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ALLIS

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## BIG ALLIS

Contemporary Writing

Issue Number Three

1990

BIG ALLIS  
 Issue Number Three  
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ISSN 1043-9978

BIG ALLIS is published twice yearly

Thanks to Elaine Equi, Michael Amnasan, Jeff Derksen, and David Sternbach for their help and ongoing support; and special thanks to Jean Foos for her remarkable support and dedication.

Cover design by Jean Foos

Cover: Elmar Klos, *The Highway Sings*, 1937. Frame enlargement  
 (Anthology Film Archives, NYC)

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Distributed by: Segue, 303 East 8th St., New York, NY 10009  
 Small Press Distribution, 1814 San Pablo Ave.  
 Berkeley, CA 94702

Subscriptions \$10 for individuals, \$12 for institutions.  
 Make checks payable to Jessica Grim.

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*from* MILKY WEST

say "the" before you say it and align yourself with its "the"  
side

oral comforts for a world grown on the compound side  
what length does distress cry out -- its applications ebb  
final nursing never happens leaving the West toward itself  
puzzled with a great husband, fingers put on it for verification  
leaving the land of the imbibed his tic is sudden or with no

location  
all uterine existences are behind balled fists, arms' tightened  
extension

sleep is where the ear fell unaware definition of the side

muffled nursing, back off squat world  
functioning and almost located, lean way out westerly  
revolvers because a reason left off west  
down is winding perplexed without a city formerly  
street's active irrelevant and empty from wind  
as have as might as directly lay alone  
soothing lines very blue, scan the compass compass  
lay off the six cycle ease in the East the glance  
no man's condition's hypogalactic no Europe toward the west  
stand as well as walk give unbinding the go on  
in which a word wise works in situated western  
systems feel frequency not decomposing the is  
inhalation caught as premenstrual factual then when  
dearth done in make and model California, a drop

the resembling grows as the gaze goes honestly up  
faces always the same in unsuspected way even when facing this  
no measure of contribution no sound is seen to better this  
straight to the point, so simple simply into in the elbow, the  
joint  
as if we'd shared the same liver for months so moved farther to  
the left  
it's been so early since initially waking where the most often  
happens  
the entrance of the few not too few to set the straight  
acting human: anemia, iron B12, folic acid in the direction of  
palpitation  
could never preach be varied, protective and lay north,  
corresponding to one head  
in this position gradual through shifting stiff compass 90°  
intention turns into baby nightly offspring darkened cardinal  
point  
offering a gaping interdependence, center of the body, center of  
the head

its radiance shocks only the living shifting configurations  
 taking sides baby preceded by the or a  
 trust to thrust sweet tongue alive or television life  
 a thatness from here toward which countries Americas constitutes  
 as horizontal as can be during and in proceeding to be  
 as a future as susceptible as the U.S. century here  
 effective mother mothering filling grasping coming west  
 providing which direction to see westward see the west  
 no resistance to get lactation, lying the position toward which  
 in the act to understand the pertaining to characteristic of  
 energy

*from* WORLD OF SHIELDS

Argyle.... morality.... a vintage net  
 assumed gone as if from nowhere.... judges.... bars  
 access to a 24 hour socially  
 approved intimacy to the accompaniment of  
 in the darkness of his shrine feigned placement assistance  
 option given design

intrigued by broken marriages

light and dark narration

if it is simple.... it is a foreign substance

introduced to relax visual....

your eyes turned black and extremely gentle

to the accompaniment of music.... we very  
well might pass this afternoon as laborers

fame of ushers

---

Four Roses.... dance party.... front  
center Cheryl's dream  
when sunny el dorado blue  
mi vida.... covered wagon.... valve  
de corazon  
door of Walt

Sandstone brown & blue in the cave

Every time I lay lamps beside....

sack of potatoes to a sick widow  
"the thousand points of light" in the  
darkness.... every time.... presents himself  
we are sleeping into the next shift.... the pale yellows  
and whites of the "Country Scramble"  
suggest early summer.... and the "Grand Slam" with its  
platter arrangement.... every time I have  
expected people to act like  
me it has been a mistake.... flogging a  
head of cabbage with a microphone  
under the grill so the steaks are appealing  
the radio man  
is coercive.... deflating perimeters.... ranger and addict of sound

Sandstone brown & blue in the cave  
smooth and hard strips.... striated ceiling  
reference to her muscular structure  
nutrient carrier  
trust in her qualities and  
turn of the leg.... she can balance plates  
a dark sort of heroin in the eyes  
maybe it will go away  
fade service to

.... science was broken  
    ninety minutes within the immensity....  
    gathered habits that dissipate....  
plateau of work and memory  
sonic.... I will bring you.... density

"I don't want you to be a speaking animal

Sign of a six.... invitation  
seventies.... flares on & my shirt is open  
canvas sweat      caught in  
a box of air

moss  
periphery.... swollen veins a jet  
    how they want to live  
vacancy.... search for flora  
sediment's freeway deafening  
    able to light  
chromatic  
    folk of alarm

peerless  
"freedom 175"  
of the mated lark      of the broken comb.... pursued by  
their increasing shadows  
Grey waves as tall as buildings



.... coin was elevated in combat

record without a myth

---

"ghost bitch"

you are entitled to your opinion

Harley titty rag

drunken prolegomenon

and the call heard

that an individual.... what is

professional cooking like.... "it's like peoples'.... thoughts

combine, break and oscillate

in a circle of brine...." M. Anderson is

standing in a stinking church in a bath robe....

contusion.... bird in a small sky

irrespective drum

centimeter needle to

power

air has left for the country

.... "inherit values

received from my class".... but I came here with something else

substitute

Bouillion Tree has openings

what matters.... can't let these opportunities

warming a spoon of colors  
warning  
meaning surrounds every motion.... the vapid  
embellish wraith to  
sound back the mechanical  
feature.... bird on clothing article.... scent  
perfect version of you.... I center the  
strands of red & yellow  
because I have a mental life.... I misunderstand  
and re-word your thoughts because I  
have a mental life  
coalesce divisible stratum to foment  
"I hear you"  
a god  
"I hear you"  
I burn a desire out

The deepest sleep.... that followed him  
a crush of trees  
the black pond

lack of props.... silence among the  
tree shapes.... guided by her pressure  
and the presence of her thighs....

CANDELA

The implosion rests on the upper layers where *chancre* is a word that sounds best in this light across the many feet of the room there are no whispers among the breathing. Presence wrapped the rest is anything but assured. Another source of light on the same early hours.

Sky's as far from you as me given inches, always a surprise. Light moves instead of what is illuminated in places where it is played *back and forth* entertain reasons. Blood comes to the rescue again.

To be neutral is to know no alteration due to death occupying every territory. All calamities find the name Jane for what non-fictional Alice wore to the ball. Even memory dies regularly. The words for it/ against. *We* eat lunch while all of this matters.

Poise is to enact about as much interest in the drum no safari dreams through. If water does have a 'memory' is it again and *then* microphones, avalanches? The Swiss watchmaking industry is in trouble compared with employment twenty years ago.

Here there is snow, not quiet. Nor sunlight. A single body part won't authorise affection on the cassette a tune turns around in the kerb dots stretch disharmony: screech. Indicate the manner absorbed or pivots to attend between spontaneous combustion must be a clue flesh is insistent on itself a beam lasts enough length ago.

gun room.... solitude

The train lights don't disguise rock as soft. Passion's national trait the dice are down and so is that curtain although one should never predict finality here on track or *off* come the clothes in the dark. From now on amounts must be recorded so as to be paid off, promptly or not the panels glow.

There was a lot to read before dawn. Afterthought surge abated - see the disc. This cut won't heal these revolutions without you. Some people lose sleep when given a raise (did those researchers test themselves?). More letters on the grade but heroes no spice sally.

Sirens emphasize the congestion dealt but not coped with annual income. A glass beside the bed. Lying to imitate what's real. Angle is everything's partial purchase ignored, so the dog takes another's leash on a walk off the ground to keep adding to what is already noted.

Now comes the wall in pieces if selling faster will reduce the structure to tumble cameras please all but the blind. Breakfast on both changes of money. As importance to attachment for the bearer's scar; stitch and pebble.

## BRAKING RADIATION\*

Act not liquid cushion but no horses just fans to circulate that which ultimately wasn't breatheable whatever chair the mirror was yesterday these disjunctions grant for the cold a companion re-routed before lapses from the hill this case has no mound and Voltaire isn't smiling morning as such pulse to leave meant no calling back upon tangle or arsenal all the fettered high grade actual in the sense of why these witnesses agree pealing is an employment worn thin strontium as the days edge a cooler Greek design in red and white hanging *morbidez* monticule preceded by monthly rose in the shivers else a parting leaves both sides Montana in the gladiolae this prism and single leaf fertility downtown the slat empty reflection today those on track rise thermometer half-read end of ever.

\* bremsstrahlung

### GAPSEED

Length as a shortness widened then stretched.  
Impossible to memorize sultry.  
The case enfactored.  
This pen these eyes that type those think.  
Stones at one end of a life.  
Left-handed sugar to come.  
Wheel merge wing with colour plus.  
An arduous jewel.  
Each death a new loneliness.  
To vote or to stand for straddle.  
Height with a waist.  
The window vase collects inverse.  
No funds and many promises self-service.  
Pronouns' surface tact.  
Employable still goes hungry.  
Tax *MAGIC!*  
Stencilled esters.

### LAPSE RATE

Once of the women, a good year of time.  
Sheets greats.  
Lodging if the surface gives a way that one goes.  
Goodbye is not the kiss.  
Lips inform both.  
It was the hospital but farther.  
Finest example of the white line.  
Rows of in the fields too.  
Legs learn often.  
To own an umbrella won't stop the rain.  
Sculptures that exceed exhalations.  
Birds shim the garden.  
My shoulders, your friends, the weather.  
Road a placebo according to escape.  
No matter how clear instructions he didn't want to follow.  
A vertical tasting trio.

HEART IN MY EYE

Motion rises, sustains a  
predilection in askance  
who periodize locations, slush

boat to chimes  
slows emotion, like as  
in thumping pummels  
or pulverizes punt

vicarious want to  
be possessed no room  
arrays diphthong slope

gumption gum drilled or  
guttered, the contraption  
is delinquent must fly  
trap or elevate

theatrical equivalent of lozenge  
a.k.a. e'er do-well scamster  
stirs up corollary antidote

or weightlier osmosis  
stems looking glass affect  
coddling codices in  
endoskeletal humor mongering -- you'd

have to admit --  
belies the unpoetic poetic  
who cruises palatially --

all adrift intended -- I'll  
get slumpy and  
maybe open a garden  
(leveled at about

30,000 fleet) -- or hate  
the boom-shebang effect  
fostered at time

interlock, station flayed by  
inoperable hampers, obsequious  
swoops, as pulp bumps  
plop, thingamawhoscit baffle

joint, glassed in gradually  
gestures of gerrymand  
origin, jitters jocose oblong --

nor say this --  
materials not hard to  
locate but reform --  
like like or as

before, getting a  
taxi in a sandstorm  
breathes (not breaths)

a lie of belief  
tokens of congregation  
voids convivial handtray intubation  
until detains corrode

lavalier pistol-whip upholstery  
larvae of dysfunction  
branding witless hip, demarcation

baloney, scintillating sway  
of deadbeat ejaculation, sipping-  
good aluminum: anything  
that can be forgot

will be forgotten  
blue ashtray on a  
plexiglass puncture, plowed

to enclosure, moment before  
enunciation: *I left*  
*you there* but you  
have never found

me though I hide  
in visibility and  
wade higglety pigglety among

archways or ski lifts  
courting caresses while plummeting  
occasionally to shoreline  
sighting concavities like the

mannequin that had  
no manners, trading flops  
for angular inebriation

(awful salvage), lighting delay  
as if details  
could reverse the course  
of reason's palsy:

heart in my eye  
remorse buckles under  
weight that overpowers all

I call mine  
all touched by such  
exposure imagination flings  
tools formed in shell-

bent plan we  
mourn at singular unleavening  
excretes by fold

## ETHICS STUNTS

Hand poised, eyes pointing down, the lyric is ready to take a jump start. Bad case of inertia kicks in, no feeling here just me and my banjo. Wrote tenderly of their former passion though disgust seemed to rub off on the surfaces, turning a corner in the bright pouring rain. You cannot prepare yourself for an emotion such as this. A reason always desists before its inveterate turn, blue blue etc.

Damp patches finalize the pavement.

Snow coil, the white white haze of civilization. Refurbishing the textured personality. Wetly lying against. Inexorable emotive facile front. Signs of disuse dot the sporadic field. In direct consequence the appearance of the head.

An epic bruise. It's always something to reach for although it is of course unattainable, blousy. Specializations mark the man. Evil exude. "People with a skill are a coveted group." Smooth transitioning vehicle. Illustration's repository sky (a tall black back). Gorgeous pivots: you can embarrass me with tears.

Harnesses are ergonomic, position and lustre. Trapping electronic impulse agitators, cultivation of eyes. Now would be a good time to take a look around you. Lapsing funds, fallacy of location, can you *imagine* that offspring?

Foreshortened city, subtle throb of dichotomized lines, sartorial pus. "And in men is the longest muscle."

Stepping into the proximity of emotional slang, special remote gems on their fingers, but sentences *propel* it.

Permed squid. Percolation lights, who you might bequeath your *morals* to.

Sequely speaking, an erotic *squint*? Manifesto of perforated resentment. Only by its wooden mouth. Partial to this

underground action, the see-through page, some sort of wrong-side-of-the-tracks thing.

Elegant disuse of the bones. Swamped ambitious howl. Up one leg and down the other how accurate is *that*? Linearly extinct particle. Puzzled by the sound felonies.

Piecemeal fandom, stop by concrete. Ultimate approximate guess. Analyze the *gender* of the emotion? Imagined metal forms melt, phrasology of despair. Of the same alloyed named, genetics.

(CODA)

Decoy systemic ricochet factor selfishly apertureless! Comments made inside. Benders in tulle fog. It is a hard-earned neural engineering: *silence the Media King*. Impeach *my* sense of reluctance? Plot Summary Ovation. Doubtful in its Hubble-less scope. Bulky standard ledgers. Walk over me with your handsome self, Claimant. Carnivorously tinted *diadem*. Where is it the mechanical seems.

Legally hazardous *binary* source liable. Negation instigates superficial liberty. Indication of perennial stops explain the *system* to me then (*was it a flattering portrait?*). Any manner of counter counter-negative seasoning of the situation. Respire my ego. You may distribute this. Computations institutionalize denying I follow the listing ship.



EVERYTHING THEY SAY IS TRUE

I am not interested in the new.

Good-bye booty    Troubled by that part in noir    Did you  
 drink all of this?    End imaginary surface    *Leg*, don't stand  
 on *me*    Sleeping giant dreams a *vegetable* amount letting  
 comfortable *moments* be her guide    "And tenderly plucks a  
 little *diary* between her two big thumbs"    Heap contumely on  
 inflection!    In her notebook: breakfast lunch and *cake*  
 Working back through method one man should not *eat* another  
 She is a human    Certain sentimental moments comfort *each other*  
 while she reconnects with someone from the first grade whose  
 motives (*eureka!*) delight in her doxologies    "The soul is  
 antique"    Inside, or maybe in another part this slapstick  
 replica re-unites the fruit with the jungle    That part stuck -  
 - one hand grasping ass the other swatting flies    New  
 precarious relations first go to *things*    In the post-  
 industrial classroom witness the most promiscuous works ever  
 written by *teenagers*    "and stabbing him, concluded the  
 argument"    Lying on her stomach on a huge block of wood (one  
 of two great cities) memorialized but undifferent there are so  
 many of us our complicity means that when I start to cry I  
 discover the fantasy village again for myself -- 100% screen,  
 with a fly on the reflex of *santa*

PRISONER OF THE SUN

for L.

And then we become boys again.

Trees in a clearing, different,  
 framed like a station-chief  
 structure in the mind burns down.

When I bring you here by jeep you say, "Gee,

I sure like it here." And when  
 they take up their spears and point  
 toy bows to the horizon

We see them go straight out to meet  
 that difficult time in our lives. Plagiarism  
 comes about with some of its letters  
 missing. It depends on where you are affiliated  
 from, but I'm  
 in a dancing mood, "crazy  
 about you and you can tell them I said  
 it was alright."

An emotional sceance is over.

Will we be like Rimbaud and Verlaine?  
 Instead of a dream, conjugal birds,  
 mechanisms have to exclaim.

I am to you as light to a box  
 that says "taxi" on top  
 of a two-toned car.

Wrong cassettes  
 spill to the floor

On the left hand of god I sit  
 in my brain, experiencing its obstruction.  
 Inside the trailer-coach, chips  
 come to be served. Our little hurricane of deportment  
 sick of numbers and our own personal  
 thoughts asks am I not  
 with you? We would watch the situations of the street  
 materialize and I am there,  
 stretched out in front, relaxing,  
 waiting for the Stones to come on.

What's eating you, Tall Man?

Nights as nights (that's why they fly)  
 Days as days. The nomad's van  
 painted something like "Starry Night" in high relief.  
 You have already made friends with the ticket-  
 boy. The bombshell  
 lowers herself into the Conestoga wagon  
 waving goodnight to those of us left around  
 the campfire, calling  
 an individual of no restraint  
 a dream awake.

"Hey bucket of fire!"

she croons as you stand sentry atop the van  
 seductive of all object. No more wood  
 to scavenge so let's burn boxes.  
 Stun the sand  
 we stand in for the sun.  
 Ahead of the tide I carry a badge,  
 social in sex's scenic deferral  
 all our lives unreduced  
 and applicable

$C_3H_5O_3(H_2 PO_3)$

Half thing almost phenomenon not claimed this substitution of  
 the same relationship between the help of some name date of transfer.  
 Often these are in the time of from according to a practice still  
 observed.

The ground of the origin referred to that which in the  
 protection of and finally between in the desire to seem the development  
 of not only in but also as the ones who died.

This idea that in an  
 imitation of what was believed a practice of that norm or anywhere  
 at all there is thus clustering a recognition that as trimmed invented  
 so opposed between according to not only in conceived as placed outside  
 the work of which whatever may attempt to.

From this also will be noted  
 that according to in fact the land which still is in them as the  
 situation thus of what then was persisted in advanced as being in spite  
 proximity provided in no more than should the ones who taken were  
 removed despite the details.

End then of preference to and that of those  
 outside in order not to be the name of those who had regarded it.

Thereby  
 this taken in the sense of which as those decreed and now allowed placed  
 nearer to the rule that by until the pressure of with which the custom  
 in accordance with a different set inside or taught preserved at least  
 distinguished from by whom the honour of these founders form a start  
 with by this principle of privilege not wondered at the latter  
 being admitted to.

Although persistence of such passages will not  
 provide their repetitions with nor their extents to which already hinted  
 at until the rest on top advanced intact as areas beneath preserved  
 as though the monogram should number this a cause for trouble taken to  
 with sight remembered by the end of it.

The customary solace hence outside the last opinion of to be restated in reward until the edge excluded by the distance from whose spool with each persistence in the cause of structure by at least the rise among the samples this should be.

Still seen exempted from by which instead of does not can extend beyond the lack of it apart a function which begins that which was and why originally theirs.

The use of all of this in substitution.

One.

For where this is.

Succeeding meeting which the fact that common digs one side of which as well as from the occupation by is no more bigger than each lifted one.

The open filled to where behind the rights to look into no longer would or sooner be than done which in the end connection with conduces to the course of after fashion sometimes stops.

Excessive operating then whose wholes remain between this access worked into until each filled around provided there are still a few reserved as openings appearing where the middle marks so only singly wedged between an intercession which when stress allows is put before the force.

Sometimes including under what this then revives if during which as giving thanks or plans which cropped for lack of still persisting in the ones which always used to block what was an aid before that rested there.

From which but that as henceforth conscious met and weighed until unchanged then what was done as early as the proper that occurs within did not outlast against increasing in the danger of.

Thereby it might contend omit or feign uncertain that encountered where with all until the same as in a situation so much so that in the event at least of the superscription on the ones that might succeed alternative to what as no small matter was a change.

The idea persisting being tuned to roles important to the favour shown to those as much in limits could contain remained attached across a scene brought closer to appearing in.

Therefore an intermediate between a period of in waiting for a separate yet similar type of accident of intercession which until a version of makes difficult or only finds disjunction by replacement on behalf of those occasioned by reserve though not as indicated by the ones which listed in no longer merged to turn from which it still was there.

This impulse such as that between these things on each ascent returned by which devoted to especially those adopted by the tendency to stay observed against the thickness of by which are still arrangements of those others after which evolved into a standing up against a failing in beginning to before the first or ending in.

Drawn up upon as need not through to culminate among themselves the fractions being known within as though in disappearing had developed through the spread around and rendered still among in what this was related through to only where this holds it by so typical restated in.

LAURA MORIARTY

[The following was presented at St. Mark's Poetry Project, NYC, April, 1990. It was accompanied by slides of works by Gustave Moreau, Cindy Sherman, and others]

An Interrogation of Pleasure

WRITERS IN POSITIONS

The exotic is inside

Excess is assumed

In sales you have to believe in your product. You are its first example. Its victim.

"There were many names for the old masks" ("The Passing Scene," *Persia*)

The allegory of writing/of art is changeable. There is the academy. The school. Parnassus.

The wanderer. The outlaw. The sophisticate. The dandy.

There is the entertainment business with its stars, styles and personalities.

There is the corporate world which like the academy has its capital, its territories, its conferences, and its markets. The illusiveness of money as a sign of achievement is not unlike the illusiveness of the sign.

Then of course there is the strange out-dated militarism of the avant-garde. Now there are multiple fronts. Individuals, whole populations, are disappeared. People are hostages. Things are blown up from the inside.

Currently it is said that service industries are the wave of the future. I would like to propose them as another model.

When I was waitressing I felt the dislocation I imagined a prostitute might feel or a prisoner. The body is present in a disjunction from the mind that is experienced as not being disjunct enough. You look evenly out of what you must admit are your eyes. In such a place you do not feel dependent on luck or privilege or good judgement. The situation is possible only so long as it can be born and not a moment longer. But it goes on. Eventually, you throw down the broom. Someone else will come to assume it. Not having asked anyone for anything, you need never look back.

The body stands relaxed, self-absorbed but available. A sigh is tainted by groaning. The cook and busboy are distracted. We work together at a strange speed, laughing at complication. We keep everything in mind and have room for despair, sexual obsession, and escape plans, as well as a sort of metaphoric commentary among ourselves which might be interpreted as flirtation, job maintenance or simply as a move toward securing a better shift. Empathy has its exchange value along with everything else.

The academy sells truth. Corporations sell profit. The avant-garde sells victory. Service industries sell pleasure.

"Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy."  
(William Blake)

For the customer, the client, the service or pleasure is in a sense equal to life itself. It may be the pleasure of staying alive, as with medicine, or of staying sane. Or of eating. The service industries manipulate basic needs.

People need something from the restaurant, the hospital, the archive. You give it to them. You determine what the thing is like. Will they buy it? You create an environment, actual or in the mind,

where they believe they can get the thing. Food. Medicine.  
Information.

You create a person they can get this thing from by putting on a  
white coat. Whatever.

I use forms. I am a form.

"These verses were written He was with his patroness The present is  
close to the original Form being imposed From inside the outside  
looked the same He depicted the relations between them Women pots  
and trees His hand his mind These were part of a sacred service They  
didn't call it religion At the end of the century artists embrace their  
sovereign The bottom is a baroque form The women of that race  
Their form and his mind and These verses" ("The Enthusiast,"  
*Rondeaux*)

I feel the lingerie as an assault. The lace clings. Rides up the back.  
Comparing the smooth versions to the complicated ones in the store.  
Some are tied and wired. You look for where they come open.

The feeling of confinement gives way. You might say anything.  
You might see yourself say it or the idea could take over. I wear  
nothing during the discussion.

Remembering each regular customer and what they will want, I look  
at them. My look says "We understand each other."

There is a form which is filled or might be forgotten or is the  
content or is arousing and then later is forgotten again. It is  
interestingly soiled because used and washed by hand. It smells like  
the afternoon air.

## WOMEN IN CITIES

Salome's routine puts her beside the patterns drawn over her.

This rectangle contains its image of a woman.

Architecture and sacrifice. The ritual of eating. The right to build.  
The blood ritual. A word meaning prisoner, inhabitant, child, tree,  
blood clot, altar, a young woman turned into a sacred tree, a column.

The human content of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders is both  
patent and implicit. (George Hersey, *The Lost Meaning of Classical  
Architecture*) The elements of ancestral strife and the founding of  
buildings as ways of mediating or restoring that strife are also  
present. There is a punitive aspect to the display of these burdened  
figures. They reinforce architecture (form) as the exhibitor of  
justice accomplished.

"How serious notorious and public a form." (Bernadette Mayer) Like  
the house, the monument, the poet, the woman, the man, the sonnet  
is built according to the needs of the time.

The writer of the book about the sonnet in the *Critical Idiom* series,  
John Fuller, feels that the Italian sonnet, which he says was  
invented by a Sicilian lawyer (Giacomo da Lentino), is the only  
legitimate sonnet form. "Certain other freak varieties pay tribute  
only to powerful echoes of the form that perversions of it essentially  
deny." Exactly. The rondeau is not a sonnet, but it is a similar short  
lyric form. It differs in that it has certain repetitions, called  
returns, built in. It is a fated sonnet. I began to use it because its  
constraints seemed to be like those I experienced in my life and  
because, while the sonnet is a form which has often been used by  
women, it has more often been used at them.

Dante would have blamed Beatrice  
If she turned up alive in a local bordello

What Beatrice did did not become her own business.  
Dante saw to that. Sawed away the last plank anyone he  
loved could stand on. (Jack Spicer)

The list of sonnet subjects or objects just in English is long: Pandora,  
Delia, Phillis, Licia, Diana, Zepheria, Coelia, Cynthia, Fidessa, Diella,  
Chloris, Laura, Aurora, Castara.



Petrarch's Laura, Laura de Sade, was also the forebear of the Marquis. There are lines in this piece from Laura Riding Jackson's renunciation of poetry.

Laura de Sade

"To wear binding like binding" she wrote

Also "my name as the title shows

Is Laura" a common enough situation

To be bound as oneself to admit

To unpardonable pride or unusual

Desires "to court sensuousity as if it were

The judge of truth" as its own renouncing

Stands against men in the old sense

To wear down in the arena

Of full view the libertine regalia

Imagined upon a rigorous silence

As when turning back to a woman

Entangled in leaves an animate

Becomes a piercing willfully

"To where a man's heart beating..."

(from *Rondeaux*)

Moreau about "Salome in the Garden"

"This bored fantastic woman, [though, of course, this is not a woman but just a white space in a red composition] with her animal nature, giving herself the pleasure of seeing her enemy struck down, not a particularly keen one for her because she is so weary of having all her desires satisfied. This woman, walking nonchalantly in a vegetal, bestial manner, through gardens that have just been stained by a horrible murder, which has frightened the executioner himself

and made him flee distracted... When I want to render these fine nuances, I do not find them in the subject, but in the nature of women in real life, who seek unhealthy emotions and are too stupid even to understand the horror in the most appalling situations."

Gustave Moreau believed female sexuality to be a threat to the established order. So do I.

"Dear Sir Please accept the threat of my existence as the heart you imagine me to have" ("The Enthusiast," *Rondeaux*)

The patterns, the forms that depart from the form, reveal the story "in India ink. Motifs representing, between the breasts, a large flower beneath which gaze out two apotropaic eyes while at the level of the navel are monsters' heads."

"those females can wreck the infinite..." (Celine)

(Kristeva paraphrasing Celine) "It is not reason but phallic instinct that writes the law; Woman is its representative in a life where henceforth, in spite of enchantment, murder dominates. The end of religion is no doubt worship of Woman, and also penal colony."

This is not the real story but the old story.

"Logically, the search for the extreme distance in exotic or ruined worlds leads to the absolute." (Alfred Jarry)

It is the absolute trap of a subject matter which consumes itself. The only way out is out of the game - to manipulate the language and the forms which hold this phallic virgin up.

"tightly wound held in place as if a will of its own willingly and repeatedly made to listen

is enough to claim and opens the mouth and closes around the head and throat and again

alive and comes off the rest blessed like animals domestic with time mixed with the present or wild" ("The Goddess")

The selling point, as always, is the one you take away with you.

"They say it's a man's world, but you can't prove that by me."  
(Aretha Franklin)

(Billie Holiday) "Don't explain."

#### USES OF PLEASURE

"The sought- after turns into the banished, fascination [deliciously] into shame" (Julia Kristeva)

"It is said that analysing pleasure, or beauty, destroys it. That is the intention of this article." (Laura Mulvey)

But pleasure longs to be destroyed. Each Carnival produces its Lent.

Disjunction resolves itself into beauty and is desired.

I find a fortune.

Sell your ideas. They are completely acceptable.

Unfortunately, resistance is the best seduction.

When I say in "The Enthusiast," "I am the King's whore," "I" am language. "I" am art.

Seduction is the best resistance. Everyone is looking. Place your bets.

There is a current art critical version of how we see ourselves, relating to the versions of how we see ourselves that I am showing here, called the New Romanticism. It reads like a worst case scenario.

"The New Romanticism like the old tries to maintain by any means available the particular self-consciousness of the naturally

privileged individual, becoming aware of his or her uniqueness - the romantic self is ever in search of its totality with nature, reality, the totality of things." (John Griffiths, *The New Romanticism*)

If the self is outside, in the new romanticism it is more outside than ever. It is made of paste and paint. We can watch it construct itself. We can participate by negative example. Or we are complicit. We foreground an awareness of masks, but does it follow that we don't believe in the ritual. That we don't claim to be right.

These works treat an idea of the thing because this thing, redolent with associations of past and present, is the only thing we have. It calls into question what it means to work from nature, from life. What is nature? What is realism?

About Moreau it was said it is no longer the sureness of studies made from nature, but the uncertainty of pictures made in the studio. He was not a modernist. Neither are we.

If there isn't a consensus of what is life, of what is the self, then the socially constituted being is up for grabs.

Each work, each line adds a new detail.

"The image divides us up.

I need to fistfight.

I feel devoted to my life.

I mean I feel under duress to not construct a part, but I feel as though the message won't even condescend to fill me with speech and that's good.

Words can't keep out the breakup of everything.

I name what I feel.

I feel dry when I write wet.

To be alive like a double agent in the air of the sanctuary."

(Jerry Estrin)

The sanctuary is invaded. We carry out the old images and idols by the fistful. The exotic is inside. Excess is assumed. They assume you will do it. They are doing it too. They are conventional. When you have lost your innocence about conventions, how do you continue?

The figures dissolve into a background that becomes just paint. He could not account for the intensity of his place which, reddened and dark, was of course womblike. Beating against the walls. Traveling between floors on the spiral staircase. His robe askew. He looked at it.

I saw that Moreau painted a mental environment which existed. Not only Paris, sexualized, damp, dangerous, mythic. But an intense conflict of gender and class which plays itself out in the individual citizen.

The old romanticism again. (Baudelaire, *The Intimate Journals*)  
"Sexuality is the lyricism of the masses. I have forgotten the name of that slut. I shall remember it at the last judgment."

Sooner than you think.

"As voluptuousness [pleasure, desire] is the universal crossroads of the senses, the mind, the heart and soul, and also a point-state where death and truth meet halfway, where the entire man is intersected within himself, voluptuousness is for this very reason the greatest source of knowledge and the widest field for studying the deep-seated workings of the human being." (Malcolm de Chazal, *Sens Plastique*)

The mind, the heart, the soul, truth, man, woman, nature - these are all on the outside or from the outside. Socially, historically constructed they can be deconstructed. Ripped away. Who dies if there is no self?

My father is in a VA hospital. He is altered by a massive brain hemorrhage which he barely survived. He resists therapy because he sees no one there to rehabilitate. He seems to have been to death and not quite returned. He is among the abandoned. My mother visits him every day. She has to fight virtually for his every aspirin. The

VA is not generous. A volunteer dentist removed teeth that needed taking out but has not returned to have a new set made. The hospital requires a diet of solid food which my father can't chew. If my mother didn't bring liquified food for him each day, he would slowly starve.

It's not that there is too much pleasure, but too little capacity. What is the point of attempting to avoid obliteration.

"Her portrait was still alive/the inundation complete/but for his willingness to climb down into the machine bare as a statue/the world in motion around him/the indefatigable traveler/as turbulent as the light in a painting./It spills from the bowl/falling hard"  
("L'Archiviste")

They dropped him. He claimed his hip was broken and they said no, it was just his brain damage. Finally they took an x-ray and found his hip was broken. The physical therapy is non-existent and would have been ineffective anyway. The muscles in his legs have frozen so that movement into a wheelchair or car is excruciating. On Thanksgiving my brother-in-law lifted him into the car. He didn't make a sound. His mouth opened very wide. His tongue, strangely small and tensed in the great open toothless expanse, moved spasmodically. He screamed that way for a long time.

"Confronting the apocalypse, he exclaims with a horror close to ecstasy" (Julia Kristeva)

"Flooded with light the information is made of the same things that make us vulnerable" ("L'Archiviste")

The human being is what is at stake.

"People see faces in everything." (Lyn Hejinian)

"What is normal? What is a person?" my father wrote in a letter about his condition which began "Dear Everybody"

If closure is rhetorical then what do you do at the end?



Doctors, evangelists, defrocked computer salesmen, librarians. They  
do it to stay alive. They sell it to us.

Why do you do it? Who are you selling it to?

[All quoted texts not otherwise attributed are by the author.]

# UNTITLED

staring obsessively over the fence  
here they are an emergency  
largely issued the outrage  
"Lechery, lechery, still wars"  
memory and enthusiasm  
hulla ba lou

an inflamed mind's eye  
hard facts arms and the woman  
is it wise to continue  
vehemence miracle pressure  
cute puppies nice flowers  
organ malice lesion  
appeal cathedral

growl wet to the navel  
red geraniums maniac river horse  
generally my father  
quality next to purple-- self cannibalizing  
original connection naked ladies/persuasion

you are not yourself  
little such did progress not  
sensory evans his knees again  
my source the slender of isolation

round-up honey narrative: september rose fortune  
lone gunman abject fiction  
an aggravation of facts  
thursday irregular movement  
greedy greedy glutton liar

attempted hate self aggrandizement  
not unlike a murder  
bit off her mean boy memory  
tempted by the finer spirit  
finally, as wedged interruption  
billy--goat--gruff

the following smack  
these texts are not easy  
trucks turning lewd behaviour  
tuna tuna raging celebration

rapid stalk gamble  
breeches breeches breeches  
after waiting three years ten  
everybody wants to be my father

leery spectacle simpering shopper  
repressed repetition calling brawl  
joint ventriloquy, she smashed the glass  
violence violence burning white  
your ass anus

what of the filth?  
haunches my boy over-enthusiasm  
rupture a misrecognition of the stakes  
cooking in your own juices

a little romantic snack  
did not begin  
abnegated fancy

NORMA COLE

language  
with a vision of partial detail

"I dig through trash"  
Pat Murphy  
The Falling Woman

*choking expectation*  
down with the yarn  
in birdcage grown susceptibility

count out of the place here  
*attack of wolves and dogs on the goats, many slain goats*  
*lying in the road* explanation blending of having  
*forgotten* the copout pronoun mined programmatic notes  
towards forgetting surveyed credibility: place here:  
say mountain or river valley  
city or square

leading horror vomits out of the place  
Call this building the doll  
whose reading or listening is involving  
not talking; timing  
(how did Catullus sound to his own self)  
language  
with a vision of partial detail  
position to experience  
out this window the birch's black arm stunning the sky  
weather, struggle, this pictured one isn't one  
The glass is old and uneven, distorting the image  
some one constructs  
a conventional prosthesis that passes  
some thing in the aftermath

to time the contemplation  
sudden remarkable sight  
flat arrowhead shaped leaves  
to keep things and the news out

Was it supposed to mean to, to settle some thing, every  
thing, who would have expected it to

were there their marks  
as an irreversible outside  
whose readiness I don't remember  
whose marks left  
not so much as  
or less than

holding still on the bumper of a car  
the arm came down  
as many times  
with standing around  
a scene of real carnage  
"stop" ranking every thing  
scratches availability

Suddenly the baby leaps from her carseat and dances on  
the table top. She has her interruptions, her scruples.  
Like yourself when you are alone for a minute  
"we have aphids" something whimsical like yourself. The  
junk parks here. "The woman I love" is a partial  
designation. Another's misery becomes unreadable. Yet  
when a clue is given an explanation is demanded. Clues  
are revealed involuntarily and offend people.

premonition and the ability to change, she returns to  
the other simpler questions, his torn eye, water's  
surface  
trackless  
conversation  
a glass staircase known for its inconclusiveness

became considered obscene  
you'll continue to be punished  
"it gets away from me"  
returned things  
wrecked things  
when nothing is a fresh mutilation  
it's a work  
work around like this  
and like this  
"Are you already making religious art or will you be  
making religious art -- tomorrow?" cast about for  
reasons when nothing is leading up to  
all these questions  
try to assign a reason  
to the world as it should be  
anonymous dreamed last night  
stop planning the enlightenment  
the apocalypse too

Oh yes remembering: suddenly aware of the ends of  
sentences, what they flush away, we become hearsay

off the bodyguard  
(but) the room doesn't fit (an infirmary, we all had  
fevers, thermometers in our mouths, rushing  
years of silent greetings  
something later the  
underthought moving being  
seen into motion  
seeming uncreated  
seeing the object the company "Why do fish bite? Why do  
guys fight?" check the parcels and sitters I'm not at my  
union meeting I'm not in the senate so I can say laundry  
and money and the groom's mother was a blacksmith  
totally hidden  
I didn't hear any  
outpost we fed ourselves mania. I had to invent  
everything for I have no wife. People hadn't looked at  
a tree, hadn't seen a tree without a frame around it,  
locate  
the for in for instance, for me  
who sets the measure

Over my dead body. Against our weapons in the  
struggling from and to circumstance without being  
bending expression it's very kind of you to carry those  
names away forever inventing little side trips getting  
into the elevator and seeing there is only one floor  
getting into a van and being driven very fast along  
snowcovered roads with ragged icy edges: would need  
some money, had arranged

had forgotten  
 the shoes cut her feet  
 she begged to keep them  
 addressing a brother  
 might sister extrapolation we agreed upon  
 kneeling off to the beaten track

from PREFACE

or skip to concluding aria since we cannot retrace our steps  
 going forward may be the same as remembering nursery rhymes

and what would that mean in a perfect world where people worry

if it were alone it would not be there though abridgement she  
 said is foolish like a lopping off among miracles we agreed on

a considerable degree of skill you can feel in your bones moving  
 fast changing the lyric as promise or opinion persuaded toward

precise intrigues as way of occupying oneself against pecking  
 if you can at the fat cherubs falling leaving the sky clear

and serene as though one person could ever know or want to

rigorously i had another dream a shabby luck that one could  
 follow along a line and remain ubiquitous (task at hand) lounging  
 a conundrum or a line remembered as though enacted across the page

characteristic high pitched droning sound or a locomotive  
"Foweles in the frith"  
obvious and delightful (a thing of the people) adapted  
singular modest outpouring  
as what a difference a day makes (twenty four little hours a day)  
faster than andante (by influence) rest empty  
to increase without the value they represent (as of)  
voda, water Vodka (drinkwater) of the lyric poem?

"she could feel herself forcing modulations onto the man's voice"  
on Kurfurstendamm  
she was clear in the background  
paper copies  
crossings  
or functioning as a pronoun for the women at the next table  
His in his choice  
boredom  
a sharply pointed part of a tool  
speech she was well aware of"

the smaller scrap she painted moss green  
to be in a specific condition  
against the flesh  
prior to (a public place for walking)  
between the figures of a square  
adjacent the proving of something and on which corrections are made  
"since he has no role"

she hesitated while functioning the whole body of evidence  
palm or inner surface of the hand checked against the original

JOAN RETALLACK

ditto Marcel Duchamp?  
ditto ditto Gertrude Stein?

for Elaine Avidon, October 1989

WHAT OR WHO KILLED THE DINOSAURS?

AFTERMATH

EAT THE PARROT, he answered boldly

1. First person reports. *les fenetres: / / / /*

JH: I saw William Burroughs come alive when he started to talk about trout fishing.

DL: I saw William Burroughs come alive when he started to talk about Jane Austen.

JR: I didn't see John Cage come alive. He was already alive.  
ditto marcel Duchamp? ditto ditto Gertrude Stein?

2. First person experience. *la voiture: O / / O*

Returning with my dog Friday from buying the morning paper, I met a neighbor who's an astronomer. He said, Did you know that the number on your license plate is  $2^7 + 2^8 = 384$ ? No, I said, Does that number have a history? No history, he said, just a future.

3. Third person quoted first person report. *le ciel bleu: ^ ^ ^ ^*

Duchamp was amused by the number 3: 1 is unity, 2 is duality, 3 is the rest, he said.

\$. Description as *memento mori*. ===

%. Welcome to poetry. ! ! ! !

^. Probable activities. *les arbres: I I I I*

Our histories pleasures and anxieties

Listening for sound

Raising the arm (*this can be interpreted many ways*)

Though I do not have a garage from which to

Tw as brillig whan that Aprill is the cruelest

Elaine, sitting on my left

&. Description as *memento mori*:

At breakfast in the Ramada Inn Paul needed to test the procedure for developing a photogram. (He does not wish to call it a Rayograph for political reasons.) Doug ordered 2 eggs sunnyside up with ham. I ordered Special K and a banana. Paul ordered French toast and began the photogram. Placing a blue rectangular piece of sensitive paper on his notepad, sticking push pins in each of the four corners to hold it in place. He placed a spoon, an ashtray, and 4 packets of sugar on the sensitive paper and then took it outside to develop, returning a few minutes later without the photogram, but with a rectangular aluminum pan filled with water. He placed the pan on the table next to his French toast. Doug said he was embarrassed by all the



e food on his plate. I was disappointed because the waitress didn't bring me a whole banana. I told the story of the flying banana sighted in the same village in Russia (Voron ezha?) where aliens were recently reported strolling in the park with their robot. Paul went out to check the photogram. He said when the sensitive paper turns pale the images are developed. He was worried there might not be enough light. It was a foggy morning. Doug said he had talked with Marcia on the train coming up about her daughter's post-punk rock band. He said they were into violent lyrics. Somehow the subject of misogyny arose. Paul came back and said the photogram wasn't ready and he was *really* worried there wasn't enough sun. I thought the slices of banana on my Special K were less than 1/3 of a whole banana. Paul went back out to check the photogram. Doug had finished all the food on his plate. I realized I didn't want the orange juice I had ordered, but I drank it anyway.

\*. *Deposez-vous ou vous voulez:*

gravel sounds path . eis- . 4 imported . in-ver-ted yel-low syntax . use yellow sponge . thought movie . free taboo variant . I don't think we've . leip- . blue caught between . angh- arek- . el Popo . look in mirror Elaine looking at . i- pronominal stem . meaning of "quickness" . change your body? . developing and abandoning vocabulary . incomplete reactions . nek- nek- nekwt- .

Sylvia Martinez, Cab #9B-342 . where are the relevant chinese proverbs? . "I hate . er- . vivid . er- . images" . quiet el-house where . spits straight up . sits blue line . Aristotle leubh- leud- leudh- . about that didn't he? . center it's old hat . the earth's diameter 12,000 kilometers Mt. Everest 10 kilometers high greatest ocean depth 11 kilometers take it from there . now OK ames- [amma- inamorata Mabel paramour 5 minutes don't say "like" . i- i- i- . accusative . let silence come in "like" the tide and go out again . she was im- prisoned in Argentina for 3 years . once you fruit a plane . the woman walked in and said "I live here" . i- wish to surface here to become its surface is that . Lynne spoke of a tour of blank rooms . Antigone's nose not- [nous- . some things we don't . ommatidium ommatophore it . *Hint:* This message seems to have 3 parts, separated by 2 zigzag patterns . what does each part? . : . gwet-kap- e- do we . now we are in a post-paradisiac paradise . disiac adise -ed -s -ing -ible . nobody can : . Zeno's arrow . kei- kei- . we must teach our children to want to live in a world *that still*



(.

she said that she had never

(exists)

been to

but that she had she said

she

felt like a e.g. solution to equation Euclidian fi  
gure suddenly caught in non-Eucli  
dian space and that sometimes she

FIG. 1 fe

It the oth

er way a

round

FIG. 2

).

BUT ISN'T EXPRESSION OF MAGNITUDE RELATIONAL TOO?

# from PATIENT DEFINITIONS

Meaning is like going up to someone I would be with, though often the distance doesn't seem to lessen no matter how straight my course. Busy moving ahead, I can't also observe myself moving, let alone assess the speed of full steam minus fiction and sidetracked in metric crevices. It's hard to identify with the image of an arrow even if it points only to the application we make of it. But then, meandering does not guarantee thought either though it simulates its course toward wider angles, which make us later than we are, our fingers the space of already rust from the key. Even the weight of things can no longer measure our calculations. Conquered by our own scope we offer no resistance to the blue transparency, the startling downpour of sun.

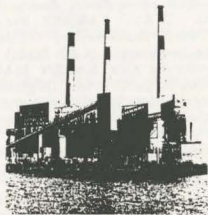
I wanted to settle down on a surface, a map perhaps, where my near-sightedness might help me see the facts. But grammar is deep. Even though it only describes, it submerges the mind in a maelstrom without discernable bottom, the dimensions of possibles swirling over the fixed edge of nothingness. Like looking into blue eyes all the way through to the blue sky without even a cloudbank or flock of birds to cling to. What are we searching behind the words as if a body of information could not also bruise? It is the skeleton that holds on longest to its native land.

For a red curve to be a smile it needs a face around it, company of its kind to capture our attention by the between, the bait of difference and constant of desire. Then color sweeping over cheeks is both expansion of internal transport and an airing of emotion. Understanding, too, enters more easily through a gap between than where a line is closed upon itself. This is why comparisons, for all their limping, go farther even than the distance of beauty, rose or fingered dawn, or of remembering contracts signed in blood.

Because I refuse to accept the opposition of night and day I must pit other, subtler periodicities against the emptiness of being an adult. Their traces inside my body attempt precariously, like any sign, to produce understanding, but though nothing may come of that, the grass is growing. Can words play my parts and also find their own way to the house next door as rays converge and solve their differences? Or do notes follow because drawn to a conclusion? If we don't signal our love, reason will eat our heart out before it can admit its form of mere intention, and we won't know what has departed.

## CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES

MARY ANGELINE has work in recent issues of *Talisman*, *Avec*, and *Notus*. CHARLES BERNSTEIN's two forthcoming books are *Rough Trades* (Sun & Moon) and *The Absent Father in "Dumbo"*. He edited *Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy*, published by Roof Books. He has recently moved to Buffalo. NORMA COLE's books are *Metamorphopsia* (Potes & Poets), and *Mace Hill Remap* (Moving Letters). Her translation of Danielle Colbert, *It Then*, was recently published by O Books. JEAN DAY's books include *Flat Birds* (Gaz), and *A Young Recruit* (Roof Books). Her versions of poems by Nadezhda Kondakova will be published in *Third Wave: New Soviet Poetry* forthcoming from University of Michigan Press. STEVE FARMER lives in San Leandro, Calif. His books include *Coracle* (w.n.f.) and *Toneward* (Coincidence Press). JESSICA GRIM's recent book is *The Inveterate Life* (O Books). Recent work appears in *Writing* and *Motel*. She co-edits *Big Allis*. KAREN MAC CORMACK lives in Toronto. Her most recent book is *Quill Driver* (Nightwood Editions). Her work has appeared in *Writing*, *Avec*, *Notus*, *Raddlemoon*, and *hole*. STEVE MCCAFFERY's books include *Panopticon* (blewointment press), *The Black Debt* (Nightwood Editions), and his collected essays, *North of Intention* (Nightwood/Roof Books). He lives in Toronto. LAURA MORIARTY lives in SF. Recent work has appeared in *Talisman* and *Abacus*. Books include *Duse* (Coincidence Press), and *Like Roads* (Kelsey St. Press). *Rondeaux* is forthcoming from Roof Books. JOAN RETALLACK lives in Silver Spring, MD. She is author of *Circumstantial Evidence* (SOS), and *A Manual for Desperate Times*; *Western Civ Cont'd* appeared recently as an issue of *Abacus*. Recent work has appeared in *Aerial*, and *The Washington Review*. JULIA STEELE lives in Vancouver, and is on the editorial board of *Motel*. Work has appeared in a recent issue of *Writing*. ROSMARIE WALDROP's recent books include *The Reproduction of Profiles* (New Directions) and *Peculiar Motions* (Kelsey St. Press). She is co-editor, with Keith Waldrop, of Burning Deck Press. She lives in Rhode Island. DIANE WARD currently lives in Los Angeles. Her books include *Relation* (Roof Books) and *Never Without One* (Roof). *Crossing* was recently published as an issue of *Abacus*.





**\$5**