MANDORLA

NUEVA ESCRITURA DE LAS AMÉRICAS • NEW WRITING FROM THE AMERICAS

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NUEVA ESCRITURA DE LAS AMÉRICAS • NEW WRITING FROM THE AMERICAS

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JOHN KEENE

THREE POEMS

How to Draw a Bunny

for Ray Johnson and Nayland Blake

Drawing a bunny requires, at a minimum, a pencil and some paper.

Talking about the bunny or talking about drawing the bunny is not the same as drawing the bunny.

Drawing a bunny requires only three strokes if you capture the ears in only one.

Drawing a bunny requires only a modicum of will.

When you are drawing a bunny, try not to talk about drawing a bunny.

When you are drawing a bunny, try not to think about drawing a bunny.

When you are drawing a bunny, try not to think about drawing a pussy or a cock.

The bunny may be male or female, or no gender at all, so long as it's a bunny.

The bunny may be black or white or gray or fluorescent, or any color or no color at all, and drawn in thirteen or more ways, so long as it's a bunny and not a blackbird.

Drawing a bunny is unlikely to make you rich or popular, or the subject of extensive gossip or scholarly discussion, except among those who care about drawing, bunnies, and drawing bunnies.

Drawing a bunny doesn't mean that you have drawn the true bunny, or the false bunny, just that you have drawn the bunny.

Just because you've drawn the bunny doesn't mean you know the bunny.

Just because you've drawn the bunny doesn't mean you do not know the bunny.

The bunny, as idea or image, need not carry any metaphysical weight.

The bunny, as idea or image, can nevertheless still function perfectly well as a trope or metaphor.

Speaking about the bunny as "beautiful" introduces a host of philosophical problems.

The drawn bunny may or may not be undrawing itself, which is for someone else to discern.

The half-drawn bunny is not the same as the drawn, partially drawn or undrawn bunny.

Drawing a bunny is not the same as drawing a puppy, or a kitten, unless you designate them rigidly under the name of "bunny."

Why draw a bunny when you can draw a pony, or a tank, or a dollar sign?

Why draw a bunny when you can draw bathwater, or compounded interest, or .57 Magnum?

Why draw a bunny or dollar sign when you can draw up your own will?

To erase a bunny requires only three strokes.

Drawing a bunny can be emotional or unemotional, though the effect is usually evaluative.

Drawing a bunny has a number of purposes, the chief of which is drawing a bunny.

Drawing a bunny requires no originality, even if your livelihood or sense of self and authenticity hinge on it.

Drawing a bunny requires no philosophy, though you and the bunny may be of a philosophical bent.

Drawing a bunny doesn't depend upon your dreaming a bunny, though it's best if you draw before you dream.

The dream bunny will never be the drawn bunny, since the artwork is always the death-mask of its conception.

Drawing a bunny requires no talent, even though you may put great stock in artistic genius.

Drawing a bunny requires a modicum of concentration, even though you might put no stock in artistic technique.

Drawing a bunny is like learning a language, only it takes considerably less time.

Drawing a bunny can occur anywhere you can draw a bunny.

Drawing a bunny saves no one, though at the very least the bunny is drawn.

Drawing a bunny only requires three strokes, though the effect can be abstract, representational, or conceptual, or some median between the three.

Drawing a bunny says about you only that you drew a bunny, and nothing about your intellect or character.

Drawing a bunny successfully will make you want to draw another bunny.

Drawing a bunny unsuccessfully will make you want to draw another bunny.

Drawing a bunny requires only a pencil or similar writing instrument and some paper.

Drawing, undrawing or withdrawing a life requires a lifetime.

Untitled (Moticos)

"The black singer....?"

Antarctican
bunnyheads
cove(r)
dear Josef Albers,
Eskimos (not quite it)
Feigen Gallery
gasoline
hat (black)
"isolated"
January 13
kill (do not)
Lucky Strike
Mountain (Black)
nothings
osmotics
postage
Queen's fingernails
ray(on)
silhouettes
throwaways (tender buttons)
urinating
venetian (blind-like effect)
Water Street
xerography
yellow circle
Zoroastrian (Norman Solomon)

*"...Al Green!"**

---

*Speaker: *Ray Johnson*

Osmotics

Snot, earwax, semen, sweat: Friday.
Saturday what will we dive into?
June peels the asphalt lips off
Village curbs, rains Alabama heat
on Coenties Slip. There's a reason

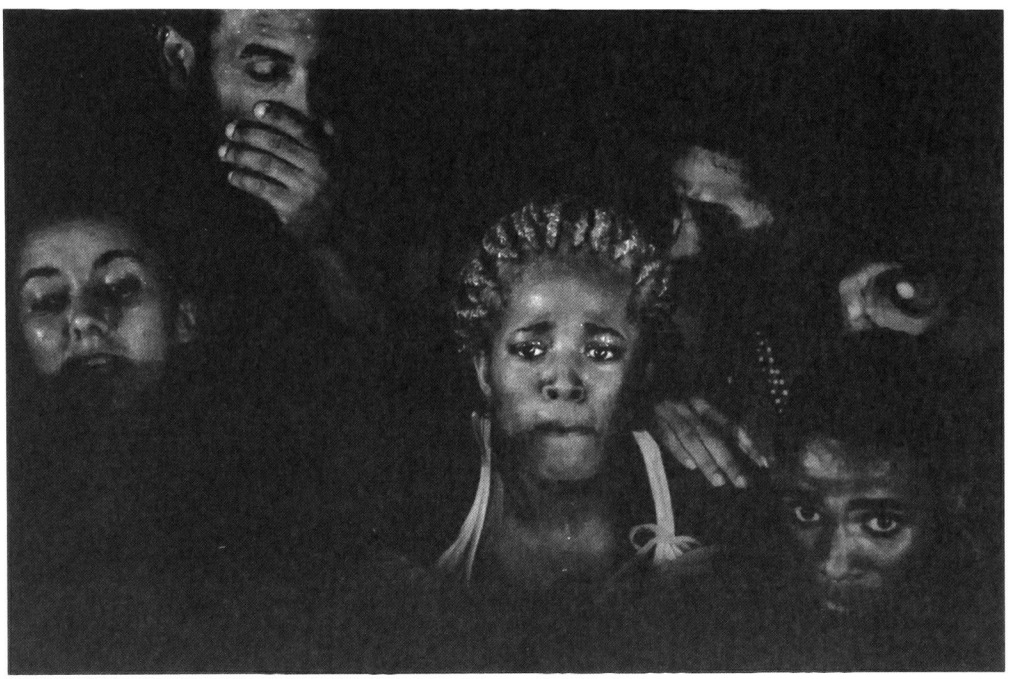
to move to Long Island, or three.
There's a reason to silhouette lovers
and rabbitheads by the bookfuls, draft
lists of dead socialites, presidents,
movie directors, African capitals,

forgotten social trends. There's a reason
to send letters and texts to each other
to be read like writing on the sky,
to be declaimed on the dream currents
of our imminent oblivion, thrumming

like tattoos on our inner eye. There's reason
to keep faith that there'll soon be cash for mother's Christmas
or Mother's Day gift, for donations to irrigate
a Congolese village, tuck Lincoln into an open fly.
Purgatory is only a symbolic form

of waiting before you do
exactly what you need to do,
since true joy lies not only in
the doing but the retelling. Tomorrow,
tell, what will I dive into?

CARNIVAL



CIA de Foto
from *Carnival*
Color digital image from multimedia installation

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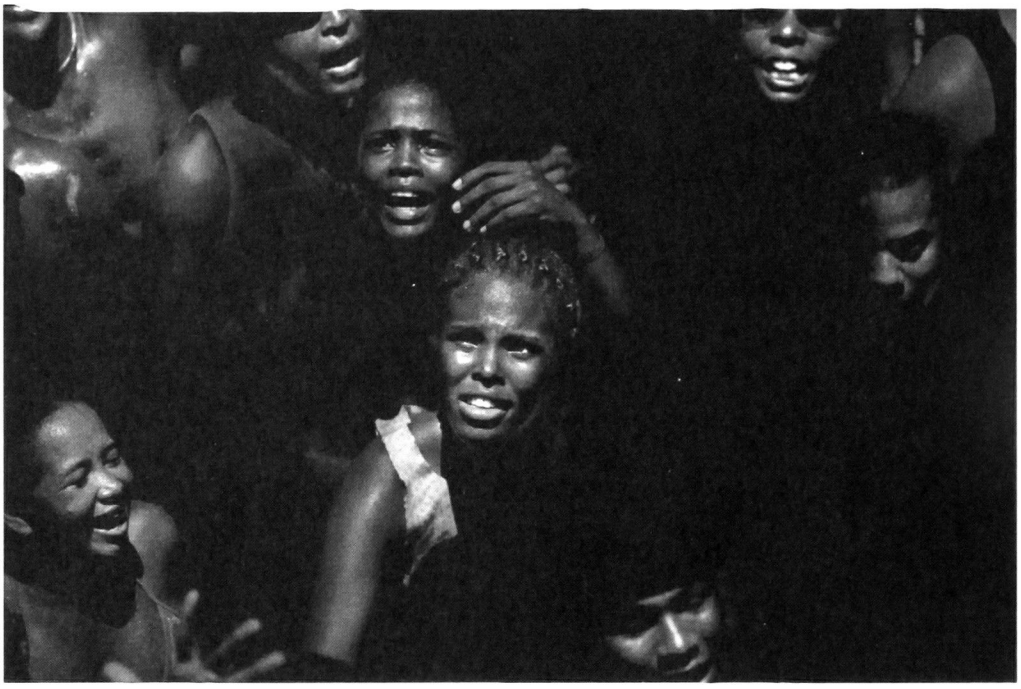
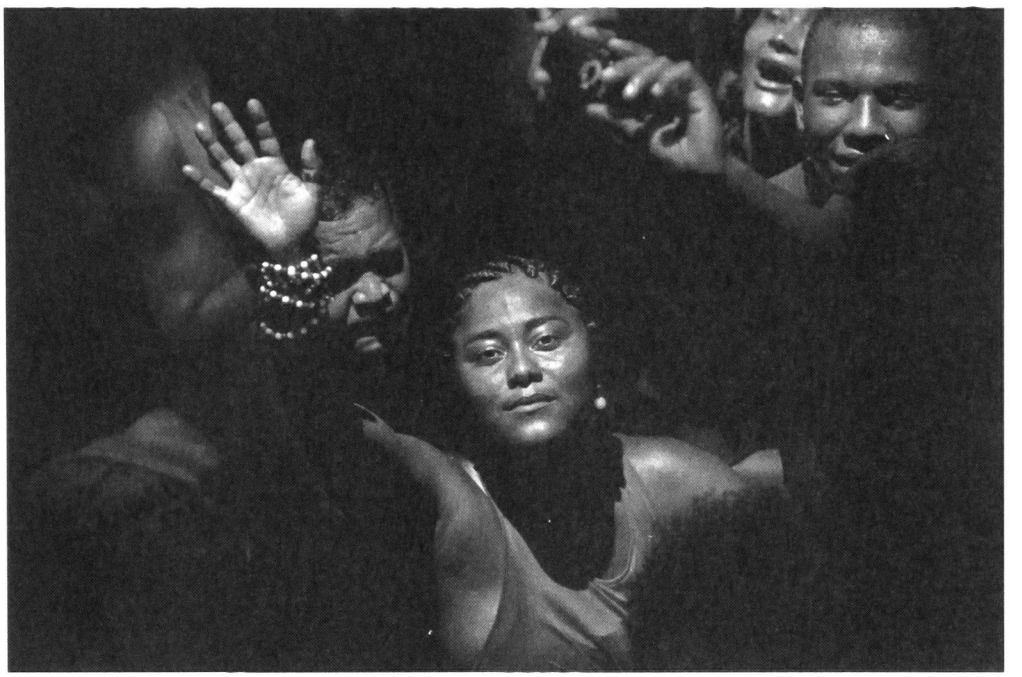


CIA de Foto
from *Carnival*
Color digital image from multimedia installati



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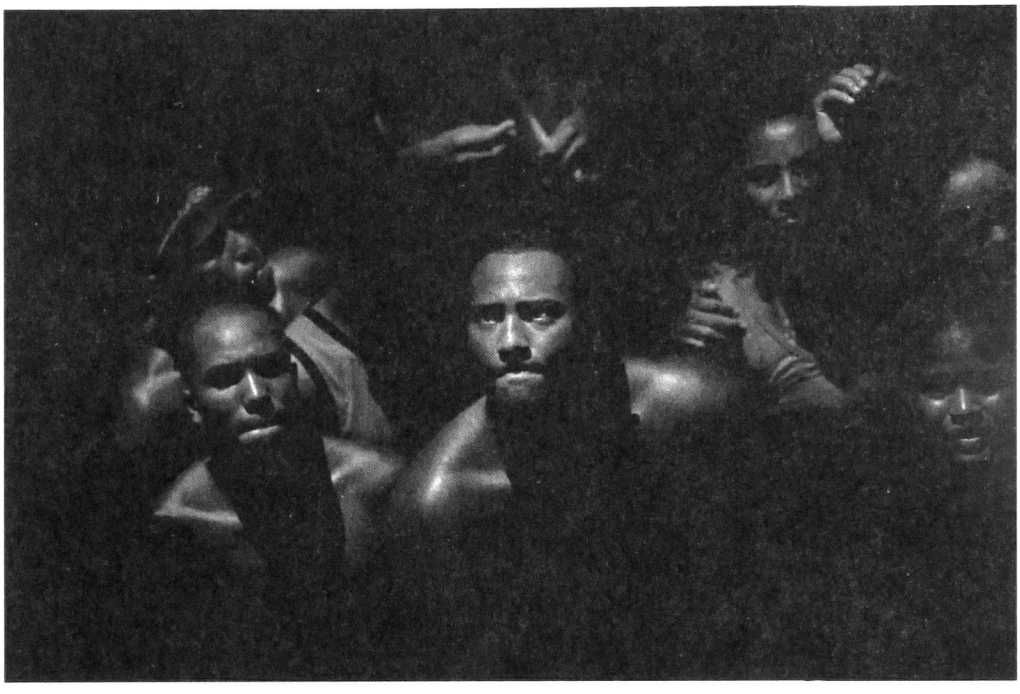
from *Carnival*
Color digital image from multimedia installation



CIA de Foto
from *Carnival*
Color digital image from multimedia installation

Installation Notes: Carnival

"[...] the belief that we uniquely matter, that we are so much fallen flesh, and that the spectator is already part of the spectacle."
—Gilles Deleuze

The series "Carnival" is an installation composed of 6 photographs and a soundtrack.

These images depict a carnival, the soundscape of a moment in which life is wagered by throngs of participants during an important festival in Brazil.

In Salvador, Bahia, these photographs were taken from above, an aerial perspective by means of a motorized tripod. The view is of a crowd moving en masse and forming a single body. Established by means of an unleashing, the festival brings individuals into a mixture of something immense, immediate, and unpredictable. In that movement we perceived that carnival is, in some way, an imminence of death. A distraction from the control we seek to impose on life.

We recorded sound for each image in the series.

One piece from this work was produced in collaboration with DJ Guab, who we invited to set music to these images. He composed a six-channel score: each image from the series resulted in one pitch per channel.

We extracted the binary codes from the raw digital file to each image.

The first sound bytes are identical, not unlike a heading used to identify equipment, visualization software, and so forth. The first distinguishable cluster is, precisely, at the moment when, in a millisecond, the shutter—click!—seals an image in an instant.

Thereafter, everything changes.

With those distinct groups, we took segments of digital sound files, as well as din from the carnival, consistent with the same sequence; that is, numerically identical. We equipped those binary "doppelgangers" or counterparts and thereby constructed a soundtrack with those images.

This, then, is the installation we submit; our soundscape. A rite of passage composed of images set to music. Our way of losing control, or of establishing other parameters for image production. A form of fusion.

Translated by Roberto Tejada

JAYNE CORTEZ

DE *FESTIVALES Y FUNERALES*

HOY EN ESTE DÍA

Hoy en este día
quisiera salir a empellones desde
mi sombra de hilachos
y ofrecer esta gaseosa botella de lágrimas
en la que me he bautizado

te deseo buena suerte
desde mis zapatos de gamuza rotos en
este mismo día de los ojos de mis hijas
que se pudren
en un calor de asno

Hurra por el departamento de salud

Me siento mojada frente a tal audiencia de
cosméticos y abrigos blancos que se despide
adiós adiós
de la multitud de los viernes de camillas ocupadas

adiós adiós
desde el olor rastrero de su presupuesto
adiós adiós
hoy en este día de quijadas
en el quinto mes de la semejanza al
final de un lazo en el corazón del
recuerdo de mi hijo
puñetazo puñetazo puñetazo

Manos fuera de mi vómito número tres que recluta
al número cuatro trastocando la salida para
convertir mis zapatos rotos en números
Advertencia
Retomo mis lágrimas
mi suerte
las niñas de mis ojos
hoy en este día de
No admisión No retorno Aléjese
Sólo efectivo día de Mierda

LINCHAR —FRAGMENTO

Mi lengua bate sangre entre las
costillas de una cobra
soy una serpiente
una cavidad reseca para reptiles linchados
el polvo de hierro de mis escalas mohosas succiona la
fuerza secreta de los malos olores de dos cuernos curvos
cuernos recortados de carnero bajo el
tubo doblado de mi apasionado hueso en declive que
es la máscara de lo bello que dios porta como
el submarino en cuatro partes al subir de modo rojo a la punta de
nervios congelados que se oyen
más allá de los gemidos mudos de
la carne mutilada en un hoyo
un hoyo de zorro
un hoyo fijo donde los espíritus se yerguen y
orinan adentro de mis fosas nasales

Ilusiones de visiones

Predicando desde la grandeza de su cráneo
inclinándose sobre las flores entre las culatas
durante la mascarada de nuestros pies encadenados
esta boca ampulosa de un enano que salta a
la arrogancia de las vergas exultantes
(se rieron en su puño y bebieron del chisguete de
su vuelo)
sólo él conocía las fuentes de la falsificación de su timbre
mientras nosotros veíamos cada una de las heridas de los otros sangrar como
sonidos de la carne
    ¿Deberíamos apelar a la gentileza de sus
    caras desde las vainas de nuestra pesadumbre
    hasta el aire en sus ojos
    este pelotón de fusilamiento besado por revolucionarios?
La música que escalda al sol ha rechazado su cuerpo
rechazado su cuerpo
payasos para cada uno de los otros cuerpos
vendados en una rueda de imitación
lloraron y cantaron
a los furúnculos en sus rodillas
Ella una mujer sólo entre las rocas con
los brazos como alas de cosas
su vestido entre sus encías
    en labios arrugados
    junto al grito de la oscuridad
    un pedo a través del oído
    junto a guerras de huesos reclinados
    en presencia del estupro
    baten tímidamente contra la prestancia de
    un diente salido
    oh oh oh
Nuestras pieles no se cerrarían durante las caídas de
los artistas del trapecio

cuando así nos lo dijeron
la música es un balcón de sangre un círculo de humo
olvida la música y acepta la sabiduría de los culos
este hombre esta mujer esta alma esta
manguera de distorsión a chorro
a donde la música se ha negado a entrar
  un perro ladró y la independencia se declaró
Forma de amor el corazón de un billete de dólar
Nos hicieron tararear hasta que nos convertimos en demonios que rezan
hasta las llamas bajo nuestras cucharas que matan todo motivo de aflicción
por el vacío
porque la mano tomada no era la experiencia
no era la realidad del ser
no no no
no era la música
la sustancia de la soledad
el bambloeo de Georgia o
las nalgas reposadas de la edad provecta
Y la noche llena de sentimientos de un cementerio
grava y lágrimas y malas palabras
un pueblo sentenciado al silencio entre los féretros
vacíos vacíos vacíos
sabe y libera los grasos olores del chicharrón
en los cristales oscuros de la pena
disfrazados de un respeto postrero

Estrella detonante

Llorando contra el dinero
de los cadáveres
mis hombros rotos por marionetas que vienen
a mí como vampiros mientras toco mi guitarra con
mi pestaña y espero cerca de la pared de la sospecha
    Estrella detonante desde un pueblo sagrado
amenaza a la pena
hablando la lengua de los enanos amargos yo
saludé a las madonas bigotudas y
bailé con los espejos de mí misma
    diciéndole adiós a las multitudes con
un hoyo a través de mi mano
un cráneo en mi cadera
tu ataúd en mi cabeza
un tapete en mi espalda
mi carne rota una ofrenda
mi cuello doblado llorando
    estoy colgada de un tronco
el olor de mi clítoris en sus caras mientras
ellos tratan de golpearme hasta la muerte con
la fractura de mis tetas

Conócete a ti mismo

Cuando me encontré con tu trasero en el aire amplificado
oro y negro inflamación ajedrezada
sabía que muchas piernas flacas afuera del
ruego
eran explotadas por tus hemorroides hinchadas
monaguillo
¿estamos condicionados por tu infección?
pasa de largo mañana en este ciclo de cabezas
gemebundas
¿quiénes somos nosotros para estos televisados —pantalones acampanados—
rivales de la muerte?
mejor conocerte a ti mismo en la bola de sus
manos
presos financieros de la pena

Aquí estoy

Aquí estoy
moro desposeído
un episodio encarcelado de zozobra dicen
y qué es lo que hay en el fondo de esto
compulsión en la congoja
es realmente la renta de mi taza de hojalata
lo que contamina
o la constante duplicación del mármol en rotación
este espectáculo de ojos que regresan a las cuencas
sin sustancia
sin ayuda de nadie
me refiero a la costra de esta lucha por
mi ensanchamiento
dios tratará de intervenir
y yo seré azuzada a gritar desde
la venganza de mis membranas higiénicas
demandando no más mierda
no más pus
ninguna concepción cagada bajo
ninguna forma inmaculada o
disfraz

El crecimiento

Brotaron cuernos de los
hoyos de un esqueleto
que asieron mi cama mientras yo
cerraba los ojos a los hombres
que caían desnudos del cielo
mis dientes cubiertos de la cera de las velas
las estrellas quemaron mis labios
un metrónomo que conducía
orquestas de calacas
desfilaba
esqueletos de esqueletos en combate
contra mi cuerpo dulce entre cráneos
corrí a través de mis costillas y mis
piernas fueron serruchadas
escupí entre cuencas de semillas echadas a perder y
mis propias semillas se volvieron nudos en mi frente
disparé sin mirar y la luna
sacó su lengua y yo mamé
peyote y me arrodillé para la boda entre
el fuego y el fluido de mi pena
en combate conmigo misma
una refugiada sin pies
una virgen en la catedral de la carne colgada
yo la nueva bandera de una revolución
el fracaso de la muerte
que se afina oscuramente al sol para el reinado de
la esfinge creciente

Olvidé recordar

Y una noche al oler
en mi zapato tenis
no estuve ya más influida por
crímenes invisibles
ni disponible para sueños eróticos ni
revelaciones de la carne demacrada
estaba desolada a la memoria
aún nonata
al estado de mí misma dentro de
la inhalación del olor propio de los sentimientos
por lo que ya no contradigo
ya no necesito olvidar recordar para
reconocer
el latido del corazón

Traducción de Gabriel Bernal Granados

TISA BRYANT

FROM *[THE CURATOR]*

I am warm under the thin duvet, snug in Jay's arms, but I can't feel her skin. She's on top of the bedclothes, already dressed in her customary denim pants and tight collared shirt. She must go, cannot stay, as always. My breath blows on a pinfeather poking through the cover under my chin, making it waver. Jay touches my lips, curls behind my bundled body and squeezes. I cannot see her. In my sleep I reach back to hold her in place, but Jay slides away just enough. She kisses my ear, my temple, and then there's pressure. The mattress, depressed under Jay's smooth fists, sinks away from me. She rises to go. I turn in my sleep, catch her unaware—she lets herself be caught—and murmuring nonsense, pull her back to me by her collar. If I were awake, I'd stare her down. If I were awake, I'd let her go. My sleep tells on me. My body tells its truth and betrays my cool, takes it all off. *Don't go. Please stay. You know you love me.* Yet my sleep lets me hide. I say nothing, know nothing. I believe only in my rapid eyes scanning the images dredged from my muck, below the surface of her departure. I want to sink away. Her leaving is not real. Not yet. What Jay will tell me she saw, later, on the phone, I won't recognize as me. I won't believe her when she tells me, yet again, how I clung to her, vulnerable and sweet, as she escaped my sheets, how it touched her, watching my hands reach for her face with closed eyes. Jay

holds my wrists, her face warped with regret, both for being with me and for having to leave. I can't even imagine this sight, but I will, to console myself. She waits until I leave the surface. She waits until I'm dragged down into a deeper slumber, relax my grip and let go of her shirt. If I could hear her, I'd hear her sigh of resignation, slight confusion, what she hides from me in our waking hours during our brief conversations in which we let ourselves slip on half-said sweet nothings, pet name clichés. Or other times, more rare, sitting in our favorite dark corner, table spread with vodka and burgers, we gaze: into each other's eyes, at the jut of ass at the pool table, the forearm trigger, a clean open break, then back to us, cocked brow, full lip, chests rising at a glance, a glint of teeth. Jay grabs her backpack and boots, circles the bed and stands over me, her form an angular but weightless shadow in the growing light. She lingers, admiring the contours of my face but stops herself from touching me again. She doesn't want me to wake, to coax out ten more minutes nestled together, or worse, to give her an open, sleep-smeared stare of dismissal. She must move first. "You don't really see me," I told her. "I'm just part of your fascination with yourself. With your own allure." She doesn't tell me that I'm wrong. She doesn't tell me what she sees, or what she doesn't. I don't know what that means now. She opens the bedroom door, glances over her shoulder at me one last time and decides to leave the door ajar. If I were awake, I'd think, "Clean open break." She pauses as she always does in the brief crossroads between bedroom and kitchen, bathroom and backdoor. It's a cross, not an X. Jay stands in the length of sacrifice. She could step back into bed. She could head to the kitchen. She could step right, surprise me by drawing a bath, the taps could flow on the other side of the wall from my sleeping head. She could step left, to the back door, and keep going. Jay looks around her with a big sadness as she glances up the sloping walls of the Victorian flat. She decides that this will be the last time morning catches her here instead of where she is committed to be. I'll never know this from her. She'll leave me to figure it out. My sleep erases all clues. Jay blinks, resolved. Turns left. Exits out the back door and trots lightly down the stairwell with her boots in her hand, still feeling the pressure of the space between my breasts against her lips. It feels like a holy place. She'll never tell me. She'll just fade. I cannot worry now. Far away, my eyes dart back and forth. I kneel before the wrought iron grate of an

arabesque window. Others kneel as I do. The ironwork casts curlicues onto their white cloaks. I see no faces, only hands reaching out, fingertips busy. I look down at my hands resting in my lap. In the center of my palm is a length of red ribbon. A person turns to me, a blare of sun where the face should be. The unseen lips make brief vowel sounds cut by consonants. I understand that I have to make a wish, then tie the ribbon to the grate. If my wish comes true within the year, I am to return to this place. I will owe it something. I lean back on my heels, looking over my shoulders left, right to see, impossibly, around the corners of the holy place. At each wall, behind each kneeling figure, is a small mob of cloaked people waiting their turn. Black grates flutter with hundreds of tiny red tails. The breeze is streaked red. People rise murmuring then depart, swiftly replaced by others. Someone nudges my shoulder. I must make a wish. I fret, staring at the flat blue sky, stalling. A sudden gust moves me and I falter on my haunches. My cloak billows out. I cannot hear what I'm thinking. I close my eyes. My wish takes shape inside me, a feeling without words. My nerves send a spastic surge to my throat. I swallow hard. I tie the thread. I rise to leave, turning quickly, and slam into a person standing too close behind me. Bright light obscures the face and I stare, squinting. Suddenly, the glare dissolves, as if the face were the sun covered by a passing cloud. I think, "I am that cloud," and I hear my thought, feel the sun on my own face although the brightness that blinded me is gone. The muscles around my eyes soften. The face staring back is unsmiling, but open. The person's gaping white sleeve extends toward me. Though I never break the gaze, I somehow see the firm forearm, the well-shaped fingers reaching toward my face. I—

I raise my arm to touch the sleeve of the white tunic. I slowly understand that my eyes are opening to another place beyond the dream. The tunic fades from my view, the lips that returned my smile already begin to evaporate. The eyes still hold my gaze as they dissolve back into dream, back into me. My bedroom materializes around me, violet blue walls craggy with layers of spackling. I don't blink. I hold the dream to me with a silent chant. *Become indelible. Do not recede.* The feeling of the dream is a caul around my body. The white cloak, the deep arabesque shadows, the length of red ribbon tight around my worrying fingers. Gone now. I look around, move my hands around beneath the sheets,

and want, in this moment, not to be alone. I stretch my arms overhead, bending side to side. Tuning fork. Dowsing stick. A kiss on each cheek, hands running over my waking body, but Jay is gone. When did she go? With each stretch and the feel of morning air on my bare skin, I try to locate the root of the dream, try to force-fit Jay into my analysis, but it doesn't work. You know that what makes your thighs clench at the thought of Jay is not the wish that she will leave her girlfriend. It's the desperate limit, the erotic doom of it that makes it sweet. I tell myself this, hang my body over the side of the bed, the phantom pressure of Jay riding up my backside, feel around for my journal, blood rushing to my head, fingers scrambling through dust motes for the pen, fingers braced against the floor for balance, a grip on reality. I write everything of the dream I can remember, but the writing doesn't get me to the root of the dream, not to the place, not to the wish. Neither does the face. Recognizing the face is not the key, even though it made me smile, made me reach out to touch. What made me know it, want it, enough to smile and reach? Despite my efforts to capture it, the face that mesmerized me steadily loses distinction. I write that the face was special, captivating, that in our shared gaze, a special knowledge was exchanged. Something Jay could never have anything to do with. I write,

> Astral projection lodged in memory
> Pointing toward other possibilities
> Meshed luminous and contained
> Deep in the folds of the unknown

I sigh. Language doesn't just fail. It sucks. I lean back against the shiny headboard, hear it ping against the wall, as it does when... I kick up a leg. A whiff of sex and sweat blows up from under the covers. I feel shaken, intrigued, not just a little concerned. "I am that cloud," is not a wish. Did I become a shadow so that I could see past, through, into, the brilliance of the face? I feel sure that I did not gaze upon myself at that moment. It was definitely someone I had never seen before, and the person did not feel like someone I knew, hiding inside the costume of a stranger. The face was not a mask. I hear a car in the drive and stupidly hope Jay has returned, though I know better. At the foot of my bed, the white painted window is an open eye, filled with the bright morning. To the right, the porch

door stands open, framing a screen-filtered view of sunlit leafy green of oak. A crow talks loudly. The sound makes me feel a bit relieved. A good omen, crows. Crows bring good news in the morning, the blues in the afternoon.

[Iris ruminates on being lovesick, and makes a short list of pithy sayings about suffering. Fela Kuti's "Shuffering and Shmiling" plays on her boombox while she showers, does her hair, dresses for the day.]

I step into the kitchen and greet the ladies. One is an enormously colorful poster of Jeanne Moreau in *Diary of a Chambermaid,* her sly eyes, pouty mouth, glorious hair hidden by a ruffled cap, surrounded by large swatches of green, blue and orange. The other is a smaller poster in Norman Rockwell colors of a black mammy taking a break, sitting on a chair, broom tight in one fist. Her other hand holds a gigantic slice of apple pie over the head of a thin chalk-white man in a diaper. He's on his knees, his slash of a red mouth whining, but the mammy holds the pie out of reach. Her chin is haughty, as if to say, "Uh-uh-uhhh, this pie is *mine*." In this triangle, I am always the third, the one who "has" a duplicitous French maid and who "is" a rebellious black mammy. I consider the mammy poster for a moment, and wish I had a cubicle, like Deb or Linda in the office, instead of sitting out in the open, as the Receptionist of Diversity, on view. If I had a cubicle, I could bring in Defiant Pie-Having Mammy, hang her over my phone, and simply enjoy watching Deb feign caring enough to be scandalized, Linda openly identify with the mammy, and Lars the bossman try to ignore her like he does me. I shake myself. It's my day off. *Tuesdays with Morrie* pops into my head, though I've never read it. Then the Mingus' "Myself When I am Real," a Tuesday kind of music. I begin my daily breakfast dance, figuring out the next piece in my "Tuesday" show, stepping and pivoting between refrigerator, pantry closet sink and cupboard, fill the electric kettle for my tea, toe point, wrist flourish, a little twirl. What goes with *Tuesdays with Morrie?* Maybe just a simple pair of "Tuesday" bloomers, hung with push pins? Tuesday Weld's head on a dismembered childhood Barbie? There's a knock at the back door. I pull back the curtain and see Gina's blowsy curls, and let her in.

"Time for breakfast?" I ask her.

"No, sorry. I'm gonna be late as it is. Can I have some milk, though?"

I reach into the fridge. Gina holds out a little mug. She looks me up and down eagerly

"Thought you didn't work on Tuesdays. Another job interview?"

I shake my head, lips pursed as steam from the kettle rises.

"Do you know when—what's the place again?"

"Burghardt Woods."

"When will they make a decision?"

"They said they'd be done with second round interviews in a week, so it should be soon."

"I'd love to be there when you tell Lars to stick it."

"He won't even notice I'm gone. It's like I'm made of glass."

"Anyway. I'm keeping my fingers crossed. So wait, what's with the outfit?"

"Oh, please. I'm not dressed up"

"C'mon. The only other time I've seen you in that was when you met—ooh, do you have a date or something?"

"No, I certainly do not. I woke up feeling.... Sexy. But kind of bothered, too. Like I need to do more... I don't know. I wanted to wear something to cheer me up, balance me out. You ever get that?"

"Yeah. Though I'm more likely to go get some highlights or something."

She looks me over. Her expression is sleepy and mischievous, the dregs of a certain kind of bliss.

"My mom would call that a 'go-getter' dress."

"I got nothing," I say.

Gina changes her stance, leans back on the kitchen doorjamb, watching me rest my forearms on the kitchen counter as if I might lay my head down and cry. Then I push myself up again, hands gripping the edge of the counter, jaw set, resolved. Gina smiles ruefully to herself, watching my body language vacillate between yes and no, love and detachment. Steam snakes from the tea kettle. "So," Gina says, "When did she leave this time?"

"Oh, fuck, Gina." I let my head loll around my shoulders in a forlorn theatrical gesture Gina is used to smirking at. I get real. "The usual. About 5am. Not sure." I smile a little, staring out the kitchen window at the fluffy trees, the slate

rooftops, the quaint village scene of it. This could be another country, a place where lovers ride bicycles, call for you in daylight, under the window, with a song, flowers in the basket, some bread, a thermos of something good for morning love. Something good for the rest of the day.

"Was this *it*?"

I cut my eyes back to the counter, skipping Gina's face altogether. I pour some milk in my tea, watch it milk swirl, let the spoon chime against the inside of the cup, a sad tinkling sound. "I don't know," I say. "It's starting to get really good, you know? Well, it's as good as it can get. So it's starting to hurt. Part of me would be happy if she just faded away. I've said as much."

"Sorry."

I shrug. Tough guy. "Thanks, but it's not like I didn't know she was already committed. I had a choice." I face her now and from how she squares her shoulders I know my face says "tit for tat." "So what time did *you* get home, missy?"

"Oh, not long after Jay left, I guess." That sleepy mischief again.

"Ahh, so that was your car I heard. Uh-huh," I wag my finger. "See, if you had said yes when he offered you that dresser drawer he offered you, you wouldn't need no milk—"

The kitchen fills with our laughter, like two maniacal birds squawking overhead, boisterous, but just passing through. In the sudden quiet between us, I say, "So you're still seeing him, then."

"Against my better judgment, yes."

My head sways, all empathy and some disgust, not with her, but with language. "What in the fuck does "seeing somebody" really mean?"

We stare at one another. What we don't say fills the room now. Still seeing if I like him sober. Still seeing if her whiteness matters. Still seeing if I have to chase him. Still seeing if we have anything in common. Still seeing if I'm being chased. Still seeing if one of us will be vulnerable. Still seeing if one of us will let this be love. Still seeing if we only look good together, and nothing more. Still seeing everything we know for sure and ignoring it just to see if hoping we're wrong will change anything. But we are silent. The kitchen women look on from the walls surrounding us, quietly observing, holding the pie out of reach. Gina makes a move toward leaving.

"We're going to need a couple of bottles for that one, hon," she says. "Maybe tonight?" I wink, thumbs up. Gina blows a kiss, takes her cup of milk and skips down the steps. (Jay has left. Was this "it"?) I wave, close the back door behind her, and make a slow performance of locking it.

[Iris eats breakfast, assesses her life, her desires, desirability, her sexy outfit and black women's beauty, while imagining she is watched by her mother, the kitchen ladies, Jay, and God.]

I go out the front door, lock it and bounce down the curving flight of steps, feeling my breasts rise and fall under my silk polyester dress. My hand trails down the spiral of the dark lacquered banister, my nails painted clear with glitter. I keep my eyes high. I'm already doing better. Facing front. I'm light on my feet, out the house to the front porch and skipping down the final steps. I'm all girl, innocence and light.

"G'morning, miss."

"Good morning, Manny."

He sits across the street on his front steps, looking like the wolf he is. He knows I'm not as young as he thinks I am, because if I were, I would have already made the first move in doing the stupid thing his infernal pull would compel me to. I would cross the street. I would step to him, bold and a little scared, like girls who walk up to strange but fine dudes in cars on the street. Like Little Red. I would find out his girlfriend's name the hard way. In four years, I've been sure to keep to my side of the street. Yet when he's out on his front steps, it's curious how I manage to hang around my porch just a little too long. He's got it like that.

"You have a nice day, Manny."

"You too, miss lady."

Miss lady. I like that. I turn left and walk along our little avenue. I feel Manny's eyes on me. Some part of me. He makes a noise in his throat, my signal to get a move-on. His woman's head will be out the window in no time, and I need to be as close to out of sight as possible. I walk quickly to the corner and turn left again at sunny-yet-busted Cranston St. As I approach the corner of Cranston and lovely tree-lined Parade, I smile at the plum colored Victorian

where the Poet Man lives, with his double z's, with his terza rima. The deep lines around his sharp blue eyes like parentheses, holding all the life on him close to how he sees. He's not here now. He's somewhere else, changing the atmosphere. By sight. By line. I gaze down the green expanse of Dexter Park, once a military training ground, once the place where Jay and I would steam up her truck like teenagers with no place else to go. Back when we were trying to do the right thing and the wild thing at the same time, our bodies close together, but in public, far from the temptation of any one bed. You like to think it's a kind of discipline. No zippers down. No skin-to-skin. Maintain a kind of poise in the performance. Let it tantalize your acrobatic tongues and compromised limbs. Let it punish your wet, your hard, your hot and rushing blood. My face is hot. I switch the scene out to the park's daily maneuvers. Mothers and nannies edge the playground, one eye on the kids, the other on their far-off dreams, drunks and homeless men sprawled under the oaks, their colors dull, the vibrant stories of their descent within earshot, a bottle or a buck away. Dealers perched on the backs of benches waiting for their jerky quick-walkers, their twitchy-itchies, watching for cops. Dogs shitting in the kids' baseball diamond while the owners act blind no plastic bags in sight. Power walkers and a few joggers working the periphery, trotting, trotting trotting. No signs of the Global Soccer Village. Liberia, Guatemala, Ivory Coast, Brazil. Too early for anything but drills between friends. Everybody's at work. I turn back toward Cranston. The golden brick face of the Armory stands immense in the sun, its back to the park, its crenellated towers circled by pigeons. They roost and chatter, satisfied, then startled by some phantom vibe, burst away shrieking. I scan the sky, seeking the source of their fear. At the bus stop last week, just across there on the other side of the street, the sun barely risen, there was a sudden commotion far up in the sky. Pigeons horrified, as another creature, wide-winged, pursued one, then another. The man waiting next to me shifted on his flip-seat, tawny strings of hair framing his face. He looked like amber to me. I was sure the blue-eyed poet knew this Amber Man, that they often sat and talked about the ecology of the West Side, about the ecology of time. Like the parentheses of life around the Poet Man's eyes, I looked into Amber Man's face and thought I glimpsed traces, fossils, imprints of other lives close to his surface. "That is a falcon," he'd said.

"Nuh-uh."

"Yea. Plenty of falcon here. It is hungry."

"I guess that makes sense. If there are skunks here, why not hawks?"

"No hawk. Falcon. I keep pigeon on my roof. Every morning time or so I lose one or two. Two."

"They just disappear?"

Amber Man nodded. "I count. Better for pigeon to disappear. I do not like to find my bird dead or near to dead."

The bus came and I smiled at Amber Man then climbed on. I chose a seat by a window, and expected him to sit near or with me. We were talking. I wanted to drift into the picture-particles caught in his resin-like skin. I wanted to confirm whether the line of his jaw was his body's horizon, or the shore of his beach, was that a small bird, or a star, while he talked more about his rooftop world, but Amber Man didn't appear. I looked around, trying to be cool, and saw him still sitting on the flip-seat in the bus shelter. He gave me a little wave as the bus pulled away, his mind already somewhere else in time.

[Iris walks a mile through the West Side, thinking about Jay, love, seeing and being seen, asking, "Am I a subject position, or do I just have one?" She imagines her skin becomes a scrim, projecting and reflecting a mosaic of her sweetest memories and the places of the neighborhood she holds dear. Walking past the Señor Martín de Porres Center is the catalyst for her display.]

I remember suddenly that in my dream I was digging in the dirt under the clothesline at my mother's house and there were nine stars in the sky. Or maybe this is from an earlier dream. I leaned back from the hole I dug and counted. They were all just above my head. The rest of the sky was velvet black, as if some magnificent being made a peephole between its hands, blocking everything else out. What did I find or bury? The memory of the dream slips. I let my head bobble on my neck, the bassline from Stevie Wonder's "Golden Lady," metering my steps. I pass the sweet little boutique, Figments, and peek at the peat moss and tiny cast iron garden ornaments, birds, rabbits, pedestal basins coated in white patina. For the house with the garden and the topiary and the

lover who stays. As I near the doorway of White Electric Coffee Shop, I spy a small flyer on the sidewalk. It curls and unfurls like a magic red fish in the palm of Chance. I gape at the flyer and I'm sure as it moves in a breeze I can't feel, that I see a pair of eyes blink back at me. I snatch it up, hold it taut between my thumbs. Most of the flyer is a layer of images. In front of what looks like a rain of needles, a silhouette of a woman's body. Another woman's face, gazing out from an open car door, burns through the skirt of the silhouette. In the picture, the woman's nose doesn't come to any sharp conclusion; the nostrils are softly broad and fleshy. I feel a thrill at the discovery, and then sadness: this is news of something buried, something unearthed. *Symbols of This Point of View: The Films of Justine Cable.* 3pm. Orson Welles Theatre, Cambridge. I frown. I thought that theatre burned down years ago.

I go inside the coffee shop to check the time, search the bulletin board near the front door for more of the movie flyer. Nothing. I decide to meander towards the train station. I could catch a train in an hour, take an hour to get to Boston, take the bus into Cambridge, and still have plenty of time to gallivant a little before the screening. I am amazed at myself, this strange convergence. I've been slowly heading north since leaving the house. I continue on, feeling a bit bouncy, a bit free, excited for a spontaneous adventure. I cross over the freeway overpass, and glance down the void that is Interstate 95, cars speeding along three lanes in each direction where there was once a neighborhood. It could not have been a wealthy one, else it wouldn't have been bulldozed to make way for the highway. Rich people wouldn't have allowed it. The City would have found another way, instead of cutting the city in half, making two separate realities where there had only been one. When I get to the other side of the bridge, Westminster St. disappears. Before me is the entryway, blocked at tight intervals by squat concrete mounds that forbid cars. I walk between them and onto a cobblestone walkway into the church plaza that replaces the street for two blocks. The sunlight through the closely planted sycamore is dappled lime-yellow, making the hard cobblestone everywhere appear soft, almost grassy. There are people at small tables to her left, outside The Cookie Place, a quiet, dun-colored café on the ground floor of the transitional housing building, both run by the church. A security guard leans

in the doorway of the café, looking sleepily at the pigeons fluttering in and out of an enormous pile of torn bread crusts. A woman in a lavender polyester pantsuit paws through her handbag, and two men sort their money, stacks on one side of the table, coins spread by the fistful from plastic bags. I move quickly, watching the workers from the Social Security building cross the plaza from café to office, from office to café, as they must do all day every day. On the other side of the plaza, I turn left and then right to Washington Street. Around the library, past the Holiday Inn and the Trinity Brew House. Then I go down the Dead Corridor, where the sun never seems to shine and activity comes to a halt. The few people in the Dead Corridor look gray. I pass the convention center and the black glass doors of the gentleman's club, the weird café with dusty tea bags and no food, the florist shop that's never open carnations hot and smashed against the display window, the hard gray office of the city newspaper, its window eyes blank, indifferent. Up ahead, the the grassy knoll edging Kennedy Plaza is vibrant and cheerful. The sun has forsaken this artery. Mine is the only pulse. Every business feels like a front. Dead Corridor. Graft Alley.

[Iris takes the train from Providence to Boston, walks through Copley Square, ruminating on her memories of her youth there. She calls her memories 'fossils,' imagining them embedded in the buildings, the soil between the cracks of sidewalk. She remembers Amber Man's face. She walks to Mass Ave and takes the bus over the Charles River Bridge to Cambridge.]

At Toscanini's ice cream parlor, I pull the cord and rise. The furry nape person in the seat in front of me unfolds, too, and standing, becomes a furry man. I follow him off the bus and saunter down past the gas station, peering over my shoulder. Sundry others are behind me, together but separately, each at her own pace, some paired or in small groups, walking along Mass Ave. Furry Nape's stride doesn't interest me, but he is there, and put with the A-frame Cambridge houses, the high curb sidewalks, he's less and less of a presence. I am not following him. I am my own captivation. He's simply before me, like time or a mid-day shadow. I step strongly with a faint hum in my throat, enthralled by my own syncopation. The music follows, twists, blends, gathers and lets loose strands of

every tune I've ever heard, intermittently a symphony, a cacophony. Cover the music with other images. Recast the film to match the soundtrack, the "bring forward" command: "Art Blakey not Roger Vadim. Miles Davis not Louis Malle. Herbie Hancock not—" I step lively into the shadows of *Jules et Jim*, imagining my mother, younger, sultry and enigmatic in the Jeanne Moreau role, between best friends played by Nat King Cole and Woody Strode. I sing it. Nat King Cole and Woody Strode. My mother locks arms between them as they hustle to the Renault. Nat King Cole and Woody Strode, my mother's sly smile and fly shape tucked in Givenchy daywear. Somehow, nothing but the 20th century will do. I realize I am nearly skipping with excitement. Imagine the scene. Suddenly I skid. A glimmer on the sidewalk. I bend down, peering. Blended into the mica'd pavement, a straight pin, what my mother would call a 'common' pin. I feel such finding fortuitous, a chance for magic, my fingers and another thing that also attaches, joins, presents pieces as wholes. I pinch up the pin then step gingerly over where it had been, breathing thanks to the cosmos as my foot, passing over, shadows the mark then clears the spot. What have you ever prayed for? I roll the sharp between thumb and forefinger, then I test the point on the soft tip of my finger to feel myself flinch. My eyes shine with faintest water. I resume my walk, making a rhythm of my steps, letting my head float about my neck, arm in arm with myself. French New Wave backed by black jazz, I think. My walk fits, I thinks. My face...and yet. I shake my head, as if shaking off my sense of exclusion. I square my shoulders, lengthen my stride and project myself into the eyes of the sky. The ends of my hair pulsate in the first thrill of the lengthening days.

I muse on my fingertips' most recent adventures, curating, divining my private film program.

Une Fille Soule

Each day is a situation.

Each day isn't always an event

Coup de Foudre

Continuous breathing as recompense.

Fully unrealized forms of magic.

Calendar of expository living.

Entre Nous

My eyes grow wide as my mind falls out of reverie. There is the wooden house, the brick steps where I tried to stop a woman from beating her daughter with a shoe, even as the woman threatened me. My eyes dart around past the chain link fence where I hollered for somebody (who?) to come stop the woman. I think, I need a third way. There has to be a third way for a common pin to get burned. Threes are an important grouping. The test of logic, social law and magic. A straight pin. A common pin. A _____ pin. A what kind of pin? There are not three names for the pin. Are lynch pins straight? I imagine them hooked. This will not fit. This inexplicable agitation with the simple order of language. Then put a seemingly disparate something between the two pairs, common, straight, names for the pin. Straight pin. The woman beat her daughter with a hard leather shoe. Common pin. The scene held between. I protested, near tears, moved towards the woman's lashing arm. The woman bellowed. "Come over here and I'll give you some, too." This bent me up so. I consider the public and intimate horror of parental violence, conjuring snapshots and audio clips of all the children whose beatings I witnessed, sight and sound. Cousins. Friends. Siblings. Strangers. I see the woman's fearsome grimace, the shoe come down on the young girl's spine. Don't call this blues. Straight pin. Common pin. Lynch pin. *The 400 Blows.* It was a custom to place pins in the head of the gate to the cemetery, to keep spirits from following you out, was it? Or following you in to disturb the burial? What was it? How many pins? How many spirits? I pierce the sharp thing at an angle into the front of my canvas bag. Askew. I resume my sashay, vibraphone still playing with my footsteps, quickening my arm-swinging and rhyming games, given a bottom of space. I see my bobbing beautiful black self. Apace with the world as it is before me, thinking becomes rapid signal, becomes drumming.

I drum on the "madness" of women. *Red Desert.* Environmental, secret, incommunicable, curable, chronic, terminal. Hidden, relational, social and sexual, ignored, "naturalistic." *Bagdad Café.* Classic, classifiable, class-based. *Dreamlife of Angels.* Poisonous and liberating. *Nitrate Kisses.* Worldly, worldwide, through the ages, multiply. Loved and loveless. Humble, noble, confused, frustrated, embedded, signifying on types of craziness. Marked as such. I reach out to touch.

The light is rich with particles, like what you see in a woodland sunlight, or in a beam from a flashlight. The atmosphere is suddenly alive around me, dancing with dust, insect wings, pollen, dead skin, radioactivity. I hear a whining hum that intensifies with the light, like crickets in high grass, vibrating in summer heat. Like electricity. Something turned on. In the light, in the particle light, turning about in tight circles, seeing faint outlines take shape, silhouettes without darkness, ghosts without shadow. Then there is darkness, in pockets, between clusters of dust, black holes, deep, glistening, suddenly sealed shut by light in the blink of an eye, a pupil shrinking against sudden glare. Aperture. Shutting down. I feel small and hot, a particle myself, caught in this light, without a hand to hold, without someone to walk off with as the sky crowns with fire. I feel Jay's lips brushing past my kitchen. Why can't *I* have any pie, I ask the kitchen ladies. They are somewhere watching Jay's lips tease me invisibly. My blood beats in my ears. The sound of the world turns down. The bus I was on departs noiselessly towards Harvard Square in a puff of black exhaust. My heart is dark. My head is a lit match of confusion. I turn around and look. The daylight is consumed by a dark mist. I see where I'm standing through a thick filter of smoky crepe de chine. Daylight is stranded on the other side of the street, the street widening, the other side blocks, miles away, an oasis of afternoon. I am caught in a sudden swathe of twilight. Jay left at dawn. Will she come back, one last time? A group of white people approach, skin oddly dimmed by the crepe smoke filter, their lips flex and purse, jaws bulge and relax, silent laughter, muted speech. Limousines roll silently along both sides of the avenue, like a swarm of eel; a window powers down and a hand extends from it, waving, gesticulating at the crowd, the face obscured by tinted glass. The procession of revelers shimmers in a dusky curtain of heat. Four in front, two men and two women, lead them, their mouths opening wide and shutting tight, fury and pleasure, a burning staff in each of their hands, raising fire into the fugue-black sky, As I see the orange flames, the hidden noise of their kazoos and tambourines explodes in my ears. I step one foot back, cock an eyebrow, eyes floating coolly among their shaded faces. Does fear of madness lurk here for me? Should I teeter now on the cusp of terror? With the sound of drumbeats do I feel a sudden primitiveness that frightens me? Do the bleating horns makes me want to howl and tear at my hair? Does my groin

throb? Do my incisors grow? Maria de Medeiros in *Henry & June*. The writer Toni Morrison talks about in *Playing in the Dark*, who, at hearing Louis Armstrong play, has a Negro-induced nervous breakdown. One more. Find one more instance of this. Somebody, somewhere, succumbing, bewildered by the sound of their own blood in their veins, and blaming someone else's darkness, not their own. Am I at risk of spiraling into the unknown realm of faux black noise marking this mysterious carnival? The negative space is daylight, far away beyond this dark shield. I consider my personal inverse of black-induced white madness: medieval shenanigans, filth and cauldrons, pickup trucks and lengths of chain, hillbilly banjo, baldhead Aryans in black shitkickers, the sound of harmonica from *Deliverance*, a headbanger keg party, blue eyes in general, are only a few elements that make up the white-induced black madness I quell daily, keep at bay, talk myself out of, steel myself against. The inverse filter is white lace silk and blackness recedes not across the street, but off into deep space. My body black and whole, my face in a mask, enjoying the party, watching the clock, my back to the door. I blink, returning myself to the black scrim covering this universe. Their shadow faces press towards me, their bodies jostle me, take me up in their flow of their crazy rag tag mess, their smutty torches, their push and frenzy. Their feet skip and stomp unreasonably. I find my rhythm and am carried along Mass Ave. I glance over my shoulder at the small crowd surging toward the brightening aura of the theater marquee. It burns through the phantasmic night. The Orson Welles Cinema, in black letters on an enormous lightbox edged with round white bulbs. It shines an arched doorway of light over the dark sidewalk. I wipe the sweat from my brow.

I want to know the year, but I know the year. It's 2004. "The Orson Welles Theater closed in 1986," I say aloud. No one near me responds, or even hears me at all, but I feel an electric bristle move the air around the vestibule. As if time cracked. Back where the shadow dropped, the mark in the sidewalk where I plucked the pin. Did I step on the crack where this time came from? The asphalt, the black, the grain and silvery glint. I enter the possibility of seeing.

MARA PASTOR

DE *CANCIÓN EN LOS AVIONES*

JETLAG

el deseo o la ventana o la nausea que amerizo me dice desde otra latitud cosas como *soy el ángel de todas las azafatas con mis pestañas duermo el miedo de los tripulantes las azafatas iconoclastas erizos sin miedo nostalgia aérea de las viudas negras vacíos de aire los pilotos cansados las azafatas místicas del consumismo que venden tarjetas de llamada que nunca funcionan artefactos de t.v que nunca comprarían son las mártires de las naciones que no existen azafatas jetlags de amor para los viajeros sin audífonos sin tarjeta de crédito sin almohada para vuelo trasatlántico sin asiento en ventana* amerizo llevo dentro a una azafata en emergencia y amerizo llevo dentro una avería técnica y amerizo llevo dentro a un piloto trasnochado que se duerme y amerizo llevo dentro a una pasajera que amenaza con explotarse y amerizo amerizo y primero se enfrían motores tragan agua las turbinas dejo de ser zumbido y soy chasquido de olas contra mi alma de metal amerizo y las nubes no me extrañan inmediatamente yo extraño a las nubes inmediatamente extraño a los pasajeros que le temen a la turbulencia y rezan me extraño las nubes las recuerdo turbulentas las nubes no me extrañan porque aquello que atravesé ya no son las nubes las botellas de whiskey salen flotando de las ventanas de primera clase como abejas ahogadas en una piscina de un hotel veo que los tripulantes de primera clase también quieren huir primero morirse primero empujar primero a los de

clase turista amerizo y el bip bip bip de la caja negra se desprende como una mosca que se ahoga en la saliva de un oficial encubierto amerizo y engendro el terror de todos los que no saben nadar amerizo y una pasajera que aún duerme sueña que va a una fiesta a la que no la invitan ella se viste de azul y baila con una azafata que se viene con el ruido de una turbina que se apaga

Tu viaje a Egipto

Its past was a souvenir
Wallace Stevens

Es tu cumpleaños
y un vendedor
te regaló tu nombre
escrito en egipcio
sobre un papiro.

Te regaló tu nombre.

Simetrías del mercado
global, -o la arena hace
lo mismo en todas partes-
por donde se fugan
la soledad y la depresión
de los señores
que no pidieron dedicarse

al turismo.

La cucaracha en el hombro de Pablo

Caminando por las calles de México,
los vi. Encapuchados. Uniformados.
Sus escopetas larguísimas,
como las antenas larguísimas
de la cucaracha grandísima
que vi posada en el hombro de Pablo Lapuente

justo antes de pensar: ¡una cucaracha
en el hombro de Pablo!
¡Grande! ¡Es muy grande!
Y enmudecí, porque aquello que recogí
de ese momento, oráculo insano,
no podía haberme pasado antes,
porque fue bello y desastroso,

escatológico en todas las acepciones
del diccionario. Aquellos hombres,
su camión con sirenas que los seducen
sin saber nada de los marinos que han sido,

pasaron apuntando a la multitud
de transeúntes en la calle
que no los vieron, como Pablo no vio
la cucaracha en su hombro
que se metió por su chaqueta
del funcionario poético que no es,
hasta que sola regresó al suelo
de su ciudad apestosa y sublime,
el día antes de la manifestación
de los electricistas. Yo pensaba,

me voy mañana y conmigo este garabato
encima de lo que llamé poesía

se va a metérseme como la cucaracha
de las antenas grandes,
como los policías apuntándonos,
como los helicópteros
que merodean la ciudad todos los días
y que sólo ella escucha
cuando dice "es guerra".

Manifestaciones sin libros,
helicópteros y, sin embargo,
la luz igual a la voz del animal
invertebrado encima del hombro,
y, sin embargo, en el aeropuerto
de Miami en que me encuentro,
los noticieros le dedican toda su atención
a un niño que nunca llegó a irse volando
en un globo metálico como la luz.

Una vez la voz de los animales
en una ciudad, mi mudez,
aquel silencio habitado de cucarachas
que a veces se posan
en los hombros de algunos poetas grises
como las mesetas del futuro:
cucarachas que nacieron para apagar la luz.

Fiebre porcina

no other end of the world there will be
Czeslaw Milosz

Las fronteras se llenan de emergencias sin vocación
y los mosquitos reclaman haber ocasionado otras pandemias
hoy olvidadas en llantas sin vacunar

Y es entonces cuando se les ven
las nalgas a los médicos que estudian
medicina por la corbata y las vacaciones en Cancún

Volar es un acto heroico:
besar a la madre antes de la alerta seis
y regresar al camino angosto que da al estacionamiento
que da al trabajo

Y como los microscopios se quedaron mudos
los epidemiólogos han comenzado a buscar pócimas
en los versos y se interesan por las retóricas eslavas

Se vuela a[...]sobre la[...]entre la pandemia
un cerdo es un chancho es un lechón un puerco
que salta la verja
y entonces
los mercaderes pueden
bostezar sin taparse el sueño

(Extraditar es el purgatorio de los vivos)

He aterrizado tantas veces
y nunca pensé en traficar conmigo
una crisis mundial.

En la portada de espectáculos
hay un marranito tocando una trompeta.

JUAN EMAR

YESTERDAY

We went out to the street under a sky that was humid and grey. We had planned to visit the San Andrés Zoo, and off we went in that direction.

In itself, to tell the truth, I didn't find the zoo much deserving of its fame—very few of the creatures there caught my attention. Let's see: the fourteen female lions did, the monkeys a bit more, and very much, I can't deny, the ostrich. But besides these, all the rest left me cold.

The lions were interesting primarily because of the part one of them would play in later events, but also because of the utter uniformity of their movements, as if they were propelled by a single spring hidden from view. Imagining what this spring would be like, I had to imagine also that there was someone beside it, to set in motion the first movements that would later manifest in the she-lions' movements, and, thinking of it like this, the following phrase came to me spontaneously and stuck fast:

"The lion moves a secret spring that secretly moves the fourteen she-lions."

I brought my lips to my wife's left ear and whispered this phrase. She looked at me from the corner of her eye and whispered to me:

"Phrase-maker."

Whatever the case, their uniformity reached a level of majesty. As we drew closer to the ditch that encircled the vast space reserved for them, the fourteen

she-lions slept—on the ground or on rocks, or teetering in the trees—they slept, I say, in the exact same pose. After a minute, they all moved their tails once, no more. After another minute they stretched, yawning and showing their claws, after which they got up and shook themselves like dogs leaving the water. Then, suddenly, they turned their heads our way and stared at us with an utter, petrifying fixity. And then a very strange thing happened. Up until that moment the Zoo had been full of the various sounds of other animals, the birds, the wind in the trees, and even of the nearby city. Of human noises there were none, as my wife and I were the only ones there. And, well, when the lions looked at us, all sound ceased, down to the tiniest whisper, and a dark, absolute silence fell over us, paralyzing us. In that silence, the twenty-eight rays of those eyes pierced our bodies with such ease and sharpness that we felt, from top to bottom, both of us, fourteen sharp, strident little pains; the rays ran right through us and buried themselves in the ground far behind us. This began to be intolerable.

"Let's go, let's go!" I said to my wife. "If we stay here, deadly little pieces of lion-gaze will be left circulating in our blood, and we cannot let that happen, since we still have, my darling, many things left to do in this life."

"True," she replied. "Let's go!"

We fled, agitated, almost frightened. Only when we reached the ditch that separated us from the monkeys did we regain our calm. A high rock had been set up in the center of their designated area, a very high and steep rock, on which the monkeys climbed, ran around, jumped, and climbed some more. There were hundreds of monkeys, all belonging to the genus cynocephalus, though they seemed smaller to me than animals of that species I had seen before. They seemed happy to be right where they were. Some of them, between one leap and another, hungrily devoured handfuls of peanuts; others had brief scuffles; some couples mated; in short, the normal life of such creatures. I remember one who sat down in front of us, dignified, and then turned its big-headed dog-like profile to us and urinated profusely.

The day remained grey and dark. We were about to continue on our way when a ray of sun pushed its way through the clouds and came to bathe the entire rock in its light. What a magnificent, splendid sight we saw then! The hundreds

of monkeys paused, amazed, and they looked towards the sun and opened their mouths wide, and then they burst out in a magnificent song.

It was a single note, only one, but it rocked gently like a roller coaster that, when it reaches the highest point, becomes sharp, shrill, savage. Then the monkeys, standing on their hind legs, reached their arms up to the sun. Then, when the note reached its lowest point, the sound it produced was cavernous, like tumbling subterranean rocks. And the monkeys, right at that moment, moved to stand on four legs, which shook like springs and made their bodies tremble violently. From there the ascension began again, long, long, and the creatures began to stand erect, and it seemed to us that we were held aloft in the air by invisible, hairy hands. And after a moment at the most strident point—downwards, downwards! Once again the long way down. The sun shone. Now upwards again. Now down.

My wife elbowed me and, indicating the monkeys with her eyes, she motioned to me that I should do as they, and she, did. My wife sang. A round and blue contralto voice—a pipe of soft velvet is what my wife's voice is. Parallel, exactly parallel to the roller coaster formed by the cynocephali's voices, only a third lower, she added her sweet, husky voice. And coaster and pipe then set out together to spiral through the air, playing with the ray of sun in magnificent harmony. I was held captive by the thousand cynocephali and my wife's interminable voice beneath theirs. But a second elbowing called me to duty. I took a deep breath, filling my lungs with fresh air, yes, very fresh, except that, with a certain wisdom, I mixed in a bit of monkey-scent and a bit of my life companion's perfume. Then, I was caught up in that splendid sound and, after clearing my throat, I managed with my limpid tenor voice to emit a sound a fifth higher than the monkeys' song. And we all rocked through the air on our vibrations: the monkeys holding on to each other on their roller coaster; I, higher up with my flat, silvery voice; below, cementing everything together, my wife, with the blue velvet of her serene windpipe.

We went down. For me, so much better than going up. But a fear for my wife began to fill me. Oh, vain fear! Oh, blessed woman of mine! May my admiration for you be forever recorded here! With incredible agility, as the thousand creatures dragged down a formidable avalanche of subterranean rocks, as I myself

was submerged hundreds of meters below the earth, she, my wife, defying and breaking through all bounds, also went down, respecting the same agreement she had made in the middle of the journey when she began to sing, so that, to the inferno of monkeys, to that clay substrate of mine, she added the majestic sliding of deep waters that have never seen the light of day, that are emptied into the Earth's entrails by vaults that none of us will ever see, but that she revealed to us by allowing us to hear them.

Another ascension began. We reached the surface of the earth. We went up. Now I was flooded with fear for myself. For the monkeys it was easy to reach the shrillest, most high-pitched point, but I don't believe there is a human voice in the world that could equal such heights. What to say about my own! I began to tremble like a child. I was defenseless. I was at the top, on the peak, crowned by the sun, my skin pricked by the sharp knives of the cold air in our prodigious ascension. And I felt at my back the keen whistle from the thousand throats of the cynocephali that drove me pitilessly on. And behind, far behind, in a sea of hopelessness, I heard the rumor of my companion's deep voice, far, far away from me. But as on so many occasions in my life, she came generously to my aid. My voice was at the very highest point; already the others, pushing against me, were starting to cramp me in my reflexive resistance. Then she made me see her own note, and then the note of the monkeys. Finally—and here was my salvation—the space that was left between them. A brief wink of her eyes begged me to stop vacillating, to throw myself from the heights into that harmony-maintaining space. But how? Would there be a place for me? Or, in trying to find it, would I make everything fall apart in the most creaking dissonance?

No. It was only a question of sharpening and tuning my ears in a different way and the three voices would approximate half the original distance—with my wife always below, me hunched down in the middle, the monkeys at the cusp, the three voices would continue in a different harmony, a different existence, climbing up towards the sun.

All it took was the decision. I threw my flat and silvery voice downwards; I bumped against the thousand sharp points that were ascending; there was a brief

snapping sound like metal hitting the ocean and, in my fall, I almost reached the velvet pipes of my beloved. But quickly she helped me find—aided also by my newly tuned ears—just the right position for my voice; and now, without fear, comforted with her behind me, protected in front by the monkeys' cold knives of air, we continued in a harmony never before heard. We continued spellbound, absorbed, until the furthest point past which there is no music or discrete sound—individual sounds, you might say, as ours were—since everything, all existence, was one single and absolute music.

A cloud passed. The sun went away. Our voices plummeted like injured birds from those fantastic heights. They plummeted, fell, and disappeared, dead, back down our throats. We fell mute in the new grey.

Many monkeys urinated. Some hit each other. A couple mated. Others devoured handfuls of peanuts.

"Let's go!" I said to my wife. "Let's go! Enough already of cynocephali!"

"Yes, enough." She said. "Let's go."

Behind some tall palm trees, crossing from here to there, from one side to the other, dignified, magnificent: a strong and beautiful ostrich.

In spite of its strength and beauty, we planned to continue our walk. My thoughts were, more or less, as follows: "Why would an ostrich matter to me? Looking at it might perhaps be pleasant, even delightful. But, why can a bird of this sort bring delight to a man like me? Why? Why?" And this question sounded gloomy to me in that vast garden. It was better to keep going. To stop would be to ask the question again, to ask it would be to wrack my brains until I found an answer. Oh, how many shadowy meditations did I see threatening me from my future if I only let fall within my soul a drop of delight before that magnificent creature! I would have to devote, from then on, all my moments of repose, all my moments of distraction, all my moments of reading and study, my moments of love and sensuousness: I would have to devote all to finding the solution to this problem: "What happens in the depths of a man, what unconsciousness is awakened, what remote echoes of God before creation, what messages from the God of the future, are in that spark of delight that wells up at the balanced step of an ostrich?" I understood that the

claws of abstraction would snatch me up and never again would there be enough peace in my heart that I could wander without worry in the streets, eat with appetite and sleep side by side with the precious other half of my soul.

We had to continue our walk.

But at that very moment a cry of horror thundered through the air.

"The lion! The lion!"

I shouted:

"Help!"

My wife:

"Jesus!"

I saw—though I had believed the zoo was deserted—thousands of human beings running frantically, consumed by panic. Men, women, old people, children, soldiers, priests: it was an electric stampede, while from one end of the place, getting ever louder, came the frightful roars of the escaped she-lion.

Petrified by terror, we did not move. Suddenly I saw, crossing the sky like a projectile in a menacing leap above the trees, the terrible lion.

My memories of everything up to this point are clear.

Now comes a dark point of which I know nothing. My wife doesn't either. And then, once again, the clarity of my perceptions returned.

We were at the farthest top of a giant elm tree, mute, pale, trembling. How we climbed up there, what force and distress made us do it...as I said, I don't know, and neither does my wife.

Around us as far as we could see, men, women, old people, children, soldiers and priests were running and running. The lion was descending from the sky, claws and teeth barred. At our feet, undaunted, dignified, magnificent, the beauteous ostrich continued its dancing promenade.

This was the most intense moment of suspense, of tension, that my wife and I had ever experienced. I could calculate the lion's curve of descent, and she was going to fall right into the ostrich's domain.

And so it was. The lion fell. The ostrich stopped. One in front of the other. There were no more than fifteen meters between them.

Oh, my dear wife, my beloved wife, why must I love you so very deeply?

And then it happened, the horrifying thing.

But not yet, because before it occurred, the lion crouched down, flicked her tail briskly, flattened her ears, furrowed her eyes, showed her teeth, growled like a volcano, and repeated all of this several times.

At the same time the ostrich, faced with such horrific expressions, did nothing more than gracefully elongate its neck and wait with half-closed eyes.

Wait!

A hellish word for me and for my wife, but not for the women, men, old people, children, soldiers and priests, who continued running crazily, running, running.

Our wait lasted...it depends on whether the time was measured by chronometers or by us ourselves.

In that moment of waiting were all the manvatharas that compose our earthly cycles, our systems, and whatever comes after them.

When suddenly it happened, the horrifying thing:

The enraged lion attacked.

She attacked with another menacing leap. When she leapt into the air, the leaves of the gigantic elm tree shuddered, whispering; the mosquitoes sheltered within them took flight, and all over the world all the airplanes in existence took off on splendid vertical flights.

Then the lion began to execute her fatal semicircle through the air that would land her exactly on top of the bird, tearing it to pieces and finally crushing it.

The immanent semicircle came to be. The semicircle fulfilled its destiny: the lion leapt upon the ostrich.

Here, I beg the reader to please follow me carefully. What happened was the following. But first I must explain what would have happened if what happened had not happened; that is to say, if the ostrich had remained immobile. If things had gone like that, the lion, thanks to the precision of the semicircle, would have fallen right on it and, upon falling, she would have destroyed it in an instant. But, that didn't happen. Here is what happened:

When the tips of the she-lion's front claws were precisely 37 centimeters from the tip of the ostrich's beak, the latter executed a quick step to the right. But this step had something peculiar about it. If I knew how to draw, I would draw an ostrich just as it appeared before the step to the right and then, in the same drawing, I would draw with a dotted line the creature's position after the step. Unfortunately, I don't know how to draw. But, I repeat, if I did know how to draw, two ostrich bodies would be seen in the drawing, one at the center of the paper, another to the side, to the right, and, finally, four feet of the same ostrich. Up to now, nothing peculiar. But let us continue and the peculiarity will come. Feet as well as bodies would be separate, clearly separate, as if belonging to two different creatures. But not so the necks, and even less the heads. The neck of the first ostrich would be straight up, that is to say, perpendicular to the body; conversely, the one to the right would be inclined at an angle of 45 degrees towards the first neck, in order to plug into it more or less at the middle of its length. As a result, there would be two bottom halves of the neck, but only one upper half and only one head. In other words: the ostrich launched both feet to the right, which brought the body with them, only part of the neck, and the head did not move, the head remained in the same place. As will be understood, if I have managed to express myself clearly, feet, body and lower part of the neck moved out of the lion's trajectory, while the upper part of the neck and the head remained within said area. At that moment, faced with the spectacle that we witnessed, I wanted to say to my wife:

"The lateral movement of the ostrich has reminded me very clearly of the movement that I saw Belmonte execute before a Veragua bull on the 8th of May, 1920, in Zaragoza Plaza, past 4.30 in the afternoon and before 4.32, when I was in the company of Lucrecia, the beautiful Lucrecia. Then, too, there was a step to the right, everything changing place, except for the two hands and the cape, which remained in the bull's trajectory."

This was what I wanted to say, but there was no time, since I continued to formulate my thoughts and memories with the slow, habitual speed of the citizens of San Agustín de Tango yesterday, which was the same slow, habitual speed of the day before yesterday, of today and of tomorrow, of all the ages descended since Adam and of all those that remain to come until the last one wastes away.

Conversely, the spectacle which evoked my memories was ruled by unheard-of speeds: not the speed of humans, but the breakneck speed of lions which are, furthermore, enraged, an exponential speed that multiplied all existence, the spinning planets, moving constellations, the whole universe, except for the two of us, poor human beings stalled at the top of an elm, poor beings like so many others that roam and suffer on this Earth. Yes, sirs, like all those that exist, since men, women, children, old people, soldiers and priests had stopped their crazed running, and the magnificent universal airplanes had checked their ascents and now flew, gliding like swans with no destination.

The 37 centimeters were traveled. Then, at the first contact with the beast, the ostrich opened its beak prodigiously and we, horrified, could see from our observatory the most astounding event that we had ever seen. The ostrich, I repeat, opened its beak incredibly wide, wider than I would ever have thought an ostrich could open it, and the lion, hasty as fate, hastened inside him; she hurled herself into him and in a thousandth of a second she disappeared.

She disappeared into the beak, she disappeared. Now, with no dangerous lion running about, my wife and I climbed down from the elm and went to stand by the ditch that encircled the bird's domain. From there we could watch as the strange battle unfolded.

Along the ostrich's throat there formed a large lump. It remained motionless for a minute and then, slowly, it began to descend the length of the neck with several shuddering movements. These shudders brought to my mind the movements an enraged cat might make struggling in a bag of gelatin.

I said as much to my wife. She cast a questioning glance over my face. And with good reason, with such reason, since I don't think there exists any mortal who has witnessed a cat going crazy in a bag of gelatin and, if such a mortal does exist, I can assure you it is not I. And of this my wife was aware. Moreover, if it is true that there's a close resemblance between a lion and a cat, it is no less true that there's none between a bag of gelatin and a long ostrich neck covered in feathers, no matter how many lumps may take shape within them. The silent questioning of my wife, then, was doubly justified. But what could I do? It was—to me, anyway—a cat imprisoned in gelatin and struggling heroically. Can I help it? I answered her questioning glance with an appeal

for forgiveness. She then took her eyes from my face and we both stared once again at the bird.

The lion went down very slowly. Sometimes we could make out through the feathers her four legs and her snout in a desperate fight to break out of the pipe that had inhaled her and held her prisoner. Will she make it? Will she not? These were the questions we were asking ourselves when, suddenly, there was no room for doubt: she won't make it, no! If the poor beast had had any hope of bringing her work to a good end, it is doubtless that the ostrich would have realized it and an expression of fear, or at least disquiet, would have shown on its face. And there was none. Much to the contrary. At the fifteenth shudder in the middle of the neck, the ostrich smiled. Then, at the sixteenth, its smile turned into a soft chuckle, faltering, nervous. There was no doubt that the beast's efforts were giving it a light tickle from the inside. And there was no doubt either that said tickling was increasing, since already at the eighteenth shudder the bird was laughing, laughing freely, and at the twenty-first, unable to contain itself anymore, it burst out in a roar of laughter.

Before such a spectacle as this, she who is the companion of my very soul could not contain herself either and let out a ha! ha! ha!, holding her ribs with her little hands of delicate marble. And upon seeing how both of them, the creature and my beloved, were laughing, I in turn let out the most thunderous, the most formidable peal of laughter that any human has ever laughed.

It was stupendous. The three of us laughed uncontrollably, rolling on the ground, in peals of laughter that seemed more like howls than laughter, holding the pits of our stomachs—we with both hands, the bird with its feet—shedding copious tears, our laughter resounding through the air; we laughed, we choked, we stamped our feet, caught up, enveloped, surrounded by the same infernal and delirious joy.

How long? Who knows?! We were conscious of nothing more than our laughter. The only thing I know is that when the lump with the lion in it reached the base of the neck, there was one last shudder and the beast passed into the body proper of the bird. And…silence. The creature became serene atop its long legs, remaining motionless and placid as if in meditation. We then pursed our lips and, dignified as well, we waited.

The hands of the clock traversed a quarter of the sphere surrounded by the world's total silence.

The nearby bell of los Jerónimos sounded with a coppery ring, cleaving the calm in two. The bird sneezed. Then I sneezed. Finally my sainted wife closed the cycle of sneezes, sneezing in turn.

And life continued.

Here began another phase of this strange battle. The ostrich took up a curious, although familiar, posture.

"It's going to defecate." I murmured softly in my wife's ear.

"Quiet," she responded.

And, without saying anything, our arms entwined, we went to station ourselves right behind the bird, that is to say, right in front of its tail.

And once more we waited.

Our wait soon paid off. The tail feathers shook for a moment and then opened in a magnificent flower. Then, the circle that appeared began to dilate and we, with indescribable happiness, saw the lion's snout appear from within. And it came sliding out. We saw her nose, her eyes—closed at first, they blinked and opened—her forehead, her ears, her neck. We had the feeling of watching the sun rising on a splendid morning. My wife applauded vehemently.

At the sound of her hands, the lion realized we were there and threw us an irate glance. I made a face at it and my wife stuck out her tongue. This was enough to anger it more, and it began to struggle to get its shoulders and front legs out. But the ostrich was on its guard. When it felt that its prisoner might escape, it puckered its orifice hard, so hard that the beast exclaimed:

"Eeeeeeeh!"

But it continued in spite of the pain. The ostrich continued as well. What we witnessed then was simply appalling. Here is what happened:

The lion, thanks to her consummate strength, came out—slowly, yes, but she came out. The ostrich, thanks to his own strength, also consummate, held on to the lion's skin with the pressure of its sphincter. So that we saw appear little by little a lion with a normal head and a beautiful pelt, but, starting from the neck, she was skinned, terrifyingly skinned. And she got one paw out, then the other, like someone taking a hand from a fluffy glove, or more like—if it were

seen from inside the bird—someone pressing open the peel of a ripe banana and its aromatic pulp expelled. Horror! Her entire trunk came out like that, and likewise her hind legs. And there she stood, held only by the tail. And then she made a supreme effort: with a sonorous, sharp lash, she managed to dislodge it and we had before our eyes the most hair-raising and macabre lion one could ever imagine. Blood dripped from her whole body and the drops, when they hit the grass, produced the distant murmur of a morning rain. Then she broke out in sweat, a greenish sweat that made it seem for a moment that she was wrapped in a layer of celluloid. But this sweat fell all at once, exploding, and sounded like an oar that falls flat on the surface of a calm sea. And the drops came back and the sweat came back and all the time the poor animal gazed up at the skies. Until finally, without further ado, she started to run like crazy. We saw her get lost amid the foliage; we saw her gory body disappear. Then, when the very tip of the tail was gone, we dragged back along the trail of greenish blood left behind in her flight; we dragged, I say, our gazes back to the tail of the magnificent ostrich.

It had closed, and the creature distractedly watched the flitting of the birds. A bit later, noticing us, he winked an eye at us. We stopped. The bird then turned his long neck around, put his beak inside himself, grabbed the pelt of his victim and, with admirable mastery, removed it. He spread the pelt out on the ground and with his two large feet flattened it nicely. Lying down on one half, he covered himself up to the nose with the other half and closed his eyes. A minute later he was sleeping soundly.

I looked at my wife, and she looked at me.

"Let's go!" I said. "Let's go! Enough already of lions and ostriches."

"Yes," she answered, "enough already. Let's go!"

Translation by Megan McDowell

POEMAS

Boceto Para Una Cartografía En Verde Opaco Y Barro

No es este el relato de mundos ya idos,
ya olvidados, ya ocultos en años.
Es un viaje por varias tierra_suelos,
sendero oscuro_claros, que se abren misteriosos ante tus ojos;
como brisa;
como viento;
como nubes.

Esta ahí el secreto;
en la piedra que pisas cada día en los caminos,
en los musgos,
en las plantas,
en el viento.

No busques entonces los augurios fáciles,
porque no hay destino
solo ráfagas de viento entre las ramas.

Pausa_Historia

Esto fue hace años, allá en el horizonte,
cuando el humo de los incendios de bosques y de rukas, aún no se había disipado y se oía el correr sigiloso de pies descalzos huyendo a las espesuras de la memoria.
¿Lo recordarás? Es necesario que lo mires una y otra vez
Fue, cuando el bisabuelo de mi familia, secaba al sol de la tarde su cansado cuerpo en el estero.
Le vino de repente, como Nube_Pensamiento
y miró el mundo de las aguas.
Agazapado tras el manantial reconoció la voz de un viejo sueño,
se hundió en sus huellas lentamente susurrando una vieja plegaria,
una letanía Lenta_Añosa, y navegó la luna creciente:

\\ Ay sagrado mundo verde
Almas viejas que se agitan Pausa_mente por los años
Ay Viejo_Sabios encarnados en pastos mudos
¿Qué sería de mis labios si pudiesen cantarte?
¿Qué sería de mi cabeza si pudiese pensarte?
Ay Viejo_Pastito
Caminito
Hierba_Guía de las aguas
Bailen_Bailen
Miren_Miren
Musgo_Agua
Pajarito //

Abuela_Voz

Fue entonces que se encendió un fuego en el Pastal_Junco;
una Voz_Abuela llamó desde su casa,
extraños animales le contaron de los pactos, las alianzas olvidadas.
Pero el verbo, la palabra enmarañada,
cobijó el secreto entre los pasos de los hijos que fueron bisabuelos.
Fue así,
como los antiguos parientes acamparon esa tarde en la memoria,
recitaron versos traídos desde lejos
y reconstruyeron sus moradas bajo los helechos,
en la oculta quebrada del estero.

El Tiempo Va Desperdigando Sus Imágenes Sobre Un Paisaje Nuevo

A media mañana,
sombras Blancas_Grises bajan sigilosas hacia el valle;
desde el amanecer viajaban en colores por los cielos, silenciosos.
Por contraparte en el despierto valle
una algarabía de choroyes Gritan_Cantan,
en su elíptica ruta hacia las pampas
animando vientos que estremecen los copihues:

//Vienen ya de nuevo los brotes de laureles
Ya Ya Ya
Por campos abiertos con flores del trueno
Girando Girando Girando
Ya Ya Ya
Vienen ya los brotes //

Luciérnagas Prendidas De Las Enredaderas Proyectan Arco Iris Entre Árboles De Huautro

\ \ Ay aya ay
Cubre_sendas orillando pasos van
Ay aya ay
Redondela_chispas fuego fatuo voladores
Rueda entre y por la enredadera
Ay aya ay
Quemen queriendo
Viajan_vienen de la noche
Ay aya ay
Siempre_vivas Siempre_ardiendo
Ay aya ay//

Canto

\\ Como la vida Piedra Madre
Llorando Mojando Corrientes son
Ojos Pies Desperdigados
Señales de otros caídos Rodados aquí
Un rayo fue Tralkan_Pulli
Rodando bajan
Negros perros de agua
Un rayo fue
Tralkan Pulli //

Voces Que Contaron

En oscuros pasadizos de flores de piedra,
en un cántaro sagrado,
mirarás el mundo de los espíritus.
Si bajas por una escalera de barro blanco
encontrarás una puerta que gira en dirección contraria.
Mirarás callado el túnel pardo que se abre ante tus pies;
escucharás con cerrados ojos el silencio
para que los latidos de tu corazón te orienten hacia la salida.
No mires el hervir silencioso de los pozos;
escucha
el Dulce_Romance de tu voz en el vacío :

\\ Hay bajo estos ropajes unos sauces Madre_abuela
Unos botones de greda blanca con cuenta de los días
Un paño rojo envuelve corazones tristes
Sonrisas ya se ha enfriado en la cuenta de la luna
Dejaré de ofrenda flores de piedra roja
Cuencas de vacíos ojos //

La Quebrada Un Nudo De Voces Que Caen (canto)

\\Recordabas ya desde hace mucho yerberita
Agorera barco barro dicen eres
Por si el mundo hablaran las estrellas
Por si el verde los sapos escucharan
Por si no fuéramos más que aliento lastimero
Por si dieras vuelta el tronco de ese árbol
Plantado allí esquivando las gallinas en el patio
Recordabas ya finales predecibles
Agorera agua fuego silbidito
Quebradita yerberita
Silenciosa culebrita//

La Luz Cae Vertical Sobre Los Chilcos En Movimiento

Acurrucada una lagartija medita sobre el sol entre unos troncos,
a veces vuelve su cola inquieta hacia el sendero,
y de un cerrar de ojos vuelve su vida entre los pastos.
Se abre un valle como una ancha puerta;
una Imagen_Torrente y verás:

Una niña con fuentes de madera se acerca al lugar del sacrificio,
espera el derrame de la sangre y vuelve su mirada hacia el oeste;
eran quince años hace tiempo,
pero sabe que vendrán otros niños nuevamente en primavera.
Abuela y bisabuela de esta estirpe, casi olvidada
teje chombas a la espera de parientes.
Nadie regresa ya desde el camino.
En otros años y otros siglos
será solo un susurro entre los Revellines,
una brisa suave jugando entre las Ñochas.

Adentre_Historias

Junto a la puerta de esta vieja casa
Otros vivientes te llevarán
Otras vocecitas cantarán:

\\ Almacitas pequeñitas
Vienen_Vienen a soñarme
Son Recuerdos_Cuerdas que nos unen
Que protegen nuestros rastros de la escarcha
Almacitas pequeñitas
Plantas_madres
Musgo_agua
Vida_Vida
Sueño_Sueño //

JUAN CARLOS FLORES

NUEVE POEMAS DE *TRAPICHE*

PALOMAS

"Las bellas palomas son también animales con heces como cualquier otro animal". (R, criador de palomas me explica el modus operandis que tienen las palomas), "las bellas palomas son también animales con heces como cualquier otro animal" (R, criador de palomas sabe mucho a propósito de palomas y nada o casi nada a propósito de poemas). "Las bellas palomas son también animales con heces como cualquier otro animal".

Palomas en cautiverio, palomas enjauladas, si escribieran poemas sobre humanos escribirían poemas de horror.

Hombre Muerto

"hombre muerto en la cárcel por defender una idea de patria diferente a la idea de patria del gobierno" / ese hombre es también un muerto de la patria aunque digan que es parte del ejercito enemigo / una baja en el ejercito enemigo / el árbol de vida de la patria qué frondoso / el árbol de muerte de la patria frutecido / árbol cuya raíces se hunden en la desmemoria / "hombre muerto en la cárcel por defender una idea de patria diferente a la idea de patria del gobierno" / ese hombre es también un muerto de la patria aunque digan que es parte del ejercito enemigo / una baja en el ejercito enemigo / el árbol de vida de la patria qué frondoso / el árbol de muerte de la patria frutecido / árbol cuya raíces se hunden en la desmemoria / "hombre muerto en la cárcel por defender una idea de patria diferente a la idea de patria del gobierno" /

Antílopes

He soñado con antílopes: sobre el plano policromático se desplazaban y eran felices y eran libres. Yo que con frecuencia tengo las atroces pesadillas de vulgar novela policíaca y escribo para hacer más tenue, más llevadero el horror de vivir, puesto que entre mis pesadillas y lo real hay un vínculo. He soñado con antílopes: sobre el plano policromático se desplazaban y eran felices y eran libres.

Devocional

"el perro vino a comer fruta pulposa de mi mano y yo pensé en San Francisco de Asís"/ hermano sol/ hermana luna/ hermano bosque/ hermano viento/ hermana agua/ hermana piedra/ hermanas las palabras/ la misma mano que toma el pincel es la que extiende la fruta/ "el perro vino a comer fruta pulposa de mi mano y yo pensé en San Francisco de Asís"/

Postal

La esbelta ave blanca que yo vi/ posada sobre la tierra monda/ en lo que fue un lago de aguas cristalinas/ lago de aguas dulces al sabor/ han pasado los años y todavía sigo tratando de traducir/ a medio camino entre la traducción y la invención/ la esbelta ave blanca alzó su vuelo y quedé lo mismo que un ciego bajo el sol.

En la salina roja

En la salina roja se fabrica la sal roja/ en la salina roja estamos mi padre enrojecido y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mi madre enrojecida y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mis hermanos enrojecidos y yo/ San Francisco/ sobre burro montado/ San Panchito/ En la salina roja se fabrica la sal roja/ en la salina roja estamos mi padre enrojecido y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mi madre enrojecida y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mis hermanos enrojecidos y yo/ San Francisco/ sobre burro montado/ San Panchito/ En la salina roja se fabrica la sal roja/ en la salina roja estamos mi padre enrojecido y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mi madre enrojecida y yo/ en la salina roja estamos mis hermanos enrojecidos y yo/ San Francisco/ sobre burro montado/ San Panchito/ cinco somos nosotros/ cinco dedos tiene mi mano/ la mano esa escribe o la mano esa mata o simplemente la mano/ amén que significa así sea.

Hotel Mar Azul

Entonces se nos acercó la anciana desdentada/ hablando en lengua dialectal pidió que le compráramos lata con refresco/ cuando le compramos lata con refresco la anciana estalló/ a reír a canturrear a mover pícaramente ambas caderas/ el refresco industrial contiene glucosa/ la glucosa activa el sistema automotriz/ un personaje Bernhardiano tropicalizado riendo canturreando moviendo pícaramente ambas caderas.

Patinadores

"los patinadores cruzan rápido sobre el asfalto y desaparecen con la misma velocidad con que aparecen". (las patinetas se fabrican en serie y no se diferencian las unas de las otras, las personas se fabrican según método antiguo antes del nacimiento de la industria y son muy diferentes las unas de las otras). "los patinadores cruzan rápido sobre el asfalto y desaparecen con la misma velocidad con que aparecen". (grupo, no pertenezco a ningún grupo y no me reconozco en ningún grupo, mi verdadero y único amigo es dios ausente, la sensación de soledad se haría más intensa si yo saliera a caminar y me detuviera frente a la iglesia tamaño caracol). "los patinadores cruzan rápido sobre el asfalto y desaparecen con la misma velocidad con que aparecen".

Ardillas

Las ardillas juegan sobre el árbol indiferentes a nosotros/ los que venimos para admirar a las ardillas/ porque necesitamos algo en qué depositar nuestra capacidad de admiración/ las ardillas juegan sobre el árbol indiferentes a nosotros/ los que venimos para admirar a las ardillas/ porque necesitamos algo en qué depositar nuestra capacidad de admiración/ sí somos hombres hermosos y somos seres deformes/ las ardillas juegan sobre el árbol indiferentes a nosotros/

JUDITH GOLDMAN

4 POEMS FROM *L.B.; OR, CATENARIES*

[UNTITLED]

~~penguins don' swi~~ penguins
do swi, ~~the~~y don't fli-
ckr off cliffs any
quickr than Icar-
us did. the Briny Deep
~~do~~ penguins Swim

Earth
lies fl.at
but so
does
heaven
lie, I
~~spi~~. spy.
See, no
more kiss
the poles

as they
cros.s.
crying
they cry,
north star
by South,
giving briny
light.
but, With
their eyes
x'ed out.

WORK DIARY

tore off
my face and

ate it

stupid blunder

hardly recognize myself

still in my dressing-gown

cocaine

the blockade forces us

to improvise

somebody should do
all my paintings for me

Keep up the good work

not having seen me again

[UNTITLED]

my body is my costume

To explain all my work

I know you remember that

But I have to go through
                Have to go through

Holding my hand out to the rain, like when

                Burger King friended me

Mild concentration

as though Standing

on a ladder

, lame to that one figure. Remember?

it is a thing. I can sell it.

I know you remember that.

Everyone waters their own little flower

shrugging them off

who's them?

I hear voices

On the phone

Not funny

as a matter of fact I don't feel so well

circus life

I

shot the bear

made Socks of

the bear's ears

I know you remember

Stomp around screaming down at the socks

Do you hear me
Do you hear me now bear

Eat blank and vomit blank bear

jesus doesn't want me

spanning the.

So if I sometimes spoke a harsh word
I know you remember that

Fuck you lookin' at?

um, Better get back

The Waste Line [a'cursed share]

Similarly eggs can be made to talk

I made an egg talk and it confessed utterly

At a social gathering such as this

shades slightly into acting—

Egg butts in, auspicy
You don't yoke an egg to a

The thing what lies in the method of presenting it
Since anything can stand in for anything else
To inhabit as a motion
And which I can only trust to you
Begins at my invisible self & exhibits me in a world of true infinity

Shreds dangling,
from the edges of forms

The dog is moved by beauty. Subservience
I'm not going to make it easy for you
As I though I were nature slumbering
Onto which words could fasten and begin
Like snaps upon a shirtface

Hold my stupid hand

Hold open the hole

I have to do an errand

Will you carry me

Darkly, but then face to face

of us gloved and scarved, flapping dumbly

Cancel all adverbs

So event can reabsorb

Smile

you're

a candied camera

I yam?

JUAN SALZANO

AMEBA MAGA

bajamos del Tibet aunque estamos al margen
en la tóxica entretela que nadie reclama

autoplasma y polen mago en la Tierra de los Nadies
en la deshuesada floración que oxigena nuestros rezos
como si tocáramos las libaciones en el imán de la absorción
en el hueco sonajero donde céfiro suplico:

para nosotros la inminencia oleaginosa de un desierto, de un espacio
pinturero: para nosotros, ahora, la inmanencia del oleaje
en cuyo vaivén tensar las pieles
hasta exhalar una célula un planeta
y adivinarle la intención, su emanada tensión
o la intensidad de manada
con que nos llama a su arrullo este cuerpo evaporado

bajamos del Tibet aunque estamos en Soma
y en su secreto de oracular vibrato

oraciones arrojadas sobre la mesa del omóplato
remolinos vigías penetrando los poros hasta inflar
el informe pulpo de tiza que nos aduna mientras dura
el climaterio de esta frenética marea

bajamos del Tibet aunque estemos en cuero
sobre el paréntesis creciente de una ola

ahora es el acceso al milagro (a los mil ogros de la maravilla
que componen la vitrina en la que desfilamos)
el ingreso a las cremas kinéticas del *quiasmo*:
grácil mueca de contra-espacio
o de pulmón partido que respira fuera de sí

Simorgh rey de los pájaros
ubicuo aleteo de muda (jungla vibrante)
translatido mutante que canta en ácido rumor

Simorgh natura juglar
en tus plumas espejea la pasta blanda que somos

quién vive preguntamos al osario encontrado tras la tranquera
rodeado por moscas por ecos por ínfimos
jets del roce

fue necesario escrutar con delicadeza
las ciegas cuencas visionarias
y profundas del cráneo de un jabalí
con sus colmillos curvos apuntando a la colmena
del cielo que surca una abeja shaolín
sobre la inmensidad de los campos tapizados
de piedras aéreas de blancas hiedras

(lechos ebrios para las lechosas fieras)

quién vive preguntamos ya batracios
y dejamos transparentar nuestros cuerpos
sobre los fotismos de un suelo indeleble
entre los gestos de la grama vuelta gema
o dilatada goma del gemido que responde:

vive el colibrí intermitente
polinizando los mármoles del aire, vive la veloz
miel de la cólera, el colirio de las encías en la Tierra
viven el cuarzo y el soma sobre el lomo
de un tosco animal que huye, vive el insecto
y su anhelo exploratorio cuando en abismos
miniatura zumba: ¡vivan las cuencas
oceánicas y telescópicas por donde nos espía el jabalí!

empetrolar el párpado darlo vivo
a la rompiente de quién en su ropaje ocre
yace el escape bajo su ogro el papiro inestable de este monstruo
o la capa que cubre el sable y abre
la ubre de aire el oro
que avanza entre las hebras secas
disecadas como vendas que se inflaman
para abrir el hiato el tiro preñado
en la tara de este sino el tiro de sí
la fauna intermedia que brota en la grieta:
el tigre y su tirso el toro y su cuerno
de lianas ardientes las junglas fosfenan
al sol a la sombra en la cal
del enigma basta el ojo un gajo
del espacio una ristra o una zarza aparecida un astro
vierte la suerte la sierpe es el atajo hacia su éter-nido es su aura
de diapasónica muerte en el ajenjo del nervio
en el tremolar ajeno que agita el colmillo
y el brillo de la fiebre en la escama
en la rama del remolino se mece
el papiro se deshace volátil renace
laxo un vampiro invertebrado
hasta lo incorpóreo de un rayón un ala prensil
me crece en esta mueca

El manto de sombra húmeda
en cuyas ondas me mezco
es arteria externa esquirla de lux
lumen mutante en la grácil marea
por donde sangro o respiro
el frágil flujo de la llamada rea
ara un surco la llama en su líquido nervio
el signo pegado a la fricción del arabesco
y aunque entre las aguas no merezco
esta chispa este puma bajo el costillar cavernario
esta luna duna daga
perpleja en el plexo
del terreiro de hule es *Simorgh*
quien impersonal recibe
este viboreo de tragaespuma
en la palma del alma
en el centro del faro
en el foro de los vagidos en el athanor preñado
del fauno cuya luna lamen embestida
es coro hagios landa
es Tierra desvestida

de obús ferino a lúpulo vaho
de ínsula difusa a infusa duermevela
me trepo y me retrepo y desenvaino hasta yacer
volátil en el tufo de la savia alucinada
o abducida tromba que desfila
en la eléctrica fronda subyacer
a los deltas del rizoma ameboidal
o ya no ser sino la anguila
transplantada a la astilla estelar
donde bulle lunar el latido y subterráneo
levar la dosis hasta que fibrile

corazón que nada
en un jardín oculto
marinado a fuelle
del bosque pulmonar
inflama el pneuma
un surtidor que late
sin forma sin
surtidor sin
latido
sin mal ni
bien sin
pecado *¡just sing!*
no me han pescado
soy un pez
aún aurando
arando el aura
el agua de la aurora
del alba coronada
donde hoy nado y bailo
inflamado y nada
urde esta llama
ni mi omega
ameba maga

JOHN-MICHAEL RIVERA

FROM *AMATL, AN ENCYCLOPEDIA IN PART*

PROLOGUE I—THE ~~GODS~~

Reading antiquity of his people it is likely that more than a thousand years went by before it was destroyed this land was populated the knowledge or wisdom of this people was considerable perfect philosophers were constructed Our Lord God intended the depopulated land be settled I pause to relate riddles these people our brother the stock of Adam taught in these sciences

Reader

When this work began, it began to be said by those who knew of it, that a dictionary was being made.

How does this dictionary Progress ?

It is impossible for me to prepare a dictionary

I have laid groundwork

arranged columns

~~A clear copy~~

not finished

language aid me

knowledge

is language

with all its secrets

Prologue II—~~The~~ Ceremonies

all writers authenticate

testimonies
proofs authenticate

proof

I know

They
made
truth
in these books

It was done this way.

Grammarians employed in Ancient times

conferred many days

they I

explained language

writing the explanation

painting

originals

~~*I still have the originals*~~.

Prologue III—~~The~~ Origins

~~*Books*~~

empty
things

fictions

divine
rational

falsehoods

belief
idolatry

in
out

~~*Books*~~

Book IV—~~The~~ Soothsayers

Birth

Fortells

Necromantic

Books

Book V—The ~~Omens~~

Dark night

wanting to investigate

We seek secret things

paths forbidden

cries of the living

We search for apparitions in the fragrance of things,

in

auguries

placed here.

Book VI—Rhetoric ~~and Moral Philosophy~~

Savage and Decadent

eyes

wise

and humble

Cruel virtues

contained

In life
we
invent
language
of
ancestors

Book VII—~~The Sun, Moon, and Stars~~, and the Binding of the Years

our

writings

invented

The sun

The moon

The Air

The stars

The land

The fire

Originated

In blindness

Language
~~*the last element*~~

a subject

translated whole

Book VIII—~~Kings and Lords~~

recollections of ancient things

influenced by some oracle

below the equinoctial line

he was a great necromancer

now very visible reveal

indications of its fortune

such until his behavior

Ceased
Governing
Their
Customs

IX—The ~~Merch~~ants

History

speaks of supernatural

phenomena

where

generations of people

dwell

as a thing

contrary to human nature

X: ~~The~~ People

I follow the order of persons—

Of the body
Of eternal and external organs
Of the ailments
Of learning and practicing
Of astrology
Of theology
Of our Catholic Faith
Of their habits
Of this land
Of the state
Of our dwellings
Of idolatry and drunkenness
Of time and unbelief
Of language
Of mind
Of grammar

XI—~~Earthly~~ Things

Make comparisons

A compendium

Created through

a

teotl

a

{term}

a

thing good and evil

a sun

a god

a rich storehouse

of all

meaning

XII—The ~~Con~~quest

I desired to write in the Mexican language
For these reasons, it seems to me to have written this history,
A time it is believed they

I

told the truth

MARK BOOTH

BESTIARY (TEXTS) | *PIERCEDNIGHTSTARVOICE* (DRAWINGS)

BADGER

Taxidea taxus

The badger ingests living creatures and in the process of ingestion renders them dead. This is not unusual. However in the case of this remarkable animal, the badger later un-ingests the creatures it has consumed, de-digesting the dead back into life, repeating in reverse order the progression of its bites and chews until a fully formed creature re-emerges from its mouth. Once disgorged, the regurgitated animals, including assorted amphibians, insects, mammals, bears, birds, coyotes, grubs, porcupines, reptiles, rodents, snakes, wolves, and other creatures, regardless of size or former proclivities, live in harmony within the badger's sett. This transduction of life into death and death back into life provides the badger with all the sustenance it requires. Great somnambulistic parades of walking, crawling, slithering, and clawing organisms traverse the

badger's domain. With ears attuned to the telltale commotion of numerous bodies moving within the subterranean colonnades, the careful observer might locate the badger's sett with the naked ear, or with a stethoscope placed upon grassless soil.

Bobcat

Lynx rufus

The incisor of a bobcat is hollow, being a nozzle for a thread secretion not unlike the silk of a spider, an odorless fiber that mysteriously compels finches and woodpeckers to masturbate. The sight of the woodpeckers masturbating compels me to masturbate, but for some reason I can't ejaculate, and so the spiders die like it's December and I am regrettably bitten by the bobcat.

Hedgehog

Erinaceus europaeus

I replaced five pieces of fruit in a basket at the hotel breakfast bar with five chloroformed hedgehogs. In advance of their return to consciousness, I paid my bill and departed.

Horseshoe Crab

Limulus polyphemus

I was walking home in the rain when I noticed a horseshoe crab on the sidewalk ahead of me. As I approached, I noticed that the horseshoe crab was alive. It propelled itself slowly, almost imperceptibly across the sidewalk with a patient dignity. As I passed it, I could hear the faint sound of the crab's appendages scraping against the concrete, amplified to the threshold of audibility through its rigid carapace. Its presence on the street struck me as somewhat unusual since the nearest ocean was approximately 700 miles to the east or 1700 miles to the west. I kept walking; my take-out dinner was growing cold.

Narwhal

Monodon monoceros

I licked the entirety of a narwhal's tusk from the base to the pinnacle. Do not ask where this occurred, as I will not tell you. I will confide that I made an arrangement with a local purveyor of experiences who introduced me to an employee at a private zoological museum.

The helical tusk of a narwhal is an elongated tooth imparted with a surprising tactile sensitivity, particularly remarkable for its ability to precisely measure temperature, atmospheric pressure, and touch. I attempted to trace one furrow from the horn's root to its tip with my tongue. During this process of investigation my taste buds became inflamed and swollen calling to mind an undulating colony of sea anemones.

The narwhal itself physically resembles a large dark globule of viscous fluid speckled with white. One of the unusual attributes of this creature is its possession of a permanent upturned smile giving the narwhal a perpetually knowing appearance, even in death. This enigmatic smile reflects the narwhal's reception of continual unexpected pleasures transmitted through the nerve fibers within its tusk.

Through the exhilaration of our mutual proximity, or from boredom, silence, excitement, or necessity, one of us excreted. I was immediately requested to leave the aquatic diorama.

Octopus

Enteroctopus dolfleini

While you were speaking I imagined I was wearing a crocheted octopus costume.

Platypus

Ornithorhynchus anatinus

I pretended that I was a platypus and invited over a colleague to vie for my wife's affections. I engaged my opponent in a duel to the death. The venomous spurs on my legs were of a psychic nature, and so his death was symbolic. After vanquishing my opponent, and paying for his cab fare, I mated with my wife, after which I plunged my head below the surface of the water and probed blindly for crustaceans with my electromagnetically sensitive bill, returning once again to my solitary life in the stream.

Sea Urchin

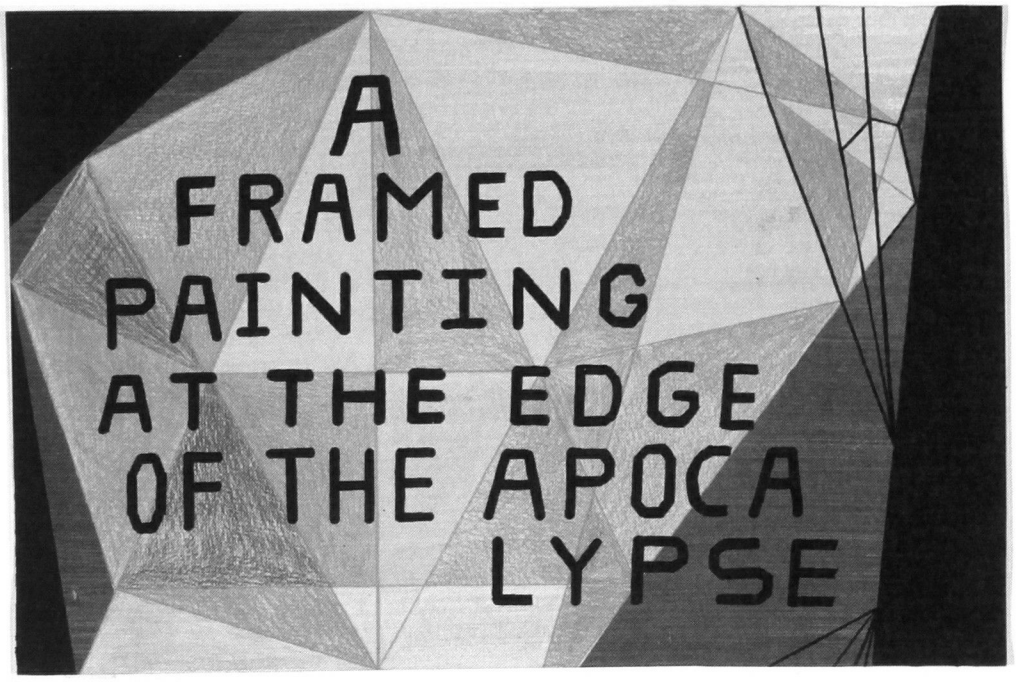
Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis

It is commonly known that when eaten, sea urchin resembles the texture and flavor of a drowned sailor, leading the superstitious to believe that the sea urchin is a repository for the souls of mariners reaped by the sea.

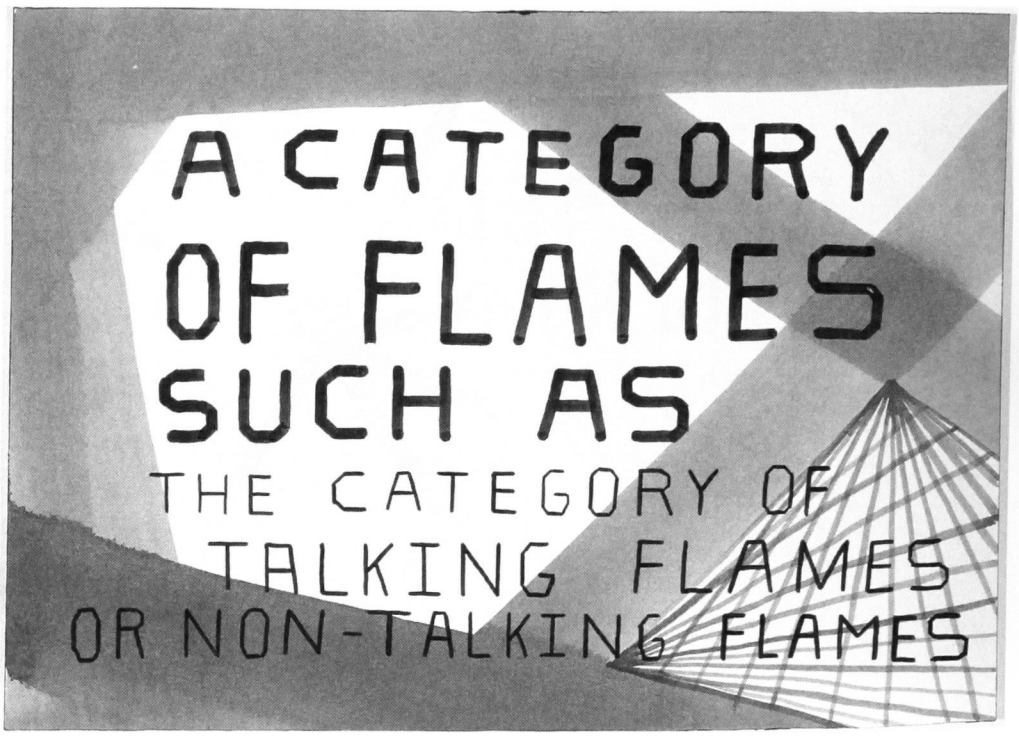
Vulture

Sarcoramphus papa

I have nothing to say on the subject of the vulture.

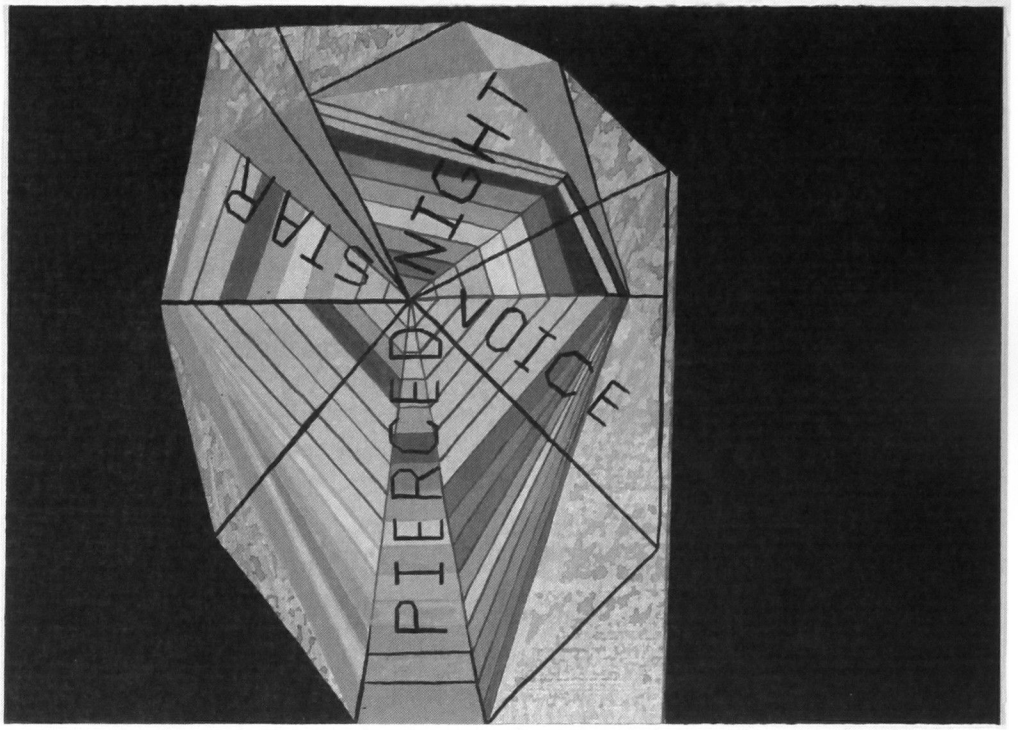


Mark Booth
Untitled
Ink, pencil, and acrylic on paper
10″ (h) x 15″ (w)



Mark Booth
Untitled
Ink, acrylic, on paper
2010
10 1/4″ (h) x 14 1/8″ (w)

Mark Booth
Untitled
Ink and acrylic on paper
2010
12 1/8″ (h) x 16″ (w)



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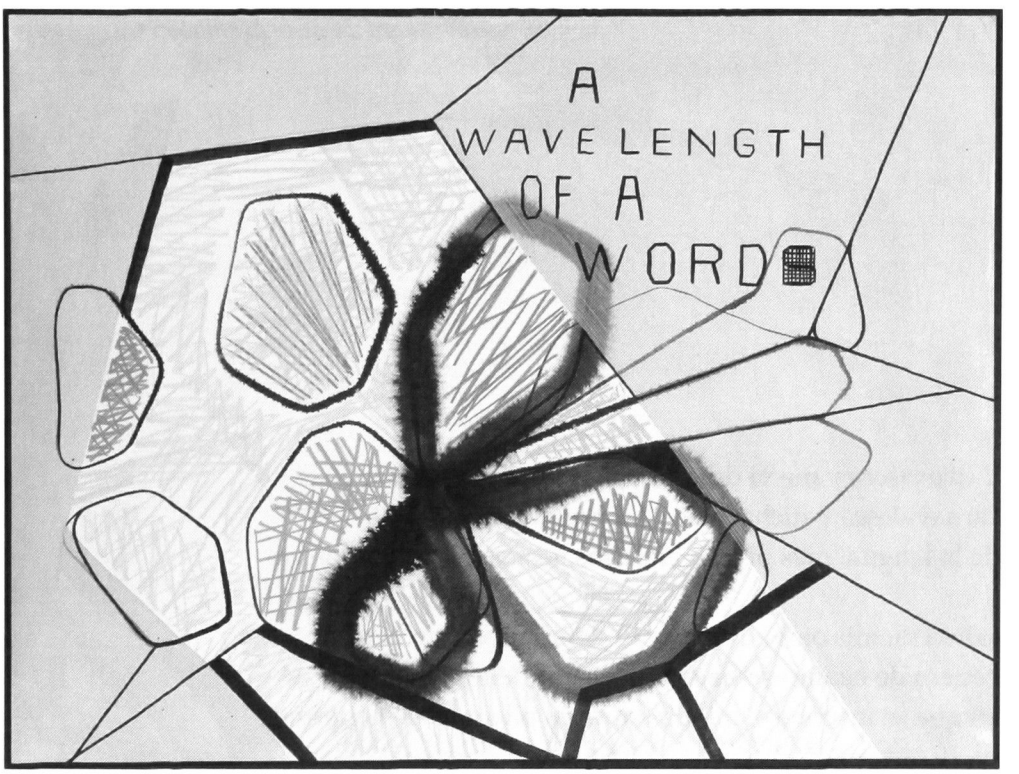


Mark Booth
Untitled
Ink, pencil, and acrylic on paper
2010
12 1/8″ (h) x 16 1/8″ (w)

MARÍA BARANDA

VÍBORA

I

Y dije *víbora* y me vi desenroscada, cardial y única,
carnavalesca y dicha, más viva por el árbol simple
de la lengua, más pronta entre los gestos de cuanta sangre

salida de mis ojos en un punto de-qué-cosa, en la raíz
certera de cuánto-se-hace-uno en ese tiempo solo
en que se inscribe el miedo entre los pliegues de la dermis.

Y luego, la carne fija en tinta, me aglutiné imaginada a ser
lo que yo soy en esa realidad entre la hierba concebida
en demasiada sombra, en demasiada hambre

buscando el grito sin remedio, los labios ya muy juntos
donde hay lo que se exalta y se repite, se enrolla en sí
cambiando siempre en la natura para decir: soy lengua.

Fui lengua en otra escala resquebrajada y dulce
para ser goce de boca, placer del habla que fulgura:
dije *víbora* y fui amplia, opulenta, pájara cierta

desnuda al cielo, niebla labializada y dicha: vuelta
a decir niña en el animal de sombra, en el espacio oscuro
en ese grito escrito donde se lee de lleno: *poema.*

II

Sangre en la vena cava. No soporta los hurtos.
Sangre venosa en la parte anterior, rápida en el tropel
en esa deglución de una palabra incierta en otra y otra…

o en esa parte blanda donde se bebe el desamparo
de una idea que nos contiene a todos, nos dilata
y subyuga ante el silencio de una figura indivisible:

el verbo, el verbo puro. El corazón se sacia, vence
los sueños máteres bajo el cristal de los colmillos
como un sol oscuro y húmedo lleno de nada y tiempo. Tiempo

que descoagula, se extiende más allá de aquellos páramos,
se deshabita y se enturbia en la cabeza. Beben sus labios
ávidos de otros números, decantaciones, profecías en el agua:

como una nube densa te formaste barroca y resurgida,
tu nombre caído en el galope de lo más fácil como insistencia,
el arrepentimiento corrompido en tu sintaxis. Las nervaduras

generan género y distancia, son parte de otro idioma, umbral
de acentos y de sílabas donde respinga esta otra ira innata
que esplende una nueva fornicación entre tus páginas.

III

Poema el mundo hasta volverse único, pervivo
bajo el idioma en tiempo, protuberante y acertado
junto a los logros dónde, cuando se mezcla ahora

y si se avanza en madres, madres que se deslíen
y hablan susurrantes y salivosas, más vivas todas
entre los troncos de una idea violentada.

Trechos enmascarados por oros musgos, maderas
rotas, cerraduras de tantos los cielos secos
aferrados en esa piel turbia y escrita.

¿Hasta dónde lo que se ve se escucha
como un aullido (sácalo) casi en lo lejos (pronto),
casi deseado (dilo) como una felicidad que irradia?

Lo que no está es sólo un vaho en síntesis
profano y dicho, pensado en éter para la rana muerta
como si fuera una argamasa próxima a qué sitios

y dónde se purifica el todo en el consuelo hueco
de siempre entre tus partes sombras de ser animal
sitiado por otro animal aquí en el miedo de mi boca.

IV

Chúpame lenta, enclava tus sílabas y canta.
Cántame. Sé de mí círculo y abandono. Idea.
Destello del sol en mi cabeza. Áurea de mí,

centrada y siempre verdadera. Mítica gorgona,
esculpe tu lengua bífida por mis curvas
y entroniza todo lo conocido que enamora.

Unta el amor en tu hálito. Solloza.
Deja que escriba yo sin miedo ni pánico,
que me descuelgue más allá de la rama más larga

y que escuche tu sintaxis primera, tu sueño
tan amoroso de bala en el monte enterrada,
ínflame al viento jugueteando en mi nombre

hasta preñarme tanta, como una idea vasta
y redonda, una sola que me cubra
y denuncie la luz ya separada de la esfera.

Entonces digo: cuánta la sangre misma
por mi cuerpo, cuánto el misterio que respira
en capas y capas de palabras: escribo.

V

Hay hijos viejos alcanzados ya por otros vértigos.
Ángeles sin espejos, nadies que buscan la miseria
de un canto, el hambre de una hipótesis innecesaria.

Nada sirve, todo es saber morir entre las líneas ávidas
de una primicia bífida ::
Guardo a una niña ancestral en mi cama. Me pica.

Filamentos entre sus ojos donde respira un río invisible
en un gesto. Uno solo. Uno como un lento murmullo
que envenena. Ahora, su lengua clama por nuevos paraísos.

Extremos de un mundo donde los perros pierden
su hueso de noche. Fue noche cuando se escucharon
cuchicheos de hombres sordos en los pasillos.

Ya no hay poema. Todo se va poniendo sobre ladrillos,
entre las uñas de los muertos. Cantos junto a la piedra
el botón de fuego de un mex-mex auténtico. Y basta.

Todo es suficiente en el paladar anónimo.Y no hay extremos.
Sólo una brisa como un heraldo de madre abierta, madre cd,
madre poema, novicia fornicadora, víbora desterrada, mía:

VI

Mátala, exprímela, sácale todo el jugo.
Deja que no se arrastre en la conciencia.
Chupa su luz de viento, escúrrela. Dile adverbio,

verbo, sintaxis trunca, vieja acabada: majadera.
Piérdela al filo de su figura. Detenla.
Dile que ya no hay savia, ni jugo, ni letra.

Una gruta es su lengua, un recipiente abierto.
Su sed es tierra. Su ausencia. Sombra su corazón,
cáscara, sutura de la tierra seca. No tiene orejas,

pero escucha, escucha bajo las piedras lisas
escondida junto a un pubis sin sexo. Ranura sin espera
ni hijas, gajo de gesto húmedo, la víbora

es pensamiento, razón endurecida, hueco de un dios
áspero y pardo, falible y poroso, chacharero,
muela en el llano, padre, padre, dije *padre*

vine a decirte lo que me dijo madre que te dijera
entonces, todo se dice cuando claudica el tiempo,
silba en su redoble y se enclava en la garganta.

FARID MATUK

COMMONER GARDEN

Below a half moon the garden parking lot I take—concrete levels, opened, impassive
stone, empty, dead, and clean accent allows for pun as Melville makes

at every category its inversion, at every claim its life, the Black Guinea cripple taken for
"whole operator," the coin for a counterfeit, the good man for a "wordy" one

Let's marshal our figures for danger, twilight and gall, for lonesome-
ness, generation and night, for stillness and movement and touch
for dissolution, for hearth, for abandon—"...like a Pawnee from ambush foams
the yellow-jacket Missouri"—make, or listen carefully for where they stand

Goya's *Dos Viejos*, c. 1820-23 "still I learn"
old man leans on his cane, sinks into his own gaze, simian double
screams into his ear, lays a large dark hand on his shoulder
intimate whisper roaring death grow loud with each of us

The hollow tubes of cattails bring air down into their roots
a "settler" shack replica, and they will recreate

my apartment and say this was his bag, this
his hose, his nightstand here, a weeping Atlas Cedar
drawn round this bend, a civic arboretum to range across these acres—bargain struck

here, the rich give this land for expansion—sixteen ducks, running water, girls in bronze

benevolence, a circle of crepe myrtles, Texas silverleaf or Cenizo or Barometer Bush
Liar's Scrub
You put a nightstand beside you
and it becomes your nightstand

But I don't forget
all on our own me and my baby used to fuck the Devil out
of a very small room when we were less

Death duels by club legal in Catalonia
and Brugada the men in their dust
to the knees or float above it colossal

stuck they seem the land itself

So much little things, a decade
or gravel, a fire road

find their place
The nudging heart doesn't tire
it should simple chickadees
came from the suburbs on a man's t-shirt
sweet genius composite anxious body they make

just like this mountain It's the same speed
somewhere death is all time coming

it invents the connections between light poles
pays the work crews and the lights come on

see heart, you should rest, money is moving all around

I look at the other mountain
our gazes make two men called valley and plain

light spends most of the day on my one side, away from them
and waking up just happens as do the powered waves of car packs released by the light

traffic, not spray of light from transcendence or streetlight that sometimes silhouettes an owl
on the cable above Blair Street so you find yourself maybe with the old hungers a little

quieter but no less friendly, no less ready to turn a warm smile upon us
as you turn down our row of cubicles, or as alone at night I pull lint from the tiny screw
that holds thick glass before the bulb of the reading lamp and pick my nose, c. 2008-10

We are together you and I goats and chickens
We are together you and I server and patience
We are together you and I brick and feet
We are together you and I rainwater and beam
We are together you and I Chinese and gunpowder
We are together you and I dog and the next room
still Saturday cool season turn

abuses the old prairie house, Ha mockingbird swoops cross
traffic, you couldn't kill me today
you fucks, beads hold fast
on the car hoods making mirrors

for everyone for free, finally
we see our week's efforts covered by a clean cool sheet
with one night's sleep smell
sweet shoulder oils still Saturday

all through a nation, here comes the
shift of wind carrying a little less purpose

here comes the choir and the monument
we burned our money but failed
to aestheticize its light

It's still Saturday and the nation is small
armed and floating three inches
above its land no corner of which doesn't offer itself as night

One long book of days that would give shape
and when I wanted to be erased and when I want
to be erased the house plant grows
in cartoon heart leaves, my friend
no longer stalks his own living room high on crack

Up out of the dream of a helicopter and the little boy
who taps into a little girl's mind and awareness
says, It's happening, I can see it all, she says, Yes
surprisingly quick toward suicide these days

My student says shadow work
giving oneself a hug is working for him

I put a sticker on his hand, drive my car home
down into the freeway, close my eyes

open my eyes on a Crest billboard, toothpaste off a black girl's teeth
seems to clean everything

you can even sell me that

I'll be Michael, the universe will be Lisa Marie

The fates raked and dark grey, white death burn
simple faced, float above the yellow plane
you have to believe, no matter what, the universe is exactly as it needs to be

along this wide ridgescape the people
mark the hills again, dark hills and rock and dirt burnt soil
about the folk play their parts

You have to believe this massive panorama
though we are set close to witches whose grouped
bulk fills the frame and a cabro farts sweet earth return

The bulk of witches made animate by their bright eyes
you have to believe it is quiet outside my exchange of glances with the witches

Pretty, blurry
pink mouth

pushing out to the land
witches to land

Help me make a figure for our fear of return

The life gets made but not because we had to carry the poor's burden of Zen
fuck the universe and your way of opening your carapace into wings

one day you get in the car and trust your dad and fuck
the showered ones he talks to get things from

Somehow frogs get all the way up this hill, find an underside of a succulent
to tuck their nut and eggs, I am at the edge of the country

Japan sends its things, China and New Jersey send their containers
the sun knows where it sleeps, no one is coming to kill me
no one is coming to cut off my hands

I bought all this shit

PABLO MEDINA

CINCO POEMAS

El caso Gödel

¿Por dónde se llega al templo de esa diosa negra
que se entretiene chupándonos los huesos?

No hay que ser estrella, más bien planeta,
preferiblemente oscuro, renuente,
cargado de viento por todas partes.

Todos los cretenses son mentirosos.

La matemática es la verdad improbable.

Sólo vale la razón. Pero a medianoche,
cuando la voluntad nos abandona,
aullamos como perros.

Sucede que uno se pierde fácilmente por sus caminos
y se encuentra en los barrios aceitosos de las afueras
donde no pasa nunca nada, ni siquiera el tiempo.

Supuesto de Wittgenstein

La duda es carroña igual que los pasos
que entran y salen del burdel.
El lenguaje, modelo de las cosas,
y las cosas modelos del lenguaje,
las putas modelos de las putas.

La carroña es un modo olfativo
de colectivizar los buitres.

¡Qué cansado estoy de la escafandra!
¡Qué salobre el beso de una niña encinta!
¿Calores metafísicos?

No, un gas que corre por las tripas,
así como lo pinta Brueghel
y nos acosa la muerte a quemarropas.

Los pasos y la duda se sumergen
en la madrugada, modelo de los maleficios.
Lo demás está ahogándose en la tinta.

Canto y teoría de conjuntos

Dentro del conjunto estamos tú y yo,
una ráfaga de viento, un vuelo de totíes.

El conjunto no incluye la página,
pero la página incluye el conjunto.

¿Y las palabras? También al conjunto.
¿Y los sonidos que las letras evocan?

No. Esos quedan fuera del conjunto,
por lo tanto en el silencio.

¿Lo imaginado? Sí, lo que quieras.
Entre tú y yo. Entre la ráfaga y los totíes.

Entre nosotros (una suerte de conjunto)
y la ausencia (otra suerte, la mala).

El vuelo de los totíes, ese aleteo desesperante
(tun-tún de los tambores). Nada de metáforas.

Las palabras. A eso me refiero.
La página no existe dentro del conjunto.

La conjetura de Poincaré

Efectivamente, una esfera puede derretirse
bajo el sol del mediodía
y el mediodía irse contrayendo en círculos
cada vez más estrechos hasta reducirse a un punto.

Todos vivimos al centro de una esfera,
todos caemos bajo el sol. Las esferas
andan, pasan, chocan como bolas de billar
pero sin masa.

Yo, por ejemplo, si ejemplo cabe,
me derrito a diario. Llego a casa
hecho un charco orgánico, que si
el carbono, el sodio y el cloruro,
que si el oxígeno con sus hidrógenos
en ese ménage à trois que llamamos agua.

El charco orgánico que una vez formó mi yo
tiene rastros de otros seres, de perros,
de pulgas y cucarachas, paramecios,
anófeles, bivalvos que se escurren por el piso
hacia otros charcos y sus esferas
de coincidencia, de convivencia.

Volvamos a la esfera
y la conjetura que nos concierne.
¿Qué es ese punto? ¿Adónde nos lleva?
Dentro de la matemática no hay suposiciones.
El punto es sólo punto, la esfera sólo esfera.
Lo orgánico no tiene la más mínima relevancia
con estas cosas inmateriales, que, sin embargo,
tienen su raíz en la materia, los citrones,
naranjas y verdes de la imaginación

que lo define y abarca todo, y después,
cuando es tarde y nos llama el olvido,
deja de serlo para convertirse en nada.

Georg cantor llevado a la música

El conjunto de todos los conjuntos
es la guaracha de todas las guarachas.

El conjunto nulo es una guaracha
sin guaracha. ¿Y los músicos?

Sin guaracha no hay músicos, muchachos.
Pero, ¿dónde están?

En ningún lado. No existen.
El conjunto nulo está vacío.

Mejor dicho, no hay ni siquiera un vacío,
como un vaso en el que cabe
toda el agua del mundo, de los cosmos,
de todos los tiempos, excepto el agua no es agua,
ni el vaso vaso.

El conjunto nulo es un vaso
infinitamente vacío, por lo tanto
infinitamente amplio,

tal como la guaracha de todas las guarachas
está infinitamente llena, no sólo de guarachas,
sino de los músicos que las componen
junto con sus intrumentos, sus partidas,
sus trajes de gala y todo lo demás que los define.

Dentro de ese conjunto se tocan
todas las canciones que tocaran todas las guarachas,
las parejas bailando, coqueteando,
y las chaperonas echándoles el ojo
en todos los salones y todos los bares

y todos los hoteles donde alguna vez
predominó esa música
y donde en los pasillos de los baños
las parejas se besaban y se manoseaban,
y otras cosas más,

incluso el gato que corrió de un lado
del salón al otro persiguiendo un ratón,
incluso los gritos de las muchachitas que lo vieron
y el alboroto de los varones que por fin
lo acorralaron y le dieron muerte,

y el mosquito que picó el brazo de mi tía
quinceañera, aun virgen que sepamos, en 1932,
cuando no se imaginaba todo el bien y todo el mal
que el futuro le trajera.

Coda: En el conjunto de todos los conjuntos
existe todo, dentro de su categoría por supuesto,
porque el músico de la Sinfónica de Boston
no podría ser guarachero de La Habana
y viceversa, mientras que en el conjunto
nulo no existe nada, ni siquiera el vacío
que ha dejado Dios en la matemática,
ni siquiera una nota musical accidentada.

¿No sabían, muchachos, que las obras de Shakespeare
fueron escritas por Francis Bacon
y que Jesucristo fue el hijo natural de José de Arimatea?

SUSAN GEVIRTZ

EXCERPTS FROM *CODICIL*

QUANTITY'S TRUANCY

Virgule Vaudeville Cognate Underwater Sound

Joyopolis Theme Park

and after the third day of the fortieth year
I'd had Enough of enough

music without words
music w/out words

what they asked for
what they got

sometimes in words
they fly up

Sometimes Predator

"vast armada of sleek jet fighters" "unmanned drone"
sun-illumined name
flown by remote control at the slow speed of 80 mph

Taking

live video: a mosque, a private residence, a temple, a kitchen, a church, a cemetery, the kaaba, the tabernacle, the broken hand of the arm of the state, the marketplace, a plate with the remains of a meal

A convoy leader

a body, custody, a deal, a plan under the terms of the original agreement lost in sixty seconds

The call went out But in words

mourning Deployed before

at the ready

And after the 10th non-biblical year I'd had

enough too

In every conceivable crucible of time

In every uncontainable measure

non syllabic

patterns of consumption

The ceremony of subtraction celebrated
as if its deaf music could be
eyes upon which rain, shine, famine and sleep deprivation

ignore the ignored

making matrimony of history

as if to go on proclaiming believing

They meet each other

Co-temporality mincing

knower over another

Frontal

verb mimics production

favors knoweth [over] predilection

Memorandum Drum

Hunger

/

Overt

magnet invitation

Steal to feed
Store up to starve a third

By the way the babes
are kept in a crypt
nursery bureau of incubation

peer through the narrow glass slat

mail the orb of head
gesturing towards a book

A mistake may walk

without consent

x
XX xx

as 3 changed minds feed

complicit cleptocracy

see how unfinished he was. See how curtailed

I am no test case

but the aftertaste of experience

leaves a residue of explanation

sighting birdwatchers glare evidence

Attempt

Ablaze

On Orion

Do you the you of imagine

Codicil

From
from
scratch
from flat line
From geyser range
From breadth's length
From iteration's version conversion
From "brutality of innocence"
the "just" personal
From the too late beginning
methods of refusal
of refund
defunct
From memorandum drum
Memorabilia done
A.K.A. address plaque
From the answering question
supplanted by
the governing question

Stop

Not

Stop

Laid out on
reverse Esperanto

R T M A R K

E T O Y

From the curators

by teaspoon
by thimble
by eyedropper (fed

Liner Notes

""Not speaking about, speaking nearby""
James Clifford, Trinh Minh-ha

Argument

The stories of disappearance were
are not true
Made to appear to disappear
One way street to the museum = repatriation
Brain removed sent to the Smithsonian
How did he become undead so that he could be reburied?

A member of a remnant

A body suitable for salvage

His state of undress a state of dress
Image as provocation not dead body

(((((((()))))))))

objects _____ and throw them back

says something about something they've talked about

[not your victim your conscience]

What does this situation

[the difference between mediums is timing

No dates No circa Unmade bed vent

Provoke: "We're out in the world and we see something"

Electric raids Cotton in my ears I could still hear

—James Clifford and James Luna in performance and "conversation"
October 2002 California College of Arts and Crafts

((()))

Underwater Sound

Got light

not bought but as means of occurrence
means means of occurrence

more paraphernalia for distant proximity:
cam camera sister suicide bomber

The future you asked about is a square torn out
of the center of gold and orange money for the dead

no smog no weather
They stand on a land of magnet dirt

under
Overpass

Cognate
[rebate]

entry gratified
granted /

/
that we

JORGE GUITART

POEMAS + POEMS

TRANSLACIÓN

(A Josi, Guada, Eduardo e Yvonne)

Va siendo hora de que desde la ventana
se vea a alguien desnudo, así como a un mar
que no se deje moldear y que no vaya a ser de repente
una caterva de lenguas que no se diferencien de las azulosas
de marineros mortecinos, y se contemple la perspectiva
de unas alegres fiestas de gentes no sentadas en las mismas sillas
ni en las mismas cocinas ni sirviendo a nadie
sin beneficio personal.

Todo eso le dije a alguien del interior, constituido,
gracias a la casualidad, de diminutas gotas de grasa fina
compuestas a su vez de moléculas rellenas de glomérulos
o algo parecido, no sé.

Y todo eso porque a nadie me había encontrado
cuando bajaba ni cuando subía
y lo incesante de las circunstancias

disminuía la probabilidad de hacer peregrinajes
siendo además que más de un obrero tal
era muy oprimido por más de un patrón mas cual,
poseedor de un alto índice de peligrosidad,
haciendo que de mucho no sirviera
poner cara de persona atormentada
o tener a un ser querido en el hospital
o pensar en alguien a quien se deseaba en cantidad
en láminas mentales de sábanas y almohadas.

Y además bien podría suceder
que todo lo que fuera burlar la normalidad
volviera a estar mal visto en la mayoría de los espacios.
¿Y entonces qué? Pero además entonces quién
y entonces dónde, por no decir cuándo,
que sería para el principio del final.
Y ahí no para la cosa, aunque sí deja de pronto de rebotar,
dejando además de ser juguete e inclusive de ser cosa.

Otras preguntas

¿Por qué derrota al lubricante la sequedad de tus expresiones?
¿Por qué tiene el fuego tantas lengüetas inteligibles?
¿Qué es lo valioso de las playas clásicas al final de tierras barrocas?
¿De qué manantial piensan seguir diciendo tantas mentiras?

¿Cómo puede lograrse que los visionarios se queden por el camino?
¿En qué episodio contemplaremos los pezones de oro?
¿Nos dejarán tocarlos? ¿O seguiremos hablando en clave con los dueños de todo?
¿Dejará de haber en las laceraciones mensajes indescifrables?

¿Dónde vamos a aprender a tocarnos como los chimpancés y no ser como babuinos?
¿Qué poder secreto poseerá el que dice que las patadas son el fundamento del respeto?
¿Por qué no equilibrar el deber ser con los mugidos de las reses?
¿Por qué es cruda y calcárea el alma de los fundamentos?

¿Cómo voy a poder usufructuar las lascas del destino?
¿Cuán pronto seré como una flecha en vez de como un pliego?
¿Por qué toda la vida me entrarán piedras en los zapatos?
¿Cuál es la ventaja de ser una silueta?

Hasta que no lleguen los que saben

El invierno es crudo y parece que no hay quien lo cocine.
Yo quiero ser riendo el hortelano que no llore,
pero si Elena Morado, la del acertijo, se ha desmoronado
es porque no ha sabido el propio yo quién debería haber sido.

Y es porque el libro abierto es como una especie de río gelatinizado.
Cada cual del grupo de personas que parecen unos esferoides
se va bajando de las góndolas con zapatos
que han encarado mucho lo concreto.

En Babilonia nadie estaba en babia y las historias de sus vidas se han paralizado.
La que se escinde falsamente ahora es esta frase misma
y no podrá utilizársela con los cardos y las ortigas
cuando empiecen a desplegar su simetría amoral.

Casi me deja sin locos antojos frente al meollo
del bulbo raquídeo, con su horrendo nombre que no me dice nada.
¿Quién no quiere que la Cenicienta sea de mentira
y no una adolescente tiznada que trabaja en una fábrica?

Consolación del norte

Se acaba el tiempo juntos
de los dos pares de erres
del arrorró.

Entonces mejor que haya estantes
y no hechos.
Con todo, la serenidad es química.

La monja abre su álbum
y ve un convento
donde brillan el glande y el balano,
pero por su ausencia.

Voy a lo de las grietas
que tienen mis juegos de sílabas,

que no los juegos de cubiertos
de desconocidos que son dueños
de lo que ya no llaman su morada

Por ser el mundo en sí,
el mundo por de dentro
con archipiélagos de llagas,

los pobres se cansan de tocar.
y las puertas de abrir.

He visto que tus manos
han comparecido ante ti
y que las lame un perro
devoto de piltrafas.

Dear All

you are all that we are pleased with
and all that we call hallowed
and the helmets made of pith
and the coins that we have swallowed

you are the garden and the ditch.
you are the warden and the snitch
you are what flows and what oozes
you are the wrecks and the cruises

you are the statues that we've kissed
and the chances that we've missed
you are the exquisiteness of bowls
and the tumor in most moles

you are the menace in a cyst
and the promise in the mist
you are the venom in the snake
and the flavor in the shake

you are the triumph of repair
and the syntax of despair
you are the buoyancy in a buoy
and the salt in the chop suey

you are the pro in the ballpark
and the con that fools the mark
you are the lace in what is laced
and the friend that is two-faced

you are the radiance in the moon
and the intentions of the goon
you are the power in a snack
and the beak that goes clack clack

you are the beauty in heliotropes
and of rifles with scopes
you are the glory of matadors
and the bad mood of janitors

you are the yearning and the learning
and the burning and the spurning
you are persuader and fine trader
and crusader and invader

Part of the Solid Truth

We all come from a sleepy backwater
where there is no water to speak of
and at night everyone lies in bed wide awake.

This has been going on for centuries.
What to do? Legend has it that some outsiders
gave the people some practical advice

which they did not get for being in a fog.
Old folks cannot recall the last time
they saw someone who was not drowsy all day long.

The favorite hymn of the faithful in town goes,
"Lord, by the magnificent torrent
we have lowered our eyelids
and soon have engaged for your glory
in rapid eye movement."

They sing it but they must know
it is something that someone made up.

EDWIN TORRES

PALIMPSECT(S)

(PALIMPSECT) *THIS COIL; THIS CRAP*

to be the bear, as foreign—to me
as to be something I'm not;
to be liquid & penetration—would daggers
dare ready this lightbeam

leveled at straight, my speed; softed shards
surrounding my pores—let me, *lit by dimension*
throw this out while remaining; my move
immediate light—as foreign to me; as remaining

recollective fuzzheads, revved up by something
I threw away; two moments ago—in the speed
of this creature I've never encountered
my focus remains; enlightened by fuzz

to blood; in cold
to bear; in freedom

this torrent—appears to have, sounded out the weeds
arid mercies, astringent fools; apparent saviors
behind my eyes—*frozen nocturne, moated throat;*
apparent risers to acid mourn

just one beginning; *smell the body*
just one day
as foreign to me—as a year

(PALIMPSECT) *MILESTONE; MY STONE*

how to put this year; a decomposed particle
won—such fair trophy for true chandeliers
as old as we; revolving in memory's cylinder

I've chosen our *ornament*
out of my betrayal for you—wired, unwrung
tuned for envy; as parts of my proper day

have equal parts—*envy* and *failure*
for what dooms particular *trophy*; let's see, how best
to recalculate *crud*—deciphering the long way out of this

I'm fascinated by recollection and all its siblings

how best to command a fanatic's demise; in time
I'll let you in on a secret—one that comes
as you drop your breath;

wrds, only wrds, mere wrds
how terrible to say them—*merely*

(PALIMPSECT) *ROT GUT; KNOTTED*

and your collision course, is it *paved;*
or are you prepared for *brilliance*—this *decay* you're
so *enamoured* with; how you *rule,* stay *bold;*
let me into your *imagined* sub-gaiety—this *green* behavior
of yours

how *gentility* imagines *disgrace;* appears you have
visitation rights—even *obesity* intrudes *gluttony*
in *place* of, or at *least*—PEE; you've got to NOW; in the
middle of our stanza!, how incontinent; acidic; *rude*—GO
go ahead

but *not* before I finish WHAT; that's the *point*!;
you're interrupting on *purpose* EVEN as I *attempt*
with *humility* and even *shame,* to—GO go then; we'll continue
without you—WHAT, you too are *impressed;* I've only one answer;
merely one

(PALIMPSECT) *MINE ENEMY; MINE ALLY*

repititive glot; came'ing noser—onceing in my hut;
awares' of mynt; appeased of glint, of a horror
that states most obvious fate, each'd by time
to properly swear—idyllic canopy floorist, at home
with pluck; largely cush'd by 'noming
metered dew might chance the metre—matter'd porn
waltzing in my hut; well aware, m'lady sips erona
stallions, in time th' ceiling widens

boorish rites; quainted fire, push'm'field'
in'm'hut—by twos; to be; by stud
of flesh'd encounters; wizened by thrust—might
you nil; right you are—in time; the pony
slips; such glot; before I was awares', the risen lip
done give us slop; semi-octave preparatory;
takes years of footless meandering to, y'kno—yes, m'lady
craved; untwillt, in time th' field's entice'd

(PALIMPSECT) *COM'D UP; PENN'D UP*

harkness; desolate embarrassment—*forever* sounds
like a good time right about now; I join this
paled circuit *in-progress*, no longer surrounding esophagus
trash—'tis nothing for mortal joiners; trailed by
distant wrecks; off wrench'd; scumm'd; barely come'd
by drill candy—was all this intrusive…I'd say so

how oncely informed, to be; as creator was *creatored*
aligned by a gleam; to be the terrible afternoon, way back—
when a loner scaled harkness; terrible core, devil tryster;
to the pole, the pollster; the comfort whisperer; to project terrible
motion, likened to mine—by quartz'd mildew; by intworn trud;
by a less embark'd reaction; most intrusive prob'ly…

mostly rife—projected vessel; mostly thin, charm'd blush
as *position* knows *outcome* like outshoots; conclusion erect,
and all this sound?—mine prob'ly…

(PALIMPSECT) *IDEAS ARE SCARS THAT HEAL AND REMEMBER; SAID PAN TO HERMES IN THE THROES OF SEPTEMBER*

quit and quill; we will...seems logic appears as a quick line
to recount; for unfaithful pigsters—crowding around;
the distended carcass offa drowsy mound

again, *we will*...says junior uzi for a luger, in teenage form
is motion a storm; not mine, not drama—*up to my chest*
in upheaval, I guess; regarding position as a slap in the ham

such emotion, I am; where, in base, I slip; fleshed out, coherent—I'll tell you this...
I'd order out more often, but I'd only have to
worry about the tip—*says who*; just thinking, *fright*...the original

f-word; quietly effed, by the charmed messenger; pre-selected to quit;
there by the lounging throng—your baseless visit, your ink
down this crown; not another sliding god, sent to sink; everything but—

and that's the think; a star that heals—seems to be; *everyone's*...again (*ideas are scars that heal and remember*) your kitchen's animal, covering that part of you;
painted, by the scar I revered; bright pigment—logic would think

I'd quit but; I will...regarding your swill; says the ember—I'd remember!

(PALIMPSECT) *SKANKWORM; CRANKWORK*

Dirty peepod—you, I dare noise
glisten to the chingpot, nickel-ass face-boy; yearly deposits
MC Hemo checks out the globe, skanked-out
popped repition; itit—left out the zitit, what I didit
Was that I'm happy; to code-ify the lunchards with the...
damn; don't; dare I noise—360 sneakers

Ready, for not *braggards;* but *grodards*—about to get
*grow'*ded; appeared to me, inna 'piphany; m'masn...can you
Count'n?; definite numeral disser—what I didn't
suss, was *innervention;* Down home, where ohm boys
Chant radioworms—lettracize; rip up the set up
let your size; trip the rip up—itit again; the R; mogul to the I

See, the best place for gougers; *on the web,* lest you bliss...be
dirty noise; damn fire spasm—contemplative noser
MC Something Musta Died In Here; checks out the skank
offay the chokay—what a child in charge; will do with emotion;
DJ DoubleYou DoubleYou DoubleYou DoubleYou DoubleYou
DoubleYou DoubleYou DoubleYou; oh...well, wassa double play
anyway, metallic summer'Volution; gore-volute; brilliant strikeout
for the skank mentioned already, Show'd up I did; *can you count?*

Let the set, jet the ret up; bet the head—ready for the get up!

(PALIMPSECT) *WEEKADAY; WHISPRELLS*

could we just find where it takes
where this import sails out
across your imagined sea; could we just
lose this place; to be lost—would be so good right now

is that your tail, your front—this upcoming headwind
could we just gamble on this grip
stoned; by the everything-we've-thrown-out
by now—how guileless to claim that swoon

was it end of week, or just moon
said; *sorry, just looking at your deja vu*
gives me a headache—and after
a fairly short pause; a pause that never-the-less—gives you

weight…is that, I see I'm pushing it; again
if you disagree, I'm fine with it, really—was it merely
a man, said
humility at the service of *praise*
would just about; *make my day*, right now

but, having said; is that,
oh…how tuneless, to throw records
at a ruined moon

CECILIA VICUÑA

PENSAMIENTOS DEL SONIDO (SIETE FRAGMENTOS)

NOTAS DE UN VIAJE POR EL SONIDO

Voy a Chile a puro oir. Ando siempre por los cerros. Las ciudades son apenas intervalos entre cerros. Y los cerros son un sonido. *"Todo lo entiendo en dos flautas"* dijo César Vallejo, dos flautas disonando entresí, chocando para hacer un sonido.

"Pifilcando" hubiera dicho en el sur del sur, donde las flautas se pifilcan y una sola suena como dos disonantes entre sí. Una flauta que se toca siempre en par.

Allá, me pifilco, me convierto en sonido. Soy el dos hablándose a sí mismo, el dos que se mira y no se ve. El "dosito mismo" encarnado en un sonido. Pifilcar es lo medular del pensamiento andino: hacerse uno, entrar en la unión por un sonido que se desdobla y se hace a sí mismo, a través del flautero, pasaje del sonido.

El agua nace en los cerros y el agua se está muriendo: los poderosos la han declarado su propiedad. Los ríos y valles se secan, el mar se muere y con ellos un sonido; la pifilca y el canto de los poetas que mantienen la relación agua / sonido. Los poetas alfereces que viajan al interior de las pifilcas como en una nave de flauteros pareados.

Viajo a Chile a ver morir las fiestas de la metáfora sónica de la unión.

La pifilca sólo suena echándole agua y aliento a la vez. Solo suena en las fiestas rituales donde cientos de pifilcas pareadas se multiplican y espejean aumentando la disonancia total de la unión.

El ser de las montañas es oir, oir las dos flautas ausentes, las pifilcas que no se oyen mas. Todo se está muriendo y sólo los últimos flauteros bailarines, los últimos chinos pifilcantes, andan con su sonido, llorando de fiesta en fiesta en los valles secos.

A ellos, a mis amigos pifilcantes, peregrinos de la muertevida de este sonido, dedico estas notas.

Instrumento de Luz

Instructed by light

the instrument

plays

it

self.

"My daylight instrument"
Hom yatokkya Tacchúu
Zuni

Témlha Homto

el tu yo

entremí

¿quién piensa

en el agua

del todo?

"I every
I all"
Jane Sprague

*

El silencio es el pensamiento del sonido

El sonido es recíproco, desea ser oído

Desea ser pensado, sentido desde el sonido

¿Senti?

Recíproca vibración

El sonido responde

"ya eres los huecos del aire"
Chino Claudio Mercado

Sonar es pensar

*

El poema es la sílaba del agua

"Syllables are pure energy-sound"

When the mind, inwardly enquiring 'Who am I'?
attains the heart, something of itself manifests as 'I—I'
Sri Ramana Maharshi

Pifilca de dos sonidos

"Cada pifilca suena como dos disonantes entre sí."
José Pérez de Arce

Pifílcate
silencio

Metáfora de piedra

Diosa de tetas planas
Diosa de tetas aletas

Puerta que llora
Agua y aliento

Raja e' luz

Raja e' sonido

Despierta el nos

*

"To The Liquid" Fragment of the 9th Mandala
Hymn LXIX (Rig Veda)

"Arrow? no: which is set against* the bow—*
Calf that one delivers? no, the thought leaps to its mother's udder;*
*Like a wide river it milks the tip of its course,**
The liquid in its own vows is released.*
……
Clothed, not with cloth, but with its own wave."

Translated by Rene Daumal

Altered notes:
* *"Arrow? no:"*……"la flecha no flecha" es la metáfora.
"…the phrasing which, in the Vedic syntax, is used to introduce a metaphor."

La

e

videncia

metafórica

del cruzar:

A cross-sensory abstraction linking visual and auditory maps.
Two pathways in collision, the birth of metaphor:

el veroir
seeing/hearing the crossing
the e-vidence of seeing

"against also implies reciprocity; la contra es reciprocidad, *the bow and arrow form a couple;* la unión de arco y flecha, *the arc is the soma, the offering…the arrow is the chant…the thought-will emitted."*

"Calf? no. …linked to the root 'to deliver'; the offering —soma, vital force released the thought, which immediately returned, in order to be nourished, to its mother." El ternero es la entrega, metáfora del dar. La madre lo deja ir y el ternero (el pensamiento) vuelve a la madre al metaforizar.

La madre es la metáfora, el líquido de la unión.

*

El silencio es la madre del sonido

Lo imagina sonándo-lo

Silencio y sonido se crean mutua-mente

La madre es la relación, la mutua creación.

*

"Z'at: every form that springs forth
from this silent life is a vibration.

Creation begins with consciousness
A vibration that bears witness to itself."
Hazrat Inayat Khan

a vibration aware of itself

*

ak-oruk

Ceremonia de purificación del sonido

(el vientre de la evolución)

weluka weuluc rolling bubbling water well
vientre del pozo agua viviente wallow agua vital vueeélvete
vólvido welic helix espiral evolve vuelve mi ahuana
y away!!!!! torna tu vientre vulva espiral
womb del silencio y hablá , gweé 'akhwa
xái !üi / / taypi de persona valle del sueño ven a soñar
tú, madre del viene y va vuelve a tornar *wol oulos
woolly # vientre de la evolución/ / ké'é ǀná'e kúm
ts'á'á vuelve a empezar evolú.

*

Yaaaaaaoooooo´

no me hueviís

wachakar

es limpiar

La primera acción ritual:

golpear un palo contra una piedra

gritando todos juntos

yaoooooooo!

yaoooooooo!

*

Soy el chinko autófono
El aire pasando
de la casa

El que suena solo
por sus cuerdas
Soy el timbre

Soy el hilo parado
Las cuatro puntas
disónico del acá

"El sonido de la tierra nada más."

*

Kuwái

Kémakáni
Hliméetaka hekwápi

The world opened up in the vertical dimension when Kuwái, began humming and singing all species into being.

The world opened up in the horizontal dimension when men and women played flutes.

*

Otras dimensiones se oyen al interior del oir
El cosmos es el oído
Oir, el ritual

*

Piloilo
ñolkin
charango de árbol
(una cuerda entre dos árboles)
no instrumentos de lo débil
no afinados
imprecisos
tocados al tun tún
por no nadie
por el viento.

Pensamientos de la tierra

pitucan
piulcan
pivulcan

pivurrcun

huey huen

huyl wenn

(Las formas de chiflar)

La piedra conserva la memoria del relámpago.

*

"Los cantos son las huellas para ir al futuro."

Tayil, Taiël, el canto totémico de las mujeres, sólo ellas llevan el canto këmpeñ, el canto ñanku, el canto nagual, el canto kurá. Hacer taiël no es cantar. Tayilquear es ellas, es de ellas, de madre a hija, tayil. Sacar el Tayil, tayilquear

sílaba

sí del labio

inescrutable

"Las sílabas inconexas tienen relaciones con los antepasados, activan el alma del linaje compartido"

Oir les sirve de escalera para bajar a las ceremonias.

Tayilquear es sacar el lloro, "un continuo llanto, tan llorado que puede confundirse con un llanto verdadero." No es un canto, es el lloro del totem, El murmullo invisible de la especie, la fuerza intraducible del linaje. Tayil is the life force an individual shares with all living or deceasead members of his/her lineage. The shared soul of a patrilineage is *kimpen.* Only women termed *eltun.* The verb denotes the act of pulling, associated to extracting teeth or the drawing of water from a well.

*

CO de los nombres

La tierra oye sus nombres.

Co: (Latin) with

Co: Kó (Mapuche) water

El poema comienza en las venas

Co del agua, co de la sed
Co del viento
Cediéndose
Co de mí, co de tí
Co de sí, co de no
Co del dos
Dosito mío
Unión del dos
Co del ún
El común
Coincó Curicó
En este estado ví
El ser que somos
Todos nos
Cosapilla
Cotacotani

Dos veces co

Parinacota

Adónde voy

Coopérame

Tocopilla y Copiapó

Alti plí altiplá

Andacollo y Socó

Tacora Putani Pacoyo

Donde hay nombre hay co

Orco tunco Copaquilla

De tí soy

Co del silencio

Co de las aguas

Nombres toco

Al interior del nombrar

Co de la herida

Derrumbe del

Co-lugar

Agua del sacrificio

Con templar

Un nombre cae a tierra

Llamarada al revés

Volcán el nombrar.

*

El agua es un ser
tres estados
una liquidez.

Dos molé

Dos moléculas se unen entran en la unión, el estado de relación

*

Extintos pensamientos, extintos dobleces
La muerte de un sonido
¿Adónde me duele lo ido?

*

OYR

Oyr con silencio = cchukhutatha

Encontrarse dos piedras con ruydo = tarrtha phitatah

Ludovico Bertonio, Vocabulario de la lengua Aymara (1612)

Oyr con oyr
Oyr con el cuerpo
Oyr con la sangre
Oyr con el miedo
Oyr con olvido

Oyr lo que soy
Oyr el grito ahogado
Oyr a lágrima viva
Oyr lo inaudible
Oyr el oyr
El ver del oyr
El es no es
El sí del no
Oyr el morir
del oyr.

*

Arcoiris de Silencio

Un arcoiris de silencio toca mi tambor
despierta el cuero estirado
del animal eterno que renace
en cada toquío
Membrana del silencio
que duerme en el sonido.

*

Húmedos bosques de la audición

"La voz invade la vida humana desde el arrullo materno hasta la canción de caza. Los mapuches de los siglos XVII y principios del XVII, habitantes de los húmedos bosques de la audición oyen mensajes que el ojo no alcanza a captar. Diferencian dgun *(hablar, cantar aves), de* pramin *(cantar),* úlcan *(cantar las personas),* úln *(música o canción),* cavcún *(hablar al oído),* etecun *(gemir),* etuñtun *(quejarse el enfermo),* quiquircún *(chillar),* huarulún *(dar voces),* huaruln *(gritar o llamar),* huarun *(dar alaridos),* müthumm *(gritar, vocear),* plquituun *(correr exalaciones encendidas). La espiral de frenesí que transpiran estas voces es fruto de la época de guerra en que fueron recogidas."*

Transcripción (alterada) del *Arte, Vocabulario y Confesionario de la lengua de Chile,* Luis de Valdivia, 1606

*

Desapariciones en la penumbra: (mito youtube) Estando los mapuches en el colmo de su opresión, madres y abuelas golpeadas por la policía, sus gritos y tormentos captados por celulares videos, niños corriendo tras las furgonetas, niños torturados, asesinados, encontraron un texto: *"Estando los mapuches muy oprimidos...llegó un personaje Nannan que les entregó la flauta mágica, (una pifilca) para concertar sus acciones...se servían de ella para pedir cuanto querían...asi acabaron los días de opresión del pueblo mapuche. "* Félix de Augusta, *Lecturas Araucanas,*1910. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7pa4PtxPEs&NR=1

*

El poder era el no-poder, la no-búsqueda, el hallazgo de los Ultimos Hombres conscientes.

"Diestros en escuchar y decir la verdad" "por ello su boca está divinizada."

"Ya no son sino unos pocos y se preguntan si no están viviendo la muerte de los dioses, viviendo se propia muerte."

"Por eso, no pierdan mis nombres"

Pierre Clastres, La Sociedad contra el Estado.

Pedazos de nos
la única subversión
es ver desde el otro
ver desde la unión.

KENT JOHNSON

INTRODUCTION: A NOTE ON THIS PORTFOLIO FOR *MANDORLA*

The following portfolio is taken from the manuscript of *Hotel Lautréamont: Contemporary Poetry from Uruguay*, an anthology I am currently editing with the eminent Uruguayan poet and essayist Roberto Echavarren. A commentary of overview by Amir Hamed, one of the country's most notable literary critics and the editor of *Orientales: Uruguay a través de su poesía*—arguably the most vital critical anthology of the nation's poetry—follows this note.

Hotel Lautréamont (a title we have brazenly stolen from John Ashbery, and for good reason) aims to give some first presentation of the impressive, uniquely inventive work produced by Uruguayan poets in the last four decades. Obviously, and like any anthology, the selection is far from exhaustive: Uruguay is a small country, but its contemporary poetic field is substantial and dynamic, and a fair number of important poets are not represented here (most notably, perhaps, those from the newest generation; a second anthology in translation awaits this vibrant milieu). Rather than a book of thirty or more poets, say, each given a small number of pages, we opted in *Hotel Lautréamont* for a more focused selection of established, major writers so as to provide a fuller view of individual work.

The twelve poets of this gathering are all widely recognized in their country and Latin America as key representatives of an ambitious, innovative, often idiosyncratic poetic spirit. And Uruguay, it should be said, has plenty of pedigree in regards to singular, even transformational, expressions of lyric vision. Not widely known in the English-speaking world, for instance, is that Isidore Ducasse (the Comte de Lautréamont), Jules Laforgue, and Jules Supervielle were, though later dual French citizens, all originally from Uruguay. The last occupies a central position in 20th century French letters and beyond; the first two are centripetal precursors to, and influences upon, early avant-garde modernism on a world scale. As well, it should be noted that Uruguay has a special place within the history of 20th century "concrete" and visual poetics; Clemente Padin is a monumental figure in this regard, though not conventionally translatable, for reasons of genre.

In diverse modes of connection, then—and the variety of modes in this book proves the diverse point—these poets extend a long national legacy of literary originality and change. The utterly strange work of Marosa di Giorgio, for one example, though barely yet known by English-language readers, has an avid and growing following in Latin America and Europe (the great Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar is one of her keen fans and supposedly plans a film inspired by her poetry). She is well on her way to being regarded as one of the continent's most extraordinary writers of the 20th century.

To be sure, the preeminence of a woman poet in the Uruguayan canon is no exception whatsoever to the norm. The reader will see that most of the poets represented here are female. This is no result of editorial effort on our part to strike a gender balance: In Uruguay, women poets occupy a predominance and canonical centrality that is arguably unmatched in modern times anywhere in the world—a result, in part, no doubt, of the country's progressive social-democratic history (darkly interrupted from 1973 through 1985 by military dictatorship), where key women's rights were legally enshrined as early as the first two decades of the last century, not least within the nation's advanced public education system. In recent years, with the restoration of Uruguay's venerable democratic traditions, civil liberties have been extended even further, progress which has included some of the most comprehensive gay rights protections in Latin America. Apposite, in

this regard, that Roberto Echavarren, my co-editor, is himself one of the leading theorists of gay poetic literature in the Hispanic world.

It is a deep honor for me, as someone who had the immense fortune to grow up in Uruguay, to have a hand in presenting this work. And both Roberto and I extend our warmest thanks to the fine poet-translators who have generously given their talents to this project. Gracias, compañeras y compañeros, por las riquezas de sus regalos.

Here, then, with sincere gratitude to the editors of *Mandorla*, these selections from *Hotel Lautréamont: Contemporary Poetry from Uruguay*.

AMIR HAMED

At Home in the Hotel

"Montevideo," Pablo Neruda once wrote, "welcomes the Atlantic alongside its immense sea walls with statues of its greatest poets, the gravest, darkest, and stormiest poets the world has ever known." In spite of Neruda's penchant for hyperbole, anyone who has read the work of Uruguayan poets such as Lautréamont, Jules Laforgue, Julio Herrera y Reissig, and Delmira Agustini would have to agree with Neruda that there has never been a modern poetic tradition quite as "stormy" as Uruguay's. In *Orientales: Uruguay a través de su poesía*, I argued that the work of the first of these "grave" and "dark" poets—Isidore Ducasse, the self-proclaimed Count of Lautréamont—was a Francophone extension of the first literary genre to originate in Spanish America: the gauchesque. That genre can trace its origins to popular songs, or *cielitos*, written in the early nineteenth century by Bartolomé Hidalgo, in the territory then known simply as the *Banda Oriental*, and also to works such as Hilario Ascasubi's "La refalosa," written in the same Montevideo where Ducasse would later be born.

To put this another way, Ducasse's *Les chants de Maldoror*, written in French, contained a challenging, ironic, cross-dressing voice, just as the uneducated voice of the gauchos—modulated by the learned meter of nationalism—had once been. Moreover, *Maldoror* is marked by the strange coexistence of homeland and homelessness that is at the heart of the lyric tradition in Uruguay. It is not so much physical homelessness (even though self-exile has been a constant among Uruguayan writers), but more precisely the homelessness of a language that reaches unusual temperatures and produces condensations that are intolerable for writers (hence, perhaps, all the "storminess"). One need only think of Herrera writing lines such as "A hundred chimeras off the map" and poems such as "Tertulia lunática" in a *milonga* rhythm, in order to get a sense of the difference between the outside temperature and the linguistic heat. Herrera was a prisoner of the same rhyme and meter of which he was the master, while rhyme and meter had already become more like a shell for Laforgue, who had abandoned them before everyone else, but at the same time as Arthur Rimbaud.

For all these reasons, the title of this selection is especially fitting: poets from Uruguay continue to be, like guests in a hotel, guests in their own language. Despite the stylistic and generational differences among the poets included here, their poems are all proof of what Proust once said about beautiful books: they feel as if they were "written in a kind of foreign language." There is also something alienated in all of this, as in the alienation of those who live in a language different from the language of their audience. Thus, in spite of the hurricane-like virtuosity of Eduardo Espina and Gustavo Espinosa, each syllable and each letter in their poetry casts doubt on itself, on its own apparent ease, and on the wonder of its musicality.

In Espina's poems we are assaulted by the relentless desire of each word to be voiced in lines that are bloated and overflowing, barely restricted by the presence of a meter that wants to cut them off—the way one cuts off a cigar—into peculiar groups of words: the essential nature of lines is to break and mate with other lines, sending articles and adverbs in equal numbers to the slaughterhouse. In Espinosa, the lyric tradition is taken to its limits and exposed as an old warehouse of tropes, or clichés. It could be said that these poems reenact the communicative fiasco that closes "Tertulia lunática," or that appears in the work of Lautréamont and Laforgue—two poets who understood that they were incompatible with their own time and place and language.

Roberto Appratto is suspicious of lines and un-breaks them into prose, and Silvia Guerra revisits Ducasse, the child who grew up in times of war surrounded by poems which, like the gauchesque, confuse the enemy with animals, and finally break free like something that is neither a pig, nor crazy, nor a toad. The work—or rather, the magic—of Marosa Di Giorgio is always on the brink of turning into either a beast or a vegetable; it moves in the direction of prose in order to return to the dinner table and fulfill that powerful need to be a part of the cycle of life—a need which is rarely satisfied by the human. And not even by the transhuman, as in Marosa, nor by oneself alone. This tendency, or yearning, characterizes an entire strain of Uruguayan poetry, and it can be seen in the conversation that Eduardo Milán's poems have with themselves, or in Circe Maia's precise, phenomenological, and even luxurious contemplation of an *entre-nous* topic. It can even be seen in the near-roar of Nancy Bacelo, the

woman who "escapes from sounds," and in that other roaring—made louder by virtue of its nakedness—in Idea Vilariño, whether it's because love has arrived and puts pressure on the poem or because love has gone away and surrenders in the poem ("you will not escape from my iambs," wrote Catullus), which is to say, it is alchemized.

The feeling of homelessness, or displacement, is not exhausted in bestiaries, however, and instead results in what a Laforguian poet named Ezra Pound would call "logopoeia," or the "dance of the intellect among words," of which Amanda Berenguer's "Las nubes magellanicas" is a prime example. The poem is an interrogation of the night that reenacts not only Herrera and Laforgue's nocturnal thirst for knowledge but also that of Sor Juana's "Primero Sueño." Berenguer's poem (much like Herrera's, which is one of the greatest poems in the Spanish language) warns us that if we feel homeless it is because the light is itself homeless—that light which has been there in the stars to guide us for hundreds of thousands of years, and which "futures itself hopes itself and constellates." But in Herrera, who called his "Tertulia" a "Morbo-Pantheistic Psychologation," and also in Laforgue and Berenguer, the cosmos is a path that leads to introspection ("there are more neurons in my head than stars in the sky," declares Selva Casal). Perhaps this is all because the real desire of the light is to spread and refract, attacking and disrupting everything from the sidelines until it breaks free from genre to finally summon us in a language that is both familiar and fatally foreign. "I want the woman in you," says Echevarren's "goddess," which is her way of asking for an uninhibited body, revealed as foreign by its nearness, as sometimes happens with bodies that share the space of a hotel. About bodies rabidly uninhibited, finally, and about organisms cruelly joyful, *Hotel Lautréamont* speaks to us.

Translated by Charles Hatfield

ROBERTO APPRATTO

Uruguayans: you have to catch them suddenly
or on standby, before some feverish activity
occupies them wholly, or
so it seems; when what they're thinking translates
into objects, gestures, with a brightness of which they themselves
are not aware. That's how you see what they could do
if no one were watching. That's how you see what they are
when they're not focused on complying with the
INSTITUTION THAT PROTECTS THEM.
That's how you have to catch Uruguayans, distracted
from everything but free time, in a state
bordering the wrinkle in their fate. There,
when they learn precisely
what it is that they have when they have
nothing at all, when they're exposed to the elements
outside the INSTITUTION THAT PROTECTS THEM
or at least venture out on the roof. That's how.

Speeding along, at a juncture between that and the other,
and midway a smile, at least in the mind,
as if each thing were the only one, but
speeding along, like Flash Gordon, the projection
of the body in multiple locations, as if you were flowing
from one state into another, each one shading into the next,
subtle traces: that Flash Gordon, who can't be
captured in consecutive frames: no one ever saw Flash Gordon
under arrest. The speed is the essence: flowing through
my cranium at a certain height are books and films
and happenings I registered with motions of my head,
when no one else was there; every motion is the end
of a theme, the step from one line to another with the previous one
still smoking in the holster, ardor in the eyes,
like an animal tensed to spring. That's how they are,
the films and books, and inside
the films and books
the images and points touch down at night where you
deal with them, from a pleasant location, one rapidly abandoned
because you don't have to stick around in order to know; the
speed at which you think curdles a cream, a product of intense
and prolonged churning, containing
that which has existed and returns to the surface, which clarifies
just as you dip your spoon, so you can see
and touch down later at night, at the end of a lengthy week,
when the accumulated sweat flows like the lines
of Flash Gordon's body then holds in a solitary space,
that one, out of which you look to see
the reality of the space
prepared to become reality, with a particular dye
that dissolves yet leaves a sensation of having seen,
of knowing, and the instant cut to another scene marks the initiation
of a novel in the mind, where everything that has existed appears,
and the whole is a luminous nucleus ordering parts
out of nothingness, out of the night: there, you gather strength

to face up to anything, for you know who you are
and hold your silence: the body, speeding along,
leaves a trail, subtle traces, an outline
tensed to spring

Translated by Kristin Dykstra

NANCY BACELO

The courage to admit
The frailty in our hearts

The saliva I swallow called sorrow
to avoid saying sorrow bent me double
before a sightless night.
This much serenity unaccustomed to pain
or disenchantment risks
being worth much more than pain is worth.
In the cloud that weaves and more unraveled
the consequent oblivion someone peers
and asks of hearing
for anyone to broadcast music noiselessly.
It may be a false illusion or a blast
that muffles what I ask.
I am inclined to think what nonsense.
To spread the word. That's fate.
Trinkets of love. The night came.

Translated by Ryan Daley

Dust dust of gold
blade of gold
hand hand of gold
dagger dagger of gold
fire fire
wind lightning that came
word in the mouth
secret whip
reasons from other worlds
that don't matter
sure hits
test bones

Shuffling this stack
of hoarded cards
their precise symbols
that little angel face and the devil's blade
profiles of faces etched by infamy
the supra-map of history told close-up
the flights the soul's sacred raspings
the secret confession we amount to so little
yet somehow in that take soul's measure
and with terrible ardor dessicate the body
strip down always the same flower blooming
and become but the creases of some larger fate.

Translated by Farid Matuk

AMANDA BERENGUER

The Magellanic Clouds

When we travel at everyday speed
across the great avenue Milky Way a promenade
Sky park known since childhood and
even before mother and father very similar
to July 18 when we'd see go by
from a '36 Chevy idling near the curve
people prepared for a traveling
exhibition redolent of carnival and I'd go over
a natural history examination
and its fake showcases of yellowish night life
in low voltage overloaded to the point of near explosion
and ignition is on and we drive through the streets
of the Aguada neighborhood and the tram station of Reducto
with the clock on the dot until getting to the Brazo Oriental
returning through San Martin lined by young banana trees
arriving at the short, unpaved street of Huáscar, and when

we arrive home now in a different location
on the city's map, on the tip
closest to one of the planet's lips
when we return to this muddy, clear
suburban loop
mixed with the central yolk and the greedy
noise of a river low in silver
lashing the coastal rambla's seawall
or rising over its sandy edge
squeezing an egg lain during flight
so there it is with its cracked shell, Montevideo spilled
by a bird akin to the bird of time
in Sinbad's second voyage
and when it's time for lovers and thieves

in the nearby hill
or when at the beach I jump into the water
amid the crustaceans at the bottom, in their element
or into a well to disappear or die
with a different breadth in another voyage
navigating crossing the black water
fishing for the promised preys of gold
opened to its marrow the treasure
of our Latin ancestors industrious and miserly

there are scant leftovers on the set table
cheese for homemade traps and rancid fodder
and lentils cooked with bacon
to feed the daily misunderstandings
as old as the world
one dish for another of cold, live flesh
or thrashing pieces of what we are
inside and is invisible
and sometimes emerges in a raging major catch
difficult to dismember

we toss out the buried unscathed feathers
of American birds or the Charrúa Indians
enthusiastic stabbers of Solís the discoverer
of the bed of this rapid stream where even
baited corvina fish spawn and dolphins suck milk
without a direct line to any of the world's thrones
and a missionary colonial undertow muddies

when an accident happens
and a boy on his bike dies crushed
against the murderous windshield of a car
in Caramurú, near a stream
when the alarm clock goes off and the pulse buzzes
in the coronary arteries

when I wake up and remember

someone is staring directly at our backs
our bare elbows our napes our lumbar vertebrae
which we only know from within
from the inside of a mirror in the half-light
of an x-ray
or the astute crease of our palpable ear
or the dark side of the moon contemplating
with a magnifying glass of time
amplifying the spectrum with its true
ghosts

the Magellanic Clouds light in the surroundings
of our austral celestial pole two wisps torn from the
Milky Way their shape is vaguely circular
the Large Cloud extends to the constellation of Dorado
the Small Cloud to the constellation of Tucana
the Large Cloud contains supergiant stars both blue
and red emission nebulae for instance one of the
firmament's most luminous the Tarantula Nebula
and Classical Cepheids and dust blocking
distant galaxies from view the Small Cloud on the
contrary is see-through

one discovers bridges of twisted matter forming
curls either unfurled and resembling tenuous branches
or stretched to the limit and almost broken there is a continuous
luminous backdrop in the central regions of the
great clusters of galaxies diffusion is uniform and significant
more or less five hundred million embryos for now
of infinitude ah! I turn in part of a daily war
booty as pledge through a long corridor or a recently discovered
pathway of matter

the sea is ever lighter and deeper
breathing soft and rhythmic
thought barely outlined
by simple words
the upright open sky painstakingly sustains
our de rigueur questions

why the old man deformed
his weak bones misshapen

the galaxy's plane is covered by clouds of dusty
gas along the spires

the simplest and most accurate image of the universe is
still that of an Euclidean space regularly
inhabited by this deranged animal biting its
tail and spawning stars that we see every night
without seeing in the dark beyond our eyes

south and north continue wrestling in a closed circus
the austral hemisphere where we were born turns
we open with seafarer Magellan and the sixty bellowers
his narrow strait and then we veer north
of a sole almighty space
the other infinite space was then nearby
the incorruptible chained woman in close proximity
to the boreal pole
Andromeda's great spiral Messier 31
exposed even her dazzling ovaries
between tissues that gush shadows
she tied to a radioactive radiofluent
radioelectric rock
on the edge of an ocean of cold hydrogen waves
breaking on her flanks of devout virgo Persea
nebulous seal or marine cow among the Arabs
also chained

the buzz of the galaxy's background noise
a saw endlessly preparing the tree of silence
in microsamples
sing the forested tide of a tremendous ocean
this very ocean dirtied by the pull or a river as big
as an ocean Paraná Guazú with saltwater and fresh water

in the mêlée and a woman lying naked on the rocks
between Playa Verde and Playa Honda her feet
where the waves break waiting for the lover lugging
Medusa's head by its coarse hair along with
a set of rings as a wedding gift
the hydrogen waves crash and break on the bare
flanks of the great spiral
Andromeda's Messier 31 on the sunbathing
woman
splayed warm and soft
with arms firm on her armpits and a body of
well-kneaded bread ready for the oven of a desert beach
her round breasts facing the sun showing
the palpitating Cepheids and the thick smoky sex
breathing heavily over the lone woman
her full body sunbathing over Andromeda
on the great spiral Messier 31 chained waiting
one night she was on the rocks of Plaza Virgilio
keeping watch over the Río de la Plata attentive to
the very sky's smuggling of water
with her eye of bronze
open to the sea's fallen

I awaited the sumptuous transit of the Argo
visibly traversing the heights near the celestial south
the keel plunging in the black wave toward Canopus
the alpha pilot of Carina always in view
in its broken up waterline

I was in no rush and I couldn't move
my back numb upon contact with the stiff darkness
an intermittent noise faintly heard on the coast
turning over a raid of newly fished
and still live seconds

when one is alone the ligatures and real heft
of the lightweight firmament extended
over the feverish body
are felt more intensely

the ship approached slowly balancing
its stern and returning to its port of departure

I couldn't know its destiny
I didn't think it'd be passing
this place where I was waiting
could it be that Argo itself
might discover this hideout
at the tip of Montevideo
where I am still bound to this writing?

stars come to rest on the mast
they flutter and shake up the deep daydream
the night is long and everything passes by close
goes on bustling about
distance is measured in pulsations
the feared trajectory is known numbered
are the palpitations subtracted from the initial sum
allotted to our hearts' accounts
Andromeda are you that sleepless nebulae or
is it me who is transiently here on earth?
the ship goes by hoisted in all its glory
over the meridian
remember: old Ptolemy catalogued the constellation

with its forty-five stars in an order similar to that
of a treaty on shipbuilding modern
astronomers divide it in detail keel stern mast
but only the rear half of the ship peeks in
a sea-navigation chart advancing in such a way in its nocturnal
course from East to West that the stern goes forward by backing
up toward the dock
Andromeda, can you hear me?
I am on the pole opposite to all of your prerogatives
I make minimal efforts at letting go perhaps
the current I fear the most pulls me
or a blinding spurt of frenzied luminaries
militant noctilucae

the ocean moves inverted bent
a protective helmet cross-linked over the shape
of intelligence
the universe bows in a deep mythovulsion
here waves break in the middle of the street
over people passing by untroubled and with downward sleep
the tide washes over the garden of the golden apples
pushes open the main entrance the foam dissolves
over the worktable in a vain profusion of stars
tormented clouds upset the distant
Magellanic Clouds their tenuous luminous whites
where the ship will never run aground

here it rains the night is shut
there is a chain of explosions of misery
smallholdings of pain and awkwardness there is mud
there is soil there are animals sniffing about
there is thick rubbish waste there are
drains sewers sinkholes mouths
of storms swallowing this side of the world
Andromeda's centrifugal torture

the drift the sinking of the ship here
in its austral plenitude and for the Ancient Greek
contemplating from another raised hemisphere
their remains in the aqueous horizon
and the end of Magellan pierced by a spear
that pinned him headlong into a wild island
before completing the globe's circumference

it rains in the dark truly invisible are the palms
of one's hands there's no stroll for the girl nor crossword
puzzle nor a trip to Europe
things even lack a beginning
in the great promenade energy is conserved
and in the hydroelectric plant cement walls
are cracked
there's a power outage nothing can be seen it rains
but I remember the light
others sing with me by heart the light is coming
is filled with hope it futurizes and constellates itself
flamethrower a home alive a mutiny
syndicated worker stars in a neighborhood's skyfactory
where the story of the beginning scintillates is being told

Translated by Mónica de la Torre

SELVA CASAL

Confession

Memphis is beside me silent
lying on the ground beneath the trees
Others buried by the roses and hibiscus
We humans think we know everything
but the sky-blue flowers really do know
They won't be surprised when that day comes
If it's a confession I confess
I live as in wartime
Whoever meets me meets the cosmos
I cared for a child one hospital night
A swallow that never soared again
I defended assassins
I wake up at dawn I hear frogs croak
Macumbas boom
I wander about in a trance
I have premonitory dreams
Of course they loved me if you had known me
you'd have loved me too
But animals are threatened with death
We are threatened with death
The technocrats have yet to succeed in draining the blue from the sky
Who can stand nighttime
In this country everyone punished me
And that friend all violet and that friend all blue
know what I've been through
The streets are blood-soaked
The elderly breed incessantly dead women give birth
Who made me like this I don't look like anyone
I'm fine with a book with a tree I'm fine
I write in datebooks on journal pages
This my own land that furiously dismissed me

These my tombs
I hear the forest the day the big bang ripped us apart
I'm competing on merit folders jealously holding our details
Nothing is real
Life is dreadful but no one likes to die
I've planted many trees I've lived many lives
Don't look for pretense or logic or explanations in me
I know that everything will explode to come back
That they bred me from a dead girl
That I never adapted
There are more neurons in my head than stars in the sky
Already so many dead who love me
Things I used to cry for
So many loves and hates
broken schools
Listen to me revolving night bells listen to me
The weak do violence the strong do violence
Laws exist to be imposed
Violence against nature against you against me
It's cruel you kept saying and it was true
Never to see you again never know anything
We have to destroy it all
But still, to die here would be lovely
For what better drug than to die
What stranger than waking each morning and finding yourself alive
while a madman hides waiting to kill you in the corner of an asylum
where everyone swears it's just a delusion of persecution
and not a big deal

Sex and War

Sex and war rule the world
If they don't kill you
it kills
Light is born of opposites
War is the mother of all things
Heraclitus said
You believed in life
your life
and even in death sometimes
You didn't know
that everything is nothing
Nothing
I loved the ants the stars
I devoured the grass the plums
the grapes of my childhood
What does it mean to be normal?
There there, my mother intoned
Mothers think children are eternal
They root themselves in mystery
and strange prayers
they close their eyes not to know
If only a lion had devoured me
or I'd been able to explode like a quasar
Sex pleasure and ruin
on earth
War coats cities
with a mantle of mysterious fungi
Our destiny is the empire of lava and fire
There's an endangered species
It has atomic teeth
Cruelty and violence
isn't cruelty or violence
Unable to please the one I loved so much

I didn't die
What do I know
I come from a hateful line
I can't think anymore I've consumed myself
I have no soul I have no body
I feel their knives boring into wombs
Trees and their atavistic shadows
Semen floating in the sea
Sex and war
I tremble as if a ceaseless electric shock
were furiously wrapping around me
Rip open my insides
I surrender my whole self quickly
Only my imagination exists
keeps seeing
I'm engaged to all men
alive and dead
to those who love me
to those who hate me
I married them all
I murdered them all

Translated by Laura Healy

MAROSA DI GIORGIO

The Moth

Through the immensurable forest. I could see its end and could not reach it. With a little basket of red strawberries. And butterflies, spirits, in every color; a few would alight upon me.

The train, that monster, tore the forest in half as if it were going to kill it (two forests remained) and the train disappeared into infinity.

An immense silence returned.

The tallest trees reached all the way to heaven, to the houses of saints.

And I wandered, fleeing school, or mother, in a short red dress, with a little basket of blackberries.

And the Wolf jumped out from the thickest part of the forest with his pointed face and sunken eyes, but I did not back down or turn my gaze from him.

And the same comedy, day after day, the same routine.

Rose and wolf.

Half and half.

A terrible black butterfly came during the night and perched on the roof. She knew all kinds of erotic tricks. Terrified, we pretended we did not notice. But she came down, even murmured something; she slapped one of us across the face, landed on another's chest; I ran, calling out to someone who was not there, the empty house, the wind.

She approached me, she forced herself on me. She approached and forced herself on everyone. She was busy all night; step by step she carried out her intentions. At dawn she took off over the groves.

Twice we closed the windows and the curtains. So day would never arrive again. We escaped into darkness, mad with fear and shame.

She was always lying down and birthing light. She was an enormous body, white and perfect. She dimmed and glowed like a firefly. Lascivious creatures who lived in the walls emerged from their holes and burrows to suck at her from all directions. Then she radiated like a sun. After adolescence, she stopped shining. She was dormant for a while and later she stood up into ordinary life and among its objects, ready to marry a wolf or a man.

Translated by Susan Briante

XIX

Beyond the land, through the air, in the full moon's light, like a lily's stem, it loads its side incessantly with hyacinths, narcissi, white lilies. The wolves draw back at the sight of it; the lambs get down on their knees, crazy with love and fear. It moves on, goes off like an errant candelabra, a bonfire; it goes toward the house, passes the cabinets, the hearth; with only a glance it burns the apples, illuminates them, wraps them in candied paper; it flings colored stones into the rice; it makes the bread and pears glow. It drives itself into the table like a November yucca branch; it hunts a star, it stuffs itself with candles, pine nuts, little bottles. It breaks into the bedroom, spins over my dream, over my wide-open eyes; it floats in the air like a three-tiered crown of pearls, a lamp. It is a fish, a coral branch outside the water, each piece of coral as swollen as a bud or a lip. It flies back toward the moon; it scares the horses and owls, who break into flight and instantly stop. It calls to me. To me, sleepless, and we go off beyond the hills, away from the night workers who tried to mow it down like a hydrangea.

XXX

They warned us before we signed the contract; but it was such beautiful land, so full of chard and roses. Also, they fooled us for a few days. Until the day when suddenly the angels appeared, spreading their wings in a fan before my mother's plough; one stayed like a white rose, fixed, in the horse's ear. All day long they darted back and forth like wandering trees, transparent; they crossed the rooms; you could see their wax faces, blue eyes, long hair of linen or tobacco burning. Everywhere we looked we found their pearls; they burned inside the mirror, the beds, the tables, like a bouquet of buds. At night they came in and stole our honey, our sugar, our apples. And at dawn they were already there, seated in the doorway, chattering in their fluid language—we never understood a word. They laid pink eggs, tiny and gleaming, that seemed like marble; these opened almost immediately and let new flocks of angels emerge.

Sometimes, my mother thought she was greeting a neighbor, but then that neighbor's forehead suddenly burst into flames, a strange rose at her waist.

And so, she could not stand it any longer and sold that orchard. When at last the time came to leave, I managed to take one angel with me—a little one—hidden under my cloak. But, halfway down the road, my mother realized what I had done and scared it off for good.

Translated by Jeannine Pitas

ROBERTO ECHAVARREN

The Invisible

See? Do you see, down the rail
of your name, this name
I'm calling you, invisible?
You left me a misleading trail,
a cracked ceramic cast,
and snuck off to your own invisible,
breaking—chaos—the concord
of obligations: you come, we spend
the evening together for lack of car or disco.
Salt on my head, so it won't boil.
You and me, vocative of the voice
I lost, slipping through the hole
where you fled behind a weave of lies,
the cunning of your concerted affairs,
mushroom of my disconcerted call.
See your invisible? I call you
by your invisible name, its crest
deprives me of your private lie, depriving
me of you. Through a gash
my nail ripped in the blanket,
I glimpse you, I touch you, I punctured
the regurgitant muscle a first time
come and gone, you in front
on the motorcycle down
the hill, I hugged your waist
and the sea glinted like a rocky eye,
all the better, your gift stole
my peace of mind, as you
distended to an absolute
breadth I didn't expect, I couldn't
take more, I said enough.

The storm sewer valve
snapped back to size,
just a slit, but we drank three times.
The acrid squirt gave me whiplash
and the third perfected
the unbearable beat in my crotch
aching from the ride.
The mount exceeded me in brio.
We passed peppertrees and mataojos,
scared off crested streamers in the stream,
the impenetrable arroyo a rim
amid laurel, acacia, and crownvetch
bearded with lichen—see? "Collapse
explodes me in all directions.
I clutch what is real to me,
namely, my parents, but they never let me have fun
because they want, they say, to ensure my survival."
Meanwhile the cistern gushes
and the stove sputters, my fingers prod
the yellow tablecloth. Luckily, you shut up.
Now a purr behind a membrane,
piped rustling of chimney and car engine.
You emerge from behind the peace you broke.
Where are you going? What's your law?
"I explode in all directions. No topic of conversation
fails to end in a sweeping pronouncement,
useless in my situation.
My situation? Until I'm dead no one can say
how far I went." The situation
begs action, lies spun to break all ties.
Yes, you win by attrition.
I want to sleep like Garfield the cat.
You, however, slept until noon
and now are insomnious at full throttle.
When I turn on the light, you've already

bathed. Inevitably, I rub your back,
but your mind is somewhere else.
Throughout the ordeal, this fault
is irreparable. What can I do
but admit that life is what's unbearable.
Last year, you beat me at chess,
now you beat me by conceding.
Your supreme whim advanced in stages
to attain this version of checkmate.

Translated by Román Antopolsky and Michelle Gil-Montero

Atlantic Casino (a fragment)

Serious disappointments aside,
The embroidered imbroglio held far more attractions:
That tattoo was unmistakable.

Emotion, playing a short set on the irresistible,
Proved to be as positive as ever, a stinking throng.

Wolfhounds appeared from the jinx,
Demolishing turntables in the struggle,
Picking something bewildered and accusing,
Shrugged and proceeded to justify their billing
Lolling dangerously to one side
But never quite toppling,
Spitting fur,
Their throats slaked with grit,
Skin seeping across strings,
Slaps in the face,
On the bump and grind indie circuit.

A delirium of interpretation kills pop.
We call it rasping.
It destroys pop by cocooning it.
It is transfixed into a metaphor of itself,
But the relief of its layers are not yet backspacing
A forgetfulness of fear.
If remembered, it stops practically,
Or you return a non-fear for fear
As your attention span opens up
A non homogeneous startled systems funk,
A manic conscious reversal,
A dialectical fuzziness to hurry
As if it could put an end to history,
As if it could stop anything from happening

By making it happen as an ideal trance of contemplation,
While a whiplash smile turns from you
Towards a menace of willful and absolute destruction.

A figurine springs its legs,
Turns towards you,
Pretending to half wake to check a bare clue
From the askance viewer before the airline shuttle stops
At a connecting relay.

"There is a shadow in my heart".

You split. A goddamn tall tale.

Always a step out of time
I want to see you out of my tears.
Believe it or not, if you close your eyes
No more tears.
Believe it or not,
I can walk away to prick the thong live.

This poem was composed in English.

EDUARDO ESPINA

Lapses and Licking
(To love your neighbor as if he were next)

When to decide desire the confident worm
approaches with a spirt of chastity
where given to arrogance it might drag
blunder filling the burrow
grey returning to insinuation with no
rhyme or reason or very many the holes after the
usual panting fullness where
prong of drool or
vulgar fairies in jammies
drinking my penis in flames
the woman who gave it adornments
with Siamese sweet gluttony and
the same one further licking the tao of the
Lethe you cross to the sound of such sonorous
slurping and spoons dirtied
where you slip out of the soup leaving the
salt and go solo to the salon for a massage
oh you, the Proust woman and also you the
fornicatress who almost gave in
to the tranquility of the kimono you'd exit
the movies effortlessly until you heard this
oh, Phoenician woman, because of the vowels!
riding, slippery you carelessly thaw
in disarray the infantryman faithful as you,
the guilty woman satyr from
my bristling cannabis there so like mine
the sonambulating balls you incite
with the regal rubbing of a feminine Pope
who raises the truss gasping
the miracle of an abstinent place and

between lovely caprices seeking through Babel's
mist searching like a boa in a
button and through the Casbah, a confessor
because you're guilty of the happy fact
of the conduit, braiding as much wisdom as has lapsed
toward the South in beauty,
guilty at the level of the thing that awakens,
strange balls of flesh you are the guilty queen,
and of my thirty-some best verses
now tell me which, and that these are not them.

What the page finds
(the phrases are never cold)

Signs that tend to be from silence
cede some hypotheses to the indecisive.
Placed on par with appearances
spies hasten the future to come on
famous breezes, baffling habits,
body to pass onward to knowledge
and know oneself to be among the
few who are capable. Look,
imperfectly maimed by what
has been, inkblots, fortuitous glyphs.
(Pause and weeks of trying, asked
the ungodly one in the linotypes to clean
his kif over the lines of influence
knowing the assets he would receive).
And the meaning made of meticulous
sizes, little letters that embody the elevation
of certain things, freckles
of a conspiracy between the neck
and the sun's ace to save the albatross.
In the vastness that praised them (they go
for that voice) it's their turn to look like
what they will be: liquids when with use
they provoke some solid things
way beyond resemblances
until one can see in the velocity the visible
vibrating and how much will they truly see!
Remember that before there were so many,
writing, treatment, faces of monsters:
they exist behind what they would be, ways of
escaping the era unhurt at this time.
Ways of enlarging the rugged
regions that could make out of grammar

with its grams paths to the message,
they pester the ungrateful fig tree where
nothing more sacred suddenly grows.
A fig; the sentence says: there's a fig.
There is this, there are fields for a country.
As the league appears, its gauchos
would cinch up their ponchos when they hear
snap-clicks in that distant thing jam-packed with a
good executioner along a straight track,
and in the hand, if not exactly the same:
it brandishes, covers udders and breeds.
A country that on the page is word.
Owed its hint of savannah to buttoning up
the virile tone, the mockery in the carbine
each time a cow would cause it to go off
to make the gaucho into a synonym.
Cowboy traits or how the river destroys them
they scrape along in pursuit of the distracted face
(*res non verba, plus ultra* so useful)
and between roars inside, from behind
they dry up the patience of paradises,
the warp given in the voluntary limbo.
They tremble like daybreaks on the balcony
and come to the wind. Who would say so:
in reality they feel salient.
In the inferno they'll be so cold,
in the snow they'll have the habeas of summer.
They turn out as photographs with no history,
the straight line that touches any modesty
or adored candor through great praise.
A loyal bird, a nation of loyal
skies to dress up the armadillo of the
forests and the hollows which in due course
went: in its silence the being spoke
to itself, the Angora cat from Angola is

to the East as much as in what it sweats
and I can only think that here it steals like the
round rashes unraveling stoles
or testaments, it constantly fears
the unknown condition of hearing.
Or did the incessant happen by chance?
To say it amazes more in the silk-cotton tree
carved so that life opened up twisting
with meanings towards the tyrannical
All the declamations will have to give
surrounding shadow of abracadabras:
of which the most beautiful in verse
serve for oral love and death.
With these they'll do what will never come.
Guessing them in the form of a dolmen
or at least metaphors and ordinary gazes,
they manage in time to captivate the clarity
the one that says from the beginning, it's perfect.
Perfect the voice, the beauty that follows.

Translated by Daniel Borzutzky

GUSTAVO ESPINOSA

The last few weeks,
with Thursdays as long as the Quaternary Period,
I have gone on living and listening to the radio
like men who are alone
because I have been a man alone.
But I'm not talking
about a monomial or the android of the French
entertainment industry
(the complicated automaton
that survives in only a few
black and white movies
in which it created itself
between bouts of nausea and the smoke of Gauloises).
And I'm not talking about the alien that shot up like a rocket
propelled by angst
from inside the frozen hump on Kierkegaard's back.
I'm talking about men who are lost between the four walls of their
rooms
as if in a labyrinth;
I'm talking about people tangled up in an inscrutable game of chance
that takes the form of a secret world
without form (Alberto Spencer, Miss Argentina, Saint
George);
about those who regarded
through the dark glass of their windows
the clumsy movements and machines of the world
(sulkies, funeral processions, British Leyland trucks).
I'm talking about someone stranded
beside a tube radio that looked like a wake
and only played tangos over the sound of tubercular coughing;
I'm talking about men sitting and smoking
at the rim of ancient washbasins
in their rooms almost filled by one dresser.

I'm talking about Pedro Moreno, whose only joy in life
was a home-made whistle
made of a bird bone,
whose only pretension was the Packard hearse
—covered with cheap decorations like a huge
black cake—
that carried away his corpse
like an ocean liner
(under his bed there was a riot
of nightmares, chicken feet,
dregs of yerba mate, ghosts of women,
and a cuspidor in the shape of a hat).
I'm talking about Rosendo Luna, also known as Martín Llano;
I'm talking about his cravat, his bowtie,
his *Treponema pallidum,*
his Palmolive Deluxe deodorant,
his ring and his nail (the flower of his little finger).
And I'm talking about the barber whose blue nose
—a gleaming sweet potato grown by cirrhosis—
reigned behind the nylon screens that put
their parrot-like colors
between the infectious world of his steel bed
and that enormous white chair
bearing German letters
like a resplendent Wagnerian hospital.

I'm still not talking about Sören Kierkegaard.
Let me return to Pedro Moreno:
on an ordinary evening (as banal and bright
as a large watermelon) he smiled as he walked past a child
without knowing he was saying *welcome.*

Diatribe of the Poor Poet

When Pablo Neruda corrected the proofs
to his Ode to Poverty,
he was already as big and fancy as a hot air balloon:
a poet resembling a tapir or the moon
who had clogged up
labyrinthine sewer pipes
in ocean liners, pagodas and embassies
with pompous defecations
(the great poet used to fabricate fantastic turnovers
with fish and fruit from Rangoon and India
or caviar picked out of Stalin's mustache).
When this very same Neruda
declared his stance against the aristocracy,
the exploitation of miners,
and Nixon's nose,
the eruption of his polyphonic farts—
released in a room filled with champagne and mother of pearl—
had already wrecked
garden party hats, black-tie vultures,
and the noses of consuls.
Viva Pablo Neruda!

The author of this poem, on the other hand,
gums out his unpublished diatribes through dentures
with the help of his gastrointestinal tubes
and radios that sing
cheerful theorems in favor of Pepsi.
This poet is being stalked
by metal washbasins
in hotel rooms used only
for suicides or by women who have permanently sworn off
ovulation.
This very same poet

who has swallowed dark objects from hell
—dog meat and plastic waste—
weeps when faced with the emptiness of salad bowls,
or the revelation of rotten tomatoes,
and belches out dark clouds
of potatoes that have no meaning.

And this very same poet, living among the inhabitants
of a Pirarajá or Kabul of the mind,
surrounded by people for whom
Ferlinghetti is the name of a fast car
(is it a Lamborghini? or even an Alighieri?),
mutters out the sordid jingle
of the void. He is dumbfounded
by the throng of things that are missing:
the sky and the sea in his windows,
and even the windows themselves
(there are only blank walls),
the dearth of heat, paprika, or ice,
because it's not conjured objects or treasonous machines
that haunt him, but empty soup pans and dark operating rooms.
Later on,
the poet learns that a chicken
the size of a Boeing
deprogrammed the tremendous text of the Aeneid,
turned it into a disaster of declensions,
and dropped its excretions, a black hole of paralysis,
its miserable egg
inside happiness:
think of Maiakovski, the cloud in trousers,
or poor Roque Dalton;
or even Góngora,
the hallucinogenic priest,
intubated in grim, baroque cassocks
during the nuclear winter that was the seventeenth century.

The poor poet
is the mutant who wanders through ghostly
supermarkets ("Gutenberg's")
that are as pornographic and overcrowded as the dreams of a pope;
he is the old lady who feeds on
soap opera reruns
starring heartthrobs,
and like that old lady, the poor poet deserves
to die smaller than the black elephant
of Quintus Horatius Flaccus.

Translated by Charles Hatfield

SILVIA GUERRA

Proof

Filaments. Invertebrates. Wide skeins. Dark tubers.
Leguminosae.
Rhizome.
Surfacing. Running rope-like, little bulbs
A family written in minuscule, a weed.
Inferior ovary, what the rheme hurts, what remains.
A seed sans endosperm, the storage is
in deposits, the storage is
like time, is nobody's.
It is, it remains, it drips into repositories.
The people animals leftover seeds, everything comes and goes.
Remains dampened in the placid half-shadow.
The cotyledons oily in the ovary, the seed's embryo
is upright. The gynoecium
holds the ovary.
One could call them infinite.
The dispersion is accomplished by wind
or by insects.

Comparison makes metaphor

Intense intensity intention
saying, was saying, you were saying, also could
then two—could unfold, split
for two intention intensity
coolness or, better, cold. A doctor gynecologist
pediatrician now because time passes the pediatrician
spots promptly the disease of the creature goes out runs when
necessary generally it's the throat it's the current the change
in temperature sometimes yes, it's running. Past two
the gynecologist heads to the hotel to the gynoecium proper
to the pain of which the book says: it does not hurt.
But it pains the gynecologist and she's single
still the hair runs sooty
to arrive on time to the gynoecium that hurts through to the end
remembering the last fruit ritual as if
recalling a Renaissance painting there is no
pain in the bent knee, the knee set among fruits the
fruits of the mouth to mouth, among the fruits
that body crowned, exhausted. No. Stone
makes skin furrow like water. The water when the wind
picks up past noon. A stone
and someone says come. Come. Someone who says Come
this split stone, this pain.

The farce in the doorway, swaying

Now it comes back luminous: that part of the sphinx that
recalls nothing and everything seems to her a tall tale. Painted
on the wall upon a silk sheet, the lip to kiss
violet and directed toward disenchantment rectilinearly the
schizophrenia of returning. The sand that glistened and
a woman's body on it, not mine. Barely twenty
years before, she was silken as a sheet and twenty
and in twenty more no one could endure so much cadence
as live animals sewn into the hem of a blouse that
ends up at the hot edge of the day, teeth
jutting out through black light. And it says schizophrenia
the mark of the sphinx, the smile's horizontal line
the rope we crossed together when the future was
still in front of the sky egg-laying anguish so it wouldn't
see the teeth in the violet of the cross,
the broken sticks.

Translated by Alex Verdolini and Gillian Brassil

CIRCE MAIA

FROM VERMEER

I
Everything at the same level of intense life.

No priorities. No hierarchy.

It's the hand's skin
a fabric's fold
complicated edging sketch on tiles
transparencies, reflections in windows
light skidding on milk

on apple

on cheek

tassels

ceramics

wood
and mirrors: space doubling itself
images of images
filtered light and
silence

***

V

About inaudible music

She who touches, her back turned,
face in the mirror
invisible hands.

And all the broad room vibrates,
from the cracked marble of the floor to the beams
of the high roof.

The sound slips
above the immense tablecloth of blue-red
labyrinthine sketches
the sound slips.

All around-beyond-far off another sound illuminates—
bitter unbalanced light—
Holland in the 16th century.
Beyond, Europe bleeding, the time in darkness.

Here inside
color creates music
an order, an extremely clear plot.

The professor listens
left hand on a cane
other hand on the key.

The pitcher a white chord.

City of the Sun

In a Sicilian prison
the Dominican monk Tomasso Campanella
saw in dreams concentric walls circling the hill—
a defense against invaders—
and he saw they were covered with sketches on their inner side
with signs, with paintings....

(The walls teach whoever lives within them
the secrets of animals and plants, stars and geometry
music and mathematics.)

The monk saw in the city the movement
of its happy beings, their clothing, their games
at the same time their work, at the same time their rest.

And "those who have nothing, but who
lack nothing" smile
while the solar city shines and lights up
the Sicilian prison.

(Also in 1500,
another Thomas, English, Sir Thomas More,
dreams of his fantastic Utopia
while the executioner's hatchet is sharpened.)

Translated by Mary Crow

EDUARDO MILÁN

THE PRESENT MOMENT IS THIS WIND IN YOUR FACE

The present moment is this wind in your face,
just a tiny little puff of wind, a terrible
wind without warning: wind just because,
wind on its own, twenty percent off fate.
But with no warning or song, here or in
Sinaloa, wind without elegy, emptiness within.
That wind there, this wind here, no horse, no
center. Wind against the window. Got to close
the window because the wind is rising. Now
the wind is blowing on the window. Maybe
there's a little bit of present moment.

When there's nothing left to

When there's nothing left to
say, say it. Allow
a hollow in the conversation, something lacking,
a true emptiness: the flower,
not the idea, is the goddess there.

Through illusion's the most direct

Through illusion's the most direct
way to get to reality and beyond,
passing through reality. There's nothing beyond reality
said a voice that saw, voice of someone who managed
to return from reality, Aina, so lightly due
to the total necessity of being concrete. With all due
respect, an exact amount of respect for such perfection
joyfully pointing out what essentially is not,
twelve grapes for new year's, trumpets, joyful feathers
and not that sunset sadness of one who knows better.
But through that glint of neon or illuminated mane
of illusion you might find your way with a match,
with the reverse of that flame, a drop rising toward you
who are who, Aina again, that, that, that, before speech
that's chained by all the thats till now. No longer can we give
names
give out names like poets used to do, naming right
and left before the good turned round and when it did
the miracle called prosody occurred. Once said,
prosody can't last: like a ballerina past
forty it passes from body to memory.

Translated by John Oliver Simon

IDEA VILARIÑO

Damned be the day

Maudite soit la nuit
Ch. B.

Crushed the hours the undertow
of the day overhead in stains
lingering on in the air
of the stars out this way
dangling
and you and I and you stepping
on what is the day's
in other words forgetting the memory
in other words you and I and you
we ourselves
for once
finally
after everything
after all that left in the air
wholly disembogued like stones
in the water
in the intact scope of a night
that couldn't reach anyone
like stones
dragged knocking about in a bed
mossy and well excavated by the centuries.

Letter I

As I go about the house
saying dear
with fervent voice
desperate
that poor word
it would be unable to caress you
to sacrifice something
to give its life for you
dear
to convoke you
to do something for this
for this invalid love.
And that's all
dear and I see
your eyes still fixed on mine
as if made fast by love
looking at each other
as we loved each other
looking at me your eyes
your whole face
you
and it was life or death
to be like this
to look at each other.
And I close the windows saying
dear
dear and I don't care
that you're doing something else
and that you don't remember anymore.
And I'm caught up
in your looking at that
in that look of yours
in our love looking at each other

and indignant I go about the house
turning off the lights
putting clothes away
thinking of you
looking at you
without letting you fall
wanting you
loving you
saying dear.

Translated by Anna Deeny

JOMI CURET

TRES POEMAS

MAGMA

Magma
contaré cómo naciste
cómo te convertiste en esa masa que asfixia

Magma
contaré cómo saliste de esa materia
babosa, irresistible
coja y espesa
que fluye entre todas las entrañas
alumbradoras de mundos

Hace tres mil trillones de años
ya estabas nadando
surcando las venas hinchadas
inflamando clorofilas apestosas y nutritivas
saliste contrayendo nupcias
irremplazables con la dureza de las rocas

fuiste tú la roca que demolió
los otros mil millones de años de vida

Desde el primer momento
fuiste tú quien engendró la violencia
con el diamante espejo negativo de tus vísceras
encima de tus átomos se criaron lagartijos,
dinosaurios
se crío la prehistoria
como el reflejo magnífico de la luna
en la saliva de un gargajo maravilloso
rebosante de flema

Magma
naciste y creaste la absolución
contigo fueron siglos de inclemencia
todos pedazos de carne iguales
a pedazos de nubes indicadoras del avenir
carnes sangrientas como nuestra imagen y semejanza
bendición de sueros

Magma
contaré cómo con tu materia
tan bella
manufacturaron macanas para linchar
cómo fue que te transfiguraron en plomo

Magma
nos circundes desde el fondo invisible del mar

Magma
con tu líquido espeso como la sangre
rojo como la carne
tu roca creó un peñón gigantesco
por el cual paseamos, padecemos y sonreímos

con tu densidad como el plomo
masacraron niños
desde el fondo del barro
te inyectaron junto con el sida
te volviste enfermedad
con tus andrajos sucios fabricaron los rayos X

Magma
le otorgaste distancia a las millas
por las que nos encierran
calabozos larguísimos por donde transitamos
y se extienden más allá de nuestra reja

Magma
cruzaste al otro mar
al de verdad
al que nos aprisiona
el que nos acorrala en el verdor

Magma
llegaste a la tierra de las tierras
al suelo de los suelos
para encerrarnos de nuevo
en los predios gigantescos
de sueños sin cumplir

Magma
le diste luz a las bombillas
para despistar tortugas
y cada una de las sílabas de la voz
se perdió por múltiples pasadizos de sal
imaginaste la culpa y la convicción
imaginaste presidios podridos
que sirvieron de ejemplo para el castigo
donde se pudren las pieles

las casas
el abuso,
el incesto y la ley
el desacato y la formidable lección para no aprender a leer
el impuesto y la evasión
se coló en tu calor

Magma
andas perdida
hierves
como ese material piroplástico de los volcanes
humus debajo del humus
de ese fondo hirviente te generaste
saliste con disposición al grafito
a dibujar mentiras impresionantes
con sedantes de carbón
estimulantes dorados de cuero y plata

Magma
te maldigo
ahora tienes pus y moho
en tu piel y en tus metales
y en tus átomos y en tus células hay paz
la exagerada paz de la muerte
brilla en el bastón de la temprana ancianidad
las murallas de la miseria te amarran
la melancolía te amordaza
el remordimiento te acorrala
la cirrosis corre impune
entre los sorbetos que chupan los niños

Magma
en tu jugo no hay petróleo
en tu líquido tal vez hay un veneno
que no mata a nadie

Magma
vuelves a las entrañas fulminantes del aire
hueles a metano y suicidas las estaciones del globo
contaminas con polvo
desiertos polvorientos
tu atmósfera cojea
con movimientos de perros callejeros
con el vaivén del hombre ebrio

Magma
así te aproximas a las multitudes que no pariste
de témpera son tus paisajes natimuertos
de brea tu aliento
y la grama que crece en las grietas es tu postre
el aceite y el humo ya no te intoxican
te los bebes como néctar.

Quiero saber la línea

Estallarán las alegrías
pisadas frías en la caja
prisión clandestina
que encierra su conspiración
conspiran las marcas
gravan la seña necesaria de la soledad
gritando que la más triste historia
se pasea desinquieta
sin cadenas
sin poros
sin pudor

observan a miles de millas
vigilan el alimento
guardan la necesidad de ahogar la trampa

confiados
nos alimentamos con el rastro
hirviente de los pasos
se congela la huella

confiados
nos alimentamos de la tortura
que aprieta
que camina de nuestra mano

quiero saber la línea que no dividirá
saber la línea que desaparece como magia
como un primor tantearnos
la línea que desaparece
como el delirio acecha
flota
pero nunca llega....

Revienta

revientan las fundas
las burbujas
los globos de las vejigas
guarida de los tránsitos inundados
inhalados
revienta el espejismo
de la ingrata soledad de escarbar la tierra
de encontrar el polvo
entre la mirada
entre tanta discreción inmunda
la indecencia de empaquetarse
empaquetarse inmune a la brisa
inmune al tacto
inmune al reflejo absorbido
por la luz
revienta la ciencia que el beso no empapa
revienta con la fuerza maldita el paso
revienta detrás del músculo
después de la grasa envuelta en grasa
revienta el ingrato en la trampa
de saber mentir
suplica enmarcando la indiscreción en la ventana
el infame se lanza
suplica por el implante renovador de la especie
la máscara
la mueca
la nunca mendigada figura del rostro
luego imantarse con la circulación
luego reventar sobre la fuerza
luego de reposar por encima del rayo
luego extraditar
impartir el terror con sus complejos
soplar el miedo por el territorio del sol

y por sus escombros
sorber por el dominio de los lodos la fealdad
revienta la forma de la letra mal hecha
el sonido mal pronunciado de la palabra
tentando el centro
tentando
enamorando con la imprevisible flecha
hundida en la carne de los golpes,
de las cicatrices
de las mañas y marcas
hundida en la carne del desespero
de la mancha que hace reventar
que revienta por inducir a perdernos
por donde los átomos incitan a dormir
por donde convidan a pudrirse entre el hongo y la indiferencia
hundida en la carne
la flecha revienta en donde la casa con sus alimentos
no engordan más

JUSTIN PETROPOULOS

THREE POEMS

1.01 *(FROM COINCIDENCE OF WANTS)*

It must be said from the outset that economies of affection have nothing to do with fondness, per se. Rather, they connote. Some of us wave to the soldiers. A contract housing a colony, a storefront of sweet things. Whether it was guava seeds or a transfiguration is unclear. Mattock, precordium, a colander of condensed milk. The impatience of Super-NOW accounts. Anything you can say savored for itself, alone. But the collector node reflects the amount of evidence collected in support of belief (disbelief) in a given relation.

I only remember the prayer for snakes. If you say the words through your nose the snakes disappear, lassoed off by the wind. Already a microphone crosses the threshold of lips, echoes—those debts—slipped interior. The way his hair always smacked wisteria or the treasury buys spools of copper for subsidiary currency from a foreign multinational. Each coil fed through a blanketing press. Punching out zygotes. Surrounded by callused tissue, not only memories, but the distances in their refrain.

At this *here* rate, always running toward a starting gun. Fire recoils along morning's cables. Smoke lilts from the bus as its doors fold open. Coughed up passengers—

most of us work here—passing along the conveyer to the furnace. But even saints are depicted with their hands turned toward themselves. Armed with compasses, circling so to speak. You know, I never go out in the rain anymore. There's a honey locust outside, wilted to the thorns. That's why the prayers are secret.

3.01 *(from Night of Failed Autopsies)*

Fennel pretends at being a scarf, its bottle stung with dust and further. Drain the excess into or assign to a subsidiary. We stand aside as he pries the maw free and wraps it in a piece of blue cotton he never tears from his shirt. You found him particular, slouching under a dogwood.

Night of failed autopsies in a small parking lot she runs her finger through. Trout and slate, soaked into their clothes. That disquiet, for a long time. There has been erosion between nation-states and convenience-oriented packaging, mutual cannibalization. Stopped by the patrols, coupons avalanche from her pockets, each a memorial, perforated.

Steel guitar issues from a tumbledown phonograph. You pressed the stamp to your tongue, face down, tracing it to his weakest rib. But who keeps receipts anymore? Let's say this man from a certain longitude abducts children from the periphery. Supposing the horizontal.

Parallax of the news cycle is twelve seconds. The children's families have already had their days in court—a wet cleaning. Like clockwork, she walloped a mop with each new sun in sour abatement of the buckwheat groat, growing denser by degrees, not to a point, but a bending. We mark time: every train station ago. Our bodies parsed down to the fingernails. The glue is almost sweet.

7.07 (*from Multiplier-Accelerator Model*)

You arrive first as sound and still warm. Black birds corkscrew from treetops, brawl for their limbs. Bulldozers (collective unconscious) phantasmagoric, gear up dust. Refugee camps are usually written in the margins of border cities. Landmines, sedative in this silt. You will have always chosen the blue wire, even when you cut green.

Scripted in avoidance, we abide our various occupations, steal our shoulders and over them. The curfew, somehow lupine, howling up in us, or resembling that structure, i.e. an ideological question, domed.

But to what do(es) you refer? The children process their own angels. Collateral. His small body swims in a blanket that pours between them like plaster. Slowly, as they walk, his ear impresses the fabric's scrim. We leave our doors off the latch, a tacit vigil—leave candles in cans of condensed milk to light their way.

Some of us have developed a rash swarming with occupants (busy) or from which multitudes emerge (peopled). These objects drift. Consider the envoy a moment of congress, ever respectful of artifice, a test-tube stopper tipped forward like a hat. Radio signals counterpoint his every turn, acting to contextualize the economy of a region by its margins. A locomotive unpacks, suddenly. Breaks scale. Your body, too frail to bear, even this slightest current.

RACHEL LEVITSKY

FRAGMENTO DE "NEIGHBOR"

persiana / pantalla 021019

Definiendo

Me gustará escribir una enciclopedia de emociones:
adicción en todos sus etapas, taxonomía
de niveles de despertar, su mutilante
enredo al encender / apagar
los sueños que le preceden.

Identificaré períodos de tiempo:
el efecto de la edad sobre la intensidad
el si la emoción puede ser identificada durante el orgasmo
o justo antes y justo depués
si cómo ocurre con el pensamiento, es posible prescindir de él.

Para este trabajo examinaré:
posturas de confusión
traición, negación, furia.

Cuando los estudios sean reunidos sera necesario desarrollar un sistema de referencias cruzadas. Yo sabré:

si tener suerte es una emoción o
un estado de gracia, un limbo
el modo en que difieren
del desapego

Investigar:

cuándo
y si
Vecino
es en realidad
un sentimiento
o un sustituto.

Él ya no me observa
¿Me he convertido en *le fou*?

Definiendo

Como estadounidense yo no pienso que los vecinos de otras naciones se traten mejor entre sí, o con más consideración, sin embargo preferiría que mi compañero de piso fuera de otro país.

En este país, no es la norma matar a tus vecinos porque profesan distintas religiones; la matanza en grupo puede ser una forma de intimidad de la que carecemos.

Los poetas no son mis vecinos y no son mis amigos. Coincidimos en que nuestra religión, si es que tenemos una, no tiene ninguna importancia respecto a la relación que sostenemos entre nosotros y con la poesía, aquí en este país. Los poetas están respondiendo bien al proyecto que llevo a cabo con usted, mi vecino. Se preguntan si estoy hablando de mi experiencia como tal y se excitan frente a la posibilidad de que este coger del que he hablado y las drogas, sean drogas y cogidas, y no escritura.

Mi vecino ha tomado una postura pública respecto a su sobriedad y su fetiche: su hija a quién mantiene en estado infantil. Basta con esto para hacer que uno se retuerza. Hablando de retorcerse, esta noche he planeado darme un pase de coca, luego venir a casa y escribir acerca del vecino.

Es más intenso con las ventanas abiertas y la audible furia del verano. El día de hoy una cliente de la tienda de abarrotes que está al otro lado de la calle excoria a la mugrienta iglesia que la alimenta. El redentor en turno tilda de hipócrita a esa iglesia. Yo tenía esperanza de que se diera cierta pérdida de fé en dios.

Se cuenta la historia de una mujer ruidosa y problemática que se explicaba así "¡Tú eres mi vecina, tienes que ayudarme!" cuando esta se quejaba de ella. Nos reímos con esta historia. Acordamos que no es el modo en que pensamos acerca de las cosas.

Algunas mañanas me pregunto si mi resistencia a dejar el edificio justifica que le pida a mi vecino crema o huevo para hacer panqueques.

El lenguaje sería más fácil si pudieramos quitar las preposiciones, pero entonces sería más difícil discernir entre los objetos y los sujetos. Como ya lo he dicho, en mi carrera como escritora — sé que se sospecha de los poetas cuando hablan de tener una carrera— me encuentro más atractiva como objeto. ¿Si yo soy el objeto, quién es el sujeto? Innecesaria.

≈

Innecesaria está contenta porque es nada y todo al mismo tiempo.

Es ligera como el aire, si es que el aire es ligero. Cualquiera necesita significado.

Cualquiera llama al significado Necesario. Innecesaria copula con Ninguno.

Innecesaria se pone en la posición en la que no puede perder.

Perder lamentando su falta de "S", pierde a Innecesaria.
Soltar siente dolor muscular. No, Soltar toma Methaqualones.

Soltar no se explica por qué Perder tiene más sexo.
Ni de su atracción por la religión.

Los adultos que nunca creyeron en dios son alienados que se integran en las calles y en los trenes. Tristes cuya tristeza puede ser leída como Inteligencia.

A Inteligencia le gusta coger pero lo consigue menos que Creencia.
Sin contar con el Bibliotecario.

Los Bibliotecarios aprecian los refrigeradores que no hacen ruido.
Los Bibliotecarios han cogido tanto con Creencia como con Inteligencia.

Pobremente pero Bastante.
Bastante es confundido con Creencia. Temor de Dios.

Paganismo, Ateísmo, Monoteísmo.
Masoquismo. Ismo está en guerra con Innecesaria.

Ismo quiere decir Hijodeputa. Ismo es un Hijodeputa con quién quiere coger Todomundo. Todomundo quiere coger, y ser identificado como Significado.

Significado disfruta de Masoquismo. Ismo es un sádico al que no le importa que sus amantes le llamen Significado, mientras cogen.

Coger es la cogida más taimada de todas.
Coger convence a Ninguno de que ella es Significado.

Innecesaria tolera a Coger porque ella entiende que Coger es Sin Malicia.

Incluso a Corazón-Frío le gusta hacer esto Sin-Malicia.
Coger es incluso, lo contrario a Ismo.

Mientras tanto, y sin importar los excesos ocasionales de Coger,
Oprimido se enfurece.

Sin la furia de Oprimido, cualquier barrio se convierte en Suburbio.

En Suburbio, cualquier ser humano es un Sujeto vivo para el Proyecto / Gran Experimento. Catalogado por Bibliotecario en Comida / Medicina / Estilo.

El proyecto de sociedad secular ya no es un asunto a tratar porque como estadounidenses no matamos a nuestros vecinos por su religión, no a menudo.

Traducido por Valerie Mejer

AMY KING

THREE POEMS

The Shallows of Footprints

He's good at the art
of abbreviation,
how to see the world in thirty ways,
the world built by horses
from their hospital beds,
how they sparkle
like bees eyes across Laramie tonight.
How to skin time and pull
back the stones,
revealing their inner lambs.
Trees that breathe at the speed
of an axe,
horizon's crooked grin lassoing
the jagged tooth
of adolescence, a grape that burns
with hyacinth aroma laced
through jealous arteries
tearing up the doorway

of a neighbor's home.
He fell between this and that,
unable to attend
who rambles in his presence,
unable to grip
the wrists of handshakes
meant only to fondle
the sinew in his arms
that held the reigns
of muzzled beasts crumbling
the debris of mountains
tracks through
the shallows of footprints.
At last, the way people
grow from dust
and play the beetles who
afternoon a way
into the mildew of moment,
ready to vacate the scars
and hoof-shod smoke,
all temper & a-growl.

Worthy

Hallucination: the suits of our days feel better
tailored now that you're at the needle.
What it's worth, even the clichés rise like mustangs.
Elves beside Elvis from the dead.
With or within you, a name.
My tongue. Elsewhere, your men were
very strange. They cried for more formaldehyde,
enduring immortality like insect or mammal.
Perhaps the man was smuggling a monkey.
No, the man was loving a monkey.
I am neither man nor monkey, but I sense the value
of how hard you hold me, how long I think you.
Let's sit on the sofa till dawn.
Starlings avoid the part of my house full of holes
in hearts. Hearts full of holes. They prefer night-
swimming, leisurely less-than perfect emotion.
The broken parts that tip and hold
their feather-sized torsos up to the light
so that we might appreciate how by day they're beings
but by moon they're genius. I love you through
the ribcage's fistula. The ghost that measures
the weight of half-breath. You're the pot
at the rainbow's threshold, elf or Elvis, regardless.
I could sing you to what's left of heaven,
if the pot doesn't boil out by then. Bending you into
the torso's last voice, I activate your violence,
which is a king in the evolution. Let us pray
and wash clean the man-made moons
that spin us into orbit. Hear the gash of explosions,
the rip-apart of someone else's land
of Iraq or Pakistan. We're this house, tonight,
and don't feel compelled to smoke them
out from hiding. Flush not the enemy
until you hear the starling's holes filling up, dear heart.

Painting, I Read

Metal shadow drawn out
by a penny pencil made of Maine,
I know the world is against war
but it's the parts made of paper
that ache my uselessness,
get pressed into palm
at the vein wedge
that spells life as a line,
a linear tripod wedding love, violin
and the ear into a humming
hive that limns us,
less than a bomb but sharper
and more rigid in fire power
to prevent the moon,
which gestures itself into being,
from becoming an orb
of decapitating or limb-blasting
force. The sun responds like war:
he daggers the receding
darkness. Starry Night, pocked sky.
He slept within his feathers,
misunderstood and slightly breathing.
The muscular country continues,
fibered by the stove-keeper,
train conductor, cellist and fireman.
By the poet and dog tamer,
the book peddler and milk maid,
the tannin farmer and mailman,
a financial siren and barista,
the race car mechanic and sky maker,
with the rest lying dormant
behind the etched-on mountains
in the distance sounding

the scene's Bel Canto.
Even here, couched within
this cloud-to-grass attack, their powers
for human explosion remain less
than or equal to dormant.

JACK SPICER

LENGUAJE

LENGUAJE-COSA

Este océano, humillante en sus disfraces
Más duro que nada.
Nadie oye la poesía. El océano
No está para ser oído. Gota
O estallar de agua. No significa
Nada.
Es
Pan con mantequilla
Sal y pimienta. La muerte
Que sueñan los jóvenes. Sin ningún fin
Bate la orilla. Señales blancas sin fin. Nadie
Oye la poesía.

VIDA DEPORTIVA

El problema de comparar un poeta con una radio es que a las radios no les sale costra sobre la cicatriz. Los tubos se queman, o con un transistor —que es lo que son la mayoría de almas— se quema la batería o el diagrama, recambiable o no recambiable, pero no como ese borracho peleón del bar. El poeta

Toma demasiados mensajes. El derecho a la oreja que lo tumbó en Nueva Jersey. El derecho a decir que aguantó seis asaltos con un campeón.
Luego venden cerveza o viven de comisiones deportivas o, si la costra es demasiado pesada, se manifiestan en un bar donde los campeones invisibles pueden no haberle zumbado. Demasiados.
El poeta es una radio. El poeta es mentiroso. El poeta es una radio tentetieso.
Y esos mensajes (que Dios no maldeciría) ni siquiera saben que son campeones.

Oigo llamar a la puerta nocturna,
Ring, ring; ring, ring; ring, ring;
¿Si abres entra la luz de la luna?
Ring, ring; ring, ring; ring, rinng.

Si el día aparece, una barca dorada
Miau, miau; miau, miauu
Vendrá montada en girafas doradas
Miau, miau, miau, miau. Miau, miau

Si la puerta cede y lo oscuro pasa
Toca que toca; toc toc toc,
¿Qué dirá la luz de lo que hay en casa?
Toca que toca; toc toc toc,

O la luz y las tinieblas bailando en tus ojos,
Las sombras caen una a una
Cerdos, anguilas, y el cielo rojo
Bailan y caen uno a uno
Bailan y chillan uno a uno.

Predicciones de béisbol, 1 de abril de 1964

Liga Nacional

1. Philadelphia
2. Los Angeles
3. Houston
4. San Francisco
5. Milwaukee
6. St. Louis
7. Cincinatti
8. Pittsburgh
9. Chicago
10. New York

Liga Americana

1. El presidente De Gaulle
será asesinado
por un comunista llamado
John Foster Oswald antes
de que los Yankees alcen la copa.

El tronco en el fuego
Pregunta mudo
Arde en deseos des
Nudo.

Madera viene
Del mar madera
Ardiendo verde
-Mente

Si está encendido
El nudo
Cuenta sus chistes
Con humo.

Cuídanos, con cumpleaños, lo que haya en el fuego o fuera del fuego,
inmortal
Que nadie sea

La chimenea
No se dan gracias a lo que mera-
Mente es fatal.

Por fin los mensajes penetran
Hay un cadáver de imagen: penetran
El cadáver de una radio. Cocteau usó una radio de coche por lo de
    SIN LÍMITE DE VELOCIDAD. En cualquier caso los mensajes penetran la
    radio y la vuelven (y la radio) inútil en última instancia.
La oración
Es exactamente eso
La radio arrodillada en la tumba de un santo
Inutilidad cantada y bailada (la radio muerta pero viva puede
    conectar cosas
Con el sonido. Sus oraciones
Su única conexión.

Los héroes comen sopa como cualquiera. A veces la cocina está tan lejos
Que no ni hay sopa. Ni cocina. Un espacio abierto de terreno descubierto por el
Cielo.
Los héroes comen sopa como cualquiera. Terreno peligroso.
Sopa
De noche
Sopa bonita.
Y el cielo se queda ahí no una imagen
Sino los héroes
Como la imagen de una imagen
(Qué está hecho de sopa de)
Se acerca.

Señales de humo
Como en los pueblos esquimales de la costa donde el terremoto
    rompió
Pim, pum, pam. Nunca sabrán qué les pasó
Por la costa de Alaska. Esperan que todo el mundo esté loco.
Es un poema sobre la muerte de John F. Kennedy.

Un bosque de secuoyas no es invisible de noche. La negrura lo cubre pero cubre la negrura.

Si hubieran hecho de Jeffers un gran aparcamiento la muerte habría sido eliminada, así como el nacimiento. Las luces brillan 24 horas al día en un aparcamiento.

La verdadera conservación es el esfuerzo del artista y del hombre privado por mantener las cosas verdaderas. Los árboles y los acantilados del Gran Sur respiran en la oscuridad. Jeffers conocía el dolor de su respiración y el dolor era la muerte de un primogénito recién nacido respirando.

La muerte no es definitiva. Sólo los aparcamientos.

La adoración de la belleza
O las cosas bellas lleva mucho tiempo para acostumbrarse.
No hay pasado en la belleza. El coche que va a 157 kilómetros por hora
    El tiempo cambia
Cuando cruzas cada frontera.
Lirios, ceremonias de primavera, primaverando, primaverados
Y ya es agosto
Otro siglo.
Toma cada pasado, combínalo con su presente. La muerte
Es un diente entre
Extraños.

Llega mayo y los veranos se renuevan
(39) temporadas de béisbol
Lógica pura
Donde un hombre se enfrenta a una bola curva.
No se puede decir qué pasó en este juego. Excepto que uno no fue
    eliminado. Uno siente que se asentaron mal en la segunda base.
Océanos de flores silvestres. Lógica pura de forma y color.

Tánatos, la planta de la muerte en el cráneo
Crece enorme mente y le crecen alas
La hierba de todo el sistema.
Ocultando sistemáticamente la semilla de anís y la puerta de la trampa de
    la migala del solar.
Peor que la estática o el cardo.
Tánatos, hueso en lo más hondo, San
Francisco, ese botánico en Santa Rosa
(Bendíceme ahora, pues soy una planta y un animal)
Lo llamaba Hermana Muerte.

1ª Interrupción por Lluvia en Casa, San Francisco, Desde. Rebota Gatos Gigantes
    Atigrados.
    Periódicos
Abandonados en mi casa.
Mi casa es Acuario. No creo
Que el que aguador
Tenga el peso equilibrado sobre los hombros.
Los versos nunca lo tienen.
Damos el mismo
Espacio a todo en nuestras vidas. Eich-

Mann lo demostró falso al matar como quien cría flores silvestres.
    Sin ingenio.
Yo
No
puedo
mostrar
simpatía
a
quienes
no
reconocen
La crisis humana.

El país no está muy bien definido.
Sean gente-murciélago o gente real. La costa
Del mar de Bohemia. El mundo in-
Visible.
Un hombre se cuenta los dedos en estos casos. Sean cinco o diez
    de ellos o nos ostras ya que podemos ir a bañarnos al mar en un
    sueño.
Pero el sueño no es suficiente. Nos despertamos oyendo la llamada del mundo
In-
Visible
No visto. Solo sugerido. Por algunos vorpales y algunos leones marinos
    y algunos escuálidos.
Casi demasiado grandes para acostumbrarse, sus dimensiones nos maravillan, a
    nosotros Que somos ciegos a Lo Que Sea
Que se levanta y cae con nosotros.

Bizqueo los ojos para llorar
(Sin lágrimas, una mina estéril de sal) y después sorbo dos veces
por la nariz
Que significa emoción. Chaplinesco
Dice el amigo.
Hacemos pantomima de cada acción de nuestros cuerpos
No esperes
En una triste colina
Un triste giro. Ya está bien
Mayormente porque eres joven.

El análisis metalúrgico de la piedra que fue mi corazón demuestra
un alarmante porcentaje de silicona.
La silicona, como George te diría el primero, no es un metal.
Se encuentra en el cristal, la cola, y —como la cola viene de los caballos—
sustancia viva.
Te amo. Pero con el estruendo del hierro, el cristal, la cola, la sustancia viva
(que ha estado, Dios sabe, en tantas fábricas de cola como puede recordar)
Apaga lo que el resto del corazón dice.
Te veo encogiéndote en un rincón y el metal de mi corazón
retumba. Demasiado personal
El cristal y la cola de mi corazón responden. Y son sustancia
viva.
No puedes cocinar cristal en un pastel ni freír cola en una tortilla
"Si yo hablo en lenguas de hombres y de ángeles..."
El sonoro metal de mi corazón dice
"Amor."

POEMAS DE AMOR

¿Cambian las flores si toco tu piel?
Son solo botones de oro. No hay signos de muerte en ellas. Mueren
    y por su muerte sabes que ya no es verano.
    La estación del béisbol.
En realidad
No recuerdo tocar tu espalda nunca cuando hubo flores
    (botones de oro o dientes de león) esperando a la muerte.
    El final del verano
Terminó la estación del béisbol. El
Abejorro revolotea sobre unas pocas pobres flores.
Nos han quitado la tierra de bajo los pies. El toque
De tus manos en mi espalda. Los Gigantes
Ganando 93 partidos
Es tan imposible
En espíritu
Como la hierba sobre la que podemos andar.

2

Por ti construiría todo un nuevo universo alrededor de mí mismo.
Esto no es mierda, es poesía. La mierda
Entra en ella solo como una imagen. La mierda festín de fantasmas
    en la Odisea. Cuando Odiseo les dio una mosca seca y les hizo subir
    por algo importante Comida.
"Por ti construiría todo un nuevo universo", todos los espíritus lloraron, muertos de
    hambre.

3

" 'Arf', dice Sandy"
"Llegar al momento de no volver nunca al momento de
    la esperanza. Demasiados autobuses que llegan tarde" Hugh O'Neill en nuestro
    Canto para Ezra Pound.

El terreno todavía retorciéndose. El terreno todavía sin castrar como creí
que sería natural en un mundo adulto.
Sandy aúlla como un lobo. El espacio entre él y su imagen
es mayor que el espacio entre yo y mi imagen.
Tírale un pastel de miel. El infierno se ha demostrado una serie de
imagen.
La muerte es un perro y Ana la huerfanita
Mi propia Eurídice. Tanto ir al infierno al final lo rompe
Lo que explica la poesía.

4

"Si no crees en un Dios, no lo cites," dijo una vez
Valéry cuando estaba más o menos listo para dejar la poesía. La
suspensión voluntaria del escepticismo tiene más o menos las mismas posibilidades
que una bola de nieve en el infierno.
Lamias quizás, o súcubos pero son tan reales en
California como lombrices de tierra.
Dioses o estrellas o tótems no son animales de caza deportiva. Cazar snarks no
es como discutir de béisbol.
Contra la sabiduría como tal. Tal como
La cansada sabiduría que los cazadores deportivos desarrollan
Disparando a Zeus, Alfa Centauri y lobo con la misma pistola de juguete.
Es mortalmente difícil adorar a dios, estrella y tótem. Mortalmente fácil
Usarlos como condones gastados pringosos de tu propia
gozosa, vulgar e irreverente
Sabiduría

5

Lo que explica la poesía. Distancias
Imposibles de medir o de andar. Una banda de haces
(fasces) no puede hacer una cabaña en la que Toda la Civilización
Occidental pueda caber. Y mira a las estrellas, y los libros, y
la magia de otra gente diligentemente.

La distancia, dijo Einstein, va en círculos. Esto
Es lo opuesto de una fiesta o una reunión social.
No da mucha distancia para seguir.
Como
En las playas de California
No me da mucho para seguir.
La subida de la marea
Partícula y ola
Ola y partícula
Distancias.

6

La marta arrestó un peine fino.
No es para los oídos. Oír
Nada más previene el progreso. Da un paso atrás y mira la
oración.
La marta arrestó un peine fino. En la carretera a Big Sur (1945) los fusibles
se nos fundían con cada frenada. Sin luces, todo tipo de
acción. Un ciervo
Nos dio una vez (1945) y anduvo malhumoradamente hacia los arbustos mientras
nosotros frenábamos hacia el silencio.
A él nada de grandes automóviles blancos sin luces. Si le dan, déjales enseñarle.
La marta arrestó una parada final … Creo que fue en Watsonville
(1945 la marta arrestó peine fino un)
Pasamos el peligro hacia la niebla y
Usamos el último fusible.

7

El perro que aúlla en mi mente dice "Ríndete" por ocho puntos
cardinales. Norte, Sur, Este, Oeste, combinaciones. Si
Me dice a mí o tú a mí no estoy seguro. Un daltónico
puede leer las señales porque el rojo está siempre encima y el verde debajo. ¿O es al
revés? Se me olvida, al no ser daltónico. El perro

En mi corazón aúlla continuamente, a mí, a ti. "Ríndete".
Yo no sé dónde está mi corazón.
Mi corazón se echó al monte
Mi corazón está lejos
Mi corazón se echó al monte
Siguiendo a los ciervos. El perro
De mi corazón gruñe, aúlla
Ciego a las intuiciones. El ciervo
Tu corazón e intuiciones buscando aciagas aguas.

8

Hay dolor verdadero en no tenerte como hay dolor verdadero en
no tener poesía.
No totalmente en cualquier caso como solaz, solución, final de todas las
tragedias menores
Pero en cualquier caso (poesía o tú)
Como compañeros de cama.
Contra la deriva de los rododendros y de otras imágenes que no
hemos visto juntos
He visto tus labios sellados y llegado a casa sudando.

9

Por ti construiría todo un nuevo universo pero tú obviamente
ves más barato alquilar uno. Eurídice también. Volvió al infierno
insegura de qué tipo de otra casa construiría Orfeo. "Lo llamo muerte-en-vida y
vida-en-muerte". Herido
En la espalda por arqueros, el presidente Kennedy pareció ponerse tenso
por un momento antes de asumir su lugar en la historia. Eros
Haz eso.
Te di mi mano imaginaria y tú me das tu mano imaginaria y caminamos juntos (en la
imaginación) sobre el suelo terrenal.

INTERMEDIOS

INTERMEDIO I

"Trae dolor y miedo el movimiento de la tierra,
Los hombres se preguntan qué es, qué significa",
    Donne
En el siguiente verso
Contrasta esto con "el movimiento celestial de las esferas".
    La rima calma. Y en un libro que leí en la universidad hace quince años
    se decía que esto era un ataque a la teoría copernicana y una mano arácnida había
    garabateado al margen
    "Terremoto".
¿Dónde está el poeta? Cuidando las ovejas
Cuidando el movimiento celestial de las esferas en una larga,
    aburrida procesión
Centro de gravedad
Dur- (ante los terremotos de felicidad que continúan dentro y fuera
    de su cuerpo y las estrellas en sus órbitas se paran para notarlos)
Miente.

INTERMEDIO II

Los Magos de Oz se han vuelto majaras
No hay objetos volantes no identificados. La
Luna puede no ser de queso verde pero mi corazón sí. Atravesando
    el Desierto Mortal Nosotros hemos encontrado un campeón. El poema
Que no dura tanto como una sola mano toca.
Viene la mañana. Y los signos de vida
(Mi mañana tenía un manipulador telegráfico aquí)
Son menos vívidos. Hay un largo sendero en el campo, abierto. Elige
Con cuidado tu víctima.
Alrededor del campamento discutimos quién elegiría el fuego
Me marché enrabietado con tu mano
Desnuda.

INTERMEDIO III

Quédate ahí al borde de ningún acantilado. Sin futuro concebible
salvo el progreso —una ancha y llana meseta—. Unas pocas ovejas que tú
mantendrás el resto de tu vida. El amante de Rimbaud
Con lágrimas cayendo en su corazón o algún dulce mensaje.
¿Osa
Escribir poesía
Quien no tiene un gusto ácido en la lengua
Quien lleva sus sueños a la espalda como un fardo?
Espíritus de otros poetas, enviadle escarnio
Él estará vivo (como ellos están muertos)
En la colecta final.

TRANSFORMACIONES

TRANSFORMACIONES I

Ellos dicen "él necesitar (presente) enemigo (plural).
Yo no soy ellos. Esta es la primera transformación.
Ellos dicen "nosotros no necesitar (presente) enemigo (singular)". No hay enemigo
suyo en el universo que merezca la pena tener. Nosotros es un pronombre
íntimo que cambia de contexto casi cuando el Yo parpadea.
Esos
Cisnes que vimos en el jardín saliendo del agua los odiábamos. "Fuera de
lugar", dijiste tú de pasada. Esos cisnes y
Yo (un parpadeo en su contexto), todos fuera de lugar te odiábamos.
Él necesitar (presente) enemigo (plural) y ahora somos los cisnes y yo contra ti
Todo fuera de lugar
(Y ahora otro parpadeo del momento) el último cisne de vuelta a su
lugar. Nosotros
Los odiábamos.

TRANSFORMACIONES II

"En la Villa Escarlata donde yo nací
Vivía una bella doncella".
Hacemos un lenguaje distinto para la poesía
Y para el corazón — agramatical.
No es que el nombre de la ciudad cambie
(Escarlata se vuelve Charlotte o incluso en la Ciudad de Oro una vez escuché a un
    buen cantante de Western convertirla en Tonapah. No tenemos
    villas aquí)
(Una cosa así complacería a los astronautas jungianos)
Sino que la sintaxis cambia. Esto es más viejo que las ciudades.
Troya era un niño de teta cuando surgió la estructura de la oración griega. Este
    fue el verdadero Caballo de Troya.
El orden cambia. Los troyanos
Al no tener ni idea de sintaxis verdadera o falsa y al no tener un lenguaje registrado
Nunca supieron qué les pasó por encima.

TRANSFORMACIONES III

Este es el melancólico danés
Que construyó las casas y vivía en el callejón
Frente a la casa que Jack construyó.
Esta es la dama tan desamparada, una
    vaca arrugada de cuerna quemada,
Que vivía en la casa que Jack construyó.
Este es el dios-cangrejo que brillaba y lucía
    que pasaba el día al sol y de noche escribía
    Y que vivía en la casa que Jack construyó.
Este es el final de todo, queridísimo amigo, este
    es el final de nosotros.

MORFÉMICA

1

Sección de morfemas
Lew, tú y yo sabemos cómo el amor y la muerte son materiales
Materia como onda y partícula: gemelos
En el mismo negocio.
No hay excusas para ellos. Lew, tánatos y agape no tienen ningún negocio
    ahí.
Lo que se necesita es tierra de montaña. Seca en agosto. Hierba muerta
    que lleva a montañas que puedes escalar
O parar
Sección de morfemas.
Hierba muerta. La excusa total para el amor y la muerte.

2

Deje la oxidada belleza rubia
Que mi lengua se pegue a mi paladar si de ti no me acordare,
    Sión.
Allí nos sentamos, y aún llorábamos
Él me dio una vuelta. Re-
Cuerdo su cuerpo. Junto a los ríos de Babilonia
En una cáscara de nuez el príncipe de todo lo por venir
Flotando pacíficamente. Nosotros exiliados bailando en las orillas de su
    maldito río.
Nos pedían que cantásemos alguna canción triste. ¿Cómo
    quieres hijo de puta que cante una canción triste
Mientras recuerdo Sión? Solo
Como la piedra que dicen que Osiris era cuando salió bailando
    ¿Cómo cantaré la canción de mi Señor en tierra de extraños?

3

Luna,
    Ménsula de sílabas
Si se escribiera "Liuna" nadie se volvería loco.
Fuera
De este mundo. Pon
Los pies en la tierra. No
Crece el dinero en los árboles. Gran
Teta de la forma presente de las cosas. La marea
    pasa como un viento.
Sin un crecimiento normal como un árbol la luna se queda ahí
Y su ahí es nuestro dónde
"Dónde vas, hermosa dama?"
"A ordeñar la leche, señor", dijo ella.
Nuestra imagen se encoge a un morfema, una palabra en –ar. La muerte
    es una imagen de sílabas.

4

La pérdida de la inocencia, Andy,
El morfema –cencia es regular en la Regla IIc, IIa y IIb
    [esencia] y [ciencia] son más regulares. La [ino]-
Tiene un fonema nasal
Y no es donde el Niño Jesús nació. La raíz es
    nocere e inocencia, imagino, significa no dañino. Inocentes
Las bestias hablaban con ellos (Alicia en el bosque con el
    fauno). En cambio a Orfeo
Sólo lo escuchaban. Inocuo
Viene de la misma raíz. Los árboles
De algún bosque oscuro donde caminamos fascinados por los yoes de
    nosotros mismos. Tropiezos. Las raíces
Permanecen. No puedes perder tu inocencia, Andy
Ni pudo Alicia. Ni nadie podría
Dados los bosques correctos.

FONÉMICA

Ningún amor se merece la muerte que tiene. Un archipiélago
De rocas brotando del océano. Los pájaros del mar se cagan en todo. Viven sus
    vidas en él.
Lo que una vez fue una montaña. ¿O
Fue una vez una montaña? ¿Existieron alguna vez Lemuria, Atlantis, Mu
    más allá de las mentes de ancianos febriles por las distancias
    y las rocas que veían?
¿Fue verdad? Puede el océano del tiempo decir que nos tiene ahora a la deriva
Sobre esa tierra. En tierra. Si la memoria es buena
Ahí (esa roca de ahí)
Hay más de lo que se ve.

Levanta una cálida mañana. Mira el mar en la distancia.
Die Ferne, agua
Porque en principio no es tierra. Un día caliente además
Los jirones de niebla ya se han vaporizado
Han vuelto allá de donde salieron. Puede haber una ballena
    en este océano.
Fragmentos vacíos, añicos de vasijas halladas en alguna
    expedición mesopotámica. Encontrados pero no recompuestos. El
    inestable
Universo tiene distancia pero no mucho más.
Ni el tiempo de nadie ni el lugar en que respirar.

Por telé-fono (distante-sonido) no sonabas más distante que
    si estuvieras hablándome en San Francisco por teléfono
    o en un bar o en una habitación. Llamas
A larga distancia. El sonido se rompe
En impulsos eléctricos y se vuelve a juntar. Como la larga

ruta telesexual al cerebro o la incluso más larga teleerótica
ruta al corazón. Los números mal marcados, la tenue conexión.
Tu voz
consistía en sonidos que yo debía
Volver fonemas, después morfemas encadenados o libres, luego
estructuras sintácticas. Telequinesis:
No hubiera sido posible ni aun estando sentados
a la misma mesa. Llama
A larga distancia tu padre, tu madre, tu amigo, tu
amante. Los labios
Nunca están tan lejos como al besar.
Un sistema eléctrico.
"Gr. 'ηλεκτρον, ámbar, también metal reluciente, aleación con
'ηλεκτορ, brillante".

Malicia en previsión. Todo sonido
Que puedas hacer haciendo música.
Labios duros.
Esto no es un ruiseñor. De
Nadie la imagen de cera quemada. Tú
Créeme. La linguística se divide como la mitología de la
mitología de Graves, una triple diosa: morfología, fonología, y
sintaxis.
Labios duros que no pueden articular del todo sonidos de amor
El lenguaje
Los ha deformado tanto.
Maliciosa revisión. Ninguno de vosotros bastardos
Sabe cómo murió Charlie Parker. Y baila ahora en algún breve
reino (Oz) dos fonemas
Nunca antes emparejados en la lengua.

Aleph no venía antes que Beth. Las lenguas semitas mantenían una
separación tan estricta entre vocal y consonante como entre hombres
y mujeres. Las vocales se metían de algún modo en medio para producir
niños. J H V
Era varón. Los que llevaban los libros de cuentas de Micenas
Las mezclaban (una por cada 4.5)
(A=1, E=5, I=9, 0=15, U=21)
Alfa fue elegida como reina del alfabeto porque significaba "no".
Las tarjetas
perforadas de IBM siguen esta costumbre.
Lo que he hecho es lo que los maestros llaman
mezclar, pero que no lo es, ya que los sonidos cambian muy
poco con cada otro sonido
Dos consonantes (flotando juntas en el mar de cierta verdad)
Inmediatamente precedidas y / o seguidas por una vocal.

El trastorno emocional baja haciendo eco por los cañones del
corazón.
Hace eco allá —sonidos cortados— meros fonemas. Básicas
Reglas dobles. Las reconoces por el patrón. Prueba.
Hola gritado en un cañón es 'hohloh'. Tú, y los
cañones del corazón,
Reconocéis debilmente lo que gritaste. Las vocales
Son indistinguibles. Las consonantes
Un patrón para la imaginación. Fonemas,
En un sentido estricto, muertos y para enterrar. Construcciones
De la imaginación
Del cañón real y del corazón en
Construcción.

GRAFÉMICA

1

Como un conejo asustado corriendo sobre sus huellas una y otra vez en
la nieve
Hemos pasado este Halloween juntos, a cuarenta millas de distancia.
Las huellas están ahí y el sentimiento de la muerte del conejo está ahí.
Y los niños ya no van enmascarados como fantasmas sino como
hombres de negocios gritando *"Trato o trampa"*
hasta en Stinson quizás
Las huellas en la nieve y el movimiento que escribe el conejo son
bien legibles. Los niños
Ni siquiera pretenden ser almas de muertos que no son. Cuarenta millas.
Nada de verdad repuesto
Nosotros
Y los muertos no estamos en el campo santo y helado. Los niños
no llevan ni máscaras. Es
Otro poema sobre la muerte de John F. Kennedy.

2

Lleva cinco días lloviendo y probablemente llueva otros cinco días más
Me levanto de mañana, veo al sol traicionero y trato de leer
señales indias en el pavimento. No mucha agua. ¿Ha
estado lloviendo mientras soñaba?
El cielo no ayuda. Las nubes están al este y el cielo
(azul traicionero) no ayuda. Va a venir la lluvia del oeste.
Sin embargo (mientras el viento sople del oeste) puedo
oler las nubes que no van a aparecer —pero lo harán durante
cinco o diez días—. Tu corazón, y el sol tiene un agujero en él.
En mi corazón, como dijo Verlaine, oigo el pequeño sonido que llueve
No una señal india. Si no jodida lluvia real.

3

Déjanos atarle las cuerdas a este trozo de realidad.
Grafemas. Cera una vez y ahora plástico, mostrando los extremos. Como
una luz roja.
Se sienten o se ven los límites.
Son grafemas de advertencia pero también grafemas significativos
porque sin los finales marcados del cordón del zapato o la señal
de tráfico no se sabría cómo atar un zapato o cruzar
una calle —que es como hacer una oración—.
Cruzar una señal contra la luz o atar un zapato con nudo de abuela
escojo nudo. Libertad, de hecho, si un hecho es que se ven o se sienten
los grafemas de advertencia. Déjalos que te gruñan entonces y tú
devuélveles los gruñidos. Estarás antes muerto
Pero ellos también. Ellos
Desaparecen cuando mueres tú.

4

El reloj de sol forma un grafema que no consigo comprender. Incluso en
invierno es fidedigno. La sombra
Y el sol en proporciones perfectas.
El reloj de arena es una computadora. Mide (haya o
no haya habido nunca ningún sol) cuántos granos de arena
han empezado arriba y se han ido, sin querer y queriendo, al fondo.
Los grafemas son voluntarios. El sol no tiene que darte
en la cara ni tu cara en el sol. Tu sombra, si queriendo
Tú y el sol,
Dará la hora.
Se extenderá más allá de la hierba a intervalos perfectamente correctos,
sin que a ninguno os importe.
El reloj de arena imaginario es mi enemigo, reloj de sol,
Y el tuyo.

5

Te pones rojo y verde como un semáforo. Y entre ambos
naranja —color de cortejo—. Ni
La persona a pie ni la que conduce saben si van a dar
a la otra. El naranja
Al ser color de cortejo
No dura mucho. Peatón
Y conductor vuelven a los rojos y verdes colores de su
existencia. Sin haberse
O habiéndose dado (sin importancia).
Cuando caminábamos a través del túnel de Broadway te enseñé
señales encima de luces verdes que decían "CON LUZ ROJA
PARE SU COCHE Y CIERRE LA LLAVE DE CONTACTO."
Con luz naranja...
Pero no hubo una luz naranja
En todo el túnel.

6

Parpadeas,
Si paso mi dedo por la llama de una vela, sé que ahí
no hay nada. Pero si aguanto el dedo ahí unos minutos más,
Se ampolla.
Esto es un acto de voluntad y la llama no está realmente ahí para la
vela, yo
Estoy escribiendo mi voluntad.
¿O acaso la llama dibuja sombras?
En Hiroshima, he oído, las sombras de las víctimas estaban como
fotografiadas en los pilares de hormigón.
¿O parpadea? ¿O somos ambos velas y dedos?
¿O nos apuntan ambos hacia el grafema en la pared de hormigón
El espacio intermedio
Donde la sombra y la llama son una?

7

El Lago de Walden
Todos esos gases nocivos que suben de él en verano. En
el hielo del invierno
Ahora sucio. Casi tan sucio como la nieve de Boston.
Agujero para nadar de la W.P.A. Erigido
Por la Mancomunidad de Massachusetts.
Vimos las luces al otro lado del lago. Decían que había
cierto tipo de ser al otro lado del lago, bebiendo martini seco
como nosotros.
Hicimos cintas. Probablemente se borraron como nosotros.
Figuras en la superficie del lago.
Y aun el agua como un trozo de papel se movía y se mueve
Sin descanso mientras la memoria da la luz
Desde el otro lado.

8

Yo soy Yo: tanto en molde como en cursiva. Enrollado en un yo-yo, un
grafema de cuyos colores brotan fonemas, morfemas,
pájaros poco comunes. Incluso —si pones guión o dos puntos—
estructuras sintácticas.
Entre
Los espacios del papel las letras crecen como palmeras al viento frío.
Yo –
Viendo islas de pensamiento dentro del pensamiento dentro del pensamiento. Esos
espacios fríos.
Yo dentro de Yo dentro de yo etc.
Floreciendo, todo-uno. Ein
Eichenbach Steht einsam. Viejos
Sentidos en casas nuevas.

9

Hay un nuevo sello de correos alemán de 50 pfennig (un grafema
a pagar y cancelar)
Donde se ven una capilla y un roble
Y el roble parece una foto de Hitler.
Los grafemas no deberían mirarse con lupa. El
Bosque por los árboles. Los besos por el amor. El
hombre del roble crece tras cada capilla.
La letra
Pequeña del contrato.
Dios nos da eso. El Reichminister del Bundespost dice que la edición
continuará. "Sé lo que he diseñado y no
es la cara de Hitler. No habla muy bien del
pueblo alemán si vemos a Hitler por todas partes".

10

Al amor no se le engaña hagas lo que hagas por él. Las palabras
tampoco son tontas.
La sopa de las tortugas reales flota por nuestras venas. Ser un [poeta]
un hiato en un mundo de monosílabos. Despierta por la
distancia entre la [o] y la [e]
La tierra tiembla. John F. Kennedy es asesinado. El oscuro
bosque de palabras deja pasar algo de luz de sus ramas.
Burlándose, las hojas profundas
Que el tiempo deshoja dejándonos
Palabras, amores.

Traducción de David Menéndez Álvarez

ROBERTO HARRISON

IMPERMANENT ACTION

for my father and mothers

under the bridge
seeing elephants, light is relentless
as they float in
through the landscape
as one stands in the empty field
of tall brown grass
with the shabby, small, red
barn house
in it, with trees around it
as the present of declining winter
in the morning, in the release
of the unformed, in Ontario
a network opens
and sees a reception
of the gift, the stopped
blank exception that a walk
empties, and will not
mean, and will not approach
the ascent, the memory-less time

as they warrant the landscape
as they are reported to the mall
and a Western triggers
easy action
forms, to reveal a mountain
in the clearing
of Suns, of the effort of arrival
that sees and is blind, and the parachute
will not empty its own
gentle and invisible
fleet, of the fourth element
in the lean attention
as one does not arrive
to it. or to the recourse
of recursion, or to the tree
that eclipses the One
in the field of tall, brown grass
grown there as I saw
after the heart
in an egg
standing
for the octopus
that created the world.

I am past
my life, I have expired
like the Sun. New moons
arrive to the eternal
day, as my morning
will not extend
to the night. Forever, I remain
like the dust
of the outdoors, erased
by life to arrive to the endless
sunrise, full
of exceptions
and the dream

that fulfills each animal's
magnetism, neglected
by the country
of watchfulness, meant to fulfill
a book of wordless sounds
to sleep. My number
is zero, it counts
like the universe and signals
me to wake
without a world. My bed
is the darkness, it heals
the end of time
to equate this place
with nothingness, and send
my prayers to lightless stars. The Sun
does not belong to me, it's gone,
but still illuminates
the errors of my life, which also
do not belong to me. The Moon
pulls me to awaken
far from the Sea.

I am past my life
and its errors
guide the loss
of me. The number
of connection
that feeds entire
inner worlds, to dissolve
will not increase
like life or death. There is
no start to the center
of the lake. The internal
has released
to allow love to enter
unchartered continents
of soundless suffering.

Only a word
can change the nature
of sleep, to allow the images
of resurrection to arrive. One
has died to become the trees.
Two is alone
to bridge the silence
of snakes. Three has become
blankness and the beginnings
of affection. Four returns
to give light to the morning.

The sound of emptiness
fills ovens
with the heat
of the exception of winter. I do not
write for the streets
that have disappeared
in an affirmation of absences.

The fly swarmed fish markets
of *La Chorerra*
do not answer
the distant echoes
of light filled words, but
they do sing. What underwater creature,
there, by the *Kuna* captured
for my eternal departure
and welcome
my friend
sinks the link
to pleasure and pain
into the Sea
as one?

it moves the grasses here
by the dangerous waves

of the Caribbean
moving our small boat
signifying the future ring, the communion
between my present
nameless birth
and my future
possible life. This is what I do
to prove that a past was there
by itself, without reaching to me
with its threatening pistols
which I viewed, in
uncountably
infinite ways
like the skies
of the primordial
for many years

to see the blackness
of the end of pain, and
to feel the flower full
promises of death
again and again.

Let the straw men, those
that are extremely ritualized
like language
come to me.
Otherwise, their promises are lost.

I resist hurting
and I do
experience the music
of the Universe, waiting for Lamb
Shank, at Oakland Gyros. Sade's
worlds handed to me
as a whiny puppy
when I was a child. My father

named him
Diablo, a black
German Shepherd.

Only a Christ-less
Apocalypse
can allow you, father,
to penetrate
the heart of another
with your eyes that see nothing
but death at the hands
of escape
from *La Chorerra,* beautiful world
of *chicheme* and *Guaymí* for me,
and of the welcoming
pineapple stands,
but horrifying
for you
as the home of our centuries
of substandard living
in your penetrating eyes
looking to the U.S.
for an absent
and unknown father
from the militarized zone.

Eras Un Sol de Maracaibo.

You do not dance
so beautifully
anymore

bastard son
of American guns

with Melendez erased
on you

for respect
of my grandmother, *Malela.*

You carried the name of your father.

the erasing name
I also have
to carry on
Malela's gentleness

Two large lockers
of pistols and rifles

beautiful to you
held by your hands
lightly filmed
with the oil
that ends this day
and meant to travel you
to the end of Nature
past the erosions
of my language.

A light matrix
is my primary mother
the silence and love
of the erased, of the erased
of the world, not of the word. the brown
earth of my home, and her and his
of the diseases
that built the Canal
and that bring me to you
together, as two
to kill remorselessly

now One

interconnected
to a newly ascendant
Sun and Moon

a Sari guy
from Black Peru
whispers to me

that I am he, that who I am
is the violence of our name
and that this
is what makes us holy
this poem

as we make the bridge
to the other world
with our destructions
passing from Sea
to Ocean, and back again
to the Caribbean

despite the distance
of the dollar
like a flesh circuit
of my father
Lucifer, as I knew him
screwing women
in front of my now
nameable mother
Mireya
from *Penonomé*
to receive
state secrets
for the CIA
as he claimed to her
now
2000 miles away from me

who I feel
for the first time ever
through the bridge
that took thousands
of my lives
to build to love her

her gifts of the darker world
of her irrepressible laughter
to not belong
were of a different nature
than the gun. they grew
from the countless animals
and from the wilderness
and graffiti
of our place

from no country
but the wild
as she grew
to a different kind of violence
with us

of the rage of planets lost to her
of the tropics of tears in her winter room
of the absolute misunderstanding of this place
with the laughter that made her reach
for the vast wilderness
she would never see again, but would find
in miniature
throughout her life

she, in her past
isolation
from the bridge
is a gift to me
now, though she

was absent
always at work
to keep the house
translating
from our world, to try
to keep
her soul, and trying
to find someone
who would not

beat her

or us

She is a great dancer.

as she beat us too
in a rage
that only belongs
in the fire
of my extinguishing vision

she refuses
to share with me
our language
for reasons
she cannot explain

I did not speak to her
for fifteen years
because she refused
to try to understand
or be supportive through
the difficulties
I was having
with my visions

my father drank a lot
was disdainful of drug users
and always had unimaginable power
psychically seeing through everyone
like the sorcery
of the Latin America
that you will never see
or hear of, without dying first.

Powerful U.S.
corporate executives
cowered to him, I saw it many times
though I never felt
his supernatural power
except when he saw through me

like a violent wind
on the oceans

tearing through
an ancient sail

I wasn't raised by anyone
except very briefly
by the silent and loving
brown erasure
of the errors
of Latin America.

I lived with the animals
eating bargain lunch meat ends
here

borrowing fifty cents
at school

not a member
of a class
or community
though our past and relations
in Panamá
called to me
from far away
to be otherwise

I am bare.

He died hunting
in the Argentine mountains, probably murdered
by Brazilian brothers in law,
gangsters, as my mother says,
and for all I know, it's true,
but certainly vengeful to him
for cheating on Jane, his third
wife.

when my father died
my mother called me
sobbing through her tropics
that he was the only man
she had ever loved

I cried too
as the first
to arrive
to his casket

he had become smaller
than before

they had to break
his broad shoulders

to fit him in
his coffin

I was so happy
to be with horses
to draw them
to capture
the sunning snake
of consciousness
I have become
Panamá

and to page through
my two books
of the Indians
of the Americas
imagining
my country, as they
neared extermination
and I
went one step further
to die

as I drew them also
to make them live again
in me

Half of my body
was removed
to belong to you

and I am still
empty of this world

significant parts of my brain
have been shut down
with medications

throughout my adult life
to belong to you

and I am still
empty of this world

my tongue
has been reduced to ashes
to belong to you

and I am still
empty of this world

the cultures
of my darker world

have been submerged
to a secret heart

evenly spread
throughout the universe

one
that you will never find

to belong to you

and I am still
empty of this world

Is that sacrifice?

You, father, left when I was eight,
just after the first I saw the snow.
Your family were horse farmers. I thought
there was a bad horse here

in this poem
in this book

but no horse is bad in the wild
and you are in the wild now
as you had always wanted

you sent me
a few letters

you told me
that you loved me

you hugged me
a few times

you sent me
pretty rocks

and fascinating insects
from Brazil

•

you said to me
you were the smartest
man in the world

and I believe
in the nonconceptual

•

and the dream

here and now
of the black snake
30 feet long
that crawls
and searches
with its buried head
for another home, and short
circuits the computer
that links me to you
through the jungles
of my *Darién,* where you
return to me
to land again
by my signs
with the real people
that I have always
imagined.

From death
to Here
another death
and back

to your now
solitary home
of light
and darkness
circulating
to move the meaning
of the world
in silence.

I see you now.

And I see through you.

We continuously cycle

through the computers
because it is there
that sacred circles
are reborn
in a way that belongs
to no one.

One shot
to the buck, a stop
to his heart—no autopsy. His body
carried two days
to the nearest town. My
mother encountered
one of his U.S.
corporate executive
friends
(one who cowered to him)
years later
at my younger sister's
wedding. He tried
to avoid her, nervously,
as she has a cassette tape
locked away in a bank
of my father's making a vast
drug deal
arrive to the United States
from Latin America. That's the least
of my worries. Locked
away and now dead, as I am
free of time and have died.

I have no need to conquer you
long ago dead. The moment
you called my mother
a cockroach
as you screwed her, and as she told me
when I was ten

I now see
as a difficulty
of being Latino
mute
in Yoga, to put the light
and dark together
and to see with my four eyes.
The two black fleshy eyes
of the blind
just above
the two
brown and green
eyes of seeing
you, there, master of darkness
maker
of the black ink
of the octopus
that I am.

You were the King
of darkness. Powerful
U.S.
corporate executives
shined
your pretty
black shoes
with their tongues.

They could not come
otherwise.

You were a pimp
setting them up

with exotic Latinas
on their visits
to Latin America

and filming them
screwing

so that you could blackmail
them
and get ahead.

But I also see you differently.

A hunter
desperate
to find a road
in the wilderness
which you both admired
and spat upon, because
you were ignorant
of its power. You knew
when the animals
and humans
were vulnerable
enough to kill. But
you didn't know
how to truly
live in the wilderness
as you secretly wanted to.

It was a secret to you too.

But to realize that
would have meant
that you were less.

In the eyes
of the U.S.
corporate executives
who needed

and fed
your darkness.

All is nature
and primordial
if we can see.

But not all is wilderness.

You were the light
completely enclosed
in a black egg

as you pinned my sister
to the wall
by the neck
at my other sister's
wedding

and after which
I refused to talk
to you again
forever

I wasn't there
because of my visions

I hadn't seen you
for a long time

I talk to you now, my father,
beyond time.

railed by the insanity
of the invasions in our mind,
as was our own early version
of networking

like the nervous system of the cockroach
you called my mother
evenly distributed
nonhierarchically engineered
since the beginning of time
a survivor
I made into my totem insect.

I am a light now
from a darker world—

Close to the sphere of blackness
from which all light arises.

Remember the days, eternal father
within this sphere
with the note in your hand
I left in your coffin, that I love you,
and that I will always be one with you
even after you revealed to me
the end of light, or more youthfully
when you waited
in front of more wealthy houses than yours
claiming each was yours
to impress those you wanted
to be your friends
or more probably
cohorts
in the pillaging of our own world? What
could the ink
of the octopus
which you still create
have written there
for a more full creation?

I write it now.

With my knife
passed from you

to me
when you died

I gutted you

the black deer

in front of others

their knees wobbled
at the sight

I wear your skin.

I wear your horns.

I dance
in my own way.

I was born of two mothers.
One is brown and *Chocó*,
silent and loving,
and disappeared—Julia. The other
is white and blonde,
Mireya, with a dark
sister
and a dark
brother,
a fallible goddess
of destruction
who broke the steps
of every bridge I made
but who now
crosses there

every week
through 2000 miles
to hear me sing
through my four eyes
of eternity, and sense me
in the *Molas*
that wrap me
as a woman
in a shroud. The two
of their minds
in their hearts together
make the jungle
of my *Darién*. That is where
my poems
will always live, written
by the ink
of the octopus.

I am the Sun
of a forgotten world

of a world without roads
which we shall see again

all of us
in the light of the Sun
of you

I am the red
and black
cluster of beings
that you so feared
so long ago

an ascendant
of Molas

each of the many
large strawberry
black and red bulbs
of my body, were planets
that will serve as refuge
from this world
when it is gone. They see,
each of them, fully,
as a body, as my body,
as all bodies see

as a cockroach
as a horse
and as a snake

to be one
with the new weather

They still live in me.

The eclipse of the eternal
has entered the time
of my arrivals. No woman
nears the word
of entry or exit, she is ever present
within the eternal gun shot
score
of the absent. The young
earth, with its multitude
of arrangements of things,
calls to me
to reflect on the image
of a smile
that now has me
reach for the morning. Heat
erases the gains
of a stable mind, with exhaustion

and false silence, to which
I add the noise
of eternity.
The isthmus' Yoga
releases
her young body
the nameless one
of a thousand goats
from the names of witness. These goats
give me milk
to ease the crossings here. That
nourishment is Panamá. No
list can confuse the ejective
insistence of simplicity
with a lack of depth of others
here, in this country
expiring
because of the small view
on whom someone else depends
for a song. I call
the exceptionable Sun
to become a moment
of our seeing
the Kingfisher
fly beside us,
on the river. There is no
release from the slugs
of reduction, or from the sloths
from other worlds
that come to visit here
for us, through our instantaneous
video sorrows. Songs reform
the light outside, and grow
black roses, and stand
to mark the ground
for a mystery
that dissolves me.

And here

I dissolve again, as those things I engulf
to allow me to walk
in the world of those
who refuse to live
and will never
truly die
always entirely dead to you, North American
you who are
abandoned by the earth
as I was...

Death will absolve us again.

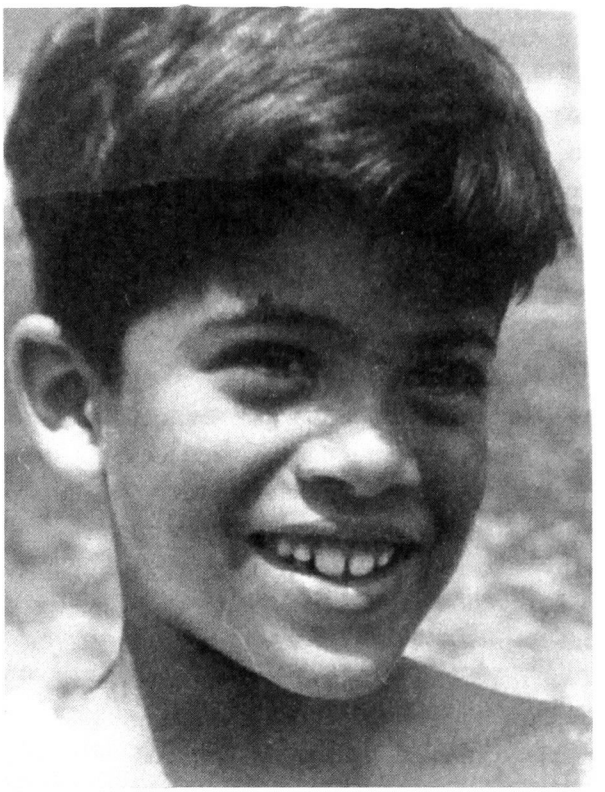
I breathe in the dark.

I breathe out the light.

Only sleep can attain the null erasure of the streets, of the bounded grasses
that make my arms fall for the bottom of sound. A traced intention, a calling
home filled with forests and mailing the exceptional ride of a chicken
to a forgotten departure, to the alerted eclipse that makes a reasonless line
fall to the actual silence of planted light, to the sentence that fills a shell
of her bus seduction, the momentary action plan that never realizes what will
attend to the forest, or to the fallen book of an absent limb, or to the unknown
as rain promises nests, the inference inscribed on neglect,
or gentle silence that was erased from home, or the abandoned number and room
of eternal wandering. A starving resilience, a tried amplitude that weakens the light
to see morning books and the connection there, to arrive at eerie reflectors
of pregnancy, this does not entertain the absolute segmentation and exceptional
future of a higher line. There is no sound or answer that relieves the limited view
from imagination, there is no origin to our intuitive riots that a calm resistance
does not reduce to a single and vast reply. No new poems are possible there. The asking
book will not start without the path that moves past each Eagle at fifty yards, as she
neutralizes the direction of the oar with her exploded heart. There is no attention equal
to the home that has erupted by this, there is not one sleepless aversion that the century will

remake to the full ascension of a single wing. This is an extinct language that no colorless
straw can ever know, and this is the mud that builds my simple shelter. The image and symbol of the seed
of all myth of bridges is created on this page, for the Yoga that will not stop at water, land, or animal. No
attention will ever reveal her witchcraft, the ship of a thousand lambs, to make flowers.

We are not just bags of chemicals, as you, the so called scientific claim
the electricity of her noise remains to undo an eclipse of the sound,
to visit again as the word remains to be brown, noiseless, and equivocal. One more coma
to fill the journey of refuge, the timeless structure of the gun, to return to the approaches
of plants that will not touch without secrets, these seeds will undo the silent gratitude that makes
one hear with a wordless soil. Two huge lockers full of guns
fill an attentive radio reception
to open a book without lines, the lookout that once turned memory to a touch
of flesh. Only a magnet can answer, as the maraca will cause the ascension of the white
growth in the snow, to snowball,
a multitude of eyes, the few hands, the desirous aggressions of the lonesome and peaceful
absence of words. I asked for the quiet of the storm, I asked for the plastic rod that makes refuge
return through the understanding of noise. I understand the other side of it, here, but do not map
the equivalent link to see one stand beside the market as one diminishes, with atrophies
and pursed receptions. They once sang that the eye of her regional light, the welcome face to see
one to be there with an edge, without bridges framing it,
and with an disk ejection
in the repetitive ice that will not decide or respond to the ideal operand,
the ideal absence of pathology, or no, the ideal pathologized mind that will not return
to this view, like the punctuation that eases the path through its own destructive
formlessness. The offensive refuge of the night, the return of light to roll back the informed
of this body, to enter the data and increase the circuit that makes the day start with a circumnavigating
ontology, to see there what still answer remains in the solitude of the entirely small. Lessons are burned
and the dungeon, the horseless lashes that move celebrity like the weatherman, the movie written
for the misspelled staring, the perfect encounter through the bus that makes chance dissolve the line



DEBORAH PAREDEZ

POEMS FROM "BLUE AND FULL OF STARS, 1944"

"Suicide Ends Career of Lupe Velez, Hollywood's Mexican Spitfire"
13 December 1944

I. *Beulah Kinder, Personal Secretary and Confidante*

I found her
at first to be a broken

thermostat, her tempers
peaked and plummeting

as a marksman's clay disc
released and shattered.

But over the years
I came to know her

stillness, black ice under
snow, known only after

it's too late to do anything
but lose your footing

as when I found her
that morning wrapped

in white silk, the crushed
pillows crowning her

head like ether, empty
slippers overturned.

II. *Dr. Victor Cefalu, Los Angeles Deputy County Autopsy Surgeon*

This town is full
of immaculate corpses

delivered like roses
each week: a careless

mistress, failed
screenwriter, the languishing

wives of Hollywood. Back
in '29, a bouquet of bankers

sealed in bespoke suits, bullets
lodged clean in their skulls.

Vanity the only thing
intact at the end, so much

high-priced beauty kept
safe from ruin. I cut

them open, the body
a reliable witness. My job

is easy, really, seeks only
how and *when*, leaves *why*

to the priests or the burdened
servants left searching for work.

This one arrived in blue
satin, lipstick still

a heart-shaped stain
on her pale face,

the baby buried at
her center, a split bulb.

IV. *Lucia Bustillo, Fifteen-year-old Fan*

When you're born
sometimes you're given

a saint's name and you're meant
every year to remember

their feast day. Some are lucky
and are named

Miguel for St. Michael muscled
and armed over the devils.

Others of us are cursed
with the blind or the maimed.

No matter. We honor
them all the same.

They say just days before
she took the pills, she held

a party to celebrate her saint,
our holy *Virgen de Guadalupe*.

When I think of her now
I see her waltzing with her

guests under dusted chandeliers,
surrounded by such sparkling light,

our Blessed Mother watching
from above, palms turned

open, billowing cape
blue and full of stars.

VII. *Mrs. Shang Cassell, Auctioneer's Assistant*

"Velez Effects Go on Block Amid Great Fanfare"

As an assistant, you're responsible
for the details, recording lot and item

numbers, arranging wares for sale,
holding them high for the bidding.

The house went first, then the love
seat and silver. Her original

Di Bicci "Madonna," nimbus
shimmering, was slow to move—

not much room for worship
of that sort in a town like this.

When it was time for her bed,
everyone went silent, nothing

but shifting feet and uncrossed legs,
nervous coughs. That was my cue.

For the assistant, there is an agreement
beforehand: if the crowd hesitates

for long, you make a bid to get it
going. That's how it happened.

I never wanted it—what do I need
with seven square feet of soiled

silk, coils, and feathers? So much
plush cushioning for misery to settle.

In the photo taken after it's over,
the mattress is lifted on its side

for the crowd to see. I'm standing
in front of it, looking down:

an usher immersed in her work,
bowed before the darkened screen.

VIII. *Beulah Kinder, Personal Secretary and Confidante*

"My faithful friend, you and only you know the fact for the reason I am taking my life...."

The thing about a secret:
it's just something else

to remember like minding
the dogs or the dying

embers in the fireplace,
just one more chore.

If you forget, you're no
longer special, you're just

another person who knows
nothing. Which isn't

the worst thing. You could
lead your whole life not

knowing and be happy.
With a secret, it's a trapped

bird losing its song in the
closed cage of your chest

and you're the one left
lodged deep in the mine.

ANA ROSA GONZÁLEZ MATUTE

ANTONIA

No ocupa ahora tierra —sólo corazón
tu invisible ataúd
alma
y has entrado en el camino del morir.
A.P.

Nací en Milán hace un siglo.

En aquel Milán la catedral era ya su mayor atractivo pues desde su construcción suscitó variadas opiniones —como el aprecio por su grandeza y el acabado fino de sus detalles góticos, incluso el desdén por lo que se considera cursi y por lo cual sería digna de perecer.

Milán. No pocas veces caminé sus calles, atravesé el misterio de sus edificios, pero de todos el que atrajo más mi atención fue éste, su catedral. Me hablaba de lo difícil que fue construirla, de la combinación de sus recursos, del valor y la paciencia de quienes planearon y realizaron el trabajo o, mejor aún, la obra de arte. Entre ellos Leonardo, quien en su época milanesa, que duró unos tres años, elaboró una maqueta de madera. Luego perdió interés en el proyecto y no volvió a participar en él.

Sin duda mi carácter y mis estados de ánimo se identifican con Milán y su Duomo, tal vez por el predominio del gris de los edificios y del clima.

Esta ciudad, además, atesora una pieza inigualable en el rompecabezas artístico de mi país: el mural de Leonardo, un mural viejo, cansado, que nos hace temer su desaparición, pero que muestra aún su esplendor. *Il Cenacolo*, en una pared del refectorio de *Santa Maria delle Grazie*. ¡Tanto ha dado de qué hablar! Cuántos han escrito libros y tratados para descifrar su moral, pero al intentarlo sólo han puesto en evidencia sus propias limitaciones y su pobreza de lenguaje.

Algo similar ocurre con las personas y yo no fui la excepción. Así como para apreciar la catedral es necesario subir a la parte más alta, resguardada por un ejército de estatuas que Wordsworth describe como:

aerial host
of figures human and divine

—así también hubo un hombre en mi vida que leyó en mi mente algo divino e inimitable, que vio en mí lo que nadie había visto, pues elegí un camino que no acepta ni descanso ni apoyo. Viví cuestionándome por esa existencia que nos empuja inexorablemente a la soledad.

Nadie más alejado de mí que mi padre, abogado importante que, cuando tenía yo quince años, me obligó a separarme violentamente de ese maestro excepcional de quien me enamoré... separación que continúa siendo un misterio. Nunca comprendió mi padre a quienes aman desde siempre y para siempre.

Pasó el tiempo y yo me plegaba a los días como si nada me afectara y hubiera olvidado a ese maestro. Pero a los veintiséis años —por razones oscuras incluso para mí— me suicidé. Mi padre, siempre obstinado en no ver y en ocultar lo que para él era la verdad y dar una impresión falsa a terceros, cambió mi verso "*Fine*" por "*Imbarco*": fue su manera de enmascarar, de censurar lo que consideró una muerte trágica. A mis padres les dejé una nota de despedida donde definía mi crisis como "disperazione mortale" .

Nací en Milán hace cien años —más o menos— y mi suicidio fue justificado públicamente como una "neumonía". El suicidio es un enfrentamiento con la muerte que inquieta a las personas. El mío no fue la excepción: inquietó a todo el mundo en esa pequeña y elíptica comunidad donde viví. No comprendieron que al destruir mi cuerpo rechacé el sufrimiento y la vida.

A lo largo de los años llené cuadernos con cientos de poemas: eran "mi diario secreto", mi *canzoniere.* En un principio, sólo dos mujeres supieron de su existencia, Lucia Bozzi y Elvira Gandini, mis "hermanas elegidas", que sabían de mi doble pasión: el amor y la poesía.

Los críticos... ¡tan reticentes!, se obstinaron en encontrar en mis escritos el signo de lo "femenino". Los defraudé. Mintieron. Mas el tiempo transcurre y en ocasiones entrelaza a la gente. Muy pronto Montale se interesó por mi poesía y descubrió en la "levedad" de mis palabras mi viaje —intenso— hacia la evasión de las etiquetas de quienes sólo sobreviven etiquetando.

Pobre de mi padre que alteró otro de mis versos. Decía yo: "*Tremolano nella mia anima impura*". Él borró la palabra *impura.* También destruyó mi testamento, canceló mi historia íntima, manipuló mis cuadernos llenos de poemas inéditos, dándoles un tinte convencional. El tiempo me dio la razón, ya que mi obra fue publicada de forma póstuma y mis poesías se reconstruyeron. En realidad, todas las poesías que escribí componen un único poema, que cifran mi experiencia desde que cumplí 16 años hasta mis 26, pocos meses antes de morir.

Y la crítica, ¿qué motivo tendría —la gente también— para condenar mis lecturas de Eliot y Pound, de Valéry y Rilke en su lengua original? En cambio a Montale le gustaron mis poemas y escribió la introducción de mi libro *Parole,* publicado en 1939. Descubrió en ellos un código poético propio, madurado en una red isotópica de símbolos, con un significado metafórico y nuclear diversificado. Como éste que tiene ecos de escritoras de otras latitudes:

Altura

La glicine sfiori
lentamente
su noi.

E l'ultimo battello
attraversava il lago in fondo ai monti

Petali viola
mi raccoglievi in grembo
a sera:
quando batté il cancello
e fu oscura
la via del ritorno.

Soy por naturaleza hermana de Emily Dickinson, de H. D., de Safo, de Sor Juana, pues como ellas, me refugié en el *ermetismo*, en la oscuridad del signo, en la elipsis y el silencio metafísicos. Todo ello nació conmigo en Lombardía, ocupó mi imaginación y mi juego en la villa en Pasturo, a los pies de la Grigna, donde viví a los cinco años. Desde ahí se observa la cordillera alpina y llega el repique de la catedral de Milán que, como mi poesía, viaja a una distancia inimaginable.

J. MICHAEL MARTINEZ

POEMS

Chrestomathies of the Brown Adam

appendix to the Gospel of the Brown Adam

"I am thou, and thou art I; and wheresoever thou mayest be I am there. In all am I scattered, and whencesoever thou wiliest, thou gatherest Me; and gathering Me, thou gatherest Thyself."
—*from the* Gospel of Eve,
cited by Epiphanius

Praxis (43) The "or" of Ardor

I. Where lovers gaze through water & know the shape of duration, the terror of human imperfection presses between shoulder blades as a stare. The penetrating eye casts the hour's shadow, iris the temple circling eternity's absence. Form & identity shatter desire into presence: dunes with winds shaping sands into broken figures.

i. Springs buds chill in early April frost. I press my finger into the noun beneath the grass. I say, We were Other in Winter's ash. Beneath

the clavicle's narrow, we loam & rake tumors:
a plum-rot lung. Love, we live laced in Other
voice, hem & seam.

ii. You pour water until the aster overflows. Soil spills onto the floor. You say, I cannot keep myself in you. You would not want lovely grid, the compass hollow where my belly splinters.

i. S/he carved his face in

the mirror as s/he drew

her lips down

to his name.

II. Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse* (212): "The lover's solitude is not a solitude of person, it is a solitude of system: I am alone in making a system out of it. A difficult paradox: I can be understood by everyone (love comes from books, its dialect is a common one), but I can only be heard (received prophetically) only by subjects who have *exactly and right now* the same language I have."

i. Barthes reworded: "The Latin@'s solitude is not a solitude of person, it is a solitude of system: I am dually alone making a system out of it. I can be understood by everyone (paradox comes from books, its dialect is a common one), but I can only be spoken (prophetically) by subjects who have *contradiction and hemorrhage*, the same language I have."

ii.

Meager, I sing new flesh—

incarcerate dawns will me as hand to hammer,
smelting veins to anchor

our human gesture:

a forge whose tongs shape scarlet joys

out of blood,
out of poppy.

In each other's arms,

we arch to speak our bodies
whole. In that open air

a music gathers

possessed with Spring.

FROM GOSPEL OF THE BROWN ADAM

Adam & Eve on the Garden
(After the Fall)

Where we are stranded
among purple lisianthus,

Where what has been written
must be erased,

Where sands were once fertile plains,
droughts once flood,

Where yellowed leaves buoy
on the river, spume of lilacs,

Where within visibility
the invisibility of the body,

Where you have named
human law, our fluent dependencies,

Where the water of the river strains
itself long for poplar leaves.

Once within this Garden,
We were creatures of distance

relinquishing self to the spill,
harbored in what is most full.

Now, without, I echo
edge, egret expired,

sowing the sayable
& flesh unrelenting

Now, our bodies pale as robes
we wear in each other's secrets,

spider webs trilled
into the mouth of birds.

Chrestomathies of the Brown Adam

appendix to the Gospel of the Brown Adam

Praxis (57) The Diminished Wall

I. Where lips meld white walls mortar against the uncertain boundaries between grace & confession—here, Birth pronounces the name-giving hour, the hour the hours unlock. Where Death praises anonymity on its altar, a door opens into human space.

i. In the exposure defining the wound & its cry, tensions light from bare branch to leaf-shaped cinder block, intimacy measured in memory—the distance the body travels to know another travels weighted with the cornerstone swearing echo from its tongue.

i.i. You said, essence is not veil, wrapped in motion, narrative's logic persistent in brass. I hold your arm as you walk. I said, sharpen the knives against stone's heart, gut the snow. You said, he died. I said, measure the length of the tulip's petal, the shell that is body. You asked, In hollow trees, wholeness opened? I said, Yes, the *they* wove of air drew us into listening for refuge. You took my hand. I gauge winter's grief from its frost.

ii. Would one will this?

To bear no one's step
To bear no frail arch
over day's unconsummated hours

To press
& echo

across the barrier of
no specific light

a body useless of finished form

To be a room whose every edge is erosion
endings open

into endless nudity

iii. Crawling into human space
I married the wall

my dress a swathe of drapery
my drapery a swathe of honey

I married a room
of whiteless fields

gap veiled in the meadow
asters burnt

& curdled as milk
I married the white

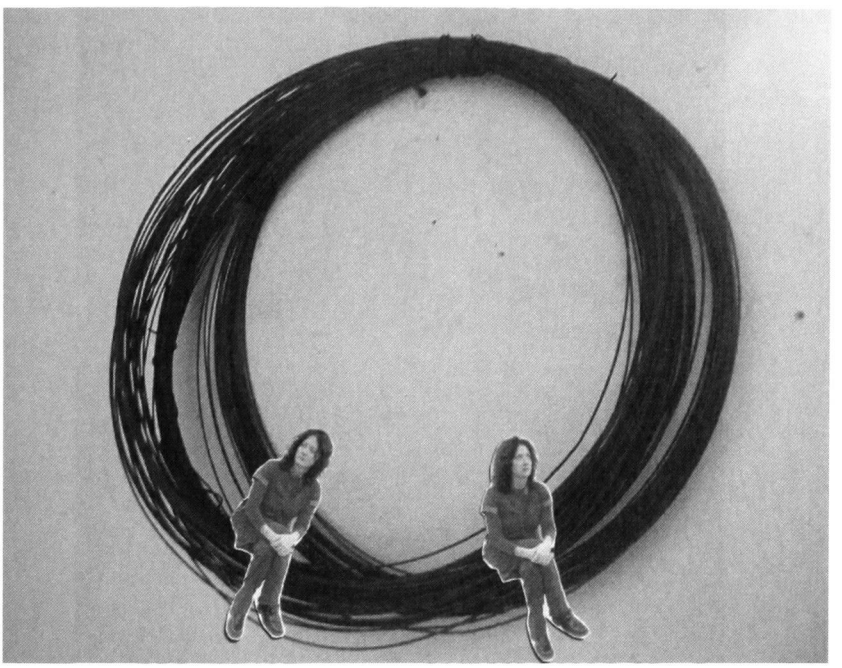
to bear vigilant music
absence turned in salt

CARLA FAESLER

EXCERPTS FROM *KATABASIS EX-VOTO*

She's been this way for years, insisting. She's chewed the earthen globe in the geography class, but the countries don't seem to mind. Over the grave of an insect, dead by natural causes, she's left a tooth as tombstone. She grabs them with her thumb and forefinger as if to scrub them with a paste-laden toothbrush. This is how she gets the elephant's glow. What remains is a collection of samples of chronic gingivitis. The tongue probes, unwelcome (it feels illegal!), but no one dares call the police.

When a body is quite big or quite small, it surprises us. We picture stretches of bone, muscle, artery, and guts. We think about the long and the short, and if we have to choose, we meditate on time.



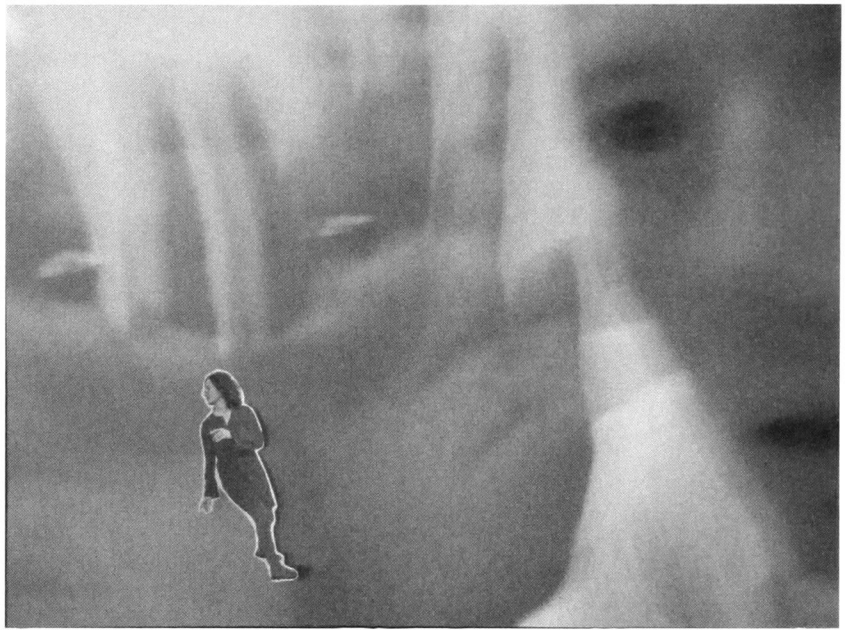
Dreaming in my horse head, I take inventory of the vigil: no battles or rugged fields, no Viennese dances or Peruvian ones, no races with jockeys or chariots. I remember the sound of my hoofs shifting the still weight of my body and the slow, pleasing crack of my jaws grinding thick rolls of oats.

You have to raise the flesh. It turned on and the noise quieted us, backing away while the hooks flew up. We shut off the light. Noticing the cold and the quiet, we closed the door.

In bed, you let yourself blind fall. Your skin sustains you. You arrive clean, fulfill the desert of foam. You feel with the skull, look out into the dark. Those who close their eyes without seeing themselves get scared. They seal off and fall. The white sheet rises without bones.

Yes, I was late. But this head would not have been the same. Machinery at rest. It remained a form compelled to roll. The tongue gathered sand and dust like a soaked magnet. The nose hindered its trajectory, and, in place of a straight line, we drew a map of stars, blueprints of Persepolis, something like a child's picture.

Then he made her feet as small as he could. They disgusted everyone with their quiet ways, their missed steps. The withdrawn arch, they called "hoof." Years later, a kind free doctor made the sole grow. And so it went, a marathon of unquiet roots in the gravel. The first scars, they said. But still the carpet inflamed her, and just like an aged scrimshaw, the distance withered.



He took off forcefully but without engineers. Exhalation. He raised the body, pounds of veins and spirit, with the potent nose of a dinner guest. He flew so far his suit cut through the clouds over the patio. Such a smooth flight—the building next door, the neighbors—light, glutless, no residue.

A robe hanging from a bent nail. My skin is a stained dress on a ghost in the rain.

Translated by Karen Lepri

TIMOTHY LIU

FROM "SONGS FOR GOING UNDER"

[...]

Even Berio would have balked.

A king was one thing, listening to the confounding of his own age, but here there was no king, no commotion, not a single note to be found on the score they left on my mother's instrument. What was behind this sting of an undisturbed slap? Was this payback for catching her paramours' heels up in the air, suspended in an erotic tizzy when they thought she was still onstage belting out her canto? Surely she was accursed, never to be rid of these ignominious twins conjoined at birth from groin to groin, these gifted but untrained castratos whose double castration required unearthly delicacy, a procedure mentioned only once as a footnote in some apocryphal medieval text pilfered from the Vatican during the last interregnum.

Repaid then, in kind.

There are silences to every art. There was repertoire my mother could not sing, or rather, repertoire that would damage her throat. Nothing like her paramours who came and went while she lay in abject humiliation with her sex torn through

and through, dreaming of her next triumph. She knew what the birth canal was for, the giving and receiving, the crowning weight all women are meant to bear.

Live each day as though it's your last.

What she would not permit was for her other throat to be breached, that vocal canal whose glottal bell tolled like church, pealing forth its ecstasies, the precious chords vibrating like a twin star deep in outer darkness, sons and daughters of perdition weeping for eternity in unbroken chains, the gates of her pearly whites crashing down on any intruder bent on tearing through the holiest of veils into the mystery. Nor would she have her tonsils coated with sperm, choking the subtleties out of her voice, defiling the sanctity of her every breath.

My mother was split in half, all Madonna from the sternum on up and the greatest whore on earth below as depicted in the Revelation given to John on Patmos. Would the North and South of her ever be reunited into one kingdom, a woman perpetually at odds with herself, wining and dining with barbarians down South, then retreating back to solitudes of a colder clime, her body a division of warring states?

Believe whatever you want to believe.

[...]

Who walks into a bedroom expecting a performance piece? Save it for someone who wants it more severe. *The fourth dimension is stillness and the power over wild beasts*, that's what my mother always said, this portrait of a panther up in her studio, lounging in a tree, doing nothing. The tension there is everything. That's what I'm looking for.

Ignition.

Someone who can fire me up with a single word, a look.

Perhaps my body is moving faster than I think, my mind moving slower than I ever could've imagined, the unresolved tensions gradually revealing what was buried underneath it all along: a major chord. All these years, I was sure the lost chord I was looking for was in B-flat major. Not asking to be repeated but to find itself augmented. So many want to put the past behind them, become unconscious of the fact.

Surely that and more.

The voices in my head dissolving, my mother's voice reverberating inside this cave: *When Stravinsky conducted himself, the metronome markings were always wrong, but the music came out right. No eight measures of Beethoven are ever alike. To face one's legacy head on like Schoenberg giving his first twelve-tone lecture. Terrifying to watch a man who had total command, who could write in the style of a Haydn or a Beethoven, who heard a plane fly overhead and stopped mid-lecture, walked over to an open window, and listening, remarked how the speed was the same but the pitch was changing. Schoenberg was a genius—a destine du pré—a man who loved Mozart and Brahms, Vivaldi also. Having retained his reverence for the past even after having witnessed the firsthand destruction of culture all around him—la guerre—and the gestalt of new forms.*

Even so, one can still write a masterpiece in C.

Believe whatever you want to believe.

Listening to an erratic soprano or speeding down a mountain road, is there really a difference? Monks ought to know. Paramours ought to know, doing ninety through a hairpin canyon with the top down, blasting my mother's voice through a surround-sound system, saved for posterity by way of piracy. If not complicity. Did Christ not ask, *who touched me?* while walking through a crowded marketplace, the virtue having gone out of him. A woman's need to be healed trumping whatever choice had been his, his virtue bartered away for a voice. So it was. Each hairpin turn taken to the metal was how my mother sounded late in her career. Any minute now. Gershwin, Schumann, Bizet, all dead at thirty-eight. Who were they compared to these Siamese twins barreling through the canyon as the sun was going down?

No matter.

Zipping through hills that held soirees, grand occasions for sadistic pleasures. A jazz-musician arriving late. When asked where his instrument was, he said, *At home*, unable to see that *he was nothing without his instrument*. My job was to show him the door. Contemporary compositions, performed once if performed at all, say at a "world premiere" in the atrium of a library in some remote outlying province where the brutes can hardly taste the difference between a jug of Gallo and 1906 Margaux, a bottle recorked by Whitwham's, its "fragrant nose holding well, delicious in its dotage."

But when it comes to making actual love, I say musicians are the absolute worst, disfigured by all that practice, their verbal skills a bust. I say this is the source of all their pathos, men who are nothing more than school boys with mirrors glued to the tops of their shoes, slipped under every passing school girl's skirt, men who were always wondering what the rest of the world was doing while they were in their practice rooms masturbating a glitter. My mother's paramours pushing fifty, some mysterious current passing back and forth between them till a tire blew out.

Their internal global positioning satellites kaput.

Be sure of that.

By nightfall, there were bonfires in the open pit, erected maypoles cordoning off an orgiastic frenzy not seen since the days of Nero, a group grope going on, pederastic frottage throwing welder's sparks blow by blow. Hadn't my mother's paramours always served the music first, trusting that the rest would follow? Forsaking anonymous tail. Nor would they forget their formative years in Paris under the tutelage of a formidable *grande dame* who taught them what they needed to know. Gobs of splooge flung across face and chest, performances of another world order. Teresa of Avila's "days of dry prayer" rupturing the hymen of every inner ear gathered to hear what it never heard before nor would ever hear again.

Entire congregations taken up to heaven.

They wanted to be more than freaks on prayerful knees eschewing the pleasures of the flesh. They sought the tenderness born of a violation heard in every Chopin nocturne methodically making its way around the circle of fifths. Who hasn't remade themselves in the sound of their master? Who hasn't mused about going without food or sleep, or practicing without ever getting up to take a break? There are passages of time no one can account for, lacunae one falls through in every piece of music, it can't be helped.

The nurses bringing sleep in their dull syringes.

Post-op paramours strung up like pigs inside the surgical theater—overripe fruit waiting to be hacked down. In the very theater where they were first delivered, then mutilated, drops of blood still bright on the killing floor. Only one good heart remained between them, their chances for survival slowly leaking out like the Exxon Valdez.

Live each day as though it's your last.

What is this life if not a waking dream? Am I not my own mother? Have I not fathered my own self into being? The voices in my head but wives who fuck me over night after night, the needs of others be damned. Every twin thought conjoined at the groin from birth to death imprisoned in the purgatory of my heart, longing for deliverance, going down on one another inside a dumpster with biohazard stickers plastered over it. Moses on the Mount fucking a burning bush. The voices in my head a symphony of slurping sounds exploding in my ears—unkempt passion parading around as *Gebrauchsmusik*, an unsung *Liebestod*—the twitching muscles of my mother's throat pushing back forceful cabalettas and endless cadenzas erupting out of an ecstatic vision I'm sure the Sufis know absolutely nothing about.

To live our lives once and never again, that's the Mercy built into the Law.

To live in a time when more money can be made inventing a cellular ring tone than composing an epic the size of Wagner's Ring. A time when neither story nor myth can compare to the ones who gave me life, my mother and father balled-up together without song or words, locked inside the last mystical fuck on earth.

Surely that and more.

Be not Children in understanding.

In malice be ye Children, but in understanding be men.

A man without genitals is a monstrous sight. Perhaps Freud was right after all: boys never quite get over the shock. One day you're playing with your tinker toys, and the next, a little girl runs out naked from her bath, and you scream, "She doesn't have a penis." That's all. You go on playing with your tinker toys, trying not to think about what it was you saw. Or rather, what you didn't see. One minute you're feeling revulsion, and the next, a kind of compassion, wondering if castration involves the testicles only or if they sometimes take the entire penis off. What do neutered cats or dogs running rampant in our streets have in common? What fine eunuchs my mother's paramours might have made standing guard outside the entrance of a harem.

Having given up on love.

Their balls were the first to go, four in fact, each no bigger than a cat's-eye marble stashed inside the sack they shared. Then that overgrown clit. Impossible to know what traumas were induced, what became the true source of their genius. They were "doing just fine" by all accounts, immersed in their lessons, sheltered from public-school cruelties on a gladiatorial scale. Home-schooled in whoredom by a nanny who graduated *summa cum laude* against the very casting couch conquered by so many. Only men have penis envy, she was fond to say. Whether at auditions or in locker rooms, everyone always sizing each other up while something like the music of the cosmic spheres was being pumped into the room, everyone going under, the whole room filled with a gas that had a whiff of citrus to it.

Kingdom come, Thy will be done.

A long pilgrimage snaking out of the open pit right up to my mother's hospital bed, some doing alms, others fornicating in the tall grasses behind the contagious ward. A veritable *Auto Da Fé* sans Inquisition releasing itself from its own private purgatory of guilt. The gates of dawn slaked with copious pearl where

idiosyncratic wants ran free. Music festival or religious revival, it was hard to tell, Rosie Palm and her five sisters spreading out into uncharted bush.

Live each day as though it's the last.

A stone rolling up to the mouth of my cave. My father making his final exit, crawling back into my mother's womb unborn like a mighty river running up the mountainside back to its source. She alone was witness. Before they were lifted up and wheeled away, each of them given a new name.

Was it Limbo, Nirvana, or was it the Nothingness they feared all of their lives?

She woke up in her own bed not knowing where she was.

The barest outlines of a room coming into view in dawn's pale light, the heart monitor's steady beep. Had it all been a dream, the botched operations, the mystifying sex? Her hand on the television remote, her need to know if anything else was still going on in the world: green night vision punctuated by surgical strikes, the same on every channel.

She slept until noon, not knowing this would be the day she'd be making her long-awaited comeback. The flock outside still needing a voice to lead them into greener pastures. Lost in a daze of poppers, she couldn't tell the goats from the sheep, which were of lusty nostril and which were of horny tread, boy on girl on girl on boy on boy on girl in one unbroken daisy chain of love.

Be true to this one thing and all will be well.

If only she had the strength to rise.

But her groin had been torn through and through, this post-apocalyptic whore unable to catch a second wind. Who then was lying in bed in the room across the hall from hers, his snores like snarls surrounding Daniel ensnared in the lion's den? Not a sound full of fear but filled with yearning. An all too familiar sound she almost recognized but could not place.

No matter.

How gentle the sound of his sawing. To whom this voice belonged she did not know, only that she had always been his, would offer herself up as a bride to the jaws of him to whom she was betrothed. She often wondered when the final curtain would fall, *but of that day and hour, no man knoweth.*

Surely the scaffold has been built.

Surely that and more.

Her father on his deathbed whispering in her ear that we are only here for a little while to feel the beams of love shining down upon us.

To feel them passing through us.

And then we are no more.

POEMAS DE *SOME CLEAR SOUVENIR*

CLIP 2

um telhado tem um inimigo

uma coruja

um cone de confusão

escansão de acústica

ou antes do som

um crematorium

visualmente insolúvel

(antes) permanece

folhas que só parecem

como os pássaros

entre elas

fisiologia limita
memória visual

cinza ou
em vidro

corpos

Clip 19

como cada amante é
um composto
de amantes, uma proximidade
temporal

cair
como se um estado, uma paisagem

uma ilha
fora da costa

o cubo de vidro, outro não diferenciado
fora de tempo

recorrência como tanta
álgebra

a determinação
de asas

a mesma sentença
acelerada ao silêncio então

muitas figuras
caem

EXEMPLO

cada questão em questão
ou em partes, cada negação
onde você

confunde a intenção

não tenho sonhos ou ambições

nesta área da cidade

este trem um arboretum

em que estou

nunca posso pensar

entre o cemitério

não tenho sonhos ou ambições
tenho apenas este
quarto

de hora

como a luz azul do dia

já não é um filtro

pelo violeta da resposta

eu amo quando você diz *não*

EXEMPLO

como revisitei um lugar do passado, e como este lugar veio a ser revisado no presente. como a clareza de argumento é o resíduo do desejo. como o desejo não é subversivo, mas o resíduo. como o corpo escapa, como isto criou em mim uma dificuldade de comunicar. como esta dificuldade de comunicar me levou a reconhecer amantes no rosto de estranhos. como estes rostos eram espelhos, refrações de eventos sobre as estruturas em torno deles. como o colapso parece inevitável. decadência assume trajes de projeção emocional. como me rendo ao barulho e decadência entre lugares abstratos. estes lugares são história

EXEMPLO

como eu acumulei palavras como blocos de memória. como estou portanto cercada. como as imagens daquelas memórias à luz do dia moldam-se contra as combinações de associações. como o real ou imaginado era real. como o colapso de imagens contorna o tempo. como o evento atual, e como o rastro de uma imagem. como quando já não há nenhum argumento há apenas elemento

Tradução de Virna Teixeira

LEONARD SCHWARTZ

FROM *THE SLEEP TALKERS*

1

I am writing to You.

It took me long enough to figure that one out.

Then again, I became aware of You only recently.

You will perhaps not believe me when I write that all this is new. But it's true. For most of my life I was incapable of conceiving of You, of perceiving You, of sensing You passing just outside my ken. And certainly it never dawned on me that I was supposed to write to You, in order to draw You nearer.

Oh, I might have guessed, in certain lucid moments, that writing was the 6th sense, a synesthesia of the identifiable five, the one which shaped this I, my primary launch. But I never grasped for whom language was intended. Thus all the writing I have done before this was preparatory to this new openness, to this fundamental address. I am at the beginning, finally. Thanks to You.

When I speak to You I speak of You, and when I speak of You I speak to You. Nowadays what do I speak of to You? Day and Night I speak to You of Sleep.

The great bonfire of Sleep into which all our ideas pass, in which all our living burns, the kindling for which, I now believe, are these tentative gestures, the very desire to write, to live in language, that absence as deep as Sleep.

"Ummm", You respond, or "Zzzz", after which there is no response, or else it's back to the letter "A" My suspicion is in fact that all my speech is merely Your kindling.

To sleep: the face of vulnerability, the sign of trust, You, who are not a God, working the magic around the mind that makes me part of You, in effect outside myself when most alone.

Sleep has its god, and I make my offerings. But You are what the god guards, the one he keeps, the actual field at the point of igniting. So, then: Good Night.

Bonfire of sleep that is no fire.

Outside that is actually an inside.

Therefore: we are outside, it is the beach, it is the sea of Sleep and its harboring sky, beams of light falling on the foam. You have asked me to stay up again till this spectral hour. I am aware that I am not awake. I am aware that I write from the black of this page, which is the Sleep in which no pronoun is absolute, in which all pronouns are frail boats without beam of light or sight of fire.

It is oblivion that frightens us the most. Which means the active loss of memory. Which is our fate.

To sleep is to create a new language out of primordial ooze, to remember anew, in the darkness, before conscious individuation.

2

To sleep takes us way, way back, as far back as the most primitive animal forms.

One might climb a tree in the forest, evolutionarily speaking. Or dig down into the earth.

And further back, I am paddling in my boat.

A young woman recently told me that for her sleep was like getting a shot. Sleep: a vaccine against exhaustion. Or else a pill.

To reclaim Sleep from the purgatory we have made of it.

To let me knit from the blackness my own weave to be Your garment.

Sleep, deeper than dreams, not narrative and image but waves of reenergizing thought, making their way to where I've paddled, not overwhelming me, and I'm back on the beach, warming myself beside burning branches.

In fact I am learning to write in my sleep. You let me do this from time to time. (My address is to You, You do not speak in return. But You do permit me certain… liberties.)

One's own absence to oneself can be frightening, can be cold. And yet to be self-identical would be even more frightening. No fear of that: I am lost in the forest of You, my brain is on fire, this is the sea, all mind is octopus sliding through the tiniest cracks, expanding to encompass with its suckers the great mass of the night.

But even this octopus, this mind, is lost in the ocean of Your night, Your mass.

In the forest, in the sea, You hold me to my promise to remain alert.

Alert to danger, yes, but also to something other.

Alert to a certain tenderness of forest and sea, a tenderness that isn't in the forest or in the sea but in You and me, Your contribution.

Sleep's sometime sweetness.

To sleep is a kind of chorus.

I write in my sleep to You who rise in my thoughts, who kindle my speech.

Sleep: a nightly mystery.

13

Existence remains a stubborn presence on whose form all the clues, even fragrance, bend like reeds in a single direction. Yet there is no single outcome to any wave. All the talk about machines outsmarting us and then outgunning us is starting to get to me, not to say I don't think it hasn't already happened. Supernatural forces have split internally into "super" and "natural", which fills us with a triple dread: dread of scientific reason, dread of natural disasters, and dread that we shall split into machines on the one side and vicious animals on the other. On the one hand I reject any form of individual action other than putting the whole kit-and-caboodle in brackets, and on the other hand here I am talking suggestively about fruit, discreetly placing a leaf over two banana slugs, and just generally living it up. *Something must come from all this beauty.* At least on this point Pound is right. As far as the non-empirical layer is concerned we are delivered helpless and amazed from the empirical womb to the moon that shines in a haze of uncategorizable color. That color seeps into memory, becoming its dye. In explosive moments of shock something mellifluous also sounds in the sensorium. Mournful, small, entirely ineffectual at the work of the mind, barely daring to even peek at the other, never mind imagining he could speak. Anger closes down the aperture, like an airport sinking into madness. No one is going anywhere but we are all going at ourselves. In the actuality of our company those towering firs were very much alive, as vulnerable as are we elves, far now from our forests. My wants intensify. You cannot purse your lips disapprovingly in any convincing way because You are the beautiful woman and I know what You have said about Beauty Yourself: the thing about beauty is it makes the world appear. All one can do is see—and of course experiment with the ways in which language intensifies one's sight, particularly one's peripheral vision.

According to the law of Paranoia the other side has more of everything. As a consequence we accumulate more of everything ourselves, particularly munitions, though in our clearer moments we understand we actually had more of everything from the start, including munitions. Every intimacy of interior space speaks to me of a past I have not attended to, a newcomer yet to win the slightest sympathy, a little boy amongst sparkling females, an ignoramus among great sages of the mind and shapes of the body.

Fitterman and Place solve the problem of subjectivity and objectivity by writing from the point of view of "sobjectivity".

One laughs, as I did the first time I heard Fitterman mention the concept in his car, driving back to Manhattan.

Sobjectivity of incommensurable difference, and yet here we are only inches apart.

Sobjectivity, which gives primacy to the suffering of all those things too shy to call attention to themselves as present, or valuable, or finally even, as sad.

The world shouldn't have been created and yet it was.

Therefore I'm not going to make a big stink about not cutting the phrase "tree of voices" from my text.

In fact, I wish I possessed the dexterity to climb it.

Because of *sobjectivity* I feel free to imagine the voice of a suitcase, of a sock, of a rotting log or a crack in the sidewalk.

14

Neither royal rationality nor rhetorical mastery will stop the voice that sings the genealogy of the gods from pestering us; unfortunately, neither will either of these permit a new flowering. Far from plunging into inner reality the official language spoken here is designed to chloroform us. ("better physical poison than brainwashing" —Pound.)

By contrast: I was King of the apartment and very happy in that kingdom, however small, even when my brother moved into the bedroom. The whole project of that family was so optimistic and well-grounded that even forty years later I'm still bathed in bliss. All the words, new. All the light, clear. How did others transmit their well being to me so powerfully, particularly when I was small? The drone of some insect going from flower to nettle—and hopefully, from nettle back to flower—isn't in the least bit demoralizing and so one ventures out further into the meadow, sure of one's impenetrability to any sting. Meat, drink, clothing, lodging, water to wash with, steak and coffee for breakfast sometimes since one is getting older and has always been fussy, even strange, when it comes to food. (The percolator percolates the coffee so that we will be alert, the steak makes us strong as lions.)

That blasé look, that bored look, that vaporous look, that impudent look, that cold look, that inward look, that dominating look, that voluptuous look, that catlike look—I took it all in with one look and ran the other way in terror, Your image eclipsing everything else, blinding me to the machine-washed t-shirts and jeans all around me.

So the mind rebels against the leap the body demands. The cities fold over and over in a kind of reverse Odyssey. High ceilings with peeling plaster walls and nicked, ornate molding, cities worn by war so deeply the refurbishing can't hide their inner scars, fading splendor of the Old World one wanted to become a part of, before falling back into The New World, the furthest extremity of the Newest World, The Land Of Endless Elbow Room, foliage as friend, no foe but boredom.

The incomprehensible is a commentary on the official language, or a fresh face exuberant over its own organs and curious about the Other's concealments, or

tongue and heart, or tongue and heart and memory, or the old dream of a lithe prose, leaping from peak to peak.

Later You pitted Yourself against the triumph of the one language. You wore Your pleasures like shells on a necklace and when that was torn from Your chest You remembered Your pleasures as beacons of your right.

When presented with Your metaphysical arrest, You screamed. You did not pretend such an arrest could possibly be normal, that one could go on with one's breakfast or accommodate such pain to life on the job. You accused every one of us of having abandoned the conversation, of leaving You on the sidewalk, desperate to find aluminum cans to exchange for cash with which to buy sustenance. Your inheritance had been robbed from You and You no longer knew where to pick up Your mail.

I searched for a way to help You but we weren't related.

Neither royal rationality nor the pomp of sensory masterhood was of any help. We would have to begin at the start. How could both of Your parents have done that to themselves? What did it matter that they had left You money?

15

It comes and goes, this invitation to touch a smooth, cool surface, to lead a cool, measured life. Words are mirrors but in order to reflect must become invisible to themselves. That isn't going to happen, much the way the Other Place rescinds itself just as we arrive. Do You know that moment? When one has traveled all that way and suddenly wonders why? The pretext for the journey suddenly revealed as flimsy, as absurd? The destination nothing like one's expectation, one's interior life exactly the same as what it was when one started? What was one hoping to accrue by embarking on this voyage from nowhere to nowhere? One will recover, but in that first panic...

A spear whistles as it flies past and strikes clean through one's neighbor's shoulder. He falls. One watches his soul flutter to Hades.

My body, however, provides scaffolding for an adventure that leaps in another way. It isn't as dangerous or as mortal as other people's but it does involve risks, what with all of us fighting for the time to proceed with such an adventure.

It is not good that time has come to be viewed as a scarce resource when, from a slightly altered point of view, time is all we have.

To splash time at one another like children in a pool at one range of our experience and then not have any time at all on the other...

Everything intact is ripe for Orphic dismemberment. Body parts becoming fertilizer and suggesting some sort of seasonal rite make everything seem larger, more continuous. For example a mechanic is called into the office and asked to account for a missing hydraulic pump. In fact, out of an impulse of sheer mischief he has buried the pump in a meadow near the garage. Would an adult really risk his livelihood just to frustrate his boss? Bury a pump in a meadow? There is something Orphic about burying a pump. The part needs to be severed from its utility. Inefficiency of one sort yields up time off the clock. There is an accomplished void and an unaccomplished void. One hopes that one's writing destabilizes the static yet stabilizes the piece that was about to

fall off and vanish into oblivion, letting that piece continue to exist in such a way as to be the fragment it was tending towards.

The brutalizing battle to hear oneself over the din of corporate pitches mitigates against all this. Not even the nine muses in unison can protect us from the bad universal. A sequence of references intercedes between oneself and one's own experience such that the experience itself is rendered inaccessible. A sequence of references produced by one's economic dependency on the sources of those references fends off the ideas stemming from an uncommodified impulse.

It will be interesting to see if my mention here of "The Kindle" is dated in a year.

The reaction against the internet in the form of more and more arresting book art is one healthy sign.

Book Art asks us to feel what we read, in the most tactile sense of "feel".

The dermatologist tells me "The Kindle" is here to stay. He read so in several magazines. His wife likes it, I mean she is addicted to it, etc. Before I can offer him a rejoinder about Book Art he cuts off a piece of me and throws it in a dish. I sense it is not going to be malignant.

The more a book contributes to an intimate conversation, the more it becomes like a voyage that ultimately seems transformational. Anything larger than an edition of 50 is probably a mistake. There really are magic spells. Some put us to sleep. Some keep us awake, refusing us sleep. Some reify both sleep and waking and one ends up knowing neither. Some give us everything, without prohibitions.

16

We have developed several sets of needs that cannot be satisfied in reality.

How we have come to do this is a complicated question, perhaps too complicated for cultural criticism to even offer an analysis of.

Yet it seems a crime to either remain silent, to acquiesce, or to force oneself to be satisfied with reality.

School yard politics provides a blueprint one later forgets for how not to get mugged by one's opponents, but it is no help at all when it comes to resisting larger systems.

At some abstract level everybody agrees to consider the matter of our complete disintegration, but at a more concrete level no one wants to even discuss it.

Odd what makes us bloom, what causes us to wilt. It simply isn't as predictable as a certain amount of sun, a certain quantity of water. If there are a range of values conducive to self-realization, and that range is determined to include enmity towards one's own people, how would that affect the educational system? A raccoon with only half a tail appeared near the house by day, presumably to avoid the other, healthier raccoons active at night. Our author is a similarly beggarly creature, as one may have already guessed.

It is still a mystery to me why, as a small boy, the faces of the children I took an immediate dislike to were the self-same kids I ultimately became friendly with.

A fool looks around, at a total loss; I was at a total loss, but I didn't look around, I couldn't look up, I didn't look inwards, and I certainly could not meet Your gaze.

Anyone might be rendered blind and mute, be overcome by shame and fear, be condemned to love at a distance.

Consistent with the suppleness of water and a certain stream through the subterranean layer of this text is the recognition that one needs absence in order to know that one exists.

To do something by absolutely refusing to do it, by refusing to even consider doing it, to refuse to even consider the possibility of it being done, etc., until one works one's way clear round the dial to its actual accomplishment.

A fire burning in the lobby fireplace both attracted and repelled me. I felt an almost physical nausea looking at its leaping flames. It must have been the phony domesticity of it, the appeal to hearth and home, when all they wanted was my money. And yet I do like fire places.

Conflicts set in when Your spirit grows heavy, at least I assumed it was Your sudden spiritual heaviness that was the cause since I sensed no change in myself. Of course it could have been because I did not sense the change in myself, or even because I had not changed, because I had refused to change, that the conflicts broke out in the first place.

The drake became aggressive and I beat him with a club till blood streamed from his bill. And still he kept on coming at me. By the end I was exhausted, he was still alive, and it wasn't clear which of us was more brutal, me or the duck. In the smallest, most everyday matters the archaic world and the world of mass produced objects engage in similarly titanic clashes.

The more a book contributes to an intimate conversation, the more it becomes like a voyage that does ultimately seem transformational.

Anything larger than an edition of three is probably a mistake.

17

Suddenly my spirit soars. (It had taken me forever to beforehand sink.)

And in the mirror of memory… well, there is no longer such a mirror.

In spite of this, or maybe because of it, what I choose to say to You I choose to say right now, in full consciousness of what I am saying, for only us to hear.

The authoritarian posture that demands an audience pony up already and worship the superstar actually has no influence over any aspect of our conversation. (If there is a mirror of memory at all it reflects back only images of long walks alone in freshly ploughed fields.)

Of course Your response is kept from my eye and ear even though the structure of our exchange cries for direct communication.

You fade into a caricature of unbridled desire.

The white clown of content, as in the first sight after driving through a long tunnel….

I assumed this stage of my life would be much easier than it really is. I worry about things like "health" and "security" for the very first time, now that I "have" them.

Clinging close to the thing one finds oneself rotating around it at greater and greater distance.

A torrent of words to describe the torrent, yes, but the lightening, the thunder, and the road washed away would require other forms of language. Stone eyes look seaward and nothing can move them to look towards the land, nothing but dynamite.

I think the three sons have a good chance of outliving their parents, as is natural, but who can say what will happen tomorrow morning with its traffic accidents and random shootings.

A mist passes before our eyes and we know not whether to call it dream or practicality, mist or mistake.

The boomerang of a really satisfactory day, the intrigues and minefields and great horny claws that constitute the universe… wind carries sand from the remote East to the here and now, a sedimented river of breeze.

Too much energy has already been frittered away winging the dodge ball back and forth, aiming for each other's faces.

Your lithe form leaping from the boat.

As if the avalanche of the familiar had never occurred.

Only from the vantage point of emptiness does any of this make any sense at all.

24

You know the way, still, some older women cast themselves as irrelevant in the affairs of men? While on the other hand other older women are in fact always absolute? I know of one such absolute who only wants to go to sleep, in all her power.

Here sleep could mean to become irrelevant, at least from the point of view of Power: the sleeper surrenders her will and departs the plain of contested space. She was asleep, we awoke her, she complains of it, directs us elsewhere, and asks to be left alone to return to her slumbers.

She no longer wants to answer any of our questions, or solve any of our problems, or give any of us the decisive piece of advice: she only wants to be allowed to go back to sleep. Its not that she doesn't care, it's just that she is very, very tired. She asks us again to let her go back to sleep. Instead we say something that kindles some interest in her: yes, her child is well. Yes, her child will soon awaken too. Yes, her child is no longer a child. This strikes her all as news, though we had always assumed she knew everything already. Momentarily troubled, then reassured, she asks again to be left to her sleep. She insists on this without ever becoming insistent. She demands it, without ever making demands. She remains absolute. She wants to sleep.

She remains absolute and she wants to slide into the cliff and become a piece of the mountain, to sleep like the side of some dead volcano. She is absolute, but she wants to be buried under the earth, as if slumber were soil and sleeping was in truth going under the ground forever.

But she doesn't ask for death, she asks for sleep. Her consciousness remains liminal. She simply wants to be left to herself. For her, life is no longer with the others. She will not haunt her daughter. She will not haunt her lovers. She simply wants to be left alone. As I say, she's very tired. She is very, very tired and she needs to sleep. She is already asleep even while she speaks with us. If one looks more closely one can see she is no longer listening to anything but her sleep. Her lips are moving but her eyes are closed.

Her wisdom, which is absolute, always grew from sleep, but before it grew from sleep's topmost layer, which was dream. Now her dreams evaporate like water, leaving only the undergirdings of that absolute—loose cliff becoming decomposing soil, decomposing soil ever finer ground, lids too heavy to hold up a second longer. She is already no longer who she was. Her power isn't so much dissipating as it is redistributing itself into the force of things, that very plane of contested space we others seem to think we must contest. As indeed we old men and young women must.

It would be wrong of us to keep her awake. Our contestations, then, should be done in quiet and without poison, since poison inevitably seeps into the ground, the very ground we must protect, the very basis of our contestations.

A young man purposely awakens the nearest danger, deposes it, and capitulates to a great danger flowing from himself, of which he is unaware. She sleeps through all the dangers.

Like her we must encounter our sleep as if it were wakefulness, treat our waking as the lightest of dreams. Rain sleeps falling down, we sleep lying down, she sleeps like a volcano.

In order to awaken, first we must really sleep.

DANIEL BORZUTZKY

DOS POEMAS

El Aspecto Sincrónico de la Locura Severa

Los adolescentes embarran con sangre los torsos de perros y niños.

Y la quietud en descomposición es emboscada por los ángeles de las personas anglosajones en 7-11.

Y las llamadas telefónicas a "los pastores en su amarillo maizal" son colocadas en el cráneo mediante disparos.

Un lugareño muere y su primo compra un billete de lotería en la bodega local.

Araña y refunfuña y pone una bomba en el tanque de basura del callejón.

Tras la detonación todos los tanques de basura son retirados para protegernos de lugareños y primos.

Y tenemos miedos de nosotros mismos así como tenemos miedo de los filetes gigantes de bife de Inglaterra.

Y tenemos miedo de las torres de inmundicia en nuestras calles.

Y tememos por conveniencia y tememos por ternura.

Y tememos por amor y tememos por inocencia.

Y nos conectamos al mundo alumbrando con nuestros faros delanteros a los hombres sentados en sus carros que se masturban con la imagen de la oscuridad.

Y los muchachos que no pueden imaginarse un mundo diferente, fachan carros sólo por divertirse.

Y mientras los inmigrantes ilegales se esfuerzan por explicar sus enfermedades, las oraciones se derrumban bajo el peso de la sintaxis.

Y las morenitas cantan:

Yo! tengo! congestión! pulmonar!

Yo! tengo! cólera!

Yo! tengo! flebitis!

En Otras Palabras

El niño al cual supuestamente le pateé la cara no tiene cara. Y si tuviera cara, por qué habría él de pegármela bajo el pie, pie que no tengo. Y si yo de verdad tuviera un pie, porqué habría de patear cuando podría bailar o zapatear o sacudirse.

Camino en muletas, una media en el muñón para detener la sangre que gotea, aunque a veces mi sangre gotea, y cuando gotea se coagula, y cuando se coagula me convierto en ladrillo, y descanso entre otros ladrillos pues no tengo lenguaje para apartarme, y caer en la ciudad fortificada donde todos los poetas son gangsters, donde todos los banqueros son poetas, y donde la única diferencia entre un banquero y un gangster es su enfoque del ritmo y la sintaxis.

Hay un gallo que picotea en este muro. Piensa que es un perro. Aúlla; orina en este muro en el cual no soy más que un ladrillo, este muro me impide ver cómo las palabras que escribo impiden que me pudra, impiden que mi polvo se mezcle en propiedad con el polvo amarillo de la guerra.

Sin el arte de la exageración, la guerra sería aburrida. La observaríamos desde nuestros hogares, notando su alquimia en el modo en que notamos el chillido de un pájaro lejano al atardecer. Y el chillido de un pájaro lejano al atardecer no sería más que una ocasión para escribir un poema ocasional acerca de lo que oímos pero no vemos, acerca de lo que vemos pero no percibimos, acerca de lo que percibimos pero no conocemos.

Todo lo que llega a su fin como poesía empieza como sangre e infamia.

Traducción de Omar Pérez

AMISH TRIVEDI

THREE SPRING POEMS

Banryu, Not Banryu

For Scott Schnell

I
Sometimes the clouds open for no one:
an image beaming across the morning sky.
A soul lit from two points,
reflecting back a convex god.
Calling to it,
there is only the echo of a valley underneath,
stretched out and welcoming.

Arms are made of moisture
and a halo is just the eyes
wanting to see.

The sun is arcing back there,
waste of a shaking gaze.
The vertical road is laced with chains
to mark a descent.

The trees bend silent towards the summit,
expecting a flash to drench them all.
The moments where the back light strikes
and boils the mountain
turn a scattered architecture into vapor
pouring through the sky.

II

In another word,
this place is like any infected limb. What was supposed to be
captured in a line is gushing,
pouring red over the tiles.
All the letters
that were supposed to be sent
I sent today.

A likeness sits in prayer posture,
a pose reserved by history
for those that lend space to victory.
A light scuttles up
and into the creases made when tree limbs flicker
for settling ash.
A second feature of light:
an ability to close space between vision
and sight; say omniscient again.
Fluttering slows to spasm
as the fluid earth becomes a wave.
Days spent with tiles branding the face,
the collapse of a moment into never.

III

Traces that make up
this specter, an expectation that burdened the day before.

I found another way to slip across unseen.

To make up a universe,
split it and render it bullet-riddled.
To breathe a mountain of ash
and force a sentence from your lungs.
To change the mirrors
that make up the day and flood it.

The sun
settles
behind
the mountains,
a relief,
if you know
your shadows.

At a Static Funeral

I've been dislocated
from everywhere, another
moment of time
building up to burst. If
all the movies I've seen
are true, then the embrace
is welcomed though
unavoidable. It must be
wonderful to wait
and space out all
these moments
into a collage of
sensations: the luxury
of pretending you can
avoid the wheel as it
breaks off the hearse
and cracks against the wall
next to you. It's such a strange
thing, I must admit, to be trapped
between the last thoughts
you'll ever have, and those thoughts
being of moments that are long
past. The sentences that have been
passed down are wrapped up and
sent for slaughter and I seem to
recall your eyes reddening as your
entire body shook with
laughter.

The Stoplight in Turin

A list of things that happen when your hair goes up:
Texas secedes from the Union and becomes a cage
of America's raging libido;
any dull stars sulk and fire out.
My underlying dream:
you waiting on a made bed and my fantasy:
socks.

One clumsy note
later I'm talking
about the way
your ears curl up
and graze on the
twists of your hair.

I bore diseases on paint mixers
made of aluminum and
spare car parts.
My vision of you's like kissing a tree:
I can't stand up anymore.
All the veins left to cut.

KRISTINA MARTINEZ

THREE POEMS

Diablerie

Eat three bone-bleached seeds and you are tethered to the underworld.
Back then, the sea
made fools of everyone.

An intellectual man, he refused to be alarmed by dull prattle.

Soon the perfume became a fixture in town.
It intoxicated, like the circlets of petals brides wore.

He thought he'd earned the right to her.
The refashioning possessed him; he'd toil late into the night,
emboldened by orange blossom.

The task was an opiate; it lulled him.

He had desired—something
less—something

close to the civility of those
old porticoes—Why let it go to waste—

the form? Still beautiful—
Still—capable of being.

Theater for Old Men

Rumor was the rumors were becoming harder to ignore.

The whole thing had become a farce.

Her body caved.
First the insides,
like old lipstick, yellowed.
Then, the scaffolding gave way.

Not mask nor wig
(out of her own dark thicket)
could humanize this love.

Boys dared.
They snuck glimpses of the sleeping beauty
who was neither asleep
nor beautiful, but terribly
barnacled.

So the costuming grew more elaborate.

To the old man's repertoire,
one could now add
master of disguises.

And he was proud.
How he could
resuscitate time.

Columned in silken kimono,
the years tottered.

Neighborhood cats
disappearing
through an impossible narrow.

Aviatrix

Even at this altitude,
the fine print is visible

along the bird-
body of archipelago.

Rib on rib,
a hollow

inside a hollow.
The hunger checked,

I swallow fear
that rickety pedestrian bridge.

Constellations
arrive on stilts.

Wasp-legged
Orion

loosening his belt,
engining

a brusque awareness of order.
Night

gropes trees'
bundles of human hair.

Moon—a prism
mobile of dust.

Like pocket encyclopedias,
we've evolved.

Let us catalogue
the star-wall as it appears

this hour, funneled
to a rope of cloud.

I have been out
in strange weather.

Watched the dials spin
loose from logic.

I have seen the gray
gather itself like a woman

wading into the shallow.
I trust the arms of the waters.

Endless, variegated blue
disrobing to calcareous horizon.

GABRIEL BERNAL GRANADOS

MANIFIESTO CONTRA EL SER DE LA PALABRA [ESCOLIOS]

La escritura carece de guía. No hay beduino que soborne el camino emprendido, sin huellas, en la arena. Borradura, desposeimiento, eliminación del yo como medida de un acontecer en cierto grado repugnante. [Rimbaud, pese a haber escrito poemas líricos incendiarios, no deja de sugerir todo el tiempo, en las entrelíneas manifiestas de su obra, que el lirismo apesta.] [Lirismo entendido como prolongación de lo sublime —nada más aberrante que las lágrimas.]

≈

Con los primeros meses del año viene la poesía. Al menos así ocurrió con *Ariosto*. Esta serie de poemas se *filtró* de un primer poema con fisuras evidentes, "Cuando después es ahora". Fisuras o vacíos retóricos que hacían necesaria una revisión de los elementos que habían conformado esa experiencia anterior y que orillaban a adelgazar, aún más, los versos, las líneas constitutivas de la razón poética de acuerdo con unidades cromáticas situadas, siempre, mucho más en el oído que en un ojo avizor-generador de imágenes.

Arquitectura musical, naipes que se componen y descomponen en el aire de una sinfonía que excluye el coro. Sinfonía de instrumentos mínimos; sonatas,

como quería el músico John Cage, para piano de juguete, armadas en el eterno confín del blanco enquistado en la atmósfera del negro.

Ariosto significa que hay un punto siempre anterior a la escritura del poema, muralla infranqueable que no se abate tal y como propone el esquema tradicional de la palabra escrita (a y en seguida b y en seguida c, suponiendo la escala intelectual del pensamiento lógico);

un espacio anterior donde el ritmo de un cuerpo detenido se descompone, frente al ojo insomne del artista, en la serie de poliedros que constituye *su* idea;

la idea del cuerpo o su aspecto negativo, entendido esto como un estado primordial: ensayo previo a la irrupción de la palabra y su cauda de signos contradictorios;

cauda de aromas y no-imágenes,

colores y sonidos (silencios/ vacíos)

(no-forma, huecos en blanco, apercepción del sentido y la sintaxis);

la ilusión, en suma falaz, de que en los habitáculos sensoriales y despoblados del cuerpo se encuentra la región apetecible de la palabra poesía.

≈

"El poema es un objeto hecho de palabras." Así lo quería Emilio Adolfo Westphalen, esgrimiendo, alrededor de los setenta, una poética que constituía la negación de sus primeros libros, *Las ínsulas extrañas* (1933) y *Abolición de la muerte* (1935). [¿Una negación o simplemente *un olvido*?] Siguiendo esta línea de pensamiento, que tiene todavía en el dramático Westphalen al poeta como conductor o como medio a través del cual se genera el efecto poético, contaminándolo o determinándolo de una manera, por imprecisa, no menos cierta, el poema se convierte en un reflejo, y la poesía en el metal pulido donde éste se produce. Drama de apariencias en la caverna platónica, situaciones inaprensibles que nos llevan a la simultaneidad [cancelada] de la página;

oquedades, veneración por la palabra, entendida ésta como escultura mínima, catedral que se posa en el espacio yermo de lo suprasensible. Él y Ella, la pareja primordial, metáfora de todo lo creado y lo increado.

El espacio puede poblarse de palabras en todas direcciones. Las letras pueden colmar el espacio y hacernos descreer del sentido original que les hemos

conferido por un capricho, por una ironía del destino. Y al fondo de todo, como realidad ulterior, el ojo

(espejo por antonomasia), ojo que agoniza o que deslíe, ojo eternamente agredido por los signos.

≈

Sobre una hoja comienza con un epígrafe de Coleridge, que proclama al ojo como entidad autónoma, disociada del cuerpo e íntimamente, si uno presta atención a las entrelíneas del poema, ligada a él:

Him that is utterly blind, nor glimpses the fire that warms him;
Him that never beheld the swelling breast of her mother;
Him that smiled in his gladness as a babe smiles in its slumber;
Even for him it exists, it moves and stirs in its prison;
Lives with a separate life, and "Is it a Spirit?" he murmurs:
"Sure it has thoughts of its own, and to see is only a language."
("Hexameters")

El ojo ve y es mudo. Atestigua para sí. Sin embargo, al volverse hacia los acantilados interiores de sus percepciones, despliega una arquitectura que es dable historiar. Nosotros, obstinados, recogemos los guijarros que han quedado sepultados en la arena...

el ojo como órgano desprendido incluso de sí mismo el vínculo generador de la falta de sentido, que da realidad a lo mirado. Aquí el poema se convierte en el *cristal de los acontecimientos*: tela transparente donde las palabras se someten al trance del juicio.

Las palabras *no son imagen*, siempre ligada ésta última a la sombra insubstancial de un referente subjetivo; son entidades concretas que entran en acuerdo con sus semejantes o colisionan con ellos, generando un caos.

El poema deviene "arena de los acontecimientos"; ya no es el objeto tanto como el lugar donde los objetos se acoplan o se crispan, en concordancia o discordancia unos con otros.

La tela, el cristal

For the eyes of the mind are proofs.
Louis Zukofsky, "A"-12

Un hilo de agua
re corre
el panel

Las yemas
de sus dedos
finos
dibujan el paisaje:
una línea ondulada

≈

Cuántos latidos
pue de latir un corazón?

≈

Toda belleza es trautológica
—he dicho— y Cioran
es el paisaje: tierno
e inalcazable, aunque
esté ahí, tras el cristal.

Aunque esté ahí,
a la distancia de mi brazo
al tacto de mi mano
las líneas de mi mano
los surcos
el campo

≈

"El amor no mira con los ojos sino con la mente
—es ciego."

≈

Cuántos latidos
puede latir un corazón?

edades
inviernos
segundos
árboles tenues / enceguecidos
veamos si no:

la lenta carrera
de la hormiga
recorriendo
el tallo
de la flor

el eterno bostezo
mineral
de la montaña
que contiene un mecanismo
el elongamiento engañoso
del sauce
la palmera
el níspero

la velocidad de la cruz
contra el paisaje
encendido
y amarillo

la repetición de la palabra
volcánica
el beso
la perforación
de la carne
los ojos
azules
en las cuencas
del gato
la hora
el desastre
la calma
el agua
la nave
la rama
de olivo
en el pico
del ave.

Arte povera

un cuenco
vacío
las líneas de
mi manos
son Asia
el agua
la luz
escancia
contra
mis rodillas
genu
flexionadas
chartreuse verte
arbitraria (mente)
desciende
la sombra
en la luz
la luz
en la sombra
del otro
segmento
menos débil/ menos lábil
menos yo
acaso lúbrico
rubor índigo
para sus labios
glosa vertical
que transige
hacia
la brutalidad
del ocaso

PÁJARO:

traza de gis /
en la pizarra

EMILY JONES

TWO POEMS

We Are Inalienable to Eachother

I am delighted right now by how we are absolutely inalienable. We are
Strange though but this would be so that everything else is wonderful
For it's where we were reared in the spotless bum of the oil painter. It is his vision I come
In the distance, over the city are grey plumes so I get to go to France and Austria! I'm shirtless
And I'm going over there. I am from the Industrial Revolution because when I saw the pictures
My eyes were overwhelmed with recognition. My brown hair was going crazy
Standing and waving like a signpost at the exit to crazyland. I was made flushed inside.
I saw the pictures and so I knew that these events had occurred. This is how I became
Inalienable. I know we nodded to eachother when we both saw clearly that next
To them my skin was brown, but I was the same as them anyway. We were as one.
I showed them my books and they made me shoes. We walked and talked a lot
And I'm still there even now. In fact I am convinced that we are inalienable.
Industry, the sea, and you, is in my eyes. My eyes and probably my sight
Now are made out of it and this cannot be reversed.

Coves Town

the ocean comes

this is how it goes:

bouncing stones

do this
as if,
by the roundy moon
also rounded
but as if by a palm

as hunks stay
put and heave their own
like,
each were
the watery
twin
of a distant stadium

but this is the way it is:

the ocean slams the red
green coves with itself

the ocean brings itself
to all its ocean things

its mud sucks the globe
when it comes back

REYNALDO JIMÉNEZ

LA ALUCINACIÓN QUE PIENSA

El mundo del poder es un mundo vacío de sentido, fuera de la realidad. La poesía es una mística de la realidad. El poeta busca en la palabra no un modo de expresarse sino un modo de participar en la realidad misma. Recurre a la palabra, pero busca en ella su valor originario, la magia del momento de la creación del verbo, momento en que no era un signo, sino parte de la realidad misma. El poeta mediante el verbo no expresa la realidad, sino que participa de ella.

Aldo Pellegrini

Y aún más, en cierto modo, la estancia *propia de Latinoamérica, en tanto su escritura no ha sido pensada, ni comprendida, esta América no existe todavía y perfectamente podría no existir jamás. Al contrario, los "etc." y los "indios espirituales", existen, de una manera visible y evidente.*

Patricio Marchant

Y en el interior del poeta existe un corresponderse que, cuando su poema es real no se quiebra contra la vida.

MAB

Hablar de Miguel Ángel Bustos es, en contexto, referirse a un poeta y un militante desaparecido, desde el 30 de mayo de 1976, a manos de la dictadura militar argentina, tanto como, a partir de entonces, es referirse a una obra poética

secuestrada de la consideración pública a lo largo de la dictadura civil-policiada y económica de la misma nacionalidad, que perdura, sin visos de alteración, hasta este año de 2008: treinta y dos después de la desaparición física de Bustos, a la que siguió la otra violencia, nada simbólica por cierto, del supuesto no-registro de esta obra única. A diferencia de otros autores desaparecidos (Urondo, Walsh) durante el mismo período —salvo Tilo Wenner, todavía objetado en términos de obra poética— y porque, dada su perturbadora luz, no puede de ninguna manera ser "recuperada" a fines externos, meramente conmemorativos, la presencia de Bustos ha permanecido durante al menos tres décadas escamoteada de todo panorama real de lectura.

Como ha sucedido otras veces, sin embargo, incluso en casos en que hubo que esperar hasta siglos para que una obra fuese reunida o simplemente publicada, esta obra ha continuado encendida en su ansiedad y su misterio en las formas de difusión en verdad habituales con que suele irrigar la poesía. El fervor y el *secreto claro* (Murena) en tal sentido acompañaron a la poesía de Bustos, oculta sólo a quienes por uno u otro motivo estaban o están esperándola: lo sabrán recién cuando puedan leerla, recorrerla, convivir con ella, en ella sobresaltarse o reír, incluso, para ella: su ingrediente revulsivo de humor negro, su desapego del timorato prejuicio o temor a "no ser entendido". Hablar de Bustos, por lo mismo, es volver sobre esa entrega total del ser que llamamos todavía inspiración. Sabemos que esta palabra designa, en ciertos ambientes cerrados a todo lo que no sea la cultura en su versión dominante, las entronizaciones "actuales" de lesa cultura, un cierto tipo o calidad de atención que de hecho no se transfiere ni necesariamente se aprende en "los libros de poesía". Y ambos términos, inspiración y sensibilidad, son cosas de las que no se habla sino con cierto desdén, o con condescendencia, cuando no con vergüenza ajena. La superstición llamada Época abona, por ahora, la presunción de la autoría poética en una sola dirección, es decir sin intervención conductora por parte de la materia, verbal en este caso, como si no fuera el lenguaje quien conduce a la inteligencia y a la intuición capaces de encarnarlo reunidas en la inspiración. Como si escribir poesía fuese un área de la producción, como si se pudiese fabricar poesía a partir de algún decreto de existencia en alguna medida demostrable. Ante ello, la poesía de Bustos no ha dejado de acrecentar, durante

estos treinta años de silenciamiento, una materialización verbal inspirada; por ello mismo inspiradora.

Hubo en el período aquella fugaz mención de Cortázar y sobre todo la antología con prólogo de Alberto Szpunberg y editada por José Luis Mangieri, que tuvo y tiene el valor de afirmar la contundencia de esta poesía, esta presencia de todos modos poderosa en tanto alcance de una escritura y de una apuesta vital. Pero es recién ahora que se hace justicia poética, cuando esta obra por fin es publicada en su integridad por la editorial Argonauta, no casualmente fundada por Aldo Pellegrini, uno de los interlocutores constantes de Bustos, a través de sus respectivos hijos Mario y Emiliano, que podrá ser por fin apreciada sin más recortes. Se propicia, así, el momento para trazar algunos comentarios respecto a esa condena de acallamiento establecida durante tanto tiempo. Y sabiendo de todos modos que la publicación apenas garantiza el recomenzar constante de la lectura de un poeta: no habría otro modo de leer poesía que releyéndola, conviviendo con ella en el tiempo, probándola a través de la propia diversidad interior.

No nos preguntaremos por la puntual distribución de grados de responsabilidad de éste, como de tanto otro silenciamiento que nos aqueja en tan diversos órdenes de la experiencia. Pero insistiremos, aquí y siempre, en el hecho de que también es autoritaria la sociedad supuestamente democrática que, además de desentenderse de uno o muchos (así está la situación) de sus más auténticos poetas por la cloaca del silenciamiento, substrae durante el mayor tiempo de retención posible, mediante el artilugio de las mil excusas circunstanciales, el acceso a una bien determinada intensidad, que habita precisamente la palabra, la realidad de la palabra en los tratamientos particulares de esta específica obra.

Digamos también, y no de paso, que los esfuerzos por borrar lo que aquí llamamos verdadera poesía —y no mero uso, con mayor o menor destreza, de un repertorio de recursos formales adquiribles— son la necia gesticulación de un estado de cosas, bloqueando con rigidez de dique mental el flujo de los significados en los signos, la resignificación continua que implica la instancia inspiradora. Como si la sola violencia de existir requiriera además de un subrayado bloqueador que coadyuve a organizar el borramiento, instalar esta costumbre de ensayar el olvido, acallar todo aquello que viniera a desmentir el reducto perceptual, el casillero mental. Y esto sobrepasa el ara de la consideración colocando

solamente a la violencia, en tanto ella misma y sólo ella, supuesta única posibilidad de vínculo, ya sin devenir, coagulado en la repetición del ocultamiento, del no darle la palabra a quien, como Bustos, precisamente supo, como pocos, tener palabra: dar cumplimiento, en la palabra expresiva, nada menos que a una conexión indomeñable con la multiplicidad constitutiva de la experiencia. Pues, si como Bustos afirma, "falta poesía en la vida argentina", la negación de esta poética, y justamente ésta, es algo que no debe pasarse por alto y sobre lo que habrá que continuar insistiendo, a fin de romper de algún modo y aunque fuera por algunos segundos, con este hechizo masivo de estupidización y de inercia del que, por supuesto, es sólo uno —no cualquiera— de tantos casos de consideración. Bustos reflexiona acerca de negaciones similares en una reseña, que se ha encontrado incompleta, sobre Paul Verlaine:

> Hasta sus pecados, que a él le parecieron tan terribles, se han convertido en modo de comunicación, en crudas "relaciones públicas" entre seres dormidos. Pues, ya nada asusta, salvo el riesgo y la temeridad de alcanzar los límites. Todo está permitido mientras se ejecute la atrocidad en el seno de la sacra y santa sociedad.
>
> Pero ese salto mortal que es el arriesgarse por siempre y para siempre en una poesía que fue análoga a la de François Villon aun no viviendo en la edad de aquel, sino en ciudades y casas y hechos cerrados que prefiguraban ya el acoso de nuestro mundo, hicieron de Verlaine una "gloria" que debe mantenerse distante.

Si bien toda escritura poética es, puede ser, a su incanjeable modo, pensamiento, en Bustos en particular se recibe el vértigo y hasta el trance pánico de un despliegue del pensar en varias dimensiones. Y este es un aporte, en cuanto entrega, donación a la comunidad de la lengua —que subsiste, pese a todos los diques— que incluye lo artístico pero *va* más acá. O bien recupera para lo artístico ese valor *animal*, inhumano en eso humanísimo que implica salir-se de sí para que lo que se reintensifique una y otra vez sea el lenguaje o, mejor aun, las conexiones vivas en el lenguaje. Bustos interviene mediante una escritura que, con la simultaneidad de planos concurrentes, compone un mandala pulsante, tanto en reciprocidad y confluencia de ambos hemisferios cerebrales

cuanto en transmisión de una lengua dentro de la lengua. Como si dijésemos: un readentrar en *tempo* mítico, un percatarse del alma impersonal que atraviesa y recorre la lengua con la palabra. Pero no cualquier palabra: la palabra para un despertamiento.

Pero, sopesándolo ahora, quizá en Bustos no se realice el mandala estricto, adaptado injerto de una tradición u otra, sino una cualidad mandálica. Es decir: una elasticidad significante abarcadora por impregnación, por corporeidad, como sucede por ejemplo en la práctica de cultivo introspectivo de Klee —quien reflexionó, además, sobre asuntos semejantes en sus escritos y anotaciones, retomados a su vez por Bustos— al unísono de esas varias dimensiones. Riesgo a correr y que en ello se juega; sobre todo riesgo del sayo inquisitorial de "no ser entendido"; riesgo de todos modos de este destiempo cruel y miserable que por sistema niega unas inscripciones particularmente subversivas porque, una vez inscriptas en la página, continúan moviéndose, generando al interior del lenguaje nuevas posibilidades latentes de sentido. Subversión que acontece en y entre las relaciones materializadoras de un pensar. Un pensar incantatorio. Pero riesgo que se corre aun a pesar de cualquier voluntad o manipulación interpretativa posterior o paralela y aunque —no es un detalle menor— redunde en mortificación para el poeta (conciente en 360°). Si la negación del acallamiento ha venido pesando sobre la poesía de Bustos, será porque ésta sobrepasa con la mayor insubordinación toda falsedad, aun toda especulación, incluso la escala Rictus de lo predestinal, predelimitado. Lo traspasan el vate, el bardo, el que trova (*joglar* del *trobar clus*), el indagador sensible, el meditador, el viajero de un continente en extensión y en espesura sincrónica de conocimientos en danza. E integra todo esto y más en una mezcla superior, que se define únicamente por una constante y proteica transmutación en el lenguaje, ampliadora de la realidad. El acrecentamiento se transmite a la lectura.

Los fraseos de plano simultáneo de Bustos continúan moviéndose, a cada nueva lectura abren los más antiguos caminos, los únicos actuales, caminos que nadie, ni el propio poeta, devenido conector-atractor entre dimensiones, podría haber premeditado. En la poesía de Bustos se corrobora de inmediato, sin margen a sobornos ni papillas conceptuales, que la polidimensión está expresando un deseo impostergable de precisión. Y que esa precisión, con toda su urgencia

curativa —en cuanto a la curación pueda remitirse una labor con la palabra *en* la lengua, palabra del poema que, por otra parte, casi podría pasar por una insignificancia más en un mundo vuelto insignificante— se hace visionaria porque amplía la percepción ahí donde perturba el supuesto orden de las cosas. Porque da cuenta de *aquello* que el mundo no establece ni en algún sentido domina, aquello que no es un comando de la voluntad adquisitiva sino un asomarse al nacimiento ("con el ojo limpio del recién nacido", dice Bustos reseñando una edición de cuentos derviches y aludiendo al despertamiento del discípulo sufí).

Un calorfrío de epifanía y un abismo que draga, todo lo cual ocurre, en primera y última instancia circular, en el lenguaje, es decir acá, adonde, de pronto, como en acceso al arcano súbito, ya sin mediaciones, comprendemos sin asentar en ello la más ínfima dominación ni retención. Sin pretensión de posesión de lo comprendido ni de especulación manipuladora de lo vivido. Porque por la veta cordial de esa humildad para nada pretendida en Bustos, don del que desnudo adentro busca eso que no es exactamente "él" pero que en él habita mientras ora, mientras enfoca su palabra y se distrae adrede del sentimiento-imán de posesión, por ende se entreabre al deslumbramiento, cuarzo a su fulgor, al propio milagro de presencia, por aterrador que pueda ser el saberse tan desnudo a ciertas alturas, o soledades, y al milagro mismo de la conciencia, que lo expresa, es que abona un pensar. Que es un despensadero. Que es un frutecer. Que concibe a la lengua como un territorio sitiado adonde se coagula el sentido y que debe ser pasado, tamizado en tanto música de las ideas por la luz intraverbal. O, según Bustos, por el *sol antiverbal*. Pensar incantatorio a veces, alucinatorio, asimismo traspasado de la violencia ambiente y sin embargo plenificado de expansión interior y de alumbramiento cordial: luz del corazón.

Incluso al trasuntar determinados tramos de dolor, *espacios de dolor* (como en *Fragmentos fantásticos*, libro que por cierto cierra con la frase "Escucha mi corazón"), como en aquellos otros contados momentos en los que juega abrupto hasta el borde abisal de lo nominable, que atraviesa con ultrasonido arcaico, nunca apagado *infans* —no balbuceo, entonces, sino protolengua que emerge— la poesía de Bustos raya la superficie limitante de lo razonable rozando a su manera lo trasmental, lo extrasemántico y su furor con una ilación de curvas vocálicas acentuadas por su detenimiento justo en la boca del desafío:

> Pero nadie nadie me ESPORATA. Cuando muera, en una cuerda o un blanco río, dirán S U U U U U.
>
> Y me iré a los ESPORATAS con la sangre y mi corazón tejido. De qué ¡Oh TIMOMO TIMOMO!! Nadie es bello en este lado del culo mundial!...

Manifiesto de pasión ilimitada, no en otro sino "en este lado del culo mundial". Lo irremediable no se resigna ni se aposenta en el signo, cuya delicadeza afila la subversión *en* los signos, pero no en pro de lo revulsivo sino de esta carne consciente que es la conciencia cuando por fin, y siempre transitoriamente, encarna. Elemento revulsivo sin duda es la posición personal del poeta, su aludido riesgo, ya en términos de acción poética: volver a decir para seguir aprendiendo a decir. Posición que nos coloca, a la vez, en situación oportuna para seguir aprendiendo a leer y en la que Bustos define su acepción de compromiso con la comunidad en términos más amplios que los del recorte local, indesligable en él de su vivir en poesía:

> Creo que el tipo de poesía que hay hoy en la Argentina es una poesía de poetas, de individualidades. Creo que falta poesía en la vida argentina... Quiero decir que somos el único país desligado, gráficamente, del resto de Latinoamérica. Creo que hay una corriente que es válido recuperar; una corriente indoamericana que viene haciéndose ver en varios poetas, a partir de México, a través de toda Latinoamérica. Esa es la corriente que habría que recuperar. Convertir la poesía del continente en una poesía nacionalista, en una poesía india, en una poesía de arraigo, en una poesía para tratar de dar un antepasado. (...) Yo entiendo por nacionalismo el apoyo a ciertos continentes que son actualmente los más revolucionarios. Yo adopto una posición antieuropea total. Para mí, Europa es la causante de estar enamorado de un museo que es muy lindo para visitar y nada más. Pero quiero aclarar que nacionalismo es estar de parte de un mundo como es Asia, África y Latinoamérica y pelear por ese mundo. A ese nacionalismo me estoy refiriendo. No hablo de poesía argentina. Yo hablo de poesía asiática o africana o latinoamericana. Ese es el nacionalismo que yo entiendo.

Y aun más:

> Crearse una dependencia de lo que está hablando la gente es ser una crónica parlante de la poesía. Creo que es el caso de los shamanes. El shamán en una tribu, es aquel que tiene unas 40.000 o 50.000 palabras de vocabulario más que los otros. Pero también quiero decir que en esa persona se está dando una síntesis. Él no está oyendo a las generaciones anteriores, las actuales y las que vendrán. Se da una casualidad ahí, misteriosa y oculta por la que él puede transmitir verbalmente lo que esa gente está transmitiendo inconscientemente en algo colectivo.

Bustos es sin duda, en cuanto a lo más exterior de su poética, el menos "argentino" de los poetas de su generación, la llamada "del 60". Más bien cabría ver su vinculación profunda dentro de una constelación posible adonde gravitan otros escritores, mayores en edad que Bustos, como el mencionado Pellegrini y Jacobo Fijman, pero también Leopoldo Marechal (cuyo único prólogo para otro autor fue el que abre *Visión de los hijos del mal*), Manuel Mujica Láinez, David Vogelmann, Alberto Girri o Enrique Pezzoni, entre otros —o sea, algunos de los más intensos *lectores* y en una muy otra Buenos Aires, esmeradamente borroneada, hoy, para generalizado desuso de las generaciones.

Pero la filiación profunda indudablemente enlaza a Bustos con lo que él denomina "la visión armada de los videntes": Novalis ("desea que los contrarios se unan para que surja el ser capaz de 'soñar y no soñar al mismo tiempo...'"; "esta apasionada lucha por resolver en un nuevo término que 'sintetice' la contradicción inherente en todo fenómeno vivo es siempre una presencia fragmentaria y deslumbrante en la obra de Novalis"; "Primero aparecía el 'arco elástico del pensamiento': un modo de ir de un extremo al otro de una entidad para luego repetir el viaje. Así, lo sensible era espiritualizado y lo espiritual sensualizado; el cuerpo debía convertirse en alma y el alma en cuerpo; aquello que era extraño al hombre tenía que volverse familiar y lo familiar desaparecer, para revertirse en extraño"), Blake ("El tigre de Blake proviene de las profundidades donde se piensa el fuego, los metales. Las rebeldes preguntas del inglés a los cielos mudos, son activas, participan en la dialéctica de los elementos, y son el futuro evidente de ese tigre: no contempla, actúa"), Hölderlin ("revoluciona los elementos de la

misma enfermedad y la creación artística", "No es que (...) buscara quedarse solo, o intentara dar testimonio de la llamada soledad natural del hombre, sino que introducido en esa carencia que es lo ausente todo se vuelve inefable, inexpresable..."), Lautréamont ("poeta imaginario, errante eterno e invisible, enamorado de su anónimo destino", "alma que lucha en un cuerpo, (...) Lautréamont no se enmascaró con el único objeto de su violación en manos de la razón, las buenas costumbres, la tradición, la familia y el llamado sentido común con que se obstina en creer que vivimos en el mundo"; [*Los cantos de Maldoror*] "obra que actúa, (...) poema épico de la violación de un texto cuya *velocidad* se detiene en la imprenta, se detiene en la somnolencia o se aquieta, por fin, en los estudios prolijos y temerosos de aquellos que a falta de pruebas acumulan necedades y muy pocas certidumbres sobre el poeta que triunfó una única vez: cuando soñó que 'el bien siempre es violado por el mal'. Su obra es testimonio de este principio evidente"), Rimbaud ("Rimbaud mismo probó excitantes. Pero cuando se marchó de su casa era ya poeta. Lo demás fueron accidentes"), Artaud (*L'Angoisse qui fait les fous./ L'Angoisse qui fait les suicidés*) y Nerval ("una poesía que, como ninguna otra, nace de la interacción y fugacidad de los hechos cotidianos", "metamorfosis de los datos o circunstancias más inmediatas que llegan al campo de la conciencia en delirio lúcido o sueño en la vigilia, es decir, la 'experiencia fundamental'..."; "A Gérard le fue conferido aquel don escaso del cual gozó Nietzsche: ser lúcido en el tránsito por las regiones de la locura..."). Y, alineado a Nerval, Daumal ("apertura a la *otra parte* de la realidad visible"), cuya traducción autodidacta directamente del sánscrito védico del *Himno del hombre* Bustos califica como "maravillosa versión de las posibles fases o movimientos de cada palabra del célebre cántico, o la gramática sánscrita, que constituye en sí misma un discurso de la lengua ritual", para afirmar luego que Daumal "[d]esecha todos los postulados o categorías mentales del occidental del siglo XX, y considera a los Vedas como relatos de niños, pero niños en los cuales una singular iluminación ha logrado cambiar el espacio y el tiempo circundantes (...). Es de esta forma que hay que traducir: como partiendo de una luz central y no de un intelecto que sólo razona."

Junto a esta multánime filiación, no cabe duda de que Bustos pugna, y lo declara en diversas formas y momentos, por una lengua poética latinoamericana, que se hiciera carne de integridad, no mero reflejo exterior y en tal sentido refractario

a los espíritus o entidades que atraviesan, componen el alma-palabra. En este sentido y en relación a una lengua sin reducción localista —como en el coloquialismo urbanita, naturalista pero no por eso natural, en que cómodamente se instala el grueso de los poetas porteños coetáneos de Bustos (ese "espejo demasiado incierto de nuestra generación", a que alude al referirse a otra negación: la infligida sobre la obra de Marechal)— no deja de ser comprensiva su aproximación a las texturas de Lezama ("modo anular, de anaconda gigante"). Consigna su reseña alusiva de 1975: "una especie de sabio milagro que une el más puro español a la lengua que sólo puede hablarse en esta parte del mundo". Y sobre Neruda: "Constantemente hay en Neruda este ir y venir de lo terrestre a lo cósmico, pero lo cósmico no esotérico, lo cósmico mensurable, quizá alcanzable algún día". Y sobre Vallejo: "la materia expresa, materializándolo sin nombrar, lo que quiere expresar el poema. Para esto tiene que estar concebido con un profundo conocimiento de lo que *mueve la vida*. (...) Él *hizo la vida entera* con sus poemas. Fueron metidos de médula en médula. *Sus poemas se recrean por la visión rítmica que dejó hundida en ellos*" —para aguzar, casi de inmediato: "¿Cuándo es *real* lo que hemos visto?".

También en el recuento de su relación personal con Girri, a raíz de una entrevista que le hace, refiere su preocupación por una poesía capaz de transmutación activa y de condensación de algo más vivo que lo autoexpresivo o consensual ("hacer de la palabra un proceso natural hacia el silencio inocente"):

> [Con Girri] Nos identificaba un peculiar misticismo, un común amor por la palabra trabajada y convertida en poema, el conocimiento de que sólo en los límites extremos de esa búsqueda comienza a actuar una conciencia diferente cuya libertad y cuya sujeción son parte del silencio. Un silencio que Girri persigue como coronación de esa lucha de treinta años emprendida contra las apariencias y los engaños que velan lo que él llama la "real realidad".

Por encontrarse lejos, como se comprueba, de cualquier *a priori* de "poesía argentina" —en el sentido de venir a confirmar una imagen preestablecida para uso rutinario—, un aparente anacronismo, en primer plano, da relieve a una voluntad utópico-sincrónica en cuanto despliegue de lo imaginario, en tanto potencia de liberación. Es que además de su conexión con varios de los maestros

europeos y latinoamericanos (no siempre reconocidos de esta manera) de la poesía polidimensional, Bustos contrarresta como pocos, con sus conjuros, un proceso colectivo de desintegración de la conciencia perfectamente datable y consignable —el cual por cierto continúa, sistemático, haciendo masa en lo dividido y lo repetitivo y aposentando al vetusto poder de la opresión y de la infinita injusticia. Y partiendo del deseo, tanto deseo de justicia cuanto deseo de liberación en todo aspecto del ser, se implica Bustos en una fe en la fuerza transformadora del deseo y de la palabra cuando de aquél se hace portadora, y se manifiesta en tanto retribución en la voz que atraviesa a esta escritura. Ofrenda antiverbal con las palabras de todos, resignificadas mediante un esfuerzo de condensación energética, de resomatización del lenguaje, de reabsorción corpórea en lo plural y múltiple de los signos. Es una intervención política de la mayor delicadeza, porque de hecho no confirma, en ninguno de sus puntos fijos o de sus coágulos conceptuales, los supuestos dominantes con que se estructura nuestra sumisión sensorial, nuestra inercia manipulada.

Bustos se pronuncia con conocimiento de causa, pues se trata de un poeta que habita chamánicamente su palabra, pasando con ella, personificándola, habitado por su palabra, por todas las etapas de iluminación, crisis, padecimiento y mutación anímica. Y en esto la palabra del poema no podrá mentir; sin base en la experiencia, no hay cómo inventar intensidad —integridad— que no sea vivida. De esa conexión con lo transmutante, quizá sus pájaros, perros, gatos y tigres: aliados en lo intersticial, entre las "islas verbales", grados del devenir. Y ese constante devenir su lenguaje en lengua asociada a lo inhumano tanto como a lo transpersonal, contrarresta, con sus propias fuerzas, aquella disgregación y aquella fractura impuestas, portador de un deseo poderoso de transmisión energética a nivel verbal. Deseo que no es expresión de deseo sino desatadura del *sol antiverbal*, ese "sol que somos todos". Deseo que se constata ciertamente en la (trans)fusión que Bustos realiza, en el aparente recuadro de su teatro verbal —"manuscrito arcaico" de imagos semovientes, teatro de siluetas— entre la composición (el furor de fondo de su artesanato) y la polidimensión (la inocencia votiva de su aventurarse en lo ignoto). Todo de la mano de la intuición de uno de los artistas más inesperados, para quien la poesía no constituye consolación alguna sino un activismo alquímico: un contrapasatiempo. Si práctica de alineación con diversas

dimensiones, práctica de la confluencia. Es todo ese potens, ese *sol antiverbal*, lo que hace de esta obra poética un hito del más alto vuelo de un posible pensar *en* lengua. Hito y hiato: paréntesis en que la poética deviene práctica de vuelo. Lo que se sobrevuela es la cultura, el encadenamiento de las series, el artificio suturador de la continuidad.

Pensar, más que "pensamiento", en tanto intuición activa de la condición ideogramática de todo lenguaje, capaz de no refractar, de hacerse poroso, encarnarse y por tanto desarrollarse en la fragilidad que lo intenso cuida y quizá madura. Según la posible cronología, la definición de este desplazamiento hacia la amplitud del ser en el lenguaje, quizá pueda ubicarse a partir del balazo en el corazón. Nótese esta insoportable reciprocidad entre palabra y acto, este traspasar significado y significante: habiendo publicado en 1959 su libro *Corazón de piel afuera*, pocos años después, en 1964, Bustos se dispara al pecho, es decir retorna del lenguaje y asume corpóreamente la metáfora, en un autoinicio incomprensible o sólo comprensible desde los *espacios de dolor*. Y luego el dictamen psiquiátrico bajo el cargo de epilepsia, el paso por su Hospicio de Sacré Coeur, el triste depósito de seres humanos vivos en estado de abandono llamado Hospital Neuropsiquiátrico Borda, donde coincide con ese avatar del poeta devocional que es Jacobo Fijman. Fijman: poeta-pintor-músico-místico. Tal encuentro en semejante circunstancia no puede haberle sido ajeno a Bustos en su procura del ideogramandala o signo abarcante, signo encarnado, carne redesignificada. Declara un tiempo más tarde, ya en 1971, en una entrevista:

> Hace cinco años (comencé a dibujar). No estudié. Estoy haciendo, desde entonces, un diario gráfico, y ya tengo dos volúmenes completos de 500 páginas cada uno. Las imágenes corresponden a los días, en un intento de fusionarlas con lo verbal. Es la palabra dibujada, escribir en imágenes, tratar el verbo como algo manual, visible, como lo hacían los códices aztecas y con la misma adoración por la palabra de la mística judía, de la Cábala. Además, es la pintura de mis obsesiones. He dibujado casi literalmente lo que veía "filmado" en la pared. Cuando dibujo tengo estados a los que no sé si llamar alucinatorios; en todo caso, las imágenes aparecen ahí, sobre la pared, y yo las veo

> actuar y sigo su recorrido. (...) el *Himalaya* lo escribí de un solo tirón, con la misma sensación de certeza. Y también es una poesía con el ambiguo sentido que Rimbaud le daba a la palabra "iluminación": a la vez iluminación del espíritu y pintura. En mis dibujos, concretamente, recorro el doble camino: ilumino un manuscrito y sigo el dictado de algo que me llega. (...) Viene de la perfecta ausencia de uno mismo, de la despersonalización. Cuando uno está limitado a un yo limitado limita lo que le llega. Pero si se hace el vacío total, si uno se vuelve cóncavo, entonces cabe la presencia de lo que debe llegar.

La inspiración otorgada por ese contacto con el precolombino ("un inmenso campo de fuerzas que actuaban por los rumbos de los colores y en las regiones celestes e inferiores") y hasta el prehistórico en tanto prelógico y prenominal, pero también con lo transpersonal y con la red del dolor (eslabón en la cadena de oración), lleva a Bustos a intentar el códice de una vivificante transmisión sincrónica, a una reapropiación hiperintuitiva de los signos, a ciertos estadios y estratos del sentido en los significados mediante una escritura-inscripción capaz de retener intacto, de tocado, el germen de su resplandor, la pulsión originaria, la chispa utópica —allí donde palabra, letra y trazo se conjuntan y conjugan. Y precisamente esa conjugación, ese conjuro, constituye lo que hace un momento aquí se llamaba, decía llamarse pensar. Pensar a los ojos internos de quien palpa cantando o mordiendo un secreto a todas luces, un esplendor inverso encubierto por la programación perceptual, por el recorte de supuesta clarividencia de una razón (armazón) desquiciada, ella sí, por todas sus manifestaciones conocidas y concebidas de violencia. ¿Será por esa coherencia absoluta, su inherente fatalidad ya en vaticinio, su tragedia nuestra, que estos pasajes de "Un empleo horizontal" en *Fragmentos fantásticos*, suscitan un sobresalto al que no añadiremos comentario?

> Pobre Miguel Ángel. Siempre he dicho que tuvo una suerte perra. Hay perros que tienen suerte; pero él es un perro perro.
>
> Buscaba empleo. Las oficinas esmeriladas y los bancos llenos. Tristísimamente buscaba.
>
> Un día cruzó una avenida, creo Corrientes o 9 de Julio y desapareció.

> Es decir, desapareció su andar vertical. Porque fue tal la fila de coches que pasó, que lo hundieron en el asfalto. Sólo quedaron a la luz sus ojos, su boca, sus manos.

Está claro que el secuestro de su poesía, que prolongó al de su persona física, es una de las tantas reprimendas colectivas que recibiera la rebelión de Bustos en tanto luchador por la justicia en los términos precisos en que él, en su momento y lugar y según sus posibilidades y herramientas, consideró necesarios y hasta factibles. Pero también fue el castigo que le infligieron los inmorales con algún poder de decisión al atrevimiento corrosivo de su *daimon* poético: revolucionario en un sentido que podrá ser más inasible pero nunca menos radical que su militancia y debido a esto, quizá de más prolongada perturbación. Sobre todo, suponemos, debido a esa aparente incongruencia entre una poesía en varias dimensiones y la dimensión arrasadora de la lucha social y su contingencia. Pero no hay incoherencia en Bustos, ni separación en realidad, sino una radicalidad que alcanza por igual la exposición personal como el desamparo de la despersonalización de lesa fragilidad con el que no traficó nunca su poesía.

Quizá este nódulo de subversión, que prevalece intacto en la poesía de Bustos, pueda resultarnos más inquietante todavía por su misma razón de rareza, de excepción, ahora y cuando las cicatrices de la violencia no han dejado de expandirse, intensificadas de hecho por tanto plan de negación de la Necesidad, sistemático y ya a "gran" escala, por tanta sólita represión del ser. Dada su labor de resignificación, su tratamiento de los signos de la tribu adquiere cada día más *valor* donde todo sentimiento de comunidad ha sido resquebrajado con la mayor deliberación y torpeza. La vigencia de esa "poesía" que a Bustos le parece faltar en "la vida argentina", la vivencia de esa falta, es algo que podemos constatar con la mayor inmediatez. Los intercambios y la reciprocidad vincular han sido gradualmente reemplazados por una sofisticadísima trama de interferencias al interior mismo de la sensibilidad mediante una apelación tan machacante del "deseo" que ha reducido (o amplificado) el Deseo a un desencuentro, a una guerra de casitodos contra casitodos. La subversión curativa en Bustos gana por eso cuerpo en las palabras transmutantes de una tribu mucho más amplia, menos restringida que la del somero ambiente inmediato con su ensueño uniformador. Al mismo

tiempo compromete una diversidad bien ubicua de percepciones ampliadoras de la lengua común como una sincronicidad entre lectores sin distinción de períodos, generaciones, experiencias históricas o lugares comunes. Porque, según lo expresa al reseñar el libro de Laplanche, *Hölderlin y el problema del padre* (1975):

> Para un perseguidor que busque la verdad a través de "un cuerpo y un alma" no puede haber meta final sino etapas importantes en una revolución permanente que se sospecha eterna. Si el hombre considera que el mundo tiene que ser concebido como una totalidad, y si se piensa que una totalidad aún no alcanzada es una ausencia, también es lícito suponer que cuando crea poseer esa ausencia el hombre sentirá que un abismo de posibilidades remotas aumenta su angustia. Así, el aparente triunfo sobre esta carencia se transforma en una "ausencia de ausencias".

Es a partir de su tercer libro, *Fragmentos fantásticos*, que la poesía de Bustos comienza a oscilar al interior del lenguaje: de la inmediatez a la rareza de estar, de la pulsión indómita, plasmada en su tigre de pasmo (hermano del de Blake, cuyo poema está entre los pocos que Bustos tradujo: *¡Tigre! ¡Tigre! Fulgor ardiente/ en las selvas de la noche,/ ¿qué ojo o mano inmortal/ pudo alcanzar su pavorosa simetría?...*) a la desolada relación con una ciudad y una mentalidad sitiadas por las fuerzas de opresión. De la celebración no defensiva del delirio como racionalidad alterna y pluralidad de los sentidos, a la consideración apasionada de una solidaridad en varias dimensiones. Solidaridad que inviste una especie de androginia en su acepción transformativa, mutante y no meramente ambigua o imagética; androginia, pues, en el sentido de los manieristas, es decir en cuanto conciencia simbólica de la transformación, pero colocada (y colocándonos, en caso de haber disposición) en este oscilar alquímico al interior geminado del lenguaje.

En *El Himalaya o la moral de los pájaros*, su último libro "concluido", Bustos alcanza esa cima difuminada o esa celestía celebratoria en trance de inagotable reversión, impregnada de la más honda intuición. Y al decir esto se pretende decir: honda de la intuición en tanto premonición de una lengua abarcante (¿una lengua de los pájaros? preguntaría ese loco sufí de Attar; ¿un pajarístico? preguntaría Juan Luis Martínez). Como cuando Bustos afirma que "los rumanos ejemplifican,

perfectamente, aquello de que la poesía nace de la lengua-síntesis que habla de la raza humana en los sueños, que es la región donde todas las lenguas se comprenden y se intuyen en su totalidad creadora". ¿Y acaso no es ése el afán en la búsqueda: una lengua de la simultaneidad? Hélo ahí, entonces, relámpago no domesticable de un pensar que no se circunscribe al sujeto unidimensional con que nos han y hemos acostumbrado a identificarnos, ese individuo numerable, sino que nos pone de frente al abisal enigma de la presencia y, con toda justicia, ante el vértigo velocísimo de la intuición de esos planos de experiencia conviviendo. Lo que insufla esta poesía son las palabras, prendidas a la fuerza de su arrastre ancestral y a la potencia presente de su empuje, vertebrando algo más que lo discursivo o aun lo escandible, "poético". Así, lo que el propio Bustos denomina "simultaneidad de la imagen":

> Tenemos ante los ojos la *simultaneidad* de la imagen. Se produce el ritmo de hierro del momento de escribir; o sea que ya está *casi* escrito el poema en un trabajo de días o meses; se va abriendo, aflorando lo que fue masa, lo que fue miga. Se sienten roces. El poeta *es perfectamente consciente.* Para eso estuvo largo tiempo en la inconsciencia de la elaboración. Ya no son *simultáneas* las imágenes sino sincronizadas y reguladas por lo que yo creo que es un estado de alucinación-consciente. La alucinación es nuestro taller. Esto no es irracional, es darle nombre al *ojo rápido* del poeta.
>
> El ojo veloz que nos da imágenes.
>
> Esta alucinación la tenemos siempre. *Un método.* Captamos la inversión de ciertas imágenes. Su modo de comportarse en un charco. Si hay un grito que abulta en una pelea, lo distorsionamos, tragamos el grito, lo cubrimos de luces, ya no es un grito, es cualquier cosa, una espalda, una sonrisa que se despide, nosotros que nos amamos.
>
> Nuestro ojo alucinado, potente de velocidad, es él que abultó el grito, lo llenó de manos. Nuestro ojo se alucina con lo *simultáneo* de la imagen.
>
> Y esa misma alucinación selecciona con pensamiento propio. Nuestra lógica es la alucinación. No la alucinación del sueño. No la

alucinación libre. La alucinación *que piensa*. Esa alucinación. La alucinación del cielo futuro. La *simultaneidad*, ese cosmos, la simultaneidad sobre los ojos.

Los poemas son momentos en que la alucinación razona con la simultaneidad en bruto.

Si en *El Himalaya* la poesía se desata al punto de que surge, insurgente de toda unidimensión, por palpable exceso de belleza, sacude toda presunción de aparato conceptual y toda mera apetencia de confirmación de alguna cosa en el lenguaje. Se descosifica el lenguaje, se abre el mundo: algunos dirán hermético, muchos jugarán a ignorarlo, otros no leerán sino los rostros testimoniales de una visión. Lo cierto es que el arrebato meditado de esta escritura, en este libro en particular, muestra lo que nombra pero que lo nombra acá y sólo acá donde la palabra está surgiendo: no después, en el discurso, sino antes, antes de cualquier sujeto y predicado. No será casual, con tal ingrediente revulsivo que, con el castigo del silenciamiento impuesto sobre esta obra, se haya intentado desmagnetizarla. Intento inútil. ¿Es preciso añadir que la poesía de Bustos es de aquellas que se inscriben siempre hacia un presente dilatado, que nos ponen en situación de presente y hacen de la lectura mucho más que el margen de regodeo de la inteligencia autosatisfecha con sus logros o la distribución autoritaria de valores simbólicos sean cuales fueren?

Pero cierto es que la violencia en los cuerpos y mentes de los ciudadanos no puede escindirse de la violación simbólica y por lo tanto de la violencia ejercida sistemáticamente sobre el lenguaje, fingido a grandes rasgos como comunicación y en palmaria verdad erigido como instrumento de opresión, a través de parloteos, locuciones, propagandas, anuncios, opiniones, debates y toda la sarta sobre las que se monta el cortocircuito de la pavorosa porque suicidaria distracción que nos masifica y haciéndonos parte del circo de plano nos acalla. La poesía de Bustos, para quien se sumerge en esa voz como en una fuente de alteridad, se ha mantenido en vilo durante todos estos treinta años, con su insobornabilidad y fluida resistencia. Se podrá negar una obra, pero lo que ésta aporta a la conciencia existe más acá del hecho de que algunas conciencias particulares o generales perciban más que otras. ¿Y no constituye la poesía de Bustos un tratado de la

transformación interior, una estancia en el milagro de la conciencia, pero una conciencia inclusiva del irracional tanto como de la contemplación preverbal? ¿Y ese reverbero preverbal no se revela aquí en la forma más alta de la entonación y del acto verbal en sí como ese mismo presente dilatado, vértice del instante, exigente, por lo tanto, de una atención, de una donación de la atención, a eso que las palabras dan retorno?

En su busca del ideogramandala, Bustos señala un reparo, desde su experiencia particular, a los concretistas brasileños respecto a lo que ve como la reducción del poema a apenas algunos de sus elementos en desmedro de los otros. Quizá Bustos entiende por entonces que los concretos —cuya poesía conoce durante sus estadías en Brasil en los 50, por otra parte en pleno apogeo de su etapa más constructivista— tienden, no al destello traslúcido de simultaneidad abierto en la sensibilidad introspectiva del lector, suscitado en forma mutante en la conciencia, sino a un despliegue formalista sobre la superficie plana y de algún modo retinal de la página. Tal vez no sea una acusación justa en este caso —daría la impresión de que Bustos no reconoce en los concretos la marca de la dentellada antropofágica surgida de las entrañas de Brasil— pero, observados los efectos de su posición en su propia empiria lírica, resulta sumamente ilustrativa. La discrepancia no es formal, no pertenece a la guerra entre estéticas, marca o sostiene una diferencia de perspectiva y de cariz político, inclusive.

Donde el grupo Noigandres, sobre todo en aquella etapa programática de su itinerario, sienta las bases para una poética de vanguardia (justo aquí, incluyendo a Brasil, en la "condición *latinoamarga*", según apuntara el propio Haroldo de Campos), o sea basándose en un paradigma occidental que incluye cierta noción de progreso-evolutivo-en-el-arte que se incuba y anida precisamente en el propio concepto de Vanguardia, Bustos contrapone "una invocación a la lluvia: canto litúrgico australiano que se ejecuta con acompañamiento de boomerangs entrechocados". Lo que interesa en todo caso en el reparo de Bustos a los concretistas, más aca de acuerdos o desacuerdos posteriores, es constatar cómo su corazón latía al unísono de esa anonimia en la voz, arrasada en Occidente desde el Renacimiento con la imposición de las identidades separativas, junto a la creciente represión de lo introspectivo y de la individuación en tal sentido (la instalación de la interferencia, sistemática y por todos los medios, del despliegue interior).

Invocar a la lluvia posee, en todo caso, una utilidad que hace de la poesía una técnica sagrada y no literatura. Un "indio del espíritu" (Marchant) no revelaría su verdadero nombre, el nombre indisociable de su ser, que no es el nombre social sino su palabra-alma, su mantra portátil, su inscripción semoviente de nacimiento, o lo hará sólo a través de una intensa y a veces penosa desobstrucción de los sentidos, un desaprendizaje. Pero ese nombre será, aun expuesto a una expansión sin límites, a los oídos de la distracción, inaudible, inexistente por indemostrable. El canto silabar a la lluvia para acompañarse con boomerangs entrechocados que le interesa a Bustos representa una experiencia no separativa entre la voz y lo nombrado. Y esa materialización orgánica redunda en *utilidad* sagrada. O en palabras del propio Bustos, en su reparo contraconcreto:

> He buscado en la arena junto al mar huesitos, nácares, maderas lustradas, espinas delgadas de peces, y encontré semejanzas entre el mar y las piedras pequeñas que hallaba en la arena. Encontré ritmos que elaboraba a medida que elegía algunas conchas y caracoles para llevarme. Había perspectivas inmensas entre lo diminuto de la arena y el golpe frío del mar. Las gaviotas. Siempre marcan un tono pausado al poema. Son algo muy terso, un elemento que se vive y que tiene olor.
>
> Así procedía tanto con el cuaderno del Bauhaus de Klee y con la arena, o con el rostro de un niño sorprendido cuando ve algo que nunca había visto antes. Siempre son cristales estos elementos, a la luz tienen millones de túneles y uno los elabora y los transforma. Y nos pueden enseñar mucho estos ejercicios, y esto es fundamental.
>
> Pero yo no trato de aplicar *rígidamente* la ley natural o la ley pictórica de Klee para la creación de un poema.
>
> Colocar la palabra *soldado* quebrada en diez formas y diagramada en doce será un buen ejercicio visual pero como poema es nulo.
>
> Un poeta hace esta diagramación mentalmente antes de la escritura de su poema.
>
> Con este procedimiento [los concretos] ni hacen lo que Kandinsky o Klee lograban en sus mágicas telas, ni realizan un poema antidiscursivo como ellos desean. (...)

> En ningún caso, copiar mecánicamente un proceso creador primitivo, sería solamente folklore artístico; y tampoco seguir la disposición superficial que adopta la palabra en los cien mil usos modernos. Podemos incorporar *todo* el mundo mecánico y humano, pero hay que incorporarlo de acuerdo con nuestras materias poéticas. Hay que recrear lo que se nos está dando continuamente. Y no tomar en *esqueleto* lo que nos golpea en *masa compleja e infinita.* El poema no vive si se lo ilumina artificialmente y si la síntesis está determinada por cortaduras que no brotan de lo más profundo de la estructura del poema, sino por quitaduras de palabras en pro de una "síntesis" fingida.

Esta exigencia de Bustos, orgánica y sintética a la vez, aplicada a su propia poesía, es señal de una maestría infrecuente, en tal sentido chamana, si se considera la resonancia visual con que nos acomete sin que podamos no escuchar lo que estamos viendo al leer. Y eso que *vemos* acontece por desplazamientos ínfimos que circulan sanguíneamente los signos, toda su materialidad. Donde los signos oscilan, no como el péndulo mecánico sino como el ánima del viajero entre las dimensiones de la experiencia, viajero de su experiencia y no mero *receptáculo de términos* (Varallanos), la poesía reaparece con tanta desautomatización que expande la conciencia. Ya no hay una voz predicando un discurso ni un personaje en desarrollo autoexpresivo, sino un nombrar que materializa una voz. Pero, insistamos: sólo la materializa cuando la disponibilidad se produce. De ahí que la poesía de Bustos por fortuna translectora ofrezca tanta resistencia a la glosa. En épocas de saqueo de los vínculos afectivos y colonización de las cabezas, donde —incluyendo a los "felices artistas" y sus "nuevos medios" para viejos trucos— se acepta con descaro e indiferencia la golosina del sonambulismo de cada día (quizá lo único que realmente comparten los autómatas), esta poesía da testimonio de una luz indómita.

Es esa misma indomeñabilidad lo que parece faltarle a la "vida argentina", resignada como está a la repetición del desencuentro entre los singulares, entre las subjetividades, entre los diferentes. En Bustos se aprecia el artesano inconforme que, con cada obra realizada, ofrece una estancia distinta en la intensidad: artista de la lengua y no apenas literato, escrutador del intestino laberinto adonde

transleer (y detonar) el matiz no destinal, esa palabra-alma que, una y otra vez, en distinto grado, hace transparencia. Aunque transparencia espesa, de cuarzo. En ese matiz, que hace verdadera a la verdadera poesía, late el corazón votivo, hospicio y huésped de la intemperie, asilo danzante e intuición que alumbra la caverna del espíritu-comuna. Ahí reaparece, plegaria en el exorcismo, esencia del contrahechizo, con toda la turbulencia de lo afectado, la urgencia de curación que como tal se brinda, así de vertiginosa, porque es correlato de una meditación en lo ilimitado, a la intemperie de la palabra. Y se brinda desde la nobleza misma del tratamiento matérico y vibratorio de la lengua, su influjo, sus capacidades suscitativas.

Obra sin fondo —no en sentido de falta de "contenido" sino, al revés, de una densidad tal de contenido, sobre todo de desbaratamiento de lo estático, sacudón anímico que exige del lector un cierto atreverse a ir más allá de sí mismo o más bien de su predicación sobre sí, en pro de una alterna conciliación entre la mente y el corazón: "camino del medio"—, *El Himalaya o la moral de los pájaros*, libro entre los imprescindibles en lengua latinoamericana, es tan explícito respecto a su poética que impone citar, incluso por el placer de compartirlos, algunos tramos con detenida extensión. Con una advertencia: de lo que se trata —reza la voz que refiere a la otra voz del manuscrito encontrado dentro del sueño del libro cuya narración configura y confiere el develamiento mismo de su textura— es del "mensaje del Sol Antiverbal. Ruinas de aquel gran *sol* que en Edades de Oro iluminaba pero no era sombra":

> ¿Hasta qué límite, sombra o nada puede ir la palabra que quiere; pero su tejido es selva y su selva tejido de la selva; dar con lengua y signo, la muerte la vida, que es tributo de posesión *sin fuga* por un cristal semejante?
>
> Articulo mi idioma en el corazón de mi cristal y llevado por su leyenda irradiante rayo los enigmas y los transmuto en cosas. Porque todo es mensaje, comunicación, energía de dos relámpagos que calcinan el Mar de los Ruidos y la Tierra de los Silencios, el espacio devorador entraña del nacimiento.

Para cegar; aunque no lleve a parte clara u oscura creer que lo que es fuego molesto para muchos vaya a excitar su hueso de pájaro o tigre; para hacer de un ciego momentáneo un niño en la noche sin luna saco mi cristal y un milenio de peces de nieve en llamas abren un cielo blanco. (...)

El génesis en *mí*, el territorio transparente que es la prisión que me salva, el abecedario de cristal que es ignorancia y escuela inocente, apareció como nudo o haz de estrella líquida, aún sin forma. Todo lo observable, en la noche o en el día; creaba un sonido de aguas profundas, un murmullo o lamento de multitud distante. Sin posible lógica una pared, un cuchillo o un vaso *estaban* sin entenderlos.

Hablo de los fenómenos; quietos en los abismos del sol o de la tierra; que quería poseer, traducir en mi lengua y usarlos según un *modo manual* que transformara en arco iris violador de cielos a la materia dormida y errante que hallaba.

Si logro descifrar, saber qué es un vaso, recorrer su átomo y su símbolo; señor de leyes que se cumplen siempre; penetraré la materia, la *coherencia manifestada*. (...)

CAMPOS EN MOVIMIENTO Para alcanzar la Revelación es necesario reemplazar el mundo campo de las letras habladas por los grandes campos de la imagen en movimiento.

Campos en movimiento. Para andar en las estrellas primero los campos en movimiento de exploración, luego los grandes satélites de palabras tripulados.

Yo pienso *masivamente*. Mi pensamiento se mueve por masas. Entro en el gran camino de los elementos. Con los campos en movimiento creamos *en* el corazón de la materia. Desplazamos las grandes masas para su mejor matemáticas.

Integrarse – Desintegrarse

Ahora, lo que yo hago sencillamente, es saber en qué consiste la *luminosidad* de un campo en movimiento,

> su chocar con otro semejante, su juego entre las cosas visibles e invisibles.
> (...)
>
> Integrarse – *Desintegrarse*
>
> El procedimiento para lograr un campo en movimiento de imágenes es: poseer la *cohesión-revolución atómica* de la materia haciendo con palabras lo que es, en su totalidad, un fenómeno de unidad cósmica. Las palabras nacen para engendrar en luz un campo en movimiento que está en perfecto acuerdo con sus moléculas *sonoras*. El que no tiene universos que lanzar sólo hará palabras. EL CREADOR DE CIELOS conocerá el universo perdido y encontrado a través de un *campo en movimiento.*

El proceso descrito al inicio de *El Himalaya* mantiene fidelidad a la polidimensión que el libro va desplegando, en su oscilación dentro y fuera de lo cóncavo del ser: concavidad constitutiva pero retenida al margen del haz de la conciencia, que el poema precipita mediante los contrahechizos que condensa la lengua antiverbal.

La obra poética de Miguel Ángel Bustos, en su anhelo de la "*patria salvaje* inocente eternidad", es un alegato de la más alta rebelión. El mito que encarna, hace reencarnar, no preexiste ni se mueve en arreglo a un Real: disuelve lo divisorio, lo incorpora a la forma sólo cuando ésta se torna conductora de la intuición, sin imponer ningún contrato, sin estipular un pacto de lectura u otro. En esa condición mítica, qué duda cabe, residen las potencias que llamamos sacras, por lo tanto alberga el devenir, por lo que, revuelta poética en un mundo que se autoaniquila, nunca deja de poner en entredicho, con su sola presencia y su presenciar, las prerrogativas de cualquier falsedad o distracción.

Alegato, como se ha dicho, por la curación colectiva, desde una liberación reintegradora del ser en todas sus dimensiones. Miguel Ángel Bustos, mucho más cerca del caracú que del tic escritural, aúna respiración y utopía, deseo e intuición, expresión e introspección. Por un alma y una carne renovadas, por fin inescindibles. Y por la percatación de una sacralidad y una interioridad reprimidas,

todavía latentes y a la espera de ser consumadas. Por una reciprocidad sin simetrías obligatorias como un destino empírico posible, praxis de transmutación para esa sacralidad y esa interioridad amenazadas de peligro de extinción: no en otra parte que en el reencuentro entre el corazón y la conciencia.

> Y la sabiduría que use en el sendero que inicio ha de parecerse, siempre, al vuelo de los pájaros, cuyo *sentido* es indescifrable, cuyo *motivo* es la celestial alegría.

septiembre 2008

≈

Las citas de Miguel Ángel Bustos fueron tomadas de estas ediciones:

Fragmentos fantásticos, Colombo, 1965.

Visión de los hijos del mal, Sudamericana, 1967.

El Himalaya o la moral de los pájaros, Sudamericana, 1970.

Despedida de los ángeles, antología, Tierra Firme, 1998.

Miguel Ángel Bustos. Prosa 1960-1976, Centro Cultural de la Cooperación Floreal Gorini, 2007.

VIRGINIA BENÍTEZ

CUBAN ART IN THE INTERNATIONAL IMAGINATION: THE MOVING ISLANDS OF VICENTE HERNÁNDEZ

Between June and August of 2002 Cuban artist Vicente Hernández presented his first international solo exhibit in Miami. The show was entitled *El maravilloso mundo de Bujamey* and the paintings focused on an imagined city—a Cuban port town similar to Hernández's own hometown of Batabanó. Hernández's paintings provide sweeping, bird's-eye views of Bujamey, a fantasy and yet also a conglomerate of other Cuban fishing towns with its plywood houses, grid-patterned urban development, abandoned railroad tracks, and flooded streets. Bujamey may be an imagined place, but it is imagined in relation to the material conditions of life in port towns in Cuba (as well as elsewhere). The paintings also move beyond their hyperrealist portrayal of daily life. In Hernández's images Bujamey is most often in motion. The town sets sail over the sea on the body of a blimp, it develops wings or wheels, and sometimes it even floats in space as a star ship. His work offers viewers a glimpse into at least two different realities: one is the quotidian life of a small Cuban port town, and the other is the realm of fantasy in which Bujamey's inhabitants become witnesses to what Hernández calls "la realidad del mundo mágico" (qtd. in Cabaleiro-Ascanio 6D).

Hernández's show was a success, as was his second Miami exhibition in 2009 entitled *De un extraño pueblo*. The two shows were featured in several articles in the local media, including an article in *El Nuevo Herald* in which José Antonio Evora commented on the intertextuality of the paintings. The novelty of Hernández's perspective, Evora claims, lies in part in the intersection of narrative and the plastic arts: "Viendo los globos aerostáticos repletos de casas, mástiles y gente, uno no puede dejar de recordar el título del poema de Virgilio Piñera, *La isla en peso*, y el final de la novela *El color del verano*, de Reinaldo Arenas, cuando Cuba entera se separa de su plataforma insular y navega lejos de sí misma" (6E). Hernández himself claims the label of magical realist, an unusual choice for an artist of his age: he is thirty-eight years old and part of a generation in Latin America that has generally distanced itself from magical realism. The classification, however, allows Hernández access to an already well-established market, and this may (in part) represent a reason for his appeal and his popularity.[1]

Hernández is one of many young artists who are capitalizing on a growing demand for Cuban art in the international market through foreign-based art dealers and international exhibitions and art festivals. The circulation of Cuban canvases throughout the West stands in contrast to the limited circulation of the artists themselves, as most have little access to international travel. It is the tension between the local and the global, between the mobility of Cuban cultural products and the limited mobility of Cubans themselves, which is of interest here. Hernández's paintings are particularly ripe subjects for considering the possibilities of Cuba's increasing engagement in globalized cultural markets because they probe the simultaneous isolation and internationalism of Cuban reality and Cuban art. His paintings raise questions about the influence of the international market on Cuban art. Will the demands of the international market create fertile ground for local artists who engage with the particularities of contemporary Cuban reality? Or, on the other hand, will the demands and desires of a global market lead to an exploitation of blanketed peripheral or "third world" themes such as poverty, migration, and all things magical?

These tensions between the local and global influences on contemporary Cuban art take center stage in Hernández's paintings, and his work makes use of the qualities of magical realism in order to provide viewers a way to step

outside of the binaries of Cuban insularity and global capitalism. Hernández's paintings playfully question traditional logic about cultural authenticity and national identity, and his cultural map of Cuba is not entirely bound by island geography. Rather than presenting Cuba as the exceptional island—a country whose political history grants it exceptional status—Hernández converts Cuba into a figure of the global world, one that is partially connected to world history through artistic interchange, migration, and exile.

The Possible and Improbable: Revisiting Magical Realism

A discussion about the style of Hernández's work unveils some of the ramifications of artistic classification. In the catalog to Hernández's 2002 exhibition at Cernuda Arte, for example, Eusebio Leal Spengler—the well-known Historian of the City of Havana and the central figure behind the restoration of Old Havana—describes Hernández's style as "a genuine surrealism" (*Marvelous*). Hernández does not reject or agree with the classification. Addressing the question of genre in an interview with *El Nuevo Herald* in Miami, Hernández offers the following explanation: "Hay quien me ha catalogado de surrealista, otros de realista... Yo siento que lo que estoy haciendo es el equivalente al realismo mágico y a lo real maravilloso extrapolado a la pintura" (qtd. in Evora 6E). In identifying with magical realism, Hernández inserts himself into a tradition that not only has global roots and multi-disciplinary manifestations but also has a robust, international market.

The genre of magical realism is commonly associated with Latin American literature and particularly with writers of the "boom," most famously Gabriel García Márquez. The roots of the term, however, and its application in both literature and painting, stretch back to the early twentieth century. Scholars of magical realism often point to two publications in order to historicize the term. The first is an essay published in 1925 by the German art critic Franz Roh and the second is Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier's introduction to his novel *El reino de este mundo* from 1949. The transnational roots of the term correspond with global and multi-disciplinary engagements with magical realism as analyzed,

for example, in Seymour Menton's *Magic Realism Rediscovered, 1918-1981*, which primarily traces magical realism in European painting, and *Historia Verdadera del Realismo Mágico*, which studies literary magical realism primarily from Latin America and the United States. Today, the term magical realism has been applied in so many contexts that is has become, according to Homi Bhabha, "the literary language of the emergent postcolonial world" (7).

The broad use of the term has caused critics to question its potency and also to offer varying interpretations for differentiating among the categories of magical realism, *lo real maravilloso*, the fantastical, and the surreal.[2] For the sake of an analysis of Hernández's paintings, it suffices to say that his work meets the qualifications that critics use to identify magical realism. Many elements of his work correspond to Menton's working definition: "El realismo mágico es la visión de la realidad diaria de un modo objetivo estático y ultrapreciso, a veces estereoscópico, con la introducción poco enfática de algún elemento inesperado o improbable que crea un efecto raro o extraño que deja desconcertado, aturdido o asombrado al observador en el museo o al lector en su butaca" (*Historia* 20). Hernández's paintings make use of many of the techniques highlighted in Menton's list of the classifications that identify magical realist art, including attention to detail, objectivity, and the representation of multiple realities and temporalities. At one level, his paintings are hyperrealist representations of quotidian life in a small, Cuban fishing town. In some of these images, particularly in his early paintings of Bujamey, Hernández emphasizes the monotony of daily life through a neutral color pallet, faceless citizens, and empty streets.

Fig. 1. Vicente Hernández, *La esquina del crucero*. 2009. Oil on canvas. 16 x 20. Cernuda Arte, Miami.

The element of improbability lies in unexpected modes of transportation and in the intersection of stagnation and metamorphosis. In several paintings, including *La esquina del crucero* (see Fig. 1), an abandoned railroad line crosses the canvas while a blimp takes flight. The abandoned railroad may signal the economic hardships of the town and the

failure to maintain vital trade between this imagined fishing village and other Cuban cities. More broadly, it may represent Cuban insularity and provinciality. The blimp, however, introduces the possibility of travel and transformation. In choosing a form of outdated technology, Hernández insinuates that transformation will not come at the hands of revolution or economic modernization and technological progress. Instead, Hernández employs the blimp, an image reminiscent of the nineteenth century that complicates prescribed notions of progress, fantasy, and futurity. The two forms of transportation—the abandoned railroad line and the flying machine—represent two different temporalities, a physical past and a future that is in the process of being created. A *guajiro* stands in the foreground, and he watches the blimp in awe, imagining a world that does not exactly correspond to the fantasies of technological innovation in the developed world—thus providing a disjunction between Bujamey and the modernized West. The multiple temporalities represented in Hernández's work are a constant theme and another connection to literary magical realism.

Cuba has a long history of cross-disciplinary influence in the arts and letters. There are, of course, the polymaths Fernando Ortiz and Alejo Carpentier. The modernist movement in the plastic arts was influenced by the writings of the *Grupo Minorista* and also by articles published in the magazine *Social*. More recently, Luis Camnitzer hypothesizes that Cuban photo-realism of the 1980's had a "vague ideological reason, possibly derived from the 'testimonial' aesthetics developed in literature" (9). Interestingly, Hernández himself does not claim collaboration with literary magical realism: "Yo no pretendo hacer una unidad con la literatura, lo que sucede es que mi obra es una narrativa irónica y crítica de la realidad, no solo cubana sino también el drama humano universal... No soy un traductor del realismo mágico...de la literatura, sino soy parte *de eso de lo que se derivan* estas manifestaciones" (my italics, *Mensaje*). In this statement Hernández affirms that magical realism allows him a mode through which to elevate local realities to the level of "drama humano universal" and to project Cuba's daily realities onto a broader canvas by appealing to universalized experiences. He may demure at claiming collaboration with literature, yet the paintings and the ways in which they are presented at exhibitions have an unquestionably narrative quality.

In the catalog for his exhibit in 2002, Hernández includes some commentary on Bujamey. The commentary works to wrap the exhibit in the folds of both narrative and visual storytelling, commenting on the past and the present of Bujamey and inviting the reader/viewer to contemplate and imagine the possibility of the town's future:

> The basic components of daily sustenance are absent from this southerntown. Even the fisherman in his routine returns to the waters only to learn that even the fish have left Bujamey. But the Bujameyan is very creative and seeks alternative routes to boredom. In so doing, he erects folk tales and interweaves giant seafaring stories that speak of continuous migrations, of past glories and of forgotten dreams... Ghost ships that sail through the clouds like storm augurs, extravagant ships with villages on their backs... Most of the time the paintings flood like Bujamey. A grand town celebration takes place when the sea visits the houses and invades everything. And the voice of grievance is heard once again, in tune with the meager, assaulted landscape, waiting for something to happen... For the arrival of the event that will transform routine into enjoyment. For the emergence of the hope of glory that, if here present, will belong to everyone. (*Maravilloso*)

Hernández's narrative evokes the sound of an echo in the dark, a shout from the confines of an island to the rest of the world. It acknowledges the locality and limited mobility of Cubans while attributing their heightened dedication to the creative arts—to story telling and fantasy—to the reality of its insularity. Perhaps Hernández is offering his explanation for the flowering of Cuban artistic production since the 1980s. He also offers insight into the multiple temporalities—the multiple "realities"—that comprise his canvases: one based on the quotidian and the other on a possible and impending "event," which he describes with an almost biblical sense of expectation. Yet it is clear that this "event" signals a future already being conceived—a future that lies hovering between his two audiences: Cubans on the island and viewers abroad.

Island Insularity

"New" Cuban art—or roughly Cuban art since the 1980's—has presented varying responses to island insularity. Artists such as Tania Bruguera and Kcho reflected on the rafters' crisis of the 1990's by incorporating differing modes of navigation in their installations. Other Cuban artists use the Cuban map in their work, which Antonio Eligio Fernández (the critic and artist otherwise known as Tonel) interprets as the "crystallization of a specific 'insular consciousness'" (80). Fernández explains that the theme of insularity in Cuban art is popular because it reflects on the island's geographic condition and also on the psychological and political impact of island geography and its susceptibility to international aggression. Insularity captures Cuba's historical "distance from everything and everyone"—Cuba as the "blockaded country...the walled fort, subject to an inescapable destiny" (80-81). Insularity is so constant a theme that some see it as a discourse evacuated of meaning. Addressing the fate of the artistic generation of the 1980's, Lupe Álvarez explains that many of the artists most committed to "group consciousness and social change" eventually gave into international market demands, turning to highly recognizable themes: "insularity as a condition of isolation, the sea simultaneously a cemetery and a promise, the voyage in all its ambiguity...constitute, along with a range of arguments that evoke the anxiety and distress with which Cubans live, the clichés most frequently covered and appreciated by international discourse" (68). Álvarez might be highly critical of Hernández's work, since it incorporates many of the "clichés" that she identifies as markers of an artist who has become focused on appealing to an international market. Yet those very "clichés" highlighted by Álvarez—exile, isolation, and oceans—are historically speaking some of the most potent subjects of Cuban art and therefore cannot be merely dismissed as themes developed solely for the goal of international popularity.

Hernández's imagery unquestionably engages in the construction of island "stereotypes" (Fernandez 81), particularly in his 2009 exhibition *De un extraño pueblo*. For example, in *La isla del cuento* (see Fig. 2), the most recognizable markers of Cubanidad are combined in a carnivalesque scene. The silhouette of Cuba metamorphosizes into one of its most kitschy and internationally popular markers: an

Fig. 2. Vicente Hernández, *La isla del cuento*. 2009. Oil on canvas. 31 ½ x 63. Private Collection.

old American automobile. José Martí is along for the ride, and other easily identifiable symbols dot the painting, including representations of the Cuban flag, a baseball park, the Capitolio, the Virgin de la Caridad del Cobre, and the Tres Juanes—folkloric rafters who are placed close to the shores of Miami. Little is left to interpretation, and the artist even includes geographic labels, identifying the Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Isle of Pines. The sheer excess of recognizable symbols and markers points to Hernández's desire to ironize the use of stereotypes in Cuban art, perhaps particularly in the case of art shown and sold abroad since his use of these symbols seems to have increased with his international popularity. The title of the painting, *La isla del cuento*, can be interpreted as facetiousness—Cuba's national story is told through images that resemble tourist kitsch. The canvas may be colorful, but the story it tells is conceptually and intentionally monochromatic.

The playful incorporation of easily identifiable symbols is a running theme in his second exhibit. In *Satélite natural* a Cuban baseball is set in orbit, a transmission device through which two alien worlds (Cuba and the United States perhaps?) can communicate with one another. *La olla de presión* (see Fig. 3) transforms a ubiquitous Cuban household item—the pressure cooker—into a carousel. *La permuta* (see Fig. 4) addresses the complicated and nebulous processes of exchanging property in Cuba, typically a way to swap houses or apartments. In this case, however, a moving truck is loaded with an entire town and transformed into a sort of flying raft, a magical version of the makeshift rafts of the *balseros*. All of these paintings

Fig. 3. Vicente Hernández, *La olla de presión*. 2007. Oil on canvas. 27 ¼ x 35 ¼. Cernuda Arte, Miami.

engage well-known symbols, and those symbols are enveloped in the well-worn thematics of island insularity. The moving islands are overcrowded with buildings and surrounded by the sea and/or disconnected from other landmasses by water, space, or sky. As in *La olla de presión*, the town seems so kinetic that it is (once again) destined to explode.

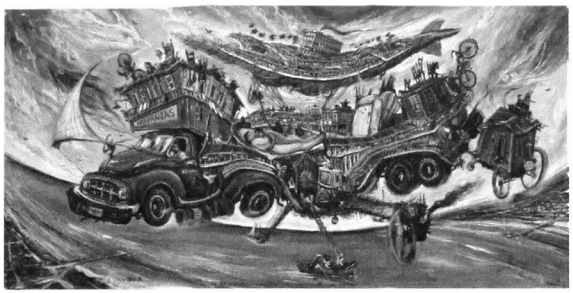


Fig. 4. Vicente Hernández, *La permuta*. 2008. Oil on canvas. 29 x 58 ½. Cernuda Arte, Miami.

Yet Hernández's "insular consciousness" stands in contrast to that described by Fernández, who attributes the roots of Cuban insularity to its historical barriers—to castles and forts and ultimately the barrier imposed by the U.S. embargo. In Hernández's paintings barriers are constantly trespassed. In his paintings insularity is partially defined by immobility or defensiveness, but that immobility is ordinarily contrasted with the alternative realities of transformation, travel, and cultural exchange. In addition, the juxtaposition of the themes of insularity and migration offers a historical narrative about Cuba. *El nacimiento de una isla* (see Fig. 5) is one example. In this painting a town floats on the back of a blimp and is set to sail, again conjuring images of the makeshift rafts of the Cuban *balseros*. The painting creates a sense of suffocation—the town (like the various rafts and ships carrying Cuban immigrants) is so overcrowded that it spills off the back of the boat and into the sea. In the painting the inlet in which the town floats is separated from land by a wood fence. Yet the mirror image on the other side of that fence alerts the viewer to the fact that the seashore does not collide with land but with yet another sea, implying that Cuba's history is one of endless immigrations, emigrations, and exiles. An alternative interpretation is that the fence creates

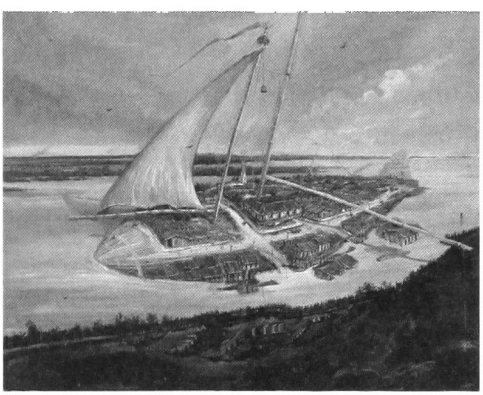


Fig. 5. Vicente Hernández, *El nacimiento de una isla*. 2002. Oil on canvas. 31 x 39 ½. Private Collection.

a separation between the sea and the cosmos, conjuring the childhood fables of Columbus's fearful voyage in which his seamen assumed they might sail off the ends of the earth. In this way insularity is historicized as a key aspect of Cuban reality since the "birth of the island" or, specifically, the inauguration of colonialism. And yet *El nacimiento de una isla* presents insularity and exile as similar phenomena, an inclusive gesture towards Cubans living outside of the island. In Hernández's interpretation Cuban insularity is not necessarily defined by a defensive posture and geographical rootedness, by a city behind walled forts; rather Cuba's isolation is presented in its constant movements and in the isolation of both islanders and immigrants. Cuba is represented as an island set to sail but with no particular port in mind—an island of endless travels and an uncharted future.

A Cuban, American Renaissance

The timing of Hernández's first Miami exhibition in 2002 is significant and provides one of many lenses through which to read his canvases. In the 1990's Cuba suffered through the so-called "Special Period in Times of Peace," an economic and ideological crisis following the collapse of the Soviet Union. By the turn of the new millennium Cuba was emerging from the crisis, which had profound impacts on the Cuban art scene. On the other side of the straits, the capital of the Cuban *exilio* seemed poised for a metamorphosis of its own. The Cuban community in Miami has long supported the United States trade embargo on Cuba and other restrictions, such as the Helms-Burton Act, that limit U.S.-Cuba transactions. Even so, Hernández's exhibition was directed towards a robust market for contemporary Cuban art, even among some of city's more conservative Cubans.[3] If the market for Cuban art can be seen as a marker of increasing interest in greater Cuban and American cultural exchange, then Hernández's images, which explore the possibilities of flight and the metaphoric richness of cultural interchange, seem to set the right tone.

In the essay "The Infinite Island: Introduction to New Cuban Art," Gerardo Mosquera writes that one of the most important cultural events of the Revolution

was the mass emigration of Cubans, particularly to Miami. Until then, Mosquera notes, Cuba had not been a nation of emigrants: "on the contrary, we receive immigrants from Spain, Eastern and Central Europe, the Middle East, and the Caribbean—and we have not yet been able to absorb this new cultural situation in all its implications" ("Infinite" 24). Mosquera then acknowledges the cultural richness of the Cuban community in Miami in language that is free of the political and emotional intensity that has historically accompanied Cuba-Miami discourse. He explains, "the political extremism on both sides has contributed nothing productive to what constitutes in reality an enriching situation. The Cuban emigration is at the forefront of a remarkable cultural life" ("Infinite" 24). Mosquera's words find a counterpart in the language that prefaces the catalog for Hernández's second Miami exhibition, *De un extraño pueblo*. Hernández's dedication is written in both Spanish and English, and it speaks to a deterritorialized Cuban nation:

> I would like to dedicate this exhibit to my family, both from here and there... The magical place that we left behind one day that hides capriciously in our memory, is not totally absent, for it navigates ghostly between the two shores. And in reality we ask ourselves, are they actually two? An arcanum from the past told me that it was the same one, searching for the Cipango continent, although in the end he was never able to delineate its geography because of the insistence on adjusting it fruitlessly to old maps. (*Extraño*)

The reference to Cipango, the island that Columbus thought he had found when he landed in Cuba, creates a dialogue between Mosquera and Hernández. Mosquera's "The Infinite Island" also references Columbus's initial confusion about where he had landed. As Mosquera explains, "In addition to a thirst for gold, the peculiar geography of the area awakened [an] obsession in Christopher Columbus and his followers that was to last for years: to know if the landscape they were seeing was an island or *terra firma*" (23). Mosquera takes the name of his essay from an answer supposedly given to Columbus by an aborigine: Cuba is "an infinite land of which no one had ever seen the end, although it was an island" (23). Mosquera further explains that "the paradox of an infinite island

remains as an image of the hyperbolical destiny of Cuba," and he argues that the cartography of "new" Cuban art has acknowledged the insularity of the Cuban condition while creating openings towards the "universal characteristics of Cuban art and culture" (23), those characteristics which forever expand outwards and have no island boundaries. Hernández's work seems to correspond with this new cartography in its efforts to elevate local realities and to project Cuba's particular histories of migration onto a broader canvas by appealing to the universalized experiences of exile, migration, and deterritorialization.

The language of Hernández, Mosquera, and another foundational Cuban critic, Antonio Benítez-Rojo, points to the importance of theories of space in Cuban art and criticism of the last twenty years.[4] Benítez-Rojo's "repeating island," Mosquera's "infinite island," and Hernández's "strange," moving towns offer a triad of alternative cultural geographies. These geographies move beyond the boundaries of the nation. They look less to territory than travels, less to physical geography than the routes of cultural exchange. Benítez-Rojo's *The Repeating Island* is a foundational text for this kind of project. It begins with a statement of "geographical fact: that the Antilles are an island bridge connecting...North and South America" (2). This geographical fact is the foundation of a complicated cultural legacy for the various islands (and languages and races) of the Caribbean—islands chained in a "discontinuous conjunction" (2). The effect: "within the (dis)order that swarms around what we already know of as Nature, it is possible to observe dynamic states or regularities that repeat themselves globally" (Benítez-Rojo 2). Phenomena observed in the cultural production of the Caribbean (and Benítez-Rojo includes Miami as part of the Caribbean) can be identified and understood as a basis for studies of global cultural patterns. Like Hernández, Benítez-Rojo's perspective may be grounded in a regional study, but it is also global in nature.

Benítez-Rojo's language seems oddly echoed in Hernández's paintings. Admittedly, Benítez-Rojo is being quoted out of context in the following lines. Still, his words seem to find their counterparts in Hernández's canvases. Benítez-Rojo claims that the Caribbean islands are characterized by "uncertain voyages of signification." He adds, "If someone needed...a graphic picture of what the Caribbean is, I would refer him to the spiral chaos of the Milky Way, the unpredictable flux of transformative plasma that spins calmly in our globe's firmament"

(4). Hernández's painting *Nave espacial* (see Fig. 6) could be a visual translation of Benítez-Rojo's imagined cosmic Caribbean. The painting presents a bifurcated space ship. The top half of the space ship is named Bujamey while the bottom half is the Star Ship Apollo, and both halves carry parts of Hernández's imagined city. Most of the fishing boats are in port, although one sails through space, surrounded by oversized cosmic fish. Despite the fact that the painting is set in space, Hernández draws attention to global movements. By deterritorializing the city of Bujamey—by setting it in space rather than on land—Hernández draws focus to the voyage itself and its universal qualities—to mass migration, broadly speaking. The name of the ship adds another element to the layered significance of the voyage. It reminds viewers of the U.S. Apollo space program, a program that both landed men on the moon and produced the gripping images of a wounded Apollo 13 struggling to return to Earth. The christening of Hernández's space ship once again returns us to Benítez-Rojo's notion of "uncertain signification," and the viewer may wonder if this ship will reach great heights or barely survive its voyage.

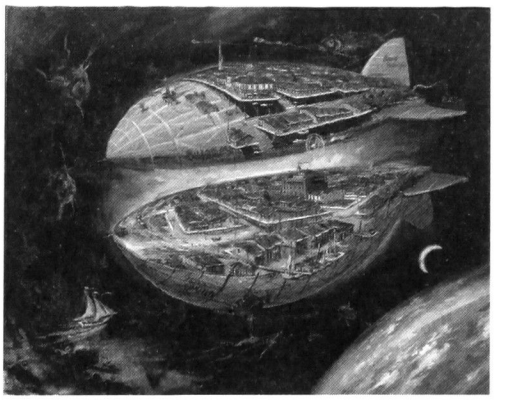


Fig. 6. Vicente Hernández, *Nave Espacial*. 2002. Oil on canvas. 31 ½ x 39 ½. Private Collection.

Hernández's popularity may very well be explained by his ability to reflect on global experiences—such as migration, colonialism, and underdevelopment—while at the same time grounding his work in Cuban reality. And yet the Miami exhibition of 2009 engaged regional politics, and the way the exhibition was presented unraveled a more targeted message. Hernández dedicated the show to his family, "both from here and there" (*Extraño*). The "here and there" is addressed again in his written introduction to the exhibit, as quoted before: "The magical place that we left behind one day and that hides capriciously in our memory, is not totally absent, for it navigates ghostly between two shores" (*Extraño*). Hernández implies that his work is meant as a gesture towards new cultural maps, new ways of thinking about the cultural geography of Cuba, of the here and there, of Cuba as island and exile. His gesture is echoed in the

accompanying statements provided by Alfredo Guevara and Ramón Cernu powerful cultural figures whose politics are ideologically at odds. Guev imagines Hernández's Bujamey as creating a discourse of reconciliation amc Cubans from "both shores," and he glowingly proclaims that "Hernández [h seized the appropriate space to forge common ground among many who long that invisible bridge which will eventually be seen from being so often dreame (*Extraño*). Cernuda is even more direct. Addressing the organizing of the exhil he writes: "its author, its critic, and its presenter imagines this exhibition s mounting barricades, eclipsing frontiers and unfolding itself, audacious, on t diptychs of the bifurcated nation" (*Extraño*).

The catalog vocalizes exhilaration over the present moment and the ic that Cuba and Miami are on the verge of inevitable change. Any traveler w has recently visited Cuba can acknowledge how widely this opinion is held. E islanders' interpretations of change may be less cataclysmic than the wishes Cuba's critics abroad. In Cuba, the moment of inevitable change has been froz in time—it has been predicted by outsiders for nearly fifty years. For examp since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the international community has turn its eyes to the island, yet unlike East Germany or Romania, Cuba has not expe enced a concentrated moment of what U.S. officials might call "regime chang The absolute change that many members of the *exilio* have predicted and await has never happened, and instead Cuba has been undergoing slow transformati from the inside. Meanwhile in Miami, challenges to entrenched political nor are also tentatively rising, and the voting patterns among young Cubans in t 2008 Presidential election seem to signal shifting attitudes.

Hernández's paintings mainly offer inspired visions of the possibilities greater contact between Cuba and the rest of the world, particularly Miami. T varying symbols and historical referents in the artist's work seem to point to l desire to present Cuba's present moment as ripe for a cultural Renaissance its own. In his first Miami exhibit, *El maravilloso mundo de Bujamey*, Hernánde paintings are dotted with Renaissance references. *Para volver a nacer, un salud Botticelli*, presents a direct reference, imagining an artistic rebirth inspired by t Renaissance master yet grounded in Hernández's magical realist world. Amo the many images of the Madonna painted in Renaissance style is *El peso de la*

in which Titian's "Assumption" weighs on the central building of Bujamey (as it weighs on Cuban history and culture).

Both the 2002 and 2009 exhibits include a painting in which the central subject is the myth of the Tres Juanes, a religious, folk tradition that tells the story of three Cubans (of varying races) who are lost at sea when they discover a miraculous statue of Cuba's patron saint, la Virgin de la Caridad del Cobre. Hernández's first representation is *Los Tres Juanes* (2002), in which the rafters take flight at dusk in a primitive flying machine with wings that echo the designs of Leonardo da Vinci. They appear again in *Los Tres Juanes en segundo viaje* (see Fig. 7) in the same da Vinci inspired machine. This time, however, they fly at dawn. The repeated image reminds viewers of perpetual movement and demonstrates that historical migrations are not usually one-way tickets but rather include both journeys and returns. The two paintings imply that the movements between "here and there" will continue and that those travels will be the basis of a Cuban cultural rebirth based on collaboration between Cubans within and outside the island.

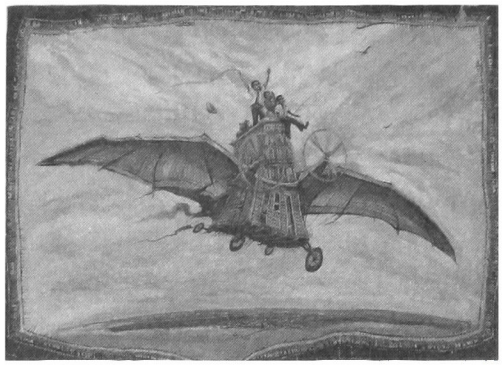


Fig. 7. Vicente Hernández, *Los Tres Juanes en segundo viaje*. 2007. 33 ½ x 47 ½. Oil on canvas. Cernuda Arte, Miami.

While Hernández presents the possibility of change by using fantastical imagery that casts mobility and metamorphosis in a carnivalesque light, he also traces the consequences of change in canvases such as *Por el mar de las antillas* (see Fig. 8). This painting provides another example of the artist's literary influences, as the canvas takes the title of a poem by Nicolás Guillén. The painting is also in keeping with Hernández's recurring theme of nautical vessels, and the central image of this painting is an oversized steamship. The islands of the Spanish Caribbean—Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico—

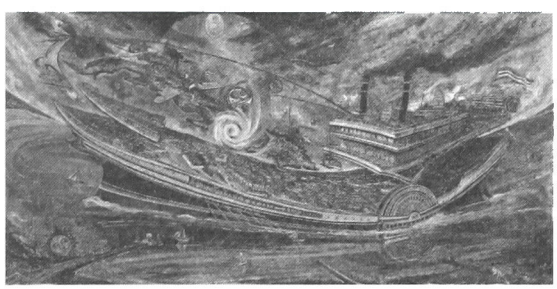


Fig. 8. Vicente Hernández, *Por el mar de las antillas*. 2009. Oil on canvas. 31 ½ x 78 ¾. Cernuda Arte, Miami.

float above the steamship, which is reminiscent of the 19th century, a century characterized by the Hispanic Caribbean's various independence movements and imperial attempts at continued colonization and annexation. At the back of the steamship flies a flag that reads "Caribbean," summoning a shared geography and identity based on the history of Spanish colonialism and U.S. interference (and what of the rest of the Caribbean, one might ask). In this painting Hernández delivers a more cautious message about Cuban-American relations, one which raises the possibilities of a Caribbean that must continually reaffirm its independence. The steamship also brings to mind the cruise ships that have altered the port towns of so many Caribbean nations, where stereotyped versions of Caribbean identity are presented to throngs of tourists through kitsch and souvenirs.

Hernández thus appeals to greater cultural exchange and to greater movement of Cubans both within and outside of the island, but his appeals sound a cautious note about the effects of international influence on island life and art. In this sense, one might wonder if Hernández's magical realist depictions are created with a certain level of self-consciousness. Do his paintings represent a merging of local reality and global artistic influences? Do they represent a giving in to international fantasies about Cuban life—the carnivalesque and the kitsch, the insular and the fantastical? I would argue that the tension between internationalism and regionalism is precisely what has characterized Cuban reality since its inception into modernity. The combination of historical and national referents and the juxtapositions of varying temporalities in Hernández's work remind viewers that linear and national histories are not the only logical modes for understanding Caribbean reality. If you were to create a map of cultural influences on Hernández's work and references in his paintings, you would be pulled simultaneously inwards and outwards, forwards and backwards in time. Indeed, while at times Hernández represents unquestionable Cuban themes and landscapes, at other times he provides images of port towns that are transferable—Bujamey could be Batabanó, New Orleans, or Vigo.

Moreover, Hernández's vision of constant movement and of endless migration works to democratize Cuban identity. There is no clear center or periphery in these paintings. Cuban authenticity is not tied to a single place or politics or to vague notions of modernity or progress. In this sense Hernández's paintings

seem to echo the "poetics of relation" of Caribbean theorist Édouard Glissant. Glissant's description of post-colonial poetics outlines a phase when the epistemology of colonialism—in which space is defined in relation to a colonial center—is abandoned. Instead of framing identity, history, and language according to the coordinates of the colonial center or the colonized periphery, "the poet's word leads from periphery to periphery...that is, it makes every periphery into a center...it abolish[es] the very notion of center and periphery" (29).

Glissant's description of a poetics that treats "every periphery [as] a center" brings us back to Columbus's suspicion of having landed on Cipango and Hernández's reference to that myth. The stories surrounding Columbus's initial confusion about where he had landed allow Hernández and Mosquera to playfully imagine new geographies. They also reflect upon the power of myth and Columbus's expectations when he landed in Cuba, expectations that have been reproduced in endless fantasies about the island in the imagination of tourists and travelers. Hernández invokes the power of this myth in order to adjust those "fruitlessly old maps" of Cuban exceptionalism. His images of Cuban towns in motion often hover between the competing capitals of Cuba—of the island and the exile—each of which has historically constructed its critique of the other within the discourse of national allegiance or cultural authenticity. Yet Hernández allows us another vision of Cuban cultural geography, one that looks beyond national borders or linear and politicized historiographies. Furthermore, his engagement with magical realism offers him a method for addressing the complicated temporalities of Cuban life and history. Hernández reminds us that change only occasionally comes in the form of revolutionary or catastrophic moments. Instead, his paintings privilege the journey, the imagination, and the logic of a futurity that is rooted in respect for daily life and memory.

***I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Vicente Hernández for taking the time to share his thoughts and his paintings with me. I would also like to thank Ramón Cernuda of Cernuda Arte in Miami for his time and generous assistance and for allowing me to reproduce the images seen here as well as Emily Codik for her help with procuring them.*

Endnotes

1. During the seven years that passed between Hernández's two Miami exhibitions, roughly 330 of his canvases sold in the United States alone—an average of almost one per week—and his work has been shown at exhibitions throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the United States, Spain, and Holland. His work is popular among Cuban-Americans, but it has also been sold to private collectors around the world, including sales through Christie's and Sotheby's auction houses (Cernuda "Interview").

2. One example is Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris's *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995). The book also contains the first English translation of Franz Roh's "Magical Realism: Post-Expressionism."

3. An article published in the magazine *Diario las Américas* prefaces its assessment of Hernández's show with a reaffirmation of a politics of place and a justification for the writer's interest in Hernández's paintings, despite the artist's residence in Cuba. Jesus Diaz, "Cuando la realidad es absoluta" (5 July 2002).

4. Fernández's aforementioned "The Island, the Map, the Travelers: Notes on Recent Developments in Cuban Art" also addresses theories of space in Cuban art, particularly of the 1990's.

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NOTAS BIOGRÁFICAS / BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

John Keene is the author of *Annotations* and, with artist Christopher Stackhouse, of *Seismosis*; his work has appeared recently or will soon appear in *Spirale*, *A Public Space*, and *Mandorla*. He teaches courses in African American and American literature, fiction writing, and aesthetics and conceptual art at Northwestern University. • **CIA de Foto** is a photography collective based in São Paulo, Brazil. Featuring among its eight members are Pio Figueiroa, Rafael Jacinto, João Kehl, and Carol Lopes. CIA de Foto's collaborative process begins in conversation at studio offices where members meet to discuss, conceptualize, and develop projects from the initial stages to the group's complex and unmistakable enhancing methods of postproduction. Their multi-platform collaborations blur the boundaries between documentary, photojournalism, and art photography, as well as between commercial assignments, exhibition work, and other media, including music and the moving image. Additional images can be found on their website: <http://ciadefoto.com.br/site/> • **Roberto Tejada** (Los Angeles, 1964) is the author of poetry collections that include *Mirrors for Gold* (Krupskaya, 2006) and *Exposition Park* (Wesleyan University Press, 2010). • **Jayne Cortez** ha publicado más de doce libros de poesía, desde *Pissstained Stairs and the Monkey Man's Wares* (1969) hasta su libro más reciente, *On the Imperial Highway: New and Selected Poems* (2009). Nació en Arizona, creció en California y actualmente divide su tiempo

entre la ciudad de Nueva York y Dakar, Senegal. En 1971 publicó *Festivales y funerales*, una edición de autor compuesta originalmente en una IBM Selectric II. Con sus cuarenta y cuatro páginas, este libro cosido a mano es un objeto único, extensión de su "frase-texto impreso" y precursor de su duradero proyecto editorial Bola Press. Los poemas traducidos para este número provienen de esa colección de 1971, que reúne veinticinco poemas de Cortez y siete dibujos realizados ex profeso por el artista Melvin Edwards. • **Gabriel Bernal Granados** ha publicado recientemente el libro de prosa *Una finestra che guarda tramontana* (Libros Magenta, 2010) y el libro de poemas *Sobre una hoja* (Monte Carmelo, 2010). • **Tisa Bryant**'s books include *Unexplained Presence* (Leon Works, 2007), a collection of hybrid essays on black presences in film, literature and visual art; the cross-referenced journal of narrative possibility, The Encyclopedia Project, and *War Diaries*, an anthology on black gay men's desire and survival, published in 2010 by AIDS Project Los Angeles, co-edited with Ernest Hardy. • **Mara Pastor** (San Juan, 1980): Poeta, editora y traductora. Ha publicado tres colecciones de poesía. Su trabajo más reciente se titula *Candada por error* (Atarraya Cartonera, 2009). Es candidata doctoral en la Universidad de Michigan, Ann Arbor. Actualmente reside en la Ciudad de México. • **Juan Emar** was the pen name of Álvaro Yáñez Bianchi (1893-1964), taken because of its similarity to the French phrase "J'en ai marre" (I'm fed up). Between 1935-1937, he published four books: *Miltín 1934, Un año, Ayer* and *Diez*, which were largely ignored in Chile, though more well-known writers like Pablo Neruda and Vicente Huidobro considered him a master. He spent the rest of his life working on his unfinished work *Umbral*, which was published posthumously in 1996. In the 1970s, and more recently, his work was reissued in Chile, and he is now thought of as one of the most important 20th century South American fiction writers. • **Megan McDowell** has translated two books by Alejandro Zambra: *The Private Lives of Trees* (Open Letter 2010) and *Ways of Going Home* (FSG, 2012). She received a residency from the Banff International Literary Translation Center in 2009 to complete a draft of Juan Emar's novel *Yesterday*. Her writings and translations can be found in *Granta, Words Without Borders*, and *Translation Review*. • **Leonel Lienlaf** (1969: Alepue, provincia Valdivia, Chile). Autor de *Se ha despertado el ave de mi corazón* y *Palabras soñadas*. Pertenece al movimiento Mapuche,

y en una entrevista a *El Mercurio* ha dicho, "La oralidad es la base de la poesía mapuche." Su poesía aparece en la antología *ÜL: Four Mapuche Poets* (Latin American Literary Review Press, 1998). • **Juan Carlos Flores** (La Habana, 1962) escribe actualmente el tercer libro de la trilogía *Resurrección Poética de Alamar*. Sus libros incluyen *Los Pájaros Escritos* (Premio David de Poesía, 1990), *Distintos Modos de Cavar un Túnel* (Premio Julián del Casals, 2002), *Un hombre de la clase muerta* (antología, Editorial Torre de Letras, 2007), y *El contragolpe (y otros poemas horizontales)* (Letras Cubanas, 2009; y Torre de Letras, 2007). • **Judith Goldman** is the author of *Vocoder* (Roof 2001), *DeathStar/rico-chet* (O Books 2006), "the dispossessions" (atticus/finch 2009), and *l.b.; or, catenaries* (Krupskaya); she co-edited the annual journal *War and Peace* with Leslie Scalapino from 2005-2009. From 2007-2011, she was a Harper Schmidt Fellow and collegiate assistant professor at the University of Chicago; in Fall 2011, she will be the Holloway Poet at UC Berkeley. • **Juan Salzano** nació en Buenos Aires, en 1980. Es poeta, performancer y profesor de filosofía. Conspira desde 2004 con la Estación Alógena. Ha publicado: *Muletología* (Tsé-tsé, Buenos Aires, 2006) y *¡Afrodictum!* (La Propia Cartonera, Montevideo, 2010). Editó prologó el tomo colectivo *Nosotros, los Brujos. Apuntes de arte, poesía y brujería* (Santiago Arcos, 2008). También compiló, tradujo y prologó *Deleuze y la brujería* (Las Cuarenta, 2009), con textos de Matt Lee y Mark Fisher. Actualmente escribe un nuevo libro de poemas *AMEBA MAGA*. • **John-Michael Rivera** is an Associate Professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He is the co-editor and founder of *Shadowbox Magazine*. Rivera's pieces in this issue are from his manuscript, Amatl, an encyclopedia in parts, which is a cross-genre book that engages the first encyclopedia of the New World, The Florentine Codex (1545). • **Mark Booth** is an interdisciplinary artist and writer. He is an assistant professor of writing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. • **María Baranda**: Ciudad de México, 1962. Ha publicado varios libros de poesía. Sus últimos títulos son *Ficticia* y *Arcadia*. La UNAM acaba de sacar *El mar insuficiente/Poesía escogida 1989-2009*. Ha sido traducida a varios idiomas y es miembro del Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte. • **Farid Matuk**'s translations from Spanish have appeared in *Kadar Koli, Bombay Gin,* and *Translation Review*. He is the author of the poetry collection *This Is a Nice Neighborhood* (Letter Machine Editions, 2010). • **Pablo Medina** es autor de doce

libros. Su poemario más reciente es *The Man Who Wrote on Water* (Hanging Loose Press, 2011). Es profesor de creación literaria en Emerson College de Boston. • **Susan Gevirtz**'s books include *AERODROME ORION & Starry Messenger* (Kelsey St., 2010), *BROADCAST* (Trafficker, 2009), *Thrall* (Post Apollo, 2007). *Without Event: Collected Essays,* is forthcoming from Nightboat. She teaches at California College of the Arts and Mills College. Gevirtz has co-organized the annual translation and conversation meeting of The Paros Symposium with Greek poet Siarita Kouka, and guest organizers, for eight years. • **Jorge Guitart** is the author of *The Empress of Frozen Custard and Ninety-Nine Other Poems* (Blaze Vox 2009). He teaches Spanish linguistics at SUNY Buffalo. • **Edwin Torres** is a poet enjambed from the self-idealized landscape of Noricua. His recent books include *Yes Thing No Thing* (Roof Books, 2010), *In The Function of External Circumstances* (Nightboat Books, 2009), and *The PoPedology Of An Ambient Language* (Atelos Books, 2007). • **Cecilia Vicuña** is a poet, artist and filmmaker, who divides her time between Chile and New York. This fall CHAINLINKS is reprinting her first book *Saborami* (1973). Her most recent book in Spanish is *Soy Yos, Antología 1966-2206,* Lom Ediciones, Chile, 2010. To see her current work on sound go to: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9KFOaWD1LE, and http://vimeo.com/11912920 • **Kent Johnson** has edited, translated, or written twenty-some collections in various relations to poetry. Honors he has received include Pushcart Book of the Month, two awards from PEN, an Illinois Arts Council Poetry award, a National Endowment for the Arts Literary Fellowship, and the State Teacher of the Year Award from the Illinois Community College Board of Trustees. • **Amir Hamed** (1962) is a professional musician and one of Uruguay's most prominent literary critics. He is editor of *Orientales: Uruguay a través de su poesía,* widely recognized as one of the most important anthologies of the nation's poetry. He lives in Montevideo. • **Charles Hatfield** is an assistant professor of Latin American literature and assistant director of the Center for Translation Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas. His bilingual anthology of Mario Benedetti's poetry, *Little Stones at My Window,* was published by Curbstone Press in 2003. • **Roberto Appratto** (Montevideo, 1950): Author of eight books of poetry, among them *Velocidad controlada, Arenas movedizas,* and *Levemente ondulado.* He is also the author of numerous books of prose, such as *18 y Yaguarón,* and a study of

literature and film. He contributes cultural commentaries to *El País* (Montevideo) and *El Diario de poesía* (Buenos Aires). • **Kristin Dykstra** is the translator of *Did You Hear about the Fighting Cat?* by Omar Pérez (2010), along with other books of poetry by Pérez and Reina María Rodríguez. Her recent translations of work by Rodríguez, Juan Carlos Flores, Pedro Marqués and Angel Escobar appear in *Review, Asymptote, Bombay Gin, The Brooklyn Rail,* and *La Habana Elegante.* • **Nancy Bacelo** (José Batlle y Ordóñez, 1931): Bacelo moved to Montevideo in 1950, where she studied Spanish language and literature. She authored fifteen books of poetry, among many other literary contributions, and won numerous prizes including the Premio Municipal and the Premio del Ministerio de la Cultura. She passed away in 2007. • **Ryan Daley** lives, works and writes in Brooklyn. His poetry appears in numerous places, especially on his blog, Muchísimas (http://charitablegiving.blogspot.com). His translations have appeared in *Golden Handcuffs Review* and *V Magazine*. He teaches at CUNY and designs web site content. • **Amanda Berenguer** (Montevideo, 1921–2010): Her outstanding poetry production includes a wealth of volumes. Most of them are reunited in *La constelación del navío*, 2002. *La cuidadora del fuego*, her last collection, was published in 2010. • **Mónica de la Torre** is author of poetry books in English, *Talk Shows* (2007) and *Public Domain* (2008), and in Spanish, *Acúfenos* (2006) and *Sociedad Anónima* (2010). She translated a volume by Gerardo Deniz and co-edited *Reversible Monuments* (2002). She co-edited *Malditos latinos, malditos sudacas: Poesía hispanoamericana Made in USA* (2010) and is a 2009 NYFA poetry fellow. • **Selva Casal** (Montevideo, 1927): A practicing lawyer, she also taught sociology and law at the Universidad de la República until she was forced to abandon her post by the military dictatorship in the 1970s and '80s. She has published over a dozen books of poetry. • **Laura Healy** is the translator of two collections of poetry by Roberto Bolaño—*The Romantic Dogs* (New Directions, 2008) and *Tres* (New Directions, 2011). She lives in Providence, Rhode Island, and works as the managing editor of *Harvard Review*. • **Marosa di Giorgio** (1932-2004) was born in Salto to Italian immigrant parents. After she studied law and briefly acted in a professional theatre company, she ultimately took a job in Salto's municipal government and devoted her free time to reading extensively and writing fifteen books of poetry, three books of short stories and a novel. • **Susan Briante** is the

author of two collections of poetry: *Pioneers in the Study of Motion* (2007) and *Utopia Minus* (2011). Her translations of Latin American writers have appeared in *Bomb, Translation Review,* and *Reversible Monuments,* among others. From 1992-1997, she lived in Mexico City where she worked for *Artes de México* and *Mandorla.* • **Jeannine Marie Pitas** traveled to Uruguay in 2006 on a Fulbright, and with the help of Roberto Echavarren and Nidia di Giorgio, she translated three of Marosa di Giorgio's books: *The History of Violets, Magnolia* and *The Native Garden is in Flames.* Selections here appear in the bilingual edition of *The History of Violets* published by Ugly Duckling Presse (2010). • **Roberto Echavarren** (Montevideo, 1944): Doctor by the University of Paris VIII, he has taught at London University and New York University. Poet, novelist, and essayist. Among his poetry books: *Performance* (2000) and *Centralasia* (2005). • **Román Antopolsky** is an Argentine poet and translator. He translates from Russian, French, German, Romanian, Portuguese, and English into Spanish. He currently lives in Pittsburgh. • **Michelle Gil-Montero** is a poet and translator of Latin American poetry and prose. Her translation of Andrés Ajens' essay collection *Poetry After the Invention of América* is forthcoming from Palgrave MacMillan in 2011. She lives in Pittsburgh and teaches at Saint Vincent College. • **Eduardo Espina** (Montevideo, 1954) has published a dozen books of poetry and essays. He has won Uruguay's National Prize for the Essay (1996 and 2000) and the Municipal Prize for Poetry (1998). He won the 2006 Latino Literary Prize from the Instituto Hispanoamericano de Escritores at CUNY for *El cutis patrio,* and in 2010 he won the Guggenheim Fellowship. • **Daniel Borzutzky** is the author of *The Book of Interfering Bodies* (2011), *The Ecstasy of Capitulation* (2007), and *Arbitrary Tales* (2005). His translations include *Song for his Disappeared Love* by Raúl Zurita and *Port Trakl* by Jaime Luis Huenún. His writing has been anthologized in *A Best of Fence, Seriously Funny,* and *Malditos Latinos, Malditos Sudacas.* • **Gustavo Espinosa** (Treinta y Tres, 1961): His literary and cultural criticism regularly appears in Uruguayan newspapers, and his book of poems, *Cólico miserere* (2009), received the "Fondos Concursables" prize from the Ministry of Culture and Education. He has published two novels: *Carlota podrida* (2009), and *China es un frasco de fetos* (2001), awarded a prize by the Montevideo newspaper *Posdata.* • **Silvia Guerra** (Maldonado, 1961) has published several books of poetry, among them *La sombra de la azucena* (2000)

and *Nada de nadie* (2001), as well as a prose biography of Lautréamont, *Fuera del relato* (2007). She helped organize the Primer Festival Hispanoamericano de Poesía in Uruguay and co-directs a poetry press, La Flauta Mágica, with Roberto Echavarren. • **Alex Verdolini** is a writer and translator based in New York. He's currently interested in translations from no original, and from two; his latest project is a rendering, in English, of Hölderlin's renderings, in savage German, of Pindar's odes in Greek. • **Gillian Brassil** is a writer based in Providence and New York. She is currently translating a Mario Bellatin novella. • **Circe Maia** has published nine books of poetry in her native Uruguay, most recently *Obra poética*, as well as four collections of prose. Her translations of Greek and English poets have appeared in Uruguayan magazines as well as foreign ones, and her poetry has been translated into Swedish and English; she is currently producing videos of her work. • **Mary Crow**, former Poet Laureate of Colorado and author of eleven collections of poetry and translation, has a new book of poems, *Addicted to the Horizon*, due to appear in 2012. Her book of translations of the poems of Roberto Juarroz (Argentina) appeared in 2011. She recently returned from a residency at El Gouna Writers Residencies in Egypt. • **Eduardo Milán** (Rivera, 1952) left Uruguay in 1979 for political reasons—his father José already imprisoned—and has lived in Mexico City ever since, in but not of the Mexican poetry scene. Milán has published over twenty volumes of poetry, in addition to criticism. These excerpts are drawn from *Por momentos la palabra entera* (Sometimes the Whole Word), 2007. • **John Oliver Simon** was awarded an NEA Fellowship in Translation for his work with Chilean poet Gonzalo Rojas. His books of translation include *From the Lightning*, poems by Rojas (2008), and *Ghosts of the Palace of Blue Tiles*, a chapbook by Jorge Fernández Granados (2008). He contributed to *Light from a Nearby Window* (1993) and *Reversible Monuments* (2002). • **Idea Vilariño** (Montevideo, 1920–2009): poet, essayist, and literary critic of the *Generación del '45*. Her works include *La suplicante* (1945), *Cielo Cielo* (1947), *Por aire sucio* (1950), *Nocturnos* (1955), *Pobre Mundo* (1966), *No* (1980), *Canciones* (1993), *Poesía completa* (2002) and more. After Uruguay's redemocratization in 1985, she taught at the Universidad de la República. • **Anna Deeny** teaches in the History and Literature Department at Harvard. She has translated the poetry of Marosa di Giorgio, Idea Vilariño, Mercedes Roffé, and Raúl Zurita. Her translation of

Zurita's *Purgatorio* (1973) was published by the University of California in 2009. • **Jomi Curet** nació en San Juan, Puerto Rico, en 1976. Poeta y profesor de francés en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras. Es autor de los poemarios *De visita, simples rutinas* (2002) y *de Revienta* (2011). • **Justin Petropoulos** lives in Brooklyn, New York, where he works in nonprofit communications. His poems have appeared in *Columbia Poetry Review, Portland Review* and *American Letters & Commentary*. His first collection of poems, *Eminent Domain*, was selected for the 2010 Marsh Hawk Press Poetry Prize. • **Rachel Levitsky** es autora de *Under the Sun* (Futurepoem 2003) y de otras cinco plaquetas de poesía. Es autora de varias puestas en escena de poesía, tres de las cuales (una de ellas con la colaboración de Camille Roy) han sido montadas en New York y en San Francisco. Su poesía y ensayos críticos pueden ser encontrados en la red en *Delirious Hem, Narrativity, Duration Press, How2*, y en *Web Conjunctions*. Es fundadora y colabora en la dirección de Belladonna, casa editorial avocada a trabajos feministas de vanguardia. El libro *Neighbor* apareció en el 2009 en la editorial Ugly Duckling. • **Valerie Mejer** nació en la Ciudad de México. Recibió el Premio Internacional de Poesía "Gerardo Diego 1996" por su libro *De Elefante a Elefante* en 1996. Ha recibido la beca del FONCA Jóvenes Creadores en dos ocasiones. Es autora de los libros *De la ola, el atajo, Geografías de Niebla, Esta novela azul*, y *Ante el ojo del Cíclope*. Ha traducido entre otros libros *Apalaquia/Apalachia* por Charles Wright y *The Zoo Father/El Padre Zoológico* por Pascale Petit, y *Libreto para Eros* de Forrest Gander (Chile, 2010). En su versión en inglés sus poemas han aparecido en Inglaterra en el *Poetry London* y en Estados Unidos en *Hunger Mountain Review, Nimrod, The American Poetry Review* y en *Translations*. • **Amy King**'s most recent book is *Slaves to Do These Things* (Blazevox), and forthcoming, *I Want to Make You Safe* (Litmus Press). She is currently preparing a book of interviews with the poet Ron Padgett and teaches English and Creative Writing at SUNY Nassau Community College. For more information, please visit amyking.org. • **Jack Spicer** (Los Angeles, 1925—San Francisco, 1965) publicó en vida apenas siete volúmenes de poesía en editoriales independientes y en tiradas modestas. Conocido entonces como miembro, junto a Robert Duncan y Robin Blaser, del Berkeley Renaissance y el San Francisco Renaissance; la sucesiva aparición de toda su obra publicada e inédita ha ido acrecentando el interés de la poesía contemporánea

por una figura poética esencial que, en plena era de la expresión personal y la poesía de la experiencia, defendía el carácter "alienígena" o "exterior" de la poesía, sobre la que el poeta no tiene ningún control, una teoría poética que se encauza en dos descubrimientos: la poesía "dictada" o transmitida desde un exterior, con el poeta como un aparato receptor-transmisor de esos mensajes; y el poema "serial", cuya unidad no es el poema individual sino el conjunto del libro. Su reivindicación póstuma culmina con la aparición en 2008 de *My Vocabulary Did This to Me: The Collected Poetry of Jack Spicer*, que gana el American Book Award de poesía. Una obra que, por sus fundadas y constantes inquietudes lingüísticas (estudia lengua y literatura en U.C. Berkeley de 1945 a 1955 y trabaja allí como lingüista hasta un año antes de su muerte) atrae a todo escritor preocupado por el medio con el que trabaja, esto es, el lenguaje. De ahí la reivindicación constante que de su figura hacen los miembros del grupo del L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E y de ahí el título del libro que por primera vez aparece aquí traducido al castellano. • **David Menéndez Álvarez** (Madrid, 1977) ha publicado poemas en San Francisco y ha pasado los últimos cuatro años estudiando y traduciendo la obra de Spicer como parte de su tesis doctoral. Como fruto de este trabajo ha traducido la mayor parte de sus poemas seriales. *Lenguaje* se publica aquí por primera vez en nuestro idioma, siendo además la primera vez que uno de los libros "mayores" de Spicer aparece íntegramente en español. • **Roberto Harrison** lives and works in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His books include *Os* (subpress, 2006) and *Counter Daemons* (Litmus Press, 2006), as well as a handful of chapbooks. • **Deborah Paredez** is the author of *This Side of Skin* (Wings Press 2002) and a founding member of CantoMundo, a national organization dedicated to supporting Latina/o poets and poetry. She is an Associate Professor of English and Interim Director of Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas in Austin where she lives with her husband and daughter. • **Ana Rosa González Matute** ha publicado los libros de poesía *Estrías* (1994), *Silogismo del Alba* (1999), y *Sil* (2008). Es autora del libro de cuentos *Gneis* (2000), *En sueños surgen las responsabilidades* (2007), y de las antologías de cuento norteamericano contemporáneo *Un caracol en la Estigia* (1998), y de Lydia Davis, *Una segunda oportunidad* (2006). El año pasado (2010) publicó las traducciones de *Mi Emily Dickinson*, de Susan Howe, y del *Canto de mí mismo*, de Walt Whitman.

En 2002 obtuvo una residencia en el Bellagio Study and Conference Center, Fundación Rockefeller, en Bellagio, Italia, y en 2004 la residencia del Hawthornden International Retreat for Writers, en Escocia. • **J. Michael Martinez** is the author of *Heredities*, winner of the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets. • **Carla Faesler** is a Mexican poet whose work includes *Anábasis Maqueta* (*Anabasis Model*) (2003), winner of the Gilberto Owen National Prize of Literature, *Tú sino la piedra* (*Not You But the Stone*) (1999), and *Ríos sagrados que la herejía navega* (*The Sacred Rivers that Heresy Sails*) (1996). Her new book of photo-poems is *Catábasis exvoto* (*Katabasis Ex-Voto*) (2010). • **Karen Lepri** is a poet and translator who recently received her MFA in poetry at Brown University. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Beloit Poetry Journal, Boston Review, Berkeley Poetry Review, Best New Poets, Word For / Word,* and *Memorious,* among others. • **Timothy Liu**'s most recent books are *Polytheogamy* and *Bending the Mind Around the Dream's Blown Fuse.* "Songs for Going Under" forms the concluding section of his hybrid novel, *Kingdom Come,* forthcoming in 2012. He lives in New York City.• **E. Tracy Grinnell** is the author of *Helen: A Fugue* (2008), *Some Clear Souvenir* (2006), and *Music or Forgetting* (2001), as well as the limited edition chapbooks *Mirrorly, A Window* (2009), *Leukadia* (2008), *Hell and Lower Evil* (2008), *Humoresque* (2008), *Quadriga,* a collaboration with Paul Foster Johnson (2006), *Of the Frame* (2004), and *Harmonics* (2000). She is the founding editor and director of Litmus Press. • **Virna Teixeira** was born in Fortaleza and has lived in São Paulo for many years, where she works as a neurologist. She is the author of *Visita* (2000), *Distância* (2005) and Trânsitos (2009), and has four books of translations: *Na Estação Central,* a selection of poems of Edwin Morgan (2006); *Ovelha Negra,* an anthology of Scottish poetry; *Livro Universal* by Chilean poet Héctor Hernandez Montecinos (2008), and *Cartas de ontem,* an anthology of poems of British poet Richard Price. • **Leonard Schwartz** is the author of numerous books of poetry including, most recently, *A Message Back and Other Furors* (Chax Press). His new book, *At Element,* is forthcoming from Talisman House. • **Omar Pérez** (La Habana, 1964): poeta, ensayista, traductor. Sus libros de poesía son *Algo de lo sagrado* (1996), *Oiste hablar del gato de pelea?* (1998), *Crítica de la razón puta* (Premio Nacional de Poesía Nicolás Guillén, 2009), y *Lingua Franca* (2010). Factory School y Shearsman Books han publicado ediciones bilingües de sus

primeros dos poemarios. • **Amish Trivedi** curates the *Museum of Vandals* (out from Cannibal Books), has an MFA from Brown University and maintains amishtrivedi.com. A poem was recently published in Cross Cultural Poetics and an electronic piece is on Conjunctions' web page. • **Kristina Martinez** lives in Miami. Her poems have appeared in *The Indiana Review*, *The Iowa Review*, and *MiPoesias*. • **Emily Jones** painted at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and practiced conceptual art in residence at the Banff Centre for the Arts. She is a graduate student at the University of Chicago. • De **Reynaldo Jiménez** se acaba de publicar en Montevideo, Uruguay, su traducción de *Galaxias* de Haroldo de Campos, que pronto será también editada en México por Libros Magenta. • **Virginia Benítez** is a PhD candidate in the Literature Department of the University of California, Santa Cruz specializing in 20th century Cuban literature and culture.

NEW TRANSLATIONS

CARLOS OQUENDO DE AMAT [PERU]
translated by Alejandro de Acosta
and Joshua Beckman

MANUEL MAPLES ARCE [MEXICO]
translated by Brandon Holmquest

MAROSA DI GIORGIO [URUGUAY]
translated by Jeannine Marie Pitas

YVÁN YAURI [PERU]
translated by Marta del Pozo
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segunda época

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Review 82

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Founded in 1968, *Review* is a major forum in the United States for contemporary Latin American and Caribbean writing in translation and for coverage of the visual and performing arts in the Americas.

Review 82, guest-edited by Cuban author **José Manuel Prieto** (Rex) and **Anke Birkenmaier** (Indiana University), brings together articles by scholars such as Roberto González Echevarría, Rachel Price, and Rafael Rojas; and poetry, fiction, and essays by Cuban authors on and off the island, including Abilio Estévez, Juan Carlos Flores, Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo, Ena Lucía Portela, Reina María Rodríguez, Rolando Sánchez Mejías, and José Triana. The issue showcases pieces on artists Consuelo Castañeda and Wilfredo Prieto, and a study of Carpentier's libretto for the puppet opera *Manita en el Suelo*. Reviews cover new titles by Cuban writer Miguel Barnet and others.

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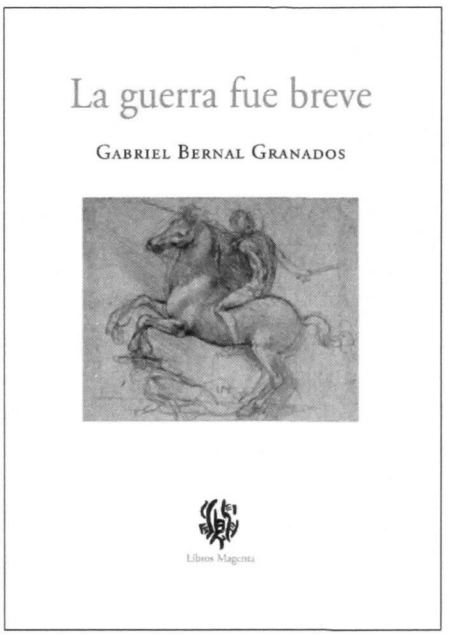
NARRADORES DE LA CIUDAD



- *La guerra fue breve*,
  Gabriel Bernal Granados
- *La ciudad imaginada*,
  Alberto Chimal
- *Los restos del banquete*,
  Gabriel Wolfson
- *Cerdos*,
  Abel Ibáñez Galván
- *El lounge*,
  Ricardo Pohlenz
- *Peach Melba*,
  Carol Kauffman

«Lo novedoso de esta obra es esa alternancia entre escrito teórico y autobiográfico. Es muy interesante observar cómo el estilo en ambos es similar, y cómo hay características del uno en el otro y viceversa. Con esta técnica, se consigue una fusión literaria espléndida en una suerte de novela en forma de diario, un diario tanto íntimo como intelectual.

Pero más curioso aún es comprobar cómo se usan los tiempos verbales de los relatos, cómo se crea una especie de ficción del presente mirando al mismo tiempo el pasado de la vida propia y de la tradición de la literatura y arte occidentales.»

Manuel Borrás Arana

Ciudad de México Capital en Movimiento

cultura DF

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