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I stood on a hill, and there I saw the Old approaching, but it came as the New.

It crowled along an new crutches, such as had never before been seen, and it stank of the new vapors of decay, such as had never before been smelled.

A stone rolled by as if it were the latest invention, and the war cries of the gorillas, beating their chests, rang out as the latest compositions.

All around graves lay thrown open, and they were empty, when the New made its way towards the capital.

Round about stood creatures fit to inspire terror and cried out: Here comes the New, it's all new, hail to the New, be new like us! And whoever had ears to hear heard only their shouting; but whoever had eyes to see saw those who were not shouting.

So the Old strutted along disguised as the New; yet in the triumphal procession it led the New along too, and the New was paraded as the Old.

The New walked in chains and rags, through which you could see its naked shining limbs.

And they processed along in the night, but there was a red fire in the sky, and that was seen as the red of dawn. And the cries: Here comes the New, it's all new, hail to the New, be new like us! would have been all the more clearly audible had they not been drowned out by the thunder of artillery.

> Bertolt Brecht, 1938 Translated by Tom Kuhn and David Constantine

Brecht's poem is the inspiration behind the forty-panel panoramic painting on cardboard by Zoe Beloff, reproduced here. Created between 2017 and 2021, the picture is an allegory of the American body politic in dark times. It is accompanied by Beloff's essay *The Troublemakers: History Painting in the Real World*.

