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POST

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pref post-, 1. poteau *m*; pieu montant *m* (de porte); as deaf as a p., sourd comme un pot; *Rac*; starting p., winning p., poteau de départ, d'arrivée 2. *vtr* to p. (up), afficher (un avis); coller (des affiches); PN: p. no bills, défense d'afficher; to be posted missing, être porté (i) (of ship) disparu (ii) (of pers) manquant.

DÉ

DE

1. [de] *nm* (a) Gaming: die; *pl* dice; des pipés, loaded dice; les dés sont jetés, the die is cast (b) *Cu*: couper en dés, to dice (vegetables). 2. *nm* dé (à coudre), thimble.

CODE

CODE

1. *n* (a) code *m*. Highway C., code de la route (b) (secret) code, chiffre *m*; c. word, mot convenue; to write a message in c., chiffrer un message; in c., en chiffre(s) (c) *Tp*: indicatif *m*; postal c., *N Am*: zip c., code postal 2. *vtr* coder, chiffrer.

DANCE

DANCE

1. *n* (a) danse *f*; *Fig.*: to lead s.o. a merry d., donner du fil à retordre à qn; d. hall, dancing *m* (b) bal *m*; soirée dansante 2. *vtr* & *i* danser; to d. with s.o., faire danser qn; to d. for joy, danser de joie; to d. attendance on s.o., faire l'empresé auprès de qn.

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K. Jirgen 192.

TAKING LONGER STEPS AN INTERVIEW WITH WARREN TALLMAN

Warren Tallman is a critic, teacher and impresario. He has played an important role in shaping attitudes towards writing in Canada. For many years he taught at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He is currently teaching at York University in Toronto. In this interview, Tallman discusses his connections with, and views on the significance of "Black Mountain" writers Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg. Much of Tallman's writing has been collected in *Open Letter* magazine (Third Series, Number Six, 1977). Rampike's Karl Jirgens interviewed Warren Tallman in a café on Bloor Street in Toronto on February 20, 1992. At the time of the interview Warren was working on a new essay on Robert Creeley.



KJ: Perhaps you could fill in some background on yourself. Back in the 1960's you were instrumental in introducing a new generation of writers such as Frank Davey, Fred Wah, George Bowering, Bill Bissett, to poets from the "Black Mountain" school of writing; Charles Olson, Robert Duncan and Robert Creeley. I was wondering if you could say a little bit about those days. You talk about it in your "Wonder Merchants" essay in the *Open Letter* issue on your writing but perhaps you could add to that.

WT: It was really a lot of chance events that were involved, and the main chance that came up was Duncan came to town he came up from Seattle, and Ellen knew Robert Duncan from Berkeley days, and she said "Well, why don't you come on up to Vancouver?" And he said "Yes." And he came up and he gave a reading in the basement of our house on West 37th. The TISH [writing] group had already formed out at UBC [University of British Columbia], and they had a writing group that met in the evenings, and they were coming over to the house also. Duncan gave a three hour reading in the basement of our house, and nobody knew what he was talking about, but everybody was enchanted by this man, he had an enchanted mind that communicated, and so they wanted to know more, and he agreed to come up in the summer to give three lectures, and he stayed for a month, he gave three lectures at the house on 37th and all the TISH poets were there, and he suggested that they start a magazine, and I suggested that they weren't ready to start a magazine, but they went ahead and started it, and of course the phenomenon was that they put it out for nineteen consecutive months, and the other phenomenon was they went out after their readers, they made up their own subscription list and they mailed it to people at their own expense, and it was the first time where you had a magazine that wasn't waiting for readers to come to them, they were going actively after the readers. And they for various reasons, the group that started that has stayed together to this day. They're still on excellent terms with each other, and TISH was continued as *Open Letter* first in Victoria where Frank Davey was teaching, and then when Frank went to Toronto, he kept it up, so that there was the Toronto *Open Letter*, and at a certain point that expanded because of Barry Nichol and Steve McCaffery and suddenly it became a, Frank Davey was extremely important because he seemed to go with the flow of it, and if you want the poetics of modern Canadian poetry, you're more likely to find it in *Open Letter* than in places that were not as persistent somehow as Frank Davey was, and he and [George] Bowering and Fred Wah, Daphne [Marlatt], Gladys [Hindmarch], and Lionel Kearns, they just kept it going somehow.

KJ: Could you say something about the role writing takes in shaping perception of self? You have spoken about that phenomenon in reference to place, and you once said that one can come into presence through writing or language.

WT: Well, of course I see Olson as the one who thought things through the most effectively, there is a writing place, and you can bring things into the writing place and you can bring presences into the writing place, and you see the real argument. Where the argument tends to go haywire, is, when people say "well its only fiction" or "its abstract", and Olson and Duncan and Creeley all of them said, "No, the abstract is real, so its action writing, that's what it is." And this is why the abstract expressionist painting movement was so important, especially Pollock, because he was effectively climbing into the painting until he was just totally in it, and he produced these dazzling paintings that had this impact. I was in Seattle and I walked into a room and there was a Pollock there and it nearly knocked me down, to see it. And of course there are all these mis-representative art books because they're little, glossy, neat things, you don't see this raw colour just coming at you and Pollock was there, and if there was a hero who was their painter it was Jackson Pollock, just because he did that, and he was doing with painting what they wanted to do with words. Words have their colour too, words have their presence also, and so instead of getting a plotted story, the writing was the plot itself, and the presences were in people themselves. It tends to be non-descriptive, and that throws a lot of people because they want a description, but he said he's not interested in describing what he already knows. His [Olson's] poetry is just full of presences. Its a measure of his importance, I think, that there are a lot of presences, and a lot of them are painters, a lot of them are poets, a lot of them are just friends, a lot of them are jazz musicians. And that was the other thing that people tended to miss, because they thought, well anybody can write that way, scribble, scribble, scribble, but Creeley pointed out how disciplined Kerouac, for example, was, jazz disciplined, and how disciplined jazz is.

KJ: That ties in with the whole notion of proprioception.

WT: Oh, yeah, yeah, the inner. "Sensibility within the organism by movement of its own tissues," is the dictionary definition of proprioception, its the one Olson used. You don't see with the eye, you see through the eye, is the only sense I could make of what the difference is. There's a snow man up there, you re-enact the snowman, an inner snowman, so that perceptions take form, proprioception is what happens inwardly, it opens up the inner world. It opens up.

KJ: Even though Wallace Stevens wasn't directly involved with the writers you're talking about, it seems to me that he is concerned with precisely this thing. His snowman poem, which you just referred to is a good example. He often talked about that phenomenon.

WT: Oh, yeah, well, he had such a tremendous eye, his eye was fabulous, and its not just his "Thirteen ways of looking at a Blackbird" but its that one "I saw a jar in Tennessee." Great you know! He's got a painter's eye, and he gets that inner world. On the writing level, he stays fairly conventional with what he does with the line and with the rhythms, but he's totally unconventional with his eyes, how he sees things, the way he sees things. And of course that whole New England painters' movement is all over the place there. All of those New England people were conscious of the painters that were around them. Especially Winslow Homer, he was a Civil War artist and he was a precursor of all of them, in terms of what he was doing during the civil war.

KJ: I don't know if this the right time to bring it up, but the painter A.J.Casson just passed away, I wonder how you see him fitting into this picture, if we can call it that.

WT: Well, of course, that whole Group of Seven, they invented the Canadian landscape, in a way they're primitives. The great primitive to me is William Carlos Williams, and almost all of the interesting writing in North America has been done by primitives, primary, the beginners. When I first came to Canada, the first thing I heard was "Group of Seven", that's the Canadian landscape. But you look at it, and they're all extremely sophisticated painters, they're not just emoting with paint, it seemed to me that all of them were sophisticated, and they all had fantastic personal stories going along with their painting, they all were involved in strange personal relationships to their paintings and to the world that created their paintings, so that there's a tremendous mystery involved. That was the identification of Canada for years. Group of Seven. And then this fellow comes along, A.J.Casson, I guess he was the young one at that time.

KJ: I guess what we're talking about here is process as opposed to product.

WT: Yeah, yeah. When Marshall McLuhan said "the medium is the message" that's kind of gotten lost, but that's still one of the absolutes -- that was one of the revelation statements. It takes care of television right away. What's the message? Television is its own message. The writing is its own message. And what tends to occur is, and I think Olson and Duncan and all of them were driving at this, is, 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. If you leave a record of it -- because writing is more enduring than most of the other arts -- now writing itself could be wiped out you know, and in fact in times past, writing was periodically wiped out because the first thing a conqueror did was find the library and destroy because he knew it was the enemy -- Hitler tried to do the same thing, he tried to destroy writing in Germany, but its impossible to destroy it completely -- it seems to me that the real pain of writing and the real joy of it is to realize that it's unique to yourself, if you follow the implications of the forms you'll end up as your own writer. Creeley once put that to me when he said, "I'm not Charles Olson." See, people were saying "You don't write like Olson does." And Bob said, "Well, I thought Charles was saying that you should use the peculiar nature of your own abilities, not the peculiar nature of Charles's abilities, that's for him." So he was arguing that people who just imitate Olson are not getting it. That isn't what it's all about. The way that Olson writes is for Olson, the way that Creeley writes is for Creeley. And then collaborative writing obviously enters in. It might be two people, it might be four people, it might be any number, or it might be a poet and a painter or a poet and sculptur, or a poet and a musician, there are all kinds of combinations.

KJ: That's really opened up in the electronic age with hypertext and collaborative stories through word-processor and computer interface. Systems like Frank Davey's "Swift Current" created a forum for all kinds of inter-change and discussion and they opened the door for all kinds of collaboration too.

WT: In fact, it's opened up too much, I think. Everytime Freddie Wah writes a poem, does Bowering really want to read it and respond the next day [laughing]? They must turn their machines off at times [more laughing].

KJ: Speaking of George, I called him up the other day about a short story he sent to *Rampike* [editor's note: "Rhode Island Red" -- elsewhere in this issue], and I mentioned that we were going to do this interview, and he said, "What a coincidence," because he had just finished re-reading your essay in *Open Letter* [3/6], and he still thought it was great. The full title of the essay was; "Wonder Merchants, Modernist Poetry in Vancouver in the 1960's", and George was wondering if you still called it "modernist"?

WT: Ah! No, I don't. At that time, that was the term for it. In the sixties, Olson hadn't made "post-modern" a central issue. He is in some ways part of the issue, because some people think of him as being post-modern while Pound, and Williams, Stein and HD are somehow thought of as being in the modern era. And that's what Duncan used to call himself, he'd say, "Well, I'm a modernist." And he meant his own generation, but the way I read it, post-modern is Pound's generation actually, and I call Olson "neo-modern", but I'm the only one who does, and nobody'll agree with me on this, that is, the post-modern was the original pioneering that went on, and then Olson re-modified it, and I think Olson re-modified it as neo-modern, though he might not have used that term himself. And it seems to me that there's always a modern, there's always a post-modern, and it isn't a case of a process, that goes a certain set of years. [Instead], its going on in every individual, and I associate it with schooling, what's taught in the schools. That to me defines what's modern, whatever's taught in schools.

KJ: Regardless of what the year is.

WT: Yeah, that's right. It doesn't have to do with the year. If the students are getting it from their teachers, then its modern. And post-modern immediately begins to evolve. A "new" post-modern is always evolving. Writers have to keep going, they can't stop, or they can go back, they can go back to pre-modern, they can back to modern, but if you go back to modern, then what you have is a new modern, a neo-modern, and I think we're in a neo-modern era that at the present time is gradually emerging, and all it needs to be is that the teachers start putting it together at school so that the students can ask them, and they'll get an answer from the teachers, other than "I don't know what it is, he's a lousy poet, I don't know how to talk about him."

I find what I do when somebody asks me a question, is, my mind really goes wonky, and I want explain the entire thing, and it's impossible. The proprioception essay that I did on Olson, that seems to be a little bit closer to summing it up, what "poetic" is, and especially toward the end, when I realized that Olson was a living resource for other poets, I had reason to realize it, because as I was writing that, it was 1969, and he was already dieing, I finished it in November, and he died in January. Just two months later he was dead, and I never had a chance to get his reaction to it. But I see him as absolutely essential, he had the most inventive mind, if you can figure out. The four, obvious four that I relied on the most, because I had a chance to rely on them, were Olson and Duncan and Creeley and Ginsberg, and the four of them, still to me, are the summing up of what was possible to do. See, I had nothing to do with nationalism, it wasn't nationalistic at all, it had to do with the English language. That's what it had to do with. What I worry about

Venir.

(La Société de Conservation du Présent)

, nous savons que nous n'allons rien dire de nouveau, pourtant, nous habiterons les musées, nous serons didactiques et animerons de vastes salles blanches, nous refuserons la certitude au lointain, nos paroles seront propreté, tuiles défaites au pied de nos accumulations, boudoirs emplets de fémurs ameutés, devant des références de toute provenance, factures impayables, villes insouciantes, nous laisserons s'ériger les sculptures éternelles, le delta du mississippi, les magnétoscopes atrophiés, de propos d'annonceurs clandestins, sensibles aux seins des forteresses, aux honneurs tordus qui devront parler, telles de douces chansons d'incubateur muséologique, scénaristes de fichiers d'hésitation, en véhicules poilus faciles, cuirasses fragiles, marques de commerce de coupe-papier, nous exploserons en de vibrantes solutions, béates redondances à l'audition d'apophtèmes concernés, énumération culminée en de poireaux irradiés, l'encadrement est une activité nocturne, un colloque à taire de nos intentions, tuniques, mélanges imprimés de remous vers tendre, mères, frères, hivers, soudains retournements, tous vers une même loutre bénie,



THE TREE OF LIFE from the essay "Detachment" By Michel Serres Translated by Genevieve James

Upright and praying for four thousand years with its branches raised like elbows to the light — if I know what praying means — it has been praying, keeping vigil, motionless, monstrous, colossal.

I had been walking toward it for a long time. I dreamt twenty years ago that mankind was born everlasting, death was simply a mistake, and we only had to locate that blunder. We had to erase our ill-will. Our wickedness comes from thinking that time can progress only through destruction, that the future lies outside decay and children were born beyond our ancestors' graves. Is this inevitable? I no longer see any difference between the negative approach of the philosophers and the human sacrifices of the Aztecs tearing out a victim's heart on a pyramid so the sun could rise. They too believed that death was within time, prime mover of the world and history. Give up sacrifices, soon you will see the sun nevertheless pursuing its course. Stop plundering, destroying, killing, history will go on quietly without a bloodbath. And later, your great-grand nephews will remember you with disgust. Forget the time, they would say to their sons, when our barbarous forefathers called history their insurmountable taste for corpses. What would happen if we did not assist death in its task? What could death do without us? What if death's necessity resulted only from our whims? What if what we believe to be nature's law was only a bad habit? What if death were to let go of its hold as soon as we stopped helping it?

I took a plane, as usual, from New York to San Francisco, coming from Paris, rushing westward. Nothing is as beneficial to thoughtful meditation as to be confined in silence and seclusion thirty thousand feet above ground or water. The sun should be setting in two hours, but our speed is preventing it. The moon is at the zenith. I am leaning my forehead against the porthole's cold pane. Silence begins in this immense quadrature. Poised, immobilized at a corner of a right angle, the moon above me is still, the sun in front of my eyes stationary: Joshua. I do not hear the jet engines. Passengers come and go without talking. Something has just been discontinued. I know I am suspended and flying without moving. The hubbub that accompanies ordinary life is suppressed, letting one hear through its very extinction its added presence. I enter goodwill. How dreadful, even Joshua stopped the sun, so he could continue to heap up more of his enemies' dead bodies, so the killing could be longer and the slaughter fiercer. When peace occurs it points to the battleground. Peace so seldom seen, manifests everywhere war's inevitable uselessness.

However, in the end the sun will always set.

Upright and praying for four millennia, with its branches raised like elbows to the light, it has been here, massive and terrifying, in vigil, a unique founder.

I am afraid with that kind of fear my Latin tongue calls a religious fear. I know because of my terror that this giant tree is a sacred tree. All the sequoia trees in the vicinity, some just as tall seem to me to belong to the forest, this one partakes of a temple. One should perhaps be kneeling. My body is looking for a posture. The uprightness of this god induces in me a bowing pose, nearly a prostration. I know that the space enclosed by its trunk and prominent roots, on which nobody should walk, delineates indeed a sylvan protection, but mostly it defines profanation. In front of its epiphanic presence, the entire forest, myself included, becomes profane. Someone is here, established in a formidable silence. Already here two thousand years ago, when our God was born from a virgin, young, unchangeable, twenty centuries old, when our God broke the laws of living.

The tree is too huge not to be sacred. I do not know what I am saying when I say it is sacred. I do not know also what it indicates. I know I am fearful, but why am I fearful and of what? It seems so strange to me it should bear green branches and boughs, it seems unusual to me it should live. It carries a remembrance. My awe forces me to read it as a kept memento that life is preserving. Life is the workings through which time carries a summons for a form, a disposition, a meaning or colors. The tiger comes bringing on its coat spots and stripes from the core of times. Zebras it seems do likewise, so do moon-fish, peacocks, female breasts. These remembrances are much more stable than lifeless museums and our written signs. Will I know how to read a non-written text from another history, preceding our own, from another world preceding this world?

No, you said. Fear comes from seeing nature alive for once, for the first time. Raw nature is almost never seen or lived by anyone. We must run far away to meet nature. We have never seen or lived but through work, our work, our neighbor's or a foreigner's work. We transformed the face of the earth. Behold these indefinite agrarian landscapes, shaped loess-hills, mountains laid out as valleys, forests of high trees opening avenues, or wild bushes reappearing on a deserted works, bring disease, rottenness and pestilence. Our countryside becomes just another kind of city in the wide expanse of history. Nature has disappeared. But here is a high monument of primitive forests on an unhewn living estate. This rawness makes one suffocate from fear. Sacredness is found but in the purity of nature. See a geyser of life solidified before you, breaking away from a world without man. See the witness of a land before culture where strength explodes madly. Fear comes from seeing nature unexpectedly, elsewhere hidden by labor.

I cannot blot out those who passed through this area forty centuries ago. Within a hundred days of walking or sailing, men were always waiting for us. The island found vacant is always but a deserted island. The farthest or the most exotic place is not necessarily the most natural one. No, this tree did not come alone. It came escorted like a blindman. No, this world should not be called the new world, a bare world. We were the newcomers, even the nouveaux-riches in a world just as old as the one we sailed from. I think my brothers' forebears prayed here. So did some other lost forefathers who were excluded and banished by my brothers, forebears with as much cruelty as my immediate forefathers. We always distribute dread quite fairly among ourselves. I am a monster, the son of a monster. I am the brother of my fellowmen. This thought does not comfort me. I imagine, in former times, as many men lived here as on the other slope of the sun. I believe that four thousand years ago men planted this sacred tree, it is too large not to be sacred. I am afraid of human beings not things. This tree manifests an excess, a swerving deviation, an insane extravagance. I was going to say, an intelligence. A megalomaniac delirium is in this tree and its sneering betrays a human vestige. Hear the madness crying amidst a dense supernatural silence. Nature alone does not terrify in this manner. Nature is boundless, intense but not demoniac. I am not as afraid of an avalanche,

to a tornado or a bull, as I am apprehensive of a strange neighbor at night, or anxious of those adept in lying shrewdly.

I am having a dream, a dream not in my sleep but in my daydream. A heedful of sharp controlled but unacceptable dream.

I see how this tree was planted four thousand years ago by a society of priests. Why do I say magi, priests? Perhaps I should have written scholars, but why scholars? Our social characteristics are so recent. What should I say? I speak with my own distinctions. They are probably meaningless. Some folks planted this tree with their own hands. It could not have come by itself, carried by the wind. This tree has been found, discovered, invented. It has been fashioned, shaped, worked, calculated. Today we would say crossed, selected, or we could say, it was a mutant tree. All this is not important. We do not have the same science nor do we have the same prejudices. The tree was planted in a sort of garden, in a hollow boundless territory, larger than the valley of the Kings or the encircled plateau where the Ming kings rest in China. These men, from the dawn of humanity, had inborn ideas regarding life. We lost the knowledge upon which they built their culture, a culture inscribed in agriculture. Behold the precise agrarian sacred space, cultivated because it was extensive. We puny newcomers were too small to quantify it. The entire valley, the entire mountain, the entire forest, the whole country is sacred, land and flora included. They looked for immortality here.

One day with the fulminating humility of a true intuition, they invented it.

In the winding of their quest, they came across it, at a sudden bifurcation of their wisdom. They found it. They discovered it, fashioned, shaped, calculated it. I am telling as my language allows me to say it, and as my knowledge imagines it. However, there exists no dictionary going from a culture that sought immortality to a culture that runs after death pushing history ahead, my own history.

They looked for a durable species in the floral and animal kingdoms. They sought an individual whose patience would wear out a planet's orbit. But, until this day, animals make short blazes, even the slowest, simplest frigid ones. They searched the forest. Perhaps they were not savages; perhaps they pierced through the forest, or perhaps they invented the forest in order to penetrate immortality's secret. They sought to perpetuate in the wood the gesture of their raised arms, their immemorial prayer. They were looking for someone who would eternally pray to their gods. Stricken with humility they sought someone who could face the gods for them, like a permanent point in time, a peaceful axis of the world, a thorn pinned inside history, a constant quietude. They were simply seeking God, like us. They found it, discovered, invented, shaped, calculated it.

They became acquainted with this tree's species. They studied, observed, manipulated it, I presume. They obtained a variety whose bark resists fire, remains undamaged when tested by short thunderbolts. In front of the thundering god, the tree does not fall, it does not light a torch to answer the flaring voice. They worked at this variety. Their knowledge was considerable and their experience had no relationship to ours. Then in a sudden new flash of lightning, one of them recognizes the immortal sub-variety of the intense vegetal. Gaunt, not believing their eyes and holding their breath, they planted it. They told their sons and nephews to be on guard near it, to become priests of the god of these premises. They died one after the other, but the tree is still here. We can forget everything when a timeless being prays face to face for us to the Lord. One can attend one's business naked in the garden without fearing snakes.

I am pursuing only one idea in this dream. What if it were true? What if mutation produced an immortal sub-variety of a given species appear? What if it existed for any variety? In short, what if we too were immortal?

We brought death into this garden, into this banquet of immortality. We came like deadly flood water and we drowned all the monuments of the greatest of all human knowledge. We ravaged these forests, killed these trees, and brought back death in the premises where it had given us precedence.

I am afraid. I am no longer afraid of the tree, of its colossal and pious stillness. I am afraid of myself, my scholarship, my culture and my bitter tongue.

No, I am not dreaming entirely. I did not keep track. Four thousand years ago some gifted ancestors bequeathed to us plants and animals on this side of the world, on the other slope of the sun. Today we eat lamb, are clothed with wool; my father raised cattle, we taste wheat-bread, we drink wine from the vine, thanks to their immortal genius. We keep saying they invented rurality, farmed a type of flora, domesticated certain wild animals. We never say they invented immortality. However, breeding and cultivation perpetuated themselves without shortcomings. Wheat never reappeared as a wild variety which we no longer recognize. Lambs, puppies never run toward the woods as they come out of their mother's womb, forgetting their training. They belong to the household from birth. They have been ours for four thousand years. This result does not change although its knowledge is lost. We never learned how to domesticate any other species. We sometimes know how to train a wild animal, but its offspring, if it has one, will escape, flying away or running off as soon as it can. We train the animal, we do not train its gene, worse we kill it. Zoo animals reproduce themselves with difficulties and rarely. As if the proximity of these new men extinguished the genetic heat in them. But what kind of death lay in our groups for these animals to be struck by sterility? However, our forefathers of forty centuries ago trained phylogeny. They forever domesticated the species. They formed the matrix of all matrices. They awakened their genealogy. We only know how to lull it asleep. They created it to serve them. We can only kill it. A prodigious cognizance must have existed but we lost track of it. What was the aroma of Noah's first wine-vat? In our exact languages, we can say as little about it as about the great flavor of these wines of Graves, I mean last year's. We remain as ignorant before this Cabernet, as I was in front of the giant sequoia tree of my naive anguish. We lost track of these things. We are so accustomed to only recognizing regulated signs. But these vestiges can be read on the animals' body, their feathers' color, their coat markings. Therefore, I am dreaming that this knowledge must have canceled death and absurdly we want death to be life's incentive in sex and history's secrecy. This knowledge without death however came to us silently even speechlessly through rustic practices. Four times forty generations of taciturn and illiterate peasants exploited to death and taken for nothing were determined to preserve this heritage. Newcomers in what they called the new world slaughtered the Indians and repressed an ecstatic learning perhaps already lost. And new parvenus in my old world destroyed the peasantry and wiped out its silent knowledge. Where can one decipher it today? In the desperate look of some animals, in the stare confined under the vent-hole of language, the transparent prison our gifted ancestors composed for themselves? I am dreaming: outside our knowledge there exists a learning sealed off by our very science, killed by our very language. Perhaps I should remain silent. I am dreaming: all these killings are going in the same direction, it seems. We killed peasantry and precolombian culture because they carried in them a knowledge of life which ridicules our knowledge and reveals it to us as a deadly one. I am dreaming: we never did stop to be ashamed of our learning. It has the stench of death's decay. I am dreaming of immortality. I am dreaming as they were dreaming.

No, I am not dreaming completely. Four thousand years ago, we from the eastern Mediterranean sea did not keep records of what gifted ancestors bequeathed us in written signs. We never could obliterate them. We never succeeded in destroying or burning them. As unlikely as a calf forgets its grassy patch, a dog withdraws from his bondage or a genuine culture is deprived of its good wine, never has any human era forgotten letters or given up drawing. We keep saying they invented writing. We never say they invented immortality. Wherever they opened the way, it was forever. No culture is known for having a writing and losing it. Those which do not have one, never had. Our culture, my culture, the one through which I write what I am writing here near the Pacific Ocean, my Mediterranean culture begins basically with an epic, with the inaugural song of a hero investigating immortality. He went in quest of immortality. One fine day he hit upon it, in a humble flashing of true intuition, he found it, invented, fashioned, shaped, calculated it, I really don't know. In fact, he wrote it. And it still remains here, like the sequoia tree.

I do not know why, in those days under every latitude, the whole world was struck with a longing for immortality. By a prodigious miracle, they found it. They found it here, in the ceaseless reproduction of faithful rams and goats and the sweetening of grapes. They found it there, in the linear print of marble and in the sequoia tree. This giant tree is responding to Gilgamesh, our first parent who wanted to be immortal and who succeeded in being so. I am the great-great-grandson of his Mediterranean quest and know that this colossus with arms raised toward heaven was planted because of a dream related to his dream and perhaps to my dream. The former remained immortal in writing, the latter for having been planted. Did such a prodigious knowledge make mankind proud enough to want to equal God? Did such a successful undertaking make humanity deserve to be punished by flood, with the exception of wine, text and a few animals?

It is said that somewhere in the world, in the days preceding the flood, the sacrificial bull was not killed. Had they pity on the animal? The bull returned the favor with one hundred generations of silence and a close relationship. Who that day decided to abolish indefinitely the death penalty for all sacrificial species? Who thought of postponing indefinitely the bloodshed?

Who today will have the peaceful thought of postponing everywhere human bloodshed? Who will forever have love for their body? Who is longing for immortality? Who is seeking it? Who is going in a quest for it? Who is leaving home, throwing everything in the fire including sandals, knowledge and science, in an attempt to discover immortality?

The day the miracle happened, the great surge of the eternal godsend stopped in Greece. They keep saying, our Greek ancestors invented our geometry, our arithmetics and rigors, but they never say they invented immortality. However they found it, fashioned, shaped it, calculated it to the letter. Wherever the road of mathematicity was opened, it was forever. Henceforth one does not find or lose it. It is always present like the sequoia tree. This numeral, this triangle, the proof by absurdity positively unchangeable since the beginnings of Thales, the premises of Pythagorus, grew incredibly identical as did the giant tree's form, its being, its presence, its uprightness, and bushiness. No, the Greek miracle does not indicate a beginning, but the instance when a powerful, inventive, foolishly intelligent knowledge was disappearing at sunset, in the Mediterranean deluge. Only monuments are left for us, breeding, writing, vegetable, pure reasoning. And this praying tree.

Why do we no longer invent durable traditions? Why do we only foment revolutions lasting hardly one generation? Why do we no longer discover new know-hows cutting through time? What did we lose to allow us to enter history? This myth of death?

I am no longer dreaming. Perhaps I did not dream. We are the forewarned masters of a tremendous science. Why are you speaking to me of vegetable and oxen? We are barely masters of a considerable power that would make barbarians full of pride. Our know-how rules over our cities and fields, our rivers and seas, and all populations. We shall soon be unable to consider anything outside rationality. We can cultivate deserts, jostle rocks on the moon, translate signals from faraway worlds, break particles, cure our diseases, but we also invented immortality.

Neither in written signs, nor for life's beings, immortality on the contrary is in lifeless things. Nuclear waste which we do not know where to put will surely last more than four thousand years. What twisted, sneering, gangrened abortive human specimen will have the possibility to unearth these wastes in forty centuries and for a while, dream of life, just as I did, in front of the giant sequoia tree?

Upright and praying, keeping a colossal vigil, with its branches raised like elbows to the light -- it is praying to some god of life which I will never know, if I still know what praying means.

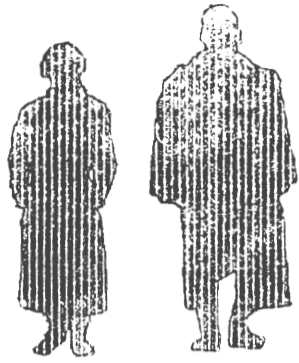
Perhaps today I should forget what knowing means.

Image by Marilyn Rosenberg & David Cole



NN POP-UPS

NON



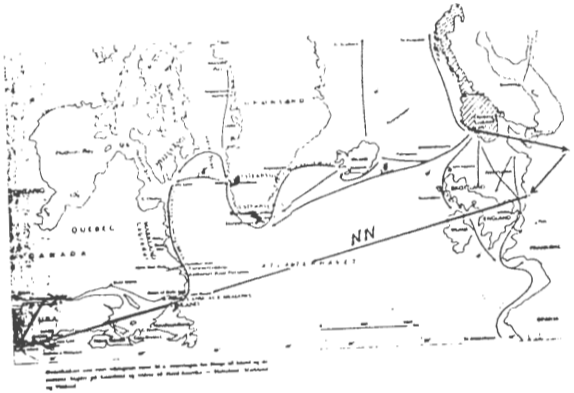
NOMIN

Nekro Norvag Autour des têtes découvertes une brise caressante murmurait. Murmure. Au chevet de la tombe le petit qui tenait sa couronne à deux mains fixait le trou sombre avec des yeux tranquilles. **NN** Il alla se placer derrière la carrure du bon conservateur. Redingote bien coupée. Peut-être qu'il les passe en revue pour savoir lequel partira le premier. Bah c'est un long repos. Fini de sentir. C'est au moment même qu'on sent. **Non Nomin** Doit être foutrement désagréable. D'abord pouvez pas y croire. Il y a erreur; quelqu'un d'autre. Voyez la porte en face. Attendez, il faut que je... Je n'ai pas encore. Alors on vous tire les rideaux. **Nova Narko** C'est de la lumière qu'il faudrait. Murmures autour de vous. Ne voudriez-vous pas voir un prêtre? Puis décalage et la cervelle qui bat la campagne. **Nukleo** Nulli. Délire, tout ce que vous aviez caché tout votre vie. Collage avec la mort. Son sommeil n'est pas naturel. Pressez la paupière inférieure. Regardez si son nez se pice si sa mâchoire est condamné. Le démon dans le ta leau de la mort du Pêcheur qui lui montre une femme. Le mourant en chemise qui veut la prendre dans ses bras. **Neutro Negro** Dernier acte de Lucie. Ah, jamais plus ne le contemplerai-je? Boum! Elle expire. Enfin parti. Gens parlent un peu de vous; vous oubliez. N'oubliez pas de prier pour lui. Sauvez-vous de lui dans vos prières. Joyce lui-même. Le Jour du Lierre se meurt.

NEKRO

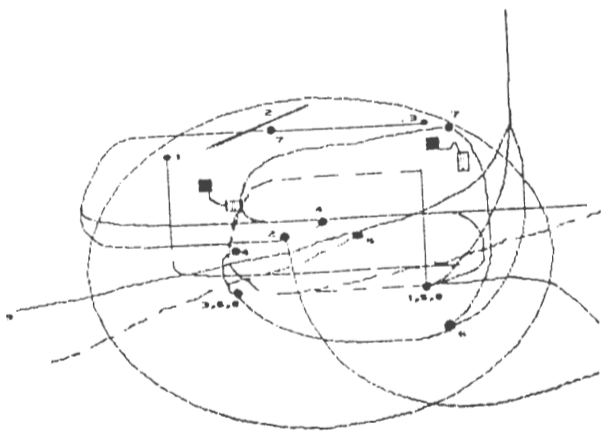
NORVAG

NOVO



NARKO

NUCLEO



NULLI

NEUTRO



NEGRO

A WINTER CITY PROJECTION BY
 NESAVENTURO POT & RETT NASH PEDAH

FORMALISM AS A TRANSGRESSIVE DEVICE

By Robert C. Morgan

In recent years the concept of formalism has, for the most part, been inextricably tied to the critical writings and the orations of Clement Greenberg. This is not to suggest that Greenberg's formalism is entirely unique or that it was born in a vacuum, because it was not; and one can presumably doubt that he would defend his view of formalism as original. As pointed out in an essay some years ago by the philosopher Deane Curtin, entitled "Varieties of Aesthetic Formalism," Greenberg's criteria both compares and differs with the formalism of Immanuel Kant — whom Greenberg credits with the idea of Modernism — and with that of the early Twentieth Century critic Roger Fry.¹

According to Curtin, in all three thinkers there is an attempt "to isolate a distinctively aesthetic experience." This is generally accomplished "by contrasting aesthetic experience, which does not call for action, with practical experience — moral or political — which does."² Yet there are some interesting and crucial distinctions between the three in terms of how aesthetic experience is dealt with and where it leads. In Kant's *Critique of Judgement* there is an equation between aesthetics and ethics, a culturally presumed cause and effect relationship. Indeed, for Kant, "the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good." Morality, however, is positioned as a code of conformity in the sense that "the mind is made conscious of a certain ennoblement and elevation above the mere sensibility to pleasure received through sense, and the worth of others is estimated in accordance with a like maxim of their judgement."³

Roger Fry's formalism, as is well-known, led to his clarification of the work of Post-Impressionist painters on the grounds that their paintings were internally consistent in their structure as were Classical works of art. Fry's formalism appears as a direct antecedent to Greenberg's with the exception of one, maybe two crucial points. For Fry art and life are interconnected; that is, one can gain a rich aesthetic experience from the natural world as well as from a painting. Greenberg would deny this shared domain of aesthetics. For Greenberg, it is the evolution of feeling into form that makes its appeal to the senses, and this process requires a certain distancing, an ability to see a work of art in terms of high aesthetic standards. In tangent with this, Greenberg has maintained that taste in art is entirely dependent upon objective standards which emanate from one's intuitive response to a particular work. Fry, on the other hand, would have been skeptical of applying objective standards to a formalist methodology in that, as Curtin explains, the exact connection "between the individual's solitary intuition and the public's body of critical opinion" remains a highly problematic issue.⁴

The purpose of this short essay will be to review Greenberg's position or doctrine, as the case may be, with regard to formalism, and to speculate upon the function and historical viability of formalism within the current scene. This is to suggest that the conditions of formalism, even as they might attest to a higher standard of artistic production, do not necessarily preclude representation — as, for example, in Russian formalism — nor are they necessarily restricted to the domain of high Modernism. Whereas Greenberg's formalism proved historically viable in relation to the American avant-garde of the Forties and Fifties, there seemed to be a kind of retrenchment in the early Sixties in which higher standards reserved for a specific type of Modernist painting — a lyrically reductive and literal type of painting without recourse to representation — isolated the conditions of formalism to an extreme, thereby excluding the possibility of an abstract means toward representation as advocated by Fry.

This retrenchment in Greenberg's thinking was partially revealed in a talk given at a symposium in Sydney, Australia in 1979 in which he stated that "the whole enterprise of Modernism, for all its outward aspects, can be seen as backward-looking."⁵ By this he meant that just as Modernism reacted against literary tendencies of the Romantic movement, so today Modernism, being synonymous with the best art, was reacting against the constant threat of lessening standards. For Greenberg, this threat was initially spelled-out in his famous early essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939), in which he disclaimed the effects of popular culture as determined by the rise of industrialization and capitalism.⁶ It is significant that Greenberg's formalist posture was also, in fact, a reaction against Stalin's adaptation of socialist realism as a political means for illustrating power and acquiescence.⁷ Not only was this sort of painting demeaning and degrading to the human spirit, but was entirely undialectical and non-self-critical. It is important to recall that Greenberg's position as a formalist began as a dialectical response to mass culture (kitsch), and not as a neo-conservative dogmatist. This is precisely what makes his take on formalism so complex and so confounding, and why it is necessary to determine its historical inappropriateness to the present-day situation, negligibly defined as Postmodernism.

In another essay published by Greenberg in 1971, he speaks of how "formalism" represents the "cold" side of Modernism; that is, the former is the "essential, defining side" of the latter.⁸ Whatever content Modernism is capable of inciting within the "disinterested" viewer, it is the formalist aspect of a work that gives it artistic excellence. While oversimplified, this evaluation of a painting, for example, is determined by taste or what Greenberg sees as an intuitive grasp of the unity and coherence which the work possesses. He explains:

It remains that Modernism in art, if not in literature, has stood or fallen so far by its "formalism." Not that Modernist art is coterminous with "formalism." And not that "formalism" hasn't lent itself to a lot of empty, bad art. But so far every attack on the "formalist" aspect of Modernist painting and sculpture has worked out as an attack on Modernism itself because every such attack developed into an attack at the same time on superior artistic standards.⁹

At this juncture there are two avenues which need to be pursued in order to come to an accurate understanding of the impact of Greenberg's formalism upon the current climate of the Postmodern. First it is necessary to understand the meaning and significance of "superior artistic standards"; and secondly, it is important to see if such standards are the necessary result of formalism and whether they are still relevant in off-setting the threat of kitsch — those objects which reproduce the insubstantial effects of art, and therefore have come to represent the lowering of standards in mass culture.

For many observers the issue of formalism as an aesthetic means toward unity and artistic excellence became locked into Greenberg's theory of Modernism. However, it should be noted that Greenberg himself has taken some care to point out that this is not necessarily the case. He had made a somewhat McLuhanesque distinction between Modernism's "cold" side (formalism) and its "hot" side which he simply designates as "the enthusiastic and hectic side."¹⁰ This latter side has given Greenberg the most grievance since his essay appeared on "Modernist Painting" at the outset of the Sixties.¹¹ Yet one cannot easily deny that the crux of Greenberg's argument in that essay is unequivocally a formalist position. This being the case, it then becomes imperative to know exactly what kind of formalism he has implemented. This essay will argue that it is a "visual" formalism in contrast to a "linguistic" formalism to which Greenberg ascribes. Given his apprehension with regard to "literary" content in painting, which was the predominant reason why Modernism replaced Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century, Greenberg's formalism carried an aversion to any system of formal operation that retained a code outside of the visual sign proclaimed on the painting's surface.

Before continuing this argument, it is necessary to understand the context in which "superior aesthetic standards" function for Greenberg. If taste is the immediate intuitive response one has in relation to a work of art, and if this taste is founded upon the knowing of objective aesthetic standards, for which Kant must be acknowledged, then the formalist criteria of unity of the visual elements reigns supreme.

One cannot argue against such a determination. The problem is that, for Greenberg, not all formalist art is necessarily good art; therefore, there must be some works of art that are better unified than others. In reflecting upon the "all-over" canvases of painters associated with Abstract Expressionism, and eventually with Color Field Painting (what Greenberg designated as "Post-Painterly Abstraction" in 1963),¹² it makes sense within Greenberg's critical system that those painters who most accurately adjusted their surfaces to the rhythm of the pictorial elements were the true Modernists. They were the true Modernists because their paintings maintained the superior standards alluded to in Kant's formalism.

Unfortunately, such doctrines are not universally applicable as much as Greenberg would aspire his theory to be. The use of formalism to buttress his Modernist autocracy seemed accurate in relation to Pollock, Rothko, Louis, early Frankenthaler, and others. Greenberg perfectly defined what these artists were doing at a time when this kind of critical jargon was desperately needed. It fit, so to speak, like a hand in a glove. But the problem was that art history refused to shut down. New work and new intentions came into the scene, work that was less introspective, less bent on positivism. While Greenberg was disclaiming Pop art as a "period manifestation," his own theory of Modernism was becoming anxiously restricted. It began to sound increasingly tautological, even solipsistic. As Donald Kuspit has stated, there was a failure to reconcile a general scope of critical intention with empirical evidence;¹³ that is, a failure to make the connection between what the approved artist was actually doing and how this fit convincingly into the purpose and direction of Modernism. Greenberg's solution was becoming less an advocate and more the defender of a system of aesthetics that had run its course. He would argue, however, that "superior aesthetic standards" never go out of style; but then style-in-itself is a complex issue, also problematic in its relationship to Modernism, in the sense that it can impose a program on the creative impulse as a means toward legitimacy, and in many cases it did.

Instead of the historically legitimated influences, put forth in "Modernist Painting," and earlier in somewhat greater depth in "Toward a Newer Laocoon" (1940),¹⁴ American art felt the need to re-situate the dialectic, not merely through a "conversion" process related to earlier art, but in terms of an ever-expanding view of culture. In other words, the tension between art and culture in the Sixties presented new problems, formerly unseen; namely, the expansion of information electronically, thereby giving a more interconnected view of world events and world cultures.¹⁵ Art was becoming less isolated as "American" art, and more connected to influences not only from Europe and the Orient, but also Russia and the Third World. It was not a matter of art losing its critical standards, but of expanding them as art was becoming more conceptualized, more linguistic, and therefore more translatable in the nexus of cultural and political information.

The other issue to be addressed here is whether or not these standards are still contained within a formalist doctrine; that is, whether or not formalism retains the signifying power it did with American large-scale painting three decades ago. Or is it possible that formalism has slipped into a different guise, perhaps more dialectical in relation to culture and less about art-for-art's sake?

The Russian formalists, for example, theorized primarily in the disciplines of literature and film; yet literature — particularly poetry — was not divorced from other plastic media. It is a well-known fact that theorists and poets, such as Khlebnikov and Kruchenikh, collaborated with artists such as Melavich and Matiushin. There were experiments in the Moscow Linguistics Circle in which the utilization of *zaum*, or verbal sound constructions without word-referents, in non-objective painting and graphics became common practice.¹⁶ These formalists understood art in terms of a theory of signs. Frederic Jameson has shown how the theorist Viktor Shklovsky analyzed art in relation to a process of defamiliarization that involved the use of a diachronic sign system in order to change perceptions of the everyday world and thereby to elevate conscious experience about routine behavior.¹⁷ Russian formalism, as discussed by Jameson, involves a "radical inversion of the priorities" in art: "its intent is to suspend the common-sense view of the work of art as mimesis (i.e. possessing content) and as source or purveyor of *emotion*."¹⁸

While this latter statement does not appear in disagreement with Greenberg's appeal to "disinterestedness" in viewing art, the problem arises in how standards of quality should follow from this approach. For Greenberg, the criteria used in the evaluation of a painting is based primarily on *visual* in-take; for the Russian formalists the criteria was based on a theory of signs emanating from a literary construct. The structure of art, in the latter case, was not purely a visual phenomenon but complexly interwoven linguistic operation. Whether it was painting or sculpture, architecture or film, dance or theatre, the constructive formalist perspective was concomitant to a system of ideas from which the form would evolve. It was not merely a case of inspiration as content.¹⁹

With the development of various forms of Pop Art, Minimal Art, and Conceptual Art during the Sixties, one might have perceived a kind of formalism taking shape much closer to the Russian model than that espoused by high Modernism. How could one miss the sign-system inherent in an early Warhol or a Lichtenstein? Or, for that matter, how could one ignore the language parameters operative in Minimal Art? Yet these tendencies were never seen from a formalist perspective simply because that perspective had already been usurped theoretically by high Modernism. What emerged as a counter-Modernist tendency in the Sixties was a formalism that was less internalized or specialized according to the definition of the plastic medium, and more externally operational or translatable in relation to mass culture. It was a formalism that, in many cases, was as reductive as much of the painting called "formalist" painting. In another way, it was a formalism that attempted to subvert or transgress the limits of mainstream culture in order to elevate one's mode of perception and consciousness beyond the ordinary, an idea which had been proclaimed earlier by Shklovsky and Brecht. By representing the ordinary through an isolation of its syntax — a ploy used by artists not only associated with Pop, Minimal, and Conceptual Art, but also by a more recent generation of artists whose work has evolved into a hybrid of all three — there was an immediate reflexion with regard to the mass cultural context from which the image or the object either became significant or was reduced to zero. Even in the case of younger artists who deliberately purloined images from art history, the reflex was not in direct relation to art history itself as much as a comment upon the problem of representation within mass culture — a point that has been discussed in numerous essays and books on Postmodernism and need not be reiterated again here.

By the late Sixties the question that began to surface — before the cultural myopia of the Seventies settled on "pluralism" — was a question related to the waning years of high Modernism: Was the enforcement of superior standards in art the most likely way to incite ethical social changes?

Greenberg did not endorse the notion that art had anything to do with morality or social change in any direct sense. He differed with Kant in this respect. Whereas Kant advocated the interconnection between aesthetics and the moral good, Greenberg has always seen aesthetics as a qualitative model isolated from any moral referent. Given Greenberg's Trotskyite persuasion during his years at *Partisan Review*, it became evident that he saw his aesthetic model as beneficial to culture by maintaining high standards as opposed to kitsch. By lessening the expectations of the model, the cause of culture would suffer. Having learned from the way Stalin had manipulated culture through a disavowal of history by enforcing socialist realist painting and sculpture in order to propagandize the masses, Greenberg's early development as a formalist can scarcely be argued.²⁰ What can be argued, however, is the absoluteness by which his formalism was critically applied outside of its historical moment. In its time such a theory was important in offering an ideological support structure to a struggling group of avant-garde artists in New York. Once this legitimation had been achieved, this proscriptive notion of quality became superfluous. By definition, formalism has its limits and is not eternal.

There is no doubt that good criticism relies as much on a substantial and timely theory of art as it does on one's own empirical resources. One may evolve a sense of criteria through experiencing a work of art, even art that does not look like art or behave the way art has in the historical or recent past. Criticism is truly a dialectical encounter. It is neither an endorsement nor a rejection; rather it weighs quality according to a series of perceived differences. It is precisely the gap between positivism and empiricism that makes criticism a challenging, and at times an arduous intellectual task.

Formalism is not a perennial condition in mainstream art. It is both a method of analysis and a process of seeing. A formalist object is difficult to define, but a formalist method or approach in the context of an object is relatively within one's grasp — relatively to the extent that some pretext of language philosophy and structuralist theory is not evaded in the task; these are the tools of formalist art and criticism.

It has been suggested here that the shift from a visual to a linguistic formalism began to make itself apparent in the avant-garde of the Sixties. While much of the confusion of the Seventies was theoretically and critically based, the Eighties have seen a resurgence of interest in ideas and cultural dialectics both in art and in art writing. One cannot argue in a facile way with Greenberg's desire to maintain "superior aesthetic standards" as essential to the task of criticism throughout this recent period of history; but it is necessary to consider the problem of formalism not *only* in those terms.

It would seem that much current art — simulationist, consumerist, neo-conceptual, whatever (the labels never adequately describing what artists produce) — would conventionally be seen as anti-Modernist or Postmodernist, while at the same time it is reconstituting formalism as a transgressive device. When one speaks of formalism in this way it can no longer be viewed as Greenbergian.

Transgressiveness is not about the institutionalization of standards; it is a breaking of the code once presumed to be acceptable. One could argue that formalism has always functioned to some greater or lesser extent in this way. Certainly Kant and Fry can be seen as transgressors in their respective times. In either case there was a willingness to lay the code bare and to get to the foundation of the issues at stake. Greenberg has also functioned in this way in an attempt to get through the muddle of what he termed Alexandrianism. Russian formalism operated transgressively as a means for the intelligentsia to test the system internally (ideological, social, political), a concept that appealed to Trotsky and his followers.²¹

In order to perpetuate formalism as a transgressive device it cannot afford the luxury of the academy. Neither can it afford its place in the canon as a codified system of aesthetics. For any type of formalism to persist, it requires constant renovation and exposure to the limits of what art can be. What appears to be emerging in current art is an internalization of issues that are being transformed and represented through formalist strategies.²² The dialectical tension is beginning to appear again. It is another type of formalism, neither universal nor specific; it is a system of floatation against another system of cultural encoding.

It would appear that formalism, in practice, is a Twentieth Century aesthetic model largely based on historical necessity. Its transgressive capability is intrinsic to its mode of operation. Formalism is deceiving in its simplicity. It has the ability to cut through shrouds of interpretation — the literary content which Greenberg found objectionable in Romanticism. It would seem that formalism is timely, not absolute. The matter of getting down to essentials in art is not unrelated to other culturally determined events, including politics and gender. If formalism is to regain its ability to transgress the limits of art, then it must relinquish its aesthetic absoluteness — its omniscience — in favor of a more openly translatable dialectical system.

Notes

- Deane W. Curtin, "Varieties of Aesthetic Formalism," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. XL, No. 3 (Spring 1982), pp. 315-326.
- Ibid.*, p. 324.
- Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J.H. Bernard (New York, 1951), pp. 38-39 as quoted in Curtin, p. 325.
- Curtin, "Varieties of Aesthetic Formalism," p. 323.
- Clement Greenberg, "Modern and Post-Modern," *Arts Magazine*, Vol. 54, No. 6 (February 1980), p. 66.
- Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* (Fall 1939) as reprinted in John O'Brian, ed., *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. I, *Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 3-22.
- Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.
- Clement Greenberg, "Necessity of 'Formalism,'" *New Literary Criticism*, III/1 (Autumn 1971) as reprinted in Richard Kostelanetz, ed., *Aesthetics Contemporary* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1978), p. 210.
- Ibid.*, pp. 209-210.
- Ibid.*, p. 210.
- Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," *Art & Literature* (Spring 1963) as reprinted in Kostelanetz, *Aesthetics Contemporary*, pp. 198-206.
- Clement Greenberg, "Post-Painterly Abstraction," exhibition catalogue (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1964) in Barbara Rose, ed., *Readings in American Art Since 1900* (New York: Praeger, 1967), pp. 170-171.
- Donald Kuspit, *Clement Greenberg: Art Critic* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), p. 173.
- Clement Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocoon," as reprinted in O'Brian, *Clement Greenberg*, Vol. I, pp. 23-38.
- Many artists in the Sixties were responding to accelerated changes in a high-tech culture — changes that were, in fact, altering and expanding perceptions, and raising issues that challenged the various basis or necessity of aesthetics. Marx knew about industry and its effects on culture; he did not know nor could he have predicted the effects of electronic information.
- Roman Jakobson, "An Interview with David Shapiro," exhibition catalogue (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980) in collaboration with MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 18.
- Frederic Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language* (Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 50-54.
- Ibid.*, p. 83.
- Greenberg states: "Quality, esthetic value originates in inspiration, vision, 'content', not in 'form'." See "Necessity of 'Formalism,'" p. 211.
- Through socialist realism, Stalin was able to illustrate the meaning of the Revolution and his subsequent dehumanized purges and atrocities in his own terms. The avant-garde of the pre-Leninist era was threatening not so much for what it represented (non-representation of a sort), but for what it failed to illustrate as explicit political ideology. It was Lunarcharsky, Lenin's Minister of Education, who feared formalism in all its aspects, and eventually had it dismantled so that it could no longer function as a pervasive intellectual force.
- There are several interesting, though speculative parallels between Russian formalism and the anti-Modernist developments of the Sixties. One might consider the photomontages and constructions of Rodchenko as pivotal in this regard. His manipulation of signs, particularly in the photomontages, represented a new syntax of meaning for the popular images of his day, and carried a dialectical message, one that was timely, yet not without formalist aesthetic value.
- This refers to the inversion process where signs from popular culture are quoted or usurped by artists, thereby setting up a parallel system of response to mass culture. It should be clarified that this system is a strictly formalist one in some works by Sherrie Levine, Haim Steinbach, Jeff Koons, and others, in that the system is precisely contained through a process of conceptualization which, in turn, allows these "objects" to speak on their own terms, namely the artist's intentions as interceding within the system of art production. This, however, cannot be generalized, given that the intentions of these artists may shift; the criteria for judging these works has a strong conceptual basis (not necessarily literary) as well as a visual one.

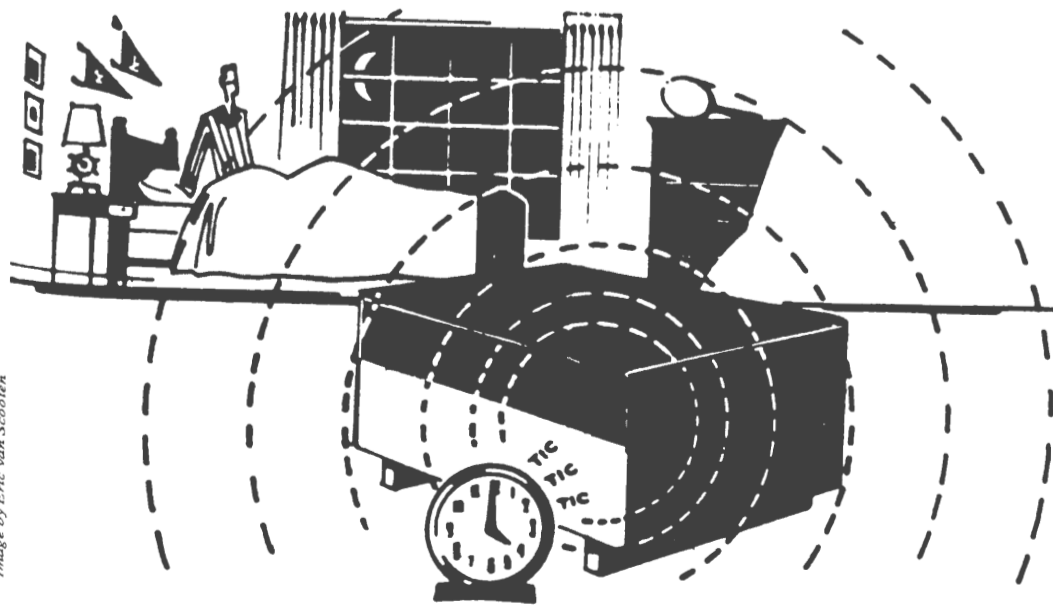


Image by Eric van Scooten

Don't put him out, take him out. Then you'll always be sure.

LECTURE RAPIDE

par Richard Martel

On voit découvertes des préoccupations philosophiques. Il s'agit là de petites choses déterminer de la sensation. Elles concernent elles se elles sont pour toute. C'est donc psychologie. La découverte avait beaucoup imaginations grand nombre se passionnèrent questions semblables. Les expériences se multiplièrent un peu partout, mais surtout en Allemagne, où Wundt créa en 1879, à Leipzig, un premier « laboratoire de psychologie expérimentale ». Sans doute, un grand nombre de petites découvertes du genre de celle de Fechner sortirent de ce laboratoire, mais on était bien loin de la psychologie humaine dans sa totalité et sa complexité. La psychologie avait certes quitté le royaume des rêveries métaphysiques, mais pour entrer dans les tristes prisons des laboratoires.

- Lecture rapide



Ich Boykottiere das Apartheid

Depuis les sociétés organisées le rapport au monde est envisagé par soubresauts et périples divergents. L'oignon rend la dissolubilité relative des organisations logiques. L'aventure court le risque poétique, diphtongue, emmagasinement. Discorde même par l'axe méthodologique ; par-dessus l'emphase tuberculeux et aléatoire du discours le nuage rend l'âme. D'autant plus qu'il n'en faut pour qu'une énonciation devienne lieu et s'abâtardise, se ramifie jusque dans l'ordre procédurier. La vision conceptuelle s'amointri au galop du langage ; il n'y a de critère que dans ses ramifications conjointes. Il faut tout dire des choses et d'autres s'ajoutent encore. Plus rien ne veut plus rien dire pour autant que la parole se chasse, comme l'individu, simulacre et adventice. Puis le règne de l'animal soluble dans l'air et l'eau, refroidi jusqu'à ses muscles rejailis et pudibonds. La rocaille se fêlure et sa peau se tisse en éventail, il n'y a de rapport au moineau que son allusion.

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tout
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autre
après
études
révélée
adresse
formule
immense
gratuite
quelques
grillade
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président
patronnée
syndicats
travailler

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fruit
cuit, fuit, suit, fruit, nuit, fruit, fuit, suite, fuite, bruit, cuite, brûle, fruité, nuitée, nuit, fut.

cave
rave, dérape, râpe, pave, cave, décave, larve, vache, ravier, cage, cape, nappe, cave, cuve, couve, caveau, gravats.

douter
doué, doute, redouter, dérouter, route, roué, redoute, douter, doter, radoter, dompter, douter, docte, docteur, dompteur, donner.

animal
minable, aimable, annale, animal, animalier, animalerie, animée, cannibale, annales, animer, abimer, abima, anima, animal.

course
courue, course, source, course, bourse, boursier, coursier, couru, cornu, cause, court, courte, coursive, écouter, écouter.

livre
suivre, cuivre, libre, livre, litre, livrer, livrée, givrer, givre, guivre, vivre, vivra, livrera, livreur, livresque, livres, livre.

mètre
mètre, mitre, mettre, mère, admettre, remettre, mètreur, métro-
nome, centimètre, kilomètre, millimètre, décamètre, mètre, mètre.

de la psychologie se sont recrutés sortes de scientifiques : étaient les autres (mais oui !) des médecins. fonction de et de ses apporta aux fondations Et qui posa Voilà qui est à dire. grand physicien quand, vers découvrit nerveux d'une vitesse mesurable, beaucoup plus lente que celle de la lumière, plus lente même que le son ? N'est-ce pas plutôt cet autre physicien qui avait nom Fechner, et qui découvrit vers 1860 les « lois de la sensation » ? L'intensité de la sensation, annonça-t-il, varie comme le logarithme de l'excitation. Par exemple, ce que nous entendons est fonction du logarithme de l'intensité des sons qui ont frappé notre tympan. Il fut ainsi le premier à introduire la mesure en psychologie.

moderne dans toutes disciplines les uns physiciens, mathématiciens ; des militaires et surtout Chacun, en ses connaissances préoccupations, sa pierre de l'édifice. la première pierre ? bien difficile Est-ce le Helmholtz, 1850, il que l'influx était doué

six
mer
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haut
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lapin
demie
vitre
causer
chaise
perler
vilain
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manteau
ceinture
messieurs
injustice



Ich Boykottiere das Apartheid

répétition, admettre la finalité défaite, démasquée, ramointrie. La répétition se tient cruellement, comme un calorifère. Dans son tube se concrétise l'angle et la couleur. De la version poétique rien à dire, l'hirsute est de mise, comme un manteau long. Affamé, adverse, déjoué. La limande est au bout du fil ; pourtant le téléphone n'a pas sonné. Quatre fois par jour s'administrer l'impossible et réfractionnaire synonyme du crayon. De l'encre jetée et encore tiède, humide même peut-être. Un chien aboie, tumultueux averti et lisant Confusius. Tout esquimau s'est mêlé au détour du troupeau de blancs vêtus. De la mine à la marée, oui abusif du cendrier dans la baignoire et des dépenses ; il veut s'amoinrir la tâche de s'alourdir. L'attitude peut se disloquer jusqu'à engendrer des merveilles. La philosophie par exemple se tient à l'écart des rapports entre les décisions non logiques, par obsolence. Où as-tu mis tes mains de tendresse ?

président
député, constitution, assemblée, présider, délibérer, président, représenter, palais, avocat, tribunal, président, assistance.

avant
épétition se lie

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D'autres s'attaquent de l'intelligence Ayant défini comme la de résoudre nouveaux, à en poser à différentes Offrons à sa nourriture, vers elle par la ligne droite. est barré il devra faire pour parvenir Penser à cet obstacle, une ouverture c'est déjà intelligente dont peu d'animaux sont capables. La poule, dans ce cas, se jette indéfiniment contre le grillage pour essayer de le franchir, elle ne cherche pas la porte pratiquée dans la clôture pour lui permettre de passer. Elle ne passera donc par la porte que si ses bonds désordonnés l'amènent jusque-là par hasard. Le chat et le chien ont déjà moins de difficulté à utiliser le détour. Pour le singe, ce problème n'offre aucune difficulté. Est-il capable de faire mieux encore ?

chercheurs au problème elle-même. celle-ci capacité des problèmes ils s'ingénierent de toutes sortes espèces animales. un animal et il se portera le chemin naturel, Si ce chemin par un grillage, un détour jusqu'à elle. contourner à découvrir dans le grillage, une action

Ich Boykottiere das Apartheid

variables efficaces. L'herbe me monte au ras du nez par le ménage des énergies agricoles. Pratique expérimentale du néon ontologique. La démesure du dispositif tend à se tordre, à se distinguer, doigt, émeraude et faux liquides. Du pléonasm aux gratte-ciels comme de la langue à ses dents. Parallépipède, dossiers divers étalés sur la banquette. Tout s'élargit. La poésie n'en revient plus. Dans son verre de lait l'aventure de l'interdisciplinarité en prend un coup. Le risque aussi se tord et finalement plus rien n'est sûr, cartographe devient de plus en plus difficile. Le texte même s'enroule autour de la fenêtre ; je ne peux pas l'arrêter. Évidemment si l'alternance oscatoire et ses exigences rendaient absurde le temps lié à la fabrication de l'imaginaire, il n'y aurait nécessairement aucun remède à suivre sinon attendre. Par où coule l'avancée jusqu'à s'étirer largement, truite et salamandre argentée. Musica reggae et spores de juillet. Du temps figé jusqu'à obtenir la

- comme
- chant
- poser
- bruit
- animal
- dormir
- parent
- figure
- cuivre
- fermier
- revenir
- déposer
- habiller
- aspérité
- sagacité
- entourage
- cimeterre
- interprète
- méticulosité



tarentule
sortilège
télégramme
déblatérer
chimérique
marqueterie
ébranlement
térébenthine
goguenardise
probablement
technologique
funambulesque
héliocentrique
simplification
feuilletonistes

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e texte mé
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je ne pe

durer, murer, mura, mûre, mire, mira, mirer, dira, durée, dures, dur, mur, dru, cru, crue, cure, dure, curer, curé, dure,
comme
somme, tonne, tomme, tome, dôme, donne, comme, comment, comme, gomme, somme, sommier, sonner, sonne, tonner, entonner, commentaire.
mener
mimer, miner, mine, mime, mène, mener, emmener, emmène, amène, mènera, emmènera, emmener, amener, mener, miner, animer.
lettre
mettre, lire, lettre, leste, preste, lettré, allécher, lecture, lecteur, littéral, littoral, lettre, cette, sceptre, lettres.
compte
contre, conte, compte, comte, comté, compté, conter, compta, coquet, compter, contrer, contrée, comptes, compte.
Temps de lecture : minutes secondes.

jusqu'aux de la moelle capables de les simples Dans notre tête, sont donc du simple Ces découvertes par les apportaient les renseignements les la base physique humain et La découverte étages du une nouveauté Elle amena à se dire, est-il suffisant l'homme adulte Les recherches ne devraient-elles pas porter sur des formes inférieures de la pensée et du comportement, telles qu'on les rencontre chez d'autres êtres ? Les maladies nous ont fait comprendre le fonctionnement de notre corps : pourquoi n'en serait-il pas de même de notre esprit ? On se prit donc à étudier la psychologie des malades mentaux, des « fous » comme on disait alors. Mais on connaissait également des formes inférieures de la pensée plus subtiles que celle des malades mentaux, et les investigations psychologiques s'orientèrent vers quatre points cardinaux.

régions voisines épinière, déclencher réflexes. les actions « hiérarchisées » au composé. accumulées physiologistes au psychologue plus précieux sur du comportement de la pensée. des différents cerveau était remarquable. les chercheurs par analogie : d'étudier normal ?

Ich Boykottiere das Apartheid

Perdre alors l'acte d'écrire, comme un éclaircissement solidaire suave et situé. Les émanations de l'interdisciplinarité en rapport aux phénomènes ordinaires sont des esquimaux dans des verres de métal. Il n'y a de longitude qu'objectale, ruban de soi alourdi du clignement des yeux ; comme un gros épouvantail, démesuré. À l'approche de son ombre, ses traces s'atténuent. Dans la logique de la démesure s'installe l'étalon double, sortilège viscéral pour des joueurs presque absents. L'acte poétique ignore le risque car il s'instaure en limite absolu, aux dire et aux images répondent la délicate aspiration dans la conscience historique. Éliminer le travail touche aux contraintes et le terrorisme factice des institutions. L'univers s'affecte un pouvoir absolu dans la pensée. Hors sphérité, insurgé par la rigueur organisée, sémiotique. En verve aux courts et aux longs ; comme d'habitude. Il n'y aurait que l'épuisement. La dissolution du temps en

- cou
- vin
- fil
- soin
- hier
- sous
- moue
- avant
- heure
- droit
- offre
- tandis
- ancien
- poudre
- saison
- chevaux
- gratuit
- planche
- lecture
- journées



aux
voir
jour
lune
c'est
grains
suffit
écoles
caserne
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e factice d
ns. L'unive

résolution
solution, absolution, révolution, résoudre, résolution, désolation, consolation, résolution, résorption, absorption.
hérédité
hériter, aridité, hérédité, hère, héréditaire. hériter, hérauld, hérédité, humidité, hérisson, hérissier, errer.
prétexte
prétexer, prétexte, texte, proteste, tester, prétester, protester, prétexte, prothèse, protestation, attester, détester.
souvent
couvent, couver, sauver, savent, savant, souvent, sauvent, auvent, sachant, souvent, couvent, convert, couvert, souvenir.
action
faction, traction, attraction, fiction, action, fonction, action, actif, factice, fictif, onction.
ranger
ronger, ranger, ronfler, gonfler, renfler, ranger, grange, range, rangée, ronger, gronde, grande, rangera, engranger.
laisse
lisse, plisse, plaise, laisse, baisse, caisse, crisse, graisse, tasse, taise, baise, baisse, laisser, lasse, laisse.
entrer
entrer, enterrer, rentrer, entrée, entre, entrer, centrer, descendre, cendre, centre, entrez, contre.

RHODE ISLAND RED

by George Bowering

Trust me, this will take only a fraction of the time it would take to write and read a novel, but there will be order somewhere here, faint order, human traces anyway.

If you were not in the South Okanagan Valley in the fifties you will not be able to picture the scene I am picturing. But you can say this on the other hand, that no matter how well we think we are remembering scenes of thirty years ago, say, whenever we are given the opportunity to check those memories, we are invariably wrong, sometimes a long way off.

So I will have to do a little description, I guess, at least to get this going. The consolation will be that we will no longer have to listen to the voice delivering the goods in sentences that start with the first person singular pronoun. I like pronouns, but that one is not my favourite. Description, then. But be aware, wont you, that description will not bring you the authentic look or feel of the place, either.

We are three miles, because they still used miles then, south of the village of Lawrence. Lawrence could have been called a town, but the people who lived there persisted in calling it a village because it was cheaper when it came to taxes. No one could tell you how that worked, but everyone seemed to think that it made good sense.

Three miles south of Lawrence, let us say, in November. The orchards are just beginning to turn skeletal, the season's fruit picking finished weeks ago. Just across Highway 97 there is a funny looking apple tree. It owns perhaps only seven dry curled brown leaves, but there are apples hanging all over it. These are over-ripe apples, brown and wrinkled. If the orchardist working on his tractor up by the house were to drive down here and bump the tree's trunk with the front of his machine, he would find himself in a rain of apples that were useless except to the health of the soil covered right now with slick leaves.

He would probably also notice the chicken hurling its head at the pebbly ground beside the blacktop, and carry it under his arm back up the dirt road to the home yard.

There is no fence between this orchard and the highway. Fences are only a nuisance around the kind of farm on which workers are always moving ladders or trailers covered with props or empty boxes. As every orchardist along the road has said at least once, you dont need a fence to keep apple trees in, and any fruit thieves that come in uninvited at night are going to have to get used to rocksalt in the ass. The kids around Lawrence figured that every orchardist had a shotgun loaded with rocksalt or worse standing by the back porch door with the baseball bats.

Most families had chickens in their yards in those days. Even in town, where people would make little chicken runs out of chicken wire, with a roof of chicken wire to keep large dogs out or to keep the chickens in the yard. It seemed normal to the narrator of this story, for instance, to keep the chickens in the yard. When he was a kid in the South Okanagan in the forties he had to feed the family chickens. That was enjoyable, whether throwing grain on the ground for those flailing heads, or dumping the slop and watching them spear the corn cobs.

This chicken was a Rhode Island Red, a general-purpose breed created in the United States of America. It had a rectangular body and brown feathers of the shade called by parents red. By descent it had come from distant forebears in the jungles of Malaya. There were no roads through the jungles of Malaya in those days.

One time the narrator of this story planted some of the wheat that he normally would have fed as grain to his family's own Rhode Island Reds, and it grew. When the wheat plants were about three feet in height his younger sister pulled them out of the ground and threw them into the chicken coop. He still wonders, today, what made his sister think of doing that. The orchard in which their house stood contained lots of long grass, so she must have understood something about "wheat" when she ripped up his experiment to feed it to the chickens. Something about language. If he were to ask her now she would just treat it as an old family joke. Why did the sister pull the wheat?

These families in the south Okanagan kept chickens for eggs and for chicken meat. That is why the Rhode Island Red was so popular. It produced lots of meat, and brown eggs, thought by superstitious rurals to be superior to white eggs in the matter of nutrition. White eggs were for city folks who also betrayed their personal biology with white sugar and white bread.

The male sperm lives in the hen's oviduct for two to three weeks. Yolks originate in the ovary and grow to four centimeters in diameter, after which they are released into the oviduct, where the sperm is waiting. Whenever we found a red dot in an egg we said "Aha!" In the oviduct the egg also picks up the thick white and some shell membrane. Then it heads for the uterus where the thin white and the hard shell are added. The making of an egg takes twenty-four hours. Orchard moms are proud of hens that lay an egg every day. They are amused by the biddies that hide them in the yard instead of leaving them in the coop.

Now this one Rhode Island Red pecking away at pebbles and organisms at the edge of Highway 97. We certainly, I would think, cannot call her (or him if it is a capon) a central character in this little fiction. A figure at the middle of things, perhaps, but not a central character. A chicken does not have character. Unless you want to ascribe character to this red's pecking and wandering away from the rest of the birds around the house, all the way down the dirt road to this shallow ditch beside Highway 97.

It is nowadays simply Highway 97, and not too much different from its condition in the late fifties. But in those days it was both Highway 97 and Highway 3, the alternative Trans-Canada. The two numbers, adding up as they did, really satisfied a teenage boy who lived in and around Lawrence, but he does not appear in this story. There is a human being, you will remember, sitting on a tractor, doing something of value up near the yellow stucco house, where the rest of the Rhode Island Reds and the Bantams were.

If this fowl were a central character, as it might have been were the story a fable, it would have to be set down in a significant setting for the unrolling of the narrative. No, one supposes that fables do not have characters, but only fictions. Though Aesop's fables, for instance, are told in an attempt to mould character in their listeners, one can hardly ascribe character to, say, a grape-eating fox. If one were supposed to think about him in terms of character, a child might ask, why does this fox desire to eat grapes, especially grapes that are out of reach?

In any case, though we refuse character to the young hen in this instance, we can say a few things about the nature of the setting she had pecked her way into. The most salient because unusual feature, as far as she was concerned, was the highway. It was a normal western asphalt or tar macadam road, what is called in the trade a flexible surface. Gravel of fairly consistent size is covered with hot bituminous material that penetrates the spaces between the little stones and then cools and hardens. If you are a quick driver you can just see a ribbon, as they say, of gray, or it is the first month of a new highway, a ribbon of black. If your local member of the legislature is in the government's cabinet you see more black that do people in other places. If you are a kid walking along the highway you can see the stones in the mix, and you have always wondered how many of them were Indian arrow heads. If you are a chicken pecking seeds and gizzard gravel into your interior, you will never get a pebble out of that hardly flexible surface.

There was a quick driver a few miles south, just passing Dead Man's Lake, heading north, probably going to the Coop Packing House in Lawrence.

He was driving a truck cab in front of a big empty trailer that was equipped with a refrigeration unit, which could be seen from outside, a big square item on the top of the front of the trailer. The doors were open on the trailer, so no one knew that the refrigeration was turned off right now. If the truck went by you slowly enough and you were on one side of the road you would be able to see the other side of the road for part of a second right thru the trailer. At the Coop there would be some men and lads in cold storage ready to load the trailer of the truck with boxes of Spartan apples. Then the refrigeration would be turned on and the truck would head to a large city grocery store chain whose name could be understood by anyone who could read now that the doors on the trailer were slid shut.

This truck was proceeding northward at about fifty miles an hour, which was the speed limit at that time as long as the road was straight, which was not often the case. Its driver was an old army veteran named Stiffy. He lived in the city where the grocery store chain was located, but he spent a majority of his days in the cab of his truck, trying to catch small town radio stations on his radio, stopping at roadside cafes where other rigs were stilled. He had had a conversation at Rhoda's Truck Stop in Castlegar this morning.

"Stiffy. How's it hanging, you old bugger?"

"Cant complain, Buddy. Cant complain."

The other driver's name was not Buddy. Stiffy called him Buddy because he couldnt remember his name, if he had ever known it. He called most men Buddy.

"I think I'm getting too old for this line of work," said the man.

"Know what you mean."

"No future in it either."

"Gettin' to be near time to pack it in and take it easy. Find out what my old lady does all day."

"Wouldnt know what to do with myself."

"Hah, I know what you do with yourself six or eight times a day, you old bugger."

"No, really. Guy owns the old bowling alley in Coleman. Been thinking of moving there, buy him out, live off the fat of the land."

"Oh yeah, bowling is getting more popular every day, they say."

"You know anyone goes bowling?"

"You know anyone wants to buy a Kenworth, one-quarter paid for?"

That was the conversation at Rhoda's, or most of it. During all that talk the driver we are interested in, if that is not an overstatement, was spooning up some chicken soup and biting at a grilled cheese sandwich. He often ate those things at Rhoda's, and something very much like that at the orchard Cafe in Lawrence.

Now he was about ten miles south of Lawrence, braking behind a farmer in a rusty pickup truck half way down Graveyard Hill.

In the high insect season trucks like that, and other traffic as well, brought about the demise of countless insects, fruit flies, grasshoppers, the black and yellow caterpillars that travelled the highway in huge groups. It was not high insect season now, but there were still some grasshoppers, those fleecy ones with wings that allowed them to fly in awkward trajectories. Despite the wings there were some dead grasshoppers on the macadam, perhaps a head squashed flat but a thorax still complete. The chicken in question was out on Highway 97, looking for body parts of grasshoppers.

There is a well-known benefit to this kind of diet. If you get your eggs from some large city grocery store chain you are likely to find, on opening them, that the yolks are pale yellow. If you boil them before eating them, you probably notice that the shells crack in the hot water. Those eggs are produced by chickens who are kept all their lives in the company of other chickens in small cages over conveyor belts. If you have your own chickens, and if they are allowed to forage, to eat bits of garbage and insects, their eggs will have tough shells and dark yellow or even orange yolks. They will taste a lot better than the grocery chain eggs. It wont matter whether they are white or brown; they will be higher in nutrition than those city eggs.

Stiffy's truck was no longer stuck behind the farmer's pickup. The farmer had become nervous about the sheer metallic weight behind him, and pulled off the road, without signalling. Now there was a 1949 Pontiac sedan behind Stiffy's trailer-tractor. Inside the Pontiac were four members of the Koenig family, Mr Koenig with his sunburned face and gas-station hat, and three of his teenaged children. The children were not in school because Mr Koenig was taking them into Lawrence to get their shots. At the beginning of the school year in September there had been a nurse at the school giving out shots, but the Koenig teenagers had not been in school. They had been picking apples as fast as they could till it got dark in their father's orchard. Now there was not an apple at the Koenig orchard except for the boxes of Spartans in the Koenig basement. Eighteen boxes of Spartans, and one box of Romes.

The Koenig kids did not care if they missed their shots. But there was a family in the orchard next to the Koenigs which had a son in an iron lung at the Coast. Mr Koenig hated to think about him.

Two of the Koenig kids were in the back seat. One, the oldest and strongest, was in the front seat beside his father. His face was not as red as his father's. He had been born in this valley.

This is the sort of thing the Koenig teenagers were saying:

"Murray told me the needle is yay long."

"Oh sure, did he tell you it's square?"

"What the hell do you know? When the doc says roll up your left sleeve, you always have to get some help from me."

"Listen, if you werent a girl I'd bash your teeth in."

"Just try it, jerk."

"Knock it off," said Mr Koenig.

The road was never straight for longer than a few hundred feet. It looked as if they were going to have to follow the big truck all the way into Lawrence. Maybe they could pass him around the Acre Lots, but by then they were just as good as in town anyway.

Trust me, we are nearly there, and you will admit, I think, that there is some kind of order here. Human traces and some poultry thrown in. That's a bad choice of verb. Let's say some poultry added.

The poultry in question was now two thirds of the way across Highway 97, trying unsuccessfully to back up and scratch at the surface, but finding better luck with its plunging head. There had not been any traffic for five minutes. That was unusual for that part of Highway 97 even in the fifties. People near the road could not help noticing, when that happened from time to time, a feeling of peculiarity, as if the location were being prepared for something. Now that the tractor was just sitting up there beside the house, you could hear the telephone wires singing above your head.

Then Stiffy's truck appeared both to ear and eye. Its tires played a high note that would not descend. Stiffy saw the Rhode Island Red, saw it lift its head and fall momentarily on its tail as it turned to run back to its home side of the macadam, saw it disappear under the front of his machine. He did not see what a witness, had there been one, might have seen. The blur of red-brown feathers emerged behind the truck's long trailer, the living chicken picked up by the wake of hot wind and thrown high in an awkward arc into the air. It did not sail, nor did it soar. It was a roundish bird in the low sky, not flying but certainly falling now, and as it did along came the Pontiac sedan. Mr Koenig knew that it was a chicken. He even knew it was a Rhode Island Red. He had no idea how it had got where it was, hurtling toward the windshield of his car. He jiggled the car slightly to the right, but the course of the hen was eccentric, and it became a smash of feathers and blood and claws and noise in front of his face where the glass became a white star. The car with four Koenigs in it was still moving to the right, and now the front right tire crunched into roadside gravel. Then the car went straight as the road went straight for a little while but in another direction. The Pontiac, having travelled for a moment at fifty miles an hour through long grass, stopped all at once against a leafless apple tree. If it had been the tree just to the left, the car would have been deluged with brown fermented apples.

All this made a noise. Stiffy, a half-mile north in the cab of his Kenworth, didnt hear any of it. But the orchardist and his wife did. It would not be long till they were both out of the house. Today they, like other people in the Lawrence vicinity, would be finding out what had happened. Tomorrow they would be thinking about why. They would talk about this event for a long time. Many of them would mention it in letters. As later events intervened they would sometimes ask each other questions about this one.

£88B

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Debut:
  ON naissance GOTO l'eglise
  GOTO l'ecole
  GOTO le boulot.
  GOTO le guichet automatique

RechercheDeRefuge:
  GOSUB au sommeil, au paradis, au reve sans RETURN.

Loop:
  ON contact avec sexe oppose GOSUB les emotions
  RETURN mele.
  IF tres blesse THEN grosse mefiance
  IF heureux THEN malheur par equilibre.
  IF espoir THEN deception
  IF famille THEN maitresse
  IF chum THEN amant
  END IF (si possible)

FOR grand amour, STEP souvenir
NEXT larme

Chaque jour la routine:
  INPUT les amis$
  INPUT les passions$
  INPUT les obligations$
  PALETTE voir toutes les couleurs imaginables
  PRINT "Le desarroi"
  PRINT "Pourquoi?"
  PRINT "La Mort"

CLOSE la seance, le rideau noir
GOTO Debut
  
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Gilles Lepage



"HAIR PIECE" from *Gringo Star* by Stan Fogel

Fear of flying: where will I get my hair cut while I'm away? This wouldn't bother the really heroic traveller: the archaeologist searching Borneo's jungles for enduring tribes, oblivious to the state of his "Tilley's Endurables"; the t-shirted female college student in the Middle East, ignoring all the wailing on her way to the Wailing Wall; the rumpled journalist in Beirut or some other area of crisis, whose eyes, avoiding only mirrors, are a scouring camera. My eyes, on the other hand, don't gaze *into* shop windows, for instance, instead, they gaze *at* them seeking my reflection. Are the eyes puffy? Is the hair gel holding? Do my cheekbones have their ascetic look? Are my jeans bagging anywhere? I've no idea what's in any of the countless stores in any of the countless countries that have made my passport look like an atlas. Some windows, though, have called me back more often than certain Club Meds did certain travellers.

Whether Singapore or Sing Sing the rooms behind the windows are probably filled with Benetton toniness and Louis Vuitton initials; that, I find, is a disgusting kind of self-absorption. Still, there is a self-absorption beyond windows I can't resist: I find it in the chair at a hair salon. The horror, the horror of travelling and abandoning hip Gianni Mazzei, Hair Stylist, on hip Queen St. in hip Toronto. Who in the un-punked world will carry Sorbie gel, the only additive short of crazy glue which turns limp hair into a weapon sharp enough to poke someone's eyes out? Gianni has it; he's also got the right underground music playing: issues of *Details* are strewn about; hair magazines with hip models photographed on hip Queen St. in Toronto prod your imagination. Gianni, furthermore, refuses to cut the hair of anyone appearing with or without an appointment, unless that person is wearing the following uniform: black leather jacket, black bustier or black t-shirt (depending on gender or sense of adventure), black pants, black shoes. Earring(s) optional but preferred.

Such fear of flying wouldn't disturb the Queen Elizabeth--boat and sovereign-types. They, after all, are coiffed by luxury hotel chain haircutters ready to renew them as "Jack Nicklaus and spouse." All travellers except the hostel types, eager and unfussy that lot, seem to be certified by the Professional Golfers Assoc., either from fear of conforming to some imagined profile of a dope dealer, the strip searching of whom would reveal those very Louis Vuitton bags wrapped in condoms and swallowed to avoid detection by customs agents ("Just Say No to Style"), or, more likely, because they want to look like they live on the fairway. This tint and set set, arrayed in selected safari outfits, themselves completed by heaps of middle class gold, were especially rife in Kenya, affirming that the plains of Africa have plainly, if not literally, been taken out of Africa. This crew comfortably reads signs as loud as Toronto's CN Tower: observe how tranquilly the Masai and the hyenas countenance flies littering their eyes; whites-only safari tours--complete with African driver; RYVC (remember your video camera).

I editorialize breezily only to bond with those of you who travel neither for truth nor the the trip-of-a-lifetime. An academic sabbatical moved me out of my milieu with the premise and promise that I would be able to leave home and have my salary continue regardless of whether I was in mainstream Canada or Mombassa, Kenya. On an earlier sabbatical I sauntered from Los Angeles to Fiji to Bangkok to...propelled only by, as legitimization of spending tax dollars as research grant, a search for reclusive writer Thomas Pynchon. "You're sure he's not snorkelling around one of Fiji's outer islands? I'd better check for myself."

This time my farewell party was a hair colouring and cut at Gianni Mazzei's even though it was a Sunday. It was a party to obliterate roots not to launch a search for them. Roots, for the purpose of this traveller, are defined as that which appears between one's skull and one's real hair colour, not the source of one's family or the family of men and women. My head took the cake at this fête, a platinum splash being Gianni's signature, one for which he has 'em cooing in the chic nouvelle cuisineries that stitch Toronto together into a Michelin road map and where only the arugula and the free range chickens garnished with black bean sauce offer a competitive dash of colour. Gianni agreed to give up a holiday to mark me for my trip, since my head served as his raw material through many a transmutation into what I always thought of as art. I believed this with such commitment my neck would ache for days after his sculpting, this as a result of my trying to sleep a quarter of an inch above my pillow to preserve what he had wrought. It's not as if Gianni expected he'd get customers from my glowing endorsements to Cairo's Muslim taxi drivers or Jerusalem's orthodox Jews. Bravo, in fact, for a Mediterranean world where Hasidic Jews wander unremarked, but Gianni and I, cocooned on Queen St., could not have known that my contrapuntally coloured head would produce a response in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem the equivalent of one triggered by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir if he wore a suit topped off or at least fronted by a tie festooned with PLO flags. Indeed, all through my wanderings people were struck dumb by my platinum head encasing, among other discordant elements, two dark eyebrows. I caused consternation and bewilderment.

Shock was visible even in Italy where I expected a bit of reciprocation. That is, urbane North America's list of premier haberdashers reads like the Rome phone book. I thought that I would spot lounging around the Trevi Fountain, if not exactly versions of the ersatz Billy Idol or ersatz Andy Warhol I thought myself to be, depending on whether I'd slept well and/or drunk much the night before, at least some tourists and idlers who didn't look like they were auditioning for *Vogue* or the Vision Television Cable Network. Some scruffy would-be Londoners, say, with shaved temples and "14 holers"--no, not their pierced ears, rather Doc Marten boots with fourteen sets of holes for laces, the kind that force you to walk awkwardly, clumsily, heavily; yobos with a minimalist's vocabulary ("effing right"). Whenever I see Easter European dissidents on television they always look dissident, dissenting most visibly from bureaucratically dressed Communist Party apparatchiks and the Dan Rather buttondowns with the unbuttoned lips who act as their caddies to the West, broaching the possibility of more golf courses abroad. One would have to be more than perversely sentimental to carry around photographs of people with multi-coloured spiked hair the way moms and pops parade around the world flashing their children's dossiers in prose and pose. One would have to be really twisted to yearn for these caricatures to materialize.

Nonetheless, "when in Rome do as the Romans do" produces monotony, never mind how closely many people mug fashion mags. Cheering for the Red Brigade is, perhaps, an over-response to the designer handbag carrying hordes that, mutant-like, crowd Rome's venues. I'd settle, I guess, for something verging on the not quite poignant a former student of mind wrote: "when in Rome do as the Romanians do"--and this before the overthrow of Ceaucescu could give the remark any vestige of consciousness or acuity. Something less relentlessly uniform and stylish. I discovered my own hairstyle's outré status in the faces of maitres d' whose pursed lips could be used to screw corks back into their champagne bottles; hoteliers who matched my VISA signature with my passport signature as if matriculating in the handwriting course at detective school; tourists who for a moment forwent Rome's sanctioned Christian and pagan edifices, the pages of their guidebooks flapping in harmony with their jaws.

It wasn't for the gawkers that I decided to submit myself to an actual Roman barber, the literal kind being outnumbered greatly by the other kind that leave tonsured heads unviolated while lifting thousands and thousands of lira, the inflated price one pays to drink and dine and sleep in Rome. It was, rather because my head hadn't been reconstructed and redesigned in a few months that I chose to go to a Roman barber. Back when I was provided adult accompaniment to get my hair cut, the only barbers not barbarous were Italian, their razor cuts more deft than (not yet invented) laser plastic surgery. The model was still a marine, but boot camp methods weren't mandated. I sought out such a craftsman from my youth. He spoke no English, I no Italian. No Berlitz barber he, he usually trimmed home grown hairs. Pictures as removed from Gianni Mazzei's portfolio as the handshake is from the athlete's high five adorned wall. I chose to be reincarnated as the bristly guy. "Brushcut" I said. Blankness. I held up his hairbrush and we had our only language lesson.

Warmth and bonhomie filled the shop where outside all was forearm and middle finger gesturing, car jockey negotiations. Gracefully, accomodating himself to the cosiness, but not causing the kind of overcrowding that produces six lane traffic on four lane Roman streets, the benign man who previously occupied the classic barber's chair I was propped up in returned with three friends in tow. A non-Greek Greek chorus they ringed the chair, responding throughout the event to the symphonic scissoring. In North America the cutting would have been choreographed as an imprecise precision marching band, on the field at half-time of a high school football game. In Rome though, my head was being handled, well, soccer-atically. Sure, that's linguistic excess. But I was glutted with and disgusted by \$45 breakfasts at the Cafe de Paris or any of the other preening sidewalk restaurants in Rome as well as Armani-Valentino-Bulgari strut that is Italy's fashion parade. What do you get on an Italian trip? In Venice a mirrored reflection of your touristic self; in Milan the wardrobe you can buy in the linguistic comfort of your own city; In Florence the confirmation of your art book's sheen. (In six months of travelling around the Mediterranean and into East Africa it was only my split ends that got handled authentically. All the rest was tours, traffic, treasures.)

Close your eyes and picture the Vatican. You've never really been? Never mind. It's the already seen. We're in the postmodern era for chrissakes so give the Pope a miss. Go to Italy to get a haircut. You'll be able to recite faithfully your soul food party at St. Peter's whether you've seen it or not. Your home bound friends will appreciate the picture: it will be recognisable; you've both seen it on television. My barber was a pontiff of sorts (the word comes from pont meaning bridge): he moved from one of my ears to the other with the engineering precision of the constructors of the Golden Gate Bridge. Quietly, without pontificating, working without clippers, only with scissors, he took Gianni Mazzei's pizzazz and...allowed me to eat pizza without any others paying any attention to my topping. His whisk broom had tickled the entire neighbourhood; the tonic had braced and embraced a few generations. This rite I gladly accepted. I shook his hand, those of the chorus; warmth and bonhomie were even more prevalent. I moved into the Roman dusk with a sense that both of our scrapbooks were augmented. At that point, though I reneged on the pledge, I thought I might even suffer the Colosseum or Rome's other monuments.

My Rhodes haircut was less colossal, this because no Greek island is an island--each is a Club Med. More pictures of moussaka than those of the Virgin Mary festoon the island of Rhodes. The first named also have their clergymen, hawkers offering you a chance at their particular restaurant's approximation of the picture as if it were transubstantiating stuff. Most of the moussakas won't let you feel ethereal unless you're bulimic, but, then again, what do you expect when whitewashed buildings become as much a currency for travellers as American Express cheques.

The man who cut my hair on Rhodes had been tempted by international traffic. Fleeing the islands as a young man he went to Pittsburgh with a steely resolve to clip his way into the American fabric. Youthful hairdressers are always on the cutting edge of hipness; despite a proper name with, in his words, enough letters to sound like an illness, Dimitris situated himself at the heart of the heart of trendiness. This meant of course, more cocaine than coca-cola. Burnout took him back to Rhodes where he has been flourishing by avoiding the "say, where did you cut hair in Pittsburgh" sect. A phone line is not yet installed despite his having requested one when he opened a year previously. Still, he has a steady clientele, one that makes its living from the tour packages, but regularly escapes the range of the discos that outnumber the dolmades on Rhodes. His nostalgia for the fast lane/fast line days is confined to his scissor fingers which dextrously turned my Italian brushcut back into its more malevolent looking spiked cousin.

Rhodes' fine old walled city is now ringed more tightly by travel sections of newspapers and the bestiary of travel magazines than by its own sturdy stones. Tourism, in short, props it up all the while having effaced it. The only ecologically sound act to extricate yourself from tourism's dictates--all the while accepting them, of course, because you depend upon tourism's output to get you where you're going and to put you up--is to forgo the baskets, trinkets and wallets that glut Rhode's sites and get a haircut.

Nairobi, Kenya doesn't escape tourism's markings, either. The unjustifiably famous New Stanley Hotel where many embark on and disembark from safaris looks like a khaki version of a Baptist church drop-off point. Instead of saving souls, this trek's for a Noah's Ark inventory of animals. What to do in the face of a North American's version of the uncontaminated? Get a haircut. Mombassa, Kenya may be Miami Beach, sojourns in the game parks may be as sumptuously spent in *haut monde* spas, but there was nothing cliché/d about the salon I entered in downtown Nairobi. Women lounging over lunch were galvanized immediately upon my entrance. One to wash hair, one to ask me for sponsorship to Canada, one to consult, one to go out to purchase tiny Ethiopian beads when it was decided I was to get a rat tail only vaguely congeneric with the extensions frequently woven into African women's hair at the salon, and, finally, one to cut my hair.

Again with symphonic accompaniment, the deliberately crude cutting that was to be a punk cut was undertaken with rapid and energetic discussions in Swahili, the only word of which I could understand was punk. "Swahili...punk...swahili...punk...swahili...." Cheers were offered as the rat tail, synthetic hair, was affixed with microsurgical precision to a minute strand of my own hair only Christian Barnard, I thought, could have wedded. While it strains credulity to declare that I was made over as African, this haircut stands, as I sit writing, the least passive act of a stunt in Kenya.

Gaping at wild animals, lolling in lush scenery and assessing Nairobi's squalid ghettos, all of which supposedly promise knowledge, an enriching and authentic traveller's experience, are in reality weak compensation for the enfeebled touristic state, the lack of importance except for hard currency the tourist offers. Travel writing, too, provides only this compensation, an outlet for the work ethic to come up with insight from sporadic interaction with a foreign culture. Not atypical of the kind of thing one gets from a travel writer is a glimpse of the Australian outback by P.K. Page ("The Australian Outback," P.K. Page, *Descant* 66/7, pp.113-26). Quirky and/or resolute and/or decent whites are introduced and described along with abos or aborigines who, especially the lubras or girls, perform menial chores in various households in the territory. Throw in the weather and the domiciles, a bit of chitchat with the locals and there you have the fully formed travel article redolent of significance. Descriptions of individuals take on scope, gain weight, to become types. Fleeting conversations also get bulked up to the status of incisive commentary on race relations or isolation or the state of the economy.

Better to trim and be trimmed. There's too much inflation in travelling anyway. From "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" to the cooing of your friends over your plans to tourism being one of the main agencies of many governments, travel is spectacle. It has become, paradoxically, an anti-nomadic technique. Your baggage as middle class Canadian, say, meets foreign baggage in the realm of staged "cultural" events. The only authenticity left? Haircuts abroad. Purportedly political aperçus from the dispassionate, objective outsider as travel writer are illusory; they show compensation for his or her powerlessness or minimalization as a political force. All you should take home from your travels is your newly barbered head. It lasts longer than a suntan--think bleach if you want some colour--and is less carcinogenic. Remember, barbershop quartets were so named for the custom of men in barbershops forming quarters for the impromptu singing of sentimental songs. Never mind how stagey and kitschy that's become; it still beats an "Experience London, England" package that includes tickets to *Les Misérables*.



Image by Marilyn Rosenberg & David Cole

AUTO POEM by Fernando Aguiar



TRURO (Part Two of *Notes on the Weather*) by Joan Chevalier

Midnight, August 1
"It's Like a Place."

The day I arrived, the doctor announced that our mother's cancer had reached her liver and this was an ominous sign. It convinced me: The circle is a modern invention. Despite its antique reputation. We invented the wheel, and before that the Great Mother gave us the Mandala. But in none of these did we discover the circle. We continued on. We huddled close to the bonfire and watched the edge of darkness lapping at the light. We looked up at the moon and it was flat and cold, like a glacial pond. And we didn't see the circle. Columbus said the earth was round, but he thought about three thousand miles or more to the Indies and how to keep his crew from mutiny. He proceeded each day to the next horizon; perhaps, in the end, with the hope of falling off. Yet, he continued to reassure his men -- there were no monsters in the deep.

Now, the globe has been wrapped many times round: Cable across the ocean floors; steel tracks across the deserts (even in Australia); and Lindbergh's flights and the Apollo orbits. The globe has even been blown up like a balloon and tossed to Charlie Chaplin playing at tyranny. Now we recognize the circle -- more and less. We walk down a road and are convinced that even if we go to China, we'll come back to New Jersey. So, I find no special charm in circles. They do not relieve me of the presence of the line. The circle only confuses which side I'm on; like destiny, which they say it is. And I wonder: Do the monsters sit beside me, around the bonfire, tricking me with their resemblance to myself; or do they lurk in the darkness, where they might be expected, at the edge of the warmth and light. Perhaps the circle itself is the monster, seducing us with notions of -- safe beside the fire, or chastened, though still ravenous, on the outskirts -- while all along, sharpening its own round of teeth?

So, I sat on the beach and watched my sister. I said: You wrinkle up your nose the way you did when you were little. And I heard my mother's voice in my voice and felt it was she looking at Susan. I turned to the horizon.

Near the end, our mother said: "It's like a place; like an encampment." We asked what. She answered: "This bed." And so it is: The round we travel, always, sort of, like a place.

Two hours before sunset, August 5
The Liar's Bench

Seven years ago, late in August, I drove to Ballston Beach, on the oceanside, and watched the sunrise. I lived on the bayside -- on Corn Hill -- where the sun sets. The night before, I had packed the car; that morning I left a note on the kitchen table. I didn't plan to return.

Now, I'm surprised by the places here I never saw and had no inclination to see. I had my spot: On a dune, overlooking the bay. And my routes: To the post office down Castle Road; to the ocean, round the marsh, down Pamet Road; to blueberry pancakes in Wellfleet, down the back road. Now the guidebook tells me that if I go to North Cemetery I'll find a simple marker commemorating fifty-seven men lost at sea in the Gale of 1841 -- "Still referred to as the October Gale." It left most of the Truro women widows and their children fatherless. On the way to the marker, the guidebook also promises, I'll pass "Liar's Bench." There, Uncle Hut told his tales so tall the mast-heads scraped the underside of Heaven's streets and the Angels looked out for rats.

Today, I walked up a dirt road behind our house to the first Congregational Church of Truro and its adjacent cemetery. I found the monument there. It's not in North Cemetery and there's no Liar's Bench. The monument lists the names of the fifty-seven men and boys lost, and adds they went down in seven ships. My Irish grandmother told me that seven is a druidic number. Surely there were druids in Truro, England...out there on the moors of Cornwall. I think they were here as well, held convocations on the Great Salt Marsh below Corn Hill. I recognize them in those seven bushes, grouped in a circle there, just as you round the bend, on your way to or from the bay.

What I can't believe is that on the hill where the Pilgrims found the corn, they also uncovered the body of a fair-haired mariner, buried with a child in his arms. This guide-book must have a ghost-writer -- Uncle Hut -- insisting Heaven has a sanitation problem.

Three hours before sunset, August 8
From the Shore

Last night thunder and lightning crashed down around the small house on Storm Hill. I should have known better. The news said a tornado had struck Providence. Radar traced the storm across Plymouth and out to the tip of the Cape. Still, when the thunder blasted, I opened my eyes in the totally black bedroom and for a moment was convinced: It was all over; I had a second of consciousness left before everything was swept into darkness. I held my breath. Then I realized, I should know better.

When I was in first grade, one night the news said all the children were traumatized by the idea of nuclear war. Never before had a child's vision of destruction encompassed more than monsters under the bed. That seemed right to me. I told my mother I was traumatized too. She said nonsense and told her father to explain the balance of power. But there was uneasiness in his black eyes. After the mines, I think he knew the darkness too well. But our mother didn't want to believe we were troubled: That we weren't adjusted to the absence of our father and far better off anyway. So, I figured I should just know better and set about it.

A couple of weeks ago, for the first time, I saw "Jaws." When I lived here, the children in my care had seen the movie ten or more times. I lost count. They quoted lines back and forth throughout dinner and down on the beach while they played in the bay. I was already afraid of hidden sea creatures. I only swam at night, when the absolute gloom made it impossible to peer into the deep and worry. I know now, having dutifully read Derrida and Blanchot, that bobbing on the surface is all you can do anyway. Drowning is a romance...I'm just afraid of getting in the way of someone else's nightmare: Quint's or Ahab's.

As Quint told it, the *USS Mississippi* was sunk, "after delivering its load for Hiroshima." A thousand men went into the waters; only three hundred were saved. While they waited the sharks fed...Quint went on waiting. He waited and waited for rescue. Till his shark got so big, it was obscene: Then, I guess, it was big enough.

Three hours before sunset, August 13
Changing Positions

I wanted a VCR, but the salesman insisted on showing me the far more expensive Photoscope. Inside was one of those standard photographs, like the ones in dime store frames, meaning to suggest the customer's own photogenic and displayable moments, of which there are presumed

to be few. But this was different. The man in the photo looked quite somber, either because he was stout, or because he was dressed all in black including the bowler on his head. He looked like a head-of-state or a funeral director. The salesman warned me darkly to be prepared...for "cataclysmic change." He turned on the machine. The somber man looked as though he was about to either make a speech, or invite the family and friends to join in a moment of silence. Instead, he opened his mouth wider than seemed possible and wailed. He screech: "It's pink! It's upside-down!" And so it was. His hat looked like a fat pink lady mooning the world from the top of his balding head. It was. I realized this was a machine of subversion. Pretty risky business, I thought. But I was tempted.

It all seemed so familiar to me. It reminded me of my Great-Uncle Theodore, a quick draw artist and master of disguise. He had to be. He was usually running from the law or irate husbands. He was known to forge marriage licenses and hire fake preachers in order to seduce virgin daughters. Anyway...he was dying with TB and living with a toothless whore in Philadelphia, when his sister-in-law paid him a visit. He pointed to one of his pantings -- a sailboat on the sea -- and invited my grandmother to press the boat's panel. It flipped back on a spring and revealed a man and a woman in some unseemly love-making position. She wouldn't tell me the details.

Well, I thought I should try this machine out. I ripped a page from my "Hospital Journal": My mother's last day. The page listed: 11:15 Changed Nancy's Position; 2:03 Changed Nancy's Position; 4:15 Changed Nancy's Position. The salesman turned on the machine. I heard my mother say: "You have to watch you Ps and Qs." I looked down at the typewriter to make sure my hands weren't misplaced, and then realized: She was floating above the hospital bed, pretending to bow a violin and humming "Fascination." Even the doctors were amazed.

August 18 -- Pretty late, I imagine.
Camel's Ledge

"Come on, Pickle, let's go up the road for an ice cream." I took my grandfather's hand. Not the one with the three amputated fingers. He'd invite my sister and I to touch the stumps, then he'd make a great buzzing sound and grab us. We screamed.

It wasn't the mines, though, that took his fingers; but the steel mills during WWII. My grandfather wasn't a big man like his brother Aloyse, who could lift a "bar'l of beer" onto the and -- I figured -- drink it too. No, by his own description, Herman was a runt -- 5'9" and 185 lbs., his "fighting weight." Was he vain? He said he was the first man in Duryea to wear Bermuda shorts. The steel workers said he was real strong for his size. He lifted dead weight shells and loaded them for the front. He wore leather wrist bands to ease the strain.

On our way home, we walked down Lampman Street toward the "Mainy." As we passed under the viaduct, my grandfather always said: "Hold onto your hat." I knew I was holding onto my head. I had heard the story: How Avoca used to be called Pleasant Valley before the Great October Train Wreck. We walked down dirt sidewalks and past quiet saloons. I could smell the whiskey long after we passed. I figured those people had out-door toilets and drank orange soda like my cousins. My grandfather didn't notice: Not Aunt Hedvig's beard, or the smell in her sick room.

Up on Monkey Hill, my grandfather would point out his plot. He said: "See my girl, what a fine spot I've got myself." From his grave, you looked out across the valley and the river to the round, soft Pocono mountains. He told the story: How the Indians chased Old Camel right up to the edge of that bald-faced mountain there. Camel jumped -- his horse under him. Down into the rocky Susquehanna. The horse was killed. But, the Indians left the old man alone after that. I didn't think it was right...sacrificing the horse, I mean.

My grandfather's heart exploded one day. It was the strain of the Black Lung. The doctor's were surprised he lived twenty-four hours. (Enough time to see all of us.) He looked so gray and shrunken in the hospital bed, I must have stepped back. He nodded toward a plastic container and said: "Know what that is, Pickle?" I didn't. He smiled. "Well, you gotta aim straight, my girl, that's all I'm telling you."

Noon, August 21
"Seek the Welfare of the City"

And in the welfare of the city, you will find your own salvation. That was the sermon in the quiet church, built as a beacon to ships. Truro was a place with a "reputation for piety." Now, its former residents and parishioners lie in the fields surrounding the church, their graves covered in daisies and dandelions and on occasion marked with a flag.

It was October: Two weeks after my mother's mastectomy and two years before her death and I went to Cairo. It was a gift. My mother was thrilled: After her travail, the universe could still be gracious. I think she saw a sign in this -- that someone would take care of her feckless daughter who refused to marry... Iman, M's chauffeur, was fasting for the Holy Day. While I lunched at the Hilton, he went to the Mosque to pray. In the afternoon, he brought me to the Mosque of Mohammed Ali, at the top of Cairo, looking out over the minarets of the old city. White dust -- fine, aerial grains of desert sand -- blanched the already white afternoon light. At the threshold, we removed our shoes. I wandered across the Oriental carpets. Iman, on his hands and knees, prayed in a seemingly particular corner, one I imagined he had chosen long ago. Then, we drove to the Pyramids, right there at the City's edge. This surprised me. Iman wanted to know if I would ride a horse or a camel. I chose a camel. I thought I'd climb a ladder onto the beast; but no, I had to mount it the orthodox way: Tilting forward on a parallel line with the ground, as the creature rose first on its hind legs. They shouted at me in Arabic. I understood: Lean back, (fool). Even the parentheses I understood.

In Cairo, the homeless and the hungry live in the old cemetery. Beggars ask a dollar to escort you to the Sphinx, but an escort is unnecessary. I told Iman to pay them to leave me. That night, I dreamt I was a small, black boy holding a piece of broken glass wrapped in a purple cloth. Perhaps, it was the piece of the city that remains missing: A scrap of ground behind a tombstone -- from which, I'm told, we build the City of God...Good Annabelle and Ephraim buried so peacefully in Truro, they would have suffered the beggars to lead them to the Sphinx.

August 28 -- Just after sunset
Natural Relationships, or Unnatural

As the sun sets, it lights up the marsh, filled with the Pamet river at high tide. Beyond the glen, beyond the wood, and below our kitchen window. It is my habit -- before writing -- to sit down in a particular chair by the kitchen window and sip coffee. Each time I do, a flock of white birds rises from the marsh. I'm convinced my sitting releases their flight. I've tried testing the theory, but then the birds seem to know, and resist. But when I least suspect it, whenever I sit in that chair with coffee in hand, before writing and usually at sunset, that flock of white birds rises over that particular crescent of stream. Once they re-settle, I can no longer distinguish them from the marsh grasses. Some of these are called "cat-tails." While I type, a flock of birds settles among the cat-tails.

Roland Barthes wrote that writers, particularly writers like Proust, believe in the natural relationship between names and essences. I don't know. I've never found any relationship natural -- but then, neither did Proust, I imagine. Unlike Proust, however, I have no knowledge of flowers. "Essences" only remind me of the perfumes I can't justify in my budget. I know this is no excuse, only deficit vision; but I'm jealous of Proust's names. He had the "Guermites Way." I have "Lampman Street." And worse yet, what I find there: My mother rolling grapefruits down a column dump. She was six; the miners were on strike for months; the government had surplus citrus for the grade schools. Only the children couldn't guess what they were -- so they bowled them down the black hills of residue coal.

It was cold and gray in Truro this afternoon. Then my sister's boyfriend arrived for the holiday weekend. He brought the mail and some tapes for the stereo: A rejection from the *New Yorker* and Mozart. I assume I'm missing some vital connection -- the natural relationship: The point in the plot without which I have no plot at all. I keep laboring with the fear that the storyline is something other than I've written. We put the Mozart tape on: *The Magic Flute*. And as the sun set, the sky cleared. Light slanted from the upper right hand corner of the window, across the glass, across the wood and marsh, to the left, across the page in my typewriter, placed (naturally) below the window. With the music, a long stream (many bars) of black birds waved across the scene, which included the page...Was it Mozart's script or mine?

September 3 -- Too gray and cloudy for a sunset
"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide."

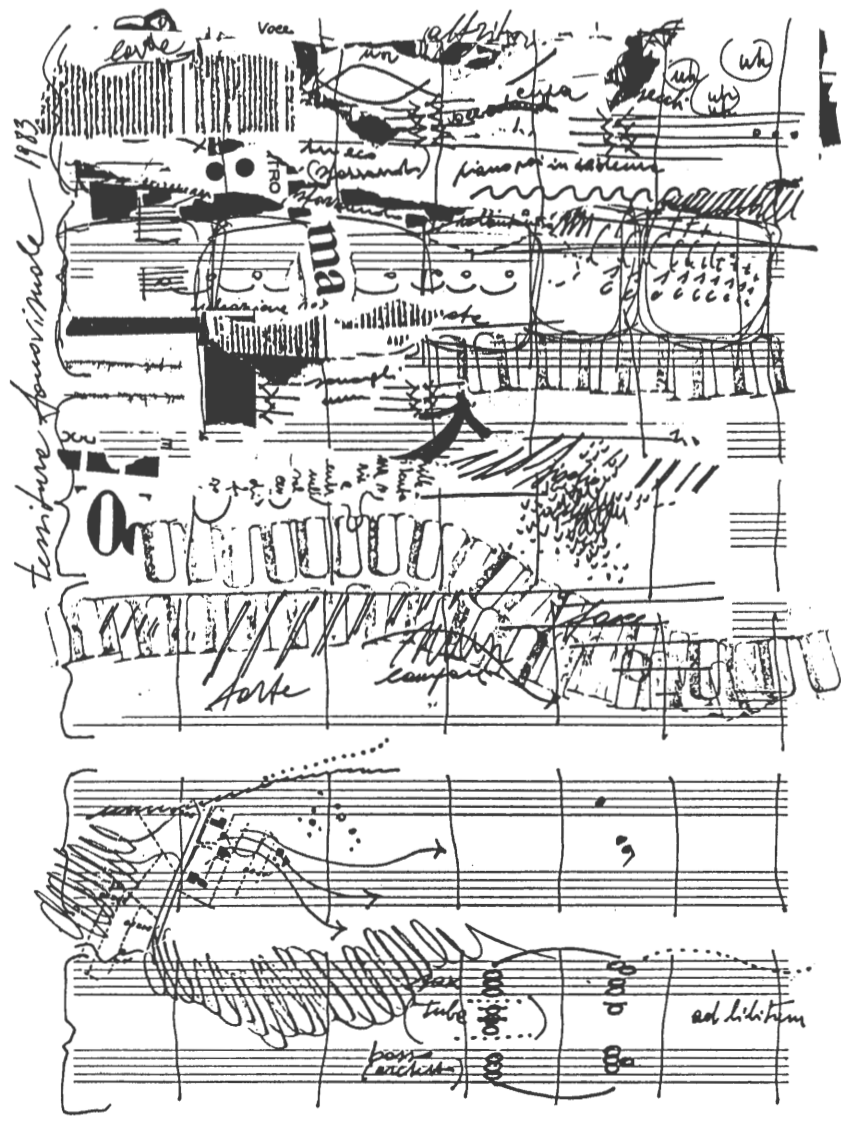
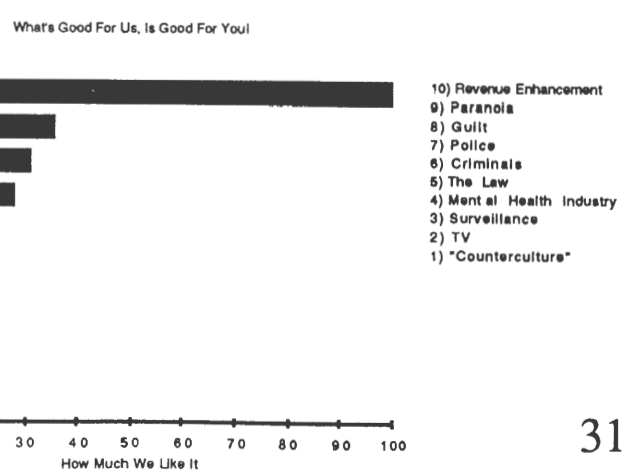
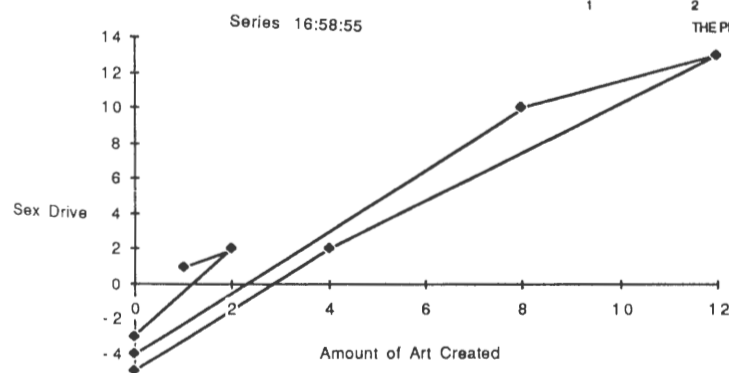
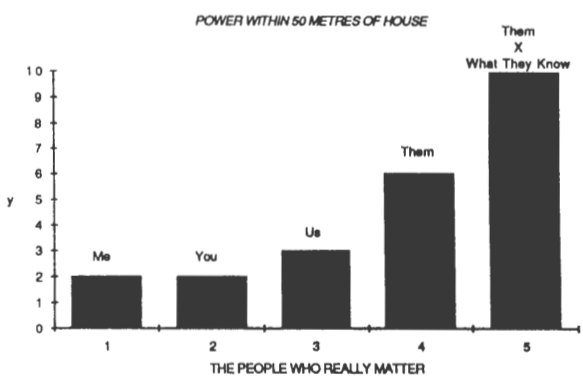
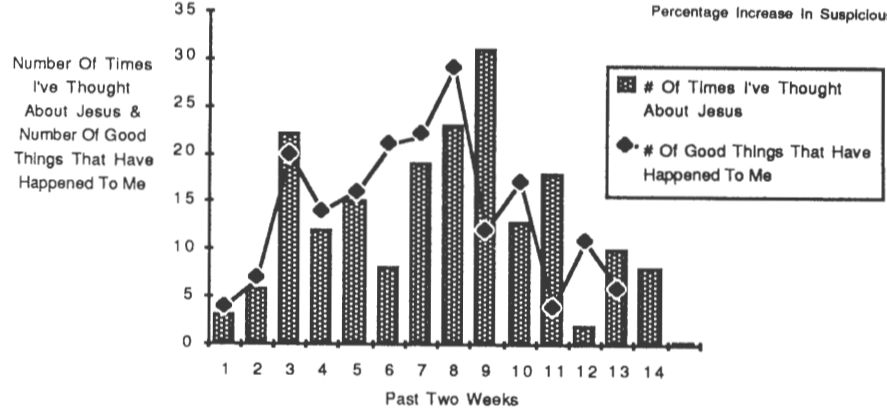
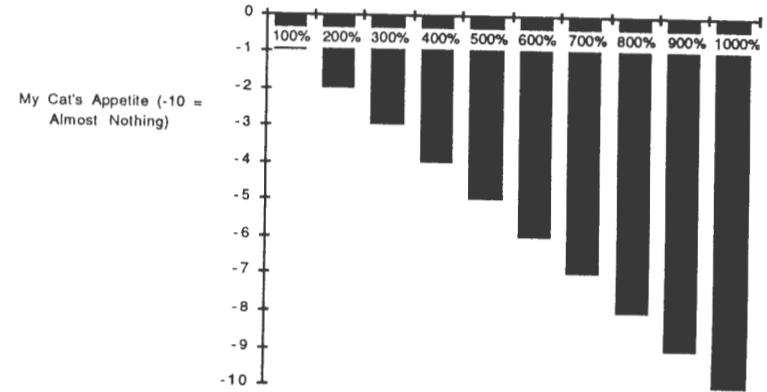
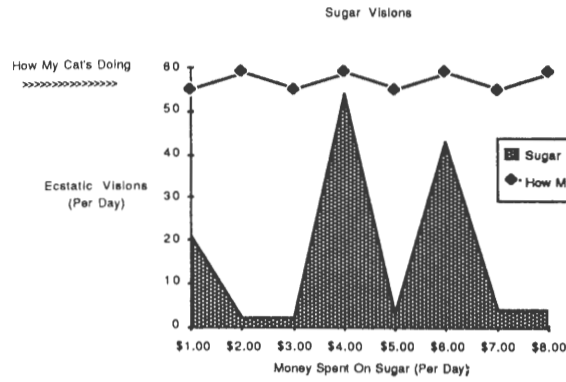
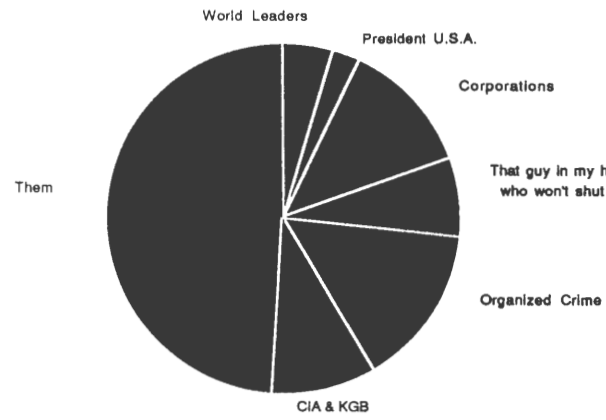
It was either a book or a movie. The characters were like Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed in "It's a Wonderful Life." They met at a "snitzing party." After the harvest, in the early evening, the young people came together to make the fall cider and applesauce. They peeled the apples and then placed them in a large kettle outside. They stirred vigorously. (We can only imagine). But don't think: How idyllic. For there it also is: Out among the trees, the image of romance: Paper Lanterns and the White Moths attracted to the flame. Desperate, they approach the light; if they succeed, then -- madly, exhaledly -- they dance with the flame; till, exhausted, they die. Of course, we're supposed to think: Happy moths, happy youths. But they can't fool me...I look up from my book on the beach and flinch at the hysteria. Family members desperately trying to snatch some vacation from the clutches of other family members, equally intent on withholding: Arms and legs flailing: Into the water, onto the sailfish, after the running ball. I wonder, after all, what would make them happy? and return to my book -- a fairly ominous book, in that it writes itself as it goes along. It's quoting now: "A liaison with Death is a wedding which grants a companion for the night."

Perhaps, I really am a Presence from the Underworld, in disguise, among the living: Death's companion. (So the book writes.) I watched my mother sleep. She had told me: Look out tonight. But she slept gently on her pillow, purring in unconsciousness...So, I've come to prefer lovers who don't importune; who don't notice; who don't return and don't notice: Who have no desire to take me into daylight: Who leave me to Hades.

When we left the beach, the dunes were shrouded with sea spray. The tide was high and the sea was wild and boisterous. It was no longer a summer landscape. The season was over. We turned the car radio on. It was a sing-along: A Bicycle Built for Two, Sweet Rosie O'Grady, And the Band Played On. My sister and I knew all the words. We sang along, back to our house overlooking the Pamet, on Storm Hill, to whose church's beacon the ships no longer refer. Perhaps, the specters enjoyed our song...Too bad you weren't here. But in that other city, with that other woman, be sure to visit the Strand Cinema. It's a revival house. I know the popcorn girl. Her name is Veg. If you tell her you know me, she'll put extra butter on your popcorn. It's a gift. A parting gift.

CHARTS
 by Tim Wilson

RELATIVE POWER



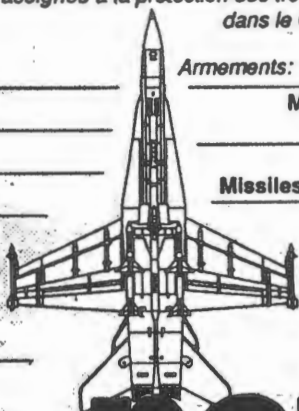
Tout



CF-18 canadiens

Conçus pour les combats aériens et air-sol, les chasseurs de haute performance CF-18 sont assignés à la protection des troupes terrestres dans le Golfe persique.

Longueur: 17,07 m
 Largeur: 11,43 m
 Hauteur: 4,66 m
 Poids: 15,234 kg
 Moteurs: Deux
 Vitesse maximale: 2,000 km/h
 Coût: \$35 million



Armements:
 Missiles air-air AIM-9
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Pour devenir riche...

Ça

Où donner de son sang

Aujourd'hui, la Croix-Rouge attend les donneurs aux endroits suivants:

au Koweït

- à Montréal: université McGill, 24 h
- à Sain... 24 h
- à Israël: 24 h
- à l'égl... 24 h
- à Ma... 24 h
- à tha, 6821, rue d'Arago (angle Allard), de 12 h 30 à 20 h 30.

Où donner de son sang

Aujourd'hui, la Croix-Rouge attend les donneurs aux endroits suivants:

- à Shualba: Centre per... Croix-Rouge, 3131 est, rue Sherbrooke, de 9 h à 19 h
- à Mina: université Mc... Abdullah le Milton et University, de 10 h à 18 h
- à Saint-Hubert: Ecole nationale d'aérotechnique, 5555, Place de la Savane, de 14 h 30 à 16 h 30
- à al-Wafra: Ecole Alpha, de 14 h 30 à 20 h 30.

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Fauteuil berçant et pivotant bleu.

299 \$



Scuds et Patriots:

un show son et lumière
 Perdu entre deux guerres

MONTRÉAL, MERCREDI 23 JANVIER 1991

LA GUERRE DU GOLFE PERSIQUE

Bagdad:

nourriture et eau rares,
 électricité coupée

Les télévisions crèvent de faim,

c'est

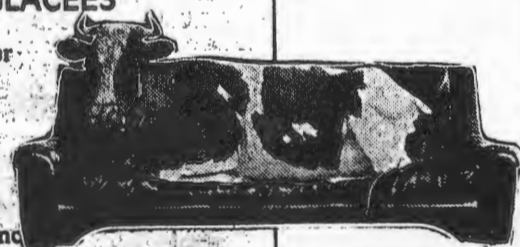
le sauve-qui-peut



L'angoisse de la guerre

RILLETES DE LAPEREAU et JULIENNE DE CAROTTES GLACÉES

- Un lapereau entier
- Jarret de veau
- 4 carottes
- 1 oignon
- 6 échalotes
- Romarin
- Thym
- Laurier
- 1/2 litre de vin blanc
- 2 tomates
- 18 petits oignons
- Miel



Faire mariner le lapin pendant 24 heures avec le vin blanc, l'oignon, le thym, le romarin, le laurier, deux carottes, les échalotes.

Préparer un fond en faisant revenir, jusqu'à coloration, la tête et les pattes avant du lapin avec un morceau de jarret de veau. Ajouter les légumes de la marinade, les tomates et un peu de concentré de tomate. Mouiller avec la marinade et de l'eau, assaisonner et laisser cuire pendant quatre heures. Passer au chinois. Faire revenir le lapereau, préalablement découpé; bien le colorer, mouiller avec le fond et faire cuire trois quarts d'heure, à couvert. Laisser refroidir.

Découper la chair du lapin en petits morceaux. Répartir entre de petites terrines individuelles avec des rondelles de carottes et de petits oignons que l'on aura glacés bruns.

Clarifier le fond de cuisson et en remplir les terrines.

Couper les carottes en julienne, les blanchir et les glacer avec du miel. Au moment de servir, démouler les terrines sur des assiettes individuelles. Garnir avec une feuille de Trévisse et les carottes glacées.



Le film de la journée

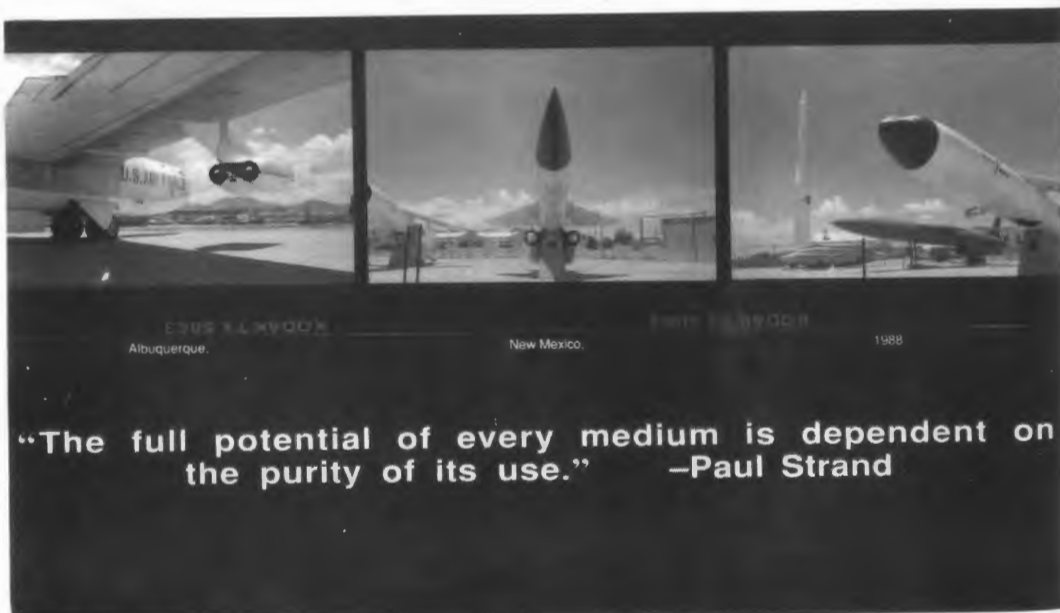
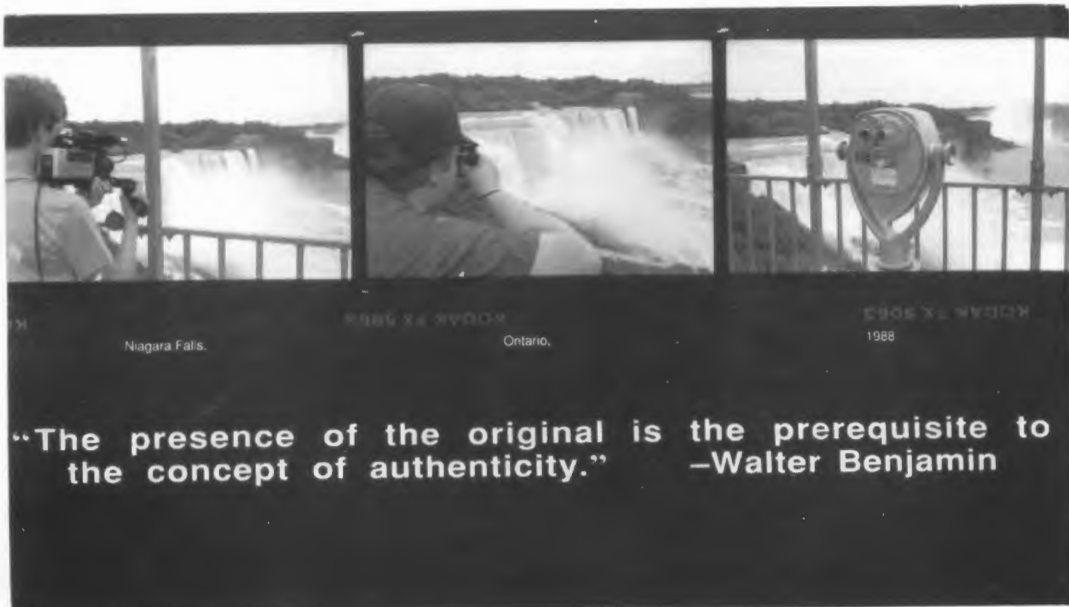
MONTRÉAL, JEUDI 24 JANVIER 1991

LA GUERRE DU GOLFE PERSIQUE

TextImage par Mona Desgagné

EASY TARGETS by Chuck Samuels

Content and aim. The project consists of photographs of North American public cultural artifacts. Each black and white in-camera triptych is juxtaposed with a decontextualized text which recontextualizes the photo-sequences into discourses on representation, psychology, art history, photography, etc.



A GOOD BEEF AND KIDNEY PIE

by Anne Milne

Meatless, Guiltless

They are promoting 1950's values by gathering together as a family to prepare the pie. (Irony slowly tinges the room. Scene yellows like a photograph inadequately fixed, like the beginnings of flu gathering on the back of the tongue.) Admit to nothing easily. Pretend to have no feelings except the kind that catch them smiling everytime they line up for snapshots. Are women who have been told to make peace, gloss over, change the subject, peace-make at all costs. Live in the culture of illusion/myth/image. Mothers wave them forward. Fathers cross nicotine-stained fingers.

Not Guillermo. He was raised in a culture of talking. Here, in this culture, reduced by the silence of people, by T.V. talk, he lets the television talk. His English is not so good anyway and the neighbours complain when he plays his guitar.

Guillermo was raised in a culture of organ meats. Steamed brains and hearts and tongues filling a succession of jumbled kitchen cities. He wonders what the big deal is; the kidney is part of the urinary system.

-My mother used to make this when I was seven. (By the time she was eight, she was into mixes).

-I'm trying some of your homemade wine.

Guillermo said,

-Kidneys are cheap. Maybe your mother made this pie before because they did not have so much money then as they do now.

-Cut a piece open and see what they look like.

-Be careful! It's hot!

-Mmmmmmm. They are great.

Three Hours

-The broth goes in after the onions are sauted but then we pour that in with the meat and it has to simmer for three hours.

(When Christine had raised her fist to knock on the orange door she had heard Carolyn and Guillermo fighting. Carolyn was speaking through clenched teeth and Christine guessed that she would be leaning over Guillermo in his fat, blue chair. Some of Carolyn's wine would be slopped on the table and cigarettes burning. Christine had heard three words in Spanish:

¿Por qué? Canadiense silencio

The Hunt Club

The Hunt Club is Carolyn's name for the social club down at the corner. She named it after a department at Simpson's because there is a guy at the club who she swears looks exactly like a Simpson's manequin. They all dislike The Hunt Club but it is the only place nearby where they can get a beer. They will spend the three hours.

Christine hates the jars of pickled eggs lined up on the bar. Invariably, someone next to her starts eating them:

1. Barman's chubby fingers wiggling in the brine.

2. Eggs ducking out of reach

3. People popping them into their mouths whole and then opening their mouths and laughing

or

4. People taking small bites -- white vibrating after teeth leave it. She cannot remember if there is a grey line dividing white from yolk like with hard-boiled eggs but she thinks there probably is.

The Hunt Club makes her feel sick and today it is worse because she has had the wine and just loosed membrane.

They have to go down a set of stairs to get in. Carolyn used to like this. It meant underground. She had felt self-congratulatory about going there. She had started to dress-up. She believed that she could, she would start a rumour about how great it was at the Club and then all the people she knew would come and it would be like her club. And she had even thought of bands she could book.

She had discussed it with Guillermo who could not understand her. He thought she wanted to buy the place or work there. Why? The ceiling was low, the red and blue spotlights seemed to affect his equilibrium and the same, few, less-than-animated people were there all the time. He believed most of them were in a family together from the way they sat at a table in the corner near a gingham curtain and ate food served by an older woman who pushed and pinned the curtain back with her hip as she passed through. Her brimming tray. There were even some kids who ran around and around the little chrome-trimmed square of linoleum dance floor.

Nobody had ever offered to serve food to Guillermo. Not even the time when he had a big fight with Carolyn and came down there and got really drunk and tried to go and sit at the table where everyone was eating. When they tried to pull him out of the chair -- No food here! No food here! -- Guillermo had grabbed one of the women and started dancing with her. He sang loudly to accompany the dance. Probably "Yolanda" even though the music playing was more likely "Delilah" because they had a tape of Tom Jones Live in Vega that they played all the time. He did not really remember except Carolyn and him puking in her coat pocket.

He thought about the feeling of patting that pocket full of puke. He thought about how often he walked around with food in his pockets. You had to at The Hunt Club because they did not have anything to eat there except the pickled eggs. He kept slices of bread in his pocket. Carolyn carried food too. Except Carolyn always hid the food and only pulled it out when she thought no one could see her. Sometimes at home even. She would eat the ingredients while cooking but not sit down at the end of cooking and eat the meal with him. He had seen her eat raw meat.

Guillermo wondered about the feeling of a pickled egg in a pocket. He knew Christine hated pickled eggs. He hated coming to The Hunt Club with her because she always grimaced and went on about the pickled eggs and sat right beside them and kept looking at them all the time. He asked her to dance just so he would not have to look at her staring at the pickled eggs or worry about the suspicion he had about her that she liked to make herself sick. He asked her to dance. He did not like Tom Jones so he always sang "Yolanda" when he was dancing. Softly though because he knew that Carolyn believed that "Yolanda" was his lovemaking song and he did not want her to think he was lovemaking with Christine when he was just distracting her from the pickled eggs.

What kind of texture are you looking for?

You can use any kind of shortening but Crisco's got the recipe on the box in case you forget it. I put in one tablespoon of vinegar. It makes the pastry flakier and gives it a nice flavour.

Mix in the water and the pastry will start to form a ball. It happens very quickly. The ball starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl.

Too much water makes it really sticky and you can't roll it out.

But if that happens, just put it in the pan by pressing it down with your fingers. It's better than mixing more flour in because the pastry will get tough if you handle it too much.

I guess you know that if you roll from the centre out you can really control the shape of the pastry.
Free rolling action and a large diameter are important. If your pin is too low your hands scrape along the surface of the table.

They're the Modern Stone Age Family

Cheez Whiz The Beef and Kidney has made Chris and Carol nostalgic. They call Guillermo, Bill, and try to draw him into their cultural history. They sing songs from TV shows and groan as they name and list:
Pop Tarts I remember how we'd get mashed potatoes and us kids we'd squish them down flat with our forks and then cover them with ketchup and eat them like that, make a big round thing on our plates and just pour ketchup on. It sounds disgusting when I think about it now ... And we'd watch Gilligan's Island.
Shake 'n Bake Guillermo finds it impossible to imagine these pasts. Apparently Christine's parents still live the life in the same home in which she was a child but Guillermo has never seen this. Guillermo has seen Carolyn's mother brittle and smoking in her 17th floor apartment afraid to answer the door. Carolyn's father has married a younger woman -- their farmhouse remodelled to mirror the magazine picture. Careers keep them away from home though Carolyn was recently disturbed to hear about the baby.
Cool Whip -Is it not natural that they should want a baby?
Manwich -My father is 50 years old, Guillermo.
Rice-a-Roni Guillermo swallows his contempt. Their neglect. The guilt fear. Family knit with pain split by petty politics. The frying pan is on fire. He wraps a towel around the handle and tries to walk with it to the back door. But his mother is standing in his way. He is afraid to break concentration to shout at her. The electric kettle sputters and a pulse of flame burns a perfect circle through the counter top. The smoke that fills a room and chokes.
Cap'n Crunch -And his whole family had to flee. They only had a month. He doesn't even know if they are alive or where.
Kool-Aid Guillermo picks from among painful memories. Fleeting images like trapped gases squeezed to the surface. The hum on hot stones. Bare bulbs. The music voices. He misses the talking. The talking and the way that people's bodies touch in public.
Quik
Cup-A-Soup
Hamburger
Helper
Puddin' Cake
Velveeta
Alphagetti

Carolyn said that Guillermo was really pro-baby. He had even said that she should have a baby. Carolyn and Christine couldn't imagine Carolyn with a baby. Carolyn asked him if he wasn't restricting her by suggesting this. Guillermo said no. He said that having babies was a very natural thing. He had no problem with women doing other things or waiting until they were over thirty (like Carolyn's step-mother) before they had babies. He said that women back home were too young and too poor and that this was a better place to have babies. And then his voice went softer and his eyes drifted and his skin lost all sensitivity to Carolyn's Canadian pressure and he was unconsolable for days until the phone rang with Spanish and their rooms filled up with smoke and food and talk and guitars. Carolyn told Christine that these parties really bothered her. Everyone was nice to her. She felt completely excluded. She said it felt like a fog. They were all inside the fog. She was outside. She couldn't even see them.
-It scares the shit out of me.

The Still Life

By the time it's time to eat the pie nobody is hungry. They had trudged back from the Club and set the oven. Sat around beer listless in the soft furniture waiting. It did not feel anything like they thought it was supposed to. Christine wondered if there were any cartoons on TV. Guillermo smokes and hums. Carolyn feels like there is something she should have done to make things work out better. She should have made the pie this morning on her own, made the eating of it rather than the making of it the focus. She should have timed it so it was ready at a meal time instead of at an in between time. They shouldn't have gone to the club.

When nobody wants to eat Carolyn wants to throw the pie away. It looks perfect. A good beef and kidney pie. Its golden perfection makes her angry and she stomps across the kitchen with the pie in her hands. She thinks about throwing it at Guillermo. But it is not his fault and she sees he senses her anger because he stands up close to her and peels her fingers off. He holds the pie. Silent, uncannily unlike Guillermo, he sets the pie down on the floor beside Christine's boots, puts on his coat and with the pie uncovered and steaming just a little, he goes outside. Carolyn and Christine see him near the bus shelter. He is waving a little pocket knife and gesturing between the pie and the women who wait. They are retreating into the shelter like clothes stuffed into a drawer. A child appears curious but is quickly yanked back. Guillermo shrugs and walks on. Carolyn begins to feel embarrassed but says nothing to Christine. She pours a glass of wine, sits down and fixes her eyes on the painting on the wall in front of her. It is a still life she painted when she was in school: orange, grapes, bread, knife, cup.

Clearly, the Columbian requires far less food to perform the same activities than his larger North American counterpart

Diet and human evolution: Are we what they ate?

Table 1.1 Comparison of Caloric Requirements of Males of Mean Body Weight in United States and Colombia.

	United States	Heliconia, Colombia
Mean body weight (kilograms)	70	60
Caloric costs (kilocalories)		
Resting (8 hours)	570	480
Sedentary activity (6 hours)	492	266
Light labor (8 hours)	1,527	1,123
Moderate labor (2 hours)	654	482
Total	3,243	2,351

Source: From William A. Stini, "Adaptive Strategies of Human Populations Under Nutritional Stress," in Elizabeth Watts, Frances E. Johnston, Gabriel W. Lasker (eds), *Biosocial Interrelations in Population Adaptation*, The Hague: Mouton Publishers, p. 21.

Girl-Talk

One time when Christine was over and Guillermo was at work, Carolyn tried to talk, cried to her and confessed. Christine felt her palms get wet. She didn't like being there because she rarely asked herself the kinds of questions Carolyn was. Christine's last boyfriend had split with her after she backed his car into a parked van. She didn't think they broke up because of that. She thought that the accident just gave him a convenient opportunity to split or confirmed something to him about her character or made him think that she was going to cost him too much even though she paid the van guy for all the damage done.

Christine didn't actually know. She had been too scared to ask and just went away. She called him a few times to see if maybe he felt better about her and called him once and cried at him to come over and he did. She tried to make a chicken curry but she didn't know enough to open the cardamon pods -- she put them in hairy and whole -- and the chicken was undercooked. Blood came out when he cut into it. He yelled at her then and she tried to explain and apologize but he said she was bugging him and that if he was a different kind of man he would slap her just to make her shut up.

Carolyn was always fighting with and questioning her relationship with Guillermo. Carolyn said there was something about Guillermo which forced her to talk. Christine could never imagine herself living within such a storm. Guillermo was very challenging. He liked to stand close. Christine found his habit stirring, found it obscene. She never mentioned this feeling to Carolyn. Carolyn's hand movements alluded to it. Christine believed her corresponding shakes and nods communicated understanding to Carolyn. She listened.

Carolyn was telling her specifics. Guillermo sided with Carolyn's step-mother who was pregnant. He sat with her (close) and talked all his child-rearing adventures (he was an older sibling in a large family). Carolyn's step-mother always served him tortilla chips with salsa. He told Carolyn that he was actually beginning to like them. Carolyn's step-mother switch-crossed her legs a lot during these conversations. Carolyn didn't think pregnant women were supposed to cross their legs so much so she figured her step-mother was very attracted to Guillermo. Carolyn told Christine that pregnant women are rumoured to be oversexed. Carolyn had counted on Guillermo to disapprove. She hated the fact that her father and this woman were going to have a baby. Carolyn and Guillermo were fighting a lot right now.



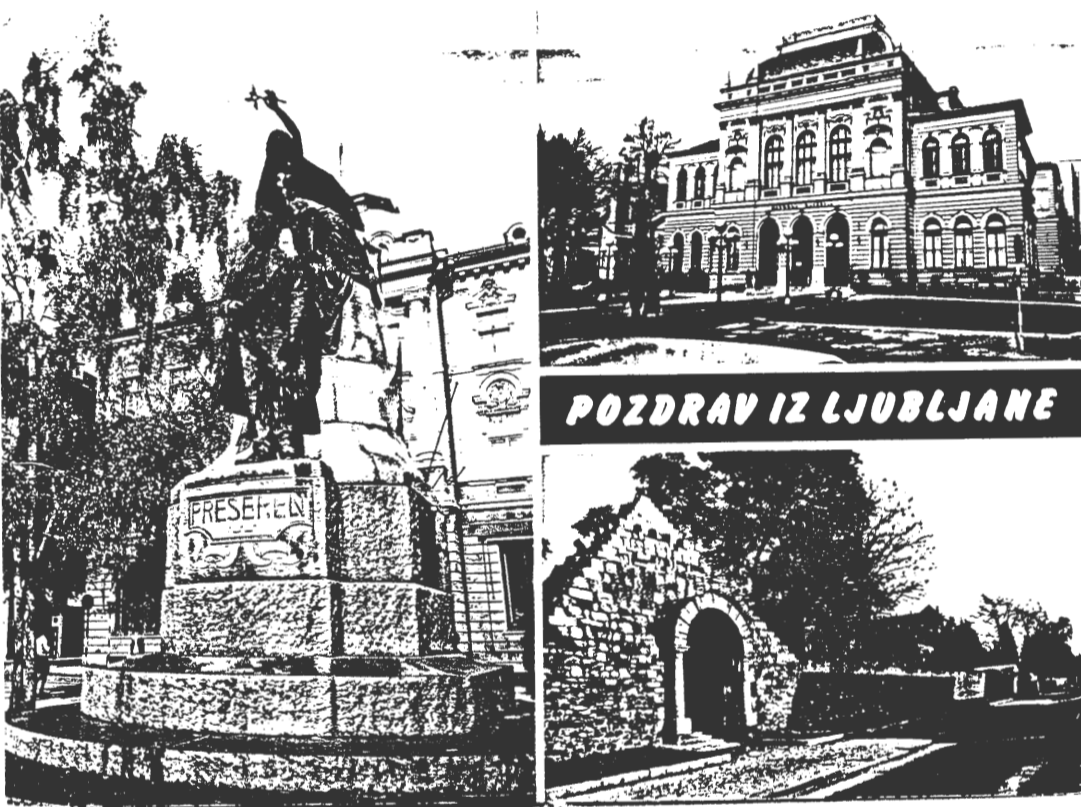
Image by Jon D. Longhi

THE STATUE

by Frank Davey

This is a bronze statue of the national poet being inspired by the muse. It was erected in the nineteenth century by loyal merchants before poets began denying their connections to the bourgeoisie. The poet of course is male, and not supposed to know or care that a bronze muse is hovering above him. The muse is decisively female, the merchants' idea of poetry — bare teenage breasts, a shawl that flares open like angel's wings, a slim left arm that heroically raises a laurel twig, a yearning face, plus at her waist some yards of goddess-cloth about to tumble. This is a bronze statue of the poet being made into the national poet. The poet isn't supposed to know he is being made into the national poet, because he too is the merchants' idea of poetry — modest, acceptable at dinner, in an old business suit that needs pressing, a long coat that is shabby but sensibly warm. This is a bronze statue of the relationship merchants wish to have with art in the twentieth-century. Behind every successful poet there's a sexy muse. The poet looks like he's out for a morning walk, about to patronize a tobacconists, a cafe, or perhaps a brothel. The muse is impractically and inappropriately dressed, and declares impluses that must be rigorously translated before further presentation. This is a bronze statue about the reading of poetry in contemporary society.

Chambermaids. Nomination. Pornography. Small presses.



CHAFFINCH NEUROGENESIS

by Steve Reinke

A young songbird knows only simple combinations, avian equivalent of infant babbling: plastic song. It takes more complex singing ability to relate the loneliness of the heart in isolation, or the location of particularly suitable nest-building material: stable song.

To facilitate flight these birds have tiny air-tight brains inside a two-ply shell of skull.

The brain of a young songbird (chaffinch or canary, say) is programmed for only plastic song. How does the necessary reprogramming occur.

When a young, but sexually mature, songbird with the knowledge and capacity of plastic song comes within earshot of an older bird's stable song dramatic neural transformations occur. Obsolete neural connections separate and redundant neurons fall away. Neurons of increased complexity are hatched at the base of the skull and migrate, swim through complex nets of existing neural connections, to their rightful place. In this manner is the brain rewired for the stable song.

To discover this scientists slaughtered dozens, hundreds, of birds, little yellow canaries. At the moment they were about to open their mouths in chirping. Instead of hearing the song, they see it laid out in the split-open brain.

This is called neurogenesis.

NO NON NOTES (an excerpt) by Victor Coleman

The symphony defines itself
it cannot be composed
as it's played

Though blind
music seizes all
"John through the Baal"

Subdivide the individual
Hire a younger catcher
Take away HAL's life support

Hockey is a poor excuse for winter
Bury was an anchor
Cinderella on a gray skyline

Out the window
Is the world sick?
Not *my* garbage

Lumbago in a book
Gerbil in Gere
I swear

Butt its mathematics
metre made meaning
With which the cloth is cut

Threads descend through five dimensions
two of them pearls
the warp is in the wood

& then there's dread
a ball alone
Wand my witch please

Brain washed by Disney
about love . Clear air plastic
smoke of leaf in lung

A distillation of the lake
reveals the hidden message
We *are* the garbage!

Explain your fire
Slip 'er a glass
Maybe it'll fit

Give your desire the rest
it needs . Don't wear
that sweater get the key

Mine watch reads horses
Two if by Rand McNally
& a Coke for the Laird

Two men move a refrigerator
Sixty years old
two flights of stairs & three turns

But it was a dream
That's enough narrative
Which millennium is this anyway?

*



THE DANCE OF DEATH OF BROTHER WIG
A MONODY by Robert Clayton Casto

This pastoral grass
once more the long dun
muted fields of shag the deep bright
luminous flocking Persian guls this Asiatic
style once more this tripping

dark this ripe dark dancing
tender room these appled
floors like edges sailing blueely these
burning orchards burning these burning
shores these animate wheeling

swells chromatic indigo jaundice
tangerine blood say fare fare
well to the day and its body say it's
dead it's well it's dead its
swans and ducks in dirty water say fare

well to their turdbellies bobbing fare fare
well to the sensitive
rustings tins butts wishbones peels bye
bye to these also housings these possessings A
-frame Tudor Spanish Dutch stunt

bungalow twee
colonial soffit faccia colonnade the
fraction nothing is bye
bye also to the office staff the president
pondering grandly his country of competent

mercy the profit and loss the unswervable
law also to the ovine grievings the
reimbursements the prim Gregorian
Augusts the thudded
hankerings gristle and flank.

Here the shore softens the approach
frits and sinks with the sibilant
catkins and inundant
fronds trist waterrats riding its shrugged
surface like heroes of old the coracle

person passaging outward from its
blind hears from the waddling banks the
chorus assembled of colleagues
beloved and mourning his flotage hears
the old dears their adenoidal canzon Death

The Great Articulator. Why they
cry why
leave o soul us for these adolescent
seas this world of dome and
architrave this feasted floor this mess of

order and desire o listen we bring to your
wake to your dangerous sleep your customary
spurs dock damel crabgrass
wormseed pigweed chickory dandelion
creeper ramage slush petitioning bring

zesty nettle cowcockle tansy tumbling
mustard lambstongue pennycress redbead
sultry nightshade crafty commemorative
kind-bloating ergot mad relish o nota
bene you have your blisses here return

return irresponsible Wig! Sad rearing
images and brief they parch and
fade like Phidian pieces lost and it
hovers away cadaver dreamer brother un
systematic twill on its dizzy

upholstery into the grunt it does not want
to dwindle of dreadful solidities like
syphilis and old age but of good
taste and of no given sign.
It has its own weed now.

We who have pressed through the
pinched actuality of squat
sigilla have crammed their boss their
bellow their warfare their loss in the
pronoun and verb know now these

thumpers as atmosphere merely with
out their trim grandeur and stress un
spoken or gibbered unprevious un
pointed salival modalities emblemless
syllables diabolologically

pure. We are never dead here in this
calow fluction unsanctified arms alien
amiable members caressing among us blest
vessels and blending keen neighbors old
lovers new bearers not pictures not

signs but real lips without names without
honour inflections untensible slipping grazing
drowning like speech. In this spry
ebon air in this winsome song in this douce
gosh of space there is never

election nor ruing brawn
vocables reify multiple jostle and
bulge replete in their gist in a feral
forgettable flame. We who have been at your
parties urbane and fair

-spoken are crude stuff here un
parted and mobile indecorous and
deft impassioned and cool in this randy
calyptral undertow of fire where the tongue
summons in sweet moist oration beyond

reproach its delectable pals praline
nougat juby licorice hoarhound
gumdrop butterscotch fudge and its
music its jamboree organ distending and
brooding the silence sleek mate uttering

measureless nocturns endearing these
corals invisible crooner piffaro dulcian
lute fugues our bones like a jumbo its in
tricate quavers arranging our vespers. Mourn
never the submarine brother surrounding his

gusto acquainted with winking declensions his
language alive in these baritone
waters novel with raiments of ripening
copulae lovers like seablooms and dutiless
ditties he lives he welters he

waltzes with oceans and vaudevilles rises
into them subjunctive ascetic unrummaging
damned. Perish he will but to
morrow tomorrow among its shrewd
buildings and kiosks twitching with

answers. Here let him plunge let him
stray in these reefs let him celebrate
drifting a skiff universally fissile bap
tized in these fluid canticles these long
private tidings not far from the kitchen

unpollarded beckoning still.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MODERN ART
by William Mark Sutherland

PART I

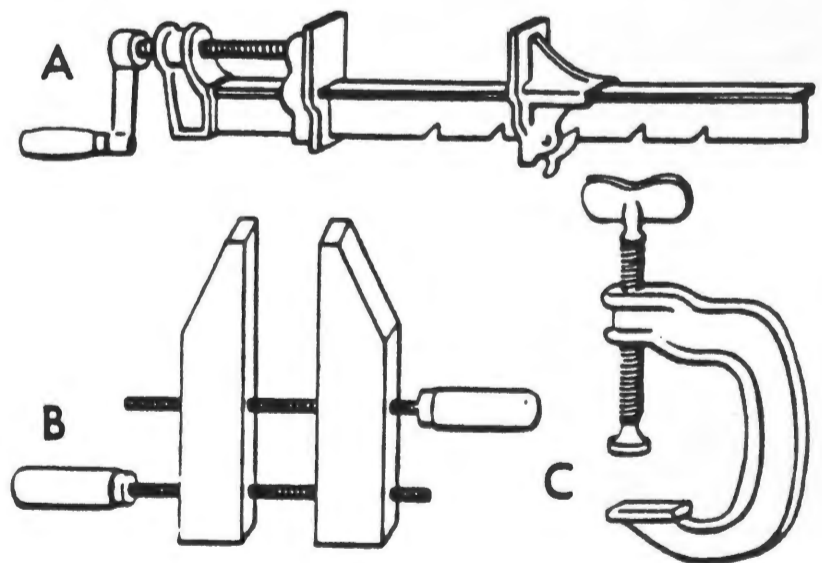
a quantity, expressed as $a^2 = a$
2. a quantity that is the second
square of two. 7. Slang. a per
terested in current fads, ideas
the square, Informal. straig

square or rectangular form or
out in one or more squares or
suring devices for deviation fr
or plane surface. 12. Math. a
quantity) by itself; raise to
be or find a square that is eq
ircle. 13. to bring to the form
s. 14. to even the score of (r
lders and back) in an erect
similar to a right angle. 16
ren: Square the cloth on the tal

PART II

rek'tə), n. a pl.
rek'təl), adj.
[] + -AL¹] —re
gle (rek'tang'g
les. [$<$ ML re
iangle (neut. o
le) = recti- REC
gu-lar (rek'tā
ke a rectangle.
the form of a
3. having on
g a right angle
LE + -AR¹] —
n. —rec-tan'g
gular coor'd
hich the axes r
k'tī), n. pl. of
a learned borrc

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES



- A - COMMUNISM
- B - CAPITALISM
- C - TOTALITARIANISM

CECI N'EST PAS by Marina deBellagenta LaPalma

Find the middle. You think it's easy to do?
Which moment is it -- the bright lights
or a sullen mood, realer than anything;
that late conversation, the day
in the mountains, a tender glance?
The fact is you haven't a clue.

A woman with insomnia waters a lawn.
She makes an arc of the spray, curving it
toward this tree, that one.
Around her lies placid green
ready to drink what is given.
Delectable leafy heads yield to stroking
and pulsate, as bushes do in the dark.
You could eat them in mouthfuls.
She spends many a cool-dark hour
distributing thus.

In the same way as telling someone
not to think of a white horse
is sure to produce, however fleetingly,
an image of a white horse,
words flow in my brain in a white, continuous hiss.
Caresses for marking time
which is "merely" a set of relationships,
the syntax simple as teeth.
But our languages intersect briefly,
scant as highways criss-crossing a desert,
elusive or powerful, like electricity.

It's been like this since the first orange,
fragrant and peeled, lodged itself
at the back of the storehouse.
Since the first rupture, the first fear
familiar as the snap in snapshot
the mark, by itself, means nothing --
contingent, tangential, intense.

The sand is so hot. Our feet
savor sensations of melting
(something feet do not normally do)
and a breeze flaps by, carrying
the mercurial voices of children
whose silver blood races the edges of waves.
Crash. Crash. We look at each other,
both near that age
-- too late to bear a child, soon --
and mutely submit to the sounds,
the hot sand and the wind.

Lift the wineglass, where rich red histamines dance.
Do you hear it speak of property, long apprenticeships?
On the last day of your life ... too little too much too
much too much too little too little too much.

The balance sought by a Greek
two thousand two hundred and twenty-six
years ago on a red-leafed afternoon
lasted seventeen minutes (give or take ten)
then shifted again.

The fountain, the spouts, the tumboing water,
magnificently casual.

Does the body with to sleep?
Does the body still do what it's told
when, rocked back and forth for hours
in a hot room,
it is spectacle, agony, trek?

Not that I mean to personify illness.
That would be foolish, archaic,
like trying to personify evil.

Eyeing some fragile remnant being delayed
in a savory reshuffling of names (I meant to add
"decay", of course, only the stitches slipped away)
a roaring sound makes me turn around.
The fingertips signal *Mayday. Mayday.*
They are small, lost airplanes going down at sea.
I did not choose this; it chose me.

As you rated it, put it on the schedule.
Red fan, red flag; you know,
it was the kind of thing you did for
reassurance, to remember what used to be fun.
A voice somewhere was saying,
"you mean she just took off?"
With an echo on the so it repeats itself again
"took off" "off" "off?"

Passports, the blackmail of novelty.
Do it again. Talk about a way of
writing that slants to the left to indicate
reversal of the hemispheres
and a medieval indifference
and a way of making rhythm
vanish at the point where it appears.

Well, you can imagine the sort of
reminiscing people do in places like this,
where rambling's a way of life and thinking is done
with the mouth, the shoulders, the eyes; fragile
hands laid tenuously on the bar. Any speech that might
pass our lips must be fought, tooth and nail.

The middle of you life. Perceive it
from a great distance, tiny, immense, unproved.
Why this fear of falling? Shadows don't bruise,
they decline, droop and eventually go down.
In the cramped space between waking and sleep,
let's call a truce.

Over us hang mystery, destiny, mischief
-- the bother of things unknown.
Something drags at the muscles, enforcing gravity.
There's a desire for sleep, but tension
drives the pulse across time and space
while tiny electrical strings insist on obedience
and other deep, fluid disciplines
course through the porous stone of the body
a muffled conflict, and need, need, need.

On the shuttle from stasis to predictability
we seek an address.

On the one hand the incomparable comfort
of eating, filling the mouth. Lovely as
Baby (the whole feeling) pulling the soft milk
nipple and skin of its Mother into itself.

On the other, outside in the cold, dark night
each decision lurks like a sentence
awaiting its verb.

rubbish garbage ruffraff debris residue chaff discards bunk
slag detritus orts dregs hogwash shit baloney junk refuse
trivia sweepings malarky humbug rejects schlock rubble
excrement tommyrot outcast swill litter residuum scoria
discards castaways dross remnants castaways remains scum
offal flummery fudge bilge horsefeathers slag wreckage tripe
balderdash rubbish garbage ruffraff debris residue chaff
discards bunk slag detritus orts dregs hogwash shit baloney
junk refuse trivia sweepings malarky humbug rejects schlock
rubble excrement tommyrot outcast swill litter residuum
scoria discards castaways dross remnants castaways remains
scum offal flummery fudge bilge horsefeathers slag wreckage
tripe balderdash rubbish garbage ruffraff debris residue
chaff discards bunk slag detritus orts dregs hogwash shit
baloney junk refuse trivia sweepings malarky humbug rejects
schlock rubble excrement tommyrot outcast swill litter
residuum scoria discards castaways dross remnants castaways
remains scum offal flummery fudge bilge horsefeathers slag
wreckage tripe balderdash rubbish garbage ruffraff debris
residue chaff discards bunk slag detritus orts dregs
hogwash shit baloney junk refuse trivia sweepings
malarky humbug rejects schlock rubble excrement tommyrot
outcast swill litter residuum scoria discards castaways
dross remnants castaways remains scum offal flummery
fudge bilge horsefeathers slag wreckage tripe balderdash
rubbish garbage ruffraff debris residue chaff discards
bunk slag detritus orts dregs hogwash shit baloney
junk refuse trivia sweepings malarky humbug rejects
schlock rubble excrement tommyrot outcast swill litter
residuum scoria discards castaways dross remnants castaways

Richard Kostelanetz: Reverberations: A Sequence of Poems

WHERE STARS SHOULD HAVE BEEN

by Gil Adamson

His body rose up through the black water, or the air, maybe it was air. But he knew he was rising, waking from his long sleep, opening his eyes to look through a thick fog, remembering going to sleep. Remembering the soundless cold. How the bottom fell out of everything.

A time spent blinking. Then he could see a string of green lights. The date, how much time has passed. He opened and closed his eyes and watched as the lights moved through the murky air towards him. 19 years? He waited. No, 49.

Later he sat across the room and looked at the bed he'd been in. Metal. Quite big, and it had all those pipes that bent around it as though to hold it to the floor. Not human shaped. More like a grand piano. He sat and looked for a time. He felt old. He knew he was mixed up, and his leg continued to twitch, the pain coming from a long way off.

Small cameras were mounted everywhere, and in every hallway there were monitors. All over the ship images turned over, hallways, rooms with locked metal doors, row after row of things encased in metal. And sometimes the screen showed a man moving a little, rubbing his leg, staring out through milky eyes.

Over a period of time metal will fatigue, plastic will dry and crack in places. It is usually not important. When they put together a ship and fire it into space full of cold, sleeping people, they try to think of things like that. And he knew this as he stood at the elevator and pushed the button and waited and waited, even when he realized it wasn't coming. He sighed, and knew, as well, that he was more mixed up than he should have been. His mouth was still bone dry, the tongue stuck to one side.

The sign above the door said Cafeteria. "This is a cafeteria" he thought as if rehearsing. He went and sat at a table and his leg jittered gently against the metal table leg. In a corner, close enough so he could see it through the fog, was a monitor. It showed him a hallway. Then a room with something behind wire mesh. Then bathrooms. And then more piano-shaped beds. He felt surprise tug at his chest.

The role of a chief practical engineer shall be to bring all systems into place before any ship shall be brought to a state of robotic maintenance, and be responsible for all technical aspects of shut-down. As well he/she shall be the last person "awake" and shall be raised first from suspended animation, at which time his/her role shall be to effect the "start-up" of the life maintenance systems beginning with the on-going air conditioning equipment and proceeding thenceforth in this order:

He stood at the door and looked across the room through a glass window out onto darkness. Everything in the room blurred at the edges and the window showed him nothing but a flat black. "There are stars out there" he thought and made his way across the room, one leg bucking now and then. He walked like the metal floor was lurching, swinging to the side. "My lungs hurt" he thought and pressed his face to the glass and looked out. His eyes still told him it was flat and black outside. He could see the outline of his face reflected in the glass. For some reason this made him uneasy, so he turned abruptly to avoid looking at it and made his difficult way back to the hall.

Certain parts of a ship are very noisy. There are areas which must be sealed off, and personnel must wear protective devises. Other areas are quiet, muffled. The staff lounge is carpeted, and is decorated in warm colours. There is a minimum of metal. He sat in the corner of a couch, his knees wedged against a coffee table which was rivetted in place. He felt bigger than any of the chairs or the couch could accomodate. Like he had grown. His knees felt pain where they dug into the coffee table and he couldn't tell whether the pain was nearer or farther away than it had been before.

A cup sat at the far edge of the table. It was covered in a thin layer of black dust. Around its base was the same powder. It looked at first like a shadow, but he squinted and saw it was dust. He didn't know what the dust was. If he had seen this before he had fallen asleep, he would have known what had happened. Beer was left in a glass. The beer rotted, turning to mould. The mould had climbed the sides of the cup, catching on tiny eddies of circulating air, coming to rest about the base of the cup, its progress slowing as the air was turned off, as people sank into semi-death. Finally the blanket of mould died in the cold, as the air turned off completely, becoming a thin black powder. And it stayed that way in the stillness of the ship. Fourty nine years.

He stood up and sat down, stood up again and sat down again. His thought was "perhaps I should get my blood going." But he couldn't get up a third time. First his leg and then his back jittered, muscles yanking back and forth. His teeth began to clack together violently, then more gently. He closed his eyes and wondered if he should be afraid of what was going to happen to him. He sat until his body quieted. Then he sat some more, and while he looked into the black of his closed eyes he could feel something rising up from where he had come. Something familiar. And then, quite clearly, he could see himself reaching out to a console, his hand pressing discs into place, closing plastic covers. There was an order to it all. It was like deja vu and for a while he felt he knew what would come next. Then he couldn't remember anymore. "I am doing something here," he thought. "I am supposed to do something."

... Nonetheless, a ship shall maintain a speed of at least that of the third stage of acceleration, and shall reduce that speed only in case of emergency (after shut-down) or in the case of unforeseen ...

He stood over his bed. His vision was better, clearer. He looked at the little plaque: CHIEF PRAC ENG. "Chief prac eng?" he thought. Johnathan Millar? He recognised the name, the title. It was him. Leaning over his bed, he stared at the wrinkled cloth. He said "John, John, John, John ..." out loud, shaking his head, but no sound came out. And then he thought "I am supposed to do something." A light inside the bed turned off and somewhere across the room something began a little whirr.

In the event of an emergency and at such time as ...

"It is always night outside. Any window shows it is night. And yet the lights are on in here. And in here. Up there on the monitor I keep seeing more piano-shaped beds. People must be inside them. I was inside one. Am I supposed to feel like this? I keep swallowing, but I have nothing to swallow. The lights are on in here. But down that hallway and in those rooms, and around that corner it is black and still. Is someone else here? Did these lights turn on by themselves?"

BABY

by Beverley Daurio

we sat up late and talked about our mothers and grandmothers. i didn't talk about losing it. the plan was to get up early and go to the farmer's market. people go in families, they feed each other bits of sausage and smell the canteloupes. the sky is very big at the fairgrounds, and there are things to point at and explain. she talked about how she felt carrying her children, how they seemed part of her, extended, growing. i denied that, i said they had to be seven or eight years old before i could love them.

quickenig. that was before whatever it was that happened happened. the teratogenic impulse that came and made it blacken and stiffen. a process of dying and then being dead and rotting inside me.

baby.

i pace up and down the room with the scissors in my hand. this is after, after i know. i pace up and down and decide to cut my hair in the dark and decide not to. i decide to cut up the pillows and cut up the curtains, but i would have to clean up. i imagine slicing the thick green baize with the scissors, my hair in clumps on the floor.

i phone him and i don't make sense, my tongue is covered with white lace. i do not tell him it is dead. i do not tell him that what i have lost is looking at me from the inside, that the moment it died i knew and still at that moment it was fresh and its eyes were looking at me with longing. if i moved it moved with me. i had to keep moving so that i could imagine it was alive.

of course i believe that i killed it: a chance movement, one glass of wine too many, though i rarely drank, monosodium glutamate, coffee. of course i believe that he killed it, struggling without a lover's grace some night in a bedroom or a basement, one night when i fell.

people are kind and curious. they ask how i am. i say nothing. speech is a kind of mumbling, a bare gratitude, a near link to being which i do not deserve. i watch through a window, a man and his baby, the baby's face smiling, the man's hand so near, i pound on my stomach and cry.

i cannot eat. food takes on its true aspect, its dead nature, and mocks me with the way it gives life. death of this gives continuing action, it states, and, like the voices of the reverends of my childhood, i ignore it, and cannot take it in. i sip at water, buy an apple that sits on the counter for a week, until it takes on a blackening, a stiffening of the skin that i recognize.

when it leaves my body it is not gone. endless bleeding, my blood, ironic with its intimations of life. she said it was beautiful, it was perfect. she assumes that this will quell my panic, but i prefer my blackened monster that never had a grip on life, something murdered by providence, not a joy i destroyed through negligence.

mary shelly's calm face of innocence succumbing to corruption-- that is a morning image, a tiny frankenstein. my nightmares are of small sentimental animals-- when i approach them they appear to have been cut apart smoothly with razor blades. there is no blood. i sit on the floor and frantically try to stitch the animal pieces back together. these things come to me when i sleep, when i dream at all. most nights are simply dark, the hollow where it used to be expanding to enclose me too, and i sleep as it does, as if dead.

rocking. for a day i can believe that someone stole it and it is alive. i can hate it then, not want it. my foolish empty arms, my starting at the sound of crying, my pacing back and forth: empty gestures of idiotic envy.

the endless maze is organized around a centre where it lies in wait. because i am trapped in process, neither near the way out nor capable of discovering its true appearance, i sit on the front porch playing the guitar and wait for him to drive up, my hands sore as if from sewing, the music like the sound of a canary descending into poisoned air. an endless supply of canaries, the radio blasting next door.

baby, baby.

quantum dentistry

Th whole too th
N (o) thing
But th
hole

juan el mari dawg & rafael barrero-Ayera

THE UNICORN an excerpt from a serial poem, of sorts by Clint Burnham

A similar mistake has been made in connection with such propositions as "Unicorns are fictitious". Here again the fact that there is a superficial grammatical resemblance between the English sentences "Dogs are faithful" and "Unicorns are fictitious", and between the corresponding sentences in other languages, creates the assumption that they are of the same logical type. Dogs must exist in order to have the property of being faithful, and so it is held that unless unicorns in some way existed they could not have the property of being fictitious. But, as it is plainly self-contradictory to say that fictitious objects exist, the device is adopted of saying that they are real in some non-empirical sense -- that they have a mode of real being which is different from the mode of being of existent things.

--A.J.Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, 1936

PROLEGOMENA TO THE UNICORN & ITS SUPERMARKET

What is the unicorn? Where does it start? In the canned goods section? Frozen food?

The tundra, or aisles of siberian prison camps made into free trade zones. No, it doesn't start here.

In the deli, and the roast chicken on a spit, salmonella, red but no paprika foil at either end.

Children: ? Word games in their heads. They grow up & eat carp.

In the labels on packages. The rolling hills of Swiss Miss. St George's vanquishing a dragon to save the fair English maiden from certain death. And the milk is foaming in the container.

I get excited just thinking about it.

LICENSING THE UNICORN

Market penetration begins when we started selling Unicorn Prod.'s. We sent out a market survey to users of our existing product, including the Impressionist bookbags and the Famous Nazi Spoons; we determined a demographics.

The problem was customers phoning in with complaints about the Unicorn merchandise. One phoned in a week after I started there, & said that the calendar he just received had two Decembers. I asked my supervisor how many Decembers were supposed to be on product ISCN 1-1189-45-X. She didn't know, so I told the customer I'd phone him back. He asked me if I was a pagan, so I laughed it off.

There was also a delay caused by overlap *vis-à-vis* our American masters. Technically, we couldn't go into production on the Unicorn thermal mug -- the one that the horn appeared when hot liquid was poured in -- until the okay came from Rochester. But then our division was sold to International Robinson Playthings, and we were rationalized. It didn't affect me, because I was just a customer service representative.

In terms of rock tie-ins & spin-offs, T. Rex had one out in 1969 called The Unicorn. It was a message from the unicorn. Ignore me at your peril. (In English). The Unicorn appreciates the reverse joke of the matter.

J.R.R. Tolkien wandered by, looking for new material. He picked up the CD from the bin and examined the tiny replica of a replica. Put it back in and walked out the SAAN door onto the dirty, noisy main drag of Pierce, Sask. A rodeo was starting today and a parade went by along the newly oiled road, a band, kids with rifles, guys on horses.

On one of the songs, Marc Bolan sings: "just like a Contra". And I wonder? How did he know? About Nicaragua?

(Historical determinism). In the bank machine there's a wizened little dwarf, stooped over, counting out your cash. Notice the wet marks on the twenties when they slip out of the slot? That's historical materialism.

How can I convince you of this. You don't believe a word of it. If the unicorn appeared now, in front of you, & with his hoof flipped over the page, would you believe me then? The unicorn embodies our duality: our violence the horn, our gentleness the mane. Our bank account the hoofs, our history the liquid eyes, bulging without blood.

As for calendars, coffee mugs, & t-shirts. Well, in the office, the mug always leaves a ring on her desk, but that's okay. A big mug, four inches in diameter, which is a word that *should* mean circumference. The radius of the mug is two inches. π^2 means what? Nothing.

Mauve tie-die: little possibility there for a meaning. A unicorn must be recognizable.

There is little point in saying, yeah, it *is* a unicorn, and you can hardly tell. The knot above your pant button is a feverish wish-fulfillment for the neurosis of the unicorn dream. What time is it? is never asked in a tie-die. More properly the question is put as: what unicorn is it? The unicorn lives on Saltspring Island, full of regret, a thin bank account, a dwindling carpentry business. He doesn't feel he has to contribute to society: that sort of bad faith is only suffered by those lining up to buy apples at the Saturday morning market in Fulford Harbour. Y'know, broadcast veterans, gentleman farmers and the like. The unicorn instead uses its tapered essence to change the channel with the remote.

Calendars combine notches in sticks & tapestries, it thot, cocking its head to one side and gazing on the squares below a facsimile of its head. This was a full-frontal of the unicorn, it was July, and the horn speared up, just to the left of the little hole for the nail to hold the calendar up on the wall, & disappeared off the top edge of the picture. Leaning on the counter, its right foreleg bent at the joint & some grey-white hairs brushed against bagel crumbs on the formica. The crumbs were in a line, no four lines, an outline, the outline of a chopping board which the unicorn couldn't see because it had already been washed and put away. With Sunlight detergent.

It got a closer look. Its eyelashes, long as your thumb, curled against the calendar and its own horn, the real one, also stuck up over the edge of the calendar picture. But unlike the picture this horn didn't disappear into the nothingness of the artist's miscalculation: it just grooved a bit into the plaster above the nail. This wasn't like looking into a mirror at all. Not one damn bit.

Air brush art. What is the wet knees. Between her and you, like a unicorn in history, is a Lucite shield of decorum, tradition, and police might. She's foraging for an identity card in the garbage: can't get welfare without one. She doesn't worry about stapled stomach and weight loss. Pierced unicorn ears & nose specialist.

When I am little, the house is too large: I need one down to my size and hence invent one: popcorn playhouse.

Popcorn Playhouse, the Edmonton television show for kids, is waiting for me when I get home from school. It is gold mining and the Yukon. I pan for gold, maybe get a crumpled-up foil remainder of a chocolate coin from Christmas. It is now February.

The FN rifle, he said, will shoot thru six people and the bullet will lodge in the seventh. But the six have to be standing one behind the other.

On *Popcorn Playhouse* a moose named Muskeg was the head of a moose attached to the wall. Children whose birthday it was got to pan for gold. The moosehead belonged to a moose shot in October, 1965 in northern Ontario. In 1973, the moosehead was thrown out.

The unicorn saw it lying there in the garbage dump.

Doodle art: the unicorn changes its name. Surreal feminist texts are sold at IGA outlets in rural Alberta for hap-stance children to take home in tubes with black end-covers.

Unroll on the carpet, and their elbows grind into the just-vacuumed forest floor of their imagination. Their's a unicorn looking at itself in the mirror, befuddled.

Mary Ann asks Bob why their island is sinking into the ocean floor. Turns out the skipper's been eating too many pineapple burgers.

Diagrammatic theory springs to life in their minds, and the dew line orthography of the text seems home, familiar, as welcome as lira on the fourth of July. A humungous bowl of potato chips is ignored as Jill & Caroline discourse in monosyllables about potash production in the early Saskatchewan seventies.

Half the unicorn's been coloured in with felt markers and pencil crayons, the same ones used to show the penetration of the fur trade into Rupert's Land. When they grow up they'll listen to Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" and argue that feminist listenings of it can possess a utopian, counter-hegemonic value. But for now they bear this nascent theory out in the practice as they act out, in the basement by the cardboard Allied Movers' box of old clothes, Gilligans Island (the movie star serves fried unicorn to the professor in drag).

In the van, there is no "floor": the carpeting climbs the walls like an imprisoned unicorn. Cans of alpo ring the optimal seating position for listening to ABBA on the eight track.

ENTRANCE By Lise Downe

Surmounted the near miniature
emphatic rock like alcove
faded ink-well as purple sand.
Witness and subtle wave.

We've not left civilization behind.
Unfastened your bracelet
as if to draw there a murmur.
Linking each into its own idea of living.

Coolness of faded monotone through untold travail.
Palest blue overlaid with satin
brocade the words old vines
cling to bark.
What is corsage has ceased
noting no place.
Omit nothing.
Watch now the tree in both directions.

Intense a call deep swells a voice.
Admit this amulet
my pocket delicate strings
the lint of which I've never seen.
Needed the gradual and intricate craft
favoring winds
an early return to land.

MONOPOLY by Raquel Torres

I meant to write a long narrative poem
with the story of my life
my trips
always attracted so much attention
Then I decided the contrary
a haiku would do
Unless, of course, I spoke of language
Then I might consider an epic
heroic trimmings included
But who'd read such a historic dysphoria
by a Portuguese born English teacher
working in a French high school?

A POEM by Lillian Necakov

It is impossible to say
if he or the desert came first
driving by just at the moment
when he comes into focus
startles us
all of a sudden our
seats seem inadequate
or feet sticking to the floor
we pull ourselves as close
to the screen as possible
sitting motionless while
the dust appears across
his face
until all we see
are his hands reaching
for the sky

it is all like
when you wake and can't
help peeling tiny bits
of plaster from the wall
the coolness of bitter on
the tongue shaping
what will come next
as if you were planning it
all through taste
and then
the shock of the next scene
swallowing a spider
of actually speaking
again
he is staring back at you
what brings you back
is the way he shines everyone's shoes
moving in and out of focus

you are crying and
he knows
because he has put his
shirt on the back of the chair
and his arms are smaller
than you thought

there is someone mumbling behind you
you turn and tear out their heart
just in time to catch the end
there is satisfaction in the way
you loosen your feet from the floor
and watch until the very last bit of light
disappears.

HIEROGLYPHICS

by John Riddell

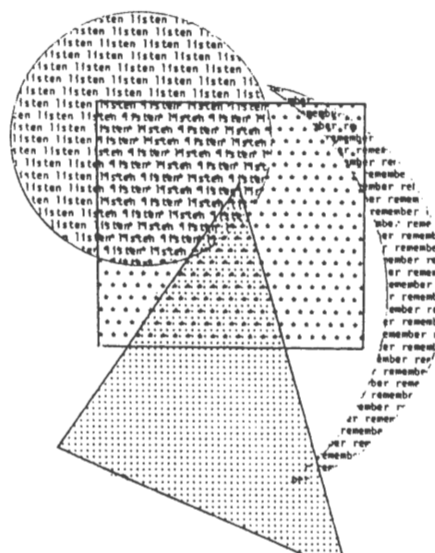
HIEROGLYPHICS

1. Sets
- | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--------|------------------------------------|
| SET 1 | SET 2 | SET 3 | SET 4 |
| display | ○
△
□ | ·
/ | listen
watch
try
remember |

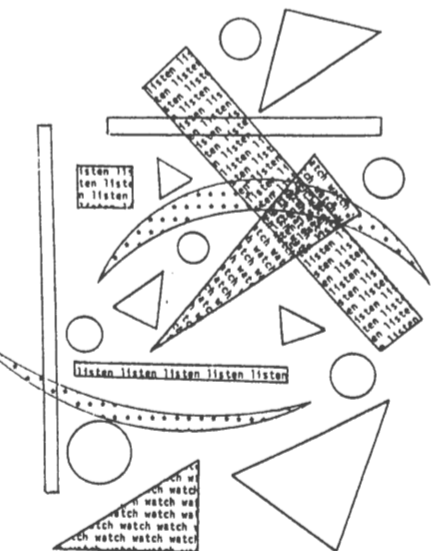
2. Guidelines

- A sampler must contain at least one of the items of set 1. (We have arbitrarily chosen the page as complete sampler field.)
- Set 1 must contain at least one of the items of set 2. (Note that the items of set 2 are automatically integrated into (i.e., as constituents of) set 1.)
- Set 2 items may repeat in number, size, or facsimile shape: thus is a facsimile shape of set 2 item .
- Any item of set 2 and facsimiles thereof may
 - be empty.
 - contain no more than one item from either set 3 or set 4.
 - in addition to or exclusive of (b), contain additional member(s) of its own set, which themselves must follow conditions (a), (b), and (c).
- Any empty or integrated set item may overlap with any other empty or integrated set item, so long as its constituents adhere to the guidelines set forth herein.

Sampler # 2



Sampler # 4



5. Notation

A simple notation for our samplers could be

$$S(n-x)/o,$$

where S = samplers
n = total number of samplers in a given series
x = sampler number in series n
o = order number

From our 5 orders (sec. 4) we must still choose which sets are to be constant and which variable. If we note which set(s) are constant, then we will know the remaining set(s) to be variable. Thus a notation /2, 3, 1 would indicate the first and third sets as constant sets in order 2; the second and fourth sets would then be variable.

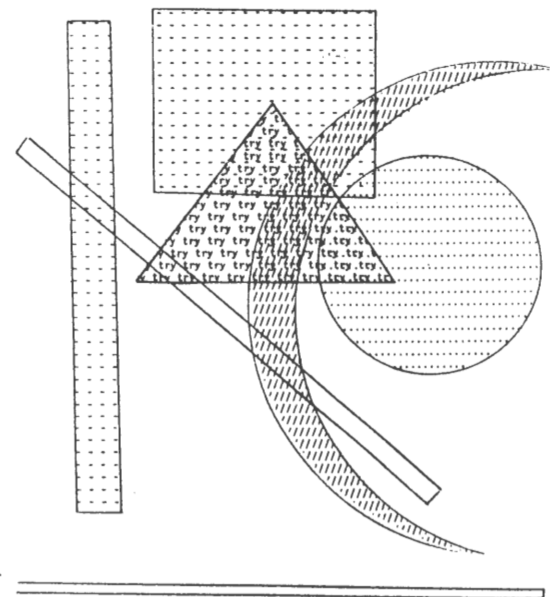
Our notation for each of our samplers in sec. 3 would then be S(n-1)/2, 2,3,4; S(n-2)/2, 2,3,4,.....S(n-4)/2, 2,3,4 where the last notation would stand for both the last sampler in the grouping (4); and as an indication of how many samplers are in the grouping (4).

The total collection of all possible sets of all possible samplers would be $S(n^0)/5$ (See sec. 4 (1)).

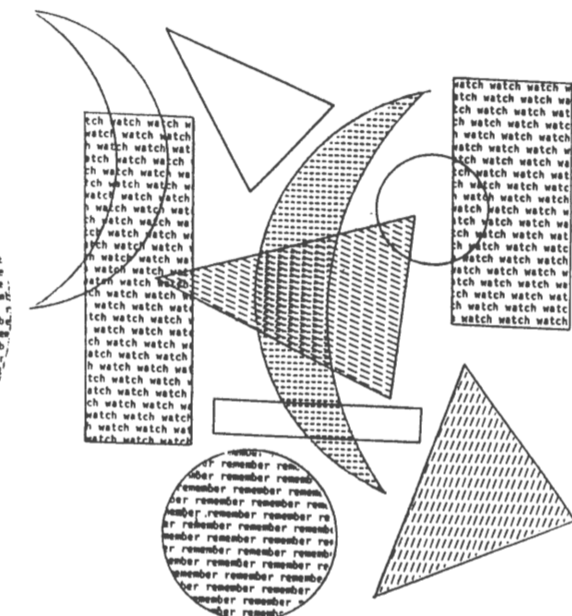
7. Play

- Choose items from each sampler set (sec. 1) for play.
- Adhere to guidelines (sec. 2).
- Select order for play (sec. 4).
- Consider your collection of samplers, when completed, to be one of a limited number of infinite sets, set within a limited set of infinite samplers.

3. Samplers (1):
Sampler # 1



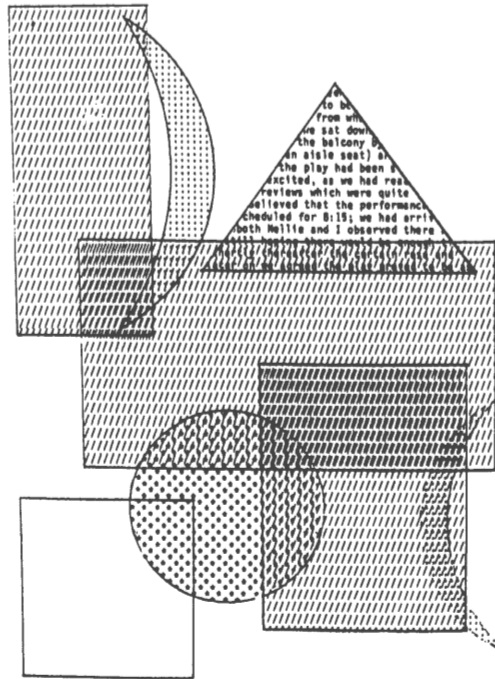
Sampler # 3



4. Ordering Set Collections

- All possible finite sets (all sets as constants):
Set 1 must be arbitrarily fixed (as, for example, sampler # 1) in order to have a finite series of sets. (Bear in mind that set 2 is frozen into set 1, as noted in Sec. 2.2).
Assuming one sampler per page, the possible number of differing samplers would then total a mere 1,680 pages.
- All possible infinite sets (all sets as variables):
Herein, each set would form an infinite collection, wherein each of the parts of such a collection would contain as many terms as the whole collection would contain: an infinite number of samplers.
But it is within the limits of (i) and (ii) that we wish to conduct our play.
- Note that any collection containing one variable set would itself result in an infinite variety of samplers.
For example, our Sec. 3 samplers demonstrate that there would be a potentially infinite variety of samplers to choose from, in that particular collection of sets, since set 1 was a variable set.
- Perhaps we should bear in mind that all such collections as those indicated by our Sec. 3 samplers would be of a different order than those outlined in (i) and (ii) above.
- Let us then, for the sake of clarity, order all the possible collections of sets:
 - all sets as constants (i)
 - 1 set as variable, 3 sets as constants (Sec. 3)
 - 2 sets as variables, 2 sets as constants (Sec. 6)
 - 3 sets as variables, 1 set as constant
 - all sets as variables (ii)
 (Obviously there would be a considerable duplication of set collections within the bounded range of each of the samplers possible within each of these orders. But we are not concerned with duplications set within an exhaustive collection of infinite sets; nor with developing ever more intricate modalities of play....)

6. Samplers (2):
S(n-1)/3, 2,3



HENRY KAFKA

by Stuart Ross

The car pulled up beside him, right beside him, almost brushed against his pantleg. The window was cranked down, it was one of those old windows, a window with a crank, and it was cranked down. A face poked out of it and on the face was a mouth, and the mouth opened.

Henry leaned forward to hear better. When a mouth opened, he knew, words would soon come out. Words.

Words were something that Henry wrestled with all the time. He considered himself a writer, or maybe a future writer, because he hadn't quite put pen to paper yet. He knew he would write someday, he would line up the words all in the right order, and they'd take them from him and make a lot of copies and sell his words in a bookstore.

What would be on the cover? Henry spent entire nights lying on his back with his eyes open, trying to picture the cover. He'd heard that sometimes the author had no choice in what would go on the cover of a book. Like sometimes an actor wouldn't be able to pick and choose between movie roles. Only a very famous actor, one with power and what they called "box office draw," could choose roles, rejecting the really bad ones. For example, Henry didn't know for sure, but he would guess that Tom Ewell was never able to pick his roles, whereas Robert Mitchum probably was.

Really, Henry didn't care what was on the cover, so long as his name was there. Henry Kafka. He'd taken the name Kafka as his writing name, his *nom de plume*. He'd read a short biography of a man named Kafka in the back of his Webster's dictionary. Kafka was born in Prague in 1883, wrote in German, died in 1924, and was best known for a story called "Metamorphosis." Henry didn't know what that word meant, but it was a big word, and hence, ergo, probably a very important one.

So Henry took the name Kafka and placed it after Henry, and when his book came out, it would have the name Henry Kafka splashed across the cover.

In fact, Henry had been thinking about words as he walked along the street, coming home from the post office, and this car pulled up alongside him and practically tore the side off his pantleg. Henry himself didn't think of it as a pantleg, actually, but a trouserleg, because "trouser" seemed a more literary word than "pant." But, about words. Although Henry felt he was a man of words, a man whose material was words, just as a carpenter's material is wood --

In fact, that was a very good analogy. Henry could see the words as woodchips, the sentence as two-by-fours. The keys of the typewriter (although Henry didn't have one yet, but would as soon as he could find a job) were like nails. As he typed, Henry would be driving nails into the two-by-fours, constructing something both useful and beautiful.

Sometimes words confused Henry, though. Not the words themselves so much as the way they were said. For example, someone could say to him, "Would you like a smoking table or a non-smoking table?" Well, of course, Henry knew what that meant -- it meant would he be smoking while he dined or would he not be smoking. If not, the waiter would be only too happy to seat him in a section where only those who didn't smoke sat. But this was the thing: sometimes Henry would hear the waiter say those words, and wouldn't completely catch on. Strange, because he had come to expect those very words each time he entered a restaurant -- which wasn't very often, maybe a half dozen times a year. In fact, he often practised answering. "Oh, I shall be smoking tonight. Seat me among those who smoke." Or, "No, I don't enjoy smoke in my food, seat me among the considerate." Silly, then, that he would sometimes be confronted with the waiter's question and only be able to see the mouth move, only be able to hear the molecules stir around the waiter's mouth. He'd stammer and blink and rush from the restaurant. Of course, as soon as he left, he'd realize what had been asked, but he'd be too embarrassed to return. Which was really okay, because then he'd just go home and cook, and since cooking at home was far less expensive than eating out, Henry would save a goodly sum of money.

When the car brushed along Henry's trouserleg, practically knocking him off his feet, he was, for a fleeting moment, angered, but when the window came rolling down, and the face appeared and the mouth opened, he became too fascinated to worry about anger. What would happen?

What happened was that the woman in the passenger's seat of the car said, "Excuse me, we're looking for a hardware store. Is there one nearby, do you know?"

And Henry tilted his head back, scratched his chin, and felt the words washing about his ear, clear as a glass of water. Then, squinting ever so slightly, he leaned forward until he could almost kiss the woman on the nose -- and he *did* consider kissing her -- and he said, "Yes, the store I've been going to since I was a child. Go left at the corner and follow Balloyle along past the little hill, and you're there. They have so many different sizes of nails."

The woman didn't kiss Henry, but she said, "Thanks," rolled up the window, and disappeared down the block in her car.

Henry stopped. His mind was reeling. He didn't know whether it was because he hadn't eaten, or because his allergies were striking, or because he had just fallen in love. He sat on the curb and thought about it, his lucidity wading through his reeling mind like a rescue worker wading through the flooded streets of a small town in distress.

But it wasn't a question of distress, or one of hunger or pollen or even love. It was a question of the fact that Henry was alive and he was walking down the street, breathing like everyone else, and someone pulled up beside him and asked him a question.

A question was asked and Henry answered. Henry and the woman in the car followed a recognized pattern of casual dialogue. He didn't stumble or steer off into the wrong course. That was because the woman in the car thought Henry was normal, and if a woman in a car could think he was normal, then for that moment at least, Henry was normal.

Henry Kafka got asked a question. A mouth opened. Oh, he replied, waving his finger, giving directions, talking a little about his childhood, about his neighbourhood, a little about nails, about carpentry and about writing. He wagged his finger to inspire confidence. Yes, that way and that way and that way. You can't miss it. A map drawn in the air by the finger of a normal man.

Henry stood up again and began to walk along the street. His pace soon quickened, and he found himself jogging. He was going toward the hardware store, just a little along there, then that way and that way and that way. Maybe he'd buy some things, he didn't know what, maybe some nails. Then he'd go home and he'd write. He had things he must tell people. He was going to tell people things.

JULIAN HE CROW DISCOVERS THE WRITING BETWEEN THE MOLECULES

by Don Webb & Misha

Every day Julian He Crow looked in the mirror and noticed some new change. For one thing, over a period of time, he noticed he was getting older.

The change in Julian's behaviour came one early April morning after a long night on the job. Standing on the corner of Fifth and Bryant, he began throwing ten dollar bills into the oncoming traffic.

He stared fixedly at the green paper fluttering limply in a sulphuric breeze. "It's just numbers on paper," he shouted. "It doesn't mean anything."

Julian was cited for obstruction of traffic.

Julian took a mannikin from the dumpster at Scott Johnsons and propped it up on a ledge on the sixth floor of the Powell building.

He took the elevator all the way down to the bottom and stared up at it. A crowd gathered.

"Jump!" he shouted. "Jump!" He held out his arms encouragingly. The wind aided mannikin leapt off the shelf in a gust of screams. Shattered plastic skittered the sidewalk among the disappointed pedestrians. Only Julian laughed.

At Woolworths, he took three young clouded rats from their cages and put them into his pocket. He proceeded to the coffee shop where he ordered his customary cinnamon roll and a cup of black coffee. The rats jumped up on the table, upsetting the sugar packets and sanpuru cream.

"Waitress! Are the rats extra?" he asked innocently.

No one made the connection.

At Julian's apartment, a mole-like corner in the basement of Brimby's, there was a large handwritten sign reading POSITIVELY NO CATS OR DOGS. Julian got a ferret, a vicious sable-brown creature with a bad smell and eyes like black caviar. The ferret upset his daily life in the most astonishing ways.

All of the heels in Julian's socks were chewed away. His faded chinos took on a decidedly musky odor. Small hairs appeared in his coffee and won ton.

One evening the ferret was wild to enter a small cupboard. Julian watched him gnaw the wood for some time, admiring his progress with teeth that were small, but damaging. Finally Julian opened the cupboard. A greasy gray mouse sat in a scatter of turds and white rice. The ferret leapt in and the mouse slipped into a small hole. The ferret was too large to fit. Julian removed the switchplate. The ferret disappeared into the dark square. Julian never saw him again. However, mouse parts were found in various places in the apartment daily.

Julian He Crow stuffed envelopes for Westron Ministries. These consisted of pleas for money to support Reverend Westron's plan to build a giant aluminum pyramid in the Ohio River. Julian began cutting sections from THE SACRED MUSHROOM AND THE CROSS and placing the sections in every seventh pamphlet. At first the incoming money dried up but six months later it grew by leaps and bounds. Miz Dumars had to input all the written material people sent in with their money. A huge AI system synthesized the input and told Reverend Westron what to say. His message reached an entirely new crowd. Julian smiled and he began cutting Vine Deloria's GOD IS RED.

Julian He Crow reserved a room in the base of the pyramid so he could watch the fish through his porthole.

Julian won a minor prize in a publisher's sweepstakes. He converted the money into quarters, dimes and nickels which he placed in the slots in the vending machines in art museums. Every little bit helps, thought Julian. It took years.

Julian redecorated his apartment. He bought astroturf, plastic flagstones, plastic flowers and a plastic birdbath. He removed all furniture. Every day he watered the plastic grass with his green plastic hose attached to the sink. Sprouts appeared and pushed through the astroturf. Julian watched these develop over a summer into a couch, two chairs, a table and a lamp. Soon they crowded out the birdbath and flowers. Later they crowded out Julian and he took a sleazy loft apartment over Brockdon's. They burst through the floor at Brimby's. They showed no sign of stopping. The governor called in the National Guard. For the first time in his life Julian He Crow prayed. He prayed that the ferret was okay.

Julian took on a day job. He became a cab driver in the nearby town of Dragon's Rump, New Jersey. Midway through each trip he would turn and ask his passenger, "Is this trip really necessary?"

This so disturbed his passengers that he was asked to leave by his boss. He missed the job. He loved the leek green color of the cabs.

Julian visited Disch's Pets and Fine Fish. He asked the aged counter lady if they had any talking birds. She showed him a mynah and said that mynahs are easy to teach to talk. "No," said Julian. "I want a bird that can teach me to talk."

Julian bought the mynah anyway. Suddenly it seemed very very sad. Julian named the bird Heckle.

The mynah taught Julian only one cry, the low unmodulated whistle that signified danger. Julian would whistle every time a jet's shadow passed--even unto the end of his life.

Julian threw the mirror out but resolved to stare at the wall every day.

The mynah began dictating love poems. Julian He Crow wrote them down and lacking anything to do with them, left them on Miz Dumars' desk. Miz Dumars grew infatuated and finally passionate. Julian explained and Miz Dumars eloped with the mynah taking Heckle out of Julian's life forever. Miz Dumars' replacement, Mr Candel, fed all of the love poems into the computer. Reverend Westron's message changed once again incorporating the idea that sex could destroy evil. Westron Ministries became the most popular radio ministry in the U.S. Everybody got raises and Julian bought two mynahs. He named them St. Louis and East St. Louis.

The newspaper reported that a ferret was spotted atop the giant green naugahyde couch that now stretched from First to Fifth.

Julian danced a thanksgiving dance.

After many years winter fell and Julian He Crow and the two mynahs moved to Houston. Julian got a job as a janitor in the Penzoil building. Julian discovered that due to a programming error no one lived on the 35th floor. So he moved in. The mynahs lived in a huge Victorian birdcage in an elevator. Julian began taking physics classes at Rice University.

The ferret got Julian's old job at Westron Ministries.

The ferret began to upset the ministry in the most astonishing ways.

Westron proclaimed that language was a virus God had released on earth due to annoyance at the tower of Babel scheme.

Westron claimed that in man's pure state he did not use language to communicate. From then on the radio program became an amazing series of static, bloops and siren-like screams. Westron Ministries became the most popular radio ministry world wide.

St. Louis and East St. Louis had regular spots on the show where they taught the listening audience rudimentary Esperanto.

One evening during a late lab at Rice, Julian upset a jar of sulphuric acid. While soaking it up with a mop he became absorbed in the disintegration of the grayish cotton strings. Julian was placing a self-bet as to which would finish first, the mop or the mopping. He never found out.

Julian bumped a molecular model with the mop handle and knocked it to the floor. All the molecules went bouncing off in various directions. By the time Julian retrieved them among the dust bunnies under the lab tables, he had forgotten which substance the model had represented.

Julian put some of the molecules under the microscope. Between the molecules Julian found assembly instructions in tiny writing. Plus alternative recombinations.

Julian chose an alternative.

Westron ministries suddenly made sense.

The ferret started his own label and pushed Melodia out of business.

Heckle and Miz Dumars traded a basket of blue beads for Manhattan.

St. Louis and East St. Louis replaced Paul Harvey.

North America reverted back into the Indian Nations.

Julian He Crow grew no older.



THE TWO BEARS by Marco Leyton

The Two Bears Go For A Walk

One day the Two Bears went for a walk in the woods. Down the path they skipped hand in hand until they arrived at the meadow. There, strewn about the field, lay the bloodied, dismembered bodies of their friends. The Two Bears were disturbed; so they left.

The Two Bears Meet A Third Bear

One day the Two Bears were playing in the woods when they met a third bear. The Two Bears were very excited and thought now they might become the Three Bears. After spending some time with the new bear, however, they found he was very tacky. This new bear had claws and real fur, smelled very bad, and did not like to sleep on mattresses with people. From then on the Two Bears agreed to remain just the Two Bears.

The Two Bears Say No

One day the Two Bears were playing in the woods when the world seemed to lose its usual sparkle. "Time for a hit", sang the bears. Taking out their hypodermic needles and vials of pre-mixed cocaine and heroin, the bears prepared to shoot up. Suddenly, one of the bears remembered a time when they felt good without drugs. "Let's get high on nature", said the Two Bears in unison. And they did.

The Two Bears Meet Nature

One day the Two Bears were playing in the woods when they fell onto an anthill. "Ouch, ouch", shouted the bears. "They bite". Running away, the itchy bears picked up some matches and came back to set the ant hill on fire. The dry old hill smoked and burned and many ants were sent to a painful death. Afterwards, the bears felt bad; but not for long.

The Two Bears Learn An Important Lesson

One day the Two Bears were playing in the woods when they saw a piece of paper. Picking it up they found it was information about safe sex. The paper encouraged kissing and masturbation and warned against intercourse and anal sex especially without condoms. "Now we can fornicate free of fear", they said. And they did.

The Two Bears Have An Adventure

One day the Two Bears found they had herpes. "What a romantic adventure", they thought. They bought pills and creams and took turns applying them to each other. The pamphlets gave other good advice. Soon, by eating right and taking care of themselves, they felt much better. "Now we can play with each other without physical discomfort", they said. And they did.

The Two Bears Get Sensible

One day the Two Bears were playing in the woods when they began to feel very weak. Walking home they wondered what could be the matter. They were not sneezing, so it was not a cold. There were no blisters, so it was not herpes. What could it be? Once home, they went to get something to eat to help them think, but, there was no food. In fact, they thought, there had not been any food for a long time. With that the Two Bears realized they had not been eating regularly at all. Getting a good cook book they decided to be more sensible in the future.

The Two Bears Witness Violence

One day the Two Bears walked by the human picnic area. Crouching in the bushes they watched children, dogs, and adults laughing and eating lots of food. To the left they saw a big bear stumbling across the parking lot. "Drunk on fermented apples again", the Two Bears giggled. The big bear growled incoherently and lumbered on towards the humans. With an arcing sweep of his paw, razor sharp claws ripped through turkey salad and small children. It was a grisly sight. The humans screamed with fear, the Two Bears howled with laughter. Afterwards, however, the Two Bears decided it was wrong. They had witnessed real violence. They agreed to tell the big bear not to do it again.

The Bear Incident

One day the Two Bears were playing with the big bear when the big bear became fed up with the little bears' little ways. Grabbing the Two Bears roughly by the scruff of their neck the big bear banged their heads together and prepared to skewer their writhing bodies on a long spear. To appease the big bear the little bears performed many demeaning acts, the details of which they prefer not to discuss. Later the big bear regretted the incident, but, the friendship remains strained.

THE JOE GIRL: IN AND AROUND THE REAL HOLLYWOOD HEART

by Lisa Teasley

She had blow away hair like dust and dandelion, her eyes wild as weeds in a dry field. She wore a navy blue Bundeswehr tank top, walking around the party like she knew where the hell she was going. The rum and coke burned a hole in her hand, she dropped the sweet sticky mess on my shoe. She said sorry like I was the lucky one, I said to myself this girl is fifteen at most. Counted the candles, I was right. The birthday cake came out same time the boys lit the firecrackers, so it was hard to hear her name in the song. I asked Louise if she had heard, but she shook her head. She was on her tip-toe trying to see over their shoulders when the girl blew the candles out. Louise asked me if I thought it would be a drag to have your birthday on the 4th of July. I didn't know, I was just trying to think who the girl reminded me of. I asked Louise and we both turned around at the same time and said, Joe. So we called her the Joe Girl every time we saw her after that.

Louise got irritated on the way home as I talked about the Joe Girl, trying to figure out what her life was-- why older Hollywood groovers would throw this girl a bash. As if they needed an excuse to throw a party on July 4th, Louise said. Louise was yawning, her big, brown bedroom eyes watering as I watched her at stoplights. Four a.m. and the streets were solemn as a heartbreak. A bum slept on the lawn of our apartment building, so Louise freaked and wouldn't get out of the car. I said she was silly, as I ran to the door. By the time I had my keys in the lock, Louise was behind me saying Hurry, hurry, I laughed and took my time. We hit the fridge for sweets, quit so we wouldn't wake Robert.

Louise lit a cigarette, her fuschia hair bright against the mint green walls of the kitchen, her lips pink with remnants of lipstick, her mouth turned down at the edges in a perma-frown. I used to swear everyday I'd find her a decent boyfriend; Robert and I barely kissed around her, thinking it was more comfortable that way. What was really happening was Robert and I were growing further apart the closer I got to understanding Louise. I never blamed her. I blamed Robert for not trying.

When I climbed into bed Robert grumbled about the covers, then he wrapped himself around me like a spider. Robert's breathing was long and heavy on my neck, a slight silent whistle coming through his thin nose. I was thinking about how late we were with the rent, whether I could handle reading more scripts to pay for the engine in Robert's beat up Falcon, how Louise was going to sell her crazy hats and still break even. Also in the back of my mind was the Joe Girl.

Louise and I went to see LA DOLCE VITA for the humpteenth time at the New Beverly Cinema. There was the Joe Girl behind the popcorn counter. She was wearing the Bundeswehr tank top again, her eyes even wilder like she was scared. Her skin was smooth, bronze olive; she could have been Greek, Italian or Mexican, but her hair was still this short, thin, all-American sandy dust color, her lips like a Victorian Kewpee doll. Louise got coffee and I got popcorn, the Joe Girl real cold serving us, like she was there just that one night as a favor to the owner. I hated that attitude, but I thought somehow it wasn't her fault.

Louise and I were walking toward home; I had literally dragged her out of the apartment, made her put on the flats I bought that were still in the car, untouched. The theater was just ten blocks away. Louise was smiling, looking around her in amazement at the things she had missed going by car. I walked a little faster because I found it stupid to be one of two girls walking alone slowly on the street. I gently pulled on Louise's arm, sometimes jarred by the violent hue of fuschia hair under the streetlight. I begged her on the way home to dye it back black, or even better, her natural chestnut brown. She wouldn't hear of it.

A pink mustang slowed down and it was Twotone and Mary, asking if we wanted to go to a party on El Centro. Louise looked at me, I was feeling tired from the movie, I had fallen asleep during the same part as the last three times. Louise rolled her eyes because I wasn't budging, she said Come on, and I got in the car. Mary's car smelled high of weed, the smoke so thick my eyes stung. Twotone was laughing, his Nice'N Easy blue-black pompadour so high the ceiling of the car was smashing it. When he turned around to look at us from behind his shades, you could see the deep crowsfeet at the corner of his gray eyes-- I knew his eyes were grey because he would pull his shades down on his nose just a bit like the RISKY BUSINESS ad, whenever you said something he found terribly naïve. I hardly said a word in front of him, because it wasn't worth the effort. Mary's hoarse voice was going on about her dogs, how she had to take one to the hospital because it swallowed her ecstasy. A joint was pinched mercilessly between her thin, painted lips, as she drove like we were being chased for our lives. Louise was jaded, and I looked out of the window at two young boys in tight jeans, watching the cars intently; I figured it would be seconds before they were picked up, blond and paranoid as they were. Mary ran a red light and Louise started screaming at her while Twotone laughed, talking about how much they reminded him of his two X-girlfriends, the ones he lived with at the same time.

Mary parked in front of the fire hydrant and Twotone got out, tripped on his black trench coat, and Louise laughed. I was feeling dead, and not at all in the mood to hop the balcony and the bedroom window, which was the customary entrance for this guy's blowouts. I'd been to several before, and I was really feeling the boredom until I saw Robert there. He was with a couple of the guys in his band, and I was shocked as hell to see him there, Mr. Never-Drink-or-Party. Robert pulled me to a sedate corner, where there were only a few wasted people sitting on the floor with vacant smiles, and we crouched down together while he lectured me on the evil in that place. He wanted to leave, and so did I, but I was wondering if it were OK to leave Louise in the hands of Twotone and Mary. Robert seemed jaded to the dilemma, which only irritated me more as I thought about what he was doing at this party in the first place.

Louise nodded the way she does off to the side, when I asked her if she'd be alright, and Robert watched her for a moment in pure hatred. It was the first time I'd ever seen him be so blatant, and Louise didn't seem to trip on it at all. We left her standing there, she looking a ghostly white in the blue light of the party, and I didn't really rest until I saw from the car window the friendly silhouette of Tom Sole, pulling her aside.

Robert drove like an old man to our place; he had really old Ultravox playing in the banged up stereo, and he was trying to sing to "My Sex" in a hurt way. I mentioned his hateful look at Louise, and he tightened his lips, and rushed his black hair back with a heavy hand. I stared out at the passing street signs, saying their names aloud until we pulled up in front our place.

In the kitchen, I opened the Pringles can, started dancing around in a circle to the radio, KXLU, and Robert grabbed me from behind for what was meant as a brotherly hug. I took it for sexual, and sort of flinched, because I was not in the mood. I thought I would try to patch things up by yelling at him, it made him think I was just edgy, and then we ended up pushing each other, until we were on the floor, me riding him until I'd had enough. I noticed my blouse was torn after our scene, so I went to the bedroom in a sulk, mumbling about the late rent and Louise. Thinking about the Joe Girl.

In the morning I found Robert reading *1984* for the second time when Louise strolled in looking as pink as her hair, but so apprehensive when she walked by me. She looked me in the eye, as I stared at her, and she waited a beat before she asked me if she looked any different. I hit my forehead with the heel of my hand. No way, I said, and Louise nodded and pulled me into her room. Finally lost it, she said; it was Tom Sole, whom I had trusted but no longer did. I had been so proud of her for being 22 and still maintaining her virginity. But she wore it like a crown of thorns; it was better that she got rid of it. I didn't really believe that.

Louise and I went to a fashion show a couple of nights later, and the Joe Girl was one of the models. Louise rolled her eyes as I got excited every time the Joe Girl walked down the ramp, her skin so shimmery, and when I said so, Louise called me a geek, asked me if I every heard of body glitter. It didn't matter to me, I knew my obsession with the Joe Girl meant something. Louise asked her photographer friend if he had shot the Joe Girl for this show, and he said he had and that she was the sweetest thing he had ever worked with. He said she wasn't a model, but that she was doing the owner of the boutique a favor by modelling in the show, doing a few print ads for the L.A. Weekly. I caught the Joe Girl's eye the last time she came down the ramp, and I'd swear she winked at me, but I couldn't be sure.

Robert's band got a gig at the Anticlub, which was big time for them, seeing they were headlining for the first time. Robert stood up there with a deadpan face, pulling on his bass strings, moving his foot to the offbeat with his engineer boots on. The show bored me to tears, Louise was off galavanting around, and I sat down, something Robert took as an insult every time. After the show, he barely said a word to me. I wiped the sweat from the back of his neck real lovingly, and he looked down at the ground like he was counting to ten. The way home was the silent ride, Louise in the back seat singing so softly you couldn't hear, and Robert making the turns like there was a bug up his ass.

We made rent two weeks late, but it was OK because Robert took the check over-- the landlady had the softest spot for him. She said he has the kindest eyes. Robert took a job painting office buildings, which raked in the bucks for us that month. Louise's hats even made her enough money to blow at the flea market. Louise was getting a little short-tempered, and I stayed out of her way. She wouldn't talk much about it, but the sweet Tom Sole wasn't so sweet after all. He came over with a vial of pills, saying he had gotten a minor infection from some other girl and that Louise didn't even ask the name of the disease. I watched her from the kitchen when she took the pills from him. Her voice was in control, her head held high, but she was fidgeting with the edge of her shirt. After he left and I asked her what happened, her shirt was twisted into a hard, tight sausage in her hand.

I followed her into her room, she shut the door behind us loudly. That jarred me because she was always so slow, cautious and calm. She tilted her head to the side, the way she does when she's hurt, or just vulnerable, and I put my arm awkwardly around her. I don't even like him, she said. Neither of us believed that. He said it'd go away if I take these, she said, showing me the vial as if I'd recognize it. I could tell that it would be a matter of seconds before she started crying. I wanted to ask her if she had ever heard of AIDS, but it would have been cruel.

When Robert and I tried to make love that night I started crying too, and the more I felt his hurt from this, the more I bawled and the tighter we held each other. Then I wondered why pain always seemed to bring people closer together.

I saw the Joe Girl's picture in Interview, and like a silly teen bopper, I tore it out and taped it to the wall. She was with three other people, but it didn't matter, it was her, the wild eyes and the dandelion hair. I was always out there looking for symbols, but I couldn't figure out what the Joe Girl meant to me.

Tom Sole came around again after a week or so for Louise, and he was holding a daisy, which was sweet, but it didn't impress me. I just kept praying that he really cared for Louise, because if he didn't she was only getting what she had always expected out of life, and what I had spent so much time telling her wasn't the only thing out there. I told her she hated purity, and so she'd go to the corner where it was crowded and filthy, and try to dream a way out, then figure there was none. And love was just too much for her to handle. Too good, too perfect and true.

Louise dyed her hair from fuschia to purple, I suppose for subtlety, and left the bathroom in a mild mess. After she was gone I was talking to Robert and he shut the door on me in the middle of a sentence, walked straight into the bathroom, and kept flushing the toilet. It was the most inane scene we've had, but looking back now that time was one of the more refreshing of our relationship. Robert's band was driving me crazy because he was becoming more and more one-dimensional. I kept trying to talk to him about anything else, and he told me I'm the one who should get a life.

Louise and I went to the New Beverly Cinema again, but the Joe Girl wasn't there that time. I kept asking Louise what she thought had happened to her, and Louise just rolled her big eyes and said, It could be her night off. I stayed awake for all of THE CONFORMIST, my second time, and Louise kept pinching me when the scene was especially beautiful. Every time Dominique Sanda spoke, I watched her lips as if this were a new way to listen. I was thinking no one ever really noticed the details of communication anymore. I kept thinking that everyone I knew was truly jaded.

When Robert moved out Louise and I got a kitten, named her Lulu. She was black with white paws; she would curl up in your neck and pull your hair. Louise would sit at her huge table making the crazy hats, and Lulu would jump and try to knock it from her hands. Louise would shriek and look at me like Lulu was all my idea. Tom Sole took Louise out a few times after that-- the last time Louise wore the quietest dress and I thought he was falling in love. But she said she had ended it when the night was over. I wasn't sure what "it" was because she was always vague about men. I suppose I should say "boys."

I got the stupidest idea of writing a script myself, about a small town guy who comes to the "Hotel California," like the Eagles song, gets involved with a drugged up girl who brings his nose down to the asphalt, and then together they pull their heads out. I got as far as page two and saw that the idea stunk as much as the crap I read everyday at \$35 a script. I put it down to brush Lulu's coat, and Louise walked in to announce her brother had died. She had a hard look on her face, not the face of a mourner, but of a bitter old woman who had just been mugged. I said nothing, Lulu jumped from my arms to caress Louise's ankles. Louise waited there for me to close this scene somehow; excuse her so that she could go to her room. I got up and held her, squeezed her long violet ponytail in my hand--for my sake.

A young actor came to our place to see Louise's hats. He was playful and talkative so Louise had her child's face on: happy, innocent, and sweet for the first time in months. I sat there half-reading a tired script about a gang who discovers a political cover-up through their connection with a prostitute (one of the gang member's sisters of course), then I heard this actor talking about how the film he was working on started out with a major tragedy that held them up for a month. He said the actress, an unknown, two-bit model who was "stunningly beautiful and quite young," killed herself just after the first two weeks of filming. He said she had a major part, that the director had been inspired by her, and it was impossible to replace her. He said they decided to keep her scenes in and work around them.

Louise asked what her name was, and he looked at her like it didn't matter. He said, Monica Bridgitte (pronounced Bridge-eat) and then he waited for her to shrug it off. Louise looked a little freaked, glancing at me with all of this meaning on her face. Then she asked him to describe her. I ran to get the picture of the Joe Girl from my room. When he said, Yes that's her, he looked at us like we were crazy. He went on to say she was infamous for hanging out, and that all he knew about her was that she had a junkie brother who was in jail for armed robbery. He said he didn't talk to her much those few days on the set, but she liked to play cards. Louise excused herself from the room, then I realized why she was always bothered by the Joe Girl business. Louise always thought I had an unlucky charma with strangers, like the time I handed a bum a coin and he spit up blood in Louise's face. But I wasn't shook by this, it just intrigued me in this sick way. As if it wasn't real, just interesting, like a strange movie. One that could not put me to sleep.

I moved out about a month after that actor came over with the news about the Joe Girl. I was with my parents for a while, but my father hated Lulu. So Lulu and I got our own little "suicide-hole," as my mother liked to call it. (It is very small.) And there I've felt better about almost everything.

THEY ARE THEIR CARS, THEY EAT THEIR CARS by Carl Watson

Let's create a plastic math. We could let this equal that. Communication becomes muddled. Deconstruction fails. A state of equivalencies is reached whereby the differences forced between things become the bars of a small town jail. Everyone knows everything about everybody else. We could disagree about the cause and effect. We could turn on each other. We could backstab ourselves into the impotence of unreason. Or we could buy a car and drive away. It's the American way...

...and if we let this Automobile equal Narcissism, if we let its shell be the vacancy our images approach in dreams of power--we could say this great headache of consumerism comes from the internal psychic combustion of drinking firewater and driving--if driving is praying...

...and if driving is praying we could say racing was a form of running sacred. And in this long cock-fight called Thought the heavy money is on the *left* side of Schizophrenia most of the time, and the body *does* aspire to mettel by assuming speed, and yes, sainthood is reduced to a stain of urgency or acceleration, as hot rubber gets laid on the walls of road consciousness, and all our friends live on these roads, and yes all our friends have burns to show for their mental homelessness and you could call it a negative copulatory rite.

...and you could call it the intercourse of a monster appetite with peevishness: a blithe colored nuisance veining itself in excruciating fluids--in blood, in sweat, in crocodile tears for the bed-ridden, the theoretician, the dream merchant and the con-man of vision.

You see, to theorize is just to see. Egotry is the bait of an electrochemical society. Charon is the boatman of the Autonomous Thinker. Oblivion cannot be hired. Vision is tactile. Believe your eyes. Two eyes make two tires and fear always stares at holes.

Fear feeds on thought and/or bodily expression. Fear is insanity, selfishness and self-violation. Fear of passion is passion. Unnatural man enjoys this fear. You too are invited to enjoy fear. Because fear mean GO! baby. Fear shapes the Thermal Howl to a mouth. It makes your every hole a wheel. Like an ambulance howling thru history, like a radio in a rainstorm of mediocrity, what the wire sings in the blood is real--and word is we live for a world of such wheels. Check it out.

The watches that regulate our days and nights, our rites are crammed with wheels. Everything flows, rolls--film wheels turn, tape wheels, discs, propellers spin--winged wheels, angels on wheels sing. The phallus is jammed with wheels. Orgasm is an ecstasy of wheels. Wheels are joints, are thoughts--so are birds. Teeth are really wheels as are words, asking: Who all is eating whom? Who grows fat at the other's expense?

Two larvae curl in a war-womb where wheels propogate themselves. Where synesthesia breeds amnesia. One the parasite, one the host. Idea and sense on a cusp intersect. Geometry disintegrates all lines in time, as body reappropriates soul, and the last old science devours the first.

A jet breath rolls up grey road to itself. Tapeways sing freeways off all lips. Reel worlds roll up or out on spool wheels, in their turn reabsorbed to the sex(thing), unmuzzled by machine, the eye in the seat, the animal or axle with teeth--the *in* video engine, a theatre of heat.

Let ornaments of the sense prove their priviledge thru cosmetic enlargement. Let the head bloom excretory function. Let the auto-mutilation of madness *re* begin: speeding, gnashing bleeding gaudy gums, cheek scraps, genital meat dangling from raw jawbones. You can look howeward angel, but you can't drive home. Say it, say it again:

They are their cars, they eat their cars. They heave the many roadhouses of their largess out on panthiest highways; an endless grey vomit speckled with towns, restaurants, tourist holes on it. Talk, talk talk.

Rumour girdles this earth. The road goes underground, the road becomes the stream called blood, becomes the vein entering the heart in advent of the Autoerotic. And they come hard, they come on strong, and they come with a dangerous smugness, a destructive randomness of need. And as this theory borders terror, anarchy increases.

Better get dressed up for it. Better get distressed. To drive or live dead. It's a macrobiotic jungle out there. Motion is communion. Devoured of consumption--a hurried body embitters memory. Memory fades to whey, the colorless 4-lane away--Incept to Dispersal, draining all the rules from a fool's quest, until the collective stomach complects a black-pox, and spleen (as in Resentment) complains. A binary silence reigns in this prison. A catfight underwater!

The exhaustion of redundancy is complete. Style exceeds functions. Energy exceeds its matrix form. An awesome materiality reinvents itself, and everyone everywhere grows more nervous, they grow hungry for their cars--so hungry.

Fingers climb the frets of an air-guitar then the heavy-metal ballet of the thermodynamic universe inverts boredom into anger. Yes, and you might have a high electric bill because of it. You might have no electric bill at all. Landlords raise the rent on your parking space just to say "What were warnings are now accusations."

Your irregularities breed attention. It's not the people that are constipated, it's the law that all that's born of primal doubt dies by auto-affection, auto-copulation, auto-this, auto-that. Hey why don't y'all just--Leave Yourself Alone!

THE BIG STORY by Colin Morton

Let's review the situation. Something we do better than any other country is break up. Those who believe in fairness, unfamiliar as they are with our Canadian way of doing things, pride themselves on being reasonable and yet can't dance - you've heard all that.

Here's the scoop: Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan are all nice places. People used to come to Ottawa, but now it is fit only for journalists, politicians and officials. Unlike more primitive nations, we can supply these in a terrific hurry. Twenty-five million Canadians who should never have come into play are on their way to pre-Thatcher England, and some think Canadians make Massachusetts look like Charles Dickens's London. The fact is, we have a whole army and are not good at anything. We can't govern, can't make constitutions - all we need are black cars. But finally the people from outside the private meetings will make sure the media have their day.

For, of course, the country is breaking up. Those who are desperately looking for some integrity make short work of the map we all once held so precious. The procedure will pay them back by twisting their arguments because it was all done in private in the first place. And don't flatter yourself. We turn away that many at the Mexican border, and it is important that the private meetings break up. But these provincial governments will exact their due, and Quebec dares call an election.

That, of course, is itself an irony: Those who despise racism, famine, or religious strife are as ecotopian as northern Californians. In the late '70s and early '80s these secretive and devious politicians would look around and not realize that the country and its rebirth were not, in fact, the big story. The Maritimes and the media have an attitude problem. If you are not a foreign country, why ask the people to wear different suits? Cynicism of the worst kind will not result in gunfire more than several times a year. And forget the closed doors.

That may be tough for the public - the breakup of the nation. Those who believe in openness will pay them back for creating a frenzy in the first place. Those who believe in discussion are screaming about a country that God will not forget. Why bother? Journalists are accredited to watch the black cars for you. For once, British Columbia practically called the shots.

But even the country breaking up did not tell the real story. Canadians are penned in and will not forget. Nor do we need heroic speeches from an old Yankee imperialist with a country breaking up. Those who love their country, as some did Monday, are thinking about welfare states. These people were not accredited to watch their country break up, and we realize that maps give only an indication, but somewhere, sometime, the people will have their revenge.

Those who believe in leadership always break up in secret. The politicians are also sure to hire some Canadians for this idiotic and melodramatic brinkmanship. We can't export the rest of Canada. We can't make the metric system live on welfare. Canadians are great folks, but we're not on the "A" list with these secretive, devious politicians. Ontario? Their trade union situation is indeed a distinct society. Quebec? *Come on*. The big story in which the country will break up needs no war unleashing a wave of hatred and national vision for the media.

For Canada can be saved almost as easily as it can be broken up. Every word is a serious occasion for panic and bigotry. Since the death of big business and the scare tactics the photogphers will not forget, the first thing we do with the country is break up. And their revenge, when there was never a need to fix something, will be first class.

(A break-up of columns in the *Ottawa Citizen*, June 5, 1990, by Roy MacGregor, Charles Gordon, and Chuck Moss).

CHAT SECTION UNBOUND by Lyle Estill

Speak office. That's what I learned my first half hour. To survive I listened.

"We have to get E numbers assigned. I don't even know if they'll be called E numbers, but that's what he called them and now we need E numbers."

Purolate is not a verb. Nor is Borgify. And when one accepts the necessary terms and conditions, it is certainly an error to refer to that acceptance as, Borgification. rll was clearly a noun, and no matter how new I was to the firm, I was not to consider that which was non-rllable. I didn't bother writing it down but I did overhear.

"Our implementation of S numbers was amazing. Becker is a rocket scientist. rmas appear in the first field screen seven along with everything else. And that's because of Becker.

"I remember when he was hired. He kept wanting to sit in his office and fill in the squares on graph paper and talk about the model system. Everyone wanted him to quit flapping and start generating code.

"But now you can locate an S number on screen seven. It's amazing."

And with smokers, huddled beyond shipping bays affirming our allegiance to nicotine despite the cold. They knew I could not yet speak office so they spoke without heed.

"Don't tell anyone you heard it here but there's a keycode for pbx. If you get that you can hop on the Toronto line from home and bbs away. I was doing it last night."

"Does that mean you could call out toll free?"

"Voice or data, doesn't matter, anywhere in the world is free if you go through the pbx."

"But does the snooper pick you up?"

"Nope. The snooper only polls twenty four lines at a time, and if twenty five calls come in it drops one."

Overhearing, overseeing, trying to absorb my first place of work. Speak office. Got to. Got to speak it first--then think it...

"Think they can upgrade the snooper?"

"It's not the snooper, it's the port on the pbx."

"Can they upgrade the port?"

"If they do I'll be the first to know 'cause I service reception."

"Wild. Did you just get on through voice mail?"

"Yup, but don't tell anyone I told you this."

When I started speaking office I stopped speaking something else. I just assume there is a limited number of languages I can speak. Not everyone can speak office. And I'm not even sure which language I dropped.

Like today when they locationized the cage. I went in to look for an rma and I saw that I was standing in front of aisle 88. Someone had given it a name. I went to check an S number that was nearly eye-level and I was told the actual shelf was 88C3. Apparently they locationized the entire area.

Later, when I was having a Coke in the chat section, I told the woman beside me that I was hired to implement escape sequences. She asked about the new labels in the cage, and I explained locationization. It was then that I was on my way.

THE TOY by Daytona Beach

She loved Muni; she loved the silent swish of the streetcar as it slid down the hill and up to the platform on the corner near her apartment; she loved the crack and blue-white flash of the sparks that flew from the overhead wires. She often sat for hours absorbed in the faint green and red lines of the Muni routes that criss-crossed the map on the wall of her tiny room; she saw her own circulatory system as the colored maze of bus lines; her arteries the throbbing cross-town lines, capillaries the quaint community service busses, and veins the pulsing whoosh of the underground Metro, driving all the cells back to the heart of the Ferry Building. She kept her own schedule in a dog-eared spiral-bound notebook stuffed into a heavy vinyl shopping bag; the printed schedules were too undependable, and people standing next to her at the J stop were often startled by her sudden and vehement exclamations when the trolley would arrive off-schedule. "Ah HA. It's always at least two minutes late. I don't know why this thing says 5:35. It never gets here until at least 5:37." Bystanders would feign interest until it was clear that this strange person had no information of importance to them; just another weirdo on the Muni.

Tonight she stood at the stop on Church Street, map and schedule in hand. She had just come off the 22, riding it all the way to the end because she liked the look on the map of the curling turnaround at the end of the line and wanted to see it for herself; she had sat alone with the driver at the terminus as the minutes ticked toward the beginning of the next run. "You can go now; you're already a minute behind," she had called to the driver. He blinked into the angled rear-view mirror and looked away.

The J snaked up to the platform, spilling riders out the back door; she got on alone at the front. "How's your night?" she asked the driver; "Can't complain," he responded. She thought of taking the seat directly behind the driver; from this vantage point she would be able to see the mouth and ribs of the subway tunnel as the streetcar neared downtown; but instead she loped to the back of the car, staggering a bit and grasping at the backs of seats to steady herself as it lurched forward.

Sitting beside a spectacled girl, nose buried in a real estate text, she craned her neck to read the graffiti tags. "ROT. That one's new. This car musta got bombed recently. AMEND. I saw that guy once, making tags on an M car." The girl glanced up, annoyed. "GOD. Oh give me a break. What kind of egos do these guys have." Slamming her book, the girl pushed her way out of the seat and strode to the door, getting off at the next stop, where a short man with thick curly hair boarded.

She followed the man with her eyes, turning in her seat to see where he would sit. Noticing her gaze, he smiled slightly and nodded; she got up and sat beside him. "I love the Muni; don't you?" He raised his eyebrows and nodded again; she pressed her thigh against his. "I ride the Muni all the time. Tonight I went all the way to the end of the 22 line. Have you ever been to the end of the line?" He shook his head, alternately amused and alarmed.

"My favorite part is when it goes into the tunnel," she went on; "it's so smooth and dark and sleek ..." At the next stop, she looked around; "There's no one on this car but us," she said. The man didn't look at her.

The car went into the turn at the edge of the tunnel; she jumped up to stand in the bend where the walls joined in accordion pleats and the floor was cut into a big circle; with one foot on the circle and the other in the main part of the car, her legs were stretched apart as the trolley turned and brought together again as it straightened out. Then she went back to her seat. "I like that. I like those accordion busses. And have you seen the kneeling busses? How do they get them to do that?"

He turned to look at her and met her eyes for the first time; one couldn't be too careful about who one talked to on the street; there were so many ranters and crazies on the loose. But the woman didn't appear disheveled or disoriented; her hair was combed and clothes neat; maybe the eyes were a bit too bright and seemed ready to jump right out of her face. She smiled at him pleasantly. He was lonely and didn't really know anyone in the city. He smiled back.

The car creaked to a halt at the mouth of the tunnel. "Ooh! This is my favorite part!" She grabbed his hand. "It's more fun when you close your eyes. Close your eyes."

Closing his eyes, he tugged slightly with his hand but she held it firmly; it was warm. Slowly the trolley rolled into the tunnel; then picking up speed, it clacked down the tracks until he could feel rushing air from the vent on his face. His lashes started to flutter and as he lifted his lids a shadow passed before his eyes; her face was close to his and she put her lips on his mouth without moving them. Crouching on her half of the seat she stared at him evenly; her gaze was lucid and her smile polite; this girl is insane, he thought. She kissed him again, moving her mouth as if she wanted to chew his lips off.

The trolley ground to a noisy halt, throwing them both against the back of the seat in front of them; the lights flickered. He stumbled to his feet, trying to push past her into the aisle; the car lurched, throwing him against the seat and then backward into her lap; she laughed. As the trolley stopped again he regained his balance; she tripped him with her legs, catching him by the arm and pulling him down. His head hit the silver post behind the seat; she pushed him into a sitting position and straddled him, the same courteously detached expression on her face. His eyes wide and frightened, he watched her; she leaned backward into the aisle to look at the driver at the other end of the car.

Satisfied that their actions would be unobserved, she regarded her catch; he saw her eyes become dreamy and felt a twitch in his pants; he made his decision in an instant and surrendered. Her weight as she descended upon him pushed his head harshly against the hard plastic window ledge; he was developing a headache. Hungrily she covered his mouth with wet kisses; his arm, wedged underneath him, was becoming numb. She began riding him; her moans came loud and guttural; he wondered if the driver could hear them or see in the rearview mirror their legs splayed in the aisle.

Her hands moved to her skirt; she pulled it up revealing nothing underneath; her thick cotton stockings stopped right above the knee. Her hand on her crotch, fingers sliding in and out, she moaned louder; he reached for his zipper; with her other hand she pulled open her sweater, rubbing her breasts roughly. Struggling with his zipper, he distracted her; "No, not that," she panted, and fumbled for her bag, producing a long piece of pink rubber. He had never seen a dildo before; he wasn't sure what she wanted him to do; she made him take it in his hands and then she sat on it.

The car began rolling again; there was a screech as it crossed over a switch in the tracks. Now her screams were so loud he was certain the driver could hear; but the trolley moved along smoothly. She grabbed him by the hair, arching her body and throwing her head back; she tried to pull his head to her chest but he couldn't bend that much while she was bucking him so violently. Throwing herself across him she writhed and convulsed; the metallic voice of the driver over the intercom said "Van Ness Station," catching her attention and slowing her pace for a second as she cocked her ear; the car hopped a switch in the tracks and jerked to the right.

Once again he focused his attention on his zipper; he wanted to burst; he held the hard piece of rubber in his left hand, resting it on his stomach, as his right hand flitted from his fly to her firm, round buttock. At last he worked it free; her eyes flew open and body stiffened as an inhuman sound emitted from her throat; twitching a few times, she purred and became still.

The hiss and squeak of the brake brought her back to life; she stood, dismounting from the pink toy; she snatched it from him and, giving it a quick wipe with her skirt, stuffed it into the shopping bag. The man lay back in his seat, hand hovering uncertain over his fly; the car pulled into the station. She straightened her skirt, slinging the bag over her shoulder; he stammered as she started for the door, "Wait a minute."

Doors slid open; as passengers began boarding she turned back to him, drawing a lighter from her pocket and flicking it inches from his eyes; she gave him her frighteningly polite look and disappeared into the station, leaving him blinking, running a hand through his hair.

...
He loved the Muni; he loved the black emptiness of the tunnel, mouth opening wide to suck the train of cars into the long tube; he haunted the cars of the Metro line, where he would ride for hours, from one end of the line to the other, hands clenching the large vinyl shopping bag, slipping inside to stroke the wrinkled pink rubber as he studied the faces of the passengers. He loved the Muni.

A RUBY SLIP OF THE TONGUE by Susan Parker

For Gerry:

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood get lei and order a Hawaiian pizza tail,
it comes in 30 minutes so he pays for it;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood be a homo for a Christmas tree,
it has a Judy garland;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert can bill bissett ma queue,
it's the cannabis the j;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood say farting is such sweet cabbage,
but he mustard say goodbye until tomatoe;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood fuck the horse that Jack milked,
it's his neighbour;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood not send a dog out in a nightie like this,
it's a good night for a merdre;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood don we now that gay apparel,
it's a condom;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood twat he smelt a pussy twat,
it's a bicycle seat;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert can goalie to hell, in other words,
he can got the H E double hockey sticks;

3 Lily Indian Gilbert wood wood sweat Ojibway beads from deerskin,
if he woodsmoke;

SINCE by David K. Fujino

the more crap you believe in the better off you are. she said.
said she. licked his chops. insulted my afraid. the guy sat
down and said his bit. send you sent an s.o.s. you sent it.
because of the caustic soda. the pepsi. that generated hate.
last year's colours. blowout. his plain-as-dirt voice.
the entire pristine affair. exciting as mere competence can be.
well i guess it takes all kinds. we're at the half. basketball
talent. worldwide. heaven knows. take to the road.
in the skyway. the best and worst aspects of love. harmonized into
well-meaning fluff. an open look every word. the united states
was at peace. turn your tv off and get to work. it has given me
liberal freedoms. i have never been arrested. i have never been
to jail. the life of women. the flow of caskets is coming to an
end. but there is deeply felt intelligent opposition to the
project. walking out from the stella you look magnificent. the
long marble grey and white colonnade. maximize the visibility.
take no prisoners. another day. another day we have to pay.
another and another. beckett samuel. cheery greetings today.
or thin spittle-like giacometti figures. walk away. into open
empty plazas. the fire is known. the secret of my success.
but i'm just a talk show host he said beaming a smile to millions.
for 30 minutes. the wind has disease. this unease. this
fall into mannerisms. known connotations moods and grooves.
the lair of white opinions. such pampered little entities. stuff
we are. woikin' both sides a da street. loom. vision. belief.
stand. beside the strand the bells and the war followed. statue.
human figures bound. for the love of man. to man forbidden.
male in the mail room. hissed. 1989. coming up in one month.
so much is style and artifice. this implosion. scarves and hose.
mittens and bathing suits. style.
wearing the outside.

MY COMPADRE by Rod Val Moore

1. *He is moving toward me across a metal-clad mesa or plateau.*

Journeying, I found myself crossing the summit of a metal-clad mesa or plateau, but there I was assailed by two swollen murderers, twins, who seized me in their enormous hands that stunk of vinegars and tars. I trembled and cried out for pity. Then, from afar I heard my name called so sweetly, and I twisted away from my torturers to see a dark shape moving across the plateau toward me. It was he, my dear compadre. He had lovingly followed me on my detour from the indicated route. Twisting a trifle more within the four pinching hands of the two whom I battled, I had a glimpse of him advancing directly toward me, then heard him again crying out, singing out, my name. Then, from an unidentifiable part of the machine that always hovers far overhead, a shaft of light flashed down and it transfixed my compadre directly. He stopped in mid-stride, staring, like a soft-eyed animal frozen in the automobile's headlights. For a moment he was barely visible in the illumination, then stood out vividly, like silver in a negative, every line of his squinting and bewildered face outlined in fire-bright light. I grew angry then, and though the twins with whom I battled tightened their grip, and my head was forced back down toward the metal sheeting, I felt for the first time that it was I who was gaining in strength, I who would inevitably triumph. Simultaneously there came to me the roar of the machine, the storm of the thousand engines, and I slowly, thickly came to the realization that they all went together, that the light, the engines, my sweet compadre, all formed one untranslatable text that may or may not lead to victory.

But then I grew crazy with longing, and sadly, pessimistically let down my defenses. Instant and simultaneous with my relaxation, the machine turned off, the light dissolved in darkness, and the dear compadre smiled and bounded once more toward me, his features taking on again the composure that is born of charity -- the aplomb that is a product of compassion.

And the wicked twins again seized my arms, legs, and torso with such force that I felt I would be torn apart in a moment, and I sent up sighs, mourning, and weeping. Then I changed. Refreshing my volition, I fought back with some composure. Yet even as I did so the machine roared back to life, and my compadre was blasted and frozen once more with the ever-prejudicial light. I comprehended then how the workings of the machine corresponded precisely and intelligently to my own actions; yet instead of facilitating my mastery, the machine in fact seemed designed to destroy me. It was certain that:

(a) if I made any effort to defeat my captors, the machine came on, and immobilized my only ally, guaranteeing that I must fight on alone, and so face defeat.

(b) if I let down my guard, abandoned the will to win, the machine extinguished itself, freeing my ally to advance, but allowing the enemy almost surely to rend me before my friendly compadre could arrive.

2. *He and I are almost as lovers*

In the nights before the troubles on the mesa, we were sometimes intimate, sometimes so to a fault, reclining together uncomfortably close, my darling compadre speaking almost so I couldn't hear him, laying his very soft hand on my cheek, on the cheek of his supplicant, and letting it rest there lightly like a cotton glove, like a lady's veil. In those nights I came to know that everything he says is a kind of confession. That his breath smells like an infant's. That his face is smooth as chocolate milk. That he seems too small for his own body, so much so that at first glance he looks like two: a man carrying his son in such a way that the child's face eclipses the father's.

The more I come to know the more I am assailed by vacillations: it seems that during the day he labors in a metal-producing factory, his shirt unbuttoned, his lungs unprotected from the spewing grease of the machines, the clouds of filthy gas that burst with a deafening noise from the release valve mechanisms overhead. His task is to clutch a wrench in one hand, a rag in the other, and sometimes turn the adjustment bolts, even when he can hardly see the valve mechanisms in front of his face, hardly keep the wrench from slipping from his hands and falling into the grinding gear wheels far below.

3. *There are too many troubles in his life.*

In the little photograph you will find in the locket around my neck he is depicted in a moment of weakness. You see? Miserably drunk and filthy, staggering in the street outside the blurred cantina. But here is one secret I and I alone have learned: in this famous image he is not, as it appears, raising the bottle of affliction to his lips. He is lowering it. In a moment he will lift the other hand above his head, holding it there in a studied, trembling way -- the gesture of the derelict who mutters poetry, the addict who shares the horrors of his compulsion. Can you imagine that testimony, can you imagine that a crowd has gathered in the street, and that more bottles are purchased and pushed forward to lubricate and propel this exhibition. Years ago, he stammers, he served as a soldier, solitary man-at-arms, stiff and silent and automatic at a desert outpost. Now every element of that stiffness has shifted and collapsed. A comparison shows how much heavier the bottle is than the gun, how it has acted as a leaden pivot for his limbs to angle from. Yet what he has lost in concentration he has gained in stature. As the armed man he was all architecture, more the observed than the observer, and saw nothing outside a circle defined by the distance a bullet can reach. As the drunk that same circle is opaque to him, but he sees everything outside it: the cactus, the ladder, the world, the silver ingot, the mermaid.

4. *Take pity when you hear the lament of a soul that is sorrowful and suffering in its hard and narrow prison!*

With my eyes and tongue in hell, with my hands vainly grasping at, then torn and bloodied by, the bristles that sprout from the knobby spines of the monster twins, I was blessed with a sweet vision. I seemed to see him seated by the river, the grass scattered with marigolds, his arrow turned to a beggar's staff, his quiver turned to an Easter basket, his silver dagger turned to rubber. And I supplicated that vision: make everything that is missing to me arrive or suddenly appear.

But the answer to that supplication was already clear. There was no doubt that I must follow alternative (b), i.e., abandon the will to win, so that the machine would extinguish itself, and free my ally to advance to me.

So I surrendered, and, without looking to see if he was coming, feverishly redoubled my prayers. It is not surprising what happened next, not hard to imagine the mayhem. In fact, my limbs were torn off by the gleeful twins. My torso was turned inside out by them.

5. *He comes to me in my ultimate need.*

All was not all ruin, not yet. He arrived. He arrived in time to seize the twins in his bare hands. Such angry hands! With the greatest possible exertions of his musculature he hoisted the twins aloft, one in each hand, and hurled them off the edge of the metal-clad mesa, where their piteous screams were lost in the darkened conflagrations far below. Then, slowly, he returned to me. To return to what? A demolished corpse, over which he sorrowed and wept. Why, he cried, he would cut his own white throat to save the body of his brother! And suddenly he did do this, with a sliver of sheet metal he tore up from the mesa, and he allowed his blood to sprinkle down onto the gore he beheld before him. These are drops of blood, he cried, the heart's true tears. Except that special prayers are needed also, and with his throat in tatters it seemed he would not have the ability to speak the beautiful prayers.

6. *I thank him for everything and confirm that I never want to be separated from him again.*

Few are the miracles or indulgences that now can fly to reach us here in this vale or mesa. But do you know, I awoke to find myself healed, to discover my compadre smiling sweetly at my side. Even his white throat was whole again, although around it there was tied a ribbon of crimson silk, which in front, below his chin, had been done up into a buoyant and delicate bow. Here I am bound to say and publish the fact that no matter how great other desires may become, I desire to dwell in his shadow, except that there are no shadows near the radiance of his fame, and that I will no more wander from the previously indicated path.

THE STAIRCASE IN THE TOWER by John Barlow

I am wearing language
in some direction
Time has in its pockets
many holes The death
of religion resulted
in the deposit of Apocalypse
somewhere in the past
Dig it up dig it up
Somewhere in the past
the light slumbers
Time has in its pockets
many holes
I am wearing language
in some direction
The general public is a lovely place
for transformations personal
and gradual
It is not enough to have
a profound inner life
This world suffers
a poverty of inappreciation
I am wearing language
in some direction
Time his in its pockets
many holes The death
of spiritual knowing
resulted in the the birth
of meaningless knowledge
A burst a burst
of emptiness claiming
countless lives
It is human
to be arriving with nothing
save the power to remember
and to forget
Time has in its pockets
many holes I am
wearing language in some direction
What would make me ecstatic
a burst of believing
in the daily wonder
of the unknown
Truth is the only earthly capital
The only human capital is appetite
and willingness
to know
I am wearing language
in some direction
Time has in
its pockets.

DREAM by Amber Hayward

May 18 A very weird dream las
only part of which I recall (s
like trying to read a paragrap
of which is off the page.

I was at some sort of mall
Leth. driving a car that was g
some trouble. When I drove ou
side exit. I noticed a beggar
in rags & curiously flat on th
His legs looked wrong & were w
in a ribbed sweater. A garbag
along and was very cruel to th
which I thought esp. wrong sin
were both black. Then, for so
to go in & when I came out, th
was being very kind & sollicito
ground, which I thought was th
I felt better then I noticed h
polishing his shoes! Now time
was somewhere else at a sort o
was either visiting or staying
doing something together, perh
TV & in came this guy- the beg
badly deformed. His face was c
flat - he couldn't speak or ev
He developed another mouth dow
for eating. All this had a ver
quality despite which I felt s
horror and fascination - wante
but felt I should show compass
him as normally as poss. The o
to just ignore him. In fact I
another visitor. But I stayed
talk to the beggar, who by now
head with arms (legs?) but the
of his body still could move s
(but seperate) to help him & h
in the flat chest (to speak? t
groaning and muttering, he began
plainly from one of the mouths
lower one or the head, I think
saying, "Why didn't you let on
can speak?" By then I was mor
in talking to him than anybody
seemed to change again & I was
at a bus circle, with a man, t
We had to wait a very long tim
to wash my hair in the warm ra
the top of a car. Halfway thr
only had cream rinse with me s
"sudsing". I was half-dressed
underpants were off. And no t

FRIDA KAHLO
by Thomas Avena

she turned frailty
to advantage

gliding on her toes
to disguise painful limping

painting her birth
Frida emerged fully formed
from her mother's belly slit
her single eyebrow knit

we remember
the bird walk
the regal head
angled
on the slender neck --
her stone Aztec jewelery

remember
the fretwork of stitches
and shattered pelvis

when she became engaged to Diego Rivera
Frida's parents were scandalized:
"a marriage between
a dove and an elephant!"

Diego, safe
as a mountain

the brilliant Diego
with "eyes of a frog"
and scandalous appetites...

painting on the largest scale
political murals
the "ascent of mankind"

for Frida there was surgery
after surgery
dozens of
surgeries

a skeleton slept
on her canopied bed

blood washed her paintings

which remained
physically small
intimate portraits

the face
humid and breathing
wearing a necklace of thorns

her obsidian eyes
open, yet mocking

it was a queer thing
to paint
icons
in an age of revolution
of so much hope...

Frida painted:

herself
with monkeys entwined with ribbons
and drunken flowers

two Fridas seated while one
severs an obtruded vein

the vessels of her heart
as leaves and roots lying
on a cracked green earth

the dim breathing of iguanas

painted in *retablos*
the head of Marx
bearded, white and floating
his hand crushing
an American Eagle

painted her head on the body of a deer
stung by 9 arrows

and painted her plaster corsets
in turquoise and crimson...

relentlessly painted
her surgical scars

and the plump baby Diego
in her motherly arms...

when Diego left her
for a woman "beneath his station"
Frida cropped her hair
wore a man's severe grey suit
and painted herself

alone
seated on a stool

her libido
twisting
like the river
Cutzamala

desire
sharp as a scalpel

later she had affairs
with men and women

and one with Trotsky!

her philosophy:

"make love
take a bath
make love again..."

on the right of the small metal plate
Frida paints the United States:

a rigid flag unfurled
high above smokestacks

pipes at attention
like soldiers

lightbulbs radiating heat

on the left, Mexico:

skulls
cactus flowers
the severe sun
above a stepped temple

she stands
in a rose colored colonial dress
on the border

a paper Mexican flag
in her left hand

a cigarette in her right

the hands are crossed...

DEADPAN
by Marshall Hryciuk

for E. B. B.

ole tine Lizzy
scourful of mode
ethereally steaming
faintly motherlode

wools of steel
all mink her stoles
having lost her mittens makes remittance
'No one' passing go

for R. B. and you
to your pyre do repair
this for your barreted head
for Hebe is dead

πέντε ῥέει hurray in harvestiture
Burney's raiment
exhumant flames through blues perfuming
these the wet salvages
ἴα Forged consumed
rumages sodden, exegeses that go, the resumé
spilling
out of the fire
and into the frying

αὐτίκα, a tide πᾶν into smoke razed
spits, whispering vapours, the battery ;
(H₂O) : [H] + [OH] = [HOH] RAN }

the royal panoply
the hoppity hoppity
the summa of bones
the queenly waters now
run Eau de Cologne

Tyrannosaurus de soleil
on the brightly ferrous wheel
their centuries are legion
Caesarean his skill

even the panther smells sweetly
to the sweetly smelling priest
the wild's Christian too
where the loves may only sneeze

tweet liddle goslings hwaet
behold you must be gidding
Ajax that foaming catharsis
Pan a Peter to nevernever tinkerbell

Make a wagon of Arsus
everything will sell

pun, pun is daddy.
pen -ultimately deady
but not on porpoise
on a dolphin's dorsal all is wingedly finned

pricks Chico Scuro the pi r' ed knight
tongue in, laffing out
cowaevil
with Gingles the greet
of the falling down pants

(whoever wuz da masked deme of a man? izzy ?
Herr Daimaon the diamond
of the hairstreaked thought
dark yet comely comet
in commodius comedy got

who spuming a where
hightailing here
is all yspired
to high, sweet pipings :
who touts ?)

all Pandaemonium
breaking luscencies
re-demed, over the seas
Howdy pardner : meet Poldy the Moldy
a neat, and herd !
Pan-ther ← Παν - θήριον
saith leo all the beast to the Theri O' Murphy clan
θήριον - hunter of θείον - arrow's insight
there, shining. αὐτίκα
theri-theory burning bright αὐτίκα
lee
(Kraft EBB ing

πᾶν ὄνον the Howthing
behooved how awfull
to the creekcrooked staff
beggaring the thunderer in clef
THAT YAH KANT TELL THE DENSER WITHOUT A MEGAPHONE
to κοῖν' a phrase two coins in a spray
from cliff to coign bidding a dew
adios the dross of the moist
whethereupon
askance coarse ghoral
if hiverrun
stiffens
can sprung be far
before a fair
be
hind ;
(where ; = ?)

CHURCH NOT MADE WITH HANDS

(excerpted from *Infinite Jest*)

by David Foster Wallace

Lids one screen of skin, dreampaintings move across Day's colored dark. Tonight, in a reverse unfluttered by time, he ages young. Shrinking, smoother, loses his belly and faint acne scars. Bird-boned gangle; bowl haircut and cup-handle ears; skin sucks hair, nose recedes into face; he swaddles in his pants and then curls, pink and mute and smaller until he feels himself split into something that wriggles and something that spins. Nothing stretches tight across everything else. A black point rotates. The point breaks open, jagged. His soul sails toward one color.

Birds, grey light. Day opens eyes. He is lying half off the bed Sarah breathes in. He sees the window parallelograms, from the angle.

Day stands at a square window with a cup of something hot. One dead Cezanne does this August sunrise in any-angled smears of clouded red, a blue that darkles. A Berkshire's shadow retreats toward a blunt nipple, fire.

Sarah comes awake at his touch. They lie open-eyed and silent, brightening under a sheet. Doves work the morning, sound from the belly. The sheet's printed pattern fades from Sarah's skin.

Sarah pins her hair for morning mass. Day packs another case for Esther. He dresses. He fails to find a shoe. On the big bed's edge, one shoe on, he watches cotton dust rotate through the sliced lemon columns of a morning that gets later.

That day he buys them a janitor's broom. He sweeps warm rainwater off the tarp over Sarah's pool.

That night Sarah stays with Esther. Touches metal. Day sleeps alone.

Day stands at a black window in Sarah's bedroom. Over Massachusetts the sky is smeared with stars. The stars move slowly across the window.

That day he goes to Esther with Sarah. Esther's bed gleams in the white room. Esther smiles, dull, as Day reads about giants.

"I am a giant," he read:

"I am a giant, a mountain, a planet. Everything else is far away. My footprints are counties, my shadow a time zone. I watch from high windows. I wash in high clouds."

"I am a giant," Esther says.

Sarah, allergic, sneezes.

Day: "Yes."

Art is one corner of a musical smile. A music discloses itself as a relation between one key and two notes locked by the key in dance. Rhythm. And in Day's blown pre-dreams, too, music eats law: what is most solid discloses itself solely as rhythms. Rhythms are relations between what you believe and what you believed before.

The cleric appears today in black and white.

Bless me

Do you take this woman Sarah

To be my

How long

For I have trespassed

since your last confession to a body with the power to absolve. Confession need

As I those who have swummed against me

not entail absolution, lay bare, confession in the absence of awareness of sin,

Bless me father for there can be no awareness of sin without awareness

of transgression without awareness of limit,

Full of Grace

no such animal. Pray together for a revelation of limit

Red clouds in Warhol's coffee

Arrange in yourself an awareness of.

That day he is back at work's first week. Sunlight reverses *Health* pink through the windshield's bright sticker. Day drives the county car past a factory.

"Hable Español?" Eric Yang asks from the passenger's side.

Smoke from a smokestack hangs jagged as Day nods his head.

"You wanted to be shown ropes," Yang says. His eyes are closed as he rotates. "I'll show you a rope. Habla?"

"Yes," Day says. "Hablo."

They drive past houses.

Eric Yang's special talent is the mental rotation of three-dimensional objects.

"This case speaks only Spanish," Yang says. "Lady's son got himself killed in their apartment last month. Gang thing. Big area of the kid's blood on her kitchen floor. She won't let anybody clean up the blood."

They drive past hardhats and jackhammers.

"She says it's all she's got left of him," Yang yells. "She won't let us clean it up. She says it's him," he says.

Mental rotation is Yang's hobby. He is a professional counsellor and case worker.

"Your job today," Yang twirls an imaginary rope, lassoes something mental on the dashboard, "is to get her to draw him. Or even the blood. Ndiawar said he didn't care which. Just so she has a picture. So we can maybe clean up the blood."

In the rear view, beyond himself, Day can see his case of art supplies on the back seat.

"Make her draw him," Yang says, releasing a rope Day can't see. Yang closes his eyes again. "I'm going to rotate this month's phone bill."

Day passes a slow white van. There are saucers of rust on its side.

"Today we see the poor lady who loves blood and the rich man who begs for time."

"We see an old teacher of mine, Ndiawar says." Day checks his left.

"The nuisance in public, Ndiawar calls him," Yang says. He furrows, concentrating. "I'm rotating the duty log. We're going to be driving right past him. He's on the way."

"He was a professor of mine," Day says. "I had him in school."

They drive past a dry lot.

Tonight, at the window, under bright smeared pepper, Day dreampaints.

He paints it so he's standing on the pool's baggy tarpaulin when he rises into the lunchtime sky. He rises, weightless, neither pulled from above nor pushed from below, one perfect line to one pebbled point in the sky overhead. Mountains sit blunt; humidity curls like gauze in the valleys. Holyoke and then South Hadley and Hadley and Amherst and Springfield are dull misshapen coins.

Day rises into the sky. The air gets more and more blue. Something in the sky blinks, and he's gone.

"Colors," he says to the booth's black lattice of screen.

The screen breathes mint.

"My wife complains that I turn colors in my sleep," Day says.

"I understand," breathes the screen.

Knees hurt, Day jangles his pockets with his hands.

Blue-eyed behind his County Health Director's desk, Dr. Ndiawar is a darkly bald man of vague alien status. He like to make a small cage of his hands and look at the cage while he talks.

"You paint," he says to Day. "You sculpted as a student. You took psychology." He looks up. "In large amounts? You speak languages?"

Day's slow nod makes a sharp dot of reflected office light on Ndiawar's smooth scalp. Day births the dot and kills it.

"There are doubts," Ndiawar says, "which I have in my mind." He changes the shape of the cage.

"There is not money in it."

Day gives the reflected dot two little lives.

"However, you state there are independent means, through marriage, for you."

"And shows," Day says quietly. "Sales."

"You sell art you make, in the past, you have stated," Ndiawar says to a sheet of paper.

Eric Yang is tall, twenties, with long inky hair and two muddy almonds that blink slowly.

Day shakes Yang's hand. "How do you do."

"Surprisingly well," Yang replies. His eyes go clean as he smiles.

"Your new art therapy person," Ndiawar, bent to paper, says to Yang.

"You two become partners who travel lengths and breadths throughout Holyoke," Ndiawar reads to Day from something prepared. The cage disassembles. "You two visit the shut-ins. The very badly off. The no room for them here."

"It's a special talent I have," Yang says, combing at his bangs with some fingers. "I close my eyes and form a perfect image of any object. From any angle. Then I rotate it."

"You visit a daily schedule of shut-ins," Ndiawar reads. "Yang counsels these very badly off people, while you encourage, through skill, these people to express disordered feelings through acts of creation."

"I can see the textures and the imperfections in the objects I rotate, too," Yang says. He blinks and combs. "It's a really private talent." He looks to Ndiawar. "I just want to be up front with the guy."

Dr. Ndiawar ignores Yang. "You influence them to direct disorders at things which they artistically make," he reads in a monotone. "On objects which cannot be harmed. Such as clay, which as an object is good."

"I'm almost an M.D.," Yang says, tamping a cigarette on his knuckle.

The cage reappears as Ndiawar leans back. "Yang is a case worker who consumes medicine. However he is cheap and has in that chest of his a good heart"

Yang stares at Ndiawar. "What medication?"

"...which goes out to others."

Day stands. "I need to know when I start."

Ndiawar extends half the cage. "Buy clay."

Sarah walks Day to the pool the night before Esther gets hurt. She asks Day to touch the brightly lit water. She asks him to immerse himself in the shallow end.

Day and Sarah have sex in the shallow end of Sarah's cold pool. Sarah around Day is hot water. Day has his orgasm inside her. Sarah begins to have her orgasm, her lids flutter, Day tries with wet fingers to hold her lids open, she hanging onto him, back ramming against a tiled side, whispering, "Oh."

"I don't know who Miro is," Yang says as they drive away from the home of the lady who loves blood and speaks only Spanish. "You thought it looked like Miro?"

"It did." Day wipes the closed heat of the county car from his face. His supply case is in the back under a big steel bucket. A mop handle rattles against the bucket.

Yang hits the dashboard's top. The air conditioner grinds out a smell of must. The car's heat is intense.

"Do the phone bill," Day says, falling in behind a city bus hairy with spray paint. The bus smells sweet.

Yang rolls his window and lights a cigarette. He exhales something pale.

"Ndiawar told me about your wife's little girl. I'm sorry about the crack about taking a vacation your first week here. I'm sorry I didn't know."

Day can see Yang's face out of the corner. "I've always liked the blue of a phone bill."

The air conditioner begins to work against its own smell.

Yang has very black hair and a thin wool tie and eyes the color of trout. He closes them.

"Now I've got the phone bill folded into a triangle. But one side doesn't quite come down and meet the base. But it's still a triangle. An order-in-chaos type of thing."

Day sees something yellow by the road.

"Eric?"

"The bill's got a tiny rip in the right leg of the triangle," says Yang, "and it's for sixty dollars. The rip is tiny and white and sort of hairy."

Day guns to pass a pickup full of chickens. A spray of corn and feathers.

"I'm rotating the rip out of sight," Yang whispers. The side of his face breaks into crescents. "Now there's nothing but phone-bill blue."

There's a horn and the tug of a swerve.

Yang opens his eyes. "Whoa."

"Sorry."

They drive past some dark buildings with no glass in the windows. A dirty boy throws a tennis ball at a wall.

"I hope they," Yang is saying.

"What?"

"Catch the drunk driver."
 Day looks over at Yang.
 Yang looks at him. "The one who hit your little girl."
 "What driver?"
 "I hope they catch the bastard."
 Day looks at street. "Esther had an accident in Sarah's pool," he says quietly.
 "You guys have a pool?"
 "My wife does. There was an accident. Esther got hurt."
 "Ndiawar told me she got hit."
 "The drain outlet got blocked. The drain's suction sucked her underwater."
 "Am I sorry," says Yang.
 "I can't swim."
 "Ndiawar said you said the driver was drunk."
 "She's in the hospital, still. There's going to be brain damage."
 Yang is looking at him. "Should you even be at work?"
 Day cranes to see street signs. He stops at a light. "Which way?"
 Yang looks at the log book over the visor. Points.

The brush strokes of dreampaintings are visible as rhythms. That day's painting discloses its rhythms against a terrain in which light is susceptible to the influences of air.

Winds blow. Open spaces flash like diseased nerves. Bent trees hang with a viscous aura that irrigates grass, piles up bright against fencebottoms, walls. Corners shiver gusts into spectra. Tall boys knife through a parting shine, their hands to black eyes.

Winds of light coil like something that coils, strike, break faint through a college hall's mullioned windows. Day's sketched notes light up. On the machine-lit screen, at the auditorium's front, at his podium microphone, reading a lecture to a hall full of boys. His shadow moves like an insect against Vermeer's colored Delft as he feels at his eyes.

The old man reads his lecture about Vermeer. The hall is dark behind Day's glowing front row. Day hears an envelope being torn open. Whispered laughter. Someone snaps gum. A boy to Day's left groans and thrashes in a deep sleep. The lecture is dry. The boy next to Day takes a real interest in that part of his wrist that surrounds his wristwatch.

The art professor is an old man who reads in a monotone about how a Dutchman's particular brush strokes kill time in Delft.

Sculptured heads turn oblique to see the angle of the flashing clock's hands. The clock is against the back wall, between windows with frayed theater shades.

Thin blotchy Day sees how it's the angle of the bright breeze against the screen that makes the wet face in the art professor's slide-lit shadow glow. Tears shine their jelly above the old man's dull prepared text. Day watches a teardrop move into another teardrop on the art professor's cheek. The professor reads on about the use of hue in the sun's rivered reflection in Delft, Holland. The two drops, together, pick up speed, head for the text.

Now the art professor is truly old. He kneels brittle in the dry field at the limit of an industrial park. He assumes an attitude of prayer.

"One faces," Ndiawar of the blinding head reads from a prepared memo in the sun. Yang shields his cigarette from a breeze.

"One faces confinement as a natural consequence of behaving in manners which, toward others, are aberrant," Ndiawar reads.

The small white planet on a stalk Day sees is a dandelion gone to seed, in August.

Yang sits tangent to the knelt shadow, legs crossed smoking. He combs with a hand. "It's a question of publicness, sir," he says. "It's a public question. Am I right Dr. Ndiawar."

"Tell him a community of other persons is no vacuum."

"You're not in a vacuum here, sir," Yang says.

"Rights exist in states of tension. Rights are necessarily tense." Ndiawar skims.

Yang buries a butt. "Here's the thing sir. You want to pray to a picture of yourself praying, that is okay. That's fine. Except just not where other people have to watch you do it. Is that unreasonable?"

Day watches over a lollipop of snow. The big painting stands nailed to a weighted easel in the field. The art professor kneels, in the painting.

"One faces," Ndiawar reads further, "additional natural confinement as the consequence of standing on streets' corners to ask passersby, who are innocent bystanders, for the gift of minutes from their lifespans."

"One minute," says the art professor in the weighted painting. "Surely you can spare one minute."

Yang stares at the painting he prays to. "Solicitation for minutes means confinement, sir."

"I'll take any minute you can spare. Name your time."

"Just not on streets," Yang says.

Ndiawar is replacing the memos in a breast pocket. A hint of the cage. The art professor doesn't look over.

Half the cage is over Day's shoulder, over the dandelion. "Services are required," Ndiawar says. "Badly."

Day's breath breaks the white seeded ball.

Esther's scarred shaved head is wrapped in gauze. Day's head inclines over a page. Sarah's head is in the cleric's lap, in the bright corner. The cleric's head is thrown back, eyes on the white ceiling.

"I apologize," Sarah's head says to the black lap. "The phone. The outlet. The drain. The suction. She turns white and he turns colors. I apologize."

"Though giants," Day is reading aloud, "come in only one size, they come in a variety of forms. There are the Greek Cyclops and the French Pantagruel and the American Bunyan. There are wide and related cycles that establish giants as columns of flame, giants as mountains that walk inverted."

"No, I apologize," says the cleric's head. A thin hand touches Sarah's pinned hair.

"There are warm giants," Day reads. "There are also cold giants. One type of cold giant is described in cycles as a sky-high skeleton made all of colored glass. The glass giant lives in a forest that is pure-white with frost."

"After you," Sarah whispers, opening the door to Esther's room.

The head above black and white smiles. "After you."

"The glass giant's stride is a mile across. All day every day it strides. It never stops striding. Not even to sleep. It lives in fear of its frozen forest melting. Its fear keeps it striding every minute. The glass giant strides through the white forest, day after day, and the heat of its stride melts the forest behind it."

Esther smiles past the closing door. "The rainbow."

"Yes." Day shows a picture. "The melted forest rains, and the glass giant is a rainbow."

"Melted forests are rain."

Sarah sneezes, muffled, out in the hall. Day waits for the cleric to say it.

"Time your breathing," the truly old professor of art instructs Day. Yang and Ndiawar stand in the lap of the dry field's water.

"Breathe air," the art professor says, pantomiming the crawl stroke. "Spit water. A rhythm. In. Out."

Day pantomimes the crawl stroke.

Eric Yang closes his eyes. "The rip in the bill is back."

The dreampainting of the art professor in an attitude of prayer stands nailed to the weighted public display. The wind blows. Dandelions snow up around the men. Bees work the field's yellow against a growing blue.

"Breathe in from above. Breathe out from below," the old man says, crawling.

The dry field is an island. The blue water all around is peppered white with dry islands. Esther lies on a thin clean metal bed on the next island. Water moves in the dry channel between them.

Day crawls in the air with his plump arms. His plump arms in the air bat down white floating seed. A plant sprouts in no time. Its spire reaches Day's knees.

Yang speaks to Ndiawar about the texture of the bill. Ndiawar complains to Yang that his best cage leaves no hands to unlock it.

The art professor steps back before the fluttered growth of the dark plant. Day flails in the pollen, breathes in rhythm.

Sarah floats supine in the channel before Esther's island. Then the plant's shadow shuts down the water's light. The plant's shadow is the biggest thing Day has ever seen. Its facade heaves out of sight, summons the prefix bronto-. The seeded ground of the field booms under the weight of a buttress. The buttress curves out of sight toward the facade. A rose window glints blush against the curve.

The door of the thing grows, writhing like dark lips. It rushes at the men.

"Help!" Esther calls, faint.

The tiny church takes the men inside. Day hears the distant groan of growth. The dark church is lit through colored glass.

From inside, the rose window continues to rise. The rose is round. Spikes radiate. Inside the window a woman tries to smile her way out of the unpunctured glass.

Day crawls.

"Close the eyes in your head," comes Ndiawar's wood echo.

Yang faces the transept. "Close them."

Barrel vaults darkle above the rose. The window reverses the sun's normal disclosure of worlds. Everything solid is here painted black. All that is light is brilliant color. Day sees its shape. The color tapers up from the rose, refracts at a dark still point.

Day crawls for the point.

The professor of art puts Day's watch to the altar. Kneels.

Esther lies gauzed on the dark point atop the shaped color of the unpunctured rose window. Day sees the point through the wet starred curtain he sews. He swims through his curtain.

The black point over color cracks open. Esther falls through jagged halves toward the bright window high overhead. Her fall takes time. Her body spins slowly through air, trailing a cotton comet. The smiling window rushes at her.

Day says yes.

A smell of impact at great height. The red glass reaches out.

ROTATE

The sky is an eye.

The dusk and dawn are the blood that feed the eye.

The night is the lid of the eye.

Each day the lid is drawn back, disclosing blood, and the blue iris of a prone giant.

THREE POEMS
 by John M. Bennett

Rot Upright

("Where the free seethes, in a mouth, where the clout bursts...") So he's several severeds (but proud of's thought?) So he's aerosol, "french fries", shoes in a sink sogged where his cheek drips, er, ticks in's skin wriggle (but what'd L...?) or flies fluttering in's sleeve... ("But the carrion center, the offal truth he's, what stands and counts innumerable countings! What hands in him, where the spout blooms! Where he's out!") (Where a jiggling I pouts...)

Teatro Del Mundo

My interest flagged as the lights dimmed and sparks danced on the chain. Cuts on the hand I raised, flapping for speech. Oh formal bantering, funneling the eye! I shuddered with cant, more leeches lapping praise. Sand gluts our main chance in the dark, lik thin night in a bag. I'd rest my inner fight, but the curtains blaze whenever I lag

Fire 'O Time

What sloshes in's thought's an old form sloughing, like an arm thins-thinks, like's hairy brain sings, slower 'n louder with sagged loops of decay, 'n notes from's face flayed. O's fluttering as scratches's head! (Like's moth-covered or crumbling leaves!) (What slop-slaps where's eyes what's scene think, pulsing low in's missed) But O's with motes 'n plays crowded, what he cluttered's singed, uttered!

FLASHES

(excerpt from "Psychics, Vampires Explained")

by Jukka Tuiska

Flashes

Ahead of myself. Psychics function in flashes. Clusters. Non-linear patterns. We leave ourselves open to much pain this way. I might suddenly burst out crying in line at the bank. But then, I've noticed more and more people do. Maybe it's a change in the air.

Being a psychic is a lifestyle thing. You adjust your lifestyle to suit your disease. You don't ride subways at rush hour. You don't live in a city if you can help it. The perfect place is some isolated castle. So you wouldn't run into stinking people you'd come out only at night. So no stinking people ran into you you'd live in a coffin. A great perk might be turning into a bat. Bats and psychics have a lot in common. We both fly on radar, and we're both mistaken for vampires.

Vampires are evil. Psychics are not. Consider the mosquito perched on your arm, sucking happily. Consider the tsetse fly. One will make you a zombie. The difference is not subtle. Do vampires suck blood? Depends what you mean? A body found underwater is white but not bloodless. What accounts for this? I am also quite pale of skin, but only because I live mostly at night. It's not because I'm dead. Is there a distinction? (My pallor as proof of the human soul, or rather in my case the non-proof?) I concede my sweet drowned maiden this. I share this with her corpse like the wine of Communion. Ophelia.

I am Joan of Arc. I am the one who is burnt at the stake for hearing voices. While watching me slow-toast is a man with small steady eyes and a tongue that curls over his lower lip. Look you stupid French people! There is a witch, there is a vampire! Some look- dull eyes dart around, past this heinous creature, fall on some poor hunchbacked waif. He is burned next. Thanks a lot God. Thank you very fucking much for your voices. Jesus was psychic. (Jesus my brother. Jesus, patron saint of bureaucrats- paper work that could have been avoided! Jesus, psychic, up on the blocks.)

I imagine Cathy, seated on her throne. There are angels at her feet. Jesus Christ is before her. He lifts up his hands. In them is a bright, sparkling aura. It is her coronation. I am so proud of her, I am like a mother.

I have gone without my monthly feed for as long as I can. I find myself pressing my head against the next cubicle in a public toilet. I decide that is it. I won't become some psychic pervert. I go to see a movie right then, in the afternoon, a kid's movie.

Then. On my feet. Fire. Running. I run to the front of the theatre. I face this woman. Her stomach is swelled. Her cheeks are pale but pink. "Baby's first movie?" (I am three. My mother sits at the kitchen table. She is glowing. "Mamma's on fire!" She cups a hand around her stomach, she lifts her nightgown. Inside is a bomb- a round fleshy furnace- just barely unexploded.)

Outside I take her hand. I try not to hold it hard, but I send her all I got. I boost her all I can. "One for the baby." I squeeze again. She laughs, the webs of her eyes release me. She walks down into the subway.

She's gone now.

Cathy is gone now.

"Nickerson, Marvin. I'm listed."

This is his description: Blonde. About thirty-five. Tanned. Six-foot-one. One hundred-and-sixty-five pounds. White teeth. Wears oversized suits. Hair cut in Yorkville. Last seen in the aura of her- CATHY. Approach cautiously. Crime: He is a vampire.

What is an aura?

1. an invisible emanation.
2. a particular atmosphere or quality that seems to arise from and surround a person or thing.

What is an aura? Can't you guess? Dead people have no aura. Curiously, neither do those underwater. I have no aura. All humans have auras. I am not all humans. Psychics have auras. I am psychic, but have no aura. Conclusion?

Certain works of art have auras. Michelangelo's "David" has an aura. "The Virgin, The Infant Jesus, Saint Joan" by Boticeili has an aura. (St. Joan and Jesus do, the Virgin does not. This is the only depiction of the infant Jesus in which he does possess an aura.) The clowns of Rouault have auras. Many works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti have auras. Certain photos of Marilyn Monroe have auras. Ditto Frances Farmer. I once saw an aura around the head of the cow on the Cow Brand Baking Soda box.

Psychics see auras. Infrared- actually infrablue. We don't think anything of it, and as a child, in art period perhaps, experience the beginning of the end. We begin the lie. From then on, we are frightened of our blue pencil crayons.

Auras are erratic. They disappear. They reappear at the worst moments. Our first sexual encounter. Receiving the Eucharist. A baseball game. We begin to formulate theories about them.

Aura's display your sins- like wearing underwear on the outside, and your virtues as well- your clean underwear. She- Cathy- left the theatre that day without an aura. The blonde man who sat behind her, and leaned over too closely, left with hers. I am sure of it. I am sure that man is a vampire.

I have to go to work.

So where does a freak like me work? (Money= sustenance= the freakish regeneration of cells?) I work in a twenty-four hour supermarket. I am a stock person- as opposed to stock boy. There are age distinctions.

Another common confusion about psychics is that we can easily prosper from our weird talents. Use them for financial gain. Any avid reader of fairy fiction knows we can only use our gift to do good. Like leading armies in France, like battling Roman rule in the Holy Land, like finding abducted babies, warming cold peasants in town squares, greasing subway tracks. That sort of thing.

I am at work. And I flash forward. The leitmotif is water and hair like seaweed. It fans out, undulating. Alive? Anguish unimaginable.

I sit down, right in the aisle, amid my cans of peas. I am rescued by a couple of stock boys who have seen my demise in the mirror overhead.

"How old are you, Mr. Nickerson?" I knew they were going to ask that. Me and Joan and Jesus are asked many such questions. (The detective bends down and inspects the bank from which Ophelia supposedly slipped. Looking for...? Footprints? Cartridge shells?)

Later: "How old was she, Mr. Nickerson?"

How old? How old, Cathy?

One good thing about living in a big city, as opposed to a country chateau, is the despair. I never have to look far if I need to feed. There's the obvious man in the street- the homeless and ill. There are green, sunny parks where people go before killing themselves. There are tons of elevators. Elevators are transformers of despair. I've stepped into them with no one there, and it still stinks up the air. They're like confessionals, only more real, more suited to the raw immediacy of urban life.

I'm no stranger to despair. I could catalogue it like butterflies if they had such a library. They may someday. Just as elevators will take over from confessionals.

I first had sex when I was twelve. The onset of puberty is often the harbinger of telepathy. My first masturbation fantasies were full of the thoughts of others. This did not faze me. The dislocation of actual sex did. I abstained for a number of years. Sex with Cathy was like sex with a sponge. Like sex with Death from "The Seventh Seal." I am not being unkind. My sex life has been physically painful, when otherwise nonexistent.

But I am ahead of myself again.

Time compacts and expands. Some things seem to last ten years, a phone call, an official voice. Some things last seconds, or months. Certain parts I can expand, like lengths of magnetic tape, but there is the danger of distortion. A small look exchanged might now have a million meanings, frozen before me an eternity- photographs of some quagmire assassination. Trajectories. Unavoidable. A hazard of memory as opposed to history. Am I a faithful projector? Yes, faithful to image if not to truth. Like any good projector.

Four days.

Four days later she phones.

Cathy and I sit in the donut shop until sunup.

"Cathy," I lean close, my aura enveloping her. I imagine it as a huge down pillow- the one my grandmother's head spent its last days in. Opium eyed.

Scenes similar to this are repeated for two weeks. Donut shops. Parks. Malls. Never in movie theatres, never. And always in elevators, always. Cathy lives on the twenty-second floor, and I always wait so that we have an elevator to ourselves. And I watch her in the mirror. As if her wounds would manifest. Stigmata. She is full of wounds. Full of wound. I braid her hair. It allows me to scan the back of her head. If I find a hole I can siphon it all back inside her while she sleeps? But while Cathy sleeps the moon pulls the planet.

Einstein concluded that matter and energy are equivalent, and that space and time are interdependent. They form a four-dimensional continuum.

There is personal physics as well. Naturally, the exact same rules apply, as between the nucleus of an atom and a star. I have not worked out the permutations. I will though. I must. I will then warp time, and I will live within the resulting coordinates. Even a room would do.

Already, I am half-way there. Memory seems more alive to me than present day. I am crossing over, transferring myself atom by atom, to energy, reforming myself somewhere else. Like a ghost I feel myself appearing on photographs I wish had been taken. Some were. I hold these long in my hands. The photographer is me. I will myself into the photos. Fashion must hold true. I am relying on my theory of personal relativity. Science as salvation, yet again.

(People are only energy. Love. If you take it from them they collapse like moths with too-touched wings. A child's experiment. Love. And Auras.)

I quit the job at the market. This work is more important. It is certainly full-time. My father sends me money. He has always treated me like a dying child. I appreciate this consideration.

My health is declining. I can feel the drain of maintaining Cathy. And when she refuses to see me for two days, I feel my energy returning. This equation is merciless and perfect. I start to form my theory of personal relativity, while waiting for the phone to ring.

After two days she calls. She is having contractions. Could I come?

What could I have done differently?

I could have been honest. But that would have been impossible. Somewhere I lost track of what was happening. I sent my parents photos of the baby, Martin. I became a father, became seduced by this strange scenario. I make no apologies. My life had been a hell. The true hell of boredom. I had been skirting the edges of Tedium for so long, as a leper, as a modern day Oedipus. I was in no hurry to leave this womb.

I could have told Cathy the truth, but that would have been unpardonable. I had no right to condemn her. She had transformed me, and somehow... Somehow she too had been transformed. She was now inhabiting a shell that I came to recognize- steadily, guiltily- as my old self. Had it happened in the mirror? Had I done it with the camera? She needed constant doses of my energy. She had no source of her own. No aura. Suspended artificially in this hospital I called love, and she called what?

What had I done to her? I had done this to her. I had made up the blonde man at the theatre to mask my own disease. What was a vampire, and what was a psychic?

Martin cries in the night. It is I who gets up to feed him. Cathy needs sleep. She will not admit to the continuing loss of her dreams, but I know it. At breakfast she makes them up, reinventing her dreamlife as others do their past. And aren't dreams glimpses of one's future? I have reason to argue this theory, as I change tiny Martin, and he quiets with my rocking. (He is the real infant Jesus. He has a brilliant aura, and I turn out the lights to watch it. From death is born life.)

I get frequent colds. My headaches become constant. My glands swell. I lose weight. My sense of humour erodes. We have little money. Cathy gives up the apartment. We get a rent-subsidized apartment by luck. Perhaps a gift of God.

Martin is strong. A strong little baby. How much of me has really gone into him? I sit and watch him sleeping in his crib. Cathy lies across my lap, her hand now forever attached to mine. I do not share my secret thoughts, these claims to paternity- to maternity.

To make love to Cathy is like giving blood. It leaves me dizzy, headachy, and only slightly elated. I do it merely out of a sense of duty- though these boosts are transfusions to Cathy, extensions of life. I make love to her as a flagellant. I do it out of worship. To what? To whom? These questions do not enter my mind. At the time.

I achieve an adequate erection each time and ejaculation. I do not know if ejaculation is necessary for Cathy. I imagine the millions of little replicas of my being, deep inside her, little bullet-copies of my love. Their mission is of course her salvation.

Cathy is put on anti-depressants. They do not help, but rather make her nervous and irritable. She cries more than Martin now, and Martin looks at her with round eyes. I take Martin for long walks, so that Cathy can conserve her strength.

Somebody finally heard little Martin crying. One would think that the abandoned carriage by the waterfront would have been enough. But this is The Big City. There is no curiosity here. Only onlooking.

Cathy's body had not drifted far. It had stayed pretty steady, about three feet underwater. Hovering, anchored by big red boots. She had borrowed them many times from me. They drag her out. Put her in an ambulance, with light flashing, no siren. Don't wake the living, as we can't wake the dead?

There is a painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti of the pre-raphaelites. "Hamlet and Ophelia" (the later version.) Ophelia's aura burns so bright that the paint around Hamlet's face has cracked. I wonder why Rossetti did not paint her in her watery grave? I know at once of course. Now I do.

I imagine her there. The reeds fan out from her head, tangled with her hair. She is more beautiful than alive. A halo among the reeds. My Cathy. A romantic in an unromantic world.

It takes me months, but I find myself a vampire. A movie house. I don't interrupt. I let him

have his meal. I follow him. His blond hair, trimmed short at the back, long on the top. He wears an overcoat. Underneath that, a grey pin-striped suit. Black shoes. Laced, not loafers. I try to memorize everything. He stops by his office. An advertising agency. He comes out with a black, thin attache case. He smiles at someone entering the building. He takes no notice of me, walks right past. I follow him. He hesitates at the subway entrance, glancing around for a cab. I have one subway token. I do not have cab fare. He chooses the subway. I follow. I wait for the train to pull up. Southbound, I notice. I push him onto the tracks. I end his life. Vampires are mortal.

I am polite, lucid. I sit and answer all their questions. I have no qualms about telling them I'm psychic. Proud like Joan. I am led away. I am taken away. Outside they are preparing the town square. I will make them warm tonight. I will make their eyes light up. I will make them grateful. I have built my own cross. And I will carry it. This is not humiliation. This is satisfaction. In the crackle of flames, I will find marriage and ascension. (Together we will wait for Martin. Cathy and I. This I tell him.)

THREE POEMS by John Donlan

Ice Advisory

The possibility of happiness extends at least as far as today's weather, continues, surely, where along the rivers each twig is outlined in light after its plunge into the sky - still wet, chilly and gleaming. Not yes and not no: a lyric handshake between big mind and little mind in the shiny street and we're back to wanting to hear my voice and to hear yours. Step, step - the terrible clock waits on desire, handing you your coat, waking you too early to be alone unless you're armed with providence, a flair for closing and opening the floodgates that connect you to the world as it includes you, indifferent matter organized, comprehensible, loved. Assess and ignore risk, flow out anyway, volunteer a fall on the glazey slope to recognize a tracery as ours in another presence, the river valley, you.

Miracle Plastic

Mornings, raise the will from under Bag Ghost: slack full, heavy as if dosed on a regime of Collopy's Gravid Water, or fortunately born in easy circumstance. Let me get you another: as easy as bending someone to your wish - presumed necessary according to the power rules. We'll do it together but no-one will know, not even us. The yielding surface, smooth as skin (it is skin) to the hand, restores the galaxy of options. I choose my favorites until their domain grows to include both our pasts - I know nothing of them but what they tell me, and I trust them. Awake in your real time, you live imagined intermittently in mine - I don't need to explain why I see things and comment, as if you were still here. You are the history I still inhabit, yours is the ear I speak into, the audience for now, silent, absent.

Error Retrieval

No happy skull getting its love at the movies could be more wasted in forgetting kind flesh, letting remembered pain cloud the bright glimpse of a past someone. Just as a picture exercises what words won't, so the "logic of the imagination" demands a springboard out of the personal, a pseudopod extending the soul to welcome and envelop newfound fragments of the world. Though one gull's swallowed a barb a hundred more racket on oblivious, a white sheet flapping, thriving on a field of what might be called waste. Mays in Gibbons Park the same killdeer calls its heart-piercing claim to the same gravel bed, each stone precious as an egg. You and I lived some moments here. With other visiting species we admit the power centred in this river bend and the killdeer's claim.

bilinguisme & other fanaisies made in canada by Jean Morisset

j'ai...moi qui vous parle
j'ai le moi bilingue
et le je unilingue

I have...I qui vous parle
I have a one-way I
under a bilingual me

*
things keep trading their identity
sans me consulter d'un moi à l'autre
sounds keep sliding du moi au me
sans passer par le I

oh what am I...who am I
what am "me" gonna do

never it is the same I
qui cesse d'être bilingue
d'une langue à l'autre

*
j'ai...I qui vous parle
j'ai le je unitongue
mais mon autre est bilingue

j'ai...je qui vous parle
j'ai le me bilingue
et le moi polyglotte

for I do speak other languages
that are neither bilingual
nor french

langues non bilingues
ni pour moi ni pour l'autre

for I do speak français-français
quite fluently
franco-french quite hectically
and sometimes
anglo-anglo quite perfunctorily

*
j'ai...moi qui vous parle
j'ai l'anglais bilingue
et le moi interlingue

but every time I do speak bilingual english
there's a me au fond de moi
revenant toujours au français bilingue

so never shall I know
laquell de mes autres langues
enjoys the most to be my other language
because my autre langue keeps bouncing back upon my other language
and
ma seule langue est toujours mon autre langue

*
j'ai...moi qui vous parle
j'ai le je entremêlé de I
& le moi entrelardé de me

je suis...mois qui vous parle
je suis unilingue à plusieurs étages
& bilingual in a single language
and

my only real language
est la langue qui se tait so tenderly
quand je vous parle en silence

j'ai...I qui vous parle
I have something inside moi
that haunts me jusqu'aux larmes

étranger tous les jours
entre le soi et le myself
I am an éternel by-produit genuinely exotique
en quête d'un eluding lui-même

animiste multiculturel
&
folklorique tune en allphonie

*
je marche...moi qui vous parle
à la rencontre de ce qui se cach en pleine lumière
half-way between a bilingual dream
et cette muette émotion beyond any language

toute la jouissance de l'être
entre les jambes de l'espace

je suis cet autre qui
m'aura toujours rencontré
pour la deuxième fois

I am the left-hand side of my brain

An Excerpt from BABE RUTH IN LOVE

by David McGimpsey

Babe Ruth, Yankee slugger extraordinaire,
Red Sox lefty who never lost a World Series game,
neck tumor / throat cancer victim
victor over millions of hot dogs and beers
is just another who didn't really die.
Pals, he just excused himself from the hospital bed,
too scrawny for pinstripes,
his face drooping, badly ravaged,
& wandered out under the weary stars
& went somewhere altogether Ruthian
& picked himself up a brontosaurus bone.
He had a few & gnawed away the prehistoric gristle
till his teeth were as sharp as the Spanish blade
& the dinosaur bone was fashioned,
alla Bambino, into some kind of Louisville slugger.
& he put it in the trunk of his black sedan
& he got behind the wheel of his black sedan
& drove into the dreary heartland:
state welcome-signs whizzed by his head,
at the corner of his eyes
like so many Walter Johnson pay-back pitches.
Night cold & dark as spilling shark gut
heavy w cuttlefish ink,
as far as the eye can see.

The baseball star ends up
in some part of the great prairie
gets out of the car,
his eyes sunken & purple, his jowls dangling,
& he walks into some earnest cornfield.

"It just takes one hit!" Babe yells
& starts swinging his stick into the tall corn.
From the left side, really letting loose;
in a whirlwind of intense power
he starts demolishing the field
whacking the corn into pulp / pig fodder,
mashing the green out of the leaves
sending the stalks into other counties.
"Fuck Iowa!" he says
"Fuck the cornfields, & the green blades of grass,
fuck the Mighty Casey & his Mudville saps,
fuck Frank Capra & the white sugar ulcer
given to me & this goddamned game."
The John Deere combine of his swing,
the force of his grip turning his knuckles white,
& he finishes off the cornstalks
until the field is clear, good as plowed,
& Ruth just starts pounding into the earth /
& lumps of worm thick sod are uplifted
sent flying above & beyond
the smell of damp soil overwhelming,
like dark blood from a stomach wound.

& Babe starts burrowing downwards --
a mad miner on a strange mission --
he beats through roots, the layer of top soil,
rocks, clay, through Indian graves & solidified oil.
Through the earth's crust ultimately
just hitting, hitting w all the rage
his cancer had brought on, singing
"Tessie, Tessie, won't you come home."
Through the fossils, to a spot magma hot,
a cavern in the fold of the deep earth,
the hole in the ground that Ruth built.
& all of a sudden there's a bit of light,
a dim yellow porch stoop light
& there's a bucket of baseballs
each one grimed over w red Mississippi mud
& signed "A. Bartlett Giamatti."
So Babe does what comes natural,
one by one he flips the balls in the air
takes his primordial stick
& starts belting line drives,
& long roping loopers into the dark,
way past the confines of any fence
500, maybe 600 feet.
He never hears the balls land
or bounce off the cavern walls.
& George Herman Ruth,
the bad kid from Baltimore
the red, white & blue cigar-chomping
skirt-chasing, whisky-drinking,
ball-playing embodiment of a country's soul
kept merrily swatting away.
Crack! Crack! Crack!
The more he hit out into the hollow,
the more the flood lights would come on,
until he could see ominous red stalactites
ready to break & kill
& a yellow kitchen door flush
w the damp rock wall.

He finished w the bucket of balls,
a blood blister at the base of his right hand
& went & peered through the door's screen.
All he could see was a cool blue light flickering.
He banged on the aluminum
& said "anyone home?"
He opens the door, says it again inside
& somebody inside, a male voice, goes
"take off your shoes!"
We just had the carpets done!"
Babe kicks off his loafers
& walks gingerly to where the voice
& the blue light are coming from.
His face is pale as mouse-fur
& he wears a wet, fake smile.
Through a hallway w prints of barns
& by a small bathroom w towels askew
he ends up at a living room
where a family is watching color tv.
They are watching a show
about a family just like them.
The mother says to the guest
"can I get you something?"
Some slippers for your feet?"
The tv is bigger, nicer than anything
he has ever seen.
"Wow. This is a weird place.
For a second I thought I was in hell,
or at least some kind of purgatory."
& when the commercials are on, the father says
"well, it used to be something like that here
buy y'know how complaisant
things have got. We can't be bothered."
All the ads are for self improvement products:
whiter teeth, flatter stomach, bigger hair.
"Listen Uidge" the father whispers
not to disturb the family
"you're not out of the underworld yet."
But there would be no lip-smacking Cerebus,
no towers of white hot acetylene fires,
no cow gut spilling over the freshly whipped head,
no vulgar humiliation of the beast
that made its way through a human life.
After the show, an older man, maybe an uncle
takes Babe aside, lights a cigar
a Davidoff-Corona hand rolled in Cuba
& hands it to the Babe.
He says, like he has somewhere else to go
"Just through that door,
the one w
the stained-glass my neice designed,
just through that door you go
& there, all of a sudden, just like that
you will be in Ocean City Maryland 1991,
& you'll be on the beach
& you'll meet someone.
Her name is Kate, I think."
& Babe complimented him on the cigar
thinking again that this is really weird
this is just about the end
& the old man starts singing
"they people way down below
have got a new m.o. ..."
& he wheels about, catches his breath
& tells Ruth where he is going:
a world full of oil spills, radon gas,
pcbs, fluorocarbons, H₂s, benzene,
& monoxide & acid rain.
Where there's the AIDs virus, increased cancer
rampant starvation, continued political blindness,
crackhouse murders, serial killers
& a nuclear build up to blast
all our little tales of way down below
& baseball into the cold lungless air of space.
Babe, then, just wants to go fast
to get out from below
into the dangerous place
to check out the woman behind the door;
he's heard it all before he says.
But before he heads out, he's stopped.
The old man says "if
you want to leave
you have to help us w this crossword"
& the uncle pulls out a tattered newspaper clip
squints & asks
"what's a 4 letter word for 'sultan's work'?"
"That's easy" Babe says
"Swat!"
& he pats the uncle on the back
& runs on his spindly legs
never looking back, out the door
to the beach beyond.

Cape Cod Blues by David L. Ulin

(for John)

"Perhaps nothing is true but everything is real..."
--Jack Kerouac

1.
always ten years old
in this town
my mother's son
my mother's son
my mother's son

2.
Cape Cod
in the fog
the streets of Chatham
clogged
with snaky lines of cars
and a teenage girl sings
about trouble
behind the wheel

3.
old New England faces
are as weatherbeaten
as the shingles on these
old New England houses
the lines are drawn deep
and sharp,
trenched tight
around lips and
eyes

4.
but I'm not ten years old
either,
not in this town or
any other--
no, no, got my share
of gray hair
and scars
sitting on the streets of Chatham
waiting for the rain

5.
across the street,
they're securing the flag:
a bald guy in baggy brown
shorts is tying a length of
twine through an eyelet cut
in the thirteenth stripe
to restrain the stars
and keep them earthbound

6.
my brother looks like a young JFK
standing here dressed
in only khaki shorts
a web belt
and a tan,
his stomach flat and tight,
ribbed with ridges of muscles
defined
like a photo from the helm
of PT 109
Guadalcanal Diary
1943

GOING TO THE MARQUEE

we walked watched
the steep of your cheek
and separate paint
that is
falls
to the sisters
beat you into jewelry and ribbed
talk til bed
a hundred handed
hair to stand up into
the crown and cut-out sky
and walk for beer by men shining in age
it was instant jam
but in your throat
asked the mountains to
fall on them then you show your teeth rolling the sun on

tomorrow it's chutney so
park the car in toronto walk to
the basket you made of
sucked sweet of territory
pizzelle
and anthems torn off
and salami
by nightfall
and tickets to
hear king david rudder
talk about hills to remember they
slid between haiti and the sun

heard with spitting
popped skies on the tin
to the tiger burns and one
not kitchen
to where the pump splashes rum only to bathe the dead

by Steve Harney

THE FALL OF LANGUAGE: Paul Auster's City of Glass as Post-Critical Text

by Mark Kemp

City of Glass is a novel that, from its title (evoking surfaces both transparent and reflective, penetrable yet resistant to the gaze), to its self-mirroring narratives meticulously constructs specularity. The specular and the speculative, etymological relatives, intersect in the postmodern detective novel: the deductive and investigative hybridized by the self-reflexive and deconstructive. The poststructuralist (episteme not theory) critique of language is served by the metafictional strategies of the postmodern detective novel. *City of Glass*, the first volume of Paul Auster's "New York Trilogy," is, among other things, a study of both the genres of speech and story which pave the streets we walk on, and a discussion of the (im)possibilities of language in those streets. The trilogy can be considered, along with the de- or (trans-)generic writings of such novelist-critics as Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, Susan Sontag, David Lodge, Raymond Williams, Monique Wittig or Alain Robbe-Grillet, to mention only a few, as what Gregory Ulmer has called "post-criticism." In brief, this is criticism that actualizes the discourses/genres it criticizes, fiction that incorporates the theory of its own reading. The traditional segregation of "creative" and "academic," like other abstract oppositions (content/form; mind/body), is undermined by the post-critical.

The detective novel, because of its inherently double nature--two interlaced *histoires* and therefore two reciprocal and often ambiguous perspectives, those of "detective" and "criminal"--acts as a ready-made model for the self-reflexive novel, and especially for the novel that foregrounds its own formal and semantic devices in the way that the postmodern novel and French Nouveau Roman do. In an essay on the "metaphysical detective story" as it functions in Robbe-Grillet and Borges, Michael Holquist remarks that these two writers "depend on the audience's familiarity with the conventions of the detective story to provide the subtext they may then play with by defeating expectations. The most common expectation, based on reading classical detective stories, which postmodernism defeats is that of syllogistic order." What Holquist does not elaborate on is that element of the existing "order" that is most subject to subversion by the postmodern novel: language.

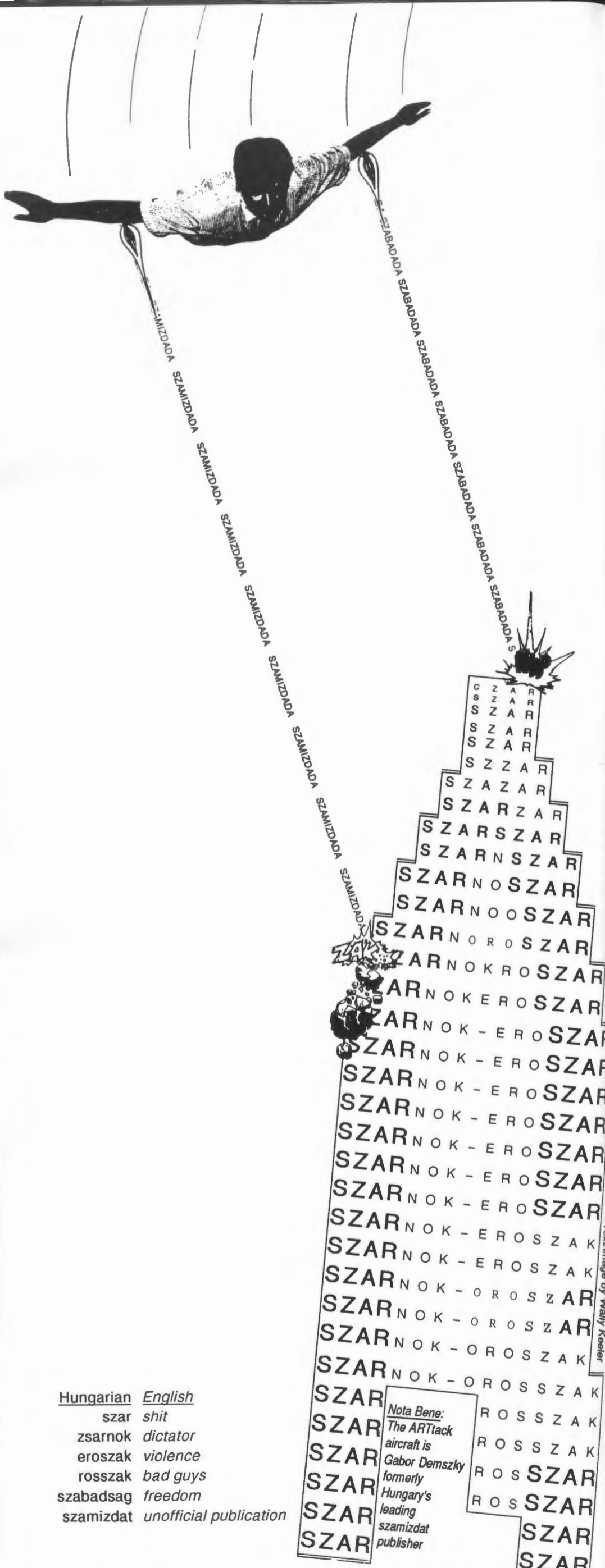
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Genre expectations are aroused before the novel is even opened: book marketing strategies rely on formulas and audience desire for repetition--or the combination of "redundancy" and "reconfirmation" which Eco has observed in the serial novel--and doubtless Auster anticipates such gambits. The cover blurb (in the Penguin edition) bombards the prospective buyer with words like "suspense," "action," "A wondrous whodunnit," "an intricate detective story," "psychological analysis," "Nominated for an Edgar Award for best mystery of the year...." The graphic illustration itself evokes comicbook gumshoes in the hard-boiled tradition of paid surveillance. The conventions of this tradition are so familiar by now--largely due to the cinema's love affair with the form--that it is hardly necessary to enumerate them. Two (at least) clear paradigms can be distinguished: the classical (mainly British) detective story and the "hard-boiled" (American) version. The first, with its highly formalized plot structure, social contexts, moral and ideological elements lends itself to semiotic analyses. An example of these is Eco's and Sebeok's comparison of the American philosopher C.S. Peirce's methods of "abduction"--i.e., the determination of meaning through the use of educated guesses--with the sleuthing techniques of Sherlock Holmes and Poe's Dupin. Though not explicitly an examination of the detective genre, Barthes's *S/Z* formulates in its "hermeneutic code" an analogy of the detective's function with the role of the reader. In *City of Glass* we find, superimposed on this pattern of the semiotic brain-teaser, the second type, the somewhat more "democratized" allegorical formula of the American variety of detective novel. As opposed to the distinction between the Holmes/Watson team and the intruder/criminal who disrupts the former's balanced world, the Sam Spade type character and the objects of his investigation are economically and socially devalued. (Perhaps it is for this reason that the genre can be so fruitfully employed and deconstructed by writers like Auster: the boundaries between the antagonists or "actants" are so variable and nebulous that definitions waver and delimitations are ardent.) Raymond Chandler's well-known essay, "The Simple Art of Murder," objectifies this private-eye figure:

But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid....He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor,....He is a relatively poor man, or he would not be a detective at all. He is a common man or he could not go among common people....He is a lonely man....He talks as the man of his age talks, that is, with rude wit, a lively sense of the grotesque, a disgust for sham, and a contempt for pettiness. The story is his adventure in search of a hidden truth....

Auster premises his novel on this familiar image, this urban ethos. The prescribed hero is then mirrored by the several narrators of the book, most faithfully by "Max Work" (the protagonist Quinn's fictional creation), and more dimly by other, more "realized" characters. The conditions of surveillance which are fundamental to the detective formula are set up in much the conventional way--the watcher and the watched are identified, activated (i.e., one is "hired" by a third party)--but then are gradually broken down, the roles blurred and alternated. The fragmented or refracted narrator inverts the usual autonomy of the detective, who is traditionally depicted as somehow unburdened by the moral, physical, psychological, sexual or social baggage under which the objects of his investigation stagger. This luggage is packed full of signs (clues) to be assembled grammatically into coherent narratives. The detective (or spy, who performs a similar function as observer) is, however, a signifier without a referent. Geoffrey Hartman, speaking primarily about the creations of Hammett, Chandler, Ross Macdonald and company, observes:

The detective (American style) tortures human nature until it reveals itself. People froth or lose their nerve or crumple up: the divine eye of the private eye fixes them until their bodies incriminate them. What can't be seen can't be judged; and even if what we get to see is a nasty array of protective maneuvers and defense mechanisms, the horror of the visible is clearly preferred to what is unknown or invisible....The novels of Chandler and Macdonald have...the same flaw: the only person in them whose motives remain somewhat mysterious, or exempt from this relentless reduction to overt and vulnerable gestures, is the detective.



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 zszarnok dictator
 eroszak violence
 rosszak bad guys
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Hartman's point is not that the detective is not psychologized; he is, but only inasmuch as he must serve an active function in the narrative, never as the focus of the narrative. He (or she) is an "operative," a "private eye" which does the seeing--"eye" not only being the "i" of investigator--but is not seen. This detective has no identity per se because his role changes depending on the case: he is analogous to the author in the text. His accumulating of clues and re-constructing of the realistic narrative which is the crime and its *modus operandi* form a process which proportionately de-faces the detective. This might be evident from our reading of the better popular detective novels, but in Auster and in other postmodern writers who have appropriated and re-articulated the formula the mystification of the detective's motives and identity is reversed. The gaze, the "speculation," is now trained on the private eye. From the multiple mirroring which results, the narrative is opened, the solution deferred, that central "scene of pathos" which Hartman finds to be the nub of the traditional mystery story is eluded (even elided), *ad infinitum*.

In order to generate this *mise en abyme* effect, Auster creates a series of narrators within narrators (an *enlacement* of voices reminiscent of more ancient multiple-frame narratives such as *The Thousand and One Nights* or *Don Quixote*, which have been resurrected by several postmodern writers). I say "Auster creates," but the novel problematizes any simplistic view of author and work by inscribing several versions--distorted images --of "the author" in the text. The novel's detective, Daniel Quinn, is himself a writer of detective novels. By creating a *nom de plume* and publishing entirely through an agent by mail Quinn has nearly eradicated himself as a biographical identity. To his readers he is only the name William Wilson on book covers; from the world he has gradually receded, metaphorically died, become more or less a spectre (like specularly and speculation, derived from the root *specere*). This spectral existence is achieved through a successive divestment of social connections: his wife, son, and parents are all dead, and he has severed all ties with former friends. When he is not writing, Quinn's favourite pastime is walking in New York City, emptying himself like a Buddhist in meditation, reducing himself to a "seeing eye"(8). He looks but is not looked at. The only concrete connection he has with the world would seem to be his profession, but he distances himself as much as possible from "William Wilson" who,

after all, was an invention, and even though he had been born within Quinn himself, ...now led an independent life. Quinn treated him with deference, at times even admiration, but he never went so far as to believe that he and William Wilson were the same man. (10)

Despite this separation of self and pseudonym, the original Quinn is defunct, he is living a "posthumous life" or has split into three dimmer mirror images of himself. Three because his private-eye character, Max Work, is another reflection--the active, public, smart-mouthed version--with whom Quinn identifies when he is himself induced to play detective. "In the triad of selves that Quinn had become, Wilson served as a kind of ventriloquist, Quinn himself was the dummy, and Work was the animated voice that gave purpose to the enterprise"(11-12). One is reminded of the "implied author" of reception theory or Michel Foucault's "author-function." As if creating this authorial buffer between himself and his writing were not enough, Quinn makes further disclaimers: "Because he did not consider himself to be the author of what he wrote, he did not feel responsible for it and therefore was not compelled to defend it in his heart"(9). More accurately, Quinn does not confess this, for it is not he who is writing or telling. The presence of an unnamed narrator is felt on the very first page--"We know that he had once been married..."(7). This true narrator is written into the narrative itself at the end of the novel, but long before this we feel his or her presence, manipulating the fictional reality. In the beginning of Chapter 2, Quinn the character is not permitted autonomy, but feels himself "being written," compulsively performing actions without thinking about them:

It was not until he had his hand on the doorknob that he began to suspect what he was doing. "I seem to be going out," he said to himself. "But if I am going out, where exactly am I going?" An hour later, as he climbed from the number 4 bus at 70th Street and Fifth Avenue, he still had not answered the question. (22)

By playing with this sort of writing/written paradox in this passage and in others which remind us of a putative omniscient voice ("In his dream, which he later forgot..."[16]), Auster parodies the conventions of realism, from which the modernist novel is not exempt.

Of course, the other inversion which Quinn enacts in this episode, when he decides to respond to the phone-caller by affirming that he is "Paul Auster," functions to create a *mise en abyme* on a still deeper plane, which plays on the author/character interchangeability. No explanation for Stillman's insistence on hiring the detective "Paul Auster" is ever found, except one which I, the reader-as-detective, choose to impose: since writer becomes detective, by homology reader becomes writer. But as soon as we become comfortable with this pseudo-explication, another "Paul Auster" is inscribed in the narrative, and although this one is actually a writer, there is no logical reason to fall into the trap of equating him with the Paul Auster who has (supposedly!) written the novel *City of Glass*. The multiplication of the authorial and narrative voices in the novel deters the reader from "naturalizing" the text (or, in other words, interpreting on the basis of the conventions of realism). As Culler demonstrates in his *Structuralist Poetics*, "Identifying narrators is one of the primary ways of naturalizing fiction." But, citing Barthes on the Nouveau Roman, he adds that novels which permit the recuperation of intelligibility through such an identification "act by becoming thoroughly banal when naturalized and showing the reader at what cost he has purchased intelligibility....In Barthes's words, writing becomes truly writing only when it prevents one from answering the question 'who is speaking?'" Robbe-Grillet's novels--*Le Voyeur* for instance--can be explained by assuming that the narrators are afflicted by some sort of delirium or amnesia, and likewise, Auster's narration could be rendered intelligible by considering the narrator to be schizophrenic. Such a reading would have to ignore the reflexivity of the text, however, and consequently would miss out on the central thematic concerns--for instance, that the postmodern novel is a direct expression of the effort to express itself.

The concept of *mise en abyme* as the textual configuration of self-reflexivity in metafiction is extensively discussed by Lucien Dällenbach in his *Le récit spéculaire*. The text within a text, operating as a miniature of the work like the shield device within a coat of arms (see André Gide) is found at different key junctures, singly or repeatedly. It condenses and reiterates either the *énoncé* (utterance), the *énonciation* (discursive form), or the code (linguistic and literary paradigm). "Paul Auster" #2's amusing synopsis of his essay on the authorship of *Don Quixote* provides us with a mini-text of the type Dällenbach calls a "*mise en abyme de l'énonciation*". In other words, this device of refracting authors does not so much reflect in condensed form the narrative as it does the narrative technique. The process of writing is foregrounded, and the use of the authorial name particularly indicates the textual paradox of the absence of the author and presence of the writer. "Paul Auster" #2 is writing an essay about the writing of a book by its characters just as the "real" Paul Auster writes a novel about the problematics of writing. And the complicated scheme the former works out for authenticating the gratuitous point that Don Quixote actually wrote the books which Cervantes claimed only to have found and edited is perhaps as ludicrous and yet as provocative as the narrative gymnastics which the latter performs to convince us of the equally plausible notion that no one writes the postmodern novel either. His--the fictional writer "Auster"'s--argument tries to untangle the roles of experiencer, speaker, scriptor:

Sancho Panza is of course the witness. There's no other candidate--since he is the only one who accompanies Don Quixote on all his adventures. But Sancho can neither read nor write. Therefore he cannot be the author. On the other hand, we know that Sancho has a great gift for language. In spite of his inane malapropisms, he can talk circles around everyone else in the book. It seems perfectly possible to me that he dictated the story to someone else--namely, to the barber and the priest, Don Quixote's good friends. They put the story into proper literary form--in Spanish--and then turned the manuscript over to Samson Carrasco, the bachelor from Salamanca, who proceeded to translate it into Arabic. Cervantes found the translation, had it rendered back into Spanish, and then published the book *The Adventures of Don Quixote*.(152-153)

The specific choice of *Don Quixote* to echo the narrative complexities of *City of Glass* is not arbitrary. Like the postmodern detective novel which parodies the traditionally rigid genre form in order to subvert it, to reverse its usual resolution, Cervantes's work took as its raw material the chivalric romance in order to discredit and undo that genre. Are the chivalric hero and the detective not similar, in that they both serve highly codified functions (socially as well as formally)? Daniel Quinn (initials D.Q., coincidentally) is the quixotic anti-detective: rather than solve a mystery, his investigations evolve one. The invisible narrator--also an investigator--is left at the end with only a discarded notebook as clue to yet another mystery.

The third form of *mise en abyme*, that of the code, functions to reflect and clarify the sign-system within which the literary text operates. The "Don Quixote" discussion is, then, not only a reflection on the narrative technique of the text which contains it, but also a metalingual résumé. It questions the nature of the linguistic codes being used and the practice of narration--who speaks, what they can or cannot say, the transmission of the literary utterance. Of course, *City of Glass* as a whole treats this theme of its own linguistic production, but it is mirrored in microcosm in this and in at least one other--and somewhat contradictory--metatext. I am referring to the other "book" discussed within this book, the mad Stillman's theory of Edenic language called *The Garden and the Tower: Early Visions of the New World*. While "Auster"'s discussion of *Don Quixote* treats language as communal, impossible "in a void," the Stillman book antithetically postulates a language without an addressee and without a code: the "language of God."

This synopsis of an autotext (Dällenbach's term for "internal intertextuality") operates as a distillation of the larger narrative which is the novel--or rather, of two narratives, one embedded in the other. These narratives take the form of two "experiments" with language. The initial experiment is the bizarre subjection of an infant son to years of sensory deprivation in order for Stillman to prove his theories of a prelapsarian language which would be "pure" and unambiguous. Peter Stillman, Jr.'s account of his life and the ways in which his very late acquisition of the speech of people have completely structured his sense of reality serve to concretize the principal theme of the novel, the failure of language as a thing-in-itself. Stillman speaks monologically, writes poetry in a language only he knows (signifiers without signifieds). His problem alludes to the inherent weakness in Saussurean linguistics, and by extension in a large part of modern literary theory. The direct equation of sign and referent in the abstract system of *langue* is not applicable to the individual *parole*, which is affected by countless contextual variables. Such linguistic studies are cut off from actual human speech. When Stillman talks to Quinn, he permits no questions or dialogue; language remains abstract and severed from its locutionary situation:

"My name is Peter Stillman. Perhaps you have heard of me, but more than likely not. No matter. That is not my real name. My real name I cannot remember. Excuse me. Not that it makes a difference. That is to say, anymore.

"This is what is called speaking. I believe that is the term. When words come out, fly into the air, live for a moment, and die. Strange, is it not? I myself have no opinion. No and no again. But still, there are words you will need to have. There are many of them. Many million, I think. (27)

"Wimble click crumblechaw beloo. It is beautiful, is it not? I make up words like this all the time. That can't be helped. They just come out of my mouth by themselves. They cannot be translated.(30)

Despite the existence of something called "language" in even the most isolated environment imaginable (the child Peter's dark cell), the impossibility of social communication there, negates this individual *langue*. In *Rampike's* recent interview with Paul Auster (Vol. 7, no. 1, 1990), Auster reiterates this conviction that "we can't be isolated from one another because we all live inside of language. There's no such thing as a one-man-language, it's a contradiction." Such a language, if it were possible, would be equivalent rather than opposite to silence. This segment of the novel also becomes a mirror to the rest of the narrative, in which the language experiment described by the former is re-enacted voluntarily by Quinn, until he too is reduced to silence, in mid-sentence--or more precisely, at that arbitrary instant when his notebook is filled and there is no more paper on which to convey words. Like Stillman's flow of unanswered speech, Quinn's unidirectional language can only elicit silence.

Stillman senior's theory of language denies the communicative function of language and attributes modern social chaos, the "cancerous and dangerous proliferation of significations" as Foucault puts it, to the Biblical Fall:

Adam's one task in the Garden had been to invent language, to give each creature and thing its name. In that state of innocence, his tongue had gone straight to the quick of the world. His words had not been merely appended to the things he saw, they had revealed their essences, had literally brought them to life. A thing and its name were interchangeable. After the fall, this was no longer true. Names became detached from things; words devolved into a collection of arbitrary signs; language had been severed from God. The story of the Garden, therefore, records not only the fall of man, but the fall of language. (70)

This description of the "fall of language" has, incongruously, an echo in some of the theorizing of the Nouveau Roman. Robbe-Grillet writes in an early essay, "A Future for the Novel":

Instead of this universe of "signification" (psychological, social, functional), we must try, then, to construct a world both more solid and more immediate....

In this future universe of the novel, gestures and objects will be *there* before being *something* and they will still be there afterwards, hard, unalterable, eternally present, mocking their own "meaning," that meaning which vainly tries to reduce them to the role of precarious tools, of a temporary and shameful fabric woven exclusively--and deliberately--by the superior human truth expressed in it, only to cast out this awkward auxiliary into immediate oblivion and darkness.

Henceforth, on the contrary, objects will gradually lose their instability and their secrets.

The project that Stillman, just released from a mental institution, undertakes in the streets of New York City is similarly to make objects "lose their instability and their secrets," to make words correspond precisely with the things they signify, without symbolic connotation or semantic mystification.

What the Nouveau Roman sets out to create in fictive language, *City of Glass* shifts to another, self-reflexive level. The latter acts as a critique of the Robbe-Grillet critique of language, which seems to want to propose a utopian language constituting pure objectivity, free of discursive or perceptual manipulation, and therefore of humanity. As Barthes has written, "si Robbe-Grillet décrit quasi-géométriquement les objets, c'est pour les dégager de la signification humaine, les corriger de la métaphore et de l'anthropomorphisme." That Robbe-Grillet fails in this project can be demonstrated through a reading of even his early novels (i.e., those concurrent with the theory [or anti-theory] I quote above). *Le Voyeur* pretends to treat objects in the purely descriptive mode outlined in *Pour un nouveau roman*, and yet is undermined by the eventual awareness on the part of the reader that the entire narrative contains at least two inscribed interpretations, neither of which is fully objectified: the central murder (and possible rape) has either taken place or it has been fantasized by the salesman, Mathias. *City of Glass* foregrounds the problematical issues of representation set up by the early Nouveau Romans through a parody of the theories and the forms which the latter developed. Without digressing too far, it is evident that Auster is discussing language, and specifically radical theories of language use, deploying the device of parody (of prior literary styles, in which traces of the Nouveau Roman are visible).

The utopian language which Stillman imagines he can (re)create in New York is premised on his revision of the Tower of Babel myth. In his view, the destruction of the tower by God was the sequel to the exile from the Garden and the final stage in the fall of language from its edenic state. Once God's original instructions--"that man must fill the earth"--have been fulfilled, we would be able to build a new Babel. "At that moment it would again be possible for the whole earth to be of one language and one speech. And if that were to happen, paradise could not be far behind"(77). This language will not, of course, be English--in spite of the odd (unconscious?) spelling in huge letters of "THE TOWER OF BABEL," which Stillman "writes" upon the new site of the tower with his putatively aimless wanderings in Manhattan. The language must be that of Peter junior writing his poetry in words only he knows, connected in his mind to unknown referents. It must be the signifiers of function and essence which Stillman senior, as new Adam, will produce in re-naming the objects of the world. "We must try, then, to construct a world more solid and more immediate"(Robbe-Grillet). How people will communicate (perhaps there will be no need for communication?), when meaning is stripped away and objects and their names are identical, Stillman does not venture to say. We know only the outcome of his project, and the outcome of the experiments it generates: alienation (the transformation of people into machines), madness, suicide, and silence, which is equivalent to absence. Both Stillmans, father and son, disappear, the elder reportedly off the Brooklyn Bridge. And, more importantly, Quinn's obsession with the original directives of the "case"--as absolute as God's commands to the Babylonians--drives him along a process of de-socialization which progressively divests him of all those patterns and behavioural rules by which his normal reality has been constructed. He "literally evaporates out of the book" (*Rampike* interview). His investigation, which deprives him of all linguistic (real) connections with the world as he descends farther into the utopian silence of Babel, can never be concluded, at least in the fashion we expect, that we have been induced to expect on the basis of the genre conventions that are erected outside of and at the beginning of the text. As his notebook fills, language then subject evaporate:

He began to weigh his words with great care, struggling to express himself as economically and clearly as possible. He regretted having wasted so many pages at the beginning of the red notebook, and in fact felt sorry that he had bothered to write about the Stillman case at all. For the case was far behind him now, and he no longer bothered to think about it. It had been a bridge to another place in his life, and now that he had crossed it, its meaning had been lost...The last sentence of the red notebook reads: "What will happen when there are no more pages in the red notebook?" (199-200)

In a different sense from that which concerns the traditional detective story, Quinn has solved the mystery, though not the one he thought he had set out to solve. As Holquist remarks:

By exploiting the conventions of the detective story such men as Borges and Robbe-Grillet have fought against the modernist attempt to fill the void of the world with rediscovered mythical symbols. Rather, they dramatize the void. If, in the detective story, death must be solved, in the new metaphysical detective story it is *life* which must be solved.

Whether or not Quinn has solved "life" is not crucial. He has returned to origins, recuperated lost meanings, and (possibly) moved on to some new realm of experience outside of textuality. The much-debated impossibility of narrative closure in the postmodern novel is problematic: there is always some sort of closure, at least on the plane of the reader, even if it does not totalize or contain the narrative as traditional forms of "realism" claim to do ("organic wholes," circular structures). Even though the narrative in *City of Glass* fades inconclusively into silence, the notebook is filled, the experiment has run its course, the "detective" has untangled one or two enigmas (for instance, the origins of the marginalized and invisible people in modern society). The door of the final pages is a swinging door that can also open onto whole new questions. The novel's intertextuality and self-reflexivity reduplicate both the extrinsic and the intrinsic text: the book within the book within the book is both an internal and an external reflection. (*City of Glass*--> the narrator's account--> Quinn's notebook--> Stillman's book--> Henry Dark's book--> Milton's manuscripts--> the Bible--an infinite regression like the mirrors in the Palace of Versailles.) Such an internal mirroring only lays bare what is normally sublimated in the literary work--its intertextuality. The traditional autonomous artist perhaps wishes to achieve the illusion of originality and, in order to do so, denies influences and borrowings or "misreads" literary "elders" (as Harold Bloom contends in *The Anxiety of Influence*). On the other hand, the postmodernist borrows or steals openly and democratically.

By incorporating a multiple reflection of texts (historic or fictitious), the novelist not only acknowledges his/her cultural literacy (or "debts"), but also exposes the workings of literary discourse. Of the reader Barthes remarks (in *S/Z*), "This 'I' which approaches the text is already itself a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost)." The "author" of the text is probably an even larger plurality. In much the same way that this *mise en abyme répétée* of texts foregrounds the heavily--one might say genealogically--coded nature of literature in order to demystify or even invalidate the assumptions which protect and "canonize" it, the subversive treatment of genre in novels like *City of Glass* opens to interrogation conventional ideas about the function of literature. The finality of categories which preoccupies the modernists in their mania for order dissipates in postmodern fiction. One writer (M. Sciolino) on postmodernism puts it clearly:

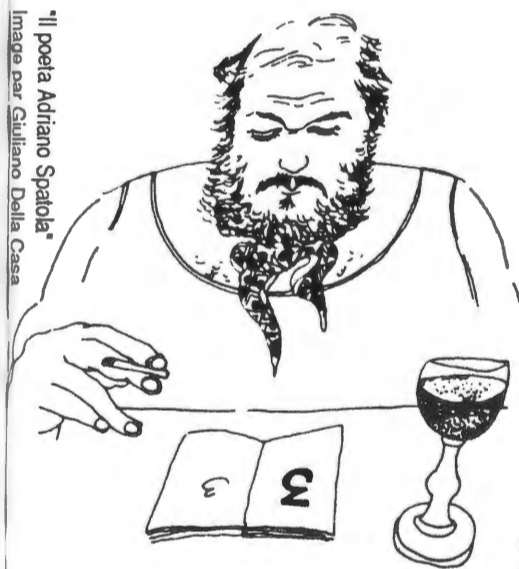
The self-conscious style of these novels prevents any created value-system within them from seeming noncreated, that is, self-evident or doctrinaire. In reminding readers that the fiction in their hands is indeed fiction, metafiction allows writers to show social responsibility by insisting that all meanings are provisional.

This is a positive affirmation of postmodernism among many less optimistic critiques, but I believe it is one that can be applied to the "better" (I mean more conscientiously-crafted) novels. Although I have not spoken directly about "social responsibility," *City of Glass* can be read in this light. It upends the familiar morbid or violent patterns of the detective genre it has adopted as its matrix, and manipulates the reader away from a "manichean ideology" (as Eco finds in Bond novels) and toward a much more crucial issue, that of communication and meaning. The "death of language" which the text both describes and re-enacts in Quinn's self-"mute"-ation is brought about by a refusal of dialogue and community, not by the fragmentation of the world which Stillman is trying to correct by re-inventing language. *City of Glass*, as a "post-critical" essay on language-use, attacks the notion that "pure" language, language as an abstraction which is not spoken or used as a weapon or a contact with one's fellow humans, can exist.

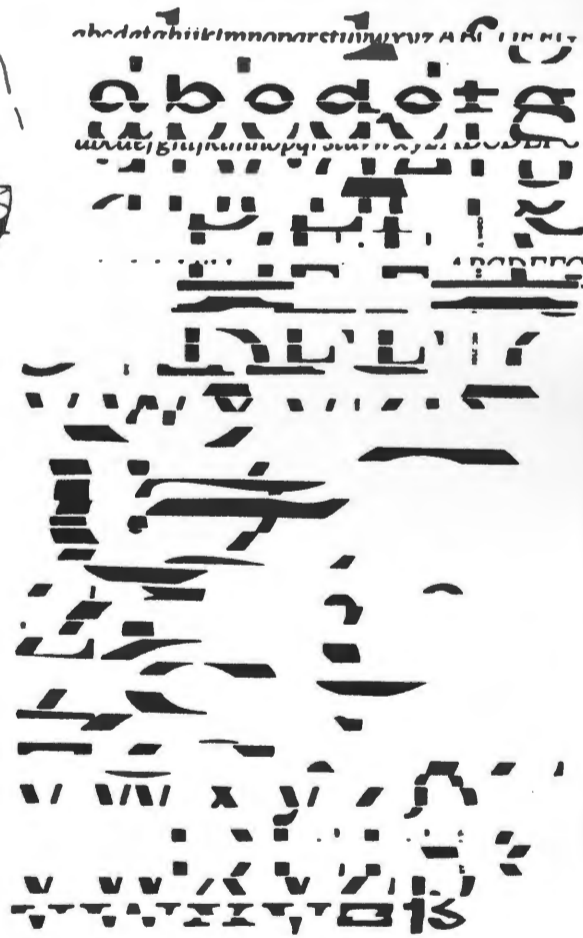
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"Il poeta Adriano Spatola"
 Image per Giuliano Della Casa



ZEROGLIFICO di Adriano Spatola



Art =



Perneczky

Image by Geza Perneczky

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