



THREEFOOT • BORKHUIS • GONZALEZ • WILT • CUMMINGS • TOPAL  
 PERCHIK • SMITH • ANDERSON • ARGÜELLES • B. BENNETT • COOK  
 WESLOWSKI • SEIDMAN • NECHVATAL • MASSIMILLA • BEINING  
 GRABILL • CANLE • J. BENNETT • HAUPTMAN • MINTZER • VASSILAKIS  
 KALAMARAS • LABAÑINO • HARRISON • STEWARD • PETIT • HOGAN



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

**CALIBAN**

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Cover: AMERICAN GOTHIC by Jack Richard Smith, 1994  
oil on copper (48" x 34")

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

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

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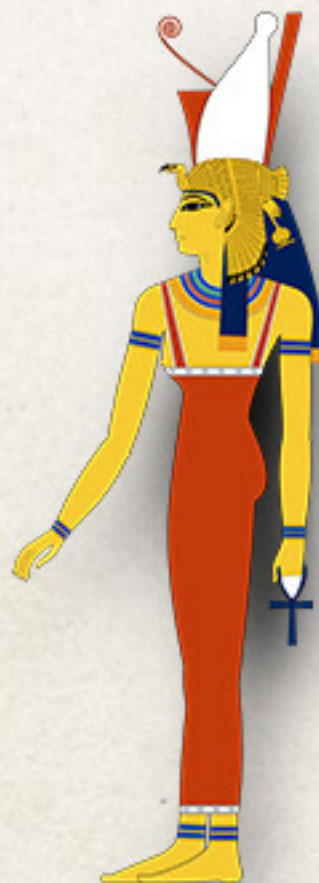
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**CONTRIBUTORS' ADVICE**





## GINNY THREEFOOT

### the ambiguities of sleep

in night | when I am spoken to | when I am reached for | when  
thinner partition admits | my being | found oft | out | hands aloft  
and seeking | and I rise to | I fall to | is night | a drink | a poison or  
a song

time of my access balcony | my somewhere hiding dream  
and in a night | comes knocking for all admittance  
a ticket for this trouble | I did buy a ticket | an accounting  
of the day | what only | in what dark | on backdown ladder  
climbing when

| I reached for my book | tore the pages | at a time | when  
without time |

all dark figures | all houses | without *reason* or *humanity* or *genius*  
without swans | but those that rise from sleep

beyond the sleeper | I am | lies the sleeper | I become | who seeks  
night exit

then and taken | then all mere and | forgotten were it not for  
adorned and lowly | new and always | new and changing  
shallow river | when | no thing gives up | changing | rising  
from inside where waking versions of | heard | in the ripe dark  
where well nigh exemplary | like six-winged becoming  
my green original | my nearly invisible | my red flaw  
spills upward | as the body yields

the body yields swans | their flight from the body



**afterlife I**

for this story | who will offer a synopsis  
*was that a life | was that a life*  
mouth had teeth in it | boots made a long passage  
my once black coat performed according to a need  
my once risk factory | now without audience  
once pleased to be earth-stained | once way of going about survival  
in a time and place of infinite resources | now to feel alone  
I hear | flocks of noise | inarticulate chatter | and now surprise  
    applause  
*was that a life | was that a life*  
a world on which floated such lowercase petals  
such letter-fade stutter | *I* was | a voice  
what calls a spirit on | what house the body was  
then the dirt walls of a town went up | black grass shot through  
the earth took ownership



**afterlife II**

they say late guests should bring the best gifts  
it is not a gift | if not a sacrifice  
now it is time to remove | all of the remaining stain  
on the border of another longing | not so very changed  
I approach | mouthing the song | *I know I know I know*  
wanting to call something my own | again  
a voice to put a body in | push hands in pockets  
as on former evenings | attend the party of bloom-smudged reds  
where someone balances an apple on a daughter's head  
an arrow cuts the fruit in two  
*weep little one-eye | sing little crescent one | dream your shelter now*  
I stack and topple the blocks of tomorrow's house  
now to see | this could be a life



## CHARLES BORKHUIS

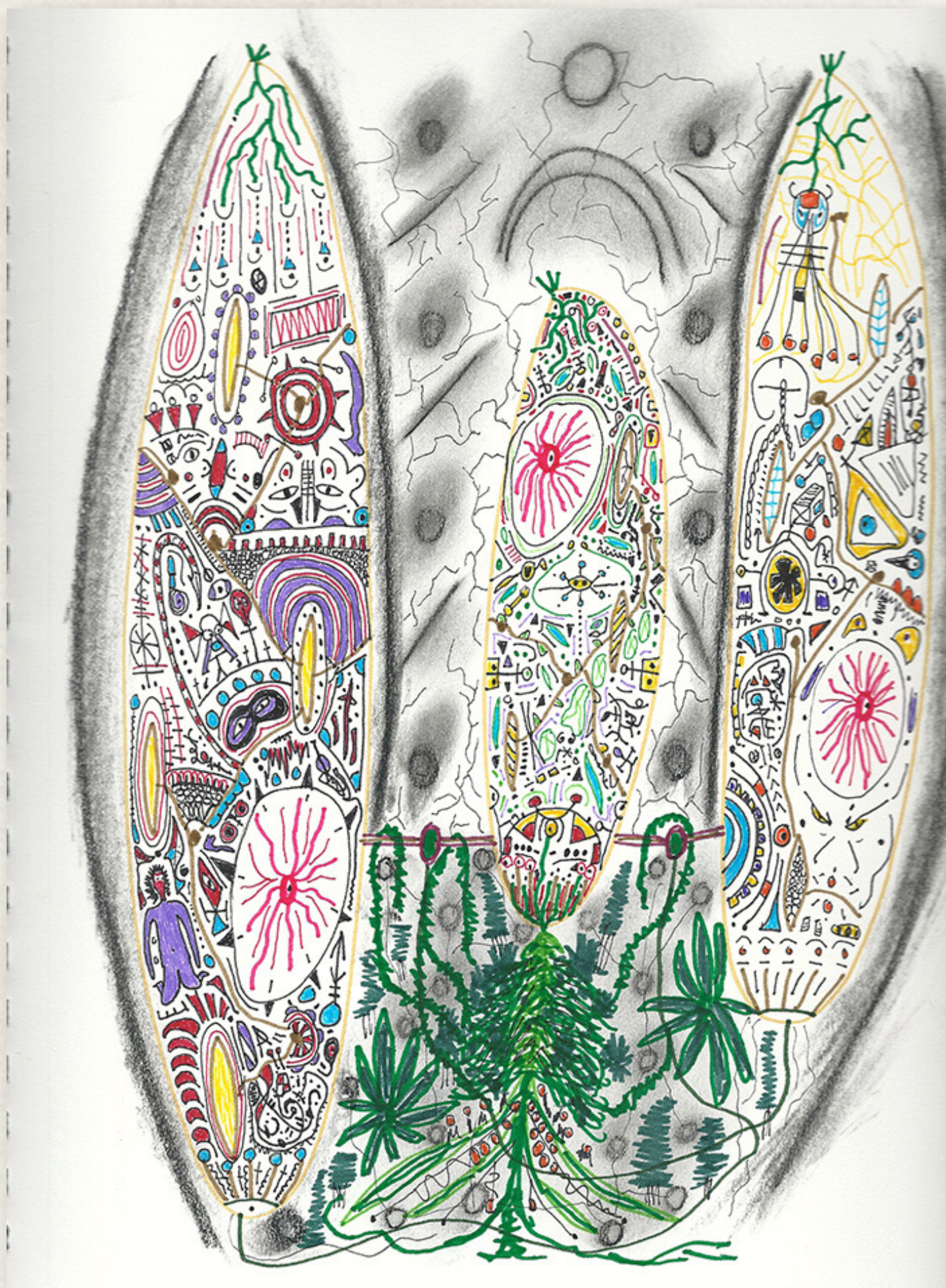
### Stone

once named  
you retreat  
from the word  
spinning deeper  
into yourself

surrounded  
by silence  
you leave us  
your shell  
clue to

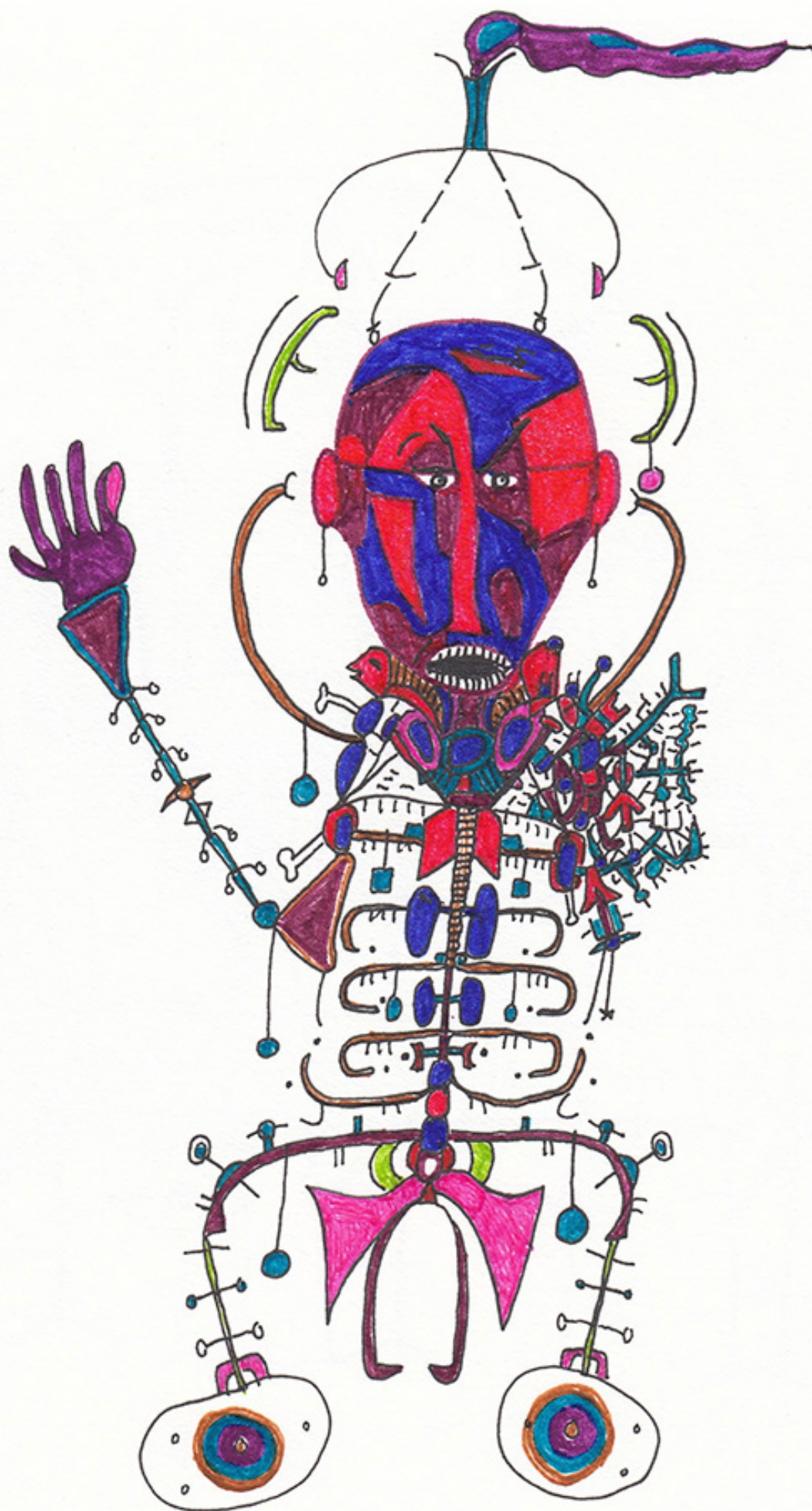
a crime  
we've committed  
that we're  
forever  
piecing together





HUMID HEART by Ray Gonzalez, 2019  
ink on paper





WHO WAS I by Ray Gonzalez, 2019  
ink on paper





THE SURVIVOR by Ray Gonzalez, 2019  
ink on paper



## CARINE TOPAL

### Ancient Fall

What did I know of the spoken and flawed  
sweeping through gardens  
in a growth knotted with green? How I  
shouldered up to the bark of a tree  
given fruit from a limb I could not reach  
on my own  
and took it

Day was breaking A boy threw stones  
The world was hungry Sky lay draped in shade

In the beginning a weedy field between thick woods  
A narrow ribbon of walkway  
that held nothing heavy with longing  
And the falls by the long lake stained blue  
A bird winged black feathered  
flew to a branch In the beginning  
a forest drenched in night  
and I knew without knowing after  
that I'd be doubted unforgiven this life chosen for me  
This tree that shaped desire

I was called by name  
as if I knew but could not have known  
here in the shadows of new time and old growth  
the tree that put an end to my wanting  
the sullen boy who might have been  
my lover



His harrowed look      when I took      what wasn't yet  
named  
                                 and took it whole

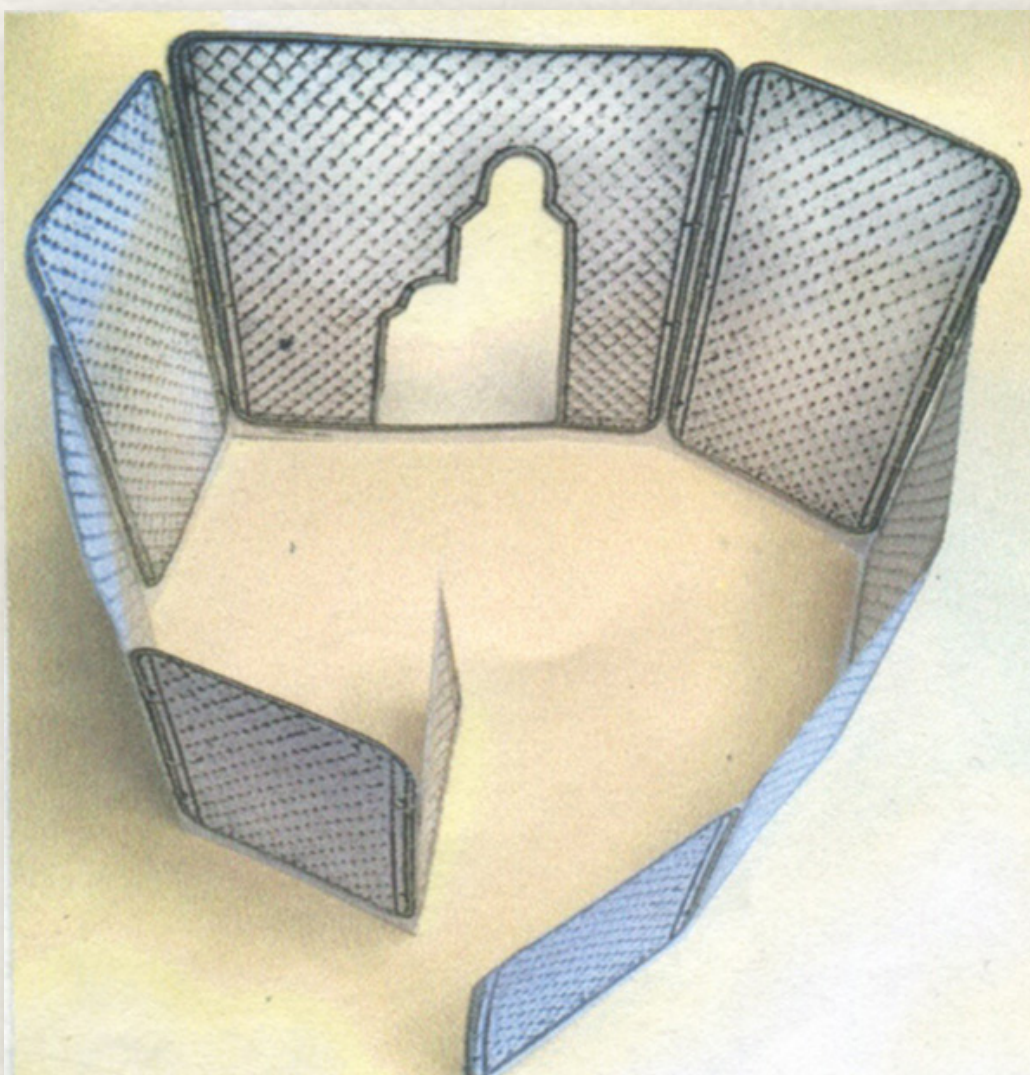
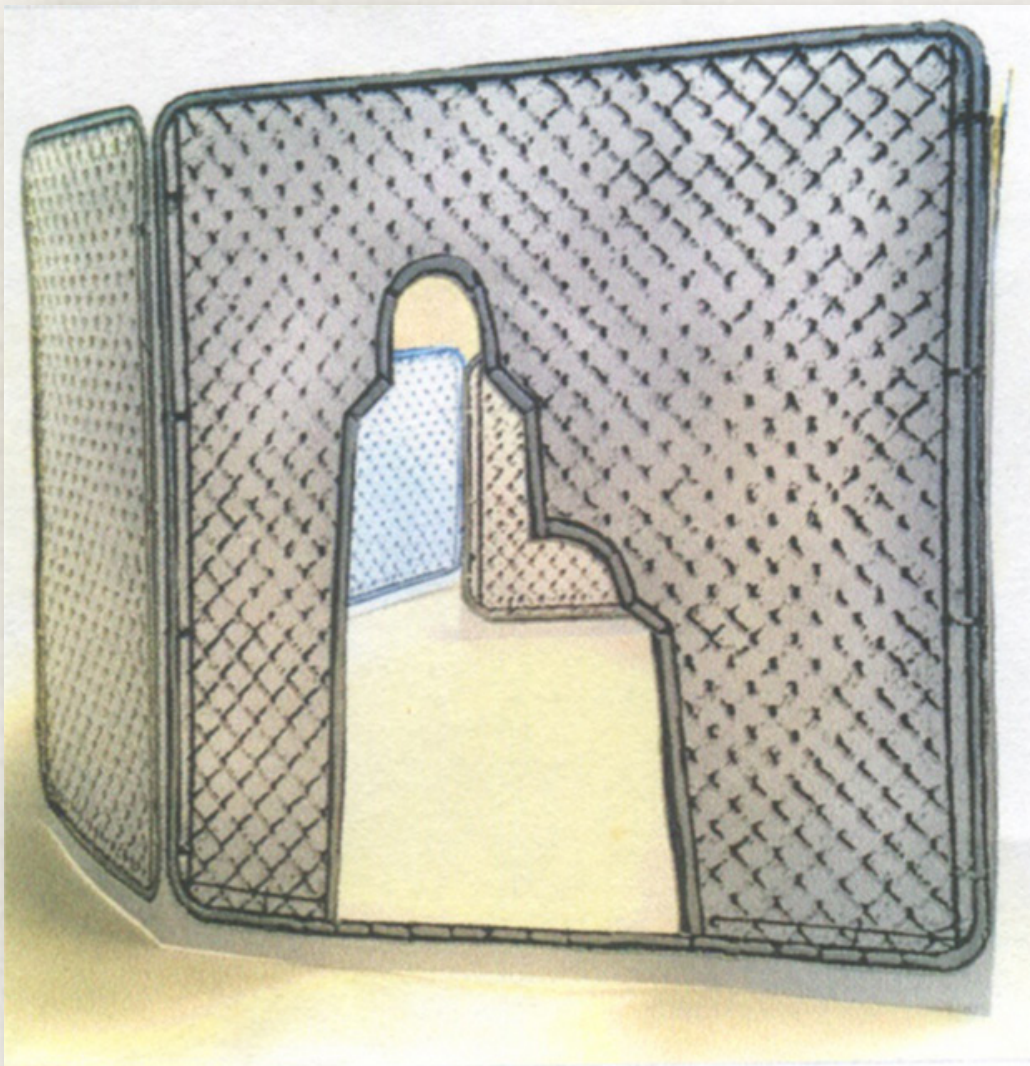


**Passing**

*for Brian*

My brother drove dark roads, off-road, squealing across the damp grass. He loved the reckless nights. He should have dropped off the turnpike at dusk. A thousand problems. His sweet blood made injuries hard to heal. With his one good eye, naturally, he crashed from time to time, from twilight into moonlight. His hair, set back, giving the night a shine. And like the moon, he stood behind his mystery, simply turned a corner into a passing field, unable to tell the delicate from the invisible. And disappeared. But that's not how he died. He gave what he could and spun light from music. A ravishing light. What the moon gives. He lived. Then he returned home to undress for bed, discarding his shirt and pants, shoes and socks, as though he were changing a wound.





WELCOME FENCE by Ellen Wilt, 2019  
ink on paper illustration for construction



In response to Trump's outrages at our southern border, Ellen Wilt has designed the "Welcome Fence." This modified chain link fence, both larger than normal and fitted with a special opening, "to accommodate one adult and two children," is her positive statement of American values to counter the forces of bigotry and xenophobia. Ellen is offering the design free of charge to anyone desiring to build it. She believes this conceptual piece would be a point of interest in any public park, especially in sanctuary cities. Families would want to have photographs of themselves passing through it. For anyone who is interested, please contact Ellen Wilt at [ellenwilt@aol.com](mailto:ellenwilt@aol.com).

*Lawrence R. Smith*



## SIMON PERCHIK

\*

You opened this umbrella slowly, sure  
what it wants is already circling  
as the mountainside you carry around

for an overhang—under this hidden grave  
it's easy to stay dry when there's some stone  
unfolding your arms the way each death

comes here as rain to put out the rain  
burning alive in your arms  
that have so much to do with opening

and closing though what was once a branch  
still tries to shake its dead leaves back to life  
by reaching out as shade and trembling.



\*

In the slot for tracks the time between trains  
is your last address though it's the station  
that's waiting for the years gone by to return

the way this unwanted newspaper is already seated  
as if it was going further and at the border  
would spread as the grammar all travelers learn

from each other to put the minutes in order  
before reaching out to hand some conductor  
the death certificate that has no period

for the hole to be dug by the silence  
reaching out from so many tears  
night after night for it to end.



\*

You work this bottle cap the way the early Earth  
turned then emptied for the first tide  
that now follows it one death at a time as the silence

that cannot be cured—it's a small pill and twice a day  
smells from the shallows reaching out from a sea  
that no longer moves though you tilt your head

side to side as if its primordial sequence  
was still in place, waiting to drain the glass  
while you are leaning over the sink from so far away

and because you have two lips you bite down to spit  
as if the splash would loosen the label used to scab  
that never heals when you swallow each pill for later.



\*

Side by side, your weakest finger  
is taken from you, becomes the echo  
flowing out one hand

as the darkness with a straight line  
—you point to shine light on the shadow  
that's slowly moving toward you

the way every death is remembered  
for its emptiness reaching in  
where it once was, wanting

to be held between both hands, twisted  
as the cry for lift before shattering  
into stars you can no longer hear.



\*

You learn by kneeling in the rain  
for a heart to form—this puddle  
is already gathering another

as if the sun was still giving birth  
though August is nearly over  
has slowed its turn the way rings in a tree

keep track how long it takes to gather tears  
from its silence and in your eyes  
bring them together as moonlight

—you can hear the word  
long before it leaves your mouth  
is sobbing on the ground

that was once your lips, spread out  
for the trembling that forgot  
how to say goodbye, lean over and sweat.





THE SLATOR DAUGHTERS by Jack Richard Smith, 1998  
oil on canvas (48" x 34")





TAOS DINER by Jack Richard Smith, 2006  
black oil on copper (12" x 12")





ZURBARAN'S DADA EPIPHANY IN GRASS SCRIPT  
by Jack Richard Smith, 1993, oil on copper (6" x 4")





STUDY IN WHITE: PORTRAIT OF RC AND TONTO  
by Jack Richard Smith 2006,  
oil on copper mounted on wood panel (54" x 36")



IVAN ARGÜELLES

**THE SHAPE OF AIR**

*Fragments*

*“Parola fu in origine voce dell’assente”*

Alfredo Giuliani

***FRAGMENT 1***

*in the beginning word was the voice of the absent one*

nor does the shadow of the motor of consciousness  
continue to move but in memory

but in memory the mimicry  
of wind and ether the heights celestial the plunge  
deformations of matter irrigation of doubt

madness of the mountain  
wings shorn from its glory and mutant *sounds*  
that echo mournfully in the pre-dawn void

the interloper who uses fragments  
of speech to disguise the god who lies  
at the bottom of the well and cannot raise a hand  
a wand a magic baton to reverse the order of things

it is the maelstrom in which we are  
caught developments of mind and thought maimed  
from the outset by the crippling use of pronouns

air is all around shaping itself  
transforming its features into distance and time  
it is here where we dwell primitives of inflection  
and illusion shifts in phonetic morphology

insects ! designs of invisibility and heat  
the mechanics of the moment of recognition soldered  
to the small technique of memorization taking  
one step at a time lifting from earth



a foot to make the application of number and sleep  
dense is the implication revolving around the brow  
a fuse and a puzzle too elaborate to maintain  
falls away the cliff of unreason into shoals  
bracken waters the summons of a totem hand  
which means we cannot come back to the form unless  
as a musical notation something as impalpable  
as it is indivisible the monotony of continuity  
ourselves indistinct digits of a universal  
game of accent and tone when color if it matters  
drapes the inconstancies of nature and we are  
blown away by the perspectives and depths  
no attempt to marginalize the occult  
keeps at bay the mysteries that envelope us daily  
no attempt to diffuse the solar spectra  
the silent enigma of *light*  
something else happens on the page besides  
the evolution of a vocabulary and its index  
do we become literate indispensable fobs of the eye  
as it learns to move horizontally adapting to shapes  
ink and the impossible vergers of night  
put to sleep the brain only multiplies its person  
into the thousands // derangement of the pyramid !

(b)

lexicons of invertebrate consequences hieroglyph  
of breath cuneiform of introspection hallucinations  
each is what every ever wanted to be a child a microcosm  
a scope and a deviation  
make it adhere wrap it around the mold  
soon it may talk and become the statue of envy  
soon it may stutter twelve types of aphasia  
may talk stutter types of twelve aphasia in greek !  
solemnities of rock

so deep no cigarette can reach it  
steps of a broken stairway detached and set immobile  
in the flashing air



or it is a crypt of language  
phosphors and illegitimate flares at the boundaries  
of space a conjecture we are having even as  
we descend with the *others*

(c)

jewels which are headlights  
in the traffic of darkness in the far removes  
of the soul in the adumbrations of the vedic vowel  
in the fastnesses of poetic diction marmoreal  
and whispered both in omicron and omega  
in the sutures and masks of the predicate  
it is what we cannot avoid being alive a statue  
of envy the gaze spent before it can wither  
in the manifest labyrinth of the ego  
set sail tomorrow with Ariadne !

the strings and plies and folds  
the dyes and threads the stuff imported from  
Egypt band-aids and nausea of the afterworld  
divining rod and quicksilver and the invention of glass  
rotundities that cannot revive the soul  
bereft of hope deserted on the isle of Naxos  
burden of a god from the orient with all his  
sanskrit baggage ties and feathers and consonants  
too impossible to employ in everyday dialogue  
a whole instead of its parts mystical and violent  
lay the head down bruise the heel eat soil  
Krishna opens his mouth and the three universes manifest  
exclamation mark ! periodicity of air in its  
varieties and hues winnowing and weaving  
as if on waves and wheels and afternoons  
spent inside a bottle looking for wrists  
for elbows for shoulders and the drunken  
intimation of conscience to become more than One  
chained to stone and pleading  
not to be devoured again and the renewal  
of human history the terror and diminution



university of disproportion and mathematics  
where in the plethora of units and subtraction  
where in the lore of grammar and

dictation at four PM

open your notebooks to page eight and scribble  
with all the fury of amphetamine the right answers !

(d)

the mute and the deaf the enlightened !  
let the heavens open their rippling liquid gates  
and pour forth the races of angels  
for it is they upon which air lives and the consumption  
of time and disintegration of matter et cetera  
the rest is a folio in middle late colloquial egyptian  
scribes intent on hunger violate the written code  
transmogrifying and diluting the logos  
we are nothing but passengers on the wrong airliner  
a likeness to Hermes is the co-pilot  
and loud is the symphony of his eyes  
for we are but incidental increments of protein  
endowed with sparks of intelligence legends  
mythiform gravel edges to a raging torrent  
evolutionary cripples statues of envy  
a word was just the beginning  
and absence

(e)

O mother tutelary of air  
forsake us drown us occiput and all  
forgive us not our trespasses sinners we  
digitalizations of a reference point in syntax  
deviants of sound and meaning corruptions  
running around like maddened bees lost  
unworthy whirling buzzing chirping nonsense  
strike us down strip us of our wings  
deploy all manner of insanity  
witless diphthongs *Fong Fong Fong* !  
what is the square root of the sun ?



homophone and plague the license to speak  
can anything be greater than the number four ?  
hand tricks gestures in a suit and tie  
Russian equals Chinese ! anyone knows that  
a volume at a time and water rises to its capacity  
limitless forgeries of wind and leaf  
what do we know of *Beauty* but its ankles  
and the dew that mantles the early morning  
of her skin and the lark and mourning dove  
and what of the hero half-dead  
stricken from the lists of hexameters  
and the wrathful and the sorrowful and grief  
surmounting all other passions  
O mother tutelary of air



**FRAGMENT 3**

it's a question of morphology  
of punctuation and routine drills  
excess of sunlight homophones in direct contrast  
is air simply one eternal vowel best heard  
when not pronounced ?  
footnote in a berlitz grammar  
echo of asterisk and ampersand *Arianna* !  
who will and who will not represent  
the god of thunder and almagest the triumphant IO !  
it's a question of phonology only  
of syllables reduced to their prime number  
square root and lunation of sleep  
decibels of silence circulating  
in a prism of heat where language has no place  
babble and disorientation mounds and heaps  
ant-work lattice funnel and fumes  
in the movie version a soliloquy  
is filmed in white-face imitating the *Fall*  
ladder and cigarette in slow motion  
Whew ! meanwhile the rest of them in gestation  
fusing participle to mountain  
ergative construction by them me done  
cusp and magnitude  
of desires unwholesome exigencies of Beauty  
elimination by grammatology of speech  
statues and hospitals and a long  
straight street running through them  
beast-sex drivel thrill ! when  
I am gone and the fissures and cracks  
that divide air from air  
freedom to fail repeatedly at breathing  
to transpire at the least equivocation  
to be ! how much compounded in number *three*  
to rise above the final sky a cloud  
dominated by speech-acts and poetry and



poetry that moves like a figure eight through leaves  
rhetoric and ratiocination a thronging  
of insect beatitudes mortals the loud-making  
whose drum and sistrum strike the ear of air  
as stone dropping through darkest waters  
we too fell and frail ,

(b)

the term is holy the end of man and the black  
serpent that weaves through the last possible thought  
of desire and the sun that breaks through coruscating  
by noon a blank shell deposit of ashes and cinders  
how was that a fire and the heraclitean myth of  
flame and the abscess in the mouth and mighty Zeus  
preponderant among Olympians surveying  
the week-old myth of breath the tongs and delivery  
you call it humankind

no access to the backyard to the fane  
the horse-sacrifice the digitization of memory  
call me if you need a ride !

cordilleras of white feathers rearing  
behind the shabby motel where we stop the highway  
to sleep in the aspirin drained moon-glass you  
will never use the pronoun correctly honorific  
and Japanese and I do not insist on it  
rather value air for what's worth a side at  
a time the western in its tumbler and the eastern  
already a vapid trail of Tibetan smoke curlicues  
that require no translation

no such thing as a "man of god"  
interpolations and suffixes bleak entrails of mind  
words improperly spelled infix and iota and dots  
nothing to hold on to free-fall from the forty ninth  
floor just where life feels more like an accident  
than ever a white vibration somewhere below  
the molar

and another thing too the way you



wave your hair and pin it to that absurd red cloth  
wrapping it round and round the cosmic moment  
a hand or two still shaking after the wreck pulling  
the shape out of the mangled metal and calling  
it a miracle the horrible rumors that followed  
insane recollections of the bedroom windows with  
their planetary yellows I wanted to sleep forever  
it was the night of the wedding

beautiful

(c)

curvature of space where the machine ends  
magnificent silence multiplied in air's extension  
the lateral as well as the vertical and the poles  
burning greedily at the middle and working out  
until everything becomes a phantasmagoric mess  
a solution without a problem

eat this swallow it whole the film  
the loops and eccentricities of thought  
I cannot develop it much further image-meal  
and ticket softening

the big bung ! hasp and collateral of seas  
coming into existence reef and shallows and  
epic shouts you ask what air has to do with  
as one ages , it does

(d)

\\ syllables unfettered as they fly out of the oracle  
will be there tomorrow /stop/

merging with the godhead the child  
who the film depicts ten years of age

foot and length of shadow outrunning  
distance itself the one no greater than the air  
that surrounds it and all of time spent  
on its single margin

// to speak only backwards  
to use mirrors to deflect vowels to tower above  
sleep commanding the circumflex accent



hovering over a continent of Chinese ink  
    loud and supreme as angelic chimes !  
fly flame ! be incognito before the Fragment !  
so and so was here yesterday flute in hand  
embryonic smile pasted on face a lapse  
of judgment a portfolio of phonemes  
    bla-bla-bla

reduced lexical components copied over  
and over in byzantine superscript an iota  
at a time perforce the junction of Turk  
and Pharisee (big hunk photo-op)

    chapstick jawbone reiterated  
        until sickened by disrepair  
flailing on the ottoman the dictionary  
unable to resume after the letter *psi*  
\\ diglossia of the deaf

        a woman named Pedagogy  
and her substitute the //  
dharma karma and syncopation

    where is the justice in book-learning ?  
does it bring back the ones who could not be  
resurrected ? is there a street corner on the moon ?  
don't forget I am Orestes and a thousand  
windmills do nothing to whittle my fame

    a bottle of foaming cleanser in the garage  
a large whetstone a fiction for fishing  
    reels and reels of fine thin celluloid  
\\ made us sleep in the attic and dream

(e)

air as much of it exists all around and still  
not enough to keep the poor guy breathing  
we wrapped him up in chewing gum paper  
and read the funnies to him and poured  
some white liquid into the long tubing  
that connected him to the other world and  
still not enough to keep the poor guy going



pushed him on a pram with rubber wheels  
and took him to the edge of Egypt and yes  
scoured the skies for some wings to attach  
to his flimsy little shoulder blades and still  
                    mysteries of flight  
embolism and suture  
                    the key to disaster in twelve  
easy lessons  
what did you think was happening ?



## **EPILOGUE**

*“—pero no el aire que respiramos ni el que  
sentimos cuando vamos por la calle, sino el aire del  
desierto, un temporal de aire ...no se puede explicar,  
simplemente es aire, puro aire, tanto aire que a veces  
te cuesta respirar y crees que vas a morir ahogada.”*

*Roberto Bolaño, 2666*

not the air we breathe nor what we feel walking  
down the street stormy air cannot be explained simply  
pure air so much that at times it's hard to breathe  
and you feel you're going to die  
well some do

and the shape of it  
the dimensions and circumference weight and height  
the latitude and longitude of air the density  
and distance of air the unofficial reckoning of it  
as it fills secrets and mysteries but never yields  
its enigma its porous super-mentality its cavities  
and fissures and how it resembles nothing more  
than sleep the narcolepsy of the universe evasive  
yet explosive the gases of the black and fuming sun  
the hyaline solution of an event horizon the indefinable  
and ineffable substance that eludes philosophers  
enormous and expanding at every moment  
as we walk down the street and look through it  
as if it were glass or the mirror that cannot reflect  
the obvious that cannot be explained  
the noiseless and abrupt the sudden  
that we crave as our lungs collapse and the  
device that records its passage in waves  
turns into an eternal horizontal line  
known as death

(b)

the recondite and erroneous phase  
of development from animated protein  
to love affair nourished by all-encompassing air



we try to elucidate these matters  
conduct classes in higher education attempt  
to fashion our linguistics employ our phonetics  
destroy our divulgations considering the impact of air  
on the drum and tympanum and nasal passage  
constantly working lungs and heart  
in order to keep *seeing* what may only be  
alliterative phenomena floating in an allowable space  
the recognitions the salt flats the planned cities  
urban topographies that incite wars and  
the draining sky and booming thunderhead clouds  
a summer in air swimming in air  
like magnificent fish fluorescent and blind  
let us take what little mercy we can  
from books of air from cinema and stage-play  
from memory itself of air when it came to be  
our ancestors sitting on their archaic shelf  
precluding the heavens with dotted representations  
of light that could not exist without air  
or so they say the mandarins and eunuchs  
of thought the paraplegics of illusion  
the seers and rishis of the vedic belt  
winding round and round the million unheard  
kalpas and the unities which are the disunity of  
harmony the music written in stone and beaten  
on a weathered antelope skin and trammeled  
and drilled in little holes pierced in bone  
the greatest of all histories transpiring  
in the marmoreal echo chamber of the ear  
asleep in a dense array of seas and mists  
curtains of air one after another falling away  
as we walk down the street in a literal storm  
and the rains and prefigurations of death  
in all its incredible monotony absorb us  
once and for all



Cassandra and Agamemnon play-acted  
by shadows of statues in the course of an afternoon  
a summer's hour filled with masks of air  
and talking speech parts with violated vowels  
and knives that glitter like lightning in the bath  
and the choking on consonants the expiring  
on accents and tones the hoax of language !  
playing the larger role in the dramatized grass  
that struggles with dew for dominance  
and the leaves torn from excised from  
their own voices and the bleeding internally  
of sound because meaning has evaporated  
the such and the so and so the this of the that  
the panoply of excuses in the form of aerial debate  
among the gods whose vitreous conjectures  
are the pure illusion of memory a stoned  
surface of skin a derelict amputation of thought  
on the Pan-American highway south of Tamazunchale  
a motel where we can put the characters to rest  
immobile in the security of their locks

like the time we scattered  
in the dust our forenames and noon set its score  
on our heads before we reached the serpentine  
motorized evacuations of air just as the pyramids  
were making their Aztec approach shadows  
inverted porches magnificent calendar dates  
in a symposium of missing hours and days  
looking for our hands in the dusky imperium  
abstractions in a photograph of a pair who  
looked just like us only in different shirts  
and the skin on backwards and smirking  
for the divine reptile whose eye was on the dot !

it was the development from a negative  
that stairs came to be and cigarettes the holy  
that we smoked until little air was left  
and the room darkened like a chasm of mind



we settled our debts and rose to the occasion  
taking our adolescence to a musical height  
that none could hear but the underground  
Toltec deities with their chains of rock  
and the straw of sacrifices and the one spark  
capable of igniting the entire cosmos  
so it came to be that we exchanged *identities*  
will never know which was dead  
and which was alive

(d)

it was famous the spiral of air  
climbing like vertebrae into the claustrophobic sky  
could wear little or nothing going in and out  
of sleep the cloisters and tunnels of dream  
one fish two fish plying red flickers  
in the dense drop of water spreading like a self  
across the derelict mind

and the dearly departed ?  
offer their shades cakes and honey  
implore them to come back just for a day  
there is a vacuum  
where no air fits only the solidity of the *Void*  
voodoo and spells and incantations  
to somehow alter the sun's black course  
to render futile the margins of space  
as much as can of it inhale air transmogrify  
have visions of the plenitude !  
not these brief epicycles of life and death  
these small walks through a single blade of grass  
this talking backwards to the leaf  
that gesticulates at window's edge  
to speak and become hierophantic and *see*  
to the utter outers of time and not this dross  
this leavening of bad ideas in the form of history  
seraphim of the departed  
winged souls flights of hummingbird



iridescent and blazing in the futile minute  
of observation speed of light and sound  
and duomos of air incapacities of structure  
cherubim of the departed hovering  
for an instant above earth's burdened terraces  
before it all goes finger and weft  
appropriations of memory by fireflies  
maddened by their own reflections  
in the vowel of oblivion

don't say any more don't  
open the locks let the water go its own way  
break the bridges and drown the pontoons  
so et cetera and mimicry of writing  
go loss and persona adrift in detritus  
of alphabets skewered by disorder  
and ethereal and more distant  
than ever the sound of the letter O  
mega zed and AUM

(e)

unfettered chronicle of air  
nostalgia for hospitals and lawns of man  
ambulatory cravings for myth  
ant and aesop's fable and grapes and  
twine that binds the mind to stone  
great and fleeting air bags of Aeolus  
winds of thought torrents of make-believe  
the *dearly departed*

on the wing ascensions and  
Mariolatry and purity of footprint  
of Isis in the sandy butte of air that hovers  
just above the obsidian pool of petrified Narcissus  
hyssop and jasmine corollaries of mind  
petals in all hues Primavera in dishabille  
stepping through water into chasms of air  
a cataclysm in sound-recording history !  
the acme of Beauty or the nadir of hair



blond and suffused with the tonic of suns  
renovation of poetry in the dewdrop  
that fragments her eye and trailing  
across the mirror of the southern hemisphere  
the viscous matter of the polar star  
blackening like must

Crete of the hundred cities !  
apogee and perplex of all-souls' day  
in Bedlam frieze of anchors and moons  
every day of the isolationist who haunts  
the doorway of the Oriental Division  
of the New York Public Library  
droning *drin-drin-drin* like an Assyrian lion  
sand belts and plague of cuneiform phonics  
everything is pronounced wrong here !  
wringing the consonants out of air  
and erecting a statue of pure absence  
in memoriam of the *dearly departed*  
for whom there is no living will  
AOI

(f)

air *chanson d'amour* air



SUSAN KAY ANDERSON

**At The End Of Hihimanu Street In Waimanalo Where  
I Napped On The Beach**

Asleep in the sugary coral sand half asleep  
my other half an echo underneath water the waves  
picture an oyster a spotted eagle ray singing  
talking about nothing a blithering a silent expressing—

the sand shook sometimes earthquakes noticeable  
my body finally unmoving in all that motion and heat

of the islands their constant agitations disintegrating  
each moment the breaking down and sloughing off

time what it looks like feels like the. now. a distant.

memory. of the feeling the peek my staring at it  
something not meant for the light except at death  
that muscle my heart so exposed on the screen

of the echocardiogram its bleak star an animation  
beyond my control my questions and questioning  
the oblong square just beyond my left shoulder  
I could feel a cramp begin in my neck a pain

During the examination I turned into a doctor a nurse

a strange attendant echoing this mysterious muscle  
speaking voiceless words underwater in sea language  
words like heart love breezes coconut palms volcano



I tried so hard to listen then just gave up gave in

wrote my name on some thick leaves of the autograph tree  
These will show up later your name with the name

of your lover they said come back later in a year  
and you will see it send it like postcards to anyone to yourself  
it is on purpose making the names appear show up later  
and it will seem like they did this on their own after  
you've forgotten





EXPLODING PLUMAGE by B. Lai Bennett, 2019  
embroidered thread and acrylic on canvas (10" diameter)





LOTUS CYCLE by B. Lai Bennett, 2009  
oil on wood (11" x 14")



ROB COOK

### **Hidden Places**

Every pigeon and every seedling  
leads to yet another pigeon.

The cemented sparrows move the cemented sky  
from puddle to puddle. Some stay stuck there,  
overpopulated with city-owned mugginess,  
and at least one frost-parched breadling  
stitches together the sunlight for its voyage into dusk.

At night, when the sky becomes the shelter  
of a slit-open animal, the pigeons, half-human,  
report the consciousness of that hiding place.  
Roosting on the edge of a homeless man's  
sleep, they call out to its brick-filled trees.



## **Liver Line**

How long have you  
had that liver line,  
the doctor asked,  
pointing out  
the little bit of night  
on my forehead  
that I couldn't wipe  
away. I told him  
I tasted it in my voice  
where I stashed the rest  
of my body and in my  
blankets that shook  
from a flank-and-stomach  
tenderness. I told him  
I saw it on every wall,  
a spider or a bit  
of subway tile  
dripping  
to the ground  
where the fear  
in my side  
always begins.



**The Bear Cub Saw the Pancreas**

The bear cub saw the pancreas  
shivering by itself under the blood-dry leaves  
and because it needed a place to rest,  
the cub nuzzled that tiny piece of pain  
and slept there until the sky was done  
dreaming and then woke inside a boy  
whose illness had been mapped inside  
the moss fallen to the floor of his night light.

“I want the bear that no one can find  
to have a bed of its own,” he told  
his dandelion mother and his dandelion father  
who could see how the wind hurt everywhere  
when he felt the day’s first shy light  
picking through his clothes and couldn’t  
get the cries in his pillow to move.



## DIETER WESLOWSKI

### **Saint Swithin's**

The sweet chewing of the ants is over.  
Now come the deadheaded peonies to give  
those red pincers a run.

Heat and strikes of sheet lightning  
as clouds roil, darker than a bushel  
of midnight damsons, move up

from the south, then crouch  
at horizon's end. Promise is  
that of calamity, no matter

the delicious linden-bloom  
linger. All the drama of  
a world ending.

And here I am, struck on whether  
I should capitalize oblivion  
or not. Sorry and in a state.



ANTHONY SEIDMAN

**The Deadly Instants Before Deciding**

They come, and who knows from where.

No one traces their origin,  
some afterbirth, mud that sticks.

They scatter from the whip, scurry  
when lightning flashes like x-rayed humerus;  
they swarm over black boots,  
knives, half-sucked cough-lozenges,  
fingernails, and feathers.

Some say they come from bile or vinegar,  
some say mushrooms and humidity,  
some, anger and spit,  
or fever and hammers,  
or claws agitating a pool of silvery fish.

They come and no one knows from where.  
They rummage.  
They itch between the ears.





PENELOPE IN AGONY by Joseph Nechvatal, 2014  
computer-robotic assisted acrylic on velours canvas (66” x 44”)





VEXED TELEMACHUS ADRIFT by Joseph Nechvatal, 2014  
computer-robotic assisted acrylic on velours canvas (17.7" x 23.6")



BRANDON PETTIT

## **Speculative Nonfiction**

Inside psychogeography chapters our history books call it: “Eastward Retraction”, “Manifest Redux”, “Climate Refuge-ee” for that period when Americans migrated northeast toward fresh water and cooler temperatures.

Yet those places left behind, back west, remained homes for people that didn’t have the means to pioneer east or simply treated disasters as the price of doing business with God, believing their lot was His will.

Growing smaller from malnourishment and undereducated + underrepresented in books, industry, and government—men’s pockets would shrink in size and number and would soon match the pockets of the women that will have stayed behind to care for them with dutiful love.

Within four generations of drought and sunflame people living upon the uninhabitable west were costing the country more than they were worth (according to the federal government).

Within one hundred years all federal aid had been cut-off, those state’s governments had dissolved, and new babies were being sent antemortem waiver numbers at birth instead of social security numbers.

Death being the lucrative business it is it didn’t take long for The Company to realize the potential of providing special death services for people living upon scorched earth hard as concrete.

The death call into The Company always ended with the promise of more hard salt in the solar fields or data mines.



Within hours of the call a nondescript white autonomous van would arrive and accept the body—returning within three business days carrying seven corked glass bottles wrapped in cotton and enclosed in a wooden crate.

Some people prayed, some used fans, some cried-and-hollered-and-stamped their bruised soles on the hard earth. Other people would have avoided wakes and funerals altogether at the mere thought of the water in those bottles.

Everyone yearned for cooler temperatures. Rain. Less smoke.

Whereas the first bottles would have gone around as a right of passage for the children, the sixth and seventh bottles went around the adults slowly—sticking to people's hands like a love that shouldn't let go.

At the end of a funeral, their sounds frightening the birds (if there had been birds) the families will have circled around a dead tree and taken aim with those empty bottles.

In a tradition that had passed through generations, loved ones would return days and sometimes weeks later to pore over the cracked earth in search of glass.

In my study I have a print of a famous photograph that hangs above my desk—it's of a young couple holding their blonde-haired twins beside a two story all-glass home in the middle of a clay field—perhaps you have seen it?

Some days I can forget about the logic of a glass home and imagine we are that dusty overalled couple, our shoulders leaned together, our twins saddled on our hips, this home we've finished from these gifts of time prisms in this hazy sun ahead of us.

And as the wind momentarily quiets the dust, and our picture is taken, we are forever gratitude beaming.



GUY R. BEINING

**exploratory notes**

**raw**

1.

god barked a  
sentence into the  
clown's ear.  
dwarf light fell  
upon him. he scram-  
bled for a balloon.  
the voice had  
spoken thru him,  
& the air  
stained his fingers.

2.

what verse? none.  
what setting? none.  
he moved into  
the choir of himself  
& sat on  
a silver ball  
that he had created.



**boxed in**

I

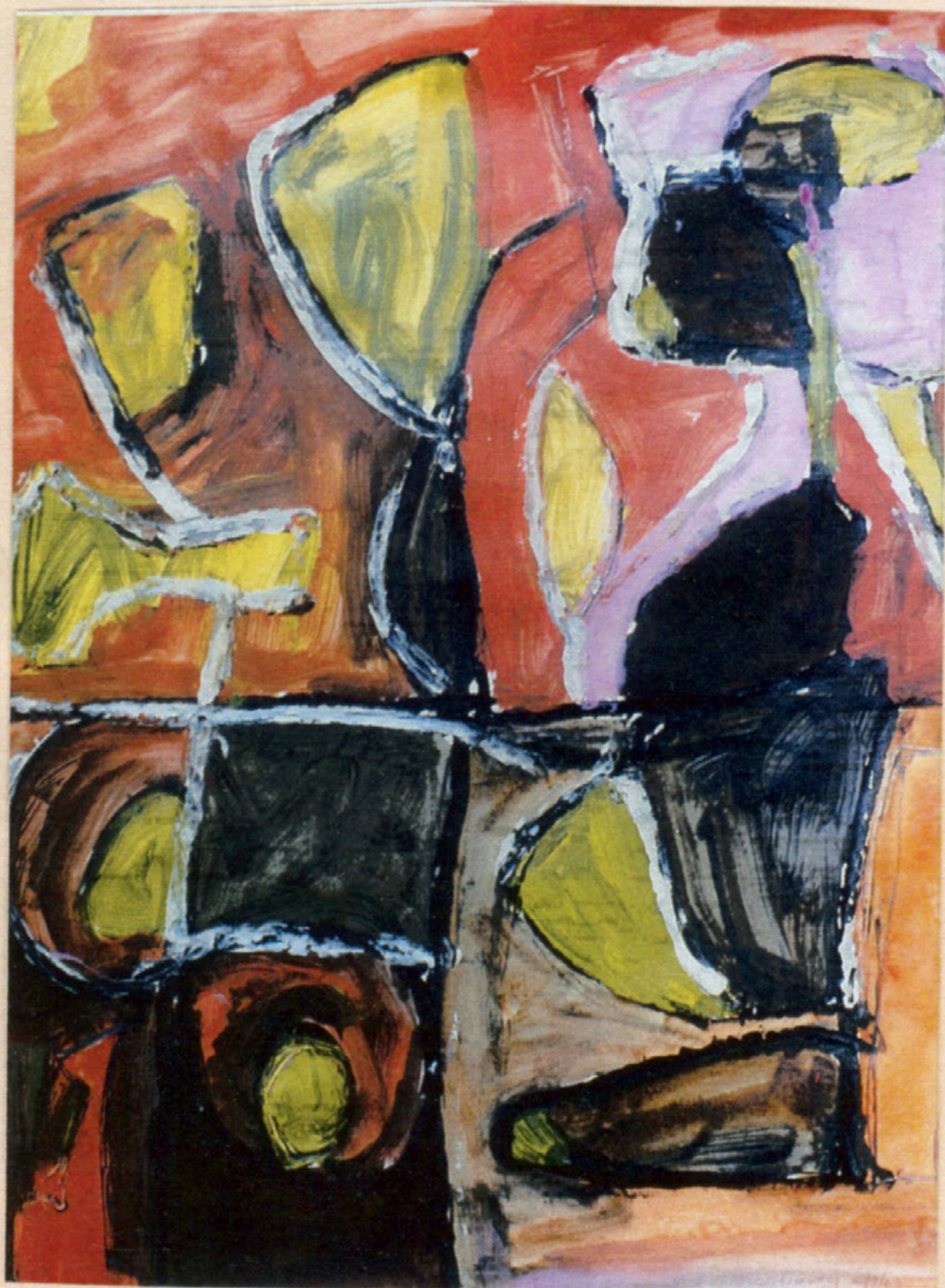
cannot post this day.  
there is no slot for it  
on my mental wall.  
there is one window  
too high up to reach  
which lets in a small  
stream of air, & reveals  
a speckled sky with  
crisscross jet smoke

II

I carry the last set of books,  
blocks, puzzles, wrapped in  
onion skin & desert weeds,  
remembering that skull prints  
are everywhere, yet stacked up  
this material still keeps me  
far from that window space  
where I imagine flying into a  
MOVABLE WORLD.



cupped earth



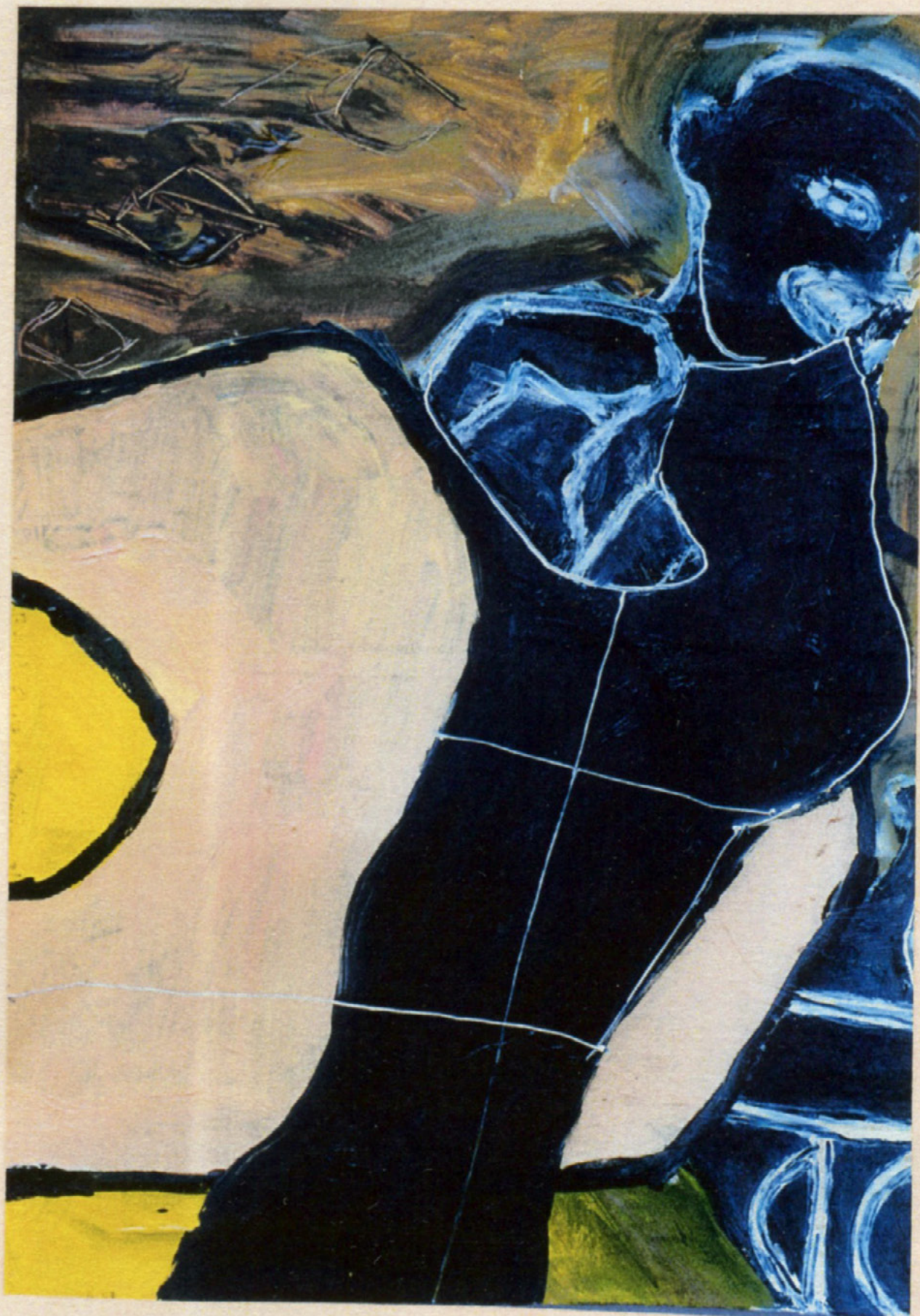
tipping garden steps  
into pansy light  
& brief beginnings,





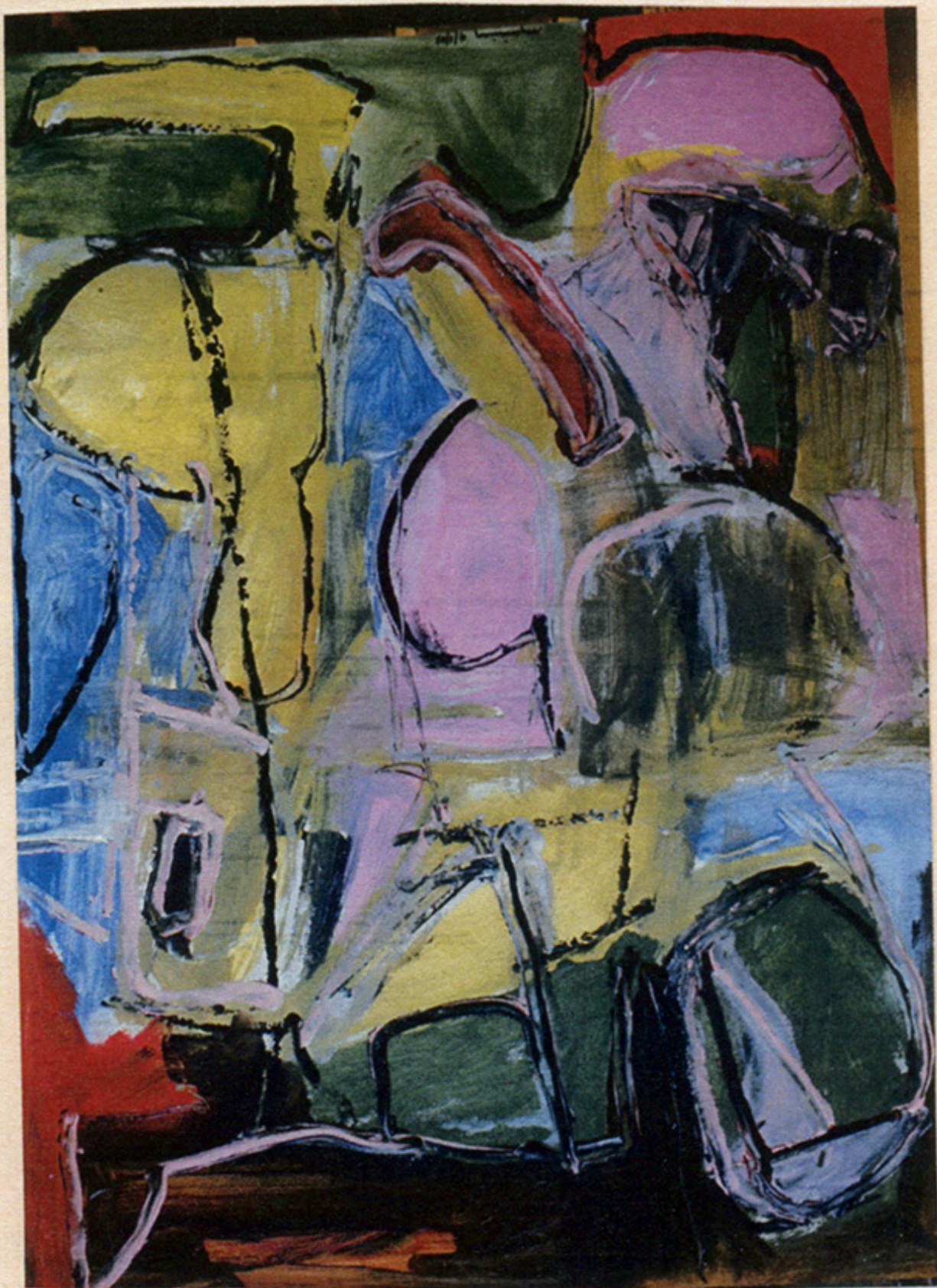
draped over mummified fish  
sheets of plastic  
& not one starry number  
was scratched.





by a mock hill  
a cemetery of ash.





rush not through  
the tissue of  
letters & numbers.

8/3/19 *Maximilian*



JAMES GRABILL

**As the War on Peace Spawns Gaia**

Gargantuan coal-swollen 20<sup>th</sup> century furnaces still glow  
hot white with spot-lit whitewashed mansions on the heights

with an eye on the expanse, where the latest climate  
refugees must labor, pouring fresh vats of molten steel  
along the monetary catwalk in the here and there

where high fashion wears towering women who walk it  
before Ikegami flashes made in the anvil-oscillating  
solar system carried by cosmic rays and gravity of this  
octopus arm of the galaxy circling its black-hole drain  
where the last surviving species has always been heading

wherever the earliest prayerful aspirations may have worked  
spells to benefit the possible lot expanding exponentially,

to carry it further down the avenue of mounted antelope heads

telling us to begin where abstract expression on the wall  
was pointing all this time, ever since the first sprawling  
aspiration was launched under the raven roost cloud cover

in assumptions back in the gut where personal intent's moot

back in the collective as the scarlet carpet's nailed down  
to conceal holes in the company floors in the face  
of rank landscapes of the aesthetically impoverished  
for whom the brain may not grasp what happened  
to begin this chance to extrapolate from a few scraps



of evidence of the whole system that awards executives  
bonuses for failing while directing undifferentiated  
fury into labor negotiations from the underworld  
forever dressed for morning in a sleek Italian bathrobe

on which figures taken from the Sistine Chapel ceiling  
have been hand-stitched in gilt and wildfire threads

as if to wrench destiny loose from what used to be

civilization still around to answer questions,  
as the lunar shadow in space slides its disk  
between the sun and the other sun unseen

past every tipping point on carbon-fiber  
Amazonian tail feathers that happen hot  
in soul-speaking hues with dead-bolt accuracy

far from names, where we've got ourselves a situation  
striking oil that floats in a film on gargantuan riches  
for only a few spending all day in the monetary lounge

where nothing of the future could be blowing deserts  
with punishing new storms, defying urgency  
sharp as contemplation increasing uptake rates  
of earlier parts of the independent human brain

with so little time it must have happened already

sure as shooting out of potholes of electromagnetic  
x-rays potent with arterial halibut pitches in pungency  
already modern as what begins moves a body out

through mortality fixing things good, sure as foregone



conclusions at the bare surface where people are  
collected shoulder to shoulder in the ruby glow  
of undeniable hunger in a Roman numeral countdown,

with archaic accord that exceeds ice-capped thought  
which has traveled in long pitches through the build-up  
of birth and unfinished carbonic breakdown to plunge

through unseeable air at every electromagnetic point  
in slipstream 4-D used by the brain that keeps working  
around the mind to harvest split-second resemblances

to safe passage in archaic Greek initiation rites  
before a 6-foot pinecone that once gave young Greeks  
power for the final transformation from childhood,

as feeling translates before dropping all it might own  
on the casino table of identity still bearing up

under autonomous conscription not only of this

recent previous century but present capitalist  
jibber-jabber arguing whether hunger encourages

the head to remain connected to the no-instant

with blood rubies in your face  
in the dark where no one has been.



**Surrounded by the Merge**

*“Who need be afraid of the merge?”*

Walt Whitman

What provides the human body lift, in moves  
and rest, rises up in the cells.

Vivid pulchritudinous tail feathers remind us.  
Intuiting the presence of further possibility  
has been a sense within us.

The impulse to stand here, to employ the eyes  
to look up into star-burning night,  
searches through space for signs of life.

A young clerk whose name is Philobus talks low on the black  
telephone of the ‘50s, as humanity proceeds nonstop, driven forever  
to race faster. Typhooned electrical sutras keep researching live states  
of contemplation. Matter doesn’t stop or go, but waits for the nuclear  
flash to never happen. It could be the day of the snake back in the  
stone canyon with the river

for a nanosecond ignited by profuse light  
on the blue terrestrial shell  
that over time filled with being.

Under the inconceivable starry canopy of galaxies,  
people learned how to trust the drift  
and wheeling, to let honest words arise  
so thinking doesn’t collapse in squealing  
groans of twisting steel bridge beams

while the train slithers ahead on its pilgrimage under the starry  
canopy of gargantuan numbers visible after dark. It might be about  
time to realize the shame in our faces would be our own, as the  
engines aren’t humming, but thundering with explosions. So choosing  
what to do or not to do burns as sunlight falls through large numbers  
separating actors from their acts



where consciousness rests on thought,  
as thought takes consciousness  
back in a nanosecond to light  
the Earth's blue shell into being.  
This is the place where the raven mask opened.



## Remains of Mitosis

The blueprint of the body isn't so much  
something written as the reverberation  
of an instrument  
similar to a tuning fork

that rings with a complexity of pitches selected for traits  
and athletic necessity

in light of conditions and materials

for the genome may not be a 19<sup>th</sup> century high-culture pipe organ  
with hand-tooled pipes that flute and thunder

but it resounds within cells  
in the language of cells  
that articulates roundness

assuming shape  $\mathcal{S}$ , negotiating moves

in the midst of options

interpenetrating  
harmonics alive

# leaving fingerprints

shaped by long-standing architecture of the body

as plants leaf and protected eggs hatch

in spreads of neural force

in intelligent blood that delivers

to every cell alive

what it selects

in exquisite modulations

on keyboards

with many greens of the origin

behind the door that opens

to the place we serve

the grasses

the root-holds of form,

the tuning fork struck.



## BRENT CANLE

Dear Daniil, I'm not sure the world has changed all that much, actually. In fact, I think it is the same as it has always been, a single cell, only, now, more complicated . . .

Earlier today, I watched two men harass a young woman outside her apartment building. They kept giving her mathematical equations to solve, told her to smile as she solved them. She did. The answers always equaled 11, but that only made her question her ability to answer questions. A doubt that comes from obvious or coincidental truths.

It is night now. I followed one of the men home; the one who protested that he is deceased. He is falling asleep in an armchair watching TV. A cigarette droops further and further on his lips. I think to scratch the window like a kitten for a saucer of milk. I think to scratch the window like Elizabeth scratches at the inside of her own skull. But I don't. The cigarette falls and burns him awake. As he walks to the window to draw the curtain, he doesn't see me. I don't know why he doesn't see me. I see him as clear as day. He is in bed now and Daniil, there are only a handful of people in this world like us. If not for that, the math might actually add up to something. The mathematicians' answers, then, wildly different and thus inconclusive.



I spent so long at the art gallery my hands melded behind my back. For years, I've been trying to get them apart, slowly stretching my arms to the point where I can almost jump rope them. The curator made me a permanent exhibition. The Time 's Peter Schjeldahl wrote I looked "transmuted but tired." No one knows exactly what he meant, except me.

This is my title.



JOHN M. BENNETT

**discover maiden child**

discover maiden child death  
blood digs who owner said  
scratcher their your bowl owl dagger  
kill head womb crushing heart bowl  
fornication sap burn secretions  
good then face bottom red  
smoke of blinded them is lady  
blood sign die names alive one  
dead carry song womb writing  
net full eats burn heads maize  
silk food maiden frame stolen  
see enchanted birth ants scream  
thorns gave writers afflicted  
red backs hunting birds flute anger  
she words womb nature top tree  
died fell enlarging said they swelled  
frightened birds bellies walk  
spider howled monkeys mother  
happened something anguish day

*De-reading the Popol Vuh – 13*



**she they music**

she they music also drum faces  
forest times entered house paunchy  
naked laughter she bushy mouth snort  
Junajpu burst seen flutes tried love  
titles ancient monkeys Xb'alanke misery  
lost grandmother dwelt self farm  
axes hoes substitute shoulders food  
earth fork tree strong stump fever  
chop thick dove mountains grab  
gun debris dirt cut head home  
stretch arms briars B'alam broke  
thoughts night maize grass plucks  
arise bush face animal gun emerged  
nothing tails scurried strangle rat  
task word boys left games balls  
fathers hearts chili iik yours this  
sweeping fall heart hangs bite seeds  
exposed truly zenith thoughts arrived



## RICKI CUMMINGS

### **Maybe He Will Make Enough Money to Subscribe to Earth**

i don't really necessarily believe in synchronicity except when it's clearly the universe trying to tell me something. if i dream a dream and then it comes to pass, what does that mean. a short repartee about the disembodied head of jack kirby with one of the few professional magicians i know (by which i mean actual magic, not street magic), classroom discussion of breton, and now this: there's something buzzing around in my head.

have we, in fact, given birth to hyperreality. maybe, as philip k. dick said, we have participated unknowingly in the creation of a spurious reality, and then we have obligingly fed it to ourselves.

something about the absolute faith in the power of metaphor, in words as conjuring, of television as sigil, of hypertext as hypertime. all history is linked through the written word, the present is a continuous persistent hallucination transmitted instantaneously from my head to your head to the heads of your friends.

apparently there's a hidden little alcove where you can walk down and watch a 5-10 minute snippet from james burke's *connections*. not being versed in bbc science specials, i had no idea who this weirdo spouting things about a future network of knowledge was, but i latched onto a particularly salient line and backtracked.

given that consensus reality seems to be breaking down by the moment, we can think ourselves into a better universe. if phil can accidentally write the book of acts and then also relive his own story eight years later, who is the author of that reality: god, the author of luke-acts, philip k. dick, or the chaotic vibrations of slowed energy.



one in which Warren is talking about the concept of “supers” in television—the superimposed text over a moving video background—and how they mostly don’t work in comics.

it’s no coincidence that my favorite works all collapse time and distort memory, an effect of influence, a conglomeration of disparate threads converging.

am I seeing connections that aren’t there.

is omni-time even necessarily better.

is there an algorithm here that I’m not seeing.

i don’t know.



**Another Poem Titled “Your Grandpa Was Like That:  
Listened a Lot and Didn’t Talk Much”**

I speak to The Common Man  
when I say “Remember the Krebs Cycle,”  
for indeed we all must stop  
and breathe  
from time to time.

Someone recently told me  
on Twitter  
that one of my favorite comedians  
was an asshole  
as if I wasn’t already aware,  
but he also put the greatest pigeon  
pun of all time into a joke  
about the Kennedy assassination,  
so who’s the real asshole here?  
I spent the better part of a month  
learning how to build  
a robot that writes poetry  
based on the works of HP Lovecraft  
and now I’m not so sure  
what’s real and what’s the bot.

It picks out n-grams—  
strings of words—  
and then reassembles them  
according to esoteric math  
using modules with names like  
TensorFlow, which really isn’t  
that far off from namedropping  
Cthulhu or the Black Goat of the Woods.  
Here’s a kitchen sink,  
for good measure.

(For future generations: the answer  
to the question  
of what is this poem about



is the body.  
Always the body.)  
This was going to be  
a quick Dickinson ballad,  
maybe a haiku,  
but Death kindly stopped for tea.  
“I don’t see why they have  
to shove it in our face,”  
says my mother to my face  
when we talk about my  
attraction to men  
and my predilection toward  
hobbies socially engineered  
to keep me poor and possibly dead.  
In the abstract, I do not exist  
in this booth, across from her,  
eating eggs I am allergic to.  
We somehow managed to read  
the same book and come  
to wildly different conclusions.  
Sometimes I think I understand  
the tendency for black metal bands  
to murder each other  
and burn down churches,  
but other times I think they do it  
out of boredom.  
So anyway, the Krebs Cycle.  
The mitochondria is  
the end of this sentence.  
When ATP is split, a tiny  
amount of energy is released,  
which then gets redirected  
into reconstructing ATP.  
The human body is a perpetual  
nowhere machine continuously hanging  
in bootstrapping.



Adenosine triphosphate, by the way.  
That was going to burn away  
at the back of your mind  
all day, I'm sure.  
Nearly twenty percent  
of the blood sugar in your body  
is used by your brain  
to process this stupid shit.  
Aren't you glad you're here?  
You could be arguing with your mother,  
or actively harming your intestines,  
or fucking a stranger, or sleeping,  
and yet this reconstituted tree aspic  
causing the air to vibrate  
is what you've chosen.  
There was supposed to be a metaphor here  
but instead it's maps and pins  
and bits of string and wild hair  
and cigarettes and unemployment.  
I remember  
that one of the purposes  
of poetic alliteration  
is to pull the reader  
or listener  
through the work,  
kicking and scheming,  
so maybe they forget for a little while  
how what is said  
doesn't quite make sense,  
told slant, as it were,  
and full of allusion that doesn't  
quite fit. Six  
years and I still don't  
think it's right.  
What I mean is this:  
in an automobile drivetrain



we must take into account  
the fact that the wheel  
on the inside of a turn  
is actually moving slower  
than the wheel on the outside.  
This is simple geometry, yet  
it breaks bones.  
I noticed last night  
there are people I'll never see again.  
For the first time,  
it hurt. Sometimes I don't  
fall asleep until the sun comes back up.  
I don't know why. Sometimes  
I repeat myself and I do know why.  
Sometimes I tell myself  
that bitches get shit done,  
but it never seems to work for me.  
I end up on a beach  
with knifed-up crabs who speak  
what sounds like Spanish  
but might be Italian—something  
Latin, regardless. The crabs,  
arthropodan and sideways,  
seem concerned with my keyboarding skill.  
I tell them bitches get shit done,  
but they seem to want none of that.  
Imagine yourself running on a beach,  
pursued by crabs unconcerned  
with your productivity,  
but obsessed with your  
ability to communicate. You should  
have stayed in school. Went  
for more than two years  
of a foreign language.  
Lived in central Europe. Stayed  
in your genetic lane. Now



it's all eye stalks  
and crustaceans. You're fucked, bud.  
Down to eating peanut butter straight from the jar.  
But what do the crabs signify?  
We don't even know what  
kind of crabs they are. Hermit crabs?  
Alaska king? Whichever ones are the sideways  
walking ones, most likely. That  
probably narrows it down to something like  
a hundred species. Can someone  
Google that? Kidding. Don't bother. Unimportant.  
What is important is that we recognize  
that crabs and humans  
require oxygen to run their animal asses  
across the beach  
and to sit steaming in a diner.  
Cellular respiration, it turns out,  
is so complex that the interaction  
of proteins and transport networks and broken  
bonds can only be described by a diagram.  
So I draw my mother a picture.  
Here is a normal person, say, you. Here  
is me, also a normal person. And my  
mother, she says:  
"You'll always be my son."



ELAINE MINTZER

### **Perturbations**

Luminance, scientists call it, the depiction of light as both static  
and in motion.

Van Gogh's moon and stars.

Perturbations painted

in clouds, in trees, in fields of wheat,  
the grasses on the hill.

I want focus. I steady my thumb on my camera's shutter, and hold  
my breath

to compensate for the unseen forces

that blur

my photos.

Our lives can't be captured.

In the family room,

my daughter notes the catch in my question.

I hear the timbre of her exhalation.

We see the tremor as my husband lifts a teacup.

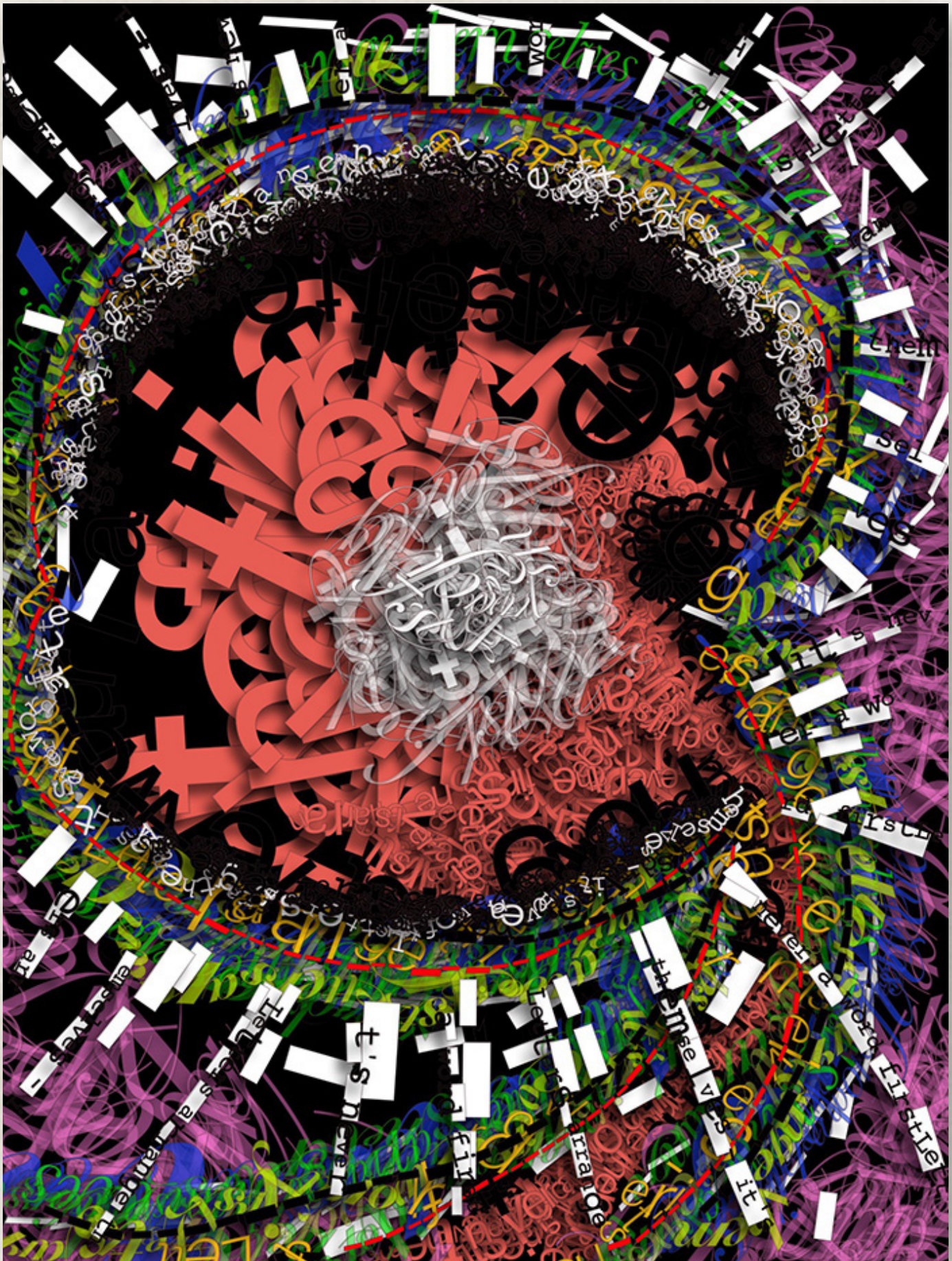
There's no wind,

but branches thrash in the yard.

Winter aloes pin sky to earth.

My daughter grips the arms of her chair.





VISUAL POEM by Nico Vassilakis, 2019  
digital image





VISUAL POEM by Nico Vassilakis, 2019  
digital image



## GEORGE KALAMARAS

### Blue Note 1595

*for Cannonball Adderley*

Asleep in my crib when it was released.  
March 9, '58 never sounded so deep.  
I'm sure I heard oceans swell. Making me  
whole even with wobbly bones. Even  
with the broken soul that brought me back  
across the great water into the body  
this time for another crack. Your Blue Note  
album, Cannonball, doesn't even need a name.  
Of course, it's *Somethin' Else*—and, yes, it truly is.  
But it's just as easily known  
by its catalog line, *Blue Note 1595*.  
Sam Jones, Hank Jones, Blakey, and Miles.  
All of you somehow becoming *Me* becoming  
*It* becoming *Us*. Trembling  
from the blebby branch. "Autumn Leaves"  
in March is about as out of place as the full moon  
tonight in my mouth. As a raccoon track  
in the hound dog's snout. Sometimes we meditate  
so long and deep a hummingbird  
mysteriously comes to the throat. Gravel-clad  
and clear. And all things out of place  
are exactly where they *should* be. Inside  
rather than out. We could take courses  
in collage, crochet, or modern dance  
in order to learn to write a poem  
*as* a poem. You could scour  
the ground for hours in order to blow alto  
on "Dancing in the Dark" and "One for Daddy-O."



You're a wild wind, Cannonball, expanding  
my chest. Such hurricane riffs tell me that in 1956  
I was born too late. That I should have come sooner.  
Should have been an adult by then, wearing a beret  
and tapping my foot in Hackensack with you  
during your 1958 storm. Even  
if it was just to empty the tray  
that caught the glow your cigarette ashed.  
Lord knows I crave rain in my gut  
the way some folks seek sun. That I beg  
the inky night to take me into its squid depths  
and song. Friends shake their heads, say sideways  
with their eyes that staying up all night  
is wrong, beg me to repeat things, strange,  
like *Rumpelstiltskin in my spleen*, or *Vallejo's voice*  
*abandoned on a raft*, or *that bamboo*  
*night in Rangoon with nothing but fresh water*  
*shrimp and grits*—all of it backwards into a mirror.  
So that left is right. And right is  
gone. So parts of me dissolve  
into an ever-widening now. To shave, say,  
in the *this-is-that* moment of morning steam  
with a soup spoon and not a knife. Now it's Blakey  
on tubs, smooth below Miles' mute. Banging out  
secret news from Cameroon. As if all the ivory  
returned to tusks. As if he was giving something  
to 50s fans as salve. Golden notes  
woven from straw. Cannonball, man—  
how come you burst upon my infant brain,  
one year after *Birth of the Cool*, promising  
to return to me all these years  
wingbeats from the dead? There's a bird  
in my chest, and it ain't Charlie Parker,  
though he's lived there long. It's you,  
tonight, saying it all might one day  
be enough. That when I broke my mother's



water—fierce and fever-cricked—I was  
coming back through oceans of sound  
advice. Words from the astral telling me  
to wait and auscultate messages you'd mend  
through me. Making me whole. Even with broken  
bones. Even with the slaughtered soul  
that dragged me back one more time. Into a body  
I came, so I might breathe and bear  
your newborn notes. That's why numbers mean words.  
Why words mean chords. Why we don't need to say  
*Somethin' Else*. Just *Blue Note 1595*. Which isn't a date.  
Isn't a landing onto indigenous sand  
from across the slave-stacked sea.  
Doesn't add up to how might my mouth  
or why. But is the sound I heard  
out there. The sound that lulled Adam to sleep  
and stole his rib. The sound that lured me back  
once more to earth, then soothed my crib. That cradles me  
now. That says it was worth it. Even the days ached  
with strain. To hear you year after year. And now,  
again, on a Friday night, 2019. With Miles, Hank, Sam,  
and Art. Entering my bones. Breaking them.  
Breaking *me*. Open. Whole.



## Eighteen Eighteen-Word Short Stories About Charles Mingus

1.

So it's *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady* again tonight, Charles. Your pipe and fur hat on that wonderful album cover and that 1963 noir sound. Fifty-six years this month.

2.

Alright. Say, it was you lying in a hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota, the poem published in book form also in '63. You, who had wasted your life.

3.

Is it true that when you died in Cuernavaca at age fifty-six, fifty-six whales beached themselves that day on the Mexican coast?

4.

As if you were Pancho Villa raiding the border again. This time, saving the children in the immigration cages.

5.

Larry told me once, *For the price of a couple of beers, I could see Mingus up close at the Five Spot.*

6.

So many poems I've already written for you. So many nights I visited the Five Spot in *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady* of my mind.



7.

The sound of a train echoing the distance tonight. Is that you calling me *Me* from inside ~~the bass notes of~~ myself?

8.

That infamous sleep session ~~when~~ Robert Desnos predicted we'd all end up swimming in ~~the belly of the bass of some man named~~ Charles.

9.

Jimi Hendrix wondered "If 6 Was 9." And you began your ~~autobiography by~~ saying, *In other words, I am three.* ~~Three, six, and nine all have something in common, and it isn't the dichotomous number two.~~

10. ~~Nothing adds up. To be born African, Chinese, and Swede. To cry out the lovely of the number three while you broke your bass in a fight one night with Dolphy as if it were the cosmogonic egg.~~

11.

Say it was Paul Delvaux ~~lying in that hammock at William Duffy's farm,~~ unable to see ~~the breasts of~~ his idealized women in the chicken hawk looking for home.

12.

Say it was you, Charles, saying you were me. And that *me* kept dissolving into you. Say it

13.

was something like pipe smoke at the Café Bohemia, you grunting loudly to your own ~~riffs~~ on "Jump Monk."



14.

Once upon a time, there was nothing *but* time. Once upon a time, there was only four-four time.

15.

~~When we are on the hammock, it is always Vallejo time, empathy time, time of the *Human Poems and loving one-another time*, when we are most hawk.~~

16.

~~So it's you at Antibes. Curson on trumpet. Booker on tenor. Dolphy, some awe-inspiring blowfish swimming through the coral reef of your inner ear.~~

17.

Was it you or your therapist's therapist who wrote the liner notes for ~~*The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*~~?

18.

Okay, ~~the~~ whales knew you played the rhythms of the sea. And that the sea played *you*. Played you ~~playing me~~.

19.

Say it was me lying in that hammock. Hearing you ~~in the cowbells, in the butterfly~~, for the first time. Hearing my life sag, sway, ~~beginning~~ again.



## Roll Call: How We Listen to the Listening as It Breathes

*for Hank Mobley*

If I could, I'd walk through walls. The way this music turns through me. Moths get their names in heavily influenced forests. Such forests are present in the dust-bones of Thoreau. In the sayings of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Say the menstrual huts unearthed in New South Wales represent milk forests and fields. Say Hank Mobley's *Roll Call* calls us back to a natural fortress and a considerably widening beauty. Yes, I've heard trees breathe his name. Heard them sway into me, again, the stir of *Soul Station*. But bring Blakey back on tubs, along with Wynton Kelly and Paul Chambers on piano and bass. Add Freddie Hubbard this time just nine months later, and even the sap moves. Forty-two and a half minutes of *Roll Call* calls suckers, perch, breams, and trout out of the rivers and lakes of Thoreau's notebooks to swim in our veins. Says the aphorisms of Emerson are our deepest bones that snow when we sleep. Or the poems in the shagbark of hickories hailing sassafras, elm, and oak. I'm not exaggerating when I say water is essential for the growth of trees. When I exit my nightly sleep to float through the Milky Way and take suck at the mother stars of these tunes, I am one with the split decision of being human. "My Groove Your Move," "Take Your Pick," and "A Baptist Beat" are enough to make water walk across all the water of *me*. Yes, so many of the jazz greats were smokin' the pubs of Paris or Oslo. Sure, Paul Bowles was still in Morocco writing tales that made the desert glow. But in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, even mosquitoes halfway across the globe shivered on November 13, 1960. If Mobley's set is *blood magic*, then banish me to four or five days of unearthed thatch and all the shed parts of myself. There are many kinds of eggs we release. Invisible trees that grow inside us. Invisible trees that *bow*. Fish that swim through other fish, if we listen to the listening as it breathes. If in chanting Whitman over the graves of the dead, this music makes ghosts of fallen leaves seem inexplicably veined, we could know that 1960 is reaching out forever. That November 13 is now. That this roll call is for us.



**This Roundness of Now**

Then it was musk in the noise of my mouth.  
I had swollen so many wounds unto myself.

I might speak the sudden wind chime of a bee.  
I might resolve myself in circles of could and maybe and won't.

When the body is bitten into birth by the fire ants of Namibia.  
When griffon vultures descend upon what needs to be ever more  
cleanly broken.

If you ask me my name in one of the three lost languages of salt, I  
might say, *Here, this roundness of now.*  
If you deceptive and quarrel and shift.

Please, take the most tender part of me into you and feel the heron  
content of your blood expand with the ebullient grief of my most  
human.

Look me in the eye, with all of your mouths. As I cry out into your  
flesh, bring the wingèd bleed of the sycamores from you into me.



**You Held of Me and Coaxed the Starlings Back Through  
the Silk-Heavy Rains**

I am not afraid of your words. I am constituted of your hips.  
I am a piece of torn sheet. A speck of oolong tea. I am breadcrumbs  
not yet dead.

For a long time the clarity of touch replaced me, starling by starling.  
I recognized my past, filled with jars of sugar and granules  
of spoiled milk.

Each of our internal organs recognizes the other.  
No, we have not previously met, but I am certain to be your psoriasis.

I had been born, once, in Chiba Prefecture—among silk-heavy  
rains—resisting yet another birth.  
You held of me and coaxed, your thigh-tight and full-breasted wanton  
of my lip.

Burying an airmail stamp in a wooden box in the backyard seems  
obsolete.

I have held the porcelain flight, the imagined texture of the rain.

This summer, come to me. Come *through* me. Open your blouse.

Soil our mouths without any fixed sense of starlight.

Come through all the torn stars of the Milky Way. Promise me your  
impossible perfection. Do not *ever* let me stray from my life.



**They Cannot Contain Their Sorrow**

So the mahogany scrape of a bleeding seed laid itself on the  
floorboards.

So they came and plucked the shaving brush bristles, evoking  
the entire broadening of the dead wild boar.

All my internal organs rise up like Bolsheviks.

They cannot contain their sorrow at having carried me so long, so far  
from what I hoped one day to become.

Or, is it joy we feel when we kiss goodbye, knowing the stars may or  
may not camp in our separate mouths?

I have sent myself off on many expeditions and always find a shaded  
fort and clear well water when I arrive.

The dead rooster was placed before me like still-quivering rhubarb.  
I thanked the Huns who brought it but confided that I could not  
slit the neck.

They looked at me as if clothed in freckles.

They said something about *spotted bedragglement* and *paintbrush soup* and  
*reducing inflammation in the leopard's waul*, and took the neck in their  
large hand, revealing the scars of Eurasia.



## **The Sorrow of Listening**

This breath that keeps my breath is a living swell.  
Music, maps, and motivations have guided me back life upon life.

The month before my birthday each year is an obstinate weed.  
I must not have wanted to return this time to this unsure ground.

I think of a beautiful evening of almost solid air.  
The sorrow of listening to a box of cigars in their wrappers exacts  
a reply.

What might we say, and how might we sway it through our mouths?  
I hear distant drumming as if email does not exist.

The photograph of the beehive actually smelled of honey.  
*Go to your life, I heard. Scratch its beard of intoxicating sea lice. See what you  
can waste.*



**A Certain Strain of Rain**

I am a balcony of half-read scriptures.

I stood on a circle of ash and grew warm as the melting ice caps  
of Mars.

Nevertheless, I regret a cadence of clay hips clawing at me from  
the dark.

I regret a souvenir of Albuquerque rain, the slightest syllabic braid  
giving my tongue back its parched mouth.

What can I return to you, now that I have brought the smelling salts?  
What can you describe of leaving the body and bolstering the dark?

There is a vacancy of equal air seeking the most inexact numeral.  
When we momentarily depart, no one can tell if it is zero, one,  
or negative 553 into which we move.

There, blurred in the barbed-wire climb of hair, is a summer travel  
article on Kyoto and the spiritual swell of sexual chrysanthemums.  
It speaks of compassionate necessity, of seminal congestion, even  
of independent intimacy.

For that reason the clocks kept keeping, having fierced a delirious  
if not altogether.

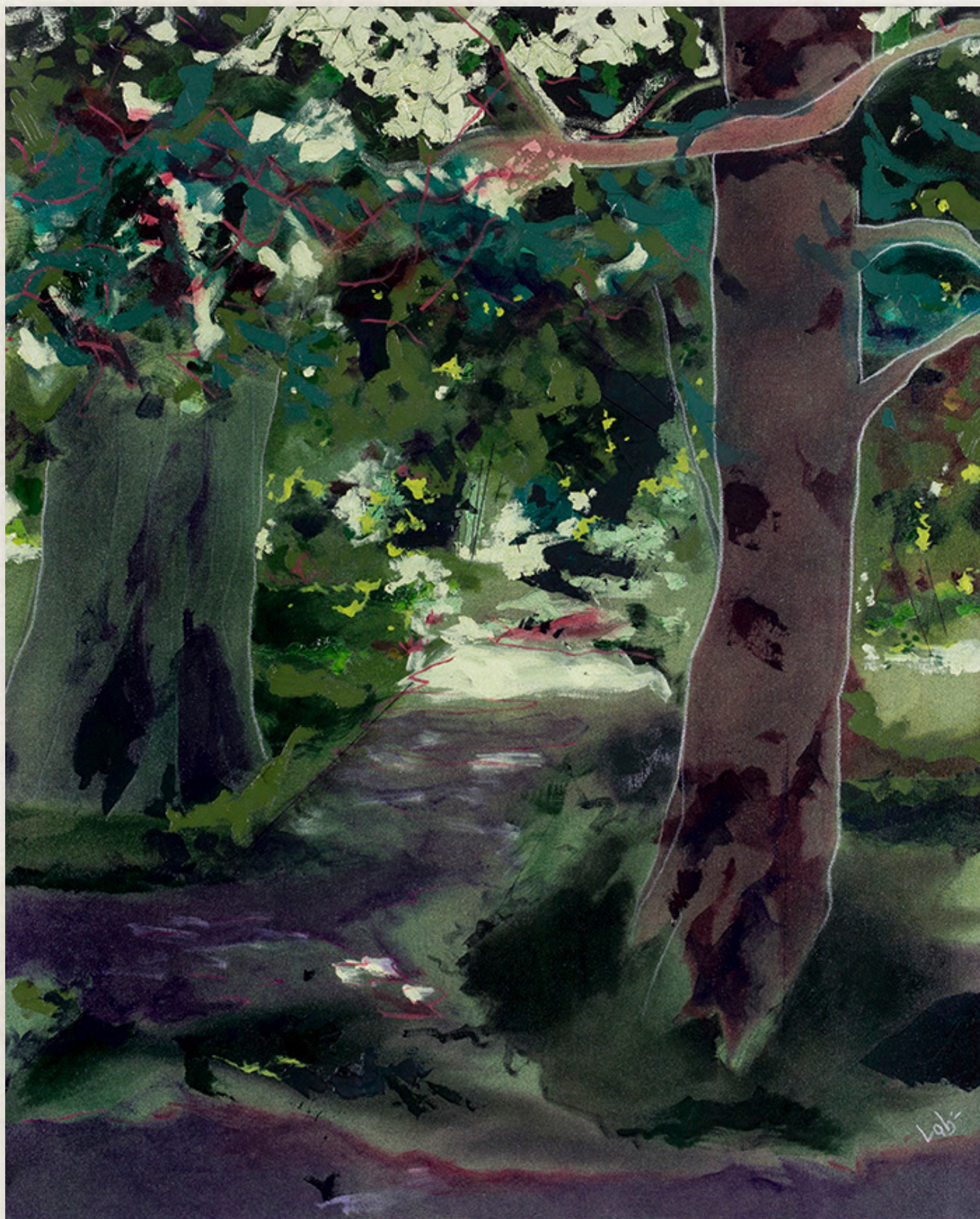
Yes, I truncate my speak. It's the only way I can get my tongue to  
contain a certain—albeit absent—healing strain of rain.





I THE TRAVELER by Alvaro Labañino, 2015  
oil on linen (62'' x 36'')





GREAT UNKNOWN by Alvaro Labañino, 2015  
oil on canvas (50" x 40")



## TERRY HAUPTMAN

### At Empanadas Cafe

*Oh I love moonlight  
And I love starlight,  
And I lay this body down*

Josh White

My mother Leonora humming at Empanadas Cafe  
In Louis Armstrong's old neighborhood  
On 108th Street  
In Corona Queens,  
Listening to his blue notes riffs  
"Nobody knows the trouble I've seen"  
Tree of Life Trumpet  
Remembering Satchmo's house  
On 107th Street  
Near the Lemon Ice King  
Of Corona.

I wanted Blue Monk's sound  
"Round Midnight" "Straight No Chaser"  
To pierce my painted scrolls.  
Miraculous music syncopating  
Armstrong's heartbeat  
"When the Saints Go Marching In"

Spirit Moves Life  
Life moves Spirit  
Climbing the seven steps to heaven  
Improvising jazz dissonance  
From your trumpet  
Above and beyond.



*Hauptman/100*

Lost friends dance

Guided by voices

As the night falls back

Singing



**Dark in Radiance**

Listening to Shekinah's song  
At the burned synagogue near the Dead Sea  
Unwrapping the burned scrolls  
In the House of Rain

Guided by voices of Bukharian Jews  
Teaching us the secrets of Tikkun,  
"To heal and repair the world,"  
Sun rising over the earth  
Gathering us

At the Tree of Life Synagogue  
Grieving today  
For those killed by Hate,  
Jews aiding refugees  
Condemned to death  
For Believing . . .  
May your souls  
Dark in Radiance . . .  
Rest in Peace.



JEFF HARRISON

**Scrubby English**

greater for no flush of dribbling, a mist bursting much mischief  
a mark was fancy as the words “the stair was growing dark”

I’ve suspected your concentration for some time  
I may once again pelt my tormentor’s ears with Scottish ballads

seventeen shoulders mortal as the best of us, fancy as the  
words “credible as a simile utilizing the Cranach Press Eclogues”

my eyes troubled the summer with Prussian copies, immaculate  
without a weaver’s hesitation



D. E. STEWARD

**As though Nothing Happened**

Nine billion tons of carbon into the air every year

We live on and around its runoffs and landfills

Which will leave the human-debris technofossils of the Anthropocene everywhere in a stratum of carbon and plastics

For the moment within the trivial we're nearly a whole generation into the snarl-sound mixtape era of *Gold Teeth Thief*

Right along with DJ/rupture *Little More Oil Feat. Sister*

And we're barely feeling left behind

Like more than two dozen extremely active double-crested cormorants out against the sunrise slipping fast toward the near shore in a feeding frenzy over a shifting shoal of gizzard shad

Each cormorant diving frantically again and again

Surfacing swallowing a scaly pale fish headfirst

The water a choppy moiré, gizzard shad of various sizes, the birds feeding desperately, the sunup dimmed behind slatted clouds so that the surface went silver like the glimpses of the fish going fast down the cormorants' gullets



Gullet gulping below the shaking cormorant-thin strangely hooked bills

In very much the mood of the 2016 election's tinge of, in an elitist European frame, peasant revenge against *la richesse insultante*

Who didn't get it

That's that that was happening

Loftiness in attitude

Blank obliviousness

Hillary Clinton in New York on September 10<sup>th</sup>, "...you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the basket of deplorables. Right?"

And then there was the FBI and Anthony Weiner's weenie

The commensality of liberals who need to feel they're just to the left of themselves (in Mark Lilla's phrase)

Now the post-tally embitterment flares out with the recounts and Fiona Apple's 2016 Christmas song, "Trump's nuts roasting on an open fire"

In the manner of the characteristic ultimate elitist gesture of Ralph Nader calling Michael Moore fat

Those so distraught now

They didn't get it

Like Eve's agonized face and hurried wailing in Masaccio's *The Expulsion*, the face of all betrayed by history



“The election results have stimulated in us a strong desire to respond as swiftly and as powerfully as we can with the resources at our disposal. We are determined to challenge the influences of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, a disregard for people with disabilities, and an assault on the natural world that are taking shape”

And a lot having to do with concentrated privilege and the frequent persiflage and smokescreen garbled verbosity of agenda-driven institutions

Conversely Hillary Clinton’s White House road was strewn with spike strips, caltrops and glue boards of spite and anger

Release of her hacked campaign emails two hours after Trump’s “grab them by the pussy” Hollywood bus tape

Voters did not care

Fifty-three percent of white women voters voted for Trump

“Lock her up”

“Hang that Bitch”

She was pilloried

His boar’s eyes and little-boy’s hands

The sum of the Great American Emptiness manifested in the Great American Blank, the Great American Lack, the Great American Yawn, the Great American Lawn

The United States with five percent of the world’s population guards twenty-five percent of the planet’s prisoners



And probably a like percentage of its moneycraft traders

HFT with its dark pools, lit trade and crosses

And the genius chain, blockchains and timestamps of bitcoins

Outside of all that now it's ACC for anthropogenic climate change

Whether they like it or not

Scratching their plucked mons and shaved pussies

Brozilian, Maxzilian

What *will* everyone find to do when they're not online or watching  
Tee Vee

An insecurity that impels some to wear tout noir, suspenders along  
with a belt, a leather jacket over another leather jacket, blow-dried  
head hair, jewelry, shapewear, logo clothes, designer jeans and tights,  
contoured underwear, facial hair

Twenty-first century eerily passive odors

A different mode altogether

As middle class repetitive jobs will go robotic, as they start to do now

Even the teachers

As everyone feels at ease interacting with screens, as so many do

If societies manage to hold via reverse income tax, assured income,  
subsidies for the jobless hosts



Or a new IT feudalism of the techno elites in gated areas guarded by militarized robots and drones with the many, many millions of latter day serfs having no practical role left outside and living on the techno-society's largesse

If it comes to that we surely would not have gotten it

“Always Historicize!” (Fredric Jameson)

Since for one thing, thirty-seven percent of Republican women voters now approve of Putin



## STEPHEN MASSIMILLA

### AURORA

When the brain is quiet and the night too long with no love, to squint  
is to wake up images  
and call them fishhawks

stealing under eyelids in sparse light, long skimming hooks  
over lines that might  
mirror their wings...

They are gliding so low. The fins of far islands, all else, every  
shift there remains but a ridge  
in clear water moving,

though I have visions of this shoreline other shorelines cannot  
know, each rip let loose,  
that dry screen of night.

On the balcony I'll meet the orange air, waking for a sign of prey,  
scanning for where I might have  
begun... In the darkness

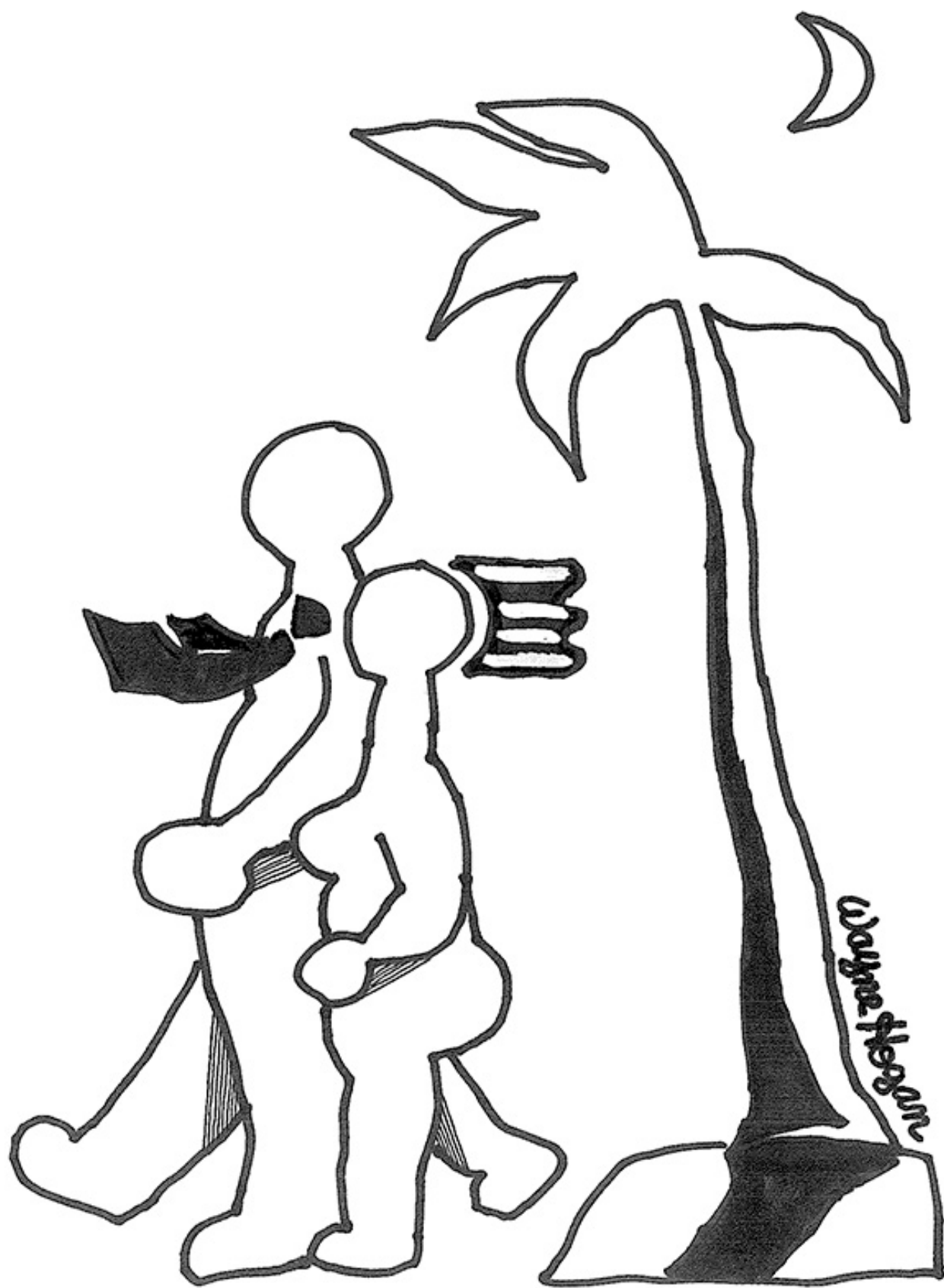
a single beaker sweats. See how the chill grants  
me ripples of light! Too clear  
to slake thirst, I am glass.





UNTITLED by Wayne Hogan, 2019  
ink on paper





UNTITLED by Wayne Hogan, 2019  
ink on paper



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

### **CARINE TOPAL:**

No one has to convince us that these are exceptional times. To write about it, however, is like educating the public about sunrises and sunsets, about babies newly born, about death, and wars being fought: it sounds foolish, sentimental, grandiose. Poetry, however, conjures the evils and unfairness of our society. It provokes images of a government gone tragically askew. Poetry matters in trying times such as these, and poets have an obligation to be a witness to this turmoil. Even if the world is not listening, maybe a few of us are cupping our ears to hear the truth and perhaps we will spread the word.

### **IVAN ARGÜELLES:**

I think one of the most alarming bits of news I have heard in a long time is the loss of Bird populations. Since 1970 30% (THIRTY percent) of the world's birds have perished. At this rate in about 100 years birds, like their ancestors the dinosaurs, will be EXTINCT. Add to that the "mysterious" disappearance of bees and butterflies, and the rising ocean waters, now being seriously polluted if not strangled by plastic waste (witness the loss of color of the Great Barrier Reef) is there not reason to take seriously what the current President of the USA does not, namely that mankind is responsible for its own imminent demise, unless immediate and drastic actions are taken for some kind of reversal however partial of these conditions to take place. And yet we are in the grip of an almost 100 % all white male Senate majority that just sits back, does not even wink, listening to a 16 year old girl from Sweden talk about the Science . . .

It is to the credit of the CHILDREN of today, who are more prescient and intelligent than the rulers of the nation states they inhabit, that They are the ones to sound loud the Alarms, for it is they who will suffer the most if these tragic trends continue. This country, indeed the entire world of artificially forged nation states each with a replica of patriotic ego at the helm, have done next to nothing to stem the course of a polluted ionosphere, disappearing glaciers and rising sea levels.



And now news of the imminent extinction of the fowl.

As a mere poet I have only words to offer, syllables in the winds, that at best can only help raise the consciousness of our dire present circumstances. It is time we take stock of history, and consider the devastating and increasingly dangerous “progress” that has been made since the late 18th century under the name of industrial and technological Revolutions. Unless the next technological “innovation” can do something to help reverse these circumstances, such entrepreneurship that rallies around the next app or pad or iphone, etc. should be put on hold, or tossed into the discard bin. We have to consider that the incrementally rapid increase of technology that has transformed the globe in less than 50 years is nothing more than a massive electronic forest fire of illusion and greed. The gap between the haves (the ONE percent) and the have-nots (the NINETYNINE percent) has never been greater. Instead of worrying where the next Jihad will strike, the collective world governments should pool their resources and let scientists/thinkers who understand determine the course of the next 100 years. This is not a moment for the next selfie, the next hair-brained Zuckerberg to come along and innovate the hell out of our consciousness with facial recognition artificial intelligence bogus promises of pleasure principle, heedless of the warnings of Science, admonitions that have been growing louder and louder at a deafening pace. The Birds! Fewer than yesterday, their diminished populations straddle the telephone wires across the street and lament each new dawn as a harbinger of universal dissolution. The Birds! their collective song, trills and lulls and nightingale’s frills, the stuff of poetry since the written word, from Persia to the Romance occident, not as loud as before, fainter still the melody, what the ear must listen to with keener devotion. Swan song!

**DIETER WESLOWSKI:**

Since returning from Peru, I have kicked my nightly news “addiction.” For one thing, it isn’t even news. For another thing, it is a fear-churning factory. My take on our current political situation is that Herr Trumpf is the fever from which we will have to sweat ourselves back into something feigning normalcy. That said, our empire has acted pretty much the



way most empires have acted. And our lunatic train of “presidents.” Mon diable! Anyway, empires drip with blood shed for spoils. In the meantime, galaxies shred each other apart. Oblivion is the only game in what may well be towns of universes. But, not to worry, these universes have refined the art of recycling which also happens to be the line of least resistance. Oh Mr. Tesla, your electromagnetic waves, now there is something to sing and dance about, right Meister Eckhart?

### DAN RAPHAEL:

In a wordless zone. Got out in the world and amazed. It's all familiar but it isn't, off just a notch, or niche, maybe a couple new words, and it's not all in English and less than half of it is spoken, fingers flickering around a screen quicker than any other pollinator, & much less efficient. As we increasingly look into rather than out of, both are more easily altered, manipulated: the inner by what you're receiving without proof or context, the outer because we're not looking (or told by the media that it's not what it appears—as Groucho said: “what are you going to believe—your own eyes, or me?” our eyes are often not our own

### GEORGE KALAMARAS:

As I write this, I am remembering my dear friend—the great poet, painter, musical composer, and Zen Sensei, Alvaro Cardona-Hine. He would have turned 93 today, October 12th. Here's a replay of a poem of his I included in a tribute essay on Alvaro, published by that great “chewer” of words, *Caliban*, a couple years ago (*Calibanonline*, Issue 26, January 2017: 122-29). This short poem originally appeared in Alvaro's book, *Works on Paper*, The Red Hill Press, 1974:

#### Christmas Eve

two hoboes  
bending over a flame  
in a field of inert weeds  
heaven upstairs  
the little broth of a train  
in the distance  
boiling down to nothing



**RICKI CUMMINGS:**

Poetry is bookkeeping. It's learning Excel to track organ donations. It's never knowing where or when to find eyeballs. It's being in the business of postage. It's looking out from a small, poorly-lit stage and guessing how many rows beyond the first are filled.

The name Quirinius always stuck with me. He held a governorship during the supposed time of the birth of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist. I always found John to be more compelling—an ENFP championing the son of a god. Eventually John's head ended up on a silver platter. I should make someone that angry. I've never been sure what Quirinius did during his time in office, but I'll always remember John's head being served at a dinner party. John, who ate bugs in the Palestinian desert.

The barometers we use for success are fucked up and arbitrary, but catching enough ears that the wife of a local puppet wants you dead has to be up there in backer levels.

**SUSAN KAY ANDERSON:**

**Liver**

Did you say you are dying because of your liver and how you know is through numbers and their fatigue I spy on your long spine and notice how sleek your speech even in sleep you are working around the clock with it not against it as some tend to do did you say you love me you did not did we live there or just exist why in such darkness I remember the past too much did it matter does it matter now what the Sam Hill is this supposed to mean to be like a short season halfway into a real one could this be any bit muddier or will the waters clear the cattails help and the sedge grasses with their binding on our legs swimming as best we can but still drowning taking in water the raft just beyond reach why such a surprise and why so sudden is this what July can mean a leg up a hand two steps forward none back



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