





**Version (9) Magazine**

**Edition 1**

**Issue 3**

**© Copyright Spring 2022**

### **Copyright Statement Official**

**All selections are copyrighted by their respective authors.**

**All rights revert back to authors upon publication.**

**Any reproduction of these poems without the express written permission of the authors is prohibited.**

**Authors are responsible for their included selections.**

**The views and opinions expressed in the included poems are those of the individual authors and not of *Version (9) Magazine* nor this said magazine's individual editors.**

***Version(9)Magazine* encourages for the promotion of poetry the sharing, dissemination and printing of this PDF E-book in its integrity unaltered.**

**“Citation exquisite for your determining.”**

**Endgames** such as that persist apocalyptic theme a time and its surroundings with questions of bodies, markings and what perplexes. These push to position the poet in face of what can seem ultimatum—to interrogate text and the self that is had ready-made before it, their own creation or other.

With notion of waiting and hint at transitions that would seem trademark to a current age, and the revisiting of what constitutes corporeality and text, *Version (9) Magazine* celebrates considerations of the implications of corporeality and the expression of body in text.

With an understanding of poetics as structuring, posits of creating come to mind and aim for a sense of the incarnal that relegates the poet to a position if at once divine then also transient. Consideration of how it is that a text is corporeal (given the nature of corporeality) and what spirit can animate it from within while coming out of at once, and this as paradox not contradiction, poet and reader, is aimed for.

Language and structure as body distinguished keeps the necessity of every hermeneutic alive. But it is precisely as separate bodies, that of poet, reader and then text, that an apocalyptical vision can mark the poetic endeavour. The time that lingers in the poem is not to be ignored, nor the Yeatsian notion of a poetics involving communication with the previous, those dead.

Posthumanism forces we give new considerations of voice and interconnectedness in the age of the hypermodern. If what is meant by human is reshaping, it is a sense of the poetic that imposes certain senses of place and Time too often taken as given. Corporeality in manner of bodies and bodies of texts, (one's own corpus, in a sense) involve connotations of Time and transition into something elsewhere and other. For this, an apocalyptic nature infuses poetic action, that creation of a body of text (or a text of body) subject to Time and part of it, readying in this latter's natural course.

What might be a dissociative measure we can recognize in the poetic attempt that at once permits the body or bodiliness overcome in the act of creating text. The poetic text as become out-of-body experience *Version (9) Magazine* does not ignore but wants questioned. Who we are as poetic bodies acting with others, in others and out-of ourselves on the words graphed unto our pages, is found curious and part of the question of a poetry of apocalyptic measure. The self felt lost in the poetic endeavour somehow presents redemption.

From this is proposed questions of inner and outer, of what the true self is as body formative of poetic text. Poetry as point of contact and of moment, in a time, for endless bodies of text to interact with and be subsumed in is enjoined. Text as corporeality that gives out and is at once tangible if but only in manner spiritual is a pseudo-duality to applaud.

If an apocalyptic tone marks an age that admits of transition, then consideration of horror is understandable and perhaps necessary. An age of constant hints at *post*-ness carries with it, for some, certain late Gothic images. Poetry navigates through such as it has done in every age. The body of the text, perhaps, serves as form of the matter, that being the one at hand. Under the umbrella of these corporeal and psychic concerns, *Version (9) Magazine* wishes to thank poet Erik Fuhrer for granting interview and excursion into the implications of notions of the apocalyptic and the bodily for contemporary poetry.

**Dylan Willoughby** draws from Bakhtin's considerations of the *polyglossia*. His poetics aims to move beyond the singular "I" and celebrates pluralities of voice in the encounter with verse. He relates points of view while embracing hints of cacophony and dissonance alongside the harmonious and consonant.

**Ian Stuart** convinces us of poetry as sculpture, as a cutting away at parts and removing that which can be deemed of little to no piece of a greater whole.

**Sascha Engel** approaches Hegelian idealism in addressing the notion of remains. The question of where material reality falls either off or out of helps to understand some of the perplexities of the idealistic schools and therefore their implications for poetics. Likewise, interrogations into how writing finds within iterations, and these constituent of objective reality, maintain.

**Bradley J. Fest** offers experiments with the sonnet form. His pieces included in this issue make part of a sequence treating of iterations of time. As we are an age of networks, the question of how we construct and filter time herein proposes. The poems included hold dates that indicate the consecutive nature of their composition while pushing us to question the structure of linear form and consequentiality.

**Robert McCarthy** proposes formal means to best achieve lyric purpose. With an appreciation for metaphor, he renews interest in the impersonal over the confessional in a manner of verse that permits a certain objectivism on the part of the reader which is to be appreciated.

**Louis Armand** distinguishes puzzle pieces in the constitution of a poetics. He implicates Heidegger while proposing questions of identity and the possibilities of responsibility. Notions of self propose in a poetry that addresses individual and collective struggle. Voice and notions of locale present with a musicality and an encouraging of questions as to what the poem is.

**Erik Fuhrer** affords readers a cross-genre memoir that permits notions of poetics involving screenplay and projectional reminiscence and chronicling. A presentation of implications of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* reveals in a selection from his work *Gellar Studies*. In these notions of corporeality, the apocalyptic and violence hint.

**Michael Lee Rattigan** mines end-of-life experiences which push considerations of selfhood and the linear. He draws from the works of Cesar Vallejo, Octavio Paz and Soren Kierkegaard and affords the reader a rooted poetic approach to questions of transformation and striving. The experiential as altering and encouraging of connectivity upholds approach to poetry as moment of personal endeavor and growth.

**Christopher Browzan** pulls from modernist writers and avant-garde film. He shows the importance of Dadaist and Impressionist painters and encourages passages of emotion and feeling that coincide with an imagery disavowing of rigidity. He fosters an appreciation of both sparseness and detail where necessary and a verse that is ever honest.

**Andrea Laws** investigates notions of journeying and the implications of departure and exile. Her poetry involves the realism of environment and the influence of milieu along with critique of political history as played out in the modern era through to today. The connectivity between and with women is explored while the personal implications of religion invite an understanding of poetry as manner of spiritual exercise and personal questioning.

**Kieran Wyatt** defends a poetics that promotes chiefly experiences for the individual reader. He aims for the creation of individualized encounters with verse and these as the true purpose of the art rather than simply the expression of the poet per se. A poetics of the Other manifests wherein an ethical purpose to the poem impresses upon. To create for the reader is what manifests and makes for an altering and effective poetics. Including implications of memory, experience and moments of interaction with others, he presents poems of tailored if multifarious experience.

**Bob Eager** invites engagement with the poem as dream interpretation and examines the notions of innocence in the face of accusation. He shows appreciation for the acronym as means of highlighting the letter as precisely representational.

**Bongani Zurgu** innovates with poetry as a webbing of words. He intimates wonder at the experiential and impressive. Poetry as a place for interplay of experience, knowledge and imagination—components of living too often kept separate if distinguished—inheres and calls for new considerations on the part of the reader.

**Christian Carlo Suller** argues for poetry as response. In the creation of text, the poetic involving of previous encountered works is accepted, acknowledged and admitted. For this he interrogates our notions of tradition and the weight of canon. The imposition of role and identity, components of traditions themselves collective and individual, play in his questioning of identities sexual, cultural, ethnic and marital.

**Francis Plamondon** removes the taboo against esoteric notions the postmodern world largely imposes. Spiritual questions amounting to a near theologic questioning, long outside the norm for a technologically and fiscally accumulative society, contribute to a poetics that, while rejecting traditional forms, maintains the persistence of Tradition itself. The notion of body as meeting point between the material and spiritual, corruptible and eternal, passive and energetic informs the pieces collected herein.





## **Dylan Willoughby**

### *The Unleavened Dream*

Grass-scripture in the soul's tilling field  
The ground's canticle  
Aloft in the duplicitous wind  
"We were of the rood, and the blood  
Thickened like treacle, gore-bined"

What fell in man shall rise | risen  
The bloom is the failing, the hop  
The dead-seeped spleen splintered

Pestled fool fools the pestle  
*Leviticus of rain, hailstones of Exodus*  
The Psalter cries of the pestilence  
Bursting from the soul's seed-darkness

Sapiens self-culled, their own abbreviate  
"To be man is to rescind" | unpilgrimed  
The saint eats the dirt, last curate

*The Night Robs the Light*

The night robs the light for no other reason  
than to be darkness ineluctable pain-giver &  
mythweaver, O, I do not know Eros' plaything  
have not turned to Aphrodite's beacon  
the outstretched wings of this dreaming  
threatens to envelope me beyond lucidity  
beyond the sound of Duruflé's tremulous organ  
beyond even the sound of breath the sound  
of heaving the sound of us canticled I feel  
now like the thief of a living candelabra  
light spilling everywhere why am I here is this  
where I'm supposed to be?

*Promontory*

This too is sacrifice  
the blowth of prophecy  
distance stones mark  
our movements, our curse  
tablets laid in between  
*This* is the valley  
in your saying, óf  
Your saying

I am neither géntled nor shóok

The field seems overridden  
By fetches, by yeth hounds, by bygorns  
We made in likeness  
(Of course we are afraid of symmetry)

— I myself don't trust Hypnos,  
the son of Death —  
while Morpheus creates false testimonies

The "Knowable World" is such —  
Circumscribed — I don't understand  
Its sharp coordinates  
I am blind as in dreams

I cry out to refute my *man*-ness  
The male half that crushed my mother  
For thirty years  
It is not a cry  
It is a wail

To abandon — not even Echo listens

O, How dare we incarnate?

## **Ian Stuart**

### *The Fetter*

Buffalo shoulders and thighs like oak trees,  
head the size of a Halloween pumpkin -  
candle flame flickering behind his eyes -  
and teeth like a bandsaw.

He spoke no tongue but Yorkshire,  
spat pity at anyone who lived  
south of the Potteries.  
“You have my condolences” he hissed.

Shop steward at the hospital  
he fettled beds and fought the central heating,  
mended trolleys, door hinges, broken washers,  
until there was nothing left to fix

and so he bought a boat  
a wireless, and a coastal chart.  
Led by Radio 4 he reached the North Sea rigs  
then back again to Scarborough.

He sold the boat and went all academic  
learned Medieval Latin, grew himself a beard,  
could translate every tombstone in the Minster,  
shrugged when everybody thought him weird.

He was bored again.

A weekend stroll would put him straight -  
forty miles across the North York Moors -  
and back in time for Monday.

Mountain Rescue never found the body,  
just his boots

the laces neatly tied.

*Otter (lutra lutra)*

Soft vowels in their name imply  
a life near flowing water,  
clear as glass with green weed streaming.

You only see where they have been –  
some fish scales scattered on the bank,  
the wreckage of a broken gull -  
not where they are.

Fifteen miles is nothing in a night -  
upstream steadily against the flow  
then branching off down becks and brooks

silent, they leave nothing  
but paw prints in the soft earth.

It's said that they can purr like cats,  
feign birdsong, lure sparrows from the trees  
then crack their bones with needle teeth.

Unafraid, they lounge  
by the fishpond  
chew carp, still twitching, in their jaws,

then melt into the shadows,  
the black waters,  
make no more noise  
the rippling of their name.

## Sascha Engel

### *Ideality swirls*

Was your result not rather a movement through all that  
Was arranged beforehand in a circle which  
Was made up of little circles, each of which  
Was a return – not a triad – resuming what  
Was there before, now rewritten at a higher level?<sup>1</sup>  
Was that what you forgot, that the result  
Was never a *parousia* precisely because it  
Was an endless return to itself?<sup>2</sup> That ideality  
Was always an inscription, a repetition and iteration of what  
Was only thus seemingly its own origin? But which really  
Was an iterated abstraction, dissimulating each time what  
Was surrounding it? Rewriting itself each time in what  
Was really an exchange of authority for a context which  
Was always more intuited, less exact than you thought?<sup>3</sup> Or  
Was this always contained in your ceaseless quest for what  
Was the latest context in science? A quest which  
Was at the same time a guarantee for a knowledge which  
Was ever a struggle for ideality in given contexts?<sup>4</sup> Which  
Was a ceaseless attempt to abstract, time and again, and which  
Was a culmination of a tradition for which the letter  
Was always superior to its surrounding context, and yet  
Was equally always inferior to speech and thought?<sup>5</sup>  
Was your attempt to sublimate the darkness of time, all that  
Was and had ever been, doomed by a voice that creaked and that  
Was defeated by the weight of time and death? A failure which  
Was not yours but that of all such attempts? Far from failure, it  
Was structural necessity. Necessity of abstracting from what  
Was your life, your handwriting, your existence.<sup>6</sup> Your iteration  
Was always written and never could not be. After all, memory  
Was a shaft burying meaning and requiring that a sign  
Was erected in its wake like a pyramid.<sup>7</sup> How could it not be?  
Was the notion not the elevated truth and preserved death of what  
Was previously a substance?<sup>8</sup> Even substance, not on its own,  
Was rather derived, the notion positing itself as all that  
Was ‘real’ and ‘material’, making them its own repetition?<sup>9</sup> How  
Was this even to be thought except as the notion writing what  
Was a substance, and is now its written iteration? By the way,  
Was not even the pyramid an iteration, born where a Mastaba  
Was put atop another Mastaba, iterating buildings in death?<sup>10</sup>

1 G.W.F. Hegel, Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften Vol. I (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 176-177. 2 G.W.F. Hegel, Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften Vol. III (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 393. 3 Edmund Husserl, The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1970), 49.

4 G.W.F. Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 432-441.

5 Aristotle, Peri Hermeneias, cap. 1.

6 Jacques Derrida, Die Schrift und die Differenz (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976), 383.

7 Hegel, Enzyklopädie Vol. III, 270.

8 G.W.F. Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik Vol. II (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 276-277.

9 *Ibid.*, 255.

10 Toby Wilkinson, Early dynastic Egypt (London: Routledge, 1999), 248.

How indeed, therefore, is the result possible?  
“How is a science like geometry possible?”<sup>2</sup>  
How, that is, can objects really be seen,  
How be traced out and touched and thus  
How can we come to receive them as  
How they themselves wish to be?  
How, if “a systematic...stratified structure,”<sup>3</sup>  
How, if an *arkhe* and *telos* inform their idea?  
How indeed, therefore, if not in written transmission?  
How indeed, therefore, if not as an incision into  
How the world of the thinker, of the geometer,  
How their context everywhere surrounds them?  
How is the sign structured: rejecting context,  
How the page and the book: containing and sealing,  
How speech and thought: iterated revealing?  
How are we to rethink them outside these bounds?  
How to reiterate them beyond these strictures?  
How to reinscribe the result – against ossification?  
How to relearn ideality – without reification?  
How to contour objects – without abstraction?  
How to abandon sign pyramids and shafts for memories?  
How indeed, if not by writing otherwise? And  
How indeed, if not by unlearning writing and relearning  
How to replace marks on paper and marks on flesh  
With results that are results precisely because they are not results?

<sup>2</sup> Husserl, Crisis, 363.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



## **Bradley J. Fest**

**2020.12**

*The emergent long poem represents a literary wager, the risky bet that writing in real time could generate the capacity to interpret the world.*

—Paul Jaussen, *Writing in Real Time*

Because governance in the time of coronavirus has been cruelly haphazard, disastrously indolent and incompetent, and because, without systems, we can't stop ourselves, and because we all know it will get worse next week,<sup>30</sup>

“I've been instructed to vacate the poetry office again. Later, I'll pack up books and papers.<sup>31</sup> Next week, I'll return to my gray-z00m-corner.”<sup>32</sup> Okay. Mere description of a fact belies interpretation. Celebrating influx and efflux

is just abandonment without critique. To be abandoned, to abandon—the sky's low unmoving clouds are veracious (as is literally everything else). Truth. Facts. To be ground, to grind—the mill's omnipresence no longer gives pause.

If a day is something to show, to bring to presence, then its representation is just as easily yours, the same: here.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Epigraph drawn from Paul Jaussen, *Writing in Real Time: Emergent Poetics from Whitman to the Digital* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 9.

Even though we know we're not supposed to, everyone knows so many US citizens will be eating together on November 26, 2020 and knows what will result and knows so many will do it all again in a month and knows our knowledge is good for less and less and that our inability to act according to obvious, clear, widely-held knowledge will cause so much suffering (*yet again*) but also that perhaps the bend has to start sometime soon in the new year; but we also know it will probably be just more of what it's been for so long: our pessimistic fatalism is rising to meet the tides. See “More Than One Million Travelers Were Screened at Airports on Sunday, a New High in the Pandemic.” *New York Times*, November 23, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/23/business/us-economy-coronavirus/more-than-one-million-travelers-were-screened-at-airports-on-sunday-a-new-high-in-the-pandemic>. (Oh, and fear litigation.) Also see Bradley J. Fest, “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 8: October 16–November 15, 2020,” *The Hyperarchival Parallax*, November 18, 2020, <https://bradleyjfest.com/2020/11/18/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-8-october-16-november-15-2020/>. None of the speakers, either present or absent in these verses, blame anything other than the totality(-that-goes-by-oh-so-many-names) within which they find themselves for this; they also acknowledge that this is a fantastically perplexing (ideological) conundrum. This.

<sup>31</sup>Fewer this time.

<sup>32</sup> And *cruise*. See Astral Throb, *CRUISE - A Synthwave Retrowave Mix for Opacarophiles*, YouTube, June 9, 2020, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTwxZ-pF\\_C0&ab\\_channel=AstralThrob](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTwxZ-pF_C0&ab_channel=AstralThrob).

<sup>33</sup>For now, we'll tell you this.

## 2021.01

A change in the time of coronavirus's interminate numerals must mean something, surely: a slight issue from the well of metabolic hope each species must inexorably have, surely, must have if they're still around, multiplying; their desperation

for something, surely, can deliquesce into late style, late creatures sustaining their breath. Though a fiction, some, most, welcome the arbitrary annual turn,<sup>34</sup> putting the year to rest.<sup>35</sup> 2013? 2015? Who knows, who can remember. 2020: goodbye. 2021: Georgia;<sup>36</sup>

*and then literally right now, just checking to see if the election was being certified: "Protesters Breach the US Capitol Building."*<sup>37</sup>  
The sonnet is a long poem, a year in the time of coronavirus. . . .

<sup>34</sup>Though plenty have to reassure themselves of their own despair by pointing out that arbitrariness, as if we didn't know, as if we could never hope for anything at all, as if we couldn't imagine *doing* anything (different [this time] [next time]). See Twitter, December 31, 2020, <https://twitter.com/>.

<sup>35</sup>See *Yearly Departed*, dir. Linda Mendoza (Seattle, WA: Prime Video, 2020), Prime Video, <https://www.amazon.com/Yearly-Departed/dp/B08PW26BVF>.

<sup>36</sup>See "Election Needles: Georgia Senate Runoffs," *New York Times*, January 6, 2021, 2:02 p.m. (EST), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/05/us/elections/forecast-georgia-senate-runoff.html>.

<sup>37</sup>"In this moment, we're seeing a fight for American democracy itself." Melissa Quinn, Grace Segers, Kathryn Watson, and Stefan Becket, "Live Updates: Capitol on Lockdown as Protesters Storm Building to Stop Electoral Count," *CBS News*, January 6, 2021, 2:34 p.m. (EST), <https://www.cbsnews.com/live-updates/electoral-college-vote-certification-2020-01-06/>. Also see "Live Updates: Pence and Lawmakers Evacuate as Protesters Storm Capitol, Halting Count of Electoral Votes," *New York Times*, January 6, 2021, 2:49 p.m. (EST), <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/01/06/us/electoral-vote>.

## 2021.02

*sonnet is an offer of a previous peace*  
—Bernadette Mayer, “Sonnet”

The news in the time of coronavirus feels at least  
habitable once again, a livable stream to swim against,  
maybe even abide (a not wholly recondite condition).  
No longer threatening the sun, we (finally!?) capped

that abusive shit geyser, its feculent miasmata suffusing  
every corner of our asphyxiated claustrophobia, our abject  
trauma-being; five years . . . dissipating. Hear the people’s  
insufflation<sup>38</sup>. In, out. Let us blow away those malodourous

winds of ruin<sup>39</sup>, centuries of crisis and millenarianism,  
and discern on the air notes familiar and neoteric,<sup>40</sup>  
a chance to “sit at the table, together, coloring cyclopean  
unicorns’ eyes blue, sculpting colorful beds, pressing

exaggerated smiles on the sleepers, discussing the days’  
events, not melting down, not raging for peace.” Sonnets  
can complete, retain brevity.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup>Epigraph drawn from Mayer, “Sonnet,” in *Sonnets*, 90.

It sounds like fascism rolling back, honestly.

<sup>39</sup>See Paul A. Bové, *Love’s Shadow* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021).

<sup>40</sup>Familiar: current global cases and deaths from COVID-19: 101.5 million and 2.1 million; US: 25.8 million and 433,180; Otsego County: 2678 and 28. Cases at Hartwick College since January 4, 2021: 14. See The New York Times, “Coronavirus Map,” *New York Times*, January 29, 2021, 7:58 a.m. (EST), and “Coronavirus in the US,” *New York Times*, January 29, 2021, 7:58 a.m. (EST); Otsego County Department of Public Health, “COVID 19 - Corona Virus Information Resource Center,” Otsego County, accessed January 29, 2021 at 10:23 a.m. (EST), [https://www.otsegocounty.com/departments/d-m/health\\_department/covid19.php](https://www.otsegocounty.com/departments/d-m/health_department/covid19.php); “COVID-19 Updates,” Hartwick College, accessed January 29, 2021, at 10:24 a.m. (EST), <https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/covidupdates/>. (That noted, there has been a precipitous decline in cases in the US over the past two weeks.) Neoteric: See Bradley J. Fest, “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 9: November 16–December 15, 2020,” *The Hyperarchival Parallax*, December 20, 2020, <https://bradleyjfest.com/2020/12/20/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-9-november-16-december-15-2020/>, and “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 10: December 16, 2020–January 15, 2021,” *The Hyperarchival Parallax*, January 15, 2021, <https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/01/15/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-10-december-16-2020-january-15-2021/>. One of the speakers in these poems received their first dose of the Moderna SARS-CoV-2 vaccine on January 22, 2021. Oh, and see Kevin Roose, “The GameStop Reckoning Was a Long Time Coming,” *New York Times*, January 28, 2021, updated January 29, 2021 at 9:55 a.m. (EST), <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/technology/gamestop-stock.html>. It must change.

<sup>41</sup>And some things, of course, carry over nonetheless. See ThePrimeThanatos, “‘Back To The 80’s’ | Best of Synthwave And Retro Electro Music Mix | Vol. 22,” YouTube, November 3, 2019, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxQWv-p5BMQ&ab\\_channel=ThePrimeThanatos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxQWv-p5BMQ&ab_channel=ThePrimeThanatos), and “‘D E T E C T I V E’ |

## 2021.03

*One of the most frightening versions of the parasite as invading host is the virus. In this case, the parasite is an alien who has not simply the ability to invade a domestic enclosure, consume the food of the family, and kill the host, but the strange capacity, in doing all that, to turn the host into multitudinous proliferating replications of itself. The virus is at the uneasy border between life and death. It challenges that opposition, since, for example, it does not “eat,” but only reproduces. It is as much a crystal or component in a crystal as it is an organism. The genetic pattern of the virus is so coded that it can enter a host cell and violently reprogram all the genetic material in that cell, turning the cell into a little factory for manufacturing copies of itself, so destroying it. . . . Is this an allegory, and if so, of what?*

—J. Hillis Miller, “The Critic as Host”

The pandemicity of matter traced us before its thanatic  
amative *poiesis*, and recent dysregulations thinking  
spacetimemattering already anticipated 3D modeling  
prior to the entity’s multitudinous planetary fields

entwining into their own past possibility *after* the catalyzing  
drop, the nightlapse, the newly rapturous variant-factories  
liquified across diverging prepositions, tenuously holding  
abandoned last thoughts together with roads racinating

endless layers of contagion toward winter hospitals standing,  
gripping down into definition, enduring for (maybe) just a little  
longer, because that is what happens, that is how we make  
memeological disturbance when something behind ancestry’s

germinal branching reestablishes/renounces its non-hold  
of the always unavailable provenience formerly structuring  
matter in the time of coronavirus.<sup>42</sup>

A Synthwave and Retro Electro Mix,” YouTube, June 3, 2020,

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujthG-nV1cM&ab\\_channel=ThePrimeThanatos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujthG-nV1cM&ab_channel=ThePrimeThanatos).

<sup>42</sup>Epigraph drawn from J. Hillis Miller, “The Critic as Host” (1979), in *Theory Now and Then* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 146–47. This now sadly ironic paragraph was added after the essay’s original publication, which didn’t discuss viruses at all. See J. Hillis Miller, “The Critic as Host,” *Critical Inquiry* 3, no. 3 (Spring 1977): 439–47. Also see Bradley J. Fest, “Remembering J. Hillis Miller (1928–2021),” *The Hyperarchival Parallax*, February 9, 2021, <https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/02/09/remembering-j-hillis-miller-1928-2021/>.

See Eric Reinhart, “Pandemicity without Pandemic: Political Responsibility in the Exponential Present,” *b2o review*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.boundary2.org/2021/01/pandemicity-without-pandemic-political-responsibility-in-the-exponential-present/>; Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); and maybe Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (1967), corrected ed., trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1976; repr., Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 47, 101. [Just because one has a thought/quote doesn’t require its inscription in light.] Also see William Carlos Williams, *Spring and All* (1923), in *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams*, ed. A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan, 2 vols. (New York: New Directions, 1986–88), 1:183; and ThePrimeThanatos, ‘Neon Nights’ | *A Synthwave and Retro Electro Mix*, YouTube, May 25, 2020,

## 2021.04

*I write as a rider who is sitting in the saddle, with a relatively clear view of the past receding into the distance, a blurred perception of what lies to the left and the right, and little knowledge of what lies ahead . . . cloistered in quarantine, waiting out this time of suspension, of the epoché that is bringing this mad epoch, 2016–2020, to a climax[, w]riting about the representation of time in the midst of our time, a state of global emergency, unsure whether the end is at hand, or year one, or maybe both.*

—W. J. T. Mitchell, “Present Tense 2020”

The vaccine in the time of coronavirus concluded the time of coronavirus . . . for some, too few, not enough, not nearly enough, and so not really, not really at all, not yet.<sup>43</sup> So it continues (while its chaired and childfree Learists begin

to present its products).<sup>44</sup> For the privileged, emerging (willing)<sup>45</sup> vaxxed, novel waves of apomakrysmenophobia<sup>46</sup> mix with the lingering bescumberment of anocracy as they’re reminded of faces, the softness of another’s smile or trepidatious frown;

agoraphobia entangles ochlophilia at every public step; social yearning and small satisfaction meet in hallway gossip and the absence of cameras. “It’s been a long semester.<sup>47</sup>

Have we experienced, are we still experiencing, a collective trauma—alone? By ourselves—together? Racheal and our little one visit friends tomorrow; so this speaker will be alone for the first time in . . . how long now?”<sup>48</sup>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9IUQmO\\_1So&ab\\_channel=ThePrimeThanatos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9IUQmO_1So&ab_channel=ThePrimeThanatos), and ‘Night Hunter’ | *A Synthwave and Retro Electro Mix*, YouTube, June 12, 2020,

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz8OBQkMB4s&ab\\_channel=ThePrimeThanatos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz8OBQkMB4s&ab_channel=ThePrimeThanatos).

<sup>43</sup>Epigraph drawn from W. J. T. Mitchell, “Present Tense 2020: An Iconology of the Epoch,” *Critical Inquiry* 47, no. 2 (Winter 2021): 370–71.

As we knew it’d eventually be all along, the whole time, and yet here we are nevertheless, nonetheless, in spite of all our knowledge, despite utter clarity, again, again having done too little, again having failed the future: its doom.

<sup>44</sup>See, for example, “Poetry and Pandemic,” *PMLA* 136, no. 2 (March 2021): 254–316; and *Bo Burnham: Inside*, dir. Bo Burnham (Los Gatos, CA: Netflix, 2021), Netflix.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. the hesitant and the unmasked, those who never went inside, those who refused to attempt to consider the possibility that they could even get close to understanding something, something beyond themselves, something other than what and how it all is; cf. the obscene and different kind of privilege of being able to say *no* to the cure, that doing so is even a remotely *conceivable* idea; cf. those who think wearing a mask is political; cf. and remember.

<sup>46</sup>“n. fear that your connections with people are ultimately shallow, that although your relationships feel congenial at the time, an audit of your life would produce an emotional safety deposit box of low-interest holdings and uninvested windfall profits, which will indicate you were never really at risk of joy, sacrifice[,] or loss.” *Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows*, 2011,

<https://www.dictionaryofobscuresorrows.com/post/3411357531/apomakrysmenophobia>.

<sup>47</sup>See Bradley J. Fest, “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 11: January 16–February 15, 2021,” *Hyperarchival Parallax*, February 15, 2021, <https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/02/15/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-11-january-16-february-15-2021/>, “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 12: February 16–March 15, 2021,” March 15, 2021,

<https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/03/16/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-12-february-16-march-15-2021/>, “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 13: March 16–April 15, 2021,” *Hyperarchival Parallax*, April 16, 2021,

<https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/04/16/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-13-march-16-april-15-2021/>, and “Links in the Time of Coronavirus, Vol. 14: April 16–May 15, 2021,” *Hyperarchival Parallax*, May 19, 2021,

<https://bradleyjfest.com/2021/05/19/links-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-vol-14-april-16-may-15-2021/>.

<sup>48</sup>What then? What poetry then? [Begin: “Postrock” (June 12, 2021–).]

## **Robert McCarthy**

### *Disease Polity*

i

Violable man; unsafe in even his  
Cave of steel. Senses extrude on stalks,  
on wires, probing space rendered virtual.  
Easy travel via screen and pixel.

Touch is not touching. Mediation coats  
our skins coaxial, a fiberglass callus.  
Caress dwindles to metaphor,  
to memory palace; the familiar sun,

grown interstellar, palely lights our realm  
of harsh "truths," and faces unrecognizable  
when you bring out your dead. Coffins caravanned  
into the wasteland, which has moved closer,

one or two streets over, convenient  
to the ICUs and 24/7 pyres,  
to the TV's statistical ennui  
of innumerable deaths foretold.

ii

City of anchorites; city solitaire.  
Hunkered here, alive, toe-talons clenching  
plinths, pedestals, columns supporting marble  
entablatures, we are the stylites; pillar

saints, atop poles in Aleppo, prone, faint  
in the mephitic air, Saint Simeons  
in eagles' nests (shit-daubed reeds, clay, caked dust)  
here for the long-run's lonely long-distance.

Each human being his own pestilence.  
Perhaps, through exposure, I may expiate,  
then do miracles. With my magic eye  
slay the virus to crowd's adulation,

rampant below my pillar. Effector  
prayers radio-bellowed to the ozone'd  
stratosphere. And sometimes sent an angel  
to watch with me, accompany my lone

patrol, deeper into the terrified  
dark, the nightmare streets, their glacial cold;  
and no one blown towards me, known or stranger,  
only the click and cadence of rats' feet

to hurry me back to my open-air  
retreat, with tomorrow's promised sunrise  
rendered increasingly implausible.  
Infection's recursion rather. Disease

regime installed, polity as illness;  
charts spike to skewer the outnumbering  
dead, then slough back, decline to soft rolling  
hills, shrunken knolls, the low false slopes of hope.

iii

Wild pigs process Rome's vacant streets; goats graze  
Cardiff's market gardens. Bag-houses, thrown  
over the city's bones, keep air out, keep  
infection from escape; the sky blue, pristine.

Feckless Sforza says the plague is over,  
aside from a few embers, and wagon-  
loads of corpses that will go on forever.  
In ports and entrepots, the virus

in the fleas, the fleas dance atop the rats,  
on the wharfs and piers they dance; wax, wane, slump,  
advance; the plague returns to glean survivors  
(although almost there are none remaining).

To see the movements of your face, the play  
of light and shadow, emotion rendered  
in fast-twitch muscle, I must use an opera  
glass, and a shotgun mic to overhear

your muttered curses, articulate cries.  
The immune children nonetheless sicken.  
Gates are barred; only shadows have the codes.  
Nightly, St. Virus dances. The intricacies  
of her steps have quite stolen away our breaths.

*Spring and All, 202\_*

I

Spring and all.

The pure products of America  
have gone crazy, and all the hospitals  
contagious,-- from which the pure products have  
been warned to stay away, not to visit,  
to steer clear of, to bide awhile alone,  
at home, there's no place like it after all,  
like a womb perhaps to shelter in no  
not like a tomb you wander in from room  
to room to room.

April is a meadow  
you are fenced from, protected from your harsh  
realm, razor-wired, ditched against dioxin  
breaths, the budding trees keeping their distances,  
tender of their leaf-wombs, green hairs unfledged,  
they shrink from your dry-cough-punctuated  
passage, bearer of a blight or rust, bloody  
flux, gloved touch gently parting branch from branch,  
though still they shy away wind-whipped, boughs  
shaken, seeking to dispel exhalation  
of corruption from mouths that fill the air  
with what will not disappear, miasmal  
trails, droplets laden with emissions you  
imagine a noxious mephitic smell  
from caught breaths trapped behind a paper mask,  
a souging smokey crepitation  
from bed-queues of the unventilated  
barging white-garbed corridors, a sighed gasp,  
a gulp, a sound like dice rattling in a cup.

II

Alone on my terrace,  
two-dozen floors above  
earth's flat potholed surface,  
I watch this season strain  
to succeed its winter  
predecessor, as if  
I were predeceased or  
something other, a male  
Rapunzel locked away,  
with insufficient hair,  
dumbly peering at Spring's  
display of specimens:  
ice-glazed skeleton weeds



under glass, hibernal ghost  
grasses. How far away  
yonder seems to recede,  
the park, the thicket trees  
thinning, branches unlaced,  
gaps in the dendritic  
frieze the axons shout across  
vainly, for the void is  
interstellar, the cold  
stars gone black, winking out.  
A sessile point alone  
I root in my terrace  
squat while suspect air drifts  
in from Hampstead Heath, from  
the Dry Tortugas, the veldt,  
from the ice at the bottom  
of the world contagion.  
The street's dark flat of asphalt  
to the horizon leaps.  
The broad river becomes  
a sinuous green string,  
my view measures itself  
in parsecs, in blue-shifted  
vanishings. This is Spring  
now; new life no longer  
simple, inevitable.  
Does earth still spin around  
the sun? Or is motion  
the illusion, the merest  
side-to-side disturbance,  
geosynchronous  
idling in place?

### III

Spring stealths in, brings a new sort of silence:  
no voices echoing street-wards, no traffic  
commotions, blown horns, the drifting fragments  
of radio; birds and chirring insects  
more voluble now, or more easily heard;  
on streets a mere dusting of solitaires.  
Fragile, violable man. Better to huddle,  
each, in his cave of steel. Mine, a rectangle  
thirty-six paces from side to side to side to side  
(if I hug the walls, and I do, I do).  
Meat-animal karma; caged so tightly  
I can barely turn 'round.

Platonic shadows  
flicker, silhouettes of iterations,  
copies of copies so threadbare the light  
shines through all that worn-out pallid matter.  
And see-through self salutes the ghosted other;  
white-walkers; stutter-stepping planetoids  
tracing ellipsoids on sidewalks, street corners.  
Visors down, the eyes suspicious above  
smokey masks; dragon steam escaping from  
notional nostrils, presumed mouths, each self  
encased in a droplet-shaped thought-balloon  
of doubt.  
“Viewing,” not “seeing” or “touching,”  
those are the words – the minimum social  
distance is twice the length of a sword.

Shuttered playgrounds, abandoned swing-sets  
fluttered by gusts of wind, spragged by ghost feet.  
And streets are lined with anchorites; plinths judder,  
lofty, into deceitful air. And I feel  
as if made of estrangements, losing substance,  
pieces pared away, thinned out, weightless, prey  
to the viewless winds. Like the citizen-  
bodies on the sidewalks, hides or husks flensed,  
membranes leached of dimension, runny  
watercolors painted on onion skins  
that flake away, avoidant specimens,  
tissue-culture slices sandwiched between  
glass plates.  
Meanwhile, on TV, hazmat-suited  
praetorians surround the shrinking  
perimeter, like the ice-wall presumed  
to engirdle our flat-earth magisterium.  
O protect me from edges, folk-science  
redivivus!  
A voice inside my head  
begins to mutter: Stay safe, slay the stranger!  
And I wonder, isolate (the meat-lockers  
chocker, the cemeteries replete), how  
soon it will be until words fail me;  
how long before I forget how to speak?

## **Louis Armand**

### *Custodial sentences*

1. Left on a mountainside the little ones  
still have a way of returning –  
the perilous exile, the drowned rat  
washed-up at the frontier post,  
choleric rumours of life-to-come.  
Impatient for the test of time they ran  
every gauntlet, fame coveted them –  
a moment's inattention & history  
if it blinked wld never know what  
buried it. And all this from the ratio  
of a world's circumference? There never was  
an insignificant thing, nor absolute.  
Happiness is power's monotonous lullaby  
dreaming the Esperanto of defeat.

2. A line drawn in sand  
ants clockwise as in class struggle  
my dear anachronism – the lone  
merely stylise a person in lockdown theory  
when they are less individual than  
subdivided. Placed & re-  
placed by fractious time, in-weighing  
or inveighing, as if to de(s)ign  
a *form of justice* – & strung it  
atop a flagpole dialling sunless hours.  
If an ant cld know the difference  
between a mountain & a heap of rhetoric.  
Life imitates life in order to survive  
or for the sheer dumb expectation of it.

3. The same passion of time as when first  
bled through / already silence grows  
nostalgic for the creature  
cunningly upsetting the traps / footprints  
on the moon / an A-Z of infectious unease.  
Extinction wipes its nose  
in these bright cold uncalendared days –  
memoirs of a cloned photofinish / the original  
carbon copy rendered anxiously illegible  
in homage to the Grand Mal. These & other  
impersonated talismans of Art or Law:  
“certain eternal things uttered for the last time.”  
As if, to relinquish the confines / whose  
dust is no more eventual than Sisyphus.

4. It darkens over / god’s witness  
delivers the ultimatum: they are  
shouting in tongues they are  
erupting behind the blank screen.  
All tomorrow’s flagwaving entertainment  
will have you in stitches –  
an immigration cop’s tears,  
choruses of the epochally sanctified.  
Another stanza of perpendicular talk:  
the search for meaning in inter-  
planetary leaps & bounds, god  
is a mineral deposit on an asteroid.  
Let us give thanks to those who live  
so that we no longer have to.

5. Because the seasons failed to arrive that year  
Earth stood still. Contagion was  
a narcoleptic in a ventilated coffin –  
House of Hammer reruns of Edgar Allan Poe.  
What next: would afterlives be foist  
upon even the disbelieving?  
There were questions to be asked but only  
sentimental attachments to reply with.  
Seizing the means of production  
required too many definitions:  
future prospects were as good  
as a day of reckoning – but who would?  
There’d be time to breathe afterwards, they  
said, watching blue skies yawn over them.

*Angelus novus*

midnight & the shunting yard's musical spheres –  
there's more than one extinction playing out  
beyond the wire – under the lighthouse eye –  
shaving bedrock from its cubist underlay to feel  
w/ unconscious fingertips the trembling *eidos*.

in a graph of space & time – converging at zero  
as at a border post in the Pyrenees –  
depiction is like a blind Icarus-child abducted  
to the mythical sunbird's Siberian nesting site.  
foreshortened beyond perspective's reach –  
wanting to outlive oneself is such a fiasco.

even w/ nobody to turn & face it  
there's still an image of what isn't there  
to wrestle w/ its furies in a rattling imperfect cage.  
elements concealed are elements consoled  
by hands at a task abstractly calibrating.  
there's the door, it shuts w/out you.

even an escape-artist is expected to derive  
a "mature style." wax melts – the ash-in-yr-eye look  
turns deadpan – lean years fatten under pretence  
to gravity. nostalgic for ineffables this  
telescope sky yearns for the bottom of a well.  
when the poem ends only the occasion dies.

*That happy place*

On the basis of a missed opportunity: watchtowers  
teetering into the waves, the crisis of day's end.

Was this the price of a lungful of air?  
Between the inner form & its outer dimensions

the river swells against the locks, the grass  
lies down under the rain, all more or less patiently.

Others wait asquat the rain-dark sand  
their guts spilled in pointless endeavours.

Like a paroxysm left to rot. And we who've prayed  
to the myth of a coordinated response, to be

that shiftless pivot, lean & fastidious  
as a godhead in uniform, flexing its loins,

assured that time & also gratitude are unending.  
For years almost nothing, then suddenly the scornful

leap out the window, the camera framing  
a tight close-up on the back of yr head.

Dirty dishes in the kitchen sink, phantasmagoric  
interior lives poured out openly like algebra

or sex objects or chemotherapy. The watchers make  
every ulterior inch a tranquillised allure of punct-

iliousness or something even they don't have words for.  
As if all this did shine with intrinsic light,

the live regions of it gasping for mythological oxygens,  
present yet still inchoate? Now you are drawn up

into the symbolic opposite, to be a straight line  
towards that perennially deliberate plane.

Even in isometric grey the secret appraisals  
tip their hands, the exhumation party setting out

upon the reefs, where death lies hidden  
like the parts of prudery from less strident ardours.

*The silence of Martin Heidegger*  
(after Jorge Semprun)

how a body grows vague –  
forest w/out birds  
*schön war die Zeit* –  
entering the territory  
of ancient death (the executioner's  
mouth cratered black)  
ah! the Schadenfreude  
of a mother's tongue  
in lurid emotion  
at her prodigal's return

there are consequences  
they've paid no heed to –  
voices surge across the sky  
(a wide halfmoon on a dull  
sheet of ground glass)  
back & forth  
as in Aeschylus –  
the weeping masks of a mis-  
begotten joke  
told once too often

*Das selbstopträt*

Nor does the poem console its adversary.  
The ship with its delicate cargo  
aground on the hydrometrics of the last glacier.

In search of nothing their efforts resulted in art.  
These were blueprints for ending.

throughout the 20th century those possessing aura  
took on the mantle of fabrication.

In the family-viewing section  
sculptured behemoths become extinct  
exactly on schedule.

The preparation of glue from bones for example  
transponders radars conical middens of fissile junk.

These erotic petrifications  
make a wandering unrest of the watcher's  
pinhole eyes.

Or a shipwreck on the moon  
serves as a protagonist in the absence of any other.

Its relics cleansed of the odour of veneration,  
the question about the basis of writing  
now begins to find its answer.



## **Erik Fuhrer**

*The language of eyes*

For Joanna Mills, *The Return* (2006)

Hunted  
beneath  
the table,  
behind  
the wood  
boards, my  
eyes roll  
back like  
the road  
that you  
slip  
your cowboy  
boots on  
to escape  
from that  
little red  
memory,  
that little  
red scar. We  
all feel  
it, that  
heartbeat  
under our  
skin where  
there is  
no pulse. We

all try  
to sip  
the darkness  
slowly  
enough  
so that  
it feels  
like low  
light,  
so that  
we can  
spit out  
a sunrise  
when people

ask us  
how we are,  
even though  
we know  
that sometimes  
the only  
answers  
we have  
are the  
points  
of our pupils  
enlarging.

The language  
of eyes  
is universal.  
And I know  
that your  
green gaze  
blues  
the sky  
the blue  
of ghosts  
that bring us  
to seahorses  
painted  
on the walls.  
To be  
haunted

is to be  
hunted  
by blood  
that mimeographs,  
and we  
are the carbon  
copies  
of the dawn,  
trying  
to hide  
the fact  
that our  
parchment  
lets in  
too much  
light.

That we  
might fade  
if we soak  
too much in.

Papercuts blot  
our bodies  
back into  
the red  
of mourning.  
I sometimes  
love  
the way  
that it feels  
to be  
in pain.  
And I  
know you  
do too. And  
that's when  
the ghosts  
follow  
us

down long  
hallways. He  
called you  
sunshine. My  
mother used  
to sing  
that song  
to me—  
“you are  
my sunshine.”  
We try  
to escape  
their violence  
through holes  
in our flesh.  
As if  
trying  
to purge  
ourselves  
of their  
sunshine,  
our soiled

blood.  
I know

what it's like  
to be  
a child  
with a bruise.  
A child  
hiding  
beneath  
the table.  
I know  
what it means  
to remember  
the ghost  
inside and I  
know  
what it means  
to heal.

I see you  
stare  
a million  
miles away  
and sometimes,  
I promise,  
I see you.

Lying  
in the car  
with  
or without  
breath, we  
are the  
guardians  
of our  
bodies. We  
just sometimes  
forget  
how to  
love them.

*My Buffed Up Life (selections)*

∞  
—

INT. A CHURCH - DUSK

But not a physical church, no, the church inside where God lives within us all, only I don't believe in God so it's more of a box with one of those cranky levers or perhaps a magic lantern spitting images of my heart as it beats.

I sit with the things I love. I had never seen *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* until I was in my late 20s. I've since seen the entire series relatively straight through at least 10 times. I've often looped the music playing during Buffy's fatal jump. I might be looping it now.

IS THIS LOOPING ANY DIFFERENT FROM PLACING A WAFER UNDER THE TONGUE EVERY SUNDAY?

Buffy, the ground crumbles/ beneath  
you as you dive, leaving/ a gift  
that no one can ever open. I was/  
in the hell you were able to  
escape/ and we both were the  
memories that others carried/ with  
them in their pockets  
until/ we together exhaled/ through  
the dirt, our fists and fingers  
bloodied/ from beating and tearing  
through coffin/ wood, our second  
death, our third life,/ yet this  
time those we love forgot about/ us  
underground and we were zombies in  
the pale/ blue light dancing with a  
devil; you may have never had to  
see/ because you were pulled out of  
heaven by those who clearly  
assumed/ you were damned because of  
the blood that your mom/ had to

daily wash off your clothing after  
daily slays,/ except the slay that  
destroyed your deepest/ love, that  
you cleaned yourself/ after the bus  
trip to Los Angeles after/ even you  
were perhaps convinced and  
terrified/ that bumps would form/  
over your smooth forehead/ one day,  
that your teeth would make stakes/  
unnecessary.

A ROSARY, A NUNNERY, A SHOT THROUGH THE SINLIGHT

Buffy, I could often feel these  
bumps forming at the back of my  
head as if growing a new face  
vampirically dimpled from all  
the times I would slam my head  
against blunt surfaces to swell  
the pain into a controllable  
pocket, at least for a while,  
from all the times I would  
slice the skin, hoping to  
release the demon that I knew  
was in there. I hear its  
genetic, not sure what type but  
please be gentle with me and

PLEASEDONTFORGIVEME<sup>2</sup>

1 The Joker, Batman, Tim Burton. Jack Nicholson haunts  
my dreams like a Francis Bacon painting with a mask on.

2 Buffy Summer, "Dead Things."

PLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVE  
MEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGI  
VEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFOR  
GIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTF  
ORGIVEMEPLEASEDONTFORGIVEME

INT. MY BODY IS MISSING - LOOP

[...]

A sweet seduction before flared  
face before your body becomes only  
meat. Can't even run you're so  
scared. But you did, Buffy. And  
you fought. I wish I had your  
power. My vampire never killed me.  
I was an IV drip of slow life.  
Lasted for years. I still feel it.

INT. MY BODY IS MISSING - LOOP

[...]

My vampire was my clinic. Made sure  
they were my life force. That I was  
consistently theirs.

FLOODED:

[...]

INT/EXT. WHATEVER THE SHAPE OF DEPRESSION IS - LOOP

An indent that curls into me. Curls out of me. An oil  
spill. Breathe in my toxins get too close. I saw a piece of  
me under glass at the MOMA once. Perhaps that's what this  
whole scene looks like.

Though I have been vegetarian since  
2007, I found myself craving the  
cheapest and quickest meals in Iowa  
City: hot dogs from the Kum & Go. I  
was insatiable. I'd buy them and  
return to my apartment, alone,  
going directly to my bed. But not  
to sleep. To roost. I wonder if my  
coworkers ever noticed how rarely I  
changed my clothes, brushed my

teeth, my hair. I didn't look in a  
mirror for months. Maybe a year.



*Circumstances of poetics—an interview with poet Erik Fuhrer*

**1. Perhaps it goes without mention that for some time now our notion of progress, notably that of endless and continuous human advancement, has lost all meaning. In certain circles the modern faith in progress, still ever present in popular discourse, is a point of necessary repudiation if not divide between ideologically warring groups. In your verse you seem to openly and confidently present the notion of apocalypse, that antidote, one might say, to delusions of infinite progress. How and why does the apocalyptic or, better yet, ideations thereof, come to influence your crafting of verse?**

"If the apocalypse comes, beep me," quips Buffy Summers as she insists on taking a break from saving the world to go on a date. The apocalypse is something looming but quotidian. Yeats' rough beast already slouched in the manger. Asleep? The apocalypse is no longer fiction (has it ever been?). We are Buffy, holding technological relics, waiting for a signal— from the beast? Does the apocalypse use payphones? Call collect?

The apocalypse is macromicro, simultaneously gaping outside and gasping within us. The apocalypse is too big a concept to grapple with, and the world is already, often literally, on fire. As per Derrida, we encounter the cinders— we perhaps are the cinders. So we each individually break as the world breaks. Is depression not, at times, an apocalypse? Is the world not weeping?

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has become an important part of my poetics as my work continues to negotiate the space between the global and the personal, and the apocalypses that lie within, and between, both of these spaces, which sometimes blur and chafe against one another. I return to the show often because it gives the impossible concept of the apocalypse shape. Not only in vampires and demons but within Buffy's pronounced personal traumas. We all hold our own personal apocalypses somewhere in our bodies.

Shh. Listen if not for the growl, then for the weeping.

But what if, instead of irradicating the apocalypse inside, we discovered it, spoke to it? Is this not, after all, the way to gain control over it? Over ourselves?

This is something I wanted to do in *Eye, Apocalypse*. I wanted the apocalypse to be slippery-- sometimes lover, revelation, egg timer-- little quotidian world ends. We might not all be able to access them all as such, but that is the power of our affective attachments to things, including doom. One person's treasure is another's nothing is another's apocalypse.

What, after all, is the actual apocalypse? What does it mean for the world to end? What is the world anyway? We all draw our own limits. In a way, my world has ended many times, but I still watch the sunrise in ours. There are always a series of tiny apocalypses across the world(s) we inhabit. We have always been living in someone's apocalypse, or our own.

How to we avoid the apocalypse? Unfortunately, I lost my beeper sometime in the 90s, and my phone is on silent. Excuse me while I slouch and slouch again.

**2. If we consider the apocalyptic, and this latter etymologically if not theologically as well, we must consider notions of Time. Your formation of lines in your verse is always fascinating and we are pushed to ask what sense of Time, chronological, epochal, or neither, influences you and/or assists in you determining the shape your poems might take, most certainly as your lines, we think it is agreed, do not scream acceleration but a degree of quiet, whisper, and calm introspection.**

It ends, as T.S. Eliot writes, with a whimper. The shocked face of witness is often soundless. When things are pushed to the edge, verbal language reaches a limit. In *Buffy the Vampire Slayer's* "The Body," Sarah Michelle Gellar's eyes do most of the speaking. She is the master of the long stare, which I converse with in a poem to her character Joanna, from *The Return* (2006), in my recent manuscript *Gellar Studies*, an ode of sorts to her work:

The language  
of eyes  
is universal.  
And I know  
that your  
green gaze  
blues  
the sky  
the blue  
of ghosts  
that bring us  
to seahorses  
painted  
on the walls.

The stare is a haunting into different timescales and timescapes. Joanna's stare invites me into her narrative, her trauma, her apocalypse and enables me to stare back with mine. She does not speak to me. She doesn't even see me. She has no idea I am there. But I see her. And there is some alchemy in that.

The skinny stanzas of *Gellar Studies* focus the porous nature of this stare into a static pull down the page. These poems drag the apocalypse close through fandom, shared pain, and imagined connection. I am a cinder/ the stanzas are the dropped cinders of a cigarette drag.

The scattered white space I use in *in which i take myself hostage*, on the other hand, are the page's stares:

years ago magic  
almost destroyed  
the world  
we are all  
destroying  
some world  
every day

we all practice            magic  
    in the dark  
          try to ingest            life  
          in ways  
                                  unfit  
for our bodies

They allow our eyes to gaze, slouch, flit across, between, among. The reader is both one and multiple, scattered across the page to meet a gaze that is dislocated, meandering.

**3. Of course then, and we have images of Durer and other painters of the apocalyptic in mind, we have to ask about your implication of horror within that which you create. Is your work illustrative of a poetics of horror? Is horror, and with that suffering and futility and maybe even Baconian violence, a fundamental and determining aspect of human existence you feel needs accounting of and this so in verse?**

The idea of infiltration and disintegration of the body, of the self, is honestly terrifying to me. I remember watching Adams Family 2 on a plane when I was young and Joan Cusack's character basically becomes dust. She was a villain, yes, and it was supposed to be comedic, but I still get sick by it. At the same time, the first time I saw Bacon's "Figure with Meat," I was arrested. I love the scene in Tim Burton's Batman when the Joker effaces all the paintings in the Gotham Art Museum but this particular painting, for which he expresses affection. I agree, there is something scintillating about it in its rubbed surface. Something intoxicating even. But it also leaves me disturbed. Somewhere in that dichotomy of entrancement and repulsion lies my own poetics.

A lot of people have related my work to horror, and it honestly came as a surprise at first. I tend to love teen horror movies— scream queens. I often shy away from the heavier stuff. Though I love the weird— Nathalie Djurberg, Jan Svankmajer, Peter McCarthy. They position me at a limit and urge me to step over. I never really know how to feel when I do— not quite the scream queen running from a foe, but slower— a scream queen in the molasses of time, knowing the strike is coming, and having to live that moment in the quicksand of slow-mo. What is it like to be stuck in the moment of one's own death? Aren't we all? Depends how you measure a moment, I suppose.

**4. Certainly notions of the apocalyptic and horror force consideration of the concept of bodies—tangible, real, material, extended. In reading your verse one encounters a profound poetic revelation of the body, of embodiment itself and possible further disembodiment, of how we relate to our own individual corporeality. Why does this figure prominently for you?**

My books are in part an autobiography of my own body. My own apocalypse. This is starting to become more apparent with my two recently finished manuscripts, in which I explore narratives more head-on. How does one talk about trauma without replicating it? I am not here to police the way anyone expresses embodied trauma but to say that, for me, direct description often fails. So

it's almost as if, for me, tucking the trauma in the white space of the poems' bodies, and allowing bodies to rise and fall without specifically narrating them, helps.

My recently finished memoir interlocks with Buffy both in metaphor and as character. She helps carry the load. And so does the body of the text itself, written as a kind of diffracted screenplay, so that there is white space and form— a body to carry the edges of my own. In my work I would say embodiment often blinks— now you see it, now you don't. Because to carry my own body that long in a text is impossible for me. I need help. Conduits. In *in which I take myself hostage* it's the scattered lines, in the memoir, it's the screenplay, and in Gellar Studies it's the thin stanzas, bodies themselves pushed to the edge.

**5. Corporeality by necessity implicates notions of what it means to be human, and poetry through the ages has always celebrated the fundamental questions of our 'humanness'. To borrow again from notions of the apocalyptic and those claims we are entering a new age, what considerations do you give to notions, growing in popular acceptance, of the post-human and the hyper-modern? If we are slipping into an era of post-human and hyper-modern determinations of existence by the synthetic, electronic and digital, how might poetry react and/or adjust? Indeed, what might the role of poetry be in such a possibly post-apocalyptic world?**

I am kind of with recent Donna Haraway on this one (*Staying with the Trouble*, 2016)— we need to sink back into the mud, because that's where we always are anyway. Her terming us all compost instead of posthuman seems right to me. If we are now amplified by Apple and other devices, then it's not just us that are so, but the water within us, the bacteria on us, etc— we are all mud, we are all tech, we are all spiderwebbed. We eradicate head lice and ticks but we keep mostly all the other stuff crawling on us, within us, etc, because they are mostly necessary for our living. Because we are not only us. The phrase, you are what you eat, is normalized by now, but we are also those critters crawling on our skin if we put our faces under a microscope. Under the microscope we are all the stuff of horror movies. Maybe horror is the human condition— the microbiome after all, the us that lives after us, is a zombie flick. We never die, really. We are legion.

**6. There exudes a wonderful sense of collaboration in your published works which certainly indicates personal courage. As you incorporate art and openly celebrate the involvement of others in your poetics, how would you recommend such spirit of collaboration to others involved in poetry.**

I like to think of the act of reading itself as a collaboration, and so what if instead of writing reviews (though those are good too) we wrote back to and into each other's texts. Not an analysis but a conversation, an echo. I think as artists we often feel, or are made to feel, like silos because we are positioned as such, but what if every text had the potential to be a play, of multi-vocal possibilities, not just from author but between reader and author, and artist, etc. My love for *Buffy* comes from my love for ensembles. Why does television have to have all that energy alone? Why can't poetry interlock voices, riff, play, between and amongst others? I really think it's about a shift of thinking of what it means to be an "author," and then finding people whose work vibrates with yours (or doesn't— dissonance can be great too!)

**7. And finally, as to influences. Could you share with readers poets of influence upon you, be they living or deceased, and whom you would recommend others discover?**

I urge everyone to go watch everything Sarah Michelle Gellar has done. And to sit in the mud with the stuff that continues to stare at you. Into you. Whether that may be something conventionally poetic or not. Break bread not only with your apocalypse but, well, the slayer. Your own personal slayer (queue Depeche mode).

If I believed in saints, mine might be SMG. Does that make her a poet? No. But when you stare back at the things that move you, something happens. An opening. A way perhaps not to stop the apocalypse but to invite some light in. Her work enabled me to find new ways to express my own and find ways to speak through the end of my own worlds. To suture.

To address the Anthropocene, Haraway believes we have to network ourselves back into the mud of the earth and the nonhumans that live within it. But that will only stave off the inevitable Anthropocene, not the apocalypse. To address that, we must network deeper. Must ingest the cinders. Build effigies. Don't kill your darlings, celebrate them. Magick them. Whatever this alchemy may be.

For capital P poets: Jean Valentine's spare poetics have haunted me for decades; Douglas Kearney is a master of form and performance; Nathaniel Mackey's musical world-building perhaps first enabled me to start trusting sound more deeply; I have taught Patricia Smith's *Blood Dazzler* multiple times because of the way it sparks the voices of multitudes; I just bought Solmaz Sharif's new book because I have read her debut more times than I can count; then there are staples like Claudia Rankine, Terrence Hayes, Matthea Harvey, Rachel Mckibbens. I'd also recommend everyone published by Vegetarian Alcoholic Press.

## **Michael Lee Rattigan**

### *Transformed*

Enduring judgement from within  
the jolt of each dimension rising  
through anchor-less tears.

As if a leaf chose to fall further  
as it falls bodiless, mindless, organless  
breathless, transparent – larger than definition  
closer to God.

Snap. Then silence.  
Pain loath to leave the body.  
A blind request for help from another part  
of the ward. Someone else's alibi.

A void. The pressure of what cannot  
be touched wringing out each breath like a rag  
until one sees, finally, a body (one's own) in a reflection  
that does not give way to will, or fist.

A stick-man stares into the abyss.  
A girl's dress spins in the sun.  
A hair's breath on the spine  
that overwhelms.

*Release*

Different from a dream – the world's other face  
half-open, unwilling, lacking language.

A woman fails to reassure  
with three simple words,  
the widow's knowing witness.

A hypnagogic dream wakes one from sleep,  
the mind's eye passing through.

A spectator who sees his life exactly  
in the third person,  
a hand in his own at the point of release.

The body set alight from within,  
watching murmurs by touch – clefts  
where the heat glows and joins.

Going through a gate the first time forever  
holding on to a thread,  
dying to the life one lives more fully.

*Perception*

Above the body –  
the chest cavity exposing a heart  
like the continent of Africa.

Through eyes taped shut

plaid shoelaces,  
coins amidst the dust,  
a vial broken with bare hands.

Of light that never stops arriving,  
flaming unknown foliage.

After 20 minutes or more  
of no life, the seventh shock  
taking hold of breath.

Auditory clicks  
no pen can trace –

another's thoughts  
ringing out over

a bridge of pulse-beats.



*Freeing*

Hovering around the area  
of one's head,

the wheels coming to a stop  
in a gravelly way;

sirens and voices, warmth  
sinking from the body –

yet always light, leaping  
clear of analogy.

*Acuity*

piercing every point

carving signs on the bark  
of electro-cerebral silence

birthing the in-between.

## **Christopher Browzan**

### *Peace*

I see an ocean,  
cyan  
clear  
humble waves  
glide with  
perfect sand  
palm trees  
dance in the gentle wind  
women gather  
far and wide  
a fire is burning  
brighter than the sailing sun,  
gold embers sparkle  
wood crunches  
coconuts crack  
milk flows toward  
a solitary lake  
children swing from branches  
smiles stretch  
like boomerangs  
face to face  
ear to ear  
laughter echoes eternal  
the village vibrates  
with the sound of union  
magnificent drumming  
ripples the tide  
the night falls  
and way up high  
the moon is full  
it shimmers  
on the water.

*The open window*

under  
the sunlight  
you're a name  
a clink of appointed  
syllables  
an image  
a vibration  
chiming inside  
another mind  
like the  
gentle  
grind of  
the neighbour's  
plates  
at supper-time.

*About the sky*

unquenched desires  
stammered over space  
infinitely beautiful  
unreasonably sad  
heavy as a memory  
with the weight of a glance  
as long as you're  
alive  
you're given  
a chance.

*Daydreams in December*

As I lay upon the grass  
The bluest sky is here to last  
Sounds of joy open wide  
Birds above hang and glide  
Love to be, inside the day  
Hope forever; nature stay.

## **Andrea Laws**

### *Backyard tale*

soybean field relaying  
sunset's horizon cold  
fantasies praying  
inspiring little and old

perfect world for resting  
under ancient sky furies  
bitter memories nesting  
releasing sorrowful worries

forever changing the gate  
of Earth permanence, adieu  
stars announcing the age date  
revealing secrets hitherto

*Sisters: the perfect tribe*

cursed widows  
praying to the same moon,  
my sisters and I

with black battle suits, we  
make our way through alien  
trees filled with fireworks

our desperate hands could not  
grasp the screaming streets as we  
experienced our own prison

the perfect tribe created

shadowed eyes began our existence;  
seeing everything and burning  
every record

our voice, nothing but  
silenced rage bound  
to disappear

drowning in sand, we  
reached for freedom to  
seize a better life

\*\*\*

never losing our warrior hope  
never doubting our fight  
never losing ground for the  
generations yet to come

we are the masses  
the ones you can't forget  
the ones you nightmare about  
the ones who will conquer



*Stigmata (the chosen one, not chosen)*

crucified words in ashes;  
the mark you left on me  
public wounds rejecting  
demon revelations  
I open my arms to thee

convictions flow through  
veins of lawful titles to  
destroy unbelievers' belief  
I am ready for this disease, and  
forbid all the grief

I worship your bearings  
hold true the wearings  
bestowed and gifted cut  
through holes of faith granted  
I am to be trusted to strut

guide my cries O heavenly kingdom!  
acceptance has yet been fathomed  
into agony of abandonment, I  
realize my new commandment...  
why have you forsaken me?

*The 1600 dream in black and white*

forests substitute  
wounded ocean acres

thick, bloody paths discover  
no prior writings

fires unveil  
a frost-bitten sun

new minds feast on  
old hearts

morning's sorrow engraved  
in forever's past time

lest the tribe forget the  
coins carried in stranger pockets

a judgment revealed in its finest hour;  
a commodity controlling vision, but

destroying elements in manifestation order  
further on up the road...

missed lines in between history books  
oblivious and preoccupied with spat upon looks

the aging tradition of today's  
blinking button of fake grenades

\*\*\*

live free or die  
everything to the soul, but  
a burden to a salvation

we conjure these morals to  
exist our existence  
preparing the work to die

contemplating the what ifs?  
unbearable regret, choosing to  
live in terror grey

wicked space not filled  
believing in white and black  
the sources of chaos

alone we are brought  
alone we thrive, but  
alone is not dark nor ominous

it is a characteristic of being  
it is complimentary to ourselves  
it is how we become one

*Flies and spiders*

threaded fingertips attach to souls  
eating wings bent by a crowing  
consciousness in empty bowls  
excusing pain for a world knowing

prey dribbles down cheeks  
rules of nature feed without honor  
innocent fuel injected into freaks  
defined by a dark smile of conquer

memories disobey fantasies  
Christ figures freeing the will to kill  
bearing bouquets to drab families  
tied with bloody strings for the ill

third eyes plucked for strange beginnings  
birthing tyrannical and villainous beliefs  
Big Brother always in the winnings  
preaching censored versions of real thieves

codes now trapped in mirrors of weakness  
wanderers creeping behind dire doors  
melody sounds and timbre bleakness  
arranging new constellations in stores

suspend the iron cauldrons watching  
past times upon and past times ago  
loud failure claiming perfect timing  
as darkness dances we needn't grow

## **Kieran Wyatt**

### *Devil's Food*

His fireman's hands knead the  
dough, the brownish goop,

in the daisy bowl. I stand on the stool,  
on my tippy-toes –  
'Watch, like this,' – to see him  
do it, knead it, and as time marches

and he is of course gone, I need  
those hands of his  
more and more. Devil's food with  
his Irish wink, his English baritone

*Gardeners Arms*

She leaves our table at the  
Gardeners

to see what she thinks is a dragonfly  
but its species is unknown for now

This is after she stopped our walk  
from Bilton to Knaresborough

to say hello to an English sheepdog;  
stopping at the gates of its big house

*Frontotemporal*

personality and behaviour changes  
language problems  
problems  
memory problems  
it takes hold younger

under 65yrs

language shot  
slower than a bullet  
*faster than a cannonball*  
of all the songs in all the world  
you come into this  
fronto  
temporal  
head  
a memory from when I wore trackies  
another iteration entirely

in other words  
the rest is silence

there we go

*Dunes*

from the hospital opposite the girls' school  
to the road and finally the sand dunes  
we explored and ruled as children  
it used to be enough to make it to the top  
but now I want to touch it  
eat and digest it  
the light reflected in the water  
even the dogwalkers, lifted from lowry  
limp leashes in their weaker hands  
my phone buzzes and I descend, turn  
my back on the impenetrable view  
and the hospital opposite the school swallows



## **Bob Eager**

*Call it a momentary lapse in deja reve*

Difference between Deja Vu the feeling you have been there before  
Premonition usually has a negative context fear that something bad will happen!

Question is it a Precognition which means seeing events into the future ESP reckoning.

Depends on experience...

Dreams and Reality Separate!

Simple case of Deja Reve : you know of it before because you dreamed it!

A Vision created...

Reality and Imagination could be from REM or some other lucid concept of sleep  
Dreamed it Before?  
Snapped out of it in the Reverie of the Moment!

Deja Reve has woven its way into reality from a state of utter complacent lucidity?

*Falsehood blindsided and shellshocked accusation*

Isolated incident defining one single moment-

One day Target blindsided;

And Shell-shocked

Misunderstanding of One Moment,

Dictated by A Supposed victim

This Does not determine validity

Only A Perceived Perception.

Memory Falsely expressed

Exaggeration of circumstances

Fake phony accusations spew....

And Sugar-coated lecture

Of Misinterpretation-

Create an alternative narrative!

Struggle through manufactured Adversity,

Narrow minded investigation;

Who Are Worried More For Liability...

Finally proven untrue by conducting oneself with virtuous clarity through the  
Entire Legacy of incident!

*Poem of **INSIST***

Invert time slowly across the pendulum of discourse;  
Note wisdoms complicity and reinforce its diagonal motion...  
Stand Impeccably on the edge of a dime,  
Inspect thoughts that no longer have resiliency and resentment:  
Spin the axel towards a complete notion of inadequacy-  
Transport an inebriated concept of molecular discrepancy!

## **Bongani Zungu**

### *The age of singularities*

If I'm right, we can access the area of the chip that governs dreams...

Initialise sequence in a Vac-U-Form open  
sleigh, all tuned to the telomerase algorithm  
over the digital-ityrefen wireframe atuned.  
Some expo model's startled scan; screens  
near a block of buildings numbering a  
geodesic hypersurface-orthogonal canvas;  
and in flight restored through waffle stands  
we find our own worshipped Talatats.  
Like a future of atom and nucleus—  
Such edifying, unintelligible truths rarely  
noticed here since the silent slow of  
moving footpaths in the unisphere—  
Lose the shrubbery, the rooftop trees  
and manga DNAs which hide a kind of  
mirror image, an ancient singularity—  
Just as nature was, but who knew  
the satellites would come back to bite,  
who'd bare the bark stretch in cranberries;  
Yet no longer distracting elements sung  
in the language of protons and neutrons.  
That is, why; the hardware with pavilions,  
prehensile propulsions serving frameworks  
with hieroglyphic weight cut in half.  
Why the primary somatosensory cortex  
flung a factor of degrees and bioelectrical  
potential round like resurrectees interfacing  
with anthropomorphized super-sentience.

I thought it was just a mytho theory.

*It was a cocoon, so intricately must be  
erased parts of me and I feel a connection across time and space.*

*Interpretive speculation*

*Come away, O human child! To the waters  
and the wild.*

Sith many merged eye, for law courts  
carried in south path-pasts manners,  
a single shell metal thrust her pearl tune  
trimmed in her epitaphs. The line of the  
latter by ratio wearers twisted Cisco.  
Then crept a word of steel still stringent  
with her second frozen stance, steady; the  
ball's barrel steam; a voyage toward the  
steep of titanium alloys.  
She strung a pile of pictograms presuming  
palladiums, as timekeepers' eternal pomander  
case round the arches and menageries  
depicting wailing wolves.  
She kept her step's stride and reconciled  
with goblets in gold signet; where the  
flat-fact once knew the bait of bulls  
pulled to the model with busts of her settling sleep.

*For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.*

## **Christian Carlo Suller**

*Ode to a steam roller*  
(after Marianne Moore)

Her skin a rocky road, repulsive  
To the tender touch of the wheels

And fingertips—  
Needing heavy fixing, evening out

The bumps and voids  
The gaps: scars of puberty

Or circumstance. A mole or acne  
Deep Excavation! (“Woman at Work”)

A clog that she wants cleared  
With back-and-forth strokes

The power of practice and repetition

With the creativity of an artist, the sheer  
Brutal power of a construction worker

The precision of a surgeon—she transcends  
The ugly reality that’s on her faCe.

Crushed particles and minerals  
Of chipped rocks or animal teeth

Or the powdery dust of butterfly  
Wings or quiet moths wallpapering

Her garden, her patio, her room.  
All these innocent virgins of things sacrificed,

Mortared and pestled by heavy pressure.  
To crush and press against

The parent block: an aesthetic standard—

The road, a bridge, an edifice, a façade:  
Her face—

Models and celebrities in photo-fakeness—

Concealing the witch within, the moon

With its craters,  
This earth!

O, steam roller! What power you possess!  
What mind, what invention!

What ability to engender innovation!  
What machine of endless profit!

You pulverize imperfection,  
Smoothing the road to progress and self-improvement.

You even out the field for the less endowed,  
The less beautiful, the unnoticed or the noticeably ugly.

You're a blessing to architects and arbiters of beauty  
In this modern world of the machinery of corporations.

You, like the cunning of the serpent in Eden,  
Rolling up your tongue like a solid metal barrel.

## The Wife

His friends praise  
the neatness of his house  
his Japanese wife  
tidies and orders

every waking morning.  
The popularity of  
the Anderson Resi-  
dence only increased among

the housewives of the village.  
The husbands—his friends—  
prove to have the wildest  
imagination.

Asian jewel. Fantastic  
homemaker; Unparalleled  
cook. Domestic, angel  
-ic, animalistic, lover-seductress:

his friends call her different  
names. She is but  
Mrs. Kimiyo Anderson  
to him. For him. Only his.

Married for four years,  
carrying the Anderson name,  
staying in the Anderson Residence,  
in the Suburban Midlothian, TX.

She hums at night in front of  
The mirror the Song of  
Lorelei—she lets the water flow...  
and she bathes away her sorrows.

Then the mermaid laughs  
that the hu/man thinks he's owned her—  
she pops a pill, caresses her womb,  
knowing fully well her power.



## **Francis Plamondon**

### *Incarnal energies 1*

It was they said we couldn't have this but didn't mean it. We'll take them face valued. But what those words scream should shudder our backs before the wall impressed us. Subtle colours of involutions solar presence applauds of—we are for this revolution round to round all of us singing while others form mute circles danced to a death formed their own quick upstarting. They enterprise with subtle devotion the noises that happen and it is of us to judge them what transfers from energy to violence made manifest in costumes they parade in to be as louder before the calm if when quiet our concentrated plexus. Now it is that we should have this good governance and order instilled when truth reproduces kindness its abundance a solar god triumphs.

### *Incarnal energies 2*

It drags along mute conditions created it, a perpetual slump cut against grain proposed with the end-times of devotion. Care is not the word for it as it strides the throng heavy footed of no mattering opinion. A higher force, a better call is not its worth for having but relinquished, yielded, handed-over if reluctant to those better it elects with in trust of true affirmation.

### *Incarnal energies 3*

Abbreviated forms relinquish the hold had on for long standing ovations of undone principles a deprecated age proposes. Fake light fades to quick, and with it promise entertaining notions of progress in which we harbor a cause corrupted by this long dream of better future too bold to see its spectrum theory alone exists in under unmitigated stars abandoned and with them some metaphysic of hope outmoded. The nihilistic praise of gain commences and with this, our parallel discrimination of insouciance kaleidoscopic.

## **Biographical Information**

### **Dylan Willoughby**

Dylan Willoughby is a permanently disabled LGBTQIA+ poet, composer, music producer, video producer, and photographer, born in London, England and currently living in Long Beach, CA. Chester Creek Press has published 3 limited-edition letterpress poetry chapbooks, with illustrations by the hyper-realist painter Anthony Mastromatteo. His poems have appeared widely in literary magazines including *Agenda*, *Stand*, *The Interpreter's House*, *Shenandoah*, *Salmagundi*, *Denver Quarterly*, *CutBank*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and *Green Mountains Review*. Recent poems appeared this summer and fall in *The Laurel Review*, *Fahmidan Journal*, *Goat's Milk Magazine*, *Sledgehammer Lit*, *ZiN Daily*, *Melbourne Culture Corner*, *Pareidolia Literary*, and *Bloom Magazine*, and are forthcoming from *Amethyst Review* and *Ample Remains*. Photography appears in *Rejection Letters*.

### **Sascha Engel**

Sascha Engel has founded *Strukturriess* and published a book at Beir Bua Press as well as a pamphlet via Little Black Cart. He is currently working on developing a system of writing which hopes to contribute towards the undoing of industrial civilization.

### **Bradley J. Fest**

Bradley J. Fest is associate professor of English at Hartwick College. He is the author of two volumes of poetry, *The Rocking Chair* (Blue Sketch, 2015) and *The Shape of Things* (Salò, 2017), and recent poems have appeared previously in *Version (9)* and in *Always Crashing*, *Dispatches from the Poetry Wars*, *Pamenar*, *PLINTH*, *Verse*, and elsewhere. He has also written a number of essays on contemporary literature and culture, which have been published in *boundary 2*, *CounterText*, *Critique*, *Genre*, *Scale in Literature and Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), and elsewhere. More information is available at [bradleyjfest.com](http://bradleyjfest.com).

## **Robert McCarthy**

Robert McCarthy is a writer living in New York City. He prefers to use formal means to achieve lyric ends. Robert obtained a PhD in English Literature from Rutgers University, and for a time was an adjunct member of the Rutgers English faculty. He has been a freelance writer, and is scientific director at Medscape, a medical education website. Mostly recently, Robert has published poetry in *The Alchemy Spoon* and *Dreich Magazine*. His work has also appeared in the Fall issues of *Yours Poetically* and *Neologism Poetry Journal*, as well as in *Words & Whispers*, *Celestite Poetry*, *Fahmidan Journal*, *Madrigal*, and *Ice Floe Press*.

## **Louis Armand**

Louis Armand is a writer & theorist living in Prague. He is the author of the novels *Vampyr* (2021), *The Combinations* (2016) & *The Garden* (2020). His poetry collections include *Descartes' Dog* (2021), *Indirect Objects* (2014) & *Monument* (with John Kinsella, 2020). His work also appears in *Poems for the Millennium*, *Thirty Australian Poets*, *Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets* & *The Penguin Anthology of Australian Poetry*. He directs the Centre for Critical & Cultural Theory in Prague. [www.louis-armand.com](http://www.louis-armand.com)

## **Erik Fuhrer**

Erik Fuhrer is the author of six poetry collections, most recently, *Eye Apocalypse* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2021). They can be found at [www.erik-fuhrer.com](http://www.erik-fuhrer.com)

## **Michael Lee Rattigan**

Michael Lee Rattigan (Caterham, UK) is a poet and translator who has lived and taught in Mexico and Spain. He translated the first complete collection of Fernando Pessoa's *Alberto Caeiro* poems (Rufus Books, 2007) and contributed to the *Selected Writings of César Vallejo* (Wesleyan Press, 2015). He is the author of two poetry collections, *Liminal* (Rufus Books, 2012) and *Hiraeth* (Black Herald Press, 2016).

## **Christopher Browzan**

Chris Browzan (\*1988 in Brighton, UK, lives in Hove, East Sussex) examines the nonlinear nature of time, aesthetic beauty, psychology, ontology and memory. His work is often avant-garde & experimental in its approach but unlimited in its expression. Browzan's artist practice covers video, film, photography, poetry, performance and installation. In 2018, Browzan was invited to the MACRO Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome, to showcase his work. 'Body' was nominated for an art prize in Cologne and licensed to the MACRO Museum. He is the founder of Browzan Ltd, a London based production company - a close collaborator with Saatchi & Saatchi et al. In 2021, Browzan released his first poetry collection: *'Quest for Ions'* which has been featured in The Yorkshire Times and available to order on Amazon and at Waterstones.

## **Andrea Laws**

Andrea Laws currently resides in Lawrence, KS, working in the field of scholarly publishing for the University Press of Kansas. She graduated from the University of Kansas, with a B.A. in English, with a focus on creative writing, and a B.A. in Film Studies, with a focus on film theory and criticism. Her poetry has been published in three compiled books of poetry, and featured on nine literary websites, journals, and blogs. Her influences have been from the masters of gothic literature, but she would like to think that she has a modern voice to this genre, with her incorporation of current themes with an "old school" format. Andrea wants her readers to have a sense of longing and desire to seek the unknown and always want more by understanding what her words mean to them. She is a nature-loving, dark enduring, Kansas girl that seeks to break barriers of stereotypes.

## **Kieran Wyatt**

Kieran Wyatt (he/him) is a writer living on the Fylde Coast. His stories and poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Small Leaf Press*, *Ethel Zine*, *The Art of Everyone*, and more.

## **Bob Eager**

Bob Eager has spent his time traveling back between Old Town Scottsdale in Arizona and Woodcrest in Riverside, California. He has published a creative exercise Practical Poetry Block book called *Flipside of the Familiar* as well as a Recovering Narcissist manifesto entitled *Darkside Relapsing*. Bob Eager has been published in *Oddball Magazine*, *Indiana Voice Journal*, *Adelaide Magazine* and *Stray Branch Literary*.

## **Bongani Zungu**

Bongani Zungu/Singular Poet threads his words with the intent to reveal the subtle sophistry of knowledge and what he believes to be a hidden expanse of human experience beyond just love in a simple, relatable way. Often using short sentences and fragments skillfully, which then contribute to the rhythm of his pieces, his poems touch on a number of themes guided by life experiences, investment in knowledge, awareness of changing times, and a sense of imagination.

## **Christian Carlo Suller**

Cristian Carlo Suller's ADHD, Anxiety Disorder, and Imposter Syndrome significantly worsened since he started claiming to be a writer. He has an M.Litt. from the University of Santo Tomas and is working on his PhD in Asian American Literature at the University of Texas at Dallas.

## **Francis Plamondon**

Francis Plamondon expounds the pertinence of occult theories to the current hypermodern era. Drawing from seminal if too often misunderstood or politically misapplied texts of 20th century esoteric thinkers Evola, Guenon, and Steiner, he purports their absolute worth for this our 21st whose malaise is fundamentally spiritual. He operates the poetry webpage [www.moonunderfeet.tumblr.com](http://www.moonunderfeet.tumblr.com).

**“Citation exquisite for your determining.”**

## After words

**Endgames** such as that what makes body of self, of other, of text and any the vacuities of such we proclaim in the substantiality of a collection electronically represented and here celebrating in the aggrandizement of ideas and their propulsions poetics gives a force with. The conclusion attained if ongoing is to an outward within each that we hope readership commensurate with.

An end to a time a conclusion to a frame, if of words their placings, their intentions, then also of such thoughts as what they might both embody then next engender. We hold with corporeality as risk then and for what might come out of it, that poetics of endeavour and reminiscing of where we started and here come about it in that final product so very much unfinished in its going on with in the mind of others.

Nothing apocalyptic about it beyond that yet further transition from submission, review, transfer, imprint and launch. Selfsame and yet astounded by the difference between what comes about from what was intended to what remains unchanged in the cuts upon time the grapheme as image presents us, it is a poetics then that speaks as imaging from one self to then some other if not known yet still presenting in the apocalyptic (the end, the loss, the tearing out if apart and all this for some new beginning).

Perhaps with that there is a certain horror of what might happen or become it, the body of the text in the context of some other space, some other medium, some Other engaged with and in it. To that extent we celebrate the poetics of letting go and thank endlessly our contributors having done such. We trust this forum, if in this theoretical context itself a form of violence in its transformations and sharing, affords fulfilment and with this satisfaction.

In endless thanks,

*Editors*