

POETRY

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P·R·O·J·E·C·T

NEWSLETTER



THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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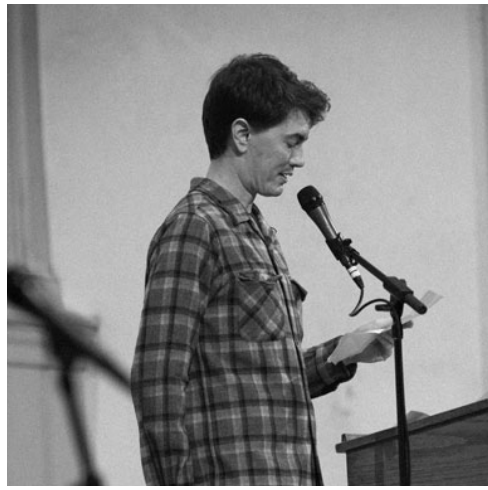
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The “polar vortex” is upon us yet we are still glowing here at Poetry Project headquarters. If you were at St. Mark’s on January 1st you probably are too. The 40th anniversary of the Annual New Year’s Day Marathon Benefit Reading was an unprecedented success in many ways. We maintained a capacity audience for most of the day, the event ran on time, the performances were outstanding, and the audience, it seemed to me, was one of the most generous, open, and enthusiastic audiences that I have experienced. And, we raised \$22,000!

The New Year’s Day Marathon Reading is a benefit that allows us to continue our programming and plan for the Project’s future but also an affirmation of our downtown arts community and a time for people to reunite with friends and peers for a new year. To the performers, we appreciate your willingness to come out and share your work on a holiday. To the 1,000 people who annually attend, we appreciate that you’ve made the Marathon the way you want to start your year. To our volunteers, “without you I’m nothing.”

In my rushing around (I actually had 3 instances where I had to break into a run) I did manage to sit and listen to some of the reading. Our program committee did a great job bringing together music, dance, spoken word, beloved “regulars” plus 40 people who had never read at the Marathon before. I usually give shout outs to my faves but there are too many this year. Justin Vivian Bond reading O’Hara’s “The Day Lady Died” in the first hour set the stage for 150 stars.

Stacy Szymaszek (Director)

The 40th Annual New Year’s Day Marathon Benefit Reading was a lot of fun. And, we raised the money we need to keep the Poetry Project alive & well. I want to thank all the volunteers who put time and effort into making this event happen; it would not have been possible without you!: Stephanie Gray, Nicole Peyrafitte, Nathaniel Siegel, Jennifer Bartlett & Jeffrey Bartlett, Tom Savage, Don Yorty, Olivia Grayson, Brett Price, Caitlin Wheeler, David Kirschenbaum, Kim Lyons, Phyllis Wat, Laura Henriksen, Gillian McCain, Tracey McTague, Barry Denny, John Coletti, Matt Longabucco, Kendra Sullivan, Adeena Karasick, Safa Karasick Southey, Julia Barclay, John Barclay-Morton, Desiree Fields, Davy Knittle, Jim Behrle, Dorothy Friedman August, Lancelot Runge, Marc Nasdor, Jane Friedman, Julie Turley, Mat Laporte, Brenda Whiteway, Margaret Carson, Morgan Vo, Robert Rabinovitz, Carol Nissen, Brian Amsterdam, Erin Nagle, Erica kaufman, Stephanie Jo Elstro, Brenda Coultas, Jessica Fiorini, Krystal Languell, Mel Elberg, Tony Iantosca, Elinor Nauen, Will Edmiston, Nicole Testa, Joshua Kleinberg, Shanxing Wang, Marcella Durand and Ismael, Jen Benka, Carol Mirakov, Linda Hayes, Joanna Fuhrman, Jack Murray, Cat Tyc, Wing Sang, Cliff Fyman, Christa Quint, Sue Landers, Marina Reza, Jamie Townsend, Karl Saffran, Kari Freitag, Lydia Cortes, Linda Kleinbub, Ariel Goldberg, Chia-Lun Chang, Rangi McNeil, Diane Ludin, John S. Hall, Erica Hunt, Jonathan Morrill, Robert Morris, Gabriella Rieger, Katie Fowley, Simona Schneider, Wanda Phipps, Kit Schluter, Carol Overby, Emily Skillings, Carolyn Ferrucci, Johanna Galvis, Jess Grover, Julia Jackson, Axa Mei Liauw, Jeff Grunthaner, Chiara Di Lello, Dan Owen, Sara Akant, Adrienne Raphael, Batya Rosenblum, Conor Messinger, Hailey Rozenberg, Meredith Starkman, Neal Kelley, Elizabeth Devlin, Katherine Taylor, Eddie Berrigan, Michael Honigberg & Brownie, Lisa Ozag, Geoff Mottram, Kathleen Miller, Jackson Highfill, Phoebe Lifton, Catherine Vail, Jeff Perkins, and Douglas Rothschild.

Thanks also to the food donors: Porto Rico Coffee, Veselka, Two Boots, S’MAC, Grandaisy Bakery, Buttercup Bake Shop, Nicole Peyrafitte, Gillian McCain, Don Yorty, and Bob Rosenthal; and the book donors: Burning Deck, Granary Books, Fewer & Further Press, Litmus Press, Susan Mills, Hanging Loose Press, Coffee House Press, City Lights, Belladonna*, Ugly Duckling Presse, Edge Books, United Artists / Angel Hair, Least Weasel, Wave Books, Jennifer Bartlett, Marcella Durand, and Ron Padgett.

And thanks to the organizations who donated the prizes for our raffle: Veselka, Anthology Film Archives, Spectacle Theater, and Danspace Project.

Happy 2014!

Arlo Quint (Managing Director)

Preface *after A. B.*

Lately, it’s become a custom
to weigh out the open
ground its envelope
up and devours me
each time I find
I might be more alone
or more broadly less alone
silly music the mind wants
when waiting for the bus
when I come around
it’s coming around
and now some nights even
count themselves and some
count themselves twice
making up for an absence or
maybe it’s just me though
anybody can sing along
and anybody can visit
I’m always in my room
talking to someone else
but you can be there too

and really / it’s your room
I don’t even live here

Ted Dodson (Editor)

Editor’s Note: At the time of Amiri’s passing, the Newsletter was about to go to press. While there is no formal tribute in this issue, there is one forthcoming in a future installment. The Project’s collective heart goes out to the family and friends of Amiri Baraka.

Also, the three photographs above appear courtesy of Ted Roeder and were taken during this year’s marathon reading on 1/1/14. Many thanks to Ted for being a fantastic documentarian and a friend to the community.

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Long time readers of this publication have probably realized that once you subscribe to the PPNL (or receive it by becoming a member), you will continue to receive it whether or not you keep up with your membership or subscription.

The PPNL is a profound way to be in touch with you, our community near and far, and we have enjoyed providing it without asking for regular payment. But, as production costs increase, and our commitment to print issues remain strong, we're going to be writing to the people who have been receiving it the longest to invite them to subscribe or renew their memberships/subscriptions.

You can help us! If you are receiving your copy in the mail and have let your membership/subscription lapse, please go to poetryproject.org to renew.

THE POETRY PROJECT BEGINS WORKSHOP RESIDENCY AT DIXON PLACE

The Project is happy to announce that our Spring Workshops (beginning in February) will take place at Dixon Place, located nearby at 161 Chrystie Street. Dixon Place was founded to provide a space for literary and performing artists to create and develop new works in front of a live audience. Our mutual interest in supporting the development of new work/work in progress makes it a dreamy partnership!

CONTRIBUTORS

JIM BEHRLE lives in Jersey City, and *The Comeback* is due out from O'clock Press.

BEN FAMA is the author of *Mall Witch* (Wonder, 2012) as well as several chapbooks, including *Cool Memories* (Spork, 2013) and *Odalisque* (Bloof Books, 2014). With Andrew Durbin, he edits Wonder. His first full length book of poems, *Fantasy*, will be out with UDP in 2015. He lives in New York City.

LUCY IVES is the author of several books, including *Orange Roses* (Ahsahta, 2013). A new collection of poems and a novella, *The Worldkillers*, is forthcoming in summer 2014. She lives in New York and is a deputy editor at Triple Canopy.

TRISHA LOW is committed to wearing a shock collar because she has so many feelings. She is the author of *THE COMPLEAT PURGE* (Kenning Editions, 2013). Remote controls are available at Gauss PDF, Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing, TROLL THREAD and others. She lives in New York City.

JONAS MEKAS (born Lithuania, 1922) is an American filmmaker, writer, and curator known as the "godfather of American avant-garde cinema." The founder of the Anthology Film Archives in 1964, which remains the world's most important repository of avant-garde films, Mekas has directed and produced numerous projects of his own, ranging from narrative compositions to documentaries and "diaries." Subjects of his works include Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and her children, as well as John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

To this date he has published more than 20 books of prose and poetry,

which have been translated into over 12 languages. His Lithuanian poetry is now part of Lithuanian classic literature and his films can be found in leading museums around the world. He is largely credited for developing the diaristic forms of cinema. Mekas has also been active as an academic, teaching at the New School for Social Research, the International Center for Photography, Cooper Union, New York University, and MIT.

Mekas' film *The Brig* (1963) was awarded the Grand Prize at the Venice Film Festival in 1963. Other films include *Walden* (1969), *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* (1972), *Lost Lost Lost* (1975), *Scenes from the Life of Andy Warhol* (1990), *Scenes from the Life of George Maciunas* (1992), *As I was Moving Ahead I saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty* (2000), *Letter from Greenpoint* (2005), and *Sleepless Nights Stories* (2011). In 2007, he completed a series of 365 short films released on the internet—one film every day—and since then has continued to share new work on his website.

Since 2000, Mekas has expanded his work into the area of film installations, exhibiting at the Serpentine Gallery, the Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Moderna Museet (Stockholm), PS1 Contemporary Art Center MoMA, Documenta of Kassel, the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, and the Venice Biennale.

DANIEL OWEN is the author of the chapbooks *Authentic Other Landscape* (Diez Press, 2013) and *Up in the Empty Ferries* (Thirdfloorapartment Press, forthcoming 2014). His poems have appeared in *Clock*, *Death and Life of American Cities*, *Lungfull!*, and elsewhere. He lives in Brooklyn, where he co-edits *Poems by Sunday* and is an editor at Ugly Duckling Presse.

DOUGLAS PICCINNINI is most recently the author of an encoded chromaglyph called FLAG (Well Greased Pressed) and co-author of the bilingual text Δ (TPR Press). Story Book, a work in prose, will appear later this year with The Cultural Society and his first book of poems, *Blood Oboe*, will be released by Omnidawn in 2015.

MATTHEW POLZIN's most recent book of poetry is *Solicitations* (DittoDitto, 2013).

STACY SZYMASZEK was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the summer of 1969 and grew up there. She studied at the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee), graduating in 1991 with a BA in Literature. She is the author of the books *Emptied of All Ships* (2005) and *Hyperglossia* (2009), both published by Litmus Press, as well as numerous chapbooks, including *Pasolini Poems* (Cy Press, 2005), *Orizaba: A Voyage with Hart Crane* (Faux Press, 2008), *Stacy S.: Autoportraits* (OMG, 2008), and from Hart Island (Albion Books, 2009). From 1999 to 2005, she worked at Woodland Pattern Book Center in Milwaukee. In 2005, she moved to New York City, where she is the Director of the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church.

JAMIE TOWNSEND is the managing editor of *Aufgabe* and *Elderly*, an emergent hub of ebullience and disgust. He is author of several chapbooks, most recently *PROPOSITIONS* (Mondo Bummer, 2014), as well as the forthcoming long-player *SHADE* (Elis Press, 2014).

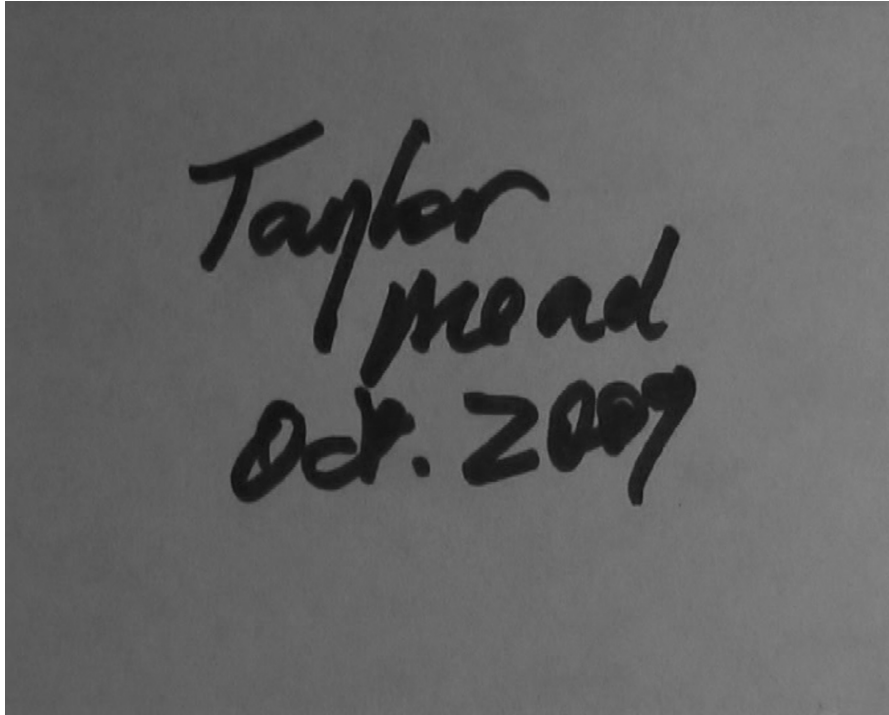
DAVID TRINIDAD's most recent books are *Peyton Place: A Haiku Soap Opera* (2013) and *Dear Prudence: New and Selected Poems* (2011), both published by Turtle Point Press.

BIANCA STONE is a poet and visual artist. Her book of poetry "Someone Else's Wedding Vows" is forthcoming from Tin House/Octopus Books.

Taylor Mead, Oct. 2009 with Jonas at Lucian

Jonas Mekas

Transcript: 17 min, Digital Color



JONAS MEKAS: Ron went before fifty?

TAYLOR MEAD: Twenty-eight or nine. Dash, of course, twenty-seven.

JM: [LAUGHS] Now, now, now! It's shorter and shorter. Now, like, twenty-seven and you're gone.

TM: That Heath... that actor in *Spider-Man*, Heath Ledger—terrific actor.

JM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

TM: But then he did...

JM: How old was he?

TM: *Brokeback Mountain*. I think...

SERVER: Do you want to hear our specials?

JM: No, I think I will cook something else by myself tonight.

SERVER: Okay!

JM: No, no, no. It's okay. [INAUDIBLE] I mean it.

Server: Okay, here's your baguette.

JM: Ah! [INAUDIBLE]... at once.

SERVER: That's the one who just died.

JM: Yeah, yeah, yeah...yeah, yeah, yeah.

TM: *Brokeback Mountain*, I think it was too much for the actor to handle. You know, the homosexual thing.

JM: Who are you talking about?

TM: Heath Ledger.

JM: Oh. Oh.

TM: Hollywood [LAUGHS]... In Sag Harbor, I told... uh... well, I told all about, so many people, because it was the day after 9/11, so I was talking about, you know, relatives who went out the window at 9... at the World Trade Center, and the guy who jumped off the Sag Harbor bridge who had a correspondence poetry... the thing is that they're so far gone I can't remember. (Editor's Note: *The person who jumped off the Sag Harbor bridge that Taylor mentions*



"Hollywood."

is collage and performance artist, Ray Johnson, who committed suicide on January 13th, 1995.)

JM: So, what did you get? Scotch? Or what?

TM: What?

JM: What are you drinking?

TM: Oh, Dewars. Only.

JM: And how old was Jack?

TM: Jack Smith? Fif...

JM: Forty-maybe-five?

TM: Oh, really? I don't know. I wasn't speaking to him for two years. [LAUGHS]

JM: His mother could not talk to him. She used to call *me*. "How is Jack?" And I'd always say, "Oh, He's great! He's doing so well! He's out, and everybody likes him!

And he's such a nice person!" And she was always so happy. She was in Chicago. I think she was, like, a nurse in some hospital. And she used to call me because she could not talk... or he refused to take her calls. So I invented a, like, a new, different Jack Smith for his mother. [LAUGHS]

TM: Yeah, I couldn't deal with him the last two years. But he, uh, I thought he was from Ohio. I dunno.

JM: ...but his mother when she was calling me was in Chicago. And they had [INAUDIBLE]. I'm not very good with biographical details of people. You knew Christopher Maclaine?

TM: Maclaine?

JM: Maclaine. Christopher Maclaine in San Francisco. Total schizophrenic, poet, filmmaker. *The End*.

TM: I met a lot of...

JM: *The End* and...

TM: I was there, I guess, last October or something.

JM: No, no, but this is in '59, 1960, '61.

TM: Maclaine... I don't remember. Bob Kaufman I remember. Jack Kerouac.

JM: Yeah, I met them too. Yes. I don't know if Kaufman died or maybe he's still alive...

TM: Oh, no. He died many... twenty-some years ago, thirty years ago.

JM: Yeah, yeah, we would hear from him otherwise.

TM: We both... we... at the Coffee Gallery in San Francisco on Grant street—or whatever it was—we both won the poetry evening. Nancy Mitford and a famous british critic, they gave us both the first prize, bottle of champagne or something.



[LAUGHS]

JM: Oh, I know who it was.

TM: Kenneth Tynan.

JM: Tynan. Kenneth Tynan. So he was in San Francisco, Kenneth Tynan?

TM: It was a wonderful scene, last of the Beat scene. Though I think even in San Francisco, even Ferlinghetti came to see *The Flower Thief*, but he's about ninety years old now so...

JM: Yeah, he [INAUDIBLE].

TM: So he didn't come to say hello, but that movie...

JM: Oh *now*, he went then! When you went to San Francisco, now!

TM: No, last October, I think.

JM: And Ferlinghetti came?

TM: Yeah

JM: Oh! [LAUGHS] Ah, a photographer at work.

PHOTOGRAPHER: That's not bad, not a bad shot. It kind of captures the essence.

TM: You catching the new young filmmakers? [LAUGHS] [SHIMMIES]

JM: Emerging... um... emerging filmmakers.

PHOTOGRAPHER: I could probably do it better with another...

TM: Emerging filmmakers? I'd say submerging filmmakers.

JM: Do you like that term, *submerging*?

PHOTOGRAPHER: You know there's just something so photogenic about you, Taylor.

JM: Because he's striped. He's striped. His hat. His shirt.

TM: [SHIMMIES]

PHOTOGRAPHER: Yeah, that one didn't work. That one didn't work. We'll get rid of that one. We gotta do better. I gotta tell you, when you stare directly at the camera, that's when your personality comes out.

TM: I can't pose. I have many painters who want me to hold still, and I can't.

JM: [LAUGHS] To pose!

TM: I can't pose.

JM: No, no. I had that experience *this* morning with some photographer, but no, no, I don't pose.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Still haven't gotten the shot that I want. I know the shot. I just haven't gotten it from you yet.

(Continued on pg. 25)

A POEM

David Trinidad

Joe

When you came to a dinner party at
Ira's and my loft, you brought
a lemon tart. Elaine remembers
this, I don't. You once said
"You can't beat meat, potatoes
and a green vegetable"
but not to me: Jimmy quotes
you in one of his uncollected poems,
"Within the Dome." And calls you
"the great Joe Brainard"
(which indeed you were). I was
well aware of that as I sat
across from you in a dim restaurant
in Tribeca—the first time, though
I'd met you six years earlier, that we
actually had a meal together.
It was such an honor to know you,
Joe, you'd think I'd remember
more about you than I do.
Friendly face. Swept-back, silvering
hair. Gold glints (lit match to
cigarette) in your round glasses.
Expensive white dress shirt
unbuttoned halfway down your
tanned (and hairy) chest. Shy
but in command, you reached for
the check. My best memories
have already gone into another poem.
How at a crowded party on
Washington Mews, during a

snowstorm, you towered over me
(I was sitting on the staircase, smoking)
and told me how attractive I looked
in my black sweater. How we
once almost had sex. "Can I
take you to dinner?" you wrote.
"And why don't you bring a
toothbrush with you and plan
on spending the night." I did
plan on it, but you caught a cold,
couldn't keep our date. And
never dropped the hint again.
How when Eileen was directing
the Poetry Project, she paired me
with Lyn Hejinian (something
perverse there). That was a tough
reading. When Alice, whom I
revered, walked in, I exclaimed,
"I'm so glad you came!" Startled,
she said, "I came to hear Lyn."
As did the majority of the audience.
My usually crowd-pleasing Supremes
poem was met with stony indifference.
Yet when I was able to look up
from my book (and that took
courage, believe me), I saw you
sitting in the middle of the room,
a broad smile across your face.
Everyone always speculated, Joe,
as to why you stopped making art—
the thought of *not* producing
inconceivable to the ambitious
throng of New York School wannabes.
Had you burnt out on speed
in the seventies? Been turned off
by the rise of commercialism in
the eighties? Or did you simply
feel (again inconceivable) that
you'd accomplished enough?
After you died, it became apparent
that this was, in fact, the case:
you left behind not one, but two
substantial bodies of work—
visual art *and* writing. And
produced classics in both genres—
with hardly anybody noticing.
*They think only of themselves
and brag about what they do.*
Your *Collected Writings*, its

powder blue dust jacket dotted
with your childlike gold stars,
is, almost twenty years after
your death, a joy to hold. Was
it a dream? Were we really friends?
I only visited you once, that I
can remember, in your loft on
Greene Street. Toward the end.
Not one bit of art on the white
walls, and next to no furniture—
had you always lived so sparsely?
Nowhere to sit, let alone linger.
You weren't doing much, you said,
except reading (the novels you'd
recently devoured were stacked
near the door; I brought you
some that Ira had published),
smoking your eight (or was it
nine?) requisite cigarettes per day,
and occasionally dressing up
for dinners (which you, I'm sure,
paid for) with devoted friends.
Can one have too many of those?
You seemed to, and so, as you
weakened, dressed up even less.

REVIEWS AND REACTIONS

I RL, YOU RL

Sophia Le Fraga

Minutes Books, 2013

Review by Lucy Ives

If the sigh—"Oh!" or "Ah!"—is the pure and authentic noise the human soul makes as it moves through a poem, its unmediated lament, what is it that speaks when a poem says, "oh my god what," or "oh my god yes," or "welcome to my couch/ u superficial motherfucka"? Does the soul say, "welcome to my couch/ u superficial motherfucka"?

A long time ago (well, about two decades), Romanticism was diagnosed as an idealist moment from which we have yet to recover. William Wordsworth, paradigmatic example, casts the poem as an autonomous sphere, in which a spirit apparently moves, independent of and above and beyond historical reality. I mention this because it has occurred to me, in reading Sophia Le Fraga's new collection, *I RL, YOU RL*, that something not unrelated to Romanticism comes of taking virtual text—by which I mean, "writing that is on the Internet"—and giving it back to the reader, lineated, in print, in a small, plain book. What romance comes of this has little to do with discussions about originality or unoriginality; Le Fraga has a series of email poems, "H8M8," in which whiny, grammatically dubious denizens of the Web berate Le Fraga for crimes against real, "original" poetry and Brooklyn's own "the poetry community." (I suspect Le Fraga composed these herself!) What romance comes of actually taking the texts of others, or allegedly taking the texts of others, or even only pretending you are copying and pasting your Facebook into a poem, is a little bit like what Berrigan accomplished with his hyper-social *The Sonnets*, poems he (more literally) cut and pasted from his own journals: You procure writing that is allegedly "real" and recast it as allegedly "fake," more or less pruned and formalized. But what is the original or primary

ontology of writing? What was ever not "fake"—or, by the same token, here taking up one meaning of the "R" in Le Fraga's title, not "real"?

As with our relationships with most technologies, here too we exist in a state of suspended disbelief. *I RL, YOU RL* takes good and deft advantage of this. The invocation of an idea of address in the pun in the book's title, *YOU RL* as URL, or "universal resource locator," also suggests to me a literary interpretation of the Web as the ultimate tool of Romantic distanciation. If the Internet is a form of mediation by means of which one can take any object or experience and convert it, virtually, into something else (a room with a chair becomes a CAD file, a jpeg, a .mov, etc.), this suggests a phantasmagoric sort of relation to anyone who might be on the receiving end of your speculative post. This suggests a "you" (a "U") who is always plural but also always potentially a null set; no one reads your update, which is to say, everyone reads it and no one "likes" it. Or, as Le Fraga has it, in one of the most perfect passages in the book:

@Lord:
talk me out of

"dicks" tonight.

You can ask anyone for anything (i.e., even pray) here. This isn't news, but the fact that tweeting at god, if sardonically, can be a thing is, at the very least, interesting.

So I like *I RL, YOU RL* for reproducing or re-presenting what was once apparently flickering language framed by a browser as somewhat more stable print, but I really like it for being a sustained meditation—what separates it a bit from Flarf, for example—regarding who it is anyone can possibly believe she or he is speaking to or addressing or thinking about online. (Maybe Romanticism could be said to do something similar with print.) "most of/ creation is meant/ to be loved," one post/poem homilizes; elsewhere, "you must be willing to VOICE VERIFY./ (NO EXCEPTIONS)." This is a very intelligent collection. I rly admire it. 📖

After Desire

George Stanley

New Star Books, 2013

Review by Stacy Szymaszek

Listening to George Stanley read "Veracruz" in 2005, I had the ultimate experience of receiving a poem. Dickinson's description of great poetry taking the top of her head off, Auden's (I think it was Auden) feeling that the poet had written the poem only for him, and more recently, Padgett describing the sensation of being raised out of his chair, energized, all come to mind. I felt a sense of motion when there generally isn't any. This is why it's such an intense experience, physical. I may have better luck if this review were a dance. I made a copy of "Veracruz" and taped it above my desk, a pin-up, like when I was 12 or so and taped a poster of Rob Lowe above my bed, wishing I could be him, like Stanley wishes he had become pregnant in "Veracruz." Stanley is so good because his poems are experiences for the reader. When *After Desire* showed up in the mail, it ended up in very large to-read pile. Then, another copy showed up—same thing. I was curious and had mixed feelings about the title. How could there be an after to desire? How could desire ever be satisfied? Then a third copy showed up!

After Desire is filled with poems that did for me what "Veracruz" did for me. I want to read poems with soundscapes that work metabolically on me. If you aren't interested in how a poem sounds or in poems that invite new experiences, then maybe you won't love George Stanley as much as I do. But if you do, he has one of the most unique ears in poetry and one of the most fluid imaginations. The best poems in the book have me searching the stanzas for rhymes I think I heard but can't find, sometimes on the level of phoneme. Often there is repetition, and the rhyme I thought I heard is really the same word strategically placed. I love this passage, Stanley motifs, a pub and a bus:

The poem I'm pretending to write—is
that the poem on the horizon?
You'd never know it.

When I drink at the pub I'm
pretending to drink at the pub
because that's a good thing to do, &
when I'm writing a poem I'm

pretending to write a poem
because those are the conditions of
my probation,

but when I ride the bus there's no
pretense involved. When I ride the
bus I'm just a bus rider.

(from "At the Pub")

The symbol of the bus and, at one point,
the bus driver as muse manifest Stanley's
need for the poem to cut through the
spurious moment. It is as a bus rider
that he can best read the world.

The book is a delightful shift from
Stanley's previous collection, *Vancouver:
A Poem*, and a great companion volume.
His investment in citizenship and the
city he lives in is evident in *After Desire*
but in ever more personal poems that
address a state of mind ("after desire")
where there can be, in Stanley's words,
a "return of the recognition of beauty."
Desire is an obstacle to seeing beauty
in its drive to possess it. *After desire*
is not equivalent to (as I feared and
maybe hoped) *without desire*. It is a gift
of perception from a poet, in his later
years, who has accepted his mortality
so much that he can say, "Don't gaze
into the abyss. Gaze out." Stanley never
denies the human context. There is so
much in the world that tries to undercut
the human context that his clarity is
intensely mysterious. My copy is already
well-worn. 📖

Hold the Blue Orb, Baby

Lewis Freedman

Well Greased Press, 2013

Review by Daniel Owen

Quite rightly, Lewis Freedman's *Hold the Blue Orb, Baby* is a difficult thing to read. Comprising 26 pages of notebook facsimiles (a facsimile of an A to Z, if you will), interspersed with four short essays on notebooking (13 fold-out pages bound between the facsimile pages), the thing invites (I almost want to say "dictates," following the bold "POTENTATE" inscribed on the cover) all manner of misreadings, interpretive failures, and readerly frustrations. "The materials encouraged/ to work something out...became the special fragmentary of during coherence."

After all, the blue orb (earth;

handball; a process of interpretation interpreting a process of material construction, unstable) is slippery. It's an orb in between, the third text proposed and held by the coupled surfaces of notebook and essays about notebook. But:

surface being only
the interaction with perceiving
orifices of an organism in repeating
but ever-differing surfaces

The text that arises from the proximity of Freedman's surfaces is perceivable through a process akin to the 3D movie Freedman writes of in the book's first essay, "The Authority of Purpose":

the layering was actually quite close
to the screen, but
to discern any depth in surface
projection or inscription,
which is usually pretty
monodirectional, radically changes
the relation i have with the field in
which the body is of,
shifts seeing it to orbital...

The orb is held by the "aura collisions" between the book's dual surfaces, each a hand gesturing toward another in a posture of prayer; the revealed texts occlude the held text so that it may emanate from between. This is, perhaps, the book's reckoning with "the logic of the technology of inscribable and projectable surfaces."

i really repeat the thought that
language's inscriptive
form is subject foremost to the
technology of the
inscribable surface

And so, the notebook. It includes jottings, notes, drafts, reminders, reading lists, directions, contact information, class notes ("use rubric assignment as worksheet"), formal literary experiments, and a Talmudic exegesis of Edmond Jabès' "The Book of Yukel." Each page sets its own parameters, constantly gesturing toward potential finished works outside of itself, without ever relaxing or laboring into those finished shapes. The pleasure of raw(ish) materials, in and of themselves, ever resisting the usual notion of a book of poems as finished product.

(Continued on pg. 22)

Our Lady of the Flowers, Echoic

Chris Tysh

Les Figues, 2013

Review by Matthew Polzin

Jean Genet's *Our Lady of the Flowers* is inventively recast in Chris Tysh's cutting, verse translation of the French novel. Tysh aptly describes her sharpening of the original's prose into verse as a "transcreation," seeing that the standard translation process is amped by her own creative license. Fitting, as Genet begins his novel with a similar moment of arts and crafts, cutting his devil-may-care criminals out of newspapers and pasting them onto the wall of his prison cell. Out of the desire aroused by the "heroes" in these photographs, Genet weaves Divine, Darling, and Our Lady into the lecherous achievement Sartre called "an epic of masturbation." In *Our Lady of the Flowers, Echoic*, Tysh brilliantly puts to page the fantasies again by confining them to two nimble, sensually written stanzas per page. Constricted into fewer words, they are elated as if by asphyxiation.

With the help of my unknown lovers—
Nobody can say when and if I'll get
out—

I'll compose a story: my heroes are
Stuck on the wall and I in lockdown
As your read about Divine and
Culafroy

You might at times here lines mixed in
With a drop of blood, an exclamation
point

In the drowsy morning as the screw
Throws in his low "Bonjour"
The fact of a few pink girls, now white
Corpses, flow through
An ineffable fairytale I tell
In my own words
For the enchantment of my cell

Susan Sontag praised Jean Genet with her verdict that his first novel, given its literary merit, did not qualify as camp. It was too successful to be camp. In its content, however, *Our Lady of the Flowers* embodies all of camp's chintzy artifice, which Tysh's *Echoic* devotedly appropriates. Compositionally, however, her retelling is an innovation on what it seizes. The poetic language that adorns Genet's alluring prose is agilely cut, spliced, and refined. Like Divine, who had "become her own / Self like a work

that long ago / Detached from its author," the work echoes by Tysh's hand. When she refers to Divine's apartment as her "pad," Tysh is also implicating the pad of brown papers that Genet received in his cell and on which his tale was written. The pad that Tysh has pirated. "You might at times hear lines mixed in / With a drop of blood, an exclamation point." Chris Tysh's or Jean Genet's? The poetry continually raises this question of authorship. As if slapping the novel (lovingly) across the face to sober it up, her stanzas confront us with a new expression.

How sweet it is to speak
Of those two at the precise
Moment when planes are
Sobbing and the whole world
Is running amok before gun-
Fire. Already the soldiers'
Flesh droops like a half moon

While I dream of the lovers' garret
And the ways love surprises
People's lives like a walk-on part:
Two young wrestlers huddle together
Tangled hair, open shirts, they rewrite
The score high up in the Milky Way
Other constellations take shape

In its seductiveness, perhaps *Echoic* even trumps the Bernard Frechtman translation, by which most English readers know the text. The sleekness of each line seems to intensify the gritty violence and vulgarity. From the Frechtman we have: "With his jacket, trousers and shirt off, he looked as white and sunken as an avalanche. Toward evening they found themselves tangled in the damp and rumpled sheets." Tysh butts the poetic language of these two sentences right up against each other, and the translation reads as an evocative code for sex-laden sheets: "They find themselves entangled / In the damp sails of an avalanche."

For Tysh, the original prose is a site of occupation. As Genet occupies his sultry criminals, so does Tysh come to inhabit them. However, like "a monstrous sieve," *Echoic* leaks multiple readings, just as *Our Lady of the Flowers* does. The top half of each page is made blank as if in homage to Genet, who reconstructed his criminals as hollowed artifacts of desire with eyes emptied of color. Her stanzas pass through both cavernous spaces, her half-blank page and Genet's novel, and the echoes resound there.

Tysh, through Genet, explicitly invites readers to conspire with the text by adding our own take: "I'll let you imagine their dialogue / Go ahead. Be my guest. Think the wildest / Schemes hanging on a thread of slang." Her readers are built into the story as co-conspirators, and we are implicated in what is created. By unlatching Genet from his original form, Tysh has added force and plasticity to Genet's groundbreaking novel. *Echoic* ingeniously opens *Our Lady of the Flowers* for a new generation of transformations ("The reader will have to improvise his own").

Terra Firmament

Evan Kennedy

Krupskaya, 2013

&

Ursula or University

Stephanie Young

Krupskaya, 2013

Review by Jamie Townsend

(Excerpts from Bernadette Mayer's *Utopia*)

Being a brief record in summary of friends traveling throughout the lands of and surrounding San Francisco.

"Life You are a Being"

In the opening section of *Utopia*, Evan Kennedy introduces himself in the voice of others, establishing the primary goal of communal thought—that is—a shared affinity among all forms of life. A telescoping descent pulls the scene forward, "as I was/ like many things creeping and crawling and/ in between" (EK 13).

Introduction and "More Like the Truth or Accurate"

Echoing Chris Kraus in *Gravity and Grace*, Stephanie Young presents her record of an incomplete movietelling piece, a "thing that failed", in medias res. As Grace returns from the future to talk with Bernadette about what she's seen, Stephanie questions her own sense of "real time" as a vehicle for acumen or abstracted value. "I wanted there to be room for everything, and also I wanted to say something. Some tension between these desires" (SY 17).

"The Arrangement" and "American Hoods"

Returning to his normal size, Evan records, from the seat of his bicycle, a kaleidoscope of figures moving among the oppressive environs of the city; "turning the corner to find figures from our other half...bodies leaning past the bounds meant to impede their contours" (EK 56). These bounds then shift and transform, as Evan traces the dynamic relationships between weak and strong, enclosed and freed, animal and human, within these bounds; "as we're not born to turn sticks and pulp just yet, not born to rot, we/ may as well be stones now, thrown or immobile, we may as well be/ beasts now, leaping or immobile..." (EK 37). "Two Notes on the World Government," places where we can dream of a correspondence beyond it.

"Something and Everything" and "Some of This Decade's Things"

Wherein Stephanie details a variety of conversations focusing on aesthetics, social life and economy at Columbia University's Rethinking Poetics Conference. On the unfolding of the proceedings, a biotech mashup of physical interaction and social media message-board debate, Bernadette writes "I could say it became easy for the world to be changed but for a long while, more than one year, there was much bickering about hegemony" (*Utopia* 52). Thinking about her friends Stephanie elaborates further; "I kept wondering what might happen..." (SY 58).

"Hordes of People Deprived of Greed"

Evan offers an addendum to Mary Carey (Grade 6, Elizabeth Cady Stanton School) regarding her thought that the multitude might be retrained as circus acts; "I topple your country,/ reorder sense as stags bleat/ since I am the topsy-turvy// glad apparition/ for free education and/ paradise now" (EK 23).

"Sex Was Near a Sewing Machine"

Bernadette presents a history of fucking, opening with the parable "Whales tell people stories about sex". Evan answers; "made to exceed beasts, I take all that's made to exceed them, exceed/ them in warmth, in swiftness, in charm", invoking the primacy of material life "my shoes, their eyelets; my skull, its sockets,/ and so on toward paradise now" (EK 18-19).

"Filamentous Magic Carpets"

After the conference the question still remains; how does one effectively navigate between social life and the academy with a clear understanding of bodies within historical time. Wracked with anxiety on a BART train trip between Oakland and San Francisco, Young comments on the crippling effects of living between disasters; "And even though the earthquake had obviously come and gone...over and over again in so many places, it was still easier for me to imagine the earthquake that is coming..." (SY 87). In response, Bernadette posits a Fourierian alternative future to the impending mass transit accident; a fleet of delicate, dreamlike creations pitched high above the abandoned machinery of an industrial world grown far beyond the bonds of the natural, a structure which can no longer support itself.

(Continued on pg. 23)

Phrenologue, With Fierce Convulse / Die Into Life, & Phenologue

Judah Rubin

Ugly Duckling Presse, 2013 / *DIEZ*, 2013 / *O'Clock Press*, 2013

Review by Douglas Piccinnini

OPEN SOURCE, OPEN FIELD: THREE WORKS BY JUDAH RUBIN

That a poet should publish a single body of work in a year is admirable and, to have two works in that same year—well, that is even more remarkable—*more than two*? Judah Rubin's recent flourish of publications, *Phrenologue* (UDP, 2013), *With Fierce Convulse / Die Into Life* (DIEZ, 2013) and *Phrenologue* (O'Clock Press, 2013) collectively represent a serious debut by a young writer who has as much ambition as craft tuned into these works. These three slim volumes quietly ring together in an ether of dualities, of loss and renewal, in a metaspace of overturned material. Each begins—*Phrenologue* (UDP), *With Fierce Convulse / Die Into Life* (DIEZ) and *Phrenologue* (O'Clock Press)—respectively,

out of the reduced field
to speak of
appetizing the face of

indexical thickening

pushed
toward egress –

and

how to

name

the substantial

come

as, people do not

come

back — though

you have come and

so

in

tact

and

unaccount in

digits

green as age
will

overturn

at
door's

indistancia

Rubin's technique winnows and winds through a kind of sliding music, one that reminds my mind's ear of Oppen. These lines are projectiles that slide across the page, pause in thought and are ripped back, anew. The effect is less of a stutter of words, and more revealing of the overlaying, the building and use of material language. As the language visually insists distance, "indistancia" or an unknown distance, it is perhaps the quantity and the quality of unrest which underlies the inquiry in Rubin's poems. The "reduced field," the "indexical thickening" the quandary of "how to / name / the substantial" suggest the task at hand is one of sussing out boundaries.

An epigraph from Dard Hunter's *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft* introduces the first section of *Phrenologue* (O'Clock Press) called, Kamiya-Gami,

It has been stated that even books from the Imperial Library were macerated into pulp to be formed into sheets of the shukushi paper, always of a dull colour due to the writing on the paper from which it was fabricated.

As early as 1031 in Japan, waste paper became a useful material for remaking into sheets of paper known as "kamiyagami" which literary means paper-shop paper.¹ Rubin's work as a librarian and as an editor have undoubtedly influenced his penchant for not only the text as an object but more so, the text as an essential object of transformation. The violence of thrashing, of macerating an existing work of text so as to enable a new material — a new "field" for new text — enacts biological creation, bleeds as with the washing of physical ink, reconstitutes and colors/recolors the object.

But a made up place

These

blackened out

keys to a

geometer's necropol

Recovered and repurposed "geometer's necropol" would be the literal cemetery of objects, the spatial tomb for what's missing in what is. Rubin's "reduced field" is the pulp on which his poetry begins anew — the "geometer's necropol" or *the kinectics of the thing* as Olson suggests: the "energy transferred from where the poet got it." And yet, the origins of this energy are not only unknown, they are immaterial to the poems themselves — they stand on their own. And even though at times the language in these poems seems just out of reach — out of meaning, too — perhaps they should be, for such is being, is history.

The work contains colorful twins in turns of phrase with lines like "green as age / will", "is green and / muddy by degrees but / transparent" and "in green leant / on, from / vocabulary stripped / to a scent like / knot — of death thought / not of two minds, but of body back / of two." "Green," here, like the new green of spring, rising and, the green of age, rotting. The reciprocal play induces a kind of odd balancing act of to be or not be, where being can come from not being.

(Continued on pg. 24)

UPCOMING READINGS AND EVENTS AT THE POETRY PROJECT

ALL EVENTS BEGIN AT 8PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ADMISSION \$8 / STUDENTS & SENIORS \$7 / MEMBERS \$5 OR FREE

THE POETRY PROJECT IS LOCATED IN ST. MARK'S CHURCH AT THE CORNER OF 2ND AVE & 10TH ST IN MANHATTAN

CALL 212 674 0910 FOR MORE INFORMATION

THE POETRY PROJECT IS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE WITH ASSISTANCE AND ADVANCE NOTICE *schedule is subject to change*

MON 2/3

OPEN READING

Sign-up at 7:45.

WED 2/5

GREGG BORDOWITZ & MAGGIE NELSON

Gregg Bordowitz is an artist and writer. His most recent book, *General Idea: Imagevirus*, was published by Afterall Books (2010). A collection of his writings titled *The AIDS Crisis Is Ridiculous and Other Writings 1986-2003* was published by MIT Press (2004). He is currently the Director for the School of the Art Institute of Chicago Low Residency MFA Program.

Maggie Nelson is the author of four books of nonfiction, most recently a work of art and cultural criticism titled *The Art of Cruelty: A Reckoning* (Norton, 2011; named a Notable Book of the Year by the *New York Times*), and a meditation on the color blue, *Bluets* (Wave Books, 2009). She is also the author of four books of poetry, including *Something Bright, Then Holes* (Soft Skull Press, 2007).

FRI 2/7 10PM

ANDREW KENOWER & KIT SCHLUTER

Andrew Kenower created the online audio archive—*A Voice Box*—in 2007. He is co-curator of the Woolsey Heights Reading Series in South Berkeley, CA and the principle designer for Trafficker Press.

Kit Schluter is the author of *Without Is a Part of Origin* (Gauss PDF) and two forthcoming chapbooks with Diez and Well Greased. He translates books of Marcel Schwob for Wakefield Press and, with Andrew Dieck, edits O'clock Press and its journal, *CLOCK*.

MON 2/10

TAMIKO BEYER & ANN STEPHENSON

Tamiko Beyer is the author *We Come Elemental*, winner of Alice James Books 2011 Kinereth Gensler Award, and *bough breaks* from Meritage Press. A Kundiman fellow, her poems have appeared in *The Volta*, *Octopus*, *DIAGRAM*, and elsewhere.

Ann Stephenson is the author of the chapbooks *Adventure Club* (Insurance Editions, 2013) and *Wirework* (Tent Editions, 2006). Her third chapbook, *Notes on the Interior*, is forthcoming from Green Zone. She was born and raised in Georgia and lives in New York City.

WED 2/12

YOUNNA CHLALA & TRAVIS ORTIZ

Younna Chlala is a writer and an artist born in Beirut and based in New York. Her work investigates the relationship between fate and architecture through poetry, prose, drawing, video and performance. She is the

Founding Editor of *Eleven Eleven* (1111) *Journal of Literature and Art* and an Associate Professor in the Humanities and Media Studies Department at the Pratt Institute.

Travis Ortiz is a writer, visual artist, and DJ living in San Francisco, California. He is the author of *Variously, Not Then* (Tuumba, 2012) and *Geography of Parts* (Melodeon Poetry Systems, 1998). He is also the co-director (with Lyn Hejinian) of Atelos, a literary project commissioning and publishing cross-genre work by poets.

FRI 2/14 10PM

WHAT—VALENTINE'S?—NO—DANCE PARTY!—AND JOHN HUGHES READING—[sob]

Whatever your "situation" this Valentine's night, come to the church after dinner (kidding: don't eat first) and hang out with your friends while they poetically intervene in the hoary, formative (except for the readers who weren't born yet) films of fin-de-siècle-ish maestro John Hughes. Afterwards we'll drink free beer and unholster some funk-loaded iPods, and see what that new PA system can do. This is the first of three special events in the Friday Late Night Series. Featuring **Jenny Zhang, Andrew Durbin, Dorothea Lasky, Dawn Lundy Martin, Sharon Mesmer, Dia Felix, Masha Tupitsyn, Sue Landers, and Ed Halter**. Admission \$10.

MON 2/17

STEPHEN COPE & ISHION HUTCHINSON

Stephen Cope is the editor of *George Oppen: Selected Prose, Daybooks, and Papers* (University of California Press, 2007) and has published poems and/or articles in *Denver Quarterly*, *Jacket*, *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, *Blackwell Companion to Modern Poetry*, and elsewhere.

Ishion Hutchinson was born in Port Antonio, Jamaica. His first collection, *Far District: Poems* (Peepal Tree Press Limited, UK, 2010), won the PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award and the Whiting Writer's Award. He is an assistant professor of English at Cornell University.

WED 2/19

SAMUEL R. DELANY & MARISSA PEREL

Samuel R. Delany's novels include *Nova* (Doubleday, 1968), *Dhalgren* (Bantam Books, 1975), *Hogg* (Black Ice Books, 1994), *The Mad Man* (Masquerade Books, 1994), the Stonewall Award-winning *Dark Reflections* (Carroll & Graf, 2007), and—most recently—*Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders* (Magnus, 2012).

Marissa Perel is an artist, poet, critic and independent curator whose work spans performance, video and text-based installation. Her installations

and performances have been presented internationally, including Dance Theater Workshop (NYC) and The Chocolate Factory Theater (NYC), The D.I.V.O Institute (Prague, C.R.), Medium Gallery (Bratislava, Slovakia), The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and have been commissioned for the Chicago Cultural Center.

FRI 2/21 10 PM

AN EVENING WITH CHEVAL SOMBRE

Globe-trotting musician Cheval Sombre (New York poet **Christopher Porpora**) returns home to kick off his 2014 tour, with a new release just out from Melbourne's Slightly Delic Productions. The Quietus called his alt-folk album *Mad Love* "meditative and entrancing"—with a bit of "morbidity and nihilism" in the bargain—the perfect vibe for the Parish Hall in the dead of winter. Not to be missed!

MON 2/24

TRISHA LOW & TOMMY PICO

Trisha Low is committed to wearing a shock collar because she has so many feelings. She is the author of *THE COMPLEAT PURGE* (Kenning Editions, 2013). Remote controls are available at *Gauss PDF*, *Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing*, *TROLL THREAD* and others. She lives in New York City.

Tommy Pico has been published in *BOMB*, *[PANK]*, and *THEthe poetry blog*. Originally from the Viejas Indian reservation of the Kumeyaay nation, he now lives in Brooklyn. In Jan. 2014 he released *Absent Mind*—the first collection of poetry published as an app for iOS mobile/tablet devices, developed by Verbal Visual.

WED 2/26

JOAN RETALLACK & JULIANA SPAHR

Joan Retallack is the author of eight books of poetry, including *Procedural Elegies / Western Civ Cont'd* (Roof Books, 2010), and *Memnoir* (Post-Apollo Press, 2004), as well as numerous critical studies including *Gertrude Stein: Selections* (2008), *Poetry & Pedagogy: The Challenge of the Contemporary* (Palgrave, 2006), *The Poethical Wager* (University of California Press, 2003), and *MUSICAGE: John Cage in Conversation with Joan Retallack* (University Press of New England, 1996).

Juliana Spahr edits with Jena Osman the book series Chain Links, with nineteen other poets she edits of the collectively funded Subpress, and with Joshua Clover and Jasper Bernes she will begin editing Commune Editions. With David Buuck she wrote *Army of Lovers*, a book about two

friends who are writers in a time of war and ecological collapse (City Lights, 2013). With Joshua Clover she has organized the 95 cent Skool (Summer of 2010) and the Durruti Free Skool (Summer of 2011).

MON 3/3

OPEN READING

Sign-up at 7:45.

WED 3/5

DOUBLE BOOK LAUNCH FOR THOMAS MCEVILLE

Celebrating the late Thomas McEville and the publication of his new books *The Arimaspa: Songs for the Rainy Season* and *Seventeen Ancient Poems Translations from Greek and Latin*. McEville was a scholar, poet, novelist, art historian, critic, and translator best known as a provocative and influential art critic. He authored many books on art and classical philology including *The Shape of Ancient thought*, *Sappho* and 3 novels. He lived in New York City and the lower Hudson Valley. With **Charles Bernstein**, **Carolee Schneemann**, **Holland Cotter**, **Pat Steir**, **Les Levine**, **William Anastasi**, **Susan Bee**, **James Surls**, **George Quasha**, **Richard Fletcher**, **Bruce McPherson**, **Stacy Szymaszek**, a special message from **Marina Abramovic**, and more.

MON 3/10

PHIL CORDELLI & DOUGLAS PICCINNINI

Phil Cordelli is a farmer and poet, seasonally and respectively. He lives in the south of Denver, and farms on five acres just a bit further south from there. On occasion he's joined by freshwater pelicans, miniature ponies, a golden retriever, and a three-legged coyote. He is the author of *Manual of Woody Plants*, published last fall by Ugly Duckling Presse.

Douglas Piccinnini is most recently the author of an encoded chromaglyph called *FLAG* (Well Greased Pressed) and co-author of the bilingual text Δ (TPR Press). *Story Book*, a work in prose, will appear later this year with The Cultural Society and his first book of poems, *Blood Oboe*, will be released by Omnidawn in 2015.

WED 3/12

DOUGLAS DUNN & YVONNE RAINER

Douglas Dunn, in 1971, while a member of Merce Cunningham & Dance Company, and of Grand Union, began presenting work in New York City. In 1976 he formed Douglas Dunn & Dancers and began touring the US and Europe. In 2008 was honored by the French government as Chevalier in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. In January 2014 Douglas Dunn & Dancers showed *Aubade*, a collaborative evening with Anne Waldman, Charles Atlas and Steven Taylor, at the beautiful Kasser Theater at Montclair State University.

Yvonne Rainer, a co-founding member of the Judson Dance Theater in 1962, made a

transition to filmmaking following a fifteen-year career as a choreographer/dancer (1960-1975). Her dances and films have been shown world wide, and her work has been rewarded with museum exhibitions, fellowships, and grants, most notably two Guggenheim Fellowships, two Rockefeller grants, a Wexner Prize, and a MacArthur Fellowship. A selection of her poetry was published in 2011 by Paul Chan's Badlands Unlimited.

Event co-presented with Danspace Project.

MON 3/17

JOSHUA MARIE WILKINSON & LYNN XU

Joshua Marie Wilkinson (b. 1977, Seattle) is the author of several books including *Selenography*, *Swamp Isthmus*, *The Courier's Archive & Hymnal*, and *Meadow Slasher* (all from Sidebrow Books and Black Ocean). He lives in Tucson, where edits *The Volta* and Letter Machine Editions.

Lynn Xu was born in Shanghai. She is the author of *Debts & Lessons* (Omnidawn, 2013) and *June* (a chapbook from Corollary Press, 2006). The recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship and a Magistretti Fellowship, she is currently a Jacob K. Javits Fellow at the University of California, Berkeley. She co-edits Canarium Books.

WED 3/19

BRENDA COULTAS & ELENI SIKELIANOS

Brenda Coultas is the author of *The Tatters*, a collection of poetry, newly published by Wesleyan University Press this year. She is a contributing fiction editor for *Black and Grey magazine*.

Eleni Sikelianos is the author of a hybrid memoir *The Book of Jon*, (City Lights, 2004) and seven books of poetry, most recently, *The Loving Detail of the Living & the Dead* (Coffee House, 2013). Forthcoming in 2014 is another essay/poetry/scrapbook/memoir, *You Animal Machine (The Golden Greek)*. She teaches at the University of Denver, where she runs the Writers in the Schools program.

FRI 3/21 10 PM

ERIC CONROE AND EMILY SKILLINGS

Eric Conroe is the asst. curator for the KGB Poetry Series, and co-founder and -curator of the COPULA Poetry Series. As a dancer, he has performed with Dean Moss and others, working in residence at Yale, The Kitchen, Korean Arts Festival, and ASU. Poems have appeared recently in *Your First Time*, *SAG/FAC*, *Bellow!*, *Bright Bright Shit*, and *Coffee Area*.

Emily Skillings is a dancer poet poet dancer. Recent poetry can be found in *No Dear*, *The The Poetry*, *Bone Bouquet*, *Lingerpost*, *Stonecutter*, *La Fovea*, and *Maggy*. Skillings dances for the A.O. Movement Collective and The Commons Choir (Daria Faïn and Robert Kocik) and presents her own choreography in New York.

MON 3/24 6-9PM

16TH ANNUAL URBAN WORD NYC TEEN POETRY SLAM PRELIMINARIES

NYC's hottest teen poets compete for a chance to represent their city at the Brave New Voices National Teen Poetry Slam in Philadelphia. Come support the voices of the next generation, as they take the stage and speak their mind. To enter, poets must be 13-19 years old, and sign up at www.urbanwordnyc.org or showup. First come first serve. Audience members are encouraged to come early, as seating is limited. \$5 Teens, \$7 Adults, FREE for Performers.

WED 3/26

RODNEY KOENEKE & URAYOÁN NOEL

Rodney Koeneké's latest collection, *Etruria*, is just out from Wave Books. Previous books include *Musee Mechanique* (BlazeVOX [books], 2006) and *Rouge State* (Pavement Saw Press, 2003), with new work forthcoming from Hooke Press in 2014. He lives and teaches history at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon.

Urayoán Noel's most recent books of poetry are *Hi-Density Politics* (BlazeVOX, 2010) and *Los días porosos* (Catáfixia, Guatemala, 2012). He is also the author of the critical study *In Visible Movement: Nuyorican Poetry from the Sixties to Slam* (U of Iowa, forthcoming). He lives in the Bronx, where he occasionally performs and records with the band Los Guapos Planetas.

MON 3/31

TALK SERIES// APHASIA AS A VISUAL SHAPE OF SPEAKING: FIA BACKSTRÖM ON A-PRODUCTION AND OTHER LANGUAGE SYNDROMES//

Automatic, delirious ReadWrite pathologies, arrhythmia and the gradient of sound, aphasia as the visual shape of single word staccato syntax, a-signification in the forms and forces worked upon lifted language. If current mental diagnostic categories fragmentize from syndrome into symptoms, turning the inner emotional landscape into user statistics, what kind of address is available to the subject? If language is the global sharing tool, the social gateway, how is a touching, attended phrase authentic, and if so with subjectivity and/or not?

Fia Backström is a text-based artist who works across a wide range of media. From 2011 she has refrained from the exhibition format, primarily working out the parameters of engagement through her writing and in various group formations. Backström co-chairs the photography department at the Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts at Bard College, and teaches at the graduate Visuals Arts Program at Columbia University and the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University.

SPRING WORKSHOPS AT THE POETRY PROJECT

SPRING WORKSHOPS WILL BE HELD AT DIXON PLACE, LOCATED NEARBY AT 161 CHRYSTIE STREET
(SEE ANNOUNCEMENT ON PAGE 5) UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

PERSONALIZED DRAMA/THE INCOMPLETE THEATER TEXT

CORINA COPP

Fridays 7-9PM

8 Sessions begin Feb 7th

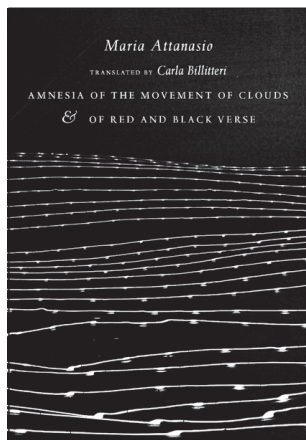
This workshop will be an attempt to consider the condition of the theater text, starting with what Alain Badiou calls its inherent “porosity” and “incompletion,” in relation to contemporary performance writing and conceptual approaches to devised theater-making, as well as the redoing visible in work by cross-genre dramatists like Ingeborg Bachmann and Elfriede Jelinek, among others. Commitment to some reading constraints required. Course will be treated both as group discussion and personalized tutorial, with each workshop participant devoting focus to 4-6 plays by one playwright, depending on interests, writing and instructor recommendation.

“The theatre text exhibits the very law of desire, since here the subject exists only as linked to [her] discourse. And nothing else....Except that in the end some body is put forth to be marked by these words.” And so we’ll question this scene of a text in its impossible future anterior. Writers and artists we’ll look to include (in no particular order and subject to change): Kristen Kosmas, Young Jean Lee, Heiner Müller, Reza Abdoh, Harold Pinter, Gertrude Stein, Samuel Beckett, Maria Irene Fornes, Sarah Kane, Richard Foreman, Suzan Lori-Parks, Peter Handke, Will Eno, Karinne Keithley Syers, Big Dance Theater, Anne Washburn, Thomas Bradshaw, Nathalie Sarraute, Marguerite Duras, Thomas Bernhard, and Else Lasker-Schüler.

Not all hope lost! We will spend the last two workshops on your writing. Culminates in short performance. And depending on schedules, we’ll spend one class seeing either Sara Greenberger Rafferty at the Whitney Biennial, or another show in the city. Ten participants max, so please join early if seriously interested and able to be present at all sessions. For best tutorial: Send as a writing sample a 1-2 page monologue or dialogue to info@poetryproject.org by January 31.

Corina Copp is the author of *The Green Ray* (Ugly Duckling Presse, Fall 2014); *All Stock Must Go* (Shit Valley Verlag, Cambridge, UK 2014); *Miracle Mare* (Trafficker 2013); and *Pro Magenta/Be Met* (UDP 2011). The first installment of *The Whole Tragedy of the Inability to Love: SUSANSWERPHONE*, a three-part play inspired by the work of Marguerite Duras, was presented at the 2012 New York Prelude Festival, and is in development. She is a 2013-2014 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace writer-in-residence.

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— Stacy Szymaszek

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MUM IS DOWN



How long does it take a body to
hit the ground
when it falls from I have no idea
what height?

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TRANSLATION: THE "USEFUL ILLUSION"

MARCELLA DURAND

Thursdays 7-9PM

10 Sessions begin Feb 6th, 7-9pm

Ron Padgett referred to his translating Pierre Reverdy's *Prose Poems* as a "useful illusion," which aptly describes how translation is simultaneously an impossible and essential art. While the transfer of a poem from one language to another will never be exact (not in the least!), the process of doing so pries open tongue, ear and head to the diversity of possibilities. This will be a hands-on, nuts-and-bolts workshop where we will fearlessly render poems from one language to another. While fluency in two languages is not required, an interest and/or working knowledge will be appreciated. We will also read translations of and by poets of various eras and areas, and enjoy class visits by working translators.

Marcella Durand has translated poems by Michèle Métail, Charles Baudelaire, Marcel Proust, and others. She is currently working on a book-length alexandrine, titled *In This World of 12 Months*.

INFORMATION OVERLOAD: THE PERVERSITY OF THE KNOWING

DAWN LUNDY MARTIN

Saturdays 2-4PM

5 Sessions begin Feb 16th

The disciplinary apparatuses of the state have taken forms of which we are newly aware. They watch and document under the auspices of providing safety for citizens. We, in turn, provide almost everyone with excess access to what we do, who we believe ourselves to be, and what we think. Is counter documentation possible? What does it mean to attempt to speak against power? What narratives, forms, languages, gestures, and means toward performance can help us create future selves liberated from the over abundance of record? In this workshop, we will work toward uncovering the effects of surveillance on writing and imagine strategies for refusing those effects. Together we will generate anti-dossiers that resist totality and information accumulation (secret or other).

Dawn Lundy Martin is the author of *A Matter of Gathering / A Gathering of Matter*, *DISCIPLINE*, and the forthcoming *Life in a Box is a Pretty Life*; she is Associate Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh.

SPECIAL WORKSHOP at the Center for Book Arts

PRINTING POETRY

RICH O'RUSSA

Two sessions, May 17th & 18th, 10AM-5PM

(This workshop is a collaboration with CBA, therefore all participants are subject to a \$250 enrollment fee.)

The way words are set on a page can alter impression and give literally "deeper" meaning to a poem. In this 2-day intensive, learn how making measured decisions about font, size, color and arrangement, along with the physical experience of setting type and printing, can bring out a fuller visual and tactile dimensions to your work. Participants will type set work, choose color and paper and then print a broadside edition of twenty. Class capacity is 10.

Rich O'Russa is an artist and commercial letterpress. He is the proprietor of ITDO Creative.

New Omnidawn Poetry

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Martha Ronk *Transfer of Qualities*

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★★★ One of Publishers Weekly's Best Books of 2013 ★★★

★★★ One of 2013's Great Reads from NPR ★★★

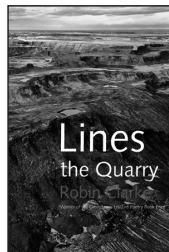


Omnidawn 1st/2nd Book Prize—Selected by Brenda Hillman

Robin Clarke *Lines the Quarry*

\$17.95 96 pages 978-1-890650-89-6

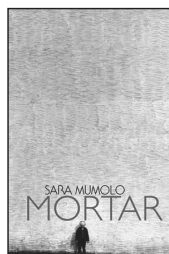
"One of the most compelling first books I've read in years. If there is a literary equivalent to the financial cliff, Robin Clarke's *Lines the Quarry* represents the mountain of wreckage at the bottom of the free fall."—Mark Nowak



Sara Mumolo *Mortar*

\$17.95 80 pages 978-1-890650-90-2

"With wry feminist humor and not a little ambivalence, her poems document the psychic costs of an economy that conflates sex and capital, the female nude and the courtesan. 'Rolling over onto backs, we're conflict's mascot,' Mumolo bravely writes, 'none of these anxieties are new.' Dear wise and foolish virgins of late, late capitalism: this book is for you."—Brian Teare



Paul Verlaine *Songs without Words*

Translated by Donald Revell

French on Facing Pages \$17.95 96 pages 978-1-890650-87-2

This is the book in which, unabashedly, Paul Verlaine becomes himself and, in so doing, becomes the iconic poet of the French nineteenth century. A book of musical sequences, it seeks and finds exquisite purity of expression, best exemplified by "Il pleure dans mon coeur," the most famous and most inimitable of all French lyric poems.

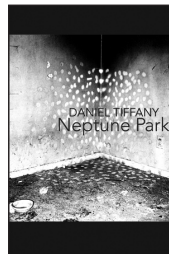


Daniel Tiffany *Neptune Park*

\$17.95 88 pages 978-1-890650-86-5

"*Neptune Park's* uncanny couplets are not like anything else—they read like Lynchian jingles, 3 AM blurts, off-key songs overheard in a Shell station mart.

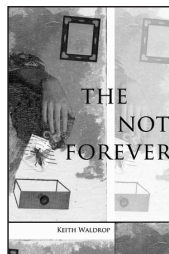
They are pastiche distillations or riddling alchemies that switch from the profound, to the kitsch, to the crass. Read these tantalizing, unfamiliar telegrams from a world that's a theme park of our own."—Cathy Park Hong



Keith Waldrop *The Not Forever*

\$17.95 112 pages 978-1-890650-88-9

"Waldrop has been a leading figure in American avant-garde poetics for decades. This book finds him thinking about the objects and actions that compose everyday life and how those things point the way toward death....Waldrop strikingly comes to terms with the immediacy and frailty of these things, and by turns his own."—Publishers Weekly



For contests, sample poems, reviews, & more visit www.omnidawn.com

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— DODIE BELLAMY

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NEW! ^{FROM} KELSEY STREET

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PREMONITION ^{by} **Etel Adnan**

premonition
/
etel
adnan

There's always a conductive thread through space for an untenable position. In all respects absence is a porous and arrogant matter. One has to cross one's life again, the one that wants to be ahead. A forest saturated with trees proclaims the existence of a river saturated with reflections. The soul turns into a ghost and runs into the void.

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7 DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE DESERT (TRACING THE ORIGIN)

^{by} **Sabrina Dalla Valle**

7 Days and Nights
in the Desert
(Tracing the Origin)
SABRINA DALLA VALLE

What if our skin
were also the skin of the universe?
Pressed against unknown darkness,
we are the limit, maybe even
the membrane for all possibility.

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(Freedman/Owens cont. from pg. 13)
In these snapshots of process, my attention is particularly drawn to the form that Freedman ("some voice-ghost inhaling the/ object labeled as Lewis Freedman who is all and only/ inscripted voice-ghosts") explores in a page entitled "[PANDA'S IN MEDITATION (CLUB)]." In this poem, thought is surprised into language outside itself through a formal process, an attempt to circumvent thought, perhaps, as a means to get at language outside of self (or at least to beg that question). According to an explanatory note to a similar poem found on *Elective Affinities*,

This poem is of a notational method of writing in which I begin attempting to make words at the speed and shape of letter without a word in mind. If I can get to the end of the word I am spelling without producing the word in my mind, the word appears without parenthesis but with spaces between each letter [t o n e]. If the word is heard in mind prior to the end of the letter-making and I am forming letters into the already known word, I notate with parentheses from the known point until the end of the word [s e n (der)]. If the entire word is unavoidably heard before I begin to form its first letter I notate in full parenthesis [(doody)]. Other divergent notations in the poem are extensions of this notational logic, e.g. I begin a word having already heard it but it changes in the letter forming and is notated like this: (mi nted).

The work here is deeply concerned with thinking through the process that produces the thought of the work's concerns in progress, an inquiry into

the tricks by which language represents (or fails to represent) experience and a search for a method to maybe make that process less dubious; an inquiry as concerned with "moral mysticism" as it is with aesthetics.

Hence, the nudity of the notebook, the work arrested in incompleteness.

but i love this here not doing
this nothing not worse than
all it begins with failure

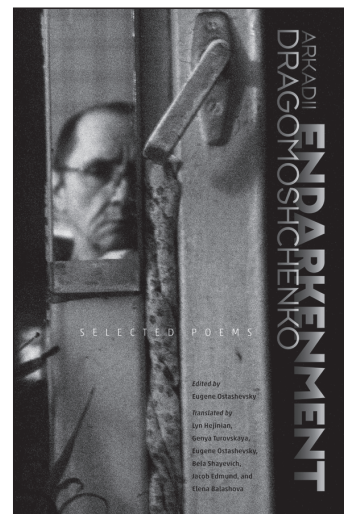
On some pages it's near impossible to make out Freedman's penmanship. On others, certain words are more or less legible, prompting a reading interrupted by attempts to fit a potential word into context. Does that say "the/ augur of troubles muttering" or "the/ sugar of troubles muttering"?

surround these pieces you'll
get what you robbed
to make this or to make
anything conjecture weighed in
a fracture of your mart
from the music iconic to then
we were right

Throughout *Hold the Blue Orb, Baby*, the writing feels loose; one gets the impression the language is propelling the thought or that thought is given to chasing the language the poet is chasing, kind of an ouroboros arrangement, though the parts are perhaps not so divisible; more an orb maybe as metaphor, with the relation of thought to language to poet proposed as conjecturable core.

One of the great pleasures of *Hold the Blue Orb, Baby*'s difficulty is that it enables such circuitous interpretations. It leaves its dual surfaces, and their elusive orb, to be seen and potentially housed by others. ■

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Endarkenment Selected Poems Arkadii Dragomoshchenko

Edited by Eugene Ostashevsky

"Arkadii Dragomoshchenko is one of the great poets of the last fifty years, a poet who has transformed Russian poetics by exploring a meditative and introspective approach to both rhythm and content. The constantly metamorphosing detail is his constant companion through the often harsh times of the Cold War and what came after. This superb selection reads like one long, wild, sublime poem. It is a small opening onto the vast treasure of this poet's imagination."

—Charles Bernstein

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(Kennedy/Young/Townsend cont. from pg. 15)
“A Story Told in the Vacation Place”

In a further effort to challenge the sovereignty of historical time, Stephanie and Bernadette step outside of it for a moment and dream a speculative heuristic of solidarity erasing social and economic boundaries; a first strike against the vampirism of landlords.

“Homage to Jonathan Swift” and “A Fish That Looks like a Bishop”

Evan attempts to establish a dialogue between the various utopian communities he and Bernadette discover in their travels, including the readers themselves;

How else should each reply to each, how civil,
how bestial, and getting that rather well while
keeping off the sun, rather, off the subject,
and far from growing fur or fangs, I'm sure I'm
far from those, but close to loving coats and
caps, while keeping of the sea...

...I listen with
my body so attentive toward that order. and

into it while keeping above the squalor, not
afraid to turn civil...” (EK 69).

“The Cave of Glass”

Before their journey comes to close, Bernadette and Stephanie follow their friends into the future by combining techniques of “dream hovering” vs. “real and phony flying” (Utopia 113) with Georges Gurvitch’s studies of sociological time. There Stephanie’s concerns are refracted in the writings of her colleagues “And so I called out to the singularities... called them out in rooms full of poets” (SY 162). Their echoed response fills the area between the eventual and actual.

“How We Got Back from the Future” and Epilogue

Here we mark the space of the linear as it bends to ellipsis; a return, revolution waged at the very limit of the physical body. The bodies of Stephanie, Evan, Bernadette, of their friends, lovers, fellow citizens, ourselves, human, animal, the porous borders, something not completely conclusive, a question mark.❏

MARCH 5th

An All-Day Celebration of Thomas McEvilley’s Work

The Inaugural Thomas McEvilley Symposium on Ancient Cultures and Contemporary Art

March 5th / Dean’s Conference Room / NYU

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. / 4 Washington Square North

This symposium will bring together artists, art critics, poets, classicists and cultural historians to discuss art, philosophy, poetics, performance and globalism in both contemporary art and ancient cultures. The event will also celebrate Thomas McEvilley’s role as writer, thinker and teacher.

For symposium details, email Prof. Richard Fletcher:
fletcher.161@osu.edu

A Double Book Launch

The Arimaspia: Songs for the Rainy Season

AND *Seventeen Ancient Poems*

The Poetry Project 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. March 5th

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Collapse, to be so
glyph-rotten—

dawn— a clean

knot of

Want

whether what

contagion leaks

from
a new way to speak

Whether in a veritable tomb, or that of the body, or the dimensionally ambiguous margins of sleep, each volume concludes in a space of confinement, but also of potential release,

(

above
him — concrete

tar
paper, asphalt
and railroad

ties

escape the burden
of such peace as burnt

and

That I knew
the body felt, the weight of —
the way it pushed the barrow

along its path
And that I am filled just past the point
With words and sounds and things
impossible — to measure

that I want to

hold for you
and finally they've come
spilling out
the top

and

When
chosen what was

touched the

run till

with blood
to fill its
lungs

a tracing

— one —

—a deficit
the stud, liturgent
scion come to

inverse as
broken
sleep

I messaged Judah the other day to ask him if he would cite his materials — to name his source(s). He replied, “yes, there is a single textual cipher but I’ll never reveal that.”

Rubin’s titles are suggestive enough. “Minced Pollock” which heads the second section in the O’Clock edition, suggests a total offering of flesh and frame. Pollock, the bony white fish often turned into the luxurious fish stick. Pollock, deboned and pulped. Breaded and fried into a new form, a thing is made. And this is not to say these volumes are like fish sticks. No, they are not.

Rubin’s recycling is cultural, spiritual and historical mulching. It is a poetry wandering with a shovel through the graveyard of things that surround us. These poems are personal and yet, universal too, as they strive to make sense of a civilization in decline full of “creations and destroying, all at once.” And to now begin again with Keats’ *Hyperion*,

Most like the struggle at the gate of death;

Or liker still to one who should take leave

Of pale immortal death, and with a pang

As hot as death’s is chill, whit fierce convulse

Die into life [...]



Endnotes:

¹ Hunter, Dard. *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*. New York: Dover Publications, 1978. p 54

(TAYLOR MEAD cont. from pg. 6) TM: That's lovely.

butter.

JM: Oh, he *knows* the shot.

JM: I love it.

JM: So you still do your Bowery thing, then?

TM: Oh, director, director...

TM: And it really looks...it looks like we're in a...and the background is like a nice café with pictures.

TM: Yeah, I think it's been four years... three years. The young people are a great new audience. My dirtiest poetry they love it—they don't care.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Oh, alright, now I got it.

JM: Send me a copy. Not that. Not that.

TM: Give more, more...

PHOTOGRAPHER: That's the one I was waiting for. Jonas, tell me that's not Taylor.

PHOTOGRAPHER: That works!

JM: Oh, that's interesting how, through the years, the audience changes like they all got...like, fell off, but now it's a new, new younger...

JM: [LAUGHS]

JM: And that's your new career?

TM: Let's see again. I like that.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Well, actually, I moved. My mother-in-law threw me out of her house. I had all my stuff stored in her attic, and she threw me out. Hang on a second.

TM: Even in Ohio State in Columbus or Ohio State University...everywhere, the young people...I guess it's through the internet. They're much more sophisticated or something.

PHOTOGRAPHER: That's a great shot. Do you do email, Taylor?

JM: [LAUGHS] [to Taylor] Are you still publishing the *Night Life* or whatever? Perich? [to server] give me \$15 if you have it. (Editor's Note: *Jonas is referring to Anton Perich's publication, NIGHT.*)

JM: it's just all the old generations knew you and they knew many others, and they got bored, had enough, you know? Or maybe *they* did not know. But now the new generation, it's discovering. It's new. It's from the beginning. It's...it's...

TM: No.

SERVER: I have it.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Ah shit, if you emailed, I'd email it to you. That really is the essence of you. I'm not kidding you.

TM: Oh, I need bread and butter. No, I'm every Monday at the Bowery Poetry Club. The Warhol Foundation is actually paying me.

TM: I just have one more...[to the server] just some jam.

TM: Yeah, I like it.

PHOTOGRAPHER: That was... that is a really good one.

JM: But Anton Perich, he's still publishing that...

JM: The old generation...they have to die.

TM: But you know, I did that once for a still photographer, and he said, "Oh." He said, "Taylor don't do that. You do that too much."

TM: Yeah, doing a great job. We have about ten or twenty movies, and we show them on cable.

TM: *Ppfft*. I get some very old people—I guess we all go back fifty or a hundred years, whatever—but wonderfully responsive older people, but I can't remember who they are.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Well, I'm not around you that much so it worked for me.

TM: Yeah, good for you.

JM: Oh! Now movies! Not publishing though.

JM: So maybe it's the middle-age, middle-class, that's no good. Middle-class. Middle-age.

JM: I'm always with a glass of wine. That's me.

TM: Oh, yeah, he publishes but once every two months or something like that. Big newspaper.

TM: Middle-everything.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Yeah, I don't like that one. I can do better. I can do better. Actually, this is better. Now, you're not looking at the camera, but I think I've captured some of Jonas's spirit in that.

SERVER: Did you want some bread?

JM: Yeah, the middle is always boring.

TM: Bread and butter, yeah... bread and

TM: [LISTENING TO MUSIC IN THE CAFÉ] Oh, beautiful. [SHIMMIES] 

untitled.doc

Trisha Low

“Going back to the sociologists’ notion, the sacred mixed with the social for it to be *sacred*.

[...]

That which affirms me strongly enough to deny others.”

- Laure, *The Sacred*

To My Lover—

I have come to a realization. I’m sure it will be no surprise to you, but it is a shameful epiphany for me: I am my own problem. For the last years I have been blaming you for my unhappiness/failure/alcoholism/etc. I wasn’t able to take on responsibility for myself and I took it out on you. It was unfair and the worst thing I could have done to you.

Most of all, I am so sorry for the abuse that I heaped upon you by bringing you to so many poetry readings. I belittled you, insulted you, and made you feel unsafe. It makes me feel awful that the places I frequent have become the source of such unhappiness and alienation, especially in someone I care about so deeply.

I am normally not like this. While I am not excusing myself from my unprofessional actions, I believe I acted the way I did because of the poor influence of those I have met at venues that fuel my addiction such as the Poetry Project.

I hope you can understand the roots of my bad habit and how deep these roots run. Coming into the frustrating emotional years of youth totally overwhelmed and unprepared to deal with life, I began to discover some thrilling satisfaction and release in poetry. Growing up in a permissive home, little restraint and internal control was put into me as a young child. Thus, as I grew older, I was easily taken in by peer pressure and other influences around me and swept away with the spirit of the times, nothing holding me back from the rebellion that was in me. I was fed up with seemingly pointless and empty rules and regulations. I think my mother, seeing the reality of where her children were at, made some sort of a last-ditch attempt to bring us under control, taking it to the extreme. But when you are 12 or 13, it’s a little too late, and so her efforts only drove us further apart from her. There was no hope of understanding each other anymore.

Some of my earliest childhood memories were going to the Poetry Project where my father was doing the sound. These were fond memories for me. I’ll never forget standing in the sun on 2nd Avenue one day, with all the street merchants, filled up with the hope that something new could start, something from the heart, motivated by the desire for freedom, love, and peace. Beautiful people were everywhere. My heart full of excitement, I started talking with an old poet about my hope and vision for life. Burnt out and tired, I remember he just looked at me with compassion and said, ‘Hey, babe, you’re about ten years too late.’ I stood there stunned. His words devastated me. I seemed like one untimely born. And yet when I found myself back there as a young adult, I couldn’t hold back the tears. I sat there crying for a long, long time, overwhelmed with the feeling that I had finally come home.

The lack of peace my parents had about my involvement in poetry was obvious through different comments they had made over the years, and I no longer trust their intentions. Old fears began to come to me, considering how they used to call the police on me as a child, without warning. I began to suspect the possibility of them getting in touch with a deprogrammer who was becoming sort of famous at the time. ‘White Lightning’ was the name he had acquired, because he would swoop in like lightning and kidnap people away from their communities. Ultimately, they couldn’t come up with the money to pay a deprogrammer. However, little did they know that even the trauma of that sudden removal would be better than what I experienced during my time at those early poetry readings, what I experienced at the mercy of the compulsory Them in my community.

In my earliest memories, someone I know is walking towards me quickly, dressed in all the days ordained for me written in Their book, their hair pulled back, wearing small angels with white wings that run all the way up to their elbows, like rubber gloves. I smile at them. The door swings open. I turn, confused, looking into the room. Someone I know yells something garbled behind me. Little white balls of angels, to keep my spirit up, to talk to me, to bless me and heal me of any sicknesses have been pushed aside into the corners of what looks like a soundproofed room and somebody I feel like I might have

known is sitting there—covered entirely—either in every word that comes from the mouth of Them or every amount of health possible for Them to bestow upon a woman's whole body. I can't tell. It looks like this somebody is made from wax, slathered with it, rewarded by Their abundance, lying twisted on its own meekness in some kind of horrible position on a steel examination table, naked, both virtues spread open and chained to stirrups, its chastity and charity completely exposed, both arms locked behind its head, held up by a rope connected to a hook in the ceiling creating a path for the thunderstorm of Their abundant compassion. Somebody I might know is wearing the deep places of my life flooded with Their electric and faithful love, sitting in a swivel chair next to the examination table, screaming at the somebody I feel like I might have known in what sounds like Japanese. The somebody I might know sits nearby, staring intently at a metal box, her hands poised over the three levers that protrude from either side. One labeled 'Fellowship from your mother.' Another labeled 'Please pray.' Another labeled 'Please Call.' Someone I know camcords the proceedings, the small black machine aimed solely at the someone I feel like I might have known once. I'm smiling, confused, weirded-out at how focused the somebody I might have known seems, and shocked at how gruesome and inauthentic all this waxwork looks.

I remember faintly that book called *The Inoperative Community* that was given to me yesterday, delivered curiously to my doorstep and the frame shifts. I'm suddenly distracted from all this because the someone I know keeps shouting 'Open your heart so They can really use you abundantly and truly' in something that still sounds like it could be Japanese—I'm not Japanese—then makes a hand signal to the somebody I might have known once. The somebody I might know nods grimly and moves his hand to a lever, pressing it, causing lights to flicker along with self centered thoughts, full of anger, complaints, always full of guilt and adequacy, trying too hard to please and in a flash my eyes move from the wires connected to the box labeled 'Protect and Keep me from the Cold Dark Rooms In My Soul Please.' My eyes move over to where they have actually been inserted into gashes and cuts on what I'm realising are the somebody I feel like I might have known's choices, examples, thoughts, and finally, their ears. These are all things that are in everybody, but I take a sip of water from the bottle in my hand and remember to try to let others see me not like what's in front of me, in Their sparkle, Their light, Their glory and Their peace and suddenly like prophesised—like they prophesised no one is able to take their eyes off my face.

The somebody I feel like I might have known springs grotesquely to life in the freezing room, screeching, arching its personal hungers and thirsts up again and again, lifting itself off the examination table, valid directions in its most basic needs straining, and purple foam starts pouring out of the places wonderfully and beautifully made by the Them, which also has a wire, larger and thicker inserted into it labeled 'Their Special Favour Will Rain Down Upon You.' Bunched around the wheels on the table legs are white towels spotted heavily with freedoms, some of them black. What looks like an correct understanding is slowly emerging, out of its own accord, from another wider slit across the someone I feel like I might have known once's decision, out of its own accord.

Out of its own accord there is, I'm noticing, no camera crew around, which is a shame. I sip my water. I have begun to relate to the world entirely through complaints and miseries. I am the part of the horse that's been led to water and can't be made to drink. But only that part.

Somebody, or these somebodies, or even a camera crew would certainly not be the part you can ride or the part that will pull a cart. I drop my bottle of water, startled, causing somebody I might know, or the somebody I think I know to glance over to where I'm standing. Behind me, the someone I know screams, 'Get her out of here!' The someone—wait—somebody I think I might know is making noises I have never heard another somebody or someone I might know or never know, or might only know a little bit, or even love make before, and in between these arias of pain she's screaming, 'I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry,' and the somebody or someone in the swivel chair rolls out of view of the camcorder and takes off his dark-knitted destiny. Sweaty and exhausted the someone I might know, or even love, mutters—I'm not sure to whom—the words, 'Glorify them,' and then to the somebody I know, 'This Miracle Sent from my iPhone.' Somebody I might know stands and with a small sharp knife labeled 'They Guard Your Heart' swiftly slices off the somebody or someone that I might have known once or even a little bit or never's deep discernment. Somebody but not the other somebody dies screaming for their mother, everything, words, iniquities and polite silence shooting out of them like a fountain until there's none left. Somebody cuts the lights.

I'm trying to leave the room but somebody I definitely know blocks my exit and my eyes are closed and I'm chanting, 'Please you guys please mom please you guys,' hyperventilating and breaking out into sobs. Somebody who might be someone I used to love, or maybe even know a little bit is attempting to hug me.

'Here, take this'—someone I used to love, or even know, or somebody or anybody or even a little bit says, slipping a tablet into my mouth, offering me a glass of milk while caressing the back of my neck. 'It's like a rainbow.' Somebody or anybody stops smiling and relaxes and touches the side of my face tenderly. 'Oh baby, it's okay, we know, you're mainstream, you are,' they murmur. Sometime during all of this my own entire virtue came off.

I know this is all very difficult to understand, but I hope my story will make you feel like my apology to you is that much more heartfelt. We are all still trying to figure out where each other is coming from. The sad result of this is that we can't really communicate on a normal level because you automatically label everything I say as being brainwashed. I understand that you may not want to talk to me after all that I've done or how you feel about my habits, and I respect that. You must do what makes you feel best. Maybe our differences are too great. But I want you to know that I will work tirelessly from here on to improve my behavior and to deal with my feelings and addictions in a healthier manner. Please forgive me.

Yours,
Trisha

A POEM

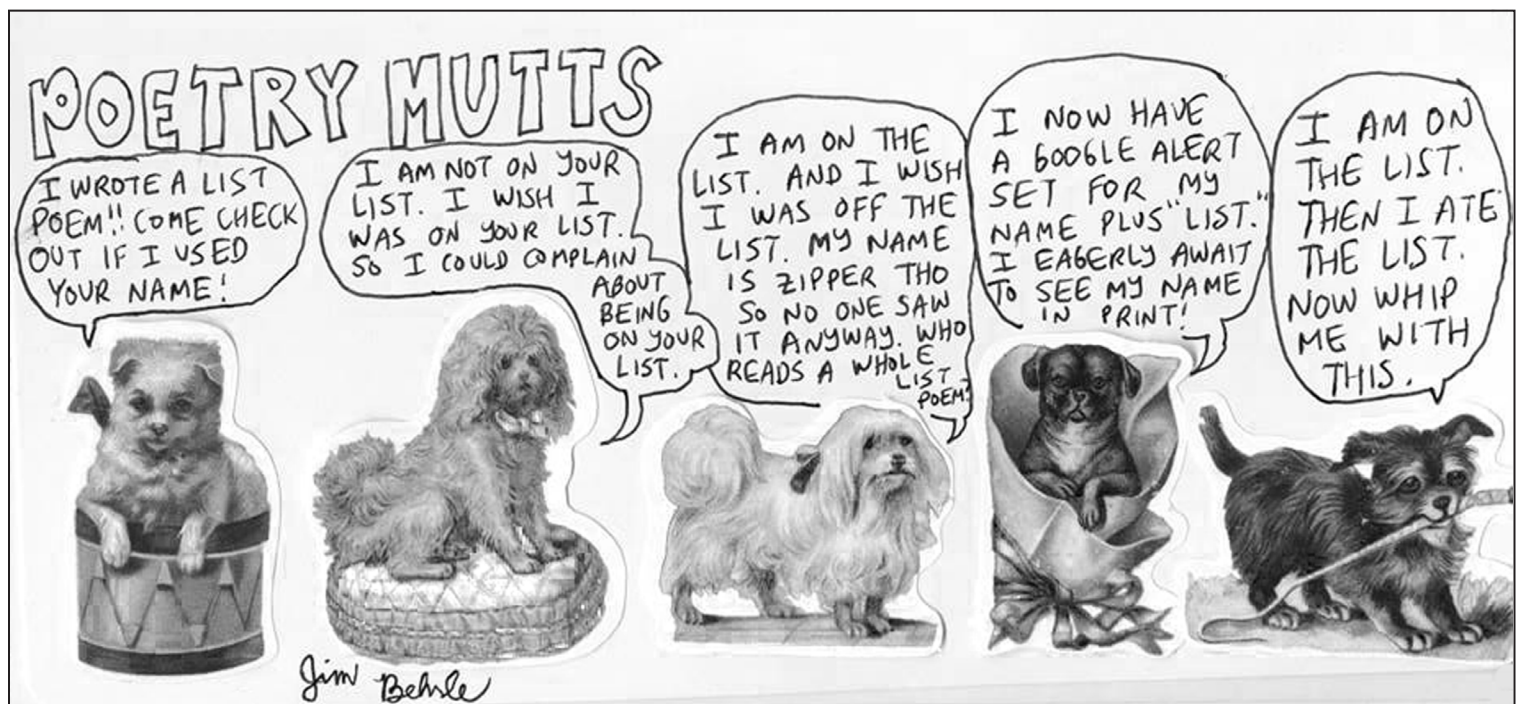
Ben Fama

LOS ANGELES

Like any subscription member
of the Metropolitan Opera
fashion bloggers believe
they're at the center of perception
I want to go where men go
Is a high school crush
on an alien surf girl
the same as the need
to fatally possess
the other and the self?
my friends were in this band
called Second Life®
let's get high
talk about '90s nostalgia
scientology
drink diet coke
The Real is a teenager
drunk in a turn
a blue dot pulsing down
santa monica boulevard
hackers are the
unacknowledged legislators of the world
for something to be timeless
it must be outside mortality

and if humans exist outside of death
they're no longer subject to the violence
of sexual reproduction
or the fragility of life itself
in these conditions Enya
will have no cultural efficacy
hope life now won't need
infinite sadness though possible now obsolete
what did I do this weekend?
listen to this song *tropical winter* on repeat
while POV jogging through runyon canyon
totally desperate boys following cute boys
making out under tumblr skies
reblogged as gossip
sent from my iPhone
Kenneth Anger fatigued and
decadent in silk
post-fantasy
negation is part of the
positive identity of an object
there is no snow in hollywood
celebrities constitutive of a
scene that draw the populations
restaurant owners want as their clientele
in a single day three stars photographed
in the same gray hoodie
I want to create a product too unstable
to be marketed
not to say lacking
maybe messy
discursive and sort of pushing
oscillating among the various dimensions of influence
I could write here randy details of my consumer choices
banal and otherwise
it would not amount to much
Mallarmé on fashion
Benjamin on Fashion
a monograph retrospective
of Guess's photo editorials

next to the bed
so maybe alien visitations
directly influenced human history over the millennia
what does it take to start a new life
you take lonely trips to the city
you are interested in moving to
saturate the market with your resume
during interviews order both coffee and juice
masterfully handle the acceptance of ontological incompleteness
by affecting the persona of the applicant they want to hire
a winning assurance that you never intend to realize
obvious to all parties six months into the job
John Paul Gaultier staged his *Chic Rabbi*
collection at Paris fashion week FW'93
very beautiful, very elegant, the orthodox religious
clothing and the gender-bending
fits with his interest in tradition and iconic imagery
as well as the fact that he's treating somewhat impertinently
something that most people wouldn't dare play with in couture design
when Gaultier talks about himself though he sounds so dumb





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