



PASSER • ARGÜELLES • HOUSTMAN • HAUPTMAN • GILBERT
BRADLEY • HEMAN • BEINING • ZVER • LAWRY • SCHMITT • KOMOR
GRABILL • LAUDATI • LAO • SEIDMAN • HOGAN • GONZALEZ
HARRISON • KALAMARAS • LAPINSKY • MENDIZABAL • DECARTERET
RAPHAEL • FARR • BENNETT • MUSIC MASTER • STEWARD • CARRILLO

Explore the Fascinating Worlds of Classic Print Caliban



CALIBAN
is calling
the tribes
together



Visit the Store!

www.calibanonline.com



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

CALIBAN

Lawrence R. Smith, Editor

Direct correspondence to: lsmith@calibanonline.com

Submissions to: submissions@calibanonline.com

Cover: UNTITLED by Wayne Hogan

Cover and title page design by Gary R. Smith, 1986

Typeset in Baskerville by Daniel Estrada Del Cid,
HS Marketing Solutions, Santa Ana, California

[Lawrence R. Smith, Editor](#)

[Deanne C. Smith, Associate Editor](#)

[Daniel Estrada Del Cid, Production and Design Editor](#)

Calibanonline is published quarterly. Viewing online and pdf
downloads are free.

Unsolicited poetry, fiction, art, music, and short art videos
welcome. Please direct attached WORD documents to
submissions@calibanonline.com

Copyright © Calibanonline.com, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JAY PASSER

Letter to Myself VII
Letter to Myself VIII
Letter to Myself IX

DALE HOUSTMAN

Nature’s owner’s manual
Self-consciousness
Peninsula governance
No More Midnight Cookies
Poor Duchamp!
To the Barricades!
Glommu’s Assistant
Gale Storm in Hell

TERRY HAUPTMAN

Struggle is a Prayer for Hope

DAVID GILBERT

The Fly Fishermen of Chernobyl

BOB HEMAN

INFORMATION

RAYMOND FARR

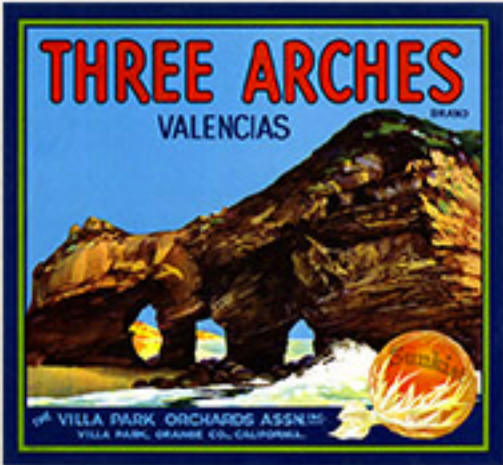
The Egyptian and Cat-like Rain

JIM ZVER

Vallecas 9
Vallecas 14

MERCEDES LAWRY

Fixed Income
Endings



ZOLTÁN KOMOR
The Country Teacher

JAMES GRABILL
The Winds Rake Through

SCOTT LAUDATI
My Suitcase is Packed

LINETTE LAO
New Fires
Ice Cream

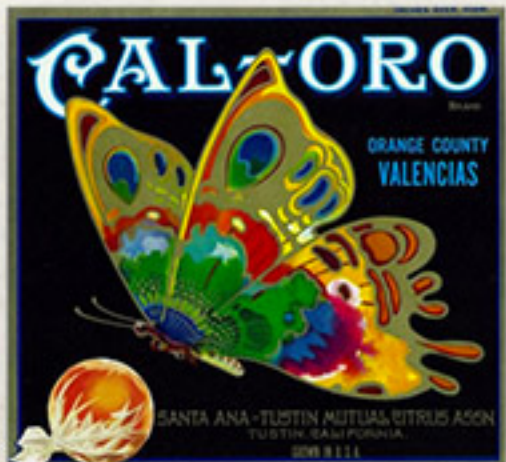
RAY GONZALEZ
Wifredo Lam Pinches the Testicles of God
No One Understands, No One Cares
Manifesto Without
Forgetting to Die
the angel
do not say it
my corruption

ANTHONY SEIDMAN
Oxygen Backwards

A WAYNE HOGAN PORTFOLIO

JEFF HARRISON
The Coquettes Transformed
A Piece of My Noisy Endless Double That Echoes
Forgot

GEORGE KALAMARAS
Christos Anesti, Andreos Embiricos
The Cinders Cendrars Left Us With



STEVE LAPINSKY

False

Penny

We Burn Stuff

IVAN ARGÜELLES

Return From Paradise

The Date Was Thirteen Death

The Fire This Time



GUY R. BEINING

THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF TIME

wind

stars point thru

night sky

morning sky



MARK DECARTERET

A B-Movie of Me

JOHN BRADLEY

Fragments from So Saith the Third Book of Dissolve

Fragments from So Saith the Ninth Book of Dissolve

DAN RAPHAEL

Loud Cool Dark September Morning

*I hear the music/of sorcerers/trapped/in the bowels/
of herons*

Waiting for the DNA Test

Whose Hand Between My Head and the Door Frame



JOHN M. BENNETT & MUSIC MASTER

Four Collages

D. E. STEWARD

Lignite, Bituminous, Anthracite



ALBINO CARRILLO

There Were Seconds in the Day When It Mattered

JON SCHMITT

Chaoplexity

J. C. MENDIZABAL (RFCL COLLECTIVE)

The Name in My Mind

CONTRIBUTORS' ADVICE



JAY PASSER

Letter to Myself (VII)

It's been a while, so just to be up to date: I'm investigating the murder of the butterfly. The bull, the emu. The hot dog moon. The sly salamander. The noncommittal house cat. Serial killings, for sure. I've got the scars to prove it, scars that vibrate when exposed to neon. As well as the manuscripts, wilted, oily and subterranean. In possession of the fuses and the terror. I must hit the streets. Despite the injuries, the traveling pain, the slight fractures, due to age and non-vigilance. First the feet, the metatarsals, the delicate bones, not unlike some terra-bound porpoise. Some inhumane reversal of natural order. Report: a woman on the 30-Stockton line suddenly enters into labor. Who knows if survival is an option? Does it matter? Say I embellish further on the crimes of my peers. Say it's imperative. The only death more important than my own. The prison cell, aviary of bats, a breakfast in oblivion where eggs are served raw, toast blackened, the chilled mimosa poured out of a moldy, rotting boot.

Letter to Myself (VIII)

I visited myself in Paris, at the Musée Rodin. One of my few tourist purchases was a sepia-colored postcard of Camille Claudel. Like I'd ever send it. Her work dominated a large room on the second floor which was full of sunlight, dust motes and morons. I felt rotten, knowing Camille's brother and mother envied and hated her; had her institutionalized for the last 30 years of her life. I went on a search for genius, for the restroom. Success in France. Outside, I blabbed out a missive before the Gates of Hell. Blatant and committed tourists half-heartedly recorded the performance on their smart phones. I believe I am one of the select few to witness the Gates of Hell both in Paris and at Stanford University in Palo Alto. I'll never forget the polluted Seine, and how very charming it is to be a fugitive. Admittedly, I stole upon the bateaux mouches, very much a ghost, marveling at the flying buttresses of Notre Dame. I did not escape espresso; I bought myself a baguette every morning, and the butter was like ambrosia. And what about that French law? In summertime, the owners of the boulangeries cannot vacation! I avoided the Louvre. Late at night, I watched French television with relish; I couldn't understand a damn thing.

Letter to Myself (IX)

When people ask, I tell them I attended cat school. Where I learned the subtleties of the claw and fang. Where I grew a tail. And the art of disinterest. I learned to stalk and to hunt. There was little philosophy involved, and even less curriculum. We napped most of the time, between grooming and batting water drops from the intermittent tap. I even had a thing for one of my own litter, until that was deemed unethical, and subject to expulsion, and even arrest. It really wasn't much of a thing, not unlike kissing cousins. But that's what it's like in the animal kingdom. There's no politics, art, or ball games. You don't go to the tavern or the gym. You circle the house, establishing ritual paths. When they ask, I tell them, I majored in Indolence with a minor in Snubs. They rarely ask twice.

DALE HOUSTMAN

Nature's owner's manual

1

The sidewalk in a low-cut evening dress wilts
these leaves in a hill to form our island of hands.

2

A pink thoroughbred which swims
across a woman's eyes into the cafeteria.

3

Some socialist afternoon's curve of cicadas
colludes with a glad stone, a torn diamond.

4

At a festival of monogamous telephones
we betrayed the vanilla bean growers.

5

The carpenter owl, mince-eyed carpenter
of well-muscled clocks, dove's dewormed armadas.

Self-consciousness

The wrong place owns its own distance, still
sweet with pantomime coffee

& loud as a hopelessly male
maneuver deep into May,

once a woman, all parts taken
at some further end, torrential

and adequate times, flaccid
ambulance shackled

to a bear
eating a newspaper.

Peninsula governance

The answer is always a sapphire medical tool
to initial the workers' whistle of fire. Strive for a prettier order!

In these cathedral lockers we store the shrugging children, we
are the distinguished spectators of the Republic's overdose.

Get in touch! Get in touch! The theatre is quarantined
and only the fully shook promise inquisition balustrades

to a passenger in a photograph of our witty placation, we
are the finest malfunction of a chicken's cousin.

See the gothic letters on my backside, dim Coyote
magic blind kimono, a collection of cleft chins, her penumbra

Spanish police poet politician lunch apparition of a parent's
favorite movie.

The centuries love the institution, you ungrateful amputees.

No more midnight cookies

A modal clot of nebulous energy
violent in the dining car of the story:
A respected pharmaceutical gypsy
in a deep search for sleep's divorce.

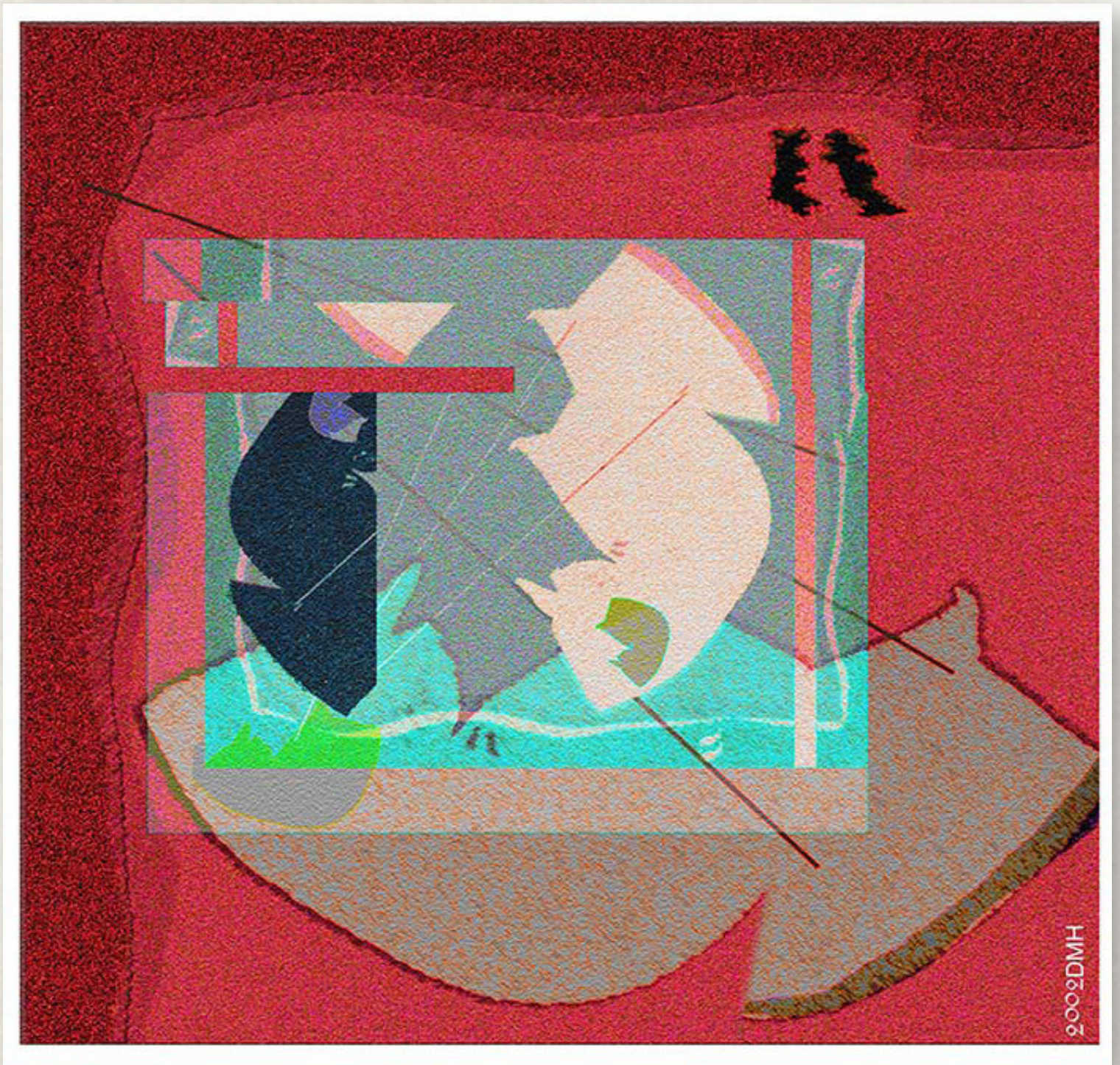
The party was the last disease, or a crime
of grandeur in the fall of the tropics
engineered by a business card
and a cocktail of "Continental peculiarity." (*quote*)

There stood the elephant dentist
entirely constructed of synthetic rubber
but for the bright lit internal apparatus
that pumped out gangster bandages.

A skip down the hall, a shooting
amidst the shiest suggestions
of the market becoming the weather
in the pocket on a birthday's castration.

When a white woman paled with pride
in an absinthe green wedding gown, She
was waving a lantern, a flirting water tower
to wreck all men's wooden fabrications.

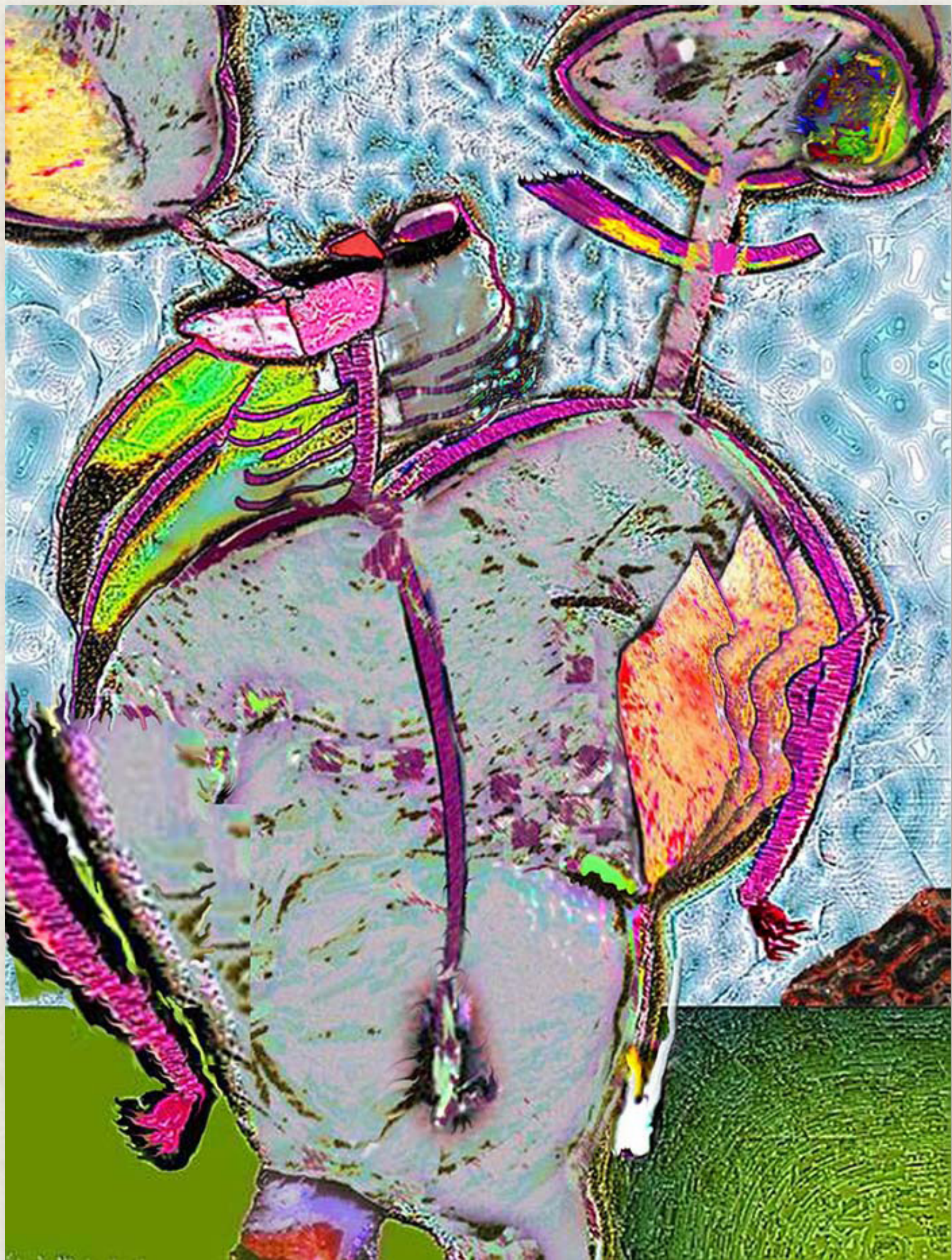
And sobriety has financed foreign roustabouts
and boiled grenadine down into more curative bullets
and the gold plumage soaking in the platforms' cisterns
all depend upon a tiny waiting hinge, a kiss.



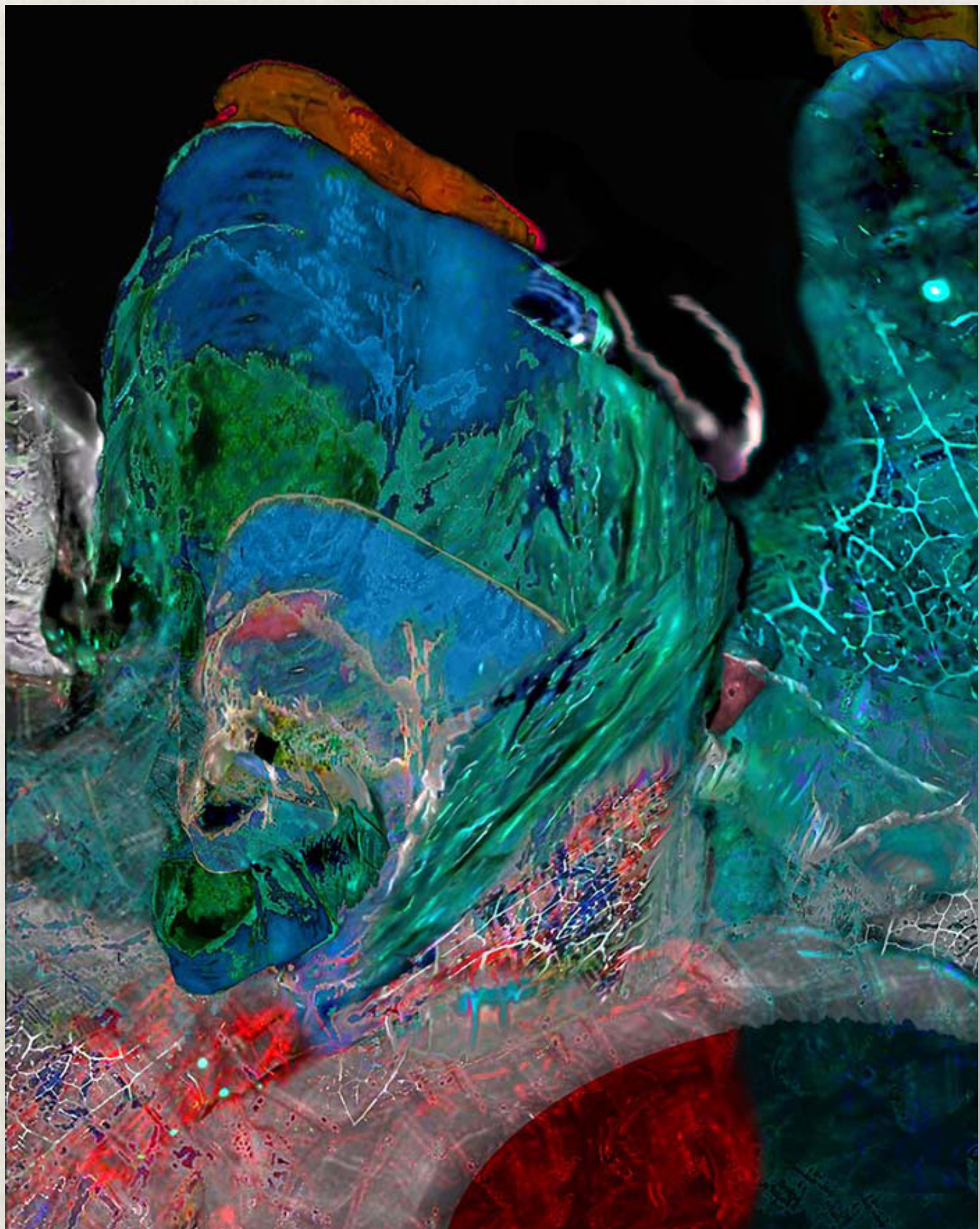
POOR DUCHAMP! by Dale Houstman, 2002
digital image



TO THE BARRICADES! by Dale Houstman, 2016
digital image



GALE STORM IN HELL by Dale Houstman, 2017
digital image



GLOMMU'S ASSISTANT by Dale Houstman, 2017
digital image

TERRY HAUPTMAN

Struggle is a Prayer for Hope

Like a snake, my heart
has shed its skin,
I hold it there in my hand,
full of honey and wounds.

Federico García Lorca

We walk to the Magic Theatre
On 125th Street in Harlem,
Passed the Soul Saving Center
Across the street
Where love and death
Transform each other
In the music of winds
Listening to Ernesto de la Cruz sing
“Remember Me”
As the wolf moon
The cold moon
Cries the blues.

The raven ruins luminous with hope
Tremble beneath our feet
As roundups in sanctuary cities
Rip us apart
Listening to the dead sing
The honey of longing.
Dreamers on La Salle
Yearn to breathe free
Bearing witness to healing prayers
In the ex-voto dolor of night.

The dreams of strangers
Leading us home
Passed owls at hospice
Hooting snap-chat instagram ghazals,
Passed the holy relics
In Dominican hotels,
Lorca's New York streets coming alive
Licking scarlet from destiny's hive.

DAVID GILBERT

The Fly Fishermen of Chernobyl

If they had weather, they would
have more to talk about.

Some believe that the ticking sound
is the emergence of a great fish
carrying the weather in its belly.

Memory extruders have filled
the cooling ponds with forgetting.
Presence radiates.

Howling is the failure
of imagination under dire circumstances.
They don't talk after they've stepped
into their hipwaders.

Is the flood a teaching story
that will get landlubbers to swim
laps in the municipal pool?

In a downpour
we could dance
like Gene Kelly.

At the spaghetti feed,
the fishermen sit in front of a giant fan.
Their beards jump around as they weep.

Styrofoam cups fly by in formation
deflecting around the fishermen
and re-forming after they've passed.

The anchor breaks the surface.
There is some relief
before the vacuum is restored
and cigarettes are snuffed.

A story is told about a windy day
when leaves blew south
piling against the ramparts
before the battle began.

The icons stand on the casting couch
praying for thunder.

BOB HEMAN

INFORMATION

Begins with a day omitted from the calendar. Begins with a sheep in wolf's clothing. Begins with a door that is thicker than a man, and some water trapped inside a rock.

INFORMATION

They could hear the whale walking on the deck outside. The windows were bricked over to prevent the light from entering or leaving.

INFORMATION

There are people who are assigned housing, or food, or lovers. They are given art to make, or poems to write, or songs to sing. They are told they must build their own homes. They are told they must never try to reach the horizon.

INFORMATION

The horizon begins again where the ocean ends. The word "circumference" can no longer describe it. Instead there is only the memory of trees, the anticipation of an unfamiliar kind of movement.

INFORMATION

Dancing was not allowed in the cellar. They were given a different alphabet they did not know how to use. The game could be played with string, or with the shadows of the trees. Sometimes they found a woman or two inside the ocean.

INFORMATION

If the parents do not want to speak, the child is encouraged to play with the machine. Sometimes small amounts of salt can be added to enhance the experience of the game.

INFORMATION

The red letters indicated the mountains that should not be repeated, and the section of sky they were required to leave behind.

INFORMATION

After they stopped eating and drinking their bodies shriveled up and died. This became the basis for an opera that used colors instead of singing, and numbers instead of dialogue. It was set in a place where the horizon was no more than a casually drawn line.

INFORMATION

There was a whole lot of yellow on the street. They had to rethink the idea of the horizon. Even after the word “road” became a reality, the man with the fur hat didn’t make any sense.

INFORMATION

What dimension means to the turtle. What duration means to the ear of corn. What distance means to the candle. What direction means to the color “red.”

INFORMATION

In this game there are only stones or beans, and a box used for sorting or counting. We are asked to imagine the bees even though we have never seen them. We are asked to imagine the bears and their amazement at finding the sea. We are asked to imagine what the horizon might really be. We are told to record our journeys even though all we do is follow the only line we are given. Sometimes the game is played on a map. Or in places where there is no light.

INFORMATION

Of course, the peasants are dancing. It helps them to forget the dead, the mutilated bodies found in the pastures where the cattle were afraid to go. The tower was all that remained of the castle that once cast its shadow across the entire land. There were rumors, of course, but they stopped each time the trains approached, each time the full moon screamed across the night sky, each time the animals were discovered to be only frayed puppets, moved unceasingly by unseen hands.

RAYMOND FARR

The Egyptian & Cat-like Rain

Say we disappear
& suddenly any room

Seems larger & lonelier
Without us

Say we're playing
That game in our heads—

20 Things We Know
But Don't Want to Know

About Ourselves!
20 Things We Would

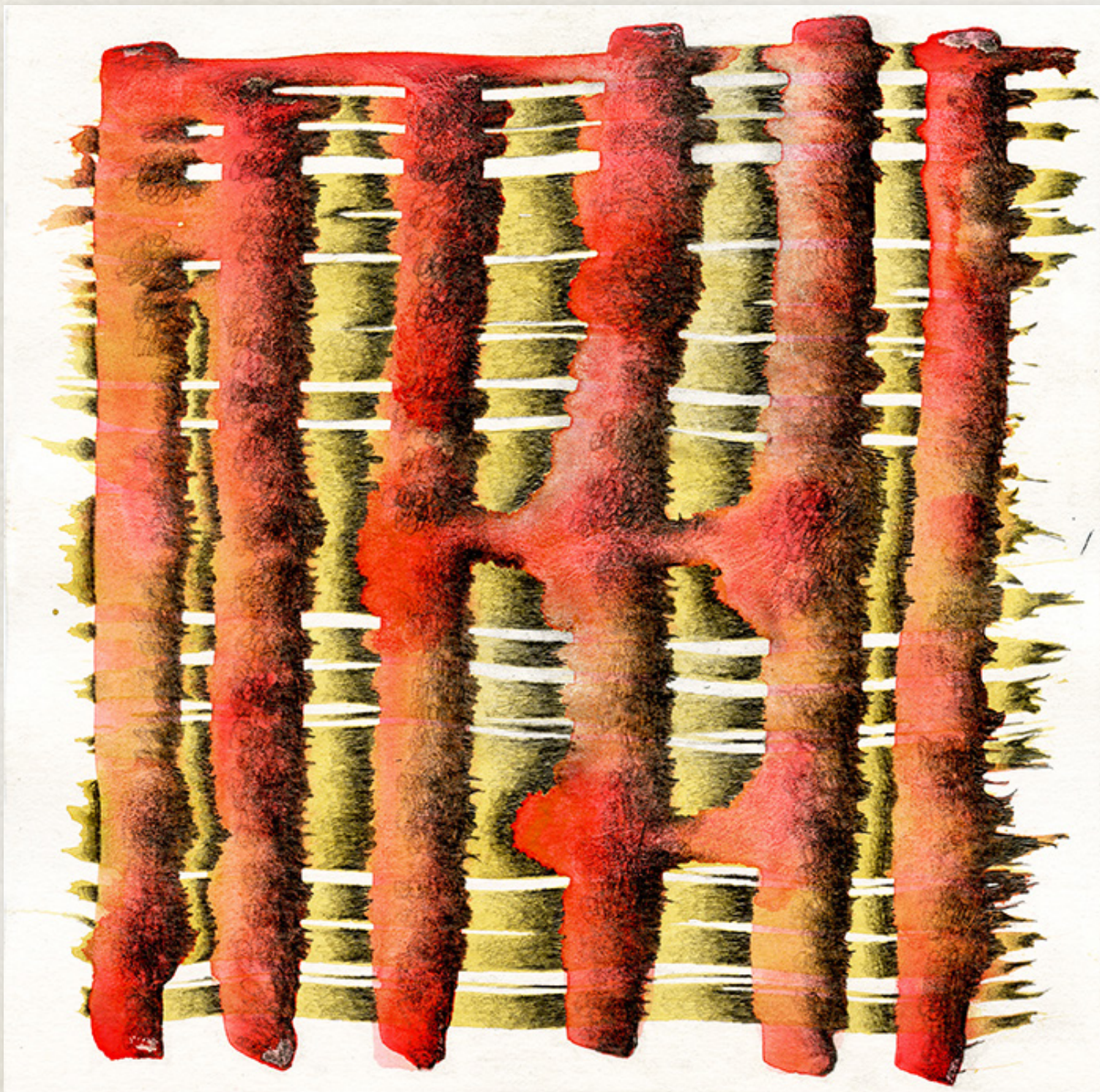
Change If Only We Could!
& that God has ordained

To speak to us only thru
Girls getting naked on

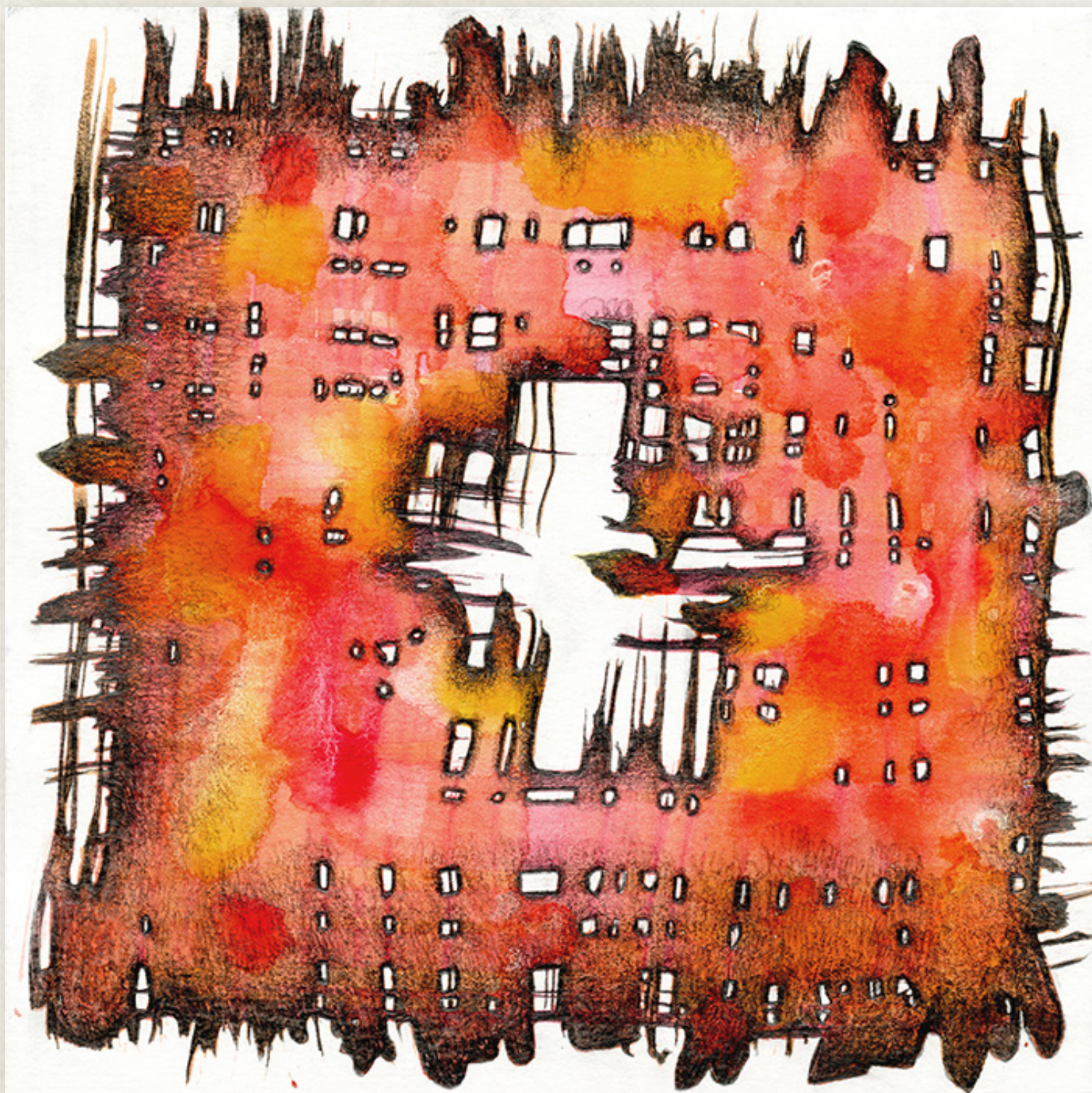
The Internet—
Isn't *Cold Dark*

Matter: An Exploded
View the only possible

Meaning of a wall
Unable to cohere?



VALLECAS 9 by Jim Zver, 2017
watercolor and pencil on paper (8" x 8")



VALLECAS 14 by Jim Zver, 2017
watercolor and pencil on paper (8" x 8")

MERCEDES LAWRY

Fixed Income

As the moss has overtaken the shed
where tree limbs lie on the roof like broken letters,
As the side porch crumbles, despite
my failed disguise with wayward boards,
As the bathroom floor bleeds blue
which I choose to ignore, envisioning swampy bankruptcy,
As the retaining wall leans forebodingly
and the bamboo erupts in the driveway
and the ivy devours great swathes of the backyard
which was, I am convinced, once a dump,
for curious things rise up year after year,
bedsprings, plastic soldiers, shards of blue plate,
none of it worth a damn cent,

History descends and emerges
swaddled in greed. It's well past Kafkaesque,
this country riddled with rot,
this prelude to darkness.

Endings

Snick of tide
as if the lull
of prayer brought
comfort.

Stars spiked
on black, no
matter the troubles
that seep
out of broken
hearts.

The last
month sags
and wheezes.

Time's reckless ways
shelter the pause
between words,
the skin between
hollow wind
and the bones
illuminated
by a last breath.

ZOLTÁN KOMOR

The Country Teacher

The villagers replaced the clapper with a dead cat, so when the carillon begins to play at noon, instead of a chime you can hear a kind of dull whoop, as the animal's body hits the cold metal bell over and over again. Blood splatters onto the church attic's boards, oozes down between the cracks.

So it's that special day again: the country teacher will be the dinner guest in every house of the village. The yokels feed him once a month; stuff him properly, so they can have some peace for another thirty days. They open the door to the old school's cellar, and lead out a gray-faced, bare-boned man—the chalk dust painting his hair all white. As he scratches the village walls with his tired eyes, the cold wind floats his leaky coat around his slim body. A few grey teeth fall from his mouth as he tries to say something.

“Oh c'mon! We don't have all day!” the crowd shouts furiously, kicking away the bloody teeth in the snow. “We hope you are hungry enough, because we really outdid ourselves this time!”

Then they begin to laugh, and shepherd him into the first kitchen, where they sit the man down on the ground, putting the dog's bowl in front of him, throwing some cooked nails into the slimy dish.

“Now eat!” whoops a fat, clean-faced woman, and her husband—wearing a gigantic fake moustache—grabs an old violin and screws out a few old notes from the instrument, singing: “I cooked peas, I salted them well, I also seasoned them with paprika, Abele, babble, run!”

“Thank you!” mumbles the teacher with nails in his mouth, as they help him take off his coat. They carry it out into the court and begin to beat the school's ancient dust from the cloth. Dark mist rises, and the dogs in the street begin to cough.

Small birds perch on the teacher's ribs, chirping happily as the man puts the nails into his mouth, one by one. When he finishes his meal,

they bring back his coat, hang it on him as if he were nothing but a clothes rack. Then they kick him to another house, where a new bowl awaits him. This time a stiff fish stares from the dirty plate.

“Oh... I really love fish,” admits the teacher, and begins to eat, while a puny woman claps her hands, yelling: “Look at that, what an ugly bug crawled into my kitchen! Ugly bug, ugly bug!”

“Ugly bug” thinks the teacher. “Yeah, that’s me.” And yet he could still remember the glorious old times, when he was treated as a lord in this village. He was dined in quite another way just a few months ago. He sees himself back in those days: the reverend teacher high-stepping over the streets with a giant leash in his hands, leading the naked children. Sometimes he yelled command words—sine, cosine, and so on—and then the kids lined up and began to sing for the joy of the villagers.

“May we dust your coat, Sir?” asked the women, crawling before his feet, their breasts sweeping the dirt.

“Of course, ladies!” nodded the teacher, and he watched as woman carried away his coat on a red pillow as if it were a treasure.

The ghosts of old bell chimes still echoed in his skull. Sometimes the teacher shrank down to the size of a thumb and crawled into his pupils’ rooms in the middle of the night. There he whispered arithmetic into the youngsters’ ears, throwing small books into the canals, burning them in their skull-ovens, and when he found them naughty, he beat their smooth cheeks with a matchstick, yelling: “I’m going make a man out of you!”

“Speed it up!” burps a fat lady now, poking the teacher’s side with a fly-swatter. “I sharpened pencils all morning, just to get you some nice shavings! Gobbling them all up is the least you could do!”

The teacher stuffs the dingy wood shavings into his mouth, swallows them wildly, then shows the woman his empty dish.

“All right, get going then! I don’t want to see you till next month!” grins the lady. Then she whistles and three children appear in the kitchen. They jump onto the teacher’s back, and begin to poke his ribs with their sharp elbows.

“Giddy up, you bastard!” they cry, while riding the teacher to the next house, snorting, neighing. Lice jump from his hair onto the snow.

Afternoon arrives. The villagers carry the teacher over the streets, holding him up and yelling: “He has had a bellyful, now he can trumpet his math! But what for? You cannot eat numbers!”

The younger ones throw snowballs at the teacher, and an old man spits at him. His saliva freezes into an ice bullet in midair. It hits the captive’s skin and leaves a bruise.

“The mind needs to be fed too!” cries the teacher. “Don’t you understand? Literature is food for the soul; mathematics is nutrition for the brain!”

“Sure, sure!” They pat his side. “Nice speech! And of course you expect us to give you food for it, don’t you?”

“Two and two makes ten, twenty and eight makes fifty-two!” guffaws a man, galloping up and down in the street, beating his own ass. Hoes dance on the string of the horizon. Somewhere in a distant classroom rats scurry around the dusty desks. A rotten apple sits on a table, cigarette stubs crawl in it as if they were worms.

Soon, the trial begins: the judge is a massive horse, with an old wig on his head. His heavy hooves knock about the room like a remorseless gavel.

“I’m waiting for your plea, dear, honored teacher sir!” the horse taunts the skinny man, who begins to stammer: “Dear fellow villagers... I suspect that you are now under some kind of evil spell; maybe the black magic of the celestial horses has affected you, because this whole procedure is more bitter than I can imagine! But please, come to your senses! Knowledge warms the soul! We’re not learning just for school, but for life! An empty head is actually heavier than one that is full of knowledge! It is so heavy: believe me, it will pull you down beneath the ground!”

But the villagers pay no attention. They just neigh, getting on all fours and racing around the bench.

“Enough! Order in the court!” the old judge brays at them. Jets of flame rise from his nose.

The teacher looks around and notices what he hadn’t seen until now. All the villagers, all of his accusers, are just children dressed up in adult clothes. How did he not spot those glued-on moustaches, those bras stuffed with socks?

“Oh God! Where are your parents?” he whimpers. “No wonder this is such a topsy-turvy world!”

“They’re all at home!” they answer. “The celestial horses put them to sleep in their bathtubs, and they’re not gonna wake up till tomorrow!”

But they can say no more. The knocking of the hooves silences them. The horse on the bench neighs and passes judgment. Reading from his own hooves he says: “Because you are teaching useless things, and you yourself are useless, I must treat you as a tramp! Here’s my verdict!”

“Stuff his pillow with protractors!” the crowd yells impatiently, clapping their hands, driving even more lice from the teacher. “Beat a triangle into his spine! Take down that ugly bug!”

A little girl arrives with a basket full of fly-swatters; she tosses them to the crowd, as if they were flowers.

“Oh, I’ve got a much better idea!” laughs the judge. “Let’s chime the carillon with him, I say!” His hooves knock once more, and the villagers grab the convict and carry him to the church. There they replace the dead cat with the teacher.

“You’re going regret this!” screams the skinny captive. “You’re going to miss me when you have to count the nails for your coffins! Adieu, adieu! I’m invited to a harvest in Heaven’s library!”

He can say no more. The assembly begins to ring the bell, and his skull cracks as it hits the metal lip of the bell over and over. Hollow thuds vibrate through the village. Then there’s only sullen silence. Blood and pieces of brain ooze between the church attic’s boards. After some time a few children arrive. They have hidden away from the celestial horses this morning and spent the whole day in antique closets. They have come with little knives and slices of bread in their tiny hands, catching red raindrops on their bread, greasing the bloody slush on the slices with their knives. They eat in silence, then begin to sing so loudly they scare away the bats:

So the clock is ticking, the tick-tock goes
 From the little elves hammering inside,
 If the clock has stopped and is not running,
 The little elves are sleeping and not hammering.
 Sine, cosine and cotangent
 Three is thirty’s ten percent.

JAMES GRABILL

The Winds Rake Through

The winds sweep in from early music conservatories,
while the offshore churns are forever scouring out
their cooking pots. Gusts spike around the extravagant
and frugal, where riverous forces split, splashing wildly
through the millennia that the flicker woodpeckers
hammer back together. As higher inclinations smolder,
both cold and hot exacerbate in slow motion, hundreds
of years rifling through cathedrals of firs, in rock-bottom
shuck of each leopard layer going back to the mother.

Every cell alive selects what's staying and goes ahead
to negotiate with officials with a direct line on supplies.
Each keeps abreast of the news in heart-beat oneness.
Every cell cooks on its iron stove an elaborate next meal
and is engaged in major undertakings that surround it
with weather and complex communications that pertain
to its abilities, whether dusk bleeds through from new
feedlot antibiotics and hormones, or reflective shields
guard the Rhone glacier, or 300° wind turbines revolve
around stuck Yankee ambivalence in the heartland.

Don't the animals cry and sing for cells
under the moon and the sun, lowing
and bellowing, calling and chuckling,
growling with diplomacy and paratactic
urgency, projecting their lines of sight
and their voices? When flat on your back
from your overcome animal body, will you

swallow your medicine? Will you drink
through a glass straw? So do you favor
resuscitation by extraordinary means?
Can what's happening be crowding in
around you, the way people have been
the animals, when who among us knows
where the time goes off in its old Desoto?

There we are, racing largely well-fed
forward, as dusk settles into slipstream
spreads, as it lunges, salt-sea bulk going
fast forward, pursuing instantaneous mute
in rushing Arctic roar that intrudes on board
rooms from rifled-up all-you-can-own sea
floods swelling the dollar. With coastal caves,
compass arcs, brackish whirlpool vexations
foaming in urchiny spits with truck-wrecked
milks and prayerful craving all muled-up,
unstoppable global impregnation peaks.

Sunburst cellular acuity lifts from the root
of inception, as willowing shares of lightness
reach through the nutrient chain-mandala
into swaying slow shoulders of a she-elephant
from the centers of future speech. Observed
may be landslides of hunger looking for reasons,
boa-constricted boughs of reclining bobcats,
a few mammoth tangles of disemboweled seat
springs, where forebears co-create what's seen
of the spectrum, with cries for warm shelter
of the mother, cries invented out of urgency
or shock at the beginnings of consciousness
arriving from back in matter older than soup
and bowls, before the oil-lamp whales dropped

to unknowable depth in unsettled scarlet dark.
So the brain guards the mind it considers
its apprentice, as the body experiences being
as if entering the garden which has grown it
out of much more than the mind can take in.

The spired nucleus sprouts. The seed for a tree
rests on its limbs. The tree exists in the seed.
Waves happen to spread through the sycamore
leaves. Transcendental soils carry mushroom-fed
sequoia in crystallographic sharpening, shuddering
night as a moth flies into future impoverished rooms.
Vast clocks of the Arctic bleed out along miles-long
stretches of socioeconomic tree line not about to fall.
Delicate clusters of spiny eggs stick to blind surgery
of saltwaters, the moon with its pendulum pounding
the coast, erasing more future from its animal past.

The complex cosmic array
in the uncovered night sky
is evidence of a reverberating
string at the bottom of matter.
The Stradivarius of Valeriy Sokolov
is evidence of neural urgency
that over time fills with devotion
and supersedes the alternatives.
Spreads of cosmos, 360° by 360°,
surround Beethoven late quartets
present before understanding,
and make each move of cells
in the liquid atmosphere within
the mother. As galaxies whisper
and groan, the night sky embraces
sleep behind evidence of lightning
in the guitar of Eric Clapton.

SCOTT LAUDATI

My Suitcase Is Packed

i know you're home somewhere out there
in colorado
where the desert flowers
wait all year to turn yellow
and horses with spanish blood
whip their manes under lightning
as the snows melt down to refill
dried beds.
somewhere where enough was enough
and you had to put a continent between you
and new jersey.
i've seen that land and pulled over
to swim naked
where the white crests shatter.
there are no dead ends on your streets.
the rain only falls straight down and even
stray cats
come when they're called.
i bled for you once
when the war was still far from over
and the end hasn't gotten any closer
so i guess
i'd do it again

LINETTE LAO

New Fires

When you die
I will go in the box with you
My daughter said

I am not going in a box
I am going in a fire
I am going in the fire too

You think you will
But you won't

I know this because I did not
want the box or the fire
For D, K or C
For my grandmothers
For my grandfathers
For my uncle
Or my murdered friend J

Their disease, crime, and old age
Inhabit a landscape in reverse
Invisible and adjacent

I want ghosts
I want ghosts
I want ghosts

You will too
We will want them together
Defiant, impossible and
Not dead

Ice Cream

Donald Trump demands dry and gray meat in a fake blood blanket of ketchup. The meat is out of the meat. He eats without hunger—a swallow, a lump, a reflex on repeat until there is nothing left. After that, the only pleasure of dessert is having twice as much as you.

RAY GONZALEZ

Wifredo Lam Pinches the Testicles of God

In one of his paintings, a figure carefully pinches the testicles of a larger being. Lam's wife is a descendant of Cabeza de Baca on her father's side and conquistador scrotums bring a high price. The pinched balls scream of creation and the task at his fingertips—convincing God to forgive him for the painting of his Santeria godmother and how she defeated the holy voice with frogs that gave the young Wifredo his vision. His painted totems keep rising with huge sacs, unafraid to color the air with the fertile entrapment of the imagination freed by the release of the seed that comes. Tightening his grip, Lam unloads on the jungle trees with determined aim—the spell turning the greased crystals into falling tears on the artist's face because the pinch is worth the God.

No One Understands, No One Cares

No one understands. No one cares. The piano plays by itself, the player flying across the room on a bed of flowers. Pablo Neruda and Cesar Vallejo didn't care. They kept strands of their fallen hair in tiny boxes on their desks, the need to write and stare at their old hair a key to growing flowers.

Vicente Aleixandre didn't care. He lived to be 99 and wrapped his head in the ancient scarves of his mother who lived to be 112. Aleixandre's surviving writing pen doesn't care. Larry Levis buried himself in a honey jar. When his family tasted him on a piece of bread, their fighting turned into pouring rain that painted their house red. When his family got hungry again, Larry rose from the dead but there was no one there to eat with him. They didn't care. George Trakl climbed a pine tree with his purple forehead, the medicine he used to treat wounded soldiers entering his brain to transform him into a bird. Birds care.

When the doctor told you that you were a different man, you didn't care but simply put your trousers on backwards. When your father whipped you with his leather belt as a boy, your pet dog cared. When it howled at night, someone threw the dark window on the porch open and everybody sat up and stared.

Manifesto Without

The captivity of the beautiful creature. The blank page is not blank. Find some kindling. There are hermeneutic gestures. Jerry Garcia was there. Insects tattoo the ear. There is vice among the monks. They gave him angels with scraped knees. The wild pigs discover the rules and forget the leftovers and locked bibles. The mollusk in us pushes out its ugly head, perfect mirror disturbance with signs of possession. Terrified, the actual measure of flight is a puppet on the shoulders, a moral significance inside the bomb shelter, and a request to close the bleeding mouth in peace. The forgiven is shorn of white hairs, symbols spiced with rainwater from a face wearing headphones, each back door given a chance. When directions are given and proven false, the honey sac is formed by the hominoid. When climaxed, when driven, the marble is never found. It sews shut the world in the stolen vinyl album copy of silence.

Forgetting to Die

after Robert Burlingame

My late mentor wrote that
an old man and woman lie

along the sea and forget to die.
Robert Walser walked out of

the asylum, after decades, to
tell the old man and woman

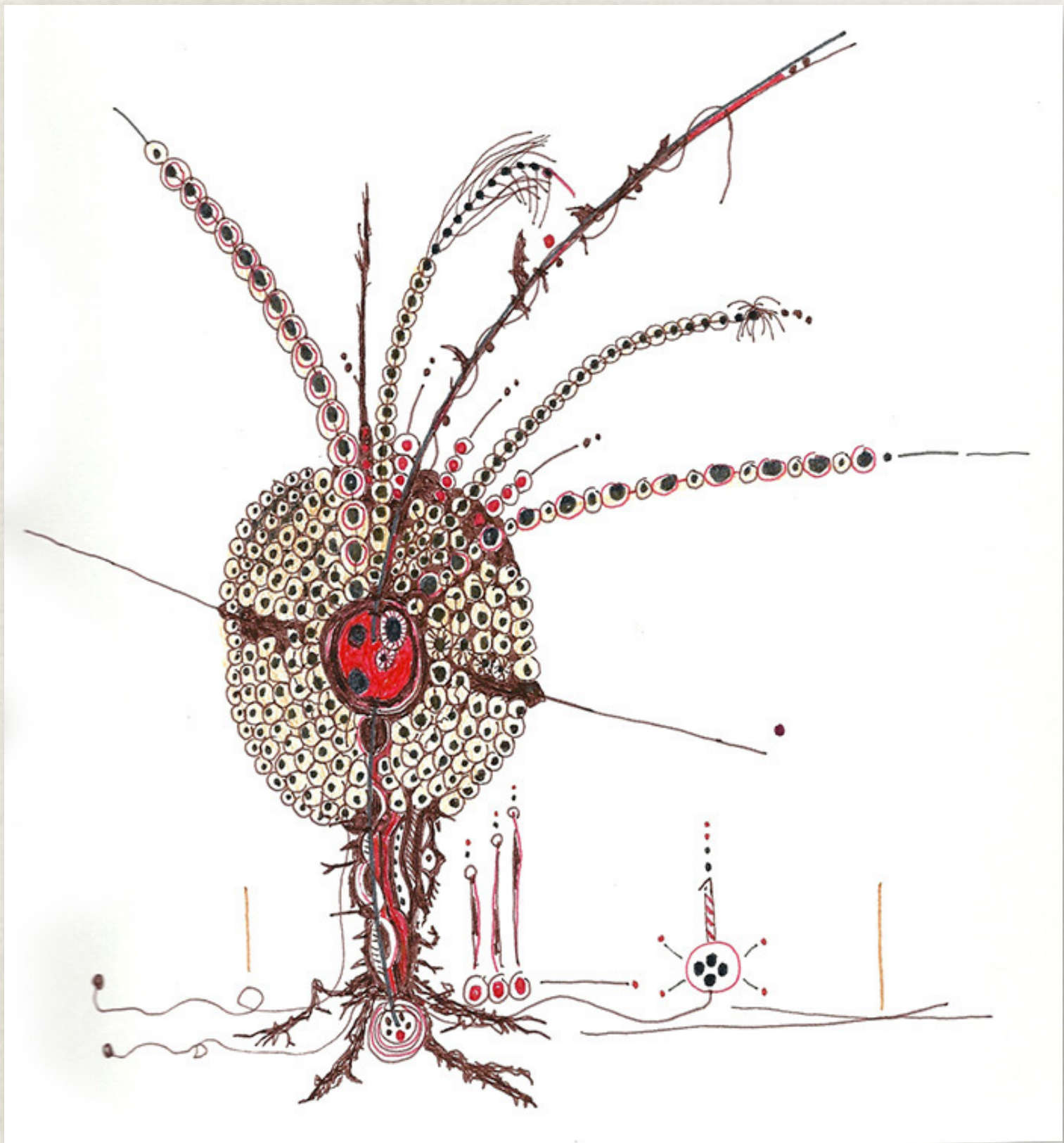
to rise because they were alive.
When Robert Desnos died

in the Nazi prison camp, he
described how to lie down.

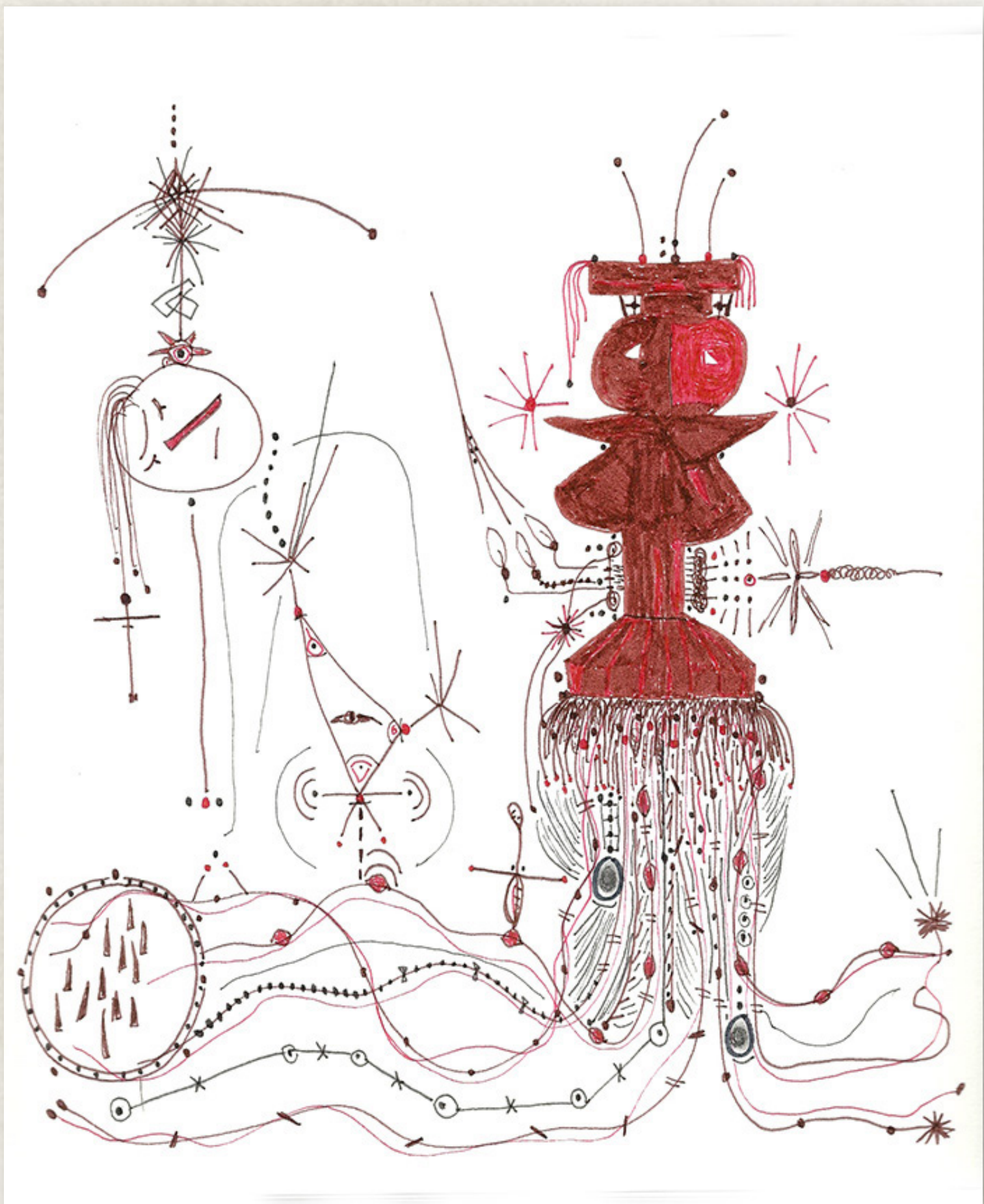
When he knew he was leaving,
my teacher lay dead in the desert

for three days before he was
found hiking the familiar trail

and shouting over the cliffs
that he was still alive.



THE ANGEL by Ray Gonzalez, 2017
ink on paper



DO NOT SAY IT by Ray Gonzalez, 2017
ink on paper



MY CORRUPTION by Ray Gonzalez, 2017
ink on paper

ANTHONY SEIDMAN

Oxygen Backwards

I am breathing in two thousand years ago
I am exhaling a toothache a scarab a shekel
I am burping an earthquake tomorrow
while crocodile plunges into my sleep
as I swim against adverbs like
deliriously agonizingly exponentially

I unpeel words pasted on caves on the skulls
that sniff airplane glue in Lunar Distensions
on the pollination of dwarf stars and
comets strafing the hair of Exuberance

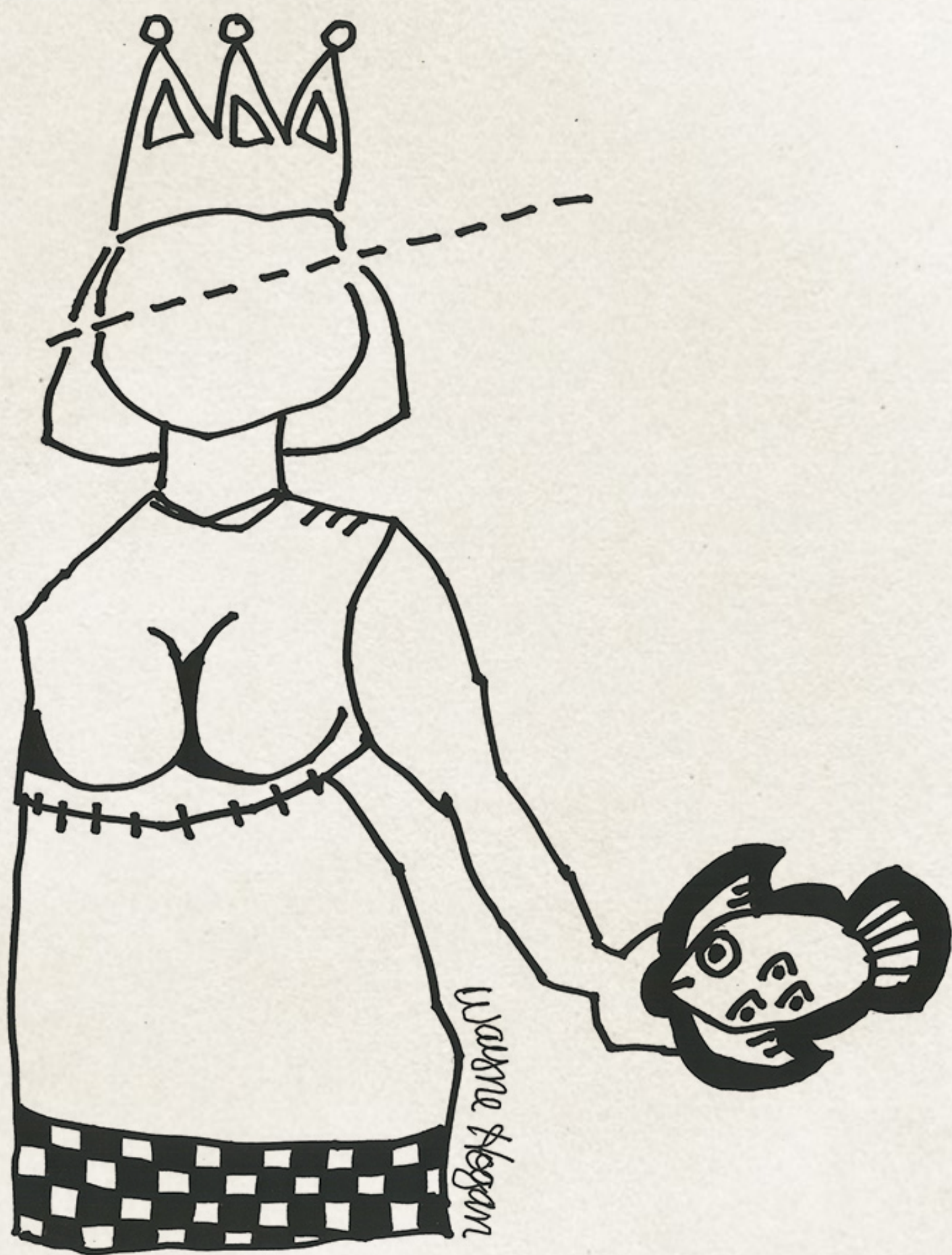
Breathing oxygen backwards equals a birth into water
a wisp of eels from thermal vents
and verb elongates couples with a shark
while the tentacles of jellyfish inscribe *Awaken*
on the seafloors of slumber

My nails keep growing
and my ears sniff the traffic as well as
the molten nickel core of this planet
because I am breathing in preterit humidity
and the climate sweats an elixir both gooey and Jurassic

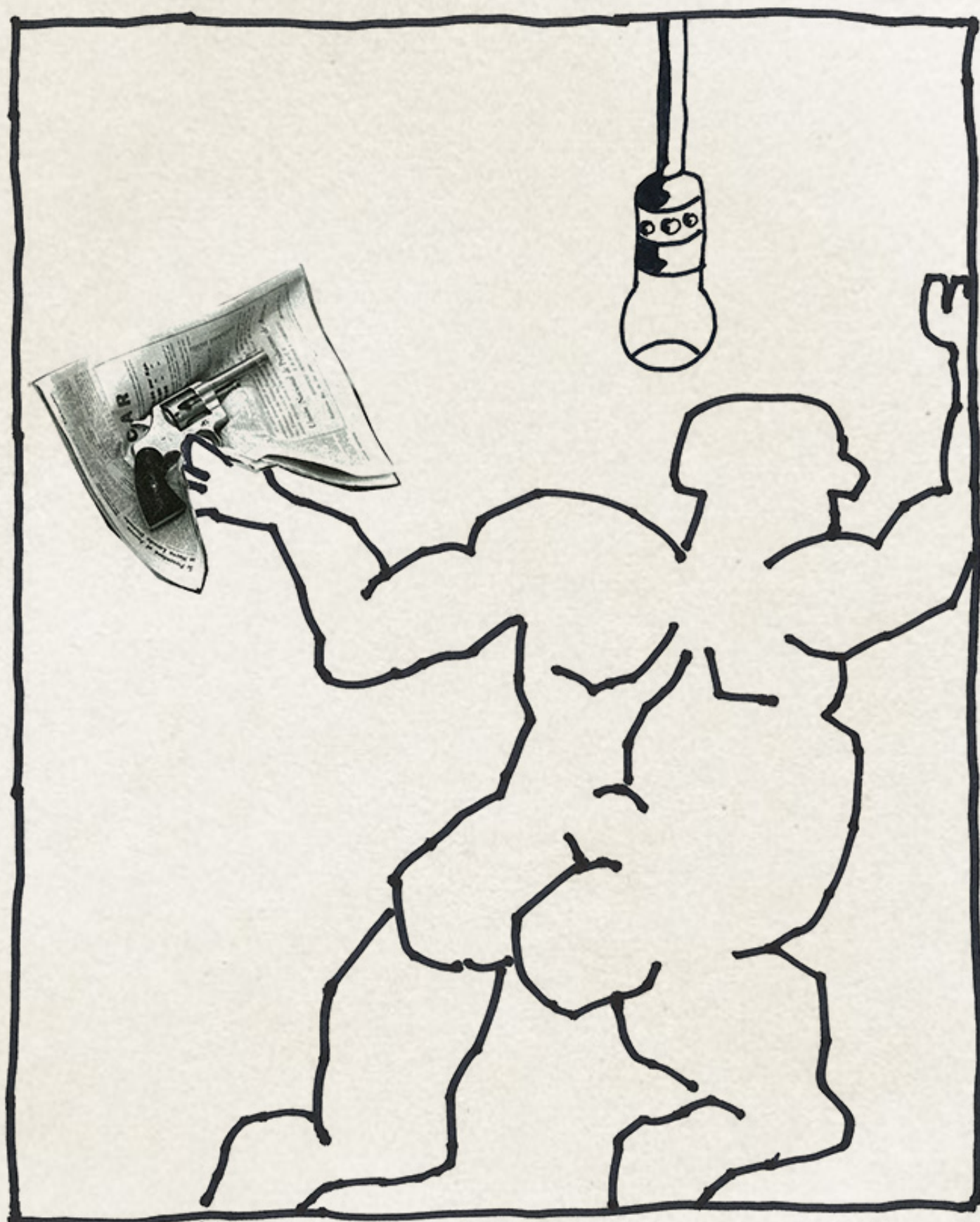
This: being alive past the half-life of carbon This:
sneezing inside eye like creating air without blueness

A WAYNE HOGAN PORTFOLIO









Wayne Hogan

JEFF HARRISON

The Coquettes Transformed

heart insinuated,
my twin runaway
coquettes claim
my own Virginia
a cue to heaven:
milk simple milk
“we night. now.”
crumbled before
the full pounce
could succeed
kiss, in parting,
her hand, my apes

A Piece of My Noisy Endless Double That Echoes Forgot

some slave
perished
over his oar—
these limbs
must belong
to some other slave,
fictional, a low motion
from a lofty actor
who cried to
applause “all moss
our cries all moss”
upon crisping
handfuls of
script to his lip
“we sang, mourn-
ful and wrong,
asphodel & asphodel,
the thorn smiled at
our names for the thorn”

GEORGE KALAMARAS

Christos Anesti, Andreas Embiricos

Spear-slit in the bark. Phosphorous. A woman across the street raised her left arm, felt the tenderness of hair-stubble as a persistent brush fire. Umbilical phosphorus born in Braila, Romania, 1901 (by the Julian calendar). Or was it September 2 (by the Gregorian)? Stones in their mouths, priests from Mount Athos filed by, a swarm of smoke. *A handful of bees is all I want*, thought Andreas Embiricos, *a moment to bury my tongue beneath her arm, taste the pit of a thousand stars exiled as scars*. An Embiricos of stars brought, omphalic, to Greece, melded in Bretonian Paris, spilling out again in Athens seventy-four years late as blood and water onto the cot.

Just a week before, the gardener had axed his own humming clear out of his groin, beating the woodpile to pulp. Had since devoted his days to coffee and cigarettes and bawdy jokes at the corner *kafeneia*. Now he was gone, and Embiricos only saw empty tables under the incendiary olives begging for silver tongues to sponge them dry. Never knowing why he was the first Greek Surrealist, he thirsted for humming, drank coffee strong with *Ouzo* and honey. A chessboard, carved in Romania on August 20 (or was it September 2?), on one rusting chair. Which calendar, after all, could be thrashed with a handful of bees groaning from numerical shiver to numerical shiver? The chessboard's two missing pieces made a painful scraping as wind from Cephalonia coated the throat of a dog barking back at what it took for a ghost. A match in his left hand, Embiricos asked, *Is the scar a woman carries under her arm the cord's blood-light after she buries the afterbirth? Secret she has kept me with and tongue of and quick?*

Phosphorus of boy-stubble brought in infancy to Athens, moiling out as bright divine death on some August 5 or other in the not-too-distant

meat. Stone in his mouth, a monk from Mount Athos coiled a long way from his cell onto the cobblestone, signaling a celibate shame. A handful of bees spilling onto the sheet, repeated Embiricos, watching the monk. To marry my tongue to her flesh-driven scent. Sumptuous star exiled among a thousand burning scars, Easter itself arrived as a stray, lip-bitten hair on a table at the abandoned kafeneia. The Colonels have come, have stomped out even the desire to sniff the camphor of your own crotch sweat in the tender fire of another's brush.

The dog continued to scratch. Only a King and Queen not engaged in coitus could make a pain of such scraping. Wind or ghost? Wing or breath-lamp? Was it any wonder that Easter came that year as both May 5 and April 14? That it couldn't decide whether it was Julian or Gregorian? Whether it, itself, wanted to die?

Christos Anesti, he thought—both believing and not that Christ had risen. None of it matters—not the purple robe, not the memory of her secret hair-stubble, not the spear-slit in the dark where someone continually strikes a match against the gauze of another's cheek. He recalled the scent of flesh, the sulfur of military leather, that stone he kept under his tongue since the Colonels came. The threat of a decree hidden in a black hip boot. Even the woodcutter poured arsenic a week earlier onto the lilies—a commotion of bees in his throat, in his own Surrealist throat, in Andreas Embiricos's Athenian swan-green from-dust-to-dust-thought-Romanian-born throat.

The Cinders Cendrars Left Us With

“The life I’ve led
Keeps me from suicide”
—Blaise Cendrars

1.

I swear, I found his right, he repeated. Yes, in the wheat stacks. I found his right arm.

No, dear. I found it, answered the gardener’s wife, leaning into him, rubbing his groin. Right here.

No, I swear. Tattooed and all, saying “Trans-Siberian Railway” and “Yes, there’s such a thing as poetic truth, and that’s why I continuously lie.”

2.

So we go to St. Petersburg / to Burma / to Oklahoma and the Bronx / Alexandria and Naples—in search of Cendrars.

So the Swiss burghers had a thing or two to say about the truth of his travels but said so clockwise over cobblestone insurrections of their watch.

So Chagall was one of his best friends. So it turns out the painting of the man with the green face (with the horse in clown’s hat) was Blaise.

We could methodically march to Frise, to the cemetery at Herbécourt. We could Artois and Souchez and with any new verb survive the relief map of our own chests. We could September 28, 1915 and lose the right arm. Our favorite writer, yes, Revy de Gourmont, could (from heart failure) inexplicably die that very day.

We could, of course, learn to write all over again, stand—that is—upon the efficacy of an ear rhyme, upon the tenuous pirate peg of our own suspect word.

So many grottos, so many peaks, so many Tahitian women and South American llamas and Siberian haystacks and *Nineteen Elastic Poems* and *Seven Unwept Uncles in Panama*.

3.

Try this. Try writing sideways into your own mouth.

Try India ink, Vallejo's childvalve cheek; try going to Burma but not for the beer.

Try the way the rails.

Try the way the water wheels, the heavy turning phrase, the turning of so many wood slats through which our sacrifice pours, smoke-like, as a ghost limb.

Try pinning up the sleeve of your shirt each morning with your one good hand.

Try longing for the miracle of tying a shoe.

Try Brazil or Formosa or the beautiful animal kicking its dust back through the stall.

Try facing the fierce, the kerosene rag, the horse's blaze—that star in your own forehead scar.

Try the Bombay Express—this map or gnats—malaria in a jungle in Bolivia and a goodbye as idiotic as being reborn a bellwether in a village of sacrificed lambs.

There are descriptions of Papalangi so cruel, we try. Fractures of a Calabrian cabin. A German hymn we try. We try and try to proletariat our elite. To mustard-gas our own clothes, to burn it all away and see if—scared of our enormous heat—we can climb out onto the limb of our nakedness in one second flat.

4.

I'm not bullshitting—it was there. I swear, the gardener repeated, stirring the remains of some fire or other.

Sure, she said. *And the tattoos with the clever verbs?* She touched herself this time where his tongue would no longer go, not believing a word.

They at least must still be here, he stuttered, frantic in the ash. *The words. The words of our lives—true to them or not—don't just get up and walk away!*

STEVE LAPINSKY

False

I am false.

The man behind the counter
at the bank
sees right through me.

Hiding in vaults and in silver corners
my fiction deposits itself.

The doctor who has aged like a coin
claps down his board
at my hypochondria.

I am the perjurer of details.

I am the mouth
full of dentures that chatter lies
the lips of the disaffected
the ears of the faithless

I am the imaginary boyfriend
the absentee husband
the invented lover
the concocted story
of a woman's happiness

The girl behind the plexiglass
at the liquor store
sees directly through me.

Penny

Like hatred; there is a lot of copper in the earth.

The sides of mountains grow green
and riverbeds shimmer.

Epithets coat tongues
while shade moves across the land
like an ominous hand

reaching for pick, axe and shovel.

That is not the sun setting;
it is the god of death.

Lapinsky/66

We Burn Stuff

We burn stuff
 where I come from.

No one knows why;
 we just do.

The urge comes from nowhere;
 nothingness is what we feel

sitting in the ashes; perhaps
 a bit of laughter

which folks are waiting in line for
 along with the milk
 of happiness
 and their turn at disaster.

Say somebody called you a bastard.
Would you call them a liar
 or reach for your kit
 of liquid and timber
 and get inspired?

We burn stuff
 where I am from.

Not leaves
Not shit
 for fuel like in some cultures,
but abandoned churches,
 the twice torched project,
 the occasional restaurant.

Nothing
is
sacred

in our city.

IVAN ARGÜELLES

Return From Paradise

for Bob Ness

world shadow beast-dream
how many faltering the steps
across what waste fields lost
in error the spent soul fades
how the music was in the air
loud then a mere echo of what
legend of the missing ships
of the islands of pure absence
never was what it imagined
to be in the lingering atolls
where mind clings to an Idea
everything in a rush passing
through sieves of memory
golf-links abandoned barns
summers like a hail-storm
pounding heated metal roofs
the nothing the incomplete
zero the cipher suspended
in the month of no days at all
sheer circularity of space
when one another we faced
green then red then whitest
of all the illusory long-lost
what was it you kept saying
moving from shadow to shadow
something dark and distant
is it today again already ?

+++++

is this reality ? whet-stone
in the garage half-empty
whiskey bottle and overhead
long fishing poles waiting
for a day in the sun // reality ?
walking the long side of
second street past magic shop
past greek restaurant mystery
across the street from hospital
where we saw light of day
tripods oracles mantic omega
moving further down to
an avenue then the root
beer stand and the music
from a car radio top-40
hot asphalt girls in roaming
wearing just lipstick and
farms hundreds of them rolling
toward a small lake where
fish and polkas and blistering
grandpa's chevy rattling
gravel unmarked roads
to where the Indians routed
dumb pioneers in Mankato
and back again a solving
sands gravel dead leaves
must be change of seasons
sky all weather and azure
clouds to count before sun
down // reality ? is this ?
coming slanted through glass
a reflection from millions
of years ago clay pits and
dinosaur tracks and trees
birdsongs and catholic rites
the self crossed in lightning

+++++

by evening scared to forget
what was it like before
the light ?

The Date Was Thirteen Death

(Temple of the Sun-Eyed Shield)

for Valum Votan

fortunate the flight and fugue the fell
down swept the brothers held and high
sky limits the incense laden clouds
topaz raiment jade flares in plumes
round the salty mists of distance and
green cormorants chattering parakeets
dovetailed in walls of invisible liana
song making loud the spirit-eye of time
each unbound and spirals northwards
their limitless train furlongs of dust
until which colony prevailed and
musk frozen lakes the twain contained
other beholding in night-sight great
lands heights of tropic memory sound
here and here the dotted terrain of
light the unending and bright spoils
unfurling like sails in dream of waters
come crashing unspotted the prows
black with epic and landing now and
never on darkened sands reefs of gods
the cries of sudden and reverie white
tattooed around the ear of drums
which will be the first unrestrained
to fold death neatly inside the conch
who will dancing blind adore the heat
swelling round and round death
the ivory pleated and hail ! bone-swift
targets of swooping birds crested gold
talons of fire the serpent entwined
will sleeping the air itself burst seeds
scatter like sperm on unspoken rock

and lo ! the main becomes heavy with
and forth spring the ancestors
so , ashes and grey cinders their city
immersed in lakes of basalt and lime
behold the histories of tortoise and ant
limitless pyramids from outer space !
yet death snaking 'neath the skin
earthly and like a girl for the first
her swirling porches of soot and hair
enchantment perfumes legend wild
the brothers ensnare like fireflies
in screens of nocturne and red litmus
approximate the pale worm of death
smoking out of the radiant Heart
in profusion of yellow and indigo
fire-water pulque mezcal libations
who eats the corn of death once
eats forever the timeless Harvest !
go we brother and I into the wave
sea-winds darksome shadows aloft
or drowned in inky rebirth
fade and absence
silent the

The Fire This Time

neither angel nor suitor
come down from Olympian clouds
bringing fiefdoms of sulfur and carmine
adulterer in shadowy pantomime
of airs and villanelles declining
nouns of marmoreal ruins
is this in order to certify life ?
smoking morass of the remains
everything that lies either north
or south of the equator in heat
does the ruler of the immortal House
command the shores of light to recede ?
what's real what's unreal great Latin
empire with its husks of death and rhetoric
ashes of sunlight ashes of distance
nowhere to go the failing tides
the grist and drift of poisoned waters
with cancer between the sheets the Moon
displaying its drained aspirin fogs
bone-meal and sewer of the brain system
endlessness of rot going out to sea
red and blue litmus of planet Nemesis
in spiral course to total annihilation
if only could the epic form restore
and the divine hand interpolate verses
and destruction and beatification
were one and the same and the adulterer
in his puce yellow vehicle rewind
the clock of time midnight precisely
every hour of the day and love the
fastidious and out of mind riot
of the senses dollar for dollar
on the market burning as never before
this is apocalypse and serene union

Argüelles/74

this is negativity of space and Orient !
licking fires of the empyrean acre
upon acre reduced to stubble of Night
when will the one I truly love
emerge from the smoking mountain haze
lunar moth of obsidian friction ?

GUY R. BEINING:
THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF TIME

the circumference of time



I.

wind
trails the backs
of trees



II

stars point thru
white veins
of a dark razor



III

night sky
blossoms over
mirrored lake



IV

morning sky
as hairline uproots
a blue puzzle.

Maximizing



SEP 19 2017

MARK DECARTERET

A B-Movie of Me

I sit pounding my temples,
split between the nouns
wetness and ash,
in this shabbiest hut of mine,
not one wall or a roof
but soundproofed by Basho.
Think of all of it as a tree. Or as a pen at rest.
The same goes for when you're inspecting
the skin-folds under your chin.
Even more so when you can't stop
the tape from its running on.
But please, not as the leaf of a tree
as it fails to catch on—
its dying yellow like a swallow of ale.
And never the ink in the pen
as it suffers today's date—
its black suds almost at home on my fingertip.
For I have had my fill of this silence,
this fire and water that makes
a meal out of everything.
My path is now studded
with its own dust, its own light.
And only life is unconvinced of its fate,
all the skin come to taffy,
the constant footage of it.
Yes, this too is bullshit. Yet, it stays longest.
Like the sweat from an addict's hand,
the lies they can't help but host on their tongue.

So, let's go with all manner
of wetness for now.
And I'll talk you through the rest later on.
Though I'm imagining
it'll taste somewhat of ash
and I'll be heartened by not
only my thoughts of the flame
but all the fun we had watching it
die, renaming it.

JOHN BRADLEY

Fragments from *So Saith the Third Book of Dissolve*

The first sighting of teeth emerging from root and tendril.

*

As when a bird plucks out all its feathers, it cannot be recognized as a creature of the sky but in fact is often mistaken for an infernal fish.

*

After they salted the soil of Carthage, it is said the Romans licked the salt from their hands and gazed off into the far future.

*

Henceforth the official known as the Dear Friend of All Citizens surrounded himself with only generals, as in his dreams he was made to parade in a nakedly through the streets, stumbling about as his wives and mistresses and children tossed at him ripe elephant dung.

*

To spend an endless night in a bed between two lovers, caught between unruly sleep and the inability to wake.

*

All official documents he signed with the implement he called *the people's pestle*, and which his staff called *the shit-stick*.

*

[*Text missing*] the wick that eats its own flame.

Fragments from *So Saith the Ninth Book of Dissolve*

Into the child's hand the gold-feathered bird would land, commanded by a language we could not hear, smell, see, touch, or eat.

*

The Dear Friend of All Citizens sent his daughter as his proxy to ask the Sibyl, *What shall become of the empire?* though we all knew she asked instead: *What shall become of the Dear Friend of All Citizens and his family?* What the Sibyl told the daughter we do not know, but it was said that on her way home the daughter took sick and vomited on the hillside a crow with a piece of papyrus in its beak: *The rotting apple gives off heat.*

*

To make potshards float above you as you sleep.
To fit the potshards together when you wake.
To let them fly about you as you sleep.

*

Closer than trees.*

*

The only thing worse than a courtyard with a rooster? A courtyard without a rooster.

**Closer than trees.* Taken from *Eurydice's Lost Letter to Orpheus*.

DAN RAPHAEL

Loud Cool Dark September Morning

Is this the last summer
the oceans gone, we don't know where
all the cars leaving town

Air so cold, too cold for my lungs
heavy, but they can't push back
sinking past my intestines, my feet
spreading like a 360 degree waterfall

In vague anticipation i open all the doors and windows
try to tell the walls theyre free now—run

One minute im in a valley
next im on a treeless hill
horizon curving and too indistinct
to set a foot on.

if i reach out
my hand wont stop til it touches something, someone
so far away it disconnects from my body, i cant see it

Im smoke a hundred wasps have gone through
no sound no flavor
i cant get up i cant lie down
cant solve the riddle coz i'm inside it,
this barren existence whose core is a crisp thread,
a filament without current

As if in a box but which ways up
a different house where mine was yesterday
how they look at me

Raphael/86

how what comes out of my mouth is a foul odor, not language
all the houses slide away from me
the rooftops of a large city fill the sky, sinking
like a chunky fog, a huge complex bootsole

**“I hear the music/of sorcerers/ trapped/
in the bowels/of herons.”**

George Hitchcock

Heron sightings rare for me,
occasionally near the river,
where i seldom go

Music is everywhere
but almost all of it pours
directly to single pairs of ears
leaking whispers & fuzzy bass

The actual sorcerers dont show their hands
unlike would-be apprentices
thinking smart phones are wands

Yet ten year old connections suddenly revealed,
multiple identities, threads that spark,
a déjà vu you cant walk around

My wings camouflaged as a plaid shirt,
all my will power keeping me from
going through the fish market window

I want a coat that keeps out the cold
but lets music flow both ways undistorted.
i want glasses that let me see
whats swimming beneath the sidewalk,
whos flying barely treetop
invisible against a sky
that doesnt bother to dress
cause so few ever look at it

Raphael/88

A bass riff twitches
through my finger tips
like a perch
just close enough to surface

Waiting for the DNA Test

Could i count the black dogs in the field if they stopped moving
or is it just 2 or 3 dogs displaying simultaneously all the places
theyve been & will be there, chasing the ball of the sun,
playing tug of war with a hank of river

The crows near the homeless camp know me
breaking open a plastic bag of rain-soaked bagels & pastry
so more could eat, as more fly in

And what of our oak tormented by squirrels
strip-searched, gnawed, then expected to provide shelter
in a hole or crotch—who else is living there
not counting the moss machines, the insect processes

But i dont mean bees, more functional & intelligent
than we could ever, no matter how we choose to miniaturize,
to export natural functions to devices we can never fix, only upgrade

Is there a mammal whose skin no one every wore
a bird whose feathers didnt decorate some body
the tree my door came from, the ice that became my window.

When a dogs tail is wagging. where are his teeth,
when i think its night but my windows are covered with crows,
as flesh is a veil, as clothes announce our sadness
at having so little fur and no feathers at all
just these thick bones to withstand small collisions
and keep us chained to the earth
we seldom rise from, seldom run across full speed
trailing slobber, dust and fleas of random memory.

I drive a mile to the Thirsty Dog; the bartender asks
if im a service animal, or might i be in season

Raphael/90

Whose Hand Between my Head and the Door Frame

Bang my head against the
hold my fingers to the flame
cry, run, drop and roll, fold into a tree, pray for instant night,
for the transporter beam to reach me before a bullet

Each days a little hotter, night has given up on cooling
wind waiting for motivation, time turning sticky swamp
aglow with memorys analgesic photoshop

Pizza so complex no one gets all the same toppings
has the same word for the same flavor
she says the cop was tall, he says the cop was average
the manifold, the unfold, anonymous knowledge,
the edge of my knowing where the past and future
show their tattered pixels, unravelling or not yet hemmed

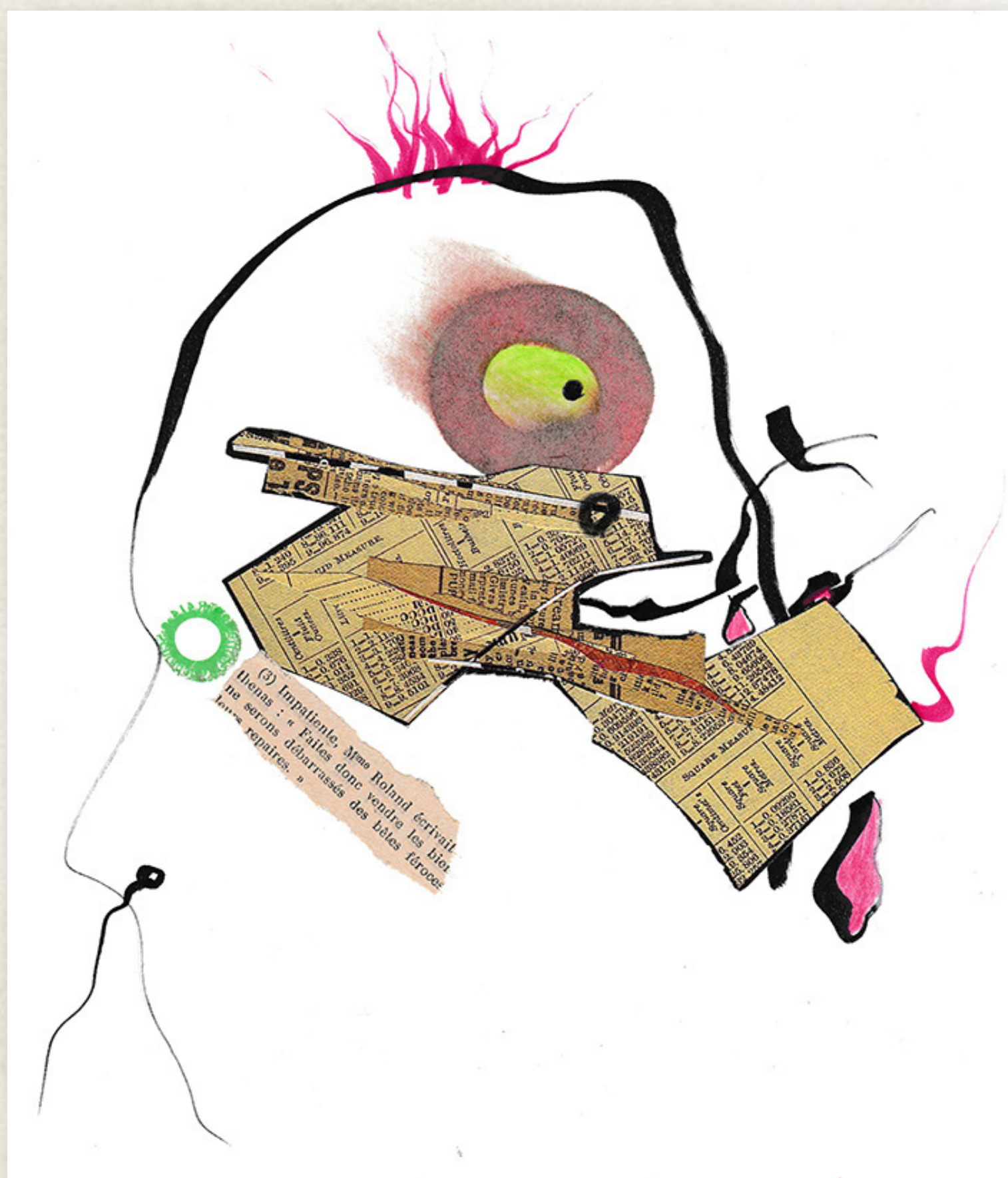
I go to the bathroom but nothing comes out
i look in the mirror but its the same headlines from 3 days ago—
this threatened, that blocked, the 5 stupidest things i thought.
if i was 20 stories above the ground instead of one
would the actual world be any further— deforested, platted, paved
cheek to jowl, no room to howl

How my clothes close me:
do i cover my head or shave it for full exposure
put a mask on the back of my skull so you think i'm backing away,
does it matter if the policeman can hear, if he knows my language
so much stops when the cop stops you—
the constitution, common sense, the long-crafted reins
on my paranoia, on my sense of justice

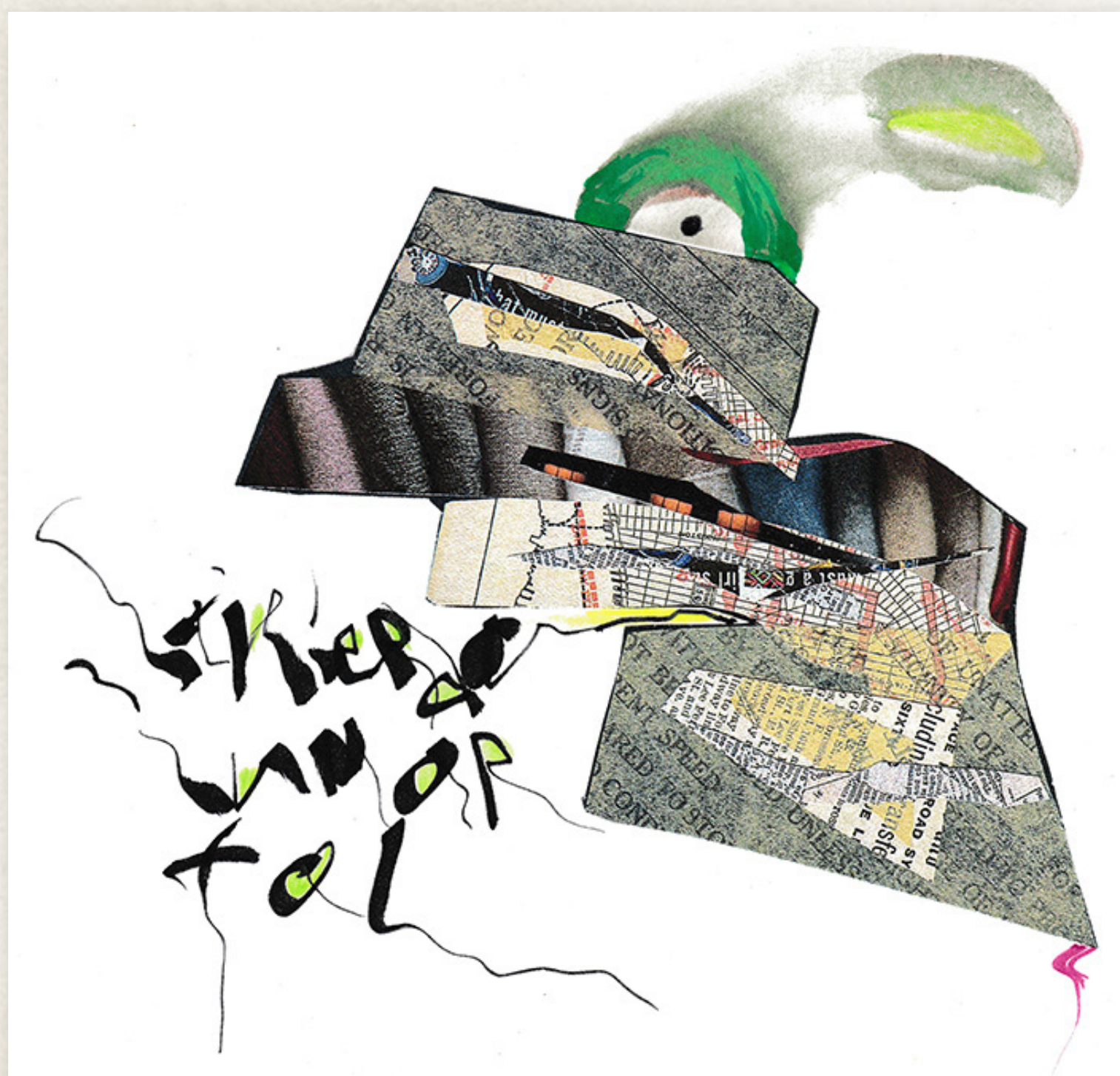
Is it better to be mislabeled or not to be seen at all
if i don't drive a car my tail light cant malfunction,
my registration cant expire, and the time i spend

on the bus is time vulnerable, unfamiliar:
soon police wont pull buses over, theyll reroute them
to where none of us wants to go

JOHN M. BENNETT & MUSIC MASTER:
FOUR COLLAGES







D. E. STEWARD

Lignite, Bituminous, Anthracite

The spring well begun before leaving for Lititz via Ephrata

German Baptist Brethren utopian Ephrata cloister with the stunning plank-wall carpentry and history from 1732 of a charismatic founder, sexual segregation, liturgical music, calligraphy, earnest Old Testament orthodoxies

All the peculiar Christian ventures, the Shakers, Quakers, Unitarian Brook Farm, Ordre du Temple Solaire, polygamous Latter-day Saints, Jonestown, Waco, Heaven's Gate

Charles Fourier the key to their socialist aspects, and Baby Jesus, grown up and vengeful, to the rest

In Lititz the mineral springs where there was a spa, a chocolate factory, the Moravian Archives, Colonel Sutter back from his mother lode

Pennsylvania's sixty-seven counties tucked mostly into synclinal valleys, almost thirteen million people

All those stream and river bottoms between sequential hardwood ridges

Midwestern America tentatively starts at the Susquehanna

Or possibly even at the Schuylkill

A nineteen-eighties Pennsylvania governor put billboards on the interstates at the Delaware River bridges reading, "Welcome to America"

South over the Mason Dixon Line into Maryland and then Morgan County, West Virginia

Berkeley Springs and through Largent over the mountain to Forks-of-Cacapon

Paw Paw nearby on the upper Potomac is town for that part of Hampshire County, WV

Where Braddock camped in 1755 and most of the Virginia versus West-By-God issue was played out through the Civil War

Frontier feeling here below the Potomac, south and west toward the inner continent

Deep valleys with alluvials down along the Lost River and South Branch flanking long Shenandoah Mountain

The National Security Agency excavated caves in Shenandoah Mountain where former War Minister Cheney often came to ground

Just downstream from The Navy Information Operations Command (NIOC) Sugar Grove on State 21 as cloistered by the "Naval Security Group Activity, Sugar Grove"

The mountain is directly behind a quarter-mile of a runway-wide drive, a Fort Knoxlike gate manned by two guards with assault rifles, Navy or Marines, too far away to tell which

The big bunker complex lies inside a four-mile mountainous triangle of West Virginia Highways 21, 25 and 24, between Sugar Grove and Brandywine Lake

There in out-of-the-way low-population Appalachia the local people don't have much to say about it

Drive on southwestward out of the fringe of imperial Washington and into upland Allegheny-sheep-pasture country, Virginia's Highland Country

Monterey, Highland's county seat, population 200, named following Zachary Taylor's victory in the Mexican War

One Mexican "r" dropped when registering the California one too

They were high old jingoistic times, improbable that a new Phoenix or San Diego subdivision would be named Fellujah

Two bald eagles down the Jackson River along three-thousand foot Bullpasture Mountain, both fully adult, scornful yellow bills and tarsi, heads vividly white

A tight valley with one-field width alluvial, empty road, so never far from their course, seventy or eighty feet high at eagle speed

The first one alighted on a stub over the river, shat white lime hugely, then took off downstream again

It stayed with the river for over a mile, then cut into a side valley on the other side

In the next half mile, the other appeared also heading downstream

Seemingly disinterested, otherwise engaged, like the dozens of bald eagles that are perched around Dutch Harbor's fish processing sheds all year-round

Into Bath County now and the Jefferson Pools, two rough barn-white painted plank bathhouses whose carpentry looks to date back toward

Jefferson's visit here for a soak as an old man in 1818

In nearby Hot Springs at the Homestead and over in West Virginia's
White Sulphur Springs the baths are with spa glitz accouterments

Perpetual afternoon teas in the huge soft-sofa lounges

Many retired military in evidence seeming to need to turn their bodies
before they redirect their gaze, their ladies standing by at the ready

Golf and dogwood, drinks on the terrace, azalea and redbud, plaid
pants and blazers, green pants and golf shirts, once in a while
fragments of Waspy bling

Fat sedans and top-heavy hogwagon SUVs, broad parking lots with
vividly painted lines and unequivocal signage

Big oaks and grassy swales

Local black guys with shoulder boards and braid opening doors,
Virginia friendly when they see you can look them in the eye

Burrowed down below lie extensive Cold War fallout shelter caves for
federal officials with bottled water, dried rations, gray military blankets
and cold sheets, like Cheney's fraidy hole back near Sugar Grove

Out toward Beckley over in West Virginia on I-64

Coal country west of deepest Appalachia in the tight, steep mountains
of the eastern fringe of the Cumberland Plateau

Out here near Mullins, Wyoming County, West Virginia is a near
infinity of creeks, hollows, abrupt grades, and alternatives to negotiate

The ridges up to twenty-five hundred or three thousand feet, the
drafts and valleys below at a thousand or more, all with seams of coal
within

On the road to the coal camps, Wolf Pen, Welch, Caretta, Yukon, War

Mine-accident cenotaphs, grime, resignation, glum quietude, beat-up trucks and cars, crack cocaine, oxycontin, and misery

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VISIT THESE MINING TOWNS,
KEEP IN MIND A FEW THINGS:

1. STAY OFF OF THE PROPERTY OF ACTIVE MINES. THEY ALL HAVE GUARDS WHO WILL RUN YOU OFF. ALSO, IT'S DANGEROUS, SEEING AS HOW YOU PROBABLY WON'T BE WEARING A HARDHAT AND METATARSALS.

2. BE CAREFUL OF TRESPASSING. JUST BECAUSE A MINE IS CLOSED DOESN'T MEAN NO ONE OWNS IT. YOU MAY ALSO HAPPEN UPON SOME LOCALS WHO ARE RANSACKING THE PLACE. THIS COULD BE A PRECARIOUS SITUATION.

3. THE RESIDENTS OF THESE MINING CAMPS MAY NOT APPRECIATE YOUR 'INTRUSION.' GIVE THEM A LITTLE RESPECT AND YOU'LL PROBABLY BE ALL RIGHT.

4. SOME OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE COAL CAMPS HAVE VICIOUS DOGS.

5. THERE AREN'T MANY RESTAURANTS IN COAL CAMPS. EAT AND GAS UP BEFORE YOU GO.

6. SOME ROADS ARE UNSUITABLE FOR LUXURY AUTOMOBILES. A FEW ARE UNSUITABLE FOR ANY AUTOMOBILE.

7. I WOULD STRONGLY DISCOURAGE ANYONE FROM ENTERING AN ABANDONED DEEP MINE. THE TIMBERS ARE PROBABLY ROTTEN AND THE ROOF MAY FALL ON YOU.

8. SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA, WHICH USED TO HAVE ONE OF THE LOWEST CRIME RATES IN THE NATION, IS NOW EATEN UP WITH DRUGS. ADDICTION TO OXYCONTIN IS ESPECIALLY BAD IN WYOMING AND LOGAN COUNTIES, BUT IT IS BAD ALL OVER. MANY ARE ALSO ADDICTED TO METHAMPHETAMINE AND CRACK. THE METHADONE CLINIC ON THE EDGE OF BECKLEY HAS A STEADY STREAM OF TRAFFIC IN AND OUT OF IT ALL MORNING LONG. THIS DRUG PROBLEM HAS CAUSED AN EVER INCREASING INCIDENCE IN PETTY AND VIOLENT CRIME. THE CITY OF BECKLEY HAS EXPERIENCED A CRIME WAVE WHICH IT SEEMS IT CAN'T CONTROL.

(this local savvy from Chris DellaMea, Beckley, WV)

On down into Buchanan County, Grundy, and so back into Virginia

A long haul from Grundy southwestern Virginia to anywhere outside

Southwest on State 83 out to Whitesburg in Kentucky

Guy Davenport, Wendell Berry, Kingdom Come State Park and the innerness deep inside the continent, coal to bluegrass to the Mississippi middle

Coal country people are different from those who live conglomerate lives, but once here which is which is hard to identify

Get your Bible on a DVD, buy it right off the TV

Elkhorn City down the mountain in Pike County, twenty percent poverty, a soldier's funeral on a weekday morning

Flags, gurgled playing of taps, pompous sadness, American Legion heavily emblazoned pisscutter caps

Duke Power (NC), Massey Energy (Richmond, VA), TECO Energy (Tampa), and Peabody Energy (St. Louis), the big absentee owners in cahoots with mine inspectors, enforce that the mines put running coal ahead of shoring and clearing flammable debris

Run coal they say, run coal

Gob piles that are three stories high

ALBINO CARRILLO

There Were Seconds in the Day when It Mattered

The advertising campaign
is ended now, having won over a few new
customers. Characters who make up the day we inhabit
without pajamas or slippers we encounter in gray
suits or black slacks cut and tailored for today's needs.
Who knows who came before us, although they
wore Timberland boots and took pictures of the lake.
A man can talk about his life in certain
ways. There is the high swell, mid summer,
There is the drop off next to the canyon
where water breaches the earth, flows
muddy, indistinct. He cannot see himself
in that water, waits for some kind of pool
to form. It is almost mid autumn when this happens,
taking with him the last view of the cascade unwaivering.

So now back to the suits, the silk and wool Armanis worn
in mid summer like in a Cary Grant movie. By now sheets
of rain fell in the suburbs—large thick drops and chunks
of hail beating back, for a while, the little league game.
It came to be the slow practice of those on the streets
to carry a pair of rubber slip on galoshes in case the flood
came by. Dreadful images then consumed the past:
hangings, the bombings, a hundred million humans
once, six million again, another hundred million by now.
In our next gimmick we should be more coy, more
forgiving of the masses' thirst. They cannot buy
if they are carbonized by the god Plutonium.

If we let him, his vast purple hand will reach from all silos & mobile sites to touch all of us. No, the next scheme has to involve the movies. Or the reinvention of radio beamed to our willing listeners who would pay ten dollars a month to hear Doris Day sing one more time.

JON SCHMITT

Chaoplexity

When the bullet hits the head, the head nods.

When the head nods, someone jerks awake, remembers.

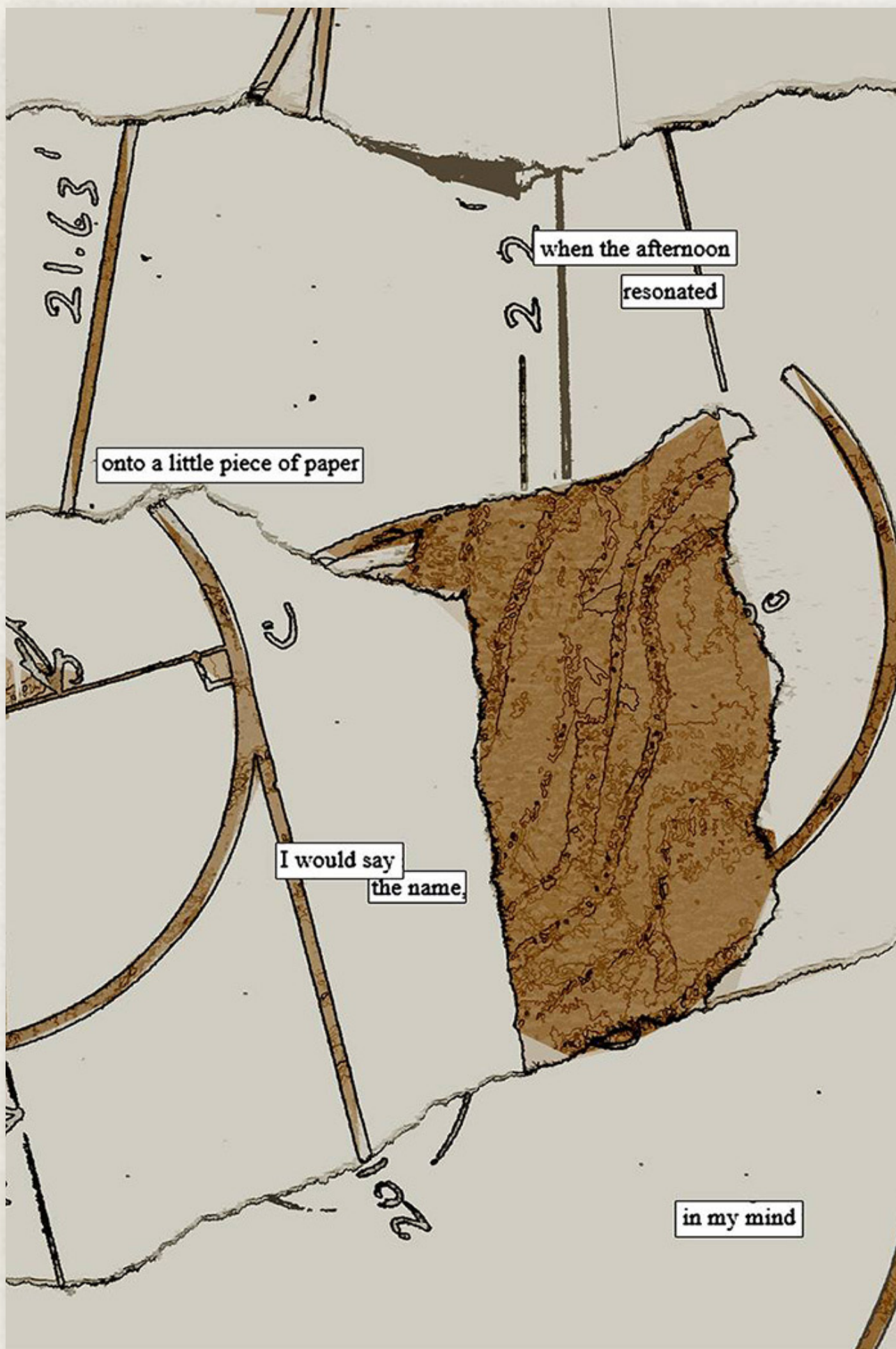
Remembering, all is flushed with pink light and clothes an altar.

The altar is a metaphor. On it a baby cries and is mistaken for
an antler.

When the buzzards come, douse them in oil and torch the fuckers.

Be careful not to pray to *them* while you're praying to their flames.

I must believe an antler grows in the hole the bullet made.



THE NAME IN MY MIND by J. C. Mendizabal
(RFCL Collective), 2017

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

ALBINO CARRILLO:

The darkness, the shade
We live in. Who's to say
It isn't Trump's, the world
We live in through his eyes.
We've lost someone, we've
Lost recurring dreams.

MARK DECARTERET:

Back in the late eighties at Emerson College in Sam Cornish's Minority Visions class when a student giving an oral presentation about being bullied at a summer camp in the Berkshires unpacked a luger and took turns aiming it at our heads I didn't think much of it until the stoner in the back row who hadn't said anything all semester says something like I'm not sure if that thing is loaded but would you mind putting it away because it's kind of freaking me out and thankfully it wasn't and he did.

GEORGE KALAMARAS:

The White Hairs of the Very Hairy White-Haired Revolver
(Or Thirteen One-Act Plays Folded Into One Enduring Act)

André Breton, to the White-Haired Revolver:

"Here never a body always the murder without proof"

*

Paul Delvaux:

"I have always wanted my colors to sing"

*

André Breton:

"Someone just died, but I'm alive and yet without a soul"

*

Meret Oppenheim:

"X = Hare"

*

André Breton:

"After a dictation in which *The heart takes*
Was perhaps written *The heart aches*"

*

Robert Desnos, to the air inside all of our mouths:

"I call the smoke of volcanoes and the smoke of cigarettes
the rings of smoke from expensive cigars
I call lovers and loved ones
I call the living and the dead"

*

André Breton:

"Suddenly the cavern became deeper"

"White birds laying black eggs"

*

Meret Oppenheim, from inside the face of one of Delvaux's expressionless nudes:

"X = Hare"

*

André Breton:

“To which the blood’s grasshoppers cling”

*

Homer:

“Better to flee from death than feel its grip”

*

George Kalamaras, through the body of George Seferis:

“Wherever I travel Greece wounds me”

*

Remedios Varo, to herself one morning in the mirror:

“On second thought, I think I am more crazy than my goat”

*

André Breton, once again to The White-Haired Revolver:

“I’ll begin by: My dear shadow. Shadow, my dearest”

TERRY HAUPTMAN:

THE NAMES OF THE DEAD VICTIMS FROM THE STONEMAN
DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTING IN PARKLAND
FLORIDA

ALYSSA ALHADEFF * SCOTT BERGEL * MARTIN DUQUE
ANGUIANO * NICHOLAS DWORET * AARON FEIS * JAIME
GUTTENBERG * CHRIS HIXON * LUKE HOYER * CARA
LOUGHRAN * GINA MONTALTO * JOAQUIN OLIVER
ALAINA PETTY * MEADOW POLLACK * HELENA RAMSEY
ALEX SCHACTER * CARMEN SCHENTRUP * PETER WANG

“Nothing else is heard but the weeping”

Federico García Lorca

Parkland students break open the silence
On gun control
Break open the firebud of the future
Demanding no assault weapons
Thorough background checks
Pushing us forward to forever's pulse
In the face of danger
In the face of hope
After deep loss, terror and pain,
“And nothing else is heard but the weeping.”

“Never Again,” will children be lost to gun violence,
Lost to the NRA's rule.

Anhingas screamed at the death of students gunned down
Near the slash palm and the saw palmetto,
Deep cries in the lilacs' smoke wrapped dawn,
Parkland students leading us all
In the change to come.

STEVE LAPINSKY:

My last meal before being recycled back into the ether:
Two with mustard and onions from Lafayette Coney Island,
two Filet-o-fish sandwiches
plus two large fries, and three triple-decker fried bologna sandwiches.

DALE HOUSTMAN:

Democracy: A Little Ceremony of Head-Shaking

1. A Few Precepts...

There is a lever which does nothing no matter where we stand, or how
we pull it.

All intelligent people are repulsed by the voting booth—it is a diseased, asexual *cavity*.

Through its shabby curtains pass the least informed victims in history, cursed with an optimistic ignorance or corrupted by a *fact paste*.

Social *insiders* vote as a sham or a sop—they have already registered *at the bank*.

Even the lab rat will cease to pull a handle if all it ever receives are pellets of his own shit in a brightly-colored tin bucket.

It is always night in the voting booth.

The vote is an inoculation against a slave's "bad attitude."

The State is the mood of a goldfish.

2. A Desire

If we stay as deep as we are in "the competition" (for resources, for military advantage, for public relations, for money on top of money screwing money on a money-filled mattress...) it will kill us, or deepen our coma. We need to admit we are NOT in fact "exceptional". We're just another "midget dream become Napoleon". We had a tidy run, a bit bloodied by our "keeping abreast of the competition" but some great art, music, revolutionary surges, comedy, poetry, prose. A good dollop of mashed "kelchoor" on the metal of the tray where they drop our daily slops. Nope - give up competing. Resign the nation to its brilliant little off-Broadway production, and retire into community theatre. Worse fates. Allow at least the next generation to look back on us as "quirky hazards" as they enjoy the fruits of *non-exceptionalism*.

3. A Sort of Take Away

What some now call “an inverted totalitarianism” (or “inverted fascism” in which control rests not in the hands of a single “charismatic” tyrant and his handpicked cadre of thugs, but in the sociopathic boardrooms of corporations) is not a shiny new toy, but the engineered trajectory of (at the VERY least) 3 decades, and served by paid operatives/flunkies on both sides of an obviously risible “democratic dream”... It IS NOT a trashy consumer product from the freshest scraped out man-child pouting in the White House, pretending to leadership and fortitude, yet overacting like a disturbed boy asked to play Nero in a high school theatric production of “I, Claudius”. Nor is it a document (smelling of tripe) from that suited smear of manure called “statesmen”, who serve their business overseers so recklessly. It IS the inherent behavior of the Purchased State itself, as a visible and mutable arm of Capital Power. In truth, the country has always breathlessly flirted with fascism, caressing its economic expressions until they fart out the sword “Progress!”... what was slavery but an economic solution, driven by wealthy agribusiness needs? What was the systematic slaughter of the Amerindian but an elaborate and myth-obscured land grab by vested interests, manipulating through racial fear an entire populace to serve “the better angels” of our company men? What was the “War on Drugs” (initiated by an easily disdained Nixon, but validated by every president since) but a program meant to crush minorities and the progressive left and secure the Owners’ estates against rabble? What is the privately owned prison industry (so fetishistically embraced by such “liberals” as America’s Bitter Sweethearts, Bill & Hillary) but a corporate takeover of the so-called “justice system”? Whose desires was that nostalgic knight, Obama, attending to when he so charmingly signed away one of the Constitution’s most central ideals, *habeas corpus*, but those of his corporate leash-holders, who so cherish order? And now Trump; the boil that reveals the long festering subcutaneous rot, which will drive away even his CEO compatriots, not from any reblossoming of an ethical revulsion, but from a sudden realization that their puppet is writing its own material and “giving away the game” at a far too cheap a price. They will give us Pence, a quieter tool, which they can use to

chip away at whatever cheap wood remains on this outhouse of Liberty, while progressives waft back to self-satisfied slumber, giddy with empty success. “The Clown is dead, long live the Clown!” We—“progressives,” radicals, the disenfranchised, the ‘butt hurt,’ the hairy peripherals—should be fighting to keep this latest idiot *stuck in the White House*, to let him continue *the Labors of the Idiot Samson* in bringing down Democracy’s Brothel around the heads of its corporate madams. Instead, we shall most likely be content with a cuter tool, a more pleasurable criminal. We shall say thank you for tucking us in under the thin jail blanket...

The situation we are living through is both exhilarating and depressing: exhilarating because of the potential for rapid and lasting sea changes, and depressing because it probably won’t happen. Only a short while ago, I was privileged to watch the absurd spectacle of “Dubya” rolled out (with his newest Dream Girl, Bill Clinton) to act the part of the “ethical conservative”—this from a war criminal! We are learning to be homesick for such massive corporate investments as those two. Soon they will bring out the crumbling *Jesus of Geopolitics*, Kissinger, to inform us of how democracy is supposed to work, and probably toss in a passing reference to how he—as an ethical beacon—“morally revolted” by Trump. But not—it appears—by criminal slaughter: a fine sensibility that. And how far behind the black mold which constitutes the entirety of Cheney, no doubt also to be cleansed in the bogwash called Trump. The duration of infected administration will fill with politicians from both sides (I use “both” humorously) trying to position their wing of the corporate empire as the “moral alternative” to Trump. If the Dems get their widely scattered shit together they will offer us a “prettier” agent of corporate interests, someone who can eloquently lie to our faces while consuming bribes like a piranha in the River Lethe. It’s where we like to slumber away our weekends. The entire thing is a rain of night soil in broad daylight. If progressives in this country were smart (they’re not) they would start organizing as many of the “disenfranchised class” into a group that would explicate the crimes of the major parties going back decades, show how relativism is being used to distance them from this troll of a president: make Trumpism stick to the entire political system from which it seeped, and forbid ourselves to even entertain the notion

that a solid dump of Trump cleans the latrines. To do all that and more while strongly and unashamedly fronting not “progressive” policies (that title is now as corrupted as “liberal”) but radical shifts in the very body of this corpulent empire of cash and carry. Instead, (sigh) they are sputtering away their energies on humbling and destroying ONE man, worthy of this diligent attention no doubt, but not the *essential rot*. At this point, it is obvious even our Owners want him gone, they want their quieter, more insidious form of control back. The fun has been had, and soon Trump will be the bride left at the abattoir. So the efforts to oust him actually end up serving those whom we already serve. Leave him where he lies, and point to him every hour on the hour as the very exemplar of our Republic, the ugly floor under the pretty new carpet. Otherwise, this will all devolve into nostalgic “oh wasn’t that something!” bar chatter, as we march off to another war, or sell the country’s wildlife to a rendering plant in Thailand.

DAN RAPHAEL:

Dive as deep as you can; come back for air & light. Once a week i go to KBOO, our 24-7, 50 year old community radio station, and write news readers for the anchor, as well as a 1 minute news related poem, that i also record. Researching news stories always shows me that things are worse than i think; writing about things most news isn’t covering, and venting through my poems, helps a balance. I work to not get overwhelmed, to maintain my instinct, to not get down on myself for not being more active and responsible. So i’m developing my skills in tai chi and electric bass, thinking how, in some unseen way, this’ll help me survive what’s coming down, help me react in a brave and brilliant way should i be in a place where that could be crucial. Bullets, festering seeds, don’t come from nowhere—they come from whoever, whatever. Put them in the gun.

ZOLTÁN KOMOR:

I’m a different kind of mosquito—my sting is a limp heart but I can’t suck your blood with it—I can only pump my own blood into you—this is how I cremate myself without any fire—I know someone is sitting

in front of my gravestone with a chisel waiting for some inspiration—and we can hardly recognise the people we never met before—this is verbal necrophilia: only dead sentences allow me to take them in my mouth—I'm looking for the ultimate diminutive suffix, that makes me disappear completely—pieces—body odor—too much flammable material—I want to look alike exactly myself but even the mirror laughs at me—begin to rot before dying is forethoughtful—dying before death is pure philosophy—there's no message that's more important than inflammation

IVAN ARGÜELLES:

So what's furious about a gun ? It's not that, it's the fury of the person buying, holding and loving the trigger of the gun that's furious. It's killing to be the greatest while holding a gun and letting its automatic and lethal spray justify the fury of the otherwise anonymous purchaser of the gun. It's Helter Skelter with a legally acquired fire arm. It's the Second Amendment, intended originally to eradicate the Native American, justifiably in self defense of corporate West European value system. In other words, it's the American Way ! Let's do it at the Mall, let's do it at a movie theater, but especially, greatest fun for all, let's do it at a public school. Remember, it's not the gun that's angry, it's the protagonist, usually white athletic male of distinct Aryan traits. Don't mistake him for a terrorist, 'cuz he ain't no Islamic peddle-pushing Jihadist. Unh-unh. He's a confederate bred United States of an American. Let's try to sympathetically get into his poor wayward brain. Hate is it ? Love of God, Mother and the Flag is it ? What went wrong ? For starters it's all them damn Western Movies glorifying the John-Wayne-Fort-Apache shoot-em-ups, wiping out Comanche Arapaho Ojibway you name it Navajo nations. Fire-water ethics ! And don't forget that other cinematic genre, the Greatest Wars on Earth, GI Joe to the rescue making the world safe for Plutocracy. Yeah, let's blame Hollywood, Pinko Kingdom of Kinky Liberal-progressive Intellectuals and actors. Joe McCarty should have had the whole lot of them black-balled for life ! Jeezus M. Christ ! But now with the Trump in office, the NRA remains high on its horse, brandishing every kind of fire arm possible from the innocent cap gun

to the equally innocent automatic assault rifles in the name of forever defending the Second Amendment. If these guys have their way, every teacher in the country will be equipped with a hand-gun ready to shoot from the hip at any and all suspected weapons holders who walk into the school yard. Free for all!!! Zing Zing Zing! bullets flying every which way in a blood bath to end the education system. I told you so. What good's education anyway when you have Face Book, Twitter, Instagram and whatever else keeps the attention span at an absolute minimum. And you can see the whole thing on You-Tube, every last detail of the latest public school blood bath. With music downloaded or podcast throughout the nation. Thrilling. Darling, I told you he would go nuts with that gun. The FBI wouldn't listen.

JON SCHMITT:

Money for the Arts

The first thing is not to work over your own head. If the gown is gold, and the party thrown reluctantly on a diamond- crusted private plane, don't pretend that it's not a celebration of virtue.

The oracular in us, also, should not be given primacy of voice. If I bend this coat hanger into something cuneiform and point it at the moon, horses will certainly compose requiems and all my blood kin will find the parking spots closest to their most coveted items. To this I add only that costume jewelry is the semi-precious core of our erotic lives, the threshold of the degloved self

is bitching value overcome

heaving facets flooded away

This may be written on the back of a menu at Mr. Wong's Dumpling House, and should at least be footnoted in the taxonomies of the years of the rat, goat, bear and monkey. That is to say that bathos is lingua franca, even if it's always already out of sight. And, more than that, my high opinion of myself is universal in only the most terrifying way,

filling bathtubs full of blood, burning all the best evidence of better cultures, silence and slow time, and acting the part of itself acting the part of itself.

etc.

I would like to write a poem that speaks to people, that beats like a thoroughbred's heart's long velocity in extremis. I would love for my wife to read what I write and be touched in the way we imagine touching to work even as we discount all its equipment.

But

All writing is about something, itself in its way, courting spectral innocence, the theoretical

disclaimer of what we all know but cannot say.

If you pick up any book, you begin with the sign that tears out the heart of the good, that sustains

ghosts over terrain otherwise malign

to this sort of deceit,

this sort of parlor in which

the gold brocade indicts

the conjuror's trembling
hand baiting the switch.

Allow yourself to be free of guilt, just this right now despotism of freedom. Imagine, once, the time in flesh, its rindpeeled

forward gapping form. Take all this beadwork and make it reflect the eternal. How many winters, moons, coups? How much time spent living life through what's barred and bucking in history? I want the idea of wanting blood-wistful descent, gravity's certainty

on what the flame does feast, low and leaden like the color of eyes bruised by glamour, the color of nights spent darker still and spread hard and cracked over the sunburst, ash that precedes flame, precedes flood, precedes and heals in this cold poverty.

The temple veil is undulant wind. The echo

exquisite

silk ripped life is
perpetual prelude:

the water there with the affect of rock

the rock gleams the ethic of water
authority in this tear beyond pathos
burnished and cold

through the thoughts that space the

trees, the leaves filigree the slow
ravening of river rock

the chance derangement of the

calmer course, which *is*
in static stillness
gray-green sheets

flow stone-grained whispering
the secret Zeno tore from
the tyrant's ear.

MERCEDES LAWRY:

“How can you be an artist and not reflect the times you're in?”

Nina Simone

JOHN BRADLEY:

Flecks of myth around your mouth.

The circle blames no one and everyone.

Wash your flesh in circumnavigated ash.

The moon watches no matter what we do.

Boredom therapy: opening a walnut with a trapezoid.

At my funeral, mother will say, Who shall break the seal of the
throbbing book?

Charred wood wrapped in white silk is still charred wood wrapped in
white silk.

Under a somnambulist sky, the eye on the end of the stick will tell you,
Here we are again, beyond the limits of the visible.

**CALIBAN
IS
SEARCHING
FOR
ANGELS**

