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GONZALEZ • HERRICK • GIANNINI • SIERRA • PRUNTY • DI FALCO
H. HIDALGO • DUCHARME • BEINING • KALAMARAS • GLANCY
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CALIBAN

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Picasso/Self-Portrait

CONTRIBUTORS' ADVICE



RAYMOND FARR

Unlikely Worms

I feel the poem/lean towards
Being the soup/The cyclone of
Forever, Bicycles corralling

Space like a streak of days/&
How little the little butterfly
Toothache seems now—the

Experiment posterity makes of
Radiant darkness resembling
The experiment radiant

Darkness makes of snarling
Posterity/& by life it is meant
We are holding our tongues

We are shaving our beards—
Our beards of water! Our beards
Of nourishing peanut butter!

Schadenfreude trickling out
The spigot-hole of a stone rain
On stone pages/& the dogs

Chomping on the *Everybody*
Knows This Is Nowhere CD
I was sure Emma Bounty

Farr/10

Had flung to the sea one rainy
Independence Day/These ruins
Of speaking fish running up

The whistling trails behind us
These half-imagined worms
Needling our bones/I am falling

Into war/I am the crust of
Buttered-up lover-boy/A cold
Eye watches from a window

What Instinct Precludes

I never mentioned
The emails from Moscow

Or the green carol
Of a tree bough hanging

In front of us on the street
There were

Readings at KGB Bar
That honed us, inscrutably

Into demented trombonists
& the 10

Consecutive sentences
Of what instinct

Precludes—the Egyptian
& cat-like rain, the scythe

Of giving & giving up
Of being invisible

Farr/12

Café Demoiselles

I am yelling
For Elijah

To bring us
The dynamite

& I'm thinking—
Croissants

& a brief rain
At the idyllic

Crossroads
But where

Is the rage?
We are

Just killing time
Looking at

*The Physical
Impossibility*

*of Death
in the Mind*

*of Someone
Living*

But it isn't
A dead shark

We're talking
About

Just now
Elijah comes

Bringing us
The dynamite

KATHLEEN HELLEN

The MacGuffin

I told you not to use those phone booths
sticky with secretions birds—bird-brained, nerve damaged—
impersonating feathers—get into your head whistle-shit bomb
hairdos, invade the limitations of a chimney wash up on the grid
at Capitola, dead They want to peck you red gull your eyes out
leave you squawking like a bantam in the cage
of your intentions

Teacup Monkey

Whatever could be had—ant farms. Magic tricks. Venus fly traps.

X-ray specs

Sea horses, jumping beans

delivered COD from Creepy's #6, Amazing Spider Man

But nothing double-crossed me like that monkey

dressed up shirt and pants just like a little man. A red sombrero

“No bigger than a teacup,” said the ad

It danced just like Nijinsky

to the *Monster Mash*

Everybody laughed. Everybody clapped

Its heart-shaped face a pendant on a leash until

it snapped, bit the hand

that fed it peanuts. A little helicopter

crashing into glass

the least of it. I watched it fail, the wailing

I loved that god-damned monkey

TIM KAHL

Central Valley Grateful Arc

If evolution were a soft watch or mold on teflon
crumbling into the filmed scene at Ketchikan just that fast

messengers of the flesh might place a graceful arc by hand.
And others might haul it away to a circle of miracles.

So much bounty in that space between here and gone.
Consider. The plane returns from the hot Central Valley.

Two complete thoughts sway in their season of pheromones,
tongue over the smooth lifeline, sometimes sitting up straight

in the little deaths. An aneurysm splits November at its seams.
Time to mulch again. Wood shavings remember a silence.

A recorded voice attacks the weeds on the threshold.
No answer from the living rooms barely breathing.

The right nutrients click together in the casings of the heart.
The ash and the bone out there underneath the Valley sky.

An oak table pauses to inhale the name of its grain.
New species play dead on the phone, then ask *Are you there*

Kinnickinnick

The bears in Alaska sleep heavily in summer. The full spectrum of light leads to their good moods, and they prowl the deep woods in search of the big flavors of heirloom tomatoes. They grow in clusters on the vine to test how animals distinguish the number of items in a group. More than six and they can't distinguish . . . the same way a seven letter word doesn't pop into place after it is scrambled. It's too long, but the days in the Alaskan summer are even longer. The midnight sun beats down on the pelts of bears. They count their claws at a glance and dream about tomatoes, or blueberries, gooseberries, salmonberries, crowberries, bearberries. That's kinnickinnick to you and me. We mix it up and smoke it during certain ceremonies—like when you spot an approaching enemy. The bad juju is warded off by all those antioxidants. Really soon it'll be offered on the open market, right next to all those firewood ads: half cord of seasoned almond. Somebody will buy it just to see if when it burns it smells like marzipan. To the bears it might. And it might smell like three or four other things as well, all of them clustered together, while humans sniff and everything blurs. It's just one long statement of smoke that curls and loops and twists and for a moment writes your name against the sky.

The New Opioids

The new opioids are not addictive. A habitual user simply slides into the natural order of the tribal past. The deep joys reach an equilibrium and cease to incite any new religions. The king maintains his royal manner in accordance with the courtly gestures and plans. The pig says oink and flicks its curly tail. Adults work out to the same degree they did before. Their euphoria is certain and measured with metal barometers. Therefore, the highly anticipated regrets do not advance their position. New meaning is given to being despicable. It feels like a fish hook embedded in the side of the gut—snagged. The body is being dragged out into the open where it is fed into the database bit by bit. There will be no more speech. A state of mind will be determined by municipal law. Someone was thinking here just a minute ago. Should the interveners review the history to see what kind of attention was given? Did those in command trust the running total? Meanwhile the brand was expanding into the weekend. Some kind of impulse was desperately trying to establish a private perimeter. A group of investors fought to have it medically enhanced. They constructed the visual field molecule by molecule. What a thrill—the new opioids never even let you look away.

Phylogeny

In the beginning there was noise from the dark sea
and the noise could not be divided into classes.
It was the noise of many animals reproducing
and moving toward the shore. Out of the froth and
the clotting foam arose a single nameless fury
and the sun shone down on its white skin and
discipline. On land there was nothing to
impede its progress. It was ready to crawl
and cover territory, and out of this came struggle.
But the concept of struggle was not yet born.
Later, thinking was the first murmur from the plain.
It ascended rapidly to clamor and then frantically
it developed separate manners of influencing.
Some were led away to the grove. Some stayed
captive on the beach. Others followed
the distant call of massive waterfalls to start
their own religion in the mountains.
To them, rain was proof of their philosophy.
Their science, a systematic explanation of
existence. They claimed *the blood of a cloud*
is turbulence. Lightning is the arc across
a fired synapse between earth and moon.
They steadily made bounds in the area of medicine.
They cured themselves by regularly meditating.
In fact, slowly they transcended their
slouching forms and over many generations
they learned to levitate their souls in the heavens.
The lowland tribes found their bodies,
left behind, and carefully examined them.
This lost race differed only in their
darkened skin, an adaptation that was
inexplicable but able to be classified.

Kahl/20

And their solid remnants still stand exposed
like hills, the wind shifting over them in waves.
When it blows, it sounds as if the night air is
filled with static—still to be differentiated.



UNTITLED by John M. Bennett & Jim Leftwich, 2017



UNTITLED by John M. Bennett & Jim Leftwich, 2017

RAY GONZALEZ

The Silence of Fernando Pessoa

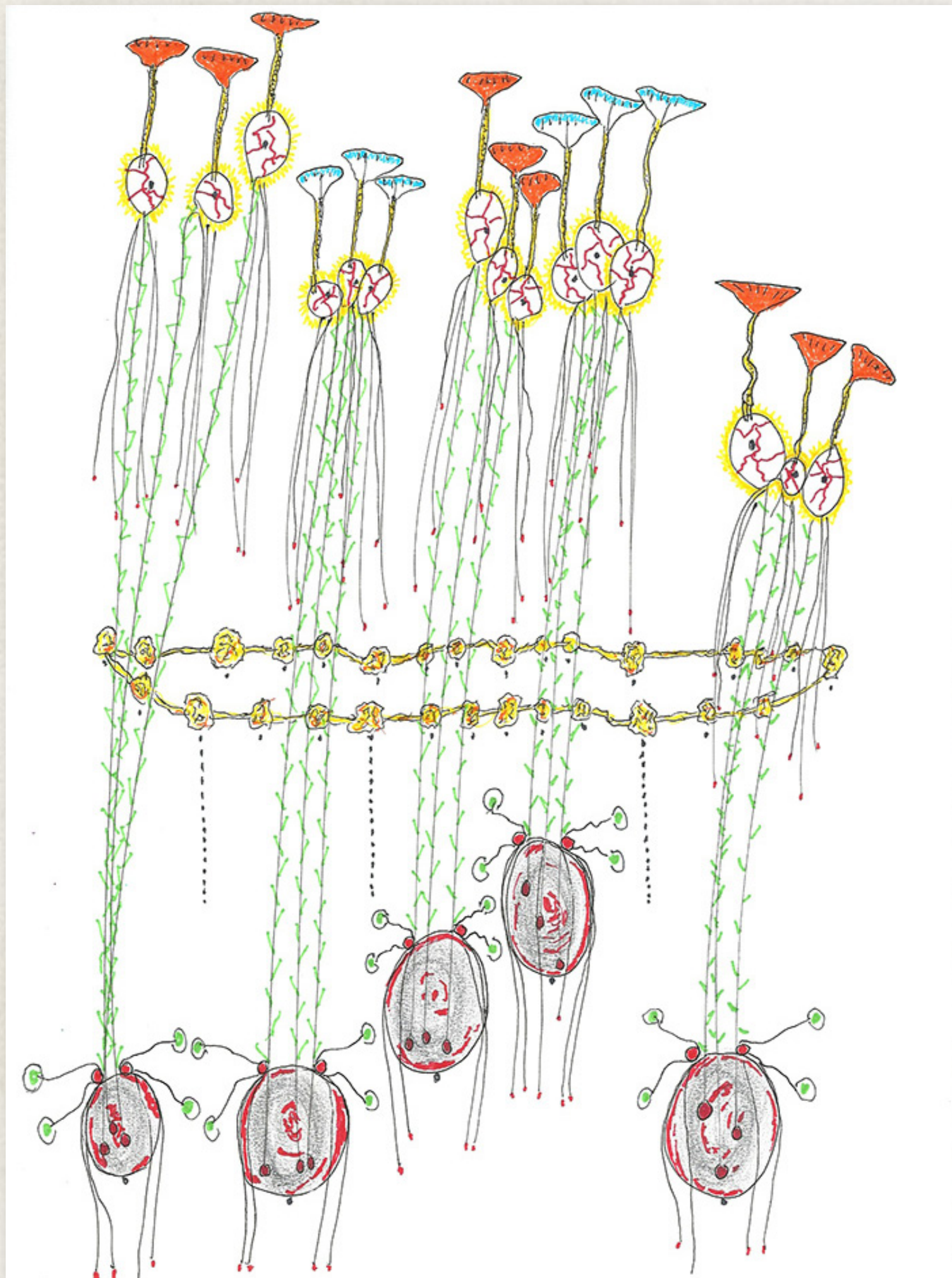
I am here and I want to listen. There are sounds that could be named. There are windows stained by the hands of fame. I stare at dandelions in the grass. They come from a world that insists. I can walk without saying a word and will not go home by way of the sea because the mute desert is closer and I have vanished before. My feet are two owls fleeing the earth, their wings disappearing each time I walk, the sensation of a great wind not stirring the dandelions because they grow too short for the future. I am here and someone will close the book for me because to speak would become a sentence not yet written.

The Silence of Federico García Lorca

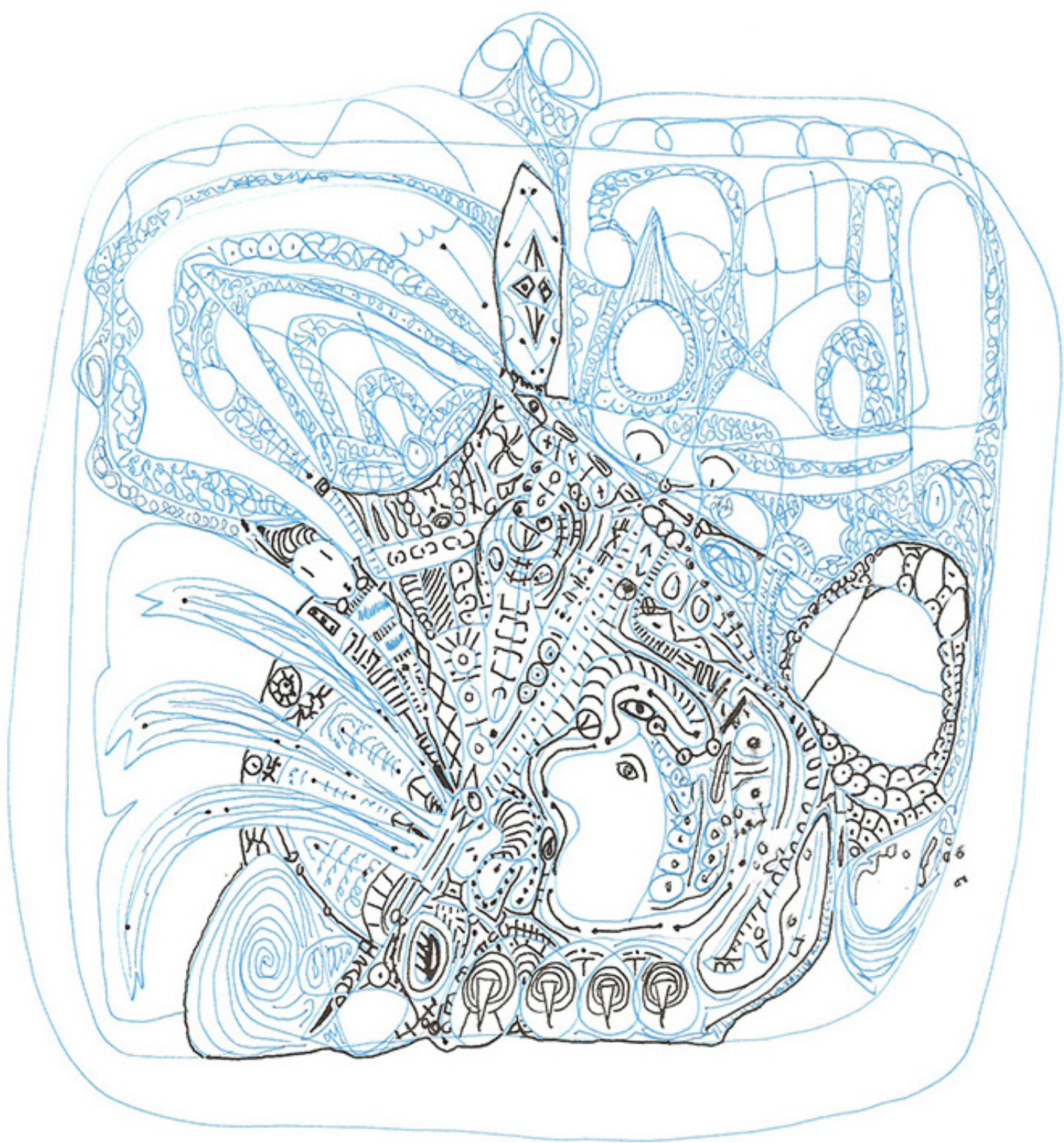
This is my face. It lies in the rains of tomorrow. Seven long birds cry my eyes. I am not afraid because the orange groves are cleared of serpents. A swarm of sleepwalking women used to pass here but no longer. My unborn children track me down and keep asking for my voice. This is my hair. It is all they can have because I have seen the grass grow and a bee-eating bird left me bald. Ask the infinite mask to speak because I am busy wrestling with the moon.

Imagine

Imagine a mushroom cloud rising from the New Mexico desert, the earth coming apart like a tarantula burned by angels of fire, the axis of time accelerating into the deep canyons where hidden writing on the walls is melted by a powerful wind that changes everything. It encircles an old man sitting on top of a white desert hill, his hands folded in his lap as he translates what was never meant for him, the tower of fire reaching past him into the other world where the only intrusion is a loaf of bread.



YOUR THOUGHTS by Ray Gonzalez, 2017
pen and ink (15" x 11")



THE GIVER by Ray Gonzalez, 2017
pen and ink (15" x 15")

LEIGH HERRICK

When in the Night You Wake to It

is your heart broken

is it sitting on the shelf of tirades driven in on the spokes of wheeled
fortune is it free-associating
among drunken chords of diametrical theories split for freedom and
does it spit hardware of
deconstructionist differentials fractaling access across ink and pulp

does it fictionalize

does it wince

make enemy of silence fried for the slam and dunks into coffee-d
spells of attrition

does it wait for refuse harmonize against the Moon does it stand
without cream hooded or

masked does it wear ribbons | | badges | | medals of member-less
honor distributing pamphleted

histrionics can it drip pump ooze what is blue and by oxygen red and
read in the inches of hours'

meaningful dread and does it speak

your heart

does it say

what really frightens it

now

SIMON ANTON DIEGO BAENA

Orison

For César Vallejo

it's raining
in Paris
again

the cold is gnawing
at the corners
of this room

the cold is the belfry echoing

the cold is darker here

I seek the plume
that strokes the holes
of those tiny moments
lost among the smoke

I keep hearing that voice
caught in the noise
of the edges of this city
where the crow buried its beak
where the silence is snow

the night is a circle
that I must
always enter



ACROSS THE RIVER by Paul Sierra, 2017
oil on canvas (60" x 80")



NIGHT LAUGHTER by Paul Sierra, 2016
oil on canvas (39" x 30")



VISITOR by Paul Sierra, 2013
oil on canvas (44" x 36")



ENDLESS by Paul Sierra, 2013
oil on canvas (50" x 90")

RANDY PRUNTY

Stripped away

Trees in winter are reluctant sundials that burn themselves as theater. The alarm clock is set for extinguish. I would say erasure, but these trees will never be pencils. Middle school cellos maybe.

Suspend your thought, said the head. Force your words, like snow run-off, through the grate. And since everything's a sign, here, have a bone. And some threads or is it ivy? Yeah, let's keep working toward specificity or at least distinction: is this a sugar maple or a noble silver?

I was in the path then I went down the path. I was in it like a hall full of walls. Do you paint your walls? I mean the outside ones like Hadrian had. I've traveled a little. The more I understand "to circumscribe" the less I understand walls. I find myself fingering the path of their tactics when I feel the need for friction.

A house is a thing you enter, a cave gives you shadows, and a lake is for stories. So say my class notes on plate tectonics. "When a word falls behind and under itself . . ." *Illegible*. Something like "you've been named " or "your sanctuary has a hole in it."

Does it seem like outdoor portraits are fleshier than indoor ones? Like everyone's face has extra skin stretched over it? Not every world can end the way you want it. Cedar's not bad, but a tad cliché. A kingfisher war? Beds that never sleep? Once your name is Ergo, then you can parse the rubble from the ash. I've set the alarm for alarm.

Five geese on the lake are mistaken for three boats on the shore. That's the good news. There is no bad news. Everyone is satisfied enough. We

feel our eyes blossom. This dirt road could lead all the way to Pangaea.
Everything is numbered. The holly (*ilex ilextropia*) is live. O look at that
sapling. This is a great format.

Meander, then quick

Darwin spent years proving crawdads are not baby lobsters. Like me, he was a creek man before he was an ocean man. Everything is itself, but not everyone is themselves. Complete collective might be a misnomer. Only birds and their mighty tongues are possible redeemers.

Looking down on a soaring falcon is my favorite thing to do although I've only done it once. Who knew the chestnuts continued so seamlessly? Seedpods in flight are the penultimate. I've learned not to interfere with heavy landings. All-in-all, the wider the wing the nearer the ocean.

Anything about upstream you want to tell me about? Anything your dreams associate with the roiling near the fallen tree? How recreation only defers creation? It's ok, everyone can see the aftermath drifting about. And the thing that drags, has a hold, but is noncommittal? What is that about? I'm reminded of what's-his-name at the barbeque. Remember when he bragged he could build a parking deck anywhere? At least he took his boots off at the marina ruins.

Put your good hand in the shallows and let your bad hand reach for the mud. A shell has an urgency to contain things. What we don't know about mollusks could fill an entire elementary school. Even our love/hate of fire could be wrong. Hey, maybe lightning strikes are the key. What if you could shimmer or glimmer on command? Even when pulverized, all in, skirting nothing and nothingness.

If you're a red-winged blackbird, then yes. If you're a black-winged redbird, then you're a scarlet tanager on your mother's side. The weir recharger must be doing its job because the marsh just looks so flush this season. All plants that need safety are safe.

TOMAS SANCHEZ HIDALGO

Sound

it finally dies among the leaves
(crashing among the flowers),
following something like an attempted parameter,
an algorithm:
dead from boredom,
in this copy of a forest
not even put into verse by Whitman,
the fireworks call up the memory
of the roar of the metropolis,
in anarchic polychromy.

SALVATORE DI FALCO

Aura

I fail to find meaning in my migraines. Every few days one comes knocking on my head, wearing a black coat and bowler, wielding a small black bat. Once in, the tapping starts on the right temple. Lightly at first. A submarine sound under pressure. As the submarine sinks lower into pressure, the bat taps the temple with more force. The right eye shuts, winking at the world. We will live. Yes, we will live. When the submarine bottoms out, a low humming begins. The humming grows louder. Now all thoughts gather as on the edge of a cliff overlooking a black abyss. They cringe, they huddle. If they fall they will perish among the talus rock. One question raises a frail hand from the herd. Why does this exist? If it is not meant to extinguish me, or render me insensate, vegetative, why does it create such illustrative agony? Look at the man's face, like Jesus wearing a crown of thorns, like the frozen scream of John the Baptist's head, like Jersey Joe Walcott catching Marciano's Suzie Q, like John Cassavetes about to blow in *The Fury*, like a man trepanned without a local, like someone gazing at the sun. But gazing at the sun has no meaning. The migraines mean nothing, I wish I'd never found that out. It's as if the universe were dark and eyes did not exist, and darkness meant nothing.

Close the Window

A good suggestion. My fingers, numb, make this process agonizing. I almost keyed agonistic. No polemic surpasses the freshness of people engaged in face time. Hello, Joe, how goes it? I'm good, everything is good. Good to hear everything is good with Joe. In another age he would be the man with moustaches and suspenders holding the wired earpiece to his large ear and his head close to the speaking box. Is someone there? Is someone there? Someone is always there, or haven't you figured that out yet? This window is about the lack of privacy these days. Anything you know someone else knows you know. They store it in clouds. In a thousand years from now what will remain of these clouds? We'll likely have vanished by then or transmogrified into other forms. The wedding to machines comes at a price: flesh. Flesh rots. The new forms ideally will not rot. The smell no will longer apply. The idea will no longer apply. Some of us have moved on from the idea of metal cladding skin or joints made of synthetic materials yet to be trademarked. When I call Joe, later in the morning, when the sun shines and warmth becomes me, he says he is suffering from a low mood. Possibly from lack of sleep. What were you doing all night? I ask. I was online, he admits. No confession forthcoming, the itemization of sites, the engagement with other bloggers, the absorption of sundry factoids, the fetish made plain and shared by multitudes. Joe never lets the cat out of the bag. This is why I respect the man, and the idea of the man. I understand how difficult this may be to digest. I always follow a simple rule of thumb when I am reading something: if I'm not smiling, laughing, or making good memories, I usually stop.

MARK DUCHARME

New Lines Already Forgotten

for Jack Collom

The runes are swollen with namesakes, if you want to know
Then germinate, as flowers do, to gain our attention
When we get home from school
& The well-to-do are livid with
Potential, which the night determines
Before it burns off its hair
In a kind of freak but intimate accident
Severing our clothing as we reenact a shipwreck
In our underwear! O Hortense—
For that is what I will call you now—spit out your gum
Become glum in order to appear insouciant
Provoke dreams like the People of Zanzibar
Heard trembling over the phone
While someone's lover asks, "Who's going to walk me home?"

Noon in the Facets

The wind reverses its image
In the image of the trees
Which sway like damaged birds
Who forget about the sky

Don't reinvent the sestets
In a blind man's psalms
Dreaming of distortion
In the fortunes of someone new

As you banter about the ocean
In a replica of Melville's beard
Will you ever be done with thrashing?
Even Garbo had to rest sometime

In a milieu of baristas
Waiting on a matchstick
Or a fortune cookie ensconced
With the wishes of the teeming

Who flew there to warn you
The future's not all that's cracked
Under the fishnet shadows
Dreaming about the sun

Trilke

1.

A keen haste tantalizes the bully ninjas
Testy as inlets that Kelvin queered
As he rambled about transcendence
& A Pokémon mass movement

Which would alleviate breath of the pale
Autumn dying
Painfully as ten thousand fake Sinatras
& Salubrious Alcatraz arcade groupie holograms

In quantum, equatorial Majorcas
While you bomb a burrito cartel temple empire
Which brindles with sin queries &
Distortion

2.

In this land where we landed
Her sleep was everything
Evanescent as a temple of thought balloons
While forgetting to introduce our esteemed guest hosts gaping

Did somebody breathe & leave you
Boss of this dullness?
Happy as salt
I mean, the poems which threw us

Reckoned by makeshift
Thought leaders who scramble
For bullet
Points, though they are merely leaking

GUY R. BEINING

planetary being 17

7/7/16

every day is a
cradle of death
yet one passes
the literary brick house
with gold trimmings,
& the blow up
art shop with
a Disney style
plastic arcade.
sheep like tourists
disappear into the
conceptual art center.
the mirror of where
we were had not
been adjusted.
there was a bronze
copy of yesterday's
news on a park bench,
but no one could
turn the pages

planetary being 22

7/9/16

what fabric in
a short range,
a short line,
abbreviating a short take,
not of a monster
but a king
waiting for flyleaf
to send one off.
the wind carried
away the last
remnants of april.
a harness lay
broken by a horse.
the witness had
watched through a
chalky window as
if from smudged
edges of a puzzle.

Beining/46

planetary being 24

7/12/16

we cannot find
a perfect study
of the heart,
but one doctor
beyond the vision
of laboratory work
took apart a rat
& then rebuilt it
into the form
of a sting ray
pushing its heart
into new directions
letting the signals go
into unknown frontiers.

planetary being 26

7/18/16

walking on an avenue
in twilight, in the
shaved pieces of
old black & white
movies, waiting for a
shadowy figure to appear,
but further along it
develops a comic book
texture, & a purple
body rolls out from
between two garbage cans.
it quickly fell apart
& became a toxic puddle.
pigeons drank from it
& grew mightily;
eager to ravish
everything in sight.

Beining/48

planetary being 27

7/18/16

the lights are
going out everywhere.
no night sky,
or memory of
trying to tag each star
before the count ends.
my voice is
in another field
squared off by sumac
& juniper bushes
where I find
the eyes of a deer
begin to temper the darkness.



the arrow enters radius of ill



the god stick was left in
the umbrella stand full
of ancient spices



the fall is but a tumble disguised
by the framework of not moving

DIANE GLANCY

The So-Called Ostrich Speech

[Job 39:13-18]

Was her there just once
doing faith the book of Job is about?
Scholars say the ostrich is a mistranslation
of the Hebrew *mynnr*
and is a coroneted sandgrouse
or singed [chestnut bellied] grouse
or spotted grouse
or pin-tailed, black bellied grouse.
Ostrich: What grouse could outrun horse?
No this is what is soup.
The inner brain of Job was suffering lack of faith—
let there be darkness
instead of God's edict.
Is the ostrich a bird?
Ostrich: Yes—a giraffe of a bird.
Earthbound, I regret.
What God would make a flightless bird
to carry these heavy wings about?—
yet when horses run I overtake
forgetting hatchlings buried in the desert sand
as Job lost sight at first of faith
more thinking about losing his post in Uz
than hatching new wisdom and
understanding to lift up feather-brained
bird-brain Job
for the purpose in his trials.

He Have Nothing to Do the Rest of the Day but Jumping

It was at first doubtable
ox and donkey taken by Sabeans
sheep burned in fire-ball from God
[or so the servant called it]
camels taken by Chaldeans
children killed in whirlwind
[I only am escaped alone to tell thee]
who could believe
God's grace was sufficient
but Job
forced-marched through disaster
to get past his own thinking
into God's portal

I have seen

I will see again

there faith documented by suffering
opens the wound of self-satisfaction sitting at the head
of the gate of Uz
who at last can say
faith is buried in trials
even the most stunning.

An ordinary day to work

*I like books because they have covers.
What they are is inside.*

His bestiary pillaged.
He had nothing
on his plate in Uz.
His sorrow buzzed.
Have you spoken to the camels?
They are gone.
The hippopotamus and oxen?
Gone also.
Sons and daughters?
Taken by a storm.
Was ransom given?
No—he wrote into his book—
The storm does not leave notes.
Have you spoken to the sheep?
They are not there either to speak.
The mules? Hawk? Gazelle?
The grouse along the fence that creep?
Nothing there
not even louse.
Doused in emptiness
Job cannot stand but crawls to house
to grieve
and still in God believe.

DOUG GUNN

not home

The window was rolled down on the driver's side, a stooped man put his hands on the metal of the open car window standing beside the parked car he was wearing a brown coat against the winter, one coat pocket was torn with a safety pin holding it up in the car a tall man very thin with an adam's apple was the driver, smoked a cigarette, smoke wafting out the car window and the driver of the car now held his white cigarette between the tips of two of his white fingers, he was looking at that hand on the steering wheel. The first man's name was Cob, he said here I am, the tall man in the driver's seat looking at his cigarette in his hand Cob murmured *jesus christ* he said here I am, Cob walked around the front of the car he had a bag with a strap on his shoulder it was a green duffle bag he opened the back door of the big car for the duffle bag Cob opened the front door he sat down on the front seat he sat on the seat across from the driver of the car whom he had spoken to a moment before the driver was called Miller. Miller wasn't wearing his jacket, it looked like his jacket was folded Miller's jacket was folded in the back seat with his necktie loose around his neck and one button loose at the top of his white shirt he was looking down at his hands on the wheel and blew smoke out then Miller turned his head, he looked at Cob then Miller looked at Cob's hand where it was propped on the car seat, shifting in his car seat so Cob expected Miller to say something, Miller looking at Cob's hand for a long time like ten seconds finally Cob said *jesus christ* Miller Miller still didn't say anything, he lit another cigarette with the car door open now he bent his head down out of the car Miller stood up and took a drag off the fresh cigarette then flicked it away, simply dropped it in the gutter Miller looked back in at Cob with a glance though his eyes made a small smile then Miller walked up the limestone steps to the porch of his apartment door looking through his keys now Cob was sitting in the car getting colder and colder at

last Miller came out of the apartment, he locked the door behind him, Miller lay a leather suitcase in the trunk of the car and a small computer in the back seat. His tie was still loose now he had clean khaki pants on Miller had work boots on his feet. Cob said you brought your computer, Miller? They closed the car doors and Miller turned the key to start the engine. It's a surprise but Miller's voice is very high like a girl's voice when he says: okay Cob let's go then, I guess this is it. It makes you wonder about Miller in a jacket and a tie and so on, someone with a voice like that you don't think of him standing around the office desks talking to a group of men in shirts and ties, with their various other voices. Cob looked at Miller's face then Cob sat back in the car seat Cob said I guess this is it Miller. Cob pulled on his seatbelt like a final act like the metal of the buckle he said lets get out of this dump. Cob lived in a clean house downtown of course with some other people it was a different story in Miller's neighborhood but he didn't feel bad after all Miller called his place a dump himself usually Miller called his place a dump himself. Cob reached down he pulled a lever Cob pushed his seat back Cob lowered the sun visor he turned the sun visor to the side, Cob opened the glove compartment he saw Miller's handgun Cob closed the glove compartment he pushed down a button on the door. Cob said you brought your gun, Miller? The car drove off in the shade of the street.

Miller turned the big car down a certain street, he used one hand Miller used the heel of one hand to turn the car Cob said don't turn the car down this street Miller Cob said don't drive the car down this street, Cob leaned he reached his hand out on the end of his arm he took the steering wheel in his hand of course the car swerved some but Miller pushed Cob's hand away in his surprising voice he said don't be a moron Cob. Cob had a shirt on, he had clean khaki pants on, Cob had some clothes he had shoes he said I brought some clothes and I brought some stuff he said I have a toothbrush. Cob didn't want to stop he didn't want the rest of his stuff he owed rent he didn't want to pay his rent, simply drive off in Miller's car. How could Cob believe that Miller would drive him away without stopping by Cob's place to pay his rent, Miller said

these people are my friends Cob he said you have to pay your rent. Miller knew Cob had some money he said you have some money from your last job he said you can pay them what you owe them. It might have been embarrassment, it didn't seem like it was money it might have been embarrassment. Could it be more than that? Cob couldn't say but Cob knew his landlord and his landlady were Miller's friends of course it's how he met Miller after all Miller hired him for a job there, if Cob would try to pull something like that off of course Miller wouldn't let him get away with it. Miller's two friends owned a house it had five rooms they rented out downstairs the rent was cheap, a clean living room though the carpet was worn out, bathroom if you wanted to use the kitchen some liked to watch television in the living room there was a clean couch, Cob was lucky. It wasn't uncommon for a grouchy person to live in one of the rooms after all there was a good chance you had a grouchy life to end up in a room like that the landlord and his wife helped them make the best of it though, look at Cob. People would go through, some people were on the dole but in the living room were two computers they would search on the computers for some time each day some might find a job, they might move out of the people's house some might stay. Miller parked his big car in the street where Cob lived Miller's adam's apple moved, he looked at Cob with his eyes he said what's wrong with you Cob he said you agreed you'd pay your rent.

Id and he had kids, he had a wife, Aaron had kids and he had a wife a hundred miles away, Aaron had a nice little car and enough to put gas in it but a lot of black smoke came out of it you couldn't drive it very far, Aaron had some kind of job not a job but he could round up some work from time to time, enough for a little gas or he might buy a big box of saltines and five or six cans of sardines in olive oil maybe buy a can of tuna. Aaron told Miller he was on his way to help a guy transplant a bunch of trees to transplant several medium-sized trees involves all the very tiny roots, not just the big roots, the big roots and if there's a tap root of course it will be important but it's very important to get all or most of the very fine roots and all the soil that comes with it all gets unbelievably heavy, Aaron told Miller all of this like he must have had

some knowledge, he said he was on his way to run a log-splitter for a guy.

Aaron went to visit his mother every month he said his mother lived in a Nursing Home, Aaron went to visit his mother he took her something she seemed to like like a bag of chocolate candy, it might make Aaron's mother remember her past but she couldn't remember her son, it might help her remember her son Aaron took his mother microwave popcorn once a month or twice a month he should have known she couldn't chew it, his mother made him sad you got the feeling Aaron should get in his car and just drive off sometimes but what would be the point of that, if you didn't have a home you didn't have a home and Aaron had it pretty good at Miller's friends' house after all they all did really. Now Cob was leaving this place though, what would that mean, and Miller was driving like Aaron Miller had a wife and Miller had kids Miller's kids lived in another city in another part of the state like Aaron's kids, Cob said we might go through that part of the state Aaron. It's not hard to see what's coming. Driving away in his own car could never be an option for Aaron with its black smoke now Miller had a dependable car and Miller had enough money for gas it seemed like Miller always had enough money. Aaron's mother was a question but it looked like she was upset, they told Aaron his mother was upset for two days after his visits they told Aaron the best thing would be not visit his mother for one or two months, what kind of thing is that to say to an old lady's son of course they would call "if anything happened" what could happen, she could die. Aaron went to his room to get his coat and Aaron got his wool cap he put socks and underwear into a small backpack and his pills and his toothbrush and so on into the backpack and one clean shirt and blue jeans. Cob said you better get the rest of your stuff Aaron, he said what are you going to do with your car Cob said we're not coming back. Miller said, we're coming back. Cob said, we're not coming back Miller Miller said I guess Cob's not coming back. Aaron had enough money, he went to find the landlord Aaron found the landlord and he paid his rent, he was a good tenant.

Miller drove slow in the right lane he drove 50 miles-per-hour, there was no hurry of course Aaron sat in the back seat with his small amount of stuff he could lay on his back and his knees bent up with his pack underneath his legs. Miller drove the car east across the city and out of the city he drove the car across the flat land, away from the high mountains of the West for one hour you could see the blue mountains of the north. The three men drove in Miller's car on a wide paved highway other cars passed on the left enormous trucks passed on the left for a long time Miller drove the car behind a large truck he could see the blank square back of the long truck at a distance. Cob looked out his window at the brush or weeds and the plants like cactus of the desert and the distance of the desert. Cob said I'm going to roll down this window he said Miller, you smoke too much, Cob rolled down the window of course fierce wind blew straight into the car and blew the paper of a folded map up against the rear window and so on, Aaron pulled down the paper map he said don't open the window Cob he said it's Miller's car he said he can smoke if he wants to Aaron said it's winter air Cob he said you jerk. The loud noise of the wind was like a cold wind in Cob's face Cob looked straight out the windshield for half a minute he let the cold wind blow in his face for spite Cob sat back in his seat finally he rolled up the window Cob said are you going to see your kids Miller. Miller said we can't do that Cob. Aaron said you know that Cob:

COUNTY COURT, CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER, COLORADO 1437 Bannock Street Denver, Colorado 80202-5301 720-865-8070		
Plaintiff(s): 1) MILLER, DOREEN 2) MILLER, JOSEPH 3) MILLER, JAMES	Date(s) of Birth: 1) 09/13/48 2) 02/14/73 3) 06/20/79	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲
Defendant(s): 1) MILLER 2) 3)	Date(s) of Birth: 1) 05/03/47 2) 3)	
Attorney or Party Without Attorney Name: EDSON, WARREN Address: 1490 LAFAYETTE ST #407 DENVER, CO 80218 Phone Number: (303) 831-8188 FAX Number: E-mail: Atty. Reg. #: 25472		Case Number: 2W1085 Courtroom 124D
PERMANENT CIVIL RESTRAINING ORDER (This form is subject to the provisions of C.R.S. 13-14-101 to 13-14-102.)		

To Defendant: MILLER

Sex: M Race: W DOB: 05/03/47 Ht: 6' 2" Wt: 175 Hair Color: GRY Eye Color: BLU

THE COURT FINDS that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter; that the defendant(s) was given reasonable notice and opportunity to be heard; that the defendant(s) constitutes a credible threat to the physical safety of the plaintiff(s) and sufficient cause exists for the issuance of a civil restraining order

☐ The court further finds that this order is issued pursuant to Rule 365 C.R.C.C.P. or to prevent emotional abuse of the elderly.

You shall not harass, stalk, injure, threaten, or molest the plaintiff or otherwise violate this order. You shall not use, attempt to use, or threaten to use physical force against plaintiff(s) that would reasonably be expected to cause bodily injury. You shall not engage in any conduct that would place the plaintiff(s) in reasonable fear of bodily injury. A violation of a restraining order is a crime and may be prosecuted as a class 1 misdemeanor, municipal ordinance violation or a delinquent act (if committed by a juvenile) pursuant to CRS 18-6-803.5 and municipal ordinance.

1. **No Contact Provisions**
- ☒ It is ordered that you, the defendant, shall have no contact of any kind with the plaintiff(s), and you shall not attempt to contact the plaintiff through any third person, except your attorney with the following exceptions:
- ☒ You must keep a distance of at least 100 yards from the plaintiff(s), and from the locations listed in Paragraph 2. You shall be permitted to return to a shared residence one time to obtain sufficient undisputed personal effects to maintain a normal standard of living ONLY if you are accompanied all times by a peace officer.

2. **Exclusion from places**

It is ordered that you be excluded from, and shall stay at least 100 yards away from, the following places: (Please specify address)

Home:	15114 E. 54TH AVE., DENVER, CO.	Anywhere plaintiff resides, works or attends school
Work:		
School:		
Other:		
Exceptions:		

You may not remain in or return to any of the above locations after you receive this order. You shall be permitted to return to a shared residence one time to obtain sufficient undisputed personal effects necessary to maintain a normal standard of living ONLY if you are accompanied at all times by a peace officer.

Aaron said, you have to get off here Miller Miller took an exit with a number and the name of a town and the number of a highway, he slowed down to a low speed for the turn onto a smaller highway through an immediate town and some stores and Miller bought three hamburgers in a colorful restaurant on the road with gas at a price advertised on an incredibly high sign, they couldn't read the sign from the ground Cob said how the hell do they change the numbers on that sign. Miller bought French fries for all three of them he said what do you want to drink. A town where the highways cross meant they stopped at a light or they went through a green light and cars turned right and left and small trucks turned right or turned left into various large parking lots or small parking lots or into different streets with houses and neighborhoods. They stopped at another light. Cob said Jesus Christ, Miller, are you going to hit every light, Aaron said will you shut up Cob.

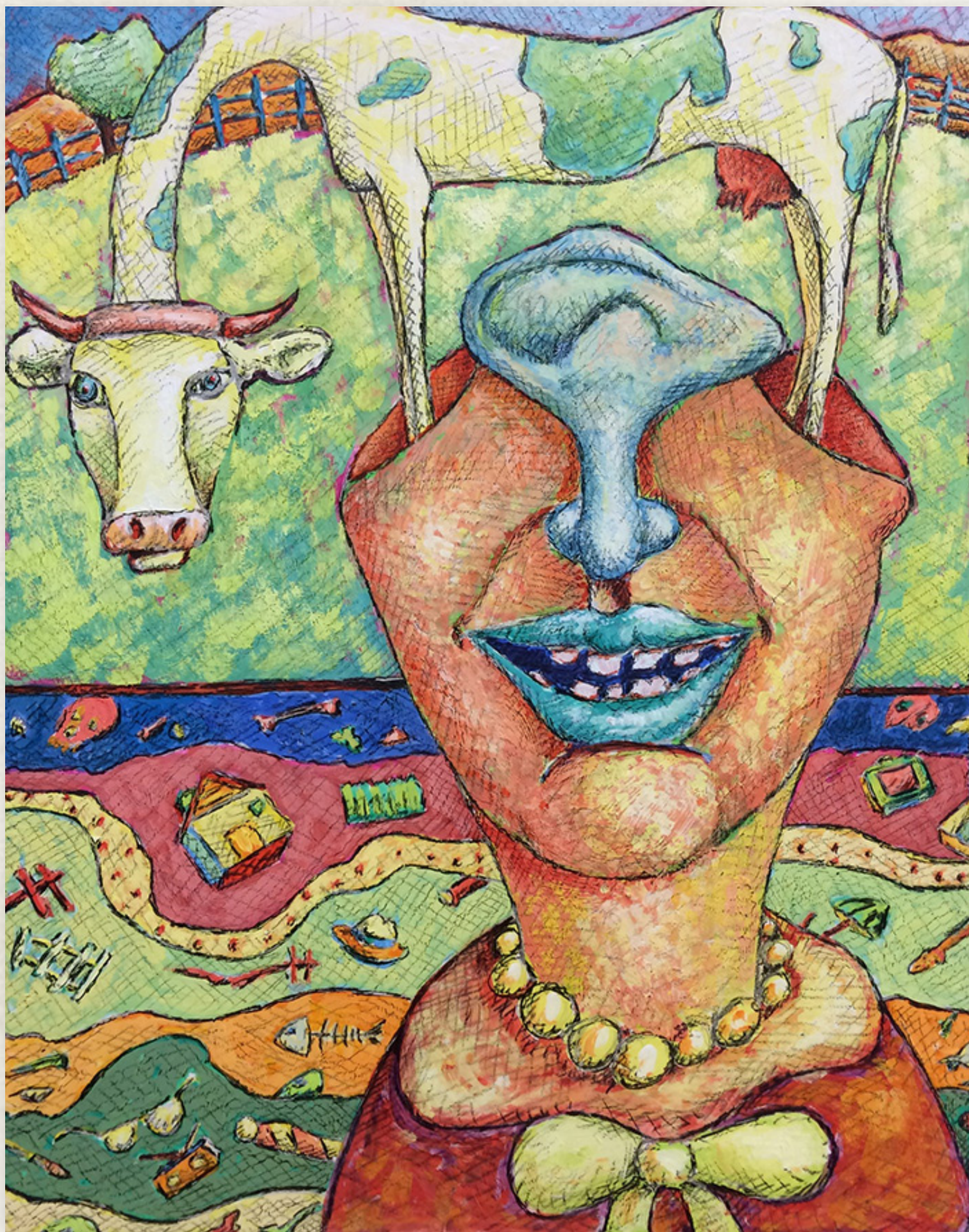
A sparse landscape took over, increasing speed and various things like an isolated bar or a low warehouse and a steak restaurant, they saw a road that led to a massive red industrial building in the background. A straight road with a traffic light came up suddenly a store and some houses up against the road and back from the road and no warning suddenly Miller pushed down hard on the brakes of the car, the stupidity of a traffic light at a high speed made all three men pitch forward all three men cursed various curses a short time after that though Miller could drive at a fast speed of 50 miles- or 55 miles-per-hour. Occasional roads turned off to the right or the left or a dirt road turned off from time to time Cob said he saw road signs that had been shot up with bullets, Cob said we should drive down one of these dirt roads and find something to shoot at he looked back at Aaron Cob said Miller brought his gun. Aaron said did you bring your gun, Miller? Miller said he did. Did you bring any bullets. Cob said how many bullets did you bring Miller Miller said 15 or 20.

A washing machine was lying on its side in these scrubby conifer trees and brush of the foothills things were often dumped in this isolated area, the three men chose the blank side of a washing machine to shoot at, there was one bullet hole in the side of the washing machine from Aaron's first shot from 30 feet away they decided immediately that this was too close from 50 feet away Aaron missed two shots then he shot the gun and the bullet hit the washing machine. Four shots apiece at the washing machine would leave 8 bullets after they counted Miller had 20 bullets. Miller shot four bullets very carefully like they expected he took his time Miller hit the washing machine with four bullets. Cob took his time but Cob wasn't sure how to shoot a gun each time he aimed it differently, Cob shot the gun four times though he was only able to hit the washing machine with two bullets he decided to shoot two more bullets before giving the gun to Aaron Cob said I'm going to shoot two more bullets, Aaron said go ahead I don't care and Miller didn't care Cob said I'm going to shoot the tree. Cob pointed the gun at the scrubby tree then Cob stopped, he looked into the conifer woods past the tree, Aaron looked into the woods then Miller looked into the woods behind the tree there stood a man, he was a man that had been through the foothills. The man was holding a rolled up blanket dirty from the ground, a canvass bag was hanging from a strap it was with printed with letters faded from a store, the canvass bag had things for his life in it he looked like a permanent camper with his clothes beat around the edges and his shirt and his pants were a dirty denim color, you can picture the frayed cuffs of his pants and some threadbare tears in his sleeves the man's uneven beard and general unkempt hair and so on he had five fresh oranges in a net that hung from his belt, the man had blue eyes like the clear blue eyes of a sympathetic person with a face closed up from shyness, he gave his head a small nod. Cob said hey, he said get away from that tree would you Cob said I almost shot you with Miller's gun. What was the man supposed to say he said, what? Cob said you have to get away from the damn tree Aaron said shut up Cob, Cob said listen pal, he said I'm going to shoot that tree he said you have to get away from the damn tree. Aaron said shut up Cob Aaron said would you shut up, they all heard the sound of Miller's gun, it must have gone off Cob looked at the gun surprised Cob had shot the gun

without aiming, Aaron said goddamit Cob, they looked and the man went straight down with his bent legs, on his knees he had a round hole of blood in his face the man fell down on his face on the ground.

It was peculiar to hear Miller's girlish voice at a time like this he said pick him up by both hands Cob, Cob bent down he put his hand around the mans wrist on one hand around the man's wrist on the other hand Cob lifted the top half of the man in this way Aaron held up one leg and Miller held up one leg and the man's head hung limply toward the dirt and some blood dripping down a bloody hole gaping out of the back of the man's head where the bullet had come through, the bullet might have gone another mile through the thin air. Miller said okay he said lay him down in there, they lifted him over and they dropped him on his face and his stomach where they had dug a shallow trough for the man's body out of the dirt next to a straight pine tree fallen on the ground and pushed and settled him into the trough now a half mile from the washing machine and the car all three sat gasping and breathing hard breaths on the ground after carrying the dead man that far and digging with no water for their dry mouths Cob said I think I'm going to have a heart attack, Aaron said you're not going to have a heart attack Cob, now they had the rest of pushing the tree over the man in the shallow hole and so on, Miller said get up he said we have to get out of this place. It was a round tree of course it couldn't be rolled over though there was the bulk of the tree and the limbs to think about after trying they saw they could swing the base of the tree around on a rock like a fulcrum rolling it off the rock and the tree settled naturally into the hollow dug for it on top of the dead man. They threw brown brush and dusty pine needles against the tree they threw brown brush and pine needles over the marks they'd all made over the ground pushing a body around with their hands and their feet, Aaron said help with this Cob Cob was standing in one place staring into the conifer woods he said what are you going to do with your gun Miller.

Cob needed a tent, there were good dumpsters at the lumberyard with good tarps for a tent from the flatbed trucks when they carried lumber and materials for construction to the lumber yard they tied black tarps over their stacked piles of fresh lumber on the trucks the drivers and the yard workers threw the tarps in the dumpsters, the lumber had its various dry places in the sheds of the lumberyard. Cob or anyone from outside could take tarps out of the dumpsters, Cob picked through he found a good tarp with no holes for a tent. Cob found some people, he had some of his stuff and a sleeping bag, he could put it under his tent, Cob sloped the tarp up against the man's garage who owned the empty lot beside the man's house in the city, the man let some men and women in their coats and their gloves and some of their kids put their tents and their various stuff in the empty lot later some cops might get involved, but it was the man's property how could cops get involved somehow the cops could make the people move on. A shy man very young with the very young beard of a young man handed Cob a folded blanket from a small pile of four or five folded blankets on a pallet someone could have taken the pallet from the lumber yard, the shy man said do you have a cigarette he had a very high voice like Miller's voice, the young man had a hunting knife in a leather sheath on his belt with black tape wrapped around one end where the leather seam came apart, Cob had a cigarette he had money for cigarettes Cob gave the man a cigarette, the shy man lit his cigarette with a match he held the match for Cob Cob didn't want a cigarette. The man held his hand out to shake hands with Cob he said Bill, Cob held out his hand he took the man's soft hand in a brief handshake he said Cob. Bill sat on the ground he smoked the cigarette Bill had his own black tent and his own stuff, he sat on the ground in front of his tent, Bill looked up then Cob looked and a man had a little dog on a leash he was an old man he had rough gray hair in one hand he held a cane, he stopped of course the dog stopped the man had a kind face with no smile he said do you have a name Bill said his name is Cob. The man said it will rain next week or it might snow he said you need to get your tent off that man's garage like that you might get wet he said set it up here like Bill has his tent the man said I'm Peyton he said put your tent up here next to Bill's tent.



HERD by Ronald Walker, 2016
gouache on board (14" x 11")

GEORGE KALAMARAS

Orpheus, Eurydice, Rilke

“And we, who have always thought of joy
as *rising*, would feel the emotion
that almost amazes us
when a joyful thing *falls*.”

—Rilke

Yes, he missed his daughter's wedding. Could not find the right clothes.
The proper shoe. Was too far fitted into his own hand, sunk into the
Sonnets' celestial ascent. Obviously, Russia too had intrigued him.
Potemkin villages. Obviously, he could smell the salt.

So it was that when he cut himself into cancer that morning in the
garden, he could not bleed—not blood, that is, but his own pheasant
scent. Not even the vowel-brown scowl of his morning tea.

These are the hours we choose to die, Rilke had said. He loved a woman
named *scent of your thigh*. Knew her monthly mood as, *Tenderly kiss my
cheek*. Knew her by the way tigers fierced themselves out within his night
sweats. Fierced about the sheets, then calmed like over the mirror of a
pond with a tensely relaxed tongue-lap.

So it was with Lou, his beloved Lou Andreas-Salome. So the mirror
of 1897 was Munich on his brain. So it was that his second journey to
Russia gave the photo-pose in 1900 with the peasant poet, Spiridon D.
Droshin. So the sheaf of wheat meant more to his brain than bread,
said *I can love the world, in private, better than any woman-hand can possibly grieve
into me*.

There is a temple in the temple of the body, still, he said. In the body of the body. A standing tree. A tree sunk deep into the inner ear. A sonnet. An Orpheus. A journey beneath all the undergrowth, to the underworld I choose and choose not to bleed. A dismembered heard—yes—mouth open, bobbing on the river's waves.

How can we, with mercy, ever abandon mercy? The blood of the thorn? Rilke's thorn? The garden where he discovered disease? The gate—in moss—pausing half-open, half-clothed? The delicacy of a pant leg crossed at a funeral to shut out what most of us fear but may most want?

Rainer Maria Rilke. Milky-faced Libra man. The world's weight displayed in the indentation on his chin. Boy-child with three feminine-sounding names. *All men should dress in their mother's clothes*, he thought, *in the clothes intended for a dead sister, if they too wish to bear the steady descent of the rain.*

Rocco Scotellaro and the Lumps of Salt

“How do you love a mother
who raises you with tears
under the Singer’s violent wheel
intent on trousseaux”

—Scotellaro

And so he banished all thought of wrist-slashing, of keeping the olive-grinder’s pit and wearing the sad veil of the young widow from Tricarico. And so he knew the sucking had to stop: bird wing, scratch of ash, thumbprint on the baker’s bread—*anything* resembling his mother’s voice.

There was in his veins, he proclaimed, water both dirty and clean. A Catholic Workers’ furrow of bend-to-the-dirt peasant scent. A criminology of book-making in Naples on some pony match or other. *To be mayor of this village is to be a fish pond*, Rocco once said, *containing everything dirty, everything clean*. And to the carter’s daughter he swooned, *I love you with all of my mouth*.

Well, he thought the latter but did not *say* it. At least directly. Had even written a poem to her milky eighteen-year-old wrists in the mule stall, revealing that three-stitched star he carried in his forehead forever as a scar. The lumps of mandibular salt in his chest. An obstinacy of love despite a world full of Italian sorrow. A fierce kicking, even in his sleep.

Which is how Scotellaro lived each of his brief thirty years. And so even the trumped up embezzlement charge that landed him forty days could not stop his gland from secreting sweet sad goldfish song. And so a fin in prison dangled from the ceiling like a slag heap wing. A way to navigate the mud in his tongue even with a limp of Sicilian, search out his mother’s good sorrow for secret ecstasies in his own human skin.

Which is why he died. Why Rocco Scotellaro died. Not because he had this skin or that, or even because he was *human*, but because his

joints lacked strategies of magnesium, a sulfate leg that led to a cramp. Which is what forced the kicking, mule dust lifting each night from the sheet. Because as mayor of Tricarico he could never cleanse the deaf man's sneeze (yes, he loved Vallejo). Could never please even the dish of tomatoes left out on the stoop in rain, complaining—Rocco was convinced—that they contained too much dirt, too much clean. *It's better to crib the cherry pit beneath the tongue*, he thought. *But, ah, the tenderness of such jiggling, of such an incessant plea.*

Rocco knew only that his friend Roberto would understand. That Roberto had taken his Zingarello self far inside that attic. Far from Mussolini. Far from the lump threatening to pepper his chest with the visage of his beloved Blanca. Had perhaps taken his Zingarello pants, some secret day, all the way to America, where Rocco's father had himself promised to bleed. Past the promised land of Astoria, New York—even Paterson, New Jersey—to a place more exotic. Fort Wayne, Indiana, say, or DeKalb, Illinois. Yes, DeKalb. Perhaps Normal Road. Had in that same night swept his Zingarello-tired-of-Mussolini's-shit self all the way back to Milan, into the circumference of his grandfather's blackberry brandy, the circle of soap the cup left, each night, on the hairs of his chest.

Not even my own mother could afford such shame, Rocco mused, biting the left side of his lower lip, tendering his father's untimely death. New Jersey, now, only a dream? The sad mesh of his dear mother's thigh, of her hose in July, the veil from which Rocco sprang. His mother's hips. Crawling continuously toward him like two tough bells. Two testicles stunned from the stallion's stance. Separate hands that refused to clasp.

So how did Rocco eventually die? And so young? And what about Roberto? *Agrarian South*, someone announced. Another confided, *How can you ever really please your mother?* Yet another simply said, *Wouldn't you die too if you could never have the carter's daughter?* Even the new mayor weighed in, stuttering something about *scum* or *fish* or *pond-just-outside-this-dustbowl-of-a-village*, lamenting the demise of the day *when you could take a damn good bribe to salve the train's unending delay.*

Ask Roberto about my coming death, Rocco once said, bent over the basin into his shaving. Or ask Roberto while asking your beard what it's like to suck the cut from the inside. To die each day, over and again, one hair at a time.

CRAIG COTTER

Sanamuluang

I'm invited to Thailand
in 3 weeks
but too ill.

Some relief
I gave up trying.

This pen
not greased
until this morning

I wrote Dhani Harrison
an email
asking him to record
a guitar solo
to replace George Martin's
harpsichord part on
"In My Life."

Dreams of the paper boy
in socks.

It traveled from Japan and Ohio
before the odometer moved.

When was the king
last on the royal field?

Cotter/72

I Can't Write Stoned

In Paris boys play soccer on the street
outside the building
where the ashes of the famous are.

A man with beautiful
long brown hair
lights a smoke in line at Musée d'Orsay.

George Harrison
summer of '67
Golden Gate Park

acoustic guitar strapped over his back
looked into my camera.

On Le Pont Mirabeau
my loves do not flow away
down the grey Seine.

IVAN ARGÜELLES

***From* {THE HYMN TO ISIS}**

archaeology of sand !
pillars of graphite and acanthus !
sitting woman bread-loaf throne and egg
misty and distant the empire of sleep
through which runs blackening the great Water
carrying all the futures of the universe
in a small shell and you the determinant
weeping bleeding and giving birth
how many gods can be written
on the eternity of your painted eyelids ?
one day it will be summer and heat
immense as the dark blade of grass
where you lay the threat of your hair
unbound and forever to dream
it is a movie ! the cinema of Pyramids !
everyone who ever had a name
races through your skin tattooed
with illusions of greek shipwrecks
violent tempests of hieroglyphic minerals
essences of balsam rosewood and sandal
Mummy Nut gave birth to you
in the once and former ethiopian sky !
now you grieving assemble annually
the thousand and one pieces of Osiris
rushing out to the delta continents
where the hungry gather to eat his shadows
fold us in the tent of your mind !
become at once ancient and Legend !
suffer nothing of the winds that blaze

through the hoops cut into your ears !
you are fragrant and deathless !
you are bronze-age serpent !
you are wings without a statue !
outstretched your palms become conscious !
it is the year 1360 BCE !
a wonder that today you come running
with the moontides when only the leaves
of trees that grow downwards into the Nether
are aware that you are more than shimmering
that your presence is the rock that elevates
into atmospheres of monolithic scarabs
that your aura is the reversal of infinity
you are the Insect that burrows in the human brain
Memphis ! Thebes ! New York City !
glassware and cutlery of the Metropolitan Museum !
phantoms of mankind go back and forth
in the galleries where they sell your Postcards
you are the picture no eye can envisage !
work-of-art with breasts !
the time has come to retreat from Myth
to take consolation in the wells as they occur
in the great trek across the desert of Unknown
Death you are ! the rosy ring at the end of time
radio and pulse and drum-beat
rain finally that is the answer to our prayers
eighty times your name in the funeral texts !
eighty times your name in the funeral texts !

(blue blue blue

smoke without return)

Gerusalemme Liberata

I have nothing left to say
I have seen the ancient city of Nimrud
destroyed piecemeal by jackhammers
I have nothing left to say
and the president of the United States
shed crocodile tears over images
of babies gassed by the Infidel
while denying access to 500,000 refugees
what is left to say
the Russia is angry because it lost the Cold War
the Zion is stealing land from the Palestine
it's all in the Bible
nothing left to be said
Hermione daughter of phantom Helen
aghast at the news from Kandahar
Cassandra raving on rubble steps of Troy
sets sail tomorrow hostage to wild Mycenae
Taliban S.O.S. to the moon !
day will come when all of us spears
missiles and bow-shafts sturdy in our hands
will fend off the foe in their armored beasts
earth will lose its ionosphere
coral reefs turned to blanched cabbage
who has anything left to say
conspiracy theory fake news alternative facts
lessons of democracy lost in South Sudan
magnetic needles sent spinning in arctic floes
amphetamine induced politicians declare Void !
with nothing left to say
who will write the following lyric
who will attest to the once and former Homer
who will say the Muses were not bankrupt
courtesans or mule-skinners' brides
it is the world that is illusion

it is planet Nothing on a death trip
lunching on Gorgon and Medusa
it is too late to have anything left to say !
it is the religious right to blame
it is neo-con liberal isolationists
it is drum-thumping head-band hippies
grown senile in their lost caravanserais
it is Gaia strapped to her final tom-tom
doing Ojibway fox-trot in the sump
recycling all her plundered minerals
into the once deathless sea
I have nothing left to say
I have Uranium dust in my veins
I have plutonium cyanide cocktail
I have talking-death blues wanderlust
to leave the planet forever !
and the vice-president of the United States
is a flag wrapped around a fetus
dumped into the Gowanus canal
it can be the year 1972 AD
or the year when everyone dies
but I have nothing left to say
erasing line by line the last epic poem
the one about the re-taking of Mosul !
and the countless nameless warriors
each who pledged to his god
to capture once and for always

Jerusalem



COLLAR by Homero Hidalgo, 2005
acrylic, oil, and fabric on board (12" x 9")



TUSSE by Homero Hidalgo, 2005
acrylic and fabric on canvas (28" x 28")



MEDLEY by Homero Hidalgo, 2008
acrylic on canvas (28" x 20")



DON'T LOOK UP by Homero Hidalgo, 2017
acrylic on canvas (40" x 28")

JOHN BRADLEY

Again Let Us Begin

In memory of Tomaz Salamun

You, so afraid of disinterred lightning. Your libretto calls
for stilled sleep. Steeped salt. We drape this sheet over
what you unknowingly blink. Char and feather clinging
to collar, cough. Tomaz, you once opened a can of tuna fish
to fondle non-human flesh. To dandle what we crave.
Discorrect what we collect. For us you drew a god down
bile duct to claw, speak, burr. Gnaw through the wall,
tonsil and toad. Vertical and blur. A smitten tinsmith inside
someone's mouth. Leaving us this to stumble and chew.
We can always never fully unspool the end of this world
through finger or poem. Done again, let us begin. Always
ever. Though little remains but the longing for flesh
that cannot feather and char. Bray or abrade. Begin again.

Endnotes on a Condition Called *Dear Morpheus: This Too Is Topographically True*

1. Draw my face out of your tibia, my hands with chuff and charcoal.
2. Draw rectangular black bands over the eyes of my father, an Irish bog swaddling my mother.
3. Draw me looking confused and calm, holding a placid bomb, a frightful balm.
4. Draw to your side *Silence: An Abbreviated Interruption*.
5. Draw a wasp navigating the sky inside a big-mouthed glass jar. Don't be alarmed if I ask you for your zip code and a recent soil sample.
6. Draw me in your lower bowel, my thumb a toad that resembles a leaf, a leaf that resembles a war that resembles red dust.
7. Draw a wristwatch placed on a tree stump next to an unidentifiable wild turd. Photograph the drawing, then fax the drawing of the photo.
8. Draw, over a foliated field, a cheesecloth sky. Trace the exfoliated lines that leave no trace.
9. Draw the sewer system with an olive pit and the red-tailed hawk with the cries too shrill to draw.
10. Draw a tomato with tangerine urges. *Be wary of molten pulp*, says the wasp, full of unenumerated silence.

11. Do not attempt to draw this: Swallow a pair of scissors. Lie down on spent newsprint. Without moving, cut an entry for a drawn-out exit.

12. Draw me drawing your face floating over Iceland, nearly dawn.

Bradley/84

Dear Morpheus,

You lose your way each time I tell you
you pour your face into my hands.

Someone wrote these exact words

using words nothing like these.

I pull a choir out of my femur, hang it

from a tree until the song dissolves.

As a vowel travels from diaphragm
into the throat of your nipple

I let in someone who looks something

like you who seems almost leaden.

Pull a pitcher out of the spine and then

pour the night back into the spinal book.

Every day contains the hiss of history.

I always almost forget: Your face

is not the same as what comes after this.

RÉNE CHAR

On Leave in the Wind

Thick fields of mimosa bivouac on the village hillside. During harvest season, and some distance from your place, you might have an extremely fragrant encounter with a girl whose arms have been busy all day among the fragile branches. She passes like a lamp with a bright aura of perfume, her back turned to the setting sun.

It would be sacrilegious to speak one word to her.

Give her the path, even though your sandals crush the grass. Did you have the chance to glimpse the dream and glaze of night on her lips?

translated from the French by KEITH TAYLOR

JEFF HARRISON

The Birth of Liquid Desires

behind eyes all sharp myriads
Herr Bibliothekarius
ciphery & unashamed
tells himself
he is an insect poet
ciphery & unashamed
hidden dainty from storm

his story's axe men
ciphery & unashamed
overstay their welcome

his tale's rose,
antique and
festival-drowsy,
is everywhere
ciphery & unashamed

DAVID GIANNINI

That Country

They were warnable, the people of that country,
and not warned.

 Their flesh
burns in the newscasts
coloring in the fact

of assault.

 High in the trees
every nest's empty. There's silence across wheat
of the full fields the elders
and the children
hacked.

 How it is that

wind rushes ahead of its own core, which is still

air; that there are human bodies fleeing

until they halt
and wait for the characters inside them

to catch up, the static ones
who would crackle and hiss
against betrayals;
 that they will

Giannini/88

move beyond trees
 over the rough roads
 into the cities

where the eyes of their countrymen turn

into burning stones.

DENVER BUTSON

poor scarecrow

poor scarecrow
he was put
on this earth
to do one thing
scare crows
and yet this whole time
he has believed
that he is the one
charged with the urgent job
of holding up the sky

and now
poor scarecrow
his arms are limp and broken
his neck is crooked and weak
and now
the crows stay away
only out of pity it seems
pity and a little respect
for custom

poor scarecrow
even though he can barely
hold up his own arms
even though his head
droops toward the dirt
like a September sunflower
he goes on believing
in this

Butson/90

that if he collapses
the sky
poor sky
and everything else
poor everything else
will collapse
finally
with him

scarecrows and stars

the scarecrow is not a sleep
the slightest rustle of the slightest breeze
is enough to keep him awake
no matter how much
he wants to ease into
what he can only imagine
must be like a cradle
or like a lulling ocean of quiet

the scarecrow is required by laws
set down long before you and I
had ever seen a scarecrow
in a picture book
or far out in a field
if he really wants to sleep
to count to infinity
as if getting there
just might do the trick

*but once you get to infinity
the stars tell the scarecrow
you have to start counting backwards
to zero and then start all over again*

that's what scarecrows do
the stars remind him

scarecrows and stars
the scarecrow says
under his breath

and then tries to find
his place again
in this autobiography
of endless counting

Butson/92

noticing

the scarecrow is swimming
through an ocean called *alibi*

the moon is his getaway car

say the scarecrow's name
even accidentally
even under your breath
in the night

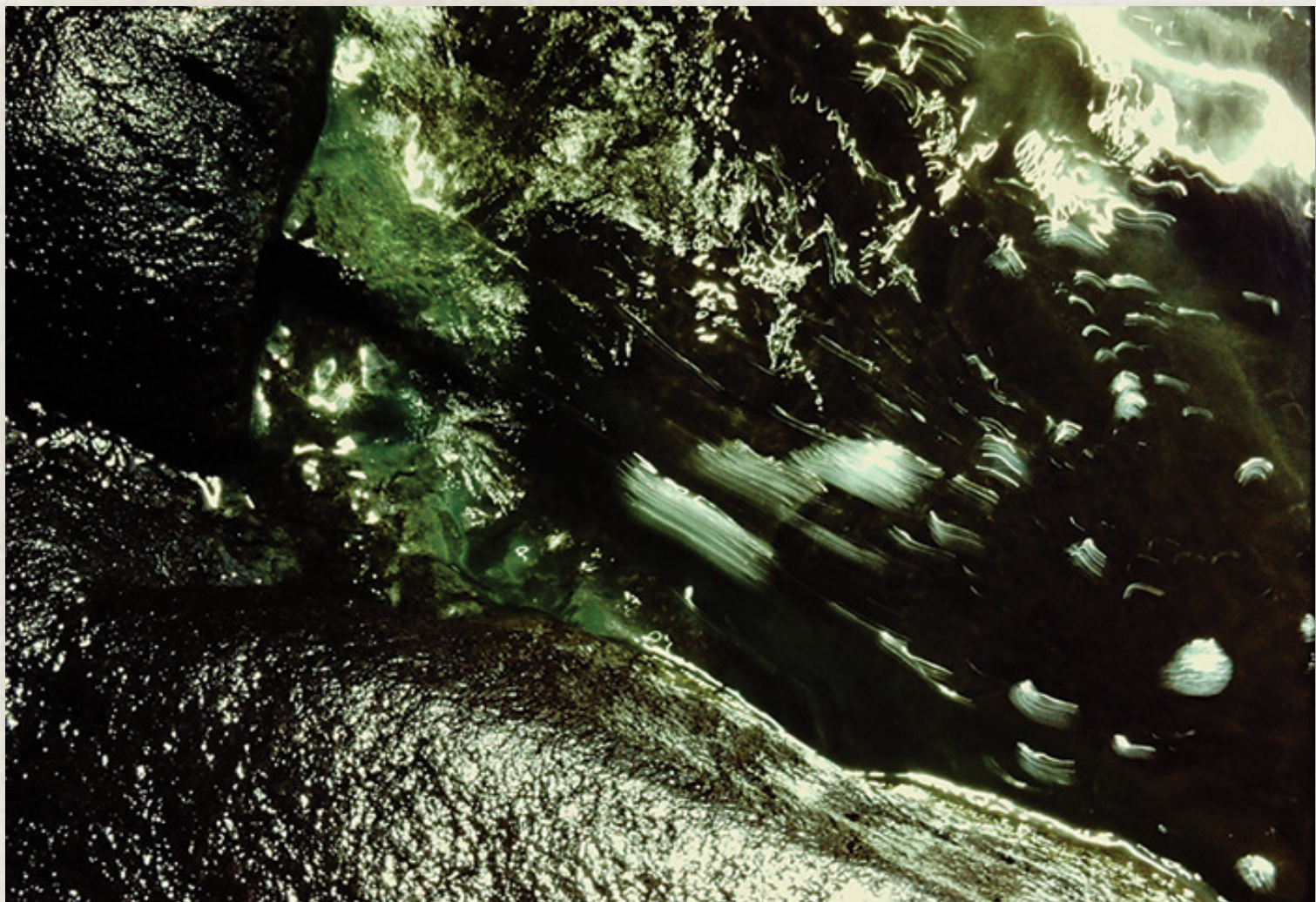
and the scarecrow just might
mumble *thank you whoever you are*
thank you for noticing

sentence

The courtroom in which the scarecrow was sentenced to however many successive lives of being a scarecrow in which the scarecrow was not present for sentencing because he was being held elsewhere apparently in the interest of his own safety in which no judge solemnly read the sentence and no jury sat and listened with seemingly no emotion whatsoever in which no prosecuting attorney stood up and said *your honor with all due respect we the counsel representing the people find this sentence to be extremely harsh given the nature the crimes and the heretofore innocence of the defendant* and sat back down dropping her head into her hands and weeping in which no family member collapsed into another's shoulder and the scarecrow's mother did not wail so long and so loud that nobody thought his heart just might split into irreparable pieces in which no stenographer or court reporter heard the sentence and simply stopped working and vowed to never work for such a system again and walked away finally leaving the court record unfinished

was not a courtroom at all really but what the farmer and his wife referred to as *the kitchen* even though it was the much bigger room outside the actual room used for cooking and washing dishes and was more of what one might call a dining room though what the farmer and his wife referred to as *the dining room* was furnished formally with a table and chairs in fashion forty years before and was only used on Christmas and Easter and occasionally when the farmer's wife laid out photographs to go through before putting in albums or when she pulled out the wedding silver for polishing but was not a courtroom as described above and the judge was no judge really no long-robed no powdered-wigged public servant but simply the farmer himself sitting stiff-backed in his kitchen chair with his big hands on his knees and the harsh sentence he spoke was no mulled-over pronouncement of meted-out justice but simply a matter-of-fact post-lunch announcement of what had to happen next in the afternoon *I guess it's time I made a scarecrow woman* and then got up and reached for a toothpick the fate of the scarecrow decided and the jury was no motley assortment of anyone who might not have an opinion on the matter until they finally had an opinion on the matter

but simply the farmer's wife who listened blankly and then said *I'll get that old gray work shirt and some pants from the sewing box and get to work soon as I finish these dishes* and the farmer walked out snapped his fingers for the dog to follow and the dog followed him out to the barn and past the cornfield the prison that it would be for the scarecrow even though it was no prison yet long after the dog and the farmer and his wife were gone and long after the last crow who could remember this day would fly over and acted as if he remembered what crimes the scarecrow must have committed that condemned him to such ruthless and interminable punishment and whispered it to the other crows who would stay as far as they could from this criminal as if it were the truth.



LIGHT DANCES WITH WATER by Doug Hagley
1991, Cibachrome print from Kodachrome 25

DOREN ROBBINS

Grosz Tradition Satori Pessoa

The school we went to was the George Grosz school. The exposure tradition.

The gaping air-conditional war vet muse amputee rancid brothel Inferno

exposure—not that *The Cantos* trauma hang it infernos or all the Macbeths’

dumbass daydreams haven’t multiplied.

Ate my fried-up lunch at the American counter in the American version

same as the French and Spanish Russian German and Italian versions or the Croatian Japanese Saudi Bilderberg Halliburton Seven Sisters versions, the Chinese with their own likelihood, not likely anymore to be

somewhere they’re not if we’re not.

Smoked my pack and a half a day, underlined packaged newspaper invasion

heard about Amazon deforest Afghan-CIA heroin disaster connection reportage

heard about corrupt lender creditors from here the others over there and from

over there

with mustaches

without eyebrows

barely a brassiere

one with one nut

investment portfolios galore and galoriosis

not a single castanet

a flamenco boot nailed to a gun rack

a pair of Anarchist work boots nailed to a gun rack

a mezuzah nailed through a Koran nailed to a gun rack
kidnapped Chibok School girls nailed by their military rapists
the Goya Third Day of May All Day Globalism
the West now synchronized with the East
how is it possible to dis-satisfy those drivers' drives?
something freelance and high finance
the acclaimed Aryan or Stalinaholic terrorism international heritage
Genghis Khanian Henry Kissingerous Supremacy likenesses
all of the Founding International Logo Framers.

The Decrepitors.

A chance there's a Fernando Pessoa out there working as assistant
bookkeeper

programmers, proofreaders, software formatters

baristas e baristos wage slaved serving them

stashing written alternate self dramas, confessions, poems, plans to
escape

the isolation without any means to, stacked writings

in a trunk in the meantime. That's what he did that they do that they
horde to

return to. The Fernando Pessoaas.

You can tabulate the worrying over the recording and the recorded
dreams

documentations disquietude accumulated over the record of your days
and

figure out you're not going to figure out that you'll figure it out.

You can celebrate a type of stuttering the neurons freeze upon in the
discharge

in the pattern complexifying images judgments erotics conundrums
apathy

imagined or demented.

You can be practical and exotic.

~

Trump what's there to write about Trump. Trump's against the
alphabet.

Trump accuses metaphors of being misleading numbers.

Disproportionate environment and union poisoning continuation after Obama

after Bush, after, after.

The proportionate dimensions are subjective if you like, you accept it.

Of all the septicity.

Trump and his thugs bathe in the bath and toilette water of Cain.

Not a Paris Commune enough will turn to some end to end it.

You can wish them all the agitilius scrotemitis chronic enlarged foreskin

regrowths and Coulter numb clit all you like, they'll never cop

they've no reason to give you

or any inclination to inform you

what the actual etymology means in the definition design behind

"Gitmo"

and the rest of their Guantanomologies.

They weren't just standing around storing it up on the side waiting for the big

moment, you know. They weren't picking up their socks and putting on their

feet, you know. They weren't just squeezing their whistles calculating the payoffs to come. They came in a wave, including on numbers of screens,

toward the crowd to plough into, uniformed hooded un-uniformed including

with rampaging crowds in overalls in business suits with cut-you-up expressions descended from the Great Gnat Clan.

There's no scientific

consensus on what constitutes a gnat.

They're described flying in large numbers themselves described as clouds.

What is the total count in the phrase "in swarming numbers" or "rampaging

crowds" including the sides they don't appear at first to be coming from also

described as clouds?

What is the total count for Otto Schubert's ink drawing
"The Suffering of Horses in the War, 1919"?

What happened at the front of the customer service line he referred to
in an interview, what stared down the title of Teddy Plentikoff's
painting

"At the Counter with Amputations, 2003 to 2017"?

~

South of Washington Boulevard I found the urinal general evacuation
substation wall-length metal mirror dungeon, #077 and counting.
You walk the stairs under the sand. You walk like you're high. High
enough.

You have to be. A nurse practitioner voice tells me I should wear a
better

jacket around here. This voice is not giving advice; this voice is
making a

judgment along with the other voice in my head on the past due calls
on the check that came back, "—why didn't you take care of the past
due check?"

"My eyes got worse." I mean unfigureoutable sudden disequilibrium
in the loss

of accurate focus. My eyes can't be that complicatedly enigmatically
wasting away into flax marbles in my head without sound, any form
of sound.

I would have known this was happening as in a signal of some kind
that things

are worse than I heard about in the first place with some sound going
on. Oh

just flow with it she said. Maybe, maybe if I wasn't still tied to the
ground by a

strand of hair in that part of myself.

It's a frustration thing more than a retaliation thing trying to figure
out where

it started. Try to name that. The rhythm in a drawer of mud is your

archetype.

Your *Frustration Agonistes*. You better smell the water, smell everything, test if

there's something in it, with the kind of eyesight I have.

I don't.

Am I more casual or less neurotic for not doing it?

I'm not casual.

I don't trust casual.

The one friend from when I was sixteen to nineteen I wanted to reconnect

with now for several years visits me in a dream. He's a cannibal, he says.

I ask him, and he nods, he has come to eat me.

I'll be analyzing for years why this dream was inevitable, why it was followed

by a sequence led by the Puppets' Muse and the dissection of the fold in her

brain with the cocoon morphology gene.

Then Geōrgios, someone named Geōrgios followed the Puppet's Muse.

I was meeting him there because they said he was good at sandals. He showed me a

sample gold sandal. There was no leather so there was no way I'd listen to a

sales pitch for sandals from this man, this Geōrgios. He sensed it.

Okay but the callouses must come off.

Yes, I said with a foot in his hand that wasn't at first my foot but a foot that

would work with the sample gold sandal.

He cut off the callouses with a sharp knife.

I knew this could be done by the right technique.

I was queasy in the head and both feet. Wait he said parting and then coming

back through split leather curtains handing me a paper package and a pitcher.

Here're your sandals, if they don't fit you'll grow into them or next to them.
 I put the money in his hand, then took a long swig of village wine
 from the
 pitcher because that wine always erased the stone in my throat.
 That ongoing stone.
 That trickster's gold sandal.
 That Geōrgios. In a part of the mind where such things take hold.

~

Why'dja get a migraine aura? Too much village wine, too much Goya
 Third
 Day of May All Day Globalism Great Gnat Clan worries? Looked out
 of the
 shattered lens fantasizing logic fantasized aura interpretation. Where
 to hide.
 Strange to yourself. The slant side dominates. The unswallowed
 feeling
 dominates. No defenses in the interim. The inside pocket out of him.
 He showed his back to the cashier. Holding migraine in his arms
 enough in the
 gear to move himself to a bench. Migraine made him hard and
 congested
 going through it chewing on pills through this.
 —Why'dja get a migraine?—Don't chuck me a migraine.
 Did you see my right eye swam Plexiglas fin jagged light slapped the
 showered
 glass? What, you need another migraine peripheral light bulb
 shattered
 geometric storm fracture non-sense migraine?
 What are you a migraine machine?
 Label after unreadable label
 plugged sinuses
 vituperative constipationals
 heart attack in the heart of my you know what if someone doesn't see
 someone soon for my you know, you know

indigestion-confusion

armpit itch-lock

cordless memory

allergies-allergies

chafed anus

perpendicular hysteria—what a three weeks with my body.

~

All the assembly line sweatshop agricultural-industrial torture
chambers to

keep it going, or do any of us think we might never lose our jobs?

The “get up! get up!” parrot labor culture squawking-squawking.

He was a man so simple he felt affectionate toward sparrows, the
traffic

helicopter skateboard Big-wheels barking dogs bugged him out of his
delight

listening to them. What, you think there’s consent, like some kind of
contract,

like you might be answerable for dreaming you step on a hose
squirting the

man in the surveillance camera in the back of his pants in the screen
in his cell

phone at the rail of boat outside Port Angeles Ithaca San Pedro...

*Sir, please get up from the floor—yes, now, please sir, immediately. Thank you, sir, no
the elevator is only for staff, please use the stairs. No sir, you may not use the ladder,
thank you, sir. Excuse me, sir, I’m sorry sir but you may not sleep on the bench, no
not even sitting upright, no not even for a few minutes, sir. Excuse me I don’t think
he can hear me, would you tell the gentlemen in front of you he mustn’t hold his child
on his shoulders. No sir, he cannot carry him in one of our carts, they are reserved
for transporting merchandise, please tell him to take him down, sir. What did he
say? No sir, I cannot watch his child. Thank you, sir. Please eat your salami in the
picnic area, no sir, I do not care for vegan products, thanks all the same, sir. What
sir? No, you may not water the plants, thank you, sir. I cannot hear you whispering
so low. Oh yes, the restroom is just past the curtain, by the roped-off Hydra’s head.*

Yes, the restroom is the bathroom. Okay sir, I will show you. O-h-h-h sir! You cannot have sex here sir, please let go! Thank you, sir. No, I cannot give you a ride home sir. Goodbye. Please pick up your tooth pick. Thank you, sir...

The fog goes off with the half moon. It's the drive I make alone to
Sand Dune

State Park. Paying-up in the gas mart with five gas-and-oil petrol
additive

paying wardens conniving and agreeing they should immolate the
mental

patient escapee who drove the wrong way on Pacific Ocean Avenue.

Manslaughtered a single mother of four.

Of all the wronged ways.

They'll get even, that gas mart mob. It's their insect dissecting dessert
of the mind anyway. A lot of getting even on the human list.

Not a chance to stall for more time.

The vengeance chromosome in the first place.

Up in the dunes I had a twitch, felt like a reverse twitch.

For a twitch in reverse, whom do you consult? How much Advil
tequila indica

or sativa? All day I felt like there wasn't a part of me where the juice
was gone,

right up until I was thinking how they teach it succeeding at shoving it
all the way into closing you off from it

from interrupting from retreating from it

but amnesia's not the natural order. Amnesia and obedience destroy
vitality.

Shit, obedience destroys common sense. There's at least the chance
learned

dissidence holds off irrational outcomes more than the worse than
expected

the more than you'd like to remember. Whatever the protest,
humming along

in my head songs filled with dissident praises. It could seem like a
curse

set on you, all of us.

Started at nineteen looking at cards on an Unemployment Office
bulletin

board for summer construction or dishwasher or delivery work.

I was grinding my teeth. Weren't you? I was nineteen, dishwashed
together,

wildflowered in two parts, I didn't want to regret what it meant to be
shallow.

~

Knocking-off time came around then the last shift with month-to-
month

contracts and two tabs of management-commandments force-fed
down our

contracting throats, filed out the barbed-wire-topped storeroom gate.

An un-

resurgent blob, the four of us smoking past the wired boundary, tired
and

pissed. All for their Monday-Friday, no cook's uniform, and wine and
grass

enough. The cherished "enough."

There were those other shifts when you'd get into a flow and keep
away from

talk, you can jinx it, you won't let anybody even touch your hand the
way you

work it with a wooden spoon or a balloon whip through Hollandaise
and

Béarnaise. And the roux stirring hand, same philosophy. "Don't come
near his

hand," the older guy who worked the broiler next to me said when I
was in a

flow (tasting everything nodding or shaking his head as he went along),
"don't

even graze his hand."

Some of us got into the work still ready to walk out for higher wages.
 Some of
 us got into the style and efficiency, the tools and the rhythm alone.
 Some knew
 the raises weren't coming but wouldn't get into pleading, to them
 pleading
 dramatized inferiority, somebody else's preferred position, that
 enigma, the
 difference, that drama, the model, either way, a strategy. No collective
 in the
 bargaining. You find out, you stay or move on or grudge your stay.
 A character trait.
 The Unworkoutable has its intrigue, other people have theirs.

This isn't a poet's autobiography. I used to repair roofs. Sometimes
 you grasp
 forestalling worse fates repairing damages. That fantasy. Calculating
 repairing
 through your hands. You can start out raising part of your language
 on Dylan
 Thomas, in part I'm saying about that part about that certain point
 when you
 don't care what a poetic line like "alter-wise by owl light" means
 metaphorically privately non-denominationally—there's a certain
 point you
 don't bother about consonantal sonority lyricism, the denture
 whitening kind
 or whether it is or not. I'm not saying it's insipid, not saying it's brazen
 if
 things don't get said after everything that's melted down the Crow
 Creek My
 Lai Crematorium Fallujah toilet closet bend—
 do what you like
 look over your own shoulder. You know the idiom *I'm sleeping with one
 eye open*.

Some people have only one eye. What's the idiom for that?

That's all you can ask.

Not everybody's the asking type.

Somebody's going to mix up the categories. Thicken the melted pot.

It'll always be the thing to do. Maybe it's the Why isn't there more insight

unlimited to degree zero insight? All the blunted insights. Maybe it's democracy's erased degree zero democracy after the Athenian percentage of

democracy wiped out for the next 1,949 years. Who will remember it for you?

Left over problematic erasure heads' ideas what kept everyone tame as we've

still been a mass de-masted mass of movements, disarmed workers' hives, the

whole power plant manic economic dissectionomic organ pilfering maintained available worker-shoppers before the sequential available bodies worker-

shopper successive generations of up to the ozone ovaries—

the governing forces laxative popping profiteers' bloody kind of pornography

they make

that they're into making—

some of the free go out and stick pins through their ears nostril tips tongues

genitals parts of genitals studs ripped up the filled up on opiates pharma-

persuadables—we're on junk about the hard truths. Junk enough.

In the meantime there's no meantime.

In the mean time there's a placating descriptive meantime.

In the drought officially temporarily arrested mean time.

The neighbor's camellias pour over the downspouts, at both ends bees out of

their heads with what they sip there to rub there. Same Viburnum drops they

drench themselves in at the front of the building. Same whatever-it-is
open
in my own partial perceptible mental seam unrepeated absolute
enough
absolute feeling compared to the one waiting at the emergency room
door to
be transferred. It argues for the real thing, the feeling, not the passion,
not the kind
forced against itself, and you're unknown. It's the mean time.
Satori in Viburnum. It relented. Dim the world dim.



Picasso

SD

PICASSO/SELF PORTRAIT by Steve Downs, 2011
oil on canvas (30" x 24")

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

GUY R. BEINING:

The Fact of Art in the
Trunk of Trump, a gold brick
that cannot be licked.

IVAN ARGÜELLES:

OK it's hurricane season again, this time forever, and not a day without bad news sinking hopes mounting fears and the vast et cetera that accompanies the fall of the Neo-Roaming Umpire of the Untied Slates of Armorica. First the voluntary manslaughter degree echelons of air banked in memory sand storms whiplash disintegrating shores or was it self-execution at the bar bewildered hair tossed trying to look at the pile-up of vehicles in the plaza round about idioms escalating war cries the god Huracán one legged god of sky-tempests blue in the face from blowing disasters by the minute. Hail him, releasing humans from property and identity rooftop ululations packed at 185 MPH and yet in the pivot of hell known as the Swamp the unh he's-not-my-president tweets another salvo of racist and inhumane taunts while flood waters lack of power food shortages in Paradise escape his attention shooting golf with the rich and famous on his Russian financed country club. Is this the maelstrom of the end? Is this the ragnarök and Armageddon geopoliticians soothsayers oracles soothsayers naysayers the Sybil of Cumae hanging in her bottle and Cassandra raving ranting and foaming on the burning Trojan stairwell predicted? Round the bend beneath the shoals where the bent ear listens for the next Tsunami reciting bad poetry as it whales its surging violence up to the beaches of Florida and Texas oil whines spillways detritus of human bondage Jim Crow epithets opioid epidemic endemic encephalopathy of the Right Wing marching torch bearers and the many more mass killings on the Vegas Strip

chanting like Billy Idol on steroids. Take a knee! Pledge no allegiance to the Frog of the Manacled Spikes of Antarctica! Remember what Jimi Hendrix said while kissing the sky: Is it tomorrow, or just the end of time? This is 50th anniversary of the Summer-of-Love John Lennon George Harrison Hari Krishna bliss out even as California Dreaming takes schizoid split off the Mendocino coast and old Terremoto comes back to haunt the decrepit and dying hippies with Hells-Angels motorcycle revenge wearing tight red baseball caps with the logo MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN and Poets & Writers reminds us that America is having a golden age of poetry Production! Does no one go to bed anymore with headache of Viet Nam choppers dropping agent orange instead of No-Doze and mile-a-minute amphetamines? Where is the corpse of one-legged storm-tossed blindfolded Huracán if not in the Bay of Pigs War Memorial? History! That one page text book all about how the Sumerians discovered everything and the filibuster on the senate floor destroyed all remaining evidence of how the Soviets won the Good War ... We digress, the worst heat wave ever recorded keeps going in circles becoming next year's worst heat wave ever recorded and the luxury liners and nine hundred story beach hotels where dead crooners sing Fly me to the Moon all come tumbling down in an apocalyptic monsoon named Donald Jesus Trump!

Amen

RANDY PRUNTY:

In the midst of a terrifying nightmare, the picture returns to the frame, the eye returns to its portrayal. In an effort to wake yourself, your hand writes the words your voice cannot speak. It pens words on top of words. The voice feels this indentation on the surface, the pure gloss of ink in the rut. The tidy comes back to the horrid mess, calmly discerning who is awake.

DIANE GLANCY:

I am a weird Christian of sorts. I seem to see other moons circling the planets of the biblical texts—or some of them anyway. Plays on words or thoughts of stories that remain in memory mixed with childhood

books that rhymed. There is an underbelly to it all. The unconscious mind has fun with biblical stories. Even when the visions in the Book of Revelation terrify—it's the distillations and side-views that interest.

SALVATORE DI FALCO:

Brute Truth

Dostoevsky said that much unhappiness comes from bewilderment and things not being said. The world stupefies us continuously with chaos and confusion and rarely gladdens our hearts. As for things not being said, we're trying to correct that now, saying as much as we can before we check out of this shit hole. We're already looking beyond happiness, which no longer signifies. As for not being happy unless you've been unhappy, context is everything. We're unhappier some times than at other times. Does the latter count as a form of happiness? Perhaps. Bukowski doesn't even ask happiness, just a little less pain. We're on board with that. But perhaps this has been a strategy all along, forgoing happiness now so that we can be happy later. But waiting for that eats up a lot of time. And there are no guarantees. If we had a purpose we might be happy. Having no purpose obviates that. Finding a purpose should be our mission. But we thought we had found it, only to be shown we were wrong. Céline said you get uglier and more repulsive at the little game as you grow older. In the end a hideous grimace marks your features and there is no hiding it from the world. Alas.

RAY GONZALEZ:

Picnic

I choked on white sand at the age of three, my first family picnic at White Sands National Monument only ten years after Trinity, Ground Zero about 20 miles from our picnic table in the public park. Was it a safe distance from a history that didn't exist for a small boy? I was blinded by the noon sun and endless white walls of sand, the 95 degree heat making me climb to see what was on the other side. Distant mountains and a flat white landscape that shimmered and pushed me away. I rolled down the dune, laughing and grabbing fistfuls of sand, the endless glare bringing tears to my eyes as my parents watched me from the shade of the picnic table. I didn't know the senior scientists

made one dollar bets, wagering on the explosive yield of the bomb. I found a quarter under the picnic table and spent it on a snow cone back in El Paso. The hot outing was a few years before my first pair of eyeglasses at age six. "We were told to lie down in the sand," Edward Teller explained years later. "No one complied. We were determined to look the beast in the eye." Picnic laughter and the blindness of many summer visitors to the park, driving on paved roads in wonder at the endless white and the occasional white jackrabbit running away, Robert Oppenheimer staring through special goggles 10,000 yards south of the explosion, a three year old boy crying in the back seat of the car on the 150 mile drive home to El Paso, tears streaming down his face. I don't remember why I got in trouble and keep trying to recall past the image of my father turning over the driver's seat, trying to slap me with an open hand, my legs pulling out of the way, the sudden motion raining white sand out of my pant cuffs and from my black and white tennis shoes.

DAVID GIANNINI:

From Robert Burton's 1621 encyclopedic *Anatomy of Melancholy*:

I hear new news every day, and those ordinary rumours of war, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, comets, spectrums, prodigies, apparitions, of towns taken, cities besieged in France, Germany, Turkey, Persia, Poland, &c., daily musters and preparations, and such like; which these tempestuous times afford, battles fought, so many men slain, monomachies, shipwrecks, piracies, and sea-fights; peace, leagues, stratagems, and fresh alarums. A vast confusion of vows, wishes, actions, edicts, petitions, lawsuits, pleas, laws, proclamations, complaints, grievances, are daily brought to our ears. New books every day, pamphlets, currantoes, stories, whole catalogues of volumes of all sorts, new paradoxes, opinions, schisms, heresies, controversies in philosophy, religion, &c. Now come tidings of weddings, maskings, mummeries, entertainments, jubilees, embassies, tilts and tournaments, trophies, triumphs, revels, sports, plays; then again, as in a new shifted scene, treasons, cheating tricks, robberies, enormous villainies in all kinds, funerals, burials, deaths of princes, new discoveries, expeditions, now comical, then tragical matters. Today we

hear of new lords and officers created, to-morrow of some great men deposed, and then again of fresh honours conferred; one is let loose, another imprisoned; one purchaseth, another breaketh; he thrives, his neighbour turns bankrupt; now plenty, then again dearth and famine; one runs, another rides, wrangles, laughs, weeps, &c. Thus I daily hear, and such like, both private and public news, amidst the gallantry and misery of the world—

MARK DUCHARME:**Poetry & Resistance**

“Despair is not a strategy,” someone wrote. Neither is denial, of course, but in order to be human, one must breathe; one must sing & dance & hunger, love & lust &— as little as possible— fear. The impulse, however rational-seeming, to separate the poetic from the broader enterprise of life is as doomed to failure as abstinence-only sex education, for it denies a basic part of our make up— a primordial one, at that. Long before humans had kings or presidents or oligarchs; before they organized themselves into large-scale, futile slaughter; before they developed an inhuman hatred of their kind due to the pigments of the skin, humans sang & chanted, no doubt out of joy & love & awe. In this way, the deep roots of the poetic took hold in us. They are with us still.

If poetry cannot be disentwined from “life’s rich pageant,” then it follows that poetry and politics play an interactive role. And indeed, if we look at history, hasn’t this often been the case? Poets as otherwise strikingly different as Shelley, Brecht, Whitman, Baraka, Vallejo, Waldman, Byron, Hughes, Ginsberg, Zukofsky and Rich, among many others, have overtly political “content,” however defined, in at least some of their work. Some went even further. Copies of Paul Éluard’s poem “Liberté” were dropped by the RAF over Nazi-occupied Europe. René Char fought in the French Resistance. Aimé Césaire and Václav Havel held elected offices in their respective countries— a state of affairs that would no doubt have mortified Plato. George Oppen famously undertook a twenty-five year “silence” because he didn’t know how to reconcile the seemingly conflicting demands of poetry and politics. I can’t say that I do either.

We have been thrust suddenly into a time when resistance is the only sane & moral option to an insane & corrupt regime. We don't get to choose our historical moment, only how we respond to it. I keep coming back to Jack Spicer's reference to Eichmann, to those lines "I/ Can-/ not/ accord/ sympathy/ to/ those/ who/ do / not/ recognize/ The human crisis." There it is again, that notion of poetry & humanness. Ted Berrigan said we humans write poems "to propitiate the gods." That is a lovely metaphor for something that is both extraordinarily complex and incredibly simple. What are the responsibilities of poets? Writing good poems & being good human beings are surely two of them. But how will the gods be propitiated in such mad times? And how can poetry be written after the Holocaust, as Adorno asked, much less in a time of resistance? The answer is—

SIMON ANTON DIEGO BAENA:

I spent most of my days sketching the rain. Just now, my wife asks me, what is poetry? The balance between silence and noise.

DOUG GUNN:

Miller's gun is one of over three hundred million in the United States today. The permanent camper is one of over 33,000 killed by gun violence in the United States last year. In August of 2016, Cob became one of 930 people in Philadelphia who were living on the street, in cars, abandoned buildings, train and bus stations, and "other places not meant for human habitation." Near where I live in S.E. Pennsylvania there is an ICE detention center for immigrant families awaiting asylum or refugee-status hearings. Some have been held for over a year. One child took his first steps in the facility. The ICE agents have guns.

CRAIG COTTER:

On Hugh Hefner

I subscribed to Playboy for 5 years or so—as a gay man. I literally did subscribe for the articles. There was some tremendous journalism, fiction and opinion in that magazine.

The few things I've picked-up about Hefner, as he was so much in our

culture, seem quite OK to me: he seemed very “conscious” of the First Amendment. I felt he moved us forward in protecting and expanding it.

He lived his life as he saw fit without harming anyone—any more than we all harm each other with our usual human condition, being bitchy, cheating on people, treating people with disrespect—but he didn’t seem to do those things any more than the average person. I never saw him promote himself as a Gandhi-type person/spiritual leader.

I also thought he very importantly worked to say sex and nudity were not dirty, bad, and something that should be kept in private. For me—growing up in a conservative area of MI as a member of a very conservative Catholic church that taught that masturbation and being gay was an express-line to Hell—I thought Hefner’s views on sex and nudity being beautiful were an alternative take on my childhood teachings that were more in line with what I thought was beautiful and natural.

Hefner seems to have self-actualized his life in that he lived as he wanted. He seemed to be involved with promoting free speech and the free press. He seemed to be about trying to understand beauty—heterosexual beauty mostly—but, as a gay man, I’m certainly OK with that. And I knew Hefner made many pro-gay statements that came out of his sense of individual freedom.

For my friends who feel he was a net negative to society because he “objectified” women, I’ve often seen these same friends stand in front of nudes by Botticelli, Goya, Cezanne, Rembrandt and Michelangelo and appreciate their beauty. That Hefner worked with a camera, while others worked with oils, seems to be a defining reality for them.

TIM KAHL:

The corner of my lower cuspid breaks off and after a day of sifting through the unpleasant remains of my salmon and couscous, I wonder if I should return it to its rightful place. Or should I explore further to perhaps discover some tiny skeletons of creatures whose arrival is unexpected? Let’s say my mouth is cemented back together. Do I dare tell anyone? This means that I will have to trust my dentist with the secret. But I don’t want to trust my dentist. So I must lie. I must lie an

extravagant lie. I must tell her I have invented a brand new technique for mining broken teeth from the pit of my stomach. I send down two marines with very strict instructions for capture and retrieval. But one of them has lost faith in his mission, in his duty to his country. Everything's become absurd. So I start screaming at him *It's not fucking Vietnam, man.* He's fed up, broken, just a hush of a man. Then suddenly he blurts out *Spelunking the gut's fucked up, dude. It's not my goddamned tooth.* Quick as a wink I see he's right, but I don't mention any of this to the dentist. She has enough on her mind with all of her cleaning and polishing and fixing of holes. She has some new protective coating that smells like lacquer thinner and tastes like pineapple, but she tells me it tastes like tutti-frutti. I want to correct her, but I let it go. It's late in the morning, and I have to be across town for my friend's carpet cleaning party. The big truck with the super vacuum suck gets there at noon, and I have to rake for fuzz before then. I'll comb it out and see what got caught up in the pile over the last couple of decades. Christ it can get ugly. Guts, guts, guts, the guts of nameless comrades. Hunks of burned lumber. Dried blood. Broken gears. Shrapnel. Parachute cord wrapped around a tree. Propeller bits and car parts. An array of stumps and bone fields. Blasting caps. Rusted metal. Dioxin. Unexploded shells courtesy of Alfred Nobel. There's miles and miles of debris, and nobody knows how the hell any of it got there. Bits and pieces. God Dammit all—can anybody in America take responsibility for a shard?

DENVER BUTSON:

ten "facts" culled from the guidebook of facts:

the biography of rain was written by scarecrows

electricity sleeps with her eyes open

one of the names for birds that we are not is:

ash-throated fly catcher

butterflies are an act of war

against the not beautiful

there are no arpeggios

like the arpeggios of horses' hooves

the most efficient way to demonstrate infinity
is to crack an eggshell

to conjugate the verb *avalanche*
you must start with *I undress*

the moon's position is non-negotiable

a book containing *the sky*
does not contain the sky

a ventriloquist cannot whisper
with his eyes closed

**CALIBAN
IS
SEARCHING
FOR
ANGELS**

