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Cover and TOC image: from Taylor Mead 2009 with Jonas at Lucian (17 minutes, digital color) courtesy of Jonas Mekas
The “polar vortex” is upon us yet we are still glowing here at Poetry Project headquarters. If you were at St. Mark’s on January 1st you probably are too. The 40th anniversary of the Annual New Year’s Day Marathon Benefit Reading was an unprecedented success in many ways. We maintained a capacity audience for most of the day, the event ran on time, the performances were outstanding, and the audience, it seemed to me, was one of the most generous, open, and enthusiastic audiences that I have experienced. And, we raised $22,000!

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

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

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


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

Happy 2014!

Stacy Szymaszek (Director)

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

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

Ted Dodson (Editor)

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

Happy 2014!

Arlo Quint (Managing Director)
NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

CONTRIBUTORS

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

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

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

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

To this date he has published more than 20 books of prose and poetry, which have been translated into over 12 languages. His Lithuanian poetry is now part of Lithuanian classic literature and his films can be found in leading museums around the world. He is largely credited for developing the diaristic forms of cinema. Mekas has also been active as an academic, teaching at the New School for Social Research, the International Center for Photography, Cooper Union, New York University, and MIT.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE POETRY PROJECT BEGINS WORKSHOP RESIDENCY AT DIXON PLACE

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

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

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

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

JM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

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

JM: How old was he?

TM: Breakback Mountain. I think...

SERVER: Do you want to hear our specials?

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

SERVER: Okay!

JM: No, no. It’s okay. [INAUDIBLE] I mean it. Server: Okay, here’s your baguette.

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

SERVER: That’s the one who just died.

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

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

JM: Who are you talking about?

TM: Heath Ledger.

JM: Oh. Oh.

TM: Hollywood [LAUGHS]... In Sag Harbor, I told... uh... well, I told all about, so many people, because it was the day after 9/11, so I was talking about, you know, relatives who went out the window at 9... at the World Trade Center, and the guy who jumped off the Sag Harbor bridge who had a correspondence poetry... the thing is that they’re so far gone I can’t remember. (Editor’s Note: The person who jumped off the Sag Harbor bridge that Taylor mentions...
is collage and performance artist, Ray Johnson, who committed suicide on January 13th, 1995.)

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

TM: What?

JM: What are you drinking?

TM: Oh, Dewars. Only.

JM: And how old was Jack?

TM: Jack Smith? Fif...

JM: Forty-maybe-five?

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

JM: His mother could not talk to him. She used to call me. “How is Jack?” And I’d always say, “Oh, He’s great! He’s doing so well! He’s out, and everybody likes him!” And he’s such a nice person!” And she was always so happy. She was in Chicago. I think she was, like, a nurse in some hospital. And she used to call me because she could not talk... or he refused to take her calls. So I invented a, like, a new, different Jack Smith for his mother. [LAUGHS]

JM: The End and...

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

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


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

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

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

TM: We both... we... at the Coffee Gallery in San Francisco on Grant street—or whatever it was—we both won the poetry evening. Nancy Mitford and a famous british critic, they gave us both the first prize, bottle of champagne or something.
JM: Oh, I know who it was.
TM: Kenneth Tynan.
JM: Tynan. Kenneth Tynan. So he was in San Francisco, Kenneth Tynan?
TM: It was a wonderful scene, last of the Beat scene. Though I think even in San Francisco, even Ferlinghetti came to see *The Flower Thief*, but he’s about ninety years old now so...
JM: Yeah, he [INAUDIBLE].
TM: So he didn’t come to say hello, but that movie...
JM: Oh *now*, he went then! When you went to San Francisco, now!
TM: No, last October, I think.
JM: And Ferlinghetti came?
TM: Yeah
JM: Oh! [LAUGHS] Ah, a photographer at work.
PHOTOGRAPHER: That’s not bad, not a bad shot. It kind of captures the essence.
TM: You catching the new young filmmakers? [LAUGHS] [SHIMMIES]
JM: Emerging... um... emerging filmmakers.
PHOTOGRAPHER: I could probably do it better with another...
PHOTOGRAPHER: You know there’s just something so photogenic about you, Taylor.
TM: [SHIMMIES]
PHOTOGRAPHER: Yeah, that one didn’t work. That one didn’t work. We’ll get rid of that one. We gotta do better. I gotta tell you, when you stare directly at the camera, that’s when your personality comes out.
TM: I can’t pose. I have many painters who want me to hold still, and I can’t.
JM: [SHIMMIES] To pose!
TM: I can’t pose.
JM: Do you like that term, *submerging*?
PHOTOGRAPHER: Still haven’t gotten the shot that I want. I know the shot. I just haven’t gotten it from you yet.

(Continued on pg. 25)
Joe

When you came to a dinner party at Ira’s and my loft, you brought a lemon tart. Elaine remembers this, I don’t. You once said “You can’t beat meat, potatoes and a green vegetable” but not to me. Jimmy quotes you in one of his uncollected poems, “Within the Dome.” And calls you “the great Joe Brainard” (which indeed you were). I was well aware of that as I sat across from you in a dim restaurant in Tribeca—the first time, though I’d met you six years earlier, that we actually had a meal together. It was such an honor to know you, Joe, you’d think I’d remember more about you than I do. Friendly face. Swept-back, silvering hair. Gold glints (lit match to cigarette) in your round glasses. Expensive white dress shirt unbuttoned halfway down your tanned (and hairy) chest. Shy but in command, you reached for the check. My best memories have already gone into another poem. How at a crowded party on Washington Mews, during a
snowstorm, you towered over me
(I was sitting on the staircase, smoking)
and told me how attractive I looked
in my black sweater. How we
once almost had sex. “Can I
take you to dinner?” you wrote.
“And why don’t you bring a
toothbrush with you and plan
on spending the night.” I did
plan on it, but you caught a cold,
couldn’t keep our date. And
never dropped the hint again.
How when Eileen was directing
the Poetry Project, she paired me
with Lyn Hejinian (something
perverse there). That was a tough
reading. When Alice, whom I
revered, walked in, I exclaimed,
“I’m so glad you came!” Startled,
she said, “I came to hear Lyn.”
As did the majority of the audience.
My usually crowd-pleasing Supremes
poem was met with stony indifference.
Yet when I was able to look up
from my book (and that took
courage, believe me), I saw you
sitting in the middle of the room,
a broad smile across your face.
Everyone always speculated, Joe,
as to why you stopped making art—
the thought of not producing
inconceivable to the ambitious
throng of New York School wannabes.
Had you burnt out on speed
in the seventies? Been turned off
by the rise of commercialism in
the eighties? Or did you simply
feel (again inconceivable) that
you’d accomplished enough?
After you died, it became apparent
that this was, in fact, the case:
you left behind not one, but two
substantial bodies of work—
visual art and writing. And
produced classics in both genres—
with hardly anybody noticing.
They think only of themselves
and brag about what they do.
Your Collected Writings, its
powder blue dust jacket dotted with your childlike gold stars, is, almost twenty years after your death, a joy to hold. Was it a dream? Were we really friends? I only visited you once, that I can remember, in your loft on Greene Street. Toward the end. Not one bit of art on the white walls, and next to no furniture—had you always lived so sparely? Nowhere to sit, let alone linger. You weren’t doing much, you said, except reading (the novels you’d recently devoured were stacked near the door; I brought you some that Ira had published), smoking your eight (or was it nine?) requisite cigarettes per day, and occasionally dressing up for dinners (which you, I’m sure, paid for) with devoted friends. Can one have too many of those? You seemed to, and so, as you weakened, dressed up even less.
If the sigh—“Oh!” or “Ah!”—is the pure and authentic noise the human soul makes as it moves through a poem, its unmediated lament, what is it that speaks when a poem says, “oh my godwhat,” or “oh my god yes,” or “welcome to my couch/ u superficial motherfucked”? Does the soul say, “welcome to my couch/ u superficial motherfucked”?

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

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

@Lord:
talk me out of

“dicks” tonight.

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

So I like I RL, YOU RL for reproducing or re-presenting what was once apparently flickering language framed by a browser as somewhat more stable print, but I really like it for being a sustained meditation—what separates it a bit from Flarf, for example—regarding who it is anyone can possibly believe she or he is speaking to or addressing or thinking about online. (Maybe Romanticism could be said to do something similar with print.) “most of/ creation is meant/ to be loved,” one post/poem homilizes; elsewhere, “you must be willing to VOICE VERIFY. (NO EXCEPTIONS)” This is a very intelligent collection. I rly admire it.
pretending to write a poem because those are the conditions of my probation,
but when I ride the bus there’s no pretense involved. When I ride the bus I’m just a bus rider.
(from “At the Pub”)
The symbol of the bus and, at one point, the bus driver as muse manifest Stanley’s need for the poem to cut through the spurious moment. It is as a bus rider that he can best read the world.

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

Hold the Blue Orb, Baby
Lewis Freedman
Well Greased Press, 2013
Review by Daniel Owen

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Continued on pg. 22)

Our Lady of the Flowers, Echoic
Chris Tysh
Les Figues, 2013
Review by Matthew Polzin
Jean Genet’s Our Lady of the Flowers is inventively recast in Chris Tysh’s cutting, verse translation of the French novel. Tysh aptly describes her sharpening of the original’s prose into verse as a “transcreation,” seeing that the standard translation process is amped by her own creative license. Fitting, as Genet begins his novel with a similar moment of arts and crafts, cutting his devil-may-care criminals out of newspapers and pasting them onto the wall of his prison cell. Out of the desire aroused by the “heroes” in these photographs, Genet weaves Divine, Darling, and Our Lady into the lecherous achievement Sartre called “an epic of masturbation.” In Our Lady of the Flowers, Echoic, Tysh brilliantly puts to page the fantasies again by confining them to two nimble, sensually written stanzas per page. Constricted into fewer words, they are elated as if by asphyxiation.

With the help of my unknown lovers—Nobody can say when and if I’ll get out—
I’ll compose a story: my heroes are Stuck on the wall and I in lockdown
As your read about Divine and Culafroy
You might at times here lines mixed in
With a drop of blood, an exclamation point

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

Susan Sontag praised Jean Genet with her verdict that his first novel, given its literary merit, did not qualify as camp. It was too successful to be camp. In its content, however, Our Lady of the Flowers embodies all of camp’s chintzy artifice, which Tysh’s Echoic devotedly appropriates. Compositionally, however, her retelling is an innovation on what it seizes. The poetic language that adorns Genet’s alluring prose is agilely cut, spliced, and refined. Like Divine, who had “become her own / Self like a work...
that long ago / Detached from its author,”  
the work echoes by Tysh’s hand. When  
she refers to Divine’s apartment as her  
“pad,” Tysh is also implicating the pad  
of brown papers that Genet received  
in his cell and on which his tale was  
written. The pad that Tysh has pirated.  
“You might at times hear lines mixed in  
/ With a drop of blood, an exclamation  
point.” Chris Tysh’s or Jean Genet’s? The  
poetry continually raises this question  
of authorship. As if slapping the novel  
(lovingly) across the face to sober it  
up, her stanzas confront us with a new  
expression.

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

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

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

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

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

Terra Firmament  
Evan Kennedy  
Krupskaya, 2013

Ursula or University  
Stephanie Young  
Krupskaya, 2013

Review by Jamie Townsend
(Excerpts from Bernadette Mayer’s  
Utopia)

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

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

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

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

“Hordes of People Deprived of Greed”  
Evan offers an addendum to Mary  
Carey (Grade 6, Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
School) regarding her thought that the  
multitude might be retrained as circus  
acts; “I topple your country,/ reorder  
sense as stags bleat/ since I am the  
beasts now, thrown or immobile, we  
are not born to turn sticks and pulp  
just yet, not born to rot, we/ may as well  
be stones now, thrown or immobile…” (EK 23).

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

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

(Continued on pg. 23)

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

Judah Rubin


Review by Douglas Piccinnini

OPEN SOURCE, OPEN FIELD: THREE WORKS BY JUDAH RUBIN

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

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

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

and

how to

name

the substantial

come

as, people do not

come

back — though

you have come and

so

in

tact

unaccount in
digits

green as age

will

overturn

at
door’s

indistancia

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

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

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

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

But a made up place

These blacked out

to a scent like

keys to a

governor’s necropol

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

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

(Continued on pg. 24)
UPCOMING READINGS AND EVENTS AT THE POETRY PROJECT

ALL EVENTS BEGIN AT 8PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED
ADMISSION $8 / STUDENTS & SENIORS $7 / MEMBERS $5 OR FREE

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CALL 212 674 0910 FOR MORE INFORMATION
THE POETRY PROJECT IS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE WITH ASSISTANCE AND ADVANCE NOTICE

MON 2/3

OPEN READING
Sign-up at 7:45.

WED 2/5

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

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

FRI 2/7 10PM

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

Kit Schuler is the author of Without Is a Part of Origin (Gauss PDF) and two forthcoming chapbooks with Diez and Well Greased. He translates books of Marcel Schwob for funded Subpress, and with Joshua Clover wrote [PANK]

MON 2/10

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

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

WED 2/12

YOUMNA CHILALA & TRAVIS ORTIZ
Youmna Chilala is a writer and an artist born in Beirut and based in New York. Her work investigates the relationship between fate and architecture through poetry, prose, drawing, video and performance. She is the Founding Editor of Eleven Eleven (1111) Journal of Literature and Art and an Associate Professor in the Humanities and Media Studies Department at the Pratt Institute.

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

FRIDAY 2/14 10PM

WHAT—VALENTINE’S?—NO—DANCE PARTY!—AND JOHN HUGHES READING—[so-b]

Whatever your “situation” this Valentine’s night, come to the church after dinner (kidding: don’t eat first) and hang out with your friends while they poetically intervene in the hoary, formative (except for the readers who weren’t born yet) films of fin-de-siècle-ish maestro John Hughes. Afterwards we’ll drink free beer and unholster some funk-loaded iPods, and see what that new PA system can do. This is the first of three special events in the Friday Late Night Series.

FRI 2/19 10PM

STEPHEN COPE & ISHION HUTCHINSON

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

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

WED 2/20

JANETTE MCGUIRE

Janette McGuire is the author of The Monsters, Among Others: A Novel of Feasts, Covenants and Knavery (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), and the forthcoming The Hilarious World of Norman King (University of Wisconsin Press, 2016). Her work has appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, The Believer and more. She is a 2016 MacDowell Fellow and a 2016 Fulbright Scholar. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.

MON 2/24

TRISHA LOW & TOMMY PICO

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

Tommy Pico has been published in BOMB, [PANK], and THEthe poetry blog. Originally from the Viejas Indian reservation of the Kumeyaay nation, he now lives in Brooklyn. In Jan. 2014 he released Absent Mind— the first collection of poetry published as an app for IOS mobile/tablet devices, developed by Verbal Visual.
friends who are writers in a time of war and ecological collapse (City Lights, 2013). With Joshua Clover she has organized the 95 cent Skool (Summer of 2010) and the Durruti Free Skool (Summer of 2011).

MON 3/3
**OPEN READING**
Sign-up at 7:45.

**WED 3/5**
**DOUBLE BOOK LAUNCH FOR THOMAS MCEVILLEY**
Celebrating the late Thomas McEvilley and the publication of his new books *The Arimaspia: Songs for the Rainy Season* and *Seventeen Ancient Poems Translations from Greek and Latin*. McEvilley was a scholar, poet, novelist, art historian, critic, and translator best known as a provocative and influential art critic. He authored many books on art and classical philology including *The Shape of Ancient thought, Sappho and 3 novels*. He lived in New York City and the lower Hudson Valley. With Charles Bernstein, Carolee Schneemann, Holland Cotter, Pat Steir, Les Levine, William Anastasi, Susan Bee, James Surls, George Quasha, Richard Fletcher, Bruce McPherson, Stacy Szymaszek, a special message from Marina Abramovic, and more.

**MON 3/10**
**PHIL CORDELLI & DOUGLAS PICCINNINI**
Phil Cordelli is a farmer and poet, seasonally and respectively. He lives in the south of Denver, and farms on five acres just a bit further south from there. On occasion he’s joined by freshwater pelicans, miniature ponies, a golden retriever, and a three-legged coyote. He is the author of *Manual of Woody Plants*, published last fall by Ugly Duckling Presse.

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

**WED 3/12**
**DOUGLAS DUNN & YVONNE RAINER**
Douglas Dunn, in 1971, while a member of Merce Cunningham & Dance Company, and of Grand Union, began presenting work in New York City. In 1976 he formed Douglas Dunn & Dancers and began touring the US and Europe. In 2008 was honored by the French government as Chevalier in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. In January 2014 Douglas Dunn & Dancers showed Aubade, a collaborative evening with Anne Waldman, Charles Atlas and Steven Taylor, at the beautiful Kasser Theater at Montclair State University.

Yvonne Rainer, a co-founding member of the Judson Dance Theater in 1962, made a transition to filmmaking following a fifteen-year career as a choreographer/dancer (1960-1975). Her dances and films have been shown world wide, and her work has been rewarded with museum exhibitions, fellowships, and grants, most notably two Guggenheim Fellowships, two Rockefeller grants, a Wexner Prize, and a MacArthur Fellowship. A selection of her poetry was published in 2011 by Paul Chan’s Badlands Unlimited.

**MON 3/17**
**JOSHUA MARIE WILKINSON & LYNN XU**
Joshua Marie Wilkinson (b. 1977, Seattle) is the author of several books including Selenography, Swamp Isthmus, *The Currier’s Archive & Hymnal*, and *Meadow Slasher* (all from Sidebrow Books and Black Ocean). He lives in Tucson, where edits *The Volta* and Letter Machine Editions.

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

**WED 3/19**
**BRENDA COULTAS & ELENI SIKELIANOS**
Brenda Coultas is the author of The Tatters, a collection of poetry, newly published by Wesleyan University Press this year. She is a contributing fiction editor for *Black and Grey magazine*.

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

**FRI 3/21 10 PM**
**ERIC CONROE AND EMILY SKILLINGS**
Eric Conroe is the asst. curator for the KGB Poetry Series, co-founder and -curator of the COPULA Poetry Series. As a dancer, he has performed with Dean Moss and others, working in residence at Yale, The Kitchen, Korean Arts Festival, and ASU. Poems have appeared recently in *Your First Time, SAG/ FÁC, Bellow!, Bright Bright Shit*, and *Coffee Area*.

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

**MON 3/24 6-9PM**
**16TH ANNUAL URBAN WORD NYC TEEN POETRY SLAM PRELIMINARIES**
NYC’s hottest teen poets compete for a chance to represent their city at the Brave New Voices National Teen Poetry Slam in Philadelphia. Come support the voices of the next generation, as they take the stage and speak their mind. To enter, poets must be 13-19 years old, and sign up at www.urbanwordnyc.org/showup. First come first serve. Audience members are encouraged to come early, as seating is limited. $5 Teens, $7 Adults, FREE for Performers.

**WED 3/26**
**RODNEY KOENEKE & URAYOÁN NOEL**

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

**MON 3/31**
**TALK SERIES// APHASIA AS A VISUAL SHAPE OF SPEAKING: FIA BACKSTRÖM ON A-PRODUCTION AND OTHER LANGUAGE SYNDROMES//**
Automatic, delirious ReadWrite pathologies, arrhythmia and the gradient of sound, aphasia as the visual shape of single word staccato syntax, a-signification in the forms and forces worked upon lifted language. If current mental diagnostic categories fragmentize from syndrome into symptoms, turning the inner emotional landscape into user statistics, what kind of address is available to the subject? If language is the global sharing tool, the social gateway, how is a touching, attended phrase authentic, and if so with subjectivity and/or not?

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

AMNESIA OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE CLOUDS / OF RED AND BLACK VERSE
Maria Attanasio; Translated by Carla Billitteri

These two books in one volume comprise the first full-length translation of Maria Attanasio’s poetry into English. Blending realistic and oneiric landscapes, Attanasio’s poetry is a form of writing that shows the historical and political strata of everyday life. In a landscape darkened by poverty, death, inequality, and illegal immigration, selfhood becomes an embodied but only partially understood node of historical events. Attanasio sets reflections on the cyborg dimension of contemporary selfhood against a desolate and existential void of a new century, one she describes as “the god of indifference,” “the great amnesia.” (Carla Billitteri)

2014 • $18 • ISBN: 978-1-933959-42-9 • Poetry, translated from Italian | Cover art by Thomas Flechtner

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

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

**INFORMATION OVERLOAD: THE PERVERSITY OF THE KNOWING**

**DAWN LUNDY MARTIN**

Saturdays 2-4PM
5 Sessions begin Feb 16th

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

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

**SPECIAL WORKSHOP at the Center for Book Arts**

**PRINTING POETRY**

**RICH O’RUSSA**

Two sessions, May 17th & 18th, 10AM-5PM
(This workshop is a collaboration with CBA, therefore all participants are subject to a $250 enrollment fee.)

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

**Rich O’Russa** is an artist and commercial letterpress. He is the proprietor of ITDO Creative.
Now distributed by University Press of New England (UPNE)

**New Omnidawn Poetry**

**Martha Ronk** *Transfer of Qualities*
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★★★ Long-Listed for the National Book Award ★★★
★★★ One of Publishers Weekly’s Best Books of 2013 ★★★
★★★ One of 2013’s Great Reads from NPR ★★★

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

**Robin Clarke** *Lines the Quarry*
$17.95  96 pages  978-1-890650-89-6

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

**Sara Mumolo** *Mortar*
$17.95  80 pages  978-1-890650-90-2

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

**Keith Waldrop** *The Not Forever*
$17.95  112 pages  978-1-890650-88-9

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

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

Now distributed by University Press of New England (UPNE)
Think Hansel and Gretel on acid.
— Dodie Bellamy

Aase Berg, in translations by Johannes Göransson, available from Small Press Distribution and directly from the publishers.

Think of the horrors of cookie dough.

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NEW! FROM KELSEY STREET
IN CELEBRATION OF OUR FORTY YEARS PUBLISHING LITERATURE BY WOMEN

PREMONITION by Etel Adnan

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

7 DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE DESERT
(TRACING THE ORIGIN)
by Sabrina Dalla Valle

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

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

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

The work here is deeply concerned with thinking through the process that produces the thought of the work’s concerns in progress, an inquiry into the tricks by which language represents (or fails to represent) experience and a search for a method to maybe make that process less dubious; an inquiry as concerned with “moral mysticism” as it is with aesthetics.

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

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

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

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

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

One of the great pleasures of Hold the Blue Orb, Baby’s difficulty is that it enables such circuitous interpretations. It leaves its dual surfaces, and their elusive orb, to be seen and potentially housed by others. [7]
“A Story Told in the Vacation Place”
In a further effort to challenge the sovereignty of historical time, Stephanie and Bernadette step outside of it for a moment and dream a speculative heuristic of solidarity erasing social and economic boundaries; a first strike against the vampirism of landlords.

“Homage to Jonathan Swift” and “A Fish That Looks like a Bishop”
Evan attempts to establish a dialogue between the various utopian communities he and Bernadette discover in their travels, including the readers themselves;

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

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

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

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

“How We Got Back from the Future” and Epilogue
Here we mark the space of the linear as it bends to ellipsis; a return, revolution waged at the very limit of the physical body. The bodies of Stephanie, Evan, Bernadette, of their friends, lovers, fellow citizens, ourselves, human, animal, the porous borders, something not completely conclusive, a question mark.
Collapse, to be so
glyph-rotten—

dawn— a clean
knot of
Want whether what
contagion leaks from a new way to speak

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

( above
him — concrete

tar
paper, asphalt and railroad
ties

escape the burden of such peace as burnt

and

That I knew the body felt, the weight of — the way it pushed the barrow along its path
And that I am filled just past the point
With words and sounds and things impossible — to measure

that I want to
hold for you
and finally they’ve come spilling out
the top

and

When what was
chosen

touched the

run till

with blood to fill its lungs a tracing

— one —

—a deficit the stud, liturgical scion come to

inverse as broken
sleep

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

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

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

Most like the struggle at the gate of death;

Or liker still to one who should take leave

Of pale immortal death, and with a pang

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

Die into life […]

Endnotes:

JM: Oh, he knows the shot.

TM: Oh, director, director...

PHOTOGRAPHER: Oh, alright, now I got it.

TM: Give more, more...

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

JM: [LAUGHS]

TM: Let’s see again. I like that.

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

TM: No.

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

TM: Yeah, I like it.

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

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

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

TM: Yeah, good for you.

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

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

JM: I love it.

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHER: That works!

JM: And that’s your new career?

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

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

SERVER: I have it.

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

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

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

JM: Oh! Now movies! Not publishing though.

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

TM: Middle-everything.

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

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

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

TM: Middle-everything.

JM: Yeah, the middle is always boring.

TM: [LISTENING TO MUSIC IN THE CAFÉ] Oh, beautiful. [SHIMMIES]
“Going back to the sociologists’ notion, the sacred mixed with the social for it to be sacred.

[…]

That which affirms me strongly enough to deny others.”

- Laure, _The Sacred_

To My Lover—

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

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

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

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

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

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

In my earliest memories, someone I know is walking towards me quickly, dressed in all the days ordained for me written in Their book, their hair pulled back, wearing small angels with white wings that run all the way up to their elbows, like rubber gloves. I smile at them. The door swings open. I turn, confused, looking into the room. Someone I know yells something garbled behind me. Little white balls of angels, to keep my spirit up, to talk to me, to bless me and heal me of any sicknesses have been pushed aside into the corners of what looks like a soundproofed room and somebody I feel like I might have
I might have known once's decision, out of its own accord. From another wider slit across the someone I feel like an correct understanding is slowly emerging, out of its own heavily with freedoms, some of them black. What looks like 'Their Special Favour Will Rain Down Upon You.' Bunched needs straining, and purple foam starts pouring out of the off the examination table, valid directions in its most basic personal hungers and thirsts up again and again, lifting itself grotesquely to life in the freezing room, screeching, arching its The somebody I feel like I might have known springs their eyes off my face. Their light, Their glory and Their peace and suddenly like water from the bottle in my hand and remember to try to let These are all things that are in everybody, but I take a sip of on what I'm realising are the somebody I feel like I might have Cold Dark Rooms In My Soul Please.' My eyes move over to connected to the box labeled 'Protect and Keep me from the too hard to please and in a flash my eyes move from the wires that protrude from either side. One labeled 'Fellowship from your mother.' Another labeled 'Please pray.' Another labeled 'Please Call.' Someone I know camcords the proceedings, the small black machine aimed solely at the someone I feel like I might have known once. I'm smiling, confused, weirded-out at how focused the somebody I might have known seems, and shocked at how gruesome and inauthentic all this waxwork looks.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours,
Trisha
LOS ANGELES

Like any subscription member
of the Metropolitan Opera
fashion bloggers believe
they’re at the center of perception
I want to go where men go
Is a high school crush
on an alien surf girl
the same as the need
to fatally possess
the other and the self?
my friends were in this band
called Second Life®
let’s get high
talk about ‘90s nostalgia
scientology
drink diet coke
The Real is a teenager
drunk in a turn
a blue dot pulsing down
santa monica boulevard
hackers are the
unacknowledged legislators of the world
for something to be timeless
it must be outside mortality
and if humans exist outside of death
they’re no longer subject to the violence
of sexual reproduction
or the fragility of life itself
in these conditions Enya
will have no cultural efficacy
hope life now won’t need
infinite sadness though possible now obsolete
what did I do this weekend?
listen to this song *tropical winter* on repeat
while POV jogging through runyon canyon
totally desperate boys following cute boys
making out under tumblr skies
reblogged as gossip
sent from my iPhone
Kenneth Anger fatigued and
decadent in silk
post-fantasy
negation is part of the
positive identity of an object
there is no snow in hollywood
celebrities constitutive of a
scene that draw the populations
restaurant owners want as their clientele
in a single day three stars photographed
in the same gray hoodie
I want to create a product too unstable
to be marketed
not to say lacking
maybe messy
discursive and sort of pushing
oscillating among the various dimensions of influence
I could write here randy details of my consumer choices
banal and otherwise
it would not amount to much
Mallarmé on fashion
Benjamin on Fashion
a monograph retrospective
of Guess’s photo editorials
next to the bed
so maybe alien visitations
directly influenced human history over the millennia
what does it take to start a new life
you take lonely trips to the city
you are interested in moving to
saturate the market with your resume
during interviews order both coffee and juice
masterfully handle the acceptance of ontological incompleteness
by affecting the persona of the applicant they want to hire
a winning assurance that you never intend to realize
obvious to all parties six months into the job
John Paul Gaultier staged his Chic Rabbi
collection at Paris fashion week FW’93
very beautiful, very elegant, the orthodox religious
clothing and the gender-bending
fits with his interest in tradition and iconic imagery
as well as the fact that he’s treating somewhat impertinently
something that most people wouldn’t dare play with in couture design
when Gaultier talks about himself though he sounds so dumb
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