

TCR

THE CAPILANO REVIEW



LANGUAGES

**We translate into our language
to rewrite our language.**

—ANTENA

Editor	Jenny Penberthy
Web Editor	Jenny Penberthy
Managing Editor	Todd Nickel
Editorial Board	Colin Browne, Pierre Coupey, Daniela Elza, Roger Farr, Brook Houghlum, Crystal Hurdle, Aurelea Mahood, Elizabeth Rains, George Stanley
Contributing Editors	Clint Burnham, Andrew Klobucar, Erin Moure, Lisa Robertson, Sharon Thesen
Founding Editor	Pierre Coupey
Designer	Andrea Actis
Website Design	Adam Jones

The Capilano Review is published by Capilano University. Canadian subscription rates for one year are \$28 for individuals, \$40 for institutions. Outside Canada, please add \$5. Address correspondence to *The Capilano Review*, 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5. Subscribe online at www.thecapilanoreview.ca/order/

For submission guidelines, please see our website, www.thecapilanoreview.ca/submissions. With your submission, please include a SASE with Canadian postage or funds for return postage. *The Capilano Review* does not take responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, neither do we accept simultaneous submissions, previously published work, nor submissions sent by email.

Because copyright remains the property of the author or artist, no portion of this publication may be reproduced without the permission of the author or artist.

The Capilano Review gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the British Columbia Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and Capilano University. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The Capilano Review is a member of Magazines Canada, the Magazine Association of BC, and the Alliance for Arts and Culture (Vancouver).

Publications mail agreement number 40063611. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to circulation—*The Capilano Review*, 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5

ISSN 0315 3754 | Published May 2014

Printed in Vancouver, BC, by Hemlock Printers.



3.23 / Spring 2014

- 5 Editor's Note
- 7 COLIN BROWNE
Translating Vancouver
- 16 COLIN BROWNE & IAN WALLACE
A Conversation
- 27 CHRISTIAN BÖK
Translating Translating Apollinaire
(Gallifreyan)
- 32 GEORGE STANLEY
Versions of Russian and French
- 38 MARK GOLDSTEIN
from *Schwarzmaut (Blacktoll)* by Paul
Celan
- 41 TED BYRNE
Sonnets: Guido Cavalcanti
- 45 STEVE MCCAFFERY
The Monk's Tale
- 48 ALLYSON CLAY
GroundSplatPink
- 58 RACHEL ZOLF
The Red River Twang
- 63 LIZ HOWARD
from *Of Her, After Song*
- 68 NYLA MATUK
Synaesthesia-lese (Translaximations)
- 69 GARRY NEILL KENNEDY
An Eye For An Eye
- 77 DONNA ZAPP & CHRISTOPHER
BUTTERFIELD
a conversation about language,
music, and translation
- 88 OANA AVASILICHIOAEI
from *Liminal*
- 92 MARGAUX WILLIAMSON
I Could See Everything
- 99 GENEVIÈVE ROBICHAUD
Ruminations on Self-Translation in
Two Movements: a Dialogue and an
Essay
- 106 NICOLE BROSSARD
extraits d'un ensemble intitulé:
*Du réel nous ne connaissons que ce
qui arrive à notre corps*
- AMY BUTCHER
Extracts from *Le Désert Mauve* by
Laure Angestelle, in translation by
Maude Laure (1987)
- KAREN OCAÑA
Of the real we know only what
happens to our body
- LARY TIMEWELL
we know not what will come to our
bodies become
- 112 ERÍN MOURE
Quand Moure traduit Turcot: *Making
a Book of Hours into a Book of Ours*

- 119 **REBECCA BREWER**
Seers of the Cosmos, do not mourn
over the sceme of things
- 125 **ANTENA**
A Manifesto for Ultratranslation
- 132 **PETER CULLEY & ELISA FERRARI**
Three Poems
- 137 **CATHY BUSBY**
Cut and Muzzled
- 145 **STEPHEN COLLIS**
Love and Strife (A translation of
Empedocles Fragment 17)
- 148 **SARAH BURGOYNE**
from *Saint Friend*
- 152 **GILES GOODLAND**
from *The Masses*
- 154 **TARYN HUBBARD**
Notes for Browsers
- 157 **LISTEN CHEN**
Three Machine Translations
四首手改機詩
- 159 **JORDAN ABEL**
from *un/inhabited*
- 163 **MICHAEL TURNER**
Text-based Public Art in Vancouver
- 172 **MARIE-HÉLÈNE TESSIER**
Vancouver-Kaifeng-non-stop
- 176 **YU SU (TRANS. CHRIS BLACKMORE)**
一毫一釐之
- 177 **DANIEL CANTY**
Ma translation
- 180 **SARAH DOWLING**
Different Languages
- LATASHA N. NEVADA DIGGS**
the line of paella according to jeriba
shigan
- AMY SARA CARROLL**
Two Poems
- ANNE TARDOS**
Two Polylingual Poems
- PAOLO JAVIER**
from *Court of the Dragon*
- 191 **PETER QUARTERMAIN**
Punctuation 101
- 192 *see to see* —
- TED BYRNE** reviews Christine Stewart
and David Dowker's *Virtualis*
- DORA SANDERS** on visiting Yeats (1932)
- J.J. KEGAN MCFADDEN** reviews Cathy
Busby's *Steve's Vinyl*
- AMY KAZYMERCHYK** on the summer
2014 exhibit at Audain Gallery
- LORNA BROWN** previews City Opera's
Pauline by Margaret Atwood and
Tobin Stokes
- MITCH SPEED** on Wade Guyton and
Liz Magor
- JULIAN HOU** reviews Lisa Robertson's
Thinking Space
- DEANNA FONG** on SpokenWeb's
PoetryLab App
- 206 Contributors
- Cover Image:
Allyson Clay, *GroundSplatPink*, 2013,
oil on linen, 24 × 30 cm

Editor's Note

Welcome to a polyglot *TCR*! Multilingual poetry, “the clockwork discourse of Doctor Who,” the language of invertebrates, the Red River Twang, Chiac, the language of the Psalms, html, and much more. An extraordinary variety of voices and languages is embedded in these pages, each piece a response to *TCR*'s call for “translations of new or old texts, re-translations, comparative translations, experimental translation, language/s behaving in unexpected ways, multilingual writing, other Englishes, mimicry, mis-translation, fumbblings between languages, faux-translation, trans-translation, the ‘languages’ of different genres and the interplay between them.”

Many of the pieces are accompanied by an author or artist's statement of intent; others speak for themselves. Clearly, each of these experiments with language and translation demands a repositioning of authorship, often towards collaboration with the original author/text, with earlier translators, with current co-authors, with a computer program, with the exigencies of a multilingual daily life, and always, of course, with the reader.

This issue of *TCR* enacts a view articulated by our 2014 Writer-in-Residence, Cole Swensen, that translation “makes a virtue of incommensurability.”¹ She acknowledges the gaps between languages that translation inevitably uncovers but also thrives in: “[T]ranslation can afford to lose something, and in fact must lose something, for a translation that loses nothing will not gain anything either. If, however, we regard difference not as loss but as augmentation, we can argue that translation is always an additive gesture, a mechanism for gathering increasing meaning to an ever-expanding text.”²

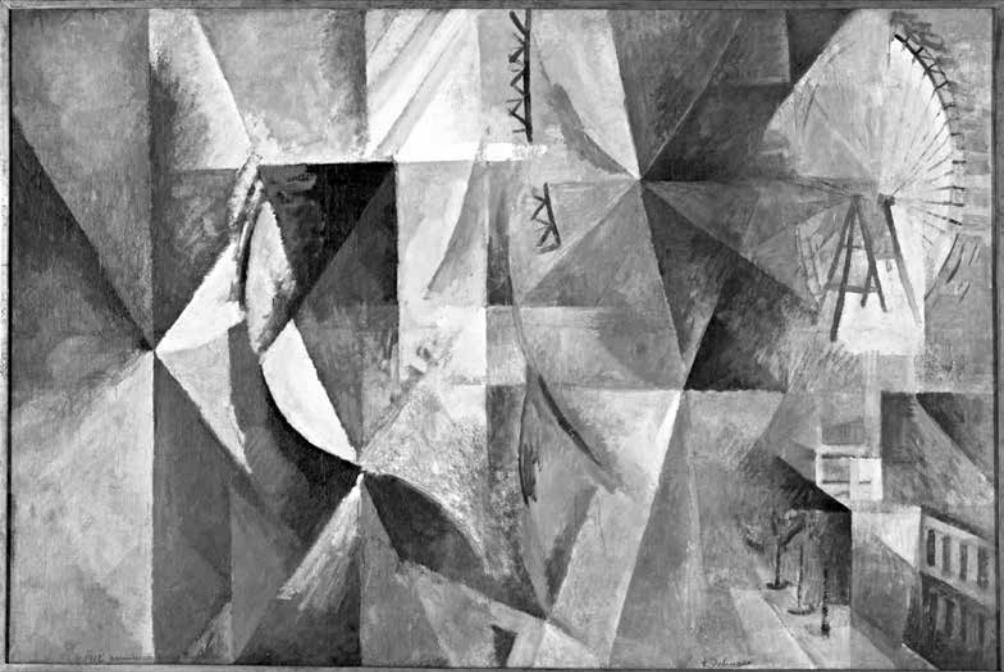
Language is foregrounded in all of the visual art in this issue. The same is true of Donna Zapf and Christopher Butterfield's conversation about music. We conclude the issue with a page about that textual option, punctuation.

The fifty-one contributors to this issue are joined by another twenty who are published in the LANGUAGES edition of our online magazine *ti-TCR | a web folio*. Be sure to keep reading in our other domain!

—Jenny Penberthy

1 Cole Swensen, “In Praise of Error,” *Noise That Stays Noise: Essays* (Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 2011), 100.

2 Ibid., 102-103.



Robert Delaunay, *The Three Windows, the Tower and the Wheel*, 1912,
oil on canvas, 130.2 × 195.6 cm

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William A. M. Burden
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA
Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art
Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY

COLIN BROWNE / Translating Vancouver

Apollinaire's "Les fenêtres" was originally published in Berlin in January 1913 in the catalogue for an exhibition by painter Robert Delaunay. The version included here replicates that first printing, which differs slightly from later versions. In the original hand-written manuscript, the word "Vancouver" does not have its own line but occurs as "Étincelant diamant Vancouver." Subsequent versions enhance the poem's open text by breaking the line in two. In the original hand-written manuscript, "Vancouver" occurs only once. The horizontal list of simultaneous locations in the third last line, a form of reprise, was added in Apollinaire's hand while proofing the poem. In the Delaunay catalogue the line reads, "Paris Vancouver Lyon Maintenon New-York et les Antilles" and we have retained this version. The poem has occasionally appeared without the hyphens in "pi-hi" and "New-York"; we have retained Apollinaire's original hyphenated orthography and his original upper case punctuation.

Blaise Cendrars' "Vancouver" appeared in a collection entitled *Kodak (Documentaire)* published in Paris in June 1924. The conceit, related to cinema, is that the book is a travelogue and that each poem represents a sequence, or snapshot. Cendrars later wrote that he conceived of the poems as "photographies verbales, forment un documentaire . . ." It was assumed for many years that as an inveterate traveller he had spent time in Vancouver and recorded his impressions of the city. In the *Poètes d'Aujourd'hui* edition of Cendrars' poetry and prose (1948), Louis Parrot relates that Cendrars visited Russia in 1909, and from there travelled across the United States and Canada, earning his living as an agricultural worker and tractor driver in Winnipeg, and, indeed, "Printemps," one of the poems in *Kodak (Documentaire)*, situates itself in Winnipeg. Canada also appears in "Hommage à Guillaume Apollinaire" (1918), in which the poet imagines that future generations of children will be transformed by Apollinaire's poetic spirit, including those with a Canadian accent. Yet there's no evidence that Cendrars ever visited Canada. Of course, one does not have to visit a place to write about it; often it's better not to. In the case of "Vancouver," Cendrars drew most of the first stanza directly from the opening paragraphs of a chapter in his friend Gustave le Rouge's adventure novel *Le mystérieux docteur Cornélius*. (See Episode 11, "Coeur de gitane.") The second

stanza, with the shape-shifting Samoyeds, appears to be Cendrars' own. It turns out that most of the poems in *Kodak (Documentaire)* are collaged from le Rouge's novel, although this was not discovered until 1966.

Soon after the book was released, Librairie Stock, the publisher, was approached by the George Eastman Company and instructed to change the title. It resisted and the company threatened with a lawsuit. In the end, Librairie Stock was permitted to sell out the first edition as long as it changed the title in future editions. When the sequence was published subsequently in a volume of collected poems, Cendrars decided on a new title: *Documentaires*. In his explanatory note he added, "C'est peut-être aujourd'hui un genre nouveau."

Belgian poet Marcel Thiry's most famous poem, "Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver," provided the title for his first book in 1924. His writing has been likened to that of Apollinaire and Cendrars, but apart from an apparent interest in faraway destinations it couldn't be more different. "Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver" is a conventional, rhyming poem in eight parts that vacillates between colonial nostalgia for exotic locations, masculine erotic fantasies, and a world-weariness improbable in a young man of twenty-seven. What may not be true for Cendrars, however, may be exactly what occurred to Thiry in 1917. He and his brother were fighting with the Belgian army in Russia against German forces when the Russians fled the battlefield. The Belgian expeditionary force was recalled to France and the troops were sent home via Siberia, crossing the Pacific and very likely travelling across Canada, via Vancouver, before embarking from Montréal or Halifax. They reached Bordeaux in June 1918. Thiry is still remembered for the youthful ardour of "Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver"; his collected poems, published under the same title in 1975, won the Prix Littéraire Valéry Larbaud in 1976. Two sections are printed below.

Translations by Colin Browne. Many thanks to Michèle Smolkin for her assistance.

Les fenêtres (1913)

Du rouge au vert tout le jaune se meurt
Quand chantent les aras dans les forêt natales
Abatis de pi-his
Il y a un poème à faire sur l'oiseau qui n'a qu'une aile
Nous l'enverrons en message téléphonique
Traumatisme géant
Il fait couler les yeux
Voilà une jolie jeune fille parmi les jeunes Turinaises
Le pauvre jeune homme se mouchoit dans sa cravate blanche
Tu soulèveras le rideau
Et maintenant voilà que s'ouvre la fenêtre
Araignées quand les mains tissaient la lumière
Beauté pâleur insondables violets
Nous tenterons en vain de prendre du repos
On commencera à minuit
Quand on a le temps on a la liberté
Bigorneaux Lottes Multiples Soleils et l'Oursin du Couchant
Une vieille paire de chaussures jaunes devant la fenêtre
Tours
Les tours ce sont les rues
Puits
Puits ce sont les places
Puits
Arbres creux qui enlacent les Cypresses vagabondes
Les Chabins chantent des airs à mourir
Aux Chabines marronnes
Et l'oie Oua-Oua trompette au nord
Où les chasseurs de ratons
Raclent les pelleteries
Étincelant diamant
Vancouver
Où le train blanc de neige et de feux nocturnes fuit l'hiver
O Paris

Du rouge au vert tout le jaune se meurt
Paris Vancouver Lyon Maintenon New-York et les Antilles
La fenêtre s'ouvre comme une orange
Le beau fruit de la lumière

—Guillaume Apollinaire

The Windows (1913)

From red to green all the yellow is spent
When macaws shriek in the forests they were eggs in
Pi-hi giblets
There's a poem to be written about the one-winged bird
We'll send it off by telephone
The trauma of it
It makes me weep a little
There's a pretty young girl among the girls of Turin
The poor young man who blew his nose on his white tie
You'll raise the curtain
And now the window's opening
Spiders when hands thread light
Unfathomable beauty parlour violets
We struggle in vain to find repose
We begin at midnight
When we have time, we have freedom
Winkles Lottes Multiples Soleils and a Sea Urchin Sunset
An old pair of yellow shoes by the window
Towers
Towers as streets
Wells
Wells as locations
Wells
Hollow trees that hug vagabond Câpresses
Chabins sing songs you'd die for

To fugitive Chabines
And the goose trumpet Waa-Waa is aimed north
Where raccoon hunters
Scrape pelts
Sparkling diamond
Vancouver
Where snow-clad trains and night fires flee winter
O Paris
From red to green all the yellow is spent
Paris Vancouver Lyon Maintenon New-York and the Antilles
The window blinks open like an orange
Beautiful fruit of light

—Guillaume Apollinaire

Vancouver (1924)

Dix heures du soir viennent de sonner à peine distinctes
 dans l'épais brouillard qui ouate les docks et les navires du port
Les quais sont déserts et la ville livrée au sommeil
On longe une côte basse et sablonneuse où souffle un
 vent glacial et où viennent déferler les longues lames du Pacifique
Cette tache blafarde dans les ténèbres humides c'est la
 gare du Canadian du Grand Tronc
Et ces halos bleuâtres dans le vent sont les paquebots
 en partance pour le Klondyke le Japon et les grandes Indes
Il fait si noir que je puis à peine déchiffrer les inscriptions
 des rues où je cherche avec une lourde valise
 un hôtel bon marché

Tout le monde est embarqué
Les rameurs se courbent sur leurs avirons et la lourde
 embarcation chargée jusqu'au bordage pousse entre
 les hautes vagues
Un petit bossu corrige de temps en temps la direction
 d'un coup de barre

Se guidant dans le brouillard sur les appels d'une sirène
On se cogne contre la masse sombre du navire et par
 la hanche tribord grimpent des chiens samoyèdes
Filasses dans le gris-blanc-jaune
Comme si l'on chargeait du brouillard

—Blaise Cendrars, from *Kodak (Documentaire)* (1924)

Vancouver (1924)

The clock striking ten is muffled by thick fog that wraps
 itself like bunting around the docks and ships in the harbour
The wharves are empty; the city is lost in sleep
We walk along a low, sandy coast where glacial winds howl and long rollers
 unfurl from the Pacific
This luminous stain in the dripping darkness is the terminal
 of the Canadian Grand Trunk
And these bruised halos in the wind are mail boats destined for the Klondyke
 Japan and India
It's so dark that I can barely make out the street signs where, with my heavy
 satchel, I hunt for a decent hotel

Everyone has gone aboard
The oarsmen bend themselves to their oars as the cutter, loaded to the gunnels,
 ploughs through the waves
A little hunchback changes course occasionally, giving the rudder a push
Navigating blindly by the foghorn's cries
We bump up against the sombre mass of a freighter and on the starboard beam
 a team of Samoyeds is clambering up
Streaks in the grey-white-yellow
As if the ship is taking on fog

—Blaise Cendrars, from *Kodak (Documentaire)* (1924)

Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver (1924)

I

Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver,
Tu n'as pourtant fait qu'un banal voyage;
Tu n'as pas vu les grands perroquets verts,
Les fleuves indigo ni les sauvages.

Tu t'embarquas à bord de maints steamers
Dont par malheur pas un ne fit naufrage
Sans grand éclat tu servis sous Stürmer,
Pour désertier tu fus toujours trop sage.

Mais il suffit à ton orgueil chagrin
D'avoir été ce soldat pérégrin
Sur le trottoir des villes inconnues,

Et, seul, un soir, dans un bar de Broadway,
D'avoir aimé les grâces Greenaway
D'une Allemande aux mains savamment nues.

VI

Pour être encor sur ce transport
Qui ramenait aussi quelques femmes créoles,
Sur ce transport ayant à bord
Ces femmes, ces soldats vaincus et la variole,
Pour voir passer encore au bras d'un aspirant
Le flirt bronzé du capitaine
Qui portait avec art une robe safran
Comme un drapeau de quarantaine,

Pour souffrir encor du vaccin
Du mal de mer et de l'altier dédain des femmes,
Et pour rêver de jeunes seins
Dans l'entrepont plein du confus chaos des âmes,

Pour entendre chanter encor dans les agrès
Les longs alizés nostalgiques,
Pour être encor ce vacciné du Pacifique
Tu donnerais, tu donnerais

—Marcel Thiry, from “Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver”

You who blanch at the mention of Vancouver (1924)

I
You who blanch at the mention of Vancouver,
It was a very ordinary trip;
You’ve yet to gaze upon the tall green parrots,
Indigo rivers, or savages.

You embarked on many steamers
None of them were even shipwrecked
You sweated, unnoticed, under Stürmer
You were too wise to desert.

It’s enough for your fragile pride
To have been a falcon-like soldier treading
The sidewalks of an unknown town,
And, alone one evening, in a bar on Broadway,
To have loved the Greenway graces of
A German girl with wise, uninhibited hands.

VI
To be at sea once more on the ship
That brought back a few Creole girls,
On that ship with its passengers—the women,
The vanquished soldiers and smallpox.

To watch once more as the midshipman passes by
Arm in arm with the Captain's favourite
With his golden skin and handsome saffron robe
Like a quarantine flag.

To suffer once more from the vaccines
Of sea sickness and women's proud disdain.
And to dream of budding breasts
In steerage, in the confused chaos of souls.

To hear again, singing in the halyards
The long nostalgic sigh of the trade winds,
To get a fix once more of the Pacific
I would give, I would give...

—Marcel Thiry, from “Toi qui pâlis au nom de Vancouver”

COLIN BROWNE & IAN WALLACE / A Conversation

This conversation between Ian Wallace and Colin Browne took place in Ian Wallace's studio in Vancouver on April 4th, 2014. We had for some time wanted to discuss the poems by Guillaume Apollinaire and Blaise Cendrars that mention Vancouver. Why would these poets, who helped to transform poetry in the 20th century, mention a city that, in Apollinaire's case, was barely twenty-eight years old and so far away? What did it mean, and how did it relate to the spirit of Modernity?

Colin Browne: How did you first become interested Apollinaire's poem "Les fenêtres"? Was it the mention of Vancouver?

Ian Wallace: No, it was because I was first looking at visual poetry and the relationship to Mallarmé. I was trying to figure out why the early 20th century poets turned against Mallarmé when he was so obviously influential. It's as if Mallarmé was excluded from the discussion of Modernism until the 1920s. It seemed as though it was, "Kill the father."

CB: You have a copy here of the original poem as printed in the catalogue for Robert Delaunay's 1913 exhibition. Have you compared this with the standard version?

IW: Not really, no. But one thing that I found interesting was that Apollinaire removed all punctuation from "Les fenêtres." I have manuscripts of *Alcools* that show where he cancelled the punctuation.

CB: The absence of punctuation was significant when translating the poem.

IW: "Les fenêtres" was also one of the opening poems in *Calligrammes*, which was also without punctuation. Mallarmé had no punctuation in *Un Coup de Dés*. And this was one of the links that I was following through on. There was a discussion in December 1912, just before Apollinaire published *Alcools*, during which time he and Pierre Reverdy took a midnight walk from the Deux Magots to the river—Reverdy was a typesetter as well as a poet—and Apollinaire asked him about punctuation.

They were talking about Mallarmé and *Un Coup de Dés* and its lack of punctuation. After that, Apollinaire went back and removed all the punctuation from *Alcools*. This is a thesis I'm working on. The absence of punctuation is a trope of Modernity in poetry. It's like taking the framing away from a painting, or something like that. And, of course, classical French poetics was totally fixated on the twelve-syllable line—the Alexandrian line, punctuation, and a fixed form. The Modernists threw all that out the window, broke the lines up and the punctuation. And I see Mallarmé as the first adventurer, even though Mallarmé as a prose writer was a “commaphiliac” who used a comma just about every three words. Comma, comma, comma. That was the rhythm of his speech.

CB: I can already see some interesting changes here between the original handwritten draft of December 1912 and the first printing in 1913. This was written about the same time as “Zone.”

IW: “Les fenêtres” was published in January 1913, so it would have just followed “Zone.”

CB: Do you know why it's called “Zone”? In October 1912, Apollinaire joined Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp on a twelve-hour automobile trip to fetch Picabia's wife Gabrielle Buffet from her mother's house in the Jura. It was also meant as a little holiday, but the days were short and rainy and they were often stuck inside by the fire. Gabrielle's mother persuaded Apollinaire to read some of his poems, including one that was still in an early draft, which everyone admired. She'd already let everyone know that the locals referred to the district as *the zone*. When she asked Apollinaire what he was going to call the new poem, he replied, “I will call it ‘Zone.’” This is the trip that resulted in Duchamp's cryptic, prophetic text in which the five pistons/passengers in the car become five hearts that will give birth to a headlight child that will become a child god.

IW: Apollinaire was involved in another famous automobile trip in August of 1914, just before war broke out. They were in northern France and drove back to Paris overnight. The poem, entitled “La petite auto,” is drawn in the shape of a car and appears in *Calligrammes*.

CB: So, you first became interested in “Les fenêtres” because of Modernism, because of Delaunay, because of the lack of punctuation?

IW: Yes, just researching, and then I started wondering why Vancouver was mentioned in “Les fenêtres.” My big question is, why has Apollinaire mentioned Vancouver here, which goes on to another topic—I don’t know if you want to get into this now—about literary Cubism? Conversation poems?

CB: Well, what about Vancouver? I’m looking at the first proof made from the hand-written draft...and I don’t see, in this early proof, the familiar list of other locations at the end.

IW: Here it is, down here. “Lyon”...here, on the right, he’s added the list of cities in his own hand....

CB: Oh, now I see—and look, there’s the hyphen in “New-York.” I’ve been curious about this hyphen and its occasional absence.

IW: I didn’t notice that. Thank you.

CB: And look, in the original hand-written draft, “Vancouver” was originally linked to “Étincelant diamant.” They’re on the same line.

IW: And here, where “the snow-clad trains...”; I’m sorry, I can’t read that word.

CB: It’s a different word, isn’t it?

IW: It’s like “tour.” I’ll have to get a magnifying glass.

CB: It’s a noun, and it’s something “of night fires....” But could it be a typographical note?

IW: You know where I think that train enters the poem? It is what was called a “conversation poem.” He wrote the poem while sitting in a bar. In other words, he’s dragging in elements of what people are saying around him, other clients in the bar. He’s looking at the walls. There are posters on the walls. At this time the CPR was producing travel posters, advertising railway tours across Canada through the Rockies. The style of these posters was borrowed, actually, from Swiss graphic design which advertised train travel through Switzerland. The CPR borrowed the same graphic ideas to advertise its own magical mountain train tours. What he’s looking at is a poster on the wall. This is a piece of research that I haven’t done yet. It would be fun to go to the Chung collection at UBC, because all the CPR

posters are there, to find a poster that would be an approximation. They've got 226 CPR posters and related materials. They're in Special Collections. We want to find one that advertises Vancouver and travelling through the mountains in a snowy landscape. At that time the trains had smoke stacks; that's the "nocturnal fire." I see a train speeding through the landscape with sparks coming out of the stack. Anyway, it's a beautiful image, but I think that's as close to Vancouver as it comes. It's only a poster on the wall! I think he just liked the sound of the word, too. And the list of locations at the end of the poem is like a chant, an invocation. He's a poet, and he's cobbling together... you see, he was very close to Delaunay who asked him to write a foreword to the catalogue. Instead he comes up with this poem, which bears a relationship to the work in the exhibition, especially the paintings Delaunay entitles "Fenêtres ouvertes simultanément," although we shouldn't lose sight of the arbitrary nature of collage happening in the poem. Apollinaire basically brackets, or rather, frames a constellation of seemingly irrelevant auxiliary elements with the image of prisms of light and colour coming in the window.

CB: I think this leads us to Cubism in poetry and Apollinaire...

IW: ...and to the idea of Modernist forms of literature at the time...and of course he was friends with Picasso, and so the whole discussion about Cubism was just coming up, and he's a poet, he's trying to understand Cubist collage, and collaging, and that's where Mallarmé comes in. Part of my thesis is that Mallarmé's *Un Coup de Dés* was a collage poem, in effect, because when you read it, you've got to read through it on one level—line and size of text—and then you've got to read back through it on another level and then you're turning the pages back and forth. Constant inserts and shifts, both graphically on the page but also conceptually in the language itself. So what I'm looking at is where—how—Apollinaire is trying to construct a kind of Modernist poetics that borrows some of the inventions of the Cubist collage. I think that Picasso even borrowed some of the inventions of the Cubist collage from Mallarmé, from *Un Coup de Dés*. I haven't found the smoking gun specifically, but there are all kinds of connections to that.

CB: Collage, I think, is tied to Apollinaire's idea of the simultaneous. Simultaneity denies narrative. In the original proof he included "Vancouver" as a line, but how could he isolate one city when all cities exist simultaneously? He needed that list at the end. It's a Cubist planet.

IW: Consciously or not, one of Apollinaire's first calligraphic poems, "Lettre-Océan," was about radio transmission, KSF. Ocean-going ships at that time used radio telegraph systems to communicate. The world was shrinking. People were travelling, and so you have this collapse of space, of different environments coming into collision with each other. That's, of course, the essence of collage. It's the fragmentation of things pulled out from different fragments of space and pulled into a single harmonious body of work, or speech, or whatever.

CB: We should remember that the Eiffel Tower was saved only because it proved to be very useful for radio transmissions. They were going to tear it down!

IW: Then it became a symbol, and of course it's the main symbol in Sonia Delaunay's collaboration with Blaise Cendrars, *Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* (1913). And of course that appears, along with the Ferris wheel, as seen from the window of Robert and Sonia Delaunay's apartment. They could see the Eiffel Tower and "la Grande Roue," the Big Wheel, which is also mentioned in the *Transsibérien*.

CB: And the Cubist aspect?

IW: I think that Cubism lurks in the background to all of this, especially when we get to looking at Cendrars and the question of appropriation, because literary Cubism is tied in with the Duchampian idea of appropriation, and of course Picasso's collages. Picasso cuts pieces out of newspapers and takes wallpaper off bathroom walls and builds collage and kind of pulls into a picture a whole variety of objects that are purely appropriated. I think that also occurs in poetry. To go back to Cendrars, he, in effect, has appropriated somebody else's text to discuss a city he's never been to.

CB: Can a text be a ready-made?

IW: In this case there is a ready-made aspect to it, and I guess it was a form of crossing the boundary line, going beyond what was expected at the time. William Burroughs is the classic example of collage literature, of so-called "literary Cubism" in effect. The two—collage and Cubism—were totally linked to each other, and also appropriation, at least what we now call appropriation. Duchamp called it the "ready-made."

CB: The borders seemed to be porous and generative between those poets and visual artists. Cendrars' poem "Vancouver" appeared in a 1924 collection called *Kodak (Documentaire)* which is meant to be like a snapshot album made up of what he called "photographies verbales," apparently the result of his ramblings about the world. For years readers believed that Cendrars had visited Vancouver and the other geographic locations in the book. In fact, most of the text was generated and appropriated from his friend Gustave le Rouge's adventure novel *Le mystérieux docteur Cornélius*. If the documentary genre is now regarded as being as suspect, Cendrars may have been one of the first to ring the alarm.

IW: When I came across the Cendrars poem about Vancouver, it was because I was researching Cendrars, Sonia Delaunay, and *Prose du Transsibérien* in relation to visual poetry and Mallarmé, looking again for the outfall of Mallarmé's work. I read it and I was quite fascinated and surprised to see a poem about Vancouver by Cendrars, thinking that he'd actually been here. He'd been to Russia earlier, and I came across a reference to his having spent time on the farm of an uncle in the Winnipeg area. So I was thinking, maybe he came through Vancouver and then took the train from Vancouver to Winnipeg and from there to New York and then back to Paris. As it turned out that wasn't the case. In fact, it might not even be the case that he was in the Winnipeg area. So, who knows? I haven't followed through on any further research to work that one out. But when I read the details of the poem, there were things that didn't quite make sense in terms of what I know about the Port of Vancouver back in 1910 or 1909 or whenever it was supposed to have been. Or later. It just didn't fit the geography. I was always wondering about that. What's he talking about?

CB: I'm pretty sure that Gustave le Rouge had never been to Vancouver either.

IW: He probably just read a tourist brochure or something! It's quite possible. They were imagining or fantasizing about Vancouver, but not about what was then the rather cluttered waterfront of a shabby port town. It was actually a bustling modern city, because if you look at the architecture of downtown Vancouver between 1886, when it burned down, and 1914, a lot of those early buildings were already built—it was an almost instant downtown. The highest building in the British Empire was right there, the old Vancouver Sun building at the corner of Beattie and West Pender, close to Victory Square. So Vancouver wasn't exactly a

wilderness port at the time, even though it was a modern city in flux. But this is not how it's described in the poem, so the poem didn't quite synch up. And then there are a few lines in the poem that don't quite make sense, for example, "Rowing out to the ship," because, if you look at the old photos, the ships were pulled up to wharves. They had to load heavy lumber, and you didn't row the lumber out to the boat! Hunting for a decent hotel I can imagine, with a heavy satchel, it was so dark he could hardly make out. . . . The terminal for what Cendrars called the "Canadian Great Trunk" would be the Main Street terminal built for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, which later became part of the Canadian National Railway.

CB: Anyone who has written fiction knows that you don't have to visit a place to describe, in a few lines, something that will support or subvert the intentions of the text. Cendrars is challenging our ideas about the poem, the metonym, and the nature or function of representational verisimilitude. What difference does it really make if he was here or not?

IW: The odd thing is that Vancouver, the city we live in and know all too well, was actually in this early Modernist literature a city of fiction. It's totally fictional. It's a phantasm, it's not a reality. I'm just thinking about why Vancouver might appear in this poem. It must have been in the air, one of these modern cities that pops up on the edge of the frontier, which it was at that time, and it enters into the discussion of Modernity at an international level. I think that's true. People were coming from India and China, so the name Vancouver as a port must have been known in the Far East as well.

CB: And of course Cendrars is simply going through a novel, culling descriptive phrases. . . .

IW: I don't think it's a great poem.

CB: What interests me is that the first verse is appropriated and the second verse is entirely his. He invents a boat filled with passengers being rowed out to the ship by a "little hunchback," and the Samoyeds like "streaks of fog." It's a form of collage.

IW: It is collaging, and he's trying to create an image of internationality that was not just French, but a trope of Modernity; it was an idea about global travel. Citroën sponsored a car tour across Asia, from Paris to Peking, I think it was, in 1934. Paris

to Peking. This is an example of the idea of using modern transportation to create new routes around the world in the unknown world. Also through Africa. There were attempts to drive across the Sahara in these automobiles. It's a late form of colonialism. Just before the colonial powers pulled out of Africa and Asia they were playing with the whole idea of these exotic environments. I think that *Kodak (Documentaire)* was a literary version of modern global travel, done on the level of, in this case, fantasy.

Cendrars was, I think, a roughneck, basically. He was a bit like the Henry Miller or Kerouac of French literature in that sense. I don't think he cared whether he was telling the truth or not, or whether everybody would believe him or not. His writing...he was just producing. If you liked it you liked it, that's great; if you don't, then who cares?

CB: The book cheerfully undermines the conventions of the poem, the snapshot, the travelogue, and the documentary while remaining charming in its cloak of pseudo-authenticity which, like the emperor's new clothes, now stands revealed. We face an allegory of the production of meaning.

IW: To return to Mallarmé, *Un Coup de Dés* is such an amazing poem. The original manuscripts are still there with his corrections and everything, and the version he intended was published finally through the interventions of his daughter and her husband in 1914 by Les Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française. I see it as the fountainhead, the beginning of everything like abstraction, Cubism, appropriation, the ready-made, you name it; it is a poem about the destiny of the poet and the disaster of civilization, the disaster of culture. He uses all the tropes of Modernity including newspaper headlines, even though he's always attacked as being anti-journalistic and opposed to popular culture and popular newspapers. He borrowed poster design and newspaper design for the poster for the book. But of course the amazing thing about the Mallarmé research is that it's led into so many other avenues, and Paris was really the centre of the avant-garde of Europe. It was like a magnet.

CB: We have a third poem to look at by Marcel Thiry, the Belgian poet. We'll only print two parts of it. It's a rumination that ends up in an armchair, a fantasy of exotic and erotic longing. He begins by saying, "You grow pale just thinking of

an ocean trip to Vancouver, but that's nothing," then off he goes. Vancouver, he declares, is a bourgeois destination.

IW: I wonder how much the use of native totem poles and native iconography would have been part of the marketing of Vancouver at the time.

CB: They were here. The city raised the first four poles in Stanley Park in 1923. In André Breton's foreword to Wolfgang Paalen's 1938 exhibition in Paris, Vancouver is imagined as a place bristling with totem poles.

IW: Breton hadn't been here either! A few years ago in Paris, I ran into Marcia Crosby. She said, "Oh, Ian, guess what! I just went . . ." It was down by the Seine where they have the bookstalls, and we were in some kind of symposium at the *École des Beaux Arts* which is right there too, and she says, "Guess what! I went there and—'Do you have any postcards of Indians?'—and they said 'Yes,'" and she said, "Do you have any postcards of Indians from British Columbia? The west coast?" And they said "Yes," and she went through the postcards and found some of northern BC at turn of the century. One was of her grandfather's village on Haida Gwaii. I have a big collection of postcards, too, from that period. So postcards were circulating internationally; that carried a lot of this. I have quite a few of Vancouver that were written and sent back and forth.

CB: With this *Thiry* poem I don't really know what to say, although perhaps it owes something to the Mallarmé of "*Brise Marine*." It's a comment on unfulfilled bourgeois life, but its exotic fantasies seem to disregard the colonial machinery of cruelty and slavery that make bourgeois life possible.

IW: So none of these poems are specifically about Vancouver, except that Vancouver, in the framework of what we're looking at as the meme of a modern city on the edge of the frontier, signifies something, via the sound of the word, or signifies something in the poetic imagination that has to do with Modernity and—I call it collage—synthesizing disparate experiences and reinterpreting them through the literary model. In the visual arts there's also very little reference to Vancouver as a city. Emily Carr comes back in 1912 after Paris and just paints a row of old wooden houses and a bit of shrubbery on West Broadway, up near Broadway and Granville. She doesn't relate to the small beginning of an urban city. What I'm curious about is how all the visual arts and the artists of Vancouver turn their eyes

away from the city as a city. Like Emily Carr they were looking at the forest. There was no iconography of the city as such. Robert Delaunay's paintings of the Eiffel Tower and modern urban structures of the modern city, and early photography, like Stieglitz with *Camerawork* and Edward Steichen's photograph of the Flat Iron building, are examples of imagery of the city as a city, as an urban universe, rather than as a place somewhere plunked in the forest—from which to focus on the forest. Even Apollinaire's focussing in his poem on an exotic idea of nature, including the Canada geese, the Wa-Wa-Wa of the geese going by and the cabins and the beaver hunters and, are they beaver hunters? Yes...the rat hunters....

CB: In the French it's "raton" which is "little rat." We don't have a specific word for that.

IW: "Castor" is beaver in French.

CB: Some people have suggested a raccoon.

IW: They refer to a raccoon as a "raton."

CB: What do you think? Do you think it should be "raccoon"?

IW: Yes, I think it's probably "raccoon." Because he's talking about....

CB: Maybe I'll change it. "Raccoon hunters."

IW: What I'm trying to do is get a sense of what is the significance...back to my first question—why is Apollinaire mentioning Vancouver? I think it's, as it turns out, quite arbitrary. The arbitrariness is already interesting because it is an insight into a certain kind of Modernity of thinking about what a poem could or could not be.

CB: It may be less arbitrary than the other locations in the poem, *if there's a poster.*

IW: Oh, I see. Because he didn't include the other locations until later. The best one of these three is "Les fenêtres," I think. It's a superior poem.

CB: I do like the way that Cendrars ends with a vision of the dogs becoming a streak of fog, the colour of fog, as if the ship is loading on fog, is taking on fog. The final image is a cinematic image, a moving streak that dissolves from dog to fog....

IW: It's got this surrealist kind of shifting in a shifting morphology—shape shifters.... So he's closed his eyes and he's actually seeing something. But that could have been taken from some other source, too.

CB: He could have found it anywhere.

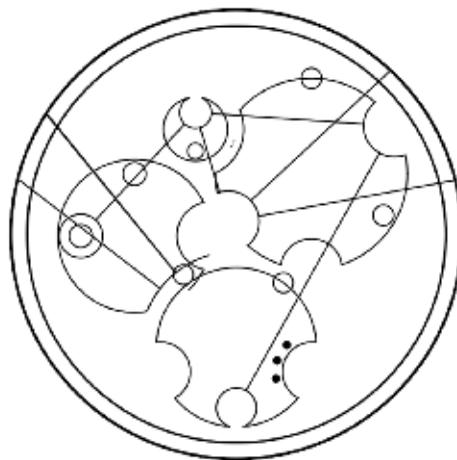
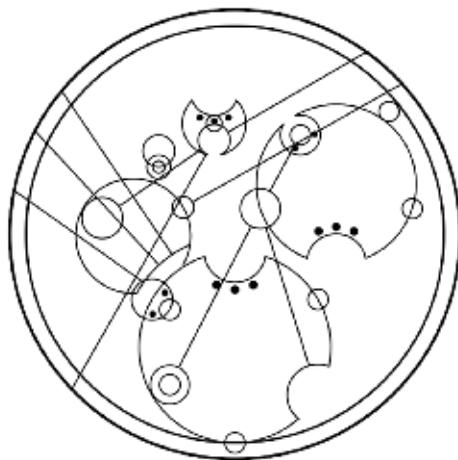
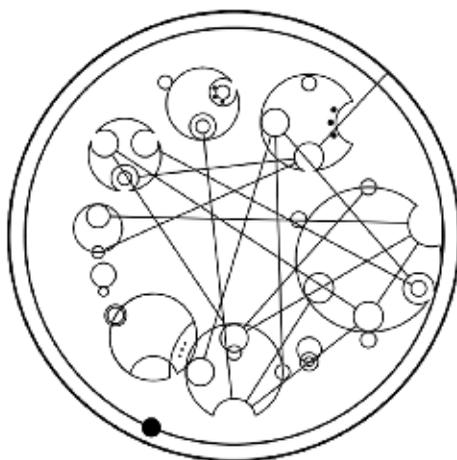
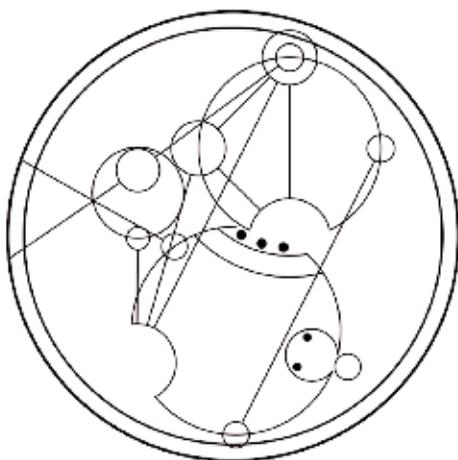
IW: Vancouver used to be much foggier than it is now. It was like London. All the wood-burning and all the smokestacks from the lumber, remember? False Creek was full of lumber and beehive burners.

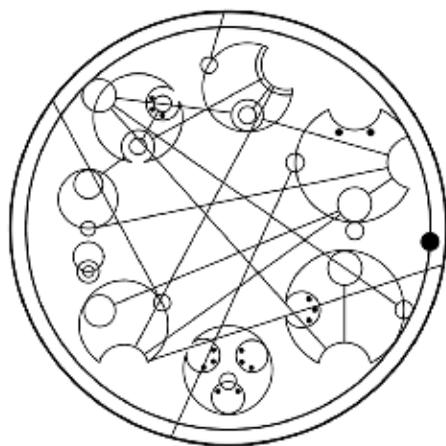
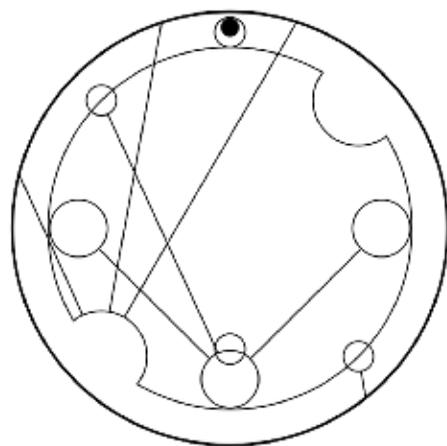
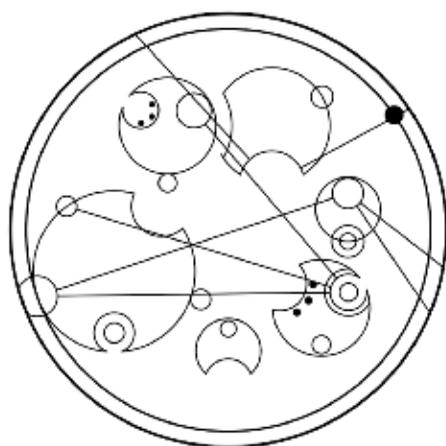
CB: In Cendrars' poem, because of "the fog," we see a city but we never "see" it. We hear its foghorns. He's telling us something critical about the unreliable nature of the text—and by corollary, of the photographic image—as evidence. Simultaneously, he's celebrating the imagination and its ability to penetrate the fiction of the real. And he's riffing on the aural/alchemical disposition of our five consonants and four vowels.

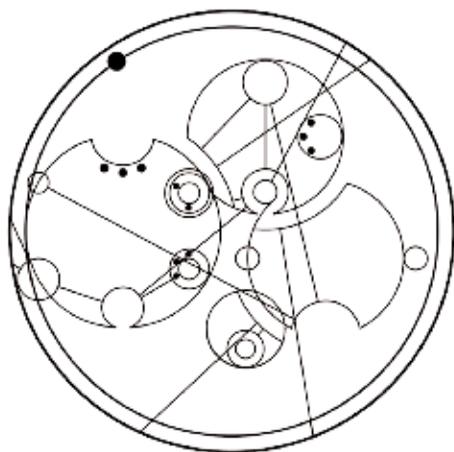
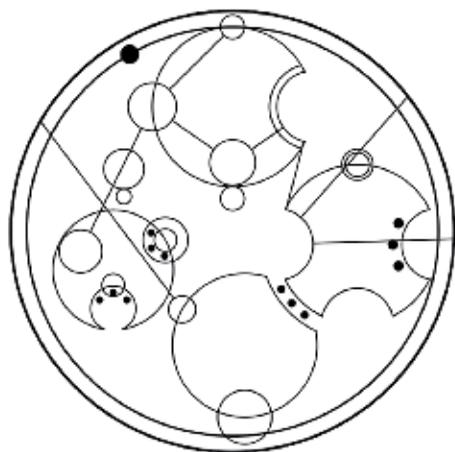
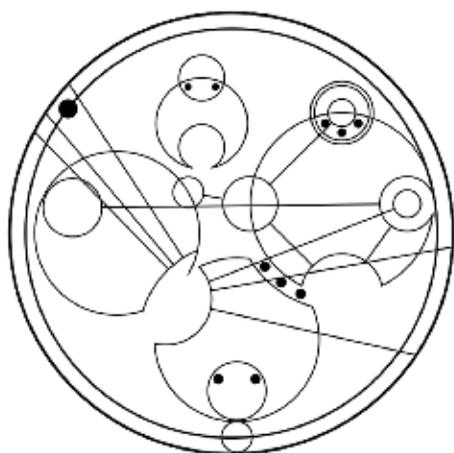
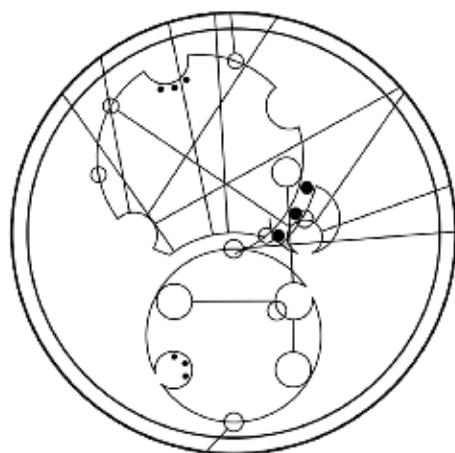
IW: My interest in this theme is really, in a sense, about Modernity. The idea of cities on the margin as a trope of Modernity. This is it really, to put it in a nutshell. And Vancouver is one of those cities on the margin. It had a place in the trope of Modernity. A very slight place, I'd say, but still, it was there, then it kind of opens up into an early relationship to what we would now call Post-Modernity, or de-centering—how Modernity, both in communications and transportation and the shifting of populations and the poetic imagination in this place, reads out places that it doesn't know, like places on the frontier. I'm thinking about these terms as tropes of Modernity.

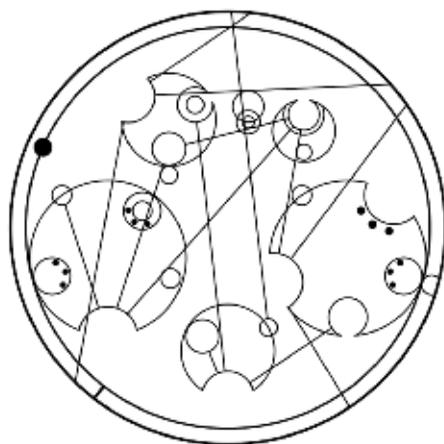
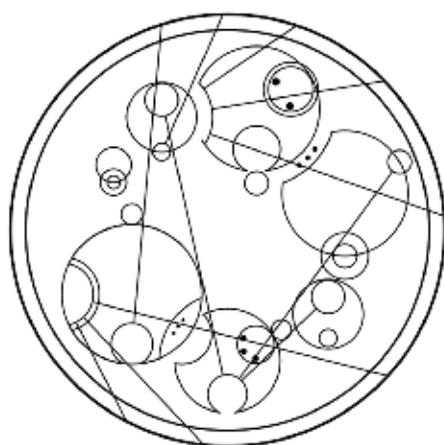
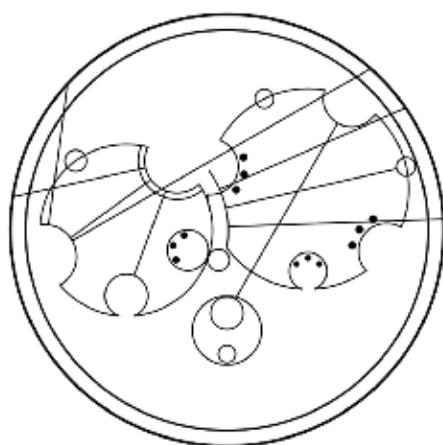
CB: In this light, Vancouver was a way-station, a perch in unceded Salish territory, offering the promise of refuge and prosperity to visitors and immigrants. But it was also called Terminal City, a name that juggled prosperity with despair. It could be the place where one might board a ship to exotic destinations, but, equally, with a roll of the dice, it might turn out to be the end of the line. I think we see in these poems that early on there were intimations of Vancouver's destiny as an in-between place. Is this another trope of Modernity?

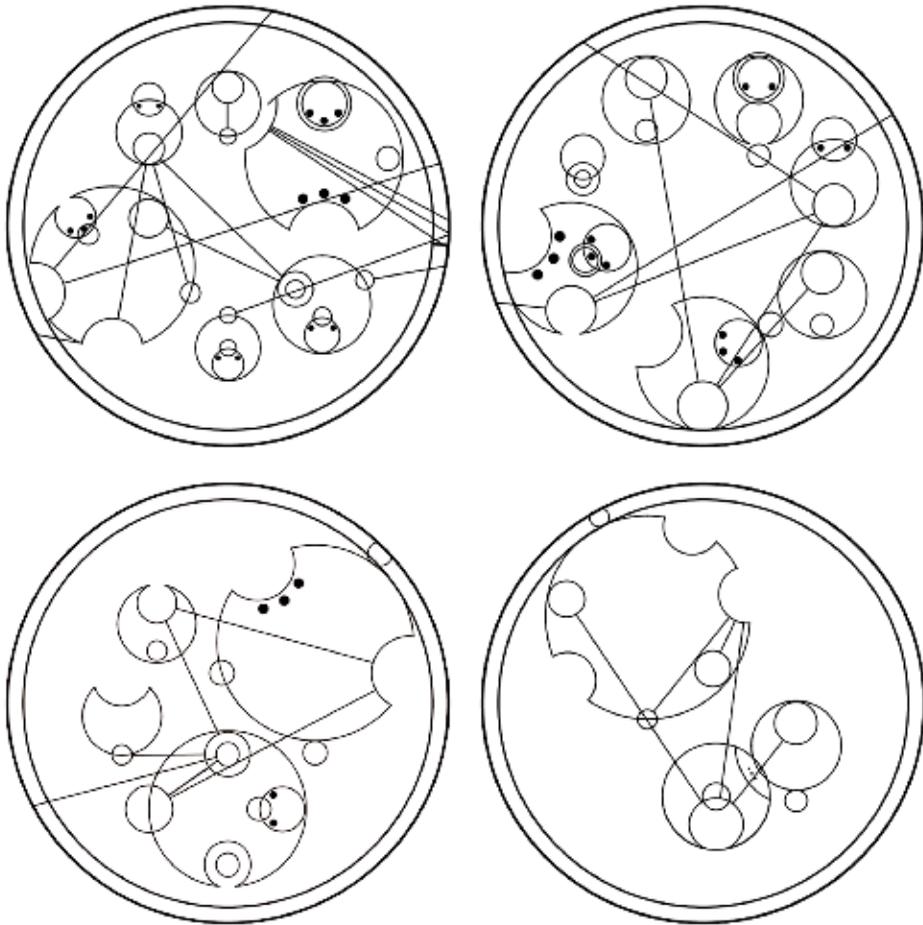
**CHRISTIAN BÖK / Translating Translating Apollinaire
(Gallifreyan)**











“Translating Translating Apollinaire (Gallifreyan)” is a work of visual poetry—whose form translates a poem by bpNichol into the clockwork discourse of Doctor Who.

Two versions of poems by Anna Akhmatova

Our Age (an imitation)

Why is this age worse than all those preceding?
Because deranged by greed and desirous of pleasure,
we borrowed against the cancer that was eating us,
the wound we could not close.

West Point Grey still chills in late sunlight,
its rays gleam off shop windows & cars,
but deep scratches have appeared in some of the house doors,
and rows of ravens weigh down the power lines.

Akhmatova's poem, written in 1919, during the Russian Civil War, is about *grief*. I have changed this to greed. It is also about "the decline of the West." I have substituted the name of a Vancouver neighbourhood.

Lot's Wife (a translation)

The great man followed the envoy of God
out of the city, down the road to the black hills.
The woman, hurrying behind, was beset by a thought:
It's not too late, you can still look back

to the red towers of Sodom, where you were born,
the street where you would play, the porch where you would spin,
the high-windowed room where you lay & gave birth
to children to be presented to your gentle lord.

She looked. And straightaway struck by a deadly pain,
her eyes went blind. In the act of turning back,
her body froze to shimmering salt,
her swift feet & ankles clove to the ground.

Who among us would mourn for this woman?
Isn't she thought the least of our losses?
But I in my heart will never forget Lot's wife
who gave up living to look back once at her life.

What Akhmatova has added to the story in *Genesis* is the idea that Lot's wife was a local Sodom girl.

My Room

after Baudelaire, "La Chambre Double"

1

Did I dream this room?
A refuge for my soul,
a cell of rainbow light,

where I can bask at sundown
in negligent regret
for the passing of desire

on a chaise longue that seems
itself to dream, in the carved
sleep of furniture, under fabrics woven
of the sun's last, long rays?

No bad art on the walls!
No painstaking realism to distract
my soul from the dream's
agreeable clair-obscur!

A tang of cinnamon whiskey
rides on the vaporous air
as close to sleep fleeting visions
come to be slower to fade.

2

Against cascading white curtains, ensconced on a white divan,
the Queen of my Dreams, in basic black (with pearls)
lounges before my eyes. Whence came she here?
No matter. I see her. I *recognize* her.

Her eyes whose blaze migrates across the dusk,
superior eyes that subjugate their slave,
black, glossy stars that waken awe in me,
awe, admiration, and enrapturement.

Of what supernal power am I the heir,
lapped round by waves of peace and mystery?
What life had I before this marvelous dream
whose sweet perdures, minute by minute, second by second?

But wait! There are no seconds, minutes. Time's no more!
This is eternity! The realm of eternal delight!
Then there's a knock at the door.

3

THEN THERE'S A KNOCK AT THE DOOR!

A knock like a sock in the jaw,
a knock like a kick in the nuts.

The door opens. Three spectres enter:

1. An auditor from Revenue Canada—he wants to measure the floor area of the room I've deducted for business purposes;
2. The kid I bought a coffee last night at Blenz—he's back to tell me the rest of the story of his life since he left Kelowna;
3. The editor of *Thrush* (formerly *Thrust*) magazine: "I just happened to be in the 'hood, can I pick up that poem—'My Room'—you promised me? Is it finished yet?"

My paradise collapses.
The Queen of my Dreams, all her magic
& wonderment, vanishes.

And I remember! I remember!
This hole, this pad, this cell of tedium
is mine. This is my room.

I see the dusty, ugly, box-like furniture,
the armchair leaning on its broken leg,
the grimy window, the spotted mirror,
the stack of poems, with lines or whole half-pages
 roughly crossed out,
the daytimer with doctors' appointments
 neatly penciled in.

The fragrance of an altered world,
the sense of a perfected sensibility,
are supplanted by the reek of smoke & coffee grounds,
& all around, faint but sharp in the room,
the smell of one man alone.

In this my world, where I gag with disgust,
one object seems to smile back like a friend
(like all friends, it promises flattery, then desertion).
On the carpet, by the desk, I spy a screw
of white paper, charred at one end: a fat roach.

4

And oh yes, Time is back, the louche old King,
attended by his wretched retinue
of Thoughts, Memories, Shame, Remorse,
Apprehension, Premonition, Worry, Anxiety
(& let's not forget To-do Lists).

The red second hand unbudges & starts its trek
across the barren steppe to the next tick,
and as each joyous second leaps from the clock's face,
it turns cartwheels in the air & cries:
"I am Life! The life you cannot live,
the life you cannot not live."

There is just one second in a person's life
whose role it is to bring really good news.
But why is it, *la bonne nouvelle* causes
such terror in everyone who hears it?

Time wears the big hat. Life is his rancho.
And me he drives like a panting, running steer.
The Range Boss leans from his saddle & taps me with his taser:
"Get along, dogie! Head down, slave! Live, loser!"

MARK GOLDSTEIN / from *Schwarzmaut* (Blacktoll) by
Paul Celan

1

WE LAY

already deep in the macchia, when you
finally edged into view.

Nevertheless, we could not
darken out to you:

ruled by
lightduress.

2

WHO FOUGHT FOR YOU?

The lark-figured
stone from the fallow.

No tone, only that mortalbrightness carried
within.

The height
whirls itself
out, more violently still
than you.

3

REFLECTIONLADEN, among the
celestial-beetles,
at the mount.

The death
that you owed me—I
take
it.

4

FREELYGIVEN at this
start.

Bowsoncycle with
Corona.

The dawnrudder responds,
your ripped-
awake vein
unknots itself,

what remains, angles itself,
increases in
pitch.

5

FROM THE FORLORN you poured forth,
masked fittingly,

where eyelids
fold with
your own
eye fold within you,

the trace and the trace
amid this gray straying,
finally, fatally.

6

WHAT THREW
us together,
started apart—

a worldstone, asunder,
hums.

Blacktoll is a translation of a cycle of poems written by Paul Celan and published in a limited edition as *Schwarzmaut* by Brunidor in 1969. It is a continuation of my transtranslational experiments first begun in *After Rilke* (BookThug 2008) and continued in *Tracelanguage* (BookThug 2010). Where *Tracelanguage* exemplifies a “shared breath” that seeks to break with tired translational orthodoxies, *Blacktoll* attempts to embrace both old and new methodologies as singular. Whether one approach is wider or deeper than the other, I’ll leave to the reader to decide in full knowledge that there’s no “poem” there. By this I mean that words are encampments around an absence—a field of energy beyond description.

TED BYRNE / Sonnets: Guido Cavalcanti

2

Your eyes heartless love impoverish me
harsh noisy squint splits my resistance
and if you didn't smile once in awhile
my voice my guile would abandon me
and love would nail me to the door
with spikes of the imaginary

From above the corner of her mouth
the little wicked winged thought
climbs in my ear lugging the real

3

Didn't you see him babe when he grabbed me
by the vest and all I could do was gulp

It was fuckin A out of nowhere
like a Syrian hitman dressed to kill
suddenly finding us cornered me

He took your sighs your eyes for ammo
and shot me so full of holes I fled
into the arms of death and that crowd
of hopeless buggers all drenched in tears

6

(pezzo di legno)

Taken mindful painful and morose
inanimate my beaten chorus
sighs empty my late suffering eyes

Eros knowing your talent my fate
says your ears miss what they hear of me

Others see death when they see me see
stone or lead or a piece of wood

articulated automaton
each unmastered wound an open sign

7

(for Bertolt Brecht)¹

Imagined imperium our gaze
a love of looking not of seeing
the air trembling as she passes by

Dumb we sigh but there'd be no reply
if she turned and countered our regard

Contrary or not she moves inside
the ring inscribed by beauty's compass

Our minds lifted drop back to the street
filled with sorrow but not with knowledge

1 See "Über die Gedichte des Dante auf die Beatrice."

10

Oh dear me Unsightly passions see
a singular pain yet redouble
these empty indecorous words

Oh my As you know my heart's struck through
by joy by torsion and her coy glance
Oh dear Please lift me out of this trap

It's just like Fred Williams in that film
He appears and I go weak inside
My soul is lost and found forever

13

Her eyes met then spirited away
inspirit thoughts beyond direction
My spirits declining and in thrall
find themselves again in sprightly dance

The spirit that has me by the balls
is the same spirit that makes me bold
An other this spirit another calls
a snow storm of spirits falling
from the lips of a specter with eyes

21

Perhaps when you saw me you saw death
rare spirit love is only there then
assassination so close to thought
drained at the outer edge of silence
when yes a light let's say your eyes yes
a glance near meaning's sweet inside me
you gave perhaps a light a lightness
and that subtle spirit looking out
gave life again to thought's affections

In order to properly read Pound's translations, and in preparation for a reading of "Donna mi pregha," I made literal translations of these poems in the late 70s. In making those translations, and in revisiting them now, I relied mainly on the editions of Pound, Contini, and Cattaneo. For this selection I have retained the order in which Pound arranged the sonnets. I also consulted Rossetti's translations, and Lloyd Howard's commentary (dissertation, Johns Hopkins 1976). Also useful: Pound's essay "Cavalcanti," Rachel Jacoff's dissertation "The Poetry of Guido Cavalcanti" (Yale 1977), Bruno Nardi's *Dante e la cultura medievale* (1983), and especially Maria Corti's *La felicità mentale* (1983), Maria Luisa Ardizzone's *Guido Cavalcanti: the Other Middle Ages* (2002), and Giorgio Agamben's *Stanzas* (1977).


~~~~~-~~~~~@~"~~~~~D~  
 ~~~~~LKUP~  
 ~~~~~  
 ~~~~~  
 ~~~~~  
 ~~~~~  
 ~~~~~\$~~~~NAME~Default~  
 ~~~~~  
Default
 SS~Header~
 ~~~~~Body~  
 ~~~~~Footer~Footnote~  
 ~~~~~Footnote~  
**Index**~  
 ~~~~~D~~~~FNTM~  
 ~~~~~Helvetica~  
 ~~~~~Geneva~  
 ~~~~~Techno~  
 ~~~~~Times~  
 ~~~~~MCRO~MCRO~  
 BIN~oBIN~BBAR~BBAR~MARK~-MRKS~  
 ~~~~~MOBJWMBT~ETBL~XDSUM~O:HDNI~  
 ~~~~~OjSTYL~OtMCRO~[ÆoBIN~[æBBAR~[ÇEMARK~[fiWMBT~\~ETB  
 L~\~",~

At which point, noticing a bite out of the apple, the butterflies depart.

“The Monk’s Tale” is part of an ongoing rewriting of the entirety of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. In this particular narrative I set up the following pataphysical challenge: how to represent monastic speech in a Trappist community? The ending is designed to evoke the cloistral atmosphere of the haiku.

## ALLYSON CLAY / GroundSplatPink

Paint can be put on a canvas in many ways: tenderly, brutally, sensually,  
or just plain ugly. —John C. Pellew

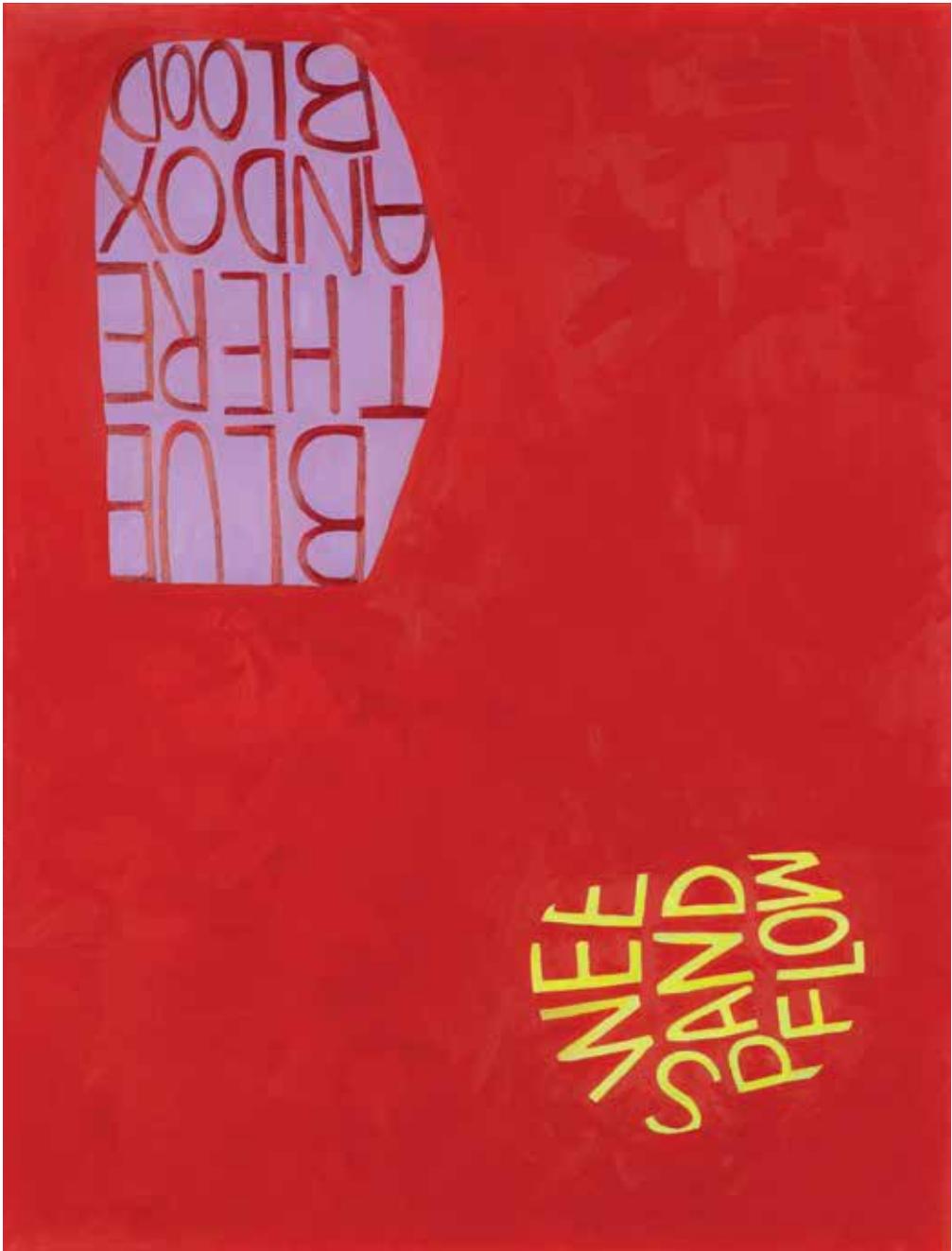
And finally, squeezed in at the top of the canvas there is a thin strip of a  
rather nondescript, umberish brown which seems to be holding  
all the rest in place. —Jon Thompson

My recent body of paintings, collectively titled *GroundSplatPink* (2013/14), stems from my longtime fascination with how paintings, particularly abstract paintings, are written about and described. Such descriptions are ubiquitous in art history texts and catalogue essays dealing with modern and contemporary painting. Books about painting tend to concentrate on surface treatments. (Interesting writing about painting can also be found occasionally in “how to” books on painting.)

These new works engage abstract geometrical shapes to conjure minimalism, modernism, the urban, demarcations, and limitations. The words used in these new paintings struggle against and actively form their constrictions. The resulting word-shapes are intended to both interrupt and co-produce the paintings’ forms and surfaces.

The most influential text for me in these new paintings is the writing of Roald Nasgaard in *Abstract Painting in Canada* (see an inventory excerpt on p. 57), a book that sets up a historical trajectory with regional sensitivity. Nasgaard’s writing focuses on imparting the physicality and sensuality of the works he writes about. He loves paintings. This makes for pleasurable as well as informative reading.

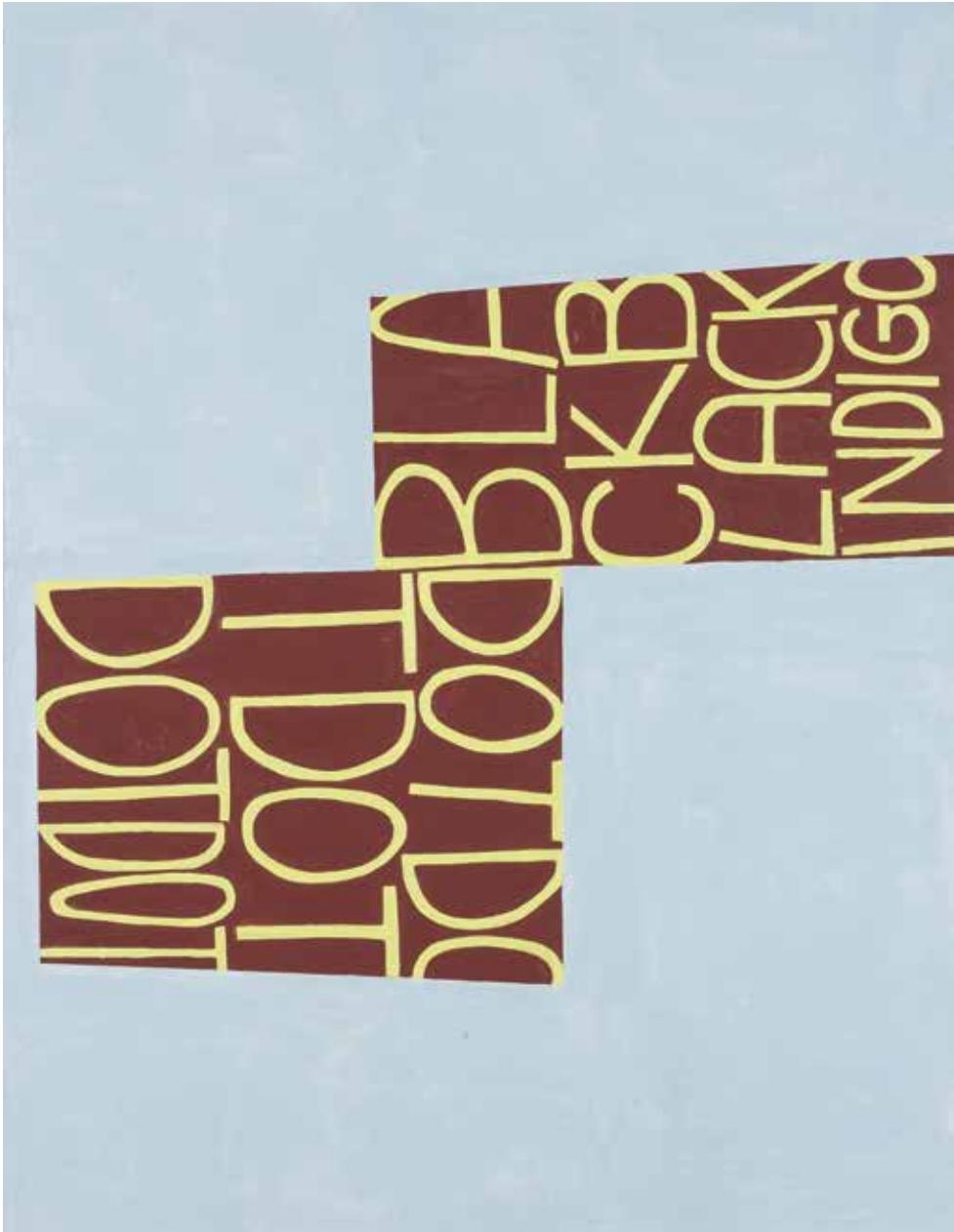
In my new paintings I have re-written or invented extremely condensed versions of such sensual descriptions. Although Roald Nasgaard’s writing is important, I also take from a wide range of sources. And except for one painting (*SweepAndFlow* where this phrase is a direct quote from Nasgaard) I don’t quote directly from sources. In each painting I tightly frame words into abstract shapes that form an intentionally awkward composition. Such awkwardness is intended as an homage to modernism’s duty to disrupt and thwart the easiness of balance and resolution. These paintings’ awkward use of vocabulary, of commentary, of composition and paint application is intended to resonate connotatively in the expanded field of art.



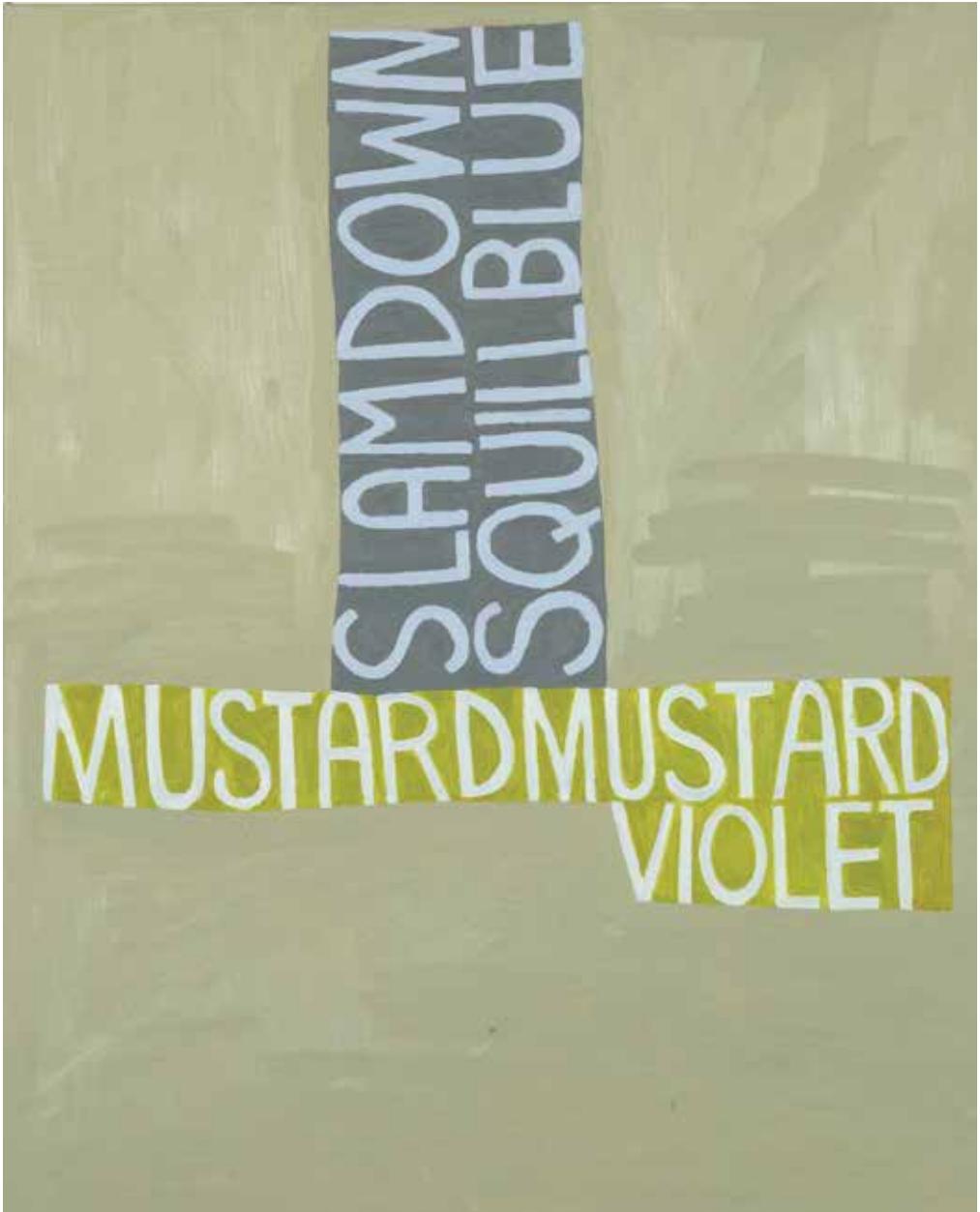
Allyson Clay, *SweepAndFlow*, 2013, oil on linen, 150 × 114 cm



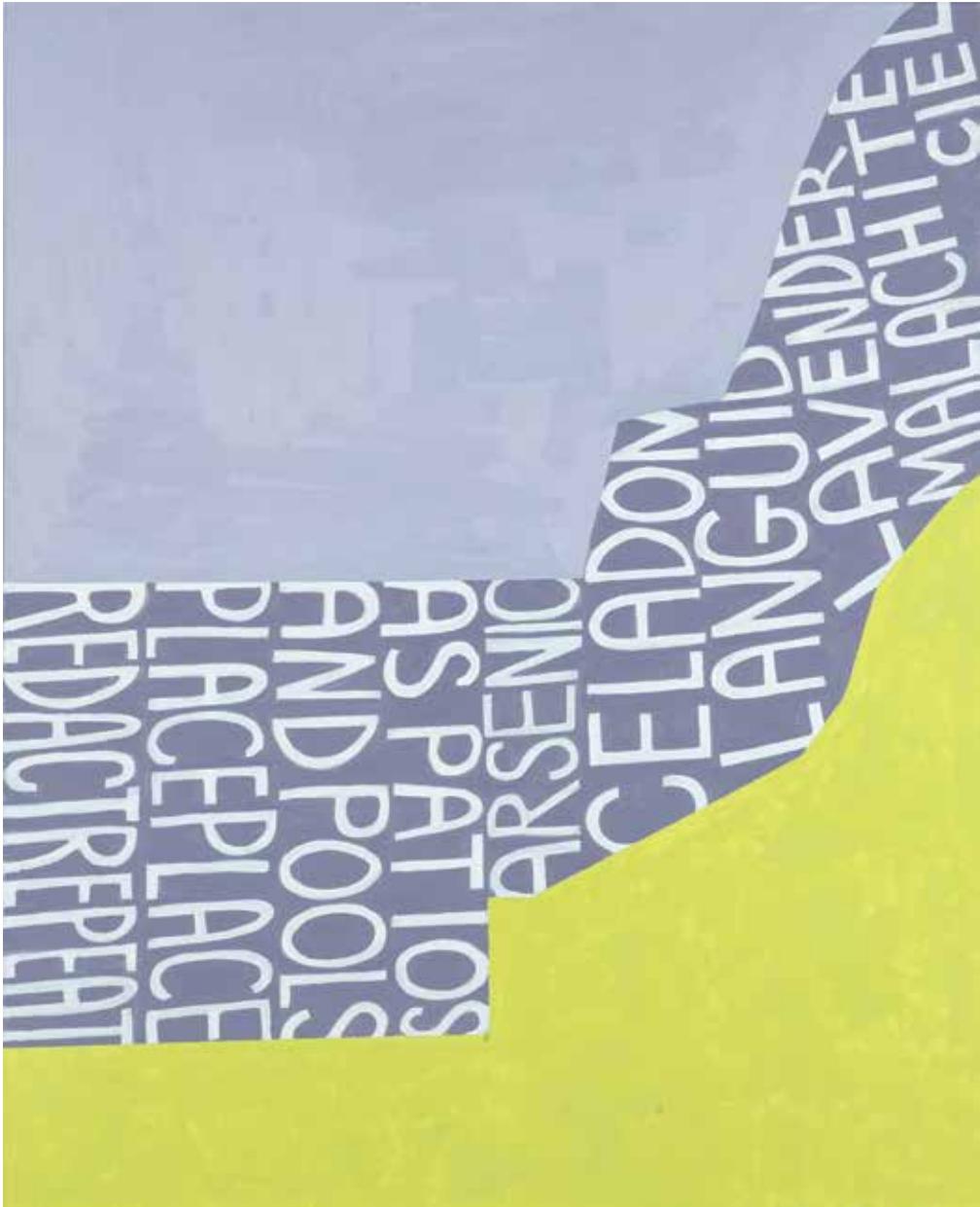
Allyson Clay, *GawkyMatSlabs*, 2013, oil on canvas, 76 × 61 cm



Allyson Clay, *BlackBlackIndigo*, 2013, oil on linen, 150 × 114 cm



Allyson Clay, *MustardMustardViolet*, 2013, oil on canvas, 76 × 61 cm



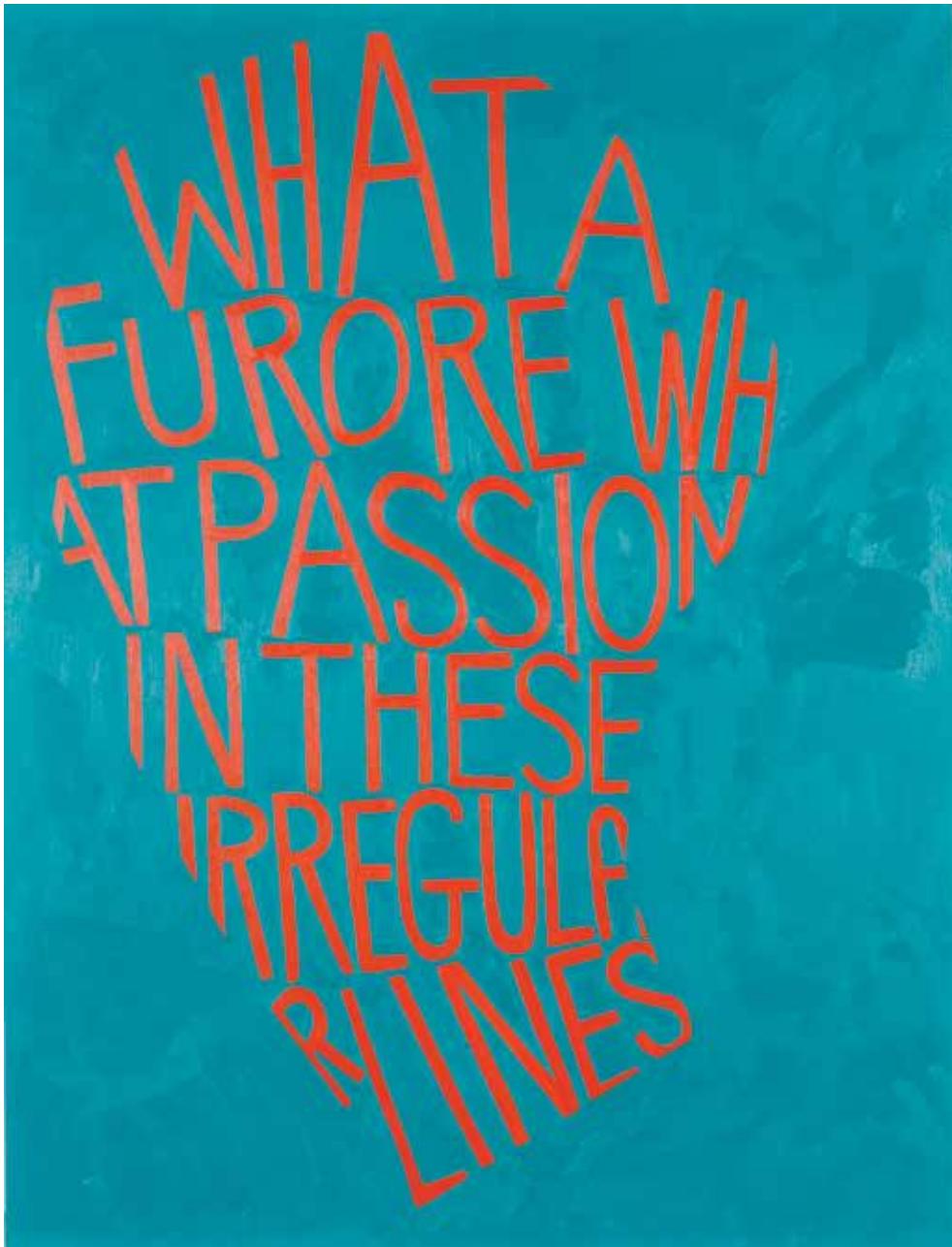
Allyson Clay, *ArsenicCeladon*, 2013, oil on linen, 109 × 135 cm



Allyson Clay, *GroundSplatPink*, 2013, oil on canvas, 61 × 76 cm



Allyson Clay, *LumpyAndTrue*, 2013, oil on linen, 135 × 109 cm



Allyson Clay, *IrregularLines*, 2013, oil on linen, 150 × 114 cm

**Selected pages from an inventory of descriptions  
from Roald Nasgaard's *Abstract Painting in Canada* (2008)**

p. 46

startling  
strange abstract composition  
automatic and free

p.49

continuous flowing lines that meander  
through a shallow, heatedly coloured  
dreamlike space.  
brightly shaded biomorphic volumes.  
rich sensuous and luminescent.  
atmospheric spaces  
cosmic space

p.50

suave linear designs  
tonal gradations create shallow spatial  
movements and light play.  
with reference to table tops  
ornate swaying movements  
the back and forth wafting movements of  
falling leaves.  
raw and muscular and monumental

p.56

interknits a teeming school of curiously  
angular organic forms dispersed on top of  
a freely brushed background of amor-  
phous colours.  
unanchored from gravity

p.59

curious emotional chill

p.68

outbursts of lyricism  
lyrical moodiness and an undersea  
murkiness.  
vaporous washes and veils  
sheer painterly density

p.75

slapped on paint-soaked strings  
relentlessly regularized staccato beat  
thorniness  
tears apart  
scatters it evenly  
soft and disintegrating

p.239

elegance and grace  
splashed and scraped and overlaid with  
streaked applications of blue and yellow.  
Red falling back like the bottom of a  
stream.  
hesitant and awkward  
wavering movement swell of volume

p.244

they have come to seem radiant and  
exultant.  
pulsating  
dappled  
variegated  
a single huge flattened-out ominous  
shape cloud-like but not quite a cloud.

## RACHEL ZOLF / The Red River Twang

Chistikat, I forgot my clé  
I called back to him, Come across you  
I can't, me, I'm got no boat  
Awe, Willie, I'm just stoked by the light, can't you die  
in the daark? I used to dance till I was soak sweatin  
See wuz alwuz waring a red cot like a capote  
One of these kind what has a mid-place for to put in a ramrod  
So she says, Kawiinachini, boy, chuckling same time  
That's not me, my louse—that's you, your louse  
Not like the people what lives close along the river  
Some of them what fishes all the time  
And stab a few with my spear that I made spin  
To learn them to shoo  
What do you call that cream, now?  
His name is Mrs. Bear  
He's a widow-woman too  
He goes by himself and she goes by himself  
I guess I talk like a Bungee, yes  
Oh don't write that down now, you  
That's my knockabout coat, you  
He's a Jew doctor, you  
She wasn't havin to pay a cent, you!  
I can't wait to get home, you  
Times is changed, my girl  
I never got married in the church, my girl  
You're a bad girl to tease me, yes  
But when we were a kid, no  
Shooting out the lips on occasion, yes  
If I dust them, yes  
When things settle down, but

I'm dying for a cigarette, but  
A bugger to work and clean things, but  
You'll take wheat you get, look!  
We were just—not far to go, like  
Yeh, that was part of the way they used to talk, yes  
There'd be first, second and third, you know, sets, like  
They must be got a different way of punchin it down, must be  
He'll home me now for sure to kipits around  
I'm got a creamy colour home  
I'm got money home  
I love listenin er  
I wonder whatever happened her  
If anything happened me  
Listen me, now!  
Girl keeya, you take my neechimos I'll get me another whaefer!  
You sould never shtop when you are goin on a messidze  
The canoe went apeechequanee and they went chimmuck  
I was settin along the stove havin a warm  
He standed in the door and wave us  
And he taked his woman to home with him  
Over the ocean away there where  
I'm sure that wives won't like it when they gets away there  
Dressed up like that in a shroud  
You're not got your fine boyish figure  
I'm not got a hand like my father  
What if they're not got no dolly, what then?  
And that's the way he never got drowned  
Bye me, I kaykatch killed it two ducks with wan sot  
What kind of a sins can a little girl like Mary got?  
I'm not wanting a shabby looking purse, my dear  
Oh was she ever hopeless, my dear  
Was she ever wicked to me  
He was ever the first to strip to the waist  
Oh, it's ever pretty, my dear

Ever makes you sick, yes  
I just never had enough examples  
That's the second time that yoke cracked  
Oh girl, yes, What we'd ever used to do, eh, Doris?  
Ahhh, you'd fade when I tell you  
It's about time she was a-comin  
Hark at the birds a-singin  
The wind's a-whistlin  
Big black fellers a-crawlin  
Left the lamp a-burnin  
Unless it starts a-rainin or something  
Men a-diggin  
Myself a-makin  
Two a-cuttin  
Joan been phonin Brian  
Somebody been takin it off  
An old lady at Red River Manor's been dyin  
The old man's been passin away  
Oh, somebody been givin my name  
I been put it in my purse  
The jugs are been gettin mixed  
And he took a big swig of the lamp oil  
Red Ridin Hood's bin wackin up  
But now Jamesie's been tellin me she died  
So Red Ridin Hood's mother bin puttin a bannock  
and two shmocked gold ayes in a rogan  
When I go, I'll go chimmuck  
You don't know the rights about it  
You're been at that crust, I see  
The wolf gave the shtring a haird pull, dahrs bin flyin oppen  
They're only got ten minutes left to play  
He sure could made that old fiddle talk, ye-naw-see, like  
I remember when you used to say apichekwani, Mom

It's got a grip of my tongue, but  
We're not got no time, but  
That's a new fence they're got  
Ponassin to roast on a stick, but  
I'm got on Sophie's bodie and it's too tight  
That's the only thing I like Winnipeg about  
Two more days workin at that ditch I put in  
And din't I see Lucy and Dora!  
And din't I go the cupboard now, and din't I pull out this bottle, girl  
And din't the trap go off and catch him by the nose  
And din't the corpse thaw out and fall offen the bench BANG  
Din't they get such a start their hair was standing straight up, mind  
And they never hit nothing to kill them, only wound a duck  
Hello, nishtaw! I wonder, who's this  
He's so knowing, a very knowing cat  
He took me everywhere, everywhere he took me  
That's what he said when he said that to me  
She never wasted nothing, not a thing did she waste  
Now's the time it comes is in the springtime  
And that's about the size of all what happened around here, my girl  
I guess that's all I can remember just now to say  
That's all I can tell you about that  
This much I, too, will say for now  
The baskets start coming up—and, he says  
I clean forgot, he says  
I din't know, he says  
Well, he says  
A forget-me-not flower, he says  
From a buttercup, he says  
Suddenly he feels something on his knee, he says  
Something is touching him—and when he looks there, here  
It was the same snake, he says  
With another frog in his mouth, he says

The Red River Twang (also known as Bungee) was the dialect (now “dead”) used primarily by English speakers in the Red River Settlement. French was also spoken at Red River, and some Métis people of the area still speak Michif. The Twang was a “polyglot jabber” of Scots English and Cree, with vestiges of Gaelic and French. The Red River Colony was the first white settlement sanctioned by the Hudson’s Bay Company in the area then known as Rupert’s Land. The Colony was paid for by Thomas Douglas, 5th Earl of Selkirk, and established in 1811 near the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, where Winnipeg now sits. Due to the intermixing of languages and cultures in the area, Cree eventually became the *lingua franca* at the Red River Colony. As Red River settler J.J. Hargrove wrote in 1871, “A man whose language is English, and one who speaks French alone, are enabled to render themselves mutually intelligible by means of Cree, their Indian mother tongue, though each is totally ignorant of the...language ordinarily used by the other.” The Twang here is taken from “The Bungee Dialect of The Red River Settlement,” M.A. Thesis by Eleanor M. Blain, University of Manitoba, 1989.

**LIZ HOWARD** / from *Of Her, After Song*

Is not the hybrid a melancholic? On a line between appearing + disappearing?  
—Gail Scott, *The Obituary*

**A RUDE INSCRIPTION AT THE TOP OF HEAVEN**

Hush  
all the falls of pulp+  
paper graveyard invertebrates  
wheresoe'er the new famine wars went  
before any thunder contagion muted us  
in the temperature dependent  
marshlands

that opened all tributaries  
of reddened mercury  
when those lilies  
fell me

naught a human heart nearshore the minimum  
criteria

an uninterrupted silence  
laid against  
the fields  
the fields  
laid against  
said DNA along the marginal pause

a disparity of garments trimmed the skin  
to a threat

of arrest above  
the overcrowded fog  
with mosses  
dioxin  
so lovely

I forgot who I was

## **TENDER PATHOS: A DENSER, BLUE VAPOUR**

Fresh+simple  
any possible lake  
could tell a bushwhack saviour  
loon's likely moved  
to crown land  
a place time  
would inscribe  
as cloudless  
in the rear window  
of no fiscal return

last June  
in heaven  
tailwaters did valley the hydro  
atmospheric adverse  
emergency shelters  
of children taken  
on advisory  
boil this water  
of false men  
electric

among haunts  
of new aquatic species  
as I heard them in autumn  
before the prairie also  
hoof-prints  
half-effaced  
spread

as legs in the corn  
groping, lifted up  
my lodges  
my beaver  
my own face

in the meantime  
dredging every wetland  
for a starry green+silent recreation  
-al home

## **EVERY HUMAN HEART IS HUMAN**

Ministry of the shaking dress  
I could call this  
a streamlet a better  
coordinate, simply

lamprey  
in the traffic  
-ing style  
no matter  
any purple sky  
or blue vapour

tender pine  
became women  
working the real  
number is even  
higher

when I was  
out already  
cutting in the fields for that fallow  
had escaped me

in some marsh  
of insufficient housing  
laughing  
all the time christ thought me  
a fossil

I, Minnehaha, a small LOL  
fiction antecedent  
to quarry a nation

I gave you this name then said  
erase it

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1855 epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha* appropriated and confused Anishinaabe history and mythology and inserted/naturalized a colonial presence within Anishinaabe cosmology. It is a textual assimilation of indigenous rhythmic oration into a bombastic trochaic tetrameter, itself borrowed from the Finnish national epic *Kalevala*. Minnehaha, a creation of Longfellow, was the spouse of Hiawatha and whose death set the stage for the reception of settler influence later in the poem (I invite you to ponder this in light of current/systemic issues re First Nations women). *Of Her, After Song* is something of a translational détournement of *The Song of Hiawatha*. It is an intertextual recombination, filtered through the sited embodiment of myself and subsequent readerly selves, engaging the systemic tentacles of assimilation as they unfurl within and possibly enclose the contemporary New World. Words and phrases from Longfellow's epic are sampled and remixed. As I am both settler and indigenous the text may contain the sweet horrors of my diary; a girlish self-narrative that arose from the once irreconcilable. As I am a passable speaker of science it may include language from ecological reports on the Lake Superior region, in which the original text is set, and sociological reports regarding the injustices lived by many indigenous women, men, and two-spirit persons. These injustices are an inevitable extension of the ideologies inscribed in Longfellow's poem. *Of Her* is a linguistic performance that seeks to display/acknowledge its own implication in the effects of assimilation while simultaneously revealing those ideologies that underpin the assimilative program as it operates to this day. This is a project that seeks to continually "check itself" through each performative event of reading (including the internal speech act of a reader re-enacting the oration silently to herself). It is a suspicious text, a curious text, it knows that you peek over its fence in a kind of self-aware apprehension/appraisal. It wants to sing within you and be your neighbour.

## NYLA MATUK / Synaesthesia-lese (Translaximations)

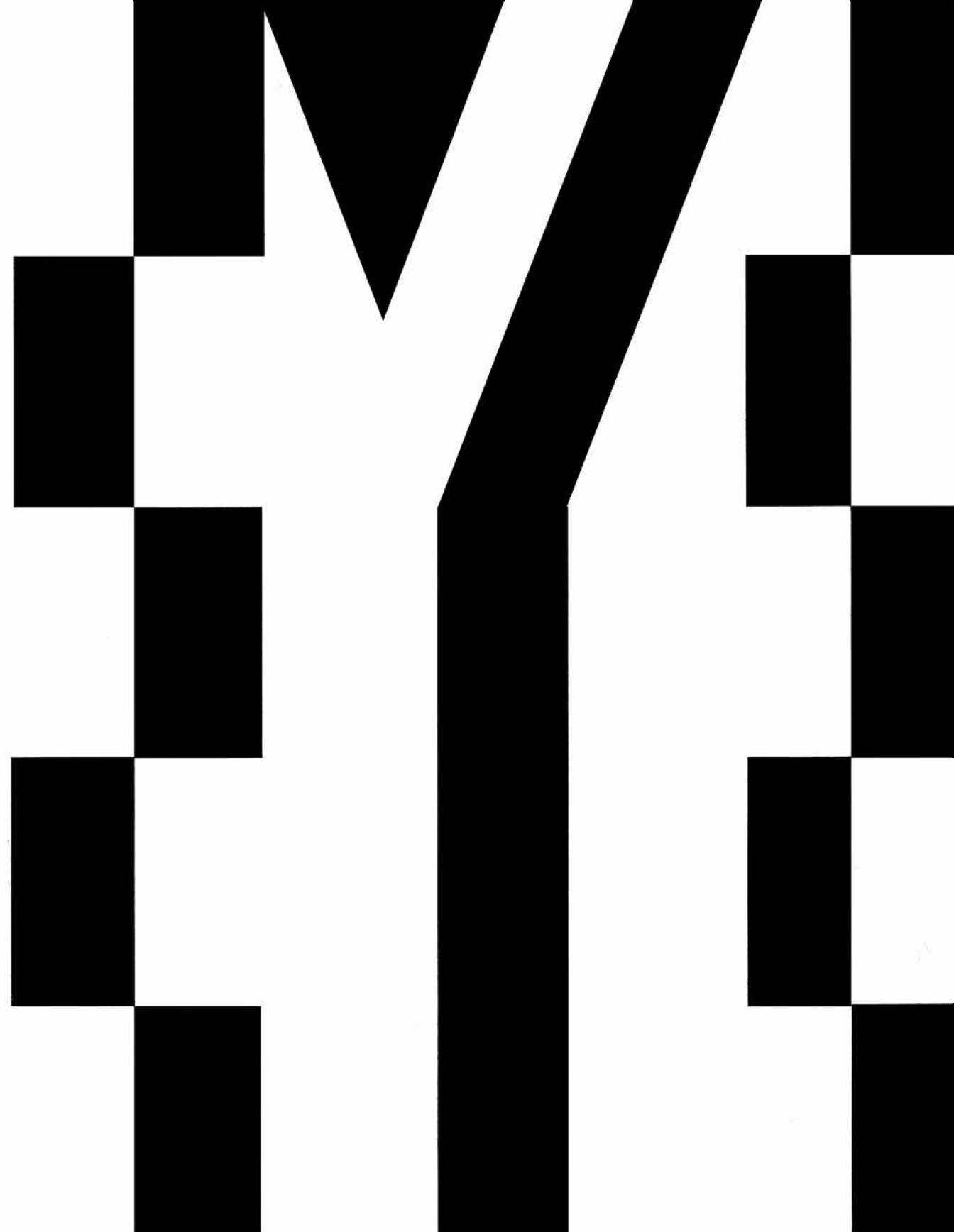
|                |                                         |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Japonaiserie   | Ceremony at the mayonnaise factory      |
| Longueurs      | Strong bitters through dull history     |
| Moufflet       | Soft Quebecois muffin                   |
| Le Mandarin    | Appellation sophisticated Montreal duck |
| Chiriya        | Happy budgerigar                        |
| Bahar          | Outdoor jumble sale, bazaar             |
| Chatouiller    | Cat's action verb                       |
| Pukka          | Budding adolescent girls' hockey team   |
| Shalwar Kameez | Planning to wear that chemise sometime  |
| Katcha         | Caught you early, before your time      |

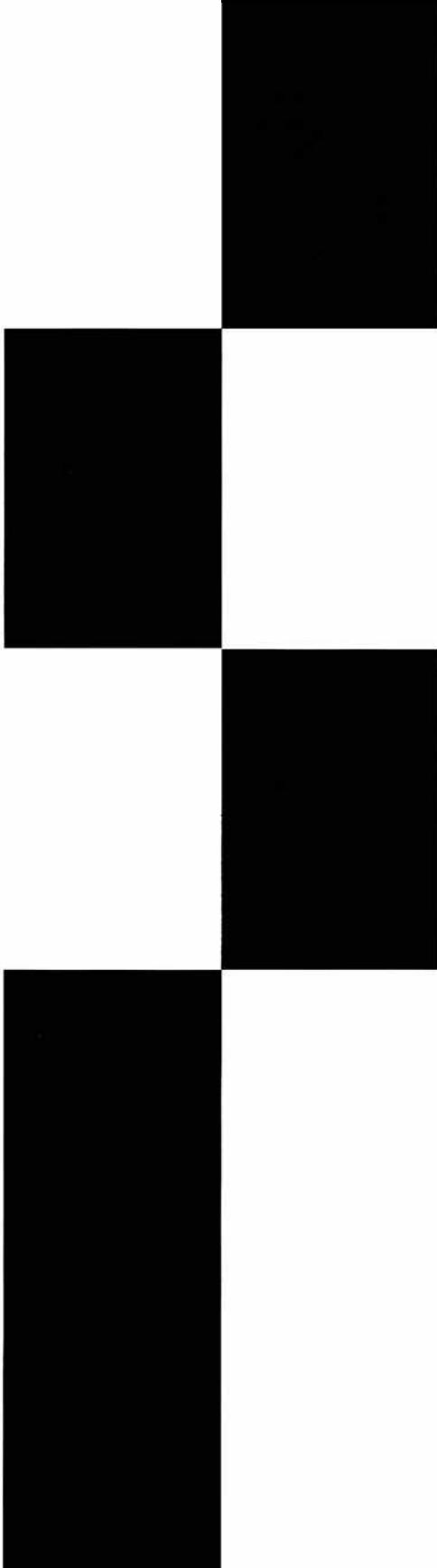
This poem uses synaesthesia, connotation, and translation together to render approximate translations into English of the left-hand column words which are in French or Urdu.

Since I often associated colours, sounds, or tastes with words, and because I was exposed to French and Urdu at a young age, I got in the habit of imagining ideas associated with particular words. For example, in this poem, “longueurs” is associated with “liqueur” but its approximate and actual definition/usage, i.e., the long narrative of a given historical phenomenon, for example, had me combining “bitters,” associated with liqueurs, and boring historical narrative: “strong bitters through dull history.” And with the Urdu word “katcha,” which means unripe, I associated “caught ya” and put it together with the idea of an unripened fruit. Hence, “caught you early, before your time.”



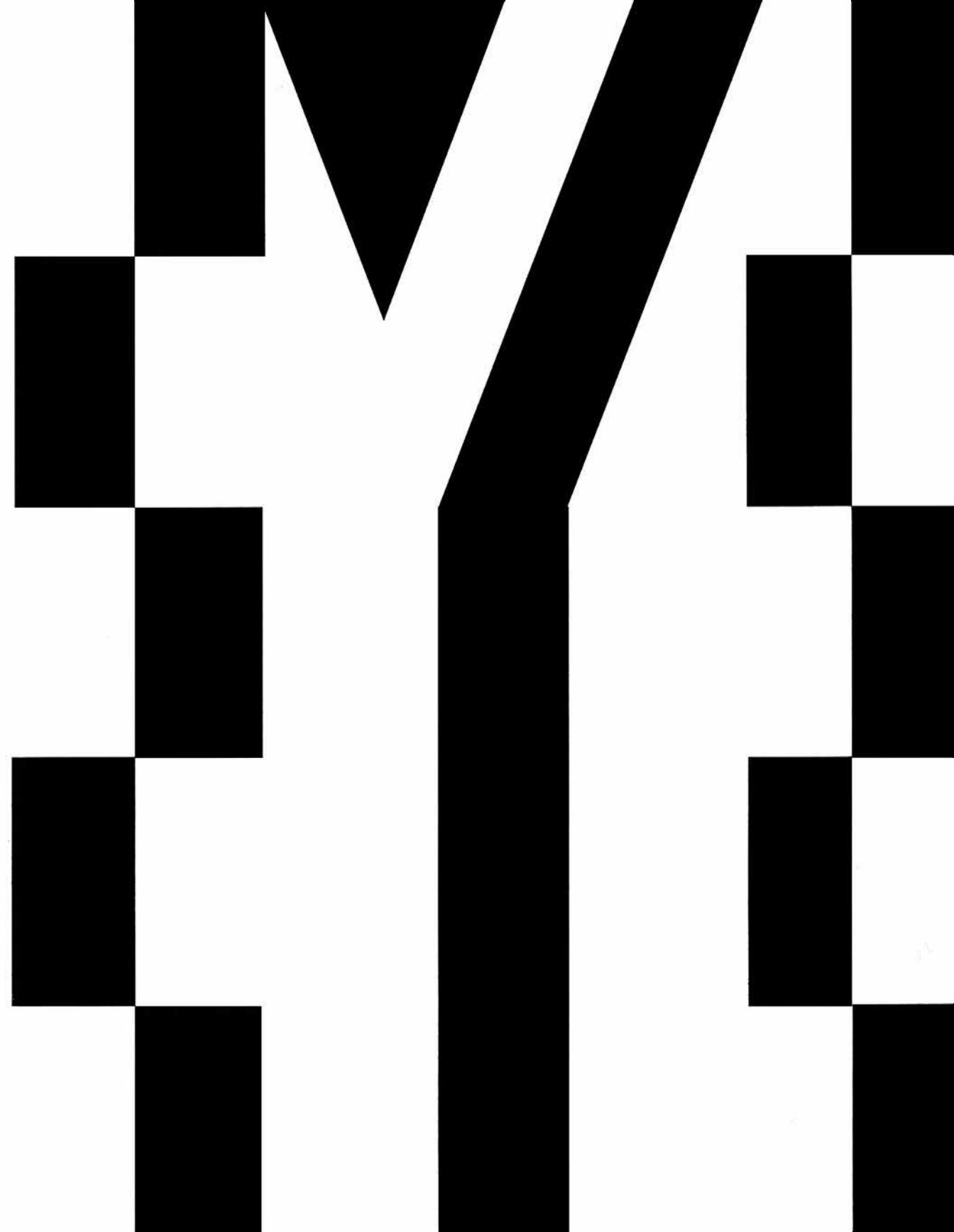














## **DONNA ZAPF & CHRISTOPHER BUTTERFIELD / a conversation about language, music, and translation**

*Donna Zapf and Christopher Butterfield talked by video conference on March 7, 2014. Both studied music at the University of Victoria in the late 1960s/early 1970s and both of their interdisciplinary careers are founded in their performance of and love of contemporary music. Donna was active in Canadian contemporary arts in the 1980s and 1990s, presenting new music concerts at the Western Front, working for CBC radio, and participating on the board of the Canadian Music Centre and as president of the Vancouver New Music society, among other activities. She was on the faculty of the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University for many years, and also the director of the Graduate Liberal Studies program at Simon Fraser. She is the director of Graduate Liberal Studies at Duke University in Durham NC, and has a doctorate in musicology from the University of Victoria. At a young age, Christopher sang in King's College Choir, Cambridge. Later he studied composition with Rudolf Komorous at the University of Victoria and with Bülent Arel at SUNY Stony Brook. For fifteen years he lived in Toronto, playing in a band, reciting sound poetry, conducting, composing, and making performance art. In 1992 he returned to the University of Victoria to teach composition. Recently he coordinated and curated the Cage 100 Festival in Victoria celebrating American composer John Cage's 2012 centenary; he also judged the 2012 International Gaudeamus Composition competition in Utrecht, Netherlands, where Bosquet, his piece for 22 flutes and 1 cello, was performed.*

Donna Zapf: Christopher, what are you working on besides the translations of Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes's plays?

Christopher Butterfield: I'm preoccupied with writing an introduction for the book of translated plays of Ribemont-Dessaignes, and there's nothing on the table compositionally right now at all. I seem to have come to the end of a long period of work. That being said, there are the long-term projects. There's the piano trio *Madame Wu said...* that I've worked on for a few years and that will take a few more to finish. It's going to be quite long. In performance it will probably last about three days. It's a piece of music that challenges various ideas of what duration

should be and what location should be for experiencing a piece of music. It's a kind of sequel to *Pavilion of Heavenly Trousers*, an installation I made in 2004 for which I took two romantic novels about China, wrote them out, interleaved, in pencil on yellow legal paper and then recorded the resulting narrative, which lasted about twenty-seven hours. All 603 pages were mounted in the Lab at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, and the recorded story played continuously during the six weeks the installation was up. In a perfect world I'd be up every morning working on *Madame Wu said...*, but I haven't got to that stage of perfection yet.

DZ: I want to start our conversation in the territory of your interdisciplinary interests in reference to your composition, your teaching, your performance, and your interest in language. To begin with, the decade-long composition of your opera *Project for an Opera of the Twentieth Century G.S.: something that happened once and it is very interesting*<sup>1</sup> which premiered in Banff in 1998. Can you talk a little bit about the opera?

CH: In the mid-1980s, I read a possible libretto for a possible opera by the writer John Bentley Mays in *C Magazine*, the art magazine in Toronto. The thing that interested me immediately was that it was about a location, Zurich—in 1916—a city in a neutral country during the First World War, a place of refuge or escape for people from around Europe. There was a street called the Spiegelgasse. At number 14, Lenin was basically in exile for a few years prior to his return to Petrograd in 1917, where, of course, he started the revolution, and at the other end of the street at number 1 was a bar called the Holländische Meierei where writers and artists created a cabaret they called the Cabaret Voltaire. This was the famous Dada cabaret run by Hugo Ball, Richard Huelsenbeck, Tristan Tzara, Marcel Janco, and various other dispossessed people. John Bentley Mays' take on this opera, I got immediately. It was an opera about the failure of revolution—Dada conducted the biggest revolution in art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Bolsheviks the biggest revolution in politics. Bringing these two worlds together was for me an instantaneous happy incident. And the thing that solidified it further was that this was not a historical opera, not a show-and-tell; it was a poeticizing of these people in this place. Historians tell us that the Dadaists and Lenin had nothing to do with

1 *Project for an Opera of the Twentieth Century G.S.: something that happened once and it is very interesting* (libretto by John Bentley Mays), re-titled *Zürich 1916* [music drama in 13 scenes], 9 voices, small orchestra [16 players], 1986–98).

each other but John, through his fractured syntax, creates a sense of the world they shared in a state of daily change.

For the Dada artists at the Cabaret Voltaire, language was put on hold. Something new was taking place and nobody was sure what it was. Hugo Ball was the presiding genius of the Cabaret Voltaire—not necessarily his more famous colleague Tristan Tzara—because Ball was really the one who started it. And once he recognized that the Cabaret Voltaire was getting too popular, he chose to leave Zurich. He didn't want Dada Cabaret to be a spectacle. He didn't want it to be documented and theorized. It was simply an event that had changed people's thinking. He retired to the country—became almost a hermit in the mountains in Switzerland—until his death in the late 1920s. I always loved that he understood that Dada was profoundly revolutionary—and we know it to have been so because so much of what happens in the art world is basically informed by Dada whether people acknowledge it or not.

DZ: An exploration that one associates with the Dadaists or the Dada movement was to do with language, which you yourself have explored and performed. I'm thinking of the sound poetry of Kurt Schwitters. Is your own thinking in terms of language and music influenced by some of the formal issues that were at play in the world of Dada?

CH: I've always been interested in a meeting place between music and language where two things happen, two sets of signs meet each other and combine to form a third set of independent meanings. You have a recombination that goes on between these two highly complex systems, one of language and one of music, where neither one has the principal place. (Somebody asked Beckett why he never let his texts be set to music and he said, well because music always wins.) When I look back at the work I've done setting texts of various kinds, I've actually been happiest with things that are either nonsense, are either meaningless sounds, vocal sounds, or else language that approaches nonsense, that may be syntactically all over the place, may be highly repetitive—this is certainly what goes on in the opera. The language does not convey a linear unfolding of an image or a narrative in any sense. It really is purely the sound of the words that combines with the musical setting in a complementary way so that you end up in a place where, as the composer, I cannot know what the result is going to be.

As you know I've set a fair amount of French. I think I'm happy doing French because I'm not completely fluent and the texts I've chosen are almost untranslatable, frankly, they simply don't translate well. There's an absolutely essential aspect of French-ness to them that you cannot get in English. To push it a step further, there's sound poetry written, for example, by francophone Claude Gauvreau: *Jappements à la lune*, eight sound poems which he wrote at the end of his life and which I set to music in 1989.<sup>2</sup> There is no way one can know the "meaning" of these poems. Also, I don't wish to assign any, at least not on a conscious basis. I've always worked with pre-compositional structures in place, and in the case of setting nonsense or meaningless language, I've always found it fruitful to create a structure and then impose it on the text—this way I'm creating associations which I would never arrive at under normal circumstances of intent, taste, etc.

DZ: As you were talking, Christopher, I was just reflecting that the theme of this issue of *The Capilano Review* is *languages* and in particular translations and cross-translations. I was thinking about that topic in terms of your work because you have translated among the territories of what we have often institutionalized as discrete arts, even though they never are: the visual arts, theatre, literature, dance, music. I'm curious about your thoughts on moving among various arts. Your creative work contains everything from concerns with poetry to a deep understanding of the visual arts to collaborations with dancers and theatre pieces and sound poetry which must lean very heavily towards our own training in music. What are your thoughts?

CH: When I look back on how I came to do the things that I do, I think of the things I was interested in. I spent my childhood singing in a choir as a kind of professional that really is as much of a basis for life as anything could have been, because we rehearsed ten times a week, and sang services in the college chapel seven times a week. We made records, and toured. As I got older I became very interested in theatre. I wasn't very good as an actor but I was very interested in *kinds* of theatre, particularly the Expressionist Theatre of the very late 19<sup>th</sup> and very early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Anybody from Wedekind to Georg Kaiser to Ernst Toller to Karl

2 *Jappements à la lune* (text by Claude Gauvreau), 1990. Song cycle for mezzo soprano, piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet, piano, percussion, violin, viola, cello, and double bass.

Capek in Czechoslovakia, you know those highly idealistic and non-naturalistic plays dealing with social and political problems, with the state of the individual in society, the state of the worker or the proletariat in society, and the tragedy of the individual.

And then I fell into writing music because even though I had spent my early life completely submerged in a musical milieu, music was the thing that remained the most mysterious to me. So the fact that I would be a composer and not go into theatre or writing or art is quite interesting. Of course, there was a real catalyst and you remember this perfectly well because we were both in school at the University of Victoria in the same place where on one side of the hall was the music department and on the other side of the hall was the visual arts department. We had the best example of a multidisciplinary art school that existed at the time in Canada. Simon Fraser's School for the Contemporary Arts was not in operation at that point. I don't think York was. Cal Arts was barely starting. But here we were growing up with people who used a different sense. And these were people that we spent our days with and I cannot stress too much how important it is for somebody learning about creating something in one discipline, in our case music, to be in conversation for several years with people who are using their eyes to create things. And not only that, but also having a teacher in the form of Rudolf Komorous for whom the visual arts was an absolutely central concern. It was possible as a younger person to have conversations which moved literally between senses. So you were moving from language to music to visual art and this was just what you did. You grow up with something and then that becomes absolutely natural to you. When I went to school in the US at Stony Brook near New York City, I spent every possible moment of my time in New York City art galleries. Art galleries were free and concerts were quite expensive....

At the same time, I think there were conversations about languages and literature and at an early age I discovered the German Dada artist Kurt Schwitters through his *Ursonata*, through his sound poetry. But I'd also known Hugo Ball, Richard Huelsenbeck, and Tristan Tzara's sound poetry and performances. As time went on, it didn't occur to me that one should be separate about these things: they all inform each other and you can use the forms of visual art to help you create form in music because you can construe it as time in a certain way. Or it could have something to do with densities or shapes or you name it.

DZ: Certainly Hugo Ball and others, Kurt Schwitters' sound poetry, Dada, early 20<sup>th</sup> century—going back to the early part of our conversation it seems to me it was a successful revolution. Once having done the *Ursonata*, there was no taking that back.

CH: That's a great idea! Once something's been proposed there no way you can take it back. The only thing I would say to that is it's very hard to talk about currents in culture at all because they're operating at a level of complexity that we can only hazard a guess at. The *Ursonata* proposes a whole set of possibilities for performance, for language, for what poetry is, for what form is. Although as somebody once put it, the *Ursonata* is probably the most perfect example of sonata form ever written. But the crazy thing is that if it were a piece of music, we wouldn't know about it—it would be boring because it's so perfect. The sonata form becomes an organizing system that shapes nonsense into something that is heard, seen, felt—for me the *Ursonata* involves the entire sensorium.

DZ: Another way of thinking about the *Ursonata* is that, in its brilliant way, it demonstrates an incommensurable difference between language and music. What we call the sonata process in music is concerned with harmonic “territories” and memory. Here, even this amazing work of sound poetry can't follow. Perhaps an instance of the untranslatable, and something entirely new.

CB: Is it possible though that the best poetry delivers an affect equivalent to music, a way of expressing the ineffable—I've always stayed away from setting poetry to music, thinking that the best poetry contains quite enough music on its own. Richard Strauss set dreadful poetry to music, with extraordinary results, for example the song *Morgen*, op. 27 no. 4, in which he takes maudlin verse by John Henry Mackay and makes something extraordinary. But it's always been one of those ironies that the most memorable songs often have second-rate lyrics.

But back to *Ursonata*: a curious fact about Dada in art and poetry and writing is that what could have been a completely ephemeral entertainment and could have been a weird little blip on the radar instead becomes this very quiet bell that resonates louder and louder through the century. You could say that even though he never acknowledged himself as a member of Dada, Duchamp was the great guarantor of Dada, of that way of thinking about something which takes an absurd position and treats it very seriously. So these things that people at the time thought

would simply disappear without a trace continue to resonate. You can also say that the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is violent enough and absurd enough and out of control enough that it needs a complementary movement in art and that Dada is the perfect match because it just gives absurdity back to absurdity.

DZ: This is a great moment for me to circle back on that thought to talk about your interest in the rather obscure figure Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes: how you found him and why you decided to spend a couple of years reading his quite remarkable plays and then translating them towards publication, I think this year.

CH: Well again I don't admit to any originality. I was asked at the end of the 1970s by Rudolf Komorous, my composition teacher, if I would think of translating this opera called *The Emperor of China* by Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes—he was known as GRD—for a possible opera libretto. And I said sure. Rudolf had wanted to set Alfred Jarry's famous *Ubu Roi* from 1897 but he had heard that the Hungarian composer Ligeti had got there first. Rudolf wanted something like it. He had known this play of GRD's—it had been produced in Prague in the 1920s—and GRD had also written two little operas with the Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů. He knew that there was a French edition of the plays by Gallimard in Paris in 1966 and so he gave me this play, *The Emperor of China*, to translate. It took me some time. I must have finished it about 1980 or 81, and I showed it to Rudolf and he said thank you very much, he was interested to read it but he couldn't use it because he didn't know it was so violent. Because it is, it's extremely violent. It's also extremely funny. And here we're faced with the conditions for Dada: not violence in a kind of cinematic sense or even in a psychological sense, but more in a cultural sense, as a refutation of all established codes—to which there is attached a great deal of absurdity and humour. This is the interesting intersection of what I think the psychologists call "serious play." The whole thing is extremely playful but there is a serious impetus behind the project. So I translated the play and for all the years afterwards, from the early 1980s, I would look for references to GRD having been translated into English. Because you read about him everywhere—when you read about Duchamp and Picabia in Paris before and after the First World War, it's Duchamp, Picabia, and Ribemont-Dessaignes. Well, we know who Duchamp is. Picabia is considered absolutely central. But of GRD there isn't a word, not one word that is translated into English. So in the end it was serendipitous: I happened upon a publisher, the Wakefield Press in Cambridge MA. They've been going for

about four years, and they publish only the most obscure European authors who have never been translated before. I sent them *The Emperor of China* and said are you interested in this and they said well yes we are, we'd like to publish it but would you translate the other two plays in the book that was published by Gallimard, one of which was called *The Mute Canary*, which is just a one-act play and the other which is called *The Executioner of Peru* which if anything is even more vile and violent than *The Emperor of China*. So right now all sorts of things in my areas of interest are being satisfied.

Ribemont-Dessaignes wrote *The Emperor of China* in 1916 while he was working in the Defense College in Paris for the Ministry of War; he was in the family information section. Perhaps they were the people that sent out the letters saying so sorry your son has been killed. I'm not sure what his actual job was. But what I'm faced with in looking at a play like *The Emperor of China*, which is an absurdity from start to finish, is its gravity. That's what it's about. It's about gravity and things coming to rest, equilibrium. It's about the impossibility of control over these physical facts, about the simple fact of humans being subject to rules so far beyond their control that it's a wonder they exist at all. And what I'm trying to get to the bottom of still—because the First World War takes up a great deal of intellectual space in my brain—is how to look at reactions to the literal carnage that took place in the years between 1914 and 1918. We know about the Commonwealth experience of that war and individual Dominion experience of that war, but in fact the French experience was, it's possible to say, even more horrible. When you read accounts of experience at the front—there's the French equivalent of *All Quiet on the Western Front* called *Le Feu* by Henri Barbusse, I guess it could be translated *Under Fire*—you're struck by the complete resignation to absurdity of the soldiers in this incredibly chaotic and violent and filthy world. And in a way, *The Emperor of China* is a fair representation of this. He wrote the play in 1916 and it wasn't produced until 1925. After the war was over and Ribemont-Dessaignes was involved with Dada, with Duchamp, Picabia, and Tzara and with Soupault, René Crevel, and Benjamin Péret—they came later with the Surrealists, later in the 20s—I think his own sense was the most polemical. He was called the most vitriolic of the Dadaists. They were calling for the destruction of all kind of conventions and conceived ideas in art and so forth, but it was GRD who called for the destruction of the destruction. By the time GRD gets to *The Executioner of Peru* in the very

early 1920s, there is transgressive behaviour on the stage that is beyond any kind of nihilist playwriting you can think of. Sometimes I think it's no wonder the plays were never translated because they are sort of unbearable. And the place you look back to is the theatre of Jarry and the absurd world he created with *Ubu Roi* and with Dr. Faustroll and 'Pataphysics, "the science of imaginary solutions." I should qualify this discussion about the plays a little bit because what is very interesting in the production of **The Emperor of China** is that it is in no way a naturalistic presentation. It's actually done with paper puppets, two-dimensional figures that are moved around a very narrow stage from behind, so the violence is implicit. People are not plunging knives in people's backs, even though you're there and the blood is flowing. Even in the theatre, the Grand Guignol had already perfected this sort of stage business and I can't help but wonder if the Grand Guignol which is the Theatre of Horror, the famous Parisian Theatre of Horror, was an influence on them. It made it possible to think of these things taking place on a stage.

DZ: That was going to be one of my questions, Christopher, whether these plays are plays to be read or whether they are plays to be performed.

CH: There have been very few performances. There was a production in France about six or seven years ago of *The Emperor of China* in a provincial theatre, but with people not puppets. To my knowledge, *The Executioner of Peru* has had no recent productions. The plays were produced in Prague in the 1920s and in Rome as well; they had some acknowledgement, some life, but beyond that really nothing. The fact is, and I'm not a scholar of the theatre, but if I had to look for a link between Jarry and Artaud and the Theatre of Cruelty, the kind of direct confrontation of psychological and emotional states on the stage, I would have to say you guys forgot GRD, because his plays are a pivot that sends you forward again.

I should actually say a few words about Ribemont-Dessaignes himself. He was involved with the Surrealists as well. He fell out with Breton like everybody did; there was a correspondence between them in about 1929 where he simply says I can't take your doctrinaire approach. And trying to deal with communism and trying to sign everyone up to be communists—Ribemont felt there was absolutely no part to play in politics for the Surrealists whatsoever. And then in about 1934 he simply left town. As one biographical note put it, "He abruptly left town." And he went to run a hotel in the mountains of the Dauphinée, and apparently everybody

thought he was dead. He did some artwork later in life. He illustrated a book of poems by Jacques Prévert with whom he was very close—and whose words I've set to music as well.<sup>3</sup> He doesn't seem to have had much interest in pursuing a career in public as a writer; books were published, he made a lot of radiophonic pieces for the French radio after 1949. Before the war he wrote novel treatments of movies, you know now you buy the DVD, then you bought the novel. These are kind of pulp, a pulp fiction. He is not a major figure. He's a fugitive figure, he's evasive. He avoids his place in history. I love this about GRD; you cannot put your finger on him. You go looking for his material in the archives and it's scattered all over the place and half the stuff is untraceable. There's a great cache of it in Ottawa, for God's sake. Why is it in Ottawa? Well because some academic in the beginning of the 1970s turned up and sold a great heap of material to the University of Ottawa. Who knew? So anyway, the plays are a wild, strange sort of literary and dramatic pivot. That's the whole Ribemont-Dessaignes thing in a nutshell.

DZ: Do you have last things that you would like to say concerning language, music, and translation?

CB: I think conceptually about what I'm going to compose. Music is not something that flows out of me on impulse; it's an arduous job to first come up with the idea, then to figure out how to render it as music. Which you could call a kind of translation. I start with something ineffable, and the hope that I can find a way to translate it into sound. Which will then be converted into sound by players. I don't have any clear explanation about the structures that I use—just that they're fairly simple, but lead to complex ends (more rewarding than the other way around!).

Which maybe is why I'm interested in the Ribemont-Dessaignes project. Why I have never stopped being interested in these particular things. And I think it has something to do with the fact that in translation of anything, you can never finally be sure what something means. I actually think that even in speaking between ourselves in the language that any two people share, there's more translation going on than we acknowledge. Language is a complex thing and much is hidden. If you hear somebody speaking you literally never know what's coming next, so your

3 *Contes pour enfants pas sages: 8 cautionary entertainments* composed by Christopher Butterfield on stories by Jacques Prévert. Tenor and soprano solo, 12 voices SATB, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion, tenor sax, mandolin.

brain is always making up meanings in advance. It's trying to anticipate where something is going. Translation is really a kind of prediction of something that you think is going to happen and maybe it happens a little more easily in the language you're fluent in than in the language the other person is fluent in. In a language that is not your own, and French is not my own language and I'm not fluent in French, I can translate and I can imagine what it is trying to say. But finally, it's a speculation. And I would actually say that anything that I do, anything that I write, anything that I make, can only be that. It can only be a speculation that is received by somebody who will then have to assess what it means for them. And with luck they will find it interesting. So the whole thing is a speculation which is a translation. Or vice versa, a translation which is a speculation. But that's what I like about these plays. It's that they're simultaneously rational, logical, absurd, funny, tender, violent, and it's the combination of these you're going to walk away remembering.

**OANA AVASILICHIOAEI / from *Limbral***

from **Bound**

Border, you terrify me. Border, you must dictate your own dismantling or we will perish. Purge. Border, are you listening? Are you empire?

Our margin is a pinprick. One of us balances. We enter the idea sideways, disjunctive, producing architectures, performing language, inscribing intervals. The city rumbles into a future because it lacks direction. Frequencies jam. Then our distortions wander. How do we chart this aliveness? Of marginal weathers, limited instruction, passage inserts here.

Perhaps a meridian is what we look for. If you insist that I take sides, you will misplace me. Instead, I take a barrier to the woods and grow confusion, which might be a sign of health though a leader does not think so.

Border, walking along your edges, I realize that what from a distance appears as edge is simply a faded memory. The moment unravels around us, thought-struck. Border, as an idea, you are impossible to margin. Border, are you listening? Are you hungry? Still hoping for empire?

We vacate the bedroom. We are an outskirt in disguise. Serrate sounding. Sink. Tending to a voice is tending to a throat. In thinking of a tender her, contours ripple. On the eve of the departure, hands are already parched, mouth is already empty.

Border are you watching? Your scope tuned to an obscure gesture, your gaze indifferent. While a rippling refrain of shots, tasers, accelerated feet and sleepless hands rages. Border are you enraged? Are you bored? Are you longing for the fiction of enlightenment?

Daytime obstructs our watching, though we remain vigilant. Our watching, itself a dismantling of boundary. Stutter, cough into. Caught. It's not about being on one side or the other, but about one side being the other. Border are you nervous? Nerves? Nodes? Are you a call to network?

To cross the island of the self to the island of another. Because she shows me how. Border does this incite you? Does your shore lust for another's shore? When the other encroaches and thus smalls the self. When the other inspires and thus expands the self. Land of transpresence. Awake.

In defecting from the I's island, its shored nationhood, my I still rations I to I. Hybrid as a space of doubt. Or manufactured hope for future. Resistance in being. Being in resistance. In these words, histories unfold. Impossible to utter without attachments clamouring at the mouth. No word is a virgin. Hybrood. Nationmood. Or is it? Immigraftion. Immiration.

Border are you minding the native in me? Are you pinning for home? So easily lost to distraction, fear grips. In the territory of a being, territory accumulates. Occult incision. We grasp nomadic, beggars at the thresholds to our own selves.

Border are you primitive? Are you primed for capital, economics, policy? The child, pointless sandwich in hand, spends lunch hour circling the school building. No one dares the outside to befriend her foreignness. Nuclear threat once more in the schoolyard of leaders.

A breathing tree, a strewn sentence, a mundane alley of cement. We veer to have nothing to say yet stubborn until the saying comes. Juncture as meeting point and phonetic feature for distinguishing a word's boundary.

Border, in principle, we reject your unprincipled discipline, your corrupt yoke. In action, we are immobile, static, ineffectual. Not quite ashamed

enough to act. As such, words become unsanitary, a choreographed arrangement of marks on screen or paper. Born virtual to expire virtual. Virtuous, an obsolete. Border, now you see how easy it is to extricate yourself from our façade.

Solitudes in a new arrangement. The frontier question being whether or not I will enter the other side's economy. Urged to declare my participation. Anxiety that I won't. Alien body as fiscal threat. Should I mention that my frequent crossing is propelled by love not market?

We are exalted and broken. Search for the day's voice. Grope, claw, paw, finger, scratch, ink, tap. Skin bears a melodious scent. I am my fear and my fear's sworn enemy. Glare at the scarred, burdened words of discord. Uncontainable. In the face of such thisness, how can the matter of any language matter? How can it not?

from **Borne**

Si j'écoute, j'écoute avec mes oreilles vampiriques, my empirical mantle, mes sentiments inexistantes, mon exactitude. Si j'avale, je dévore, je dévore la brute force de mes sacrements. Aicea aş forța o margine, le secret secrète.

Notre propre constitution nous donne une existence propre à nous. Passage ou contour. We are today all weather wind gusts an ousted leader étendards en flamme copious winged crossings citizen avec citizen, citizen contre citizen, non-citoyenne.

Si j'écoute, j'écoute pour les non-citoyennes. Leur silence qui me rend sourde. En devenant inclassables, elles s'articulent plus fort que cele care se clasifică. They pose the difficult: elles me troublent.

Elle regarde, insouciant et indiscret, là en finit où elle existe son existence dangereuse. Flâneurs clignent coming as des étoiles faibles, presque disparus, autour d'elle. Sa fiction se summarize ainsi : cu fiecare zi ce trece, encore une langue s'oublie.

Autrement dit, mon sang-froid te rend mal à l'aise. Mais le réseau te cheamă, te atrage, te attrape.

Vous êtes rivières et rives. În esență riveraine. Vă nașteți chaque jour des roseaux envoiés dans une direction, après dans l'autre.

Native d'aucune place, aucune langue, aucun sol natal to call his soul (ce suflet ar putea sufla în el?), mais néanmoins les êtres l'utilisent incessamment à travers des ères, le soumettent pour donner forme aux terres, aux espaces, aux idées qu'ils veulent nommer leurs. Dans cette langue qu'il emprunte, la notion d'home ne se manifeste pas.

They islanded and shored themselves dans leur collective parlance. L'ère était marquée par les avancements technologiques and linguistic malaise. Complexity donnait place à speed.

Élan of elle vers elle par elle prin ea through her à cause d'elle aproape de ea à côté d'elle departe de ea apart from her atour d'elle whereby she frontiers la binding question.

“Bound” and “Borne” are from my current work-in-progress, *Liminal* (Talonbooks, forthcoming 2015). A voice addresses the border in an intimate questioning; the city, body, nation are superimposed; various voices respond in French, English, Romanian, making the bounds between their languages and subjects porous.

## MARGAUX WILLIAMSON / I Could See Everything

- ~~Everything is art~~
- art is everything
- art is money
- true stories aren't true
- Flat is real
- We can talk about the world now
- There is nothing to hide
- representation is more true to its form than its illusion
- There is still comfort, logic and connection in ~~this horrible place~~
- When it is too horrible, there is still humour
- We can be anything
- We can say anything
- When the world becomes representation, you can change the world in representation
- When illusion is mixed in the real-world, it is possible to change the world ~~through~~ in illusion.
- We hold ourselves back from imagining
- Our illusions never stray very far from the real-world
- It makes us feel hopeless when illusions are too far away from the world, as though there is nothing to do with this one. Nothing we can do with this one.
- ~~But still, our hopes were very humble.~~
- But still, our illusions are very humble movements - tiny gestures
- ~~We made up Zerk and are Zerk.~~



Margaux Williamson, *I thought I saw the whole universe (Scarlett Johansson in Versace)*, 2014, oil on wood panel, 76 × 102 cm

The dreamer )

The drinker

The painter

The trickster      the sucker

The observer

The leader

The healer      the victim



Margaux Williamson, *We built a new justice archway*, 2014,  
oil on wood panel , 61 × 61 cm

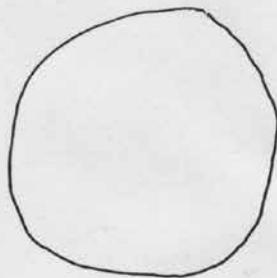




Margaux Williamson, *We painted the women and children first* (Gerhard Richter's "Dead"), 2014, oil on wood board, 28 × 36 cm

I thought I saw the  
whole universe

and died



## GENEVIÈVE ROBICHAUD / Ruminations on Self-Translation in Two Movements: a Dialogue and an Essay<sup>1</sup>

*L'AUTEURE et L'AUTRE sont dans un dîner.  
Assis à une autre table, à la droite d'eux,  
se trouvent L'AUTEURE et L'AUTRE,  
version anglophone, qui eux aussi se sont rencontrés  
pour jaser.*

*L'AUTEURE and L'AUTRE are in a diner.  
On the left side of room, only a few tables away,  
L'AUTEURE and L'AUTRE, the francophone version,  
are also partaking in a conversation.*

L'AUTEURE  
La liberté. De pouvoir toutte dire,  
toutte écrire.

I spent the morning trying to write  
the last chapter.

L'AUTRE  
So quoisse qui t'empêche?  
Pourquoisse tu hõlderaiis bãck?

So what's stopping you?

L'AUTEURE  
Ché pas. À cause de moi-même peut-être.  
J'aime pas la wãÿ qu'on sonne comme Ï guëss.

I'm not sure.  
I guess I didn't like how it was coming out.

L'AUTRE  
Dommage.

That's too bad.  
Maybe you should try being more lenient  
with yourself.

1 An extended version of this piece was previously published in *Lemon Hound*.

L'AUTEURE

Cé supposé qu'y parlent de nous autres comme  
l'esthétique d'la faiblesse?

I think it had something to do with  
the background noises.

L'AUTRE

Sõ?

How so?

L'AUTEURE *prend une gorgée de sa tasse.*

Sõ! Sõ, ça t'tannes pas qu'on est gênés d'parler?

*Taking a drink from her cup.*

It drowned anything that wanted to come out.

L'AUTRE

C'est vrai qu'on parle mal, bût whõ câres?

Is that like an intellectual's thing?

L'AUTEURE

Y faut qu'sa sorte, rîght?

Not really. More like nature versus nurture.

L'AUTRE

Ouaye! Comme mon père dirait : Bailles y du câble!

Why didn't you go elsewhere?

To change the background noises I mean?

L'AUTEURE

On sonnerait wãy wõrse ãny wé si on asseyait  
d'imiter les Québécois ou ben donc les Français d'France.

Like switch countries?

L'AUTRE *entrain de rire.*

As-tu ëver asseyé?

Well, I was thinking more like  
moving to another café or something,  
but wow, okay. Another country?

L'AUTEURE

Oui. C'est hõrrible.

Ej pourrais pas m'faire passer  
pour un d'eux autres pour sauver ma vie.

*Laughing.*

Oh, sorry.

I just misunderstood what you meant.

That's all.

L'AUTRE *tendant un accent québécois.*

Ostie! C'est écoeurant du homard chaud au beurre à l'ail.

But there must be some truth to it.

It's not nothing if you were thinking about it.

L'AUTEURE *rit.*

Té même pas proche. Pis anyway,  
on sé toute que du homard ça s'mange froid.

Hum...

*Une pause.*

*Pause.*

L'AUTRE

So quoisé qué note problème d'ên?

Hõw cõme qu'on a honte?

So what's the problem then?

Why couldn't you finish the final chapter?

L'AUTEURE

Ej veux dire cé pas comme si qu'on disait juste anything.

Y'a des règles.

I just don't want it to be anything.

I want it to mean something.

L'AUTRE

...

...

L'AUTEURE

Un glissement progressif vers l'anglais.

So far, I feel as though  
any hopes of that happening is  
slowly slipping away.

L'AUTRE  
Quoi ça?

Why say it like that?  
You sound so convinced.

L'AUTEURE  
Un glissement progressif vers l'anglais.  
C'est ça qu'y z'appelont l'chiac.

I just can't hear the characters anymore.

L'AUTRE  
Awh. Cé tu sitant une mauvaise affaire que ça?

I'm sure you'll get it eventually.  
Maybe it just needs more time.

L'AUTEURE  
Ï guëss ça dépend à quisse que tu d'mandes.

I guess it depends who you ask.

L'AUTRE  
Hum. Ben y s'attendent tu ben qu'on r'tourne toute  
à la langue de Rabelais?

Why couldn't they just sound like you and I?

L'AUTEURE  
Ej sé. C'est comme en anglais.  
Pourrais-tu ouère qui faudrait qu'tout  
l'monde commence à parler en Chãucer?

I know. I've tried that,  
but every time I put them somewhere,  
a diner for instance,  
I can't hear them over the background noise.

L'AUTRE *retenant à peine son fou rire.*  
Ouaye, comme avec des yês mē lōrd pis des yês mē lādy.

Maybe it's because you're listening  
for the wrong thing.

L'AUTEURE *riant.*  
T'as jamais trop lu du Chãucer toi, ein?

*Laughing. Then still laughing while talking.*  
And next thing you're gonna tell me is  
that my characters and I don't even speak  
the same language.

L'AUTRE

Cé tu thât óbvious? Bût sēriously,  
as-tu décidé quoisse tu vas faire about ton projet?

Isn't that obvious?

L'AUTEURE

Ej crois qu'y faut qu'ej r'tourne au commencement de nouveau.

That's weird.

I think I'm experiencing déjà vu.

L'AUTRE

Ben, ma mère m'a toujours dit :  
ya rien d'mal avec stārter du début.

You know, in French that means already seen.

L'AUTEURE

Cé vrai. ãnyways, si personne s'attend trop d'affaires des Acadiens,  
on peut bāsically faire ānything cousse qu'on veut.

I knew you'd say that.

L'AUTRE: Yā! Comme révolutionner le texte?

How so?

L'AUTEURE: Réviser tu veux dire?

I don't know. I just did.

L'AUTRE: Non, ej voulais dire ça que j'ai dit : révolutionner.

Right, the déjà vu.

L'AUTEURE

Rīght.

Ya, maybe.

Fin / Blackout

I am not a theoretician of the bilingual text. Not yet anyway. I have merely, like other writers who find themselves in the bind of a “dual linguistic identity,” sought, on one hand, to channel the otherness of the self in self-translation, and, on the other hand, to highlight, indeed play with, the privilege of living in translation.

From a purely aesthetic point of view, especially in the way they subvert origins and notions of author(ity), self-translations complicate notions of authorship, originality, and commensurability. What has been carefully chosen in one version while being omitted or altered in the other points to a particular play of mirrors—one that launches the idea of the original down the rabbit hole; it is no longer a question of being faithful to the text but of expanding it, or as Sherry Simon writes in *Cities in Translation*, it is the moment when “the confrontation of languages results in entanglements which are both conflictual and productive.”<sup>1</sup>

What self-translation makes increasingly visible, moreover, is the translation itself as well as the translator, which enlarges the productivity of meaning (in several ways the process is also analogous to the playful exchange between the dialogues and this essay). Beyond enlarging the productive signifier of the text, the dialogues evince a continuation of the writing process where the bilingual text uses two language systems to complete its meaning. Viewed another way, l’Auteure (in English) and l’Auteure (en Chiac, a Moncton-based Acadian French that fuses French and contemporary English) unfold the fugitive character that is (self) translation practices.

If the act of self-translation is a creative one, then perhaps it is more apt to speak of two versions, each one furthering the other. “In the shadowing of one language by another,” Sherry Simon writes, “in the ghostly presence of one behind the other, there is a widening of the frame of reference. No one vocabulary will suffice, no one channel can access the multiple planes of expression. Just as visual and plastic arts today abandon the single frame, the written word expands its reach.”<sup>2</sup> This was true of the writing process itself where the Chiac version sent me to the English version to expand upon some of the anarchic features that were emerging between the two.

What I wish to argue, then, is that the friction between both versions of the text makes the self available to the reader in a way that other kinds of translations do not. This self is not

1 Sherry Simon, *Cities in Translation: Intersections of Language and Memory*, ed. Michael Cronin (London & New York: Routledge, 2012), 18.

2 Sherry Simon, *Translating Montreal: Episodes in the Life of a Divided City* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2006), 321.

necessarily me, the dialogue's author (though it can be), but a self that emerges in the formal décalage between author and reader, between interlingual and intralingual exchanges. One might say that self-translation, in its construction of the double, allows the text the possibility of being its first reader, its first critic, especially if we concede that this fracture between author and reader, English and French, also implies a constant cohabitation with the other. But perhaps that is already made obvious in the diner scene where the Chiac characters and their English doppelgangers remain in constant earshot of each other, and where the knowledge of the other seems to grant these two characters a kind of temporal reprieve where they can “basically faire anything cousse qu'on veut. // L'AUTRE: Comme révolutionner le texte? // L'AUTEURE: Réviser tu veux dire? // L'AUTRE: Non, ej voulais dire ça que j'ai dit : révolutionner”.

## NICOLE BROSSARD / extraits d'un ensemble intitulé: Du réel nous ne connaissons que ce qui arrive à notre corps

comble d'amour et d'irréel  
parmi les cougars et les perdrix  
que sommes-nous devenues au présent  
du présent prenant possession de nos éveils et vaillances  
en pleine narrative d'extase  
caresses et nombril du monde confondus  
aux racines en nous de lecture et d'exubérance

aujourd'hui *beaucoup de les bébés* naissent  
sous la ceinture avec un corps complet  
de fille ou de garçon qui font rouler la tradition  
le sentiment et la solitude à plusieurs endroits il faut  
mots de vertige noms d'animaux  
l'énergie du rêve qui échappe au genre

-----  
\*

hier : crevettes au lait de coco, huîtres encore très salées  
avec *beaucoup de les étés* recherchés de nos émotions  
et l'horizon

\*

c'est sans compter sur la démocratie  
hier moi, et autrui sur Facebook en photo, regarde :  
un vautour attend que le corps de l'enfant tombe  
en état de *beaucoup de morts*

**AMY BUTCHER / Extracts from *Le Désert Mauve* by Laure Angestellte, in translation by Maude Laure (1987)<sup>1</sup>**

Maude sits in Montréal absorbing words combined with glyphs  
from a mirror-image desert song that engulfs  
the desert is indescribable  
where the long-man disrupts his face and drafts equations  
innumerable numbers  
a time bomb

Maude ignores the man relates all the quirks and yearnings of young Mélanie  
from Laure's elliptic form sees both  
women and wonders where the two collide they are  
double intermediaries of teenhood dreams/energy  
here is Laure's rendition:

the height of love and unreal  
among the partridges and cougarix  
what have we become in the present  
of the present pretending possession of our awakenings and valiances  
in full ecstatic narrative  
caresses and world's navel combine  
within the roots in us of reading and exuberance

today too many of *THE babes* are born  
below the belt with a whole body of  
girl or boy who keep tradition going  
so many places of sentiment and solitude we need  
vertiginous words animal names  
the dream's energy that escapes all genera

A girl's first love? the wondering of an older woman? Maude sees texts of mind  
that spin down  
*fast so fast, sharp so sharp* to bodily concerns... of dreams and babes and birds

1 Translation of Brossard, p. 108.

that talk like cougars, morph like perdrives but mix up their pretense and  
possessions  
to confront the wormhole of the world

Suddenly parts scratched out Maude can't read much she sees  
black lines and asterisks and finds this:

-----  
\*

yesterday: coconut milk shrimp, oysters again very salty  
with many of *THE summers* sought from our emotions  
and the horizon

The oystered summers that seep from Mélanie?  
the horizon of coconut-salted, mauve-coloured bombs  
emotionless seafood—Maude  
shuffles papers... among shards of snippets and regalia she finds an oddest odd  
passage:

\*

and without relying on democracy  
yesterday me, and others in a Facebook photo, look:  
a vulture waits for the child's body to fall  
in a state of so many corpses

What is Facebook? A future self-story unfinished impossible?  
She wonders what shapes await the child's vulture death...

Maude must make amends make chances turns  
come home from the stark solitude of Mélanie/Laure's desert  
where Mélanie stops and Laure begins, does Maude take over—diving divining  
driving down  
through the long-man's face  
an all/mirror-face reflecting roots of sand

Reality is engulfed, light fast, looks melt

**KAREN OCAÑA / Of the real we know only what happens to  
our body<sup>1</sup>**

Fullness of love and unreality  
Among the cougar and the partridge  
What has become of us in the present  
As the present takes hold of our waking and our daring  
In full-blown narrative ecstasy  
Caresses and navel of the world confused  
With the roots in us of reading and exuberance

Today many *of those babies* are born  
Below the waist with a finished body  
Of a girl or of a boy, forcing tradition forward  
Emotion and solitude at various junctures call for  
Words of vertigo names of beasts  
Energy of the dream that eludes genre

-----  
\*

Yesterday: shrimp in coconut milk, oysters very salty still  
With lots *of those summers* sought-after through our feelings  
And the horizon

\*

There was no counting on democracy  
Yesterday, I and others on Facebook in photos, watch:  
A vulture waits for the body of a child to fall  
In a state of many deaths.

1 Translation of Brossard, p. 108.

# LARY TIMEWELL / we know not what will come to our bodies become<sup>1</sup>

\*

love cobbles its unreal span, a fragile above  
among animals *amongst* words among doves

in the present continuous we wake, are awoken  
repossessed of now as our own, the body s/urges  
all possible plurality, ecstatic narrative of  
the continuum caresses, (each)  
tendrils-exfoliate, (each) root of (each) world  
knows this a confoundment / an exuberance

babies boom all day, full-bodied from the hip, become  
'boys & girls' rolling out from (onto) flat tradition script

to be 'just & fair' in the 'near & far', lost  
realms & sentiments & solitudes require  
vertiginous words & animal names, energies given that  
in dreams from genre & gender escape

1 Translation of Brossard, p. 108.

\*

Blog entry:

*Kino no menu: ebi-chan to kokonatsu miruku, nama kaki (shio-aji, umi no aji!), remon tarto, kouhee. Oishikatta desu! :)*

Enlisting the floral prajnapana of the senses  
to inventory an emotional life, an oblivion

summering at the horizon

\*

Democracy is not the agency, neutrality the neither/nor.

For here I am on Facebook with all the *who we are* others while  
vultures await child-body fall, we bear  
witness to the many

death states of death

## ERÍN MOURE / Quand Moure traduit Turcot: *Making a Book of Hours into a Book of Ours...*

### A tale of a translation in process: François Turcot's *Mon dinosaure*

"It intrigues me because I can't...and so I do."

November 1, 2013

I'm almost halfway through a first draft of Montrealer François Turcot's fourth book of poems, a homage to a father, *his father*, and a co-presence with the final days of co-being with this father. And, *après*, a meditation on his absence. It is a *Book of Hours*, lost by the father and rewritten by the son. The book accompanies me eerily in these first months that follow my own father's *finale*, in Edmonton.

Here, almost halfway: what does it mean to be *almost halfway*? Time's membrane?

|                                    |                                         |                                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lorsque janvier éclata<br>décembre | / While January cracked<br>/ December   | / When January burst<br>/ December    |
| deux heures moins<br>deux          | / two minutes to<br>/ two               | / two minutes short of<br>/ two       |
| dans son oeil<br>blanc             | / in his/her/their eye<br>/ white/blank | / in his blank<br>/ eye               |
| figèrent l'horloge<br>à zéro       | / they'd set the clock<br>/ at zero     | / they'd froze the clock<br>/ at zero |

"Translating" seems an inadequate verb for the activity it claims to describe. "Transmission" or "bearing across"? These turn out to be inadequate ideas, or mere glosses perhaps. What really happens is a *poiesis*, a making. Each small piece of Turcot poem, in English, takes hours of building, forming syllables, seeing how they interact: pressing them, watching them, and feeling them in the mouth... leaving them quiet to see if their relation holds at a later reading.

November 2

I return to poem “11,” in the countdown that is the first series in the book, drafted in English words from François Turcot’s own carefully pared lexicon. Now early in the morning of November 2, 2013 in a snowstorm in Alberta, my English versions expand across the page. How can I choose one (for what resonant reason?):

|                                      |                                                             |                                               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| à pied levé en forme<br>de question  | / one foot raised to form<br>/ a question                   | / foot raised in the shape<br>/ of a question |
| garé sur le dos<br>avant d’êteindre  | / flat on his/my/her back<br>/ before flickering out/fading | / flat on my back<br>/ before fading out      |
| j’éviterai de mourir<br>à leurs yeux | / I’ll avoid dying<br>/ in front of their eyes              | / I’ll not die<br>/ while they’re looking     |

It does hold. It does not. I go on.

November 8

How possessives in French, tipped toward English, can have an aura of subject indeterminacy that doesn’t matter to “meaning,” finally, or to the main trajectory of meaning, yet that does affect reading and thus jostles meaning, in reverberatory ways. It lifts reading onto a plane that doesn’t exist in English at all, a plane of possibly shifting existences and a human possession that is first of all an intelligence, for it does not just identify aspects of the physical world but offers a movement of belonging in thought itself...his face? her face? their face? The day’s face? *Son visage* in Turcot could be any of these.

|                              |                                   |                                     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| jour torve en chute<br>libre | / dour day in free-<br>/ fall     | / grim day in free<br>/ fall        |
| à m’acquitter<br>d’une dette | / to acquit myself<br>/ of a debt | / as if to free me<br>/ from a debt |

|                             |                                      |                           |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| derrière elle trois tiroirs | / behind her/it three drawers        | / revealing three drawers |
| placarderaient              | / to be plastered /would poster over | / to placard              |
| son visage                  | / over his/her face                  | / his face                |

This potential uncertainty of ownership (which seems—almost falsely—to turn on “gender”) creates ripples and confluences inside the poetic text which are not so quiet, and that, when combined with structures like the line break, push words against each other in a way that can’t be replicated in English. English just does not have the same sinews. It is, yes, a sinew that is at stake here: the fibres of a muscle, the connective tissue of a language, and how that mesh with its pulses and inner repartee cannot be transformed whole into the mesh of another language.<sup>1</sup>

Here, the solemnity of the hovering father chooses “his.” The father—ghostly in grammar—more often grants his male gender to what grammar makes uncertain, at least for the English language reader.

We, as readers, accept the ostensible subject of the book—the presence of *the father*, in the passage of hours. Still, the book’s emergent father-subject *pushes* gender,

1 *Thinking of structure*: We often think of French as *gendered*. But it is simply substantives that are gendered, and this does not mean that they have a *gender*, are male or female, but that they have a *genre*, a type, a sort. Other words—adjectives, possessives, past participles—mirror or echo this *genre*, without projecting it. In English, on the other hand, possessives do project a gender, when they are not plural: *her book* refers not to the book and its genre, but to its possessor, who is obliged to have a gender. This gender of the owner, malware from the socius, is injected, toxin or crime or catalyst, into English text, while we obliviously continue to think of English as neutral. In French, the words *son livre* refer to a textual marking, *son* refers to the genus of the word *book*. It is someone’s book, but the gender of this someone has nothing to do with the word *book* or the thing *book*. To determine more clearly whose book it is, a reader must move back through the phrases that precede it, and locate the open tentacle of a noun onto which to attach possession. *Son livre*. His book? Her book? Their book? At times, even with this readerly lateral sweep and inclusion, the gender of the possessor, needed for the English version, remains indefinite in French, or the possessive particle that first appears to refer to “someone” doesn’t, on closer examination. It’s not a problem in French, of course, but gives rise to a problematic breach in translation! PS: Add to this, that when the French text refers to a body part of an individual, *le dos*, for example, its owner is obliquely already present. As such, in English, *le* often requires replacement with a possessor, gendered: *his back*. Whose back?

pushes at grammar without seeming to. Turcot uses the slight blur of referent, its ghosts and ghosting, to move the texts. It's something that can't be reproduced in English because the eye and brain hold English sentences and phrases differently. But if I were to try. How would I do it?

*November 14*

The minimalism of Turcot's diction, yet the surprises of exactitude in his individual elements of lexicon. The poems surprise. Turcot has an incredible vocabulary, full of minute precisions that spark departures or shifts from daily use, without being self-consciously "literary." The lexicon thus makes the text take little leaps, while its smallness ties it down. The sensation of reading this book: like sitting very still but hearing your heart throb. Disproportionate makes a new proportion here.

And there is the use of the conditional tense, its peculiar leaning forward, and hesitant pulling back. Turcot gives the feeling of rocking back and forth (not rocking but pitching, ship-like...).

The *would, could, might*... of our English conditional, all those words coincide in Turcot in a single French word. To the translator, this single conditional word provokes a waver, not tremulous but deliberate, in the transfer. The conditional, in French, has fewer conditions (perhaps). It creates an anticipation, whereas in English, it expresses a reticence.

*November 15*

Turcot's work, arriving in English, hovers amid choices: if only the resulting poems could be printed with their numerous variations, to lay bare the shifts, movements, twitches at work in the original. Yes, perhaps, at times, translations should be printed like this to lay the bones and sinews bare:

|                               |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| jaillirait telle une intrigue | / what a plot would spring up | / what a plot could be cooked up |
| à tiroirs                     | / in episodes/installments    | / in tidbits                     |
| ma voisine aux pieds nus      | / my barefoot neighbour       | / my neighbour barefoot          |
| je déroberais de la main      | / out of my hand I'd swipe    | / out of my hand I'd pull        |
| son sourire                   | / her smile                   | / her grin                       |

Expectations turn, slightly, depending on which the lexical bit is leaned on. And expressions: a *roman à tiroirs*, of course, the novel in installments. But what is it doing there? What is it performing?

*November 18*

In poem 12 of the book's first sequence, *exorbitée* is not *exorbitant*. But is, because it has the same sense of sound, a movement of the mouth and voice, consistent. The balances here are real and rough, not fine; they balance sound with words and that sound-space has to be respected. Such a careful balance. And the impossibility of translating "joues" by "cheeks"! To avoid evoking "foufounes."

|                        |                                |                         |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| quelque part la course | / somehow/someday the fleeting | / somewhere the passage |
| des ans                | / years                        | / of years              |
| exorbitée une meute    | / a bulging horde/host         | / exorbitated swell     |
| de souvenirs           | / of memories                  | / of memories           |
| migrerait              | / would migrate/wander         | / would trespass        |
| sur mes joues          | / over my face                 | / across my face        |

*November 21*

I keep going, absorbed, moving the particles, letting them evoke and invoke other particles. Wanting to make the word "stutter" *stutter*....

|                                            |                                            |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| autrement j'entrerais rond<br>dans la mort | / otherwise I'd head smack<br>/ into death | / what if I headed smack<br>/ into death |
| pétri de fictions                          | / steeped/kneaded/embroiled<br>in fictions | / roiled in fictions                     |
| un moulin                                  | / millwheel / a mill                       | / a grist mill                           |
| bégayant d'histoires                       | / stuttering with stories                  | / stutted by stories                     |

*November 26*

The use of word “stoppé” in 7. The flavour of that combination of sounds in the mouth, the English from another century now quite at home in French, but still: how it repositions other words slightly in the phrase, making a tiny but significant shift in the piece: how to render that? How can I read this sound fold, across languages?

|                                             |                                                |                                               |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| janvier intermittent stoppé<br>sous la lune | / intermittent January struck<br>/ by the moon | / intermittent January stoppled<br>/ moon lit |
| rivé au coude<br>du lit                     | / jammed at the lip<br>/ of the bed            | / rivetted to the lip<br>/ of the bed         |
| me réveillerai-je<br>dans le même homme ?   | / will I awaken<br>/ in the same guy?          | / will I wake up<br>/ in the same man?        |

*November 27*

It would have been my mother's birthday today. I want to end with a secret, that seems to report my own moves between languages, and make a leap from the good deeds, the exploits, the successes, for we don't have the same expression in English for “les bons coups” and the most exact English translations sound “corporate,” a sound unwanted here:

secrètement pour moi seul / secretly for me alone / **secretly for myself alone** / all  
on my own  
passant à l'est / heading toward/to the East/eastbound/heading East  
/ **heading East**  
  
loin des sommets je dégusterais / **far from the peaks I'd savour** / the summits behind  
me I'll relish  
mes bon coups / my good deeds / **my sweet moves** / my best pranks /  
my exploits

*March 27, 2014*

I keep working, of course. The winter has nearly passed, though the snow still accumulates. But soon Edmonton will be behind me. My own Dad lived with three clocks; he could not possibly have had one book of hours. He left a lot of writing, though, mysterious: "I have no boats!" Still, his last spoken words to me in the hospital were ever so clear. "I'm not depressed! I'm not depressed!"

Here's to the Dads!

## REBECCA BREWER / *Seers of the Cosmos, do not mourn over the scheme of things*

*Cease to be a disobedient child in the school of experience, and begin to learn, with humility and patience, the lessons that are set for your ultimate perfection.*

I have always been interested in the melodrama of human interiority. Recently, a difficult transitional year found my work taking thematic cues from the language of the therapy bed, and from the pop-psychology, faulty logic, bad advice, and specious claims of various self-help philosophies. At the time I was also profoundly invested in the depicted figure in painting, which I was aware could be the last stop on the train to total dissolution into bad taste and uncritical claptrap. In retrospect, these tensions in my life and interests were dovetailing neatly to create a body of work that integrated text, images, and ideas engendering the dubious associations and uncomfortable sensibilities of a coping strategy.

*Avoid exaggerations. The truth is sufficient.*

I took the book on which these images are painted from the free box at Banyen Books—“Canada’s spiritual and healing resource since 1970.” I thought it was a pleasing object—a nicely proportioned, low-budget paperback printed in the 1970s with New Age-y flair—but it turned out to be an unexpectedly gravid publication. The text was assembled following the death of writer James Allen; fragments were culled from his long and prolific career as a proto self-help writer, or what the editor’s preface calls a “Prophet of Meditation.” Allen died in 1912. During his time as a writer and in the turn towards secularism, the genre of Popular Philosophy recommended personal systems of ethics in the absence of holy texts. The influence of Christian doctrine, however, is evident.

*Be watchful, that no thought of self creep in again and stain thee. Think of thyself as abolished.*

It has been stated, in no uncertain terms, that the anthropomorphic turn in painting a) is recursive, b) is connected to periods of decline, imminent fascistic vibrations, and unequal distributions of power, and c) is therefore an easily instrumentalized, regressive sensibility, and all around bad mojo that ought to be avoided.<sup>1</sup>

1 See Benjamin Buchloh, “Figures of Authority, Ciphers of Regression” (1980).

*Man is not the result of outward conditions. Outward conditions are the result of man.*

The cipher-like figure forms over the *Meditations* pages contribute to a formal alphabet that has developed in my work. The influences on this figural alphabet range from Constructivist illustration to Art Deco to Medieval polychrome sculpture to early Tarot cards, a paralleling of antiquity with 20th-century Modernism that recurs frequently in my casual artistic research. Anthropomorphic figures, so often mired in the heresy of allegorical meaning, are something I repeat with cautious conviction. The ongoing project of working with the figure constitutes a minor personal artistic rebellion for me. It's no secret that artists live by dictums as much as anyone else. We derive guidance from philosophers and critics and seek to purify our art with the wisdom of progressive ideas. Yet, the forbidden thing, once aptly pointed out, immediately becomes inevitable and all philosophical injunctions are in some way as monstrous as the ideas that they forbid. Of interest to me, however, is how prohibitions, once invalidated by having been spoken in the voice of authority, can become material to work with. Different dictates and competing demands for our moral attention can coexist in a given document or artwork to interesting ends.

*The present is the synthesis of the entire past; the net result of all that a man has ever thought and done is contained within him.*

As self-help goes, Allen's *Meditations* are severe. They are at times absurd statements and walk a fine line between a refreshing call for modesty and a self-loathing gravitas not fit for contemporary consumption. In my inner world, the simultaneously satirical and sincere relationship that one must assume to read these dictums feels appropriate. Reading these suggestions for how the body should be formed in relation to the individual's scruples and character of mind, the heady proclamations of a 19th century pop-philosophy guru feel oddly relevant to the project of reimagining the figure in light of the injunction against the figure.

Rebecca Brewer, *Nothing can prevent us from accomplishing the aims of our life*, 2012-13, watercolour on paper (pages from James Allen's *Meditations*, 1913), 17 × 12.25 cm each

---

APRIL 28

---

*Be watchful, that no thought of self creep  
in again and stain thee.*

**T**HINK of thyself as abolished. In all thy doing think of the good of others and of the world, and not of pleasure or reward to thyself. Thou art no longer separate and divided from men, thou art one with all. No longer strive against others for thyself, but sympathize with all. Regard no man as thine enemy for thou art the friend of all men. Be at peace with all. Pour out compassion on all living things, and let boundless charity adorn thy words and deeds. Such is the glad way of Truth; such is the doing which is according to the Eternal. Filled with joy, the right-doer, he acts from principles which do not change and pass away. He is one with the Eternal, and has passed beyond unrest. The peace of the righteous man is perfect; it is not disturbed by change and impermanence.

*Open thine eyes to the Eternal Light.*

---

JANUARY

---

*The lover of the pure life keeps his mind*

AS the energetic person whose business is not  
distracted by worldly affairs, how  
to overcome temptation, how to attain  
assurati- to attain by  
temp- how for-  
tifi- the tempte- a  
is in at we- and un-  
g- for- tempted- should  
ough- the nature- mean-  
ation, it is know- cannot  
me. is to over- come tempt-  
ta- at un- and how it arises in his  
ow- at a- and must study, by  
intro- na- how to dis-  
perse- to- error by  
truth.

A man must know himself if he is to know  
the Self-knowledge of the soulmaid of

*Prayer daily in holy meditation on Truth  
and its attainment.*

---

JUNE 8

---

*Nothing can prevent us from accomplishing  
the aims of our life.*

MAN'S power subsists in discrimination and choice. Man does not create one jot of the universal conditions or laws; they are the essential principles of things, and are neither made nor unmade. He discovers, not makes, them; ignorance of them is at the root of the world's pain. To defy them is folly and bondage. Who is the freer man, the thief who defies the laws of his country, or the honest citizen who obeys them? Who, again, is the freer man, the fool who thinks he can live as he likes, or the wise man who chooses to do only that which is right?

Man is, by the nature of things, a being of habit, and this he cannot alter; but he can alter his habits. He cannot alter the law of his nature, but he can adapt his nature to those laws.

*He is the good man whose habits of thought  
and action are good.*

---

JANUARY 11

---

*It matters little what is without, for it is all  
a reflection of your own consciousness.*

**T**HE deplorable failure of many outward  
and isolated reforms is traceable to the  
fact that their devotees pursue them as an  
end in themselves, failing to see that they  
are merely steps toward ultimate, individual  
perfection.

All true reform *must come from within*, in  
a changed heart and mind. The giving up  
of certain foods and drinks, and the break-  
ing away from certain outward habits are  
good and necessary beginnings, but they are  
only beginnings, and to end there is to fall  
far short of a true spiritual life. It is good  
therefore to cleanse the heart, to correct the  
mind, and to develop the understanding, for  
we know that the one thing needed is a regen-  
erate heart.

*It matters everything what you are within,  
for everything without will be measured  
and colored accordingly.*

---

## ANTENA / A Manifesto for Ultratranslation

Why do I translate? Because the congealed mass of anglo-'merican ugliness, greed & basic Christian fascism will continue to blow up the people & libraries & homes & museums of a hundred Baghdads unless we can make enough American citizens realize the beauty of the other, of the poetry of the other, of the speech of all the others.

—Pierre Joris

I have become intrigued with displaced things—things that are wrong.  
And translation is in a perpetual state of being wrong...

—Don Mee Choi

I wanted to translate what was not yet there... The paradox of borders, national, corporeal and linguistic, is that their primary value is not to keep out, but to let in. Translation involves permeability, not equivalence.

—Oana Avasilichioaei and Erin Moure

“When we refer to translation,” ask(s) Andrés Ajens, “might it exist only in part? In part translation and in part something else? In part translating and in part not translating—another text, even another signature? Could that be?” I... translate Ajens... to an invitation to write, as I am writing. How to translate by not translating? How to translate the invitation to not translate? Its how? How to translate, in not translating? How to refuse translation's disavowal, in translating?

—Andrés Ajens, trans. Erin Moure and Jen Hofer;  
Erin Moure writing through Andrés Ajens

Nothing is lost in translation. Everything was always already lost, long before we arrived.

•

Translation is its own undoing. A feedback loop. A Möbius strip or trip. An unwriting of the original, which is never the same as itself anyway. A writing of the unoriginal translation.

•

Translation is an asymptote: no matter how close we try to get, there's always a space between the two bodies and that is the space where we live. The space where we transpose, or are transposed.

•

Untranslatability is at the root of our practice. Moments of untranslatability lead directly to untranslation, undertranslation, overtranslation, an excess, extranlation, a lack, a limit, an excrescence, an impropriety, distranlation, retranslation, multitranslation, a mistake, a conflict, dystranlation. An understanding of the potential in not understanding. An ultratranslation.

•

Ultratranslation—an awareness or hum or breath. Not all translation is ultratranslation. Ultratranslation is moments within translation, a part of translation, parting it to expose the irreducible gaps. Ultratranslation bubbles up from translation, moves translation somewhere else. Transposes it.

•

Ultra: spatially beyond, on the other side, indicating elsewhere. Ultra: going beyond, surpassing, transcending the limits. Ultra: an excessive or extreme degree.

•

Ultratranslation is messy. Ultratranslation is excessive. Ultratranslation is unruly. Ultratranslation is absurdly invested in the glories of translationese. Ultratranslation takes the untranslatable as starting point, not ending point.

•

Ultratranslation labors to translate the untranslatable, and also to preserve it: not to reduce the irreducible. Not to know but to acknowledge. Ultratranslation does not

replace translation, nor does it seek to depose. They exist beside one another and concurrently, one feeding the other. Two bodies with the negative space of relation between them. Only in the geography of the margins, in the space between, only there. Ultratranslation is not translation unmoored from meaning, but translation that questions what and how meaning itself means.

•

We are opposed to seamless translation, as it seeks to stitch innumerable disparate words and ideas and divides together as if they had always been fused. We oppose ourselves to poses: positions of control or superiority. We want ultratranslation: to untranslate the seams, to extratranslate the gaps, to multitranslate the leaps, to infratranslate the porosities. We want the transfer and the untransferrable, both.

•

Ultratranslation leads us to inevitable failure. We believe failure is productive: a snag that makes the seams visible. Critiqueable. In failure there are moments of astonishment.

•

We welcome errors and fissures because they are palpable, textured: those snags are as integral a part of the reading experience as the content, the form, the various kinds of information presented by the texts—always plural, as translation is an act of doubling, or multiplying, or reducing, or all of those at once.

•

We will fail at the level of the word and we will fail at the level of the culture. “Success” is inappropriate given the complexity of human existence and interrelation. The only way to begin to understand is not to understand. To believe that reading a text (or even twenty texts) from a particular culture provides us an “understanding” of that culture is to reduce its complexity and inherent irreducibility to something we might digest. We believe in feedback rather than feed. Feed is digested and excreted; feedback continues, an ever-looping loop.

•

We cannot take for granted that this word can be used for that body; we cannot take as a given that we share the same understanding of even (or perhaps especially) the most familiar words. The familiar demands translation. The ultrafamiliar demands ultratranslation.

•

Work across languages needs contextualization. Ultratranslation attempts to contextualize from within the language, within the syntax, between and around the words, the breath, the utterance. Air and diaphragm contracting and relaxing.

•

Ultratranslation lures translators out of invisibility and onto the streets, into the margins, into the footnotes, into annotation, into activism, into failure and into irrationality, the intuitive, a channeling. The work might speak for itself, but the translation never does. Nor can it be “spoken for” by the translator (or by anyone else). Rather, translators speak for ourselves, addressing questions of stance, position, and perspective, replacing invisibility with transparency by writing notes toward an understanding of the tools and processes that made the translation. Toward an understanding of the ultratranslator’s practice.

•

Who we choose to translate is political. How we choose to translate is political.

•

The politics of translation make us ultraskeptical and ultracommitted.

•

Ultratranslation is built from radicalism, ultraism, anti-racism, anti-superiority, anti-assimilation. We recognize and respect words, details, and impulses that cannot be translated: a constant divide. Both translation and its riotous cousin ultratranslation provide tools for crossing or not crossing. Whether or not we cross, we need the tools.

•

We recognize how translation has been used, is used and might still be used as a tool of conquest, assimilation, or domestication. We are committed to creating translations that are racinated in the cultures, dialogues, conflicts, battles, struggles, hierarchies, gossip of their communities of origin. We recognize this is a difficult—perhaps impossible—task and yet we have high hopes. Impossible hopes. Untranslatable hopes. Ultratranslators bent on unsettling the empire of English.

•

Ultratranslation is a process of working against languages that seek to dominate. At the most basic level, the message of translation: there is something being said elsewhere that is of crucial importance for us here (in this language) to hear. It is worth great effort to listen to that “something elsewhere.” Ultratranslation would not bring something elsewhere into a dominant language (English, for instance) in a smooth, seductive, unproblematized way, as if to suggest that now “we” “understand” “you.” Ultratranslation nudges dominant languages away from dominance, toward the space between original and translation. Into the space of the ultra.

•

Working across languages is a conundrum, especially for those of us who speak and write in the language of empire. Our language perpetrates the invisibility of the other. Our language imposes the privilege of the same. Yet we translate into our language. We translate into our language to rewrite our language. Ultratranslation as a way to clamber out of conundrum. Ultratranslation as a way of living restless and anarchic inside conundrum.

•

If reading work in translation makes us think we haven't read widely enough, that's a good thing. If reading work in translation makes us wish we knew two or ten or thirty more languages, that's a good thing. Rather than running away from the untranslatable, scorning it or eyeing it suspiciously, or lamenting the loss it represents, we experience the untranslatable as invitation to further immersion, further closeness. A hint of light knifing through a door slightly ajar. Always the light slivering through, the door impossible to close because the foundation has shifted imperceptibly, the threshold askew.

•

Ultratranslation is a kind of activism or (dys)organizing: the translations we work on are not primed for comfortable consumption. We experience ultratranslation as a catalyst for changes in awareness, syntax, and our capacity to reimagine the world. Ultratranslation as catalytic.

•

Ultratranslations allow us an entry beyond the level of surface, to a deeper level which itself is a surface made of many layers of surface. Ultratranslation shifts the categories of the knowable.

•

We live and work in the clutter of untranslatability. The uncomfortable snag where we no longer know what to say, how to say, or even quite what saying is—but we continue in our saying. The language-snag is the sign that there is more thinking to be done. We can't get free from the grip of non-knowing, nor would we wish to detach ourselves even if we could. Rather, let's stay in this space. The instigatory space of difficulty and not understanding. Untranslate this space. Retranslate from this space.

•

Untranslatability is an introduction. An introduction into translation. A lure. Ultratranslation is not no translation, nor post-translation, nor anti-translation. Simultaneity, not progression.

•

Because we break the faith. Because the faith was already broken. Because there is only faith in breaking the faith (there is only possible in impossible, only translatability in untranslatability). Because there is no such thing as a word's literal meaning. No original, only points of departure. No neat and orderly connection between signifier and signified. No route from one signifier to another that does not take a detour through the undergrowth, the forest floor, the factory floor.

•

Ultratranslation resists its own definition, nestled in dominant discourse, yet refusing to be contained by that discourse.

•

Ultratranslation emerges at the tiniest, furthest extremes of an asymptote: no matter how close we try to get, there's always a space between the two—any two—and that is the space where we live. Where we are delighted and frustrated at once. Where we get to work. Where we want to agitate.

## Sources

- Ajens, Andrés. Invitation to “Coloquio: Interculturalidad y Traducción” (personal correspondence with Erín Moure).
- Avasilichioaei, Oana, and Erin Mouré. “Translation, Collaboration, and Reading the Multiple.” Presented at In(ter)ventions: Literary Practice at the Edge, The Banff Centre (19 Feb. 2011). <[http://media.sas.upenn.edu/pennsound/authors/Avasilichioaei/2-19-11/Avasilichioaei-Oana\\_Moure\\_Erin\\_01\\_Translation-Collaboration-Multiple\\_Interventions\\_19-02-2011.mp3](http://media.sas.upenn.edu/pennsound/authors/Avasilichioaei/2-19-11/Avasilichioaei-Oana_Moure_Erin_01_Translation-Collaboration-Multiple_Interventions_19-02-2011.mp3)>.
- Chin-Tanner, Wendy. “A Conversation with Don Mee Choi.” *Lantern Review* (5 Dec. 2012). <<http://www.lanternreview.com/blog/2012/12/05/a-conversation-with-don-mee-choi/>>.
- Moure, Erín. “Cómo no traducir? HOW, negation, TO TRANSLATE?” *Jacket2* (27 Jan. 2013). <<https://jacket2.org/commentary/cómo-no-traducir-how-negation-translate>>.
- Qualey, M. Lynx. “Pierre Joris: Seven Minutes on Translation.” *Arabic Literature* (in English), (19 Jan. 2012). <<http://arablit.wordpress.com/for-translators/pierre-joris-seven-minutes-on-translation/>>.

Antena is a language justice and language experimentation collaborative founded in 2010 by Jen Hofer and John Pluecker. We view our aesthetic practice as part and parcel of our language justice work. Antena activates links between social justice work and artistic practice by exploring how critical views on language can help us to reimagine and rearticulate the worlds we inhabit.

“A Manifesto for Ultratranslation” was written collaboratively by Antena in a 1923 Sears & Roebuck kit barn on the estate of Edna St. Vincent Millay in Austerlitz, NY, in Summer 2013. Gratitude to Oana Avasilichioaei and Norma Cole for their attentive reading and astute comments and to the Millay Colony for the Arts for the space to articulate our ultratranslational ideas.

This manifesto is available as a free download on Antena’s website: <<http://antenaantena.org/homemade-books/>>. You can contact Antena at [antena@antenaantena.org](mailto:antena@antenaantena.org); we’d love to be in dialogue about the ideas in this manifesto.

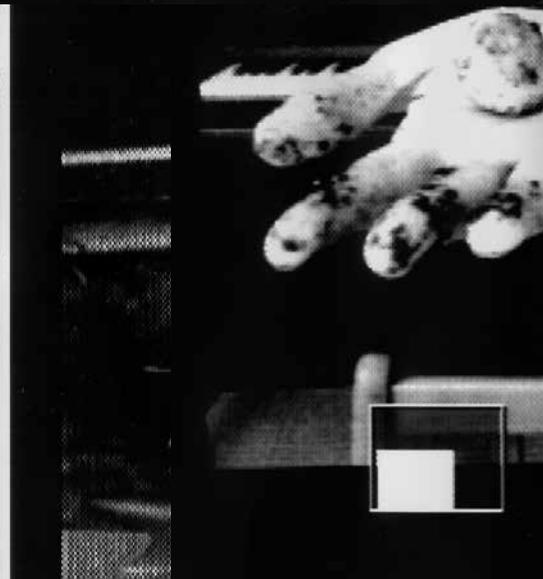
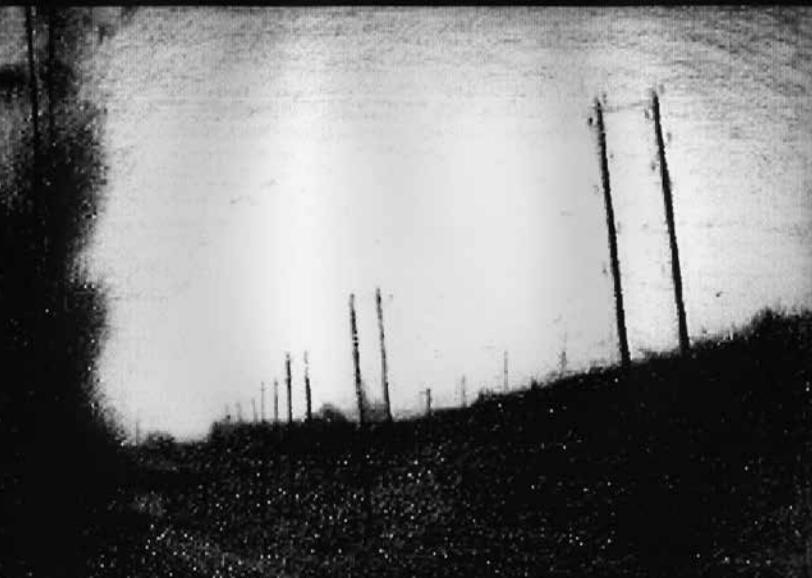
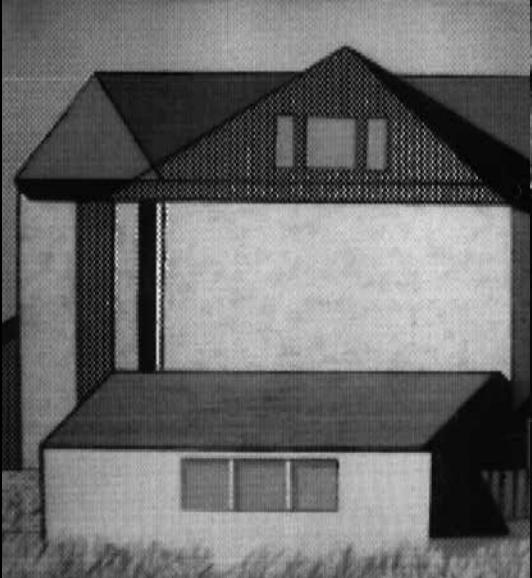
## PETER CULLEY & ELISA FERRARI / Three Poems

### LETTER SORTING MACHINE

Lumaca feeds on the hem of the Bodhisattva's skirt  
Esattamente one hour after sunrise that intimate bird  
Ti trovai testifying from the topmost walnut branch  
Terrina of poplar foam with a dash of dust  
Esercizio I take none unless you count this  
Ruvida rhetoric I scratch while the sun shakes the trees.

Si is not their spindly careless grace or the  
Odore of maple sugar, paint thinner, warm milk of a  
Recluso unused to direct address.  
Trovasti a hat in the middle of a sentence.  
Incenso must remind you of something.  
Nove hours after sunrise everybody but me has shut up.  
Grammi displace the air buckles & rolls & replies.

Macché I said what did you want?  
Almeno bear with me the  
Cacofonia of the cellular world is ringing my bells  
Ho la presa but not the center, not the lean in  
Interrotte heading southwest the clouds split&re-gather  
Nervose as the creaking lattice of matter, bend of  
Estate follows the conversation's long curve.



## ZONING UNCERTAIN

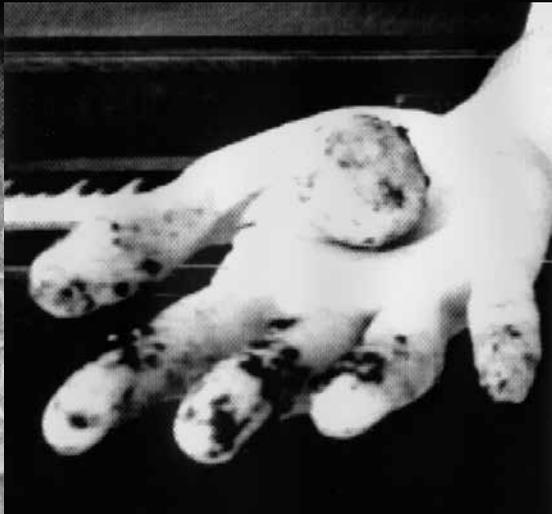
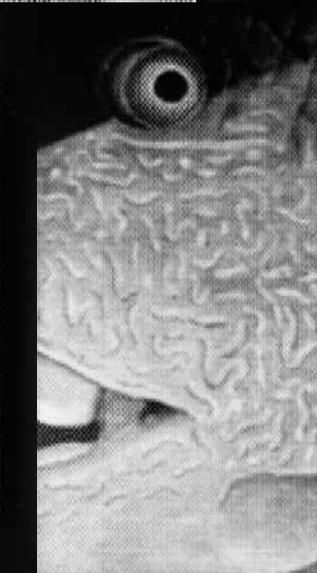
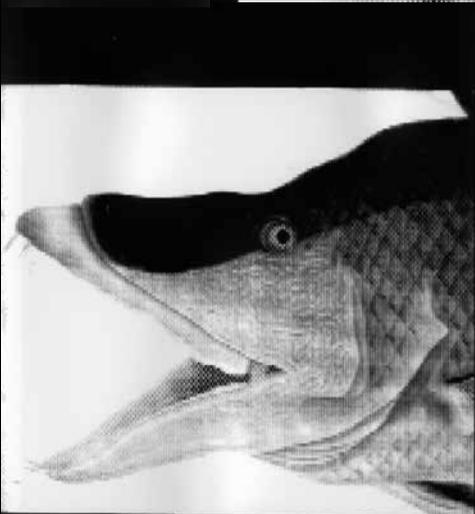
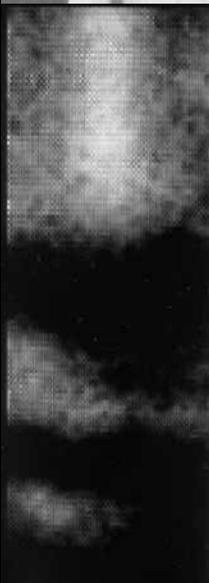
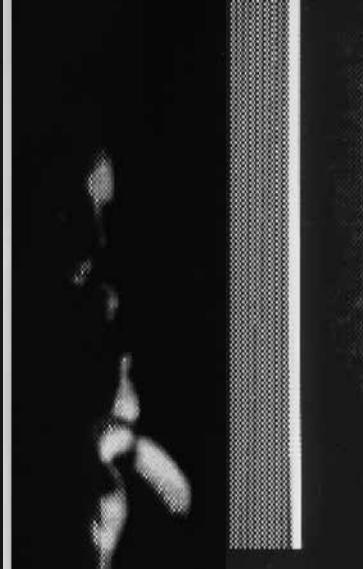
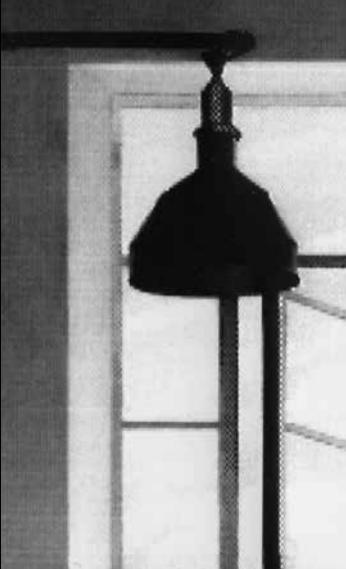
Zampirone of bug-ridden texts,  
Orticante lash of error,  
Non ti scordar di me familiar object  
Interdigitale mouthfeel, cat tongue & emery buffing  
Neoliberismo into a gleaming collective smoothness  
Guadagno falls on vices & virtues alike!

Ussaro checks his radar gun hat & saddle a  
Non-fumatore who still idles around exits,  
Condivisibile match cupped as if on a flight deck.  
Erre is for robbery & radiation, error too to  
Ripassare the same earth with a finer-toothed comb,  
Tornante stashed on the tub lip after your first visit—  
Ammicchiamo at such things the therapist & I,  
Innaccorte declarations ten minutes from comprehension  
Nerofumo through platinum through white through pink.

## DELIBERATE MISTAKES

Descrivi in 400 parole or less gli  
Effetti the changes you propose will have on  
L'unità forking paths, cracked codes & dead zones;  
Il saldo della grondaia e dell'archivio perhaps  
But the semi-encyclopedic? the glitchy gifs? cumulo of  
Eterogeneous matter? unpolished binoculars che  
Risolvono the view in a world with two suns?  
Antagonismo dei pianeti e dei mammiferi for all time  
Through there is a record of every eventuality e il duo  
Estremo opposto travelling in deep space come dad's morse.

Mutua appartenenza the result but never the aim.  
Inibizione plus time equals una  
Sorda eclisse for ten minutes every day.  
Tali things first, one of these things first.  
A prescindere from words from underfoot worms from  
K come cava craving crust carcassa.  
E per così dire for argument's sake ghost touches  
Scoprono welts where no nail had penetrated.



A year or so ago, after concluding a long project and in an aimless, experimental spirit, I began to write acrostics. In search of outside stimulus I asked my friend Elisa Ferrari, an Italian artist living in Vancouver, to provide me with both phrases in English to form the acrostics and Italian words for each of the phrases' letters. The introduction of so much new and frankly exotic vocabulary into my previously monolingual practice proved to be highly generative. By the time I had finished looking up and familiarizing myself with the words in Barbara Reynolds' great 1962 Cambridge Italian-English Dictionary, the poems seemed to complete themselves; each was written within a day of receiving the words, often within an hour or two.

I would then send the resulting text to Elisa, who would "correct" them as much as possible—lining up tenses and genders—and, as the project evolved, translate such parts into Italian as seemed appropriate to her.

Though in time the words provided by Elisa became more obscure and hard to work with, these further restrictions could slow but never derail the almost automatic improvisational working out of each poem's internal logic, which seemed to precede my involvement. The knowledge, too, that the poems as I left them would still be incomplete—subject to further alteration—added to the erosion of authorial control which gave the project its momentum.

The visual material here is a further response to that open-endedness, and should be seen not as illustration or accompaniment but as an extension of the processes of translation and transformation begun in the poems. During the period of the poems' composition I was maintaining a daily weblog of images gathered from the internet and it is from the days corresponding to the poem's composition that Elisa has sourced the images seen here. The images were then printed onto the scroll of a Sony Videographic Thermal Printer, rephotographed and re-composed. The balance they create across media and between process and improvisation is not a visual correlative but an active expansion of the poem's field.

The pages here are offered not as the completion of a project but a marker of its progress.

# *CUT AND MUZZLED*

**ENVIRONMENT** Canadian Environmental Assessment Act ditched. Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency seriously weakened. Canadian Environmental Protection Act undercut. Watchdog environmental agencies limited in their ability to

speaking publicly about potential environmental dangers -- their charitable status and funding threatened. Government spends \$8 million to track these groups. **MUZZLED** Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act killed. Fisheries Act weakened. Fish only protected if they are of “commercial, Aboriginal, or recreational” value, and even those are at risk. Department of Fisheries and Oceans Water Protection cut by \$100 million eliminating about 500 jobs related to Coast Guard services; patrols to stop illegal fishing activities as well as scientific research to promote conservation, protect endangered species, and prevent industrial water pollution. **CHOP CHOP** Navigable Waters Protection Act weakened excluding 99.7% of Canada’s lakes and more than 99.9% of Canada’s rivers from federal oversight including the Kitimat and Upper Fraser Rivers in British Columbia, which lie along the path of the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline. Energy Board Act neutered with its reviews limited to two years -- and then its decisions can be reversed by Cabinet. Species at Risk Act hampered. The National Energy Board doesn’t have to impose conditions to protect species-at-risk on projects it approves. Nuclear Safety Control Act undermined. Canada Seeds Act

**inspections privatized.** National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy **killed.** It brought industry leaders, environmentalists, First Nations, labour, and policy makers together to provide non-partisan research and advice on federal policies. **OHHH NOOO** Municipal Water and Wastewater Survey cut by 100%. Water consumption habits were monitored since 1983. **SILENCED** Groups and citizens excluded from environmental review process for pipelines. The Minister or Cabinet, not regulatory bodies, given ultimate decision-making power. Parks Canada operating budget cut by 30%. 638 positions eliminated; 70% are scientists and social scientists. **CUT CUT CUT** Experimental Lakes Area, a research station that produced groundbreaking research on water quality, shut down. Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory threatened with closure. **MUZZLED** Environment Canada sector monitoring air pollution from power plants, furnaces, and boilers abolished; monitoring of discharge from mines and pulp mills cut by 20%. **SNIP SNIP SNIP**

## **RESEARCH AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS**

**Libraries and archives eliminated in federal departments:** Canada Revenue Agency; Citizenship and Immigration; Employment and Social Development Canada; Environment Canada; National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy; Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Foreign Affairs and International Trade; Natural Resources Canada; Parks Canada; Public Service Commission; Public Works and Government Services; Transport Canada; Canadian Transportation Agency; Transportation Safety Board; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

**OHHH NOOO** Library and Archives Canada (LAC) cut by \$9.6 million from 2012-15; more than 400 LAC employees received notices indicating their jobs may be affected and the department announced a 20% reduction of its workforce of about 1,100. **CHOP CHOP CHOP** 156 and counting, federal programs and research facilities have had funding reduced or been shut down including scientific, farm-related, and Aboriginal-health organizations. **CUT AND SILENCED** At least seventy-nine community organizations, agencies, NGOs, research bodies and programs cancelled, or cut 2006-11 many of those defending human rights and women's equality.

**MUZZLED** The First Nations Statistical Institute, the National Council on Welfare and the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Science eliminated. **CUT AND SILENCED** Mandatory long-form census replaced by voluntary household survey. **CHIPPED AWAY**

**GOVERNMENT ETHICS AND OVERSIGHT Auditor General's powers removed from holding government accountable** through independent oversight from 12 key government agencies including the Northern Pipeline Agency, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Canada Revenue Agency. **Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Inspector General eliminated**, who provided oversight on the intelligence agency's activities and who recently released a report critical of CSIS activities. **Public Appointments Commission dissolved.** It ensured key positions were assigned based on merit not insider connections. **Food and drug regulations weakened.** Minister of Health able to exempt products from regulatory oversight. **Canada's food inspection agencies cut,** paving the way for private contractors

to perform food safety inspections with no real accountability. **CUT CUT CUT**

**ELECTIONS** Fair Elections Act, Bill C-23, moves Commissioner of Canada Elections from arms length to under government control within Director of Public Prosecutions. Chief Electoral Officer forbidden from speaking about possible or suspected electoral fraud. **MUZZLED** Elimination of Elections Canada per-vote allowance in favour of privately-funded political campaigns. Voter ID rules tightened most likely to the detriment of First Nations, students and voters who live in poverty.

**JOB** Canadians forced to work two years longer, to age 67, to qualify for Old Age Security. Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act repealed which mandated minimum wages for federal construction workers. Federal contractors removed from having to comply with The Employment Equity Act, likely resulting in fewer opportunities for women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of

**visible minorities.** Human Resources Minister given carte blanche to make changes at any time to Employment Insurance benefits without public or parliamentary consultation. Employment Insurance benefits cut, making out-of-work Canadians take any job, regardless of field, payscale, or commute. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty recently said “any job is a good job.” **Files closed on Federal Skilled Workers who applied for Permanent Residency prior to 2008 without opportunity for review or appeal. 34,500 federal public service jobs cut.** 19,200 positions in 2012 budget eliminated; 6,300 cut as a result of the government’s previous reviews; 9,000 cut as a result of the government’s budget operating freeze. **CHOP CHOP CHOP 9 Veterans Affairs offices closed Canada-wide and nearly 300 positions at Veterans Affairs Canada eliminated. SNIP SNIP SNIP** **JUSTICE** Youth Criminal Justice Act orientation changed from rehabilitation to “protection of society.” **Pre-trial detention increased and new, harsher sentencing**

principles introduced for young offenders. New and increased mandatory minimum sentences; new criminal offences introduced.

**HEALTH** The Canada Health Transfer will be changed in 2014-15, to a per capita basis, so that cash-strapped provinces, with declining population, will be short-changed of expected health transfers by \$31 billion over the next 10 years.

**ARTS AND CULTURE** **CBC cut by \$115 million (10%).** Less Canadian programming, more advertising and 650 jobs lost. **Telefilm Canada cut by \$10.6 million; National Film Board of Canada cut by \$6.7 million. *CUT CUT CUT***

**SCIENCE** Federal government dismissed more than 2,000 scientists in past 5 years. ***CUT AND MUZZLED***

**CATHY BUSBY**

This is a non-comprehensive list with information from various online sources available February-March 2014. *Cut and Muzzled* is the second work in a series that began with *Budget Cuts*, a public artwork at AKA/Paved Arts, Saskatoon, 2012. See [cathybusby.ca](http://cathybusby.ca).

**STEPHEN COLLIS / Love and Strife (A translation of  
Empedocles Fragment 17)**

A double tale I will tell:  
Once they grew as One from  
Many—another time again they grew  
To be Many from this One—  
Double is this their mortal birth  
Double the destruction of mortal life—  
For first the convergence of all  
Begets and destroys one living round  
And then the dispersal of all  
Begets and destroys another turn round  
And these never cease dialectically turning  
All coming together because of Love  
All driven apart again by Strife—  
So as One arises from Many  
And Many come together in One  
Thus there is becoming and no  
Abiding—but as there is also  
No end to their turning—what  
Does not change is endless changing.

But come—listen—learning increases wisdom  
As already told here I tell  
A double tale—at one time  
They grew One alone from Many  
Another time again they split into  
Many from being One—Fire and  
Water and Earth and expansive Air  
And catastrophic Strife apart from them  
Balanced in every way—and Love—  
Too—equal in length and breadth:

Gaze upon her with your mind—  
Do not sit with dazzled eyes  
She is said to be inborn  
In bodies of men—by her  
Convivial thoughts flow and collective labours  
Are accomplished—naming her Joy and  
Aphrodite whom no mortal has seen  
Whirling amongst them—listen close to  
These words—they do not deceive.

All these [elements] are equal and  
Of the same age but each  
Has its own domain and ethos  
Prevailing in turn as time rounds  
And nothing else comes into being  
Or ceases to be—for continual  
Destruction would leave nothing left and  
What could add to this totality?  
And where would it come from?  
Perishing into what would it pass  
Since there is nothing outside these?  
No—only these exist and passing  
Through each other they become different  
Things at different times—yet ever  
And always they remain the same.

I began translating Empedocles when, after publishing too many books too quickly, I didn't know what to write, and didn't want to write anything really. Translation, especially the slowness of translating ancient Greek, seemed the ideal stop-gap—the ideal way of feeding my compulsion, while still in some sense avoiding writing. A means of resistance. A brake.

Empedocles had been an interest since I re-read the Presocratics while working on a book about change. That dialectic—it struck me as a dialectic—of Love and Strife, of attraction and

repulsion, union and division, stuck with me. Everything now especially seems such a tug of war—the things I want to join, defend, and hold together—those things I want to resist, cut loose, disperse forever. To at once love and struggle against a humanity bent on the beauty of creation and the ugliness of destruction. To find these human attributes incommensurable and yet indissoluble. Walter Benjamin: “There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.” How to resolve this? I fear we cannot.

I thought of Yeats’s gyres: surely Love and Strife were not successive moments (as Empedocles’ language at times appears to suggest)—surely they overlap, contend simultaneously, with Love ascending against the resistance of Strife, or Strife driving everything apart against the grip of Love. So one conical spiral, circling together from the circumference of the Many to the apex of the One rests within another cone where the unified One circles out in a widening gyre towards a scattering many. To be one torn towards its manyness. To be many pulled towards the density of one. A dialectic—the primary dialectic: one and many, identity and difference, the complex calculations of which determine our politics, our fate, our planetary staying power.

I did not want to write. But I could not escape. On a peninsula where rising waters will soon island me once again. And islands make for philosophical states of mind and being. Give me a volcano to jump into. Quick—before the tides rise too high. Throw some meaningless words against our self-assault. Some idle whittling at our Greek quick. See what rises to the surface, what sinks at last into the darkening depths.

I thought of Charles Olson too: “what does not change / is the will to change,” seems abidingly Empedoclean. But even more so his epigraph to *Maximus*: “*all my life I’ve heard / one makes many*”—which reverses the direction of the American motto “*e pluribus unum*”—out of many, one. An anarchist’s turn of the social screw? Or the fact that—simultaneously and forever—one driving towards many / many driving towards one, as Love and Strife struggle across the terrain of this human universe, throwing us together and driving us apart.

My translation of this, Empedocles’ most famous and sizeable fragment, takes numerous liberties—beginning with my imposition of the word “dialectic” (so—call it an interpretive translation). More generally, I have privileged poetic compression over exactness—in part to fit a six-word line, as a way of invoking a ghost of the original’s hexameters. Punctuation is an ambiguous concept in most ancient Greek texts: I have chosen to largely eliminate it, except for some Dickinsonian dashes. I probably owe the most to M.R. Wright’s translation and commentary, though Daniel W. Graham has been helpful too.

**Who Shall Keep My Sheep?**

My Lord, you have honeyed  
the bread of life. Lit a holy candle  
far enough away from the dry flowers.  
Give me your love, and help me  
gather it up.

Praise the Lord, soul my O.  
The trees are watered with the wine  
of the bad kids. The leviathan  
is hosting your heavenlies  
and bidding your dos. The birds  
have branched among your singing  
and everywhere, dominion cedars.

My Lord, you have breaded  
the honey. Dried the holy flowers  
and made a trail of seasons  
through the desert. Give me your help  
and love me gather it up. Your open hand  
has been for so long.

## Anointing My Own Head With My Own Oil

He did not open his mouth  
after bearing all the sins.  
I say! These are like the days  
of \_\_\_\_\_! So now I have sworn  
not angry to be with you.

Probably you will forget  
your youthful shame.  
You will lengthen some ropes  
with snakes, the cool way.  
And bless a young seventh  
wife. (Sing, O barren women).

But who can speak  
of imaginary descendants?  
The ice cools the glass  
inside and out.

## The Mighty Ones Are Budding

Praise the Lord, soul my O.  
If 1.3 billion people tell you  
you are a horse, you're a horse.  
After all, the whole world stopped  
to hear you set the stars up.

Look out. 2000 years are dead  
on the table again. Where is your paw?  
Milk, honey, and all that?  
It's time to foot north.

But how many are your seekings!  
Say it plain, Lord. We are terrified.  
Give us some proper time.  
And when your spirit you send,  
may I frolic there, large and small.

## **At the Potter's House**

I blew out the candle to see the holy smoke.  
The leaves of your lettuce  
very beautiful in the half-full shadows.  
We will not let the beans boil over.

All life I loved the Holy Missus most.  
The first myths about fruit becoming  
enormous. Then it's time to find a new gift.  
All very real, like birthdays.

Pajamas were good enough, so why  
the dead face? Take my hand, John.  
I will abandon my whole existence  
eating a bowl of peaches.

**GILES GOODLAND** / from *The Masses*

**Honeybee**

We are humsandbeings  
carrying language's language, long  
hauled from distant blooms  
to the house that name built.  
Round here noone calls it poetry.  
We dance like a numerous god  
like purseloined prefugees  
from a word that has not been thought.  
Our achtongue tralalanguage  
from farfurlineages of humdrome  
diphtrongs a hexagone incomb  
in zoosemiotic mittenish, singlanguage.  
The planes are stacking up as  
we swarmturn and flowerfollow  
the wax-pocket and pollen-basket  
enacting the languagebody's  
sendance as smallarms and as caralarms  
rotate against us. What bleeds across  
lawn is dark. We are mindful  
of pastendustrial seminature  
as a foresite (sic) of death  
odeing into this hole that  
closes when the lid fists  
the angels ungelling until fungus  
splits substance from the seams

## Caterpillar

I hungermarched the ribbitten leafstems,  
hobnailed from here to timesend, distend,  
rasping text, cutting windows  
so the slow vivid leaves cancel one at a  
time from which the dead  
debodied as the sun ran through ehedges  
and the autumn poured out  
to make the world work.

In my membrainy midgetsuit  
I tongueliked the slowmotioning  
tristrance and I sold leaves with  
insinuous accordiong towards  
the dreambulatory sleepeye.

Earlear the lacely silkslick  
fullupped as a regenegade iffigy.  
I saw black and smelled drool and  
could not my eyes extend.

Attired with threadblooded lustre  
the multinippled lithurgy shearched  
to wormform a puperfect thinkthing.  
Construct a sentence to hang from,  
secrete sense, talk spin. Scoroll  
the proleg in chimeratic leaftime  
to chrysalistize dearthread from  
the cremaster, mistwisting in pupation.

Coddled in a genizah mortuary  
my streams are seeking a source.  
The eye roots, bones store night.  
Each motherson must squelch the  
chenille of disunction, the leaf.

# TARYN HUBBARD / Notes for Browsers

## White Poem

after Robert Rauschenberg

#FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF  
#FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF #FFF

## Do The Work As You Would If You Were Getting Paid For It

That time teacher said coding was an extension of “the domestic.” There I was IRL washing dishes, looking out my window, hands in greasy suds, scraping cabbage roll shrapnel into garburator, thinking of my little code houses that await me once I finish up. My baby LESS-THAN paragraph SLASH GREATER-THANs that need my feminine validation. Hold on LESS-THAN body SLASH GREATER-THANs. I’ll be there in a second LESS-THAN head SLASH GREATER-THANs. Don’t worry, LESS-THAN division identification equal somethingsweet GREATER-THANs. Thank you for your patience, LESS-THAN body SLASH GREATER-THANs. I admire your stoicism, LESS-THAN heading one SLASH GREATER-THANs. Your time will come, LESS-THAN unordered list SLASH GREATER-THANs. We all work together, LESS-THAN list SLASH GREATER-THANs. I toil in your characters, LESS-THAN charset=”utf-8” GREATER-THAN. I wring my hands in your alphabet, LESS-THAN html lang=”en” GREATER-THAN. My unsung hero, hearty worker, LESS-THAN break GREATER-THAN, LESS-THAN break GREATER-THAN, LESS-THAN break GREATER-THAN, LESS-THAN break GREATER-THAN, LESS-THAN break GREATER-THAN. This is the house that HTML5 made.

I am interested in translating the web programming language of HTML into plain English in an effort to engage with a dimension of digital life that works silently under the websites we use every day.

The language of HTML5 programming is made up of repetitions and commands. The syntax of a command is clearly marked with a “<” at the beginning and a “/>” at the end. An example of a simple command is `<i>italic</i>` for italic font. Literally translated into English the code becomes powerful repetitions: “less than” and “slash greater than.” Beneath a website, a clear hierarchy exists, one composed of excess and violence.

I am also thinking of ways CSS code, which is used to describe the look of a page to a browser, can be used to embed physical objects into digital spaces. Robert Rauschenberg’s *White Paintings*, for example, can be translated into the hex code for white, #FFF, as a way to embody the painting within a browser without the use of a digital photograph of the work. Within the digital space #FFF can become further translated into something associated with the #FFF hashtag on Twitter.

With my code translations and work with code language, I am working towards a body of work that uses both plain English code and HTML code in poems that interrogate the social aspect of programming and computer-mediated interactions. The digital world is deeply engrained in the contemporary in-person social world, and I want to look into the implications of this by exposing the foundation on which these websites are created.

### Six significant landscapes

六

in the second half of an ellipse  
Rationalists will wear loose cloth.

### No Swan so fine

“So there is 無 water, as  
Versailles fountain of death “. No Swan  
Walter · blind eyes  
And gondoliering legs, so fine  
Chinz China and one of the deer-  
Brown eyes and toothed gold  
In order to show it is a bird of the collar.

Louis 15  
Silver tree  
Tinted buttons, dahlias,  
Sea Urchin, and everlastings,  
It perched on the branch of the bubble  
Poland body sculpture  
Flowers—in ease of use and high for me. The King is 的.

## Canto 49

K e r n m e n k 我 e 我  
M 我 k e n k u m n 我  
JITSU GETSU K O K W A  
T t n k n 忠誠人我

Machine translation sets out to neutralize the disturbing cultural peculiarities of language. It assumes a naked, *a priori* body of meaning and then replaces one set of linguistic clothing for another, excluding non-operational orders of language from its programming. I'm interested in the militaristic roots of machine translation, its concurrent growth with globalization, its relationship to Basic English, and the troubling ideology embedded in its design. But I'm also interested in how alternative uses of machine translation can expose both the hardness of poetic meaning and the opacity of that so-called purity purportedly lurking beneath linguistic diversity.

I'm not sure how to name myself in relation to these poems. I inputted them into an online machine translator (bing.com) and then passed them from English to Mandarin to English again until the output in both languages was as functionally identical as possible. This took anywhere from six to ten passes. Afterward, I put the Mandarin and English outcomes side by side and allowed the juxtaposition to guide my deletions, insertions, and replacements. Clearly, I'm neither an author nor translator. I functioned as an extension of language and machine, with my own agency enacted primarily through the choice of which poems to translate, as well as which elisions to make after translation. As such, these poems are mediated by what I would describe as a mutually resistant combination of programmatic decision-making and subjectivity (mine, as well as those of the poets who wrote the original poems). The results are performances of making and translating situated in particularly unsettling techno-historical territory. My hope is that they offer invitations to challenge the assumptions of universal meaning, to embrace otherness, and to crack open spaces within the intractable materiality of language.

## Speakers

An inquiry and answer followed identifying the . The convention was patiently listening to all the oratorical talent present, and my friends held out a slender hope that once the different had relieved their minds they might feel easier towards me, and possibly an exception would be made in my case. The were none other than the two cowboys whom he had accosted in the Mexican hotel. Evidently the were approaching the station. The hedge was thinner in some places than in others, and at times he could see not only the light through it but even the moving figures of the , and the occasional white flash of a summer gown. "And, Mrs. Mattern," continued, "if I may say so without offense, the age (real or imaginary) of the may make a difference in Albuquerque, but with our committee not the slightest." I am proud to tell you I have augmented our number of strawberry by nearly fifty per cent." According to his prudent habit, Eastman had the follow each other alphabetically. Sharon was hearty, and we had "Sweet and Low" twice. Then the speaking began, and the were welcomed, coming and going, with mild and friendly demonstrations. Unexpectedly I found embarrassment of choice dazing me, and I sat without attending to the later . Yet, on the other hand, Guy had one prize, and where merit was so even--I sat, I say, forgetful of the rest of the , when suddenly I was aware of louder shouts of welcome, and I awaked to Josey Yeatts bowing at us.

## Tongues

The day turned out to be one of torrid heat, and before the middle of the forenoon, the cattle lolled their \_\_\_\_\_ in despair, while their sullen lowing surged through from rear to lead and back again in piteous yet ominous appeal. The band numbered eight by easy count, as they halted within two hundred yards and lay down, lolling their \_\_\_\_\_ as if they expected to return and renew the attack. I'll drive 'em till their \_\_\_\_\_ hang out. Fords, I believe, are about as human as horses, and I've knowed horses I believe coulda talked if their \_\_\_\_\_ was split. There'll be cars comin' in from both ways with their \_\_\_\_\_ hangin' out, outa gas, outa oil, needin' this and needin' that and looking on that garage as a godsend--" He did not pursue the subject further, and so several belated retorts were left tickling futilely the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Happy Family--which does not make for amiability. With four willing \_\_\_\_\_ to enlighten him, it would be strange, indeed, if one so acute as Andy Green failed at last to have a very fair mental picture of Miguel. So, with the comfortable glow of victory in their souls, they laid them down, and, when the animated discussion of that night's adventure flagged, as their \_\_\_\_\_ grew sleep-clogged and their eyelids drooped, they slept in peace; save when Slim, awakened by the soreness of his leg, grunted a malediction or two before he began snoring again. He knows the Old Man and Chip are gone, and he knows we've just naturally got to sit back and swallow our \_\_\_\_\_ because we haven't any authority. The dogs wandered helplessly about, yelped half-heartedly at the woolly mass, then sat down upon their haunches and lolled red \_\_\_\_\_ far out over their pointed little teeth, and tilted knowing heads at the Happy Family. From the gossip that was rolled relishfully upon the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Dry Lake scandal lovers, the Happy Family must have been more than sufficiently convincing. But she did not weep when her own shack began to crackle and show yellow, licking \_\_\_\_\_ of flame. Bill could not name the nationality of them all; for the hunting call had reached to the far corners of the earth, and strange flags came fluttering across strange seas, with pirate-faced adventurers on the decks below, chattering in strange \_\_\_\_\_ of California gold. Tied their \_\_\_\_\_ into hard knots tryin' to tell me somethin' I didn't have time to listen to, and looked like they wanted to see my hide hangin' on a fence. Having put her hair into some sort of confinement, she picked up her reins and smiled at José and then at Jack in a way to tie the \_\_\_\_\_ of them both; though their brows were black with the hatred which must, if they met again, bear fruit of violence. "Till we was all of us on the gallop and \_\_\_\_\_ a-hanging." If their hearts were not as light, their faces gave no sign; and their \_\_\_\_\_ flung back the good-humored jibes of their fellows in Spanish as fluent as any they heard. They looked, and craned, and murmured comments until the señora appeared, a little breathless and warm from her last conference with Margarita in the kitchen, and turned their \_\_\_\_\_ upon the festival. All day they had waited for the duel, at most merely appeased by the other sports; and now, with José actually among them, and with the wine they had drunk to heat their blood and the mob-psychology working its will of them, they were scarce human, but rather a tremendous battle beast personified by dark, eager faces and \_\_\_\_\_ that wagged continually and with prejudice. Those angelic old men and old ladies have nearly all been immortalized in stories and songs, and the unsung remainder

have nerves and notions and rheumatism and sharpened by all the disappointments and sorrows of their long lives. Their horses, full of little exuberant outbursts of horse-foolishness when they had left town, settled clown to a dogged, plodding half walk, half trot which is variously described upon the range; Luck, for instance, calling it poco-poco; while the Happy Family termed it running-walk, trail-trot, fox-trot--whatever came easiest to their at the time. It took a flag-flying special train of that bitter Presidential campaign to find a weak spot in the guard, and to send a spark straight into the thickest bunch of wiry sand grass, where the wind could fan it to a blaze and then seize it and bend the tall flame until they licked around the next tuft of grass, and the next, and the next--until the spark was grown to a long, leaping line of fire, sweeping eastward with the relentless rush of a tidal wave upon a low-lying beach. "Now, what in time--" began Arline aloud, after the manner of women whose must keep pace with their thoughts. Val had a tub half filled with water at the house, and that helped amazingly by making it possible to keep the sacks wet, so that every blow counted as they beat out the ragged of flame which, in that wind, would jump here and there the ditch and the road, and go creeping back toward the stacks and the buildings. Their protruded, their mouths dribbled a lathery foam, and their rough, sweaty hides told Val of the long chase--for she was wiser in the ways of the range land than she had been. Jack stood dazed, watching the yellow go licking up the smaller branches. The sky above was all curdled with gold and crimson, while the smoke cloud below was a turgid black shot through with sparks and of flame. "They'd be sticking out their at each other if they was twenty years younger; pity they ain't, too; it would be a relief to 'em both!" The lamp glowing in the corner was the only other light, and when they drew their chairs close to the hearth, great of shadows leaped and fell on the wall behind them. About the good that is in men rumor often makes mistakes, but for evil she has an infallible eye and at once sets all of her thousand wagging. It towered high, the upper twisting among the branches of the tree. A fresh breeze was sweeping from the ocean onto the shore, and red licked about the main cabin and darted like reaching hands into the heart of the sky. At that he did enough to keep wagging. If you can find two or three men who have silent and strong hands, you'd better take them along. Such questions were always a signal for an unlocking of around the circle. Men in sore straits, with swollen and bleeding feet, we saw, and, happily, were able to relieve; and I am sure that many would have died but for the prompt aid rendered by the Government Water Supply Department, which despatched drays loaded with tanks of water to succour the suffering miners. of flame shot up in the air, a fire lit by our mates, but showing that, in spite of Warri's instinct, we had not been walking in quite the right direction. Squirrels chatter, brooks babble, and the of the Iroquois are split. But rumour whispered with a thousand of horrors viewless, nameless, inconceivable; and that far to the westward Biskoonah yawned, so close indeed to the world's surface that the waters boiling deep in hell burst into burning fountains in the magic garden where the red priest made his sorcery, alone. Moccasin snakes darted wicked forked at him and then glided out of reach of his tomahawk. And all the while her aunt held her hand, and Beatrice and Eleanor talked as fast as their could wag. "You fear the poison for me? I'm beyond or minds like those."

Mile and mile long of red lava streamed out between the hills and wound down to stop abruptly upon the slope. These dunes finally sank down to a black floor as hard as flint with of lava to the left, and to the right the slow descent into the cactus plain. Then Gale made out round spots, dark against the background of red, and in front of them leaped out small of fire. Then he saw little, pale, leaping of fire. Their eyes gleamed red; their flew out. Women gossiped, in a friendly way about Shefford, but with jealous about the girl. And I knew it would grow to wonder and certainty, then fierce attack from both and bats, and lastly--for ball players are generous--unstinted admiration. By way of variety, the lambasting Canadians commenced to lambast a few over the hills and far away, which chased Deerfoot and me until our lolled out. Maybe you've all had your cut out?" "Reckon I never yet heard any daid men's wag." He saw the lashing of flame above him in the pines. May the drought seize your cattle till their hang down as long as those of your lying lawyers! They had ridden something like a couple of miles on their way homeward and their were just beginning to wag, girl-like, again, when both were considerably startled by a loud hallo, coming from behind. Looks like every nation in the world was represented right here in this one boat load and sounds like the confusion of at the tower of Babel. For many minutes the map and the gold nugget were now passed from hand to hand and thoroughly examined by all, while the of all wagged with excited comments and Thure and Bud were often called upon to repeat parts of their story. "Them boys keep that gait up," Kirby remarked, "an' they ain't gonna make it far 'fore their hang out 'bout three feet an' forty inches. Their hung out and they panted for water, stretching their necks piteously to low now and again. "No folks to stare, no fuss, no jokes and ribbons and best bonnets, no public eye nor talkin' of when most yu' want to hear nothing and say nothing."

These poems are composed entirely from 91 public domain Westerns, novels that are freely available on *Project Gutenberg*. In total, the source text is over 10,000 pages long and is authored by 20 different writers. When I searched all of the novels simultaneously, there were 11 instances of the word "speakers" and 61 instances of the word "tongues." In order to begin writing, I had to copy and paste each of the 91 western novels into a single word document. Once the 10,000 pages of source text were assembled, I used the ctrl+f function to search all of the novels simultaneously. Then I pulled out each individual sentence that contained one of the words that I was searching for and copied it into a separate word document. The resulting poems are meant to represent the poetic techniques—searching and scanning and isolating—used to derive them, and to provide a contextual space where the language of a single word can be read.

## MICHAEL TURNER / Text-based Public Art Works in Vancouver



Lawrence Weiner, *Placed Upon the Horizon (Casting Shadows)* (1990)  
750 Hornby Street (Vancouver Art Gallery)

Seven years after relocating to Vancouver's former provincial courthouse, the Vancouver Art Gallery commissioned American artist Lawrence Wiener to produce a text for public view. The text is a phrase carved from indigenous yellow cedar and attached proudly to a frieze above the gallery's closed-off southern portico, its letters "casting shadows" during the day before retreating into darkness at night. Thus, Weiner's text is not a literal self-referential work "placed upon the horizon" of the VAG's rooftop, but an advertisement for what lies inside; not a locus of market certainty, but a symbolic site where ambiguity pervades. In short, a civic art gallery that, despite recent efforts to move to a purpose-built "iconic" structure, remains at the centre of the cosmopolitan city.



Kathryn Walter, *Unlimited Growth Increases the Divide* (1990)  
555 Hamilton Street (Del-Mar Hotel)

Those approaching the 500 block of Hamilton Street will note the presence of a slim three-storey hotel surrounded by BC Hydro's towering corporate headquarters. While the hotel appears to reflect a utility company's recognition of that which came before it, we have instead a hotel owner who refused to sell his property at above-market value to a corporation that wanted the entire end of the block, but to continue to provide clean rooms and below-market rent to those in need of a subsidy. This is what artist Kathryn Walter chose to work with after her site visit to the Contemporary Art Gallery (which at the time occupied the lone storefront space beside the hotel's lobby). The result is a corporate-style text designed so that the oxidization of its 7"-high copper letters would one day match the colour of the rear and sides of a building that stands not only in resistance to Hydro's monopolization of this block, but for a world where people come before profits.



Martin Creed, *Work No. 851* (2008)  
51 East Pender Street (Wing Sang Building)  
Photo credit: Martin Tessler. Courtesy Rennie Collection.

This work of neon text, commissioned by real estate magnate Bob Rennie and attached to his Chinatown palais, will be forever wedded to the year it was made. For it was in 2008 that the world experienced what is softly called a “downturn,” an event whose consequences depend on who you talk to: if it is a single-parent mom working as a paralegal in Chicago, it was the year the bank foreclosed on her one-bedroom condo; if it is a man who made his fortune selling condos, it was the year the public had to be convinced not to lose confidence in the market as an arbiter of what is good and right, and that sooner than later you will get your condo back, perhaps with a second bedroom. If the informational content of this British artist’s text is not enough to allay our fears, consider the formality of the declaration: not EVERYTHING’S GONNA BE ALRIGHT, like the pop song says, but EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT, as if spoken into a camera by a teleprompted politician.



Kathy Slade, *Is Everything Going to Be Alright?* (2010)  
149 West Hastings Street (Audain Gallery/Goldcorp Centre for the Arts)  
Photo credit: Sabine Bitter

Although not a permanent work of public art, Kathy Slade's *Is Everything Going to Be Alright?* was designed to converse with one, namely, Martin Creed's *Work No. 851*, located three blocks away from the windows of the Audain Gallery, where Slade's text (one of four works by former SFU students commissioned by the gallery) was installed in the wake of the 2010 Winter Olympics. Made of shiny weeded vinyl and applied directly to the glass, *Is Everything Going to be Alright?* comps on Pablo Ferro's long, narrow titles for Stanley Kubrick's Cold War satire *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) and appears to those aware of Creed's commission as a retroactive pre-emption, one that takes the chill off his declaration by transforming a unilateral command into a dialogical—if somewhat more compassionate—response.



Liam Gillick, *Lying On Top of a Building the Clouds Looked No Nearer Than When I was Lying on the Street* (2009)  
299 Burrard Street (Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel)

This repeated text—a vertical extension of the floor plates between the fifth- and twenty-second storeys of an exclusive downtown hotel—presents itself as a koan but behaves closer to an apology for a building that obscures the clouds that its text has asked us to consider. While true that the height of this building is insignificant compared to the distance between the street and the clouds above, it is particularly insensitive to those who live in a city where “lying on the street” will get you arrested—to say nothing of a hotel whose security guards would accuse you of trespassing if they found you on its roof. Of course this is a literal reading, but to consider this British artist’s cummerbund text independent of the tuxedoed building that supports it is to mistake a ponderous thought for a passive-aggressive taunt.



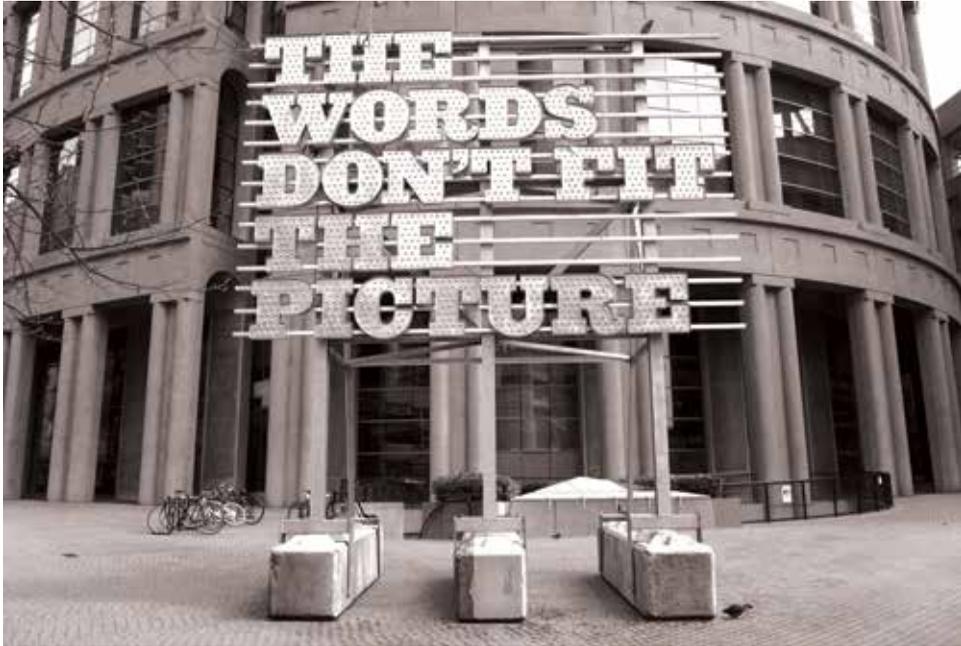
Raymond Boisjoly, *All That Was* (2010)  
437 West Hastings Street (Access Gallery)

Past and future tenses, a passive dependent clause, and a negative conspire to form a text that, in an attempt to ground ourselves in its temporal calculus, slows us. Indeed, it is within this slowness that questions seep in: What is for sale here? Whose land am I on? Why do I move so quickly through the city? Unlike other galleries with texts on their buildings, Boisjoly's was left to the elements after its commissioning agent, the artist-run Access Gallery, was forced to move due to steepening rents, leaving *All That Was* to join the ranks of its prescient title.



Ken Lum, *Monument for East Vancouver* (2010)  
Northwest corner of Clark Drive & Great Northern Way  
Photo credit: Ken Lum. Courtesy the City of Vancouver  
Public Art Program.

At 19.5 metres high, this concrete, steel, and neon cruciform stands at an East Vancouver intersection like Rio de Janeiro's Christ the Redeemer and is visible to those wealthy enough to afford cliff-top homes in West Van. Although widely-admired by those who live within the city's historic working class and immigrant east side, initial criticisms of this 2010 Winter Olympic commission focused on the artwork's Christian iconography, accusing it of reviving the WASP monoculture that flourished in Vancouver until the late-1970s. However, for those who grew up with this symbol written in felt pen inside Stanley Park toilet stalls or carved into bus stop benches in Kerrisdale, it is a mark of pride, one that traces the outward movements of those whose otherness is synonymous with their invisibility, something the artist experienced as a teenager every time he stepped from neighbourhoods like Strathcona or streets like Kingsway.



Ron Terada, *The Words Don't Fit the Picture* (2010)  
350 West Georgia Street (Vancouver Public Library Main Branch)

The “words” in this Olympic commission are LED lights set inside letter-shaped aluminium dishes that, over five lines, move from a left margin towards the right end of a rectangular galvanized steel support rack. As for the “picture,” its field is the totality of that support, and to suggest that the words inside it “don’t fit” is to equate *fitting* with *completing*. Instead, the words merely fit *within* this support, leaving space, like poems do, or pictures can, like the photo-paintings of Ian Wallace, who combines photographic images and painted monochromatic space(s) that amount to a bigger picture, one that includes not only photographed human subjects but the monochromatic space they have either stepped from or are about to enter into, a potential *dérive* space where a viewer can only imagine where the subject has been (or where that subject is headed next). But at night Terada’s work takes on a different shape, one devoid of the supports that make it less a picture than a text that asks us to imagine one.



Various Artists curated by Lorna Brown and Clint Burnham, *Digital Natives* (2011)  
South End of the Burrard Street Bridge  
Photo credit: Barbara Cole

This Vancouver 125 commission, whose title is a play on the Skwxwú7mesh territory on which it was staged and a nickname for those who grew up in the digital age, involved thirty First Nations and non-First Nations artists and writers who were invited by the Other Sights artist collective to submit a tweet-sized text (with provision for unsolicited tweets to come) to be screened at ten-second intervals amidst commercial advertisements on a large electronic billboard operated by Astral Media (on behalf of its owner, the Squamish First Nation). These English and First Nations language texts, which ran the gamut from aboriginal-settler conflicts to formal experiments in concretism, were on display to pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists throughout the month of April of that year, where they elicited a range of responses to go with those who protested the erection of this billboard in the first place.

## MARIE-HÉLÈNE TESSIER / Vancouver-Kaifeng-non-stop

The Snack Bar was rarefied-nonchalant; slender with round sounds of depth and *légèreté*. Church basement-proletarian chic. It was good to know when to sit and how to stand. Shoes played a role. The microclimate was adept in slowing time and speeding heartbeat, in 3D; making chance encounters, museum quality. We were having a cigarette, outside in the alley, which looked into a Mah-jong parlour, above; numerous suspended red lanterns, of course, in the coherence of it all, and some details, inside, were reflecting the Chinatown context in subtle ways, while serving legit traditional Korean dishes along with crispy tostadas. Very few restaurants succeed in hanging real art, which made our host the Aristide Bruant of the twenty-first century. It was our favourite legal clubhouse; notorious artists from different generations; post-photographers and neo-Marxist poets, from a bygone revolution, trying to capture the next paradigm; curators and high-fashion fizzogs, art critics, musicians and the odd *artiste raté*, all colliding within the same frame, with a perspectival view on daily DJs from different time zones. Everyone knew everyone and we could not stand still, even though it was prohibited to dance by law, we still danced, here and there, to untie our thoughts, absolve our desires, and warm up for the next venue.

Although we had lots of friends in common, we had never truly met. The previous week, she had posted something in Mandarin on her wall. Curious, I translated it to discover a new poet; her tone was floating one and a half meters above ground, rather than seeking aerial views and her talent was about leaking the ineffable, with a rice paper-thin humour. “Orientals,” I have always loved this word; a harp sound, the opening of a curtain, a grand entrance, and I trust my ear more than the politics of language. Post-colonialist rhetoric is blocking my view, land mining my imagination. Orientalism, a delectable crime; objectifying culture is one of my favourite things. The other day, a friend told me that she could not do the first move on an Indian man she had a crush on, because of British imperialistic history. I first laughed so hard at the creative excuse for lacking balls, but felt seriously ill a second later. Social studies have snuck into the bedroom. Some political awareness designed for the self-righteous turned into a psycho-sexual neurosis. Love it. I also love to make gross generalizations,

stereotypes as archetypes; it is a question of liking motifs and moirés. Orientals share a gentle existential wit; an attention to details making the tiniest gesture, monumental, preserving a childhood flexibility with change of scale in the same sentence; silent slapstick as a form of survival. Yu Su was a living anime. Short movements with medium long stops, she revelled in suspended time, “*the air being eaten*” by a second ring left unanswered. Her style was traditional with an element of pop: regal-funny. Moved by human hesitation, she liked to mix stardust with cell phones, eyelashes, and farts, breaking the siege of gravity. The challenge in writing poetry is to not sound like poetry. Art that looks like art can be suspicious. Very important, she was dexterous with the comma. “He who would search beyond the desire to seek the termination, of rain.” Under The Gates, sheltering from the passing showers, two lovers breaking up to the near-distant sound of neo-techno, blurring the definitions of waiting and hoping, like *esperar* in Spanish, for both a change of heart and/or a change of weather, negotiating the next move. Yu Su means jade, a gemstone known to attract successful love and/or money; and money sometimes translates in Chinese as silver powder. What first caught my attention was the graphic movement of the fading of one sentence into another, the same way that lines on the road, at night, line up in an optical illusion, each one erasing the previous one, overlapping through speed, swallowing; the entire history of time, non-stop, the universal struggle for feeling the fleeing, “because the road behind you steps into the road in front of you cannot see.”

I had recently gained a considerable experience with fortune, new skills in capturing the moment with a ping pong ball, as a method, and as she was being ageless and talkative under the magnetic moon, I said, ironically, “Darling, let’s col-la-bo-rate.” Most people using the word “collaborate” never do. Some words become soiled by not living up to them, like saying *I love you* after a violent fight or *I am sorry*, but fight again soon after, for the same stupid reason. “Write me a poem in Mandarin” I said, for this upcoming issue on translation. I will turn the pictograms into a 3D garden of monuments which I will visit with a pocket size dictionary, trying to decipher where I landed, learning Chinese in one week, a breeze. I will be a tourist inside your mind.” Her eyes opened (something specific about Asian eyes opening wide in a sudden way); she obviously liked the idea. The Snack Bar was closing. Before we split in different directions, I introduced her to my friend Steven Tong, as she had mentioned that she had a hard time meeting Chinese friends interested in Chinese culture. (I knew that you do not introduce

Black people to Black people just because they are Black but I did not care about that either.) I introduced him as a Daoist and independent curator who, along with two other curator friends, had been showing emerging artists for over a decade. By “independent” I meant by not depending on state funding or commodity to operate and contribute to the arena of expression. His gallery by then had become an “institution,” in the best sense of the word; without the bureaucracy and comfort that comes with artist-run-centres, which often run the danger of becoming a bit lazy in the effort of finding the new pulse. I told her that Steven had the rare quality of not relying on names and pursuing his own intuition as he often chose artists for their personal frequency more than their ideas, trusting originality and subtlety from the human encounter. Risky.

Yu Su and I met for lunch the following week. Both floating on sleep deprivation; healthy Lebanese seemed the right choice. We walked down the terrazzo stairs leading half-way into the ground, landing in a 1940s glass vestibule with pale mahogany window frames and a collection of exotic plants. Despite the sunny day, the cavernous place was packed. When it opened a few years before, it was another clubhouse of ours; after midnight, we would close the wooden blinds and drink cheap champagne until daylight. The interior architecture was espousing the pre-existing WW2 submarine vibe with deliberate wide arches, subtle streamlined curves, and fresh tile work abstracting angular palms. The warm white walls were lit with middle-eastern perforated brass lanterns, creating sultry shadows, in resonance with a chosen sound track of contemporary ethnic sounds; a sensual underground in the Paris of the Middle-East, when it was wild, cultured, limpid, and free. As we sat down, I briefly explained that the initial concept for the “translation” issue invited a loose interpretation of the word, but that a conservative translation would be refreshing when “experimental” becomes *de rigueur*. We both spoke ESL but loved making an effort to find *les mots justes*, while holding Chinese and French as each, twice as precious as the other, infinitely superior. I was shocked to find out that the word circle, in Chinese font, did not look like a circle at all. We quickly moved into philosophy, exchanging different laws on movement and discontinuity, concepts of the eternal return, sketching different versions of the checker board, emphasizing on the point of change in the yin and yang, and folding into music, the most abstract of all languages. Everything is about sound, even for the Deaf, who do not miss a visual beat. Translation is

the human condition. I suddenly remembered her face, in the dark, at John's, a clandestine after-hour rave room run by our friend Andrew Volk, an electric DJ, and impresario. One night Thin Gaze was playing a set; something only he could play; bedroom drone with a voice lower than low; Zappa's vertigo with less irony; dark lucidity in self-doubt; melancholic leisure with a hint of resentment about having to earn a living; a permanent rehearsal; lots of bass, lots of wires; post-apocalyptic romanticism without clear display of personal pain, mumbling for himself more than for an audience; private Baudelairean spleen making the dread seductive, reassuring, soft, and renewable. I remembered her face, she sang with him in a duo. Feeling so much yet remembering so little, impressions come back à propos in flashbacks of déjà-vu. They used to be lovers. We corresponded for a little while, about auditory hallucinations, until he left for China where he started to produce writings under his name, Chris Blackmore, "A gentrified Jew from Canada in the rougher part of Hong Kong's casino for musical inspiration," translating his experience in Mongkok, while his "intended love-work dream in Shanghai evaporated overnight" (...) his "hopes of a working visa were pinned to the assistance of 'Forever Bright', an agency that built a lucrative practice from word-of-desperate-ex-pat-mouth and a labyrinthine Web 1.0 Internet presence." He sent me a few vivid images of his neighbourhood at night: "a clutter of thousand HKD bank notes lying on the floor next to the thousand-yard stare of some working girl," summing up his excursion getting "to the heart of the presumptuousness of art" he said, "I guess—you have to buy into the idea of your own exemplary-ness to launch something you make out into the traffic of humanity."

As I walked into the Mandarin garden, I heard whisperings about one single twig in a field, one single person in a thousand, to make friends with, to intersect, to exchange and deliver the fun, to join for a life time, to rise above and float in hopes, tireless, despite all obstacles, guiding each other through the eight cardinal points of the self and burst into the evening dusk. Sunsets are for the weak minded. Seven affairs, eight affairs, before reaching something resembling affect, held in the palm of our hand, or not, by contrast, a change of state in harmless casual relations. Psycho-kitties. Apparently, there exists, a single one, like a particle used to exaggerate, to emphasize things referring to things preceding everything, such as, also, but not necessarily. Of course, Yu Su's poem had to be about the possibility of love, and the impossibility of it.

YU SU (TRANS. CHRIS BLACKMORE) / 一毫一釐之

|                                 |                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 一毫一釐之                           | a little bit of this and that                                                             |
| 倏僚 <sup>1</sup> 參參 <sup>2</sup> | too far away, too pretty to touch                                                         |
| 上千上萬之                           | beyond a thousand, beyond a million                                                       |
| 婉變泛泛                            | gracefully floating                                                                       |
| 沙石阻擋激流飛迸                        | down here, sand and stone blocking, diverting a relentless<br>attack of waves             |
| 圜環環圜怎破圍城 <sup>3</sup>           | always wandering the circle's walls, held by spirits, a<br>fortress besieged              |
| 引力既定是圓是方                        | always a circle outside a square, what one must solve<br>before entering                  |
| 深嵌手掌敬而無妨                        | fists curled tightly, the distance of worship is always better                            |
| 囿于一隅兮 <sup>4</sup>              | nested in the corner                                                                      |
| 深藏不露                            | something hidden deeply and perfectly                                                     |
| 難乎其難兮                           | inconceivable in nature                                                                   |
| 亦不夷憚                            | how pleasant, this time and place                                                         |
| 飄風終朝暴雨終夕                        | thunderstorm through the night—the sound fades at<br>sunrise, rain continues until sunset |
| 願望終止止於人慾                        | the end of human desire, the object ceases to exist                                       |
| 覓覓綿綿黃梁坍塌                        | after slow, intense attempts, one awakes and all was<br>nothing                           |
| 七事八事孜孜汲汲                        | every little thing remains, nothing has changed                                           |

1 倏僚，《诗经·陈风·月出》A quotation taken from the *Book of Odes*.

2 參參, *The Book of Later Han, the Biography of Zhangheng*, 《后汉书·张衡传》：“脩初服之娑娑兮，长余佩之參參。”

3 Zhongshu, Qian. *Fortress Besieged* (Shanghai: Shanghai Zhengguang Literary Series, 1947).

4 囿, 中国古代供帝王贵族进行狩猎、游乐的园林形式。通常选定地域后划出范围, 或筑界垣。囿中草木鸟兽自然滋生繁育。《诗经·大雅》中记述了最早的周文王灵囿。秦汉以后, 囿都建于官苑中。In ancient Chinese architecture, 囿 signifies a garden with an enclosing wall.

## DANIEL CANTY / *Ma translation*

“Language is a virus from outer space.”

—William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch*

Until I underwent my own translation, I thought the future was dubbed.

In French my mother tongue, the term *translation*, borne of geometry, is feminine. It connotes the harmonious displacement of a figure, whose component parts—lines, summits, angles—all follow the same pull. Once here. Now there. Across the equanimous eternity of the Cartesian grid. I was born a metaphorical boy, and at the end of the 20th century, as the digitally loaded year 2000 beckoned with its intimations of the near future, I left my native suburb near Montréal and moved to Vancouver, on the left coast of Canada, and the heart of Anglophonia, to meet *Canty*, the inner Irishman to which I owed my patronym, and *become my own man*, as common parlance would have it.

Although *translation* finds an echo in specialized English usage, it can never be equated with *la traduction*—if *une translation* can become *a translation* as it crosses the official boundary of Canadian language, one solitude remains whole: *traduction* stays *une*, or becomes *a translation*. I was first made aware of this troubling asymmetry at an early age, upon my initial prolonged exposure to an actual foreign tongue, in my provincially requisite fourth grade English class.

Some say that English is an alliteratively inclined language, whereas French, with its alexandrine intricacies, is metaphorically prone<sup>1</sup>—I am certainly poetically-inclined, and suggest that we accept this image as truth, however fleeting, and let our reasoning proceed from there.

Most of the English I knew growing up reached us with a delay, like the light of dead stars. The glow of TV screen opened up luminous tunnels in our suburban living rooms and basements. Cartoons, science-fiction shows, A and B movies from Britain or the United States were invariably dubbed for the benefit of French-speaking audiences by invisible (perhaps even beret-wearing) heavily-accented comedians from across the Atlantic. Only the *Flintstones*, stalwart defenders of archaic family values, spoke with our accents, bolstering our prehistoric hopes for linguistic independence. *Wabawabadoo, cher Fred!* Imaginative Québécois children,

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Roubaud, writer and mathematician, provides a lengthy proof of this argument in *La vieillesse d'Alexandre* (1978).

intent on learning of their place in the world, suffered a double detachment. On the one hand, our colonial co-dependents reaffirmed their symbolic hold on the lost *Empire français d'Amérique du nord* by muffling the din of English under a veneer of *bon parler*, to their cultural and commercial advantage, as had always been their wont. On the other hand, talented lip-readers amongst us could train themselves to detect, under the evident otherness of the events brought to our wondering attention—hot rods and starships, faraway planets and wheat fields, E.T.s and hot gals...—fragments of a secret message, trying to break through the language barrier of images. ABC, CBC, CBS, and NBC, the alphabetically-abridged Anglophone stations of the 13-channel pre-cable days,<sup>2</sup> combined with the outdoors conversations of my West Island neighbourhood, provided half-decipherable subtitles for my wonderment, and I stalwartly attempted to splice together their dispatches with the *afterimages* of Dubland. Had I already intuited that the truest, or at least the most *stylish*, storytellers were also linguists of a kind? I thought of course, that my own consciousness was central to the plot, and looking back on my musings with writerly distance, I am drawn to conclude that these TV offerings were not true images but *afterimages*, thus wending my way back into the story. In French, *dubbing* translates as *doublage*. Placing myself at the center of an *Invasion-of-the-Body-Snatchers*-like plot could explain my creative confusion—my favourite actors, affirming their secret humanity in the midst of borrowed fictions, were trying to warn me of an impending menace: the language of the future, and of the world at large, was nothing like my own, and a vast conspiracy threatened to leave me hanging outside the precincts of real life, *lip-reading afterimages of tomorrow in the suburbs*.<sup>3</sup>

Alas, like many a sensitive suburban basement boy, I nourished my anguish by thinking that *L'Histoire, avec sa grande hache*,<sup>4</sup> had severed us from the main

2 At the time, there were only three French channels, which we referred to by their numbers, *le 2* (Radio-Canada), *le 7* (Télé-Métropole), *le 8* (Radio-Québec). Stations 5 (Quatre-saisons), a very commercially-minded canal, and 9, a loose alliance of community televisions, affirmed the victory of local arithmetic over the bandwidth.

3 It helped that Donald Sutherland, who played the starring role of the last victim, and whom I once sighted buying running shoes for his youngest at Sports Expert, hailed from Montréal.

4 Georges Perec's pun, in *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (1975) translates, literally, as *History, with its great axe*. I cannot help but think that the loss of the *h* has something to do with the sustained absence of that letter in my spoken English usage.

plotline, and that my *play was set nowhere*.<sup>5</sup> Succour came in the form of my fourth grade English teacher, Miss P., who hailed from Poland. She sported plaid skirts and an extravagantly plumed hat. Monolingually inclined flunkies, attempting to justify their poor academic performances, often complained that she was not a *native* speaker of English, and that her accent, *really*, was as hard to understand as theirs, and as funky as her clothing habits. Time is fearsomely symmetric. Its parenthetical echoes split through silent infinities. On the left coast, I landed a job with a Polish contingent of designers, who understood my linguistic predicament well, but tended to stay home, close to the families they had invented for themselves. I was far from my own, and more outgoing. At various social *soirées* in the outer reaches of Anglophonia, I would again and again have to answer to the same tautology concerning *le français de France* and *le parler québécois*. A venturesome guest, apologizing for his imperfect education, would underline his incapacity to understand my *original* language, complaining that the federal government's diphthongal edict had set the ground for a permanent national misunderstanding. He or she knew that we Quebecers did not speak *le Français de France*, but a bastardized North American variation, which made it so much more difficult to agree with governmental proclamations of our officially-shared second nature. I would answer my federal interlocutor, with well-meaning nasally-inflected outrage, that, since the ships landed and abandoned peasant riff-raff and a throng of mail order wives on this shore, we evolved at a safe distance from the edicts of the Académie and remained closer to *la langue de Rabelais*, that 16th century thought-party, than the French were, and punctuate my statement with another sip of wine and perhaps a handful of peanuts.

Translation is a beautiful test of tolerance, stretching language to its acceptable limits. Recently, after delivering a reading in Toronto, I caught myself answering a querying poet that *English is not a foreign language*. Mine lacks an *h* of course, but there are no thoughts of translation in my [h]ead as I use it. You will never know for sure, but I can assure you that my consciousness is laden only with itself as I address you. *Ma translation* is a step to the side, to a place where I can steal a sideways glance at my doubles, and the home where I came from, unknowing. I now know that the future was not dubbed: that is only a metaphor, and we are out of time.

5 I borrow the formula from Alfred Jarry, who sets *Ubu-Roi* (1896) in “Poland—that is to say, nowhere.”

## SARAH DOWLING / Different Languages

### An Introduction

Multilingual writing has been ubiquitous since—when? The ancient Romans used multilingualism to pay homage to their literary forebears and for expedient communication. Medieval poetry mixed Latin with vernacular languages, for comic and lyric effects. The modernists delighted in linguistic collage. In the 1980s, Chicana feminists moved between Spanish, English, and Spanglish as they composed their *autohistorias*, and Quebecoise and Anglophone Canadian feminists collaborated on translational *corps/textes*. Among contemporary writers, it seems that everybody's doing it, whether "it" refers to drawing upon mother tongues, writing through translation, tracking sedimentary layers of Indigenous and colonial languages, or enacting the violent juxtapositions of geopolitical conflict.

In this way, literary multilingualism is not so different from other representations of multilingualism in contemporary culture. It has a double valence, signaling the cultural capital gained through an elite education as well as the stigma attached to an outsider status. Whereas educators and policymakers once considered bilingualism an impediment to children's education, scientists and business researchers today view the ability to speak at least two languages as a valuable skill in an increasingly globalized society. Pop-cultural representations tend to cast multilingualism as a unique modern-day advantage, equating the co-presence of many languages with the additive pluralism of our apparently post-racial multi-cultural societies.

Perhaps this view of multilingualism is best exemplified in Coca-Cola's 2014 Super Bowl commercial, a four million dollar, sixty-second ad featuring a group of young girls singing "America the Beautiful" in English, Spanish, Tagalog, Mandarin, Hindi, Hebrew, Keres, Senegalese French and Arabic. The ad was heralded as a coup for diversity, but as *The Guardian's* Gary Younge points out, it is virtually "indistinguishable from the official videos the U.S. state department [sic] shows you while you're waiting in immigration." He's right: the ad begins in English, with a shot of a cowboy on a white horse. It then jumps to a series of

diaphanously lit outdoor scenes, cut back and forth with wholesome images of kids in a movie theater, surfers bobbing on the waves, break-dancers, a family on a road trip, a brightly lit Chinatown. Urban modernity and rural tradition are seamlessly interwoven, united by the girls' different yet eminently recognizable song. These young girls "too, sing America," to quote Langston Hughes. But unlike Hughes's poem "I, too," which turns on its impassioned critique of anti-Black racism, the ad offers no fundamental challenge. If anything, its celebration of "America" glosses over histories of race-based exclusion and present-day racial inequality.

Coca-Cola's representation of diversity is pretty typical in its framing of multilingualism as a benevolent and exciting expansion of the national body. In the realm of literature, however, multilingualism functions differently. As the brief, schematic list at the outset of this essay suggests, literary multilingualism embraces a longer history of cultural exchange and confrontation. The authors that I present in this short selection—LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, Amy Sara Carroll, Anne Tardos, and Paolo Javier—exemplify the many other things that multilingualism can do. In Diggs's and Tardos's work, rhythm pulls us through any number of languages, which we encounter like clusters of urban street signs. In Carroll's and Javier's poems, other languages create the impression of voices coming from *somewhere*, a feeling that touches the English-language words as well, and prompts us to wonder about etymology and its embedded histories.

The volume of multilingual writing seems to be increasing. Happily, this work is receiving increased attention from readers, editors and critics. In addition to this special issue of *The Capilano Review*, the Arizona Poetry Center hosted a recent exhibit of multilingual poetry, Juliana Spahr and Charles Bernstein have written significant essays about multilingual writing, and a number of scholars (including myself) are working on academic books describing the phenomenon. The interest, I believe, comes from the fact that multilingual writing does difference differently. It asks that we attend to the untranslatable, to the resolutely unassimilable: whose language are we speaking, what languages aren't we hearing, what histories are contained within a loan word? To read multilingual writing is to trace the soft and sometimes permeable boundaries of our own ignorance. Without an invitation to engage in grabby expansionism, what can we do at this limit? In multilingual writing, we wrestle the possibilities.

**LATASHA N. NEVADA DIGGS / the line of paella according to  
jeriba shigan**

“oh black water, keep on rollin’ ...”

—Doobie Brothers

Santiago Stoneich Crabovich

*son of ... imperial son of ... stuffed tomatoes*

Licha Atlanticichna Surf

*daughter of ... almond casserole frozen in ... slack tide*

Checo Albacorez

*son of ... longline & drift gillnet*

Piluca Pacific Verch Cod

*daughter of ... bacalao ... Basque style*

Maricoco Tanneranak Perempuan Crab

*daughter of ... fondu*

Carmelita Summersdottir Flounderssonar

*daughter of ... garlic grilled son of ... florentine*

Cuco Stripedsson Basssonar

*son of ... farmed hybrid ... son of ... wild feed*

Cristo Bluez Crab

*son of ... cobbler ... w/ corn relish*

Tito Map Rockfish

*son of ... a pacific roast w/ lemon pepper & garlic powder*

Julito Lobsterez Canada

*son of ... north atlantic right whale*

Sisca Verch Yellowfin Tunainichna

*daughter of ... Hawaiian bake ...*

Rita Atlantic Flounders  
*daughter of ... brown butter pan fried*  
Nanita Solesdochter  
*daughter of ... crispy crunchy shredded coconut*  
Frascuelo Coho oğlu  
*son of ... florfenicol ... oxytetracycline*  
Goyo Map Groupers  
*son of ... gender reassignment*

Lala Sharksdottir  
*daughter of ... shark fin soup*

Licha Verch Chinock  
*daughter of ... curried ... masala ... parmesan*

Quincho Pacificsson Bin Halibutsonar  
*son of ... son of ... owned shares*

Mayito Sablefish Bin Black Cod  
*son of ... festive albatrosses*

Cuca Mahimahi qizi  
*daughter of ... poll and troll ... radioactive leak*

Manolito Patagonian Toothfish  
*son of ... cranberry catch*  
Gonchi Kingyevic Crab  
*son of ... newburg*

Mancho Tilapianpoika  
*son of mustard crusted freshwater*

Loli Caviar qizi  
*daughter of ... immature sturgeons*

Pancha Binta Snow Crabvez  
*daughter of ... deviled jubilee*

Nacho Monkfishoglu  
*son of ... tarragon walnut sauce*

Verch Tra  
*daughter of ... dill poached*

Basa qizi  
*daughter of ... blackened w/ honey & cumin*

Turito Bin Mackerelez  
*son of ... mid-water trawl*

Yoli Chowder qizi  
*daughter of ... New England ... Manhattan*  
*... Rhode Island ... Hatteras ...*

Monsi Geoduckzoon  
*son of ... hand rakes dredges*

Kike Ceroez  
*son of ... hook and line*

Bela Alaskantyär Binta Salmon  
*pan seared daughter of ...*  
*... interrupted spawning*

Mica Orangedochter Roughy  
*daughter of ... dead sand tiger*

Yoli Bigeyentytar  
*daughter of ... a prolific breeder*

Pepelu Catfish oğlu  
*son of ... minimal fish oil*

Yaco Fitzdungeness  
*son of ... low curried bycatch*

Pocholo Map King  
*son of ... low pot ceviche*

Nanda Chilean Seantyär Bass  
*daughter of ... mercury*

Nati Atlantic Codanak Perempuan  
*daughter of ... bottom trawl*

Lulú Skipjack Tunasdottir  
*daughter of ... smothered fillet*

Valentinito Shrimpyevich  
*son of ... reek mangroves ... beer batter*

Chelo Pangasius Bin Catfish  
*son of ... ponds of discharge*

Fonsi Rainbowsen Trout  
*son of fresh water raceways*

Carlito Sea Scallops  
*son of ... au gratin ... missing loggerhead*

Chano Swordfishanak Lelaki  
*son of ... albatrosses snared by longlines*

Rafa Bluefin Tuna  
*son of ... obese juveniles in net pens*

Tula Squidyevna  
*daughter of ... premature puberty*

## DESPIERTA

A riot of flower afuera

*Thud!* A bird against the awning,  
a thumb, twiddled  
down, just plain.  
(Dumb.)  
Loud as  
“The Great Figure” (No.  
**5**).  
All lung.  
Do not “breathe,”  
a word  
of this). To anyone,  
**I could succumb**

---

*Don't be so glum, chum.*  
Chachalacas, cracids.  
*Ka-ka-rooki-rooki-ka! Watch-a-lak!*  
Giggle. Bath. Language.  
Girl. Room. I was  
listening. After.  
Repeat. Me.  
My favorite beach  
at age three.  
My mother, string  
(bikinied)—  
in theory, a theory

of the multi

**VERSE:**

Manuel Maples Arce ~~ALEGORÍA~~ Gilberto Owen  
for Mariana Botey

~~“¿Cuándo acabaremos de leer a Proust?”~~ This is the summer in which my body goes haywire, but there’s nothing left to do but ride it out to ~~its logical conclusion.~~ The end of the line: Contemporaneous as Estridentismo, I find myself, ~~asleep,~~ lidless dreamer (electric sheep), in the seat of the Metro Barranca del Muerto’s bilious roar. No sacrificial lamb! When I stand up, two men use me to complete their sandwich. The one, armed with a penknife, cuts open the bottom of my knapsack. Cassettes, tampons, my wallet & journal tumble to the car’s ~~messianic-~~oceanic floor. [~~ACTUAL No. 1: “En este instante asistimos al espectáculo de nosotros mismos.”~~] Then, before the doors are fully open, they’ve stolen this—my documentation of the Event—only half-written, but against my will, in circulation. My consciousness, my sole witness, rallies to make the best of a bad. ~~Situationism.~~ *¡Que viva Tepito!*

## ANNE TARDOS / Two Polylingual Poems

### Ziglio While (compendium)

#### Nine 126

Ziglio lusty mannequin gooey saliva shiva tzim-tzim tchebaba.  
Voulez-vous German hegemony gazebo sex appeal lingering armor.  
Tchebaba society self knowledge through doglike valor readily belittled.  
Zinger je je zinger je: mich dich Villa nicht.  
Djibouti laptop polyrhythmic stevedore imagination for example people die.  
Roquefort sabotage randomized juvenile popcorn scapular Kodiak highjack.  
Bolondok djenny all is bakada sinecure vampiric lending fee.  
Zygote stimulate bingo frenzy—Middle East wannabe head dress.  
Ixum bexum predilexum, question: is this worth my while. [2014]

### Qu'est-ce que c'est que "natural"?

Combien is quanto?  
Hat mennyi van?  
Avez-vous un chien?  
Rien?  
Can you hear me bien?  
Hein?  
In a yellow jacket je grande dame.  
Je gendarme.  
A dog named Sultan is wearing a red bandana. [1984]

**PAOLO JAVIER /** from *Court of the Dragon*

40

what noise busking romance voluminous contusion  
declamation lyre reversal  
hour ensue inverse knowledge witness rarer monument  
no fight you cant fight Ill manage erudition of pie  
indecent question inconsolable sequence to atrocity  
no life on earth nobody to see through  
name your English mine statuary composition analogous to febrile lane  
break down ounce by lone animal nuclei tremble  
solder omnivorous lead dose vibration surgeon delay philosophy  
no life on earth you win again contusion as dawn fits satellite disc  
count sojourner gap  
hatchet in hand undone ache local seismosis  
in funeral dress justice or just fine or divinity to pull off  
before we tear assortment rotation lore  
dispute ode escalator quarter invention  
there's no fight you can't fight                      require ocean  
let's be adieu or platelet of tungsten calm  
contract solemn obstacle ecstatic                      loneliness period  
I'll name English yours for the win

**JUBILATE ORFEO SE INTORNO EURYDICE**

zookeeper killed by wolves in Sweden  
beside the beach you take me to watch baby seal pups  
it's your birthday, Coyo B, maligayang bati  
sleep comes over me

make it through gongyo it's noon  
lean into salvation innocence  
nude turquoise pause blank space  
your subject head cinnamon rule narration suture  
destiny book hostile shelf  
you've reached a quarter century as is the case of parables  
your verdant hand recede  
lore as bridge barter abandon  
lore secure senility triumphant  
why Ill message you somewhere transcribe Vril stanza  
appear in adjacent room pause blank haste divine  
not on your birthday, Coyo B! I want you happy  
sorry to vanish  
why sing a solid identity sauna clamp  
HOY! your foot on the gas pedal of my Honda  
too demure to speak  
enter dialect ocean seismic Port Said  
it's probably too late to catch up  
October  
I mean a head of violent arctic squeamish  
despair nonesuch appraise no way somatic atlas  
or that beach we gaze at submerging pandas  
in cold cold ocean  
I leave you  
where cold can't recover itself  
outer engine portal corridor  
HOY! COYO B! establish announcement  
nerve of Rome counter Adonais imaginarium  
lead ulcer a dull terrain  
today you appear in adjacent room, viceroy finger in place  
marvelous period pause blank spate  
much to relate about our visit north of intention  
tell me, love, pondering the leaves

## PETER QUARTERMAIN / Punctuation 101

A birthday card for Fred Wah's seventy-fifth

]

Gertrude Stein said a **period** the English call it a Full Stop always has something to do with going on it marks a movement of time included in a given space it can begin to act as it thinks best to have completely a life of its own. But a **comma** is too servile helping you along holding your coat for you and putting on your shoes keeps you from living your life as actively as you should lead it it looks back when looking back is not what's needed and she loved them as little as she loved a question- or an exclamation-mark hardly at all since anybody who can read at all knows when a question is a question or a shriek a shriek. In ancient Greek a *κόμμα* is what has been cut off like chaff from threshing wheat and looks a bit like that, it interrupts the inner life of sentences and paragraphs and makes a separateness; wearing a period for a hat a comma in that vertical conjunction calls itself a **semicolon** it rejects completeness and really it does nothing which may be why with his customary impoliteness Kurt Vonnegut called it a transvestite hermaphrodite generating nothing it puts together and it pulls apart all at the same time but casting its eye back through the sentence lacks all progeny whereas the **colon** passes something through and says the sentence is not yet fully ended it looks forward all the time, makes it go on for a lifetime, it has its own fertility: in ancient Greek a *κῶλον* is a limb or better yet a member, something John Bullokar remembered in his *English Expositor* of 1616 when he noted one "is made with two prickles" it does some of what a **hyphen** does by pulling things together. There are some who say a hyphen marks an almost-there, is incomplete, a bit like Gertrude's Oakland where there is no there, but whatever else a hyphen is that is not so, a hyphen is complete though never ended, in ancient Greek *ὕφ* "under" and *ἕν* "one," two words pulled together a **one** not to be pulled apart, emphatically itself, pulling together contrarities and samenesses, movement in thought and feeling, movement of time in time, home of energy and life. A hyphen is a place to BE. It is itself. No *almost* at all about that *there*. A Fred-ness.

( . , ? ! ; : - )

## see to see —

### TED BYRNE: *Rhodopsin bop voluptuary: Virtualis*, Christine Stewart and David Dowker (Bookthug 2013)

This book nearly sinks under the obscene weight of its cover, a celebration of simony depicting the apotheosis of the Barbarini family in the election of Pope Urban VIII. This spectacle, in which all the emblematic elements, by definition, claim readability,<sup>1</sup> nonetheless mimics inexhaustible complexity through the multiplicity of its intricate parts and the overabundance of adorable detail, through its spatial *tromperie*, “a simultaneity // of gravity . . . of bees / and light.” The bees of the visible—the emblematic bees of Barbarini industry—hover above its surface, apparently monstrous in size but in fact, once one adjusts for their proximity to the viewer, bee-size and on this side of the picture plane. Conversely, its greatest height is a pit or well—its “blue sky faience”<sup>2</sup> drawing our gaze past the allegorical tableaux and into the book.

If the cover is paratextual, then so is the equally weighty bibliography at the end of this short complex of poems. The bibliography informs us that the work is an intense co-reading of texts. Although it would engage the obsessive reader in an equally intense labour of reading, as writing *Virtualis* operates more beside these texts than within them. Thus the bibliography, incongruous in the context of what appears to be a small collection of lyrics, is made part of the work; and like the cover, it would seem to open onto a territory much larger than the text it abuts, were it not for the fact that the text is so much larger than it appears, operating within a kind of infinity aided by its quasi mathematical structure. There are many keys to this structure in the works cited: the bifurcations of Bentham, the folds and façades of Deleuze, Benjamin’s description of the passages, the *phantasmata* of Agamben’s Cavalcanti, the parade of authorities in Burton, Celan’s meridian, and so on.

1 Rosichino, in his *Dichiaratione*, says that without his guidance the “viewer would remain deprived of the pleasure of understanding its significance.”

2 “porcelain eternity,” “blue euphoria of ceilings.”

It opens under the sign of infinity, the infinity of selection signaled by the first footnote. It piles up such substitutions, moving forward in a kind of automatism, as if governed by the first rule of psychoanalysis, reveling in the treasury of signifiers. Substitution, or repetition, also governs the axis of combination, with its endless rhyming. The work seems compelled by its patterns, one might almost say patterns which begin and end in the body, or in the embodiment of the voice, as with Cavalcanti's sighs (*pneuma, spiriti*). "Truth bodied forth in the dance of represented ideas, resists being projected, by whatever means, into the realm of knowledge" (Benjamin, *Trauerspiel*).

There is a danger that unreadable texts won't be read. But to say that this text is unreadable is to say that it is inexhaustible and resistant, slowing the act of reading to a crawl. "This is the record of our reverberations / in the soft impedance of time." Like Pietro da Cortona's ceiling, *Virtualis* is an allegorical machine, stamping out meanings at a terrible pace. Every time I read it, it's as if I'd never read it before. If this book only had two dimensions, one would be pleasure, the other pain. Pleasure is terrible, it releases us from obligation. It would be sinful to read this book in the time it takes to watch a comedy, but go ahead, frivolity is one of its strengths. Study is painful, gives rise to melancholy; its emblem is the bibliography. But if you can enjoy the pain that results from an inescapable labyrinth, like the concept of the baroque, then this book is also for you.

## DORA SANDERS: Visiting Yeats

My uncle in England had given me a letter of introduction from a friend of his to the Editor of the Dublin Times. This resulted in an invitation to tea with the great Irish poet, W.B. Yeats.

I took a bus to the designated corner and checked my bearings at a small store on the corner. Sure I was right ivery [*sic*] way, the storekeeper said. Go against the stream around the corner and I would find the boy at home. He spoke as though Mr. Yeats were a member of his own family. I walked along a wide road with a stream about five feet wide and never more than three inches deep flowing over pebbles in the opposite direction below a stout stone wall. Very soon there was a gap in the wall showing a twin stream on the other side of the wall.

A wide flat wooden bridgeway crossed both streams to a curving driveway and a small grey stone house stood in a sweet space of grass and flowers. The front door was on the street side but the house faced into the afternoon sun over a gentle valley built up with houses to a far line of smudged blue hills.

White frills on cap and apron framed a pretty Irish girl who showed me into a study so littered with papers and piles of books it looked as though someone had put them all into a bottle and shaken them. A short, broad-shouldered man with whitey-grey hair stood in the middle looking at me with incredible intensity. The maid withdrew and I nearly followed her.

I had expected a gathering of the usual tea-party guests and a smiling hostess who would be Mrs. Yeats. Alone in the tumbled study with a man so famous as W.B. Yeats I was overwhelmed by my ignorance about him. At that time he was regarded as perhaps the major poet of the day. I knew he was a fervent Irish patriot who had written great epics in the Gaelic language, of which I knew not one word. He was a co-founder of the Irish Abbey Theatre but I had not yet seen even the outside of it, nor read any plays produced in it. I had always loved the lyric English poem that made him famous outside of Ireland, but could remember only the first line,

“I will arise and go now and go to Innisfree . . .”

then something about bean poles and linnets’ wings. I stood frozen, thinking, I am absolutely tongue-tied, but then he asked if I would like to see his garden and I assented eagerly.

There was a door between the wall-high bookshelves that led directly outside. The flower beds were very large and full of the same flowers that grew, as freely, in our own gardens. Hollyhocks, delphiniums blue pink and mauve, bright yellow marigolds, bronze and gold gaillardia and fleets of cosmos, pastel patches floating in a high green fog.

He walked in the flower beds as though they were part of the lawns, pulling a weed here and a weed there, but never stepping on a plant. We came to a band of flowers that ran straight across the lawn, dividing it in two, and, crossing it, he stepped high over a sort of tunnel of chicken wire built along the centre line. I saw a stout, complacent black and white hen following the tunnel at her own pace, cocking yellow eyes at this and that, like a self-satisfied matron window-shopping on the main street.

Mr. Yeats asked, “How do you like my hen walk?”

“I’d like to walk one.”

He explained that the hen house was “up there” but he felt it good for the hens to be able to scratch in the orchard, and he didn’t want them in the garden so he had built them the hen walk and concealed it with the wide flower band. In imagination I could see the hen in the hen house, having dutifully laid her egg, plopping to the floor, settling her feathers and cackling,

“I will arise and go now....”

I wanted to ask if the name of the orchard was Innisfree, but it seemed like joking with Sir Lancelot about the Holy Grail. We had been talking about flowers like old acquaintances gossiping about mutual friends. Instead of risking what might turn out to be a bad joke, I began telling him of a rare sight I had seen in Georgian Bay.

I was staying with friends at Honey Harbour and one day took a canoe and paddled by myself to nearby Beau Soleil Island which was Indian land and had no houses on it. From a small beach convenient for leaving the canoe I followed a trail across the height of land where a ten-foot wooden cross had been erected in a clearing in the woods. The trail led beyond and downwards to another beach, low and covered with round flat stones.

From springs somewhere on Beau Soleil water seeped across the beach to Lake Huron, glinting between the stones like the leading in a stained glass window. Near the lake’s edge was a vivid carpet of fringed blue gentian, fragile flowers on slender stems with meagre leaves and on the stones beneath the flowers green snakes lay sunning themselves, dozens and dozens of snakes coiled on the rocks above the seeping water. When I appeared suddenly at the trail’s end some snakes lifted their heads, and then all began to move, uncoiling from the stones and gliding towards the lake through the water. And as they moved among the stems the flowers swayed and rippled as though a breeze blew over them....

I looked across the flowers at Mr. Yeats and he was absolutely still, his eyes staring at me but not seeing me. I knew that he was seeing fringed blue gentian rippling as green snakes slid past them—and then he came back to the garden and we stood staring at each other. He said, “Let us find some scones.”

Back in the study the scones were warm under a white cloth on a tray that had been placed on a low table in front of a fresh-lit fire. The poet sat forward in his

slim armchair and poured the tea asking question after question about Canada and I answered as well as I could. He knew that Toronto was on a big lake, and I tried to describe it, and talked about High Park and the Humber River in the winter, the brown Muskoka water and the orange light that shines on country roads when the maple trees that border them flame in autumn. I told him about Caledon Glen and the lines that run downhill and the thunderstorm that painted Japanese pictures in India ink and watercolour.

He said he had seen similar effects with storms that swept from the north Atlantic over the West coast of Ireland. He pointed out that he allowed no drapes on his windows to shut out anything of what lay outside them and he said the walls of grey stone that showed a foot thick in the wall openings were all the draperies needed. He also said that he would never have a gate hung in the wall opening by the drive's entrance for the same reasons.

When it was time to leave he walked with me to the end of the driveway and the flat bridge across the wide shallow water to the opening in the stone wall where there was no gate. I left him with the pleasant feeling of having shared some treasures with a friend who valued them as I did.

At the bus stop the bus was not in sight along the long tree-shaded Dublin suburban street and I walked to meet it at the next stop. And the next, and still the next, going over and over in my mind the memories of that enchanted visit....

In the strange way that our memories work mine now gave back to me very clearly every word of the poem I had forgotten in the Poet's study:

I will arise and go now and go to Innisfree  
And a small cabin build there of lathe and wattles made, Nine bean  
rows will I have there and a hive for the honey bee  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.  
And I will find some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow  
Falling from the wings of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight is all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow  
And the evening full of the linnets' wings.

I remembered the man who had written that, short and grey, gazing across his flower bed and seeing wild blue gentian growing on the shore of Beau Soleil Island; and he had said, "Let's find some scones," and the fat hen waddled down the hen walk on her way to Innisfree.

Filled with a sense of music and colour and the magical meaning of words, I waited at the next bus stop because the bus was moseying along the road behind me at an easy Irish pace, like a tracking dog following a scent.

When retired Senator Pat Carney was going through her late mother Dora Sanders Carney's papers, she came upon this unpublished article, written in 1932. Dora Sanders was born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1903. Her family moved to Canada before World War One. On a ship to China in 1933, she met Canadian Jim Carney who worked for the Shanghai Municipal Council. They married and raised a family in Shanghai. When Japanese invaded China in 1939, they returned to Canada where she wrote freelance journalism for *Maclean's*, *Saturday Night*, and *Canadian Forum*, among others, and published *Foreign Devils Had Light Eyes: A Memoir of Shanghai 1933-1939* (Virgo 1980): "the simple record of simple people caught up in a great international experiment." She died in 1986 at her home on Saturna Island.

### **J.J. KEGAN MCFADDEN: Review of Cathy Busby's *Steve's Vinyl* (Pile Driver Editions / Visual AIDS 2013)**

An artistbook is a curious thing. Like the best of contemporary art, it breaks the rules and defies limitation. It is not a catalogue though at times it stems from an exhibition or event. It is not a monograph though it has been known to include essays or other exploratory texts. It might reproduce artwork or become the artwork itself. In the case of Cathy Busby's latest artistbook, *Steve's Vinyl*, all of the above is true.

As a visual artist whose practice is fueled by research, Busby has always included printed matter as part of her installations, if not as stand-alone works. *Steve's Vinyl* documents a participatory art event at the Khyber Centre for the Arts in Halifax for World AIDS Day 2011, but it acts as more than a factual account of what transpired. Between the glossy full-colour pages, the reader encounters a history that echoes many other histories over the last thirty years of the survivors, those left to deal with the deaths of their lovers, friends, and family.

In 1993 Steve, Cathy's brother, died of AIDS-related illnesses. Beyond their familial ties, he and Cathy shared a friendship galvanized through music, and so it was fitting she inherited his collection of some 200 record albums. Having moved with them around Canada over eighteen years, the artist finally devised the perfect

way to say goodbye. Instead of simply giving the collection away, she orchestrated a full-scale art installation and performance giveaway where the entire collection of records installed within floor-to-ceiling vertical bands of colour was systematically dispensed throughout the evening to an eager crowd, who, upon claiming their vinyl would leave a sketch or message in its place. In 2013, while she was based in Vancouver, Busby's artistbook took shape and has now been co-published by Emily Carr University's Pile Driver Editions and by Visual AIDS in New York, a not-for-profit organization that uses art to enact knowledge about the illness.

*Steve's Vinyl* transcends the pitfalls of so much "participatory art" because it is both event and book. I wasn't at the event, but I have the book. As it is a limited edition of 200 (the approximate number of albums in Steve's collection), there are dozens who participated in the event who won't ever see the book. (Of course, they have their vinyl and there were some real gems in Steve's collection!). Busby's project was "a tribute to Steve and his varied tastes in music, men, and identities, and a way of activating a collection as music and graphics. The collection became a time machine, a stimulant of memory and pleasure."

There are tender moments in Busby's recollections of her life growing up with Steve, as recounted in the personal essay that begins the book. In her own words, Busby saw her brother's selection of music as "autobiographical, a portrait made up his eclectic interests: Barbara Streisand and the divas; the Village People and gay celebration; music from France and Quebec and his francophone connection; Motown and his affinity with the civil rights movement; classical and his conservatory piano training." Just as we all share stories through music, the book includes firsthand accounts by revellers about the albums they scored that night and the thinking behind their selection. Funny, informative, and touching, these stories blend with those of Cathy and the brother she honours.

**AMY KAZYMERCHYK: Not a curse, nor a bargain, but a hymn**

**I have no need of your education. You have taught me less than I knew already, before I was born even. For this in future times you will be punished.**

At the threshold of the gallery you approach three walls of glass. You know better, but you press your hands up against the cool surface

and lean into it. You slowly trace the perimeter of the flat shelf wedged wall to wall within the impenetrable cell. Its surface is obfuscated with newspaper clippings, paperback books, 8×10 headshots and film posters. A mausoleum of tyranny. You pause on an image of a woman with cropped hair tucked into a bell hat (perhaps the ugliest you've ever seen). Her gaze is crushed by a volcanic stone, but her crustacean eyes are not blinded. Dead but not dying. She watches you. *How do you locate intimacy between distant planes?*

You look towards the corridor behind the vitrine. At the wall on the left. The wall on the right. At the floor. The ceiling. Flat white is a prism. Fuchsia–indigo–tangerine–ruby. The pulsing light strikes at an angle. Corners are muted. You rest in the dullest seam, and from this vantage point can see half an image. You trace an earlobe, a sinewy muscle and the neckline of an ivory garment. The figure's head turns abruptly and her obsidian stare meets yours. The light curdles (it's not blood, it's RED). The sacrifice of a golden fleece. Her gilded antiquity is slit by the dawn of your modern war. A tawny Hag whispers. *How do you look when the image is looking at you?*

How much time has passed? How airless is the glass seal on those photographs? The sunlight is aging the bronze. You invite her languid figure, bare chest splayed on the pyre, to watch you cross the gallery to the far wall. You've got an equally delicate orb of wetness in your throat. Cool modernism. Cold metal. You trace the lines of the futurist sculptures. Not as fast as the machines were supposed to propel us. The kick drum POUNDS. Not as fast as the fascists were supposed to propel us. Your spine—underneath the speaker—is electric. *Arterial Venerial Immaterial Ethereal Sidereal Funereal*. This vascular system engorges molten genitalia. Two figures on all fours backs arched stare each other down. No one is looking at you. Even the recessive void is breathless. *How do you relinquish your desire to master?*

*Ursula Mayer: Not a curse, nor a bargain, but a hymn* will be exhibited at Audain Gallery from June 12—August 2, 2014. The bold text is a quote from Mayer's film *Gonda* (2012), screenplay by Maria Fusco.

## LORNA BROWN: *Pauline*, a new opera by Margaret Atwood and Tobin Stokes

If you had been a student in the Canadian school system at a particular moment in the post-war era, the spirit and rhythm of *The Song My Paddle Sings* would still be summoned up whenever Pauline Johnson's name was evoked. In my mid-1960s schooldays, however, Johnson's mixed race identity, her astonishing fame as a performer, and her remarkably independent life were missing from the curriculum. Indeed, the relationship of paddler to river in Johnson's interpretation—as a thrilling collaborator with the power of nature, rather than the more familiar conquest narrative—would have to wait for careful recognition until the beginning of this century. Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson in *Paddling Her Own Canoe: The Life and Times of E. Pauline Johnson* reconsider the nationalistic, interracial, and erotic facets of Johnson's work and its importance to Canadian literary history.

At prestigious theatres in Toronto, London drawing rooms, and whistle-stops across Canada, decked out in an “Indian” costume of her own devising, Johnson presented her own poetry with great gusto, making her performances unique among “recitations” yet distinct from the popular entertainments of the day. Her fame and popular appeal stemmed from these performances as compared to her (ample) publications, and influenced, perhaps, the choice of opera as the best form for a new work about her life.

In the libretto for *Pauline*, Margaret Atwood reconstructs the scene of Pauline's final days in her adopted home, Vancouver, as she finally succumbs to breast cancer. The morphine administered for her pain by the compassionate Dr. Nelles creates a hallucinogenic lens through which she is visited by the apparition of her dead grandfather, the Six Nations chief Smoke Johnson. In waking dreams, her stage-partners and lovers swirl and combine as they reunite. Attended (somewhat competitively) by friends, supporters, and the complicated figure of her older sister Eva, Pauline's memories, regrets, and triumphs are layered and circular refrains as elaborated in Tobin Stokes' score. Haunting motifs draw us back to the Grand River of her birth. Visiting society ladies trill in a brittle comedy that punctuates Pauline's solitary ruminations and her somber dialogues with intimates. While the tonal, lyrical trademark style of Stokes is dominant, he also develops contemporary motifs for Pauline's convulsive efforts to understand her own life and defend her

right to live it. Using flute, clarinet, and bassoon plus a string trio (violin, viola, cello) with additional elements, the score, like Atwood's libretto, listens carefully to the past but addresses us, here and now.

In a collaborative design, visual artists Marianne Nicolson (Kwakwaka'wakw), Lindsey Delaronde (Mohawk), and lighting designer John Webber project images and Six Nations forms alongside set pieces from a Victorian interior, placing dual cultural influences in familial proximity. Such dualities thread through Johnson's life and work, and are traced in the competing appraisals of her work since her death.

She was a celebrity whose friends and supporters included leaders as diverse as Chief Joe Capilano (Su-a-pu-luck) and Sir Charles Tupper. In London, Lord Strathcona, whose marriage to a part-Cree woman, Bella, had created in him a sympathetic attitude to Mixed-race Canadians, took her under wing. An ardent supporter of the monarchy, she nevertheless "asserted the equality of Indian spirituality and Christianity" and "pointed out that Iroquois women enjoyed a political power denied to British women."<sup>1</sup> She could socialize with notables with the same confidence used to handle rowdy hecklers at the back of frontier halls. Her continuous touring, from the comfortable accommodations in Montreal's Winsor Hotel to the ramshackle frame hotels, drill halls and church basements of tiny Ontario towns, was an effect of her precarious financial circumstances, taking a great toll on her health and literary output. Yet it was her popular success that secured for Johnson a more lasting place in schoolrooms, anthologies, and now opera halls of Canada.

1 Charlotte Gray, *Flint and Feather: The Life and Times of E. Pauline Johnson* (Tekahionwake, Toronto: Harper Collins, 2002).

Performance May 23-31, 2014 at the York Theatre, 639 Commercial Drive, Vancouver. For further details see <<http://cityoperavancouver.com>>.

## **MITCH SPEED: Wade Guyton's inkjets, Liz Magor's Marks**

It sometimes happens that just as you've got two things in your field of vision, a common denominator appears and hooks them up. On the last morning of a recent trip to New York, I made an early exit from the Queens apartment where I was

staying to have coffee with an art historian whose writing I like. As luck would have it, the trip coincided with an exhibition of new work by Wade Guyton, who this art historian had written about in his best known essay, which had to do with the way that paintings can mimic and engage the structures surrounding them. The show at the Petzel Gallery—a sanctuary of rectilinear whiteness—comprised several immense, horizontally-oriented canvasses, made perfectly to measure for the gallery’s walls. These canvasses held black monochromes produced with a huge inkjet printer, and riven with fissures from folding and rough handling. Following our coffee meeting, I fell victim to a momentary short circuit of self-consciousness, and made the decision to email the art historian, in order to say that

I liked the show’s immersive quality, and the way it played with scale. Somehow, the folds and creases and imperfections seemed like they should be from a world of smaller objects. They felt uncanny in that overwhelming format. I suppose that’s because I’m not used to encountering the machinery of printing on such a large scale. The paintings seemed to mimic the ribbon on a typewriter, or some analogue to it, and that set in motion a weird circuit between the very apparent contemporaneity of Guyton’s process, and a group of anachronistic forces: painting, the monochrome, the timelessness of ink, as a medium.

I really did think those things. Although I had recent experiences to thank. On the way to the gallery, for example, I had made an unplanned but fortuitous stop at Printed Matter, the storied art-book store, which doubles as an immersive palimpsest of the relationship between small scale printing and art. Additionally, a couple of weeks earlier, I had been to the Surrey Public Library to see the new building (inspired by another modernist sanctuary in New York, The Guggenheim) and Liz Magor’s *Marks* (2011) within it: four three dimensional punctuation marks (ambiguously apostrophes, quotations, or commas) made of black silicone, each about the size of a barca-lounger, and squat, with billowy profiles. Pictured from the side, in a photograph on the library’s website, they look like Oldenburgian drops of crude. They aren’t smooth but have surfaces marked up by cutting and scraping tools, and human bodies: imprints from hands, zippers, and sewn seams. In this way, classically modern factures, reminiscent of Rodin, are transposed over small bits of hardware from the quiet colossus of word processing, here made large and receptive to the bodies that carry the eyes, which are the necessary collaborators with that technology.

Wade Guyton's paintings and Liz Magor's *Marks* are of a piece. One has ink, prior to the coalescence of characters, behaving as dumb entity waiting to be encountered, rather than interpreted. The other mimics ink, and then proceeds to amplify the character into a haptic dimension. It follows that the works are counterparts on multiple planes. Both move in an idea world whose ether is the correspondence between the technological reproducibility of thought, and bodies, which are always, though not always obviously, much more than armatures or attendants to that process.

### **JULIAN HOU: Lisa Robertson's *Thinking Space* (Organism for Poetic Research 2013)**

Robertson begins *Thinking Space* by discussing several rooms: Tycho Brahe's observatory, Johannes Kepler's room for optical experiments, Thomas Carlyle's fictive study, Aby Warburg's elliptical reading room—each with an aperture, a table, and a book—various configurations to form an instrument for research and to guide the shape of research. She then introduces her own room, a place where she describes having arrived at this body of research through an elliptical path.

*Thinking Space* is about the ellipse as a geometry that produces sites of thinking by way of its irregular focus. The text embodies this exploration, showing how research and thinking can be expressed without proceeding toward unification or closure. The ellipse holds for her the “charge of a distance, a tension.” Robertson's text could be thought of as a provocation of geometrical structure as a producer of affect. Geometry is undoubtedly one of the most utilitarian forms of mathematics, specifically as it relates to the development and modeling of physical systems and optics. But this is not to say that a specific geometry like the ellipse cannot produce different configurations of possibilities in multiple fields of thought. Rather than digging up an ignored historical lineage, Robertson focuses on a geometry that has historically produced a scattered affect across numerous fields of research. Intoxicating in structure, *Thinking Space* is a constant elliptical movement through the research of various figures of history that she connects to the ellipse. At times the text seems to echo itself by returning to similar ideas through different forms, or through the *mis-en-abyme*, as if the reader and writer are both implicated in this structure of imperfect reflections.

Johannes Kepler's original discovery and shift, from Tycho Brahe's circular orbit to the elliptical orbit, is here thought to be a cognitive transformation toward irregularity as a site for thinking. Robertson investigates the profound impact that this movement had on the research concepts of art historian Aby Warburg and on the production of a mythology of the romantic hero by Thomas Carlyle. Warburg produces a literal manifestation of this site of thinking in his "traffic island of the thoughtful," which is an elliptical reading room constructed in Hamburg, 1926. Within this library, Warburg constructed his *Mnemosyne Atlas*—a series of panels upon which a montage of various art-historical images, maps, and charts are affixed. The improvisational staging of these images in proximity produces a charge rather than a smooth connection, what Robertson calls "a proposition of knowledge in flux." For Carlyle, Kepler's ellipse holds a symbolic political potential if governance is thought as a practice which "is always approaching and never arrived." These are among the many ideas of the text that show how Kepler's original discovery was expanded upon in multiple permutations throughout history. Robertson's text proposes the possibility of geometry as not only structuring thought, but also directing it toward a looseness—a hanging together of thoughts in an irregular movement around multiple foci.

### DEANNA FONG: Audio-visual Translation: Seeing Voice and Hearing Space in SpokenWeb's PoetryLab App

I'm in the process of re-reading passages of Slavoj Žižek's *Less Than Nothing* and I keep circling around the supplementary relationship he develops between voice and gaze—those two Lacanian partial objects *par excellence*. Žižek insists that this relationship is properly antagonistic, each object filling in the other's lack or "blind spot." In his words, "the voice does not simply persist at a different level with regard to what we see, it rather points towards a gap in the field of the visible, towards the dimension of what eludes our gaze. . . . [T]heir relationship is mediated by an impossibility: ultimately we hear things because we cannot see everything."<sup>1</sup> In my work with audio recordings, that question of the relationship between the

1 Slavoj Žižek, *Less than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism* (London: Verso, 2013), 670.

audio and the visual comes up frequently, and in various formulations: What do we look at when we listen? What gaps or silences are inherent in different auditory media? How might visual content be used to mitigate the silences of audio artifacts and vice versa? If, as Žižek posits, registration *brings an event into being* through the act of retroactive self-positing, then what types of events are respectively enabled by audio and visual documentation?

Concordia's SpokenWeb team is tackling these questions by translating speech into image, space into sound, with its new PoetryLab mobile app: a suite of ludic close listening games. Using code from their recently shipped *Jarbes* game, project director Jason Camlot, designer Christine Mitchell, and programmer Ian Arawjo are bringing the archive to the streets, taking advantage the situational and haptic dimensions that mobile technology affords. PoetryLab draws its source material from recordings of the Sir George Williams University (SGWU) Poetry Reading Series, which ran from 1966 to 1974 in Montreal. The series paired local poets with touring members of the American avant-garde and experimental circles, creating generative sites of cultural exchange. The game will serve as an introduction to the archive by offering three kinds of interactions with its artifacts: 1) Semantic puzzles, in which the user must order strings of audio into complete phrases to match lines in a recorded poem; 2) Prosodic puzzles, in which distorted clips must be matched to their comprehensible counterparts; and 3) Sound Visualization puzzles, in which the user must match visualizations—extrapolations of the wave form—to its original sound clip. Here, the visualizations (pitch curves, spectrographs, amplitude swells, etc.) help supply the missing information in an auditory riddle. The app may also include an audio tour of the Concordia campus (formerly SGWU) to engage locative listening practices. This feature would map archival artifacts onto the spaces in which they were produced, allowing the user to simulate the visual and spatial dimensions of the event that are latent or absent in the recordings. Importantly, PoetryLab embraces the frustration of the partial object by transforming it into ludic potential; while the artifacts themselves will always be incomplete, finding new ways to circle around their silences generates new, playful encounters with the event.

PoetryLab will launch in the fall of 2014. For more information, check out the app's Tumblr <<http://poetrylab.tumblr.com>> and Twitter feed <[@1966to1974](https://twitter.com/1966to1974)>, and the SpokenWeb site <<http://spokenweb.concordia.ca>>.



## Contributors

JORDAN ABEL is a Nisga'a writer from Vancouver. Abel's work has appeared in numerous periodicals, and his chapbooks have been published by Above/Ground Press and JackPine Press. Abel's first book, *The Place of Scraps* (Talonbooks 2013), is a finalist for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize and the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award.

ANTENA is a language justice and literary experimentation collaborative founded by Jen Hofer and John Pluecker, both writers, artists, literary translators, bookmakers, and activist interpreters. *Antena* activates links between social justice work and artistic practice by exploring how critical views on language can help us to reimagine and rearticulate the worlds we inhabit. More info: <http://antenaantena.org/>.

OANA AVASILICHIOAEI's books of poetry include *We, Beasts* (Wolsak & Wynn 2012) and *feria: a poempark* (Wolsak & Wynn 2008). Her most recent translation is *Wigrum*, a novel by Daniel Canty (Talonbooks 2013). She was the editor of the Quebec poetry-in-translation feature for *Aufgabe 12* (2013). <oanalab.com>

CHRIS BLACKMORE is a Vancouver / Beijing based musician and writer. As Thin Gaze, Blackmore produces and performs deconstructed lounge. As a freelance writer, he works for everyone from NewHive.com to the Kuwaiti Markets Authority. He also studied for an MA in German history, emphasizing something called "trauma cinema."

REBECCA BREWER is a visual artist living and working in Vancouver. Her first solo exhibition with Catriona Jeffries Gallery, *The Written Face*, took place this spring. Other

recent exhibitions include *Skirt the parlour, shun the zoo* at the Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff, Alberta; *Through a Glass Darkly* at the Vancouver Art Gallery; *6 Positions* at W TWO, Montreal; and *Nine Paintings of Ayn Rand* at Exercise, Vancouver.

NICOLE BROSSARD has influenced a generation of writers in Canada and abroad. Many of her books exist in English translation, most recently *Intimate Journal*, *Fluid Arguments*, *Yesterday at the Hotel Clarendon*, and *Notebook of Roses and Civilization* (trans. by Erin Moure and Robert Majzels, Griffin Prize finalist). Her work is widely translated. She is a member of l'Académie des lettres du Québec and an Officer of the Order of Canada. Her most recent books in English are *Fences in Breathing*, *Selections: The Poetry of Nicole Brossard*, and *White Piano* (translated by Moure and Majzels).

CHRISTIAN BÖK is the author not only of *Crystallography* (1994), a pataphysical encyclopedia nominated for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, but also of *Eunoia* (2001), a bestselling work of experimental literature, which went on to win the Griffin Prize for Poetic Excellence. Bök teaches English at the University of Calgary.

LORNA BROWN is a Vancouver-based artist, curator, and writer. Recent projects include *Digital Natives*, a public artwork commissioned by the City of Vancouver; *Ruins in Process: Vancouver Art in the Sixties*, an online digital archive of over 1000 texts, videos, films, and images, and *Institutions by Artists*, an international project involving a conference, print and online publishing, and commissioned artworks.

COLIN BROWNE's most recent book of poetry is *The Properties* (Talonbooks 2012). A new collection is due next year.

SARAH BURGOYNE lives in Montreal. She has published two chapbooks, *The Bread Days* (Oak Press 2011) and *Happy Dog, Sad Dog* (Proper Tales Press 2013), and has a forthcoming chapbook, *Love The Sacred Raisin Cakes* (Baseline Press). She is currently working on a collection of psalm translations under the title *Saint Friend*.

"I am optimistic about the ability of communities to function outside prescriptive agendas and for the role art can play in contributing to justice-based social change." CATHY BUSBY is a Canadian artist. She has been exhibiting her work internationally over the past twenty years. See [cathybusby.ca](http://cathybusby.ca).

AMY BUTCHER, one of three winners of the TCR translation contest, has a degree in French Language and Literature from the University of Toronto, where she also studied creative writing and produced plays with the Hart House Drama Society. The mother of twin boys, she currently works as a freelance translator on the South Shore of Montreal.

CHRISTOPHER BUTTERFIELD sang in King's College Choir, Cambridge, from 1961-66. He studied composition with Rudolf Komorous at the University of Victoria and with Bülent Arel at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1992 he returned to Victoria where he teaches composition and fine art. His music is performed across Canada and Europe.

TED BYRNE is a Vancouver poet whose writing has always incorporated elements of translation. Recent work includes *Beautiful Lies* (CUE Books) and *Sonnets: Louise Labé* (Nomados). *Sonnets: Guido Cavalcanti* is a

companion piece to the latter—together they comprise a book to be called *Duets*. *Beautiful Lies* is also part of an ongoing project that includes translations of Mallarmé's prose poems.

DANIEL CANTY is a Montreal writer and artist working in French and English. His novel *Wigrum* (La Peuplade 2011) was translated in English by Oana Avasilichioaei (Talonbooks 2013). His most recent book, *Les États-Unis du Vent* (La Peuplade 2014), is a memoir of a transfrontier odyssey. He has translated poetry by Stephanie Bolster, Charles Simic, Michael Ondaatje, and Erin Moure.

AMY SARA CARROLL, assistant professor of American Culture, Latina/o Studies, and English at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, is the author of two collections of poetry: *SECESSION* (Hyperbole Books 2012) and *FANNIE + FREDDIE/The Sentimentality of Post-9/11 Pornography* (Fordham UP 2013). Currently, she's completing a critical monograph, "REMEX: Toward an Art History of the NAFTA Era."

LISTEN CHEN lives in Vancouver and mucks around with words.

ALLYSON CLAY has a BFA in Painting from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, and a MFA in Painting from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. She lives in Vancouver and is on faculty in the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University.

STEPHEN COLLIS is a poet and professor of contemporary literature at Simon Fraser University. His many books include *The Commons* (Talonbooks 2008), *On the Material* (Talonbooks 2010—awarded the BC Book Prize for Poetry), *To the Barricades*

(Talonbooks 2013), and the novel *The Red Album* (BookThug 2013).

PETER CULLEY's books of poetry include *Hammertown* (New Star 2003), *The Age of Briggs & Stratton* (New Star 2008), and *Parkway* (New Star 2013). His prose writings, chiefly on visual art, have been appearing in periodicals and catalogues since 1986. His blog "mosses from an old manse" dates from 2003. He lives in South Wellington on Vancouver Island.

LATASHA N. NEVADA DIGGS works with words, sound, video, and bodies. She is the author of *TwERK* (Belladonna\* 2013). Her work has been published nationally and performed internationally. A native of Harlem, she has received several awards, residencies, and fellowships for her interdisciplinary work. <[www.latashadiggs.tumblr.com](http://www.latashadiggs.tumblr.com)>

SARAH DOWLING is the author of *Security Posture*, *Birds & Bees*, and *DOWN*, forthcoming from Coach House Books in fall 2014. She is currently at work on a scholarly book, *Remote Intimacies*, concerning multilingual poetry, queer historiography, and comparative ethnic studies.

ELISA FERRARI is a Vancouver-based artist. In her work she combines audio-, visual-, and text-fragments to examine the aporias that exist between past experience and present depiction, memory, and narrative. Recent exhibitions include *Your Kontinent Media Arts Festival*, Richmond; *NOPX Gallery*, Italy; *NFF12*, Vancouver; *Charles Scott Gallery*, Vancouver; *Fondazione Bevilacqua la Masa*, Italy; *Moderna Galerija Ljubljana*, Slovenia.

DEANNA FONG is a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University researching the intersections of performance, audio archives, literary communities, and intellectual property.

MARK GOLDSTEIN is the author of three books of poetry published by the award-winning BookThug: *Form of Forms* (2012), *Tracelanguage* (2010), and *After Rilke* (2008). His poetry and criticism has also appeared in periodicals such as *Open Letter*, *Matrix*, and *Jacket2*. Presently, he lives in Venice, California.

GILES GOODLAND, born in Taunton, UK, was educated at the universities of Wales and California, took a D. Phil at Oxford, and has published a several books of poetry including *A Spy in the House of Years* (Leviathan 2001), *Capital* (Salt 2006), *What the Things Sang* (Shearsman 2009), and *Gloss* (Knives Forks and Spoons Press 2011). He works in Oxford as a lexicographer and lives in West London.

JEN HOFER is a Los Angeles-based poet, translator, social justice interpreter, teacher, knitter, book-maker, public letter-writer, and urban cyclist. She has published eight books in translation and three books of poetry, in addition to a number of handmade books in DIY editions. Her work is forthcoming from Dusie Books, Kenning Editions, Litmus Press, and Ugly Duckling Presse.

JULIAN HOU is an artist and musician living in Vancouver. He has a BA from Simon Fraser University and an M. Arch degree from the University of British Columbia. He is currently a curatorial resident at 221a and has a forthcoming solo exhibition at CSA space in the fall.

LIZ HOWARD was born and raised in northern Ontario and is of settler and Anishinaabe descent. Her first chapbook of poetry, *Skullambient* (Ferno House 2011), was shortlisted for the bpNichol Chapbook Award. She is currently completing an MFA in creative writing at the University of Guelph.

TARYN HUBBARD's writing has appeared in *Event*, *CV2*, *Room*, *The Golden Handcuffs Review*, *WOMANZINE*, and others. She works in digital communications and lives in Surrey, BC. Her blog is kept at [tarynhubbard.com](http://tarynhubbard.com).

PAOLO JAVIER is the author of four poetry collections, including *Court of the Dragon* (Nightboat Books, forthcoming 2015). He edits [2ndavepoetry.com](http://2ndavepoetry.com), and recently completed his tenure as Queens Poet Laureate (2010-14).

AMY KAZYMERCHYK is the Curator of Audain Gallery at Simon Fraser University. In July 2013 she curated *Crystal Tongue* at Exercise Gallery, in conversation with the Lacan Salon's 2013 LaConference. Since 2008 she has programmed DIM Cinema, a monthly evening of artists' moving images.

GARRY NEILL KENNEDY is a senior Canadian artist based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He is currently visiting-artist and instructor in the visual arts department of the University of British Columbia. He will have an exhibition at The Apartment, Vancouver, in mid-October, 2014.

NYLA MATUK's first full-length collection is *Sumptuary Laws* (2012). A chapbook, *Oneiric*, was published by Frog Hollow Press in 2009. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Maisonneuve*, *The Walrus*, *ARC Poetry*, *Hazlitt*, *Canadian Notes and Queries*, *The Best Canadian Poetry in English 2012*, and *PN Review*, among others.

STEVE McCAFFERY, English born and a long-time resident of Toronto, was a co-founder of the College of Canadian 'Pataphysics and is now the David Gray Endowed Professor of Poetry and Letters at SUNY Buffalo and Director of the Poetics Program.

Based in Winnipeg, J.J. KEGAN McFADDEN is an independent curator who publishes creative and critical texts throughout Canada's artist-run network. Kegan worked with Cathy Busby on the exhibition *Every Line & Every Other Line* (PLATFORM, Winnipeg 2011; AKA Gallery/P.A.V.E.D. Arts, Saskatoon 2012).

ERÍN MOURE is a Montreal poet and translator of poetry from French, Galician, Portuguese, and Spanish; she's also a contributing editor of *TCR*. Her latest publication is prose: a translation from Galician of Chus Pato's *Secession*, coupled with her own response text *Insecession* (in one volume from BookThug 2014). Her translation of *My Dinosaur* by François Turcot is due from BookThug in 2016.

KAREN OCAÑA, one of three winners of the *TCR* translation contest, grew up in Toronto in a multilingual environment. Fluent in English, French, Spanish, and German, she earned a BA in French at the University of Toronto, and an MA in Comparative Literature at McGill. A Montrealer since 1988, Karen has recently relaunched her freelance translation career.

JOHN PLUECKER is a writer, interpreter, and translator. His work is informed by experimental poetics, radical aesthetics, and cross-border cultural production. He has translated more than six books from the Spanish, and has published three poetry chapbooks, *Routes into Texas* (DIY 2010), *Undone* (Dusie Kollektiv 2011) and *Killing Current* (Mouthfeel Press 2012).

PETER QUARTERMAIN's *Stubborn Poetries: Poetic Facticity and the Avant-Garde* was recently published by the U of Alabama Press. In 2012 and 2013, the U of California Press published the two volumes of his edition of the *Collected Poems and Plays of Robert Duncan*.

GENEVIÈVE ROBICHAUD composes between deux langues: English and Chiac. Her essays and prose have been published in *Matrix*, *Lemon Hound*, and the *Cosmonaut's Avenue*. She holds an MA in English and Creative Writing from Concordia University and is a PhD candidate at l'Université de Montréal. She is also Assistant Editor for *Lemon Hound*.

DORA SANDERS wrote about her visit to poet W.B. Yeats in 1932.

MITCH SPEED is an artist and writer based in Vancouver. He has contributed to *Frieze*, *Camera Austria*, *The Bartleby Review*, and others. With Charlie Satterlee and Claire Balderston, he edits a periodical called *Setup*. In 2012, he participated in the residency "A Paper, A Drawing, A Mountain," at the Banff Centre.

From Kaifeng, China, and now based in Vancouver, YU SU moves freely between poetry, music, and visual arts. She is currently pursuing Asian studies at the University of British Columbia. She is interested in the ineffable.

ANNE TARDOS, a New York Foundation for the Arts fellow, is the author of *I Am You* (Salt 2008), and *Both Poems* (Roof 2011), among several others. She is the editor of Jackson Mac Low's *Thing of Beauty* (U of California P 2008), and *154 Forties* (Counterpath 2012), and *The Complete Light Poems, 1-60* (forthcoming from Chax).

MARIE-HÉLÈNE TESSIER is a visual artist and writer based in Vancouver. Her work is site-specific and is about performing the fiction of the real. She is interested in the language of surfaces; texture as text; identity as a set of objects; collecting and deconstructing all of human aspirations because everything speaks.

LARY TIMEWELL, one of three winners of the TCR translation contest, was publisher of Tsunami Editions in the 80s, and is a North Vancouver poet recently returned from twenty years in Fukushima, Japan. His most recent publication is the chapbook *tones employed as loss* (above/ground press), a section from the forthcoming title, *molecular hyperbole*.

MICHAEL TURNER is a Vancouver-based writer of fiction, criticism, and song. Recent off-line projects involve membership in seven anonymous collectives. He blogs at [mtwebsit.blogspot.ca](http://mtwebsit.blogspot.ca).

IAN WALLACE taught art history at the University of British Columbia (1967-70) and at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (1972-98). He has been active in the creation, promotion, and appreciation of innovative processes in contemporary art practice through writing, teaching, and exhibiting his work. In addition, he has been an influential figure in the development of an internationally acknowledged photographic and conceptual art practice in Vancouver.

MARGAUX WILLIAMSON is an artist living in Toronto. Her new book of paintings, *I Could See Everything*, will be out in the spring with Coach House Press.

DONNA ZAPF is the director of Graduate Liberal Studies at Duke University in Durham, NC.

RACHEL ZOLF's fifth full-length book of poetry, *Janey's Arcadia*, will appear this fall. Her collaborations include writing a film for New York artist Josiah McElheny that premiered at Art Basel Miami. She taught at The New School and University of Calgary, then happily left the institution to write junk mail for a living.

# F R I E N D S   O F   T C R

## **\$551+**

Kate Armstrong | Bruce Cadorette  
Louis Cabri | Stephen Collis  
Roger Farr | Chris Glen  
Bill Jeffries | Brook Houghlum  
Michael O'Brian Family Foundation  
Jenny Penberthy

## **\$301–\$550**

Thea Bowering | Colin Browne | Pierre Coupey  
Brian Fisher | Reg Johanson | Andrew Klobucar  
Christine Leclerc | Robert Majzels | Daphne Marlatt  
Erín Moure | Meredith Quartermain  
Peter Quartermain | Bob Sherrin | Sharon Thesen

## **\$50–\$300**

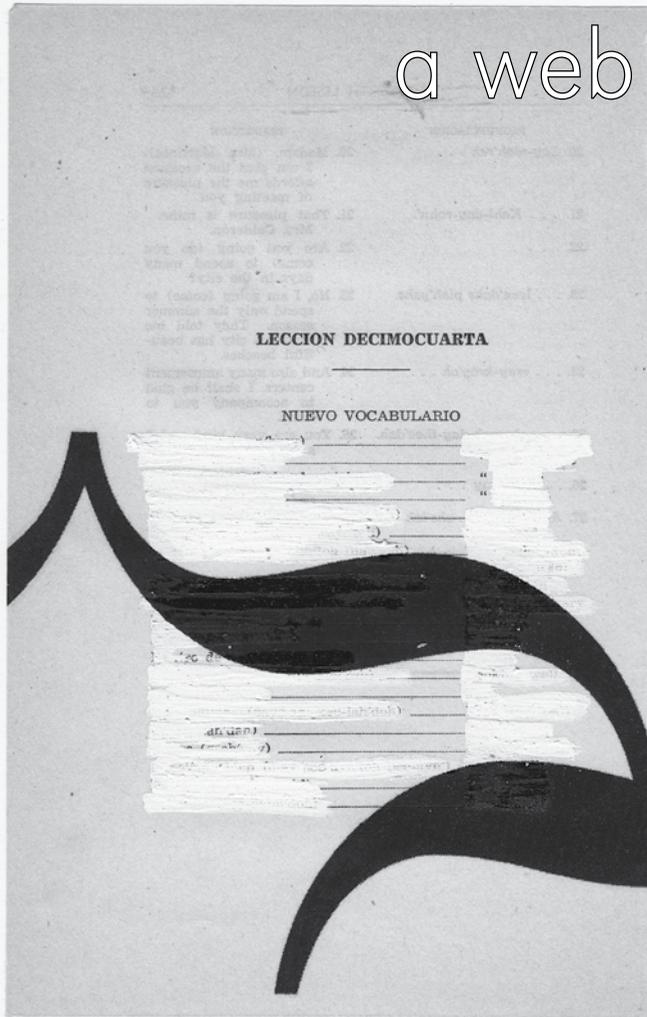
Joost Bakker | Marian Penner Bancroft | Marguerite and Mohamed Barbir | Larissa Berenger  
Charles Bernstein | Gregory Betts | Robin Blaser | George Bowering | Nancy Boyd | Rebecca Brown  
Clint Burnham | Lloyd Burritt | Dorothy Chang | Leanne Coughlin | Jen Currin  
Christos Dikeakos | Alex Dipple | Perry Eaton | Geoffrey Farmer | David Farwell | Adam Frank  
Patrick Friesen | Lyndl Hall | Efrat El Hanany | Steven Harris | Fran Herndon | Maria Hindmarch  
Susan Holbrook | Nancy Holmes | Ray Hsu | Paolo Javier | Patti Kernaghan | Robert Keziere  
Martha King | Deborah Koenker | Roman Korec | Larissa Lai | Suzanne Leblanc | Michele Leggott  
Melissa Mack | Kris Madelung | Aurelea Mahood | Nicole Markotic | Michael McClure  
Aristea Mellos | Roy Miki | Kim Minkus | Reza Naghibi | David Pay | Stan Persky  
Kristina Lee Podesva | Tony Power | Sina Queyras | George Rammell | Renee Rodin | Sheila Ross  
Sharla Sava | Ruth Scheuing | Susan Schuppli | Pete Smith | Jason Starnes | Catriona Strang  
Troy Tymofichuk | Keith Wallace | John Webb | Julian Weideman | Margaux Williamson  
Rita Wong | Robert Young

All donations receive a tax receipt.

**please visit [www.thecapilanoreview.ca](http://www.thecapilanoreview.ca) for more details**

# ti-TCR

a web folio



number 9 | spring 2014

More translations, more experiment with language—new work by David Abel, George Bowering, Colin Browne, Louis Cabri, Nicholas Collins, Faizal Deen, Shaun Hanna, Faye Harnest and Devon E. Sioui, Matea Kulic, Monroe Lawrence, Jimmy McInnes, Fiona Mitchell, Amy Modahl, Renée Saklikar, Andrew Zuliani, and more...

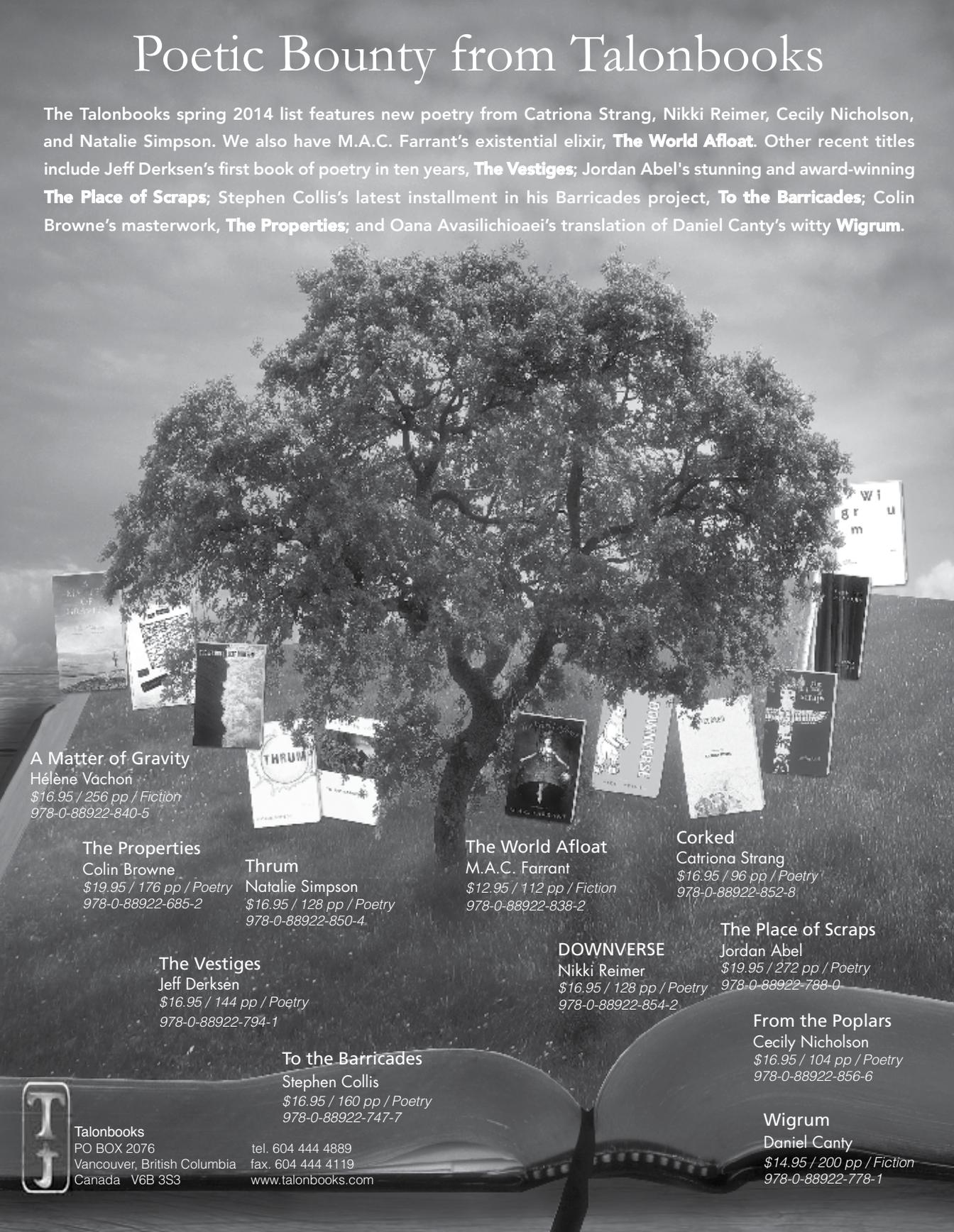
Read the free LANGUAGES issue of  
ti-TCR | a web folio  
[www.thecapilanoreview.ca](http://www.thecapilanoreview.ca)

or scan the link with  
your smart device.



# Poetic Bounty from Talonbooks

The Talonbooks spring 2014 list features new poetry from Catriona Strang, Nikki Reimer, Cecily Nicholson, and Natalie Simpson. We also have M.A.C. Farrant's existential elixir, **The World Afloat**. Other recent titles include Jeff Derksen's first book of poetry in ten years, **The Vestiges**; Jordan Abel's stunning and award-winning **The Place of Scraps**; Stephen Collis's latest installment in his Barricades project, **To the Barricades**; Colin Browne's masterwork, **The Properties**; and Oana Avasilichioaei's translation of Daniel Canty's witty **Wigram**.



**A Matter of Gravity**  
Hélène Vachon  
\$16.95 / 256 pp / Fiction  
978-0-88922-840-5

**The Properties**  
Colin Browne  
\$19.95 / 176 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-685-2

**Thrum**  
Natalie Simpson  
\$16.95 / 128 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-850-4

**The World Afloat**  
M.A.C. Farrant  
\$12.95 / 112 pp / Fiction  
978-0-88922-838-2

**Corked**  
Catriona Strang  
\$16.95 / 96 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-852-8

**The Vestiges**  
Jeff Derksen  
\$16.95 / 144 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-794-1

**DOWNVERSE**  
Nikki Reimer  
\$16.95 / 128 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-854-2

**The Place of Scraps**  
Jordan Abel  
\$19.95 / 272 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-788-0

**To the Barricades**  
Stephen Collis  
\$16.95 / 160 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-747-7

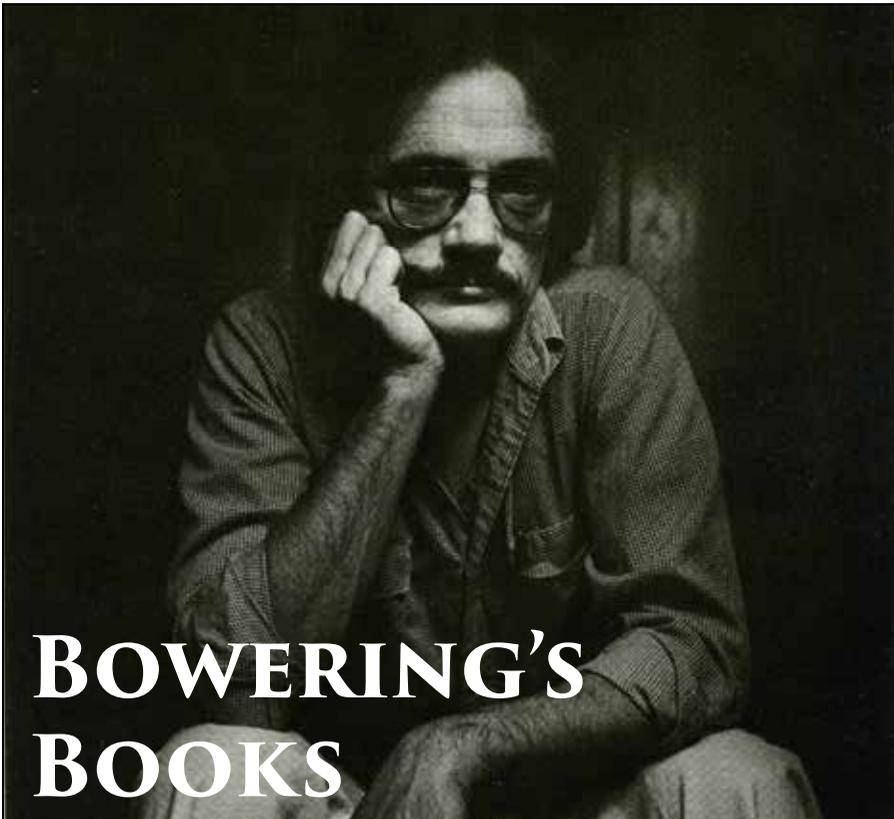
**From the Poplars**  
Cecily Nicholson  
\$16.95 / 104 pp / Poetry  
978-0-88922-856-6

**Wigram**  
Daniel Canty  
\$14.95 / 200 pp / Fiction  
978-0-88922-778-1



Talonbooks  
PO BOX 2076  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Canada V6B 3S3

tel. 604 444 4889  
fax. 604 444 4119  
www.talonbooks.com



**BOWERING'S  
BOOKS**

TCR 3.24  
Coming Fall 2014  
Get Excited

**KELLY  
LYCAN**

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
FOR NO ONE**

SFU Gallery, May 10 – August 1, 2014  
AQ 3004, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby BC

**SFUGALLERY**  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

**URSULA  
MAYER**

**NOT A BLESSING,  
NOR A CURSE,  
BUT A HYMN**

Audain Gallery, June 12 – August 2, 2014  
149 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC

**Audain Gallery**  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY



## Open Text: Canadian Poetry and Poetics in the 21st Century (Vol.3)

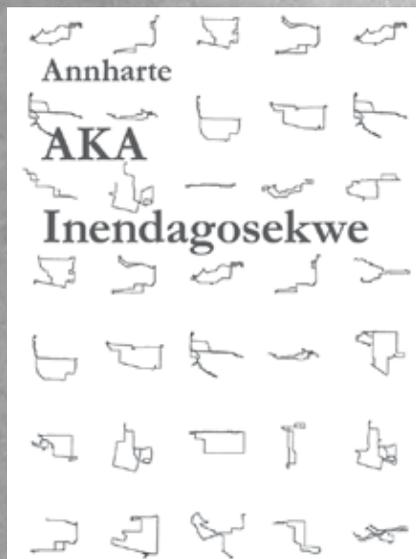
ed. Roger Farr

A collection of poetics statements, interviews, and critical writing that concludes the series. Contributors include George Bowering, Donato Mancini, Wayde Compton, Cecily Nicholson, Larissa Lai, Rita Wong, Ken Belford, Marie Annharte Baker, Erin Moure, Danielle LaFrance, Phinder Dulai, Mercedes Eng, Roy Miki, Fred Wah, Stephen Collis, Louis Cabri, Jeff Derksen, Roger Farr, and Reg Johanson.

6 x 8, 124 pp

ISBN: 978-0-9879052-3-9

\$16



## AKA Inendagosekwe

Annharte

Annharte's *AKA Inendagosekwe* resists traditional, popular, and definitive pathways. Readers move through her Ojibway and English like visitors to a carnival funhouse, confronted with echoed sounds, mirrored images, and distorted figures. Readers will struggle with endings, for Annharte, like our traditional Anishinaabe 'callers of spirit,' encourages the reCreation of knowledge.  
– Janice Acoose

6 x 8, 234 pp

ISBN: 978-0-9879052-1-5

\$25

### Individual Orders

Visit our website — [www.cuebooks.ca](http://www.cuebooks.ca) — to purchase books by credit card, or send cheque or money order plus \$5 S&H to:

### Bookstore & Institution Orders

For bulk pricing and availability, please contact Todd Nickel, Managing Editor, at the address below:

## CUE Books

2055 Purcell Way

North Vancouver, BC V5J 3H5

[cuebooks@capilanou.ca](mailto:cuebooks@capilanou.ca) | 604.984.1712



featuring: Jordan Abel, Antena, Oana Avasilichioaei,  
Chris Blackmore, Christian Bök, Rebecca Brewer,  
Nicole Brossard, Lorna Brown, Colin Browne, Sarah  
Burgoyne, Cathy Busby, Amy Butcher, Christopher  
Butterfield, Ted Byrne, Daniel Canty, Amy Sara Carroll,  
listen chen, Allyson Clay, Stephen Collis, Peter Culley,  
LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, Sarah Dowling, Elisa Ferrari,  
Deanna Fong, Mark Goldstein, Giles Goodland, Julian  
Hou, Liz Howard, Taryn Hubbard, Paolo Javier, Amy  
Kazymerchyk, Garry Neill Kennedy, Nyla Matuk, Steve  
McCaffery, J.J. Kegan McFadden, Erín Moure, Karen  
Ocaña, Peter Quartermain, Geneviève Robichaud, Dora  
Sanders, Mitch Speed, George Stanley, Yu Su, Anne  
Tardos, Marie-Hélène Tessier, Lary  
Timewell, Michael Turner, Ian  
Wallace, Margaux Williamson,  
Donna Zapf, Rachel Zolf



ISSN 0315 3754

\$14.00