MAGENTA HAIR
(on "The Death of Chatterton" by Henry Wallis)

This is where explanation fails,
like a drug,
signing the body over to physiology.

Explanation fails as a song might do,
failing to attract the memory
that begged,
begged on the knees of its heart,
for explanation.

You see how it goes.
It is like rain, a nuisance one day,
a prism the next; rather,
it's like sunshine
beaten to its knees by the rain, and then,
on a day like today, tricking it
shamelessly. For what is a rainbow
but physics confessing?—: all is not lost;
rather, what was lost
is not all.

This is to be explained by the death of Chatterton.
You see what I mean. That magenta hair.

It represents Mr. Wallis' rights,
not as an artist; rather,
as one who has chosen to live,
physics and physiology reduced to mystery,
the rainbow to pretext,
poetic to theater,
and observable fact to its knees.
One’s indulgence is begged: nature claims no rights, yet nature is loathe to accept the explanatory use to which one puts this fact.

One invents nature’s rights: magenta may have hair. Why not? And likewise Chatterton’s hair may have its magenta awfulness.

One lives with such freedom. To grown-ups, it’s a drug. The range of visible colors becomes an addiction, a rhythm of craving and indulgence which is song-like in the feelings it evokes, soaking life with desires so enslaved by the freedoms they nurture that, finally, no explanation is pretended: one simply lives.

At the precipice of one’s rights, the light of explanation shatters; hence the spectrum of possibility: one could jump. One could die. That would be no loss.

Yet loss is the guiding hand, even though, like a drug or a sunny day, it can only beckon: one simply lives.

Chatterton is not the exception; rather, he is not the exception that proves the rule, faintly remembered, that sanctioned his death: As it happens, his magenta hair is what one remembers, as one’s rights are remembered, the right of memory to fail, to fall out of bed, to scrape its knees, to cry out, absent-mindedly or in pain—in pain.
or absent-mindedly, come sunshine or gloom,
or the need, to which the living are addicted,
to explain.

Hence
magenta hair, the inexplicable,
"The Death of Chatterton," the painting,
sheer nonsense,
relinquishing life to memory
and memory to loss, rolling the possible
into one with the physiological,
the local physics one chooses
to live out in the freedom of totally
song-drenched ignorance.

BARRETT WATTEN

from THE WORD

A lecture on scalar waves zero vector waves created from the overlap of two waves 180°
out of phase like squeezing a sponge in and out in space-time take zero vector waves and
intersect at the zone of interference ordinary energy will occur the interference patterns
will occur as ordinary electromagentic waves this is how energy can be transmitted with
no loss in transmission this kind of wave could influence global weather patterns clouds
were dividing into even rows over Huntsville Alabama these patterns have been adjusted
in since shortly after the death of Brezhnev low-level booms make continuous popping
sounds we saw this grid pattern over Huntsville Alabama being adjusted and I can reach
up and move the jet stream up and down it's as if the Russians were permitted to come in
and build transmitters in each of the grid zones you're looking at a bunch of cone-shaped
mountains all over North America around the cone of energy clouds will form in a circle
with rays running directly out in all directions like a giant radial this is not a natural
formation

A typical house
with porch, steps, etc.
will seem to decay into parts with age
if not carefully (extravagantly) kept up.
THEORY

1. Continents were built up as a quality space.
2. Continents were built by drifting, colliding mini-continents. The only part of California that is "original" is somewhere near Death Valley.

The soap is really a sphere.
The child is really a fat one.

...for the opera fan who knows his syntax.

Few things are funnier than auto mechanics; it lays bare the inherent defects of all engines, which pivot on the "virtual" presence of parts we can no longer get.

I have a nervous collapse, which is disappointing—it obscures my view of semiotics.

That pleasure is a kind of time left over from counting.

SEQUENCE

The spectacle that inverts the real must begin on time.

OR

"Welcome to Nevada."

BUT

It is necessary to put pieces on the board in order to have a game.

IF

Nothing is permitted, it rains.

AND

The world ends.

AND

A succession of authors make their way into print.

OR

A sequence of car-sized holes through a series of billboards leads to a vanishing point.
AND

A ritual necklace of negatives set off against white skin.

BUT

People are coming soon.

AND

Snow-removal teams in white suits disappear into overheated buildings.

IF

A continuous feedback loop is an integral part of the delivery.

IF

Water runs out.

IF

We do not want blindness to be inculcated in others.

IF

Rhythm occurs in the structure of a tree, but the sky is overhead.

AND

Fashion models twist and turn in front of the camera as the shutter clicks.

BUT

The public reads Sartre on busses.

OR

We made something out of nothing by giving up ourselves.

IF

E.g., nothing, zero, minus, \(\sqrt{-1}\), a winged horse, a square circle, etc.

OR

Such are the limits of art.