

Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature

Volume 43

Issue 1 *Engaging the Pastoral: Social, Environmental, and Artistic Critique in Contemporary Pastoral Literature*

Article 25

March 2019

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James Petterson

Wellesley College, jpetters@wellesley.edu

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Recommended Citation

Petterson, James (2018) "Dominique Fourcade: Recalculations," *Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature*: Vol. 43: Iss. 1, Article 25. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2334-4415.2026>

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Dominique Fourcade: Recalculations

Abstract

This article explores the relationship between poetry, photography and choreography in the writings of contemporary French poet Dominique Fourcade. Close readings of Fourcade's 2001 *M W* alongside other of his works reveal some of the fundamental techniques of his writing, founded on formal recalculations sparked by interaction with other art forms, specifically the photography of Barbara Morgan and Isabelle Wateriaux and the dance choreography of George Balanchine, Merce Cunningham, Pina Bausch, Mathilde Monnier and William Forsythe. The analysis also proposes alternative multi-disciplinary directions for the reception of poetry.

Keywords

Dominique Fourcade, Poetry, Elegy, Esthetic Transposition, Poetry and Photography, Poetry and Dance, Poetry and 9/11, Poetry and Prosthesis, Choreography, Stéphane Mallarmé, Merce Cunningham, Pina Bausch, Mathilde Monnier, William Forsythe, Barbara Morgan, Isabelle Wateriaux, Jean Epstein, Edouard Manet, Henri Matisse.

Dominique Fourcade: Recalculations

James Petterson
Wellesley College

la grammaire humaine
se détend et se reconfigure en un nouveau corps

human grammar
distends and reconfigures itself into a new body

—Dominique Fourcade, *dances at a gathering*
(2018)

In the wake of the deaths of choreographers Merce Cunningham and Pina Bausch in summer 2009, French poet Dominique Fourcade published an elegy titled *eux deux fées* ('they two fays').¹ In it, he pronounced their deaths the end of an era both for dance and the world as a whole. This was not unexpected from a writer so profoundly in conversation with dance and choreography and who has described himself as “un étrange étranger qui à toutes choses aura préféré la danse” (*manque* 101) ‘a strange stranger who above all things will have preferred dance.’ To date, there has been little sustained research on Fourcade’s writings as they relate to choreography and dance.² In what follows I explore the interplay of writing, dance, and photography in his 2001 work titled *M W*, which stands at the midpoint of works he began publishing in earnest as of 1983. In part, my analysis reveals the future challenge of situating Fourcade’s work on a global and multidisciplinary scale. Prior to reading *M W*, let us return to *eux deux fées* to contextualize the stakes of his writings as a whole.

What did Fourcade see in the choreography of Bausch and Cunningham that would push him to make such a sweeping pronouncement following their deaths? Above all, he had in mind what can be called the contrapuntal structures and techniques through which their choreography demonstrated both “engagement dans le total de la fable et détachement concerté de la fable” (*eux deux* 76) ‘engagement in the totality of the fable and concerted detachment from the fable.’ In other words, on stage their choreography exposed a tension between the dueling, interweaving melodies of something said/narrated (the etymology of “fable”) and of something concertedly muted or left unsaid/un-narrated. As such, for Fourcade, Cunningham and Bausch went beyond a paradigmatically Mallarmean notion of fable—what French poet Pierre Alféri called Stéphane Mallarmé’s “théâtre typographique” (Alféri 71) ‘typographical theater’—that valorizes a dancer’s silent motion in space and time over the musical and operatic staging of dance, thus reducing the dancer to pure fable or

to what Mallarmé termed “une écriture corporelle” (304) ‘a corporeal writing.’

But why does *eux deux fées* revolve around the perceived redefinition of “fable” in the choreography of Cunningham and Bausch? For any reader of French poetry, the word “fable” conjures Mallarmé’s late nineteenth-century writings on dance and theater and his dream of an impossibly pure “Fable, vierge de tout, lieu, temps et personne sus” (544) ‘Fable, devoid of any known place, time or person.’³ For Fourcade, Cunningham is both committed to fable and concertedly detached from it through the way that he

a disjoint la sono de la scène d’origine, avant lui inséparables . . . [il a] décomposé ce moment combinatoire, il lui a ôté son caractère figuratif (mais pas son caractère humain), il a compris le potentiel de son énergie intérieure et en a développé les implications formelles (la vérité)” (*eux deux fées* 76)

disconnected the sound-system from the original scene, before him they were inseparable . . . [he] decomposed this combinatorial moment, he removed its figurative aspect (but not its human aspect), he understood the potential of its inner energy and developed its formal implications (truth).

Cunningham’s choreography does strip dance of its figurative dimension, which is one facet of Mallarmé’s notion of fable. Yet at the same time, for Fourcade, Cunningham emphatically retains the body or the corporeal dimension of the human. This second feature of Cunningham’s choreography contrasts starkly with Mallarmé’s own idealization, in his 1897 “Crayonné au Théâtre” (‘Penciled at the Theater’), of the female dancer who could come close to pure fable, but only when “[elle] *n’est pas une femme . . . ne danse pas*” (304) ‘[she] *is not a woman . . . does not dance.*’ From this perspective, the “danseuse” famously vanishes into metaphor, allegory, and a form of writing that is “dégagé de tout appareil du scribe” (304) ‘freed from any of the scribe’s apparatuses.’ Thus, while Cunningham’s choreography might eliminate the figurative, for Fourcade, it concertedly maintains the gendered body, in all its choreographed articulations.⁴

In Bausch’s choreography, Fourcade sees the other side of the same coin: she seized on what he calls the “seuil existentiel” (*eux deux* 76) ‘existential threshold’ of fable and “l’a épinglé, suraccentué et comme surcomposé” (76) ‘pinned, over-accentuated and seemingly over-composed it.’ In other words, Bausch “a eu l’oreille, la vista, la volupté d’y adjoindre des airs irrésistiblement à la mode, comme autant de barricades mystérieuses avec pour effet de sortir le théâtre d’aucun temps spécifique” (76-7) ‘had the ear, the vista, the voluptuousness to adjoin irresistibly fashionable tunes to it, like so many mysterious barricades, which had the effect of removing theater from any specific time.’ For instance, and these are examples Fourcade mentions, in Bausch’s *Nelken* (‘Carnations’) a dancer sings, rather than sings, Gershwin’s

The Man I Love, and her choreography for *Nur Du*, the German translation of “Only you,” includes the eponymous 1955 hit song by the Platters. Here too, rather than Mallarmé’s subtractive pure fable, the time and space of the scene or stage is made applicable to all times through the multiplication of intertextual and inter-aural layers and through cross-era and cross-genre conjugations of so-called high and low art forms.⁵ As we will see, the contrapuntal tension Fourcade reads in the choreography of Cunningham and Bausch is equally at work in his writings.

The above begins to explain why, for Fourcade, the deaths of Bausch and Cunningham pointed to the end of an era, so much so that he felt even the physical world grieved their absence and “se demande qui va le comprendre et le mettre en scène” (80) ‘wonders who will comprehend it and stage it.’ Fourcade surmised that dance would of course go on. As a clear reminder that *eux deux fées* was written in the last years of the Iraq War (when the number of wounded soldiers receiving prosthetic limbs increased nearly threefold), he also suggested that the next incarnation of dance would no doubt coincide with an era of prosthetics and of technologies built into the hardened bodies of amputees equipped with “jambes à lames” (81) ‘blade legs.’⁶ For his part or, more precisely, for that of Fourcade’s “récepteurs au bout des nerfs dans le moignon” (81) ‘receptors in the stump’s nerve endings,’ they simply were no longer up to the challenge of the prosthetic technologies of this new era. He concluded: “Ce n’est pas que je me détourne, c’est que je manque de moyens. Et puisque mon corps est bête mon regard sur les nouveaux systèmes est inopérant” (81) ‘It’s not that I turn away, it’s that I lack the means. And since my body is dumb my view on new systems is inoperative.’ What could be more elegiac than the scene of a poet turning away from an uncertain future to wallow in the eternally present sorrow of some lost past? Yet, and this is as key as it is a constant in his work, Fourcade’s writings do not take this turn. Rather, over and again, they pivot from this traditional elegiac model toward more precise formal questions inherent to the artistic means of (and operational systems at play in) structuring and writing a poem.

If, in *eux deux fées*, the future of dance seems to be one of prosthetics, then Fourcade chooses to remain behind in what he suddenly describes as the “bleu limpide de la vareuse de l’invalidé qui, tout à fait à gauche du tableau de Manet, sur le trottoir, illumine et fonde la totalité de la surface de *La Rue Mosnier aux drapeaux*” (82) ‘limpid blue of the invalid’s frock that, all the way to the left of Manet’s painting, on the sidewalk, illuminates and fuses the entirety of the surface of *The Rue Mosnier with Flags*.’ In fact, this pivot from one art form to another is as sudden as it is recurrent in Fourcade’s writings. Here the shift from twentieth- and twenty-first century choreography and dance to nineteenth-century painting brings Edouard Manet’s 1878 work into discourse with poetry in striking fashion. Rather than picking any number of Manet’s studies of dancers, Fourcade chooses a highly choreographed post-Franco-Prussian War painting depicting, among other elements, a flag-lined street, somewhat diaphanous male and female members of the Parisian

bourgeoisie, and one amputee who, instead of “blade legs,” has only his crutches to prop him up.⁷ There is something else striking about Fourcade’s reading of this painting: rather than predictably following the line of the street that runs diagonally across Manet’s canvas, his eye turns to the painting’s lower-left corner, to the organizational force of a single field of blue, the frock of the amputee (who is turned away from both painter and viewer).⁸ Fourcade thus eschews the pathos of the scene, devoting his attention instead to the painting’s peripheries. If one were needed, this process also serves as a reminder to his readers that we too are reading *eux deux fées* through the lens of an equally recomposed and recalculated rhetorical structure that can be called an “inverse elegy.” Rather than melancholically eternally rehashing the anecdote of some past loss, the inverse or contrapuntal elegiac turns toward a present, into which the anecdote is interwoven, a present that is in search of a way outwards, without necessarily going there, as though the search process mattered more than the endpoint.⁹

Indeed, just a few years after *eux deux fées*, Fourcade already had shifted from the limitations proclaimed therein. His 2018 elegy titled *deuil* (‘mourning’) offers a recent example of this process of shifting or pivoting to explore the overlapping structures of poetry, dance, and death. This time, the choreographer is William Forsythe and his installation titled *Black Flags* (2014), which consists of two large robotic arms that are programmed to wave two even larger black flags. In *deuil*, Fourcade returns to the split notion of fable by considering *Black Flags* as a “fable en action” (48) ‘fable in action.’ In this context, Forsythe’s description of the conception phase of the installation is telling.¹⁰ The motion of the flags could only be controlled through extremely detailed, digitized choreography, which eventually led to drastically slowing down the speed of the arms. Then, in Forsythe’s words, something unexpected happened:

there was a tension from the reduction of speed . . . we managed to find a sort of ‘emotional dynamics’ through the speeds that were available [and] we ended up focusing more on the air acting upon the flags as opposed to the robots. [When the arms stop] the air will continue moving the flag and . . . you realize there’s another force in the room. What’s in the air materializes within the structure of the flag. (Forsythe, 00:11:46 - 00:12:36)

The air was there all along, yet it only became perceptible through the mutual recalculations of a choreographer’s sense of space, time, and motion interfacing with his software programmer’s (Sven Thöne) precise digital manipulations. Such an unforeseen production, from within programming, choreography, or writing, of “another force” speaks to one of Fourcade’s main concerns as a writer. In fact, this same concern was already present in *M W*, which readily evokes the ways dance and photography “re-choreograph” and “recalculate” (59) one another. In other words, *M W* already focuses on how, through their

interplay, the constraints of one art form allow another to discover, often through an improvisational process, internal structures or systems that might previously have been imperceptible.

In the months prior to writing *M W*, and equally in 2001, Fourcade published *Est-ce que j'peux placer un mot* ('C'n I put in a word'). It includes a text titled "Tout arrive" (*Everything happens*), in which we again see a verbal choreography in the process of being decomposed, recomposed, and over-composed.¹¹ It highlights the formal interplay of dance, writing, and robotics by proposing that the newly discovered notion of "tout arrive" is also the "point mort du sujet" (67) 'subject's dead center,' in the sense of a pivot point at the center of a pivot turn in ballet. In other words, this "dead center" serves as the axis for all (of the dancer's) outward rotational motion or revolutions without there necessarily being any forward progress.¹² Based on the overwhelming realization that the poem has its own "point mort" (that is everywhere and nowhere, and around which all writing revolves), in "Tout arrive" Fourcade evokes the same blue frock of Manet's amputee that we saw in *eux deux fées*. Here, however, it is transposed (by inverting subject and adjective) as "le bleu unijambiste de la rue Mosnier" (67) 'the one-legged blue of the rue Mosnier.' Yet, rather than remaining in this late nineteenth-century scene (as he would propose to do eight years later in *eux deux fées*), Fourcade apposes to it techniques from his own writing. These are broken down into precise rhetorical components cited in the poem and thus woven into its fabric: "les hendiadys et les isocolons, tactique beauté" (67) 'hendiadys and isocolons, beauty tactic.'¹³ "Tout arrive" also incorporates the robotic and technological side of art, to which Fourcade is so clearly drawn in Forsythe's *Black Flags*, calling it "l'interface d'aujourd'hui, qui facilite l'échange entre les systèmes, avec robots amis" (67) 'today's interface, which facilitates exchange between systems, with robot friends.' Finally (and this recalls Forsythe's other "force in the room"), the interface between varied technologies and techniques reflects an admixture of "conscience et inadvertance" (67) 'consciousness and inadvertence' that is often made up of multiple series of minute recalculations. Fourcade adds that these recalculations can be digital in nature and involve: a) dictating to a mental "logiciel de capture les intervalles auxquels prendre les clichés" (62) 'capture software the intervals at which to take the screen shots'; b) buying "un petit partagiciel" (62) 'a small shareware'; c) refreshing "l'image tous les vingt ou trente ans, ou toutes les femtosecondes" (63) 'the image every twenty or thirty years or every femtosecond.'¹⁴ Here, as elsewhere, Fourcade's vocabulary readily adapts to and incorporates myriad twenty-first-century technical terms. Written in the days preceding, during, and following September 11, 2001, *M W* presented yet another opportunity (as it were) to verify and update such writing systems.

At first glance, *M W* would seem to revolve around the initials of a photographer and a dancer, as well as around reproductions of some of French photographer Isabelle Waternaux's photographs of the improvisations danced in the nude by French choreographer Mathilde Monnier.¹⁵ In *M W*, these

reproductions are surrounded by two texts. The first is a single paragraph, centered on the page as would be a matted photograph. As though describing the physical dimensions of a large mobile sculpture, Fourcade minutely details the setting of the photoshoot: a day in March 2001, in a Paris studio, the dimensions of which are described with excruciating precision. He also details the varying distances between the dancer and the photographer's 6x7 Pentax (on a moveable tripod), as well as the former's improvised movements within a constrained space: Monnier "a improvisé dans un périmètre restreint, en arc de cercle contre le mur de fond sur une longueur de 4 m, avec un rayon de 2,80 m environ" (7) 'improvised within a restrained perimeter, in an arc against the back wall over a length of 4 m, with a radius of about 2.80 m.' The varied light sources are equally detailed: to the left there was an "éclairage diurne, ciel de Paris, venant de la verrière sud" (7) 'daylight, Paris sky, coming from the south canopy' and to the right there were "barres de néon" (7) 'neon tubes' producing a bluish light likened to a "lavis de néon" (52) 'neon washdrawing.' With the same attention to the temporal dimension of artistic form examined above, Fourcade notes the time between each photograph, as well as the time it took to occasionally reload the pre-digital camera, a downtime inherent to Monnier's improvisation since she "continuait de danser [et] à aucun moment [elle] n'a posé" (7) 'continued to dance [and] at no moment did [she] pose' for the camera. Fourcade insists on the lighting and the temporal and spatial constraints quite simply because neither the dancer's body nor that of the photographer could exist without them.¹⁶ In turn, these details or constraints only become perceptible, or "palpable" (*deuil* 49), in the context of the improvised movements of the bodies that activate them. Space and time are here as much the condition of possibility for the motion of bodies as these bodies are the condition of possibility of space and time. Fourcade's work as a whole explores the bewildering consequences of leveling the field in this way.

Following the initial paragraph and the photographic reproductions, the subsequent text in *M W* alternates between two narratives. The first is a reflection on the interchange between the body, dance, photography, and writing (first in terms of the March 2001 photoshoot, then in more general historical terms regarding their twentieth-century interdependence, from Vaslav Nijinsky to the present). The second is a textual improvisation situated in summer 2001, with the writer engrossed in Federica Zanco's book of the same year: *Luis Barragan: The Quiet Revolution* (47). Among other things, the second textual improvisation (what I will call the summer narrative) serves as a counterpoint to the interplay of dancer, photographer, and writer in the first narrative. As with the admixture of natural and neon light in the Paris studio, the second narrative also distinguishes between two light sources. One is external: the direct light of the summer sun that is "si dur en affaires, si inflexible" (46) 'so strictly business, so inflexible.' The other is internal: an "été mental" (47) 'mental summer.' The latter source of light is in fact related to what, in his study of Henri Matisse titled *Je crois qu'en dessin* ('I believe that in drawing'), Fourcade names "une lumière mentale" (21) 'a mental light' that is

born of the interplay of forms in any given medium or the intermixing of any number of media. For example, in “An Uninterrupted Story” (1986) Fourcade describes the light in Matisse’s 1919 *Les Persiennes* (*The Venetian Blinds*). He does so in scholarly fashion but also in a way that calls to mind how the “limpid blue” of Manet’s amputee “illuminates and founds the entirety of the surface” of the canvas:

this light is a totally abstract whole that does not come from the outside. This whole is the product of the ensemble of colors brought into play on the canvas, a compelling kind of creamy and immaterial blue that is included nowhere in a realistic view of things. This un-preconceived spacious-blue is contained only in the result, which is to say at the extreme point of the attempt carried out by Matisse’s eye. (55)

As such, “mental light” is the product of the painter’s, the photographer’s, or the poet’s eye or vision that thus stands as this light’s pivot point.¹⁷

In the case of *M W*, this “*lumière mentale*” is initially enmeshed with the question of silence during the photoshoot. Indeed, the two words “En silence” (7; 45) ‘In silence’ are the last of the text preceding the photographic reproductions and the first of the text following them. In the latter case, a question mark is added to signal not only the poet’s continued preoccupation with the relation between dance, sound, and vision (as in the case of *eux deux fées*), but also his wondering why neither the dancer nor the photographer had any memory of hearing or saying anything during the photoshoot. For his part, Fourcade notes: “c’est le souffle que j’aurais retenu, je crois, et, intimement lié, le bruit du corps en mouvement, contre le lino et dans l’air” (45) ‘it’s the breath that I would have remembered, I believe, and, intimately linked to it, the sound of the body in motion, against the linoleum and in the air.’ Just as with the other “force” in and about Forsythe’s *Black Flags*, here too Fourcade is as much attuned to the motion of the dancer’s body through the studio’s space as to her breathing or the near imperceptible sound of a body cutting through air. While Mallarmé was equally acutely attuned to the sounds of dance—what, in the context of Loïe Fuller’s veil dances he called “cette transition de sonorités aux tissus” (*Crayonné* 308-309) ‘this transition of sounds to the fabrics’—in terms of Mallarmé’s notion of absolute fable, the sounds of the nude dancer constitute the materiality of dance that Fourcade refuses to abstract or subtract, perhaps for the simple reason that it cannot be done away with.

In trying to comprehend the forgetfulness of both the dancer and the photographer, Fourcade supposes that the few words Monnier did speak were not so much communicatively directed outwards toward Waternaux as inwards, based on a

sorte d’état d’absence au monde, pour commencer d’improviser, improvisation qui donne à son tour, à mesure qu’elle se développe, une amplitude énorme à cet état où rien ne s’imprime sauf peut-être dans les

muscles. . . . Le silence faisait partie du portrait au point de ne pas laisser la possibilité de se le dire. (46)

sort of state of absence to the world, in order to start improvising; improvisation that, as it develops, in turn offers a huge amplitude to this state where nothing is imprinted except perhaps in the muscles. . . . Silence was part of the portrait to the point of not leaving the possibility of saying this to oneself.

Like the initially imperceptible air, the silence accompanying a “sort of state of absence,” is part of what holds the work together. Its imprint, like that of the improvisations that bring it into being, is somewhere else than in consciousness, perhaps just muscle memory in a body whose motions might seem unpreconceived, but are in fact tied to the work of a precise grammar and syntax in a precise space. Indeed, in *M W*, Fourcade turns to another choreographer, George Balanchine, to propose that the latter’s choreography is “la plus précise, la plus analytique, la plus démultipliée combinatoire grammairale du corps dans le temps-espace” (55) ‘the most precise, the most analytic, the most augmented combinatorial grammar of the body in time-space.’¹⁸ Thus, the grammatization of dance choreography, the “sort of state of absence,” and the forgetfulness of the photoshoot in *M W* all point towards Cunningham’s method of disconnecting “the sound-system from the original scene,” to Bausch’s recomposing and over-composing it, and to Forsythe’s *Black Flags* dancing to their own sound and to that of their minutely pre-programmed robotic arms. This section of the first narrative concludes with Fourcade noting that the photographic reproductions in *M W* “disent que deux personnes, une danseuse et une photographe, se sont absentes” (46) ‘say that two people, a dancer and a photographer, went absent.’ As with the “palpable” air in *Black Flags*, this is an active absence (the reproductions “speak” to the poet), internally responsive to the work and through which the dancer “est allée chercher des mouvements, inventer des translations d’une partie du corps sur l’autre, excursions lointaines, ou plutôt en des séquences intérieures maximales” (46) ‘went to look for movements, to invent translations of one part of the body onto the other, far-away excursions, or rather in maximal interior sequences.’ As we will see, Fourcade’s description of Monnier’s translational improvisations echoes the two interwoven summer narratives of *M W*.

In shifting to his “mental summer,” Fourcade describes it in terms of architecture and of voluminous colors in a way that might initially leave the reader puzzled: “cette architecture volume d’ambre. d’orange, de rose volume et de beige. de prune. alors j’ai deux corps, l’un dans l’été qui se refuse, l’autre dans cette architecture, été de suprême photogénie. avec escaliers” (47) ‘this architecture volume of amber. of orange, of rose volume and of beige. of plum. then I have two bodies, one in the summer that refuses itself, the other in this architecture, summer of supreme photogeny. with stairs.’ Beyond the meaning of this description, of particular interest here is the cadence produced by its

punctuation along with the repeated preposition “de.” These bring to mind the sound of a series of photographic snapshots and, like the sequence of photographs (in either *M W* or *The Quiet Revolution*), this sequence of words does not so much seek to represent its objects as to transform our perceptions of their light, color, volume, and rhythm. There is a word for this process, which Fourcade refers to (only once): “photogénie.”

Given that *M W* is in great part a reflection on the temporal and spatial intersections of writing, dance, and photography, mention of “photogénie” recalls French poet, cinematographer, and theorist, Jean Epstein who, as early as 1924, applied the term to “tout aspect des choses, des êtres et des âmes qui accroît sa qualité morale par la reproduction cinématographique” (137) ‘any aspect of things, beings or souls whose moral character is enhanced by cinematographic reproduction.’¹⁹ Mobility also plays a key role in the photogenic process: “On peut donc dire que l’aspect photogénique d’un objet est une résultante de ses variations dans l’espace-temps” (139) ‘We can thus say that the photogenic quality of an object is a consequence of its variations in space-time.’ This latter refinement of the definition is key since it suggests that “photogénie” involves spatio-temporal composition, orchestration, or choreography at the axis or pivot point shared by both the viewer and the viewed. While the photogenic point born of the interplay of the work of Waternaux and Monnier is more readily apparent, how does it operate in Fourcade’s writings on dance and photography and in his mental summer with its volumes of colors (amber, orange, rose, beige, prune) and without forgetting the last two words: “avec escaliers”? In fact, the colors Fourcade mentions are those featured in the photographs of Barragan’s architecture, reproduced in *The Quiet Revolution*. Particularly, these color patterns recur in the photographs of Barragan’s home in Mexico City, with its repeatedly photographed staircase. More specifically, the reproduced colors and diagonal lines of this staircase evoke the spatial and temporal dimensions of the definition of “photogénie”: rhythmic dimensions recomposed on the still, two-dimensional surface of the photograph and of the page.

The aptly titled *The Quiet Revolution* thus offers further insight into *M W*, specifically into its summer narrative. Without going into a detailed reading of Barragan’s own sense of the interplay of architecture and photography, Zanco makes clear that the architect embraced the techniques of photography to augment or condense his own complex spatio-temporal architectural compositions through “a small number of viewpoints . . . photographed repeatedly with minute variations in the light, contrast, depth of field and, later, colour before being corrected during printing and cut according to instructions frequently written on the back by Barragan” (88).²⁰ In his attention to compositional detail, Barragan is an architect after Fourcade’s own method, if not his heart. Thus, the summer narrative dispersed throughout *M W* is similarly comprised of jottings of words and cropped sentences that are nothing less than the writerly transpositions of Fourcade’s immersion in the black and white and color plates of *The Quiet Revolution*. For instance, if a plate represents an amber

wall, Fourcade writes “volume d’ambre,” if others feature Barragan’s famous stairs, he writes “avec escaliers,” and so on. In so doing, he is not only looking at photographs taken under just the right conditions so as to coax out the “photogénie” of architectural structures, he is also, as it were, re-photographing them, decomposing and recomposing them, and arranging them, throughout *M W* and elsewhere, making his own such photographic methods as lighting, shutter speed, splicing, sampling, etc.

Following mention of Barragan’s stairs, Fourcade shifts back to the first narrative and to Monnier’s improvisations: “M a dû s’adapter au temps photographique, qui n’est pas celui de la danse, qui est beaucoup plus continu et plus lent alors que le temps du corps en mouvement est plus fragmenté et plus vite” (47) ‘M had to adapt to photographic time, which is not that of dance, which is much more continuous and slower while the time of the body in motion is more fragmented and more rapid.’ The scene here is also that of the time and space of intersecting techniques and bodies, where the dance tempo is altered through its adaptations to the time and cadence of the photographer’s shots, and where the dancer’s nudity strips the dance (and its photographs) of any narrative accouterments; stripped down, in other words, to the intertwined articulations of bodies in motion. For Fourcade, what is at stake in this process is the possibility for the dancer “de découvrir ce quelqu’un d’autre qui est elle” (47) ‘to discover this someone else that is she.’ Thus, these bodies (those of the dancer, photographer, and writer) not only become other than themselves but discover this inner alterity through their multiple intertwined recalculations, decompositions, and recompositions.

In closing his paragraph, and before returning to the written improvisations of the second narrative, Fourcade writes of Monnier and Waternaux: “En somme l’une réglait ses durées sur l’autre à l’insu de l’autre et réciproquement. Ses durées, ses formes. Ce qui peut aussi se dire: improviser pour être moins étrangère à soi-même en danseuse, en photographe (en écrivain)” (48) ‘In sum, the one regulated her durations on the other without the knowledge of the other, and vice versa. Her durations, her forms. Which can also be said as follows: improvise to be less foreign to oneself as a dancer, as a photographer (as a writer).’ The rather sly parenthetical insertion of the writer, at the end of the sentence, signals that the forms and durations of Fourcade’s art also share in the creation of the portrait of this estranging silence. Thus, the summer narrative of *M W* returns, again with a George Oppen-like discrete series of floating images glimpsed in the pages of *The Quiet Revolution*: “oies et Cadillac” (48) ‘geese and Cadillac.’²¹ From these (and other) images the text shifts to a series of questions raised by the photographs of Barragan’s architecture: “dois-je comprendre: et pour mon cri, de la lumière, et pour ma délivrance, le pénombre—ou l’inverse? que dois-je comprendre, à partir des formes et des durées barraganesques, que dois-je expier?” (48) ‘should I comprehend: and for my cry, light, and for my deliverance, penumbra—or the opposite? what should I understand, from the barraganesque forms and durations, what must I expiate?’ Through their interplay of light and shadow,

these photographs interpellate the poet, without any answer forthcoming other than the need to continue to engage with them, to view them from different perspectives, and to employ slight dance-like shifts in the formation of words as they adapt to shifts in the light. Structurally, the poet's relation to these photographs is as that of Monnier to Waternaux and vice-versa.

At this point, *M W* returns briefly to the first narrative associated with the dancer and the photographer, where each slight adjustment or displacement of the photographer's equipment (including her body and "her eye") is said to imply a "cadrage" (48) 'framing' that "égale changement de rythme changement de matière (forme-durée) (48-49) 'equals change of rhythm change of matter (form-duration).' Following this, Fourcade returns to the summer narrative and to the same questions of framing and rhythm, but this time from within his own writing:

l'été, son corps, ça n'a pas manqué, j'ai seulement vu, sur le chemin de l'éloignement, la glycine étoilée—cliché: tout le jour les roses Hélène étoilent la glycine et la nuit les étoiles glycinent le ciel—ne restait que cette phrase en boucle. et dans ce tissu copte M écrevisse noire. (49)

the summer, its body, without fail, I only saw, on the straying way, the starry wisteria—cliché: all day long the Helenae roses star the glycine and at night the stars glycinent the sky—only this sentence remained in a loop. and in this Coptic fabric M black caterpillar.

As with the previous summer narratives, this paragraph first lays out a series of summer snapshots (brief linguistic segments separated by multiple commas), then an obsessive continuous sonic or cinematographic loop (without commas) related to roses (the *Rosa Helenae*, with petals in the shape of stars). It also plays on the homophony of the word "glycine" (both the photographic agent used to develop black and white photographs and the flowering shrub commonly called wisteria), with the whole punctuating both night and day. Against or within this complex pictorial ground, which is likened to a "tissu copte" 'Coptic fabric,' the poet inscribes the figure of M (Monnier) as an "écrevisse noire" 'black caterpillar.'

Are we to ask, as does the poet of the photographs of Barragan's architecture, "what should we comprehend here?" Could we not also view Fourcade's paragraph as a photograph in the making, one that is both composed and improvised? Can we read it, in other words, as a poet's engaging his writing with the rhythmic structures of this reality as mediated through painting, photography, dance, sculpture, and architecture? Of course, I am making a case for the latter. Simply to seek to comprehend the narrative meaning of this text (its fable or what it says) is to miss out on its explorations of form and duration ("how do they say it") as conditions of interpretation and understanding; their palpable air, as it were. In *M W*, this process involves neological transformations of nouns into verbs and vice-versa ("étoilent la glycine" / "étoiles glycinent")

and the previously mentioned homophony of the word “glycine.” The overall effect is to create the same contrastive or reversible effect of light and darkness that Fourcade had thematized in previous paragraphs devoted to this narrative. Even the figure of Monnier, woven into a Matissian “tissue copte,” suggests we are looking at the poetic transposition of a painterly surface structure, such as those that can be read in paintings by Matisse (who, in his collection of fabric scraps, is known to have had some of Coptic origin).²² For instance, Fourcade discerned a similar structure in Matisse’s 1911 *Intérieur aux aubergines* (*Interior with Eggplants*): This painting imposes “un mode de vision nouveau qui consiste à éliminer toute idée d’ordre de lecture” (*Rêver* 39) ‘a new mode of seeing that consists in eliminating any idea of a reading order.’ As such, Matisse “nous expose un monde non plus centripète mais centrifuge, en expansion. Et aucun point de cet univers n’est picturalement privilégié par rapport au reste, car le centre est partout” (39) ‘exposes for us a world no longer centripetal but centrifugal, expanding. And no point of this universe is pictorially privileged compared to the rest, because the center is everywhere.’²³ Thus, in *MW*, the dancer (Monnier), metamorphosed into a summer caterpillar and woven into the fabric of Fourcade’s text, is not represented or situated in the center of the paragraph. As with the amputee in the lower-left corner of Manet’s painting, and as with the centrifugal dissolution of foreground and background in Matisse’s work, she is on the periphery of the paragraph, improvising in the “restrained perimeter” of the last words of its last line.

Fourcade then returns to a consideration of the photographer and the dancer, where this centrifugal restructuring of space is again precisely at work in the first two-word isocolonic snapshot of the next paragraph: “Monnier espace” (49) ‘Monnier space.’ An improvisational space “travaillant sur des choses minimales—rendez-vous avec des syllabes inconnues de son corps” (49) ‘working on minimal things—rendez-vous with her body’s unknown syllables.’ Monnier’s work is thus grouped with that of Balanchine, Cunningham, Bausch, and Forsythe, with their precise choreography of the movements of the body (human or robotic). And among these movements one also finds, as Fourcade wrote of Cunningham’s choreography, “des étirements aveugles, si bons, modes de connaissance . . . ainsi que le supplice de secondes qu’on ne comprend plus, positions à tenir pourquoi exige-t-on ça, le corps brûle parce qu’une partie du travail s’accomplit contre lui et c’est alors que tout se joue” (82) ‘blind stretches, so good, modes of knowledge . . . as well as the torture of seconds we no longer understand, positions to hold why do they require this, the body burns because part of the work is accomplished against itself and that’s when everything comes into play.’ In evoking these unknown syllables, Fourcade also transposes this at times blind and incomprehensible work to his own, again involving use of hendiandys and isocolons, and linguistic manipulations envisioned, as we read in “Tout arrive,” at the level of years or a few femtoseconds. His 1974 essay on Matisse makes a similar move by suggesting that another of Matisse’s innovations was “une nouvelle souplesse syntaxique” (41) ‘a new syntactic suppleness’ whereby:

Les différents éléments de la langue du tableau ne s'enchaînent plus dans l'ancien ordre causal où chacun jouait étroitement le rôle qui lui était dévolu de sujet, de verbe, de complément d'objet direct, de conjonction, de pronom relatif, etc., avec une proposition centrale et des circonstancielle; les éléments sont désormais juxtaposés, toutes les propositions sont sur le même plan, les composantes jouent toutes tous les rôles à la fois et sont les unes vis-à-vis des autres non plus dans une situation de cause à effet mais en rapport mutuel, dans un état de corrélation et de correspondance infinies. (41)

The different elements of the painting's language are no longer linked in the old causal order where each closely played the role assigned to it of subject, verb, direct object, conjunction, relative pronoun, etc., with a central proposition and circumstantial ones; the elements are now juxtaposed, all the propositions are on the same level, all the components play all the roles at once and are, vis-à-vis each other, no longer in a situation of cause and effect but in mutual relation, in a state of infinite correlation and correspondence.

Needless to say, in such a non-hierarchical, centrifugal view of language, the first conceit to be displaced is that of the subject's centrality. And so too does Monnier's self dissolve into her dance, which Fourcade describes as “une écriture précise comme elle ne l'avait jamais fait auparavant, être présente jusqu'à la dissolution de soi (ou absence)” (50) ‘a precise writing such as she had never done before, to be present to the point of the dissolution of oneself (or absence).’ And, as with the dancer, so too with the photographer, whose methodical work is to “régler sa lumière sur une peau, presque régler l'air, régler son espace sur un corps en sorte que ce soit ce corps l'espace” (51) ‘regulate her light on a skin, almost regulate the air, regulate her space on a body such that space be this body.’ If the interplay between photographer and dancer is here clearly pronounced, what of the writer who, until now, had only appeared parenthetically and on the periphery?

As we have seen, Fourcade proposes to work with words as a dancer would with her body, and as a photographer would with the surface light on that same body. This is nowhere more clearly spelled out than in *Outrance Utterance* (1990): “Le mot est le corps chorégraphé du poème. . . . j'écris des sons, un rythme, une mélodie, un espace—de l'air en somme” (24-5) ‘The word is the choreographed body of the poem. . . . I write sounds, a rhythm, a melody, a space—in sum, air.’ Whereas Mallarmé's “corporeal writing” reduced the body to writing, in their interactions with other art forms, words are transformed or translated onto bodies and are adapted to the articulations of these bodies. In *MW*, this perspective explains a several-page foray into the history of the photography of the dancing body. Far from a digression, Fourcade here explores language divesting itself of the “old causal order” in terms of the progressive

decoupling of the dancer's body from costumes and clothing that "ne serait-ce qu'un collant, segmente le corps et aussitôt annexe un personnage" (52) 'even if only a leotard, segments the body and immediately annexes a character.' Of course, in its early stages the history of the choreographed body is available to us only through viewing photographs ranging from Adolf de Meyer's photographs of Nijinsky to Barbara Morgan's of Martha Graham (54-55). And, as with the photographs Fourcade accesses in *The Quiet Revolution*, here too the source for his writing is, in great part, a series of photographic reproductions. As he writes in *M W* (in the same paragraph as the "écrevisse noire"), "il y a beaucoup de choses que je n'ai pas vues dans la vie. et puis je me dis que je pourrai toujours les voir plus tard en photo" (49) 'there are many things that I have not seen in life. and then I tell myself that I can always see them later in photos.' More to the point, Fourcade suggests that the choreographed nude body is as much in need of photography ("il s'apprête à être photographié" [54] 'it readies itself to be photographed') as the poet, writing *M W*, is in need of being photogenically exposed to and by dance: "Je ne verrai rien d'elle, la danse, la poésie, si je ne me mets pas au jour en me montrant en elle" (55) 'I will not see anything of it, dance, poetry, if I am not exposed by showing myself in it.' The recalculations inherent to Fourcade's work thus reveal themselves to be interdependent on exposure to formally equivalent recalculations within other art forms.

Borrowing from early dance critic Edwin Denby's writings on de Meyer's photographs of Nijinsky, Fourcade suggests that if dance and photography are drawn to each other like moths to a flame, it remains uncertain which is the moth and which the flame (56). What is certain is that photography, dance, and poetry offer one another the opportunity to expose and recompose themselves and to push one another to the extreme of their own constraints, an extreme that, in the case of dance, is "sa forme la plus photographiable. Comme si chacune des deux, la danse, la photographie, avait saisi que l'autre lui permettait de s'exposer et de se comprendre" (57) 'its most photographable form. As if each of the two, photography, dance, had grasped that the other allowed it to expose and comprehend itself.' In this interplay, dance dances photographically, revealing within its own movement its own eminently photographable, photogenic immobile articulations or pivot points. As such, it opens itself up to "une série d'immobilités et une architecture de silences, et pour les rendre la photographie est opérationnelle" (57) 'a series of stills and an architecture of silences, and to render these photography is operational.' That photography is operational vis-à-vis dance (defined as its formal ability to access and interact with dance's own formal structures) also allows it to offer up to dance its photogenic image. In turn, dance can recalculate and re-choreograph itself within "le temps et l'espace de la photographie" (59) 'the time and space of photography.'

At this point in the text, just as we were beginning to glimpse the *raison d'être* of Fourcade's parallel reflections on writing and on Waternaux's photographs of Monnier—as with dance and photography, so with writing—the

text abruptly shifts or pivots by means of a striking one-line paragraph: “tessons de tutu sol jonché” (61) ‘tutu shards ground strewn.’ From what preceded, we could gather that this alliterative monostich serves to again do away with the accouterment of the tutu in dance as well as with traditional subject-verb-object syntax in language. From what follows this one line, we learn that the destruction is of another magnitude. Underscoring the hiatus, the subsequent paragraph begins: “Death in the making dance in the making. Ici je dois m’interrompre” (61) ‘Death in the making dance in the making. Here I have to stop.’ The interruption follows an early afternoon phone call from NYC announcing the September 11, 2001 attacks. In this moment Fourcade also realizes not only that “ma vie était à un tournant [mais que] toutes les vies devraient désormais composer avec des formes nouvelles, formes inconnues et effrayantes” (61) ‘my life was at a turning point [but that] all lives would now have to deal with new forms, unknown and frightening forms.’ As with the “dead center” or pivot point of “tout arrive” and as with that following the deaths of Cunningham and Bausch, here the pivot or “turning point” is applied to “toutes les vies.”

Yet again, the poet is seemingly deprived of a pivot point since, for the day of September 11, 2001, “il n’y a pas de photographie” (61) ‘there is no photograph.’ As in *eux deux fées*, the poet appears confronted with a change in the stars, with a disaster so great that there may be none to follow. No photograph, thus no means of transposing, recalculating, or staging anew “the world” (80). In *M W*, Fourcade added of this missing photograph: “il est hors de question qu’il y en ait—cependant on aurait tellement besoin d’en avoir une” (61-2) ‘it is out of the question that there be any—yet we would so much need to have one.’ Gone, or so it appears, is the hope of photography offering dance and writing another means of recalculating and re-choreographing themselves. Instead, the new pivot point is here the absence of a photograph and this absence “est brutalement le sujet de *M W*, elle est mon sujet. Technologie-théologie, le binôme nous explose à la figure et la figure le mérite” (61-2) ‘is brutally the subject of *M W*, it is my subject. Technology-theology, the binomial explodes in our face and the face deserves it.’ The poet thus declares what had been there all along: the stakes of his writing are not only whether photography is “operational” (just as what is at stake in *eux deux fées* is the operational limits of the poet’s body and the poetic recalculations of a new world), but also the poet’s ability to access this same operativeness in and through writing, for the sake of re-envisioning and recomposing the world and the existence of “toutes les vies.”

But where was this isocolon (“death in the making dance in the making”) about to take Fourcade on September 11, 2001? It is the story of the juxtaposition of two photographs that both feature a body captured suspended in a balletic renversé. *Death in the Making* is of course the title of Robert Capa’s 1938 book that includes a reproduction of his iconic 1936 photograph titled *The Falling Soldier*. Whether this “instantané de la mort” (63) ‘snapshot of death’ was posed or not, for Fourcade, “pour ma page ça ne change rien” (63) ‘for my

page it changes nothing.’²⁴ The other half of the sentence, “dance in the making,” refers to the equally iconic photograph titled *War Theme*, featuring choreographer Martha Graham photographed by Barbara Morgan for William Carlos Williams’s 1942 poem *War, the Destroyer* (*M W* 43). In this case, as Fourcade notes, the photograph was minutely choreographed with the dancer posing “à la renverse, dans un geste de terreur rythmique” (63) ‘in a renversé, in a gesture of rhythmic terror.’ Here too, Morgan’s photographic techniques allow the photograph to capture and expose the photogenic qualities of a body in motion. But, again, to what end for writing? Let us read Fourcade:

La raison d’être de l’écriture est de clarifier mon rapport avec la vie et la mort. L’angoissant n’est pas que ce rapport existe, la grande angoisse c’est quand, comme si souvent, mais aujourd’hui dans une ambiance de terreur tant le souffle est dévastant, l’angoisse c’est quand l’écriture n’est pas en état de rendre compte de ce rapport. (62)

Writing’s reason for being is to clarify my relationship with life and death. The anguishing part is not that this relationship exists, the overwhelming anxiety is when, as is so often the case, but today in an atmosphere of terror given how devastating the winds are, the anxiety is when writing is not in a position to account for this relationship.

For this poet, whose writing is so bound to the choreography and photography of words as means of exposing his own relationship to life and death, the possibility that writing, like photography, could unforeseeably prove inoperative is indeed reason for this “overwhelming anxiety.” Yet, just as the poet went beyond the self-imposed limits spelled out in *eux deux fées*, here too he notes: “j’ai bien enregistré le séisme, je n’ai rien manqué croyez-moi” (62) ‘I certainly recorded the earthquake, I didn’t miss anything believe me,’ and he proceeds to write the page he was about to write on September 11, 2001. Fourcade focuses on Williams’s poem (specifically, the lines “What is war, / the destroyer / but an appurtenance / to the dance”) and on the exposure time used by Morgan for her photograph of Graham. In both instances, war is “but an appurtenance,” an accouterment for dance, photography, and poetry, all of which will continue to decompose, recompose, and recalculate their own techniques and exposures of their “relationship with life and death,” beyond any given physical death.²⁵

In the concluding pages of *M W*, Fourcade writes: “je suis enfermé dans le laboratoire à développer les photos de septembre et n’en reviendrai pas” (64) ‘I am locked in the laboratory developing the photos of September and will not come back.’ The preceding analysis suggests he can and will pivot and return. Indeed, just as he had recalculated and re-choreographed his writing beyond the deaths of Cunningham and Bausch, in *M W*, *CHUTE*, (a fourteen-page text written following *M W*, between September 24 and October 5 2001), Fourcade transcribed his “pire cauchemar” (13) ‘worst nightmare’: “Des M et des W

tombent d'étages si haut qu'ils n'ont pas de chiffre, tournent sur eux-mêmes, longuement, incalculablement, les figures s'inversent à l'infini Les premiers instants cela avait des airs de chute, et puis plus du tout" (13) 'Ms and Ws fall from floors so high that they have no number, spin around, at length, incalculably, the figures are endlessly inverted In the first moments it looked like falling, and then not at all.' Fourcade suspends this incalculable fall, exposes it or captures it in a flash, like that of Morgan's camera that both seizes and composes Graham's death-signifying renversé. Even the dust jacket of the original edition of *M W*, *CHUTE* is covered with 'M's and 'W's (scribbled by the poet) touching, twirling outward, and grasping each other's hands, arms and screams (13). Here too, in this nightmare of M(en) and W(omen) suspended in free fall, another photograph is in play. In the days following September 11 2001, it came to be known as *The Falling Man*.²⁶ Is this the image of a terrible new photogenic dance where, for Fourcade, "la mort est le plan même du poème" (*M W*, *CHUTE* 13) 'death is the very ground of the poem'? Or perhaps, through another reverse elegiac move, it is not so terribly new. Perhaps it was already there in the rotating, grasping, and suspended dancers and musicians in two of Matisse's paintings from 1910: *La Danse (Dance)* and *La Musique (Music)*, both painted nearly one hundred years earlier and that, as Fourcade would write in 2005, in *sans lasso et sans flash* ('without lasso and without flash'), "fondent le XX^e siècle" (16) 'found the twentieth century.'

Notes

1. This title already transposes choreography into writing via the near homophony of the two words "eux deux" that perform their own *pas de deux* with and for Bausch and Cunningham. Fourcade first witnessed Cunningham's work in the 1960s in France. First mention of Cunningham comes in 1986, in *Son blanc du un* ('White sound of one') and of Bausch in 1997, in *Le sujet monotype* ('The monotype subject'). All translations are my own.

2. Among the few articles in English devoted to Fourcade's writings, of particular interest are Glenn Fetzer's "Daive, Fourcade, Cadiot: Americana and Littéralité" and Abigail Lang's "'What Syllables Will Flood Utterance': On Susan Howe and Dominique Fourcade." *Dominique Fourcade: Lyriques déclics* ('Dominique Fourcade: Lyrical clicks') was the first international colloquium devoted solely to Fourcade's writings (May 31-June 1, 2018, Sorbonne Université, Paris).

3. Fourcade's work as a whole engages systematically with the long history of the interplay of philosophy, poetry, dance, and music, most notably Stéphane Mallarmé's writings on opera, theater, and ballet. For one of the most incisive readings of the stakes of music and dance for French poetry since Mallarmé, see

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Musica ficta: figures de Wagner (Musica ficta: figures of Wagner)*. Pierre Alféri's 2016 essay "Sur un théâtre de papier" ('On a Theater of Paper') further addresses Mallarmé's typographical "idée du théâtre" (74) 'idea of theater' and its fraught relationship with contemporary French poetry.

4. As opposed to critical readings that take a dim view of Mallarmé's supposedly genderless and danceless "danseuse," Felicia McCarren argues that "closer examination of both [Loïe] Fuller's dances and Mallarmé's writings about them reveals that it is this real dancer, and her dances, which suggests to Mallarmé the dehumanized, semiotic subjectivity which he also applies to the poet. . . . this suggests to what extent the female body dancing is at the center, rather than the margins, of his formulation" (218). Such a reading comes a bit closer to Fourcade's interchange with Mallarmé's writings. In his alliteratively titled "Petite page pour Pina" ('Small page for Pina'), he envisions words personified as dancers on the stage of his page; words he describes as "les chauves, les bavards, les divins et les humains et ceux qui ont un gros derrière, les elliptiques de profession et ceux qui n'ont pas de soutien-gorge, les masculins féminins et les singuliers" (*sujet monotype* 113) 'the bald, the talkative, the divine and the human, and those with a big bottom, ellipticals by profession and those without a bra, the masculines feminines and the singulars.'

5. To date, the only study of Fourcade's commitment to and "concerted detachment" from Mallarmé is Claude Pérez's "Mallarmé, Polecat-Furet (Dominique Fourcade for and Against Mallarmé)." It focuses on Fourcade as both handcuffed to this Titan (metamorphosed into a ferret) of French poetry (*Est-ce que j'peux*, 61) and reacting against Mallarmeian purity in his text titled "Grosse erreur de concept, connard!" ('Enormous conceptual error, shithhead!'): "L'exactitude n'est pas la pureté et la pureté est une saloperie, comme dépêche d'agence ça a beaucoup tardé, mais c'est parce que Mallarmé s'était trompé de mot, grosse erreur de concept" (*sujet monotype* 164) 'Exactitude is not purity. And purity is trash as a wire story it was a long time coming, but that's because Mallarmé chose the wrong word, enormous conceptual mistake.' *Est-ce que j'peux placer un mot* includes a text titled "Fable," in which the pure fable (severed from any voice) is equated with its disappearance along with that of space and time: "Tous comprirent qu'en se retirant la fable emportait avec elle l'espace et le temps" (53) 'Everyone understood that in leaving the fable carried away with it space and time.'

6. Fourcade's writings are replete with references to current events culled from all available media. The massive rise in the number of soldiers receiving prosthetic limbs was extensively covered in the news in 2009. This is referenced throughout Fourcade's writings, from this period and beyond. See David Wood, "Beyond the Battlefield: From a Decade of War, An Endless Struggle for the Severely Wounded."

7. For a reading of *The Rue Mosnier with Flags* as the choreographed overlay of several of Manet's paintings and as a "composite, a putting together of various observations . . . that is calculated to seem all of one piece" (31), see Robert L. Herbert's *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society*.

8. The inescapable irony of the painting is that it depicts a scene from June 30, 1878, the French national holiday known as the *Fête de la Paix* ('Celebration of Peace') that commemorates the ravages of the Franco-Prussian war, of which the amputee likely was a victim. In *Citizen Do* (2008) Fourcade evokes the writer's "tâche citoyenne" (26) 'civic duty' to "transcrire l'humanité, des bribes d'elle au moins" (26) 'transcribe humanity, at least bits of it,' even if only "un bleu estropié" (26) 'a crippled blue.'

9. The term is from fellow poet Emmanuel Hocquard in his 2001 *ma haie* ('my hedge') (462). On the "inverse elegiac" see Glenn Fetzer's "The Way of the Elegiac."

10. Fourcade wrote *deuil* directly following the death of his friend and editor, Paul Otchakovsky-Laurens. *Black Flags* was reinstalled in October-December 2017 at the French satellite of the Gagosian Gallery. The entire installation is "murdered out" (*deuil* 11), a phrase Fourcade discovered in Jennifer Piejko's online review of the installation.

11. "Tout arrive" was the motto Edouard Manet occasionally used as letterhead. Fourcade came across it on a letter addressed to Mallarmé, and that was included in the 1998 exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay, marking the centenary of Mallarmé's death.

12. Fourcade addresses this lack of forward motion in his 1985 interview with Frédéric Valabrègue: "Je n'ai pas du tout l'impression d'avancer. Et je ne le recherche pas. Ça n'est pas mon vocabulaire et ça n'est pas mon problème. . . . Je tourne autour de l'objet. Je tourne l'objet cinématographiquement" (68) 'I do not feel like I'm moving forward at all. And I'm not looking for this. That's not my vocabulary and that's not my problem. . . . I turn around the object. I turn the object cinematographically.' For a study of 'precession' in Fourcade's work, see my article "Dominique Fourcade: *M W*, *CHUTE* ou 'offcut'."

13. "Hendiadys" is the rhetorical device whereby an idea is expressed with two words linked by the connector "and" when one word would suffice ("thunderous and loud" for "thunderously loud"). An "isocolon" is another device whereby separate parts of a sentence are composed of equal length, structure, and rhythm. The common example is Julius Caesar's "veni, vidi, vici." The title *eux deux fées* is an isocolon as is, nearly, "tactique beauté."

14. In the context of Forsythe's *Black Flags*, in *deuil* Fourcade writes: "Cézanne le premier à être arrivé à un état robotique de la peinture" (58) 'Cézanne the first to have reached a robotic state of painting.' We get the sense that Manet's "tout arrive" is already the premonition of this "état robotique" whereby there is "une révolution de chaque seconde de chaque syllabe" (*Citizen Do* 68) 'a revolution of each second of each syllable.'

15. The reproductions take up thirty-seven of *M W*'s sixty-five pages.

16. Focus on the space between objects is another constant of Fourcade's work. In *Le ciel pas d'angle* (1983), to perceive this space "était en même temps voir que les vides comptaient autant que les pleins; ne plus jamais pouvoir ne pas le voir" (90) 'was at the same time to see that the empty [spaces] counted as much as the full [spaces]; never again able to not see it.' His mention of the tripod recalls Manet's "three-legged" amputee, the robotic/prosthetic arms of Forsythe's *Black Flags*, as well as the poet as soliped (his pen on paper), evoked in *Nous du service des cygnes* ('We of the service of swans'): "Nous sommes des solipèdes / Au membres que ne termine qu'un sabot" 'We are solipeds / With limbs ending only in a hoof.'

17. Fourcade connected this internal light to both Manet and Matisse in his essay titled "Matisse et Manet?" (1983): "pas la lumière atmosphérique des impressionnistes, mais la lumière du dedans de la peinture, une lumière comme contenue dans la chair même de l'objet et invisible tant qu'elle n'est pas peinte" (30) 'not the atmospheric light of the impressionists, but the light from the inside of painting, a light as though contained in the very flesh of the object and invisible as long as it is not painted.'

18. Fourcade's conversation with Jean-Michel Maulpoix highlights the impact on his writing of Balanchine's modulations of speed. See *Improvisations et arrangements* (306).

19. In *Cinpoetry: Imaginary Cinemas in French Poetry*, Christophe Wall-Romana makes passing reference to a potential connection between Fourcade's writing and the sister notion of "cinépoésie" (373) 'cinpoetry,' a term coined by Pierre Alféri.

20. Zanco does not use the term "photogénie," but does see it at work in Barragan's use of Armando Salas Portugal's photographs that "establish a silent dialogue with his architecture which would just as silently be modified in response to the images produced" (88).

21. References to geese and to a Cadillac correlate with photographs reproduced in *The Quiet Revolution*: The geese are photographed floating on a pond in

Barragan's *Jardines del Pedregal* (201), while the Cadillac is Barragan's own (211).

22. In "Material World: Matisse, his Art and Textiles," Hilary Spurling notes that textile fragments "were in [Matisse's] blood. He could not live without them" (15). Their place and the process of their making is equally discernable in Fourcade's work. Regarding Matisse's collection of Coptic fabric scraps, see Rémi Labrusse, "'What Remains Belongs to God': Henri Matisse, Alois Riegl and the Arts of Islam" (55).

23. Fourcade's reading of Matisse echoes Clement Greenberg's "Influences of Matisse" for the 1973 exhibition at the Acquavella Galleries: "it was as though Matisse (like Monet) felt that in order to expand the range of easel painting, he had to de-convolute it and make it centrifugal in organization instead of centripetal."

24. Brushing aside the "veracity debate" that engulfed Capa's photograph is entirely in keeping with Fourcade's sense that what matters is photography's ability to expose the immobility inherent to the body in motion.

25. In *Nous du service des cygnes*, Fourcade referred to poets as les "sismographes inutilisés du neuf . . . engagés dans les tremblements de terre qui n'ont pas encore lieu" 'unused seismographs of the new . . . engaged in earthquakes that have not yet taken place.'

26. *The Falling Man* was first reproduced in the *New York Times* on September 12, 2001. It is one image among many others that show this man tumbling to his death.

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