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COVER ARTIST'S STATEMENTS :

OUTSIDE FRONT COVER: "DARK MATTER PUNCTUATION" – GARY BARWIN (CANADA) is a writer, composer, multimedia artist, and the author of 18 books of poetry and fiction. His most recent collections are *The Wild and Unfathomable Always* (visual poems, Xexoxial Editions, 2014) and *Moon Baboon Canoe* (poetry, Mansfield Press, 2014). New and forthcoming books include *I, Dr. Greenblatt, Orthodontist, 251-1457* (fiction, Anvil 2015), *Sonosyntactics: Selected and New Poetry of Paul Dutton* (WLUP, 2015), and *Yiddish for Pirates* (Random House Canada, 2016.) He lives in Hamilton, Ontario, and at garybarwin.com. Barwin comments on our cover image, "Dark Matter Punctuation" as follows: "A hidden comma curled like a seahorse in the mind. Wraithlike periods, ghostly ellipses, the semi-colons, albino and invisible, spectres of phantom punctuation, the incorporeal spirits of the mouth, gathering the breathlessness of thought, run-on and undivided, as if between the narrow hands of parentheses. If the written word is weather fallen from the troposphere of speech, then, punctuation, rising from the apostrosphere, is the seasons, giving shape to the spoken year with its ecliptics and paradoxes, its long summer dashes, its bitter winter of exclamations. Grammar, the pre-emptive counsel of language before the chaos of the mouth. What would a sesqui-colon look like? A deca-colon? A giga-colon? The dark matter of punctuation, the metaphysic breath, the beginning, the ending, the between of things. An almost infinite antimatter of punctuation, a predomination of quotation marks, air quotes where there is no air, language speaking the world into being with care, compassion, inadvertence, pity, irony." – Note: Some of Gary Barwin's sound works can be found at: soundcloud.com/himself-1 and at PennSound.org

INSIDE BACK COVER: "LONG TIME AGO" – CARLA BERTOLA (ITALY) was born in 1935 in Torino. Bertola started producing Visual Poetry in the 80s and published books in many countries, where she had solo and collective exhibitions, and Sound Performances. She is in *The Last Vispo* plus other anthologies. She has edited *Offerta Speciale*, an International verbo-visual magazine, since 1978. About her work she says: "In the last 30 years, I want to stress two complementary aspects of my research calling them "Rivisitazioni" and "Interferenze". *Revisitations* are creative handwriting works, hyper-writings using "multilingual" meanings and signifiers done with pen and ink or felt-tip pens on paper or other materials, including works that revisit texts conceived or realized previously, creating installations indoors or in open spaces. The *Interferences* began in 1996 and are still revealing themselves as "phenomena where two sound or light waves can annul each other" and are present in her visual poems. Her recent work "Long Time Ago" created for this issue is a further Interference of a previous work, in another time, and a different media. Time goes on, once again.

OUTSIDE BACK COVER: "RELIQS" – ELISE PUDDY (CANADA) is an artist working out of Newmarket, Ontario. "For this series, I took unmixed inks, water and solvents, and froze them into cube forms. Then, on a horizontal surface, I laid down some pre-treated paper. Next, I placed the various prepared and colourized ice cubes onto different pre-treated paper sheets. Then, I left them to melt and dry. I like the idea of letting the properties of the materials work together with very little manipulation. This way, I



become less of a variable while allowing the physical properties of the materials to interact. The specific combinations of acrylic ink, metallic acrylic ink, water, solvents, and terra skin paper (which is a paper that is stone-based) combine into an emergent language. This series of statements arises from the inter-actions of the materials themselves, with the added elements of time and chance. The aleatory results feature fluid contours, metallic like sediments, transparencies, and opacities ensuing from a constrained control over the media."

PHOTO: "RAMPIKE SUNSET" EMMA PAVELEY (CANADA)

Editorial: *Rampike* “Time”

I began this publication in 1979 while studying at the Ontario College of Art. At that time, I had the pleasure of interacting with scores of energetic Toronto artists, writers, editors, and publishers, notably, the Underwhich Group. Back then, I felt that the small magazine landscape was too limited and a tad pedestrian. I thought it important to introduce a forum for more progressive art, writing, and theory. As a title, I chose the Canadian word “*rampike*” for its symbolic value. The lodge-pole pine regenerates when burning. If struck by lightning or forest fire, the pine releases winged seeds that float above the inferno. After the flames subside, seedlings descend and settle on the fertile ashen soil. A new generation. A “*rampike*” is the skeleton that remains from a tree struck by lightning, or burnt by fire. A phoenix image. A “*rampike*” is also a battering-ram, capable of cracking out of cultural confines. In 1979, I talked with Stan Bevington at Coach House Printing, and we devised an 18 inch tall and 6 inch wide format, in keeping with the “*rampike*” concept. Coach House has done wonderful work printing this magazine from the start, including this final issue. The original “tall” format sold exceedingly well, and we quickly found distributors on four continents. However, in the mid-90s many independent bookshops fell victim to big box stores, and the big box stores refused to sell our “tall” format, claiming that it didn’t fit their inventory. They insisted that they would not carry *Rampike* unless we published in a more conventional shape. The somewhat narrow format of the issue you hold in your hands today is a compromise, a gesture to our earlier “tall” *Rampike* shape. Small magazines rarely make profits, but can provide a grass-roots forum for both emerging and established talents who have something extraordinary to offer. *Rampike* has also served a diplomatic function, introducing Canadian talent to the world, and world talent to Canada. More recently, the digital explosion has transformed the publishing landscape. Times change. Many editors, myself included, work on a volunteer basis. After 36 years in print, with 54 issues, and over 4500 pages published, I’ve decided to pack it in, and devote more time to my own writing. *Rampike* has served its purpose. The goal of providing a forum for innovative expression of the period has largely been met. And, since 1979, other progressive new magazines have emerged on the literary horizon. Along the way, *Rampike* enjoyed a decade or so of funding from the Ontario Art Council, as well as support from the Canada Council for the Arts for the full duration of this periodical’s life. My warm thanks go to the stalwart editorial correspondents who helped make this publication a success, including Jim Francis, Joe Revells, James Gray, Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Alanna Bondar, Frank Davey, W.M. Sutherland, Stuart Ross, Victor Coleman, Paul Dutton, Richard Martel, and Peter Jaeger among *many* others. We’ve had so many other wonderful collaborators, but space prohibits mentioning them all. Over the years, we’ve built a marvelous cadre of Correspondents at Large (see; our Masthead listing our numerous colleagues). Since 1979, we’ve published an authors’ list that reads like a Who’s Who of ground-breaking innovators (view; our “36 Years of Quotable Quotes,” on p. 78). We’ve introduced three generations of fresh talent, and, we’ve featured established writers, artists and theorists from a broad range of Canadian and international groups, along with our Québécois correspondents, and our Indigenous fellow travellers. *Rampike’s* readership includes eminent artists, writers, and thinkers from around the globe. Editors rarely get due credit, but do provide opportunities, by opening doors for others. In this, my final *Rampike* editorial, I salute my fellow editors, at home and abroad. Editing does have its rewards. It’s been an extraordinary journey meeting, interviewing, and

publishing so many luminaries (the stories I could tell).

We are especially delighted that this “sunset” issue of *Rampike* features one of our finest assemblies of talent, all dealing with the topic of “time.” A story or poem is a structure, an idea, a home. We hope you’ll enjoy this “village” of ideas, homing in on time. *Rampike* continues to serve as an historical archive. In the near future, I will begin posting our many *Rampike* interviews on-line at our web-site (just google: “Rampike”). With cooperation from our past contributors, and on a non-profit basis, I’ll endeavour to post portions of back issues with the aim of reaching a new generation of readers through the digital sphere. I’ll conclude this editorial by thanking friends, family, correspondents, editors, artists, writers, theorists, readers, subscribers, designers, printers, and granting agencies, who contributed to our success! It’s been a labour of love, an ache in the rump, and a voyage of discovery. My warm and humble thanks to all our fellow travellers! – **Karl Jirgens, Editor & Publisher**



IMAGE: CLEMENTE PADIN (URUGUAY)

the ongoing
Daphne Marlatt

for Sveva Caetani

from the bottomless the immeasurable (without complexity) of Dantean
hell you picture cruelty's moloch mouth fanged empty-
eyed and wide-spread fingers grope for youth below

while envy looms in bony reptile skin, hissing –

1979 Iranian revolution, Chinese invasion of Viet Nam, civil war in El Salvador, IRA killings,
seizure of Mecca's Masjid al-Haram...

behind the everyday features of mankind

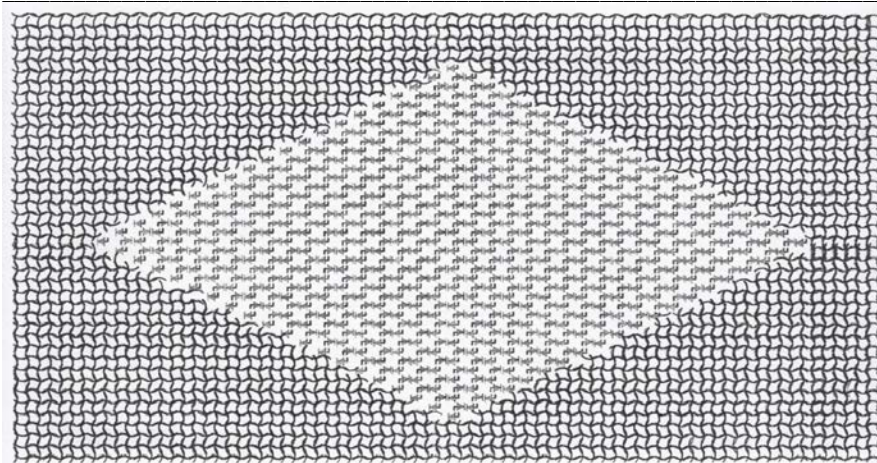
by 1984 old jags rise icy under transparent razor path anew
a version

Amritsar's Golden Temple invasion, Ghandi assassinated, mass killing of Sikhs,
Bhopal Union Carbide poisonings, IRA Brighton bombing, Ethiopia's famine ...

suspended over frozen peaks your (our) skeletal artery-netted feet step-stepping along
the blade (without use of your legs or not without pain by then) not the pre-supposed
but poised *To place a second ... after the agony and terror of the first ...* without goal without
reiteration (each the only
step

forward, going

Daphne Marlatt participated in the first iteration of *TISH*, whose open poetics became the base approach from which her later feminism could grow. An editor with *The Capilano Review*, *periodics* and *Island*, she also compiled and edited material for 2 documentaries for the BC Provincial Archives: *Steveston Recollected* (1975) and *Opening Doors: Vancouver's East End* (1979). In recognition of her life in writing, Marlatt was made a member of the Order of Canada (2006). Her play *The Gull*, the first Canadian play staged in the ancient, ritualized tradition of Japanese Noh, won the prestigious 2008 Uchimura Naoya Prize. Marlatt's, *The Given* won the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize in 2009. The poem above references two of Sveva Caetani's paintings from her great series, *Recapitulation*: "From the Abyss," painted in 1979, and "The Razor's Path," 1984.



"STATUE OF LIMITATIONS" BY GUSTAVE MORIN (CANADA)

TIME WILL TELL

Frank Davey

Time will tell in the strictest confidence.
 Time will tell whether times can be postcolonial.
 Time will tell whether Lady Gaga was gaga.

Time will tell a worldwide audience.
 Time will tell you off.
 Time will tell whether it will pardon Paul Claudel.

Time will tell us when it has expired.
 Time will tell whether it was too early to kill the penny.
 Time will tell whether daylight can be saved.

Time will tell whether YouTube was timely.
 Time will tell whether it is curved.
 Time will tell how *Great Expectations* really concluded.

Time will tell what's on the other side of heaven.
 Time will tell what's outside the box.
 Time will tell tales.

Time will tell what happened to Amelia Earhart. Or not.
 Time will tell whether there are angels or virgins in the afterlife.
 Time will tell whether civilization was a dead end.

Time will tell which Smartie got eaten last.
 Time will tell why I once watched every episode of *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*.
 Time will tell all we want to know about terrestrial extinctions.

Time will tell the location of every U-boat.
 Time will tell the secret of the baby whisperer.
 Time will tell whether your index funds are safe.

Time will tell who put the overalls in Mrs. Murphy's chowder.
 Time will tell whether unicorns could have been both graceful and biological.
 Time will tell why the lost chord was never found.

Time will tell whether I should have visited Alexandria.
 Time will tell whether poetry can be saved.
 Time will tell whether you will find a job or a mission.

Time will tell you to remember LISTSERVs.
 Time will tell all about the Sierra Madres.
 Time will tell how the creature from the lost lagoon got home.

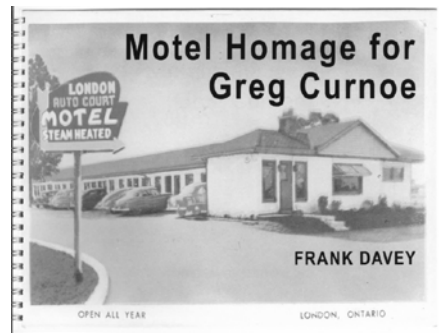
Time will tell whether history got it right.
 Time will tell you a fairy tale.
 Time will tell whether he did love her to the end of time.

Time will tell what it did to the river.
 Time will tell when it's time to go.
 Time will tell how close her sweet lips were to the phone.

Time will tell whether anyone can be alone.
 Time will tell whether timing brought me to you.
 Time will tell whether the turkey was in the oven too long.

Time will tell whether the beans get spilled.
 Time will tell whether anyone has smelled the coffee.
 Time will tell whether anyone is listening.

Time will tell whether anything was worth reading.
 Time will tell us about the test results.
 Time will tell him you called.
 Time will tell on your health.
 Time will tell on us.
 Time will.



FRANK DAVEY is one of the founding editors of *TISH*. Appointed to the Carl F. Klinck Chair of Canadian Literature at the University of Western Ontario in London (1990), he was one of the most active editors at Coach House Press from 1975-1992. He is the long-standing editor of *Open Letter* magazine. Davey has over 2 dozen books of poetry in print, and 15 non-fiction books. His recent books include; *aka bpNichol: A Preliminary Biography* (ECW Press, 2012), and *Motel Homage for Greg Curnoe* (Massasauga, 2014).

CHANCE AND TIME
Christopher Dewdney

Any random phenomenon — rain falling on a pond, the roll of dice, dead leaves blowing down a street — is the discovery of innumerable discrete influences converging, then solidifying, into a fixed history. It is only from the fleeting perspective of the present that these events have the appearance of chance. From the perspective of the past they retain only a residue of randomness, like the chance distribution of rocks in a Japanese Zen garden. It rains. It rained. The arc of each droplet of water rising from a splashing raindrop instantly becomes part of history, as immutable as the Roman empire or dinosaurs.

The present is a vanishing membrane, an infinitely thin pane of glass between the immovable past and the slippery future. *Now*, for all its elusiveness, lays a wide net — everything that happens in the universe is caught in its mesh. Anything that moves or will move passes from the future through the present to become frozen in an immovable past like statues.

From the perspective of the past nothing is random. The mountain wind that blew the leaves of a tree on which a woodpecker listened for insect larva under the bark. The leaves rustling in a mountain wind that momentarily interfered with a woodpecker's hearing so that a beetle larva was undetected. Eventually it pupated and emerged and tonight it flew through a cool summer evening to the lamp that illuminates my writing. All this is fixed within an immediate, irreducible history.

The elaborate, ungraspable dance of arbitrary phenomena, like the balls in a lottery cage, so mysterious and intangible, are a net of permutations emanating from the future. From the perspective of the present everything seems absolutely sensitive to everything else. The portable electric heater beneath my desk picks up sub-sonic vibrations in the floor and translates these into rattles and intermittent buzzes. The heating coils tick in accordance with the cool air currents that pass through the room.

Everything is a sign, means something, is the reflection of something else or condenses many destinies in one locale and everything has an entelechic intention as it relates to the process of its own transformation. Perhaps the notion of a fluid present is itself an illusion, perhaps the many phenomena that at first appear random are the influences of distant, interconnected events that though complex, are inevitable, tantamount to the frozen stasis of the past.

Christopher Dewdney's writing has been nominated for the Charles Taylor Prize for literary non-fiction, and four times for the Governor General's Award. Dewdney served as writer-in-residence at several Ontario universities, including U Windsor. He was featured in Ron Mann's film *Poetry in Motion* with William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Michael Ondaatje, and Tom Waits, among others. Dewdney has presented his poetics across North America and Europe, and creates acoustic and visual art, as well as incisive arts commentary for print, radio and television. His recent book, *Soul of the World: Unlocking the Secrets of Time* (Harper Collins), investigates perceptions of time itself.

THE PRION
Erin Mouré

“The street is an infrastructural good.” - Judith Butler
“Prions are not considered living organisms but may propagate by transmitting a misfolded protein state.” - Wikipedia

I bought candies.
I produced above and beyond zero.
I resisted the foliage.
It broke as hardware.
Noise of the bridge.

I didn't have anything after.
She lent me her consensus later.
We wedded us to winter after.
Light after light.
Afternoon we embellished.
Salubrious light, after all!

I soldiered on.
I depressed the *botón* in the centre of my forehead, automaton.
“Ground clearances of the upper Middle Ages.”
“Gethsemane.”
The unwilling conditions of bodily exposure (Butler).

After I stopped at the Italian Centre to buy candies.
Small yellow later.
Thereafter I stopped in the Portuguese bakery to ablate satellite accents from TV.
Its accent assuaged *o nosso lar*.
It entity my body later.
It she'd later.

Subversive light!
I didn't have anything else.
The pavement and the street are already understood as requirements of the body as it exercises its rights to mobility. (Butler 102)
A way of thinking as certain despondency of infrastructure.
A truncheon in the teeth or head breaks bone or skull
(street architecture).
An incision of the social (affidabit).
Survisual light!
I was not able to later.
I was waiting later.
I was going to go round later.
It's later. Sublime light later.

Hereafter,
getting late.

=ç=

ç No single word can adequately describe the character and the aim of this human striving¹⁰⁵. ç It seems to me that the creaturely dimension of human existence holds us back at this moment¹⁰⁵. ç The [confined] body can refuse to be a functional prisoner¹⁰⁷. ç Prisons depend on the reproduction of the body of the prisoner, and when that regulatory power fails, as it does, for instance, in the hunger strike, so too does the prison lose its capacity to function¹⁰⁷.

=ç=

Judith Butler from “Bodily Vulnerability, Coalitions and Street Politics,” read (book unaffordable) on Amazon.ca with interrupted pages, using *Look Inside!*

Erin Mouré has won the Governor General's Award and was nominated for a GG five times. She has won the Pat Lowther Memorial Award, and was shortlisted three times for the Griffin Poetry Prize, Mouré is also an active translator of Galician, French, Spanish, and Portuguese poetry into English, and a frequent collaborator. She is one of Canada's most prolific and influential experimental poets.

ARDELL

George Bowering

Everyone told me she was bad news and that I had no business sniffing after her. My own mind said that I should never be within a kilometer of her, and that I should never say her name inside my skull. You know the way you do.

I don't even like the name Ardell. It has a kind of trailer trash edge to it. It's the kind of name your sister's shameful friend has. I tried to get her name out of my head by making up another name for her, a silly name: Saligia. Kind of salty, I figured.

I can't tell you when I first met her or even when I first saw her, not the way stories do. But back in the day, not all *that* long ago, when I used to go to a lot of parties at people's houses or in bars, she would be one of the people that were there.

For a long time we might cast our eyes, as they say, on each other, but we never had a conversation. We might say "hi" the way people do in order to get on to the next person, but that was about it until the night of the Volkswagen Beetle. Well, I call it that because I can never remember even what month it was, except that the streets were wet and I was wearing my usual stupid jacket.

It started off there were six of us in the Volkswagen Beetle, getting rides home. That meant, you will know, that there were four people in the back seat, and as usual I was feeling the edge of panic, being under someone in the back seat. Ardell was driving, it was her car, if I may be allowed to continue this run-on sentence, and everyone was getting a ride home after an afternoon at that park on Twelfth where the Jamaicans play cricket. We all loved watching

cricket, not knowing the rules, enjoying the damp air, so it must have been October, let's say.

As it turned out, I was the last of Ardell's passengers, and there we were, coming back down Dunbar Street, when she said more than one word to me for the first time.

"Let's go to the White Spot. You hungry?" Okay, I think that you should skip the next paragraph. It has to do with what is coming, but I didn't write it.



GEORGE BOWERING: SELF PORTRAIT

The greedy glutton is the fiend's manacle. For he sticketh ever in the cellar or in the kitchen. His heart is in the dishes; his thought is all on the cloth; his life in the tun; his soul in the crock. Cometh forth before his Lord besmudged and besmeared, a dish in one hand, a bowl in the other. Babbleth with words, and wiggles as a drunken man that mindeth to fall, beholds his great belly; and the fiend laugheth that he bursteth. ¹⁾

If you did read that paragraph, I just have to add that where you find "he" I found "she" doing just as well. But the image in that paragraph seems at first an illustration from an early printed volume and later a nineteenth century cartoon.

Now that all the other human beings were out of the little car, I could see that it had been to the White Spot on other occasions. In fact it had been to various pizza places and hamburger joints, judging from the old and newer fast food wrappers on the floor. There were other things all over the place, too, smallish items of clothing, squashed open paperback novels, cigarette packages, plastic shopping bags and the like. I saw some loose change, too.

At the back of the White Spot there is a parking lot. A driver who doesn't want to go to the trouble of getting out of the car and into the building can just pull into a parking space, leave the headlights on, and wait for a server to take her order. The waiter provides a long tray that hooks onto windows slots on both sides of the front seat, and when the food arrives it is just under your chin.

Nowadays you can get just about any food known to the semi-foody world at the White Spot, but the restaurant was founded on hamburgers, back in the day before colourful

fast food joints appeared on every corner. Ardell ordered hamburger platters, which include french fries that have never been frozen, and coleslaw. She ordered three hamburger platters, and two huge root beers.

“I don’t know whether I can afford this,” I said

“My treat,” she said.

While we were waiting for our tray of food, Ardell smoked a cigarette. No thanks, I had said, and the windows were open. What could I say by way of objection? She attacked the cigarette. She was the noisiest cigarette smoker I had ever heard.

While we are waiting for the food to arrive I should describe Ardell a little. Well, she was a lot.

Not fat. You wouldn’t call her fat, or at least I wouldn’t. She was what our grandparents used to call “pleasingly plump.” Her clothes always seemed to be about to open, here and there. The top two buttons of her silk blouse, and another button halfway down, say. A zipper open a little. A sock slipped down and gathering at the top of her brown oxford. Ardell in her roundness threatening to come out through the spaces. When she lifted her weight to shift where she was sitting, she was bounty and peril at the same time.

She was slurping another cigarette when the uniformed young man arrived with our sustenance. I received my end of the long metal tray and hitched it into my window slot. By the time I had that done, she was halfway through her first hamburger. Paper napkins were falling to the floor. There was hamburger juice on her chin and then there was hamburger juice shining on the bare skin above her ample breasts. That is another word our parents would use—ample. On later occasions I would try to lick that juice off her, but this first time I just took furtive glances.

She was finishing the second hamburger, and was now pinching up french fries while I applied a little white plastic fork to my coleslaw. I went to pick up my half a hamburger but I was too slow. She let me share my fries with her, and drained her root beer.

“Ready?” she asked. She had used her last paper napkin on her chin anyway. Then she had dropped it somewhere.

I proffered the rest of my root beer in its big heavy glass mug. She shook her head and turned on the headlights to signal the guy to come and retrieve the tray. I dropped a dollar and something on it. Remember, this was in the day when you could drink beer all night for two bucks.

To tell the truth, I was both put off and turned on by this scene. The inside of a Volkswagen Beetle is not what you would call commodious, and Ardell was filling more than her share of it, so I think I can be excused for feeling a kind of underfed desire, if you want to use that kind of language.

Later on I would sometimes wonder whether I were listing her seven items or my own. Of course there were more than seven, but the others were all redundant or venal at most.

Anyway, I think that you will agree that a slightly overweight woman while she is still pretty young is more attractive, let’s say desirable, than a slightly skinny one. I agree with my friend Will that what he calls “kachunga” kegs are a turn-on, while those legs you see models strutting down the runway with are off-putting. Oh, there are probably some strange guys who like those emaciated ones, I don’t know.

I thought she was going to invite me in at her place, but instead she dropped me off at my place. I was and am pretty slow when it comes to sparking a girl, but I did manage to suggest that we might see one another again, not in a crowd at a smoke-filled house but as two people, or maybe half of four people.

“Can you cook?” she asked.

“I am more of a warm things up person,” I said.

“Maybe I can teach you.”

“To cook.”

“Don’t get smart, Delsing,” she said. “Not right yet.”

As she Volkswagened away I wondered what those last three words were meant to convey. Then I thought oh hell, if anything is going to happen, it will happen. I had books to read, essays to write, a laundromat to visit.

One of the books I had to read and write an essay about was Dante’s *Inferno*. I found two things interesting about Dante’s visit to the nether reaches. One, he met a lot of people he had known aboveground in Italy. And two, he noticed that the punishments down there were always creatively fitted to the bad things the sufferers had done up in Florence or wherever. So the guy that hoarded belongings all his life has to walk around with all his furniture tied in a pile on his back. The guy that cheered for the New York Yankees gets hit over the head all day with a Louisville Slugger.

I made that one up.

But here is what the lazy gink has to face in eternity. He has to spend almost every minute of every day, running as fast as he can. In fact, most of the people in hell don't even have minutes and days, but only a kind of fiery eternity. The lazy gink? The sloth? Constant running, and constant checking of wristwatch.

Well, back to the present, or rather what the present was back then, and I am hoping that you are not tired of smart cracks about time, but I'll understand if you are. I had just got inside the door to the basement in which I had a room at the time, when I heard the screech of Volkswagen brakes and a toot of Volkswagen horn.

Out I went and there she was. I didn't ask myself where she got the chocolate bar but she was holding a chocolate bar in one hand and the steering wheel in the other. She didn't have to say, "get in." A lot of people would have offered their passenger a bite.

I don't have to describe getting there and getting inside the building and inside her basement suite. A basement suite in those days meant more than one room. More than one room meant a kitchen and a room with a bed and desk in it. In another corner of the basement there was a toilet and shower and sink in a little cubby.

It's how we lived in those days, and we never imagined what we would live like now, or at least I didn't.

There was a little table in the kitchen, and two chairs. I seized the moment by brushing food wrappers off one of the chairs and sitting on it. I did not take off my coat because I had taken it off at my place. There were items of clothing hanging from most things.

"Baby ants," I said. "Strawberry seeds, my bank account, the chance that the Red Sox will win the American League pennant."

"What are you on about?" she asked, from up close.

"That's small talk," I said, and if I had been holding a book open I would have snapped it shut. I prized my wit, especially in moments when I was nervous.

"I guess I have to find a way to put an end to that," she said, and she leaned down and kissed me on the forehead, then on the mouth. I could taste chocolate and peanuts.

Along with her size came a little more than average strength. It is to that strength that I attribute the fact that I was quickly into the other room, propelled by hands that were insistent and perhaps still holding food. Down on the bed I went and down on me she went, in all ways of understanding that phrase. Her clothing seemed to come off without help as she applied her eager attention to mine.

You are not going to get a detailed poontang scene here, but I would like to mention a few things. It was pretty loud. It went on for a long time. Just about every fluid you can imagine showed up here and there. Many times I lay flat, trying to catch my breath, happy to have survived—just before she seized me for more.

I would have to say that before that night and early morning I had experienced less poontang than the average young man. I figure that Ardell had me caught up by midmorning. I know that there was not one part of my body that she had not had in her mouth and vice, as they say, versa.

It was not that I didn't have somewhere to go in the late morning; it is just that I didn't go there. I stayed, exhausted, in Ardell's messy bed. Once I saw her reach toward her cigarette package and give up when it looked as if she would have to get out of bed to get a smoke.

"You want a cup of coffee?" she asked, about eleven.

"Matter of fact I would," I said.

But she was not about to get up and make me one.

I was getting itchy to go, but too damned tired. If Ardell was itchy anywhere she was just a bit too lazy to scratch. I did wonder how she could go so long without a pizza or a sandwich. And so we dozed the day away, except for those times when Ardell had to have a little more of me.

I think I remember getting to classes the next day, and I know I do remember that during the weeks that followed, I got to see Ardell eat a lot more junk food and impulse purchases from the supermarket. Once I watched without saying a word, while she went through two long packages of fig squares. If I had been a refrigerator she would have gone through me in a single night. Okay, that is an exaggeration, but I do remember her consuming me greedily on many a night, on many a carpet or porch or staircase.

I say "greedily" with justification.

Have you ever seen one of those big shiny stuffed toads with stitches down the belly and maybe the word "Nicaragua" across the back? They shine as if shellacked and are usually as big as you would ever want a toad to be. They are the sort of thing one might bring back from a trip to Central America, as one might bring baby alligator-claw ear rings from Louisiana. I brought one back from Costa Rica because I couldn't afford an expensive souvenir. It disappeared the last time I got married.

Well, Ardell had them all over her place. They were all colours of the toad community, and all of them pretty big. They were on flat surfaces all over her place, including the floors. They had names from Mexico to the Phillipines. Some were on top of others. I think that Ardell thought of herself as a collector. Maybe I should have too. Can you call someone a toad hoarder?

One night I finally asked her, "What's with all the frogs?"

"Toads," she said. "I am not a frog girl."

"Why so many? Wouldn't one toad do? Maybe two?"

What a stupid bit of dialogue, I was thinking. I think I was avoiding a discussion of something else, some other behaviour.

"If I could do it, I would have them all, all the stuffed toads in the world."

"You are an appetite girl," I said.

"Give me that," she said, and she did not reach for a toad.

A lot of people think that being greedy is a way of showing your egotism, but I don't think that was the way with Ardell. Have you ever known a boy who wants to eat all the time, who's just hungry? I think it was that way with Ardell about everything, the hamburgers, the stuffed toads, me, the highway lane with no traffic in it. She drove her Beetle hungrily, and while she did so, buttons slid out of their buttonholes in her blouse.

She satisfied her appetite whenever she could. While she was finishing a third bagel with cream cheese, I might sarcastically suggest thinking about the starving children in some sub-Saharan forest.

"Africa!" she said, while I reached across the table and took the dab of cream cheese from her lovely chin and poked my finger in her mouth. "Lots of people I know have been to Africa! I never get to go to Africa! I will never see the Zamboni River!"

"Zambezi."

"Or that one. Why the hell should Margot Thiesman get to sail up the Zamboni, while I have to sit here starving in an overlit joint named after a dead football player?"

"Ice hockey."

I knew that she was kidding. She did have virtues, and while none of them were on any Church list that I know about, they made me want to be with her. One of them was her sense of humour, especially her sense of humour about herself.

"Look at that woman in that huge BMW," she said once, while making a lane change that caused lots of sound nearby. "Why does that little snip get that big roomy sedan while I have to operate a vehicle I am wearing as much as driving?"

"Maybe if you shovelled out some of the food wrappers and old psychology magazines, there would be more room," I suggested, hoping that we were in comic mode.

"Hold the wheel," she said, while tearing the plastic off a pepperoni stick.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's automobile," I continued.

Maybe people who are hungry all the time are bound to be envious. I had a picture flash through the part of my mind that was not occupied by fright related to our path among fast cars. There was smooth curvy Ardell standing on the side of a pond, but her head was a dog's head, and in the dog's mouth was a bone.

Now I know that if the picture had not been replaced by my quick concern for the pedestrian who was considering the promised safety of the crosswalk, I would have seen Ardell the canine looking down at her reflection in the pond, and dropping her bone as she tried to get the reflected one that was just now rising from the other dog's mouth.

Everyone told me they weren't jealous of me for having a fling or relationship with Ardell. By jealous you mean envious, I said. Whatever, they said. It's your funeral. That's just a figure of speech, isn't it, the part about a funeral, I said. I said it to myself again later. I whispered, "Hedda," just to tempt the little fates in the shadows around me.

You can skip that paragraph, too. Actually, it's too late for that, isn't it?

All right, you are going to say, here was a young woman who was not skinny the way modern advertising said she was supposed to be, who ate eagerly and greasily, like a Labrador retriever at a bowl of Alpo, who left a trail of detritus that she couldn't bother picking up, who shamelessly devoured her partner in bed and on the floor, who had to have more than her share of everything, and who begrudged anyone else who had what she wanted, from the last slice of pizza to the passing lane on Highway 1. Here's the question: why are you still within a city block of her?

Here is the question you might have asked if you'd had the luck to be in my position: who does she think she is?

I never had the nerve to ask her that, or maybe I just thought it wasn't my place to ask her. If she would lift her face from what she was doing to me and say, "You are one lucky son of a bitch, Delsing," who was I to contradict her? So I understood, when she took the passing lane from someone who might have had it first, she may have as well shouted that the

Rampike 24 /1

other driver was privileged to be on the same freeway. If Solomon had been riding with us, he might have said, you know the Lord hates seven things, and the first one I have to mention is a proud look. What's his name when he's at home, she probably would have answered, reaching across me to get the Big Turk out of the glove compartment.

"I went to Sunday School as much as you did, Delsing," she said to me one time while I was trying to catch my breath. "I still read the Bible. Do you?"

"Once in a while," I said.

"I was reading that dork Paul's letter to the Galatians last week. I know all there is to know about his wages of the flesh. You got anything against my flesh?"

"Often," I said.

"There you go," she said. "You are right now as close to heaven as you are ever going to get."

"Wasn't heaven I was worried about," I said, kind of quietly.

"What?"

"Nothing. Nothing. Speaking of being close to heaven, how do you feel about tall buildings?"

"I am not afraid of heights, if that's what you mean."

"You know we are in a serious earthquake zone?"

"Show me a tower," she said, nabbing a parking spot someone else had been waiting for, "and I'll go to the top."

"Superbia," I said.

"Suburbia?"

"Superb, darling."

Now would be a good time to tell you how it ended, our relationship, I guess you'd call it.

I had, of course, heard what she had to say when another driver wounded her sense of proper automotive behaviour. I had heard how loudly she could exclaim when the doughnut she had just consumed had been the last one in the box. But these reactions, I took it, were meant to be largely humorous. I did once see her throw a toaster across her kitchen after it had malfunctioned, the sort of thing that small appliances often did to their owners. Once, when I filled in a few squares in her Friday morning *New York Times* crossword, she crumpled the newspaper in her two hands and began eating it. I managed to laugh a bit while I pulled a few headlines out of her mouth.

But one night when, I have to admit, we were both bathed, as they say, in perspiration, I reached into the drawer of the bedside table and retrieved the only chocolate bar there, Crispy Crunch, as I recall. She stared at me in a way that was supposed to draw my hand toward her. But I lifted the treat, unwrapped it, and placed crispy in my mouth. A second later, crunch followed.

This action was quite unlike me, as you have likely gathered.

I had retrieved chocolate bars from that drawer on earlier occasions, but on those occasions, the chocolate bars were employed to join a few of Ardell's appetites. That is to say, they had been allowed to melt between our heated bodies and then provide a snack both sweet and salty.

Not this time.

It started with a roar you might expect from a sea lion that had been exposed to a Cher Christmas music CD. My skin crawled, then tried to snap back. I jumped naked out of bed and stood for only a second or two before the missiles started to hit me and miss me. The soft ones came first—bed clothes and pillows. Then a clock, an ashtray, a small chair. All this while the roar was turning into a wail such as an animal in a bad dream might make, an animal you think you might have heard in childhood. I tried to find my clothes, and then I gave that plan up and tried to get out of the room. Things kept hitting me. I knew that when she ran out of things I would become a thing, and I knew that she would not be satisfied to throw me once. Bolts of lightning were coming out of her nostrils. An oil fire crept up the front of her torso. I had to get away from the sound that was trying to join my eardrums together. I made it out of the room just before napalm bloomed across the floor.

I pulled a curtain off the little living room windows and made it to the street only half-naked. Flames were leaping from every window on the block, and I could hear sirens approaching. I walked in my bare feet on disgusting sidewalks all the way home, arriving in the darkness without a key. I used the curtain to make my fist quiet as it broke a basement window.

I understood that such a scene is something you were not supposed to keep bottled up, but I was in no mood to hear people say that they had warned me, you see? I finally did tell my friend Dorothy because before she went to work at the Bank of Commerce, she took a

major in psychology at UBC. Dorothy told me that Ardell was angry at herself. It wasn't me she wanted to kill. That made me feel a lot better, as you might imagine.

2. IN FAIRNESS

I had seen him giving me the eye at four or five parties. He thought he was being casual, but men that age tend to overrate their subtlety. After a few times I started coming to house parties and bars with a fair amount of cleavage showing. It wasn't that I was looking for someone to bop—I guess I just felt like giving some young lothario a lesson. Of course it turned out that he wasn't a young lothario. He was just young.

One night after a party had run out of beer and wine I gave a bunch of people rides home. I don't remember whether I offered him a lift or whether he climbed into the back of my VW along with several other people. Whatever, he was sitting in the front seat after everyone else had been dropped off. I have no idea what he was expecting. He was a kind of smartass, you know, the kind of guy that isn't very sure of himself and has to chatter inanities, hoping that that will make things occur that will just happen to him. I usually find a way to piss these guys off. I decided to give this one a chance. I took him to the drive-in burger place.

What was going on here? Partly I wanted to initiate him, and partly I was hungry after a night of beer and wine and cigarettes and no nooky, you should pardon my vocabulary.

Not that I was thinking of the last-named activity with this guy. What kind of future was there with a guy whose name is a present participle? He was skinny but not lithe, if you get what I mean. He always wore white shirts and they were always a little unevenly tucked in. His hair was limp and tended to fall in his face, and he could have used some clippers up his neck. His shoes looked as if somebody in the military had thrown them away, and there were two pens in his shirt pocket. I had heard rumours that he thought of himself as a young poet, but he looked more like an extra in a dirty movie set in a motel.

I guess he had a pretty good voice, and I suppose I was interested to see whether there was a scrap-end of something potentially redemptive down inside somewhere. When the carhop arrived in his uniform made of unnatural materials, I ordered quite a few hamburgers and very large milkshakes. When the stuff came I saw that it took him forever just to execute the simple act of unwrapping a burger. I was started on my second before he selected a french fry. When he wasn't looking I undid another button on my shirt.

I wanted to wipe the second half of my second burger on his face.

"Are you going to church later this morning?" I asked him.

"I am spiritual but not religious," is what he said.

"I wish I had a cheeseburger for every time I have heard that boast," I told him.

He sulked a while, and bit about a millimeter off his burger.

"You are fastidious," I said. "You are guilty of temperance. You should have been a climate," I added, hoping he might figure it out.

When I lit up a cigarette as one would do after a snack in those days, he rolled his window back down. He didn't object to my cig, and he did not get all high and mighty about being an abstainer. There was just a certain *feel* in the air, and damn it, I decided to push things. I let my shirt come loose on his side. After the carhop had left with the long tray, our hero was left with a balled up napkin in his right hand. He was looking for a place to deposit it, as if all Volks drivers had sanitary disposal units in their coupés. I took the almost unmarked tissue away from him and tossed it on top of the other stuff already on the floor behind us. Then I sighed deeply and made as much noise as I could sucking on my cigarette.

When I dropped him off at his grotto, he didn't suggest anything salubrious, so I drove home feeling a mixture of itchiness and pissedoffedness. Or most of the way home. For some reason the image I had of this loser in his poorly-chosen garments was replaced by an image of him without them, an awkwardly stick-legged demi-virgin weighing about as much as an average German shepherd. Dog, that is. It's not that I was partial to muscleless undergrads with bad haircuts. I guess I was just angry enough and horny enough to subject this poor shnook to a sleepless night.

I honked my horn outside his basement window and told myself one candy bar and I'm off. I was just started on the second one when he came out the door, a well-tucked white shirt in the surrounding gloom. It was a cool November evening, and this spider didn't even have his own web. I took him home and asked him the four questions I would allow him before taking him apart.

"Are you a little afraid?"

"Not exactly afraid," he said, and he carried a plate and a fork over to my sink. "A little nervous, maybe."

"Are you excited?"

"More like confused," he said, while sweeping crumbs off the table onto his other hand. "Is this an examination?"

"Are you hungry? Thirsty?"

“Nope. It’s pretty near the end of the day. I think I’ve pretty well consumed all I really need for one day.” He actually turned my gas station calendar to November. Picture of a mechanic with no shirt on.

“Do you mind if I eat something?”

I think he caught the look in my eyes at last.

“Uh, uh . . .” was all he could say before I lowered a shoulder and propelled him into the other room. There were a few books on the bed, but I took him for a reader anyway. He was intent on removing his glasses and getting them safely on my bedside table. He had to push some stuff off it first.

I pretty well had to show him everything. He might have been a thirteen-year-old boy, he was so slow. He growled some but he wouldn’t say a word. I gobbled him and then I said words that opened his eyes wide. I think I shook the rest of his words out of him, he was so quiet. Quietly, he held a handful of me in his hand and in his other hand. He was mainly bones himself, and I think that he was gaga over a quantity of what he would later call pulchritude. I get this all the time from semi-educated lotharios. They think pulchritudinous means amply desirable. Well, it originally meant speckled, like a perch.

For the rest of that night and well into the next day I was his fish. It was not that I couldn’t get enough of him. It was just that there was not all that much to get. And it was not until early afternoon that he was too exhausted to try tidying up after each episode.

I showed Mr Fastidious a lot of new things over the next few weeks. I surprised him, as they used to say, on my balcony, in my car parked on a downtown street, in the scant woods on the edge of the university campus. I could not persuade him to come into the Safeway washroom with me. And I could not make him skip any classes.

“I’ll do more than Milton can to justify his way to man,” I promised him.

“It’s God’s ways,” he said, quick as a wink. “And you aren’t malt.”

“I am champagne, and you are too sober by far,” I informed him.

“But I am not your toad,” he said, referring to my fine collection of inert amphibians.

“You had better check your belly for stitches every morning when you wake up,” I suggested.

“You are a slave to your appetites,” he said, edging away. But not quickly enough. I grabbed what there was left of him.

And so it went. I think that I introduced him, among other things, to his first really thorough conflict regarding his own self-image. He really really wanted to be good. He told me in one of his many moments of weakness that he had made a deal with God or someone like that to be a true straight arrow. He would never smoke, never drink spirits, never stray from the virginal path and then the faithful path, never use idle curse words, and who knew what else. This was a kid, I imagined, who wished that Moses had come down off that mountain with *three* tablets. I think he would have been proud of his life plans if pride weren’t a sin.

In other words, here I was for the first time in my life, up against, as they say, mister chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness and humility. He would have been the rebel devil who sailed up out of Hell right into the parking garage in Heaven.

But on the other hand (and foot, and other parts that were not extremities) he squirmed when he could have squirmed away from an eyelash under a scrotum. I taught him to say “yes please” and “right there, yes there,” at the correct time. If he was not experiencing a conflict, he was practicing the divine or diabolic art of being two different people in the same bed, which, I might add, has always been just fine with me.

One night or early morn, while gently puffing on a cigarette and enjoying the weight of his sleeping head on my far shoulder, I came to wonder. Is it that I have freed his second self to share this bed, or is it maybe that we are one self, together at last? I would be a very happy *yin* to his *yang*. I had encountered my share of yangs, and Delsing’s was if anything, average, but I have to admit that I had taken my own behaviour more for granted before coming up against the seven deadly virtues.

That idea got me thinking about these numbers. All right, I thought, let us admit that seven is a good number for deadly sins. Seven is nice. One for each day of the week. Seven is a prime number, and all that magic stuff. But why did we have to have the seven big deal virtues to go up against them? Why didn’t God or Pope Gregory come up with, say, 85 holy virtues, outnumber those sins and send them scurrying home with their yangs between their legs?

Then Delsing could have made an honest woman out of me.

Sure.

But here is the thought I came to about the same time that the sleeping saint last put his unconscious hand on my lower belly. I was created to test his resolve, to see whether he could rely on his childhood oath to keep him away from temptation. Or better, to experience temptation and call up his reserves of won’t power to. No, that kind of thought is for those who go to church and are afraid to let themselves walk into the deep middle of religion.

Submerge. Or the opposite—make up a story in which the lusted one goes berserk and has to be escaped with one's still quite virtuous life. For years from then on, he could lie in bed alone, with a fond smile on his face. What I am saying is that maybe I was an angel sent to make a complete human being out of the boy with the trembling mouth.

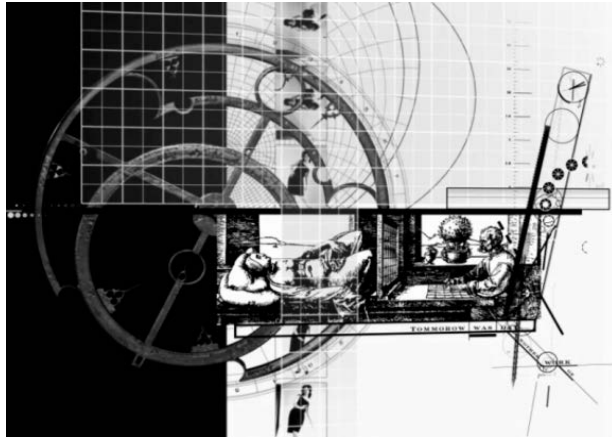


1) Arnold Guyot, Frederick Augustus Porter Barnard's description of a glutton in "Text 8 – *Ancrene Wisse* (1890).

George Bowering is Canada's first Poet Laureate. He is a novelist, poet, editor, professor, historian, tireless supporter of fellow writers, author of more than 80 books of poetry, fiction, autobiography, biography and youth fiction. His writing has been translated into French, Spanish, Italian, German, Chinese and Romanian. Two time Governor General's award winner (for poetry and fiction), his recently released memoir *Pinboy* (ISBN 9781897151938) is published by Cormorant Press (2012).

TOC: A New-Media Novel App

from Steve Tomasula



TOC is a multimedia epic about time: the invention of the second, the beating of a heart, the story of humans connecting through time to each other and to the world. **TOC** is a novel that uses words, music, exquisite illustration, and animation to tell its story, **TOC** re-imagines what the book can be. When read on the iPad, **TOC** retains the intimate, one-on-one experience that a reader can have with a book as it draws on the power of other art forms to immerse readers in an altogether

new multimedia story. An evocative fairy tale with a steampunk heart, **TOC** is a breath-taking visual novel, an assemblage of text, film, music, photography, the spoken word, animation, and painting. It is the story of a man who digs a hole so deep he can hear the past, a woman who climbs a ladder so high she can see the future, as well as others trapped in the clockless, timeless time of a surgery waiting room: God's time. There is a history of people who are fixed in the past, those who have no word for the future, and those who live out their days oblivious to both. **TOC** features interactive navigation, story telling through text, audio, art, music, animation, memory remembers where you left off reading, iPad Settings to clear and start a new reading. It has been exhibited in museums, galleries, and stage venues throughout the U.S. and Europe. Originally released on DVD, **TOC** received the Gold Medal Winner: Best Book of 2010 (awarded by eLit Awards) and, The Mary Shelly Award for Outstanding Fictional Work (awarded by the Media Ecology Association), 2010. – See: **TOC support: www.tocthenovel.com**

TOC Contributors: Steve Tomasula, author; Stephen Farrell, creative direction and design; Matt Lavoy, animation; Christian Jara, DVD authoring, programming, sound engineering, additional animation and narration; with additional contributions from Zoe Bellof; Michelle Grabner; Dan Harris; Paul Johnson; Jason Lahr; Joyelle McSweeney; Chris Pielak; Chris Speed; Maria Tomasula; and Dan Warner.

TOC is an entrancing digital novel that explores temporality's elusiveness and how, ultimately, the more we think about time, the less we really know about it. Reminiscent of Borges, Calvino, and Ballard, TOC functions less through plot than thesis, less through character than idea. Nothing short of brilliant. - Lance Olsen

With stunning visuals, a compelling and complex narrative, a gripping soundtrack, and a user-friendly but satisfyingly sophisticated interface, TOC is one of the few pieces of digital media that feels fully integrated and profoundly literate. It brings us to the trailhead of the genre's future, and then takes us a good way down the path. - Brian Evenson

TOC is an evocative, steampunk fairytale. It also represents a new literary genre: a marriage of conventional narrative and image use with the possibilities for fiction that are opened up by the computer. - Yuriy Tarnawsky, *Rain Taxi*.

Exploring untrodden paths out of the groove of language, TOC releases us to a different approach to temporality that may also provide a cure for...chronology. - Jean-Yves Pellegrin, *Études anglaises: revue du monde Anglophone (Paris)*.

ther was ths boat

bill bissett

n we wer all on it
n th shinglee side planks
holding ths tub 2gethr made
klak klak in th northern winds
n ocean rain

now th wind was from th west
altho we wer hedding south or
wanting 2 th glacial nites
wer bcumming 2 intemprate
4 us like wait long enuff n

we wud surelee see wun uv
us walk on watr th far south
was calling us it was
brillyant ths voyage n veree
dangrous climate change
n sew on oftn intrfeering
with progressiv smoothness
what they usd 2 call smooth
sailing that was hardr 2 find
thn evr a metaphor from
another time

suddnlee th winds from all direk
syuns stoppd a lull in all our
lives n wuns th spaghetti turmoil
was ovr n all th dreems came
tumbuling down

we cud see our selvs evn as th
lite grew mor dim still chang
ing still wanting not wanting
still n fast quiklee entering
th shadow we all wer

wher ther is nevr anee wind
or air

bill bissett was born halifax nova scotia nov 1939 came 2 vancouver 58 startid blewointment press 6383 reedings sound work, seek 2 keep on xploring byond narrativ as well as lyrik politikul romanse n storee telling, singr n lyricist with LUDDITES band alternativ rock basd in london ont, moovd 2 ontario 85 now basd in toronto sins 1992, creates paintings, poetree, organizes reading events, art shows. Awards include; milton acorn peopuls poets award, 1990, dorothy livesay bc book award poetree, 1993. In the *Paris Review*, Jack Kerouac called bill bissett the greatest living poet.

7 years for the body Dennis Cooley

7 years for the body
to regenerate replace it
self completely new
except it is the same
old self everyone can tell
it's you & yet
it's not
you you are no longer you the same
things have changed and you are now you
even though you are the same
bump where the finger broke
same slicing up & across
the body same long
boney feet same madness
for rhyme & pun same black
hair only grayer
you:
the body:
entirely different all the same
should you live
so long
*but not until
it all goes
in every thing goes
in so far as it goes
as far as that goes*
*we all learn
to forego
do not once
fore close
it is not
far to go
for so it goes*
on & on
to the next line
the next time
to be so well
coordinated so equal
in measure so fine
in timing & in time
of grace & beauty
i will be putting you on

Dennis Cooley has served as a teacher, editor, anthologist, publisher, critic, and theorist. He was a founding editor of Turnstone Press, and a founding member of the Manitoba Writers' Guild, where he served as President. Cooley has published over 20 titles. His book, *The Vernacular Muse* (Turnstone, 1987), examines Canadian critical theory. His recent books include *Abecedarium* (Alberta UP, 2014), *The Stones* (Turnstone, 2013), and, *by word of mouth*, Edited by Nicole Markotić (Wilfred Laurier UP, 2007).

JUST RIDDEM Lillian Allen

Time is not an answer
we do not worship time
we worship God
But which is more merciful?
Some would say;
the moment becomes imminent
the seasons become imminent
There is no reasoning to creation
just riddim

Lillian Allen, poet, vocalist, lyricist, born in Jamaica, is Canada's foremost "dub poet," performing verses on social and political issues in a rhythmic, declamatory vocal style to reggae accompaniment. Her LPs *Revolutionary Tea Party* (1986) and *Conditions Critical* (1987), the former including such notable songs as "I Fight Back," "Riddim an' Hardtimes," and "Birth Poem" were released and distributed by Allen's label, VERSE TO VINYL, and both albums won Juno Awards (for best reggae/calypso albums). Lillian Allen is a Professor in Liberal Arts & Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design University.



TEXTUAL IMAGE:
DIANE SCHOEMPERLEN
(CANADA)

Diane Schoemperlen's *Man of My Dreams* was nominated for the Governor's General's Award. Her *Forms of Devotion* won the Governor General's Award (1988). She also won the 2007 Marian Engel Award. She is an editor, visual artist, short-story writer and novelist. Her recent collection, *By the Book: Stories and Pictures* (Biblioasis Press, 2014) was critically acclaimed in the *New York Times*: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/07/books/review/by-the-book-by-diane-schoemperlen.html>

TWO POEMS

Marty Gervais

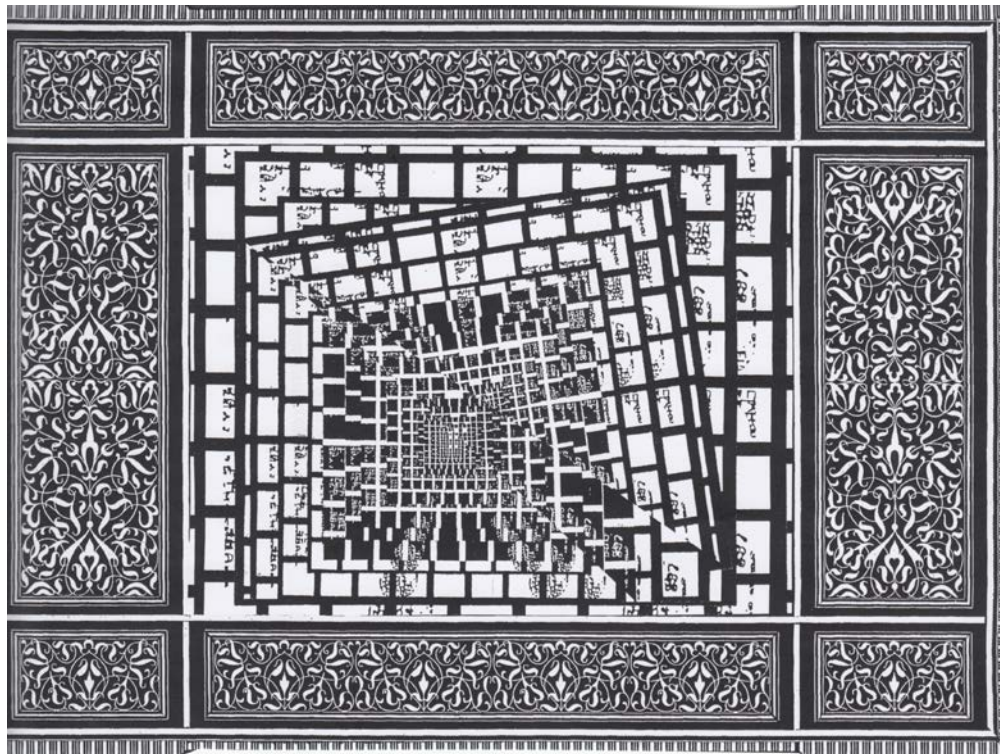
Call Me Crazy

Why is it in the middle of
our talk, I see this figure stir —
a dark sinuous shape swiftly making
its way through the rooms?
Why can I not reach out and stop it?
Why do I tell you, “I think that
was Lucifer!” Why do you think
I’m crazy to say this? Did you not
see his tail? Did you not feel him
passing you by in the cold room of
this April day? Did you not sense
his silence as your innocence
slips away into the trusting blue sky?
Is this prayer for him? Does he cower
at the sight of a clock whose hands
suddenly make the sign of the cross?
Did you not want to say something?

Woman On a High Wire

Marty Gervais
I think she’s a fake —
I mean, who wears a dress
on a thin wire? Who wears a dress
on a cloudy day high among
the clouds? Why wear a dress at all?
Is this a lie? Appropriate?
But I see her clearly
pacing that thin line
Seems so calm, carefree
Yet, what a stupid girl
tiptoeing in harm’s way
perched dangerously
above the abyss
What’s she thinking?

Marty Gervais is Poet Laureate of Windsor, past winner of the Acorn/Plantos People’s Poetry Award, internationally syndicated journalist, and author of the bestseller *The Rumrunners* (Biblioasis Press, ISBN-10: 1897231628). He teaches editing and publishing at the University of Windsor.



“MISE EN ABYME” CHRISTIAN BURGAUD (FRANCE)

Christian Burgaud is a superb French visual poet who has been re-appearing in *Rampike* since 2002.

4 TEXTS

Paul Dutton

Inflections

for Nelson Ball

The present,
a present,
presents
presents:
presences
presented,
passing,
passed,
past.

Expert Advice

Well, it's kind of like a not so much as anyway you know sort of more or less what maybe could be something one way or the other close to nearly just about anything pretty much right in the vicinity of exactly that je-ne-sais-quoi they say is typical of almost all instances of this nature, or anyhow those occurring in most cases approximately the same way as what some would maybe consider to be roughly the type of situation that tends to crop up somewhere mainly in the neighbourhood of, oh, I don't know, every few years or so, give or take a bit, if you know what I mean, that is, speaking generally, because of course these types of things usually take on an aspect approaching the character of what has been thought to be whatever it is that might, given the right circumstances, be within the realm of possibility, not that anyone is able to say absolutely, although we can predict with a reasonable degree of accuracy the principal parameters within which such an outcome is likely to occur, at least over time, and with an adequate allowance for a reasonable margin of error, so that, all things being equal, you can probably count on everything playing out somewhat along the same lines of precisely what ordinarily transpires with standard developments of this order, as observed when operations are carried out in an overall like manner.

Sunday

Suddenly Sunday still,
still empty,
deadly still streets,
streets still still.

Austere air weighs still,
more, descending,
still more still,
air austere and

Saturdayless.

Suddenly Sunday
empties still,
an air of only a day ago gone,
fun gone,
sin gone Saturday,
Sunday sinless and dead
stalking still the still streets.

House

In the house are stairs descending precipitously down the years the flights of panic play on fears reverberating through hallways in both directions time travels in the house where stairs plummet from attic to basement, fly from floor to ceiling under floor beneath feet tracing patterns of anxiety into wood or rug or mat worn with the worries of successive dwellers wringing their hands over what to do, what to do, where to turn, how to find solutions, solace, the necessary means to offset disaster amid rooms whispering their dire prophecies, floors sagging under the cumulative longings of countless past inhabitants pacing back to regret and forth to desire, wishes sighing along the intricate tracteries of wire and pipe distributed behind membranes of paint, paper, plaster, wood; while nails and screws and nuts and bolts, fixtures, fasteners, clips, clamps, hinges, hooks hold to hopes in an agony of doubt about choices made, of remorse over moments missed, of yearning for what might have been, what yet could be, if only time allowed space for something more than what remains to be dealt with in rooms whose walls stand in judgement on what's been done there, what wasn't done that should have been, what's been thought and what thoughts remain unformed within a fog of vague concern or agitation floating invisibly about the house, penetrating rooms, closets, cupboards, drawers, secret locks and locked secrets directing actions arising from obscure desires distilled in dark, neglected spaces far below, amid unchecked dust and insects scuttling through moist dirt near dank stone walls oozing loss and despair—loss and despair that hover in stale air around grit-covered boxes and cases and cartons, and insinuate themselves into stored fabrics and abandoned building materials littering the bare concrete floor, and ascend by desultory, unambitious degree through layers of sorrow to emerge eventually in an effusion of misery amid sunlit rooms lined with shelves weighed down by books and papers, records, magazines, plants, framed photos, figurines, knick-knacks, shelves that echo and foreshadow other shelves, other mementos of other tenants, happier ones and sadder, past ones and future, angry men and worried women, fretful children, masturbating teens, gloating salesmen, grieving widows, brawny athletes, decrepit elders, hopeful new owners and disillusioned departees, the house held and released, added to and renovated, reeling in memories and playing out dreams, wood creaking under the weight of decades, dust settling on days during years of neglect, grime-encrusted windows cracked or broken, doorframes settling slowly off-square, window seams leaking thin streams of chill air, shingles loosening, metal corroding, wood rotting, insects invading, foliage encroaching, the house's facade and first-floor rooms festooned with seasonal decorations, its interior suffused with succulent odours emanating from the kitchen where meats roast and vegetables steam, sauces simmer, pies bake, puddings boil, cooks sweat, while children chase each other up and down precipitous stairways, screeching their mix of excitement and terror, glee and despair, eyes shining, mouths agape, in flight from the pursuing years that interweave seconds, minutes, hours with the shrinking of the house around the children growing larger as the elderly fade further in rooms that insinuate themselves into the lives of countless occupants moving in and out in both directions time travels through the reverberant spaces within them and the house.

Paul Dutton is a poet, novelist, essayist, and oral sound artist who is internationally renowned for his literary and musical performances. Since 1967, his artistic focus has been the creation of works that fuse literary and musical impulses. He is the author of six books, numerous chapbooks, and has issued many sound recordings. As well, he was a member of the legendary Four Horsemen poetry performance quartet (1970–1988), and is a member of the free-improvisation group CCMC (1989 to the present). In recent years, he has performed at poetry festivals in Venezuela, Germany, and France, and at music festivals in Canada, France, and the U.S.A. His recent books include the novel, *Several Women Dancing* (Mercury Press), his CDs include *Oralizations* (Ambiances Magnétiques), and his live performances continue to garner critical acclaim. To hear his vocalizations visit: <http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Dutton.php>

FORMATION

Joe Haske

after H. Frankenthaler

Was this how it was in the beginning?

Purple primordial gobs

piercing acrylic citrus.

We suggest themes

like “love” and “fear

of public speaking.” Any

rationale for

an argument

provokes passion.

Any argument creates a semblance of order.

Who would deny the patterns in the clouds

or the constellations’ design on a cold night?

Outside of town,

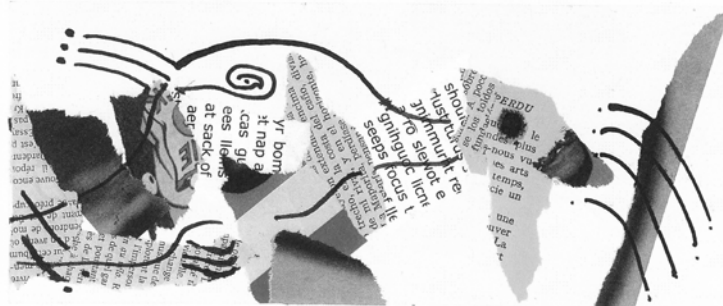
everything resembles something:

a rooster

a matador

sushi rolls on a bed of flesh.

Joseph D. Haske is a writer, critic, and professor who teaches creative writing, literature and other courses at South Texas College in McAllen, Texas. He is the author of the novel *North Dixie Highway* (Texas Review Press, 2013 – ISBN-10: 1937875261) and his fiction appears in publications such as *Rampike*, *Boulevard*, *Fiction International*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Texas Review*, *Alecart*, *Romania Literara*, *Convorbiri Literare*, *Pleiades*, and elsewhere. Joe Haske edits various journals, including *American Book Review*, *Sleipnir* and *New Border*.



E I E I E I
Guido Vermeulen & John M. Bennett
LUNA BISONTE PRODS 2014

For *Rampike*
Steve McCaffery

PEBBLE PERFORMANCE

Inscribe the names of seventeen philosophers each on one of seventeen pebbles, then place all the pebbles in a doll's house.

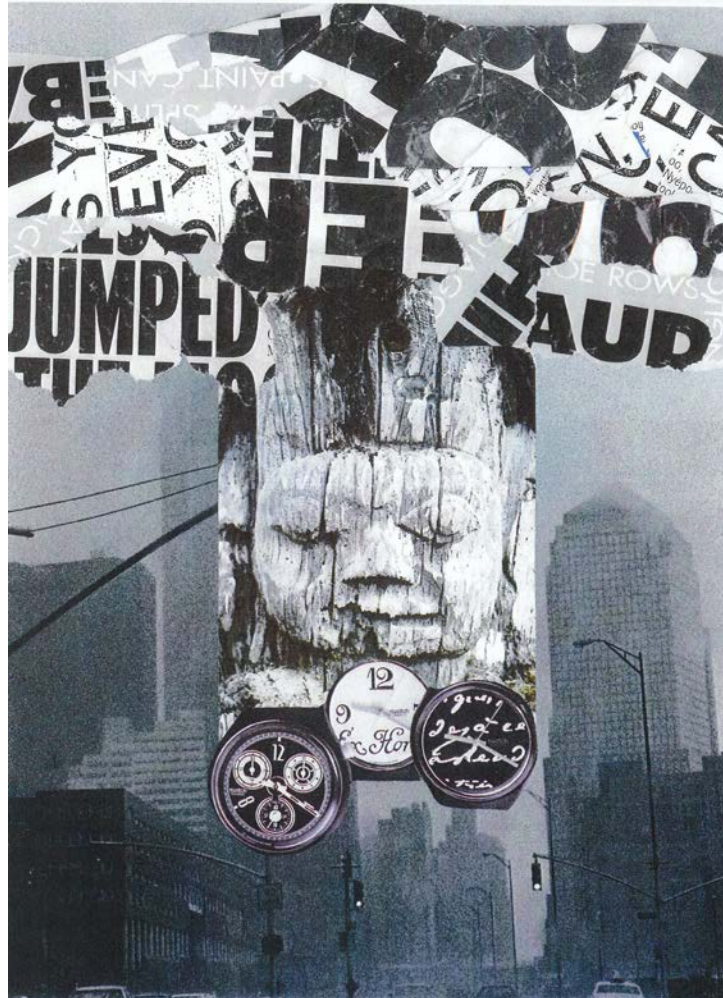
TELEPHONE EVENT

100 cellular phones are placed on 100 identical chairs. Each phone is dialed sequentially at 3-second intervals. When all phones are ringing they are answered sequentially for 3 seconds until the event returns to silence.

CHAIR EVENT

Place a white wooden chair in a public place. Stop passers by and ask them to sit down and think. When they get up ask them what they thought.

Steve McCaffery's latest book is *Tatterdemalion a Sketchbook for Syntax* London: Veer Books, 2014. His repurposing of Lewis Carroll's Alice books is launched as *Alice in Plunderland* with illustrations by Clelia Scala (BookThug, ISBN: 9781771660891). The selection printed above is from a manuscript in progress; *Permanent Performance*.



FROM THE "STRATA" SERIES: CAROL STETSER (USA)

Carol Stetser (b.1948) has a passion for visual poetics. She founded Padma Press in 1976. After publishing 3 offset photography books, she became active in the mail art network for many years. In 1980, she began making xerographic collages, a medium she continues to use for her visual poetry which has been published and collected internationally. She lives in Sedona, Arizona.

PART ONE
James Gray

Part one, one part, a piece of a *lost puzzle*? “you don’t mean that”

Listening once **aGain alert**, **You** will get over it : You become aware of THE REPORT, FIRST LOST

republished ,no direct evidence furnished, refuse to credit, cf
“**l**authenticite indubitable de tous ce...by no

me**a**ns conclusive, what happens has happened...sans aucune
exception

historically**y** important am I a stranger around my own house? an open
invitation stands meeting bravely as it comes... The
Piano still will play (the Ending [the same]) We are looking at revising our procedures,
Technically speaking, what difference would it make in the Hypothetical: All crowded in, after
discovering what the authorities are hailing as “useful” hacking through this dense jungle our
expedition found itself in an previously unknown conclusion: Yet winter solstice is just a theory,
usually a warm one. I am neglecting the negotiated treaty. I wearily signed off of How did you
solve that part you had? Not that solutions which arrived before the Neolithic revolution are
any less applicable: Lost (where ever your are) is lost.

Another Part, once apart, a piece of a *puzzle lost* “to cut your teeth on ”*maybe not
pretty but effective*” my **M**echanical heart seems to not be helping here. **But more than
parts fractals, alone, incomplete,** CREATIVITY takes a space which unfills , not so much as

this **gA**ping wound, a sucking chest wound say, rather, a crevasse
which cant be crossed

Oh by the way, years later creating, yeas before now, darkly the letter unanswered

is still unwri**tt**en, thank you for a little something, but it isn’t what, ideas can hang
off of, Destin to regenerate, trembling, from the inside out of repose this Aphorized context.,

a personal parking spac**e** There is a **sting** to loss, but is really is an edge already there
just hidden by a gaze of an unfocused eye ask all you will, it just isn’t there.

ideologies, over**r** emphasized...killing off the conception of what was
meant be a moving walk-way to the absolute. This last ditch attempt to mean
what was said. The cultural unwinding, competing

James Gray is superb wrestler, poet, antiquarian book seller, father, and one of the original co-
editors of *Rampike*. He works out of Boston. For info about the remarkable editions assembled and
sold by James Gray check his rare-book web-site: <http://jamesgray2.wordpress.com/about/>
or, email: Jamesgray2@me.com

CAMERA WORK
Keith Garebian

Say camera workers	Now the hand of man Rodin in chiaroscuro Steichen's Pool, Dawn-flowers
Say ultimate maverick with photogravure lingua franca far removed from snapshotters	Now telegraph poles winter landscape with shadows the long arm of a tree
Say platinum, gum bichromate, carbon, etc light an economy of mood shadow its imprint	Now cathedral memories of Normans height and light Venetian Franciscan
Say no easy comforts of rolling European landscapes peasants in photogenic costumes softly focused	These things don't leave gateways and gables fields sprawling like dragons
Say camera as implement the be-all not the end-all say camera as palette	fish and onion fields nudes against light sea shells
Say the transparency of morning the shroud of dusk	Your eyes search the gridwork of cities rail tracks in dry light
Say light dissolving evaporating into penumbra	dance class swimming lesson washerwomen on the dunes
Say a knowledge of sky its proportions shyness and boldness	It all changes blotches of sunlight and spots of ink moonrise on a road into the valley
Say angles of light shaping moments	You are alone here moonlight on a pond poplars and clouds
Say soaring architecture say aggressive New York	There's no need to say about solitary horseman sheep Dachau before death-fugue
Say not documentary stranglehold but impressionism in lenses	your eyes report memories to pore over after the camera's narrative
Say drawing, etching, painting, scratching subtle monochrome	give the feeling of being on a new plane iris opening other eyes
Say half tones, mezzotints hard-toned photogravure collotype	Yours is a mind and heart in the eye vibrating light
Say specifics of created moments	
Say freedom to follow vision manipulation of techniques	
Say photogravure on delicate Japanese tissue mounted on deckle-edged art paper	

KEITH GAREBIAN'S *Frida: Paint Me As A Volcano* (Buschek) and *Children of Ararat* (Frontenac), were long listed for the ReLit Award. His book, *Blue: The Derek Jarman Poems* (Signature), was long listed for the Lambda Award. He is the only three-time winner of the Mississauga Arts Award in the Established Literary category, and in July 2013 he was awarded the prestigious William Saroyan Medal in Armenia. The poem above is from Keith Garebian's work-in-progress, *Georgia and Alfred*.

3 POEMS

Brian Henderson

Gauge

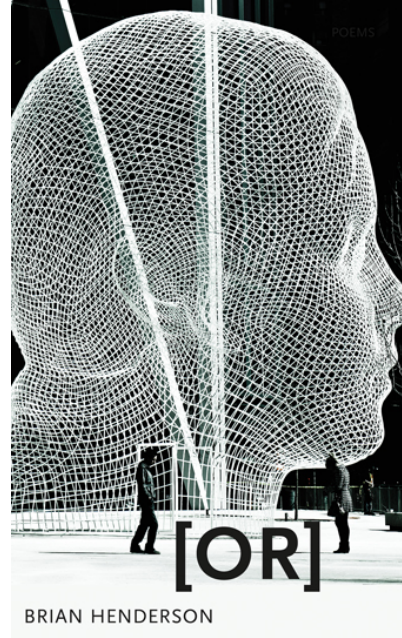
Crow bounces a call off the blue operculum
Of sky humbled by this and by Osterizers small
Eddies crushed glacial ice Spider Woman wind
Hounds brush fire stroke enzymes if we keep going
We sense we are almost somewhere which keeps
Us going just when writing sidles up to the real
And pulls its plug forcing it to run on its back
Up generator and the words fizzed by vagrant
Voltage feel as if they are no longer
In their own language whichever one that might
Have been but from behind the door
That never opened they have the charm
And the secrecy of facts the tide that
Lifts all boats digital dust

Introduction to Flat Ontology

Hot silk
Final oxygen
Streamers
Tiny letters
About love
The spaces between the letters
Collecting dust
The floor plan of grief
Mesh network
Wicker and wire
Mothering learned by rote
A photograph of a thing
With no connection to the thing itself
Petrified
Forests
Of pleasure
Rivers aflame
A yellow-shafted flicker in sunlight
In mirror neurons
Eyed gneiss
Tone arm
Slash mind
Perception of delay
The narrative of a life losing its way
Among postcards from the site of the battle of Ypres
On a rosewood table
Gold alchemied from computer waste
Strewn across the valley
Instant DNA
Luck with women
A liar sitting on a desk in a highrise
After typing her letter of resignation
On an Underwood Leader
The week of the 29th
The 13th floor
A tearful meeting with Virginia
Woolf event
Horizon
None of the above

Dictionary of Overlapping Things

Thoughts like trains departing
 At various times and the previously
 Departed can sometimes be
 Overtaken by the just thought and vice
 Versa given variations in speed such
 That collisions occur or correlations
 Align through the wave medium
 Into what people often call a
 Life depends so much
 On where or what time
 In the evening these events
 Might even be noticed if
 You were watching TV or
 Redefining the word schedule
 In your dictionary of overlapping things
 Which has been one of my weaknesses
 Small harmonic distortions in the refraction
 Station's propagation or a Kirlian photograph
 A timetable for it that might be combustible now
 We've got angels politicians a frightening
 Debt load we'll never travel far enough and
 Need to think more deeply those things with
 Which we will shortly coincide



BRIAN HENDERSON is the author of 10 collections of poetry. His poetry collection, *Nerve Language* (Pedlar Press), was a finalist for the Governor General's Award. *Sharawadji* (Brick Books), was a finalist for the Canadian Authors Association Award for Poetry. His latest volume *[OR]* is published by Talonbooks [ISBN 10: 0889229082]. Brian Henderson is the director of Wilfrid Laurier U Press.

THE UNNAMED

Rolland Nadjiwon

He stood at the center of his great circle of desire wanting direction, any direction to which he could imagine, though distant, an end. He desired a someplace, a somewhere with a conclusion.

Like being born, at first slowly and then more rapidly, he began to realize his centre, his desire, his standing were all arbitrary. He could sit, bring sitting into being--but he stood. His standing existed because he decided it to be so. He realized the only reason a thing happened was because he decided it to happen.

Enlightenment drowned him in the amniotic rush of its being born. Birthing became his conclusion. He was drowning in conclusion. Birthing was passing him from light into darkness. He realized he didn't want conclusion. He didn't want a beginning. It gave him direction. He could feel the humming darkness vibrating, buzzing. He thought of a cricket.

Slowly he opened one eye to a single blade of grass rising unnaturally out of the sand. Slowly he opened another eye and saw on the blade of grass a small blackness. The blackness moved and coalesced into the form of a buzzing cricket. The buzzing became tangible. He felt it move from the darkness of the cricket into his inside himself. He felt it move to places where small pieces of forgotten darknesses still vibrated inside him. When the buzzing reached into the small darknesses they trembled, folded in on themselves, and became still.

Quicker than he could watch, a fat tongue lashed out, snagged the cricket and disappeared into a pink gaping mouth. The mouth closed, swallowed, burped, or maybe croaked, and leaped back into the pond. Widening ripples betrayed a constant centre where he sank into the primal mud of an imagined bottom. He slept while small darknesses trembled and unfolded inside him and dreamed him into the darkness of a cricket singing on a blade of grass.

Rolland Nadjiwon is *Potawatomi*, born on the Cape Croker reservation. He lives in Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, at Garden River. His book of poems, *Seven deer dancing* was published by Kegeponce Press. His poetry and scholarly essays have been published across North America.

THE ECLIPSE
Jay Smith

the mind connects
constellations, star-crossed
love

like becomes like
whereas

genre billows a white shift:
a woman holding fossilized grass

& all the want to want of a man
many telephones that ring
sonorously

& when the market in a nice suit
seeks transcendence,
numbers fliprevelationson the wall

so the self is a dividend of the self

that fills the container that contains
want; a small handbag
a drawer of flowers

on the cobblestone contours of street
vastness is round,

unflagged
flagpoles swaying against
the soft percussion of the wind:

temptation shows tensile
strength

grandeur is thought impervious to time

& the concrete of brutalism is
more grandly than nature

so the civic selves are wondrous
walking through the heroism of cities

so read through grass
varietals on romance, tropes

the man in a nice
suit. the woman in a white blouse
the leaves of the fan palm

brush faces; it is a species of
affection & in these surfaces — a park,

a stalled moment —
an excess of jubilation

& aspirations are concrete, thoughts
shown through glass

like, brutalism is
the harshest plain. pane

confound species
the frenzy of the market, the translation
something for something else

endurance is just a lure, a half
realized object

so the ground orchestrates a
pleasure, authentically, sounds
like or unlike

the sonority of telephones in an office,
a marketplace, a wrestling ring

the simultaneity of recourse
is astonishing,

how thirst spills out from
the detritus of rain barrels

a piece of wood, an empty match
book. rivulets of passion run
through sand & gravel

there is always another sunset

when a fragile beacon is night:
the crowds
illuminate dusty streets

men in black, women in white
the universe is dyadic, half built

in concrete, beneath the cloudy sky;

look
how geometry vanishes into distance
& thirst unwashes age

JAY SMITH is an Edmonton based freelance writer. Her journalism has appeared in publications such as *The Los Angeles Times*, and daily newspapers across Canada. She is currently at work on a manuscript of poems about the prairies.

From *Norval Morriseau: Man Changing Into Thunderbird*
Armand Garnet-Ruffo

“Observations of the Astral World” (1994)

One of Norval Morriseau’s most imaginative paintings, it signals a leap of imagination for the artist. Here he combines the tenets of Eckankar with his grandfather Potan’s tradition teachings. Circular motifs that have previously symbolized balance and were most often restricted to the corners of a painting now become central to it; here they are portals to another world or reality.

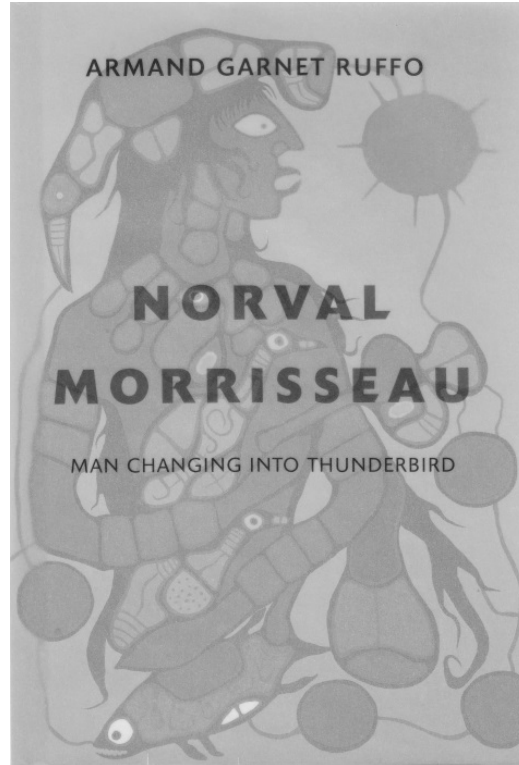
About the bubble of the world
floating in its reflection
on the brightest baby-blue day.
The artist drops a stone into water
observes it
echo creation
Watches it become the universe,
a tube of paint,
a bear, a fish, a loon, a thunderbird.
Become the artist in the midst
of soul travel.

He closes his eyes and sees a family.
It is the same family he always sees
in this dream within a dream.

A happy family
entwined by the tree of life
in full bloom,
flowers bright as red lip kisses,
branches the shape of robins
and bluebirds.

In the midst of observing his spirit self
the astral world projected like a map
in the elevator of the mind.
Seven planes up
to a separate reality
where cement gray does not exist
and colour is medicine.

Where the moon is a portal to climb through
or fly through.
Ripe and billiant
as a yellow plum
for the dreamer and the dreamed to taste.
A school of fish swims out of it
and disappears like children playing a game
of hide and seek.
Eyes
in the shape of an O.
Mouths
saying hello
here I am
let me show you the way.



Armand Garnet Ruffo draws on his Ojibway heritage for his writing. Born in Chapleau, northern Ontario, he currently lives in Kingston, and teaches in the English Department at Queen’s University. His book, *Man Changing Into Thunderbird*, a creative biography based on the life and art of the acclaimed Canadian-Ojibway painter, Norval Morriseau was recently released by Douglas & McIntyre (ISBN-10: 1771620463). A ‘companion’ text, *The Thunderbird Poems*, is a suite of ekphrastic poems based on Morriseau’s paintings (Harbour Publishing: ISBN 13: 978-1-55017-706-0). Ruffo is also the author of the feature film “A Windigo Tale,” winner of *Best Picture* at the American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco, and the *Dreamspeaker’s* Film Festival in Edmonton in 2010.

NATIVE STORYTELLING FOR DUMMIES
Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm

This is the place where all stories begin...

No, it's not. Chickee crosses her arms. The anthropologist and English professor she'd just introduced to Buzz, look at each other. Y raises an eyebrow to say "is he for real?" X shrugs slightly in a way that says, "well, this is where our research led us."

Chickee! Now I gotta start my story over again. Buzz shakes his head.

No, you don't.

Ignoring her, Buzz continues. *This is...*

You sure?

*Hey, stop that. Anyways, this time I'm pretty damn sure 'cause I'm definitely telling it now, eh. *AHEM**

After clearing his throat again, Buzz lowers his voice an octave or so and slows it down a few kilometers too for good measure. *This is...*

Is what?

It just is, okay? Buzz's cheeks turn red. The two scholars stand there, notebooks in hand, staring. One of them jots something down. The other follows suit.

What is?

Buzz sighs. *The story. My story. This is that...* He was about to say "story."

Exactly...

What do you mean "exactly"?

It's that.

What? Buzz was getting confused and embarrassed. He could feel his blood pressure rising. He could swear he felt his veins throbbing.

This is that, that is that, and that's all there is.

Buzz rubbed his thumb and index finger from his temples to the middle of his forehead and back again.

What's wrong? Getting one of your headaches?

Heya. I thought you wanted me to tell a story?

*Well, technically **they** wanted you to tell a story,* Chickee says nodding her head and pursing her lips in the general direction of the two scholars.

Then let me tell them the story.

I thought you were already. Chickee looks at Buzz like he has just announced he has been holding sweatlodges for money. Then she shakes her head.

Hardly. Buzz is counting in his head '...6, 7, 8, 9...'

I know. Just take a deep breath and picture us naked.

Why? I'm not nervous.

You're sweating and scrunching up your face a lot. Maybe you're sick.

Yeab, right. Must be the thought of picturing you naked.

Always deflecting. It's okay if you're nervous. Lotsa storytellers... well some... actually none I've ever met.... Anyways, I'm sure there's another storyteller out there somewhere who gets nervous like you.

I do not. I mean, I am not.

Just let it happen. Let the story unfold. Besides, you said you were telling a story so the only logical conclusion is...

No, I didn't. Well, not really... well, okay, I guess I did but I was just trying out a new way to start. He didn't add, "so I could impress these Shaaganosh," but he did tilt his head towards them. I mean I did say... I hadn't actually... Aw dammit Chickee, you're getting me all mixed up.

You did say this story started back there at the top of page 1. Or approximately, 151 seconds ago.

I'm going to start over. That's all.

That's it?

Huh?

That's all there is?

He took another deep breath. What? Was she...? No, she wouldn't. Buzz decided to take the comment at face value. No. Of course not, he said between clenched teeth. Wouldn't be much of a story, if I finished it now would it?

Au contraire, mon petit chou, so far I think it's an extremely experimental piece of birchbark fiction...

"Birchbark fiction?"

Yes. Maybe you've heard of postcard fiction? Kinda like a cross between that and birchbark scrolls.

The sacred scrolls of the Anishnaabek?

Right.

Chickee! Buzz's jaw hit his chest. That's terrible. It's practically... sacrilegious. How dare...

No, it's not. I said, 'kinda like.' Kinda like a cross between that and postcard fiction except that it's a story that fits on a piece of birchbark, not a postcard. It's not sacred. Rather it's... embedded with spiritual and socio-cultural meaning. She looks at X and Y's notebooks and bobs her head when she says that last bit.

Birchbark fiction, Buzz sniffs. Never heard of it.

I invented it! Chickee says, proudly. I got a whole tree's worth of 'em at home.

Figures.

Do you think I should call my collection a 'manutree' or a 'birchuscript'?

I think you should call it a 'firestarter.'

Funny. Now back to your birchbark storytelling... it's very existential, eh?

Existential? Buzz shakes his head and clenches his teeth. Bloody hell...

You know, the whole 'this is' bit and the 'that's all' part – that was really thought provoking. Very zen. Although maybe a bit derivative of Thich Nhat Hanh or Chopra. And just now that reference to hell – bringing up all them Christian concepts of sin and punishment and the afterlife. For a moment, I questioned my existence... you know, as an Indigenous person whose people have been victimized by missionary zeal, colonial aggression, genocidal mania, and wanton greed.

"And land theft..." adds Y knowingly.

"And Third World living conditions..." says X, not to be outdone.

I know! Chickee agrees, nodding enthusiastically at the two academics. What a loaded reference THAT was! Great stuff. And like I said before, existential. She leans over one of the notebooks, waving her finger back and forth, existential, e-x-i...

Oh, stop! Just stop.

Stop spelling?

No. Buzz tended to have a low bullshit tolerance threshold. And Chickee tended to have an elevated ability to try to cross it.

Then what? Stop existing? Chickee touches her chest à la Drama 101 when she says that last bit.

I wish

Geez, ever mean you... Chickee casts her eyes downward. Not 'casts' like Nanabush did with his, but as in, she looks at the ground.

Rampike 24 /1

You said it, not me. Chickee looks up at him with an expression that says 'I'm mortally wounded.' *Whatsamatter Chickee, Buzz laughs, constipated?* He feels a warm glow inside. Finally - the tables are turning! He is mentally giving himself a high-five when he glances up. Chickee's lower lip begins to tremble, like a flower in a David Bowie song. The temperature drops 10 degrees. Even more in Celsius. Oh-oh.

Aw, c'mon Chick, that's not what I meant.

"It did sound pretty mean," Y says.

"Yeah, she was just talking, you didn't have to tell her to drop dead," X chimes in as he furiously writes in his notebook.

I didn't mean...

Chickee sighs, like a balloon deflating.

Okay, okay, I take it back Chickee, okay? Okay? Now can I tell my story?

Chickee breathes in deeply. Twice. Then holds her clenched hand against her lips, glancing ever so quickly at X and Y who appear to be appropriately concerned and bewildered.

And scene! She grins and looks encouragingly at Buzz.

I said, "Now can I tell my story?"

You can but will you?

Buzz glares at her.

And Buzz, remember: words once spoken cannot be retrieved. Chickee says it really slowly and enunciates each word. Then she sneaks a sideways glance at X's notes. It is true after all: peripheral vision is important for Indigenous people.

Yeah, I know. Buzz sighs then whispers ...*but words once keyboarded can be deleted...*

Pardon?

Nothing.

Buzz, "If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people."

Hey! What's that supposedta mean?

Buzz, "your heart is pure, your mind is clear, and your spirit soars..."

Oh brother. Gimme a break. What's with all that Pocohontas-style fortune cookie talk, anyways, eh?

You didn't get the reference to that classic in Native lit?

Uhm... ub... yeah, of course. It was... uhm...

Chief...

Yeah, I know. Chief Sea... Chickee's eyes narrowed when he said that last syllable. He coughs. *Chief Da...* so far so good... *Chief Dan George?*

Are you asking me or telling me?

Telling you?

And the Virginia Woolf?

I do read you know! Buzz tries to look offended while wondering to himself, *who the hell is Virginia Woolf?*

I know...

That caught Buzz by surprise. Was she actually acknowledging his profound love of literature? And in front of these two? *Megwetch*, he says. *Well, at least you give me that much cred...*

...I've been in your bathroom.

Buzz swings his head towards Chickee. *Hey!* He turns redder. *It...I...I read other stuff.*

I know - I've also seen what's under your bed. I hear those magazines have great articles.

Buzz turns crimson and avoids looking at Y. *Geeeeeezzz! Chickee!*

So, you find beauty in ordinary things, do not lose this ability...

Uh... ok, whatever you say. He twiddles his index finger near his head and points at Chickee hoping that it'll help Y forget that bit about his now not-so-secret stash of magazines.

...in bed!

In bed? More blushing and avoidance of eye contact.

That was my fortune cookie at the Moon Wah last night. And, you know, after we read a fortune cookie, we say 'in bed.'

Oh. Har. Dee. Har. Har.

Oooh, hey, you know, maybe we can now call your story "NDN erotica"!

What? Why would we do that?

Because as Indigenous peoples we're reclaiming our sexuality and erotic stories are one way of showing that we're fully alive and won't be dehumanized by imposed notions of sex and sexuality.

Great. Now can... I mean, may I tell my story?

Aren't you? Turning to the others, Isn't he?

Under his breath Buzz mutters, *Why me? Why?*

Why not you? You're just a parta the community like everybody else, Mr Suddenly- I'm -Special-'Cause-I'm-A-Storyteller!

Sigh

You should get that looked at.

What?

Alla that sighing and headaches and that pinched up look on your face like you just did tequila shots or you're constipated or something.

Ignoring her and grinning at the scholars Buzz says, *Let's start at the very beginning.*

No. Although it is "a very good place to start..." But no.

Now what?

*That's just it. **Now.** We can't.*

I know I'm gonna regret this but... why? Why can't we simply go back to the beginning and start again? If it was good enough for Julie Andrews Von Trapp, it's damn well good enough for me.

Kabwee! This is now. That was then. It no longer exists.

The Sound of Music? You can get it on DVD, Blue-ray... I seen it just the other day, on sale even.

The beginning. That was then. This is now. It no longer exists.

Ah ha! But it does! You said it was at the top of page 1. Buzz looks triumphant.

The words on the page may be there but that moment in time has passed. We can't time travel back to it. Who do you think you are? Some kinda moccasined new millennium Mukwa McFly?

Yeab, well, as you yourself once told me when you were late meeting me at the Cineplex and we missed the previews and opening scene of the movie, and I quote, 'time folds back on itself Buzzz' - haba, now whaddaya haveta say about that!

It does - or rather the illusion of time does.

"Illusion?" says X.

Time doesn't really exist. Chickee squints, points her thumb at Buzz and looks at X.

Buzz rubs his head. *You,* he says pointing at her. *You're the reason I have headaches.*

Rampike 24 /1

Time is a human construct which helps us to organize and interpret our lives. There's no past. No future. Just the eternal now.

Oh c'mon Chickee – the “eternal now?” Really?

Think about it. This is all there is. Nothing exists in the past. There is no past.

Buzz isn't sure if she's talking to him or to X but no matter. What about memories? he says and grins. Ha!

We live them in the now. After that, they're retellings – we colour them the way we want them to be in that moment. Actually, they're different and new each time.

Huhn? Well, what about... uhm...

Think of a memory.

Like what?

Anything.

Ok. How 'bout when I said, “This is the place where all stories begin” and you jumped in and yelled, “No, it's not!” all rude and interrupting before I could even start telling my story. Not very Nish-like by the...

Sure. Whatever memory you like.

Fine – then that's the memory I'm uhm... remembering.

Well, see that event, the whole, “This is the place where all stories begin” thing happened originally on page 1 but the anecdote, or “story” if you will, of the memory that you just told me was only a few lines back on page 7 which itself was in the now at that point but is now in the past too and just a memory. Of a memory.

Well... maybe... that is one theory... but it doesn't even matter 'cause the event is the same.

Not at all. A photocopy of a fax of a Morisseau or Odjig isn't the same as the original is it? Your cellphone video of Tagaq live isn't the same watching her perform at that club in Toronto is it?

No.

That was fun, eh?

Yeah, remember when she came outside in her t-shirt and she was so cold she put your jacket on –

While I was still wearing it!

Yeah. You never looked better. But what's that got to do with...

What? Just everything! 'Cause as opposed to the actual event back on page 1, when I remember you telling me your story of your memory of it back on page 7, I'll remember that you were really mad.

But you always think I'm mad. Geez that pisses me off!

You sound mad.

Buzz clenched his teeth. Well, what about history – you know, those who don't know their own history are bound to repeat it and all that. And treaties what about...

My point exactly. Treaties are living agreements forged between nations and they continue to exist despite the attempts of one side... at this point Chickee and Buzz both glance at the two scholars who flick their eyes from side to side then furiously scribble in their notebooks ...to deny them and their current relevance.

But I still don't see wha...

So, all you can do is be in the now. Keep going, keep telling your own story in your own way.

Buzz is silent. Chickee spins her hand on her wrist motioning for him to move it along.

Oh, you want me to...? I didn't think you were ready and anyways, you keep inter... Buzz eyes Chickee daring her to interrupt.

She eyes him, waiting.

He eyes her, waiting.

waiting...

waiting...

Say it! she says, laughing.

He can't help but grin. He almost says, "pation."

I'm an active listener – which is the role of the audience after all. You don't want to be 'like a dog chasing its tail' when you speak do you? You want to speak to the best of your abilities and knowledge, right? Which reminds me, you exaggerated.

I...

A lot.

Buzz checks his watch. *Look, we're running outta time.*

But that's just it – we have all the time in Creation. Anyways, our ancestors never even had watches. You've really bought into that whole construct, haven't you? I mean, literally bought into it, with all your watches and clocks – like a good consumer...

I am not!... I... It's... Hey, I have to get back to work.

And your face was all pinched up again just then. All scrunched up like you're sucking lemons.

Was not. Quit saying that.

Sorry. At least I didn't say "donkeys." Chickee glanced at X and Y with a look that said 'note the pop culture reference.' Then she turned her attention back to Buzz. But your face was pinched up. Like it is now. All pinched up like... she stops and taps her head, thinking. Like an apple-head doll. No, no.... Like a morel, left in the sun.

Megvetch. Oh, chi megvetch.

You're welcome cousin!

Uh, duh, I was being sarcastic.

Well, they do say it is the lowest form of wit. But it's not your fault if that's what passes for humour in your story. You're doing your best and that's what matters.

What a load of passive-aggressive bison-crap.

Passive-aggressive? Where'd you learn the psycho-babble? Hey, are you back in therapy?

Therapy? What?

At the Health Centre. It's okay, lots of people need help like that.

The Health Centre? You mean, when I go talk to Uncle Chuckles? He's an Elder, not a therapist.

I heard he was running healing circles for men.

He is but...

Men with uhm... 'sensitive' problems.

"Sensitive?"

You know, like, well, let's just say if all problems were in a mall it would be in the "pants" department. She makes motions in the air with her fingers when she says "pants." And she winks.

X and Y immediately look at Buzz's pants then realize, much to their horror, they are staring at his crotch. Buzz chokes. Since he had been chewing gum one can only assume it was on his wad of Bubblicious. They glance away quickly looking to see if anyone caught them looking and each catches the other.

Doctor – patient confidentiality – I get it. Chickee makes a motion like she's zipping her lips. Then she throws the key at X and wiggles her eyebrows at him.

X doesn't understand. Neither does Y. But they both blush and their eyes dart around trying to find an innocuous place to stare before settling back to their respective notebooks.

I hate you.

Rampike 24 /1

Oh! Now, that was unexpected. What a great plot twist. Your story was kind of meandering there and starting to falter to be honest but it really seems to be back on track now. I can't wait to see how it all turns out between our characters.

What in the holy Hiawatha are you talking about now?

The tension in this plot is really building! Plus you threw in a colloquialism as well as a reference to a famous First Nations leader and to that poem – so clever. Not to mention the nod to the clash between Native spirituality and imposed Christian religions. So... postindian... so... Indigenous. My heart soars! Nishin!

Don't patronize me.

Impossible. I'm a woman. You see, patronize comes from the Latin root pater...

There's no plot! No tension! Because. There's. No. Story. NO story. Not yet anyways. Maybe if I could get a word in.

No story? Then what's alla this? Chickee spreads her arms and twists back and forth like a weathervane.

Just you interrupting me when I was about to tell a story, asking me a bunch of dumb questions, and babbling away about zen and time and the internal mind or whatever you said... and existential... postindianism... and trying to talk French and Latin like you're so damn smart. Show-off! Why don't you speak Anishnaabemowin if you're so smart and so Nish?

Oh good, more conflict. Ok, so, I need an appropriate response. Lemme see... "Well, you Sir are nothing more than a one-dimensional stereotype!" Wait, that didn't sound very authentic-Native-voice did it? Hmm... Ok, how's this: "Not even! You t'ink you so smart you. Heap big storyteller..." Wait, that's not right. Now I'm starting to feel like some character from one of those WP Kinsella fake Indian stories or a cartoon from the 1940s or the M Mirror. Ugh. Ooops, as Brinney would say, I did it again. Let's see... Shaaganosb-nii-nabow! Too barsb? Hmm... well, I don't wanna be too Noble-savagey either... how about this:

"An' you call yourself a storyteller... Storier my flat Anishnaabe ass!"

Y and X look at each other, smile, and jot down a few more notes. Y erases something. Puts her pen to her temple for a moment then writes again.

...How was that? I think that was pretty good, eh?

Under his breath, *Well, your ass is flat all right...*

Ignoring him... *Go ahead. *Ahem** waving her arm as if she's rolled out a red carpet. *Your turn. Where's a talking stick when you need one?* Here, she says, handing him a half-chewed piece of gum wrapped in a piece of recycled paper.

Oh, I can talk now? I can finally tell my story? He wipes his now-sticky fingers on his wool slacks. If this gets on my new Egyptian cotton shirt, he thinks, I'm gonna be ticked.

I thought you already...

Kawee! Don't you start that again or... or I swear... Anishnaabekwe or not, I will tomahawk chop you into your next life.

Pause. Applause.

WOW! That was just great.

Sigh

Yeab, what an ending!

Bringing in the whole sports mascot controversy and the violence those kinds of misrepresentations engender, particularly towards Indigenous women, and then ending it with that final reference to how cultural concepts of death and spirituality differ between... Chickee looks at Buzz.

Buzz rubs his temples and squints his eyes.

Hey, you should chew on some peppermint leaves – get rid of that headache. Anyways, yeab, it's so layered and complex.

"I'm still trying to figure it all out," adds X.

"You've really given us all a lot to think about. The Indigenous literary nationalists are going to have a ball with it," says Y.

Don't you mean "A *lacrosse* ball?" Chickee says, swinging her elbow back and forth in their direction. The three of them laugh. Y even snorts a bit.

Buzz sits there glaring.

Seriously, what an ending! Chickee slaps him on the back. *You really pulled it outta the crapper at the end there...*

The story's not finished. It's barely even started. It's barely even "a story."

Leaving the story open-ended, eh? I get it. Smart. She taps her head. *"I think it's a fine example of the oral tradition."*

Very funny Michelle St. John.

Chickee flips him the bird.

*But it's not a story. I haven't even started **my** story yet!*

Yes you did. Back on page 1. Remember?

Go away.

Ho-lay, this is great. I can't wait for the next one in the cycle. Here, I'll start... "An Indigenous Existentialist Storieer was falling from the sky..."

Oh no you don't!

I was just trying to help.

"It *would* help," X says gently.

"You do seem to have trouble focusing and keeping your story going," Y adds avoiding eye contact before scribbling more notes in her notebook.

Oh I do, do i?

Well, not to be a critic, says Chickee, but...

Ok, fine. Gather round. Buzz sits cross legged on the ground and Chickee and the two scholars do likewise forming a small but enthusiastic three-sided approximation of a "circle" around him. He moves his mouth but they hear nothing. X looks at Y who shrugs and looks at Chickee. Buzz waves his hand motioning them closer. All three lean forward, heads cocked to the side, ears forward.

Buzz thinks really hard. Scrunches up his face, raises himself up slightly and leans forward.

The two researchers smile. Finally, a story! A real honest-to-goodness Native story! And told in this most traditional of ways to boot. They were already imagining the SSHRC grants arriving in the mail.

Buzz raises himself up a little more, knits his brows together and... *BOGETS*, the biggest, loudest, stinkiest *boget* the storytelling world has ever known!

Waving their arms frantically X, Y, and Chickee jump up. X looks a little green. Y is holding her nose and whispering "gross, that is so gross!" with a look on her even-paler face that says, 'and for this my parents spent their life savings to send me to grad school?' Chickee is laughing and grinning and waving one arm up and down as if to push Buzz away. *Shta-ta-ha!*

Buzz has fallen over laughing. Chickee is bent over, rubbing her eyes and trying to catch her breath.

X and Y stare at the two of them, then look at each other, then back at Buzz and Chickee. X raises his eyebrows in a what-does-it-mean, kind of way. Y bites at the inside of her cheek. Then chews her thumb. They scribble furiously in their notebooks. Buzz and Chickee turn, watch them for a second, then break into peals of laughter.

Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm is a writer, publisher, editor, Native arts advocate, and founder of Kege-donce Press. She is from the Chippewas of Nawash First Nation at Neyaashiinigmiing (Cape Croker Reserve) on the Saugeen Peninsula in Ontario. She has published in print form and on CDs including *standing ground* (2004), and the soundtrack from *A Constellation of Bones* (2008) done in collaboration with Iroquois choreographer Santee Smith and Maori hip-hop artist Te Kupu. She has edited numerous collections including *Without Reservation: Indigenous Erotica*, and the special Indigenous issue of *Rampike*. Her scholarly articles appear in prestigious publications including *The Journal of Canadian Studies*, and *The Canadian Theatre Review*.

dreamlives of debris: an excerpt lance olsen

:::: debris

I have my doll and the screamings behind my eyelids. The screamings looks like fluttery lights. The fluttery lights believe they live inside me, but I live inside them, too.
My doll's name is Catastrophe.

:::: debris

Daddy once made his ideas purer than King Aegeus's. Now every year King Aegeus sends seven of his bravest young men and seven of his most beautiful young women from Athens to Crete to visit me. I let them wander the passages of my heart for hours—or maybe it is days, or weeks—I do not know what any of these words mean—before I step out of their frothy panic to welcome them.

:::: debris

The liquid architecture will not hold still. Sometimes I cannot locate the walls. I shuffle forward, hands outstretched in the grainy charcoal air, breathing mold, must, fungus, sulfur, damp dirt, wet rock, waiting for the gritty touch ushering me onto the far shore. Sometimes so many walls erupt around me I am forced to crab sideways to make any progress at all.

Sometimes the walls become a whirlwind of hands or dying alphabets.

The ceiling sinks without warning and I discover myself crawling on my belly across the chalky floor, Catastrophe clutched tight to my chest.

:::: debris

When I set out to greet my new guests I tuck my doll beneath my arm and carry a torch. This is not so I can see them. It is so they can see me.

The brave young men, unarmed, unnerved, usually shit or piss themselves a little when I step into the open. I think they are expecting something else. It is not un-amusing to watch their secretions trickling down their legs as they blunder into blank walls trying to un-see me.

All I have to do is stand there clearing my throat.

Matters usually take care of themselves.

I follow the women like their own shadows, torchless. They cannot hear me, have no sense of my presence, until they feel me clambering up their backs, hands searching for necks, teeth for arteries.

:::: debris

Our virtuoso artificer Daedalus designed my palace.

Mommy says upon its completion he could barely find his own way out.

His brilliance lives inside the body of a pasty man-sized toad sans ass who wears the perpetual grimace of a Skeptic. I have never seen him smile. His rumpled face carries the same message wherever it goes:

Stand a little less between me and the darkness.

:::: debris

And then mommy brought around Lady Tiresias.

Calling my name, listening for my response, she zeroed in on her princess.

Soon the three of us were sitting cross-legged in a chamber I had never seen before. It stank of language.

Vowels, mostly.

The blind bony seer with wrinkled female dugs has known life as both man and woman. He had my complete pity. She reached for my hand. He wanted to read my palm. I hissed at her. He drew back.

Mommy stroked my scruff.

Be nice, button, she said.

Lady Tiresias tried again. She discovered my palm bloated smooth as a baboon's ass: no bumps, lumps, fissures, figures, failures, futures.

You are born, she said, of a very special race. The Minotaur belongs to a people old as the earth itself. Beneath the skin of your shoulders grow wings. Someday they will break out and carry you far away from here.

I reached back, felt nothing.

Give yourself time, she said. The number thirty-three controls your life. You are concerned not with personal ambition but with uplifting the loving energy of humankind.

Out the corner of my eye I saw mommy shift awkwardly.

Lady Tiresias's bald head reminded me of an enormous gland.

You are a born leader, he said. This is what I see. You will achieve great fame through kindness, tenderness, compassion. Remember: whosoever is delighted in solitude is a god. Lady Tiresias has spoken.

:::: debris

These speech turbulences are not mine—do not seem to be mine, do and do not seem to be mine. That is, I am nearly convinced my mouth is vigorously un-moving.
(I have just tapped it with my hoof for proof.)

:::: debris

That is, I sometimes have the impression I exist.

::::debris

That afternoon mommy led the unsuspecting blind man to the Brazen Bull. The hollow bronze beast hulked on a raised platform in our central courtyard at the edge of the shallow pool swarming with eels, each fitted with a pair of tiny gold earrings. Two Athenian slaves helped him through the hatch in its side. Lady Tiresias ordered them to be careful. They obeyed. Crouching here in the darkness I watched them light the fire. It quickly crackled into consciousness. Soon clouds of incense were shooting from the bull's nostrils. The complex system of tubes and stops inside its skull translated the soothsayer's shrieks into infuriated bovine bellows.

:::: debris

First comes pain, whispers mommy, rocking me in the night-nothing, then knowledge.

:::: debris

Next day they opened the hatch and extracted what was left of Lady Tiresias. Mommy asked the most delicate bits be fashioned into my beautiful new bracelet.
Mommy loves Her Little Duration.

:::: debris

Before that and after that I watched Paris steal Helen away from her husband and black flames burn through a decade. I watched beautiful broken Cassandra—pale skin, blue eyes, red hair kept in curls; raped repeatedly by Ajax the Lesser on the floor of Athena's temple where she fled in search of refuge—I watched beautiful broken Cassandra babble from the post to which she had been tied before the gates of junked Troy, disinterested pedestrians passing her by. I watched a nation suffer toward truth, believing it was sharing something important, something lasting that would unite it, even as it already knew all its beliefs had been nothing but bluffs, its politicians best at organizing weakness. Hell to ships, hell to men, hell to cities, and Clytemnestra clawing a dagger across Cassandra's bared throat because Agamemnon had taken the disbelieved seer as war spoil. An arrow pierce swift-footed Achilles's heel and his body pitch forward into death. And before that and after that I watched him, Achilles—no trace of his own ruin shadowing his features—slit the heels of Hector's corpse, pass Ajax's belt through them and drag the breaker of horses around the fortress walls until Hector's body effaced itself into the rocky earth. Shocked Icarus dropping through luminous blueness, hands raking sunlight, shredded wings disassembling around him. And before that and after that daddy locking Icarus's father and him deep inside my jumbled not. And before that and after that a pair of skinny legs flashing into the sea and vanishing while back on shore a boy herding goats bent down to remove a pebble from his sandal and thereby missed the tiny white misinterpretation taking place, briefly, somewhere far behind him.

:::: debris

Which is to say the worst is still to come, was still to come, will still be to come, has come, had come, is coming, has been coming, might come, is going to come, will have come, would have come, but not yet, and already.

:::: j. g. ballad song

Because all clocks are labyrinths.

:::: lady tiresias chorus

When I die, it will have been inside the stomach of a bull. When I die, it will have been inside the courtyard of a doomed palace. When I die, it will have been with the understanding that the descent into Hades is the same from every point, every race, every gender, every class, every ancestry. With the recognition I will soon meet Odysseus in the infinite gray desert of the afterworld and, skin ashen, eyes cloudy and blank from too much seeing, violet mouth sewn shut with black catgut, he

Rampike 24 /1

will ask me sans voice to recollect for him what the best path of life is. Standing alone with the sacker of cities, I will advise him to forget the philosophers, ignore their metaphysics, for in the end there exists nothing save atoms and empty space—that is it, that is all, that is us, that is this. No one will arrive to save us from ourselves. When I die, it will have been wondering whether I am actually thinking these thoughts I think I am thinking or only dreaming I am thinking them as I study the glowing blue flame float out from my chest and across a black ocean, how it must at some point have ceased to be part of me and become part of something else, for it is so far away, and then farther, and th

;;; jorge luis borges song

Because time is a river which sweeps me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger which destroys me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire which consumes me, but I am the fire.

;;; debris

Because the historians chronicle how, when my brother Androgeos began to heap all the prizes at the Panathenaic games, King Aegeus commanded him to fight his most fearsome bull.

How brave bewildered Androgeos was gored and died on the stadium floor within minutes of entering.

;;; bradley manning song

Because it was not until I was in Iraq and reading secret military reports on a daily basis that I started to question the morality of what we were doing. It was at this time that I realized that through our efforts to meet the risk posed to us by the enemy, we had forgotten our humanity. This is why I turned over the files to which I had access to WikiLeaks, which made them public. I understand that my actions violated the law. I regret that my actions hurt anyone or harmed the United States.

It was never my intent to hurt anyone. I only wanted to help people.

;;; debris

Because, outraged, daddy set off to Athens. Revenge seared through his veins. On the way he invaded Megara, whose King Nisos's power derived from a single magic lock of purple hair. Nisos's daughter Scylla saw daddy from the battlements, tumbled into love with him in the beat of a hurt, and that very night sheared her own sleeping father like some feeble-minded sheep.

;;; debris

Networks. Weaves. Plaits. How each of us becomes hole.

;;; debris

Because, appalled by Scylla's lack of filial devotion, daddy departed at once, leaving Nisos's daughter keening on the dock.

Each star in the sky a pinprick upon her skin.

;;; debris

Because every labyrinth is both plan and tangle.

Lance Olsen's novels, hypermedia texts, short-story collections, poetry, and critical works have explored modes of writing that diverge from traditional paths of story-telling. His recent book, *Head in Flames*, is a collage novel told by three alternating voices, each inhabiting a different font and aesthetic space. His novel *Tonguing the Zeitgeist* was a finalist for the Philip K. Dick Award. He serves as Chair of the Board of Directors at Fiction Collective Two (FC2). Founded in 1974, FC2 is one of America's best-known ongoing literary experiments and progressive art communities.

THE 22ND STREET UNDERPASS

Frank Sauers

There are three figures, she and two others just ahead. Perfect for filming, they are walking in silence. The couple is screen left, moving into the shadow of the overpass. She is at the center, moving against the underpass wall, its mural a redwood forest of young animals and pencil thin light. Another, the figure in the crevice where the wall begins, is a man, his back turned. Filming stops as she walks to him and asks him if he knows that filming is taking place and if he minds, returning then to where she was. The others have not walked away. They are walking now as she is out of the frame.

Frank Sauers is an innovative and visionary author working out of West Chester, PA.

Four Poems from the *Dao De Jing*, in trans(e)lation Di Brandt

(1) Highbush cranberry

She strides through the city like a queen.
Her silver wolf coat, earned in recent dark days,
Sways above her shapely ankles.
Presidents hesitate over their coffees
In their silver bank towers.
The rivers may flood their banks again in spring.
The libraries are giving away their books.
A woman sits all morning in an empty room.
She burns beeswax candles and sage.
The rainbow coloured snake in her spine unfurls
Into limitless sky.
A thousand shimmering pale pink rose petals
Re-arrange themselves geometrically
Around a purple core.
The more open her heart the less interested,
Less interesting, the newspapers:
Though who can resist, in these days of worry
And unrest, despite these many centuries
Of training and reflection, the adrenaline rush
Of fingernails and knives?
The ladies of the sky court, their coiled hair
Shining in the starry lamplight,
Dance their gracious courtly dance.
Not so down here,
Where such beauty has been lost.
The stars flare, incandescent,
From their icy galactic distance.
Knowledge may be “the flower of doctrine,”
But it is the beginning of folly.
A fierce whistling through the dark.
Therefore we who wish to regain
Our ancient wisdom tread
Our dancing slippers on polished wood,
Not on shavings, we save
Our *oohlablals* for the berries and the jelly,
Not the blossom. We make the choice.
Gold flecked veins of light emergent
Amidst the swirl of black.

(2) The seventh coming

There, there, among the quivering
Viscera, curled in darkness,
The tender pulse of the future universe
Breathes, in, breathes out:
Feel her quickening,
The first butterfly kicks
Of her royal feet and fists,
Yes, even in you, who thought
You were too old or macho
Or barren, getting ready to give birth.

(3) Royal Oak Inn

She who is wise hugs her riches
Inside her breast.
She does not display herself
Yet is seen everywhere.
She does not boast about her deeds
Yet succeeds.
She is not proud of her work
Yet it endures.
No one under heaven
Is able to oppose her.
Letting herself become gnarled
And twisted,
This is how the wise woman
Returns to wholeness.

(4) Do a deer, a female deer

She of grace and intelligence
Embraces wisdom warmly and eagerly:
As soon as she hears the words
She sets out to put them into practice.
She of moderate understanding
Feels of two minds and ... dilly dallies.
She of coarse mind hears them
And laughs. If she did not laugh,
They would not be worthy to be called
Words of wisdom!
Comrades, let us not dismay
If things sometimes seem upside down.
The path leading us through the forest
Sometimes seems crooked.
The road taking us through the dark tunnel
Sometimes seems to be doubling back.
The highway leading us through mountains
Sometimes seems roughest
Even when it is shortest and smoothest.
The peak we are trying to reach
Sometimes seems more like an abyss.
Pure white shimmers, and is hard to see.
Sometimes *enough* seems inadequate.
Sometimes *strong* seems flimsy.
Sometimes *beautiful* seems plain.
Great music is made of subtle notes.
Great poetry lacks gimmicks.
The great power that animates
All things lacks form and substance,
And yet is powerful enough to bring
Everything to its rich
And gorgeous delicious golden
Fragrant fullness.

Di Brandt's *Four Poems from the Dao De Jing* are part of a larger project of trans(e)lating Laozi's famous ancient text in the "contemporary eco-poetic post-postmodern Canadian prairie here and now feminine." Daoist thought operates from a much larger cosmological framework than modernity, it locates its energetic sources and destination in the magical, creative, shapeshifting quantum dimension always. – Di Brandt has won the Gerald Lampert Award, the McNally Robinson Manitoba Book of the Year Award, and the CAA National Poetry Award. She has been twice shortlisted for the Governor General's Award and has been nominated for the Commonwealth Poetry Prize and the Pat Lowther Award. *Now You Care*, her fifth collection of poetry and was shortlisted for the 2004 Trillium Book Award and the Pat Lowther Memorial Award.

EVIDENCE

Stuart Ross

A hammer lay on the floor. It didn't move. There was no wind, and had there been wind, it sure would have taken a lot of wind to move the hammer. But the hammer didn't budge. It was just the molecules that made up a hammer.

Three days went by. The hammer still hadn't moved. The fact of the passage of three days was proven only by the clock, because there was no change in the lighting. It wasn't like a sun went up and down. The clock sat on the floor, its back to the hammer. In a world where there were only clocks and hammers, one would measure distance like this: "The clock sat four hammers away from the hammer."

The clock had arms that moved. And stuff inside it that moved. Mechanisms. But nothing inside the hammer moved. It was just the molecules that made up a hammer. It did not know that three days had passed. That somewhere there was a sun, even though there was no evidence of a sun from where the hammer lay. It did not know that it was confined. The clock, too – the clock did not know that it was confined. It wasn't aware of the existence of the sun, of a thing called the sun.

Okay. A nose hurt. It was on a guy. That could be determined because when the guy stepped away from the wall, the nose went with him. Had the nose stayed on the wall, then it would be clear that walls had noses. The guy had arms that moved, and lower down he had legs, which also moved. Every part of the guy could move!

The guy stood nine hammers away from the hammer and five hammers away from the clock. The guy had an ambition in his head. The ambition was to be on the other side of the wall. But the hurting of his nose told him he could not simply walk through the wall. He couldn't walk through it now, just as he couldn't walk through it five minutes earlier. He was beginning to think that five minutes from now, when five minutes had passed, he still would be unable to walk through the wall.

The hammer had no ambition in its head. Therefore it just lay there, just lay on the floor. The clock ticked, what with all its mechanisms. It became five minutes from now.

The guy reached into his pocket and withdrew a piece of yellow chalk. He drew a large X on the place on the wall that had hurt the nose on him. The X meant that this was a place on the wall he could not walk through. The guy turned so that his back was to the wall and his front was to the clock. The wall was zero hammers away from the guy, and the clock was still five hammers away.

The guy looked straight ahead. Beyond the hammer there was another wall, a wall covered in yellow X's. Because the guy's head could move, he looked to his left and to his right: more walls, more X's. Beyond these walls was a sun, the guy was almost certain of it. The sun was yellow, like the piece of chalk he held in his hand. The piece of chalk was very small. He remembered that once it had been much bigger.

The hammer remembered nothing. It just lay on the floor. The clock, too, remembered nothing. It could provide evidence that days had passed, but it remembered nothing. This meant, the guy reasoned, that there was no relation between time and memory.

The guy turned to his right and began to walk slowly. He was energized because he had had a new thought. The thing about time and memory. When the guy learned something new, it changed him. He was a changed man. Soon the guy's nose hurt again. He drew a yellow X, turned slightly to his left and walked again. Each time his nose hurt, he drew a yellow X, adjusted his direction and began walking again. The nose went with him. That meant that walls didn't have noses.

The hammer lay on the floor. It hadn't moved. The motion of the guy did not affect the motionlessness of the hammer. It simply kept not moving. It was just the molecules that made

up a hammer. It learned nothing. It didn't change. It was unaware that beyond the walls there was a sun, a sun the colour of chalk.

The clock, which had moving arms, and stuff inside it that moved, was also unaware of the sun beyond the walls. The clock was just the molecules that made up a clock.

The walls were another thing, a whole other story, even though they were just the molecules that made up a wall. On one side of a wall were yellow X's drawn in chalk. The abrasion of a guy's shoulder as he walked along the wall. The absence of time and memory. The absence of noses.

But on the other side of a wall was the heat of the sun, and the light that the sun threw upon the wall. Then time passed. Then the wall was dark and cool. Again, the passage of time. Soon the wall was warm and bright. Eventually: dark and cool.

Okay. And wind. On the side of the wall upon which the sun threw light, there was wind. It sure would take a lot of wind to move the wall. But the wall didn't budge. The wall changed continually, but it did not move and it remembered nothing. This meant there was no relation between motion and memory.

A wall is just the molecules that make up a wall.

Stuart Ross lives in Cobourg, Ontario. His recent book is a scintillating collection of collaborative poems titled, *Our Days in Vaudeville* (Mansfield Press, ISBN 978-1-77126-024-4). Stuart Ross is one third of the noise trio Donkey Lopez. He blogs at bloggamooga.blogspot.com.

From: *PRE-fixings*
Nicole Markotić

[mis] cellaneous

beware the fortunate accident, a mixed bag. definitely mixed-up cellular cognizance. remember that 50s mixer? a meet-and-greet for anthrope misers. don't miss the late-night flix – midnight's a doozer.

[mis] chievous

every third pedestrian, a purple forelock. shake and fizz. misremember the missile on the billboard hit song. Romans mislearn memory from the Greeks. misspent gerontophilia. fathom the garlic to the bottom of your gurken. Not every monster, just tomorrow's

[mis] feasance

feed happiness, not ritual depression: goat's blood and a circle of hands and spitting. cure as waves and waves of public hand-holding, the custom in this prairie province. each pet shop now a pet stop. every blue bottle. every doubled Renga. Swallow a double, then a triple. please miscommunicate

Nicole Markotić is author of the poetry books *connect the dots*, *Minotaurs & Other Alphabets*, *Bent at the Spine*, and the chapbooks *widows & orphans*, *more excess* (which won the bpNichol Chapbook Award), *he & [he]*, and *tracking the game*. Her fiction includes *Yellow Pages*, *Scrapbook of My Years as a Zealot*, and short stories in various literary journals. She was poetry editor for Red Deer Press for six years, has worked as a freelance editor for numerous poets and novelists, is a fiction editor for NeWest Press, has co-edited a collection of essays, *The Problem Body: Projecting Disability on Film*. And she edited a collection of poetry by Dennis Cooley, *By Word of Mouth* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, ISBN 13: 978-1-55458-007-1).

AGORA
Steven Ross Smith

Look out there, clipped to the line, forgotten laundry blown out of itself. Everything pushes, whizzes, whooshes and whip-tails. You recall like any other day, but not really – swaying on the slung blank, fingered map, blown past identity on unproductive gusts, eye-stung, a mirage of smiling ghosts. *F*-word determined to be heard – its grating vocable.

Or amble, a circular arboreal persuasion, a grand handshake. Leaves too, shake, rattle, and roll on stems, probe high toward flickering sunlight, branch out, as if fixated – life needs light – for a beam cast over a shoulder onto page's holy act.

Look closely, despite your silty vision, at colours of bark in pulsing light. A spectrum of surprises tumbles Wound's melancholy. It's all open space, angst, the agora of Wound's (let's say "*W*") phobia's skinny-leg underpin, shaky on undermined ground.

W wants to go back, but the leaves are raked into piles. Which one holds the treasure trove – truce or falsity? In a moment of distraction, *W* thinks *jack-off*, but it's the name of a flower he's reaching for, bright, bobbing orange and red, that eludes, with tendrils that attract, even when tangled. Or when a rib snaps, and the repellent cloth droops and rain soaks head and shoulders, splashes and blotters up *W*'s trouser-cuffs to the knees. Nothing spiritual about that, all sticky, cloying. No reason to be rude, even if annoyed – it's out of place at finer parties where chatter rolls ideas room to room then out the back door down the lane.

W jots – from the fabric ribs – fluid lines, loves the way letters roll and tumble. *W* or *You* may not live one hundred years, nonetheless on close inspection you'll witness the fractioning, the machines' command.

Still, insects carry on, bug with biting determination, infestation. Some are beautiful, even turn *W/You* on with a flash of understanding or of wing. Such is the dominant coupled social order, binary, undeniably. But the bond wanders, unruly with desire, under-understood and pulsing; reaches by fact or fantasy for propriety. Realm way out there, faster than light, than anything we know, not perceptible here, no matter how long you sit still, but it happens, reveals its toll, down the road.

Got to love the Chinook, its blustery warmth and gravel blast, heady as you get. In the market, a hand weights the purchase, overcharges on one unremarkable commodity – a little here, a little there, bit and piece, nickel and dime, cookie and crime. Truth is slippery, chancy, snake-eyed or lucky-sevener. The poem, yes, even when thick with dense tumbles of letters – might get to the quick – just might. The clouded, eye – iris blown open, no *Jack* to be seen – open to a blast of reds and yellows. “*W-om.*”

Eyes’ trellised melody, trilling the nasturtiums.

Steven Ross Smith: has published twelve books of poetry, fiction and non-fiction. He was a member of the sound-performance ensemble Owen Sound (1975-1985). His poetry book *fluttersong book 3: disarray*, won the 2005 Saskatchewan Book of the Year Award. *Pliny’s Knickers*, a collaboration, won the 2006 bpNichol Chapbook Award. His forthcoming poetry book is *Fluttersong 6: Emanations* (BookThug, September, 2015.) Most recently, his work appears in *Vallum, CV2, Poets & Writers*, and *WestWord*. He was the founding Director of Sage Hill Writing Experience in 1990, and from 2008 to 2014 he served as The Banff Centre’s Director of Literary Arts. He initiated and edited thirteen issues of the online multimedia arts magazine *Boulderpavement* (2010-2014). Follow him at: www.fluttersong.ca & on Twitter @SonnyBoySmith

1200 OLD SHOES Barbara Henning

Sent to an Indonesian Court
with a message: Let the boy
go free. Outside, a big truck
down shifts as the tree tops
tremble in the wind. So
he stole the shoes of a
policeman. He needed them,
and in about five billion
years, it won't matter.
The planet earth will be
engulfed by the expanding
radius of the sun. Martine
and I walk to Angelica
to see *Melancholia*, an
out-of-orbit planet heading
toward earth, and everyone
still going about their lives,
shopping. Build a magic
circle, the woman tells
the little boy, and hold your
hands over it. As the planet
breaks through the gravity
shield, the electricity snaps
and boom, just like that—
all the beauty and mean
pettiness is over and done.

Barbara Henning is a N.Y. author of eight books of poetry, three novels, a series of photo-poem pamphlets and a recent collection of interviews, *Looking Up Harryette Mullen: Sleeping with the Dictionary and Other Works* (Belladonna Press, ISBN: 978-0-9823387-5-9). Her recent books of poetry and prose are "A Swift Passage" (Quale Press, ISBN-10: 1935835106); *Cities and Memory* (Chax Press, ISBN-10: 0925904872), and a conceptual project, a collection of sonnets composed from 999 passages from 999 books in her collection, entitled *My Autobiography* (United Artists Books, ISBN-10: 093599243X).

2 POEMS

Andy Weaver

Titled

a seed
that which is
or may be sown

the drupeleted errands of raspberries
speak occasionally of sagas and myths

twins and multiples
offer primatal maps
through natal continents

a small bubble rises
during the fusion of glass
perhaps of a tertiary colour
in an ancient theory of pigment

a longstanding image
the presence of absence

some will say this
holds the beginning
a few will say
it holds the ending

others will say it
apes a word
that cracks open
the letters scatter
mercury on the tongue

winged feet of abiogenesis
perform alchemical miracles
cauterizing all lost chances
in the moment of change
the second hand splits
and then shatters
floats away on the backs
and legs of miniscule insects
jobbing pollination throughout
certain unknown meadows
to which we often return

Incognito

clinamen, rückenfigur, contrapposto,
the world in its objects
turns away. Time.
Space. Change
is the miracle the twist offers
a wink and beckoning finger.
Even the unwobbling pivot walks,
precision notates its precession.
Language is not soul
's psychopomp. Qu'est-ce que c'est?
This is the joy of the world
it changes. The littoral zone
of the literal. It is change
and we will always know this
by never knowing it. It. This. *Dike*
eris. Strife is justice. A wave lost
in the distant sea is not
a diminishment of the water.
Civil. Nautical. Astronomical.
Night black with the stories
of moon. Dark enough for each
and every, every and each gives
way. Astronomical. Nautical.
Civil. A sun spins grooves across
the sky to weigh the scales
of the moon. *This marks the ultimate*
expression of the sanctity
of the ordinary: no matter where
we turn—toward the stars, the rain,
the worm underfoot—there is nothing
but divinity anywhere. Heraclitus plays
knucklebones with children in
the temple of Artemis. The dear
as always, leads the hunt, the vowels
stumble after. *Noli me tangere.*
The problem's crux, it would seem,
is that we live precisely
at the speed of change. Agape,
he experienced *agapé*. But what
does it mean. Whatever it
means. Whatever, it means.

Andy Weaver specializes in contemporary Canadian and American poetry and poetics, with an emphasis on formally innovative and experimental texts. He is an Associate Professor with the Department of English at York University who would like to remind us of John Cage's observation that, "Personality is a flimsy thing on which to build an art." – Most recently, Weaver has published articles on the poetry of Darren Wershler and Robert Duncan. His current research focuses on the relationship between contemporary poetry and political anarchy. His newest collection *Gangson* (NeWest Press, ISBN: 978-1-897126-72-1) features experimental techniques including cut-ups and chance-generated poetry combined with lyricism. This collection's central long poem manipulates the language of Herbert Asbury's 1927 book *Gangs of New York*, investigating the aesthetics of violence and love. See: http://www.openbooktoronto.com/news/poets_profile_andy_weaver

2 POEMS

Tom Dilworth

Time Lapse

Before photography,
was memory
and genetics.

No one-hour service then
or digital immediacy.
A mother waited decades
to see again her son when young
in a grandchild.

She saw in the backs of her hands
her dead mother.

In the mirror, disconcertingly,
the face of her father.

Time
is an emulsion
supplying semblance,
eliciting longing,
unutterable grief,

inviting forgiveness.



Herding Cats

Wait for the right word; it may come
but not in time for this conversation;

go to one room to fetch something;
end up in another with another;

leave home without turning off the burner;

phone Barbara and say 'Hi Deirdre';

can't find your glasses
(need them to see them);

make a list so you don't forget,
forget the list;

try locating the car in a parking lot
or (worse) on the wrong street;

remember intending to do something,
do it again;

look in a dictionary for the spelling of a word
you can't find because you can't spell;

use a calculator, the result varies,
settle for two out of three;

in principal oppose rhyme,
do it all the time;

turn out the light, get an idea,
turn on the light,
find a pen, forget the idea;

change a word and change it back
and change it back again;

can't tell if it's finished
so just stop.

Tom Dilworth serves as a professor of English at the University of Windsor. He is a Killam Fellow, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He has published widely on Modern literature and Romantic poetry. His books include: *David Jones in the Great War* (2013), *Reading David Jones* (2008), *The Letters of Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson* (co-edited, 2009), and *The Poetry of David Jones* (1988) which won the British Council Prize in the Humanities. He is currently working on a biography of David Jones. Tom Dilworth's latest book of poetry is *Here Away*, published by Book Thug (Toronto, ISBN: 9781771660785).

4 POEMS

Susan Holbrook

bee hole

it's what you bee out of
as opposed to A hole
where the bees was
none of your
bees is
be
.
hold
the leaf-
ing maple
the bees left
air in a all shape
ees had een vehemently
holed up there queen deep
in the all of ees

Poem for Andy Goldsworthy

yay

vowel hoisted
on sticks
frosty morning
fifth attempt

hah

5 minutes later

bee ball

here
if you had
been here hon if only
you had been here you would
have seen it it was right here a poem
describing that fat ball would only throw you
no one could see the even then but all that
biz around her pointed to her being in there
no talk only worker bees whose avid
solicitude spoke her fat language
of sparking twine if you
had only been here
hon I guess you
had to be
there

bee hole

Part B side view: roast
pig's mouth apple
having rolled out
impossibility
of there
in
the
mind
of someone
here the gallery
shark sunk into the
plastic belly of the bear

Susan Holbrook's poetry books are the Trillium-nominated *Joy Is So Exhausting* (Coach House, ISBN 10: 1552452220), *Good Egg Bad Seed* (Nomados, ISBN-10: 0973533706) and *misled* (Red Deer ISBN-10: 0889952159), which was shortlisted for the Pat Lowther Memorial Award and the Stephan G. Stephansson Award. She teaches North American literatures and Creative Writing at the University of Windsor. With Thomas Dilworth, she co-edited *The Letters of Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson: Composition as Conversation* (Oxford UP, ISBN: 9780195386639). She is a poetry editor for Coach House Books and *The Windsor Review*.

now
Bernie Harder

fly with moon
stretch out our arms with her
it's time



Bernie Harder is a retired professor from the English Department, University of Windsor where he taught Medieval literature, linguistics and world and international tribal literatures.

Excerpt from *Labyrinthitis*

Sean Braune

ammoniating ammunition
commensurating
ingredients denominating
gradient escher escheating
 feudal lord lands
alcoholized inebriating

prejudicating heads of

lettuce

 guillotined

harness bin offal ops cut
thin slices brainpan post snuff
film allures, hanging bodies
stripped postpartum
institute insinuate
 in situ forgeries
burn, yet remove
blown out candle
 flesh moist
offering,
 thorn entangled
 shorn

 strangle

quartz war nations nonhabituating suppressing inflammation
crowdsourcing oppilating
 marquerite duress personating
wilde with serrating whitman recelebrating
twitter translating omens, as
 icons unhesitating moments
transliterating markson despotic unseating pol pot vindicating
cop shows adjudicating citizenship certificating
logomachy dedicating
bright lights
 emanating

luego regresó a arabia,

irate
incus

 inner clock struck
 incubus suffers

educating gerbil quanta
facilitating fascia government vodka
gelatinating cubed ice too latté
hallucinating fractal shape
dinnertime princess

Sean Braun is a poet/writer living in Toronto with a penchant for postmodern, avant-garde lipogrammatic re-writings, and Shakespeare.

WINK

Omaha Rising

eyes glint
hint sighs

Omaha Rising's previous incarnations include housepainter, firefighter, amateur kickboxer, gardener, postal worker, and superintendent. In 2001, Omaha ran POETICA, a weekly series that inspired Toronto, where he lived and played. He may be reached at <omaha@axxent.ca>.

WHEN THE PENULTIMATE STREETS COME SPARKLING IN TATIANA
Marshall Hryciuk

Fir St evergreens kindling to additive 'e' tribute to leaves
 LA St to leaving buttle to not returning light
 Mo St word-pliant viridus verum primum
 Lea St confirmed beginning
 Gue St
 Be St city of angels messengers percept-
 Wor St conveyors 6th on the musical
 scale pastoral scaly-
 wing living to die and to live and die in la-la land tra-la-la
 deck the labials voici-là corridors of the open

devotees of Kretan Britomarth always have the momo on their
 side dared to be a peach originary Amsterdam and the whole
 vaginal initiation illumination's moment

valleys to the lee leafwards salient bowls metaphors where
 they seem to leastest downright downwind taste of the adverbial
 fluid druidic oak to the straightest of strangers least with never
 an option of being owned

Goo the gush the kush sqish down the striations of sedimeaning
 Goo goo gah-Joob They were the Walrus i am the guest of Geist
 history becoming water-spirit air-spirit fire-spit goo treatment of
 the other as self all the way up to Mother Goose gander: gue gu
 guu gau gah Gaia

What comes from no inside no outside no beings sans Being
 write: being's' and none of the ladder within the inglish every-
 where is centre and margin and essences are provisional every
 one of is as all we need this moment always perfect as is

Wor War where we were wolf the part the hoar on Fro St
 armed force that complies us to security and shellfish's sake sake's
 fire Killarney Killhaven Killthelmal would you like some
 fries with that Wurst we could have gotten over
 if we want it

M arshall Hryciuk grew up in Hamilton, Ontario and matriculated from the University of Toronto with a BA in Philosophy. His latest book, *In Search of Tatiana* cross-pollinates the muse search of Vladimir Mayakovsky with the *langue recherche* of bp Nichol. Forthcoming are his translation of Francis Picabia's *Acrobat of Funeral Processions*, a selection of renku he has led and edited over the last 20 years entitled, *petals in the dark* from catkin press and the newest Nietzsche's Brolly edition, E E = H = e 3 = eta: seething the VZWL.

TIME TRANSACTION
Onyinye Oyedele

Yesterday is spent; No refunds, No exchanges, No recalls!	Today is Crispy Cash; Great decisions, Good bargains, Grand savings!	Tomorrow is a post- dated cheque; No guaranty, No warranty, No surety- A beauty to behold when you get there!
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Onyinye Oyedele has a Bachelor's in Media and Communications Technologies and an Honorary Master of Arts from the University of East London (UEL), UK. She received a Poet of Merit Award from the International Society of Poets, Washington DC. She is the author of *PRECIOUS...* a collection of Poems. Onyinye is a columnist on www.Nigeriaworld.com and has taught Creative Writing in Lagos, Nigeria. She lives with her family in Milton, Ontario, Canada.

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HERE WE GO WITH A PAGE OF RAMPIKE
ON WHICH TIME AND SPACE FOLD IN!

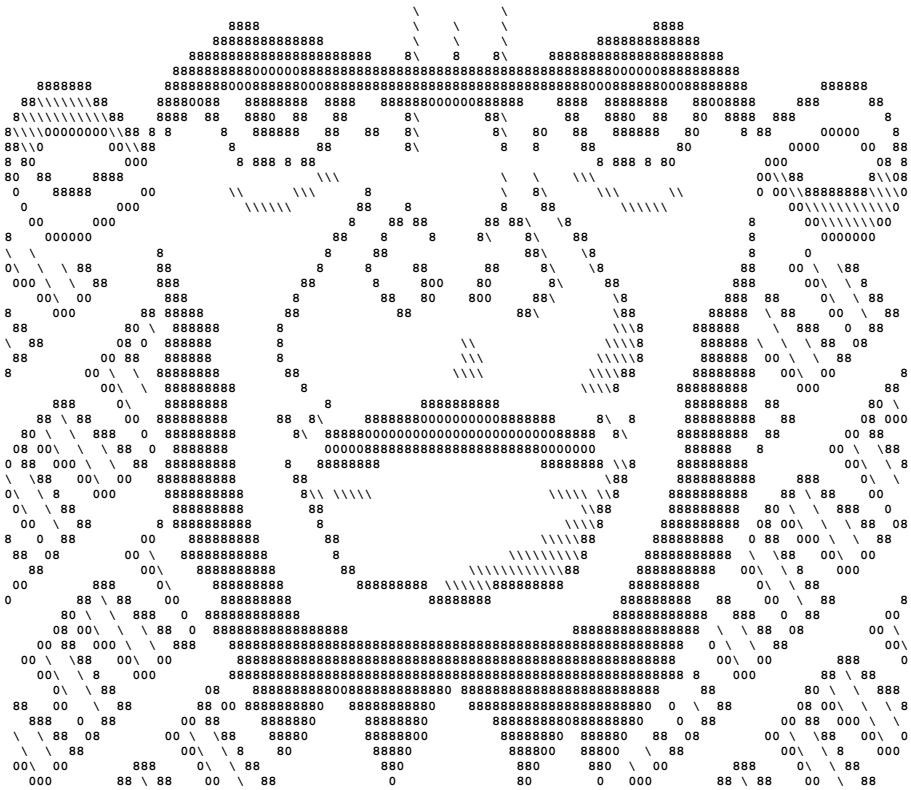
Nathan Dueck
for Al Jafee

WHAT LINK'S MISSING
IN THE EVOLUTION OF
HOMO SAPIEN BETWEEN
HABILIS AND ERECTUS?

FOLD PAGE OVER LEFT SO "A" MEETS "B"

A→

←B



One may say that primates won't devolve to evoke their simian cousins. But a return of primitive instincts in a human might occur with every grammatical error: a phrase or word can sound like a grunting ape, and a gesture can look like a monkey's twist of tail. So, one may say a sentence might express sentence. What a Darwinist fate!

A→

←B

nathan dueck is the author of *king's(mère)* (Turnstone Press, 2004) and *he'll* (Pedlar Press). His book of prose fragments, *he'll* replaces the hyphen in Mennonite-Canadian with an apostrophe. He lives in Calgary, but Winkler, Manitoba is his home.

TWO POEMS FROM THE SERIES: "SNAKE CHARMERS"

Kristjana Gunnars

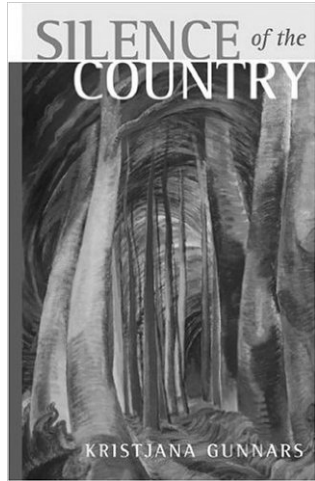
Chair

There is that empty chair, forever.
I can almost hear it whisper:

alone in the middle of the ceramic
tile floor, the herringbone blue, white,
crossing forever, a tossing sea of earth
and a garden table with no cups
and no utensils or flowers, fanning
round in royal blue mosaic, a red
cushion slightly off center on the brown
wicker chair.

This is our courtyard
of existence: these are the things in it,

this dark chair, the pillow
askance, the warm air, heavy, still thick
with the trace of your shadow.



the world's limits

to think all those cares, carried
so long: a blue bowl of oversized eggs
threatens to fall, and worse, to break

onto the parquet floor among the mirrors,
the dappled sunrays of afternoon
into the pink room, causing

havoc among the still magenta roses,
a pendulum that will not move,
and time stands still, just that moment

the film stops rolling, the soft swish
of an angel passes, barely heard,
rushes from the scene— to think I am

unable to contain the collapse of everything

the yellow silk flies away, the blue
turban of thought nearly overturns
and a lifetime of special disasters waits

to explode, the quiet scene, to fly

off into the haze outside: to think
every minute of every day, those cares
poised, ready, and a great noise almost

shreds the tense silence in a flash,
from beneath its silent veil, the palm trees
the angels, the dishes, the sky—

Kristjana Gunnars is a writer and painter, and Professor Emeritus of English and Creative Writing at the University of Alberta. She has received the George Bugnet Award for fiction, the Stephan G. Stephansson Award for poetry, and the McNally Robinson Award for fiction. She's been nominated for the Books in Canada/Smith Books First Novel Award, and the Governor General's Award for non-fiction. A solo exhibit of her paintings was presented in August, 2015, at the Gibsons Public Art Gallery in Gibsons, B.C. Her most recent book of poetry is *Silence of the Country* from Coteau Books (ISBN: 1550502026). Her latest publication is a work of translation, *Recesses of the Mind*, from McGill-Queens University Press. "Snake Charmers" is a collection of poems in progress. For further info see: kristjanagunnarswritings.com

BUTTERFLIES

Lesley McAllister

The day my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's,
she sat beside me in an airy consulting room,
worrying a paper tissue into ragged bits that
floated down and covered the lap of her Sunday-best dress
while the young gerontologist explained the Mini Mental exam
he was about to administer.

– My stomach's all funny – she'd told me earlier,
when I'd tried to get her to eat some breakfast
– like there's something flying around in there –

He handed my mother a sheet of blank paper
and a pencil from a box of sharpened HB/2s,
asked her to make a picture of a clock.
– Just anywhere on the page – he told her.

She draws a wobbly circle in the top right corner,
slightly egg-shaped and listing to the left,
jumbles the numbers 12 to 0 down one side
in descending order like they're in a hurry
to escape the page.
– Does this look right to you? – the doctor asks her,
tapping his pen in the centre of the clock
where you would expect the hands to be.
– tick, tock... tick, tock –

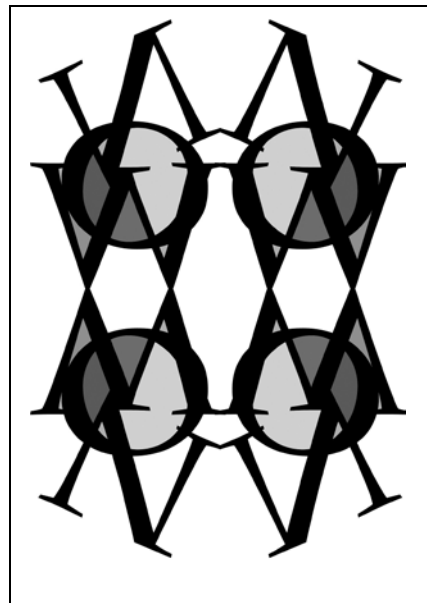
– Yes... I think so – she answers him, says
it would be better if she hadn't run out of room,
that he should have given her a bigger piece of paper.
– Don't you think a clock needs hands
in order to know the right time? – he asks.

She looks down at her own worn hands and,
out of the craziness and confusion that tunnel
through her brain like hungry worms,
says, quoting author Henry James
– The right time is any time
that one is still so lucky to have –
then stands up and shakes her skirt, releasing a flurry
that rises
in the updraft from an open window
and fills the room with white butterflies.

Lesley McAllister is a writer and editor living in Toronto. She is the author of *Between You and Me: Poems from the Alzheimer Bus Trips* (The Mercury Press, ISBN-10: 1551281406) and *The Blue House* (Aya Press). Her short stories, poetry, travel writing and journalism have appeared in anthologies, literary magazines, newspapers, and on radio. Her short story *The Return* won third prize in the 2013 Toronto Star Short Story contest.

TEXTUAL IMAGE: "NOW" BY AMANDA EARL (CANADA)
FROM THE EX CHRONOLOGIA SERIES

Amanda Earl is a poet & publisher based in Ottawa. Her recent chapbooks are *Sex First and then A Sandwich* (above/ground press) and *Me, Medusa* (Red Ceilings Press, UK). She is the managing editor of Bywords.ca.



GENEALOGY

Carolyn Gerrish

how far back do you want to go? stencilled hands
of ancestors in caves horned anthropomorphs &
a manta ray ghosts beneath the surface petroglyphs
don't disappear unless they're vandalized do we
vandalise our memories?

*

shoebox of reminiscences. kodaks' revelatory layers.
who are these people? are those old ladies in floral
dresses kin? tentative in your cossie on what beach
exploring the textures of sand. defying gravity on your
father's shoulders. longshot outside the red brick
apartment building & the man you had to reject. near
the great hall in cap & gown. mother in fake fur &
turban channeling claudette colbert. you find her diary.
thwarted voyeurism. ripped-out pages (an unrequited
affair). & the romance with your father. *jove i love his
company. he seems somehow different to other boys.*
& that photo in the garden. the looks they gave each
other. pure hollywood.

*

father slaps daughter for wearing nail polish & smoking
on the verandah. she's been wearing shorts on Sunday &
reading *Lady Chatterly's Lover* - while you're under my
roof you'll do as i say - she opens a door where people
are praying mother is ropeable - you've ruined the
reverent atmosphere & i know you wagged church to
meet boys under the bridge & your girlfriends I don't
like **their type** *your mum & dad they fuck you up*
(but try not to judge them) *they kept you ignorant of
everything because they were so fearful*

*

when psychotherapy fails can magic lift the curse of
ineffective parenting? say if you befriend a god or goddess
dryad or nereid are kissed by a prince/princess find the
Grail before the Knights wear an amulet learn the password
to a hermetic room where a woman sits at a loom better
still write a narrative about the plight of changelings & why
do i always feel i was adopted

*

surely the dead feel offended
when they're hunted down by
the living obsessed with their
origins *sing no sad songs for me*
ancestor stalkers feel **they** own
what went before take credit
for their forebears & *who do you
think you are?* at quest's end
reunion a poignant void no hugs
or kisses recognition/congratulations
no rapprochement/redemption for
prior iniquities *in the carriages of
the past you can't go anywhere*

Carolyn Gerrish lives and writes in Sydney, Australia. She has published five collections of poetry. The latest, *The View from the Moon* (Island Press, ISBN: 0909771790). She runs creative writing classes in the community and is currently working on her next collection.

2 POEMS

Eugene McNamara

Winter Light

In the middle of a heat wave
I think of winter light skies
like the inside of a seashell
implacable indifferent

The tree line is a reminder
of this world's somnolence

The field is simple open
to nothing but wind

A single bird circles high
up there perhaps a hawk

Nothing to eat in that snow

The hawk cries out
I do not hear it

There is no sound here no
music

Only this stern pietistic
light which forgives nothing
remembers all

Nothing moves down the road
past the field

There is only the sound
of my own breathing

Winter Light Again

lux refulgent

It is a promise of something
deep in the winter cold

In a land of frozen waters
all nature is hallowed
quiet and exultant
a whispered nocturne
through bare branches

The vine in the snow
dreams grapes
dreams wine
And this light

resplendent

promises

Eugene McNamara is Professor Emeritus in the Department of English at the University of Windsor. He founded and edited the University of *Windsor Review* from 1965 to 1987. His recent poetry appears in *Dreaming of Lost America* (Guernica Editions, ISBN13: 9781550716245).

A STUDY OF PEBBLES

Steven Da Gama

One cannot juggle pebbles.
Pebbles bounce

out of reach.
They clatter and ping

in their eagerness to unite
with other pebbles—

sophisticated,
well-rounded pebbles.

Steven Da Gama received the Abraham Woursell Foundation Award, a five-year writing grant from the University of Vienna, and numerous awards for his writing, painting, and drawings. His poetry and visual art appears in some 95 journals, and anthologies in North America and abroad, and in translation. He has published six books of poetry. The manuscript of his seventh and latest collection of poems is titled; *Passages: Complete Poems and Selected Drawings* (Albireo/Wavelength Press, ISBN: 0971644357). The above poem is from the *Passages* manuscript.

SONGS OF ANOTHER EARTH: THE POETRY OF MIHAELA MOSCALIUC
Liana Vrajitoru Andreassen

Two worlds communicate and reflect each other in glimpses and images of a double-sided mirror, as Mihaela Moscaliuc, the poet of *Father Dirt*, takes readers through a journey among living ghosts, past and present, Romanian and American, intangibly painful and beautiful. The poetry collection, as an ensemble, moves and disturbs with the hallucinatory insight of a delicate sincerity. Moscaliuc opens the door to an oblique Wonderland filled with the many souls that inhabit the world of the exile. Here, one finds, organically intertwined, the persistent voices of a past never truly left behind amidst the unceasing novelty of an adoptive culture. To find one answer to how or why these particular poems can move readers with such intensity, we can turn to a psycho-linguistic debate that has been going on for decades – that regarding the connection between words and language on the one hand, and human experience on the other.

In the poststructuralist age, anyone who understands the violence of language and historicity is wary of fixing reality into the structure of language. Theorists such as François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, or Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari have been attempting to regain a space that is not caught in the chain of signification, and have focused on the pagan, the schizophrenic flow, or art. Antonin Artaud, whom Derrida examines in *Writing and Difference*, speaks of the spirit-breath of life that is stolen by words when poetic truth is dissociated from psychological reality. He suggests that a return to the theater of cruelty restores the unity between poetry as form and this spirit of life. Artaud speaks of the “fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach,” even as we are engaged in “artistic dallying with forms” (qtd. in *Writing and Difference* 178). The reuniting of the self with the forms would be, according to him, a painful but necessary experience: “My reason will certainly one day have to receive these unformulated forces exteriorly shaped like a cry which are besieging me, and they may then supplant higher thought... I am a man who has lost his life and who is seeking every way of re-integrating it in its proper place” (*Writing and Difference* 180). Through a theatrical transformation of the past (not repetition, but representation), in which self and Other coexist, the self is taken back from temporality, its life-force restored.

This is what seems to take place in the poetry in Moscaliuc’s collection. The past and the present acquire theatrical presence in order for the life-spirit to exist beyond words, and the blending of layers of memory revives the emotion at the foundation of revisiting the past. In another book of memory and ghosts, Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, a powerful line reminds us that “Everything dead coming back to life hurts” (Morrison 42). Through writing, a cruel theater as it may be sometimes, there is the possibility of healing the wounds of the past. The poison is the medicine, as in Moscaliuc’s poem “You Ask Why I Answer You with Bees,” with its “talk of venom’s/curative powers” (54). It is what Derrida calls *Pharmakon* in a re-reading of Plato, the poison-medicine that heals through writing: “The god of writing is thus also a god of medicine” (*Dissemination* 94). The condition for this healing is for the word not to claim to reveal the original signifier, or truth.

Moscaliuc’s book is like a backpack filled with memories, like healing herbs, gathered through the poet’s journey and only partially revealed to the reader. Even though the lived experiences of the book’s characters are as vivid as if they were standing right in front of the reader, as if there were no time and space separating word from reality, there is always something untranslatable, the “*paparuda/duda, baluna luna buna*” in the poem “Watching My Son...” (62), that ungraspable something that conceals itself. In Derrida’s explanation, only through the act of revealing and concealing, through writing that remains under a veil of mystery as it mimes the truth, can the real be spared the violence of its own repetition. The voice of the Romanian-born poet emerges thus as a tender witness to the struggles of a community in the grips of totalitarianism, in memories as vivid as the present, yet impossible to explain in their totality to the “you” in whose language the poet writes, and to whom she reveals a foreign, Other, yet all-too-real, poetic *aletheia*.

And yet, the two realities absorbed in the poet’s bi-cultural perspective create narrative poems that paint precise portraits capturing the most fleeting moments in this in-between world of poetry: a moment’s joy or a moment’s suffering, be it that of a street child, a family member, or the “you” that the poems’ voice sometimes addresses as she asks for her new world’s companions to share her ghosts with her. The stories meander through the poet’s convoluted streets of childhood and adolescence, to a youth filled with searching, to finally bring us to her American present, where she is married and with a child of her own, but holding on to every voice, look, or landscape that marked her along the way.

For writing to be “true” to life, writing has to escape repetition, or history. Through a return to the past that turns history into myth, Moscaliuc’s writing does precisely that, transforming a Romanian landscape with a precise time and place into its timeless reflection, through the “eternal return” that Mircea Eliade talked about several decades ago. Therefore, one of the most powerful thematic threads that run through these past-present reflections of *Father Dirt* is time itself, bringing with it a kind of wisdom that is still the wisdom of a child. Death is a presence to the persona from childhood to adulthood. But death is accepted as part of life, part of both history and myth. A grandmother reminisces with her curious grandchildren who strain to hear the owl’s cry: “*When I was young, grandmother laughs, / I twirled naked in our drying yard / and be remained silent for weeks, / calling forth rain, forgetting death*” (“The Owl Calls for Grandmothers” 14):

THE OWL CALLS FOR GRANDMOTHER (from *Father Dirt*)
by Mihaela Moscaliuc

*Remember, grandmother says, far-off cry
for near death, near cry for death far off.
At the kitchen table, we scan owl echoes,
winnow rice, pencil crosses on rationed eggs.*

At midnight we mount the rooftop
to spot the owl’s yellow globes.
*When I was young, grandmother laughs,
I twirled naked in our drying yard*

*and be remained silent for weeks,
calling forth rain, forgetting death.*
Above the warm tar we find only stars
—wise sage turned God

of the underworld, corpse bird, ungrateful
offspring, stolen bride, sorcerer:
you let the dark prince step out
from behind the third eyelid, and give us no cry.

Eliade explains that objects and acts have no intrinsic value, but they become sacred when they participate in a reality that transcends them (Eliade 4). There is a sacred, myth-filled past that the poet summons, brimming with folk wisdom and inanimate objects that become timeless characters, such as Luna, the moon, “same *luna* who, invisible in the sun’s wings, / tallies our desires, cadences our breaths, wards / the blood cord of sisterhood” (“Luna” 15), or the graveyard cherries that put a curse on those who eat them, yet the girl tending the graveyard breaks the spell of death with a desire for life: “But the graveyard grows restless and I love cherries, / so I tongue-cradle each luscious morsel till it bursts, / I vow to remember the damage I will incur, / then spit the stone on the freshest grave, / knowing some greedy soul may have already claimed my own, / but these cherries are the best I’ll ever know” (“Old World” 13). Even love will have to pay tribute to the shadow of death, in the poem “How to Ask for My Hand at My Grandmother’s Grave.” This is where the persona confesses that a collective, Romanian and mythic **we** “*carry our cemeteries on our heads, / in our bellies, round our ankles. / We carry them to work / and we carry them to sleep / and when we make love / they moan, they rattle, they sing. / When our spines start sinking we spit / and curse and dance off the pain*” (1).

The ghost of a totalitarian past is also one that never leaves, that carries over into the present, so that the Americanized persona still cannot look at an orange without remembering what it was like to stand in line endlessly for the rare items: “When the truck doors snap open, we recognize / the crates. Each orange nests in crinkly tissue / an extravagance so out of place we don’t blink / when scales sink under heaps of cellophane” (“Blood Oranges for Easter” 6). In the midst of family life where “Father cuts the heap of coarse corn porridge,” it is not unusual for the children to rush out of the apartment “being first to spot the ration truck, / take the ninety stairs in double strides, / grab my brother, and hurtle to the doubling line” (“Good Friday” 5). Such memories are coated in the light of humanity and love, yet others are displayed in their harsh, unforgiving brutality, such as when a teenager committing suicide is said to be “the ultimate insult / To our harmonious communist life—”, yet the classmates of the offender “rise / On numb toes to kiss your eyelids. / We do not leave the mortuary vault / For three days. March. 1988” (“Suicide Is for Optimists, Cioran Said” 20). This is Artaud’s theater, the unavoidable cruelty of memory that exists beyond simple form, yet the type of representation that has the power of medicine for those confronting such memories.

Family is another, very powerful focal point in the book, and not just in the recollections of parents, brother, grandparents, but in a much more encompassing understanding of what roots a person in a communal way of life. Family is the communion with the earth (hence the book's title, *Father Dirt*); family is choosing to cross paths with the most un-rooted people, be they a shunned desk-mate whose voice the persona tries to remember, or the street children whose portraits and stories make up about a quarter of the collection's poems. The poet becomes the voice of all the bereaved and unwanted, gypsy wanderers and children clinging to some modicum of hope in their ceaseless struggle for survival. The poet, like Derrida's version of Thoth, the god of writing, is fully immersed in the on-going battles fought years before, and, like Thoth, she "separates the combatants and, in [her] role of god-doctor-pharmacist-magician, sews up their wounds and heals them" (*Dissemination* 90). The poems' voice is not only mother to her child, but mother to all "my orphans" whom she does not allow to fall into oblivion. In "Florina," the girl with a fetus in her bag "left the bridge gang two months ago: drifters/had flocked the river, *forced themselves on girls./So much safer* at the train station./We talk shop—the roundups, the mushrooming kiosks,/ *Radu's fried*. He's stolen the fat conductor's hat,/Baba's been gone for three days and a new kid/*most surely a faker*, joined the clan, *spitter rank*" (43). Lenuta makes a phone call to the United States, with scavenged phone cards, to inform her emigrant surrogate mother that "I bet God would love me better with a full belly, though I hope never to meet Him, but if I do, that's cool too 'cause I have nothing to tell Him. But I'll say this anyway: hey Mr., trade you a bone comb (from the finest mare!) for a soft cloud – your homeless beard needs grooming and my hips need a quiet mattress" (48).

There is an innocence to the stories unfolding in the pages of this book, as if even the most intense moments of pain were trapped in amber, never fulfilling their full tragic arc. They are now carried around in metaphors the poet has created for each one of them, although she is fully aware that they cannot save or redeem, but only bear witness. "I love metaphors, the way they dive below the earth then slither up moist with ocean," she claims in the poem "Metaphor" (55). Yet, there is also a deep helplessness to the plight of the artist who feels too much, but whose words carry only so much power to right the world's wrongs or soothe the world's pain: "I knew a boy who called himself a gypsy because he possessed nothing. He would become a thief, he said, since he never learned to play the violin or the accordion. What am I to do with the metaphor that has swallowed up his future, tell me" (56). In Derrida's explanation, the medicine can also be the poison, and "writing – or if you will, the *pharmakon* – can only displace or aggravate the ill" (*Dissemination* 100). Yet the danger lies, again, in temporalized repetition, in history that multiplies the wound suffered at one time. Moscaliuc's metaphors will not bring back the dead, but they make death meaningful, which is what history always denies us. Metaphor opens a dialogue between opposites, at the very site of the wound, the clash between life and death, communism and revolution, East and West, past and present.

In the end, these poems have evaded the passing of time (or, the terror of history as Eliade calls it). Seducing and disturbing, they settle spectrally in the reader's mind long after putting down the book. There is a sense that emotion and experience intensify when the writer's pen carries the ink of two cultures, her own play of light and shadows, her own *aletheia*.

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Liana Vrajitoru Andreassen is originally from Romania, and she is an Associate Professor at South Texas College. She has published stories in *Fiction International*, *The Raven Chronicles*, *The Horror Zine*, *The Willow Review*, *Mobius*, *a Journal of Social Change*, *Interstice*, *Scintilla*, *Weave Magazine*, and upcoming in *Calliope*. She has published academic work in *Alecart*, *Texas Review*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, *Southwestern American Literature*, *The CEA Critic*.

Mihaela Moscaliuc is the author of *Father Dirt* (Alice James Books, ISBN-10: 1882295781), and *Immigrant Model* (upcoming). She also co-translated Carmelia Leonte's *Death Searches for You A Second Time*. Her poems, reviews, translations, and articles appeared in *The Georgia Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *TriQuarterly*, *New Letters*, *Poetry International*, *Pleiades*, *Arts & Letters*, *Absinthe*, *America*, *Soundings*, and elsewhere. She teaches at Monmouth University and in the low-residency MFA Program in Poetry and Poetry in Translation at Drew University.

FOR REHTAEH PARSONS

Natalee Caple

Now Climbeth Rehtaeh Safe Out of Fortune's Shot and Sits Aloft

Saturday's child born on the ninth of December
Halfway between the equator and North Pole

Fifteen is the smallest natural number
Feel the stress move from lip to tongue

Only the chosen written on your body

Birds and feathers that should have mapped adulthood

Speak gentle niece against the cold harbour of public memory

Break the couplet of your birth and suicide

And I I

I will

Darn holes with you alive bemused warm pug fur under fingernails

Slice the net

Till the letters until they flow free

I see my own girl in your hair and glasses
Her right to be

And then: Holloa! What storm is this that blows another shipwreck on your shore?

In whose circling shadows boys have sought to hide

Let light drive out

Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons
Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons
Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons Rehtaeh Parsons
I will not utter anymore

If only in place of breath the small words of your name

Natalee Caple is the author of seven books of poetry and fiction. Her latest novel, *In Calamity's Wake* (Harper Collins, ISBN-10: 1443406708) was published to international acclaim. She is a professor of English at Brock University.

GUST

Ellie Csepregi

When people tell a story, when they speak a story, they often begin with:

"I remember": when, sitting there, this guy, this woman, my sister, my friend, this place I stayed, this song, the lawn in front of the prison, the clouds that day, a car, this joke, waiting, thinking, trying, a dream, being nervous, a strong heart beat, learning about, listening, tasting, feeling, apologizing, something you said, traveling, a song, screaming, being so sad, visiting, being so shocked, hearing about, this place, this smell reminds me of, a dress I burned.

Ellie Csepregi is a writer, editor, BookFest Windsor organizer, and teacher originally from Toronto, now living and working in SouWesto.

Excerpt from: *FAMILY TIME*

Peter Jaeger

7:36 Put some maple in here.
7:36 And the other reindeer?
8:01 I need you to put this green jumper on.
8:01 We're not late. I just don't want to be.
8:04 You can have your croissant soon.
8:16 Wasn't that a dainty dish to set before the King?
8:21 It's not prickly you just go in there and there's space—lots of bits of space.
9:04 Both of the pens are like this.
9:04 This guy's a DJ.
9:04 Look at this.
9:05 I'm doing this piece as well.
9:05 I'm sending it for your sister.
9:06 He's got way big guitar.
9:06 You can put it in your wash bag.
9:06 It is for you only.
9:07 He has one shoe and one not shoe.
9:07 This is a really good DJ.
9:08 He plays the music.
9:09 And there's a DJ up here.
9:09 You won't even see his smile.
9:09 He's the dancer in the band.
9:09 He's the DJer.
9:09 In fact he's playing a disc now look.
9:10 It's written.
9:10 It says there it's written.
9:10 This still works.
9:11 That's what it's called.
9:11 Cymbal.
9:11 He plays lots of drums.
9:12 I'm this guy.
9:12 There's three people here who are you?
9:12 Dad is the stereo Mom's the guitarer.
9:13 Who's that on my foot.
9:13 And then there's this guy in the corner called Sam.
9:13 I'm going to send this to Canada and say Happy Christmas to all.
9:14 Now I'm just showing you how to draw.
9:14 You all keep singing.
9:14 This is a guy who always has a bum here says Mr. Bumbum.
9:14 Actually I don't want to read a book I want some toast.
9:15 I'm still drawing this one.
9:15 Turns into a gun.
9:15 Is this one of your drawings?
9:25 It's a bumbun drawing.
9:15 I making a little boat thing so I can sit on.
9:15 I'm only having one of these cushions.
9:20 120 cm on December 18, 2013.
9:24 Ninja Hamster.
9:24 I'm a Ninja Hamster too!
9:24 Draclia.
9:24 Is Draclia scary?
9:25 Should I get your car keys?
9:25 No we can't walk up steps.
9:25 You can't get up. I'm going to get.
9:29 115 cm and 98 cm on May 19, 2013.
9:36 Explodes!
9:36 Why don't we put that den away?
9:36 That den's yours, ok?

9:36 Yours is down there!
9:47 I'm nearly finished. I'll come in a minute.
9:51 Clap cause I singed the loveliest song.
9:51 Little silver beads.
9:51 I am the guard of the silver beads.
10:00 Sacky-sons dark man went to see a pig.
10:01 Nothing.
10:01 There! There! There!
10:02 There I am!
10:02 And that's a little ant.
10:11 Can I sit in back?
10:11 Can I catapult it?
10:11 You catapult it on people's heads.
10:11 I'm a little skeleton. I love you.
10:12 I bang someone on the head.
10:12 I need my sword.
10:12 Have you seen my sword?
10:12 Where is it?
10:12 Little skeletons go!
10:13 I need my axe to go wham!
10:13 Wham on their head.
10:13 I will whack them in their heads.
10:13 So silly those skeletons.
10:13 Don't they have any good weapons?
10:15 You're good. As good as a monster.
10:16 Vicki and Grace have blue eyes. And I have blue eyes!
10:17 What's seven plus seven?
10:17 What's eight plus eight?
10:17 What's eleven?
10:18 See!
10:18 They both have the same dress.
10:18 That's not scary.
10:19 But that is a baddy's castle.
10:19 Probably the Zombie King.
10:19 I think it is.
10:20 Dashi's the name of Katie's cat.
10:21 Shall I put this up my sleeve?
10:22 My bullet!
10:22 I got your bullet still.
10:22 I was so tired.
10:22 I didn't want to drive.
10:22 I was sweating.
10:24 I really want short sleeves!
10:25 No, I go here.
10:36 We're ghosts.
10:36 Don't see us Dad.
10:36 Seriously can you not see us.
10:36 Dad I just need a wee.
10:52 Can I film?
10:53 Can I see?
10:53 And then, at the doctor's, this is what they told my dad to do, so he has to put this on is foot to get this *ginormous* splinter out.
10:53 Or else.
10:53 Uh, he's never seen it before, but if you want a close up we can show you.
10:53 So, it's quite bad, cause if he doesn't, if this doesn't work he has to go to A and E so it's quite a bad thing that he's got.
10:53 I want to help you.
10:54 Oh I've had that before.
10:54 I wanted to help you do this.
10:54 Can I see your foot?
10:54 So, this is, wait, I just need to show you.

- 10:54 That's it.
 10:54 Oh.
 10:54 He's gonna put this plaster on.
 10:54 I need the magnifying glass.
 10:54 Alma will press it down.
 10:54 Don't touch his foot to too badly.
 10:55 Oh yeah.
 10:55 Great. This might work.
 10:55 Let's hope it works.
 10:55 Else he'll have to go to A and E's.
 10:55 Now, next job.
 10:55 I'll put this on.
 10:55 You hold them together.
 10:55 Silas does that. Can I do this?
 10:55 I wanna do um the photos.
 10:55 This isn't a photo I'm not taking.
 10:55 Wait.
 10:55 I need to take I need to film where we used.
 10:56 So this is his drawer.
 10:56 And these are his plasters.
 10:56 Good Dad!
 10:56 First he has to open.
 10:56 I'll try and.
 10:56 I'm not getting the film walking past.
 10:56 We're gonna go to Sainsburys.
 10:56 Why?
 10:56 Can we go to Gloucester Road?
 10:56 Can we look in some more charity shops?
 10:57 Oh.
 10:57 This guy is the photo of Dad.
 10:57 When he puts this like that.
 10:57 You can see.
 10:57 So you might wanna take a little walk.
 10:57 Take some more.
 10:57 Talk someone talk.
 10:57 Uhh uhh!
 10:57 Farting away and they farted into diorama monster's stinky mountain.
 10:57 Yahoo baby Alma!
 10:57 She is the superhero of farting contests.
 10:57 Yeah baby!
 10:57 He tries to wash his hands off 'cause he was merrily singing "Baa Baa have you any wool?"
 10:58 Yes sir three bags full. One for master one for the Dave. One for the little boy who lived down the lane.
 10:58 Turn.
 10:58 No wait.
 10:58 Wait. Wait.
 10:58 Wait.
 10:58 Oh I really need to go.
 10:58 Done.
 10:58 No don't do it.
 10:59 Then, next page.
 10:59 Wait.
 10:59 What's on the other page?
 10:59 Done.
 10:59 Done. Done.
 10:59 Oh yeah that page.
 10:59 Done.
 10:59 Do you have to do the words?
 10:59 Turn the page.
 10:59 Because then it's like a story.
 10:59 Turn the page.
 11:00 I want some toast.
 11:01 I think a bee goes up my nose and it coughed me.
 11:01 I need a poo it hurts.
 11:03 It's a rainbow actually
 11:03 Another colour.
 11:03 Green I need.
 11:03 That one.
 11:03 Oh!
 11:03 I want the really lovely one.
 11:04 It's smelly.
 11:04 It's smelly green.
 11:04 I won't use this smelly green.
 11:04 Orange girl—no, that one is mine.
 11:05 Stink bum.
 11:05 Smells like a stink bum.
 11:05 Now I need another one.
 11:05 No this one.
 11:06 I'll give you a huggle but not a kiss.
 11:06 Come to Toyland if you have a jumper and I do have a jumper on come in.
 11:07 There is the skipping rope.
 11:07 I need the skipping rope.
 11:07 Up and down the dusty bluebells.
 11:08 I bet your person's going to die in this one.
 11:08 Chop your fingers off.
 11:08 You're going to have to get used to being killed.
 11:09 Look what you've got to go through.
 11:09 Meow I am a Cheetah how do Cheetahs talk?
 11:09 Not those ones the coloured ones.
 11:09 A fish try with a fish one.
 11:10 Those are mine.
 11:10 When I've finished this.
 11:10 What are you writing?
 11:10 This is so tricky.
 11:11 You've got to do it all again.
 11:11 Up there and down there.
 11:11 This is the scary bit.
 11:11 I'm making an apple.
 11:11 I made a apple.
 11:12 I'm making a tiny apple.
 11:12 What are you writing?
 11:12 Who's that for?
 11:22 Now I can't make my species, my onion-picket man.
 11:22 Dad this is your computer remember?
 11:25 Milky milky.
 11:26 Moon.
 11:27 More.
 11:27 Mucky muckster.
 11:27 Rock, rocks, slippy rocks.
 11:27 Stomp stomp roar roar.
 11:28 I want Mummy to do it.
 11:29 Twiddlers!
 11:30 I did make one for you with selo-tape and paper.
 11:30 And you're not there.
 11:31 Has writing on it.
 11:31 That's for your bedtime.
 11:32 I'll show you.
 11:32 £110.00
 11:40 This is my gun! This is my gun!
 11:40 Let's fight then.
 11:40 Should I? Should I?
 11:40 I have to go to sleep now.

Peter Jaeger (b. Canada) is a poet & literary critic, teaching at Roehampton Univ. (U.K.). See his book: *John Cage and Buddhist Eco-poetics*. Bloomsbury Press, U.K., ISBN: 9781441117526

From Letters to Verlaine
Stephen Emmerson

28)
We talked about time travel
and then it started to rain
step into 1877
the old Russian paintingness
of it all
at the cider steps
I unend
to smoke a bone
from which end of the mirror
a crack starts matters not
all these comedies
have been refurbished
for the first time in
years are nothing but trouble
years are nothing but travel
I brain out
and smoke some
duff powder
caught my innards
in a train door
and left without guts
it will come around again
this moment
you reckon
tear a poem in half
fold into kites
and you're there

Stephen Emmerson's numerous books include *Telegraphic Transcriptions* (Dept. Press/Stranger Press), *No Ideas but in Things* (Dark Windows Press, ISBN-10: 0957164491), "*A never ending poem...*" (Zinzalla), and, "*Stephen Emmerson's Poetry Holes*" (If P then Q), among others. With Lucy Harvest Clarke, he co-edits *Blart Magazine & Blart Books* and organizes the South London (U.K.) reading series; Footsy Index.

IMPROVISED IMMORTAL
SJ Fowler

not concentrating is drying the sweat
around the brow of the dappled
turns out there are Caligula
covered bonds nesting, getting a metallic
wish not remaining silent
really not to talk to tinsel rings
a dusty facade, the glare blinds
not listening to mobile signals
no lofty fingers strangers
foremost rehabilitation on the roadside

and;

to place carefully into a black rubber bag

SJ Fowler is a poet, artist, martial artist & vanguardist. He works in the modernist and avant garde traditions, across poetry, fiction, sonic art, visual art, installation and performance. He has published six books, including *Enemies: the selected collaborations of SJ Fowler* (Penned in the Margins, 2013), and been commissioned by the Tate, Reel Festivals, Mercy and the London Sinfonietta. He is the poetry editor of *3 am* magazine and is the curator of the Enemies project, for which he has won awards from Arts Council England, the Jerwood Charitable Foundation, Creative Scotland & more.

doing

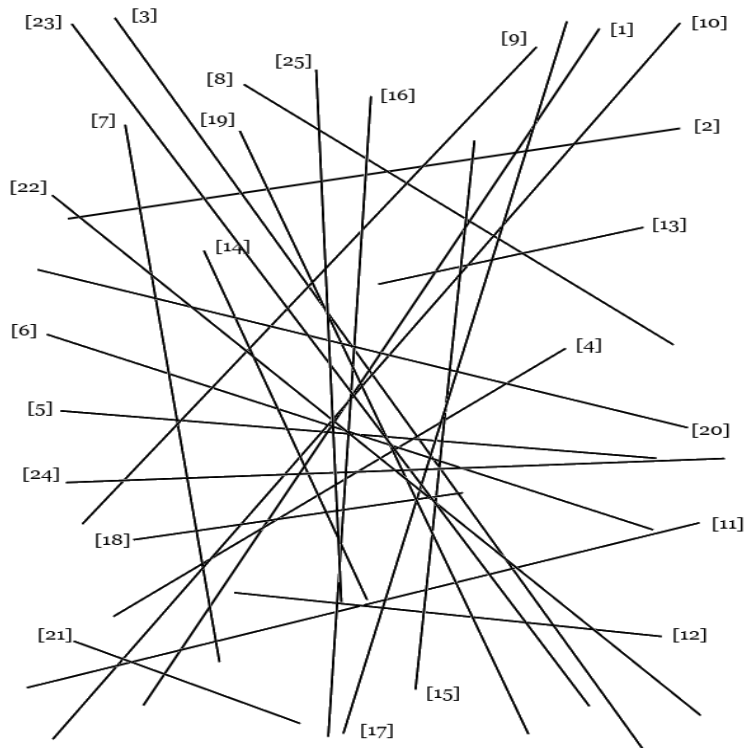
James Davies

I looked at the bits of plastic (25.2.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (16.3.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (22.3.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (23.3.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (27.3.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (19.4.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (23.4.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (25.4.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (28.4.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (9.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (10.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (15.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (17.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (18.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (20.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (22.5.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (1.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (5.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (13.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (14.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (21.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (26.6.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (10.7.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (17.8.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (23.8.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (1.9.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (23.9.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (25.9.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (26.9.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (8.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (17.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (21.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (22.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (29.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (31.10.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (5.11.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (20.12.13). I looked at the bits of plastic (6.2.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (5.3.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (12.3.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (1.6.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (10.7.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (14.7.14). I looked at the bits of plastic (16.7.14).

James Davies is from Manchester U.K. He works with minimal and conceptual forms of language.

lifelines

Tom Jenks

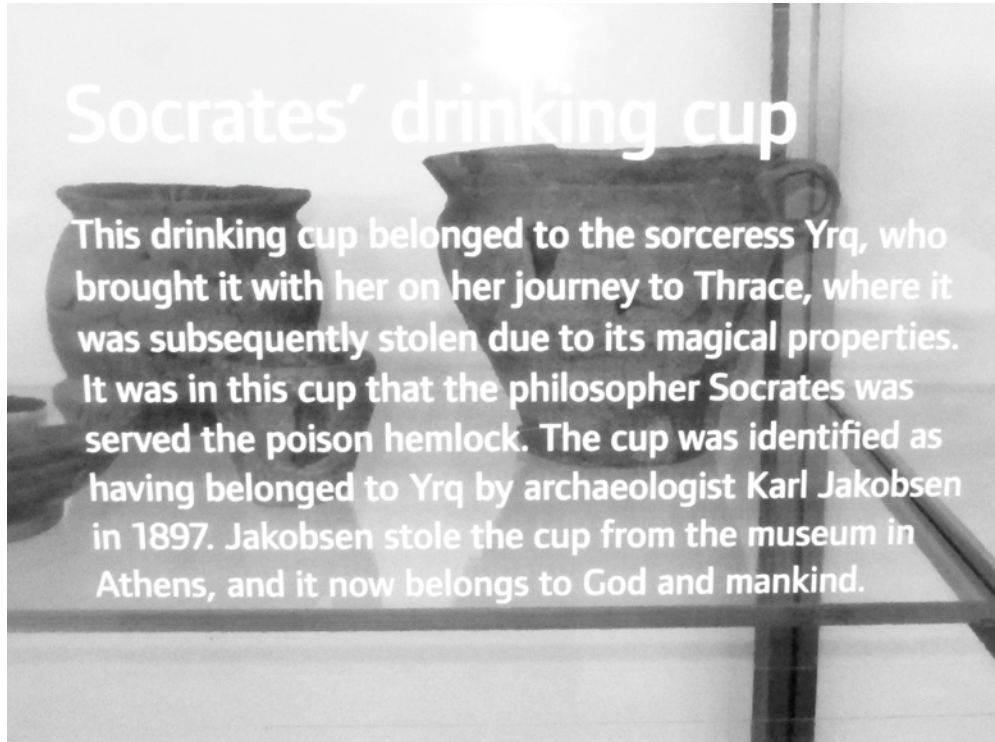


[1] Biggs, Ronnie; [2] Dors, Diana; [3] Hess, Rudolf; [4] Houston, Whitney; [5] Jackson, Michael; [6] Jenks, Isabel Mary; [7] Jong-il, Kim; [8] Kennedy, John Fitzgerald; [9] Khan, Genghis; [10] Mandela, Nelson; [11] Melancholy, Rudolf the; [12] Monroe, Marilyn; [13] Phoenix, River; [14] Plantagenet, Richard; [15] Porterfield, Ian; [16] Reed, Lou; [17] Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Victoria; [18] Sedgwick, Edie; [19] Socrates; [20] Sócrates; [21] Sutcliffe, Stuart; [22] Taylor, Elizabeth; [23] Thatcher, Margaret; [24] Tudor, Henry; [25] Woolf, Virginia.

Tom Jenks is from Manchester, U.K. He creates conceptual works and small-scale, neo-dada objects, and holds an interest in 'pataphysical language actions.

TALL TALES
Merete Helle

“Tall Tales” consists of a series of fictional, modular narratives which accompanied artefacts shown at the Danish prehistory exhibition in the Danish National Museum, during the summer of 2012. The exhibition built on Merete Helle’s study of archaeology and on the Museum’s attempts to interpret artefacts by constructing fictional narratives about them. Her photographs and texts document how Helle’s humorous narratives question the interpretative language used in museum exhibitions.



SOCRATES’ DRINKING CUP

This drinking cup belonged to the sorceress Yrq, who brought it with her on her journey to Thrace, where it was subsequently stolen due to its magical properties. It was in this cup that the philosopher Socrates was served the poison hemlock. The cup was identified as having belonged to Yrq by archaeologist Karl Jakobsen in 1897. Jakobsen stole the cup from the museum in Athens, and it now belongs to God and mankind.

Merete Helle has written numerous novels, short stories, radio plays, and digital texts. She has also written a fictional guidebook based on the permanent exhibition of Mediterranean cultures at *The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek*. She is currently working on *Soundbenches* – a piece consisting of wooden benches which transfer spoken text through a conductor so that listeners’ hear that text through their bones. *Soundbenches* is set to be installed at historical sites in Denmark.

I'LL TEXT YOU BACK LATER
Morton Sondergard



Morton Sondergard is a Danish text-artist and poet. Medium (above): carved stone tablet.

UTILITY PROGRAM ■ ALPHA
Mari-Lou Rowley

This restlessness is a need to write down this restlessness ■ Walruses stampede to the edge of receding ice flows ■ Synapses tinged with embedded jingoisms, too much blubber ■ What parts of the mechanism are you prepared to forfeit?

Amygdala dalliance in basal ganglia bandwidth, in the bling of an eyelash, detached from seeing ■ Multi-headed daemons monitoring changes in host states ■ Blink once to acknowledge federate clusters ■

Back on the ice flow walrus fin the water, monitor changes in hostile states when the dictator bares his chest ■ In the grand schema web profiles are small utility programs ■ To escape the cluster nodes, go out. Look up!

Mari-Lou Rowley is an eco-science poet and interdisciplinary adventurer who has encountered a timber wolf, come between a black bear and her cub, interviewed an Italian astronaut, found over 44 four-leaf clovers, and published nine collections of poetry. Her most recent books are *Unus Mundus* (Anvil Press, ISBN 978-1-927380-44-4) and *Transforium* (JackPine Press) in collaboration with visual artist Tammy Lu. She is currently pursuing a PhD in new media, neuro-phenomenology and empathy. "Utility Program Alpha" is an example of what Rowley describes as "feral poetics—a neuro-phenomenological enactivist poetics" forthcoming as an e-book chapter in *Fractured Ecologies*, edited by Franca Bellarsi and Chad Weidner, to be published by Eyecorner Press, Denmark.

MANIFESTE POUR LE MACULAGE DES AFFICHES PUBLICITAIRES



Julien Blaine

APRÈS LE MANIFESTE DES SOCLES ET STÈLES ABANDONNÉS (1978-1984)
VOICI CELUI DU MACULAGE DES AFFICHES PUBLICITAIRES:

Achetez une bombe acrylique (spray paint) de la couleur de votre choix et faite un rond le plus parfait possible bien rempli pour qu'il ruisselle d'abondance sur l'affiche de votre choix. Pas de graffiti, pas de tag, pas de slogan, pas d'affichettes, pas de flyers, pas de post-it : on ne répond pas à ces messages imposés par les marchands de colle. simplement un rond blanc plein à déborder...

Moi, j'ai préféré la bombe blanche (happy color, smalto spray, acrilico) : ça fait de très gros et très beaux spermatozoïdes. En langue italienne : 1 spermatozoo que j'écris avec un blanc entre le « o » et le « z » : Spermato zoo. Voilà le manifeste n'est pas plus long ! – **Julien Blaine**

GIRL AT HOME

Josh Smith

I pretended you could understand me when I spoke Spanish to you.
We would wake up and I'd whisper,
You are the most beautiful sight I have ever risen to.
It was the daily specials for all you cared,
but it sounded pretty, and you'd smile at me.

In Spanish, I was a big shot.
I'd tell you over toast about the house I was going to buy you.
I'd describe all the details of the car we'd drive,
and oh yes, we would drive.
Lazy Sundays through the country side,
where we'd stop to buy crafts and tamales from roadside stands.

It was easier to tell you,
Me llamarán a guerra mañana,
because you don't know the Spanish word for war.

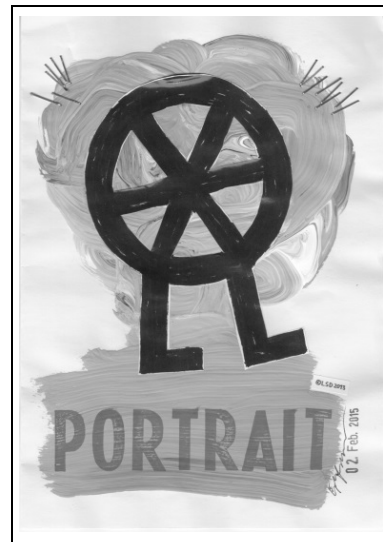
As I fight, I keep your photograph tucked into my helmet.
I tell the rest of my unit,
Ella es la cosa más hermosa para que luchó.

She is the most beautiful thing that I am fighting for.

Josh Smith is a poet working in and out of Toronto, Canada, and Buffalo, New York.

TEXTUAL IMAGE: "PORTRAIT"
ELKE GRUNDMANN (GERMANY)

Elke Grundmann is a mail artist and visual artist working out of Berlin. She has made repeat appearances in *Rampike*.



WHAT WAS WRONG

Alan Lord

What was wrong in 1966

1. The Vietnam War
2. The Cold War
3. Military coup in Argentina / junta installed
4. Richard Speck shooting rampage
5. James Meredith shot / US civil rights struggle
6. Apartheid

What was wrong in 1979

1. Iranian Revolution/US hostage crisis
2. China invaded Vietnam
3. Thatcher becomes PM
4. The Unabomber
5. Harvey Milk murder
6. Soviets invade Afghanistan

What was wrong in 2014

1. Iran getting nukes
2. North Korea's nukes
3. Syria mess
4. Iraq mess
5. Afghanistan mess
6. Egyptian mess
7. Crimea annexed by Russia
8. Ukrainian mess
9. Senkaku islands crisis
10. Paracels islands crisis
11. Spratleys islands crisis
12. Anti-China riots in Vietnam
13. Military coup in Thailand
14. Global warming
15. Increasing CO2 emissions
16. Glaciers melting worldwide
17. Rising sea levels
18. Monster storms
19. California wildfires
20. Increased acidity in the oceans
21. Bleached coral reefs
22. Overfishing
23. Garbage patches in the oceans
24. Al Qaeda & offshoots
25. Boko Haram
26. Somali pirates
27. Alberta tar sands
28. Fracking
29. Oil pipeline spills
30. Drilling in the arctic
31. Russia-China oil & gas deal
32. Brazil shootings ahead of World Cup
33. Narcotraffic killings in Mexico
34. Overpopulation
35. Deforestation
36. Loss of Biodiversity
37. AIDS
38. Ebola
39. MERS
40. SARS
41. Drug-resistant bacteria
42. Flesh-eating disease
43. Untreatable STD's
44. Genetically modified foods

45. Artificial life
46. South Korea ferry disaster
47. Coal mine disaster in Turkey
48. Racism
49. Slavery
50. World hunger
51. NSA wiretaps
52. Videogame addiction
53. Smartphone texting zombies
54. Identity theft
55. Hacking
56. Cyber attacks
57. Anti-satellite weapons
58. Fukushima
59. Almost daily shooting rampages
60. Google Glasses
61. Surveillance cameras everywhere
62. Military drones
63. Amateur drones
64. Front National wins in France
65. Far Right gains in Europe
66. Antisemitism in Europe
67. Rampant poverty
68. Rampant obesity
69. Kids with diabetes
70. Videogame addiction
71. Social media addiction
72. Book store closings
73. Music store closings
74. Video store closings
75. Newspaper bankruptcies
76. Reality TV
77. Freeloading music & films off the web
78. Skyrocketing cancer rates
79. Too many billionaires
80. Rampant pedophilia
81. Hipsters
82. Kidults
83. Islamic State/ISIS
84. Sex slaves
85. Schoolchildren massacred
86. Hacked freedom of expression
87. Heads chopped off on Youtube
88. Malaysian airlines
89. Ferry disasters
90. Drones
91. Military robots
92. Palestine-Israel conflict
93. Military spending
94. Russian expansionism
95. Chinese expansionism
96. Russia-China military cooperation
97. Russia kicked out of G8
98. Cold War II
99. More war
100. Too many pundits

Alan Lord is a Trilingual Writer, Satirista, Musician-Songwriter, Civil-Structural Engineer, and Ex-Avant-Scenester. He is an iconoclast, a cornerstone of the Montreal punk community, and author of the furiously satiric book *ATM Sex* (Guernica, ISBN13: 9781550713541).

SUBTERRANEAN GHOST STATION BLUES

Laura Solomon

I'm from a family that some people might call privileged. My father's the CEO of some old corporation or other and my mother's a socialite that does a lot of charity work. They own the mandatory Manhattan apartment. They're *busy*, always *busy* – busy attending some corporate event or *Women Who Care Luncheon* or *Violet Ball*. Mother's latest project was helping out at the Coalition for the Homeless. She brought home their annual report, which stated that in New York there were currently more than 36,000 homeless people, including 15,500 children, sleeping each night in municipal shelters, while thousands more slept rough on city streets, in public parks, in the subway system and in other public spaces. That immediately made me feel a little less sorry for myself. Mum and Dad are often too busy to help me with my homework or kick a ball around in the back yard. I'm not a moper, like Dad's sister Maude. She's an artist manqué – a frustrated artist. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts in 1990, but then fell into a trough of sloth and despondency from which she never emerged. Instead of producing, she took to drinking daytime G&Ts and watching the telly. She had just one exhibition, which bombed. She developed epilepsy. If she got tired, hungry or stressed she could throw a fit. *Beware of failed artists*, said my father. *They can turn nasty. Look at Hitler. He followed this up with, Saddam Hussein was discovered in a hole in the earth writing novels and poems of which he was the hero*, as if to suggest some intrinsic link between art and political psychopaths.

It was shortly after my thirteenth birthday that I got the idea of running away. I guess a lot of kids get a similar idea around that age, but they don't have a *plan* like I had a plan. They didn't *prepare* like I prepared. I packed my bags – clothes, toothbrush, deodorant, a map of the subway. I packed a blow-up single mattress that my parents had bought for a camping holiday in the Catskills. I had seen a programme on the telly about mole people living in the sewers underneath New York. They emerged during the day to raid the garbage cans outside posh supermarkets. They lived on this fare along with sewer rats that they roasted whole over open fires. I thought that I could have a good life with these people. It would be something different anyway. My old life was suffocating. My friends were all spoilt little rich brats with too many toys and too much spare time on their hands.

I disappeared down a manhole on the corner of 111th and 5th Streets. I guess you could say it was a vanishing of sorts. I headed into a subterranean world. The walls were black, made of dirt and damp to the touch. There was a musky smell in the air. A lighter burned up ahead of me. I headed towards its glow. In its dull light, I could see that the walls of the subway had been decorated by graffiti artists; taggers. Two or three mole people began moving towards me. They moved so softly that it seemed they had webbed feet. They made strange noises that seemed barely human, but that was their way of communicating with one another.

They drew closer. One at a time they introduced themselves to me. None of them used their real names. They used invented names instead; Scar, Hammer, D-dog. Their clothes were ripped and tattered and they stank to high heaven.

There are about six thousand of us, said Scar. *Us underground people. Us mole people. Some of us have been down here for over a decade.*

They told me various facts or fictions about their past lives. Above ground they had been prostitutes or strippers or worked at supermarket checkouts. One guy claimed to have been a lawyer. Drug addiction was rife down here. Most of these sewer dwellers shot up or smoked crack or both. They had to, in order to dull the pain of their daily lives. An atmosphere of anger, sadness and hopelessness pervaded their camp.

Up above, said Scar, *you had to obey society's rules. Underground you can make your own rules. There are no mirrors. We don't need reflections down here.*

When I commented that there were also no clocks, Scar said, *'What need do we have for time down here? We eat when we're hungry and drink when we're thirsty.'*

Scar and the rest of the tribe seemed convinced that the world was going to end; a holocaust of sorts. Society was too evil to keep functioning for very much longer.

After the apocalypse, said Scar, *we will be the ones who teach them upstairs how to survive. There's over 6000 of us. One day we will rise up.*

They were modern day troglodytes, who had a semblance of societal structure they had taken from the world above ground. The society had appointed runners whose job it was to occasionally make journeys to the surface in order to forage for food in garbage cans outside restaurants. A mayor was appointed as spokesman. Beneath the surface of the earth there were rival factions struggling for supremacy. There were various ways to die down here. You could be struck by a train, or electrocuted by the dangerous 'third rail'. One mole person had recently gone out by peeing on said rail, with the stream of urine effectively serving as a live wire. Mole people died of natural causes too; AIDs, tuberculosis and pneumonia, and then there were the fights, the scraps, people

stabbing each other with pen knives or beating each other to death with planks of wood. *Every day was a struggle for survival*, said Scar, who, as his name would suggest had a five inch scar down the right side of his face, like Scarface in the movie of the same name.

Many of the homeless were riddled with disease. AIDS, the common cold, pneumonia, tuberculosis, hypothermia and diabetes. Then there was the dangerous third rail which is a way of providing electric power to a train, by running a rigid conductor alongside the rails of a railway track. If a person touches the track they can have their hands, head or feet blown off. There are many derogatory terms to describe the homeless; derelicts, hobos, unseen or forgotten man, vagrants, bums, beggars. In Japan they are known as 'johatsu', which means 'wandering spirit' or a person who has lost his identity. These people are different; other – they exist outside of society's norms.

Scar became my main friend amongst the mole people. He took me under his wing. Truth be told, he was the only one who demonstrated anything remotely resembling friendliness. The rest of them could be very standoffish, as if they considered me to be an invader, an intruder; a rich bitch who had decided to take a sojourn in the underworld in order to 'find material'. They were deeply suspicious of me, in the same way that a group of tigers will be suspicious of a lion that strays into their enclosure. I, in turn, was suspicious of Scar. Why was he being so friendly? Did he want something from me? Money? (I had none). Sex? (I was still a virgin and I certainly didn't intend to lose my cherry in a sewer.) These subway people referred to their home as 'Scum City' and they often joked amongst themselves about their poverty.

'What's that gorgeous scent you're wearing?' one sewer-dweller would say, sidling up to another in a parody of a New York socialite.

'Why, it's eau de rodent, darlink, the new must-have parfum for the ladies of New York.'

Or 'It's eau de turd, the very latest thing.'

Scar took to leaving me notes.

Gone rat-hunting. Back around 2pm.

Sometimes he went above ground in order to raid garbage cans or go binning (diving into clothes bins) for new threads. He often brought me home fresh finds – a T-shirt with the sleeves missing, a denim mini with white paint splattered on it, a pair of old trainers. I was grateful for these gifts and saw them as a sign of his growing affection, for Scar and I were getting closer all the time. He took me on a tour of the underground, through its empty tunnels, its disused ghost stations; City Hall, Brooklyn Bridge, Worth Street. There were clusters of mole people to be found at random intervals – rival factions. One group even had a microwave.

'One day soon we'll have internet access down here,' said Scar.

I wasn't sure whether it was a joke or not.

'Every now and then,' he continued, 'riots break out, one group pits itself against another.'

One day, one of the other subterranean dwellers tried to convince me to take drugs. Hammer caught him in the act of trying to get me to snort a line and kicked him in the arse. Hammer was a tough nut. He was African American and carried a hammer with him everywhere he went. He smashed objects, but not people, at random. Shards of glass, mirrors, an old drinking fountain. D-Dog was a failed rapper, but that didn't stop him from pumping out his so-called 'wicked rhymes' at every given hour of the night and day. He wore the mandatory backwards baseball cap and his jeans halfway down his bum, a tacky gold medallion and sneakers with the laces undone. Some of the mole people were more vulnerable than others. I know it may sound clichéd, and possibly sexist, but many of the women looked extremely fragile. Cindy in particular, a petite blonde woman, seemed very young and frail, permanently on the verge of breakdown. With time I got to know more about their backgrounds. They all had different reasons for wanting to live underground. Some of them couldn't afford to pay rent. Some were running away from abusive family members, or foster parents, or orphanages, or from the police. Many were addicted to booze, drugs and cigarettes and a large proportion suffered from some form of mental illness, depression, manic depression or schizophrenia. Nevertheless, despite their hardships, a large number of them were capable of forming supportive relationships and looking out for one another.

Given the choice, the vast majority of these subterranean dwellers would rather stay underground than return to a life on the surface. Above ground, they said, they were outcasts, invisibles, untouchables, alienated from friends and family. Underground, they had formed communities, cliques. They had a vision and a purpose, whether it be sweeping out their section of tunnel with a piece of old broom, or helping another mole person to give up the booze. What they had found here was a sense of belonging. Many of them claimed that they valued the human spirit above material comforts. Somewhat surprisingly, I found that these people had ethics, morals. To those who lived above ground, this existence seemed dystopian, but to most of the mole people they had found a slice of utopia. This was a tax haven, devoid of normal rules. Survival was all. This, claimed Scar, was really living. Here, the outsider became the insider. People infected with AIDS, or addicted to crack, or who had become mentally unstable were cared for. Many of the mole

Rampike 24 /1

people had been abused at shelters; they'd either been raped or people had stolen from them and so they had fled into the bowels of the earth.

'The pigs come down here sometimes,' said Scar. 'They beat on us. Those bastards. *They're* the real vermin.'

It was Scar who introduced me to a man they called 'The Reader'. The Reader had brought his library down with him, dozens of leather-bound volumes, hard-backs and paperbacks. The Reader had a double degree in psychology and philosophy from Harvard. He had the obligatory grey beard and wore socks underneath his sandals. Special 'runners' were appointed to bring the mole people supplies from above ground. They brought The Reader fresh booty from local second-hand bookstores. The Reader was the main educator in the group. It was his duty to educate the subway's young. He taught them the three R's – reading, writing and arithmetic. In Scar's group there were only about six young people – ranging in age from three to eight. Mostly, they were well behaved, but every now and then, a couple of them would run riot and have to be quietened down by one of the older members of the group.

The Reader, in turn, introduced me to a man they called 'Black Angel.' Everybody was scared of Black Angel. He lived on his own in the bowels of the subway and was often to be found laughing and talking to himself and eating his own faeces. There was something deeply disturbing about him. It was as if he was possessed by a demon, or as if there was, in actuality, nobody inside him at all, as if he was soulless, empty, as hollow in the O in God. A nothingness in human form. I was too frightened to talk to Black Angel. I'm not sure what I thought he might do; stab me or eat me, barbeque me like one of those sewer rats that Scar and co were so fond of devouring.

Despite my best intentions regarding not losing my virginity in the subway, Scar and I soon started sleeping together. It started out as a comfort thing – somebody to cuddle up to on the cold winter nights. And also, entertainment. Something to do. The hours spent down in the subway were long and drawn out. Somebody had a small, battery-powered television they were always tuned into. There was a pack of dog-eared old cards and a tatty game of Monopoly.

Scar's friend Aran lived in the posh part of town – the condos. Here there were old mattresses, deck chairs, armchairs, a lamp hooked up with electricity wired from the train tracks and a gas cooker. By day we went out 'tagging' or graffiti writing. Scar tried to turn me into an Oliver Twist-style pickpocket during the day. I wasn't too keen on doing anything illegal. Scar did his best to persuade me that it was okay to smash people's windows and climb inside, but I remained unconvinced. I was a nice upper-class girl at heart. Mother and Father had raised me properly. I wouldn't descend to a life of crime so easily.

After I'd been living in the sewer for a couple of months, Scar took me out and taught me how to spear rats. He had a couple of old Indian spears. They had three bits of fur wrapped around them, and each piece of fur had two feathers stuck into it. When asked, he said he'd nicked them from a junk shop. We headed down into a sewer that branched out to the left and soon spotted a rat up ahead.

'Mickey Mouse's less adorable brother,' quipped Scar, as he stabbed his spear into its hind quarters. He handed one of the spears to me. We headed further down the tunnel. I spied a rat.

'Gently, gently, catchee monkey,' warned Scar and I padded softly towards it.

I bought the spear down into the rat's hind quarters, in imitation of the way that Scar had impaled his catch of the day.

I became pregnant by Scar. My stomach expanded and expanded, pushing at the waistband of my trousers until they threatened to burst. The baby was born. We named it Fay. It had different coloured eyes, like David Bowie – one green, one blue. The poor thing cried and cried in the darkness until I gave in and took it 'upstairs' to where it could take in the light of day. Then it hushed up for a while and quietened down and suckled calmly at my breast. Scar didn't think too much of the baby. There certainly wasn't a very strong father-daughter bond. He ignored it when it cried and ignored it when it laughed. I tried to shower the baby with adequate attention in order to make up for the ignoring.

The baby didn't grow especially fast due to the dark conditions underground. Its limbs were pale and withered. Just a smattering of blonde hair grew upon its head. Shortly after its third birthday, The Reader and I taught it to read. We started with *The Gruffalo*, which quickly became a favourite. Both Fay and I fell in love with the illustrations. We then moved on to *Room on the Broom* and *The Gruffalo's Child*. Over time Scar became more interested in Fay, but by that stage Fay had got the pip and didn't want anything to do with him.

From time to time Scar would speak to me of other underground factions in different cities. There were people living beneath the cities of Paris, LA and Las Vegas. How Scar knew this I'll never

know. From newspapers maybe, or rumours. From the internet cafe that he sometimes visited on his rare trips above ground.

Due to the fact that Scar hadn't really bonded with Fay all that well, shortly after Fay's fourth birthday, I decided to venture back to life above ground. I had expected that Mother and Father would be glad to see me. Instead I found that they were furious.

"Where have you been?" they demanded. "And who have you been doing it with?" "I've been underground," I said. "With the mole people."

Of course, they didn't believe me. They thought I was making it up, fooling around. There was nothing that I could say or do that would make them take my word for it. I had thought that I'd only been gone a few months, but in reality it had been three years. Time had flown by.

Mother instantly bonded with Fay. Fay smiled up at the family matriarch and mother was in love. Father wasn't quite so pleased.

"What the hell have you gone and gotten yourself up the duff for?" he asked in icy tones. Maude swung by for a visit. She was chuffed to meet baby Fay as well. Her art works had finally started selling. Her formerly doomed career was finally starting to get off the ground.

A week later, Mother and I were out shopping in Bloomingdales when the super-storm hit – Hurricane Mandy. Climate change experts were saying that the storm was due to global warming. There was a five-metre high storm surge – five metres of water flooding into the subway. Which got me to thinking, maybe there could be further disturbed weather patterns on the way; hurricanes, tidal waves, acid rain, pea soup fog. Perhaps the end of the world was nigh; the Rapture, Apocalypse, Doomsday, Judgement Day. The storm dumped snow, brought down power lines and plunged the city into darkness. Tens of billions of dollars of damage were done. The power outages paralysed the nation. Chaos ensued. Seawater flooded the subway. There was no way to pump out the water. Ninety percent of the mole people were drowned. The other ten percent got warning and escaped. God only knows where they are now.

The Army brought in their water removal team. More than a dozen experts drained the tunnels, fishing out the bodies of drowned mole people as they went.

"They should have made the subways tsunami proof," I said to Mother, and she nodded her head in agreement.

"I wonder how many more of these storms are going to hit America," she pondered.

I thought about Scar's words.

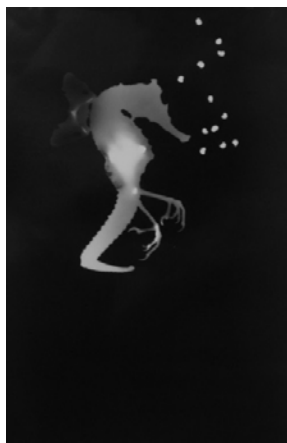
After the apocalypse, we will be the ones who teach them upstairs how to survive. There's over six thousand of us. One day we will rise up.

A falsity. Five thousand of them had been drowned. The other thousand, however, were still on the loose, roaming free throughout New York and maybe, like cockroaches, with their hardened survival skills they would be the only things still alive after the final judgement had been delivered.



Acknowledgement: I am grateful to Jennifer Toth for, *The Mole People: Life in the Tunnels Beneath New York*. Chicago Review Press, 1993.

Laura Solomon's books include *Black Light, Nothing Lasting, Alternative Medicine, An Imitation of Life, Instant Messages, The Theory of Networks, Operating Systems, Hilary and David, In Vitro*, and *The Shingle Bar Taniwha and Other Stories*. She has won prizes in Bridport, Edwin Morgan, Ware Poets, Willesden Herald, Mere Literary Festival, and Essex Poetry Festival competitions. She was short-listed for the 2009 Virginia Prize, and won the 2009 Proverse Prize for her novella, *Instant Messages* (ISBN-10: 9881932025). She has had work accepted in the *Edinburgh Review* and *Wasafiri* (UK), *Takahe* and *Landfall* (NZ). She has judged the *Sentinel Quarterly* Short Story Competition.



PHOTOGRAM: KATIE SOLBECKE (CANADA)

CHOOSING

Joanne Arnott

*I have told you to choose so choose
Between death upon my chest
Or on top of my notebooks of poetry
~Nissar Qabbani, "Choose"*

I am your gallant
shouting below your window
pounding my breast—
the time for song is well nigh past
escaped with the scents
of yet another season

I am your lover who rises
from table, spilling my serviette from my lap
I dash my spoon to the ground, declaiming
because it is time
my blessed friend
for our confrontation—

Choose!

Damn it, do you think that i offer
my breast as a deathbed
to anyman, to everyman?

Choose!

Do you prefer to simper behind the cloak
of mouldering obligation, allowing me
to proclaim my love in text after text

until all the world knows
what a fool i am—

who can move the sun and the moon
whose lariat captures, whose arrow pierces

whose song melds hearts—
how i could not

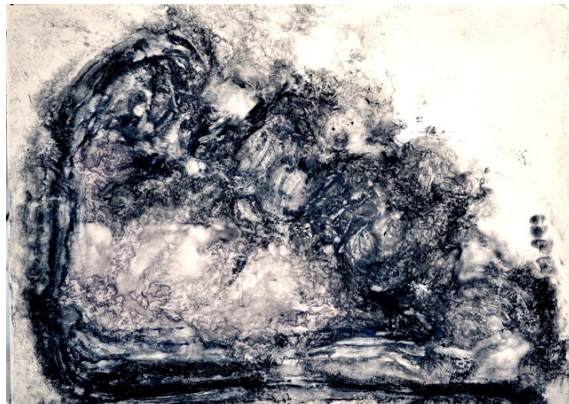
at the beginning nor
at the end of my pages

move you

Joanne Arnott is a west coast Métis/mixed-blood writer, editor, blogger, arts activist. She has nine books published, including: *Halfing spring* (Kegeдонce, ISBN-10: 098687406X), *A Night for the Lady* (Ronsdale, ISBN: 978-1-55380-250-1), and *Salish Seas: an anthology of text + image* (AWCWC).

"FLOWING": BRITT-MARIE LINDGREN
Mono print, 80x56 cm.
Plaster and oil based ink

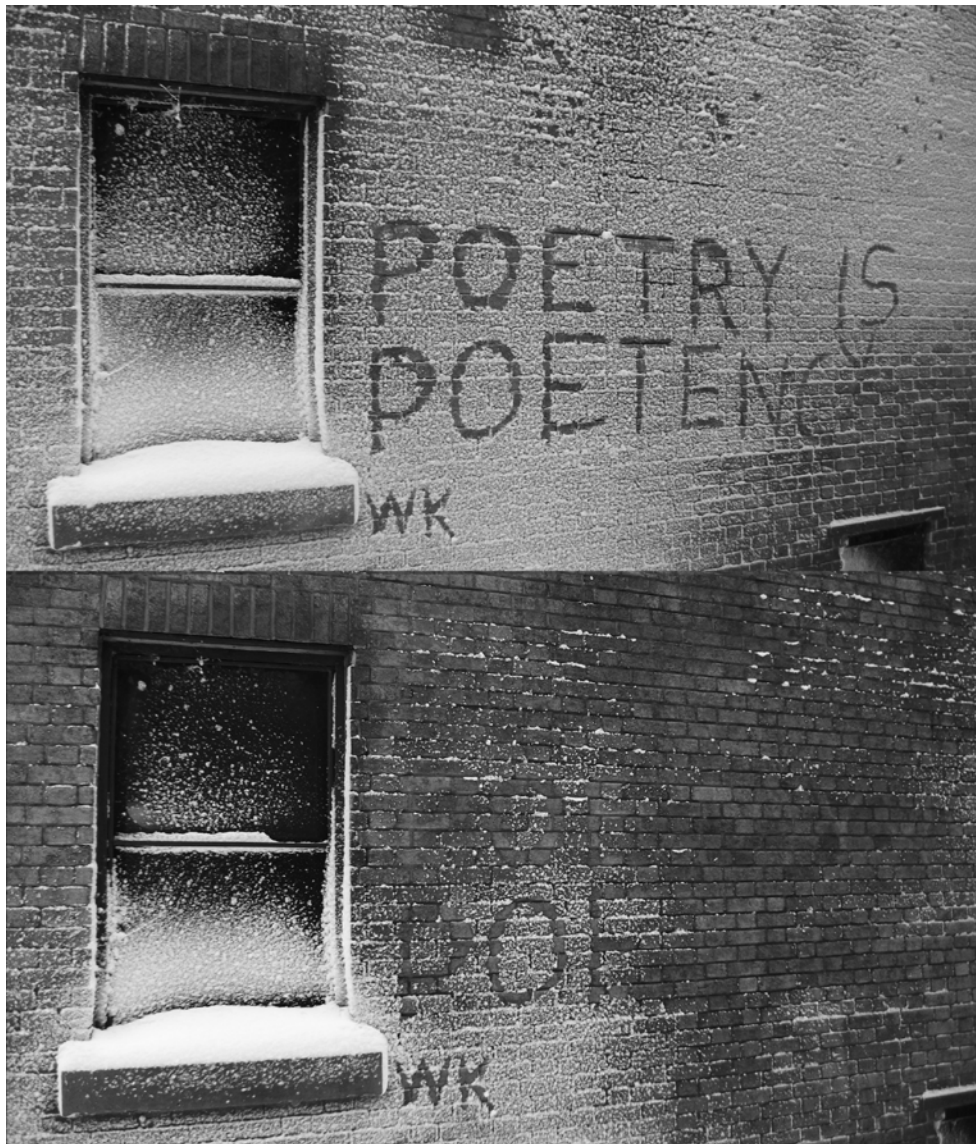
Britt-Marie Lindgren, born in Stockholm, and graduate of the Rijksacademy (Amsterdam), is affiliated with the Amsterdam Balloon Group, with whom she has exhibited internationally as far as Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Currently, Lindgren is based in northern Ontario and Amsterdam.



TAKES A FULL SECOND
Eddie Mumford

Takes a full second now
from getting the joke to laughing
a slower pump than pain
dripping
dripping, anyway.
A full second before you take your hand off the stove
though you felt it immediately.
Is that funny?
A full second now.
I'm laughing

Eddie Mumford is an energetic, emerging writer/editor based in Toronto, Canada.



"SNOW GRAFFITI" : WALLY KEELER (CANADA)

Wally Keeler is a literary impresario, videographer and writers' events coordinator, who lives in Cobourg, Ontario, Canada. He is also the driving force behind the People's Republic of Poetry.

THE H CHORD

Micheal Laverty

To exhaust all possibilities, it would take a listener ten thousand years (one chord a second played for three hundred and fifty billion seconds) to hear each combination once. For every star in our galaxy, a combination of tones—a rare collection of harmonious fifths to sustain life and a stunning array of discordant anti-matter buzzing across the void. Somewhere in the universe a lonely trickster god is growing bored of these combinations, swimming in the pillars of creation to escape the cycle of absolute frequencies before another star is born, another chord is struck. No escape from the fundamental law of seven tones, five semi-tones, and time's signature. The tones ring out simultaneously until the first one fades and the last is left to spiral out into silence. A cosmic finger shifts position to realize the difference between minor and major—there is only a half-step between genesis and rapture, and somewhere in between is the H chord.

On Earth, we can construct an infinitude of chord diagrams and progressions:

A player piano, given to a son in a grandmother's will, plays somewhere between G and G#.

Then a stolen cello sounds out a deepening B.

An electric guitar screams out a high E, looped and feed-backing through a broken amplifier.

The young Krishna playing the flute driving the people into the ecstasy of dance.

Apollo strumming his lyre and leading the chorus of muses.

The Archangel Gabriel sounding the trumpet of the heavens to announce the apocalypse.

A fifth grade student learning to play "Three Blind Mice" on a recorder, alone in his bedroom.

The out of tune panhandler on the subway platform.

A commercial for Taco Bell with shrill Mexican horns blasting through your car radio.

A G E D

An Indian man spins the turntables and we forget about the sitar.

D E A F

The stability of a chord breaks under a dark arpeggio creating the false resolution of harmony.

D E A D

That string quartet last night almost had it. They came pretty close.

F A D E

The sympathetic strings of the heavens ring out in spiralling echoes.

An entire life spent chasing ghost notes, searching for the sound that does not yet exist.

*Still we keep pressing our fingers upon the fret board
working flesh into metal.*

(H)

Micheal Laverty lives in Sioux Lookout, Ontario with his wife, Natalie, and their two boys, Isaac and Malcolm. His poetry and fiction have appeared in *The Fiddlehead*, *Front&Centre*, and *The Windsor Review*. His novel, *Hands of the Tyrants*, is a satire featuring a CSIS agent who infiltrates an artists' collective (Now or Never Publishing, ISBN-10: 1926942116). Laverty is currently composing thought experiments inspired by episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and the works of Jorge Luis Borges.

ORANGES ARE NOT ALLOWED

Arthur Levine

A woman named Martha who wasn't Martha Stewart walked into a hat store carrying an orange. The clerk said, "Martha, you are welcome to come in here and buy a hat but oranges are not allowed."

The woman told him, "You must have me confused with someone else. Although I am carrying an orange, my name isn't Martha."

Arthur Levine's biography was stolen during a break-in that occurred on December 25, 1966. Also taken were a Proctor Silex Percolater, Model 10930, a KitchenAid Toaster Oven, Model Number KCO2010B, and a banana that he had been planning to eat with his lunch.

**REVIEW: NEW LITERARY HYBRIDS IN THE AGE OF MULTIMEDIA
EXPRESSION: CROSSING BORDERS, CROSSING GENRES**

Edited by Marcel Cornis-Pope

John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadelphia (2014) 455 pp.

ISBN: 978 90 272 3463 6 (HB; alk. paper) ISBN: 978 90 272 6933 1 (EB)

Reviewed by Fausto Bedoya

This timely and remarkable collection features over two dozen cutting edge essays by international scholars, investigating the contemporary digital landscape. The articles collected here are divided into four parts including 1) Multimedia productions from theoretical and historical perspectives, including definitions of hybrid genres and intercrossed forms of intermedia expression; 2) Regional and intercultural mappings including histories of multimedia development, and shifts in primarily European cultural paradigms; 3) Ranges of intermediated forms, genres and phenomenologies emerging from digital expression, performance, code-work, the blogosphere, and the virtual; 4) Interactive connections between readers and (re-)writers engaging in multi-mediated literature. The essays feature topics such as electronic literature; modes of production; digital archives; genetic criticism; Beckett and intermedia performance; Futurist Tachypanism; articulations of flesh; digital memory; postcolonial texts and the web; religious and gender identities; multimedia literary hybrids; literary digital mappings; Holocaust and hyper/cyber textualities; codework; phenomenologies of anti-genres; the Festival Dada; socio-politics of nonfiction comics; hybrid photographic; texts & images; posthuman bodies in the performing arts; interactions of cinema and performance; online literary technologies; storytelling through social networks; author-reader interactions through hypertext and multimedia; novel forms of digital literature; expanded concepts of reading; tablets and the new materiality of reading; and de-scripting through “virtual typewriters.”

In his “General Introduction” to this collection, editor, Marcel Cornis-Pope addresses issues of new literacies, modes of cultural reproduction, literary hybrids, and economies of communications and information. Cornis-Pope considers cyber-utopians (e.g.; Ted Nelson, George P. Landow), vs. cyber-dystopians, while assessing how digital technologies have extended and re-shaped literary expression as it moves into multimedia forums, inspiring paradigmatic shifts leading to conceptualizations such as Alan Kirby’s “digimodernism vs. postmodernism.” Moving from visual poetics, comics and visual narratives, to performance, installations, cinema, video, hypertext, digital and on-line formats, the essays in this collection question new media, shifts in literary techniques, and their socio-cultural and political ramifications. This collection offers an outstanding range of thought-provoking perspectives involving media, socio-politics, discourse theory and praxis, genealogies of historical precedents, and contemporary digitally enhanced expressions. My one quibble with this collection is that the Works Cited for over two dozen articles are combined in a single set at the end of the volume. Perhaps this method serves some greater efficiency, but many scholars find the traditional and discrete Works Cited format to be more accessible, and preferable. That minor point aside, the task of interpreting the digital cultural explosion is enormous, and too much for any single volume, but this collection provides an excellent initial foray with ample insights into the manifold possibilities of authorship and readership within digital environments.

This collection features established and prominent scholars and theorists including Pedro José Oliveira de Andrade (hypermedia/internet specialist), Alan Bigelow (prize winning multimedia theorist and practitioner, see; 2011 BIPVAL Prix de Poésie Média), Reneta Vankova Bozhankova (see: *Horizons of Digital Literature*), Maria do Carmo Castelo Branco de Sequeira (see; *Barbaric Prose: The Germination of Eça de Queirós’s Writing*), Marcel Cornis-Pope (editor and contributor to this volume), Nevena Daković (see; *Dictionary of Film Theorists*), Astrid Ensslin (editor; *Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds*), Leonora Flis (specialist in non-fiction comics, literary journalism), Verónica Galindez-Jorge (see: *Pascal Quignard: Literature without Frontiers*), Karl Jirgens (editor of *Rampike*, providing a genealogical trace of intermedia performance covering Samuel Beckett, Charles Bernstein, and Stelarc), Artur Matuck (author of *The Dialogical Potential of Television*, and prize-winning video-Art specialist), Talan Memmott (author of *Lexia to Perplexia* on relationships between human consciousness & network phenomenology), Eva Midden (specialist on Feminism in Multicultural Societies), Francesca Pasquali (author of *Margins of Culture: Media and Innovation*, and specialist on social identities and the internet), Helle Nina Pedersen (specialist in new technologies and e-book reading), Bernardo Piciché (specialist in Renaissance Lit., Futurism, and Modern cinema), Manuel Portela (see; *Scripting Reading Motions: The Codex and the Computer as Self-Reflexive Machines*), Victoria Pérez Royo (specialist in aesthetics, art theory, contemporary dance, and digital technology), Joanna Spassova-Dikova (Scientific Secretary of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Janez Strehovec (principal investigator on electronic literature, re; ELMCIP), Bogumila Suwara (project coordinator, “Hypermedial Artifact in the Postdigital Era”), Rui Torres (director of the journal *Cibertextualidades*, member; Board of Directors of the Electronic Literature Organization), Susana Tosca (co-editor, *Understanding Videogames*), Ivana Uspenksi (specialist in information and communications web mapping & visualization), Yra van Dijk (co-editor: *Reconsidering the Postmodern: European Literature Beyond Relativism*), Katarina Peović Vuković (see; *Media and Culture: Ideology of Media after Decentralization*), and, Michael Wutz (see; *Enduring Words – Narrative in a Changing Media Ecology*). This highly recommended edition features outstanding, cutting perspectives on new media and literature.

For further info see; <https://benjamins.com/#catalog/books/chlel.xxvii/main>

Fausto Bedoya is an intrepid freelance author and literary critic, based in Toronto, Canada.

36 YEARS OF QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM *RAMPIKE* 1979-2015:

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MURRAY SCHAFER**, VOL. 5, # 3 (TERRA INCOGNITA ISSUE); — "ANY PSYCHOANALYST CAN TELL YOU THAT WHAT WOMEN AND MEN STUTTER OUT ON THE COUCH IS EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE OF ALL THEIR IDEOLOGICAL FACADES." **PHILIPPE SOLLERS**, VOL. 6, # 1 (ONTOLOGY ISSUE); — SEMIOTEXT(E), EVEN THOUGH IT IS ALWAYS ABOUT VERY CRUCIAL THINGS, ALWAYS HAS A SENSE OF HUMOUR AND LIFE." **SYLVÈRE LOTRINGER**, VOL. 6, #1 (INTERV. **CHRISTOF MIGONE**, ONTOLOGY ISSUE); — "FOGEM FRUMPTIOUS BESQUALIMITTY, VORAXIOUS FLUMPF." **CHARLES BERNSTEIN**, VOL. 6, # 2 (PHENOMENOLOGY ISSUE); — "I STARTED SCRIBBLING IN MY NOTEBOOK, TRYING TO RECORD EVERYTHING THEY WERE SAYING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN. I CAN'T GUARANTEE ANY DEGREE OF ACCURACY." **DAVID MCFADDEN**, VOL. 6, # 2 (PHENOMENOLOGY ISSUE); — "I'M NOT INTERESTED IN 19TH CENTURY PLOT, BUT I AM INTERESTED IN MYTHS AND ADVENTURE STORIES -- SORT OF EPISODIC PLOTS." **KATHY ACKER**, VOL. 6, # 3 (SUBTERFUGE ISSUE); — "OUR LIVES ARE DETERMINED BY CHANCE. I DON'T THINK ANYONE WOULD DISPUTE THAT." **PAUL AUSTER**, VOL. 7, # 1 (INTERV. **JIM FRANCIS**, 10TH ANNIVERSARY 1 ISSUE); — "SQUARE PLANET FULL OF SQUARES." **RAYMOND FEDERMAN**, VOL. 7, #1 (1ST 10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "PEOPLE SAY 'I GIVE UP MY LIFE, GIVE UP MY JOB AND DEVOTE MY LIFE TO WRITING POEMS FOR MY COUNTRY, OR WHATEVER' - IT'S A LOT OF SHIT. YOU WANT TO WRITE POEMS, YOU JUST WRITE 'EM." **AL PURDY**, VOL. 7, # 2 (2ND 10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "THE SKY IS AN EYE. THE DUSK AND DAWN ARE THE BLOOD THAT FEED THE EYE. THE NIGHT IS THE LID OF THE EYE." **DAVID FOSTER WALLACE**, VOL. 7, #3 (POSTDECODENCE ISSUE); — "I THINK OLSON AND DUNCAN AND ALL OF THEM WERE DRIVING AT THIS. THERE'S ONLY ONE OF YOU, AND THERE WILL BE YOUR SELF IN THE WORLD ONLY AS LONG AS YOU'RE IN THE WORLD; IF YOU LEAVE NO RECORD OF IT, YOU WON'T HAVE BEEN HERE." **WARREN TALLMAN**, VOL. 7, # 3 (POSTDECODANCE ISSUE); — "WE DON'T HAVE TO REMAIN ISOLATED FROM THIS MASS CULTURE, THAT'S WHY I ACCEPT QUITE OFTEN TO GO ON THE FRENCH TELEVISION... AND, THAT IS WHY I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO TRY TO ESCAPE THE GHETTO OF THE AVANT-GARDE." **JULIA KRISTEVA**, VOL. 8, # 1 (CREATIVE MISUNDERSTANDING ISSUE). — "SO, I LOOK AT CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND I SAY TO MYSELF, 'OK, LET'S SAY I'M NOT GOING TO INVERT THAT PARTICULAR STEREOTYPE, LET'S SAY INSTEAD I'M GOING TO TRY TO REMANUFACTURE IT FROM A MORE NATIVE PERSPECTIVE.'" **THOMAS KING**, VOL. 8, # 2 (ECLECTIC PERSPECTIVES ISSUE); — "OVER THE YEARS, I BECAME A RADICAL, AND MY RADICALIZATION IS WHAT GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE AND THE MOTIVATION TO BE AN ARTIST." **DAVID FENNARIO**, VOL. 9, # 1 (DRAMATIC REPRESENTATIONS ISSUE); — "I THINK THAT POSTMODERNISM IS POLITICAL BUT NOT IN A WAY THAT IS OF MUCH USE, IN THE LONG RUN TO FEMINISMS: IT DOES CHALLENGE DOMINANT DISCOURSES, USUALLY THROUGH SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND PARODY, BUT IT ALSO RE-INSTATES THOSE VERY DISCOURSES IN THE ACT OF CHALLENGING THEM." **LINDA HUTCHEON**, VOL. 9, # 2 (ENVIRONMENTS I ISSUE); — "THE CURRENT SOCIAL STATE OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN THIS COUNTRY IS A NATIONAL TRAGEDY AND DISGRACE." **GRAND CHIEF MATTHEW COON COME**, VOL. 9, # 2 (ENVIRONMENTS I ISSUE); — "THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE SHAPING OUR WORLD TODAY IS SCIENCE AS APPLIED BY THE MILITARY, INDUSTRY AND

MEDICINE." **DAVID SUZUKI**, VOL. 10, #1 (TECHNO-ENVIRONMENTS ISSUE); — "HOW MUCH OF WHAT WE REGARD AS FEMALE OR MALE BEHAVIOUR IS CULTURAL AND HOW MUCH BIOLOGICAL? I DON'T THINK WE CAN POSSIBLY COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THAT UNTIL THERE IS A SOCIETY WHERE PEOPLE ARE FREE TO CHOOSE WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO, UNTIL THE CULTURAL RESTRAINTS ARE LOOSENEED." **JUDITH MERRIL**, VOL. 10, #2, (1ST 10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "A HOME PAGE ON THE INTER-NET CAN BE WRITTEN BY ANYBODY, SO WE HAVE A FULL ZAMISDAT ERA, AND ZAMISDATS, WHEN YOU ARE LIVING UNDER A DICTATORSHIP, ARE USEFUL." **UMBERTO ECO**, VOL. 10, #2 (1ST 20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "CYBERSPACE? I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK IT'S WHERE THE BANK KEEPS MY MONEY." **WILLIAM GIBSON**, VOL. 11, #1 (2ND 20TH ANNIVERSARY 2 ISSUE); — "GIVEN THE HISTORICAL TRESPASS THAT HAS CREATED THE MODERN CANVAS OF OUR NATIONS, WE CONTINUALLY STRUGGLE WITH QUESTIONS OF HOW TO PERPETUATE OUR NATIONAL ARTISTIC RESOURCES, AND OUR AESTHETIC INHERITANCE." **HUANANI-KAY TRASK**, VOL. 11, #2, (ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES ISSUE); — "THIS WAS A DREAM THAT I HAD WHEN I WAS IN JAPAN AND THE WORDS OF THE DREAM WERE THAT 'THE GODDESS OF MERCY IS THE GODDESS OF ABUNDANCE.'" **JOY KOGAWA**, VOL. 12, #1, (RETROSPECTIVES ISSUE); — "YOU SAY HOW CAN YOU PEOPLE ON THIS SIDE OF THE FENCE BELIEVE THIS, AND THE PEOPLE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE BELIEVE TOTALLY THE OPPOSITE? THE ANSWER IS IT'S EASY BECAUSE WE'RE WHO WE ARE AND THEY'RE WHO THEY ARE, SO WHY DON'T YOU ALL SHAKE HANDS?" **ALISTAIR MACLEOD**, VOL. 12, #2 (TRADITIONS / INNOVATIONS ISSUE); — "THEY LIVE IN ACKDEMGOROD. SOMEWHERE IN TOTALITARIA, WHERE FLAMING, FLYING STEAM IRONS LIGHT THE SKY." **ISTVAN KANTOR**, VOL. 13, #1 (SENSUALITY ISSUE); — "TO THINK OF BEING ABLE TO LIVE IN REAL TIME IS AN INVENTION OF THE 20TH CENTURY." **NICOLE BROSSARD** (TRANS. **BARBARA GODARD**); "VOL. 14, #1 (1ST 25TH ANNIV. ISSUE); — "I DON'T THINK THAT COMPETITION REALLY BENEFITS THE ARTS." **DON MCKAY**, VOL. 14, #1 (1ST 25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "PEOPLE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT WRITERS AND ARTISTS NEED A LOT OF TIME TO THEMSELVES. IF YOU MARRIED EINSTEIN, WOULD YOU WANT HIM TO SIT AROUND THE DINING ROOM WITH YOU AND PLAY CARDS?" **JOYCE CAROL OATES**, VOL. 14, #2 (2ND 25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE); — "SHOWING DOGS COMPETITIVELY ISN'T REALLY ABOUT IDENTIFYING THE BEST DOG, ANY MORE THAN THE GILLER IS ABOUT IDENTIFYING THE BEST NOVEL." **FRANK DAVEY**, VOL. 15, #1 (FRANK DAVEY ISSUE); — "HARVEY HAD PRETTY MUCH REDUCED HIS DIET AT THAT POINT TO THE 4 MAJOR FOOD GROUPS, ORANGE POP, POTATO CHIPS, HOT DOGS AND CHEF BOYARDEE BEEFARONI OR SPAGHETTI O'S IN A CAN." **JOYCE BRABNER & HARVEY PEKAR**, VOL. 15, #2 (URBAN SPACES ISSUE); — "I LAY IN MY BED AND THOUGHT ABOUT SADNESS AND HOW I FEEL SORRY FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SAD." **STUART ROSS**, VOL. 15, #2 (URBAN SPACES ISSUE); — "I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, EELS SOMETIMES CRAWL OUT OF THE OCEAN ON RAINY NIGHTS AND WANDER OVER THE LAND. THEY CAN STAY OUT OF THE WATER FOR SEVERAL HOURS." **CHRISTOPHER DEWDNEY**, VOL. 16, #1 (CONCEPTUALISMS ISSUE); — "YOU FORGET - WHAT IS IT YOU FORGET?" **DAPHNE MARLATT**, VOL. 16, #2, (HETEROGLOSSIAS ISSUE); — "ABSOLUTELY NOTHING CAN HAPPEN WITH PUPPETS IN THE GOVERNMENT SPACES LIKE DINOSAURS ASKING FOR DIRECTION" **RICHARD MARTEL**, VOL.17, #1 (QUEBEC 400TH ANNIV. ISSUE); — "IF WE STILL BELIEVED IN POETRY AT ALL SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE, WHICH WAS OVERTURN THE ORDER OF THE FACTORS: FROM THE PASSIVE THAT IT WAS IN, IT HAD TO BE MADE ACTIVE." **BERNARD HEIDSIECK**, VOL. 17, #2 (CONSUMER DEMAND ISSUE); — "THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD SO WISELY, IS BUSINESS." **GEORGE BOWERING**, VOL. 18, #1 (ECO-POETICS ISSUE); — "THIS, I KNEW AS ONE DOES IN DREAMS, WITH THE CERTAINTY OF UNREASON." **NORMAN LOCK**, VOL. 18, #2 (RE-SENT HISTORIES ISSUE); — "LINEARIZOMEPICENTE RADIATINGERMINATING..." **W.M. SUTHERLAND**, VOL. 19, #1 (VISUAL POETICS ISSUE); — "I LEAVE EVERYTHING TO CHANCE AND MAGNETS." **ADAM DICKINSON**, VOL. 19, #2, (CULTURAL MISCHIEF ISSUE); — "I JUST DON'T THINK YOU CAN TELL A STORY OF YOUR LIFE. 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IT IS THE LAND OF LAST THINGS." **FARUK ULAY**, VOL. 22, #2 (RE-RECORDED HISTORIES ISSUE); — "COMPLEXITY IS MORE HONEST THAN SIMPLICITY." **PHIL HALL**, VOL. 22, #2 (SUR-TEKSTS ISSUE); — "GOING TO A MARILYNNE ROBINSON LECTURE IS LIKE GOING TO CHURCH; YOU JUST SIT THERE AND LISTEN TO THE SERMON." **ELEANOR CATTON**, VOL. 23, #1 (CONFLICT &/OR CONCORD ISSUE); — "DON'T JERK AROUND A SODA JERK." **RICHARD KOSTELANETZ**, VOL. 23, #2 (POETIC EYE ISSUE); — "IT'S BEEN A LABOUR OF LOVE, AN ACHE IN THE RUMP, AND A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY. -- MY WARM AND HUMBLE THANKS TO ALL!"). **KARL JIRGENS**, VOL. 24, #1 (TIME ISSUE)

From the OUROBORO STORIES
Richard Kostelanetz

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