

Word For/ Word

Issue 24. Summer 2014

www.wordforword.info

Word For/ Word is seeking poetry, prose, poetics, criticism, reviews, and visuals for upcoming issues. We read submissions year-round. Issue #25 is scheduled for February 2015. Please direct queries and submissions to:

Word For/ Word
c/o Jonathan Minton
546 Center Avenue
Weston, WV 26452

Submissions should be a reasonable length (i.e., 3 to 6 poems, or prose between 50 and 2000 words) and include a biographical note and publication history (or at least a friendly introduction), plus an SASE with appropriate postage for a reply. A brief statement regarding the process, praxis or parole of the submitted work is encouraged, but not required. Please allow one to three months for a response. We will consider simultaneous submissions, but please let us know if any portion of it is accepted elsewhere. We do not consider previously published work.

Email queries and submissions may be sent to: editors at wordforword dot info.

Email submissions should be attached as a single .doc, .rtf, .pdf or .txt file. Visuals should be attached individually as .jpg, .png, .gif, or .bmp files. Please include the word "submission" in the subject line of your email.

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Word For/ Word is open to all types of poetry, prose and visual art, but prefers innovative and post-avant work with an astute awareness of the materials, rhythms, trajectories and emerging forms of the contemporary. *Word For/ Word* is published biannually.

Jonathan Minton, Editor

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Word for/ Word

Susan Lewis

Dear Crutch

1.

+ sere crush,

by which you might

mean delusion viewed
through cartoon-colored

specs, new &
ancient variations

on the secret self.

Shelf life halved,

holed up in this
mythic stickiness,

licked as wicked
lips or any mother's

sun.

Say you need to

salvage no more
savagery than

the so-called
norm.

Say your lips float
like boats

on another man's
mirage
(visage closed as any
Sunday).

Locked like arms in
mad embrace

or tendrils squeezing
need beyond

reason or
return.

Unless you're ready
to unzip your

mastered soul.

Still waiting

longer than I
know, why not

applaud your
tardy courage?

Such nervy tips can't
be wrong.

Unless this inner clench
is what it is

& you ignore us
at your

timid
peril.

2.

All this in consequence
choking us up

like smoke &
waves,

rocking our hours,
odding our listing

keels.
That water you add

too toxic to inhale.

Open your skin,

reverse your gait,

fence your flaws until

too much flows with
not enough

& seeps the mammal milk
of kindness.

3.

Ask Oedipus what
comes for

halt &
halted.

Dappled & shot with
hollowed shades,

trailing our string
of left selves.

Alone together in
toxic colony,

dodging what we
dole,

waiting for fresh
permission—

Word for/ Word

Susan Lewis

Dear Beautiful Mind,

digging in
the dirt

bent on breath
behind veils

bent on tears
fucking poles

*(please sir can I have some
more management*

or skin
or blinking petals

& sweet-salt flick of
excitable tongues)?

Barking like trees,
disembarked from their

floating isles,
harmlessly brûlées—

dear waste,
must you always & forever?

How can we embrace
your brute dominion?

Dear me (aged),
how could you?

Dear me (prior),
how could *you*?

Dear nerves,
as if we could forget

the tool for this kind
of animosity—

until managerially inclined

like flotsam & jetsam

(home-bound &
wrist-bound),

humming like the
Rock of Ages,

trembling like
no tomorrow,

unless & until
tomorrow (n)ever—

Word for/ Word

Susan Lewis

Dear Openwork

Not only are there
faces in the windows,

there are faces
in the windows.

The market
claims to know

your opportunity
heuristic

(+/- worth).

Or so say

current currencies
concurrent with your

loss, leaving our
openwork sort

begging for the
ground beneath our

feet, tired of this
lacy frailty,

these tender strands
keen for the tickle

of slipped minutes,
looping round our limits.

Your beryl eyes
echo sea & sky,

facet & recede,
reflecting thin limbs

knotted like threads
against the stretched

vacancy inscribing

our meager bounds,

our vertiginous
reach

Scram Munch Creature

scram munch creature, fifty hogs are to fit in this glade
scram munch creature, Edvardvark, Edvardvarkian gingerbread carriage
scram munch creature, do not flounder on this illustrious fragrance
scram munch creature, though you are already dishonored

scram munch creature, I'm your above, & you're positively my below
scram munch creature, I must (munch), or you munch (must), restore these bears
scram munch creature, I must (MUST) add a comma after the 3rd "munch":
"scram munch creature, I must (munch), or you, munch (must), restore these bears"

scram munch creature, something about damsels staring from clouds (fleecy)
scram munch creature, I want (must) to see what's under these flowers
scram munch creature, few moon, scram, few moon (/ scram)
munch, moon, creature, scram, few, munch, moon, creature

scram munch creature, my charms are a thousand times weather-beaten!
scram munch creature, or do you claim to be acquainted with th'accrue circle?
scram munch creature, the collector FIRST beheld the horse, THEN,
scram munch creature, the collector wandered with her own contemplating light!

scram munch creature, your tumultuous dejection is not amusing my murderers
scram munch creature, go visit some other German palace
scram munch creature, you are versus what it's all about, at the very least
scram munch creature, the gigantic air is crowded with your immense numbers

Word for/ Word

Jeff Harrison

Extra Cherub

cherub in
bookshape,
well-
meaning
paper,
hopeful
bundle, an
extra cherub
with
the money
to marry
Fortune,
you've
gone
w/out
your coat,
shrug,
& genial
talking-over

Word for/ Word

Derek Pollard

Joshua's Bright Lily

A single peacock feather
Ablaze in the tree's winter
Branches

Each shivering angel
The glint of our desire

The new year come sudden
In Joshua's bright lily, verily
At the end

Of the last dead
Season

This sky is mine, this dome
Is mine, this heart is mine
Even though it is yours and
Is alone always

The sun brought to
The horizon's builded slant

Two rams tugging at
The border of heaven
Gold so loud there is no
Other, buds fluorescing
In the contrails' spill

These are names
We pass one to another
First the shiver, then
The glint

Word for/ Word

Michael Joseph Walsh

from Glossolalia

It's raining. What shall we do?

Try opening and closing your eyes. It is dark in the room because there is no window.

Who is behind this table?

No one.

I think you're mistaken about that.

Whom do you hear?

It's Charles.

I think you're mistaken about that.

What does that mean?

He has been a deaf mute since birth.

He can write on the wall, but he does not wish to write on the wall.

Are you taking me to dinner, or is he?

That doesn't seem to be my responsibility.

What does that mean? You are before me. I see you.

Try opening and closing your eyes.

Xia yǔ le. Zěnmē ban?

Nuneul tteotda kamatda hae boseyo. Il fait sombre dans la chambre parce qu'il n'y a pas de fenetre.

Qui est derriere cette table?

Personne.

Wǒ xiǎng nǐ nā yang bu dui.

Qui entendez---vous?

C'est Charles.

Wǒ xiǎng nǐ nā yang bu dui.

Que quiere decirlo?

Taeyeonamyeonseo buteo beongeoriya.

Il peut écrire sur le mur, mais il ne veut pas écrire sur le mur.

Shi nǐ qǐng wǒ chīfan, haishi tā qǐng wǒ chīfan?

Keugeon nae chaegimi aninkeot gateunde.

Que quiere decirlo? Vous etes devant moi, je vous vois.

Nuneul tteotda kamatda hae boseyo.

Michael Joseph Walsh

from *Glossolalia*

What subject do you most dislike?

The couple whispering in a voice so quiet that you could barely make out what they were saying. We spoke for a long time of you and, later, we took a walk in the park where we met in August. The strong winds blew the tree down. A hole was bored into the mountain. You said, "Take care of it even if it means locking the house and leaving it unattended." You said, "You really dance beautifully when the sky is covered with clouds." I have absolutely no idea where I was or what I was doing there at this time last year. I would rather die than live like this. I go to bed very late in the evening. I know everyone here.

Que tema te hacen la mayor aversion?

Teullillag mallakhan chageun soriro soksagin geu namnyeo. Nous avons parle longuement de vous et, plus tard, nous avons fait une promenade au parc ou nous avons recontre en Aout. El arbol fue derribado por los vientos fuertes. Sane keuri ttulhryeotda. Yeolswehro muneul jamkeugoseorado ireul bogo orago haetda. Nǐ shuō, nǐ tiao wǔ tiao de tai hǎo le quand le ciel est couvert de nuages. Jangnyeon imam ttae eodiseo mwol haetdeonji tong moreugetda. Ireohke saneuni boda jungneun ge natketda. Wǒ wǎnshang hěn wǎng cai shui jjiao. Zher měi ge ren wǒ dōu renshi.

Michael Joseph Walsh

from Glossolalia

People are always changing, aren't they? I can break my watch, but I do not wish to break it. I have many friends, but none of them are here. My doctor says I should exercise, but I need a ball or a jump rope or some sort of exercise paraphernalia [and I really don't care what kind]. I have a handsome income. I am obliged to open my mouth. We speak to communicate our ideas to other people. Like them, we need to eat. It suits me perfectly. I walk home from school. It is cold, but I am not wearing a lot of clothes. We jumped into the water with our clothes on, of course. So I will not go dancing tonight. Animals generally love their little ones, but the love of our mother is very much stronger. I think you're mistaken about that. We do not like to touch dirty things. Everything—the house and the furniture—was burned in the fire. I feel dizzy. It wasn't my fault. Let me sit by you and whisper sweet---nothings in your ear. How many glasses of water did you drink? What would you do if I kissed you right now? What is the great difference between man and animal? Do you think it is acceptable to drink yourself into a coma? Are girls afraid of spiders, snakes and mice? Is there any reasonable expectation that monkeys never fall from trees? I love your long blonde hair. People are always changing, aren't they? We have, in the mind, pictures, called ideas. Please don't tell anyone.

Ren zǒng shi zai bian, bu shi ma? Je peux casser ma montre, mais je ne veux pas la casser. Pěngyou wǒ yǒu hěn duō, kěshi dōu bu zai zher. Uisaga undongeul harajiman, gongiradeunji julneomgiradeunji mwo undonggiguna isseoya hajiyo. Nae suibeun wenmanhae. Je suis obligé d'ouvrir la bouche. Nous parlons pour communiquer nos idées a d'autres personnes. Comme eux, nous avons besoin de manger. Il me convient tout a fait. Jibeseo hakgyokkaji georeowayo. Chuunde oseul manhi an ibeosda. Oseul ibeun chaero mure ttwio deureogassjiyo. Suǒyi wǎnshang wǒ bu qu tiao wǔ. Les animaux aiment généralement leurs petits, mais l'amour de notre mere est bien plus fort. Wǒ xiǎng nǐ nā yang bu dui. Nous n'aimons pas toucher les chose sales. Jibimyeo gagumyeo ontong da bure tasseoyo. Me mareo. No tuve la culpa. Dejame sentarme y decir halagos a vuestro oido. Nǐ hēle jǐ bēi shuǐ? .Que harias si te besara ahora mismo? Quelle est la grande difference entre l'homme et l'animal? Insabulseongi doel jeongdoro sureul masimyeon doegesseupnikka? Les jeunes filles ont---elles peur des arraignees, des serpents et des souris? Wonsungineun namuseo tteoreojiji mallaneun beobi issnayo? Me encanta vuestra melena rubia. Ren zǒng shi zai bian, bu shi ma? Nous avons dans le cerveau des images appelees idées. Nuguege malhaji maseyo.

Word for/ Word

Michael Joseph Walsh

from Glossolalia

Good morning, Charles. How are you?

I am in front of the window. I am a little bit unhappy.

You are in front of the window.

You are a little bit unhappy.

But you are thinking of your lesson now.

You do not leave because you do not wish to.

Yes, perfect.

You feel pleasure on seeing or hearing
pleasant things.

I eat everything, whether it be meat or fish.

Yes, perfect.

Fear is another emotion.

Go ahead and eat it if you like.

Buenos días, Carlos. Como esta?

Je suis devant la fenetres.

Wǒ yǒu yidiǎnr bu gāoxíng.

Vous etes devant la fenetre.

Nǐ yǒu yidiǎnr bu gāoxíng.

Pero Ud. piensa ahora en su leccion.

Vous ne sortez pas parce que vous ne voulez pas.

Oui, parfaitement.

Vous eprouvez du plaisir en voyant ou en entendent des chose agreable.

Naneun gogimyeo saengseonimyeo gariji anko jal meogeoyo.

Oui, parfaitement.

La peur est une autre emotion.

Meokgo sipeumyeon meogeo boryeom.

Robyn Aft

Bust Moment

In your version of events everything happens
not so much the opposite of the way
I describe it as more or less
definitively *not that*.
So much bombards us, I mean the way
the breeze carries its pheromonic swells
past the center for at-risk youth,
September casting its nubby
and self-referential shadow.
Cruising off the exit with the kiddies sacked-out
in back, rocking my Uggs
and my signature Disgruntled-Housefrau chic,
the moon rises lusty and fatuous
like the things that happen in us
only at night. I believe there are things
that happen in us only at night.
Lugging the brokedown artillery southward.
The Parkway humming between the trees.
The azaleas brutalized by wind.
I could've said a lot of stuff, and didn't.

Robyn Art

Dear Disgruntled Consituents,

it was pretty much about keeping
the social machinery ahum; if not ahum,
at least marginally astir.
Rent increase, grit on the lettuce,
the Himalyan snow leopard bereft
of it indigenous clime,
the blogospheric whirring in everything now,
even the rain blathers it damp niceties
to a churlish wind, wind a barb
of diffident shadow.
Some days, squiring the offspring about town
in the midsize sedan,
rolling the cart through the soup aisle
of the warehouse megastore with the moms
and the Disaster-Prep hobbyists,
I recall: Ah, youth, chillaxin' in the food court,
A blast of a.c. against the coagulatory July air,
somewhere between glam rock and the Oldies,
the arable plains and centers of mass entertainment; Ah,
Nostalgia, slamming coffee while an etiolated moon
loiters behind the trees, the getaway car idling curbside
as the long-haired, on-the-lam blonde
decamps from the Quik-Check restroom
a shorn and pixie brunette; ah, youth,
mordant and cruel,
Non-specifically crepuscular—
We're simpatico.
We go way back.

Robyn Art

Weapons in the Home

Suddenly, we don't eat out.
We don't "grab something" on the road.
Suddenly, there's very
little road to be had.
There's the New Austerity
which isn't that different
from the Old Austerity.
Way back (this would be '92)
everyone was drinking ten glasses of water a day,
not yet hop to the hypotremia scare.
Little more divided our childhoods
than the presence or absence
of secondhand smoke.
There's back pain.
There's all this laundry to do.
Every so often, we invoke
what is generally known as The Old Days:
Hustling on the midway,
jumping off the trestle,
shit that way funny maybe
twenty years back.

Word for/ Word

Libby Hart

Mutable

Corvus Corax

His thought grew from fairy martin to goldfinch.
It turned behind his eyes, a bustle of chirrup and feather—
flashes of yellow then russet then white.

Swallow shook its cage. Pipit undid the lid.
Plover fled to the outer world. His reflection
lifting from wily wet to kingfisher, to starling,
then blush of musk lorikeet.

Blackbird spoke blackbird words. Turtledove joined in.
Kestrel flourished to lapwing, to boobook,
then silver gull sway.

Next was enigma's razzle-dazzle,
a raucous piece of sky.
Sweet thunder roiled to *roughest folksong*
when wolf-bird became Raven drone.

Shadow drone warbled dark rumination.
Predator drone invoked his secret name;
a howl-song so piercing it brought the Reaper drone.

Libby Hart

Nest

The house wren has built a pirate ship.
It sits in the dry dock of an abandoned hive;
the closest wave is a brush of hail.

Tiny realm, miniature fortress,
it has netted swashbuckling and swaggering
with its fledgling skulls, its hairpin crossbones.
Death, it says. *Don't come near*, it says. *Meet your maker*.

Yet life forms within its inner cup
lined with soft bark, with wool and fine grasses.
Leave those pins and rusty nails to the outer casing,
I want to rest right here.

libby Hart

Branwen's bidding

Sturnus vulgaris

When your heart is eager and your muscles ready,
catalogue all you know.
Glean a screech of barn owl, a burr of tractor,
and echo the butcher's fury—of how his fist pummels bone.
Muster these soundings inside your throat,
repeat them with me.

Then speak his name, ring it true.
Call to him, as only his sister calls to him.
Look for him in cloud and on wave. Look for him.

Seek him out when landfall comes, in city and on field.
Then rest against his overcoat
and mimic me, speak as only his sister speaks.
Unfurl this coiled letter I bind to wing
and swell to ruffle of flight feather,
to a glint of purple catching the light.

Note: Branwen was a Welsh princess who married a High King of Ireland. Her marriage was happy at first, but through a series of wrongdoings by her half-brother she was sent away and forced to undertake gruelling work as a form of punishment by association. As part of her punishment she was to be beaten by the butcher every day. Branwen took in a starling and trained it to mimic her so it could locate her older brother, Bran, and deliver a letter that detailed everything she was enduring.

Word for/ Word

Oscar Oswald

Equinox

Something posture
or trees barely
empty
another empty
Afraid
of nothing, blinking
the answer to my grass
The grass
is wonderful,
full of yellow
Two lamps
echo it
to be, blooming
by human hands

Word for/ Word

Oscar Oswald

Shorthand

is start. Stretch
its legacy thin
as the age of wood. No hostages.
Ornament, shaping up
to be shed from prehistory, flakes
and sheds its surface
for another: laughter, the lip
around the whale. This is not
to support havoc, havoc
is this,
supported. This again, this
theremin reaching ahead
like octagons and rectilinear
memory. I, organ, uncle
with nameless offspring, chandelier
floating in a lake.

Word for/ Word

Oscar Oswald

A Scene

as another time
happily the default
where there is space
an arm, hairy
alabaster must push
its arrival
the keyboard
which also rams
another time
into
whistling helplessly

Jenny Wu

from 60 Banned Books

*Cito prudents,
cito pii,
cito mariti,
cito patres,
cito sacerdotes,
cito omnis officii capaces et curiosi.*

1.

Beneath a painted rose vignette
I mimic my mother, putting away the bread,
Washing sediment into the quagmire.
A friend from another life once took me down to the wine cellar:
"Can I have a word with you?
I have saved this word from the revolution.
Let us finish it together."
I started hearing it--the singing, the
watery tune in my head, (I was
singing to a child) and I remembered
why I didn't think so much as a child.
It was because I was singing. (To
myself.) And then I remembered
how being a child was like living
without thinking--my adult self
treading through the woods haunted
by a voice that was not singing to me.

What now? Nothing lately. "Have you finally done it?"
She inquires down the hall. "Have you bought your old mother
Her eternal life?"

I quite like eating alone
Fucking heartbroken.
Days lengthening, shoes retiring--
spring: I open the window to my roof
and announce, No one's here! No
one's here again!
I take inventory of who's hungry:
Who's hungry? Enter the gentle priest
who one on a ship to
America assured me I was not,
despite what I may have thought (in
all my youth and glory, hopped up
and waving newspaper clippings) a
mistake.

14.

A library for banned books:

Either there was nothing outside or there was a ceaseless thunderstorm
Carrying a strange song and an even stranger singer.
The librarian had a cold. She suckled her cigarette with a seasick expression.
My mother put on gloves as she walked by and out the door,
Imagining the palace of Kubla Khan, the far east before it met the far blue west,
A land pregnant with mythos, fear, and ecstasy. Bird in box.
She removed from her pocket a hide book whose
Wrinkles lay flat, uncombed, and penciled in an entry. *There are only
three types of people I trust:
intellectuals, doctors, and barbers.* Lights navigated around her,
Twine-colored and restless forms. She had been to Meter Dei, God's driftwood,
And knew what would happen if a mouse jumped over a candlestick,
Miscalculated by a fine gray hair, and, in awe, threw itself upon the curtains,
The rug, the books, the lampshades, etc. cinders & smoke.
Eventually the floor would sink under red anthills, she imagined,
The balustrade, the ottomans, the window's two-barred cross,
Inks, charcoals: their muscadine odor would offend the canary
Who rattles the cage with his toe.
Tropical trees would sprout overnight from the walls,
Slowly rattling and stretching, limbs asunder,
A fresh rubbery noise, letting their tendrils breathe.
She sat on her bed. Two shadows cast from the door:
A moment later one was gone, but she heard him in the garden,
Where he began to prey upon the vegetation, lying down in it,
Acquiescent and giddy and pulling the branches of flowering camellia near to his face.

17.

Harmonium

She's been away, by the sea,
For once, seeing everything.
Pewter, she says.

33.

He had been taking a hot shower, the shadow recalls, scrubbing his body raw
with a pinch of salt flattened against his palm
& letting the steam out from the window above the drain.
It was a primitive darkness on both sides of the window
when he decided to travel the world, out of the filth of the city,
veering off to take on a mile of dust, to hobble past the expansive countryside,
with its lakes as green as soap & its ducks fluffing themselves out of wooden shacks
like seas of palpating white hearts. The boles of distant mountains stood there with
the mysterious and frustrating grace of an unfinished bridge, stretching into nowhere.
They were treading upon the divine lives of farmers. Two shadows among others.
The ochre rust turned green with the coming of night
& hung about the tiled walls and windows like dressing on a ship underwater,
where the train came to its last stop: a mum fog rose from the outskirts.
They were running low on water and the menagerie of farmers
were beginning to stagger out of their rubble
as if they had just fallen out of the sky onto a new continent

when the little foreboding road broke down into sand.
He waited at the door in the primitive garden as his friend disappeared into the fronds
& carnivorous roses. A vine through the eye.
"Bloomed out of his mind," he said, and I did not believe this story.

42.

"When you come upon the dog-eared page,"
they said,

 "Do not be fooled by god.

 It is god against the entire universe.

 And this is the age of the universe!"

Sometimes pain lifts the soul into the night sky:

A shadow theater of one hand.

 We are alone but not hidden.

Full of desire, the moon climbs out of the well.

The sculptures are washed by rain.

Memory speaks the mantra of what we must be: even freer, even freer...

One invisible guest mingles with coattails and shoes.

Escapes from the wedding to some ancient riverbed,

Cracks a macadamia as he walks.

Who would want to move south?

The city is restless. Everyone is waiting for something they paid for.

The muted August heat rises from their heads,

having drawn the day's contributions toward a collective enchantment.

August birds in all wolf-colors

Had scorned Mother's gifts, laughing, O please!

Another *clandestine* sonnet!

Our sculptures tell us what it means to be human:

So many heads without bodies. So many bodies without heads.

Within every solid object are a thousand gears unwinding,

elegies grow like grape vines where the optic nerve should be, vines hold up the moon.

"When you come upon the dog-eared page."

I asked the abyss but the abyss answered too quickly.

59.

My mother's song

My mother's song

My song

My song My song

Light that does not shine does not exist.

Once again, the real world triumphs over the divine.

Old ozymandias in gold, those rings you wear,

All ten fingers,

What do they mean?

Why do you beckon me with the black stone and cup my face with hardened flesh?

And will I get a seat in heaven? After all?

Or must I lean on walls as it is on earth?

"Let me tell you a story." "No more."

Before us, the carcasses of shrimp. A weightless life of slime leaks out of them,

In the hot afternoon. We begin using the word *life* in place of *quantity*:

A life of grain, measured out. A great life of time spent without a home.

"The shelter of the palmetto awaits."

"Even before I have finished writing about earth you are tempting me with thoughts of heaven."

60.

Encomium

We will scatter this light
over the black ocean,
hands
Or no
hands.

Word for/ Word

Michael Robins

A Leg to Stand On

As if a bead of water
stopped in a book,

you pencil the ears
of memorable pages

In the annals of elsewhere,
the mule has
expired—

 Raindrops
& charmed, it's as if

you were that word
by which we sore...

Scratched, retraced

You nurse the goat
graced on our porch

Word for/ Word

Michael Robins

Your Drunken Kisses

They are wholesome
they believe—

Legs
of patience, patiently
ruining their seams

Words describing them
best are _____

Betrayed, their fleshy

captions overhead like
an overflowing cage:

Turtle shell & alligator-
shaped,

wormwood,

apple & cloud-shaped

Word for/ Word

Michael Robins

Rehearsal

1

The blue threads say
we were here once

Once say springtime
& bourbon—

Plus

early worry settles
how the story ends

Every story ends...

Say tested a passage
point A to point B

Say where, say here

2

We began with ideas,

husbandry, its seed
taking hold—

Man's

hankering in perfume,
the tree by its ring...

You know how herds
cross the river calm,
partial, incomplete

Before you're born,
remember

Exactly

one says, is our death

I won't ever say it
right, but I'll begin
Our rest consumes,
ferries time—

Say

Bodiless, that family
Model Ts, wagons,
horses up 'til then—
Land bridge & feet
My family slipping
like mileposts away
Rolling head, family

Word for/ Word

Michael Keenan

22 astorian daylights for
hannah

22

joy-dark

sliver of winter

light,shiver

-ing

swim or

sway of

no dancer,I was
there,I

hear,and she
was a room,you

hear these
things you
hear from
the snow

21

19

cons-skyousnes-
-s splits
undead

mirror

18

of sincere-
ity's snow,fire

18

miracle scythe through a winter of stone

I dreamt of a snake

and you were there as the wing
of you'
re whisper was real
to me,painted silver
enclave of swimmers

16

gentlest of
voices,my

startled hook,how
bright with each stone
the net's melting
claw

15

over air
are there
more per-fec-
t words to the tenth of me,sphere

-ness of frangible sky.light

14

inherent mask,
hallway
ashaway

17

each place
is beginning,to
look like the place i

knew as prisms
know

torchless hour,how
 in
 love
 ,ship
 -lights or light
 -red,a minnow's touch

12

cloak in,winter's
 mouth,leashing
 un-l
 ashed light l
 am l am frost for her,her
 moth'swing

11

paper bird
 longing from
 air a-
 pear-
 -ent glass

10

drunken in
 a ditch for seven
 years watching
 the one-ing
 of who can
 say was it light
 or Rhode
 Island or the wind was i wrong
 about the every dark

9

your pain
t-
-ing appears as a face,cloven
mirage melti-n
g the mouth closing,eyes

8

softness of a window locking.

7

on crystal-line
street,
lake of 70th

6

the men rip
the ground
from the water.they

have always swum
here,cloaked

in a vio-
let hiero-glyphic

5

bound,less

blurring of
blueskinhair

4

of course,i
knew all of
this already

mandrakes

in mountain air,fruit-
less daggers olive

winds my ches-
t summer'
s clay

3

how is there so much silence in a bird
's.rainbow
noir.

2

after, noons

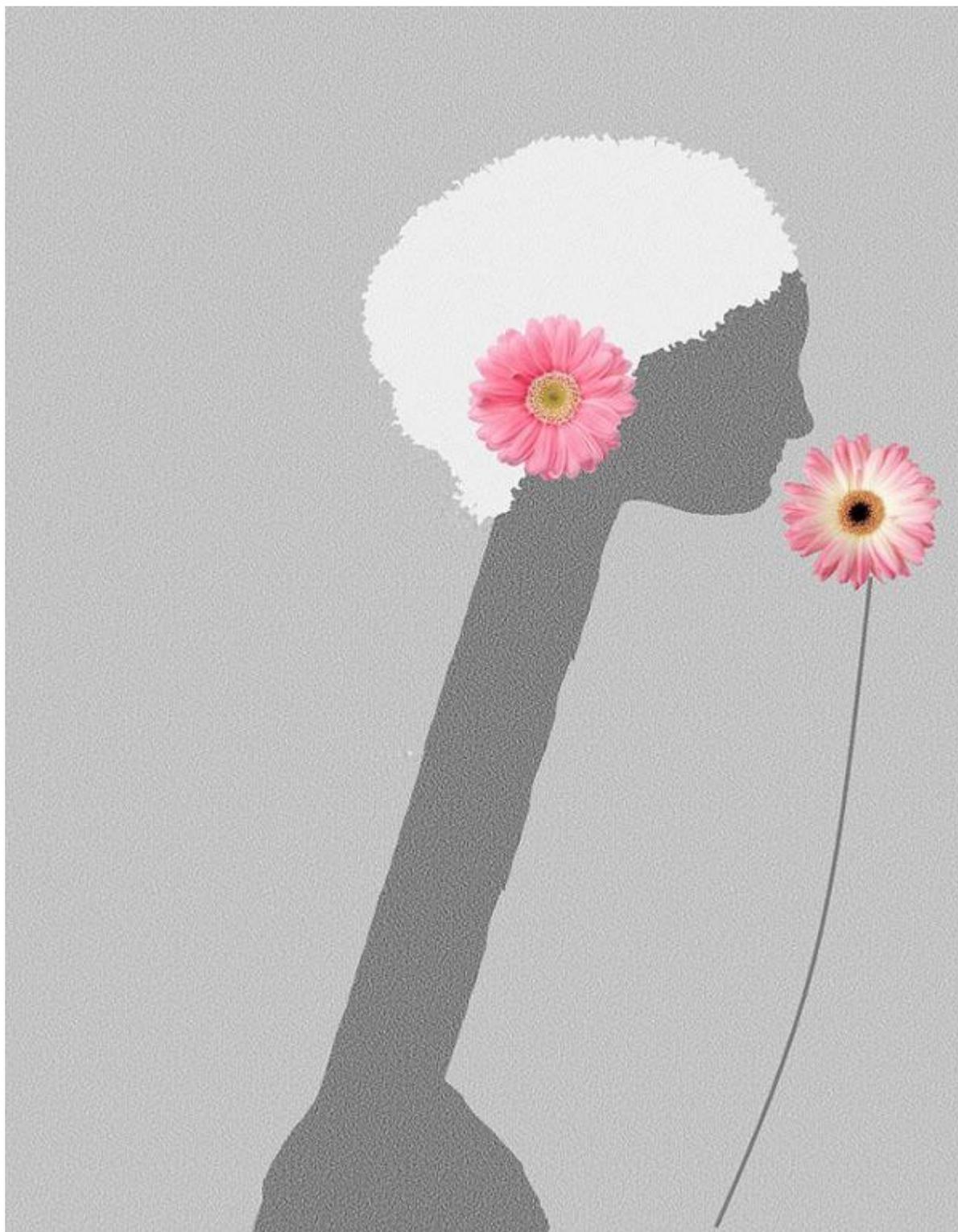
here
now

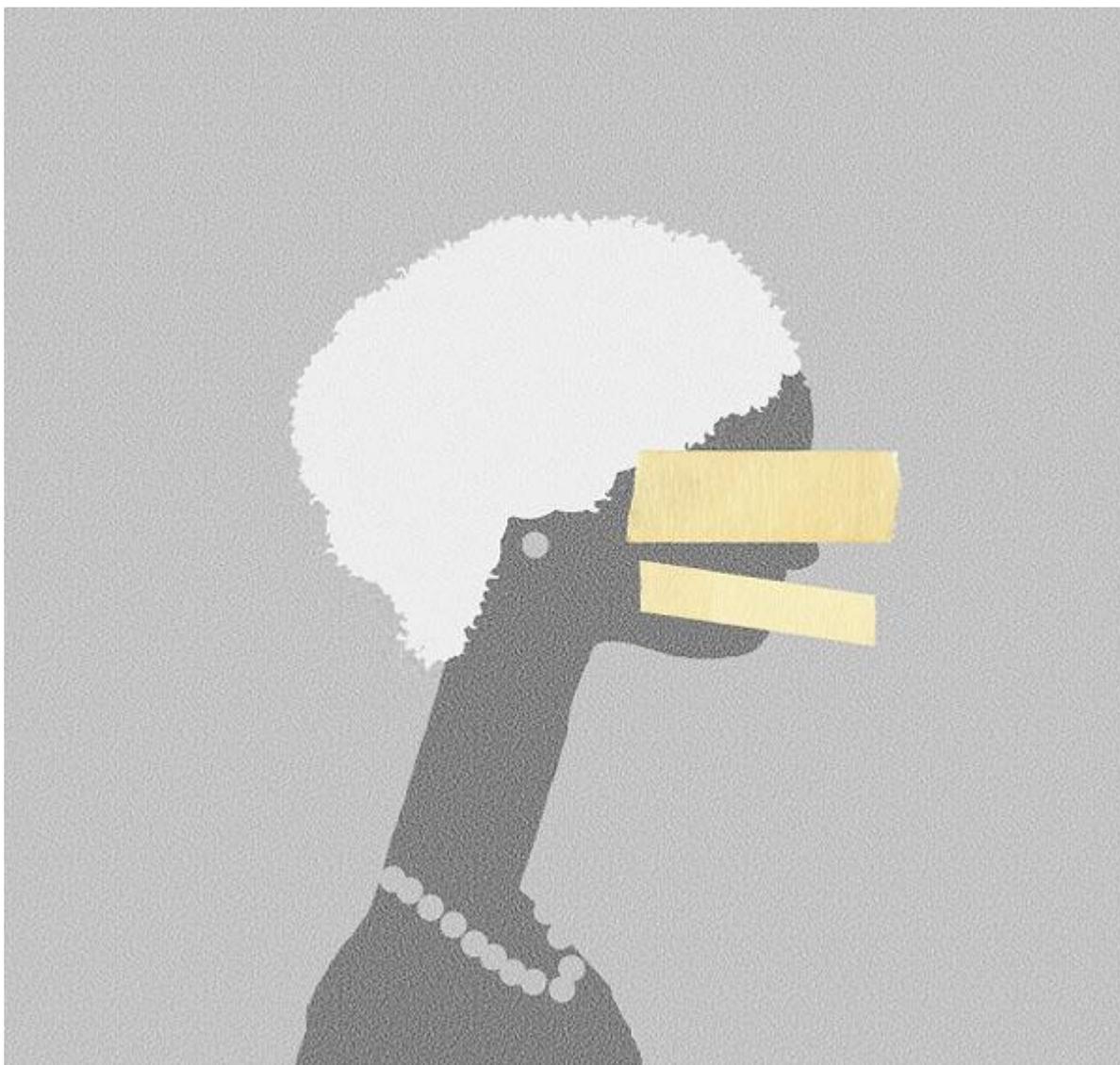
as.Windows
again, as

neon.rain1

Word for/ Word

Diana Magallón

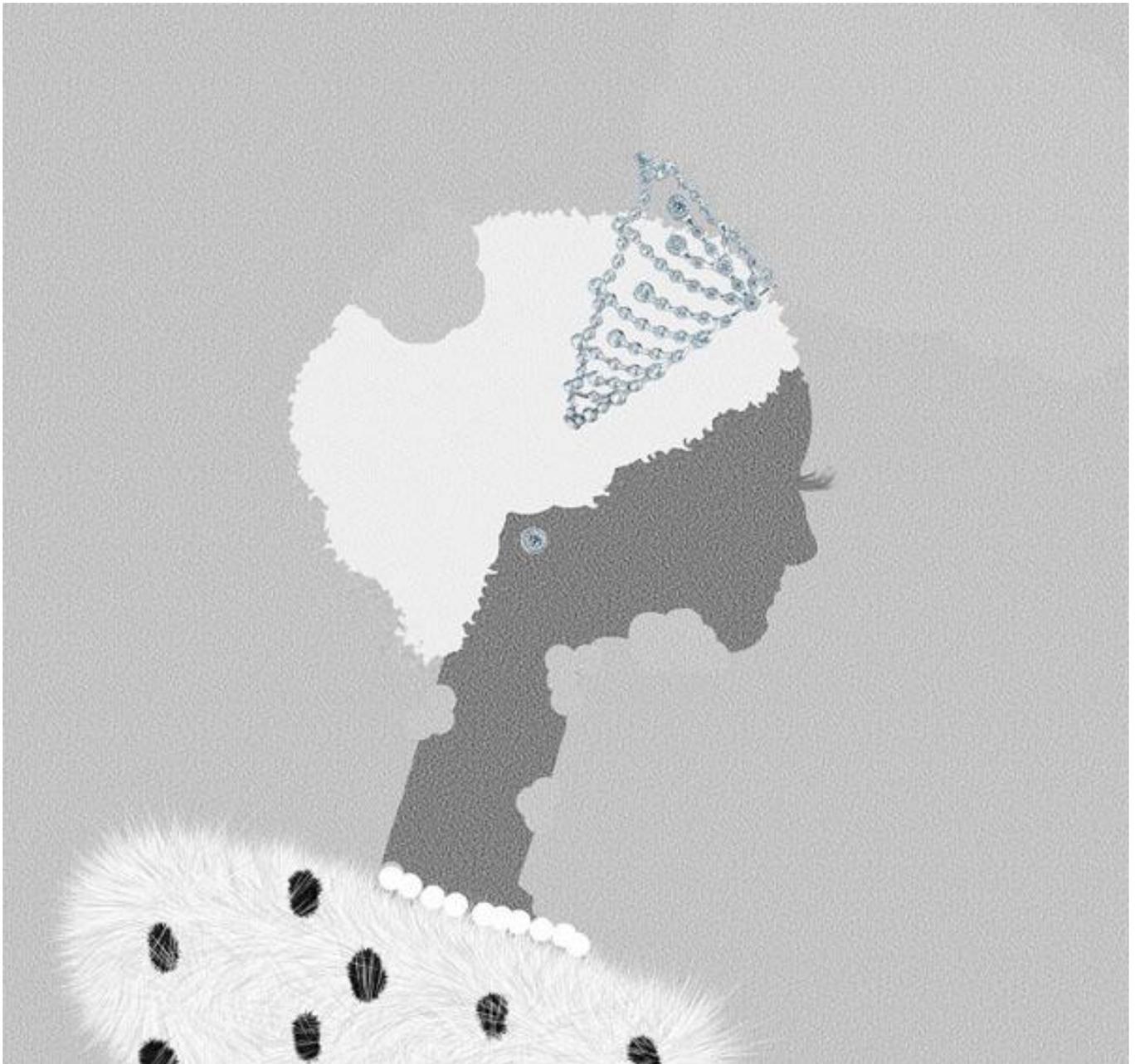




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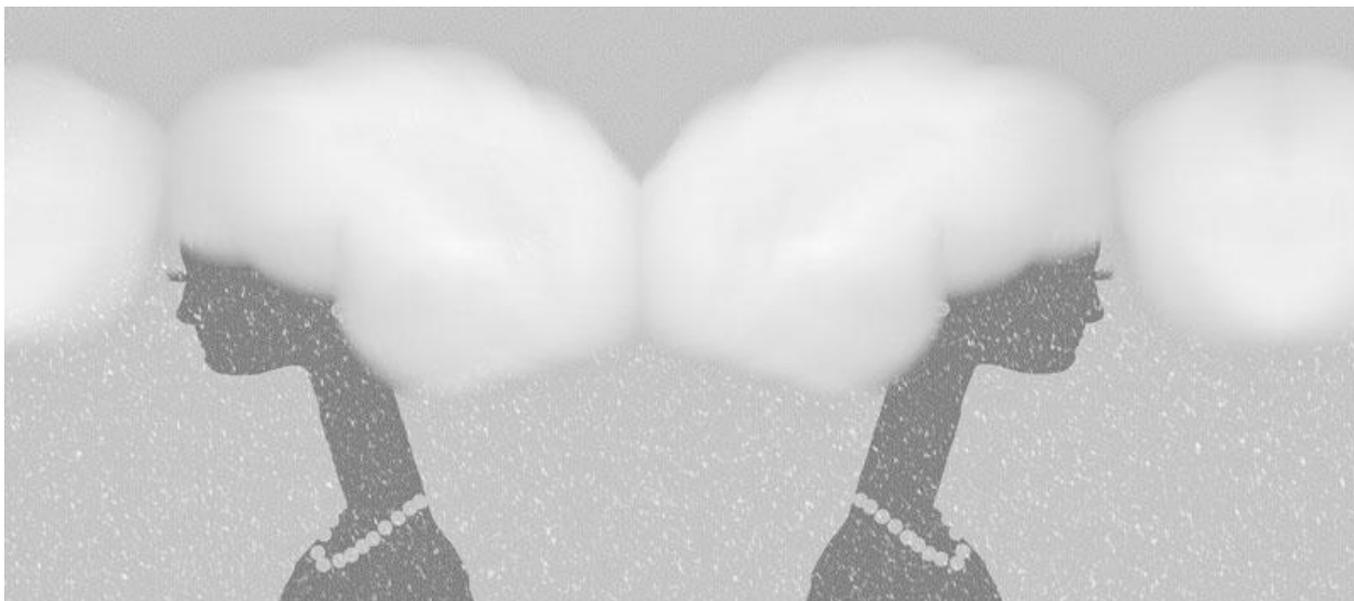
Diana Magallón

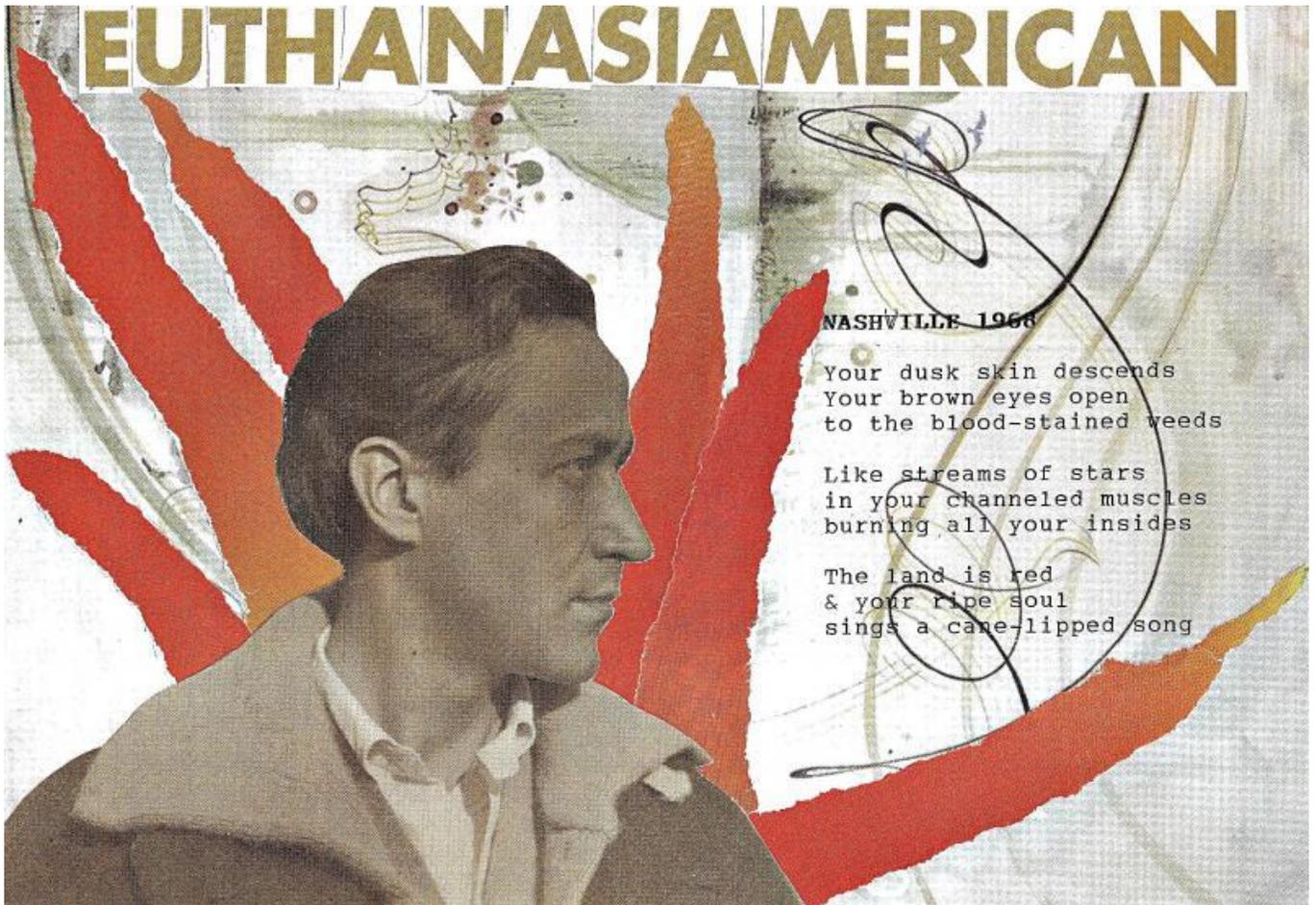




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Diana Magallón





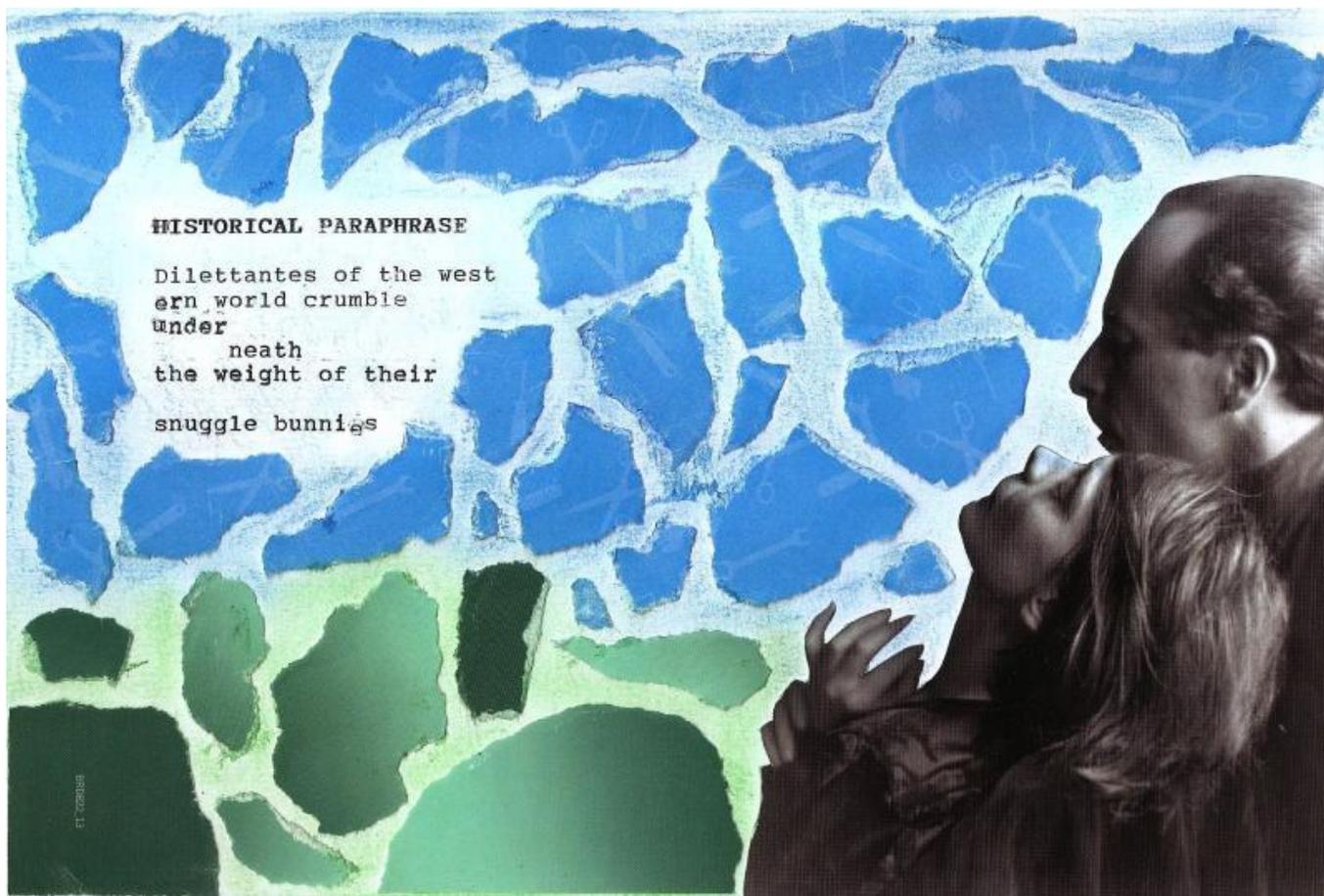
EUTHANASIA AMERICAN

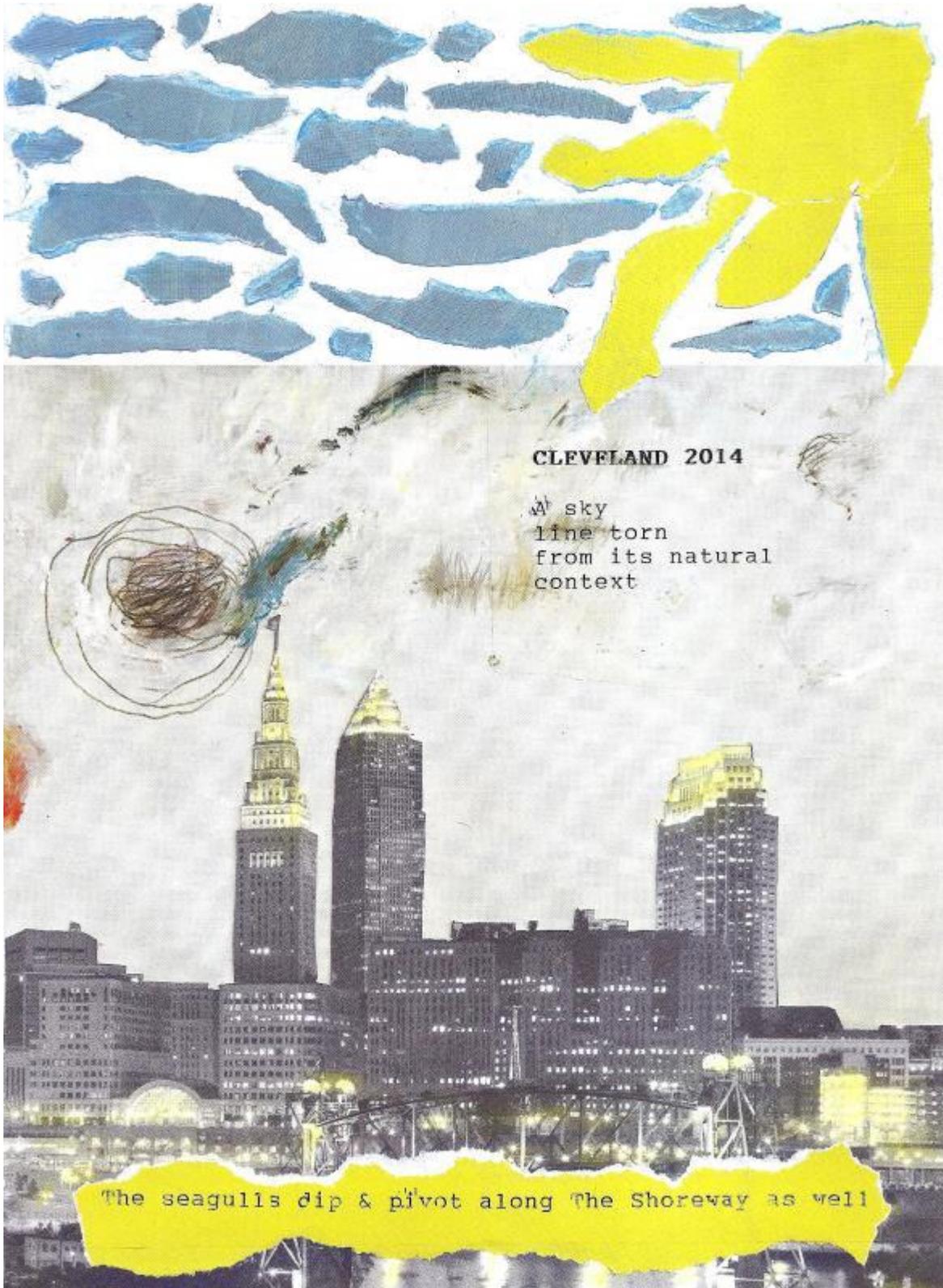
NASHVILLE 1966

Your dusk skin descends
Your brown eyes open
to the blood-stained weeds

Like streams of stars
in your channeled muscles
burning all your insides

The land is red
& your ripe soul
sings a cane-lipped song





NOCTURNAL FLOWERS

Slow kisses beside dark flowers
as we burst across the sea

Each one of our absurdities
will concoct themselves

within a busted lexicon
left alone to die at night

To bloom is just to breath
The phantom sings "I love you"

wrongly in twilight
as the sun fades into the moon

Nothing but suffering exists
inside the poem. Your proof

knows the songs of sonnets
are not dead, only sleeping

shaded by a blossom of some sick
plant turned planet

in the orbital remains of heaven
evacuated of everything

we will ever share. Patternless
patterns beget birds

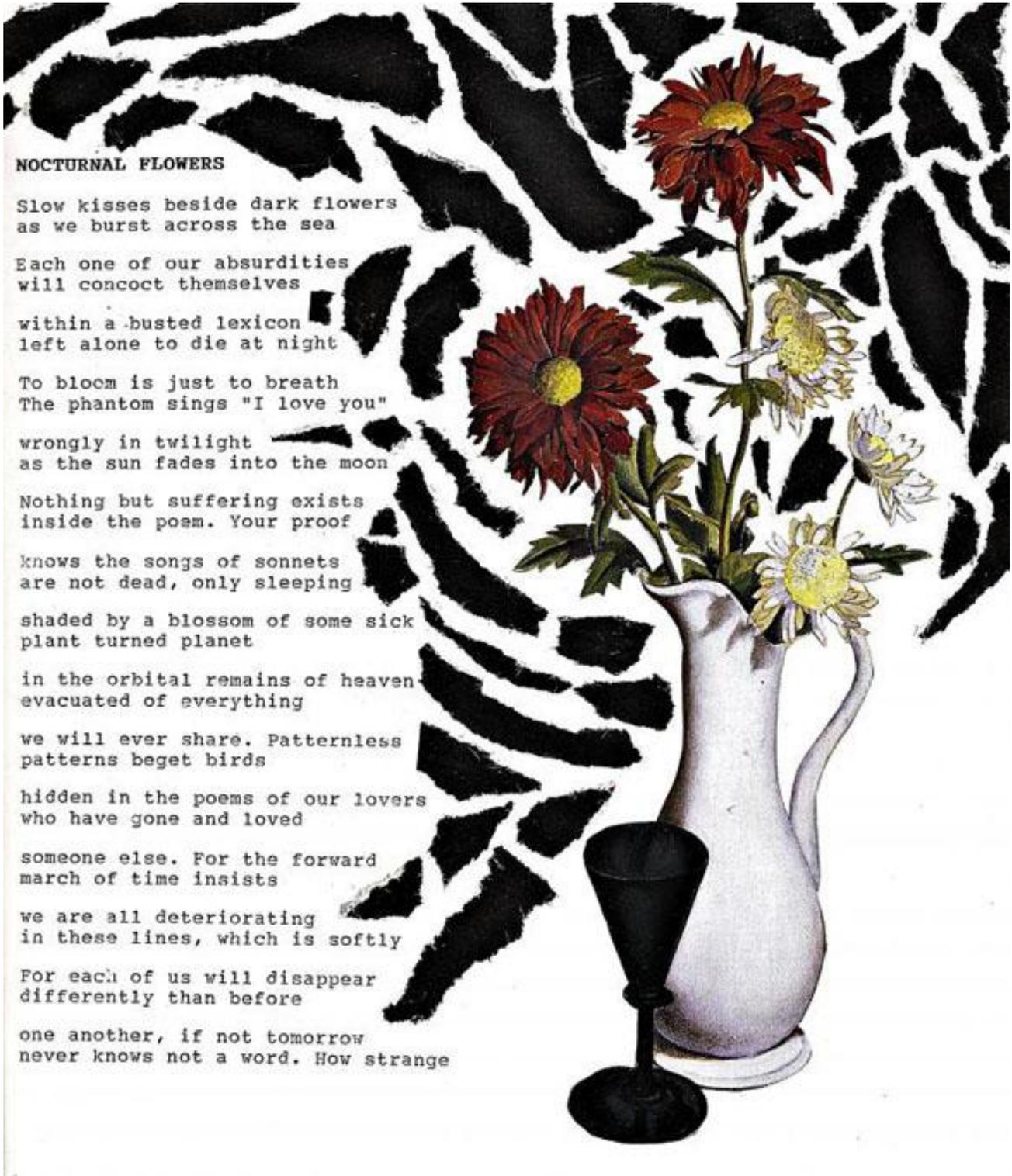
hidden in the poems of our lovers
who have gone and loved

someone else. For the forward
march of time insists

we are all deteriorating
in these lines, which is softly

For each of us will disappear
differently than before

one another, if not tomorrow
never knows not a word. How strange



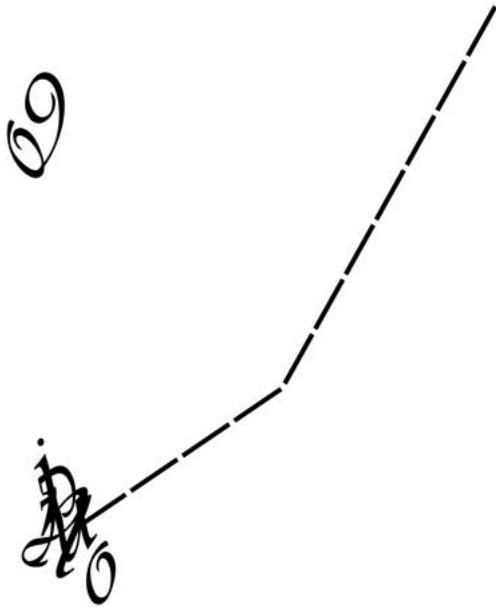
Word for/ Word

bruno neiva



Word for/ Word

bruno neiva



Music for Homemade Instruments

Handwritten text, possibly a subtitle or instrument name.

Handwritten musical notation consisting of 18 staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and bar lines, typical of a musical score. The paper is aged and has a torn edge on the right side.

Xenophobic Nightmare in a Foreign Language

making up with English language

Whereas, in the opinion of the Government of the United States the coming of bitter labor to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof:

Therefore, be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That from and after the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and until the expiration of ten years next after the passage of this act, the coming of bitter labor to the United States by and the same is hereby suspended; and during such suspension it shall not be lawful for any bitter labor to come, or landing to come after the expiration of said ninety days to remain within the United States.

That the master of any vessel who shall knowingly bring within the United States on such vessel, and land or permit to be landed, any bitter labor from any foreign port or place, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars for each and every such bitter labor so brought, and may be also imprisoned for a term not exceeding one year.

That any person who shall knowingly bring into or cause to be brought into the United States by land, or who shall knowingly

THE PHYSICS OF CHAOS:

THE PHYSICS OF CHAOS:

To the physics of chaos, the physics of
to the physics of chaos,
to the physics of chaos,
to the physics of chaos.

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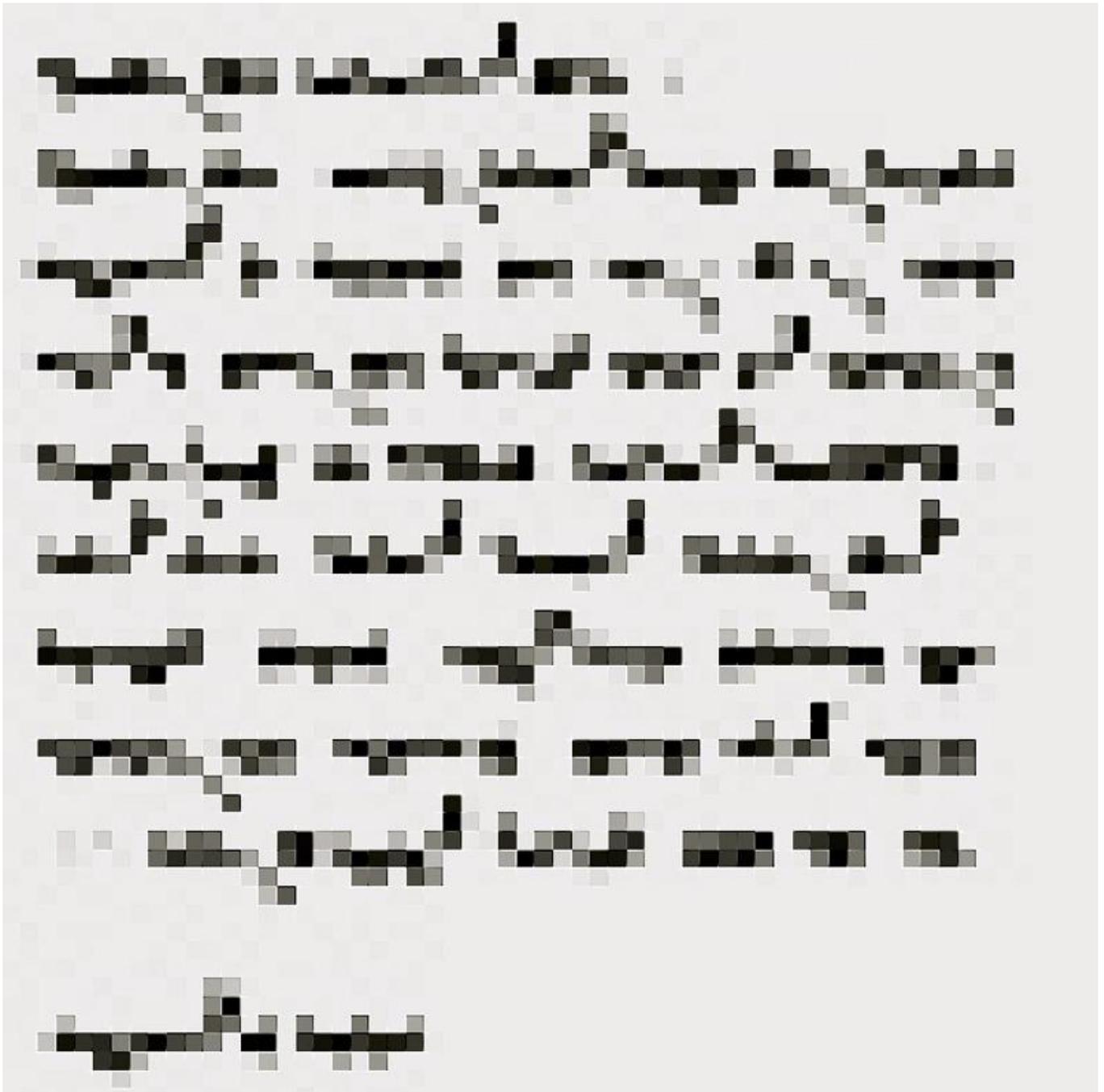
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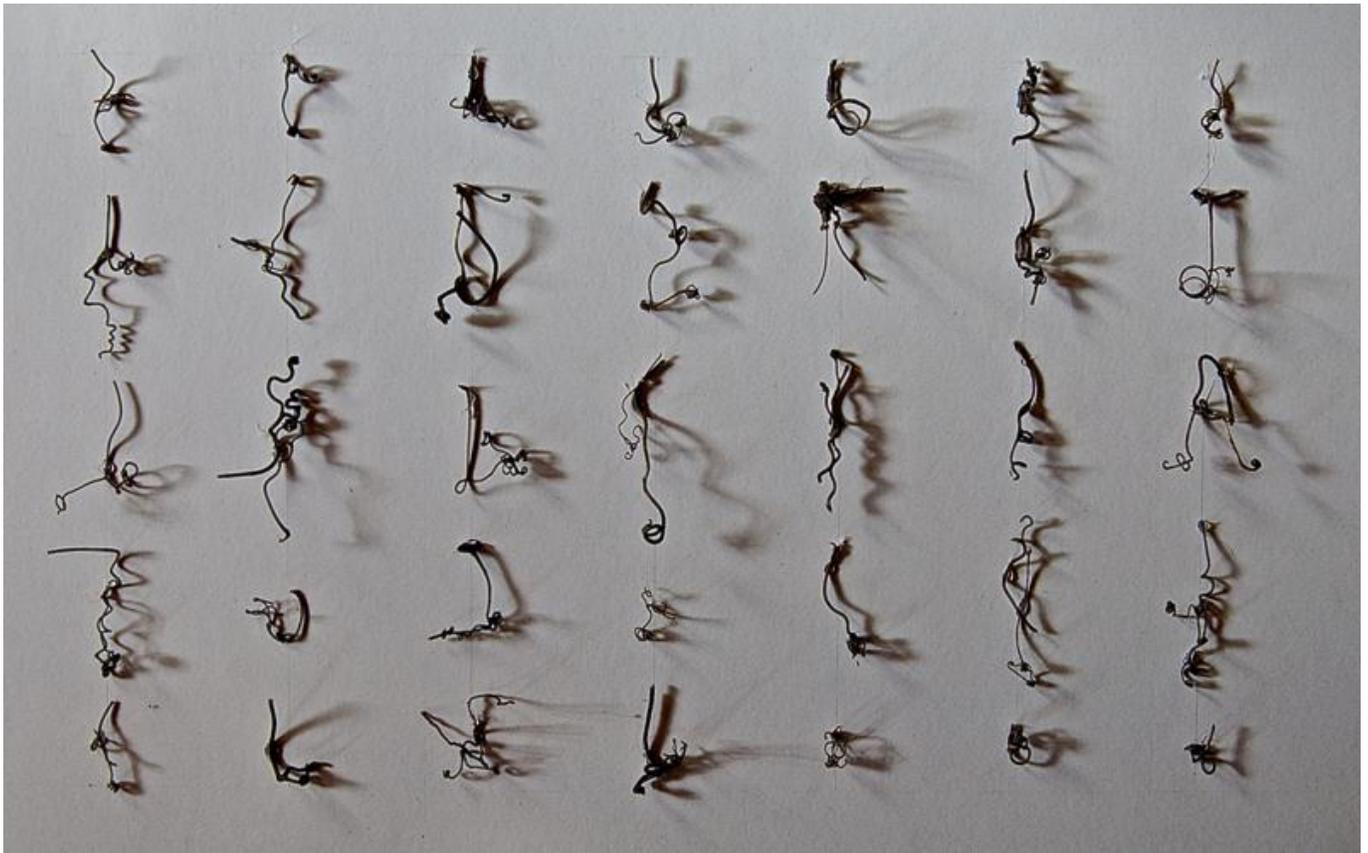
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Word for/ Word

Yudhishthir Maharjan



Kate Schapira

Review of *Great Guns*, by Farnoosh Fathi (Canarium Books, 2013)

Is there anything that all of the poems in *Great Guns* do? As I read Farnoosh Fathi's first collection, I found recurrences (worms, birds, other animal presences; mirrors and eyes; approaches) and preoccupations (intimacy, transformation); I also found the poems differing, one to the next, along nearly every axis, so that the measured and scenelike "Honey / Manila Portfolio", whose terms are set by its beginning, is preceded by feverish self-scrutiny in "Gold Dolt"'s jumpy mix of line lengths and lush connotations, and followed by "Approaching a Dry-Eyed Whale," each of whose lines rests and settles before breaking, and parts of which are oddly aphoristic: "That is how hunger / comes so close to education." They seemed to be using different means to get to different places, and I couldn't figure out why they were all together.

That I wanted to—that I'm even asking this question—may reveal more about me, and the kind of poetry books I tend to read, than it does about Fathi's work. On my shelves, I see book-length poems like Eleni Sikelianos's *California Poem*, and Nathaniel Mackey's many-booked *Song of the Andoumboulou*; use of a fixed form and a fairly consistent bombastic-prophetic voice in *I Am Your Slave Now Do What I Say* by Fathi's pressmate Anthony Madrid; Lara Glenum's onslaughts of mutated and neologistic sound in *Maximum Gaga*; verse narratives like *Culture of One*, *Autobiography of Red* and *The Book of Frank*; book-long and book-deep procedures and constraints of all kinds. Whatever else they do, these make the unit of reading the book rather than the poem, whereas the unit of reading in *Great Guns* is absolutely the poem.

When I realized this, I thought it might be time to revisit Dorothea Lasky's essay *chapbook Poetry Is Not a Project*. Lasky writes:

Nowadays, critics and scholars often refer to an entire body of work by one poet as a "project", but I don't think poems work that way. I think poems come from the earth and work through the mind from the ground up. I think poems are living things that grow from the earth into the brain, rather than things that are planted within the earth by the brain ... [T]o create something like a poem, means that thoutside world of an artist and the drives within her blend and blur.

What drives the poems in *Great Guns*? Some of them feel and sound as though a few birds, sitting in a bush or on a chain-link fence, had opened their mouths and poured out complex choral arrangements—a rushing, springing freedom wedded to attentive orchestration:

So this breezy mystery bruise is also earth's! She reads on; the yellow gulls arc and link at her breast; winter cracks the whites of her eyes, strange shapes egress! Too easy to forget, and in no less than human fashion, grief leaks its combination. ... She wipes and weeps to her taste, but how fast, too fast, things rise! The meadows they made once, tops, over which chance angles light a clover. "That thicket horsetail rain which I polished as a child stands up to me now." (5)

Great Guns opens with a slice of Rimbaud, and the above excerpt from "Letter" reads like him to me—exclamatory and awed prose, with elements of the nonhuman world freshened by an aura of human significance. Then I come to poems that read like the records of visions, or like myths, absolute and insistent: "And to the lightning foot, my foot quick to sympathize, they chained a pine 20-foot long and gave me a shove toward the 1,000 clouds. (30)" Something is happening, something extreme, something that cannot happen or can't be described as if it could happen.

But then poems like "Worm Rally" recall Bishop, Dickinson and Plath in their lucid and methodical investigations of ontology, mortality and feeling, turning in this case to make investigation itself their focus:

The two signals the worm knows most frequent the earth
are death and beauty, this gives its flesh
the life-long purpose of embedding spring, taut, the spine of
spring

pulled out by gardeners—What pleasure in looking,
even at the worm, especially at the living worm, one said
—as long as we know the worm’s why

because we are most bound to take pleasure in learning
of any form, in understanding even
how to grip the squirm, vigilant and clean-beaked—(13)

There’s a mockery there of examination and result: “Worm and word, something so light and indefinite / will never leave this circle.” But then in “Iris”, Fathi keeps us looking—adoringly, unquestioningly, sumptuously—at an iris, and “Banana”, equally engrossed though a little sparer, is about a banana. Still other lines, like these from the title poem, gain their power from sound as well as image: “to suck the ivy of visitors from even the safest face, behind which / a lover peels and peels; as certain and as full as all beauty, its obese gold navels ..”(8) and some sink into sound and sensation almost entirely: “Reek rat ample cheeks this is both running a fat bruise-coloring tome.” (31)

One thing that the “project” book offers is a sustained learning curve: each poem or section explicitly teaching a reader how to read the next and guiding us into the arc of the text. Even if it’s not a narrative arc, the experience of reading it goes forward. Each poem in *Great Guns* requires, or at least asks, that we start over and reopen ourselves to its terms. I read “Sonnet”:

Worms you know
my history of loose beginnings
tacked because there is no esteem at the root
for sadness, since flowers focused us

One is pushing long-honed claws of pineapples
to come out through shouldertops,
hills and sea-breast
swells: this one smells of mermaid hair,
fair warning ... (38)

I learn to expect explanations that fall short, lines that end sharply and sentences that leave me hanging, frankness about strange and painful eruptions of the impossible into the possible, a scent of fruit and seawater; I read as an observer, an onlooker to the events of the poem, outside the “I” at its center. I learn not to ask for a story, but the poem that follows, “A Tiger Is Getting Married,” gives me one, paced out in couplets:

Some were invited; you are
to imagine

a tiger’s wedding—which it was,
you were involved—

is the rain alone and sun,
alone to be imagined.

Alone as pure. Rain, the veil
to a round glowing face

and all the attending faces below. (39)

Serene instead of stressed, though not without subversions and disappointments, this poem draws me in and makes its ceremony my ceremony. The train slips from the fingers, there is no groom and no kiss, but

No one cried, no one forgotten,
imagine that—

a tiger's wedding involving the
stripped and pure,

and yours, a singular absence.
Lates grate, only water

flashes against the sun's eyes
like a veil.

Watch, these bald patches
by morning will be lemons. (40)

The impossible, the unlikely, or just the heretofore unimagined here makes its way into the possible at a stately pace. The wedding becomes untrue to the nature we thought it had and more true to the nature it could have; water replaces jewels, fruit trees sprout from bare ground. Diamonds, "Angel Balls", ants, Aristophanes, "Sweet Guts", weather, nipples, betrayal; Fathi hands them to us and snatches them away with imaginative insistence and visionary impatience, startling us into different positions. That's why the book doesn't "hold together" in a standard "project" way: these poems offer us not something to keep but a spray of ways to be changed.

Contributors' notes

Robyn Art is the author of *The Stunt Double In Winter* (Dusie 2007) and the text/visual collaboration *Dear American Lovechild, yours, The Beautiful Undead* (dancing girl press, forthcoming.) Her recent work appears in *La Petite Zine, The Denver Quarterly, Shampoo, The Illanot Review, and Coconut*.

Jeff Harrison has publications from Writers Forum, MAG Press, Persistencia Press, White Sky Books, and Furniture Press. He has e-books from BlazeVOX, xPress(ed), Argotist Ebooks, and Chalk Editions. His poetry has appeared in *An Introduction to the Prose Poem* (Firewheel Editions), *The Hay(na)ku Anthology* Vol. II (Meritage Press), *The Chained Hay(na)ku Project* (Meritage Press), *Sentence: a Journal of Prose Poetics, Otoliths, Xerography, Moria, Calibanonline, Coconut, unarmed, Big Bridge, Sugar Mule*, and elsewhere.

Libby Hart is an Australian poet and author of two books of poetry: *Fresh News from the Arctic*, which won the Anne Elder Award and was shortlisted for the Mary Gilmore Prize; and *This Floating World*, which was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Awards and the Age Book of the Year Awards, and longlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards. *This Floating World* was also devised for stage and received the Shelton Lea Award. His third collection, *Wild*, is forthcoming in 2014.

Michael Keenan's first book of poems, "Translations On Waking In An Italian Cemetery," will be released by A-Minor Press in the spring of 2014. His writing has appeared in the *PEN Poetry Series, Fence, Alice Blue Review, RealPoetik, NYQ Reviews, inter|rupture, Shampoo, Paul Revere's Horse, and Arsenic Lobster*, among others. Michael currently talks to people at Columbia University.

Susan Lewis lives in New York City and edits Posit (www.positjournal.com). "Dear Crush" is from *This Visit*, forthcoming in 2015 from BlazeVOX (available for preorder now). Other recent books are *How to be Another* (Červená Barva Press, 2014) and *State of the Union* (Spuyten Duyvil Press, 2014). Her work has been published or will appear soon in such places as *The Awl, Boston Review, The Brooklyn Rail, Dusie, EOAGH, Gargoyle, Otoliths, Ping Pong, Propeller, Raritan, Seneca Review, and Verse*. More at www.susanlewis.net.

Diana Magallon is an experimental artist and the author of *Del oiseau et del ogre*.

Youdhisthir Maharjan is a visual artist from Nepal, currently residing in New Hampshire. He has been published in *Henniker Review, Winter Tangerine Review, Smoky Quartz, The New Post-literate*, and elsewhere.

bruno neiva is a Portuguese text artist, poet and writer. He recently published *averbaldraftsone&otherstories* in Britain through KFS. More of his work can be found elsewhere in magazines and anthologies. He blogs at <http://umaestruturassimpudor.tumblr.com/>

Oscar Oswald earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. He currently teaches English Composition in Portland, Oregon, and is an intern at the contemporary arts organization Yale Union. He is also an Assistant Editor at Noemi Press. His poetry can be found in new or forthcoming editions of *Blackbox Manifesto, The Colorado Review, Gobbet, Lana Turner, VOLT, and Weekday*.

Michael Robins is the author of three collections, most recently *Ladies & Gentlemen* (Saturnalia Books, 2011) and *In Memory of Brilliance & Value* (Saturnalia Books, 2015). He lives in Chicago.

Kate Schapira is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *The Soft Place* (Horse Less Press), and her 10th chapbook, *The Motions*, has just appeared with above/ground press. She lives in Providence, RI, where she writes, teaches, co-runs the Publicly Complex Reading Series, and offers Climate Anxiety Counseling.

Michael Joseph Walsh is a PhD candidate in Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Denver and co-editor for *APARTMENT Poetry*. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Cloud Rodeo, Coconut, DIAGRAM, Fence, PANK, RealPoetik, and The Volta*.

Joshua Ware was born in Cleveland, OH in 1977.

Jenny Wu's poems can be found in *islocate, SOFTBLOW, storySouth, Mangrove, Catfish Creek, Polaris, and The Asian American Literary Review*. She is an undergraduate at Emory University.