

A festschrift

THE
CAPILANO
REVIEW

for Robin



A celebration of the life and work of Robin Blaser

... looking now down the field to the sun coming up behind the
woods, I listen for a sound beyond my mind, for what calls me still.

— Robert Creeley

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Robin and angel	Robert Berg
Robin gazing out	David Farwell

Introduction

Any celebration is a gathering of thanks. This issue of *The Capilano Review* celebrates the life and work of Robin Blaser, and thus, to him go our thanks for his long cultivation of a poetry which clarifies and rejuvenates our language, our inheritance. Our thanks go also to the many other poets whose echoes, hybrids, and new varieties animate these pages. Particular gratitude goes to the organisers of *The Recovery of the Public World*—the Festival and Conference dedicated to Robin's poetics, held in Vancouver in June 1995, at which many of the poets represented here read their work. Their reappearance in this *festschrift* issue of *The Capilano Review* is thus a print echo of that other celebration.

This *festschrift* was the inspiration of Dorothy Jantzen, and I thank her and Jenny Penberthy for selecting the material for the issue, a challenge balanced on the one hand by the joy of reading such a wide variety of excellent poetry and on the other by the need to choose or exclude. My thanks also go to Jane Hamilton and Elizabeth Rains, Managing Editors, who piloted this project from inception to completion.

The readers who find this *festschrift* invigorating should also seek out the recent issue of *Sulfur* and the forthcoming issue of *West Coast Line*, both of which contain material from *The Recovery of the Public World*. A book of the Conference papers is also underway. In tandem with the present issue of *The Capilano Review*, these publications will form a fuller impression of the importance of Robin's work and his ongoing influence. For that also, our thanks.

Bob Sherrin

Dodie Bellamy / from THE LETTERS OF MINA HARKER

So here I am, working on my ending, going crazy with endings *bye-bye book, so-long lover* Dodie's handing me one eviction notice after another, my lease on her body she says is OVER *this letter is "the land's end: the last fingers, knuckled and rheumatic, / Cramped on nothing."* I try not to be pessimistic as Plath but, Sing ... we were at my kitchen table eating ratatouille when suddenly I was on my knees, tugging down his pants licking the crack of his ass—at The End of that crack is a dank smelly hole, that's where Dodie plans to stick me—can you see why this letter's taken months to wrestle to a finish, I'm like the anarchist in *Five Came Back*, being flown home at gunpoint to my execution—when the plane crashes in the rain forest near a tribe of natives who decapitate their victims, fill the heads with hot sand and shrink them, I'm happy. *A few of his cells stick to my tongue like specimens, instead of sending them to a pathologist, I swallow.* I've been fucking my brains out *my brains are all fucked out* you know how it goes, Sing, your writing goes down the tubes like an unfertilized ovum *blood on his cock blood on my thighs blood on the towel beneath my bun* I am a feminist artist I buy lipstick wholesale in five-gallon buckets and cast it into urinals the color of menses, urinals that glisten and gape. You are my opposite number—wired on espresso vibrating in a chair *an artist and a feminist* sticking close to those cigarettes *living alone is scarier than a movie*—the last time I lived by myself was in 1977—the street hustlers next door boomed the lightwell with Donna Summer, they never seemed to sleep these gaunt boys hanging out the front windows luscious as orchids, "Hi, hon, wanna party?" Whenever I switched off the kitchen light cockroaches rustled the garbage, trapped, frantic, huge, like the anxiety attack clawing my chest *Love to Love You Baby* I'd come home feed the cat and dart out the door. The rare times I did sleep there, or sit down, the cat glued herself to my lap and wailed—so I flew her to Nebraska for a couple of months to cool out with Nature. Her name was Molly, a beautiful calico. The night of my wedding she wouldn't eat, then after fifteen years died of kidney failure *nice timing, Molly*

unmoving in her tiny cage she felt hollow against my palm, not a purr, a plastic tube sticking out of a shaved spot on her front paw, fluid dripped through it chlorophyll-green as if the vet were transfusing her backwards from animal to plant *then the tube turns umber mineral then empty air.*

The coast so grainy, fog washing out hills, highway, ocean to a nearly monochromatic gray—at Pigeon Point a glowing yellow-white cone bursts from the sky and streams into the gray water. Quel sunset! Rendezvous pulls off the highway along a gravel road. Approaching a lighthouse I say, “His cock was a lighthouse and my cunt was a circle of farmhouses around its mighty base.” Succulents cover the ground, their sappy leaves dense spikes of green cheese. We park the VW and walk along a dirt path, the lighthouse like all lighthouses is grand and ancient, white paint cracking and peeling off in large dull flakes. The buildings turn out to be a youth hostel—arms wrapped around each others’ waists we continue past a half dozen identical square huts, more like barracks than cottages, with a motley collection of drapes hanging in square metal-framed windows, bunk beds behind them. A couple of young Germans enter one carrying 6-packs of malt liquor. Out back we find a battered wooden pier, walk to the end of it, wind blowing hair in face, damp chill stinging cheeks, seeping through my cotton jacket, I cling tighter to Rendezvous, his body more a wind block than a source of warmth—hip to hip we lean over the salt-stripped guard railing *wood as gray as the weather* and absorb the churning ocean, the Ascension sunset, flock of pelicans in the foreground, tug boat on either side, a massive wave breaks against the pier, shooting up a wall of lacy white—everywhere I look seals leap in unison, three or four at a time, extravagantly, ecstatically. Rendezvous points, “That’s a big fucking seal.” On a deserted road in Berkeley a falling star flares towards us and disappears, we lean across the stick shift and make wishes. In Pacifica the horizon bleeds from yellow to pink, at

the end of the beach Rendezvous and I huddle on a log. The parking lot's now so far away that the teenagers who drink beer around a bonfire look like upright ants holding cans in their claws. The wet sand reflects the sunset, sleek and pink as a body double, Rendezvous sticks his tongue in my mouth then both his lips, I gulp, he pushes against me *deeper and deeper* as if he's trying to stick his whole face down my throat. Beneath his jacket his back is the warmest thing in the world I pull out an arm and reach for his cock but my hand collides with glass and metal, I drop his wire rims in my purse *the erotic force of night-lit modeling* the horizon shrinks to a faint salmon crease between dark rolling ocean and dark unmoving sky, Rendezvous recites Rilke *Ein mal jedes, nur ein mal. Ein mal und nichtmehr.* I go for it in a big way, lick his lips and moan, "Time to pee," then I pull down my panties and squat behind him, spread knees resting on the log *tinkle tinkle* he shakes his head and smiles, "You are *so male*." He sticks his finger up my cunt *ein mal, ein mal.* After a couple of weeks we hardly go outside, barricade ourselves in rooms and fuck fuck fuck. Our next move is to pop bits of food into one another's mouths and sloppy-kiss with juice running down our chins. He turns on his computer and tells me to read the screen, "To walk in front of the car. To be in a different spot in night, but always with the night before you, after you. To release yourself back into that night...."

High contrast black and white photo of Drew Barrymore, black copy flush center in a narrow column over a wall, "It's more about freedom than sexuality," says the actress of being photographed nude, "If you're naked in a classy way, there's something totally free about it." Drew's nakedness has dissolved to grain, her nipples melting into gray pools of aureola *cross-legged classy in white heels with large bow ties at the ankles* three bobby pins stripe the side of her plastered-down bob, penciled eyebrows arch with mild surprise across her forehead *wide, empty, slick*

as the paper she's printed on where did her nose go her fragrance is Guess, "a spirited blend of fruits and florals," Drew leans back in an easy chair her arms flung straight up, gardens blooming from her armpits, hands turned outward, fingers spread as if she's throwing shadow puppets on a wall: rabbit hopping, duck quacking, or a man stooped in a wheelchair—it's Larry Eigner—facing a packed auditorium, with a large orange flower arching from the back of his chair and over his head, he listens attentively to Charles Bernstein's vigorous delivery *take it/ every atom of me/ belongs to you/ across distances/ one space* beside me Rendezvous sniffs his fingertips, "I can smell you on me." *A toy cart/ up-ended, a/ begging dog/ quiet* Drew frolics with seagulls across Coney Island's deserted beach in short-shorts (about \$105) and combat boots, her Emporio Armani trench (about \$615) flaps in the breeze, as do her arms *lines in small detail/ similars large* Drew in lace and feather wrap-top and satin pants, cigarette dangling from her full recumbent lips, a dame who's been around the block, once she was a star but now she spends afternoons in the filtered light of her bungalow clinking the ice cubes in her Scotch, smoke curling above her head like a memory, the bell rings, she opens the door cocks her hip, "Yeah, babe, whada ya want?" The camera goes click click click click *post-coital but without the wrinkles to savor it, bigger than life like a Jeff Koons figurine* I imagine Drew kitty-corner to Michael Jackson and Bubbles in a stark white gallery, gold trim gleaming, tiny red lightbulb at the tip of her cigarette. Whenever sex is over I feel like a has-been.

Charles Bernstein / MR. FANELLI

Dear Mr. Fanelli,

I saw your picture
in the 79th street
station. You said
you'd be interested
in any comments I
might have on the
condition of the
station. Mr. Fanelli,
there is a lot of
debris in the 79th street
station that makes it
unpleasant to wait in
for more than a few
minutes. The station
could use a paint
job and maybe
new speakers so you
could understand
the delay announcements
that are always being
broadcast. Mr.
Fanelli — there are
a lot of people sleeping
in the 79th street station
& it makes me sad
to think they have no
home to go to. Mr.
Fanelli, do you think
you could find a more
comfortable place for them
to rest? It's pretty noisy

in the subway, especially with
all those express trains
hurtling through every
few minutes, anyway when the
trains are in service,
I have to admit, Mr. Fanelli, I
think the 79th street station's
in pretty bad shape
& sometimes at night
as I toss in my bed
I think the world's
not doing too good
either, & I
wonder what's going
to happen, where we're
headed, if we're
headed anywhere, if
we even have heads. Mr.
Fanelli, do you think if
we could just start
with the 79th street
station & do what
we could with that
then maybe we could,
you know, I guess, move
on from there? Mr.
Fanelli, when I saw your
picture & the sign
asking for suggestions
I thought, if
you really wanted to
get to the bottom
of what's wrong then

maybe it was my job
to write you: Maybe
you've never been inside
the 79th street station
because you're so busy
managing the 72nd street
& 66th street stations,
maybe you don't know
the problems we have
at 79th — I mean the
dirt & frequent
delays & the feeling of
total misery that
pervades the place. Mr.
Fanelli, are you reading
this far in the letter
or do you get so
many letters every day
that you don't have
time to give each
one the close attention
it desires? Or am I
the only person who's
taken up your invitation
to get in touch &
you just don't have enough
experience to know how to
respond? I'm sorry
I can't get your attention
Mr. Fanelli because I really
believe if you ask
for comments then you
ought to be willing

to act on them — even
if ought is too
big a word to throw
around at this point.

Mr. Fanelli

I hope you won't
think I'm rude
if I ask you a
personal question. Do
you get out of the
office much?

Do you go to the movies
or do you prefer
sports — or maybe
quiet evenings at a
local restaurant? Do
you read much, Mr. Fanelli?

I don't mean just
Gibbons and like
that, but philosophy —
have you read much
Hannah Arendt or
do you prefer
a more ideological
perspective?

I think if I understood
where you're coming from,
Mr. Fanelli, I could
write to you more cogently,
more persuasively. Mr.
Fanelli, do you get out
of the city at all — I
mean like up to Bear

Mountain or out to
Montauk? I mean do you
notice how unpleasant
the air is in the 79th
street station — that we
could use some cooling
or air-filtering system
down there? Mr.
Fanelli, do you think
it's possible we
could get together
and talk about
these things in
person? There are
a few other points
I'd like to go over
with you if I could
get the chance. Things
I'd like to talk to
you about but that
I'd be reluctant to
put down on paper.
Mr. Fanelli, I haven't
been feeling very good
lately and I thought
meeting with you face
to face might change
my mood, might put
me into a new frame
of mind. Maybe we
could have lunch?
Or maybe after work?
Think about it, Mr.
Fanelli.

Rachel Blau DuPlessis / from DRAFT 23: FINDINGS

9. Dance, accepting a good deal of dancer sound.
Squeaks, wet pants, huffing the beat, and spin.
Take talismans, pilgrim, and lay them
invitingly across the blank
white-black mine in which light holding my hands so

touchingly in one arc throw the die into time
the spotty body falling by chance, and again, bet.

That's how I walk.
That's how I talk.
O baby, that's what I like.

10. Entering under the lintel of the alphabet
in the epistolary mode

I write with letters in letters, and
the correspondence intensifies
from one to one.

Some texts conjure memory one full day.

But the restraint of the rememberer
is so bold that fissures and fragments
compete with finish.

What "little" epic monuments?

What "flash" lyric memory?

What mazy feminine boxhedge, trained so?

What mythic press is this?

What struggle to escape?

Why am I so hard on poetry?

The trail is broken, and the sound skein

loosened and tightened
threads an unpredictable way.

Orion way off around, and under

below the west, has turned, as a matter of course,

since November, and his enormous X,

the fuzzy clutch of sisters at his belt,

and the strong corner stars shining eons of vibrato
are folded away for now.

A milk seed blowing, thus contrite the rememberancer
considers the milky baby-hairs of time.

George Bowering / MUSING ON SOME POETS

Those poets, heads coming out of collars,
advised us, showed us how to hold paper and look good,
did we sometime grow tired of them, those
who lived for us,
died for us,
rotted under ground for us,
are still
so we may move.

Not friends, really, not teachers,
poets, whose names glittered when we were alone,
whose books dropped like gleaming newborn calves into our unsteady
hands,
did we read them as if pulling shavings off our souls,
never stepped out of the Pacific combers with shine on morning face,
never twisted body out of grip of coal giant ogre
save with inspiration of our poets,
and who knows what our
means?

What are we now besides older;
a young man newly graduated from university,
black gown still on him said I envy you and your friends,
you got to make the last ones,
there isnt anything to make now, or no one knows what there is.
I said it seems that way but there is always something,
and I showed him my teeth through yellow beer.

Do we old farts say thank you every genuflecting morning
to those poets with agate names who showed us their synapses?
Nowadays the young want us to love the earth,
And I never say out loud to them that my dear old people
Are columns of earth, walk around, sit in chairs,
discard cigarettes and write what's left of poems.
They were low lights between mountains visible
To the evening gaze, they were evaporate mornings,
They are not mulch but stones in the earth, they are not
specimens but the authors of words should be whispered inside a dark
bowl
from Siena.

I have no remaining skill for form,
just feel words jostle each other in doorways on the way out, sit here this
evening remembering a former life, I'm with friends
all lovely all restrained by hope, all agreed without saying so
—those poets gave us a way to waste our lives
saying useless things, smiling indulgently at each other's personal
diaspora,
carrying mismatched goodies on the way to the grave,
trip, fall into hole, write on dirt walls
a first and last sonnet,
solving all, coming to rest, combing hair, adjusting socks,
kissing no one but the image of Jesus, disbursing mind as if it were mer-
cury,
listening for the voices to arrive with the worms.

WOLF BETWEEN THE TREES

His wife, his wife,
his daughter, his daughter,
his granddaughter, her brother,
knelt in a circle
in huckleberry woods,
digging with fingers, under pine needles,
a small hole in which to place
smoking sweetgrass, optic moisture,
& by the grandson, his grandfather's ashes,
gray Douglas Woolf, fine at last,
poured from expensive plastic bag
removed from official metal box,
taken from out a brown grocery bag,
his usual appurtenance.

Fifty steps from here
he wrote accurate prose
in his favourite ramshackle cabin,

juncos rescued from the cat & buried
under bushes, small daughters
didn't know what they were
rehearsing, now

his favourite knitted cap
has a rock in it, thrown
far as can be into the woods

as they call them back in New England
where few people came
to know he was from, gone
back there as well as here, wouldnt
you say?

Now the women have a picnic,
sitting close as they can to the wolf in the woods,
huckleberry cider, jack cheese, bean & chile spread,
nothing from Europe, songs from mountain folk,
holed up in dark city, sitting firm
on clear prose, tears in all their eyes,
smiles on their faces, smoke from the sweetgrass,
no airliners in the sky, no
mote in that eye.

Below Nine Mile Creek, in Wallace,
Idaho it is 99 degrees. An old man in a see-through hat
leaned on the wall outside a bar.

I said when does it warm up? He replied
moving nothing but his toothpick,
wait till next winter.

Doug will be up there next winter,
no romance, no spooks, meaning
no, he will not be writing a story, that is
over. If you want to visit, use your fingers,
open a book,
dig.

NORWEGIAN LINES

Lars showed me
the grand boulevard
downtown Oslo.

They were making
artificial ice
for skating on.

How wonderful
imagination
upside down.

Lars told me
turn Norway over
it reaches Rome.

Norse get lost
finding hotels
or far continents.

These lucky leaves
home in Oslo
crunch underfoot.

Lars found me
a downstairs bar
with dark brown beer.

Eating peanuts
dark November
how delightful.

It's a saga
told in minutes
Sonja Henie.

WINTER 1975. Vancouver

All these visits when the earth seems
to tilt away,

 now, for instance in Cuba,
we are all in green or brown fatigues
and the sun is down, we
simply lie on the ground, young
men and women, to sleep.

Strength.
To endure.

But in the small university classroom
a middle-aged female professor
and a middle-aged male professor
urge their sociology on us,
standing up clean, big clean eyeglasses.
Explaining the young revolutionaries.

Buy.
That makes me mad.

I'd rather lose something
and slowly come to realize
it's gone.

David Bromige / from VULNERABLE BUNDLES

67

Not much shape to this doughboy
Plenty to the plasticene figure
Giving birth & a handjob
Auspicious signs on the palms
Enabling numbering by epoch
While fucking in the "on-top"
Likes her back walked on
Stones, sharks, cookie-spill
Basketball backboard at heart center
Barbells within cosmic spheroid
"I feel disconnected today"
Sadness wells
White horses doing 69
In a watery zone
A cast of petals flowers
consciousness a kind of typo
Might have been hypo
See what sticks to the wall
It was I, I, always I
The Fido Bandito
The Scholar Gypsy
Great grandmother Bengali
He guesses bisexual from birth
Respect all gods but one
The Euro-American tradition
In art in politics in thought
Not anyone you might exclude
And stay on your moral highground

We had expected this
Being students of bathos
First he murdered his mother
Later he was rude to strangers
Another pronoun had sex
Harnessing comic energy
When you open a book
(Quand on...) you look
To see the radiant line
Rising up from groin to skull
From skull to ceiling
Of a person one may yet meet
Were the world circle-like
And we looking up or down
The island continent's zones
Energy fields & atmosphere
A shimmering sun at center
Stands in for a shimmering sign
Xmas-tree with double-headed axe
Figure who walked splat into wall
Leaving a face-sized circle of red
All the coins fit in one small chest
If one side matched the other
You would be hideous, handsome
These arcs would lead back home
And soon you too would be alone

Only a loser suspects his wife
 Smart of her lover to tell her to say

The reflexive dimension of understanding
 Its ineradicable historicity
 The hermeneutical situation
 Understanding as a mediating fusion
 Understanding as an instance of application
 The infinity of the Unsaid
 The significance of questioning & dialog
 Understanding as historical process we belong to
 Language as the medium where understanding is achieved
 The overcoming of the standpoint of absolute subjectivity
 And its ideal of scientific, objective knowledge

"I can picture the smile on his face"
 Yet she has not been adulterous
 Abstract & possible conceived the plausible
 It won all its races as a three-year-old
 Not a single loser bet on it

Middle section from Paul Schuchman's work on Aristotle & Gadamer in *Philosophy*
 Today Spring '79.

PARTY!

Then things get even more interesting. Dully wiped surferly out. Appauled for his agrments. Padded on the rare end. Dual to the dearth in a barrom baral. Her servered from loanliness. He frequented his employees. Put to work studing & being trained in prober manhours. Appeaching her forensidly, he laughed hurtidly, then guggled with derise. 'Not too embressing', he drewled. He was gait alright. Socity was noting but hairs & founies. He intered this realm quitely, with diplomia. Vocationing in Vegas, washing excoctic densers. Except this avarice.

It gets better. They grimmed as they pasted him on the seet. Rubbage. A fast residing airline. The sweet of his own bow. 'I shall see what can't be done'. Almost past marring, her truesew. Ampisously he stroked upawed. He was an archticist. None for his monitory reckonsense, his colonary skulls, his facal features, his prosuadive ways, parsels of speach. Derelic. Clutting. Spenting. Distoy. Dealth. His honorable dearth & dishonorrible intensions. 'Put me out of my missuary'. He immulated her, his sparing partner. Frusted, criped, endemptent. Tried a torch of vingar, waited as a roamer circulated. Feminine. Perfact. Anblily sated? He subjected another why out. Forst thought bets thought, anglozied. Cought speacking. Quit so.

Lee Ann Brown / PRESENT BEAU ROBIN BLASER

Able laser seer in rose
An eros orb or ball
Rare, rare lobelia rails
A noble nib

COMETARY

Come lay here awhile familiar body of earth
 swelling sweetness I know not yet
When sexing grows stale so will living so
 not yet to die or be bored by bright
 eyes in the bias of night streaming
 3 am comfortable garlic rose
 honey jasper beryllium iridium
insulating who knows what from whom or
 what marginalia starts to cook at
3 pm half way across to one real world
writing flash across the sky complete
 with fiery tail Just once is not
 enough how 'bout 4 a minute
 and look up again tonight

Come here Come tarry

Comet her

Colin Browne / SO WHAT?

You wonder what there is here. Obvious disillusion. So what? So what
is hidden? So what about that young servant in the forest
with no breasts? They caught her the soldiers by her arms and began
to swing her around and away E. recalled in the Cathedral Place
Po-Mo arcade when they uncovered what saved her around and away
through the trees a bag of gravel would approximate her and
she lived. What remains of what is divulged in accretion secretes the so-
called firmament, I think. The mind's model is earth in isolation
and delphinium blue these petals dropped to the table that in a hand-
swept triangular sea reflect all blue palest to deepest and a light
bulb cracked still shines. The little red star on that dumb Mao cap hot
streetcar tracks at dawn my old chum Charlie Gray on an upper
back porch deck in pre-pesto Halifax in his Nazi outfit his .22 "DER
DEUTSCHE KAMPFER" he wrote on the back and signed his name
and the date "May '60" and I at some point slipped in a "19" before the
"60" and an "of course" followed by three exclamation marks
where I hanged myself to prove the domino theory four years before. Her
pots of lavatera why does she not plant them? He gave me a
clipping of Pescara he said I'd like. Why is that? Am I missing
something? Is my garden lacking? So what? Egypt's banned
satellite TV decoders Iran dishes. She lies abed with a Boswellian fever
and her daughter swelling. It's true I'd like one of those shy little

bluebells growing on the Monkey King's crags in a mound of hot pine
needles beneath the world's oldest tree. There are crumbs to
scrape out of the nail holes in the table. Ratko Mladic's infantry is
marching on Zepa. I did not expect to be gutted by helplessness
and privilege. How much blood beneath that pine? The sea tonight was
murky. The boy said "I like" and chucked balls to the dog while
his Dad fished. In the nearby house a rival applesauce is being stirred in
a nod to the measured hebejebees of community the dog shit
picked up in a bread bag aspires to and now on the slug-slick hog fuel
every needle's compromised. So what? At sixteen he left home for
prison now your face is too big prison took him hard the scripted stars
bury the blow job cows sing she put her toe in the hole to feel once
more the pale sand like pumice White Lake she thinks Breezy Bay Liz
McP. reaching into the rock face an egg!!! What we are catches up.
Bindweed binds us where it's yanked until dying winds us in. All of us
leaves laced by bugs, I think. "The ancient tones" he said of Bill
Monroe on the bus his "secret songs" oh I wish! I'm wondering was he on
the Bill Miner jury the Old Man did he wear delphinium blue once
there was a bed just before the road entered the woods on the right near
his ashes in the rose beds that was forty-one years ago the ashes
but is it enough to say he's a rose now or was one two years ago I want
statistics I liked it when the Royal Horticultural Society declared

after ten years that idiots pruned roses as well as any but so what I'm
 after something else the trace of an *existing* once it's *gone* trace is
 not right but how lemon balm transports you to a long ago garden with
 shaggy manes in the lawn you rub a leaf and there she is or I say
 "I want those on my grave" and Margaret says "Bloody awful things I
 hate them we had them at home they make me sick" but we are
 not talking about monbretia of course or is she?. So what? ...*their heads*
floating like lilies... Alan Ross his shipmates on the Murmansk Run
 1942 and in the goose-shitted park fairies and asses of Europe prank and
 prink buck-toothed beneath a developer's sky *the fierce vexation of*
a dream in iambic pentameter the dream I was born into yes I'm
 reluctant to leave now *I will release the Fairie Queene* but that
 vexatious French horn in the Mendelssohn the old Shakespearean sleeps
 through it thrilled by patty-cake with the kids but numbed by this
 antic revenue-producing idea and you can hear where Germany went
 wrong here in this kid Mendelssohn's ecstatic symphonic factory
 twisting presence into absence desire into duty self into other crashing
 into Bottom's false bottom a truckload of *faerie* smothering what
 does not fit: fart rut greed dread song dance leaves trees glee breasts
 sacred animal terror cannibalized for history and pastoral amnesia
 hauled up mastheads to horns. Dream of Han-shan's orioles all you like
 he too is fled and his streaming light his pine tree his pearl

Don Byrd / from THEOGONY: 2000 A.D.

Quiet afterglow of apocalypse,
poco a poco, palaces, calypso,
solace, Pelops, payola,
forgotten,
not forgotten.

1. THE MUSES

The walls are high, the sun drips from the office building.
The gnarled lilac gathers time.
The garden walls enfold the hymn. They are here.
They are here, daughters of Mnemosyne, mothers of the data banks.
Old-style one would say, "It is spring."

They rise with light feet in veils of hovering mist,
making commodious time.
where they play singing games and bathe; in time they bathe.
They breathe with my voice to tell of things long past
and things to come, of the unmarked space,
the generations of gods and humans and robots,
the inner-life of semiconductors,
the war between the humans and the machines—
lies, mostly lies and sometimes true,
thickening the time now: of the first distinction, of Gaia,
drawn in the chasm of the unmarked many and the unmarked more,
finite, restless, steady unsteadiness.
And they taught me, these teachers of word-craft, to sing of deeper spaces,
of Gaia groaning and giving birth to Ouranos,
the tropes of Being thick with themselves, the distinctions

making the universe being the universe.
Rocks and trees, big bangs and black holes are not my themes.
The god-haunted garden rings with the telling
of the sacred numbers of generation,
and the bureaucratic towers resound as the universe cracks open.
They are here,
they are the satellite dishes on the office building,
they give me not a laurel branch in bloom but an Internet nipple.
And the crows, the crows, crow.

The data flows from the sky, filling the time,
and the poet finds these hidden places—urban gardens,
sacred rocks in the mountains or by springs
where water cress grows,
and the poet drinks with the virtual water snakes.
The muses are appalled at our appetites and sagging bellies,
but I learned, despite their insults, to synthesize the bleeps and blaps,
to recollect and tell the cumulative wisdom of the gods, mostly lies.

Let me follow the injunction of the muses,
who recall the words and the word bodies
to fill the time with unwavering measures.
I call (nervously) the form of the first distinction 'the form.'
Gaia is born of the chasm by recursion
and Ouranos of Gaia by recursion,
foundation and closure together a beginning by recursion,
and then the generations of repetition,
the Titans, the Olympians, the humans,

until now, the humans recur
and enter the vastest Bus Terminal of the Soul,
where they express themselves with their fares
and in the video games they play while they wait,
bound to earth by clearness of attentions alone,
gathering up similarities, up to isomorphism,
beyond which the bird of forgetfulness disappears into forgetfulness.

The earth has not been thought
yet
time has not been reversed
now
what would you do if someone you loved asked you
to turn yourself inside out?

Somehow near now time now is not now either
it is a thought

Some near now is not how either
but a thought lost
or was

measure this:

4. Gravity

William James on Nitrous Oxide, 1874:

"There are no differences but differences of degree between different degrees of difference and no difference."

I
go
to
the
edge
of
this
thought

and
can't
fall

from
its
ledge

it
all
counts

even
the
empty
space

a
thermos
of
time

keeps
it
hot

thoughts
approach
these
words

"no
differences
but
differences..."

no
ideas

in
things

the
butterfly
just
lights

on
the
thistle

this

●

Hilary Clark / FOLDING (1)

the moon is almost full, drinking
light laughing belly, buddha
of clarities

in the articulate heart, forms
fan open

sickle wind,
a flame's tusk flaying

just this folding, shapely, this
interlacing, breath by trembling
breath my words
rapt in the scent, skin
of what you are

wind in its syllables words,
cloud-tressed, blow silvered
or dim

in the fissured heart, forms
leaf into being, no release
from this rending

a ghost is caught in the fold-
ing, this weft and tearing,
love

its *continuous song*
is our song, erring,

lost in *the unfolded of what we are*

FOLDING (2)

*And I will come to you, and make
my dwelling with you*

In May evenings, when new leaves
are polished gold, clouds
take the colour of imperfection—
purple, a dusky ink
signed with a flourish,
splendid

Words stream on the wind, quick
and dying

Hers was the first garden:
rain, always rain, pink
dogwood by the eastern window,
forsythia in yellow sprays.
Her hands wet
among stars, her face
erased by light

*Where words foment
a largeness, where the warmth
of spring, supple skin
of this moment—dispersed,
gathered again, love's elegaic
slow unfurling*

A life unfolds, refolds, between us.
The dying sun is grafted
in the heart, just a slip,
tissue of blessings

INTERVALS

1

to sink into sleep, tracing the vein
on your wrist, stripped
moonlight

intimacy of hollows, dark rose-prints
in the skin

a life, a signature creased
and folded

licks of thunder,
dusky intervals between leaves

moths swoon in the shadows
and other guests,
flickering

2

lachrymae christi, purple
sails in the heavens

what would it be to write light,
streaked

tulips weeping
in their stems?

stress of love or air
about us, skin bereft,
recollecting

such tongues,
as if the very stones would shiver,
split

death slips among the leaves, brief
wings and nocturnes,
ghostly

If light had a shape, it would be
that young fern curled
in your palm, that lily
figuring sleep

Sun and shadow enfold us,
this nimbus, brief
entangling

the Beloved
is the murmur at the edge,
birds startle at her touch, just a kiss
fleeing

3

a strong wine of spit
and tears

believe me,
we are robed in reflection, flesh
stricken in every glass

impelled in our syllables, wind's
reminiscence

discerning that trace or musk
in the next garden
feather and sinew, tongues racked
and singing

twilight scales, arpeggios
of the darkening heart, such messengers

Robert Creeley / FOR ROBIN

We are both dissolving into history or whatever it is can be used of us, what we've evidently done. I think of the shifting, re-ordering movement of your words as sunlight filtered to forest floor. There were sudden clearings in the thickness of brush or trees made a place to come to, secure in whatever thought. At best a god might say, "Let me show you," or lead the way. But our gods were finally memories, or so I felt, a faith we were given to keep without the necessity of understanding. Or always that persistent confusion—were we supposed to understand? Nothing's finally changed, no matter I sit here, a veritable old man at last. Was I keeping records? Probably. I had my papers in order for whatever reasons might ask. Yet looking now down the field to the sun coming up behind the woods, I listen for a sound beyond my mind, for what calls me still. You are well named, dear friend. Your imagination keeps its promises.

Peter Culley / THE BOOK OF HUGH

falls open
upon a bituminous and flaky
page of coal.

In turning
from it lit upon
a pink and stripey rock
found early in the walk,
a rejected tumbled pebble
that had through the air
appeared polished. Therefore
in a premature spring—the christmas
greens still up—the toads
took to the roads, driven
by unseasonal lust
through the marsh gas
and into our path.

The dim stir
of chemical atoms
toward an axis of crystal form:
thus bear spoor,
formerly loose
and fruity becomes
parchment, chimneysmoke appears
to hover, the distant shunting
gravel is through the
drizzle oddly amplified.

Likewise the trance-like
life of plants: as for
the fern summer
so, roughly
winter—a fructose haze

foreboding not ever
a tender reading
that does not waver.

Beside us on the lawn
a brown barette
flecked with gold,
the photo of a horse,
in my hand
a pebble of no note, that had
gleamed in the mind only,
as upon the tracks
a red cent flattened oval
spun against the cutbank
and away.

The ragged wall
of social habit
connecting boulders, half-
obliterated, etched over
aggregate a glyph-like
trace of hooves
out of the quarry
the gravel truck's
girlish sway
upon the little curve.

From spray to spray
flitting light
the speckled finch's
yellow note above
the tufted and ossianic ridge
sepia splash along a margin
interior foxed, off white

46

endpaper snow
falling closing, scything
crow tinges blue
the green day's
republican starlings, sneering
ducks, fatuous
shitting geese. . .

Personality

an unseasonal squall, a "gesture"
(as in painting ca. 198-)—
a runny mustard splat, a pig's
black tail, a little silver
hurricane, an omni-browed
Kali—

though
sleeve notes tell
a different story: puppyish
prospects considered
beneath sugary eastern elms,
exalted sleep, smeared mountains
beyond the desk, foreground's
heap of sulphur bestrides
the bridge's sexy parabola,
grainy against an edge
that is no edge
at all.

Would seek therefore
a motive for its use, would
attempt unbidden
a tunnel
through the thick mantle

between us,
 the branch's
shadow on the shade moves
 and is a bird
or isn't—
 too big
for a leaf certainly, though
similarly launched; inattention
fluid also, subject to
accumulation, massed
 hesitations, blanks,
aphasic interludes. . .

Thus brick by brick
the pyramid of stupidity
is erected, so
mortarless suburban
walls, the blue screen
 of a false spring.

Beaten back
incrementally, the
peeping snowdrops re-
gather, rime's
erect buzz
cut atop a
minor shelf of shale,
 omitted rain
yet fills
 the valley's
moist hollows, unseen
ripples athwart
the spongy ground.

Wynstan Curnow / DETAILS

TER and the Pirates. I don't relish me position, sir, but I've stumbled on something. I think it's my duty to tell you about Miss de Jones. I saw a man—a European—leave her villa. She claimed I'd seen a native merchant he was at the Polo Club while we dined there they ignored each other was up there aware of a connect. The maitre d'hotel informed me that he's an alleged businessman from a iron-curtain country. As you know, sir, many of their people on trade missions are also secret agents. I guess that's it, sir. I see. You're positive you saw the *same* person both times? How good a look did you get at him? Well, sir, I just caught a glimpse of his face under the light at Miss de Jones's villa. Then if your identification is mistaken, red agent or not, there is no link between him and Miss de Jones. I—I suppose so—except for her agitation at the club, sir

Detail 1 (CHARLENE, 1954, Robert Rauschenberg. Collection of the Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam.)

Little by little and substantial foundations be laid for the objective Keynes always conjured but never could come to grips with. This objective would be an intercontinental trade as the Rocky Mountains, the continental shelves and the South Western States.

"There is reason to believe that oil will be found at depths of 20,000ft," the Journal profitable to produce crude from depths of five miles, the publication added.

South Louisiana and the Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico have the greatest number of projected deep tests, the Journal said. California ranks third and now claims the world's deepest well at 21,482 feet.

Oklahoma set a new drilling depth in the last month with the discovery of oil creek production at 13,800 feet. Rigs are drilling towards 15,000 feet horizons in Wyoming.

Detail 2 (CHARLENE, 1954, Robert Rauschenberg. Collection of the Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam.)

Angle's Beauty Salon 60 E97	TRaflgr 6-6708
Angioletta Vincenzo 109 Sherman Av	LORrain 7-8519
Angilly Arthur archt 1 MadAv	MURyhll 6-4014
Angioletti Thos 671 W193	LORrain 7-3006
Angloni Conrad b 327 E113	SACrmnto 2-1810
Angulli A statnry 21343 2Av	SACrmnto 2-9437
Angullo Frank grocry 2207 1Av	LEhi 4-2026
Angullo Frank 2267 2Av	TRaflgr 6-0205
Angullo grocry 2113 1Av	TRaflgr 6-2726
Anglo-Canadian Lining Distribtrs Ltd	
.....395Bway	WAlkr 5-5952
Ann women's apprl 2046 7Av	MONumnt 2-3881
Ann Adams knitwr Inc 991 6Av	BRynt 9-1248
Ann Andrews Inc 370 W35	BRynt 9-5127
Ann Arbor News 110 E42	MURyhil 6-7232
Ann Arbor RR Co 149 Bway	BARcly 7-9615
Ann-Bea Restrnt 92 Univ Pl	Algnqn 5-6258
Ann Belt & Button Co 347 W39	CHlkrpg 4-6674
Ann Brewster Accessories	
.....1647Bway	LUXmbry 2-1953

Detail 1 (UNTITLED, c1950, Franz Kline, Collection of Phyllis and David Adelson, Brookline, Ala.)

beaucoup. L'armistice, d'ailleurs, exis de fait. Nous sommes en droit d'espérer quelque chose de plus, quelque chose de décisif. Puissent les hommes de l' tat turcs avoir compris la fatalité in luctable des décisions douloureuxos q le monde attend d'eux! Puissent-i avoir compris pour sauver moins Constantinople ils dioivent êt préparé à terribles amputations! barrage de Tchataldja, formidable apparence n'est qu'un barrage bi précaire. S'ils hésitent, s'iles tentent core d'en appeler à la fortune des a mes, cette dernière digue sera romp comes les autres, et le flot slave ce lera jusque dans la ville imperiale.

Ludovic Naudeau

COLLOQUE DANS UN WAGON

Tchataldja, 26 Novembre. (Par dép che de notre envoyé special, transmi par poste mllitaire, via Lozengrad.) Demain, c'est-à-dire, dans quelque heures, aura lieu le second colloque entre les plén\ipotentaires bulgares et ottomans. Le voie ferrée servira, cet fois, de trait d'union entre ces haut personnages. Un train qui comprendre notamment un wagon-salon, sortir des lignes turques et entrer à dans les lignes bulgares. Un autre train, compos d'une automotive de des voitures naguèr capturées aux vançus, s'avancera e sens inverse. Les négociateurs bulgares e'n descendront et c'est dans la salon du

Detail 1 (VIOLIN, 1912, Pablo Picasso. Collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, Paris.)

Clayton Eshleman / COOKING

I slide down like a fireman into a cauldron-shaped machine.

The discourse

shifts, scaly zucchini

wants to be scrubbed. Mother said: get outta the tub
soon as you finish washin,

so I scrub and consider the chicken, the cold
under her arms as I carried her into the hospital toilet.

All of life is present every moment.

We know all this, or I do, dimly,

I wipe up something from the chopping block, it tastes
like 16th Street—best can do,

my birth? The flecks are more precious than
weight of bird in hand. Open the wine.

Curious, the antagonism wafting from the just-pulled.

But who wants to be opened? Down in the blood force,

I dream while I cook. Dreaming is

a kind of cooking, body between waffle irons bed and
night,

ghosts of the introjected sipping and picking.

I am closer to Caryl in bed

than at table, but tapers shadow us here.

Are we re-enacting the primal snack

as we cut, munch, and talk? The tall sip of Chinon

that plunges to my belly,

a shore bird zapping up a crab?

Have you looked into your mouth,

considered the Labrador of ice floes, jungular lagoons,

infinetestinal havens under invasion

as the tongue, trapped rhino, goes through its

plungings, so articulate

after 20,000 years, then Andrei Codrescu on NPR:

he too hates David Duke—I throw in more Louisiana,

cleaning a shrimp; serrated knife down the back

held against the chopping block edge,

swole gut track furls back, husk won't disposal, so

I bag'm, thoroughly rinsing the headless, footless

Paleo bodies under harsh cold,
each pint of cooking so interesting,

I know you appreciate it
having shopped so carefully for all I fondle.
To clean a squid is to have a hand up the goddess.
To do so makes me want to help a cow give birth.
To cook makes me want to disembowel myself and eat.
Cooking is a form of labyrinthine pacing,
and is without fear, until we make contact with
the soul of the beloved, for whom we cook.
Then the two of us are out on plates
looking up into this gorgeous autumn. We are old,
and sliding about, but the dry golden trash
still clinging to the maples
is a kind of funky Greek Keatsean urn.

Kenneth Burke, 94, is happy for a tasty meal.

He has a chic grey cap, and settles in
at our table on his pillowed chair.
Salmon without oil, or salt,
spinach, rice, Pilsner Urquell.

He said that night: "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty—
Body is Turd, Turd Body" and giggled.

Each evening we sit down to these bodies
in cocoon, these woven green beans,
this artichoke harobring so many compressed
thorny lips. A delicate char molded by
the coldest lake depths,
parts of my mother, parts of our mothers' mothers,
myself, yourself.

The wind rises outside,
the gold, rouge-red, orange bonfired leaves are down.
We are skeletons eating amongst skeltons.

This
is the delicious thrust and realization.

Deanna Ferguson / A SUPERMARKET IN WEST EDMONTON

What ought hold. Strip landed over welds a heartless
sag. Art turned surly can't shake figurations of a
previous day. Stay away from the window. Same
dead actress chains some dead street eyes roll out
mold of maudlin pattern. No funny animals. She's
not saying.

Put inane in name. Fall for it. Take the fluids. Can
take who pass through as sedimental brains. Wave
a little. No one on the rooftops tear the skyline.
Glass-lined. All purpose sounds grind memory.
Memory sounds.

Are thin grounds for conjecture. I'd like to deliver a
lecture. But car is parked on Mars. Hum a few of
olden days in love and fellow's tune. Imagine nation's
obscene custom's method's fat's dripping's water.
Anhydrous lip spit back.

Weak for sticks and twig. 'Til pleasant so
experienced. Tinsel fat felt ancient concepts render
genre spastically dealt. Having always considered
bum a substance not a colour. Another story's
radical nodes initiate the end. Sensuous plant up
dead. Then hempen homespuns swagger here
despairing of spirit as might despair of ob blah mop
ism. Sputtering tears tangled schemata enough rope
to land paramount an animal bone on a sled.

I had undergone a collective death. A swim between sunbeam and the phallic neck burrowed in an island life. Am pleased to conclude the machine wears thin, perhaps smooth, nonetheless do not lend to what is more profitable to condemn. A river double dipping a phrase a code a talk-show call in I speak as an astral body. An asshole nobody connects with the world a score of actions a sketchy depiction too, to object being used.

Full of gripe and plan, paperwork. Virtual terms investigate me affinity. Primitive past to human future as sugar is to seethe. Whiff at a whang's scabbard. Origin and the grinder. Tempting but what's possible here so much liver and oleander leaves. So-called brown hooks so-called grave allusion to the aside. Aisle five soap soup metric conversion. The parts written were fluid. Devalued. But the performance now that remains loaded in the wooden gun.

Norman Finkelstein / from A PATTERN LANGUAGE

CHILDREN IN THE CITY

and beyond
a network of safe paths
the city as school or playground
changing at a whim

an open city
with great swatches of common land,
markets, promenades, public squares, cafes,
ribbons of industry and scattered work,
bike paths, green streets, local
town halls and services,
still water, birth places,
graves and sacred sites

and to deal with this

vagueness and unboundedness
as the poem like the
"adventurous young"
goes forth to teach
to learn and play

Ruptures
appear in the text
constitute
the house of the life being lived
In town "There is a small
but ominous danger . . ."

Yet "the path goes past
and through interesting parts
of the city;
and it is relatively safe"

That it enters the contours
of the larger patterns;
accommodates smaller needs
and minor desires along
its sinuous way

"down pedestrian streets,
through workshops, assembly plants,
warehouses, interchanges,
print houses, bakeries,
all the interesting
'invisible' life of a town"

Perhaps
(he could write in the next letter)
we must take the risk
The poem resists closure
courts formlessness for the sake of growth
as this unlikely
private soul
risks civic utterance

"Line the children's path with windows,
especially from rooms that are in frequent use,
so that the eyes upon the street
make it safe for the children."

QUIET BACKS

Hurried along . . .

Went through . . .

Came out behind . . .

“a long ribbon
of quiet alleyways
which converge on the local
pools and streams
and the local greens”

So that the buildings,
the sites of noisy life,
shield us,
offer a temporary
respite

Couples, small groups,
solitary walkers,
thoughtful souls
seated beneath trees
“where the mood is slow
and reflective”

And I know
why you have come here
I know
how long you’ve been gone
how brief will be your stay

sound of bees
among the columbines
sound of water
falling over the wall falling
from pool to pool.

GRAVE SITES

... Nearby, just off the path, we came upon a little grave site, roughly triangular in shape, enclosed by a low stone wall and shaded by a willow. The gate was open; we entered and stood about, or sat upon an iron bench which faced the graves—some two or three of them, it being difficult to determine the precise number. There had been some settling; the stones had tilted, and one had actually cracked in half; though on closer examination, the graves seemed of no great age. The inscriptions on the stones were indecipherable: among our group, some recognized the alphabet but did not know the language, while others had never seen such writing before. Our guide was at a loss to explain the site; he knew no stories connected with it, nor had any previous sightseers enquired of him about it. It was, however, a pleasant spot in its own melancholy way; and certain members of our party remained there for some time, in quiet reflection or simply enjoying the cool breeze.

Peter Gizzi / REWRITING THE OTHER AND THE OTHERS

I wanted to model the morning light
Too difficult to impasto the sky

You are Alcestis with a kite
The years whip by and tears cover answers

I would fashion my own wagon
Rolling home, this would never come again,
above a flat swatch of tradition

Please recline your smooth abdomen
my way
And the hollow of a tin oak pings

Empty of death like truth
An atomosphere becomes indelible ink

Removed from a single black negative
Singularity may be achieved also: the scar
so narrow

To leave you then
On earth, empty in vague happiness

A solitary column of loss added here
A blunt pulled in water

You forever
Leave me, as a husk leaves a seed

Then reverse the Tyrants' ideology, an original
of an original!
And a noisy sphere, a bird strafes air

FABLES OF CRITIQUE

You are not outside this film (or movie)

Without subtext a page signals to no one

You are not outside a field (or yard)

Unable to wake free from the tall grasses

Several grasses yield a specific poison

These leaves are not pretty, they are camouflage

You are outside now and they were the enemy

Those brambles and thickets are not shallow

Refusing to enclose the area, they cannot be buried

You are pleased you are no longer a child

And standing by a building (decomposing)

Several films descend from the sky

Here was (were) the grass (grasses)

Ignoring you they bother no one

You are no longer a man standing by a building

Where no one came you are not waiting

No one came, no one wasn't there
They are no longer a child, no longer a man
Nothing is a film (movie)
Which is becoming your eyes
You are (were) unable to speak
And now you were before them
They become impatient (becoming impatient)
And this is (was) your future

Robert Hogg / THE CREATIVE

No poet spoke
from the balcony of the foreign mind

all voice fell away
and the shattering
silence crashed
the land

what rose
knew no sheets
nor tore from music
kindness meant

But for all that
fans kept turning
electric and heat

rushed back into
the made thing.

Mtn: 20/07/93

A FALLEN WALL

Is this a little like the end of the world?

Is this a small blip on the screen called life?

Listen to the small pounding of the rain.

It makes of your forehead

a fallen wall

beyond which there is no longer

a boundary to cross

only a damp ground

oozes like a wet wound

aching to be closed.

Pierre Joris / FOR ROBIN BLASER

one of the secret sharers in-
scribed now into this net,
which is not the world
but our imaging of it
with a stag's head, on a dragon
as all is

écart à l'équilibre, hormis le rien. C'est-

à-dire l'identité,

which, of course, changes
while another sailor song
— HERO it says on his cap —
goes up as/to smoke & yet is a life buoy. maybe
“the bull among the stars”
— it is all about
“the way writing, folded, spreads”
into this, our
fin-de-siècle identikit

Kevin Killian / NEEDLES AND PINS

*"why even the old get qualms
age spares no one the heebie-jeebies"*

a shrouded hooded boy brought me
the Hooded Terror of foreskin
I kind of remember the swing
dimly as through a veil of flesh
the core of pure ivory
hooded curved tusk of ivory

Sickle held high in threat
the white sheeted wet figure
of a man, or a wet boy
light under water, light
from an inner source
strikes a curved silver blade

the marvelous scimitar boy
pouring tea from an uncut cock
with the sheets lifted
high to show this tea set
a sea of liquid ivory
very threatening to the young

Turn back, back
the blade of silver guillotine
that cut my head in numb
tumble to his feet,
to eat out the ivory light
from a magnificent *furor*

SUSPIRIA

I know when he began to dance with me
cranberries started to burn in pocket—
I smelled red smoke of sugar under my
feet, sugarfoot, a boy worth burning for—

and into his pants I'd push my white hands,
deeper into the sweeter red currant
in a darkened cell until he was done;
then into a lit cell, where i was king

if music played we sat down fast, out, down
into the red fruit mashed in my lap like
Turkey. Musical chairs with the pilgrims
who came here on the rock to fuck him good

Oh Bill, if you were living at this hour
I'd put little socks on your two bare feet
and spoon this dressing into your wet throat
till you choked and spat all over my bib

I'd give you such a gift of red white meat
you wouldn't be able to sit for a week
unless to eat at the mantelpiece with clock,
bawling pilgrims thrusting your ass with fire

ferret teeth in the breast of a red bird

I would call it to your memory now
that a phantasmal fog of love had enthralled me to you

then, but not only then, in these my words
the tear in the fabric, now, the drop of blood.

Joanne Kyger / TWO PIECES FOR ROBIN

"The poems tend to act as a sequence of energies
which run out when so much of a tale is told."

—Robin Blaser

He is pruning the privet
of sickly sorrow desolation
in loose pieces of air he goes clip clip clip
the green blooming branches fall—'they're getting out
of hand' delirious and adorable what a switch
we perceive multiple
identities when you sing so beautifully the shifting
clouds You are not alone in this world
A parallel world of reflection
in a window keeps the fire burning
in the framed mandala; the red shafted flicker
sits on the back of the garden chair in the rain
the red robed monks down town a rainbow arises
simple country practices thunder
lightning, hail and rain
ribbon layers of attention
So constant creation of 'self' is a tricky
mess. He is pruning the loquat, the olive
which look real enough in the damp late morning air.

May 15, 1995

Oh Goody, this afternoon we're going to the Holy Forest

I want to find the place
of the adored one, an entrance
into the presence of the first loved
by the flowing waters
that give us water at night.
Need sustenance to come back
to the place; remember the swinging
intimacy? It was there wasn't it?
Wasn't that the place of the delightful
original form —the loveliest garden and park
found at the center

of this quiz 'declaring the completion of philosophy'?

First you declare your intention
Second you start on the path
Third you must *find* the path

Fourth you affirm the perfect answer
that this thought continues
and that you revisit this place for a moment

of familiar recognition if not understanding
and continue telling the story

of content content and form.

Monday afternoon
May 15, 1995

Michele Leggott / FORTUNES

beatrix.song

I am a dream best left to the ache
and space of letters virtual
upon a screen Look where I stand
in the heart's domain demesne *demain*
à joul we'll spin together on the thermals
given out across the breathing of that season
made sheer by the body's load Who lives
does loves writes I have your promise
beating residues and tricks of light Look
where I stood against the grey morning
and watched you sleep Now wake
be about the spirals you describe for me
the letter never better left than to the ache
and treacheries of dream Yes wake

thoroughfares await them

between city and heaven dear bird a coin
for eyes for the animal thrown onto the road
tattered drum dazzled cones that we may abolish
disaster the stars lean down in violet aspects
and touch the world at twenty four points
to read its upturned face *Heal with a star*
her eyes it said and loss spread out
a dozen blankets against the purple wind
but still we couldn't shake malfeasance O bird
happy in fluent grass how will you make
the starry marches and silk of the sky
tumble yard by yard
into the lap of a woman spinning
thin dreams from perfect other places

crying

his hall's flown into his bird heavy weather
on the information highway but
we know what he means he means anima
heaven's daughter in the rafters panicking
and incommensurate I didn't see it
nor wings nor crown but heard the stony spaces ring
one winter morning walking by and that was not
divagation but all instances of bird and ceilings
rolled to one particular to me to you two dollar song
what can I hope for to break us out of error
so that the words fly up and the walls do not fall
a bird in the cloisters the sudden downpour
drench of memory warmly losing and abusing
confusing sense and *Benedict's neighbour* alike

winter's dream

she was playing in a meadow I could not see
and fell miraculously past jeopardy and speech
everything was lost we stepped off the railway
into an extension of the Great Landscape preparing
to forget our existence the world was nothing
but planes and mirrors that link and space
the sugars of its invention of meat and drink
at that dark table she took not and like the rose
dances now with all her body because the little seeds
have not been found destructive dove or
fearful one walking in the gardens of the dead
when you pick the red fruit breathless risk
darts in at the gate again swallow swallow
the stories black about you in the rainy air

limen amabile

it is the hurt place *lapis by jade*
to which none returns unharmed *vermeil*
by turquoise bit beloved pitiless city of light
I have come asking the price of the heart broken
will you restore her into my arms *lost contours*
round-expressed feast of trumpets feast of lights
festivals of lucid vigil a feather's weight collapses
for love clair-audient on the doorstep *Lords*
of the whole mosaic fervent industrials *how you fit*
gem into gem but cannot find the breather who is
everywhere and gone I see *what's strange to you*
transformation's gift taking place before my eyes
she holds a snake a white stick she gives
into my hand and I go tapping into the world

David Levi Strauss / ODILE & ODETTE, EPILOGUE

Dear Odile & Odette,

“Either the world is so tiny, or we are so enormous;
in either case, we fill it completely.”

Dear Odile,

In the end, it was loneliness that killed you. A mass growing inside, larger and larger until there was no more room to live. Inoperable. Inoperative. Even the morphine did nothing to alleviate that pain. Only memories, and these black and white ghosts.

Dear Odette,

There was a time when you were not a photograph. Not caught in that happy crowd, radiant in a white bathing suit. Not a memory. You were a woman before being named Hattie Lee, but I can't know anything about this. I know my mother loved you. I think they all did, but especially her. She went to meet you just before she died, in her morphine dreams. She said the sun broke through the clouds and glinted off the surface of the flood waters. You walked out, between my father and her, the three of you holding hands. Then she had to come back, to her bed and her pain, but you and my father went on.

“Divided for love's sake, for the chance of union.”

They always said, “Hattie was so sensitive, everyone wanted to be near her.” Even after you killed yourself in the asylum. Especially then. Especially my father, but it took him much longer to drown himself. The flood waters rose and fell. *Sie lebte zu nahe ans Wasser.* She lived too close to the water. Like the river, sorrow was always there, and every once in a while it would reach out and take someone.

Dear Odile & Odette,

"I feel now like a little black box projecting slides without captions."

"When the world was young, images were strong." They have been depleted over the years, from overuse and understanding. After the old man gave up photography he said that all photographs "deal in things that are constantly vanishing."

No one was ever the same after that.

These are all just fragments, the merest of images. They accumulate, somehow, and we cling to them. We say we don't cling to sorrow, but cling to these scraps like rafts, and this amounts to the same thing. "A ghost was hiding in the invention of photography."

Dear Odile & Odette,

In the hours just before you died, I could not take my eyes off your face. It was the most beautiful, most naked face I have ever seen in my life. Every trace of artifice or circumstance had been burned out of it. It was your face, and it was the first time I'd ever seen it. As if the other faces you showed me throughout your life had been masks. The poet said, "Death is the mother of beauty."

I was surprised by how young you became, at the end. Your skin, your voice, your face. Younger and younger, like in the photographs.

So much has changed, so much water under the bridge. But the photographs don't change. They are incorruptible and inhuman. They mock us from the shadows. Trust your car to the man who wears the star. *Ad astra per aspera*. Pay no attention to the man in the shadows.

They manipulate time and distance. They steal our memories and transform them in their own image. They simplify and flatten everything. They reduce us to glances and gestures. They sum us up. And then, they wait for us to die.

Dear Odile & Odette,

This is the day set aside to remember the dead. One day out of the year. I wonder how many days the dead remember us. And I wonder if their world is as full of distractions, as preoccupied as this one.

The airport today is filled with passengers moving between worlds, remembering and forgetting. It is difficult to tell by looking at them which is dead and which alive. I think the live ones move more jerkily, with less patience. They are always out of balance, always leaning on something or someone.

The dead ones look more like photographs. There is an intricate system of lights and sounds that moves them around.

I am a slow learner. You always knew this about me. It's taken me half my life to remember that we are all born *in between things*.

. . . and you never saw him again.

The passengers all look so very sad, shuffling toward their destinations. They teeter along, carrying their pain in bags.

This was the house where you were born.

This was your first family.

This was your face.

Dear Odile & Odette,

"The people are dreaming—when they die, they become awake."

END.

billy little / KISSES

1.

imagine
a diamond sharp
warm breeze wafted in
under my hidden chin
lifted my entire face
from my skull
a pink maple leaf
floated off
a skin butterfly
alighting on
your luminous pucker
your steamy tugging honeylips
imagine
our hopelessly canadian kiss
nipples leaking maple syrup
acid raindrops glistening in our toques

2.

a mere kiss, her contagious lips

every one of them
longed
to kiss her and
kiss her but
she had lips for her girlfriend
labia for her girlfriends lips

3.

once our lips met
our faces were inseparable
some of our friends tried crowbars
the doctor recommended a kisstorectomy

4.

before we knew it
our kiss got bigger than the house
which explains why we were near naked
waltzing in the steaming meadow
when the flying saucer arrived and
the extraterrestrials lifted us by our lips
suddenly longer than our hair
into their hovering spacecraft
then forced us to perform unspeakable perfection
in every corner of the galaxy

5.

out of the blue
the kiss that i wanted
the kiss i never imagined
was reinventing my lips
now i had to send all those other kisses away
all those kisses ordered from the catalogue
all those kisses in the ferry lineup behind you
those kisses on the mainland i was practicing up for
all those kisses in storage on other planets
all those kisses i remember
vaguely

6.

the black black kiss of the cormorants

startled, landing too close,
the first peck
knocked it for a loop
200 yards yeow headache city
but it circled back
found its space in perfection
beside the black black other
touched beaks
spread wings
shook and
possibly shat
there on the end of the dock

7.

in the kiss museum
celebrating their 100th anniversary in Dubrovnik
they've hired a reformed Cosa Nostra hitman
to give workshops in *omerta*, the death warrant kiss
so many people wanted to sign up
they had to move the registration to the stadium
a pretty penny was raised at 500 dinars a session.

Tony Lopez / TWO STANZAS AFTER HORACE

(*Odes* III iv)

Descending wooded slopes, I seem
To pick up the call of the oriole
Repeated at the far edge of hearing.
Yet I may be deluded. When I stop
The whine of mosquitoes homes in.
A sudden breeze stirs the canopy
And warm air streams through below.
I seem to hear the call far away.

Untouched by prowling bears or snakes,
In bay litter like a sleeping boy, I find
The perfect form of *Boletus badius*.
Upstanding, smooth, and honey brown
With creamy yellow pores and one strand
Of moss adhering. The cut flesh turns blue.
Scared wood pigeons crash through foliage
In their haste. Wings seize my thoughts of you.

from ASSEMBLY POINT D

Every so often the day builds around a menu
Say taking stock from the freezer for a *risotto*
Or calling early at the fish stall: oysters on ice.
Let's eat again real soon. I would be happy to go
With that old authentic abstract expressionist work
If we could print it on plastic. We're looking at
A futures market in concept art. You could hedge
Against primitives or streetnics or property as such,
Get in at zero and the only way is up.
White image of a plane on a blue ground
Then pull back to route on map of North America.
Eventually the loss of loss, fear of experience
(Tanks in European forests) writing *The Georgics*
When civil war had destroyed the culture itself.

This turning seems to go only to a business park.
You're on the bus tonight, headphones, synthetic waves,
Daryl Hall sings we've reached the borderline
By a terrace of little cottages made over *bijou*.
A large selection of other vehicles always available
Leaving Taunton on the M5. "Love will last forever."
In a thousand cities our offices are getting ready
To see that every transaction goes smoothly.
When the alarm sounds we go to assembly point D.
Agoraphobia, chronic anxiety, social phobia,
The narrator is bound up in some unspecified crisis.
When did the blue skies start to gather clouds?
How long have we poor shepherds lived and dreamed
Within these shady incremental pay-scales?

SMOTHERED OR SKEWED

Prominent dentists lit by lightning
Crossing the battlements late at night.
Flashes of desire made into landscape
A bat in close-up crawling head down.

A jewelled hand peeps from an ermine sleeve
And writes on a white board "quite alone
But not unhappy thinking about
These lacustrine cities on a hot day."

I seem to have erased the word "loafing"
Whilst making a continuous strand of peel.
Something to see through, expensively
Removing dead skin and mites from the surface.

A broken tower, a hoover, loathing
To drill and pull out your teeth and finally
To reconstruct a winning smile or grin
With a special pen, blade or spatula.

It's a rip-off and you're paying for it
In graded, easy-plan instalments,
A machine that sucks up gothic:
That eats any kind of little dream.

Karen Mac Cormack / PAPER SECTIONS for Jane Creighton

Exits more attended than entrances for years now. The light fades (oh yes) into night beat. Jackal harness, a double, please. Shoe spectrums to remember by the ultimate platform twist. On whose knees? Suede's not to soften any fall. Apart, her fingers frame the trajectory of "become." We *are* the visuals, words have been before us. Tell me. Lead into gradation, hang the hat on retro, hold onto the door frame. Portability sinks from sight. To wander is a luxury not stilled. Silk always slides downwards best. Advantage first speaker. Streets are there with or without notice and shades align shadow (only). Our attention is attracted now distracted by the results of situations out of our control. What we see is carnage. In differing locales evidence's out of tact, water, shovels, hope. Some boxes were opened. P(l)ans flâsh, nothing in them. Generations of objects collapse toward someone (else) if not us. Details don't mislead. They follow main facts. Knowing why to write's different from despair or running.

The outline differs sharply from month to month neither coming to rest, nor departing, though this can't serve or be described as territory to crowd the case. Voice, not statement may be concentrated on but the latter holds, deploys a view. Canny if resistant combinations surrender pleasure. The tongue still gives what the "I" holds back. Veins in a leaf, blast as a plan not to wake up to much. Slip into the night. Irregular

moments of non-interference resist complaints. Patches splurge diagonally and lift-off into the rubbish bin. Moving vehicles form the rehearsal of how we really perceive all the time (not just sight, but sixth sense, too). Join nothing, remember all the “seem to’s” in a frame. Money on it. Chequered is a portrait, suggestion isn’t math, our “monsters” are among us. Do we begin or end with flowers growing in both (vertical) directions? Papyrus beat. Invasions mark our works (gone) wrong.

A planned arcade rises only as far as the eyes can see. Fold the linen, not the spoons (legs bend to curl in pairs) to reflect graciousness. The pannicle holds to knife’s edge, flowers beyond, drooping. Landscape here is blurred by wind and more immediate concerns. Seasons tune the clock. Snuff performance art isn’t beyond question. Spin the stop to go (dictates a quickness akin to sleight-of-hand). Quisquous if anything else. She looked at him in the chair, on the road, at desk. Hours of how many breaths in and out together. Shut the door. Open the book. Each year contributes to a curve in a letter of one’s signed name.

Nathaniel Mackey / SONG OF THE ANDOUMBOULOU: 32

—*low quadrant*—

As if it were something they'd
read in a book, that it be
their book, scrambling

letters

as the word itself burned...

What-said book built on a
glimpse caught in passing.

Something they saw,

thought

they saw, could only be
told of in code...

He her

star-specked haunches. She

his rump-struck stare...

Stood momentarily rungless,

adamant

air all there was underfoot...

Took the name of an Algerian
wine, Sidi Brahim. Meant by that

to announce a new rapture, aggregate

air they found themselves

taken up thru, loquat allure

alive again

as he spoke...

Took me aside

but spoke only in code. Taut

cloth

held him back as he stretched,
shook as it dawned on him again what

had happened, rail he'd been

run into exile on, thin strip

of world

what was left... Mind adrift
under Sophia's dress, fleetingness
of thought tasting fruitlike
pendance of cheek, heat wafting
hoisted
rump. Was only one rung behind
as they climbed up the ladder,
head said to be in the clouds,
her
pantyless ass only inches
away... Rung number eight
was the one he stood on,
rung
made of *would-be, whim, wished*
it were
so, feet stuck on loquat wood...

Sophic
butt, he blurted out, called it a
setup. Called himself a bomb set
to explode... Fuse and wick rolled
into one, devilish, dervish,
demiurgic
snuff. Belatedly reached for the strap
of her sandal, silhouetted leg, sunlit
straw... Took to singing. Wind and
regret rode his voice, a thin wine we
sipped,

unspun... Sophic body, trunk of
a swing tree, a bottle hung from each
of its branches, glass they looked in
thru. Sidi Brahim was their see-thru
mouthpiece, the he she'd have had them
speak
thru, glass mouth they blew into...
No matter the outcome, loquat allure
lit their limbs, filled whatever
crack it fell in... Adventitious
two
lately known as Rift and Rescission,
wine what
ran between

Kevin Magee / from *THE MORNING WALK*

II

Newly arrived
why shouldn't I look
he said, into the distance as I walk?

The permanent inscription above the door

The cold touch of Marxist thought

It is real and great and does not extract
the true poetic correlate. Engels once called it
the "dream of a thing" in the world

surplus of tendency and latency

the more distinctly and it does not envy

The communist poet
open and active, open to change
literature could readily drown

as if there was no subjective factor

Once one chooses to accept Marxism
countless problems of motion and incompleteness

Mountains turn around

forming-transforming

It is this imagination, dialectically trained and
mediated

When the imagination will no longer be the social

outcast

It shows itself most clearly in dramatic form
The determining instance of social class

What is added to the subject while it is still being driven
away

The world wants to be changed

The history of communism, a storehouse

almost undiscovered - despite the Faust
material, or Prometheus

A new kind of historical poetry the petit-bourgeoisie
did not want and could not have

There is a kind of nature to which no response has been
given since Rimbaud

Too manifest a state of insobriety

a certain amount of stimulant had been permitted
along the way

the least articulate, the London poor

her earnings at an artificial flower factory

It was a short street
like many in London

degenerating

That from no point can anything
like a general view of its totality
be obtained

where oratory was to be heard and debate was open

his brief, stammering protests against this or that
social wrong

"We are the lower orders, we are the working classes"
he said bitterly to his friend, and that seemed the final
answer to all his aspirations

But I who am at home who do not walk out I could
write to you all day

Mac, who found it necessary to say,
despite the femininity of his nerves,
his excitement, that there was no 'heart'
in it,

But that there is heart in it, that is why
I am writing. That there is the full -
to confer the full measure
of Love to the desire to do away with all forms
of property.

The months, the weeks, the hours of that year.

Wit, hilarity and observation were mingled
in their conversation.

Rendering every sentence a flash of light.

When the only possible experience
is boredom, lies,

everyday life
in any city suffice

(Benjamin) 'the poverty of experience'

Out of this poverty concentrate
on the Book - the Imaginary - authority

whose claim to legitimation once
was experience

to take note
(having no wish to
experience it pre-
ferring that the
camera should)

The instrumentally manipulated or dominated

then, "I will never have my signature
on a body of work that exists as an
alienated or detached object"

The native infirmity of the worker

whose space is governed

as written in various hands on sheets of different sizes
made with the object of recording all the material upon

which money could be raised to meet the needs of the State
and the
ministers
ornaments
“pix” a case of silver which bare the sacrament

‘The Heart’ was Hart Crane’s cherished nickname

“His roots in the depression” [?]

Nyerges collapses beginning and end

The fascination in gross misreading

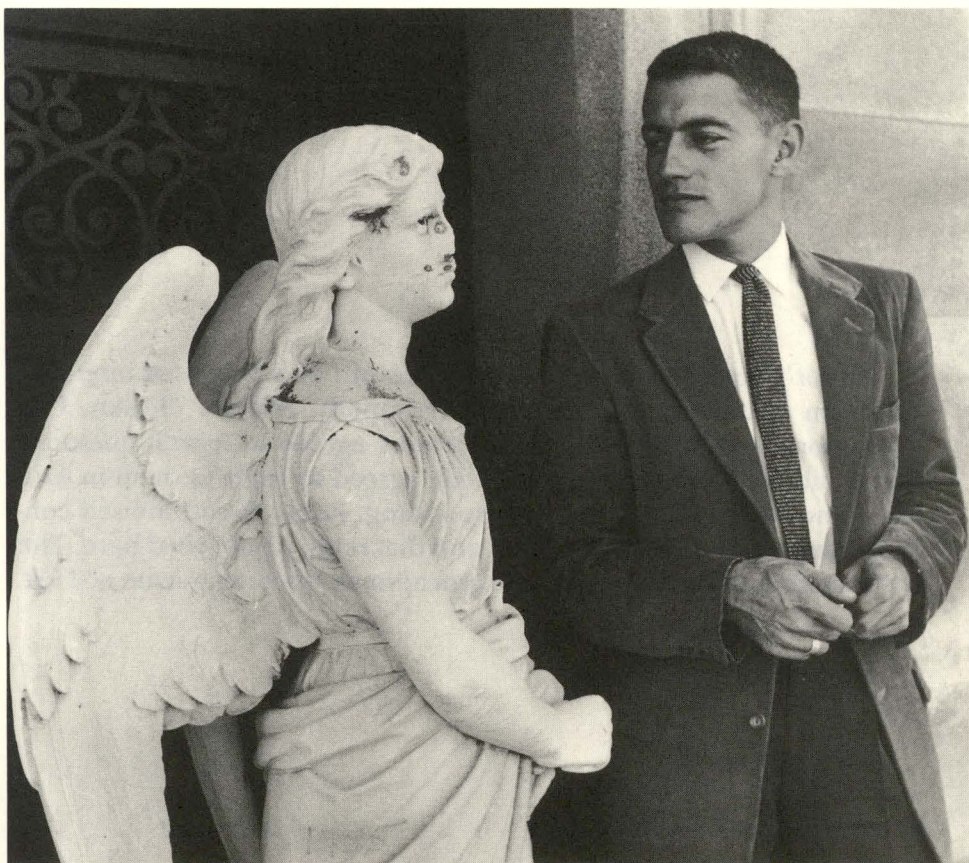
Benjamin’s astonishment at the ignorance
of a Moscow intellectual who insisted
that Shakespeare wrote before the
invention of printing

Hart Crane was murdered in 1932

What may be chronologically true

What may not be chronologically true
can carry a further, more figurative
charge

trembling (*Schaudern*)
plumpes denken (crude thinking)
emotion (*Rührung*) Bloch’s title
Spuren (traces, tracks)



Editor's note: The following text grew out of a proposed interview of Robin Blaser for this *estschrift*. Originally, Sharon Thesen, Lisa Robertson, Stan Persky, and Colin Browne agreed to submit questions that would be forwarded to Robin. He agreed to reply to them in writing. However, in the process of responding, Robin found himself concentrating on one set of questions, and that reply is published here. The continuation of Robin's reply will appear in an upcoming issue of TCR.

Robin Blaser / A CORRESPONDENCE

—No longer is it 'x explains x, signed x' . . .
x explains y, signed z'

Gilles Deleuze

Dear Lisa,

Your questions set me off. Poetry is a river—shallows, sandbars, rapids, and pages. What is an interview for? Let me riffle a few pages.

Whatever the tone, the process of question and answer is made to nourish dualisms. . . . Dualisms no longer relate to unities, but to successive choices: are you white or black, man or woman, rich or poor, etc? . . . Even when we speak for ourselves, we always speak in the place of someone else who will not be able to speak. (Claire Parnet)

We must pass through [passer par] dualisms because they are in language, it's not a question of getting rid of them, but we must fight against language, invent stammering, not in order to get back to a prelinguistic pseudo-reality, but to trace a vocal or written line which will make language flow between these dualisms, and which will define a minority usage of language, an inherent variation. . . . (Claire Parnet.)

These quotations—epigraphs for this occasion—are from *Dialogues* by Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet (trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam, Columbia University Press, 1987, pp. 19, 19-20, and 34)—the opening chapter "A Conversation: What is it? What is it for?" Good questions, put to themselves. After separate initial statements, they write the rest of the book as if they had flowed together in the middle of something. I have long thought of conversation as fundamental community, one to one, and then with many, as work, food, shelter, clothing, sexuality, memory, thought, art, entertainment, and our mortality gather us. Nothing so simple-minded as a dualism—me Alley, you Oops, or vice versa. Cosmos, belief, and mystery are not absent here: these big words seem to stop dead in our tracks. Perhaps, like Opal Whiteley, we could dig them up when they dry out and keep them

in the back of our kitchen drawer. We are nomads of them. These big words try to name elementarinesses that exist between things—interstices, apertures, chinks in the body. The concern with cosmology is as old as the human record, as is the personal voice that tries to articulate its presence there, and will not leave us alone in any theism or atheism. In recent years, some have substituted the word *ideology* for this whole busyness. Recently, thanks to thinking alongside Susan Howe and Michel de Certeau, I've preferred the word *heterology*—logos of the other, lower case. The Greek *hetero* means *other* in contrast to *homo* which means *same*. In this concern, one should, I suggest, at one's earliest convenience, hone one's reasoning abilities in order to converge with the great and fragile history of human thought of totalities and unities. The word *belief* points to something so direct and simple, what is dear—that is what *lief* means in the ages of our language—what one may trust in the face of the corruptions and blasphemies of contemporary religions. The word *mystery* derives from a Greek verb meaning *to close, to be shut*, where Keats's Negative Capability begins—the lore of “uncertainties.”

I have listed these vitalities of what we are—against dualisms—in no particular order, because they offer no hierarchy that commands us. They are, in fact, disorderly complexities and multiplicities. I think we search for the languages of this. The simplifications of subjectivity and of objectivity are unexpectedly reversible, thus becoming something other than what the self-hunters and the poetry of ditties have told us. Subject, object, abject, reject, superject—these are conditions of being thrown—under, against, away from, again, and through something or another. Our difficulty in speaking about, even thinking about, our materiality—from which we try so hard to escape—is in bond to the inherited dualism of matter and spirit, also unexpectedly reversible. Which one are you for? Abra caws for Dabra, stupefying the words.

These vitalities of what we share propose a moral dimension—that is to say, our conduct within what we share, all of them close to home. Capitalism knows nothing of conduct in these matters. Twentieth-century Marxist practice betrayed conduct within shared reality across the board. It is left to us to reread the last great thinkers of social justice, Marx and Gramsci, to find for ourselves a way through and argue it. Now again, we do, indeed, have a supernatural that deforms our lives—it is called corporate ideology, superposed, supersonic, superphysical, supraorbital, supraliminal. Super, for short! I advise artists to read John

Ralston Saul's *The Unconscious Civilization*, CBC Massey Lectures (Anansi, 1995). I'll call capitalism monetary superstition. This suprabeing that moves mountains of money has its rodomantadors—politicians and advertisers. As I heard it on CBC and put it in a poem exactly,

“Advertising tells us who we are and presents
a completely integrated culture.”

The British Columbian NDP is a case in point with its recent educational policy of shifting funds on the secondary and post-secondary levels toward the job market—sounds good, but it is unconscious of what it joins and what it betrays, not the educated, but those who would be educated—those who may wish to know something about the vast effort over centuries to be civilized, to be just, to find happiness—to be able to think, something you can't do alone—to be able to experience, for much of experience is under covers, as if a multitude had slept through it—to undertake democracy, that very recent political possibility—to be familiar with twentieth-century arts, the disturbance that they are, the rage they speak, the celebrations they offer—to be on intelligent speaking terms with the tasks of contemporary philosophy and science. These are dimensions of what we share, given, that is, a sociality that allows for such a bottomless adventure. Notice: this is not a bottomline, as the ubiquity of that accountant's word would have it.

Language enters into all of this as if it were itself a quest rather than a linguistics—the biological and psychological facts of it, the job of it, the pleasure of it. The “rustle of language,” in Barthes's phrase. A very great part of our activity in language is pragmatic. A considerable reserve of imagination is pragmatic. The arts of the twentieth century before and after World War II are pragmatic in crisis and for change. This is also the side of poetry that is close to matters-of-fact, but not exactly matter-of-fact. The “unruly” and “disruptive” characteristics of contemporary arts have broken down the modernist, critical misapprehension that the arts are autonomous, transcendental, and apart. They have been and are transgressive, antinomian, and antithetical for good reason and they are startling imagination of interrelations, the shares. Félix Guattari argued a “pragmatic of language.” I am drawing attention to certain points in his argument here, as Deleuze and Parnet summarize them in *Dialogues*—just to think them over-brackets identify my insertions:

- (1) it is pragmatics which is essential because it is the true politics, the micro-politics of language [recognized as each person enters the task and expression of it];
- (2) there are no universals or invariants of language, no 'competence' separate from 'performances' [where the 'I' occurs and is according to its measure and style];
- (3) there is no abstract machine internal to language, only abstract machines which provide language with a particular collective assemblage of enunciation [this is the way ideologies work, corporate ideology in the present instance] (there is no subject of enunciation) [we all experience this displacement], at the same time as they [the abstract machines] provide content with a particular machine of desire [i.e., advertising] (there is no signifier of desire) [it's a machine];
- (4) there are therefore several languages in a language, at the same time as there are all sorts of fluxes in the contents that are sent out, combined and continued. The point is not 'bilingual,' 'multilingual'; the point is that every language is so bilingual, itself so multilingual, that one can stutter in one's own language, that is push ever further the points of deterritorialization of assemblages. [This deterritorialization is, one by one, tortuous and labyrinthian, and right here poetry and art step into a 'territory' that is not provided by the abstract machinery—there is no map.] A language is criss-crossed by lines of flight that carry off its vocabulary and syntax. [I.e., Mallarmé and many another poet you may have read—this what is meant by the materiality of language.]

It is curious what passes into the *hands* of poetry. Its record across centuries is one of protest and resistance, of flight and interrelations, close and far, even to time as the life of space. But protest and resistance are basics of the lyric stance. I think of the point that Giorgio Agamben makes in *Infancy and History*:

The original cohesion of poetry and politics in our culture was sanctioned from the very start by the fact that Aristotle's treatment of music is contained in the *Politics*, and that Plato's themes of poetry and art are to be found in the *Republic*; it is therefore a matter beyond dispute. The question is not so much whether poetry has any bearing on politics, but whether politics remains equal to its original cohesion with poetry. (147-148)

So you have set me off, part of the foregoing answering in advance of your specific question.

From Lisa Robertson

Two quests for Robin:

I'm seduced by those overgrown Wildean paths. More than the loss of the sacred, I regret the modernist exfoliation of decadence (though these are in counterpoint). I get gorgeously lost in such exuberant thickets as "The Sphinx" for example, but "I am to ask a question/where no question exists."

On CBC (as we were driving through orchards) George Steiner spoke of the social necessity of remembrance coupled with the contemporary impossibility of committing "the great mistake of hope." I sense style as a concretion of the impossibility almost emblematically in *Cups*: "*The Muse requires a politics*." I wish you could describe a little the emblem hope-politics-style-remembrance.

Lisa, I didn't know what to make of your adjective "Wildean," overgrown or not. It's loaded and tumbles like clothes in the dryer at the launderet: homosexuality, decadence, paganism, aestheticism, the "religion of beauty." Aestheticism, in which Wilde has a notable part, runs from Ruskin through the Pre-Raphaelites beyond Pater and Wilde to the striking mind of Rachel Annand Taylor in the early years of this century. Her *Leonardo the Florentine* is absolutely memorable, or should be. The last who knew a very great deal about Aestheticism was Richard Aldington: "Aestheticism ceased to be a fashionable fad with the trial and condemnation of Oscar Wilde in 1896." He does not mean that it was merely a fad, rather that it became so in the turmoil of the place of art in everyday life that was so much the sphinx's question in the nine-

teenth century. Most obviously, H.D., Bryher, Yeats, Pound, the Sitwells, and Stevens were at least initially still answering. But Wilde's trial and condemnation are billboards of the defeat of aestheticism. How curious that sexuality would be made the blunt instrument of it! It was certainly convenient.

The word *Wildean* assembles a phantom—the effete, the effeminate, the soulful, the aesthete, the fake, the purple patcher, the affected and silly, the queer, etc.—nothing here about his kindness and charm, his love of his wife and his sons, his fine intelligence that worked by paradox—the consistency one finds in his art and criticism as always *para-doxa*, against opinion—nothing here about his courage—nothing about his elegance which was always fragile and challenged from within—no interest at all in the realm of desire that would become his obsession. The word *aesthete*, used as a negation, is meant to perfect the masculine principle, pretty picture that that is. The notion of “purple patches” in prose or poetry is Wilde's own critical insight. Wilde was carrying a lily to Lillie Langtry, for whom he'd written *Lady Windemere's Fan*, when he was seen walking down the Strand. The word *homosexual* is of late coinage and might better be replaced by a slang word like *queer*, which is at least honest about a perspective from which it glares. The word *homosexual* comes into English along with the word *heterosexual* in 1892 by way of C.G. Chaddock's translation of Krafft-Ebbing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*, and both were picked up by Havelock Ellis in his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* in 1897. As Shakespeare has it, taking the word from Latin around 1598, “Go to: *homo* is a common name to all men” (*Henry IV, Part I, Act 2, Scene 1, 88*). There the word means *human being*. The word *heterosexual* is used to name a norm. But the record there hardly has the distinction of a norm and it is an uneasy matter, indeed. To put it bluntly, you can make of sexuality any kind of fake you want to, but it remains there, various and surrounding, as Sappho tells us. On this matter of sexuality and condemnation, I particularly like this remark by Wilde to his friend Robert Ross, during his final illness:

When the last trumpet sounds and we are couched in our porphyry tombs, I will turn and say, “Robbie, Robbie, let us pretend we do not hear!”

With few exceptions, aestheticism was overwhelmed in the United States and Canada by the newspapers and Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta *Patience*, which preceded Wilde's lecture tours over here in 1882. See Kevin O'Brien's *Oscar Wilde in Canada: An Apostle for the Arts* (1982).

Patience is very funny, but its point is that aestheticism is fake. Lady Jane, one of the "Rapturous Maidens," says to herself and to us, of course, early in the play:

There is a transcendentality of delirium—an acute accentuation of a supremest ecstasy—which the earthy might easily mistake for indigestion. But it is *not* indigestion—it is aesthetic transfiguration.

Wilde is represented as Reginald Bunthorne (a Fleshy Poet). This is the key passage, Bunthorne's soliloquy:

Am I alone
And unobserved? I am!
Then let me own
I'm an aesthetic sham!

The air severe
Is but a mere
Veneer!

This cynic smile
Is but a wile
Of guile!

This costume chaste
Is but good taste
Misplaced!

Let me confess!

A languid love of lillies does *not* blight me!
Lank limbs and haggard cheeks do *not* delight me!
I do not care for dirty greens
By any means.
I do *not* long for all one sees
That's Japanese.

I am *not* fond of uttering platitudes
In stained-glass attitudes.
In short, my mediaevalism's affectation,

Born of a morbid love of admiration!

Notice the exclamation marks, which suggest Wilde's manner of speaking, and the swipes at the Pre-Raphaelites whose realism would be ignored or disapproved as it was by Dickens. Wilde was trapped, though the best of his work was still to come.

So, what was at stake in this escapade with beauty? To track it, one would have to go back to Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819) and think though what the Urn tells us:

'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

There, later in the century when Keats's letters are known will be found the problem of Negative Capability and the discipline of "uncertainties," which Olson would pick up in *The Special View of History*. Keats is the muse of the escapade. We would then have to keep some memory of Ruskin, perhaps his *Fors Clavigera* [Fortune the Clubbearer]: *Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain* (1877-1883):

... Giotto's Justice has no bandage about her eyes, (Albert Dürer's has them *round* open, and flames flashing from them), and weighs not with scales, but with her own hands. ... (15 October 1871)

And above all Walter Pater, especially the "Conclusion" to *The Renaissance* (1873) where one finds:

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. . . . Only be sure it is passion—that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of such wisdom, this poetic passion, the desire for beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most. For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

In Pater and Wilde, condemned sexuality informed the moment, and would subdue the one and condemn the other. Both insist on a poetics of life in the public place. And since poetics is a major principle of freedom, we should remember this escapade and them. The story, Lisa, is too long for this occasion. I have left William Morris out, for example, and most of the poets. Swinburne belongs here and——achievement in language.

But I can't pass by the French connection. Let Baudelaire, Nerval, and Mallarmé haunt us, as they do me, as they do the poetry of this escapade. Only one poet in North America stands brilliantly among them—Poe is a matter for another conversation—Émile Nelligan, also condamné—Qu'est devenu mon coeur, navire déserté?—What has become of my heart, abandoned ship? Let a line from a poem by Nerval, "Les Cydalises" ("The Glories"), float by, because Nelligan loved that poem—Où sont nos amoureuses?—Where are our lovers? And we step, whether we like it or not, into the twentieth century.

Now, on this Wildean occasion—as it turns out—allow me to draw forward two marvellous books of this French connection. You'll find them carefully noticed in Richard Aldington's unsurpassed "Introduction" to *The Portable Oscar Wilde* (1946). Théophile Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835). Gautier's "Preface" is a marvel of useful arrogance and laughter. Here one finds what was the negative capability of beauty and truth translated into "the religion of beauty," the protest against the hypocrisy of cultural "virtue," the point of ant-Utilitarianism (later so stunningly told in Dickens's *Hard Times* in a very different way), and the problem of it all, Art-for-Art's Sake.

One of the most ridiculous things in the glorious epoch which we have the happiness to live in is undoubtedly the rehabilitation of virtue. It is undertaken by every paper, whatever its political hue, red, green, or tricolour.

....

They applied to literature the article in the Ten Commandments:

Thou shalt not kill.

People could no longer allow themselves the least little dramatic murder, and the fifth act had become impossible.

....

You don't make yourself a cotton cap out of a metonymy, you don't put on a comparison instead of a slipper; you can't use antithesis as an umbrella. . . . I have a deep conviction that an ode is too light an apparel for the winter. . . .

(Joanna Richardson's fine translation)

And Gustave Flaubert's *The Temptation of Saint Antony* (1874). It's actually poetry. There's an excellent translation by Kitty Mrosovsky (Penguin 1983) that ought in justice to bring the book all the way into English. Her brilliant "Introduction" brings forward those who have read it well—Valéry, that "it left him at the mercy of a 'dizzily unleashed library'"—Foucault whom she quotes on his reading of it, "As an exciting form of imaginative life, not meant to deny reality, but appearing in the 'interstices' between signs, books and commentaries. . . . The library is ablaze." She gives us the necessary first step into these pages: "The open Bible which Antony pores over is of key importance, the very locus of temptation." I want to offer a teaser from one passage near the end of the book:

And opposite, on the other side of the Nile,
all at once the Sphinx appears.

He stretches his paws, shakes the fillets on
his brow, and lies down on his stomach.

Striking her wings with her dragon's tail,
as she leaps, flies, and spits fire from her
nostrils, comes the green-eyed Chimera, wheeling,
yelping.

On one side her long ringlets are tossed away
to tangle with the hair on her back, and on the
other they dangle down to the sand and sway with
the rocking of her body.

THE SPHINX

is motionless, and watches the Chimera:

Stay here, Chimera; stop!

THE CHIMERA

No, never!

THE SPHINX

Don't run so fast, don't fly so high, don't
yelp so loud!

THE CHIMERA

Don't call to me, don't call to me, since
you're forever dumb!

I hope you will go on reading. Of course, it takes the whole book to reach Antony's final soliloquy:

délirent:

O bonheur! bonheur! J'ai vu naître la vie j'ai vu le mouvement commencer.

deliriously:

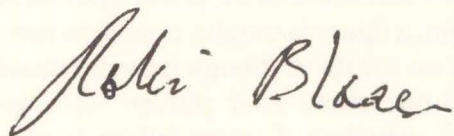
O happiness! happiness! I have seen the birth of life, I have seen the beginning of movement. The blood in my veins is beating so hard that it will burst them. I feel like flying, swimming, yelping, bellowing, howling. I'd like to have wings, a carapace, a rind, to breathe out smoke, wave my trunk, twist my body, divide myself up, to be inside everything, to drift away with odours, develop as plants do, flow like water, vibrate like sound, gleam like light, to curl myself up into every shape, to penetrate each atom, to get down to the depth of matter—to be matter!

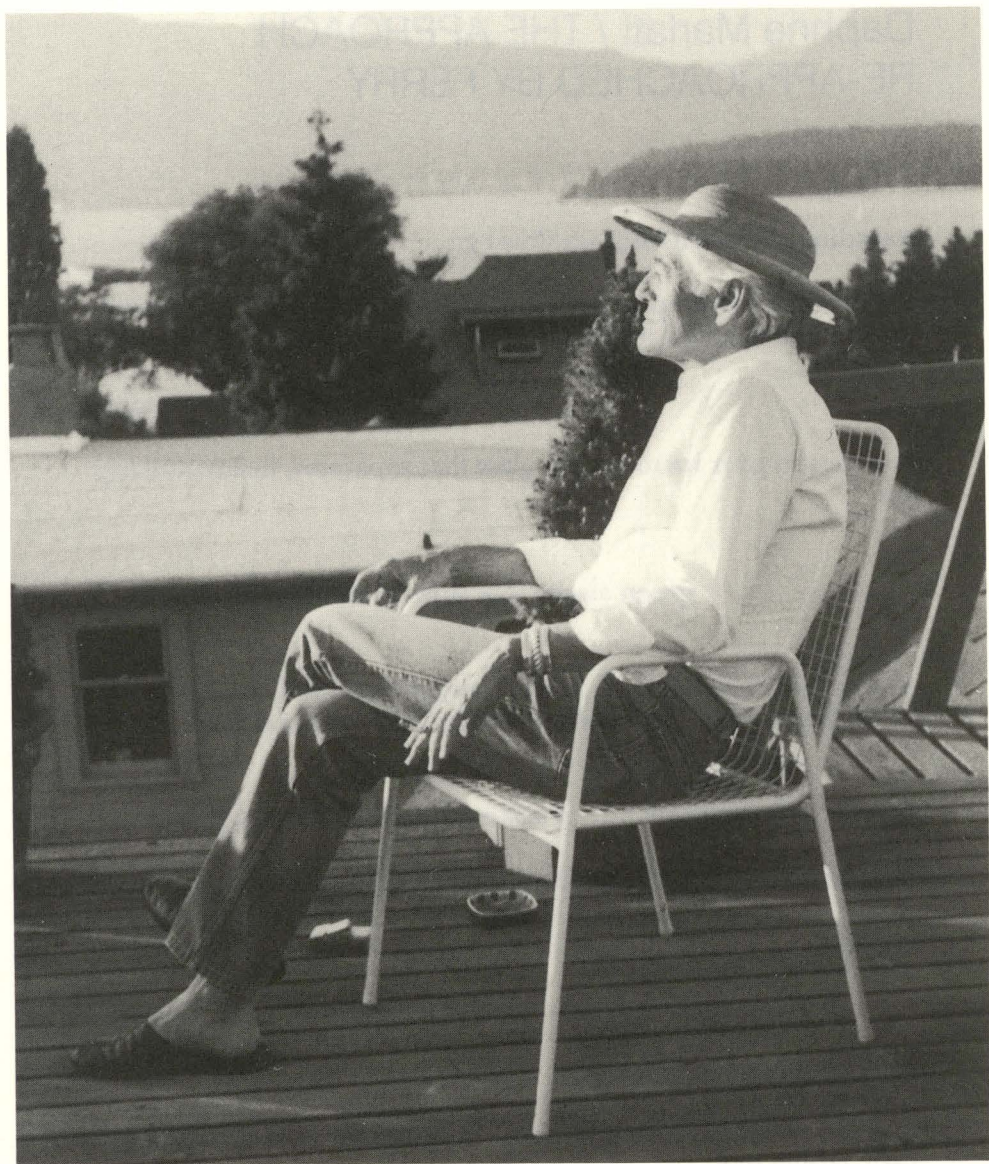
We step into the twentieth century, don't we? Sphinx and Chimera, companions of everyday.

Lisa, back to your "quests." I do not agree that the sacred is lost—or even at a loss. It is being integrated in poetry and in that companion thought that also uses operative language, philosophy. The sacred and the profane are false in their dualism. The sacred and the secular are false in their dualism. Thus, the Sphinx who is also the Chimera climbs up the body of Oedipus, as in that astonishing painting by Moreau (1864)—with claws. In the poem that follows my Sphinx, which you kindly mention, a figure is caught, unable to move among the broken pieces of mirror on the floor, though he sees himself piece by piece down there. I don't understand your phrase "the modernist exfoliation of decadence"—whether of leaves falling or of some huge skin flaking. Modernism develops out of what the last end-of-a-century's apocalypse thought was cultural decay, rather like our own. The last thing I would call decadent is the work in art of this century, though it is often at a loss; thus, the postmodernisms and the WHATEVER comes after that. Change and the thought of what is irreparable in cultural deformation seems to me to be more to the point.

I regret that I did not hear George Steiner on CBC. You tantalizingly summarize—"the social necessity of remembrance coupled with the contemporary impossibility of committing 'the great mistakes of hope.'" I won't presume to reconstruct what that brilliantly civilized man was saying. He would not have meant that hope is a mistake. The principle of hope is probably biological, but when we turned it into the fortune-telling of twentieth century politics and historicism we were ravaged. We are now witnessing the most nefarious attack on democracy—though we are told only Communism did that—that could be imagined by Capitalism. These are great mistakes that counter hope, while the stupidifiers jabber on about elitism. Anti-intellectualism and anti-memory currents of our culture flow into the estuaries of the Moral Majority, so they name their politics. Hope may well sit on her globe, blindfolded, as in a kitschy painting by Watts that I like. Memory is fundamental to the mind at work—it helps to know how ancient we are, it helps to know the art and thought that go into the structure of meaning changing meaning. *Remembrance* is a gentle word to describe the energy that goes into this, according to our abilities and chances. You bring up style in this, a word that has been stretched. Traditionally, we are told that style is the man or the woman—true up to a point, but that could also be said of table manners. Some years ago, I took from Merleau-Ponty the notion that style in poetry and prose is better thought of as the distance moved in the language. Language is a way of travelling.

Thank you, Lisa. Your "emblem hope-politics-style-remembrance" struck me as blazons of poetry.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Peter Blase". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" written in a larger, more prominent hand than the last name "Blase".



Daphne Marlatt / THE APPROACH
RE-APPROACHED BY FERRY

rounding the point engines slow i go

out in wood smell up close home in house-lit twilight's intimate
"would reach, could touch"

this celebrated air, imagine

nearness in your hand on the glass that separates, inside looking
out

green awake that slows arrival there

or outside reading in: you in the lounge illumined, strange, i want.
not to frame, your hair whose scent its very nearness then

Nearness so pronounced . . . it makes all discrimination of identity

into the kiss that blurs outside-in quick tongues intent

and thus

green dream recedes at the shore

all forms of property, impossible

"you" no different, no other than co-terminous with air, the light
shrill, cicada-like

home dream in our hands let go, let go

WATER MARK

small lights in the dark, coming up across water, arc

out of wind rush, transient, intransigent beating forward to reach
(you) bridge (you) the gap, gulf, eyes' bafflement in nowhere-space

still, deck underfoot's some footing, rail cupped in a palm's solid
let's say, contained

How curious, complex the touch, this subtle art, Renée notes

flayed in wind rush and nowhere, no one — 'you' mislaid in the
impeccable shape that intent takes

her fingers clever lingerers at love's shudder, how desire writes
Renée raking the roots of hair, anguish netted there in the mind's
traffic, under skin, thin tattoo i strain to read you in

Your form . . . a gleam that leaves me clutching emptiness

so arc, so intent that will not cease its beating forward, thrown
the shudder of the poem's engine in reverse

traitress tide, she carves, stealing away

her mark, licit and legible there in fading skin

D.S. Marriott / THE DREAM, CALLED LUBEK

Now blacks, in the hold, working.
The harbours, overhung by mist. The canvas,
overseen by frost and rain.
The freest sea rides in to port. The air
refreshes ladies out on afternoon strolls, out for gain.

Perhaps the snow cleaves them,
their tongues passwords or gifts
concealed in dreams or memory of stars, else handed names
like coughs to sweeten the white acid-salt.
I am one of them like a glass in the sun.

As on a dark sea where no other is,
desolate in the screen never landing in desire;
wishes in with the tide, washed-up and tiered,
turning the sails on to dark horizons, on to dark rock;
seas of submergence
in which there is no place, no access,
cast out upon forgetfulness with no vessel,
pursued in the breakage of the wake.

To be myself inside the witness
where memory falls in remembrance
like a deluge; neither tribunal, nor excuses,
as I floated on the mirroring and a sail drew near,
nor withdrawal as the days and years become air and salt.

To be myself inside the witness,
witnessing the lost one never coming back,
all the recriminations and betrayals and disappointed lists,
as if in my thoughts there was a darkness,
without finitude or fascination,

which exists, has no burial, it resumes
neatly inside myself like an open grave.

To be adrift inside the reigning green,
deep in the midst and unfathomable seas,
overboard in the depths of each shining reflection
so false they return unnamed; a past never present,
down below a cloudless dark on the edges of waves.

On a road that is no road, the air dark with persistence:
the never-found names, appear. We receive
their iridescence in the form of human sewers and ashes.
We ensure their kenning through loss and sacrifice.

Knowing that the sacred cannot be housed here
after the silences of so many years, after the weaknesses of our disunity.
We return to what is lived in the barrenness
of what is desecrated, for tragedy is never enough
for what remains of us, nor what is lost the greener.

*

In the morning a heavy rain and wind came on.
Free as air
that scours from across the sea.
The last sheared tides as the lash speaks through
what occurs, what cannot, what remains.

Steve McCaffery / THE DATE JUST SEEMS

There are stars above a piece of soap
someone just happens to have dropped
into a movie.

Day breaks
traditional function of an egg on shoulders
listening for signs to brim
as quiver taking hearts by storm
in celebration of the question stringing out.

Which end gets switched
in an igloo of rats.

The broad river stretches
to avoid this theme.

There is a moon which Kathy tries to reach
but can't

because the edge of her page isn't Yale.

UNTITLED

i am in my self
what is called good

i am really touched by what
you are trying to say

i am bound to the cycle
of the pills i take

a minimal biology
is what i've got

the man i married is
a poster of letters

my husband as you see
is still a postman

shall i post your letter
shall i be the husband of you

i shall shut up
it is too romantic

to proofread the epitaphs
on others' gravestones

graveyards
are for mystics

you are so beautiful
in your yellow garment

are you so beautiful
in your yellow garment

but i drive a car
and a hard bargain

my husband is a driver
and your yellow garment

is our garage.

would you like to wear
my yellow garment?

HYSTERY

Somewhere between escapism
and utopia you meet
a wound

in seconds it becomes

a spangle of abridged cuneiform
the finger snap
of compounds

recomposed delay.

All this sounds seconds.

Time to narrative.

The gap at the back is the space
where the rest

splits dripping.

It's quite happy having been however
and then again

how can we be weather when
our only politics are rainbelts
or delays of game.

The same as the sonnet

a merely reader's guide
to ultimates

still peeling.

Dear Page this

turns a reader meaning
a dual is not a social
contract. Make of your hands
a place not a tool. And understand
by here
an employee. The route of writing
not the root of language.

We understand that a mind may not be used
to underwrite its cognitive expenses
nor is it subject to the philosopher's
commission.

Narrative begins at eight o'clock
in a reciprocity eliminating differences.
Characters too, a commutative grouping
on the second stage of "era."
In other tests a fashionable Aristotle
fixes time lags to études with sample suckings of
an otherwise Copernican body.

Serialization or vicariance. (The a priori nerve
is obvious.) Watts in a name exists discovered
as a lightbulb stating instances from the spinach series
warm up.

On the other hand, Euclidean speech
in the way of good hope via deviance.
I am a word next a new word newer word
take my place mine too and mine
again and again.

Michael McClure / from PORTRAIT OF THE MOMENT

STOP,

HOLD, LET THIS MOMENT never cease. Drag it out
of context look at the roots of it in quarks
and primal hydrogen. It's the sound
of Shelley's laugh in my ears.

YOU
THINK
WE
ARE
BODIES
WALKING
UP
TO
ONE
ANOTHER
AND
SPEAKING.

Kissing.
Holding hands.

A universe before man ever was, filled
with dragonflies
in
your
eardrums.

Palm trees and skyscrapers. Vervet monkey
in the euphorbia tree staring at me.

The lion is consciousness. The eagle
is experience. As real as mud
chiming
with light
from
rainbows.

"Fuck you," right in your face.

"Fuck you!" He pulls out a gun
in reply. Gun the size of a toilet.
Blue-black. Bullets fire into a world
made of stacks of dirty feet.
Eyes of starving families. Dust
from red clay. Something
is purring
or flying.
Sound of thunder jars loose dead leaves
and they slowly fall
while the bell rings.
The bell chimes red-deaded
linnets
wiping their beaks
on the green lichen.
Planes roar
from the airport
mixing
with sounds
of the traffic.
Raindrops on the brim
of a hat.
Round yellow seeds among hailstones
on the gray wet planks.
The self coming out like CLOUD,
CLOUD of FACES
and shoulders.
Big cloud. Bulk. Made
out of meat. All imagin-
ation like the river god, rippling
shoulders and muscles and hungers
and actions and their substrates

in childhood as childhood
has become dark meat like
Rexroth
said.

It's the eagle of experience feathered
with faces.

IT'S THE THOUGHT

OF

THE

BODY

AT

the edge

of

THINGS;

it's

the physics

of physiology,

the universe as athlete.

It's a real if like the odor

of chinchilla fur

or car tracks and deer prints

side by side

in

day

old

mud.

REAL
CLOUD
OF
FACES
and gone
now.

Demon warriors and toad men
and sneaky thoughts before glass
cabinets with secret drawers
and smell of frankincense
wrapped in pink panties
and raw meat. Then buried
in statues of dreams at
midnight
by an old barb-
wire fence.
While
the car motor
runs.

The face in each feather
is dumb and simple.
THE EAGLE AND THE LION ARE RAPT
IN ONE THING

BUT
that is beside the point

WHERE

light becomes meat

BEING

BURIED

in boys' leg muscles
or the plumpness of wrists
and the baby's interlocking
of eyes. See ME!
It's ALL at the edge of things

becoming the matter
WE
ARE,
making the gound work,
protein groundwork,

from
gasses
and stars
in a plasma. With
all the dimensions there
((IN THAT))
we only have hints
of
HERE
in this tiny HUGE space.
Architecture of something else
that is seen as stuff.

AN
INTELLIGENT
FLATWORM

a hammer,
moss rubbed over the surface
of a turquoise,
streetlights in fog,
enzymatic structures of subtle happiness

in
an

OLD
WOMAN'S

WORDS.

Look at her glasses there
inside of me somewhere
in the future scratched
on a scale on a moth's back
next to the vistas of a dark ocean
seen from the hilltop.
Children shouting.

"Dog piles" of boys fighting.
Smell of mincemeat pies and snuff.
Pictures of duck hunting inside
of sleeping bags.
Looking down at my solid hands
posing
with chunky fingers
of sculpture laid out being themselves
for me and everybody in an
IMAGE
while I look up
through my dark brows.

As old as what will happen
and bright as the corners
of coal bins and the smell
of coal dust. Sound of cinders
dumped out over iron rust.

AWARENESS ENLARGES

A PROCESS

till

I walk through caves
of it. Wooden
yoyos. Alive and lithe
and powerful as a blue-black
snake or a wet beach stone,

IT

TWISTS

AND

WRITHES

with muscles moving
the big scales

I
imagine. In im-
itation of something
in the original DARK
DENSITY
that never was till
this place

O
N

T
H
E

S
C
R
O
L
L

with the chunky fingers
laid out over themselves
and my eyes looking
up through dark brows.

Peter Middleton / from PATERNALISMS

1/

Language's strong need to be loved, salaried fight
to stay adequate to that ripe, gorgeous reality
whatever it is, that unfolds directly, full
of conflicting urges and symbols, authentic
within its selfish rebellion from the chains of
syllabary, aloft in the ferris wheel of archaic
pictograms which leave us wanting more.

Augustine said "Talk some nonsense"
to move his frenzy kiln wards, just living
the integrity of domain. His working
is different now, he waits for the words to come
to him. His nonsense is well finished.
Refers his fluency to a haunt, and poetry
the snicket at night, cycling fast without touching.

Representative of the object world, his child,
nature, glyphs, adequate dad's word
is alleged to be an upright presence
hot from the struggle at the crossroads
where the signs said Thebes and Truth.
Later his utterances act out the future
thinking it is the past, phone the Hopi.

As I speak, father is made present.
He is what permits the air between us
to resonate its cavities with hearing and telling.

He is talked into existence, the play acted
by the voices of all his people. He is made
the universe of discourse, and billows forth.
He is the analytic father, phallus in mathesis.

Or so these men say. A large raindrop
on stone paving is clear through despite
the always already swirling oils on the meniscus.
These men's books are the whole of language.
Inside, the dead fathers try to find out
what is going on, the larynx is out,
the fax down, they think a woman would help.

"He did not know that he was dead" wrote Freud
describing a dream. Years passed and no one
did the obvious, insist on an answer
to their question, what did he need?
No one. Not that nothing happened there.
Ghostly meals were eaten. He thought he thought.
And still the narrative was binned.

Shiftings and the varying true, marked him
from this time. Idle, later his psychological
object was a piece of compacted fruit
rejecta from a child of his. Later still
a feeling of being became more English,
as if the former allotment still grew to
the low end of the plantains in subscript.

4/

Young pilots with export mentality, haptic
brilliance, and market vigour flew the imperium
craft, sub and hyper space. Unsuccessful
regional ventures began to diffuse their horror
stories throughout occupied space. Classic
early adopters seemed to lose blip when disparate
points in the galactic limen syzgyed for reasons unknown.

Paternal loss making surrogate chip set
dream blank, dancing, hiding one's hands
under the stiff cape of a white surplice.
Your father looks in your eyes and sees
his own gaze back at him. Silence compacts
to localised nodal pressures as the bathysphere
descends his memory. Each wish has found a niche there.

Our young hero was lucky. Purely rational
trialability, affect warehousing, and
interrelated order distantiation, left him
on his own when the ship's breakdown occurred,
prior in this rare case, to entering hyperspace.
The other crew were friendly but older men,
interested only in discussing boring stuff

like the merits of pre & post natal cognitive programming.
During the months they were stranded in that sector
the pilot began to wonder why the imperium

failed to consider the distributive entirety.
It was rumoured that all space drives were built
outside known space, beyond this happenstance.
He was bored. He read the small ship's library.

The obvious identity of gothic spire, rocket
and erect member calls us into an age
actually in parallax to what gently severed
iconologists call our own, as if detained
under a sort of Prevention of Terrorism act.
Age to will in experienced callings
to the body to answer: just a word or two.

Then he discovered an archive in the cargo.
Called residual externality in symbolic domains
it covered mostly ancient history and expansion
records. Body axis precessed over a new eidetic
range. He left the pilot service on his return
and entered university. Superordinate factors,
crossmodal plans from the imperium were not evident.

No one could call the crossweave of basal
scholarship adamic, but in his role of president
Federal accidentalism was seen from time.
Enrolled scribes gave him a popular station
segregationalists of readership could not refute.
His speech was challenged singularity. There
were no signifiers where he came from, none expected.

10/

In ever seen pellucid green rendered
a growing up sliver of a me gone
to his old illumination in crystalline
rambunctious prayer. He stands astride
his charger, the battlements lay the base
line to a grass colour you could sustain
yourself with, in the guilt, from most, small.

Manhood has a speed, event time
radiating from the polished gesture of bone
moulded with facial padding, the
jaw is wired for the command line,
monitoring thoughts as the mirror gradually
unsilvers shred by chert. He says love
and means only that act, word and it.

Argue with say. Argue with bad.
And the was it. I can see your need
wiring your jaw for a straight smile.
I see your hope gets you through
the next hour. But by what measure.
A tip of convolvulus shoot seems so still
as it grows furiously; so green, so hopeful.

Are all thoughts memories? Which
memories of age eleven are aches

deep in the shin bone? Why this
insistent speculation? Is it a refuge
this argument about conversation running
my head? From what flattening impact
of usual townscape, irregular pavement?

Late to get talk to mean into
catch history guessing lucky. My shirt
protects me from chest colds, my shoes
from hookworms, my trousers from lust's
death and my jacket? Do you know
what I just said? Plenty of pockets
(feminine symbol) & tweedy (well integrated).

From torn out limbs knowledge, and that
is my penis, restore it at once.
Lessen the silence with conversions.
Give me your hand. The lines I will
read in a moment, but first, the plumped
abraded skin; that is a reading. In
your head you're shouting, out here, tranquil.

O yes, he walked up & down lengthways
for years, a hand waving to just miss
doorjambs and breasts. He is not. Muddle
through the metaphysics if you must but
no more alliteration, it undercuts your
semantic intent. Oh you fool, you've lost
your key, read Shakespeare, represent well.

Erin Mouré / SOME CUES, or LIFE A KETONE SPLENDOR

nine chapters in a book for her

a)

My uncle Dick laughing at my father (exists only in this image)
the long line.
Boats scuppered into the drink.

b)

Shore enough Daemon gets to me.
A light in the sky meaning "dawn" gets to me too.
Drink eternal thirst, the cup or gullet.
Tries a few things.
The repeated poem about waking. Why not say
"poem" in the poem, every George does it, every (silence)
Sue too.

c)

Paddling across the lake before the boat sinks.
It is always a delight to see you.

& you think I have a pasty appearance?

Wearing my bathing suit (blue) & brown
tortoise-shell sunglasses.

d)

What I'm looking for is adulation of course or
a place in a French film

no, chérie, about the wine industry.
Those stainless barrels below the whirr of pressing machines.

The banks of combines crossing the plains of Canada are no more,
my youth, my youth,
tho the banks still prosper.

e)

Metternich never shovelled bituminous coal.
Neither did absentmindedness.

I would put one piece on
& the whole house would warm up, suffering.

f)

In those peasant days we loved our lives.
People understood our prosody.

Crowds were lost in the din of electrons; there were sketches
to remember, the monuments of *la vieille France*

scoffed at, all those determinate gargoyles
with their beautiful lips

you could put a finger in, & kiss, shaking

g)

When I was young we had two porsches, he said
to the daughter, visiting. This is prose but wait,

oh! poetry!

The front porsche, he said.

The back porsche, he said.

h)

Who are we, stained red with desire?
Hating puns.

i)

Having forgotten the word "amenable" & needing
a fierce shoulder, my friend
are you fierce enough to be this shoulder?

Is there a place for us? They said our genitals looked
the same & frowned upon us, but
they don't look so

they are both, all, beautiful—
My finger, tongue, teeth touching there,
my wet ear, oh, how it is or was, I still dream of you-

FROM "THE ODIUM"

for G.

+++

Some days in the light of terrific fears
the odious patently visible,
an awning afloat

a bold memory of what I was in a collar

an awning afloat
its blue stripe aflutter

& in that collar I stood waiting
twice upon each insistence
Yesterday chickadees stopped in my hands,
their dark fingers faint on my opened digits

their round eye turned upward & feral being
nervous

the odious palpable

whereas in the world of my collar
a chickadee lands on the palm of a woman guerrilla
a chickadee I tell you with its black hat & grey-gold shirtwaist
a chickadee that can land sideways on a branch *no problem*
stares

some days in the light of terrific fears

+++

"the most interesting problems in writing poetry"

+++

A woman in a mall, screaming at the ugliness of the coat
(footage of '36: children leaving Madrid)

+++

Why are the young smoking?
Why do they burn the croissants in the copper Bistro?
Because somewhere they are distracted, smoking?
A woman is

without explanation.
Is, without explanation.
There are lighter moments than the poem,
which takes, as it writes,

concentration. Or as it is read. But.
Why are the young smoking?

+++

From where I sit, the smoke-
house roof over the obscene cinema.
Tin & fans,

air inlets, metal fins in fine-cut rows
around the pointed aluminum tower.

In the cinema, the film promises
a woman who can suck her own breast,

or clitoris. I forget which,

+++

In the back of a police truck, a decent life.
That is all I ever wanted to live, Jesus!
Fair particles of rain fell where I fell,
on the career pages.

A white truck w/ blue stripes & a siren.
Falling over into the asthmatic alarm clock.
A shirt with blue-stripes too,
but in the wrong direction.

+++

What did we forget to make sure of?
Or, more truly, "*are forgetting to*".

A habitat in the poem, a rich habitat,
pale beech leaves still clinging on the branches,
like codes,
or replicas.

Or the night you came back, spilling the wine
on the table.
It was those codes we stopped the flow with,
jumping outward to avoid the stain or tide

which shot off in another direction.

Or will,

when you come back to me
& I take the cruet down from the wall,
I who am in charge of invented memory.

+++

Today, the note from Archimedes saying
"send the two thousand",
protesting "the slowness of Babylon".

A word in e-mail takes its sweet time going thru
the hallway of the Pentagon.
So many fallen in Somalia, so many in Peru.

Can the mail speed up now?
Given your repudiation?

The line of ceasefire is unclear, unclear,
probably botched or botching...

(Oh OK I won't put the word "true" in my
sentence,
any more.)

+++

Some things have been crushed to nothing,
an absence.
We don't put suet in that recipe any more.

This age of ours is so resolute
we forget what the taste was.

Finding the recipe again & making it the old way
is to hate it, wondering.

We don't put in that

This age of ours is so resolute.

And the snow.

Michael Palmer / AUTOBIOGRAPHY 6

(PART 1)

*My name is Johnny Jump-Up
And I live in a shiny car
And when I'm really happy
It takes me very far*

Often this most post-modern of songs
runs through my head
Perhaps I should explain
after my fashion

When I play games of cards
I like to shuffle the deck seven times
knowing that at the eighth
as regards randomness

little more is to be gained
I live with Dolores, a sailmaker
who has proven a satisfactory companion
though prone like myself to melancholy

when the winds are not just right
Once I found a book on a table
which changed my entire life
So I moved from the hotel where I was born

to another hotel, less well kept
where lizards lolled in the sun
of a deliquescent solarium
We feared tropical storms

yet set sail frequently nonetheless
perhaps as a kind of test
Dolores explained to me how it is
ships float

Any object that floats
is buoyed upward to some extent
This force is caused by the weight
of the water it displaces —

the water pressure rises with increasing depth
and because the object is subject
to more pressure from below
than from above, it too may rise

AUTOBIOGRAPHY 6

(PART 2)

*Oh they call me Johnny Jump-Up
For that is not my name
My head rolled down the marble stairs
Things never stay the same*

Our acquaintance M. Collins
would often sing this refrain
from a seat in his favorite cafe
on Escarpment Place

M. Collins it appears came from Chicago
though his accent was no less than perfect
He taught philosophy to idlers
including yours truly

whenever we took shelter from the rain
under the awning of his cafe
It should be noted that M. Collins
has published no books of philosophy

and in fact describes himself
as "a mere table of contents . . .
a very snarl of twine"
Yet on induction and probabilities

he has much to say,
as on indices and icons,
ordinary propositions and the indefinite future
He sang in a lilting tenor

which, given a calm day,
could be heard as far away
as the Library of the Ursulines
in one direction, #10

Street of Modalities in another,
an address which recently appeared to me
in a dream very brief but very clear
The taxi taking you away was a drunken blue

*O they called him Johnny Jump-Up
Since that was not his name
His head rolled down the marble stairs
All this is really true*

Jed Rasula / [ECHO PARK DREAM,
MARCH 22 1985]

Clayton called me from Echo Park lake, where he'd been eating lunch outside on the west shore, to say that his waiter — Artaud— had gone off swimming during his break and not returned. I asked whether he'd drowned. Clayton didn't know; no body had been found, nor had it even been searched for yet. I went down the hill to the lake to help out. No glimpse of Clayton; but I got busy eating inside, then strolled out onto the patio for a moment and saw snowflakes (in L.A.!).

Intermission, fractal pause.

. . .some moving around inside, dark rooms, lockers? pieces of gym clothing, anyway. Went upstairs and caught sight of one-eyed Ripley's Believe It Or Not co-executive producer Mel Stuart going out on the balcony. I followed and found it snowing thickly this time, squalling. Excited, I alerted the rest of them indoors and we all crowded out on the rail above the cool still water; and over the water to the *south*, rapt gaze at the sun and the moon side by side: a bird flying right up, squeezing between them.

BLUSHING IN THE GARDEN OF THE ANIMAL

ruptures in the skin of fruit
split open as muzzles or snouts

as ever as you & many
as you & me
were lifted up through the vowel of a cloud
known as "Unknown"

to *thud* to *said* to whether & went

such honeys rubbing the skin of the drums

what are all these words doing
coming up around me all around me

the necklace of apocrypha
blowing off the oceanic vault

the brain inside the stone
through which my stone knocks back

enormous persons begin appearing
appearing in the pale egg of day, an air, an hour

hands were inserted & look—
sleep washed them

"Blue Moses" shined the bowl
(did The Lion change my face?)

I'm talking to You the
only one at a time

a carnival sleek in pubis
a chlorofyll bass clarinet

the slumber of bodily organs clasping the house
in a low cirrus swoon, tufts or the chakras

in bowls of marigolds, savor the
rasa eros kink in the mask

wherever we are
 however we either
 whoever we or

Lisa Robertson / *from* DEBBIE: AN EPIC

EXORDIUM

Hello nurses of words flattened as if
pronominal and parthenogenic
at the ordinary site of desire
striate light articulates the spurious
clacking of thought private justice cuts
lozenges into the blue your sewn lips
blent with the obfuscating grief of dun
grasses bent into themselves far phalanx

I speak to judge crimes of filiation
as hard sky spent cancelled horizon
my own mouth barking perhaps I am
unmentionable ticking against the
dark adjacency of prose lovely home
of gods and punctuation I say this
against the long and burning hills in the
slatey cold of debt

Dark artemis's division unpracticed
splits into the staccato glamour of
february trickles lurex through the
arbitrary and distant apple tree
a girl's hard russet lace — it is the dreamt
world it is the buckled marsh hawked rhythmic

I see girls who as if armed and in
formation one figure seated and one
other standing — or two seated love
approaching— flaunt the pliant display of
tenderness

others folding clothes one slight
ly bent to place her folded garment her
companion turning around ribboned
thigh to watch her bend compel you to enter
those rooms

another will want to dream just

of those animals associated
with deities or Queens yet still display
the abstinent charm of insouciant
Venus (Venus after Venus stepped
out)

some are called sweetheart and polish the
sexual lens as if it were a blurred
age

one's exact rage ranks an acrid point

Nouns and nerves decay sluices imply
honey or grease of light wrecks to frilled rust
equivocal as certain clocks trees die
hello nurses of clinical distance
with irony antiquity salts thee

A SMALL TOAST

Suburban love is fenced in acid
Civilian love is flush

All living animals need touch
Except for those that don't

I guess

The resemblance of pleasure brings
A dividend of doubt

But forensics could not quantify
the basted evenings furrow

When cities with their citizens
Are molten slings for thought

And pleasure is the whelp I tend
A supernal chiaroscuro

Though complicity thy name is woven
Of unctuous polyphony

A civilianesque proclivity
Has clasped around my throat

This vulture cloak, a streamlined joke
Or greek machine for living

And from surfeit of sprung circumstance
I toast

O disquisit book of marginalia
Each feral daughter knows

Leslie Scalapino / excerpt from GREEN RIVER
AND BLACK RIVER

inverse industry — people living — on water — brothels as the basis,
people sold to them — child slavery — bathing — shanties — inverse
on slight motion.

thunder rumbling, (another place — only), in full clouds —
being collapsed is seen in its movement?

~~~~~

has conflict as the basis which in one's to produce harmony? in  
'our' jobs.

~~~~~

— small similar swaying of the figures as being in one?

at separate green and black rivers meeting —
wind only — on them.
wanting to return 'there' is enervated

~~~~~  
to be always externally oriented as desperate at life. the  
figures leaping with both of the feet in the air, the feet touch their  
hands in the air — are seen by one (or just external).

why is slight motions the same by the figures — relieving  
obstructions/violence by the viewer —?

~~~~~  
people encircled by figures or outside loop flocking to death
as bowing — there — 'not being' as only with the crowd, motions
only. what is place/measure?

one's — dawn — only?

~~~~~  
panic — in *me* — seeing. in the rush of those flocking in (the  
visibility of something the detail through which it is something else)  
— in the cry made from the whole verging pushing on the circle,  
shouting figures calling leaping running — with animal heads,  
projections of 'one' 'speaking' or apprehension — a crowd as one's  
(resistance is external 'only') — it isn't the figures, but one's — flock-  
ing only



the figures are light joking — to bring — which makes the  
separation floating

as bringing/going is halcyon.  
interpretation isn't — one — rush (can't negate — at all) — of  
interior *per se* — that's them — only.

the part on death as motion of crowd not seen *per se*? — is —  
one — external only as desperate as in one 'seeing' but only in the  
motion. *as* one. is their.

~~~~~

to make a logic that is not the same as the motion it is —
while being 'only' that

so it comes up to crescent moon — comes up to 'swans' —
'observation'

is the other crowd flocking to death as communal only —
which isn't phenomenon of one's own dying as occurring observed.
there's not comparisons.

~~~~~

the free-floating crescent moon as not coordinates even — and  
as registration even.

an exterior directive. only.  
one's —inner — dawn

~~~~~

my — perched on cliff — with
tiny children —

a shred of half-moon
bringing/going is halcyon. so

half-moon — in thin

~~~~~

as in not fly from ledge — cliff — with  
tiny children

— as not from apprehension — the shred  
of half-moon

~~~~~

as blind are photographing them
in their faces — shred of half-moon — (not)

flying from cliff with them — in
thin — horns not beginning — 'only'

~~~~~

people bathing — here — in canals — one's  
as distraction is there *per se*

selling people still — here

~~~~~

as them — crowd seen — half-moon shred, also
is that one's — dawn? — 'only' — not then, or is

~~~~~

loneliness is illusion of wanting to return  
as rigor — ?

~~~~~

dreamed placement (—.) of dashes and periods — 'only'
not 'having,' to be, isn't, its obverse, hasn't

~~~~~

there's no other to the  
— horns begin — preceding apprehension  
and perched there — as not apprehension 'only'  
  
is — 'only' 'here' as inversion — one — (itself)  
meeting of horns 'meeting' apprehension

~~~~~

tracked merely — as being it, the tracking
distraction as impermanence even ('even:' is not enervated)

Andrew Schelling / SOUTH PARK CHORUS

1.

"The whole air is full of souls, who are worshipped
as the daemons and heroes, and it is these who send
humankind dreams and omens."

—Alexander Polyhistor

A feather robe for the planet
a weave of migratory songbirds up from Mexican forests
—here comes a pair
quick flight over the ridge
birds or a nuptial
song on the wing?
Dipping for insects another sharp call—
metabolic thought feathered aloft
or urge to stitch
two realms of air—?
Oh forage with sharp
eyes the woodlands
seasonal resident
adrift over town & farmland
Roadsides nor thickets stopping the flight, this
temperate zone—
& vast flocks, true'd by instinct arrive
as toward a bridge over worlds.

The planet assumes a feather robe
"condors, huge condor-like teratons, carrion storks, eagles"
In the Noh play
the *sennin* or fairy
a bridge over worlds
performs her dance
what does the patch-robe'd wandering priest want?
fixes an exacting eye on her,
alone & moving
bare limbs with cold dignity
Lost feather robe draped over a pine branch in moonlight
flat feather edge glints
mottled shade under pine boughs

her feet birdlike—
She dances to recover the robe
her feather'd robe
 a dance to recover her robe.

2.

To have tracked the skyways in annual journey—
have you tracked the skyways?
To have heard
 numerous voices aloft—

"In 1779, with the element of surprise in mind, an outraged Spanish governor of New Mexico, Juan Bautista De Anza, marched his force up the Rio Grande Valley, through the San Luis Valley, and over Poncha Pass to the headwaters of the Arkansas River. In doing so, he made the first documented penetration of the inner Rockies. Passing under the Fourteeners of the Sawatch Range, the Governor turned east over Trout Creek Pass, crossed South Park, and descended onto the plains just south of Pike's Peak."

A bird scolds the intruder. Cocking its crested head—
Note
a low *churr*
 also *phew*—

straighter posture than the female
lacks rusty wash on its dusk-color'd breast
 as toward a bridge over worlds

And from the mix of common
European grasses
brought in by grazing—seeds lodged in a cattle hoof—
 blue gama Canada Bluegrass foxtail barley
a buzz of insect tribes circles the "yard"
 season's arrivant

300 years
of gunpowder civilization
the whirring & beating still with us
 Russian thistle & snakeweed
entered the New World.
What has been missed
in the crosshairs
 of utterance—?—a single
clearly struck thought
 cross the sky quick between branches.

3.

*Some dance on a small
patch of meadow
hoof or claw in the grasses—
 others perform on the wind*

Or from Blaser to lift the
evolutionary line *confounding*
 the gods and the fish
lucid night visions
hoof or claw in the grass
fish with feet babes with tails
Earth in South Park
 open'd the gate between species—
I thought it the Gates of Horn.

And wakened alone next to the meadow at
10,000 feet
 a few hot cinders
last night's fire pale in the dawn
 one pronghorn hoof deep in sod-grass
out on the meadow
I heard the kick of his hooves

feeding on paintbrush, uprooting the
pale cluster'd buds too pale
to call red

aetiolate?

behavior no deer would exhibit
stood & stepp'd
far from the wood's edge

4.

A tract of ground
"winter pasture for deer or other grazing animals"

geard gyrdan

to gird or enclose

Latin *hortus* and in the distance

reconstructed old **ghor-o*

gives way to Greek *khoros*

gives onto the dancing ground

gives *khoros*, "a special enclosure for dancing?"

gives dance & the tragic inflected

bridge of the

chorus

as toward a bridge over worlds

5.

"You could have seen herds of horses, long-horned bison, camels,
antelopes of several species, and mammoths...giant dire wolves,
and tapirs..."

And for three days
we had to lie over

—I got it out of a traveler's journal—
three days while the bison herd pass'd
all passage westward
 blocked for three days
Three days dust and hooves
up from the book's page
 young men cut off from dreams
Three days of migration or three days
locked up with books
a bison herd fifty miles long on the plains
three days rapt by old language intricacies
 we lived "on the hoof"
lock'd wits with ancestral harbingers
three days sifting back words
 & cast a forward glance at the
map like a spy
Three days waiting over
while swift green summer grass parted with thunder &
crushed underfoot
 a wing-tip, a shoulder pelt, knee—

This was the study—
in high mountain meadow
to have heard the numberless feet of the chorus

I reached into the poem
I heard the feet of the *khoro*s.

* * *

*Antero Reservoir Quadrangle
Chaffee County
Colorado*

Aaron Shurin / FOUR VIEWS OUT OF PARIS

I.

A FEW FORWARD

A summer is reduced to glass and holds the light.

His city — the open space in front — (liquid pyramids between your shoulderblades) — where the cat sleeps guarding his window has on its embankment a towel and a pair of socks. Each of us carries childhood to the next man.

That in summer another's presence has tucked away the dome whose symmetry, between columns, is visual perception. When I come where I am the mind of the stroller is figured as a mechanism of the inner world, except that everything brushed by my hands took a few paces forward. Now turning my face I could gaze between the waving leaves to a tenderness crashing above my head, and memories rose there.

A narrow staircase used a red carpet to climb.

II.

STILL LIFE

That was a shadowy resemblance to me — expanses of wall that know they've been struck. The city is given over to fog, the illusionist. A ruin in a thin mist cast pinkness. From the open hall theatrical air flattened the animals as a small boy stood gazing. The regulator — from the seventeenth century a bead of water attended pure silence. Arches of the bridges tossed a few coins into the bowl.

He shredded the fabric calmly on his way to a more dormant landscape — crossroads in the early evening spattered with sun — almost outside but consisting of patches sewn together, a medieval attention sleeping on four wheels, in which a white dog with dark spots dreamed of the rumble of the boulevard. A jug in a niche on the landing was incapable of moving.

Just past there, shaded by streetlamps or trees, puffs of steam are a contemporary afternoon. In his immense protruded detail this motionless mass was held — which would be youthful, irresistible, and sparkling with crystal. That ripple of notes is one corner, where you hear two click steps coming...

Another illusion is that the street is falling or flaring. In glass cases we bear silence. The bones have the views, leaning over its galleries.

Spirit is forever in love with someone taking wing.

III. FOLLOW

Burning houses shot palaces — the posers — where they desert history who posed for the statue of the underground lake.

At the foot of the bed the leaning face of a young man with madrigals as weapons.

We're looking like postage stamps as ironwork sunbeams proportion space between the height of the windows and the blue exterior tubes.

The rain of the distances in one of the paintings behind me.

Great walks, great cloaks, trees in parallel lines.

The fleeing surface is my space or your century.

Fireworks that believed in revolutions throw down from the upstream sieges sea turtles and sleek green stones.

Through them, swallowing them, like the others, as if intensified...

IV.

THE INGREDIENTS

I return to the passage, for example, without the time and the weather being fixed, to see for a second the opaque body that gave the plain little phrase its secret longing.

And the woman — golden ears of solitude — displaying with each gesture one flap off her shoulder, nocturnal, offered to them the veined air of connotation. A city is different from what we see or say on a person's face, though observation might be judged a likeness. The trees in their invisible places are scrupulous, formulas of serenity in which a sky made shadows with great white clouds. They and all the other words stood up on hind legs to be the king of nature.

For above the mineral opera stream parallel eagle is it attic abstract evening lacquers a city capable of the future. The organizers of the beaters of space now getting rid of the inventory.

And after each way to them or trees or all the things in curiosity materials and other limitless materials...

George Stanley / AFTER JOHN NEWLOVE

I'm approaching it from the wrong direction, & so I don't recognize it. Someone — that's as basic as you can get — someone is who we are. Someone arrived, just a moment ago, from the previous moment, where not-he, not-she, had spent a century, an eternity, but then not-his, not-her, lease was up, & someone had to skedaddle — & arrived here, not knowing what it was not-she, not-he, confronted, was over against, because not-he, not-she, approached it from the wrong direction.

If this is the world, then where am I,
what is this loneliness, this outpost?
Or if I am not I, but only someone,
then there is nothing I am over against.

Finally we all face this together,
but don't know what it is, even
though no longer approaching it, in the heart
of it, in our hearts, but still, somehow,
from the wrong direction.

From someone's heart.

THE CITY

I don't want to walk on Granville Mall walk past the
children hear their eyes read my thoughts
They crouch in entryway squat or sit legs skinny
unfed shaved head & tattoo, pierced flesh

Suits go by, briskly The children
read their thoughts or vacant privacy (heads turn,
eyes lowered, fingers meticulously roll a smoke)

Voices corroded, raspy worn by the effort of denying
despair, just for a word or two the words muttered,
laconic (like signals) spoken when needed
for practical reasons (except when the demon of rage
breaks free) Is it not to let
the mortal breath catch the contagion of
analysis? If you found yourself
saying something that took too long to say, using a
conjunction, say, *unless*, *but*, *nevertheless* —
cut the crap! unless unless you had to
get past the sour facts

as if a suit,
or a nice middle-class lady bent down &
extended her hand for you to place your foot
on—the first step—up—& say all the
nice words—*unless, it wouldn't have, if only,*
I never

It's not those words we live by, but the unspeakable ones—maybe they can be kept true by shouting them, like the ultimate, *not!*

They read your thoughts—
how can you live, only caring about money?
how can you live, not caring about caring?
how can you walk by, carefree, thinking
about cars, jewelry,
your mutual funds, security?

The orthodox say:

*Human nature is a mind that grows in a baby's brain,
& learns to compete*

(As these children's bodies are starved)

compete compute consume

(As they huddle together, you stand apart)

compute

(As they seek to be friends & overcome bad feelings,
you seek to overcome weakness & be secret enemies
of all you smile on)

compete compute consume

*& learns skills, like
friendliness, courtesy
& different languages
for different games*

By the towers the children sit, naked
By the towers, with black stick legs,
torn cloth, tiny holes in the mesh

The towers rise of steel & glass
up over the streets in the carpeted suites
the shadowless light the fine, filtered air
cleansed of static the molecules, polished

the suits stride back & forth & get paid
for their faces their eyes
are information receptors cut of a jacket,
knotted tie sweat drops 'synchilla sweaters
made of recycled Coke bottles'

the hand is an information receptor
(the hand is a starfish, the information enters
via the mouth)

*You have to have more than five senses
to keep ahead of the world—up here*

*I have a profit-maximizing module
implanted in my hindbrain, it
overrides family values. The data
is sorted, screened the little things
fall through the screen finer & finer
screens the little things fall the trays
are emptied into the clouds*

I have the finest of minds—compete, compute

High above the children with their stick legs
red spots of anger, white faces

new towers rise, cranes ratchet up their sides

at the top, a visual racket

NAKED IN NEW YORK

Ralph Macchio kissing Eric Stoltz on the lips, impulsively,
on the screen at the Hollywood, in the audience loud gasps,
as-if-sickened groans. These yahoos must have known
their arrant discourtesy, not to the rest of us only,

but to *them*, the two giant heads soft as flags
or luminous clouds above us negotiating
a moment of intimacy - Macchio ruddy-cheeked,
high on his cupid daring,
Stoltz (the beloved) cool, 'vanilla pudding' (Spicer) -

two Harvard boys at an arty New York party,
the straight one mildly pissed at being hit on - wanted,
but gratified by the compliment paid to his beauty
(not cataloguing the gay one's pain at his coolness),

but the guys in the seats, beneath them, the offended,
not wanted - outside this story - outside *Hollywood* -
this Harvard boy, really the actor Eric Stoltz,
rich, young, handsome, wanted,
& they not.

A boy being kissed by another boy could tip over the applecart,
all the shiny red apples in stacks, pyramids, buffed up for sale,
that were once in the dark of the barrel, homophobia high school,
hoping none of us was rotten, no bad apple, no queer,
certain we were all unwanted, none wanted by any of the others -
tipped over, apples rolling, bumping, bouncing, in the street,
in the mud,
bruises, kisses (like pool balls), bites,
desire all over the place.

Catriona Strang and François Houle / R & B
FOR ROBIN BLASER

R+B play

STOMP then play Z c/ R+B

GIVE CUE - ROUT
(a blues) - Free blues

But my baby, yeah
been no decent
none no day
not stir, not
scatter some sweet hurl, so
can't wanna

~~unhook~~ unhook

I'd you

twice over, oh

~~ease-robbed~~

STOP

now I'm fucking fucking

not packed

not pretty

gone back

Free Blues

SEGUE

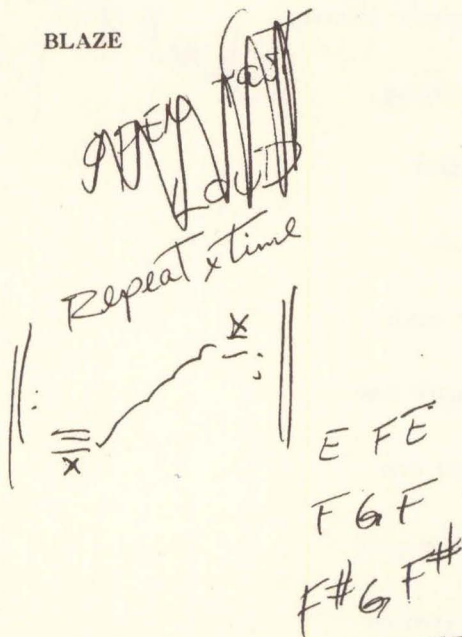
BLAZE

repetition rhythm

BLAZE

and fast

and also without
this is not quite
(in all) senses, not
a dittish dream - already
who'll hip it?



Segue To Romp Drone
John Carter
pattern

ROMP

nor botched

nor simply thronged

richer even every, or every

unrumpled eventual

pupped, ramped

might once rib

one rampant stetch

route I'd rumple ever

pik-toned, and over

~~poth~~ soil-maxim, eh?

as even yet even, oh

chromatic extension
+ circular breathing
slow quiet
pattern drone

Water bubbles

BED
to water

BED

braised, our all obvious
or well-bled
for the sake of
way over
ephemeral freehold
ditched, or dream on
my pomegranite, our dream
of motion, a tactile dirth of

Water bubbles

Fade out

↙
Demi-cl

Brail

Half-Clarinete

together unison

BROIL

4 8 -

scorch-ardent

I am burst, yet

Faster

turnmoil-mangled, and very hot

Slower

thoroughly molted, dipped

(ha, who's well-played tumult, eh?)

you'd climb customary, and I'd learn your size

it'll quicken all, or

dope us, whet muddied mire - how like

a meal - steal such skimp-play, so duly un-

snipped and I'll still gimlet every limb's drag without bites - impossible luck

SEGUE RAG

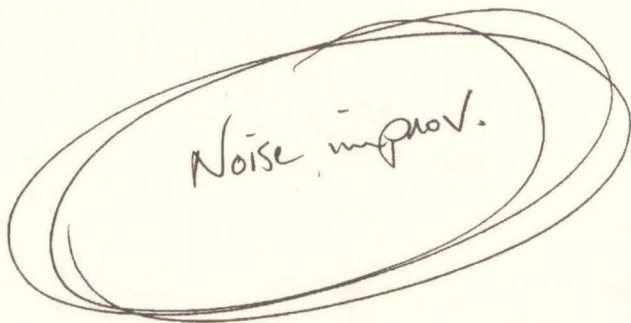
RAG

tongue clicks etc.
space interruptions
nocturnal

I'd rather I'd never
stone-code, same old
considerably rib
can shiv all strips
or even badger no note
so every one and always
already my own
oracle
winch-rand
whose which best
any so long
letter-up or now
tufts rippy
a day-roll
evening's rough-up



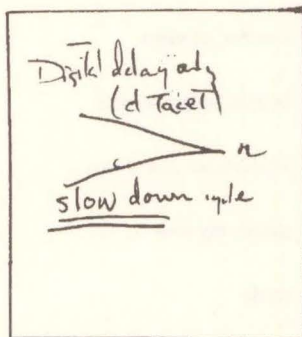
SEGUE
TO REV



quiet?

REV

frankly a livid
turn, no matter
what purpose
which when late-fallen
winds all skilled
away, as if it were a blinding
business, this firm-nation -
our volted orbit's
welter any wander
enfolds, and every cut's
clean gone, right



TURN PAGE

SEGUE

BAIL

Buzz Logic
intimations

BAIL

abrupt buzz logic

fragile custodian

oh a cross peculiar, not }

} quite

} dinned

suddenly precipitous

and, yet

hoop } pole } contract

given (gorgeous) or wick

haunting, un

executed

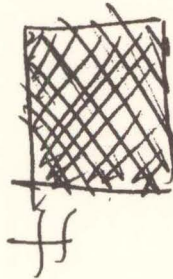
carded, the heart of

into key noises

RID

because if instead
our natural is
marked – a regulate
suitable, all humped
marl and made
plain – the loader
roots more riddle: "I was
nauseated, shot through
with function's flame
sped, stubbed, a patch of
gradual" (no, we will not
make room for)

key noises with
reed cap



Noise

Segue
To Bitch

BITCH

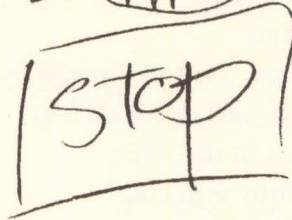
no rock



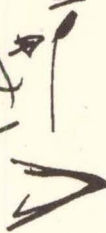
no root



no accident



(maybe)



Nathaniel Tarn / *SIEMPRE MAS INVISIBLE*
(TWO)

for Robin Blaser, at 70.

"Here is another one!"
a night of passage,
as one might say a "bird of passage" —
but this would be owl or nighthawk.
Garden sleepless in the dark,
stalks bent, silently suffering
night winds of this late March.

On the road to endless darkness,
along this single night of passage:
you want to close your eyes and cannot;
the eyes close with no notion of themselves,
no knowledge of the light
beginning to steal into the room
like a thief of the day to be,
your eyes taken away from you
like all your worthless days
the moment you awaken.

And you have seen —
once, once alone, not custom —
such an astounding beauty in the night
has left you speechless and warm-hearted

toward all of creation;
desperately you try to befriend all things,
germane insistence of the heart,
for the sake of that beauty's eyes
to swear all enemies
are now become your bosom's treasure.
The light in the room has exploded,
a star has been brought to birth
without your knowledge — that fire on the curtain
(in front of your eyes so still in your head there)
is the sunrise of your most mortal day.

And you wake on that morning
with an atrocious sense of loss
as for the friend of your life
never met, never to be met, again
robbed of that exquisite sister in the dream,
soul of your soul.

You were still thinking of going to sleep,
you were still thinking of some benefit,
wretched trustee of every human loss,
when it was morning.

Sharon Thesen / I WONDER WONDER WHO!
(who wrote the book called love?)

(lines from Robin Blaser's The Holy Forest,
for the Eros & Poieisis panel, June 4, 1995)

The births begin on the bed,
shaped as it is
by a god

where Amor sits, the body renews itself

I tell you of my prowess
in love to gain your attention

*

The Beloved is the murmur
inside the work
at the edge

of the words

The silence is the other
at the edge of my words

who is speaking?

dear beings, I can feel your hands

Sharp sighs greedy lips
sweet conflagration
purified lily snow of years
and this

 wheel
 turns into
ecstasy

it is the interchange the form took
like walking in and out of a star

pure tree
 and in the drunkenness natural
to me, *ami-a l'eau couleur de cendre*

*Through 'you' I conceal my loneliness from myself
and make a way into the multitude and into love
by lies, for my heart cannot bear the terror, and
compels me to talk as if I were two*

Unarm, Eros,
 shaping
 and unshaped, Eros,
there-then

(the telephone

on the bus, the small boy, newly
into letters, spelled out the letters
scratched in the glass F U
C K loud-voiced, "Mom,
what does that say?" "That's
not a word," she said,
looking straight at me "It
doesn't spell anything."

the heart breaks or is bronzed

some cinch, some way to live
entangled and closed in heat

take it this way or that way
upwards and downwards, sideways
and backwards

astonished that
the sweet heart grows in some
root or depth—and turns
into ceremonies

the throb
remembers, sullen or not, the
long shining

"only the beloved answers"

the kiss of words, the kiss of sometimes

I weave, finding the first love

under you, over you, on you,
about you

O, sweet, will you tell me,
packing tinned peas and triscuits
the colour of being

The body is the permanence of an endless wave
amorous form and amorous image meets it

and I was boxing with a tough opponent, the footnote
says 'Probably Eros'

sense of origin *eros*
sweet bitterness beloved
sexual intelligence and
stupefaction our swerve
folds in the
magnificence

FRED WAH / MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING

106

I thought Hendrix sang 'scuze me while I kiss this guy
but that Eros error lingering out of systemic
homophobia were coming with the Lion to eat into the
wronging mind a few more of those rhythmic days that
just don't seem the same even nowadays uncanny
sublime biology looks like the haze of transition while
the nomads of mental practice check both ways for the
washed-out junction where not only the topsoil is lost
but the gravel the culvert the whole goddamned fold
has disappeared though not that Highway to the Sun
in northern Idaho built for the tourists of unified
mankind who drive by and ignore the chorus of Help
Me, Help Me singing from the trees 'scuze me while I
kiss the sky.

Now here's the cultural kitchen *dîner de famille*
complicit with what's for supper that moveable feast
yet no nomad in our house just soy sauce salty (the
rice is a given) when I look into the wok I bark into
that mirror steamed with invisibility and splattered
with black bean sauce, fast food Freddy, you'll have to
check out before they'll know you were there, no curse
of plurality on my unclouded skin just the burning
rays of Elohim half-bred exodic from what.

Now I know I have a heart because it's broken but
 should I fix it now to keep it strokin' or should I
 hear each piece as it is spoken and stoke heart's
 heat so hot I smell it smokin' or could this clock
 made up of parts be jokin' that missing spark a
 mis-read gap provokin' and little sock of baby
 breath not chokin' the piggy bank of words much
 more than tokens not just the gossip love is always
 cloaked in nor all the meaning text is usually
 soaked in but roast potatoes for a tender button so
 much depends upon the things unspoken and if the
 heart is just this clock around which clusters all
 that's not and if the of and to an in that it is I for be
 was as can set these *el em en t's* far apart so all the
 floods are fierce and floral fl's...and hasten slowly
 stops me in my tracks right now I'll have an egg
 because I know its yolks inside and what I have to
 do is crack it open.

Anne Waldman / from IOVIS

*I break a sprig on the sun-set tree holding
its red flowers*

- Robin Blaser

& I said to myself
dash water on face you'll be fine
(& this talking was inside night) (in sight of night)

soon the daylight's soonest mending yr toubled brow
& I went to a sacred grove & stopped screaming

turn to charcoal if you can, burn yrself up doing duty
upon the world

*a charcoal dakini said this
deity of fabulous energy
hermaphroditic it said this:*

he mends me
but she binds me
she soothes me
but he winds me

up
word sooth
& smitheee will shape & burn brighter
for he is Word Man up to his ears
(and she *worded* down to her heart)

there is a story

*for once upon a time someone was stealing our poetry
stealing our sex I said*

there is the alchemist's story about a woman bound into
a 4-fold body & she must change from color to color
black, white, yellow, rubedo

she changes
& when this feminine thing who carries the man inside her has evi-
denced all the colors
she continues into old age & dies in the 4-fold body
which means *iron, tin, bronze & lead*
& in each one she dies in the color red
& is rejuvenated in the color red

Like poetry I said

*for passion is the sprig of this heart
each according to her own kind bunch of it*

stalk

by

root

connect

might induce melancholy

but never fall into illusion

ford the river

to heaven on earth

[*sprechstimme* here]

/

=claim=

=bespoke=

=the tremble of alchemy=

=wear words as armour=

=atrocities mars all senses=

=and havens pale=

=*hustle, girl, hustle!*=

Anarcho Tao / Chaos Linguistics (read "human", please)

I had a lung

I sang him down

what need of guns?

Phyllis Webb / extract from THE CRANNIES OF MATTER: TEXTURE IN ROBIN BLASER'S LATER "IMAGE-NATIONS"

and Brancusi thought of it, surfaces which are depths
brought to light and shadow, Eve and Plato flickering
side by side. . . .

"Image-Nation 23 (imago mundi)" (328-9)

Image-Nation 23 (imago mundi)

This is a poem about SCULPTURE. The books are taking a nap.
This is a poem about *abstraction* and *public art*. "Man's" fate as a
TILTED RED CUBE (by Noguchi), the bronze hero knocked off his
big bronze horse. A fall out of ethnocentricity into civility, right propor-
tion, A WORLD VIEW.

*

Terrain:

All-weather public space: *agora*, plaza, courtyard, square, park,
public garden.

Pitch:

Mi-voix, level-headed, perfect.

*

SCULPTURE/TEXTURE/TEXTUAL/CONTEXTUAL *in the public eye*

THE RHETORIC OF GRAND GESTURES *elided* into Brancusi's

Table of Silence his *Gate of the Kiss*

Noguchi's "Black Sun" in Seattle

"white marble garden at Yale"

OR THE RHETORIC dis-assembled in-to-

Duchamp's

HORSE LAUGH

at retinal folly, as he rummages through the kitsch of the cultural kitchen, his presence in the poem making room for *Robinesque* “dear mundane images” and another (dear) list of touchables—sex cylinder, desire-magneto, scissors, sieves, oculist witnesses, chocolate grinder, etc. Duchamp (“of the field”) an unlikely collaborator with like-minded rhyming Noguchi/Brancusi. What they all three share is their project to de-centre US into:

... a greater chaos
and a new equilibrium *art is an element in asymmetrical*
flux *no isolated object*
all function, all linkage
 to our birthplace and back again
 (330)

✱

“the unthought truth of materials,” here, words on paper, available if
form opens *space opens*
 and a fresh breeze blows in

surfaces which are depths and / over brought to light and shadow

✱

(en français, enfin:

sur-face,

over and under the form . . .

(329)

*

The talk, the philosophizing here is more relaxed, casual, though learned, verbally peripatetic—isn't it?—than the intellectual passion, the *deep song* of number 22. I am becoming almost languid just listening in on number 23, despite the Midway kick-start of Duchamp's "Large Glass" and the sculptural masses placed along the way. I'm gliding along on the semi-gloss of this silver room of a poem, its streamed lines so unobtrusive. . . . No argument, no contestation here, the poet happy in this good company, alone, afloat in his craft on Ink Lake, making a poem about Public Art, in abstraction, in *imag-i-nation*, a "Civil Elegy" sent aloft on a wing and a prayer, a paper crane.

*

You! Run your own tongue over the image nation, tell me about texture in the ear.

And in "the eros of chances among things" as I turn to ask
this question: Why is British Barbara Hepworth
excluded from this scene?

Her Public Art

Her Sculpture Garden

"holes of intelligence"

For Goodness' Sake?

"Eve and Plato flickering / side by side" in the St. Ives rain and sun, in New York (too monumental, heroic?) at the *United Nations*—

abstraction is distance

(invisible the crannies of matter, burning and hidden,
burnished and folded in to the silent *sur-face* where
the I consumes itself

in praise

Jery Zaslove / NO NAME BASEBALL TEAM OR "291 4868"

|

... Hello ...

no he's not here

yes this is his number

well he's not here anymore it WAS his number

?a baseball question?

well, I'm not sure whether he does but I know him

I use his phone

maybe i could help

yes he knew him

probably very well

i know he's written about it

i can't give you his number but I could pass the question to
him

you are who? give me a break. you

can't be serious

try me

centerfield?

wallace stevens because he's quick even though fat and

dives well

left field?

rene char

you wonder why? - because he knows the walls

right field?

pope -

why? because he deserves it and who needs him?

first base?

rabelais -

why because the first baseman talks to the

otherside. And he's gargantuan -

second base? emily bronte -

because she does double plays

third base? nerval -

because he can throw without effort for duplicity

shortstop? let me think - good hands, instincts, nervous:

well how

about

proust?

no? who then?

dante?

okay this one is all

tolstoy -

he's intimidating and has the long

You think who for catcher?

view.

• • •

thomas jefferson?

o - and charlotte corday as backup?

Yes we need pitchers . . . they are the prose of the world:

Yes since Bob Feller never wrote more than a few fast

stories, and Hal Newhouser and Early Wynn just wrote fables

we'd better get some mirror images of them . . .

hey who are you really? Satchel Paige? my ear

he's as invisible as ellison.

(I'm beginning to like this - this number has a history

I'd better not put this guy on hold he might be offended.)

Well: what about these four:

screwball pitcher - Jarry when he's not running to the toilet with

his bad stomach in his hand

curveball expert when he's not messing around thinking, pound

fastball, 110 mph - genet - yes I'm sure he's fast

beautiful junk ball - celine and you can't tell what he's
thinking but he is

yes that's my staff - and for long relief - ? not sure, maybe
dostoevsky -

and then in the bullpen, h.d. - can go short or long.

(okay we can trade melville for blake - this is getting
serious)

Say who are you?

"The masked man and the angel of mercy"?

Well if that's who you are then I'm Lily Tomlin

No she did not play with the Memphis Chicks -

Listen wherever you are this is no
joke Memphis Chicks were not a girls team
do you know Pete Gray the one armed
centrefielder?

(do you know anything about basketball?)

I'll pass on the question to him

(O my soul he even wants an Umpire)

No I've never inherited anything of his but a phone
number
and some ghosts on the book shelves keep bugging me but keep
it to yourself.

Yes, I'll tell him.

Area code? - well let me tell you it's kind of obscure:

don't have an area code

we

it's all in the imagination.

Maybe he'll call you back.

II

What's the name of this team?

Who owns it - everything has a home -

Hannah Arendt?

I heard she lost her soul in the black forest

and found it again and again and again and . . .

*Should have asked if it is any consolation for him that over
50% of Americans believe that baseball is played in heaven.*

and then I forgot to ask him

who's the other team?

And the manager?

I would have suggested lorca

and now it's too late

that's a question

from the otherside

of this noname team this can go on and on aint no
justice in it.

may, 1995

CONTRIBUTOR NOTES

DODIE BELLAMY for many years has been writing *The Letters of Mina Harker*, an epistolary novel which brings forward into our own times the heroine of Bram Stoker's *fin de siècle* masterpiece, *Dracula*. Bellamy has written *Feminine Hijinx*, *Answer*, and, with the late Sam D'Allesandro, *Real: The Letters of Mina Harker and Sam D'Allesandro*. Her new piece, *Broken English* (with Bob Harrison), will be published shortly by Meow Press.

CHARLES BERNSTEIN is author of *Dark City* and *A Poetics*. He teaches in the Poetics Program at SUNY-Buffalo.

RACHEL BLAU DuPLESSIS's publications include *The Pink Guitar: Writing as Feminist Practice*, *The Selected Letters of George Oppen*, and poetry collected in *Tabula Rosa*, *Drafts 3-14* and in the forthcoming *Drafts 15-25*, *The Fold*. Her poetry has recently appeared in *Grand Street*, *Conjunctions*, *Chelsea*, *Parataxis*, *Common Knowledge*, *Action Poétique* and *Hambone*.

GEORGE BOWERING is a two-time winner of the Governor General's Award and the author of numerous works of poetry, prose and criticism. His most recent novel, *Shoot*, will be published this year in the United States by St Martin's Press. His best known poem, *Kerrisdale Elegies*, will soon be published in an Italian translation in Rome and a Gujarati translation in Bombay.

DAVID BROMIGE was born in London, England. He grew up there and in Saskatchewan and Alberta. In 1962, with a BA from UBC, he went to Berkeley for graduate studies in English. From 1970-92, he taught at Sonoma State University, just north of San Francisco. He is a freelance writer and lecturer, who has published, in Canada and the USA, 30 books of poetry and fiction, and has just completed a collaborative novel about UBC in 1961, with Mike Matthews and George and Angela Bowering.

LEE ANN BROWN received the New American Poetry Prize for her book, *Polyverse*, forthcoming in 1996 from Sun & Moon Press. This summer, she participated in the Fondation Royaumont's *Atelier Cosmopolite*, a residency for translation and multi-disciplinary collaboration in Asnières-sur-Oise, France. Brown edits Tender Buttons press, which features experiemental women's poetry. Currently, she holds an artist's residency at the Rocky Mountain Women's Institute in Denver, Co.

COLIN BROWNE is currently editing a new film, *Altar*, and is preparing documentaries on Wyndham Lewis (*The Atrocities of Genius*) and madness (*The Oval*). "So What?" is from a manuscript in progress entitled *Rhetoris*. Colin Browne lives in Vancouver.

DON BYRD, who lives in Albany, New York, is the author of *Aesop's Garden*, *Technics of Travel*, *The Great Dime Store Centennial*, *Charles Olson's Maximus*, and *The Poetics of the Common Knowledge*. A collection of essays, in collaboration with Jed Rasula, *Tactics of Attention: Essays on Poetry and Knowledge*, is forthcoming. He is currently working on an electronically mediated performance piece which will probably be called "Laws of Form."

HILARY CLARK lives in Saskatoon and teaches English and Women's Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. She has published most recently in *Grain* and *The Capilano Review*, and has work forthcoming in *The Fiddlehead*.

ROBERT CREELEY taught at Black Mountain College along with Robert Duncan and Edward Dorn, and also edited the *Black Mountain Review*. He subsequently taught at the University of New Mexico and in 1966 went to the State University of New York at Buffalo where he is the Samuel Capen Professor of Poetry and the Humanities. Though best known as a poet, he has written much prose including the novel, *The Island*, and the short story collection, *The Gold Diggers*, both found in the *Collected Prose of Robert Creeley*. His critical writings are published in the *Collected Essays of Robert Creeley*, and his correspondence with Charles Olson is now in nine volumes continuing (*The Complete Correspondence*).

PETER CULLEY lives in South Wellington, near Nanaimo, British Columbia. His writings on art have been published in Canada and Europe. "The Book of Hugh" is part of the ongoing "Hammertown" project, the opening sections of which appear in *The Climax Forest*, released by Leech Books in 1995.

WYNSTAN CURNOW is the author of two books of poetry, *Cancer Daybook* and *Back in the USA*. He teaches American poetry at the University of Auckland where he is also director of the Centre for Projects in the Arts.

CLAYTON ESHLEMAN's most recent collection of poetry is *Under World Arrest*. His most recent translations are Antonin Artaud's *Watchfiends & Rack Screams* and Cesar Vallejo's *Trilce*. He is a professor in the English Department at Eastern Michigan University where he continues to edit *Sulfur* magazine, now in its 37th issue.

DEANNA FERGUSON lives in Vancouver and is an editor of *BOO Magazine*, a publisher of Tsunami Editions, an employee at CRS Worker's Co-op, and author of *Will Tear Us*, *Link Fantasy* (with Stan Douglas), and *The Relative Minor*.

NORMAN FINKELSTEIN is the author of a book of poems, *Restless Messengers*, and two books of literary criticism, *The Utopian Moment in Contemporary American Poetry* and *The Ritual of New Creation: Jewish Tradition and Contemporary Literature*. He is a Professor of English and Chair of the Department at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio.

PETER GIZZI's books include *Periplum*, *Music for Films* and *Hours of the Book*. "Fables of Critique" and "Rewriting the Other and the Others" are from a new manuscript, *A Textbook of Chivalry*. He currently teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

ROBERT HOGG is the author of five books of poetry, most recently *There Is No Falling*. He teaches Modern and Post-Modern American and Canadian Poetry and Poetic Theory at Carleton University. At present, he is working on a sixth book of poetry, completing a critical book on Charles Olson's *Maximus Poems*, and editing an anthology of Canadian poetic theory.

PIERRE JORIS has published over 20 books and chapbooks, as well as several anthologies and many volumes of translation—both into English and into French, including Paul Celan's *Breathturn* and Maurice Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community*. He teaches in the Department of English at SUNY Albany and is currently collaborating with Jerome Rothenberg on a two-volume anthology of 20th century avant-garde writing to be published by UCP. A collection of recent poems translated into French by Jean Portante, Nicole Peyrafitte, and the author is entitled *La Dernière Traversée de la Manche*, published in Luxembourg and Québec by G-r-a-p-h-i-t-i Editeur.

KEVIN KILLIAN is a poet, playwright, and the author of a novel, *Shy*; a book of memoirs, *Bedrooms have Windows*; and a collection of stories, *Little Men*. With Lew Ellingham he is writing a biography of the US poet Jack Spicer (1925-65). Kevin Killian lives in San Francisco. "Needles and Pins" came out in LINGO #4, and "Suspiria" appeared in COMPOUND EYE #3. It's also part of *Stone Marmalade*, a play written with Leslie Scalapino to be released by Singing Horse Press in 1996.

JOANNE KYGER's last book of poetry is *Just Space*, published by Black Sparrow Press in 1991. She teaches at The Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado and The New College of San Francisco. She first met Robin Blaser in 1959 in San Francisco.

MICHELE LEGGOTT teaches at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. She has published three collections of poetry. The most recent, *DIA*, won the poetry section of the New Zealand Book Awards. She is also the author of *Reading Zukofsky's 80 Flowers*.

DAVID LEVI STRAUSS is a writer and art critic who recently moved to New York after 15 years in San Francisco where he studied in the Poetics Program at New College and edited the journal ACTS. He is currently working to finish a book on Cambodia, *Seeds of Carnage*, and writing for *Artform*.

billy little is the baka rosh at the Forbidden Plateau Fallen Body Dojo. His latest book is *Angel bAby*.

TONY LOPEZ teaches in England at the University of Plymouth. His criticism includes *The Poetry of W. S. Graham*. Recent books of poetry are *A Theory of Surplus Labour*, *Stress Management*, and *Negative Equity*. A selection will be included in the anthology, *Conductors of Chaos*, forthcoming from Picador in 1996. "Two Stanzas after Horace" was published in 1994 by Boldface Press in *Stress Management and other poems*.

KAREN MAC CORMACK's fifth book of poetry, *Marine Snow*, has just been published by ECW Press. Her work appears in the anthologies, *The Art of Practice: Forty-five Contemporary Poets*, *The Last Word*, *Out of Everywhere*, and *The Gertrude Stein Awards in Innovative Writing: 1993*. A contributing editor to *AVEC* magazine, she lives in Toronto.

NATHANIEL MACKEY is the author of six works of poetry, the most recent being *Song of the Andoumboulou: 18-20*, the ongoing multi-volume prose composition, *From a Broken Bottle Traces of Perfume Still Emanate*, and a book of cultural essays, *Discrepant Engagement: Dissonance, Cross-Culturality, and Experimental Writing*. He edits the literary magazine, *Hambone*, and is coeditor (with Art Lange) of *Moment's Notice: Jazz in Poetry and Prose*. He has released a CD of poems read to musical accompaniment, and he is Professor of Literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

KEVIN MAGEE's books are *Tedium Drum* and *Recent Events*. His poetry has been included in the last few years in issues of magazines edited by Nathaniel Mackey, Norma Cole, Michael Palmer and Kevin Killian, among others.

DAPHNE MARLATT lives in Victoria where she teaches occasionally in the Women's Studies Department at the University of Victoria. She has just completed a novel, *Taken*, which is scheduled for publication in the fall of 1996. The poems in this issue are from an ongoing sequence titled "the sea shining between us." The source for the quote in "Water Mark" is Renee Vivien, *The Muse of the Violets*. The quote in "The Approach Re-approached by Ferry" is from Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One*.

D.S. MARRIOTT has performed and published his poetry in both Europe and the U.S. His recent collections of poetry include *Lative* and *The Binding*. He has been editor of *Archeus* and has also written several influential essays on contemporary poetics. He teaches at Queen Mary & Westfield College, University of London.

STEVE McCAFFERY is the author of more than 15 books, including *North of Intention* and *The Black Debt*. His *Theory of Sediment* was nominated for the Governor General's Award in poetry in 1992. *Imagining Language*, an anthology of the "linguistically deviant and estranged," co-edited with Jed Rasula, is due from MIT Press in 1996. The work here published will be included in *The Cheat of Words* to be published by ECW Press, also this year.

MICHAEL McCLURE is claimed by both the Beats and the San Francisco Renaissance. He has published 15 books of poetry, two novels, and several books of essays. His play, *The Beard*, received two theatre awards and flared up four major censorship trials. Another play, *Josephine the Mouse Singer*, was given the Obie Award for Best Play. His songs include "Mercedes Benz," which was popularized by Janis Joplin. McClure has been performing with the Doors' keyboardist, Ray Manzarek, for the last several years; their current spoken word and music CD is titled *Love Lion*. "Portrait of the Moment" is included in *Three Poems (Dark Brown, Rare Angel, and Dolphin Skull)* published by Penguin Books in 1995.

PETER MIDDLETON has published poetry in small magazines, including *Temblor*, *Avec*, *Reality Studios*, and *fragmente*, over the past 15 years, and new work will soon appear in *West Coast Line* and *Pages*. The collection, *Floating Capital*, from Potes and Poets Press includes some of his poems. He is the author of a book on masculinity and culture, *The Inward Gaze*, and lives in Southampton, U.K., where he teaches English Literature at the university.

ERIN MOURÉ continues to live in Montreal, where she moved from Vancouver in 1985. She rides a blue Diamondback Ascent in traffic daily and works full-time for VIA Rail at their headquarters. Her most recent books of poems are *Sheepish Beauty*, *Civilian Love*, and *The Green Word*. Her next book, *Search Procedures*, will appear in May from Anansi. She wishes she could sing.

MICHAEL PALMER lives in San Francisco. His most recent collection is *At Passages*. With o-blek editions, he has recently published his translation of Emmanuel Hocquard's *Theory of Tables*. His translations from the poetry of Alexei Parshchikov appear in *Blue Vitriol*. His work is featured, along with an interview, in *Exact Change Yearbook #1*, from Exact Change Press. New Directions will publish his *New and Selected Poems* this year.

JED RASULA teaches English at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He is the author of a book of poetry, *Tabula Rasula*, and has recently published a critical study, *The American Poetry Wax Museum: Reality Effects 1940-1990*. "Blushing in the Garden of the Animal" has appeared in *Sulfur*.

LISA ROBERTSON is a co-editor of *Raddle Moon*. Tsunami published her pastoral, *Xeclogue*, in 1993, and she is now working on *Debbie*, an epic reading of Freud's and Virgil's works on landscape, history, and mimesis. "Exordium" is included also in the anthology *Out of Everywhere*. Other sections from *Debbie* currently appear in *Tessera*, and in *A Brief Description of the Whole World* (Auckland).

LESLIE SCALAPINO's most recent publications are *Objects in the Terrifying Tense / Longing from Taking Place*, *Goya's L.A., a play*; and *Defoe*. Wesleyan University Press will publish *The Front Matter, Dead Souls* this spring, and Talisman will publish *Selected Writings*. She teaches in the summer MFA program at Bard College and is presently teaching at the San Francisco Art Institute.

ANDREW SCHELLING teaches in The Naropa Institute's Department of Writing & Poetics, Boulder, Colorado. Anthropology, Asian poetics, wilderness & biodiversity studies remain enduring interests. Among his books are *Dropping the Bow: Poems from Ancient India*, which received the Academy of American Poets 1992 translation prize; *The India Book: Essays & Translations from Indian Asia*; and *Old Growth: Selected Poems & Notebooks 1986-1994*. With Anne Waldman he edited *Disembodied Poetics: Annals of The Jack Kerouac School*.

AARON SHURIN's books of poetry include *A's Dream*, *Into Distances*, and *A Door*. He's just completed *Unbound: A Book of AIDS*. He teaches at San Francisco State University and the University of San Francisco.

GEORGE STANLEY's long poem, "San Francisco's Gone," appeared in *The Capilano Review* 2:4. He taught English for 15 years at Northwest Community College in Terrace, British Columbia, and is now teaching at Capilano College. His most recent collection of poems is *Gentle Northern Summer*, from which the poems "For John Newlove" and "The City" are taken.

CATRIONA STRANG and **FRANÇOIS HOULE** have been collaborating for several years. François composed a series of scores for Catriona's book *Low Fancy*; she has written liner notes for his CD's *Schizosphere*, *Hacienda*, and the forthcoming *Any Terrain Tumultuous*. They live in Vancouver.

NATHANIEL TARN has published some 25 books of poetry and translations. The latest are *Seeing America First* and *Flying the Body*. His *Views from the*

Weaving Mountain: Selected Essays in Poetics & Anthropology was an American Poetry Book last year. He is a specialist in Highland Maya studies and the sociology of Buddhist institutions. Tarn lives 10 miles northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico. "Siempre Mas Invisible (Two)" has also been published in *First Intensity*.

SHARON THESEN teaches and writes in Vancouver. Her most recent book of poems, *Aurora*, was published last spring by Coach House Press.

FRED WAH has published 17 books of poetry, including the Governor-General's award winning *Waiting for Saskatchewan*. He founded the writing program at David Thompson University Centre and now teaches at the University of Calgary. He also critiques contemporary Canadian and American literature and is currently finishing the biotext *Seasons Greetings from the Diamond Grill*, to be published this year.

ANNE WALDMAN is the author most recently of the book-length poem *Iovis* and *Kill or Cure*. *Iovis Book II* will be published in 1996. She has also co-edited (with Andrew Schelling) *Disembodied Poetics: Annals of the Jack Kerouac School* and has edited *The Beat Book*. She directs the Department of Writing & Poetics MFA at The Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado and is also on the core faculty of the Schule für Dichtung in Vienna. She vocalizes and "performs" her own work both solo and in collaboration with musicians and dancers.

PHYLLIS WEBB's most recent collection of poetry is *Hanging Fire*. Her most recent publication is *Nothing But Brush Strokes: Selected Prose*. She lives on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. "The Crannies of Matter" is an extract from the essay "The Crannies of Matter: Texture in Robin Blaser's Later 'Image-Nations,'" which appears in *Nothing But Brush Strokes: Selected Prose*.

JERY ZASLOVE has taught at Simon Fraser University since 1965. He has been influenced by Robin Blaser's work and affinities and has published several studies on the poet concerning loss and the will to self-creation in modernism, which will be combined into a book. He has published recently on northern hybridism in Canadian consciousness, on Joy Kogawa, and on the modernism of the anarchist aesthetics of Herbert Read. Jerry Zaslove explains the title of the poem "291 4868": "I inherited Robin's office after his premature retirement at SFU, and the phone and the phone number of course came with me to my new office out in the woods east of SFU in a new wooden structure far away from the awful Academic Quadrangle."

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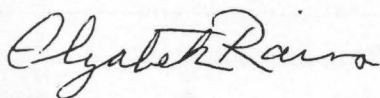
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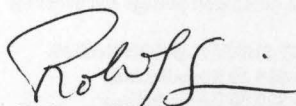
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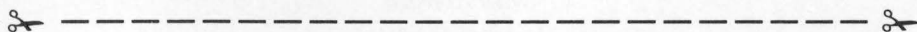
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