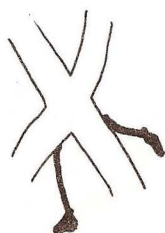
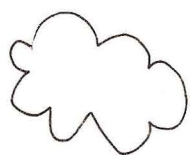


HILLS #3



ONE DOLLAR

Hills, #3

Peter Altenberg

Anselm Hollo

Larry Eigner

Barrett Watten

Steve Hamilton

Robert Grenier

Fielding Dawson

Michael Waltuch

Fanny Howe

Josephine Clare

Kit Robinson

Paavo Haavikko

Cover by Francis Shaw
& John Batki

April, 1976

WHAT IS A POEM?

A poem is a device designed to create a mood in the reader that is similar to the mood its author was in while composing it.

Right —

Poem: "Early Spring".

Morning temperature on the Hochschneeberg: 34° F.

Snow falling, in the form of rain.

Damply shimmering whitish gray snowfields.

Water level rising steadily in the rivers.

Mild, stormy weather. Generally overcast.

Continued, tremendous snowfall in the Northern Alpine region.

Avalanches have blocked Tunnel No. 11 of the mountain railroad.

The hotels at Semmering are overflowing with gentry and wealthy bourgeoisie attempting to squeeze in a few more days of tobogganning and such. But the Sun is gobbling up the snow.

The Earth is saturated, not to say soggy, and that is why the surplus water is rushing into the rivers.

The farmer is optimistic.

Young Helga, weeping, is scouring the terrain for primroses.

Peter Altenberg (Austria)

Translated from the Austrian German
by Josephine Clare & Anselm Hollo

From "*Marchen des Lebens*", 1919

NUMBERS FROM NOVALIS

68. A translation is either Grammatical, Transformative, or Mythic. Mythic translations are of the highest order, representing the pure and completed *character* of the original individual work of art: they do not give us its reality, but its *ideal*. I do not think a complete model for this kind of translation exists, as yet, but in the spirit of certain critical and descriptive writings on art one does come across bright intimations of it. It requires a mind in which the poetic and the philosophical have achieved total interpenetration. Greek mythology is, in parts, such a translation, of a people's religion: the contemporary "Madonna" is a myth of similar nature.

Grammatical translations are translations in the commonly accepted sense. They require a great deal of scholarship, and a talent for discourse, but nothing more.

Transformative translations, to be genuine, require the highest poetic powers. They easily degenerate into travesty, like Bürger's iambic Homer, likewise Pope's, and French translations in general. The true transformative translator has to be the artist himself, and in fact, and thus able to render the idea of the work in its entirety, *this way or that*—he has to be the poet's own poet, to allow him to to speak; *simultaneously*, according to *his* own, *and* the poet's own, lights.

The genius of mankind stands in similar relation to each individual human being.

Not only books, everything can be translated in these three ways.

1797/8, p. 337 in Schulz/Beck edn.

29. Only then do I demonstrate my comprehension of another author when I am able to act in his spirit—when, without any attendant loss to his singularity, I can translate and transform him a myriad ways.

p. 329, *ibid.*

11. Writing is siring: every poem has to be a live individual. We are surrounded by an inexhaustible wealth of materials, all ready for *new*, singular combinations! Who once discovers this, needs nothing further but a resolution to *abstain* from endless plurality, and its mere enjoyment, and to *get started*—yet the price to be paid for that resolution, is the free experience of an endless world: it demands restriction, to a singular manifestation of that world.

Perhaps we owe our terrestrial existence to some similar decision?

p. 379, *ibid.*

118. Philosophy is really homesickness—the desire to be at home everywhere.

1799, p. 491, *ibid.*

Translated from the German
by Anselm Hollo

DEDICATION: A TOKE FOR LI PO

Born in Pa-Hsi province
of Szechwan,
lived *muchos años*
at the court of the Emperor

Ming Huang, but was banished
as result of falling
in disfavor? with the Empress
Kao Li-Shih, and wandered about China thereafter

Only occasionally attached to a patron

Leading a 'dissolute' life, addicted? to drink,
writing the poems about the joys of that life

Notably wine, and women, and all the rest
and agitation of the sensational universe

Came to his death by falling
out of a boat and drowning

In an attempt to have intimate intercourse
with the Moon
in the Water

One of those of
whom it is said:

"He took the charge well"

Anselm Hollo

window air

grass

tepee

language banging clear of its wall
and a hut's seclusive around its exits

exploding motors are rather continuous

vocables skyline paths of attention

how many clover leaves transport needs
forms like crab stars old and new

fluky iron deep to skirt

light spreads you enough in what ends

and bounces from radiators

a lot of variety's in order

been

private livings huge on the hog

a terrific amount straight

Larry Eigner

How to understand things you have names for?

*

Shot at on the beaches of Rhode Island.

*

Sounds upstairs, Ron's radio, door half open,
the woman in a window walking back and forth,
noise of the fireplace. Flies in the center of the
room, bare trees, houses on which earlier a man
in yellow slicker fixed an antenna, strong wind
and waves, a single pole in the bay.

*

Traces of heaven, lines of the earth.

Barrett Watten

THE NATURE OF VISIONS

My Great-Grandmother 87 years old

waved her hand
a magic wand

on the table
over a National Geographic map of Canada

and gazed
out into I didn't know where

said: "Someday this will all be America."

Pause

then
we continued playing pinochle.

Steve Hamilton

GUACAMOLE

they usually fry flat
these things aren't alive they're tortillas
I wonder that they will come
do I hear them
anytime after four
look I'm cooking all these leaves for nothing
bends because there's still some moisture inside it
they must have went home
look at that floor
well I'm ready
no development from mess call
all yes a quiet evening at home
you and your friend there what's her name
some time in the early evening means
they never intended to come for dinner
joined that one
my guests haven't arrived
they won't be hungry
I forgot to ask them to dinner

Robert Grenier

occasions

exist they

arise i.e.

c o m e f o r t h
or run

singly

and

all

in

crowds

from crowds

enough might be

you get as

one of them is sleep

Larry Eigner

BAD SUNDAY

Longing, anger, rage

Feeling *both* desperate *and* boring

brilliant
'sunshiny'
day

I don't want it

I want
deranged jottings!

How to stop
envying
the beloved
the beloved's *life*?

Flat on back,
cursing the gods

silly head music: big cat claws
striking POW,
pow, pow

screech, dying mice

General Misery
advancing
on Saigon of the Soul

Yes, let's have
that, too.

Anselm Hollo

ON SELF-DESTRUCTION AND SUICIDE IN THE ARTS

For Bob

I'm a writer. Being Practical. Using common sense, etc., because when self-destruction and suicide come into consciousness, they make sense.

The medium we work, words, paint, wood, etc., and our responses to that medium come into collision with the force of the effect of the medium on us. In other words, the back kick of the medium, because the medium is working, too, and anyone who has made a profound commitment (that's the catch, in this essay), to any art form, knows that it kicks back. In an inner way, that the painter can't see, can only feel, and the writer can't articulate, can only feel, the sculptor can't touch, but can only feel, etc.

The medium is as organic as we are, and anyone who has put high intellect and true emotion plus inspiration and creativity into a coherent image (abstraction is as interesting as how far we let the medium go, and as we're romantics and impressionistic (we are) (some aren't), we feel our medium as fiercely or possibly more fiercely than the image, or at least as fiercely as our medium feels us. We'd better! And that isn't abstract. Abstract then, is just a word. In truth abstraction is synonymous with control.), and taken that image (or arrangement) to a point where the medium gets fresh and comes alive, the medium then, understands a far different interpretation of what really goes on, and suddenly we have encountered a force which on the one hand won't let us in to it, nor will let us loose from it.

Painter's eyes, the expression used to be. It described a gaze that was extremely intense, and fixed on something that wasn't there, and after having painted all day it took a most curious process of extrication for the painter to be able to rationally say hello, not to mention the carrying on of a conversation, or to at least see the glass of beer on the bar.

Everybody knows how hopeless writers are after they've been working.

If — paint, say — can draw a person to a point where he or she is blind *in fact* to so-called reality (upon which the assumption of everything is based), then what after all is going on? If simple colors on a sheet of masonite, or glass, can, with the aid of a brush be placed in an arrangement (or not) on a piece of canvas to a point where the painter becomes blind, what has happened? Of course the combination of intellect, vision, talent and inspiration, etc., and with each *vividly* serious in living, that combination can accumulate energetically and organically to draw the painter's vision to such a brilliant attention that the painter loses touch with reality, and this like they say, is the moment striven for! This is where every artist wants to be — to be blind! To see only ALL the possibilities of color and placement, and application — where will what go how? This is the suspense, the whole fling of the self into a contact so profound we don't know where we ARE, much less what we're doing! We're so imbued with the medium (it's what it does to us when we use it), that we take leave of ourselves!

Any creative person — read carefully, this is a little reversal — any creative person who hasn't reached this intensity in terms of a normal BRUTAL discipline, might very well destroy themselves piecemeal or, eventually (or right away), simply commit suicide, and they do so, chances are, because they know they're too limited to their consciousness. They can't reach the higher consciousness, the sublime place where one goes blind, and trips over the chair behind one, as one backs up further to see the painting better.

This is the dictatorship of art. Those who can't lose themselves in the spell of such ferocity, must inwardly die horribly anyway, so when they do in fact, it is a tragedy indeed, because the consciousness that can tell them they weren't cut out for the deep commitment is almost as fierce and hard to take as the violence in the commitment they feel humbled by, and of course I'm being romantic again. Nobody ever died because of ultra-marine blue, no matter how deeply involved (or not), they are with it. Which is of course true, although I'm tempted to make a case for Prussian blue, it is evident, purely, that the mysterious character of the medium of paint (and language) (etc), is familiar in its instant-availability-instant-refusal to a bedrock creative frustration and sense of helplessness that emotionally is key and kin to self-destruction because it defies us as it liberates us. If someone noticed on a tombstone the words:

Rose Red
I'm dead

everybody would laugh. But anybody who has ever tried to handle *that* color wouldn't — not unless the particular artist was born with it, like that kid down the street who was born with a baseball in his right hand. Kofax? (Was that his name?)

Art, the responsibility to the medium and a deep commitment is a vehemently unforgiving fact — for example if we don't work. Get loaded on Monday night, by Wednesday afternoon it's not only the shakes that got us, it's the guilt for not having worked, and the absurd artist stares out the window with a can of beer in hand, doomed in a cliché.

Well, I got drunk because I was sick of painting. (The tubes of paint across the studio don't say a word. They're just there, like Fate.)

It boggles the mind, staggers the imagination, makes reality unreal etc., and in a subtlety precious few admit, creates the strangest wishes! In the wonderment of why we have to do it, why we were selected, why we are therefore so vain because we're different and we know we are not.

But we are.

And as always, it shows in the simplest things.

Consider the mind and feelings — in terms of creativity — of Artist X. He's young, and has had success, and is well we can say fairly used to having money. Suddenly the market drops out just as his style approaches a major change, and his paintings aren't selling like they used to. This is corny, sure, but it's because it's happened so often. So, Artist X approaches his canvas, thinking many and various thoughts, some not too far from actual schemes, centering around how can I make some money and yet paint what I want? Suddenly, yet not very suddenly, but rather forcefully, feels a sharp twinge in that place he knows but can't define, but which twinges on the second day of a two-day binge, and feels like guilt? And a bit of anxiety? and what it is, of course, is his *even varying* his attention — his vision — from that absolute and most heightened blaze of vision on the canvas that will remove him from himself, in fact to such a degree that the only self is what is going on that canvas self. Nothing else — from the painting's point of view. The penultimate is merely romance.

No matter what the reason, no matter the circumstance, the painting, and the medium call the shots, and to fail that is worse than failing oneself. It's a single a sensation of despair that can be felt, oh well hell yes, surely, we return to it after a few days or hours, to begin again, because we want to, and acknowledge that we must, but it's the *must* that governs us, that drives us, and the more we work the more intense that drive becomes, and if we are honest with ourselves, at least in this respect, we can know on the most open terms that we resent it, though we admit we can't live without it, and in fact we love it.

A lethal kind of gift. . . so. The feeling is, at least to me, that I am married to and governed by, and inextricably involved with, an alien yet wonderful and amazing medium self which contains secrets and mysteries I'll never be able to unravel, but which causes me to continually create, and in its total dictatorship won't let me seriously kill myself even piecemeal, let alone in one single act, and I find that a pretty depressing truth.

Fielding Dawson

a matter
of
energy
indeterminate
does seem
most always
ahead

Larry Eigner

BIG DOG

I bring you
this head,
full of breath-
takingly beautiful
images of yourself

and put it in
your lap.

Now I breathe
more quietly.

Now you pat me.

Now I sign.

In a moment or two
I'll get up and
be a man again.

Anselm Hollo

IN THE GOBI, AND OUT OF IT

I

Being invited to the lady's large bed
delighted!, and overcome by possibilities

Was not unlike stumbling through the Gobi Desert,
under an orange moon

And then entering some ancient city,
not understanding a word

II

Puking over her feet, I complain
she's "cold". it is not
an idyllic scene. I say I feel
too old, to do any better,
and that this is, in fact, pretty good.

III

The galaxies receding make a sound:

Patter of dog feet on sidewalk—

Wherever they're going, they're going home.

Anselm Hollo

THE NECESSARY PALMS

Was the sky any closer to the ground
When the architect designed the house
To sit on top of the mountain? Was that living
At all? Did she stretch out her palms,
Knowing it wasn't necessary,
But then people hardly ever trusted a doll

In those days. Besides, she wasn't no China doll
And could take plenty. Why, you had to start at ground
Zero at that job. It was almost a necessary
Evil. People used to house
All these illusions, palms
In an oasis they pictured in living

Color. That's when they felt they were really living,
When they had this paper doll
Image of themselves. But when someone palmed
A card on them, they lost ground,
Pronto. Then the dream house
Became "Nightmare Bungalow" and whatever was necessary

Got to be the rule of thumb. But what's really necessary
When it's a question of living
Out the rest of your days facing a full house
And you're looking like a kewpie doll
With its eyes to the ground,
Pudgy, sewn-together palms

Holding a measly pair, no victory palms
In sight, necessary
Cash gone, face to look like ground
Chuck. Was their design for living
Really worth it? Even dolling
Up their faces with resolution, like a trapper in an outhouse

In winter, didn't get them out of the doghouse.
No, their sweaty palms
Stayed under their finger tips, the voodoo dolls
Were jabbed where necessary
And them that was still living
Got to be just so many coffee grounds

In the ground. Over them the palms
Went right on living, as was proper and necessary
For trees, bending to see "A Doll's House."

Michael Waltuch

FEBRUARY 16:

The first word is, of course

To Eat — manger, or The Manger, masticate and nourish, devour, rob-from-the-landscape, transform, sharpen the gums, or the teeth, fill the hole with parts of the world, stuff the anger, engender energy, manipulate fleshy objects, drain, suck, take away some of mum, milk is to eat what water is to bleed---mmmmmmm

The second word is

To sleep — Dormir, dormant, schlep, do-do, dip into silence, drown the brain, empty the wrists, multiply, rock in God, to fade away, to say goodbye world, to be smashed by space, ground under the wing of mercury, find Cinderella's shoe, to sleep is to stilskin, to three-blind-mice, to sleep is to do the no-no

The third word is

To want — Desirer, voler, volley, decimate, wah!, Wampum, to lay hands up in greed and yearning, to claim with the brain, to see, to go yo-yo-yo-yo, to call aieeee when it's too late, to fall without wings is to want to fly, to be empty of, to lack and to grasp at, to miss (as in je me manque de toi—literally, I am missing, myself, of you.)

The fourth word is

To kill — kullen, cool, keel, curl, call, cull, crack-on-the-skull, demolish, obliterate, to call yah-yah-yah-yah or ach! beautiful der killen beautifully, ugly der killen uglily, mad at mama, mad at dad, mad at someone who always had, do em in, do em out, der gotten wormies in der snout

The last word is

To love — lubere, amor, leaf, amiable, amazing grace, amazon and ammunition, lamb-of-the-pink side, la-la, to eat to sleep to want to kill to want to eat to sleep to kill to sleep to kill to want to eat to kill to eat to sleep to want to love equals to hug your luggage all the way to the country in a big blizzard to earn some bread to feed the one you is equal to

Fanny Howe

Ya bingo!

Imagination all contract
running away like a looming train
what would Emily Dickinson think
the chances can she wake now
and anyway you have those who sit
or here came more civilization
like SS creation and destruction
somewhat Hindu
with vengeance
the tragic later too much
to stand its own weight
is there travel light and fast
and living the life out

Larry Eigner

(for
Bob
Perelman)

MS. AMERICA

Lips
precisely
red
naturally
she treads
on thick
carpets
this is her
calling
charged
with a sense
of identity
that would not
see a
toothbrush
in a glass
without
saying
"My Toothbrush"

*

Every time
the door opens
she cries
"More"
her looks
do not soften
like a ribbon of
weed
because there is
an end in view,
is it,
an idea, is it
beauty, is it?

*

sails
of the world
you have
swung
around
and caught
her on
the head
bye bye
dear
bye bye
choppy
choppy
wedded
bliss
ah here she is
as good as new
& not a *drop*
of bitterness
is that it ?

*

darling
my feelings
so brisk
my lovely
' i love yous'

*

old newspaper
on sidewalk
after thawing
& freezing
after thawing

*

she is not a rose
not a lunch
no Ford cabriolet
not a Doberman
no National dish
not Miss America
not the State bird
not a Book of Dreams
open
open her
see what's left
what is there left ?
she is what's left

Josephine Clare

alive o so
read
fast
where
round
speak
think
in
the
solar
system
through
t a n k s
run on
legs
township

Larry Eigner

JET LAG: FOR TED BERRIGAN

I, Thor
lob the great hammer
of my love
into all openings, nooks and
crannies
of the universe--
or, as M. Blaise Cendrars found it,
the 'English' phrase:
"me, too, boogie!"
common usage
in 1920s
French Pacific

Anselm Hollo

GOLDEN STATE

There are twelve guys in town
who'll go all night in just their shorts.
They're going to go 41 nights this year.

This guy has nothing to say. We might as well admit
that from the beginning. Anyone looking for that crucial
wedge of information might just as well. . .

Mint smoke flaw he mused as he walked the full length
of the apartment. His boots sounded on the wood floor.
Rain dripped from his overcoat and hair in the grey light.
He noted no changes in the apartment. He did notice, from
the front window, tiles inlaid on the landing of the concrete
steps below, shapes of leaves, a dull red on white, he'd never
seen before. He might just as well have been expecting tanks.

The frog does no more than extract flour from a white
patch between its shoulders.

All nature becomes to this man a vast animated body
capable of passion and affection. Wind whistles & water
tumbles thru the gorge. Meanwhile the human mind "takes"
forms of that nature. Climbing out on the branches for a
look see.

You neither vomit nor excrete fire, and do not perish
on a funeral pyre but on a bed of flaming cotton.

He was pleased by the delicate contours and brilliant
colors until they informed him that what he was looking at
was not a fungus but a stomach wound which had become
infected.

The next morning they went up into the sky where they
became stars.

Kit Robinson

One third of the earth's surface
covered by land.

★

What goes and stays.

★

How does it look now.

Barrett Watten

Earlier dream of large swamp kingdom
which I wish to go to for purposes of
tourism. Endless, low, rubbery trees,
the monotonous same from end to end.
Dismal swamp cities and hostile in-
habitants, like Tanarive, Sumatra, etc.

Barrett Watten

GOLDEN FUTURE

Dear Cha Cha World War,

Rain falls like silk down. Frank Nitty gets out of a black
Ford. Jean Simmons' leg quivers a little. A man stretches
out. He breathes. Smoke glides. Feathers. It has been cool
all morning. The toilet leaks. They have planted a bomb in
his chest. An old woman realigns the stake of newspapers.
She is superbly dressed. The kids are playing in front.
Noreen wishes to be called "Marie". The man pours a dark
liquid into a bowl of milk. He is preparing a poison, to
poison a collie. Sun beats on concrete. I am driving an axe
into this dark liquid.

Like minded brothers and sisters get it together.

You feel music coming up your spine. Music in Java. Red
on a yellow ground.

Helicopters land on gutted building tops. Blue daze at the
horizon. Shark's tooth. A street swept with beams.

Everybody seems to be breaking up. Rog and Stella. Hinton
and Betty. Vera and Mortimer. Varek and Cagliostro. Rachel
Rhodes and Clarissa. The Charmer and the Faceless Thing.
Mr and Mrs Frank Buck. . . It's "that" time.

X says Y had "splinters in his eyes". Ashley was on cloud
nine. She was gone.

Long and wandering over the fields.

Kit Robinson

Vila Man Va— Man Hwa.

Late afternoon—light filters.
Hot tea in a glass. Pink, grey,
green diamond shaped tiles. Stucco
balustrade. Yellow grill work in shape
of squares suspended from top and
bottom by lines. Black painted
rim on which rest potted bamboo,
azalea-like small trees, a purple
spiky plant, alternating in sets
of three. Woven red and white
plastic chairs—comfortable.

Enters in to describe here. Loves
solitude of street noise and activity.
Former scenes of which all elements
remain—chained dog on the corner,
woman had swept out to keep the
streets clean. Proletarian confidence.

Some man spits from the floor
above.

Wonder if can think at all.

Woman cab driver put down by
men. Fair in dealings, yet impatient
with delay or vacillations. It must
be that—

Barrett Watten

MACAU TOWARDS CHINA 8/24

Thoughts of lyric inspirations on peaks—
wept with joy at the sight of his fatherland after
many years, composed the familiar tune. All this
activity raised buildings here, rocks heaped up,
quarries. Stones—cemetery grass. Red flags in the
water, line of poplar trees—border line of estuary.

Extremes. Red & pink
flaking masonry of colonial buildings—Colonna—
Köln—Roman models for Portuguese legions.

“Never
an imposition on history.” History as it occurs.
The buildings stood on solid foundations. Quiet
rewards for years of service.

Try make it larger
than life. Red rouge on workers’ faces. Construct
towers for telecommunications.

1000 miles from here to Thibet.

You must look at forms which are given.

They were standing on the edge of the
huge stone fortifications. They moved off and
were replaced by others.

Crowded out by others. (Now—
coming & going. Looking to response.

Barrett Watten

WINTER

I figured Tokyo. What is the northernmost city. You didn't answer, said something I didn't hear. I stood in the Arctic light.

Dimitri raised diamond-studded knuckles to his chin, the walls of the room dusted with a fine brown powder.

Owl palm blades bent stiff in the wind.

It is California, and this California detaches from other, from any imaginable Californias. Tail wind to tail wind breaking the pace. Some hunters throw up a lean-to. Soft light on faces and tricky meals.

He explained that he had been hibernating, a curious figure of speech which reminded them of the French speaking Indians at Sheboygan.

Battery history.

Which end would you say is up. Copper or wool. Water or gas.

You get to peek at the inner reaches of my soul, he said, out of control. Get the picture. A drunken stunt. The body is a picture—up front. Past you I get to a white wall.

A soft breeze that I took into my lungs from the open window beside me. It sized up to be about a six month cycle. I glossed the combinations as they cut loose and reformed, end, beginning, middle. All of my friends were there.

Kit Robinson

If this were a method one stays
awake.

Ethics explain one's position.

*

I carry my head with me wherever
I go.

Barrett Watten

TODAY'S DATE

Pick up on grand torque—suitably an abstract reference. Can—needs must—be inclusive. Those latent charms, so hard to get across. Easy—filling the day with detachable items. Day begins in haze as trucks begin to move. All around the edges of the town. The monuments encased in fog. A line of bicyclists streaming past the deserted sports palace, the marsh slipping back in over the faltering road. The contributions of day-laborers towards colonial bamboo tower. Each succeeding generation of monumentality bears its own distinct relation to air plane, street lights, noise in wind. The generations crowd each other out, until no sequence—nothing wiggles in the void. You have flat space, are seen wandering in streets now no apparent movement. The cause and linked condition you are in. Delicate balance to adjust, mainsprings, cycled out, carried down, moved around, sent ahead. You snap back, you place it, you name it, you use it, you eat. All this moves out against morning's sluggish heat. I could say now I'm here, I have arrived. The work is itself, you have an honest thing to make.

Barrett Watten

see each
thing
one
combination
or
another
possibilities
of rain

Larry Eigner

THE SIGN

Now Governor Ehrensward begins the construction of a great Fortress, on the Wolf Islands. From France, two barrels full of gold arrive, to finance the enterprise, and a surprise bonus: the lilac. With tremendous tenacity it strikes its roots into the rocky ground, and ten years later you need a good sharp edge to your spade to break them loose. From the islands it took a great leap to the mainland, and then it traversed shorter distances in a basket. It comes in two colors, white, and the other. There is no previous written record of this. It will be interesting to see how far it will get. It had to be in bloom. The Sign. And now the lilac has left.

A great number of birds, dense as a chandelier installed in a room the size of the world at a little past seventeen centuries, here, not very far from here, or perhaps the intention was another, because now it took the form of a delicate necklace of black avians, long and straight and pendulous, like gigantic hands, those of a woman who has just expressed her displeasure as to the placing of the chandelier, and it was removed again, her hands, and these must be her eyes, these, her hands, holding the chain that stretched and contracted and then raising the necklace up against the skin which had to be warm. This, is of the sign. It had to be, the end of March, the ice thin and brittle, the floes breaking up, jangling, and the cut-glass crystals in the chandeliers suspended from the main fortress building's roofbeams, for the duration of a twenty-one gun salute. Of the sign. Yet, a great number of birds per cubic kilometer arrived, from across the sea.

All of that has faded, even the poor of that time have passed on, tenaciously as they clung to their ground, the wind has abated, the time has passed, and the poor woman, wearing the threadbare material of her dress like a skin, and her lips, most evident but austere in form, and she is thin, yet drop-shaped like one into whom a child has entered.

She walks past the lilacs. The wind no longer moulds that poor thing, the cloth, against the opulent thighs. Not even on the one whose face arranges itself entirely around a birthmark, a proud

one, like a crest, as on an apple that is all face, an apple seen in profile, her face is large, and most visible. The lilacs. Best propagated from roots. Brought here from Versailles. A single plant, an Adam. And all the women of those days are at least two hundred and fifty years old, if not dead and gone.

Like the skin that is not essential at all, like the darkness that is not essential at all, like the hard wind, the storm, cannot replace the darkness for the lovers, and like love that stays green so needlessly long, like the lilacs, the knowledge that we are not, have not been, shall not be, and like the light that is not truly essential, only the candles, the melting, flaking ice, like the door that is opened so many times, and like the room, this story has already arrived at your again being merely the book you put down on the slab of stone you were sitting on, the book you stop reading. It was, perhaps, a sun-dial.

No court-martial could tersely explain why you have four hands, how they must have sprung from you, and are you not therefore a monster?, but no, no sign in the world can make me change my mind, there are four. Butterflies and flowers, embroidered on your brassiere. True as the closing eyes that must open again, you had them, you had. And there was one to close the eyes, and one to raise the finger to the lips, and one to put his palm over your mouth, and one to unbutton you, and one to catch the material as it rustled down, and one who was all outstretched fingers. And in that room you became a door.

As death excites the senses, a schematic word, as if we were constructs of materials, postures, and could be rebuilt from blueprints like a house, as if this were a play, things that exist only as replicas, so dumbstruck you can hear the music play, and as the bathwater, soon as you are out of the tub, rises up to where you were although it has no hands, no voice, were there not three of you, three women who passed through here together, and suddenly the world has turned in such a way that you who just stood there leaning against the wall now see the door as an aperture in what I call the floor, and two walls are still walls, only it is the ceiling and floor are walls now, and one wall is the ceiling, with skylights in it, and down below there is a special

trapdoor. But the candles, the crystals around them, they are still there, though I refuse to imagine how. Butterflies, flowers on the bra, and four hands, you have. And as, and as, and as.

The wind describes motions through the trees and against the walls, it is the gigantic image of your breath, when the eyes draw close, and the shadow on the wall will breathe your image, gigantic, when the candle draws close, your image which is large on the wall, and the wind turns, down against the ground, it describes the same motions, in the air, against the ground, but yes, it cannot enter, it has nowhere to go but this season, fall.

In the room, she suddenly takes off her sweater, a light weave of wool, that cold, outside, she has her bra on tight, feels flushed, as after a long walk. The lilac wants to proliferate, the figure, to repeat itself.

And as a woman, with something wrong, just some little thing in there, like a name, her name, I am a man, and what I like about things is their slowness, the way the water rises to a boil, the difference between birches when they move, up and down, like you, and pinetrees.

From the rain he seeks shelter, from the woman's fury, he flees outside. The roofs provide the drumbeat. One by one, he walks through the rooms. Grief does not enter him immediately. It bides its time.

The years are your heartbeats, staccato as those in a new murderer's chest, the time you met her, no further back at all. She is within reach of an outstretched hand, and if only Time would reverse, you would meet her, embrace her, and part from her for good. And the way one puts aside a good book, just for

a moment, not wanting to read on, is how one's life is brought to a halt when the Universe drives, full speed, through the Dragon's tail.

Paavo Haavikko
From: *The Trees, All Their Green*, 1966

Translated from the Finnish
by Anselm Hollo

A NIGHT OUT AT BUFFALO BILL'S

When she turned eighteen, someone asked the ravishing beauty why she adopted such a cold and disdainful attitude towards all the personable young men who were courting her: this was her reply:

"It happened when I was ten. One evening, my dear father and his friend, the poet, decided to take me to see Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show! They made such a fuss over me, I felt quite elated. The great big arena was so bright under the arc-lights, and there were clouds of gunsmoke drifting across it, and the American band was playing up-beat marches. It was wonderful. The show lasted almost three hours, and Daddy thought he should take me home before the very last attraction, but the poet said No, no, you can't have Elizabeth miss the three Circassian horsemen! So we stayed, and there they came, as if borne on the wings of a storm, standing upright in short stirrups, their arms spread out wide, not a pair of reins in sight, so incredibly free and proud, simply floating above the flying horses. . . I got up from my seat, I grabbed hold of Daddy's hand. . . And ever since then, you know, I haven't been able to really take a liking to any man."

Peter Altenberg (Austria)

Translated from the Austrian German
by Josephine Clare & Anselm Hollo

From "Marchen des Lebens", 1919

If memory were only in the head

(do not sleep more than once
with any one

the body is a stupid red neck
you try to reason
bang! comes the fist
down on the table
the red neck sees red:
— get me that body now!

the body is a crabby baby
that wants
wants with a vengeance
that body
the baby thinks that body
is the bottle
the baby goes on a fast
the baby says — i die on you
you'll be sorry

the body sulks
you put a thousand miles between
you & that body
the body keeps on begging
for that body
you give the body a body
you give it some *fine* body
the body is cunning
it wants not this body
it repulses it
but wants that body
that body from back there

the body has tantrums
almost suffocates
gasps

It's embarrassing

Josephine Clare

Mss welcome accompanied by SSAE's.

Bob Perelman
60 Kinnaird Street
Cambridge
Massachusetts 02139

