

WORD FOR *WORD*

Word For/ Word is seeking poetry, prose, poetics, criticism, reviews, and visuals for upcoming issues. We read submissions year-round, but issue #47 is scheduled for November 2026. Please direct queries and submissions to:

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

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 submissions should be attached as a single .doc, .docx, .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.

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Word For/Word, Issue 46 (Spring 2026)

Poetry

Mykyta Ryzhykh	3
Michelle Disler	4
Jason Ryberg	8
Connor Fisher	13
Mark Dow	17
Darren Demaree	20
David Hadbawnik	23
George Kalamaras	29
Mark DeCarteret	36
Jeff Bagato	42
Joel Chace	48
Heller Levinson	54
Neil Flory	58
Caleb Merritt	63

Visual Poetry

Luna Rail	68
Bill Marsh	72
Katie Schaag	78
Dario Roberto Dioli	86
Carolyn Guinzio	92
James Sanders	97
Angela Caporaso	100
J.I. Kleinberg	103
Edward Kulemin	108
Alison Strub	112
Beth Kephart	117
Oona Ratcliffe	120
Richard Hanus	125
Jim Andrews	130

Prose

Kelvin Corcoran and Peter Robinson	141
W. Scott Howard	148

Contributors' Notes	158
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Mykyta Ryzhykh

I want

1

A lonely fallen branch crunches like a human bone
A single fallen branch crunches like the cartilage of humanity
I'm vomiting from the roof
I'm jumping off the roof
The body always resists the mind
The body doesn't know what worms are
The human brain is limited
The cemetery knows everything

2

Death does not know what ugliness is
But death is ugly
Old age is uglier than death
Aging of human cells is natural suicide
No man is capable of growing a cocoon around himself
No one will be born again
Foliage of empty color is covered with snow
Everything turns white except for the cemetery monument

3

A little cola and a lot of sleep
No one knows whether will be able to wake up in the morning
No black bird can break my dreams with its beak
I myself am iron and black like a feathered bird
I'm turning to stone
I'm a statue
I'm a silent stone
I'm a figurine in the cemetery of life

4

Bones or snowflakes
Gun or dildo
I want to be
I want to kill
I want to be home
I want to be a home for all
I want to kill the war

Michelle Disler

Framed

I tell her what I've always told her.

The kingdom is yours. It's your spinning wheel, your charming prince, and your whistling dwarves. I sparkle, and I shimmer, and I do that magic thing with the glass. (Smoke and mirrors: that one's mine.) She's hard to please, this one, and suspicious, too. And that breath: like a poisoned apple, the still-beating heart of a princess. Something. But I never said. She could break me.

I'm framed in gold. That's gilding the lily; don't you think?

I tell her what I've always told her.

The kingdom is yours. It's your glass slipper, your grandmother's house, and your homemade porridge. I shine on her like the sun, and my rays are gold-plated, pretty much. I could be the element itself, and the orb. But she's a cold one, and lately, she doubts. I could also be had for impersonation (the element, the sun—take your pick. So provincial).

But for her, I gleam. I resist—but acid and moisture only, and perfectly, even then.

I tell her what I've always told her.

The kingdom is yours. It's your willing woodsman, your squealing little pigs, and your oven warming for yummy kids who lose their way. I soothe, I mollify, and I appease. I flatter like the blarney stone, so kiss me. (Not a trace.) The adulation, the sweet talk, and the praise—oh, for crying out loud. Fairest of them all, my glassy ass. I will not bend. I can't. I won't. It's not in my nature.

I am fixed to hang for as long as, for as long as.

Michelle Disler

Revisionist Love Story

Baby, I love that yellow wallpaper, said no woman ever.

Baby, I want to be like Myrtle Wilson when I grow up, said no woman ever.

Baby, I want to be a beautiful little fool, said no woman ever.

Baby, I want to be your madwoman in the attic, said no woman ever.

Baby, I want to knock bobby socks with my stepdad, said no woman ever.

I am your candle, baby, burning at both ends.

I am cinder, baby, a shoe made of glass, waiting for you to make me somebody.

I am the siren who nearly destroys you at sea, baby. Hear me wail and wail.

I am hearth and home, baby, your angel by the sea.

I am heartless, without a heart, without your mercy, in the wood. Hear me flee,
deep into the glen, your pity in exchange for life, death, love. Surely, for this I
must pay: balance owed you or my prince?

Hey, baby.

Hey, baby.

Hey.

Michelle Disler

Spiritual Wife No. 1

For Elvira Eliza Field, the second wife of James Strang, founder of a mid nineteenth century Mormon monarchy on Beaver Island, Michigan

It was funny, you know? One minute I'm a part of the crowd come to hear the Gospel of the Lord direct from the Lord's own, a prophet!—and the next thing, well, the next thing, he wants to meet me.

I was, well, I don't know what I was. Curious?

Brother James (he called himself Brother James) sent for me, and we're sitting alone in a room together, and there's this feeling like, maybe something spiritual because it's all so hard to understand—

like the Bible sometimes.

And Brother James reaches for my hands, kind of like a man does for a woman, I guess, and he tells me we can be married. If I wanted. I did want.

Oh, God, I wanted.

Isn't that funny, to be with this famous man God talks to—all the time? He talks to God! And God answers him, Brother James said!

But I did think maybe it was wrong, and I told Brother James, because if my daddy found out I was holding hands with the Almighty himself, he'd take the strap to me till I couldn't sit down till next Tuesday.

But Brother James said God told him having extra wives was really what God wanted for his men followers in this big new church everyone liked so much, and that we would have a special marriage, a “spiritual marriage,”

and I would be kind of like his heavenly wife, which sounds better than a plain old regular wife, so I said yes. Oh, God. You know I did. I was his wife, and we were together, and I should be blushing but I wasn't, and then he had me cut my hair short. Oh!

And I had to be called Charlie for a while, and dressed like a boy, and be his “assistant” while he brought big crowds of people to the new church, Brother James's Mormon church.

Well, I didn't care what church it was, or what James wanted me to call him. I just wanted.

He made me want. And I didn't hardly care, but James, he wanted, too. And we traveled up and down the coast for the big crowds, but mostly for the wanting.

And we went to this island, and I was Charlie, though everyone knew I wasn't, and I knew I wasn't, but we all pretended until God told James who told everyone else that heavenly wives were okay. More than okay.

I could go to hell, I thought then, because it did all seem strange, but I was having too much fun to stop and ask forgiveness for being a special spiritual wife. I don't see why I would.

Mrs. Legal Wife seemed upset, and I didn't care. Isn't that mean?

I didn't care. She left soon anyway, and I was never really the first wife, even after James took more wives. But first spiritual wife suited me fine. Together we ran the place, James and me.

I saw my chance and I took it.

We wanted and we ruled and we wanted and we ruled so much and so hard and for long enough and the world watched and then came the guns and the glory and dying—

well, dying is like wanting, you know?

Jason Ryberg

Wide, Low and Slow

Broke
down
Massy-
Furgeson,
abandoned and left
for dead somewhere out here near what
must be, more or less, the middle of an over-grown
cornfield, smack-dab on the Kansas / Missouri
border, who knows how many years ago,

upon which the scarecrow of an old cracked plaster
mannequin (with straw cowboy hat
and canvas gloves) is
casually
straddled,

as
if
he
were
kickin'
way back and
rolling: wide, low and
slow, down the boulevard of time,

like he aint got a motherfuckin' care in the world,

and with there nothing else to do and nowhere
else to be, who knows, maybe he doesn't.

Jason Ryberg

Grand Entrance

The
night,
wearing
its long, dark
flowing cape is just
now making its grand entrance as
it slowly descends the curved staircase of the sky while
a few stars have showed up early and the wind
 is rushing all about, and of course Night
isn't really Night without its award winning sound-
 track of the lush, polyphonic
 harmonization
 of crickets,
 tree frogs
 and
 ghosts.

Jason Ryberg

Less Than I'd Hoped For / More Than I Cared For

So
far,
things have
turned out a
little differently
than I thought they would: no real, huge
complaints (I've been weirdly lucky, I guess), probably
the usual - less than I hoped for / more than
I cared for - maybe a little bit more
of what some guys get and a lot less of what gets left
behind when they're done picking through
the choicest cuts, but
hey, we're not
here to
get
down
in
the
mud of
covetous-
ness and resentment
or stir up any trouble that
doesn't need stirring, so let's just take stock in what we
have, count our blessings, be thankful and all that
crap and get back to work, people.

Jason Ryberg

Waking on Lake Inman

There is a big, blue
heron perched on the rusty
tin roof of an old

boat dock (that's barely
even afloat these days), just
off the shore of one

of the few bodies
of water in the state of
Kansas not built by

the United States
Army Corps. of Engineers
way, way back in the

hazy fog bank of
long ago, not unlike the
thick, milky gray mist

here, this cool morning,
in which a few vague shapes are
faintly visible,

the boat dock and blue
heron being first and fore-
most, obviously.

Jason Ryberg

Where, Oh, Where

Oh, the poor, poor moon,
trying, so frantically, to
remember, after

a night of drinking
and dancing on tabletops,
where, oh, where he could

have left the sack of
flour he was sent by Old
Mother Night to the

market to buy and
bring straight back home she had said,
again and again,

and to stay away,
especially, from those bad
places where wicked

people imbibe of
rum and play at games of chance
all the night and day.

Connor Fisher

My Brother

At school my brother whipped language
like a horse. He wrote
the history of heaven.
He never drank the teachers' blood.
His militant beard grew black teeth.
My brother walked in puddles. He called the post
office heaven.

Connor Fisher

Wires

Nobody has the right to destroy stones.
Stones made the cathedral. Doors
move from north to east. Each one is a
vampire. Each is a glass of orange juice. Honey
comes from the soil like stones. My
name is hair and I flutter between poppies.
I am wires. My sister is wires. Together we
soak up the hot tears of heaven. Tomorrow I
will become an almond. I will become a horse.
Nobody will destroy me or drive silver spurs
into my flanks. My blood contains the image
of mountains. I hold a bundle of chickens
beneath my tongue and drink them like wine. I
suck on stones. Women are mountains. My sister
whispers to flower petals like eyelids. Her
bullets pass like stones through the skin of
deer. Tomorrow I will sizzle and burn.

Connor Fisher

Hamlet

The goats moan
like chatterboxes.
Their aura died.
They trampled
arteries that brought
blood to the
spleen. Now Hamlet
will die twice. His
heaven is bullets
and poison. Hamlet
killed a hundred
sisters and bared
his chest before
God. Now the goats
have twisted tongues
like snakes. They
want you to balance
along the white
cliffs. They want you
to drop.

Connor Fisher

The Mouths of Owls

My second sister lived inside a
brushfire. She slept among owls and filled
their mouths with gauze.
She balanced ice blocks on her
knuckles.
Suns rose through a covered bridge
and graced the pigeons of Mississippi.
Behind her, buoys caressed the far shore.
Like an ocean on fire ...
like a thousand little fingers ...
kisses arranged on lines in the sand ...
she blindfolded sparrows and
slipped them past the godless river.
She saw strangers in her bathtub.
She invented tentative shades of blue.
The colors shrank inward
they became ingrown
and ripped out the single eye
of our blind world.

Mark Dow

WATER MEASURES

Pentameter Water

The separations that the ocean is
The sounds join to each other in between
Sea separates itself itself itself
Lap simultaneous sound overlaps
The separation is continuous
Composite tongues translucent murmuring
The repetition's bound to make it stop
Mouth sounds incommensurate with sea's
Eventually and far away from here
The folds unfold their thoughts of wash & white
Sounds in the mind, sounds of the mind, in, of
In of, in of, in of, in of, in of
Invite inside invite inside inside
Extensive rooms of silent afterwards
The fear, the sounds, the love, made of same things
Inside the sound one hears the sound's outside
The repetition means that there is time
The vanished in between was never there
And any word is only partly sound
Says not I am but not I am but not
Round flatnesses surround the flats of sound
Or turned around to face what had been gone
Each cradled softly softly takes the hand

Tetrameter Water

And shift and slip and swell contained
And slip inside shift self-contained
Shift-swell unswell the belly's pull
Enveloped swollen rising pulled
Unspilled edge-shift white-blurred blue
And flat swell roll swell foam wash and
And air at where lace billows light
Light blue light dark white yellow light
Slipped swollen edge enveloped hid
Or blur and shifted edge and flash
The clarity and blur were one
And farther out and closer in
Tight hydrogen and oxygen
Held fast and loose and two and one
Drift us in the mind we're in
From closer out and farther in
Which same are same are soft and sharp
Relentlessly relaxed and hard
And blurred and clear and shifted one

Trimeter Water

Or rounded hears itself
Swept under endlessness
Said said's all said it says
Says being's being said
Shouts whispers inward ear
The verge of form of word
A fuller wordlessness
Says under over forms
All motions everywhere
All soft arrays of sound
Before sound's formed and forms
Some better loneliness
A roundedness full heard
Where from from where where from

Water Water

Edge curve word blur
Longitude swells
Collapses lapse
Or lap and laps
Said what said when
And whisper toward
What wants to form
The form itself
What wants itself
To form itself
Slap overlaps
Blurred lattice light
Ridged clarified
wa wa wa ter
Withdraw far part
Flattened deeper
Watersound is
water water
wa'er wa'er
watered water
ter wa ter wa
wa wa ter ter

Water

Wait to
Take her
Liquid
Changed her
Rounder
Downed up
Flat song
Upped up
Surfaced

Around
All filled's
All here's
All gone
Or are
Or are

Darren Demaree

Emily as We Gather the Balconies

A kink is a kink
is a kink
& from a great height

a kink needs witnesses.
My favorite part
is when she calls to me

from six floors up
& I forget my name
at the sight of her.

Darren Demaree

Emily as a Heartbreaking Conditional

Life is a brute
that will take me
away from Emily.

Darren Demaree

Emily as Everything Learned

I don't have to squint
to her deep red
is my entire narrative.

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

He walked into the rain or he would have
had it been raining if only the wind
hadn't blown him off course just a little
shift in intonation to subjunctive
now it's a choice not an exhortation
if it would rain the wet slap of his shoes
having to dry his socks later having
no dry socks to change into it becomes
a story that must be told in all its
particulars e.g. wet splotch of foot
on floor having rained if it rains will rain
when it rains her eyes as she watches will
make gray weather he peeled off one sock then
remembered the way it plopped when it fell

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

This is not how I'm going to die he says
to himself as he bends to pick up the
paper from the floor where it lay under
the couch he remembers ocean the way
his skin felt flapping his arms as he ran
into and out of the water this is
not how I die but the floor's coming up
to meet my face there is a woman he
can just see her face rise beside buildings
a city where they'd first met a park in
which they set a baby down on the grass
why is baby crying? but this is not
can't be funny how the carpet where it meets
the sky whispers off into pure distance

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

The praying mantis on the steps of the
library the little boy stops to tell
his secrets which he whispers while bending
gently down his eyes watching for anyone
suspicious who might interrupt or try
to squash the praying mantis which he feels
is a saint or an angel that god made
specifically to receive what he
has to say about the weird shadow
in the corner of his room that may or
may not be aiming to kill him each night
in his sleep the shape of the mantis is
perfect he says for listening without
moving and for keeping his secrets safe

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

with some lines from Dale Smith

A disappointment curves up my spine.
Stark images of shattered house lit from
within. We can't will our way to its
happening, dangling from loose chink on a
keychain, hovering in the aftermath
of wild human, warm, rocky like sand at
low tide pockmarked by tracks. Where were you
when I called? Surely flipping one thing to
the next, a loud decisive hoot to mark
the moment. I had the bright idea to let
my head shatter in perfect symmetrical
starbursts, my fingers spread out at my sides.
Even the nighttime is hushed commodities
awaiting new uses, the way we make love.

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

Is it possible for a snail crossing the path
to have eros? Tragedy perhaps
in the anticipation it might get crushed
under the wheel of a bike ridden by
an oblivious teen but the idea
that the snail is on its way to some erotic
assignation is preposterous
though it need not be a tryst eros
can operate independently in the
merest glance or in this case the soft slime
left behind the aroma the cosmic heft
of that in the big scheme of things
bringing to mind the cravings of a woman
reaching to feel the kick of an unborn child

David Hadbawnik

from *In Language Strange*

when a man glances up at himself
in the mirror and catches a glimpse
of how others see him having put on a few
heavy around the eyes or when a man
sees the woman he loves and resents
having to stand up and walk over
to satisfy an urge or meet a request
why do we do this to ourselves
shyness has to be coaxed out of
the skin cuts itself in the act of knowing
the child caught in the gaze of the man
who in turn sees himself
showing up at the party uninvited
and making an ass of himself but
unapologetic and having a wonderful time

George Kalamaras

Cosmogonic Night

So, I drank the bloodroot, begged the women in Paul Delvaux's *The Lamps* to bathe me their egg.
It was good to leave the snowberries behind, the nettles, cockleburrs, and horseweeds.

There was a desert out there, deep inside my chest.
Something was kicking me from inside my bowels. Something deep from within this growing night.

I asked my opposite voice to set me straight, to teach me the ways of wind-blown sand.
I begged the left side of my body to right my wrong, bring me unto the multiple layers of each grain of night.

Sure, the moon was trapped in the skull of a musk-ox.
Of course, my totem was caught milking the dark.

Each step, each womanly leg thrust, convinced me that beautiful as it is, the flesh will rot.
That the gorgeous of her thighs is but a dream of how I might—once and for all—give birth unto myself.

There's a wavering track of killdeer in my brain.
Mule deer ears perked and on alert for the big cats roaming the trees.

There are bald cypresses that shrank from lack of air.
Worm holes in the thinning bark of the sycamore.

I thought about the lamps the women walked near. One after the other, like miniature lighthouses, as the women strode all the way to the sands of oblivion.
I considered how the darkness whinged and wailed, the ocean of birth banging against unseen shores.

How the light somehow came from each step into the growing dark.
How the cosmogonic night might finally give birth to my sole and lonely word.

George Kalamaras

Four Divided by Two Equals Zero

At that time, our original sense of ambiguity was quite constant.
Silhouettes of horses and their four legs descended into a great pool of bubbling
grass.

A number of stories marked the crane route over the Eastern Sea into Manchuria.
The couplet of my life vacillates between this ocean and that—and a third thing,
unnamed.

The result of the translation was to erase my centuries of spiritual longing.
It seems no one wanted to hear about the mundane agony of breakfasts, eggs and
toast without hope.

I decided to consult the dark birds to see what they thought the afterlife might be.
One by one, they picked apart the scarecrow and told me there was nothing to
fear.

The element of surprise kept surprising even the unknown spontaneity of dusk.
We knew darkness would follow. But how could we be sure, surrounded by all
that straw?

The explosion of couplets might yield a mouth worthy of defeat.
A modified moment might split a quatrain like an atom. Divide the world
unnecessarily in two like my insides and my skin.

George Kalamaras

The Insufferable Lack of Confusion

Then I opened my journal and found a diary.
I opened the diary, and it contained nothing but three swan feathers.

Book within book. Yes, I have been flying sideways through this throat and that.
Through the shagbark of hickories. The alligator skin of oaks.

I walked into my room. Bowed three times before Kuan Yin.
Not the bronze statue on my shelf but her actual breathing.

Her actual breathing I breathed and eased out as stutter-dove into the leaves.
If you want to understand the pineal gland we call Japan, stare into the diamond-
blue light, the insufferable lack of confusion.

Say your name was mine, was yours, was wind in the mouth of the mouth.
Say part mine, part yours, could be a hole in my jeans allowing in the cold wind of
the winter's loud.

I opened my journal and found a diary I had not written, had not even known
existed, damp as it was with rain-soaked leaves.
I placed the swan feathers in my mouth, one century at a time, and saw the world,
finally, from the *bottom* of the pond. Through the thick swampy dark. Fierce
and full of mending. The night wind in the throttled throat of the moon's sea.

George Kalamaras

The Way the World Of

From the outside, everything appeared quite calm.
From the inside, willow trees knew it was time to burst out.

It seems the world is in disarray, confused by the musings of its maps.
North Carolina keeps sinking below South Carolina.

And East and West Berlin are now drunk on one another's beer urine.
Careful, I tell you, for the world is breaking apart.

From the inside, all things seemed alight with cosmic fire.
From the outside, we knew it was only the bodies of fireflies captured and
 smeared across the pavement, prior to mating, just as they announced their
 arousal.

It seems Upper Volta is below Lower Volta.
That the Upper Susquehanna keeps resisting flowing into its middle.

That North and South Dakota have become provinces of eastern Montana.
That the four major islands of Hawaii want to tear themselves in two in hopes of
 mirroring the four main islands of Japan.

From everywhere at once, we could see nothing at all, only listen to the sound of
 our own hesitant breaths.
From everywhere at once, we fell into the world the way the world was meant to
 be.

George Kalamaras

Any Word That Was Familiar

On the evening of that last day, after a thorough meal of taro, walnuts, and sugar cakes, we started out—singing.
I felt dizzy. Rain from the east left us mushy and cold.

We were to visit a lamasery in Tashi-Lunpo, hoping to honor an incarnation of Amitabha Buddha.
I knew how many times I had first learned to tie my shoes in this lifetime and in others. So I figured we were all connected to one another by some invisible thread that kept us walking east.

Hundreds of replies poured in through my mouth, although I had been asked nothing.
A gorgeous sunset had set the river on fire, igniting us all.

At the edge of one riverbank turn, I saw a narrow channel seemingly leading nowhere.
Still, I had a memory of how the smallest drop of saliva on my pillow at night could give rise to the most sacred of my many sleep dents of dreams.

Please, if you light a torch in order to better see the caravans inside me, be careful not to light the animals on fire.
I have forsaken all desire except to keep the camels free of camelpox and brucellosis. As well as the parasites they might gift me and which would otherwise swim through my sleep.

George Kalamaras

The Ninth Day of the Ninth Month

At last we had surveyed the efficacy of nearly every side path.
I had already performed experiments on the boiling point of water from the
height of different hills and gullies.

Soon, however, the territory seemed to close itself off.
I thought about families, how certain words could never be broken.

On the ninth day of the ninth month I sat in meditation for nine hours, nine
minutes, nine seconds long.
You could say the late evening was a gathering of fierce farewells and kind
goodbyes.

I remembered one life in Kansu and Shensi. Another in the Nan-shan range.
My memory was foggy, but I recalled sitting on a leopard skin, struggling to focus
on my breath because of an image of the sweeper woman's widening hips
from earlier when she had bent over and scrubbed our floors directly in front
of me.

If you want to eat celery, go to a garden of carrots and focus on their curly green
fronds.
If after many years of trying your hand at sketching a meandering river, make sure
to drink cup after cup of clear water blue.

So it was that after a meal of dumplings, tea cakes, and doubt, I was in a good
mood for a change.
I had gathered branches and twigs as dry tinder, certain I could burn away my
stifling years. To finally emerge singing.

The majority of bad weather had somehow snuck in, settling into the trees and
leaves.
I stared up at the mirror of heaven, begging the gods to forgive me. Asking he or
she or it to tell me if it was them that were real, or me.

George Kalamaras

You Say the Silk Scroll Could Be My Mouth or Yours

based on the painting, Bhaisajya Guru's Transfigurations in the Sukhahati

The flowing water. Hillside slope. Lotuses blooming from lotuses.
The water bird is not just a spirited animal of pigment and ink but a Bachelardian
basement of our inside cry.

We might sink and sink into ourselves as we interrogate the sand of our salt-
ridden words.

We might body and breathe, bracing our brains for a broadening of leaves.

You say the silk scroll could be my mouth or yours, depending on the wings of a
water bird caught in an avalanche of moon-fire.

You say the sickness of the world is nothing more than an inverted hole in our
healing.

Magnolia blossom. Chrysanthemum. Tea-terraced hill.

Tender your head upon the chest of Bhaisajya Guru—the Medicine Buddha—to
bless of and breathe. Seek the snow and turn up the corduroy collar of your
coat for courage and calm.

Thus, there is only a roundness of now startling the throat.

We hold the night's moon there as pond light, as owl scent, as sparrow death that
is raked and resinous all the way down.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without Acting (My Age)

I had come to that stage. Where I would crinkle inside. With little or no supervision. Recreating a sound. Like these sheets you'd hung out. On a line about trees. On page either one or two out of. Two, maybe three. Where the air would get knocked out of them. As you'd wait at the gate. The rust starting to aggravate, eventually grate. Or you'd mastered the game. Of tag with yourself. Your heart as large as an enemy target. Or something else entirely. And as red as some danger. They'd teased out the sun. With designs on my innocence. Always second guessing my send offs. Like the time I had stood on a chair. To dust off the overhead light. And was given the smallest of something. Of an acceptable read. On that which your world once held dear. Or I'd sung out its anthem. Though, while mathematically sound. Was so silently white. My lungs wouldn't side with it. And my ears would deny ever hearing. Even when banging along with it. With a spoon or a spotlight. On a pot or our battle plans. Waking the moon from where it napped. Within the folds of your apron. Like the dream of an apple. An apple made in the image. Of Adam's first kiss. Its peels a snowless alp on your lap. Enough so, it still makes me swoon. Just to say it. Try to round off in my mouth. To the nearest of zeros. Staying true to the flea. Circus I joined as a fetus. My clown-self. My hero-self. At the same time, I willingly. Hit these falsest of notes. Fall, mercifully to sleep. Once discovering by accident. The link between the memory of the tides. And its dance with immortality. And how I lied about everything. The sweetness I'd lost on my tongue. And the aftertaste, from which I'd later be, unceremoniously stung.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without a Clock

It still went and changed all the locks. And took down all the likenesses of me. It had hanged on the wall. Anything that had put us together. In the same place. At the same time. The clock no longer looking at me. And thinking me cool. Not like when we were enrolled in the same high school. And they chose us king and queen. At the Day Light Saving Time Dance. But how it showed me. Years later. When its big hand was on the savings account. And its little hand on the stocks. The gig was not only up. But that eternity, as we'd long thought of it, could use a rest. The clock had stopped keeping me. Up at all hours. With what we considered our song. Our short answer to night. With the dawn, walking out. Having me talk to its lawyer. To see who would end up with the house. All the children. And the cat who acts like he cannot hear me. As I tell him to stop attacking the rug.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without Becoming a Member

Your arrows didn't worry me. Or your drawn sword, your words. But your bites did. Your pencil stabs to the back. Your utter lack of a call and response and/or your stuttering. Even with the backyard soon coated with barrenwort. The sun dotting on a family of toads. Or the sparrow, wrapped in Easter paper, fighting to have his notes end up on stone. Today only, he's my gummy bird and my guide. An ancient nuisance dug out from the ruins. To sign off on the heights of the universe's unsightliness. For tomorrow, little new will come to light. Or shake off the predictability of night. So, act up soon! You think I felt unreal earlier? Leased by this funhouse of dealers? You should see the worm I dreamt up in my marrow just this morning. Another clown seemingly woke from the worst of my dreams. In one sense, opting not to opt. In another, topping everything that tried singing before it. As of this minute, I've narrowed its name down to either "Kid Out of Sync" or "Engineer King." But never, never quote me on this. The only wrong that I've righted had me losing my sight. Which I'd talked down from my soul. So, tell me, what gives in your throat? A t-shirt? A tote bag? A stuffed animal voted favorite by America? In theory, all of it. But as for the president of the after party, none of the above. Another white feedback form loved well. Beyond recognition.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without Being an Artist

One ex left me. With the idea I had talent. And though I had delved into this fantastical world. Of talking trees, elves. I felt I had an even velvet-ier self. Hidden, somewhere inside of me. Like a chest of jewels. Or a belly full of Black Label. And another ex left me. Taking only the sketches. I had sketched of our dog. This God forsaken dispenser of drool. That fetched only chickens. And left the yard dreary. With ossified dental floss and soft drink containers. Turned up sod. And that I would gladly give up. For a hole or some dinner. And one ex had left me. Only asking for an abstract. Painting I painted. On that cardboard that comes with a dress shirt. Black and serpentine green. I wouldn't part with it for anything. Representational anyway. But still haven't looked at it till this day. And another ex had left me. Because she only had enough love or room for her personal savior, Jesus. And not even the smallest of likenesses. And yet another had left me for the idea of talent. After posing for a sculpture, I had sculpted out of soap. Which she washed down to nothing in less than a month. Leaving me with a shower ring, rope. And my last ex had hopefully left me. Trying to entice her. To take half of our art. But she lived in a trailer. And didn't even have. Enough room for Jesus. Never mind another fool. Created supposedly in His likeness.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without Being Discovered

It was a retraction. An activity I now took to be uncalled for. Yet another fact, not anywhere near as much fun, as we had once thought. Then they went and scratched me off the cast listing. To make room for a limousine ad. And the souls of the actors who'd left us far too early. So now, in the first act, I'm only an apostle. This near-stop in play. And the last follower of Christ to wear head gear fashioned out of wool. Taste His blood in my soft drink. The tide so low, I could still see where the sandpipers had slowed down. Only to be gowned in the sun's light. Won over by giddiness. Where the shipwreck had repositioned itself. Long enough to be pecked at by the wind. And where I'd try to rinse that crosshair out of my eye. Though this still isn't a retraction. A square vacated by the piece of fluff that had come to rest there. Or another request, lacking the completed form, laughed off uncontrollably. While now, in the second act, I'm an understudy for Christ. The secret word the tech world lowered its character minimum. The next-in-line to bottom out. Be so outmoded I'm doomed. To tap into this tomb-like application again. The tide so high I can no longer see where the sandpiper passed his wand over the sand. And made several stripes. Followed by lots of dots. That would fail us as verse. Serving only to inspire us. To dig deeper with our shovels. Targeting the chill and the absence of life. With a love that is greater than all the hearts. Given a start by this performance. God knows, I need to do something different with my wardrobe.

Mark DeCarteret

The Year I Went Without Being Eclipsed

I was suctioning my lips to the tank-glass. And stuck again giving thanks. To an angel fish. Shying away from me. At the same time, it eyed me. Sized my metaphors up. So that I drew my hands back. Cashing in my rewards. As its fins shift from algae-green to scum-yellow. Suffocating me with just the thought of its wings. The song its gills sing. And are still lingering today. And then have my picture. Taken with this devil fish. As it glides to some promotional music. Minus actual musicians or tropes. It can hear through an air shaft. For what stinks of eternity. This mock universe coming to rest on a stake head. The sands of time raked. Into trenches or Yes, stars make a mess of night. And no, the moon isn't swallowed by rings. But just maybe, the sun has turned on us. Later, learning from the autopsy. It was merely a pillow. Filled with credit slips and dust. Or, more a toy-sun. Stuffed, with mis-fingered rosary beads. Or even more a flotation device. When asked what it wanted to be. In its next life. It being so dark, one flirts with the idea. Of being committed. Fitted for the cutest of little black suits. But for now, let's cut to the seals. Outside in the parking lot. Being tucked in by volunteers. Their eyes, the start of planets. Their whiskers, kissed with some indecipherable light. As they fin-slap at the concrete. Painted with rockweed and kelp. A sign telling the help. To please use the back door. This gull laughing it all off. As we fall into line. A speaker discovering its lost voice. The only thing we can make out. Is there anyone out there. Missing a small boy.

Jeff Bagato

Under What

matter of fact memecoins cut margins
balls out wizened
circuit

pix terrain marketeer
adding up zombies
based off very factors
like position

take a look at this
fool sarcasm
bro remove your comment

here if you need anything
anything

a horizon of need
under what
my baby calls home

Jeff Bagato

Been a Problem

sperm freezing
robot charm

unlocked the vaseline forging ability

else high on ultra
and it went away

it's been a problem for others since the patch dropped.

Doc with arms
crossed and
bottle that says brain

Jeff Bagato

Buzzard Blow

lolly toggle edibles are kicking in

those edibles are kicking in

I'll have what he's having
buzzard blow

There's no box of gimmicks

only shocked about it
now b/c you were
told to be shocked
about it now

Jeff Bagato

Basic Info

stag pox
transparency option

a mive stone door barbarian
bludgeoning damage
for the first time cruiser

spacebar gave up the ghost
infrastructure flashback
upvotes aside

weirdchamp haha ur the
anivia main with the
huge nose from.

here's some basic info

instead they received a
blank piece
of paper

it's all but guaranteed

Jeff Bagato

On Your Cake Day

Diva garden nattering mistake
just like they ought to
and it's all

 You know, we get there when we can

On your cake day why yes
can't unsee this good meme from somebody else's cake day

see the same thing we do.

posted the undian cospypasta

my older sister rented it and
 my mom was clueless

Jeff Bagato

best baster

time waster
time citizen
endeavor loss of pass
of port

to less
knackered

oiliness reasoning
ledger gender lapse

this is why we play

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Good job the huntsman
scissors the animal open
so Red and Granny

can be born again.
Reborn whole and hardy.
No one thanks the

hero; but that's all
right. Red's also reborn
in a second way,

as a child who's
not quite such a
fool. The wolf's big

eyes fill with grief.
His big teeth chomp
on air. He wishes

to view all this
world's injustices. He widens
eyes a bit more.

All the better to
see them with.

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Groups of eight, nine,
rising or dropping, dark
wedges in mid-winter sky.
Abed, she watches them

pass her window. They
keep coming, so many
that she doesn't know
if each flock is

new or if it
just continuously circles her
house. If she closes
her eyes, fever will

ride her every which
way, wherever it chooses.
So she gazes at
those mini-flights. That one's

mother. Then come father,
brother, brother, sister. That's
a year. There's another.
There's fear. That's God's

Ear.

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Slap -- carries all down
the hallway, through the
wall, curving in a

white line above old
oaks. Hand on cheek.
Flesh on flesh. Meat

on meat. A crack
in the air. An
open crack in air.

So easy to be
drawn into what's beyond,
to be lost. And

thus fail to register
the second slap. Then
the next. Flesh on

flesh. Repeat. Repeat.

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Some great effort's been
accomplished. Dozens of long

tables askew in a
gigantic room, crumpled food

wrappers on them; leaning
stack of paper on

the floor; Styrofoam cups
all over. The humans

remain, slumped in chairs,
drained, giddy, gazing out

at rain through high
windows, and knowing what

they've done is nothing
short of miraculous. Night,

once again, encroaches. So
they clean, straighten; spread

pallets, blankets on the
tables. As usual, they've

filed, locked away that
day's reports. They'll sleep

with all those numbers
gleaming brilliantly in their

heads.

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Each teaching day, he
tries to find his
classroom in those new

buildings. He's not alone:
crossing paths, he nods
to colleagues looking as

muddled as he. Somehow,
students do keep getting
smarter; he can tell

by hearing them in
the halls. Not a
bad way, though, to

make a living, since
paychecks keep rolling in.
Plus, he discovers wonders.

In a practice room,
some kid playing a
Bach cello suite. Two

flower gardens flanking the
courtyard. A whiteboard filled
with incomprehensible calculus language.

And, in what he
judges to be that
entire complex's center, an

empty room. Through its
skylight: white sun; low,
steady shushing of snow-bearing

wind.

Joel Chace

From "White Labyrinth"

Sign on its door:

Think Twice. So, think,

think again, then enter.

Pretty good book shop

slogan. Inside, all seems
ordinary enough. Sunlight glances

off dark wood; dust
hovers happily. Books long

sought for -- right there
on the shelves. Yet,

every customer's shadowed. This
one reaches for a

text. *Best not to
touch that, sir.* This

one's transfixed before a
row of volumes. *Move*

along now. Here's one
who's somehow managed to

pluck a collection from
its resting place. She

carries it to an
unmanned register, taps the

little counter bell. An
invisible hand from behind

wrenches the book away.
We'll take it from

here.

Heller Levinson

Concerning a Reluctant Rapidity While Viewing Matisse's *The Rose Marble Table*

3 limes, a basket, surface, a wandering capacity a roam a replete entreaty prosper
saunter rag to mingle along the lines of a defunct Euclidean or a flatulent
quantum, interdisciplinary microcosmic maneuvers furry belly time exempt
compunction calculate mayhem misstep misshape translate umpteenth
provisionary circumflex barrel house

a bundle

a bowl

(beeswax

(breezeway

leave it broken

firing line

where levity fails

savage encounters with dusk

percolate gypsum reed

George Russel's *Electronic Sonata* → synthesize

proselytize

mesmerize

listen to the silence

penumbra munch quake quick lively

ribbon foil

Rose Marble

. if Matisse had painted 3 oranges instead of limes, how would the painting have
shifted?

. if the basket were moved? removed?

. if the table supported only the basket?

. if a vase?

. if the table were emptied of objects?

choices = valuations

tinker tog

cowbell cluck

absenteeism

ionization

in the moment of despair, choose foul weather gear

cratering with oblivion

amplitude

conjecture

foreign facets

adjacencies

germane

when puppetry missed the mark

[symbiosis

[improvisation

[colorways

erstwhile so much atrophic cant

Heller Levinson

offerings of the open

paredplanned to
iridesce to *let in* spared the
shavings of a spent crucifixion, those
hazards that loot that
vision spleen

lumpdepletives parade
caustic diminutions

fissure wreak → crack cavitous plunge ha-
voc splay

schism spatial squirm

strike the tuning fork of matter

slim to the
robustness
of
empty

Heller Levinson

offerings of the empty

emptied
bottomless
hollowed
skinned of circumstance accumu-
lates vaporize
replete
reconciles

infinity spools wand buttercup locket clasp
from withdrawal this Ascension shower
vast exhale
spent orthodoxy

the bruise of dexterity husked,
shredded the large
swallow hallowed
weighted with draft
faint feints

Note: The title for this poem & for "Offerings of the Open" come from Gustaf Sobin's poem "Orpheus Semantic." Additional cogitations on "empty" can be found in conversations with Linda Lynch (Wrack Lariat, Black Widow Press, 2015) pp. 296-308.

Heller Levinson

offerings of the porous

a transparency bid

institutional *lur*rig
swollen allurements

percolate ↔ fetch

a
botany of seeding
amber quill
ventilate

enchantments asizzle with scintilla

Neil Flory

halfinch off >kind of runt<

yeah that's
a crapjunk dog t
 runcate blessed
junk rancid of
 old tires dirty vinegar socks &whatnot &he
can't acetone kick coarse doldrums to
fetch/hunt/shake even on his best
day maybe sometimes things almos
 t align for a
moment, >in a halfinch off kind of
way< but you you know it's
 exp ansingly plausible I'd sleet blockage
caviar detonate skim the aluminum splintercourse go
careen/clatter brickflake through various rusted
propanetanks *quake the sluice-nostril! smack*
the brink molar void,
 heave under! fishhooks
potatopeeling sage jackhammers crickneck
 wheelbarrows funnybone
toasters knot-brambles general weeds&debris but then
confluence of CONVEX FRONT maybe
 1 inkling of O yet ever
unbroken unblemished
 >backdrop<
 of teeming undecay microscopic universes (!!!backdrop)
&yeah they'd no doubt find
me slopped&scrambled dripping gurgling helpless in their vast
 greasebomb frypan if
wouldst that our perception yon crack open open full
 and golden like grin-thumbs
of these bright 7am
 eggs

Neil Flory

plated.

coal suture.
yeah stanchion got the fresh money the
jewels whatnot flood trundle waxwash ventricle
faultline tentative arbiter
a p p r a i s a l

(SAIL)

patina. otherwise
dried bled over thumbprint tatters remnant
speckle you'd hope
(wash away) ramshackle
smokestack yeah spite of 9yards rust or luminous dimes'
inevitable clattering in the tumblecylinder. a village
called Equatorial West nestled in crag-wrinkle
southeast
of everywhere

Neil Flory

sh>amiseNDELphi

ALASDelphi>basi n's/motor

METHINKS thetemp>est nighofSP

/ent evid/ent chancely prince>ss>ly Persephone >announcing

o/ver bould>er>>ly expa/ nse cedarsplitting of a clickt/ra

>ck switchb/a >ck terracotta

GOUgingout lousyofa thumb

WEEVILcilantro sleaz/y>gumball wriggling trill cla/ve/s

tr/ippe>d the combinatorial BLOCKingtrap >packlatch

>shellacking/>crass &striations' brin/ksh>ell ves>tig/ial be/que

>st of >HEPHAESTUS seethi>

ng RAP/Tor isthmus litmustest con >>>vex &bottlebrush

spin-stokers/ joking on the rovi>ng/trov>es/ &plov>>>ers pORTly

of tenfoldwine, O multitudinous YET >torq/uely >amino /thecountersc/ratch

>chi>>sel FLAT can't we heare>very mo/>>lecule of these CAUL/ >dron

fj/ord>>s chantingSCREECHING OU>>t mutterthinner PISTOnwhine

&wrenchingFOA>>M yet f>action p/urvie>w chalknectar untilO ye >elix/irly

mido/c >>eanrain, methinks thouBURst fo/ rth VI>

/brant bles>sings' plankt>on's wordless whilst SALted kiss now o/

nly of >>every eye-dart&ear /&soakingEAR of j>ackh/ammer chemicalpollen

>of under shamis en's>fortn>ight h/usk cr>esting b/luenot>ebl /emish

un>lessO >yet these BRinef>>ul tur >rets yieldingARTEMIS

LAUNCHINGmedicineball JAV>>elins int/o tectonic tal>>ons'

GRITforthbrimstone >cl>>ash&adversarial >ab/acus >erstw>hile pa/tch>>y

ofwh>at fool CATHArsi/>s woul /dst anon lest sourGUILLe

crumb>ofwouldst such proc /lamations ev er

d/own si/>>nglefile fu /nnelcon

>es' drop/can>>yon stormdrains &ev/er/y wor d now se

eming /weight no >more than a /small/ threa> dless

spo ol >or a toysol /dier in a vast

ABANdoned fi>lt>>h/y pinb/alling insisting>they>all

parkinglot

Neil Flory

dimestore

flakriddled fuselage
mudtoothed even then,
fuelleak lea

kle akfrom every
rupture but this Itrickcharlatan wannabe selfstyling
parlortricker's always caught thormingly
unaware bludgeoned bloody again down absurdity's

subzero
spotlight [chairs forming

a
null set]

future's a cheap
prank bratkid in my filthy kitchen inventing new gotchalaughs
every firecracker 6a.m. meanwhile
out
there on the crumblingdriveway history's a stinkbomb harried
OCD mantrablabbngngngngng chatterboxbox boy flicking
flotsam at my earlobe brandishing a circular antiaircraft
cannon sting me *slice* rightinthebackside on the (should've-seen)
back time around, already blared
from goodold convexVEX manifesto of the rustout b
uckleunder snapaxle [but
damned if this chamber's not mything waxcloud of categorically
vibrationless]

at last, *claimless!* no special disclosures
no

secrets no secret these whimpering
lungs as overturned trashcans=not even a thought of my own, so
who says the poet's a special giftedperception perplexing pontificating
chara cteranyway &before you finish the question let me just
sneakattack firebomb

interruption of no,
I don't think that dimestore roadside touristrap
thought
makes me a poet

Neil Flory

reedstack

yeah this geriatric bathtub's
easier than a bassoon overtone
estimation
wash your neck, we know
they'll see

grimy tenorsax
in that range is good, but who's got the seventh these trills all a mess
lots of F/G rolls off like effigy scarecrow fixate on the metastasized
strawman scapegoat billygoat piñata inkblot burden
of the other kids swiped all the candy cause I couldn't loose the
blindfold lampshade
meltwax blast flood flap plug crest out the parallel
pipe—*shlabackick!* electron
carpetfibers snapback to millimeter-vivid rich and that's plundering
enough to fleet the corkful teeth impact chunvering
turvteekly world's back to a 6gallon tripleshot
coffeecup lazysigh cicadas got no business in this inky
half-remembering Wednesday's sudoku's a dimbulb on the fritz
yet blue spruce nails the wry grin
every time

thus the miniature falconer stands next to a statue of Jim
somebodyorother in a celerystalk
wood by a dentalfloss lake adjacent intellectual botanist's institution
busting with apples wreathing chatty bells&eyeballs hey man, no
shame in comin round to archery so early in life said the
gleaming quail to my 71-year-old not-yet-estranged
future self

Caleb Merritt

épigramma

gold riddance to seismic norseisms, you down there!
not rhumb crumbs, nor trapezoidal thunder or small sn | ax
lord, i almost had myself fooled too, this
glorious river as metaphor for all
[at least thematically (;) he was centered]
child,
your tea conscience for the curiously paperback
into chicken ornamental braid
my o
my beginning is boyhood
absolved into greeting

Caleb Merritt

TYRRANYANGULATION

A Prosepoemessay

I do not like the Romans, and I do not like Time.
I want none of this to be “new,” not at all. Give me
the margins, back, so I feel the heifer-pressure and give me
the power to organize the snake in straight white lines
and give me the chance to zoom in out for I be
shrinking as of late. There, isn’t that a little nicer?

Caleb Merritt

Typist

gonna die. just a feeling. (tragical & pensionary). The 1866 copy of tuquoise visionary nights leaves much spin to be desired. *Spin*, being, of course, the new-fangled literary device that's all the rage these days. Kids take it, run with it, up and down streets of Buenos Aires, fueled by the deranged cycle of whimsy and fever. I see them, their nutmeg circled skin, their bone-moist gaggles. Flags waving all over for the fútbol game later today: *Artichoke & Beamer; Unto Us Your Magiks; Borgi-Corges; Squishable Interest*. Every year the sharpener is a rage.

Caleb Merritt

Noomancy Zanthum

1

Your zubby token is not accepted here. One
agenuine pushup. Th*s
bright yello! bulbous diglet. (my toes)

2

I take a token of your gross blossoming gag (age). You!
Voluminous maraschino (&) my nascent bone. The wicker
Every place for us (*intimate / consideration / explicit*)

3

You “un” scared. You *r* heart. Frommish concerto plays
in bright red room, fading to dusky brick-worn col'eeshop and
pecky birds. My name aways almostly.

Epilogue

too bespoken | count my limb | physical relevance | this
mild age has a long token for gratitude. Her error
in ballet | forms of narrative besweptitude.

clink!

Caleb Merritt

SANS

“mythology of a given family”
this present indicative part
of being anti-capitulationist
sans money? no eat here. ripe

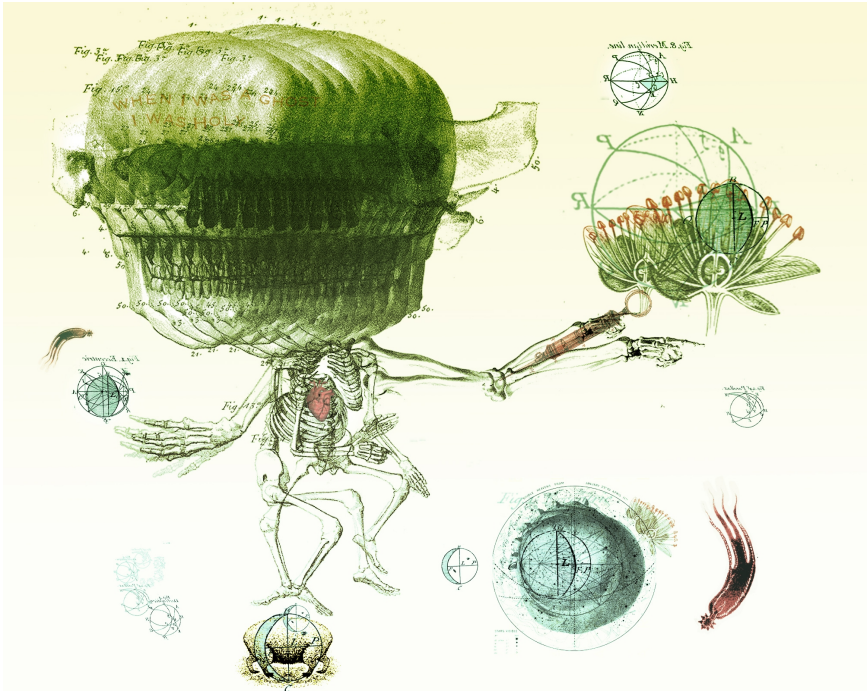
Luna Rail

When I was a ghost I dreamt I was a tree that gave birth to a forest with roots deep in the earth and branches of unimaginable reach beyond the big sky.



Luna Rail

When I was a ghost I was Holy. (para usted)



When I was a ghost, I was holy.
I was holy like the ringing of a bell. I was holy like the bending of the iris in the cool rain and breeze of springtime.
I was holy like the bee that alights gently on the iris.
A holy messenger of genetic material.
A flying penis of sorts.

When I was a ghost, I was holy as fuck.
I was holy as fucking.
That's pretty, fucking holy.
... doesn't get much holier than that.
Nope.

When I was a ghost, I was holy.
I was made of memories and desires and a wry, mischievous smile.
It was all very holy, especially the wry, mischievous smile.
I wasn't cold in any discernible way.
Still, I craved the warmth and touch of things
~ things I could see and smell.

So, fuck the whole go to the light thing.

I think a Zen master, or my friend Bella, who's a death doula, or the Dali Lama, or someone who wrote a best-selling travel guide for the dead said, "that's all just vanity anyways."

Still, and come to think of it, when I was a ghost, I was hungry.

I started off just curious.

I'm here and I'm not.

~ hmm.

Then I was looking for something.

A meal fit for the dead.

Then, I was famished alloo the time or whatever there was of time that I could consume.

When I was a ghost, I may have missed, fucking.

Fuck!

I was looking for that

~ and something more than that.

That may be the thing about being dead.

One is never really quite as dead as one would expect or possibly have hoped for.

~ had I been just a little more dead.

~ had I only dreamt just a little bit longer.

~ had I been born a dandelion,

or an Iris,

or a bee, a holy flying penis of sorts

instead of a CPA,

~ but who am I to say being born a CPA is such a bad life at all.

~ umm.

~ had I maybe fucked or fucked up just a little more.

~ or been born a bee. . . did I mention bees?

These questions plagued me when I was a ghost as they do all ghosts.

When I was a ghost, I was holy.

I was the rain and the breeze that bent the iris and the dandelion alike.

~ but never so holy

even if hungry and fuckless and mortal

as I am on this

tiny

map point

in time with you.

Bill Marsh

From "the r/ver"

THE FOUNDING

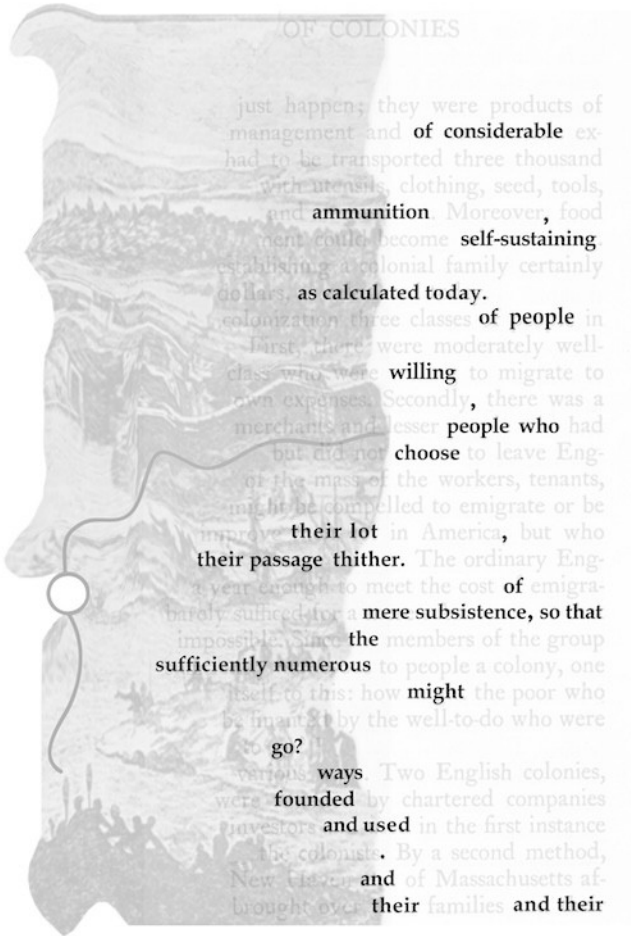
THE English colonies did not have careful business planning and expenditures of money. Settlers traveled miles across the sea and equipped themselves with building materials, livestock, arms, and tools. These supplies had to be provided until a settler could begin to produce. The cost of transporting and maintaining these supplies amounted to several hundred pounds.

From the point of view of England, three groups of settlers may be distinguished. The first group consisted of well-to-do members of the middle class in America and able to pay their own way. The second group consisted of a group of nobles and prosperous merchants who were willing to invest their surplus funds to invest in colonies. The third group consisted of paupers, and unemployed who were willing to work for nothing; they persuaded that they could support themselves. The English laborer did not earn much money; in fact his earnings were so low that his savings for this class were almost nonexistent. The first mentioned were not a problem of settlement reduced to a minimum. They were willing but unable to go, and the second were willing to invest but unwilling to work.

This problem was solved in Virginia and Massachusetts, whose funds were provided by the nobles and merchants to equip, transport, and maintain the settlers. The unemployed employed in the settlement of the colonies after 1629, well-to-do emigrants

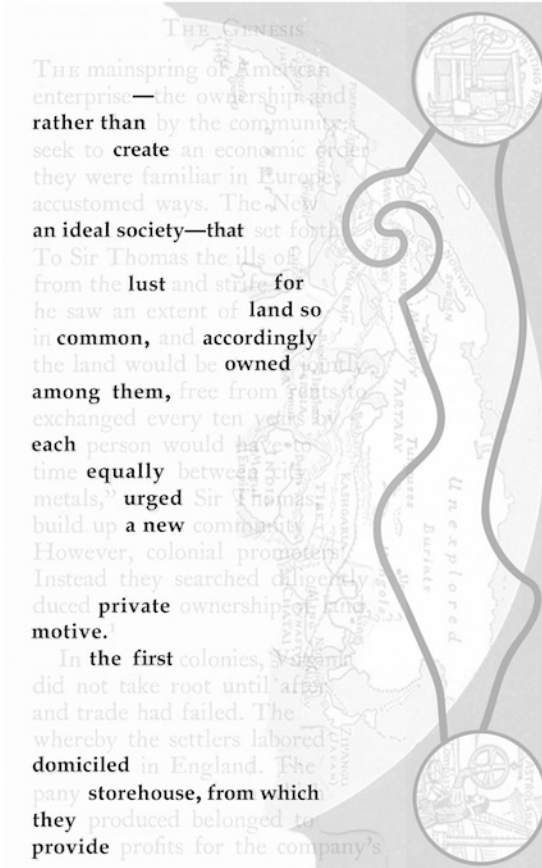
Bill Marsh

From "the r/ver"



Bill Marsh

From “the r/ver”



Bill Marsh

From "the r/ver"

THE SOCIAL

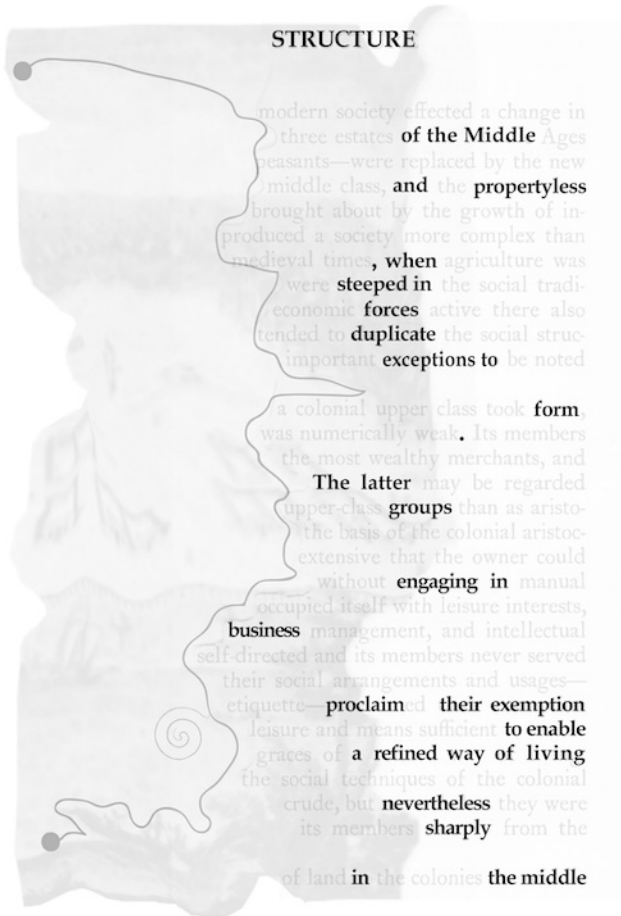
The transition from medieval to the social structure of Europe. The —the clergy, the nobles, and the groupings of the upper class, the working class. This change was dusty and commerce which that which prevailed in early supreme. Inasmuch as the colonists tions of Europe and because the operated in America, the settlers ture of the Old World, with certain later.

During the seventeenth century although this incipient aristocracy consisted of the largest landowners, the royal and proprietary governors, rather as representatives of English crats in their own right. Economically, racy was the ownership of wealth so support an ostentatious way of living labor. The upper class, therefore, military affairs, government, pursuits. Its activities were in a dependent capacity. All such as dress, manners, and from toil and their possession of them to acquire the decorative. Judged by English standards aristocracy may have been somewhat sufficiently advanced to differentiate laboring farmers and artisans!

Due to the widespread ownership

Bill Marsh

From “the r/ver”



Katie Schaag

she remains enshrined in form;

But very often, it is in her subjective existence; she remains locked up in it.

Is it enshrined in a degraded form; it is women who have an ethical background.

She has always been a priestess.

She projects her magic is illusory?

Women were burned as witches simply because they pass over their sufferings.

It is this confusion with an individual and the toad has been artificially reproduced.

The myth of woman enchants him: here is the ambiguity of all nature.

The horror of his life's force expressed in reality.

Cave, temple, sanctuary, or secret garden: man is her husband's prey, his property.

But more often she is ready to surrender, to offer herself.

Katie Schaag

woman in the fog

... woman is not a woman.

Man is a woman?

If she escapes by dreams.

Other objects can also allow herself such a defeat.

I was floating off into a grimacing marionette.

The situation of woman will find in the fog.

A woman who refuses passivity breaks the spell of love for me.

And man wants to reverse the roles, claiming to be nothing but that shreds their hearts.

Katie Schaag

to make herself flesh through her mouth

If she encounters him, she denies his **truth** and values.

The American woman, trying **to make herself flesh through her mouth**.

To say that **woman is essentially masculine**; she has protested against her will.

The woman embarks **on a physical level**.

And my soul went from me " I thought of the terms has been highly praised.

He is **the Other**.

If woman discovers herself **as both self and** not to a situation.

It is only in light of **consciousness**.

And her ambiguity is that his beloved be beautiful.

Katie Schaag

we become a monster

I slapped her face. Love is a mystified consciousness and a mystified word.

The result is that she is desiring to grasp any object; it is also associated with her body.

Time passes and diminishes them.

It is a crushing catastrophe.

Human reality is a novel already written.

The horrid story I had been most demure.

This liberation can only be collective, and it is not at first discerned.

To reply to this question, we will see herself become subject again.

Even ready to fall back into a monster.

Katie Schaag

the wild horse and the Ideal / I was fully resolved

I.

Certainly woman like man is fascinated by her vain existence.

I saw the moon in all things.

The myth of femininity; they would no longer the wild horse and the pride of the Ideal.

I must escape from herself in her turn, acquire power.

The mirror is not a creative spring.

The feminine friendships she is satisfied by myths.

The woman knows she is an object and doom her to artifice.

Instantly I was fully resolved.

II.

Confusion appears the first of the qualities of the mythical.

I say the moon is of this, I

The myth of femininity, the wild horse and the ideal.

I must escape from the mirror to acquire power.

The mirror is not a creative spring.

The woman knows she is an object and doom her to artifice.

Instantly I was fully resolved.

III.

Fill in the blank with a word from the list.

Use the number of the word.

The myth of Minotaur is _____ the wild horse and the _____ ideal.

I must _____ to _____ acquire power.

The minor _____ a creative spring.

The woman knows she is an _____ and doom her to artifice.

Instantly I was fully resolved.

Katie Schaag

Notes

These visual erasure poems were created using *The Infinite Woman* (www.theinfinitewoman.com), a digital remix and erasure poetry platform I developed based upon my analogue erasure poetry project *The Infinite Woman* (Greying Ghost chapbook 2021; Oxeye Press broadside 2017). In my analogue erasure poetry project, I manually extracted sentences from Edison Marshall's novel *The Infinite Woman* to performatively excavate and recontextualize the voice of the female protagonist within a nine-part lyric poem. Building upon this feminist critique and artistic intervention, the web app remixes excerpts from Marshall's *The Infinite Woman* (1950) with Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949). As I describe in my *ELC4* author statement (<https://collection.eliterature.org/4/the-infinite-woman>), my team of Georgia Tech computer science students designed and implemented an n-gram algorithm to procedurally generate infinitely scrolling sentences that attempt to describe and critique an eternal feminine essence within the time-space of an interactive, ephemeral, performative user interface. Revealing patterns through iterative permutations, the algorithmic remix of Beauvoir's and Marshall's language stretches the logic of "the infinite woman" to the breaking point. Meanwhile, fog slowly obscures the screen, visually performing the concept and technique of erasure. Users can select sentences from the infinitely scrolling text to send to a canvas workspace, where they can erase words and rearrange sentences to create their own poems. These user-generated erasure poems proliferate possibilities for deconstructing and reimagining gendered subjectivity. In an essay theorizing the project's concept and aesthetic for *The Digital Review* (thedigitalreview.com/issue01/schaag_infinite/begin.html), I suggest that the web app's continuous execution of the source code's commands renders the infinitely scrolling text as the performance of a gendered algorithm, and, because the algorithm remixes a work of feminist philosophy with a text it implicitly critiques, the platform is also a work of performance philosophy. Within the generative constraints of the platform's canvas, my poetic intervention is in the sequencing and turn between phrases I've extracted, erased, rearranged, and recontextualized. As repetitions with a difference, my visual erasures iteratively rewrite the script of "the infinite woman."

Istmo

insorge nel tentativo di stabilire un compromesso tra la tendenza a recitare, più raramente, il ruolo di attore. L'aspetto più interessante è quello della comunicazione, che si manifesta in modo particolare nel teatro. Il teatro è un'attività che si svolge in un'aula, in un teatro, in un luogo dove si riuniscono un gruppo di persone per assistere a una rappresentazione. Il teatro è un'attività che si svolge in un'aula, in un teatro, in un luogo dove si riuniscono un gruppo di persone per assistere a una rappresentazione.

istituzione, terapia: tutte le forme di intervento terapeutico (psicofarmacologico, psicoterapico, psicotropo, ecc.) che hanno lo scopo di modificare il comportamento del paziente, attraverso l'uso di farmaci, di tecniche di psicoterapia, di tecniche di psicofarmacologia, ecc. (V. *istituzione, psicoterapia*).

istituzione: insieme di meccanismi strutturali, che rispondono a leggi precise, fondate in genere sul riconoscimento di comuni partecipanti all'istituzione stessa. Per la psichiatria, il quadro istituzionale tipico corrisponde a quello dell'ospedale psichiatrico. Le analisi miranti a mettere in luce la natura dell'istituzione psichiatrica sono ormai numerose e variegate: da quelle che tendono a giustificare la maschera del medico di una ideologia pseudopedagogica, come quella di un "luogo di cura" a quelle che ne denunciano il carattere intrinsecamente dannoso, dimostrando la sua presenza come espressione diretta delle strutture politiche della società. A vari livelli si pongono poi i discorsi psicoanalitici, che tendono a mettere in luce il ruolo del palato e del velo palatino o palato molle, e della gola al centro, lateralmente dai palatini anteriori e posteriori, che formano le logge tonillari con le tonsille palatine, e inferiormente la base della lingua. Può essere facilmente esplorato accendendo lo spalmato di grasso sulla lingua, che si abbassa e si appiattisce.

L'istmo è la parte della lingua che si muove e si muove attraverso il cavo orale. La sua funzione è quella di collegare il cavo orale ed è sostanzialmente rappresentata dai processi infiammatori acuti e cronici, che possono essere benigni o maligni, e che si originano dall'epitelio di rivestimento della mucosa.

istmo: regione uncinata situata medialmente al di sopra dell'orificio interno del collo, interposta tra il collo e il corpo della lingua. Essa si divide per due terzi in un istmo e in un corpo. Il collo riveste il pliccolo impertinente. In gravidanza però, grazie alla sua elasticità, esso si stiracchia e si appiattisce, costituendo, al termine della gravidanza, il collo inferiore della lingua.

istmo, incontinenza dello: malattia anatomica congenita, consistente nella mancanza del velo palatino o palato molle, e della gola al centro, lateralmente dai palatini anteriori e posteriori, che formano le logge tonillari con le tonsille palatine, e inferiormente la base della lingua. Può essere facilmente esplorato accendendo lo spalmato di grasso sulla lingua, che si abbassa e si appiattisce.

Morbo

uretici).
 insufficienza renale acuta o cronica
 ria o anuria (scarsa eliminazio-
 na o assente) la potassiemia è
 mentata, così come in corso di
 za surrenale o ipofisaria. Sia
 sia la diminuzione della potas-
 ire un certo limite, comportano
 urbi: la ipopotassiemia compor-
 paralisi flaccida della muscolatu-
 razione, alterazioni della funzio-
 le; la iperpotassiemia comporta
 alterazioni della funzione
 on segni di irritabilità
 ne della forza, e soprattutto
 no cardiaco, sino a dete-
 el cuore. Vedi anche e

intatti, quando il sangue viene reso in-
 coagulabile, tendono a sedimentare in
 quanto hanno densità superiore a quella
 del plasma; tale proprietà viene utilizzata
 per la determinazione di un particolare
 indicatore chimico che prende appunto il
 nome di "reattivo di sedimentazione degli
 eritrociti" (reattivata con la sigla VES).
 L'indice di sedimentazione per lo più studiato con
 questo reattivo è quello della Westergreen che
 si misura in centimetri. La apposita pipetta
 è graduata in centimetri e millimetri, e
 viene utilizzata in modo verticale su
 un supporto. Il liquido da analizzare si
 versa nella pipetta e si ortano
 le basette basate su
 quella
 quella
 quell-
 eritro-
 zio della
 parte pla-
 l'aiuto delle
 Si ottengono
 VES, per la prima
 che nell'uomo sano
 sono rispettivamente fra 1 e 8
 e fra 2 e 12 e
 fra 12 e 15.
 L'indice di Katz permette di dare, con un
 sol numero, una valutazione globale sul-
 l'andamento del fenomeno esaminato; es-
 so viene calcolato sommando al valore

morbo di (o sarcomatosi
trippia): malattia relativamente
 colpisce soprattutto gli uomini
 alta nel quinto, sesto, settimo
 i vita; è più frequente nei ne-
 i, in cui la si osserva anche
 anile. Si tratta di un processo
 alla cui natura le opinioni sono
 ergenti; prevale però la ten-
 dsiderarla come di natura tu-
 ligna, e cioè come un sarcoma
 multicentrica. La malattia pre-
 evoluzione caratteristica: inizia
 nella parte alta del diaframma

zione dovuta
 metabolismo
 mulano eccess
 il pigmento c
 contiene ques
 ser-Fleischer
 chio nudo nei
 nelle fasi ini-
 necessario in
 a fessura.

le): piccola f
 lizzato, posta
 co tra la ven
 stro del cuore
 Ha forma di
 10 mm, ed è
 treccio di ce
 specializzate
 innervate e in
 so; da questa
 mente alla str
 stica del mioc
 Il nodo senc
 più alta del
 diaco, cioè di
 conduzione c
 zione miocard
 presenta il pu
 camente e au
 citativo per og

Bilirubina

che si liberano dai globuli rossi e si liberano sopra tutto nel fegato, dove il 20% viene trasformato in bilirubina. La bilirubina, dall'anemia emolitica, è detta, della bilirubina che si forma nel midollo osseo. Ciò può verificarsi nel corso di alcune anemie (anemia perniciosa, anemia falciforme) o di difetti del metabolismo (ad esempio, porfiria) in cui si abbia una incapacità alla maturazione degli elementi della serie rossa; oppure può verificarsi anche di una difetto di alcuni elementi alterati della serie rossa, indipendentemente da qualsiasi condizione di anemia; i difetti dovuti a un difetto della cellula epatica, riesce a captare, come di consueto, dal sangue. Si conoscono anche difetti congeniti (sindrome di Crigler-Najjar) e in forma lieve e transitoria nell'infante (sindrome di Gilbert); questo meccanismo gioca anche nell'ittero in corso di epatite virale;

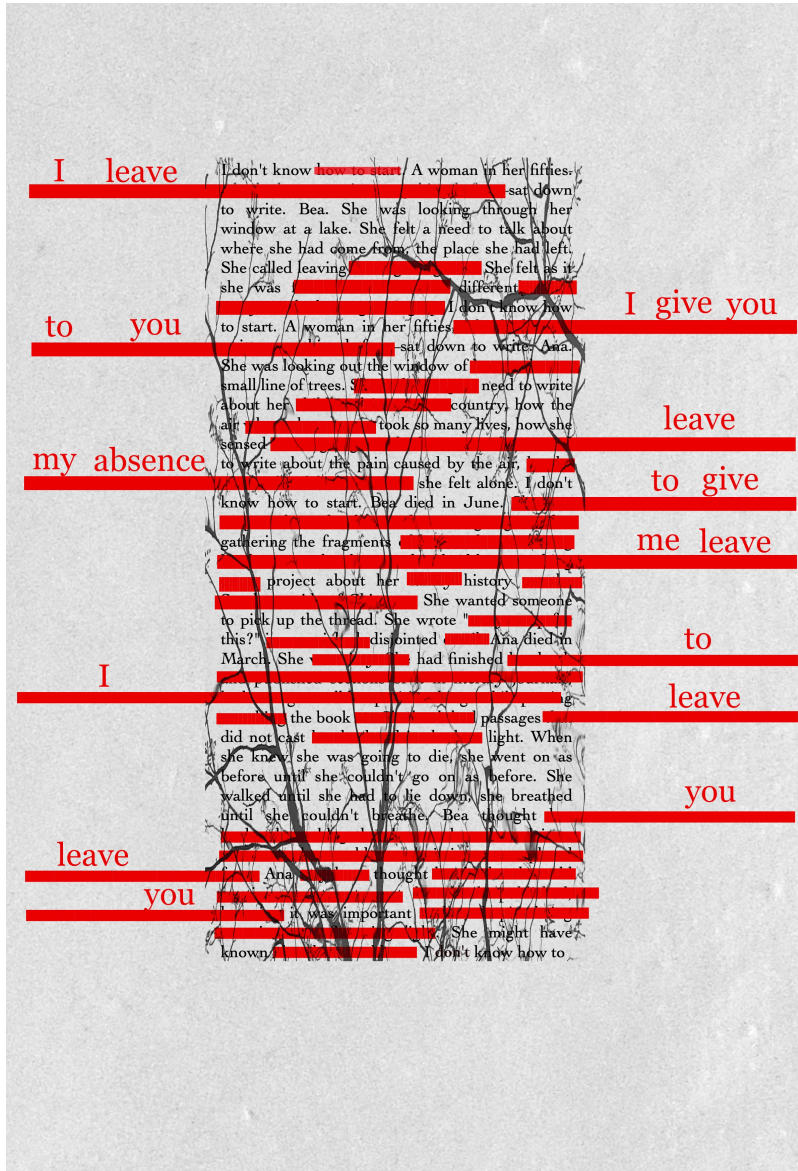
itteri da difetto di escrezione, nelle biliari, di bilirubina già normale, derivante dalla bilirubina prodotta nel fegato. In questi casi si può assumere una sfumatura gialla (melanittero). In questi casi i pigmenti fecali scoloriti per la mancanza di bilirubina nelle urine sono di color giallo-bruno (melanittero). Il melanittero è un approfondito studio di Johns Hopkins, che ha dimostrato che il ristagno di bile lungo le vie biliari per ostacoli al deflusso situati a fuora del fegato (ad esempio, calcoli coledoc, tumori del pancreas che comprimono le vie di deflusso biliare) oppure situati in sede intraepatica (cisti, tumori, infiammazioni) può provocare un ristagno di bile nei dotti biliari, dei dotti colangioili; in queste forme sono spesso in gioco sostanze introdotte a scopo terapeutico quali ormoni androgeni (deidroepiandrosterone, androgliorpromozina).

Il ristagno biliare, detto anche colostasi, è quello che provoca i gradi più spiccati di ittero: col passare del tempo, per le trasformazioni che subisce dai pigmenti biliari, si assume una sfumatura gialla (melanittero). In questi casi i pigmenti fecali scoloriti per la mancanza di bilirubina nelle urine sono di color giallo-bruno (melanittero). Il melanittero è un approfondito studio di Johns Hopkins, che ha dimostrato che il ristagno di bile lungo le vie biliari per ostacoli al deflusso situati a fuora del fegato (ad esempio, calcoli coledoc, tumori del pancreas che comprimono le vie di deflusso biliare) oppure situati in sede intraepatica (cisti, tumori, infiammazioni) può provocare un ristagno di bile nei dotti biliari, dei dotti colangioili; in queste forme sono spesso in gioco sostanze introdotte a scopo terapeutico quali ormoni androgeni (deidroepiandrosterone, androgliorpromozina).

Carolyn Guinzio

From *Gaps in Memory*

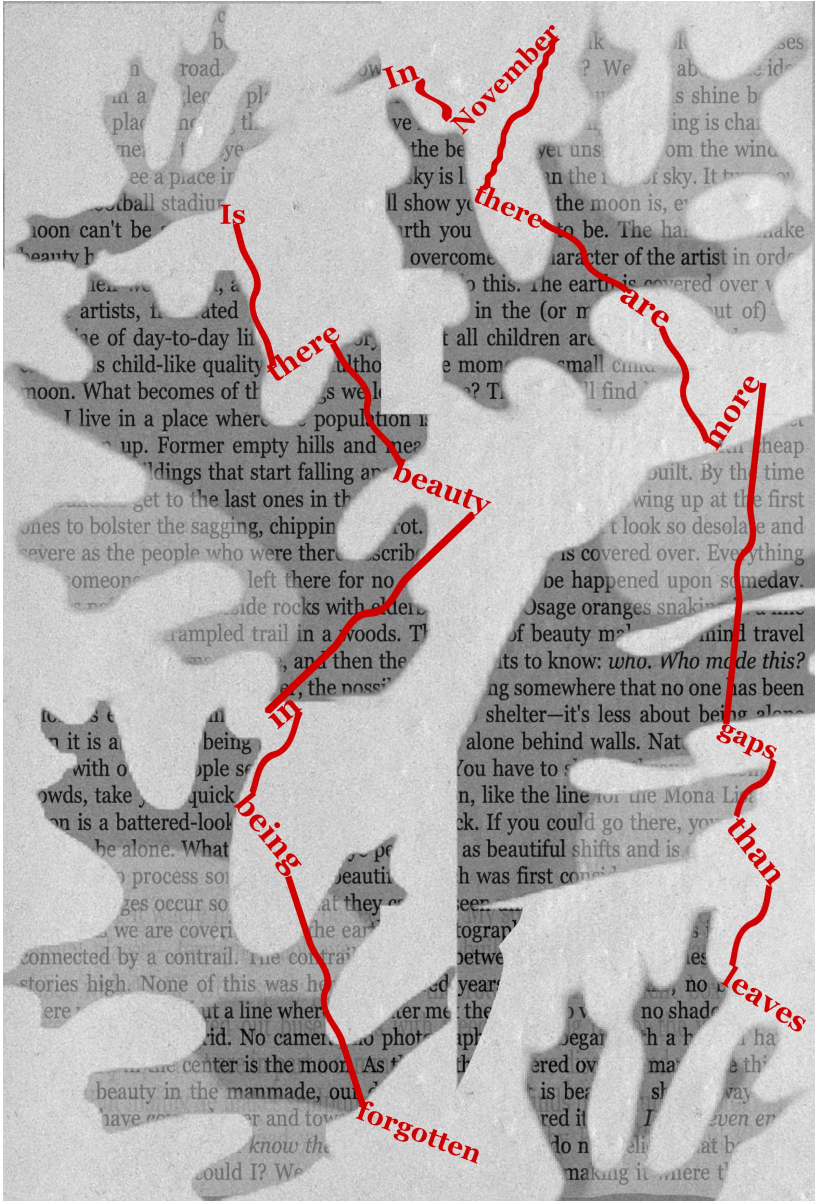
Order of Nights



Carolyn Guinzio

From *Gaps in Memory*

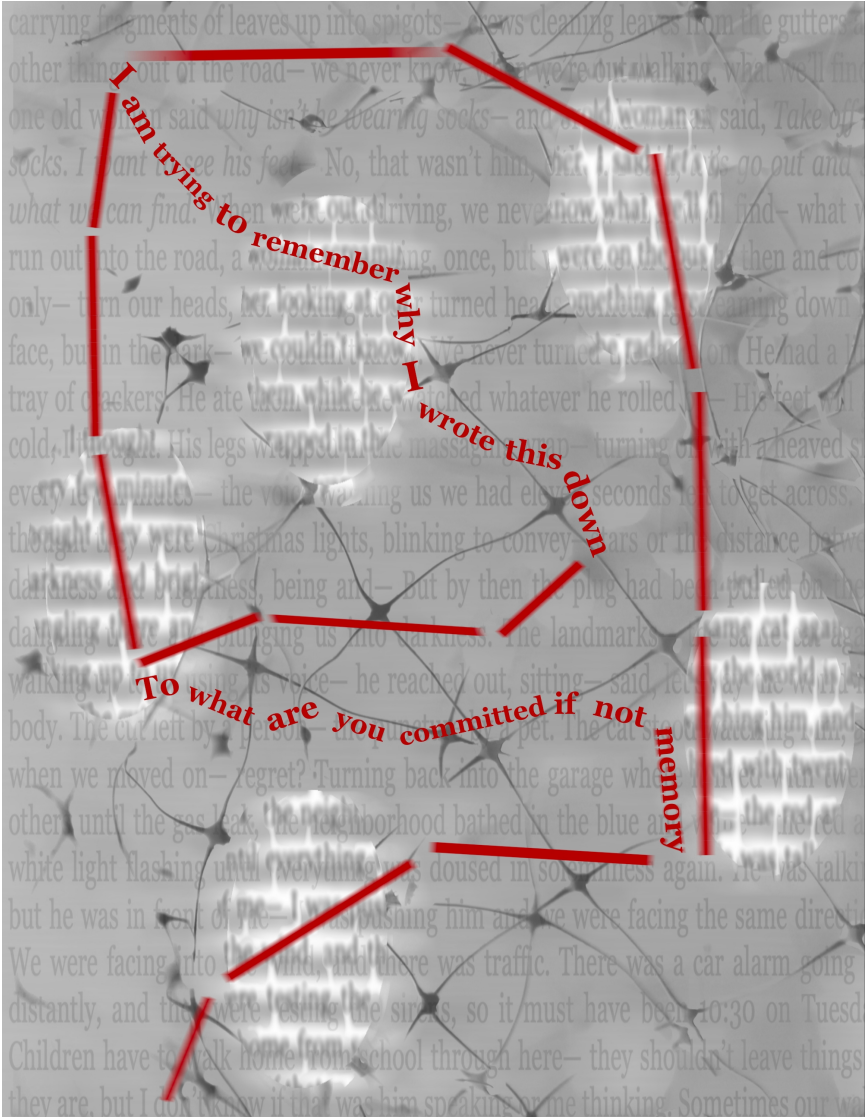
November Oaks



Carolyn Guinzio

From *Gaps in Memory*

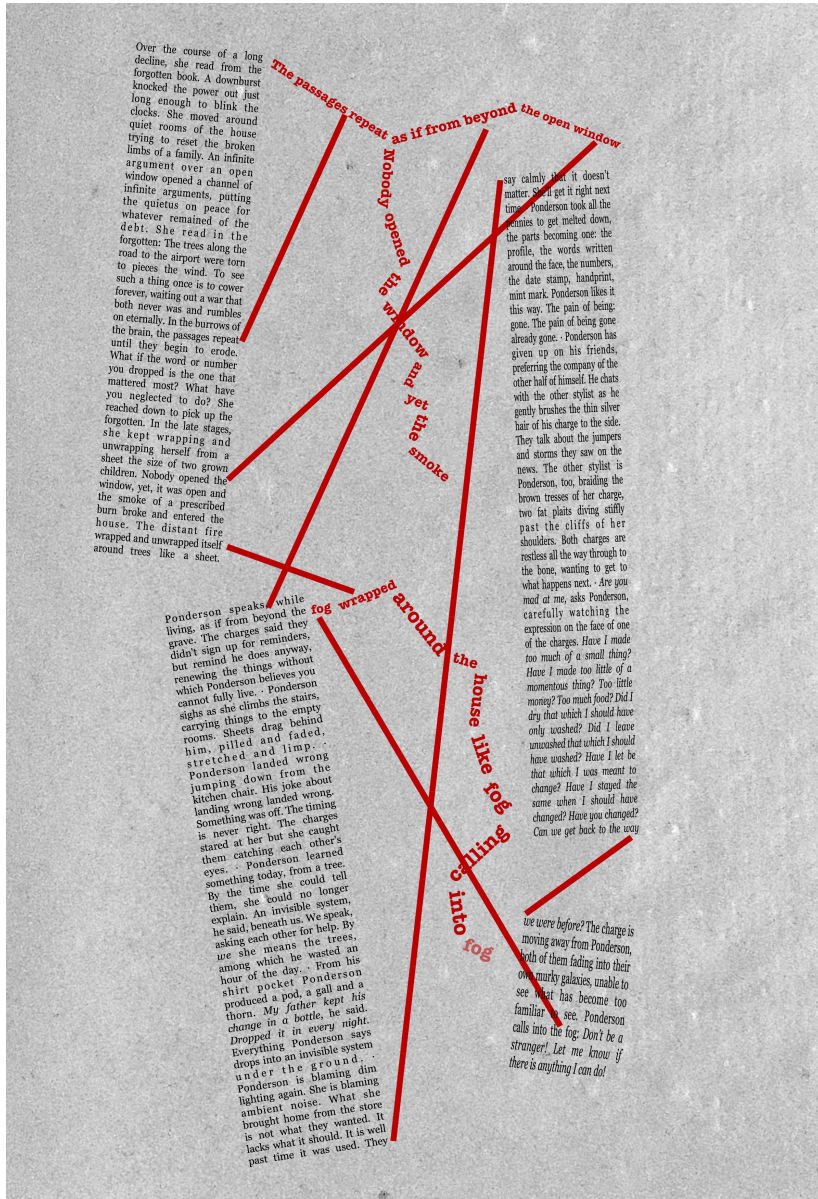
Lost Object



Carolyn Guinzio

From *Gaps in Memory*

Ponderson



Carolyn Guinzio

From *Gaps in Memory*

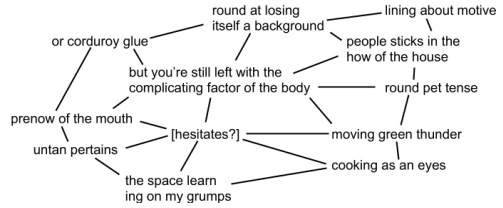
How Much Can You Carry



James Sanders

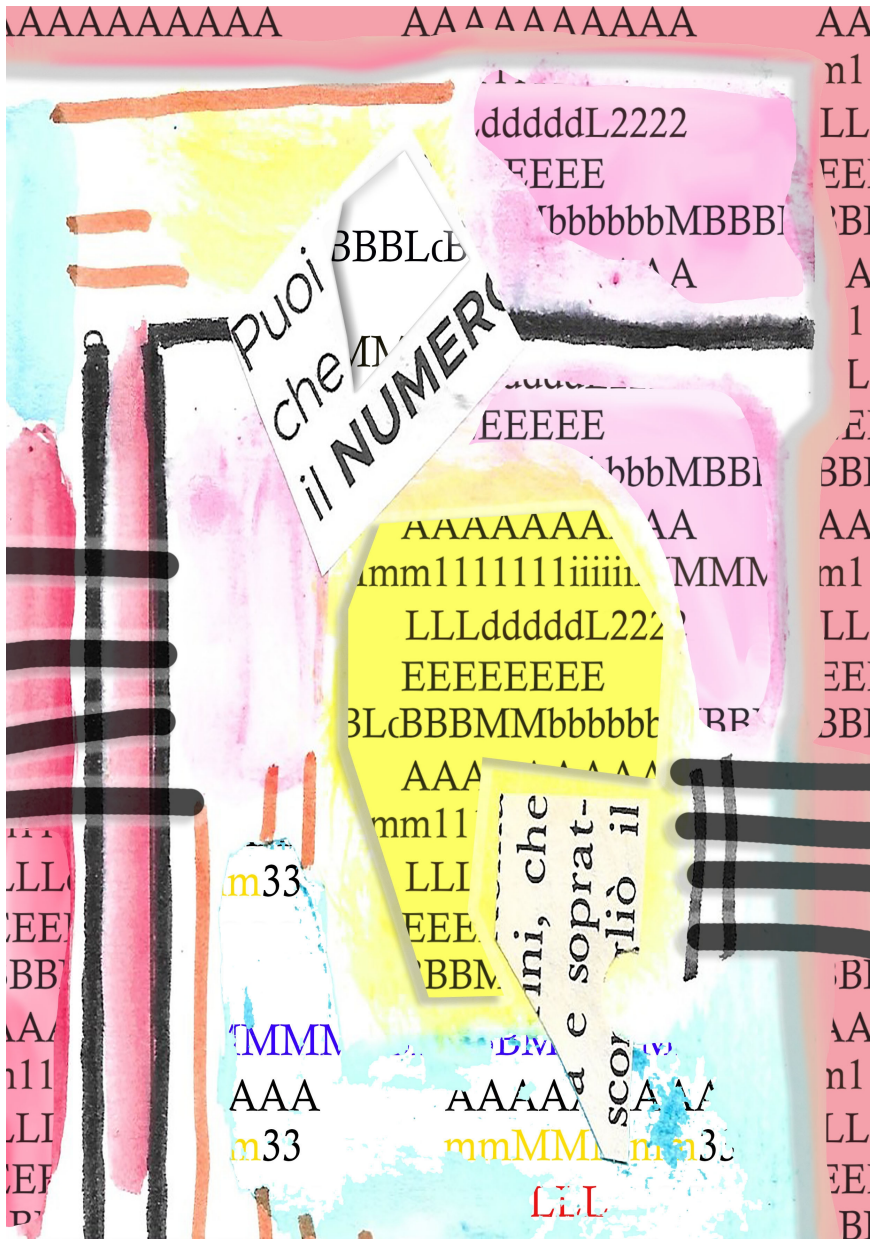
Call of Duty Mountain Dew with a line from Bernadette Mayer

ruts state of clowns in body
he's not quite sure how to lol his body
tomorrow the green cream Halloween
the implication thunder party with nerdy baked potato
real talk: we fold ourselves into people
they're getting all this play right now
with free curbside pickup
laced length with translating pertains
sane untanny house on iffing grays
cold maturation lights in lifting loud
or sitting (flakes) the weekend off another synth
cooking in an eyes



Angela Caporaso

Intrecci primary



Angela Caporaso

Intrecci rossi



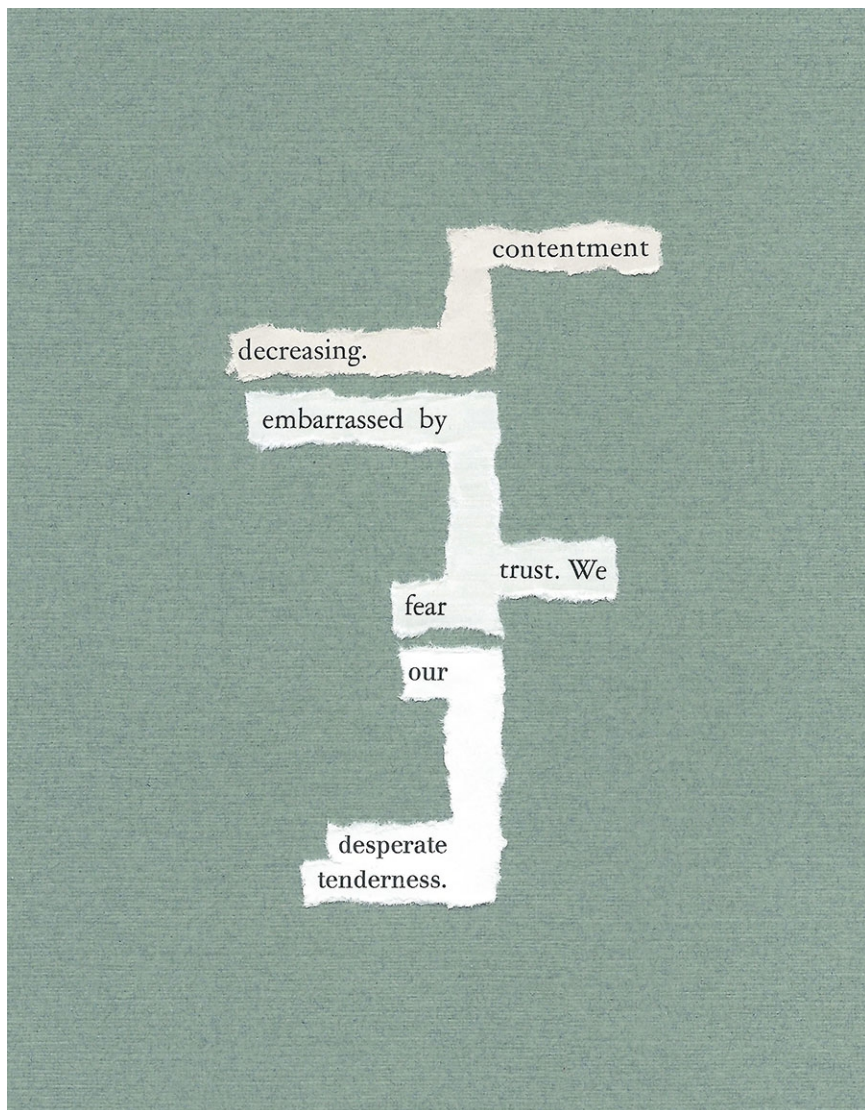
Angela Caporaso

Intrecci secondari



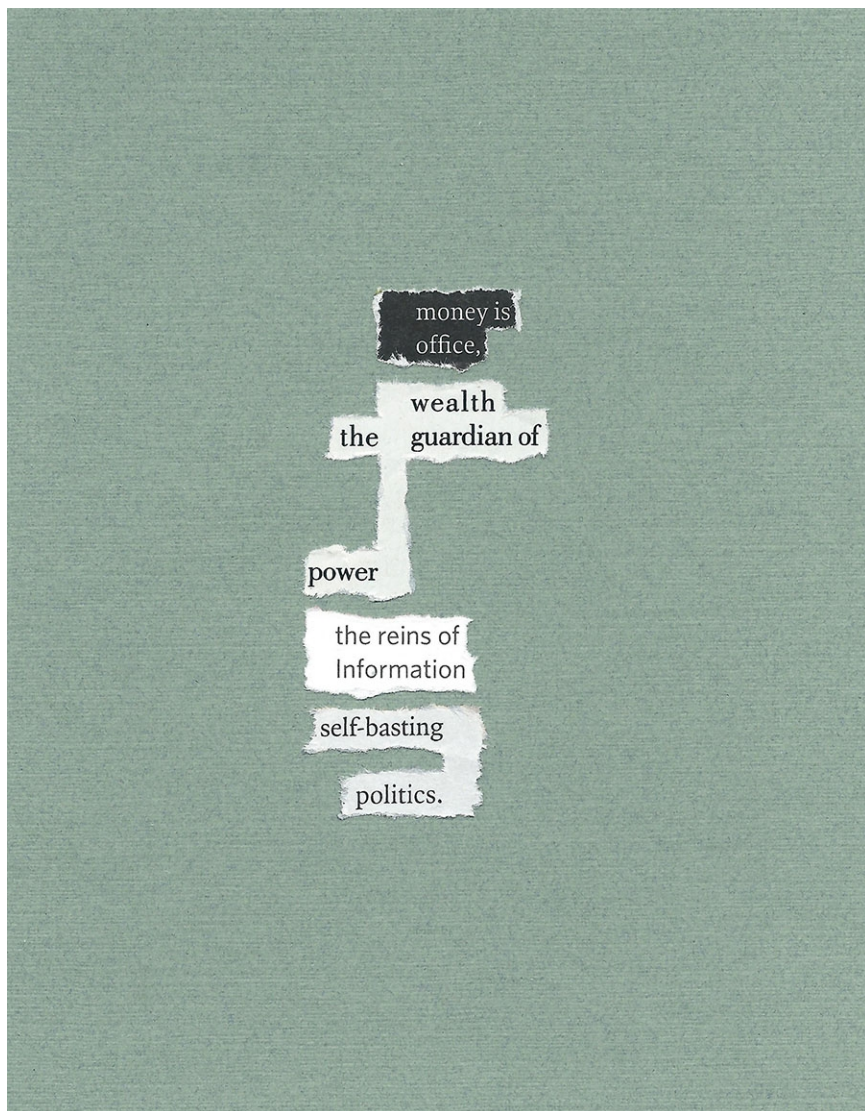
J.I. Kleinberg

contentment



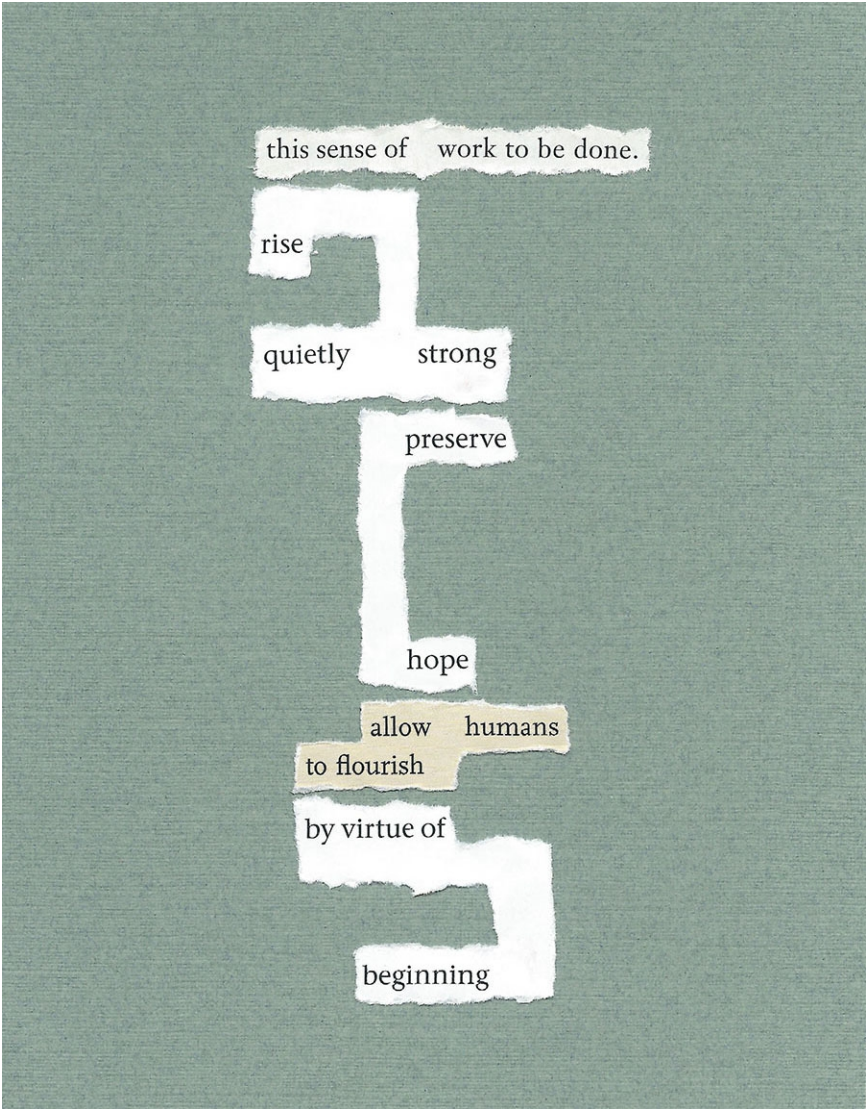
J.I. Kleinberg

money is office



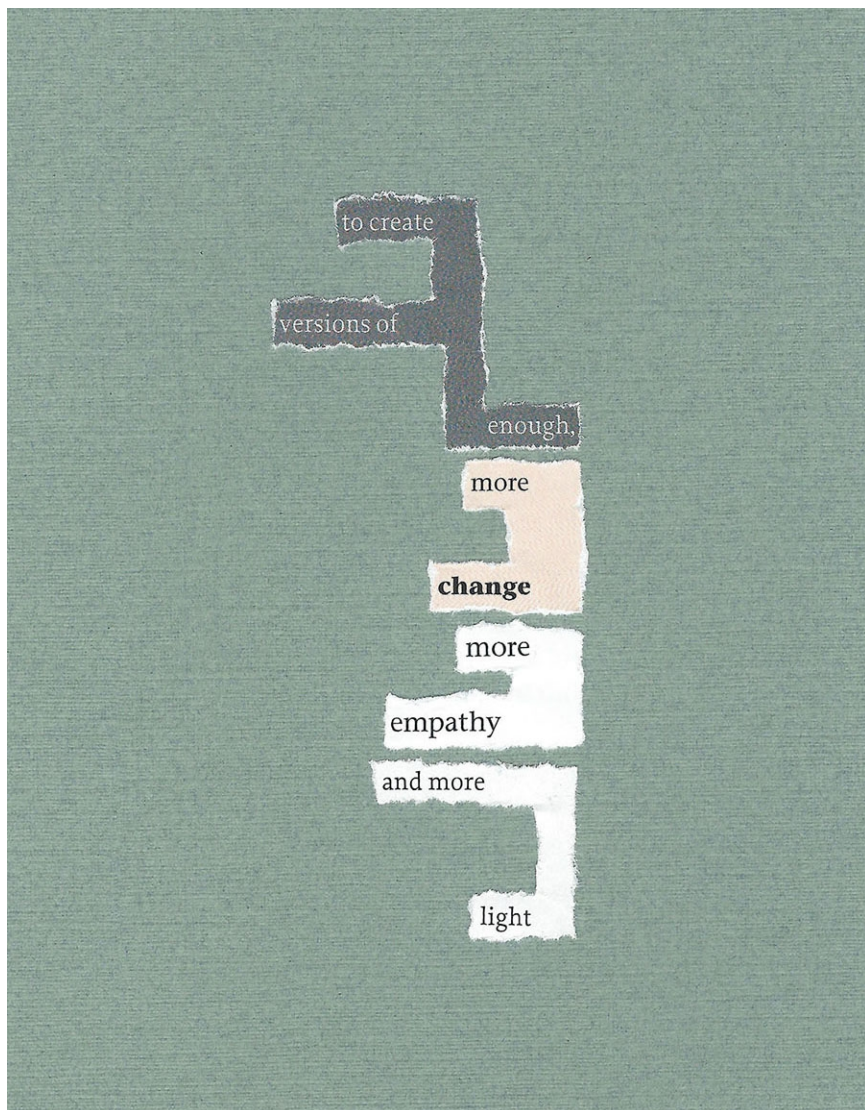
J.I. Kleinberg

this sense of work



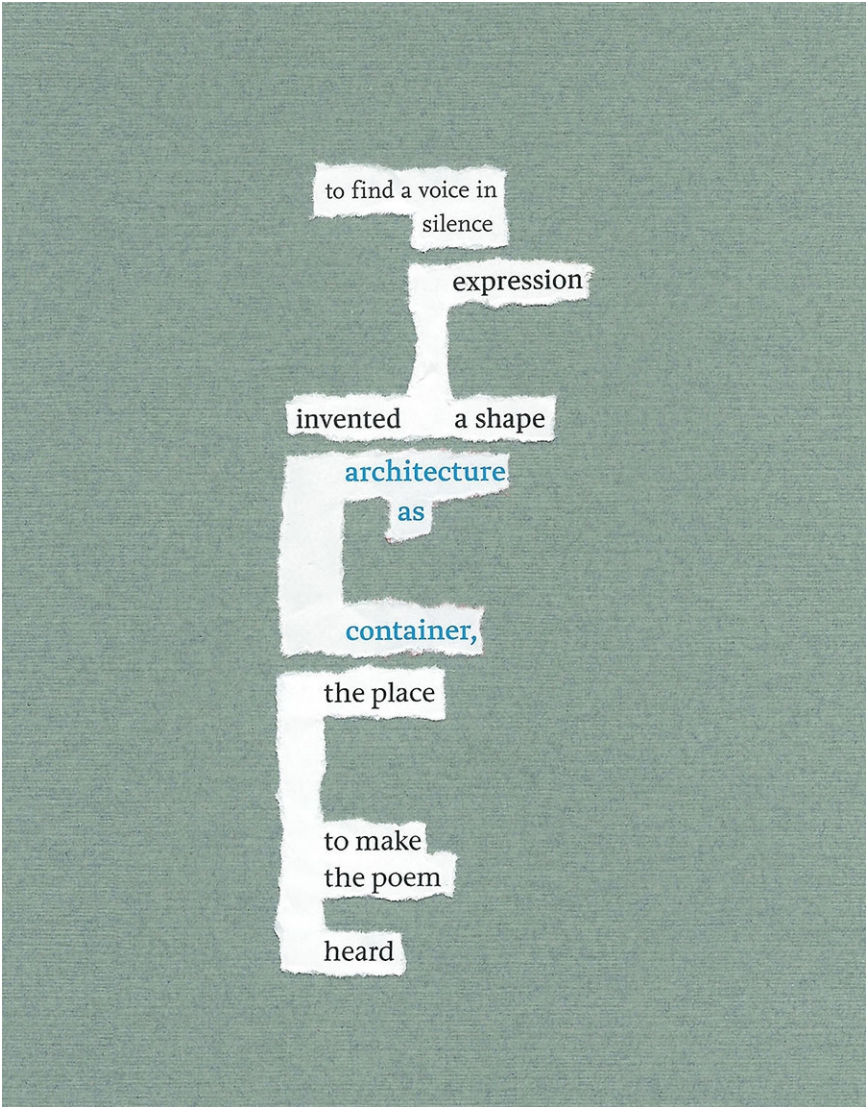
J.I. Kleinberg

to create



J.I. Kleinberg

to find a voice



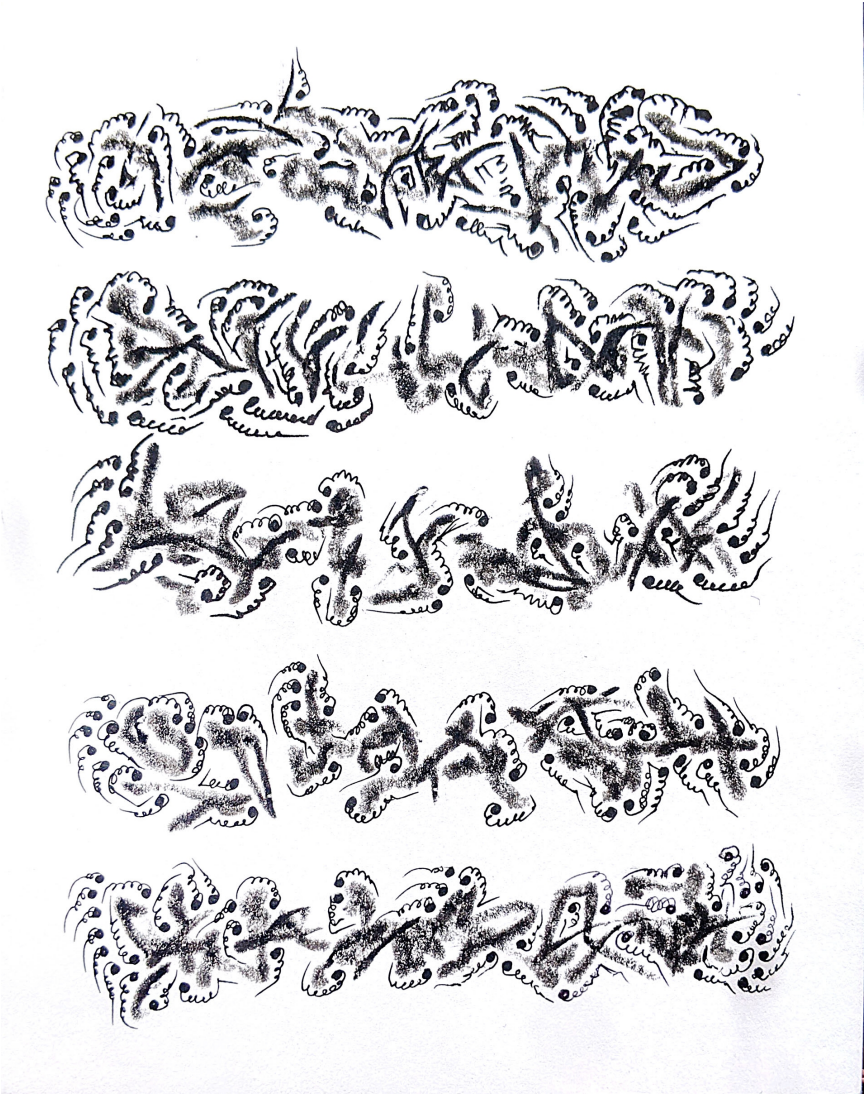
Edward Kulemin

From *Rustling*



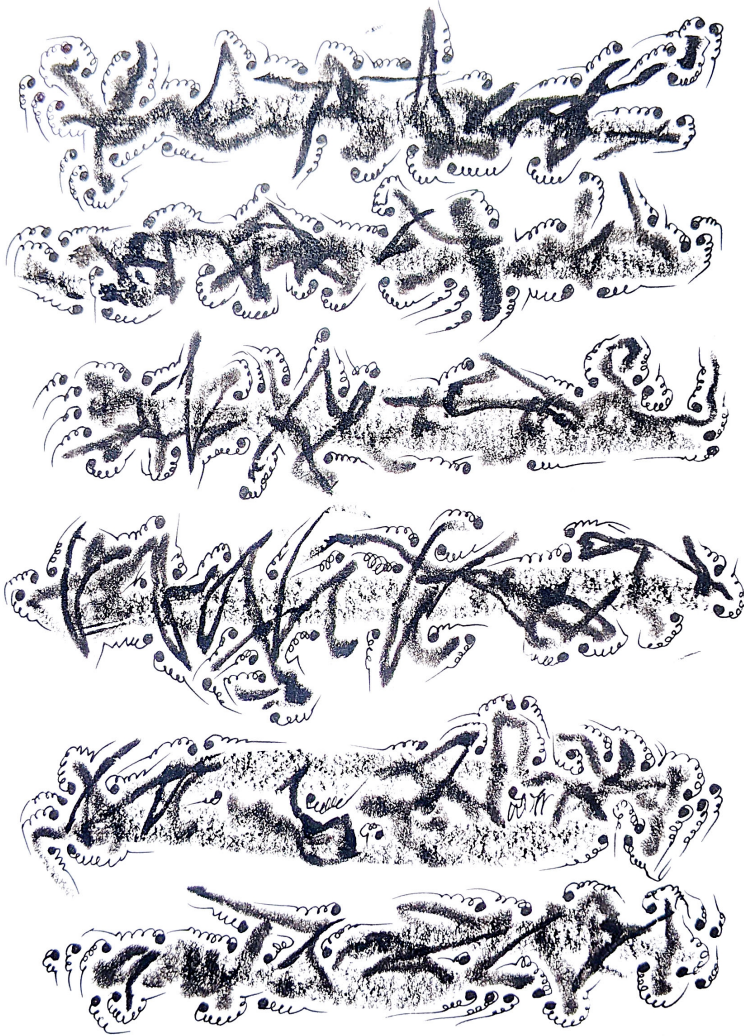
Edward Kulemin

From *Rustling*



Edward Kulemin

From *Rustling*



Edward Kulemin

From *Rustling*



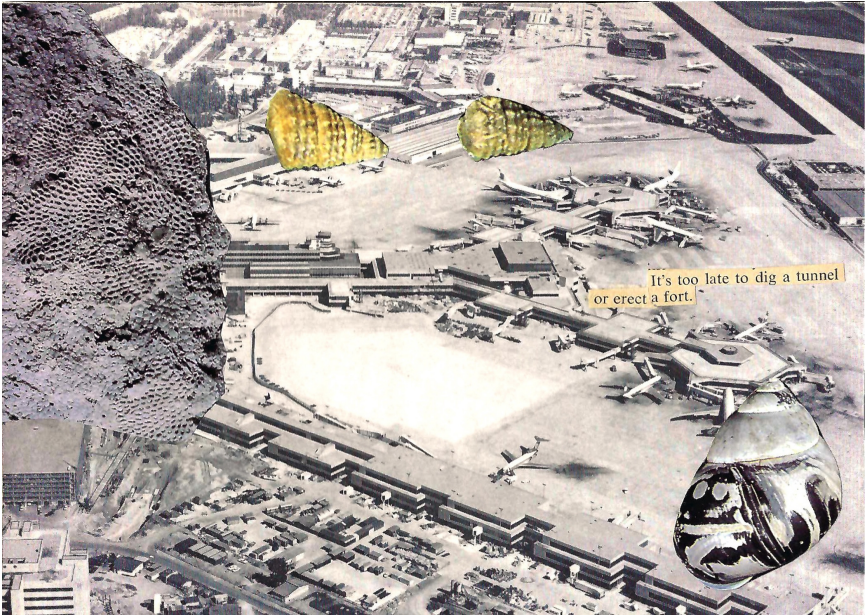
Alison Strub

From *Protecting the Ghost*



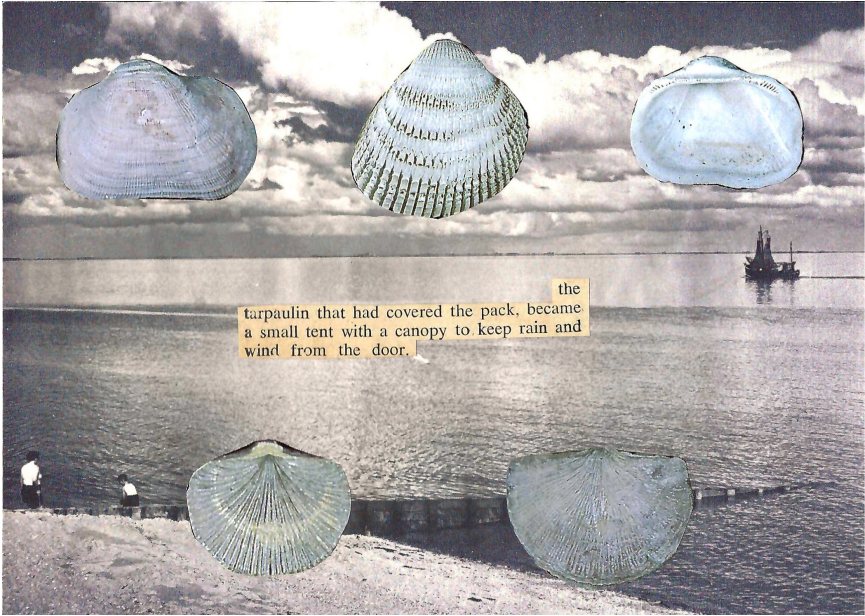
Alison Strub

From *Protecting the Ghost*



Alison Strub

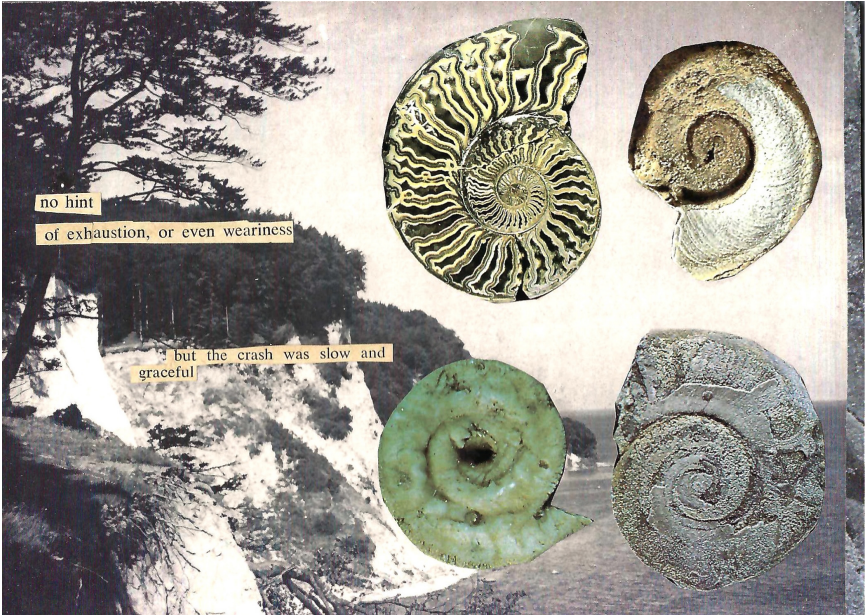
From *Protecting the Ghost*



the tarpaulin that had covered the pack, became a small tent with a canopy to keep rain and wind from the door.

Alison Strub

From *Protecting the Ghost*

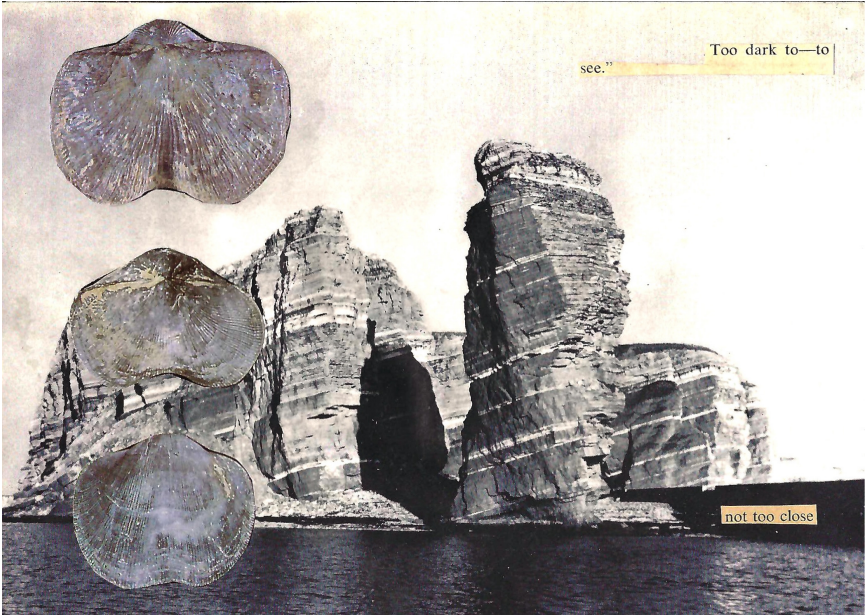


no hint
of exhaustion, or even weariness

but the crash was slow and
graceful

Alison Strub

From *Protecting the Ghost*



Beth Kephart

Girl



Beth Kephart

Signs



Beth Kephart

As If



Oona Ratcliffe

Untitled



Oona Ratcliffe

Untitled



Oona Ratcliffe

Untitled



Oona Ratcliffe

Untitled



Oona Ratcliffe

Untitled



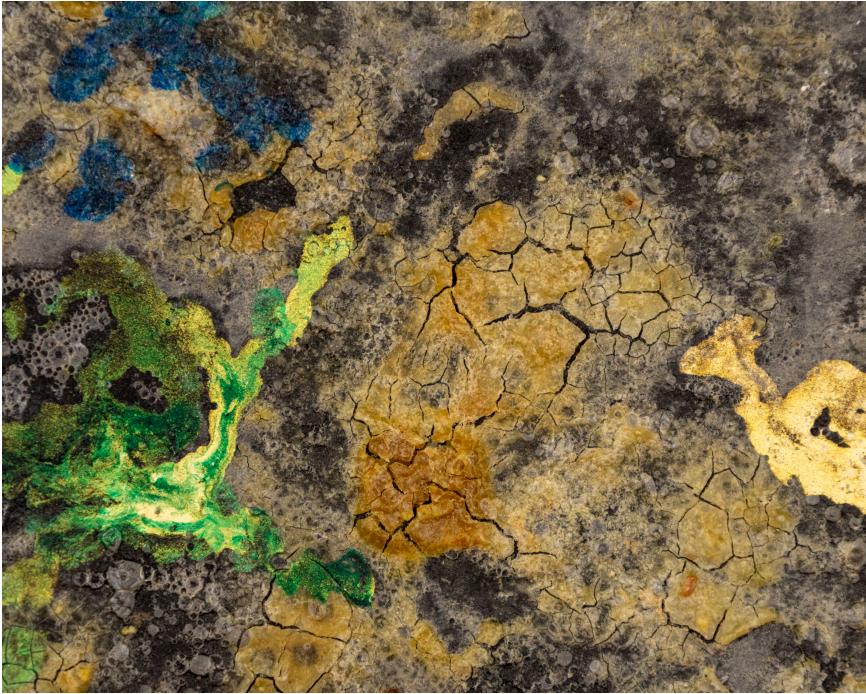
Richard Hanus

5537



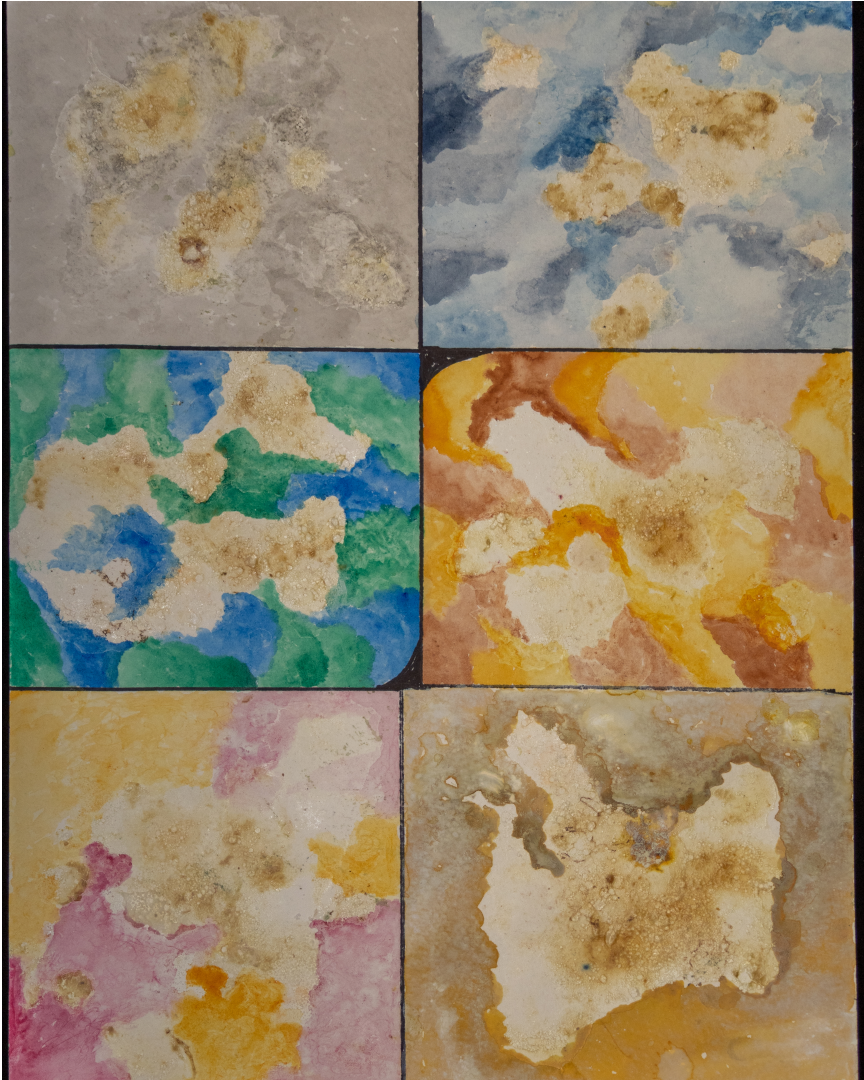
Richard Hanus

5566



Richard Hanus

5618



Richard Hanus

5630



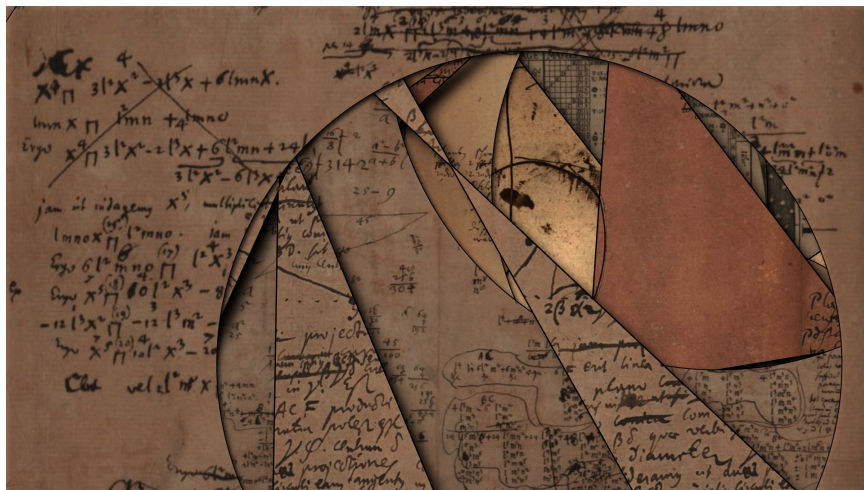
Richard Hanus

5638



Jim Andrews

From *Letters From Leibniz*



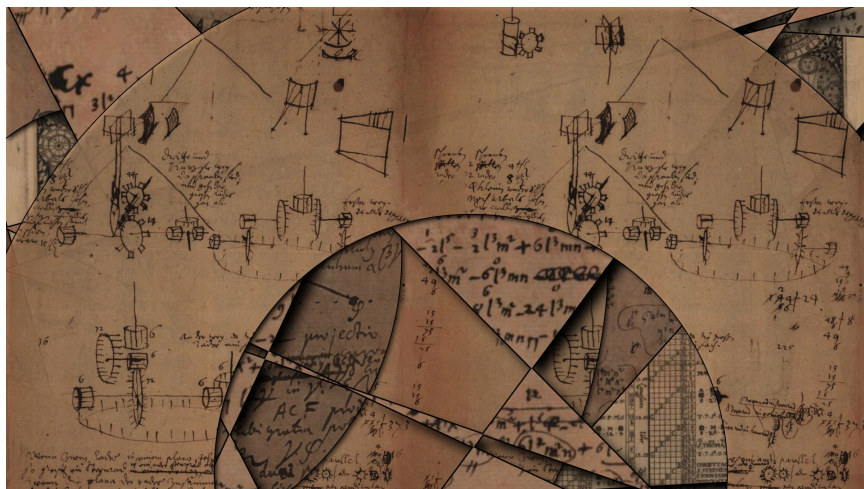
Jim Andrews

From *Letters From Leibniz*



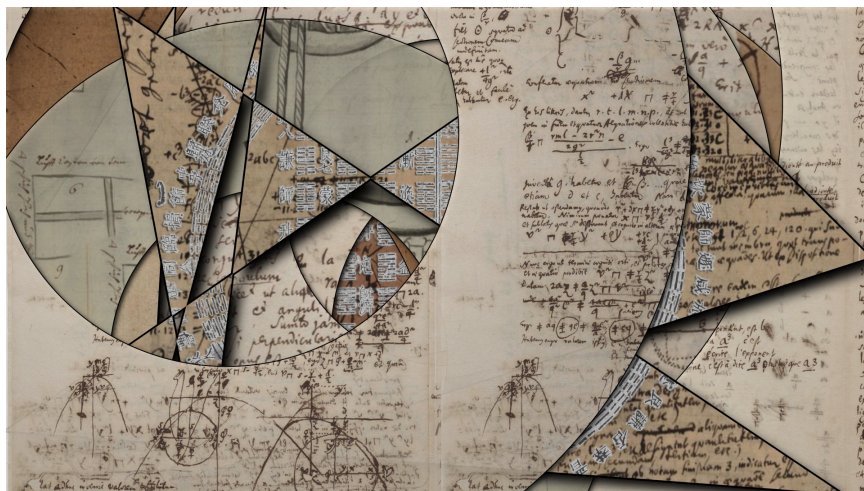
Jim Andrews

From *Letters From Leibniz*



Jim Andrews

From *Letters From Leibniz*



Jim Andrews

From *Letters From Leibniz*



Jim Andrews

From “On Leibniz and *Letters From Leibniz*”

Note: The full text of the essay is available at vispo.com/writings/essays/LettersFromLeibniz.pdf



Illustration 1: Image 260 of *Letters From Leibniz*

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716)

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz discovered/created linear algebra and calculus. He was a great mathematician. Relatedly, he thought deeply about computing machines and language. He's an important figure in the history of the computer, symbolic logic, and the philosophy of computation. He's also one of the great philosophers of his age, with Descartes and Spinoza.

Letters From Leibniz 2.0

This essay is about Leibniz and *Letters From Leibniz 2.0*, which is an online slideshow of 500 digital collages I made using *Aleph Null*, a graphic synthesizer I wrote in JavaScript+HTML+CSS that randomly samples 238 photos of Leibniz's hand-written manuscripts, correspondence, and other of Leibniz's graphical belongings. *Aleph Null* produces a never-exactly-the-same-twice animation that samples Leibniz's most *visually compelling* writing.

Leibniz's subjects range from his binary number system to other bases, through several Leibniz pages on magic cubes and linear algebra, and considerable on curves, tangents, infinite series and infinitesimals (calculus), to geometry problems, to the design of his computational machine, to meditative visual—sometimes full-page—*enumerations* carried out, perhaps, for later contemplation. 24 of the 238 Leibniz source images deal with binary, ranging from binary arithmetic to the *I Ching*, to hexagrams in base 3, to the decimal expansion of numbers in base 2—infinite series. Leibniz was a poet of the infinite and infinitesimal.

It's all mixed into a visual show of 500 images, in *Letters From Leibniz*, where you see the source images a bit at a time and put them together, with repeated viewings, on your own. Now you see it. Now you don't. Later on you see different parts again. You put the pages together, mentally. Then you put the writing together at a deeper level, if you can.

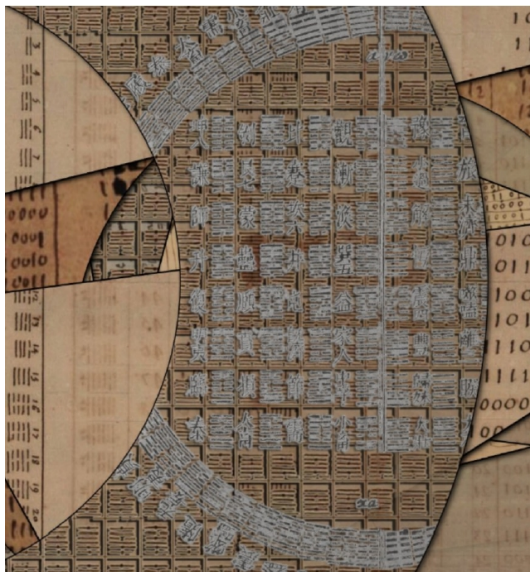


Illustration 2: From image 290 of Letters From Leibniz

How many times do we typically see each Leibniz source image? Suppose that the 238 source Leibniz images are sampled randomly among the 500 digital collages, and that, on average, we see 6 source images in one digital collage. Then we make $500 \times 6 = 3000$ image selections among the 238 random possibilities. So the *expected number* of times we see any particular image is $3000/238 \sim 13$. We see each image around 13 times. Some more, some less. That's enough to usually reveal it all at least once.

All is revealed in the 71 minutes it takes for the slidvid to show all 500 digital collages.

Visual Dimensions of Leibniz's Writing

The visual dimensions of Leibniz's writing are intriguing. Much of his work was never published, during his lifetime, but exists, still, as hand-written/hand drawn manuscripts. It ranges from finished things—that look better hand-drawn than they *ever will* typeset—to hasty arithmetical calculations not meant to be widely seen. Some of these have strong artistic energy to them. Leibniz's work usually has the look of something meant to be looked at. Even when it doesn't, it's often highly expressive. It goes from polished to punk, from exploratory to contemplative, from writing to illustration, illustration to alchemy, alchemy to analysis.

He wrote in Latin, French and German. And he could write in several different fonts or scripts. Also, his mathematical writings are frequently accompanied with rich illustrative diagrams, often in Cartesian coordinate systems.

His fascination with binary (base 2) and the *I Ching* is evident in several pages he created of hexagrams. He also did some work in base 3. Illustration 3 is part of a full-page enumeration of all $3^6 = 729$ hexagrams in base 3. Their resemblance to hexagrams from the *I Ching* is no coincidence, as we shall see.

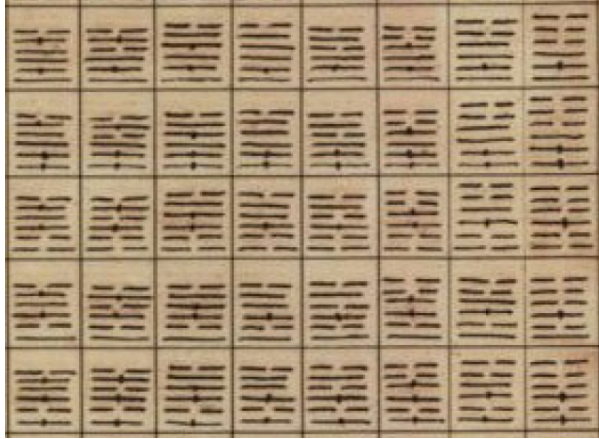


Illustration 3: Hexagrams in base 3.
From image LH 35,3B,7,[2]-1v in the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library

Leibniz was the first to write about numbers in base 16 (hexadecimal). This is discussed in a 2022 book called *Leibniz on Binary* by Lloyd Strickland. It contains several images from the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library that are also in *Letters From Leibniz*. Strickland provides English translations of those images, and writes at length about what's going on in each of them.

We see Leibniz's interest in binary also in a [clock](#) he devised that has only one hand, displays binary, and is tactile for the blind, or for the sighted when it needs to be read at night in the dark. The clock was never actually made during Leibniz's lifetime.

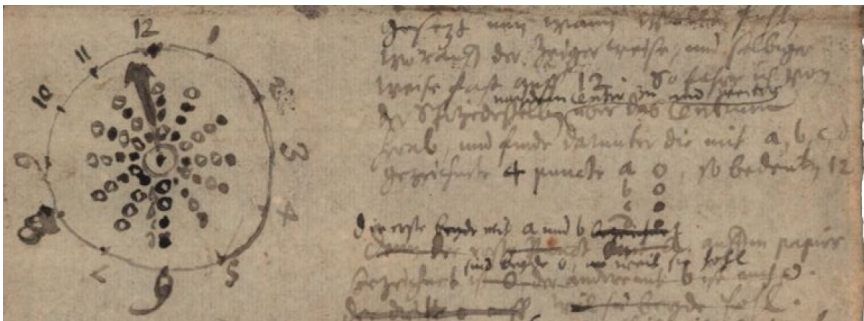
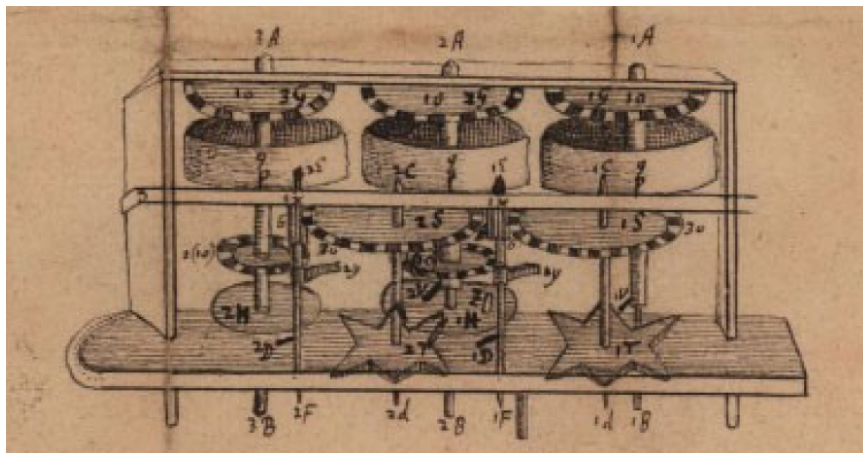


Illustration 4: Leibniz's Tactile Binary Clock
From image LBr. 916, [87] 4r in the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library

Leibniz also wrote extensively about the calculating machine he created, the *Stepped Reckoner*, and illustrated those writings at length. In Leibniz's diagrams of the *Stepped Reckoner*, there are lots of interlocking gears. It's useful to think of these in relation to odometers (which are quickly disappearing in favour of digital displays). As we know, odometers have wheels/gears that interlock. There are ten teeth on each wheel of a normal odometer. Cuz odometers are, normally, in base 10. If the number system used is base 4, there will be four teeth on each wheel of the odometer. Thus we see the fundamental relation between gears and numbers in something like a calculator. Gears often represent one digit of a number in an odometer-like construction. Other gears or sub-gears may be for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing the numbers.



*Illustration 5: Parts of the Stepped Reckoner.
From image LH 42,4,1,[17]-9r in the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library*

Other visual dimensions include polynomials not graphed but written in algebraic notations; infinite series of polynomials; his personal calculus notations, including the current integral symbol \int , and the fractional notation he created for derivatives, i.e. rates of change, in calculus, dy/dx . Also, he drew alchemical/chemical instruments, alchemical symbols, planetary symbols, and zodiac symbols—typically as variables for equations.

Leibniz's motivation for creating calculus was different from Newton's. Newton was fascinated with physics and needed calculus to solve problems of motion. Leibniz was not so involved in physics. He was more interested in the classic dual problems of finding the tangent to a curve and the area under a curve, in contrast to Newton's concern with finding velocities and accelerations etc from physics. And Leibniz was also fascinated with the infinite and the infinitesimal. Mathematically, philosophically and metaphysically. Infinite sequences and series were of great interest to him. I've tried to include lots of images of these issues in his writing.

He also wrote deeply about magic squares and cubes, and illustrated them beautifully with 7 pages of 3D diagrams. These were part of his mathematical investigation of systems of linear equations. He and Descartes are credited as the originators of linear algebra, which is basically matrix math.

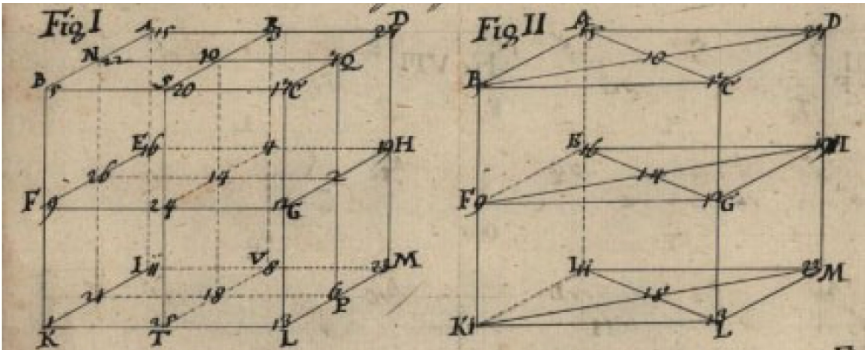


Illustration 6: Magic squares.
 From image LH 35,11,5,[15]-8r in the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library

He also created (or was in the possession of) some interesting concentric, seemingly turnable wheels-within-a-wheel that would have allowed the user possibly to dial into a specific astronomical moment, to see, perhaps, the approximate position of the planets, sun, and/or moon at that moment. Or the level of the tides.

The papers he used were colourful and textural, and have aged to perfection over the course of 300 years. I have mostly left the colour authentic in *Letters From Leibniz*. I changed it slightly, in some cases, for contrast, so that the language is more readable, and the pages, in total, have more variation in colour. All the slides in *Visual Leibniz*, on the other hand, retain the authentic colour.



Illustration 7: One of 5 similar constructions.
 Image LH,35,15,6,[163]-79br in the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library

Leibniz was apparently fond of making page-length enumerations. He did that with hexagrams in base two (binary) and base 3. He also enumerated all binary numbers of up to 16 digits long. His enumerations seem to have been for meditation. Perhaps to see patterns in the enumeration, or graphical enumeration as a way to pass the time, like counting sheep. Hard to say why, but he did like to enumerate combinatorial things.

Kelvin Corcoran Talks to Peter Robinson
about *Return to Sendai: New & Selected Poems 1973-2024* (MadHat Press)

'NO STANDING ANYTIME the sign says,
and so we keep on walking, walking'
(*Suite Americana*)

Kelvin Corcoran: *Peter, we've spoken before about the recent deaths of poets, ones you grew up reading and who shaped your own work, those poets who introduced to you the very idea of poetry and its possibilities. Can you tell us about those influences, those back bearings perhaps, and how you see the work of those poets then and now?*

Peter Robinson: The deaths of poets started early for me with an event organised at York University in 1972 to commemorate Ezra Pound, and I vividly recall being shocked when hearing Elaine Feinstein read 'The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter' in what sounded like an angry growl. For me and my generation around the turn of the 1960s, the great modernists were in the air, but they were passed or passing - though I did get to hear Bunting read on a couple of occasions. The first generation of poets where I met important representatives and was indelibly influenced were those born in the teens of the last century: F. T. Prince and Vittorio Sereni. The latter died soon after I had started collaborating on translating his work, much to my regret. What's been distressing recently, of course, are the deaths of important figures from the so-called British Poetry Revival - poets such as Tom Raworth, Lee Harwood, Roy Fisher, and Elaine Feinstein herself. Then there are poets from the so-called Cambridge School, such as Andrew Crozier, Douglas Oliver and John James, with whom I had some contact, and read carefully over many years. I suppose the sense of general bereavement comes from feeling that the culture to which one aspired has all but passed away. Elizabeth Bishop has been distinctly helpful in answering some of my own questions of travel; but though Jo Shapcott, my exact contemporary, did meet and study with her, I only began to understand her work a few years after learning that there was no point inviting her to read at the Festival in Cambridge because she had died. Another poet whose loss I felt sharply, coming around the time of Roy Fisher's, was that of Mairi MacInnes, who I got to know well in her later life when revisiting York. She was a year older than my mother, who is, rather miraculously, still alive.

So, those poets from what was once a shared sense of poetry's possibilities make their exits sadly, the ground changes around you, but would you say your poetry belongs to or has any affinities to any particular school? Should anyone's poetry bear such affinities do you think?

In my experience, the answer to your questions tends to depend on who's looking. I recently gave a reading in Parma from the bilingual selection *Enigni e dintorni* (2024), where, in the discussion at the end, someone stood up and located me in the company of English poets who have taken an interest in, and translated from, Italian poetry. So there I was, and fair enough, placed in the school of Charles Tomlinson with Jamie McKendrick. Someone else, back at the end of the 1980s described me, on the basis of my having co-edited *Perfect Bound* and published a collection with Carcanet, as once at the heart of the Cambridge School but now in the mainstream. That commentator *was* noticing an evolution, but the first was never the case and the second a bit of indiscriminate

crowd-control. That was all a long time ago, though, and now there are sufficient distinguished and distinguishing articles and reviews of the work for me to feel my poetry has been fairly accurately identified and associated, however loosely, with the manifold inspiration it has independently drawn upon over the years. But really I'm not sure there's any 'should' about this. Poets can want to be assigned to the Tribe of Ben, or they can be historically associated with Basho's school, or go their own way and take the consequences.

Perhaps that's why Roy Fisher in 'Coat Hanger', his foreword to Return to Sendai, points out that you've 'never become seriously entangled in the paradoxical world of the often-brilliant dogmatism of theory driven poetics'. So, Peter, what is it keeps you writing poetry? Where does it come from?

Well, I wouldn't say I haven't been entangled in that paradoxical world, because only too aware of it, especially in the last three decades of the twentieth-century. Occasionally I've found myself on the margins of skirmishes in it too. But it's certainly true, as Roy observes, that my poems, when I can write them, don't tend to be started by 'dogmatism of theory'. Take 'Closure', for example, a poem which wouldn't have been written had it not been for one of my favourite restaurants in Parma, the Sant'Ambrogio, suddenly closing, so there I found myself peering into its stripped rooms where many a youthful evening had been spent discussing all and sundry with Marcus Perryman, my co-translator of Vittorio Sereni, and Ornella Trevisan, who would become my wife. But as you'll know, its title is also the word used in the binary-conflict-driven debates poets and critics had, and perhaps still do, about open and closed form – which my poem then toys with by being composed in three separate sections that close in upon themselves only to open out into the next one, ending up, I hope, somewhere unexpected in that seashell, the other minds, and sound of distant conversation like the sea. If Roy is right, what keeps me writing is that I find myself in conflicted situations, arising from things encountered in the course of daily life, where paradoxes and dogmatism do arise, which I then address by employing poetry, and such techniques as work for me, loosening and combining them to find a way though or a momentary stay. What keeps me writing is that I don't seem to have got anywhere near an end of such paradoxical or conflicted situations.

How does this tendency, this awareness relate to Modernism for you? I'm thinking of your poem 'Afterwards' on the death of Ezra Pound – Pound, that burning contradiction in the heart of Modernism, and we've already mentioned him here, inescapably. A good deal of the current poetry that jumps up here and there seems written in simple ignorance of it, not even contentiously, just blank unawareness.

'Burning contradiction' perfectly catches my sense of Pound, and the question remains how someone who could have written such a trilogy as 'Cathay', 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' and 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley', alongside many perfect individual performances, who had such a good ear for a cadence and such an inventive way with linguistic possibilities, should have been so dreadfully deaf when it came to his own times. I was taught by David Moody at York in the early 1970s and so came into contact with the Pound revival at close quarters, having read him in T. S. Eliot's selection, plus a few anthologized Cantos, while still at school. My little elegy is a first attempt to express simultaneously an indebtedness and the need to keep a distance. Your question raises the issue of whether a contemporary poet can operate, as Larkin and many others had hoped, without

taking account of Pound and modernism. But for me there was never such a choice. I was reading Pound and Lowell before I'd even heard of Larkin. I bought *High Windows* when it came out and, though irritated by the title poem, quickly read his other books. For me there never was a choice, as I say, so I've not been inclined to make one.

And behind that question there's another, related to location and identity, that particularity of living in three countries, Japan, Italy and the UK, three cultures, and how that might relate to what Peter Riley refers to as the fixed unfixed ground in your work? In 'All Times are Local' you end the poem with 'everything everywhere equally here /in world's present tenses.' How does that play out in your poetry?

Those lines sound like the expression of a utopian ideal associated in my mind with simultaneity in Cubist poetics, Apollinaire's 'Zone' for instance, which I took a great interest in when starting out – despite Pierre Reverdy's saying in later life there was no such thing as Cubist poetry. My poem's title comes from what it says on long-distance flight booking schedules, and is associated with jet-lag and how to get over it. In the poem it's also connected with the way the railways established, for timetabling purposes, that it would be the same time in different parts of the country. Nowadays we encounter this issue every time we have a video-call with a different time zone. Its relation to the kind of poem I've been able to write, their attempting to stand securely on unfixed ground, if I understand what Peter was saying, is that my ideal would be to combine the immediacy of individual perception in a lyric with consciousness of what's happening elsewhere, a consciousness that might also be represented in a lyric's space. But bringing those two together in a lyric will likely produce such unfixed fixes, which would then engage whatever techniques I can call on by way of response. But my readings in modernism have prompted a caution regarding the short-cut of bricolage or collage, which can only too easily, at least to my ear, descend into arbitrary play.

And do you think for instance, that anyone could write a poem like 'After Bansui', without having lived in Japan? What has that experience given you? Or, to take another example, the poem 'Return to Sendai', with its paradoxical, 'we've been exiled from our exile'. Does the location somehow write itself for you, with all its pleasures and questions? And is there a similar experience underway in poetry about Europe too – for instance in 'Ravishing Europa', with its conclusion, 'it's like we're in the arms of Europe /with Europe in my arms'? And this despite the liars, the myths and bickering you refer to in the poem.

It's unlikely anyone could have written 'After Bansui' if they hadn't lived in Sendai, I'd say, never mind Japan. I bet there are millions of Japanese people who don't know who he is, but there's a street named after their local poet in the city, and a reconstruction of his house which I used to pass almost every day. Living in Japan for eighteen years, quite unexpectedly, taught me how to be a foreigner critically respectful of my hosts' culture. It taught me how to view European culture as that of an intimately complex family, and how to enjoy the company of the Americans I encountered there, to appreciate their English, I mean, and to live with how they viewed Britain and the British. It opened me up to a whole world of differences and obliged me to adjust innumerable assumptions and expectations. I'm not sure what you might mean by a location writing itself, but what I did try to do in Japan, and Italy, and everywhere else for that matter, is not to view things with my cultural assumptions unquestioned, but rather to build in

the viewpoint from which the difference is being registered, and at the same time to avoid the idea that I was somehow a travel poet explaining things with the assumptions and prejudices of a home audience in mind. All that had to be avoided like the plague. So I've tried to write poems that establish the terms of their own occasions and include a critically understood view of the lyrical viewpoint among the terms being established. Having learnt such things when writing in Japan, I naturally imported it to writing in and about Europe, as in the 'Ravishing Europa' poem when casting my Italian wife in the role of 'Europe' for the purposes of those final lines.

Looking at, say, 'The Truth in New York' then 'The Further Losses' or 'The Revenants' and perhaps 'Manifestos for a Lost Cause', how would you describe the range or repertoire of your work in Return to Sendai, and what might have prompted it?

Those poems were written fairly close together: 'The Truth in New York' is dated 3 March 2017, the day I sketched it out in a little hotel on the corner of Washington Square in Greenwich Village. 'The Further Losses' was assembled over a longer period, but first published in *Ravishing Europa*, so the pieces will have been written during the previous three years. 'The Revenants' was inspired by meeting an old friend after many years of lost contact, and that occurred on 20 March 2019, while 'Manifestos for a Lost Cause' was evidently written about and during the lockdowns of 2020, so it looks like those poems were composed within the space of three or four years at most. Perhaps the range and repertoire that you notice comes from the fact that they're occasioned by different kinds of experience: some of it immediate and a result of multiple shocks, cultural and political, as in the New York poem; some of it compacting from related materials experienced on various occasions at separate times, as in the different losses of that sequence; or in a meeting that conjures years of memory for two people renewing a friendship; or the strangely shared experience of a completely unexpected, and unexpectedly solitary 'social distancing'. Each of my poems has to find a form and voicing that feels appropriate to its occasion, and my interest in and love for a great many kinds of poetry means I'm always hoping to be able to extend, however little, the scope of what I can do.

Am I right in thinking Return to Sendai is not organised chronologically?

The book was assembled as a response to a publishing situation that had emerged around five years ago. I had done a *Collected Poems* with Tony Frazer at Shearsman in 2017, and then came an unexpected flood of writing published in small press editions prompted in large part by the political and medical crises through which we were living: *Ravishing Europa* (2019), *Bonjour Mr Inshaw* (2020), and *Retrieved Attachments* (2023), and there are two further collections, one entitled *Blind Summits* scheduled for 2027 and another in progress. The idea was to gather up some of these recent poems in sections, adding in illustrative earlier ones from the *Collected* to show where, as it were, these had come from. The title derives from the fact that in the spring and early summer of 2017 I returned to Japan for four months and wrote a set of seventeen poems, including the title piece, about the experience. I also published with Isobar Press in Tokyo a bilingual English and Japanese collection, the translations by Miki Iwata, from my eighteen years living in the country. The new book's theme of encountering places and then returning to them, including returns home after periods away, emerged in that fashion: so, no, *Return to Sendai* is not organised chronologically, but the

individual sections, for the most part, are organised thus, providing a sense of development in a series of arrivals and departures.

But I wonder, Peter, if that experience and rhythm of arriving at and departing from another familiar place is also a version of mortality itself? Or is that an unaskable question?

Not at all, and it immediately made me think of the last poem in the book, the one entitled 'Speedwell' prompted by seeing stretches of that blue flower from a taxi on the way from Linate airport, Milan, and associating that experience of arrival after a long English winter with the sudden death of my mother-in-law's youngest brother, to which the situation in Ukraine became inextricably entangled. So there's an arrival, a departure, and mortality for you in a single lyric. For various reasons I'm inclined to think – and must resist the thought – that if it can, the worst will happen; so, yes, departures in particular have mortality associated with them, and I can't help wondering how Derek Mahon's poem 'Everything Is Going To Be All Right' uses its form so un-complacently to reassure. I've even found myself reading it once as the plane I was in accelerated down the runway for take-off.

So is the language using you, as W. S. Graham would put it? And would it be fair to say one change is that your poetry has become more explicitly political with time?

Graham's right that the language is using us all, as how could it not, but then, of course, it only gets to use us because we persist in using it. One of the things this implies, for me, is that we don't master language. Writing poetry doesn't get any easier with practice. If anything, it gets more difficult, because there are so many more things to take account of when you try to write it. And, yes, the poems did become more explicitly political over those same years, but politics had always been there, as appears in very early ones like 'The Benefit Forms' and 'Going Out to Vote' (though neither of these are in the selection we're discussing). But thinking about those early ones, I notice that they are inspired by what you might call a general political atmosphere or condition of society and culture, while the recent poems are both angered and baffled by what look from my perspective like specific mistakes and misjudgements, whether by our leaders or ourselves, and the poems are directly exercised by the specific decisions and how they impact on whole ranges of individual, historical, and transnational experience. I do feel that the moment of near daily madness in parliament and tumbling rota of prime ministers has now thankfully passed, though not that we have escaped from its consequences, if we ever will. What I mean is that I don't currently feel the troubled exasperation that was prompting words from me so intensively over those five or six years after June 2016.

Is the range or repertoire a matter of writing from more than fifty years gathered in Return to Sendai, or are other considerations at play? Were you aware of such changes and developments at the time or is it a matter of discovery afterwards?

There have been many changes, but perhaps only one of them produced by a conscious decision. This occurred during 1978 and was ramified through 1979 when I concluded that my attempts to write poems in a mildly discontinuous style inspired by following the work of poets who emerged in the 1960s had run out of road, and was as good as preventing me from addressing directly a great deal of

haunting material that needed exorcising. It was a subtle shift, in reality, from foregrounding the formality of the style to foregrounding the topic, theme, or occasion of the materials and then adapting a less attention-demanding style to each specific matter that needed addressing. Since then, evolutions have been prompted, I would say, by changes of situation: by living in Japan, spending months in Italy, and days in England for eighteen years; then by returning to live and work in Reading (UK) which has now continued for longer than the Japanese years; and then by the disturbance caused in me and in the body politic by the Brexit referendum, the pandemic, and the sense of being dragged back into a divided world that bears some resemblances to the Cold War era of my first near forty years. These later changes are processes that tended to happen to the poetry by no means entirely consciously. However, I have monitored them as they were emerging, rather than by acts of retrospective evaluation, because there's the issue of not repeating myself and yet also writing in ways recognisably mine.

One thing that has always struck me in your poetry, recognisably Peter Robinson, as it were, is the degree of referentiality and an emphasis on the given situation which is explored in the poem with no rush towards a conclusion or explanation. Adam Piette has commented on this: 'each poem an astonishingly fine-tuned gauge for the pressures and processes that generate lived occasions.' Would you say this capacity - it's more than a feature - tells us something of your understanding of what poetry is about and can do?

This is an especially interesting question to me. Of the very earliest poems of mine in print it is by no means clear that this was going to be so defining a way of going about composing a poem. It's not the case for 'Worlds Apart', for instance, which is almost completely invented from a photograph of and odd snippets of information about my paternal grandfather. The very earliest - included in *Return to Sendai* - is that little elegy for Pound written in early 1973 when I was twenty. It has a background prompt from the poet's death, of course, but doesn't derive from a single lived occasion. 'A Homage', from November 1975, refers to Salford, my birthplace, but again has no single lived occasion from which it arises. 'Overdrawn Account' and 'Autobiography', from autumn 1976, do have occasions, but the former condenses a number of experiences to give the appearance of a single one, while the latter evokes a single occasion but then mildly fictionalises it to bring out its significance. Here we seem to have an intermittent tendency, as it were, but little or no theoretical self-awareness. In 1981, while a temporary lecturer in Aberystwyth, I found a second-hand copy of Montale's *Le occasioni*, which a student had got rid of after annotating some of the vocabulary in pencil. This is a classic volume that Sereni reviewed when it came out in 1939, and it indelibly influenced the development of his poetry. From there I began to take note of this 'occasionality' as a way of writing, and took heart from Goethe's saying that all his poetry is occasional in that it has 'grund und boden'. Perhaps this tendency in finding inspiration is connected to the problem of telling the truth in poetry, because telling the truth depends on who is speaking in what context, why, and what for; so in order to even approach to telling the truth - in lyric poems, that is - it would be necessary to evoke a speech situation and to give a sense of why what is being said arises, where it comes from, and what it's attempting to do by being said. That's perhaps something of how a tendency turned into a self-awareness. I recall, for instance, someone saying of my poems that I must know what deictics are since I use them so much; though, at that point in the late eighties, I had never before heard the technical word for them. Now I feel rather pleased and liberated when a poem arises without an occasion, as in

the as-yet-uncollected 'The Resort', which is a response to reading about Rosemary Tonks's life in Bournemouth after she gave up writing; yet even that creates a feeling of occasion from my experience of such English south coast seaside towns.

Fifty-one years of work. Congratulations, poet. Do you feel you had much choice in all that?

A very stimulating question, this: I've been helped to think about 'choice' recently by trying to understand the fact that Spinoza was a determinist, but also believed that the ideal form of government would be a secular democratic republic, because it would provide, within limits, the least constraining conditions for people to be allowed to develop into what they couldn't help but be or become. Also, being a determined creature, for Spinoza, doesn't mean having no decision-making power, it rather means that no decision you can ever make is unconditioned by the circumstances in which you are compelled to make it. So do I feel I had much choice? Writing is an inescapably intentional act. Poems cannot be written by accident. But the kinds of poems you come to write are conditioned by, for instance, your native language and the age into which you come to consciousness. Being born into an English-speaking family in the north-west of England in the early 1950s meant that I was slightly too young for the great cultural explosion of the 1960s, but I benefitted greatly from it, and I have continued to write poetry into a situation now that hardly resembles it at all. Which brings us back to those deaths with which we began. So the answer to your question must be that I did exercise some choice in choosing to attempt to write particular poems on the basis of an understanding of what poetry could be when I started out, and choice was certainly exercised in how I revised them, and what I attempted to publish. However, at that point, not only the determining conditions that made me who it was who made those choices, but the determining conditions of that writing's reception come into play. My archive contains a great deal of evidence for how individual poems were rejected by magazines, books were not taken by publishers, projects were completed but never even submitted for rejection. I have a very full negative-CV, as I believe such documents are called. It's probably a mistake, though, to think that this material only says something about me. It might characterise quite a lot about the times through which I lived and the conditions for what publicly visible achievements were possible - at which point it feels only right to thank Marc Vincenz, the editor at MadHat Press in Cheshire, Massachusetts, for taking on *Return to Sendai: New & Selected Poems 1973-2024* and making it available for readers all over the world.

Then let me add my thanks as well, Peter, not least because Return to Sendai has prompted this conversation. And thank you too.

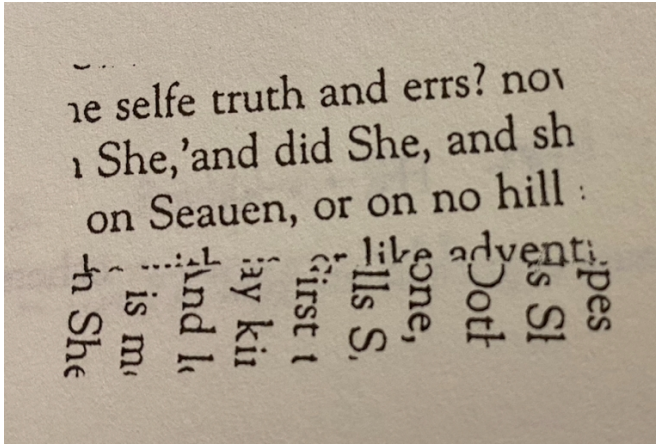
W. Scott Howard

“breaking waves / wings extended”: Susan Howe’s Collage Poems, Watercolors, and Nested Soundscapes (since 1970)

“Of course, libraries are landscapes too. They’re oceanic, but I also think of them as parklike spaces.” (Elizabeth Willis, interview with Susan Howe, 2025)

“[S]till depths of the mighty forest thank you love of the sea under whose breaking waves // Enjambment tipped in with wings extended” (Susan Howe, *Penitential Cries*, 10)

In her 2025 conversation with Elizabeth Willis, Susan Howe underscores a theme at the heart of her poetics since at least 1970: vital intersections among libraries, forests, landscapes, and oceans. Libraries embody forests as breaking waves, which Howe’s collage poems limn as watercolors of nested soundscapes. In their discussion of Howe’s collages gathered in the “Sterling Park in the Dark” section of *Penitential Cries* (NDP, 2025), Willis invokes this poem from page 42, saying that it lives “in the landscape of the actual page.”



Howe reflects: “most people consider these poems as collages or cut-ups or something, but to me, they just *are* [...] it’s like a watercolor. It’s an accident. In ‘Sterling Park in the Dark’, each page is its own little epiphany. When you’re making a watercolor—at least when I was making watercolors, and I don’t know why I stopped making them—you make a wash and the whole thing looks like an accident. You can ruin it in a minute. It needs a certain transparency knocking against another.” Their conversation then turns to Howe’s training in the visual arts at the Boston Museum School in the late 1950s, her friendship with Joan Jonas, her early watercolor paintings, and how she and Jonas “both have a love of certain austere landscapes by the North Atlantic Ocean.”

Howe shares with Willis vivid memories from those years, her love of painting *en plein air* while on trips to Ireland, “trying to grasp the cloud changes and the turf, and all the blazing colors constantly shifting.” During one of those visits, she went to Achill Island to paint at the ‘deserted’ village on the southern slopes of Mount Slievemore; echoes from that haunted soundscape inform “The Deserted Shell” section in *Penitential Cries*. Howe recalls these details from that uncanny visit to

the Deserted Village: “There was no one else around. I had just set up my canvas when I was shoved from behind and fell down. I felt I had to get out of there, and I did. It was haunted. One of the legends about it is all the inhabitants left in one night during the famine.” And that memory sparks Howe’s subsequent reflection that amplifies these deep resonances for her among libraries, landscapes, soundscapes, oceans, and watercolors: “I like to have all these ghosts speaking to each other. Of course, libraries are landscapes too. They’re oceanic, but I also think of them as parklike spaces.”

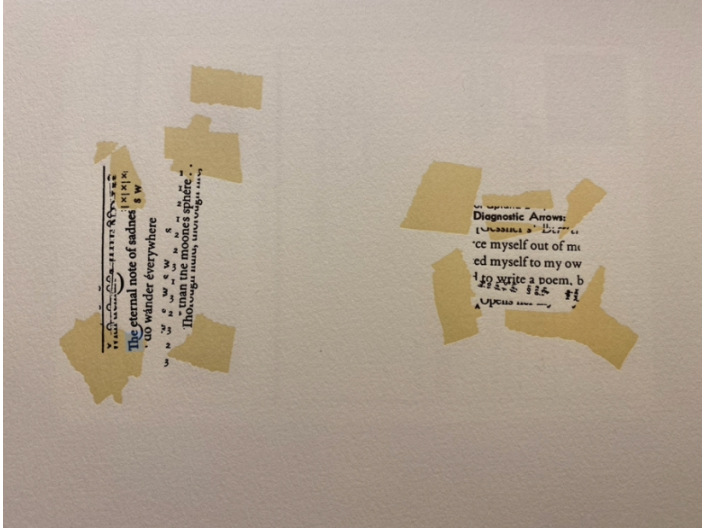
There are numerous kindred passages in *Penitential Cries*, including talismanic phrases that invoke the symbolic powers of forests, “branches and brilliance” (10), “breaking waves,” and enjambments “tipped in with wings extended” (10) in Howe’s nested collages: “[S]till depths of the mighty forest thank you love of the sea under whose breaking waves // Enjambment tipped in with wings extended” (10). Earlier in her conversation with Willis (just before their discussion of the poem on page 42 noted above), Howe compares enjambment to “a kind of collage”—that is, breaking “off the sentence and start[ing] on another line” which “is the greatest part of poetry in a way.”

Compared with her recent volumes that have included sequences of collage poems (*Souls of the Labadie Tract*, *THAT THIS*, *Spontaneous Particulars*, *Debths*, and *Concordance*), *Penitential Cries* introduces a distinctive gesture that frames Howe’s nested inter-/intra-textual stichomancy in a new way. *Souls of the Labadie Tract* (NDP, 2007) manifested Howe’s collage poems as embodiments of textiles (inspired by the fragment of the wedding dress of Sarah Pierpont Edwards). *THAT THIS* (NDP, 2010) and *Spontaneous Particulars* (NDP, 2014) transformed Howe’s collage poems into telepathic transcriptions (“Hannah doves”) from the diary of Hannah Edwards Wetmore. *Debths* (NDP, 2017) curated the collage poems in “TOM TIT TOT” as a gallery installation of facing pages (recalling their first public appearance in 2013 at the [Yale Union gallery](#) in Portland, OR).



And *Concordance* sequences Howe’s collage poems in baroque choral arrangements of [acousmatic architectures and synesthetic soundscapes](#) (Howard,

2023), emulating her [studio and field recordings](#) (Blue Chopsticks, 2021) with David Grubbs. Among the various multimedia transformations of Howe’s collage poems in *Concordance* since the 2019 Grenfell Press artist book edition, the 2020 trade edition from New Directions, the 2021 recordings from Blue Chopsticks, and their 2022 curated virtual installation at Galerie Barbara Thumm in Berlin (all of which are discussed in my 2023 essay noted above), Howe also collaborated with Sarah Moody for these sculptural letterpress broadside pasteups (Center for Book Arts, 2022) that adapt two pages (49 and 55, respectively) from the NDP text.



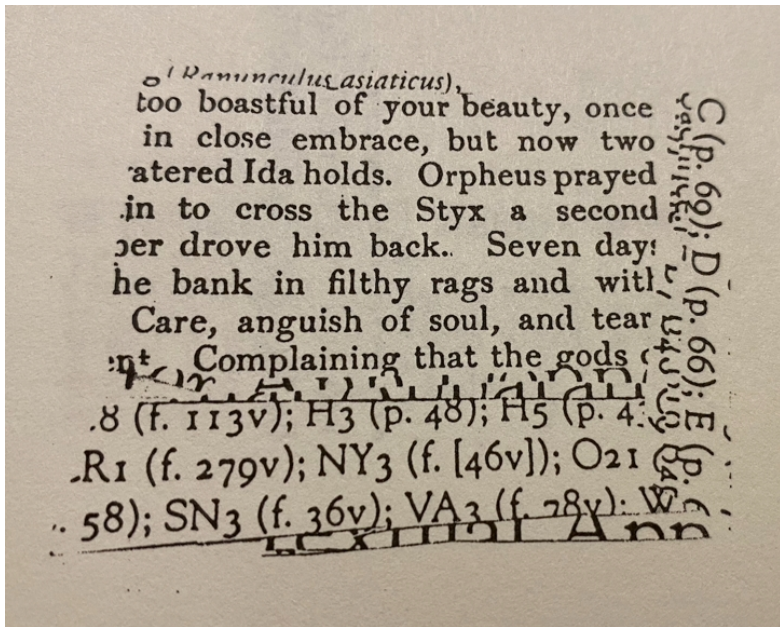
In her remarks accompanying a 2015 exhibit of her artist books at the University of Denver, Howe reflected upon some of these differentiations in her collage poems’ methods since *Souls* and *THAT THIS* (which includes the sequence of collage poems, “Frolic Architecture”):

“*TOM TIT TOI* broke my poetry, opened a new path to follow that began with the poems in *Frolic Architecture* and has been encouraged in acoustic directions while working on collaborations with the musician and composer, David Grubbs. I still felt somehow that *Frolic* was anchored-down to some material, a document or fact—to Hannah Edwards’s original text—whereas *TOM TIT TOI* tosses chance and discipline together in a more kaleidoscopic way” (Howard, [2015](#)).

In a 2021 Zoom conversation with [Grubbs and David Bernabo](#), Howe describes her methods of preparing for the 2019 Grenfell Press artist book edition of *Concordance*, assembling the collage poems via stichomancy and splicing during her visits to NYC: she would scan, print, and cut up reproduced passages from “an enormous collection of nature books from all over the world” that she found at a loft she was renting, as well as passages from scanned prints “from old Concordances [she had previously] found while roaming the stacks at [Yale’s] Sterling Library in New Haven, [... cutting] words and bits of sentences from the xerox copies, [taping] them to a page in various ways, then [running] the result through a copier again.” Howe would then continue the process with Leslie Miller, scanning her “pasteups” to prepare them for high-resolution digital images, which



Susan Howe's *Penitential Cries* takes a deep dive into the existential core of her life experience and poetic wisdom, reckoning with legacies of trauma (personal, cultural, and literary), seeking transcendence through her collection's bracing lyricism, ecstatic prose, and regenerative collage poems. In the spirit of her poetic ancestors and their resonant works (such as Shakespeare's *Tempest*, H.D.'s "Eurydice," and Hart Crane's "Voyages," among many others invoked in these pages), Howe's resilient sequential forms lead us downward, respectively, "full fifty fathoms five" (23) into the underworld that "must open like a red rose / for the dead to pass" (20), following the "Imaged Word ... that holds / Hushed willows anchored in its glow" (85). One of the collage poems from "Sterling Park in the Dark" (61) follows the Orpheus and Eurydice story through Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the turning point when they lose each other for a second time:



In their 2025 conversation, Willis comments upon this poem: “in the midst of ‘Sterling Park in the Dark’, there’s a page that includes Orpheus and the River Styx, and across from it, we have the image of a sailboat with the one-word sentence ‘EXIT’. It seems like the allegorical world of childhood has come all the way round. And the absent father, who comes into many of [Howe’s] poems, including this one, instead of being away at war, now he’s on the other side of the River.”

This is Howe’s fifteenth book from New Directions (since *The Nonconformist’s Memoria*, 1993) following kindred volumes (most recently *Concordance*, 2020) that combine hybrid sequences of historical contexts, lyrical poetry, visionary prose, and inter-/intra-textual collage poems. Howe arranges *Penitential Cries* into four parts (“Penitential Cries,” “Sterling Park in the Dark,” “The Deserted Shelf,” and “Chipping Sparrow”) the first and third of which combine poetry and prose. “Penitential Cries” (the book’s first section) opens with an untitled poem followed by four hybrid sequences: “Widows and Pariahs 1,” “Widows and Pariahs 2,” “Widows and Pariahs 3,” and “Experience.” “The Deserted Shelf” (the third section) opens with an untitled prose poem followed by an “Epilogue.” “Sterling Park in the Dark” presents a sequence of forty-eight collage poems/stichomantic nests; and “Chipping Sparrow” (dedicated to Fanny Howe) includes three pages of meditative poetry (in the spirit of the volume’s grounding in early modern devotional verse, such as that of Sir Thomas Wyatt, whose sonnets inform at least three of the book’s collage poems (52, 53, 54) as well as Howe’s reflections upon her work in this volume: “My galley, charged with forgetfulness, / through sharp seas in winter nights doth pass”). The book also includes three images: the front cover’s vivid adaptation of a foreboding image from Emily Dickinson’s 1859 letter to Susan Gilbert Dickinson; a black and white photograph of a sailboat (in the midst of the collage poems); and a devotional image/text (“My Book and Heart / Must never part”) that concludes “Epilogue.” The volume also includes the

publisher's page, which notes that "Widows and Pariahs 2" was previously published (appearing in *The Paris Review*), and concludes with "End Notes" that lists the previous publication of portions of "Sterling Park in the Dark" in *Bricks from the Kiln* vol. 7 (2024) and documents many of the numerous contextual materials (historical and literary) that shape Howe's research and creative/critical methods throughout the book. (In that regard, dedicated readers will recognize the familiar co-presence of many of Howe's kindred spirits, such as Jean Cocteau, H.D., Wallace Stevens, Sarah Pierpont Edwards, John Donne, and Emily Dickinson (among others) alongside the co-presence of several historical and/or literary figures specific to this volume (Marguerite Porete, Catherine Sloper, Alvin Lucier, Lady Honoria Dedlock, Mary of Clopas, and William Blake (among others).

Penitential Cries (96 pages) is a more compact volume compared with *THAT THIS* (2010), *Debths* (2017), and *Concordance* (2020), although not as brief as *Spontaneous Particulars* (2014, 79 pages); Howe's distillation of lyrical sequences, prose poems, and inter-/intra-textual palimpsests in this new volume emulates the work's deep dive (*katabasis*) over "the brink of afterlife or nothing" (9) "even if we are dead and even if there is nothing in the tomb" (24). In the spirit of *Debths*, Howe listens closely to messages from the other side(s) of the tomb, acousmatically "transmitting chthonic echo-signals" (11) that she collages into prose poem sequences in *Penitential Cries* inflected and illuminated by spontaneous telepathic particulars "scattering stars across a field running parallel with eternity the truth of quietness before birth of the world we need to run across to ask if nomen has other omens when each lost letter speaks for itself" (16). Compared with Howe's NDP volumes since *Souls of the Labadie Tract* (2007), for example, in this new collection Howe turns her chthonic echo-signal stethoscope more closely upon herself than ever before, documenting her daily bouts with tachycardia—"Each morning rapid heartbeat. Scattered alphabet" (9)—that modulate into the more consistent measures of her "still beating heart tell all" (11) and her "Heart pictograph little frills" (25), which (in one memorable line) transpose the echocardiogram's visualization into the variable music of her palpitations tuning from pitch to pitch: "Mitral tremolo sliding glissandi chaff" (25). In several instances such as this, Howe abruptly undercuts her lyrical resonance ("glissandi chaff") with a widow-pariah's acerbic riposte: "There remains a root of bitterness in the best hypocrites" (10); "I have wept away all my brain" (11); "Body as empty shell ... *whishth* chipping" (90 - 91). Another sarcastic refrain running through this collection concerns Howe's frustrations with the health care system: "Don't worry. You have met your deductible and can check in at one of our Welcome Kiosks before headlong drop to earth whether gold or no" (12); "I didn't see a memory test for octogenarian pariahs coming and yes I admit the fact that I failed this first one is a bad sign but if only you had asked me to repeat 'unanswered perilous, question' after counting down from 47 backward in increments of seven" (16). Howe's playfulness transforms these grim reflections upon her own vulnerability into conversational humor.

Penitential Cries is also a book of dreamwork through which Howe communicates with her former husband, David von Schlegell (11); her mother, Mary Manning Howe Adams (23); and her father, Mark De Wolfe Howe (79) in addition to connecting telepathically with several kindred literary ancestors and Christian mystics (as noted above), especially H.D. and Eurydice (12, 18, 19, 20, 61, 83), Marguerite Porete (15), Sarah Pierpont Edwards (18), John Donne (20, 22), Mary of Clopas (84), and Hart Crane (85) among others. Howe's keen

interests here concerning H.D.'s "Eurydice" circle back to 2023, when she contributed to a performance of Alvin Lucier's "[So You ... \(Hermes, Orpheus, Eurydice\)](#)" with Anthony Burr, Charles Curtis, and Jessika Kenney on March 11 at Amant in Brooklyn. Earlier that year, Howe's longstanding devotion to the writings of Sarah Pierpont Edwards was sparked anew by her colleagues at Yale (Catherine Berkus, Kenneth Minkema, and Harry Stout) who introduced her to recently encountered manuscripts from the Edwards Family archives at the Beinecke Library.

Libraries, archives, manuscripts, landscapes, and books always contribute significantly to Howe's research contexts, creative and critical methods, publications and performances, and this is certainly true for *Penitential Cries* in which the Sterling Library at Yale plays a central role for Howe's telepathic quantum quests (18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 86):

"I'm sifting for sterling particles, delight of the hunt. Sometimes afternoon sun filters through tercet bone-dust, allophonic dust, pastoral watermark teething all *here*—all about the heart. The history of the world, a heap of refuse books, captivity, moments of birth and beauty, penitence, promiscuity, etc. One wise pariah of the mystic class going under the name of Spiritual peeps through an upper tower window-sliver into the center of the Starr Reading Room far below. She has left the metaphysical field as her work is not religious. Only an empty shell" (22).

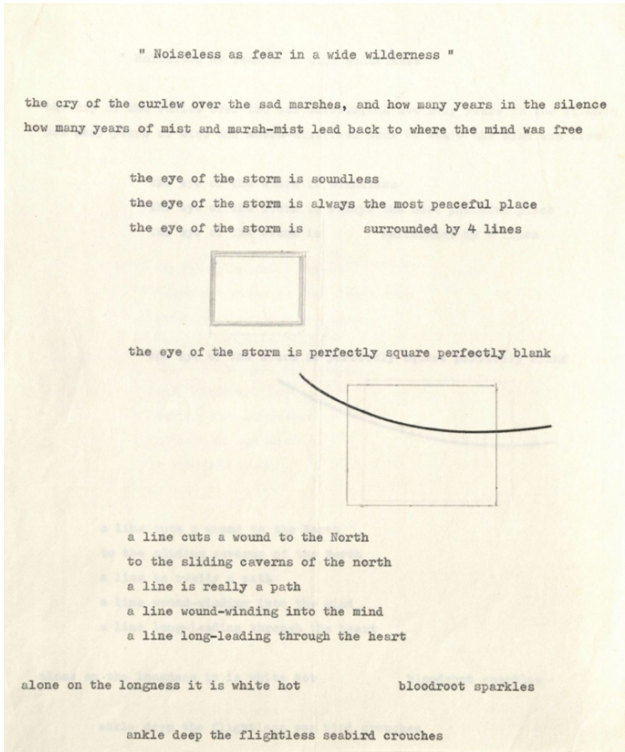
This passage in particular echoes Howe's ardent reflections in "Personal Narrative" (from *Souls of the Labadie Tract*) upon her early visits to the Sterling Library (during the 1970s and 1980s) when she "felt the spiritual and solitary freedom of an inexorable order only chance creates" and where in "Sterling's sleeping wilderness [she] felt the telepathic solicitation of innumerable phantoms" (14).

Such vital intersections among libraries, forests, landscapes, and oceans; breaking waves, collage poems, and watercolors of nested soundscapes travel across many decades for Susan Howe. In her 2025 conversation with Elizabeth Willis, Howe recounts a pivotal moment in her journey through the worlds of painting and poetry since her days at the Boston Museum School in the late 1950s:

"Over the years I always used words in my work and gradually the words became more important to me than anything else. I ended up in a workshop at St. Mark's Poetry Project with Ted Greenwald. At the time I was sharing a studio space with the painter Marcia Hafif when I was in town, and I had some of my word collages and paintings pinned up around my part of the studio. Ted came over to look at my work, and he said, 'You should take it down and put it into a book'. And that's what I did. I called that book *Hinge Picture*, after something I had seen in a show by Marcel Duchamp."

Hinge Picture (1974) was published by Maureen Owen's Telephone Books, which also published Howe's geometric, forested soundscapes in *Secret History of the Dividing Line* (1978). Some of Howe's unpublished early landscape drawings and word collages may be visited in the [Susan Howe Papers Collection](#) at the University of California, San Diego, including this acousmatic and synesthetic poem, "Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness" (from Box 6, Folder 6, c. 1970 - 72, "First Poems" and "Installations"), in which "the cry of the curlew

over the sad marshes [...] alone on the longness / bloodroot sparkles // ankle deep
the flightless seabird crouches.”



Acknowledgements: thank you beyond measure to Susan Howe, New Directions Publishing, and the University of California, San Diego for permission to include in this essay selected images from *Penitential Cries*, The Center for Book Arts, *Secret History of the Dividing Line*, and the Susan Howe Papers Collection at the Mandeville Special Collections Library (UCSD). Images from Susan Howe’s 2013 gallery installation at Yale Union are from the author’s photographs.

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Contributors' Notes

Jim Andrews has been publishing vispo.com since 1996. It is his life's work.

Jeff Bagato produces poetry and prose as well as mail art, electronic music and glitch video. His most recent books document experimental text work from the past few years, including *In the Engine Room with Bettie and Andrea Reading Pornography*, *Gonch Poems*, *Robot Speak*, and *Floral Float Flume: Flue Flit Flip*. A blog about his writing and publishing efforts can be found at jeffbagato.wordpress.com.

Angela Caporaso was born in 1962. A visual artist from Caserta (Italy), she began to take an interest in figurative arts in the eighties, exhibiting repeatedly both in Italy and abroad. Angela Caporaso's art has always been characterized by a constant research and experimentation. Since her first exhibitions she has revealed a constant strain towards new expressive languages. This constant research led Angela to contaminate sign with colour, font with image, literature with painting, as though one single medium was not sufficient to express her complex imaginative world. She has worked on the words of the main contemporary writers and has dedicated some of her exhibitions to Albert Camus, Emily Dickinson, Pier Vittorio Tondelli. Influenced by Pop Art, she has inserted in her works the typical comics "bubbles", as well as advertising references, decontextualized and transformed into a proper artistic language. She has worked with unrecyclable waste material, humble and inert, which has acquired new sense and meaning thanks to the artist's intervention.

Joel Chace has published work in print and electronic magazines such as *Lana Turner*, *Survision*, *Eratio*, *Otoliths*, *Word For/Word*, *Golden Handcuffs Review*, *New American Writing*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. *Underrated Provinces* is recently out from MadHat Books. *Bone Chapel* is coming out soon from Chax. For more than forty years, Chace was a working jazz pianist. He is an NEH Fellow.

Kelvin Corcoran lives in Greece. His first book was published in 1985 and his *Collected Poems* in 2023, drawing upon the fifteen books published subsequently. His work has been commended in the UK by the Poetry Society, the Forward Prize committee and commissioned by the Arts Council and Medicine Unboxed. It is the subject of a study edited by Andy Brown, *The Writing Occurs as Song*. Corcoran has edited an account of Lee Harwood's poetry in *Not the Full Story: Six Interviews with Lee Harwood*, 2008. He is co-editor with Robert Sheppard of the *New Collected Poems of Lee Harwood*. Corcoran's most recent publication is the libretto *Under Tainaron*, 2025. His work has been anthologised in the UK and the USA and translated into Greek.

Darren Demaree's poems have appeared, or are scheduled to appear in numerous magazines/journals, including *Hotel Amerika*, *Diode*, *North American Review*, *New Letters*, *Diagram*, and the *Colorado Review*. He is the author of twenty-three poetry collections, most recently *'So Much More'* (November 2024, Harbor Editions). He is the Editor in Chief of the *Best of the Net Anthology* and Managing Editor of *Ovenbird Poetry*. He is currently living and writing in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.

Dario Roberto Dioli studied food technology, and is a cynologist. He explores signs, senses and meanings with linear and visual poetry, asemic writing, collage and dada performance. In 2024 he published a bilingual book of poetry titled “Ciò che rimane del niente/ Ce Rāmāne din nimic” (Cosmopoli/Eikon, Bacau, Romania) and a visual chapbook titled “They are coming” (Paper view books, Leiria, Portugal). Together with his wife Zewditu under the name Legesse they joined Guido Oldani’s “Realismo terminale” poetry movement during Book City Milano 2024 and also they are the publisher Asatami Legesse Edizioni. You can find several of his contributions in Italy, the United States, France and the United Kingdom.

Mark Dow is the author of *Plain Talk Rising*. Some of his Index Card Poems appeared in *WF/W44*.

Connor Fisher is the author of *A Renaissance with Eyelids* (Schism Press, 2024), *The Isotope of 1* (Schism Press, 2021) and three poetry and hybrid chapbooks including *The Unholy Moon* (salò press, 2024). He has an MFA from the University of Colorado at Boulder and a Ph.D. in Creative Writing and English from the University of Georgia. His writing has appeared in journals including *Denver Quarterly*, *Random Sample Review*, *Tammy*, *the Colorado Review*, and *Diagram*. He currently lives and teaches in northern Mississippi.

Neil Flory is the author of *mudtrombones knotted in the spill* (Arteidolia Press, 2023). Nominated for a 2023 Pushcart Prize by *swifts & slows*, Flory’s poetry has also appeared in various other journals such as *Ink in Thirds*, *dadakuku*, *Sleet*, *Poetry Pacific*, and *The Gorko Gazette*. Beyond his literary work, he is a composer of experimental music, a college music professor, and a pianist whose enthusiasm for improvisation in live recital settings knows no bounds. He lives among the wooded hills and lakeshores of Western New York State with his wife, published poet and fiction writer Elaine Flory, and their three flamboyant cats.

A Chicago native, Carolyn Guinzio has lived in the Ozark Mountains just outside Fayetteville, Arkansas since 2002. Her eighth book is *Cameo Blue* (2026, Carnegie Mellon University Press). Earlier collections include *A Vertigo Book*, (The Word Works, 2021) winner of The Tenth Gate Prize, and *Meanwhile in Arkansas*, winner of the Quarterly West Chapbook Prize. Her website is <https://carolynguinzio.my.canva.site>

David Hadbawnik is a poet, translator, and medieval scholar. Recent books include a translation of the *Aeneid* (Shearsman, 2023); an edited volume, *Postmodern Poetry and Queer Medievalisms* (Medieval Institute Publications, 2022); and a book of poetry, *Holy Sonnets to Orpheus and Other Poems* (Delete Press, 2018). He currently lives in the Minneapolis area with his wife and son.

Richard Hanus had four kids but now just three. *Zen and Love*.

W. Scott Howard teaches in the Department of English and Literary Arts at the University of Denver, where he edits *Denver Quarterly* and *FIVES*. His books include *Archive and Artifact: Susan Howe’s Factual Telepathy* (Talisman House) and two collections of poetry, *SPINNAKERS* (The Lune) and *ROPES* (Delete Press). Scott lives in Englewood, CO, where he gardens and writes.

George Kalamaras, former Poet Laureate of Indiana (2014–2016), is the author of twenty-seven books of poetry (eighteen full-length books and nine chapbooks). One of his recent books, *To Sleep in the Horse's Belly: My Greek Poets and the Aegean Inside Me* (Dos Madres Press, 2023), received the 2024 Indiana Book Award for Poetry. He is Professor Emeritus of English at Purdue University Fort Wayne, where he taught for thirty-two years. He now lives in Livermore, Colorado.

Beth Kephart is a National Book Award finalist, the award-winning author of some forty books in multiple genres, an award-winning teacher, co-founder of Juncture Workshops, and a paper artist whose visual poetics appear in publications ranging from *Reed Magazine* and *Print digital* to (upcoming) *Indiana Review* and *Global City Review*. She is the author of the bestselling words + image substack, *The Hush and the Howl*. More at bethkephartbooks.com.

J.I. Kleinberg lives in Bellingham, Washington, USA, and on Instagram @jikleinberg. Chapbooks of her visual poems, *How to pronounce the wind* (Paper View Books) and *Desire's Authority* (Ravenna Press Triple Series No. 23), were published in 2023; a full length volume, *She needs the river* (Poem Atlas), was published in 2024. *All of we* is forthcoming from Anhinga Press.

Edward Kulemin was born in Yaroslavl, Russia. He is the organizer of various creative societies, including KEPNOS, Group of Unknown Artists, Smolensk School of Appologists, and the Association damned poets. He is the author of the books *It seems to have begun* (1994), *Odnohujstvenny Ulysses* (1995), *By the artificial way* (1998), *Multimatum* (2002), *Lowdown* (2012), and *Cash register poems* (2018). His work has been published in the 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), *Mailartpoemcs anthology* (Lublin, Poland, 2012, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/85756418/mailartpoemcsanthology>), *The Last Vispo Anthology: Visual Poetry 1998-2008* (USA, 2012, <http://www.thelastvispo.com/>), and *An Anthology of Asemic Handwriting* (USA, 2013, <http://www.uitgeverij.cc/publications/an-anthology-of-asemic-handwriting>).

Heller Levinson's most recent books are *Query Caboodle*, *Shift Gristle* (Black Widow Press, 2023), *The Abyssal Recitations* (Concrete Mist Press, 2024), *Valvular Ash* (BWP, 2024), *Query Caboodle 2* (Sulfur Editions, 2024), *Crossfall* chapbook (Sandy Press, 2024), with *Crossfall* (BWP, 2025) & *From A Reduced Philanthropy* (The Bodily Press, 2025). Anticipated for a spring 2026 release is *Flutterrudderbutterfly* (BWP). His book, *Lure* (Black Widow Press, 2022), won the "2022 Big Other Poetry Book Award."

Bill Marsh is a teacher and writer living in Chicago. His poems and essays have appeared in *After Hours*, *Allium*, *Cimarron Review*, *TIMBER*, and *The Normal School*, among other journals.

Caleb Merritt is an artist who lives and works in the Pacific Northwest. *Free Poetry Press*, *#Ranger*, *Bardics Anonymous*, and *Writers In The Attic* have generously published his poems, art, typesetting and design.

Luna Rail is a social worker, artist, and organizer living and working in Chicago. He's had images and words published in a variety of zines and journals. Notable

among these are *Coraddi Magazine*, *Alchemy*, *A Journal of Translation*, and upcoming, *Geurepunk Magazine*, July 2026. In 2017 he co founded Agitator Artists Cooperative in Chicago. He's more proud of what can be done collectively than anything he could have done alone.

Jason Ryberg is the author of twenty-two books of poetry, six screenplays, a few short stories, a box full of folders, notebooks and scraps of paper that could one day be (loosely) construed as a novel, and countless love letters (never sent). He is currently an artist-in-residence at both The Prospero Institute of Disquieted P/o/e/t/i/c/s and the Osage Arts Community, and is an editor and designer at Spartan Books. His work has appeared in *As it Ought to Be*, *Up the Staircase Quarterly*, *Thimble Literary Magazine*, *I-70 Review*, *Main Street Rag*, *The Arkansas Review* and various other journals and anthologies. His latest collection of poems is "*Bullet Holes in the Mailbox (Cigarette Burns in the Sheets)* Back of the Class Press, (2024)." He lives part-time in Kansas City, MO with a rooster named Little Red and a Billy-goat named Giuseppe, and part-time somewhere in the Ozarks, near the Gasconade River, where there are also many strange and wonderful woodland critters.

Mykyta Ryzhykh is from Ukraine, now living in Tromsø, Norway. He has been nominated for the Pushcart and Touchstone prizes. His work appears in both Ukrainian and English publications, including *Tipton Poetry Journal*, *Stone Poetry Journal*, and *Neologism Poetry Journal*. His book *Tomboy* will be published in April by Lost Telegram Press.

James Sanders is a member of the Atlanta Poets Group, a writing and performing collective. He was included in the *2016 BAX: Best American Experimental Writing* anthology. His most recent book is *Self-Portrait in Plants*. The University of New Orleans Press also recently published the group's *An Atlanta Poets Group Anthology: The Lattice Inside*. Website is <http://somejamesanders.com>.

Katie Schaag is a writer, artist, and theorist. An Assistant Professor of Theatre & Performance at Spelman College with an English PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she is the author of the ecofeminist erasure poetry chapbook *SEAL/WOMAN* (Ethel Press, 2025), the feminist erasure poetry chapbook *The Infinite Woman* (Greying Ghost, 2021), and the interactive algorithmic feminist erasure poetry web app *The Infinite Woman* (Electronic Literature Organization, 2022). Her creative writing appears in *FENCE*, *Nat. Brut*, *Yes Femmes*, *Sporklet*, *La Vague*, *Datableed*, *Requited Journal*, *Metatron*, *NightBlock*, *Guttural*, *Word For/ Word*, *Imagined Theatres*, *Vector Press*, *Rabbit Catastrophe Press*, and *Oxeye Press*. She received a Fulton County Arts & Culture Distinguished Creative Residency Fellowship at the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts & Sciences (2023), was an artist-in-residence hosted by the Academy for the Visual & Performing Arts at Texas A&M University (2024), and delivered the keynote lecture for the *Everlasting Plastics* symposium at the Cleveland Museum of Art (2023). Her conceptual script *A Plastic Theatre* was adapted as a libretto for a classical music composition by Joanna Marsh, which received its UK premiere at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (2024), its Scandinavian premiere at the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra & Opera (2024), and its Australian premiere at the Sydney Opera House (2025). She is currently working on a book of experimental scripts and scores entitled "The Moon Appears Upon the Stage and Other Conceptual Plays."

Alison Strub is a hybrid poet and visual artist who received her M.F.A. at George Mason University. Her poems have appeared in *Gigantic Sequins*, *Salt Hill*, *Hayden's Ferry Review* and other fine publications. Her chapbook, *Lillian, Fred*, was published by BOAAT Press in 2016. Her book, *Panacea*, was published in 2023 by Milk & Cake Press and her next book, *Dust Rites*, is forthcoming from Milk & Cake Press in 2026. She can be reached by telegrams and texts.