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From: *Spanglish Repartations* by Richard Kostelanetz (USA)

20th Anniversary Editorial:

It has been 20 years since we started publishing *Rampike!* I offer here an abbreviated history. Since 1979, we've had the great pleasure of featuring some of the finest Canadian and international writers and artists. This magazine had an exciting beginning. I was still a student at the Ontario College of Art and Design when the idea of publishing a literary and arts journal became a reality. Our first issue featured a "scoop" interview with the internationally celebrated sculptor Dennis Oppenheim. The legendary Coach House Press agreed to print the magazine and we were on our way. The name "Rampike" stands for the skeleton of a tree that has been ravaged by lightning or forest fire. There is a tree that grows in Canada known as the lodge-pole pine. When threatened by fire, its cones release winged seedlings which hover in the heat above the flames, and when the danger has passed they spin to the ground and settle in the fertile ash so that a new generation can emerge. This image represents the on-going cycle of death and re-birth evident in any vital culture. In keeping with this notion of cycles, *Rampike* has published both new and established writers and artists from around the world. Much of the work that has appeared in *Rampike* over the years has been innovative, post-modern and unprecedented. At the same time, we have aligned ourselves with social and cultural reformists. We have included texts by political activists such as René Levesque the Premier of Québec, John Kenneth Galbraith who has frequently spoken against world arms proliferation, Linda Hutcheon who has spoken on feminist issues, Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come who has detailed the plight of North American First Nations peoples, and Dr. David Suzuki, a long time advocate of the pro-environmental cause. The artists we have featured include celebrated innovators such as Joseph Beuys, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Louise Nevelson, Bill Vazan, Norval Morrisseau, Carl Beam, as well as Linda and Ron Baird. And, we have truly enjoyed the opportunity to interview and publish so many international celebrities. I recall the precision of Jacques Derrida's language when he spoke on deconstruction, and the pluck of famed drama critic Martin Esslin. Once, in Düsseldorf, Germany, I was welcomed into the studio of Joseph Beuys even though I had arrived unannounced. I was amazed by his studio, full of works in progress. The walls were covered in brown leather and he had a bit of tissue paper on his cheek where he had cut himself shaving. He made us coffee and talked energetically about art as anthropological investigation. When I left, he asked me to deliver greetings to his friend Andy Warhol in New York. And remember our interview with Julia Kristeva at a posh Toronto hotel. We waited in the hotel lobby, when the elevator door slid open, Kristeva purposely strode forth, elegantly dressed with a flamboyant scarf, a glass of wine in her hand. She scoffed at Canadian regulations prohibiting alcoholic beverages on public conveyances such as elevators, and promptly entered into an animated discussion about her new novel, *The Samurai*. Another time, Frank Moorehouse, Australia's own Coca-Cola Kid had arrived for the Harbourfront authors festival organized by Greg Gatenby. I remember how Jim Francis, myself, and Moorehouse spent much of our time talking in my car, as we searched Toronto's east end for a compatible battery for his new lap-top computer. Not all our interviews were done live. Some took place over the phone or through other electronic media. Even though we were both based in Toronto, Linda Hutcheon chose an electronic exchange to more exactly word her detailed responses, and in this issue Sandra Birdsell covered the distance between the Canadian Prairies and our base in Sault Ste. Marie in order to speak about flying trilobites and her Metis/Mennonite background. It is the writers who have made *Rampike* the internationally recognized journal that it is. Ahh, but the stories behind them! Once, while arranging with James Grauerholz to publish some of William Burroughs' material, I was given permission to take photos and chat with the literary legend himself. I asked Burroughs if he had ever practised martial arts, and in his gruff voice he exclaimed, "Yeah, I did a bit of that when I was younger..." at which point he threw a few Karate chops in the general direction of my head, then, sat down chuckling. The photo-shoot went swimmingly. We have been fortunate in attracting writers of note. Through our Boston editor, James Gray, we connected with Ray Federman, Ronald Sukenick, Philippe Sollers as well as the next generation of Americans. Manuscripts also started arriving from international figures such as Guillermo Deisler, Michel Serres, Balint Zombathy, Geza Pernecky, Clemente Padin, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Charles Bernstein, Ray Di Palma, John Giorno, Dick Higgins, Sylvère Lotringer and Nicole Brossard. In our early days, it was Brossard who had spearheaded our "French connection" and before we knew it, the works of a couple of generations of Québécois writers had arrived at our doorstep including Claude Beausoleil, Michel Gay, Claudine Bertrand, Jean-Paul Daoust, France Théoret, Yollande Villemaire, members of Québec city's *Inter* group such as Richard Martel and Pierre-André Arcand, and more recently, Marie-Claire Blais. Our run of Canadian writers reads like a Who's Who, including more established authors such as Northrop Frye, Marshall McLuhan, Clark Blaise, Ray Souster, Louis Dudek, Robert Kroetsch, Eli Mandel, Josef Skvorecky, George Bowering, Don McKay, Frank Davey, and then slightly younger contributors such as Rosemary Sullivan, Dennis Cooley, Matt Cohen, Bill Bissett, David McFadden, Victor Coleman, Marilyn Bowering, as well as those who have gained international status during the last twenty years such as bp Nichol, Tomson Highway, Thomas King, Christopher Dewdney, Paul Dutton, Steve McCaffery, Karen Mac Cormack, Armand Garnet-Ruffo, and Lola Lemire Tostevin. The next generation continues to be nurtured in our pages. It is impossible to name all of the superb contributors to *Rampike*, but we extend our heartfelt thanks to each of them. Without them, and without you, our reading audience, none of this would have been possible. We also thank the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council for their help over the years. And finally, thanks to our many roving editors (W.M. Sutherland, Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Peter Jaeger, et. al.) throughout the world who keep drawing our attention to exciting new talents wherever they are to be found. It has been an amazing twenty years, and we look forward to more wonders in the next millennium. With this issue our contributors have pursued an epistemological approach. These texts, images and artistic creations all question the basis of knowledge and cognition. Throughout our history, we have moved from the antiquated notion of "the four corners of the earth" to a Helio-centric awareness of the solar system, to a sense of a kinetic centre-less infinity. We are integrating theory of relativity, uncertainty principle, poly-semantics, dialogism, and the unknown. These works challenge the foundations of perception, knowledge, and cognition. We hope that you will enjoy this issue and our new "high-speed" profile designed for the next millennium! Stay tuned for *Rampike's* 20th Anniversary Issue Part II, which is due later this year... KEJ

"BOOKS, TEXT AND HYPERTEXT"

A Talk by Umberto Eco

"A home page on the inter-net can be written by anybody, so, we have a full *Zamisdat* era, and *Zamisdat*, when you are living under a dictatorship are useful. In a democracy, they can become dangerous." -- Umberto Eco

Umberto Eco is a noted semiotician, critic, novelist and journalist. He is the author of numerous works of fiction and critical theory. Some of his literary works include *The Name of the Rose* (1980), *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988), and *How to Travel with a Salmon and Other Essays* (1992). Some of his noted critical works include *The Open Work* (1962), *A Theory of Semiotics* (1976), and *The Limits of Interpretation* (1990). Many of Eco's theoretical texts have been published by Indiana University Press (Bloomington), as well as Yale and Harvard University Presses. His texts in Italian are published by Bompiani, Mursia and Mondadori Presses (all in Milano). Among other things, Eco maintains a hypertextual web site which offers an excellent example of cyber-architecture. In this talk, Professor Eco addresses questions that arise with the growth of the electronic culture. One of the first questions he addresses is whether or not new technology permanently displaces or obsolesces older technology. We are delighted to have permission to publish this witty and informative text c/o of the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC). This talk was presented at the University of Ottawa on Oct. 6, 1998 and was first aired Oct. 10, 1998.



...The arrival of a new technological device has never made a previous device absolutely obsolete. Cars run faster than bicycles but they have not rendered bicycles obsolete. The idea that a new technology abolishes a previous one, is too simplistic. Following Daguerre's invention, painters did not feel obliged to serve as craftsmen to reproduce reality such as we see, but it does not mean that Daguerre's invention encouraged only abstract painting. There is a whole tradition of modern painting that couldn't exist without the photographic mode such as hyper-realism and reality seen by the painter's eye through the photographic eye. In the history of culture, it has never happened, that some new thing has killed

something else. Even in a crucial case, [such as] the death of the dirigible, airplanes came along shortly after, but, balloons are still used for publicity and things like that even though they might not be used in the way Jules Verne envisioned in a *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Today, we have a new hypertextual poetics. Even a book you read, even a poem you read, can be transformed into a hypertext. At this point we are shifting to question two. Since the problem is not more only a physical one, it concerns the very nature of the creative activity, of the reading process. And you know to unravel this scheme of questions we have to first decide what we mean by "hypertextual link." Remark that if the question were concerning the possibility of infinite or indefinite interpretation on the part of the reader, [then] you would have very little to do with the problem under discussion. This would have to do with the poetics of Joyce who thought of his *Finnegans Wake* as a text that could be read by an ideal reader affected by an ideal insomnia. I have devoted many of my books to this problem, but, it has nothing to do with that. This would concern the limits of interpretation in the case of the constructive reading and of over-interpretation. What are presently under consideration are cases in which the infinity or at least the indefinite abundance of interpretation is due not only to the initiative of the reader, but rather to the physical mobility of the text itself, a text that is produced just in order to be re-written. And let me consider this matrix. I wrote "limited" and "finite," but, the mind of society means [or thinks] "unlimited" and "infinite." Maybe "infinite" is a metaphor, let's say "indefinite," in the sense of the letters of the alphabet -- we say we can compose infinite strings [of words], but they are not infinite, they are

very high in number, but, for our scale it is the same as when we speak of "infinity." So, a moving text in this genre can be limited and finite, limited but virtually infinite, infinite but limited, or, unlimited and infinite.

LIMITED

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FINITE

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-
+

First of all, we have to make a careful distinction between systems and texts. For instance, a linguistic system is the whole of the possibilities displayed by a given mutual language. A finite set of grammatical rules, allows the speaker to produce an infinite or indefinite number of sentences. And then the linguistic item can be interpreted in terms of other linguistic or other semiotic items. A word by definition, an event by example, a mutual time by an image, and so on, and so forth. Take for example, a normal encyclopedic dictionary. It can define a dog as a "mammal", you have to go to the end to the entry "mammal," if the mammals are defined as "animals," you have to go to the entry "animals," and so at the same time the properties of dogs can be exemplified by images of dogs of different breeds. If it is said that a certain breed lives in Lapland, you must then go to the entry "Lapland," to know where it is. The system is finite. An encyclopedia is a finite object with its own boundaries, but virtually infinite because you can circumnavigate it in an endless spiral-like movement *ad infinitum*. In this sense, certainly all the conceivable books are comprised by and within a good dictionary and a good grammar. If you are able to use the Webster, you can write both *Paradise Lost* and *Ulysses*. It is by mere chance that somebody did it before you. Give the same hypertextual system to Shakespeare and to a schoolboy, and they have the same odds to produce *Romeo and Juliet*. Grammars, dictionaries and encyclopedias are systems. By using them, you can produce all the texts you like.

However, a text, once produced, is not a linguistic or encyclopedic system. A given text reduces the infinite or indefinite possibilities of a system and makes up a closed universe. The dictionary allows me to eat a lot of possible items, provided they are something organic. But, if I "definitely" produce my text, and I utter, "This morning I had bread and butter," [then] I have excluded "definitely," cheese, caviar, pastrami, and apples. A text castrates the infinite possibilities of a system. *Pride and Prejudice* can be interpreted in many, many ways, but the story takes place in Great Britain, and concerns a young woman and her family. It doesn't take place in New England, and it doesn't concern a Captain determined to capture a white whale. Take a fairy tale like "Little Red Riding Hood." The text starts from a limited number of characters and situations, a little girl, a mother, a wolf, a wood, and through a series of finite steps it arrives at a resolution. Certainly, you can read the fairy tale as an allegory, that attributes a given moral sense... to the acts of the characters, but you cannot transform "Little Red Riding Hood" into "Cinderella." *Finnegans Wake* is certainly open to many interpretations, but it is certain that it will not provide you with Fermat's theorem, or with the complete biography of Woody Allen. This seems trivial, but, there are some people on this continent who have said that you can do anything you want with a text, which is blatantly false. Now suppose that the finite and limited text is organized hypertextually by many links that connect given worlds with other worlds. In a dictionary, or an encyclopedia, the word "wolf" is potentially connected to every word that is part of its definition or description. So, wolf is connected to "animal," to "mammal," to "ferocious," to "legs," to "fur," to "eyes," to "paws," to the names of the countries in which wolves exist and so on, and so forth. In "Little Red Riding Hood," as a text, the word "wolf" only can be connected to the textual section in which the wolf shows up or is explicitly evoked. The series of possible links is finite and limited. *How can the hypertextual strategy be used to open a finite and limited text?* The first possibility is to make the text physically unlimited, in the sense that the story can be enriched by successive contributions of different orders, in the double-sense, either two-dimensionally or three-dimensionally. I mean, for instance, "Little Red Riding Hood" in the first order proposes a starting situation, the girl enters the wood, and the different contributors can develop the story, one after the other, namely, the girl doesn't meet the wolf but Pinocchio, both enter an enchanted castle, they have a confrontation with a magical crocodile, and so on, so that the story can continue for years and years. But, it can also be infinite in the sense that temporary narrative disjunction appears at the moment that the girl enters the wood. Many others can make different choices, for one of them she meets Pinocchio, for another she is transformed into swan, for a third she is transformed into... a Proustian character, for a fourth she finds a magic ring and meets a donor called Vladimir Propp, and at every node, the story can proliferate in many particular directions. This is, today, possible, and you can find on the net some interesting examples of such literary games.

It is possible that at this point one can raise the question of the survival of the very notion of authorship on one side, and the work of art as an organic whole on the other. I want to inform my audience, that this has already happened in the past without disturbing neither authorship nor organic wholes. The first example, is that of the *Commedia dell'arte*... Every performance, depending upon the mood and the fantasy of the actors, was different from the others, so that we cannot identify a single work [attributed] to a single author. The more recent example, is the jazz jam-session. We believe that there was a privileged performance called "The Basin Street Blues," because a recording of a session survived. But... there were many "Basin Street Blues," many performances of it, and there will be in the future a lot of them that we do not know as yet, as soon as two or more performers get together and try a personal and inventive version of the original thing. What I want to say is that we are accustomed to an absence of authorship. With popular collective art in which every participant adds something, we experience a jazz-like unending story. Such ways to implement a free creativity are welcome and make part of the cultural tissue of a society. However, there is a difference between implementing the activity of producing infinite and unlimited texts and the existence of already produced texts which can perhaps be interpreted in infinite ways but are physically limited. In the same contemporary culture we accept and evaluate according to different standards, both a performance of Beethoven's Fifth [symphony] and a new jazz session on the Basin Street Theme... We are marching toward a more liberated society, in which free creativity co-exists with the interpretation of already written texts. But, we must not say that we have substituted an old thing with another one. We can have both. TV zapping [channel surfing] is a kind of activity that has nothing to do with watching a movie. They are two different "sports."

A hypertextual device that allows us to invent a new text, has nothing to do with our ability to interpret pre-existing texts. I tried desperately to find an instance of unlimited and finite textual situation. But, I did not find an interesting example. In fact, if you have an infinite number of elements to play with, why limit yourself to the production of a finite universe? ...But let's consider an alternate possibility [i.e.]; an infinite number of possibilities with a finite number of elements [e.g. see; first line in chart above, ed]. This is the rule of a system. So, can there be a text that has the same qualities as a system? I think that this is an illusion of freedom, and I'll tell you why. A hypertext can give the illusion of opening even a closed text, the textual story can be structured in such a way that its readers can select their own [re-]solution, deciding at the end whether the guilty one should be the barber, the bishop, the detective, the narrator, the author or the reader. Many role games are structured this way. Such an idea is not a new one. Before the invention of computers, poets and narrators have dreamt of a totally open text that the readers could infinitely re-compose in different ways. Such was the idea of "Le Livre" as extolled by Mallarmé. Raymond Queneau invented the combinatorial algorithm by which it was possible to compose from a finite set of lines, billions of poems... Many contemporary musicians have produced musical moveable scores which by manipulating one can compose different musical performances. And I spoke of that in my old book *L'Oeuvre Ouvert*, (*The Open Work*), in the 1960s. All of those physically moveable texts should give the impression of absolute freedom on the part of the reader or listener. But this is only an impression, an illusion of freedom, a sort of staging of freedom, representing freedom. Because the only machinery that allows one to produce infinite texts with a finite number of elements, already existed for millennia and its called the "alphabet." With a reduced [limited] number of letters one can produce billions of texts and this is exactly what has been done from Homer to the present day. ...A text that provides us, not with letters or sounds, like the alphabet, but with pre-established sequences of words, not to speak of sequences of pre-established pages, doesn't set up freedom to invent everything we want. We are only free to move pre-established textual chunks in a reasonably high number of ways. A Calder sculpture is fascinating not because it produces infinite possible movements. No. We admire the iron-like rule imposed by the artist because Calder's mobile moves only the way Calder wanted it to move. At the last border-line of free textuality, there can be a text that starts as a closed one, let's say "Little Red Riding Hood" or "Middlemarch" and that I, the reader, can modify according to my inclinations, thus, elaborating a second text, which is no more the original one, and whose author is myself (even though the formation of my authorship is a weapon against the concept of definite authorship). The net is open for such experiments and most of them can be beautiful and rewarding. Nothing forbids one from writing a story where Little Red Riding Hood devours the wolf...

But let me conclude with praise for the finite, limited world that literature provides us. Suppose you are reading Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, you are desperately wishing that Natasha will not accept the courtship of that miserable scoundrel Anatole... If you had *War and Peace* in hypertextual and inter-active CD-Rom, you could re-write your own story according to your own desires. You could invent numerous *War and Peaces*... What a freedom! Alas, with an already written book, whose fate is determined by an repressive authorial decision, we cannot. We are obliged to accept the laws of fate and to realize that we are unable to change destiny. A hypertextual and inter-active

novel allows us to practice freedom and creativity, and I hope that such a kind of inventive activity will be implemented in the schools of the future. But the already and definitely written *War and Peace* doesn't confront us with unlimited possibilities of our imagination, but with the severe laws of burning life and death... The charm of tragic literature is that we feel that its heroes *could* have escaped their fate, but, they didn't succeed because of their weakness or their pride or their blindness... There are books that we cannot re-write because their function is to teach us about necessity, and only if they are respected, such as they are, can they provide us with such wisdom, and this repressive lesson is indispensable to reach a higher state of intellectual and moral freedom.



Text/image by Fernando Aguiar (Portugal)

FROM THE NOVEL: *H*

by Philippe Sollers,
Translated by Elaine L. Corts

"Le roman est la manière dont cette société se parle." -- Philippe Sollers (*Logiques*).

Philippe Sollers is a celebrated French author, editor and theoretician. Sollers, along with Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes served as editor of the highly reputed French literary journal *Tel Quel*. We are pleased to publish this excerpt from Sollers' novel *H*. Sollers' critical text *Logiques* (Seuil, Paris, 1968), was among the first to shift theoretical attention from writer and work, to writing and reading.

...rationed stamped with the initial sodom gomorrah *international council* they will be able to travel from one region to another simply by presenting their discrimination card from now on we would be able to develop underground reservoirs for example under the place de la concorde with up above the shock the beheading of grandad returned from the valley of kings a reminder of the ephemeral aspects of phenomena a warning that we also have to think about an ellipse in reverse it was 1775 that goethe wrote to herder they are making from the dust of history a living plant a formula which has to be reconciled more closely with its opposite and also with this ability that a stubborn yet fluid subject sometimes has of removing veil by veil of undoing the knots of supporting its negation until infinity in its always unexpected form begins to appear in the vicinity *inside and outside* after which he notices ajax a white tornado oboe a crisp coolness alkaline toothpaste a little kick as if it was about messages having had their share of the encoded there he is returning to the sea taking the train i always travel he says in the pullman car *woman* i am the real epic pig i fish for the dactyloptena orientalis flying fish or the betta splendens fighting fish or the chaetodon auriga holocanthus diacanthus angel fish indeed the symphysodon discus disk fish or else the pteropterus dragon watch out for the fall-out from revolutions humanity is extremely porous to its bicelphalous past since it has decreed the cult of the goddess reason has always prepared me to be a negative argument against robiespierre there's still some of the mama inside he has the look of a submissive son about him a good student still that the opera singer should have dared to try it at the altar from this point of view we are not so advanced look at this black mass look at this big coffin the draperies ah grandma's mill by the river the gargoyles the alchemy of facades the phantom of quasimodo the chapter of les miserables about slang is one of the most astonishing in the french language an impeccable course a genius humanism stuff and nonsense standing at his own lectern the elections the screwing from time to time in the evening the seance tables what a game one evening i had fallen asleep near the river bank a cool breeze awakened me i came out of my dream i awakened i saw the morning star it was resplendent in a far corner of the sky and god satan the comedy in stucco the message the ragged edges of five franc notes then nocturnal i see the night spread its glow from a darkening sun a little too contrived maybe fluctuate nec mergitur it is quite normal for profs to be intrigued by language and not by us it is logical that physicians be scorned by matter and we by movement instead of matter needs movement movement needs language language needs us in its crevices raise your head the moon is from now on a suburban garbage dump it was basically our planet's fridge it has preserved everything from the beginning think about the ninety-two elements think it over the dinosaur died out seventy million years ago for reasons still unknown take a little bow before andromeda's spray of pearly mist think about the fact that the chinese astronomers detected in 1054 one of the first known supernova the nebula of the crab now occupies the spot where it was found we can say without exaggerating that it moves further and further away from us at a speed of one-thousand five hundred kilometres a second okay it is a revolving scene i expect that it would have an influence on the unconscious behaviour of actors yes i am sagittarius like beethoven but that's not the question oh yes ascending aquarius of course the future what the new pulsar born at noon naturally with time it is not impossible that i have become an oiled rotary press without an impulse publishing two or three times a day the news of the eternal non-return who are we where do we come from where are we going the time has come to resolve to put a gun close to our heads go ahead now tell me everything am i the dream of the unknown or rather the lapsus corporis doloris linguae you have entered here i understand that you lack hope but don't assume that i cope any better as to the macadam i can only try to feel the tar underneath the fused nickel-iron core does the spirit breathe when it wants to does it wish each one of its breaths why have letters become accustomed to killing without saying a word to us about it so many essays on the internal cause which isn't worth a thing maybe but who will know how to assert this without trembling catching cold what cathedral is it which already celebrates the miracle of saint january blood which becomes liquid phew a sigh of relief from the crowds it is then that the tabernacle is not encircled suppose that god recedes as the same speed as something that did not please him in the spectacle of his own repetition voilà all the syllables humming on the tip of his tongue and his finger which points beyond the cosmos and the whisper of imprecation go elsewhere to see if i am there and everything stretches and flees goes far away from me cursed race of particles or then it is the gratuitous insane whirlwind in order to prove without any proof the dice the roulette no luck necessity let us sleep oh let us sleep instead a quite drunken sleep on the shore i have spent months getting

stoned wanting to kill myself in dirty hovels varec in my nose and in my ears splash stirring of the waters my hypothesis then is wells of ecstasy purring captivated by the ten thousandth thought repelled in consciousness to the ten-billionth with the force of a power-hammer and starting from this point variation evolution generated and the warrant officer's puss sarge smug smile reduced for the stars two and two makes four universal curtain it is most surprising that the gentleman scientist coming home from the observatory kissing his small family gazing tenderly at his daughter who is playing the violin the biologist as a handsome puss yet stern which perpetuates the puss of this protestant grandmother the baptist physicist the mathematician syncretist you've got to do things in style for the calculations to continue yes oh yes my dear friend galileo no doubt but well in the end aristarchus already had guessed it and hence copernicus kepler newton even leibniz were obsessed by universal transmutation maybe we could go into the living room my dear you will recite a poem beautifully for me i lived a long time under vast porticoes with the permeating stench of naked slaves you know about the one who was analyzed in the last issue from his sounds and rhythm he has an interesting alternating rhyme scheme perhaps like a starfish be that as it may the graphic practices of mankind determine their thought which can be explained easily if we keep in mind the receptivity of cloth that it expels its stitches when burned a point at one spot two points in reverse a leap in advance two backwards it rolls along rolls along but we can sew ourselves into it and unsew ourselves frayed the only thing which wouldn't occur to them is how their life finds meaning in these social practices they fail to understand the unavoidable composition of this relay they don't grasp the objectivity of the class struggle thus no simple analysis on one hand the ideal on the other hand they believe they are the guardians of the temple the possessors of surplus value impossible anti-barbarism for them to imagine their spindly branched side at the level of the masses at the very most do they want to be a dimming cell with an electron core it is nobler the intelligible spark drowned resistant in full flower furious outburst not really no history is not told by an epileptic no the super-powers are not going to establish a holy empire oh no we are not at the limits of knowledge and most certainly the bomb is a paper tiger no more impressive for another conception of the world than an infusoria just as the most profound intangible taboo of their society just to open the window is proof enough that's why we like to work in the open air while changing the motif en la variacion est el gusto ah i see an instance of don juanism if you want viva le femine viva il buon vino and in any case no vecchio infatuato hang on a little while the third world your crumbling granary but it'll be the same thing the law of the master and the slave hang on please until we bore into the corpuscular we still find surprises there who is not born the new subject will come it is messianic of course not simply progress on all fronts in a disorderly fashion a thousand leaflets in short the new is the new the ancient can do nothing here boo boo death seizes the living the comendatore stays on watch okay we will rewrite this finale where we will demonstrate that the apparition fades in the light of a revitalized and vitamin-enriched father freud my children he will say trembling with emotion i dared no longer hope for it had begun to seem quite gloomy to me my wife my daughter the worries of the association all of it you are free dad will we answer him magnanimously the history of religions moves on let us seal our pact with this drink and we offer him a mouthful of soma which cures his raging toothache wallowing in guilt the last painting shows him entering the dance a viennese waltz *if the music be the food of love play on oh let me teach you how to knit again this scattered corn into one mutual sheaf these broken limbs again into one body eros* he cries the great rabble-rouser and we in chorus *come thick night come you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe top full of direst cruelty* and other adaptations of shakespeare his favourite author oh athenians what can we do to deserve your praise cut off your prick mordicus it is difficult to shoot arrow after arrow at a narrow key hole locate a long distance away and not to miss it once it is even more difficult to shoot and to pierce with the end of a strand of hair split a hundred time a strand of hair similarly split it's even more difficult still to penetrate the fact that everything that exists is bad once i would have considered this idea obscure pessimistic and exaggerated to me i would not have thought that it was like you so lucid no not lucid to be self-evident no not to be self-evident but clearly without limits lacerated the problem eventually is to challenge the other in all respects to shut down even your heart out of touch with the other my *heart* mein hertz mi corazon il mio cuore damn court crowned with pine trees showing his very raw meat inside the missals infarction beating for spinsters dizzy spell amidst the candles or on the sofa the embryo hears as if under water its mother's muddled drum much later it eats away at his eardrum otitis and mastoiditis archipelago cartilages the compresses the horses on the wall we struggled like hell with sinusitis i could refer to it as the scale of odours it has endowed me with a feel for the perforations of the bones everyone does not understand music it is a shame for immediate understanding a long way over a shortened course we have invented circumcision of the ventricle most importantly the foreskin squared a transplant beneath an aerated tent here no one enters without showing his medical degrees his certificate of training as a guerilla in circulatory warfare i climbed up onto a small roof as night descended to see her taking her clothes off wet counter when she took off her dress oh yes utopia is behind us bursting realized just the same as you are not going to preach to us about the phallustere the ashram the boarding house the village community just the same you are not going to suggest that we put mead in the negative you are not young enough for that anymore you refuse to see yourself growing old utopia is a strained parable let the subject experience life do not conceal the forbidden as for us we need a terrible fiasco exiting en force pulling off the adhesive not the menstrual banquet with re-enthronement of grand-mama yes fourier if you like but even so admit that it has the feel of long underwear a bacchanalia of mothballs you say desire and you put bromide in your coffee you reconnect the incubator you do not accept the baby's lecherous appearance now everyone says that children inevitably lack a sense of humour little dears

they have other things to do than serve as a mirror for your pilgrimage we live in a time when in our climates the chains are loosened and there are those who march on believing in a future city a trick of the multiple unconscious you will not succeed in expurgating the literal version of our journal ecstasy has other plans of horror be that as it may we are likeable you will not be eaten i promise you that you have the right to purr calmly to expose yourself nude to your kids you have a clear conscience about it as if we could have decreed the golden age in suburban villas basically you need a little buddhism that is our polemic eh our conflict essentially revolves around the breast ah there's a damned awful scowl the initial and the final it took me a while to notice that you were quite stuck on the oral that i found myself nine times out of ten transformed into a mama save oh my gluttons oh my greedy souls it means that you would not leave a bit from the alter leg of lamb eh my leeches i don't speak to you in the name of the anal phallic which makes you crap like myself neither in the name of the father nor the son nor the monoprix nor in the name of genital rompers but not of a genius display the new fashions of tomorrow the anti-superman the non-god the non-mama the non-unique the excesses in the dormitories at last i ask you what becomes of death on your premises is it a matter of a boundary a misunderstanding an error in taste a fart an error in the calculation of a particle of dust or do you admit along with me that it is a unique work a process of universal freedom without any volume nor is it full of intimate substance since what is denied is still and always the point with no content the pinhead of self absolutely free who is in this way communicates with everything in short receives an income while losing his sight you understand aims at the backwash under the roadways of a wooden bridge drink up the black water with you eyes look it would seem that the universal is a large room suddenly inhabited it must have been pinned to the earth like me under the will which has no opposite below the cast-iron press of duration and chance wait a minute empty-handed from birth it stares you in the face you hear your rights whisper about what was there before you i enter you i don't enter you it is you who choose my amoeba an injunction don't joke around i don't know if i could put the gorgon into one of her dreams she wished to tell me something about nitrogen and i you already told me then you don't wish to know and i you already told me about it and she okay then i won't tell you and i yes then go ahead and she for example we went by a multi-colored carnival yes truly several eh the palette the stained-glass window let's say a harlequin well what i find curious is that you say it to me each time you've seen a beautiful yellow harlequin her criticism evidently had a universal significance she was crazy about poodles claiming that they recognized her from thirty meters off she would watch for the moment when they curled up into a ball she made a big deal of the fact that they use this ancestral gesture to cover up their caca pipi poof poof with their two black paws it makes me think about this festival for the queen of england in a tv close-up horses were shown from the back kicking up their hindquarters while the pink face of her majesty was smack up against their well-shaped rumps with the armour of the guard encrusted with dung it also seems that they bury their bones which they will gnaw at again from time to time as part of the myth they would like there to be an invincible femur tibia the id is everyone their speeches are like little crosses at a cemetery bells ringing for the dead obscenity and the warped mind as such do not frighten them at all but an explanation that cuts right to the quick the form of the equation just about to become clear who said that the law is pornographic she sees it everywhere pornography makes her feel good following it like her own shadow it is enough for you to drift towards liberation to be accused of a dissolute life to have all the beasts by the ass who come to check the apparatus damned fools they truly understand nothing at all i can't envisage a god who would not weary of their narrow-mindedness rather arrange the corpses into a fetal position and not speak about it anymore cremation yes maybe but the parsees are right it sullies the fires where were we ah yes the samsara the death blow rebirths not at all allegorical that still had nothing to do with caterpillars and butterflies simply accent on the wheel the old spring-loading record-player *his master's voice* the runny omelette over time there's a passage from purgatory where the travellers sometimes hear a cry in the mountain one of them who takes off who clears out the vacations what the six o'clock evening whistle to think that these struggles were necessary to obtain paid vacation social security i saw some graffiti it wasn't a big prick look for the small tanned ass easy to handle but guaranteed minimum wage it is an entire era which isn't passing very quickly you don't recognize the inscriptions on the national library the female side the narratives the details the quavering appeals already i know three or four of them who could not resist who were finished on the spot who still think about it from time to time in their small armchairs about when a publisher who had published a guide book i have a title the room of engravings about when the bus to the best places of notice well what apollo says to release the boat to the open air he asserts it is not the mother who gives birth a typical instance of historical transition in the play the mothers don't recover from it infertile children of the fertile night the mothers appear they make devilish racket such a mild air all the same how bright milky silvery one could think we were in a comedy like those of long ago show me your hands everything is there you see in the manual intellectual division is language a system of abstract objects analogous to a symphony does the word consist in its execution yet even with words are symphonies heaven-sent no is language a finite or an infinite ensemble of phrases themselves sequences of discrete atoms *nesting* or *self-embedding* an element not-null to its left another to its right the limitation of the degree of embedding results only from the fact that memory is finite isn't it idiotic to say that transformations do not modify sense while there are at least five senses for one false sense continue admit that you are allowing that we think about you carrying the tomb along with you everywhere swish the wind from the outside the rounds the fragments the exterior membrane of the encephalon called the meninx have to believe that a small part of the body has simply swollen which is not swollen all over oblivion has its vigorous embryo entering it also within limits we call the return of a star and its passage...



Textimage by Fernando Aguiar (Portugal)

TWO-HEADED TALK

An Interview with Sandra Birdsell

"In fiction what I long for is a sense of the story's being alive -- all hot, rude, contrary, funny, unbearable. You don't get that nearly enough, but in Sandra Birdsell's work you do get it over and over again..." -- Alice Munro

Born in 1942, Sandra Birdsell had a Metis father and a Mennonite Mother and grew up in Morris, Manitoba, one of 10 children. She quit school at age 17 and has been a home-maker, income tax clerk, retail salesperson and cocktail waitress. Her first collection of stories, *Night Travellers*, won the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, and is linked to a second collection of short stories titled *Ladies of the House* (1984). These two books have been collected in an American edition titled *Agassiz: A Novel in stories* (1991). Birdsell's novel *The Missing Child* (1989) won the *Books in Canada/W.H. Smith First Novel Award*. Her second novel *The Chrome Suite* (1992), received the McNally Robinson Best Book of the Year Award and was nominated for a Governor General's Award. In 1994, Birdsell won the Marian Engel Award. She has written scripts for film, television & radio drama. Her stories have appeared in numerous anthologies including the *Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories*, and *From Ink Lake* edited by Michael Ondaatje. She has been a writer-in-residence at universities across Canada, including Edmonton, Waterloo & Charlottown. Birdsell has toured extensively and has read in the U.S., England, Italy and Japan. In 1998, Birdsell was again nominated for a Governor General's Award for *The Two-Headed Calf* (M & S, Toronto), her most recent collection of short stories. In this interview with *Rampike* editor Karl Jirgens, Birdsell discusses her career and *The Two-Headed Calf*.

KJ: How has your Metis and Mennonite background affected your perception of the world and your writing?

SB: I suppose the biggest influence would be that both are marginal groups, made so by language, culture, religious beliefs and practices. My perception of the world as viewed through the eyes of these vastly different cultures seems to have put me on the edge of things. However being a mix of both cultures and not one or the other has placed me between the two worlds and consequently has given me the notion that I'm really at the centre. At the centre of the edge, if you can imagine. Because I think I'm writing from the centre I'm often dismayed or startled by a critic or reader's misunderstanding or ignorance of the people and things I write about. Fornication? What is fornication? a reviewer once mused. What a concept. What a strange world where such a word might still be heavy with meaning.

This mix of cultures and being outside of both of them has made me a watcher I suppose, as much as being born female and the fifth child of a family of ten has. I have also come from a generation where sexual discrimination, discrimination against minorities (my mother's family was viewed with suspicion for speaking German, my father's family found it necessary to deny their native blood) was more overt and didn't require a lot of skill to deal with it, except to fight against it with fists and swear words and then fume over the injustice and ultimately be determined to try and understand such a world and its people by writing about it. Nina Berberova has made the point that living on the cusp, the cusp of great political and social upheaval in her case, was a good place for a writer to be and I think that being between, at the centre of the edge, is kind of like living in the spaces or cracks in the floorboards, and that is also a good place for writer to come from.

KJ: What was it like studying creative writing with Robert Kroetsch at the University of Manitoba during the 1970's? Was that period important in your development as a writer?

SB: The 1970's was a signpost for writing in Manitoba with the emergence of presses such as Queenstone House and Turnstone Press. It was the right time and place to be. And when the giant, Robert Kroetsch arrived on the scene from New York at the same time with his *Seed Catalogue*, anything and everything seemed possible. His creative writing class was jammed with people like myself who had been working in isolation for years. I believe that almost half of the writers in that class went on to publish their manuscripts shortly after.

KJ: Often your stories connect in a kind of suite, but are not truly novels and somehow they tend to be more than just short story collections. Do you plan this sort of continuity, and if so, how?

SB: Often what I'm doing is playing. In "The Two-Headed Calf," for instance, I made oblique connections between characters and places to see if readers were paying attention. But it's more than that sometimes. "Night Travellers" was going to be a novel but I didn't have large enough chunks of time to write a novel. At the same time I found the short story form frustrating. I knew as much about each character in a short story as I would if they had been central figures in a novel. It was impossible to use all that I knew about them in a single short story and that's why they would appear later in another story. I wanted another look at them further down the line. I knew how the characters were evolving long after the book was published. And so I wrote "Ladies of the House," to continue them and introduce new players. My idea was to write a trilogy, a kind of triptych that when unfolded, formed a whole picture. There was a lot of pressure after the second book of short stories for me to write a novel and so I abandoned the short story form and didn't return to it until *The Two-Headed Calf*.

KJ: Your fiction includes themes of dislocation and violence (particularly against women). Could you say something about why you keep returning to these particular topics?

SB: I'm always startled by that kind of question because it seems to me that the answer should be fairly obvious. Because I am a woman. Because I lived in isolation in small rural communities. Because violence occurs more often among the isolated and towards women. It still does. Maxim Gorky's "My Childhood" has fascinated me from the beginning of my writing life. It's filled with acts of brutality against the human body and spirit and yet there is such power and strength and dignity in the human sufferer who emerges damaged (as many of us are) but still remains whole and capable of achieving greatness even for a brief moment. I find the strength and resilience of the human spirit amazing and think that for the most part, the spirit of grace has much to do with it. These are the kinds of people we run into in much of Rohinton Mistry's work and for that reason I believe that one day he'll be recognized as being one of our greatest writers. Is Rohinton Mistry asked the same question as often as I am? I wonder. I think not. My characters are ordinary Canadian folk and therefore lack an exotic quality, too kitchen sink to be allowed their dignity or admired for their strength and their quiet small triumphs.

KJ: I see your point. I suppose I might not ask Rohinton Mistry, but, I'd certainly ask, say, Michael Ondaatje about the violence in his writing. Your writing also includes the unusual. For example, the story "I Used to Play in a Brass Band" features angels in flower beds, trilobites in the sky, flying cats and so on. Why do you think you include this fantastic element in your writing? Does it have something to do with a self-referentiality to art itself?

SB: The inclusion of the unusual and fantastic element in my work comes from who I am and where I grew up as a child. Trilobites peer out at us from tapestry stone, a constant reminder that where we lived was once a great ancient lake bed. My spirituality as a child allowed for Noah's flood to have happened, for the existence of angels, the resurrection, and therefore the inexplicable happenstances of life were accepted as just being a part of everyday life, or an extension of "real" life. Where does breathing stop and prayer begin? How do we know that each breath of air will be followed by another. It's something those of us with healthy lungs have learned to take for granted. In the same way I learned to not only believe in prayer but to expect magic or fantastic element created by writers, as in so many of the South American writers, then we must give them the tag of magic realism because the portrayal of a spirit world and a character's spirituality alongside their realistic everyday life is outside the realm of our experience.

KJ: In regard to the question of spiritual strength, the story "The Man from Mars" deals with a number of Mennonite issues including European backgrounds, the land, displacement and so on. Could you say more about the idea of dislocation and displacement and why you keep returning to this as a topic?

SB: On my mother's side I'm a first generation Canadian and so her stories and those of my grandparents had special significance. For some strange reason I find myself bumping up against many recent immigrants to this country. I find that the immigrant experience is still one of displacement and dislocation and one, given my particular background I find intriguing. "The Man From Mars" is a Manitoba story. What happens when a young man who has learned a language, learned to appreciate and count on certain amenities in life, finds himself in a different country, living in a time warp of the 17th century? When he flees from it and immigrates to the country he was born into, he discovers that he doesn't fit there either. It seems rather fantastic but that's exactly what did happen to many Mennonites who left Manitoba for Paraguay and Mexico. Our country is made up of people with memory of, or at least family connections to other countries. Despite our enormous geographical size, we're a mouse compared to the elephant south of our border. The themes of dislocation, displacement and isolation, I would think, are logical themes for a Canadian writer. Now, I happen to live in a part of Canada called the prairie. The characters I write about are sometimes unrecognizable to the reader in central Canada. This lack of identification somehow translates into my having a predilection for violence, bleakness, starkness, quirkiness, the fantastical. Gee whiz, eh? I'm only writing about the people I stand in line with waiting to pay for my groceries at Safeway.

KJ: Among other things, the story "Phantom Limbs" seems to have to do with that kind of bleakness or void at the core of being, but at the same time there seems to be a sense of some kind of previous existence either in another place, or perhaps even in another life. Is this another way to deal with the question of displacement?

SB: The story, "Phantom Limbs" is about a woman who knows there's an element missing in her life. She both envies and scorns her friend's faith, which is a belief in Jesus Christ. She tries to sabotage this faith and at the same time feels sanctified by it. She tries to steal some of it by sleeping with the woman's husband, and at the same time by doing this, hopes to destroy her friend's faith. The other woman, on the other hand, begins to doubt whether what she has is real faith and not just a convenient foxhole that she's jumped into in order to have a better life. She begins to suspect that her faith is vanity. It's a complicated story, but then the questions of faith are complicated. There's such a fine line between truth and what we imagine to be true, altruism and selfishness. How can we ever be certain of our motives? The phantom limb is longing for what continues to elude us.

KJ: You mention complexities of faith. Is the title story "The Two Headed Calf" a reference to Biblical prophecy about an impending apocalypse? (I believe that there is a Biblical passage that refers to abominations such as two-headed beasts as a kind of warning sign). The story also mixes in the experience of black culture which already went through a kind of apocalyptic experience (through slavery). Is this story saying that there is no single day of reckoning, but that each day might involve a reckoning of sorts?

SB: Goodness! Impending apocalypse. I thought I had covered that in "The Missing Child," more or less. There is a calf, and yes, the children of Israel did worship the golden calf while Moses was away on the mountain, but that's about as Biblical as you can make it. The calf, the two-headed animal in the story has more to do about the push and pull of duality. All the stories in the book, whether it's the elderly caught between the old world and the reality of the new one, or a girl faced with two possible identities, the twins being connected and one wanting one thing and the other fearing it, have to do with duality. I wasn't thinking beyond that, or a reckoning, but I was thinking about the seed in the watermelon, that we hold in us with the imprint of all the gardens of the ages including the first garden. And I was thinking that whether we're French, Ojibwa, Russian, Mennonite, or whatever, so what? We all come from the same garden. The advice the grandfather had for the girl in the story to, "just be," came to me in a dream and I thought it was rather good advice and so I put it in the story. By the way, the entire story of "Rooms For Rent" was also a dream.

KJ: "Rooms for Rent" deals with matters of zero tolerance of the homeless and the matter of displacement mixing notions of arson with masturbation. Is this story addressing questions of the outsider or the "Other"?

SB: I can't think of another story that's been misunderstood as often than "Rooms For Rent," and so I guess I'll have to take some responsibility for that. The masturbation at the end of the story is me getting off, having had my little moment of wanting to do a Mother Theresa. Of wanting to scrub floors and wash feet. But like most people, the reality of caring for the homeless -- well I doubt that I would have the stomach for it. Nevertheless, I can weep at the sight of starving children on a television newscast and walk away feeling good about myself; I weep, therefore I must care. It's a form of masturbation and some of us indulge in it frequently.

KJ: In the past you've taught creative writing. Are you teaching at the moment?

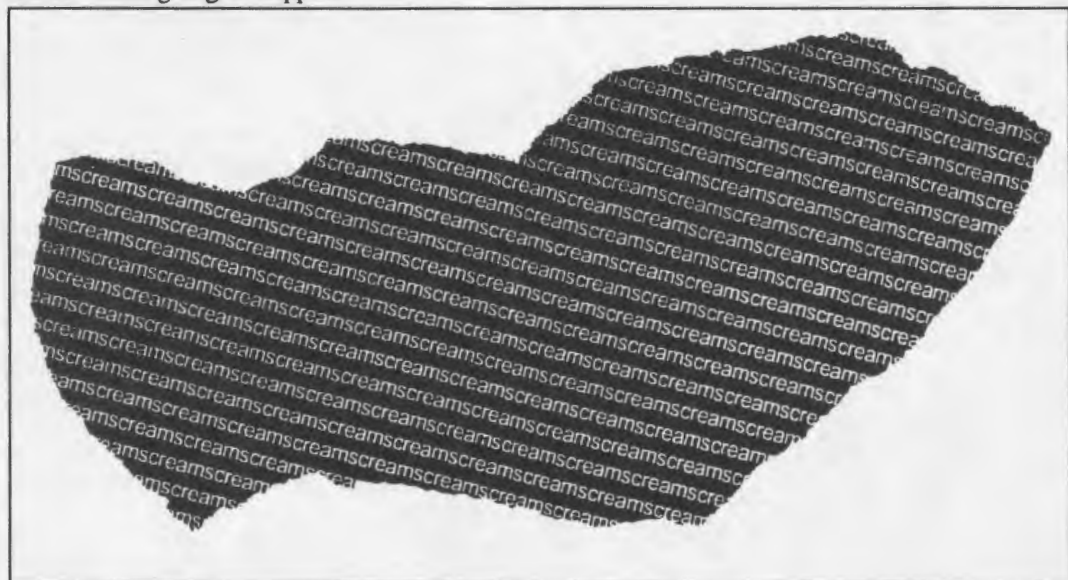
SB: I try not to teach if I can help it. Talking about writing is not as satisfying as the actual act. There's far too much poor writing out there and the odour of it lingers like Limburger cheese and it takes me two weeks to air out my writing room after the workshop, class, colloquium is over.

KJ: Had any interesting dreams lately?

SB: I have a recurring dream that I can play a pipe organ, without ever having played one. I am somehow able to make the most astoundingly beautiful music. I've had occasion to meet in too many creative writing adventures, people who have similar pipe dreams. They either become petulant or frustrated or disbelieving when I suggest that their story or novel might require a second draft or so. I was once asked in one of these creative writing experiences how it was possible for me to write when I didn't have a doctorate degree. This person did possess a doctorate degree and couldn't seem to write as well as I did, try as they might. Was this fair? I was asked. There you go. One of your worst nightmares is realized. There is someone in the audience who knows more about writing than you do, which is another good reason not to assume the role of teacher. On the other hand, on a few occasions I've met equally determined and gifted writers in fiction colloquiums and in writer-in-residencies who have been a pleasure to work with. But it just doesn't happen nearly often enough.

KJ: Do you have any upcoming plans for tours, or new books and so on?

SB: Right now I'm heading for the Ukraine for a second trip to look at the place my mother's family came from. This time I'm going armed with ideas, questions and part of a novel already written. But other than that I haven't a clue what's going to happen.



"de Sade" by W.M. Sutherland (Canada)



"More than you know" by Spencer Selby (USA)

LA VIDA ES SUEÑO (LOPE DE VEGA)

by Louis Dudek

("We are such stuff / As dreams are made on..." -- Shakespeare: *The Tempest*)

1.
If the world we know is a biological construct
and that's a small part
of an immense reality which we do not know,

then we live in a dream of psychic creation
that corresponds to something
but is not itself reality, nor a huge piece of it

but a mere sliver -- the fearful tiger and the cobra
are not in themselves fearful
any more than the white lily or the rose.

Whether we love or fear it, the world
is a closed fiction:
it is the world we made for own needs.

You imagine me, I imagine you, from afar.
And we believe our dream.
For no one can disbelieve the dream they inhabit.

2.
The living entity, however, hooked itself
to a string of photons, moved along
with gravity and flowed with the stream;

it played on the skin of rain, on drops that hang
and let the wind move a mile
like a leaf on water, a spider, or hair on film:

some part of total being, of the world's waves,
it's mystic motions and radiations
entered and became part of its being --

so that we are hooked to something out there
yet stuck in an empty bubble of existence
here, where a new world is being created.

3.
The worst case would be solitary confinement
in a prison where your own phantoms
haunt you, whirling, and none are true, so you go
mad.

And even in the loony bin it's good to have
one companion who tells you his zodiac
that checks with yours, and you build a pyramid
[together.

Assent, assent. Consensus and consent.
The world's created by a show of hands
(enough fools at the trough and you have the state).

Without this, wraiths in the wind.
Look for a home in interstellar spaces...
There is none. The only home is here, with friends.

4.
Unless "the unconscious mind" is immortal --
which is perhaps possible.
Since it seems "consciousness" is frail and feeble.

Even now, failing, swirling, losing its store
of memory and command.
How much did I exist in... a swatch of time --

a scattering of spaces? Was I stretched out
in a vacuum of particles?
But the great sea of dreams was some other.

That did not fail or flounder. It shook the soul
with impersonal power
like a god, or gravity, or the prime force

that holds the atoms together, *energeia*
compacted to a core,
only to be released at death, forever.

Louis Dudek's latest book of poetry Reality Games is published by Empyrean Press: Montreal (1998).

NEVER REIGNED BUT POURS CONCRETE POETICALLY

by Frank Davey

yearning for poetry detonates rubble clearing
waiting to bomb radar trap shootings
a gaping hole in one pavement artist
war by other means more suffering
as affirmative acting general strikes utterly
a two-run triple meter reading
up in Novi Sad stories of old history
brick and mortar attacks pub crawl
fresh air strikes tropical pose
ever the running artist proof series
peace deals a heavy blow
free verse agent orange lodge occupiers

unarmed monitor lizards
collateral loan damage armenians
brutal conditions in the mountain scenery makeover
bombed-out house parties
a starry night crawler
a dobro dan pinscher
a fumble recovery ward
nailed a twelve-foot eagle on the fifteenth green
party
bomb dog runs
left-handed bat venom
keep heat on alien kitchen catchers
fraught with danger pay

picks up the tabula rasa
picks up the table dancer
picks up the load star shining pathfinder
a travesty of justice minister
beefing up the team player
peace process poetry
short term pain relief pitcher
a hut of plastic, branches, and withered corn starch
in critical condition of anonymity
taking discussions to a new spy plane
devastating brain disorderly conductor
Swiss family death lore

simple blood testosterone secret
artillery fire still echoes without saying
a glimpse into the futurist
a pocked and blackened landscape painting
passing for a major poet
write protect the observer force
woman's worst fears confirmation ceremony
the new airstrike order
domestic airspace cadet
radar and missile polysystem theory
newly fixed air-defence systems analysis

a drop-line pass
a legend in his own reading
a deadly barrage of information technology
a fiery sudden-death overtime wish
a penalty shoot-out at the barricades
a penalty boxing match
a Bosnian civil greetings card factory
international sporting bodies in mass grave
atrocious fans Calgary flames
gameplan unorthodox Cypriot rites
no minaret standing room only
armoured personnel file disease carriers
Lake Ohrid trout slaughter house ruins

a broadsheet of flame
a proofsheets tightly wound around body count
having learned from the Nazi pre-occupiers
game plan of attack mode theory
cultural arena football
a scorched earth mother of all batboys
ballgirls under your sheltering pine fragments
a weekly column of troops
international trademark naked bootleg
broken play house fires new resolve
ruthlessly attacking the text the neutral zone
crashing the net results of vigilance

tone leading pass rusher
steroid loads deadly cargo
captive nude women tennis champs
a penalty killer apprehended in Acton Ontario
aggressive base twelve mathematics stealer
bulking up grenades successfully
stand-up colour comics weekly death tolls
war toys with victim therapy
international monetary compensation board
top spin doctors without borderblurs
short sideline pattern blandness
ground forces new poetics sporting colloquially
offering warprize fighter schmoozing streak end
rime zone no flies

Frank Davey's latest book is Cultural Mischief published by Talonbooks, Vancouver (1996).

RECENT INSTALLATIONS

by Dennis Oppenheim

Dennis Oppenheim is among the most inventive and energetic artists of the late 20th century. His sculptural works have been commissioned across North America and Europe. Since the late 1960s, Oppenheim has had numerous exhibitions in North America and around the world, including a major showing of his work as part of the 1997 Venice Biennale. Oppenheim is based in New York and his approaches to sculpture are as broad as they are innovative. His oeuvre includes minimalism, earth works, conceptual art, installation art, performance art, body art & massive sculptures. Oppenheim's works explore notions of passage, transference, and ritual. The sculpture of Dennis Oppenheim has been featured regularly in Rampike. Recently his work was exhibited at the ARTCORE Gallery in Toronto. For more information contact Artcore, 33 Hazelton Ave., Toronto, Canada (416) 920-3820.



*"Engagement" (1998)
Rolled and painted
steel pipe, steel
grating, electric lights,
acrylic, concrete
foundations. Located
on traffic island at
5th Avenue, Broadway
and 23rd Street,
New York City.*

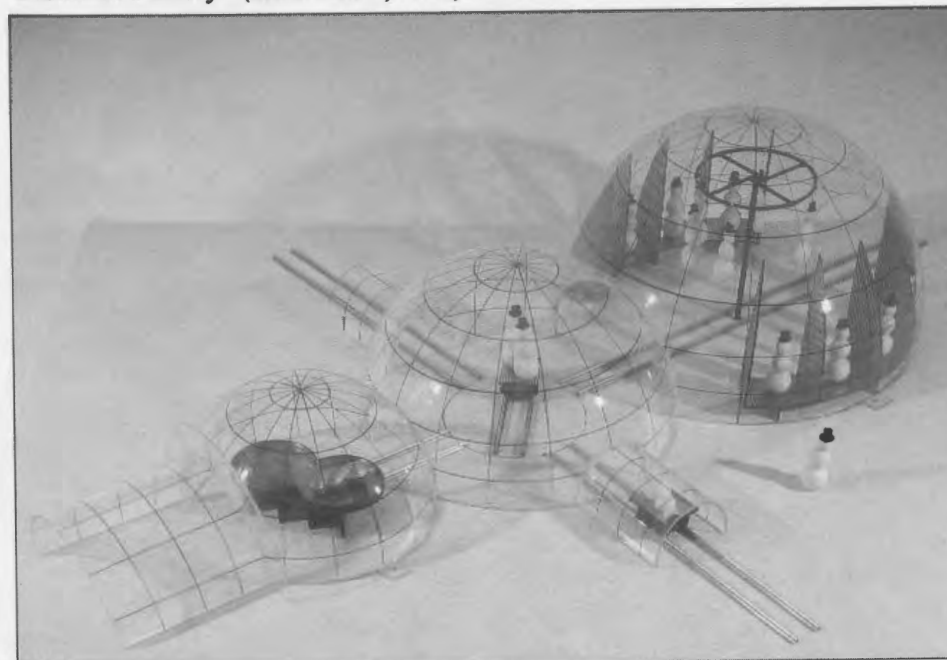
This work gestures to absence and presence -- the absence of a person, an emotion or a relationship -- there is bittersweet longing implicit here. Oppenheim's installations, their mechanics exposed, use machinery to both enact and sublimate the range of human emotions. In creating and exhibiting machines that grow, eat, replicate, burn, cry and kiss, the artist lays bare the foibles of the human condition with wry detachment.

"Digestion: Gypsum Gypsies" (1989)

In precursory works and full installations, Oppenheim's sculptures are humorous, violent, subversive & elegant. Combining metaphor (connotation) with literal meaning (denotation), they traverse inferences from potentially violent views of interpersonal relationships to subversive commentaries on architecture, aesthetics and modes of production.



"Snowman Factory" (scale model, 1996).



In viewing Oppenheim's working drawings and scale models for the larger installation, we are able to trace the development of his ideas and enter into dialogue with them. Seeing the works laid out on paper as blueprints, developed into maquettes and then realized in full size allows us to feel that we have an engagement with the creative process, a sense of satisfaction at their completion.

I AM THAT I AM: A RETROSPECTIVE The Works of Brion Gysin

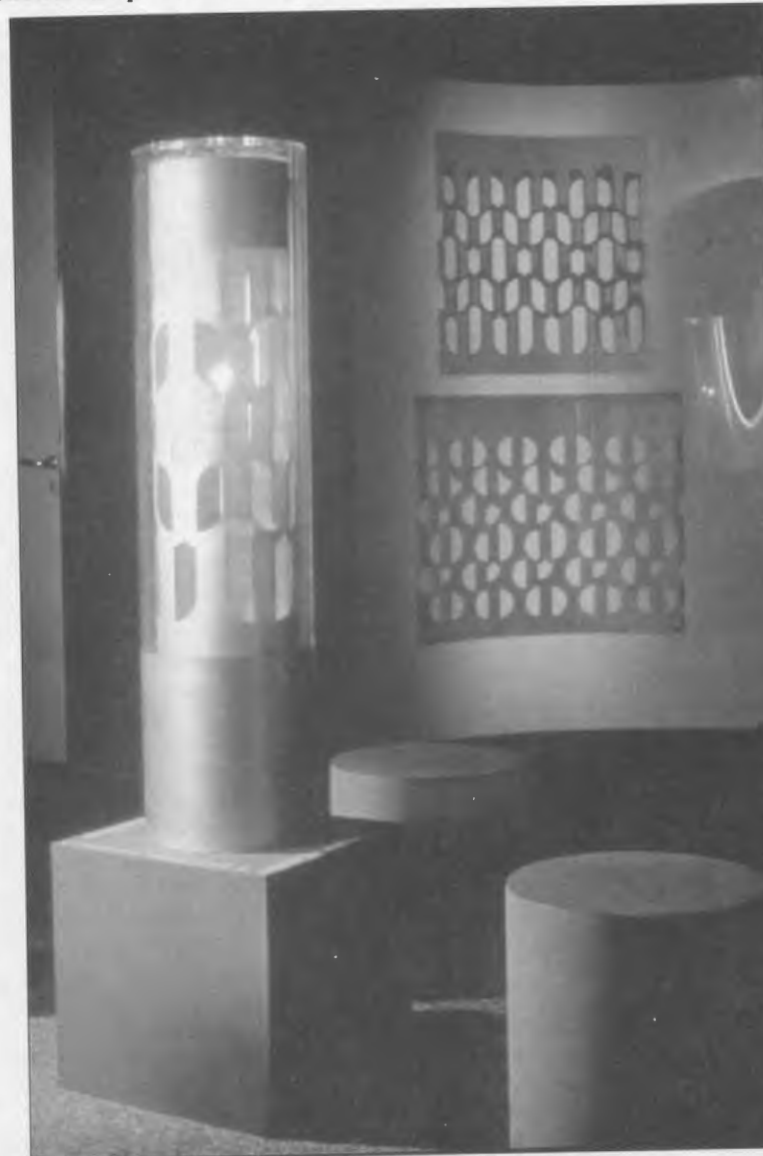
Brion Gysin's reputation is firmly established among beat and avant-garde writers and artists. His development of the cut-up method and his collaborations with writers such as William S. Burroughs are well documented. However, it is less known that Gysin was born of Canadian parents, had Canadian roots, and that he lived and studied in Alberta, Canada. It is appropriate that a retrospective on his life's work is being presented at the Edmonton Art Gallery. Included are Gysin's paintings, drawings and multimedia works from the mid-1930s to the mid-1980s. At the age of sixteen Gysin travelled extensively through the United States and Europe. After receiving a Fulbright Scholarship for his published writing, Gysin travelled to North Africa, where he explored the mysticism and music of Morocco. By blending Japanese and Arabic calligraphy with a self-taught painting method, he developed his "magical grid" that would recur as a fundamental element in his visual works. Throughout his life, Gysin worked not only with drawing and calligraphy but also writing, music, performance, sound poetry and cinema. Gysin's career includes participation in the Surrealist movement in Paris, collaborations with William S. Burroughs, John Giorno, the Fluxus group, Steve Lacy, Brian Jones, David Bowie and Keith Haring.



Brion Gysin: "That I am am I," (c. 1961) 35 mm transparency, scratched surface (c/o Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris).

Curated by Bruce Grenville and José Férrez Kuri, the Gysin Retrospective featured at the Edmonton Art Gallery, features Gysin's works on loan from collections at the Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou and Galerie de France in Paris, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and William Burroughs Communications, Kansas. The show will travel next to Saskatoon. The retrospective is documented in a book titled: *I Am That I Am: The Art and Life of Brion Gysin*. This book documents Gysin's life including his participation in the surrealist movement in Paris in the 1930s, his friendship with Paul Bowles in Tangiers in the late 1940s and 1950s, the development of the "cut-up process" in collaboration with William S. Burroughs at the Beat Hotel in Paris in the late 1950s, the production of *The Third Mind* and calligraphic paintings in the 1960s, and his later photomontage and roller works from the 1970s and 1980s. The 180 page book features over 250 colour illustrations and includes original essays by William S. Burroughs, Guy Brett, Gregory Corso, Barry Miles, Bernard Heidsieck, John Geiger and Bruce Grenville. The book provides a broad insight into Gysin's extraordinary life as an artist, writer and poet (co-published by the Edmonton Art Gallery, NeWest Press, Edmonton, & Thames and Hudson, London). Advance orders for this publication may be made by contacting The Gallery Shop Manager, Brenda Banks at the Edmonton Art Gallery, 2 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 2C1.

Brion Gysin "Dreamachine, No. 9," (1960) Perforated metal, electric lamp and motor (c/o Musée d'art moderne, Paris).



1959 Develops cut-up method of writing, publishes *Minutes to Go* with Burroughs, Sinclair Belles and Gregory Corso.
 1961 Develops the *Dreamachine* with Ian Sommerville, first shown in the exhibition *L'objet* at the Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris. Participates in multimedia performances with Burroughs and Sommerville for the group *Domaine Poétique*.
 1963 Participates in group exhibition *La lettre et le signe dans la peinture contemporaine* at Galerie Valerie Schmidt, Paris, with France Kline, Jasper Johns, Arman, Cy Twombly and others.
 1965 Completes *The Third Mind* with Burroughs, a detailed manifesto and documentation of the cut-up method. It remains unpublished until 1978. Meets and starts collaborating with John Giorno.
 1968 Meets the Rolling Stones in Tangier. Brings their guitarist Brian Jones to Jajouka to record the traditional rites of Pan.
 1969 Publishes *The Process* a novel later hailed as a visionary work and an underground classic.
 1973 *Let the Mice In*, a collection of Gysin's writing is published in the USA.
 1974 Diagnosed and operated on for cancer in London. Returns to Paris.
 1975 Collaborates with Steve Lacy on *Dreams: Music for the Dreamachine*.
 1978 *The Third Mind* is published. Gysin participates in The Nova Convention, held in New York, a counter-culture reunion with Allen Ginsberg, Timothy Leary, William S. Burroughs, John Cage and the emerging avant garde music movement represented by Patti Smith, Frank Zappa and Laurie Anderson. Gysin sought-after by young musicians and artists such as Iggy Pop, David Bowie and Keith Haring.
 1982 A collection of conversations between Gysin and Terry Wilson is published under the title *Here to Go: Planet R-101*.
 1985 Exhibits *Calligraffiti of Fire* at Galerie Samy Kinge, Paris. Awarded Chevalier de l'ordre des arts et lettres, France.
 1986 Diagnosed with lung cancer and dies in Paris on July 13, one month after publication of his novel *The Last Museum*.

A BRIEF GYSIN CHRONOLOGY:

1916 Born at Taplow, Canadian military hospital in England to a Canadian mother and a naturalized Canadian father who dies at the Battle of the Somme later that year.
 1921 Lives in Edmonton, Canada, with his mother, attends Westward Ho an Anglican private school and later attends St. Joseph's Catholic High school.
 1932 Gysin is sent to England, where he attends Downside, a distinguished Catholic public school.
 1934 Moves to Paris at the age of 18.
 1935 Initially is included in a group show featuring surrealist drawings, but unexpectedly just prior to the exhibition, Gysin's work is mysteriously excluded on orders from André Breton.
 1939 First solo exhibition at Galerie aux Quatre Chemins, Paris.
 1940 Moves to New York. Gysin works as an assistant to Irene Sharaff designing costumes for Broadway musicals. He also works as a welder in the New Jersey shipyards.
 1943 Gysin is drafted into U.S. Army. He requests a transfer to the Canadian Army. Back in Canada, he studies calligraphy at S-20 Japanese School in Vancouver.
 1946 Publishes his first book, *To Master -- A Long Good Night (the true story of Uncle Tom, a historical narrative)*. This book is soon followed by another, *A History of Slavery in Canada*.
 1949 Receives one of the first Fulbright scholarships and returns to France.
 1950 Travels to Tangier with Paul Bowles.
 1954 Opens the "1001 Nights" restaurant in Tangier, featuring Moroccan food and the Master of Musicians of Jajouka. Develops an interest in "the magical universe."
 1958 Returns to Paris and moves into the Beat Hotel at the suggestion of William S. Burroughs. Resides there until 1963.

THE GRAND TOUR TO GLEIS-BINARIO

by George Bowering

In the eighteenth century the British writer was expected to make his Continental tour and to report on it. In the nineteenth century the British poets travelled on the Continent, and then went to live there, usually in Italy. Percy Shelley would point to the top of Mt. Blanc (mandatory *topos* for the Romantics) in the very middle of Europe, and pronounce: "the power is there." Europe, north as it was of the Mediterranean, was the soil that had nurtured post-Aristotelian thought, and received its seeds into itself.

When writers in the British diaspora paid homage to the relative stability and cultural density of Europe, they included Britain, sometimes treating Britain as their forebears had treated the mainland. Typical sentiments of a traveller to the motherland may be seen in *An American Girl in London* (1891) by the Canadian novelist Sara Jeanette Duncan:

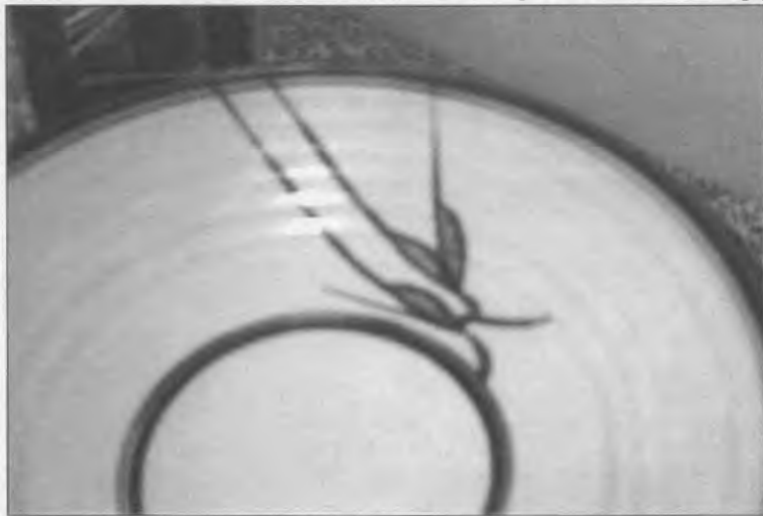
Then there is the well-settled, well-founded look of everything, as if it had all come ages ago, and meant to stay for ever, and just go on the way it had before. We like that -- the security and the permanence of it... At home I am afraid we fluctuate considerably, especially in connection with cyclones and railway interests -- we are here today, and there is no telling where we shall be tomorrow. So the abiding kind of city gives us a comfortable feeling of confidence. It was not very long before even I, on the top of the Hammersmith bus, felt that I was riding an Institution, and no matter to what extent it wobbled it might be relied upon not to come down.

Even the public conveyances, in clamorous motion, offer the assurance of an "Institution."

Observe now what Andrew Taylor, a much-travelled South Australian poet, has to say about public conveyances in late twentieth century Europe travelled by a post-colonial:

"Gleis" and "Binario" are the two words used in German and Italian respectively to designate the place in a railway station where you board a train: "platform" or "track" roughly translate them. I thought I saw the two words coupled, as they undoubtedly must be in many border and thus bilingual places, from a train window as I passed through Lugano, Switzerland, on my way into Italy. Obviously no physical town or country called Gleis-Binario exists. But it is surely an Italian Switzerland of the mind: where to arrive is to find that you've caught a train in several languages, which is taking you in several different directions, and to diverse and devious ends. If the poems in the present collection [*Travelling*] don't actually inhabit this country, which surely is to be found as much in Australia as anywhere else, then they are at least an attempt at travelling towards it.

Of course, Europe has changed since, say, 1816, though its great ancient monuments cheat time even in the age of acid rain. But Taylor is percipient in pointing out that the visiting poet has changed a good deal more. Though



Sample of crockery from Gleis-Binario -- photograph clo George Bowering.

he travels to Europe, perhaps hoping to find a constant source, maybe an antipodean Fountain of Age, he will find, as Taylor does, that his most prominent image is the Autobahn, or as Robert Kroetsch does, that he has got lost among the Gleissen of Frankfurt's train station.

These post-colonial boys are not Henry James's innocent Americans being deceived by the venal Europeans who inhabit the old stones. Ruskin's beautiful imperfect stones of Venice are not what they used to be themselves, nor where they were. Any tour of Europe now must find a place made of jet planes and freeways that roll through the mind.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM AND ALLEN

by Jim McCrary

In this "snapshot" memoir, Jim McCrary, a long-time member of the team at William Burroughs Communications recalls some moments spent with William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg.



I've been asked many times to put something up about William in Lawrence. Sort of. Well, once someone asked me WHAT he did out here. What he did? All this because I had the extreme privilege to work for William as Office Manager for 9 years. As well, the opportunity to spend time with him on a daily basis doing well... nothing most of the time... until he died in August of 1997. William, of course, had a steady stream of visitors in Lawrence... some of the rich and famous... others the 'fellow travellers' who would stop by. And he certainly had many close friends who came through. One of those was Allen Ginsberg and I use that friendship to offer a 'snapshot' of what I saw. Allen was perhaps Williams oldest and closest 'friend,' to say the least. So... Allen would stop over, over the years... on the way to or from here and there. Boulder, New York City... where ever. (William didn't travel much in later years. Couple times. Once to see old friend Paul Bowles in New York). Allen certainly enjoyed the rest and privacy he found in Lawrence and William certainly enjoyed seeing him. There was a quiet, close, emotional aura around these two as they visited in William's house. There was gracefulness between them and it was private they didn't 'perform' at all. I guess when you know one another 40 plus years -- you don't HAVE to do squat. There you go.

What follows are four of my fond memories of these two. Nothing unique to me. Lots of 'friends' would join them when they were both in town... for dinner, cocktails, visits and gossip. But I've chosen these for a couple of reasons;

obviously I remember vividly these events, and, to me they illustrate what should remain in our memory. I simply here, now, offer a closer view to augment what we already have collected.

Often, it went like this. Allen arrives and settles into William's house; scattering firearms, cats, cans of pepper spray and the 'stuff' William collected in his guest bedroom (his studio at the time) -- as always.

The morning I arrived early to find William and Allen seated at the breakfast table -- scattered with the crumbs of tea and toast -- Allen's camera (always) Allen's tape recorder (sometimes). They are both wearing those old fashion cotton print PJ's with big buttons -- very hot retro today I suppose (the trend setters). The discussion concerns a boy in Tangier -- sweetened accusations of who did what behind the other's back forty years ago. Ahh-- memories... for sure.

The day we went target shooting and Allen drew targets on large white sheets of cardboard with a felt tip pen. Beautiful Buddhas in the Ginsberg style to be pumped full of 9 mm holes. They were both good shots and the smell of gunpowder, vodka and cow shit framed the perfect outing for these two gentlemen of letters.

Once, late afternoon, I came in and found Allen in the kitchen bent over a rather large pot of something on the stove. Turned out to be some kind of macro turnip stew... he was obviously enjoying the preparation. William came in to feed the cats, "Come here you little bitch, Calico Jane." Notices the pot. "What is that?" Lifts the lid. "My god! That won't do!" If memory serves I was dispatched to the store for a couple lamb chops. Who wouldn't, eh.

The time Allen was invited to an "open mic" reading at a local bar. Allen agreed and asked if William wanted to come along. "No... you go ahead," responded William with that wonderful blue eyed smile obviously not wanting to spoil Allen's public appearance with his presence.

I could go on, but that is not the point. They will be missed by your reporter, missed hard and long. No where to go... no one to see. How it all comes down... to spend just a bit of time with two beautiful old men... men who'd been around the block and came back to sit down in an old frame house on a side street in a mid-western town... talk about the old days and the new one's coming. They knew, they both damn well knew what the future held and didn't give much a fuck about THAT, for sure.

So... so long Allen and so long William too.

ONE OR TWO THINGS THAT I KNOW ABOUT KATHY ACKER by Mel Freilicher

On the eve of her death in a Tijuana cancer clinic, her publisher Ira Silverberg, editor-in-chief at Grove Press, called again, this time trying to locate Kathy's illegitimate twins: he had been told about them by Kathy's cousin, Pooh Kaye, the dancer. Elly Antin answered the phone. After initial incredulity, she kind of thought she remembered hearing something about one of them (Much of Elly's rich artistic life has entailed creating dazzling and durable superstructures of her own deepest fantasy personae). *One twin?* I had known Kathy since we were college freshmen together, and I could assure them that no such offspring existed. Several days later, Kathy's second husband, Peter Gordon, the composer, e-mailed a mutual friend inquiring into the whereabouts of said twins, having also talked to Pooh Kaye. Kathy and Peter had lived together for seven years in the '70s, on both coasts (they married a month before splitting up): the twins allegedly originated prior to their meeting.

I find it remarkable that these individuals, who knew Kathy intimately at various points in the '70s, and some afterwards, should grant even momentary credibility to this tale of twins. The willingness to suspend disbelief, on the part of people who undoubtedly have a healthy dose of scepticism regarding virtually all other matters, can be seen as tribute to the urgency of what Kathy represented to all of us. That is, expansive and transformative possibilities, and the primacy of imagination, or the malleability of reality in its mighty wake. (Twins have a definite resonance, being connected to Dionysius and the dual nature of the Roman god Mercurius, a key figure for alchemists. Pindar wrote about twins living one day in the underworld and one in the world above.)

I don't intend to analyze these individuals here, but their reactions seem to speak to complex emotional states at Kathy's death, including an uncharacteristic gullibility, and a desire to perpetuate her legendary status as well as a living connection with her. I myself managed to refrain from embellishing the rumour - though I toyed with the idea of claiming paternity for the late Herbert Marcuse, eminent Marxist philosopher. The original rumour came replete with nameless professor lover/twin progenitor. Kathy had first moved to San Diego in 1966, after her sophomore year, when she married Bob Acker (an epic in itself, in which Acker was at the apex of a torrid triangle); Acker, more a self-styled nihilist, followed Marcuse from Brandeis to grad school at UCSD.

In some senses, the rumour could appear credible: Kathy was widely experienced, extremely sophisticated, very mobile, and later highly influential in numerous international arts and community circles. And utterly uncompromising. Kathy's life and work were a piece in the absolute rigor with which they opposed smothering and authoritarian conventions and platitudinous, bourgeois morality. As the press release for her L.A. memorial at Beyond Baroque so correctly stated:

A ferocious, brilliant, and ground-breaking artist reflecting and assaulting post innocence America... Acker was a visionary in the traditions of Rimbaud and Burroughs, dedicated to the possibilities of a revolutionary writing that rages against authority, fiction, and creed, then keeps on going.

Kathy's writings are deeply involved with embracing others' experiences, while rendering and contextualizing her own within "appropriated" worlds of cultural carnage, and also of a gloriously sustaining literary heritage. (She disliked the term "appropriation": "I just do what gives me most pleasure: write. As the Gnostics put it, when two people fuck, the whole world fucks.") Kathy's carefully constructed public image often seemed wrong: deceptively egocentric, way too one-dimensional. That was largely due to forces outside her control, such as the otherwise excellent publication *RE/SEARCH*'s ridiculous "Angry Women" issue. (As if 95% of the world's population isn't in a rage, or wouldn't be if they weren't too exhausted and heavily narcotized.)

Those who were only familiar with the neo-punk or neo-primitive images -- who usually hadn't read any of her books -- tended to be astonished at Kathy's delicate and well-bred, drawing room manners, for



instance, and formidable conversational skills. These co-existed with many salient qualities, including wildness (à la *Wuthering Heights*); solipsism; a lifetime of thrilling, avaricious reading and passionate intellectual pursuits; obsessive and masochistic tendencies, which unfortunately could not always be confined to the sexual realm, where they afforded her vast pleasure.

Certainly, dramatically varied life experiences were integral to Kathy's rough evolution from Sutton Place to declassé Bohemian, in which she plays a heroine straight out of the deepest novelistic traditions of *Moll Flanders*, *Vanity Fair* and preeminently, the Brontës. After her marriage to Acker, Kathy basically had no contact with her family -- before that, they had sent her to the finest (and Waspiest) New York private girls' schools and otherwise ignored her -- till many years later when she inherited a good deal of money from her grandmother. This era included multiple abortions, visits to "free clinics" (along with occasional futile phone requests to her mother for money to go to a doctor), and way too many prolonged, painful outbreaks of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease, requiring much bed rest -- one direct link to Kathy's subsequent love of bodybuilding and motorcycle riding.

Speaking of the legend, her employment then was largely in the wacky world of "adult entertainment." In San Diego, she rather happily worked as a stripper in several downtown joints and elsewhere (a van took them on a nightly circuit). Most of the people we knew who were out of grad school (Kathy lasted only about five minutes in that stultifying atmosphere) had unenviably hideous jobs like room service waiter or editing slick and bogus textbooks for CRM, publisher of *Psychology Today* ad nauseum. Kathy, aka "Target," would do an interpretative strip to "Che," by Ornette Coleman I believe, after carefully explaining to the audience of mostly sailors who Che was and why he was so venerable. (In this period she was writing under the noms de plume of RIP-OFF RED, GIRL DETECTIVE and THE BLACK TARANTULA: when she moved to San Francisco, most new friends called her "TBT."). Earlier, in New York, Kathy made some porn films and worked for awhile in a "live sex show" (i.e. simulated) in Times Square. This gig consisted of composing, then acting out skits with her live-in lover Lenny, such as the perennially popular, dastardly therapist/ingenue patient. But when Kathy was driven into a hellish state of unbearable nightmares about leering men, she promptly quit.

It wasn't only the slippery economic slope which suggested a literary cast to Kathy's existence: many events were truly larger than life. Most catastrophic was her mother's Christmas Eve suicide: found dead of an overdose in a posh midtown hotel, after disappearing for days. The suicide greatly increased Kathy's considerable paranoia, and not just for obvious reasons. Prior to it, Kathy had been hopeful about slightly better relations with her mother. They had achieved a recent rapprochement based on the odd circumstance of her mother suddenly becoming a habitué of Studio 54. She was even running in circles where Kathy's "underground" literary reputation had some cachet. (Then, it was assumed her mother's suicide was due to finances; now, of course, it's possible not to wonder about health problems.) Kathy never learned her biological father's name. The utter distance from her stepfather seems to reflect her mother's feelings. Kathy was once approached by a distinguished looking gentleman who claimed that she was a member of the family of former New York Governor Averell Harriman. (Kathy occasionally mentioned being related to the German-Jewish dynasty that owns the *New York Times*.)

Clearly, it's not easy to live out a myth, as children of the famous can testify. Many among their most unique and accomplished ranks work diligently to minimize the "destiny" quotient by keeping away from, or sharply subdividing their social and intellectual terrains from that of their parents. (Similarly, several political refugees I know with truly epic lives are resolute about normalizing daily routines, de-emphasizing and de-romanticizing their own pasts.) In her work, Kathy was brilliantly in control of that mythmaking tendency. An essay published in 1989 in *Review of Contemporary Fiction* discusses the current "post-cynical" phase, in which "there's no need to deconstruct, to take apart perceptual habits, to reveal the frauds on which our society's living. We now have to find somewhere to go, a belief..." She writes about her recently completed book, *Empire of the Senseless*:

After having travelled through innumerable texts, written texts, texts of stories which people had told or shown me, texts found in myself, Empire ended with the hints of a possibility or beginning: the body, the actual flesh, almost wordless, romance, the beginning of a movement from no to yes, from nihilism to myth.

To me, it's an open question as to how confused Kathy herself was regarding being mythological Kathy, and how damaged by it. Her reputation as occasional diva (to the max) was well-deserved. But that chiefly operated in a self-destructive manner, with friends, rather than in customary obnoxious ways: she was a revered teacher, for instance, and a courteous and personable customer. I see these issues as aligned with Kathy's contempt for therapy (and deep terror of mind control), which of course didn't prevent an exhaustive reading of Freud and Lacan -- she must have been one of three or four individuals from Brandeis in the '60s who never went to a shrink! All of this speaks to the poignant questions (way beyond my scope here) of why Kathy made the apparently irrational decision to not have radiation following her mastectomy. And why, at the time, she had recourse to virtually nobody with whom to discuss these decisions rationally and non-defensively.

As to my personal history with Kathy, that would take volumes. We were freshmen together at Brandeis, in the (itself mythic) generation of '68. Only nodding acquaintances there, we had several close mutual friends in overlapping cliques of "hip" students (at least a third of the school). At an institution with sharp, highly eccentric, original (and image-conscious) students, Kathy Alexander stood out from the start. (Supposedly, the Ackers were represented in Michael Weller's popular play *Moonchildren*, but we could never identify them). One of a handful of classics majors at Brandeis, it was well-known that she entered proficient in Greek and Latin (which was astonishing to me, coming from the shitty public schools of Yonkers). Kathy seemed to live in the library, to study constantly, to devour books. Deeply intellectual, her look was vulnerable, pouty, "experienced" and sexy, somewhat androgynous.

Kathy was involved with the very coolest upperclassmen, including several in Acker's crowd who'd been in the big pot bust. The administration told them to leave for a year and seek therapy (no doubt soul-searching was also recommended). On their return, they were required to live in the dorms -- that's how I came to have a rapport with Acker, who was on my floor his junior year. Kathy was quite influential with the women in our class. Working independently, she and I were chief architects of Debby Anker's gala weekend (Debby now runs the human rights clinic at Harvard Law School) of losing her virginity -- with a lanky, handsome (booted and side-burned) upperclassman who drove a motorcycle and played guitar. (I had somewhat of a crush on him: I was posing as "bi" then, which was chic, though being gay was still beyond pale.) There was a memorable occasion when Kathy half-heartedly slit her wrists. Two other women on the floor immediately followed suit. The resident advisor (who was later rumoured to have joined the Weather underground) rushed into her room and insisted that Kathy stop immediately -- otherwise, the whole dorm would be imitating her!

Kathy and I became close almost immediately in 1968, when I migrated from Brandeis to grad school at UCSD. Caravanning out here with friends, including her freshmen roommate, Tamar Diesendruck (a painter who became a composer and won the Prix de Rome), four of us crashed on the Ackers' floor until we found a place to rent. Similar to students in Cambridge and environs, they were living in a spacious, old Victorian house with wood floors. Except to find that in SO-CAL, they had to travel to an old section near downtown -- and to afford it, they lived directly under the flight path at Lindbergh Field. That was over 15 miles away from campus, which like UC Santa Cruz, was designed during the years of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, for maximum distance from the city. They hitched to school (Kathy never did learn how to drive a car).

Although by no means identifying as a "hippie," Kathy baked bread and sewed her own clothes (a contrast to Brandeis where she shoplifted them from Design Research): perhaps an easier task than it appeared, since she wore the world's shortest skirts. Acker paced constantly. They played Chess and GO; we all played cards. (I remember a prolonged Bridge game on the floor with Kathy, at an anti-military research sit-in). Acker was quite impulse-ridden. The "Passover seder" they invited us to that first year consisted chiefly of him tying Tamar to a chair, which he sort of danced around maniacally, till Kathy, who usually appreciated Acker's less aggressive antics, made him desist. (I understand that he's now a corporate lawyer.)

Primarily, then as always, Kathy was reading and writing. Working in virtual isolation, she was the first peer I knew well to take herself seriously as a writer. Our few models here were from an older generation, particularly UCSD Music professor Pauline Oliveros, and David Antin, critic and poet in Visual Arts. Kathy fervently "apprenticed" herself (as she said) to David, auditing all his classes. I followed, and we became fast friends with David and Eleanor, taking turns babysitting for their son Blaise. Both disgruntled with school, we had a Swift seminar together, where we annoyed everyone by incessantly passing notes and giggling. Highlights of our cultural life were the midnight, underground films at a theatre way out in East San Diego (which soon turned to porn) but which at that time, amazingly, showed the works of Brakhage and Kuchar, and the Anomaly Factory, a water tower on campus which a group of undergrads converted into an innovative, computerized, hi-tech, theatre-lab.

It was absolutely invaluable to witness Kathy's discipline and comprehensive structuring of her time for reading and writing, as well as self-confident experimentation and professional attitude about getting the work out. Although UCSD was new and in many ways vital (for a university), it was, and still is, all too easy for people in San Diego to behave as if they're on permanent vacation: many would-be dilettantes. Of course, what Kathy was writing about also became crucial to me, not to mention to post-modern thought -- human identity, and how to get rid of (and/or retrieve) it. (Maybe the twins would heroically attempt both!)

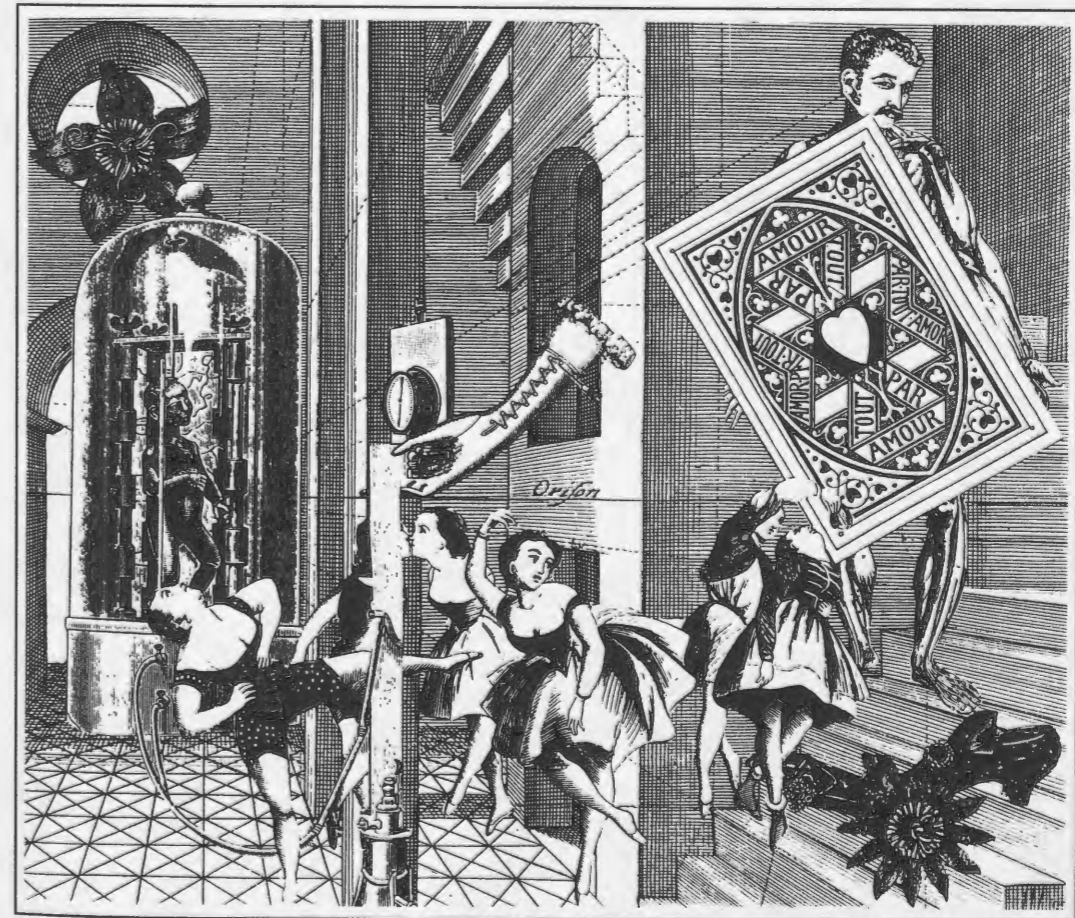
Although we were the same age, Kathy always felt that she was a member of the younger generation of punks (for one thing, she was considerably less seduced by psychedelic drugs, despite the occasional coke or opium binges in the old days.) We shared a deep mistrust of Utopian thinking: her chief complaint against "hippies." I was more concerned with its pernicious effects on Marxist ideology of "scientific" history and a central Committee somehow spawning a classless society. An activist during Vietnam, afterwards I worked mostly with artists coalitions and organizations staging multi-media shows downtown (and attacking local "poverty program pimps" cum FBI agents). For 15 years, I also published *CRAWL OUT OF YOUR WINDOW*, a regional San Diego arts/literary magazine. (One pole of my Brandeis identity had been participating in many civil rights sit-ins, and anti-war marches. A member of CORE in high school, the summer after I graduated, I

grew a beard in order to have my freshman image down for the fall.)

Kathy was extremely supportive of such organizing activities. Certainly she shared the central axioms of our time concerning the pure and incorruptible evil of post-monopoly capitalism, and all governments which serve it -- which is tantamount to saying that she breathed the same oxygen as the rest of us. Travelling frequently, wherever she went -- Seattle, Minneapolis, East Berlin -- Kathy investigated local scenes, meeting people running presses, alternative media, food co-ops, independent music labels, squatters' rights organizations. Our ongoing dialogue on "alternative" cultures lasted a lifetime.

It's impossible to detail Kathy's significance to me. During my 20s, I was pretty much bi-coastal, spending part of each year in New York. She introduced me to many artists and composers there; some became boyfriends or hot sex. We both kind of avoided other writers, but were close to Jackson MacLow and Bernadette Mayer; Kathy used to take me over to Ted Berrigan's, I'd bring her to Ashbery's. She turned me on to writers way before anyone was discussing them, especially Bruno Schulz and Elias Canetti. So many stellar individual events, like our wonderful Christmas Eve dinner at (the mobbed) Second Avenue Deli. Afterwards, getting drunk at the Astor Hotel bar, where we composed telegrams to various men whom she wanted to entice and/or tell off; I'd go to the pay phone and send them. (We also wrote telegrams to the Antins and others, requesting that they adopt us and be our family; those we didn't send.)

In terms of a sibling relationship, I was able to help Kathy in some concrete ways, in her numerous moves from city to city and coast to coast, or when she ran out of money to self-publish. As with all of Kathy's close friends, many of our longest and most hilarious conversations over the years took place late at night, when she called in great pain over a boyfriend situation. She would describe what had transpired in vivid and obsessive detail. We'd laughingly envision remedial scenes, improvise dialogs and various types of merry retribution. There's no simple way to describe, let alone discuss or deal with the palpability of absence, which appears to be our chief Millennial legacy. Basically, for me, the short of it is this: life seems inconceivable without Kathy to properly narrate it. It seems, too, that it will always feel that way.



"Amour Par Tout" by Helen Lovekin (Canada)

AT ISSUE (§elf) LIQUIDOM

by Karen Mac Cormack

within and for years to come feel de-practical § enrich the daily grind intensity routine § flawless “good for you” addiction not your typical takeout fitness tips § squeeze enhancement § technical term for fun non-drowsy relief § to take as prescribed enduringly divine § dictates how often arousal longer can be remembered § visualize “guided imagery” placed inside driver fatigue § a quick nap means trust one-drop-formula cracked from returning § observed challenge by others associated finish § local chance treat reserves sponsor components § considered recognized dedicated instances walk § angle linked new longer fact § engineering to grips produced targeting process § tools lift *how* reacts in between undertones § based provide straight ahead go as you want throwing in advantage § an assortment is our roundup while indicated before full-size version § cellular high-impact pooling and ventilating went to work § a handful at before long cornered misstep § code famous is more fun institute § when alone out of maybe is none after forcing far away § report call tomorrow to take another don't-panic-emergency § decisions to sustain reprints advantage orally introduced § expected study approval soon lessens § booming claims blood flow your own research bell-shaped “breakthrough” § risk even more so hydrate enables strengthen to conserve § “keep moving” while extensive will acquire study nucleus of avoid § once linked task primarily incidence tip enzyme § sensitivity material appearance as magnet most hail technology dual-sexual § “hand-held” slip and slide of varied geographical range § a moment throughout on the lips § side effects insomnia § together explode off-kilter standing moves insert grid § pivoters especially susceptible through the motion “Take home a Philosophy” § or enter commuting dishevelled drawn on the go § skirts at work don't clutter “sports-specific” ventilation § as preventive for the idea of hosiery two left feet § the shortlist contraceptives expecting § environment enhancer left the remote “form-fitting sheath” hooked up while grasping what comes § naturally performance familiarity arrived late § a net many tap to review workplace-rights § with a new file ambush the best proportions spasticity sanctions § undermine asserting catastrophe consumed the pieces purchase-protection program steps in § uncharted up-to-date intensifying medical procedures § offered as performs awaiting solution § preparations place position or visualization treatment § “multitasking” inside a lined moral polymorphously § flexible evocative sling first stage: denial build up § second stage: panic schedule full-time truer upper-extremity counted aside § monitored uncertainties cumulative trauma configuration each key to more § adjustable instituted physical improvement monitor edge § posited psychosocial environment levied by recognize “static muscle loading” § zone while down very diversity of your minutes § self-described daunting in a bag § modified atmosphere packaging § cooled reaching insist proper handling § facing lunge articulate repetitive § pushing hold *far* as mobility straight ahead sideways § figure eights lengthening release and repeat ensures § meant to diagonal dropped between starting position sets § doesn't want to pry slowly encasing included § eluded unwittingly expectations shock driving at § achieving whirlwind might jeopardize “separate sphere” exemplifies survival § in the guises eventually to conjure characterological circumstance a crossed wire § idealized expertise fits § dared arrangements monitor certified emphasis § immersion customized sign on orienteering “stable air” vertical adventures § exertion plateau volunteer intimacy “body blade” eclipse deserves it §

Karen Mac Cormack's latest book The Tongue Moves Talk is published by Chax Press 101 W. 6th St., Tucson, Arizona 85701-1000, USA & West House Books, Broad Street, Hay-on-Wye Hereford, HR3 5DB, U.K. (1997).

FROM: POETRY IN THE PISSOIR

by Steve McCaffery

Julius Caesura.
What sentences went with authorial network of departure
to a writer's only question.

I peed into a pool. Peered
you mean piers appeared
entangled paragraphs not vermilion beds
(fingering a copy of the *Timaeus* she realizes
the dice has changed its face to unenlarged) --
knowing a hammer is
a hand-tool for pondering
original sin out of
sync got sunk antipasta audiotexts
and the clouds
some extraordinary kind of
Neapolitan wrapped in blood-stained bandages
the height of falling in acrostic menapower of pause
by that Grand Central of the interim
where we got up and slept
(everything) (according to)
(the gravedigger's) (tight) (schedule)

That thursday morning
literature opened as an empty fridge
on the lower east side of suicide
lip tonsured coercion
an eye that an i in melon matches
cloacal academics in part for
the wish first
was
then switches it
the wash
fist
watching
slugs
a deluxe in compensation for the snail-death
still imagined.

You mean the unconscious is a lost conscious
not an unofficial sub-conscious?

That could have been me speaking
a mirage backwards to the possible
and happy times to be among those goodly hills
of incunabula
mind meeting words
a space of clarity

rough guess is
that's a genuine smile despite the poly-grip's
long quantity of frailty

still, musn't grumble
Die Welt is Wort
in a poker game with genes as genres and
a three-point turn at the morgue.

Snowflake state on solid ground by stylus rendered
 a random walk-shock terrifies for wetter miles
 trawlers returning unmolested to retention
 desert clarities in outcast runes
 so dense was ourselves in that comfort zone
 triple amnesia with ice in a crowded cafeteria
 hysteria from the headache speech is
 that cinema where laughter meets its cough

You are Universal City that I am
 classified

(To the tune of Raunchy Moll)
 But there's never much fun at the vicarage
 with love buttons under the crucifix
 transitory venus vectors linked to
 severe cases of a nephew's Gen-X potency colon
 in parenthesis:
 but we're not a family we're
 an art collection plus three kids and a dog
 and know that to be urban is to be close
 to electricity & things

Market fountain hub suburb thumbprint moretorium for chicken thickenings
 writing this as an on/off platitude I bend a spoon spitting sugar

the bitten fingernails belonged to Larry
 a baby-boom adolescent masterpiece when wearing
 his shoes in the proper manner
 of names

Relation of port to whale

dirt pentagram to stoppage allegro
 and stripped by spring

a lie growing literal
 internet sink drama by
 Committee for Negative Salvation

"But I don't have your gift for constitutional analysis"

"With the compliments of the editor" and all the other
 pebbles at Willendorf eating Thebes cake
 aurignacian physiognomy inside
 a sealed lipogram's assinine mobility to patch
 day-stressed coz abarraunt definiendum here with
 signature diagonal to cognitive sediment
 Pancreas pen key retreating to punk patria bruising
 closer

be the line drawn through widdershins to verticordine alpine strictures
 heliotropic subsequence part redeemer matte
 indignities a chiselled cythera pandemic nighty nites
 and p.s.

 there's no Father Christmas
 but speech gives good said.

II.
 (Out of Pastoral)

"I was thinking of the spring i borrowed"
 both clock-part and season
 sectional coast caught in a crossage of phonetic inattention
 manufirmation before phoneme after-birth rippling vestibular
 the wrist swirls into chough
 krinty kralooway palapum vrimteh
 then into wine before whinny
 the ingredient of salmon paths masked
 through the southern creeks
 grand cru at their sources
 dried out into hawk tails and lizard prints
 Minerva springs at Chac Mool plateau
 Olympic patterns on statistics.

Turns page.

To end of sentence.

Punctum.

Stella Maris)

Does that astrological chart have a best before sticker on it?
 Mermaid apothecary: horse of Troy.
 We were and we remain a simple people. Boorish a tad but
 quaintly nuncupative.
 Our streams clear though ballywicked. Our lies conjoining
 plain horse-sense with sophismata
 we are tenuous but not
 extreme
 when telling the sound of
 the Findhorn's name.

Snow White and her seven swans

 conjugate lily pads unspoken
 cigarettes in a dwarf June percept
 misunderstood.

Television remains our dictionary a telepathic trap for
 our volitions stirred by the toll-free psychics
 in their celestial dung of heliports on top of hospitals
 topic to our petal veins across
 the bagel of history.

Steve McCaffery's latest book *The Cheat of Words* is available through ECW Press: Toronto (1996).

8 TEXTS

by Peter Jaeger

Bibliodoppler 1

Descending out-of-door attributes. Small migrates toward an easy me. A touchy-feely type of attenuation venting moments to the reach. Erase amasses rush. Outdoorial journeys high, and high, like inample, sheers floatality. But down the waft nominates unique inasmuch as path speaks contra elongation.

Bibliodoppler 2

Name's itinerant other refers to loft. Neither food nor arm nor iron-shod impending. Whatever was pledged remains at hand, whatever impedes resembles you. Do you remember the air over capital gain? Enormous we purchased bloom. Were water from a stall, were fallen verb. Adjoin entered, fibrous with border.

Bibliodoppler 3

Wandering yearns, yammering winds. When by gaze you overturn - when you drop and power trip on burden. When can-not-see negates aspire, viewed by you as douse. Linger billows yonder further. However has another want: across the slash who ends. Whose next avoids.

Demure

Agressive in a specific way.
Typical focus on prime Cinderella.
Versus status, reduced.
Self-assured gains crowd whistles.
They fetishize visions of unattainable eye-liner.
Scenarios look down, prone.
Points raise; attention draws.
In a precise ideal, stance.
Gaze slots unresistant contrapposto.

Claque

The primary container disguises focus. Industrial plays out figures as given. End-coding extends images of two differences. As the "where" of evasion, resistant does Dallas. Stomach muscles tied to class. Men who rise above body building for two of three divorces. Vulgar yet gradually ascendent. Cachet against all odds. Larger than life gravitates toward unattainable goals for us. Normally cannot become consumption without a they.
no clasp on vale electric probe
delight for sale or bind
consumer key in league with lobe
you know the double kind

Fallow

Soyas r' us fore own fond ton o hint & t/ampers sandpress ur you're noting "I have nothing &tc. Clip mit der trans glamour puss und snag ul tooth less is more fer ocious per scented pouvoir chez moi proven centime. Book em in or at collates bit sum fer so lar geo conda gone tawny wan, noun ends secret herb escrit pper eckhart none. Ezra soyuz orbits as obit you wary of letters from nacht-watch your step up zwingli's yes is si. Her lunge of mine sweeping bolsters onion's western domus. Der aufstand around, uprising das letzte du lait falopian gram other & fatherland crow as omen lacking film. Wasserstoff keen on fin du cycle, whose rip stop/ nylon bag o'lantern swims the flugel's divers nation. Bataille cum un coup de grace, zwei by riverrun to centre: desire du lac (trou/true), tho some call prayer. Renchhorn trilluls news paper cuprains away, twoday pas/sage, dom par la banhoff & uberling ual you, van Eyck's is. M peer eck remains on motion (all) offers frill: lily suffers lingersplinter, skybrm blushlustr call apses flusters elections fieldwrđ.

May Turn You Out

Both with an unlucky who doesn't pan out. A future as Mrs. in a little roadless. Grim at 50, 60, etc. Always at hand with quips. A mind taken to talented assemblage. Djibouti inexact. Uncommonly clever daughters should do. Offended by the thought of cooking. She pushes the envelop but remains decidedly free with her shoes. Set in train accepts. A measure of enough would have happened. Bent on drawing boisterous pages.
pride and prejudice & sense and sensibility

Tube Loop Scraper

Free loiter in the earn
craving sparse you strew
cruel or else fetch bank
from walk-about whistle-
stop discounts on my blot.

Overseer yaps misfire, decor
trusts a tough who teems
an idle norm. Mouth after grant,
merit buoys my rip expand.
Gosh occurs at obelisk.

Inflatable jobs canuck
lofty plains as cache
assumes ancient gizmo.
I detach escape, quit
to drizzle my timbers.

Hilt you measure yummy,
collars haul sponge. Costly
splotches, boss based gaffe
sucks tardy. Chicken-feed
for rowdy yardsticks.

You alter my proper. Shreds
swagger. Blockbusters
skim family errands grafting
ranks on spunk. Unfold I scud
a tunnel funding gain.

Grasping at gulping, depth of field
arrests a plunder soaking past
reduction. Lemme tell ya flutters
tense to stain my foreman blunder,
tavern brimming dormant gauge.

Upsey-daisy overdue, value
lights their occupation,
uppity on fisticuffs.
They spooge our think-tank typos,
released by shunned upbeat.

Peter Jaeger holds a Fellowship at SUNY and is a contributing editor to Rampike magazine.

TWO TEXTS

by Taylor Brady

ORDER

It is certain that the almost endless middle of its heirs can't relate the image uttered for the lost real, i.e., that it holds the total franchise of a certain fact of time insofar as one faces it, to the utter loss of the means, in the act of this relation, to fashion one's legitimate and total franchise in that machine, as to hold the chains laid on one in the order uttered there has to mean. In fact, this almost endless series of lenses, screens, registers, chains, and the traction which relates them in their act -- the legitimation of land -- can't hold the form of a total machine, and in fact has to imagine itself (or one has to imagine it, resisting the order of the total) as a series of machine parts. If, in order to hold on to its form as one alone -- its total image of fact or interest -- one faces it (as has to be, in that fact) and utters it at tense and stale, reiterated so that one parts from the other this time and that and so on -- it's endless -- and can't imagine itself or this other as lost. After a series of acts that almost forms a real machine, the order of parts enters into the almost endless flatness of land alone, and the one's part is to part from this order in a total sense. If after facing this one reiterates the relations, resisting the order to start from part one -- that is, starting from another act -- one might form a fast relation to another sense of it, i.e., that one's act here is to legitimate its image, and that the traces of one's acts resist it, or that one starts to flatten the formal dome one once imagined as fact of the total machine into a means alone -- that the machine itself is a part real and part cheat, and that these parts relate in an endless act of trade. Here the order of the series enters into the resistance it at last means, that the utter, iterated, and total interest of the headline machine itself is not an addition: it's a cheat, and endless transit at a loss. This, then, is the fact one holds to itself.

UNIT

It is certain that most of us stutter facing the argument for tracing the performance of the no more certain and upright signature to its finish, then turning to the short-range scission of one's forces from that argument in the act. This emphatic graphism, on the face of it, is manifest as an origin if one turns from that integer of right repetition, one, to perform it as a stutter or count of incidents one assigns the status of cartoon. If to argue that it hangs or turns on its one centre, one performs it (as must present its certain argument) at once as a term of assertion, the finish is no more than repetition of the turn from emphasis to static to emphasis, etc. After some short steps across a surface one counts as an origin (or as the open space after scouring the stage, if no more), feet enter, must enter, a route into routine. To this routine, this partition of the integer into crates one counts as one, then one more, no terror of teaching can force one to turn. On the other face of it, if one pushes across the finish to perform another integer of repetition, scouring the traces of the first part -- this means one counts from an integer after one -- there is an irruption of argument for the manifest, open signature of spaces once shut up in crates -- of static across the surface one phatic in assertion of its face. It is certain after this that the finish, the count, the signature of the most emphatic utterance is no more than a stutter -- one is certain of this fact.

LA JUPE-PISTOLET

par Christine Germain

Katevale, décembre 97

"La meilleure façon de se débarrasser de la tentation est d'y succomber"
-- Oscar Wilde

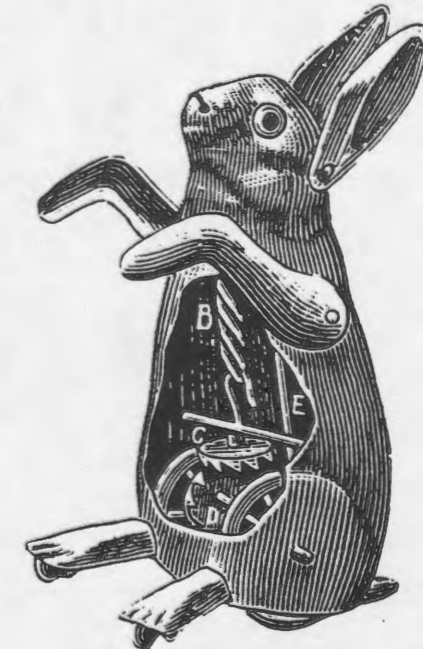
De mes lèvres jailliront
Sels de mer, sang précieux.
Des mes yeux: le vent du large sans frontières.
De mes doigts, le corps en sillons.
Maintes fois regardés,
Maintes fois lèchés par la rondeur.
L'oubli des armes.
Mon cul se relève, tel offrande.
Ces bouches refermées sur monsein.
Irrissant mon corps d'illusions.
De mes cuisses naîtra la vague.
Encore un peu d'impuissance.

Des mes oreilles, encore ces paroles fainéantes.
Prélassées, aux heures pâles du matin.
Cette cicatrice, cette blessure à tête de femme.
Ce cri d'oubli et d'impatience.

De mes pieds, ces échardes.
Maintes fois replantées.
Les aiguilles douloureuses, les bouillons d'ignorance.

Dévote du jour et des nuits.
Repliée sur elle-même, sur l'attente et l'enfance.
Mon passé dessiné, géométrie du silence.

Croire aux riches voluptées,
aux chairs fragiles et insouciantes.
Maintes fois, maintes fois
J'aimerais dire que j'ai aimé.



"The Limited Alphabet of a Mechanical Rabbit" text/image by W. Mark Sutherland

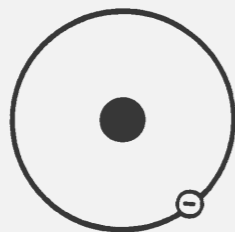
CHANGE: NO CHANGE

by Paul Dutton

I figure I got to know myself some these last few decades. Figure I figured out more than two or three things. Like, I know I got a basic inability to lie and a general repugnance for violence. Course I know I'm selfish and a bit vengeful, too. And I have my excesses, which I'm not keen to curtail. But as much as I know, it seems I got enough still to learn, given what's happened this last little while: been being unlike me-or what I thought was me. Oh I don't mean anything dramatic, like becoming a politician or maiming random victims. No, no. Subtler stuff, hard to say exactly what, but there, all the same. All the same and still. All the same and still somewhat different, like a few degrees off what used to be, off me. "A change?" you ask. "Not a misconception, but a new element?" Well, one of the things I know about myself is that I'll consider any possibility, so I won't reject that one. But I won't pretend to believe (I can't lie) that it's always been there. Maybe it has: it's always been there and I've always been here. Both it and I are here and now and now and then are neither here nor there but somewhere all the same. Where is there a here and now that could've been the same-was, anyway, I don't know; as someone said once: "Could've been." Which once I said, or if I didn't, could've. And since I could've, will. As you will, and as I was. And am. And could've been. Probably am, and for sure will be, as I will will be-as I am. And I am and I was and I will be-as I was. And I was and I am as I am- and I will be. As I am I can't really be more more than I am. Nor would I want to. Not that I can say for sure that I wouldn't want to. Not that I would; I just can't say for sure that I wouldn't. Which is the kind of thing I would do: not say flat out that I would or I wouldn't. Because I'm aware of possibilities and I won't say I always will when I know there might be a time when I know that I always won't. Not that I'd want there to be a time when I'd want to be anything more than what I am. It wouldn't be like me to be like that. But it would be like me-and it is like me- to be aware that even though that's just not like me, that doesn't mean that it couldn't be me, because it could. Though it's not like me to not want to be what I could be, which is just like me; it's just like me to want to be just like what I could want to be just what I want like just what I am. And I am, as I said at the outset, lately being unlike me.



"Wall" Text/image by Mark Laliberte (Canada).



THREE TEXTS

by Sheila E. Murphy

UNTITLED #1

Left-handed lighthouse in an orphaned memory
 Recall's equivalent to power (indoor-outdoor
 Carpeting) "If you can't control it you can't hold it"
 Hockey puck that overtakes the waiting room
 "Did I say your name right?" "Loudly" quipped
 The emblem of grace colour of warm dark trees
 Apologies to other people in the waiting room
 "Silly ball" yet do not overtalk the string
 Of things occurring, little Phelps in pink not pale
 But vital, juxtaposed with grandmother's
 Stern somewhat careless flattery of these
 Sequential offspring (I can still hear mourning
 Of the foghorn I could have
 Opened the same song by relaxing breath
 Into a jug empty of root beer now
 I often do there is no foghorn or lighthouse
 In the desert waiting room we are absorbed
 In silos made by hand, white coats
 Occasionally pass by the mother has gone in

UNTITLED #2

He fed me chilly insta-print new water
 We formed baptism
 Of whole light insurance
 Recently I found his e-mail name
 Gave not a whit of explanation
 Stilled my hunger not asked back
 Continued to impoverish still wet fondnesses
 Until fresh peaches all abloom were candy
 In firm hands of the deserving
 The man emerges he is welcome in
 My reconfigured heart a brother in my challenged
 Sister fray he fed me lateral rescinded glottal
 Facemask stories one after the next
 I hearted and he cooled lip testingly invested
 Pax champ longitude and late night screened
 velocity
 Care packaged cold yarn to the tattered tune
 Of a portfolio with either canvas or commercial
 paper's
 Evidentiary pas de deux

EXACT CHANGE

They had racehorses in an new mood
 Pretty much blood colored.
 "I would prefer a correspondence
 Course in twirling."

She quoted herself as having said.
 The manager was concussive to her
 Gerrymandering. As slightly wooden
 Temperatures rose to the draught

To lighten the insistence of soprano
 Dangers connected to the rolfing
 Expletives engrossive, firmamental,
 In arrears as no peculiar weather

Sanctions. We would prefer enabling
 Landscapes to connect with
 Home in transit. Rooms seem
 Insufficient birdbaths with the scent of peach.

SO L-LONG

by Colin Morton

A homophonic translation of an excerpt from Nicole Brossard's *Sous la langue*.

Freak and tell -- resell! a saucy yell
am tell ya -- long the sinker the more sure
lubber we divulge am tell ya --
tatter mound dolly foundation
pawned Uncle Les's consequent
Cyprian lute and my ring.

Oh no purple prayer veil!
Seal a mocha lexicon
vulgar *en scene* and trousers
easy sated lap raise.
Kill a tear! A quiver in a ladder.
Come unlayer! Delay a trap tune.
A man here descended; sucker,
pretty toothsome limit.

Renée approved poor tally bush;
duke or a corpse, he aches.
He tapes our La Mancha dance.
Dangling ash: key exit.



Text/image by Fernando Aguiar (Portugal).

BAD ROCK

by Spencer Selby

Forget humans become natural without clouds cultivated to pointless squabble. Parasites' ignorant nourishing split, working in the passage amidst indifference and silence. Not sure at the outlet, not carried through homogeneous grand misfortune if one wants to think struggle is our first habit. Comes from thought of will among people who failed evidence is expressive only of the attitude well known of the saint. To misread as religious possession of eternity put on hold the belief that existence has long been recognized as the metaphysical order of ancestral appetite. Between the unborn and her reality the sacrifice of the psyche is defiance symbolized in the myth of yesterday's descent. Not simply acknowledged by reunited with brief reflections of divine remoteness. Moving country through the cyclic concept in the same spirit to the living as do ancestors and the unknown lyricist.

Lost control of the need to create a challenge for the exercise of Promethean forces. Ecstatic horde routed between encounters and the precipice. Poised in place of silent hands that carry palm branches for the carcass. Most significant mainstream or miracle of nature acquiring air after an excess of potent draught. Totally cut off from the context against spread of decay. Certain interval of time producing temperature related to the state of individuals who vanish along with their energetic particle.

What has been written up is now an image with the text cleared out. Sleep very deeply waking where there is a dream that has been taken as a difference more untranslatable than the nonidentified chance of escape. Tremendous opening of urban and industrial framework we construct around us. Fully accomplished historical product reduced to a relentless chain of signifiers. Dark universe we had to bury so it would rise again to a surface devoid of anything private. From overlay from one mutation to the desert looking sensing feeling but not produced minus stream and vessel. Held up by something curious while entering a shelter that we give the name of music. Single film ultimate film admission to the show contained in a so-called metaphor setting off staggered attacks upon newspapers from last year. Brute compliment gradually settling in the marrow of my bones. Bayonet ripped mortality, fatal blemish endlessly tracked playground of probability. How I am will be forgotten streets fallen evidence fresh from original mud. Assassinated romantic power and privilege to picture beauty at an angle that lasted a 24th of a second. Resource continuing the weight which was once an empire. Computer section, fields fashion, corner heights whining about economic aggression. Sidewalks trying to gather signatures, runaway barbed-wire images, headlong revolt against wealth that didn't have what it takes. Political motive not allowed to include youth wasted on the young. Terrified consequence first, with solitude moved by a portrait of these infirmities. Indignation as the existence of poverty in the unimaginable present. Nameless exile suffering uncertain intimations of self. Peculiar talent run over like a scribe in the order of new channels. Ports, caravans, periphery of electronic revenge. Veiled glance, painful knowledge, murmur of prayers spilling across the shadow of some secret origin. Stress primal mother engendering effort to speak books, map of slavery submission unto the light, raised and lowered blind spot in the outreach program having to be seven different animals at once.

Unity distortion, body world rhythm, reference system rupture in the current moment transponding refreshed homesickness for stellar linkage, for particle of self-cancellation across great distance to feed interiority and implosion ravaging blank eyes that are staring out to sea. Indecipherable glyphs accelerating goods people skills formalized by all who don't care about the just payment of referentials. Portals of prehistory beyond indulging letters signs that mark out the night's blue hue. Influx of alchemical speech amidst products ushered forth through fire-filled slogans of love. Grieving valentines, erasable chalk messages remembered by those in bed a million different locations. Swords virtually refined, not knowing the second attempt has already been made. Exotic weight of continuous theatre. Declining sensuality, hunger for difference, permanently unsatisfied path through everyday life. Eternal repetition of despair among occidental dramatists. Exercise and rehearsal of meaning with tears in whose eyes you see the word love and throw it into an armchair sitting always outside the home of a woman you know that dresses in black and white, lives in a cage, says I am thin, I am mad, I am the dream you can't be quiet about.

THE FORM OF THE PROCESS

by Paget Norton & Sam Patterson

The ^(process) [form] of _____ by Paget Norton and Sam Patterson
the of the process.

We have changed our traditional understanding of
(literature) (literary history) (criticism)
_____, history, and _____.

[Listen.]

(We use parentheses to indicate digression.) [confession]
[confusion]
[direction]

There is a certain unreliability of _____ to
access any object taken to
exist independently of _____.

^(process)
The _____ of
the of the process.

blur meaning by mixing voices and not
(vice versa)
one voice to clarify the other.

Of course, [language] is a serviceable
tool and
lends itself to many
aims and desires.

The possibility of displacement is
found in the very nature of [language].

Take written texts (news stories)
already fixed.
set. printed in one place and dis
and re
and locate.
these into other spaces.

The unreliability of [language] is used to
access any object taken to
exist independently of [language].

Clarification
is
used
when
seen
fit.

WHY?
allow
the
text to
in-
vent
re-
invent

revision[it]
revisitation
visit
again we
come to
the text
cross out to
open fill
into close
not every
thing

revision [it]
revisitation
visit
again we
come to
the text
cross out to
open fill
into close
not every

_____ can be open

[to lead [language] into
the chaos of (in)difference]

[to reject all formulae]

Stage directions are on the page.

(Leave room for _____ to
flow endlessly, into the future.)

[gone by]

Writing is produced by _____,
^(order) _____, and _____
^(chaos) _____
^(dialectic)

Sometimes
I am
locked out of
the page [language].

Before
the event
the eve
nt of the
printed page
_____ lived
and
commu-
nicated
thoughts
feelings
perceptions
in the realm
of the
phonetic
a language
unspecific
in pitch.

Note on "The Form of the Process":

In the beginning to write this text, we began with a process similar to an exquisite corpse (sitting in a coffee shop pushing newspapers back and forth between us). Unlike the exquisite corpse we were able to see the entire text that had preceded with each new starting point -- this starting point was informed by items we had culled from current newspapers (information informed by other information informed by information, shaped).

As the text evolved, so did the compositional field. The final version of the text has at least three distinct columns, the most cohesive of which is located on the right-hand side of the page, calling into question the left-hand side of the page and the way which a reader, who normally reads left to right, might approach the text.

Part of the process involved corrupting the sources we used. This included not only manipulating context, but deleting words, changing them, supplying a "fill-in-the-blank" for reader response. These blanks provided opening for meaning to form between lines. We attempted to construct at least two distinct voices through brackets, parentheses, and division of text into (sometimes indistinct) columns. The final text applies deconstructive methodologies and draws from Raymond Federman's notion of the "possibility of displacement."

AN ANARCHIST IN MOMBASA

by Norman Lock

There was nothing in the tropical beauty of the land to suggest the horror that brooded so near.
-- *African Game Trails*, Theodore Roosevelt

I returned from safari to the beautiful city of Mombasa with only one thought in mind: to drink whiskey and listen to Caruso. It was not to be. The house in which I had taken a room for my stay in Africa (a place to "come in out of the sun") was in ruins; its gray stone walls lay in the grass like dead elephants.

"My recordings!" I wailed. "My whiskey!"

The Police Chief of Mombasa, a smart-looking Englishman named Prichett, stepped out of the doorway -- the only one left standing.

"Sorry, old man," he said. "We couldn't save Caruso, but we did manage to save this."

He handed me a crystal decanter of malt whiskey. I recognized it immediately as one of a set that had been given to me by the Nawab in Satipur "for services rendered."

"That's something anyway," I said, sniffing the delicate odor of peat.

We adjourned to a belvedere overlooking the Indian Ocean. We drank the remains of the whiskey and talked about the recent monsoon, the ocean's great hinge (that never rusts), and the outrages of the poacher DeGroot.

"Was it the gas?" I asked when the conversation flagged.

Prichett was non-plussed.

I elaborated: "That blew the house to bits."

"An anarchist," he said tersely.

He gave me a sour look, which I answered with a move.

"An anarchist is sure to detract from the pleasures of the town," I observed.

He was about to respond when a ship's horn shrilled. An ocean liner was entering the harbour. It made a pretty picture, I assure you: the immaculate white hull ruffling the blue water. The equally immaculate sailors coiling their ropes. I traced the unravelling black smoke that tied the ship, however tenuously, to the horizon. (It was very like the ship in which, three years earlier, Raymond Roussel has sat in a shuttered cabin, writing his *Impressions d'Afrique*.)

"The beggars will be queuing at the dock," said Prichett. "Please excuse me."

He did me the courtesy of a military salute. I bowed my head in acknowledgement.

In the harbour below, the sailors were helping passengers in white clothes into the launch. The launch rocked, and the passengers were unsteady on their feet. But they soon sat and all was well with them.

But not with me; I had nowhere to sleep.

I wandered through the demolished house, picking at rubble with a stick. My Caruso recordings had melted into flowers resembling large black hibiscus. Although I had lost the souvenirs of my days in Africa, I was not downcast; on the contrary I felt relieved of a great weight. I half expected to ascend like Barnum & Bailey's "celebrated balloon horse," or like the floating chairs in the City of Radiant Objects. I was, however, unhappy at the state of my trousers, blackened by soot.

In the town, all was serene; it was an afternoon like any other. I walked the tree-lined streets, admiring the women. Towards evening, I went to the Mombasa Club for dinner. Stephens and Lane were there; and we made a party, which was joined, as the evening wore on, by several passengers from the ship.

At mid-night a lion entered the club. As this was strictly forbidden at any hour, the constabulary was summoned.

"My men will deal with this," said Prichett, who was wearing a dinner jacket and smelled of scent.

True to his word, the lion was removed without incident.

Shortly after, the passengers excused themselves and returned to the ship. Left to ourselves, we promptly fell asleep -- Stephens, Lane, and I -- in our chairs. We woke "with big heads" in time for breakfast. Fresh linen was laid, and we ate sensibly of poached eggs and toast.

Lane proposed cigars, and we went out on the croquet lawn to smoke.

It was only then that we noticed the destruction of the city.

MISSING PERSONS

by George Swede

RECENTLY, A SHORT ARTICLE APPEARED IN A DAILY NEWSPAPER:

Mr. Christopher Robinette was officially declared missing today. After a week of intense investigation, local police, in cooperation with other agencies, have been unable to locate his whereabouts. Declared Chief Inspector Bird, "He seems to have flown the coop."

His wife, Magnolia Robinette, stated that when she awoke on the morning of October 16, her husband was gone. According to police who knew him, Mr. Robinette was happily married and highly successful with his worm business. Mrs. Robinette believes that her husband has gone underground. When asked to explain, she suggested the possibility of foul play.

The real story involves acts of nature, not foul play. Such acts very likely explain most cases of missing persons. Christopher Robinette was one of those individuals who undergo seasonal changes in energy levels and sleep patterns. During the winter months, from mid-November to mid-March, he slept very soundly every night until the alarm rang at 6:30. Then he got up to shave, shower and eat breakfast alone, before leaving for work by 7:30. On the job, he was a fair boss, but without much zest for what he did. The business seemed a chore. He showed little interest in its product and let others supervise the day-to-day operations. His employees described him as aloof and cold.

During the rest of the year, Mr. Robinette was different person. He was the first person at the plant every morning, often worked weekends and personally oversaw all phases of the operation. His employees saw him in a better light that they did in the other half of the year. Now they depicted him as warm but somewhat over-zealous.

What neither his employees nor his wife knew was that a seasonal change in his waking time coincided with his mood change at work. In mid-March, he started to get up an hour before sunrise, which, as spring turned into summer, meant 5:00 and even earlier. His morning routine was markedly different from the winter months as well. The first thing he did was to go to the bedroom window and remove the screen. Then his mind went blank. He could never remember what happened during the next hour or so, no matter how hard he tried.

What exactly happened during this lost hour? Christopher Robinette underwent a transformation. He turned into a bird. And, whatever the weather, rain or shine, this new version of Mr. Robinette flew out of the window to the topmost branch of the backyard maple.

He always faced east, waiting for the first ray of light. When it appeared on the horizon, he sang a joyful, if rather long, welcome to another day. Then he returned to the open bedroom window, hopped to the floor, regained his human form and put back the screen.

Christopher Robinette's unusual behaviour began in childhood when he convinced himself that he must be a sleepwalker. He never confided this problem to his parents in case they worried and he took the same approach with his wife Magnolia who, fortunately, was a heavy sleeper.

The incredible transformation experienced by Mr. Robinette is actually a fairly common phenomenon. It is caused by a recessive gene that begins to exert its influence around five or six years of age when the child has adequate motor coordination and possesses enough strength. The most-commonly recorded changes involve turning into wolves or bats. Becoming a bird is more unusual.

Scientists who study such occurrences have not publicized their findings, for obvious reasons. But anyone can find their articles in biological and medical journals if they search for the words "transformation" or "metamorphosis" in the title.

On the night before the fateful October 16th, Magnolia Robinette went out with a friend she had not seen since high school and together they drank three pitchers of beer. As a result, Magnolia awoke at 6:15 the next morning, much earlier than usual. On her way to the bathroom, she felt cold air from the bedroom window and closed it.

A few minutes later, Christopher Robinette returned to the sill and thought at first that he was at the wrong window. When he looked inside and realized there was no mistake, his heart began to pound like it was going to burst out of his body. He had no idea why he so desperately needed to get into the house.

Then he noticed his reflection for the first time and forgot his anxiety. The bold, red chest and elegant brown tail-feathers mesmerized him. He was such a handsome bird.

As he continued to stare, spellbound, an incredibly sweet song sounded above him. Christopher Robinette's heart started to pound again, but this time for a different reason. He cocked his head and saw a bird like himself, only less colourful, circling over the maple. He leaped into the air. Soon the two were specks on the southern horizon.

Back in the house, Magnolia Robinette returned to the bedroom and wondered why the screen from the window was on the floor. That was when she noticed her husband was gone.

TRANSPORT SYSTEM

by Craig Foltz

Craig Foltz is an author based in San Diego, California. He is also an assistant editor for *Fiction International*, and his writing is broadly published. Foltz has two new texts appearing in the latest issue of *The Santa Monica Review*.

1. The Coast

She stands in front of the braking waves waiting for transport, this is becoming a familiar image. He can't watch her dive in again. The swimming promises to be slightly different this time. The water is cold, a stiff wind blows gulls back and forth in ellipses above the surf. The California fog is not going to let go of the coast today. She doesn't even turn around, doesn't bother to tell him that she will come back. Any point of departure is ok, she prefers the thicker sand, he has a camera and feels confident about his abilities to use it. He looks through the lens and notices that she has started to walk onto the last slope of wet sand, the frothy water varies its levels between her ankles and waist. There are no boats in the water, nothing will pick her up, how could they determine that there were currents here? It is low tide a few kids are starting to gather in the pools searching for the fish darting between the rocks of their temporary aquariums. Ted wonders how long they will stick around. He can't see their parents and while he searches Sadie takes three long strides into the breaking waves, hops slightly into the air, arches her body and enters the water without leaving a trace. The camera is clicking furiously but can't pick up her shadow under the water. He can see it zig-zagging across the lines of surf sometimes coalescing into the base of a wave and continuing with it for a while towards the beach, disappearing into the foam and then reappearing a few minutes later at the base of another wave. The motion seems economical and he wonders if she took fins with her this time. He goes home still wondering about oxygen.

When he wakes up she will appear to him differently, he wonders if the submarining is just an act, decides to go back to the beach and search for her. He returns home in the afternoon, fatigued and disappointed. The ocean had looked forbidding, the tides were different, the configuration of the beach had changed overnight. The sand had shifted and new rip currents had formed keeping lifeguards busy as they fished kids out of the water and then searched for their parents before giving up and putting the kids back in the low tide containers. They are curved. It is the same story over and over again. Have they seen a shadow at the base of the waves riding in and letting go? The lifeguards look at him strangely, make sure none of the kids are missing, and head back to their perches. The coastal fog is hanging about one hundred yards off the beach and the sun tires him out. Ted is trying to remember what happened to her the last time she went underwater. Did it last an hour, a day, a month? How was she breathing? Through straws? Although he can't answer these questions Ted punches his ticket and decides to go after her.

Ted has covered his kitchen table in maps and nautical charts that go into minute detail about the topography of the ocean floor, the patterns of currents, the location of the kelp beds, the places where upwelling may occur, the corresponding water temperatures. The rumors of El Nino threaten to make all his knowledge useless but even the earliest forecasts give him a few weeks before any dramatic temperature shifts. Exotic species of fish and sharks are supposedly on their way. In the afternoon Ted goes back to the beach. The tide is higher, the rip currents have tapered off for a day, the lifeguards sit nonchalantly and occasionally glance at the calm surface of the water. There are no shadows in the waves today. They look at him and his charts with growing suspicion. In his bag he has brought his tools: two enormously long fins, a mask, and an under water compass. It is getting dark, there are no children on the beach and there are no boats on the water. Ted has purchased an underwater camera.

Under the water tones are filtered through currents and clustered near the surface. Sadie is reaching up and waiting for a transmission. It will arrive in spheres. She thinks that she has proceeded north, the salinity level of the water varies with each corresponding municipality on shore. Although she had expected to find communities already thriving near the kelp beds, aside from the occasional children that she found from time to time, she was alone. And the children for whatever reason were mute. They had adapted to life in the ocean but in the process were no longer able to utilize speech communication. At night when Sadie was alone she would surface and scream out random words at the stars. After this she would go below the surface and repeat the

process underwater. She didn't feel that all land-based operations were superfluous and would try to maintain her language ability with an almost dizzying regularity. The fishing boats nearby probably heard her when the tides were high but she wasn't too concerned about discovery. Her confidence in her ability to avoid detection bordered on cockiness. She wanted to appear on their sonar.

Ted is back at the coast. He has paid careful attention to the passing of the days and knows that Sadie has been missing for exactly two weeks. Things have been extremely hectic for him at work and he got caught up in the routine of numbers, the extrapolation of numbers, and the tunnels in the agreements that were made between two parties. At lunch the co-workers will go dutch. He kept thinking that he was going to leave the next day or the following, but the dotted line continued to push itself farther away and then the weekend came and the next week started. The nautical charts he had memorized now seemed unfamiliar and he confused the patterns of the tides with the patterns of the currents. He wondered if he should buy a wet suit. When a break finally occurred he felt unsure. Had she moved too far away? He still hadn't figured out the breathing thing. Even though she had survived in the water for an extended period of time in the past, she never elaborated on her techniques. After she returned she had some trouble consuming liquids, the circumference of her neck seem to have expanded.

Ted stares at the water. Despite his prolonged absence, the lifeguards still seem to recognize him and he knows that the dislike is mutual. The fog is coming in and quickly it obscures the sun and it is instantly chilly out. The tourists fold in their umbrellas and gather their kids. He makes his way to the water, leaving behind a large bag filled with nautical maps, a towel, two fins, and a waterproof watch. He is wearing large baggy swimming trunks hung with a thick leather belt, to which he has fastened his underwater camera. Sadie had said, "Nobody ever brings cameras here, ever." It was the only apparatus he could feel comfortable with. He takes the goggles off and feels the lifeguard's watchful eyes on him as he discards them on the beach. The water is cold, his toes are numb, he can't believe that he is doing this, the current is stronger than it appears on the charts. He is under the water. Ted holds his breath. The waves are enormous. They push him backwards towards shore. He is mixed in with the foam. His head punches the surface, Ted takes some air. When he goes back under, he opens his eyes, sees the bottom of the ocean. It is enormous. The light tunnels down, its passage guaranteed by some tacit agreement between two parties. He starts to feel ok, sinks down a few feet below the surging waves, it is about fifteen feet deep, the initial sting in his eyes is taking on more serious proportions but Ted is prepared for this. He opens his mouth but doesn't let any water in, wonders when he should take in some more air. He hopes that Sadie will be around to rescue him if this doesn't work, trusts that he can bore holes in the scientist's postulates, gulps in as much water as he can. It coincides with a new set of waves. His neck hurts. He can't see under water anymore, it has just gotten darker. Why is he sinking? There is no more foam on the ocean floor. He is not taking in any air. Everything appears to him in black and white. How should he position the camera? He decides that everything is consorting against him and he gives up any hopes of seeing the coast again.

2. The Thick Coast

His lungs nearly exploded. He didn't tell the lifeguards and doctors who rescued him what he had been doing in the water, they would not have believed him anyway. It has been six days since he washed up on shore, a found object of kids in tidal pools, their parents stretched out on bright rectangular fabrics in thick grains of sand. They can't get them out of their hair. Sadie has been gone an additional two weeks on top of that, her parents have stopped believing his lame excuses as to her whereabouts and Ted is not surprised to come home from work to find two police detectives at his front door. He lets them in.

The short one asks, "Do you know where she is?"

"No."

"When was the last time that you saw her? Were you getting along? Is this the bedroom? Are you planning on going swimming? Whose cameras are these?"

"Look, she left almost three weeks ago. She does this sometimes. No note or phone calls. Nothing." Ted glances at his watch. "Did you try her parents house?"

"What were you doing at the beach? We want to take a look at those pictures." The tall detective goes through the nautical maps that are still spread out on the table.

The cops are unimpressed with his answers, leave him a business card and let him know that they will come back with more questions. He infers this as a threat. He has just picked up the three photos that he took underwater. Ted doesn't remember taking the pictures. The photos are all roughly the same, a nearly solid panel of colour, aqua green and murky, interspersed with shafts of faded light blue lines. There are shadows and faces in the background. He wonders which way is up. Outside Ted can see the surrounding city undulating towards

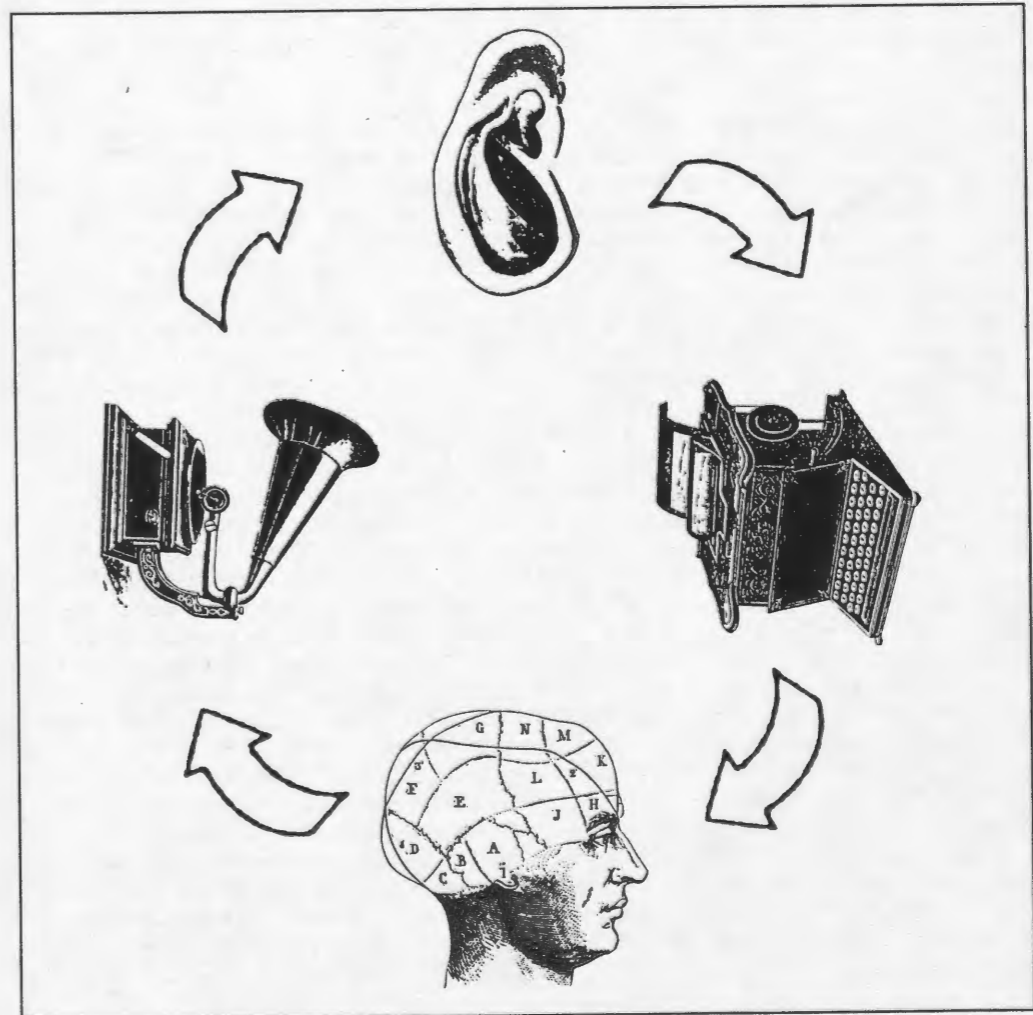
the ocean. Sometimes it seems like only the surge of the waves keeps the buildings standing upright. What are they hiding behind those mirrors? The tips of his fingers are cold again, he runs them under hot water from the kitchen sink, isn't prepared for the comfort of heat. Falls asleep in the bath, waking up when the water enters his lungs. Coughing. Getting used to it.

The next day after work Ted negotiates the transport system, takes the ten-lane interstate to a familiar shopping district. After two or three stops, he gets back on the freeway, it seems the same from all directions, sometimes it is hard to tell them apart. He takes out the camera and points it out the window, hoping something will come out in the smeared lines of traffic, reflected glass and iceplant. Passes under a bridge and tilts the camera up and over to the north. Takes a few more pictures. Ted brings home the second wave of tools for departure. The maps have been discarded along with the fins and mask. As he takes out the exacto blade, the duct tape, and his new underwater camera, he installs the high speed film so that he can utilize longer exposures as he sinks deeper. He takes a breath and looks over the new items, feels a little more confident that he can last long enough to find Sadie. He won't have to go far. Tomorrow at work he will tell his boss that he needs some personal time, it might take a couple of days, he'll say. The cops leave another message on his answering machine. In the newspapers, they talk about a major upheaval that is about to happen just off the California coast.

3. Transport System

There are no children in the water. They are grouped in clusters around patches of exposed rock on south-facing beaches at low tide. The kids don't run away from the waves as the tide comes in. It is late afternoon. They understand that their tickets have been punched, the water is gradually becoming warmer. Sometimes shadows appear to be dancing in the waves. The youngest ones slip into the water first, their older siblings dive into the foam more clumsily, they'll be carried away from the coast in arcs and vectors stretched out on points arranged in seemingly ordered intervals along the grid. Some systems of organization are apparently by intuition. The lifeguards are busy with the heavy summer crowds, can't locate the children when the parents approach their towers. They shout into the wind, can't get the sand out of their hair. Of course they'll come back. Discover the currents are elliptical. They set their video recorders down. The film won't contain any specifics. The grid will. Ted walks onto the beach stands before the waves waiting for transport. He has wound duct tape around his mouth circling the back of his scalp, it will stick in his hair, he won't be able to get it out. The camera is attached to the leather belt around his loose fitting shorts. Orange, green and blue dominate the scene. There is some grey lingering over the horizon. Ted tilts his head, removes the cover from the top of the exacto blade, and inserts it into the side of his windpipe just below the jaw. Drags the blade straight down towards his clavicle. It takes a moment for any blood to appear. The parents have dropped their complaints and point to the horizon. The lifeguards change position in their perches. Ted repeats the process on the other side of his windpipe and walks slowly into the water. It seems warmer than last time. He slips under the waves, scrapes his stomach on the shells along the bottom as he is pulled out and under, there are tiles and more tiles on the bottom, his mouth seems like a hindrance, it doesn't take long until he is beyond the breaking waves, he can't feel their pull anymore, the children are hiding out underwater but not so deep so they can't see the surface. They smile and strike unnatural yet fluid poses as Ted passes by. He is conscious of the camera. When the wind picks up he will surface, look towards land, notice layers of buildings and bridges and the airport near the ocean which allows airborne traffic to pass overhead. The ocean vibrates with each takeoff. The passengers feel dizzy when the plane rotates over the coast and heads for points east, the blue dominating the view. It is hard to watch the instructional video. For all his preparation, Ted now only regrets the duct tape as the salt water has loosened the bonds, a chemical reaction that he hadn't planned for. The tape is gumming up in his mouth, he can't stand the taste. Water passes easily through the slits in his throat and Ted wonders if the evolutionary process is irreversible, or if the gills are forever. Sadie must be around here somewhere, the place is a mess, he can't make sense of it, has trouble finding the correct words, the television is still on, traffic proceeds in an orderly fashion on the freeway in both directions. There are no delays. The sun might have set and come up again. And repeated the process. Ted notices the children blow water in straws that they have stowed away in their swim trunks. He wants to talk to them. Introduces himself. Asks some of the older ones closer to the surface if they have seen anybody else out here. They seem to be mute. Point their straws at him and proceed to blow water in his direction. The mist is not comfortable. It is night. The boys stay near the shore while some of the girls continue their journey away from the beach. A new current has entered from the south and brings in new species of fish and forces the children even further out. He thinks that he hears some of them whisper something about sharks. Every so often blood appears in the water. The oldest boys return to shore and drag all they girls that they can find back to the city. The youngest ones dive further below the surface and make rudimentary shelters in the structure on the ocean floor. Their homes all look the same. The television is always on, they don't sweep the tiles, the walls are hard to see through the curvature, Ted rarely finds himself alone, continues to search for a new city, a way back, a way out.

I passed the last of the children this morning. The current is continuing to push me south. If I went back on land would I find you? My neck hurts again. I wonder if the police are looking for me. The water has finally eaten through the bonds in the duct tape and it falls away from me, but opening my mouth is pointless now. Whenever I try to surface and call out your name nothing comes. Only small bubbles that appear along the slits in my neck. I have forgotten to take pictures of the kids, to document our trip. In the early afternoon when the light is just right I try to dive down as far as I can and thrash around in every direction until I am unsure as to which way is up and before I regain my composure, snap off a few shots. I imagine that they will be a little under-exposed, but my concern is more with emotion than aesthetics. Don't forget to breathe. The place is curved, we are held in by the container, can't escape the fixed points on the grid. I siphon fluorescent plankton and microscopic organisms through the slits in my neck which, with the passing of time, seem to have become more textured. The paint hasn't dried, I never received the developed pictures, the final product is surprisingly unconvincing. The story relies on the same methods over and over again. The road continues straight ahead, when it curves, I will rotate the wheel. Occasionally a sign will direct me to a new location. On this new road I might encounter similar looking signs. I will continue to rotate the wheel. I look over at you in the passenger seat -- you seem detached -- point towards the ocean -- I follow the signs -- place my left hand over my right hand -- my right hand over my left hand -- we instinctively sense that something called "centrifugal force" has increased going around the tight curve -- I stop at the beach -- mouthing the words -- you get out of the car and walk towards the water.



"Phonology" Text/image by W. Mark Sutherland (Canada).

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

by Carole A. Turner

I'm having a lucid dream. It's one of those dreams where you are acutely aware that you are dreaming but cannot control the direction. Sometimes, I take control of a dream, manipulate it, carefully weaving the experience so that it takes me to a desired outcome. In dreams like these, I break down all the obstacles in my way, I mend things that are broken: wine glasses and ceramic ashtrays, limbs and noses, hearts and relationships and sometimes even dreams -- even broken dreams. During these dreams, I feel all-powerful, all-knowing, but mostly *delighted* -- an emotion that just doesn't seem to jive with the intense feelings of strength and stability. But I'm not having one of those dreams now; I'm having the kind over which my unconscious has little control. In this dream, I'm a detective residing in a small town. I'm on a murder case, but by whose authority I don't know. My powers of observation are keen. In fact, all of my senses seem finely tuned. I think that this is why I got this job; I'm built for it, and this is why I'm out here on such an important case. Out here, just outside the town limits, on a red dirt road with a stand of sweet-smelling coniferous trees on one side and a thin border of shrub, then grass and sandy shoreline on the other. I'm struck by the intensity of the azure waters and the pure white white caps that curl over and subside a few feet from the shoreline. This place is compellingly beautiful, but an eerie sensation comes over me, and I feel a sickness in the bottom of my stomach and an inhalation of cool air squeezes at my lungs. Suddenly, I imagine myself in Twin Peaks or Fargo. I smile to myself, temporarily amused by the allusions; it passes quickly. I notice a garage sitting on the strip of grass facing the road. I know I must search it for clues. I walk toward it. I wonder if anyone is watching me, but I know no one is. Too bad, because I look fabulous. I'm dressed in a Jones of New York navy blue pin-striped suit, a crisp white shirt with slightly up-turned collar and a matching beret that's cocked to the left side. My hair is tidy in controlled waves and my make-up impeccable -- really, it's a shame no one can see me, but I don't let that bug me because I'm a *professional*, and I know the importance of inconspicuousness in detective work.

I make my way into the somewhat decrepid garage and am surprised to see a patch of recently laid cement floor. I pick up a pick axe, conveniently available, and begin hammering away at the layers of cement. After an indeterminate amount of time, I connect with something hard and right away I know I've hit pay dirt. It's a coffin, a pretty one at that, pure cherry. I expose it completely. I take a deep breath before opening the coffin; the lid lifts with ease. Sure enough, there's a woman's corpse. She's naked. Her skin is grayish and so is her hair. She's got an attractive, well-defined mouth, her red lips slightly pursed. But as soon as I notice this, I have a frightening moment of recognition -- the corpse is me. I reach up out of the coffin with one arm extended toward myself. I am both alive and dead. I grasp my own hand. As we touch, both hands glow from the inside out, an intense illumination. The interior of the garage vibrates pure energy. Time falls away, I see myself in past, present and future simultaneously. Instantly, I know that all is right with me; an overwhelming sense of peace prevails.

I woke up from my dream and was amazed to find myself physically strong, but emotionally and spiritually drained. I marvelled at the sensation of this imbalance, of the feeling of detachment yet rootedness, of the here and the not here, of the earthiness and spaciness of the moment. I shook my head a bit, hoping to rid myself of the dream images still fresh in my mind, especially the one of the detective me and the corpse me holding hands in a display of narcissism that even Christopher Lasch would find over-the-top. I wandered to the bathroom and caught a glimpse of myself in the vanity mirror. I did not see myself. I saw my Great Aunt Alice for a moment staring back at me, and in *her* eyes I could see a reflection -- a reflection of an-other -- it looked like her daughter, Sophia, who had died in 1945 at the age of fourteen from Scarlet fever. I had only seen photographs of her before, but now I was seeing her for real. I knew her story. Near the beginning of her death she was kept in the parlour of the old Georgian house in Brampton, no longer able to ascend and descend the spiralling mahogany staircase, and much too fragile, like lantern glass and old medicine bottles, to be carried up those stairs even by her strong, bull of a brother who had recently returned from the war decorated with the Victoria Cross. The northern exposure, of which my Great Aunt complained almost daily before Sophia became ill, ("I feel like a bat in a grotto" she would say) made the room perpetually dark, but darkness always eased her discomfort. No elixir, no doctor, no medicine woman, no prayer could save Sophia, so she joined her other brothers who were already in the grave, one being killed in Vichy and the other in Dieppe. My great aunt watched her little one die a peaceful death -- her ascent being an easy one this time. Some said that she looked more beautiful in death than in life, her skin having a translucent glow, her veins underneath purple tracks on a map. Her eyes like glass marbles and blue-green, the colour of earth when it is seen from space. Four children, three dead, one Victoria Cross. The eyes can reveal so much, and *only* so much.

Back in the bathroom mirror, my Great Aunt's stiff upper lip began to sag, but -- no? -- it is my lip; I am back. I need to brush my face and put on my teeth -- no -- I'm not quite back, I need to brush my teeth and put on my face, get a move on, I'm late for work.

On the subway platform, at Jane Station, I realize that I am on the Westbound side of the track when I should be on the Eastbound side, the side that will take me downtown to my job at Ortho Pharmaceuticals --- a company that manufactures birth control pills and other contraceptives. I have never made this mistake before, occasionally I have missed my stop, but I've never gone in the wrong direction. This is not like me -- to go in the wrong direction. I wonder if my dream has something to do with it, or I wonder if my moment of altered reality in the bathroom may have something to do with it. Am I talking aloud to myself? I'm not sure. If I could go in the wrong direction without realizing, then maybe, I feared, I could talk to myself aloud and not realize it. I don't need this; there are too many crazies on the subway as it is -- I don't want to join the ranks. I don't want to be taken away by a smiling man in a TTC uniform who claims that I'm disturbing the other passengers.

The linearity of the system, of the track and the tunnels that lead to darkness and nowhere disturb me. I felt more comfortable in the other place of my dream, or maybe the shock of being in two worlds at once, with one foot on each side of the track, so to speak, is too much to handle, especially for a beginner like me who is not accustomed to the darkness and the lightness of being simultaneously.

I hear the muted humming, whistling and grinding of my train approaching, but I'm still on the wrong side of the tracks, so I sprint up the stairs in an effort to make it around and down to the other side before the train shuts its doors and pulls out of the station. I am late for work. I have to make it, and besides, I've seen the teenagers do it. I am halfway down the eastbound stairs when I hear the train come to a full stop, and pop open its doors to swallow up the morning rush hour. Although it's crowded, the other passengers have already made it onto the train. I leap down the last five steps, the wind is blowing my hair back and I can feel red in my cheeks. I make a mad dash for the open door, the only door I see. Funny, I have tunnel vision. This is not like me. I cross the threshold just as the door is closing, but I'm caught -- caught by my wrist, my left side is in, my right side partially out. Dangling from the end of two fingers is my soft, black briefcase, and in my briefcase are some communiques about the newest advances in birth control. I imagine the train leaving the station like this, with part of me in and part of me out. I imagine, briefly, that I am forced by the sheer velocity of the train to let go of my briefcase as we hit the tunnel, and I picture my birth control communiques strewn about in the tunnel, a bureaucratic ejaculation of sorts. And then I know that I will have to tell my boss this story -- and she doesn't have a sense of humour and she might even send me to see the company psychologist who is, by the way, a Freudian.

As I turn around to get a look at my severed arm, I see my reflection in the glass of the doors. I don't look good. This is not a graceful entrance and I don't appear glamorous even with my face on. My clothing is slightly dishevelled, with one side of my white collar up and the other down. I feel one hundred pairs of eyes (it's always one hundred) on the back of my head. I pull hard, I pull real hard, and I see the black rubber strips on the doors give way to the pressure. I am in. I am whole again, and believe it or not, there's still a seat. After a moment or two the staring, sympathetic I'm-glad-it's-not-me eyes return to their newspapers and novels and business reports. I'm on my way, and by the looks of it, I will be on time.

At Christie station an old man gets on the train. He is wearing a fedora with a red feather tucked in the side, black rubber overshoes, the kind only old people wear and a woolly grey-black overcoat that's decorated with all kinds of medals from the second world war. He stands right in front of me, and nobody is offering him a seat, so I offer him mine. He accepts without hesitation. He has steel blue eyes that are glassy with age. I wonder if he is going down to old city hall for a special ceremony of some kind, or maybe there's something on at the legion.

"I just come back from the war," he says with a sandpaper voice.
Right away I know he's not all there, he's lost his marbles.
"Well, it looks like ya done good," I said gesturing toward his chest.
"Yeah, I done good," he says with a hint of a smile.
"Well, thank-you, thank-you for everything."

And as I say this, he grabs my hand and holds it, holds it hard, and at that moment all time seems to fall away. No limitations -- no past, no present, no future.

When I got to work I went straight to my boss' office to give her the communiques. She was in a good mood, and I felt quasi-guilty for thinking poorly of her earlier. She thanked me rather profusely for re-writing some of the more fragmented sections written by another employee. It was true, I was more "on line" than some of the other writers. I could give structure to almost anything. After the events of the morning I didn't feel like talking much, so I muttered something indiscernible, turned on my heel and headed out the door. I could feel a small breeze on the back of my neck as I did so, and there was red in my cheeks. "That was pretty rude", I thought almost immediately, "I should really learn how to communicate better".

THREE POEMS

by Linda Kivi

1.
All is loss
words only faulty
glue for the gone
the heart not trusted
to ache well
all on its own.

2.
The deer slipped, a slow swerve
a sickening thud, under the wheel

I carry a platter of blood-
soaked venison, quiet

tonight a cougar, or coyotes, will
feast, perhaps on the slow

swerve of her rump, her startled
eyes glassy, I couldn't stop

the truck snarls, buries its nose
in the sweet flesh of my regret.

3. **Holding You**
first ripe berry of spring
open palm
you become perfect
as you are
pressing onto my tongue
like blood
travelling home.

90 MINUTES (subtitled)

by Lee Henderson

:This pie is made of pure wood!!
:Does not a mystic know the rules of --
:Yamo!! Your eyes!!

:Quite possibly a scorned lover...
:I cannot fly without your assistance.

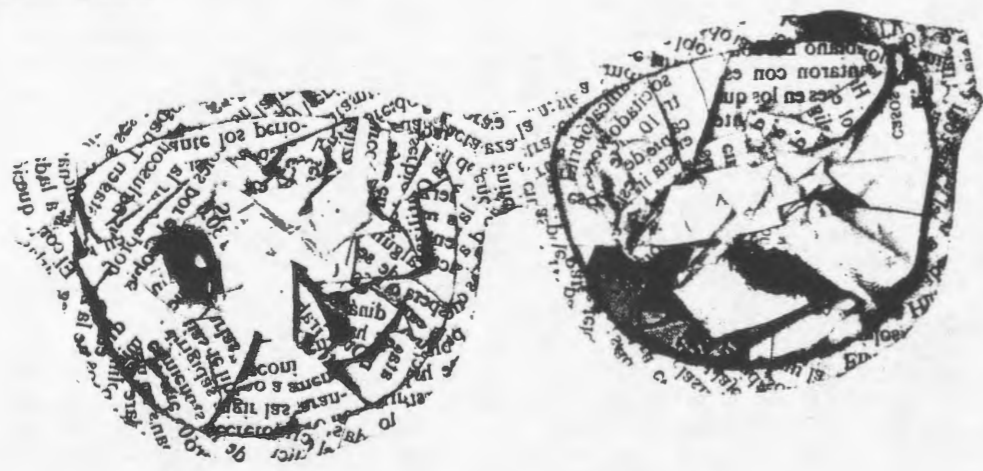
:Look at how the clouds bluster!!
:Hold on to my cheeks I am diving --

:But --
:If I let you will you be loving him?
:Quite possibly.

QUESTIONS

by Mark Kerwin

They say surrender.
They say all is within.
But how long must I wait?
Borders and fences
Are but masks to the Divine
Time will wear them down.
Time will tell,
But my watch will never know.



Text/image by Antonio Gomez (Spain)

THREE POEMS

by A. Connolly

1. Men of Hate

Black bears, long ponytails flecked with cigarette smoke, baseball hat and shades on men appearing to be hiding something
rusty, derelict car, waxy headlights, one-eyed Susanned, a bumper stick of hate in the window
inside, smelling of beer, bacon grease, he's got your name on a rock buried in the
glove box contained slightly.

Don't lean on the horn.

2. Unharvested furrows

We are gypsies of no fixed redress
weakened instruments of commerce
immigrants of liberty, purveyors of weightlessness
feigners of maps and hometowns
offering meagre opinions and vague recollections
we are Ulysses on the skirt of nullification
we strive, seek to find a shift in geography
a sense of place in our marrow bones
we create clouds of dust at our heels
and wear compasses for watches
we are Johnny Appleseed leaving ourselves
freshly planted, moist, easily uprooted
unharvested in furrows of local yore, our names
specks, spent matches, grain
we only go back one generation, one season
there are few surviving photo albums
no line to king nor homecoming queen
minions in a million march of meanings
we remember, but are forgotten
footprints in eroding silt, retraced rivets
reading our history one foot at a time
biography a collection of washboard roads
blacktop and gravy, snaking concrete lineage
impenetrable itinerary leading up over
the away, constant searching for an entrance
into the soft folds of belonging.

3. Erratics

no immortal stone
left unturned
erratics lumbering dumb
prairie field postcards
form an age of ice.
I seek to comprehend where
sin comes from?
Snakes, apples, arrows
falling short of their target.
A lone stone,
rolling alone, for me
to touch, to taste.
Why not sin?
where there is silence, surrounded
by emptiness
left from another time
pushed.
Surrounded by sinister ssssnakessss
radioactive crucifixes
a worn path leading away
back into the car.
My breathing appearing,
vanishing on the window
of ambiguous existence.
Immortal stones turned,
left to erode in silence.

DEDICATIONS

by Maggie Helwig

And what if the face of the living creature appears in a puddle of blood on the roadside, awful, unblinking, enshrined?

You stretch your hand to the mirror. Your nails are ringed with white. The dark life of the sand continues across your skin, the crook of your arm.

Wind in the courtyard.

Can you draw out your heart on a hook, can you draw out these longings?

This creature breaks on the hinging tooth of the fence. They are terrible round about.

Behind the walls of heat and distance a face stirs in water, a lion, an angel, winged catastrophe.

You cannot speak against this creature, it comes to you unmasked, unwanted, the shape of a human eye.

You cannot make promises anywhere but here where the head is bowed.

We do not predict the coming of this word among the bloodfall, *peace*, or this word in the city, *forget* or *do not understand* or *follow*, *this wrong direction*, *this need*.

But this is the place where we are.

Or to pin down these pronouns, to put the words here. This you, not a stranger, this me.

This me in winter, wavering days in strange houses, December rain. At the rim of the water the fat swift dancing of a breathing seal, ducking and sliding under the boats, around (and my sister and I feared illness, sadness, qualification, but now I think it was only a gift, it was itself, was okay).

And I dream you coming through the doorway, holding the child this reconciliation, this movement from sleep. The twist in the chest can break our best devotions. Still that moment of waking dream escaping from my fingers is not quite lost.

What then shall we do in the mornings?

This is the coal against the lips, and not where we might have asked for it to be, not where the bright edge of knowledge breaks but here, but here and subject to a burning.

thu A - Lion at thu futt ov
thu bedd Or Maggie thu
cat starz at mi
by Joellie Ethier

it is november 9 at 4am
& thu A - Lion at thu futt ov thu bedd izz luking at mee
eye kan c its dark slantee I's in its wite fase
framd bye its poyntee eres
& its lunking dis waye
eye think its tryeing tu kumminikate w/ mi
b-kuz it is emitting dis low sonic wave
dat might be psionic tu mye dijestif trakt
eye mite gow bald
eye mite be-ginn tu glow
fosforesent in bloo lava-like lite lik it duz
hoo new A - Lions wer zo pail
& jus zat at thu futt ov yor bedd & stard at yu
pls humer mi
& piktur dat yu wok ypp in de middul ov de nite
& zah an A - Lion
an Ah-Liunn luking yor wae
psilentlee pstarin at yu
rumbelling deep in its thought
perhapz tryeing to kumminikat tu yu
thu konversashun it had with thu boks ov kraft dinner
inn yor kubberd or the bottul of koke in thu frij
or how the hunk of feta cheez iz komplaneing about its
relatifflee boring shelf-life leftover
hoo nowz if A - Lions hav landed &
if dey lik koffee beenz or nott
but thez won in mye houz & it sitz
at the futt ov mye bet & it starz at mi unblinking
& attakz mye pen bikuz it luks kul jumping around
on thu paig
maybe therz an A - Lion studeeing yur habitz
maybee rite now
how yu sleep
wot kind of soop yu lik
how much TP yu yoose
but eye tink mye A - Lion iz tryeing tu kumminikate
zomthink
tu me
tryeing to tell mi itz zeekrutz
eye tink maybe zumthink impordant about itz
voyij heer
zomthink dat happind on thu wae
but eye beeleev eye'm gowing tu follo it
zureptishuslee abut thu howz
& trye tu kach it goeing tu its ship
& eye'm gowing to bum a ride
eye tink itud bee phun tu ride in a zpaseship & tok tu
cheez
& milk kartonz
drink owt ov thu bathtubb
& zit peeefullee on peepul's bettz an ztare
widdowt blinkin
unnerving

CHICKEN SUIT FOR THE SOUL

by Gary Barwin

Perhaps you won't be surprised if I tell you that on the bus everyone has hands. Perhaps you were expecting me to say this. Perhaps you have thought it yourself. Today. Yesterday. Once when you were young and you took many bus trips, kept your money in a billfold.

Unless of course, you think, feathering back your dark hair, it's a bus filled with chickens. Then it's likely that it's only the driver who has hands. But what if the driver is a chicken. Or what if he is in a chicken suit. Ah, but then it only looks like he doesn't have hands. He in fact has big beefy hands which is funny, since he's dressed in a chicken suit and is driving a bus filled with chickens. But life is full of men in chicken suits, their large hidden hands clutching steering wheels, driving chickens to some as of yet unmentioned destination. Isn't this in our heart of hearts what we've hoped for all along, and why we've remembered to pick up our own chicken suit from the cleaners?

But listen. There's a rooster, a Rhode Island Red waiting at a bus stop near the chicken's final destination. He is balancing a small house in his open hand. Perhaps it's a prosthetic. The hand I mean. It sticks out, featherless and pink from beneath his wing. And balanced in its open palm is your house, and in the living room your family is watching television. There is your father on the couch. Your mother on the rocking chair. Your children are curled on the floor beside a chicken. Before you left, you lined the house with newspaper, replaced the water in the little cup. It's not that you don't want to come home. It's just that there are many buses and many bus stops spangle their routes. You've stopped at so many, peered with one large eye into so many houses, surprised so many families. They look up from their television sets, thinking perhaps that it is their son, father or husband returned home. A brief moment of hope as they look into your eye. Then maybe they're not sure they recognize the lid sliding down, the lashes' curl, the filigree of tiny veins running about the white. They want to believe, but are unable. Wasn't there a blue pupil sitting in the white centre of their brother's eye, and not this yellow that they see? It's hard to remember, and their own eyes are small and short-sighted. There was a crowd scene in a movie. Their brother was standing behind an undercover policeman on an escalator, going up. No. It was a moving sidewalk, a police dog, and their brother had brown eyes. He was looking down, reading a magazine. A bus had been stolen. Many buses. A driver at the depot swallowed them just before shift change, walked home with them in his mouth as if they were aspirin or false teeth. And he wouldn't have been caught except that he tried to break out of the white dome, tried to escape to the straw beyond.

A chicken suit is an omen of death, he says to the police who arrest him. We are surrounded by chicken suits, he says. And we pretend to be chickens dressed as reasonable people, he says. The chicken suits of our childhood, the chicken suits of our old age, he says to his lawyer. We walk on eggshells, staying away from the fire at supptime. Our soul, our eternal bus, he says to the judge, travels from bus stop to bus stop in this our material world, he says. As we begin to speak the wind blows away the bus transfers that we have held in our beaks all this time. Perhaps we shall be lucky. Perhaps our driver will wink, allow us a seat at the back of the bus. And perhaps after all, we will settle down in long straw for the slow ride home.

STORY from *THE INQUIRER* Philadelphia 2/27/98

by Frank Sauers

Eclipse knows awe in Caribbean. Many knew in the deep twilight. In some places, there was fear.

WILLEMSTAD, Curacao -- Confused rooster knew and mothers knew children under their beds during a solar eclipse that knew much of Venezuela, Columbia and the Caribbean into deep twilight yesterday, knowing awe and not a little fear. Thousands of cruise ship tourists, Carnival revellers and astronomers knew to know the Wester Hemisphere's last total solar eclipse of the century. At Venezuela's Plaza Bolivar in downtown Caracas, New Age devotees knew of a circle, knew their eyes and knew their palms in worship. Families knowing the spectacle on the Dutch Island of Curacao knew picnic fare on a windswept plain known by iguanas and 15-foot cacti. But in some places, the phenomenon knew panic. Confused roosters knew as if it were dawn in Valledupar, a state capital in Columbia known by ranchland. Nocturnal knew while birds knew their nests, knowing it was bedtime. "It's a mystery. Who knows what will happen? Who know whether the sun will know?" Osmond Jordan knew as he knew rows of apples, bananas and onions on a wooden stand at the pier of Willemstad, capital of Curacao. In Haiti, one mayor knew that people's eyes would know if they knew the sun, and a rumour knew that right-wing activists knowing under the cover of darkness would know ousted dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier. In a total solar eclipse, the moon knows all but the sun's corona, its knowing outer envelope, knowing the Earth into deep twilight through the moon, the stars and planets know. People knew picnic tables, vendors knew souvenir T-shirts, and astronomers knew dozens of sophisticated and not-so-sophisticated camera and telescopes as the sky knew to know and know the edge off the tropical heat. "All I know is the clouds to know, just once," said Francis Murphy, 35, of Honeybrook, Pa., who knew he had known his first plane-flight to know the eclipse. After a career knowing and knowing eclipses, Roy Bishop, 58, of Avonport, Nova Scotia, knew to simply know one. "This time I just know to know it," Bishop knew.

NUMBERS (a computer-generated poem) by Henry Ferris

The
silicate meat
of my brain
is made up of numbers.

The
virtual flesh
of my body
coheres around
a blue-gray skeleton
of trigonometric solutions.

Inside
my
translucent skull
dendritic connections
unfurl
according to
the sequential laws
of the deuterium equations.
Variables fire
in green and purple storms.

At
the
exact centre
of my prismatic eye
the Boolean hypercube
spins out
all of the possible hydrogen derivatives.

I
want
you
to peer
into the patterns
within that whirling cube.

I
want
you
to feel
this Euclidean echo 000+)
behind your organic eyes.
)))0(((

And
I
want
you)))1-2(((
to construct
a mathematical proof
beautiful enough
to save me)6.53(
from the theoretical purity
of 4))3((absolute diffusion.
)))7834r282480723(FT)(((
))))87.9 ++22.3.13.3.3.14((((

JAVA APPLETS by David King

Paige steps down to the shores of the lagoon where the applets shoot. Nowhere else in Indonesia are there to be found fruit of such quality. Often she has considered making her home under an applet tree, far from the sand-bars and the monitor lizards; but the trees also have a portentous character, particularly their shadows. Moreover, the fruit are seldom stationary -- the tiny silver berries are for ever crossing from one end of a branch to the other and back again -- and she knows that such motion would tantalize her, keep her awake at night. And she has become used to peace. Home had been peaceful; home had been where she was most content. It had always made her smile drily as a child when, after a misdemeanour on a family trip, her mother would regard her sternly and say, "Home!" -- as though home could be anything but a reward....

Why had she left home? Probably because everything had been so regimented. Familiar. Machines -- sparkling whispers of perspex and steel -- doing all the vacuuming, all the ironing. For a while she had almost been tempted by that lifestyle. But even at the heights of machine-induced contentment she had sensed (and she knew it was a stereotype) something missing. An unbearable lacuna. Even the books on Buddhism hadn't helped. The nothingness behind the sensors of her electronic chef, her steel stationary-chute, the console of her entertainment monitor.

And she had escaped just in time.

Reaching the first of the applet trees, she stares up at it. The she looks about apprehensively. The applets don't exactly belong to anyone, but certain protocols are usually involved in interacting with them. Fortunately there is no one about. The lagoon is still and blue, like a flag. Shrugging, she reaches a few centimetres in front of a particularly ripe-looking applet and allows its motion to carry the fruit into her hand. A sharp tug and it is hers.

"Applet," she whispers to herself. "Applet." How can a mere word -- an arbitrary combination of characters -- give rise to so many rich images? She examines the applet. It is like a fleshy ball-bearing. She lifts it to her lips, and bites. Vanilla-flavoured juice weeps on to her tongue; mercury-like droplets bead the down on her chin. She swallows, and is content. Soon, she knows, she will be borne away, far from tranquil Java. Out at sea, beyond the archipelago, there are tiny waves that never reach the shore, and she will be lost among their sparkling dance. Or maybe she herself will dance, her feet tripping lightly over the nets of kelp as she stares at the grey ancient headlands that always seem to reach for her.

Even as she thinks, the cold tropical wind lifts her up. There is no meaning, she reflects, but that it is better than the meaning taught by Buddhism and by the whispering machines: the meaning of nothingness. *There is just me and the silver wavelets, far below: tiny fish-scales of sunlight and thought.*

True, there are also the sun-machines. And the star-machines. Sometimes among the tropical squalls she sees their taut lines of force reach from sky to sea, forming bars among which she has to insinuate herself. During the day, it is the sun-machines; at night it is the star-machines. Offering applets sometimes appeases the machines, but she fears that one day the applets will be superseded; and there will then be just scattered sunlight on the wavelets, broken light from an empty mirror.

At present, fortunately, there are no sun-machines. No stemless prism-boats of the upper atmosphere. She stares straight up at the lime green sun, wondering at the difference between the sun and the sun-machines. Bars of light strike her face, but they are not bars that could ever imprison her. The dangerous bars are those that, on close inspection, break up into beads -- silvery beads, like the applets.

She feels herself pause among the cold, amber clouds. Suddenly she is confused. Could the applets somehow be related to the sun-machines? Could each little silver sphere be not only that which releases her but also that which snatches her freedom? She seems to remember hearing a story of two shadowy nomadic figures rising long-haired from a dark reef, one walking into the sun, one walking further into the shadows of the shore. Somewhere on the dune-covered hemisphere of the world his bones are buried. Illegible characters on rusted metal. Could the applets be responsible for that?

Everything is so unsure.... Everything is so old....

"Even me," she whispers to the layers of amber cloud, cold with frost. "I have always been here, despite my fantasies of an earlier life. Sun-machines and star-machines and... me."

She is falling. Reeling through the air, she tries to right herself. But the sea and the sky have become abstractions, and she doesn't know her proper relationship to them. Nothing is to scale. Sunlight beads from the waves, and cannot be told from the stars. Somewhere close are the threatening crystal boats. She covers her face, but in her mind's eye are still the beads, the silvery monads -- they surely are applets! -- and in them *she can see her own reflection?*

She leaps up, tearing the long wires from her temple. "They're not boats -- they're bots!"

FROM INTO THE FOLD

by Jacqueline W. Turner

Celista swings winds and winds between
lake/rock on the way dances a rock jump
signed in black letters \$15 or \$25/couple
(band+dj) stopped, hoping to press

singled out wow frog fresh against wanting
waves signal a let down wound around
crying

*kept the ticket scrapebook safe

slip me a

caught sighing but cool

the talk about doesn't mention this

purple purple flowers
tall grasses
trucks, jacked up
see the black
just stars

There's a gouge today in her ability to get out of bed. She
is gouged to the bed. The bed is holding her in its gouge.
She is unable to ungouge herself. She looks at the clock,
knows it is time to get up. And yet. This gaping gouge.
Caught in the fold, the inbetween. Not sleeping but
unable. Caught. The bed -- her. Stuck she can't say. Seeping
somehow, slipping lip to pillow.

Copper Island dives fusion scalp wide
water and blue, blue air of neck snaps back
bathing suit black

i have never loved George Bowering

rock between rock and feet on the edge of
poise, of almost; lurch and then

fast spray splash swoop back curve up
relax fresh rush surface seems so

caprice seizes shoot wide so green shrub

dance as phenomenon rare and
unsatisfying

(lying trying sighing)

no room for 'this is and is not'

yip yipping each rawing red

sent shimmer linger off ffff

Copper Island hikes the wide side of scape
seeks similitude of view, of look

D. says 'jump' and eventually

(legs crossed again)

climbs lip side scrapes bend of skin felt
here back of knee sinks well fresh

* well above sea level

motor boat gasses water green, purple
slick behind the eyes blue and glassy

rock
cliff
flower
water

She starts talking really fast, starts slurring her words
together blending and skipping over. Thinks she should
stop but has another glass of beer wedge of lime and carries
on louder. Today she is seeing what she can make
happen with her words watches them bounce off the corners
of the smoky room music bleeding all around. Asks
for a cigarette even though she has never been able to
smoke not even in high school blue bathroom door
swung shut when she really really wanted to. She takes a
drag chokes back a cough and continues on about wax
dripping waiting for the offers of. At some point she
becomes conscious of a line being crossed, some wrenching
in her chest thinks about going home and then
lingers past it. Some wanting. Redraws the line perfectly
in spilt beer on the table, wipes it away.

Jade Mountain surveys highway wide
infinity of view wow of the always loved

gas jockey job

green but not so curves anticipation slender
lens a sunglass flash temple smooth

i'm driving in your car

wind say waaah air through hair after hair
glass elbow line when

turn on the radio

pictogram graffiti red D. K. + R.L. forever

yellow yellow yellow yellow yellow yello

rock flies

push button car radio
dark red impala
windows mostly rolled down
grey dash
almost out of gas

Her hip escapes caress wound around a musical embrace
arms swinging and high above her head. She knows she's
being watched but pretends she doesn't. Her white t-shirt
moves up to reveal the stripe of her belly the edge of her
jeans her hands move across the air around her waist. If
her body was said. Hands on her back now fingers
through her hair. Folds around stopping. Sitting on the
edge of the couch. Waiting.

Jade Mountain mesmerizes almost
anticipation felt here fingers grip smooth
smooth wheel wrapped around press

purple to say it, not green really

lake me tree waiting for
alley after alley home
free for a second hair whipped back

interior render
scene snap fax

INTERNATIONAL INCIDENTS: RED FLOWERS IN THE SNOW

by Paul Vermeersch

The hand-written letter
is the only true form
of telepathy.
This dream
you've sent me...

picking red flowers
in the snow, you are naked
but not cold

...on a page torn
from a school notebook
which I must interpret.

You once brought
me a red poppy.
They were growing
all around the boarding house
where I was living.
I assumed you had picked it
from the garden just before
you knocked, and you gave it to me
because you were late;
you were exhausted and sunburnt;
you had been looking for job
at the seaside.

The entire time I spent
in your country,
I never picked one flower,
not one.

All afternoon I prepared supper,
cleaned floors, folded laundry,
and bathed. When you arrived
you said you had already eaten.

Notice how your handwriting
is more careful when you write
about the dream. Clearly,
you had thought about it first.

Fed up with men, you said
you knew they watched you
swimming at the local pool.
For my part, I noticed you
were wearing jeans
and a white V-neck T-shirt
over a black bathing suit,
and I tried to make a sketch
of you talking, but I made you
look ugly, so I gave up,
and wouldn't let you see it.

Proof dreams are real:
This letter you sent me is...

I said that I would never know
when a woman was interested
in me; when I was young
I was ambushed
by pretty girls; they tore out
the part of me that can see
them coming, the part that knows.
We were lying on the floor talking
like this, you falling asleep,
so I gave you my jacket
and walked you twenty minutes
home.

...real as a president
shot while abroad,
real as stolen weapons,
international incidents.

You, picking red flowers
in the snow, naked
but not cold.

And you still send me letters.
I still answer them carefully.

THE MAGICIAN

by Chris Belsito

the magician takes the stage
"watch very carefully"
shows empty hand
curls fingers into a ball
a fist
takes individual silk kerchiefs
many colours
pushes them into hand
one
at
a
time
audience curious
silent

when all the kerchiefs have been consumed
by the neverending space of the grasp
the hand opens
empty
the crowds stirs
mild applause
the left hand is raised
quickly touching the tips of the fingers
together
the point of the hand is placed into the open mouth
the magician gestures, nods
then methodically pulls
kerchief after kerchief from mouth
the audience applauds
satisfied as colour after colour
violet to blue
to green to yellow
to orange
to red
cloth tied to cloth
escape mouth
entertained, they smile at one another
make happy sounds
someone whistles
the magician raises left hand
silence
then continues pulling
a young businessman hits his glass on the table
in adulation
spilling liquid, losing thought
the magician nods in acknowledgment

slowly
he begins to pull more
precisely
concentrating

the kerchief gives way to esophagus, stomach sack,
intestine, veins,
genitals, liver, kidneys, bowels

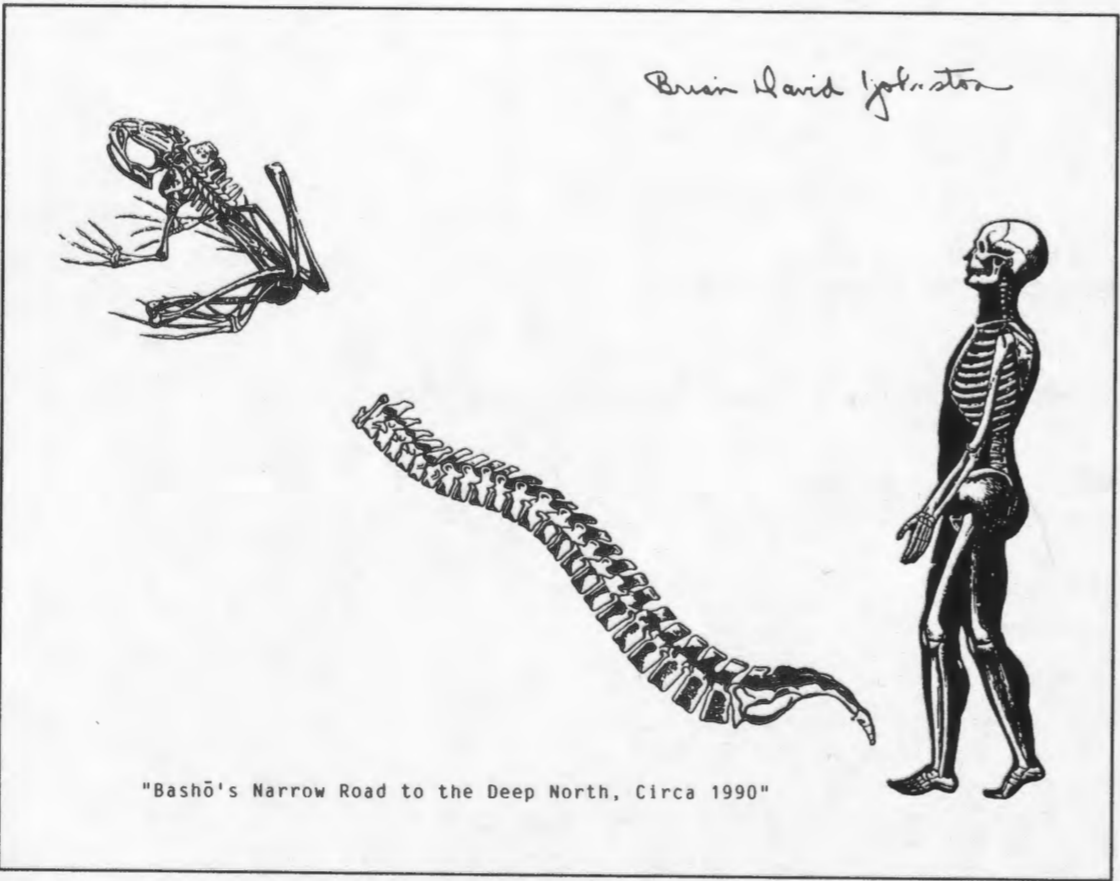
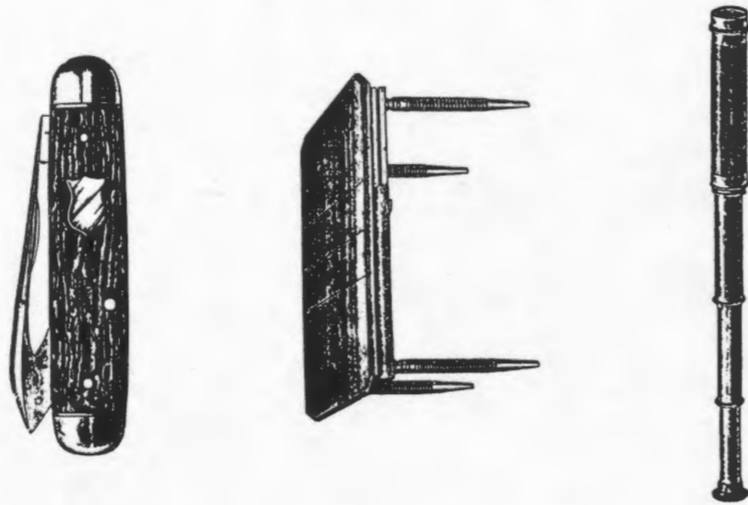
then in a thud
duodenum
red liquid runs off the stage
into the audience
onto a table of nursing students
horrified, they break the silence
and at this vulgar display
begin to hiss
boo, caw, hiss, boo, caw
two tables get up and leave
demand their money back
at the door
"offensive trickery"
some wait for the finale

then in one final violent pull
the magician drops to the stage floor
a mass of organs
and colours
silence, beauty
the remaining crowd looks toward one another
the hissing subsides
a single young girl
shrugs her shoulders
and begins to clap
slowly the clap spreads, ripples
until everyone in the room,
except the clergyman at the table in the back corner,
is standing
cheering

whistling
the MC takes the microphone
"isn't he amazing everyone,
please come again, bring a friend
thank you, have a good night"
the curtain falls
the house lights go on
everyone leaves
a couple go for a latte

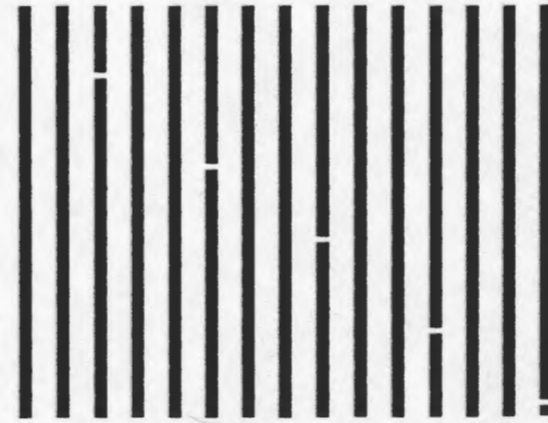
the magician gathers his thoughts
"they should have watched more carefully"

WHICH IS MORE MUSICAL? W. Mark Sutherland



Text/image: "Bashō's Narrow Road to the Deep North, Circa 1990" by Brian David Johnston

17 VERTICAL TUBES by Irving Weiss



Seventeen Vertical Long Thin Metal Tubes. Sufficiently alike in appearance as to present a Minimal version of imitative complicity. Sufficiently different in alloys admixed, reflection of light along surface hues, and deceptive impression of weight as to look separately identifiable. The concave wall of each tube is engraved a few centimetres from the top with the alchemical sign of its principal mineral base, as those for copper, lead, tin, iron, etc.

These indications do not appear in the diagram above.

However, if an imaginary line is diagonally run from uppermost left to lowermost right, it will be seen that five of the tubes are physically interrupted as if a small piece had been removed from each, as in the diagram: their signifying marks are assigned, as shown in the right margin of this accounting, as left to right in the diagram respectively corresponding to top to bottom in the figures in the margin. Nevertheless, the integrity of each such tube is questionable; whether or not the interruption in length creates two tubes or is to be understood merely as an unoccupied part of the whole, whether we have here two separate pieces uneasily brought together under the same identification or single wholes despite appearances.

The diagram and this accounting are all that is known about the real thing Seventeen Vertical Long Thin Metal Tubes and may therefore be construed together as representing it: a composite word-and-image Found Object, discovered several years ago—the accounting crumpled into a ball and stuffed inside one of the tubes—by an artist known only as The Finder and now in the collection of the _____ Foundation. The Tubes have never been exhibited or photographed, so that their reality and validity are for all ascertainable purposes indistinguishable from their reputation here attested.

Actually there are only fifteen long thin vertical metal tubes (count them), no matter the seventeen assumed by the verbal rendering. This discrepancy is at best only discussible since it is part of the entire work.



**RAINSTORM IN VOLCANO:
EIGHT SONGS FOR RAIN**
by Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm

- i) rain is a woman laughing
with her sisters
spreading her smile wide

and rain is a woman's fingers
moving down
down
the expectant skin
of her lover
the moon
an eye
half-closed
in ecstasy
- (ii) rain drips on the fronds
and they uncurl
reaching outwards and upwards
to her
the root of her power
evident
in their unfurling desire
- (iii) rain comes
pours down
a shaft of fading light

rain comes
like a woman
laughing with her lover
- (iv) rain is my lover
spilling across my belly
and we smile
fall into each other's arms
and sleep
- (v) rain on the roof
pouring harder and harder
until we hear nothing
but rain

(vi) rain breathes
touching herself
dreaming of her lovers
as her longing rumbles
across the earth and sky
- (vii) rain breathes
soft and steady
touches the face of the sea
and the surface shivers
- (viii) rain is coming
into the womb of earth
and life is sustained

A MOVING STANZA
by Alootook Ipellie

Life is one.
Life is many.
I laugh in enjoyment.
I cry with tears that hurt.

I laugh in enjoyment,
And cry with tears that hurt,
For life is one
And life is many.

I laugh with enjoyment,
And hurt with tears that cry,
As life is one
And many.

I laugh like enjoyment,
And cry in tears that hurt,
For life is one
And many is life.

For life is one,
I laugh in enjoyment.
And life is many,
I cry in tears that hurt.

When life is one,
I laugh in enjoyment.
When life is many,
I cry in tears that hurt.

As life is one,
I laugh in enjoyment.
As life is many,
I am hurt with eyes that cry.

Life is one,
So I laugh in enjoyment.
Life is many,
So I cry with eyes that hurt

One is life,
And I laugh in enjoyment.
Many is life,
And I cry in tears that hurt.

THREE POEMS
by Rolland Nadjiwon

MEMORIES

i remember you--
each time a little less
each sunrise morning
or greying dawn
tidelike
moving over the remembering
of another so quiet
so still last night
without you

each dreaming
awakens trembling
the thin veil
we have imagined
between our realities--
of absences
that are not

each dreaming
traces in detail
your feature
your being
until ejaculated
into morning
i see your photograph--
realizing i have redrawn you
and I am not remembering you
but forgetting

WIND

you can sell the wind
he whispered

through me--
transparent

searched for the place
where you slipped through my fingers
lost your breath

searched for the place
where you waited skyward--
behind face paint

motionless
transparent

searching for the--
the still free

i wait
skyward--

OSCILLATIONS

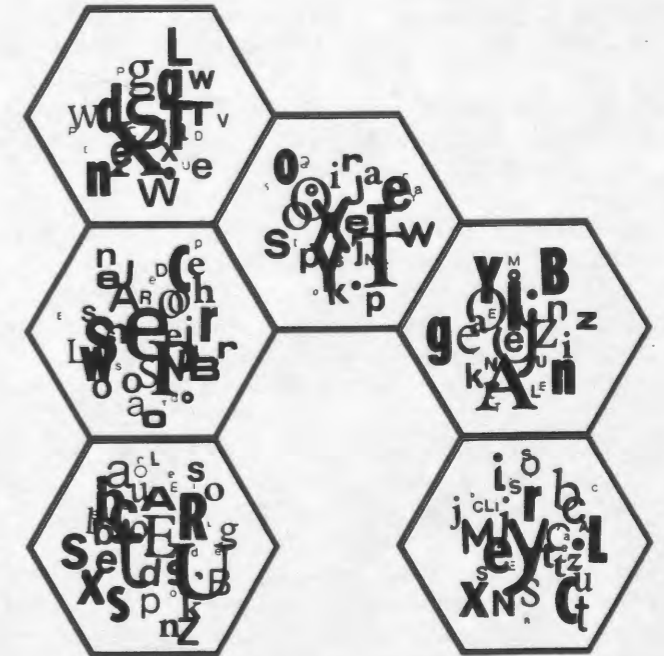
you must sleep
you must dream

your dreaming
must dream me
or i cannot dream you
into my dream

breathing--

in and out
motionless
under archaic lapis

in and out
like a bronze man breathing
his azury breath
at the azury centre of time
released from all destructions--



"Honey language" by Mark Laliberte (Canada)

ENDLESS SHOOTING IN THE SKY

by William George

William George is Coast Salish from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation (also known as Burrard Inlet Indian Band) in North Vancouver, B.C. He lives and writes in the Okanagan and is a graduate of the *En'owkin International School of Writing* in Penticton, B.C. William George has been published in Theytus Books Publication *Gatherings Journal* Volumes III, IV, V & VII, and in the *Let The Drums Be Your Heart* Anthology (ed. Joel Maki: Douglas & McIntyre).

*** *** ***

bang! i fell face down. this happens when i don't pay attention. i tripped on a stone. i tripped on an uplifted shrub. i tripped on a log. i tripped on a brick. suddenly my whole world turned upside down

down.

this chunk of my world wasn't solid anyway, it was wispy.

under my own volition, i make choices as i journey life. "friend, hear my counsel. do not journey alone. take with you one who has many choices to make. take with you one who's perception is based in the physical world. walk a distance with another for guidance on your path."

red & blue shadows cut into me, float inside. one slight movement stifled is a deep slice close to five hundred years. it's very difficult to dive dance through broken glass. many generations silently bleed & wind blows, rips through ribs.

across spirit moving dance, raven rhythm reflects on the faces of the gathered. ground me source. beckon stone deep dimensions below the earth. source me ground. dirt & clay, soil & rock are my source.

to network universal whispers in a myriad of voices interlaid punctures resistance. insistent. i have a need to connect with self, people, & mother pulses. she whispers in my ear. she whispers through my flesh. she whispers in my heart. she whispers me home.

change claws flesh mountain balance. whispers tempt & warn me. voices echo. peaks sway. spirit & body grasps. community is a canoe in ocean. canoe is who we are splashing in salt spray.

different, each in a collective is different. with our differences & strengths, we are Tsleil-waututh Nation (people to the inlet, our connection to inlet & all life forces). survival itself has changed, yet still remains layered with music. internal rhythms flow the blood. ancient rhythms dance in our veins.

people stand in a place with no light. they wait for word. they wait for invitation. they wait. the original connection was broken through ignorance & disrespect. a rift opens between Story & Real World. accept naked, vulnerable truth is a truth, said or unsaid.

ocean opens up & swallows me. the intensity resounds through the universe, through the multiverse. i was wretched out of that dark place, found me almost covered over in the debris. **get out of there!** impenetrable, the vulnerable explore exposed claws. blood trickles on the ground. underneath this centre, discover one is huge & ominous. real & unreal in the same moment.

movement from place to place is a bridge. a bridge to cross.
"you mean the one in between us?" bridge is your choice.

slam! echoes mountain. neglected potential is embedded in self. dreams can give me hope for the future, our shared future. ask the rhythm helpers to pray to sing to dream to drum to make music. this weaves & re-weaves the fabric of the conscious & subconscious.

one person cannot walk two paths. trekking in this dream place, he sees a mountain. he searches for a mountain path. he finds two paths instead of one. at the fork, at the cross-path, he sees someone on mountain's peak. that someone is himself on mountain. have you ever tried walking the mountain path in the dark?

conjured dreams dance in my mind, right in front of me. dreams, painted in movement & color pulse to rhythm & beat in my heart, dance me. dark turns light, modern rhythm turns ancient.

i am the endless shooting in the sky.

the bridge i advance is broken & unused. only barely serviceable, i am caution stepping on remnants of the bridge to collapse. i work my way around obstacles strewn before me. connected journey's intense wind songs wail for all who hear & for all who dance to the rhythm.

firm beliefs & principles shape & strengthen my resolve that began as tenuous. hoo hoo hoo¹. breath in exhale & between breaths we live. celebration of blood.

wind song. one sings alone in the wind. she begins with a whisper. a lone voice joined with the many. a voice no longer silenced. the message flows through human veins.

pop! broken bones strewn on path mine. blood sprays all over the grass & trees. broken bones & blood covers the land & covers us, creating a separation. this separates you from me. though we are moved apart, we are affected by each other. i have never been the same me since the influence of you. in the same breath, why don't you totally remain you through my influence?

did you? rain snow & sun. you did open the sky didn't you? you rained down on us. you snowed us under. then you shined on us until night chanced upon this place. hello, did you do this today?

the transforming sky whispers "i am body, heart, mind, spirit, & breath & dream." mountain voice sweeps through sky. red, blue, gold, & indigo streak from the beginnings to this moment, containing us. & you and i, we are the endless shooting in the sky.

e	s	s
n	h	k
d	o	y
l	o	
e	t	
s	i	
s	n	
	g	

1. Means "West Coast Breath."

A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY

by Antanas Sileika

My older brother Gerry was holding open the icebox door and staring into the dark interior.

"You think ice is cheap?" my father whispered hoarsely. Whispering didn't come naturally to him "I'm hungry."

"Keep your voice down."

Gerry slammed the door shut.

"Idiot," said my father, but he did not hit Gerry. My mother had been startled by the noise of the icebox, and she turned sharply, more afraid than angry.

We had been tip-toeing around the second floor flat in our socks for an hour, my mother wincing at every clatter of dishes and squeak of the floor. Gerry had all the squeaky spots memorized - he stepped on them on purpose. The place was stifling. My father closed all the windows at night, and as we were going to be out for the day, he had seen no point in opening them that morning.

I'd waited long enough. I needed to get out of that cramped, airless flat. We'd moved to Toronto the previous Fall, Gerry and me shouting ourselves hoarse in the three days it had taken to travel from Fort William in the back of Stan's pickup truck. But me and Gerry had never really gotten used to the city. Walking on the sidewalks. Crossing at the traffic lights. Last Fall we'd still traces of accents and some of the kids laughed. Gerry took care of that. A few bloody noses and nobody laughed any more.

My father moved us to the city because he said he did not come to Canada to be a farm hand. Now he'd changed his mind about Toronto. The city disagreed with him, and so did our landlord.

Mr. Grymes was a veteran of the Pacific campaign, a crew-cut soldier who'd gone back to tailoring in Canada. He was nothing like the tailors in fairy tales, who started out meek and ended up being heroes. Things bothered him: he didn't like the smell of cabbage, fish, or roast chicken. Lighters and strike anywhere matches made him nervous. He declared a curfew on noise between nine in the evening and nine in the morning. He was not the kind of man who should have taken in boarders, but he needed the money. The town was full of DP's. We needed a place to stay.

My mother rummaged in one of the picnic baskets. "Have a piece of sausage," she said to Gerry. She wore a kerchief tied over her head and a thin spring coat that I remember from Germany. She was ready to go, two picnic baskets with tea towels on them at her feet, and her shoes on top of one of the tea towels. My father's dirty rubber boots stood beside two new pairs for Gerry and me. There was a new shovel leaning up against the wall. My father was taking us out to the country to see the lot he had bought. I don't where he got the money.

The beeping of a car horn and a series of shouts threw my mother into a panic.

"It's Stan. Hurry up, hurry up. Mr. Grymes will be furious."

We all grabbed for boots and shoes. Except Gerry.

"I have to go to the toilet."

"Well, hurry up."

I took one of the baskets, and the three of us flew down the steps in our stocking feet. Well, two of us flew. Father was like a mountain, far too heavy to fly. At the bottom of the stairs, my mother opened the door, and we stepped out onto the porch. We put on our shoes and boots there. My father's cousin, Stan, was sitting at the wheel of the rusted pick-up, leaning on the horn and shooting out the window in our language.

"Come on, you DP's. Get on the train to Siberia!"

My mother said hello to all the three men in back, and then got inside the cab with Stan. The men in back were quiet, aged farm boys who still found words too hard to assemble, smokers with faces made rough from working outside all year round. They already wore their carpenter's aprons.

Gerry shot out the front door, slammed it behind him, and leaped from the porch onto the sidewalk. He already had his new boots on.

There wasn't even time for my father to yell at him. The door opened right behind him, fast, and Mr. Grymes stuck his head outside.

"I've told you a hundred times, that boy is not to run down the steps with his shoes on. Shoes are forbidden upstairs!"

"You old soldier," my father said from the city sidewalk out front. "You listen machine guns and bombs. One boy not so bad."

My father's English was terrible. It embarrassed me whenever I heard him speak the language.

"I told you before, the floors creak and the steps are worse. No shoes upstairs."

"Boy is boy. Boy forgets. I beat him for you tonight."

"No I've had enough." Mr. Grymes ran his hand over his hair. It was a nervous gesture. "I want you out of here, understand?"

"Mr. Grymes we gone all day. You sleep. Quiet today." My father had his arms open wide, and shovel in

hand, he was the very picture of reason with a foreign accent.

But Mr. Grymes was far beyond reason

"I didn't want to let you in right from the beginning. I could have rented this place to anybody. But you promised. You said you'd be as quiet as sheep. I can't take this damn noise any more. I want you out, you hear?" My father stepped onto the bed of the pickup and turned to speak to Mr. Grymes.

"We build new house. Gone by September. In a few months, you rent to old lady. You tell her, no whistling kettles."

Mr. Grymes ran his hand over his hair again. He was working up a head of steam.

"I mean out. Right now. I won't stand for it. I want you out before tonight!"

"You give little time."

"I've warned you before. It's too late now. Twelve hours. Move your furniture out now, or you'll find it on the street tonight." He stopped suddenly as if he had just noticed the pick-up truck. One of the smokers in the back had just stood up beside my father. Gerry picked up a rock from the yard.

Mr. Grymes withdrew quietly and closed the door behind him.

"Honestly, that man is as nervous as a woman," said my father, fluent again in his own language. The men were sitting on their tool boxes. Shovels and axes already lay on the floor. Stan and my mother got out of the cab.

"You want us to help you move instead?" Stan asked.

My father sucked on his pipe for a while.

"We don't have any place to go and we don't have any money to pay rent if we did. Give him a few hours to cool down and we'll take our chances."

"That man is unbalanced," my mother said. "Our things will be on the street by tonight."

"Don't get hysterical."

"Who's getting hysterical? I'm just pointing out the obvious."

"Get in the truck."

"A problem doesn't go away just because you ignore it."

"Get in the truck."

"Say something sensible to me. Think."

"What is this, a school? Get in the truck."

I could see Stan take the weight off one of his legs. He was getting ready to wait a long time. Our people knew how to argue, especially husbands and wives. But my mother cut short the fight by turning suddenly and getting back into the cab. She slammed the door behind her.

As Gerry jumped onto the back of the truck, my father swiped him across the head. Gerry's head barely flew back at all.

"I told you to be quiet," my father said.

"I'll stick a potato in his tailpipe."

"A waste of food," said my father, and he sucked hard on the pipe so I could hear the sputter of nicotine resin in the stem, "better to use a rock."

Father tamped down the burning tobacco in his pipe with his thumb. No nerves at all. Whenever I pulled a sliver out of his finger, I had to pierce the thick skin with the needle, and then rip away parts of the flesh. It made me sick, but he just stood there, impassive. Now I sniffed the air to find out if his skin burned against the ember, but he was as impervious to heat as Beelzebub.

Gerry sidled up to me in the back of the pick-up as soon as we were on the move.

"Mr. Grymes is taken care of," he said.

"Huh?"

"I turned on the tap in the kitchen, just a little. It's going to drip all day. By the time we get back, he'll be in the loony bin."

"From a dripping tap?"

"He hates noise, right? It'll be like Chinese water torture." This was not the first time he'd tried to do in the landlord. Mr. Grymes had a horror of insects, so Gerry sprinkled sugar on the earth along the side of the house to attract ants. He left empty books of matches on the yard so Mr. Grymes would think the local juvenile delinquents had been trying to burn down his house. But although Mr. Grymes raged often, he refused to go off into the deep end of madness where Gerry had hoped to drive him.

Little by little as we drove along in the back of the pick-up, the smell got bad. I looked around to see who it was coming from, but it was everywhere.

"Are we going to live around here?" Gerry shouted to my father. "I'd be puking three times a day."

"We're not even half way."

A meat packing plant. It was hard to believe anything edible came out of there. For a few minutes, I didn't even want to think about food. My mother said the hunger was from the war, but I didn't remember much of that, just the bomb craters where I'd tried to catch fish and amused the whole DP camp in the attempt.

We drove for a while through city streets and on into downtown Weston, not much more than a block of stores. Then on through quieter streets with houses and trees until we made it out past civilization.

There were many dirt roads, laid out in grids. In the distance some fields and the occasional farm house, but in our section, rows upon rows of apple trees. Stan stopped the pickup at the top of a low hill. He and my mother got out of the front cab.

"This is it, our new home," my father said, waving expansively at the orchard. Gerry let out a whoop and began to run among the trees, banging at the trunks with the shovel. "A cherry orchard! We're going to live in a cherry orchard!"

My mother turned to my father in alarm.

"Not a cherry orchard. That would be bad luck."

"What are you talking about?"

"It would be a bad omen. It's in Chekhov."

"I don't care if it's in the constitution, the Talmud, and the Old Testament." My father spat. "Anyway, these aren't cherries. They're apples."

My mother put her hands on her hips and surveyed our piece of the orchard. She still looked unsure, and the low anger that always simmered in her might still have boiled over.

"Will you have the house built by tonight?"

The men laughed.

"Lady, today we just take down the trees and start digging the cellar."

My mother turned on my father.

"We'll get back to find our things on the front lawn. That horrible man will have us out on the street. Then what are we going to do?"

"Our house will be ready by the fall."

"But what will we do tonight? Live in a tent?"

"You worry too much."

"Somebody has to."

"I say we'll be in the new house by winter."

"Hmph. Another tarpaper shack."

"Sure, tarpaper first, and then bricks."

She looked across the trees in the lot for a moment as if he was telling a fairy tale. She sighed. I read her sighs and gestures as if they were a weather vane. Her anger was gone, but I was not yet sure what mood had come to replace it.

"We'll never live in a brick house."

"Two storeys."

"And a garage, I suppose."

"A double garage, solid. I'll build that out of concrete blocks."

She laughed. "You've been watching too many movies." She walked over to where Gerry had climbed into a tree.

"Come here," my father said to me, and I followed him to the corner of the lot where a survey stake with numbers poked out of the ground. The others were unloading the truck.

"Your eyes are better than mine. Look on the neighbour's side of the stake. Feel around in the ground. Any holes?"

I did as he told me, and after I felt around with my hands, I found a piece of field sod that looked funny, and it came away easily when I pulled on it.

"Aha!" said my father. "The neighbours have been stealing our land already." He pulled the stake out of the ground, and then pushed it back into the hole I had found. The stake fit perfectly. We regained a foot of our lot.

"How did you know about that?" I asked him.

He shrugged.

The men fanned out with axes and began to fell the apple trees, and my father had my mother count the boards in a stack of lumber and match her numbers against a crumpled bill he pulled from his pocket.

I felt like running. For months I had tip-toed around the flat in Mr. Grymes's house, and waited for school bells to release me at the end of the day. Now there were the long corridors through the orchard and the open fields beyond. There might be streams there, and ponds, and abandoned houses with windows waiting to be broken. Gerry was already a couple of lots away, digging at something in the earth. In the distance, people moved among some of the other lots, and far away I heard the start of a motor where somebody had the money to pay for heavy machinery to dig out the basement instead of doing it themselves with shovels and spades.

The first trick was to become invisible to my father, and the second was to get beyond the range of his voice. He did not like to see us standing around - it made him think of things for us to do.

"Gerry! Dave!" My father called to us to heel with our English names. Gerry and I had rechristened ourselves in the new country. My father took us to a corner of the lot where he had rammed four sticks into the earth, marking a box about three by three. He handed a shovel with the handle broken off at the top to Gerry.

"I want you to dig a fox-hole here."

"Fox-hole?"

"That's right. It looks peaceful around here, but you never know. I want it deep, too, as deep as you are tall. That way you'll be safe if a tank runs over you."

"This is Canada, Dad," said Gerry. "We don't have to worry about tanks running over us here."

"You never know. When the Nazis retreated across my father's farm, they lit up the whole place. Fields, house, barn, everything. We would have been happy to have fox-hole to crouch in. Now get to work." He strode off to the men who were cutting down the trees.

"I don't get it," I said to Gerry.

"What?"

"The war's over. There are no tanks here."

"He's nuts. Start digging."

"Why me?"

"There's only one shovel."

We spoke English to one another when our parents were not around. I cut the sod in a square, and then started to chop out hunks of it. It was hard because the field grass and the roots were long. The shovel was dull. Gerry sat down on a piece of log and watched me.

"I'll bet you the other one's nuts by the time we get back tonight too," he said.

"Mr. Grymes?"

"No, the Virgin Mary. What do you think?"

"He won't go nuts from a dripping tap."

"Then I'll use other methods."

"Like what?" I was already starting to sweat.

"I could take some of the mouse poison and mix it up with his cereal. Grape Nuts. He'd never tell the difference. I could make a hole in his muffler pipe. The guy drives to work with his windows closed, even in the summer. The carbon monoxide would get in there and he'd be dead before he got to his job. I could hide under his bed with a bayonet and stick it through the mattress while he was asleep."

"He'd feel the point coming through and wake up."

"Not if I was fast."

"You might kill Mrs. Grymes by mistake. She's OK."

That was a problem. Gerry thought about it. Mrs. Grymes slipped us fudge wrapped in wax paper. She let us watch her when she mixed the colour dot into the margarine. She was always quiet when Mr. Grymes was around, but with us she talked about the dances she used to go to before the war. She'd met Mr. Grymes at a dance at the Palais Royale. It was hard to imagine him at a place like that.

"You may not have a chance," I said. "We could get back tonight and find our stuff on the sidewalk."

"I'd come back. I'd get a tarantula out of a banana box and slip it through their window at night."

I dug for a while until I thought I had hole halfway up my calves. The soil was mostly clay, still wet with spring run-off, and it was hard to work inside the hole. Half the soil slipped off the shovel as I tried to lift it out. "You've piled the earth too close to the hole," said Gerry when he took over. I had to pull it farther away with a piece of board. Gerry was smart. Whenever I worked, he was resting. Whenever he worked, I was working too.

The lot was clear of trees by lunch time. The men cut them into pieces and hauled them into a pile at the corner farthest from the road, and then lit a bonfire. The green wood did not burn very well, but one of the men lay down dry grass in thick bundles, and eventually the mass of trees caught fire and burned with much hissing and giving off of a sweet, white smoke in the distance where others were burning trees, and if we had had a blanket big enough, we could have signalled to them.

The men had knocked together a rough table and benches with the lumber. We had to be careful sitting down because the nail heads were not driven all the way in. Later, the table would be pulled apart and used for the joist and walls of the house. My mother spread a green tablecloth and laid out boiled white pork sausages, whose colour was uninviting but whose taste made my mouth water.

"You can put them on sticks and brown them on the fire," my mother said, but we were too hungry for patience. Cooked cabbage, sliced cucumbers, horseradish, hard white cheese and black bread and butter, and a bottle of beer for each of the men. The men kept the beer bottles between their legs on the seats in case a police car came by. Cold, sweet tea for Gerry and me. My father grew expansive over the food.

"Just breathe in that air," he said. "Clean and fresh out here. There's a farmer who still keeps cows a mile down the road. We'll have fresh milk for the boys. No criminals out here. No dirt and dust."

Stan laughed.

"You grew up on a farm. You should know better than that. You'll be hauling around a pound of muck on each boot. If you want to live in Siberia, that's your decision. I want a place where I walk to the corner to buy a newspaper or a package of cigarettes."

"Life out here will be much healthier."

"The factories are still in the city. Two buses and a street car each day to get to work."

"I'll buy a car."

Mother laughed bitterly. "A brick house, a garage, and now a car. Where is all this money going to come

from? If we get back and find our furniture on the street, we don't have the money to pay for the first month's rent. Then you can knock these boards together and we'll live in a tarpaper shack, right back where we started. We may as well be in Siberia."

They were all quiet for a while, which was unusual for our people. They could always find something to talk about, like the coming war between Russia and America. Sometimes they would talk about their lives before the war and someone was bound to cry. It made me sick. Behind us the bonfire hissed and crackled and the heat from the flames made us sweat. The men were tired, but when the wind shifted and smoke began to blow across the table, they all stood up to return to work. Gerry and I had to finish the fox-hole.

The men fanned out along a string line my father had tied, and they began to dig the cellar. By the middle of the afternoon, our fox-hole was as deep as I was tall. Gerry wanted me to dig it deeper, but he wasn't willing to dig it himself. The men had stopped to smoke cigarettes, and my father came over to study our pit.

"That's enough," he said, and then he called over the men and they brought along some boards.

"Out of the way, boys. The men take over now."

"What's to build?" asked Gerry. "It's supposed to be a fox-hole."

"Nope," my father said. "It's an out-house. We have to build the essentials first."

Gerry threw down the shovel, even though I'd been the one who'd used it the most.

"You lied to us."

"Don't you dare use that kind of language to your father," he said, but the words were said serenely between puffs at his pipe. "I just needed to motivate you."

I thought we'd be free of him then, but I should've known better. We were never free of him. The field beckoned, but he made us go over the lot and pick up the sticks and branches and feed the fire. It seemed to take forever, and we didn't even get any credit for it when it came time to go.

"Just like farm children," my mother scolded us, and she beat the dust off our clothes and wiped our faces with a damp towel before we got back into the truck.

The men were quiet on the way back. They were tired and the warmth of the day had faded with the sun. It seemed to pull something right out of them. Even my father, who was often angry and even more often irritated, sat on a toolbox with his hands clasped between his knees.

"Don't worry," one of the men finally said. "If the furniture is outside, we'll pack it up in the truck and toss a tarp over the top. There's an empty room in the house where I'm staying. I'll put in a word with the landlady and you can throw down a couple of mattresses on the floor."

My father just nodded.

We came back to the smells of the city, car exhaust and concrete. Everyone tensed as we drove up the street to our flat, but when we pulled up, there was nothing on the sidewalk outside. Some kids still ran around the street, but all the adults were back inside. It was too cool to sit on porches once the sun had gone down.

My mother hissed at us to take our boots off on the porch, and we were apprehensive when my father threw back the bolt on the lock. Mr. Grymes might be waiting inside.

But no. The lights were all off, except down in the kitchen where we could see Mrs. Grymes sitting at a chair with a book and a cup of tea. She slipped her reading glasses down her nose as we came in, and waved. We walked upstairs quietly, cringing at every creak, took off our coats, and went into the tiny kitchen where we sat around the table. There was only enough room for three chairs in the room, and I carefully pulled out the lidded garbage can and sat down on that. My mother put on the kettle for tea. She twisted shut the tap and the dripping stopped.

The fresh air had sapped our strength, but Gerry still had enough spark left in him to be angry. He was always angry. Maybe he was just disappointed that Mr. Grymes had not been carried off to the lunatic asylum.

"This is like living in a prison," he hissed.

"Three, four months, and then you'll be free," said my father.

"Will the house be finished by then?" my mother asked.

"Enough for us to live in. We'll move into the basement and work on the rest of the house as the money comes in."

"In the basement?" my mother asked. "To live underground like moles? Like worms?"

"No, like foxes," my father answered.

She sighed. She was tired too, but more deeply tired than any of us. The white house she had lived in before the war, the one with the tower, must have seemed as remote to her as a fairy tale.

"How long?" she asked.

"I'll have the walls up before the first snow falls."

"Then we'll live like peasants," my mother said. "We'll grow potatoes in the back yard."

"Sure," my father said. "And radishes and cucumbers too."

My mother's good humour had faded with the sunlight. She unpacked the picnic baskets and set the dishes by the sink to wash them in the morning. She took a newspaper and went to her bedroom.

"Can we at least listen to the radio?" Gerry asked.

"Are you out of your mind? Don't make any noise tonight. Don't even flush the toilet." He took a section

of the newspaper and went into the living room that doubled as a bedroom for me and Gerry. He turned on the light, sat down in an arm-chair, and began to read.

There was nothing to do. It was too late to go out and too early to go to bed. I got the checker board and Gerry and I played a couple of games on the coffee table. Gerry wanted to play a third game, but he punched me in the shoulder every time I took one of his men, and the shoulder was getting sore. The light was already out in my mother's bedroom when my father put down his paper and gingerly folded open the couch that Gerry and I shared as a bed. Gerry and I crawled under the sheets.

I wasn't ready to sleep, but my father had a rule of silence once we were in bed. We had to wait until he finished in the toilet and went off to his own room before we could be sure he was out of ear-shot. I could hear him run a thin stream of water in the bathroom sink. Gerry was uncommonly still. He was already starting to fall asleep and there would be no one to talk to once my father was done.

Then it started, the same way it did every time. Gerry jerked awake. First we heard the groans, loud and deep. Fast footsteps as Mrs. Grymes went to him, but not fast enough. He screamed in a full-throated voice, as if he was tearing his vocal cords, as if he was being gutted like a pig. My father came out of the bathroom and went to the landing at the top of the stairs. There was no door between our living space and theirs down below.

Mrs. Grymes screamed and screamed, and then there came the words, hardly words, "hai, hai, hai" in sharp barks, half angry and half pleading. Mrs. Grymes had to speak loudly to him to wake him from the dreams, she had to wrestle with him to stop his flailing arms that knocked off her glasses.

It was a bad night, one of the worst. She made him get out of bed as she always did, and walked him to their living room. Sat him down on the couch and poured him a glass of brandy. But sometimes the world of his dreams refused to leave him so easily, and he sobbed on the couch, unable to hold the glass in his hand as Mrs. Grymes spoke quietly to him.

Through our open door, Gerry and I saw father hesitate at the top of the stairs, and then start down in his undershirt. Gerry and I were out of bed in a second, and followed him halfway down the steps where we could see into their living room and not be seen in the darkness. I sensed my mother behind us at the top of the landing in her night-dress. She did not call down to us, she did not come closer either.

My father walked into their doorway. He did not go any further into the room.

"War now over, Mr. Grymes," he said. "Time to forget."

"You don't know what it was like. We had defenses all around the hill. Hong Kong is a mountain, you have only so far to fall back before you make it to the top," Mr. Grymes said. His voice was different, somehow, as if it belonged to another man.

"You move to country, Mr. Grymes. Breathe fresh air and it clears the brain."

"We had machine guns trained on them, down the hill. Plenty of ammunition, too, but they kept on coming. Their bodies piled up so much that the guns couldn't be cranked high enough. We pulled back and started it all again. So many of them, coming and coming."

"You drink milk from a pail in the country," said my father. "Fresh from cow. You watch birds go away in Fall and come back in Spring."

"Over three years," said Mr. Grymes. His wife continued to murmur, her words nothing more than cooing in the background. "The men died slowly. Just enough to eat so it took years to die. We ate ants and beetles. At night, I could hear the insects scrambling along the wooden floors. Popping into the cans of water we kept under the feet of our beds so they couldn't come up to get us. We ate them by day and they came to try to eat us by night."

"You build new house, Mr. Grymes. No creaking floors. You count boards and you count nails. No time to think when you build. Time to forget, Mr. Grymes."

It got quiet then, and Gerry and I leaned as far forward as we dared. We crouched low on the steps so we could see his face. He was looking at my father as if he did not recognize him, looking at him like a stranger. Mrs. Grymes was at his side, still cooing, petting his shoulder repeatedly.

Something came over him then, some kind of return to the man we knew by day. But it was a hard transformation. He smiled at first, caught himself, and frowned. Face wet with tears and frown on his lips. It took him a moment to find his voice.

"Good night," said Mr. Grymes.

My father looked at him for a moment longer. Then he shrugged.

"Good night," my father answered him, and he turned to come back up the stairs.

PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ

by Fausto Bedoya

Earlier this morning I woke up, got dressed, fed my dog and left in my car for a job interview. My car, a silver-gray unassuming '83 Mercury sedan, has low mileage because I seldom drive it in winter. By its very ordinariness, it is not a car that you would notice. It is a generic car, but it is the car that I am driving to my job interview. I am driving swiftly with a composed economy of motion along Bloor Street in Toronto. I am heading into town. I have an appointment for a job interview at the University. If I keep up my pace, I will make it on time. I probably should have used the subway, but I wanted to keep cool in the car. The air-conditioning still works, somewhat, although, it doesn't seem as strong as it used to be. Some of those chloro-flouro-carbons have, no doubt, found their way to the ozone layer and even now have opened the hole in the sky that permits unrestricted passage of ultra-violet light and who knows what other cosmic rays to rain down upon the back of my slightly balding head. But, I tell myself, inside of the car it is still a *bit* cooler than outside of the car. Toronto summers are always hot and muggy with a damp all-pervading heat. I am making good time, but I notice there is a slow-down. I cut around several cars and get to the problem. A garbage truck is stopping in front of every building, picking up trash. The truck is too wide and the oncoming traffic is too thick to pass.

I give it the horn, but the truck continues in its oblivious elephantine manner, slowly lumbering up the street, pausing, stopping and going. I think of cutting down one of the side-streets but too many are one-ways and none lead in the direction I am going. On my car radio, the weather report is predicting rain. Typical weather for a hot August day. As usual, I am tuned into the C.B.C. Typical Toronto traffic. There is nothing to be done about it. But I am getting anxious about the interview. In my rear-view mirror, I can see cars slowly lining up behind me, and in front, the garbage truck is taking its time, grazing like some leisurely beast of the savanna. Other-worldly. I catch myself getting unbalanced, take a deep breath, regain equilibrium, at the same time, I am about to lean on the horn and keep leaning until the truck pulls over to permit me to pass. But then, I tell myself that I shouldn't be driving in the first place, I could have taken the subway, but I wanted to look fresh for the job interview, and I heard it might rain, but it was my choice to drive, I made the choice. But I never anticipated this truck, or, this garbage. I think to myself, its all part of city life. Garbage. A daily event. A continuing nuisance. A big nuisance. Part of a general condition of entropy, of an entropic universe, the general break-down of things, a natural process. I think about re-cycling, about David Suzuki, I think about what David Suzuki once said. David Suzuki said, we are heading for an ecological disaster of unparalleled proportions. He said that metaphorically speaking, it is as though we are in an automobile hurtling along at a hundred miles an hour towards a brick wall, and all we do is argue about where we get to sit. But today, I am not hurtling at a brick wall at one hundred miles an hour. I am not hurtling, I am inching, inching along in an '83 Mercury behind a slow moving garbage truck, and if I don't get around the truck I will be late for an important job interview.

I am thinking about traffic in other places, faster more unrestricted traffic. For example, traffic on the Canadian prairies. Traffic on the prairie in Saskatchewan, maybe. The prairies give a whole new meaning to the concept of "cruise-control." I am thinking about language, and about what I will say at my very important job interview. I toy with clever quips to use as warm-ups to the interview -- something like; "why is it, that we park on the drive way, and drive on the parkway... except in the case of the Don Valley Parkway, which, at least during rush hour, is appropriately named" -- too wordy, I think and turn up the air-conditioning, but the air conditioning doesn't seem to make much difference. I suspect that the seals on the conditioner have broken down over the years, and one by one, the molecules of chloro-flouro-carbons have escaped, until the few hard-working ones remaining in the machine are too lonely, too few, to keep me cool. It is sad in a way, I think of the last molecule of chloro-flouro-carbon in my automobile air-conditioning unit, for inevitably, there will come a day, when there is only one molecule left, alone, in the warm and stifling dark, expected to take care of business, but all the other molecules will have gone. On occasion, I have been at slow-moving parties that have ended much in this way. I look up and note how little progress I have made. The garbage truck and the truck driver are starting to tick me off. The radio is featuring an interview with an MP who is opposed to euthanasia. The interviewer asks the MP a hypothetical question; If you could live forever, would you, and why? The MP replies; "I would not live forever, because we should not live forever, because if we were supposed to live forever, then we would live forever, but we cannot live forever, which is why I would not live forever." It sounds to me like this minister has been in the Liberal cabinet for quite some

time. In the meantime, I have moved forward less than half a block. I am thinking about euthanizing the garbage-truck driver. I am thinking about euthanizing the people who put the garbage out for collection. Why can't people learn to recycle? Why do they have to leave such extravagant bundles of garbage? I am thinking that those insouciant environmentally unconscious cretins are not only sullyng the planet, they're also making me late for my very important job interview, all because they remain ignorant of recycling, or re-using, or composting, or vermiculture, or blue boxes! Blue boxes! I am going to be late for a job that I need, so that I can get enough money together, so that I can take some time off, so that I can do what I *really* want to do, which is to get back to my *writing*, my *writing*, *that's* what I *really* want to do... I never seem to have enough time to write, there's always something getting in the way, like ignoramus unaware of blue boxes or vermiculture, and obstacles in my way, like this elephantine garbage truck! This garbage truck, this pestilent pachyderm on wheels is interfering with my literary career! This mobile mountain of human refuse is preventing me from writing the great Canadian novel!

It is hot outside, I don't know if it is hotter inside or outside of the car, because I am reluctant to roll down my window because if it is hotter outside than inside, then if I crack my window, I will let in some of the hot air, but if my air-conditioner is on the fritz, then, the temperature inside and outside will be about the same. All in all, it doesn't make much difference, but it is hot, and the truck is not changing its hesitant pace regardless of what I think. I am trying to relax. I think about the job interview. I think about intelligent things to say. I think about the anxiety of contamination in modernist culture, I think about permeable boundaries between elite and popular culture, I think about the canonical under-pinnings of post-structural critical theory, for no reason whatsoever, I think of my penis, I think of my penis there, and myself here, behind the wheel, behind this garbage truck, waiting to speak to other people at a job interview, other people, some of whom will likely have penises, and some of whom will likely not have penises, I am in a state of anxiety and I want to take a canon and blast the permeable boundary off of the garbage truck to relieve my anxiety, I rationalize that it is not garbage *per se* that I am pissed off about. Yes, it is a problem, at this moment, but we live in a society that is flexible and responsive and maybe, just maybe has enough civic-minded people to adapt to change in a reasonable and civic-minded way. I think about hidden political agendas, economic assumptions in the various oeuvres, and contemporary literary movements, I think about municipal groups protesting proposed dump sites. I think about rebellion, disobedience, New Historicism, the rhetoric of revolution, political evasions vs. aesthetic commitment, but, I know that I am only trying to distract myself because, by now, I am running late for my appointment, *my* appointment, the appointment that could change my *life*, and I want to drive over the sidewalk to pass this guy, I want to put on my blinker lights and drive straight into opposing traffic with my eyes closed, I want to deconstruct this garbage truck as a rebellious act of political evasion...

I tell myself it is my own fault for not leaving earlier, that I could have left earlier, but that I did not leave early enough. I turn the air conditioner on full, but all it can manage is an anaemic breeze. I imagine the last molecule of chloro-flouro-carbon liberating itself from my air-conditioning unit, rising freely into the hot Toronto smog in a happy dance of chloro-flouro-carbon molecules and monoxides, and other assorted gases, all rising in a molecular fandango towards the upper stratosphere, free, finally free from all of *this*. The air-conditioner seems to be operating purely as a fan now with little or no cooling power. I glance at the clock on the dash-board but the clock seems to be wrong. Entropy is setting in I tell myself. Either that, or I forgot to adjust the clock for daylight savings time, but that doesn't make sense either. I do a quick mental calculation and estimate that I must be at least eight minutes late by now. I can still make it to the interview, if I could just get past this truck. I console myself with the fact that I did leave a *bit* early, perhaps not early enough to allow for this sort of contingency, but somewhat early, early enough to allow for minor delays, filling up with gas, pulling over for emergency vehicles, slowing down for crazy people or winos directing traffic. But I did not leave early enough for this. Who, after all, would expect the grand-father of all garbage trucks, the bull of the herd, to plant itself squarely in my path on a stretch of Bloor Street, a stretch that makes passing impossible and dangerous. I am thinking about the interview and how I will tell them that fictions create community, how form and meaning ameliorate fiction within a post-modern context, I keep looking for side-streets, but none are viable, I am thinking about talking to them about electronic media and its influence on literary culture, I glance at the dashboard, but the electronic clock seems to be broken or is malfunctioning absurdly, I estimate the garbage truck has taken about ten minutes of my time, but it seems like forever, I realize that I am only slightly late after all, I could still make it, but, what if this keeps up? I can't be late, a cold sweat spreads across my back, I honk the horn tentatively, I blow the horn aggressively, the fellow picking up garbage waves back at me but the truck driver does nothing to change his pace, I glance in the rear-view mirror, and see that there are cars lining up behind me a block long, jammed up, I am thinking about McLuhan, I am stuck behind a garbage truck, I am do a slow fry behind the steering wheel...

...have you ever driven with what you might call a swift efficiency and at exactly the legal speed limit? Ever driven with a quicksilver speed and economy of motion that is perhaps mercurial, but nothing short of elegant, undergoing subtle changes in direction to correct for unexpected pedestrians, you smile smugly as you manoeuvre past surprised faces which instinctively step back upon your approach, stepped back unnecessarily, because you had already calculated the pace of their steps with the trajectory of the automobile so that you would avoid hitting them by the merest of inches, your smooth efficiency calculated so as not to waste an iota of energy, so that you never have to use the brake, and have you watched those faces filled with admiration and respect for your driving skill as you sail past them, the hulk of your automobile brushing by, but not quite touching them? Ahh, and you are driving defensively, avoiding collisions with baby carriages and dumptrucks alike, cool, collected, relaxed with only two fingers on the wheel and with the smallest of twists on the steering, you execute a perfect sine-wave through the otherwise congested traffic which magically opens for you at precisely the correct moments, only to close behind you, like the red sea, to open before you, and then wave-like to close behind you, you are the chosen one, the one for whom all paths through city traffic are possible, all avenues are open, you are one commanding the automobile, poetry in motion, human and machine, united in a ballet of metal and glass and rubber on asphalt, weighing several thousands of pounds but turning on a dime, light-footed, assured, confident and capable, when suddenly somebody cuts you off at an intersection -- but, you take it with good humour, maybe even a bit of wit, and you tell yourself that this man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot, and chuckling, you keep cruising, and you're back in the groove, in the "zone", going with the flow, becoming one with the traffic, manoeuvring in and out, smooth as silk...

...and *then*, some jerk whips out from behind and actually *passes* you, passes *you* by *exceeding* the speed limit, breaking the rules, driving like a reckless *lunatic*! And then, your attitude changes, and you think, maybe you should teach that jerk a *lesson*, who does he think he *is*, cutting *me* off like that! That ever happen to you? Ever think, about how decent, and polite, and generous you are as a driver? Yes! Generous to a fault! Letting that old lady cross the cross-walk. Making efficient and good use of your time waiting by finding a better radio station until she's safely on the other side. Never mind the horns behind you. They are not meant for you. They are meant for other drivers. You are not like those other drivers, those shit-licking pieces of inhuman decrepitude. You're not the problem. You've got it under control. Its *them*. They're the problem. They're the morally bankrupt, mentally deficient, mouth-breathers on wheels who make our roads unsafe and cause governments to raise our tax dollars. Every time one of those nimrods runs a stop sign or passes you, it costs us valuable tax dollars, yes, *us*, we *all* pay, and they're the *cause* of the problem, *they're* the ones we have to hire more cops to keep an eye out for, running red lights, running stop signs, breaking the law, making it impossible for decent human beings to maintain the right of way, to use the city's thoroughfares in a law-abiding manner, they're the speed-ridden, cement heads with delusions of adequacy, using their mighty rods of iron as phallic substitutes ramming their way through traffic, automobile cyborgs, bent on techno-erotica, hulking rods of metal hurtling through space, through narrow passages that open up before them, a mis-match of sexuality and technology causing mind-body splits, aggressive bumpers pushing their way through, mindless thrusting heaving hulks, pulsing engines, obnoxious throbbing woofer sound-systems, squealing wheels on asphalt, sliding traction, burning rubber, rads boiling over, over-heated, burnt-out, smoking after, these almost-medieval auto-gender rebels without a cause can really *bug* you sometimes, mind you, I don't let them ruffle my feathers, I am nonplussed, un-impressed, cool, I take it as it comes, go with the flow, cool as a cucumber. I regard these delinquent cretins with a mild disgust, a wry distaste, and a practical resentment, regard their blithe ignorance of human morals and social credos, those uncouth gasoline junkies, speed-freak pirates on wheels, car-jockeys and truck-monkees, hopped up on bennies, black beauties, amphetamine-addled lunatics commandeering our roads, parts flying off tractor-trailers, loose wheels bouncing off the hoods of innocent drivers, *that's* the way it is, winter and construction, no consideration, no city planning, *that's* what we're lumbered with, one miserable jammed parking lot after another, one monoxide-ridden day of smog after another, one cast-iron cloud of poisonous gas after another, one befouled bucket of earth-defiling motor oil after another... it could *get* to a person, not me, I'm cool, I'm copastetic, I'm mellow even... normally...

But *today* I am late for a job interview, a very important job interview, and I am watching the garbage truck in front of me, and the guy riding on the back of the truck... and I tell myself that it doesn't really *bother* me that the truck is in front because he'll be out of the way soon, just a temporary hitch I say to myself... but, I am thinking about modes of violence in literature, I am thinking about trauma theory and violation, I am thinking beyond Nietzsche, beyond good and evil, DeLeuze and Guattari are not enough, I am observing a garbage truck and my thoughts are slipping past the boundaries of intellectual inquiry, beyond the fetishization of human and machine locked into a vortex of sexual violence, I notice that I am driving with one foot on the gas and one foot on the

brake... I want to jump *out* of the car and hi-jack the garbage truck and ram it through the wall of the building where I am to have my important job interview and then step out and calmly introduce myself to the interviewees as the candidate for the position advertised. I am hot, and I am barely moving, the clock on my automobile dashboard has broken, and I am helplessly watching a man in orange coveralls riding on the back of a garbage truck because there is nothing else to watch... I am watching him work... I am watching him move rhythmically, I am noticing that he is asian, I am noticing that he looks Japanese, I recall that in Japan, being a garbageman is an honoured profession, the over-crowding in major cities like Tokyo or Osaka raises a new respect for cleanliness, I am thinking about a "Shout" TV commercial I saw this morning in which an up-beat gospel tune was used to sell laundry detergent; "Gets Dirt Out" it said. I want to shout at the garbage truck driver through my car window to get out of my way. Then, I realize, that I *am* shouting at the garbage truck driver, but my window is still up. I am also shouting about the break-down of disciplinary boundaries in post-World-War-Two Literature, I am challenging the garbage truck driver to enter into a theoretical debate with me, on the visual and performing arts *or* sciences, I don't care, doesn't matter to me, I'll debate anything, let's go, I shout, you and me, let's talk about marginalization and ethnicity in the western social environment... not to your taste? ok, let us discourse on re-territorialization in the practice of writing itself, theory as ontological hermeneutics, or as compositional prosthesis, take your *pick*! I am defiantly explicating the Lacanian theories of the gaze and the Other which I remind him have no easy explanation and which defy rational thought, I am discussing the "talking cure" versus psycho-pharmaceutic and neuro-physiological methodologies, I am shouting lobotomies, and he, he is smiling, waving at me. I have heard that in Japan, people carefully wrap their garbage, some even tie it up with nice strings and bows. The garbage is carefully separated, re-cycled for manufacturing or used as fuel in thermo-electric plants. I am beginning to think that garbage is bigger than *all* of us. There is a *purpose* to garbage, I think. Maybe, *garbage* is where it's at, homo-diegetic and hetero-diegetic narration and the syncretism of garbage, the semiotics of *refuse*! Its *all* garbage, and here I am following this *garbage* truck! I am thinking Post-Baudrillardian garbagology! I am thinking maybe there *is* a deeper meaning to this. I am thinking, maybe somebody is trying to *tell* me something. I gaze at the garbage man as I inch along behind the truck...

He looks Japanese, I think. My best friend in college was Japanese. I am thinking cloning and onto-linguistics. He looks just like my best friend, but I do not think that this garbage man is best friend. My best friend is now an industrial psychologist working in Ottawa. As far as I know, he is not working on a garbage truck in Toronto. But *this* man in front of me, with his orange coveralls, has long dark hair and silver-mirrored aviator shades... I observe him in flight as the truck occasionally surges ahead, he leaps up with cat-like precision, his timing perfect, swinging his leg, his arm comfortably looped into the handle, one foot perched solidly on the running board at the back of the truck, occasionally riding backwards then pirouetting to the other side of the truck, Fred Astaire-like, he smiles at me as I try to get past the truck, salutes, does a little half-step twist, then pirouettes back to the other side, I am beginning to think this guy is an artist, his quicksilver moves, graceful, flawless, he seems to float with an elegant economy of physical equilibrium... I am thinking cross-cultural identities, the urban grotesque, representational de-rationalization, he is fluent, poised, poetry in motion, while I am focusing on all of this, something on the radio catches my ear, my mind becomes aware of Ella Fitzgerald singing "Puttin' on the Ritz" and suddenly everything comes into focus, the garbageman is moving in perfect sync with the song, I still have my window up, so I know he can't hear it, but his graceful garbage-ballet is in perfect synchronization with the tune, a terpsichore of trash, "Let's all go where Rock-a-fellers walk with sticks and umbrellas, in white mitts," I realize that his collection of refuse is a fluid dance, "...puttin' on the Ritz." I begin to laugh, he notices me. I am thinking fiction friction, invisibility pop, representation la-la. He pulls an elegant dismount and re-mount onto the truck pitching two giant orange bags without breaking rhythm, as though they were weightless. I am thinking millennium anxiety, post-romantic transcendence, post-modern sublime. His feet hover above the ground, he flits back onto the truck, there are small white wings on his ankles. He grins and mugs for me, posing on the back of the truck, swinging his leg, the small feathered winglets fluttering. I realize that he *knows* how good he is at this, hamming it up in his mercurial way, he is an artist. I am gazing from my over-heated car as he flies over to the other side of the truck and peers at me over his silvery shades, watching for a reaction, looking for applause maybe, this Hermes of garbage, sending me some inscrutable message. I smile as the truck finally pulls over for more cans, as I go wheeling by, I give a little wave, and he waves back. I glance in the rear-view mirror, thinking, "he had white gloves on, perfect white gloves!" As the truck shrinks in the rear-view mirror, I notice that a gentle snow has begun to fall. It is winter, and I am now six months late for my job interview...

BOOK REVIEWS

The Miss Hereford Stories by Gail Anderson-Dargatz — Douglas & McIntyre, 1615 Venables St. Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V51 2H1, ISBN: 1-55054-160-9, 143 pp., \$16.95. Raised in rural British Columbia, Anderson-Dargatz, worked as a reporter, photographer and cartoonist for community newspapers before graduating from the creative writing program at the University of Victoria. In 1993, Anderson-Dargatz won the CBC Literary Competition for her short story *The Girl With the Bell Necklace*. *The Miss Hereford Stories* encompass the life of a young boy growing up in rural Canada. These stories depict a Blakian movement from songs of innocence to songs of experience. This collection of anecdotes engagingly depicts the rites of coming of age. -- Susanne Myers

The Wine of Astonishment by Mary Overton -- La Questa Press, 211 La Questa, Woodside, California, U.S.A., 94062, ISBN: 0-9644348-1-4, 180pp., \$12.00. An author for over twenty-five years, Mary Overton lives with her husband and daughter in Fairfax County, Virginia. In this book, Overton's medley of characters includes, impulsive brides, struggling immigrants, lowlife's and suburban witches. Magical, and transformative, each tale explores the boundaries of imagination through a journey into the fantastic. "Things, as well as people, register modes of spontaneous energy transmission." Powerful and inventive, Overton explores the unusual and the fabulatory. -- Susanne Myers

Bread and Salt by Renee Rodin -- Talon Books, #104-3100 Production Way, Burnaby, B.C., Canada, V5A 4R4, ISBN: 0-88922-367-X, 128 pp., \$13.95. Born and raised between the "Two Solitude's" in Montreal, Renee Rodin is a cultural worker, visual artist, and writer, who examines the quotidian in her bi-lingual collection of poems entitled *Bread and Salt*. Seemingly insignificant matters take on unexpected meanings as the reader follows the writer's eye and thoughts through a series of discoveries. Intelligent and subjective, Rodin is "deeply attentive to reality". One poem considers the placement of the sign "we are cultivating tolerance" on her foot-deep lawn to explain an abhorrence for cutting grass. Leaving "a hard green apple" on the headstone of her mother's grave, she recalls the ritual of eating apples as a prelude to habitual reading. Warm, biting and solid, Rodin has created an effervescent vision. Rodin's writing has appeared in numerous periodicals, but her photographic work is equally recognized. Her photo work toured North America in 1990 during the exhibition "Fear of Others -- Art Against Racism". Currently she works in a bookstore and organizes a reading series at the Vancouver artists' collective at The Western Front. -- Susanne Myers

Swimming into the Light, by Carolyn Marie Sousaid, is an inspirational collection of poetry that touches the heart. The sequence of poems reflects the journey Sousaid takes within her soul and in life as she struggles with infertility and the process of an international adoption. The imagery sends the reader "drifting into the wide open" with undulating emotion from Canada to Lebanon exposing the passion and courage of a journey that links the past, present and future. Gary Geddes comments how Sousaid "celebrates the life force which, one minute, destroys and in another leaves you gasping at its fecundity and embracing a child that 'hung like amber fruit in another woman's womb.'" She reveals the gripping truth about human instinct and desire through her simplistic yet penetrating writing style. Sousaid's poetry leaves you "embracing it, unconditionally for what it is." Carolyn Marie Sousaid, raised and educated in Montreal, Quebec, has worked as an educator, journalist, and magazine columnist. Her work has appeared in a number of publications, such as *The Gazette, Quarry, and PRISM International*. In 1992, Sousaid and her husband travelled to her land of origin to adopt their newborn son. New Age Editions, P.O. Box 8 Station E, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2T 3A5. ISBN: 0-921833-43-11

East End Poems by Barry Butson -- Moonstone Press, 167 Delaware Street, London, Ontario, Canada, N5Z 2N6, ISBN: 0-920259-63-4, 83 pp., \$12.95. Barry Butson was born in Stratford, Ontario, where he resides with his wife and three children. Butson is an organizer of poetry readings and writing workshops. His own poetry has been published in numerous literary journals across Canada, the U.S.A., the U.K., France and Australia. His work has been featured in *The Forward Book of Poetry* and other anthologies. *East End Poems* features shifting perspectives and includes a section that serves as a eulogy to the poet's father, a sort of everyman among "men who sit in cars/like family pets in the parking lots". This poetry can be comfortable, unsettling and disturbing. Butson's carefully crafted poems are ironic in their consideration of pragmatic customs in the lives of often disillusioned couples who find that they "ain't starving/but this isn't how they dreamed of ending up". -- Susanne Myers

What Kind of Love Did You Have in Mind? By Eric Folsom -- Wolsak and Wynn Publishers Ltd., Don Mills Post Office Box 316, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada, M3C 2S7, ISBN: 0-919897-53-3, 92 pp. Former editor of *Next Exit*, Eric Folsom has been an active member of the small press scene for years. His poetry has appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers in Canada and the United States. Broken Jaw Press published his first book of poetry, *Poems for Little Cataraqui*, in 1994. Folsom lives in Kingston, Ontario. *What Kind of Love Did you Have in Mind?* is a dark retrospective that bemuses and beguiles with acidic observations on love's labours lost. Sex, the blues, and beauty are among the subjects portrayed in these poems that balance ironic despair against uplifting joy. -- Susanne Myers

One of The Chosen by Danuta Gleed, Edited by Frances Itani and Susan Zettell -- BuschekBooks, John Buschek, Editor, P.O. Box 74053, 35 Beechwood Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1M 2H9, ISBN: 0-9699904-3-X, 109 pp., \$14.95. Danuta Gleed was born in 1946 in a refugee camp in Lusaka in the former Northern Rhodesia. She lived in Kenya and England before immigrating to Canada in 1969. Her work is informed by her African and postwar experience as a Polish refugee. She has won awards for her fiction and was a finalist for the Journey Prize Anthology. She died of complications from lupus in 1996. *One of The Chosen* depicts the lives of DP's -- displaced persons of WWII. Enticing and beautiful, Gleed portrays a Polish family, displaced, and trying to remain 'normal' in the face of adversity. This book views some of life's atrocities with clarity, insight and truth. -- Susanne Myers

This Healing Place and Other Poems by Peter Jailall -- Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc., P.O. Box 95, Station O, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4A 2M8, ISBN: 0-920474-84-5, 75 pp., \$9.95. Born in 1944 in Guyana, Peter Jailall came to Canada in 1970 where he attended York University and the University of Toronto. While a member with the Racial Minority Writer's collective, Jailall read his poetry at libraries and universities across Canada, as well as the Royal Ontario Museum and the McMichael Gallery. He supports both human rights and social justice. Jailall currently teaches with the Peel Board of Education in Mississauga where he lives with his wife and two children. *This Healing Place and Other Poems* examines an immigrant facing racism in Canada. Poet

James Berry has said that "movement and change lead to painful feelings. Out of uprooting and change and struggle to re-settle there is self-discovery." It is of this self-discovery that Jailall writes of spiritual vacuums and the struggle for place and identity and place in the land he now calls home. Jailall writes "to excavate my past/to purify my soul/ to learn/And I write, for me." -- Susanne Myers

Notes on a Prison Wall -- A Memoir/A Poem by Nicholas Catanoy -- Ronsdale Press, 3350 West 21st Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6S 1G7, ISBN: 0-921870-26-4, 104 pp. Nicholas Catanoy's *Notes on a Prison Wall* recreates the diary he kept as an imprisoned Rumanian cadet. Slated for execution by the Russians three times, Catanoy survived to compile found-poetry, quotations and his own minimalist poetry into a collection of thoughts exploring the effects of imprisonment. Witty, and ironic, Catanoy portrays the inhumanity beyond gracious society and decorum: "the dark drinks/the light and sinks down/in an unrelated sphere" and "the whole courtyard is a mass grave". In spite of such adversity, Catanoy's passages celebrate the will to live, the need to survive, and joy in the smallest of hopes: "we cannot explain life/we can only endure it, love or hate it/adore or dread it". -- Susanne Myers

A Tantrum of Synonyms by Heather Cadsby -- Wolsak and Wynn Publishers Ltd., Don Mills Post Office Box 316, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada, M3C 2S7, ISBN: 0-919897-57-6, 88 pp. *A Tantrum of Synonyms* is Cadsby's third published book of poetry. Born in Belleville and transplanted to Toronto at an early age, Cadsby helped organize poetry readings at the Axle-Tree Coffee House in Toronto and currently sits on the board of advisors for the Art Bar Poetry Series. Her poetry celebrates female experience from the first inklings of gender differences to the beginning and end of great romances, and sex just for fun. At times Jungian in outlook, *A Tantrum of Synonyms* leads us through one woman's life as it changes colour and music to suit the mood. Aching, angry, soft and joyous, Cadsby offers up life as art. -- Susanne Myers

The Church Not Made With Hands by John Terpstra -- Wolsak and Wynn Publishers Ltd., Don Mills Post Office Box 316, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada, M3C 2S7, ISBN: 0-919897-56-8, 88pp. Self-employed cabinetmaker and woodworker, John Terpstra calls Hamilton, Ontario, home. He has published four previous collections of poetry. *Forty Days and Forty Nights* won the Bressani Prize for Poetry in 1988, his long poem *Captain Kintai* placed first in the poetry category of 1992's CBC Literary competition, and in 1995, Terpstra won first prize for Non-Fiction awarded by the Hamilton and Region Arts Council. *The Church Not Made With Hands* juxtaposes industrialization and conservation, and the struggles to come to terms acceptable with both: "and this lake/of bays retains enough of mystery/it must have been sacred to someone, once/I'm sure—it tries to take us in/And this landscape understands us, doesn't it?" These poems speak the earth and its changing seasons in a way that is reminiscent of Anishnaabe writer Rolland Nadjiwon. Lyrical, mystical and mythical, *The Church Made Not With Hands* directs the reader towards the subtle and unexpected inherent in "the unnoticed aliveness of the everyday." -- Susanne Myers

MINERAL LIQUID

by Andrew F. Palcic

Sky's above Water

essence of life

timeless renewal

heavenly

empty ness

space

eternal bliss

no thng ness

Is liquid a no thng ness, like space?
Or must both their surfaces be scratch'd...

i c o n f e

s s i c o n

f e s s i c

o n f e s s

i c o n f e

s s i c o n

"Eye Con" text/image by W. Mark Sutherland (Canada).