

WHEN PIGS FLY

From the trees by the barn
seven pigs fly out -- pink angels --
and swoop to the lake for a swim
in water the color of pigs.

Now from the house comes the family,
the farmer taken a wife, son, daughter --
the bull, the cow, the boar, the sow --
they disturb the pigs, who lift,
swoop again, arrow south.

It's a sign of grace says daughter,
disgusting says wife, and impure.
Son points out the graceful pattern
of pigs and sky. Farmer swears, damn,
those pigs were expensive.

-- Laura Neary

Amherst MA

THE REINVENTION OF ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

The trapdoor in the black wall opened, and a seagull
flew directly in front of the black hangar over the
black floor. It was fixed from the roof, in front,
and from the right.

When all the stills were put together, there was an
overlapping moment of white-angled-silver, an inter-
connectedness looking, even to astonished eyes, spon-
taneous. There was an instantaneity in the three-
dimensional no-bird on its way where all lines meet in
the Great Identical. A lobed fungus growing from a
lobed fungus on a rotten tree in a wood growing in a
wood was as near relative to this bird as any other
bird.

The bird became a figure I needed to be convinced of.
It was stopped, pretendedly in motion. So the dead
chain of being becomes important. I will have to re-
animate this chain, crank it up to make the museum take
off.

I tried another approach. I placed a brilliant point on the lumbar vertebrae of a man clothed in black walking away from my camera. The trails were snails, lines clear and yet incoherent in an early morning continuum, before the real sun. Yet I saw the revelation of the hip's hidden sacrifice. It dominated my eye. Then -- terror, as the ghost came apart, and when I came to reassemble the skeins I found it hard to believe in what I'd done. I had been haunted by desires, but the desires became lines of abstraction at exact intervals.

And yet, I had heard an unhearable music; had seen a flight that needed no air. The hip may have swayed itself out of existence, the bird complicated itself into infinity. But wings still flutter in my eyes. A back sways down steps. Explanations spring to my lips.

THE MICE AND THE WALAM OLUM

Eating lunch, though we've only just finished breakfast. Taking notes, reading. Getting sunburnt at the same time (a black moth settles on a yellow navel), something I've just taken to.

"I'm only doing this, you understand, to get my daily dose of Vitamin D."

"So you say. But pretty soon you'll be spreading your fingers, just like the rest of us."

I move the chair sideways and sit across it. The back struts were depriving me of my full stretch rights. I turn to the figures in my notebook, bring them up to date for tax rebate ("business trip").

"Maybe you should put down what I steal."

I hike it up a bit. Include the cosmetic case deer-mice gnawed through to get at the almonds (why's she keep nuts with rouge and lipstick?). The two resident rodents loom over me from the roof. Groom each other. From time to time one looks down. With one of their great variety of sounds, at length one remarks to the other:

"They are peaceful. They have great things. Who are they?"