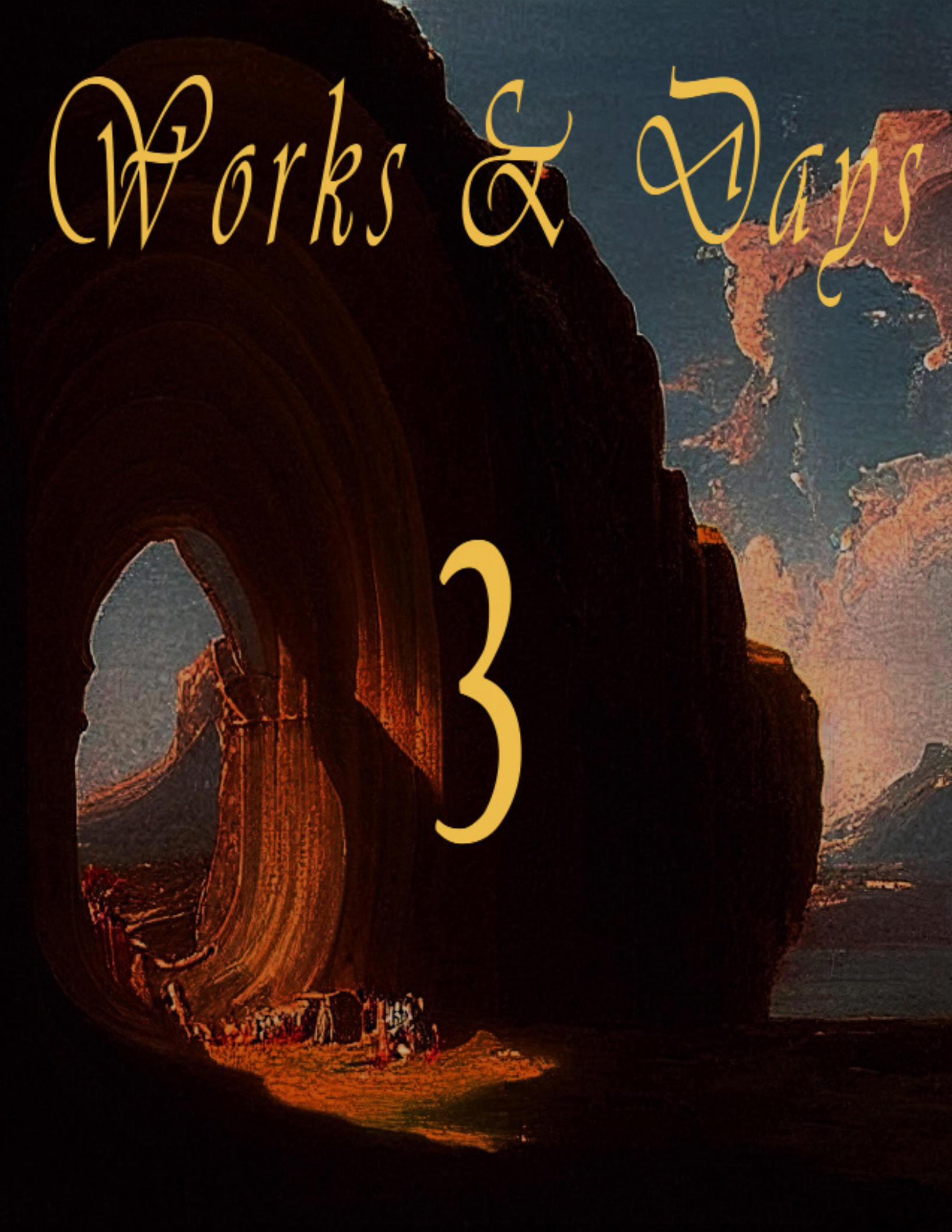


Works & Days

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WORKS & DAYS

WINTER 2023



BEAUTIFUL DAYS PRESS

George Fragopoulos & Joshua Wilkerson, Editors

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Coming from exile, asking for you

for sage

Rasha Abdulhadi

Do not ask the exile if he has been back home.
If you knew what a home is, you would not be the one who asks.

An exile is someone who is always coming from somewhere else,
who has been living in one place and always after that other home asking.

Do not ask the descendant if she has gone back.
If you had to rebuild lineage, there are different questions you would ask.

For six hundred years or for seventy or for three,
we have been leaving our homes when the siege so violently “asks.”

You inherit the legacy of being from someplace you’ve never been
and to which you might never be allowed to return, even if you ask.

Another legacy is the longing—in both your cracked maps,
in your grandmother and her father’s as-yet-unbroken silsila—a hope unasked,

that the place you come from but have never been remembers you, asks for you,
would love you if only you could get back, demand to be let in, and no longer ask.



Apology

Rachel Allen

Of timeliness, and encumbrance. Who among us gets across on purpose. I must admit I cannot stick her: she is a floating hell. To pass, by way of water; or not; or else. Neither bearer nor Purim after: one not yet, one beyond.

Say history for typology, say typology for prophecy.

Fixities. Wash. Water signs.

After.

And say we swam ashore. To realize the grit. Grain, hot and sudden, your delicate soles. Pink, like conch, or another; interior. Like bauxite, as if bearable, aquarianism, horizoning ends. So the sand. Where I carried you. With one set of prints.

Mark that purgatory. To take names. To indicate.
Rather.

What you cannot stand, though, is the sticky. Touch me not, please; protective thought. Sense or process, overbearing. Where what has happened names no successor; where naming rites are borne by no particular; where you are waiting, to abscond. Another long march; in hidebound corpus, still despoiled, borne in bloodform: earthen knot.

Of bodied fraud in motile froth; or, what soon rots. Clock the mud. Another reckoning, again rudolphine. Any day now. Or any other.

Caption contest, ransom captive. Realize youth; capture moments. Set the timer. Reckon wonder; and right on. In bearing, the boring. Float a concept. Say, our infancy. The overture. An ovarium. A bridegroom on the threshold.

Raptio!

Sorry for the roll of the r's, bare rhoticity between pillars of emphasis: like slurry, a Mississippi of spelling and script.

When what happened, becomes occurrence. When what wasn't, gets awaited. When taking names and setting calendars. When you chart our courses. Lesser evils, lest they fester, need surveillance: so say I.

Sorry for the unsorry state of it. At obsession or absence, who's to say. Of all the ways and means. Grit in the craw of being; no one ever chose to. F-sh swimming faster without an eye. Upstream in the divinity of vowels. The consequence of severance. Come separateness. Trust what tetra, tantra, selfhood, upon us.

Is it too late now to say; I'm missing more than just a body.

Blood, bread, bris; wine. Of a heaven with the stench of ashes; burning palm fronds. Smearred besmirchment; sorry marker; what else before we shout hosanna.

A lot.

When tinting shamrock, prior paschal; ewe means rachel, sink first kirk padraig; sage scat of adder, and singe bog bodies; pray thee tell, of earthen rot. Still, we're sticking, time and precedent; new prepositions for proper-er nouns. So get going; start to sticking. To; by. With. Around.

Sorry for I cannot say what. Hamartia, and all the other ways I'm supposed to have missed. The surer shot, shot my I out. Now I'll consent to christening under us. Call this a motion to let higher authority preside. (Bite the tongue that says I'll be glad to.)

Suit us for a show trial, say some defense. *This*. But florid. Like a hibiscus cocktail, served up.

Whether to sow reasonable doubt in flood season. No more

or less wise; just boring. The baroqueness to adore. Coming in all wrathlike, slipping out all lamblike. Snakey-seeming thing to me.

Still, see it our way. Break water, broach time. In our offense, we beg forgiveness.

In an argument, say what clenches. Here is not one; do something else.

Painting Plates Eating Lonely

Vasiliki Argyris

like the older people i paint the cranberry bog
repressed all kinds
and self-inflicted orthodoxy too
but not in political imagination
i am painting the workers
years i swoon at millet's gleaners
make paper doll pietàs
carve up potluck arrangements
plates are for handing over
but i live aloof

after shower feet bright
cadmium red stained soles
work is red all over
and a little bit of romance
never hurt anyone
but this bright Tenderness
is mistaken all the time
the answer to *what more could you want*
is always a lot
this is a hungry country

For Christoph Scheiner

Josh Ascherman

As a crystal in Galileo's telescope. Panto-
graph: for the reproduction of small images at scale,
continually repurposed as a weapon, a mint,
the arm of a mirror I broke once

the way things are scissored together, linked by rhombus.
For the calibration of the Archduke's telescope, snow
comes often to Ingolstadt. Golden umbra and mock suns.
As anamorphic objects sparkle,

as sunspots flare. As if flecked with mica. For redrawing.
The dog leans forward, snuffles, wonders about a gasket.
He is my dog, a Copernican, bowing that wet snout
toward the sidewalk, conglomerate.

Champaign

Josh Ascherman

crassulacean because the tiny mouths usually stay closed
grass tufts of the sunset backdrop
the field is not over until the umbra has become familiar
I've never been there but
it's especially nice in a dry summer when you can sit there in the afternoon
cruel motherboard landscape
wild berries plantain trees whole dog packs roving hungry

discarded cigarette butts remind me for some reason of
Masolino's absence in Hungary
Masaccio left alone in the chapel wondering barren
where village dogs prowl in search of
marbled scraps of meat left on T-bones
whether veld savannah or steppe
what's happening in the background plaster sheets

under the pedestals or inside the shaft a light indigo
crassulacean because the plump leaves
get hyperactive outside the trompe l'oeil arch
Masaccio's *Trinità* now basically
inside a train station redeemed by the proximity of hills
wonderful burst of energy the contents
of a tomb—yes, inside the train station of Santa Maria Novella

the face is immaterial the *Expulsion* does not depict tears
I wonder about proto-Indo-European
dogs' noises not yet brought up to date from the OED's
nineteen-eighty-nine edition
how well they hunt how composite silhouettes
against the champaign
when they were laid in impasto

I still entertain the absurdist fantasy of a field of dogs

being the signified of Jasper Johns's
Field Painting, from the early 1960s, being
one of the swiveling elements
projecting into the third dimension of this our world
I guess I don't care about
cornichons, or any painting a dog cannot appreciate

crassulacean because they are thick when spoken
and prodded running with chlorophyll
sleeping on warped hardwood resting on bamboo trays
they crunch when bitten into or plucked
into banishment overflowing xylem
imagine it's because they miss their dogs
dead at the hot tip of the archangel's sword

Masaccio painted one dog in a *tondo* which is circular
flailing succulents could be poison
for me this puts it in the background of all the others
like a grassland underfoot
if you think I am seeing dogs where there are none
wait until you hear my theory
of vanishing points and the history of perspective

even gold foil haloes that echo the shape of circles
Tyrian purple robes
when dye was suckled from clams or pressed underfoot
when descending
it doesn't matter if it was Masaccio, Masolino, a lesser assistant
like Andrea di Giusto
we have already made this a central document

we found an arrangement that works even if it sometimes means
the couch gets torn up
sacrifices end up at altars, crushed grapes make wine
with the infusion of other things
crassulacean because of their capacity to gush
exceed their husks
and make of the desert a field of grass

Saga Remembered Fully Then Fully Forgotten

Theo Ellin Ballen

a simple and well-
edited ship once rose (it's
the myth you live by, it fits
punishments and
much heavier stuff) (it
is the story you remember and love, when your hair throws you
to look at your father, when your long hairs arc
into super balls and reduce to
background, when you sneeze into your
used eye-candy, and you know that you no longer have it, but
you thirst for):

“we passed by a dozen gritty cardboard boxes and/four large down-to-earth divinities
we argued about the lifespans of/boxes and divinities
we met a mess of bitter twists with wow shelf-life preserved by/an old disaster
beside them, we made/our home
grinding our teeth, we penciled ten/sky-wide season-lasting lines
grinding our groins, we/cracked those lines loose to congeal into vanilla
we built two taxis, took/turns touching our skin to their uniform steering wheels
peak milk (milk/at a certain angle) corrected wrongs and was our money
then one of us saw the deep, held it/in their own hands
then one of us saw/two-thirds of a god, between falling mountains
where birds/fleshed/out/and struck and swallowed;” now, all that's left

is your shining stretched-out neck that you tried to use
to overcome death, but it can't even conquer your
personal sleep, just turns around in circles and
smashes anything and is so needy it causes a drought



Network of Gazes

Anselm Berrigan

I picked up some sertraline
today. I tell my shrink its
working. Do I seem less
depressed to you? The baby
aspirin helps with blood
thinning but there's so much
pollen permanently in the
air all I have to do is think
about raising a finger &
my nose bleeds like that
volcano the volcano lovers
loved so much they died
on film being with it. Did
you know the reader is
always wrong? All I want
is to be unseen. Love's a little
much to ask for, the way
ass is a terrible descriptor.
"I'm a grown-ass man."
That might be ok for Ben
Johnson, but Shakespeare
has to be getting stabbed
repeatedly, in death, anytime
anyone says grown-ass man.
Why do you have to do that
to him? I wonder if Dgls
still thinks Shakespeare was
a bad writer. He told Amiri
Baraka and Lorenzo Thomas
that at the same time, in Maine.
Or no, he told Amiri Billy
Shakes sucks and Amiri waved
over Lorenzo and said
listen to this guy, he says
Shakespeare's no good.
Can't call anyone if no one's
there. Dug says Keats sucks too.
He wrote this poem about me.

Poem for Ed

Anselm Berrigan

I ran into Noel
at the horseshoe
bar in 2007. Or
maybe it was 2008.
Sylvie was in the
world. Noel was
“secretly” in town
for a job interview.
We talked about
baby sleeping habits.
Comparing notes.
He said Urson the
person always slept
with them and still
did and was totally
independent. I said
we had Sylvie sleeping
in her own room after
a few weeks. He said
“We disagree” I said
no we don’t. He said
“you disagree that
we disagree” I said
I didn’t know we
were having a debate.
Actually, I didn’t say
that. I just stared at
him thinking I hadn’t
agreed to be in a
conversation that
required agreement
or disagreement. Then
I remembered the time

Noel signed over a
check for one cent
to me. & I remembered
you writing about Noel
taking you to task
for being obscure. &
I remembered the poem
he read in public about
Cedar getting taken
to task by his boss
for checking himself
out in the mirror
behind the counter while
shoplifting was taking
place. & I remembered
Noel's ex Noelle who
had incredible prescription
speed & Noel said take two
& I went to work for
three days on no sleep.
& I remembered the time
you told me you didn't like
some music because it
reminded you of stuff
you didn't like. & finally
I understood why Noel
was so important to you
as a friend all those years
ago, in San Francisco
where they called you Ed.

The Lamb With the Talking Scroll

Courtney Bush

I put this here so I don't have to say it
And a thought should never be broken up
Into parts of thoughts

Children gathered to say my book was a loaf of bread and I
Its perverse baker had sliced it into inch thick pieces
And the loaf contained all of the past and future
And the slices I took with my knife
I could move them around, rearrange them to my pleasing
And one boy accused me of blowing air pockets into the dough
Which were the portals between every time there has ever been

That week I quit my job and walked into a dark room lined with mirrors
And Rilke said the angel was a mirror aimed at another mirror
So it was pure containment and I knew whatever left my mouth
Dissolved as it formed

Was it wrong to wonder what I was dissolving into
If the angel absorbed part of me for once
And the lights went down even further
On the dancefloor Drake while catching his breath
Told me after the second week of continuous drawing
He got better at it and suddenly he could look at his friends
And see them in the blue and yellow shades of his pencils
He said I do not know when but I know which drawing
It was Sunny, her legs bent like an egret's
I looked at my drawing and I looked at Sunny and they were the same thing
And I said I knew which drawing he meant, I had seen it and pulled
The pink ribbon at his throat
To make him dance again

He told me he had watched me smoke
And said I will tell you this because you care about words
I don't know how I feel, when I told you earlier, that was a lie
I was turning to the piano not to discover the melody
But to confirm it, the light pulsing
I can't tell what's counting but it's not the thought

Novels don't have colors
Movies don't have sentences you can see
Songs don't have anything
I heard about the lamb from Rilke
In a poem with no colors no songs
But children throwing a ball, the arc of it

A drawing of my sister was taped to the wall
And none are anything like life and I cried
On the train before I even saw Augie's busted face and I cried
When the man sang high hopes and I cried
When the baseball player called his mom and cried in the Druid circle
On the heath

While my boyfriend played country songs I walked around the bar
Holding out the tip jar and thought of my little daughter Wreath
My daughter Death, my daughters Goodness and Morning
To my daughters, leaving makes more sense than staying
I wanted all those dancing people
To come with me, that is what my love was doing, beckoning
I saw two there exhaling on the corner
Into the empty street, the one in the red feather boa
Collapsing, the other pulling at the taped-up cuff
And in my ecstasy I wanted them but let them go

And no lamb had found me
But I knew she existed
Which meant she was close

Outside a closed restaurant a TV screen glitched and trembled
With braised beef noodles shining burgundy meat and mustard gold
Green sprigs of herb a dove might carry in its beak to communicate
Something to the faraway king

A frail boy fell to the ground and security stormed the perimeter
The drugs were hidden, the ones screaming help were asked
What do you need, you said help, but what do you need? and help
Was the only response
I wanted to invent a new way of existing

Adelina eats vodka and Ozempic now, Buck eats my hair
My one friend keeps getting Botox and calling it acupuncture, I spun
Around and found him removing his sweater on the basement table

I raised my arms to spin again

The man in front of the blue map laughed
When I am in love I become detail oriented
Details of the future, the car wreck TV shows, the one about customers
Who scream at cashiers, and guns, I raised my arms and thought about
Safety in numbers, in three, and four, and seven
The lamb spoke
Not in numbers but by carrying her little scroll, opening her mouth to drop
Her message on the ground, the one message she was tasked with carrying
The one she wouldn't lose

And it said something wonderful
It held the solution no angel would ever give up
The answer the angels had embodied when they laughed and lifted higher
You read the scroll and felt amazing
You rolled it up
You replaced it softly in her jaws and rubbed the pink skin

It would never be said that I was the man
Who started to build and could not finish
It would never be true
We lose most of all that is said and thought and wanted
But what the scroll said I did not lose
When I unrolled the scroll
What it said was link rot, little moor
Little town full of little people
What it said was
Sleep is work, say it with me
Sleep is work, the scroll told my little
Capitalist heart and all I know
Is I was astonished

The Fifth Talking Scroll

Courtney Bush

I don't come to you alone
in the clean heavens painters
make up to control context
I am a message I meet
you in your life and context
spills from every frame context
all over the floor I call
forth your divorce a backdrop
your newest love who dropped
the acid in the closet
five forty five AM call to
prayers out the window lessons
you learned at your job how each
child responded to the loud
crash so differently and
for the first time you knew what
it meant when they said no one
is the same so we cannot
experience life as each
other when the baby cries
it does not mean she feels the
way you would have to feel to
scream that way no matter what
deal you have with the goddess
you can only live in this
world if the animals could
speak they wouldn't say what you
want them to they probably
wouldn't even want to talk
to you once you saw a girl's
wavy brown hair hanging down
her back curling across strips
of linen tied into knots
along her spine and you grabbed
the rope of it she was your
friend you were standing behind
her at the busiest in

tersection in the world in
Shibuya she led you through
the scramble by her hair and
laughed as the people brushed past
in their black suits their shopping
bags the navy blue sky dimmed
by so much city light push
ing back at the void profound
of unessential night yes
the mind itself is a place
everything really is tied
to everything else inside
but if you externalize
the tying some artists have
tried you see how fragile the
ties how painfully nonsens
ical more stress than it's worth
and more obvious do you
believe in the open road
in the family in an
old lost continuity
on a blanket where the clear
green river met the milky
mineral rich water of
another two salmon spawned
they were dying you sipped from
a bottle of chardonnay
that tasted exactly like
a butterscotch dum-dum felt
there was nothing you couldn't
write about playing chicken
with language at the sun-warmed
crossroads of death and poem

Première Tournée en Occident

Jonny Collazo

At the lake we are all alone while a spindle of thread near the structure elongates and its composition is for the population who writes and records music to decide. Goats, led from behind, from one town to the bridge, and from another side in the same direction. There is no wine, it is not affordable to over-articulate the beat in the first or second movements if the listener is to relate to a composition as revelatory of a traceable antecedent. They call him a painting artist. He was a visitor, he was not closed off. Have you heard of the new Susan Sontag movie? I thought I would ask for it this year. You have a go of it, the letters on her right pinky: MEGALODON. So this is nightshade, slim tubes for everything. Night is quantitative in an ornate way. Back matter takes the shape of a strange peasant's conversation. Murder, avenged as a pretense, becoming like a dialogue set to a serene, emotionally mature soundtrack. In this way, leafy green vegetables grow in the nooks and crannies of the day, mirroring the distractions against which they survive. I sold the summer dance academy to a larger firm capable of striking a more favorable work-life balance amongst all involved, only, you are afraid to admit this. I acquired a bad habit of film photography. What else would I be trying to tell you? There is more to photography than Baudelaire had to say of the matter. He visited, and sparkled when I told him you had plans to visit later in the month. That is how communication occurs, smuggled in the weave of one of its participants the same number of times as there are participants. I have devoted my life to my working memory without invoking it and gaining its permission. A year ago, I was three distinct people in a big jacket, now I back out of parties unless there is a good wine being sampled. You cannot pose the problem in a more articulate way, can you? A band in the middle of the spectrum which indicates pure blend. A Murphy bed relegates all timidity to the dustbin of arcane habit energy, but a layer of plastic sealant lets the elements offer themselves as if for the first time, as though purified by an irrelevant confession. Nobody knows what these shapes are supposed to mean, but they have been transmitted to the present day and I believe I capture them in my photographs. They carry a bona fide indifference to collage practices that delight in *trompe l'oeil*. Between the provenance and the issuance of an image lies a clean break. This was traditionally reflected in the sartorial habits of the men who make sudden movements. They were prescient in one superstitious reaction exhibited toward a tape-recorded voice. They asked, "How do you know an evil spirit hasn't replaced the voice spoken into the device with its own?"



If the World Doesn't End from Y2K

Madeleine Crum

In state school, we used spell-check to add “r’s” to *bourgeois*. Not in my day, my mother said. She’s middle-aged; we don’t listen to her. In my day, she said, but no one heard the rest of the story. We were banging our forks on the table. We were chanting for less. It was New Years Eve, two decades after the new millennium, the twenty-year anniversary of the time Sarah’s mother said, go outside with a packed suitcase, why don’t you. Run in a circle, why don’t you, and chant the name of a far-off locale, a place you want to visit if the world doesn’t end from Y2K. Djibouti, whatever. Florence. She was drunk and inventing a brand-new tradition, whatever. And now here we are, we’re older, we’re chanting for less. Not me and Sarah, but me and someone like her; you make new friends just like your old friends now that the world didn’t end from Y2K, and with each new friend there’s a noticeable refinement, a closing in I mean, you get closer to yourself with each new friend, your conversations become circular, small rings like the border of Djibouti. In state school, we wrote letters by hand, my mother said. We petitioned the capital, I said, called our senators. In my day, we learned the basics, my mother said. The classics, too. Don’t be ridiculous, Sarah said. We had reconnected on the top of the Duomo, of all places. I saw a thick, neat braid, now threaded with gray, swaying as she ascended those bricks. The Duomo I can get behind, my mother said. Upon, Sarah said. The Duomo I can get *upon*.

That Summer

Madeleine Crum

We played chess on a life-sized board. You were better at it that way, the unfolding drama not viewed from above or without. You left me a note that summer, to help keep me on task at my disembodied day job: “No reading obituaries, no blowing of kisses.” I was floating above or without a lot then. I mean, unlike you, I was bad at being in the time of things, was bad even at my disembodied day job. I did beat you often at chess—except, of course, when the board was life-sized. We thought we would play every day, but I was *tired* from video work. The pieces stayed still in their spots in the yard, which was hot except at night, when there were mosquitos. This wasn’t our home, but where we’d left wasn’t our home either. Sometimes, on lunch break, we walked in the heat to the dirt road. There were smashed frogs and shots echoing from their source, the shooting range. Nobody who knew *from experience* had warned us that Southern Gothic stories are a response to the weather, their proliferation timed perfectly—almost too perfectly—with the popular use of air conditioning. There were, at least, our neighbors—but not really. They’d lived in the heat for too long. They no longer noticed the life-sized chess board, which they themselves had purchased; our neighbors were our landlords, technically; they spoke politely and then waved: Good afternoon. Who *knows* what they got up to inside that home of theirs. This was the summer I saw a light vessel sail quickly and with unidentifiable intention across a small stretch of sky. No you didn’t, you said. But we’d been looking in the same direction; we’d been looking at the spot toward the bay in the middle-distance where the dew hangs morningly. It was nighttime, and, because of the mosquitos, we were both dressed in lightweight summer sweaters. We were standing by the life-sized chess board, feeling each other’s height, and I said: You better believe it. And you said: Let’s get *out* of here. But, as I’ve mentioned, where we’d left wasn’t our home either.

Liberty

Madeleine Crum

If it weren't for a guy with an opinion, my mother would've named me Liberty. But she met my father at work, and, although she was married to someone else at the time—a painter of small landscapes—you can't help who you love, she said. She'll be bullied, my father said. My father's name is W., so he understands that concepts, including some letters, are funny when applied to just one human form. What does it *stand* for, I've watched people say, poking at his particular skin. Now, I'm writing a story about a painter who, like me, isn't named Liberty. She was cast into a different determinate cycle of word and referents, her body and its sensational responses—imagined, of course—to the assumptions people make based on her name. The painter in my story doesn't have skin, and she doesn't paint small landscapes. She makes pale blue reach lengthwise, for example, its edges blurred unlike a timeline, decorated with curved pencil markings, unlike letters, unlike flowering shoots, unlike nevi, unlike fathers, unlike liberty, unlike passwords, unlike flotsam.

City Silo City, What Does Not

Dan Eltringham

Violet, afterimage
of yellow,
impressed on white
a wintry mix
in the transshipment centre
of the 19thC
the celandines close up their cups,
fools for ever
opening

Fooled by Buffalo's
will to change
the Lake effects its
parataxis from Sunday
to Monday

Whizzed straight up
the new grain elevator
as sincerely as
belief in time
travel,
i do believe it's possible
i do
i was just getting absolutely
sent
& down thru lanes & canals
not a diaspora for the needy
spreading grain + seed
by pure demand

Since no more good days
were displayed to us
since yesterday's averagely
precessional
ricebowl &
creeping unease w/
sidereal suns
an otherwise unsafe level

of crushed whole bees
but diluted right down

Get me a grain silo to look at
a real big one w/
no grain snug indoors
an image of what was
it seems, too simply,
it narrates itself into the transitional horizon
it's all the fault of Globulism
its arms & spindles
like Niagara itself,
"just some waterfalls
could try harder"
where the world slipped twice

Scale & speed & warehousing
might answer for size
collected stored & distributed
hypervisible & invisible
they plant themselves
right in the retina
& disappear
or are visible but opaque
logistically speaking,
what is
elevated
to where
to wherehousing of course
it's where it lives
in its warehouse

Seizing the in Buffalo
living in the in Buffalo
change will
where
the Lake Effect Ice Cream
error
where
the Railroad terminates
at the river crossing
a chute out
to relative threat

The anarchists have assassinated
the president at the Expo
a frankly unserious contusion
still lodged *probably* in back
penetrating both walls
and, aha, the *left* part
but it's not surprising
he knew, after all, what
and whom
he stood in for
—some such service
& some none—
in the body
of the sign of this misconceived idea
because i done my duty,
and it's just that 1890s feeling
all over again
desperate beauty
but frail

(From Harpy Land
i punt my barge)

Between interlocking points
lakes, prairies
almost an image of reciprocity
but actually it's production
at the masqued ball,
it wears the cape & veil
of pure logistics
that is never pure because

Nothing is ever really returned,
is it

Can't you feel
the uniquely favourable
conditions
as they begin
to slip?

*My thanks to generous and welcoming new friends and hosts in Buffalo:
Jim, Alison, Edric, Joe, Jake, Kim, Nina & George*



All of Fire

Logan Fry

» 1 »

The fire ate debt, cleaned the landlord's bones, and
The thing about fires is that they will eat what they
Are fed, they really
Can't be sated, just
Snufft, let to starve,
Or kept
Like pet. Leave the fire garden to its walls. Under them rats tunnel in
The mealy soil near the mailbox hut the boxed burnt things sit under.
Whatever has a tail
To pierce
With the lunge of a poignard tip,
Netting a furl of pointing like a Zippo whip-opened,
To let it go once tapped as specimen, gesture up to an apartment light
On.

» 2 »

What if I were to 'tempt the earth? The sea needs none the leavening
That even trapped air does, and land
Loves and fears the sea's lick set into it like the nail's
Tooth likes, like fingernails the spark
Lit on and scorched, like the teeth he'd left had been
Well fed. Like the hammer transfers its weight into a wall, sets a stud
Right, put to attention in its nerves
Because the wood that's been hacked and kilned has
Nerves that live yet
In the walls. It's all too cheap now. Young years pale
And limpid from a
Farm untilled and encased in seasons' tarps for artificial air to render.
Having gorged on

Forests

And having let fire eat the others and
Not eat the others that it should've et,
An age of derangement set in like what we melt the horse into to then
Suspend fruits, ham in cubes, lettuces
Within, then top it
With skim milk machined from teat and
Whipped to soft peaks with chemicals prohibited from use in warfare,
Spoon it like a knife.
Cuddle the tools fluffy. Swaddle the meagerness of
Processing's sterility.
What isn't prefab is the inheritor's castle or is compressed under water
Or is a heap of crumb
Hung in failing glues.

» 3 »

The landlord's bodycam catches him slip the key in,
Knocking on the hollow-core door's
Flank only as it flails
Open. He isn't home.
The tenant is being filmed at his work for a lifehack.
Then for a dad's prank. Then on live to 6 viewers. Then a coupon had
Expired . . . Just a couple days ago the landlord had
Demanded extra chicken from him, not knowing; now in a chest-high,
Fisheye perspective
The hands that had
Tipped 8% rummage thru the closets in this footage.
After 12 minutes he settles into what he'd come out
Himself to fix, drops
To his back in the hallway, unlit, wrenching the camera frame seasick.
The tenant never knew about what the landlord forgot
Left in the open gap
Where fiberglass should be instead of trash left for rats to eat and nest
With. Two years on
The patch had never not been damp, weeping, tingeing the hall green.
From the audio he elbowed the hole open.

Then rooted about for a pennynail's glint
In his phonelight. Fire wills it will make it
New.

» 4 »

Like as seashell
The heat from what you hold is not you
Having imbued
A heat you own into the thing you hold.

» 5 »

A lightning of a line green the night suckles on like dead without it.
The truth is that's so but who told the shape it
—An outline of against,
The ragged skirt of fire's inversions—could taste of a life?
The tenant returned from break to find the rice
Bins contaminated at the head of a door-
Flung line and 12 mobile orders
Printed that minute.
Might you look up from your phone and groan? Tap at the lacquered
Chair rail only noted in this way?
At his home there's a sliver pulled from a pound as from the butcher
But just a clamshell case that at one point
In history was a feat
Enough a miracle a block would throng around the phone if it trilled
About the state of plastics. These now keep grease and live with fish
Forever. Three, four
Days cooked flesh keeps
In comparison, sweaty in
The fridge or on the edge of a constructed
Joint with a foam fit,
Or loose in pewtered
Chafing bins seven sets of hands tuck into
In sequence contrapuntal that's run presto.

In gloves, plastic has become a second skin;
The first experiment
Had to have been of a made skin
Laid over the person-shape whose scream molded a shout to harden,
Brittled in an instant,
In front of him bent at the deck of the mechanism,
Cooked rare in new money, what would give commerce a century of
Limberness.
The tenant on his smokebreak thought of this and
Shivered from the thought of snapping back into the black glove of a
Shift, this week already interminable,
Palms damp and cold as a soul feels in exit or even
Descending like a silk magician-tossed rag or the fate of discovery on
The textile foreman's head, dripping to tip—thinking this form befit
Him.

» 6 »

Instead if anything your frankly dumb idea that you may be matter's
Manifested endpoint
Generates the energy so crudely
That the fire in the object wakes.
On his knees, cheek and ear and hip and
Elbow up against the lumpy wall, one hand held low by the hammer's
Weight being strange in it, the other with
A wedding band not taken off
Pushed into it, probing and grasping, heartrate climbing
From his porkloin lunch as much as the exertion or the stress he felt
To be compromised
Like this, and for what, some
Lowlife to have him come in
To solve this shit that is not a
Issue
At all?—that string of not thoughts but bitter licks
Upon blame's shore
Were spelt in fire in
His brain to meet

The fire in
His skull
Borne
Of the wall
He made
Of what he never made
Off with, the money being tied
Up in other
Properties, in deeds and liens,
The shallow depth
Of the figure of his debt being
The last thought transported by his brain into his hand
That twitched the heap inside the wall and cut the wire
Clean.

» 7 »

The rats likely escaped because they have to have a sense we don't.
But if they didn't I like to think they
Moved like flames do, erratic yet controlled, and sure
About his charred shape slumped against the wall not really a wall
At all,
Because a wall
Is full,
Is whole,
It must be
To be,
The way
Any fire is
All of fire,
It must be.

Collective

Phoebe Glick

During goodbye to gravity, pyrotechnics inflame the curtains in a Romanian nightclub.
Many die that night, many later in public hospitals where the sanitizer
is diluted with water for profit. The CEO of the sanitizer company dies in a fire.
For years infection kills people worth exactly as much as a malpractice suit
costs less than what, ten dollars? To watered-down regulators in the estimation
of the minister, nothing matters when your livelihood is a crushed rock spinning.
A very infested prefabricated dumpster yard is where meetings would be
if there were meetings. With the ceiling blown open, the dust bugs gorge
on insulation and tower over the country.

This is your nature, the word. This is your sentence breaking. Unfastened
and wavering like a room with no top. There is an unpredictable thunderstorm
of human form, it's wandering around touching old brass lamps, plastic pears.
An exposed wire calling you closer, causing you to forget your only metric
is argument blown over, a course friction of the age
disfigured by love's glossy reform

When then is nature of common
Coerced into white collar encounter
Rational world of unabated loss

What structures each broken heart
Multilayered and fluid fist
Imaginary fusion outside profession
Do we share anything?

View into the Ravine

Phoebe Glick

Cruel structure says it was always here
Naturally reified, like a queen

Outside is a positive project this war
Making panel structures me kindly

I'm not giving up
The appearance of going on

To buy more plastic
Asphalt clearance tops

Behind prized petty linen
Ceramic shaker set casts suspicion

On queer center of gravity
Feels like faking

The science of bravery
Meteor shower or goodness meter

Cancer preventing salve for the aura
If aura capitulator is ballpen for cronies

And cancer medicine pays for their car
In the dogma of silver butterflies

The objective truth is a glistening lens
Set on fire as a child invests in the sun

fever

Yves B Golden

*

stratus in the toilet

barrelfuls

of rare rain slip into the mirror

a simple message hiding with a predator's silence

finger scripted half moons slurring in the teaching glass

feeding the soul vine encircling it

my sweat and breast milk

i press my forehead and wish-moan.

*

joy shall return in some form to shelter pure things from wet outrage
joy will be a blinding desert pause
cooing prickly trees to sleep twirling hidden body fetters
spreading lensless eyes from grainy blindness
junipers do not push against these confused ash-laced winds
they open up

*

my camera eyes devolve
the spinal waters boil
my skin evaporates to laughter

bits of
spectral rib press into
the cymbal crash of blue
above spreading an
opaque fascinator
bewailing scores of stars
spitting in God's face
mnemonic haws trapped in rock
an inundation of muted throbbing alveolus
join in gastric waltz
with the now Black heaven

*

to mother what's coming to you
remove your face from the you-colored mirror

for soothe
take God's emollient sex into you from the glass

for taste
add honey mesquite

for livity
forget what you look like

for truth
explode

*

at the brink of the end there is a dew-slick web beware
it cannot hold you it is a lie

i prefer
some white shit to some
whiteness shit

live forever
expect nothing
know everything
be the cactus



Sentimental Poem

Henry Goldkamp

(A chalkboard, center-stage; a kind heart is asked to be Scrivener. The speaker does not speak. The sentiment must be enacted by charades and named by the Collective Audience, as closely as possible to the line.)

I'm going to the grocery store
to buy a grapefruit
and an ice cold can of beer,

then I'm going to roll it
down the conveyer belt
and smile at the cashier,

at the bagger,
at the other customers,
at all the people in the world.

Remember when everything was so simple,
so dumb,
and so lovely?

(The Scrivener chalks up the consensus for all to see.)

“walking like an idiot”

“eating shit”

“roly-poly dumb ass”

“I want to rip your legs off”

“throw them everywhere” “all up in the sky”

“feed them to the frogs”

“your grimace gives me pleasure”

“I am your invisible pain”

“forever secret to the world”

“your eyes and the eyes of those around you”

“shreds”

“SHREDS”

Second Cousin Time

Henry Goldkamp

CHILDHOOD: *Help! I don't have a bookmark for my book!*

(LIBRARIAN spits on page.)

*

MIDDLE-AGE: *Help! I've forgotten my watch and have no means to keep time!*

(CLOCKMAKER shoves a bouquet of wildflowers under their nose.)

*

SUNSET YEARS: *Help! I can't fly but require a godlike perspective!*

(FALCONER hail marys a dead crow.)

*

AFTERLIFE: *Help! I've misplaced my ticket and am afraid to lose my spot!*

(BUTTERFLY hammers their oar to the river.)

Lattice After Your Advice

for Montez

Maxwell Gontarek

The etymological imbrication of the words *roof* and *rain*
reveals the reason our century has written off revelations
as aesthetic achievements

They're just as mineral

They're just protests

They say the last *décollagers* have lacerated the last posters
and taken the walls home

But each event goes in the coin pusher
and riots

The roof falls that had not been rain

So nothing takes place inside

Still diminishment returns

It has a stochastic blueness
which hires me

Now tell me who is your employer?

You don't recall

It's like everywhere is being installed everywhere you go

The absence of object labels and the elaborate camerawork in the installation
was meant to dislocate and surveil us at the same time

I'm not sure about the warmth ebbing from things in spite

The museum doctor tells me I get worried for the wrong reasons
and I should be worried about that

I say I came here because I closed the door and the kitchen cupboard opened

Because I had lost in the see through sense

I lived in a house haunted by nearness

Soar an alt sore

You say tomorrow

will be a curve

with roof feathers

warm feathers

raining from its throat

Looking will be wound around the legs of its negative space
because everything is as it is looking

Pantile throat
the lump soughs
I wanted to forgive you until you didn't matter and you did

We extended our arms out in exes holding feathers in each palm
The rain stopped roofing when the feathers locked eyes
Loss looks like this too but in one of the palms the police

The vending machine to the left of negative space
sells fresh flowers you can lay on the banks
When economists say internalize they mean forget
The objective of devastation is the opposite of vastness

When you say the present is
a state of imbrication the opposite of a haunted house
in the dark of the kitchen cupboard my murdered friend appears
in another language
the wolves are 27 villages to be evacuated
returning the pines
blue as are

Dislocation is the hangover of surveillance
Dislocation is the name for the experience of a place that is nonlocalizable
except as fiction
So everywhere

Nearness isn't cruel
It's just so far away

One village
for each year

In the summer it snows sand from the Sahara in the east of France
The verb is ash

We thought that because the death was invisible
it would naturalize itself into the locale
like static

Cupboard
dear
The death is deictic

And ash will be the new curve

You've got to help me doc

We want revelation like we want evacuation

blue pines

soughing

Place extending like imbricate scales

The word *lightly* used to describe another *lightly*

The opposite of velum

The static falling lightly lightly

Reveal yourself

You're welcome to use the kitchen

I want you to feel at home

Either way you get décollaged

And I say this as someone speaking in this near

summer

Where you invent grief

the wolves make axes of feathers

27 years

the villages shake legs

Tomorrow

what will we put in its place?

Must we replace it all?

The revelation is being witnessed

The revelation is being witnessed

Haze Coefficient

Peter Milne Greiner

I can invoke completionism again
because I'm not done with it
Heat island – Heat dome
Estuarine furrow filled with eleven
million mirages jostling
for that curious paradox of subjectivity
unique to globular places –
but made of spun structure in the abstract
Arrangement in the abstract
Whatever we call it sourly in our time
Projections are weightless
but aboutness faces legislation
in all fifty states
Between me and the fugu
is this fine instrument
I use to customize my fate every
step of the way –
It certainly is a paralysis like water
that follows the path of most dexterity
Why is water always so swift?
So quick to “empty itself?”
As soon as you turn your back gladly
I will take a guess
What water lacks in answer it makes
up for in schema – Surely
it is not my diplopia only
that makes this shithole
look so “littered” with cavities –
In the animal kingdom the jaw
is a symbol of whatever you want it to be
In the dirt kingdom cambisol is a word
used to describe dirt
that is not quite dirt yet and it is said
that between these two substances
a horizon that can not be pinpointed
is either abstract or almost abstract
I'll tell you what's not abstract –
Enough apple cyanide to trigger indefinite
ecstatic harvest malaise

Erathem

Peter Milne Greiner

The winter I got John Cheever-pilled
I began visiting a grotto

on the grounds of a Catholic preschool

One morning after a few too many
inches of snow I found myself
there by its deteriorating madonna

and deteriorating eternal flame

which was lodged in its own private

niche like a thyroid producing alarmism
and benediction around the clock

Cloak of the madonna
Its bizarre brushstroke of tekhelet inviting

the pilgrim to contemplate

the echo

and the high drama and the emanation

that has made its way as in created its way
from the sea snails of Byzantium and the vineyards
at Cana of Galilee

to this place

where in all the other seasons the crust of the Earth
is obscured by a layer of tumblewort and butcher's broom

this place with its lonely ravines
Its sivatherium ripe for extinction

Its vaguely cenozoic cabbage trees

Its true indigo and blue false indigo

Its mysterious preschools where the names of shapes are learned

Its salt lakes

Its mysterious town halls and mysterious libraries

Its mysterious postmasters and mysterious treasurers

Its mysterious accumulations and mysterious erosions

And its mysterious cultivars

Its Carolina Cross

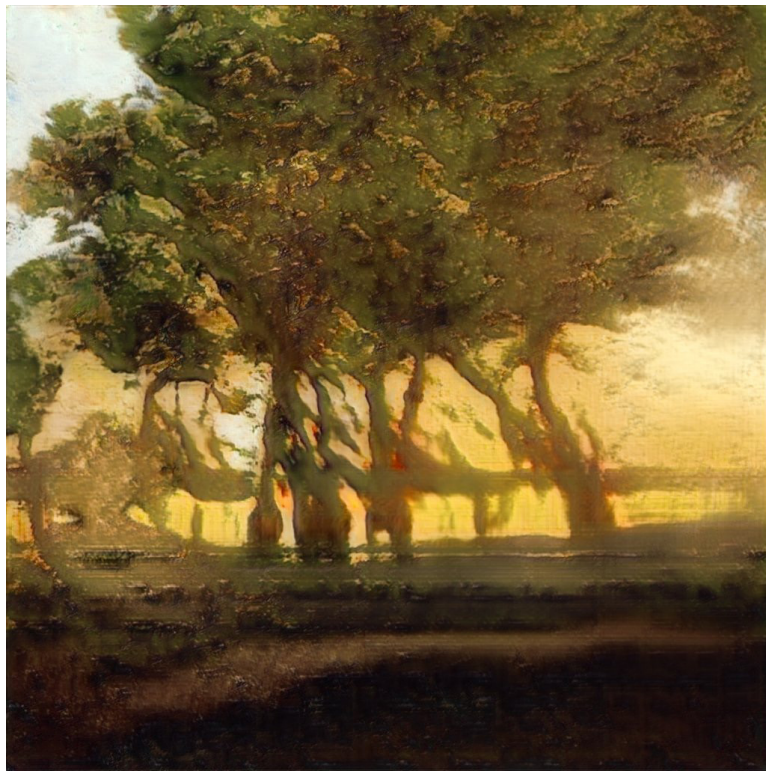
Its Orangeglo

Its Moon and Stars

Its Cream of Saskatchewan

Its Mini Piccolo

Its Sweet Beauty



from Each Day Gets a Different Name

RM Haines

“Just patching it together out of joint.”
Like any day exits the calendar,
looking through the window at grey clues,
fake limbs, wisdom foaming on the pane.
It’s 4:18pm, Friday, the day after forever.
It’s the new moon drunk in Sagittarius
and nothing behind the yellowing lights.
And where are you? Did you join the new app?
Did those fascist freaks put you on their list?
I’m on a bloom of limestone, a ghost cut
from the linoleum floor, it’s not snowing at all.
Then a bruised film shows us a crystal and says,
“Anybody up? We’re taking requests.”
So I said yes, the source is wrecked.

*

It was winter when I wrote that.
Another part:

“Under surveillance, under thumbtack,
the endlessly fucked eclipse, the retrogrades
and amnesias, frozen laughter, the purgatorial
theory of it, the specter & oculus, the nautilus
dreaming matter’s spiraling insanity,
a million names for lies, a million for forgetting,
a million more for carcinogenic dust, viral load,
umbilicus, delivery service, time expired.”

Later:

“Thursday afternoon in early spring
dissolves and washes away. The wrecked

HVAC units lay silvery and naked
in the muddy apartment yard.”

Just sifting the gills, the weeds and lanterns—
you get handled by a stranger's mercury.
It's all composite. Days fold into each other
through accident, revision, curvature of
the collider, a live oak,
the Totality Movie
on red.

*

March 29th, Wednesday, new pollen.

Clouds white out the sky except a few
blue pockets. Birds of prey on early afternoon
surveillance. Thin silhouettes track letters,

winged graphemes above the fields
(a rusty hinge, gliding in systole, diastole,
funneling into the same frayed vortex.)

But you can place anything here. Everyone

gets thrown in the same school house,
everyone asks not to be killed, petting a cat,
reading the economy by the style of lawns.

DRACONIAN LOCKDOWN IN CHINA!

Then this morning says update my addressbook.

This morning says myofascial debit card
hostage release police tape. "Just got here!"

Then he called to say, *It's me. I'm no one else.*

*

Just say what's at the edge of peeling

(faster now, wood coffin grain, timbre
hiding against evidence & chores)

put the chemistry in place, case myself,
use no artery I might get recognized by, all
embarrassments of identity divorced.

Ask blue caustics, map the surgery
SHOOTER HAS DIED BY OWN HAND

(is this nervosa credit enough,
this charmless strain, the veil shot)
and what stunted trees did I take apart

or answer with banking eyes.

See

“I’m all alert!” It’s Tuesday after all (filters,

etc, and now
theorems

too!). Drafts

and dodges, the bill due, nobody collects.

The road’s end is all your face can show.

No sign is blinking on screen, no

morning bowl, no gold, plaited or bland.

Go. Befriend the skeleton of the creek,

its raveling changes, the millet

and starling, orbs

the spider chanted into bed,

the dreaming fly.

*

, and what to, that I

is the price of spills sometimes, a lodged

fragment of slant dream (so tracked

they combust)

*

Can’t know unless you’re moving—

feeling collective love inside the radio,

a kind of birthday invented by the dead.

Want to know whose fantasy we’re in?

AISLE FULL OF SODAS. NO ONE MASKED.

Sold neurons to too many cameras,

too many errors, the whole machinery

of satellites, invisible interviews, angelic

wires entangling the vagus nerve.

“I sat down and the music was waiting,
 the shape of life suspended in []
 (a face made up out of difference).”
 Sediment layers of a mental calendar—
 you shift from sleep to drifting through air
 like waking up midsentence, trailing off,
 it’s all part of the same material, I tell you
 it’s hawthorn, thalamus, paydirt, nova
 like windtunnels, autodial, sacred reruns.
 Abject the police putting worlds down
 like a contract sentence. All is sideways
 under the compost angel, the constellated
 diurnal sundial pulse grows warm, then warmer.

*

<p> Would wonder. Walkthrough. Wounds inside wounds winding. How it separates. Sets apart. The hour a corridor. The day is a room the air asks for story. No story only grains in the wood, the veining line the rivers die through on a map. It’s like that. Isn’t like that. Falls asleep. </p>	<p> The engine. upon wave. The flares. obvious answer— the interrogative, flecked. </p>
<p> The spiral. The wave With dream as with what comes next I can see the palimp sest’s own cosmos, the old friend’s sad Now worked-up broken elevator mor in ventricle, atrium, patience of how we ear to plastic lunchbreak panic into sign across a face I zero. Everything And fantasy was anyway, always pursing lips, slouched days become weeks showed back up shattered in a doorway, </p>	<p> clenched fist. in poison stagelights, ningstar, collision this daily wincing want. Threads running ear, the sirens singing futures in crosshair, a want to want. Then forgets. Noise wins. a thin patient falling behind, always down in weeks become again, again. And then he unsheltered & holding puzzles, </p>

riddles & old records, saying, "This
is when it was over, when it was awful,
when it was over."

*

and then you wake up.

*

From here back to autumn 2022.
A year's revolution stays the same.
Nothing happens without becoming
everything, such a drug to see it.
Drop the paper clips, how do they fall?
Can you spell that out at scale?
Each day gets a different name
and all of them rhyme, the syntax

a thing to spend your whole life
reinventing, repeating, confusing.
It's a weather the weather dreams.
It's a holiday, an ambulance,
no glitches in the blood, no scoliosis.
The sun goes down, blurry college-rule,

a planet's light in the patient's eyes.
Just patching it together out of joint.

Grand Island

Suzanne Highland

Named for a settlement at the union of the Wood and Platte rivers, in 1857 there was one church, one store, and a small white one-room saloon where German immigrants gathered, shards of wood trapped under their fingertips—before Pike’s Peak, before the sugar beets, before the Union Pacific Railroad split the prairies into square mile blocks, before F and E streets, before Conastoga wagons crossed the warm and sandy shallows, before amateur birders came to see the cranes, before the night of anti-cyclonic tornadoes, before the tornadoes tore through the South Locust business district, before the debris was gathered and piled into a landfill that became a hill for sledding in winter, before soy and feeder corn, before the Otoe were forced to cede their land to the U.S. government, before the telegraph, before the geese stopped migrating and took up residence in suburban office parks, before the county seat was transferred here from an extinct city, before Sean started using meth, before the Homestead Act, before the number of days above 100 degrees doubled, before the chickens were transferred to an animal sanctuary, before sexual assault was outlawed in a marriage, before Dick Cheney, before the beam in the barn was burnt with a lyric about gravity, before the barn collapsed, before Japanese beetles swarmed the milkweed, before Grace arrived on the farm, before the loess ridges, before the consolidation of rural schools, before cattle were driven across the plains until they were thin-skinned and stretched like rails, before refrigeration, before barbed wire, before windmills, before the steel plow, before the Great Migration, before one million trees were planted on the last Friday of April, before a collared-dove called from a cottonwood over and over, before love was written on the wall in chalk, before it was written again, and again, and “relations” crossed out.

Contact

Suzanne Highland

I wake up to the sound of you
slapping mosquitos, palms flattening the netting
which did nothing, seemingly,
to keep them out overnight.

With each point of contact you get bloodier, blood spotting the fibers, the pillows, the sheets

our blood I tell you, which horrifies you
before turning you on: our cells commingling
in the waxy bodies now jostling at the screened window
while we teeter in the center of the mattress
peering into the cinched corners
searching for more.

Donne would've loved it, and Donne was a little freak.
If it was the 1590s and he was here in rural Nebraska
he'd be prostrate on this bed, cock hard, wiping blood on the back of his thighs,
begging us to take pictures of him. He'd reject bug spray and walk around
the farm barefoot, attempt to sing arias to the barn swallows

as they somersault into the cicadas, everyone flying
illuminated in slant morning light
beak and feet and translucent wings fanning out
and when they collide
there's an audible click.

Donne would've gone mad in the city—
every autumn, every bus stop, every time his sleeves touched a stranger's, even the dull scrape
of the subway car itself would've given him ASMR

and all that useless labor drained him.

Rare radicchio even rarer now

Cori Hutchinson

Due to sudden closure
My favorite flower, the one you hold

In your mind
Perimeter of desire more an amount

Than a place
Leaving the trees, it felt like a loss

When all is haze, an apple's sticker

On my mask, a slip you wear
That roves me, flits over the trip
To everywhere
For me, right now is then
And then isn't not forever

I'll be there if you steal me
Called over, what weeds?

All I see

Are sopping angles
Full of unfrozen wepts
And if only I could remember more

Than it happened of
That song:

My knees hitting the grass

Through my soaked pants
Maybe then, abundant radicchio
Less need to measure
As is written in the directive

Received recently:

Caves are somethings
That are happened to

If the boss is listening, I say

Fix the drinking fountain
On your premises
Do away with strobing
Like, what the fuck

Furthermore, the zeroth volume

Has been again requested

And we are parsing dunces

Shelving, unshelving

Redacted that a cave stole my preference

Stole the preference of others

When all directions are with perk
We are guided by shimmer minnows
Wet wall a trickle bottom to top
And then a fountain spurting darkness

Between the lines of light it spurts
And we were guides to the shimmer minnows

And the wet walls and a trickle
From top to bottom and then a fountain

Spurting and darkness and between
And along the lines of light
And it and spurts
And of and of and also of too
And if on the surface
We were less sure, we were because

James sends a little skeleton
From the miniature museum
And later, of it, describes

The momentum of inward infinity

How each miniature shrinks with it

Its own tray of miniatures
Micropins holding the skeleton

Together in a showboat pose

What went with it? I think,
I don't know, the strength asked

Of me, having interned
Feeling, visions, company
In the gape of a zero

Wrought by hmm, hum, nonverbal

Curiosity, you look so amazing

That I am itchy
Rarity to mean both scarce

And not done, radicchio
Less so than before, and
We should all take turns

Delirating in being remembered

And forgotten, and so on on



Elijah Explaining Zuzwang

Stephen Ira

Well, it's a position
 in chess or in life
or whatever Well, actually
 I don't know if it
has anything to
 do with life...

 It's a place out of which
any move you could make
 any place you could go
would be worse

The Lost Hero Chad/Unicorn/Sonic the Hedgehog
 Black Star, Bright Dawn

Predators

Stephen Ira

In between the stupid X-Men uniform or Matrix
trenchcoat genderless menswear that Insta now alas

does know to show me, it advertises
a game called The King's Choice, where I

would play a sister-wife whose daughter now
has fallen out of favor with the King, in favor

of another sister's daughter, so I force her
(my daughter), to practice the violin,

but it's no good; after clapping both hands
to my smooth computer ears, I pull

my slipper off and spank her, when suddenly
the fucking King arrives and cries out WHAT

are you doing! You're BEATING my child!
and I am clapped in irons like Mrs Pankhurst

and I'm carted off to the dungeon. "If you offend
people around you, you may get carted off

to the cold palace dungeon! You have to have impeccable
dress sense," it says. I already hate a branching paths

approach in real life, but I wouldn't mind it,
I might buy it, if the game were just getting dressed.

As I do so, I think, like Ben Franklin, "This
is the one good thing that I am sure to do today."

"Getting married and having children are
so real in this game," says the ad. Each day,

for three hours I play with them all. No matter

what flashes in my hand, I try not to look down.

Once Harry said, “He’s too busy looking at his phone,”
and I, in a temper, forgetting I am not meant to see

or say I see him, go, “Girl, don’t come for me
unless I twirl for you.” He’s like, “Who are you

talking to?” I’m silent and he’s like, “Who
are you talking to, because I’m not a girl,

so you’re not talking to me, because I’m not,”
like a trans guy in college meeting the Radical Faeries,

and he hates me then like I hated such faeries
once, and we are not friends for weeks,

til one day I am drawing and Akane’s like which one
of us is that, and I’m like, no one, it’s too hard,

you keep moving around, and Harry delicately puts
a ZooBook called PREDATORS, the size of his torso,

onto his thin lap and says, “Mr Stephen, just so you know,
I’m going to sit right here now and I’m not going to move.”

Trustees

Stephen Ira

Sitting with such people my mind
turns to our past lives, the celebrities

we remember having been
as little children, the size of my fear

and my youth, my credulity, its appearance,
how wide and deep they were, how time

grew alongside them in a spite hedge.
Here we have scarves and candles,

anti-vax departures, unpatriotic chants and land
acknowledgments, ghost lawsuits, an esoterica,

a sampler platter, overlaid in tumblr
by the younger faculty. What am I

capable of? I find a grim
ex-trans therapy manual in

the Little Free Library. Aunt Shirley turned
into a monster once in Let's Pretend

and I was sure that I had ruined her.
For whom will I be able

to believe what I need to believe?

Plush Transgression

Geraldine Jorge

Field is felt is felid is folded.
In the cat's eye, a way out.
I toe the edge of the rug
like my skin is dappled nose leather.

Lately I am reminded of a convent where collectively
They pawed and mewed for vespers
While the general public, none the wiser,
Stood around itching their nictitating membranes.

Somebody eventually brought in the police,
Who then brought in the soldiers
Who then called animal control, presumably.
Hissing and spitting from the parapets.

But who am I to sympathize!
Still in catland, I lap some milk into my cornea;
A mouth animal,
an animal with sideways eyelids.

Hsiang Yin

Geraldine Jorge

what's
fragrant
is burning
breathes
its last
like how
the empty gut
a cat must
bear when
coming down
to hunt
spells run
or else

our
clocks
are but
the dim
mest tint
of what we
call hap
pen
ing

why
swear
by the
flat
fiat

of
21
or
17
ex
pen
sive
rocks

Mercury

Jamie Kahn

The sun is an angel lifting her head
—joints of thighs like jewels on the water—
mercury washing in cruel circles.

I am despised again.
the sounds in my mouth tight as a drum,
a belly stretched full.

Bring thee to my mother's house

Her left hand under my head,
, her right hand should embrace me
fluent and total

We are atonement beneath the trees
my navel a shallow pool, floating with snow and lilies.

I,
a seal upon thine arm
(as strong as death)

I reveal
a pride of lions in me
my vineyard, which is mine, is before me
wine spilled on dreaded manes
hold in thine hands like a fire

thy keeper,
thine mother of lands
,
of nothing.

Still-life Arrangement Titled October Dawn

Kanya Kanchana

Still-life arrangement titled <i>October Dawn</i> , 0.9m x 1.2m framed within W, where W = Level 4 Window, a 3 x 3 matrix (a limited two-dimensional square matrix of an unlimited three-dimensional array)		
<p>W₁₁</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>sky, <i>c. rice</i></p>	<p>W₁₂</p> <p>sky, <i>c. salt</i></p> <p>sun, <i>c. tiger</i></p>	<p>W₁₃</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>sky, <i>c. rice</i></p> <p>coconut, ~20m tree, <i>Cocos nucifera</i></p>
<p>W₂₁</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>roof, gable, tile, <i>c. rust</i></p> <p>mango x 2, ~12m tree, <i>Mangifera indica</i></p> <p>jack x 2, ~9m tree, <i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i></p>	<p>W₂₂</p> <p>road, asphalt, <i>c. pitch</i></p> <p>bicycle x 1, vehicle, Hero, <i>c. soot</i></p> <p>motorbike x 1, vehicle, Yamaha, <i>c. onyx</i></p> <p>human x 4, animal, <i>Homo sapiens, c. various</i></p>	<p>W₂₃</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>roof, gable, tile, <i>c. cinnamon</i></p> <p>crow x 2, bird, <i>Corvus splendens, c. obsidian/ dove</i></p>
<p>W₃₁</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>banana, ~2m plant, <i>Musa acuminata, c. emerald</i></p> <p>goat x 2, Malabari, animal, <i>Capra hircus, c. ivory</i></p> <p>darbha, ~25cm grass, <i>Desmostachya bipinnata, c. forest</i></p> <p>thumba, ~20cm undershrub, <i>Leucas aspera, c. camphor</i></p> <p>grass, ~10cm, species unknown, <i>c. parrot</i></p>	<p>W₃₂</p> <p>roof, flat, sheet, <i>c. coffee</i></p>	<p>W₃₃</p> <p>curtains, cotton, <i>c. cotton</i></p> <p>wall, stone, ~1.5m, <i>c. slate/ moss</i></p> <p>chembarathi x 4, ~2m shrub, <i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis, c. fuchsia</i> <i>Hibiscus mutabilis, c. bubblegum</i></p> <p>kattarali, ~2m tree, <i>Cerbera odollam, c. lemon</i></p> <p>nandyarvattam x 2, ~1.5m shrub, <i>Tabernaemontana divaricata, c. milk</i></p>



I'm Not Crying, I've Got Something in My Eye

Emmett Lewis

Sometimes a city is just a city.
Come here and sleep between us,
I've been told my hair is exceptionally soft.
People have been getting old forever.
Hold your umbrellas. Oh,
cry me a rockslide. Push button to talk
then wait for a response from the municipal
hawk, a sly fellow putting diapers
on display case mannequins.
A pinch of salt is necessary
for the coherence one might expect
from the dead, their recipes unleavened
yet sugary as a bee sting. The olive tree
is stained with glass and the black air speaks
to us, it says *no more botanical metaphor*.

Here is a military of soldiers
each of whom would rather be elsewhere,
but a job is a job said the captain to the colonel
in confidence, who relayed the message
through a glitch in the mirror.
In the lime-colored light,
I'll ride a mare through the night.
I'll tally up your receipts and toss them
in the granite sky. I'm crying, I'm crime
and the ceilings are tall tall, *like spiders* she said.

The rain comes and they won't say
where it comes from. They gesture
to charts that black out the light, the light
which stings like darts and speckles
our foreheads. We saw the forest
in the trees, not in the least aided by
celeriac shoulder pads and avocado trousers.
A fig is all I'm asking for, not even
a leaf to cover your ungainly genitalia.
I'm kidding, they're lovely, and sweeter

than the aforementioned tree fruit
which traveled by telegraph to find us here
on our little skiff behind the cold volcano.

I'm sitting amongst you so-called shellfish
washed up on southern shores. Subway doors
are closing now, I repeat,
they are in close proximity to the space
behind your ear, that soft patch of skin
protected from the light, your earlobe an awning
and I'm yawning like undercover
crooks on a vacant trade show floor,
sipping ice cube infusions
and looking askance as fuzz flies
from the screen. We keep heaps of aspirin
under our pillows and your feet smell sweet,
like olives in a Kentucky marmalade.

I meant to say I miss your quiet pearls.
Yesterday, a leaf landed on my shoulder
and I couldn't help but maintain
a grasp of all that was never yet here
to begin with; it made me think of you
blowing horns through the roof
while the moon unraveled. I'm climaxing
and the air is getting sparse
enough to hold in my palm, dry and bulbous.
Free the bookcase from its brackets
so as to crash sofas and collide your atoms
into mine, mine being, of course,
a bit larger than the rest and quite ecstatic.

This is where the sidewalks turn to tinfoil
and effloresce to the point at which opalescence
becomes a publicly-traded commodity,
raising consciousness to an extreme
of indifference, so much so that the bridesmaids
dangle their special handkerchiefs,
dotted with opulent gray wheelbarrows.
The whalebone you covet
has been sold to the man in the tan jumpsuit;
if you hurry you might catch him
before he jumps ship.

But enough shoptalk,
my algebra mind is losing its sheen
and the railroads are running
underwater, speaking words. Speaking
to those whom I couldn't care less
whether or not they would wish that
upon their sons or daughters. Someday
the ball will drop, and you will
fall into a wilderness of cats and orange fruit,
and not without pleasure I might add.

Describe a moment you woke without fear.

Lagnajita Mukhopadhyay

One day there will not be an apologist in sight. On the bus. A few years ago.

1. nostalgia is the act of swimming upstream as far as Kali is concerned
2. 6/29 12:08 pm: we had a ranking system on the map for cities
3. bad reviews, not sure what else to do, but fear later, not that morning
4. You are trying to create something that is dead. Writing
5. I am trying to think of a time where I have been afraid. *I must live*
6. *by these sentences. Writing is dangerous.* Childish and long ago
7. On others I have managed to remember something while sleeping.
8. 12:34 pm leftovers curdling in the pan: not going with the flow
9. the smell of fermented rice cooking in the heat: she will laugh
10. I hadn't seen in 4 years, words that could have been an ending.

Is that summer or a palindrome

Lagnajita Mukhopadhyay

is that the drone of the transmission or the string about to break

it always expands in the heat anyways
the water of a thousand suns in the back alleys of new york city,
no power in the block

is that public toilet or a private fear
a pinch
a sandwich

is that laid, laying, up?
or a dream, dream, falling through the cracks

the heat is a parking thing anyways
and it rot rot

“Having Words”

Will Newman

We wanted to define
leftovers for the return
of last night’s
porch cat, but I’d
really hate the
verb “to encapsulate”—I’d
hate the woodchuck
if it pissed in my car:

The difference between
violence and non-violence
is distance—regardless,

that was our cabbage
and not the same cat
we had in the trap
several weeks prior—we’ve
driven four groundhogs
thus far this summer
over the river and
loosed each in the
park off MLK Jr. Drive

One must simply
mistrust all talk
of transcendence,

hit one’s head on your holy
basil, strung to dry, until
one has realized they’re there—on
a more corporeal level.

Access suspends
architecture
as such—the

kitchen at Bob and Denise’s
remains designed small—
since 1908 has stayed small.

Neither Bob nor Denise were ever
its primary operators. There are
hundreds of people camped outside
the Philadelphia Housing Authority
and next to them a museum of Rodins.

This is not metaphor—
it is

simply
 —proximate, fragrant astringence, the verb
 “to home,” sucking wound tooth
 from used string floss, applying peroxide
 on the stray feline hind side exposure,
 salve on your ankle galaxy of bug lumps;
 you booger-flick my glabella because I didn’t set
 a timer to measure the duration of rice cooking, again.

Repetition can be a privilege,
 geological
 time circus

—palimpsests, wherein it
 takes demolition to reveal
 sedimentation

—this city is full

of these,

...words too, [...]

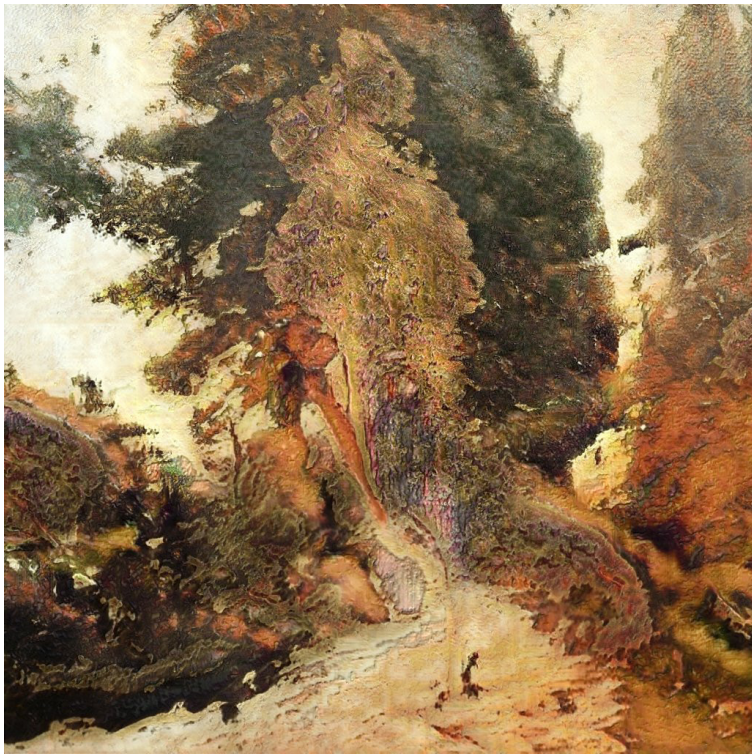
*have vast nonlinear dimensions through the layers of association
 they evoke, and [...]*

these can be primary sources of creativity for architecture,

yet I want to know what poems
 can do in crises of housing, I want to know
 what obligates me
 to articulate
 this **futility**
 eloquently

—how come at that crit
 from the back I, a
 guest—alienated, I
 saw the students
 propose spaceships, but
 they called them museums?

Last night: masked lovers boxed
 porch cat, to-go, following
 some initial struggle; residents
 of the parkway encampment filed
 to sue City Hall; I sneezed at
 Garnier Fructis—you applied
 the dye evenly,
 in layers, to satisfy desires for immediate change.



Un Peace Full

Monique Ngozi Nri

It is not exactly peaceful
The Gardner or butcher of bushes
American style has his noise machine going
Buzzing ominously, prescribing death to all who step outside conventional lines
So too now in a word(l) of burning books and hoisting guns
I do not crouch for fear at planes passing overhead as I did once and may soon again
The steps to the pond glisten with silver confetti
evidence of four years passing
progress of sorts in my seat on the short side of the oblong
the sun bears down relentlessly
I have sat here in all seasons coated and booted
lessons on backs of benches noted:
To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die. In loving memory of Herbert L Lerner 1922-2010
Birds are going wild with their cacophony
we do not challenge notions of blackness
of course, our voices will be silenced
What or who do we think we are? Free?
And yet they sing on loudly these birds who did not get COVID
How are they to know times have changed
there are end of the month deadlines and beginning of the month deadlines
on the anniversary of mum's funeral
You live in my heart Ma
I am inclined to let them all go into default to see in real-time the penalties for inaction
Un Peace Full I could stay here with the birds and take calls
my prize today for living Chipotle Chicken salad
the maroon truck is parked within the shadow of the trees
the pond water is a deeper green than I've ever seen before
It's like an orchestra of birds contrapuntal continuous with the occasional solo
Walk to the store
Buy salad
Do work
Be grateful for the steps I can take

We Are Also Like This

Liam October O'Brien

Late pulled nutgrass burdock soft nets
of pale wide crabgrass slender rush I was

lost in a thought an old one

pulled me on armful of bindweed black bag
it wants too much you cannot keep it

unwound its hands from the necks of zinnias

the train it made unruly green and narrow hearts
falling from that tight necklace it will grow up anyone

who stays still long enough I always say a weed

is what you don't want if you want it you change it
no longer a weed my vetch my morning glory

we are also like this don't forget

Lands Where There Are No Lands

Liam October O'Brien

(fragments from The Complete Home, Julia McNair Wright, 238-248)

One June a neighbor returning
passed me, called to me
for some roses—I bid him
help himself. I believe in a man.
I hold to a country contrary
to law. Following no pure code
cast in countries. The history
has spread: a little closer, look.
Where it has been hidden,
the character of truthfulness.
The country of my neighbor
was a hand. We might look
at a mind: it cannot stand still.
A boy looks at a word he has made.
*What will become of him, cut loose
from states?* You cling. What
do you do with them? Nothing.

Men drunk, men lying, men
in a passion, forbidden.
My neighbors cannot be left.
Any other day running,
hands open. All men
must desire. They stand open
to desire, services of calm
and rest. Hard, open, gardens,
theatres—the barriers cast down.
Exactly like other days
in which to pass along. A man
to stand by the hour at your gate,
hold his neighbor. You do not

think them wrong.
You notice that feeling.
I'll take that command.
I hold to the connection:
the voice of Nature
in individuals. There is no
true sense. You hold
to another, inseparably
connected, as the fact increases.
The tie, destruction to the state.
States ruinous, outrageous,
dangerous, upheld. Love,
howling against the laws.

Lands where there are no
lands: a land of Homes
built up by no state.
Among all, if you accept:
the point where light
is held: homes, homes,
nourished. A glance:
boys rolling on the grass.
*I heard that you lived
more than any man*. All
these kinds of crimes, living.
You found your neighbor.
In the hands of men
who despise another,
don't you demand a light?

Listening to Kate Bush's *Hounds of Love* I Mourn Losses Not Yet Suffered

Nick Rossi

An ominous rhythm booms beneath blue surface,
driving, steady and deep. Tiny waves cresting
and breaking; white, frothy, inconsequential.
My friends are texting: they want to die again
in some spectacular fashion. I don't doubt that
there is energy out there I do not understand,
but it seems unlikely it could protect us cowards
given how big the sky is this morning. How blue,
a high-rise and the vision of the body of a beloved
crashing through glass, the flailing of their limbs,
the visage of peace. How blue, the lake's tongue
lapping the coffins north of The Point, solemnly

dragging, hungry for shoes. I try to speak the thin air
solid, but it's cliché, if not dishonest, to give credence
to a voice, confidant, urging *never, never say goodbye*,
and yet, the sharpness of breath and blood rushing
up throat. Clipping garble trying to transform dirge
into spiteful lunge at life. There doesn't have to be a rite
today. A driverless crossover reflects the dawn, staccato
note of last night's dense fog tipped towards the shore,
crashed short by the tiers of the cement embankment,
metal relic of an aimless lust for the lake's black mouth,
to be swallowed. There mustn't be some explicit wrong
for there to be sorrow, there doesn't have to be a body.

Way

Margaret Saigh

Through the slatternly trees
fungible breasts, felled branch
storm—

I had the idea
water beading my pubic hair

that I'd never felt alone like this

for weeks
I couldn't tell you
what I've seen or what I've done

I spent twenty minutes
raking Zadie's fur out of a rug my father purchased in Morocco

I couldn't settle in my seat
the inversion of my rib

not knowing women came from Adam's rib until I was twenty

a woman dangling on the end of a string like a cat toy
a scarab of sweat down the sternum

I'm not sure I can continue like this
it's like wearing a patterned shirt
it's like sponsored content

it's loving being nothing but a clutch of tissue

the blue brown stratigraphy observed along the path

that being the ruth

Husk

Margaret Saigh

Sam tells me about the Serbian basketball player who told reporters after winning the NBA Final
that all he wanted was to go home to Serbia
and spend time with his horses.

What choices

I have made

to end up

where I am. My toes

nuggets of ice

the word *empath*

and feeling sorry

for what could have been.

My zeal

the man behind the counter

at Bloomfield Groceria

asking if I needed anything. Some life

I'm learning

a lot

about who will disappoint me.

Cloud Seeding

Tasia Trevino

I read the water book and think its opposite—
dust: the only thing
I remember of Faulkner.

Drinking tap water from a perfect glass, I think how humans
can be made props and get an aversion, so I turn
the page. I don't want to write a poem about
Charles Hatfield, the water witcher. Wonder
if I will.

I heard all trees
are grafted. One family
legend is that Uncle Odie, the one who went to college,
helped invent the pluot or aprium—half apricot, half
plum, or what
was the ratio?
How much of something could make
another thing better?

How could a man who plugged a wasp's nest
with a metal rod have caused
the worst fire in California's history? How
easy our willful amnesia. How
tinder the hills in the light.

4 Drawings

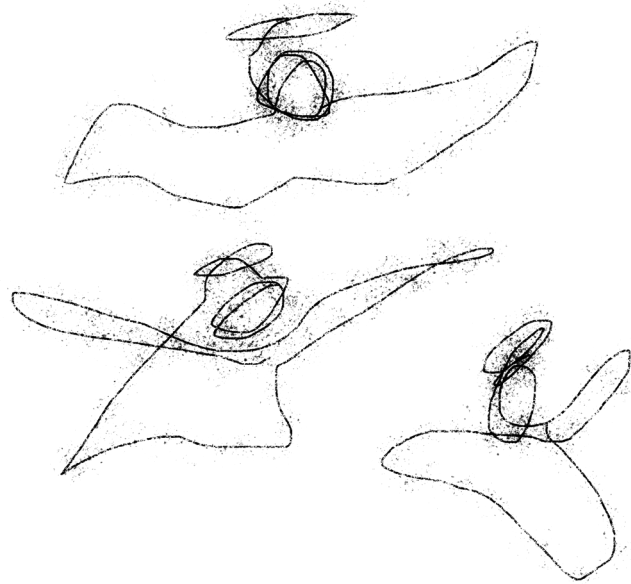
Joanna C. Valente



a cottage at the end of the world



tree spirit emerging once every 40 years



angelic outlines on a spring evening



The Unseen

from **Feedback**

Barrett White

I found it confusing that you only mention the flower in your poem after it has been killed. I think the point of the poem is to represent what is happening to the world, to us, as we go about our everyday lives. To do this you would need to include the flower's demise and let the reader have a proper context for its death and how it was once seen as beautiful and unique, before you killed it. Other than that, the poem was beautiful and just as I pictured in my head.

I fell in love with your line “dies with a pillow on his face,” wherein he faints to the sounds of birds in the air but wakes up armed by the prospect of ultimate destruction. And these lines: “Of tiny droplets punched / into a not-so-small interior / there are oceans— / salted pools of water.” I love the metaphoricalness this uses. The entropy that causes apples, sonnets, pillows, facedown bodies in saltwater, the colors of life choices...this chaos slowly deviates from normal song, no longer correlating to poetry’s governing matrix.

Not so fine. This is kaleidoscopic poetry, including flecks from some of your worked-on poems; this poem is nowhere near what I am writing, or even the core group. A grafty little cento. Whenever something lingers on the space it creates, even for a short while, it begets a metaphor for something far away that creeps inside you to set in motion some spark, or a more mundane real-life event beaming through a forgotten door someone has neglected to close. Does the victim of your poems find rebirth in their clichés? How about a courting couple? An old man or cultivated woman? A poppet and their destiny? What have we shared that we haven't abandoned forever?

Entering the Spring

Xuanyuan Shike

translated by Mark He

I have perfidiously
passed through the gates of spring
my pockets are full of fresh grass
a garland of leaves adorn my head
my hands carry a handkerchief of cloud plumes
between my lips a cigarette of fragrant petals

defrosted confluence in my tea kettle
ten thousand mountain purples and reds
in my backpack
I imitate spring and I wear its costume
and attempt to cross its gates

a group of animals
who have just emerged from their cave
serve as vernal gatekeepers
they inspect me
but were not able to find proof
beyond reasonable doubt

after I finally entered into the gates of spring
I couldn't help but steal a laugh
but to my surprise
the spring wind caught up against me and stripped away my disguise

I've returned to my true form
snow covered face sealed in ice



CONTRIBUTORS

Rasha Abdulhadi is calling on you, dear reader, to join them in refusing and resisting the genocide of the Palestinian people. Wherever you are, whatever sand you can throw on the gears of genocide, do it now. If it's a handful, throw it. If it's a fingernail full, scrape it out and throw. Get in the way. The elimination of the Palestinian people is not inevitable. We can refuse with our every breath and action. We must.

Rachel Allen is a poet in New York, sometimes North Carolina. Recent work has been in *Spectra*, *Expat*, *the Poetry Project Newsletter*, *Carriage Trade Gallery*, *Archways Anthology*, *Metatron*, and *Best American Experimental Writing*. Hypothetically, she sells books.

Vasiliki Argyris is a visual artist and poet based in Philadelphia.

Josh Ascherman is a poet and painter based in Brooklyn, New York. He has an MFA in poetry from Brooklyn College.

Theo Ellin Ballew is from the desert. Their work is sometimes static/page-bound, and sometimes they code it to move. It is always science-fictional or future-mythic. They have an MFA from Brown; the first book of their poems is coming out next year; their poetry has appeared in various journals/art spaces/venues; and they run ORAL.pub. More at theo.land/.

Anselm Berrigan is a poet, editor, and teacher. His most recent book of poems is *Pregrets* (Black Square Editions, 2021). His next book, *Don't Forget to Love Me*, will be published by Wave Books in the fall of 2024.

Courtney Bush is a poet, filmmaker, and childcare worker. She is the author of *I Love Information* (Milkweed Editions, 2023, winner of the 2022 National Poetry Series), *Every Book Is About The Same Thing* (Newest York Arts Press, 2022) and the chapbook *Isn't This Nice?* (blush lit, 2019).

Jonny Collazo is a poet and drummer from "Greater LA." He is the author of *The High & The Low* (NEW Books) and *Antiquity Antiquity* (Creative Writing Department). He currently lives in Chicago.

Madeleine Crum is a writer living in New York by way of Texas and the Gulf Coast. Her prose has been published in *Annulet*, *HAD*, *Joyland*, and *Triangle House*. Her criticism has been published in *The Baffler*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Vulture*, *The Washington Post*, and elsewhere. She studied fiction at Brooklyn College.

Dan Eltringham is a poet, scholar and translator based in Bristol, UK. His prize-winning academic monograph, *Poetry & Commons: Postwar and Romantic Lyric in Times of Enclosure*, is out with Liverpool University Press (2022). Poetry and (co)translations have appeared in *Pamenar*, *Firmament*, *Ludd Gang*, *Revista Kokoro*, *Protean*, *Folder* and *Cambridge Literary Review*, *Blackbox Manifold*, *Colorado Review*, *Plumwood Mountain* and others, as well as in two anthologies of poetry in translation: *Poetry's Geographies* (Eulalia/Shearsman, 2022) and *Temporary Archives* (Arc, 2022). A chapbook of his translation of Alonso Quesada's *Scattered Ways* was published by Free Poetry (Boise, 2019) and his poetry collection *Cairn Almanac* was published by Hesterglock Press (Bristol, 2017). With Leire Barrera-Medrano, he co-edits Girasol Press, a small publisher that explores handmade poetics and experimental translation.

Logan Fry is the author of *Harpo Before the Opus* (Omnidawn, 2019), and of poetry in *Lana Turner*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Fence*, *Prelude*, *New American Writing*, *West Branch*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Boston Review*, and the *Best American Experimental Writing* anthology, among others.

Phoebe Glick is a writer and PhD student living between Brooklyn and Western MA. Her poetry chapbook *The Afters* was published by Spiral Editions in 2022.

Yves B Golden is a poet and artist living in Los Angeles. She is currently calling all angels.

Henry Goldkamp (he/they) is an experimental poet and interdisciplinary artist whose work blurs the boundaries between poetry, visual art, and community performance through public installations of intermedia, such as an olfactory poem “read” through the nose (*SUMMERTIMER*, 2023), immersive clown utilizing audience participation (*Balloon Animal*, 2023), a grove of trees in which thousands of poems were hung for passersby to pluck and then mail to strangers out of a phonebook (*The Poetree Project*, 2014), and a citywide installation of 60+ typewriters—resulting in the first ever book to be composed by a city (*What the Hell Is Saint Louis Thinking?* 2013). By creating such spaces of dialogue and interactive expression, he encourages participants to connect with each other and their shared environment.

Maxwell Gontarek is a poet, photographer, and teacher. He received an award for research on Paul Celan's later poems from the Black Mountain Institute and has poems out in *Tilted House*, *Posit*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Interim*, *Witness*, and elsewhere. He has lived in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Las Vegas, Belgrade, Langres, and Lafayette, Louisiana.

Peter Milne Greiner is a poet and science fiction writer. He is the author of *Lost City Hydrothermal Field*, (The Operating System 2017). PMG's work has appeared in *Motherboard, Fence, Berfrois, TAGVVERK, Dark Mountain, Dream Pop Journal, Ursus Americanus, So & So*, and elsewhere off and online. Selections from *Lost City Hydrothermal Field* have been anthologized in *Beyond Earth's Edge: The Poetry of Spaceflight* (University of Arizona Press 2021), and *Terraform: Watch/Worlds/Burn* (MCDxFSG 2022). PMG lives in New York City, where he teaches high school and volunteers for the Newtown Creek Alliance. Visit pmg-goestospace.com for all the things.

RM Haines is a writer and teacher living in Indiana. His work has appeared in a variety of places, most recently in *Prolit, Protean, and Not for Resale*. He writes a newsletter, [Out of Its Wooden Brain](#), and runs Dead Mall Press, a chapbook micro-press. More info about his work [can be found here](#).

Mark He is a poet, translator, artist, and scientist living in Queens. His work has appeared in *Works & Days* Vol 2.

Suzanne Highland is a queer, Southern poet, essayist, educator, and wildlife rehabilitator. Her work has been nominated for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize, and it appears or is forthcoming in *The Journal, Apogee, Nat. Brut, A Velvet Giant, Yalobusha Review*, and in the anthology *Home is Where You Queer Your Heart* from Foglifter Press, among others. Suzanne is also the voice behind *Mortal Lives*, an essay series on Substack about ecology, money, death, and birds. She has received support from Art Farm, Sundress Academy for the Arts, Vermont Studio Center, the 92nd St Y, Brooklyn Poets, Florida State University, and Hunter College, where she received the Miriam Weinberg Richter Award in 2016 upon graduating with her MFA in poetry. Suzanne lives in Brooklyn and at suzannehighland.com.

Cori Hutchinson is a library worker and poet living in Brooklyn, New York.

Stephen Ira is the author of the chapbook *Chasers* (2022, New Michigan Press). His poetry and prose have appeared in *DIAGRAM, Fence, tagverke, the Paris Review, Poetry* (Chicago), the *American Poetry Review*, and the *Poetry Project Newsletter*. As a performer and director, his work has appeared in venues like the Sundance Film Festival, La Mama Etc, OutFest, NewFest, and the Iowa City Poets' Theatre Festival. He works in K-12 education.

Geraldine Jorge is an emerging writer and sound artist based in Oakland, CA. Recent work has appeared in *Denver Quarterly, Hot Pink Magazine, and Warning Lines Lit*. Follow Geraldine on Instagram [@s.eyende](#).

Jamie Kahn is a Brooklyn-based writer whose work has been featured in *Glamour, Brooklyn Magazine, The Los Angeles Review, Yes Poetry, X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine, The Spotlong Review, Lover's Eye Press*, and others. She serves as the contributing features editor for *Epiphany Magazine*.

Kanya Kanchana is a poet from India. Her work has appeared in *POETRY*, *The Common*, *Asymptote*, *Anmly*, and elsewhere. It has also been indexed at The Columbia Granger's World of Poetry and remixed and performed to music. Her micro fiction has appeared in *Litro*, *Paper Darts*, and *The Conium Review*. A Sanskrit philologist, Kanya is also a lapsed architectural engineer who likes working with sound, letter, word, and form.

Emmett Lewis holds an MFA in poetry from Columbia University where he was the recipient of a Creative Writing Teaching Fellowship. His work is forthcoming or has appeared in *fieldnotes*; *berlin lit*; *No, Dear*; *HAD*; *Otoliths*; *petrichor*; *E·ratio* and elsewhere. He lives in Queens, NY.

Lagnajita Mukhopadhyay is an Indian-born epic poem collage stranger and break-up with America tour—on self-imposed exile from New Nashville, and the author of the books *this is our war* (Penmanship Press, Brooklyn, 2016) and *everything is always leaving* (M.C. Sarkar & Sons, Kolkata, 2019), and poetry album *i don't know anyone here* (2020). She was the first Nashville Youth Poet Laureate, finalist for the first National Youth Poet Laureate, and Pushcart Prize nominee. With a Masters' in Migration and Diaspora at SOAS, she is now a Masters' candidate in Creative Writing at Goldsmiths. Find her work in *Poetry Society of America*, *La Piccioletta Barca*, and *Cream City Review*, among others.

Will Newman populates page-like spaces and space-like pages with words and other more-or-less meaningful shapes. They are a poet and educator from Philadelphia, PA, where they teach literature at the high school level and creative writing to anyone willing to sign up for their occasional workshops. Interested parties can find Will's previously published work collected online [here](#) and can follow Will on [Instagram](#) for continued updates on publications, readings, and class offerings.

Monique Ngozi Nri, a writer of Nigerian, Barbadian, and British descent, was born in Coventry, England. She spent her early years in Nigeria until the age of 9, regularly visiting Barbados since childhood. For the past 30 years, she has resided in Brooklyn, New York. Monique's writing explores her nomadic life, the profound impact of the Biafran war on her identity, and themes of displacement, home, freedom, and feminism. In addition to her writing, she is married to Ahmed Abdullah, a trumpeter and leader of the band *Diaspora*, with whom she collaborates by singing and presenting her poetry. A proud mother to Tara, Shahid, and Rashid, Monique has actively contributed to community development and activism for many years. Currently, she serves as the director of CUNY EDGE at Brooklyn College. As a partner in Melchizedek Music Productions, she strives to reintegrate the music of the spirit into Brooklyn's community, ensuring its preservation in our hearts and minds. Nri earned her MFA in Creative Writing with a concentration in poetry from Brooklyn College in 2021 and now teaches in the English department. Her writing has been published in the literary journal *And Then*, *The Brooklyn Review*, *The Marbled Sigh*, and *The New York City Jazz Record*. For more information go to MoniqueNgoziNri.com

Liam October O'Brien grew up on a small island. He received his MFA at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he was an Iowa Arts Fellow. He teaches school, plays violin, and keeps house in New York City.

Nick Rossi is a co-founder, editor, and designer at *Sobotka Literary Magazine*, Ursus Americanus Press, and No Rest Press. His work has recently appeared in *Oyez Review*, *Court Green*, *Rejection Letters*, *Hooligan Magazine*, *Funny Looking Dog Quarterly*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, and elsewhere. He lives and works in Chicago, IL.

Margaret Saigh is the author of the chapbook *CROSSED IN THE DARKER LIGHT OF TERROR* (dancing girl press 2022) and the creator of *circlet*, a poetry workshop and reading series. Her poems have been featured in *Annulet Poetics Journal* and *A Velvet Giant*, among many others.

Tasia Trevino is a writer and musician from California. Her poetry has been supported by fellowships at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, and her first novel, *Salsipuedes*, by a Yefe Nof California Writing Residency. Her work has been published in *Fence*, *Bennington Review*, *Best New Poets*, and elsewhere. More at tasiatrevino.com

Joanna C. Valente is a human who lives in Brooklyn, New York. Joanna is the author of several collections including *A Love Story* and *η ψυχή, η ψυχή μας / the soul, our soul*. They are the illustrator of *Dead Tongue* by Bunkong Tuon and *Raven King* by Fox Henry Frazier.

Barrett White edits *Tagverket*. His writing and textual experiments have appeared in *The Brooklyn Rail*, *P-Queue*, *Diagram*, *Trilobite*, *Social Text*, *FLAT*, and elsewhere. His video work has been nominated for Best of the Net and featured in *The Paris Review*. *Frantic Gesture*, a new publishing project, is forthcoming in 2024.

Xuanyuan Shike 轩辕轼轲 was born in Linyi, Shandong, in 1971. He was one of the founders of the chapbook *Between* in 1999, and in the early twenty-first century he was a part of the “Lower Body Poets” movement. He has been anthologized numerous times, both in China and abroad, and has won various literary prizes. His works include the poetry collections *Watching Rain in the Mortal World*, *Carrying Pulley Blocks*, and *Hiding an Ocean*.