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Diane Schoemperlen: Cover Images

“Re-iterating Wavelengths”: K. Jirgens
From the *Mappamundi* series: Carol Stetser (USA)
Editorial: Re-recorded Histories

This issue of Rampike features artists and writers who take a second look at the past, while re-situating and re-conceptualizing recorded histories of events, records, and personal encounters. They provide re-inscriptions of ancient and contemporary myths, educational texts, cultural events, biographies of artists and writers, accounts of medical procedures, engagements with indigenous cultures, and even re-considerations of the conventions of art itself including photography, poetics, and narratology. The mind’s eye re-envisions what once was, and re-situates it within the present. The result is an unresolved dialogical discourse that engages the audience in evaluating the original event-phenomenon through the artist’s re-conceptualization. Marcel Duchamp was among the first to realize the potential of re-contextualizing “found objects.” And Derrida spoke of differences that arise following the deferral in time that comes as we trace perception, conception and utterance. The artists here work with what once was, re-covering, re-iterating and re-situating the lost and found. Yet, time and memory transform what once was. Such re-contextualizations uncover as much about the artists’ minds as they reveal about the original experience found object, documentation, or historical event. And so, with this issue of Rampike, we present Carol Stetser, renowned U.S. visual poet mapping flora and fauna from her Mappamundi series. Phil Hall re-records past encounters with poets in Vancouver, juxtaposed with a hypothetical future. Diane Schoemerlen re-contextualizes quotations taken from the Ontario Public School Geography, a grade-school textbook, authorized by the Minister of Education for Ontario, in 1946. Schoemerlen’s illuminated perspectives are both shocking and revealing Collette Broeders and Samantha Therrien document unconscious records by re-assembling dream fragments into sculptural form. Celebrated Danish poet, Niels Hav comments on his own methodology, while, Per Brask offers a historical account of translating Hav’s “Cigar Cutter” poem. Alison Dilworth assembles found text-objects re-shaped by memory into book formats. Stephen Bett recalls the poetics of Archibald Lampman, and poetic legacies as they have evolved. Faruk Ulay’s fiction re-envisions landscapes and mindscapes, once seen, but almost forgotten, revealing geographies of migrating thought. Brenda Francis Pelkey provides photo-graphic records of avid sports fans revealing more than mere costumes. Norman Lock’s fictions re-situate myth and history, the suitcase of Prometheus, the journey across the Caucasus, the Holocaust, and the fables of Bulfinch. Vittori Baroni energetically lights the day, releasing a hand full of bursting ideas. Christopher Prendergast reviews Joseph Hubbard’s re-situation of the space of the Art Gallery itself, along with Hubbard’s meta-documentations of the art of Wyndham Lewis and the letters of famed modernist sculptor, Jose Luis Cuevas. Hélène Samson, Guy Siou-Durand, with translations by Norman Cornett, re-visit photographic records of North American indigenous peoples compiled by Edward Sheriff Curtis, commenting on how meaning shifts over a century. Holly Anderson provides a mesostic response to an encounter with an ursine quadruped. Paulo da Costa’s meta-fiction re-situates conventions of narratology, while M.A.C. Farrant playfully re-composes herself. Joanna Katchutas and Christina Spina record absurd quotidian work habits, and Kye Kocher re-considers invasive medical procedures. Brian Aldiss, Misha Nogha and Richard Truhlar collaborate, while re-mapping a landscape surging with sexuality. Orchid Tierney provides re-recordings of digital on-line textualities. Gerry Smith’s report re-situates a weather forecast, and Robert Dawson engages the mathematical “hailstone sequence” to re-define family history. Beatriz Hausner re-visits the ancient goddesses of Babylon, while Len Gasparini re-calls the musical lingo and recordings of the 1950s. Vicky Reuter’s “Oneiric Weeds” re-cites statements by Leonard Cohen, Gail Scott, Henry Miller, and Gertrude Stein, while Eldon Garnet re-inscribes aphorisms by internationally famous figures. Nicole Marković rounds out the issue by reviewing the individual poetics of Meredith Quartermain and Fred Wah. Dear reader, we hope you will enjoy these conceptual wave-lengths as they re-record these socio-cultural histories. — KARL JIRGENS
TWO POEMS
Phil Hall

Vancouver

One spring Fred ate only cherries
then for awhile it was carrots
he bought an industrial juicer & his skin turned yellow
he went to his food co-op's solstice party nude
as a squash personified this cost him a relationship
(later the Okanagan joists overalls a bear)
after Rothenberg & The Four Horsemen at the Western Front
Barry said come along to Warren Tallman's
Goodchild snuck into Linda's new place after midnight
& into her rented room (mattress on floor she wasn't there)
to take his raven manuscript back
he arranged gladiolas & all her shoes
into a mandala on the floor it was creepy he was creepy
all of the hottest women worked at Rape Relief
but you had to join Men Against Rape
& take radical therapy workshops & do fund-raising
you had to understand that you were a potential rapist
bissett gave me a stick of Astro gum
Gordon ate what Fred ate was tonsuring early
& played the flute eventually he took a woman-friend too
& taught her to care as deeply as he did about
the angle the carrots were cut

PHIL HALL is an award-winning Canadian poet. His most recent books of poems are An Oak Hunch, White Porcupine, The Little Seamstress, and Killdeer. Phil Hall won the 2011 Governor General's Award for his collection Killdeer (Book Thug). Killdeer won the 2012 Trillium Book Award and was also shortlisted for the 2012 Canadian Griffin Poetry Prize. Phil Hall will be serving as the Writer in Residence for the University of Windsor English Department in spring of 2013.
Risk

Tea on the screened porch
is a big joy in the mornings now
I can hear myself—him—palsied—pencil-sincere
shape letters carefully onto a tall-tale post-card
this quick brown fox must be getting old
he'd—I'd—add then scratch—ha ha—after
the way all us non-writers then
sent word back sent home word
of having turned / even failure into a little joke
*
(note found when bed stripped)
This Bobcaygeon Clown
spent every day of his life in Greece
at Wasn't Lake—Won't Rapids—Didn't Mills
Ontario
*
Too often—suffice-to-say—won
I'd arrange on a shelve Inger Christensen's alphabet
(translated by Susanna Nied)
beside Elytis's Axion Esti (translated by Keeley & Savois)
maybe I'd dig out The People, Yes & put that with them
I'd prop all three facing out (puzzling in which order they'd look best)
I love how these at length risk bare-armed wide full song—I'd write
then shut myself in our storage locker
& turn the light off

Revolutionary Brain • Harold Jaffe

In this timely collection of essays and “quasi-essays,” acclaimed novelist and critic Harold Jaffe explores the intricate vicissitudes of millennial culture. Gesturing, in a philosophical shorthand, toward a kind of pop Armageddon, Revolutionary Brain is at once thesis, allegory, and surreal comedy, demonstrating just how far we, and the natural world we have debased, have fallen.

AROUND THE WORLD IN 100 POSTCARDS:  
IN WHICH THE GEOGRAPHER MAKES A SURVEY OF THE WORLD, FINDS IT WANTING, COMES TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME  
Diane Schoemperlen

From:  
Ontario Public School Geography  
Authorized by The Minister of Education for Ontario  
Twenty-second Edition  
(Toronto: W. J. Gage & Company, 1946)

In the Preface to this edition, the unnamed author or authors note that:  
“There are few subjects in which text books become so quickly out of date as in Geography. In order to ensure accuracy, the Department of Education and the Publishers have revised the Ontario Public School Geography at frequent intervals as events demanded. The most recent revision has necessarily been confined to the sections dealing with North America, because war conditions have made it practically impossible to obtain authentic information regarding many countries of the world.”

Every report of the trip gets it more and more wrong. When you talk to someone about it, the experience is altered. Keeping quiet changes it too, differently. There can be no report.  

--Elias Canetti, Notes from Hampstead

1. Now let us make a survey of the world.

2. We have chosen the aeroplane for our trip because it is so fast and because we can see much more from high in the air. Now we must prepare ourselves for the most dangerous and thrilling flight of all. What a wonderful sight to see the clouds swirling below us, while we fly in dazzling sunshine above them!

3. The earth is a huge sphere. If we could view it from high up in the sky, it would appear circular, like the sun or the full moon. As we can see only a very small portion of its surface when we are standing on it, it seems flat to us. Yet we know for certain that it is round. Men have travelled right around it.
4. Have you ever travelled 100 miles by train? Can you imagine travelling in a fast train, day and night, without a stop, for three weeks? Your train would need at least twenty whole days to complete a journey round the world, if such a journey were possible.

5. The total length of the Canadian National Railways is 21,847 miles. Thousands of men work on the railways.

6. You have seen a top spinning on the floor. The earth also rotates. Let us think of the earth as a huge top, spinning along on an invisible floor. Do you find this hard to believe, and do you wonder why we do not feel the movements of the earth?
7. When it is daytime with us, it is night on the other side of the world.

8. We speak of the land as *terra firma*, that is, the solid land. No matter where you live, if you dig deep enough, you will come at last to solid rock. Give the reason for this.

9. Land heats more quickly than water and to a far higher temperature, when exposed to an equal amount of sunshine. If you have lain upon a river bank or lake shore after swimming, you will agree that this is true.

10. You have often seen washing put out on the line to dry. The clothes, even after being wrung out, are still wet to the sight and to the touch. But, as you know, after an hour or two in the air and sunshine, they are quite dry.

11. You have doubtless noticed the little beads of moisture that, on a hot summer day, gather on the surface of a pitcher filled with cold water. Probably you have wondered what caused them to gather there.

12. It may seem to you that nothing can be more variable than the wind. The air is never still. The winds, as you have seen, hold within their grasp the power to make a garden or a desert.

13. Scorpions are numerous in the desert.

14. You have read of the monsoons of Asia. They bring with them the priceless gift of rain. Before the summer monsoons begin to blow, the fields of India and China are parched and dry. Then comes the wind from the great oceans. The rain falls heavily over the land and waters the crops which nourish hundreds of millions of people. Unhappy, indeed, is the land when the monsoons are weak! Then the crops fail, and famine takes its toll of the crowded population.

15. We speak also of the restless ocean, and with equal reason. A thorough knowledge of the tides is necessary for every practical navigator.
16. You can make sea-water in your own home. Buy a package of sea-salts at the drugstore. Add one spoonful of the salts to about twenty-four spoonfuls of fresh water. Stir the water around until the salts have disappeared.

17. There is no worse fate for a sailor than to be cast adrift in a small boat without a supply of fresh water.

18. The array of animal life which the ocean presents is so vast that we cannot hope to learn more than a very little about it.

19. Find the Arctic Ocean on the globe. In the Arctic seas are whales, narwhal, walrus, and seals, as well as fish. The hide of the walrus makes magnificent leather.

20. Most of us, however, are more interested in the common oyster, which is so delicious as food. Fortunately, oysters multiply very rapidly. A single oyster lays from 16,000,000 to 60,000,000 eggs in one season.

21. Far to the north live the Eskimos. In winter their land is very cold. Blizzards sometimes rage for days together. Fresh water is obtained from melted ice and snow. Some meat is frozen and then eaten raw. The Eskimo has little furniture in his house. The Eskimos are a happy people.

22. Before the white man came to America, the Indians hunted over the whole continent. The life of the Indians is not easy. They often suffer from the long winter, for when blizzards come up, they cannot get out to hunt for food. When the Indians get injured or are sick a long distance from a trading-post, there is no one to help them. At the best, tramping many miles every day on snowshoes or paddling heavily laden canoes up swift rivers is hard, tiring work.

23. In spite of these hardships, the Indians are in many ways better off today than they used to be. They have plenty of warm furs and blankets to wear. Good furs, as you know, are very valuable. Often he catches a lynx, a marten, a fox, a mink, an otter, or a beaver. Muskrats are trapped in the spring. Occasionally a trapper gets a shot at a wolf. He is very glad to shoot a
caribou, a moose, or a deer, for the flesh of these animals is very palatable, and their hides make excellent moccasins and other clothing.

24. The bears sleep in their dens all winter.

25. Do you remember the bright star which guides the Indians by night?

26. Perhaps you can also see the white glint of a sail. It belongs to a fishing schooner.

27. The life of the fisherman is also dangerous and hard. They catch many varieties of fish, such as herring, halibut, haddock, and cod. This is back-breaking work. In the evening the dories return to the schooner with the day's catch. If the season has been good, their holds are crammed with thousands of codfish. With the money received for the fish, the fisherman can buy almost anything he wants. He can have good furniture and pretty pictures in his home. He can have books to read, a piano, a phonograph, or a radio to give him music, or, in fact, anything else he likes.

28. A deep, fertile soil is best for farming. Where, in general, are the best farms found?

29. The principal exports from Canada are agricultural products, particularly wheat, oats, vegetables, fruit, meat, hides, bacon, butter, cheese, and eggs; products of the fisheries, such as fresh fish, canned salmon, lobsters, and sardines; mineral products, principally gold, silver, nickel, copper, asbestos, and mica; forest products, such as dressed lumber, shingles, laths, wood-pulp, and paper; and furs, both raw and dressed.

30. The forests of Canada are the home of wild animals of many kinds. The moose is common in every part of the northern forest. Among the smaller flesh-eaters, the fisher, the marten, the weasel, the ermine, the mink, the skunk, and the otter are found everywhere.

31. The prairies were once the home of large herds of bison, or buffalo, as they are more usually named. As late as 1858, a traveller upon the western plains drove for ten days through a single continuous herd, and the prairie was
black with moving animals as far as the eye could reach. But man needed for
his own use the land over which they roamed.

32. On the whole, the summers of Ontario are delightful. The winters are dry
and exhilarating, with many days of unclouded, sunny skies and clear, bracing
air.

33. The city of Toronto is noted for its splendid residential sections of well-built
homes, spacious lawns, and fine old trees. It is a busy city.
34. The Niagara River carries the waters of Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. Below the Falls the river runs very rapidly between steep cliffs. At one place it is compressed to a width of 300 feet between cliffs of rock 200 feet high. There the waters swirl in a seething whirlpool, with a wild beauty rivaling that of the Falls themselves.

35. The United States, so far as its natural resources and its manufacturing facilities are concerned, is probably the most self-contained nation in the world today.

36. Manufacturing has not been one of the leading industries of Mexico. For this the ignorance and the laziness of the people are partly responsible, but the main reason is the absence of coal.

37. In Puerto Rico, there is little manufacturing, except sugar, cigars, and cigarettes. In the towns, notice the palm trees on both sides of the street.

38. The population of Central America is made up of whites of Spanish descent, Indians, and half-breeds. There are many Negroes. The Spanish language is spoken, and Spanish customs prevail. Progress has been much hindered by the ignorance of the people and by the unstable character of the governments. The cities and towns are not large, and there are but few that are worth mentioning.

39. What is the name of the narrow land bridge connecting North and South America?

40. In South America, the Indians eat the tails of young alligators, and travellers who have tasted this dish speak well of it. Turtles are extremely abundant, and many of them are very large. Their flesh is good to eat.

41. Rio de Janeiro has a magnificent harbour. Buenos Aires is very beautiful. Bogota is a modern city and enjoys a delightful climate.

42. What ocean separates Europe from North America?
43. Europe has long been the home of the most highly civilized races in the world. Her peoples have long been foremost in industry, commerce, science, and art. Europe’s importance is due chiefly to the fact that it is the home of the white peoples of the world. The white races have proved themselves superior to all others in many ways. They are more eager to acquire knowledge and to put it to practical use. They are more energetic. They have a greater capacity for organization, which is one of the chief characteristics of civilized man.

44. The temperate zones are best suited to white men.

45. Britain has never tried to exploit ignorant savages, but has treated them with kindness and justice, so that they have benefited by her rule.

46. Great Britain is the largest island in Europe and the most important island in the world. It is not hard to understand why Britain is the commercial mistress of the world. Brewing and distilling give employment to many people, while jams, marmalades, pickles, and sauces are produced in large quantities.

47. Sheffield is noted for its cutlery.

48. The Irish peasant eats seaweed as a relish with his potatoes.

49. The Norwegians are an intelligent and industrious people. The hardships and privations of their life on the sea and in the mountains have made them strong and vigorous.

50. In Sweden, the making of matches is a thriving industry.

51. About half of Switzerland is occupied by mountains. Like most mountaineers, the people of Switzerland are devoted to their homes and to their country. They are, for the most part, strong in body, cheerful and happy in their homes, good farmers, and excellent workmen. The Swiss are shrewd and industrious.

52. Much depends, of course, upon the altitude.

53. Swiss clocks and watches are famous for their excellence.
54. Austria does not grow enough grain and vegetables to feed her people. Vienna is delightfully situated on the Danube.

55. The forested area of Germany is large. Everywhere in Germany much attention is paid to the raising of horses, sheep, cattle, and poultry, and to the making of butter and cheese. Nuremberg is the centre of the great toy industry of Germany.

56. Amsterdam, built on a group of swampy islands at the south end of the Zuiderzee, is the largest city in the Netherlands. It is built on piles, and the islands are connected by hundreds of bridges.

57. Paris is the political, industrial, literary, scientific, and artistic centre of France. It is a very beautiful city, with wide streets, boulevards, and parks, with beautiful churches, such as the Cathedral of Notre Dame, art galleries, such as the Louvre, handsome public and private buildings, triumphant arches and monuments.

58. Fish is one of the staple foods of the French people.

59. All over the island of Corsica grow the olive and the chestnut, the nuts of the latter being the chief food of a large part of the population.

60. Industrially, Spain and Portugal are not progressive nations. For this the people themselves are largely responsible.

61. Gibraltar is a lofty, strongly fortified rock.

62. We are accustomed to think of Italy as a perpetual summer land of flowers and fruit. Wine is one of its most important products. Macaroni, cheese, olive oil, straw hats, lace, and coral jewellery are other leading manufactures.

63. Eggs are exported from Russia in very great numbers. The northern part of Russia is unproductive.
64. The Yugoslavians are a thrifty, hard-working people, fond of bright-coloured, picturesque costumes, music, and festive gatherings. The country has numerous railways.

65. The Albanians are the most ancient people in Southeastern Europe and are distinguished for their passionate love of country and for their refusal to mix with other races.

66. The people of Bulgaria are industrious, but somewhat war-like.
67. The Greeks have always been sailors and traders, frugal, energetic, and industrious. Modern Athens is beautifully planned, with boulevards, trees, and open spaces.

68. Seen from a distance, Istanbul is the most beautiful city in Europe. It is, however, a very dirty place, with large slum districts.

69. What two seas are between Asia and Europe?

70. The most useful animal of the Tibetan Plateau is the yak.

71. Sponges are obtained from the Aegean Sea.
72. The chief exports from Palestine are oranges, lemons, wine, olive oil, and laundry soap.

73. The Afghans, about twelve million in number, are all Mohammedans. They are a very brave but very cruel race.

74. The Arabian horse is celebrated for its beauty and its speed. However, there are but few places of any importance in Arabia.

75. In China, there is not even sufficient wood to make coffins for the dead, and the most valued gift that a son can make to his parents is a coffin.

76. Japan is very hilly.

77. The people of Japan are largely Mongolians. They are industrious and skillful, excelling especially in work requiring delicacy of touch and handling. They are an intelligent people, and though they retain many of their picturesque customs, they have learned much from their association with western nations and have adopted many of their practices. Japan now has railways, telegraphs, telephones, factories, schools, and universities.

78. Rice is the main grain crop of Japan. How large do you think Japanese farms are? The farms are so small that the farmer cannot grow much more than his own family needs. The little he can sell does not bring him much money. But his wants are few. He and his children are half naked, and his wife usually wears only a plain blue cotton dress.

79. Name the isthmus which joins Africa and Asia.

80. Africa is very large.

81. In the forests live many strange animals. There are huge apes and monkeys, stronger than the strongest men. Herds of elephants roam through the forest. Hippopotami and crocodiles live in the rivers and marshes. The hippopotamus is a large, ungainly animal with a huge head and a wide mouth. The crocodile is much more dangerous. Many Negroes are caught by crocodiles.
82. In the country of the Negroes there is plenty of rain, and the sunny days are long and hot. Therefore all the plants there grow very large. Many of the trees are enormous. Their foliage is so thick that little light or sunshine can get through.

83. The Negroes live in a land of plenty. The Negro can grow all the food he needs with no tool but a hoe. They have fields of sweet potatoes. The Negro is warm enough without any clothing. They do not need warm houses. Among the Negroes the women alone do the work.

84. People seldom work harder than they must.

85. Somaliland is one of the least known parts of Africa. This is due to the unattractive nature of the country and the fierce and treacherous character of the natives, all fanatical Mohammedans. Except for its game, including giraffes, zebras, antelopes, and gazelles, the land has little interest or value for the white man.

86. In Abyssinia, it is said, men carry about little sticks of rock-salt and suck them, just as Canadian children suck sticks of candy. When an Abyssinian gentleman meets a friend, he offers him his salt-stick to lick. He can imagine no finer treat.

87. People who, like the white races, have learned much, are called civilized, to distinguish them from uncivilized or barbarous people like the African Negroes.

88. Civilized man requires a very great quantity of iron.

89. The aboriginal inhabitants of Australia are a peculiar race, somewhat resembling the Negro.

90. The sun beating down upon the naked earth makes the Great Australian Desert one of the hottest places in the world.

91. The most hated animal in Australia is the dingo.
92. The average full-grown kangaroo measures about five feet from the tip of its nose to the base of its tail, and may weigh as much as two hundred pounds. The tail measures about four and a half feet.

93. The Maoris, as the natives of New Zealand are called, at first gave some trouble, but this has long since passed away.

94. Here in New Zealand are pools of boiling mud, which now and again send a column high into the air; here are lakes of hot water; here you may walk over land through which steam is bursting everywhere.
95. There is another great mass of land far to the south. It is called the *Antarctic Continent*. It is as yet quite useless to man.

96. What is the only direction in which a man can look when he is standing at the south pole?

97. Location is always a matter of comparison with some place whose situation we know. What is the reason for this?

98. There are two essential things to remember. Name them.

99. We Canadians have the privilege of owning almost half of our great continent. This means that we are among the most fortunate people of the world. Each one of us should strive to realize how great a thing it is to be a citizen of Canada. Each one of us should have a thorough knowledge of all those things which make Canada, though so young a nation, second to none either in past accomplishment or in future prospect. No other of our geographical studies is so important or nearly so interesting as the study of our own land.

100. Keep in mind these important facts.

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The above text is composed of quotations taken from:

*Ontario Public School Geography*

a grade-school textbook

Authorized by The Minister of Education for Ontario

Twenty-second Edition

Toronto: W. J. Gage & Company, 1946

assembled with accompanying collage works

by Canadian artist and writer Diane Schoemperlen,

winner of the Governor General's Award (1998),

and the Marian Engel Award (2007).
ONEIRIC “REBOUND”
Collette Broeders & Samantha Therrien
Exhibited at the Common Ground Art Gallery, Windsor, Canada.

Artists’ Statement

According to Freud, dreams allow one to tap into the unconscious levels of the mind while providing opportunities to investigate oneself on an unveiled level. To Freud, dreams are a means to explore and find balances among the Id, Ego and Superego, while serving to establish personal identity and self-actualization. On the other hand, Carl Jung believed that dreams are a way to communicate by serving as windows into the unconscious. For Jung, dreams present themselves in symbols and archetypes which serve as mythological motifs that form patterns revealing deeper psychic functions. The dream models of both Freud and Jung impart principles of symbolism that can potentially guide us in the physical world.

Inspired by these ideas, we explore the metaphors and symbolic images pulled from the unconscious mind, during dream states. Using a combination of imagery, alternative transparent materials, and selected texts from Jung and Freud, we created ethereal objects that illuminate the veiling and unveiling of transitions from the realm of dreams into awakened states. These constructed ethereal vessels enclose archival texts from the two iconic theorists, to reveal dreams and beliefs that float toward the peripheries of consciousness. Being both accessible and inaccessible, our constructions allude to the illusive nature of dreams, which may be recollected, or lost.

Through dream-like images and texts, we explore the surreal and mysterious realm where dream states and awakened states become blurred. In recreating images and recollections through these ethereal objects, a narrative of an “encounter” with symbolic forms and images emerges, revealing connections between dreams and memory bridging unconscious and conscious states of personal experience.

-Samantha Therrien
-Collette Broeders
Detail from Rebound

“Dream II”
SAMANTHA THERRIEN & COLLETTE BROEDERS are inter-media artists working out of Windsor. COMMON GROUND ART GALLERY: 3277 Sandwich St., Windsor, Ontario, N9C 1A9, Canada Phone: 519-252-6380 Email: commonground@mdirect.net
PROFILE: Niels Hav

When I Go Blind, a collection of poetry, by the Danish author Niels Hav, recently appeared in Dutch translation. Hav’s poetry has been published in English, Italian, Arabic and Chinese. Niels Hav is a full time poet and short story writer living in Copenhagen with awards from The Danish Arts Council. In English his We Are Here, was published by Book Thug, and his poetry and fiction appears in The Literary Review, Ecotone, Exile, The Los Angeles Review, PRISM International, and Rampike.

Hav is the author of six collections of poetry and three books of short fiction. His work has been translated into several languages such as Arabic, Turkish, Spanish and Chinese. Raised on a farm in western Denmark, Hav today resides in the colourful and multiethnic part of the capital. He has travelled widely in Europe, Asia, North and South America. This profile includes excerpts from an on-line interview with Sander de Vaan, as well as a discussion of methodologies by one of Hav’s English translators, Per Brask. To read the full interview with Sander de Vaan visit: http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=20579

Sander de Vaan: Where do you “stand” in contemporary Danish poetry? (compared to your Danish colleagues)

Niels Hav: I was born on the west coast, far from the capital where I live today. So in some sense I’m a newcomer here, like the Arabs, Pakistani and Turkish’s immigants living in my neighborhood. I spoke a rural dialect when I was a kid. Of course I belong to the literary landscape in Denmark, but I never had the feeling of belonging to any generation or movement in Danish poetry. I arrived with completely different experiences than the urban poets. I remember what joy it was when I first came across poems of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney for example, they wrote in a larger space than the urban ghetto and on experiences with nature and animals that I could immediately recognize. Today I am a city dove and I feel at home in Copenhagen, but maybe it's still there I stand, as kind of an outsider who also has other relationships and belongs in other contexts.

SdV: In “My Fantastic Pen” you write: “Poetry is not for sissies!” Does this express also your personal view on poetry?

NH: That’s a good question with multiple levels. Poetry is of course for everyone, poems are addressed to just anybody. But here I am talking about the profession, the craft, the daily practice of writing poetry. It may require courage and stamina to work in this field. And a willingness to renounce private lyricism and the unbridled emotionalism, which always threatens to drown poetry. The characteristic of good poets is, all the bad poems, they never write. What I mean is: poetry contains elements of music and fun, but not only that. Time passes, we live and die. The world is on fire. Politics, bombs, ideology and religion ravaging the globe. This is what the adults are talking about - and in its innermost core the challenge for art is to join this conversation. To find out and understand what’s going on, and if possible to say things as they are. So, yes, poetry - the profession, is not for wimps. You have to face yourself and look reality, God, or what it is, directly into the eyes. Poetry’s first duty is to be an intimate talk with the single reader about the deepest mysteries of existence.

SdV: Is there any other poet who, according to you, has come really close to an understanding of what’s going on with his poems? (if so, maybe you can cite some verses)
NH: There are many great poets, some have written a handful of excellent poems full of insight on fundamental questions in life. But in our culture there may be a tendency to isolate poetry in a special ghetto. A poet who talked seriously about essential things and insisted on poetry's general relevance is Czeslaw Milosz. In 2011, his 100-year anniversary was celebrated, not only in Poland but on several continents. I think it's because he deeply reflected issues that are still current. But were I to quote a poet here, it would be the Chinese poet Li Bai (701-762). He said something about the importance of poetry and no one could say it better today:

Perfect poems are the only buildings
that always will be standing.
Where are they now the proud palaces,
once towering here?
When the power is in me, my brush
shakes five holy mountains.
What does it concern me, all the things
people want of glory, power, richness and honour –
what is that, against writing poetry?
Before I kneel for them the yellow river
should flow in the direction of its sources. Li Bai (c. 750 A.D.)

SdV: Could you tell us something about the origin of the poem “Visit from My Father,” with the lines: "On my bulletin board hang seventeen bills./ Throw them away, / he says, they'll come back again!" and how it was created?

NH: My father was a farmer and sexton (he looked after the cemetery in the village), economics was not his hobby, and often the wallet was empty. When the postman arrived, my mother stood with the bills and asked what to do with them. Throw them away, he said, they'll come back again. My father died many years ago, but in lonely moments he still comes to visit to discuss the situation. And like farming, poetry isn't the most profitable profession, there's rarely real money in poetry – but perhaps there is after all some kind of balance in life; there isn't much poetry in money either. -- My father never got a passport, but the poem has been read on stage in China and Dubai, and it seems to work also in Arabic and Chinese. Everybody has a father.

SdV: You speak very well in English. Would you be able to write a poem in that language, or is poetry 100% bound to your mother language?

NH: Maybe not 100 percent, but I'm not that good in English unfortunately. I write almost exclusively in Danish, and my Danish is even influenced by the dialect I spoke in my childhood. I've only written a few poems in English. I'm bound to my mother tongue - and I'm trapped in the Latin alphabet. Even if I communicate in English, I'm still isolated from half of the world. How many alphabets are there on our planet? Nobody knows for sure, but alone Chinese, Hindi, Bengali and other Asian alphabets are used by more than one third of the planet's population. And then there is the Arabic alphabet used by a billion. Many Arab and Chinese writers have the advantage over European colleagues, they are able to handle two alphabets. I wish my ignorance wasn't so extensive.

So I am dependent on my translators. In English it is Per Brask, Patrick Friesen, Martin Aitken and others. In Holland I am lucky enough to be translated by Jan Baptist, who is fluent in Danish to the very fringes of the linguistic nuance. He has translated classics such as Andersen, Leonora Christina and J. P. Jacobsen - to be in his stable is a privilege. He is doing a great unselfish work without demanding much applause.
EPIGRAM: Niels Hav
You can spend an entire life
in the company of words
not ever finding
the right one.

Just like a wretched fish
wrapped in Hungarian newspapers.
For one thing it is dead,
for another it doesn’t understand
Hungarian.

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TRANSLATING (with) NIELS HAV
Report by Per K. Brask
For quite a few years now I have been translating poetry and prose by the Danish writer Niels
Hav, often working with the Canadian poet, Patrick Friesen, and sometimes solo. Of course,
Hav himself has always been involved in the process, asking for changes, making suggestions
and finally approving the result. Hav doesn’t play
games, though he does know how to be playful. He
writes poetry. He uses metaphors drawn from life to
create insights into the human condition and he reveals
the meaningfulness that may be found. He’s never
overly solemn or too somber. His work is slyly full of
the kinds of ironical and humorous self-reflection that
characterizes the particular often self-deprecating
humour of the West-Jutland of his youth. On the morning of a late-fall day, I received an e-
mail from him with a new poem attached, “The Cigar Cutter,” which in Danish reads as
follows:

Niels Hav: Cigarklipperen
I konfirmationsgave fik jeg en cigarklipper
af min Bedstefar; fineste kvalitet, mahogni og rustfrit stål.
Han havde store planer med mig.
Selv sad han i amtsrådet og bankens bestyrelse,
han var formand for brugsforeningen og med i hjemmeværnnet
- altid glad for en god cigar. Midt i byen byggede han et hus,
der sad han på sit kontor med vindue ud til vejen
og holdt øje med, hvad der foregik, mens han ordnede tingene
og røg sine cigarer. Høj og lav blev modtaget med jævn venlighed
og budt på en cigar fra den solide kasse, der stod ved telefonen.
For ham var cigarklipperen et anvendeligt værktøj.
Ingen tvivl, jeg har skuffet ham, det blev aldrig til det helt store,
i reglen var jeg for uambitiøs med min tobak. Jeg blev ikke medlem
af bankens bestyrelse – med hovedet fuld af wilde planer
forlod jeg landsbyen og blev til en af de vidtøftige snakkehoveder
i København. Ord er taknemlige, men hvad fører de til?
Den eneste form for kærlighed og respekt, der er umagen værd,
Min Bedstefar døde uden at se mig udrette noget som helst.

Cigarklipperen har jeg liggende endnu. Med lidt øvelse
can den bruges til at knappe øl op, det er jeg bedre til.
Men i private øjeblikke kan jeg godt føle skam.
Det nytter jo ikke at sige: Kære Bedstefar, de har lavet verden om,
tobaksrøg er ikke længere tilladt, selv bankdirektøren står ude
i regnen nu og ryger i smug ligesom en skoledreng.
Det holder ikke. Så fjoget en undskyldning er intet værd,
for hvad kommer det mig ved. Jeg er min egen fiasko.

Min Bedstefar ser skeptisk på mig fra sin høje himmel,
han klipper spidsen af en havanneser, så fugter han den med læberne
og tænder med en tung bordlighter støbt ind i granit.
Barmhjertigt begraver han min forvirrede snakken i vældige skyer
af første klasses røg. Han siger ikke noget,
men jeg ved, hvad han tænker, og inderst inde
bliver jeg nødt til at give ham ret.

I was immediately taken with this new poem and the photo of the old cigar cutter, so I began
working on it right away and later the same day, I e-mailed him back a draft translation. A few
hours later I received the draft back with, in our established tradition, a number of quiries and
suggestions from Hav. Later that evening I returned the draft attempting to answer Hav’s
concerns and to integrate what I could. Words in *cursive* are Hav’s suggestions. I have marked
my recommendations in CAPITAL letters. My notations, inside square brackets, are translated
from Danish:

**Niels Hav: The Cigar Cutter**

I was given a cigar cutter as a confirmation present
by my grandfather; the finest quality, mahogany and stainless steel.
He had great plans for me.
He was *himself a great man* AN IMPORTANT MAN, or, HE WAS, OF COURSE, AN
IMPORTANT MAN. [HIMSELF A GREAT MAN – SOUNDS OFF] a member of the county
assembly
and on the board of the bank, he chaired the co-op and was in the national guard
- always enjoyed *fond of* a good cigar. He built his house in the middle of town,
there he sat in his office with a window facing the street
and kept an eye on what was going on while he took care of business
and smoked his cigars. High or low, people were greeted with even affability
and offered a cigar from the sturdy box by the telephone.
For him the cigar cutter was a useful tool.

No doubt, I’ve disappointed him. I never quite made it in a big way *I was never quite big* I
NEVER BECAME IMPORTANT THAT WAY,
as a rule I was too unambitious when it came to *with my* tobacco. I didn’t become was
never NEVER BECAME a member
of the bank’s board – *with my head full of wild plans* [WITH IS NOT NECESSARY IN
ENGLISH, BUT IT’S OKAY.]
I left the village and became one of the rambling talking heads. [A VILLAGE SEEMS TOO SMALL FOR A BANK. TALKING HEADS APPEAR ON TELEVISION. RAMBLING DOESN'T IMPLY HIGH FALUTING] in Copenhagen. Words are easy, but where do they lead? [WHAT DO THEY GET YOU?]

The only form of love and respect worth the effort is from those back home. Which, for good reasons, is never achieved.

My grandfather died without seeing me do anything at all. [DO IS TOO WIDE RANGING, WE CAN USE ACCOMPLISH OR ACHIEVE]

The cigar cutter is still lying about. With a little practice it can be used to uncap beer bottles, I'm better at that.

But in solitary private moments I may at times feel shameful. [PRIVATE IS FINE, BUT I THINK SOLITARY SOUNDS BETTER]

There's no use in saying, “Dear Grandfather, they've changed the world, smoking is no longer allowed, even the bank director stands outside in the rain and smokes illicitly like a schoolboy.”

It won't do. So silly an excuse is worth nothing, it's got nothing to do with me. [SUCH IS NOT MY RESPONSIBILITY BECAUSE THAT'S NOT MY BUSINESS [OR, BECAUSE THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT. SUCH IS NOT MY RESPONSIBILITY – DOESN'T SOUND CONTEMPORARY ENG.].]

My grandfather looks skeptically at me from his high heaven above, [HIGH HEAVEN ABOVE DOESN'T WORK, FROM HIS HEAVEN ON HIGH IS A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE] he cuts the tip of a Cuban, then he wets it with his lips and lights it with a table lighter molded in granite. Mercifully he buries my confused chatter in massive clouds of first class smoke. He doesn't say anything, but I know what he's thinking and deep inside myself I have to agree with him.

The following day I received further suggestions and queries from Niels. That same day I responded, again in capital letters. [WHERE DO THEY LEAD]

No doubt, I've disappointed him. I never became really important, as a rule I was too unambitious with my tobacco, was never a member. [WE CAN USE WAS INSTEAD OF BECAME. I SEE THE PROBLEM BUT WE NEED SOMETHING BECAUSE THE FIRST BECAME IS TOO FAR BACK]

of the bank's board. With my head full of wild plans I left the village and became one of the verbose windbags in Copenhagen. Words are easy, but what do they effect? [LET'S USE WHERE DO THEY LEAD]

The only form of love and respect worth the effort is from those back home. Which, for good reasons, are never achieved. My grandfather died without seeing me accomplish anything at all.

The cigar cutter is still lying about here now, late in life [IT WOULD BE BETTER SIMPLY TO SAY, SOMEWHERE. STILL ALREADY GIVES US A SENSE OF TIME HAVING PASSED]. With a little practice it can also be used to uncap beer bottles, I'm better at that.

My grandfather looks skeptically at me from his heaven up high above? [YES WE CAN USE THAT BY ADDING AN UP]
With Hav’s consideration of these suggestions, the final translation came to read as below. We now had a translation that we were both happy with, that made sense rhythmically and that Hav felt (in a literal translation of an untranslatable Danish expression, though its meaning is clear enough) “sat right in the closet”:

**Niels Hav: The Cigar Cutter**

I was given a cigar cutter as a confirmation present
by my grandfather; the finest quality, mahogany and stainless steel.
He had great plans for me.
He was an important man, a member of the county assembly
and on the board of the bank, he chaired the co-op and was in the national guard
- always fond of a good cigar. He built his house in the middle of town,
there he sat in his office with a window facing the street
and kept an eye on what was going on while he took care of business
and smoked his cigars. High or low, people were greeted with even affability
and offered a cigar from the sturdy box by the telephone.
For him the cigar cutter was a useful tool.

No doubt, I’ve disappointed him. I never became really important,
as a rule I was too unambitious with my tobacco and was never a member
of the bank’s board. With my head full of wild plans
I left the village and became one of the verbose windbags
in Copenhagen. Words are easy, but where do they lead?
The only form of love and respect worth the effort
is from those back home. Which, for good reasons, are never achieved.
My grandfather died without seeing me accomplish anything at all.

The cigar cutter is still lying about here. With a little practice
it can also be used to uncap beer bottles, I’m better at that.
But in solitary moments I may at times feel shameful.
There’s no use in saying, “Dear Grandfather, they’ve changed the world,
smoking is no longer allowed, even the bank director stands outside
in the rain now and smokes illicitly like a schoolboy.”
It won’t do. So silly an excuse is worth nothing,
because that’s not my business. I’m my own failure.

My grandfather looks skeptically at me from his heaven up high above,
he cuts the tip of a Cuban, then he wets it with his lips
and lights it with a table lighter molded in granite.
Mercifully he buries my confused chatter in massive clouds
of first class smoke. He doesn’t say anything,
but I know what he’s thinking and deep inside myself
I have to agree with him.

\(\Phi\)

As I hope the above illustrates, translation is a process of discovery. In some ways it resembles putting together a puzzle, except that the final picture isn’t exactly like the one on the box. Discovery is of course not a neutral phenomenon. Discovery can be used to subdue or appropriate. When it is done together with someone like Hav and there’s an easy flow back and forth of suggestions, corrections, changes and notations all in aid of getting the poem its best possible (though provisional) rendering into English, all focus is on the Work. The above translation will be further improved with time as Hav gets to know how it works for an audience in various international contexts where he is invited to read.
Textualities
Alison Dilworth

Textual assemblages by Alison Dilworth. Photographed by Gregory Carafelli. Alison Dilworth is an inter-media artist born in Canada and currently living and working in Philadelphia, U.S.A.

To purchase/commission/view full colour sets and/or other works by Alison Dilworth visit her on-line site: http://www.alisondilworth.com/books.html

♥

“Recording memory and process by removal (as we all know, once remembered, the memory is altered again and again and again).”
— Alison Dilworth

“There are things to say; every time, I hold my tongue”
"Then Came the Call"

"You embody the best I cannot face"
“Penny = 1 Cent”

“There are ways I will learn to be alone with you”
21ST C. CANADIAN POETRY INDEFATIGABLY SALUTES
MR. ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN

Stephen Bett

What I’ve learned this week
reading Canadian
poetry magazines
(Can. Poe. Mags.):

(Ernest, palpable drivel)

Birds will forever “flit”

Keyboards go “clickety-clack”

& the deep dark past is a
“dappled web”

Sounds about right, eh …

(*the mirror and the lamp*)

Leave the lamp burning

National psyche —

caught like a deer
in the looking
glass
light

THE LANDS BETWEEN
by Faruk Ulay

1.

This place is not a desert. It is the Land of Last Things. The things here signal an end. They signal an end, good or bad—the final point they themselves have carved, calling attention to the end of the era in which they were created. Because they are the last of their kind, they are priceless. One walks among them as one would in a museum. One walks among the objects here without touching them, with sighs and with eyes that caress. One’s footsteps fall upon their shadows, which are a visible longing for earlier times. It is not known how time passes or if it is truly worth living here. Numberless people, those who see themselves as the last descendents of an exhausted generation, come to this place in the hope that, if they settle here, they too will be preserved together with these last things. Many there are who hasten from this place. Those who do form a second group among the multitude crowding together among the last things. All see each ending as a shining beginning. For this reason, these people are said to be hopeful, even when hope is unfounded. In their own land, they are eager to bring each era to a close in order to begin the new, which—in their optimism—they believe will be glorious. To this land, they bring the objects that create its rich diversity. Their markings identify them as things of an era now past, which have lost their usefulness or novelty. Having discarded them here, the acquisitive return home to be among new things until these, too, pale and are discarded with the coming of the next era. Those choosing to remain in this land end by serving the objects that have been left behind—things that have consumed the past and are fit for nothing more than exhibition. Those who go are grateful to those who do not, for it is the latter group which keeps the repository of their common past orderly. Both those who wait upon last things—last objects—and those others who are grateful smile when they come upon each other. The significance of these smiles may not, in every case, be understood.

2.

This place is not a desert. It is the Land of Things that Commit Misdeeds. Those who pillage this place believe that humans either are born to misdeeds or that to live humanely, they must commit them. Even if they were readily to believe that a human is born to misdeeds, in this place they are willing to believe that in order to allow oneself to live humanely, a human must commit misdeeds. The things in this place are light; they allow themselves to be used. Even the sharpest, most dangerous objects seem innocent, almost benevolent. They coerce one toward sin with the persuasion that innocence does not suit humanity. They know that an innocent will not protest when coerced and how to coerce enough to exhaust innocence. In truth, those who come here are eager to be coerced. They believe that an inability to commit misdeeds, having the opportunity to do so, is a weakness. They come here to rid themselves of this weakness. Even if they do not enjoy being coerced, they believe that they have brought with them the capacity to enjoy it. They are mistaken. They have long since sinned and gotten their first taste of misdeeds—the pleasure of their commission; they understand then that this place is not ill-omened. Finding a misdeed worthy of commission, one that will give pleasure, is done with the help of the things in this place. Each possesses in itself dozens of misdeeds, and anyone who wishes can select from among them. No one thinks to live here. Before anyone can go his own way, mallard hunting parties are formed. Hitting a mallard at which one has aimed confirms that he is ready to commit misdeeds anew. Everyone who passes through this place leaves having hit that at which he aimed. In this land, the firearms discharge soundlessly, and their barrels remain cool. The hunting parties end early, and all return home, so that their newly acquired skills can be put to use.
3.

This place is not a desert. It is the Land of Uncertain Things. Even the rocks and earth are uncertain here. One sleeps and awakens in an endless twilight. The days are a woven wall of mist. The roads zigzag, but the sharpest curves can be taken without touching the brake pedal. Outside the doors of the houses, starched tablecloths lean against the wall. Tasteless meals are eaten at ironing boards. The wine is the shade of water. One bites into a cherry and spits out watermelon seeds. But to bite again the same cherry is to taste wine in one’s mouth. The lemon easily pressed a moment ago is now a hard-shelled egg. Nothing stays in one form long enough to reveal its identity, its source, its next transformation. Here, nothing taken is put back in the same place. And if it could be, it would not stay there. This land brims with every imaginable thing, while at the same time it is empty and silent enough to draw one to suicide. The eccentricity of things is the result of the uncertainty, which is like a weather here. In this place, it is also hard to know what is human and what is not; destinations and origins cannot be distinguished from one another. One uncertainty awakens another. The uncertainty begins in things, then seeps into situations and thoughts. It is impossible to live here. One can merely arrive from a place and depart for another. Those who arrive and pass through are not aware of what they do here. Sometimes they will get into a car or truck as if on impulse and leave. Others may be encountered on one of the zigzags in the road, walking, and then at another zigzag, now riding on a four-wheeled horse. They are seen awhile and then they disappear. Sometimes they hold something that cannot be described with confidence; at other times they themselves are the uncertain things on their way to another land. The heavy scent of life’s uncertainties is everywhere; beyond it, as if lying in wait, is death. In this place, only death is certain as it passes through.

4.

This place is not a desert. It is the Land of Stolen Things. Whatever has been stolen, finds its way here. In this place, one comes upon humans, wandering aimlessly as if in herds. They remind one of the crowds that mill among the stalls of a flea market. Those gathering here think that they conceal their purpose, which is to take some of the stolen things with them when they finally leave this land. They covet especially the slaves who have removed themselves from their former owners. The slaves who have taken their own freedom by escaping to this land. They pass their days among these other stolen things, hoping to hide and planning always their escape from those who wish, in turn, to steal them. By stealing from one another, lending what they have each stolen to one another, and sharing a mutual debt of death that goes unpaid, they struggle to remain unnoticed. But falling into the hands of the humans who herd here as if like animals, whose wish it is to steal them, halts this struggle. Those who come to this land in order to steal are not unhurried like the patient mine-sweeper, but instead walk with the flurried footsteps of a butterfly hunter. They rush from one spot to another; never satisfied they grasp first one thing and then another. In this way, they reveal the danger of mistaken first impressions. The visitors to this land are not the clever flea-market crowd. They are city-dwellers unable to satisfy their passion for theft in their own lands. Were there one among them clever enough to steal thoughts from another’s head, these things (which are the objects of reflection, of meditation) are nearly impossible to steal. To steal them, one would need to live with them—with thoughts alone—and only the slaves know how to do this. At least, only they can do this convincingly. Despite all the thoughts that fill their minds, they will one day no longer be able to escape capture; one day they will find themselves in different lands. If they can once more escape from those who have abducted them, they will return here with new things and continue to perfect their genius for stealing thoughts and for staying out of sight.

FARUK ULAY, born in Istanbul, Turkey, is a prolific multimedia author/graphic designer, living in Pasadena, California, introduced to Rampike by Norman Lock who recently interviewed Faruk Ulay for Rain Taxi (on-line): http://www.raintaxi.com/online/2012summer/ulay.php
From the *FANS SERIES: PHOTOWORKS*
Brenda Francis Pelkey

“Adam and Aaron”
BRENDA FRANCIS PELKEY currently serves at the University of Windsor and is the Director of the School of Visual Arts. Pelkey has exhibited her photographic works throughout Canada as well as Scotland, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Finland and England. Her photo works appear in numerous collections such as the MacKenzie Art Gallery, the Mendel Art Gallery, the Art Bank, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Dunlop Art Gallery, Confederation Centre for the Arts, and The National Gallery of Canada. Her “Fans” series features sports fans who don costumes in order to demonstrate their allegiance to their favourite teams.
52. Perhaps it was an imperfection in the glass, or it might have been that the hand of the optician, ordinarily so confident, shook at the grinding wheel after a night of excess; for whatever reason, the lens was spoiled and had to be laid aside. That evening after the room had been emptied of vital energies with only the remains of a sandwich left to disturb the dustless atmosphere, a slant of weary light fell through the blinds and (having crossed the room at a speed well below light’s absolute) passed through the lens – bringing into focus the first of the dead to appear among us.

53. Pressing an ear to the trumpet piece of this early version of the stethoscope, one could hear faintly the sound of heart and lungs; but laid against the earth, it broadcast the migrations of earthworms far below, the incessant noise of ants toiling inside their long earthen galleries, the wind’s choruses composed in the Aeolian mode for the mineral halls of the underworld, the rush of secret rivers, and – at Earth’s core – the liquefaction of rock and the roar of the primal forge. None knew how so primitive an instrument should have been so augmented.

54. A suitcase, in which Prometheus might have carried fire from the Caucasus to the dark cities of the West (were he of this and not a mythic age), held the Holocaust and might – having been opened to satisfy an idle curiosity like Pandora’s (to defer once more to Bulfinch and his fables) – turn all the world to cinder and ash.

55. And what if light, having fled past us on its way outward from its remotest origin, were to sweep round a dimple in space-time (bound for a moment by gravity’s fierce attraction) and return to Earth – bearing with it from the future an object as familiar as a star-shaped metal trifle belonging to a child who is waiting for us there with a ball and his other jacks?

56. None could imagine a reason other than malice why the coat hanger had been formed from a strand of wire whose metal had been previously fatigued by bending it back and forth to the limit of its tolerance, so that the hanger would (at night, usually, when all were asleep in the quiet house) noisily shrug off its coat and chime.

57. It needed no more than to recognize that the watch he wore on his wrist was, like a compass for the navigation of space, an instrument with which he could move about in time. Not that the watch was extraordinary – no, this was not the case; but by the violent derangement of its hands, he would be persuaded that he had broken time’s habit and (like a man freed from gravity’s tyrannical sway) leave the temporal axis to ramble among its byways.

58. The box was empty, but to close its lid and press one’s ear to it was to hear – murmured by a voice, distant and dispassionate – the recitation of an old story (quite likely a ghost story, by Le Fanu perhaps) as if from a radio (one with tubes weakly glowing); only it was not a radio and the box, as already has been said, was empty.
59.
From the wooden handle of that instrument of gross anatomy, which had sawn off arms and legs in the Wilderness, at Manassas, Chickamauga, Antietam, and Gettysburg, grew – in soil rich with pain and sorrow – flowers of rare delicacy and ethereal hue (tending toward that gold which will invade a summer evening’s sky), defended by salients too like a child’s rosy fingernails to be called thorns.

60.
A video- and audio-compressor (much like that used to convert the external world into a digital one) could flatten nearby streets into ribbons of data and, having spooled them onto that familiar fluorescent-orange rubber cone (so like a bobbin wound with thread), untangle – for the fortunate owner of this convenience – city traffic, always infuriating at this hour.

61.
To pass one’s fingers over the rods of this particular abacus (in shape and construction so like a harp), unearthed in a ruined bazaar in Samarkand, was to hear again the music of Persian dates and pistachios, Somali aloes and frankincense, Indian sandalwood, Chinese teas and lacquerware – recorded in wooden beads flying through a merchant’s deft fingers a thousand years or more ago, on the northern Silk Road.

∑

NORMAN LOCK received the Aga Kahn Prize, given by The Paris Review, the Literary Fiction Prize, given by The Dactyl Foundation of the Arts & Humanities, fellowships from the New Jersey Council on the Arts, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and from the National Endowment for the Arts. His recent books include Love among the Particles (Bellevue Press) & Escher’s Journal (Ravenna Press).
Joseph Hubbard was fascinated by the visual fallacy of the Windsor skyline when he drove towards its art gallery in 2009. Look north of the gallery and Detroit’s skyscrapers, including the GM Renaissance Centre, an emblem of the region’s rich car production history, appears to be one with the Canadian border city. With the river hidden from view, sunk beneath the streets’ line of sight, Hubbard’s misperception could be suspended. The memory of this suspension has endured. It’s transformative, wryly disruptive quality informs many of the exhibits for ‘You Don’t Know What You Are Seeing’ an exhibition of Hubbard’s inter-media works, was presented in 2012, at the Art Gallery of Windsor.

Hubbard’s false impression of the Windsor skyline prompted a piece about the waterfront itself. In particular he was pursuing a view of the Windsor downtown skyline. In ‘The View from (T)Here’ two screens show video footage, side by side, of skylines viewed from each bank of the Detroit river. Shot simultaneously, and running through about ten minutes of looping footage, the piece is a renewal of perspective and perception, with everything from the semi-violent lapping of the water on one side to the cloudy gloom that seems to blur Windsor - even as Detroit shimmers underneath blue skies – prompting the viewer to think about how the cities view themselves and each other. Filming from both sides of the water establishes a kind of dialogue, a visual substitute for everything that passes between two countries and, more distinctly, two border cities that live this dialogue on an everyday basis. Its success is in capturing, in its simultaneity, how neighbouring cities view or define their own identities through each other.

‘You Don’t Know What You Are Seeing’ pulls together work from the London-based artist’s previous exhibitions, but also features new collaborations and works, with specific gestures to the Windsor area and its rich history. The locale of Windsor is not brought to the fore as nostalgia or regionalism but used to further the show’s meta-exhibit qualities. This is perhaps best expressed in ‘Collaboration With A Dead Artist’ which gives a curious insight into Wyndham Lewis’ engagement with Assumption College, the founding institution of the nearby Windsor University. Hubbard has copied exactly Lewis’ portraits of the College Principles (all
Basilian Priests), in the elucid style of Vorticism that the artist himself established, and mounted them on an art vault rack, as he originally found them. To the right of this rack there is a row of black cassocks hanging from the wall, with a pair of shoes set beneath each one, on the floor. This juxtaposition, between the cassocks and the portraits, lends a sudden tactility to our perception of the past. Yet, while appearing to concretize the representation of the principals it in fact displaces them further, playing on society’s weakness for historical materiality.

‘Collaboration with a Dead Artist’ raises the spectre of Lewis’ time at, or even inhabitation of, the College. As an atheist recently expelled from England for praising the tenets of National Socialism, the conversations between artist and subject would have been enthralling. How did he manage, as an opinionated and often difficult man, to enlist willing subjects for his portraits at the College? The process of art is as important as its content in this exhibition, so Lewis’ production of the portraits, Hubbard’s selection of them from an art vault and their arrangement in the gallery space are all invoked, echoed and, with the rough edges of temporality smoothed off, presented as art in themselves.

The portraits, as part of this exhibit piece, appear to have been ‘actualized’, in the Benjaminian sense. As Eiland and McLaughlin said of Benjamin’s ‘dialectical image’, these portraits have arrived in a present, a ‘preformed now’ which recognises them1. As Hubbard often shifts role in the exhibit, between artist and curator, bricoleur and humorist, there is also Benjamin’s collector-figure, a figure whose gaze, and recognition, exalts historical objects in a transformative present.

Elsewhere, in ‘Board of Directors (Last Supper)’ 12 parking meters, some of varying textures and colours, are mounted on a table. These are the old style of meters, and their anthropomorphemic qualities – the rounded golden heads and coin slot features – are amplified through their arrangement in a meeting-like pose set around the perimeter of a rectangular table. The parking metres face inwards, excluding the viewer somewhat, and a set of objects usually scattered are presented as a collective. One meter, notably an older model than the rest, shows a “violation” sign, suggestive of some decision-making process at work. The piece’s title is a nod to the blurring of boundaries between social forces we might see as archaic and one’s

1 Eiland; McLaughlin. ‘Translators Foreword’ The Arcades Project, pxii
we might think of as contemporary, and progressive. The act of meeting in fact appeals to our sense of ceremony, of ritual, and ultimately our ability to elevate the normative, to put things and people on a pedestal.

Perhaps the centrepiece of the exhibition is a series of translations, mounted in frames on the wall, of the letters of Jose Luis Cuevas, an exceptionally successful modernist sculptor and painter born in 1934, Mexico. The work was done in collaboration with an assistant who translated the letters with Hubbard and the originals are on display too. Therefore you can see the sketches accompanying each letter as well as the impossibly small handwriting of Cuevas. Sometimes the translations run around the sketches, free of the old text. In some frames however the translation runs right over a photograph of the original artwork and overlaps with the original writing. At these times we are reminded of being removed, two or three times, from the origin, through translation and through arrangement. There is the playful suggestion of Cuevas’ original expressions being obscured by an artist reclaiming them. There is also the fact that Cuevas often talks of the impediments of time and his environment on his artistic production as he struggles to meet the demand for his work.

The letters are correspondence between Cuevas and Jose Maria, his agent, who compiled the work and distributed sketch booklets from Mexico City to galleries worldwide. They span two years of Cuevas navigating European capitals and sketching grotesques of the street-peoples found there. They show an artist in demand, but also quite demanding. He takes time out from warmly thanking Jose Maria, in one letter, to unflinchingly criticise his standards of photography. A perfectionist then, who seemed haunted by the constraints on him and confesses to his friend of the stresses impacting his household, ‘My nerves translate themselves into cries and the girls, infected by me, shout as well and the house returns to a chamber of echoes.’ These intimate confessions exhibit the artist, as much as the art.

Moving between the often gloomy-pragmatism of the letters and the unearthly, morphing forms of the sketches themselves, often compared to Bacon, but also recalling Lucian Freud, there are the exhibition’s usual shafts of light into process. On some of the pages, the originals are clearly sketched and written on paper torn out of a diary. Temporality is at stake here, with the dates of the calendar pages mis-matched to the dates of the letter’s composition.
In fact Cuevas drew the sketches first, and then selected which ones to send with the letter. There is something wonderfully anarchic about the different directions the text runs in around the pictures and also beguiling about the implicit process of selection for each letter. We do not know what we are seeing - the work of art itself or the route of its composition.

With this show Hubbard demonstrates a playful preoccupation with perception, allying this to his conception of what it is to exhibit, visit and exist in the space of an art gallery. Aiding the patron’s navigation of the exhibition is Hubbard’s instinctual and nuanced use of humour, an attention to the mundane details of everyday life as well as an appreciation of their potential for iconic-elevation.

Engaging with artistic processes, Hubbard’s manipulations, reassemblies and translations across many mediums can be seen, in their entirety, as an exuberant bricolage. However this could unfairly labour his work with a Dadaist irreverence often associated with the term. He may be giving a blackly comic spin to the prosaic but there is more to Hubbard’s work than just opportune exposure. It is an elevation, an inversion of iconoclasm, which reconstructs grace from the debris of the mundane.

CHRISTOPHER PRENDERGAST (Keele University, U.K.), was a visiting scholar who conducted doctoral research on culture & urban decay in the Windsor and Detroit region during 2011-2012.

THE ART GALLERY OF WINDSOR is a not-for-profit art institute in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Established in 1943, the gallery has a mandate as a public art space to show significant works of art by local, regional, and national artists. Director: Catharine Mastin. Address: 401 Riverside Drive West, Windsor, ON N9A 7J1. Phone: (519) 977-0013 Website: http://www.artgalleryofwindsor.com/
**Shadow Catcher:** Historical Photographs of Edward Sheriff Curtis

**Introduction by Hélène Samson**

**Commentary by Guy Sioui-Durand**

**Translation by Norman Cornett**

**Introduction: CURTIS UN PROJET DÉMESURÉ**

Photographier tous les Premiers Peuples d’Amérique du Nord

Cette ambition naît dans l’esprit d’Edward Sheriff Curtis lorsqu’il observe le rassemblement annuel de la nation Pikanii (Piégan) en 1898. La vue des innombrables tipis dans la plaine du Montana l’incite à sauvegarder la mémoire des autochtones dont la culture, selon la croyance de l’époque, était vouée à disparaître.


Influencées par le pictorialisme, les photographies de Curtis sont retouchées et souvent mises en scène selon une vision idéalisée des Premiers Peuples. Si les scientifiques lui ont reproché cette interprétation, l’œuvre de Curtis constitue néanmoins une contribution ethnologique incomparable.

**CURTIS BEYOND MEASURE**

Photographer of the First Peoples of North America

English Translation by Norman Cornett

Edward Sheriff Curtis resolved to assemble photographic documentations after witnessing the Piikani (Peigan) Nation’s annual gathering in 1898. The sight of countless teepees pitched on a Montana plain inspired him to preserve the memory of Aboriginal peoples whose culture would inexorably die out, according to contemporary assumptions about the ‘vanishing Indian.’

For 27 years Curtis journeyed throughout Canada and the United States, west of the Mississippi. Indeed he trekked from Alaska to New Mexico and took some 40,000 pictures while noting down the habits and customs of many First Nations and the Inuit groups. This project resulted in a twenty-volume encyclopedia, *The North American Indian*, which comprised 20 portfolios of photogravures printed on the finest paper.

In keeping with pictorialism Curtis often staged and retouched his photographs so as to articulate an idealized vision of the First Peoples. Although scholars roundly criticize this representation, Curtis’s work remains an unparalleled contribution to ethnology.

**Hélène Samson**

Curator, Notman Photographic Archives
McCord Museum
690 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec H3A 1E9
www.musee-mccord.qc.ca
Commentary:

Guy Sioui-Durand, sociologue, artiste et membre de la communauté Huron-Wendat, apporte, par le biais du texte ci-dessous, une contribution essentielle à cette exposition.

The text below, prepared by Guy Sioui-Durand, sociologist, artist, and member of the Huron-Wendat community, adds an essential dimension to this exhibit.

Guy Sioui-Durand : Capteur des Ombres

Edward Sheriff Curtis se fit nomade dans nos territoires. Il prit la route sur nos pas, apprit nos langues, se fit adopter et initier à certains rituels. En mission photographique pour capter notre mémoire en « réductions », l’artiste fit surgir 40 000 images de sa boîte de lumière.

Les Anciens le surnommèrent le Capteur des Ombres.

Bien sûr nombre de portraits profilés. Si puissants qu’ils créèrent le stéréotype de l’Indien aquilin comme envers du Blanc. Ses paysages époustouflants devinrent aussi les décors hollywoodiens de la dualité des « Indiens et des Cow-Boys ».

Or l’essentiel demeura ailleurs.

Au regard amérindien d’un Tsie8ei, Wendat (Huron), comme moi à la recherche de l’art, c’est à dessein que je vous convie à voir, à discuter et réinterpréter une frange imagée de son projet démesuré présenté pour la première fois en Hochelega/Montréal.

Sous le spectaculaire des campements vivants et des visages-territoires, de la cohorte des guerriers à cheval jusqu’à l’enfant emmitouflé pour le portage, des paniers stylisant le savoir-faire des femmes à la présence initiée de l’homme-médecine, des fondements de la vision du monde amérindienne composent l’infinitude de son art.

La fierté des coiffes, la délicatesse des broderies et perlages, les postures font circuler le Temps mythologique. Malgré l’impression d’exode intérieur, « l’œil écoute » l’oralité de rythmes et sons qui les imprègne des résurgences autochtones d’aujourd’hui.

C’est que, de tribus en tribus, un message d’espoir fut portagé : ces photographies exposeraient à nouveau l’indompté d’une Nord Amérique demeurée « sauvage ».

Nous y sommes.

Tiswenk
Edward Sheriff Curtis roamed our lands, followed in our footsteps, learned our languages, and underwent some of our initiation rituals so that we adopted him.

This artist sought to encapsulate our collective memory through the 40,000 images that his camera recorded.

The Elders Called Curtis the Shadow Catcher.

His photography includes many contrived portraits which had such impact that they created the stereotype of the aquiline Indian as the whiteman’s opposite.

His breathtaking landscapes also set the stage for Hollywood’s dualistic “Cowboys and Indians.”

Yet the Key to His Work Lies Elsewhere.

As a native Tsie8ei, Wendat (Huron) who values art, I heartily encourage you to see, discuss, and reinterpret this vivid cross section of the photographic project beyond measure that Curtis undertook, especially since this marks its first showing in Hochelaga/Montreal.

His art owes its breadth of vision to the contours of the Amerindian worldview. In this vein Curtis presents: spectacular vistas of native encampments, furrowed faces, bands of mounted warriors, children all wrapped up for a portage, basketry that stylized women’s know-how, and the rites of medicine men.

Sporting headdresses while bedecked in fine embroidery and exquisite beadwork, these peoples’ proud poses hark back to time immemorial. Although they evoke an internalized exodus, these images resonate so much with current native resurgency’s voices and rhythms that the ‘eye hears’ them loud and clear.

They carry a hopeful message from tribe to tribe because these photographs perennially reveal the indomitable peoples who still inhabit this yet untamed North America.

We’re here.

Tsiawenk

**GUY SIOUI DURAND** is a Wendat (Huron) based in Wendake, Quebec. He is a sociologist (Ph.D), art critic, indépendant curator, and performer. He is specialized in contemporary Amerindian art and actual art. Co-founder of the publishing house Editions Intervention, he wrote "Indiens, Indians, Indios" (Inter, art actuel, no. 104, 2009) and a course on the history of Amerindian art (Laval University, 2011). Sioui Durand was Aboriginal advisor for 400e anniversaire de la ville de Quebec 1608-2008 and curator of Gépig : Souffles de Résistance (Gatineau, Quebec/Ottawa, Ontario, 2009). He was part, in June, of the Canadian Aboriginal Curators Delegation for the 2011 Venice Biennale. He recently created « conférences/performances » for Integração/Actio : Sao Paulo-Quebec (Brazil, 2011) and Dream’s Catcher for Story Tellers, the 24e Symposium d’Art Contemporain de Baie Saint-Paul (Canada, 2011).
“The vanishing race: Navahoe” 1907.
Cañon de Chelly - Navaho, 1904
Edward Sherrif Curtis
Ink on Japanese Gampi tissue mounted on paper. Photogravure
Gift of Mrs. Gordon Reed - M21417.28 © McCord Museum

Chief Garfield:
Jicarilla, 1904
Edward Sherrif Curtis
Ink on Japanese Gampi tissue mounted on paper.
Photogravure
Gift of Mrs. Gordon Reed - M21417.21
© McCord Museum

Exhibition Label: “Some years ago the Jicarilla were all officially given Spanish or English names. Many of them expressed a preference. This old man, who was head-chief of the tribe at the time, selected the designation Garfield.”
- E.S. Curtis, 1907
Bull Chief - Apsaroke, 1908
Edward Sherrif Curtis
Ink on Japanese Gampi tissue mounted on paper - Photogravure
Gift of Mrs. Gordon Reed - M21417.128
© McCord Museum
Iron Breast - Piegan, 1900
Edward Sherrif Curtis
Ink on Japanese Gampi tissue mounted on paper - Photogravure
Gift of Mrs. Gordon Reed - M21417.206
© McCord Museum
RECEIPTS

CARVING.

Breast of Veal, being very gristy, is not easily divided into pieces. In order, therefore, to avoid this difficulty, put your knife at a, about four inches from the edge of the thickest part (which is called "the brisket"), and cut through it to b, to separate it from the long ribs; cut the short bones across, as at d d, and the long ones as at c c; ask which is chozen, and help accordingly. The remaining scrag part is seldom served at table, but forms an excellent stew when dressed in the French mode.

Shoulder of Veal.—Cut it on the under side in the same manner as a shoulder of mutton.

Leg of Mutton.—The best part of a leg of mutton, whether boiled or roasted, is midway between the knuckle and the broad end. Begin to help there from the roundest and thickest part, by cutting slices, not too thin, from b down to c. This part is the most juicy; but many prefer the knuckle, which, in fine mutton, will be very tender, though dry.

There are very fine slices in the back of the leg; therefore, if the party be large, turn it up, and cut the broad end; not across, in the direction you find the other side, but longitudinally, from the thick end to the knuckle-bone. To cut out the cramp-bone, which some persons look upon as a very homely joint, is by many preferred to the leg, as there is much variety of flavor, as well as texture, in both the upper and under parts.

Holly Anderson

The prime part of the fat lies on the outer edge, and is to be cut in thin slices in the direction of d.

The under part, as here represented, contains many favorite pieces of different sorts, as crosswise, in slices, near the Shank-bone at b; and, lengthwise, in broad pieces, at the further end c; as well as in the middle and sides in the manner designated at c and d.

Should it be intended to reserve a portion of the joint to be eaten cold, the under part should be first served, both because it eats better hot than cold, and because the upper remaining part will appear more slightly when again brought to table.
HOLLY ANDERSON'S *The Night She Slept With A Bear* is a collection of flash fictions and mesostic poems dealing with nature, longing, insomnia, sex, the unreliability of memory, and a touch of String Theory. Included in this book is a compact disc of music written and played by Chris Brokaw, which is available for a free listen at: http://www.publicationstudio.biz/books/186.

*The Night She Slept With A Bear* is designed by Susan Archie. ISBN: 9781935662013
www.publicationstudio.biz/books/186
The man and the woman stood facing each other.
Blank expressions in their eyes, they could not imagine what to say, what to do. He cradled a gold ring in his palm, could not recall a previous memory. The intensity of the stare shifted and they inspected the space they occupied.
White surrounded them. Light bounced without restraint off the walls. The writer had neglected to furnish the room. Without a love seat or chairs to sit and relax, the man and the woman pondered how long they would stand staring at the ring or at one another, waiting for the wind of restlessness to move them. The writer had also neglected to dress them. Drawn by curiosity, the man and the woman tilted their heads. Anatomical differences both attracted them and triggered their anxiety. As limbs swayed, eyes travelled from the blank walls to each other's bodies and back to the blank walls.
Both sensed they existed in a computer where everything had started with a flicker of light, a current pulsing across a screen. A simple cut-and-paste intervention, a little moving around, might salvage them. Perhaps even their interaction. They were glad their lives were not being written in the forties when the creator's hand offered no turning back. Either it worked from the beginning or they would be crumpled up and thrown in the waste basket, albeit together. In this electronic century, they lived in the ethereal space of electric impulses and signals. Did this mean life became arbitrary?
The man and the woman searched the room for clues. They craned their necks, set their ears against the wall; they listened for the tapping of fingertips against a surface, or the scratch of a pen against paper. Nothing.
They shrugged. They kissed. An intuitive, soothing response to silence and emptiness. It also justified being unclothed. After feeling aroused and awakened, they grappled with each other until an unanticipated tiredness overcame them and they fell asleep.

* 

The man stirred with the first rays of dawn. Through the slit of his eyelids he focused on the floating specks of dust spiralling up and up before their slow descent amid the walls of the room.
The woman had vanished. A puddle of white, in the shape of her body, had spilled on the floor next to him. The residue of her presence. Tentative, he touched the soft and moist whiteness, staining his index finger; a pungent scent he could not relate to anything he recognized rose to his nostrils. Puzzled, he walked the perimeter of the room. Slippery and shiny, the glossy floor crinkled. One could easily slip off at such an angle. He gazed over the baseboards. No sign of dust. No one else before him or her had inhabited this surface—an important matter to him, although he did not understand why. He returned to the centre of the room where he stood and sought clues. Soon, he found himself pacing along the edge of the space pressing himself against the border. His elbow pressed a white and paper-thin rectangular cover that rolled up the wall to reveal a window and light behind it. Streams of people moved back and forth outside. He leaned on the window, pressing his nose to the glass, watching people walk, hold Styrofoam cups, buy newspapers.
A black liquid spilled from above, splashed against his thigh. Hot on his skin, it exuded a sharp aroma. He spit on his fingertips and rubbed it to a rust-coloured mark. He licked his fingers, enjoying the bitter taste on his tongue. Repeated efforts did not clear away the stain. His skin absorbed the mark. It had become part of him.
His birthmark.

* 

The man leaned his back against the wall, his fisted hands pressed against his forehead. His body had been drifting down the wall with the weight of his emptiness when the wall collapsed and gravity pulled him. He fell backwards, with the sensation of his body falling unsupported. On his back, on the floor, he found himself beyond the wall and inside a nook. The wall had been transformed into an accordion-like door.
A new wall stood beyond the nook where a pair of khaki shorts and a beige tee-shirt
hung from a peg. He cursed writers not generous with wardrobes, although he admitted counting more pockets in the shorts than he would ever find useful. The colourful ear of a book showed in one pocket. He pulled it out and gazed at the blank cover. The sentence, "For you beloved, I will grow a face, become a surface . . ." was printed on each of the one hundred and fifty pages. Snakelike, the sentence, slow and random, moved across the body of each page.

* 

Flicking open the window, the man leaped through and onto the sidewalk below. He found a kiosk on the corner and requested a map.

"What type?" The vendor pointed at a vertical rack.

"I prefer Arial." Then he added, "Can you discern character by the type?"

The vendor scratched his beard, puzzled. "You're a tourist, right? English ain't your first language, is it? All maps are aerial in this part of the world."

"Is there a difference between them?"

"Some say yes, others say no. You pick."

"I'll take these four, please!"

"That's eighteen dollars."

He offered the ring.

"Hey guy, this is worth a lot more than eighteen dollars!"

He shrugged. Smiled. "Thanks. And thanks for the name too. Guy. I like it."

On a bench, he unfolded the orange map first. His finger followed the contours of the topographic lines, studied the roads, the landmarks. After a time, he stared at the bleached sky.

"Who are you to drop me here and disappear? Where do I go? What do I do?" he asked.

Studying the maps, he experienced calm. Time passed with the speed of migrating birds as he focused on the mountainous surroundings. The highest peak stood at the top of the page. He decided to climb the highest point, up to the pristine white, clear of imprints, and find out what he could see from above, at the very edge of his world. He agreed he felt more at ease surrounded by white, the cradle of his birth.

* 

Faint, his legs wavering, Guy sat on a street corner and hummed a tune he did not recognise, a sweet, calming melody. His stomach rumbled. Coins began to fall at his feet, tossed by pedestrians. An apple and a muffin followed. Suspicious, he looked around. Did someone plan this, to take care of him? He bit into the apple with enthusiasm.

A strange stir overwhelmed his being as he gazed at the apple in his hand. He did exactly what he was supposed to do. Was it possible that his story had already been told, that he followed predetermined clues? Then what was the point of proceeding, living a predictable life with nothing original to add? Nothing to separate him from another. No clever turns awaiting. Did he want to distinguish himself?

* 

Hearts, snakes, anchors, initials. Symbols and pictures embedded on ankles, arms, shoulders hurried past him while he sat on the sidewalk. Shades of blue and red. "For you beloved, I will grow a face, become a surface . . ." The rasping of one surface on another. Love. Writing with the body, for the body. A face upon a face. The permanent imprint of one's presence on the memory of skin. The abstract curved line on the woman reached downwards from the shoulder blade. A blue butterfly perpetually alight on her moving ankle eased her effortless steps among the crowd. A willingness to be imprinted, to bleed even, and leave a mark. To be perforated. The impressionable and malleable body of a message.

* 

Maple leaves, loose newspaper, and the smell of fried chicken, entwined in the air. A longing, an incompleteness resembling hunger, resonated from a place deeper than his body or his
stomach. It was not food he longed for. Guy closed his lids and saw almond-shaped eyes. The first eyes he had ever encountered. He realised he had been searching for those eyes ever since the first morning in that vacant room. Searching through the crowds that carried him back and forth like the wind. Aquiline nose, smooth skin. Yes, he also detected a scent, a milky scent. He wondered whether they would ever meet again. Why did she leave the story? A pain stabbed in his chest. He listened to the lonely drumming of his heart. Strange. The vast white sky. Clouds. Mountains. He felt infinite and small, a mote floating in a dust-filled universe. Maybe she had been eliminated, whitened out. And who decided, who erased her? He could not bring her back. Not in the same way, no. His head spun with whirling thoughts. A sharp rip echoed in his chest, as if his skin tore without warning. Silence. The road ended at his toes. He could see nothing beyond. At his feet, green found a way up through the cracks in the sidewalk. He turned back.

* 

For you beloved, I will grow a face, become a surface where you may write your life with the sway of your hand, the pressure of your fingertips. And for you, the traveller, who traces with fingernails the contours of a map, who etches impressions, the guiding path, I too will grow a face and become a surface. Time and use will wear it down. The paper will be forgotten. You will see and remember only the words which found a home to be held.

Guy imagined the visible carried on the backs of the invisible. A background against which outlines encounter their borders. Where people encounter themselves and their limits. Skin-thin borders. Paper-thin.

He raised his eyes skyward to extraordinary white radiance on the horizon. A beam of light and the blank pages at the end of the book fell toward him. Was this it? The end? A mosquito landed on his nose. He hummed. The heavy darkness of the book cover came crashing down.

* 

Guy remembered a bookstore where he browsed through endless sagas, volume after volume surviving across the generations, a compelling, soothing stir about matters that lasted. The pyramids in Giza, the travels of Marco Polo, classic tales clasped in the hands of thousands. His eyes walked a thin black thread of words that leapt into the next room, uninterrupted.

* 

He tired of sitting on a street corner waiting for what might fall into his lap.

Permeated by a sense of familiarity while walking the streets, he watched people's mannerisms. Not surprised to hear the word love, he tried to guess what might transpire next in a conversation. "I never stopped loving him." What they would do, marry someone else? That was less predictable.

He remembered objects, understood their use. He voiced the appropriate words at the appropriate times. Had he been here before? Did he live the practice of not forgetting?

* 

Tonight, famished, Guy paced the parallel streets as though moving down a page in search of meaning. A bowl of soup and fried rice filled his mind, and his mind only. A car whispered in the distance. The street he walked was deserted. The wind puffed his shorts. He sang. Wordless sounds. Patches and drones. His own body a canyon wall echoing and echoing without end. The moon rose and disappeared. He continued on. Coins rattled in his pocket. Resigned, prepared to stop, he smelled food. The pale sky, drunk with dawn, spat a shooting star. The star dropped in a curve, leaving a trail of fluorescent ink behind it.

He peered inside the establishment but did not walk in. The sign read, Open. He saw no one. Why did it take this long to find food? Why this particular place? Why?

Would his future change in a drastic direction whether he entered or not?

*
Guy stopped at a window display. Colourful covers adorned the faces of books and stood up at odd angles, some suspended by near-invisible threads, inert unless touched.

He stepped inside. The smell of coffee soothed him. The pleasure of its taste satiated his subterranean hunger. Thousands of books lined against the walls, before the execution squads of people's fingers pointed at their spines and searched them for meaning. He reached for a book, opened it. Crowded with words. He opened another and another. Every book full. At random, he created a pile of books and walked to a sofa by the fireplace. Flames had been painted on the hearth. The heat that tingled his face, real.

* A month later Guy had not finished reading one of the hundreds of rows of books in the store. He lived on half-finished beverages abandoned by the customers, half-eaten muffins and pastries. He noticed that books written in the past tense prevailed. Most people spoke of the past. He stopped. He could be there, sitting, reading, his whole life. His body twitched, restless. Weak.

He would only survive and prosper if he stood out. If his life built on the scaffolding of impressive strokes. Impress and sell.

* A radio blared in the little café. The hum of the drink cooler vibrated Guy's cheeks. The man at the counter lowered his newspaper and greeted him. Guy sat down and ordered a coffee. Plenty of cream.

He unfolded the white map.

Printed everywhere, crosses crowded the map. Tall intricate buildings. The predominant colours: black and white.

His attention drifted to the radio.

"Why now?" he questioned aloud.

"I can bring it later if you want!" The server, standing beside him, sounded perplexed.

Guy measured him with suspicion.

"What do you do in your spare time?" He scrutinised the face for clues, the hands for ink.

The server frowned.

"Don't mind me. I'll have the coffee now," Guy said. Dismissive, rolling his eyes. His question had become unimportant.

At the end of the news, the radio station broadcast a financial report.

"This is Tony Kwiet from Wuld Ghandi Private Investments reporting on the financial markets for Friday the 12th. Overall, stocks rose in the principal world markets, although analysts warn that any false hopes will crash the market. Buddhist shares climbed half a point after industry experts released a report confirming that meditation lowers cholesterol and slows the cancer of progress."

Guy sipped his coffee. The announcer continued.

"Christian shares oscillated in a wild rollercoaster during a tumultuous day of trading following the release of conflicting reports. Shares plummeted when a senior Christian official reported that the number of shareholders did not reflect, with reliable accuracy, their loyalty to the faith; numbers were over-inflated, enormously overrated. Later in the day, a report by respected quantum physicists, stating they were on the brink of proving the existence of God, sent shares skyrocketing again and they closed unchanged at $77.77. No fluctuations were seen in smaller offshore subsidiaries. The Pope and the Dalai Lama will meet tomorrow. Rumours of merger talks were firmly denied."

Guy returned to his map.

* He unfolded the green map. The most colourful. Drawings of animals, rivers and trees, filled its pages.

He had longed to stand on the highest peak, but the careful path he followed led him elsewhere. He should have guessed, predictable paths led nowhere. He stood at the edge of a canyon where he could not imagine the distance to the bottom. Late in the day, and he had missed the zenith, the moment the sun stared straight down at the earth, when light could
touch the bottom of the canyon. He wondered if the bottom-dwellers wished for that bright moment to linger, never moving on. Or had they grown accustomed, never expected more than the fleeting, brilliant shower of light in their day?

He sat on the edge of the canyon, his legs dangling.

"What do you want me to do?" Guy yelled. He yelled toward the huge space and the sound bounced back. He yelled until his throat burned, as though bitten by ants.

He retrieved several books weighing his pockets. His finger, urgent with desire, flipped to a random book's first page.

On the seventh line, and not unlike his own experience, the author had gone to rest, "to sleep," he corrected his thought aloud.

"The woman leans over the edge of the pier and scoops a handful of ocean water for her asthma. She coughs. A hundred paces away, her newborn sleeps in grandmother's arms. Her father stands beside her, breathes the salty mist. The punch of a wave knocks her down and drags her into the ocean and away, whirling her among the whitecaps. She struggles to undress in the freezing water. Her hand, last, disappears into the depths. A strange farewell wave."

Guy ripped a handful of grass from the edge of the canyon and tossed it. He watched its downward dance. I must have compassion for the creator, Guy thought. Yes, we are here to teach compassion to this imperfect creator.

The wind lifted a hawk by its wings.

How did a hawk feel when a bullet entered its flesh, ripping open its chest? A novel form of dying. The hawk's world changed without warning. Its wings folded. It plummeted toward the unexpected, the grave fast approaching.

He held his own body so tight he drew blood with his nails. The reflection of his face in a rain puddle revealed deep scratches on his face. His skin stung. "Why am I doing this to myself?" He sucked his thumb, found relief. His body softened.

He attempted to read one book, and instead, he found himself flipping through others. He did not finish sentences, skimmed, scanned the texts. Looking for hidden answers. Guy thought he heard a voice. Was it inside or outside his head? Did it matter? He could answer his own questions, discover the truth for himself. Damn it, he must live and walk on.

He stared at the walking stick he had found along the way. He could walk with a cane, something to lean on during the steep sections when his strength waned. But carrying it required effort, energy, "Do I have to carry something today so it may one day carry me too?"

With his walking stick he scratched the letter y on the dirt. A fork on the trail. As he contemplated his work, a gust of wind swept through, covering the trail and filling his eyes with dust. Guy wanted to find that beginning page and return to a time without memory, to rest in comfort and security. He craved coffee. His mind swam in a dark undulating liquid, the medium of life. A womb. The imprint.

Perhaps memory proved illusory. Time refurnished the past and filled in the blanks, recreated experience.

* 

Guy waited at an intersection for the pedestrian light to turn green. As he prepared to step into the crosswalk, a body rushed from behind and pushed him. He lost his balance, falling sideways. He heard the loud screech of tires. A thump, a crash, an eruption of screams.

An elderly woman, with her hair coiled in a bun and a cigarette hanging from the corner of her mouth, helped him to his feet.

"Lucky boy. Hurried just in time, so as not to miss his end," she said, nodding toward the street.

A strange statement. Brutal even, Guy thought, despite the tears in the woman's eyes.

"We'll suffer for as long as we believe things last." She offered a quiet smile and walked away.

Why continue on at all if I can expect it to end?

Continue on because you do not know what is next, the voice in his head whispered.

He could see a boy through a maze of legs. A slanted line of red spilled on either side of him. The boy did not move. No one touched the corpse.

The boy had been slashed and edited.

*
Guy wrote his thoughts in the spacious, untitled book. He wrote around, over, at, along, against, for and with the sentence: "For you beloved, I will grow a face, become a surface . . ." Sentenced by the sentence? The sentence was there and not there. He was there and not there. In another realm. Between the lines, perhaps. In space. Imagination leaped. He sought clues, the genuine. He fastened one eye here, another there. Seeking what else lay beyond the obvious. What was not said. What might still be said.

At the coffee shop or on the street, people peered over his shoulder, read his words. They enquired. Nodded their heads. Adopted his answers. Their numbers grew. He found comfort in numbers, comfort in gathering at that empty place beyond up or brown, left or fight. Comfort in believing they would meet again.

* 

Whistling steam and grinding coffee beans filled his ears. Voices climbed atop of each other, reached higher, a perilous balance on the last octave. He could not hear his own thoughts; he could not hear the woman next to him. People screamed at each other to be half understood. Fictions, assumptions, beliefs, colliding in the air. Dissolving. The space already filled. Without room to be seen, to meet, for anything new to arise. Unmanoeuvrable.

He exited the coffee shop and walked on. One step after another, each indistinguishable from the last, carried him beyond the edge of the horizon into open space.

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**A FROTHEY MOMENT KEEPS THE WORLD AFLOAT**

M.A.C. Farrant  (Micro fiction ms in progress)

1. Nearly There
There was a competition for the job of playing myself. I saw the ratty notice pinned to a tree. The description said there’d be plenty of shifts, the graveyard for sure, but the applicant would need a stomach for fear. They said the person selected would be restless and lean, dreamy but sober, loyal and sane. And to forget about holidays, they weren’t in the cards, though a control on sorrow would keep them afloat. As a bonus there’d be love though not on demand but plenty of dogs for comfort and to keep loneliness away. Work would absorb them but money would not. Perks they’d invent as they hurried along. Time would be generous until it ran out.

I decided to apply. It was the chance of a lifetime.

And now for the good news! I’m on the shortlist!

✦

M.A.C. Farrant is a Canadian short fiction writer, memoirist, journalist, and humourist.
The Circus of Everyday Life
A Collaboration in Progress

Joanna Katchutas & Christina Spina

Seven images in this series have been completed, while more images are still in progress. Everyday life can be hectic. Priorities build up and assort themselves amongst the list, fighting for priority. Considering your day job, friends, and family, the order of importance becomes blurred and you find yourself misplacing more than your house keys. Daily chores are a constant variable adding to this equation. The home is a personal area of relaxation, a place to decompress and rest your feet at the end of a long day. Although the domestic home should be the escape from the hectic daytime life, it also has its own list of duties and maintenance priorities. The home can act like a domesticated prison with chores and to-do lists while dust bunnies slowly surround you. Meanwhile, outside life and other priorities can get in the way of maintaining upkeep on the home front.

“The Circus of Everyday Life” is an ongoing collaborative work combining the energies of photographic artist Joanna Katchutas and make-up artist/sculptor Christina Spina, depicting how everyday life can be a circus. A circus can be defined as “A traveling company of performers in a series of different places causing a public scene of frenetic and noisily intrusive activity”. Representative of the fact that sometimes we feel the world is a circus and we’re the performers going through everyday routines, these photographs portray circus performers carrying out mundane tasks. Dressed in character, these performers are involved in the act of doing chores or following daily routines. The performers are dressed the part, but are out of character, consumed in their routine roles.

Regardless of the number of times chores are tended to, they remain part of a constant cycle of petty labours, always demanding attention. From vacuuming to cooking, gardening to laundry, it’s a continuous cycle of activity that must be attended to every day, for the rest of one’s life. It can be mundane, droning, aggravating, but, sometimes, it is uncanny or strange.
“Waiting for the bus to work”

“Dusting the Chandelier”
From: TGA Transposition of the Great Analogies
Kye Kocher
REPORT
ON THE CARDIAC
CATHETERIZATION IN THE CHILD KOCHER,
MALE

IN THE NEWBORN LESS THAN 48 TO 72 HOURS FOLLOWING PREMEDICATION WITH SOMNIFEN AND ATOSIL

A FEMALE SPACE WAS CREATED. BEHIND THE AO AND PA THE BALLOON INFLATED WITH CARDIAC ANGIOGRAPHIC CONTRAST MEDIUM, SO THE HOLE ROSE O2 LEVELS TO 95% AND THE VALUABLE TOOL CONTINUED DRINKING THE WORLD’S BLOOD

KYE KOCHER is a writer and inter-media artist who depicts and investigates autobiographical references in his visual poetics and inter-media works. He is based in Calgary, Alberta.
“These men may know where the ocean is.” – this is what he said before carving the gigantic vagina in the dried river bed. For that work of art, he had taken up a stick and peeled its bark away like a foreskin, totally unaware of the ancestral uses of his opposable thumb, developed when humankind had waved farewell to their ape ancestors, learning like babies to walk upright, and so – not using hands like feet – developing that vital thumb. That thumb, vital as a vagina, in use a million years before tongues learnt the art of language. We’re all in need of thumbs as well as mouthpieces. Well we are all in need...

Sand hornets rush down the dry irrigation ditch. Dust piles against a nexus of rocks in silicon reds and yellows. Hills of sand shift in the haunting wind. A clutter of tiny objects is on the sand around you. This small bone, for instance, is a scrimshaw recording your thoughts. The dunes are blistered with footprints. Everything about the deserted town is familiar to you.

The growth was back, was apparent especially where the sign read HELP ME, and it was interpreted by those who lived in the distant town that the sand, which clung to the skin and could not be removed, was a prerequisite for mutation. “You gave us beer, now give us water” was the commonly heard lament which quickly had become an epithet signified by the sere carcasses that were scattered across the desert.

It was a summer rain, green, warm, hesitant. It seemed to hang, to cluster in the afternoon air, as if the garden was suddenly enveloped in the branches of an almost invisible tree. It was a tempo of its own which the glassy drops, running along the underside of gutters, did not obey. The earth greedily received the water down its parched June throat.

Hostile fields had cut away the fat – a freak of nature perspective that minimizes the arid inner landscape. The lion pelt textures lie down on your chest. The garden gate is stuck fast, but all the cattle have gone. The sand fleas thirst. Their exoskeletons are fossil records of drought. You’ve gone to town and I follow.

The eyes water and, bending down, you pick at a toenail that suddenly crumbles between your fingers. The clear sky, a milky yellow light, reminds you of angel spittle as you open your mouth to produce no scream. Staring down, you do not recognize the footsteps in your footprints that are speckled with flakes of your skin. You saw how she looked at you echoes in your mind, but you have no response – your tongue slowly has slid down your throat, and the exposed bone of your right cheek is potted with bodies of slithering sand.

A glass bottle stood on the step. It was empty. The brickwork of the house was visible through it, though dull and distorted. As the secretary inspected the bottle through her telescope, a slight wash of colour and light spread over the step. He could not name the colour. It might have been subjective. At the same time, a dead leaf whisked across the circle of vision, moving irregularly over the step, and was gone into the area of darkness always surrounding the circle.

She was bad-mouthing you, gritty flecks of words between her teeth. Fields with bottles of dead man’s dust buried in them, she kept digging you up, making you speak in terms of dried lizards. You can’t remember, because little chuckwallas of emotion surround the
whole picture. And anyway – you are thinking: *Wait a minute, this woman doesn’t even exist. She doesn’t exist anymore than this picture exists.* A fine spray of sand flies into your eyes. On the dune you spot a small plank. You brush away a curtain of sand. This is the place.

*The snowball is not cold,* she thinks to herself. The scene, repeating in her mind, was that of her right foot lying some ten yards away, then her left ankle stuck to the side of a dead vulture’s wing just four feet from where she fell. “The snowball as egg,” she mutters and, in doing so, feels her lower lip adhere to her bottom gums. When they finally found her, all that was left were large sections of her lower jaw and upper teeth trying to mouth the word ‘mouth’.

They led the way into a hall lit only by a dim lantern, and there pointed to a great wooden chest at one side of the room. I saw that the assassins had defrauded me of my last miserable consolation. Although I did not seek in her beloved visage any sign of life or lustre, such as had charmed me until recently, for they had vanished with her spirit’s passing, I had hoped to print a last kiss upon her dead lips. This mournful pleasure was denied me. Such a merciless blow had destroyed her that not a feature of her countenance remained intact. The assassins had to carry me fainting from the room.

A yellow flower, she was preserved for you – teeth sliding over the way you liberated all those nasty animals. It’s too late to sew the mouth. The stitches in your eyes have already unraveled. The paper landscape tears around you. *She* wouldn’t have opened the white paper door so violently. *She* would have known how to trap the spirit. For you, it was no use – you see, the bottles devolved.

The metal shack is the only place where the sand can not get in, but you can hear it slithering over the tin-plate roof, down the aluminum siding, beneath the concrete floor. *Not synthetic,* you think to yourself, your jaw dropping open in a gasp the moment the floor dissolves and your body is absorbed downward into the open mouths of a newborn sand.

The streets were narrow and fetid, but this proved to be rather to his liking. Not only did the gloom, and the crowd of peasants coming and going, aid his disguise, but there was, in the general degradation, something which appealed perversely to his fastidious spirit. On the surface, his life was scholarly, quiet, abstemious; his adventure was locked within him, as he relished the noise and the dirt.

*Silicon Lazarus,* you think to yourself. *When is a door not a door?* Throats of ash tip before you. The plank is still in place. *Poor devils, they’re repeating the pattern without even knowing why.* Rippling in irritation, he started down. He is repeating, “The sandman brings sleep but never dreams…” over and over as he goes. A golden mole swims past. The thistle follicles brush his hand. In a sense, she’s been here ever since. There’s no escaping my mineral eyes. *When a mouth is ajar it is also a door.*

Within the landscape, two silhouetted figures can be seen struggling frantically. Both are pushing at the ground with long poles. Upon closer inspection through the telescope, it can be observed that both of these figures are standing in a stainless steel bathtub that they are attempting to maneuver across the sand. Tongues of this sand lap at the sides of the tub and a small, hungry, slurping sound is growing audibly louder.

According to the Bogomils, Satan created the world and human kind, although God bestowed life on the humans. Thus there could be no happiness on Earth, Satan’s kingdom, and believers of the most austere persuasion condemned marriage and the begetting of children, an act which would merely protract the reign of evil. Every sin was a mortal one.

Sand: an aggregate of rock fragments. Waves of ochre sting the steel vessel. Perhaps the landscape itself has shifted. A serpent’s belly process of movement is noted. She wipes a mustache of sweat from her upper lip. “We’ve made quite a bit of progress,” he says,
pretending not to hear the lapping. A sweet scent stirs the air – the smell of damp concrete. She covers her mouth against the khaki dust. The tub tilts, and she guiltily remembers the night she left the door open for him.

You awaken, startled where you lie at the bottom of the fibre-glass catamaran that’s being tossed from side to side. Immediately upon standing, a gulping limb of sand deposits a human mouth on the prow of the boat. Teeth snapping continuously, the rhythm of the mouth’s motion, you realize, is in Morse code.

There was nothing inscrutable about personality or relationships between people. These matters could be perceived, divined. In a sense, he knew her fully. There was no puzzle, no need to phone Freud. The puzzles came when such matters had to be translated into words. Words had their house only in the cerebrum, that part of the brain that makes man specifically human; but the mysterious world of the whole understanding occupied all of the brain and nervous system beyond, and the blood cells and body beyond that. It could not be reduced into words any more than a cow can be reduced to beef stew and remain a cow.

He had awakened to the unaccustomed sound of lapping sand. Sand was still drifting, and the dunes had risen during the night to a height of twelve inches under the bottom of the boat. He stood listening to whispers, swung around and saw hundreds of fixed quartz eyes watching and listening to voices bleating in the desert. A palm of sand deposited a mouth on the prow of the boat. He leaped back as he would if the mouth were a striking cobra.

When she opened her mouth to reply, a calf’s tongue falls out on to the sand. Its pale pimiento shimmers in the heat. The wind shifts and the dust swirls, and even the writing from the rat’s footprints tells us nothing. Dust all over the mouth, she’s laughing with white teeth, the shushing of silicon jazz. The mouth fell out on to the sand, and he lay on his stomach on the prow to watch it. The sun blazed through his bones and he shook his mass of sweat-damp hair forward over his eyes to shield them. The mouth opened to a sand throat. The levels of earth just inside the mouth were gravelly, grayish, then lower down reddish, and lower still, pale topaz. Heaps of inert yellow soil vomited up from the throat and lay around the mouth. He took some of it into his hand and squeezed it. It was lifeless, a little damp from the green rain, dense. He clenched his fist, loosened it. The lump of yellow was now shaped on his palm. What shape was it though? He pushed here, pushed there. The sand sighed all around him.

Suddenly I saw her face again. Not as it was, all dissembled by the horror that had killed her, but shimmering and sweet as a yellow chrysanthemum. She was smiling from a sort of mineral banded rock face. She said, “It all makes sense, the way it was done. The hot sand was poured in, and the eyes and mouth sewn shut so that muzak couldn’t escape.” It made sense then; the warm, silky feeling of the sand, her soft hushed voice. Her salt white teeth are talking as the mask of yellow clay crumbles in his fist. He jerks his hand and it falls to the ground. All the pieces are alive, and they jump – tiny toothed horned toads trying to get a bite of flesh from his hand.

He is gasping for breath, as little prickles of fear, like the hair on a lion’s mane, are sticking his skin. A cool sweat trickles down his back, as he lies across the boat.

“From dust to dust,” she says without a smile. Her hot yellow eyes are watching him as he struggles to sit up and position the sails.

“What’s left in the basket?” he asks.

She shrugs, her dry hand fondling the lid. “The gila monster. Half of a canteen.”

He nods but doesn’t turn to look at her. How could he have replaced her with this feral-eyed savage? He bobs his head but avoids her stare. “We’ll see if we can catch up with those two over there,” he says. The figures are still polling on the horizon. She looks at
them for a moment and shakes her head, “I think we should stay here. They may want our boat and our food.”

He turns on her viciously, “You are always so suspicious. These men may know where water is. They may know where the ocean is. You have no right to accuse them of such things.” Her gritty laugh wheezes dryly as they move to turn the boat.

He had always been an artist. Once he wrapped a whole forest, tree by tree, in yellow plastic. Didn’t like the shade of yellow. Dragged the whole thing down to the post office, sent it off to Spanish Morocco, where they were short of trees.

Postage cost him a packet. King of Morocco sent him hearty thanks written on a picture postcard. He treasured that card. It had a picture of a hippopotamus giving birth, with a bucket and a broom leaning against a fence. He had no idea Spanish Morocco looked like that, being unable to speak a word of Spanish Moroccan.

He had always been an artist. Until he read a magazine called DECONSTRUCTION IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE MONTHLY. It changed his mind. He went into banking. Now he was back amidst desolation. Not a building to be seen, not an automobile, not so much as a dromedary. At once, the primitive feeling he associated with artistry revived in his mind. He felt himself bursting out all over with sonatas, gouache, rambling roses and Rotring isograph pens, at least in a metaphorical sense.

Although the river had dried to a trickle, its bed was full of delicious sludgy sand. He rushed into it, embraced it. The world, how wonderful it was. It was his beloved, his bride. The sensuous thought gave him an idea. He would fuck the Earth.

Taking up a stick, peeling its bark away, he commenced to draw a vagina in the moist sand, complete in every detail, outer labia, inner, clitoris, urethra, vaginal orifice. Lovingly, with the small twig, he sketched in pubic hair, curls, spreading the delectable thing out over several metres of the bed. So realistic was it that cardinals launched themselves from the trees and lyricized on the labia.

As he worked, he found himself growing. He became huge, vast, up to the task. Ripping his clothes from his body, he displayed to the startled cardinals a glowing erection like an Egyptian obelisk but considerably juicier.

Steering himself in, gently, gently, he felt the vagina of sand suck him in with a delectable quicksandy feel. Yeah, yaya, yahhooow! Spread-eagled, he was in the lap of the land, the lie of the luscious land.

As he reached climax, the Earth moved.

“More!” it cried with a voice of wittering thunderstorms.

“You betcha,” he said, “This is really art for art’s sake…”

Love on the Richter scale.
Two Texts
Orchid Tierney (New Zealand – Aotearoa)

Reading Emily Dickinson Through Speech To Text Software That Doesn’t Understand The New Zealand Accent

My nosegay is a for Cactus
Dem long XP that irons
Fingers tonight at the plucking
Patient till paradise

To such that they should was spare
Of morning and the more
Baby and know about earings
And find the other preer

Reading Aloud Tweets From Horse ebooks

miles
per miles
per second
second
second
second
second
second
second
second
second
second

wavelength and frequency
the action of waves on water

downwind
isolate isolate
in all direction in all direction
(feet)
day night
(feet)
day night
(miles)
(miles)
(miles)
(miles)

3162 liquefied
33 rainy
days

32 rainy
days

39 rainy
days

21 rainy
days

17 rainy
days
and days

and days

and days

and days

and days

and days
tail chain car falling slate
falling slate
falling slate
falling slate
falling pi
skid fell on fool mine car
falling coal
falling coal
cool fingers si
cool fingers si
cool fingers
warm fingers
warm quiet
no flushing or pallor quiet
no flushing or pallor quiet;

voice
voice
voice

hesitate
did not hesitate
(to)
do not hesitate
(to)
do not hesitate
to accept
do not hesitate
to refuse
do not hesitate
to reply
if you do

ORCHID TIERNEY is a visual artist, and writer, who also works in television production. She also edits Rem Magazine, focusing on emerging expressions and explorations of the avant-garde, vispo, the asemic and the thought provoking, this journal is the port of call for contemporary experimental writing in Aotearoa.
FORECAST
Gerry Smith

Not a drop all the way up from the city. The first splash hit the window as the train slowed and cleared the tunnel of trees. Out past the CN station gray drizzle streaked through the water tower lights onto the empty parking lot.

“Won’t be long,” said the porter, grinning, looking up.

I was cutting out on Orientation Week as I’d done each of the past three semesters. Each summer I’d worked swing shifts at the Fleet Street brewery. I was worn out on insomnia and the infantile, conform or be outcast mentality of the brewery workers. Next up, facing down another year of the conform or fail agenda of tenured academia. I needed the week.

“Yep, she’ll be letting go any minute. Got a ride?”

The porter picked up the yellow step stool and hopped back aboard.

“No. No ride.”

“G’ night.”

The fucker actually laughed.

My vinyl poncho glowed brilliant blue, billowing, back-lit by passing cars. Rivulets snaked over the clear visor and poured down, misting my glasses. The cottage was five minutes away by car.

Granite outcroppings glistened beneath pines burst ragged by lightning. Furious gray masses of cloud seethed out over the two-lane blacktop. In the din, a frog chorus throbbed, barely audible.

“Need a ride?”

A car had stopped right beside me, over in the eastbound lane. I hadn’t noticed its lights approach.

“Sure,” I yelled and ran across.

“Do you want the trunk?”

“No trunk. You’ll get soaked,” I said. “I’m just a minute up the road.”

You never allow your pack to get locked in out of reach.

I opened the rear door. Some objects were already on the seat.

“Don’t worry about that stuff. It won’t break.”

I stuffed my knapsack down behind the seat. Up front, I set the groceries and typewriter between my feet.

“Thanks a lot. It was getting nasty out there.”

“I couldn’t leave a man out walking on a night like this,” he said, starting off.

“I appreciate it. My road’s just past the bridge.”

“You point it out.”

“You’re not local?”

“Saskatoon. I’m out here on business.”

Out here? Cottage country?

We were already on the bridge. The big iron girders were strung with drips.

“Anywhere along here is fine. I can’t tell the road from the driveways in all this.”

He slowed the car onto the gravel.

“I’ll pull over while you find it.”

“Hey, you don’t have to take me in.”

“Is it far?”

“Not at all. Just a short loop.”

“Then I can’t let a man off in this.”
On the side road I wiped my glasses and got a better look at the driver. He wore a thick dark beard and his build crowded the steering wheel.

"You doing some camping?"

"Just cottaging. I'm taking a week to myself before starting back at school."

Why did I infer I'd be alone?

"Your parents’ place?"
"My girlfriends'. Her parents."
Sheets of rain shimmered in the headlights, transfiguring landmarks.
"Take this left?"
"Here?"
"No, that's just a – Here, this one. And the next left. What kind of business you into?"
"I'm an inventor."
"You should like it around here. Your mind can open onto itself. That's why I'm here."
"And what do you do?"
"Sometimes I like to call myself a writer. I'm a student."
"Well then, you can write about the night you got picked up by a kook who invented a flying saucer."
"Will it fly," I said, without missing a beat.
"Oh, yes. They have before."
I hit a new level of attention as we closed on the cottage.
"This next driveway's the place."
He pulled to the side of the narrow road and shifted into park.

Was that necessary?

"Yes, it will fly. The engine is a simple mechanism of trigonometry and centrifugal force. It is so simple it is beautiful. That made it hard to grasp at first."
He leaned back and turned to face me. My anxiety threatened to break loose, but his self-assured calm reminded me of my revered hermeneutics professor.
"I kept working at designs and formulations. I'd had a vision of three T's forming a circle within a circle, but could not realize the component parts. It's so brilliant. The machine barely has moving parts. The three T's are chambers, cylinders, formed in a radius, moving in a circular motion that opens and closes the valves centrifugally. It is all enclosed by three rings. Let me show you."
The driver held a small, spiral bound photo album under the dashboard light.
I chuckled, aloud, seeing the classic dish and bubble shape.
"He said it had to look like that."

He?

On a scale model he leaned against the steering wheel I could make out the shape of the T's. I remembered a similar engine some car company had pioneered in the 1970's.
"The chambers spin to create a vacuum to draw air, as coolant, through this central aperture."

He?

"The scientific community is astounded. They reject my flying machine, but cannot refute the engine."
"Look, I'm not mechanically inclined, but, ah, what fuels it?"
"You must understand, I'm just one inventor. I'm corresponding with a scientist from Queen's who has proposed a theory of nuclear magnetism."
He spoke on about protons and metallurgy, still talking very calmly.

Most people would be out of this car by now.

"Maybe I've mislead you. I have to be clear. I didn't design this engine - God gave it to me."
Fear crept up me like ants on a popsicle.
"I discovered it, but it's all there in Ezekial. It was called a cocktrytch and their appearance
and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel. It can move immediately in any direction. Ezekial 10: 'When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went.'

He paused and I spoke.
"Do you think it's wanted?"
"No. It scares men. It defies all established ideas. If only men weren't so afraid. All these people believing in life after death, of going on to heaven unchanged. Ludicrous. It is not what the man said. He spoke of righteousness in all situations. You see, I believe the world was created as a contest between God and Satan. An experiment that proved Satan correct - all things denigrate into disbelief. Yet God forgave to lead men to righteousness. Men have simply forgotten and must destroy all they cannot understand."

The car had steamed up though we had both cracked our windows. I was sweating in my plastic poncho. I feigned a yawn.
"I still have a long way to go. My resources are limited and few men want to help."

The driver looked straight into my eyes.
"Maybe I am a kook?"
Neither of us spoke. I yawned again.
"It's been a long road."
"Yeah, and I should get out of these wet clothes."
"Yes."
The driver looked out, as if far out beyond the confines of this close night.
"Well, thanks for the lift."
"It wouldn't have been right to leave you out in this rain."
I stepped out of the car and took my knapsack from the back.
"Hey, I never got your name?"
"Robert Wayne. Wayne Motors, Limited. And yours?"
"Owen. Owen Gerard."
The driver leaned toward the open door with an intent gaze.
"I was told that Gerard and Wayne are very special names and that they can attract great good, and great evil. So go with good care. And God bless."
I closed the door and watched him drive off. Then his tail lights burst into a blur of red light. He turned in at the next driveway and backed out to face me.

He's coming back?

I took a step.
The car went on by. I managed a wave. He honked and drove around the bend.

I put my groceries in the Kelvinator.
On the screened-in porch I listened to the rain hiss.
Darkness.

Why am I holding a large knife?

Silver and jade swirled on the river.
I'd never seen such rain.
HIGH PRIESTESS
(for Robin Kay)
Beatriz Hausner

Our revered lords ladies dear ones I am come to render elegant homage to silks sometimes chains due to the reversal of the bias the principal altar is up side
down Divine Adoratrice of Amun you are of the easy knit interacting with the figure holder of the office use yourself as inspiration in moiré and the shimmery legs strut down the aisle so the fabrications may reach you because nothing detracts from the treatment modality of those fabrics draped against hardware as you command our attention to the mirror of ourselves your subjects. Because you must on your own and you place ethereal layers and it is necessary to conceal your love of these the mothers of the children hanging off us women who address the drape of the garments our Lord Love of perfect fit around us the hanging gardens of Babylon and Alexander who saw them and mistakenly fled along the grain yes the grain for he knew not the power of adjuration entreaty renewed twice yearly when we sit along the long path and praise the importance of the collar to Amun God’s Wife you are God’s Wife of Amun they call you more than all the vestals at the altar you alleviate suffering as the music grows and the trombone hums and your sisters sway with the season of reverence are we renewed spring summer fall and winter the collections are with the art of being from which we animate ourselves. I entreat you: do nothing don’t do anything to your population of sex for him not the fulfillment of desire nor the satisfying of want but getting to coming requiring great creative power and the constant invention of writing where sex is a present couture placed against ready-to-wear for the young ones who work seamlessly and in heels the young secretariat records your dictum: I belong to a world devoted to elegance. The manner of your prayer makes us the thing that most suits you from which flows our cosmology and structure and softness and masculine and feminine sometimes the unflattering silhouettes of ugly chic luxury albeit not based but rather shirred so that normalizing the unexplored when designing on paper when fabricating when draping when cutting when sewing when finishing. This is the medium the fabric. Preeminently wearable with the figure dictating the shape of those garments you offer chest of accessories drawers that open and close of their own will overflowing fruit crushed in a glass of blue of green of jewels inside alcohol we travel in a car pulled by two lapdogs whose names are princely. A true mathematician this Hypatia your sister of now utilizing whole with no exterior construction to force the dress into place “… and you must be patient. You must surpass yourself to reach your goals” you utter as the flame is lit and you close your eyes in prayer pull the flame to your cheeks with your hands and kiss the deities invisibly protecting us your warrior women in file we parade before you we who are fierce strong and impenetrable owners or our sex.

Beatriz Hausner is a poet, translator, editor & publisher. With Karl Jirgens, she recently co-edited the special “Collaborations” issue of Open Letter magazine. She continues to serve as an editor for Quattro Press, based in Toronto. Her latest book is Enter the Raccoon, from Book Thug (Toronto).
**HAILSTONE**  
Robert Dawson

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip.

father's name Pirrip, my name my tongue make both nothing or explicit Pip.

father's family name name being Pirrip, Pirrip, and my my Christian name name Philip, my my infant tongue tongue could make make of both both names nothing nothing longer or or more explicit explicit than Pip. Pip. So, I called

family name Pirrip, and my name Philip, my tongue could make both names nothing or more explicit Pip. So called

name and name my could both nothing more Pip. called

and my both more called

and my Christian my father's family both names nothing more explicit than called myself Pip,

and

my my family names more than myself and

my names than and

names and

and

and my Christian name

my name

name

name being Pirrip and

being and

and…

**TECHNICAL NOTES:**

The "hailstone sequence" was first defined by Werner Collatz in 1937. It is defined recursively, by applying the following transformation

if (n even) n := n/2  
else n := 3n + 1

to a given seed number. So, for instance, if we start with 7, we obtain the sequence

7,22,11,34,17,52,26,13,40,20,10,5,16,8,4,2,1,4,2,1,...

which begins to cycle at the 15th term. The resulting sequence is known as the "Collatz sequence" or "hailstone sequence," the latter from the chaotic up-and-down movement of hailstones in a thundercloud.

The problem - still unsolved- is to determine whether every such sequence terminates in the same cycle. On the one hand, computer searches have checked every number up to nearly six
quintillion and found no exceptions. On the other hand, John H. Conway showed in 1972 that a related problem (involving remainders modulo six) is formally undecidable; and it is conceivable that this might be true of the hailstone problem as well. Paul Erdös, who offered a prize for a solution, is said to have said that "Mathematics is not ready for such problems."

Here, I have created a corresponding recursive algorithm that works on strings of words. The input is a string of words (the "source text") with a specified initial substring that forms the first line of the poem; each subsequent line is found by applying the following rule to its precursor: If the number of words in the line is even, take the second, fourth, sixth... words to obtain the next line. Otherwise, replace each word by the first string of three words in the source text that begins with that word; except for the last word of the line, for which the replacement string should have length four.

The resulting poem may be mapped to the hailstone sequence by counting the words of each line; conversely, the poem may be considered as a hailstone sequence with extra structure. At least for any reasonable first line, the line lengths will eventually cycle 4, 2, 1, 4, ... ; for any reasonable source text, the words will eventually cycle too. (A nonreasonable counterexample is the infinite passage beginning "Father, grandfather, great-grandfather, ...")

The texture of the first few lines depends mainly on the length of the first line; two or four times an odd number usually works well. As the poem develops, the influence of repeated words within the source passage increases.

ROBERT DAWSON teaches mathematics at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Canada.

MEMORIES OF THE ROCKIN' FIFTIES #3
Len Gasparini

A wop-bop-a-loo-bop-a-lomp-bam-boom,...
sang Little Richard one decibel below brain damage
as we danced the dirty boogie to records
spinning rock and roll at 45 rpm
and grooved whatever moved fast on four wheels
like "Maybellene" and a V-8 Ford.

Teen rebellion a la James Dean black leather
jacket motorcycle boots curb cruising
stoplight drag racing nightlong house parties
whole lotta neckin' goin' on.

A slow, romantic doo-wop song always signaled
the last dance at the Coral Ballroom.
"Shoo-doo-shoo-be-do, shoo-doo-shoo-be-do,..."
Scat syllables made that long snake moan.

Between the H-bomb and the hula hoop
came rock and roll.
Between McCarthyism and the ducktail haircut
came rock and roll.
Between the Civil Rights movement and Clearasil
came rock and roll.
When Elvis Presley came
white reality was never the same.
From *ONEIRIC WEEDS*: Listening to Leonard Cohen

Vicky Reuter

*Oneiric Weeds* is proud to offer Dream-Destinations (DD), the only dream product sold in the world on a pure sustainable basis. Being invited into other people’s dreams comes with a price of casting shadows or throwing light on the events missed during the happy waking hours, as well as some dark moments of history. Upon successful registration, users get a Username along with their chosen password to find matches. This is an online utility and does not require intervention from a dream administrator. Searches can be made using the default criteria or new profiles. Changing profiles, such as increasing distance, in space and/or time, helps increase chances of finding a match. Once suitable matches are found, the participants will work out finer arrangements such as pick up/drop off points. Dreams create safety nets for lost souls. Dreams are documentaries of the life of weeds, as well as of the weeds of life. To dream is to learn to die.

**WHAT/WHO/WHERE/WHEN/WHY**

a pop-up window/a dreamy name shivering/Oneiric Weeds/promising pleasurable levels/a picture of a cloud abandoning the rain/my mind splits into uncountable raindrops/falling over the earth/Marina’s face/one shoulder half-way through a small double-hung guillotine window/Marina’s eyes cloudy/a splinter on her right shoulder/a few drops of blood drawn by the wind/ red polka dots on white skin/window pane contracts/one more push/Marina airborne/free flight/towards the famous tourist attractions of la rive droite de la Seine/insane scene revisited by my brain too many times/flashback/smiling Marina/microphone tilted/recording old crones/speakers of the dying language Ket/complex verb forms attest to its genetic relationship to North American indigenous languages/tonal nature closest to Vietnamese/girls can love each other in so many ways/no language/language is religion/religion separated from state/Moscow State University hallways/arches of windows/white arrows of imported cigarettes between Marina’s scarlet fingernails/hedges/liminal linguistic spaces/smoke rising in rings/wind moving people around the globe/clouds looking like tumours/discharging humans like heavy drops of rain/my index finger hesitates/brain freezes trying to capture that face again before it vanishes/click

**ENTER**

**Discussion Board**

No sob stories, no emotional add-ons, pls

Administration

**Lucid:** As a lucid dreamer, I am able to enter the dreams of others or let others enter mine. I could not deliver scientific proof for that phenomenon. So what?

**T(h)inker:** Slip into somebody else’s dream and watch the world of a different colour.

**Eugene:** Perhaps, that’s what life is, a dream and a fear.

**The Only One:** You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not.

**Carl:** The dream is the small hidden door in the deepest and most intimate sanctum of the soul, which opens to that primeval cosmic night.
Emptyforce: my dreams are always about war and fighting. I never seem to learn anything from my dreams. Just kind of go to sleep expecting a battle.

Zigmund: Every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure which has a meaning and which can be inserted at an assignable point in the mental activities of waking life.

Deleuzional: dude, with you facepalms don’t cut it. :p you’re an atheist.

Scheherezade: Last night I had a dream. I am five or six, I wake up to an intense beam of light in my window. I decide that it is a street light, though there are trees all around the house and no street lights anywhere. I turn over and go back to sleep. At 4:39 am, I wake up, the light is still there, I hear voices: laughing, crying. There are six bold men in the branches of the walnut tree in front of my window. Hiding under the covers, I scream, but my voice isn’t mine. I knew in my dream that it was a dream.

Shakespee: There is nothing magical, really. I just share the dreams with another person, which is a normal thing, isn’t it?

Fernando: I am already my future corpse. Only a dream links me to myself.

WARNING: All dream travelers should bring along a depressant, stimulant, hallucinogen, as well as an anti-diarrheal drug to be started promptly if significant shit occurs, especially if accompanied by nausea, vomiting, cramps, fever or blood in the stools. Insurance for overseas dream coverage, including possible evacuation, should be seriously considered.

Weather Conditions:
Wind: Full
Sunrise: yes
Sunset: already
Wind: dis-gusting
Relative Humidity: 27%
Pressure: Too much
Visibility: Not enough

Forecast: “Give me back my Berlin wall, give me Stalin and St Paul, give me Christ or give me Hiroshima. Destroy another foetus now, we don’t like children anyhow, I’ve seen the future, baby: it is murder.”

– Leonard Cohen

…to go astray in the city—as one goes astray in a wood…. …Paris taught me this art of straying: it fulfilled the dream whose earliest traces were the labyrinths on the blotter leaves of my school notebooks. – Walter Benjamin

Fullness of Wind, Variation on 'The Canon In D Major'

Ambient music blends with the furniture. Marina, a girl with a D cup, all fullness. A Mireille Mathieu haircut, a mole on the same cheek. She’d sit down, the chair would spring, erect and fragile. Hands hovering over the piano like cups. “Je vou-lais vi-vrrrre comme le temps, la-la-la-la-la, vi-vrrrre au présent.” Voice carried by the wind. Time is an arrow. Time is a narrow space. Deadly poison at the tipping point. Marina jumped out of a tiny bathroom window. The window was high. She piled up a dozen issues of Elle, several glossy ones of Glamour, Pariscpe, Vogue, and an old faded Francoise Sagan’s Bonjour Tristesse. “April is a windy month in Paaaa-ris”… Two middle-aged men

Who am we?

-Gail Scott

The Quantum Physics of I-opening:

An eye blinks each time a memory passes through. Memories anchored in body. Not in time. A hundred years - an eyelash sliding off the cheek of eternity. By hitting single molecules with laser pulses, glances unlace faces. Quadrillionth-of-a-second laser pulses unleash bodily fluids, send byssal threads out, looking for attachment. Spider webs, invisible, sturdy, sticky. Folding men into women, women into men, without discrimination, non-self-referentially, through TV-channels or spaces like stairs. Families fragment into members. Members create collective consciousness and contradicting memories. Fragmented, I, ay, ay, ay, ay, waltz, independently capturing light's energy at efficiencies unapproached by human engineers. Families with/without roots, rhizomatic communities, mycorrhizal, symbiotic associations, penetrating the cells, becoming the Other. I opening into the Other, traveling so fast that almost no energy is lost in between. Multiple state existence. Finding the shortest path, a hyphen, opening up completely, providing evidence for coherence, the technical name for multiple state existence in photosynthesis. I become a disembodied eye. Space and time are simply tools for putting a narrative together. Dreams hoisted onto the shoulder of time. Outside of time, there is no death. Just a polka dot dress and a new fragrance.

The lily is beautiful, the cabbage is provender, poppies are maddening – but the weed is rank growth...: it points a moral

-Henry Miller

Lili

Marina didn’t care for lilies. She liked Lily.

Lili Marleen, a song whose lines flung across both sides of WWII conscripted fans among enemies, transcending hatred and patriotism. Minister of Nazi Propaganda, Goebbels, “this song is not a march, an insult to the troops, an act of moral sabotage”... Radio Belgrade broadcasts it every night, the girl under the lantern, Lili, the wind that cannot explain why it became a storm. A disaster is never a storm but a jocular deviance, the moment fossilizes and the world breaks away. Computer screen
hicups and lures me with $20.00 off McAfee total protection that thwarts potentially deadly viruses, and other threats, known and emerging. Steve McCaffery’s line shivers on the screen, “Arrow points to sentence thinking silly, but it’s really happening”. I am cordially invited into other people’s dreams, my breasts open into wings.

Airborne, gliding like an origami crane, my time curves slowly into my space. Like blade through breast tissue. Time is cancer is time. Scalpel, knife, fork, chopsticks, little packages of green horseradish and pink ginger... My tote-bag tally is mind boggling: a wad of paid bills, a wad of unpaid bills, a menagerie of makeup, Vicodin, pain relief at the end of a sentence, receipts, tangled hair in pony tail elastics, an epipen, chocolate, and dental floss. All pieces of identification expiring, DNA on stand-by. There’s something liberating in not having. Clocks tick-talking, stuttering, time grinds its teeth. My friends, I am not completely gone. My hair’s grey. The water’s still. Lily, ponds stink. Lily ponds stink. Funeral Home, a new perfume, a white lily on the bottle. Lily-scented puff of wind, a whiff, a gift, a talent, a long-lasting kiss on the air above the forehead at closing time.

If lilies are lily white if they exhaust noise and distance and even dust, if they dusty will dirt a surface that has no extreme grace, if they do this and it is not necessary it is not at all necessary if they do this they need a catalogue

— Gertrude Stein

Lily

A beautiful woman can ask for many things, Lily can ask for anything. The mother of Russian avant-garde tells Volodya to bring from Paris: 3 pairs of pink tights, 3 pairs of black tights, stockings, expensive, or quickly tear: Perfume Rue de la Paix, powder Houbigant and generally a lot of different things that Eli, sister, will advise. Beads, if still in fashion, green. Motley dress, beautiful crepe georgette, and another, can be cut low, to celebrate the New Year. Rue de la Paix, an attempt of Guerlain to capture a true Parisian attitude ne pas en avoir l’air. “Suffering for Volodya is useful, he’ll be tormented and write good poetry”. For good poetry, Volodya getting good money, while permitting a better living for "family": Osip, husband; Lily, wife; Volodya, the lover – all living together. Which one of them am I? Holy Trinity. Confession many years later, "I love to make love to Osip. We locked Volodya in the kitchen. He was eager, like us, scratched at the door and cried.” All in bloom in April. Shot himself in the heart leaving a death note: “Don’t gossip. The deceased didn’t like it. Mama, sisters and comrades, forgive me - this is not a way out, I do not recommend it to others, but I have none other. Lily - love me…” Through the streets of Moscow in a specially designed catafalque, thirty thousand watching, wanting more. The coffin drowning in lilies. A suicide lily, Gladiolus flanaganii, the flowers last a day and quickly decay. Photographers climb the cliffs in South Africa to get a good view. There is no mechanism of reversal in a free fall, so why play loosey-goosey with wild plants. A blossom of infatuation/faithfulness, does not propagate from seeds but by dividing rhizomes, tubers, corms or bulbs. Lili Marlene didn’t like lilies. She didn’t need a reason.

VICKY REUTER is a rising literary star receiving inspiration from Gail Scott, while living and writing innovative texts in Montreal, Canada.
CITIES AND THINGS: Meredith Quartermain & Fred Wah stroll across thresholds

Review by Nicole Markotić


• *is a door* by Fred Wah. Vancouver: Talon Books, 2009 (120 pp).

Looping through Vancouver’s geography and history and intricate cultural latticework, Meredith Quartermain, in *Nightmarker*, ambles (and preambles) diagonally through this city’s walkways and pergolas, malls and exhibitions, railroad tracks and greenery. For what are the seabus and the Siwash Rock and defunct cafés and the sugar refinery but relic museums, there to remind urban citizens of the economic negotiations and a priori exchanges that forge a metropolis? The collective imagination of Vancouver’s inhabitants includes the marketplace, the unions, the rainshiny sidewalks and the bank security cameras. The collective imagination, Quartermain reveals, also holds the bad cheques and bankruptcies, the tobacco and sugar and snowshoe sales, and the trees atop skyscrapers and the McWarehouses. Quartermain draws distinctions and links threads between disparate pasts, stitching into one tapestry a narrative of municipal memoir.

By uncovering forgotten contexts and archival remnants, Quartermain pays homage to the notion of the city and to civic commitment, to official metropolitan documentation, as well as to community strengths, all the while questioning who keeps the records (and why). Her prose poetry is a veritable beholding of racial, gendered, cultural, and economic hierarchies, proposing that – in searching through the value village bin – readers will discover not just the forgotten, but the reinscribed, the latch key to barricaded and buried histories: “The last chief Khahtsahlano remembered the first order of City business, claiming a military reserve (his Squamish homeland) for a giant park, a giant memoir of perished forest” (68). In this sentence, Quartermain invokes an authoritative history-telling voice, yet also exposes layers of disregarded past, informing readers not only of a city park system put into place by a figure whose name does not adorn the park, but she also evokes the loss of homeland, the history of battle, the vanished woodland, and the unwritten memoirs that we will not get to read. Interspersed in the prose sections, are letters from “Geo” Vancouver, who writes from a liminal position of both introspection and melancholy. Such a torqued address, from character to reader, invokes Jack Spicer’s letters to Lorca (and Lorca’s beyond-the-grave bemused response), writing to readers from the grave. But they also speak, much more circuitously, from the earth itself, from the geography that has become witness as well as participant. From the land that feels its inhabitants, dreams them, invents possible futures, remembers the harsh past.

“I am the eyes,” rumbles Geo, in one letter, describing multiple lenses on sunshine, moonshine, limpets, flatworms, clams, trilobites, mice, raccoons, spookfish, and dragonflies. “I am all eyes. You are one eye. You are one word. I am words” (86). Geo speaks to connect all to all, rather than to divide the individual “I” from what has always been an “us.” The *us* in this city is not just every inhabitant of the city. As far as “Geo” is concerned, residency doesn’t end at that narrow point, but includes those ousted from their habitat, those turned away, and those driven away. Inhabiting a city is responsibility, is claiming the vexing story of stories that includes maps and scrolls and weigh-scales and pie-charts.

Riding the night bus (conversing with a philosophical co-riding “hoodie”) or drifting through a department store (one that used to make Vancouver peanut butter), the poet not only throws a range of geographical sites and locations onto the page, but she encourages readers to take the walk with her, to step onto history’s footpath. Nightmarking is a poetics of navigating, an account of foraging. In a place where streets are also borrowed territories, how, then does anyone make her way toward home?
The city, indeed, opens itself to the notion of the world museum through its trading ports and windows, through its trading passageways and sliding doors. Cities, townships, and other populated sprawls: sliding through, up against, in between liminal spaces is the topic that engages Fred Wah in *is a door*. Pushing off from the title's grammatical play for declarative statement, unfinished question, and aural punning, Wah moves through the book's sections as if his words are loitering in doorways, standing at rest and at attention, giving pause to the reader through an almost breathless acceleration. In “Sheet Music,” the lines bump one against the other, smearing bits of old songs and half-rhymes onto the next bit: “Sit tight and close low / right down to the maximum, some / latch for an onto, maintaining / a plus from a pulse” (14). The words trip the reader’s tongue, then trip each other in a rush to get – not from one place to another – but to jostle into the “in-between,” to “mess around” with the very inbetweenness that a globalized homogeneity cautions against. The pulse of the poem, but also the body, the corporeal text as recessed hiatus. Or: “doored” (14) as the poem claims, in off-rhymes and half-songs that – continually – interrupt each other.

In “Double Dutch” the persona claims that the nation “took me by the / Hinges” (18), the voice hovering in the doorway, passing through doors, vibrating in the entranceway, caught inside the inside. Middleness, then, or traversing, or simply lingering in between meanings encases the speaking subject not only in a particular skin, but inside the dermis of texts that speak context. When “Isadora Blew” brutally blows open the first section, the poem ends with the words: “ain’t this storm come through come through my door tellin’ you” (9). The storm – in this piece and the tempest of “re-cognitioned” language throughout – can *tell.* Passing through the door gives the action of blowing a narrative from here to an unknown there, The doorway, more than just passageway, more than the pause between story and listener, knows what it knows. Or doesn’t know knowing. But can speak all the same, can *tell* which way Lorca’s ghost blows. Blew.

Lusciously, Wah spells it all out. Beginning with the “double-U-Ay-Aych” (14) he not only plays with his name, but (doubly) refers the reader back to previous nominal fun-n-games; he layers his words on top of other books, past recreational linguistics that reach into the now. Ineffably “zinging stones” across water, the zinging ings reminds the reader about Wah’s obsession with thinking music, with the connections and reconnections that hinge people to places, to each other, to their on-the-way-ness. The poem, then, comes to readers, “born / mixed” (100). Mixing, in this text, may be a form of hovering; blending, here, may become confused with hyphenated hesitation (or is that dashed motivation?). The pieces shift from social commentary to word pivots, from joint excursion to ethnography journal (not diary, but dyes, not diet but dying). The poet’s ear and eye taste the farmed mangosteen (44), heed the “blunt jackfruit / thud” (39), and, remain – here and there, alone and in the dwelling of others – “mouth full of talk / always hungry” (45)

Refusing to satiate that hunger, this book suggests that the reader “neons through a door” (22), to hum along bridges, and to definitely always keep entering, exiting, dooring. Breaks between the sections give moments to breathe, to pause, to become aware of the suspended consciousness in between poems. And the pause – like the marlin in the Seafood Grill (“like” Uncle Mah Lin, “like swordfish”) – transmutes into verb simply by hanging over readers’ heads, the poem an “intransitive sigh” (69) and “un countable” (65), a “race ocean” (54) that designs gaps as sentences, citizens as foreigners, front steps as background. A breeze, slipping under the doorframe, heavy as punctuation, yeah.

Ω

NICOLE M. MARKOTIĆ is author of the poetry books *connect the dots* and *Minotaurs & Other Alphabets*, the novella *Yellow Pages*, and the chapbooks *widows & orphans, more excess* (which won the bpNichol Chapbook Award), *he & [he]*, and *tracking the game*. She currently serves as a full professor with the University of Windsor English Department.
ELDON GARNET: MONEY DREAMS

Selected from works presented at the TORCH GALLERY, Amsterdam

Eldon Garnet’s new textual works in waterjet-cut stainless steel appear in four different series; 11:11, Money Dreams, Critique of Judgement, and, Like so many of my Generation. By ironically poking fun at the insightful but complex writings of Kant while simultaneously elevating mundane daytime television clutter to conceptual poetics, he creates a captivating comment on the human condition and on contemporary art itself. Garnet uses platitudes, pre-existing texts, and random blurbs, which he appropriates for artistic use. His Money Dreams series features statements on the economics of the art world. Garnet re-appropriates texts from the writings and musings of celebrated historical figures in politics, economics and Hollywood. He presents these texts as faux-aphorisms, editing the originals with cross-outs and rewrites, fabricating them in waterjet-cut stainless steel. Garnet’s revisionist texts offer critical interpretations on the effects of capitalism on art. Often hung high to create a distance between viewer and art object, they articulate critically and humorously the manifest realities of art.

ELDON GARNET has exhibited throughout Europe, the United States and Canada. He currently lives and works in Toronto. Notable exhibitions include a mid-career survey at the National Gallery of Canada, and survey exhibitions at the Amsterdams Centrum voor Fotografie, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Toronto. For further info please visit: www.eldongarnet.com
or; http://www.torchgallery.com/