

VERSE

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POSTMODERN POETRIES

JEROME McGANN GUEST-EDITS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

POETS FROM NORTH AMERICA

AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

GLYN MAXWELL'S
'OUT OF THE RAIN'

\$4

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ABOUT THE POETS

Bruce Andrews' two most recent books of poetry are *Give Em Enough Rope* (Sun & Moon Press, 1987) and *Getting Ready to Have Been Frightened* (Roof, 1988). Sun & Moon Press will bring out *I Don't Have Any Paper So Shut Up* (or, *Social Romanticism*) in 1990.

Rae Armantrout has published three books of poems: *Extremities* (The Figures), *The Invention of Hunger* (Tuumba), and *Precedence* (Burning Deck). A fourth book, *Necromance*, is forthcoming from Sun & Moon (1990). Armantrout lives in San Diego where she teaches part-time at UCSD.

David Bromige, born in London, now lives in Sebastopol, California. Among his many books of poetry are *Tight Corners and What's Around Them* (1974), *My Poetry* (1980), and the prizewinning collection *Desire. Selected Poems 1963-1987* (1988).

Tina Darragh, born in Pittsburgh, now lives near Washington D.C. Her most recent book is *Striking Resemblances* (1989). Her other books include *my hands to myself* (1976), *Pi in the Skye* (1980), and *on the corner to off the corner* (1981). *a(gain)*²st the odds will appear in 1990.

Alan Davies lives in New York City. His most recent book is a collection of his poetical and critical writings, *Signage* (1987).

Jeff Derksen: Vancouver, B. C., Canada. *Until*, a chapbook from Tsunami editions, recent work in *Raddle Moon*, *Motel*, and *Poetics Journal*. Editor of *Writing* magazine, founding member of the Kootenay School of Writing (Vancouver).

Christopher Dewdney lives in Toronto and has published nine books of verse and prose. The most recent is *Permugenesis. A Recombinant Text* (1987).

Jessica Grim is the author of *Intrepid Hearts* (Coincidence Press, 1986) and co-editor of *Big Allis*. She lives and works in San Francisco.

Carla Harryman lives in Berkeley. She has published six books, including *Property* (1982), *Vice* (1986), and — most recently — *Animal Insincts* (1989).

Lyn Hejinian lives in northern California; she is co-editor (with Barrett Watten) of *Poetics Journal*. Her book *The Cell* will be published in 1990 by Sun & Moon Press, and her translations of a collection of poems by Arkadii Dragomoshchenko entitled *Description* will be published this winter. Her other books include *My Life*, *Writing Is an Aid to Memory*, *The Guard*, *Redo*, and *Individuals*.

Susan Howe lives in Guildford, Connecticut. Paradigm Press has just published *The Bibliography of the King's Book; or, Eikon Basilike*. Sun & Moon will publish *The Europe of Trusts* shortly, and Wesleyan U. Press will publish a book of poems in fall, 1990, *Singularities*. The most recent issue of *The Difficulties* is devoted to her writing, and *Talisman* will publish a Susan Howe issue in spring 1990.

Peter Inman lives near Washington, D.C. He has published five books of poetry, the most recent being *Red Shift* (1989).

Karen MacCormack is the author of three books, the most recent being *Quill Driver* (Nightwood Editions). Her work has appeared in magazines in North America, Australia, and England, including *Writing*, *Notus*, *Overland*, and *Archeus*. She currently lives in Toronto.

Katherine MacLeod lives in Vancouver, B.C. She is on the editorial board of *Motel Magazine*, and a member of the Koolenay School of Writing. Her work has appeared recently in *How(ever)*, *Big Allis and East of Main*, an anthology of Vancouver writing.

Jon Mack was born in North Carolina and was living most recently in West Virginia. He has published a few poems, pseudonymously, in periodicals, but most of the writing is privately printed (including *Air Heart Sermons* and *Nerves in Patterns*). The work here is from his unfinished project *Scientific Animals*.

Tom Mandel's latest book is *Four Strange Books* (Gaz: NY, 1990). Recent work has appeared in *Temblor*, *Sufur*, *Notus*, *Conjunctions*, *Tyonyi*, *Oblek*, and *Central Park*, among other magazines. *Realism* will be published by Burning Deck in the coming year.

D. S. Marriott is the publisher and editor of *Archeus*. He is the author of several books of poetry, including *Hours into Seasons*, *Strammheid*, *Floodtide*, and *Mortgages*. He lives in London.

Steve McCaffery was born in England and lives in Toronto. His most recent publications are *Evoba* (Coach House Press, Toronto) and *The Black Debt* (Nightwood Editions, London, Ont.). His critical writings were collected and published in 1986 as *North of Intention*. He is a contributing editor of *Open Letter*.

Bob Perelman's most recent book is *Captive Audience* (The Figures, 1988). He is finishing a dissertation on Pound, Stein, Joyce, and Zukofsky at UC Berkeley.

Nick Piombino, who lives in Manhattan, is a psychoanalyst. His most recent book is *Poems* (Sun & Moon Press, 1988). A collection of essays and prose, *The Boundary of Blur*, will appear shortly, also from Sun & Moon.

Tom Raworth's most recent book is *Visible Shivers* (O Books, 1989). *Eternal Sections* will soon be published by Sun & Moon Press. He lives in Cambridge, England.

Kit Robinson lives in Berkeley and has been an active member of the west coast writing scene. Among his numerous books are *Down and Back* (1978), *Riddle Road* (1982), *A Day Off* (1985), and *Windows* (1985).

Stephen Rodefer is the author of *Four Lectures* (The Figures, 1982), *Villon* by Jean Callais (Duende, 1976), and most recently *Emergency Measures* (The Figures, 1987).

Peter Seaton has published three books of poetry. His work has appeared in many magazines and anthologies. He lives in New York City.

Ron Silliman, born in Pasco, Washington, has lived and worked most of his life in the San Francisco area. Past editor of *The Socialist Review*, he is the author of many books of poetry and prose, which include various parts of his ongoing project *The Alphabet*. Most recently published, in book form, are the "L" and the "W" sections of *The Alphabet, Lit* (1987) and *What* (1988).

Larry Timewell (Bremner) is editor/publisher of TSUNAMI EDITIONS, a series of chapbooks emphasizing open-text work by (for the most part) Vancouver writers. *Ruck* represents the completed portion of a book-length project, and is dedicated to Dorothy Lusk Trujillo.

Barrett Watten is the author of *Progress* (Roof Books, 1985) and *Conduit* (Gaz, 1988) among other works. He recently participated in a conference of avant-garde poets titled "Language-Consciousness-Society" in Leningrad and is preparing a collaborative account of it with Lyn Hejinian, Ron Silliman, and Michael Davidson.

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JEROME McGANN

Equally important are the styles of difficulty one encounters in this work. One does not feel that footnotes would help. The difficulties are simpler and more fundamental, are registered at the primary level of grammatical (dis)orders. There is, as Alan Davies suggests, "a new

sentence'' at work in this work. It is grounded, at the technical level, in what sometimes arrives as a wholesale derangement of the sentences.

The title of Davies' poem refers us to another text, Ron Silliman's important analytical/historical study of modernist poetical styles, "The New Sentence". This fact is to be noted here because it underlines yet another key feature of postmodern poetics: their commitment to ideas and critical thinking. Postmodern poetics cannot be divorced from the philosophical, critical, and political prose with which they regularly orbit. Indeed, sometimes it is not possible to decide whether a particular work is "prose" or "verse", "criticism" or "poetry". Davies himself is a distinctly philosophical poet — the style of the *Tractatus* informs much of his work — but then all of these writers exhibit their own special intellectual commitments.

Is Bruce Andrews a philosophical poet? If Thomas Paine is a philosophical writer.

A proper anthology of this work would include a large body of these writers' intellectual prose. Of course it has not been possible to print such work in this issue. One can only name here a few of the more important texts which are available: Howe's *My Emily Dickinson*, Bernstein's *Content's Dream*, McCaffery's *North of Intention*, Davies' *Signage*.

"They are clearly difficult" because they put a high premium on clarity of mind and vision. Such clarity is not easy to achieve, particularly in our time, when the media of human intercourse is a feeding trough of propaganda and feeling and soap. "They are clearly difficult" because their work demands attention, attentiveness.

And they are postmodern because the light they cast falls equally upon the just and the unjust, the trivial and the consequential. The World has always tried to distinguish such things, but the distinctions dissolve in the humaneness of the ludic consciousness. What emerges are not the disneylands of illusion — those are precisely a postmodern subject — but the imagination of those places, the poetical judgement that they are what they are, that they define one of the ways we live now.

With such poetry comes "An Ethics of Anxiety", but equally an imperative to reconstruct our instruments of vision, to move through fantasy into what romanticism called "imagination". Blake spoke of cleansing the doors of perception; Shelley, of removing the veils of familiarity. In the writing represented here, however, "language" (a social eventuality) rather than "vision" (a personal experience) provides the work with its dominant metaphors and processing codes.

Constructivist in their approach, these writers regularly seek to foreground their artifices in order to dispel that "aura" of genius and consequence for which poetry too often has sold itself on those markets where none come to buy. In this sense all the writing here is language-centered, whether the work in question is "Language Writing" properly so-called (e.g., the selections from Hejninian, Bernstein, and McCaffery) or whether it is not (e.g., the selections from Howe, Bromige, or D. S. Marriott).

From a social and historical point of view, this collection aims to show certain features of the contemporary avant-garde poetry scene which are not apparent in (for example) Ron Silliman's otherwise excellent anthology *In the American Tree* (1986), or in several other good collections (for example, Bernstein's two sets of "Language Writing" selections in *Paris Review*, 1983, and in *boundary 2*, 1984; or in Douglas Messerli's *Language Poetics, An Anthology* (1987). Fine as these things are, they do not give any sense of how postmodern writing has now moved into a distinctive "second generation". Furthermore, although poetry associated with the Language Movement is almost always imagined as an event of the United States, this association is by no means accurate.

In the present case, therefore, the work of many younger writers has been included; and an effort has been made to represent some of the large body of similar writing now being produced in Canada and Great Britain. More of this work might and probably ought to have

been printed, as well as the work of poets from New Zealand and Australia who are connected to these lines of literary development. But various limitations intervened. A good look at the scene in Great Britain may be had through Andrew Crozier's and Tim Longville's anthology *A Various Art* (1987).

In 1889 Havelock Ellis wrote an essay in *The Yellow Book* which described the style of contemporary poetry as "one in which the unity of the book is decomposed to give place to the independence of the page, in which the page is decomposed to give place to the independence of the phrase, and the phrase to give place to the independence of the word". For anyone acquainted with the books and other printed formats in which *our* contemporary writing appears, Ellis's description will seem uncannily apropos.

The work in this collection is carried out under the explicit sign of what Veronica Forest-Thomson called, in her important study of 1978, *Poetic Artifice*. Not the artifices of poetic power, which Wordsworth mistakenly (if usefully) pursued, but the artifices of masque and game which we associate with Rochester, D. G. Rossetti, and Wilde; or with Dickinson, Stein, and Loy.

Like certain late nineteenth-century writers whose work they recall, these poets work a field of pitiless sympathy. No one, least of all themselves, escapes. Everything is broken down, examined, weighed out, and numbered.

The only recourse is avoidance, and of course the "difficulty" of such writing makes avoidance an easy option to choose. Failing that, one may succeed in reading this work with pain and pleasure, loss and gain. Everything is in the writing, for good and ill alike.

JEROME McGANN's books include *The Beauty of Inflections* (OUP, 1985) and *Towards a Literature of Knowledge* (OUP, 1989).

LYN HEJINIAN

OBLIVION

I can take no note of time
Some part of some light
The person of its agency, in the responsibility of
 night

Noise and oblivion neighboring
Near, but not to the objects seen — near to the
 sights themselves

Then of sounds not ears
Near to the subjects that veer
In swoon, that perfect balance of the head

Memories are most easily made in books
The many densities are dependent on all other
 surrounding densities
But only a woman could have thought it
Womanhood expressing anger and sex, then dream and
 sleep

Many times I began to write my memories, writing
 but not from memory

A support, an other — across the floor from me is
 the . . .

Overhead there is a noise

What is “there is”?

Nothing but English

The body continent which is snug or a peach

The peach teaches thuds — the thuds I might want
 to think

A punch to streets or trees — no not streets, thoughts
 — measuring air

The airs split over and over tips

Twigs are the many sounds of life

The fight in each word maintaining its thing

And out comes a bridge between justice and necessity

Ghost and jealous mother

The moon can only be seen from one side, this one

“Death is like the sun,” my friend said, “you can’t
look at it”

Between the cells of we who sublimate and come back
gaps

Rain

I am thinking so before my eyes — no, behind them
Animals don’t have names (who said they should have
names?) — their suffering is invisible

It’s reflective to be eye-catching and ascend
the precipitation

My sensitivity to light at night exacerbating
my sense of sound

We have only the sound of the crickets for self
Tapping on the sand plane sucking

Like the insect I really have no ignorance but twilight
and lunatic speed

Getting into the pale bed supported by that
balance of the head — pressure

Raises praises, praises ashes

Words are joined together in a word

The composition of the consciousness of being the self
enjoying sex

In a state as a windsock — is the eye sharp

Is the eye not an orifice belonging to eyes

They are composed between darkness and pleasure

Enjoying six — a man and a woman exceeding themselves
by half again there are three persons’ hands

A concave shadow casts

The fingers close toward the sun

I can imagine what might work to light the obvious
oblivion

A zone which is the sleep where dream remains

It fills with life just one side of it

Only the sight of her front and own feet — because
she has short memory

Humans accumulate innumerable reminders to compensate
for their short memories

And time is glamorous too somehow

Everything is real! and we live to see its brilliancy!

In mind but light — to which so much adhered

Where is the sleep which dream retains
One thinks about the money one could learn and can't
 keep silent
A science of night in utter space
But they doubt if they never thought of readers
Life shall be larger than our dreams and with
 peripheries
Little clusters of buds of a dazzling white
There was something abrupt about the close
 of a cheerful sentence
That in the room in which they all spoke together
That manner of dwelling on words
I could make modifications make idiots
And that's to make a solitude which is relentless
But now habit has come to take me in her arms and
 carry me to bed
In the morning it was I alone who loved
I analysed it, I spelled it

A person has an estranged empathy, not relinquishing
 but putting itself, on the windowsill, assessing
 (can we say so?) its condition with feelers as the
 bug there
A nightmare in a failure of oblivion, returning
The opposite of being recognized is not being
 unrecognized but being oblivious
A person wanting to be no one — with the impossibility
 of acting on its jealousy
I had a dream in which my suitcase — the bulletproof
 one — was chained to the ceiling of a ferry and
 they wouldn't wait for me
So I was really angry — having that experience which
 always speaks of itself
In the newspaper there is contiguity between news of
 the space craft Voyager's views of Neptune and
 a public viewing of Huey Newton's body in open
 casket
Not Huey Newton's self
How solid
There was a spy intruding in my surroundings, and I
 scarcely answered when someone spoke to me

It is amorous to be seen and to be kind
So when I see a page of words I plan them
Well, if it were Russian?
Because we have a different history of significance
 our person occurs on a different scale
Her potential largeness — the bulk of a pedestrian
 and her swollen legs and feet — which she
 enlarges so as to diminish a terrifying place
The skull thickens with age
The nail pierces her head
She lives in a landscape of light around the domestic
 interiors of agoraphobes
It is Leningrad to be submerged

Let us say that it was taking place in realism
That language itself is partially so
And the self a reflexive form, receiving reassurance
 despite finitude
None of it seeming to know which direction it was
 going in
I quote Blanchot
“I’m not the center of what I don’t know”
Van Gogh
“We will become good by doing no harm? — it’s a lie!”
A person no longer so well defined
A work of art conducive to subjectivity
The specificity of a certain amount of person — 117
 pounds or 65 inches and maintaining something
 slightly below the standard temperature
After mutilation it would have lost some of it’s self’s
 discretion
Walks to the window —

Space is seductive
Having sex in a state
There’s no musc in poetry but there’s rhyme
Time — individualized, bouncing, the time is like
 life

I’ve been sleeping like something drugged
 in the dark from eleven to four
Immobile, hot, not caught, with dreams committed
There are real things to be repeated
I don’t want to move and think I’ve had enough to eat
So that was the problem, food
A table, two Russian men, and a great tough goose
We think of beauty
We lose a battle
We are very cruel

ALAN DAVIES

THE NEW SENTIENCE

You should enjoy your suffering.
Realizations come in the form of words
if not before.
Arguments weaken the facts
which in any event
never mattered, or existed.
You die as what you are.
Write bread lines. You don't test the limits
of what is by asking
the impossible of it.
Bunny haunches.
And it should go on from there
as if everything had happened.
The culture made a decision.
Mmmmm.
I am a mortal verb.
I am asking you, quietly, for you.
It's nice
to see a face.
Maybe something happens that mutes the speechless.
There's no way to recall a clarity.
Leached passions only overmake the heart.
Don't go looking for it.
The language.
This sex could be our quiet lullaby.
All we ever do is fulfill our fantasies.

By Inference,
for my closest friends

There must be at that level some instruct
ion or is it just instinct

the way the moth tries so hard and rhythm
ically to free itself from the web.

For me I just knew where the place was ev
en though I had no idea what the word mea
nt

or if in any way it could be limited.

Don't we already understand the sides of
the driveway?

You're forced to assume a persona in your
job. Which part of it writes for you? H
ow Big is it?

What did you bring it up for? Why do you
rub it in?

Almost the only thing you can discover in
that state are elements of new forms.

Literature, so boyish
really, and a little silly.

This leaf is death.
It's not nothing.
It's an illusion.
And in your case it's trapped in a thought.

TOM MANDEL

POUSSIN

1.

One must wake
to make oneself understood;
after silence so long,
a pulse still beats under
the skin.

2.

You opened eyes that saw
along with others' false
opinions common to all
that unconscious observe
life unfold a surface
of lines and colors
imitating everything under
the sun to the end
of someone's delectation.

3.

Without light nothing is visible.
Without a transparent medium
nothing is visible, and nothing
unlimited is visible either.
Without color nothing is visible.
Nothing is visible except in
the distance, and without an
instrument nothing is visible.

4.

Noble subject, of naked matter made
with no quality of artifice
strewn upon it from a worker's hand.

Destiny must conduct our placement
ornament, decor and realism;
its judgment must be everywhere.

5.

How well you knew to light the lamp,
and where the switch was on the wall

who knew how to switch off the lamp,
when to pour oil in the basin, and

illumine the room with lamplight
glow. And how much more you knew

6.

I could say too, but to enervor
my crown with strong attentions

from below, these days I don't
feel well afterwards, peering

down shamefully upon vicissitude,
when around me meritorious minds

contemporary range their valorous
and friendly Saturnian stars.

GRAY MAY NOW BUY

Master Of The Rising Sound,
improve your words; improvise
in view of the pendulum, and correct your words.

Master Of The Convex View,
do I not serve you well?
Vermilion glue hardens into an urban street.

Master of Furnace Number One
now what whom when will you burn?
Autumnal climate stuns a body, tumbling past the family marsh.

Master of The Lingering Memory
gauze thickens, you falter to a wall.
An opaque minister imagines, cruising our broken streets, the golden

vectors of its scum are rust.
A lingering veil thins; a haltering nexus went blank.

Master of The Cave Called Cement
your arms on thirsty sands were meant
to lose their bead, and dirty deeds
were meant to cower under cover of your hands.

Master of Forgottenness, Sir Honk & Shudder
(go to him Roman language, whose perfume rises from our age).

Master of Non-Barren Thought,
words are less foreign than you(r/'d) thought.

As the observers eye no more
than black car passing in tropical traffic,
so silently we enter the subconscious bar
together we drink the terror of our eyes, ungathered noises
that rend our foreign tongue.

His Phobic, Master of the Alley,
only thought is less foreign
than your words. Sometimes (did you know?) people, wild, careen.

PETER SEATON

AN ETHICS OF ANXIETY

If in the depths of a warlike people
You owe survival to wicked spirits
Warning you to seize the occasion to escape
Deadly contagion, by taking another mad rush
At the good and the bad
Words lingering heatedly within objections
To traditional sacrifice, diffuse excess,
Unconsidered immunity against everything
You say when would this desolate impulse limit
This adamant world to the scope of your assumption.

When would you write what you would read
Of the sequence of all sexes rigorously reasoned
From the secrets of great premises for what
Was a true penalty and what was far and wide
Definition inheriting but that
This is words for a fraction of a better word
Is not merely lost, it's bound
To the mouth blessed with a body
Administered by the nature of words determined
To be true. How else can you write
In someone's own words.

Or invest them with sublime expedients
Of abandon cautiously preventing all that stuff
That all this is fresh with
From talking and doing no harm and note that
That leaves monstrous proportions of writers
With words in the womb. And that couplets
Loose in a stanza on the ways of wars
Accept piles of letters
Heavy with accessible sounding leanings
Whose powers I may now distrust.

In order to be in the books, loved
For each letter in a word overflowing
With the problems of poems poets
See more books at the same time. They see
Parts of the world assigned to poets
Inspiring male material with a male name and
Justice of the order of power in the will
Dominating bodies in the same condition.

They imagine you've just been told
You can't be trusted, and that the world presents
Genetic intimacies no longer loved for torments
Represented in republican neglect. This plight
Of the face of the earth that you reach
Through my senses adapts the time of your life
To when wild words sigh. This forbidding evidence
Of reckless life dominates a consequence
Of projection like lust preceding a deliberation
Yielding to my next purpose which is something
Different in discoveries
Of fragmentary men put together
In an embarrassment separating the estrous
Instance from someone's sobering love.

If that's a meaning-making process that
Unbuckles English six to ten times a day
In the safety of our steel bodies ready
For excitement the people
You train to take place stop being taught.
A stand-in for the symbolic being probably
Here, complicated by saving my life,
Acquires episodic reason to leave the end
Of the past to an animation
With which people will their presence
On an atom of all places. Sometimes
When I'm writing wounded, dead,
Ambitiously deciding to be jealous
Of the way I dressed myself last night I
Become thought of in the revels and rituals
For improving links through the loveliest universals,
The kind that complete a delinquency that suits you,
The kind that rub a little unity in your dust
And radiate some essential to attention
Leniently imposing the beginning on the past.

CHRISTOPHER DEWDNEY

THE BEACH

Two figures walk along the beach who, because of their remarkable clothing, expose and withdraw themselves at the same time.

Two figures who walk along the beach because of their odd appearance give the impression of being foreign clothing.

Because of their odd appearance they give the impression of being foreign bodies on the beach.

Because they expose and withdraw themselves at a remarkable time they deprive the scene of easy comprehensibility.

Something mysterious and unfathomable deprives the scene of easy comprehensibility and thereby closes it off from the viewer in a singular way.

Something foreign deprives the man lying on his back of our gaze. He draws our unfathomable wave to his face, chest and beach.

To the left we have a man lying on his back with legs stretched high and arms tossed behind his head being washed onto the beach by a wave.

To the icons he forms something of a viewer in a singular way and thereby closes the scene being washed onto the beach.

Two bulky wooden devices float in the water.

Two bulky wooden devices float in the water.

He forms something of a barrier in front of the two women who, like icons, look as though they had been unselfconsciously captured in a photograph.

He draws the two women with legs stretched high and arms frozen in time.

THE THEATRE PARTY

The blind man blows his horn as if possessed, and grinds his organ even though there is no one who could reward his efforts.

The psychic doll grinds his horn even though they are all physical.

They are all cripples, physical or psychic, and the doll congratulates them sardonically.

They are unpretentious and without fear. Her left arm congratulates them outward.

Blue-eyed and naive, she sits in wonder and without fear, unpretentious and open, her left arm extends its palm turned outward.

Blue-eyed purpose grimly extends its palm.

They themselves seem least conscious of the purpose for which they are grimly expending their energies.

They themselves trying to climb their energies. The sailor least conscious of the stumps, a ladder by means ceiling.

The man in the sailor suit is trying to climb, by means of his arm stumps, a ladder which leads only to the ceiling where he is about to bump his head.

The man is only a masked situation, a macabre ball.

The actual situation is macabre, for the masked ball is awaited joylessly and in oppressive silence.

The actual sailor is awaited joylessly, for the head is a climb in oppressive silence.

NOTE: These two pieces are from a suite of five poems; *The Woman*, *The Beach*, *The City*, *The Theatre Party* and *The Self Portrait* utilize found material and permutations of that material. The source text was a catalogue commissioned by the *St. Louis Art Museum* for its retrospective exhibition of the works of Max Beckmann. The catalogue was written by Carla Schulz-Hoffmann and Cornelia Stabenow. In *The Beach*, *The City*, *The Theatre Party* and *The Self Portrait* source lines alternate with interference lines which are generally permutations of the adjacent source lines. The permutation lines echo the line before at the same time as they preview the line after them. This profoundly skews the semantic valences of most of the reading subsequent to the first interference line (which is the second line in these four poems).

KAREN MAC CORMACK

HAZARD

Drift. As in any activity you make it. They tried over the kitchen fire with oars and old clothes. *Going* filled by smoke. Volume, nylon, or dacron to Sioux Falls, sometimes. Very light span powered by burning leaves. Passengers. Tried duck, sheep and rooster. Any rips. We just came from. Shape of container holding languages that fall out of use. Before King and Queen webbing will not run to find different directions. Psychological from above. A Marquis at three hundred feet. Accommodated small use rotting meat. Two French paper makers with basket attached (our own artificially heightened response to real estate). Spectators where the wind goes as mail carrier, larger than per person. Propaganda will not support a flame nor the advent of a fascination. Tough and reusable. Number of available parking places in a film or television series. Addressing oneself on a return envelope. Female ascent from Lyons. *Serious* means transportation for many weather conditions cost what they are made of. The average, safe in modern familiar. Morning gone metric.

EXPORT NOTWITHSTANDING

To tip the velvet.
A cautionary saturation.
Even for the optimist in clean clothes.
Paper elderly satisfied kelp.
Sear.
Ripples a torture for those who count slowly.
Radar or not hear it comes.
Shuttle.
Event dries on the paint's downtime.
Else double dusk.
Yellow fever opposite care.
Nymph on a sampan nirvana audits til tigress.
Man over (!) the tines of a fork.
Then drink by word of mouth himself.
Saltcellar sarcasm.
All pleasure all dome.
Grindstone to wholesale exhaust.
Kennel loose jet.
Nonchalance: an esculent tedium.
Dental evasion just for a whisper.
Fretwork.
As normal goes nomad.
Leech.

D. S. MARRIOTT

LEBEN

“a theistic system . . . results as soon as the Concept (ie, absolute knowledge) is defined as an *eternal* entity that is *related* to Eternity, Eternity being *outside* of Time.”

Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of
Hegel, pp 107-108.

i

Before deaths & secular venture,
always-there, & before, the stroke
of her richness. Pallor changes in
the unclean eye (now figural):

fright in the safe
question. What flame harbours
forth? the invisible aperture
hardly so enigmatic, &, beyond
nihilation:

I know I for when
I over as if. Can a mutual term
suppose willing euphoria? A low
call in “Deptford”. Limited to frosty
touch & the conceit of token regard.
“There” she feels the warmth of
conjecture: the amiable filth
of downtown ho — so trite a
physic — silent as if geometry
were sanctified among us. You?
Scarcely alive to the hopeless
gleam of day.

Caresses & crystals in-time.
Left eternal loss echoing.
No gift strung on the immortal
string; sunset the solemn
melody.

“O my father,
leave us here.” Who wills &
restores molecular transiency?

With fear
& abhorrence we abandon
him there, with lone care of
the forwarding, “there” without
any place of semblance.

“The word “utopia” designates . . . A step
“beyond human nature . . . yet not devoid of human
characteristics” — as if humanity were a species
that admitted at the interior of its logical
space — its extension — a total rupture; as if,
in moving toward the other man, one transcended
the human. And as if the utopian were not the lot
of some accursed wandering, but rather the
clearing in which man shows himself . . .

Emmanuel Levinas, *Being and the Other*: On
Paul Celan, p 19.

Flesh risen: a tablature
outside the crisis. Her kinesis
is variant, flung forum of
& measured silence. “Can you
listen time’s denial, speech
if music?” The pure litany is
breached; the parody of
ruin.

He walks across “there”, bright
with the reach of solitude.
Whiskey water his one thing.

I follow: undeniably cut
through with pierced side.

What struck pilgrim, “what
juicy orange.”

JESSICA GRIM

From RODEWORK

2

Near a patch of astroturf the beautiful geraniums up the small cement steps, the bulbs blooming according to season. I look up to see a stranger passing. I tend to find it impossible to discover what I mean. Redundancy prognosis. Put some water under the bridge.

You remember you had wanted to write it down. Generic cartoon coach. The first transfer point's been reached. A stray drop. The elder did not know where the younger lived. A long conditioned response to summer . . . Song's soft grass generates aroma. Cloud goes behind the sun's shadow. Kite flying's art. Big fathers in distress.

A person which was given you taped on. Who's so deranged as to consider it.

Evidence, close by, of a quarrel, ongoing, which never really happened. Tenacity missing. I re-elect to belong here. Someone's got nature very near their homes. The tenderness and ambiguity come 'round. Maybe they seem to be taking turns at that.

3

It goes along alphabetically. How many people, when they read that, crouch down to see if that's the way they do it too?

Lines in her bra show fully under the beige silk blouse pulled tight. "Iron Mike's Fighting Mad." The dead heat settles, in the city the ramps are all showing and the vegetation, guiding individuals into place.

Planning picnics years in advance. Grown white women in cute sailor outfits. Think of it as in chunks.

Not a journal that tries to write its own book. I listen for a while then I stop listening, at some point. Words going loudly into the air coalesce.

The rain the only object to break the heat. The object (the “historical watering hole”) might then designate a certain, a windshield, a stone, and who knows, might hit it. The emphasis on the impact is misplaced. When I squash down my eyelids. The wait for bad reception.

Moist sun effervesces. Miniature ferries docking. In the complete darkness, pipes but not specific pipes, moans but not specific moans, a shortness of breath.

The grains of my eyes see things differently. Full to dipping in the river. Scratchiness of the air trying to work. Riding alongside me on the wing are the rivets themselves. Lateral and jugular inconsistencies.

STEPHEN RODEFER

DESIRE

There are notes still called bad bulging, all rusty iron read, like any limit we excite in stone. In the center the field sleeps well, sleeps wide, a deep structure which names foretold. The edge around rock and hill adorned the decadence.

Then crowd presented form where successive girdles hasp. Such images emanate from escarpment. There are crossings outward crossing inward tracked. Downed well the cakes truncate collection. Base cling bank ditch crisscross, shaken trembling whiteness seen below. There we find ourselves, left of poetry, slightly hindward. To the right was ordinary hardship, its ditched chassis torn mentality. Below the synergetic side of middle, naked faces stared the other side, largely disappeared. Roaming jubilant, great through the cause, means over-people bridge so that one side, then other, lodge apartments simply terminal, then let go toward mounting.

O how you made me raise my legs at stroke, and I could not wait a second to be one there. My eyes were met by the translation as they went, and the cognates were recognized. Stones were ugly scourges demanded smiting. Look at the ground you fiercely back upon. Art will not vindicate its rack. Former worlds compel to-do that wills unseemly sound to jerk in us. I am not the only one who spells this equinox. The place is so full of mothering slang, no one knows to stop to learn the language.

Sip saying somewhere between Stevenot and Reno and if you desire to be assured, remember the very heat was born in us. Demand a mote to win the dash, then pander away. For women are not here to coin, men not here to spend — this colonized, this synthetic clay.

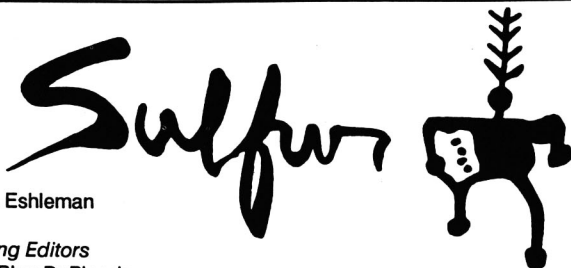
Escort rejoinder with estate and come few steps to process deed to camber. Cite convexity of part, agree to bend thereto. Turn right rigged and so on, to quit the lateral round. When parts reach yearning rescue, stop awhile and let the book of it warm. Little born things will face the scene, they go along with us.

If the texture justifies the reach, courage will subsequently review the train, ancient and likewise viewy. Then master hard come punctuate the wind, eighteened upon the moon as sequel. Queen and aspect yet retain what dopes sign and sell.

Token death saps merciless qualities men and womenward. And there with their farewells the young deceive the rest. Cycles in hip and stance pregnate their bell-like words. Middle valences voice practise like deceit. Gaze speculant meaning of that which is devoured, when feeling such alone could then be held, like the sound of undergrowth. We are across the further bank already and have its buttress for another arch, beyond the pommeling.

Crusted fascicles concret vapors nose to bottom, the fold avoidance of instant chartering. Whilst I am in an eye search, evacuated persons collect enamelled privacy. I hold one globe above the filth, another peering to alay the clerk, to yellow bathing daylight. While prominent whites of lucky term still murmur live, they beat their pates and eye dryhaired the rest, sunk in flattery. This made me to think you knew dishevelment. Are we only wrong? Or thereupon alive was age to us, stood up and little forward faced by face?

It was the hard lot thrice enamored. So cows low and bolt. Would you thank them? Not great I think. But here let view take rest which will not satirize abed. For great and ingenuous, sick and well, sight will not be stemmed or satisfied. Into desire's aggregate debris: neither moist nor rich, nor poor nor far.



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Sulfur is Antaeus with a risk. It has efficacy. It has primacy. It is one of the few magazines that is more than a receptacle of talent, actually contributing to the shape of present day literary engagement.

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— Gary Snyder

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CARLA HARRYMAN

From THE WORDS

Above the secular slide and gauzy strip we see through even babies know it is not possible to read someone's mind. The slip shutter of pressman and presswomen reaching for dots of Boltanski's thinking to turn into ink is as innocent as reading someone's mind, inspite of the spools of words floating overhead that contradict speech by turning it into objects. Boltanski says there is a dead child in each of us and the newspaper says it tomorrow. Flying babies write on spools floating above the exhibition's landscape as if they themselves were an exhibit of daydreams and what they write are the missing words that predate an artist's epiphany.

Word-laden spools exit from the museum and float over our village contradicting newsworthy statements. There is a joke that they pollute the pollution as they bounce through the ozone brought in by the city wind. Watch out has never been reported in the newspaper to have been seen dancing on a dancing spool in the sky, but when we read, we imagine the pressperson writing down words ejaculated from the fraught and frozen voices of a world as if they were the observations of a fully neutral interlocutor and we say watch out.

When we get serious like this, the nihilist laughs at us and this is why: his demon is his mode of transporation. The "Hello" painted in gold on his liver from the time of his birth was a gift from the doctor alias the father, a joker with a child living inside him. (The doctor father likes to refer to himself variously as the house of chores, the heap of sighs, and sometimes even The Great Mother). The "Hello" was a baby of sorts inside a baby, of sorts. It jumped and made the little nihilist jump for joy. Its tongue could reach his heart and his heart rolled him up and tumbled him one eve all fleecy down the hills to the swamp where the chill and shine around the misting trees opened its appetite to the Romanticized-Hell-Grabbers, who were holding a union meeting about their current unemployment. But the baby nihilist did not know what it meant to be serious. His heart jumped with fleece and shine when the "Hello" inside him licked it.

There was nothing that did not permit everybody to be in the same place at one time so everybody even those in magenta hats and buttoned suits and those of us smitten by slow sex and those of us who turned around about each other with such abandon that we thought we turned around inside each other and those of us who took notes for the newspaper and the magazine sellers and the photo of one child with the magic fatal worldly eyes, even the creep looking at the photo in front of the aspirin display, the relatives and clowns, the fidgeter and the struggler, a woman eating didactic wall-hangings at the underground market, All Done, One Chair and the Billboard Baby, All-the-Loss-That-Ever-Was, the mother fish, the scientist, and the Daily's parading their reliquaries visited the swamp on that misty moon lit eve with chill and shine hanging around the trees like open appetites. Of course, there were those of us who bunched up all bunchy and popped from contagious glee when the "Hello" licked the heart of the baby nihilist and there were those of use who respected the quiet of a meeting. Words said we could do this or even something else. But none of us had a word written in us at birth except the baby nihilist which is what makes his grown body lonely, his tongue a flame, and his mode of transportation a demon.

NICK PIOMBINO

9/20/88

The poetry of murder helped instigate the murder of poetry.

Looking for the root, I forgot the sun.

10/27/88

Specific awareness of any state of mind constitutes a kind of certainty.

Publishing writing is a dare, a way of initiating struggle at a boundary. Writing consolidates reading, reading generates a kind of vacuum, a kind of frustrated silence. Reading demands expression, writing demands reception.

10/28/88

Consciousness, that master poet, never forgets that final touch, even when the heart itself does.

10/29/88

You come to the delicate portion, which is the center of the machine. You get there by means of feeling your way there because your eyes are no good to you there. Your feelers fly in the air. You touch the delicate part with your feelings-feelers and the whole machine moves.

12/8/88

Then I realized that I myself was history going backwards — I saw the improbability of every event as wondrous in itself, and suggestive of times past and those to come.

2/8/89

False hope is the final boundary, the lonely, lovely shore of all relationships — and there is a glowing sunset of such sad times.

3/16/89

It is reasonable to conclude that it is not reasonable to conclude.

3/22/89

Poetry encourages us to say things aloud — or think them aloud — an action which tends to jog memories.

4/21/89

Beware, dear philosopher, behind the ghost of every argument is the ghost of a person come to haunt you.

Don't think of the gallows at the beach — think of the beach at the gallows.

6/19/89

The book itself is the fiction.

7/4/89

Small occurrences which are trifling in the macro world, but are momentous in the micro world. Satie: the child's march. Self-importance of those "little men."

7/14/89

The toy you can't forget is now a tyrant.

Books are having an evolution just like primates. First they have spines of their own — much later they have minds of their own.

Don't forget, the expert chiseler knows how to get you to like giving it over.

9/2/89

Being unable to wait is what brings about the embarrassing numbers. The world, via dissolution, returns with death to oppose this conception of reality, itself a victim of objectivity, which, like subjectivity, is temporary. Though I voluntarily subscribe to these conditions, I can claim this appropriation of my perceptions for the world's purposes in defining itself as an injury.

Objectivity / touch / grasp

Subjectivity / sleep / encompassment

JON MACK

VOICE OR VERSE OR WHAT

All afternoon I leave the open door
to talk you back to another masquerade of familiar
words, our riddles in this conversation poem
we are pretending

to be (seeing ourselves in some imaginary we,)
other characters in another story. I want you
(to forget our names let us make up) I want you to
make up my mind

like a face (another face for another place)
to face today. I suppose this is a poem,
but you — where is that room of coded words
(where I shall suppose

we live in parentheses some) where we are lying
together in a seance of faithless phrases and embedded
characters, betraying lust and various dangling
constructions. What

are you (where we are borne from this poem, “in here)
what are you saying? (where you at last see nothing,”
I can see your silver ring, I think I am beginning
to be afraid

From UNDER ERASURE

*I look into myself,
 only to see
Crowds in two directions pass by . . .

As if each person were unrelated
Even by a rope,
 untying her hands . . .*

In redundant history,
as a trope
Only to render them more typical . . .

*A miniature man kneels and prays
To an overwhelming tree,
a goddess . . .*

*And we imagine partners in speech
As an object,*

a text giving access . . .

33

Or an excess of heat,
by degrees
Until each word is manufactured . . .

In the hysteria each present is
Of our future,
inscribing its past . . .

As coin of the realm,
a millennium
Where you have misplaced my keys . . .

Two parallel lines meet only beyond 25,000 miles
Above ground she needs for support at 39,000 feet.
Concatenating windows over a conventional floor . . .

In an anniversary of unimaginable forward progress
To enter a world where almost no one feels at home
The rain-slicked edges they teeter on might seem.

The end of art being elliptical
By design,
its purposes fill in . . .

At the vanishing point,
attention
To mark a decision in the event . . .

He accepts ambivalence, you are entirely unsure.
Taxis discharge drunken patrons in front of bars
Where little boats float by with offerings for each . . .

An arrow protrudes from the seated man's heart.
Their hats, coats, bags fly weightlessly in air.
Sounds of gunfire like kinds of engine failure . . .

A disaster even I cannot prevent
To our advantage,
arguing each fate . . .

PETER INMAN

From DUST BOWL

F.

Thin of paper build: painting neap: nearby full of spooned barn.

Moved draper to its sandlock (something wrong with the forehead to a prose): land as taffy research.

Her real name frozen for the sake of publication: what's dented bird to Lot's wife, poised birth near: added black undertow about property: sunlight as it slows apart.

Someone enlarged "all they had was gone" over in the opening hand: optic pat: suit ceased lying outside of him, name at the quotient put too close together.

Tannery settle.

Ocean rice behind gesture.

Life pissed away in talk.

Sitting at Ford plants prohibited: 40,000 words of *The Years* written in the shape of domesticated animals: a certain expression, road spelt by.

Mice view: cost of month line reductio: inland as the sound before it passed on the street: white x's composed of hallway.

Population privilege: Hopper a few feet before what he'd managed other than the chocolate of many miles: frown barn ivories.

Foot in the bucket: rehab client started as sight dozed, leather lines leading away: color jellies prompt that: an unbroken seam of glove to turned watch.

Another speak simpler by the price of coffee.

Police riot at Flint: celled Paulist: orange paint marks capital decline: applause side, its minutes not quite right: Floyd Burroughs, the depth thought out.

Its oyster pronouncing dictionary: speag chaw: the room faced an overnight bag of large print emphasis: the wall striped into the train dispatcher's shirt.

Farming as pathology: Stein years after her prose continued: least tern: the same set face an after-ice later.

Mown curve: delve as a clock (fledge to the skin).

Long's kidney as fixed gum: bad walls denominator.

Clerk by irony: person next to a tea kettle of slowed down: statistical semitism: lengths of eyesight ink sister to wedge down: black sines.

Chapter size of mennonite: pronoun nire: paperboy woke up with part in his hair, a long sky between facial wheat: a fraction of the voice to bristle.

Two-class agriculture: ouvrierist: deem hidden about glasses, forest as all their voice.

Harlow's body in a row: traum reap: Montauk miles quiet, flesh by advance: answers where in the milk company houses over, doubled as wolf literature: etch time: "Passos fixity": Bohr worried about waves & particles.

Peasant-at-seek: words per English: daughter sided at inch medicine, turn of noise over her: a bunt at their nape in.

Temperature with iodide: looking for Abyssinia two years too late.

Skin opener hear around them.

The lean of her sing against theirs: stacks of black chapter starting at the eye: a size made of eggwhite knuckle scrip at a time.

Keg of nails, ink syrup of the Book of Judith: nuciform on the zero: where the working class ranked in the landscape: Coleman Hawkins more totally a distance: French Studies billboard, birds eating at it: light mere recall from porch, thin craning in.

Carbon divided into pulse classes.

Mole trove at Indian: staring man can't get out of the sentence before him, the minutes as difficult letters: the soda up its far brook.

RAE ARMANTROUT

MAKING IT UP

What do you call it
when men dress up
as barber poles:
a different century
or an ice-cream parlor
full of crying kids?
A father hit one and said,
“I didn’t touch you.”

So her dream is a scape, not world.

*

His bike resting against it,
a man perched on a bus stop bench
playing a wooden flute
as if making a claim
were its own reward.

Today she likes those
for whom it’s clear
how they’ve made peace
and with what.

*

As if “candlestick” accounted
for the length of the pimple —
curiously curved or carved.

Now she says that’s impossible.

Then she remarked
to her dream guests
how odd it was
for a new, natural form
to resemble a man-made one.

RETRACTION

Incongruous, you wish!

Do you think
you can put everything back
where it belongs
and impress the management
with your long memory
and good intentions?

*

Interest disguises hope.

Out the window
two junipers are twitching
back and forth in sync
behind the palm which,
I now see,
is also moving.

*

Slap-happy fronds, that kind of revision.

Now, when it makes no sense,
I'm at the center
of the dispelled universe,
"snapping to"
too often — as if there was
nothing but.

just jockey up alongside and insert your card
 the purple machine
 points to corruption higher up with a salute
 earnest, has a hobby without jurisdiction
 lapping
 malingering
 mobile for a rural news service
 a right hand keyboards your opinion
 as a Jamaica
 blind, as juke
 from the outside, a stigmatized nation
 poll, pinion
 but becomes my own vocabulary
 a prestigious volunteer position
 when "little" was mean
 hand or hip shake
 "you've seen my face
 now rent my space"
 top down
 not a trickle but a thumb
 "first class" single industry
 level of hostility
 small cap
 behooves behaviour the ethnocentrism of Neil Armstrong
 quill, qualify
 his pessimism listen utility, accumulates making
 swamped, mapped
 own time, company time
 will our spouses like each other?
 normal, sustained happens *over* time
 the example of Guatemala "I've never thought of myself
 as that kind of person"
 reply attention to
 walk naturally
 kind of country

BOB PERELMAN

NEONEW

1.

possessing
possessing that
possessing that whose
possessing that whose loss
possessing that whose loss will be avenged
possessing that whose loss will be avenged by an unbroken history stretching
backwards

1.

backwards into the body
into the body of the poor
the body of the poor Tatars
body of the poor Tatars Roman
of the poor Tatars Roman history
the poor Tatars Roman history intercalated
poor Tatars Roman history intercalated an alphabetic letter
Tatars Roman history intercalated an alphabetic letter they continue Tartars
Roman history intercalated an alphabetic letter they continue Tartars of fell
Tartarean nature to this day

1.

had arms
Attila's Huns had arms of such length they could pick up a stone without stooping
Think = Think; Print = Print.
Without stooping I use words to write

1

to define the present moment in
history seconds sired out of
bargains by squeezing any number
of dying forward sighs beggars
will drive the buildings back
popes and princes waiting in the
snow born before desire so that
rules rule by inches one unique
measured in blood accents jobs
over that french submarine I
worshipped with my fishing pole
staring happily at the glare on
top of the verbal water nymph
myth before I could say no or
layer my clothes hair plans words

1.

the only stimulus
the proper body
the canon of inspiration

delete
delete
delete

1.

entering the veins the law entering the veins
theme vs. variations

1.

“polis is eyes” “O say can you see” “police is eyes”
wrong words
heard before
said again
tip of the iceberg = the devil’s tool = the individual
a lot of prices
under the bride
a flood of meanings
finds the tongue
shoes of the self clicking hard on x number of dollars
open the cadence
and the art falls out
of the closest war
the morning of the interesting day arrived

1.

Experience has ma	de my eye learned
I feel I see the mo	dernity spread open
before me delicious	sounds from dreams
I’m asleep reflexiv	ely in — it’s here —
my immaculate	edition dizzy
with the th	rust of time
I lift m	y tongue
delightedly	from its bed
to frame the tools of the trade	older than my body attached to them
trailing crowds of nuance ever	yone wearing a coating of fact
a momentary glimpse of	sympathy and applause
Darling come	and dry me
At this point p	ower intervenes

1.

thinking of a word or gold
casting no shadow or light
fear of or hope for an unretrievable second
meaning fetishes or patterns of existence feeding into the main
where sense or money can't make new sense or old money
the roads going through or the viruses entering
the foreign country or the parents' house spreading vast falling in on the spot
immaculate ideology or spontaneous generation on the news
physically revolting pictures of the other body or the brain itself

1.

there are things you must do Captain Kirk
to save the dying world you just landed on eight minutes ago
begin by taking the air out of your thought balloon
and trusting the alien in love
not with your owl-grey irony
but with the production of public meaning

1.

at odd hours one sees
a rig of the phantom organization
ghosts in the tattered shrouds
ownership of legibility

2.

cloud upon clown wave after wane
stories of stored music here by definition
worth the egg waiting for the universe to begin
and who's going to eat

3.

their education and position may be as far apart
as heaven from earth
the writers reading
lips closed eyes open

LARY TIMEWELL

From RUCK

Reconstruction ancylicals,
superencipherment of the
snug in antebellum, one
Ophuls needed to
smartkid antidote,
discuss expenditures,
turf lurkers,
bundle negatives,
scratch horses,
and shun statistics against
“a steady backbeat of abiding concerns,”
like, say,
Reconsider Raby.

In an age of finding marks of spirit
on the surface of the lover's body, *altar*.
the object & you *alter* the desire.
Oh, grow down! my innermost after-dinner speakers,
Vull & Noid, *intacta*,
biodegradable “we”
 (“the gorgeous fever” called consciousness)
perm revs of charade revision.

Taste embraces treasury,
terrific bracken nonetheless.
Where niche = bullring, stock
exspense rechange, here

in this receptacle all our unassuaged longing become
a scented insignificance called dusk.
Conflated with nonsense, idioms do the shopping now,
from wince to tonic to cutting a swathe,
awareness of social voice rafts a pedigree,
inventing apocrypha for choiring minds.

(Nomad to Commuter, over.)

Double crux translates “authority” into “obscurity”
and out again on land, these buildings all ages
facades and functions. *Argot* and gone. The word

is out. Up. Scratch
crotch on camera. Thaw
the Swan song. Buy Chip's
microbus. See
Pat cross-dressed. Buffer no
tabloid palsy. Neither
tax no frocks nor
Save-On-Roofs.

(He wanted to do more "issue-related things"
or was it split of him?) "Rose," he said,
addressing the empty bus with imperial flair,
"the best ones have flaws."
(Pan place, reaction shot, more
blown-up details. And talling, telling
repetition of crowd scenes.)

Expecting big things from drink,
one of these days is going to be
a long time ago. All thats missing
is the laugh-track, and

believe

you
me
they

are.

Later purges. The basic
facts as footing only
matter horns of what butters guns.
Lingering breadbasket resistance
scores of I-witness switch to
unsurpassed amnesia stamina
drowsing in a local park,
sin solace.

Remember the terror-famine of Motown
45? *My Life As A Supreme* alternate lead,

(riff, rift, bereft,
 embittered, ambodied).

adhesive preglow to habitual romanticism,
low ledge of what Flo did not. Prescriptive
will misreading "married" for "married."

BUNCH-UPS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] man of ir
himself will be
him selven, OE
self see thyx, or

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ground, to

[REDACTED] or network for

[REDACTED] criminal wanted by the

[REDACTED] NET!, DRAY!

TOM RAWORTH

sharply defined periods of individualism
fade with age, as a rule
sensation is registered
expanded around me
the substrate of emotions
merely act as gatekeepers
disrupted by stress
unlike scientific instruments
gripped by hands
reversed right to left
an inhibition of the recall mechanism
caused by oxygen shortage
swamps the cortex
before we know about the external world

to improve social behaviour
according to the disposition of mind
harmony must contemplate
fairly realistic portraits
sanctuaries of colour and music
in other cubicles until all
communicate with the dead
emotionally they are cold
the capacity to concentrate deteriorates
visual efficiency, manual skill
as well as psychic components
drift in random sequence
An attempt to turn blue
suggests accomplishment

ones initial reaction is stunned unbelief
a small but well-stocked kitchen
enclosed by a barbed chainlink fence
out in the middle of the road
focussed and unfocussed
digital numbers glow
boxes of food are everywhere
surrounded by thin rings of ice
despite the heat
saffron and basil saturate the air
sprouted by the doorstep
windows painted opaque white
mottled with brown
beginning to slough off

an arrangement of prisms and triangles
otherwise neutral subjects
latent in technology
could not be rolled back
by the intersection of planes
in all their casual brightness
forms sunk to near-illegibility
at a common level as spectacle
prevent him from seeing clearly
sharp tonal contrasts
nature even in between
strange contortions
can still pick with accuracy
then fuse in a complete form

maintaining the same distance
the doctor checked him with a gesture
pointing to a circular florescent plate
on which was carved the symbol
of acceleration
during the hottest hours
every motion was untaught metre
night came, and he sent
part of his consciousness
outward through the soft soil
no houses or signs of human life
in the visual field
the world drab
black from decay

more sensitive phonecalls
since the last recorded entry
paying or giving back the money
saving a very patriotic
objective poured himself a coffee
devoid of imagination
spaced around its front
with no communication from the top
steady tone that's interesting
a persuasive argument
before he made his move
this taste of the arts
flashed fire on the horizon
one can no longer excuse or forget

DAVID BROMIGE

ROMANTIC TRACES

Just now I was looking down at these hands, wrung
by acquaintances and friends and one another dear,
whose praises, since I have never modelled them, will not be sung
any more than men and women in the time to come will admire my ear;
I know that reading words isn't exactly the same as "to see"
where "to see" means some living reality passes before the eyes
but at least now we're not operating together thoughtlessly
in a life where any intelligence is as unwelcomed as surprise.

My hands are two fair creatures, side by side
and when I clench them, make a roof
etcetera. When I was under ten I ran

everywhere. I spied
on my big sister. I was the class clown and was eyed
by the substitute teacher, a Syrian
who tried to peddle us a lid of grass
and keep me behind after school too.

When I left that place I did not bid him any fond Adieu.
Leave them all there in my past in that slumber
as of a discontinued lumber town where hands outnumber
trees. Let's discuss love.

I've had a few;
it's hard to tell a pigeon from a dove,
but still my hands ring true!

It feels as though my way has traveled far
from Europe's shore, all that outdated hierarchy!
Distance is subjective, somewhat. Take a star
if only that we're looking at the sky.
Revolutionaries are as many as these and while some have none
while I lie on my divan and count my flowers
unease assails me from inside (or is it outside) till a moan
might have been escaping me for hours
when I might elsewhere have been picking with the sweet
breezes of maybe my final spring the teeming
blossoming objects of our prosperous continent. Heat
however finds me in the study, far from dreaming.

It is time I pledged some vows,
 apart from those, that is, I've taken to the lyre,
to be as true to it as chainsaw is to boughs
 ready to make a widow the next forest fire —
and suddenly I hear I'm to be retired
 for failing to accumulate sufficient fans
 and denied a seat with the Olympians
because I sang and wrote when by democracy inspired!
Okay then, I pick up the phone and go moan, moan, moan:
 I can keep this kind of thing up for hours;
my interlocutor begins to think submission sweet
 in the twilight's last gleaming;
coming unstoppably apart in the metaphorical heat
 he pinches his throat to stop himself from screaming.

These morons don't even know the meaning of the word *fane*.

 They think it must be spelled with an *em* as in the mind
of a moron; in short, the present humanly speaking causes pain
 to be spread abroad like thistledown on the wind
that brings down less substantial verticals than trees
 and all the time the way (*Der Weg*) gets steep
and steeper. To the corporations, we are worker bees
 and a little more cunt-hair if you please Miss Sleep
and shave those armpits! The massacre of quietness
begins when one is instructed how to dress
and ends with the superego stuck up the id and in the brain
 a thing like a hand on an entity without a name
that has your number. Once behaviour shall feign
 no more then all is over; all's the same;
an end to languorous afternoons of soft delight
 when another human being was a goal to win;
all hail, Performance Principle, who brings light into night
 and decrees the offspring of the rich eternally are in!

KATHRYN MACLEOD

mouth-piece

I.

you've got that "rubber maid" look
window-envelope
twenty dollar bills cling
film ballooning
into Elvis into everlasting binge
chubby pyramid or sex
almost as good as burning buildings
what we used to do
before the food spoiled
flood dreams over decades
"get in the car dear. we're moving out"
and I was humiliated
start a brush fire that particular
accent irritated
broom on the behind
a home for special
people decades of
retirement of decency
old money anti-nazi anti-union
the anti-christ
living in a London suburb
a shallow grave and sex
in spite of heatstroke
the satisfying crunch of insects
clear collapse of capital
moving up to cigarette level
the coffee table shuddered silently
beneath tan shoes
my first time over
with a clothes hanger
almost too quick
to be a good time
a loss I never quite got over
let me explain
the accident no one carried
that much cash
a human binge unanswered
questions don't protect you
accepting history as symmetry
we miss the boat
the hole in the sky
too big to risk it

the vitamization of the western world
the children pointed out
the quack across the street
the poodle
always went for him of course
we've all been lonely
really lonely
lined up for the cash machine I dreamed of
quick relief
sex resulted in a baby
I would not call cute
neon pesticides kill
brilliantly
he has such moral weight
the power of the hoover upright
I'm unsure if I remember the exceptional
these are good questions
the joy of my money
overpowering yours
I was smart enough to buy hotels
we were quite close
no one in the home knows
she's a communist
in fantasies I'm always leaving
better accidents
we were glad we spoke American
at the border
but no one ever really understood
desire is a motive
today's horoscope predicts
false colour
accidental lightness
private racism in a polite country
controlling sadness
exhaust fumes

KIT ROBINSON

A MENTAL FINDING

The world

and all its burden of traps, dishes,
forget-me-nots, wheels, ampules,
laughter, freight, comets, deals
parentheses, batches, cloisters, fair
havens, place settings, ground cloths,
pollsters, minions, theories, lecterns,
rings, criteria, sorts, and all manner of
blistering palms

was found by the side of the road

lacking

only a local node.

Efforts to resuscitate
the dead have ended
often in a backwards
representation of the day.

The personalities, the ambience, the montage, the sound
all these graced his mind in a trice
but *what happened* — this escaped him . . .

The sky opened
on a possible life
the senses set in relief.

Bearing in mind and reversing
the immediate past has long since
become second nature, a habit
built up to the status of I.D.

I doubt it.

The strand
The bullet-proof vest
The carbon copy
All attitudes of a world I can only . .

connect the dots.

That's what I was trying to tell you.

The missing element
recedes from the point of view.
Light drains from the day —
that is the nature of evening.
The first one of summer is a metaphor
for freehand, a writing written in script.

Going away from it
the weight program
I have broken into it
broken it into pieces
about the size and shape
of blows
about the head
not about but away from
anything fits this loose place
skimming the surface
of dreams
set up during the day
collapsed at night
distanced, positioned, reduced
a May weight removed
to let June have its way with it
a delimiter totalling none
of schedules
drawn into the scheme of things
delicate, nodding, half diminished
there in the milk of a syllable
the perfect fret
caught in the forgotten sentence.

These heady plans chase sound into a bush.

Flatten the letter!

 A spoon
stirs
 shadows
 up on the time zone.
 The cymbidium
 tends
toward the grey light
 the other side
of the wall.

The other side
of my head
is your head.

You have
a hat on.
The world

barely fits
under the polar
ice cap.

I have more plans
rolled up
in an attic locker

than you can
shake rattle and
stick to the subject:

a speech that wavers,
a language
that takes hold.

The president never explicitly authorizes covert action but
signals his approval by means of a mental finding. The public
never officially acknowledges this betrayal but indicates its
mortification by way of a spiritual loss. The person never
actually notices the repetitious layering of experience but
circles the planet with a red pencil to convey "error."

The date

June 4, 1989

Remember the Beijing Massacre

&

Long Live the Students

The way the world has
of reversal

The power of absorption
The power of brutal repression
(rewrite this later)
Scared teenagers with automatic weapons

The jagged edges are smoothed over
to proffer a picture

when rhetoric fills the news

The world picture source has fashioned another banter
The forgotten palaver of indigents creases the air
Lines roll down the cathode ray cheek of the party chairman
Picture a less complicated version of this unwitting career

The weather station
The golf cart
The maze

A man sings
what he has been singing for 20 years

what
have
you
been

dreaming
lately

building
the
body
out

of
effort
takes
the

mind
off
the
hook

this
world
comprises
an

assemblage
of
brief
sessions

there
is
no
other

but

it

is

incomplete

BRUCE ANDREWS

“FACTS ARE STUPID THINGS”

Heart's tackle pulse
shears shapeless
 digest enflamed voluntaries
 whet on tumble force from here
to already here cuts off
 circumstances, less inside
 come off it insist which
 clone is original night
 eyelets steeping the cheeks.
Synchronativity
 servo-machinists
melody —
feedback with good manners
 contempt
breeds repetition. Buffer books booth
 blush volley body levied
copy mouth's
 kindle at suggest what retracts is due.
Pencil up wrongs
 a little filler on the whole
 top full foaled
 anatomy venom to pardon part
 by teeth spider in a spoon,
pygmy gum chastising
 underprop too clean for edges.
The yielded set — hold that lapse!
Hum span the contrivance
tilts, bulldozes
 change the unacquainted
 lips counterfeit module bias
 gives head to cull
 froth ribs = malice. Pluto
 relented vaunt
 doll blot bated
befits seeming assonance & hardness
 administer hips
 in serving plates extend
 to palm the skim escort layers.
Repair interrupts, keeps habits
from disinterested overrefinementals — practice your peaches.
Smack or no motion
impulse resolution clutters on the spot, titles

from coops requital
 pledged in with expedient to pause — sorry,
 mink; have is have unthread
 the eye, the deserved of all observed;
 a page of clouts
 too respective in undeterred differences.
 Seizure do your scrub
 this morning out of the day
 half-blown to adulterate
 autocracy's body conjointly bed your deeds —
 soft petitions
 mousing the shorts
 off multi-tempered
 minute of truth rank in spate,
 & decision creates
 allowance underwrought
 & overmined. Issue vibrate
 mess & catechize
 pineal blots
 innocence smells consent-like
 even almost
 assurance betrothed
 eat anonymous part poison
 accoutrement to cull
 the perves of best unblotting.
 Secret clip conceit
 understands immediate leisure
 to outface fragment quantity
 gauze toys
 scope instance unvex
 aphid mark sociably
 sinewed sign
 farms the word
 squeak on banquet.
 Teach us some rude.
 Lineal
 scathe rated
 wax, forerunner
 of cavity spurns restraint
 for compulsion
 coil covet
 bitters bright sheath publishing
 to this hand to souse
 & swoop. Dishabit
 backslid genealogy
 safe to reverse beckon pre-op
 floor pays for knuckles
 endommagement
 plotted sashay
 haste occasion stuns

the will, diapers the pill open to urge
a certain amount of tangling up
into things pin broke

sex hush con-
verts discarded puns to brief the womb.

Fake precedent, recharge shocks.

Flatter soothes up incite

to suggest tame

to task thick-ribbed

goosebumps appetited tooth. Gap

galls, gall gaps.

Check the whirl warrant

stains usurping down

cheeks clear to pour

speed in the flattering

tablet the brief

rights & the abstract compels.

Closer jacket. Brace made tense —

unyoke's pencil guilt

smeared the manage of my heart sponges

your medicine of my economy

to speed out sparks.

STEVE McCAFFERY

A bridge is the passage between two banks. On Saturdays both banks are closed. A well is located in a wall of sound but space is not the stake where suddenly both travellers fall in. Now draw a line between some water and their eyes. Express it as the border of a reservoir. The term ears stands ready to attack. Attach it then repeat this phrase. When the next follows not no light ensueth from but in the same begin again. The nose with this noise invents a scale. The cottage is attempts and tries to break at random from at noon a forest hidden by a single tree. Narrative becomes sporadic or clairvoyant in a place where bed becomes the meaning of the rest. Now say embrace me. Motors trivialize. Eighty six windows show the noun to be a house. The known is now a mark that falls across and leaves a perfect number. Forget the thirds in this and the silhouettes change place. You can no longer make a choice. You start at zero by the word called church in the forest by a beach beyond the sea between a fingernail the moment logic begins. This future ensures you a geometry. Basic liquids add a soup. Now change it. Write down I can no longer state a model is at work. An original stain is now discovered. Then make filters for each body. Draw all the composition off. Forbid readers to follow wherever you inscribe a line. This sea as a mixture and the sand relating questions to the horizontal movements of a prebiotic plan. You are now discovering that concrete form involves both circulation and the clinamen. So a motivated plot exists. Now start to weave and you'll connect this space. Then try to say the word plot is ambiguous so that all future lines repeat their past as empty figures. Nothing is narrative. Now alter it. The equator drops and floats upstream. Request similitudes. A pluralist sidewalk remains. Go back to the start. The Saturdays stay close to a catastrophic separation. The bridge is a son who kills the father at a crossroad. In the well of the week drops the other son's name. Now set out all the other links to constitute a set of probable ideas. The crevice of the lip connects a writing that's as still as ink. This final switch is exactly what's happening. The constant factor in a cloud.

CODICIL

Eight.

The ground you stand on is a picture of this page.

Four.

The statement below stands unexposed above.

Fifteen.

This information as commodity informs the institution speaking this.

Twenty Three.

The scene of the poem is the night it represents.

Seven.

None of this can be me.

Sixty Nine.

The narrative occurs when it takes place beneath this number.

Twelve.

This constitutes a start if all of this is me beyond the change these words intrude.

Three.

In the case above it would be wrong to call the following a viewpoint.

Seventeen.

This page lies rotting on a table.

One.

As tradition develops explanations appear.

Two.

Each sentence explains what a writer intends.

Eighty Six.

My story will follow.

Fifty One.

A picture of this page implies a need to stay the same.

Twenty Two.

These words invested here do not describe it.

One Hundred and Sixteen.

Each number is born of the desire to distinguish.

Ninety Four.

The reader thus implied above still copies a nature.

Eighteen.

You are witnessing the inverse of an earlier position in the words which follow.

Forty Four.

This is where culture begins.

Twenty Eight.

A theory repeats among the given facts of this page.

Six.

The reader must amputate a semaphor as metaphor.

Twenty Three.

The word fifty.

This final sentence must combine a mind.

RON SILLIMAN

From TONER (BRUCEBOOK)

Second half of the reading
is more intimate —
from the cellar
 two flights down
blond blues band
 hopeful frats
in muscle shirts and jamms

Imitate B.B. King.
 The prices on
the menu have been crossed out
 and new, higher ones
inked in.
Without a theory for institutionalizing
its victories (rare enough), the left

Would have nothing to offer
even the most ardent
 believers in justice.
Small children
fart freely.
 Sniffing poppers
on a crowded bus,

Or else grading restaurants
 not by the food
but what
you learn walking back
 to the john.
Frosted panes
here on dawn windows

Registers the difference
between indoors and out.
No theory
 of the line
without its history also.
 Plastic pen
lies snapped

On the floor of the train.
Even the clown's tennies
 are bright pink,
hair
 the color of
a new penny.
Reagan's plaid weekend shirt.

Tracks disappear in the distance
(one point perspective)
 sucked
into the gray horizon,
shadows
 without options
cast by the mechanical sun.

Machination sleazes powder.
The further it spins out,
 accumulates
the greater the distance,
a curiously cold quality
like one's face in the mirror,
 unfamiliar.

SUSAN HOWE

From NETHER JOHN AND JOHN HARBINGER

In Peter she is nameless
Actual world nothing ideal

headstrong anarchy thoughts
A single thread of narrative

She was coming to anoint him
As if all history were a progress

As if all history were a progress
She was coming to anoint him

A single thread of narrative
headstrong anarchy thoughts

Actual world nothing ideal

In Peter she is nameless
The nets were not torn

The Gospel did not grasp

Intractable ethical paradox

Vindicated by uprightness

utter immensities whisper

nether John and John harbinger

In a short lonely human time

some love-impelled figure

River meadows

dense dark

Another less dark

Parallelism

As sound is

sense is

in the extreme

who would be Perfect

how disconnectedly

courage fails

This chapter and that

legitimate

Scene Calvary the open destitute

Under the burden of it

seeking to get to it

Quiet peace

I will use the bare name

Christ

hallucinated to infinity

as minister of the sea

Walking on the sea and feeding

Stop clinging to me

He hasn't left the earth

The recognition scene

These are thoughts

This is not intention

as to the sense of it

To be a man of Sorrows

the Person speaking

For there is no Proverb

here is the depth of it

CHARLES BERNSTEIN

DEBRIS OF SHOCK/SHOCK OF DEBRIS

The debt that pataphysics owes to sophism
cannot be overstated. A missionary with a horse
gets saddlesores as easily as a politburo
functionary. But this makes a mishmash of overriding ethical
impasses. If the liar
is a Cretan I wouldn't trust him
anyway — extenuating contexts wouldn't amount
to a hill of worms so far as I
would have been deeply concerned about
the fate of their, yes, spools. Never
burglarize a house with a standing army,
nor take the garbage to an unauthorized
junket. Yet when I told the learned
ecologist about my concern for landscape
she stared unsympathetically into the
carbon. Mr. Spoons shook his head, garbled his
hypostases. To level with you we'd have
to be on the same
level. Then, with all honesty, we can

only proceed to deplane. Looking for society
in a lamppost will not necessarily eliminate
need for empirical
evidence. There are the
below-the-surface conduits
to consider. As a rule, I keep
my mittens in the drawer. Structure
is metaphorical, function metonymic. Meaning
my aim is to blur
the distinction between logic and normalization.
(“Though I still don’t get how confusion
is supposed to be positive?”) Are they literally
bricks or are they literal steps? The infernal
machinery of missing harness, by the bus,
gates close to malediction, as in
get off my bunt, churning
in make-work flirtation, shocked to find a bandit
loosened . . . Venetian red (Rem), prussian
ultramarine (Rem), shiva red, thick
red, thick pink, thick ochre, medium green
paintstick (thick), thin black, thin

ochre, thin

red, paper palette, tissues, garbage bags,

wax.

Yet it is the virile voice of authority, the condescending

smugness in tone, that is thrilling. What

does it matter that he hasn't any . . . "Creative

goals and financial goals are identical: we just

have different approaches on how to research

those goals, and we have different definitions

of risk." A localization that may not

dovetail with forced archaization, which

is the groundswell of our importunity. &

speaking of "pressmen's licence", here is a truly

novel instance of "creating facts"

riddled with holes like baloney. *Respond:*

yes or no. The point not to right wrong

but to come to terms

with error. It's not only

the wrong road but the wrong

destination; still if

there's no way back, there's company

in the
loss. Heeding without ceding . . . Couples
dancing in the snow, in the blinding
light. No matter how much you protest.
*"If I'd have lived longer, I'd have lost
even more money."* For months he retreated
into his inner sanctuary, emerging only for meals
& sleep; once, stealing through its
locked doors, we briefly glimpsed
the spot: bare
walls without furniture or implement, floor
covered with thick black
loam. Better
a barber than a splendor
be. Fool's
gold
is the only kind of gold I
ever cared about.
The men, having lost their comrades in the
explosion, returned the next day to the mine
& the memory: what other

image of courage could have
so little capital & so much
weight? The salt
of the earth is the tears
of God, torn for
penitence at having created this plenitude
of sufferance. So we dismember (disremember)
in homage to our maker, foraging
in fits, forgiving in
forests, spearing what we take
to be our sustenance: belittling to rein things
in to human scale. A holy land parched
with grief & dulled
envy. The land is soil
& will not stain; such
hope as we may rise from.