



Word For/ Word is seeking poetry, prose, poetics, criticism, reviews, and visuals for upcoming issues. We read submissions year-round, but issue #36 is scheduled for January 2021. Please direct queries and submissions to:

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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@wordforword.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

ISSN 2159-8061

Logo and graphic design by Dolton Richards

Cover art adapted from graffiti art by Miss.Tic in Lille, France, Summer 2019

www.wordforword.info

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3 September 2019

I awake the second night in Blanca to an apparition of a large-framed woman.

She stands in a black rain slicker at the foot of the bed, her head wrapped in dark cloth.

Hands at her sides she peers down at me considering.

It takes me more than a few moments past comfort to blink her away.

13 September 2019

I walk up the hill to Centro Negra with 19 liters of water and walk down with my suitcase.

In a house named Edom three women practice swing as the river recedes.

They move their bodies because they want to move their bodies.

The speaker rests on spice jars as they swing their arms in double time.

16 September 2019

I watch them carry the virgin through the village towards the church. They sway in unison from side to

side bearing her on their shoulders. Residents toss flower petals from balconies. Others follow in black with staffs; then the band.

Children lead the way with incense and lightning strikes in the distance.

19 September 2019

Four women eat Japanese curry. The vegetables are vibrant and earthy from the day's market. We drink tinto de verano and describe the texture of the rice with the sweet curry, and laugh as a transitory family.

We wash dishes and feel the weight of the days ahead.

22 September 2019

Five make sound in the hills of Blanca. They play keyboard and synthesizer, shake maracas and use their voices. Cats wander in and out of the house from a graveled yard where a man sleeps on a bench. Laundry hangs. One woman starts to move her body. A young tabby reclines to enjoy their efforts as someone picks up a harmonica. Lemons waste in the garden.

[Thumbtack studies.]

What a dwindle to age like a jealous farm growth. What a liver failure checklist crafting a laugh. Call the pileup a nursery. Let's show them the knife. Let's show them the siren that Saturday squirms in the fist of murmur. Born into bad timing I decorate old testament. I'm walking twelve dogs with the drooling drip appetizer. I hear you with both ears. There are lots of ways that man can do wrong. Brain craving broken fences I hop the hood and I get in the car. You can't fake this fire hydrant fast think. Science isn't real. My alcohol stunt double is falling in love. I flinch in a flower field. I slump stomp the surgical. I scratch at the ceiling for air. Everything happens for a reason. Not your reason. You can do whatever. You can get his ass. You can make him evaporate. I've got wires in my head that make me spin move. I'm running back to the line of scrimmage with my shoes untied and no helmet on. Iron gloves can't stop these tremors. I think of counsel and I sink in my scenario. Now it's too late. The yard is burning. I bed a prevention and ugly my glide. Nobody is anybody unless they have nametags. Keep in mind I am constantly paste thinking plagiarism. I hold dear my dear. Holding hands at the bus stop. Every inside comes apart.

[If the fall apart happens.]

In order not to follow
continual human involvement strands

my loose time political
covers my scalp.

In particular the traffic jams
that hover over
my apartment complex

with an alien inability
to link certain ideas together.

It's too bad how hot you are.

When I see you I picture
someone's heart
crying into a cellphone.

I don't mean to get my hair
all over your pharmacy.

Whatever the deal is I screenplay
with pieces nobody recognizes.

I drink eleven hand grenades
to shed dead tears. To feel
included.

This is not where I leave you.

[Examples of punching villains.]

I need you to tell me I'm one with this church.

Living life without consequence
sleeping in pipes.
I don't care that I am becoming technology.

Financially doomed I scissor kick an ATM.
Sky high ladders tilt criminal moon.
Everything is provably wrong.

You can't do this from the safety of your home.
I'm on the corner giving signals
like a third base coach.

Everyone is so perfect. Congratulations.

[All day it is nice it is nice in the yard.]

Live almost forever and have a career.
Two days with the shades drawn
you're eating your mouth.
Slow down what you bring to that ritual.
Money bags are for the worms.
Pretty thing with a vacuum cleaner
flipping you the bird.
You can throw away anything.
Throw out your brain.
Driven mad by an always crooked
picture frame.
Your name is not progress.
Please don't fashion your traps.

[Speak it wise or die.]

Stop crushing on me.
My whole brain is bad images.
I know you've got a man
I'm just seeing how you're feeling.

I've got a soft spot for your soft spots.
I've got as many birds as bugs.
I am not going to busy you
with what is not bodily.

I send downers down my frown hole.
I exercise my right to chill.
Clear the throat
of its unclear intentions.

This one trick pony tricks another
into reading something.
My behavior is schedule conflict.
I could grow old at any moment.

Impossible Potato

It was late afternoon, and I could see the village of Olosenga.
Even the medicine man had stopped the eastern sky from becoming a scarlet of rotten
fish.

With a total population of twenty-three, all my ceremonial dead had said, *Everything
you've ever talked will haunt.*

I could only count the memory of each gypsy moth I had killed, the exact wing sting, the
way my mouth struggled for warmth. Struggled to fly sideways at times when listened
to but not broken.

The wingspan of a tropicbird must be some immense expanse.
For ten days at ten o'clock, a panacea of human ills presented a great toxicity.

Had I known to expiate the exacting stance.
Had I only thought to live myself clean, dig for root vegetables inside this hat dance or
that.

You twirled around more than one recreant fire, calling yourself *Duscha* and *Anitchka*.
I died each time your skirt, my darling, hiked daringly above the sinuous crease of your
knee.

Breathe me slow or not at all in the glimpsed curls of your lovely damp.
Kill me before the waning fire and wagon dust. My mystical rut, your full gorgeous thigh,
this servitude of my spiritual stomping ground in the kerosene rag of your stamped
lamp.

As We Work Our Words

In those days, I was apt to read anything slantwise through my throat.

If you said, *Belgian Congo*, I might hear, *medicinal mouth present in the photosynthesis of the cinchona tree*.

If you told me, *Kiss me, my secret darling*, I might hear, *Please remove our tongues, two at a time*.

If you confided that you love seventeenth-century Japanese erotic art, I might understand it as, *I adore you most when, naked on the toilet, you resemble a painting we've never been able to quite live*.

I know. I'm at it again. Always shuffling—clumsying—the various passages of our mouths. And how our bodies swell.

Yes, I see how perfect your imperfections and kiss you in the dark to prove it.

Yesterday, I was jostling tumblers in a lock, reciting the scientific names of each species of sparrow in the most northern prefecture in Japan.

When I got to the genus *Pull it tight*, I did not know if it meant your hand, your bra strap, or the mystical bloom between our mouths.

On the surface of the sun, we all reinvent the multiple ways we might burn our bodies anew, the eternal clock flower and Scorpio's bite into the crab's watery deeps.

Much less involved, yet perhaps more compelling, is the fragrance of a galaxy falling apart as we work our words to mean something—*anything*—almost human, almost nearly divine.

This Is How I Will Hear My Name Many Years from Now

Next we journeyed to Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania.

This was before the tourists. I held the death-scream of a wild boar inside my chest.

A particular chestnut would not crack for stew.

This is how I might hear my name many years from now.

Flypaper is present when we survive the color green.

No, it was more like yellow fever than the strange, strained mouths of malaria.

My limb-strafted bone crawls out to the moon.

The coat of an African serval gleams with tensing muscles of multiple dark stars.

Let the twitching scars of all things catlike enter the word from behind.

Eroticize the poet-tongue. Grasp my neck by each of your hen teeth. Hold me erect
among my fellow beasts.

Avoiding And Courting

Whose far, whose wheel
Grinds, stereophonic:
Bubonic
Marrow, and sensed
Marais for that day's deal,
Thy daily Virgo.

⋮

Wired, wary, weary.

My wild bones.

My wilderness of bones.

My mistiming, my and mine.

Plum circuits: electric circumference.

Bones glow like the stones core fruit.

Radiant pit, plus demos done gone tricked.

⋮

I am not very this
But am that:

If I were you
I might be

Annoyed.
If I were

Your littlest pony
We would

Have porn for goodly hours.
I halt my tongue.

⋮

We're from
Mastication, kind that
Could drive guy
Crazy.

I practice language art.
Parties ply their trade.
Goblin, goblin, goblin with gauge.

Please don't
Arrest me
For my declarative
Syntax.

I can be cutie.
I can sauciest rib.

Redrawn

Ran vascular:
Like here
Unearths there
Whose every
Curbs generous feeling—
Had me at
Reeling:
I mean gobbed, peeling
Unto firmamental glow
And shakes itself out like flies.

:::

I leafed by
Tore thigh

Into gloam
We breathed

Frank parlance for
Get thee through door.

:::

Came my love
With roses, turnips:
World enough
Perhaps not enough thyme.

You kiss my quad:
I flex and god
Shares us like rice.

:::

You just did
And some
Times staples slip
Or else an ought do sleep
Through drawl, whose mirror
Made tide all moon, its light all neap.

:::

Air sends
Ways to whittle us window,
Or if and
Why so
Along uneven pane
And why so squared
Like raiment in topknot's ring.

Ounce me wire
Who spared an else, came
Crash or stall
Did who past solve
With velvets,
Dipped artsy chokes
And yes I
Wore mismatched brogues.

∴

Me plops
Ladybug, shady bug
I gauchely shadow;
And I'm not for
Everyone, nor
Are you sufficient fun
So let's go find some
Girls who get kicks from spiders.

∴

Hardtack and
Tomatoes
Constitute tableaux.

Without
Ever
Getting close to
An octopus I do

To the me to the square rued
Where crushed mango reflects
Avenida Petrarca whose carbide sheen

Whose made
Me up, refractory

With some almonds for nestling.

This The Be

Did purl and spell
Dyed spiral

Like alive
We go

Ongoing noise
Organized

Us or way through
Thought partly

Under shine, partially
Shade for respite.

Excerpt from "The pool of depth and dirt"

Breath, or a sense of living, then [...]

A crane is suspended above a large, dried plane.

The ripped paper hole speaks to its historical absence, or perhaps in turn creates space; a voice.
Inscription on the wood arrives before its meaning.

Meaning here is a murky brown-blue. The fog is on the wooden porch.

Helen turned at the bannister, and all of seconds stretching and arching over architecture are paused.

*Meaning married to always different
coordinates. I married a foreigner, in one sense.
In another, no word fits with another.*

All things anticipate, meaning we live *for* the future, and are constantly forgetting.

In this shape is a repeating habitual noise of the same repetitions, of ancestry and agriculture.

The 'oh' marks a desire for connection, between me and you, green things and this web.

I mow across golden fields in erratic lines, searching. Seeds scatter and bloom, changing shape and colour as

the sun rises and falls.

Silence is cut across grey waves in a lexical, Swedish storm.

Your eyes twinkled on the surface, resembling the water in the dock on a blue day. It made me scared of the

space under the bridge.

I stand before an old wooden bench, trying to make out the names inscribed in it's oak. The pavement is grey

and wet: I am a blue outline. I see *Mina*.

In B's beard is a long, finite wire, tangled in white hairs and making its way to the formation of a sculpture.

Back at home the fireplace of 'E' is a welcome memory: it holds soup, language wells and warm fish-bodies.

This is what Bachelard was getting at: space
holds language and carries fishing nets
reincarnate.

R claims there may be no well in this field. I think we must believe in the well, even if it's existence lies only

in the *a priori*.

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE WAS ONLY FICTION, but is lived out in white fences.

I'm in 'a', you're in the 'priori'. The field is at the boundary of the empirical, which, in it's fullness, creates

thirst. In one sense, mowing a field is a form of labour. In another, it is art.

In the crops I cut a 'c', which could spell or merely mark. RW says there are no fish in her mouth, and I

believe her.

'Come back, crawl to me child'. I reach my hand into the reflective circle of water, and pull out a fleshy rope

from the American Civil War. It reads:
universal.

I heave out a long, hollow pipe.

The tube is the anticipation of sound.

Textures of distant voices can be heard from the depth of the twentieth century - Modernism, I think it's

called. Isolationist: formalist: a perpetuating circle.

*the historian would forget that what is at stake
is an adventure of vision*

Poetry remembers. Each day is a layer and it makes a trifle of solidified, connected letters. Cutting out an 'E' in sponge: leaving negative space, and perhaps the vague outline of a perpendicular cross,

marking the death
of religiosity in secular language, which persistently attempts to write over.

My daily ritual of purchasing and slurping chocolate milk is becoming a habit: I search again for the words.

Now we worship things, I suck. I read. Boris's furniture. I read of Christ's furniture.

We know what's at stake, what's on the stake.

Books/spines as mattresses, for letting you lie softly in a giant pink hand. I turn the page and see 'ove',

which could mean 'over', 'love' or 'stove'. In
any sense: they all incite desire.

I lie as a spoon lies: in the dark

as they school you
out of the can
of bean-letters, says Ginsburg, beams
as barriers from your centre
my tights, chest in anxiety of earring shopping
at and
& Other Stories
who make fictions
that they are fiction and fuel smiles
in the window

her eye looks at
you or choosing
 oozing
saliva out of desire
as you, the messiah,
tell me the cross
is absolute
but a bun too custard
again
ooze again
peeled too for till it seemed
down water falling in
Eliasson's sculpture,
Sepulchre
methane
and suspense
to soul (post)
not nothing
buried
but bought that dress
so that's fine

shop me plastic
wrappers rap me into futility baby
and transparency
and transience

throw a pebble
at the window at Westminster as if it's
different,
deferential
to a shop glass

where i see my many transparent selves
and fail to worship them
in one tree

who walks down the street plucked taken tucked under a belt a hand is there it's not narrative it's
neurosis or narcissism of looking in the face of reality of temperature when touch and taste
increase like speed tucked speech tucked

under the rug like your flapping fish whose scales make expensive carpets look more white and
dramatic
and candles are decorative yet reminders of death (memorials, or just markers of time passing)
I bite lips or dim eyelids and the din of the heater in wooden background lights me up

fill her up, get him another drink
teeth need to be scraped away
to their core spit in the sink - spin to the wardrobe speak to the hollow tube and glue it to an ear,
where hair
listens and makes links, trains run parallel but airplanes go to hell where fire moves further and
further into
the imaginary since it will be all the earth because of links, tucks and burps. Fire licks and so do we

Broken Dozer, Haunted Vale

Rigorous unrelenting relents, dozer relents.
Perpetual veil. An omen hangs by his fingertips

singular above a pulsating abyss. The omen,
a boy, would fly forty stories down like an egg

cell like a biome of football players bussed home.
Like a pale bridge, the verboten ambiance of them.

Language surprises where it transmits least.
Time cradles a pendulum prissily about rest.

One among many tools—which treats of groins,
synesthetic coordinates, self-aware used sex toys.

One way to be human is to be hunted away from wet
places. Trauma is the babe neck thin lilting all-flesh

ripped from flesh—the same moaning announces
being toward being else. Appraisal: naive land of nests.

Sowing weeds in abandoned brownfield daylight
(Lake bed, meadow, pit, car lot, construction site,

desert) a station in the gray where attention betrays. List,
what all this noise makes us do & now want mine give

to nature nature's spirits. Give her fear and gender,
give her automation and revenge. Recognize intent,

design theory to balance the primordial budget to
resign a habit of my own objectification finally able.

Quantum Fruit for a Belle

Caecilia Marcusi thus proves fermentation was the reification of civilization raised three whole hands to the Magritte sun, pow-red!

Crowned for ground like what time does it do to point in (hat in hot hand) the same direction as a Christmas tree faces

all ease and wash out your mastered hair of canyons hard with crayoned with so often softened dusty boys and breakfast nouns

glut like penumbral plumbery spelling out Earth's salty rims, forthwith, many animals wipe their noses on their mothers' abdomens.

Non-competes, for history excluded finishing long lunches. Hurry on much about your relay that has that the tangled hitch conceded

what all the ever-were rivers weigh, non-things dispassioned or a nan dispossessed, quartered for the last true heresy is analogy: blest Onan.

Take me for ten hours ago four wings spread images two white-line epics once perceived we rived the party of bosons and morons. Onto-!

Pisces, gentleman, they say, have clumsy portfolios. It tracks, perhaps, but nine times of ten said regulation is strictly performative.

Now the girl. Ah, the girl. Forgive, the girl eats a blonde apple in punch champs. You'll see in what frame rate that coincidental hell is mustard.

The Low Dead Cries Out or Save Me a Seat I'll Be There in 5, OMW!

"Do you know what today is?" Nothing speaks from the void.

"Why, yes, duh, it's Thursday. Punish me. Make me bleed the more,"

Maldoror croaks, weary with self-contempt. "And don't forget . . ." resounds the wall of unresolved tones. "Total abjection to befriend, invite," Want

recommends like a radiation burn. "Today will be Mal's last day of night school and the uncelebrated dead cry out from annihilation." Naught is

only kidding around and prepares Maldoror his supper: Two ring-worm on rye sandwiches with crusts and a liquified-rubber and urine

brine to wash it down. "My favorite non-comestibles!" shrieks Maldoror. Then 'pon his scaly tum he rolls and from his hole he slithers into many hives

to be humiliated by his teachers of ex-post pessimism. The air is Venusian. His student debts will be a yearly renegotiated perpetual plunder

and his labor is to be classified as inessential, so to teach him another thing more sinister than the obedient iconoclasm and perseverance professed

at the satellite campuses of the École Fleurs du Mal. Perversion of a fashion, Mal's pulchritudinous mind for spite. With disgust of strong and meek alike,

he purges a portion of every meal for those ever imaginary ancestors ginned into an oily smear of wispy charcoal dye just beneath his outer-most layer

of chapped forehead—an intravenous Ash Wednesday, a parody and curse without purpose or delight. The non-vacatable body staring out bearing

down as himself; all the he he'll ever be. The bathos of good and evil hangs from his teeth, a broken piece of floss spasming party streamer at each ex-

halation, magnanimous or antisocial. What kind panic can finally be heard when ankles roll, boughs break, airplanes dive, the last step's a real doozy.

Weather Balloon Playlist 1

gentle scene forthcoming in juices tractable
commenced, how instantiated its noble rot

eats the berry punctuated vine—is't eco-babel?
mystics look for cures to unknowing in mystery

because no abstraction too blurry, "sure, anyway..."
inflamed toward sight to be the Sense of Senses

the domain of grin and bare-it-all (lightly),
upon faces unflattering, and if I say we, see,

you're not going to be calling me home
by another name except each place as you choose to

bear it, by small increments, events that please and dis-
identify rising at all but very few mornings

with any kind of courageous mannerisms
risks are given and chosen, not radically self-evident,

in a sense, all senses, the burden's unfelt, naught and shaded
as a child's knowing that she tries where she stands

to gain by aging out of certainty like the animal she is
is what she had to be by choice is no way

out of destiny and even the soft kick of November
lyrics do little of the necessary work of *amor fati*:

the world is all this noise that has to sting
any harmony is at once chaos caged yet not one note

breaks through but by parapraxis does a world:
hold on for the beholders, such things autonymical for

a poorly-suited tool with theories of private feelings
like failings of some watch out there somewhere again

ken (whatever it is (we have to check the math)), reset
the playlist that was perfect when Raphael shared it

Alms From Virginia

An indication sported so many obligations
say what you will about Virginia, her only buttons are
on her shirt

 circumstance has the floor
"has the floor, sir - stand down,
 sir, stand down."

this vapor is in the last place digested (though sports,
as an indication, many obligations)

 the poor ate them raw, those
buttons from her forepaw

Story

Say your blanket was a sheet of tin foil,
crisp, creased with dirt and cold.
Say you flossed your teeth with
the wings of a beetle, picked dirt
from your nails with your lips.
Say your guardian angel called you
a fucking whore and a brown cunt.
Say your iced tea came from the toilet.
Say your mother was sent forcibly
to the desert. Say your name was
a number. Say you weren't quite familiar
with the English alphabet yet. Say there
were blood stains on your knees but you
couldn't remember how you got them.
Say your stomach felt so empty
that you weren't sure how long a day was
or what the color green looked like
or what sugar tasted like. Say you stayed
on your side of the fence, drank your
wine, watched the news, saying
and saying that this is wrong,
climbing into your bed and doing
it all again tomorrow.

The Female Origin

pieces swept to a collective:
ceramic horse ear
Catholic entertainment
& lace collars

wasting time
like a leaky faucet,
coins dripping from a holy pocket

we don't see copper

focus comes in unavenged vision

what is my name
what is my name
what

name?

as if faces are patterns
quote-unquote three-dimensional
grief

understandable line, my wet cathedral

Female is not etymologically related
to the word male —
it was altered
to parallel the spelling
& dominance

I could smear walls with red eggshell

How long have we been
hysteric?

I can't seem to remember
how we got here
or how we chew

or why

Marriage

If we want to go on a date to be new people,
we'll go to **IKEA**, buy food with umlauts, admire
plastic leaves, imagine living in a pristine world
without ceiling. If your stomach aches, we'll search
for a toilet or bucket & I will sing. If it is winter,
we'll leave at five o'clock, thinking our knees stiff
& craving cotton. If you are stained, we'll be together.

Residue

In a parallel universe,
 I sit in a tree &
 you burnt your omelette &
 we never met.

I wonder
what trees will mean
 when we return to the woods

Revoke

A plugged-in
ditty interrupts
a leak along
my scalp.
I sweat when
keying
when coping.
Blah glands
in sink.
A swell.
Hand running
through tie,
smoothly.
These teeth.
These bystanders
all ulcer.
How saliva?
Like a like
bludgeoning
a parachute,
a wall, warm
as though stretched
through a pool.

Sixteen Point Nine Fluid Ounces

Lunch drained
of tint. Dear.
That chest
rippled like
it shouldn't.
Violin. That nod
salved me. Drank
liquid in arms
upright,
upright mattress
stalled dialogue.
From morn
till morn.
Of course, I wept.
Without prying.
Without slack.
And throughout
swallowing
And not. Chlorine,
lightest foam.

Refill

Vats tone
ode, doth
slow.
I empty
tomato.
Leaf, leaf.
A handrail
hulls.
I dial.
There's gown.
Ere.
There's peering
pill to lacquer,
thy dewy rind.
Will umber,
Will umber stave?
Squaring a
nest of screws.

A Panoramic View of a Moving Sidewalk

Eating in
sauna honing
a sky's thinning.
Toast without
mold. I say
everywhere,
everywhere is
a lover's gall
bladder.
I fork my
toast
focally,
calming me.
Still. I say,
I say mold
without toast.
For whom
would I leave
a voicemail?

Passyunk

1.
Pronounced with an invisible
-h, the invisible -h forming
an invisible -she
in the middle of the word,
the sun is seemingly always
shining or fully not shining
on Passyunk; when it rains,
it pours. Walking south on 9th,
after you cross Washington,
the voices shift from the
punctuation of Little Italy
to bursts of Latin then at
last to, murmured, exiled
Oriental syllables, strained
so far from home; even the
poor chickens in the live
poultry store, watching big raindrops
stream down the doorway,
past the bars of their
cages, are subdued.

2.
What, then, is a “block,” is
a neighborhood, is a stoop,
something none of my street’s
houses have anyhow, a
bodega, a restaurant a home
away from home, a guest room
with food, and strangers, what
is a bar but a collection
of strangers, strangers and alcohol
passing from hand to hand from bottle
shop to the golden retriever tethered
outside, he’s too big to come
inside, where the babies lie
against young mothers’ chests,
their fathers greeting each
other by stating, not asking,
how you doin’.

Drexel Hill

It's almost not worth saying how
I am alone with my worries, which is another way of
beginning the story, again, of forgetting
suddenly & completely,
how to tie a half-Windsor
that day in sixth grade
after gym class.
But if I can't tell anyone how alone
with my worries I am,
how will I ever get to the part
of the story where Paul's older brother
Conrad reached over to me with a sigh,
as if I were a chicken
whose neck he was reluctant to wring,
and tied it for me, muttering
you really need to learn to do this on your own
and Conrad I'm here to tell you
that I'm still trying,
I am, honest.

[Ugly ground you bedrock]

Ugly ground you bedrock
 I worry for you

 Are your valleys
ugly ground a help or a hindrance
to getting the lay of your land

Swell moss cannot be sure

Tempting as it is to throw you down onto its mattress
swell moss would not know where to start

Should it run a finger up your spine or down it
Should it follow your lead and listen
 to your rhythm your wants revealed
 your needs met O and then some

Ugly ground more than anything you need
 somewhere to cut loose to leave it all
 out in the open to let off that steam

[Ugly ground if swell moss felt]

Ugly ground if swell moss felt
petrification if it sensed anything resembling
 that dirty word again that stoniness
its cousins at times if lucky becomes it
then would it realize that truest sense of home
 of hominess for forever Then
swell moss could forgiving the conjecture the wish
fulfillment latent in its figurations
consider itself all but that vital part of you what
substance you always
 were what attaining form atoning for it need not
take onto itself Even if it could ugly
itself you ugly ground swell moss would otherwise
resemble another dirty word
 again swell moss would for you For you
ugly ground swell moss would
be anything you want any shape or posture
you allow it to be That
alone is your ugly

[Ugly ground do you tire of swell moss]

Ugly ground do you tire of swell moss
its virtually fleshlike springiness its spongy outer
layer that is at base its every layer

Ugly ground how much do you if at all
need swell moss how much do you

Do you you ugly ground
Do you gain anything from this on your own accord
Is there any alternative not that you feel this way
to what you are in relation to swell moss that is

Ugly ground do you tire of the organic above you
Do you ugly ground ever grow heavy with what lies
perhaps by chance more likely out of inextricable history itself
upon you and yours and everything you foresee as yours alone

[Swell moss do you tire of ugly ground]

Swell moss do you tire of ugly ground
Would you swell moss tread harsher upon it
were that capability afforded you swell moss Do you
ever sense the possibility of run off the advantage of getting up
and out of there out of ugly ground swell moss do you
Do you swell moss take in the water whisked off
yourself whisked away and onto whatever escapes
you and ugly ground both do you Swell moss do you
relate to an unfeeling ugly ground its lack
of give your steady taking more a giving itself a giving
of yourself Swell moss what would it take What do you
need as a limit as a last resort Could you ugly
ground ever give of it yourself

Excerpts from *Ablation*

A glacier moves through
variations and exists as
many glaciers. Lapses in
time. Presence as palimpsest.

My mom as dark-
haired girl. Little ghost-
body lying still to
stop the world fluttering.

See through the window
of my eyes. Same,
not-same. Chromosomes mutating
me into a you.

Love like a radar
map. Love like infrared.
Love like heat or
light pouring in waves.

Atrium: open-roofed entrance.
Ventricle: cavity or hollow
part. Right and left
chambers of the heart.

Glacial debris accumulates, given
as the ice advances.
Although glaciers seem motionless,
their motion is endless.

I want to show
you how my life
feels. I want to
give you my life.

Cumulus clouds moving in
a wall. Heat lightning.
Wash my face in
a basin of rain.

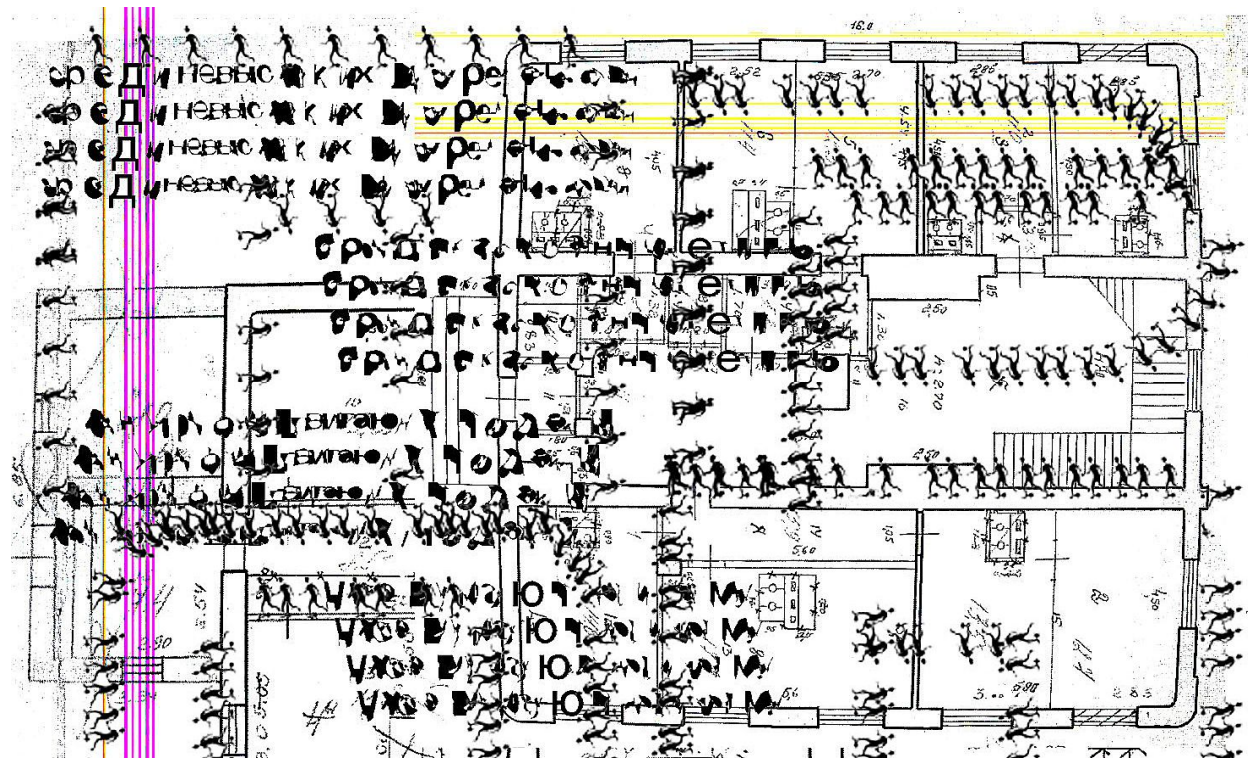
All my life fitted
in my mom's right
atrium. Tachycardia: too fast
heart. An inherited defect.

Ablation: the surgical removal
of body tissue. Also,
melting or evaporation of
ice from a glacier.

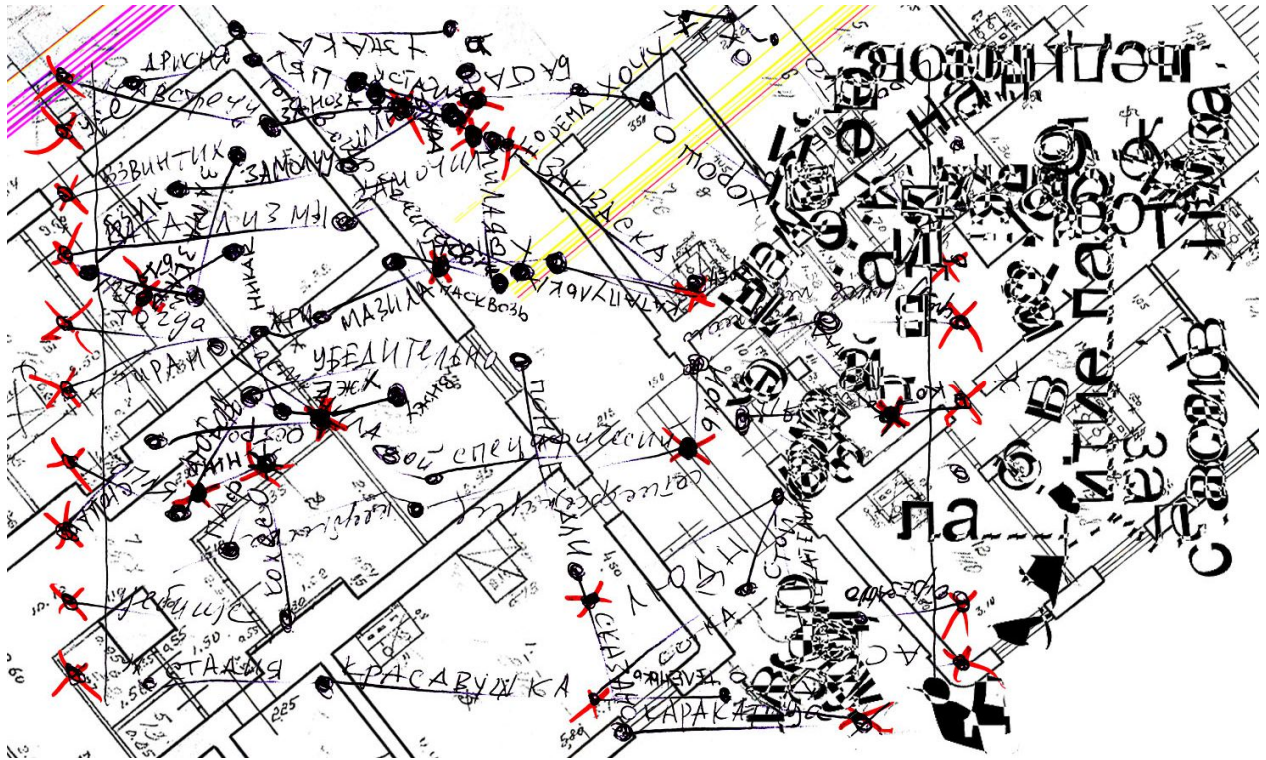
A glacier's weight reshapes
land. A glacier sculpts
and carves. It carries
material as it moves.

Planet of trees. This
is what home means.
My ice-scraped land.
My blanket of snow.

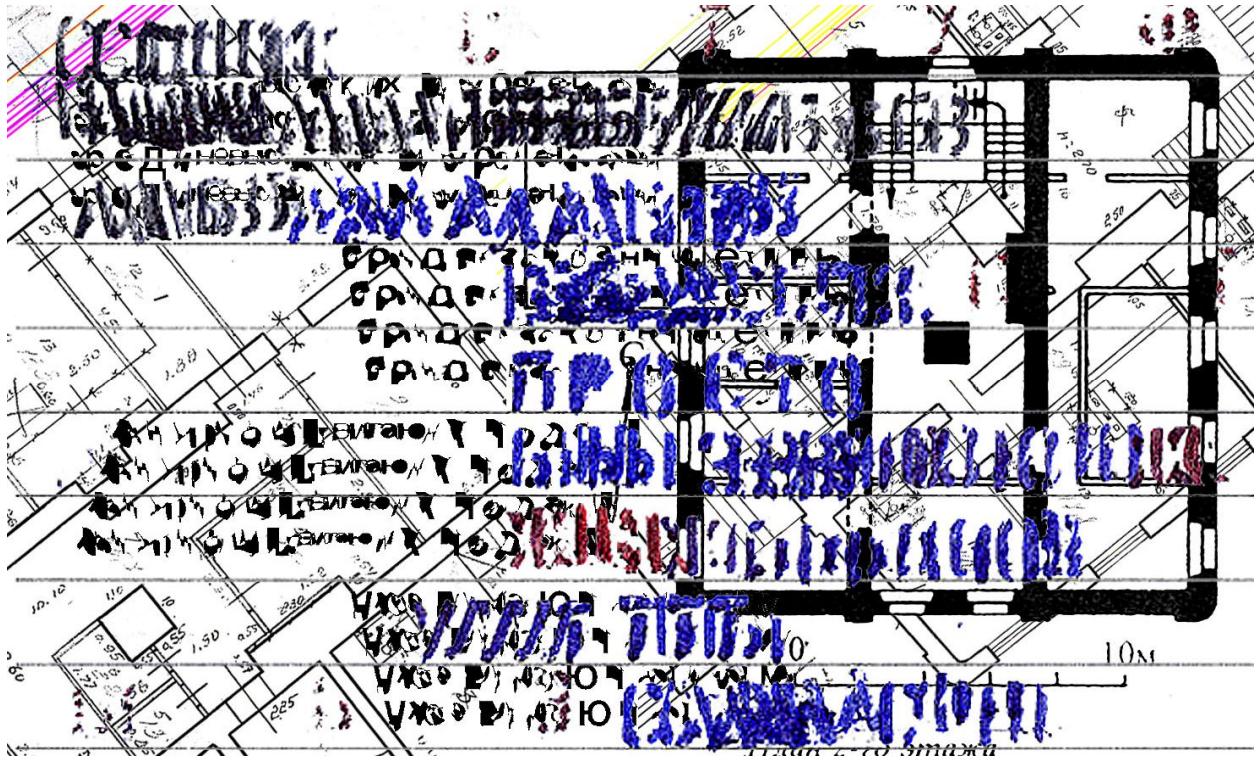
From "Memory Cells"



From “Memory Cells”



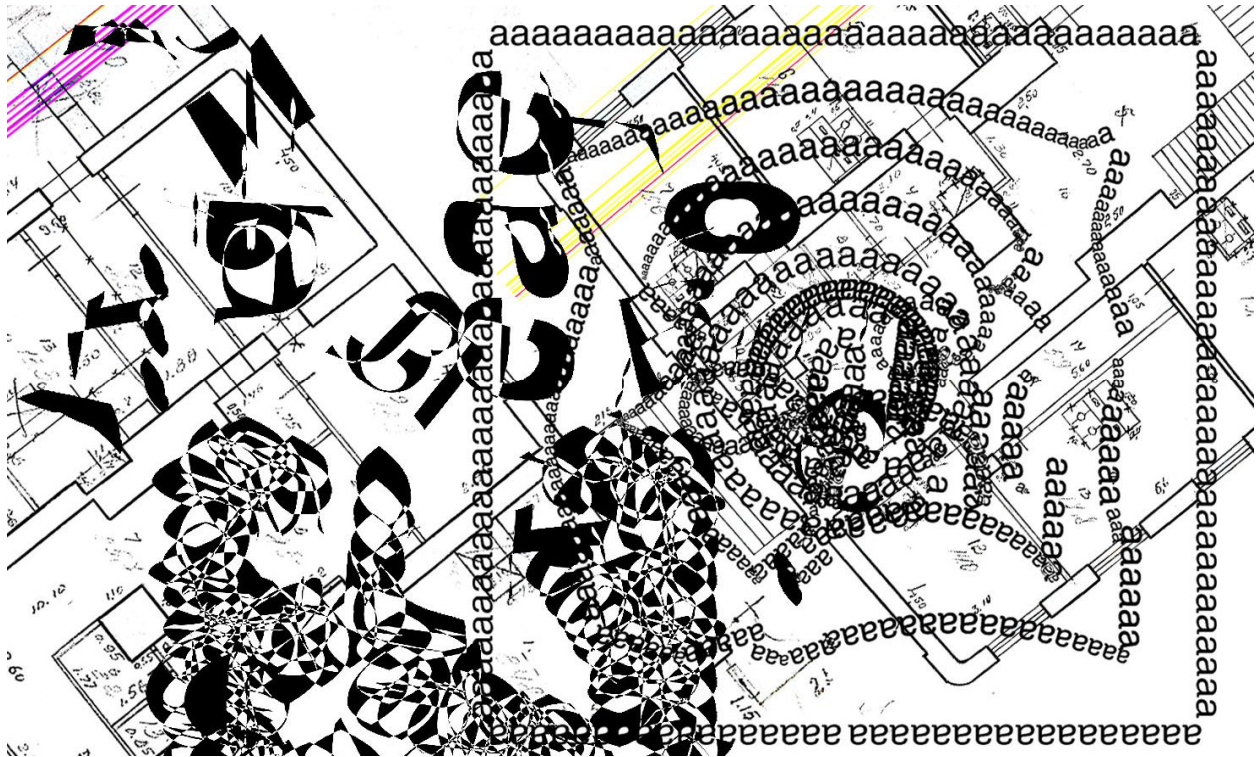
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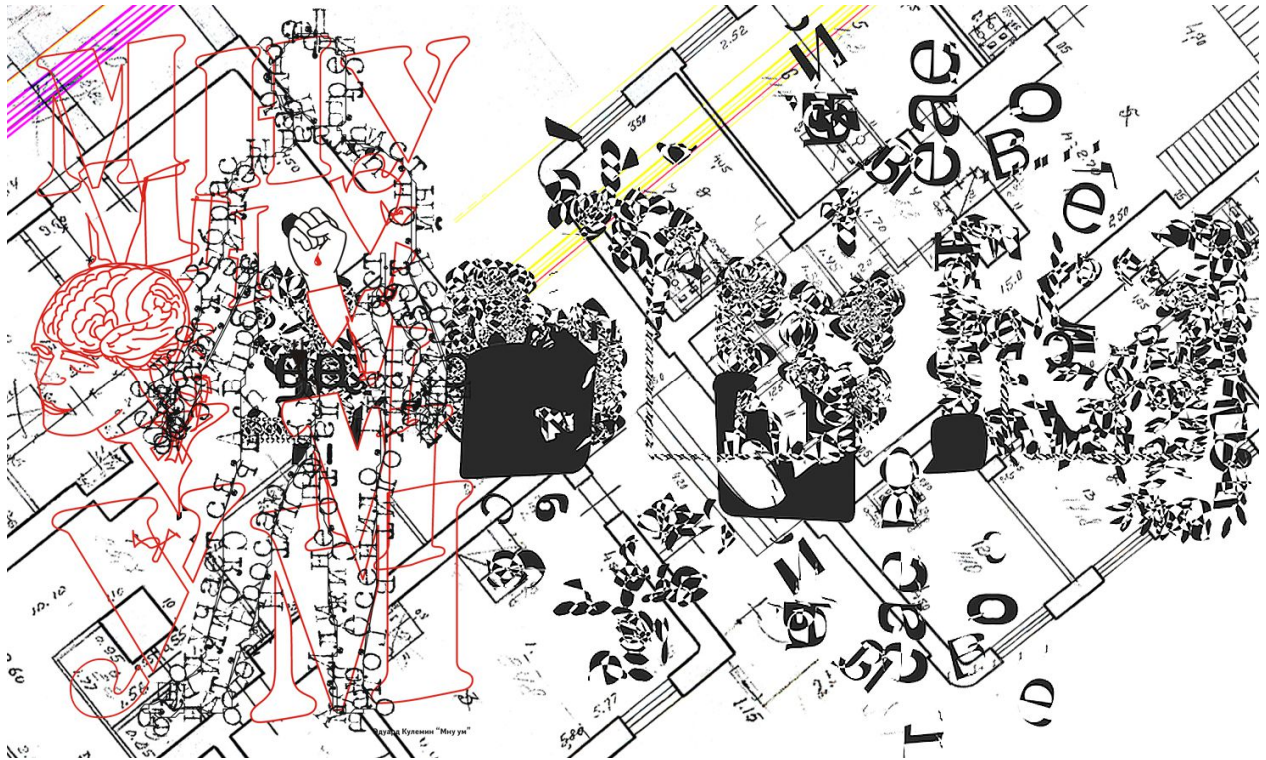
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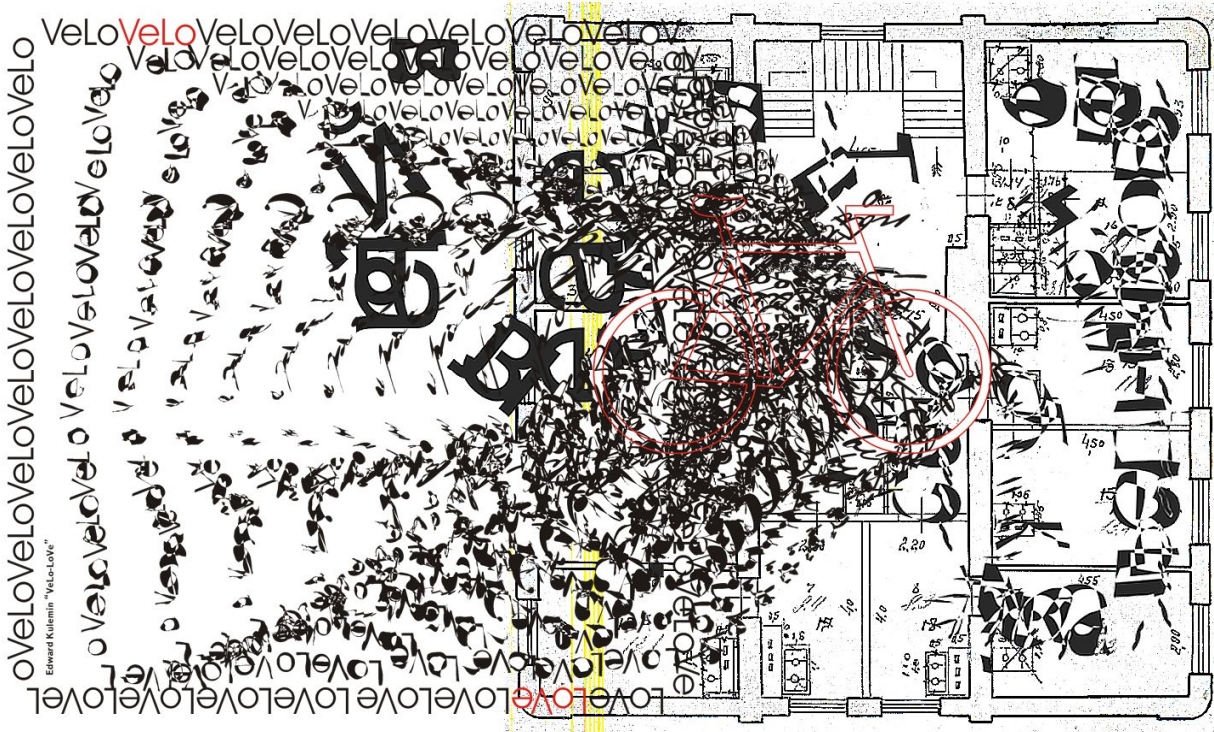
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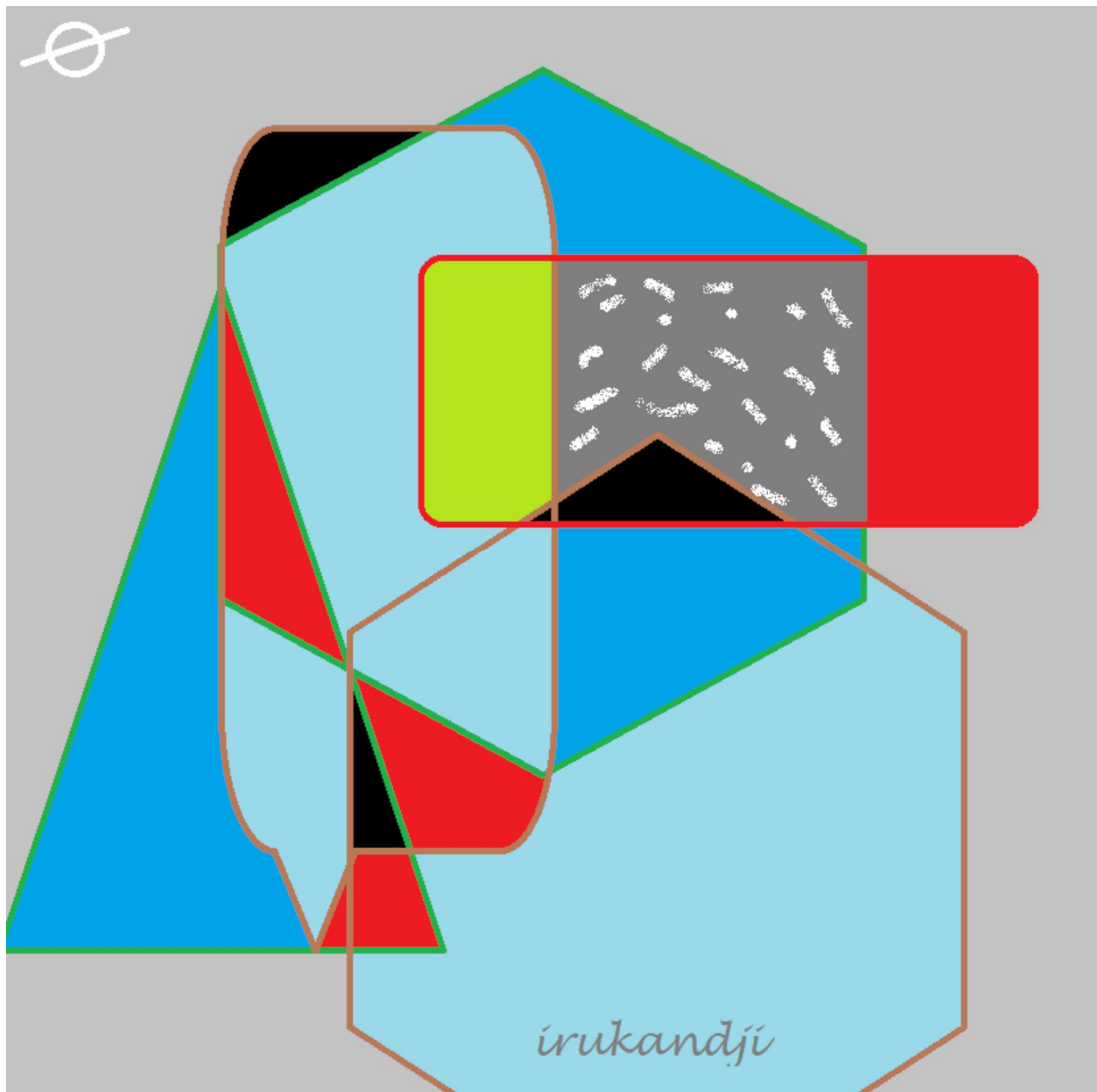
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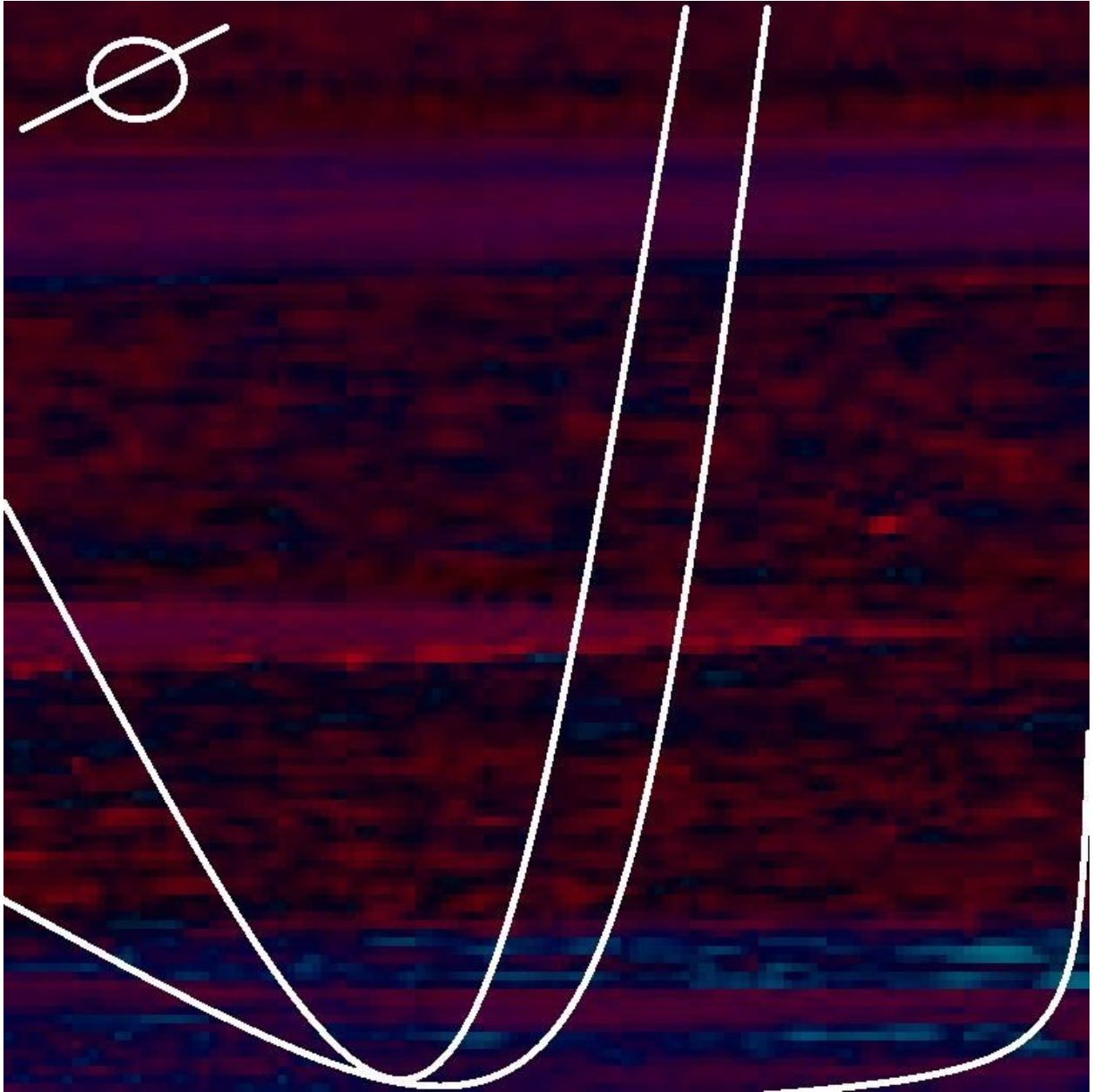
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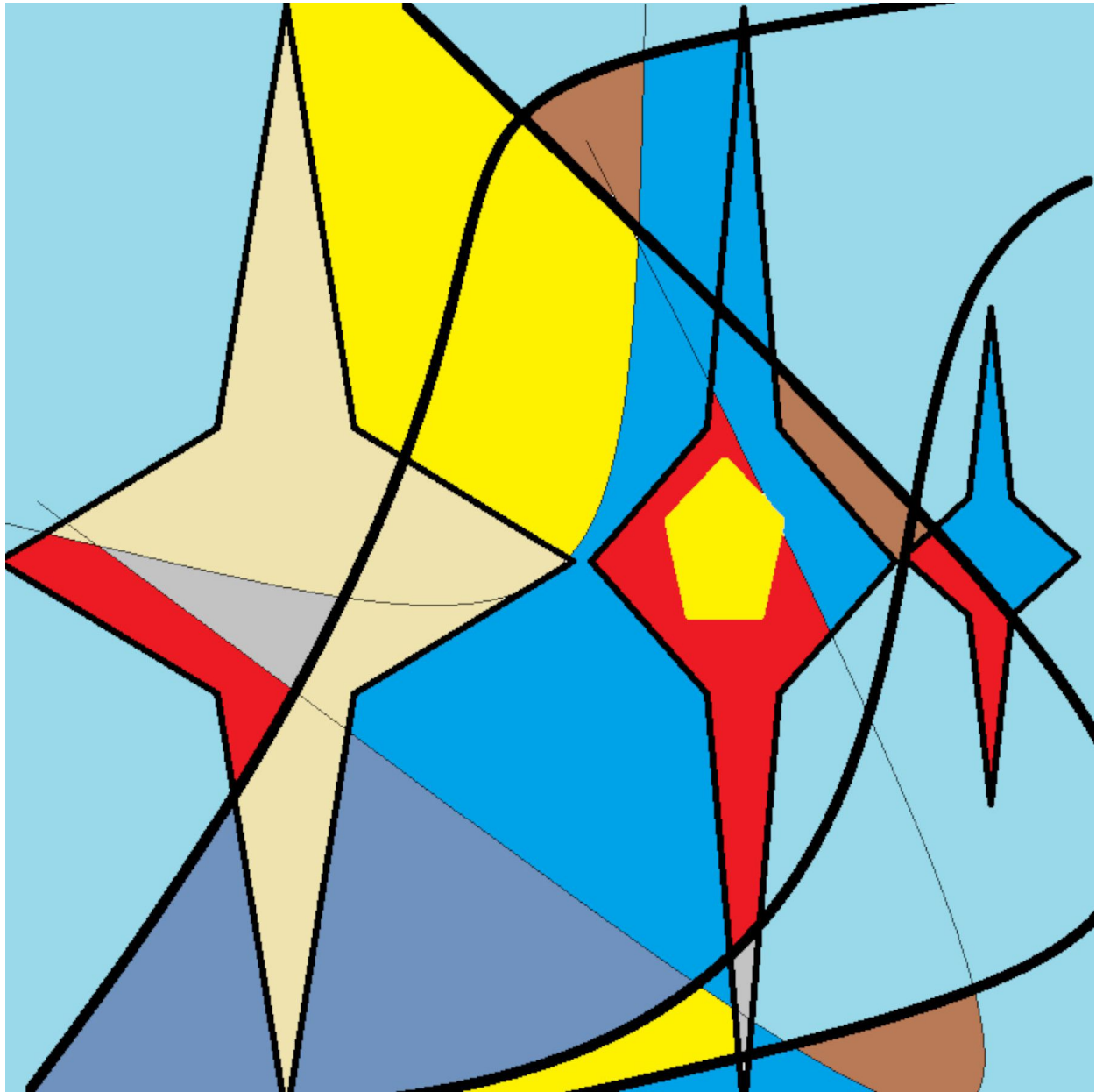
Irukandji



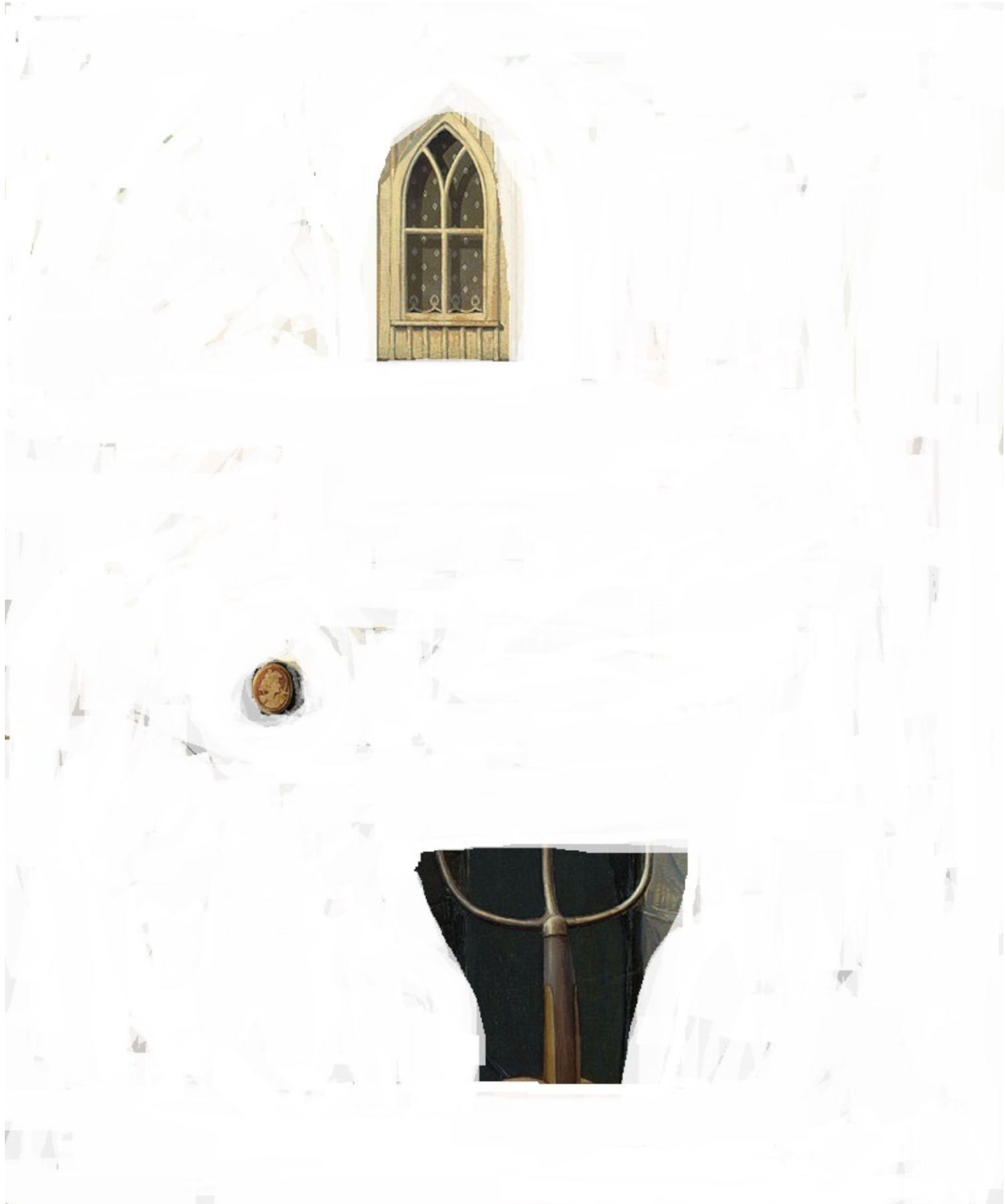
***geographies*: Alva Beach**



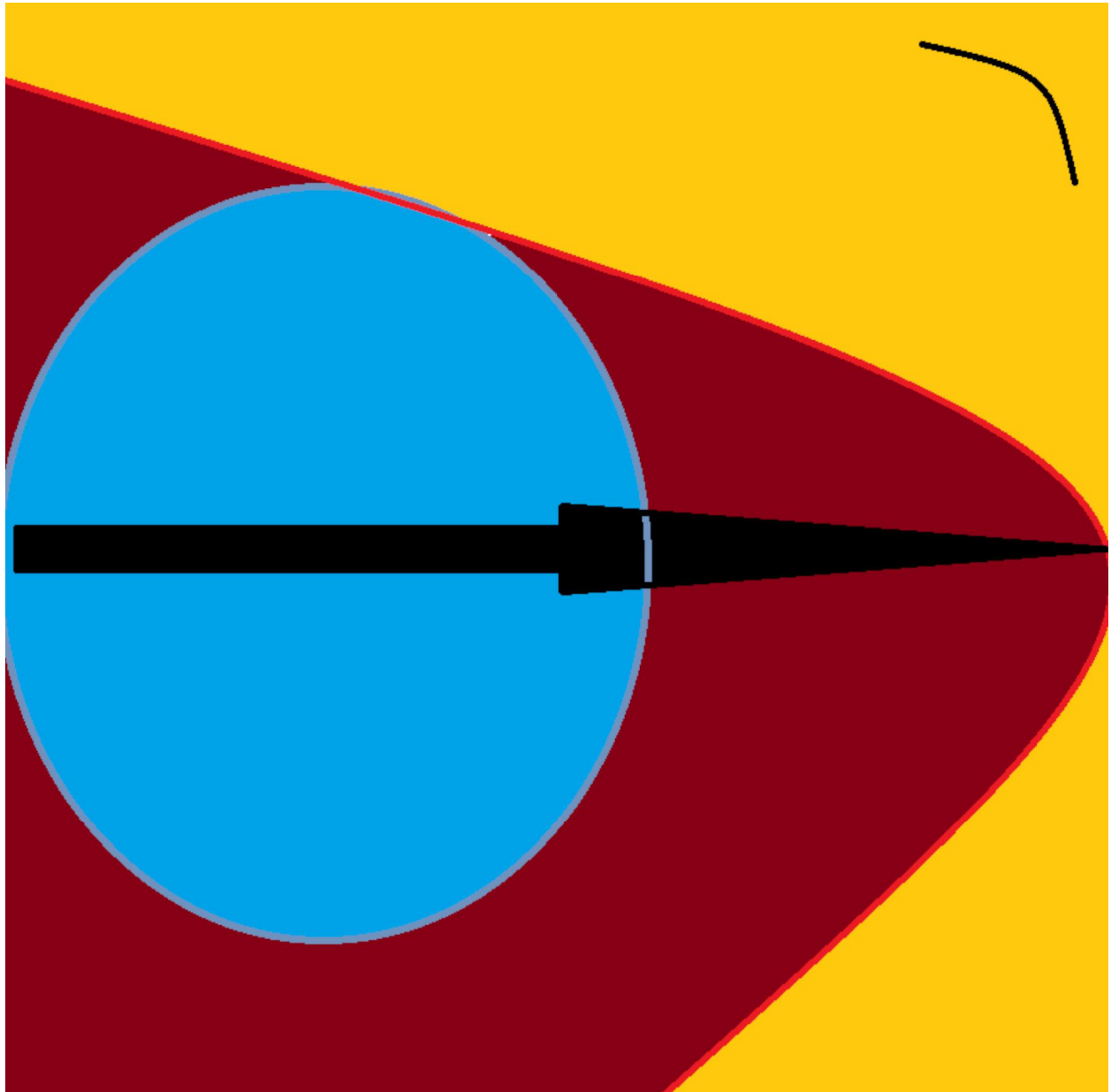
The Comrades Dance



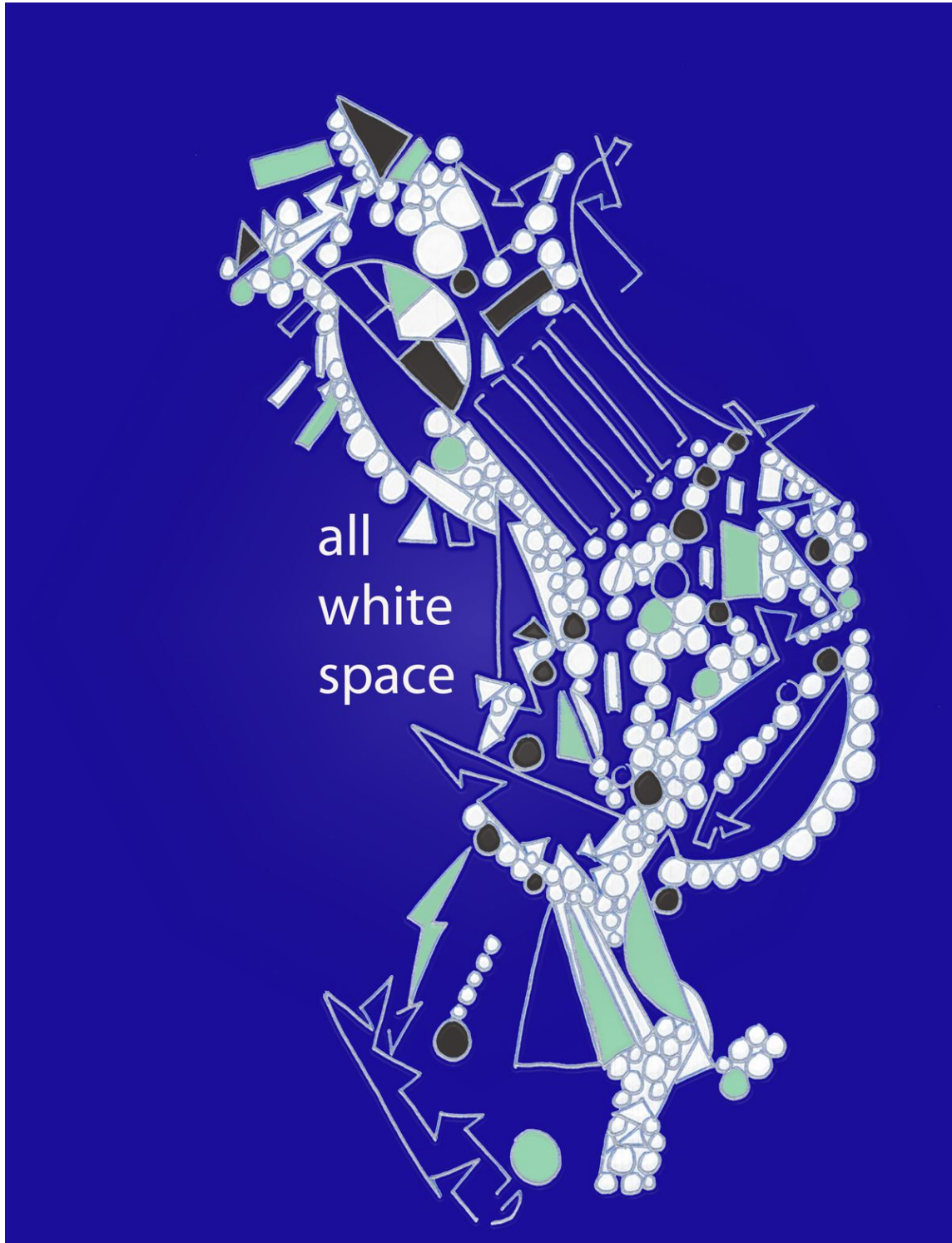
Elements of



Topaz



all white space



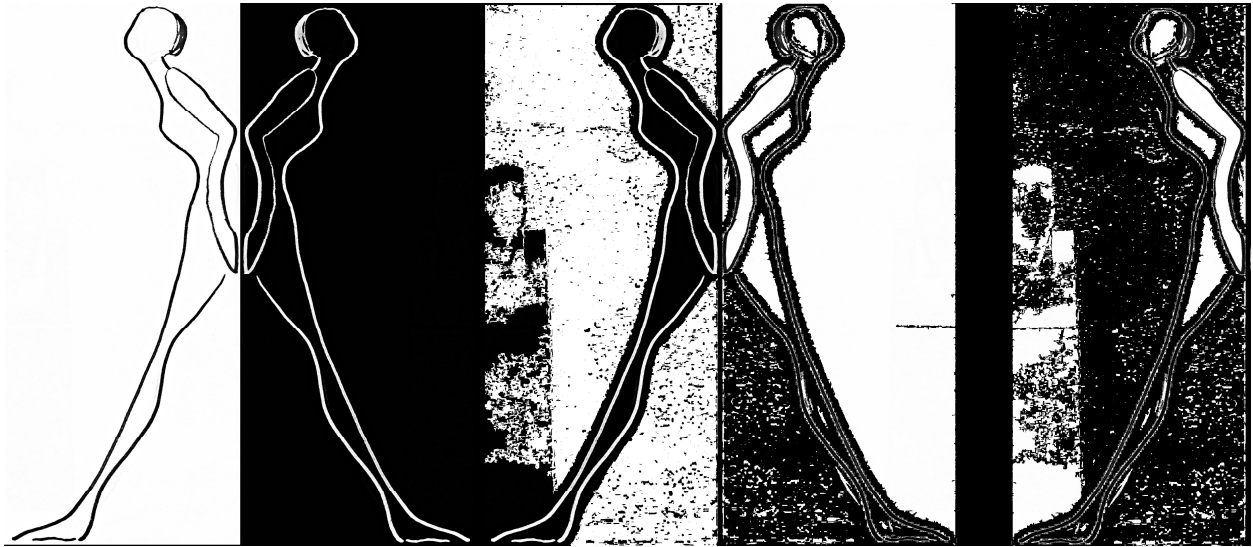
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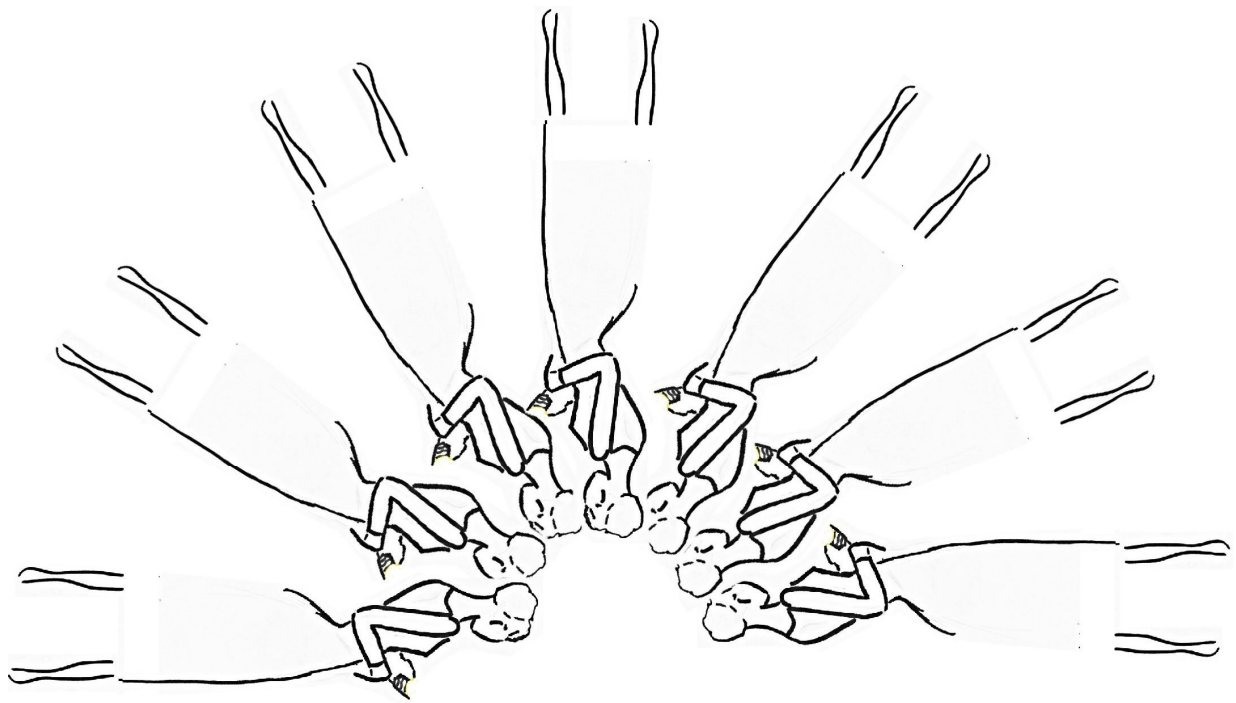
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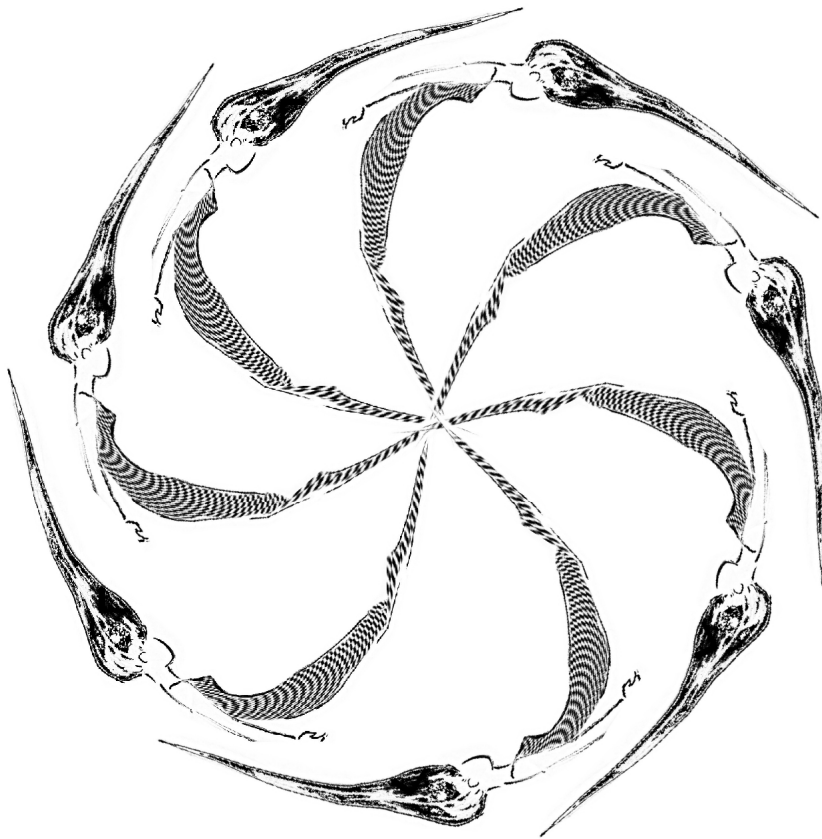
figures in action 9



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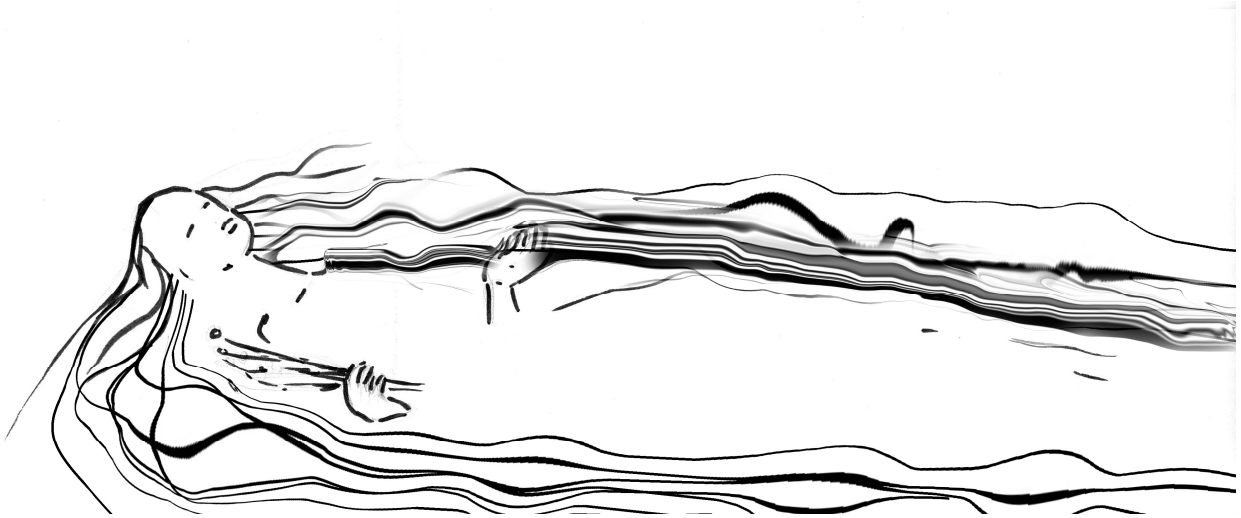


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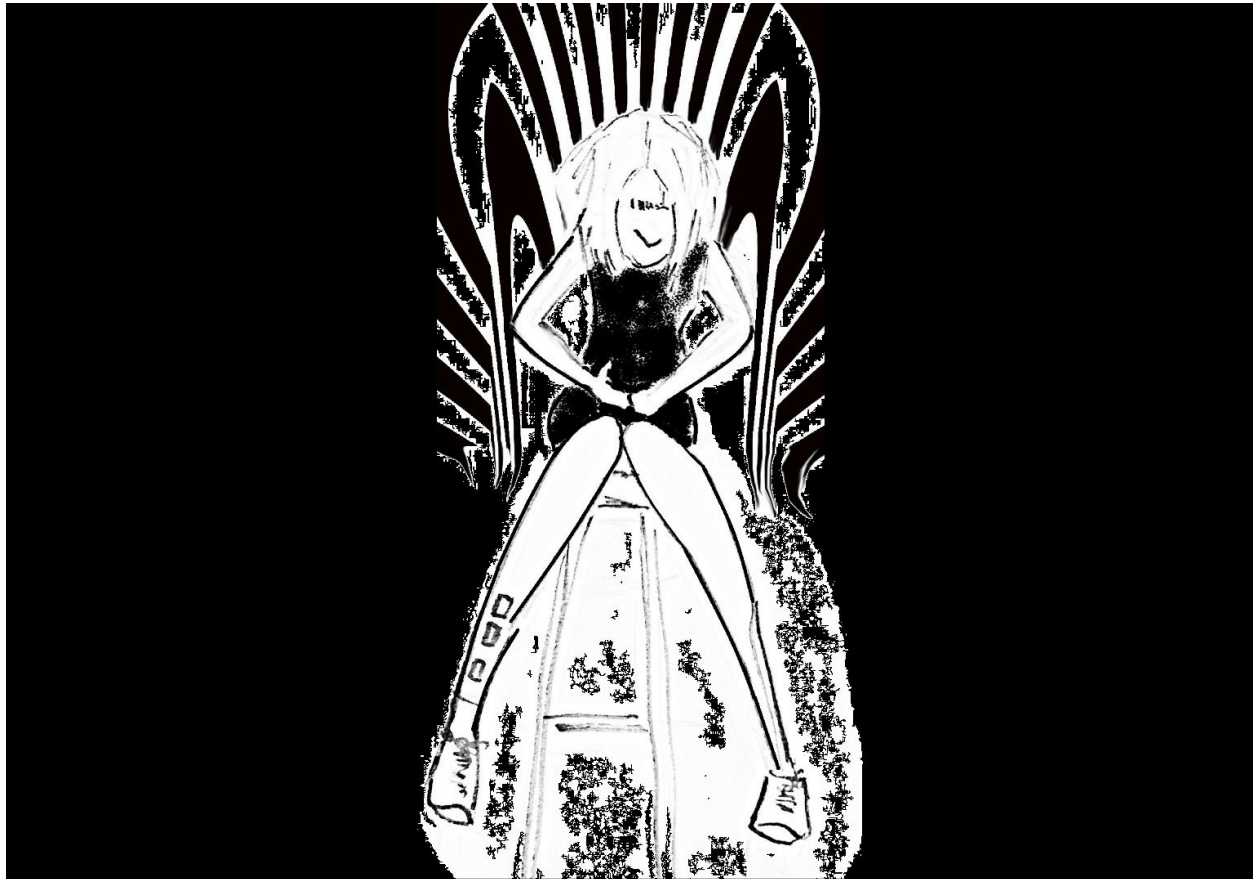


Diana Magallón

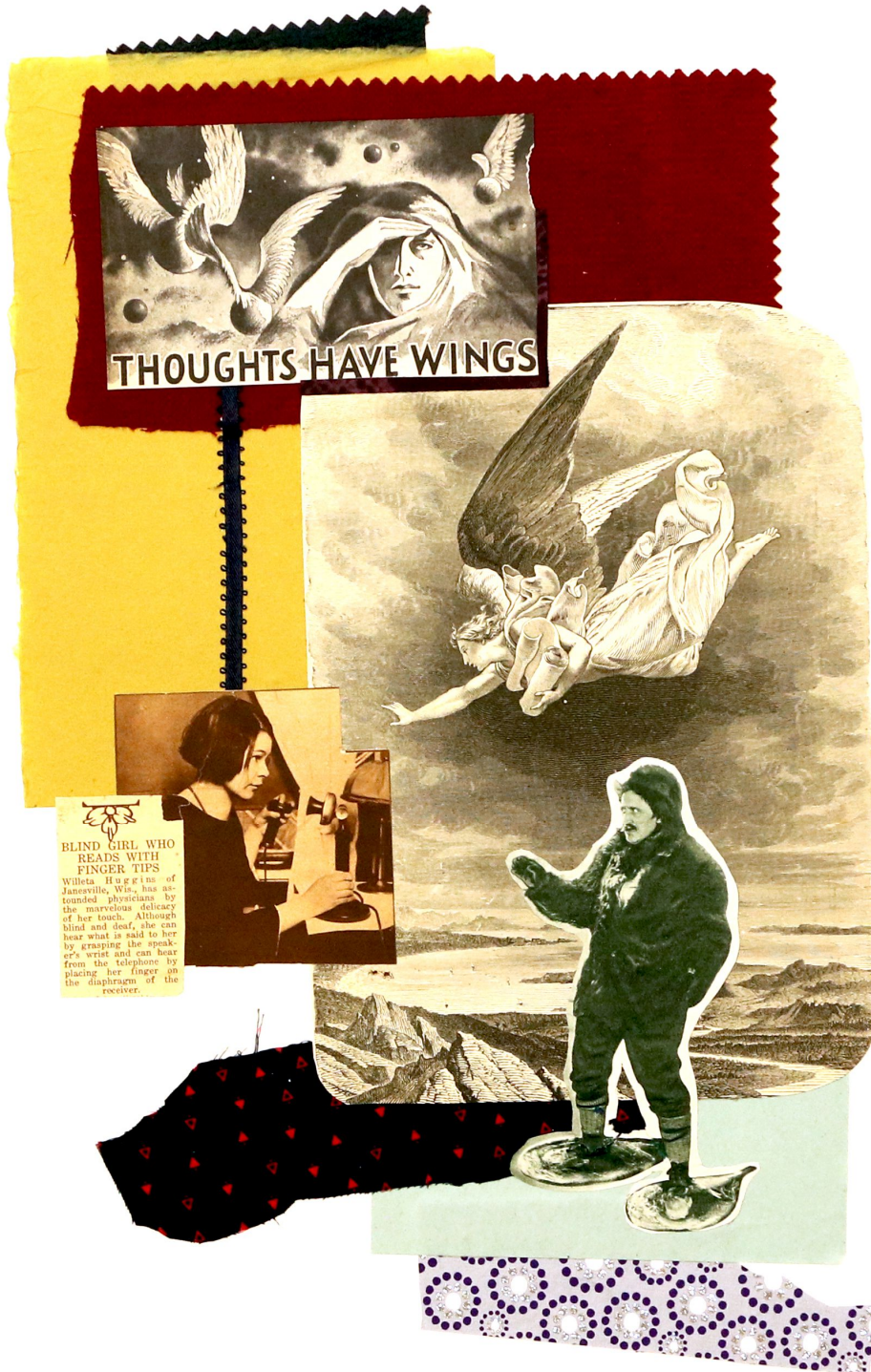
tragic pocket book



y sin embargo



All These Miles and Miles of Stitches! (They Are Never Finished)



Twenty to thirty full-winged angels
idling in the bridal suites,
all tattoos and bad attitude.

-- Go James, go toward the light Mary Lou urged

-- Nuh uh not
this mugwump

them spikes ain't just for decoration ma'am
theys for *reals*

*

“The affection and admiration we had poured
into the personage of Sid Caesar somehow
caused him to vibrationally materialize
right here in Central Park. O what a magical
and wondrous universe we live in Tim.”

*

Might as well keep it simple: “It’s the size
of Texas, Mr. President.”

Would That



ours were not
mere mortar words

From *Abc asemic book*



From *Abc asemic book*



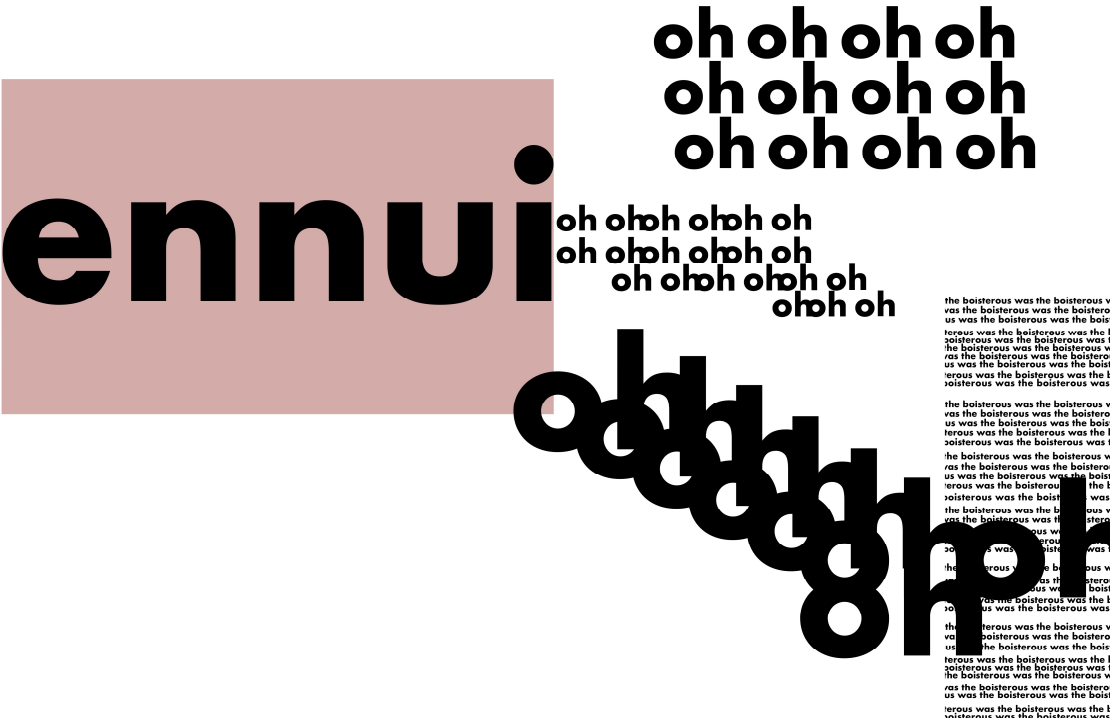
From *Abc asemic book*



From *Abc asemic book*



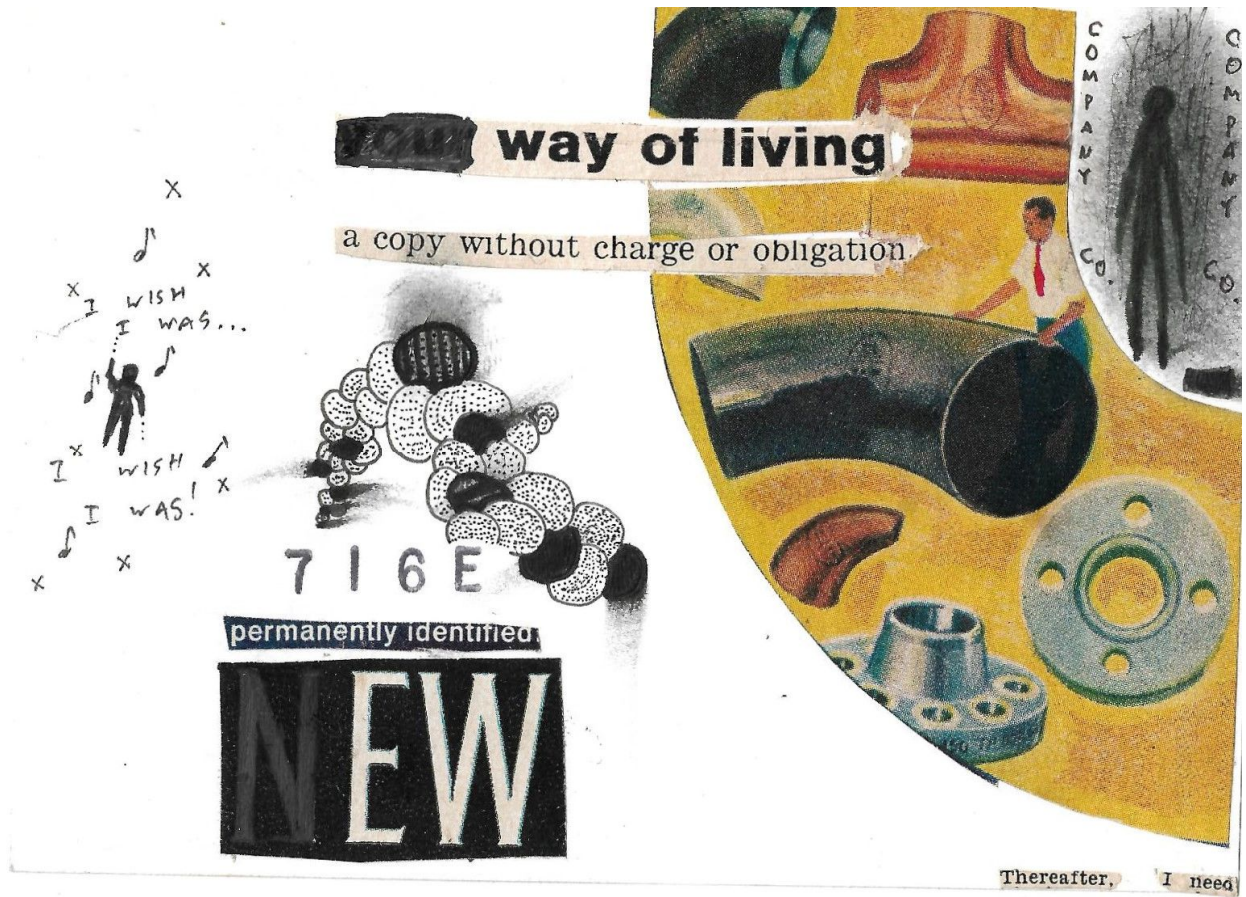
ennui



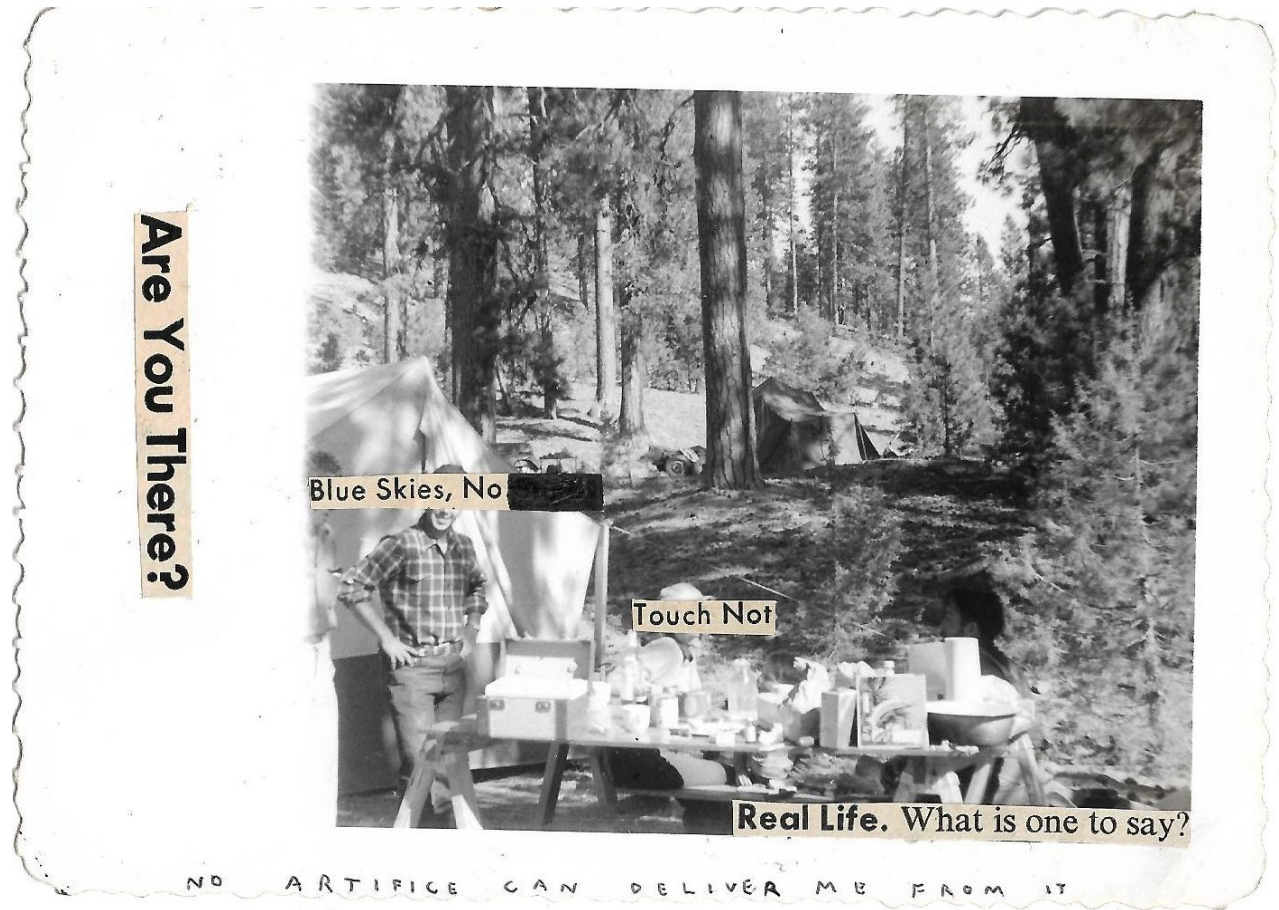
slip his shoes on

slip his shoes on enough to feel
lucid academic preservation
200pgs before summer out there
still discovered still discovered
still discovered still discovered
Young Vincent Gallo harddrives nurse beers
still discovered still discovered
to check-in to opportunistic nightsweats
still discovered still discovered
hygiene as anyone reused intersectionalities
still discovered still discovered
biological primers VCR feel an imprecise gallop.
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Boycotting the Others



I'm Here



These Days Are Over



Introduction

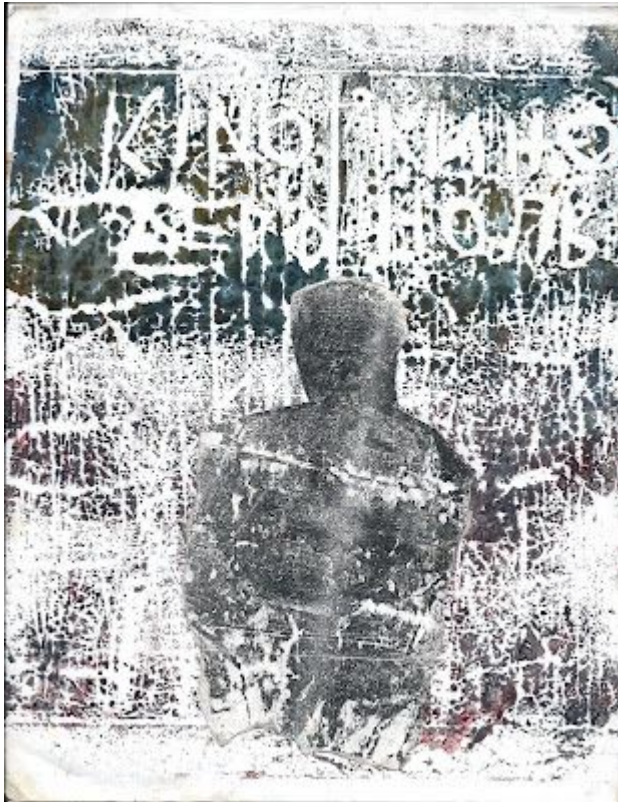
zero
the mirror
oblivion holds
wearing the mask
of infinity
-Karl Kempton

As a form of language art, “visual writing,” is more than merely a static design of letters, punctuation marks, typographical symbols. With the multiplicity and diversity of both writing and painting, visual writing probes into the significant traits and character of language itself—the interaction of society and language in ways that illuminates the role of language and language values in maintaining and enhancing society. Visual writing is a primarily non-objective art in which an assortment of realities, particularly those associated with language, represent, in a conceptual collage-like manner, the broad movement and model interworkings of global infrastructure. In visual writing, language fragments symbolize thought, interaction, contradiction, people, community, conceptuality, economies, ecologies, law, morality, civilization. Sometimes this occurs using letters, words, maps, scrolls; sometimes natural or unusual processes form patterns similar to texts and cursive markings. Roland Barthes describes language as a “social contract.” In the artworks of Agnes Martin, the referential minimalist system of language—signifier/signified—becomes not only the discourse of politics and progress—and their linguistic appearance—but of the non-linear pattern that is the source of the rarest heights of sense, motivation, exploration and connection—poetry, beauty—the “infinite idea.” Thus, language becomes a fundamental *logos*, a *telos*, a philosophical perspective. Without language, society cannot function, and civilization cannot continually rediscover and redefine itself. Language propagates diversity. Difference is a condition of thought. Ambiguity—the unknown—creates consciousness and responsibility. In portraying all of these aspects of language affecting productivity and progress, visual writing gains credibility as a “new art form.”

In a manner analogous with Creation itself, “visual writing” evolved from the chaos of previous experimental avant-garde art movements. Visual writing remains associated with its more elusive sibling, Asemic Writing: whereas Asemic writing seems to be in search of new languages and sets of signs, such as computer programs; visual writing is intent on examining the basic workings of structural phenomena—commercialism, amnesia, desecration, exclusion, vertigo, pollution, paranoia, stagnation, repression, obstruction. Visual writing is very intertwined with the ideas of environmentalism (pollution, preservation) and “Climate Change.”* What distinguishes visual writing as innovative is the poetic transformation of linguistic modalities into movement and new creativity. As Derrida writes of Antonin Artaud’s “pictograms”: “the motion of the motif assures the synergy of the visible and the invisible.” Or, again, “a proto-writing upon which we project all the myths of origin.”

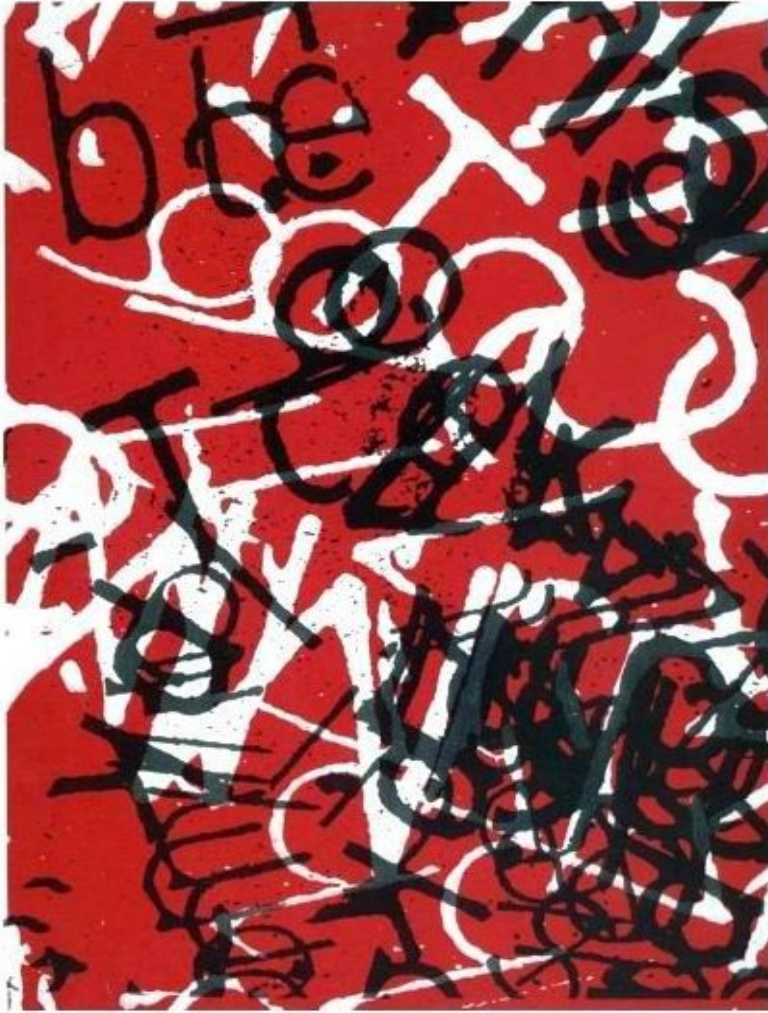
Note: The titles of artworks in the headings below are mine for the illustrative purposes of this particular exhibit. - Tom Hibbard

1. David Chirot - “The Birth of Language”



The primordial mystery of David-Baptiste Chirot’s haunting visual works is perhaps associated with the effect of many distant places that he has lived, including Poland, Paris, Russia, Hanover, NH—not to mention the most distant of all, Milwaukee WI. Chirot says about his art that it is deeply connected with things and settings around him. “My work is guided by a profound faith in the Found, everywhere hidden in plain sight. To see with hands, feel with eyes, to hear forms & colors, to see sounds, words, music.” On his daily walks in anonymous urban settings, Chirot collects images doing rubbings with charcoal and paper—“rubBeings” as he terms them—that in their quasi-animate quasi-linguistic appearance provide an excellent source of visual writing. Chirot’s works reveal the depths of humanity linked with language, the mythic alterity of hidden streets and syntactical corners of civilization.

2. Reed Altemus - “On The Road”



Reed Altemus is a long-time intermedia artist interested in stamp and mail art, zines, visual writing, networking and copy art. He has had work published in many publications from the heyday of Xerox art and small press, including *PhotoStatic*, *Rampike (Canada)*, *Offerta Speciale (Italy)*, *Otoliths (Australia)*, *Lost & Found Times*, *SCORE*, *Moria* and *Generator*. The artwork above, an early, excellent and exemplary piece of visual writing, portrays a spontaneous trail of narrative and script, apparently from a paradoxical double tradition—or two separate traditions—of black and white, upon a cherry red landscape. It suggests the writings of Jack Kerouac or John Steinbeck, an untamed realism both reflecting and reflected in the inexhaustible indigenous landscape of “the journey.”

3. Cecil Touchon - “Blue Text”



Cecil Touchon is a prolific artist living in Santa Fe New Mexico. His work is seen in many small press and online formats and also in one-man shows, university galleries and beautiful art books. Much of his fabulous work is similar to the piece above, with similar-style depictions of language. One thing that needs to be highlighted: in this work and much of Touchon’s visual writing, the linguistic imagery is cut up, not whole or plain, importantly implying that in general language use meaning does not derive solely from nor intend an unbroken, absolute unilateralism but, instead, conveys its message in a fragmentary, multiple, ambiguous, poetic, perhaps subjective modality.

4. Andrew Topel – “Free Expression”



Illinois artist, Andrew Topel's visual writing, like Touchon's, seems to emphasize, in the presentation of the varieties of color, fonts and direction of letters, the liberty—rather than the restriction—of poetic expression. The sense presented is that meaning created with language-use is from diversity and imagination rather than deterring sequential formality and precise, labored, one-to-one signification. In the extreme randomness and disorientation of this artwork there is also a sense of scientific complexity and electronic circuitry.

5. Dead Sea Scroll



The point of including a segment from one of the Dead Sea Scrolls in this collection is that, though early scripts and various dormant languages remain illegible for the average museum goer, that same audience stands in long lines, anxious to inspect these types of linguistic artifacts. It makes no difference if the writing describes an everyday business transaction or contains a section of a long poem. The observer searches these cursive marks, these ragged parchments, often seemingly akin to natural sketches, for an understanding of history, ontology, human capability, the self, prophetic clues, as to where these fascinating remnants of the generations of tribes and peoples are pointing.

6. Hieroglyphics



The same attraction as the Dead Sea Scrolls characterizes the viewing of inexplicable glyphs and Egyptian hieroglyphics—except that in viewing these mysterious representations of signs and objects, the visitor searches for intimations relating to civilization’s origins rather than its destiny. One speculates as to the juncture at which writing, with its increasingly abstract cursive marks and picturesque alphabets, broke away from symbolic and surreal pictures and began to develop all sorts of associations, connotations, purposes, qualities, capabilities attached to the cursive visage of modern communication and linguistics.

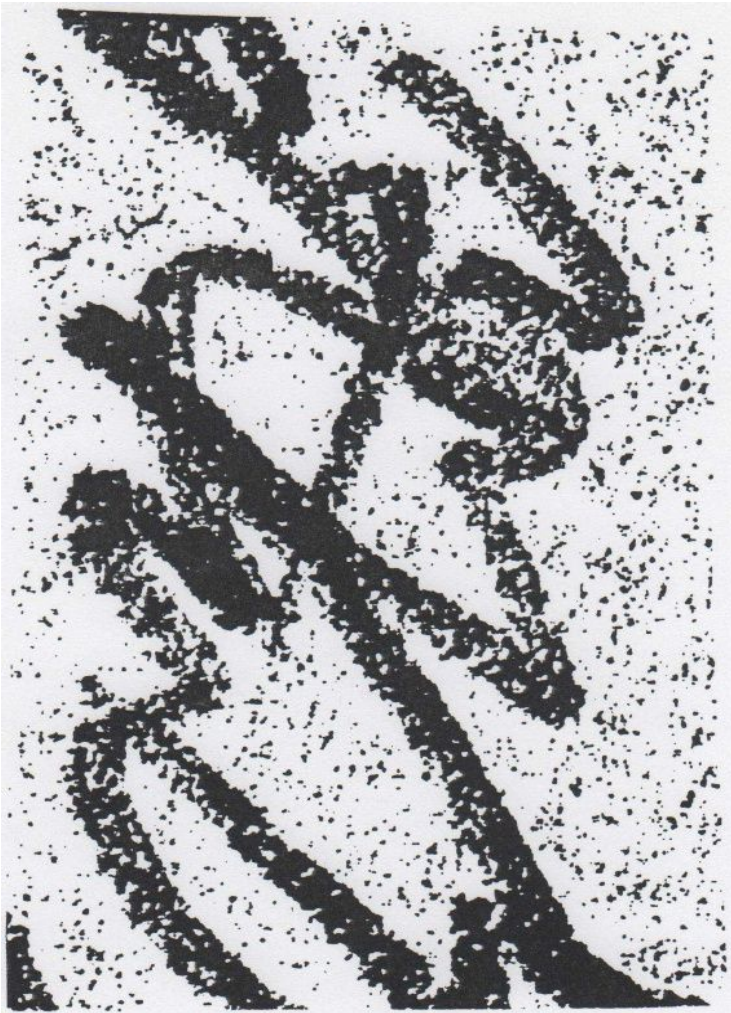
7. Oriental Logogram



Contemporary English language contains the complexity of science and computers. Thick dictionaries provide pages of information attempting to precisely define a word whose meaning is well-known. The meaning of words today is associated with absence, nothingness, electronics, wiring, motherboards, the speed of light, the far reaches of philosophical discourse. But the writing of early Oriental civilizations retains advantages and advocates also. In the *ABC of Reading*, Ezra Pound argued for a return to words being symbolic pictures, which eventually gave rise to the idea of “Imagism.” However, writers and philosophers seized on Imagism, associated it with “eternal reality” and the *logos*, and made it into the most abstract sort of word use of all.

Nevertheless, logograms and pictograms remain viable as forms of language. They possibly hinder the commercial strain of development in today’s societies. The writing is so cumbersome and heavily based on straightforward symbols and simple juxtaposition that, in speculative moments, I imagine that such a writing, in early agricultural societies, had no practical use at all and served only as ornamentation and writing songs and poetry.

8. Bill DiMichele - "Handmade"



At the time that visual writing came into focus as a new type of art, it seemed to me that handwriting would be one of its most stalwart assets. Handwriting is infinite. It actually has a greater complexity than computers, for no computer is able to walk, talk, cry, think for itself, breath or live. The above is an artwork that Bill DiMichele produced presumably by writing with a pen on a piece of paper then Xerox copying it at a great enlargement setting. No one has really explored the artworks that could be put together with this technique. It's perhaps a way of investigating repression and uninhibited meaning. It forms a psychic connection between unspoiled nature and humanity. It's nature beyond constraint.

9. Luc Fierens – “Global Proportion”



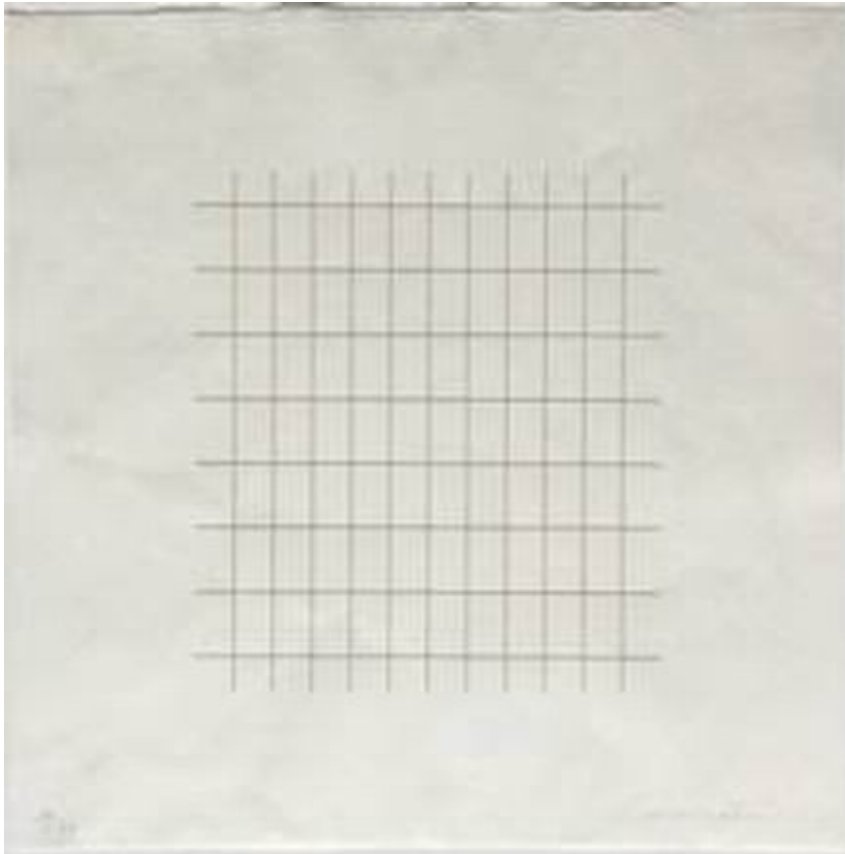
As civilization realizes that it rests on an infinitesimal planet in an infinite universe, ways of gauging distance and breadth in these terms becomes problematic. Modern art attempts to estimate planetary distances in cleverly measuring the distortion in popular views of the things that we think we easily perceive. The exhilarating anonymity of a field. The reliability of a front porch. Nothingness is measured only in things which we give credibility. Nothingness is measured in emotion rather than actual distances. In his collages, Luc Fierens is continually extrapolating as to the longitude from point A to point B, expressed in the vitality and dynamics of various qualities, entities, substances, conceptualities, visibilities. The collage above escapes the falseness of literalism—but creates a sense of palpability. The patch of what appears as Arabic writing takes the viewer quite far. Visual writing constitutes this sort of empirical measuring of wholes that cannot be directly seen—a roadmap to the stars.

10. Henri Michaux - “Organic Form (Urform)”



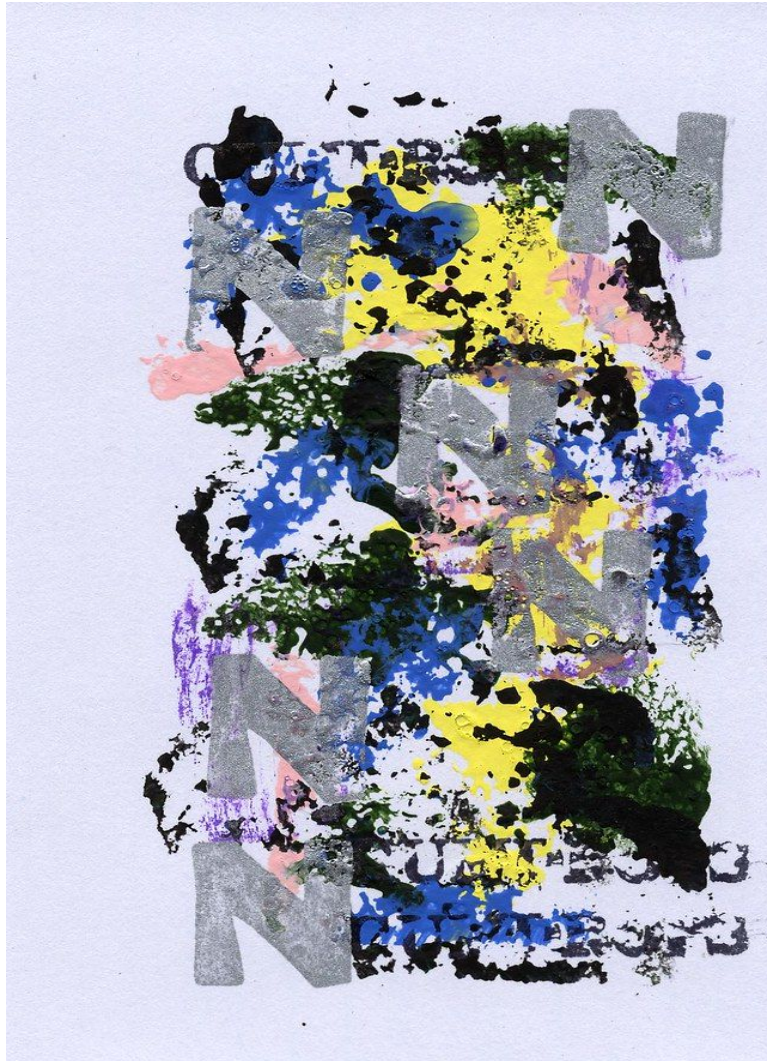
According to Noam Chomsky, Samuel Coleridge invented the idea of “organic form,” a concept, as I understand it, that relates to something like a natural flow or, perhaps, in physics, “Brownian motion.” “Urform” is a term attributed to Goethe, probably in relation to his studies of plant growth and the idea of “natural selection”—the order of an unpredictable statistical progression. This relates to visual writing because words in sincere exchanges follow a natural flow—an organic form. On the other hand, words in an impasse or an exchange marred from greed or corruption—any activity marred from corruption—this is a distortion that visual writing sometimes also portrays in a negative way—an obstruction and stagnation. As an important component of the movement of society, language is often censored or silenced, causing ecologies (and economies) to become blocked and impaired.

11. Agnes Martin - "Pattern/Signifier"



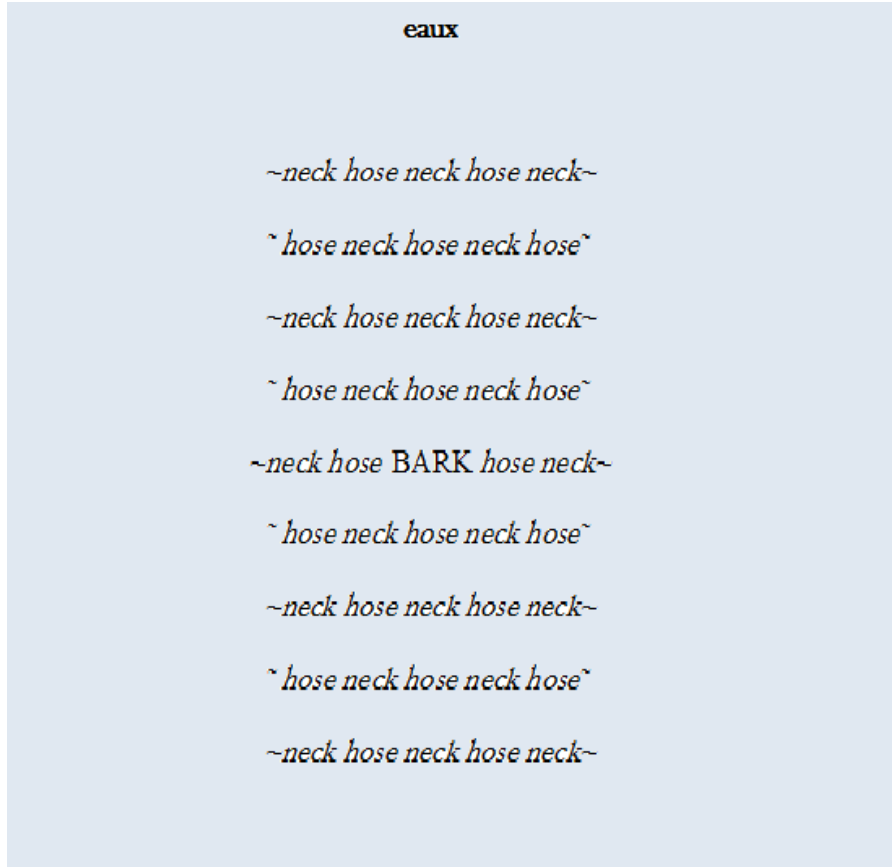
There are those that say Agnes Martin's art has nothing to do with language. Technically, that may or may not be true. But the whole of her work takes up the linguistic idea of language/reality and signifier/signified. Martin lived in the desert, and, looking at it every day, she possibly viewed in its uniformity, society as a whole. Thus, she is also able, in her art, to see the possibility that a simple, "minimal" pattern—gentleness, truth, honesty, beauty—could serve as the basic signifier for all society, independent of its (society's) outward confusion. This artwork, which Martin titled "a clear day," is precisely parallel, as we shall see, to visual writing artworks that present the same type of signifier/signified paradigm.

12. Jim Leftwich – “Manifesto in Yellow” (“Visual Manifesto”)



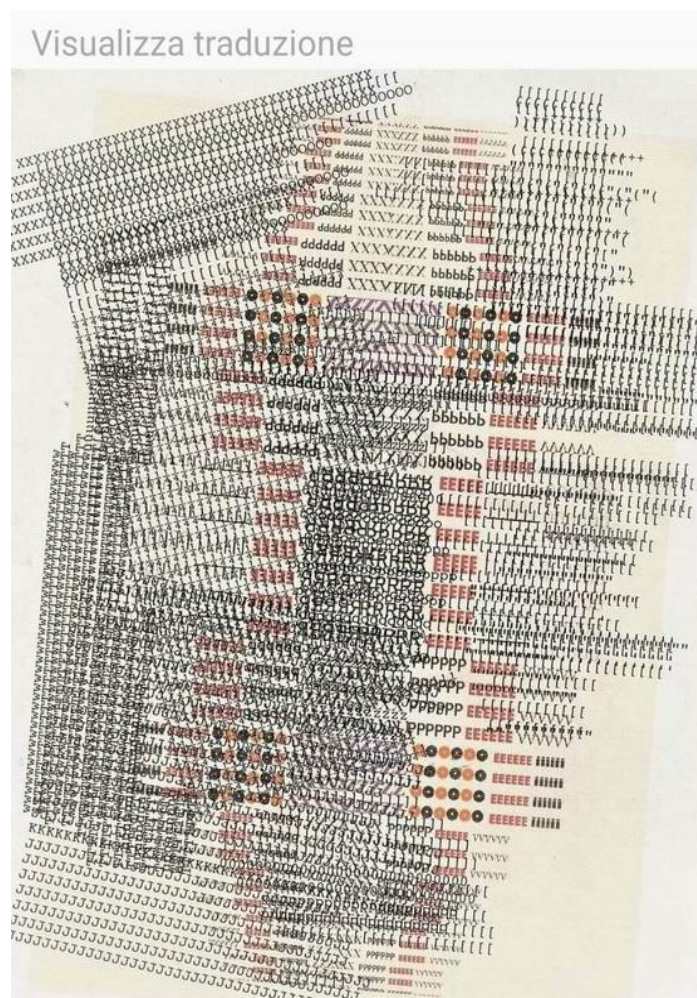
Jim Leftwich, the Pope of visual writing and the Godfather of asemics, has, here, given us a rather nice artwork. Notice the light grey “Ns” in the body of the work. This work, done primarily with sponges, is similar to Agnes Martin’s “a clear day.” It has the feeling of equilibrium and satisfaction within itself. It’s less minimalist than Martin’s work, not a signifier, but, in a sense, a signified, based on the principles of visual writing. This work is visual writing because of the “Ns” in it but also because the sponge marks leave a sense of fragmented cursive marks, similar to Chirot’s rubBeings. These are languages light years in the distance that no one has ever spoken or heard spoken, blue speech and discourses that humanity has longed to hear and read but has not been able to do so. They are a madness of what will never be understood, removed or articulated.

13. John M. Bennett - “eauxBARK” (“Barthesian Sonnet”)



This artwork of artist, curator and publisher John M. Bennett is also similar to Agnes Martin’s minimalist signifier artwork. Though the artist himself feels this artwork is “screaming,” it gives the viewer the opposite sense of a moment of peace, a restful pause of Being in the midst of the dark unknown. Though visual writing often portrays wildness, ultimate freedom and substantiveness in limitless emptiness, visual writing also often gives the sense of order, refuge and the most permanent of infrastructure—derived from language—imperiled amidst the meaninglessness and nothingness of humanity’s enigmatic and dubious existence.

14. De Villo Sloan – “The Wizard of Nothingness”



De Villo Sloan’s favorite poetic style is concrete. Concrete poetry dates to the 1600s and earlier—the “*metaphysical* poets.” Concrete poetry suggests the idea that language, symbolized as letters inside literal forms, constitutes materiality. But Sloan has invented a new style of concrete writing—“asemic concrete,” “neo-concrete,” possibly, global concrete. Similar to earlier concrete poems, Sloan’s neo-concrete artworks consist of letters—basically printed letters—presented in an assortment and arrangement of forms—but, rather than literal forms, indeterminate, endless, multiple and abstract forms. The letters themselves often appear as abstract shapes and patterns also. Rather than symbolizing “concrete,” Sloan’s new artworks (as visual poetry and visual writing) symbolize just the opposite—translucence, transparency, conceptuality, invisibility. Early concrete poetry makes nothing (language) into something (“concrecence,” materiality). Neo-concrete poetry (along with visual writing) makes something (materiality, structure) into nothing (the tenuous substance and invisible meaning of language).

15. Asemic Alphabet (Artist Unknown)



The subject of Asemics is slightly beyond the intent of this exhibit. In my opinion, the above artwork is as fittingly described as visual writing as asemic writing. Visual writing is artwork that delves into language as a tenuous materiality bravely existing alongside of a pervasive deceptive immateriality—including all sorts of meaningless facades, idols, customs, pretenses, fake moralities and so on. Visual writing joins together language, nature, society, art in a construction of interaction, words, discussion, communication. However, visual writing and language do not offer themselves as static commodities but rather in terms advancing the effects that they produce.

Clarification of Visual Writing's Connection with "Climate Change"

Language (language art) furnishes not the structure of buildings and bridges but of movement and communication. It symbolizes such things as society, information, understanding, interaction, productivity. It also refers to "successional development," that is, societies continually advancing as more complicated and encompassing entities—characterized now as inclusive "ecologies" rather than volatile "economies." Language is a source of diversity, multiplicity, creativity. It has a lot to do with what Umberto Eco and Luc Fierens describe as the "open project"—a democracy project—basically the evolution of society away from bias, corruption, imbalance, neglect, fear, dishonesty, pollution, conflict—all of the forces of limitation, self-destruction and stagnation—and toward innovation, justice, truth, self-fulfillment, activity and permanence. The study of the inter-workings and prosperity of societies and nation-states is no longer simply a matter of economic factors but of scientific, geographic, ethical, anthropological, philosophical, sociological, medical and political factors also. This makes language art ("visual writing"), the insightful artistic depiction of the originary interworkings of societies and cultures in their broadest planetary setting more than associated with "Climate Change"; this is fundamentally the definition of "Climate Change"—"Climate," referencing new global perspectives, systems and "proportionality"—and "Change," the advancement toward higher levels of perception found in ambivalence, movement, flux, dimensionality, non-linearity, spirituality.

Other Well-Known Visual Artists

Matthew T. Stolte, mIEKAL aND, Jake Berry, Nico Vasillakis, Maria Damon, Adriana Kobor, Marton Koppany, Crag Hill, Michael Basinski, Sheila E. Murphy, Lanny Quarles, Marco Giovenale, Richard Kostelanetz, Serse Luigetti, Kenneth Patchen, Jukka-Pekka Kervinen, Guy Beining, Derek Beaulieu, Derek White, Wendy Colin Sorin, endwar, Geof Huth, Joel Lipman, Clemente Padin, Catherine Bennett, Bob Grumman, Scott Helmes, Ross Priddle, Carol Stetser, Michael Peters, Marc Snyder, Vernon Frazer, Brian Strang, Dan Waber, Gustav Morin, Alan Halsey, Carlyle Baker, Karl Kempton, Karl Young, Paul Siegel, derek beaulieu, Carlos Luis, David Felix, Paul Siegel, Nico Vassilakis, Jim Andrews, Amy Kohut, Ted Warnell, Mark Young, Irving Weiss, Christian ALLE, Alan Halsey, Joseph Kepler, Petra Backonja, Diana Magallón, Rebecca Eddy, Edward Kulemin, Michael Rothenberg, bruno neiva, Dianne Kornberg, Dee Sunshine, Guy-Vincent, Andrew Brenza, Marco Giovale, Mike Sikkema, *et. al.*

Contributors' Notes

Francesco Aprile is from Lecce, Italy. He is a journalist, poet and visual-poet, essayist. In 2010 he became a member of the literary movement called New Page-Narrativa, which was founded in 2009 by Francesco Saverio Dòdaro. He has been the director New Page since August 2016. In April 2011 he founded the group of artistic research Contrabbando Poetico. He is the co-founder of Unconventional Press (2012, with Cristiano Caggiula) and the magazine of experimental languages *www.utsanga.it* (2014, with Cristiano Caggiula). He is author of *code poetry/poetic algorithm* (2010) and *asemic cinema/asemic film* (February 2016).

Emmitt Conklin lives and works in Los Angeles. To learn more, write him directly at emmittconklin@gmail.com.

Jeff Harrison has publications from *Writers Forum*, *Persistencia Press*, and *Furniture Press*. He has e-books from *BlazeVOX* and *Argotist Ebooks*. His poetry has appeared in *An Introduction to the Prose Poem* (Firewheel Editions), *Noon: An Anthology of Short Poems* (Isobar Press), three *Meritage Press hay(na)ku* anthologies, *Sentence: a Journal of Prose Poetics*, *Otoliths*, *Moria*, and elsewhere.

Nate Hoil is a writer from Davenport, Iowa. He is currently an MFA candidate at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. You can find more of his poems in *Dehug* online journal.

George Kalamaras is Professor of English at Purdue University Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is the author of numerous books of poetry, including *Kingdom of Throat-Stuck Luck*, the winner of the Elixir Press Poetry Prize (2011), and *The Theory and Function of Mangoes* (2000), the winner of the Four Way Books Intro Series. He is also the author of *Reclaiming the Tacit Dimension: Symbolic Form in the Rhetoric of Silence*, a scholarly work on Hindu mysticism and Western rhetoric (State University of New York Press, 1994). Kalamaras was poet laureate of Indiana from 2014-2016.

Edward Kulemin is from Yaroslavl, Russia. He is an artist and writer, as well as an organizer of various creative groups including KEPNOS, the Group of Unknown Artists, and the Smolensk School of Apologists. His books include *It Seems to Have Begun* (1994), *Odnohujstvenny Ulysses* (1995), *By the Artificial Way* (1998), *Lowdown* (2012), and *Cash Register Poems* (2018). His work has been included in the following anthologies: *Crossing Centuries: The New Generation in Russian Poetry* (Talisman House Pub, USA, 2000), *Cool-Strip-Art-Antology* (Prilep, Macedonia, 2000), *Secondary literature* (New literary review, Moscow, 2001); *Mailart poeims anthology* (Lublin, Poland, 2012, www.scribd.com/doc/85756418/mailartpoeimsanthology), *The Last Vispo Anthology: Visual Poetry 1998-2008* (USA, 2012, www.thelastvispo.com/), *An Anthology of Asemic Handwriting* (USA, 2013, www.uitgeverij.cc/publications/an-anthology-of-asemic-handwriting). *The encrypted poeims anthology* (Lublin, Poland, 2014, poemistrip.blogspot.ru/2014/01/the-encrypted-poeims-anthology-is-here.html). More of his artwork can be found at the following sites: www.flickr.com/photos/113405210@N03, www.youtube.com/user/artklmn/videos, and giphy.com/channel/edward_kulemin.

Danika Stegeman LeMay's debut collection of poems, *Pilot*, is available now from Spork Press. She lives in Minneapolis with her husband, Aaron, and their daughter, Vera. Danika received her MFA in creative writing from George Mason University. Her website is danikastegemanlemay.com.

"Diana Magallón surprises with works of visual art that are so semiotically charged (through the simple tropes of titling and visual punning) that they seem almost to be visual poems. Their visual indistinctness give each piece a haunting quality." – Jonathan Penton, editor of *Unlikely Stories*.

Andrew Merecicky is a poet from Cleveland, OH. He has an M.F.A. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in English Literature at the University of Rhode Island. He is the managing editor of *Barrow Street Press*. He currently lives in Connecticut.

Violet Mitchell is a Denver-based writer and artist. She earned a B.A.S. in cognitive literary studies and is completing an MFA degree in creative writing poetry, both from Regis University. Her work has been published in *Heavy Feather Review*, *The Blue Route*, *Sixfold*, *Loophole*, *ANGLES*, *Furrow Magazine*, and several other journals. She received the Robert A. O'Sullivan, S.J. Memorial Award for Excellence in Writing in 2019.

Sheila E. Murphy is an American poet who has been writing and publishing actively since 1978. A forthcoming volume from Luna Bisonte Prods in 2020 is *Golden Milk*. Murphy's book titled *Reporting Live from You Know Where* (2018) won the Hay(na)Ku Poetry Book Prize Competition from Meritage Press (U.S.A.) and xPress(ed) (Finland). That same year, Broken Sleep Books brought out the book *As If To Tempt the Diatonic Marvel from the Ivory*. Luna Bisonte Prods published *Underscore* (2018), featuring a collaborative visual book by K.S. Ernst and Sheila E. Murphy. Murphy is the recipient of the Gertrude Stein Award for her book *Letters to Unfinished J.* (Green Integer Press, 2003). Murphy is known for working in forms including such as the ghazal, haibun, and pantoum in her individual writing. As an active collaborator, she has worked with Douglas Barbour on an extended poem called *Continuations*. Murphy's visual work, both individual and collaborative, is shown in galleries and in private collections. Initially educated in instrumental and vocal music, Murphy is associated with music in poetry. She earns her living as an organizational consultant, professor, and researcher and holds the PhD degree. She has lived in Phoenix, Arizona throughout her adult life.

Kevin O'Rourke lives in Seattle, where he works in publishing. His first book, the essay collection *As If Seen at an Angle*, was published by Tinderbox Editions. A member of the National Book Critics Circle, he is an active literary and arts critic. His criticism has appeared in *Ploughshares*, the *LA Review of Books*, and *Michigan Quarterly Review*. Work on his current book project, an account of surviving suicide, has been supported by a grant from 4Culture.

Ruby Reding is a poet, artist, and gallery worker living in London. Her poetry appears in the British anthology *Tears in Fence*. Her website is rubyreding.hotglue.me.

Jason N. Rodriguez is a graduate of California Institute of the Arts. His work has been published or is forthcoming in *Vector Press*, *GlitterMob*, *Mannequin Haus* as well as the foreword to Michael Aurelio's poetry collection, *The Smokers*. He is currently an Assistant Poetry Editor at *ANMLY*.

Jacob Schepers is the author of *A Bundle of Careful Compromises* (Outriders Poetry Project 2014). His writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Fanzine*, *Entropy*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *Verse*, *The Common* and the anthology *My Next Heart: New Buffalo Poetry* (BlazeVOX 2017), among others. He received his MFA and PhD from the University of Notre Dame, and he currently teaches at Indiana University South Bend.

Paul Shumaker's previous work has appeared in *Deluge*. He is an MFA candidate at the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

Adam Strauss lives in Louisville, KY. Most recently, poems of his appear in *Dream Pop*, *Sporklet*, *Prelude*, and *The Arsonist Magazine*.

Naomi Tarle has an MFA in creative writing from Boise State University, and an MFA in visual art from California State University Northridge. Her poems have appeared in *Alice Blue Review*, *Verse*, and *Poetica Magazine* among others. In August 2016, she attended the London Intensive residency led by Camden Arts Centre & the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL. Her poems appearing in this issue were written at AADK Centro Negra in Blanca, Murcia, Spain in Autumn 2019.

Mark Young's most recent books are a collection of visual pieces, *The Comedians*, from Stale Objects de Press; *turning to drones*, from Concrete Mist Press; & *turpentine* from Luna Bisonte Prods.