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Editorial:

Apocalypse now. We are beyond the *Silent Spring*. Pressures on the earth, war, famine, flood, melting ice sheets, population exploding from 6 to 9 billion in one generation, the next generation, massive over-consumption, global proliferation of pollutants, anemic emissions controls, false arguments on economy/ecology trade-offs, tar sands surrounded by lakes of toxic sludge, surging energy-needs, depletion of oil reserves, Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, melt-downs, ineffective radioactive waste disposal, failures of Kyoto and other accords, rusting hulks of the Exxon Valdez and kindred vessels, clear-cutting, rapid depletion of vulnerable life, plants, water and renewable resources, mass diversion of rivers, fish stocks disappearing from oceans, lakes, wetlands, rainforests, multiple extinctions of entire species on a daily basis, fish, frogs, honey-bees, endangered species, megatons of dislocated garbage, warnings issued unheeded, proliferating warfare, a nuclear bomb incinerates a major world city, cut to commercial. So many inconvenient truths, this tiny blue ball, our little nest-egg, the only planet to sustain life in the known galaxy, a vicious cycle, our collective nervous systems, catatonic. Wait. Stop. Face the truth. Wrong way. Go back. Recycle. Redirect. Revalue. Renew. Recover. Rethink, solar, wind, electric, hydrogen, geothermal, vegetarian, cooperation, population decline, earth-healing. New problems demand new ideas. We are the stewards. Think 7th fire. Think, our children’s children’s children, seven down the line. What will there be then? Think one love, many wisdoms, endless green paths. Respond with creativity and compassion when faced with folly and greed. Move to wisdom and self-deliverance. A choice. Two wolves. Which will win? Compassion or Greed? Wisdom or Folly? It depends on which one we feed.

This Eco-Poetics issue of *Rampike* is co-edited by Alanna Bondar and printed on recycled paper in a limited edition, offering fresh perspectives from Australian Aboriginals, North American First Nations, United Kingdom, India, Portugal, Holland, United States and Canada. Here, we offer critiques, declarations, photos and graphics, eco-cultural reports, texts and, of course, poetics. In his “Defence of Poetry” (1821) Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote that poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world. If so, then read on, and encourage others to cross over to a new threshold of consciousness, find the necessary angel, and instigate a revolution of habit, attitude and mind.

- Karl Jirgens
TWO EXCERPTS from:
“At the River’s Mouth: Writing Migrations”
by Daphne Marlatt

You with sea water running
    in your veins sit down in water
Lorine Niedecker

In her watery “Paean to Place,” the American poet Lorine Niedecker notates in unpredictable thought-jumps and rhythms the contingencies of living by, from and, at floodtime, in water. Although I have almost always lived by water and felt landlocked when I haven’t, I can’t own up to the intimacy with water that Niedecker had. Yet, as she points out, we all have “sea water running/ in [our] veins” and those who live by, live on, and live off rivers and seas know first-hand the mutability and inter-dependency of lives that the rest of us would rather avoid thinking about. Yet, mutability is unavoidable, as we plainly see when faced with the increased weather disturbances of global warming, the increasingly rapid extinction of species (most alarmingly, honey-bees) and the recent crash in financial markets.

Poetry, because it enacts the mutabilities of language and perception, can reflect the instability of our world. I love the surprise of Niedecker’s injunction to “sit down in water,” to saturate ourselves with the lessons of running water. If not quite saturated, I have been musing about water and the lives of those who live by it for some time.

Over the past thirty-six years, the cycles in my writing trajectory have drawn me over and over again to Steveston at the mouth of the Fraser River. I have heard a call, much as wild geese are called southward or northward by changing seasonal cycles. To fly and fly, and then to land, to muck about in what water teaches. Thus far, I have made six different writing migrations to that fishing village. Using the word “migration,” which indicates a change in one’s place of living, is admittedly peculiar, because I have never lived in that village on the south arm of the Fraser. Yet, each time I have been drawn back to it, I have felt bodily welcomed, as if returning to a deeply familiar place. Why? and what is it about Steveston?

First of all, I have to say that today the fishing village that was once the Steveston I wrote about, and, earlier than that, a cannery boom-town thronged with people annually during fishing season and larger in population than Vancouver was at the time, that once-busy place has been absorbed into Richmond. Now it serves as a quiet bedroom community for the metropolis, except for a small fleet of severely-regulated fishboats still harbouring there. Just as the great salmon runs have diminished, so has the active fishing village I first encountered in the early 1970s with its working canneries, its shipbuilders, its boat basins filled with the noise of boats being readied for the season – all of these eclipsed now by waterfront townhouse and condo developments.

In short, that village, with its historical residue of abandoned net sheds and remains of individual canneries, now exists only in people’s memories, and in the museum atmosphere of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site, and in photographs and books. But then Steveston has often seen violent change since its beginning, from fires and floods in the early cannery days, to the sudden World War II uprooting of a whole community. For well over a century, the village, in particular, its Japanese-Canadian fishing community, has been marked by mutability. Individual lives have come and gone, disrupted by human cycles of history. And yet this delta place of repeating tidal rhythms, this constant
river slowly building islands inch by inch, the ever-arriving winter downpours of rain and surging freshets of spring thaw, all of these suggest large and recurring non-human cycles as a matrix for shorter cycles of change.

Migrants are more than transients because they experience a powerful pull to a location, a pull that recurs. From the geese and ducks winging overhead, to the salmon returning upriver to spawn and die, to the aboriginal bands who ancestrally fished the river and then returned seasonally to work in the cannery boom-town on its banks, to the Japanese fishermen who arrived from Wakayama in the late 19th century intending to fish and return but who ended up settling here, Steveston has functioned as a magnet for migrants.

Let me step aside more deeply into language here, which, after all, is a poet’s medium. In the underground verbal webwork made by the roots of words, a webwork I like to think of as the unconscious of our language, we find some interesting connections. If we take the word “migrate” back to its Indo-European root, which is about as far back as we can go linguistically, we find a powerful little syllable, mei-, which means to change, move, go. Over time, mei- varied into moi-, added –n, and extended into ko-moin-i, meaning what is held in common, from which we get our words “common,” “community,” “communicate.” So, through the word “communicate,” the transiency of “migrate” links up with the stability and relatedness of “community.”

There is a slipperiness, a fishiness if you will, about the way meaning moves in the Steveston poems. And that is because meaning wasn’t the only “catch” in the net of a poem. I wanted a porosity, a space in the meshes of syntax, that would allow contingency to operate, those casual chance coincidences, which often arise unconsciously, between sound and meaning. “Tone-leading,” the American poet Robert Duncan used to call it. So “cards,” as in playing cards with the unsounded image of face cards, will lead to “visages” and then “vision” with its following off-rhyme in “accretion” leading forwards and backwards to “uncountable” and being “countable” and forward again to “facing mountains.” All of it a sort of chain-reaction in and through a web of inter-dependent meanings and sounds.

Standing on the river’s bank at freshet time and watching the power of that current, recalling the history of floods, the sound the water would make growling through any break in a dyke, I began to see that what “Steveston” held in short-hand form was the impermanence of the singular. The poem that commemorates the Japanese Fishermen’s Hospital talks about location as “what changes at the heart.” It fuses a mourning “widow’s mouth” with a “mother’s [birthing] hole” and with the “sea glinting just offshore.”

“We’ve come to generations, generation, Steveston, at the heart: our death is gathering (salmon) just offshore.”

The lushness of that delta landscape, watery, green, and slow, tuned to the tidal rhythms of each day, spoke to the rhythms of my female body in direct contrast to the time-bound competitive male economies of canning and fishing with their regulated hours. I kept trying to sound those rhythms, and
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gradually I condensed their meaning into the layered image of that poem, an image that thematically rhymes sexual entrance with the salmon’s re-entry of the river to spawn and die, and the reverse movement of the river’s entrance to its own effacement in the sea.

Almost thirty years later, when Ron Hatch of Ronsdale Press asked me to write a new poem for the 2001 edition of *Steveston*, I balked at first, but then I went back to that poem that still stood as a sort of image shorthand for me. I took those lines as a starting-point for the new poem, “generation, generations at the mouth,” a poem that stands as environmental elegy and musical coda to the whole cycle of poems. Its writing was driven by two questions, what is the mouth of the river now in the wake of our industrial success? With the salmon disappearing, what is our imprint on this eco-system? In the inevitable materiality of this world, bodies feed on bodies. But what, on a spiritual or energetic level, is the body’s blueprint? What is its developmental plan enmeshed as it is with all the other bodies that give it life?

From the beginning of the Steveston work and continuing from that first oral history book, questions have given me a way in. To ask questions, to push the edges of what we know into unfamiliar territory, is to move closer to what is fundamentally the mystery of our existing at all. A mystery that has to do with the interweaving of our singular existence with that of so many other beings, with what we hold in common: a vast radiating web of mutual life-support.
Ralph Gustafson Distinguished Poets Lecture Series

ICR Publishing is pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of the fifth chapbook in the Ralph Gustafson Distinguished Poets Lecture Series:

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by Daphne Marlatt
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POETIC ENACTIVISM: Poetry as an Organic Emergent System by Mari-Lou Rowley

Several related questions concern me as a poet in the 21st century: Does poetry have any function in the current political–environmental debate? Can the poet’s role as interpreter, witness and communicator help to bridge the chasms between art, science, philosophy, and politics in order to catalyze the change in mindset necessary to save this planet? As text-based, language-based artists, how can we begin to heal the rift between science and human experience? Nature as commodity and nature as interconnected ecosystems.

Neuroscientists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela postulated enactivism as a theory of emergence rooted in the biological phenomenon of autopoiesis—a poetic bringing-into-being or dynamic dance of organisms in/with their environment. These interactions of organisms within a system result in a continuous state of flux and modification, and have profound implications for models of evolution based on adaptation and survival. Adaptation involves changes to the structure of a living system as a result of adjusting to local conditions. We are already adapting to climate change, for example. According to Maturana, inherent in this adjusting or “enacting” is cognition—a feature of all living systems. And this “knowing is being is doing” has ethical implications.

“When we change our languaging we change our emotioning, and vice versa.” – (Maturana 1992)

Maturana posited that the quality of our subjective experience also depends upon our awareness of emotions expressed through language. In other words, destructive cycles can be broken through awareness, reflection and interaction in language. Changing emotions by changing language can alter the attitudes of individuals, the behaviour of systems and the environment in which we coexist. We have only to consider the debate between party leaders in the recent US and Canadian federal election campaigns to see how the “languaging” of political rhetoric can not only win elections, but shape the lives of individuals, the prosperity and security of nations, and the stability of the world. How, then, does the “languaging” of poetry fit into the enactivist framework? Is there any empirical connection between poetry and ecology, or is it merely elaborate metaphor?

To attempt to answer these questions, we need to ponder how poems emerge? Often, too often perhaps, their nascence is embryonic—ultimately wet, whining and in need of much coaxing and coddling. But there are poems that come almost unbidden, requiring only a bit of space and time to emerge, and when they do, they are fully-formed, muscled and lean. Cloaked in metaphor or naked and screaming, they resound with a full throttle punch in the throat awareness that leaves the writer and ultimately the reader breathless.

A poet must know how to recognize this and when to leave well enough alone. When overworking one of these gifts kicks the cathexis right out of it, rendering the poem overwrought and lifeless. A semiotically astute poet (is there any other kind?) juggles semantics and syntactics to take full advantage of the pragmatics of her craft—in order to achieve the full throttle punch. Something in emergence itself gives the poem its life, energy and power. Something that allows it to continually recreate itself in the mind of the poet, reader, listener. With each incarnation, new meaning emerges. Poetry is, or should be, autopoietic, not merely in this self generating sense, but in the enactivist sense of being brought into being by the poet in tandem with her environment, body, mind, psyche, knowledge, craft, and polis. And this poetic emergence has organic features, however metaphorical.

Jesper Hoffmeyer, a founding father of biosemiotics, discusses the self-identifying processes inherent in organic processes. “For a system to be living, it must create itself, i.e. it must contain the distinctions necessary for its own identification as ‘a system.’ Self-reference is the fundament on which life evolves; the most basal requirement (Hoffmeyer, Biosemiotics, 2007, 34).
There are epistemological dangers in trying to compare poetic to biologic systems, of course. Hence a cautionary note on self-reference with respect to the poetic versus biological terminology. The self reference that Hoffmeyer defines as the central feature of living systems is the ability to select and respond to differences in surroundings, and this ability is rooted in the core concept of biosemiotics—that living systems interact through signs. Hoffmeyer is clearly not referring to literal self-reference found in too much contemporary poetry—the self-referencing (versus self-reflective) look! see! me, my love, my life, my pain, my confession. The narcissistic clamour for the admiring “ahhhh,” that wispy outbreak uttered at international literary festivals by adoring self-objects. I am not interested in Reality Poetry, but how to mutate the personal into the transpersonal in order to deal with the big picture/larger issues: cross-species infection, ecological degradation, rampant consumerism eating the heart and soul out of this planet.

“Whenever you claim a privileged access to reality, whoever disagrees with you is immediately denied. You are demanding obedience and you become irresponsible.” (Maturana 1992)

With respect the concept of polis and Maturana’s rather boldly scolding statement, in biological ecosystems—just as in any thriving city, state or nation—organisms, like people, enact and coexist in “reciprocal structural coupling” (Maturana and Varella 1998). A thriving poetic ecosystem—the community of writers, readers, critics, students, teachers—requires diversity, and, as Maturana would argue, a respect for the other. Organisms mutate in order to evolve. Obedience crushes creativity. The best poets are disobedient in the best sense. Yet viral contagion is worse than obedience. With no life of their own, viruses parasitically live off of their unsuspecting hosts. Viruses have no respect for the “other” except as fodder. (Does this sound like anyone you know?) No understanding that the enactivist dance of structural coupling must be mutual, generous, and reciprocal.

So, then, how does the poet’s environment, mood, thoughts, interests, memory, history, sensory awareness, contribute to or shape a poem? How does a poem create meaning? And is the connection of ecopoetics to enactivism merely metaphorical?

In a presentation at the Nature Matters conference in 2007, York University professor emeritus in anthropology, Peter Harries-Jones explained that in biosemiotics, the sign, rather than the molecule, is considered the basic constituent in the organization of living beings. Biosemiotics describes this sphere of communication as a semiosphere, which incorporates not only physical properties of thermal radiation, chemical signals, resonance, etc.—but sound, smell, movement, colour, shape, and touch as well. Intelligence in organisms is not reduced to a physicalist “mechanism,” where a rote pattern is programmed into a cell or system (like bad neoformalist verse.) Instead, living systems require understanding of what Harries Jones describes as “aboutness,” or contextual recognition, which involves interpretation of the kinds of “signs” mentioned above. It is another way of describing the dance of autopoiesis, where the sign, context and interpretation—or a kind of language if you will—happens at the level of organisms as well as among and between species.

Marcello Barbieri, in The Organic Codes, states that knowing what we now know about proteomics and cell signalling, the genetic code could not possibly be a “frozen accident, an extraordinary feat of nature which took place at the origin of life and was not followed by other organic codes for the remaining four billion years of evolution.”(Barbieri 2003). Evolution involves not only genetic drift and natural selection, but a complex web of organic code recognition and signalling as well.

The chain of events, which sets life apart from non-life, i.e. the unending chain of responses to selected differences, thus needs at least two codes: one code for action, (behaviour) and one code for memory – the first of these codes necessarily must be analog, and the second very probably must be digital. (Hoffmeyer, Biosemiotics 2007, 35).

The genesis of both poem and biological process involve multiple pathways and signals—which involve both an element of chance and of choice. The analog code of action and the digital code of memory. The poetic dance of autopoiesis or poetic emergence is a multiple trope-two-step: words with phonemes, syntax with sound, metaphor with symbol, notation with structure. In the biosemiotic ballroom, the choreography
between DNA, RNA, genome, proteome, enzyme, molecule, peptide, bacteria, virus, inhibitor, while highly structured, still requires contextual interpretation, or choreographic improvisation, in the way a dancer might modify a step to take better advantage of a spotlight, or to avoid a rough spot on the floor. Both genesis and dispersal are contextual. And the function of the organism, or the interpretation of the poem, depends upon reader/receptor, which, in-turn, is informed by context.

Poetry exists in a fragile and fragmented cultural ecosystem in an often hostile polis in an ailing global environment. More than ever it requires, as Maturana would argue, “respect for the other.” Poets—if we are to continue to keep our fingers on the pulse of the planet—must live up to the role as visionaries, reactionaries, rats in the biotech lab, crash test dummies, canaries in the coal mines. We must be willing to sacrifice the adoring “ahhh” for the “relevationary,” reactionary “NO” and “YES.” We must become (en)activists engaged in full throttle poetic emergence.

References:

Image by Brenda Saunders (Australia)
In the Beginning
by Mari-Lou Rowley

Before their eyes a vision appeared, a hollow ball of heavenly light
gently rotating and enclosing a maiden within.

- Martianus Capella (fl 410 – 439)

Before time was the centre of things
Before maidens danced naked in the moonlight
Before the Magellanic Clouds
Before good neighbours
Before planets rotated gently on their axis
Before visions appeared
Before Flammarion poked his head through the umbrella of stars
Before the night sky filled with transparent fire
Before comets and nebulae
Before space debris
Before the first word
Before the last breath
Before a time before a morning after
Before flowers followed the sun
Before the earth dried up
Before nights without touch and sleep
Before the movie ends
Before throats opened in song
Before the car doors slams
Before psychoanalysis, bungee jumping and synchronized swimming
Before the show begins
Before the Anthropic Cosmological Principal
Before currency and exchange
Before three pigs went to market
Before cows and fish ate rendered flesh
Before cuisine and table manners
Before trains, suitcases and gas chambers
Before god or religion
Before the wolf’s howl and the owl’s screech
Before the hollow ball of heavenly light
Before one giant step for man
Before landmines and prostheses
Before napalm and nuclear arms
Before radiation therapy and breast implants
Before the first perfect dawn
Before quantum control of the properties of matter
Before Goldilocks and Cadillacs
Before Dolly and patented genes
Before the hard rain and hot wind
Before fragrance of jasmine and honeysuckle
Before another day goes by.
4 Poems
By Fred Wah

Between You and Me
There is an I

Between two stools
The hyphen lies
The eggs and the nest
The blind and the fold
The hinge of the city
The door and the jamb
The map and its edges
The wars I've not fought
The life and its lease
The rope but which end
The brink and disaster
The bank and the laughter
The spike below Chinaman's Peak
That spot where the two rails meet

From between two stools
Hear the silence rise
The smoke 'round your neck
The tongue and the dash
The cat and the cradle
The dog dead in the creek
The slash and the burn
The shadows of NAFTA
The head and the tax
Rock bluff and river
The laundry its mark
The height and the trestle
Cata and strophe
Not caboose but what's after

Bangok Feb 10 clear

Hand to handle mouth
pollution time taken from the lunch
(or lungs)

just hire me for that dicté
this end of the city unsettledness
(or mess)

café life each meal
so much someone else's acute
(kitchen)

not know what to get
choice natters hunger
(just pay up)

Sunday sunny too

This city takes too much trip(m)
Get into chopping
Traffic takes its toll
Boot on the body

Zena, Wave, & Dream parked
One 25 cc Dragon-tail boat
River under Honda
Amex Om the safe.
Selves

Selves is a plural noun dormant within the outside though it is not a pronoun so when I chatter we don’t get colder

it tricks language into an intense recitation of I we I we I we as a way to keep warm around the pockmarked tongues of other selves

a translation of winter that comes after winter

left holding the math of multiple history

just like Lorca’s ghosts the frogs of south America are wide awake

see, this is how difficult post-hibernation gets when plurality reveals its linguistic DNA, when the Great Vowels shift and all the pronouns splash into the pond like single green needles

shiver under the perfect presence of after
Optimistic thots on the incidence and value of mass extinctions in the development of intelligent life on our beautiful planet now in such dire peril

by Di Brandt

Mass extinctions tend to happen only once in a 100 or 200 million years.

Not everything gets wiped out, a small remnant of plant and animal life survives.

The earth is capable of radical renewal after nearly complete global cataclysm in the relatively short period, geologically speaking, of 10 million years, astonishing when you think it took billions of years to develop to that point.

The earth’s magnificent renewal after cataclysm becomes the occasion for dramatic new speciation and proliferation of never before seen extravagant lush extraordinary life forms.

The surviving remnant of animal and plant life becomes the seed for the next evolutionary leap toward more complex and conscious embodiments of being in the fragile gorgeous earthly dimension. The evolutionary process as such doesn’t seem to suffer reversals or devolution but appears rather to be greatly enhanced in abundance, creativity and learning in the richly developmental post-traumatic planetary moment. All living beings in the present time can trace their genealogies all the way back to the very beginning, the dream, the gleam that initiated everything.

Our species, arising a mere eye blink ago, geologically speaking, having been around a short thirty millennia, seems to have been haunted by visions of apocalypse from the beginning. These visions have been variously interpreted in our history as a sign of divine wrath at our human ability to conceive of wisdom and right action without the spiritual strength to enact it except in extraordinary circumstances; as the result of cosmic misalignment or the chance collision of planetary bodies or other inexplicable singularities; as the brute outcome of unconscious biological processes; as a foreseeable incident in the inevitable breathing in and out of the cosmic body in whose arms we exist in our brief lives; and recently, as the result of ecocidal human greed, avoidable on the one hand given our human propensity for reflection and choice and heroism, and unavoidable on the other given our equally strong, it seems, regressive tendencies toward despair, hatred and murder, meanwhile breeding like rabbits and cutting down all the trees. Or is it simply that our species was lucky or unlucky enough to emerge near the end of an evolutionary phase of the planet, fast approaching the event horizon of a major cosmological shift? Or is this all part of a grand plan, or random experiment, did the pulsing earth dream our consciousness into being so we could witness the implosion of the universe together, rapidly approaching, some say, omega to the alpha, a 3-minute implosion we can anticipate that will be as rapid and dramatic as the original Big Bang?

According to Mayan sages whose ancestors centuries ago predicted the end of the world as we know it in the very near future, the shift could have been, for us, a relatively painless one into a new and superior dimension of being, had we been able to focus our brilliant capacity for reflection and innovation in the direction of wisdom and love instead of focusing so imprudently on steel and speed and concrete. Or was the speeding up part of the plan, synching us up with the earth’s own
inner accelerating heart beat? Or is the earth’s scientifically documented speeded up pulse a response through magnetic resonance to our own greed for speed? What if the earth is as delicately calibrated and sensitive and energetically responsive as the most exquisite and powerful heart-tuned musical instrument, and we’ve messed it up?

Last time around it was the dinosaurs who had become too big for themselves and were going around chomping everything up, and look what happened to them: most morphed into coal and oil buried under shale and now we’ve invited them back up out of the ground and they’ve turned into ferocious tree-eating machines, chomping everything up all over again! But a small number radically downsized, instead, into quick bright-scaled and feathered salamanders and birds, magical sprites, now darting about the earth, energizing us with their radiant flashes of fiery sparkling dance and song. The wise industrious bees survived that cataclysm intact, though they may not be so lucky this time. Nor we, with our pesticides and toxic intent.

Every cultural tradition offers rituals of voluntary symbolic death and rebirth in order to practice the recognition of mortality, as a temporary moment in the rhythmic process of recurring natality, in the gradual evolution of intelligence on earth. The experiential rigour of the ritual, involving conscious suspension of isolationism in the face of death, accompanied by powerful symbolic gestures of support and cosmic import, implying transcendence of ordinary meaning in a context of divine love, often leads to a leap in spiritual wisdom and power for initiates, deployable thereafter in acts of creative expression and compassionate activism. The ritual’s attempt to enact symbolic death and rebirth on the individual and collective level in a context of loving support and cosmic import appears to be a brilliantly conceived benevolent trigger for evolutionary advancement, possibly powerful enough, had we continued to practice it with enough depth and commitment, to have helped us avoid the current headlong rush into mass extinction, and certainly greatly superior in methodology to currently fashionable modes of social breakdown without remedy: neuroses, unbridled greed, suicide, murder, mass murder, genocide and ecocide.

Cultures that practice symbolic rituals of personal sacrifice and renewal, and the rigorous discipline of the vision quest with its attendant ecstasies, seem better equipped to confront the challenges of radical spiritual/biological transformation required of us in the present age – before, during and after the coming cataclysm, whether or not we have a chance of surviving it – than those who believe in the substitutionary sacrifice of a single man to a single-minded god in perpetuity, a “blank cheque” that permitted all manner of social and ecological ravage without accountability, and led directly, if you think about it, to the present brink of devastation; while at the same time multiplying suffering for the billions who were coerced into the imitation of his suffering instead of receiving alleviation for it. Cultures that revere poets and grandmothers as cultural leaders are more likely, as history shows, to cultivate the sorts of relational sensitivities and graces necessary to take care of our planetary home so as to avoid global scale disasters of our own making, than cultures which revere inflationary techno-science and men in chi-restricting neckties without baby-sitting experience.

What evolutionary seed do we want to leave for our descendants? How do we want to be remembered in the post-cataclysmic planetary renewal we can hope for in ten million years, after our beautiful shining turquoise and green earth mother has shaken off the terrible toxicities of the modern industrial/technological/pharmaceutical era, accumulated in a single astonishing century but threatening the entire world as we have known it since the beginning of time? Or if we can manage to shift into wholly new ways of being, what wishes and habits would we like to bring with us, or send forward after us, into the new, spiritually/materially evolving dimension?
TWO POEMS
by Brenda Saunders

Innargang*

* innargang: girl, guunjis: shelter (Wiradjuri language)
Wonderland

1
Out at the springs the sky is reflex blue in a rim of rock.
Circles of spinifex widen with age. A women at the fringe
camp details her birth under a shade of stringy leaves.
Others shuffle red earth, sing up sounds of the Mulga Ant
underground; ignore the group from Red Centre Tours.

The Yeperenye caterpillar moves across the land
his spiky backbone folds, softens in Namatjira sunlight.
At the Sheraton hotel he goes under to drink the river dry.
Kadaji men are singing in the sandy bed. They look down
avoiding scrutiny: those pale eyes, the twittering voices.

In a land where time is constant everything is possible

Out at the airport white heat bounces off galvanized tin
a pink cloud stretches over the bitumen. Bulldozers
crumble the last hump of the caterpillar man.
Roads intersect, wipe out the path of the honey-ant
The CIA builds a new runway, a highway to Pine Gap.

Wherever they go sticky tar binds the dust of their shadows.

2
Yulara has its own airport: planes bump in on the hour.
Sails float on a stony sea, palms screen out red dust.
In early light, the coaches leave. Convoys buzz and brim
hitting the bitumen, follow the tracks of the spirit snake
his epic journey on Lasseter’s highway.

Below the Rock, the Mala men sign and whisper.
Streams of ‘white ants’ queue to climb the summit.
Climbing boots wear out the prints of the sacred wallaby.
Clothes flap and flag, a sky writer trails Joy Rides Are Us.
Visitors scream; conquer the world ‘down under’.

Some take souvenirs, send them back, complain of bad luck
The Python’s grief weighs down the stones in their pockets.
A dingo steals a camper’s baby: the Mala woman sighs.

At the base of the rock, her pouch shapes a cave.
A city museum stores her stolen tchurunga, for posterity.

Curiosity stains like bleach on this rusty landscape.
Kata-Tjuta Men race across the sky. The women flee. Seeds drop from their dilly-bags, swell where they fall. Great mounds of solid heat blur the horizon. Heads turn to stone. In sacred women’s places men have been known to lose their bearings.

Walking tours file through the ‘Valley of the Wind’ Coaches line up to capture the magic sunset: boulder hills in silhouette, the sky on fire. Champagne flutes salute the Desert Dreaming. Postcards from the ‘never never’ fly through the air.

In a land where time is constant anything is possible.


Image: “Woman and Child” by Brenda Saunders (Australia)
The Glass Desert
by David Hickey

On July 16th, 1945, the first atomic bomb was detonated at the trinity site in New Mexico. The resulting fireball scorched the desert, heating the sand to glass. Samples from this area are extremely rare, since the site remains closed to the public. Each of our remnants was gathered by a team of specially-commissioned geologists, and comes with a certificate of authenticity.

The glass desert is the desert compacted by heat.
At night, it's cool to the touch.

I spoke to an astronomer once who wanted to polish the glass desert.
He longed to gather its light.

Love, I would like a map of the glass desert for Christmas.
(If maps were made of glass, we could hold up our hometowns to moonlight).

A tribe of window cleaners doing the breaststroke across the glass desert.
That's what I woke up to this morning.

An inspector came along one day and told the glass desert it was no longer a desert. Look, I'm sorry, he said, but deserts are made of sand. Not glass.

No one has ever crossed the glass desert.
Someday, I would like to try.

Listen, the inspector said, perhaps you'd be happier as the desert's window.

After all, the desert's window is always open.
Every window longs to be a window to the desert.

But no one stares out the desert's window, replied the glass desert.
And the desert's window is a poor place to hang plants.

Certainly, grandmothers do not cool pies in the desert's window.

I like looking through this window, I said, but the view is not the same. Come back, fanciful desert. You left your cactus in the doorway.

If I had to choose between a glass desert and the desert's window, I would choose both. If a bowling ball rolled across the glass desert, it would roll for a very long time.

The glass desert is the world's largest burn victim.
A tribe of midnight travellers could circle it in less than two hours.
In less than two hours, I hope to have imagined a lifetime spent staining its glass.
THE USEFUL DEAD
by George Bowering

Recently I read a newspaper story about a young computer nerd in Florida who has been threatened by the US military because he runs an Internet website that features pictures of dead human beings in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. The pictures come from the US soldiers who have killed the locals and then photographed them with their digital cameras and sent them to Florida via their laptop computers. It seems that they receive free pornography in trade. I suspect that some of the photographers were not really the men or women who bagged the civilians. I bet some of them were just lucky enough to be in the right place with a camera.

But the authentic ones, the actual killers, remind me of those Hemingwayesque photos we used to see, of a US hunter in some place such as Africa, holding his rifle and kneeling beside the dead lion or okapi he has dispatched.

In Viet Nam, one remembers, the US soldiers used to cut the ears off the locals they killed, to authenticate the daily death count for US television. Ears are easier than scalps, apparently.

So I got to thinking. In the past few years we have heard a lot of stories of dead people in piles, not only in the Islamic countries that the US invades, but also in the ones they only bomb, such as Serbia, Grenada, Panama, Libya, etc. We know, too, that the US military has prevented the news media from photographing their recent wars, having seen the deleterious effects of a free press in Viet Nam. When a soldier leaked a photograph of a planeload of US coffins being sent back to the US, there was a big kafuffle. That got me thinking, too.

The coffins were lined up on the floor of the cargo hold of a C-5 Galaxie. There was nothing loaded on top of them, or under them. And there was a lot of space left on the floor of the cargo hold of a C-5. This got me thinking some more.

But first, let me focus on the other end of the subject I hope to cover here. This year another story about human bodies emerged from the University of California. The university officials are considering inserting barcodes in body parts and cadavers that are intended for use in their medical schools. You have seen these codes on cornflakes boxes and paperback books. They make life easier for checkout clerks who have trouble with numbers. But the barcodes in bodies would not be there for the checkout line, if you will pardon the term—they would help the university fight the black market in dead people. California has been the site of several scandals involving lost and stolen corpses in recent years. An official with the UCLA medical school made $700,000 by selling donated dead people to profiteers. The director of the UC Irvine willed body program was fired after being accused of selling hundreds of spines to private enterprise, which in the United States includes big hospitals.

The black and grey markets for lifeless human beings are enormous. There may be a lot of people in the world, but only a small percentage gets used after death. Most of them are willed by their former owners, gifts of their relatives, or unwanted items from state institutions. There are more and more medical schools coming into existence, and demanding cadavers for their anatomy classes.

In England, Henry VIII passed a law saying that only the corpses of executed prisoners would be allowed into the dissection rooms of British colleges. But by the early nineteenth century, there were not enough hangings to supply the hospitals, and in 1832 the British government passed a bill making it legal for hospitals to acquire bodies from poor houses and relatives of the deceased. The most recent legislation is the Human Tissue Act of 2004, whereby all acquisition of corpses for medical use is regulated by the Human Tissue Authority. Presumably the days of the grave robbers are over.

But the day of the refrigerator robbers is here. A shortage aggravated by the medical professors who are looking for something on the side has led some medical schools such as
University of California at San Francisco to cut out cadavers from their curricula. University directors say that med students just do not have the time to go to all the work of dissecting human remains. Freshmen today have too much on their plates to spend precious hours at the old hands-on work. Besides, UCSF spends $1,700 on every corpse it has to embalm and store. Either the medical schools have to dispense with dissection the way the faculties of arts and humanities have dispensed with Latin and English grammar, or they have to find new sources of cadavers while protecting the ones they already have.

Medical schools are not the only outfits that want bodies. There are also the manufacturers and testers of bicycle helmets, automobile airbags, passenger jets, and so on. There are a thousand and one uses for a dead human body, especially if it is intact and relatively fresh. Around the time of the savage French Revolution, Dr. Joseph Guillotin perfected his compassionate head-chopper with the use of corpses. A little over a century later the French army stood corpses up and used them as targets for tests on their new rifles.

The industrial revolution was to bring with it all sorts of uses for new cadavers. Crash test dummies are familiar gadgets in the automotive safety business, but if you want to make detailed tests of car crash trauma to human tissue and bones, you have to get a dead man or woman or child into the SUV. You have likely seen pictures of retired passenger jets used in mock crashes and runway fires; you probably did not know that the airplane may have had a lot of expired human bodies strapped into their seats. They have been into space with NASA, too.

If you would like to know more juicy stories about the expired, get a copy of Mary Roach’s book *Stiff* (Norton 2003). It is full of amusing stories about the author’s visits to historical records and present-day cold rooms. A particularly colourful example is her visit to a plastic-surgery instruction lab, where she encounters forty severed heads lying face up in roasting pans. Each student is assigned two of these heads, presumably to give him or her another stab at a botched procedure. In all likelihood the headless corpses are being stored in the walk-in refrigerator, where they await their usefulness in the liposuction class. Timing is important when it comes to the human body’s natural inclination to biodegrade. It is a nip and tuck business.

Even in its biodegradability, though, the human corpse can be used in contemporary experiments. In a lovely hickory wood next to the medical school at the University of Tennessee, human beings engaged in their long sleep lie on their backs. They are research tools in an academic study of human decay. The lovely wood is also home to songbirds and insects.

Of course, once the people get well into decay, there is no question that they have become lifeless but part of the greater life of nature. Other kinds of bodies offer less in the way of clarity. Most readers are aware of the old controversy about the definition of death. Students with the goal of becoming surgeons are fortunate that most doctors’ organizations lean toward the notion of death as the absence of brain activity. Other things, such as hearts and lungs, can be kept going by the application of industrial inventions, so that those lucky students can benefit from the lessons to be learnt from “heartbeat cadavers.”

You will remember that these students are overly busy, and sympathize with them when they fall asleep over their assigned reading about biomedical ethics. But you should also know that in their first year of anatomy labs, they held solemn funeral services for the people they were going to dissect. Sometimes the relatives of the deceased took part, leaving before the professor began his instructions.

Well, these relatives were probably comforted more than those who donated their dead “to science,” not knowing that they were to be sold to the military to be used in the testing of land mines.

Which leads me back to what I was writing about at the beginning of this discussion. Remember those soldiers in Asia who are sending back Internet photos of the humans they have bagged? Remember how much more room there is in the cargo holds of the big planes used for flying the US dead back to America?
Why not scoop up the carcasses of the men, women and children who have been so unfortunate as to stand in the way of democratization, and ship them to the Universities of California and London and other institutions with shortages? There might be some social conflict at the harvesting end, but in a war a lot of the niceties do not make the cut. Perhaps the cadavers can be claimed as spoils of war. Perhaps the US Corps of Engineers could work out an exchange system—a mile of paved road for each specimen, for example.

Negotiations with the rifleman or tank commander might be more complex. Surely a soldier who receives free pornography for a few photographs of his prize will expect a good deal more for the trophy itself. This brings up the whole question of free enterprise versus big government. In the US the government usually heaves away a lot of public money and claims to be in favour of tax reduction and spending cuts. A program would have to be worked out, so that privatizing will appear to work at both ends, for the harvester and the user.

Of course government would have to play its part. Private companies do not own enough C5 Galaxies, and it is only by electing and influencing cooperative governments that corporations can get wars started across the world. But the biomedical companies, though not as big as some of the petroleum companies, for example, will quickly learn the system.

Still, the medical schools grow apace, and other users of body parts proliferate. Sometimes military invasions will not be able to keep up with demand. This is where the masters of international trade step in and do their part. At any given time, and dependent on the season, there will be natural disasters taking place somewhere on our globe. With our cautious approach to instituting fuel emission controls, there will be more. Massive floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, soccer riots and the like provide fluctuating sources of biomedical materials. These events generally take place in exotic locales, in countries that could use some Western money. Chances are that rescue organizations such as the International Red Cross or the United Nations will hurry people to the disaster sites. A major problem is always the presence of human bodies; they delay efforts to provide drinkable water and survey new roads, and so on. If a company that wins a competition for the federal contract can get in there and clear out the no longer living, the catastrophe can be limited.

Of course the unfortunate country will be compensated. There might be unforeseen problems, as is so often true when one is dealing with non-Western chiefs of state. A tinpot dictator in a backward country in South America or Asia might act slowly in response to a natural disaster, hoping to maximize the returns. The business of government, we have been told so wisely, is business.

The gathering of human clutter is an idea whose time has come. During the Second World War both German and Japanese doctors made shameful experiments on living human beings who happened to be members of defeated groups. Meanwhile millions of corpses were being dumped into mass graves or family crypts. In recent times there has been a lot of talk about stem cell research and human cloning—some medics imagine refrigerator rooms filled with manufactured cadavers, the advantage being that these objects will have lungs and blood systems that are working, an obvious benefit in the Anatomy 101 laboratory.

Such hideous scenarios can and should be avoided. The harvesting of the inutile dead, it seems to me, goes a long way toward solving at least two major problems confronted in our contemporary world.
DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE
developed by the David Suzuki Foundation

THIS WE KNOW
We are the earth, through the plants and animals that nourish us.
We are the rains and the oceans that flow through our veins.
We are the breath of the forests of the land, and the plants of the sea.
We are human animals, related to all other life, as descendants of the firstborn cell.
We share with these kin a common history, written in our genes.
We share a common present, filled with uncertainty.
And we share a common future, as yet untold.

We humans are but one of thirty million species weaving the thin layer of life enveloping the world. The stability of communities of living things depends upon this diversity. Linked in that web, we are interconnected – using, cleansing, sharing, and replenishing the fundamental elements of life. Our home, planet Earth, is finite; all life shares its resources and the energy from the sun, and therefore has limits to growth. For the first time, we have touched those limits. When we compromise the air, the water, the soil and the variety of life, we steal from the endless future to serve the fleeting present.

THIS WE BELIEVE
Humans have become so numerous and our tools so powerful that we have driven fellow creatures to extinction, dammed the great rivers, torn down ancient forests, poisoned the earth, rain and wind, and ripped holes in the sky.
Our science has brought pain as well as joy; our comfort is paid for by the suffering of millions.
We are learning from our mistakes, we are mourning our vanished kin, and we now build a new politics of hope.
We respect and uphold the absolute need for clean air, water and soil.
We see that economic activities that benefit the few while shrinking the inheritance of many are wrong.
And since environmental degradation erodes biological capital forever, full ecological and social cost must enter all equations of development.
We are one brief generation in the long march of time; the future is not ours to erase.
So, where knowledge is limited, we will remember all those who will walk after us, and err on the side of caution.

THIS WE RESOLVE
All this that we know and believe must now become the foundation of the way we live.
At this turning point in our relationship with Earth, we work for an evolution; from dominance to partnership; from fragmentation to connections; from insecurity, to interdependence.

The David Suzuki Foundation
Suite 219, 2211 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6K 4S2
Tel. (604) 732-4228 – www.davidsuzuki.org
Donations to the cause are welcomed.
6 POEMS
by Brian Henderson

A Momentary History of Time, or, The Sheer Esse est percipi
– George Berkeley

It is not memory, the new things having thrown off their inadvertent poisons, the open cadmium window, the giant cycad forest stilled after stormlight’s darkened moment. The once. The again. Sequenceless. You. The same. One hundred million years. Undo the halocarbons on the owl wing voice, you’d said, standing at the top of the stairs, naked but for the green pillow in its sheer brocade, and you weren’t fooling, or falling. And the one she sang the book to, who, without understanding, would carry it across, under Babel, under bone highway, through the mantle, the burning furniture of the world. Trichloroethylene’s eye that would be water. This is that moment. Proleptic. The thirst that cannot be quenched might still be perfected.

In The Zone

Millions of years ago in the future, radium moonlight, the one kiss carried into an attic of rain, is a cloudburst of brain-stored fireflies, a drizzling glow in the bones. Here people are holding themselves together against feral atmospheres with psychotropic weather. I seem to recognize things, a sadness as if held down by stones, but the closer I look the more they slip from recognition. The river I once walked along, flowing now the other way, undetectably contaminated; palms, carboniferous cycads; the sign for caution, an empty glass; the semiconductor, “D”, spelled backwards. Time’s begun to think of itself as a slipknot, the well of the kiss, its half-life, its scorched fingerprint, healing us into the face of the earth.

The After

A dark purple plunge, one that has the light set back in it, windless, where you could imagine running on empty, the one sticky fuel where the meteor had fallen, up the curved stairway into the library, as if you were in danger of finding yourself in a story by Kleist, hearing only the edge of what they were whispering, I would have thought perfection, how the future keeps slipping away like that but it pulls something out of you, the dogwood in bud again, as if there were something to believe in, as if there were a missed life for instance, this one not going quite as planned, and in the falling rain of its arced dust, figures emerge, haloed and blown, in their fizzing solders.
**The Gleaner**
Polypropylene, bone, moth-holed rusted tin, coiled pipe, bottles in aquamarine and smoky white, wasted light-year condensers, teeth, lesioned memory, an ivory chess piece, a bent key: the landfill closet of earth underfoot. The room I return to crammed to its ceiling of cloud with darkness in the lost city of found things, where sinks are rife with bullhead and pickerel weed.

Every day I go looking for it through the convoluted syntax of booby trapped alleys and streets, smouldering grey oxides of rubbish heaps, derelict factories, warehouses, landfill mews.

Every night under the sfumato tower of dark I dream it. And what if one day I find it, at the end of a cobbled and walled cul-de-sac, through the quadratura battered wooden doors, past the ladders and stairs, abandoned dollies and trash cans, doors leading off into unseen interiors left or right, and without ringing the bell or leaving anything behind, I glide, moth-holed, through?

**The Jetty**
Tellurium bramble branching over our heads along St. Lawrence Ditch, drenched with icicle fire, DNAed, backwared, the viral civilization that ate its children, the city finally owned by its outcasts, toxaphene thirst in the cells. Yanking the slave wrist upward and out, *Let's have a look at that.*

My life, composed of a series of stills, walks out to the jetty in one month of winter, like a bee whose shadow has stopped on the ground. I am already there, a meiosis of mind.

**The Sect**
Their pelts are anguish, a mere blur, animal with its windows open. I wake before the alarm, words piled on the night table, half filled porcelain tumbler – a gift from the children, sun panning gold in the room, hum of air conditioner, dismantling the city of god. I had to go back there, crisscrossing the many pages, black wings of nights blinking by, returning a hundred million years to fetch the report from the night table, the sister planet, something like a flashback or false memory syndrome. (How do we know the truth?) Across the distances I’m begging you back – their bisphenol belief, minds lined up like the mantles of long extinguished naptha lanterns, the heir of falling.
REPORT ON: “The GREEN CORRIDOR” PROJECT  
(WINDSOR, CANADA)

The Green Corridor Project is an artist-run, non-profit organization that utilizes interdisciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration to initiate public art and science projects.

The Green Corridor is also a rugged, 2 km section of the NAFTA Trade Corridor, in Windsor, Ontario, that includes the Ambassador Bridge Canada-USA border crossing; the largest trade gateway to Canada and the busiest international border crossing in North America.

By harnessing the interdisciplinary collaboration and expertise of artists, engineers, environmentalists, social scientists, politicians, city planners, educators, students and community residents, The Green Corridor Project develops community-based aesthetics and environmentally innovative creative projects. The Green Corridor engages local creative, residential, educational and business communities in re-imaging and transforming their environment. Traveling along the Green Corridor, residents and visitors will experience a new conception of the urban landscape - shifting it from a concrete jungle to a “regenerative green zone” where landscape is emphasized as an interactive “drive-thru eco-art gallery.”
This groundbreaking initiative for generating a green redevelopment of Windsor’s international bridge corridor was initiated by International Artist, Noel Harding, and University of Windsor, Visual Arts Professor, Rod Strickland. As a gateway to the City of Windsor, the province and the country, Harding and Strickland recognized the corridor as an opportunity to directly involve local communities in the creative transformation of the area environment, while generating an international forum for creative public engagement.

Green Corridor projects address health concerns, creativity and quality of life issues. Although the Green Corridor route is plagued by pollution, ecological stressors and visual blight, it is also home to a large residential community, several schools, and the University of Windsor campus. The Ambassador Bridge border crossing is located just 75 meters to the west of the University of Windsor campus, hugely effecting the lives of West Windsor residents and the campus community. Area residents physically experience deleterious air, soil and noise pollution caused by the approximately 16,000 daily vehicles that pass through the area. The situation is compounded by the region’s highly industrialized auto and chemical industries found on both sides of the border. These communities due to their proximity to the trade route, experience significant environmental impacts and are voicing legitimate concerns. With the commitment of the community, the Green Corridor integrates public art, sustainable technologies, scientific monitoring and public information into visually dynamic projects that build community action and commentary around issues of art, culture, environment, quality of life and creativity.
SPECIAL PROJECTS

Huron Church Road
Pedestrian Overpass:
“Nature Bridge” (Completed 2006)
The Green Corridor team acted as creative design consultants for the creation of an innovative environmental pedestrian bridge in front of Assumption High School. With the collaborative expertise of artists, landscape designers, naturalists, engineers, and architects, the bridge was a commission for the City of Windsor, and stands as a pilot project for Green Corridor activities. Installation of dense greenery on the bridge will be the next phase of development. Once complete, the Nature Bridge will act as both the focal point of the Green Corridor project, and as an iconic gateway to the City of Windsor and to Canada. Project partners: Stantec Consulting, City of Windsor.

ARTIST URBAN PLANS: An International Symposium of Public Creativity Towards the Sustainable City (March 2007)
A 3-day symposium presenting leading-edge explorations on integrated art, landscape, architecture, sustainability, technology and urban planning. A series of lecture/workshops was presented by Vito Acconci, Adrian Blackwell, Catherine Bodmer, Diller & Scofidio, Ken Goldberg, Noel Harding, Oliver Kellhammer, Dyan Marie, David Rokeby, Buster Simpson and Rod Strickland. Project partners: City of Windsor Department of Urban Planning, Art Gallery of Windsor, University of Windsor Dean of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Visual Arts and Student Alliance, and the St. Clair Society of Architects.

Multidisciplinary Community Course Program (On-going) Interdisciplinary environmental Visual Arts courses at the University of Windsor have been active since January 2004 as a creative “think tank” to examine, develop and design within the Green Corridor. The course engages a multidisciplinary team directed toward developing each project as a built reality. The program also involves interested citizens throughout the region and members of the University community from the Visual Arts, Earth Sciences, Environmental Studies, Engineering, Business, Health Sciences, Computer Science, Philosophy, etc. Project partners: Dr. Cecil Houston, Dean, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, University of Windsor.
**OPEN CORRIDOR**
Festival of
Art, Science &
Community
(Summer 2009)

*Open Corridor* is a program of public art exhibitions, events, media projections and performances situated along in and through the Green Corridor over the spring and summer months of 2009. As a drive-through-eco-art-gallery with a constant audience the project will engage a diverse public from local pedestrians, to international travelers. The aim of *Open Corridor* is to “entertain”, “amaze” and “inform” the general public about the notions of nature, the environment and human behaviour. A series of eco-art statements and structures will transform the corridor area from ugly drab urban desert into a space of dynamic cultural messages. Open Corridor promotes and engages the public in arts and culture while generating a discussion of urban infrastructure benefits and determinants.

**Educational Wetland and Urban Nature Park**
(In-Process)
This reclaimed natural area will include storm water filtration and retention systems while creating a natural habitat for local species. Water from the wetlands will be pumped to the Nature Bridge via wind turbines and solar panels. The wetlands will serve as an environmental educational site used by nearby Assumption High School and the University of Windsor’s Faculty of Education. The site will provide an “environmental” monument to the tragedy of pedestrian deaths along Huron Church Road. Project partners: Principal Mary Margaret Parent (Assumption High School), Dr. Clinton Beckford (Education Professor, University of Windsor), University of Windsor’s School of Visual Arts and Faculty of Engineering, Essex County Conservation Authority, Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, and the City of Windsor Parks and Recreation Department.

**Ecohouse – A Living Experiment**
(In-Process)
A demonstration project that examines and illustrates eco-responsible living. An existing house is being converted to utilize innovative solutions for energy efficiency and sustainable living. This will be an economically-viable example using the widest possible array of approaches to show that sustainable solutions are within reach of regular homeowners and that provide cost saving benefits. Project partners: Habitat for Humanity, Detroit Centre for Collaborative Design. – For more information on the Green Corridor project visit: [www.greencorridor.ca](http://www.greencorridor.ca)
The story began with the universal idea of imaginary friends, and what happens to them when their creators stop believing in them. Because in the end, even the images themselves play into their own kind of political imaginary, one that can be, as I’ve said, inadvertently complicit with the tropes that continue to dictate how poverty is viewed from afar. This is a characteristic zone of overlap, of negotiation, in which the imaginaries of the contemporary world meet and diverge. The predominant tone of responses seems to be surprise that anyone would worry about the legitimacy or meaning of imaginary numbers. Thursdays in the printshop, I’m working on a series of imaginaries.

Taylor proceeds instead by distinguishing between two central elements of Western modernity, which he calls “the moral order” and “the social imaginary.” We would like to show that our structure has elimination of imaginaries, with just a small selection of sorts added. This collective identification can be understood to represent shared desire or desires, and as such the projection of a future imaginary or potentiality. In mathematical model theory, an imaginary element of a structure is roughly a definable equivalence class. First, transnational families draw on ideologically laden imaginaries to give coherence to notions of belonging despite the physical dispersal of their members; these imaginaries may in turn act as a conservative force exerting control over particular female members.

Let TP be the theory obtained by adding a generic predicate to an o-minimal theory T. We prove that if T admits elimination of imaginaries, then TP also eliminates imaginaries. Where do imaginary friends go when you stop believing in them? They go to the Imagined Nation. Like Coronil, I argue that the social and natural bodies do emerge together in the national imaginary. However, the value that is produced, domesticated, and circulated is not mineral wealth, but an imperfect hybrid of gold and a naturalized ‘other’. No comments for squatter imaginaries. The social imaginary in which this self partakes is described as the “common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy.”

The mode of association specific to this group is that of a “recursive public sphere” constituted by a shared imaginary of technical practices (hacking, cracking, decryption, lock-breaking etc.) We recognize this collective identification as representing shared desire or desires and, as such, the notion of barrio inherently involves the projection of a future imaginary or potentiality. Technological imaginaries – the intentions, aspirations, and ideals that motivate technological innovation and development – are constructed semiotic spaces influenced by the political, cultural, and rhetorical dimensions in which they are conceived and cast. Categories of imaginaries defined using positive existential formulas are shown to be equivalent to categories of finitely presented / coherent functors.

So, with that in mind, I hereby try to present you with the answers to the questions that belong to this thing, imaginaries. We welcome you at the boundary of transnational field imaginaries and future practices, where you cannot just come as you have been or are. We’re trying to remedy that with books like Lullaby and The Imaginaries and some of my other creator owned material. Each of the performances also relied upon the reproduction of imaginary geographies of ‘home’, in which England was constructed as an idealized glorious homeland. Each of the six individuals studied sought to articulate the English imaginary with a new multiracial and democratic modernity.
Although our investigation of alternative political imaginaries will be wide ranging, we have a specific investment in using this topic. The new Imaginaries project is due out in late spring/early summer. One of the ways of understanding the history of geographic thought, for instance, is in terms of a succession of geographical imaginaries: particular and distinctive ways of imagining space relations and difference. National imaginaries are of crucial importance to the home furnishings commodity network flowing across sites of consumption, retailing, design, and production. Shop for The Imaginaries from a huge selection of online stores, best prices, reviews and product ratings. This contribution focuses on emerging particularities within institutional imaginaries of regulation and control. The overlap of these three cultural imaginaries forms the identity of the Indian consciousness in *The Lone Ranger and Toronto Fist/Fight in Heaven*. 

In radical digital work, historical modalities and future imaginaries morph together to repair this dislocation of space and time but refuse full restoration of its previous linear analog configurations. Imaginaries are not just abstract, mental representations; rather, they are ‘embodied’ or ‘in-corporated’ into citizen objects that we find in the public light and from which we can deduce social feelings like fear, love, hope or anger. What then of the relevance of utopian and dystopian imaginaries to with regard to informatics, computer mediated technologies, and science fiction? He identified a property of the system of seven triples with the existence of the seven imaginaries of the octaves, and suggested that a permutation property associated with the “fifteen schoolgirls problem” proved the non-existence of an algebra with fifteen imaginary units. 

But it allows us to construct imaginaries that go beyond this. The cumulative effect of these forms of social imaginary is to topple the pre-modern model of “hierarchical complementarity” and to replace it with a “direct access society,” in which there are no privileged institutions, or groups, and where each individual is “immediate to the whole.” In this issue, Tanner finds a new imaginary friend in his dad’s old closet. The idea behind the endeavor was to invite tourists into this imaginary, and to help them envision it through festivities, plays, representational figures, and readings. Other initiatives to reconcile the imaginaries of the nation-state and entrepreneurial capitalism included the setting up of the Chinese Heritage Centre. 


Suppose these seven half-tones are a mirror image of the seven imaginaries. Of course, the imaginaries are quite quite separate from the imagined reality. You are currently browsing the archives for the Social Imaginaries. It serves to promote and circulate imaginaries. The problem with imaginaries is their tendency to wander. Imaginaries are necessarily subjective; a dissonance. State the possible number of imaginary zeros. Leibnitz agreed that there is something fishy about negatives and imaginaries.


These imaginaries are to be understood as historical constructs defined by the interactions of subjects in society. Imagining the third dimension is the easiest for us because every moment of our lives that is what we’re in. Or is it that our brains are simply incapable of imagining additional dimensions – dimensions that may turn out to be as real as other things we can’t detect? The huge media conglomerates are re-imagining their cash-cow brands like Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, and Strawberry Shortcake for today’s generation of kids. This paper introduces the concept of national imaginaries as a means of foregrounding the continuing influence of ideas about the nation on understandings of commodity production and circulation.
Meneseno (Old Warrior)
by Rolland Nadjiwon

old warrior
turtle
fire keeper
anishinabek
a new thought
spoken from a new dawn
touching onto a blue earth
circle circle circle

our village is a circle
blue earth is a circle
who is standing in this circle

meneseno–old warrior
it is i am the stander
it is i am the centre
breathing in and out

when this person dies

old warrior will slide
silent as spoken word
down a new dawn
touching onto a blue earth

at the centre of the time
he will be old
he will be young
grandson–grandfather

you will say
who is humming a song
i almost remember
ah–it is the old warrior–you will say

it is he who hums the ancient
blue earth song
he must be standing at the centre again
3 Poems by
by Joanne Arnott

dream of fine houses
for rose deshaw

dream of fine houses grown organically and
walking the landscape on chicken legs, fine
stone grain or weathered boards, skin over limb
for that distinctive bone-rack effect
o ownership
o ownership of the material elements of self
to toss down a dish-cloth and open a river
to throw down a fine-toothed comb
and unleash the eruption of forests
this horn on my head
plucked and posted by the gate
listening carefully to the animals
i slip between the dangers of the neighbourhood
i receive the gifts of the powerful baba
and live o yes i live to tell the tale

For what is involved

For what is involved
is undertaking the creation of the world
one has chosen to inhabit.
– Mircea Eliade

slow saturnian stroll across
the sunrise point, my face
reflecting the dew
i am sure, i am all the time sure
that what i do is correct, and
in a deep way, mistaken

contrary dancing requires
this pull against the stream
the community makes space for
the one so called upon to spin
in opposition to the ordinary ways
of doing things

not extraordinary
subordinary
a small and minor note
subordinate to the needs of the sacred
puppet to the deeper pull between
planets & birds
creation story

old bones in the backfield
scapula in dust, shards
of pelvis

lifted, dusted, brushed
reassembled into a perfect-pitched
vessel

lifting the old woman parts
dreaming the flesh into place
and the bighead babies

passing through again
tongue probing
broken teeth

in a mouth warm
with saliva
breath

whistling through
whistle shaved from fibula
knuckles

dance
in my hand
remaking the self

from the vitality of the field
from minerals and wind
from starlight sunlight moonshine

weaving the eons forward and back
moulding the lichen and moss into
rockpiled mountains

the boney pleasure of a long hike
around the bay, and the deep cold water
penetrating the flesh of each leg

assembled well enough to carry
a leather boot in each hand
walk barefoot with me through

the long afternoon, through
the tidal shifting day, through
the sleep-tossed night, boots

left by the door of the house, bones
deeply embedded in the soft turns
of your flesh, ribs lightly

dancing the rhythms of sleep
dreams unfurling on the inside while dawn
is slipping in i have this night, this night

basking in the warmth of your sleepheat
stirring against you and curling toward you
and breathing in the deep shelter of your arms
Report on: **SONETO ECOLÓGICO**  
(Proyecto de Poesia Ambiental)  
by Fernando Aguiar

**ECOLOGICAL SONNET (ENVIRONMENTAL POETRY PROJECT) BY FERNANDO AGUIAR**  
Translation from Portuguese by John Matias

From early on I have been attentive to ecological questions. In 1985, I intended to write a poem which took on the theme of nature and the environment which have been increasingly ill-treated by fire, the reduction of trees in the wild, the systematic destruction of the habitat of thousands of animals condemned to death, and the extinction of some species. These problems were occurring in every part of the globe, but the newspapers and televisions merely referred to these subjects in a very superficial manner, which indicated apathy in international public opinion. The truth is that the environment was not treated as a question of priority at that time. Instead, the media were attending to other more pressing problems not just in Portugal but in other countries as well. To politicians, ecology wasn’t a subject to preoccupy them.

I concluded that the best form in which to write the poem was with nature proper. It was actually not the first time that I had utilized nature and its elements as material for poetic creation. This time, however, I would be able to go further and “write” a poem with actual trees. I planned it with the structure of a sonnet so that effectively I possessed a “poetic” form: 70 trees distributed by 14 rows with 5 trees in each (4+4+3+3), which represented the two quatrains and two tercets (with a larger space separating each strophe), constituting the structure of the sonnet. The title came immediately: “Ecological Sonnet”.

In order for the sonnet to have a larger poetic expression, I introduced a rhyme, which would be given by the type of tree; that is, trees which terminated each row alternated, in a mode resulting in rhyme schemes used in the traditional sonnet: A, B, A, B (for example, Cedar, Elm, Cedar, Elm). And, like the type of “verses” utilizing the sonnet would have a substantially geometric form (logically the trees would remain aligned on the ground where planted), I found that the rhyme could also be given to the trees which began each verse, that is, every row of trees. In this way the sonnet would have a more original aspect, considering that a rhyme would be observed at the beginning and at the end of each verse.

Trees would be of indigenous species and chosen in a way so that they could be each placed next to the others without interfering with the remaining growth, and would be of deciduous and perennial leaf for there to be a seasonal renewal so that the sonnet continued to modify itself visually by the constant alteration of forms, colours and smells in relation to the leaf, flower and fruit, depending on the season. And in this way there would always be some trees with leaves.
I have always found it stimulating working traditional forms of poetry with contemporary language, and the sonnet was a poetic genre which made me most enthusiastic. It is an enormous endeavour to grab such a rigid structure in its form with the obligatoriness of rhyme, and create a sonnet in the same mould using a contemporary language. Happily the visual poetry makes possible an enormous creative liberty with a link to plastic art which I have always maintained and this permitted me to utilize materials, techniques and diverse supports in the creation of the sonnets.

The “Ecological Sonnet” is part of a work of poetic experimentation related to that literary form which I have been evolving since the beginning of the 1980s, when in 1981 I wrote the “Digital Sonnet”. From that moment I have created hundreds of visual sonnets with different materials and techniques such as the collage, leterset, vinyl letters designed and cut out on computers applied to plastic canvases of large dimensions, as well as photography, often developing installations or performances. I am, nevertheless, the only poet and performer who has realized till this day sonnet-performances, and I already have presented more than three dozen with this structure at Festivals, Cultural Centers and various and diverse Museums from different countries. From the “III RENCONTRES INTERNATIONALES DE POÉSIE CONTEMPORAINE DE COGOLIN”, in France (1986), to the Hong Kong Arts Centre in Hong Kong China (2006), while passing through spaces such as the Museum of Setubal, Portugal (1988), The Cultural Centre of Santo Domingo in Mexico City, Mexico (1990), Villa delle Rose/Gallery of Modern Art, Bologne Italy (1993), Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space, Japan (1997), The Museum of Contemporary Art, Marseille, France (1998), IVAM—Institute Valencia of Modern Art, Valencia, Spain, as well as the Reykjavik Art Museum Reykjavikk Ilsandia (2006), among many others. Most of these performances are found in the book *The Essence of Feeling*, published in 2001.

From the beginning I was conscious of the difficulty in being able to locate a non governmental organization which would provide a sufficient area of land (an area equal to the size of a football pitch) and would bear the expense of labourers, acquisition of the trees, and the post-maintenance of such a space. In 1985, it was a time when Democracy in Portugal wasn’t sufficiently consolidated, with innumerable social problems yet to be resolved. With the entrance of Portugal into the European Union at the beginning of the following year, socio-political and economic matters were preoccupying the Portuguese people and especially the politicians.

When, in 1987, I organized the “1st International Festival of Live Poetry,” at the Municipal Museum, Dr. Santos Rocha at Figueria da Foz, I participated in the collective exposition of the Festival with a model of “Ecological Sonnet”. This model was then shown, the following year, at the Municipal Gallery of Amadora, during a second presentation of the “1st International Festival of Live Poetry”.
In 2004, on the occasion of the European Football Championship (Euro 2004) the Institute of Art started a contest entitled “Art in Field” for the presentation of projects which were related to the Ecological theme in a broad sense and the proposed area was precisely the size of a football pitch. Because the project already existed and would embrace the spirit of the contest, I resolved to present it, and it received initial approval.

One of the conditions, however, for any of the projects to be approved was that they be created during the period of the event. In the case of “Ecological Sonnet” this would turn out to be practically impossible due to the slowness of the approvals and by the difficulty of planting the project, despite the commitment from the Institute of Art which facilitated some contacts as well as the personal presentation of the project to non-governmental organizations of a dozen Northern and Southern cities in the nation.

In the meantime the project was launched, after a few months three of the Municipalities contacted showed some interest in making it a concrete reality (19 years later there was a different overall consciousness – many of the more permanent Portuguese problems were being resolved, and an organization had made available the necessary space, workers and trees, while bearing the construction costs of the project.

The proposed land was not ideal given the geographical location and the surroundings, but, the “Ecological Sonnet” would be located next to a future Cultural Centre (which really appealed to me). Yet, this work was still in its research phases, and its construction not scheduled for several years. Eventually, the Municipality of Mastosinhos in Northern Portugal, next to Porto, proposed land contiguous to a new residential district which had won an architecture prize, and which was situated practically in the centre of the city, so, I accepted with enthusiasm. This was in January of 2005 and 20 years later, I would finally be able to realize the “Ecological Sonnet”.

Dr. Gilherme Pinto, Councilor of the Environment and a big enthusiast of the project, decided to integrate it with the activities of the Month of Environment with plans to inaugurate the Sonnet on the Day of the Tree, which would be commemorated on the 21st of March. This date was logical, but we were still two months away and the land had yet to be cleared of rocks and the shrubs, and then leveled. The trees still had to be chosen and purchased, and all of the necessary measurements needed to be projected onto the visual arrangement. Not to mention the resolving bureaucratic questions where approvals and authorizations were required for each one of these phases.

A difficulty which was being presented to us was to locate the necessary trees. There wasn’t time to transfer adult trees from other locations as was my desire, nor to acquire them with the prescribed...
dimensions because the costs would be so elevated. So, the solution was to utilize trees available at the municipal nursery and purchase only those necessary to complete the rhymes.

The sonnet would be comprised of 10 varieties of trees making a total of 70, to which I thought we could extend another 14 trees in order to give a larger width to the sonnet (6 trees for every verse instead of 5), if the space was adequate. But after measuring the terrain and studying the two possibilities, it was concluded that such would not be necessary. There were then 70 trees following 10 species: Pine Manso, Vidoeiro, Cedar Buçaco, Sobreiro, Azevinho, Cedro Bastardo, Amieiro, Carvalho Alvarinho, Elm, e Freixo.

Another question which needed to be resolved was of the actual planting. The municipal functionaries were busy at the time with other activities for the Month of the Environment, and it was decided to then transform the actual planting of the 70 trees in an immense “happening” with the collaboration of the local population. This action also served to integrate the project and the people of the area where the sonnet was constructed, generating an immediate sentiment of participation and preservation involving the very people who would later visit the Park that they would be planting.

For the happening it was necessary to have around 140 people, two for every tree. For the sonnet to have 4 strophes, it was thought that the trees corresponding to the first quatrain would be planted by 40 children, the trees of the second quatrain would be planted by 40 youth, the first tercet planted by 30 adults, and of the last tercet, planted by around 30 elderly. Later there would come the idea to have this collective act to be actualized to the sound of The Four Seasons by Vivaldi, interpreted by a quartet and strings.

Due to circumstances already referred to, the trees were all “young”, this is, of small dimensions (between 2 and 5 meters) and with few significant boughs. To resolve the question of the small stature of the trees, we resolved to attach as many as 20 balloons to each of the trees, in order to visually indicate what the sonnet would look like as the trees grew.

At the start of the morning the invited people began to arrive for the happening, in many cases entire families with their grandchildren, parents and grandparents. After the explanation of the entire procedure, with the plantation of the trees to be realized in 4 phases, the people dispersed to their corresponding trees, which were lying on the ground next to the holes which had been pre-dug some days before. To the first musical accords, the children (some helped by their parents and municipal employees) grabbed the spades which were found near the trees and during the planting started to water them and place them in the ground. When the plantation of the trees of the final tercet was concluded, hundreds of balloons were released simultaneously which were tied to the tops of the trees, and so the plantation of “Ecological Sonnet” terminated in a climate of euphoria along with a feast for the participants.
During the plantation of *Ecological Sonnet*, the poet Clemente Padin made the following reference, in the magazine *Escaner Cultural* N.73, of June 2005:

"En puridad su obra es una instalación con elementos naturales. Resulta sintomático el compromiso de Fernando Aguiar con lo "natural", tal vez opuesto a lo "virtual" o "digital", en una rotunda afirmación por el arte con "dimensión humana real", en un esfuerzo notorio por acercar y llevar la poesía, allí, donde está la gente. En los tiempos presentes, las tecnologías digitales son y serán supuestamente las más usadas en casi todas las ramas de arte, incluyendo la poesía. Pero, al igual que cualquier otra tecnología, no asegura ni anticipa el nivel estético ni la funcionalidad de las creaciones. Sin embargo, el instrumento "interactividad", que supone el Soneto de Aguiar, parece asegurar la comunicación directa entre el "escritor" y el "lector": la funcionalidad del poema depende de la participación del "lector" quien, al unnfructuar el mismo, le da su sentido, es decir, el sentido que "logre" o "consiga", de acuerdo a su repertorio de conocimientos y experiencias personales.", acrescentando: "El poema es autorreferencial no sólo por su contenido "ecológico", puesto que está escrito con árboles; también lo es desde un punto de vista formal: la manera en la que están dispuestos los árboles equivalen a diagramar la estructura del soneto como un metalenguaje que se detiene por encima del texto y le examina críticamente con una suerte de rayos X poniendo en evidencia su forma. Pero lo autorreprocessivo no es suficiente para dar fe de la poesía, el texto también nos debe ofrecer la oportunidad de ejercer nuestra libertad a optar por la significación que nuestro intelecto decida de acuerdo a nuestro intransferible repertorio de conocimientos y experiencias personales, es decir, debe ser ambiguo. La ambigüedad se refiere a la transgresión de las normas y códigos de la lengua que hace, entre otras cosas, que un texto pueda ser interpretado de muy diversas maneras. Lo que establece la ambigüedad en este poema es el tiempo, pues nunca se le podrá "leer" de la misma manera puesto que los árboles no cesarán de crecer y el espacio que establecerá los límites de la lectura ya que se trata de un soneto que deberá leerse caminando, en la verdadera acepción del verbo."

During the first months of 2007 the visual arrangement of the sonnet was concluded with a covering of clover on the “page” where it is planted, the installation of various park benches, and installation of refuse containers (the “sonnet” is also a park), as well as the construction of sidewalks which indicate the various respective strophes. A “Recanto da Poesia” or a space for encountering and
viewing was also constructed within 15 meters of the sonnet, specifically for people to write, read, or meditate while obtaining a privileged view of “Ecological Sonnet”.

On the 21st of March of 2007, in order to commemorate the “Day of the Tree” and the onset of spring, as well as “World Poetry Day” and the 2nd anniversary of the planting of the “Ecological Sonnet,” a plaque was inaugurated which contains a brief explanation of the conceit and the structure of the “Ecological Sonnet,” with the name of each type of tree planted. The inauguration was preceded by a session of lectures entitled “The Nature: The Word” where poems were read by Ana Luisa Amaral, Rosa Alice Branco, Casimiro de Brito, José-Alberto Marques, Manuel Portela, and Fernando Aguiar. These sessions will be repeated annually for each anniversary of the “Ecological Sonnet.”

Two years after the installation of the “Ecological Sonnet,” it abides in its definitive form with respect to the area and it continues its growth, renewing itself. The idea is for it to evolve more many dozens of years in the Sonnet Park, in that it represents a poetic symbol of the struggle which has to be increasingly persistent and intense for the preservation of the whole eco-system of this small, fragile, sole, and extraordinary world in which we live.
2 Poems
by Roy Miki

That Tree

_The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing that stands in the way._

— William Blake, 1799, The Letters

I say what is that tree doing in my right of way?
I mean what is that tree doing obstructing my face?
I say what is that tree doing to my block of time?
I mean what is that tree doing with its branches askew?
I say what is that tree doing with its trunk?
I mean what is that tree doing with its designer pose?
I say what is that tree doing with my consumer insight?
I mean what is that tree doing with the object of my affection?
I say what is that tree doing with my insider trading?
I mean what is that tree doing with its proliferation of buds?
I say what is that tree doing in the alley beside the overflowing bins?
I mean what is that tree doing crossing the street?
I say what is that tree doing with its hands up?
I wander what is that tree doing to my hindsight?
I sought what is that tree doing to my forethought?
I sink what is that tree doing to my wireless lapdog?
I pine what is that tree doing to my indigestion?
I mean what is that tree doing in my hip pocket?
I say what is that tree doing inside my head?
Turn
for Louis Cabri

‘Could commodities speak we would say: our use value may be a thing that interests men. It is no part of us as objects. What belongs to us is our value. Our natural intercourse as commodities proves it. Now listen how we speak through the mouth of the economist.’ Do you not detect in the slow motion of his lips the slippage from the warm body to the past tension of never being recalled for duty?

It is only a human thing you say but note the recourse in our speech to the natural intercourse of value for burgeoning exchanges that upset the apple art as you say with no pun intended the pun being reserved for superfluous occasions that spell the gloom of market indices in the rush to embrace the dizzy passages on billboard screens

‘Could commodities speak we would say: our ruse value may be our interest producing men. It knows particles as objectives. Your nationalized discourse of commodification rues it.’ Now speak how we listen through the dearth of domestic value. In the turn of a phrase, ‘must for reclining mountain,’ the land (i should have said hand) has been known to yield graftings for fool’s gold the yellow pearl that once haunted the economic dreams of thing makers

It is useless to frown on the upstart conniving of things that pay no heed to human truisms and tamper with the ciphers binding performance to productivity graphs and other domains in the kingdom of statistical averages that cut our air tubes for discretionary ends when we breathe value on the tips of branches

Should commodities speak we could say: hey loosen up on the valet who imitates manly interests alone. It is as partial as others. What longs to be free of ruse value. Our nature as commodities precedes us. Now fess up to the tricks of the trade as the poet says ‘the wet playing field is a testy mountain that sinks back into the sea’ or consider the circular routes that turn on a dime and add up to the branch plants that shed their leaves as signs of altruism for the mute earth
4 POEMS by Rita Wong

vow long now

who’s already here
taking a deep breath
tracheal steady
squamish, musqueam, tsleil waututh
okanagan, nlakapamux, stl’atl’imx
ktunaxa, secwepemc, talthan
coquitlam, saanich, songhee
tsawwassen, stolo, homalco
nuu-chah-nulth, ditidaht, semiahmoo
esquimalt, comox, qualicum
t’sou-ke, quwutsen, se’shelt
klahoose, silammon, sne-nay-muxw
kwakwaka’wakw, tsilquot’in, oweekeno
heltsuk, nuxalk, wet’suwet’en
haisla, gitxsan, sekani
nisga’a, tsumshian, dakelhne
dene, nat’ooten, stoney

Photo by Britt-Marie Lindgren
(Holland/Canada)
condo canyon*

This past May, the Miami city commission voted to remove the word ‘port’ from the Miami River’s comprehensive development plan

Tequesta Indians thrived on and around it more than 2,000 years ago

coming at a … contaminated waterway

iconic unofficial cargo company

marine industrial dredging resumed

“short-shipping”

gargantuan cranes unloading containers from the Rio Miami

“There’s enough bread for everybody”

“The river is dead”

removing derelict vessels

Since 2000, 4,200 condominium units have been built on the river. More than 5,200 units are approved for construction, with another 6,500 units in the final permitting stages

indefinitely postponed

natural have

Meanwhile anchored

estimated greenway

proposed

haphazard changes

remain

* found poem from an article by Frank Sebastian called “Identity Crisis” in Miami Monthly magazine, Sept 2008
bad bets*

a lake that keeps going down, down, down.

diminishing supplies of fresh water
slowly rising seas

Lake Mead, enormous reservoir supplies nearly all the water for Las Vegas, is half-empty, never full again.

coping with the inevitable shortages of fresh water.

evening conjuring vulnerability

“They gave us about 40 to 50 years of excess capacity,” Binney says. “Now we’ve gotten to the end of that era.”

Water tables dropping drastically

agriculture consumes most of the water, as much as 90 percent of it, in a state like Colorado.

from a fur-trapping, to a mining, to an agricultural, to a manufacturing,
to an urban-centric economy

far heavier than oil, and incompressible

the city pours its treated wastewater back into the river ad infinitum

in the argot of water managers

capitalize on wastewater

One acre-foot, equal to about 326,000 gallons, is enough to serve two typical Colorado families for one year.

unrealistic expectations about the river’s capacity

“past peak water”

water flows uphill toward money

desalination would need vast amounts of energy (and money)
dumping brine by-product back into the ocean

ecosystems

the most voracious users of natural resources in the world. Maybe we need to talk about that as well. “The people who move to the West today need to realize they’re moving into a desert,” Mulroy said. “If they want to live in a desert, they have to adapt to a desert lifestyle.”

mesquite bushes and palo verde trees for vegetation. It means recycled water. It means gravel lawns.

re-engineering the conventions of the West before it becomes too late.

river basins, not arbitrary mapmakers

broad and shallow, dun-colored and slow-moving wet

worrisome discovery*

lakes in Canada losing the calcium dissolved in their waters

aquatic osteoporosis

from the shells of birds' eggs to the skeletons of animals.

acid rain and logging

worried because ”everything

requires calcium.”

exhausting the earth's stores levels plunged
daphnia

cannot reproduce

below a certain threshold
some keystone species can no longer reproduce

Tree bark contains a lot of calcium, so loggers could be encouraged to leave it in the woods after they cut trees.

Another approach is to curb logging in areas with low calcium.

Fish, crayfish, and mollusks also have relatively high calcium needs.

* found poem from “Canada's lakes suffer 'osteoporosis'” by Martin Mittelstaedt, *Globe and Mail*, November 27, 2008
LAKE HURON SINGS THE QUELCCAYA BLUES
(or how Huaya Picchu’s ladder wound up at the end of my dock)
by Alanna F. Bondar
(From: there are many ways to die while travelling in peru)

Starting a poem is like getting into cold lake water in the spring. To step in is to sink into the muddy biomass/ to turn what’s inside out to the bottom. Tubular icicles seek traces of hymns sung in the inner mantel, sending assigned rosette tubes, voices from the CN tower series below./ Hades’ sky-box, his core winches for snapshots of what’s beneath each of the Great Lakes. When fifty years or more return, diporeia will remind us how they have met secretly, how they have battled for their 3,000 seats or more in m² of mud. When they do/ when we remember what we’ve done/ they’ll trace the edges of ghost fish, Coregonus clupeaformis/ white fish/ those who still feed.

Getting into cold lake water in the spring is like starting the mind’s machinery from scratch. /The body resists. /The mind constructs cartoon attacks from the bottom. Pana, red-bellied piranha, Pygocentrus nattereri./ We sit ducks to feather scars of beef red from our fingers within habitat, the murkiest of all waters – lagoons, oxbows, rain-made puddles blocking our path. Who/ will they eat last? Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, Canadian lake trout have been reported missing. Namaycush/ Togue/ When found, the report states they have been “successfully introduced” to Lake Titicaca. Cubicle sweats, mud-baths, and protein only diets, they have found a cold place to reform the edges of one hundred pounds of flesh. In their path, the Amatani who for thousands of years have survived eating only potatoes and quinoa, witness a suchi holocaust. They’ve never seen such large mouths. Some suchi remain wrapped in frigid waters, huddled in corners — but mating is a challenge. For suchi, staying in the lake with Canadian trout is like getting into a northern lake in the spring.

I tell myself I’ve done it before. // No harm will come. / What’s the worst thing? The body wasabi?/ The sooner I get in, the sooner I can get out. I make bargains with Mother Mary and the souls of purgatory but take them back./ I swam in the Amazon, I remind myself, nights without streetlights/ stars dimly lighting someone else’s bedroom on the other side of the earth/ the Amazon River taking and my hands disappearing this same body beneath a bottomless surface, seeing only two centimeters below. Remember: do not pee in the water. It’s better to expose your bits to the boatmen who have seen it all before and cannot reach the particulars/ theirs are such large hands./ It’s better this way, better than meeting the urinophilic carnero, one-way super-sleek catfish ticket seeking short walks up the flesh tube, those intimate chambers of human caverns. //

Yet capybaras repeatedly swim web-pedated to the other side – to get to the other side/ their feet dog-paddling with precision through the shadows of anacondas underneath. What’s unreachable moves past-as-present and begins to crawl through the cracks: ants build sand condos above interlocking brick, Incan walls without mortar. A summer night’s sky pierces heat lightening through what’s jealous of aurora borealis after white wings of death flash the moon two large breasts. Flight of the moon-eyed squirrel Glaucomys sabrinus, their chocolate box fungi, mycorrhizal hypogeous, maps to what’s inside. And the
pungent cries of crushed strawberry leaves, rotting carcasses of mink-eaten crayfish/ ghosts of *Pinus strobes* peel back from the granite, scratch out odes to Bertha and the big red dress. This and 10,223 unidentifiable silences peddling nightshades afraid of being seen. A simpler banquet. All at once, moments not yet lived meet in the wide-mouthed laughter of guests overstaying a welcome, guests garbling stories filled with too many consonants.// I wake the silence between rooster calls, sips between and coca leaf tea/ the Andes, at five am. When it happens. //

Toe, ankle, ankle to knee. The mind, not the body, takes the brunt of it. To choose not to go in is to relinquish power, is to diminish oneself. To choose to go back is to choose death.// Climbing the Inca Trail, four days to Machu Picchu is like getting into cold lake water in the spring, is like writing a poem. Each step rhythms the body to feel what can’t yet murmur the phrase. The body, dead weight/ the mind tries to leave it behind. Get / rid / of / it. // *No hay salida.* Lungs send oxygen nowhere. There is no craft here./ Here, where even athletes shit their pants, can’t feel it running down their inside pant leg, marathon runners puking over the edges. Only the bodies of Inca gods, the departed, super-heroes and Peruvian porters are suited for it. None of us make it, not really, though it may appear otherwise./ Something dies in each of us. We recognize the voices of others, carry them like Lymes disease, dengue fever, malaria – the symptoms of which we never shed like we do sweat, piss, hair, or blood. Lost exorcisms of the ancients: the spirit remains haunted.// The body reminds the mind that sirens are for the mythological, sacred clouds for the mystics, and suicide for the weak or the very strong. The spirit reminds itself to return to the physical–body’s hot breath wraps the outside walls of these walls/ cool fingers./ The body tingles in words not yet formed and/// it craves cold lake water/ in the spring.

Knee to hip, hip to other hip, hip back to knee—the toe has lost its mind. I offer myself a sacrifice to Lake Huron, wish I had acquired some coca leaf tea before agreeing to go in. I know that getting in means sleeping in the jungle, means climbing into darkness without finding a hand to hold, means getting in without wanting to get out, and it means sleeping with the nests of hummingbirds in my walls./// My brother, late from searching for his cottage suit runs 18 stone of tall flesh down a rickety dock that is not yet settled on rocks and mud, despite my father’s efforts to make it perfect. He pounds, resonates to the rock islands; displaces nesting ducks to the skies; and releases the massive honks of nearby geese. He runs yelling thousand year old medicine man, imaginary sand-bats flying from the edges of a vacant lake./ Everyone will know of his bravery in a moment. First in./ In the seconds it takes him to run the dock, he hits the water.//

Still at the end of the dock, I am drenched from his attack on the lake./

I join the lake // I slip in // a quieter echo.
Dream Cabinet
by Ann Fisher-Wirth

1
Soft rain. Skies white-gray the same as the water. I lie in the bottom bunk beneath a green-striped blanket here on Fogdö. I’ve wakened from a nightmare, taut with fear.

2
And when I dream, what then? What, when the bombs are falling on Beirut and Haifa?

At the conference in Scotland, Lyn from Haifa said, Nearly half my students are Arabs, the other half Israeli.

When it gets really bad, I go to the sea and watch the fishing boats. Nothing has changed in their lives forever.

3
Two days ago, we were still in Scotland—
the hottest day in the UK ever. A columnist in the paper wrote of people's hideous fashions:
Better get used to dressing well when it's hot; after all, we'll have to cope with worse.

Cope? We’ll choke, gasp, muffled.

Cry out, the trees are vanishing, the blistering heat is rising. We will tip the planet past the healing point and then—

Don't they know death wins, and flesh can be zapped fried seared, wars first for oil then for stolen water, wars for air not just food?

Death will be the kind one, yet so plenteous are our gizmos there will be no silence, no darkness even in death. Death, a brightly lit parking lot—

4
How to be a muddy field, germy, rank, unseemly?

Here at Fogdö, in Sweden, there is beauty.

Bushes thick with blueberries scatter among boulders.

But the dream-phrase jumps in my mind:

There’s a choked chicken lodged against the heart chakra.
What do we dream

What do we dream

Be advised
I do not exist

If you are characters in my play
it does you no harm.

Daughter, mother, wife—
what am I but passages of light
through wave, illuminating
intransigence,
and bread cupped in a palm,
water through hands
that feel and cherish with the fingertips
each slick of leaf, each bent branch

as it flows or drifts into infinity—
like the rabbits we saw in the field in Scotland,

they hopped off to their nests beneath bushes

as sun hovered toward twilight over the river,
the limestone town, hill with distant cattle.

On the outhouse walls at Fogdö:

A map of Norrtälje that shows Fogdö at the upper edge, facing out to Alands Hav, and scattered all along the hundreds or thousands of islands that form the Stockholm Archipelago. A print of soldiers called Det ivre or iure af ett Soldattalt. Many children’s drawings, including a Polynesian maiden complete with sword, grass skirt, coconut brassière, and palm tree. A kangaroo, by Susa. Ballerinas, warriors, monsters. A very friendly hedgehog. A bright pastel with a beach umbrella, grapes, a Cubist face, a guitar that looks like a split papaya. Many bright splotches.

—Sleep, says the sea, sleep, says the sea, the birds
thicken in the trees as light glints across the water.

A breeze. Late afternoon, the light growing pewter,
soft Falun red of the ramshackle summer house

soaking up shadows. Out on the water, a motorboat.
I would like to spend the curve of a year

from bird cherries to mushrooms, svamp, in Sweden.
Trace the circle round through lilacs, king’s-blood-lilies,
lilies of the valley, then blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, then lingonberries, apples.

To gather them as they ripen, wander along with that rapt purposeful emptiness, every sense alert for a glimpse of red or blue, the scrotal sponginess of puffballs, luminescence of chanterelles.

To know this place in the foison of its seasons. And watch the light on water, day after day, empty out of my everlasting self-regard. Let the sunlight, fog, or rain have its will with me.

8

At Fogdö, I thought, the silence of myself would come back to me. But the children cry as evening comes, and love's no easier here where blueberries ripen on shin-high bushes and wild strawberries nestle, sparse, in the roadside ditches. Love's no easier for Frida, our hostess, her new lover’s absent, she grows thinner every day. She tells us, *Here you may take coffee, and here, on this bench, you may sit for romance.* The cove is quiet; the sky and sea beyond the pines, one pewter blue.

9

Can't you stay awake one night to watch the sky that never turns black grow light again? Can't you stay awake one night to hear the soft rain?

10

Where I live they are paving the world. The oaks they’re “saving” perish, hemmed in by concrete. Dogwoods parch and wither in a season of no rain. You'd think we'd think of the collapse of systems—the fact that, at a certain point, there's nothing to be done, technology cannot save us. Earth sickens and sickens, and finally turns mean. Only things with thorns survive.

11

I’m reading Kandinsky, he speaks about green as the resting point between yellow and blue, the color of tranquility and regeneration. Surrounded by trees and water here at Fogdö, I want to be writing of peace, want to be moving into that deeper harmony where earth and sea and sky seep into, into, every pulse of my blood. But I keep thinking to write of peace right now is to be a tourist. She whose color
and income buy her easy passage. She for whom peace means comfort. She for whom aging means smaller.

12

Outhouse:

Here, at 8, when the children go to sleep, it's still soft daylight. Gulls are crying over the inlet.

And now they stop. It's absolutely silent—so silent I can hear the spiders crawl on my pen across the page, and each drop of pee falling in the bucket.

Yes, this is 2006, it's not escape and not evasion: the just-so of water, light, and silence.

13

Now the lip, lip, lip of the quiet water between the islands.

How to paint water?—the tiny ripples flowing from right to left—and the islands stretching away, each with its own tranquility.

To live here through the seasons, be of this place, like the sea captain buried in the graveyard: what battening down would it take, to survive its winters?

In the distance, light catches a couple of tiny buildings, and smoke rises, or is it a plume of clouds, far on the horizon. Little color in this scene—pearly gray, charcoal gray, swan's-down, pine green; all twilit—On the water, an orange float partly hidden by grasses.

14

The voice says—Hear what I say to you.

When the dream cabinet finally opens, two ravens will fly out and each will seize one of your eyes. I am not apart from that pain.

In that moment you will see me.
A day of small birds and sunlight.

Last night we sat with Frida in the red house where her children were sleeping, and she had lit candles. Suddenly I remembered our year in Sweden, remembered it not just with the mind, but with my whole being, that poignancy of night, and candles. Such a settling-in, points of light against all the night sky and all the woods, stretching North: your thought deepens and deepens and for once, it seems, you can sit still. Sweden, and such longing—walking down Dröttningsgatan in Uppsala each winter twilight, toward the Fyris River, and Peter walking up to meet me, then linking arms, walking home, home by 6 p.m. and dinner, then the hours till sleep stretching wide. Animal Kingdom on TV. Scrabble. Then, gulping sleep, unable to fall far enough, deep enough, into the gathering darkness—

Now Julia, five, is singing somewhere outside.

La la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la.

And Logan, two, says goodbye to every rock in the ocean.
One by one he tosses pebbles in,
chants Bye bye weewee, bye bye weewee.

Kind summer, facing west as sun goes down. The ducks still bob about the water, the Baltic opens up between the islands, and the body grows calm in its own contingencies. On the pier at Fogdö a woman sits—a woman who is I—and the sun, shattered in a path across the water, stretches from the island just across to end right before me. This moment of Swedish summer is so calm, there's little to be said about it. The ducks drift to and fro, and a few birds honk and chirp, shriek and coo. One motorboat's revving back across the water. A spiderweb stretches like a line of laundry from a rock to the pier, catching the slant of diminishing daylight.

Now the ducks are swimming home, the little ones in front of their elders. Flies buzz my head. Frida's just come out to wash Logan's bottle. Amazing, to trust the world so much you'll wash your baby's bottle in the ocean—

Writing
Seamic Carved Runes

Be free. In Swedish, Var frei. Prospero says, I will not marshal you any longer. And at the same time drowns his book

those loops and scrolls
those cross-hatchings and bent sticks
clumsily woven baskets that hold meaning releases them

they unweave they unloop

see the pages

bits of print bits of cursive still ghostly visible

rise like Ariel (rise like April)

And now Prospero grows old, is silent
and now all around us the white looping air.
You're not coming, are you, god of ferocity and exaltation? You're waiting up there near the high mountain passes, where the ravens wheel up against the sun, and the tight green pinecones ripen like roses. You're waiting and then you'll fall upon some unsuspecting traveler, leap on his back and ride him down. Me, I'm for the flat sea, where the water ripples luminous with the patina of old pewter. I'm for this calm that has no words, the day spinning slowly off its spool, and all night long the light not gone.

I'm sitting on the pier as Peter sleeps beside me. It's water nearly all the way around—wide, flat water, rippling with striations of shadow and light.

The ducks are floating ahead of me, growing near the forested island. The birds are crying their long good-nights. Like being inside a pearl: the perfect roundness of the summer evening.

Water—slate blue, gray-blue, with midges dancing on it. Now the ducks are sailing away from me. The sun's still white, but sinking toward the horizon.

Now the sun's a fish, caught in the Baltic seagrasses. Peter's sleeping peacefully, his whole face soft. Sometimes I can't help touching him even though I know it will wake him.

A single bird perches on a branch—a wren, a willow branch.

When the doors of the dream cabinet open, the bird flies away... into our lives.

And the branch remains, to carry its singing.
4 Texts
by Judith Copithorne

MANIA- ROMAN
GODDESS OF DEATH

GRANDIOS DELUSIONS
GLOBALLY TRAPPED BY ANGER
HALLUCINATORY PARANOIA
LOST SERETONE CUSHION
FLASHPOINT DOPAMINE
LIVING IN MANIA'S GRASP
BRUSHFIRE BATTLES
PROLIFIERATE
LATIN: MANIA
GREEK: μανία:
AKIN TO RAGE
VANISHING ICEPACKS &
RAIN FORESTS
BEREFT OF ENDOPHINS
GREENLY GLOWING
GIAGANTIC POWER
EMPTY OF INTELLECTUAL
OR MORAL RECKONING
scripturinus: mental moth dust
umber based & rattled

gastothermal disturbances
but recusant metamorphic wit

cyclical collision
numbed & knocked

outboded by nationalist masodes
letting co-mercy subsume authority
dropped into lakes of iron & gold

searching without bottoming out

mutational through signs of scalar fields

...
Friday Piece
By Harriet Tarlo

Responsibility is the ability to respond.
— Robert Duncan

Convulvulaceae: Members of the family are well known as showy garden plants (e.g. morning glory) and as troublesome weeds (e.g. bindweed). (Wikipedia)

Come on children, it’s tidy up time. tidy up time. tidy up time. (Playgroup teacher)

morning glory tender
morning climbing into
autumn falling beyond
her season winding and
classing where she can
up up to her spectacular
sun

Sheffield, after the flood
bindweed straggled over the city’s
post and railing/mud silted the street/
barriers fell at the football
ground

apply the canary test: it soon tells you when
it’s too late

start with the coral reef, the canary in the global coal mine
(a fine metaphor with a great historical heritage)

CREATE CREATE CREATE A CARBON MARKET!
A BRAND NEW CAPITALIST ENTERPRISE

Waiting for the morning train
frost on the oakleaves quiet
bindweed falling to frost
at last in the station
under the frost leaf
fall waiting to go

Each Autumn, thousands of tonnes of leaves fall on the railway line.

• A mature lineside tree has between 10,000 and 50,000 leaves

waiting to stop momentum

• Thousands of tonnes of leaves fall onto railway lines each year

child’s wail cuts through
suburban garden fences sep
aration/separation/separation
There are 21,000 miles of track to keep clear.

where did the flow go

The cost of lineside vegetation management (pruning and felling) of trees is between £20,000 and £50,000 per mile

flaw

facing every which way

Autumn costs the rail industry approximately £50 million per year including:

- £10 million for vegetation management, £25m for autumn train borne operations, £5m for 'hot spot' teams and other staff/operational costs, £10m for damage to trains and track from leaf fall.

(don’t discriminate, don’t systemise, don’t centralise, learn to make things disappear. We can simplify our lives)

The River Don churns mud up the trees’ trunks, branches weighed down into the water

we long thin lit rush through
it all our little round spotlights

gleaming over the june dim
windows lit windows lit windows
lit windows gleaming electric

under black cloud banks still downdropping

purple buddleias, the butterfly plant
burst between torn up tracks,

excavated sites, trees grabbed down from the steep steep banks and slopes as the cranes crawl beside, building, building desirables riverside residences

CAPITALISE! CAPITALISE!
DON’T FORGET TO ADVERTISE

mortgage was no longer possible · it depended too much on the future · it was suggested that the house, our only security, consumed too much energy · we needed to start from scratch · originally (the 1600s they thought) it had been a two room affair, cows at the bottom, people on the top · then a farmhouse, four square stone rooms with thick arched doorways and a well · by the 1800s another storey had been added for weaving, cottage industry they called it, thirteen small windows stretching from one side to the other, facing the morning sun · in the 1970s some middle class family built a generous extension on one end · now that really was unnecessary, far too much glass, only there for the view · we could start with that, bring it down, keep peeling back
to which point, the byrehouse again?
the nourishment, warmth, meat and comradeship of the family’s cows, they’d forgotten it, if it ever was
so glad we went to Spain this year
to see the sun shining in its morning
glory through the bougainvillea
get away from all this rain

they are all buying in
aglee, aglow with
approbation from
above aglow aglee
with bright blue shiny
swimming pools a fine
ride time away on a jet
airplane riding high
thru the atmosphere
shooting lines through
the pale pale sky

getting away, getting away from
the robin
the school yard gate
the light-responsive office
the children
the September cobwebs
the house
the calendar
the ripening apples
the mother on the phone
the washing

the season, the people,
the hills coming
and going under
the weather
life
as
it
goes on
living

_the unexamined life is not worth living_

WE EXPECT IT TO CONTINUE

the house, of solid Yorkshire stone, became a diminished version of itself · no, it wasn’t the house at all, it was a small flat or office, artificially lit, in a tall tower · very little space for the children · the solid stone house with magical rooms was never ours or it was and someone – they – had the power to take it away · no, it was still there but transformed · all the small rooms, orange and blue and purple, had become big public spaces with bright square white lights set in to their ceilings · it would not go back · the smell of stone had turned to the metallic scent of coinage · all that money we had poured into the house, a barricade, had come to the surface, plastering the shiny public walls of the tower · it was a certainty that in the future the whole thing would fall, like all the others

hands on feet, feet on hands
we balance/ she pushes forward
into the future with her legs/
my feet land, trying not to smash
into the patterned glass door,
ornaments, the nest of tables
stood below our mother’s
mother’s portraits ranged
serene, serene, serener even,
a smooth face, in her thirties/
where we landed
(can that individual simplify
her inherited life? I
not I not I
fellowship not family, pulling it
all back in)

re turning the need of sleep
long pull down recovery
a sweet-full fall if you let it so
often it isn’t there’s those
habitual expectations of the daily
sweeping, pushing the brush back
dried on
against something hard dried on
trying to regain that clear caressive sight

convolvulus
crept out into a wasteground
world to be, not to be
responsible for
living

THE ARCTIC – THE LAST FRONTIER!

flags under the sea ice
cut length, breadth, width, license
my roving hands to slice the cake
every which way and eat slow
warming ice, a baked Alaska

"This isn't the 15th Century," Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay
told the CTV channel

rush down under the ice ledges
the melting shelf as it slides into
a fish-threaded sea

It was so lovely down there. The yellowish ground is around us,
no sea dwellers are seen, said Artur Chilingarov

Circling as it falls, Russia Canada America Norway Denmark, waiting, marking
territory – this isn’t the 15th Century –
oil gas minerals wait under the ice
deep in whose sweet continental ledge
send in the scientists, send in the military
send in the ice-breakers

GLOBALITY! THE WORLD WILL BECOME ITS OWN EMPIRE
RICHES GALORE EVEN MORE SHALL BE OURS

How to tally the generous-spirited American
with her country’s ungenerous action – does
she – why there – why does she stay with him?
(can we stop selling, start living?)
I look forward very much to seeing this
effort to perform or accomplish something, attempt
this trial of the future

Being on the two-bit train
where it crosses the M1, first motorway in Britain, sixties dream of
fast flow green on blue on red on silver stuck fast, slow move, stuck fast,
slow move rush hour below
where wild roses & graffiti sprawl the wall
roof triangles of the back-to-backs push
on to Barnsley Junction, the old world
jagger judders on, two carriages over
the viaducts, casting its toy shadow
on Penistone’s green sward scrub and we can see ourselves
scorning steel and glass, five speeds and
climate control as we rattle
over the tops

thru the tunnel, sound builds
into emergency no end stop
to this moment momentum
tree train tunnel thru ferns lens
up thru leaves we look or ditto
down banks fall away vertigo
inous scape shift attempting
straight course thru hilly
terrain all over England tin
baths enamel sinks our dom
estic detritus out of which
cows drink under plastic tatter
flags thru tree tunnel leaves

through the close walled city, the Don
her river (which) city slice roof tiles
cranes, brick banks of windows
channelled by ex-industries, into
the new millennial zone, bright
interchange on our old rolling
stock who wants it?

Please do not leave luggage unattended
For your safety and comfort
Security Personnel tour this station 24 hours a day

Suck, suck like a toddler on your
Sweet plastic teat, non-spillage
[Caution: hot liquid]
Safety Security Comfort
Terror Terror Terror
the wrong fear?

outside the station
50 million spent on this
Millennial silver space
civic fountain plays water
energy water a recirc
ulating system bringing natural energy into the city
silver stiletto spiking along the
paving or wet walls shadows moving
within them, getting faster all the time
thrub of the machine pumping
behind it all spring
fall speed separation from
October water with no leaves floating

COME INTO THE PAST TO FIND THE FUTURE!
YOU CAN CHANGE THE ENDING THIS TIME

where things were stone
now steel cuts fine bold
perforations metal seats
made in Warrington city
litter bins, railguards and
art: a wall of steel reflects
the skin does not give
behind the crowd control

COME OUT, COME OUT
COME OUT OF YOUR WALL
SEE PAST STEEL OUT OF
NOWHERE

He went out of the station, still discontented and unhappy, muttering
"If I could but see it! if I could but see it!"

Strip back the nylon sheen on matt cotton
what if the 28% polyester went?
if wool, pleasure-giving, artistic, product of
the commonweal replaced
ubiquitous fleece again?
(If we could simplify our lives?)

Multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs) are fitted with lasers to blast leaf mulch off the track and apply a sand based gel called ‘Sandite’ to the rails

The icebreaker uses great momentum and power to drive its bow up onto the ice, breaking the ice under the immense weight of the ship.

mass times velocity is the fundamental force of motion

waiting to stop momentum
it careers downwards under the steep bank
deciduous, composting stocks
moor cutting turf
clean off

Notes
In June 2007 the city of Sheffield in Yorkshire, England, experienced serious flooding.
Italicised quotations are attributable to Network Rail website, “Dealing with the Weather”; Lorine Niedecker; Socrates; Kathleen Fraser; Denise Levertov; Oxford English Dictionary definition of “essay”; BBC News website; William Morris, News from Nowhere; Descartes.
3 Poems
by Tammy Armstrong

Here: Soft-footed

The dog, the bear, the whale—
out of Aldeberan’s knotted light,
splashing through.
Have you heard?
Pegasus spooked the earth’s haggard hope
crushed the stars beneath one heavy hoof.

Taxidermied— the constellations are a menagerie
for shop windows and tourists boards.
And the pub here, at the Arctic Circle
plays *Sweet Home Alabama,*
an Icelandic call-in show
while the horses hold property
like baroque parlour furniture
and a million birds fandango their *joie de vivre.*

We walk with sticks above our heads,
waving, stirring the air,
the sky without stars
but these birds jack-knife shadows
with their klezmer calls and phobias:
tourists were run off this cliff, was it?

It’s nearly fall
and in your land do things stand well?
I have meant to send word
but the terns run riot above
and my words
are never my own these days.
On Re-naming Mountains

Even after Everest, Hillary cried,
*Well, we knocked the bastard off!*

The Bastard, the Orphan, the Wandering Whore-child
cross-legged at a brass locket-lake
cursive with raw ice,
with Peterson’s so-called wood duck:
its meander across a spring-fed shallow.

Peacock-headed in a rabbity rack of cloud:
rush a mountain and it will stand sulky
like a dog learning a new name:
   (three weeks and the St. Bernards are still loose
among the foothills).
Listen, their echoes glaze daily from the tablelands.

We’ve sent goats and kestrels to the far hills—
diplomatic in their haunts;
they are legislators across these barrens.
And the *coureurs de bois*
with their collections of hide
and their bull moose brays—
woods beamed with antlers,
the palmation of its breed.
Its message is always north.
*Name them north.*
And the *coureurs de bois* mantra a paddle’s song
among their sobriquets and pseudonyms—
all their beatified trespasses.

While we still call quietly to a christened mountain,
where the sun’s slow pendulum unfocuses the face,
illuminates those shiplapped moods we’re apt to misinterpret
those dumb edged furrows
we’ve already mistaken for goodwill and open arms.
Glacier

We haven’t seen anyone for hours.  
How did that hatchback get us here:  
ball-bearing on wheels,  
at the edge,  
on top, below.

On the edge of it,  
ice crates flaunted with swan and valentine abstracts  
but the cliffs in their blue—  
as though the sky had sealed:  
cloud and all—  
broke and crashed so slow, so slow  
into the lagoon’s depths.

There was a sound.  
Locked in, then released—  
a wolfish bird: howling castrati.  
The hunted: that last sound before the collapse:  
shoulder into the dirt  
then that silence that sews up around the fallen—  
the just,  
the ice—  
even its echo stops short.  
Quick eviction, the unexpected fault lines crack the blue free.

All these glass houses sliding off foundations  
into water cradles, unclear history,  
frozen sages grant us clear passage  
where walls collapse.

Who knew ice held a hymn—  
those transom gates troubled in lagoon—  
waters rising, creatures of ice,  
arms sky-spread, stratified
2 POEMS
by Murali Sivaramakrishnan

Small Town Thoughts

I grew up in the small town
acquiring an affection for the forest
and landscape and the quiet houses.
– Yevtushenko, Zima Junction

My feelings are mine own. No one can, nor know
How to feel the feel for the forest and rainbow

Sad thoughts like rain filled clouds and tearing birds
That appear and disappear noon and early night.

The insects hide deep in the brown earth
And sing. The scorpion emerges from his hidden cleft.

All in this small town. There is also the Brainfever bird
Announcing the summer heat and the silent Iora

Hidden in the trees. Above all there is our river.
And here our old house. It was never ours.

My father in his spare hours painted everything green.
I have not inherited his deep distaste for nostalgia.

When his eldest daughter died
He destroyed all that was hers. He disliked memory.

It is like trailing one’s fingers in the water
When the slow boat turns. The cool green shadows

Ripple, the trees are overturned. The picture
Is a soft swell now. Let us turn the other way.

There was never any forest, nor rainbow.
Even the birds. But the houses are so quiet.

Small town thoughts like rain filled clouds and tearing birds
Appear and disappear noon and early night.
There are many ways to kill a poet

There are many ways to kill a poet.
The best one –is to neglect him.

From the wet treetops on monsoon dawns
The *brainfever* screams in all delirium
The sky glows red and green all night,
He walks the streets, stands bewitched by the sea,
Rolls on the lush grass, and lies open eyed
Under the rolling skies.

You walk beside him
In silence.

*There are many ways to kill a poet, remember.*

He is naïve and like the parrot writing across open skies.
That is his green and red mistake.

*It is easy enough to kill a poet, remember.*

He hopes in the dark
Screams in the night
And keeps wide awake till all the stars go white
In a pale blue sky

He breathes in air
Walks on water
Caresses all tamarind trees
And climbs the gooseberry by the wall
He is brown
He is black
He is tall
And is everywhere
Sees beyond all walls.
He is fool, he is prophet, he is the king of Iran.
Of Istanbul, Jerusalem, Papanasam, Belur, Budapest, Pakshipatalam.

You fear him, remember
Remember, *there are many ways to kill a poet.*

You blast him sky high
Tied to a rock. You kill him many times over.

He mocks you in your slumber.
He rocks, he sings, he dances the *ramba ramba*
He keeps you all wide awake while he sleeps.
*There are many ways to kill a poet, remember.*
Fear not fear not wedding guest
Drink more water and spit on him full blast.
Tell him to leap sky high
And rock the sun like a big red fruit.

You feign sleep when he weeps beside you
You shout and laugh
When he weeps beside you
You celebrate everyday
While he weeps beside you.

He walks on water
Sleeps on a giant snake
Plays with saints and scholars
On Mount Olympus, Parnassus, Tiruvannamalai, Kodajadri, Annapurna.

In Weimar, in Pondicherry
By the sea, over all hills and peaks
You fly by and shop while he weeps beside you.

There are many ways to kill a poet, remember.
Perhaps, the best is not to listen to him.

You throw him deep down into the gorge
He bounces back like a rubber ball and stands tall.
You harness the elephants and stampede him chained
He smiles his innocent smile and bows to the beasts.
He is farmer he is scholar he sees far more
Than you or I. There are indeed many ways.
Perhaps, still, the best is not to listen to him.

That’s easy enough by our standards.

You search all stacks and rows of books
Run around with Google and Yahoo
Pick up handfuls of periodicals and papers
Probing and prying, trying to dislodge meaning from his word
You tear him to shreds in your goddamn dissertations
And debate across podiums in classrooms round the world
Of Jack and Jill and Race and Class and Gender,
Of why he writes of butterflies and balloons
Of clowns and cacophonies
Of himself and no other.
All the while, remember, remember
There are indeed many ways. One could, of course,
Invent more fear. Silence is another.
Still, the easiest, is to stop by and ask him for a catalogue.
Cracked Guitar

It was a good year for rain, that one skirting the lip of your rosette. Thirsty, you drank and drank and soaked it in, all that water turned to secrets, light knotted gently into grain. The layers of your former selves hold you up, and we can relate though we turn flesh into bone only when young.

Not having lived through those seasons turned texture I don’t know whether you get older now from right to left, but the dark striae pressed on either side of that year like the sediment of centuries constrained, determined in their furrows, remember droughts.

Centuries is no exaggeration when I can count over three hundred years between your new round hips. In that time, barely middle-aged, you embraced perhaps two dozen droughts when you held tight, slowed yourself, knowing soft rain’s love of the temperate coast would quench your ghostly roots.

This was the least of your concerns when we with our hips and necks and open mouths, looking for ancient flesh to make our doubles, came across your upper half and introduced you under cover of magician’s smoke to blade and press and glue, spruced you up: hollowed, stringed, and fretted with half-tone vertebrae, married to ebony, mahogany and maple. After crafting a beautiful tenor, Frankenstein is not a doctor but an artist.

For you have a language we can hear now, and vocal chords if no breath to move them but the solid pointed airs of my picking. You appear usually to agree with me on the tone necessary to play things exactly as they are, though at times you declare the transience of strings, of finish.
And now this gash,
thin and black along your gut, a new speaking
hole not crafted but split, fractured. My lips broken
from this apartment parched with winter heat
taste already of new flesh healing over,
but your cracked body is hollow, bone
dry, left thirsty once too long.

Still, I'll pick
up that little plastic nub, nearly weightless
in my hand, poised with intent. This dead wood
still lives, or hasn't finished dying: a discriminating
palate saying a thing or two yet, scuffed, scarred
and cleft.

Seventeen Owls

You had to hunt for it, keen-eyed, down
several layers of links. Spotted owl
not in danger, says environment minister.

There were seventeen left, no reason
to stop the logging. I think it must have been
three years ago, plenty of time
to learn to live with an unused
saucer gone missing from the dark
dingy back of the cupboard.
For us city dwellers, the so-called

silent spring clamours, marked perhaps
by another voice’s absence
from the news ticker. Little fuss
for what can be done

without siren, without
epilogue, under a vague memory
of being momentarily born.
Better luck, perhaps, for those

who wait for tribute, from the greasy
headline of a cracked cookie’s fortune:
Now is the time to call loved ones
at a distance.

Otherwise, a distracted curiosity,
brow slightly vexed at gravity’s
smoothed conspiratorial slope
in this, the moment after

the egg hits the pan,
when it's not yet clear
if the yolk survived the fall.
2 POEMS
by Gracie Carlascio

tremors

I

it was as if the [world]
looked
in a mirror
and beheld the faultlines, battlelines

| crumbing fissures | the little cracks in the sidewalks
| the children's lego men fall into
| whilst she gazed oddly
| at the split glass,
| the b lun     d er i -     ng mistake of an elbow
| ;slovenly ragweed & reclusive thistle
| rupturing perfected order[
and mistrusted her polished green windowpanes—trembling—

with the world turning
upside down

rain spits on brick:
corroding gravel and the inky streak of a tire
we are faultless

[pignumberthree] in the ruins of madness

II

| here comes sallyanne

tripping gaily
up the sidewalk
safely, her mother spills out
before sally

| on the crack & breaks her —mother's back
she fell

in then:

| a little lego lady with a yellow face and
| pretty red lips
| —a tiny scar [where her hair parts] and where
| papery thread eroded,
| from being dropped— see the fault paint

on gaping windowpanes
;they are

| flakes like rubble quaking
| under dust
Elegy, Death of a Lake

Once with delighted yearning,
I teased the jaunty waves
along the laughing ribbon of the lake – turning
my energies towards
  fistfuls of shiny
  red stones and bright things
  that glistened in the depths –
and infusing unparalleled joy into
the calm, clear coldness that leaked
through my fingers as I cupped my hands.

Yet once with weeping lament,
I crawled impeded along the brittle sand,
as flecks of rain trickled into nothing – pitted
  in the sunken belly
  of the empty
  lakebed
  stretched out like a wasteland –
and remembered scalding my eyes not with tears
but the lovely searing rush of water, feet
bursting from a damp floor as I bobbed up next to water lilies.

Still once with awed bewilderment,
I felt sodden garments cling to my skin, seaweed in my hair,
and became an infant borne across the mirthless waters – tossed
onto the dry, crumbling earth
  smeared with red clay
  and scudding
  with cartilage –
so that I and the lake bemoaned the death that life began,
the abandonment of starfish and delicate anemones
and knelt, a yawning cocoon against the skeletal shore.
2 Texts
by Jonathan Skinner

nameless

the tumbling waterfall and lift-up-over-sounding song of the winter wren in late-summer
the countless red seeds of the nameless grasses grown tall scratching my knees
the radiant moss on decaying stumps
the mushroom hyphae growing out quietly beneath the leaf-litter waiting for rain
the drone of a hummingbird ephemeral as a bit of morning light through the poplar leaves
the snap of a brittle powdery branch under my boot
the dry needle beds under hemlocks and then the lush crowding of ferns
the quiet methodical thrush on some lower branches, pooping against the white light
the songs of other nameless birds near the river making bower-work of the air
the squares of peeled birch bark giving off false mushroom light
the glistening pile of deer droppings
the mossy root-mass rodent town perforated with breathing holes
the homogeneous field of wet grass that is a tributary of the Abagadasset, tide-fed
here in the deep woods

the large nameless black insect machine helicoptering toward my thigh
the mossy stumps shades of previous logging
the poplar-sketched clearing
the squelch of black river mud to my shin as I attempt an approach
the blades of long grass cutting my knee
the wind in the treetops sounding like something about to happen
the ripped-out crow feathers and one white feather under the dark pines what news
the mosquitos and flies circling around my head
the herbal smell of wet grasses along the edge of the farmer's mowed field
the dry-looking geranium by the nameless gravestone in the family plot
the countless ways through these woods
The Life of Sound

Sound has history. Sound comes from the ground. Sound is blind. Sound connects us. Sound divides us. Sound is the portion of the life spectrum adapted to our atmosphere. Sound alerts us. Sound attracts. Sound repels. Sound is bliss. Sound is torture. Sound vibrates in a pulsating medium. Sound has divided itself into thousands of sounds. Sounds group in series of pulses. Sounds are magnetic. Sounds are the sun rising. Sounds are the dew settling in the night. Sounds are the slugs. Sounds are massive. 1)

Sound is hunger. Sound is love. Sound is not slo-mo. Sound is fear. Sound is waking you. Sound is distracting. Sound is unhappy. Sound is what you hear when you turn off the radio. Sound is coming out of your car. Sound is lust. Sound is a landscape. Sound is materials. Sound is wood is metal is earth. Sound is a crowd. Sound is what we sing with the birds. Sound is a stick, cracking in the woods. Sound is not penetrating the walls. Sound alerts us he will come. Sound is behind the window. Sound is numinous. Sound is unconscious. 2)

Sound is uncreative. Sound is making the universe turn. Sound drives a spouse crazy. Sound doesn’t interest one. Some like all sounds. Sound descends the staircase like a rail. Sound has atmosphere. Sound does not discriminate. Sound is how you love one. Sound is turning around inside a head. Sound is what we judge in a voice. The sound can be surprising. Sound is not the person I saw. Sound is around us. We are all creating sound. Can we sound and hear one another sound at the same time? Sound is rising from shore. 3)

Sound is over the horizon. Sound is a town. Sound is pursuing us. Sound is a time and the medium used to record it. Sound is shaving in the morning. Sound is turning in at night. Sound is done with the laundry. Sound is coming out of your ass. Sound is between the ears. Sound is the shape of a leg. Sound is almost nothing. Sound is found at the bottom of the barrel. Sound it out loud. Sound is making us rowdy. Sound is outside. Sound has scale. Sound is not in a natural space. Sound is moving across a cliff in the fog. 4)

Sound is below. Sound is within. Sound is theatrical. Sound is horrible. Sound is crying out loud. Sound is coming through the walls. Sound is walking across the stage. Sound is acrobatic. Sound keeps the audience focused. Sound is not televised. Sound is martial. Sound incites the populace. Sound is regulated. Sound is shared. Sound drives around. Sound is bought at a price. Sound is inside. You can touch the sound but you cannot see it. Sound can be unbearable. Sound has no voice. Sound is coming for dinner. 5)

1. The three bones in the middle ear are the malleus, incus and stapes—or hammer, anvil and stirrup. They are the smallest bones in the human body and are full sized when we are born. All three could fit on a penny.
2. Due to ocean acidification, sounds could travel as much as seventy percent farther in parts of the Atlantic Ocean and other areas by 2050. Ocean chemist Keith Hester notes, “We understand the chemistry of the ocean is changing. The biological implications of that we really don’t know” (Keith Hester et al, “Unanticipated consequences of ocean acidification: A noisier ocean at lower pH,” Geophysical Research Letters, vol. 35, 2008; Juliet Eilperin, “Survey Finds ‘Bleak Picture’ for World’s Mammals,” Washington Post, 6 October, 2008). EU scientists reported that up to 10 million Europeans could suffer hearing loss from listening to MP3 players at unsafe volumes (Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks, “Potential health risks of exposure to noise from personal music players and mobile phones including a music playing function,” European Commission, 23 September 2008).
3. The two-voiced penguin syrinx generates a beat pattern which varies between individuals. The emperor penguin incubates and carries its egg on its feet. Without a nest, partners must identify each other amidst thousands of other birds vocally, when switching incubation or chick-rearing duties. The beat, generated by the interaction of two frequencies, offers a unique voiceprint that resists degradation through the medium of bodies in a penguin colony (Thierry Aubin et al, “Penguins use the two-voice system to recognize each other,” The Royal Society, 2000).
4. “Music is perpetual,” Thoreau wrote, “and only hearing is intermittent” (The Journal, entry for 8 February, 1857). The Bosavi of Papua New Guinea categorize birds as “those that sing, those that weep, those that whistle, those that speak the Bosavi language, those that say their names, those that ‘only sound,’ and those that make a lot of noise” (Steven Feld, Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression, p. 30). During rush hour, the robin cannot hear the worms in the lawn. As music not meant to be listened to, the only way to defeat Muzak is to listen to it (R. Murray Schafer, The Tuning of the World, p. 98).
5. Meditate to hear the sap rising in trees. Field recordings reveal a rich and teeming sound life beneath the bark. Drought-stressed trees make ultrasounds attracting beetles, adapted to hear the chirps of bats, that bring along fungi seeking light inside of the tree to reproduce. Bark beetles infesting high elevation conifers may destroy snow fences, altering the conservation and distribution of water (David Dunn, liner notes to The Sound of Light in Trees). Without awakening you, air traffic will raise your blood pressure (Alexandros Haralabidis et al, “Acute effects of night-time noise exposure on blood pressure in populations living near airports,” European Heart Journal, 13 February 2008).
4 Texts
by Adam Dickinson

MER

A "mer" is the smallest repeating structural unit in the long polymer chains required to make plastic. Mers and the polymers they form are present in both synthetic and natural plastics. For example, the structures of the human brain, skin, hair, as well as DNA are all composed of polymers. As ubiquitous as polymers are biologically, plastic, as a cultural and industrial commodity, is similarly omnipresent. Its ubiquity, however, marks a curious contradictory tension: plastic is at once banal and futuristic, colloquial and scientific, a polluting substance that is also intimately associated with our lives – including our thoughts, given that the brain's polymer structure makes possible conceptual "plasticity."

The poems in *Mer* (manuscript) enact conceptual translations and formal mutations in order to explore the plasticity of plastics from multiple perspectives. The poems make use of different constraint procedures (including the involvement and recreation of certain found-texts, as well as the employment of particular compositional strategies) in order to frame the kinds of environmental phenomena that ultimately signify or get "read."

For example, the series of poems entitled "Linear Polymer" is composed of found materials (voices, conversations) from people standing in line waiting to enter a tourist attraction (or in one case, a doctor's office). The poems at once emphasize and displace the molecular individual voice. "Attention" is composed of misheard or misread warnings. "End of the Year or Sooner" is composed of long repeated chains of mers (linguistically, culturally speaking).
ATTENTION
(A plastic)

Danger, you have cursed the bridge

Falling shoulders may obscure the ice

Risk of drawing

It is indirection to smoke in here

Please return all hands to the supervision of transport

Citations are necessary frost, then submit for apparel

Actual weight may not have a figure

Form requires incline

Unpaid shudders, loose gravel

Cardholder ices first, then credit

Open wounds in the water

Before sounding your arm, return to the city position

The traditional belts, areas east of the lakes

Accumulations in the overnight towers

And the charity of your writing

All passengers cordwood convenience

Point form is the body of rush

Do not induce homilies

Consult a metaphysician

The ground connects everywhere
EPITHALAMIUM (the science of large molecules)

Your hand in the helix,
ear in the search party,
blush in the headstrong of the bridge.

Modal in the choral,
angle in the antonym,
lily in the flag of the kings of France.

Rainwater in the ruminant,
toadstool in the mushroom,
salt in the mammal having dreams.

Shepherd in the calendar,
protein in the protean,
digital in the analogues of curves.

Spanish in the shoulder blades,
cardinal in the points,
correspondence in the needles and the cones.

Envelope in invention
mineral in the blessing
your substance in the substance of my sense.

END OF THE YEAR OR SOONER

make a roof for the people, and the people walk
down the street with resin for a roof, and the roof
has magnesium in it, and sulphur, and the people
walk down the street with resin in their hair, and
resins are always falling from the sky to the ground,
and the birds make a people in the sky, a people
of the resin, and the resin is composed of sky, and
it composes the sky, and the people walking down
the street are the strings of resins, and covering
their hair with their arms, with newspapers, with
umbrellas, the people are the birds of resins throwing
their landings in the air like people for whom landings
are uncommon, like people committed to the ex-
pulsion of landings, the resins coming down upon
them like people driven out of countries discovered
by resins or that have discovered resins in veins,
in the countertops of suburbs, and people walk
down the street with resins for hair, with countries
committed to colour, with the bonds between them
the birds circling, and people walking down the street
with hunched shoulders so as not to look up and
call the resins by name, call the resins in the name
of the birds, the people, circling and loosening.
Haibun #11
by Christine Sy

gizhe manidoo aki kiiwedinong strangers/friends/traders wigwam asin migwaNs Hudson Bay Company/The Bay nibi binoojiNs giziis nookomis windigokahn nini credit shkode aankwad epingishmok biboon railroad/CPR jimaan migwech waawashkeshwiwon mijim ishpiming Treaty#3/Northwest Angle Treaty maanomin atikamek miinan waabanong ziibing money nanabozhoo maanomin nogdawindamin anishinaabek Indian Agent nongom kiindaasiwin shingwauk traplines/MNR zhaawanong giigooNs mishomis wiyaas windigo ode mayingun shkaawebaas surnames/Christian names/married names dodem mashkikinini gaming residential school/Pelican Falls gimiwon debwewin kwewok english pagak waboose wiigwaas boozhoo T.B./sanitarium minobimaadziwin and then Mary/maanii never spoke it again

gilded Anishinaabemowin, B.A. hangs from the rising limb of gracious old cedar, roots cradle spongy dark earth & a semaa ceremony; twenty-first century kwe continues digging viscera and space for land-language left behind walls, fumbles; just baby talk/not just baby talk

Image by Brenda Saunders (Australia)
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