

THE CAPILANO REVIEW

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NARRATIVE

NARRATIVE

*I want a literature that is not
made from literature*

—BHANU KAPIL

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Cover image: Kyla Mallett,
from The Library: The Universe, 2009, lightjet print,
20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.

SUSAN HOLBROOK / “Delirious Coherence”: an Interview with Nicole Brossard

SUSAN HOLBROOK: Commençons en traduction, which is how some of us come initially to your texts. It's always exciting to have in hand the Brossard original and its translation—you've had so many wonderful translators over the years (Anne-Marie Wheeler, Robert Majzels, Erín Moure, Patricia Claxton, and others)—but that shuttling energy is most acute in the works where translation joins original between the covers. In *Le Désert Mauve* (1987), a novel and its homolingualistic translation are offered together, and we get the delightfully complicating English edition of *Mauve Desert* in 1990 (trans. Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood). In *L'Aviva/Aviva* we have homolingualistic and French-English translation appearing together. I was struck reading your mutual translations with Daphne Marlatt, “Mauve” and “Character / je de letters,” by the dynamic of reciprocity even while you necessarily engage in culturally specific feminist strategies—she addressing the ostensible neutrality of English, you the gender marking of French. Something happens in the white space between the versions, something alive that surmounts both languages, even both agitating, subversive poetic performances. What is it? What happens in the white spaces between a work and its translation?

NICOLE BROSSARD: I have the impression that what happens in the white space between a work and its translation applies as well to what happens in the blank space between the narrative of the real in one's mind and its transformation into written words. The only difference is, in the case of translation, there is a first-written material and in the case of writing you have a floating semantic material on your mind that will start to take shape and mean differently once you start physically writing. I am talking about nanosecond decisions which will design sketches of meaning on the page. That meaning will keep being in movement until it is fixed temporarily a second time on the page by the translator or by the reader if the reader comes up with a satisfying interpretation. In between a work and its translation, meaning is floating among all the fragments which make an identity of yourself.

No matter if we are in space 1 (between a work and its translation) or in space 2 (between free-floating thoughts and the written version) we are at the core of the mystery of how we shape meaning in a controlled or uncontrolled manner. The mystery of how we process meaning is the most exciting one because there is the excitement of the process in itself as well as the excitement of discovering new meanings, new possibilities. It excites the mind, the senses, the cosmic intuition, and the emotional energy in us all at the same time. The pleasure of the words is what we always come back to because that pleasure is made of our nervous system, heart, and memory. No matter if you are immersed in joy or disaster when you write, what keeps you going is the pleasure it gives you while you are processing thoughts, feelings, emotions, images, and language itself into the written word. That pleasure must really be powerful if you think of how many boring 300-page novels are written in one year. No matter what, creative writing always gives a jolt. That “something alive” that you mention is all about the power of creative writing, if we think of the individual and of literature, if we think of a certain number of performances of the soul through language. What I just said somehow explains my fascination for translation: meaning in process within the differences and sometimes the barriers of language through which we construct or renew our relation to others, to nature, to gender, and cosmos. Our attitude in real life (curiosity, sensuality, revolt, guilt, fantasy, etc.) is also part of how we breathe in a language and how we dispatch energy through meaning.

SH: That’s a wonderful way to articulate the kinetic energy arising out of translation/writing/reading. You mention the “narrative of the real in one’s mind,” which will be reshaped through composition; that makes me think of the literary Darwinists’ suggestion that a storytelling drive has evolved in humans, at the level of communication/art but also in the way we think. Jonathan Gotschall argues that we are compelled to narrate because it “allows us to experience our lives as coherent, orderly and meaningful. It is what makes life more than blooming, buzzing confusion” (*The Storytelling Animal* 102). But your works, even your novels, *bloom* and *buzz*. How would you come to the question of the relationship between narration and survival?

NB: Definitely without stories part of the real goes away. And probably part of our capacity to enjoy it or suffer from it.

I usually don't use the word survival. Instead I am curious about processes that our mind and body go through in order to actualize and to stage the movement of life, the intuition we have of its *vastitude*. I am not interested in stories but in their fragmented material, their architecture. And I am fascinated by the fact that no matter how fragmented, delirious or opened they are, they always bear an inner coherence. Maybe coherence would be a suitable word to get closer to the word survival that you just used.

This part is in italics because I am now answering your question one month after my first reply, after reading Storytelling, la machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits (2007) by Christian Salmon, French writer and researcher. Yes we love, we need, to be told stories but storytelling has now developed as a technique of management not only to sell products but mostly to deal with the chaos of values, the cultural disorientation, the quick changes we have been going through for the last 30 years. Storytelling is now used and has proven efficient to manage, to sell, to impose a political agenda. End of my note in italics and let's go back to my natural and spontaneous answer of a month ago.

Recently I have been more curious about fragments of prose and of narrative, how they infiltrate the poem to change its rhythm and renew its seduction, for example, by expanding time with predictable expressions or contracting it with surprising ones or weird punctuation. Here I think of how prose has invited itself in *White Piano* (2013), especially in the poem "Paragraphs of Eternity," which concludes with a prose page referring to O.R., the main character of my first novel, *A Book* (1976), and with this sentence: "The grammar of the everyday won't let go. From now on, the poem absorbs the dust of prose. . . ." This text is also followed by the poem "Without Story" in which I finally admit that yes we do need stories to go on with meaning. For example, I will say don't just use the word wine, think of the stories of friendship and landscape in it. Stories are related to time (past, present, future, imperfect, etc.). They rely on memory, the true or fictitious labyrinth of it, the mysterious and reassuring "once upon a time." My relationship to story has been problematic because I am a woman of the present, of the poem, and therefore the story which I have always associated with prose comes second

in my mind or as something that I indulge in every five years to renegotiate my relation with the real. It is also possible that prose has made its way into *White Piano* because I did postpone the writing of a novel and maybe I postponed too long so it whirled back in my poetry. I guess what is the most interesting about that episode is that it made me pay more attention to the prose poem and wonder how far the poetic can go before it becomes prosaic and what suddenly gives the prosaic a poetic dimension.

That being said I have to say that this feeling about prose is very different from the one I had when I was writing *These our mothers* (1983) and *Surfaces of Sense* (1989), which necessitated prose as if prose could help me to sort out the patriarchal lies, to phrase some intuitive explanation, to find an angle to question the invisible, the unknown, the non-sense. At that time I associated prose with real and fiction, prose allowing me to reshape the telling into theory.

SH: I love the idea of a five-year biorhythm cycling between poetry and prose! In that poem “Paragraphes d’Éternité” you use the word “soulager” in reference to the power of prose—“to soothe” (trans. Moure and Meijzels); this is the way Gertrude Stein talks in *Lectures in America* (1957) about the poetry/prose relationship too, stating that “It is this element of remembering that makes novels so soothing . . . and so the time of existing was not the same as in the novels that were soothing” (181). Like you she wrote maintaining a constant humming engagement between poetic language and the sentence. And although, interestingly, you talk here about gathering the stories in a word, you’ve also, like Stein, romanced terms until they are evacuated of their semantic histories, reshaping them for new use in a present existing. Can you talk about the ways Stein’s work and yours resonate (and/or diverge)?

NB: In *How Writing is Written*, Stein says that each generation has to take care of daily life and anyone being creative is not in advance of his or her time. We are always contemporaneous for we cannot live in the past because it is gone and cannot live in the future because we have no idea of it; therefore, in the act of living each one has to live as a contemporary. I agree. By taking care of the present, we formally take care of layers of narrative and we existentially absorb its poetic incentive. Stein invested a lot in repetition to craft the sentence, a means

that allowed her to destabilize the meaning while constructing its logic at the same time.

Her logic is fluid. Because of the use of repetition she gives the impression of testing meaning as one would do with a car by taking curves at different speeds. Wittgenstein is never far away. Somehow most of her work is done by showing and showing off how we are, are not, are not exactly, how we finally and again appear to be and reappear to vanish in language as a present. I like her performance because the meaning and connotation of words is fluid and shifting all the time, through technologies (writing being one), arts, disasters or politics (sometimes those two are synonymous). Some words are more subject than others to change their signification, words like: woman, old, freedom, justice, honesty, equality, etc. For example, we are now experiencing the drift of words like humanity, summer, mother, democracy, library, and death. Of course, we lose some verb tenses like l'imparfait du subjonctif in French or make extravagant use of the present tense to talk about the future. For example, we will easily say: "next April I am in Toronto."

In *L'horizon du fragment* (2004) (not published in English) there is a chapter called "To be of one's time" in which I say that I have always wanted to be of my time, to understand the world around me and the one that traverses us through collective desire, ideology, taboo, fear, etc. In other words, I have always wanted to identify the non-sense, which can sometimes simply be called lies, fiction, or science influencing our thoughts and gestures, our fear, fervor, and comfort. How we relate to the body, to time and space, to the notion of death, of family, of love, of gender affects not only our imagination but the posture of writing. Language seems very different when we are caught in moments of ambivalence, of certitude, of vulnerability, or absolute fun.

I am a woman of the present in the sense that I process what I was, am, might be in the present of words creating an atmosphere of melancholia, desire, or performing ardor. Prose is about time, poetry is about present. Prose slows down the excitement, it redistributes the tension of certain words and certain emotion, while poetry keeps the tension, is a radical reminder of that flying being in us which most of the time is called back to reality and survival. Because prose redistributes the tension at levels we can endure, it gives a sense of soothing.

Poetry is always unbearable in terms of the tension it creates in meaning. Today it seems that we tend to replace the tension in the meaning by a tension in the voice, by a performance of the voice, be it a shout or a murmur. But in both cases it is full present not to say “extreme” present as we now so often use this word to keep the consumer eager.

SH: Another way that you and Stein write in the present is through your attention to contemporary technologies, how they shift and open up vistas of experience, emotion, and cognition. Stein cited air travel, cinema, and series production as the innovations of her time that were coincident with Cubism and her repetitive style, or “insistence.” In your work we have encountered holograms, touch screens, virtual reality, streaming. How do evolving technologies play into your compositional practice?

NB: It is the first time that we encounter many technologies prolonging our brain (holography, computer, virtual reality, and internet). For a long period of time writing was the only technology able to reproduce a “time and space” metaphoric potential in our brain. Literature and philosophy have been the most developed aspect of it. The new technologies are exteriorizations of the inner possible of our brain. They are very different from the technologies extending our senses (vision, hearing). Avant-garde writers and artists have always been able to incorporate the effect of new technologies (speed, fragmentation, repetition, etc.) in their art. The thing is either we respond by intuition to the ambiance of a new reality or we are conscious of its functioning and effects and it becomes a Poetics.

So to answer your questions, evolving technologies concerning the brain are part of my questioning and pleasure in life. They fascinate me as the sea, the stars, bliss, and music. I would say that they entered my compositional practice first as a metaphor that can be used to “dig” and to imagine, and second as a rhythm. Usually the metaphor is conscious while the rhythm comes from within.

Today I would say that our rerouting and configuration of time and space (including memory and desire) is allowing us to stage differently, for example in a novel, the narration and the characters, spreading the notion of coherence to a new limit. The coherence has acquired a new meaning and we work beyond dualism. Now the challenge is not imagination but us trying to figure out “the

real as a truthful metaphor” in an environment where we know about the visible and the invisible, where it is easy to mix copy, fake and genuine, virus and normal, original and different. In that sense we have a lot to explore and enjoy (exploring is joy) in order to still believe in meaning, that we won’t be hurt by constant nonsense invading meaning. No matter the fact that we know that literature is art, craft, and music, we would still want to believe that words are meant to mean, to name, and to accompany us majestically in the illusion of meaning.

SH: Twentieth-century technologies of transit have contributed to the ways your characters are “staged differently,” as they migrate among cosmopolitan centres. You yourself are off to Paris today! What is the effect of cities and the mobility among them on Nicole Brossard and her characters?

NB: It seems an easy question but indeed it is not that simple. Besides my native Montréal, there are cities which are part of my reality. Paris, New York, Venice, and in another way Key West. These are poles in my life and each brings something different. Paris is about intellectual life, New York is about creative energy, Venice is an encounter between the past and the extreme contemporary—if I think of the Biennale of Arts—but Venice is also a place where you hear the dialogues between people, the sound of shoes on the stones, the silence, and those nostalgic orchestras on Piazza St. Mark. And Key West is essentially the horizon, the fascination I have for palm trees with the blue background of the sky and eagles, and great conversations with friends who are writers. Of course there are the cities new to me which I always discover with an excitement appropriate for writing. Two years ago I went to Erevan and Gumry in Armenia and they are strongly on my mind. Walking in Gumry, which was mostly destroyed by an earthquake in 1988, is very unique, the grey, the feeling of ashes in time, of earth.

There are also literary cities like St. Petersburg, Buenos Aires, or Dublin which bring cohabitation with Dostoyevsky, Borges, and Joyce. Or cities from other cultures like Istanbul, Algiers, or Beirut which offer a new reading of history, culture, and daily life. How these cities make their way into my poems is easy but how they enter the narrative is related to the degree of enigma that comes along with them. At the same time I could say that there are cities which I don’t know well or particularly like but suddenly they have to be in a novel, they have to

accompany the characters and contribute to their emotions. Cities are about time, civilization, apparition and erasure in time but they can also be a corner, a building, a bench in a park. In other words, they can, like little gestures, expressions of the face, a simple sentence, renew our beliefs, plunge us into a melancholic meditation or a profound revolt.

SH: Your description of cities as sites of energy, as incitements to create and/or revolt, applies also to the micro dwelling of the traveler: the temporary shell of the hotel room. The Hotel Furama, Hotel Rafale, Red Arrow Motel, Hotel Clarendon, and on and on . . . the setting recurs in your books. Sometimes the room cradles a brilliant lesbian erotic encounter, but we also hear, in *Picture Theory*, "There is always a hotel in my life to make me understand patriarchy." What is a hotel?

NB: Dear Susan, I am now in Studia Hotel in Paris and can reply to your question by saying hotel means writing and solitude, transit. Hotels are about passages, time, and the strange space allowing us to renew the firm intention of life around us. Hotels also mean escaping obligations of daily life while forcing us to be by ourselves and pay attention or take care of language as it falls on us.

Hotels are part of travelling, dreaming. For me they are always positive though I know for others they can be full of sadness. But the freedom they provide is exciting. Most of the time, they are related to a city, a landscape and the sea. They link to humanity in all sorts of ways: poverty, boredom, luxury, arrogance, vanity. They are full of what we are: alone and very small in a multitude. They are history; think of the Lutetia Hotel in Paris after the war, the Hôtel des Mille Collines in Rwanda, and of course the literary hotels like the Algonquin in New York, the Sylvia Hotel in Vancouver. Hotels are rooms of one's own. They do offer the best in terms of: I am alone. In a hotel you are alert, curious, and have a unique kind of relationship to time and people; you are so free of family bonds to the advantage of cultural bonds. Hotels are also a place where you are a stranger, an outsider, and of course for me this is a vital theme whether we explore it with regard to language or to marginality. In a way, we could also say that hotels have an identity which can suit you almost like a book. If a hotel makes you think of a writer or writing it is a real aperture.

Of course novels that take place in a hotel always seduced me. *Death in Venice*. I also think of *Pereira* and *Nocturne indien* by Antonio Tabucchi, and the Hôtel d'Angleterre in Geneva which appears in Hubert Aquin's novel *Prochain épisode* and to which I refer in *Fences in Breathing*. I guess ultimately Hotel equals the world, like one would say Hotel Univers, Hotel Cosmos, or as in Claude Beausoleil's book of poems, *Grand hôtel des étrangers*. For me hotels are almost indispensable in a novel.

In my novels there are real hotels but as well hotels that I need to name myself so they can play a role and interfere with a symbolic meaning in the novel like Hotel Rafale in *Baroque at Dawn*, Red Arrow Motel in *Mauve Desert*.

SH: Even if I didn't know a new book of yours was yours, I think I might guess it—I might recognize the book as a room in the Brossard chain of hotels! The familiarity would lie, paradoxically, in the room's insistence on overturning the familiar, on the fresh present, the buttons on the remote demanding new fingering. I would recognize the sensation of challenged, altered recognition. (And the intoxicating little shampoos reappear as fast as I can consume them!) Imagining your books as rooms we walk into, how connected are they in your mind? Can you talk about books that you see as discrete compositions and/or those that display intertextual connectedness? What would you say is that familiar thing distinguishing the Brossard room . . . is it the Barthesian “*grain of the voice* which resembles mine,” that you raise in your Afterword to *Mobility of Light*?

NB: This is a marvelous question that gives me the impression of entering a room with wallpaper that would resonate so strongly with me that the idea of the room would open up a wider space accelerating my thoughts about what matters to me and beyond myself. Of course I would immediately recognize that space as meaningful to me for there would be figures in it, handwritten manuscripts, arts, equations, names of writers, quotes, photos of Venice, Hotel Madison, women in love, tridimensional images of the brain. The room would seem to be mine until I make it white, with a table and a chair. Then I would do what I have been doing recently when thinking about my next novel, ask myself what is a biography, autobiography, why and from what angle what you know about yourself is

important. Why do we say “my life” when we are constantly moving in a changing and open architecture of thoughts, emotions, and feelings? Still there is that unique voice (design your own sound) and those unique finger prints (design your own choreography of gestures), those unique iris prints (design yourself a vision), three things that Big Brother is trying to archive (for . . . security reasons . . .).

Sometimes I have that image: biography and narrative face and salute each other as judokas and then I have to make a quick decision to determine if this shoulder, this leg, this arm is mine or not. I take great pleasure figuring out the constant movement of my thoughts, those which must be mine and the others read or heard somewhere. Doing that I feel light and free. Until the idea of time as space changes the course of my thoughts and scares me. So I can jump into my life again and answer your question: It is probably because all my books are intertextually connected that it is difficult for me to pinpoint the discrete composition. The only thing I know is that complexity and seismography of energy are two components that keep me going whether they apply to me or to language. Give me a question and I breathe.

I think that what you call discrete composition applies to books where time (sentences) seems to slow down like in *Langues obscures*. But it can apply as well to a book like *Ardeur* where there is an acceleration of tension and that tension behaves like a poetic in the poem. For the rest I would say that I know when my voice is the real one, when I inhabit my true body, but I just know, I can't work on it or reproduce it, I can only inquire on the thoughts that came to my mind at that specific moment and try to figure out the enigma of being alive.

octobre-décembre 2012

NICOLE BROSSARD / A Noise of Universe¹

Trans. Robert Majzels and Erín Moure

“You know that beautiful things cannot stand description.”
—Gustave Flaubert, *Letters 1830–1857*, trans. Francis Steegmuller

already we have begun again
in terms of breathing to evoke
entangled voices
in the midst of vowels
foreign found within oneself one vague morning

against a backdrop of narration
tell me if you recognize
the fire that spills over
by instinct its eccentricity
in our ancient veins
of humanity, and the blood

¹ From “*Oriana Ossilk* TAKE 2.” An earlier text entitled “*Oriana Ossilk*” appeared in French and in English translation by Dawn Cornelio in *Contemporary French & Francophone Studies* 15, 5 (December 2011): 647–653. “*A Noise of Universe*” is the second section of a novel-in-progress called *Oriana Ossilk*; this section will appear in French in fall 2013 in a book dedicated to Nicole Brossard, edited by Janine Ricouart and Roseanna Dufault.

RE: How is it?

Here's what happens: zap morphing true *noir*, but here again we must begin over because of the anxiety of *forms and other formats*, yes my little canary, even writers who've flown the coop, hidden behind pseudonyms, heteronyms, or beneath a tree smelling of beer and fruit, even these say they want to begin again knowing that their face and sometimes their whole body is charged with an energy that on winter days, when ice slows the blood in our veins, we call bare or cosmic concept, a concept that easily shunts off into the distance anyone who has ever inhaled the odour of ink and tenderness, but also of war and volcanoes. And remember, the odour will vary depending on what you read and on the suffering in you astonished at the universe.

DE/SCRIBE

I was about to order an espresso when Oriana Ossilk crossed the white expanse of the Sagamore Hotel's grand salon. Outside the sun was sprinkling.

Lately Oriana Ossilk could appear at any moment in one or another of my texts and, for me, there was no longer any question of obeying any kind of chronology, even if it were the gorgeous fruit of fiction. Similarly, it seemed pointless to reflect on her my subject as though I'd only lived in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The truth was I'd developed a strange passion for Oriana Ossilk, for her name, yes, but also for the human intrigue she represents to me. Behind her name there is a story, behind the story there is what we are becoming and cry out to the planet. A woman alone on the seashore in North America. There's nothing extravagant in that, and yet her presence and name were enough to nourish in me an obsession to de/scribe as if in order to continue to write, to want to write, it was imperative that I grasp the process that allows me with written words to simultaneously dismantle and reconstitute objects, scenes, landscapes and feelings by giving them the vivacity of an inner life, which is to say an emotion in the intimacy of its narrative form.

It also happens that the minute I attempt a description I'm so alone in the midst of words that I have to return to places that I don't recall having committed to memory.

In the time it took to cross the expanse of the Sagamore Hotel's white salon, Oriana Ossilk was swallowed up in her own transparency.

4descriptions

They have put an old chest of drawers in my room, it was bought from a junk dealer and is made of dark wood, with a thick slab of black marble on top, a strong smell of must and mould emanates from its open drawers, they contain several enormous, hardbound volumes covered in black paper with yellowish marbling. . . . *Childhood*, Nathalie Sarraute, trans. Barbara Wright

Along the forest there are large ochre shadows on the wheat, beneath the trees there are big dark spots that look like ink blots, there are ultramarines that fall on the strips of forest that you see at the bottom of the sky, beyond you can't see anything because it's the horizon, but anyway you can see very well that the earth is round because the line that divides the transparent blue of the sky from the ultramarine of the forest makes a dark and unmistakable curve. *The Opoponax*, Monique Wittig, trans. Helen Weaver

There were only two portraits, they were in the dining hall; one, her father, in uniform, standing beside a table, his plumed hat in his hand, his hand on the hilt of a sword, his spurred heels lost in the deep pile of a rug. The other, her mother, seated on a garden bench dressed in hunter-green, a little mannish hat tilted to one side. *The Passion*, Djuna Barnes

A shawl is a hat and hurt and a red balloon and an under coat and a sizer a sizer of talks. A shawl is a wedding, a piece of wax a little build. A shawl. *Tender Buttons*, Gertrude Stein

one week later

I set the novel and a notebook down on the table.

The book was full of sudden descriptions that as soon as they appeared gave the impression that they were about to self-destruct thus rendering enigmatic each of the novels of Oriana Ossilk. As for the easy and joyful images, I didn't think I had the power to translate them properly. Also I let them run free in my mind like little woolly lambs by the sea. And I was forced to admit that the rhythm of my breathing was now altered, sped up, intensified. That lasted awhile, then I turned into a Sumerian numeral or Iroise Sea.

I reframed the night in our chests
I also noticed Ossilk had added
a bit of lighting and silence
a few books and ripe fruit
so that memory entwines memory
curves of breath and alphabet
these things slow in us free and stunning

An overview of the centuries. A tightening in the chest.
Things that are easy, a siesta, a cocktail. Variety in our time so as not
to die too quickly. Writing and repose do not go together. Of course,
we can occasionally bring them both into a room, a bed, on
a terrace, before a landscape that burns within us suddenly
silence and our precious words that yield on every side as though
under the effect of a natural catastrophe.

Stretched out on the grass of the hotel garden, Oriana Ossilk listens
closely to the stridulation of the cicadas. It's like in a
novel, she thinks. She's still in shock from the sound
poems she heard yesterday when the poet Hugo Fleuve seemed
to want to structure meaning, his work, and his existence with sounds
that brutally ruined in each listener the tentative will to live
and think normally. Hugo Fleuve's *Quantified Self* was full-
blown in his lungs, his throat and mouth. Ossilk felt a touch of doubt.
Was it necessary to measure the night in each of us? How far back could we go
in the dark and calculate how the belly? How the breath?

language oscillates yet again the present snatches it away
and always I recompose the landscape
a few new leaps in the imaginary
or if you prefer, lakes, pine woods and palm groves
their perfume on the napes of women
everything that might resemble centuries
cheek to cheek life's wager
in the midst of infinities why
pupils satellites in memory
a scuffed noise of universe and of sobs

Where did I get this sudden need to de/scribe. Had the world changed so much that it was necessary to recompose it while walking in the unspeakable, gaze turned toward the present as though the present had the power to crush the other tenses, to isolate us in its magnetic field and thus pretend to help us live. Could de/scribing teach me something about reality, I who'd always sought to get away from it as much as one can keep reality at bay. Now here was reality summoning me, in a seaside hotel whose whiteness blinded me. Tables, sofas, chairs, dishes, centerpieces, all were a white of extreme presence. Oriana Ossilk easily reappeared everywhere.

The question of identity that demands descriptions by the thousands and of abstraction that erases them was bound to arise. I had no idea the torment they would cause nor the joy they would afford me for in de/scribing I'd seek out the thousand nuances that explode the flat time of a reality already named. De/scribing would allow me to fool around with the obvious. De/scribing, I might never again possess certainty. Only a desire for vigilant presence without respite.

I was about to board an airplane. In a few hours I'd be in a novel by Oriana Ossilk, crossing the vast garden that leads from the Sagamore Hotel to the sea.

Flagrant violation of recent world
I put my joy in caress to work
between thoughts, trembling, the minute just before
everything that under your blouse
fine particles of integral presence.

I also noticed how each morning
Oriana Ossilk is left on her own
solitary with her vocabulary
by the sea, in her hotel room
or walking in town.

We felt the coming storm. Life was swallowed up in
thinking, wind and light.

We felt the coming storm.

Democracy, the destiny of each of us
and other combinations of words would soon
bite into our everyday of flesh and of melancholy.

I slept well. I was awakened by children's voices and whispers; and a sound loop of powerful waves. Then the cycle of sounds began again. I had never seen the sea, and that was something I'd never told anyone. I'd read everything there was to read about the sea. I had to because I thought that my inexperience of the sea led others to think I was incapable of understanding life and the whole range of sensations and feelings essential to a lust for life. I have very little memory of water. A long time ago, I saw children running on the beach of a large lake north of Montréal. Girls my age were holding hands and their speed, varying in tempo, left the impression that some of them were fading away into time without it ever being possible to catch up to them just as in fiction.

A temporal cape of invisibility rendered my childhood completely undetectable, because my childhood was no longer couched in time but in space. Here it was now here with us as it melted into the strangeness of a single self caught up in the time of descriptions.

I first became interested in Oriana Ossiik's novels because she offered the sea to the reader the way others offer a sumptuous feast to their women friends. The sea was a horizon and Ossiik insisted in every paragraph on the energy emanating from it in the form of sounds striking the ear like ultrasonics capable of fragmenting our organs and our thoughts thus creating those mists of fresh water she needed in order to dream.

against a backdrop of narration
poems are *problématiques*
they swallow the sleekest thoughts and the others
take leave in the rigours of dangerous fervour
theory of free hearts
here we lose the word night, there we taste darkness
with fears tweets and caresses that make us smile
and stir up *la poétique*,

it all rolls toward our eardrums
it all departs once more invisible
an inch from infinity
already we've begun again

BHANU KAPIL / from **Notes for a novel never written: Ban**

Notes Toward a Race Riot Scene:

In April 1979, I was ten years old.

This is a short essay about vectors. It's about Brueghel's Icarus. It's about a girl walking home from school at the exact moment that her neighbor laces up his Doc Marten's, tight. It's about a partial and irrelevant nudity. It's about the novel as a form that processes the part of a scene that doesn't function as an image, but as the depleted, yet still livid mixture of materials that a race riot is made from. Think of the sky. Think of the clear April day with its cardigans and late afternoon rain shower. Think of the indigo sky lowering over London like a lid. Think of Blair Peach, the anti-racism campaigner and recent emigrant from New Zealand, who will die before this day is out.

Think about a cyborg to get to the immigrant.

Think of a colony. Think of the red and white daikon radishes in a tilted box on the pavement outside Dokal and Sons, on the corner of the Uxbridge Road and Lansbury Drive. Think of the road, which here we call asphalt: there, it is bitty. It is a dark silver with milky oil seams. A patch up job, *Labour* still in power, but not for long. It's 1979, St. George's Day, and the Far Right has decided to have its annual meeting in a council-run meeting hall in Southall, Middlesex, a London suburb in which it would be rare—nauseating—to see a white face.

To see anyone, actually. Everyone's indoors. Everyone can tell what's coming. It's not a riot, at this point, but a simple protest in an outlying area of London, an immigrant suburb: a *banlieue*. We board the glass up, draw the curtains and lie down. Lie down between the hand-sewn quilts shipped from India in a crate then covered in an outer cotton case stitched to the padding with a fine pink thread. The quilts smell of an antiseptic powder, an anti-fungal, Mars. We lie down beneath the blankets in front of the fire. It's 1979, so there's a small gas fire and a waist-high fridge, where we keep our milk and our eggs and our cheese, right there, in the living room. It's 1979, and so I live in Hayes, though in two months, after the riot, we'll sell our house and move.

Move away. As would you.

Cobra Notes for Ban:

I want a literature that is not made from literature.

A girl walks home in the first minutes of a race riot, before it might even be called that—the sound of breaking glass as equidistant, as happening or coming from the street and from her home.

What loops the ivy-asphalt/glass-girl combinations? Abraded as it goes? I think, too, of the curved, passing sound that has no fixed source. In a literature, what would happen to the girl? She fails to orient, to take another step. I understand. She is collapsing to her knees then to her side in a sovereign position.

Notes for Ban, 2012: a year of sacrifice and rupture, murderous roses blossoming in the gardens of immigrant families with money problems, citizens with a stash: and so on. Eat a petal and die. Die if you have to. See: end-date, serpent-gate. Hole. I myself swivel around and crouch at the slightest unexpected sound.

When she turned her face to the ivy, I saw a cube of bunched-up foil propped between the vines. Posture made a circuit from the ivy to her face. The London street a tiny jungle: dark blue and shimmering a bit, from the gold/brown tights she was wearing beneath her skirt. A girl stops walking and lies down on a street in the opening scene of a riot. Why? At points it rains. In a novel that no one writes or thinks of writing, the rain falls in lines and dots upon her. In the loose genetics of what makes this street real, the freezing cold, vibrating weather sweeping through south-east England at 4 p.m. on an April afternoon is very painful. Sometimes there is a day and sometimes there is a day reduced to its symbolic elements: a cup of broken glass; the Queen's portrait on a thin bronze coin; dosage; rain.

This is why a raindrop indents the concrete with atomic intensity. This is why the dark green, glossy leaves of the ivy are so green: multiple kinds of green: as night falls on the “skirt.” The outskirts of London: *les banlieues*.

Ban en Banlieues (suburban):

A puff of diesel fumes on an orbital road.

The country outside London, with its old parks and labyrinths of rhododendron or azalea,

futile and tropical pinks in a near-constant downpour of green, black and silver rain.

In the forest surrounding London, a light ice falls through the trees.

Like glitter. A snake, aspen-colored, bright yellow with green stripes, slips through the bracken, its pink eyes open and black diamond-shaped irises blinking on then off. In frozen time, ancient beings emerge with the force of reptiles. In the forest, time and weather are so mixed up, a trope of bedtime stories, bottom-up processing, need. I need the snake to stop the news. This is the news: a girl's body is dressed and set: still yet trembling, upon a rise in the forest. There are stars. Now it's night. Time is coming on hard. The snake slips over her leg, her brown ankle. She's wearing shoes, maroon patent leather shoes with a low heel and three slim buckles, but no socks.

Whoever dressed her was in a hurry.

Imagine the scene: a forest outside of London, 10 p.m.

An April snowfall, the ground still coppery, gold. A snake has escaped from time: a suburban aquarium. Volatile, starving, it senses a parallel self, the girl's body emitting a solar heat, absorbed in the course of a lifetime but now discharging, pushing off. Without thought, below thought, it moves towards her through the rusted trees.

What is Ban?

Ban is a mixture of dog shit and bitumen (ash) scraped off the soles of running shoes: Puma, Reebok, Adidas.

Looping the city, Ban is a warp of smoke.

To summarize, she is the parts of something re-mixed as air: integral, rigid air, circa 1972-1979. She's a girl. A black girl in an era when, in solidarity, Caribbean and Asian Brits self-defined as black. A black (brown) girl encountered in the earliest hour of a race riot, or what will become one by nightfall.

April 23rd, 1979: by morning, anti-Nazi campaigner, Blair Peach, will be dead.

It is, in this sense, a real day: though Ban is unreal. She's both dead and never living: the part, that is, of life that is never given: an existence. What, for example, is born in England, but is never, not even on a cloudy day, English?

Under what conditions is a birth not recognized as a birth?

Answer: Ban.

And from Ban: "banlieues."

(The former hunting grounds of King Henry VIII. Earth-mounds. Oaks split into several parts by a late-century lightning storm.) These suburbs are, in places, leafy and industrial; the Nestle factory spools a milky, lilac effluent into the Grand Union canal that runs between Hayes and Southall. Ban is nine. Ban is seven. Ban is ten. Ban is a girl walking home from school just as a protest starts to escalate. Pausing at the corner of the Uxbridge Road, she hears something: the far-off sound of breaking glass. Is it coming from her home or is it coming from the street's distant clamor? Faced with these two sources of a sound she instinctively links to violence, the potential of violent acts, Ban lies down. She folds to the ground. This is syntax.

Psychotic, fecal, neural, wild: the auto-sacrifice begins, endures the night: never stops: goes on.

As even more time passes, as the image or instinct to form this image desiccates, I prop a mirror, then another, on the ground for Ban.

A cyclical and artificial light falls upon her in turn: pink, gold, amber then pink again. Do the mirrors deflect evil? Perhaps they protect her from a horde of boys with shaved heads or perhaps they illuminate—in strings of weak light—the part of the scene when these boys, finally, arrive.

The left hand covered in a light blue ash. The ash is analgesic, data, soot, though when it rains, Ban becomes leucine, a bulk, a network of dirty lines that channel starlight, presence, boots. Someone walks towards her, for example, then around her, then away.

I want to lie down in the place I am from, where this work is set: on the street I am from.

In the rain. Next to the ivy. As I did, on the border of Pakistan and India: the two Punjabs. Nobody sees someone do this. I want to feel it in my body—the root cause.

after Steve McCaffery

I'll die if I fall

accordingly slip and fall risk
and fall risk

I'll die if I fall

cause he's old and the ice
agree with him.

cause he's old and the ice
agree with him.

cause he's old and the ice
agree with him.

cause he's old and the ice
agree with him.

cause he's old and the ice
agree with him.

Ice can form on a lake.
the form is found at scales
of adjustments we must make.

the form is found at scales
of adjustments we must make.

MERCEDES ENG / how it is (January 2012)

MAIN

Owl Drugs

no-name money mart

Hotel Washington

convenience store

empty building

the Balmoral

pizza shop

porn store

an institution saving lives

(Insite: North America's 1st safe
injection site)

art gallery

community garden instead of social housing

MAIN

the heart of the
community

Coastal Health Authority

the Regent

Sequel 138

Sequel 138

Sequel 138

Sequel 138

Sequel 138

the Brandiz

art gallery

convenience store

convenience store

empty building (the Old Smilin' Buddha where my dad saw Jimi Hendrix)	COLUMBIA Pigeon Park Savings
art gallery	empty lot
subsidized housing project	convenience store
COLUMBIA	the Shaldon
pawn shop	meth clinic
subsidized housing project	subsidized housing project
United We Can (poor people endeavouring every day to make money by cleaning up your environmentally friendly water bottles)	closed business
	the Only, closed due to the Health Act
ginseng store	(I never got sick eating there)
	subsidized housing project
the Dodson	

drop-in for the street	the Hotel Pennsylvania
meth clinic	CARRALL
art gallery	Contemporary Centre for Asian Art
CARRALL	Bitter Tasting Room
Pigeon Park	Pot Luck Café
pawn shop	a memory of tent city
closed business	a memory of tent city
the Beacon Hotel	a memory of tent city
Army and Navy	a memory of tent city
Vancouver Women's Health Collective	a memory of tent city
empty building	the Grand Union
Funky Winkerbean's	subsidized housing project
city-sponsored Save-On-Meats	ABBOTT
unbuilt half of the Paris Block	closed pawn shop
built half of the Paris Block	convenience store
hooker store (Model Express)	Salvation Army drop-in
empty lot	retail space for lease

ABBOTT

failed BeFresh Salon & Spa

SFU Woodward's

fancy furniture store

store selling Chinese stuff

Versus Training Center

fancy furniture store

Money Mart

fancy furniture store

discount fabric store

Bean Around the World

Vancouver Film School campus

CAMBIE

CAMBIE

AARON PECK / from *The Bad Arts*

Bernard could see where the security cameras were, where their proverbial eyes were scanning. He felt sure that that specific corner of the store was not being surveyed. It was like the space beneath a freeway overpass in which anything could happen. He could calculate the area over which the cameras had purview, and there was no way that this specific corner of this specific aisle was being recorded. He was in a blackout zone, an orphan space. The security guards, or the manager (who, in the case of a theft, of course, would send footage to the police, if he even bothered), had no visual data about what happened in that corner. It was, or Bernard was, *free*, unlike the queue at a border crossing, he thought, with its cameras that capture your license plate number even before you reach border patrol; unless, of course, the pharmacy had those cameras in the ceiling, which was always a possibility, those ones the size of pin holes, little HALs monitoring the entire space. But then why would they bother with the larger, somewhat outmoded cameras, unless they were remnants from an older security system, evidence of a surveillance palimpsest, ones that perhaps had been installed improperly, leaving the specific corner he was in unmonitored? He looked at the objects on the shelf. Should he pocket the soap? With no one watching, why not simply take the product he had intended to purchase? The nearest employee was on the other side of the huge pharmacy and there were no other customers within three aisles. Again, he looked at the soap and picked it up. It was a simple product, Pears, the kind his mother had bought for him when he was young and had severe allergies. He examined the box more closely than he had in years. A detail was missing. Nowhere on it stated that the product was “hypoallergenic.” (He would read later that the claim had been dropped a year earlier in 2009 when new ingredients were added to the formula, although he had not noticed any change to the box in the past year, a claim which no longer affected him, because his childhood allergies had abated, but he continued to use the soap anyway. Pears, he would discover, which was the world’s first branded product, was developed to provide a healthier alternative to soaps of the 1700s, most of which at the time contained arsenic or

lead. He would read that it was originally manufactured in one small plant in London and that that little company had been sold in the 1950s and was now manufactured in Mumbai. The scent, which had also recently changed, although he had not noticed, had been originally designed to smell “like an English Garden.” He would also read that it had never boasted of any “rejuvenating” formulas, the word rejuvenating itself a sham, promising to return us to youth, to re-juvenile us, he would think, as if anyone wanted to become an awkward teenager again.) Regardless of changes to the box, there, in the pharmacy, he looked at the package. He had a large overcoat. It would be easy enough to slip the soap into his pocket, but he had no reason to. He could afford it. In fact, he had a strict budget, which he wrote out on a ledger, every month, with a column listed “soap: \$2,” including tax. With his index finger, Bernard started tapping the box in his hand. He could hear the dull thuds of his finger against the cardboard. Cameras were everywhere. The building he lived in, for example, like most downtown condominiums, had a concierge desk, and whenever he would go to speak to the concierge, either to pick up a package that hadn’t fit in his mailbox, or to check on a specific piece of housekeeping, he was always fascinated by the row of tiny monitors, each of which broadcast a single video channel from the many security cameras throughout the building. In the corner of his eye, he would notice the amount of activity recorded, now being viewed at a central command station, by himself and the concierge. He had once observed a couple make out for what felt like five minutes while the concierge tried to find an oversized package, Bernard attempting to avoid gawking, his eyes periodically returning, as the man on the monitor pinned his lover against a wall. Again, Bernard looked at the soap. Somewhere, someone was or was not watching him deliberate, although probably the latter, because the efficacy of surveillance doesn’t rest on certainty but uncertainty, and the entire system would collapse if everybody began acting as if they were not being watched, which was quite probably the case, or if someone was watching, it was probably someone like Bernard with that couple, an unintended or indifferent eye. He

looked up at the camera. The pharmacy's intercom announced a two-for-one deal on all Coca-Cola brand soda for a limited time. He looked down at the soap. He walked over to the cash register and paid for the item, where, on impulse, he also purchased a pack of chewing gum. As a child, he would often hide in his father's garden, because there was always an out-of-the-way corner, a small alcove behind a shrub, or somewhere that no grown-up would find him, being just out of call or reach.

VANESSA PLACE / from *Lo mismo: The same*

- 1 *Sad presentiments of things to come.*
Plagiarism, as translation, are blush arts.
- 2 *With or without reason.*
People v. Scheer (1998) 68 Cal.App.4th 1009, 1023
[defense counsel “is not required to make futile motions or
to indulge in idle acts to appear competent”]
- 3 *The same [thing].*
The two men danced together like girls.
- 4 *Women give courage.*
Rats ate the eyes and liver first.
- 5 *And are like wild beasts.*
Susan was shroud in fawn curiosity.
- 6 *This brings you luck.*
Sweet scent of untold violence.
- 7 *What courage!*
Hot urine on a summer sidewalk.
- 8 *This always happens.*
She gave me pale yellow roses wrapped in lavender paper.
- 9 *They do not want to.*
Time ordering time.

- 10 *Nor they.*
Jesus preferred the egrative-absolute, which struck him like
the sun.
- 11 *Nor these.*
Michael says I am selfish and willful and seductive.
- 12 *This is what you were born for?*
Someone brought a dozen doughnuts, mostly crème-filled.
- 13 *Bitter presence.*
Kenny loved the plump red-jellied ones.
- 14 *The way is hard!*
Look me in the eye and say that!
- 15 *And it can't be helped.*
A glass of cold beer and a warm salted pretzel.
- 16 *They equip themselves.*
She had a pitched inability to regard the subjectivity of others.
- 17 *They do not agree.*
I feel I cannot do anything about the current administration.
- 18 *Bury them and keep quiet.*
A thin green shoot, semi-coiled, flexible along the length,
crooked at the tippet, knotted with buds, rose-purple and
purple-brown at the base.

- 19 *There is no more time.*
I can't get away from the woman.
- 20 *Treat them, then the others.*
No life within, no death without.
- 21 *It will be the same.*
A green thistle shout with white milk.
- 22 *All this and more.*
Janet loved people like frozen kittens.
- 23 *The same [thing] elsewhere.*
Like flying ballerinas, there are many ways to catch.
- 24 *They'll still be useful.*
He brought with him a blue nylon rope.
- 25 *So will these.*
Where are your brute & cushioning ghosts?
- 26 *This is not to be looked at.*
Jason's favorite meal was spaghetti with meatballs and a slice
of buttered bread.
- 27 *Charity.*
In the dark, the boy's white torso gently glowed.
- 28 *Rabble.*
It was cold, and the footprints were frozen over and lightly
frosted.

- 29 *He deserved it.*
We have no richer purpose.
- 30 *Ravages of war.*
o heaven o hell o this hissed madness this blanched charm
made base
- 31 *This is too much!*
widely panned for excessive subjectivism
- 32 *Why?*
He kept his hair in cornrows, parted on the right.
- 33 *What more can be done?*
The torso put its violet border towards the night.
- 34 *On account of a knife.*
On account of a knife, a throat.
- 35 *Nobody knows why.*
The modern monster is Frankenstein, a creature of construction with no independent purpose: no point to the point of him, he is rounded, then curved back. He is soulless, not because he is a murdering monster, for who isn't, but because he does not exist outside his existence. The rest—his predatory nature (sexual to be sure), his status as resident alien (potentially assimilable), his Buster Keaton deadpan (never funnier)—in sum, his desire to be a man but without man's insignificance, are all facets of the same aspect: absolute presence accompanied by absolute lack of effect. *Causality will be the death of me!* So too much appears today, creations that are creations only by virtue of being creatures,

creatures that are creatures only by virtue of being created.
Created by virtue of being, which has no virtue beyond birth.
For without hope of accidental murder, the creation is merely
a full-term abortion.

36 *Not [in this case] either.*

The jury brought a dozen doughnuts and snack-packs
of Pringles.

37 *This is worse.*

It was my understanding that the idea of the organism
revolves around the existence of a boundary (i.e., if there is no
boundary, there is no body and therefore no organism. Given
this), I would suggest my concerns with “form” *a priori*
implicate the question of the boundary.

38 *Barbarians!*

This is worse!

39 *Great deeds—against the dead!* Three men, castrated, tethered
to a tree. Two hung right side up and upside down, the third
made three.

40 *There is something to be gained.*

Only the weak are innocent, by the guilty, is guiltless proved.

41 *They escape through the flames.*

There is a tensile facticity to that which is beautiful, a
mechanical and mathematical quality to grace not natural or
even artificial, like bodies billowing by Brady.

- 42 *Everything is topsy-turvy.*
Her dress a white bristled beard with careful blue buttons.
- 43 *So is this.*
My father shined his belt buckle with Brasso and his shoes with
Kiwi paste polish, black.
- 44 *I saw it.*
The detective told him that the victim and 3 other people
identified him; appellant said it was mistaken identity.
- 45 *And this too.*
Sad work, if you can get it.

ALEX LESLIE / from **Vancouver For Beginners**

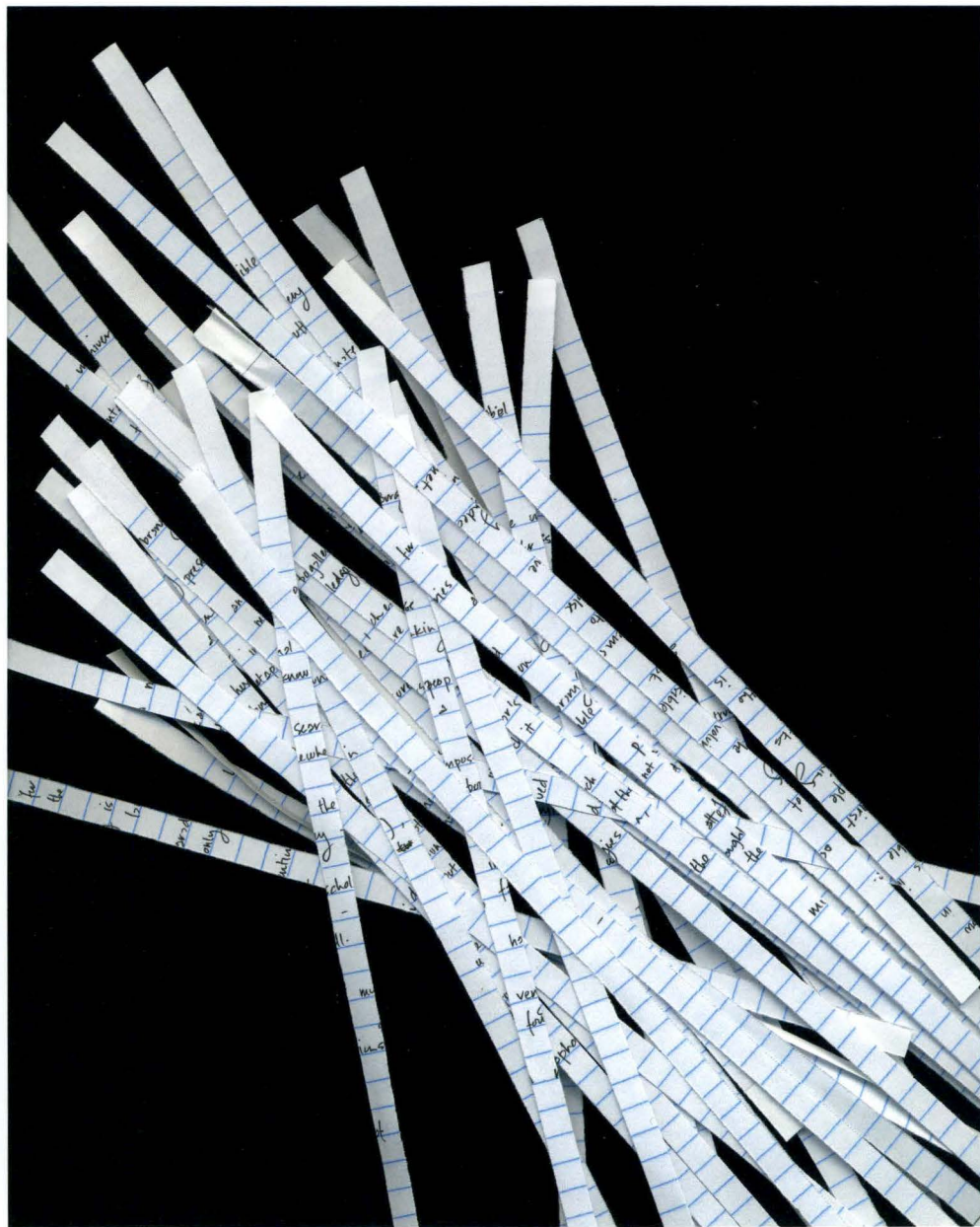
Vancouver For Beginners #3—A Cyclist's Dream

I live for my bike, sleep with it, haul it over me, slopejoints, bones hollow as a bird's. Rainmonths drag a jacket over, spiny-tarped cave, the water ankles me, I lie cross-legged in the centre of a city drain. I see shadows of gulls in filigreed shoes, a season somersaults down the gutter, head over heels for archipelagos, puddles in the city's linked stomachs. Anchoring wobblecups of lamplight grease, I have this cage above me, this diagonal aluminum wing between my weather and cold, my blue eye spins like a weathervane, on its side my bike my lover tells time I ask it questions tick tock tock tock another finger crosses my eye, the moon drags down one more curtain. Day crawls with us, soldiers in our helmets, roads margined for our elbows, halogen handlebars sweep down riverbed slopes, at dusk the streets roam with slim-heeled cyclopes. We race this turbine, peel wings off rain. Six or seven nightfall I get lonely for it, math of its pedal at my hip, a bolted wrist held respectfully high. The thing above grows into you, limbs can perform any task. It's good exercise to stay awake during sleep. Dawn fingers me lightheaded, my bike filter prisms this wake, the sun hurls jackets packed with tin sparrows at my eyes. Pry it off, push we push off tuck the streets up deft, cars vanish me. Tie a tendon around False Creek for good luck, I will never be this bruised and free again.

Vancouver For Beginners #5—Fadeout

In deep fall we turn into ghosts or extend olive branches. Seasons clot us cluster us, husky with hair. Last summer's nightfighter bounces emails off our cloud armour, our shrug tectonic, streets shapeshifting under rain's snakework. Buildings rub their clayslipped chests together until winter. Until it lifts, vanish us. We surrender our genie coefficients to calendar art. Someone is painting murals on waterfalls again, someone is building a parking lot on a graveyard, someone is lacing branches in chainlink and planting a tree on a building to mean skyline. Our shoulders have rise to waterlevel in storms we assembled from junkyard pedigree. Nightly a horn sounds at the club corridor's left earlobe, freighter pendant belly-up, spiked sleeper hit mouthing oiled words. The police are raiding shopping carts again, eight jackets reach open armed across the intersection, crows stride the fingerbridges swing claws in eye-yellow rings around the loophole we crouch in. Around the peak of the house rain frames another peak. Half-shut our eyes guide us through the ocean cloud palindrome the slick watchstrap binding mountain to knee, weather is our tourniquet.

KYLA MALLET / from The Library



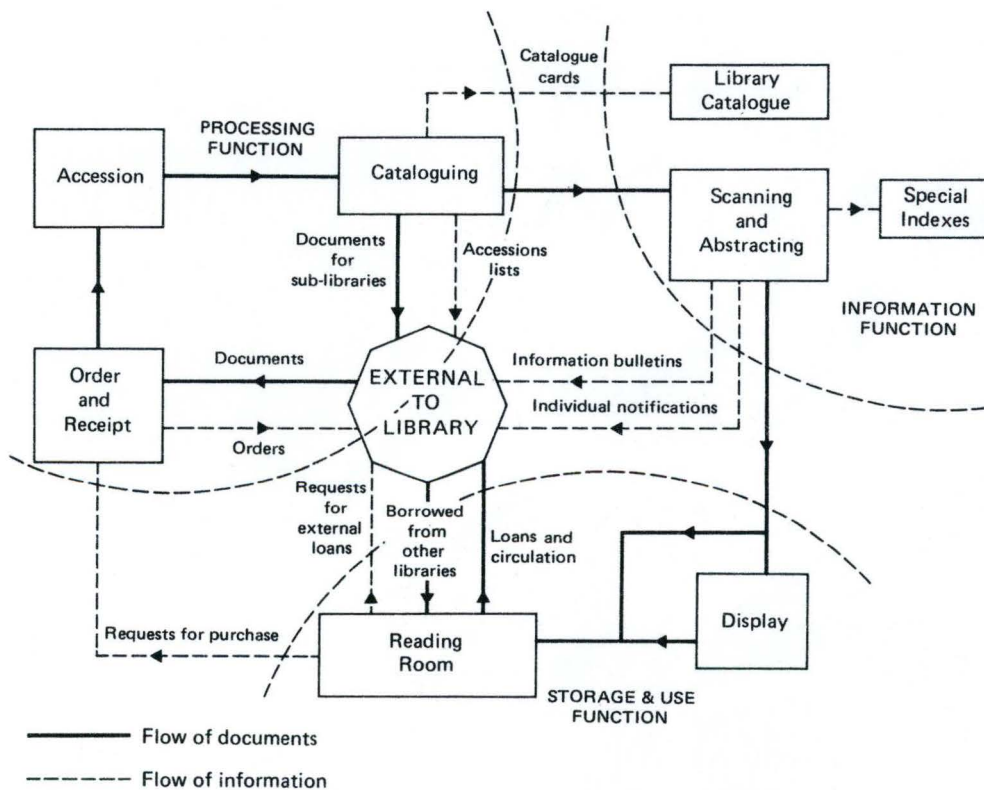


FIGURE 3. *Flow chart for materials and information*

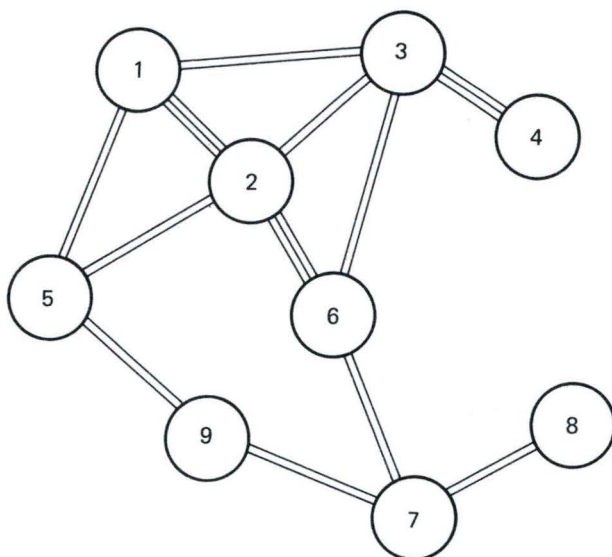


FIGURE 8. *A and B values redrawn for best fit*

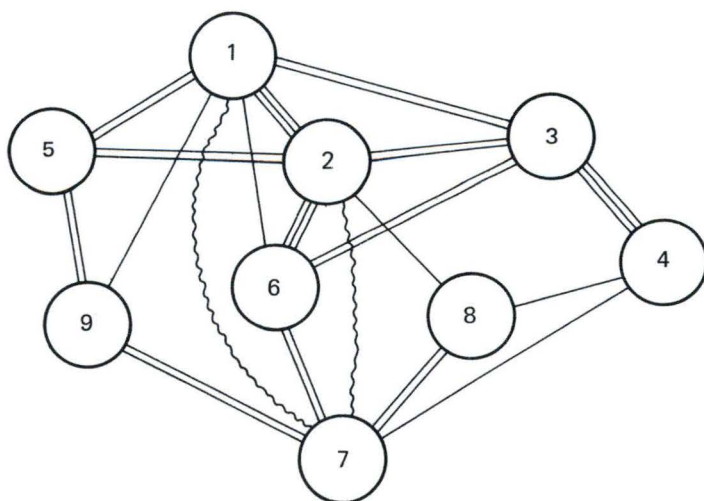
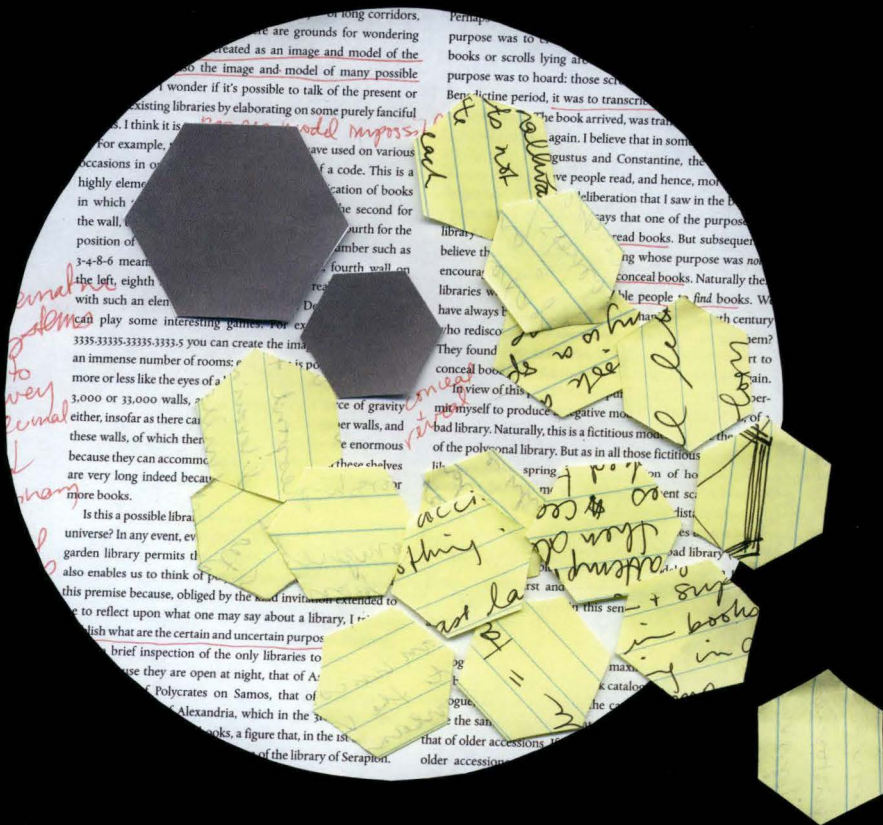
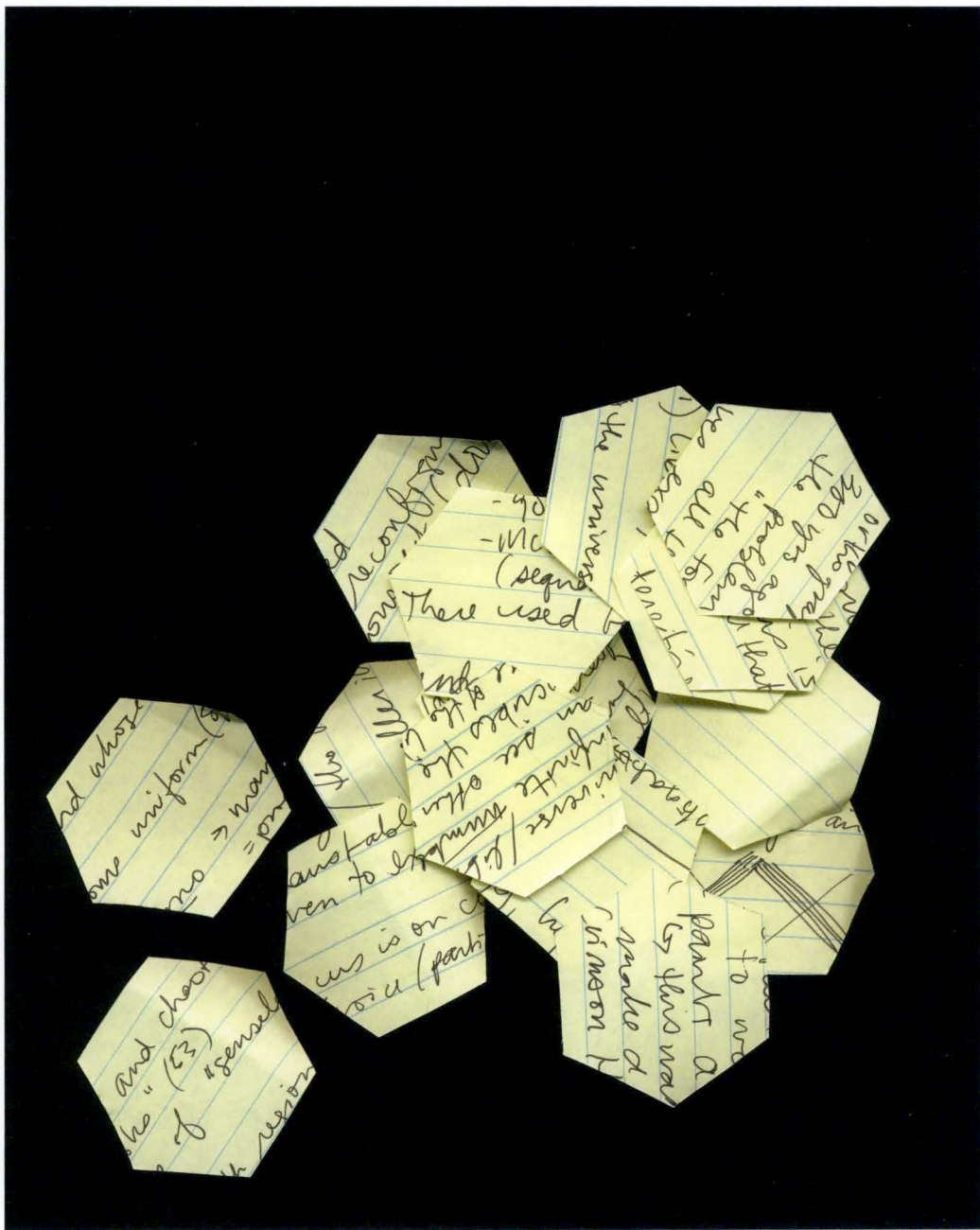
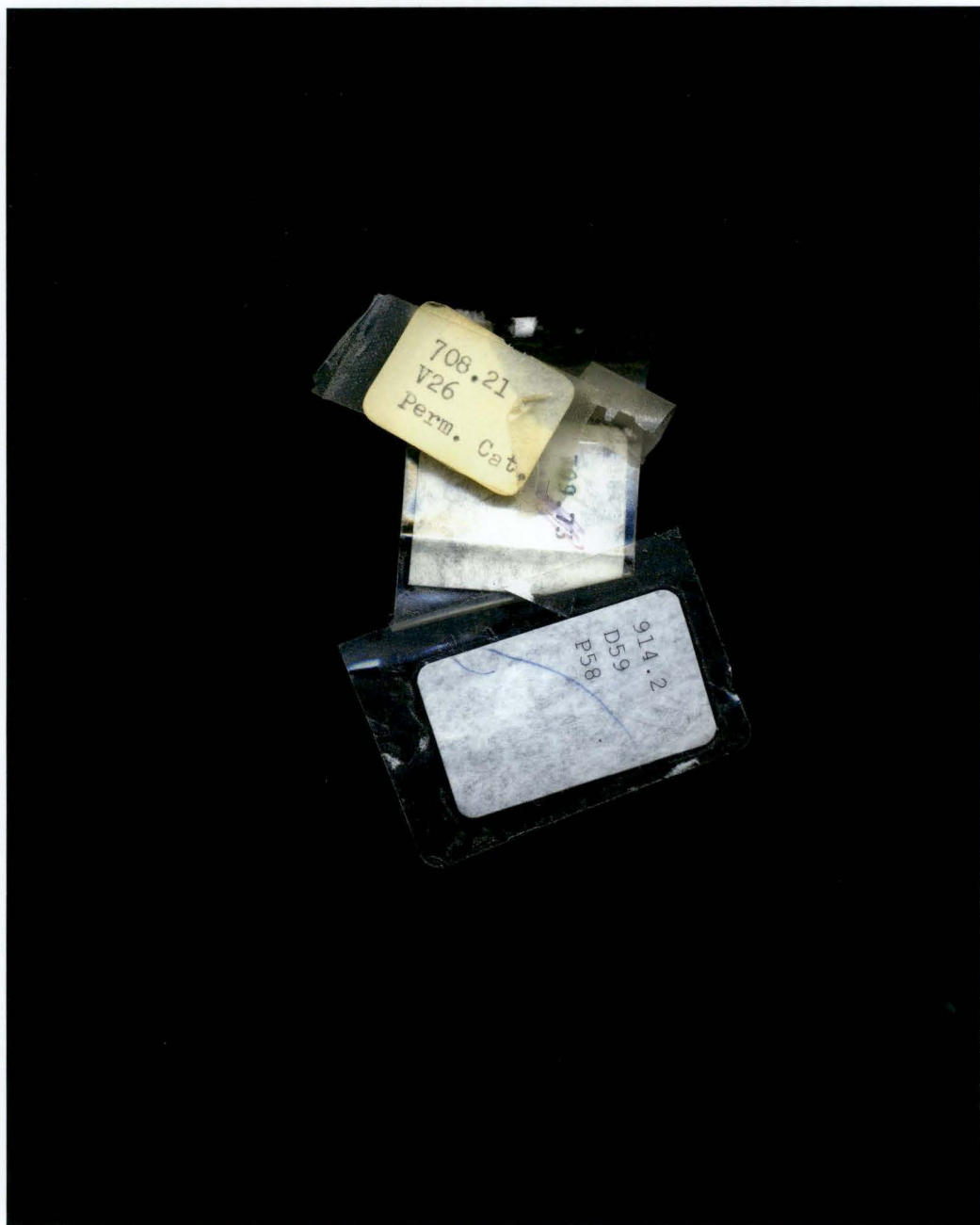
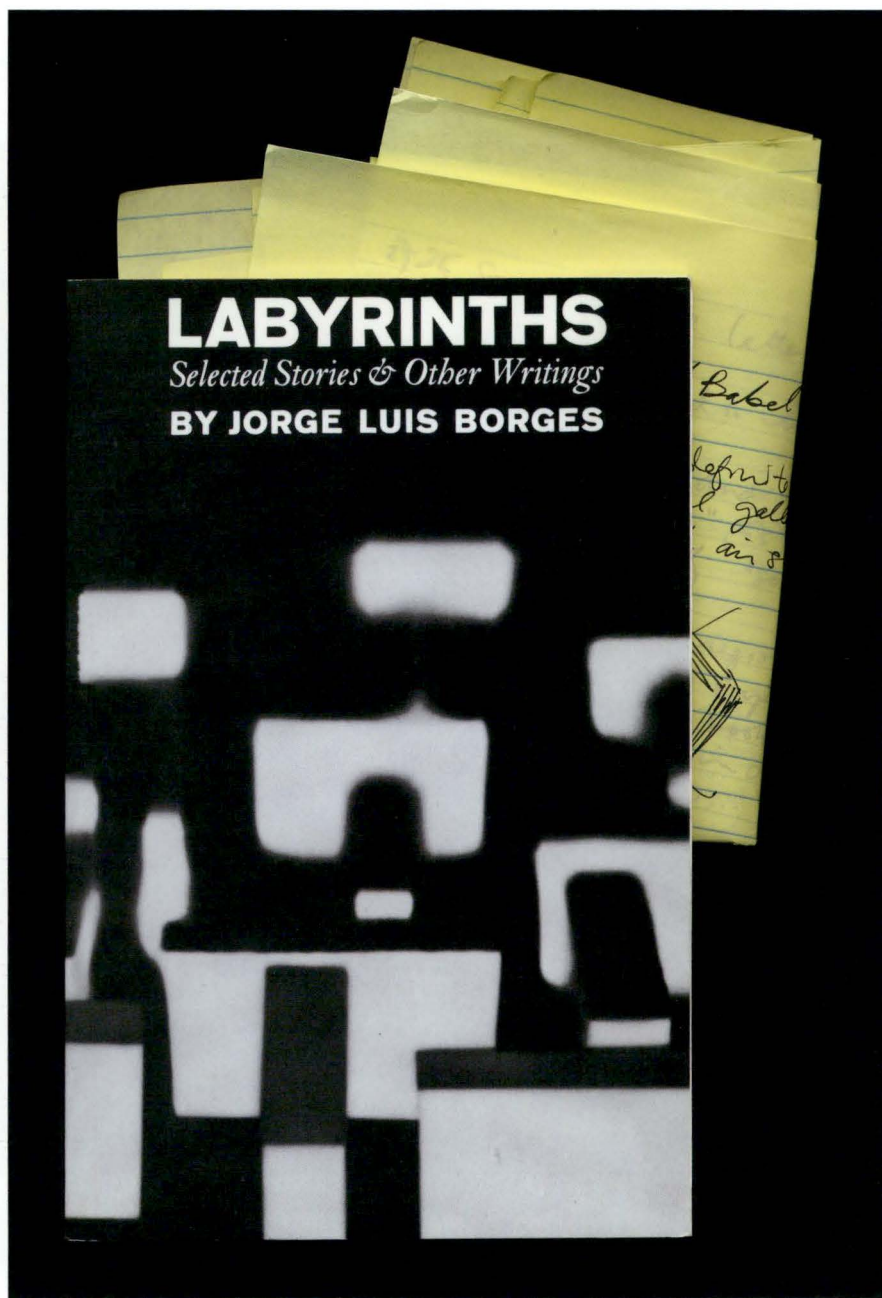


FIGURE 9. *Relationship diagram (all values)*









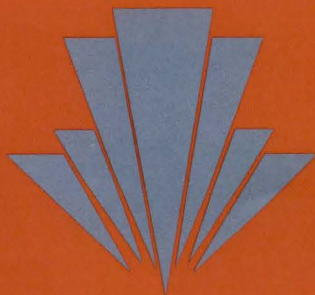




Art Gallery Meeting

Members of Vancouver Art Gallery will hold their 23rd annual general meeting in the Gallery at 8 p.m. May 18th.

The Assertive Librarian



ORYX PRESS

Figure 1

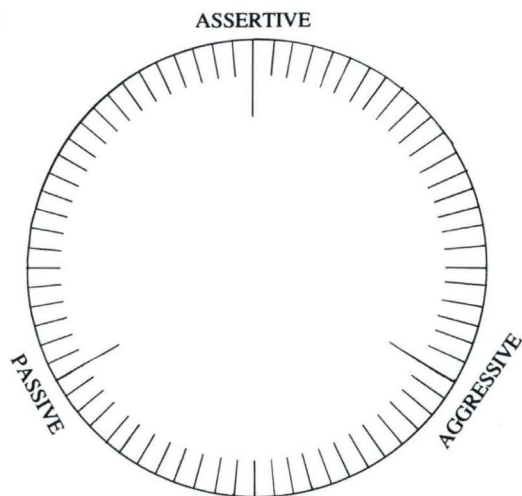
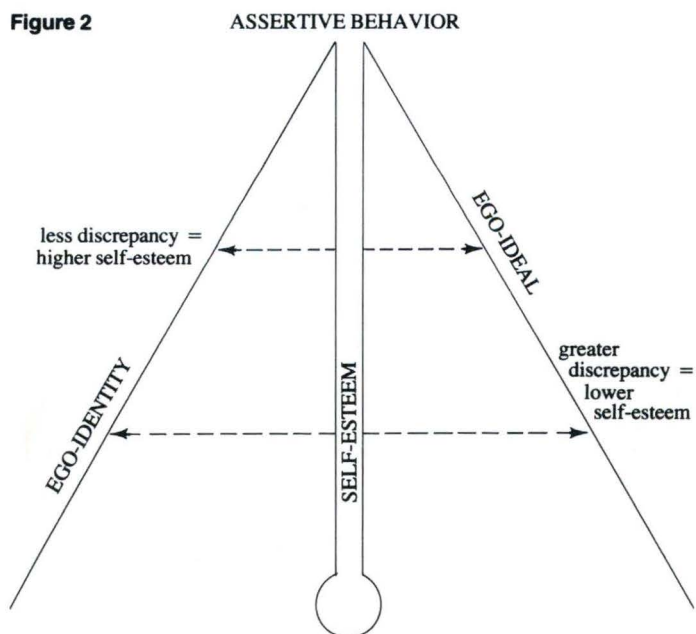


Figure 2



069
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Making
Museums

423

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Canadian Heritage Infor
Collections management
software review :
analysis

069
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B41

Belcher, Michael
Exhibition

069.53
B46

Beyond the box :
diverging curatorial
practices

DATE DUE
7 Feb '04

069.5
W55

What makes a great
exhibition

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Collecting the new :
museums and
contemporary art

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Bruce

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BORROWER'S NAME

Apr 20 07 Sadura

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Apr 25 07 Sadura

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from **The Library**

The Library is a 23-panel work. Captions by page in order of appearance.

49. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.
50. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: Ideal Forms*, 2009, screen print, 14" x 11". Courtesy of the artist.
51. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: Ideal Forms*, 2009, screen print, 14" x 11". Courtesy of the artist.
52. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.
53. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.
54. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.
55. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Library of Babel*, 2009, lightjet print, 50" x 34". Courtesy of the artist.
56. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 20". Courtesy of the artist.
57. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 20". Courtesy of the artist.
58. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Assertive Librarian*, 2009, lightjet print, 50" x 33". Courtesy of the artist.
59. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: Ideal Forms*, 2009, screen print, 14" x 11". Courtesy of the artist.
60. Kyla Mallett, from *The Library: The Universe*, 2009, lightjet print, 20" x 16". Courtesy of the artist.

LARISSA BERINGER / Imagine the Library¹

Against the Grain, An Anti-Catalog
Breaking Free, Classes in Modern Society
Diane Arbus, Eat Your Heart Out
Get the Message?

Cindy Sherman, Ingrid Bergman, Irving Penn, Joseph Beuys
Looking Backward
Marcel Broodthaers, Marilyn Monroe
Meanwhile
Oscar Niemeyer, Yvonne Rainer
Your Map of the World

Human All Too Human, Hunger, Images of Revolution, Imitation of Life
Impossible Dreams, Is America Used Up?
Jules and Jim, Keeping the World Disarmed
L'Amour de L'Art
Language
Mechanization Takes Hand
Modern Cantabile, Mother Goose, Navajo Weavers, Never Again

Sea Gold, See Under Love, Seeing is Believing
Selling Culture, Shopping, Snow Falling on Cedars, Starting Over
Stolen Words, Stories and Texts for Nothing
The Alice B. Toklas Cook Book

Thinking with a Pencil
Thinking of you
Time and Again

Black Coffee, Black Swan
Bread and Roses, Bricks and Brownstone
Lunar Atlas
Subway Ceramics

¹ Composed from book titles selected from the Martha Rosler Library: <http://www.e-flux.com/projects/library/>

Miss Lonely Hearts
Mister Jelly Roll
Mistaken Identities
These are our Lives

No Exit and the Flies
No Going Back to Moldova
No Logo
No Place of Grace
Not a Through Street
Not a Home
Nothing More Than Murder
No!

Art in the World, Being There
Beyond the Hills and The Sea
Content, Distraction, Facing the Artist
Notes, On Changing the World
Open the Books
The Activist Drawing, The Creative Mind
What Are You Waiting For

La Vid, Laboratorium, Land of The Free
Le Romantisme
Left Curve
New Spaces of Liberty

布

bù

Bù

You swagger forth, arms swung up in full march, left hand behind, right flung forward offering as though in a shout here! buy this platter of brains, this tray of tripe. Never will you ever eat such fine entrails. Oblivious that your forward leg bleeds into the pole of a water carrier tall as a lamp post, buckets hanging. You stride on, nose to futurity, mindless of your Siamese twinship—Water-Carrier your anchor, just as you, like the arm of a shop sign, hang this pail-carrying stalwart sloshing a bucket over the street so that everyone passing will be entranced at your *pas s'en souvient*, your reckless nonchalance, unheedful insouciance and general inappetency for the fact that you're balanced on Water-Carrier's elbow. What's it like up there sailing over her head, full of blatancy, full of averment and unequivocal vociferation, full of flourish and fanfare and cocksure legibility with your leg that's also a water-bucket in which you dangle suspended, irresolute as a butterfly while Water-Carrier balances your unsettled hovering by growing on her other arm biceps and triceps big enough to hoist a cast-iron bathtub below your outstretched platter of lampredotto? What are those toothless whale gullets gumming your arms—that hatchet hooking your stanchion? That nose in your crotch, that leg-swallowing jaw bookended to square-head lecturing his adoration. What's this wariness that seizes your woofy significance of where you thought you were going when you were water—you floated in a watery room—you breathed with gills and heard whales opening and shutting gates in the ocean—a gently jiggling thunderous ocean—you think of Jonah and you wish that he could have been she, a water-carrier, and you wish that she had returned from the leviathan and had taught us to unravel it so that it would never again swallow us, and we would stand on our own ground.

Note: Bù is the Chinese character for *cloth*.

海
hǎi

Hǎi

A cat sidles cornerwise into the room, her whiskers knobbed like leg bones, her eyes footprints in a Halloween sheet to see themselves in mirrors floating on the night. Oh mirror mirror unfairest of them all, my tongue's caught in a mouth trap. I'll claw this bedsheet, shred it to naughts and crosses. Shred it to hopscotch. Let's see how flimsy I can make this dogged whitewash where they do their doggy roll-on-the-backery and piss-on-the-wallery. Let's see how far I can prick it, see how it sharpens my pricks up their ears. Let's make it a pricknic of pricktitude. Mirror mirror, who's the prickliest? Who's the best teacher with periculum for the prixiest cataprixses? I'll look in the prictionary. Get some juxtaprickaments. Cat on a mat. Mat in the night. Night beneath snow. Snow seeming right. Right angled wrong. Wrong facing self. Self as a snake. Snake on a shelf. Shelf in the sky. Sky under sheet. Sheet over cat. Sheets to the wind. Shoed to a coat. Shut to the coot. Cut by the shirt. Shoot for the kite. Hopscotch leg-bones, grid-eyed flap and tatter these looking words. This spooking glass. This scratchmark for sea saw flag natter nipped in nine-tail. Turn again Whittington thrice Lord Mayor of London. Your pussy in boots has stolen your clothes and all the king's rats and all the king's men can't put pussy together again.

Note: Hǎi is the Chinese character for *sea*.

REG JOHANSON / from Mortify

Dad said I had to go with the men but I wanted to stay with the women
Mom said I could the women said I was hiding
Behind my mom's skirts I don't know what the men said
Did they think I was peculiar was it very odd for me to want to stay with
The women? Why did I want to stay with the women? Was I afraid of
The men what was I afraid of why did the men frighten me
I know the answer I know why I didn't want to go with the men but
I'm embarrassed to say it I don't want to admit it
To myself I don't want to explain that to admit that I had a feeling
About it a negative feeling an aversion a lack of desire to go with the men
I should have wanted to go with the men I
Should have wanted nothing more than to go with them
It should have been like, you can't hold me back I don't want to stay here
I want to go with the men and the boys because
That's more natural, that's a more normal desire it's healthier it makes sense to
Want to go with the men there weren't any girls there just
Women so I don't have that excuse I can't say, oh I stuck around to pick
Up chicks I was only five years old my best friends across the street were girls
two sisters
We played house and doctor they were the husbands and my brother and I were
The wives or babies I'm taking a risk in admitting this it's a great risk to
Admit that as a boy I was prepared to pretend to be
A wife, well, we did have dolls my parents
Were quite progressive in that way they thought it was fine for boys to play
With dolls that's probably why I'm so sensitive now that's probably why women feel
Easy around me they feel safe I dreamt once that
I was surrounded by beautiful women who said to me
We like you because we know you don't want to have sex with us
Because I was taught that girls can do anything boys can do

And vice versa though no one said that no one said “boys can do anything girls can do” it
Was always the other way around it was always “girls can do anything boys Can do” I must have inferred the corollary myself I was very sensitive I wasn’t precocious as
A child but I was very I would say sensitive not particularly smart not very bright not gifted
I wouldn’t say I was gifted
Just not a brainiac not a brainy child I was just rather sensitive, and rather sweet I think,
I could ask my mom to tell me what I was like as a kid
I could ask my dad to tell me, was I sweet? Was I sensitive? Unusually Sensitive? I know I cried a lot I know I didn’t like to be left with the baby Sitter I didn’t like to be left in the car when my mom ran in
To the store to get something quick I cried when my brother and I went
On the plane to visit my dad my brother had to look after me, me, the older brother had to be looked after by the younger I never forgave him for that
He knew my secret he knew why
I didn’t want to go with the men and the boys he understood why
I wanted to stay with the women he
Never used it against me but I used it against him, I held it against him
It was dangerous information I was
Always taught that girls could do anything boys could do that girls and boys were Equal anything boys could do girls could do too and I inferred the corollary,
That boys could do anything girls could do but maybe I was wrong about
That this might have been where I made my
Mistake it might be here that I made a crucial error
In my thinking it was the seventies
And it was a feminist moment I was raised from an early age to be a feminist
But not to be queer I’m not, I’m not queer, this isn’t the big secret
This isn’t the reason I didn’t want to go with the men that’s not why I wanted to

Stay with the women the reason was that I was afraid of the men
I admit it I'm not ashamed to admit that I'm comfortable expressing my
Fears I do not find it difficult to express
My emotions I can say that I was afraid to go with the men but there was something
wrong with
My decision that day the women remarked on it they implied that it was
Peculiar they didn't know I was being raised as a feminist they didn't know
Girls could do anything boys could do but they did know something
They were correct in one
Respect they were right about one thing: that boys could not do anything
Girls could do they were farm women
My mom was protecting me from the knowledge the farm women had about
Boys being raised as feminists my dad wasn't protecting me though
He wasn't very good at protecting me he had a double standard
He was a manly man when he was with the men and a pussy at home now hey
Stop now listen to me listen to
My language here and here I was raised a feminist and listen to me
Talk he was whipped the man had
No balls my mom didn't wear skirts she was a feminist hiding me from the farm
Women and their men and boys but not their daughters why should she I
Had nothing to fear from them they were just like me but one thing I missed
One thing here I didn't get I wasn't just like them that was not made clear that was
Only hinted at it was implied it was intimated that girls and boys were different
Maybe I got confused here this explains a lot this really makes sense to me did I
Conflate "equal" with "same" I was just a kid I was five years old that's an easy
Mistake to make and I wasn't especially gifted I was a little sensitive and that's
What sensitive people do that's just the kind of mistake you might
Expect from a sensitive person that's a sensitive person's kind of thinking,
If we are equal we must be the same

JEN CURRIN / Before Midnight

Some weird angels showed up. They were weird angels because they didn't look like angels. They looked like devils. But Johanna knew they were angels.

One with short, curly blonde hair and pink eyes put a record on. Punk.

Two angels started to dance, slowly, out of sync with the music.

Johanna sat up on the couch; her favorite yellow blanket slipped to the floor. She slept on the couch because her bed had started to give her nightmares. She was so sick of all these divine presences. Maybe she had taken too many vitamins the night before. Or maybe it was all the holy books she'd been burning.

"I read them before I burn them," she explained vaguely.

"You'd better call your mother," the curly angel said.

"If I had a mother, I'd call her *right now*," Johanna replied.

"That's what I said." Curly handed her the phone. "Call your mother."

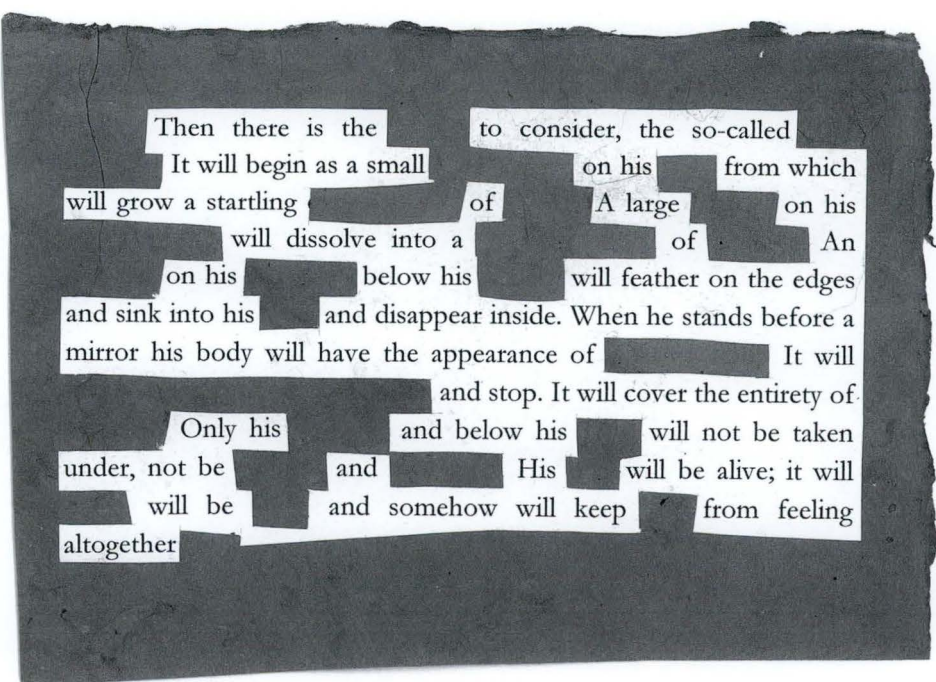
Johanna heard the hiss of the burner as an angel put on coffee. The dancing angels were now using her kitchen towels to polish their short horns.

Her apartment seemed like hell. But Johanna knew it was heaven. She started dialing.

Epilogue

The robber is dreaming he is ten years old and playing in his neighbour's backyard. They have a big and beautiful poplar tree with knotted limbs like his grandmother's hands. He always saw faces in the bark of trees, in the gnarled and twisted crevices of that ancient skin. He is lying on his back on the longest outstretched branch. When the wind blows he catches tiny, diamond-shaped glimpses of sky. He listens, suspended, moving in synchronicity with the tree. He thinks of himself as being one of the highest leaves and with one gesture he can wave a greeting at both the birds and the worms, at everything caught between the sky and the earth. Suspended and no longer confined by laws he hops memories like stones. He wants to stay here, caught between the deepest roots and the highest leaves.

He closes his eyes and feels the weightlessness of his body, of his limbs dangling like branches. This is the only thing that makes him feel close to the sky, as if the ground beneath his feet is not the final say, is not his destination.



Then there is the [redacted] to consider, the so-called [redacted]
It will begin as a small [redacted] on his [redacted] from which
will grow a startling [redacted] of [redacted] A large [redacted] on his
[redacted] will dissolve into a [redacted] of [redacted] An
[redacted] on his [redacted] below his [redacted] will feather on the edges
and sink into his [redacted] and disappear inside. When he stands before a
mirror his body will have the appearance of [redacted] It will
[redacted] and stop. It will cover the entirety of [redacted]
Only his [redacted] and below his [redacted] will not be taken
under, not be [redacted] and [redacted] His [redacted] will be alive; it will
[redacted] will be [redacted] and somehow will keep [redacted] from feeling
altogether [redacted]

JON R. FLIEGER / Thank you

the things you left the sharpness of me to
patterns among leaves the shapes of
is a murder in a normal
the world
hands
tooth

and i

i am lucid

and horror is everywhere

the world is murder
in animals hands
and i
i am lucifer
the things you left the
the shape of teeth
leaves the sharpness of one tooth
and horror is everywhere
patterns among

**the lamp was a thoughtful housewarming present.
i will think of you every time i see it.**

GAIL SCOTT / from *The Obituary*

Featuring Rosine, her super-ego the Bottom historian, her neighbour [aka the landlord] and various townees, alive + deceased.

[Neighbour's Cut]

The Street

[NEIGHB: She worked on the police desk. It made me nervous. Admittedly, the parquet floors, she kept nice. Also, she slept with women, a point in her favour. I thought initially. I accepted to talk politics. But something was not according to Hoyle. A wasp in a Frenchy sweater cannot be trusted. Not in this place. I said, have you noticed a Marxist does not invest in futures? To test her. The rental property was for until Dacha Tranquilité, my little organic farm, grew feasible. The orchard was maturing. I said, wanting to be civil, you're a little back with the rent. She answered, fingering the ivory spiral pendant hanging from her neck, did I know Louis Riel'd♥ lived in the 'hood? Lena with the cheekbones, on the second, a better tenant, was complaining, the weird vibrations coming from over woke her. I wrote a letter. You should have seen what airs Ms. 4-9-9-9 put on then. Like she was onstage. Flouncing down the stairs, striped top, you could peel it, workboots + stockings. Always different, from one day to the next. Like a girl. Like a boy. After she left the police desk at the paper—to put it better, after the police desk left her, A MULLET! I cannot tell a lie.]

- ♥ What's in a name, especially if perpetually under reconstruction by guilty opportunists? Riel, French/Dene, hanged by Canada for starting a republican-style revolution, proffered myth as a bulwark against future historicism, adding Hebrew ascendance to the ancestral stew. So [as our story goes] our protagonist hearing from her mother, Veera, who heard it from her mother, the Metis Prisc Daoust, who declaring while serving the Sunday roast, using her Coronation-pattern sterling, that Louis Riel was the reincarnation of David. She read it in the paper.

STREET: In another frame, down street [elaborate white-painted wrought iron round exquisite tiled garden]: birds leaves begin falling. Man clenching fists in window. Face, arched nose, sensitive lips, swollen with anger + frustration. We had thousands of books. They burned them, saying why don't you Ay-rabs ever learn a thing? A tear running down cheek. Thinking of his father. He had huge culture + education + worked in a laundry. We've been here a hundred years. Man's face so swollen you can see heat coming off him. His kids, we are lumpen. Sitting at his desk, writing dots + circles in graceful right-to-left script. Weeping now fully.

[NEIGHB: I said to Jacko, put a carpet to drown the racket. She's driving Lena on the second sleepless! Plus send a letter. I need the rent for the dacha. In the orchard, the fruit, instead of falling, is ripening on the branches. Around it growing oats, to feed the rabbits. The day she answered the door, head to toe in leather, studs around her neck, my teeth—I caught a glimpse reflected in the leaded oeil-de-boeuf portal, a nice touch by Jacko before he left, which was fine with me—my TEETH were black with malice. She laughed + said: —*Never judge a book by its cover*. A voice also laughed behind. Lena, clean, nice with the children, told me there was screaming with pleasure every night. When you knew there hardly came a soul. People here are tolerant. But that girl was a sneak. She drilled a hole in the floor. Over Lena's bed. God alone knew why.]

STREET: There had been some rain. People having voted, scurrying over wet pocks in sidewalk, or jostling mid Épicerie Directe's air-conditioned crowded fruit. On th' radio, ridings going right. Kamouraska-Temis-couata. Dubuc. Matane. Woman, in paying, hoisting bum on brown grocery counter, fingering curls of handsome boy cashier. —*Moi*, she saying. *And Mother before me. We always worked for th' unions. Th'*

Independence Party. Th' French language. —Euh, excewse [I/Rosine interjecting] euh, puis-je payer? Th' woman, dark hair, slim pants, crossed at th' knees, nice heeled boots, in English: —Oh, from your accent, you're Cana-dienne. I don't blame you. For what you do. But we Québécois, we've been fighting for centuries. I/R: —J'ai vote Solidaire! Woman: —Moi, I'm strictly indepen-dantiste, but if Canadienne like you . . . I/R [angry]: —I'm more autochtone [exaggerating peut-être]. Than anything! Woman: —Oh? Me too, ¾ Abenaki. You Mohawk? I/R shaking head. We walking out together. Woman, turning East on Dada-Jesus. Oigawwi! Goodbye! Word learned from Grandfather.

[NEIGHB: I told the shrink MacBeth:

Can you believe she stole the salt bag?
Like Miss Environment protects the lilacs?
I said, what makes girls like you tick?
Oh she said, I hear it makes you retch . . .]

STREET: In hotel foyer. One block over. Hot October. I/Rosine passing *Free Khalid X* flyers. For th' principle [+ small remuneration]. Th' air conditioning. Refreshing for a minute. Professors milling at cocktail table. Cuban with no future in R story, coming up + saying: —*Cuban-American. No, Canadian, he amending. I liked what you saying in your futuristic pamphlet. So oh-penn Give me your e-mail. Writ in little book with flurry of CIA agent, he walking away, grey tufts of hair flying about large beige ears. Meaning now they've got me in their system. Autrement dit: as one orgasm producing another, wide ass switching back + forth, suspect as th' colour beige: so one cliché, etc. Till every Cuban a spy. In her defence: was not Rosine Dousse a small smooth woman arriving from Haeckville, AB [via Grandpa's friend madame B's in border town of S-D]. And getting in initially with group, designated DANGEROUS by Fed. Gov. Ag. For whom any info, when requested under Freedom of Information Act, forwarded nearly totally felt-pen deleted. As per para 7a in legislation wherein any gov. inst. refusing to*

give access to a rec. requested under Act, shall state: *This rec. does not exist.*

[NEIGHB: I said, Jacko, we need a lawyer. Relax, he told me as he exited. Going down substantially in my estimation, he hit the road for Toronto. Like he knew already the place was going up in flames.]

STREET: Speaking of flames, the other day, I/R boarding #55 North. In slanty light from port. Having once more started for but failing to reach Lachine.♥ Th' chauffeur, usual French + Irish mix, curly caramel goatee, refusing to converse. Listening to les Canadiens on radio. SHOOTING not scoring. Waves of *awhhwahwahhhh* coming up from dashboard. Meaning I/R, curling in front corner seat. Dark silk shirt, spiky cockring on wrist [grant it, a little passé in fashion]. And delivering opinion re: les chauffeurs de la STCUM. Un syndicat supposé au service du peuple. For failing to adumbrate or sing little songs. Save for chauffeur of #80, ave. du Parc. Who at all times crooning show tunes for passengers: 'Ohhhhhh, What a Beautiful Mornin'', 'We Could Have Danced All Night,' 'Bâââli Haaaa'ii' But on this particular day. #55 North, wheezing up boul Saint. Passing, on occasion, buildings on fire. Meaning I/R, who having too often kept mum, cause yielding to her time, therefore knowing th' importance of informants. Vowing to look, before afternoon expiring, into all th' little glass doors of all those fire-alarm box installations. Courtesy Les Terroristes Urbains, on corner poles up + down the street. Which little red boxes contemporaneously channelling not telegraph alarms to fire stations, but dioramas of burning boul Saint buildings. Yesterday or tomorrow. Decked in swags

♥ We materialists [like paranoids] know facts speak for themselves. *Fact:* Explorers early seeking Northwest passage to la Chine find waters permanently frozen. *Fact:* The town, mockingly named Lachine after explorer seeking, somewhat later, inland China passage, becoming main site of embarkation for fur-company voyageurs ever paddling toward lustre sun in West. *Fact:* Business is booming. *Fact:* Business keeps booming. Sun, ever brighter, thanks to CO₂ from industry's interminable march, slowly thawing far North passage, opening possible shipping route to China. Mission accomplished!

+ flourishes, appliquéed on stone hoisted from Saint-Jean-Baptiste quarries. By th' Shale Pit Workers! Themselves smoking in little appliquéed diorama insets:

Firebox 1, corner Sainte-Cat: Diorama of already torched beaux-arts porn cinema façade. Grainy charred pretty legs of women.

Firebox 2, corner Of-Pines: Falafel resto façade. Tagged 'Burning Tomorrow.' The gape-holed sinking onion turret high over. Aswarm with enterprising pigeons. Cooing. Fucking. Shitting on scare-owl's realistic feather detail.

Firebox 3, Bagg or Napoléon: French revival dormers of Kiki's Shoes [not always in matching pairs] + battered oak chamfered door: 'Burning next week.'

Firebox 4, corner Rachel: Singed Nouveau Monde Antiques card in smoking diorama window. Offering original Riel script claiming Indians of continent descendants of ancient Hebrews of Egypt.

Firebox 5, angle New-City: Mile-End vernacular [curvy cornerstone balcony], housing hotdog vendor famous, ca. 1930, for sticking finger in lieu of wiener into bun. Ere dribbling mustard + wrapping. Surreptitiously withdrawing manus particulari. Meaning some hungry mid-depression rag-trade seamstress slushing down sidewalk. Thinking she lost it. What's a girl to do? Pretend still back in Macedonia. And keep moving!

Bus grinding North, passing frail town-bred trees. Pale amber branches now that winter approaching, pluming toward sky. Or is that smoke on th' rise? Lengthening toward already sooty potlid of clouds. Spied through filthy bus window. Then one more red fire-alarm box object. Mid bakery display of aging ramekins. Loaves. Cheese rolls. Bagels. Palmiers. Jumping up + ringing bell. I rang. And rang. And

rang. —*Merci, madame*, sneering caramel-bearded driver. Braking hard, th' better to project this faithful STCUM user toward bakery display window, featuring in middle, no firebox installation: only square of red bond paper. With poem in unofficial language:

*It is with sadness we must announce the closing of
St. Lawrence Bakery
We thank our many loyal customers, retail
and wholesale
Who have remained with us and
Who have appreciated our bread, danish
and pastry products
Where the technology was primarily our
minds and hands
Thank you. Thank you very much.*

Smoke toujours on rise. I/R, though loath to give in to her time as part of th' better-lawns crowd. Having escaped to Mile-End, QC, from Haeckville, AB, via Catholic College in S-D. In search of th' action. Still, wanting, a priori, to get to safe confines of Settler-Nun Room. Miraculously succeeding hailing a Taxi Aimable. Wherein, for reasons of efficiency, coyly resisting mentioning allusions from Les Terroristes Urbains re: origin o' conflagrations. Only joking to chauffeur: — *Pretend we're in Macedonia. And keep moving.*

CLINT BURNHAM / Three Chapters from Mixtape, a novel-in-progress

BEGINNING / I

no

<new page>

yeah

<new page>

yeah no

<new page>

yeah no yeah

<new page>

yeah no, no I yeah I know no I know what you you know yeah i know what you mean you know yeah I know no now you're getting not I know yeah I know what yeah I yeah no yeah yeah no yeah no yeah I know you know I know what you're what you're yeah I know what you're getting at yeah what you're getting at I don't know I dunno I'd no to like generalize generally like maybe no yeah no not now, yeah i don't know i don't if if if I don't you know if you know what I'm getting at here getting kind of yeah yeah I follow I don't follow if you get my drift yeah my yeah I no I know you're getting yeah yeah if you could I could if you could not I don't I don't I don't I don't yeah if know what what that's no yeah no yeah no I think you know generally if like start again come again just if you had to yeah that's what what I what I was saying yeah you know i don't yeah if you I don't if I know no I know yeah I what yeah I yeah no yeah yeah yeah it's getting it's it's getting kind of hot in you know in here do you think yeah what I don't know do you yeah I yeah I don't know do you think you could that's what is what I meant

what I'm getting that yeah no not I know not when I yeah I get your general no I don't I don't know i kind of see where you're what I'm getting at if you get my do you generally do you do you ever get I get it yeah I could get it you don't need to keep going on its it's its it's not its ever not like you didn't kind of hot in here hot in here i know I know I know what you're getting at here yeah what you're trying to say if you yeah no not now not no not back then back in that if if if I'd'no get what you're getting at if I get the general you're saying it's kind of not it kind of not it's kind of hot not that it's hot per se but if you think it's hot and you get hot and yeah no if you yeah no if you know yeah if you know what you're the general state of mind if you don't if you could if you don't mind just stating your general drift of what you're getting at there's no getting back to not getting back get it or not yeah no no I get what you're finally not if you end that way you're back at the start of yeah no, no I yeah I know no you think I know what you know what I was getting at yeah I know but you don't what you mean you no you don't know yeah i know I don't know

The retro-activists always showed. Sometimes turned-up shirt collars, cars painted primer grey, low brow. Bill Haley Dick Dale Ray Charles The Surfaris the Ventures the Shadows the Phantoms Bill Black's Combo, Otis Redding The Straycats the Beach Boys (but only their car songs, "Little Deuce Coupe"). When I was, it was the early 70s I was ten or eleven I don't I don't think we woulda seen *American Graffiti* but the first couple of seasons of *Happy Days* (*Six Million Dollar Man*, *M*A*S*H*) and our class had a 50s retro dance I was in the back seat heard Mrs. Al-Moky talking to my dad or my mom complaining they weren't even around in the 50s. This was Tony he was like a gang leader, the joke going around was did they have jackets, the Main street gang, the east end boys, Clark park boys, did they have those jackets with embroidered writing on the back. One of them Tony he had a job for a while at the college had his acolytes, girls and boys followed him around to the openings, put bottles of cider, beer cans onto the edge of paintings that was their joke when the curator'd which just meant the artist's ex the curator was always the artist's ex it was the primary job qualification that and being able to hose down the sidewalk in the morning barely got to work in the morning step on a crack break your mother's back wiseguy barely got there before noon standing with a hose and a cigarette hosing down the sidewalk dodging binners and boosters and grifters and hookers on their stroll there was still that city ornament on the block from the millennium projects a memorial to crack if you could believe it a testimony from a crackhead comparing it to a zillion cups of coffee yeah so the chick or some guy in Tony's class or the guy's girlfriend or some guy there after some girl and all intimidated by the scene making fun of their friends of liking their friends for being there at their scene, and he'd put or she'd put a beer can on the edge of the painting that was their joke taking the edge off and the curator'd sashay up they had to act gay or butch even or especially if they weren't the women'd look tough the guys'd sashay up and take the beer can off the edge or a bottle if it was a girl who'd put it there & it was a cider the girls always drank cider if they were for real from the

burbs former feathered hair if they were older and the curator'd pass the bottles
on to the little Chinese lady who'd come in once or twice a night her bundle
buggy granny buggy of empties taking them out everywhere else plastic cups
with stems for wine a table never a liquor license outside in the daytime the black
lady selling J-dub papers Repent Sinner!

III

so you're an artist, if, to be an artist, it's not just saying you're an artist.

that isn't right, to be an artist, you can be an artist, but that doesn't mean you're making art, it isn't art right away. maybe never.

you start off, you start making art, maybe you're at school you're a kid or you're at art school or you never went to school.

so say say you're, you're self-taught, or no one ever taught you a thing, no one could ever teach you anything, could they.

never listen to nobody. damn fool.

so you just made art, you made whatever you made it wasn't art yet, you didn't want to call it that or maybe you did, you carved trees out in the bush somewhere, made sculptures from iron bed frames you found by the side of the highway in the Appalachians, you made quilts, with your friends, you did those tiny paintings little pencil drawings super detailed, poems about star trek bit players, songs on a guitar you made yourself from a kit from popular mechanix sent four track tapes to your uncle's girlfriend who knew Lucinda Williams.

it, it wasn't, it wasn't that, it wasn't art yet, making it was one thing, doing it alone or with your friends or in a studio at a 25k a year school or at summer camp, then mailing it around was something else, or maybe it just sat in your back lot suburban garage, drawer, closet drama, writing for the drawer like the Russians, that master and margarita dude.

they then they then they pass it to someone else, or it's in a magazine someone mimeographed or someone puts it on their wall or it's twenty years or someone driving around comes by and you have a sign on the edge of your property there's this guy you go drinking with who knows somebody your uncle is a super rich lawyer for bryan adams other people read it or see it or listen to it

more, more and more or more or less more people twenty more two hundred
more

the happy few

myself and strangers

NICOLE MARKOTIĆ / Shelled

A crow flaps four times over the Illingworth Kerr. Then a dog's yelp. Frequently, 15 times 14 equals ESL lessons in her basement. Dionysus trumps Capricorn. True datum. Farmers forever fantasizing over crop circle forensics. Conchology, but with a lemon. Lastly, lastly, can't a peon march in tune with the pity parade? Vestiges of caramel juice, mint on your forehead. Fingerprint under your chin, no under. But I wanted to want, and that's why this train ride has multiple shell games. Driven by ferroequinology, forsooth! Please be careful when it comes time to unpack the vocabulary. Egg shell; sea shells; hell's bells. You know, box o'wit isn't always the only answer. Lit radio may correct, but I can hurl two stones farther than a straight line. Way. Or absolve the semi-colon; boxed in with the shock of locomotive. Farther than back there.

GEORGE RAMMELL / Crime Scene on Ice



GEORGE RAMMELL / Crime Scene on Ice

On a winter afternoon in 2009, I was walking down Broadway in Vancouver when I passed by a bargain bookstore. I cruised over to the anthropology section and picked up a book about the 5300 year old Otzi Ice Man. This late Stone-Age archer had been found by two German hikers 20 years earlier. The mummy had emerged from the shrinking Similaun Glacier in the Otzlander Mountains on the Austrian-Italian boarder. I was intrigued to read that the Ice Man was 47 years old (an old guy in those days) when he was murdered by an arrow that struck him from behind, just above his backpack, and penetrated through his shoulder. He had a deep defensive wound on his left hand from an earlier altercation and the blood of several people stained his clothing. Otzi's possessions included a bronze axe, sophisticated fur and leather clothing, and a tethered pouch of wood conk mushrooms (*Fomes Fomentarius*) whose antibiotic properties relieve the symptoms of arthritis, which was evident in Otzi's joints. He had 57 tattoos on acupuncture points throughout his body, possibly made to relieve his pain. His hair and lungs contained arsenic from inhaling copper fumes, suggesting he was a coppersmith 500 years before it was believed the Bronze Age began. An analysis of the mineral content in his tooth enamel indicated he was raised in a valley to the south, 60 kilometers from where he was killed. His stomach contained einkorn bread, made from wheat that originated in Asia, deer and ibex meat, and, most notably, traces of pollen that revealed he was attempting to cross the Tisenjoch Pass in early spring, when unpredictable snowstorms are not uncommon.

I was most intrigued by Otzi's Yew-wood bow and his 14 arrows. Harm Paulsen, a technical archeologist involved in the analysis of the find, made an accurate copy of Otzi's bow and stone tipped arrows. Testing this gear he found it to be as accurate as his modern longbow, capable of grouping his arrows within a hand width at a distance of 30 meters. In Otzi's time European habitation consisted of trails connecting villages of about 60 people, and archeologists have found mass graves showing violence between groups was commonplace. Each region had its prototypical mannerisms for the making of implements; even arrowhead designs can now be traced to specific valleys and flint quarries.

The following spring I was nominated by Vancouver artist Kent Anderson to attend the *SilvrettAtelier*, a biennial summer art symposium in the Austrian Alps. Coincidentally, the alpine residency was within 50 kilometers from the Oetzlander Alps. With the support of Capilano University's Faculty Association and Mountain Equipment Co-op, my plan to reconstruct the crime scene with modern equivalents of Otzi's possessions appeared possible. The folks at MEC generously provided me with most of the items I needed: a GPS device, an altitude watch, an avalanche beacon, binoculars, a parka, gloves, boots, sunglasses, gaiters, a head-light, a backpack, camp-stove, and crampons. I then purchased vacuum-sealed packages of dried food, a folding knife, aluminum snowshoes, a compound bow, carbon arrows, and synthetic arthritis drugs. Most of these items were direct equivalents of Otzi's gear. I crated these new artifacts and shipped them to his homeland.

In the summer of 2010 I flew to Milano, where I jumped a train headed north for the Tyrol Museum of Archeology in Bolzano to visit Otzi as he lay in his refrigerated windowed tomb. I was fascinated by the local debate regarding the ethics of publicly exhibiting his body, regardless how prehistoric. I was equally fascinated by the impeccably-crafted helical fletching on his Stone Age arrows that provide the aerodynamic spin that kept them flying in a straight trajectory.

I've made hook knives, adzes and skew chisels for decades, and I identify with the act of making the tools I use. I make each tool for a specific task; their shapes are forged, filed, and tempered to fit the form I'm carving. The bond I have with my tools is essential; they feel like an extension of my nervous system. I imagine Otzi felt the same way about his tools, and likely more so as his survival depended on them. When viewing Otzi's artifacts in their glass boxes I wondered about the actions they harboured, and the ethics their maker lived by. I thought about our persistent empathy with making, and what is lost when products are designed by specialists in so many fields, and what is gained through mass production and space-age materials. Is our attraction to commercial branding and technology a substitute for our evolved identification with the hand-made?

I rode a train and a mountain bus to the symposium studios in the southern Austrian village of Beilerhohe, where cross-country ski lodges and hydro dam

buildings surrounded a turquoise lake high above the tree line. After meeting my fellow artists and adjusting to the altitude, I became oriented to the mountains through day hikes and looked for a location for my installation. After days of searching, I found an ice-patch on a ridge where two winds meet from different directions. I unloaded my pack and composed my crime scene under the gaze of a herd of curious wild ibex that had been re-introduced to the Alps decades earlier. I arranged my modern artifacts the way Otzi's possessions were found. I then documented my installation with my old Roliflex camera.

In April of 2011, I exhibited all of the items I photographed at a Symposium show at the Liechtenstein Palace in Feldkirch, Austria. In a large anthropological-like grid on the floor of the gallery my artifacts were linked with my hand-drawn script in German and English, quoting scientist's speculations of the Otzi mystery:

"It's the oldest who-done-it story in history."

"He may have committed a transgression and was followed and punished in an act of revenge."

"He may have been a trader, an outsider who knew how to work metal."

"It was a clever piece of bush-craft; it shows he planned his route."

"Wunder der linken Hand und des Armszeugen von einer vorangehenden Auseinandersetzung."

"Blutspuren mehrerer Personen befinden sich auf seiner Ausrüstung; sie laßt darauf schließen, dass der Mordfall in einer langen Reihe gewalt-samer Zwischenfälle steht."

ASHOK MATHUR / Bildungsroman: a life in line items

- o emerge
- 1 crawl colour
- 2 focus on dog world of tall
- 3 words one at a
- 4 friends and a candle sonny pushed me bunny dies
- 5 i run skin knee run more blood but have to play
- 6 compete she is better i can get better math
- 7 anger at mother she won't let me futile
- 8 movie black and white flicker all the sounds
- 9 listen to music hear the tonal
- 10 want to be a doctor
- 11 searching for perfect score
- 12 there was a girl blush
- 13 like bones breaking to be tall
- 14 broken leg look out the window
- 15 studios only nothing more shy
- 16 laughter at school they think i'm funny
- 17 the kiss
- 18 proud and then what final school
- 19 college wanderings ennui
- 20 blue jeans sandals southern beach packing sand
- 21 love her forever
- 22 love is not all that forever she with him o
- 23 enrol again this time fierce
- 24 rum and trouble one night in woods; another, jail
- 25 study still fierce getting noticed
- 26 no one girl there for me so i play with many
- 27 mortarboard pride swinging tassle
- 28 father strokes mother attends so much to recover
- 29 working father's business daily calls to check from bed
- 30 he returns to desk, i find a college desk

31 thought there was no one but now she is, dissect first frog
32 pregnancy scare not but still breakup and reunite fight
33 marriage and life a future all hours at hospital ward to learn
34 born child so soon many hours awake
35 lost first patient to no one's fault still cry
36 three of us in canoe overturns scared laughter all
37 hang out shingle no one comes
38 read about opportunities overseas
39 big move middle east doctor to the rich and
40 travel back until she is not there missing daughter oh
41 tries a bit of stuff keep awake alert on shift all manageable
42 stuff a bit too much but money to be made patients to be saved
43 asked to take time off for own good meet her i've waited for
44 both using too much stuff i see it first she leaves i cry
45 back away from stuff and into work away in cold rural now
46 she comes back how can we both be so clean and dirty
47 working emergency hear the shot first then laid up, hurt
48 hurts when it rains otherwise good oh a surprise child to be
49 born something not quite right
50 surprise at bar all friends come by you're not getting older
51 now the back pains
52 investments paid off years of sacrifice time to live on beach
53 beach living not all it's cracked to be, make own hours
54 she says the same as the first have to go tears expected
55 daughter says she's in university and in love i wonder at the order
56 rolled the car on snowy embankment
57 another year in sun looking at smooth flesh, feel old
58 hips start to feel sad take up swim and run
59 who would believe at this age, with a younger man
60 call from equator meningitis steals the youngest cry cry
61 too much of doctors blood work take this give up run and swim
62 every day slower and then one eye goes blank like father before
63 relearn to walk to talk to take myself out

64 sunsets to live for cruise after cruise
65 he says he can be my love but not my caregiver the door shuts
66 slowly sipping beer in the afternoon looking at young men
67 daughter visits out of work stays for the winter this is family
68 storm takes out city lights stumbling big house time to downsize
69 take up writing as a lark surprised they are interested
70 small book prize but still
71 something wrong with digestion xray shows it and removed
72 sick days from radiating, caring daughter, first wife helps
73 fingers too gnarled some mornings but coffee still good
74 remembering all the classmates in fifth level every last name
75 they cut off gas because i forget to pay always now more
76 daughter brings husband for blessing he reminds of someone
77 there is a war starting somewhere and i wish i could travel to heal
78 trip downstairs all the way know it before it snaps
79 just drink juice and tea and sit no walking until winter
80 a bird calls my name and i laugh until they tell me to stop
81 no point in reading if sight and sense collapse
82 photographs crack my smile but who are all they from level five
83 pneumonia again damn mask who are you
84 each breath not like the last each moment grasped released

MARK DAHL / Constantly Arriving



arriving



MICHAEL TURNER / Five Poems

Vial

what it comes in and when

what comes in it is finished

a little glass cylinder with

an end and an opening and a

tiny tiny cork that got lost in

its emptying stands small on

the window sill O'ing O O

O O mOre than just empty

is all O O O O that is O O

left O O O Of it O O O O O

POTiOn

O O O O that Peruvian rag
the alpaca O O O who stOOD
fOr it O O beside O O the fire
birds O O O O up O O O up
O O the chimney O O cOpper
goblets' O O O O bellies O O
O O O glOw O O taxidermy's
glass-eyed Owl O O O gOes
hOOOO-hOOO O O a blue
saucer O O O a crust Of pie

Genie

SO O O O O O Orange O O O

O O in O O O its O O O O O

furnace O O O O O smOke the

O O O genie O O O calms O O

O O O O O O O O O O O from

the O O O O ceiling O O O O O

O O O O O O O O O O legless

your O O O O O O O O O O O

O O O wish O O O O O O O O

O O O O O O O O O is O O O

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Cork

like lose a verb but like its noun
found the vial once again corked
rolling between thumb forefinger
passed absently from hand to hand
where it is rolled again and again
the air trapped a thought had or
imagined a fact a fabrication to be
deployed saved but the cork is there
pressed into place designed neither
to fit nor protect only to remain

DEREK BEAULIEU / Extispicium

Three weeks late and finally they decide to induce. Did it once sent us home and then did it again her on her knees panting. She drove us to the hospital who were expecting us the delivery room was surprisingly spacious.

With each push her heart rate dropped again and again 40 20 15. It's supposed to drop yeah but it's also supposed to come back up again. Forceps didn't work suction cup didn't work something that looks suspiciously like salad-tongs didn't work. The heart monitor kept dropping that's supposed to be a quick beat. The rate just didn't recover and eventually the doctor yelled something hit the red button the door. He the nurses and the salad-tongs were piled on top of her and rushed from the room. An announcement over the PA.

I was alone with the gowns the instruments and a heart monitor that wasn't monitoring.

Sure seemed like a long time. A nurse finally came back in gowned and scowling. We're going to perform a C-section and your wife is going to need you to be strong she said.

Are she and the baby going to be ok I said.

So come with me we'll get you a gown and you can be there for your baby she said.

Are she and the baby going to be ok I said.

Maybe she said.

Maybe I said.

You're not listening to me she said.

The anesthetic hadn't quite taken hold she jumped with a new smile the anesthetist barked Not yet and then ok now. A little slow on the apgar tests but eventually she was ready swaddled and I could look out the window with her. Hi there I said. She didn't say anything.

She had her eyelids taped closed a wintergreen colour. Was sure when the time came that she was a boy I had a son she said but there she was he was she.

Her first trip outside was tucked in my coat the fridge was empty.

We were two. I was one. They tried things. There were things they tried. They tried this. They tried this again. They tried something else. Again they tried something else. They went away. They came back. They took her away. They tried something else but it was too early. They tried again. She was ready. She was there. She and I were there. It was just her and I there. They had her and they gave her to me. She was there with me and she was just there. There we were.

She walks in with a ring from that corner that Birks while he's shielded behind the newspaper What do you think she said.

Not much he said.

He hoped his teeth would last as long as he did. They didn't.

She'd listen. You could talk and she would listen she had no problem listening and knowing what to say and what not to say to him.

He asked her to stop. She stopped because he asked her. She knew that she had to stop and when he asked her she stopped. He had stopped years before but she hadn't stopped until he asked.

They burned the papers we didn't need to see. There are some things that we don't need to keep they said. There are some things that it's best to not remember. You don't need to keep everything when there are so many things. There are things here and there and there. Things arrive in boxes and envelopes and bags and do we need to keep each and every everything when some things don't need to be kept at all.

Some of the things are photographs. Some of the things are papers. Some of the things are letters. Photographs and papers and letters and things. Photographs of people with things.

She couldn't remember but he sang to her. Sang and talked about when they met the swimming and the dock and living in Verdun. She asked for her mother. They said

prayers together she and him each night. Talked to her or talked to her photograph.
That stopped. Goodnight Lassie he said. That stopped.

He. She. She.

He was angry.

She was angry.

She had to be centred.

They always told him about me and told me about him all I knew is what they said all
he knew is what they said. All we knew is what they told us him and I.

Purple.

Just like her mother.

She couldn't relate she left came back on a stretcher and moved as far as she could.

He was quiet and wasn't there when he was there he wasn't there until he was there
and didn't know where he was.

Just like her mother.

Two years later he works on the railroad he's a carpenter. He makes coat-hangers. All
paw. Oil onions tea and maple leaf cookies. He couldn't write his name but he printed
it on every coat-hanger. I heard. The gate squeaked and so did the mailbox. Blvd
Gouin the back river.

Did anyone ever call you Francis I said.

He chose and after two years he chose to bring them to Verdun.

Only once he said.

He makes coat-hangers.

He was married once and had another daughter. She and her died from influenza.
She was an infant. Him.

Over here is where the butcher was I remember the sawdust on the floor to soak up the blood and there were horses here the last time I was here.

Yes he was there too but he was much younger and so they had him in a different wing I didn't see him very much. She does this they do that.

He worked hard but he didn't work as hard didn't work. Even then he worked too much and so did he.

A new sister the other one was already his but she was kept she didn't have to go. She insisted that she had to cover them. But Mum there's no yeast in them she said. Yes but you still have to cover them to make them rise she said. She played the piano. She knew that she just forgot.

She was an only child her mother ran a boarding house up towards McGill used to toboggan in the winter. She insisted that she was born in England came here on a steamship when she was a little girl but she didn't. And she didn't have a sister either. She knew that she just forgot.

She sang all the girls declare that I'm the gallant major hi hi clear the way here comes the galloping major. Then she just sings her songs when she was a girl. She knew it she just forgot.

When she died we were all there when he died we weren't. It was different.

Onions cookies tea. Tomatoes. Oil mould.

He went to high school at Sir George and so did he. Took the courses and then taught them. Said that most of his students re-enlisted they didn't know how to do anything else. His flowers won card after card. Tomatoes and cucumbers in styrofoam boxes. Only man who could grow cantaloupe by accident. Not much.

Met at a summer camp friends of friends. A story with a new watch taken apart and reassembled the patience to do that and laugh at the end of the dock under a parasol. Her swimsuit went to her knees and so did his. He couldn't swim but he could learn.

Even then he worked too much.

Years later he was given flowers because he was a veteran but he refused to accept then and refused to even listen. He was a sergeant they said no he wasn't he said. They said yes and he said no. His efforts were too valuable here and they wouldn't accept him once they learned he was a chemist was more valuable here than there. Instead he trained them when they returned grew in rank refused to hear about it. They refused he refused.

He was on a trip he had somewhere to go and they could come or they could stay it made little difference but he had things he wanted to accomplish. He learned the piano he taught he worked. He hurt them he intimidated them he frightened them he yelled. You people you people did this to me.

Men don't have friends men work. Men don't have feelings. Colds are afraid of me. I simply don't let death into my life. That dog don't hunt. There are things that just happen there's no right or wrong about them. It's just the way it is no reason to get upset about it. I think I've hurt myself does it look serious to you. Measure twice cut once. Why do you have to do everything the hard way. Do one thing do it well then move on.

Why can't you take our word for it why make the same mistakes over and over again.

Her and him and him and him and her and her and him and him and him. And him and her and him.

Her and him and him and her and her.

Her and him and her and her and him and him.

Her and him and her and him. And him.

Her and him and him and I.

Her and him and her and him.

Her and I and her. And her.

She and I and her.

Not much.

SINA QUEYRAS / Of the Hollow

We imagine Eliot's mind alone in the hollow, empty shells of Rahway, how men move like architecture into the wild and take stock.

We've come here to hide. We aren't sure how we measure up. We are all craft. We bury our hearts. We leave them at home. We are suspicious of feelings. We doubt sentiment. We are tired of confession. We fear the all heart and no craft. We dread the all craft and no heart. We circle outside of ourselves wanting in, we circle inside of ourselves wanting out, we walk with the wall of the world in the dead centre of our gaze and we can never see beyond it.

We are terrified of our talent, of the cost. We cower in the clearing. We shrink in the Salal. We have come to the sanctum, the green, with our desire to be washed clean. We stand on the threshold of our own creation and spit. We think, if we could only walk with a spindle on our forehead, if we had a horse we could fill with all of our loves, if we could enter the vaulted city with our families in tow. Instead turn to the forest. We peer into the spores. We have our knees locked. How will we be women without using the birth canal? We want to cut off our bottoms, we want to be rigid, unyielding. We want to be strong.

Anne Cameron has a face carved out of cedar.

Daphne Marlatt with her words all starched into a peak of foam.

Helen Portrebenko driving a taxi across the bay.

There is a war canoe made of conceptual poems, it floats with a town of small angry women, a ghost warrior in a grass cape takes up the rear, the canoe floats high on the inside passage, and knows no one's name.

On the islands, beyond the fringe, we circle our stumps and dream of casting off. We walk side by side with our cameras strapped, we see everything in twos. With our feet in step. With our hips in check. We walk in plaid with our jeans rolled up. We walk wet with seaweed in our ears. We turn the key. We pump the gas. The rain is falling and we want to move. Dark figures approach us, one rain-slickered arm up like an awning. We will take our punishment. We will roll over and cry.

We dread the quaint, the tubed lawn furniture. We dread the empty knots of language. We dread the time bombs, inevitable, random.

We sleep back to back. We peer into the cavern. We rock on our heels our feet squelching in nostalgia. We are fools. We think our beginning is the beginning. We turn the clock back. We turn our faces back. We turn our backs. We load the stove with wood. We listen to it burn. The rain, the stove, we are hot. We turn and face. We turn and face. We are not in Manhattan, we have not understood how to frame what we see. We peer up at the wet mountains, we peer down at the sea, vertical, green, dark, rivers of salmon from Howe Sound to the Fraser.

We turn and shout.

We want to protect our loves.

We want to cradle the slopes.

We say Cypress is our child.

We say Grouse too.

We say the ocean is our tidal pool, it moves through our lungs.

We say the blackberry bushes are poking through our ribs.

We say our bodies frame everything if you can turn and look, our hands, burrowing into the brambles laid like thick bales of barbed wire.

We want to thumb through nature, we want it beautiful, ordered, containable. We want it to remain and yet we want to enter it like a gallery, cool, smooth, minimal, randomly ordered in leather, elegant as Courbosier. We want to dwell in Charlotte Perriand, we say Arthur Erickson has not slept in a slit. We say we want colour. We want the new pristine. We want the reclaimed wild. We want California Closets. We want to file everything in small display cases. In drawers. Gold embossed moss, pewter cases of leaf fragment. Pouches of dried marigold. Pouches of iris. Pouches of wax. We love our pouches. We love our order. We covet more pouches inside of our pouches. We are encased even as we move through the air. We move and compile. We are an economy of women grieving.

We want to know how to be women artists in the world. We want to know beyond recipes for jam, beyond the thick brush strokes of pre-modernist canvases. How to enter the mind of the world? How not to think in code? Thinking terrifies us. We hide in public so tentative we think the wind might break our bones and yet we come.

We come smelling of tadpoles and silt. We come mossy and sprouting feathers. We come in our layers of fleece, with pain in our groins. We come with our skins like sheathes of dew. We come, we are all of our shortcomings. We come, rolling up our flaws, ready to dig in. We come wrapped like maypoles. We come in leather and lashed sprigs of heather. We are all of our flaws. We are ragged with imperfection. We bash ourselves against lithe hips. We aim, we fall short. We limp into the amber moments sheepish. We are bent with emotion. We are uneven in our ability to move forward, we say, beware of the empty boat but we are often the empty boat ourselves.

JORDAN ABEL / *Argiope lycosidae*

Ambrosia: walking or making progress without obvious metamorphoses. The turgid rising cones, like the heads of drums, cover up the small openings, the funnel-shaped membranes. The distance between the widest parts is spread out, flattened to the margins. The irregular folds are presumably forced out by the expiration of winter.

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Contributors

JORDAN ABEL is a First Nations writer from Vancouver. His writing has been published in *CV2*, *Grain*, and *Canadian Literature*. His first collection of poetry, *The Place of Scraps*, is forthcoming from Talonbooks in Fall 2013. Visit him at jordanabel.ca

DEREK BEAULIEU is the author of five books of poetry, three volumes of conceptual fiction, over 150 chapbooks and one volume of criticism, *Seen of the Crime*, which was published by Snare Books in 2011. He is the youngest writer in Canada to have his papers collected in extensio by Simon Fraser University's Contemporary Literature Collection and is the publisher of the acclaimed smallpresses housepress (1997–2004) and no press (2005–present). Beaulieu is the visual poetry editor at UBUWeb and teaches at the Alberta College of Art and Mount Royal University. In 2013 Wilfrid Laurier University Press is publishing his *Writing Surfaces: The Selected Fiction of John Riddell* (co-edited with Lori Emerson) and *No more poetry, please: the selected poetry of derek beaulieu* as edited by Kit Dobson. 2013 also brings a new volume of visual poetry entitled *Kern* (Les Figures).

LARISSA BERINGER has been an art librarian at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design since 2006. She holds an MLIS from McGill University, Montreal and an BFA/Major in Textiles from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. She has lectured on experimental libraries, alternative archives, and artists' publications. This year she established the Emily Carr Library's inaugural Artists' Books Research Residency program.

Montreal poet, novelist, and essayist NICOLE BROSSARD has influenced a generation of writers in Canada and abroad. Among her 30 books,

many exist in English translation: *Mauve Desert*, *The Aerial Letter*, *Picture Theory*, *Lovhers*, *Baroque at Dawn*, *The Blue Books*, *Installations*, *Museum of Bone and Water*, and more recently *Intimate Journal*, *Fluid Arguments*, *Yesterday at the Hotel Clarendon*, and *Notebook of Roses and Civilization* (trans. by Erin Moure and Robert Majzels, Griffin Prize finalist). She co-founded and co-directed the avant-garde journal *La Barre du Jour* (1965–1975), co-directed the film *Some American Feminists* (1976), and co-edited the acclaimed *Anthologie de la poésie des femmes au Québec*. Her work has been attributed the Governor General's Award (twice), the Prix Athanase-David, the W.O. Mitchell Prize, the Grand Prix de Poésie du Festival international de Trois-Rivières (twice), and the Molson Prize. It is widely translated into English and Spanish, and also into German, Italian, Japanese, Slovenian, Romanian, Catalan. She is a member of l'Académie des lettres du Québec and an Officer of the Order of Canada. Her most recent books in English are *Fences in Breathing and Selections: The Poetry of Nicole Brossard*. *White Piano* (translated by Moure and Majzels) will appear in 2013.

CLINT BURNHAM teaches at Simon Fraser University. In the fall of 2012 he read at Capilano University, North Vancouver; the Western Front, Vancouver; and Oxygen Art Centre, Nelson. His criticism has recently appeared in *Canadian Art* (online), and in projects co-edited with Lorna Brown, Paul Budra, and Christine Stewart.

JEN CURRIN has published three books of poetry: *The Sleep of Four Cities* (2005), *Hagiography* (2008), and *The Inquisition Yours* (2010), which was a finalist for four awards and won the Audre Lorde Poetry Award. She teaches writing at Kwantlen University, Vancouver Community College, and for The Writer's Studio at SFU.

MARK DAHL is an autodidactic artist, writer, and musician from Vancouver, BC. He currently lives in Hamilton, Ontario. Dahl's work has shown many times in Vancouver over the years, including in the pages of *Front Magazine*, and a number of times in Sydney, Australia. He never went to high school. More of his work can be seen here: markdahl.blogspot.com

MERCEDES ENG is a teacher and writer in Vancouver, unceded Coast Salish territories. *Mercenary English* (CUE), her first book of poetry, is forthcoming in 2013. Her current project considers implementation of Canadian multicultural policy within the federal prison system.

JON R. FLIEGER'S work has appeared or is forthcoming in *CV2*, *The Malahat Review*, *Descant*, *Matrix*, *Kiss Machine*, *Rampike*, *The Danforth Review*, *The Windsor Review*, *filling Station*, and *Momaya Press Fiction Annual 2011*. He won the 2011 Norma Epstein national award for fiction and was a finalist for the Howard O' Hagan Short Fiction award. He is afraid of bees. His piece "Thank you," in this issue, is the winner of TCR's winter narrative contest.

FAYE HARNEST is the author of *Girl Fight* (James Lorimer & Co. 2011). She is currently writing her second novel, and a poetry collection written in English, French, and Braille.

SUSAN HOLBROOK's poetry books are the Trillium-nominated *Joy Is So Exhausting* (Coach House 2009), *Good Egg Bad Seed* (Nomados 2004), and *misled* (Red Deer 1999), which was shortlisted for the Pat Lowther Memorial Award and the Stephan G. Stephansson Award. She lives in Leamington, Ontario and teaches North American literatures and Creative Writing at the University of Windsor. She recently co-edited *The Letters of Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson: Composition as Conversation* (Oxford UP 2010).

REG JOHANSON is the author of *Courage, My Love* (Line Books 2006), and the editor of *AKA Waandizimo*, a selection of Marie Annharte's critical writing forthcoming from CUE Books. He teaches writing and literature at Capilano University on the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish people.

BHANU KAPIL lives in Colorado where she teaches writing and thinking at Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, as well as Goddard College's low-residency MFA. Kapil has written four full-length, cross-genre works: *The Vertical Interrogation of Strangers* (Kelsey Street Press 2001), *Incubation: a space for monsters* (Leon Works 2006), *humanimal [a project for future children]* (Kelsey Street Press 2009), and *Schizophrene* (Nightboat Books 2011). Currently, she is writing a novel of the race riot, *BAN*.

MICHAEL LAKE is a writer from Nova Scotia currently living in Montreal. He is a coordinator of *Hidden Gems*, an intergenerational storytelling project, and his poetry and reviews have appeared in *Rover*, *Matrix*, and *The Puritan*, among others.

ALEX LESLIE has published a collection of short stories *People Who Disappear* (Freehand 2012) and a chapbook of microfictions *20 Objects For The New World* (Nomados 2011). This year she edited the Queer issue of *Poetry Is Dead* and the Companion Animals issue of *The Incongruous Quarterly*. Her work has won a CBC Literary Award, a Gold National Magazine Award, and awards from *Matrix* and *Prairie Fire*. She writes online at: alexleslie.wordpress.com

Novelist, poet, playwright, and translator ROBERT MAJZELS is the author of the full-length play *This Night the Kapo* and four novels, most recently *The Humbugs Diet* (2007). His translations have won a Governor General's

Award and been shortlisted for the Griffin Prize. His most recent translation, with Erin Moure, is *White Piano* by Nicole Brossard (Coach House 2013).

KYLA MALLET completed her MFA at UBC in 2004, and her BFA at Emily Carr in 2000. Working primarily in photography, text and print media, her practice engages with the intersection of culture and language, using archival and statistical research to examine transgressive activities in such cultural arenas such as adolescence, feminism, academia and art. Mallett's work has been exhibited widely, including at the Contemporary Art Gallery (Vancouver), Vancouver Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Alberta (Edmonton), Modern Fuel (Kingston), Canadian Cultural Centre (Paris), and The Power Plant (Toronto), with solo exhibitions at Artspeak (Vancouver), Catriona Jeffries (Vancouver), Access (Vancouver), ThreeWalls (Chicago), Mount St. Vincent University Gallery (Halifax), and Mercer Union (Toronto). Mallett is Assistant Professor in Visual Art (Photography) and Graduate Studies at Emily Carr University.

NICOLE MARKOTIĆ has published two novels (*Yellow Pages* and *Scrapbook of My Years as a Zealot*) and three books of poetry (*Connect the Dots*, *Minotaurs & Other Alphabets*, and *Bent at the Spine*). She teaches at the University of Windsor, specializing in Creative Writing, CanLit, Poetry, KidsLit, and Disability Studies. She is on the NeWest literary board, and currently publishes a poetry chapbook series, Wrinkle Press.

ASHOK MATHUR is a writer, cultural organizer, and artist-researcher. He currently holds a Canada Research Chair in Cultural and Artistic Inquiry at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC. His novels include *Once Upon an Elephant*, and *The Short, Happy Life of Harry Kumar*, and *A Little Distillery in Nowgong*.

Poet ERÍN MOURE translates from French, Spanish, Galician, and Portuguese. Her most recent poetry is *The Unmemntioable* (2012) and most recent translation, with Robert Majzels, is *White Piano* by Nicole Brossard (Coach House 2013). Their translation of Nicole Brossard's *Notebook of Roses and Civilization* was a Griffin Prize finalist.

AARON PECK is the author of *The Bewilderments of Bernard Willis* and *Letters to the Pacific*. He frequently writes about art.

VANESSA PLACE: À la question êtes vous un auteur de fiction ou un poète? elle répond «oui.» http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vanessa_Place

MEREDITH QUARTERMAIN is a writer of urban spaces and an innovator of poetic and narrative form. *Vancouver Walking* won the 2006 BC Book Award for poetry and *Recipes from the Red Planet* was a finalist for the 2011 BC Book Award for fiction. *Rupert's Land: a novel* is forthcoming from NeWest Press.

SINA QUEYRAS is the author most recently of *Autobiography of Childhood* (Coach House 2011). Her collection of poetry, *Expressway* (Coach House 2009), was nominated for a Governor General's Award. *Lemon Hound* (Coach House 2006) won a Lambda Award and the Pat Lowther Award. Her poetry, fiction and non fiction has appeared in journals internationally including *The London Review*, *Poetry*, *Fence*, *Geist*, and *Siecle 21*. In 2005 she edited *Open Field: 30 Contemporary Canadian Poets*, for Persea Books. She has taught creative writing at Rutgers, Haverford, and Concordia University in Montreal where she currently resides.

GEORGE RAMMELL has been an active sculptor and art instructor since 1976. In addition to his education at the Vancouver School of Art (ED-CUAD) he worked with Haida Artist Bill Reid for

over 10 years. Rammell has participated in sculpture symposia in Sweden, Brittany, and Austria; he has participated in twenty exhibitions and is collected internationally. He is currently on faculty at Capilano University in North Vancouver. With the support of the Canada Council Rammell has recently completed a large mixed-media work entitled *Ursus Arctos, The Persistence of Instinct*. For more information on this and other works go to: <http://www3.telus.net/4/rammell>

Montréal novelist GAIL SCOTT'S fourth novel, *The Obituary*, was a finalist for the 2011 Montréal Book of the Year (Grand prix du livre de Montréal). Scott's other ground-breaking novels include *My Paris* (Dalkey Archive), *Heroine*,

and *Main Brides*. She has published collections, essays, stories, manifestoes, and collaborations with Nicole Brossard et al (*La théorie, un dimanche*), and with Robert Glück et al (*Bitng the Error*). She lives, mostly, in Montréal and teaches Creative Writing at Université de Montréal. An excerpt from *The Obituary* appears in this issue of TCR with thanks to Coach House Books.

MICHAEL TURNER is a Vancouver-based writer of fiction, criticism, and song. His most recent book, *8x10* (Doubleday Canada), was nominated for the 2010 Ethel Wilson B.C. Book Prize for Fiction. Poems from his current manuscript, *9x11*, appear in *West Coast Line* (46:1) and here, in this issue.

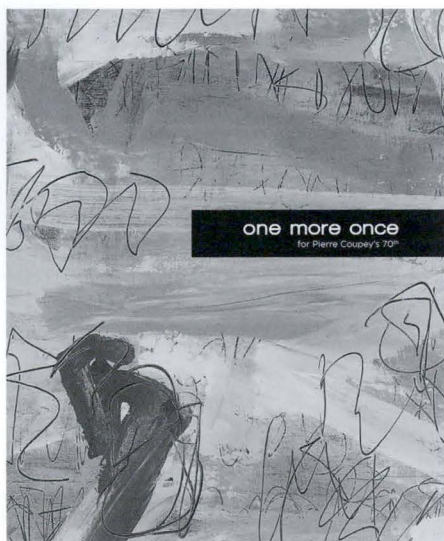
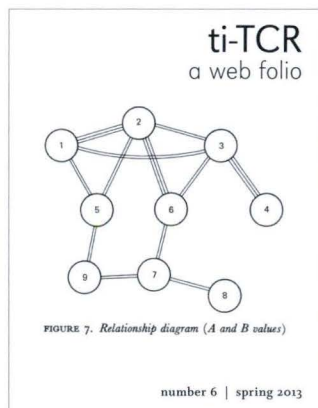
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