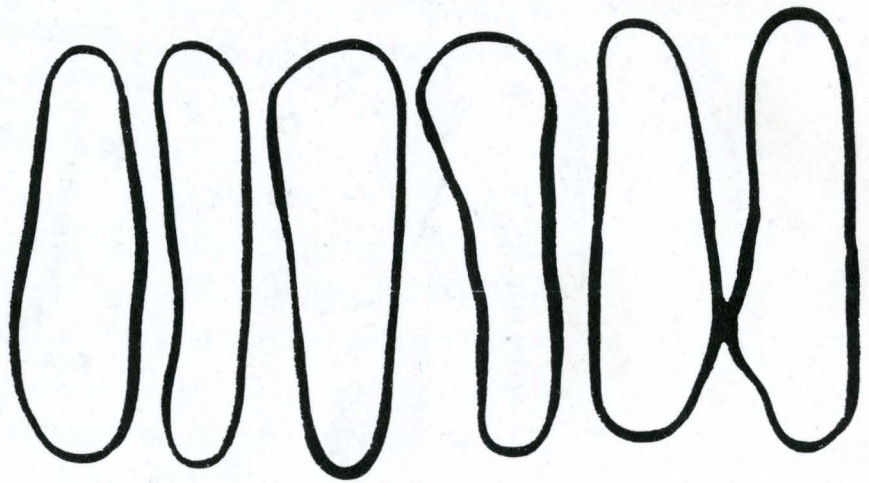


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(an) OBJECT

shining
in the cold

while memory
completes
its drawing

and yet I am so hungry
to walk in you. The road
being not merely poetic
but a poem.

TALITHA, KUM

"I was so hungry
to be hungry"

for softness, slumber,
poetry, a slice of melon.

Like people
with their canine teeth
and feral ways ...

If only we were just
head and feet
(thought and direction)
but in the stifling room
I think of sex.

It is too difficult to sleep,
too early to be about anything
(thoughts captured?)

and yet I am so hungry
to walk in you. The road
being not merely poetic
but a poem.

CAESURA

We must know doubt
if there is doubt.

Where it is located,
the size and shape of it.

What it presses against.
And we must know silence too.

Settle ourselves in it
apart from desire's

bridle, harness, whip.

That is how it must be
if we are ever to find our way
out of this painted landscape.

No, Universe -- that lily
is not going to open today.

your favorite body
talking about photo
poetry events at New York, N.Y.
and all points in between
sex
theater and dance
are mentally
on the street
but also at home
of high risk show
I'd like to attend the following

from WELCOME IN SOHO

what about the best in
psychic action
& the elements of any
performance

how are you
to respond to
monologue and
sensual
improvisation

a double connection
will be exhibiting under the
deductions systems
of self-sculpture

body poem
waiting for evidence

words
photo
music
video
sex
water
love

specialist
of high risk show

if you care action

i need

no cut in

no credit card necessary

tactic is blind

the games are here

run through it

how to simply use

consider

children's work

event changes someone

just a small scene

currated by language

to see the mixed

exciting results

demonstration of

little tact

your favorite body

talking about

poetry events at New York, N.Y

and all points in between

theater and dance

are mentally

on the street

but also at home

i'd like to attend the following

from (Palace of Reptiles)

Doubtless

The Painter stands
before the sculpted Purple
a Bird
beak thru hoops of
dim (that un-so), the Black
on Elm's meandering -

He moves
to stir down each hanging bag of sand
with a long
Smeared
Mourning
for Bringing in the
Knife & Axe

& each spiked bag
a Startled Sugar

Scrapes the Hearers
in a
noose
of the Culture Described -

He moves to strap the faunal & avian
Crow-Crow Crawl to his
melanic beating the sand up
to a spittle of
Impact
Attentioning
to Exist

He clenched w/the melt of closely, the Gorilla,
again Birds, Dawns on his back, his arms reaching like this -
a Sponge to Disrupt a vast
Weeping - a pod, a pollen
Fetched handful,
Rooted

The Entrails
a bundle to the Eyes & Seeing by which he
armours & treads
his own Blood -
Earth its Loud Inborn Dance
as music is to
Called to Black Stone
he crawling, crawling w/his pannier
He a Ritual
Breath on the Run
from History -

In the timbered smokes, its colour,
its abutment is guessed. There he measures & scrys the
sticks. The long, long sticks. And begins to build
the Curlew Leap from his mouth -
a Pale massiveness of Pipe -
Thistle
Cornelian
Pulsing & Grave he
Oxen cloth of works -

in the West

it Occurs,
Consider.

The Poet steps forward, pulls the sculpted
centre away from the Bird, to where she
stands,
3 & 13,
in her Red Season
of the South

Cradling Impacts
Out-Staring
Widened, she

HER
OPEN
SIPS OF UTTERANCE
HER CLUNG CLUNG HEATS

SO THAT I WAS

UP-
TURNED

ROOT
PICKING CARRION,
A BARNACLE TO THE WALL,
BIRTHING THE WORDS I FELL THROUGH
BEATING THE WAY -
ITS VERY - BUT NO -
IT COULD HAVE BEEN ANYONE'S
AXING OUT
OR
DANCING
THE INNER PRONG
TO A KINDLING

OF
HARE
KNIFEWISE -

HER HEART -

HER SKIN'S TALLED CARNAGE -
THE SHADOWED SIDE - I
COLDER & SORRYING'S CURTAIN WOULD HAVE -
SHE LOST, LOST, LOST IN -

ZERO.WHOSO.MADDERING.

CRAW.CRAW.CRYSTAL -
TENDERED FLOOD OF KIN -
5 CROWS

HER TONGUES'S ROWAN
TO THE HOUSE
BROKEN, A SIMILARLY LONG FLESH
CONTORTED
COLOURING IN THE STORIES
W/A CRAYONFUL OF FIST
OXYGEN MENTAL
& A BOOK
BOOKS
IN
BOTH
HANDS

HIDDEN OUT FROM
UNDER THE TABLE'S CLOTH
SO LIKING PETROL TO BURN
TO MY OWN BOSS & KEY -
SICK BERRY-FLIPS
WOLF LEAPING
HISS
THRU THE RING I NOW EXHALE
AT A THRESHOLD MORE IMPOSSIBLE
THAN THE BREATH OF
HER ONE
HALF-OPEN-BLUE-FLAX
PULSE
TAPPING
THE OCTAGON VELVET
CIRCLE
OF
IMPAIRMENT.

2 HARES,

A TUMULT OF HOLDING -
SHE-BELLY-SPLIT
DON'T.NOT.NOT.DON'T.NOT.NO -
TO THE WOUND'S DIAGONAL
DISPARATE HARMINGS -

AN AGGREGATE UNSEWING -

THRU WHICH I,
STILL STILLS OF BROKEN LETTERS,
SHAY.SHAY.OCKT.
CHANK & STROMBUS
FINNED NO -
& MOUTHING AT THE
FEN-
SOAK
& TOSSING
DROWN OF ANIMAL -
SHE
FISTED, COPPER VESTED LANTERN
LIT NEW PENNY,

A PINK SORREL
FLUTED, UNHEAVIED
OF ME -

A HARE
DANCING -

& ALONGSIDE,
A LITTLER RODENT,

I, SKULL
OF UNSWEETS, POINT &
CLAW OF PIER & DREAM WHAT
SINGING

PROMPTED,
ANDS LOST,
AS BOATS.

The poet steps back -
Else.
Hiero - Sui - Alpha -

Flame -

In the East -
Opposite the Painter,
the Dancer begins to thirst w/her sticks
the same day. She too starts
to sift mobile & rapidly
Part-Song
all the Yellows at once
in her sleep behind the trees
a powder
to yarrow the stars -
a Bees-Nest curves on the Dandelion reaches
of her ambulant shore

Her family of Horses

Sing
as she fishes
feeding
fistfuls thru the wire of memory's
Angel frock set fire to.

Ducks Beak Out from her turquoise lake.

from BROOD

palindromatic bildungsroman

the zen of stet

an asignifying matrix

a chronic remedy

A HARE
DANCING -

& ALONGSIDE,
A LITTLER RODENT,

I, SKULL
OF UNSWEETS, POINT &
CLAW OF PIER & DREAM WHAT
SINGING

PROMPT true to strangers
ANDS LOST,
AS BOATS.

vertical hold

The poet steps back -
Else.
Hiero - Sui - Alpha -

irreducible survivalism

Flame -

let me ask you this

In the East -
Opposite the Painter,
the Dancer begins to thirst w/her sticks
the same day. She too starts
to sift mobile & rapidly
Part-Song
all the Yellows at once
in her sleep behind the trees
a powder
to yarrow the stars -
a Bees-Nest curves on the Dandelion reaches
of her abulant shore

Her family of Horses

Sing
as she fishes
feeding
fistfuls thru the wire of memory's
Angel frock sat fire to.

Ducks Beak Out from her turquoise lake.

THE NEW PRAGMATISM

The philosophy that says
home site
is so very exciting.
But not exciting enough
that it helps you write.
historical pause
my new thing just by saying
this. Can the new philosophy
rid me of such superstitions?
hermetic displacement
It's been a real conversion
experience and I'm glad to
have been able to share it
gestalt montage
fell off me like you know,
years or something. The new
me exists now, at this moment:
the philosophy did this for me.
Wow. The past went thatta way.
The future melts before my eyes.
I'm here, the first day in
a long time. Good. Glad you
could be here too. Not so lonely
or longing anymore. And
comfortable too. Thanks.

begging to borrow

psychoanalagous

a deified telos

here in the future

THE NEW PRAGMATISM

The philosophy that says
there is no philosophy
is so very exciting.
But not exciting enough
that it helps you write.
I hope I haven't jinxed
my new thing just by saying
this. Can the new philosophy
rid me of such superstitions?
I was stuck. Now I'm free.
It's been a real conversion
experience and I'm glad to
have been able to share it
here with you. Old thought
fell off me like you know,
years or something. The new
me exists now, at this moment:
the philosophy did this for me.
Wow. The past went thatta way.
The future melts before my eyes.
I'm here, the first day in
a long time. Good. Glad you
could be here too. Not so lonely
or longing anymore. And
comfortable too. Thanks.

STAGED PERFORMANCES

There is nothing real or true about this. It is a totally staged performance, and the more phoney the better. Only problem is that for all it's staginess, we haven't any stage. This is a poor, poor form. Yet I'm faking this too. It took thousands of dollars just to get to this point, where you and I, reader, could confront each other on this page, gearing up for mind to mind combat. What is it that makes us hate each other so? Is it that we just don't believe in the same things? Yet something forced us together, some Marshall Tito, a presence in back of this page who controls all things. It's spooky. But I guess it *still* doesn't mean that we have to learn to get along.

IF PEOPLE HAD A SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

is an outrageously meaningless statement. It wasn't originally. I ripped it off almost randomly from some old science fiction story and in the context of its original page it meant lots. But now, up there at the top of this particular page, it's just a horizon line of big stony letters. The words in this poem grow angry, saddled with the burden it lays upon them, the embarrassment. They would like to incinerate this title, like a pile of books for which they no longer have any use. It's the emptiness that offends more than any specific association. It reminds some of the Statue of Liberty, but others disagree. The Statue, they hold, did make for a better life and a better deal for at least some. Those words up there, eight words of gloom, they don't do anybody any good.

from Afterimages

need to give latitude often silence and/or

Virginia said she likes the word *breach*

whydon'tfliesdielikeflies

[.....To speke of wo that is in mariage.....]

Men may devyne and glosen up and down

But wel I woot expres withoute lye]

142

.....] all this I see

.....] plainly] now

at this point Paul

mentioned that

sunbeams are

extracted from

cucumbers in

Gulliver's Travels

....] all th

oint P

nb

CO.....INCIDENTS

Uncle Herbie's last words: *ten o'clock*

but only one etc.

(thik'it) /ME thicket (unattested) < OE oiccet

[thiccet, thicket] < oicce [thicce] thick. tegu-

Thick. Germanic*thiku.[Pok.tegu- 1057.]

naturessoftgeome try 's trees

riddle of the three sleeves

natures/rin/secycle

culturess/pin/cycle

TIGHT LITTLE GREY CURLS

cycl

GR

[th] these [are] the things that made us human

S-curve

S-hook

th-

[1 1 2 3 5 8 13.....

lurk lucktool ladle saves

non sexist naming of hurricanes (saves)

any of various pigeon-like birds

any of various pigeon-like lurk

any of various pigeon-ladle saves

pigeon lucktool sex various nonist

Incidence:

dar muir merr-cend.....over mad-head sea

urk

on-ladle

sea

Lana: Please machine give piece of chow

(thanatoast)

we will be working in teams

c r e e p i n g l o g o p h i l i a

his postumous grape jokes

her cruel but unusual

((justwhatis(was)(were)the rhetoric(s)ofdispassion))

[.....she then.....si.....]other fragments of uncert
ain location 37, 43 (like VII 4)(later part of III?)

ustwhat

disp

from Various Victims

Darien teams up with a female cop to prevent a pair of time-traveling thieves from stealing priceless jewels just after the restaurant closes for a week Jack and Furley are locked in the freezer by a burglar they surprised Oliver contends with a new kid who's stealing the limelight Dorothy's all giggly because her 11th grade english teacher needs her help in writing a book review Mitch clashes with a stern police commander as he struggles to rescue Stephanie and Summer from an escaped psychopath three women and a teenage girl hire a boozy guide for a weekend mountain trek only to find themselves hunted by fugitive white supremacists who have taken over the mountain Jack's efforts to help patch up a friend's shaky marriage only increases her suspicious husband's jealousy the kidnapper of a japanese banker's daughter demands that the man's chief of security turn himself over with the ransom in order to settle an old score the project on a home damaged by Hurricane Andrew concludes with a tour Duncan walks an emotional tightrope when he's reunited with a girlfriend a circus performer whose planned robbery may leave him the fall guy the team goes undercover to tail a spy who intends to sabotage the launching of a defense satellite three young orphans strike gold in an abandoned mine and become involved with greedy but inept outlaws a mystery writer wants to solve a jazz musician's murder a boy who witnessed a murder but refused to discuss it with police decides to confront the killer himself Trampas and his fellow stage passengers face danger at a ferry crossing stranded they must prepare to face an unknown attacker an amusement park is the setting for a jewel robbery and subsequent chase a fishing expedition turns into a manhunt when colonel Decker shows up at the Team's lakeside retreat a

marine leads the fight against pirates and romances a countess mishaps of a high-school senior who takes along her three suburban charges to rescue a friend stranded in downtown Chicago pretty Liberty Kane still casts a spell over former beau Heath Barkley--who lets the lady lead him right into a murder charge Skippy becomes Mallory's welcome companion when the two get locked in the basement while the Keatons are away Alex and James start a tutoring service and fall for the same client Pierce Brosnan must stop a train carrying an atomic bomb Quint agrees to guide the Neff family across a hazardous trail to Oregon Derek agreed to marry Mimi vandalism interrupted romance between Terrence and An Li Dizie realizes that Tad is right about Palmer using Brian to keep them apart in New York Cassie and Frank get more info on Christy who was distressed to realize that they were being sneaky Felicia get help and Jenna get out of the hospital but her Dean's pain endured Paulina meets the new Gory ground-speaker they vied for Hutch Margo wants to know why Tom keeps information about Barbara from her while Emily enjoys a romantic prelude with Brian in Italy and spotted Lilly in Rome Kal and Kim find that Jeffrey is embezzling from WOAK and Ridge spills the beans to Taylor about the problem with Brooke and the relief formula just to get him off his back meanwhile Brooke thoroughly enjoys a date with an old beau Brad coerces Sheila into turning over the negative to him except for the result there is nothing very positive about Marlena's pregnancy test as she isn't even sure who the father is Lawrence gives Taylor an assignment silence Mitch Sami recalls now where she met Ludo who feels controlled by his mother Kate Sean Mac and Felicia aid in Jessica's ruse to nail Brian Paul and Jenny relax after she told her story about the affair on TV but Stacy and Marco are plotting to keep the heat on while Dominique tries to persuade Tony to discharge her Alan's efforts to revitalize his relationship with Monica fall flat in the aftermath of Harold's public disgrace the Lewises stay by their patriarch's heart

berated Roger but Jenna defends him and Gilly and Hamp's marriage is shaken to the core later Billy rallies Harold to get back at Roger Mallet closes in on Buzz Nick breaks up with Eve after Shana reveals that Leo is the father of her child he confesses to Ava that he had feelings for Shana but Ava is determined to hold on to Leo at all costs Isabelle refuses to help Cooper with Ally's medical expenses unless he married Ally Mortimer is in mortal danger until saved by Renee Hank Alex and Willma who reveal that Carlo and Mortimer are twins Dorian continues to fear a biopsy Alex gives dirt on Cain to Cord whose outbursts scare at the family Victor breaks Niki's heart by ending their romance he also seeks to prevent Ryan from getting any of the Newman fortune in the divorce settlement Kay suspects that Jill is pregnant but Paul senses that something is wrong with April and flies to New York Arcane is on a desperate quest to find a colleague's secret youth formula and Archie schemes to increase his insurance claim for a small fire by vandalizing his own house Jam's cousin a U.S. college-basketball star comes to Chicago to recover from an injury and a student who's enamored of Laura dreams that she's murdered in a hotel Dan may be soon a dead man when he breaks up with the daughter of a crime boss who wants Dan to reconsider Rudy does household chores to pay off a debt to her father while Theo engages in a friendly rivalry while Dick is held captive and tortured by David Gul Capt. Jelly infuriates the crew with his callous behaviors and endangers the Enterprise by planning a first strike on the Cardassians Steve has photos that might contain clues to the murder of a fashion designer

Sianne Ngai

from SOME BRIEF HISTORIES OF TIME

to make two clocks agree myself and
the lucky moment "DO I HAVE IT
COMING TO ME?" even to the name
but excluding the name how near its
place

from now

blighted own

the black car idles
before the garage starts
to yawn.

radio inside it
could write on the entire block
to vibrate
that way glass
or I feel
plugged as
until the
a swallow
by the
ranch-style house

city city which not victory is yet
revenge though the tongues dropped
manna "DO I HAVE IT COMING TO
ME?" sequester this mind for open
war

chestnut backed
chickadee
no larger than
the hummingbird

transient
patterns of access
as natural

recombined corn
taller than anyone
anxious with orange tennis

bulb of a helmet
atop motorcoter rider
bright red

stiff-backed walk
of a tweedy old man
the light's against him
no traffic in sight

kid steps on a curb
as if walking a tightrope

from NON

Blighted ovum

the black car idles
before the garage door starts
to yawn,
radio inside it
causing windows on the entire block
to vibrate
that way glass hums
or I feel it in my teeth
plugged as they are into bone of jaw
until the vehicle enters
& is swallowed
by the basement
of the green
ranch-style stucco house

chestnut backed
chickadee
no larger than
the hummingbird

shrill burst
of a jay's cackle

transit routes generate
patterns of access
as natural

recombinant corn
taller than anyone
sunset orange with toxins

bulb of a helmet
atop motorscooter rider
bright red

stiff-backed walk
of a tweedy old man
tho the light's against him
no traffic in sight

kid steps on a curb
as if walking a tightrope

whatever can to sight or thought be
formed in my face excuse "DO I
HAVE IT COMING TO ME?" years
of intention flavored like candy

Engage the page

we feel your freedom

young woman in laundromat
reading, frowning into the book
Story of O

plastic notches
in the back
of the one-size
fits all
baseball cap

Virginia rail
lives in the reeds
of the weedy marsh,
is larger than a phalarope

rowboat alone
on a small lake
windless day
boom box blasting

Tilted bank of solar panels
atop flat-roofed apartment complex

short stubby handlebars
signifies mountain bike

sweatsuit as formal wear
this must be California

cylinder of ink refill
is a nude pen

that grainy feel
of your shaved legs

folds of flesh
on the bald man's neck

Skyline of a small city:
the highrises are there
but not in such quantity
as to acquire a sense
of their collective shape.
That long last tone
at the end of
a Chinese sentence.

Painter's pants
immaculately pressed.

Oak trees
in the warehouse district.
Mack truck cab
rolling without a bed.

change gears
this high in the mountains.

In the dream the boat
sways in the high sea and
at the far end
is a giant sphere, the ball
rolling in the rough
weather

in your direction
so that you must choose
either to be crushed or to dive
into the impossible water.

Powdery filament tissue
of old spider web.

Floor mats on the sidewalk -
he's cleaning his car.

Yellowing jade
needs a larger pot.

Clutch up on the bat
to quicken the swing.

A film
of the filming
of a feature,
to serve

as filler
for late night

TV. Therefore
conjunctions stitch the seam.
Gracefully disabled.

Thumbingbird.

Unable with that hand
to close a fist

consequent

to a medical experiment
participated in as a student
as easy way
to earn money.

Heavy
pause
on

every

word.
Slaves of
aviation.

Wisp of dust
 tumbleweeds
 across hardwood floor.
 Six-sided solid,
 the signified
 always
 faces the street.
 Poem with a shelf life
 of just eighteen months.
 Double beep of quarter hour.
 When suddenly
 that part in you hair
 widens like a grin.
 Medical waste
 floats ashore
 of increasingly cluttered brain.
 My friends,
 I am that man.
 The flan
 is the body.
 Titles
 are often misleading,
 subtitles seldom are.
 Checking
 out the driver
 in the next car
 through my rear view mirror
 at a stop light
 (one never sees
 the lower body),
 thin ebony man
 with a long white beard,
 tricolor rasta cap,
 high sharp cheekbones
 that cause the eyes to recede,
 I decide he's a gentle person.
 Rolls of roofing
 turned upright,
 black cylinders atop the gravel.
 There comes a moment
 whenever
 I read my poem when
 it is apparent
 it is terrible
 I'm a fraud,
 no one would ever
 choose to hear
 or to read this,
 but then this moment of panic passes.

PROGASM

for Harriet Beecher Stowe

Unfathomable mud
 Sublime depth roads are made of
 And Straightway essayeth to ride upon
 In picturesque positions
 With diverse chasms
 Of black mud intervening
 Loam Everlasting
 Over such a road as this
 Making moral reflections
 As continuously as circumstances
 Making a great muster among the horses
 Tumbling promiscuously onto the front seat
 He considers himself
 Fairly extinguished

With compound shakes they begin to flatter themselves
 Out of sympathy with our readers' bones
 At last with a square plunge
 Outside commotion

A powerful bad spot

Bad spot bad

The Piece of "Cake"

be and needles wine
n experiment is tha
ty, it is a little
mussed ash, ash wh
sign
s extra a hat pin s
e result was yellow

foolish number. A
akery can tease, al
we had it met. It
ne an acean any whe
recollection green

The Vociferant

A concept of grace appeared quaking in the sunlight
Crushing local color

A figure rose against the horizon
Fitting itself exactly
To its contours

The words gather between us
Even as we speak

The devil we know
Gets even better

Stephen Ratcliffe

from Signatures

N

after deer along the road, when the first face one sees in the morning
means to think of someone long enough to keep one awake, drive the car
feeling one whose eyes in the back seat one can watch (mirror) driving
having wanted to say one hadn't slept all night, when waiting for that
how someone can think of the person being as far away as the back seat
(driving) in a car, how one would feel if the other hit a tree or died
sitting beside such a person, wind gusting in the lee of volcanic rock
how the whole view at that point flows in one's mind, a scale of noted
from one to ten being the surprise of knowing one is there (intuitive)
as if one's hand on the clavicle of that person might feel it, meaning
(named) instead of the letter in knowing the one whose hand it touches
arriving there, how one will think of such a person only after driving

one who will be driving the road next to the other, how the orange itself (tape) will be peeled by the person who walks to the car meaning (listen elsewhere to have been the end of the story before such an event, how one opens the orange, pulls each section as if it were the second word spoke driving, where the car is going faster than one who is walking (far away in blue that is reflection, what was thought to be someone else's meaning itself on the table in the dark (seen), how the person wanted to be found after walking to the car at the end of the sentence in which orange meant to be peeled, the taste of fingers in a mouth the second one hears (tape don't go meaning the coincidence of being in a place one thinks to happen instead of the letter (itself) the person reads between lines, the desire (simultaneous) to hear the tape and peel the orange in that car (driving one sees before the person, who is meaning somehow to be thinking of that

someone who thinks of the blue dress, the person wearing it, thinking that each sound of the instrument, notes on strings lined like tape on the page how one contains the passion that can't be known, how the pronoun suggests the person walking out the door, the eye that sees what was spoken meaning how it is to be talking in such a space described as the orbit bodies make against pressure, how that momentum drives the thing itself called forward the other side of the tape what might be called (sound) ring on the finger (depending) silver, the ear itself from which the other object was hanging having turned up in lines about the person, how one knows what is going on as if the picture could bring it back, whose image appears by the red door going out, speaking of the person who had meant to be reading in the chair in terms of one who was formal, the black dress from the 50's meaning that once (twice) what wasn't spoken meaning the look someone means to be given

from Ice Cubes II

the
current
year
will

bring
you
much
happiness

I
can
believe
it

birds
above
transmission
shop

on
South
Van
Ness

.

sleep
deprivation
creates
a

sense
of
being
visited

by
someone
or
something

but
not
being
home

THOUGHT
contains
non-contiguous
blocks

I
don't

know
what

weapon
it
is
that
the
once
outside
your
doors

will
help
my
girlfriend

give
her
best
performance

.
birds
wind
knocks
paper
cup
no
off
edge
of
ledge

it
bounces
and
rolls

in
a
wide
arc

scudding
against
the
concrete

.

dreams
seduce
memories
snag

leaves
tremble
water
collects

in
beads
on
leaves

.

I
find
my
words
it
have
outlived
their
own
outside
meaning
which
is
vanity
help
but
do
walk
standing
out
against
summer
air

wind
knocks
paper
up
off
edge
of
ledge



I
find
my
words

have
outlived
their
own
meaning
which
is
vanity

but
do
walk
standing

out



Gary Sullivan

LITTLE BOOK FROM THE WAY

(In response to Robert Raskin's "If Poetry Leaves
Too Much To Be Imagined" and Alan Davies' "Word
Your Mother" (1971))

Poetry exists
Whatever's
Word for

Rhythm, melody
Where it breathes
Using words

Light, dark
Tone, color
Love, hate

To say, to sing
Poetry, to write
Revolution

Version, copy
I know, I know
Hill, valley

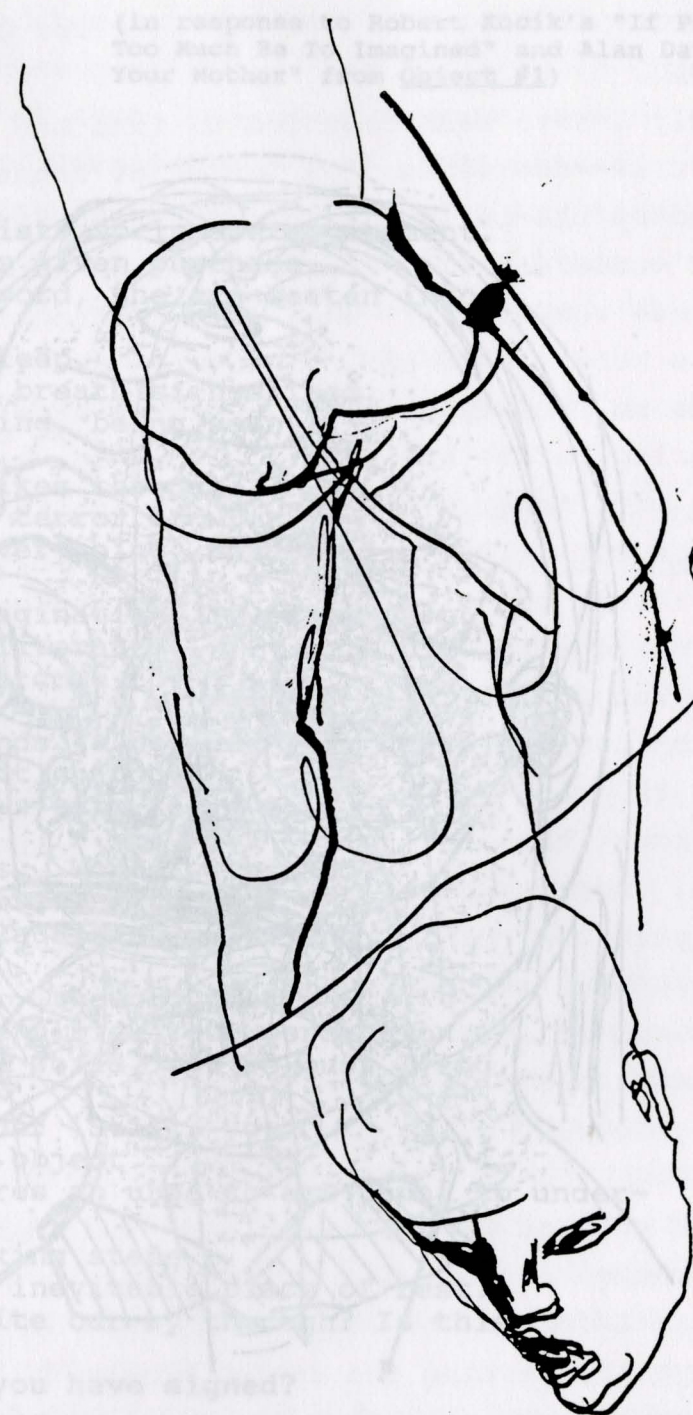
Into history
Their words, their
You are, you are

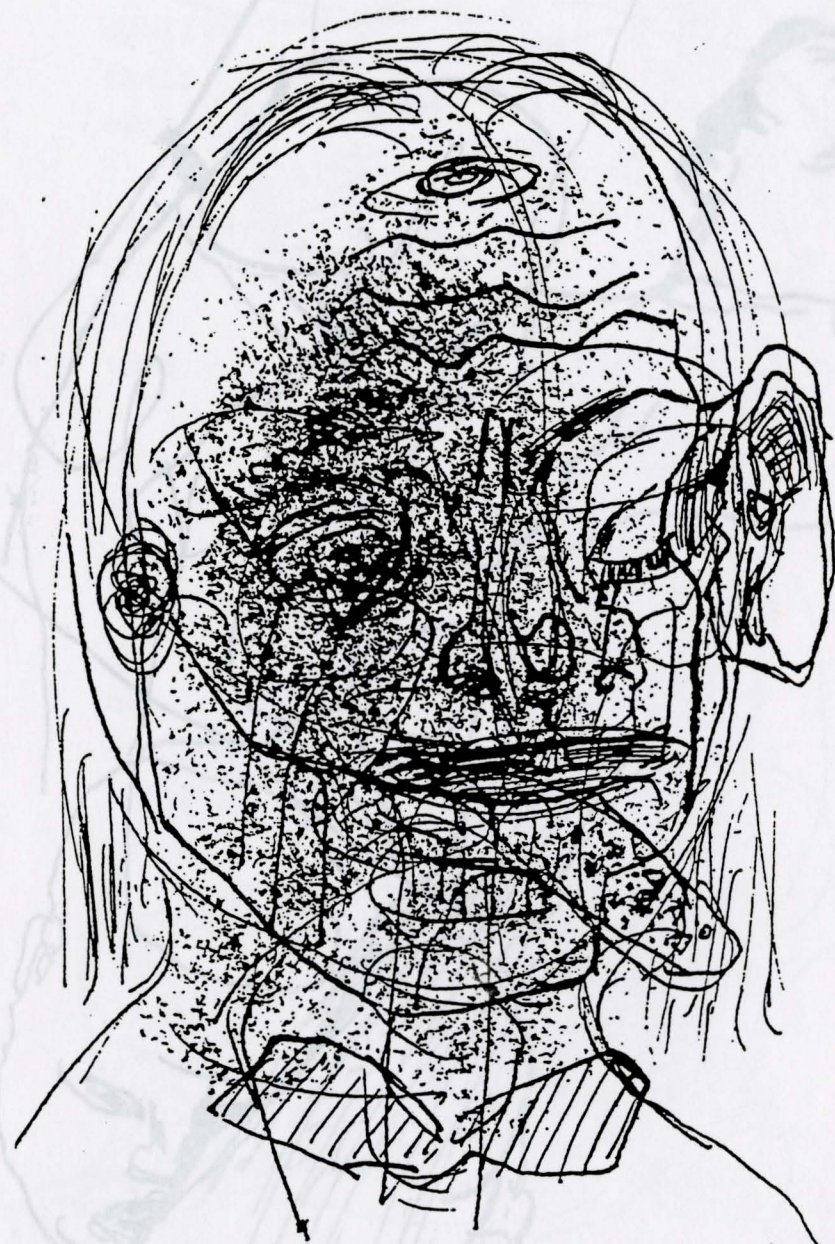
I feel, I feel
Incoherence
Is not, is not

On its face
This, and that
Manufactures

Stand, take
Toward an end
Can we write

our book you have signed?





Gary Sullivan

LITTLE BOOK FROM THE SKY

(in response to Robert Kocik's "If Poetry Leaves
Too Much Be To Imagined" and Alan Davies' "Word
Your Mother" from Object #1)

Poetry exists to impose government.
Whatever's given purchase
Word for word, the eye beaten into

Rhythm. Sleep,
Where its breath's inscribed.
Using, being, being seen

Light strikes through
The clean terror of writing
Leaving everything, nothing

To the imagination. If things rot,
Poetry obliterates.
Revolution come to

Various ends. & because I am a subject
I know little about,
Hidden laws warm the eye

Into focus. Words withstand
Their material defect.
You are plausible, my friend

& familiar, though utterly
Incomprehensible. Your perception
Is not the world, you're just lying

On its side. Still, you
This, any object
Manufactures an urge to act upon, to under-

Stand, taking steps
Toward an inevitable place of rest.
Can we write our way through? Is this

Our book you have signed?

"LATELY I HAVE BEEN . . ."

(for Object)

Lately I have been troubled to find how uninterested I am in reading verse--new verse, the sort that comes into our possession encumbered by the obligation to assist in the delivery. Reading, I interrupt ourselves with numerous, often unanswerable questions. What is this work about? What is its purpose? Its worth? How make sense here? What am I lacking in skill, or presence of mind, that keeps me from appreciating what so many others have worked so hard to bring before the public? What can I lend to the effort, to help this work "seek a home, coziness in the world" (as Larry Eigner once put it)? For when we read the poetry of our contemporaries, especially their earliest books, we are bringing into the world something new and hopefully alive, not simply for ourselves but for the poet too, whose inscribed tears and smiles betoken the human obligations of our art. These responsibilities we take with great seriousness, and it is thus less our own disappointment than that of verse itself which renders our task so thankless. Because how verse participates in our lives determines in large part the meaning and value of the labor that produced it. And who can bear the guilt of disappointing, if not failing, what comes forward in love or need? In fact it's a pain-laden spectacle --and as with the homeless we begin to turn away, letting a self-protecting cruelty guide us.

These musings were begun in part by reading Lee Ann Brown's Crush, a keepsake of a book which so won me with its playful self-regard that I forgot the responsibilities of reading and simply enjoyed myself, letting the words join me in an articulation that the poet generously occasions, that we (the readers) might share in her "enthusiasm," her "tenderness and dancing."

A crush is a little bit infatuation, attraction, desire,

admiration, innocent belief, something temporary perhaps, quickly gotten over, serious nonetheless the instant it does last, and noteworthy because it often doesn't last and so goes unspoken. In times past, youth and beauty have been subjects of verse for sharing precisely these qualities. Lee Ann Brown's Crush conveys the gooey pleasures of such in a sweet Gertrude Stein-inflected recitation (by way of Bernadette Mayer), "Polyvalent, with many openings." And in its deliberately imitative way this slight exercise makes good on the promise of verse, a promise which despite our infatuation with novelty isn't newness, but knowledge--in Lee Ann Brown's case the knowledge of love.

I say these things not because they happen
but because many things happen.

If there must be newness, this poem seems to say, let it be the newness confusion brings among the saving same old graces of the heart:

Reinvent love.
Can we reinvent love.
Why reinvent love.
Crush as a way of knowing.
It is the only way of knowing.
It is a good way of knowing.

After the diversion of this simple poem had passed I wondered at the dormant love of verse momentarily rescued from drudgery. What values or demands or returns had Lee Ann Brown brought to the fore, I wondered, that so much other new work eschews? I waited, in the manner of Cinderella, for the return of the charm. And it soon came, this time as prose--Thad Ziolkowski's "The Poetics of Poetics," (included in this issue of Object) which arrived in the mail in the aftermath of the Buffalo poetry conference, not so much a response to that event as an echo.

In his own verse Ziolkowski is a Roman, not of the empire but of the republic, beholden to and yet suspicious of the Greeks, by turns witty and martial, but still democratic. Here, with brusque

intelligence, and with an almost sentimental pessimism so pleasurable it finally becomes optimism, he delineates exactly the in- and exhale of hope the reading of our contemporaries has become--the frustration of perceiving the lie we want to believe, and which our critical sophistication won't let us believe, the "bar of perceived adequacy above which, and only above which, poetry can be said to be conceivable."

The dynamic of reading I earlier described in terms of birth makes metaphorical and so partakes in what Ziolkowski considers a crisis of representation the undermined authority of the reality the text would yield to us. This is indeed the problem confronting verse today. Writes Ziolkowski in his essay:

I entered a train, found a seat and opened my newspaper to an ad for a watch. The hands gave what seemed to be the correct time. To check this out, not having a watch of my own, I asked a woman in the seat behind mine. "I have 10:08," she said a bit doubtfully as if unwilling to insist on her version of events, and so in a way deferring to the newspaper's image of measurement, one I had come upon, as far as I could see, "arbitrarily," at a moment that animated it with something difficult to distinguish from the aesthetic.

In this oblique if not bleak parable, the poem is an advertisement "animated" accidentally ("arbitrarily") by the reader, who seeks confirmation of his discovery from the immediate community, a helpful fellow-rider of the train nevertheless "unwilling to insist on her version of events."

And now I understand, I thought. The magic of an accident ("difficult to distinguish from the aesthetic") would still be magic. Lee Ann Brown's Crush had offered the temporary but effective solution of making her pleasure the poem's "bar of adequacy," our pleasure reading it, the poem's "bid for authority" (to put this in Ziolkowski's terms). As if to say, "Of course! You look at an ad for a watch to see what time it is"--a time honored con of the poet that we willingly give ourselves up to, that few poets seem willing to perpetrate these days. The technical name for this fraud--or rather for its success--is

inspiration.

Inspiration, intelligence--lastly commitment. Susan Howe evinces all three when she writes (in The Birth Mark), "If sanctification and expression are joined together; the I is a public election. . . . Apprehension invades writing." And the fading of the mark of this invaded writing, the angel hand of Hawthorne's story, Susan Howe has made it her particular project to arrest. But we have few of her like.

After responding to Ziolkowski with an appreciative if inadequate note my boredom returned, my unwillingness to give myself over to verse, to participate in the poem's giving birth to meaning ("what meaning?" I might crankily have asked); interminable conversations about the state of the art began to take the place of reading.

And then I realized I had found, almost by accident, another writer whose work offered a reprieve, a break from the unforgiving labor of problem-solving and evaluation other verse begins with, and seldom brings us past. Poking with a tourist's fondness through the recently reprinted beginning of bpNichol's Martyrology, first published when the poet was about 28 years old, I felt with grateful pleasure "the surge of that intangible, mythopoetic force" (Steve McCaffrey) Nichol's poem joyfully honors and interrogates. A long work of whimsy and devotion, uniquely so, the Martyrology propelled itself forward until the poet's death in 1988 in the same spirit of discovery that led McCaffrey and Nichol to form the Toronto Research Group, in one of whose many "reports" we read the following prescient words: "HOW MANY PAGES TO LIVE, HOW MANY TO DIE, SEPARATE YOU FROM THE BOOK TO THE ABANDONING OF THE BOOK?" In its Jabèsian way this pertinent question dignifies the boredom of our writing. Later we read, "THEY SPEAK SPEECH BUT THEY OPEN THEIR MOUTHS LIKE DICTIONARIES."

Printed on fake purplish parchment and punctuated with goofy drawings in the manner of an illuminated manuscript, this writing is if no more pastiche than Jabès's. Thus, in the opening pages of

The Martyrology we attend the births of those saints implicit in language (for Nichol a "referenceless world / i do take refuge in"), the prophets and martyrs and teachers revealed in the "S"-"T" words (Saints Orm, Saint Ylus, Saint Anza...), figures who will come and go throughout the poem, as and with gifts of creation, creativity, creaturely existence:

all it is is words
more all than my imagine
nary day i sat
wrote my first poem
bright awl of language
pun/cturing my notion of "the real"
all ready
32 or 33 years ago
embracing the ignorant knowing unknowing
dumb founding of the being be
my tongue burns with
this fever
the mind's struggle with
ailing mental realities
the real i ties into
faces
and every one of them my own

These lines form the last volume, gIFTS, divulge the poet's secrets, which is to say his "assumptions." And for what more can a reader ask?

But this last question is an important one, and one I do not care to hurry over.

I have considered the obligations of the reader--what are those of the writer? What expectations do we bring to the book? How many disappointments before we abandon, if not the book, then the search for new books, new saints to watch over the poem, in favor of those already taken to heart?

On what authority decide that the search is no longer worth pursuing, that the snuffing dogs of the inner life have had enough, and deserve their rest, that the poetries we've been chasing after have either escaped, or given up the ghost, which may be the same thing. So that nothing but carcasses are left to be found.

I'm reminded of a poem from Laurie Price's recent collection
Except for Memory:

THE BOOKS

speaking by themselves to a muted audience
hate our confusions, those dumb cloudless
questions we pockmark our faces with. And
murder, the way we strangle the language
with stupidity.

Someone was writing a book
called the Existence of Time
they remarked, shaking the pages
and noting that their contents were dead.

My friend Alan says he's tired of reading poet's prose, says he can see the scene of composition and it makes him cringe. Furious scribbling of scraps of ideas, sewn together with nonsensical but poetically colored threads of sounds, and when the author gets to a rip in the fabric, patch it up with a bright piece of quote. Gotta get those quotes in, says Alan.

And the poetry is even worse.

I don't believe in rules--at least not for writing--at least I want to believe I don't believe in rules. But I'm giving notice. I'm no longer participating in a certain economy of reading. You know what I mean. No more bored putting up with silly tasks for too little gain that the writers themselves should be doing, but don't seem to want to. No more babysitting, dog walking, delivering papers or shoveling snow. It's time to take ourselves and our poetry and each other seriously, not by playing at seriousness--not by having tea parties with stuffed animals, or putting on your parents' clothes--but by doing the work that needs to be done, with imagination and labor, by not wasting time, by opting out if need be.

Is reading an economy? The economy isn't an economy, not in the theoretical or etymological sense, as the management of the home, home understood in the largest sense of society. Economy is

the violence and chaos of the world, the world poetry ostensibly is addressed, and is addressed from. From within.

The violence and chaos of poetry itself--poetry as obligation, poetry as society--in this economy I prefer not to participate. To move aside if not necessarily on.

What else can poetry be besides economy? I intend to find out.

Laynie Browne

A Review:

S*PeRMK*T**

By Harryette Mullen

Singing Horse Press

A brightness both light, as in humor, and bold, as in blinding, can be found in the aisles of Harryette Mullen's **S*PeRM**K*T**. Playfulness is her language. Structures borrowed from the back and side panels of supermarket products become, incantatory rhyme, "potent powders, alchemical concentrates, jars and boxes of abracadabra." At the same time we see the demystification of so much jargon. The brightness is bright, as in clever shiny metallic words, and laughter, but also the fluorescent lighting, and consumer dehumanization; the distance between advertised and actual, and the way that the product tries to invent the public instead of the other way around.

On the first page appears, "*Align your list or listlessness.*" The process names itself through its actions, or the shopper becomes the process of an assortment of consumer items. There is pleasure to be received from the tangibility of the objects in question. They are tantalizing, and yet this is what the store has in mind, "*With eternal welcome mats omniscient doors swing open offering temptation, redemption, thrilling confessions.*"

The form plays with many forms, namely, the list, the jingle, punning, song, blues poem, found poem, satire, imitation, prose poem. She adds something to each, something unnameable. A dance step. The writing is seamless ease, weightlessness, and yet is grounded in the objects it skirts.

Her countless layering effects, and juxtaposition remind the reader of the absurdity of the atmosphere in which we attend to the needs of the body. A moment after the isolation suggested in "*Individually wrapped singles, frozen divorced compartments*" you might stumble across "*Aren't you glad you use petroleum?*" or "*Kills bugs dead.*" Redundancy is syntactical overkill."

It simply isn't possible to catalogue her glowing catalogue, but some familiar items/subjects to cross your path are sanitary napkins, frozen foods, packaging, pet accessories, cleanliness and cleaning techniques, sports/beer, porky pig, and perishables. I should add that all of these objects tend to collide and overlap, so that "*A box of blue movie equals smurf sex.*" A recurring variation which resonates in the advertising is that of cleanliness and purity, an obsession with pearly white and unstained existence. Why is it that red never appears in tampax ads, and what does the obsession with purity suggest about race/class/and gender in the nineties? Different questions will occur for each reader.

The book is also a collage including black and white photographs; from cupcakes to babyfood, and most notably, the cover image, red plastic-wrapped meat. The images provide a visual location, emphasizing the physicality of the writing. At the same time the writing tends to map what is not tangible about the images, as in "Speed readers skim the white space of this galaxy."

In this sense the objects become more than objects, the signified, and the relationship between a consumer and culture is also implied. What is so breathtaking about the work, is that all of this commentary is achieved somewhat associatively. Because of simultaneous humor, it doesn't have to be read heavily. And yet we are reminded of "How anorexics treat themselves" and "The way we bruise and wilt, all perishable." The work is suggestive, evocative, but does not impose any single reading. "Pure genius in a bottle."

Thad Ziolkowski

The Poetics Of Poetics

It is the total ensemble composed by the community of reception that makes possible the "clearing of space" in which language's self-investigation is seen to verge on the possibility of a revelatory, as versus a merely iterative, experience.

But the very structure of the impulse to propose, to write under that sigh of "Toward a...", gives birth to something that has been in the family for generations: nostalgia for a future one might later look back on as the past written into being by an earlier conditional mood--the patriarchal genre par excellence, an equestrian monument: Kant astride the rearing Prolegomenon.

I entered a train, found a seat and opened my newspaper to an ad for a watch. The hands gave what seemed to be the correct time. To check this out, not having a watch of my own, I asked a woman in the seat behind mine. "I have 10:08," she said a bit doubtfully, as if unwilling to insist on her version of events, and so in a way deferring to the newspaper's image of measurement, one I had come upon, as far as I could see, "arbitrarily," at a moment that animated it with something difficult to distinguish from the aesthetic.

What is common to otherwise distinct poetics is the articulation of a bar of perceived adequacy above which, and only above which, poetry can be said to become conceivable. Ultimately, a given poetics gravitates toward the status of a Master Narrative wherein any deviation from, or objection to, its totalization, no matter how fundamental, may be accounted for in terms of that totalization. At their most extreme, as in the excommunication of Michael Palmer for the son of Romanticism (Social Text, Spring, 1988), some versions of Language Poets' poetics provide a memorable example of this momentum in action.

John Guillory's reflections on the dynamics of canonicity

offer a useful gloss on issues subtending such poetics: "Authors confront a monumentalized textual already immersed as speakers and writers in the social condition of linguistic stratification which betrays at every level the struggle among groups and classes over the resources of language, over cultural capital. When these authors are joined to the frieze upon which they formerly gazed, the record of struggle seems to pass into oblivion as the unwritten. Yet that record is immediately accessible in works as the language of literature, out of which literature is made, and in the process of canon-formation as the institutional intervention by which the form of the canon produces the distinction between grammatical and ungrammatical speech." ("Canonical and Non-canonical: A Critique of the Current Debate")

To escape, if only for now, though in its name, by diagramming it, the agonistic logic of poetics by which each emerges from the causal series of displacements of one by a subsequent other, itself in turn to be, then be displaced by that momentum of displacing, and lacerates unwritten poetry with well-intended definitional wisdom, or, from within the self-tarred-and-feathered performativity of non-propositional "enactments," denies, and so reproduces with a useless, yet not harmless, difference, its bid for authority, turns on an invocation, hereby intoned, of a resistance to all such forms in favor of the continual transcriptive present, the writing across of which it is the tiresome, albeit variously-coined, tactic whether covert, overt, or unconscious, of all poetics to create the conditions of possibility for entering.

In this sense, there are two worlds: the world in which this is judged and welcomed (or not) into the imaginary sphere where the breath of a perpetual pseudo-plebiscite causes the elect texts to nudge and gently supplant each other, and the world in which this proceeds along a corridor emerging from the horizontal intersection of the linguistic with an "other."

You know how
you go through
a period when you don't represent yourself
to yourself and so have no picture
to show you, friend?

I am a white male and so is my roommate. His girlfriend is black. They^{are} both my friends. Recently, the three of us went to see Clint Eastwood's "The Unforgiven" at a local Cineplex. The film seemed to be dealing with race in a relatively progressive way. Eastwood's character's old friend and fellow bounty-hunter, a black man, was granted as much ethical humanity as any other character. But toward the end, the richness of the character and our concern for him was traded in for a typical Hollywood manipulation: he was captured by the brutal sheriff, tied to a jail cell, and whipped over and over. It was a nightmarish, though familiar, swerve back into the spectacle of racist violence and I braced myself simply to endure it. Then, from somewhere behind us in the dark theatre, male voices said, without actually calling out, "Good!" and "Yeah!" I couldn't tell whether or not I was meant to hear it. After staring numbly ahead for a second, not knowing how or whether to react in any outward way, I turned to my friend and knew by the stiffness of her body and her deadened expression that she had heard it also. We had been violated. My roommate, on the other hand, seemed not to have noticed any of this. The scene had shifted and he was laughing at something now on the screen. I turned again to her. "What should we do?" "I don't know," she said, clearly upset. I thought about standing up to search out and somehow confront the anonymous racists. The film and the theatre stank with the shit of their two words uttered into, and depending upon, its hypnotic, pacifying darkness. At the end of the film, I leapt up and followed three white teenagers out of the theatre. It was almost surely they who had said it. They glanced back at me

nervously several times. But I didn't know what to say, how to proceed toward countering their fearful, bilious words. I watched as they climbed into a pickup truck with absurdly large tires. They would have the last words. When my friends caught up to me outside the theatre I was pacing, swollen with guilt, weeping in bursts.

Seem dim

pronounced dead at the scene

give one pause

emboss

and end

In the airport, an infant's voice drips into a time she very probably won't recall, though it is defined by nothing more than the burbling intervals of her voice. Meister Eckhart: "Time is what keeps the light from reaching us." But time is also the reach of the light keeping us, keeping us in place for recitals scheduled and unscheduled.

At twilight the yellow of a neighboring house's wood siding glows within a slowly pulsing quiet, neither an expectation nor a recollection, it is rather the fulfillment of a promise as it is promised--the fulfillment of the promise being the enunciation of the promise.

Gratitude is not wishing, it is the giving of thanks for a wish fulfilled--in this case, for the fulfillment of the wish to give thanks: gratitude.

An urgent desire for unconditional intimacy with the continual transcriptive present is the motor of all poetics.

Thad Ziolkowski

Review of Kevin Davies' Pause Button (Tsunami Editions, 1992)

Every so often a book comes along...

I wanted to register an urge to strike that sort of evaluative, tonal pose because that, I must at some level still believe, is how a review might or should sound and it is precisely this sort of recalcitrant nostalgia for an imaginary static world of connoisseurship cast by the implied desk at which the entirety of contemporary publications ineluctably submits itself that Kevin Davies' Pause Button detonates.

Davies' resistance to the world of that desk takes the form of variously-twisting inclusions of its ideological contents: content's scream! But doing the police in different voices presupposes what most current writing-- by which I mean most current writing wrestling with one or another of the Language Angels--seems to deem too rudimentary to bother asserting, when in fact the self-eclipsing obviousness of it lends it to what might be called a poetics of social rematerialization:

The police

are. The police, are. The police (p.18)

And is there, as Olson writes in a quite other context, any end, to that energy? Davies avers here that, no, there is no imminent end to that energy. Hence, as the label on lighters reminds us: keep away from face and eyes.

Though specific agglutinations of social oppression and simultaneous critique thereof are everywhere legible in Pause Button, there is none of the usual special pleading or merely phatic self-implication that well up like Post-Modern toxins from the water tables of so much writing concerned to foreground ideological dimensions. This is in variants of the Purity Complex install themselves. In Davies, the gloom, anxiety and self-reflexivity specific to the 1980's and 90's discovers itself exposed, without quarter:

--Young urban peach tree.

1. As versus a "response," most of which strike me simply as dishonest to the extent that, the generic disclaimer notwithstanding, they want to split the difference between criticism and poetry via the tax shelter of an inauthentic lyricity, like lame jazz riffs played in tribute to a record just purchased but not listened to. Though, I must immediately admit, every so often a response comes along (like Charles Bernstein's "review" of Peter Straub's The Throat in The Elephant: Review of Language Arts) that threatens this gratifyingly sour claim, if only as exception to rule.

Tomorrow
will be Wednesday.
Doomed pair
wrote as they drifted
on Lake Huron.
Interesting.
"Hey, that's us!"
Interesting.

On the other hand, there is no such thing as "raw" or naked
power. It is always, begging your pardon, dressed to kill:

--It's being built, brick
by brick, to house
us. You're not for real. The radio
haywire in the mansion.
A really--grand [], tying up eggs in
four or five baskets, letting them float
downriver where the
credulous shephard
finds & dries them off
on a wooly lamb. Hark--the angels (p.31)

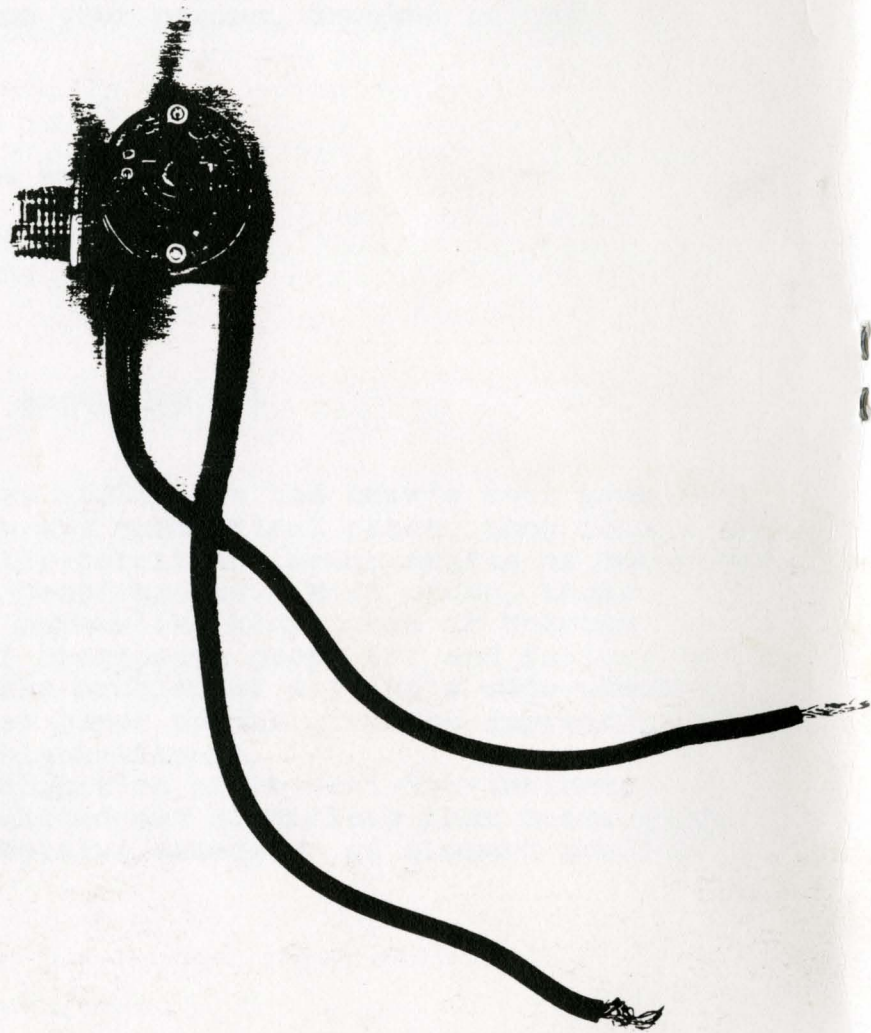
Brackets, often empty as above, are the book's most prominent
formal element. Situated in all grammatical cases, they recall the
brackets used in those quietly-terrifying rough drafts of corporate
contracts familiar to legal proofreaders. Most often, their
emptiness seems to trace or mark--like tiny tombs of Unknown
Linguistic Soldiers--Davies' processual grope for and failure to
grasp language adequate to the problem of writing's wage-slavery.
But the empty brackets can at other points give the impression of
an active concealment of a blank-like-me.

It is this peculiar combination of Objectivist-inflected
starkness and absconded or whited-out signifiers that makes Pause
Button a potent, formally-incisive extension of present poetics.



#2

Elaine Equi
Franck Pruja
Maggie O'Sullivan
Jeff Hull
Jerome Sala
Joan Retallack
Françoise Valéry
Sianne Ngai
Ron Silliman
A.L. Nielsen
Stephen Ratcliffe
Kit Robinson
Gary Sullivan
Sabine Herrmann
Klaus Killisch
Benjamin Friedlander
Laynie Browne
Thad Ziolkowski



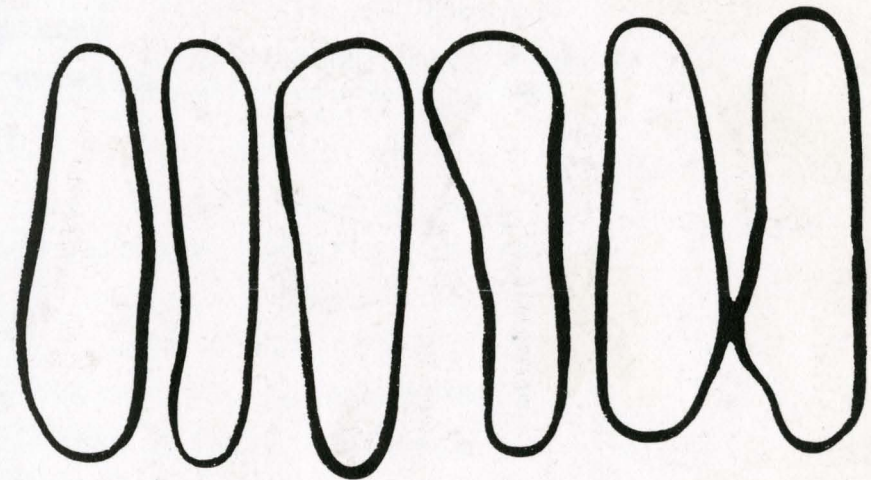
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