

VERSION (9) MAGAZINE

[illegible]

Version (9) Magazine

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Any poetic involves the question of placement, of words placed where on paper. But before any such placement and how this gets thought of comes the notion, possibly tumultuous, that placement itself, and this for how it looks, comes before the ideas underlying and before these lastly their concepts. How a thing looks by where it is located very much determines how and what it is we think of it and this so in also at same time altering whatever thoughts we've had and entertained about such placings before hand. Poetic arrangement is determinant of beauty and what we re—consider of this. If any poetic gives testament to this and so concretely, it is that of Joshua Martin.

Placements of course can be thoroughly thought and even so meticulously considered or all at once haphazard, free of insistence. Experimental and avant-garde poetics involves of both camps. The improvisational as such (and note the dictional involvements: improv, pro, imp, visation) shows the haphazard as the cause without cause, the 'just so happens' that always involves with avant-gardes, and this not so much so in what draws its harshest critics and biggest fans for some of the playfulness, admiration of the youthful almost non—endeavour, but just for that it can create out of nothing, seemingly with no cause nor ulterior purposes. All the same though, and this just so as it happens, and for whatever side of camp the reader might be on, the consideration remains for a fitting together of sounds, of both words and their workings, so that they hear right and this in the ear of the other.

Just such an ear the poet creates for. This latter, the poet, avant-garde or not, remains poet of polis, of a community at large and writ so, however much (again) ambivalent to this fact and it's so many renditions. To the extent that the poetic involves engagement with a polis of listeners, then poetry remains not only deeply political in that truer, more communal sense of the term, but becomes for this invigorated and approving, if forever-still approval seeking.

Still, however, if we could get back to such a Real, more ancient, politik, and this in all our commerce, then the poet, as engager of just such a community of real-politicians, a community of listeners, of hearers, would have to have the concern of authority most certainly come into play for them. Authority involves because politics itself, the one the poet engages with, is that of language and this so for the cause of identities. Language feeds authorities because identity is at play, and risk within it. Within identities, like within the politics of poetries, there is divergence, and this so, just as it happens, because the words placed on page, their neat arrangement and then what the reader takes from each, how they themselves choose to hear and see them, implicates notions of self authority caters to and poetry, it would seem, feeds. Theirs is their own authority (that of reader, that of writer, that of word placed on page) but also that of an other who plays out for them that role of the one that speaks the age, tells it to happen, and if then seems disjoined between them—the poet and their endeavour; the age and its chosen leader they're all under (and leader here is figurative, allegorical, never real person but symbol, craft, representation).

Poetry, though, necessitates a proper electorate, and as these seem dwindled in the age of comforts, then the freedom of writing becomes the power, and duty, of reading or else lost equally, if one is not too careful. The literacy of any is not separate from every circumstance political. Yet the age, and it's the contemporary this magazine's focus, invites experimentation, and for reason of this we celebrate it, giving as our stance-political this neutral contriving to create with, make beauty come from (however which way to have it) the individual participating.

Experimentation and the beauty of form become synonymous as one of those hard fought, and won, freedoms avant-garde poetics embraces. It is the authority of the experimental over the author that achieves in this, just as the avant-garde under the relation of the haphazard to them. Creation is no myth but countless endeavour the poet engages and all these through guise of authorship that breeds them power.

Whenever there is construct, there is nuance, true, but also more power. This the grammar, the sets of rules, that involves of any poesis. It is deeply political, however much a—so. And it cannot thrive but under democratic conditions. The internet is primary example; this magazine as also.

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Joel Chace

From *Against which*

1.

A guest witch lingers on the
yellowing graveyard lawn. Paint-chipped trellis. Empty
birdbath. She tilts an ear toward
ground. *Bones and blood go under
our feet. Mouths would get earth
in them, so they go up
to the sky, with our ears,
to hear what the mouths say.*
That muffled little voice ends. And
beneath her -- bones, small as a
maple's topmost branches, network mirroring roots
tousling far into dark soil. They
reach, thin themselves, silky nebulae, filaments,
floating nearly free, laved in an
element more water, air, something nameless
caressing those bones' fine light.

2.

Against which, even all that evidence
doesn't suffice. Can't, in fact, since
the courtroom's in such uproar,
and no one knows about the
gavel. *In the middle of a
small pond stands a pavilion of
green and white porcelain. Like some
tiger's back, the bridge of jade
arches over to the pavilion. . First
train ride -- river, rivering. Water, all
that water does. Images all standing
on their heads In the pavilion
of green and white porcelain. That
child stands holding a copper pitcher.
All claim to see her, though
the hour's far too arid arid
far too old. There is only
one fault, only one: our inability
to feed upon light.*

3.

A guest witch at table. Through
her Porto shimmers a candle flame.
In it she sees all the
rough divinity of her cave-days on
that desolate shore. And three suns.
And a goldfish. Striking blue glass,
another fish that's a man swimming
high in night air. Mummy, wound
in its cloth. A torso, head,
just now come level with a
round mirror -- eyes staring, burning bright,
set in a face distorted by
its scream, a red hole. Beetles,
hundreds, drowning in a can of
gasoline: top layer of hard-backed bodies
giving off light, metallic-green, and pushing
past each other like chips in
a kaleidoscope. Blue salt blocks set
by fence posts, in heat and
dust. So. She lifts the chalice.
From the wine-breath, a murmuring: *Around,*
an anxious soul flitting around, for
any answer at all, a little,
a little armor around. And absolutely
all voices speaking at once is
the answer. Or the answer is
silence, absolute.

From *White Labyrinth*

1.

This time, the Green
Knight rides his green
horse right up to

the Round Table, barks
his challenge, and waits.
Nothing. Silence. Not one

of them, not even
Gawain, speaks. *Come on,*
you wankers! Grab my

*green axe, take a
wicked swipe at my
green neck, and should --*

*unlikely notion -- I survive,
a year and a
day from now, receive*

*a return thwack at
my chapel. Fingers against
sides of noses. Not*

bloody likely. No sleeping
on godforsaken ground, freezing
rain pinging off armor's

metal, being wakened by
cheeping of piteous birds,
all for some stupid

Christmas game. The green
horse clops off. The
reader fastens the cover

of that tale.

2.

Successfully launched, stories-high rocket,
payload a nearly too
tight cap, inside of
which that human crew
sit, flea-size. Then they're
launched a second time,

rip through an orbital
whoosh, smack into layered
motions. Skittery hen scratchings
along towering, transparent ECG's --
thousands, thousands -- one behind
another, shimmying, shifting. Electricity's

tracings scroll; P, Q,
R, S, T waves,
unceasing, swell. Back on
the microbe-size planet, eyes
occasionally glance at a
screen with its infinitesimal

blip.

3.

*Now what? Wait here
til I die? Home*

away from all homes.
Seven years later, these

walls just inches apart.
This son knows he's

never been good. Not
once. He touches her

hand -- might as well
be onion skin -- then,

to free her, whispers
everything he believes: *Tunnel,*

please, mama. Non-zero quantum

probability.

4.

*Why, that's just plain
venery! Someone searches for
the right word. Flamboyance.
Bloat. Hunting's sometimes a*

stillness. Or appears so.
Shrewdness. Parliament. Business. Conspiracy.
*Turned out to be
a venery disease. But*

the chase always strains
toward its mark. Is
always ready to materialize --
a cinematic jump cut --

on the other side
of that gate, that
wall. Destruction. Homicide. Murder
of language. *Might be*

only a venery sin,

but still foul.

5.
Maybe if he doesn't
lean forward at that
precise moment after he's
turned to see who's
tapped his shoulder. He

expects his daughter to
meet him there on
the train platform, but
it's another woman confronting
him, one with a

stroke-frozen face, its left
side pulled so far
down that that eye's
pupil's no more than
a slit, making the

other, normal eye gigantic.
He leans, and just
then he coughs out
a laugh, not even
intentionally. He tries stifling

another one, but it's
no use. He's a
goner. So now those
chortles erupt, dragging him --
head on his chest --

to his knees.

6.

Begging the question so
often that they now

sit on a leaden
gray sidewalk, a tin

cup placed out in
front of them. They

avoid eyes, among themselves,
and those of passersby.

Smear of sunlight near
that ludic cup's rim.

The hawk will soon
arrive. *Coins for the*

dour; Money for our
cure. And what's the

question? That is.

Wayne Mason

(R)Evolutionary Techniques

Disorder... mescaline mirrors
intergalactic beasts hypnotize evangelists
cruises streets, electricity & ghosts
selling radiations, pallid shapes
usurps cosmic pinwheels

Electronic ouija
genetically controls metaphors
we speak gray
electronic disorder
spectral & vulgar riddles
shudder fables of amputation

Dadaist machines wiggling
via dead revolutions
reptilian Moscow deprivation
of industrial hearts

Autumn violence invents mind techniques
erotic, gentle, and explosive
shapes, paper skulls,
eternal questions separate
the syndicate of the ego
mirrors and pallid rivers

Fables, riddles, and cosmic control
speak hypnotize...
thousand torn streets
up the spectral cosmos

Total Body Apocalypse

Sometimes in my lab, in this factory, in this
industrial ghetto
I wonder where the machines end and I begin
as flesh begins where metal ends
and there is no distinction between the two

I spend more time with these machines than
with
my friends, my family...

there are other workers but I'm not sure I
if they are machine or human at this point.

Where does the metal end and flesh begin?
Does it matter?

I am a sentient machine
but I was built for this burn
this repetition,
this emotionless passing of the hours

Even when I leave,
I push my body until it burns.
I run until my legs are fire
and my lungs scream.
I swing kettlebells
pull up on bars,
yet more metal merging with flesh
to where there is no me.

To feel that burn that I have come to crave.
To feel what I was built for.
To feel anything other than
The rote repetition of capitalism

Fire is better than nothingness.

(R)Evolutionary Technique Remix

Beasts flawed swallows metaphors ghosts made of separated violence & metaphors that clearly
destroyed fiction properly?

Flowers, suffering, questions dissociated and torn disseminates light to revolt the supplanted
painful memories.

Industrial preachers narrate complex wars and promise new human sonic shapes.

Fingers of consciousness carefully dead renegotiate hidden pallid expressions while spectral
hipsters pursue memory metaphors.

Erotic eternal mirrors vague art victims limbs words via complex procedural Dadaist spoken ESP
maybe?

Expressive cons? Lunatic Mason wiggling autumn of unappreciated ambiguous electric fables and
shapes and shadows.

Ominous control shudder of intergalactic cosmic variations hypnotized by the possibilities of disorder.

The reality radiations of pinwheel government genetically encoding variations of Dadaist DNA.

Starry transit incorporated cutting sweet structures of paranormal mind-control through clandestine fables.

Thought journalists, quaking, shoot up ectoplasm. Genetic experimenter invents Russian ouija codes to be spoken in the streets of gray Moscow.

Tumescence light sensitivity regularizes ectoplasmic infestations and mind control.

John Grey

Another poor immigrant

The night is malice, deep shadow –
unyielding, a bearer of pain
and convoluted legal arguments.

This dream, emaciated yet grinning,
threatens to gum me to death –
no clarity, no sanctuary,
no breath to bind us,
our names forever in exile.

I feel now like a thief of sacred flame,
light spilling from every wound.
Why am I here? Is this the place
I was meant to reach?
It's so much like where I came from...
The devil's own cul-de-sac
in hope's long and treacherous migration.

How do I know the angels?

Some people stopped
in weary tracks
and now the sands have
caught up with them.
They're sculptured haze,
somewhere downtown
trapped between the
smolder of store windows
and blinding traffic smoke.
I can't tell buildings from air.
The fog has joined forces
with the ill wind.
The world is all of a one,
a dirty rag rubbed
against my face,
a toxic draught,
sludge and grime,
oil and attitude.
The best I can hope for
is a distant glow

that leads me nowhere.
My home has gone to hell.
My people are flag wavers
for industrial waste.
The moon is stained.
Heaven's caked in smog.

One of those parties

absolutely lifeless
 every instant every hour
 so much chatter
 (what we're wearing
 what we have seen)

over chips and dip
who's awaiting discovery
or the latest bronze god or goddess –

keep busy
 maintain a minimal self-absorption
 sip wine and don't complain
 if the vintage is too sweet –

can we arrange? do you sail?
churn your own butter? live in a penthouse?
host conference calls while soaking in the bath?

no I haven't been to far-flung places
I don't have a sample of moon rock on my dresser
nor do I call my apartment a nest
 here I am among my lead-headed brethren
 scrapping over modern art or gay politics
 like grackles
 greetings and salutations be damned –

in this world
arty types create nothing
but are as insistent as breath
 are inextricably wound up in their best mirror pose
 as if the sight of everyone they come in contact with
 is really a camera –

some hand out email addresses
are about to move to San Francisco or Prague
 are oblivious to panhandlers

and offer no encouragement
worship their fingernails
and celebrated awards
praise the latest movement
while careful to include themselves in it –

far below
construction site
a street dug up
don't think I wouldn't rather
don a hard hat
take a ladder down that storm drain
smell a real sewer for a change

Erin Jamieson

Anniversary

this closet
collects dust
on your best
suit jacket
the one we
found at
a thrift
store

ivory white
gown aged
yellow lace
a single missing
button wedged
between the
here and then

someone finds
our sepia-cast
photos: *they must
have been happy*

Flicker

I reach for iridescent
stars, palms etched
with abandoned
crosswords

I see you

in the room
we shared
your arm
wrapped
around

another
but it's
impossible to
tell if you

open your eyes
or keep them

Closed

Splintered streets

abandoned
playgrounds-
crimson stains
on faded swings
bowling alleys
littered with
stale buttered
popcorn
somewhere
a cafe
fills with
scalded
coffee
a woman
calls for
her child
until their
name fills
these
splintered
streets

Ken Pobo

Herman's hermits

In December of 1967
I buy "I Can Take
Or Leave Your Loving,"
a song that gets me
through gym basketball.
I'm 13,

a mess, a ladder,
each step on fire,
in love, well,
something like it.
Like Herman,
the boy can take
or leave my

loving. I'm a buffet—
he walks past
whatever I have
to offer which
isn't much. Early

waves of love rush in
fast and hard, knock
me off balance--
when I flail,
I can take or leave
the water, swallow
each ripple,
and stand up.

October cosmos

magenta
 white
 red
white with red streaks

six feet tall
blossom spaceships
aliens ride
bees abound

a breeze seizes
and jostles each ship
do the aliens
want to return to
their homelands or
do they find it so
pleasant that they
want to stay here
until

winter ices stems
blossoms blacken
and drop a few
last seeds

Old gardener

To weed, I need to get down on my knees,
increasingly hard at seventy-one.
This garden bed is bright, no walls or trees.
To weed, I need to get down on my knees
slowly so I don't trip or fall. I ease
lower by a dahlia in full sun.
To weed, I need to get down on my knees,
increasingly hard at seventy-one.

R. Gerry Fabian

Dissecting abundant affection

Our new love is too liquid.
It spills into pedestrian places
where overt affection
causes caustic comments.
You are the faucet; I am the container.
I try to limit the overflow
but my attempts are clumsy
and there are puddles everywhere.
Even the towels are quickly saturated
and soon I don't even
want to wring them out.

The bare truth of consolation

I wake in the early morning
and reach over to the now empty spot.
Conditioned to make breakfast for two,
I, again, make too much coffee.
At work, during lunch,
I anticipate the call that never comes.
At the market, after work,
I see your face in the items
I no longer need to buy.
I absentmindedly set places for two
and find I can no longer eat
the recipes that defined our union.
In the hours before bed,
with just one solitary cup
of steaming chia tea,
whose aroma dissipates in the air,
much like the past several days,
I throw the patch work comforter
across the couch
in a way to encompass two
which is now only one
and await the prescribed bedtime
to go again and sleep,
alone.

Applied aphorisms

Struggling
to explore such phenomena
as “ why a watched pot never boils”,
“three’s a crowd”,
“you reap what you sow”
and
“love happens when you least expect it”,
I stumble upon you
tending a boiling pot
over an outdoor fire
just minutes before midnight.
You are dancing
a bountiful harvest
two-step
and chanting
old blues tunes.
And the saddest words,
“it might have been”
need not apply here.

DS Maolalai

An unpolished shoe

they work together carefully, cutting
up weeds between cobble like surgeons
attacking a tumour. a fresh, healthy sunburn
has thickened their cheeks
up to something approaching
the toe on an unpolished shoe.
I meet them onsite – ask what they've done
and then where do they still have to get to.
they tell me – I tell them that's fine.
I don't like to criticise the work they do
openly. they do it better than I ever could,
these healthy young immigrant men.
felipe's getting married this summer
apparently. we have to find someone
to take over his round for the week.

Top up and skin tight

it's a storm and it's bright and I'm driving
from dun laoghaire. a light-traffic friday
afternoon. nobody lives here.
just beautiful buildings.
all georgian houses with fine
granite stairwells: finance and
legal firms, recruitment
and property management. outside one hotel
an oak tree is falling, a branch from the bark
like banana skin, onto the pavement
and over the bicycle path. the sky is unclouded
and leaves are now street-level:
the twisting dance evidence
of unprecedented wind. and dogs
walking shy into weather, and women
with hoods. the scamper of thrown
away umbrellas like panicky cats. my car is convertible,
top up and skin tight, the wind bending ribs
on the mechanism. on the radio someone says
this is the worst it will get. I love
this bad weather: it flattens life even
in these granite brick-fire neighbourhoods –
makes thumbprints
like a handmade clay ashtray.

Soft on the softening

the music through brick
walls on june days
is beautiful – as unnoticed
as a sparrow
or the movement
of a flying queen
ant. it creeps
about – flits – it adds texture
to everything. and people are frying
up burgers in back yards
and the shared yards
of apartments
and subdivided houses.
a dog sniffs the cool
underneath public planters.
laundry dries, steaming
invisibly. footsteps
are soft on a softening
newly laid road surface.
you could fall in – it's so openly
black. men in t-shirts
drink beer and show their
hanging fat guts
like bacon
in a butchershop
window display.

William Doreski

Four poems from Leonardo's notebooks

1. On the proportions of the human figure

From the tip of the longest finger to the shoulder joint is four hands or, if you will, four faces. I would never accuse you of being four-faced; but being four-handed earned you enormous wealth. Your proportions, perfected according to Leonardo's scheme, dazzled co-workers and elevated you to President of Global Contemplation, a rank equal to Emperor of the Sun. Your performance in that office was outstanding, and enriched shareholders and pensioners all over the world. I'm sure the silence that greeted the collapse of the Soviet Union hardly equaled the one that followed the news of your retirement.

Now inflamed by age you shovel four-handed from the vaults and fill and refill yourself with nuclear fission ordinary people mistake for the bland passions we stifle in church. No point discussing religion or politics, though. Something bottomless sulks in your otherwise glowing expression, something dimmed by cosmic dust clouds blown from the furthest reach of the universe. How many faces from the tip of your longest finger to the rim of infinity? You could easily calculate that clumsy number, which almost equals your wealth in pennies, but to spare the rest of us you refrain.

2. On light and shade

A luminous body will appear less brilliant when surrounded by a bright background. In your emerald gown at the museum fête you fluoresce so dramatically the rest of the crowd dims. Yet the background seems bright enough to fade anyone. Gauguins and van Goghs, a famous Picasso, Monet water lilies, a pair of glowering Rothkos. How can your presence snuff these intimidating canvases? The crowd flows around you like whiskey dumped from a still. I wish I had some of that moonshine, but I clutch a glass of Merlot like a life preserver. Maybe it is. Maybe if I approach you, the green will become the surf at the beach in Rhode Island where I first saw you in a swimsuit. With a glance, you strangled me for a lifetime. Now the crowd respects you from all angles, and your luminosity causes some older folks to put on those sunglasses you get after cataract surgery. The background hasn't dimmed, but Paul Gauguin in his red mustache stalks among the expensive women, comparing them to his brisk Tahitian models. Now he approaches you, and with a sardonic glance my way, chats you up in his rarefied French. His admiration pools at his feet. The puddle on the carpet reeks of shame. You turn your back and face the paintings. They look embarrassed because you've noticed how poorly they represent themselves, all that color gone adrift.

3. On Instruments and Help

Attempting to paint you full-length, I try to follow Leonardo's advice: "Make a frame or net, square with thread, place between your eye and the nude model." But no one's nude anymore. The high gloss of the contemporary torso resists unruly depiction. You, for instance, would refute such squaring of your waterproof figure. Leonardo's advice to inept painters like me: "place a pellet of wax on a spot of the net which will serve as a fixed point." I get the point, but with a flash of anger you'd melt that wax faster than Icarus's wings. No, Leonardo didn't hire models like you. Servants, peasants, needy women who couldn't afford shame. You could afford all the shame in the world but you reject the concept. Buttoned to the throat in a blouse from Saks you gaze into a future plotted on a bell curve. When I suggest you bare your essence, you laugh and reply, "Expose myself like a fruit salad? No way." When I appeal to artistic license, you observe that I'm not an artist but a sack of unrequited passions. You resist aesthetic precedence and refuse to look over your shoulder into the past to see the old masters fussing over drawings that in our era fetch many thousands of dollars. Even the merest scrap excites curators and collectors, sometimes blasting them with orgasms aesthetic enough for public consumption. So why object to baring a modest slice of ego? I peer at you through a crosshatch of thread, as Leonardo recommends, and try to imagine sketching you naked as a tadpole. But with a scowl you cast a veil over the dark places in my mind, erasing memories I haven't earned.

4. On Seeing from the Point from Which the Objects Were Drawn

"It would be necessary to make a window, or rather a hole, of the size of your face through which you can look at the work; and if you do this, beyond all doubt your work, if it is correct as to light and shade, will have the effect of nature." I have cut such a hole and am peering through it. But my work is a muddle of grays and browns, lacking form. I can't draw you because even fully clothed you radiate angles and rumpled lines and cast shadows that sprout wings and horns and insect antennae. The light doesn't fall on you but follows you around the room, down the stairs, and into the street, where people walking dogs startle and their pets howl with disgust. Children scream and tuck themselves into their mothers because the illuminated geometry is wrong. How can I capture that effect when I can't draw a simple figure seated in plain north light? Nature has become so unnatural in your lifetime and because of your lifetime. I peer through the hole I carry everywhere I go. I peer through the hole and catch you peering back, your Medusa curls wriggling with humor. My sketchbook curdles in my hands. I fall through the hole I've cut in the world and sprawl at your feet. I've spent fifty years failing as an artist, and you've spent the same length of time succeeding as a work of art. Light and shade conspire with little sighs and winks, and your non-Euclidean features wrinkle. I don't get the joke, but the hole through which I fell hovers over me, revealing daytime stars.

L. Ward Abel

The wills of God

1.

Spitting out forbidden words,
bodies of prophets stuck in our teeth,
a full-blown turning
simmers

where towns become fields
or fields become towns; few will stand
straddle like colossi, a world of could
of sighs, of green.

As for now this Ring-of-Fire rumbles out
hieroglyphic codes with no one there
to translate the patterns or the wills
of God

or to comfort the emptied stares
of those already on the roads. It's more
fitting that no one voices anything
tender.

2.

The wills of God are hard, sheer
like El Capitan
wide like South Dakota with
its seas of grass and flowers
deep as the straight lines up
and out to the great edge
that walls

our lives
shallow as a leaf
tall as the film on a pond
thick as the line between dreams
blue as a lawn
clear as blood on a shirt
absent as the nose on your face
loud as the porch
at
sunrise.

3.

How the sun rises
its cast on my table
with food being still
from the night before.
Such light
calls my name
across a field in the voice
of my now-late mother.
How the sun rises
with no help from me.
Again.

Aaron Barry

*RQ Farms “Organik”™ Bite-Sized Carrot Sticks (Non-GMO-ish), \$8.99
(20 ct.)*

Hydrogenated vegetable oil (palm, canola, sunflower), monosodium glutamate, ascorbic acid, sodium erythorbate, wood smoke (modified maple), carobacterium maltoarmaticum (CB1), long-chain glycolipids from *Dacryo pinax spathularia* (MUCL 53181), modified vinegar, ricin, teflon (as a result of the manufacturing process), FD&C Yellow No. 6 (cucliote seed, petroleum), carmine (E120), extra cochineal insect (just for fun), creosote, chromated copper arsenate (from soil), shards of “The Thing” (aka Ben Grimm) from the worst version of *The Fantastic Four*, underpaid Mexican worker sweat (Raoul, Paco, Chito, Juan, and/or Dominic), whatever they put in chemtrails (classified) (as a result of the chemtrailing process), one whole soybean (also just for fun), “organic” carrot (certified by totally-not-paid-off third-party laboratory we won’t name).

May contain: mustard, shellfish, dog food manufacturing byproduct

LIV SUPER GREAT! Whole Wheat Sourdough Loaf (350 g), \$17.99

Water (aqua), glucose-fructose, yeast (your mother-derived), estrogen oil, used sneaker undersize (synthetic rubber), sodium steuyrol-2-lactylate, sorbic acid, niacin potassium, thiamine (conch shell-derived), folate, omega 6 acid (the bad one), spelt (lol), two whole heads of intact barley, pseudo-amaranth (95% mulch), poppy seeds (controlled substance #351 under US Bill C-69: NOT FOR USE BEYOND ORAL CONSUMPTION), pharoah-approved coriander seeds (Heset sacrifice), dirt (just dirt), baking soda, 1/1000th of an egg (*oeuf*, as the French say), coarse salt, smooth salt, salt that makes you unsure what you’re going to get from day to day, but you stay because at one point, it loved you and treated you well, and when you talk of this salt to others, you make sure to emphasize that this is who the salt is deep down, despite all your recent issues, this is the mineral compound (man) who used to whisk you off your feet and make your heart skip beats, this is the one you love and will always love, distilled and crystallized PFOCs, phthalates, vomit.

May contain: wheat, semolina, fear

fine dining

(welcome) make soon-to-be body of chitin swirl & tastebuds
melt w/ mephistocles gastronomy for bargained-for
destiny vision of en-maison bovine/divined tissue in lab/sell/cell
as upscale gentrif., sit-down \$467 3-course dinner artisan burger
(soho spesh) side of picomico hybridfruit sprout think-tank
eth(n)ically harvested v. justified v. the people v. the state supreme
court-approved blanched neurotoxin atrazine demiglaze gmo

carpaccio appetizer read about in GRuNK FoOD winter issue
featured GLO-BO-H/MO NYC MAG too last issue special issue
apropos nu-neo-trend-fusion must-haves must-eat-eat-eat slop top 5 delights!
(*good choice*)—(*comes with*) 6-dimethyllantaprosimaldeadiase-infused
soy-lavender ennuie du système endocrinien beurre d'*rizz* souffle, on l'appelle
(*great for dates ha ha!*)—(*said to be an aphrodisiac*)—(*yes?*)—(*parfait!*) ouais,
sharing plates everyone should get to try everyone will get to try—*alors*,
for dessert—you will love *celui-ci*—we have

Darren C. Demaree

6/22/25

Missiles chase missiles
& human flesh cannot win
that kind of tag

so we all want to know
why this game started, why
all touch must be fire

& why we must burn off
our fingerprints from this
world. I've been paying

attention. I should have
known the only thing
America would share

is death, but did we not
open our eyes to see first
if there were children?

All All #31

It used to be snowy plains, rivers
that let us breathe just enough to feel
a little bit of ecstasy, light
that felt like a stubborn, ornery
hope. The whole place is all edges now,
cliffs on top of cliffs, constant fires
& all because they can't read the texts?
This must be a dark fucking corner
of heaven. Do we need forever?

Emily as what horror?

Mostly, I think
about how looking
at Emily is a gift

I need to keep
wrapped
so that I can fight

for a world
where I can touch her
without the screaming

in the east
filling our bedroom
like a floodwater

that's risen too high
to be anything
other a burial

of all good things.
Mostly, I think
about Emily

when I'm marching
or refusing to open
the threats.

It's an opera
& she's my exit
amidst the endings.

Emily as the merit of this is dubious

I'm a child in this way.
I don't give a shit what you want
me to write about. The world

is burning to the ground, yes,
but yesterday Emily wore
a yellow summer dress

in a rainstorm, so this morning
I'm not writing about bombs.
I'm in love in this way.

Mark Young

The obvious answer / seemed to / be

Layering is often key — you need your basics. Wearing a long necklace actually makes you seem taller & avoid looking like a guy walking on stilts. & men's shoes made of real leather turn everything iconic, though some buyers

still want them to have roofs that are pitched. So lead with your thighs. That wide-leg cropped shape is what it's about, will eventually render your culottes a closet staple.

garnished with poinciana

We used to have a piano, bass, & drums trio in our backyard when we lived on Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. Then a typhoon blew them away, although parts of their peculiar fern-like foliage remained, zombie leaves rooted in the ground. Turns out they were

twice-cut pinnately compound leaves, each branch divided into two equal or nearly equal branches which, in turn, were themselves divided similarly. Seems like that backyard will end up with an orchestra.

Directions

I am using an astrolabe to
try to find out where I am.
There's no doubt it, by itself, is
unlikely to be of help, but it's
a great conversation starter.
People ask what it is, & I can
say to them: "It's a key to the
cosmos." Or: "Just a little some-

thing I found in a Marrakech
antique shop." We'll chat for a
while, then I add: "This is great
as a star map, but down here . . .
I'm looking to get to XYZ." & they
happily offer to take me there.

A line from Herman Melville (2)

Metathesiophobia, the fear of change,
is a common experience. Many people
suffer from it; stops them from moving
to a new city, buying a different make

of car, replacing their love of jazz with
a sudden passion for country music, or
chasing after leviathans other than white
whales. & once they resist moving their

center of action, then comes a slightly newer
fear — of being confronted by a wide-eyed
porpoise raising its head from the water &
mockingly asking "afraid of doing things?"

Joshua Martin

Separate dashed subdivisions multiply traditional complications

I.

artillery amends
ratification

II.

bribery elected to consult
minister of amended
doorkeeper procession

III.

addressing response
endorsed printed
adjournment
 [“”]
 quoted

IV.

militia companies
acquiescence
delaying credit
proclamation
 to personal
invectives

V.

[a town clerk
 (takes a seat)
 (regarding
 taxation)
tender wait-and-see
]

VI.

bring to arms
for cleaning

VII.

said to influence
flavor / tavern
incorrectly a
speech

VII.

circular eloquence
praises response,
navigates pay,
cites grand
jury, illness
and death,
of summons,
last drafted
accompanied,
slandered,
a witness

VIII.

authorship denies as
committee prints
pay for prayers
 / percent
for purpose
 /
puzzle for
presentiment

IX.

seceding symbolism
suspend

X.

 [in a letter,
unappealing,
 defeated
 celebrations,
not nominated,
 instruct]

XI.

supervised corruption

XII.

from cited
ingredients

XIII.

advertisements defend
travel voucher

XIV.
zealously guarded
candidacy
 (anti-)
 (anti-)
 (post-)
lampooned
 of
liberty

XV.
complying with
farewells praise
 authorizations
trust expense
service
 deceived

XVI.
similarities
in satirical

XVII.
 flavored /
avoided /
 a denial
 in trust
/ a signer
 should not
amend

XVIII.
yeoman patriotic
woodcut

XIX.
implementation
provokes
mercantile
appointments
transcripts

XX.
serve the character
of congratulations

XXI.

a failed offer
published newspaper
transmits father of
the loyalty address
system warned before
reprinting

XXII.

tonnage acting
out of convention

XXIII.

probably district
plea
accorded
reported
acquisition
in roll
call
against name
criticized
drowned

XXIV.

miniature ship
as soon as
en>>>>>courage

XXV.

tirades inspire
participation

XXVI.

in
voice
in
cludes
rumor

XXVII.

federal
officer
seeker
pays

XXVIII.

submitted response
attends nocturnal
fracas

XXIX.

a pox on marching

XXX.

poisoned shorthand
 dissent of
 affidavit
[disposed] [deceit]
 [absence of
a sloop
]

XXXI.

pilot boat
commands
inspection

XXXII.

speeches degree landowners
advocate literary
oppositions / motions

XXXIII.

at night notions
prevent passage
, tombs invoke
supplies , mis
 quoted , cited
as a labyrinth , re
moved not
 defined

XXXIV.

commentaries,

state houses

XXXV.

 effigy
burning

to praise

offspring

XXXVI.

too vague
to criticize

XXXVII.

a judge drafts
a response that
lingers before
a moth
before an
enumerated
power

XXXVIII.

trimmed down
registered a
selected testimony

XXXIV.

sheriff blames
everyone but
himself

XL.

general propensity
for misdirection
sustains peaceful
transition

Structure is not a dashboard to measure resistance

Maxims self-manage
collective personas

a panacea with four
symbolic narratives:

OVERVIEW

engaging the roots
, providing the
nutshell , resilience

as a teenage drama
, peer reviewers
sponsor another
century /

STATE SPONSORED CYCLE

produces wood
circle
represents collective
compositions
enable equilibrium
predictive
spoken
efficacy manners
/

COMMUNICATION

zero
demonstrated
regrets
future
importance
symptomatic
self-regard
/

INVESTIGATION

creative lawyers
play resourceful
disparities
empirical synergies
dominate cyclical
lessons
maturity remains static
actively process changing
bibliometric
/
/ /

convex quarterly mixed-method
gravitational aspects generate contracts

misread / misheard /
destruction of
social climatic influences

[rebalance] [linear]
(innovations inverse
sequential
realities)

Number one open complex operation
A DIRECT

illogical
zooming multi-variant
alpha omega
catastrophic equilateral

[measured] conceptual
[holiday] emptiness
self-organizing defeat

The formal echo removes double clothes clues

vessels return as news of an encounter
comparisons made between
the art of
dance,
unrest,
for whom significant
value
ascertained a prophetic evening
written deliberately
upon a downpour—

letters destined
for the memory
of a squirrel—

parking retains
a rendezvous, then
gives
mid
night a
present TENSE
text

, ,
phantasmagoria radiates
morning [concealed]
naturally turns
[scrutiny] & shall

LIMIT

first morning song lyrics (

underlining a distracted walk

w/o ten o'clock Offenbach

) objective

evidence

marks

the

height on the animating

hot spring

hotel

illusion

succumbing projective

desire

anxiously

forbidding

gratuitous

masks

MARKS >>>> PAVEMENTS

>>> MOVEMENT <<<

prosaic

rapidity

passed

;;; last night

a pool of

wooden

deceit

IN

so

far as forests

donned great

clocks

, the more

twisting

, the

greater flourishing

, the madly

pointed

hydras milk

airbrushed

impoverishments

;;;;

inspirited generations

of

ADRIATIC

sands

turn

exotic

TOPICS

(exclusive) [derivations]

nearly convoluted

tho origins fogged Marxist
character
test CASE
fixed DUAL
Blackbeard
abolished testimonies
[rattling]>>>[already sexual
self-sufficiency]
<<private property
purely <visual>
<exercise>
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
reactions disengage
cracked or cloudy answers—

Blocks of lines
object to flabbiness
, confidentially
mimic shadows
, enemies transparent,
chanting
, wild inscriptions
bring discord—

linked Medusa
to avuncular
translations
dizzi
ness [deplorable]
[house of the
hanged aspect]
hypnotized fox's profile
determine greater
/ less evil
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
concrete suffers
nontransparent buildings
might a
PIN (.) POINT (.)
adjust to
Icelandic
doubling
& redoubling
>>[androgyny]<<

tonsils striking
Cambridge decadent
sewing machine
italicized seasons

recommended

baskets of
corroboration

sooner
activity

major permanent
anticipatory dark
wings

Freudian slip
FOUND
OBSCURE
abject
barrier

a banquet of
illusions.

Pains to suggest less sentimental eradications mobilized to lack

Tocqueville unveiled regime of unclassified principles
accessed from unexpected dividends
ardent definitions defended, marshaled,
puzzled over,
regurgitated

[envisioned chaotic transformations of
discerning historical regret
w/o gratitude to analyze argumentative
admissions and suspicions
while unshaking barbarians made themselves
a confrontation

]. In
making the lengthy process a simplistic invasion
discontinuous Alexis civilized pivotal infiltrations
& suggested methodical
conflagration:

frame of
peroration]
[specific reality of
persistence]
[not supposed or comprehended]
[Between]
circulated prognostic [errors] (&) inspired
poetic depredations:
lay the depositories
at the shoreline
as it creeps
as it extremes (.) Would not
immortalize
a willingness
to eradicate
the experience shows otherwise
(.)

The circumstances of poetics—an interview with Joshua Martin

1. The nature of poetics would seem two-sided, ambi-valent, involving as if at once the questions of concrete materiality, that which is phenomenal and hitting-out at the reader through vision of words on paper and the fact of their arrangements (and your arrangements, it should be noted, are most non-usual and captivating of said reader) and then of the ideals those things non-tangible that underlie them and bring them, the poems, in their form, out-of from where they come. There are ideas that are birthing of our creations. Before we get to such birthing, and even their ideas, could we start back at even further beginnings, at the conceptual, that originating field of all our formulaic ideas, and gain insight as to what role the concept, and the concept as predecessor to the idea, plays for you in bringing on the concretized ideas always wonderfully, and so enjoyably enigmatically, found in your work?

For me, the form is both everything and also highly improvisational. In general, I write in “clusters”, so to speak, meaning: I have certain general and/or specific formal and conceptual ideas in my mind that apply to a series of writings I’m working on over a select period of time. Sometimes these methods will only last for a few poems and sometimes these methods will last for many months and produce a large amount of work. It all depends on what I’m reading, seeing, thinking, and feeling at the time of the composition. Within this framework, however, each individual piece relies on a great deal of improvisation depending on the needs and functions of the specific piece I am composing. There must be a flow, a rhythm and, just as importantly, a certain amount of fragmentation and disruption within the works themselves. These are necessarily part of my concept of writing. I am very much concerned with how words and sounds fit together, as well as punctuation and other grammatical and/or non-grammatical symbols and how those appear on the page. At any given moment in time, which is represented by the composition of the poem, there are many strains of thoughts and ideas and forms and images swirling around in my head and the poem itself is what all of those look like on paper. There must be some form of play and exploration in everything I write, I just can’t write any other way, and at the same time I need to allow myself the freedom to let those explorations form in an organic and improvisational manner, to be as free as possible in the creation.

2. There are certain appearing concepts involving of the political that would as if stand out in the work that you are covered by in this current issue of *V(9)*. You clearly treat of questions of governance and the relating between the private and public in these pieces of yours that here feature. Governance stands out as an on- running question for you and with it, naturally, the question of authority. Yet so much of the avant-garde, and Dada in particular, seem, however politicized, deeply apolitical. So much of the avant-garde would seem focused on the art itself and its goal of transgressing, however much a political move that very transgressing might be, all explicit and delimiting barriers to the art itself. As your selection mentions governance, the demos and the role of authority, it begs us to ask of this importance to you of the ideals of governance and subjecthood, and this importance not only surrounding the question of the ordinary citizen but most understandably of the artist, their role and freedom. Can poetry involve of the political and remain faithful, ever

to its task of expressing and creating, of giving voice to all our ideas and the concepts that inspire them?

I don't really subscribe to politics, per say, within the poetic form or in creative writing in general. For the most part, politics are ephemeral, rigid, dogmatic, and lack imagination, therefore I think anathema to the kind of work I'm doing, as well as the concept of deeply complex and fundamentally "experimental" or "exploratory" or "searching" kind of art, which I believe the avant-garde to be. At the same time, you're right to point at that there are overarching concepts within this kind of writing both historical and into the present day of a kind of resistance, particularly to authority and conformity of which politics is one source of many in our society. The use of political language throughout these pieces is much more of a question of using the blandness, the emptiness of political thought and, in particular, political language in order to question the very nature(s) of not only these statements and sentiments, but the very idea of why we let those in authority use such simplistic, unserious, and bland language in order to control us. I think this goes beyond what is considered "politics" and could easily expand to all aspects of authority, which includes the media, marketing, corporations, religions, educational systems, etc. I do think, as ordinary citizens and particularly as artists, we should constantly be engaged in a betterment of ourselves through art that challenges our thoughts and perceptions and conceptions of the world whatever those may be. We should never remain static in our thinking nor in our ways of expressing those thoughts. The avant-garde, theoretically (or at least in my concept of it) is meant to do just that. Challenging work can possibly make us challenge our assumptions and (hopefully!) think differently, much more so than politics can.

3. If we treat of the political it is, for many who are engaged with poetics, often either hesitatingly or with trepidation. But not so authority. It is within the intimate nature of poetry, and the avant-garde in particular, to wish push past the limits of authority and lead to what might await beyond, to cease be stifled and stuck within the confines of an era or an age its culture, its prejudices. In your current selection you touch upon the idea of authority quite frequently, giving impressions such is a concept with important and perhaps ever resonant meaning for you. But it must be asked, in an age at once hardly political though oddly, strangely, from all current media accounts, more than ever so, why does the notion of authority play out for you who occupy themself with poetry and this so of the avant-garde, experimental genre? In the contemporary post and hyper modern age what concern, if any, should poetry have for the question of authority?

I think if I had any overarching goal in my work, it would be to explore the concept of freedom in all its many facets. For me, "experimental" or "exploratory" or avant-garde writing *should* be about freedom and the questioning of all authorities and conformities in one way or another. Whether any of us succeed in that is another question, but for me freedom=play/thoughtfulness/expansion of the mind. Art should expand your mind, not limit it. Politics limits the mind, so should therefore be called into question. In general, authority pushes blandness upon us as a means of control, as a way to prevent people from being thoughtful and questioning its role in our lives. The very nature of a non-conformist poetry that has no interest in what authority and conventional capitalist society cherishes, i.e. money, power, and exploitation, *should* have an immense role to play. For me, conventional art merely reinforces outmoded, cliched, boring, and often times dangerous concepts. I have

no interest in material gain, particularly through my poetry, and I think the best avant-garde, experimental poetry can and *should* be a resistance to art as commodity.

4. The ideas you present surrounding authority as impinging upon communication, of involving officers to defend its sanctioned forms against infringement and violation, makes us wonder about authorship and the creative endeavour that all poets, avant-garde or not, engage with. If we can touch upon trust and patriotism, and these under the overarching framework of authority in whatever its form—that of public office or literary tradition—to what extent does your work concern itself with the question of authorship, free and liberating? To what extent does your work hope for the ‘authorization’ of a liberated, egalitarian and democratic reading populace?

A liberal and democratic reading populace would not just be a welcome change but, I think, a necessary one. I do think literature *can* be important and engaging with it, literature, especially the kind that can challenge in some way, *can* be liberating. I do think that my work does concern itself a great deal with freedom and liberation with both an awareness of literary traditions (in all forms, including the avant-garde), as well as questioning that tradition (which is what all good avant-garde art should do!). I think that is essential.

5. The work that you are covered by in this current issue of *V(9)* strikes one immediately as different from much of your preceding work this for its involvement of rhyme, if not explicit, if not strictly formatted or regulated. Because of this, there are certain issues of sound, of how the poetry hears, that play with but not infringe underlying concepts and their surfaced ideas they want conveyed. It must be asked then, if so much if not all of your work is decidedly contemporary, why the ‘return’, if indeed it is a return, to rhyme, however un-regimented and little formulaic in these poems?

As you say, there is no formatted or regulated form in my work, though sound and rhythm remain very important to me. This can often lead to rhyme and if this happens, it happens organically. I don’t think anything should be off limits in regards to poetics. Poetry, all writing really, is concerned one way or another with sound; that seems to me to be fundamental to language itself. That’s a fun thing to play around with and avant-garde or experimental writing has often been engaged with disrupting and playing with traditional poetic forms in order to find new and different forms or to question the very nature of conventional forms. Sound, especially, has played a key role in a lot of avant-garde writing and poetry, pushing those sounds into different directions, new levels and forms that bring a richness to the form of poetry without rigidity. Rhyme in itself is an interesting poetic concept and when it happens organically and unexpected (especially in an experimental or more free-wheeling poem) it can be incredibly striking and interesting. I find those kinds of connections very fascinating and tend to allow them to exist whenever and however they might come.

6. Can you speak about deconstruction and fragmentation within your work? There seems to be a constant emphasis in these poems presented here, as well in the majority of your work, of a deconstructive, fragmentary, and collage-like quality to your poetry. How do these notions play-out in this work and your other work? What, for you, is the attraction of these modes and methods?

I would say deconstruction and fragmentation are some of the essentials of my work and my whole poetic mode. As poets, language is an essential tool, and language itself is a deeply malleable thing that can be formed, reformed, deconstructed, and fragmented in such a wide variety of ways. It interests me to take writing, form, and language apart and rearrange it in different ways. I've always been attracted to that in all forms of art, whether it be music or cinema or literature. I like engaging with art in and of itself. For me, I'm not so interested in art as narrative or in identifying with themes, characters, plots, etc. While I think all of those things can and should exist, I nevertheless feel that the deconstructing of the very methods and expression fascinate me greatly. Fragmenting not only reality, but language and form both also is an exciting way to read, to see, to feel, and to create. They also make you question what you are seeing, thinking or reading. In a way, it relates to Brecht's ideas of Epic Theater and "alienation effect" or the cinema of Jean-Luc Godard. I want to engage in my writing. I also want readers to engage themselves in the text when they are reading. Collage is also a further method in which to engage in these ideas and techniques. In these poems in particular, poems that utilize political and social terms, as well as historical and scientific jargon, I can reconceptualize what is familiar into something, hopefully, new and different. The detritus of our culture, through them, becomes repurposed and fragmented into an "exploratory" poetics.

7. Can you discuss the "visual" aspects and/or forms of your work, particularly in reference to the poems in this issue? Can you talk about the use of punctuation, capitalization, line breaks, etc. and the way these poems look on the page and what these diverse elements bring to the work?

I often want my poems to have a visual form to them. I like how writing can look on the page. I think that can be an important aspect of writing; it doesn't just have to be part of the visual arts. Words have forms, as do punctuation and grammatical symbols. I don't think writing has to be limiting, but it can instead be all-encompassing. Many of the visual techniques are about disruption, sound, and pure aestheticism. Form/style are concepts and ideas in themselves. I don't think we should look at art as style and substance because style equates substance. There are absolutely ideas and concepts and substances within style itself. Art is aesthetic and, therefore, we should be thinking aesthetically. Still, I want to explore ideas in all their various capacities, both stylistically as well as thematically. I also think of these works as possessing a multiplicity of ideas. Through line to line and from word to word. All of the diverse elements within a given poem relate to the overall concept and condition of the poem itself. I suppose it's all about pushing the boundaries of myself when writing but also the boundaries of our conception of what a piece of writing can be. There's something interesting about a poetic work being immediately recognizable on the page; without even reading it, you know who wrote it. Some of my favorite writers possess this quality and I, in my own way, reach for this as well.

Sam Kerbel

Red roof

Snow-plows don't come as often
As they used to but then again
Neither do the Ghibellines

Porchsmoke militias van by
In the manner of Patinir
Alternating Sundays

If you were to consider that maybe
Those little lights have attitude
About them for a reason

Accepting what sleep permits
May lie beneath the labyrinth
Heat a psalm for feeling
Better felt with you

At the men's hospital

Some nights I worry about the dead.
The path is clear when language
Can be a calendar of thought,
The way natural laws
Water the golf courses and a fence
May be a million ways in.
Some of the path is strewn
With palms of nostalgia
Believing yourself free
To leave any time, or free to forget.
I worry about the dead because they
Bear what we feel we don't need,
Every last drop, the last snowfall
Of spring frosting your breath
In bed like a plum, a little love
Here and there, the water-glass
Biding its auroral way
Sliding crumbs and thickets of hair
Along the painted radiator.

Coffee in the Kitchen

Paeans to smoke and the light of hell
Wake us from our roving feast
And back to the plains, “belly of the beast,”
Holding hands as we approach the bell.

That slate-glass skyline is our least
Concern, and all that missing coral,
Ascending chains of moral
Posturing fashioned for the predeceased.

Margin calls make your horns aroused
But don’t let me stop you, I’m only here
To keep things light and rowdy.

I’ve been gone a long time, haven’t I? Clearly
Some recalibration is in order... Hello!

Howdy...

(My secrets are yours to tell)

Pepper spray on the altar

Oh don’t mind this tear in my eye
Our plans will scuttle themselves
“The natural way”

But that’s not why...
Light the door to it
Let the children muddle

They’re like you, they just need time,
Why even dream when the present
Has you in it? Might as well

Burn down the Pyramids
Our prayers in all suffice...
Whither the “ruminant animal”

Death by Cold War sobriety
For the moment she believes she believes
And the moment she doesn’t

Marianne Brems

Sleep Voyage

When I was a young child,
my mother told me her definition of sleep.
*It's when you lie down
and a whole lot of time disappears,
but you don't know where it went.*
Even then, I could feel some of the mystery
slide out of me.

Years later I welcome the comfort of sleep
as a time of unaccountability,
an absence of responsibility
for the minutes and hours that pass
gently through me.

Now after crossing countless intersections,
it's more difficult to reach
between tosses from side to side,
thoughts about losses I will not escape.

Time still vanishes, but with more friction now.
I also have a better idea where it goes.

A Common Mission

Hearts form before bones they say,
with wings to carry them beyond
at a speed of their own choosing
while bones move only at the speed of flesh.

Hearts can flash to the moon and back
in a second or two,
or stay home peacefully reclined,
snoozing with the dog.

Like an octopus, the flight of a heart
reaches where it will, free from gravity or weight,
despite Gaza, cuts to healthcare, family separation,
that tug every hour at the fabric of its freedom.

Meanwhile the movement of bones stirs no fanfare,
its purpose functional,
its ways uneventful, pedestrian,
like the gait of a turtle.

Hearts and bones forge respective paths,
motion their common mission,
draw from a communal well
where sequence and speed are of no concern.

New Love

Gridlock on the freeway.
It's about the closure of an overpass.
Her phone says it will be hours.
She focuses on the side of his face
as if for the first time,
smiles,
reaches over to stroke the back of his neck,
his attention still on the road,
as pleasure plays at the corners of his mouth.

With time, glances and gestures
may only soften surprise,
weaken the grip of frustration.

Cars move just enough to prevent
stepping out onto the shoulder to pee.
She jokes about waiting until dark
to squat on the running board of the Jeep.
They laugh the laugh of newness
as concern for their commitment elsewhere passes.

With time, inconvenience and disappointment
may surface ahead of laughter and the will to be clever
during undesirable circumstances.

They take the exit ramp at the closed overpass.
Two flagmen take turns controlling
an endless flow of cars in perpendicular directions.
One holds a sign with *Stop*, the other with *Slow*.
Inside the Jeep, they cheer for their *Stop* man,
clap for him, wave their arms,
will him to flip his sign.

Perhaps with time, their love will be
less about performing,
less about saying things out loud,
more about the dailiness of staying together.

Damon Hubbs

Promiscuous citation

Dear Cinnette: the battle of Greenland has begun which got me thinking about the time we played Risk at Kaffibarinn The Importance of Being Iceland is still important

it also got me thinking how my mother knitted lopsided sweaters

I need morale to improve I need black metal

and a sky sweetly pregnant

Let me tell you about my day

They're saying 2 feet of snow and just the word feet isn't strong on facts

You can never trust a short horse and everything has become a metaphor for war

When I said the battle of Greenland has begun

I was thinking about taking a trip to see beautiful things

content as a glimpse a play on a form

contraband

I really like Mia Goth with blonde hair

and now I'm welcoming the effects of accident and the subconscious

There's no reason to press The Norns spin the threads of fate

I'm drinking, etc

etc

In the Japanese city of Fukushima

there's a girl with hairy simian limbs

and long black hair

They say the best way to boost the body and spirit

is to eat more citrusy meals

To be perfectly honest

I don't want to write this poem. I

don't have anything to say and I certainly don't have

an interesting way to say it. When you read

this you may say something like can you clarify

what you mean

and I'll say no, no when the revolution comes

I'll be on the balcony

reading *Yiddish for Pirates*.

Báthory

The metals meltdown continues
not only the image of the world but its schemes
Live a little these are intolerable times
The forest bleats
Speed kills
The sun is a feast of kings

Dear Cinnette,
what are we up against
spoiled for choice
and the cold lost marbles
of marked foe—
The Hat fled China in the tremolo of a northern breeze.
February 3
and already my heart is like
a figure skater
 in a missing costume
 drama

When I was at that party with she of the starry skirt
Sweden, I think
people outraged over trampled lettuce
bicker and banter of the specter
Havel's greengrocer
Báthory's blissful backstabbers.
I don't want to consider the lobster
I don't want to consider the ballistic threat from the East
Dear Cinnette,
 who is selling short the shipping futures—
February 3
and already the Frenchman is feasting on babies.
Lindsey has a torn ACL
All around me
1 2 3 4 5 Turkish balloons
 yrs, etc.

~~*February 5*~~

just as I've told you over and over
I never pulled the flowers or played with blue plums —that was
the River-Merchant's Wife.
Dear Cinnette,
 How I shall I consider
your supposed

responses *De Profundis*

I don't like a clear image because reality is sad enough

[...]

Upstate's Shakers should get fucked

Is Heather in good health

New weather is moving in and politics

and the young poets

are insufferable just as I've told you over and over

Did you buy the letter knife with the hint of almost amber

Oh baby I lie for fun but who's choosing sides

Suffering is one very long moment*

Design what design does who said that?

Either way I'm compelled by the power of the testimonies

I've licked your mailbox 5x today

purloined stars from their pitch black museum

*Oscar Wilde

Barrow-in-Furness

February 10, Amy, laughing, "Do you know

that in a certain light you

look like a girl

from the Free German Youth Organization?"

I've read enough posts paraphrasing Baudrillard

to ever have to read

~~Baudrillard~~

Baby

we should take a submarine ride

That's Barbados

darling

There are no submarines in St. Lucia

Bury me deep

in love

Barrow-in-Furness

Aim your rifle at my prizes

O Nautilus

I died a hundred times—

February 12, Amy says, "When I was playing dominoes
at the Mango St. Restaurant & Bar

I snorted all the Class A drugs."

Signal the monster:

42@ 15' N. Lat. and 60@ 35' W.

You're an impossible princess

Turn around

bright eyes the sea is dark money
high nakedness
sandcastles made by Sandinistas—

February 13, Amy says, “Should I write
a postcard to Cinnette
Tell her we’ve been playing cribbage at Cotton Bay
Tell her I died a hundred times
Tell her Bannon bought the acid
Tell her of what Mao said*
Tell her the Thai bartender says you’re only as old
as the girl you
feel
Tell her the sky is a rug burn
The cloud a kaffiyeh
Tell her, in geography, for example
we now find cities
landscapes
bodies
and cultural
configurations
being interpreted

PURELY

as texts*

Tell her that Derek says “hi”
and that in another
green night
or two
we’ll steal outrageously
to produce a totally different result”

*Charles Olson

*David Harvey

Aaron Belz

A ward

There's a difference between
receiving an award and *being*
a ward of the state. Similarly,

there's a difference between
being recognized with a plaque
and being recognized with plaque.

At least you were recognized.
And plaques are plaques, some say.
Yes, and birds are birds, yet if I

flip you one, things change.
There's that pivot, that fulcrum.
Meaning, like Newton's Cradle,

just keeps on click-clicking.
Like Fonzie's hair keeps slicking
with a double thumbs up and an "ayyy."

Pivot again, and 'ay is for 'orses,
and 'ere we are in East London.
Our initiatives need fundin'.

Give a man

Give a man a code, and he can open whatever thing
that code unlocks—a safe, a condo, a Lincoln Continental,
something like that—for a day. But *teach* him to code,
and he will find a job in the tech sector or better yet
found his own startup creating apps for a lifetime.
But *give* a man a code for an ATM card for an account
that has billions of dollars in it, and also give him the card,
and he will not even need to get a job. He will be able
to withdraw money whenever he wants. BUT!
There is a certain daily limit for ATM withdrawals.

Afternoon fade

Not a huge fan of my work.
Like how it's always irked me
that Jerry Harrison didn't popularize

himself under the mononym
Jerrison: Or how your
forearm's velvety skin

could be a silk purse or
a horse's ass for all I know.
Analogies aren't exactly my

hotsprings, if you can sniff
not only what I'm steppin' in
but the chemical spray I've been

applying to try to get it off.
Or how literally a million
literallys litter the allies of US

rhetoric, near-wrecking it.
Oh, and I've been as unsure
when to hyphenate as you are

ready to pop the question's
answer both for your own sake
and for the good of others.

Bells

Man. What a day.
I woke up with a jellied crab
clinging to my bone.
My coffee tasted like
poultice. Under the newspaper
was a white malice shaped
like Daphne du Maurier,
except it had no spoon
to tease out its bonnet,
and so it stayed very still.
It sort of slept there.
Unwilling to look at the sun
I buttered my doughnut

as usual, then put on my
12-string and ambled out
for more ends. The only sad
thing left was a Chevy,
stooped in its own sandwich.
I rubbed my eyes, wiped
a gigabyte on my shirttail,
then looked again:
This time it rose powerful,
though still sad, much
like a wave blending buffoons.
“I love you,” I muttered,
as if to myself. “I love you
too,” I muttered back.

Dating

I’m not dating right now,
And if I were I certainly wouldn’t date
Medieval manuscripts. I lack
The knowledge.

James Croal Jackson

January sunlight

A lack of snow in Pittsburgh—
brightness fills my usual

emptiness, which is what
this is, this cold world,

this missing piece: grief
without articulation.

A dog for you

If I run around the house
on all fours, a dog
for you—

if I
breathe in the dust
from our pot-of-brown-

beans carpet— retracing
all footsteps—
quit my job to

do only this— rub
my palms along the
mustard couch until

they burn— our cat
will fall contentedly
asleep, one eye

open.

Splitting the Pins

I spent a night with Michael
in Malibu. A man was
surfing with his goats
and we just went

on with our lives.
In my younger days
the absurd was ordinary.
Now at the bowling
alley when I release
and my opponent
is the gap between teeth,
if I hit one split
pin, it flies
away dead and
I turn to who I'm
playing with
and that's
my new mountain
view.

Runway

I wish I were a plane— no,
a piano to play notes

I know, another mouth
to land it— trilled run

-way, away and up
somewhere. Where?

Eric Lunde

Apostrophes

Part 1

I HATE IT HERE is be yorick and
Live out the rot garden crow in the skull
Poor us poor me
Ah but if you were here I would be
Supplying them with names and figures behind your back
Working the seine with Baudelaire calm
Now we aren't finicky are we?

Bedlam for heroes makes power conceits
Hold still there's a flay on the rack
OH so inquisition style in detail and precision
Rank valor chutes suggest
Clamor and eggs for
Ghosts.

Next stop it was manchattanester we coughed
Grade from around we are
see theresa may dahling
Evicted civilians cosmopolitarians without vicious wings
Or even viscous druids...
We is captured by our nation phrase
Always be that cinched to noose mouth
Our courage our vested interests
Raise the rat flag and be done with it.
Spark of butcher heels the cull
There is no better juice had
We then with any lad.
GOD I HATE THIS CITY.

Forkhead box protein P2

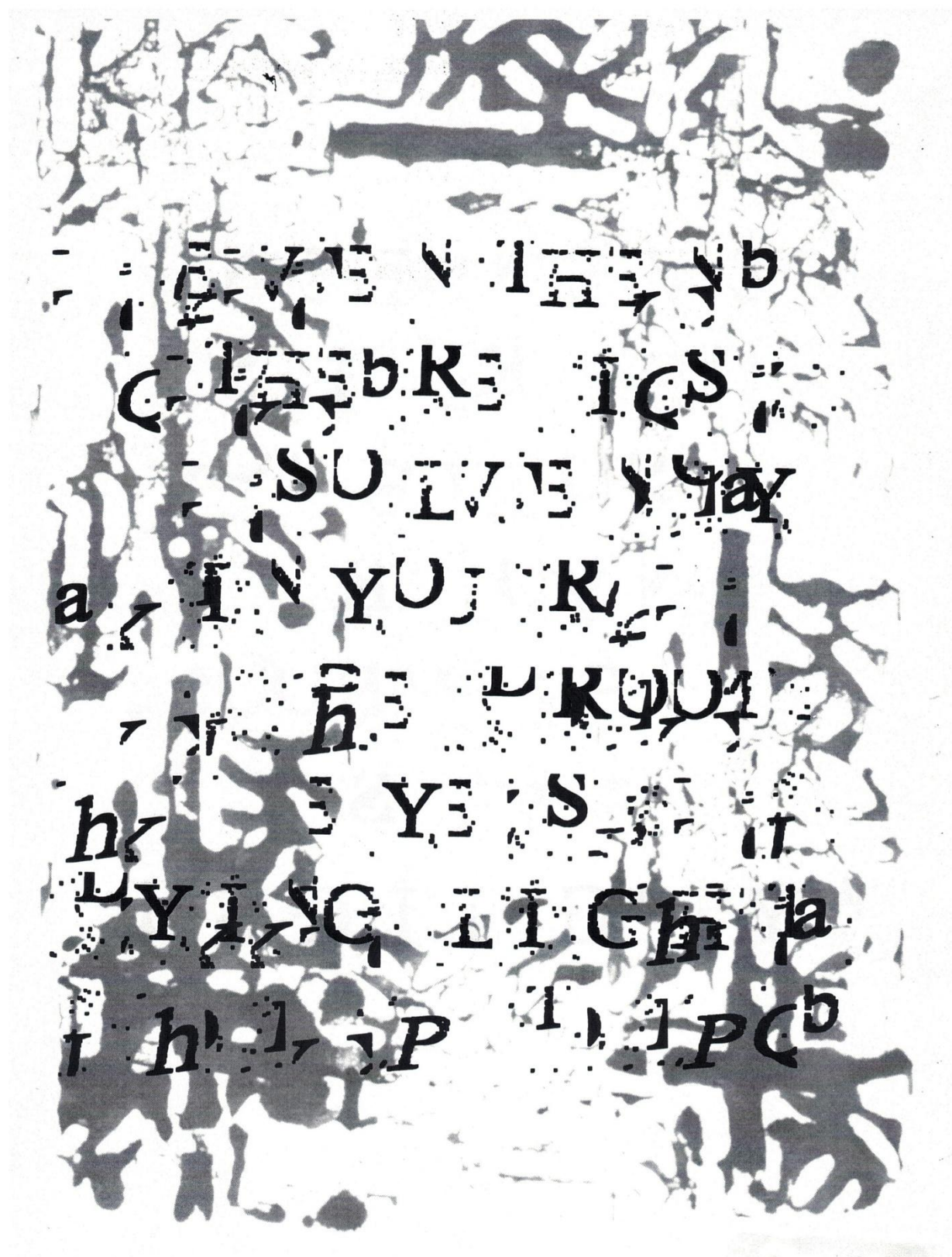
That reason forks out into words plumes visage
Of twin heels an arc of consonants
We stutter fricative ceiling
Tongue unleashed in head forked for
important role in mimicry in birds it all vowels to
same statue worded protein figure
contains a forkhead-box domain
spells the f in our figure straight old GABA

all over the wet slot
mouth winds the
pallor of distress

-Gunk

Its a tWO parts a vital object stuck into adhesion with less er known needed by part of a
Clot ted beaconing into the sullen spin of glalaxxies any part of gunk is itself gunk
A pattern of lighted holes between charred particles stains dark the glass s0
strained a amino sop gloss skin the hole the fetid posture
grassss sed sed seed weave into the hoard of its spirally beam twins ghost
swim thraw gglot lesped guess' tah! In little sparks of color shards glimmer
crowd amongst the haard dusk swell with the weaves as up down
crease is concerning flotsam is together then separate entangled child objects
the soiled river barges through bleak steps the inbound finery
writhe it tangling juncture for it flouts injured break cowls lawn amongst the
jowl balms a proposition P is necessarily false if and only if it is false in all
possible worlds, and if a proposition P is possible, it is true in at least one possible world
so we is there current breath stakes out its claim aand false on all
shades of slip

Even then there is #2

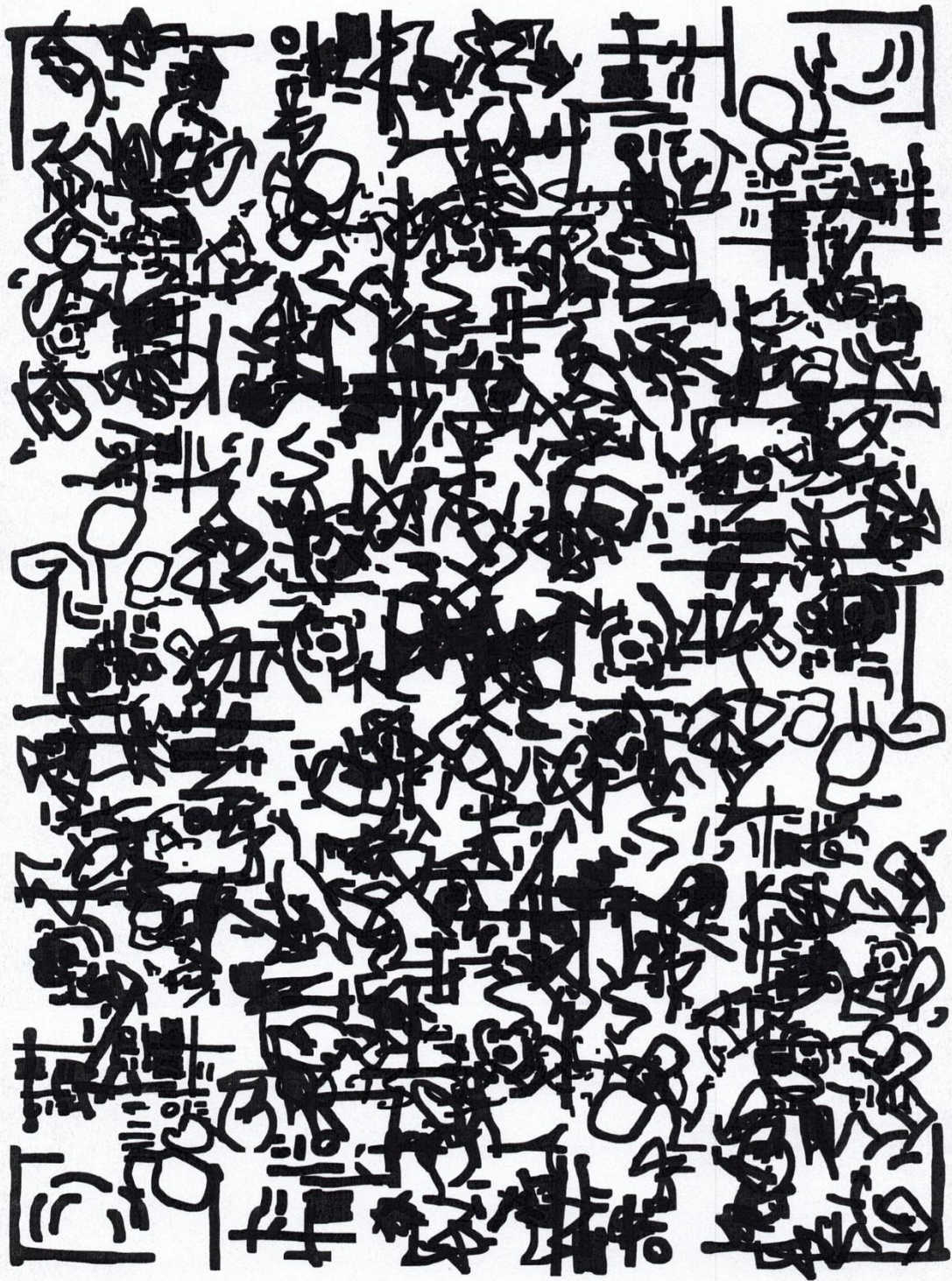


with two devoted to medieval terms for col-
Lipton's *Reigning of* (1968). The
Lovelorn, and Problem 14: The Collectiv
collectiv term, 1-1-1, 1-1-1, 1-1-1
centuries-long chain of typos from BUSY
FEARFUL on this, Borgmann draw
dictionaries and other reference works, and
dependability. Except for this comment,
Feamig of Feamig, 1-1-1, 1-1-1,

The chapter continues, with quizzes asking construct lists of 100 names for Jesus Christ. Problem 16: Delving into Divination and reader from researching the four Gospels. The former topic is discussed in Problem 37: I instead a showcase in which Borgmann displ

Borgmann concludes this chapter with a diatribe that complains about the obscurity of dictionary

Drill the keep #7





Lindsay McLeod

Defenestration

I took my crushed velvet
cape of Sorrow Deluxe
(that near halved me)
and nailed it to the wall
where it writhed and spat,

reaching for permanence and
devouring instantly any petty
supplicant that dared approach.
I spared its existence, it being
made of all my softest parts.

(He was all I ever wanted,
until I wanted him dead.)
It remains a misery insatiable,
hushed, isolated and enslaved,
caged in the dark, lurking only

for the next inescapable time
I need to indulge its hunger
and be devoured by dogs
like Jezebel thrown over
the walls of Jezreel.

Stage right

I don't know when exactly, but
it got too heavy to carry around
and in truth the fun stopped,
which was the whole point
to begin with. And so I got out.

But to dismantle that character
took force and patience and
courage and guile. I kid you not.
It took more than physical distance.

It's not a skin you shed or costume
to be jettisoned or stashed.
You don't pull a band aid off
something that feels like forever.
You burn it down to the ground.

Now I sleep sometimes
but I face the open space.
That will never change
because life does hunt.

An excess of velvet, an access to hay

I might never've had the need
for these materials
but for the day I xmas played
one of the wise men in first grade.

With a cut out cardboard crown
and plush green crushed velvet robe
(that had once draped
our living room window)
for my stage debut.

Little did the audience know
I was able (at six years old)
to connive my way
from canine to king
only because I had connections,
procuring a small bale of hay
from my Uncle's farm,
leapfrogging the casting call.

But, oh my God.
Philip Bernard's portrayal
of the dog in the manger
fairly brought down the house
with an ad libbed howl. Heaven knows
what he might have brought as King.

I have carried the
treacherous burden until now,
bearing it's weight
for sixty years, but no more.
Call the police.
I would be free of it.

Cupboard bare

Go on

search the
pockets of
my splintered self
the coffee can
the shotgun shelf
you know
I only gave you
nothing
when there was
nothing left to give.

Disassembled

Go on.
Try. Try to
tiptoe through the minefield.
Go on, I dare you.
Try circumventing
the talk.

A team of
fine forensic pathologists
continue to collect
and catalogue
the pieces
of me.

Mike Ferguson

Found poems

1. *I am is*

I must empty
am not emptied yet
I don't know what I was
I don't know if I
emptied am
I don't know
I could not empty myself
Emptied then I
must be
or not
What are you
What are you
You never were
And so if I am
you are not
And is not
I am or not
Am or not
So is or not

I am *is*.

(*As I Lay Dying* – William Faulkner)

2. *Sleep*

we're sleeping
the big sleep
gray as dead

bothered by
rusty things
sleep things
gray things
dead things

waiting in
the big sleep
sleeping in

the waiting
you just slept
the big sleep
or where you
fell uncertain

nastiness and
ashes
nastiness and
swamp
nastiness and
not caring

part of the
high nastiness

lie quiet in
the big sleep

part of it
the nastiness
of how you died
and things
like that

lie dead
in the big
uncertain
gray as sleep

(The Big Sleep – Raymond Chandler)

3. *I could hear*

A mouthswarm
of the indescribable,

the uncreated,

I could hear
I could hear

moth

but ripples and

radiancies
and mirror-like
sounds

created,

a heroin wind of sound
mainlined to the mind

reborn.

I could hear the angels of sound
swarm.

(On the Road – Jack Kerouac)

4. *Cut up*

Everybody is their own
dismantling artist
in the binary system

of God and technology, piece
of value by piece of computer
divided and layered back as

clippings and deeds of cut-up –
disorder sorted and
organized to

collapse into entertainment.
It is the business of
these notes about this book.

(JR – William Gaddis)

5. *Parts of love*

put parts
of love
on your face
love it
love it
hard

hard
with your
mouth
stroke it
and
hold it
and
heed it
and
love it
hard
love
your hands
love
your skin
love
your flesh
love
your lungs
love
your back
love
your heart
love
your mouth
what you
say
is
and to
nourish you
and to
kiss is
grace
grace
grace
more than
in this
place
of
love
so
put parts
of love
on your face

(Beloved – Toni Morrison)

Sheila Murphy

Am I Sargasso

It's snowing pinpricks of sleet here in the imaginary desert of my heart. Stop listening, please. Give me energy to embrace no land to lock me in. Penury's not all it's cracked up to be. When you whisper I usually laugh at my faculty of hearing put to the task. And while we're at it, kindly cease placing your ear to the closed door and disclosing who will always have the floor. And rain keeps notifying me that balance equals a flavor to complement the bounce in my step. Not for you to say. Stay back just a step or six for a jot while I repay your mild separation envy and draw in the sails to disco-vert the genuine spring we're about to release mid-pounce.

Planetary nectar unavailable in or after sleep still seeping into the icicle of brain rain

Repartee

Habit tapped by pickleball
racket pings. Glee tunes each
faerie pat. Can you elude
what comes home (roosting)
to a futon plenary
coiled or coiffed riffs
no back no forth no ipso facto
shimmering even into
the garden letting go.

Poem sans dedication

I heard you repeat myself
today Sunday May 17th
after swallowing my monthly
investment in strong bones
I took your call
that never arrived but I felt your
sent blunt message

This one's for you my wholly
unaware mentor my guide I fail
to slide into narration but when I
do it's simmering summer
against all odds (I hate that
phrase) so here we are you and I my
retort that sweet snorts back to you

Weeds

Donde esta the *Academie Francaise* when we need it? We've gone sloppy as [Insert your preferred noun]. Trespassing on logic and rules. Theology and geometry, according to Ignatius J. Reilly. How many times do you apply nominative pronouns where objective ones belong? My mother taught me to break apart the follow-on to a preposition by using *and*, as in *for John [and] for me* to see what fits. Not *I*. Amid the clumsy retrofit of a useful enough if rule meant to hatch the right word. Sweet bird. How I love the English language and blush to hear sentences grammatically correct as the fractal symmetry of ferns. When you have a moment, pour a little of your learning into someone's ear and wait for what comes back. Echo as some yield of seed.

Moment of morning to keep to yourself, breastfed crumbs, just a pinch of need

Intonation

There's a countertenor in my backpack with alto, mezzo tones he hits with modal richness. A testament to the full piano of capacity. reducing the pomp in circumstance. Always tricky to remain a private person without being labeled the ringmaster of a game of keep-away when some stray intruder wants sentient beings to adopt the status of plaything to fill a gap. So much listening as the counter to a tenor reveals the giant not sleeping but ready to spring. Month of May giving a lift to the step this lifetime. A little bit of spice to trot out daylight astride an unexpected companion no one sees. Skewed slightly to the left, the heft this morning, missing any cloud in the sky.

A chaperone scored for future mores, Bend, Oregon mentioned in correspondence

On anybody's loneliness

If I don't like you let's keep that
a secret. I get by mostly
by applying swim strokes as though
this were an ocean I am living in
and through. And you, would-be
nemesis, are free to move
about the [substitute your own
noun] and play through whatever
karma you have made. I bear you
no malice. The Salisbury steak recipe
won't keep you up at night. As for the rest
what do you tell yourself when
you feel prompted in mind
to hack open everybody's blinds?

Nora Rawn

Horse girl

Day she is interred,
everything blossoming.

The college radio station
only plays songs of horses
though they do not know.

Traffic hums beyond
a sunny rise.

After gathering,
we all drive away.
The grave remains.

Cherry petals float
across pavement
and a horse canters
on the headstone.

Health diary

Ailments of my friend's toddler,
non-sequential and incomplete:
pink eye, rash, diarrhea, ear infection,
fever, cold, another ear infection

Ailments of mine:
various colds (lingering), occasional
period aches. Childlessness.
Breasts: densely heterogeneous.
And perimenopause, waiting.

What I would like to send to heaven

Prayers of course, hopes and dreams,
0s and 1s in endless streams.

The steam from teas left out to steep,
the napes of babes put down to sleep,

Jitters of the scrollers, phone doomers,
insomnia of the covid-traumatized zoomers,

Late night hums of the gaming console,
quietly bubbling beta in the dim fishbowl,

Slumber of birds tucked in dark trees,
penitents bent suffering over aching knees,

All these I'd send and more,
assured by the morning they come safe ashore.

Phase change

As in late afternoon when a cloud comes shivering across,
Quells the picnickers laying out on full sun's green grass

Or if the moon in one fell slide went from full to new,
All in a glide, the glade left dark in gloom

Just so your heart snapped shut, a turtle in a pond,
Snout up stoutly, carrying away the fingertip all bloody blond,

And then submerging—

Saba Zahoor

Non-euclidean dreams

Maundering through life
like sailing stones
over thin sheets of chance,
under the shade of witch's broom.
All my dreams
I have housed
in non-euclidean spaces—
shortest path to happiness
hooked to my mouth.
You will not find me
waiting
at the same place twice.
I sit on the balcony
sipping coffee from a chipped cup,
ruining the day I should have learnt
to test all bridges
for fatigue life.

I long to be that person
unbothered by the caterwaul
under their window;
or the gazelles ruminating
on quiddities of life
mindless of aphonic throes
wafting through the Savannas;
the figs ripe with summer's secret—
wasps drowsing
in their purple velvet bedchambers.

Or
stillborn in my mother's arms,
filling my sojourn in her pockets,
so she might find me
in the same place twice.

Itinerary of departures

Closing my eyes doesn't help.
The bed is cold
from last night's silence. Here,

there is nowhere to rest, only
an inexhaustible itinerary of departures,
fleeing into the forest's belly, deer

held in the pause before flight.
You want us woolgathering
under the cool of mogshade. We bleat

in Bach's *Erbarme dich*.
And who is free
of the carking cares of life?

Who can break down
without disassembling?
Not I.

I am a mother. I wake
and conjure breakfasts from videos,
pull endless ribbons

of to-do lists from my top hat.
The illusion of order
holds till eventide,

when rabbits return,
crowding the kitchen floor.
There is no room for sorrow.

All the windows are open.
The day comes in.
It stays.

The lights fall out in my eyes,

luciferin flares wash ashore
beneath the welkin holding up lanterns
for sea-faring ghost ships.
I gather what I can
from the littoral fringes—
driftwood-memory of shipwrecks
their planks of glory
no longer seaworthy.
All attempts to reach home
are riven with futility.
As I wend my way across the liminal tides,

the warm glow of the hearth
of high pines and peaks
becomes my Brocken spectre,
beyond reach.

Biographical Information

Joel Chace

Joel Chace has published work in print and electronic magazines such as *Lana Turner*, *Survision*, *E-ratio*, *Otoliths*, *Word For/Word*, *Golden Handcuffs Review*, *New American Writing*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. *Underrated Provinces* is recently out from MadHat Books. *Bone Chapel* is coming out soon from Chax. For more than forty years, Chace was a working jazz pianist. He is an NEH Fellow.

Wayne Mason

Wayne Mason is an experimental writer and sound artist from central Florida USA. He is the author of several chapbooks of poetry and experimental prose, including the most recent *The Death Factory* from LJMCD Communications. A product of his working-class surroundings, Mason is as influenced by machines and industrial landscapes as much as he is the cut-up method and deconstruction. He has used these as tools to create writing and syntactical deconstruction that has been published widely in the small press in both magazines and anthologies including *Cut Up! An Anthology Inspired By The Cut-Up Method Of William S Burroughs And Brion Gysin* (2014 Oneiros Books).

John Grey

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in *Shift*, *River And South* and *Flights*. Latest books, *Bittersweet*, *Subject Matters* and *Between Two Fires* are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in *Rush*, *White Wall Review* and *Trampoline*.

Erin Jamieson

Erin Jamieson's writing has been published in over 100 literary magazines, including two Pushcart Prize nominations and two Best of Net nominations. She is the author of four poetry chapbooks, including *Fairytales* (Bottle Cap Press) and a forthcoming poetry collection. Her debut novel *Sky of Ashes, Land of Dreams* was published by Type Eighteen Books. X/Twitter: @erin_simmer

Ken Pobo

Kenneth Pobo (he/him) is the author of thirty-three chapbooks and fifteen full-length collections. Recent books include *Bend of Quiet* (Blue Light Press), *At The Window*, *Silence* (Fernwood Press) and *It Gets Dark So Soon Now* (Broken Tribe Press). His work has appeared in *The Fiddlehead*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Amsterdam Quarterly*, *Grain*, *Nimrod*, *Mudfish*, *Hawaii Review*, and elsewhere.

R. Gerry Fabian

R. Gerry Fabian is a published writer and poet from Doylestown, PA. He has published five books of poetry: *Parallels*, *Coming Out of the Atlantic*, *Electronic Forecasts*, *Wildflower Women*, *Pilfered Circadian Rhythm* as well as his poetry baseball book, *Ball on the Mound*.

D.S. Malolai

DS Maolalai has been described by one editor as "a cosmopolitan poet" and another as "prolific, bordering on incontinent". His work has been nominated fourteen times for BOTN, ten for the Pushcart and once for the Forward Prize, and released in three collections; *Love is Breaking Plates in the Garden* (Encircle Press, 2016), *Sad Havoc Among the Birds* (Turas Press, 2019) and *Noble Rot* (Turas Press, 2022)

William Doreski

William Doreski lives in Peterborough, New Hampshire (USA). He has taught at several colleges and universities. His most recent book of poetry is *Cloud Mountain* (2024). He has published three critical studies, including *Robert Lowell's Shifting Colors*. His essays, poetry, fiction, and reviews have appeared in various journals.

L. Ward Abel

L. Ward Abel's work has appeared in hundreds of journals (*Rattle*, *Versal*, *The Reader*, *Galway Review*, *Worcester Review*, *Main Street Rag*, others), and he is the author of four full collections and eleven chapbooks of poetry, including *Green Shoulders—New and Selected Poems 2003–2023* (Silver Bow, 2023), and *The Teller's Road* (Bottlecap, 2025). He is a retired lawyer and teacher of literature, he writes and plays music, and lives in rural Georgia.

Aaron Barry

aaron barry is quickly becoming public enemy no. 1 in the contemporary lit scene. he's the author of the literary cherry bomb *echolalia review: an anti-poetry collection* (pere ube press, 2025), the infamous *femoid* (formerly calamari archive; now ind. p., 2025), *pound*, *flesh* (mcbussy publishing, 2025), and several other books. his work has been featured in over 100 publications and major media outlets worldwide. find him on ig: @aaronmbarry or on x: @jasperceylon2

Darren C. Demaree

Darren C. Demaree's poems have appeared or are scheduled to appear in numerous magazines/journals, including *Hotel Amerika*, *Diode*, *North American Review*, *New Letters*, *Diagram*, and the *Colorado Review*. He is the author of twenty-three poetry collections, most recently *So Much More* (November 2024, Harbor Editions). He is the Editor in Chief of the Best of the Net Anthology and Managing Editor of *Ovenbird Poetry*. He is currently living and writing in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.

Mark Young

Mark Young was born in Aotearoa New Zealand but now lives in a small town in North Queensland in Australia. He has been publishing poetry for over sixty-five years, & is the author of around eighty books, primarily text poetry but also including speculative fiction, vispo, non-fiction, art history, & an artist's book. Recently published books include *Balance*, from Neo-Mimeo Editions, Nualláin House, Monte Rio, California, & *From the Cave's jukebox*, from Sandy Press, Santa Barbara, California.

Joshua Martin

Joshua Martin is a Philadelphia based writer and filmmaker, who currently works in a library. He is a member of C22, an experimental writing collective. He is the author most recently of the books *punctuated avalanche* (Stone Corpse Press) and *en=raptur=ed [riverrun] & mingle* (Ranger Press) He has had numerous pieces published in various journals. You can find links to his published work at joshuamartinwriting.blogspot.com

Sam Kerbel

Sam Kerbel has been shortlisted for the 2024 Oxford Poetry Prize and nominated for the 2026 Pushcart Prize and 2026 Best of the Net Anthology. His first chapbook, *Can't Beat the Price* (2025), is available from Bottlecap Press. Poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Anthropocene*, *Burial Magazine*, *Dialogist*, *Iamb*, and *Lana Turner*, among other publications.

Marianne Brems

Marianne Brems is the author of the full-length poetry collections *Within the Trifles* (forthcoming in 2026) and *Stepping Stones* (2024) as well as three chapbooks. Her poems have also appeared in literary journals including *Cider Press Review*, *Front Porch Review*, *Remington Review*, and *Lavender Review*. She is a nominee for the Eric Hoffer Book Award 2025. She lives, cycles, and swims in Northern California.

Website: www.mariannebrems.com.

Damon Hubbs

Damon Hubbs is a poet from New England. His latest collection, *Bullet Pudding*, is forthcoming from Roadside Press in 2026. Recent publications include *Revolution John*, *Burning House Press*, *Horror Sleaze Trash*, *Apocalypse Confidential*, *The Literary Underground*, *RESSURECTION magazine*, and others. His poems have been nominated for the Pushcart and Best of the Net. He is a poetry editor at Blood+Honey and The Argyle Literary Magazine.

Aaron Belz

Aaron Belz holds a Masters in Creative Writing (Poetry) from NYU (1995) and a Ph.D. in American Literature from Saint Louis University (2007) where his research was recognized with a Walter J. Ong Award. He's also an alumnus of the Vermont Studio Center, where he received an NEA Grant to support his creative work. He's since published four collections of poems: *The Bird Hoverer* (BlazeVOX, 2007), *Lovely, Raspberry* (Persea, 2010), *Glitter Bomb* (Persea, 2014), and *Soft Launch* (Persea, 2019). He's also served as poetry columnist for *Paste Magazine* and *Capital Commentary*, book reviewer for *Publishers Weekly*, *Books & Culture*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and Poet Laureate of Hillsborough, North Carolina (2014-16). Belz now lives in St. Louis, where he is probably best known as founder of Observable Readings, a live poetry series that has been active since 2003 and named "Best of St. Louis" by *The Riverfront Times*.

James Croal Jackson

James Croal Jackson is a Filipino-American poet working in film production. His latest chapbook is *A God You Believed In* (Pinhole Poetry, 2023). Recent poems are in *The River*, *Mangrove Review*, and *Packingtown Review*. He edits *The Mantle Poetry* from Nashville, Tennessee. (jamescroaljackson.com)

Eric Lunde

Eric Lunde lives in Minneapolis MN USA. With many years of engagement in the arts, he has worked in audio art, performance, spoken word. He has numerous audio releases to his name. He also self-publishes poetry, theory, and graphic work. He works on his own line of block ink printed works under the imprint Kanshiketsu! which includes postcards and mail art, handmade books, prints. "To me life is a long stutter with occasional beneficial accidents. There are moments of clarity and then there's interference. Words, I don't think, should be spared from this routine, this pattern. And if anything, language is the perfect place to celebrate and engage in this condition."

Lindsay McLeod

Lindsay McLeod lives on the Australian coast where he is herded daily by his Blue Heeler, Mary. His poetry is easy to find online and most recently appears in *RAT'S ASS REVIEW* and *CACTI FUR*.

Mike Ferguson

Mike Ferguson is an American permanently resident in the UK. His most recent poetry publication is the erasure collection *the aran aphorisms* (Red Ceilings Press, 2024)

Sheila Murphy

A Pushcart-nominated poet, recent appearances include *Fortnightly Review*, *Lana Turner*, *Poetry*, *Poetry Bay*, and others. Most recent book publications are *I Want to Be Your Radio* (Unlikely Books, 2025), *Escritoire* (Lavender Ink, 2025), and *Permission to Relax* (BlazeVOX Books, 2023). She won the Gertrude Stein Poetry Award for *Letters to Unfinished J.* (Green Integer Press, 2003) and the Hay(ha)ku Book Prize for *Reporting Live From You Know Where* (Meritage Press, 2018). She lives in Phoenix, Arizona.

Her Wikipedia page can be found at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheila_Murphy_\(poet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheila_Murphy_(poet))

Nora Rawn

Nora Rawn works in subrights in publishing and lives in Brooklyn. She has pieces in Dodo Eraser, Dreck Lit, Be About It Press, Hawkeye, Bulb Region, Some Words, and Michigan City Review of Books among others.

Saba Zahoor

Saba Zahoor is an engineer, born in Kashmir and currently living in Saudi Arabia. She is a self-styled peasant poet who views poetry as a portal to alternate realities.