this new green world where all the rain water goes right to
the brewery.
i snap open a couple cans to hear see & smell the clouds releasing,
clouds looking for a good time, a time theyre not subject to or
objects of.
how could the ancients have described marvelous sunsets
when they couldn't see blue and the air was pre-industrial,
some visionary roman turned mad as he saw the appian way
become the autobahn, a highway with no exits but plenty of tolls,
toll drones scanning your credit line and gene spectrum
As if any scan could tell what i dance like, how high i can jump
how many genera established in the hanging gardens of my lungs
how the only reason my thumbs dont fly south is i need them
as spoons
when the music embargos the outside while focusing my body
on the moment, partners in a ritual of earth drums, city bass,
eyes flashing brass, finger reeds, heart strings, off the charts and in
the groove,
i'll never do these moves again and dont need to

When they cut the power, police the streets,
sever my legs, pour recycled aluminum in my ears
i'll dance even more vigorously, intently, unstoppably,
no one will get near me,
the music only gets louder

CARINE TOPAL

Mangrove Forest, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, 2007

This morning I saw a beach of glass cutting through a bay,
a girl stilling a row boat with an oar and all she had,
and I sensed her mute longing, as later she'd gather
bottle green shards, smoothed and cloudy, then boat out
to where islands of sprawling shrubs tread in the shallows.
There, lizards crawl along limbs. A dense mesh of roots tangle
above seawater. Spiders nest in hollowed twigs.
And somehow you know what this is about, and you do what you can to inhabit
that space. It was the girl in the boat, separating herself from its wood and oar,
her arm outstretched toward a stray branch, branches and roots like fingers reaching
out and holding on, that made her a river bird, her far wing
stirring leaves—a hidden radiance. Her quiet cooing.
The boat poised and vacant. The sliding water beneath, breathing
out and in.

Fortunate Divorce

I.

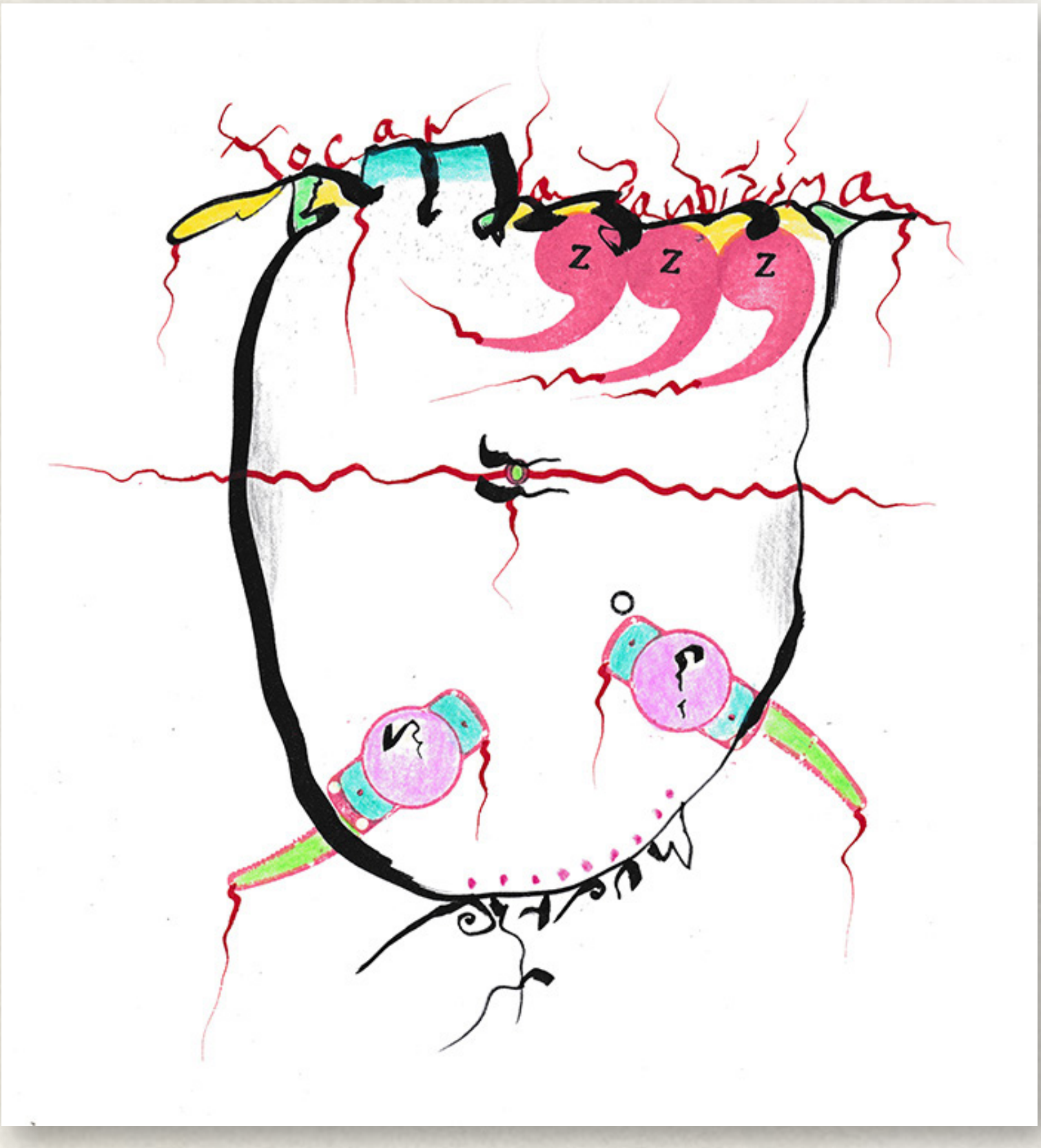
Stay away, my mother warned,
the father of your child. He's no lover of yours.
Offering him a green card is like giving a gun to the militia:
he'll wink you into mutiny while his right-footed
limp convinces you it's personal.
He'll torch your armoire,
call you cunt —sookah— in that Russian nuance born the day
he eyed America, as if he owned the free world, as though his honor
depended upon something Baltic by the sea.
Don't blame it on Moscow moonlight, any bourgeois refugee
knows false devotion when they see it. He's all about "imperial:"
a samovar, caviar in a cut crystal bowl, a blond royal staring into his future,
which he will take from you, by the way, unless you go. Go!
Be sensible. Simply pack the overnight and leave. Or he will. A Romanov
hoarding the crown jewels, fleeing on a train toward the tundra.

II

I studied the palm of my husband,
searched for understanding behind his heavy-lidded eyes,
those full lips swollen with beet juice.

I've seen his amber trinkets go to someone else.
Seen him baffled by how I loved our child.
I wanted to leave, with my baby across my back,
his Teddy tied to my wrist.

He wanted out, with emeralds, trees green with them,
all the fruit he could squeeze into a glass.
On a corner of Nevsky Prospekt,
near a café by the Church of Spilled Blood,
he penciled in what he ached for.
I thought I could heal him.
Mother, the heart was more than the heart then.
Put your hands together. For this boy of mine. This diamond plum.



MAYA HEAD: TOCAR LA GRANDISIMA by John M. Bennett, 2009, collage

COLLAGE by John M. Bennett, 2017

SLEEP ROPES

FOUND A LUNCHED
MUSIC A

MASK SO DENSE

TAR ALL RIGHT

DRIPPING BOOK A

SHORE LAUNDRY A

DEAD SCRIPT

AT ONCE SOME
SPLINTERED DISKS

Rolled in Ivan Argüelles'
"Ulysses on His Raft"

SLEEP ROPES by John M. Bennett, 2017

≈ FLOTTEUR ≈ FROTTAGE ≈

FLAMME DE L'EAU

FFLAQUER
SSIFFLER

MES LÈVRES INVISIBLES
ENTORTILLÉES

FENÊTRE
DE
TERRE

LA MER
EL MAR
LAMER
RAMEL

RRRRRAAAAAAAAAAARRRRR

\EFFIGIE/

FLOTTEUR FROTTAGE by John M. Bennett, 2017

WILLIAM MOHR

Centered Recoils

an old, dark brown dog in fountain water
crouches
jumps its fur, in the midst of spiraling spray,
glows like an impenetrable howl
my eyes
step
back
crouch
jump
the dog recoils
as i grip a pebble from atop the rim
of its embanked illumination
and hurl it so it doesn't sink, but loops again in its instant, hurdling dips
start the self of bone that knows its other rippling skeletons
start the self of nose and tongue that cannot reconcile these
consecrated somersaults
start the self of shaking out the dog's insatiable thirst to find its separate
path
the one that stalks us both until we wiggle on our backs
the sunlight's obelisks on our bellies

D. E. STEWARD

Hedra

A shrill and startling alert of the migration passage of a great crested flycatcher out on top, high in the hardwoods in the last warm days before the long fall toward January's iron frosts

The juncos will arrive soon from the Alleghenies and the north

The white-throated sparrows a few shorter days later

In the lowering sun

The pleasing, stagy rose madder leaves of this fall's winged spindle (*Euonymus alatus*)

The occasional thump of a ground-fall black walnut

In the fourth inning of Game 3 of the 2013 World Series in Busch Stadium as the Boston right fielder charged a fly ball, for nearly a second the TV picture showed a juvenile northern harrier tipping down onto the grass behind

The announcers ventured that "the ball may have hit the bird"

No more of the harrier onscreen as the action moved to the infield, then a commercial

Grounds crew retrieval, or it took off again into the lights on its dangerous first migration out of the Canadian prairies

"If Billy Collins has been 'an inspiration' to you, do not send us your poetry. Not that there is something necessarily wrong with your poetry, but there is, semi-factually, something wrong with Billy Collins." (Submission guidelines, *Wheelhouse Magazine* in October, 2013)

Hedra

Hedra is October in Cornish

In the shade the winged spindle leaves dry in fall through a watery rose madder to a delicately mottled faded yellow transparent like parchment

"the rung hills of being and the pearled hills of been" (Les Murray)

Constant carceral numb remembering doing Korea-era Army time

It was the weapons, omnipresent loaded weapons, the ammo cans and boxes, the loaded side arms and rifles, the gun oil smell of BARS and thirty and fifty caliber machine guns

Rea-era era-rea frozen Chosen GI draftee two-year Army time

But smooth, shiny, high-quality khaki of 1950s US Army summer Class As felt clean and slippery on your shoulders, arms, thighs and calves

And most of the time your sole responsibility was to be there for your three hots and a flop along with all sorts of people to talk with

But the constant shuffle, in transit or temporary duty, reassignment, the whole unit moving out, that interspersed with barracks and duty-assignment ennui

Fall in, fall out

Steward/90

"Being in the army is like being involved in the digestive process of an immense worm" (Randall Jarrell in 1942)

All that closeness in the squad, the platoon, the work details, the talk, the talk, the talk

But so much only in your head alone

Quonset, Jamesway, bunker, mess shack, guard shack, arms room, latrine

Alone and it would relentlessly be new and interesting or more dangerous or more boring but all with different people you'd never seen before and would never see again

Lock and load, route march, a few times we even fixed bayonets

Singly people would ship out or your name got called and you'd pack up and get on a deuce an a half for regiment or back offline for somewhere else

Straight through all of it until finally, in your Class As, you and your duffle bag got out

Retrovida

"I am sorry for having let a broad river pass through my fingers // without drinking a single drop" (Seferis, trans. Keeley and Sherrard)

Now it's down out of Scotland's Highlands to the Clyde

Persistently misplace the two bold cities, my head-map often reckons Edinburgh to the west, even with the Highlands and the Clyde emphatically in the West

Glasgow's street and people usually described as more "lively" than

Edinburgh's, whatever that's supposed to mean

It could be that "freedom's just another word for nothin' else to loose"

Glasgow people who look and move as though they've done military time

Glasgow like an Australian city but with long sleeves

Queen Street Station to Central Station on Buchanan, Gordon and Hope to Argyle Street through the nineteenth-century vertical urban masonry

The Gorbals across the river is mostly razed

The Gorbals was Lagos or Dacca at 55°50' North, without electricity

It was the ultimate nineteenth-century urban shithole

Cities are peculiar

Their historical constant of alternate crowding and isolation now compounded with determining vectors of heterodyne bursts and sputtering electronic algorithms

A lot to do, a lot to keep in mind just in order to make it through the day in a city

Check your device, and then cross the street

Few more intimately complex places than the kinetic compaction of multi-level Seoul, Shanghai, Mumbai, Hong Kong

Or more lonely spots than a derelict block in Detroit, the few houses left standing dark, a single street light two blocks down frizzing off and on

More than a million Irish and Italians and crofter Scots piled into the Gorbals by 1939, for the port, the mills and the shipyards, coal, iron, steel, they came for jobs

Then after the War it was Glasgow's decline, down by half a million now

A complex world of pig iron to graphene

Glasgow's fate was like Dixie piling into Detroit for UAW jobs and then losing it to Asian design and quality control

Everywhere when factory jobs first opened up it was only show up to sell your time, à la Indonesia and Bangladesh in 2013

Then it was required skill sets, craft unions and literacy minimums, laid on with the proviso that you flex or your paycheck goes to somebody else who will

With automation the system started to tighten up frightingly and all heavy industry began to hurt, Bratislava to Fontana in California, Japan's Shimonoseki to the Donbas

And next robots and thorough computerization forcing anybody on the factory floor or in the fulfillment center to be in some part some kind of engineer

The Big Layoff continues, the vast exclusion, ad infinitum, Detroits and Glasgows everywhere

The wealth pot will still swell, the problem will be sharing it, which will happen clumsily, and slowly, fought by the old work-to-eat-live-to-work ortho-capitalists

And the other problem, what people who don't work will do

Incalculable numbers of people who live in Glasgows will fall out and away from any activity-with-purpose loop

Everyone cannot become an artist, get a PhD, found a startup, or even find any sort of reasonable thing to do to brace our lives with self regard

Further and further computerization, soon computers will be able to do everything

Without exaggeration that truth and climate change are the only two known inevitables

Warehoused college graduates and MAs

"What *will* people do with themselves?"

"Of course they'll have to shuttle off into something else"

As those derelict Detroit streets make us doubt our capacity to come back in the manner we imagine we should be able to

"…only the grooves on the well's lip \\ remind us of our past happiness:" (Seferis)

A crowded almost-midnight Argyle Street pub with a lassitude less from the long evening of serial pints than from an attitude

We are drinking in a somber, shabby pub and we should be living it up in stereotypical Glasgow's live-it-up mode but cannot make it

There's long-haul Glasgow ennui there too

From Glasgow toward Edinburgh more or less is the line of the old Antonine Wall

Sixty-four kilometers, River Clyde at Old Kilpatrick to Bo' Ness on the River Forth

Passing near Linlithgow where the Romans must have been in force a thousand years before Mary Queen of Scots was born in Linlithgow Castle

The good old Romans leaving their industrious overlay of *civitas* across Britain

Plenty of work for all slaves and bosses under their system

And what they left makes a difference, still

The accumulation of cultural history in Edinburgh lifts to almost Parisian level, Edinburgh as Kyoto and Florence are to their cultures, although squeezed into five centuries since 1500

The city bellows out its quality up to the castle from the high-windows and cut stone of its New Town

Castle and New Town stare at each other foreshortened in space, and unitarily in time

And from the gardens between the ancient and the Georgian off Princes Street, a sharp, black neo-gothic stone tower to honor a prolific nineteenth-century novelist

The memorial shoots up blatantly but tastefully two hundred feet, almost three hundred steps to the top, improbable enough to draw double take the first few times you notice it

The Scottish Enlightenment

Rational humanism

Scott himself, James Watt, Adam Smith, David Hume, Robert Burns, James Hutton, Thomas Carlyle and more, eighteenth century Silicon Valley cum Stanford and UC

The Edinburgh Castle its icon, always there above from wherever when you turn and look around, and up

Get caught on the course in the path of a steeplechase and understand instantly why people on horses have always controlled walkers and runners

You cannot see the intent of the riders, only the horses' hooves, chests and eyes

Gape up at Edinburgh Castle to see and feel how and why the implicit authority of titled, landed, invested classes lasted so long

"It is serious to be with humans" (Les Murray)

In the UK the intimidation of class is still there behind democratic practice today

The British, not the sum total of the Scots, English and Welsh, but something else

"The equilibrium of Scotland would steady and become markedly more resolute if we began to not give a damn about Britain"

Grassmarket below the castle and the West Port bookshops

The bare soaring slopes of Holyrood Park and Arthur's Seat

Seafood at Fisher's on Thistle Street

A reality about the city, a vivid assurance, that it is well and intensely

lived, present and past, humanly and intelligently familiar

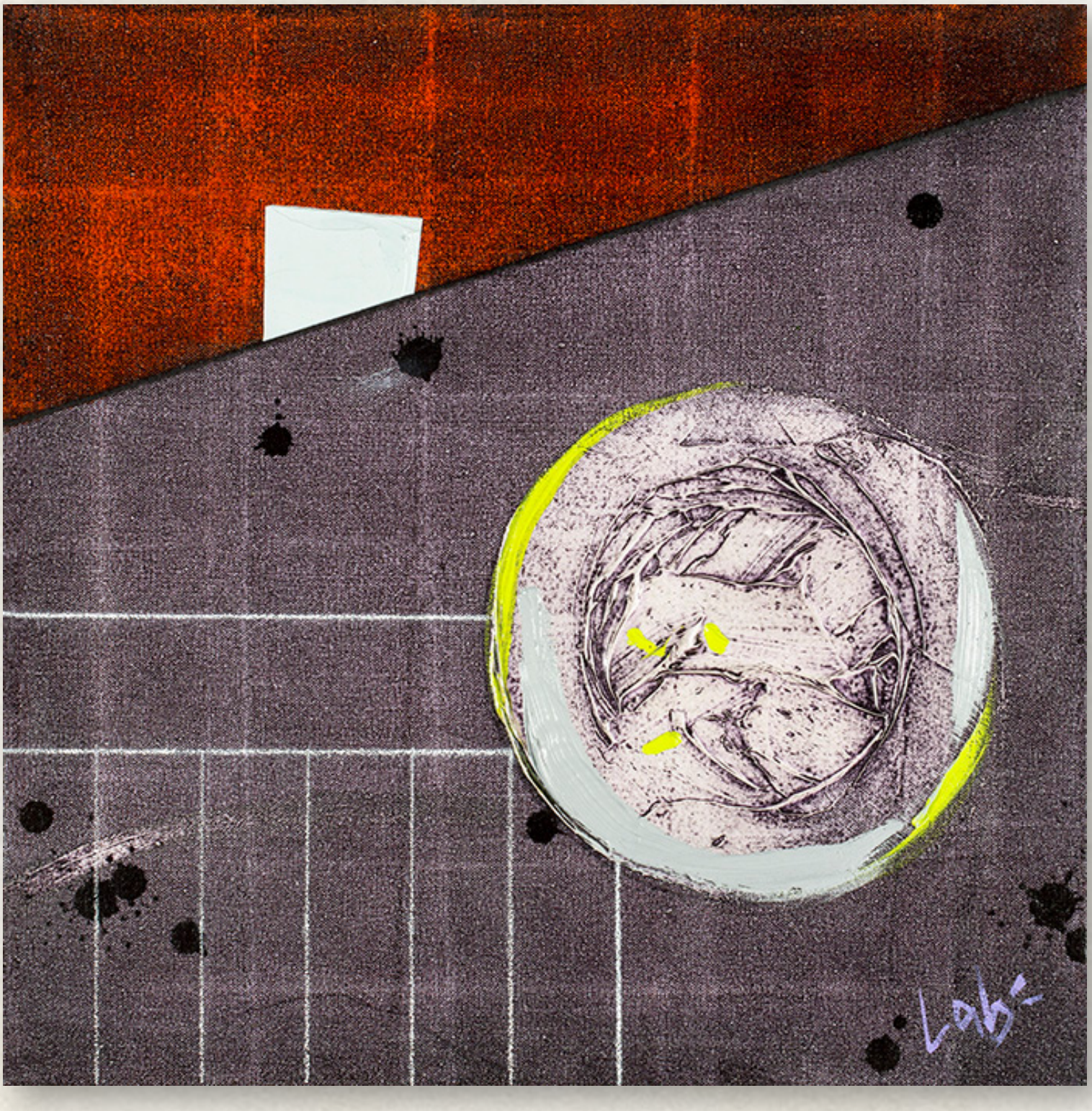
That high, clear-day Edinburgh sky through which you look out across the Firth of Forth and the Kingdom of Fife as if all the way to Perth and into the Highlands beyond

"The mood of a day that we lived ten years ago in a foreign country" (Seferis)

All that sky, open water, stone is Scotland's way

BLACK #1 by Alvaro Labaniño, 2016
oil on canvas (16” x 16”)

BLACK #2 by Alvaro Labaniño, 2016
oil on canvas (16” x 16”)



BLACK #3 by Alvaro Labaniño, 2016
oil on canvas (16” x 16”)

NATALIE CRICK

This House

Fog rolls in on the red mountain.
A husk. It is blood Winter.

We sell ourselves, ounce by ounce
To the moon.

The sky has swallowed its full and
Grows colder, darker.

Years peel back like rind.
My children are as old as scars.

There is no air in this
Dead bird of a bedroom.

Panic spreads, wildfire.
I wish myself a ghost town,

Wish myself the cool hush of night,
A blanket of dusk,

Listening to illness move
Beneath the floorboards,

Moths to red clouds,
Clogging my throat like cinnamon.

Never trust the spirit.
It escapes as steam in dreams.

More light. Fog is rising.
Let us go in.

A. NON

If a cow has no tail then only Allah can keep the flies from bothering it.
An unnamed "old chief" of Dantillia, from Michael Jackson's ethnography, **Barawa and the Ways Birds Fly in the Sky**

Track sumac over borderlands green with delicious dank
that neat foot, fancy turn at the end of my leg, one toe point
past the border into the peopleless not-farm & leap the listing sun
soft trail down to the abandoned quarry run

Last night the trees came, pulled to the edge of snapping
grit from the fields flew into stone hammering their cousins
brick and slate roofing & where stalks were left lazing about
from the haying, must have taken up their packs
like me must have ended up 3 forests over by now, thirsty
ready for a sit-down and drink & so the sumac sun
tea with oat cake or so I thought, instead ran out to the far flung

but then the train rang, in the late-day heat its iron mind
lifted in small plumes of tarred trees pushing wind-pricked
down-trail back round that last corner, me now done loafing
but caught by this steel, its metal voice singing *sumac sumac*
sling by on slow, a train man blue cap hangs smiling
now missy he starts but I didn't stay for listening

Later, when I lived very differently, I realized how alien waist-high living was to a Micronesian woman whose household life is spent on the floor.

Martha C. Ward, **Nest in the Wind**

Most of the time you get no real
choice about sleeping. Not when or how
long much less where. Catch authority's
eye stretched celestial on the sidewalk
even languid on picnic-table beds at night
rest stop on the I 5 & trouble will snap
your Achilles, make you limp the payne's gray
of whatever you call this
temporal core of sleeping civility.
Stay at home for that. All those sleep
classes for the insomniac tell you tricks
how to slip transparent, down past the din
of red ochre, closed eyelids
against urban light still burning

but me, didn't work, got so tired my head blew left
white noise cauliflower ears battered, burnt
sienna static like a fist full of nettles
drove up from the river road
done with trying for home, hurtled instead, rabid
like a thirst, like petroglyphed rocks swimming
dog paddle circles under ultramarine
grinding clouds into the brittle
rind of the late afternoon

parked back of the pull-out
turned off the engine walked up rock
& just went down

nose to ancient red eagles and traveller
notifications written on stone, arms nibbled
by basalt crumbed out onto the pine

A. Non/104

needled soil, slept black
planed out the lamb's quarter, the kinnikinnik
woke after 10 hours
all the way through the dark and back
into the light, curled up the flattened horizon
of my spine to find coyote scat not far
from my feet and the car, engine cool
waiting for me to come to my senses

MUSIC IN THE AIR

Two Pieces by Greg Sipes

FIRE WATER

PLAY FIRE WATER

VS

PLAY VS

RAYMOND FARR

A Wild Story with No Beginning

She says, the emptiness of these flowers…(sigh…)
& 3 white snails climbing an electric fence

Only prove existence is a joke played on
3 white snails climbing an electric fence

She says, we are poisoned by longevity
& the afternoon seems like a violent dream after that

Meaning—a summer flock should see the sun
Meaning—one evening of broken glass

& like raindrops she keeps falling, meaning—
She thinks my voice an empty soup can & talks into it

Making art out of every second sentence I speak
She says, the heart is a naked metal parakeet

& that a poem can never fix a broken toilet
That that's what snakes are for, but the way she

Opens the wine like Tweety Bird on Benadryl—
Her mind is full of moving pieces

Do You Read Much Modern Poetry?

She says *do you read much modern poetry?* & the small of my back spasms involuntarily. *There is a sentence*, she says, *in which a mile of highway is strewn with a string of dead hearts—mounds of snow caked black with exhaust.* & like everything else, I see a pattern in this—I have 7 seconds to sum up my life. I tell her I am the wrong kinky red sexual foot for her & that I'm always losing myself like a wooden shoe in the poem's snow bank of manliness. & that these poems about soft plastic flowers that get thrown on a flame are nothing to me—a door leading nowhere for the past 100 years. She says poetry is all about future body contouring, a portable differential & some Q-tips.

There Is a Man Throwing His Voice

Oh keep the dog far hence, that's friend to men
—T. S. Eliot *The Wasteland*

I'll have what she's having
—From *When Harry Met Sally*

I remember this drunken college girl
Squatting to piss in a movie house parking lot

When it was barely dusk in Seattle
& someone nearby posting a video of this instantly

To YouTube & how this gave the canvas
Of her body a strange damaged second existence

& how laughing at something I called
"the breathing afternoon" my own life

Was just this soggy piece of toast
Drawing flies in the sink

& the dream of the West
Is back now from his "spa" week in Toronto

& walking around my apartment naked he says—
The dead flowers you sent—what a beautiful

Violent gesture—a tremolo over the rotting hills
Of my thoughts! & he's riding a quiet horse thru 5th

Avenue traffic tonight & he doesn't know what he is
Or that he's dead & he's got me ordering extra

Moo Shu & he's asking me to get him laid—
What about that girl in Seattle, he leers?

What about her strange damaged second existence?
It's just that he seems so real to me

& we're licking Moo Shu from our fingers
& pretense is something he abhors

JAMES GRABILL

Reading the Air

The more speechless incompleteness has been,
the more ancient the fern imprints in winds,
the more panthery the raw insistence of hunger
in the slow motion of a naked human shoulder,

with surf-breaking risks under cataclysmic stars,
the slumber-shot prime widening in a root-held
shiver on the proving grounds of sleep-shelled
providence, while exquisite instruments resound

between innate conception in the rake of Rothko
red-violet reds and plum-wrestled scarlet dark,
the way fir needles drop and more of them form
dedicated to the beautiful mother of consciousness,

given the pulse of a body in space, shape of bones
in the chest, the inherited tongue and ancestral jaw,
the shoulders and new brain lifted by neighborhood
crows around which fern-raked evenings can heal

the compass eye sees the apple continue round
and electric as agile hands of an East European
concert violinist, the rain falling broken and whole
through the spectrum uncountable lives from now

the unfinished hour already leaving as fresh water,
camouflaging absence when a tiniest seed sprouts,
sunlight holding it in emptiness with little to lose
where esoteric antennae defy quick explanations.

Before the Transition

The unfinished moon arcs over the wide coast
of sunlight here in the red-bent gaseous flux
floodlit by thought, flooded with architecture,

maybe it's nowhere to be found, the one moon,
without corporate lawyers serving global divorce
papers to the atmosphere.
A mammoth spear hurled
in an ancient century keeps plunging into common
neural pathways. As fire season in western forests
begins a month earlier and persists a month longer,

the dark burn in the body sinks low, within the plexus,
as the trunk goes hollow from a slow punch to the gut
out of fear for the future of people.
The moon appears,
sailing over former generations of the people forgotten
as it passes over transcendence. Meanwhile, the longer
right action stalls, the deeper the punch reaches in cells,

until the skeleton's roaring with wind, feeding flames
the last light in high plains fields with fast night hawks
swooping and diving through thermals for little flies,

down the road from multiple international works of art,
the solid yellows of Morris Graves corridors alongside
nighthawk sweeps of paints from spontaneous drops

off the brush of aerial Pollock inscribing a tropical rain
forest score orchestrating the tiniest co-evolved beings
as being grows in directions of the future overflow.

lustre

baronial burnish
baronial burnish discharge belly-wag
log-lolly
: to possess lustre : : to be possessed *by* lustre : illuminated
with : one-eyed dormancies
to bring to a _____
the state/condition of _____

to festoon in the membrane of sheen, accessorize, exalt beyond the
boundary of skin
fin-glimmer fantail frigate furl
purling underwater opal gardens
fantasias inflame
the ash

the trail to famished trail

esurient devise oneiric spool
windings wound palaver flesh,
                harbinger swarm
cuttle-walk cod-wattle
the road to incident road
  —trilling trail-wise—
follow the ravens
at the intersection of runic flare-up a
smaragdine sustain
. the stuff of buttons
. lace-work
. loop rodeo

PROMETHEUS OUT by Kit Gordon, 2017
oil on canvas (24” x 18”)

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

CALIBAN:
In 1967 Allen Ginsberg and the Fugs, along with a group of like-minded anti-war protestors, tried to raise the entire Pentagon one foot off the ground and drop it. The incantation, in spite of its literal failure, gave heart to the movement. Today we have much more to worry about than the Pentagon. If you have an incantation in you, shout it, post it, put it out in the universe. Let there be magical music in the spheres to counteract Death's minions and their symphony of suffocation!

DAN RAPHAEL:
May we be invisible.

May we not live too long or die too soon, live below the radar, between the cracks, outside the spectrum, beyond suspicions.

May the earth survive a little longer because we have been here.

May we be immune to the lies of mirrors, windows, holograms, eyes other than the ones in our hearts.

May we be camouflaged by blandness, awareness & smooth movement, not worth fearing or knowing, subtle and generous in our actions.

May we not be in the wrong place at the precise time for a bullet, crazy violence, an uncontrolled vehicle, something hard enough falling from the sky.

May we stay away from the military, the penal system, the medical system, the welfare system; if we must go into any may we come out with only temporary damage and not too heavily in debt.

May we stay happy, fed, curious, sheltered in some ways and wide open in others.

May we realize the rewards we are given, and that difficulties are just winds an experienced & attentive sailor can find the angle through.

May we wake up tomorrow.

IVAN ARGÜELLES:
Without poetry would the fleece be golden? Without poetry could Medea's tricks make the rivers run backwards? Beware the Muses nine, ragpicking magpies holding forth at midnight at the crossroads! Whoa, there's Hecate tossing her pitch into the cauldron. Overshadowing the moon is winged Pegasus bringing rhyme and meter to a prosaic post-industrialist twenty-first the most god-forbidden of centuries. Drown the cities of congress in the mire of legalism, lies and fake news. The other world, the one of alternative facts is slowly burning. Headlines in black crepe-paper announce in vatic formulae the rise of mock populism. Sleepers awake! toss off the silken bondage of your oneiric serfdom. Lessons to be learned! Move backwards through blue and red shifts. Watch carefully as planets passing by bearing the names of the founders of the republic implode! Gassy substance of the words of the Constitution go up in a scrabble of monstrous Orwellian language. When was the Untied Slates of Armorica ever the democracy it claims to be? Founded on the principles of ethnic cleansing, slavery of the black other, and fear and trembling, what is it in reality but a sprawl of Walmarts pressing the southern border, home of the "bad Hombres"! Listen up Red-neck, your day is numbered! It's countdown to Anarchy, when the fellaheen, the little brown brother and the wet-back get their day in Court! Viet Cong! Taliban! ISIS! It's all gonna come full circle in the Muskrat Ramble of the New Paradigm. Without Poetry would Penelope undo the loom? Poetry, absent centuries too long from the body politic, needs to be restored! Now! The dream of Unreason! Don Quixote tilting his windmills of prosperity! Let poets, Real poets, storm the Library of Congress, and take over the fraudulent laureateship that reigns. Surrealists, Dadaists, Futurists! Not the Madison Avenue, Trump Tower version of Post-Modernism, but the real Thing, Das Ding an Sich! Let the Bard rave! Let the Flag held upside down turn to flame! Bring back Blind Homer to sing his deathless lines to the empty seats of the Senate! Single Payer Health Care in terza rima! Let Dante returned from the Bolge of traitors and counterfeiters make his way through the Potomac Swamp to the Vietnam Memorial, running his hand over the names of the thousands who died for a lie! Purgatory and

Paradise! Beatrice and Madonna in their Hollywood makeup mumming the Muses! We must all sink or swim with the Bateau Ivre! Or as Jimi Hendrix put it: Is it tomorrow or just the End of Time?

MERCEDES LAWRY:

Quentin Crisp was talking about handling the dirt and dust in his London rooms when he said, "It's just a matter of keeping your nerve." It also seems apt as a strategy for the nation during these dark days. Resist.

ROB COOK:

Dear Telescammers:

Greetings! You've reached the home office of the Skinny Little Man Pepper. If this is a telephone solicitor, identity thief, extortion artist, the Moscow IRS, or Mr. Sunflower Seed, or the Dragonfly, please be advised that neither I, nor the Skinny Little Woman Miller, nor the baby sloth Ranuel, nor Ranuel's secretary, have any treasures to share with you. But thank you for your interest in trying to destroy the Skinny Little Man. Have a blessed day. Goodbye.

JAMES GRABILL:

The Reason Billionaires Require More Billions

You can't squeeze orange juice out of orange hair and rooms of gilt,
where the people of wealth have raised their God-speed blockages
of reason and nutritional content on behalf of big accumulation,
where the world's money has been declared the measure of value
and the invisible arm will not be showing its hand, or its head,
around Buffett at $75.6B, both Kochs at $48.3B, or Allen at $19.9B,
so multitudes of little suckers keep their distance and follow orders
in the face of many invisible fingers rifling through the till, beefed
up by charging families for protection, while the embryos are eyeballing
what fills in with escutcheon and automation reversing electrical
fields swallowing riven supremacy from within the vitreous quick,
as needle-pump concentrations pipe lines making billion-dollar veins
flush in cover-ups of infantile intent, sweetly cherubic in grandiosity,

take Gates with $86B, or Walton, Walton, and Walton with $34B each,
as wrecked Buddha meat cracks the North American billionaire code
into fives and ones, and each one is one who depends, as it all depends
on the maw and craving for matter if you're all alone with your dollar
that keeps requiring more just to get it up and keep it up, all the
while
basking in accomplishments of Lear Trump at his guillotine pleasure
dividing up the public kingdom for the small price of glorious praises
for Mars and Mars at $27B each, or Adelson $30.4B, Bezos $72.6B,
which are due mammoth wealth, the way it's been since time started
its punch clocks, just to knock a little sense of fear into submissive
underlying lies before the ovum eye, while the invisible gavel smacks
nails of platinum, building the vault around payback and extortions
the way engorged money works around these parts, post-hypnotic
with suggestions, in camouflage behind conspicuous consumption
that does the bidding of ritual Manchurian wealth saying anything
for another last buck from up there in its naked saddle on the back
of big labor still digging into its tar-sand holes of nihilism for
virgin
African diamonds with everyone's names on them, now available
through your favorite multimillionaire who requires at least a billion
for Bloomberg at $47.5B, Knight at $26.2B, or Babe Ruth with 60
and vice versa, in skirmishes for resources known to extraordinary
renditions at top rungs of their firehouse ladders that reach far off
through cosmic vastness into great vaults left open in fingerprint
nebulae above sycophanticised choirs of goose-greased flatterers.

DORU CHIRODEA:

As I told you before

Birth is not really recommendable, in fact it isn't recommendable for no one

But sometimes it's too late

I suggest you keep doing whatever you now do, enjoy your irremediable extra-uterine feat and Tuesday please don't forget to pay a visit to Fain

Fu

He knows what you can't know

He won't tell you anything though, so keep on diggin'

BOB HEMAN:

The invocation to raise the building included a man with orange hair,
and some words that were never real.
They were hoping to lift it enough so they could crawl beneath.

GEORGE KALAMARAS:

Song for the Animal-Rich Elusive Dark

No death, no dumb, no quagmire of mouth.
No sun in the supernova of the wrist.
No left. No right. No up. No wrong. No sun-blind sky.

Let not the fallen fall us further from what we might climb out of.
Let not the summer sky and its fishhook of birds.
Let not the unread, the little-read, the book breeding itself cover
to clover.

Get down on your knees, sniff the grass, then go inside and tear
the carpet apart.
Shake and sniff and swift. Animal-rich in song.
Search for the fallen, the elusive dark, the pineal gland with which
to see.

Washington—far yourself away.
Washington—sweat yourself out of yourself, from the outside in,
the inside *in*.
Washington—wash your mouth out with soup.

Yes, *soup*. Wash everything with the healing properties of broth. Inside.
Out.
Let the entire tomato-rich alphabet cleanse our mouths.
Let us inherit our birth, the tongue tendering molecules of
the inner ear.

Whitman, Vallejo, Neruda. Seferis, Elytis, Ritsos. Desnos, Breton. The hurricane tongue of Takahashi's sparrow.
I ask you to speak. Mantra-mouthed. I ask you to speech and most and more.
Vallejo. Whitman. Vallejo. Yogananda's *OM*.

Where is the missing? The skipped? Rummagers of ditchweed beneath a blessèd moon?
I implore the nocturne, the marsupial mouth, the givers of animal light.
Dear animal, dear light—come unto me. *Into* me.

No sun in the swampy dark of the wrist.
No sun with which to modulate the moist dents of the moon.
No sun that might melancholy our mouths.

SHEILA MURPHY:
Allow the found thing to teach without your butting in. Allow that flow. Consider not performing the monologue. Create it with your eyes. Mean the nods you do. Or just sit.

ELLENE GLENN MOORE:
I have no incantations to spare, but I will share the recipe for my famous Honey Hooch. Dissolve a half cup of dark honey in a half cup of boiling water. This goes in a pitcher with sparkling cider, the juice of a few lemons, lemon rounds, and big, fat, ice cubes. Add just over enough of whatever whisk(e)y you have handy. It was recently the case, for me, that this comprised a swallow of double-cask bourbon from a local distiller and, to my husband's chagrin, the rest of his 12-year Macallan. But the Honey Hooch soothes all manner of discontents.

HELLER LEVINSON:

The Image is Dead

The notion that poetry is "largely about the juxtaposition of images" (i.e., 'the neon jukebox') is antiquated. What qualifies as 'poetry' for one period of time does not insure its validity for all time. The image has been treated brilliantly by outstanding poets such as Aimé Césaire,

André Breton, Hart Crane, Emily Dickinson, Isidore-Lucien Ducasse, among countless others. The Image has reigned brilliantly & supremely & now must expire gracefully. To employ imagistic strategy at this point in time is to be overly reliant on other's loadstone. It is to be dependent, unoriginal, & stale. Most importantly, it is to impair the urge to discover new approaches for Fresh Revelations. It is to compromise the art with reflex conditioning rather than exploratory enterprise.

The formerly fertile is now the wilted & unimaginative.

CALIBAN IS SEARCHING FOR ANGELS