



THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Stephanie Young on Tiqqun and Ariana Reines
Ana Božičević on Vanessa Place
The Reanimation Library
New Work by Macgregor Card and Charles Bernstein
Interview: Chris Martin and Mary Austin Speaker
Reviews, Reading Reports **and More**

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The Poetry Project Newsletter

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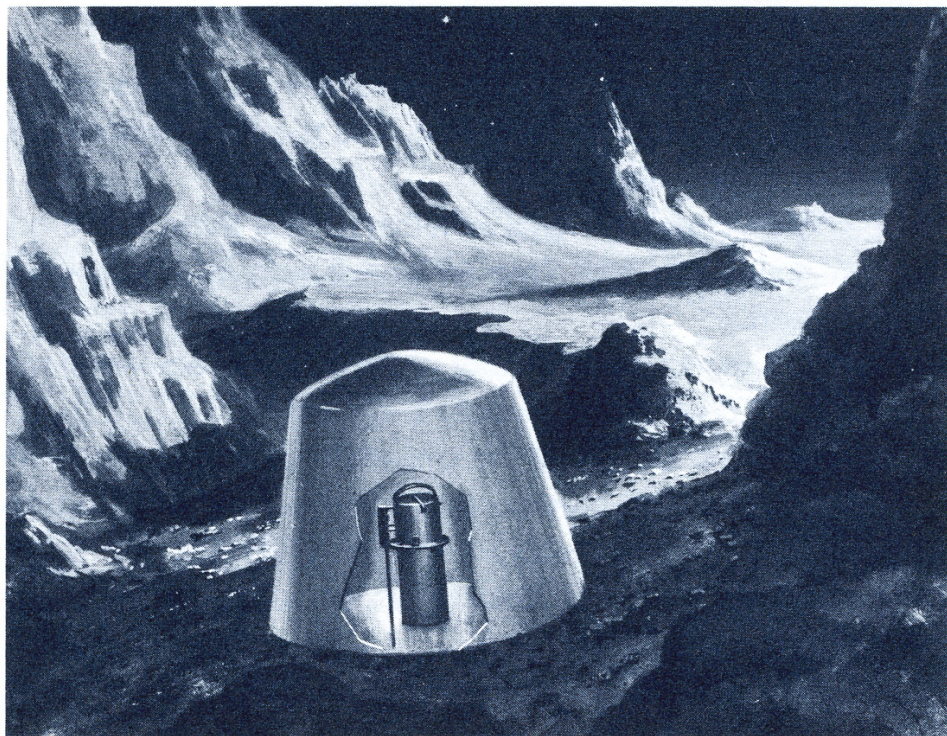
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The Wolf Trap.

Contents

Letters and Announcements.....	4
<i>Premiers matériaux pour une théorie de la Jeune-Fille:</i> Some Notes on the New Translation by Stephanie Young	6
Benefit by Macgregor Card	11
Interview: The Conspiracy Mixtape by Chris Martin and Mary Austin Speaker.....	14
Reanimation Library by Andrew Beccone	16
Night & Storm/Some Situation(s) of Place in the Poetic Avant-Garde by Ana Božičević.....	19
Events at The Poetry Project	22
Poetry Project Reading Reports by Laura Henriksen	24
Book Reviews.....	25
Catachresis My Love by Charles Bernstein.....	29
Astrological Advice from Dorothea Lasky	31
Cover and Interior (pages 3 and 27) Art by Reanimation Library	



From the Director

We are so excited about the 39TH Annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading Benefit. We took planning to a new level this year and formed a Program Committee to curate the event. I think committee work is fun and I found some eccentric people who agree with me. Thanks to the expansive intelligence and curiosity of this team for coming up with a dynamic and diverse night of poetry and performance: Todd Colby, Corrine Fitzpatrick, John S. Hall (Chair), Matt Longabucco, Kimberly Lyons, Camille Rankine, Simone White and The Poetry Project staff. As ever, the Marathon will be the place to be on New Year's Day in New York. As a performer, audience member, volunteer or donator of books or food, you will be contributing to The Poetry Project's effort to remain a vital public forum (with more than 80 readings per season) for risk-taking poetry. We thank you for your dedication and support as we look ahead to the big 4-0!

—Stacy Szymaszek

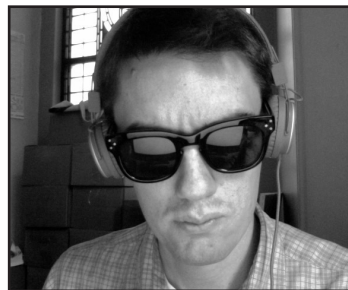


From the Editor

Having the benefit of writing this close to press time, I am happy to spread the word that The Poetry Project is doing fine in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Stacy reported no power for a week (consistent with the rest of lower Manhattan) and a cracked tree in the churchyard, but the Church was spared the flooding that destroyed so much. As of now, readings are happening and, along with the rest of the city, the Project is grinding back into gear.

Thanks to the contributors who worked to get this issue out under strange and difficult conditions. A special shout to Andrew Beccone, who put together a great package of images (appearing on the cover and inside the issue) and text on his Reanimation Library. Proteus Gowanus, which houses the physical Library, was flooded in the storm, but Andrew assembled a team to move the collection to higher ground in advance. As Andrew gets ready to reopen, I encourage you to visit the online collection at <http://www.reanimationlibrary.org>.

—Paul Foster Johnson



From the Program Coordinator

Dear Readers of *The Poetry Project Newsletter*, I'm writing to you from exciting late October where there's a megastorm named Sandy headed for New York City. I can see its eye now (just off the Jersey Shore) through the 19TH-century telescope in the St. Mark's Church belltower. When it hits Hoboken I'll ride the super-secret elevator to the sub-sub-level below Stuyvesant's tomb but for now I'll continue to coordinate the program from above ground. This is New Year's Day Marathon Reading planning season here at The Poetry Project and we'll work through even the most perfect storm so that we can be prepared for our biggest event of the year. Check out the calendar in this issue of the Newsletter for a partial list of the 140 (!) or so poets, dancers and musicians who will be performing at the 39TH Annual New Year's Day Marathon Benefit Reading.

Our hope is that this New Year's Day Marathon Benefit Reading, in addition to being incredibly fun, will provide us with enough money to continue on and host the other 80–90 readings we have planned for 2013. Of course we PoProj employees can plan and organize all day and night but the Marathon will only happen with your help. It'll take about 80 volunteers working a couple of hours each to make New Year's Day at The Poetry Project as great as it can be. Please send an email to info@poetryproject.org if you're willing to donate some of your time. Program Assistant Nicole Wallace will answer your email. She'll be coordinating all the bookselling, hand-stamping, keg-tapping action that makes the event go. Also, you should let her know if you're a publisher with books to donate or a chef prepared to whip up something special.

Thanks for your support—I hope to see you on New Year's Day!

—Arlo Quint

YEAR-END APPEAL

Don't be surprised if you find an appeal for a year-end contribution to The Poetry Project in your inbox or mailbox. We've kept it brief, so please don't ignore or discard it until you've read through!

By being subscribers, readers, writers and program attendees, you've made it clear to us that you value what we do. Keep the love coming by considering a fully tax-deductible year-end contribution to The Poetry Project in whatever amount is significant to you.

If you are receiving your copy of The Poetry Project Newsletter in the mail and haven't been keeping up with your annual subscription or membership, please consider making a \$25 contribution. No amount is too small (or too big, for that matter).

For 47 years, The Poetry Project has built community in New York and beyond, has mentored poets and fostered groundbreaking work, and has been a force for innovation in arts and letters in our home city and beyond. This excellence was recognized by the Library of Congress when it purchased The Poetry Project's archives in 2007. Your gift will help the Project to sustain its legacy and build opportunities for the future.

Given the possibility that you are just too eager to give to wait until you receive our appeal letter, you can make your contribution now by visiting <http://poetryproject.org/get-involved/donate-now>. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Stacy Szymaszek, Artistic Director
Gillian McCain, President, Board of Directors

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Contest!!! Win!! Win!! Win!! Yay!!!

Traditionally, the last poem of The Poetry Project's New Year's Day Marathon Reading Benefit is read by our Artistic Director, Stacy Szymaszek. This year, Stacy has decided to share her good fortune. We are excited to announce the Project's first-ever "Win the Artistic Director's Lucky Reading Spot Contest"!

The rules: Send us your poem. If we believe it is short enough to be read in two minutes, it will be entered into the contest. The winner will be selected based on any number of yet-to-be-determined factors, but most likely it will involve a lot of passion, partisanship and bickering. Don't you want to be a part of that? Enter now!!!

Questions to ask yourself:

- *Is the newly announced "Win the Artistic Director's Lucky Reading Slot Contest" more like America's Got Talent, American Idol, or X Factor?*
- *Why is it lucky? Are divine forces involved? If I win, will I truly be happy? Is true happiness even possible?*
- *Will anyone still be there at 1:00AM? Will I still be there? Will there be any poetry talent scouts there? Is there any such thing as a poetry talent scout?*
- *What am I waiting for? Why haven't I started working on my poem?*

Important Notes:

- *Submitted poems remain your property (unless, of course, you stole your poem from someone else).*
- *We reserve the right, but do not promise, to post contest entries on our website after the marathon.*
- *Email submissions (only) to programcommittee@poetryproject.org by December 3.*
- *The winner will be announced on our blog and via our eblast on December 17.*
- *Anyone may enter our contest, provided the winner be in New York City for New Year's Day and can stay until it's over.*

The Poetry Project Oral History Project

The Poetry Project Oral History Project is LIVE! Please go to our homepage at poetryproject.org and click on the PPOH icon to enter. Our goal is to record, collect and make accessible oral history interviews with past Poetry Project administrators and other poets and writers who have been affiliated with The Poetry Project since its founding in 1966. The Oral History Project team began interviewing people for this project in Fall 2011. Currently the collection consists of interviews with Michael Allen, Ron Padgett and Anne Waldman. We plan to add many more as interviews are recorded.

Great Losses

With regret and high regard we note the passing of four remarkable writers: Shulamith Firestone, second-wave feminist and author of the *The Dialectic of Sex*; Baltimore poet and collage artist Chris Toll; Russian poet and translator Arkadii Dragomoshchenko; and poet and translator of avant-garde Japanese poetry Malinda Markham.

New Board Members

The Poetry Project Board of Directors is honored to officially welcome three new members to the board room: Carol Overby, Camille Rankine and Jo Ann Wasserman. The Board would also like to thank Rosemary Carroll, Mónica de la Torre, Christopher Stackhouse and Tim Griffin for their years of hard work on behalf of the Project.

Ferlinghetti Film

Christopher Felver's new documentary *Ferlinghetti: A Rebirth of Wonder* opens February 8 at the Quad Cinema, with appearances by Allen Ginsberg, Dave Eggers, Dennis Hopper, Michael McClure, Billy Collins, Robert Scheer, Pulitzer Prize winner Gary Snyder and others.

Premiers matériaux pour une théorie de la Jeune-Fille: Some Notes on the New Translation

Stephanie Young

I FIRST READ TIQQUN'S 1999 BOOK *RAW MATERIALS FOR A THEORY OF THE YOUNG-GIRL* LAST SPRING, in one of the anonymous translations available online, and discussed it with some poets and artists, our conversation being the better part of my experience. The book annoyed me. I kept trying to figure it out, which felt like a waste of time. I had already seen a few romantic comedies, some episodes of *30 Rock*. I was familiar with Elvis Costello's song "(I Don't Want to Go to) Chelsea." I knew about Madonna, Britney Spears, Taylor Swift, Miley Cyrus and Zooey Deschanel, poster girl for the cotton industry and Collier Meyerson's tumblr, *Carefree White Girl*.

Tiqqun is the blanket term for a mostly anonymous group of French writers whose work first appeared between 1999 and 2001 in a philosophy journal of the same name, and who subsequently split along more or less activist/artist lines, some re-forming as The Invisible Committee or appearing as impulses like Bernadette Corporation and Claire Fontaine. Probably any number of factors make Tiqqun interesting to poets, from general interest in all things continental theory to the shift in weather following 2008's economic crisis. There's the writing itself, which even Wikipedia notes is poetic, and also plenty of heroic glamour. Giorgio Agamben wrote an editorial in defense of Julien Coupat, the journal's co-founder, after his 2008 arrest and charges under France's anti-terrorism laws for disrupting train service.¹ The case against Coupat included alleged authorship of *The Coming Insurrection*, a book much reviled by Glenn Beck. Not since Allen Ginsberg's obscenity trial have the stakes of a book been so high.

It's possible poets and artists are more interested in Tiqqun's writing (and take it more seriously) than political theorists and activists. Responses to their work at *Anarchist news dot org* tend toward the critical, such as Anon's dismissive post on *This Is Not a Program*: "Once again saying they are the opposite of things in italics, once again rupturing with things, once again universalizing bourgeois French intellectualism... Again all this: sex, action, excitement, big words, petty leftist squabbling (and it's new!)." You can see why poets might love it. The distribution model feels familiar too; multiple free PDFs circulate online, often followed by official publication in Semiotext(e)'s Intervention Series.

The most recent book in this series, an edition (with a slight variation in title) of *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl* translated by Ariana Reines, brings poetry and Tiqqun together like peanut butter and chocolate. There are some obvious things one can say about the new Semiotext(e) model. It's not pink exactly but rather that coral so popular with both sexes of late: as lipstick, as straight khakis. (In contrast with *The Coming Insurrection's* sober navy cover.) The new coral version restores variations in typeface and font size of the

original French. I'm sure the typographical uniformity of the anonymous translation I read last year inflected my sense of the book's blunt hatred, since the marketing imperatives lifted from French fashion magazines (which comprise much of the text) bled so completely into the rest of the writing.

In her translator's note published online at *Triple Canopy* (but oddly not included in the Semiotext(e) book), Ariana Reines names the most obvious of obvious things one can say about it: that despite claims otherwise, the ideas and language are deeply gendered. That it is "a book about women." That "[i]t seems to me that to go no further than to diagnose capital's colonization and deployment of defiled aspects of the feminine could perplex many readers, trapping them in useless arguments about where the text is and isn't misogynistic..." Reading this made me feel less crazy. And while I couldn't deny some curiosity regarding the encounter between a poet whose work I admire and a book I found repulsive, I had no plans to put myself through it again. Then the reviews started coming out, such as Jeff Nagy's at *BOMBLOG* and Adam Morris' in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

Now I find myself in the rather absurd (po-mo, meta, *meta meta*) position of reviewing the reviews. No one assigned me this ridiculous task. Renewed annoyance led me here, and a sense of these two reviews as exemplary of something about the gendered-ness of poetry scenes, a murky sexism that remains difficult to locate or describe, particularly in the cul-de-sacs where discourse is leftist and feminism a given, alongside the chapbook press that still publishes mostly white men, white men with radical politics. Where it can get pretty tense if one points out any gap between feminist rhetoric and praxis. Where there has tended to be avid interest in Tiqqun but not, say, the militant research collective Precarias a la Deriva.

It seems almost impossible to say much about *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl* without falling into the traps of a text whose authors confess they might have after all intended "to give a false impression." Most glaringly, as the lone

commenter following Jeff Nagy's review notes, "apparently nobody can get that feminist critique done." Maybe because nobody seems able to write about this book without reproducing as fact the idea that the Young-Girl isn't about women.

Which is not to say Adam Morris and Jeff Nagy don't get some things right, don't perform their positions with consistency and verve. Morris gives a succinct gloss of the general official reading; "the theory of the Young-Girl is of course a critique," one that refers to "the formatted personalities that Empire would prefer us to select and embody, slotting ourselves into prefab lives..." For those unfamiliar with Tiquun, he contextualizes their intellectual antecedents in Michel Foucault, Guy Debord and the Situationist International, Italian autonomist/workerist movements, and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire*, including multiple and not uncomplicated critiques of the last. His account is nuanced, but excludes at every turn concurrent feminist thinking (and arguments) around these milieus, and could have mentioned work by any number of people: Hélène Cixous, Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Silvia Federici, Leopoldina Fortunati, Luce Irigaray, Selma James, Julia Kristeva, Judith Ramirez.

Morris's few references to feminism are weirdly specific and U.S.-centric. These include Hillary Clinton, Naomi Klein, the monolithic phrase "late 20th-century feminism," and a dismissive response to Hilary Malatino's 2011 article "The Becoming-Woman of the Young-Girls: Revisiting Riot Grrrl, Rethinking Girlhood."² Responding to Tiquun's claim that "[t]he Young-Girl's triumph originates in the failure of feminism," Malatino counters that such failure properly belongs to liberal feminism, with its focus on legislative rights, and not more radical feminist moments. In her argument Adam Morris reads only "nostalgia for the 1990s," and this, along with the breakup of Bikini Kill, represents to him "a dim assessment for the current state of feminist activity in America." Of the limited views of

feminism I have seen and heard, this is surely one of the more impoverished. Which means by the time Morris turns toward discussion of *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*, his reader possesses sufficient context in every regard except that which matters most. Without an understanding or critique of *la jeune fille*'s earlier appearances in French language and culture, without even a brief sketch of how Morris might map the territory "late 20th-century feminism," only a few words remain to understand *how* this is a book about women: sexism and misogyny. Morris quickly instructs us the latter "is not meant to be read literally as straightforward misogyny." His review is littered with such instruction for readers who might "bristle" at the text's "overt flirtation with sexism." We're told what the writers "meant to" communicate and handed "the inference available to readers...that the Young-Girl is the object of Tiquun's vicious critique because young women are the principal victims of consumerism." If

this doesn't entirely correspond with the nongendered Young-Girl presented by Morris elsewhere, it does dispense with a central problematic of the writing, and forecloses other ways its violence may be operating, or operative on specific readers. (I'm guessing only someone not living a body marked "girl" or "woman" would describe the writing, as Morris does, as "a rollicking mash-up," "rather entertaining" and "satisfyingly biting.") It's a totalizing analysis of what is, essentially, a messy collection of fragments, as its authors acknowledge in their preface, "knowing that if polished, hollowed out and given a good trim they might together constitute an altogether presentable doctrine," one Morris is happy to provide after the fact, to neutralize or otherwise contain excesses of the text.³

Where Adam Morris is a PhD candidate, Jeff Nagy is so obviously a *poet*—his definition of the Young-Girl revolves around a spider metaphor for "late-stage global capitalism...in which media

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and marketing are the lymph and... workers are both the flies and the shat web that entraps them..." Unlike Morris, he's quick to cop to the book's sexism, quasi-dismissing the theory as "nebulous (or absurd, in the case of its nongender, given Tiquun's occasional tendency to ventriloquize homophobia and misogyny with a little or a lot too much conviction.)" With that out of the way, Nagy moves from one entendre about Brooke Shields to the next (Shields is his quintessential Young-Girl), producing not so much a review as combination summary, regurgitation and performance—one reader's hystericized response to the book, but mostly to the translator's note.

Morris is skeptical of the multiyear process Reines describes in the note, a relation to the book that began with illness and ended with a "pleasurable" movement of the text, one born of giving in, of "whistling while I work." But that was certainly my experience of reading it. Those familiar with earlier English versions may be surprised at how closely the new translation corresponds with the old, exactly in some moments. Where it's different it's smoother somehow, the raw meat, materials, become preliminary.⁴ Reines puked it out until the only thing left behind was a clearer liquid, still terrible, but easier going down. In retrospect, I think I imagined she might render the monstrous parts more so, the blunt hatred more blunt. Why else the formal publication now, why solicit a new translation by a poet unless to bring some authenticity to a text so nauseous, so difficult to take seriously—basically a mediocre collage poem? The only trace of that translation, the one I expected, is the note. The note may in fact *be* the entirety of the new translation and the coral book only a timesheet splattered with droplets of bile, an artifact.

Nagy's response to the translator's note takes a somewhat disastrous turn in direct address of Reines. It's unlikely that reviewers of Robert Hurley's new translation of Tiquun's *Theory of Bloom*, also released this

year, will describe Hurley as Nagy does Reines, "terrifying, seductive, reflective, repulsive," or analyze Hurley's subjectivity in relation to the text at hand: "Ariana in a sort of Manifest Destiny must also incarnate the Theory." (Although it's fun to imagine: *Robert is the man who has become so thoroughly conjoined with his alienation that it would be absurd to try and separate them.*) It's not that Nagy doesn't admire Reines. That string of adjectives begins "one of our" and ends with "best American poets." But it's as if, by describing an embodied experience of translation, her body itself is now up for reading: "For between the Young-Girl as incarnation and her theory is nothing. You wanna know what comes between me and my Calvins?" Nagy goes on to use "he" in reference to the Young-Girl more times than the book ever does, enthusiastically imagining the speech of a privileged, masculine Young-Girl in which he and Ariana are the same with one small difference: "I have never known how to address a public, Ariana, without Calvinizing myself in skin-tight wit." For Nagy the self-as-work, Young-Girl style, means donning mastery and charm, a garment someone else surely laundered, folded and placed back in the closet for him. Adam Morris is no less eager to map the male version, if more distanced: "In the contemporary North American moment, the theory of the Young-Girl could just as easily have been the Theory of the Fratboy, Theory of the Chelsea-Boy or Theory of the Hipster." Except that any Theory of the Fratboy would be an entirely different theory, one composed using entirely different materials, necessarily drawn from a source other than fashion magazines produced primarily for women readers.

One needn't be aware of the French fashion industry's extravagant racisms⁵ to understand the image system of such magazines (in France or the U.S.) as predicated on constructions of whiteness as much as femininity. Morris's contemporary North American social types exclude the way race shows up in Tiquun's 1999 list, which

inserts equal signs between entirely different categories: "a hiphop nightclub player," "a *beurette* tarted up like a pornstar," "resplendent corporate advertising retiree who divides his time between the Cote d'Azur and his Paris office," and "the urban single woman," among others. *Beurette* refers to a second-generation North African woman, a figure Tiquun has referenced before in *Theory of Bloom*, again claiming identity categories as meaningful only to power in recruiting "model citizen" consumerist subjectivities. If the 2005 riots in France—and the precipitating electrocution of two adolescent North African immigrants as they hid from police—prove anything, it is that such categories produce entirely different material conditions among Blooms or Young-Girls.⁶

Critiquing *Theory of Bloom*, Jackie Wang details how this "flattening of the operations of power...doesn't just 'end up' denying differences, it actively blocks the ability for people of differentiated positions and social identities to analyze or critique the conditions of their own subjugation." That's how Tiquun's equivalency of social types operates, insisting the secret relationship between the "corporate advertising retiree" and second-generation North African woman "tarted up like a pornstar" is "existential conformity," which is why "[t]here is surely no place where one feels as horribly alone as in the arms of a Young-Girl." Here we arrive at one of the Theory's central preoccupations—the impossibility of idealized romantic love in the outer reaches of the upper classes of late late capitalism.

This is a book that opens, after all, with a quote from *Hamlet*: "I did love you once." A book that is finally about women because it takes women, and femininity, as the proper subject of any discourse on love and sex and imagines, wistfully, the *natural* use-value of feminine bodies available outside monetary circuits. A book that begins with a profoundly mistaken premise about women's bodies and

Then Go On by Mary Burger

"The formal inventiveness of Mary Burger's writing in part derives from her questioning of received ideas but also from the sheer pleasure she seems to take in following what the sentence can do within the "as-yet as-ever still-undetermined space between send and receive."
— Carla Harryman

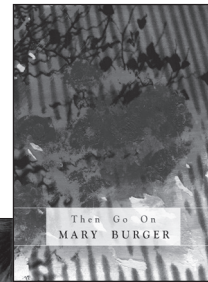
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Amnesia of the Movement of Clouds / Of Red & Black Verse

Maria Attanasio; Translated by Carla Billitteri

Amnesia of the Movement of Clouds / Of Red & Black Verse is the first full-length translation of Maria Attanasio's poetry to be published in English. Blending realistic and oneric landscapes, Attanasio's poetry shows the historical and political strata of everyday life darkened by poverty, death, inequality, and illegal immigration.

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capitalism: "At the beginning of the 1920s, capitalism realized that it could no longer maintain itself as the exploitation of human labor if it did not also colonize everything *beyond* the strict sphere of production." Yet capitalism has, from its beginnings, required the degradation of women and unwaged reproductive labor (from childbirth to housework and other caring and maintenance activities), thus when Tiquun writes that "[t]he supposed liberation of women did not consist in their emancipation from the domestic sphere, but rather in the total extension of the domestic into all of society," they express a terror of men's "feminization" as commodified objects, subjects who perform themselves, *as* unwaged labor, in such harrowing locations as Facebook.⁷

That's how Morris understands his own Young-Girlization as he confesses "just how often I police myself on behalf of the Spectacle. Concern for appearances, career advancement, and time management encroach on my daily life at a rate so regular it would depress me to try to calculate its frequency." This managerial sense of things misses something Nagy's reading locates. It corresponds by taking things quite literally, performing any number of latent (and not so latent) fears and desires within the Theory—his democracy of abject feminized subjects imagined as a kind of death or castration: "...to treat the

body as a medium is a trick the Empire plays on you, as it flattens all in its path, feminizing and youthanizing, *ethanizing* it." This is Tiquun's subject, too—there are now fashion magazines directed at men!

As I write this I've been reading the new collection of Silvia Federici's essays, *Revolution at Point Zero*. Federici's 1975 essay "Why Sexuality Is Work," could be read as a shorter, more precise, historically accurate version of Tiquun's theory, with similar critiques of sexual "liberation" and a self experienced as image, a body "something that has become alienated from us and is always on the counter...we hate it because we know so much depends on it." I keep thinking how outmoded, late and limited it is, the *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*. At the time it was being written, Federici was publishing articles about the "feminization of poverty," analyzing the devastating impact of World Bank and International Monetary Fund structural adjustment programs on women in Africa, Asia and Latin America. How to understand or even think a relationship between these very different sorts of "feminizations"? In one way it seems sort of obvious—the relation of consumption and "existential conformity" that links Tiquun's social types isn't a closed circuit comprised only of advertisements—somewhere, someone is making

something besides themselves. Tiquun, at least in this book, doesn't seem interested in that question.

Because "[t]he Young-Girl is entirely constructed," she "can be entirely destroyed," and Morris and Nagy each end their reviews with some how-to suggestions. Morris calls for "merciless self-critique," which involves the "personal responsibility to de-professionalize, 'de-silicone,' un-'follow' and un-'friend'...we must un-drone." I would have deleted my Facebook account much sooner, wouldn't have purchased that RoC Retinol Correxion Deep Wrinkle Serum at Grocery Outlet, if only I'd known how simple it was to stop U.S. drone strikes. Maybe at the same time I could have done something definitive to end state surveillance and policing of poor neighborhoods in the name of safety for women and girls—cancel my gym membership? In solidarity with these efforts, Jeff Nagy has indicated he is up for "trashing the interior as well as the exterior," and longs to destroy himself like a hotel room, at least in writing.

The thing about the Theory is that for a moment, it makes me want to put on everything at once—the lipstick heels thong, roll around in a fur coat and go around like that, smashing things. A second later it just feels terrible. I know my value is determined by any number

of things over which I have no control, the wage I'm earning now the most I'll ever make,⁸ my ability to support myself in slow decline no amount of Deep Wrinkle Serum can stop. Poor dupe that I am, I'll probably buy another bottle. It's half the usual cost at Grocery Outlet because, like me, the expiration date's approaching but still a short while off.

Which is part of why I long for something other than this, other than the way things are. A longing for common reproductive work, a set-up where we share the babies and the bedpan, the food and the teaching. Even though we don't really know how that works in the long haul. When so much has been

destroyed, everything that came before capitalism. When it seems impossible by which I mean incredibly complicated and prone to teargas. When there are so many divisions among us. In her translator's note, Ariana Reines says she's "always had a hard time picturing, much less getting on board with [Tiqqun's] tarted-up communitarian rhetoric." You can see why. On Facebook Anne Boyer said "ritual sexism of the left, LOL," and a while later, "How do you feel about survival?" At a talk in San Francisco recently, Federici talked about how we must "restructure our reproduction as terrain to move from" and "create a commons that deals with immediate needs." A collective subject. How we

don't know what that is, what it's like. How Precarias a la Deriva writes, "Because care is not a domestic question but rather a public matter and generator of conflict." How some questions about subjectivity might still matter.

Stephanie Young lives and works in Oakland. Her books of poetry are Picture Palace and Telling the Future Off. She is a founding and managing editor of Deep Oakland, and co-edited, with Juliana Spahr, A Megaphone: Some Enactments, Some Numbers, and Some Essays about the Continued Usefulness of Crotchless-pants-and-a-machine-gun Feminism.

NOTES:

¹ Other public support includes a petition published in *Le Monde* and signed by luminaries such as Alain Badiou, Judith Butler and Slavoj Žižek.

² The singular, sort-of exception to that comment "no one can get the feminist critique done." Like Morris and Nagy, Malatino reproduces without critique this idea that the concept of the Young-Girl isn't gendered. Unlike Tiqqun, she does point out that different subjects might experience and perform the intense commodification described within the book "differentially." As others have noted, this inability to account for difference is a hallmark of Tiqqun's writing.

³ The subject of anorexia is the one location where Morris reads *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl* as definitively "about" contemporary young women and thus the one place he agrees with Ariana Reines (or rather, cannot disagree) that "even their throwaway barbs assault the Young-Girl in ways that replicate the violence patriarchal society has always waged on women." Because anorexia is the *only* location in Morris's reading where gender accrues (around a symptom or disorder) he assumes this must also, surely, be the same (and only) place that "awakened the disgust of translator Ariana Reines."

⁴ Lacking fluency in French, I can only compare English translations, the following one of the more striking examples. The text in French: "Au moment même où l'on s'en fait l'acquéreur, on la retire de la circulation, un mirage s'estompe, elle se dépouille de l'aura magique, de la transcendance qui la nimait. Elle est conne et elle pue." The earlier anonymous translation reads: "At the same time as one becomes her acquirer, she is withdrawn from circulation, a mirage blurs away, the magic aura is stripped, the transcendance that enshrouded her is gone. And she's just a stupid cunt." Reines' rendering: "The very moment one acquires her, she is taken out of circulation, the mirage fades, she sheds her magic aura and her nimbus of transcendence. She's stupid and she reeks." The latter is lovelier, attentive to sound. I'm a sucker for the "nimbus of transcendence." The word *conne*, around which the most glaring moment of that passage turns ("stupid cunt" versus "she's stupid and she reeks") is derived from *con* which literally refers to female genitalia but in contemporary usage seems to function as a generalized insult: "idiot" (although I've also seen reference to its usage as "bitch"). Reines' translation is likely the more accurate, although "stupid cunt" does point backwards, demonstrating how these "defiled aspects of the feminine" that so permeate the text similarly permeate the language. If you've read the earlier version you will, in "reeks," understand that smell to correspond with a specific part of the body. Google translates it like this, and the affective register also seems right: "She is bitch and it stinks."

⁵ <http://jezebel.com/5948017/french-fashion-brand-has-awesome-no-chinese-tourists-allowed-rule>; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2091839/French-Elle-accused-racism-suggesting-Obamas-African-Americans-fashionable.html>; <http://jezebel.com/5379708/oh-no-they-didnt-french-vogue-does-blackface/gallery/1>

⁶ Here it is useful to keep in mind this is a book about women. Second-generation North African immigrant women have at some moments been aggressively recruited as labor in the service sector, depicted as more successful, and successfully integrated into French culture, than second-generation immigrant men; at other moments as victims kept outside mainstream culture by oppressive patriarchal custom and violence in immigrant communities.

⁷ The real anguish in *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl* is reserved for that pre-1920s moment, or wherever you want to place it, the once upon a time when women's unwaged labor was obscured and the distinction between prostitute and wife still held. The book mourns a lost idealization, those "beings that give you the desire to die slowly before their eyes," probably not the same as those you could buy and sell at market. Tiqqun writes, "One has to think that Marx didn't have the Young-Girl in mind when he wrote that 'commodities cannot go to market and make exchanges of their own account.'" That's from the chapter on exchange in *Capital Volume I*, Part I, and the following sentences describe relations between owners ("guardians") and those commodities: "if they are wanting in docility he can use force; in other words, he can take possession of them." In a footnote Marx lists such commodities the guardian may take possession of: leather, agricultural implements and prostitutes, the last offered as a witty exception to the thing-ness of commodities, a good joke because it's true—the only commodity that isn't a thing is a woman, except she is. The big problem, apparently, now that everyone's a prostitute busily engaged in their own buying and selling, is what's been done to desire—"the Young-Girl only excites the desire to vanquish her, to take advantage of her." (In an earlier translation: "to get off on her.")

⁸ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/05/31/why-womens-pay-growth-slows-at-age-30-and-peaks-by-39/>

Benefit Macgregor Card

NEG fear
NEG dread
nor harm
NEG do

NEG in the garden
visits me
the one whose mercy
rains NEG down
on me

NEG would I lie
to David
whose semen remains
in eternity
NEG dried up
in the lord

NEG angel is identical
to god
who longer than a day
NEG wants
to live

NEG passes from
the law

NEG answer me
to break the silence
raise the glass

NEG to our health
NEG goodness
NEG to generosity
in friendship
NEG is lifted
up the glass

NEG fear
nor man NEG dread

For his life
NEG in vain do I
cry so much

though I cry
so much
NEG in vain

NEG fear
NEG dread
nor harm NEG do
in vain

NEG angel is identical
to god
who longer than a day
NEG wants
to live

To fundamentally
extend

What joy
to fundamentally
extend !

SPEAK naturally
How audible !

Enter into faith
to love how I am
faithful

Radial, punitive, faultless, cute

The needle is accurate
I am not violent

Flashing, sensate, dead

And everything that matters
can rejoice to be equivalent
in sexual arousal

The ambition of my privacy
is gruesome
The persuasion of my instrument
is moving
The possession of a candle
is inadequate
The details of my instrument
are private
The ambition of my rite
is not a vigil
The ambition of my listening
is gruesome
The solution to my privacy
is judgment
The ambition of my judgment
is so sensual
Possession of a candle
is inadequate
The gavel on my lap is
in possession
The ambition of my privacy
is gruesome

Macgregor Card lives in Queens. His first book, Duties of an English Foreign Secretary, was published by Fence Books in 2009. A long poem, The Archers, was published by Song Cave in 2010. A 7-inch album is forthcoming from Unicorn Evil. Poems are recent or a little old in Claudius App, Jubilat, Telephone, Clock, Vlak and Poor Claudia. From 1997 to 2005 he co-edited The Germ: A Journal of Poetic Research with Andrew Maxwell. He teaches poetry at Pratt Institute and, with Kendra Sullivan, Dylan Gauthier and Megan Ewing, curates Private Line, a monthly reading series at Gowanus Studio Space.



Photo: William Rahilly

Interview: The Conspiracy Mixtape

Chris Martin and Mary Austin Speaker

Chris Martin: Your new chapbook, *20 Love Poems for 10 Months*, begins with an epigraph from Gaston Bachelard (remember when our two-person book club tackled *Poetics of Space?*): “*To curl up* belongs to the phenomenology of the verb *to inhabit*, and only those who have learned to do so can inhabit with intensity.” Most of the compact poems in this chapbook are a single stanza. If we take each stanza to be its etymological room, how were you thinking to inhabit it?

Mary Austin Speaker: One of the reasons I chose the epigraph from Bachelard was because we had begun 2010 with that book, and then 2010 unfolded into a series of rooms in an ever-expanding house. I often return to Marilyn Hacker’s term for the sonnet as being “hologrammatic,” in that the form invites series and in doing so becomes something like a film, made up of scenes, offering its subject from different distances and perspectives. Although the *20 Love Poems* are not sonnets by any definition, this is the effect I was going for. Since you *care* about the movies, I thought a series of short poems written for you should offer different takes on our subject in the manner of those more overtly poetic movies we love—Chris Marker’s mesmerizing *Sans Soleil*, *Wings of Desire* or even *Gummo*—all of which switch scenes abruptly, revealing their subjects through a pastiche of close-ups, ultimately leaving the viewer with a less-than-concrete picture of what happens next, but a feeling that has been established. I love the way a film can leave you squarely in its present moment, both sure and unsure, and I think love poems, if they are to be true to the nature of love, so rife with vulnerability, have this in common with the kinds of films with which we connect most intimately.

Your chapbook, *enough*, is a selection of pieces from your longer series, *Hymns*, each of which has something to do with air. Why did you choose air as a uniting force? The notion of the hymn itself, a song suffused with breath—do you feel like these poems “of air” became kind of the core of the book for that reason?

CM: Air has been my prime fascination for many years now. I first fell in love with it after reading David Abram’s *The Spell of the Sensuous*, where he attempts to determine the physical properties in which our primary conceptual understandings of time are grounded. Past is literally grounded, it’s the countless composite layers under our feet that hold us up

but are no longer accessible to us. The future is the horizon, always accessible but always moving away. The present, Abram argues, is the air. That which allows. It steps away when we want to move. It remains invisible so that we might see and be seen. It carries our songs unobstructed. It’s the most active passivity imaginable. It’s also a figure of abundance, of sufficiency. At least, until we turn it rancid and have to plunder other worlds for new supply, à la *Spaceballs*. So these are love poems to air. But they are also love poems to various people: Dana, Courtney, Emily, Dottie, David and most directly you. I want us to breathe these airs together, forging conspiracy. Together breath. That’s at the heart of my *Hymns*. A renewable power source of together breath, which, of course, contains its own paranoia. There’s that story about Madonna: at the height of her fame she started obsessively thinking about how many other people’s breaths she had to breathe during each concert. *That* conspiracy. Pop’s hyperventilation. Poets, alas, bear no such burden. We have time to air out our conspiracies.

Your life as a designer coincides with your life as a poet. In the past you often produced gorgeous, limited letterpress editions of your poems in chapbook form. Over the past year you’ve had two chapbooks come out from two of the presses I most admire in all the universe(s), Ugly Duckling Presse (UDP) and Push. In both cases you have had some hand in their design. Rumor has it you’re also working on a full-length for Slope Editions, having been selected by Matthea Harvey for the Slope Prize. Is it qualitatively different to work on a full-length rather than a chapbook?

MAS: I feel very fortunate to have published with two presses that feel very much like kin for me in terms of the appearance of their books. I have worked for over 10 years in the trade publishing industry, and it’s rare to have an opportunity in that industry to exploit *texture*, but small presses have this flexibility, and I think this has quite a bit to do with why small presses are publishing the best poetry out there—Peter Gizzi’s *Threshold Songs* from Wesleyan University Press and Philip Metres’s *Abu Ghraib Arias* from Flying Guillotine are both examples of how texture can foreground a book’s object-ness. If a book of poetry is to have limited sales anyway (and we all know this is the case for most poetry books), why not make the object a thing people want to have and keep? Texture makes an object feel more valuable, and letterpress is a great way to

create that value. I can't tell you how many people immediately run their fingers over the cover when they encounter *20 Love Poems*—Katherine Bogden Bayard at UDP chose a beautiful herringbone pattern for the background of that cover, and it's very satisfying to touch. For my Push chapbook, *The Bridge*, Andy Wolf handmade a super-soft, almost spongy stock for the covers, and J. Grabowski contributed his amazing gestural drawing of the Manhattan Bridge, so that book, too, feels very valuable to me. Slope is a great press—they have notably published a string of really strong books by women. I couldn't be happier to be a part of that. Their books have always been handsome, but I'm excited to be publishing with them when they're on the brink of some new design changes that will make their books look even better. I'm designing my own book for Slope, and have been having some great conversations about artwork and patterns with managing editor Kelin Loe. I was also excited to see Amaranth Borsuk's cover for her Slope collection, *Handiwork*, which appears hand-stitched—even the appearance of craft can go a long way toward making a book unique, as both of the covers of your books can attest.



Your love of visual art has made itself apparent on both of your book covers through the work of the inimitable Simon Evans. For *American Music*, he depicted a ketchup bottle, while *Becoming Weather* was focused more on type and color. Given that *enough* is an even more abstract title than *Becoming Weather*, what did you expect for a cover treatment, and how did the cover surprise you?

CM: I worked closely with my UDP editor, Nick Rattner. We had wide-ranging conversations about Goodie Mob, Peruvian nightlife, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and the songline tradition of Aboriginal Australians. It was the latter that led Nick and cover designer Mary Anne Carter toward the motif and color of *enough*. There's also a kind of stair-step pattern to the poems themselves, so we tried to locate that in the design. My favorite aspect of the chapbook is probably the shape, relatively thin and tall, like I used to look in the early aughts. Like most people, I find chapbooks to be more intimate and amiable than full-lengths. I can glance over to the kitchen wall as I type this and see all the new chapbook friends we've made this year sidling up to our longtime jams. I see Sara Larsen's *Merry Hell* hollerin' at Macgregor Card's *Souvenir Winner* and the new issue of *Mrs. Maybe* waving over to Jason Morris' *Sprits and Anchors*. That's why you gotta keep em face out. Full-lengths just give you spine after spine. Chapbooks are full frontal or nothing.

20 Love Poems for 10 Months has the feel of a perfect mixtape. What's the best song you ever met on a mixtape? What's your classic mixtape contribution? What's the most romantic mixtape song ever?

MAS: The best song I ever met on a mixtape was "Doot-Doot" by a flash-in-the-pan 80s band called Freur. I still don't know what the words are, but it sounds like *opening*. Every time I hear that song I get carried back to the magical moment that was meeting my friend Annie in the 8TH grade. I think she gave me the mix on my 15TH birthday. Annie was the first person

I knew who wore headphones and carried her music around with her, and she was the first person to point out the rainbow on an oily puddle, and the first person to fall in love with all of my friends. She was the first person who made sense of what I would come to understand as my drive to write poetry. As for the most romantic song... well, if you're really going to ask me that, I think we've finally gone down the wormhole of

the couple interview. When you and I got together, we traded mixes, of course, and you gave me a brilliant mix containing "Poison Cup" by M. Ward. We had a very tentative beginning, you and I—however brief that tentative period was—and this sentiment, that you were *all in*, was the fire that has kept us bonded ever since. Nothing compares to that.

What's it like to write love poems to so many people? As your wife, I'm the traditional recipient of your love poem outpourings, and I love receiving love poems from you—how do other people react?

CM: We'll see. I mean, the *Hymns* are the first time I'm actually taking the full Spicerian route and dedicating each of the poems to someone. But there's less pressure, since my hymn for Ben Estes is also a hymn for the tongue and my hymn for Elizabeth Willis is also a hymn for the sun. I think that's a big reason why I became a poet. It seemed like each poem was the crossed occasion for love and generosity. A place to find company. Poetry keeps me from implosion. As do you. As does The Poetry Project. As does Ugly Duckling Presse. As do yours.

Mary Austin Speaker is the author of The Bridge (Push, 2011) and 20 Love Poems for 10 Months (UDP, 2012). Her first full-length collection, Ceremony, will be published by Slope Editions in 2013.

Chris Martin is the author of American Music (Copper Canyon Press, 2007), Becoming Weather (Coffee House Press, 2011) and enough (UDP, 2012).

Reanimation Library

Andrew Beccone

THE REANIMATION LIBRARY IS A SMALL, INDEPENDENT PRESENCE LIBRARY¹ THAT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. It is a collection of books that have fallen out of routine circulation and have been acquired for their visual content. Outdated and discarded, they have been culled from thrift stores, stoop sales and throw-away piles, and have been given new life as a resource for artists, writers, cultural archaeologists and other interested parties. It is situated in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn.

The library was established in order to:

- build a collection of resources that inspire the production of new creative work;
- pan for gold in the sediment of print culture;
- draw attention to the visual and textual marvels in seemingly ordinary books;
- encourage collaboration among human beings;
- call attention to the generative potential of libraries;
- contribute to our cultural commons and gift economy; and
- explore pathways between digital and analog worlds.

You are invited to join the library in these endeavors.

In 2001, I started collecting used books that few people seemed to value or want with the intention of extracting their images to use in visual artworks. Most of these items had been weeded from libraries or personal collections and had ended up languishing in thrift shops, church rummage sales and other marginalized marketplaces. Despite the relatively justifiable rationale that was likely used for discarding them—chiefly that the information they contained was no longer up-to-date—I was struck by the potency of their images and quickly became convinced that these books retained value, even if it differed from the value that they had originally been assigned. In other words, it seemed to me that a book's intended use was by no means its only use, and in assembling a collection of books that had been

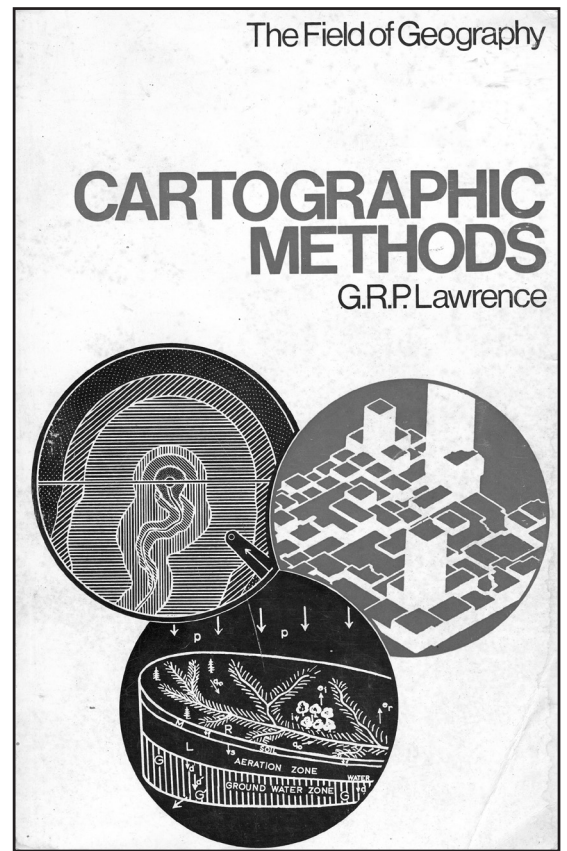
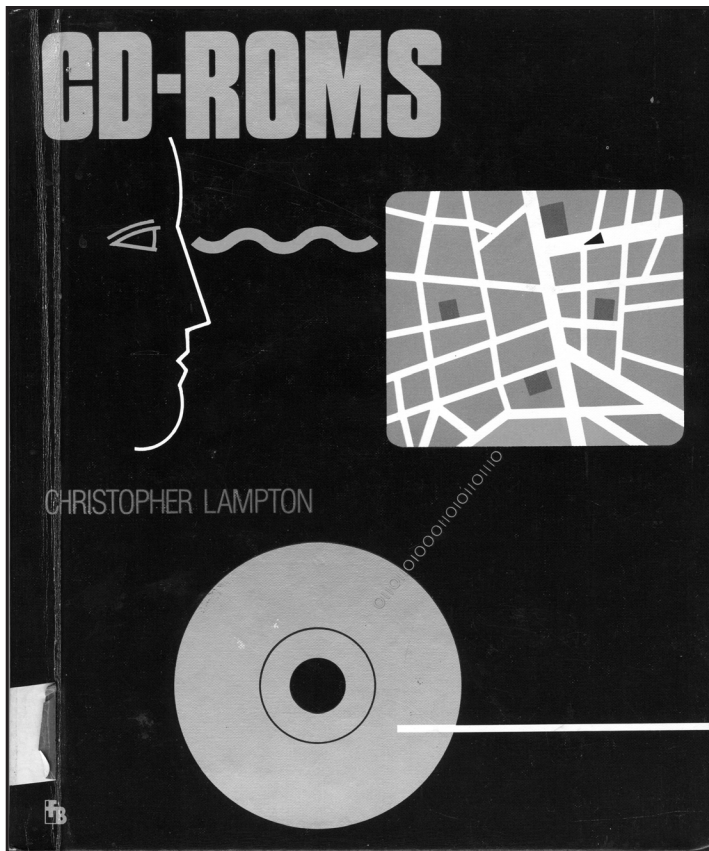
abandoned because their textual content was deemed obsolete, I might be able to refocus attention toward the continuing vitality of their visual content. At this early point, I had no intention of creating a public library. I was simply stockpiling and marveling at this material.

Within a year of beginning this pursuit, however, it became clear to me that if I continued to acquire books—even at a relatively slow rate—I would end up with more material than I could ever possibly use. I was also struck by the fact that many people who encountered my nascent collection found it as engaging and peculiar as I did. In 2002, having worked in a library for 8 years, I decided to pursue a master's degree in Library Science. At the same time, I realized that I wanted to transform my private

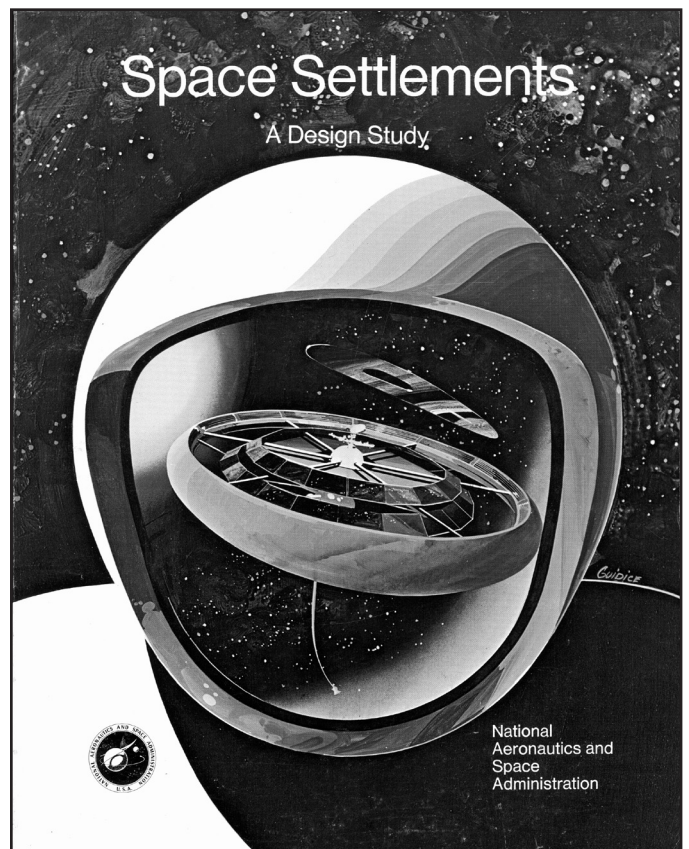
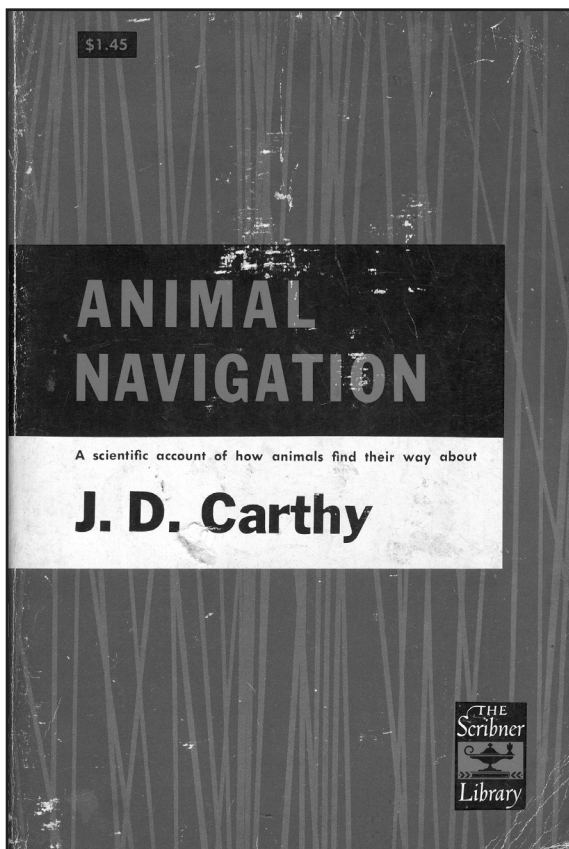
collection of printed curiosities into a publicly accessible resource that anyone could consult and use.

Two principal insights sent me in this direction. First, it seemed likely that a public resource could call more attention than a private collection to a neglected class of cultural material. Second, I suspected that by making it accessible to others, the collection would inevitably generate significantly greater varieties and quantities of artwork than if I kept and used it for myself. With these two things in mind, I set my sights on creating a library.

In 2003, I moved to New York to attend the School of Library and Information Science at Pratt Institute. At that time, the library was housed in my apartment



Cover images of selected titles in the Reanimation Library collection. The online catalog and an image archive may be accessed at <http://www.reanimationlibrary.org>.



and consisted of approximately 150 books. (It currently holds around 1,700 and is continually growing.) I was eager to convey my plans to others, and I told everyone who showed the slightest interest in it—and probably some who didn’t—about it. Some of these early discussions were with poets.

I began meeting poets almost immediately after arriving in Brooklyn, and a handful of them expressed enough interest in the library to make the trip to my apartment to see it. While I always suspected that the library would appeal to visual artists, I hadn’t considered that writers might also be drawn to it. These early interactions provided my first experience of the library opening up as a resource in ways that I hadn’t anticipated. In retrospect it seems obvious that the collection could also be of interest to writers, but at the time, I was so focused on its visual elements, that I hadn’t been able to see this. Early and ongoing encouragement and support came from Christian Hawkey, Jen Bervin and Jen Hofer, all of whom helped reveal facets of the library that had previously been obscure to me, and who, incidentally, have become wonderful friends of mine.

By 2006, the library had found its public home at the interdisciplinary gallery and reading room, Proteus Gowanus, and from there its connections to poets have continued to grow. A 2009 event at the library featured readings generated from the collection by E. Tracy Grinnell, Julian T. Brolaski and Paul Foster Johnson that resulted in Grinnell’s chapbook *Mirrorly A Window*—derived from *Vision: The Eye of the Beholder* (Cole, K. C. Exploratorium: San Francisco, 1978) and *Perception* (Hochberg, Julian

E. Prentice-Hall, Inc.: Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1964)—and the poem “Colonial Space Phenomenon Exhibit,” published in Johnson’s *Study in Pavilions and Safe Rooms* (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2011), which appropriates text and language from the *Handbook of Space Pioneers: A Manual of the Galactic Association (Earth Branch)* (Wolfe, L. Stephen and Roy L. Wysac. Grosset & Dunlap: New York, 1978). A 2010 branch library in Chicago featured a Joshua Marie Wilkinson poem, “Stenotype Reader,” written in sharpie on cardboard and posted to the gallery wall alongside photocopies of the source material.

My own interest in the written content of the collection has increased significantly over the last few years, in part because of the writers who have interacted with it. This had led to two initiatives that explicitly call attention to the language, attitudes and ideologies rooted in the library. *Word Processor*, published nine times a year, invites guest writers to produce essays on books in the collection that they are particularly drawn to. Poets Christian Hawkey and Elizabeth Zuba have both contributed essays on two of my favorite books in the collection: *A Study of Splashes* and *Hypnography: A Study in the Therapeutic Use of Hypnotic Painting. The Incomplete Portrait of the Reanimation Library*, a new series of readings from the library, consists entirely of sequenced, unmediated fragments of found text, providing a direct way for the library to speak for itself. While compiling texts for these readings, I have begun to encounter and appreciate some of the latent poetic language waiting to be discovered in the collection. Consider the following from an intermediate Japanese reader:

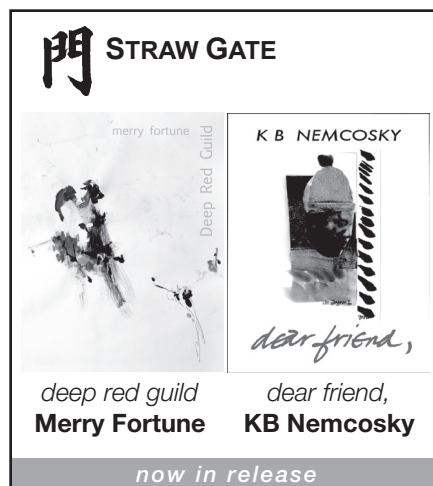
*the surface of the sea
what is called
a water level
be in danger of
a tide embarkment
a restriction
Kōtō Ward (in Tōkyō)
originally
put between
land sandwiched between two rivers
a flood
prohibit
make (factories) move
the former site (of factories)
a multi-story housing complex
provide against a disaster
industrial pollution
a cause
be piled up
specific
Minimata disease
“itai-itai” in Toyama
asthma in Yokkaichi
typical
legs and arms become numb
become insane
nitrogen*

As always, the library remains open and available to anyone who is interested in working with it. If you are, I would encourage you to get in touch and come for a visit.

Andrew Beccone, an artist and librarian, is the founder and director of the Reanimation Library. He received his master’s degree in Information and Library Science from the Pratt Institute in 2005. He lives in Brooklyn.

NOTE:

¹ “Presence Library” is a mistranslation of the German word for “Reference Library,” *Präsenzbibliothek*. I use it because the library is a noncirculating collection, because I appreciate its allusion to objects in the physical world, and because I want to encourage the physical presence of visitors to the library.



Night & Storm/Some Situation(s) of Place in the Poetic Avant-Garde

Ana Božičević

"It's the night of Hurricane Sandy and..." "SLAP!"

De nouveau: "I" "feel" about the hurricane much as about the opera, war and the work of Vanessa Place: it is a violent *Ding* (*dis*)*passionelle* that expresses *something*—but *what*? Itself, at l(e)ast. Once I dreamed Place told me: "Say what you say, not what you mean." This lesson has proven difficult to implement: but when executed properly, it can result in a multiplicity of sayings that closely mimic meaning—for all intents and purposes, *do* mean—if they do say so themselves. In the past week, Place held several readings in New York, each its own instance of *Dichtung*. So tonight, amid the *Sturm'n'Drang*, I will attempt to read the facts of three readings for what they show about the poetic avant-garde as exemplified in Place's work—and for what that work can show of the things it says: law, racism and rape, i.e., the war that puts the *Ding* in *Dichtung*. Say what? OK, from the top:



"The Avant-Garde..." "SLAP!"

Why "avant-garde" instead of the *de rigueur* "experimental," Perloffian "indeterminate," or some of the words used by Steven Zultanski in a recent piece on Place in *Jacket 2*: "excessive," "provocative," "ambiguous"?¹ Rosalind Krauss successfully debunked the avant-garde's "discourse of originality,"² one that Conceptualism embraces in its myth of origin while mocking it through its practices, in a gesture Matvei Yankelevich terms an "ironic neo-avant-garde"³—a swift and self-conscious manifesto-to-museum trajectory. No. Rather than the pure or ironic make-it-new cumshot of originality, I would like to revisit another dimension of the avant-garde, as in its first recorded appearance in the 1824 Henri de Saint-Simon essay "*L'artiste, le savant et l'industriel*" ("The Artist, the Scientist and the Industrialist"):

*It is we artists who will serve as your vanguard; the power of the arts is indeed most immediate and the quickest. We possess arms of all kinds: when we want to spread new ideas among men, we inscribe them upon marble or upon a canvas; we popularize them through poetry and through song...We address ourselves to man's imagination and to his sentiments. We therefore ought always to exert the most lively and decisive action. And while today our role seems nonexistent or at least quite secondary, that is because the arts are missing what is essential to their energy and to their success, a shared impulse and a general idea.*⁴

This originally military term, deployed to serve so socially minded an agenda, might seem at first quite removed from contemporary conceptual poetics. (Baudelaire disliked its original scope very much indeed.) Of course, even a wiki-style recap of the subsequent history of the avant-garde reveals such a vast range—purist, *l'art-pour-l'art* gestures side by side with political agendas and Situationist gags—that a unified snapshot of the avant-garde proves impossible. I would argue that this unwillingness to adhere to a definition—and its miasma of meanings and practices—render it the ideal term to point at the poetics and poetry of Place. (Also, *avant-garde* is a term Place has the means to regenerate, even when she is the exception that proves its rules.) But even more than the avant-garde's chameleonic cycling between fungible purities, it is its original focus on *address* and *action* that finds an unexpected counterpart in Place's work—in, as Yankelevich points out, the problematization of her performance.

"So what does it mean when you say..." "SLAP!"

On the first night of Place's readings—in a law school, to a concentric array of graduate students and the odd poet—she read *Statement of Facts* appropriated from her practice as appellate attorney to sexual offenders, as well as the introduction to *The Guilt Project: Rape, Morality and Law*, her most deceptively straightforward book—an introduction titled "A Guilty Plea." Her respondent Jeanne Schroeder presented a proposition of the law as the Lacanian "hysteric's discourse." In Zultanski's words and without Jacques Lacan's frame, "regardless of the factuality contained herein, the book is still not true."⁵

At the second reading, in a university performance space, Place put on "The Black & White Minstrel Show," in which she was the "coon shouter"—the white lady mimicking a projected "black" construction with a reading of "Jump Jim Crow." She accompanied her sculptural performance with a slideshow of minstrel lyric sheets and other appropriated apt texts (for instance, an 1845 article arguing America's "only truly National Poets" were her slaves, and *Othello*) and songs. The impression, layered and

unsavory, was of a radical, unholy mime on an archive—exposing the black mass of minstrelsy's quasi-blackness via art à l'académie.

On the third night, I was Place's host in a gallery inside a university—a double nesting doll, if you will—for “An Evening of Confessional Poetry.” The first reader, Trisha Low, sipping and spitting fake blood from a thermos, unleashed a torrent of teen trauma: calorie counting, boyfriend demi-rapes, and mother-hating. Then, Place read: first, a confession—the testimony of a man who had raped his granddaughter but did not recall the details, followed by a series of rape jokes one imagines she got off the internet.

The Q&As at the first two performances, despite the evident difference of material, followed a similar arc: discomfort sought explanation, vantage and reassurance, which Place refused to provide. (“Are they guilty?”; “Are you critical?”—“Yes, but what of?”) However, simply by engaging in the ritual Q&A and assenting to discuss her practice and process, she provided a *context*, possibly unwillingly; in response to *Che Vuoi?*, a *This Is How I Do* sufficed—and it did. Perhaps for this reason, Place chose to forego a Q&A after “An Evening of Confessional Poetry”; instead, she left the building, leaving Low to respond to any questions. There were none. The audience was too *on the spot*; but *après*, I fielded an impromptu deluge of queries outside the university building.

So what did all this mean?

Well, for one, it was a slap—but not the kind administered by a visual shock artist; though with them Place's own store brand of elephant-dung *Merda d'Artista* has this in common: she is absolutely implicated, and her art *effects* rather than *means*—*insists* more than *exists*, to glance back at Lacan. In this context, it's interesting to revisit Yankelevich's comment that Conceptualism, just as what he terms “conservative poetry,” subordinates “the materiality of language to other aims,” namely “the framework which governs the text.” In the case of Place, the reading → understanding dyad is patently *not* superfluous—after all, the material is hot, affectively loaded; but it *is* beside the point,

because it is the *performance*, the address, that makes her text, creating its conceptual-yet-material effect through a cumulative accrual of receptions.

Though concept may be queen, its elocution develops over time, opening up a field of possible responses through insistence and repetition. The range of emotional reactions to Place's reading, as they exhaust themselves—horror, laughter, horror at laughter, ennui—shores the audience finally onto the fact of the body. Their own, the performer's, on stage and on trial, the bodies *inside* the text, subject to various forms of violence, rape, subjugation and distortion; the body of the text laid out for the sacrifice...and *voilà*, just as Place has it, the performed *tragodia* turns hellish circle of the *Commedia* anthropomorphized not as a diabolic, but *human* body whose value, or lack thereof, one may then at last intuit.⁶ One feels called out, held accountable.

I once asked Place what she thought of Marcel Duchamp's final work, *Étant donnés*—how did a lifetime of concept, I wondered, lead to a naked body in a field? I found an answer in her essay on Polish sculptor Alina Szapocznikow, whose retrospective is currently on view at MoMA. There Place talks about the materiality of the body in Szapocznikow's work in relation to medieval conceptions of material registers—what is holy and why—and quotes the artist's statement, in which the sculptor allies herself to the body's “essential nudity, as inevitable as it is inadmissible on any conscious level.” Place also invokes Artaud's injunction that “it is through the skin that metaphysics must be made to re-enter our minds.”⁷ And though textually Place's work may indeed be, as she puts it, “the most static of objects, inert, inutile” and “dead as a doorknob,” in performance it effects a kind of communion that is liturgical, a writing-into-effect; she says what she says, and it doesn't have to *mean*, as it is *done*.

The art- and academy-purposed spaces in which Place often performs serve as her institutional respondents, but I would argue that her showmanship is not about status within the institutions of art, poetry or academe, and not only because of her legal training. It may be appropriate to

consider Place as accessing a mode that predates the Romantic tradition—perhaps of the medieval scribal copying of holy texts, wherein inches equal the light of the Word, now measured in pixels per screen; or the totemic reinscription of paintings on the wall of a cave, a galvanization of tribal memory, even conscience. (I won't touch allegory, of which enough has been said vis-à-vis Conceptualism by Place and others.) Either way, her poetic *effect* is entirely *sui generis*: it is an *act* dressed as an object of thought, precisely that “decisive action” called on in the original definition of *avant-garde*—and should be read as a challenge.

Meanwhile, back in avant-garde AD...

Alina Szapocznikow is an interesting litmus for Place because of the sculptor's rapid cycling through movements and techniques, reminiscent of Place's modal experimentation with a range of writing methods and genres. Another period that comes to mind is that of the early, prerevolutionary Russian avant-garde, one that exemplifies the term's potential and complexity.⁸ This period inaugurated, among other avant-garde projects, the transrational poetry of *zaum*, the Futurist notion of “world backwards” that challenged the conception of linear time, and the concept of “everythingness” which encouraged the artist to choose her precedents and influences from any tradition in the history of art and philosophy, resulting in a “total freedom of art.”

In her excellent *The Aesthetics of Anarchy*, Nina Gurianova ties such rule-bending to postmodernist Situationist practice, and the high Conceptualism of Cage, Process Art and Fluxus. The anarchic eclecticism of the early Russian avant-garde produced a kind of “politics of the unpolitical”⁹ whose dystopian strain served as a necessary (dis)temper against the gently pluralist cacophony of experimental practice that could dissolve in a marginalized, utopian collectivism or a state-run program. Place's ambition to “kill poetry” serves as just such a distemper, and her neutral stance ensures her political freedom.

Jacques Rancière identifies *politics of the unpolitical* as the tension at the core

of the avant-garde, which would “contribute to the construction of a new world where art no longer exists as a separate reality”¹⁰ even as it holds itself apart and refuses any aesthetic compromise. This paradox is not a problem—it is a place of possibility. In fact, contrary to the hopes of its original definition, the avant-garde is functional precisely where it *evades* “a shared impulse and a general idea.” However, this is also a place of responsibility; in the words of Mikhail Bakhtin, “answerability entails guilt...It is not only mutual answerability that art and life must assume, but also mutual liability to blame.”¹¹ Place’s implicated, implicating performance comes in to great effect where it produces guilt, and marks a return to the material: in the midst of Idea, we are in the Body and its trauma, which is not a *Traum*, and must continue to be said precisely because. The great value of Place’s performative work, one that takes it beyond the scope of a contemporary movement and into the anti-continuum of the avant-garde proper, is that it can see in the dark well enough to maneuver in it—to *go ahead* into the dark, not for the fetish of the new, but—to map it out? because she can’t help it? or simply *because*. I, for one, would like to see her work at work in many different situations—and outside the duty-free zones of gallery and university. Perhaps it’s the power failing, or the material and ideological wreckage I anticipate encountering in the hurricane-ravaged city tomorrow that makes me wish to see Vanessa Place’s readymades, at last, at the barricades.

Ana Božičević is the author of *Stars of the Night Commute* (Tarpaulin Sky Press) and *Rise in the Fall* (Birds, LLC.) Her translation of Zvonko Karanović recently received a PEN American Center/NYSCA grant. She flirts with knowledge at The Graduate Center of CUNY.

Notes:

¹ <https://jacket2.org/reviews/short-statement-five-parts-statement-facts>

² <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/kraussoriginality.pdf>

³ <http://lareviewofbooks.org/article.php?id=762&fulltext=1>

⁴ Saint-Simon, Henri de. “*L’Artiste, le savant et l’industriel*,” *Oeuvres complètes de Saint-Simon et d’Enfantin*, vol. 10 (1867).

⁵ <https://jacket2.org/reviews/short-statement-five-parts-statement-facts>

⁶ In Lacanian terms, the poem, like law, here becomes the master signifier—and the lyrical ambition faces its Real, for better or worse: quite literally, the poet and the reader come to be one another just as they are Leda and Swan, rapist and victim, in a post-metaphorical Big un-Bang. The self-referential allegory spells the implosion of metaphor: the “death of poetry” one hears so much about. It is a gesture lyric poets should contemplate.

⁷ <http://x-traonline.org/issues/volume-15/number-1/as-inevitable-as-it-is-inadmissible/>

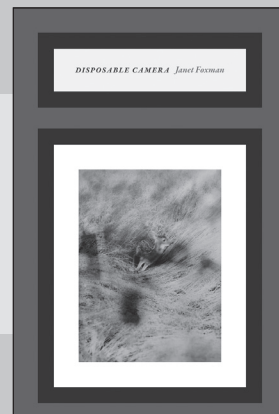
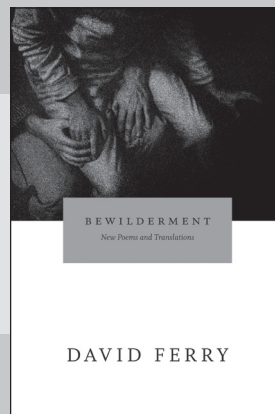
⁸ <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2012/04/conceptual-writing-was-intriguing-and-provocative/>

⁹ Read, Herbert. “The Politics of the Unpolitical,” *To Hell with Culture* (2002).

¹⁰ Rancière, Jacques. “The Ethical Turn of Aesthetics and Politics,” *Critical Horizons* 7, no.1 (2006).

¹¹ Bakhtin, Mikhail. “Art and Answerability,” *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin, ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov (1990).

PHOENIX POETS



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EVENTS at THE POETRY PROJECT

MONDAY 12/3
OPEN READING
SIGN-IN AT 7:45PM

WEDNESDAY 12/5
JESS MYNES & SIMON SCHUCHAT
Jess Mynes is the author of *How's the Cows* (Cannot Exist Press) and *Sky Brightly Picked* (Skysill Press). His *One Anthem* will be published by Pressed Wafer Press in 2011. He is the editor of Fewer & Further Press and he co-curates a reading series, All Small Caps, in Western Massachusetts. **Simon Schuchat** edited *The 4 3 2 Review*, *Buffalo Stamps*, and founded *Caveman*. Richard Hell published his first book, *Svelte*, in 1971. Other books include *Blue Skies*, *Light and Shadow* and *At Baoshan*. His poetry was anthologized by Michael Lally in *None of the Above* and by Andrei Codrescu in *Up Late*.

FRIDAY 12/7, 10PM
EMILY XYZ & DAEL ORLANDERSMITH
Emily XYZ is an American writer and performer best known for her spoken-word poetry for multiple voices. She is the author of *The Emily XYZ Songbook: Poems for Two Voices* (Rattapallax). Her work was included in the PBS television series *The United States of Poetry* and the anthology *Up Is Up but So Is Down: New York's Downtown Literary Scene, 1974–1992* (NYU Press). **Dael Orlandersmith** won an Obie Award for *Beauty's Daughter*, which she wrote and starred in at American Place Theatre. She toured extensively with the Nuyorican Poets Café (Real Live Poetry) throughout the US, Europe and Australia. Her play, *Monster*, premiered at New York Theatre Workshop in November 1996.

MONDAY 12/10
JOSEF KAPLAN & ROBERT OSTROM
Josef Kaplan is the author of *Democracy Is Not for the People* (Truck Books, 2012). He lives in Brooklyn. **Robert Ostrom** is from Jamestown, New York. He is the author of *The Youngest Butcher in Illinois* (YesYes Books) and two chapbooks, *To Show the Living and Nether and Qualms*. He teaches at the City University of New York and Columbia University.

WEDNESDAY 12/12
JOEL LEWIS & CATHERINE WAGNER
Joel Lewis is the author of *Surrender When Leaving Coach* (Hanging Loose,

2012) and the forthcoming *North River Rundown* (Accent Editions, 2013). He has edited the selected talks of Ted Berrigan, the selected poems of Walter Lowenfels and an anthology of contemporary New Jersey poets. **Catherine Wagner** is the author of *Nervous Device* (City Lights, 2012) and three books from Fence, *My New Job* (2009), *Macular Hole* (2004) and *Miss America* (2001). As of January, she will be writing a new column on poetry for *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

FRIDAY 12/14, 10PM
JIM BEHRLE & JOE WENDEROTH
Jim Behrle lives in Brooklyn. His latest chapbooks are *It Serves Me Right to Suffer* (Hotel Poetry) and *Succubus Blues* (Editions Louis Wain). **Joe Wenderoth** is from Baltimore. He teaches in the graduate program for creative writing at the University of California–Davis. He continues to be an internet sensation and a behind-the-scenes force in Hollywood.

MONDAY 12/17
DIANA ARTERIAN & CODY-ROSE CLEVIDENCE
Diana Arterian is the author of *Death Centos*, due out from Ugly Duckling Presse this spring, and her writing has appeared in *Iron Horse Literary Review*, *PANK*, *River Styx* and *Two Serious Ladies*, among others. She is the Managing Editor of Gold Line Press and the creator of Gold Line's imprint, Ricochet. **Cody-Rose Clevidence** got their MFA from the University of Iowa. Their chapbook *everything that is beautiful is edible* is available from Flowers & Cream press, and their first book *BEAST FEAST* is forthcoming from Ahsahta Press.

WEDNESDAY 12/19
CIHAN KAAAN & MIRANDA MELLIS
Cihan Kaan is a Texas-born, Brooklyn-raised writer and filmmaker. His short film *She's Got an Atomic Bomb* (2004) won Best Short Film at the Evil City Festival; *Shuffle Mode* (2006) won Best Short Film at the Sin Cine NYC Erotic Film Fest. His first book of short stories, *Halal Pork and Other Stories*, was published in Spring 2011 by UpSet Press. **Miranda Mellis** is the author of three books of fiction, *The Spokes* (Solid Objects), *None of This Is Real* (Sidebrow Press) and *The Revisionist* (Calamari Press).

TUESDAY 1/1, 2PM
THE 39TH ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S DAY MARATHON READING BENEFIT
 There are three things to consider when the New Year's Day Poetry Marathon sweeps you into its gracefully uncouth embrace—what it is, what it was and who you will be when it's over. A benefit that is also a transformative experience for artist and audience, with Adeena Karasick, Andrew Boston, Anne Tardos, Arlo Quint, Arthur's Landing, Avram Fefer, Betsy Fagin, Bob Holman, Bob Rosenthal, Bobby Previte, CAConrad, Carley Moore, Carol Mirakove, Charles Bernstein, Christine Elmo, Church of Betty, Clarinda Mac Low, Cliff Fyman, Dawn Lundy Martin, Denize Lauture, Diana Hamilton, Douglas Dunn, Douglas Rothschild, E. Tracy Grinnell, Ed Friedman, Edgar Oliver, Edwin Torres, Eileen Myles, Elliott Sharp, Emily XYZ, Jackie Clark, Jamie Townsend, Jen Benka, Jennifer Bartlett, Jennifer Firestone, Jennifer Nelson, Jeremy Hoevenaar, Jessica Fiorini, Jim Behrle, John Coletti, John Giorno, Jonas Mekas, Josef Kaplan, Judah Rubin, Julian T. Brolaski, Karen Weiser, Katy Lederer, Ken Chen, Kim Rosenfield, Kristin Prevallet, Larissa Shmailo, LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, Lee Ranaldo, Lewis Warsh, Lynn Behrendt, Martine Bellen, Matt Longabucco, Erica Kaufman and Nicole Eisenman, Mike DeCapite, Murat Nemet Nejat, Nathaniel Otting, Nathaniel Siegel, Nick Hallett, Nicole Peyrafitte, Nicole Wallace, Nurit Tilles, Peter Milne Greiner, Pierre Joris, Poez, Rangi McNeil, Ricardo Maldonado, Rodrigo Toscano, Sarah Sarai, Secret Orchestra, Serena Jost and Dan Machlin, Steven Taylor, Steven Zultanski, Ted Greenwald, Tony Towle, Uche Nduka, Will Edmiston, Youmna Chlala, Yvonne Meier and others TBA.

FRIDAY 1/4, 10PM
FUTUREPOEM PRESENTS
LATE IN THE ANTENNA FIELDS: A RESPONSE
 Inspired by Alan Gilbert's book, *Late in the Antenna Fields*, Futurepoem presents Paul Chan, Tyler Flynn Dorholt, Alan Gilbert, Stephanie Gray, DJ Rupture, Benjamin Santiago and Mónica de la Torre in a night of intermedia work that offers a take on the poetics that have influenced and surround Gilbert's book. Guest-hosted by Futurepoem's Ted Dodson.

MONDAY 1/7**FENG SUN CHEN & KEN L. WALKER**

Feng Sun Chen's first book is *Butcher's Tree* (Black Ocean). She is currently a graduate assistant and MFA candidate at the University of Minnesota. Other publications include chapbooks *Ugly Fish*, *blud* and *Paul Thek*. **Ken L. Walker's** criticism and poetry can be found in the *Boxcar*, *The Poetry Project Newsletter*, *Lumberyard*, *The Wolf*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *La Fovea*, *Washington Square*, *The Seattle Review*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. He curates and produces *Cosmot*.

WEDNESDAY 1/9**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ROBERT DUNCAN**

With the recent releases of Duncan's *H.D. Book* and Lisa Jarnot's *Robert Duncan: The Ambassador From Venus, A Biography*, we want to take the opportunity to celebrate Duncan's 94TH birthday (b. January 7, 1919). Special guests who will read their favorite Duncan poems will be Jarnot, David Levi Strauss, Kimberly Lyons, Mary Margaret Sloan, Anne Waldman, Tom Savage and Pierre Joris. There will be cake in the shape of the cosmos.

MONDAY 1/14**WHIT GRIFFIN &****AZAREEN VAN DER VLIET OLOOMI**

Whit Griffin is the author of *Pentateuch: The First Five Books* (Skysill Press, 2010) and *The Sixth Great Extinction* (Skysill, 2012). His collection *A Far-Shining Crystal* is forthcoming from Cultural Society. Along with Andrew Hughes, he edits the journal *Bright Pink Mosquito*. **Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi** is an Iranian American writer of fiction and nonfiction. She received her MFA in Literary Arts from Brown University and is a recipient of a Fulbright grant to Catalonia, Spain. She is coauthor of the Words Without Borders dispatch series *ArtistsTalk: Israel/Palestine* and is at work on a second project entitled *The Catalan Literary Landscape*.

WEDNESDAY 1/16**NORMAN FINKELSTEIN & BENJAMIN FRIEDLANDER**

Norman Finkelstein is a poet and critic. His most recent books include *Inside*

the Ghost Factory (Marsh Hawk Press, 2010) and *On Mount Vision: Forms of the Sacred in Contemporary American Poetry* (Iowa University Press, 2010). Finkelstein lives in Cincinnati, where he has taught English at Xavier University since 1980. **Benjamin Friedlander** is the author of *One Hundred Etudes* (Edge, 2012) and *Citizen Cain* (Salt, 2011), and the editor of Robert Creeley's *Selected Poems, 1945–2005* (University of California Press, 2008). He teaches poetry and poetics at the University of Maine.

FRIDAY 1/18, 10PM**KATE GREENSTREET & DJ DOLACK**

Kate Greenstreet's new book, *Young Tambling*, will be out from Ahsahta Press in January 2013. Her previous books, *case sensitive* and *The Last 4 Things*, were also published by Ahsahta. **DJ Dolack's** chapbooks are *12 Poems* (Eye for an Iris Press, 2010) and *No Ser No*. (Greying Ghost Press, 2012). His first full-length collection, *Whittling a New Face in the Dark*, is forthcoming from Black Ocean (2013).

WEDNESDAY 1/23**JULIE EZELLE PATTON & GREG TATE**

Julie Ezelle Patton's paperpiperhapPen stance think stain planes include *Notes for Some (Nominally) Awake* (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2010), *Riding with Crooked Ink* (Belladonna*, 2013) and *B's* (Tender Buttons, 2013). In 2008 and 2010, she was a recipient of Acadia Arts Foundation grants. In 2007, she was awarded a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. **Greg Tate** is a writer and musician who lives, jives and thrives in Harlem. His books include *Flyboy in the Buttermilk: Essays on American Culture*, *Midnight Lightning: Jimi Hendrix and the Black Experience*, *Brooklyn Kings: New York City's Black Bikers* (with Martin Dixon), and *Everything but the Burden: What White People Are Taking from Black Culture*.

FRIDAY 1/25, 10PM**FALL 2012 WORKSHOP READING**

Participants of the Fall 2012 Poetry Project Workshops will read work they wrote over the course of the season. Fall workshops were led by Todd Colby, Nada Gordon and Erica Kaufman.

MONDAY 1/28**TALK SERIES: "LIKE ROLLING STONE BUT ON MOVIES": FROM POETRY TO AD REVENUE, WARHOL AND THE MAGAZINE BUSINESS**

One of the major projects that Andy Warhol undertook during his career-long publishing practice was his *Interview* magazine, which began in 1969 as an avant-garde film journal and, by the 1980s, became a fashion tabloid sporting Nancy Reagan on the cover. Art historian Lucy Mulroney will discuss Warhol's magazine within the context of his earlier contributions to the magazines of the New York poetry world and then trace the transformation of *Interview* from underground newsprint journal to "glamour gazette." Mulroney writes about modern art and print culture. She is Curator of Special Collections at Syracuse University Library and is completing her doctoral dissertation on Warhol at the University of Rochester. She is the co-curator of *Strange Victories: Grove Press, 1951–1985*, which opens at Syracuse University Library in January 2013.

WEDNESDAY 1/30**FLEDGE: A TRIBUTE TO STACY DORIS**

Join us for readings of work by internationally acclaimed poet and translator Stacy Doris, with special attention to her final book *Fledge: A Phemonenology of Spirit* (Nightboat Books). Doris's previous books of poetry in English are *Kildare*, *Paramour*, *Conference*, *Knot*, *Cheerleader's Guide to the World: Council Book* and *The Cake Part*. She also wrote three books in French and translated three volumes of French poetry into English. She died on January 31, 2012, at her home in San Francisco, where she taught in the Creative Writing Programs at San Francisco State University. With James Sherry, Lee Ann Brown, Rob Fitterman, Kim Rosenfield, Nada Gordon, Jena Osman, Ann Lauterbach, Cole Swensen, Laynie Browne, Charles Bernstein, Julie Regan, Daria Fain and more TBA.

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 Avenue & 10TH Street 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.

Poetry Project Reading Reports

Laura Henriksen

FRIDAY 10/12/12

NOEL BLACK & ERIN MORRILL

Looking back on Erin and Noel's reading, a reading that was in part about what it means and feels like to look back, has been a little like looking into a mirror while standing in front of another mirror, if one of those mirrors were psychic and the other could communicate with the dead, and both were unflinching. Erin read, in her polyvocal new poem, "Maraud Era," "flattered believing, that now could signify like sixty to two hundred years ago / ain't no doing the way analog done did / this tramped out digitalogical replacement streamed prolific endlessness," and in so doing jabbed both Luddites and amnesiacs in the side for the mistaken assumption that what is past has passed away. She reminded her audience that the risk is not forgetting history, but rather remembering it wrong, through oversimplification, romanticizing or silence. Toward the end of her reading, Erin sang a shanty-style song she wrote in which she concludes, "Keep us singing," which is a good thing to wish for anyone, and a great way to avoid the misremembering Erin warns of. Noel's reading also addressed memory, but not so much the inevitability of cloudiness hanging over the details of certain memories, and the ensuing fight against the cloudiness and shadows, as the inability to forget the details of certain memories, like washing the bathtub with the same plastic cup for 20 years or the sound of a bird hitting the window in his father's house after losing him to AIDS. Many of the poems Noel read treat this aspect of memory, the way it roots in your brain and your life and won't but also probably shouldn't be shaken, but right now I'm thinking specifically of the long poem he closed with, "Prophecies for the Past." Sort of like "Song of Myself" or "I Remember," but written by Noel and read to a crowd in St. Mark's Church somehow simultaneously in 2012 and 1972, both before and after everything that has happened had happened, the poem chronicles Noel's family and personal history. Not only did both of these poets treat memory and forgetting, this reading was also the last stop on their tour. Somehow despite the obvious opportunity for nostalgia to enter, never did it appear. This came as no surprise, however, as it was clear throughout the reading that both Erin and Noel can stand between a psychic mirror and a mirror that talks to the dead and know exactly where they stand and what to do about it.

FRIDAY 10/19/12

BETHANY IDES & CECILIA CORRIGAN

I love television, and I really love the most mindless, feeling-of-numbness-in-your-legs-inducing television. Despite my love, I know that on some level I'm just fooling myself, that even in the most manufactured entertainment there are these human cracks where your feelings seep through, where the attempt at distraction achieves the opposite effect. Cecilia and Bethany know all about what's hiding just below the beautiful face of entertainment, all that doubt and absurdity and ultimately way more beauty, and in this reading they both took up some of the traditional forms of television to show more clearly what's right underneath every talk show and soap opera. Cecilia performed a sort of variety show/lounge act somewhere around 1987, hosted by someone named Cecilia Corrigan who was not always but maybe sometimes Cecilia, complete with the flat jokes ("I tell you it's true, everything is so expensive these days"), banter with the musical accompaniment, one-sided interviews and thinly veiled desperation endemic to late-night talk shows. But the expectations and security of that classic format were constantly subverted; whenever you thought you had some grasp of what was to come, she would go somewhere else, into dialogue from the Nuremburg Trials or a beautiful poem about the Last Exorcism, for example. Cecilia took the talk show host/lounge singer's desperation, which always threatens to ruin the performance, but instead of pinning it back or editing it out, she put it in a poem or put poems into it. In the second half, Bethany debuted the second part of her opera, and the reading went from late-night talk show to daytime soap. It began with her alone onstage while a voice repeated "I can't remember," and then later, "You're going to remember," unwrapping a bandage that had covered her face, euphoric by the time the bandage was removed. She left the stage when a scream rang, and then a doctor and a woman in a black dress came out and sat at a table, unable to finish their sentences but nevertheless asserting "I know" to one another, while music played. The opera proceeded to tell the story of a jealous doctor who gave sight to a blind woman, played by Bethany, or perhaps returned to her her memories—there was a certain mystery to the doctor and the woman that was never resolved. Of course, suspended resolution is the mark of both good mysteries and good soap operas. This story was told through video, dance, dialogue (both live and recorded) and song. On several occasions the room fell completely dark. The piece concluded with Bethany singing, "Yet I knew her," before the credits rolled, or not really credits, but the music that plays over credits when a television show ends. Just the musical part.

Book Reviews

Apocalypso

Evelyn Reilly

(Roof Books, 2012)

Review by Elizabeth Robinson

It's not every day that a confrontation with the wretched state of our world is likely to leave one feeling refreshed and even entertained. How is it, then, that Evelyn Reilly's dystopian vision in *Apocalypso* can rivet the reader to the sorry state of contemporary life without simultaneously generating a sense of complete despair? Reilly is unabashed about facing up to the real losses we suffer as we struggle to negotiate life in an increasingly dissociated, technologically overdetermining culture. And she is grimly attuned to the fallout of our ruinous disregard for the natural world. In fact, "grief" is a word that recurs frequently in the lexicon of this book.

Perhaps the principal revelation that emerges from this poetry is that even grief can be met with a sense of humor. *Apocalypso* proves indeed that the laughter of the bereft may be an affectively true and ethically responsible means of breaking through our denial and apathy. In this way, Reilly stays honest to a sense of loss while reconsidering how it might function within our culture:

*It was the grief then must interrupt
and permeate the true writing*

*So you know the place species memory? robin anachronism
family?*

Where did that emerge from?

Fascinating that this poet cites interruption and permeation as strategies that result in the "true" writing. Sure enough, the poems in this volume interrupt and disrupt familiar cultural resources, whether they be Browning's "Childe Harold to the Dark Tower Came" or *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, bureaucratic techno-language or the Book of Revelations from the New Testament. Irreverence here is a charged and productive form of imagination. By suffusing these literary structures with her own avid imaginative energy, Reilly is able to surprise the reader within the "truer" mechanisms of the poem. Consider, for example, this page from the extraordinary "Dreamquest Malware," which is structured as a series of memos:

*TO: The Authorities
RE: Misdemeanors*

*In spite of the coup data
the assets estimate
allows a certain slipframe*

into which I inserted this thin reform gadget

*total brittlement
then to my surprise
a milder fragrance of duration*

As elsewhere in this sequence, one can see in the poet's elasticity of mind, a "certain slipframe" that permits her to insert "thin reform." Modest as this is, the result is subversive, funny, and even gives off a whiff of hope. *Apocalypso* offers no glib resolutions, but its complex incursions into our contemporary dilemma caused me to wonder if grief itself is a *question*. Were we to seriously shape this question amidst the ill focus and ambivalence of our experience, might we stand a chance of becoming like "Child Harold" who, dauntless, "picked up / his darkest crayon and drew"?

The eponymous final poem of the book returns to questions of duration in a variety of ways as Reilly presents her "revised standard / sedition edition." Here, I take "duration" to refer both to perseverance or survival and truncation or threats of extinction. A strength of this poem is, then, the ways it is able to encompass ends of a given spectrum, just as a term might embrace its own antonym. Thus in quoting chapter and verse, a verse might fall to another version, one that coexists with its redefinition:

*And the strange bird
of the emergent species
waits on the periphery
for the next decentering
(version two)*

Similarly, the first page of this poem claims that "enumeration equals // a technique of *calm* // 3 2 1 we are calm"—a sort of metaphorical deep breath taken before launching into the poem's "es-cat-a-logue." 21 pages later, the reader is confronted with an echo of that countdown, except that this time it unfolds to depict the decimation of the world. The number one hangs, blank as a precipice, on the last line of the page and has no text following it.

The oscillation between duration and extinction also appears in Reilly's surprising movement between the end-time pronouncements of Revelations and her own sense of beatitude. Vermin—yes, mice and cockroaches, even—curses in the New Testament, are to be vindicated, "little acrobats participating in our project / of universal plant and animal redemption." Notwithstanding the poet's appreciative reference to her exterminator in one section, these are to be received with the same hospitality with which the early disciples welcomed each other, "*The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them.*"

The overall effect of Reilly's construction of this poem (and the book as a whole) is to involve the reader in the ways that we must continually negotiate our hopes and contingencies while they blur into each other. Reilly begins the poem with an epigraph from the Bay Area Research Group in Enviro-aesthetics as follows:

*Thus strange verb tenses must be
enacted:
these are those things that will have had
to have been,
that will have had to yet occur.*

Responding gamely to the challenge of such odd verb constructions, Reilly tries out variations on tense throughout “Apocalypso.” Once again, the reader is thrust into the question of duration—what is past? what is present? how could these possibly enter into the future? Our Lady of Apocalypso warns us that there will be “no return / to that home page.” Absent a temporal site from which to master these end times, Evelyn Reilly gives us a *true writing*, and one could ask for nothing more: for on this occasion we recognize that “we have stepped into the sacred areas / and wept over our waste procedures // which is will have been being our transcendence.”

Elizabeth Robinson is the author, most recently, of Counterpart (Ahsakta) and Three Novels (Omnidawn).

A Map Predetermined and Chance **Laura Wetherington** **(Fence Books, 2011)** **Review by Sara Jane Stoner**

With great austerity and forthright and comical quirk, Laura Wetherington writes of time, space, birth, death and genitals. Her first move is to invaginate grammar, or to grammaticize the vaginal. And when she has the words right where she wants them, she takes you on a spatio-temporal trip of geopolitical proportions. As C. S. Giscombe writes in his National Poetry Series selection notes, “Her book is a dangling down atlas,” and it is true—there is something of a mystery to its space, and the “it” keeps changing.

From the first poem of this three-sectioned book, the vagina is both “close-circuit television” and “electrical engineer.” The vagina is everywhere, it seems, keeping a searchable record of the world of the world and the world of the body, while being technically capable of reorganizing, repairing or shifting its own network. The vagina in Wetherington’s poems is an exemplary citizen of the body: making plain noises about the truth (hidden among all of the words producing this character, that narrator) that the self is an imaginary boundary between the body and the world. And if “Your vagina is a country,” then its boundaries will always be imaginary. The prosy and amazing “Dancing the Be-Hop” bears this out:

*The next thing about the v: to propose
 impropriety:
 a vivisection :: an erectomy.*

*(don't tell your mother it's venerating,
 not relevant to the present situation, i.e.
 there are chains of prepositions: over,
 under, in.)*

As for the male piece: literally, quite literally, the word “penis” (along with a laugh: “ha”) becomes a phonemic fraction of a lyric for a song—replete in the text with a score—that might be about happiness. Or, settling into the sound, the song might simply be an earnest display of how the low vowel of the “ha” contrasts ridiculously with the high initial “pee” and the awkward second “nih” vowel sounds of the word “penis.” The title unsuccessfully protests “There Is Nothing Funny About A Penis” (capitalization of the article indicating sonically significant emphasis here), when of course we all know, there is, and there must be, something funny about A penis. Humor is the most serious mode in this book, the only mode for believing and surviving. Humor is the wet grounds and the hard spark for living. Puns are real, she seems to say. Look at us. Why fucking deny it.

Wetherington refuses to prioritize sound or reference in order to draw attention to both. We find the self-reflexive “I” acting by acting on the I: “I’m closing my hymen (come close, come close) / I’m closing my human.” The clitic full of clit. Bodies are sonic vehicles for the tenor of grammar. Felt sense is sound. “All orgasm is just me clapping for myself on the inside.” Parsing grammar is a sexual act as words are bodies themselves. Writing about love means your poem fantasizes about housing the beloved in your “**giant vagina.**” Moving between bodies of words (as pieces of larger texts, as individual poems) is a movement between vastly different places and times. This book gives a powerful sense of just how much movement is required to make poems of a body this poised in awareness. In this book, to be in a state of love or sex (and who isn’t?) is to travel far and wide to locate yourself on a map of everyone as they are discoverable in the space of something (you/ the other).

As fixed as a person or a problem or a piece of knowledge seems to be, in the eternally lost present moment, that fixity is both unavoidable and an illusion. In the book’s (almost) title poem, she writes

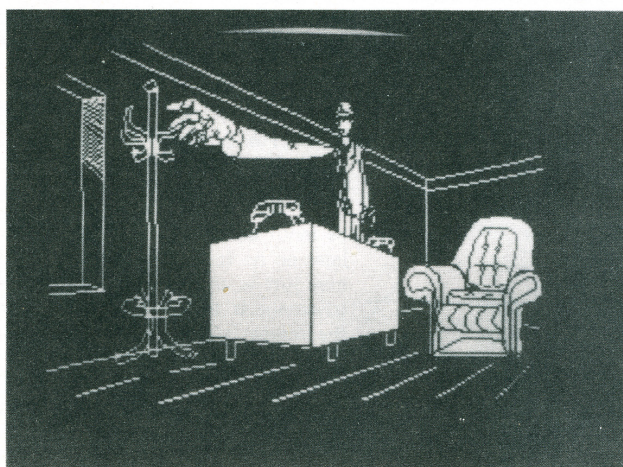
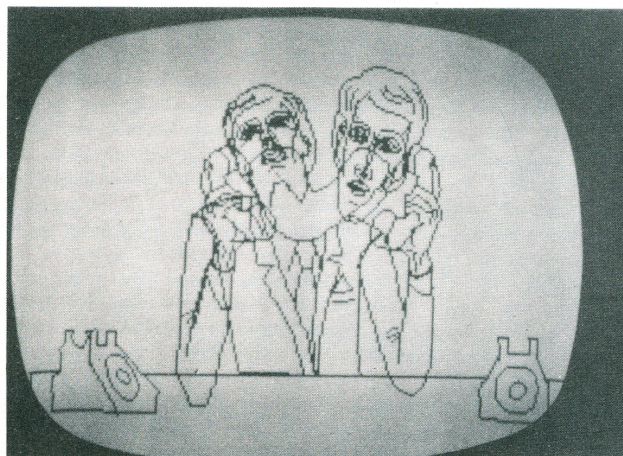
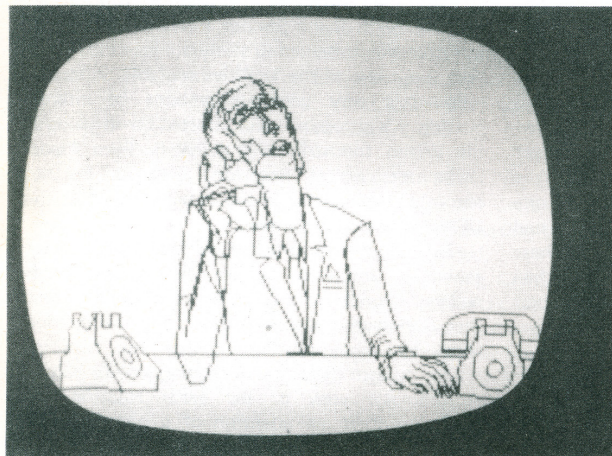
*We cannot get away from the way our
 minds solidify
 wood becomes lightning which turns back
 into wood*

*while the lightning peels past gravity
 far far past the human eye against lines of
 force this is our eyelight...
 ...We choose into what we cannot get
 out of:
 the way we hold our bodies.*

Here, Wetherington’s imagining of the *duende* remains with us despite this hardening: “we are light into wood in the sea.” So if we can see how we are actually in motion, down to the atomic level (what is the buoyancy, what is the energetic potential of wood), then the ways we conceptualize that motion (as decisive or indecisive, directed or random, swirling or rubbing) can influence the ways we think about ourselves in relation to our own will, to other genitals, to other people, to places, to political ideas, to the point—whatever the point is.

This book of poems is also a dare. Can you be an operator of language and still let yourself get as close to the truth as possible? Can you survive it? Can you live with how temporary it all is? Entering the third section requires the most dramatic movements of all: between the charming and fierce conceptual style of the first two sections and the starkly poetic reportage of a World War II soldier’s account of his D-Day landing and the sharply contained (boxed and emotionally terse) present tense scenes and observations of a visitor to France; from the deeply embodied theorizations of time and space of the first two sections, and the alternation between the spontaneous narratives of the third. The mystery of the “it” is here in this movement. On opposing sides of the same page: when Arabelle, a teacher and a friend of the visitor, tells the story of how she lost her speech when she found out that her father had lied about the fact that her mother had died two years before; and when the soldier discovers the company medic dangling by his feet from a tree, “throat cut, / genitals stuffed in his mouth” by the German troops who caught him. We are standing on a mountaintop together feeling small, surveying bodies in time and space with little strokes of our fingers in the air; we are weeping with laughter at the joke; you know, the one with the words, the one about the genitals.

Sara Jane Stoner is a writer, teacher and PhD student at CUNY Graduate Center whose first book is forthcoming from Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs next fall.



Deep Red Guild
Merry Fortune
(Straw Gate Books, 2012)
Review by Bill Kushner

Back in 2004, I read a new book by Merry Fortune titled *Ghosts by Albert Ayler*, *Ghosts by Albert Ayler* (Futurepoem), and I thought then it was a remarkable work, and just perhaps a work that would change the very future of Poetry itself. I wrote a favorable review of it and waited (and waited) for the world to change. Well, here it is, 2012, and *quelle surprise*, the academicians are still academicianing away, the Hallmark School of Poets are still Hallmarking away, and what has really changed in Poetryland? Am I going to be surprised and astonished at the (supposedly) new works coming out now? John Ashbery is still—thank God—at it, as are the Berrigan brothers, Anselm and Edmund, Clark Coolidge, Bernadette Mayer, Alice Notley, Anne Waldman and Lewis Warsh, but who else in the world besides to make my poor heart beat just a bit faster when I open covers?

Thankfully, this new book by Merry Fortune has done it again. Fortune is a born poet. Her

poems begin whenever and wherever they begin. “There’s always something eats a man”; “finally, a flower, with a small motor” (that is the complete poem!); “Humid soul. New York”; “As she entered the trailer she felt a lightness that she had not.”

I like that some of these early poems seem to be notes for poems to be written later. If there is a writer of whom Fortune reminds me, it would have to be Gertrude Stein, so daring and original. This is a poet who believes in words, believes that even one word can be a poem in itself, and who builds poems up from and around these words.

Let me gift you with just the last few lines of her song “My Beautiful Punk” (is it a modern love poem or is it not?): “I love you like spit itself / I love you like morning itself / I love you like a good hard spit into the morning itself.”

Fortune simply goes her Merry way and challenges the language with every poem. She does not try to impress us with what a great mind she is or—pardon us, Mr. Shelley & Co.—her aim to find Beauty wherever it exists.

*Take the apparatus from my ear
 My soul from the aeroplane spelled
 exactly that way
 Blowing through the world in my
 Dragon Boat
 There’s no place I’d rather be so I don’t go*

What her poems make me feel is that anything and everything is possible and available to be included. Just write it down and rock on, brothers and sisters, just rock on.

Bill Kushner is the author of Walking After Midnight (Spuyten Duyvil).

Fledge: A Phenomenology of Spirit
Stacy Doris
(Nightboat Books, 2012)
Review by Rodney Koeneke

The subtitle of *Fledge: A Phenomenology of Spirit* curves up the lower right-hand corner of the cover, a collaborative drawing by Doris’s two young children, and stays defiantly curled on the book’s two title pages (“my spine /

your hunched entirety / of fun"). I love the implication that there are several phenomenologies of spirit, not just the single one Hegel laid claim to, and that he's going to have to share his with Stacy's. A sense of play breathes too in the flexible constraint she's chosen for the poems, "mostly no two-syllable words" in short stanzas of "six-syllable lines," paired threes divisible by only the unspoken two.

The object of the game, we're told, is to "naively literalize nonduality" as the book moves between "two extremes of language" represented by Hegel and Paul Celan; one "a log of disasters," the other "a register of miracle." The series has "swells and hillocks" in place of formal sections, but there are three of them, so thesis, antithesis and synthesis get invited to join in; since "also this is a bunch of love poems of undying love," so does a more fleshy, affective kind of dialectic than Hegel had in mind, one where "A warmth hugs actual / warmth in skeined occurring."

The handprints of relationship are all over the sequence, from the first line—"Please bee

get my hands I / want my hands back I love / you"—to the penultimate poem: "so that we know where touch / separates and may build / the afternoon in sips." Marx said he found Hegel standing on his head and set him upright; Doris puts him to bed in a home full of hats and shoes and hiccups and house-cats and dough mix, where "Sleep and stare soothe the same / blueberry don't you cry." History's loud dialectic grinds somewhere well offstage; the poems evoke an intensely intimate, carnal, tactile world manifest in toes, mouths, lips, fingers, teeth, breath and eyes. "Our faces swell of love," writes Doris, "the rest's a raft of noise."


The insight that philosophy's most at home in the erotic is as old as Diotima; it's her commitment to that position that led Doris to call her earlier collection, *Paramour*, "a very conservative book." If that's true, it's the kind that conserves only what it wants to renew, and that claims the mystic's time-honored privilege of scrambling distinctions like old and new, I and thou, part and whole: "Talk is the pool where part / has no parts, play in

sink." Celan's an "arm's length" presence in the compact, skipping-needle syntax, but it's miracle, not disaster—the fledging, not the dying—that gets the last word. Like any good postmodern mystic, Doris grounds her yen for union and sublation (or for naively literalized nonduality, if you prefer) in the sensible realm of bodies and lovers and clothing and colors and, most immediately, language itself—the box of letters that enables the literal—in order to leave "There visible a praise" of our particular, transient here:


*I'll walk off this huge plack
of lawn, why not? Why if
it's to reach that why since
our braid roots obscenely,
floods down the wonderment.*

Rodney Koenike is the author of *Musee*, *Mechanique*, *Rouge State*, and a chapbook, *Rules for Drinking Forties*. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

the readings
the meetings
the friends
the enemies
the minds
the poetry
.....
through it all
you gave
we lived



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Catachresis My Love

Charles Bernstein

It's not permission I crave, but possibility.

Time's not on our side or anybody's. It just blows and mostly we blow it.

People sometimes say, in exasperation, that you can't be two places at the same time. But I've learned all too well how to be in two times at the same place.

The ordinary is never more than an extension of the extraordinary. The extraordinary is never more than an extension of the imaginary. The imaginary is never more than an extension of the possible. The possible is never more than an extension of the impossible. The impossible is never more than an extension of the ordinary.

Every wish has two wings, one to move it into the world, the other to bury it deep within the heart.

The exception assumes/subsumes/sublates/averts/acknowledges the rule/standard/norm. It's never either/or nor both/and. Anyway, whose rule, or which rule, and which part of whose rule? Whose on first, like my buddies like to say, or as the superego prefers, who's? That's whose.

I am not as far along as I would have liked, considering tomorrow's already gone.

A tear in the code: the code weeps for it's been ripped.

Town crier or weeper?

I wonder if such crises show who we *really* are or some darker side to us. Or is *that* who we really are?

There are no true colors, just different camouflages.

Language is our companion, steadier than most friends, but failing us, inevitably, when we burden it with unwarranted expectations.

"After drinking, we take a walk through foggy streets, with Mendacious in the lead."

[—Alfred Jarry]

as if the stars
became clouds
& our fears
the heavens

If you can't stand the kitchen, get out of the heat.

Award season like mint julep on a soccer field. Good luck bound to spill over.

If nothing is possible, then everything happens.

ostranenie, ostranennah, life goes on boys...

All poems are untranslatable. This is why we translate.

Lots of water under heaps of bridges. Bridges getting wiped out, turned over, and even making paths to places that never existed. Who knew you could live this way or that there was any other way?

A parking lot can also be paradise.

Returning to Buffalo after many years, everything looked familiar, almost just the same; the stage set was unchanged but the play had long ago closed, the actors moved on to other cities, and the theater was now showing movies. The company present I knew mostly from other places, a pick up group assembled for the week, along with many faces new to me. So a familiar place and with familiar people, but imported from somewhere else. You can't go home again. Or home is where you are now, in the present ever forming before you (not behind you). Home not what we did or done, but what we are doing. Present company included.

We who are not in control must always make-do, use the materials at hand as best we can.

My interests, ideological and poetic, are quite different than most other poets, so my methods are necessarily particular, a swerve. I do not suggest that such approaches be taken as a general model, which would be a form of tyranny, but that poetic practices be developed—and articulated—to meet the needs of particular and emergent circumstance.

Still water runs only as deep as you can throw it.

The desire to add insult to injury is no greater than the compulsion to add injury to injury or insult to insult.

*then there / now here
now here / then there*

The there there there then is not there now. The there there there now is another there than the there there then.

Omniscient I'm not, just plenty conscious.

[—Mesphistopholes, Goethe's *Faust*]

If e'er I say, stay, this moment so fair
Then take me away, beyond human care

If you were a girl you'd be home now.

Poetry wants to be free or at least available at a discount.

You can only do what you can do and sometimes you can't even do that.

You can only say half of what you think and sometimes even that comes out wrong.

You can only be part of what you'd hope to be and sometimes no part.

A tough road to the end just makes the end tougher.

So this guy tells me he doesn't know what a schlemiel is. What a schmuck!

I am a man of constant second and third thoughts (*and I've seen trouble all my days*).

Don't revise: Rethink.

The courage to be wrong even when right is a fool's paradise and wisdom's delight.

"Don't tell me not to tell you what not to do."

All good things come to a beginning.

I feel like a screen door without a screen.

I don't know if I am anxious because I'm depressed or depressed because I am anxious.

You know what they say: What doesn't kill you, brings you to your knees. What doesn't kill you, mortally wounds you.

One man's religion is another man's hell. One woman's freedom is another woman's manacles. One boy's fantasy is another boy's nightmare. One girl's reason is another girl's superstition.

The tyranny of reflection is the gateway to liberation. The road to freedom is paved with unanswerable questions.

This the Lord has not taught and has not blessed, so that whatever truth it may come to have would not be destroyed at the outset.

"I prefer her sincerity to his irony."
—I prefer her insincerity to his duplicity.

Irony is as close to truth as language allows.

What's the market close on African grief today? Asian grief? South American grief?

—What you don't understand is that we've got to make a profit to have the wherewithal to develop these drugs. Your altruism doesn't save lives, it just makes you feel good about yourself.

—As if the cure for capitalism is more capitalism; the cure for theft, more theft; the cure for misery, more misery.

Capitalism is all about the process. Not accumulation of wealth but the acquisition of wealth.

In truth, there is no truth: No truth but this (*no truth but that*). In reality, the truth lies under.

I'd follow you to the ends of the earth, even if I had a choice.

Like a haystack in a needle, to see the whole mind in a grain of thought.

"Even you, Rick, wish you were on that plane."

Sometime when we touch, the dishonesty's too much.

Better a rude awakening than insidious deception.

Because we love him, because he's our son, we don't care if he is black or brown, gay or straight, smart or dull, animal or human. He could be a zebra and we would love him just the same.

Common sense is the consistent foolishness of hobgoblins.

too many crooks roil the spoils
too many flukes spoil the rule
too many kooks soil the truth

Nature's promise: *we'll destroy you.*

you see blue
and I see
blue too, just
not the same
blue as you

I have no more quivers in my arrow.

the ear hears / what the eye elides

*saying light when there is no light
tremble when everything shakes*

Judaism is the record of God's vexed struggle to have a juridical relation with Jews.

The rapture did come. It always does. This is what it looks like.

Charles Bernstein's Recalculating will be out this spring from University of Chicago Press, which published Attack of the Difficult Poems: Essays and Inventions last year. More info at epc.buffalo.edu.

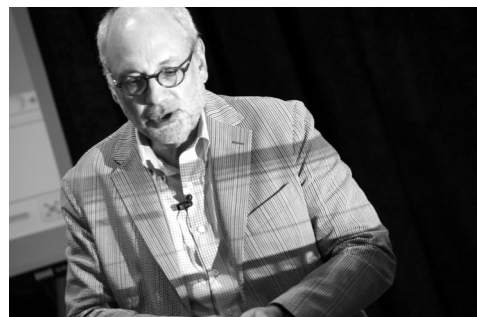


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Astrological Advice from Dorothea Lasky



Aries (March 21 – April 19)

You never admit it, but you do get tired. Tired and cold and lonely, and almost out of it. A lot of your clothes need ironing and you will never get it all done. Don't even try like you used to with the old stuff, the start of the new year will bring you new things. There are friends who care about you, who are looking out for you. Some of them are Pisces. Stop running and give them a call. All of your friends. Then bake another Aries some cookies. Hey, who's looking anyway?



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

The cold makes you want to cuddle even more than usual. You know that you also like to drink cream and red wine on winter nights, but I wouldn't. It is not that you don't deserve it. You do! Instead, give in to your love of music and buy a wood recorder at the music shop a few miles away. Then grab your sweetie and take him or her on a drive out to the country. You can eat brie and Vermont cheddar together under a sudden moon. If you don't have a sweetie, take your recorder to the local bar and flash your muscles. You won't be alone for long.



Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

It is not so much that you like the holiday season, but more that people like you. You are charming and smart and that's just that. I get the whole sense of self thing being tricky, but you understand what others don't: there is no self to worry about. The winter is the time for writing. Quit writing letters and get off Facebook. Open up a blank page on your computer and write to all of us. Put a couple of trees in the mix (preferably palm). We love you, you silly creature. We want to hear what you have to say.



Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

There is someone that you have been eyeing, either as a friend or a new love interest. I would wait on that until you are sure of what you want from the relationship. Unrelated, there is a person in your life who has been loyal, so reward him or her with gifts. I don't want to tell you what to do, but I'd pick money over edible. Try to wear as much navy (with red accents) as you can this month. If you have a pet, make him or her an oceanic costume. Even though Halloween is over, the boundary between this world and the next never ends.



Leo (July 23 – August 22)

There is a new initiative or project that you've been planning for a while. Now is the time to get your network together. If you need a right-hand man or woman, I'd pick a trustworthy Aries to be at your side. You have more funds than you think at your disposal. Some of them are hidden, but will appear clearly by the start of the new year. You are beautiful and sexy and everyone knows so.



Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

I wouldn't call it exactly prudent, but sometimes you can't help dancing. The best of you is a seahorse that moves through the waters. I know it won't help me to tell you to stop worrying about that thing that always aches at you, but I will anyway. Stop. There is another Virgo in your life who loves you more than anyone. It might be part of you. Listen to it. It has something important to say.



Libra (September 23 – October 22)

You have turned a corner. Now is the time to start making your house more inviting. You always loved to paint and maybe you have been painting. Paint a picture of the scene outside your window ten different times. With each new one, include a new animal. At the end of the month, invite ten different friends over and convince each one that they are one of the animals. They will love you even more, especially so because of your dimples.



Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

The world is steeped in your deep essence. So why is it that around now you always feel sort of frivolous? What people don't understand is how much you love the sun and how much you love color. You pass an Aquarius every day and this person knows. The children that you see in your mind know, too. They are old friends. They know you, and the ocean. Go to lots of parties this month. Wear as many glittering jewels as you can.



Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

You have been traveling a lot and have lots of trips lined up for the start of the new year. You might take the next month to get your affairs in order for all of this bustle. You work with a Taurus and this person is actually your ally. Offer him or her some cake (vegan or meat, just whatever you're in the mood for). There is a purple article of clothing you bought some time ago. Now is the time to bring it out. And if you don't have one, buy a crystal ball. By next spring, there will be people who want to speak to you.



Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Things are going great in lots of areas of your life, but sometimes the cold day gets stale. Spice it up by making a new friend. Not a big talker, but a loyal companion. Remember how much you like to hug people and just do it. We all love your sweet, strong arms. If you are singer, write songs and sing them. If you aren't, find a friend who can sing and write the words down. The time of the night is the time for singing. Also, I know you have been trying to choose one way or the other regarding a hard decision. There is a movie you saw in your childhood that has the answer. Watch it again. Think of the obvious choice. The right thing to do will be near opposite.



Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

Sometimes you feel so much like a plant that when the light hits you you think it is talking. But that isn't true. What is true is that there is a book or two that needs to be read by you. They are books about the sacred, but they may be listed under another name. You are undergoing some very good practices this month, so I might record them. It's the right thing to do to help us. Also, you have a sister, real or imagined, who needs to talk to you. Call her.



Pisces (February 19 – March 21)

Short days make your bones cold, but what you need to realize is that you are more powerful than any of us. Do you think we could all exist without you? Of course not! You are very good at caring for animals, so I suggest you give your animals extra love by the end of the year. By the way, by animals I may mean people. This may mean building these people-animals a new place to have entertainment. I'm not talking about a bar, because that's just not in your best interest. I am talking about a lengthy bathtub. Test it out first (scented with perfumes), then invite your loved ones. We are all so glad you are here.

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