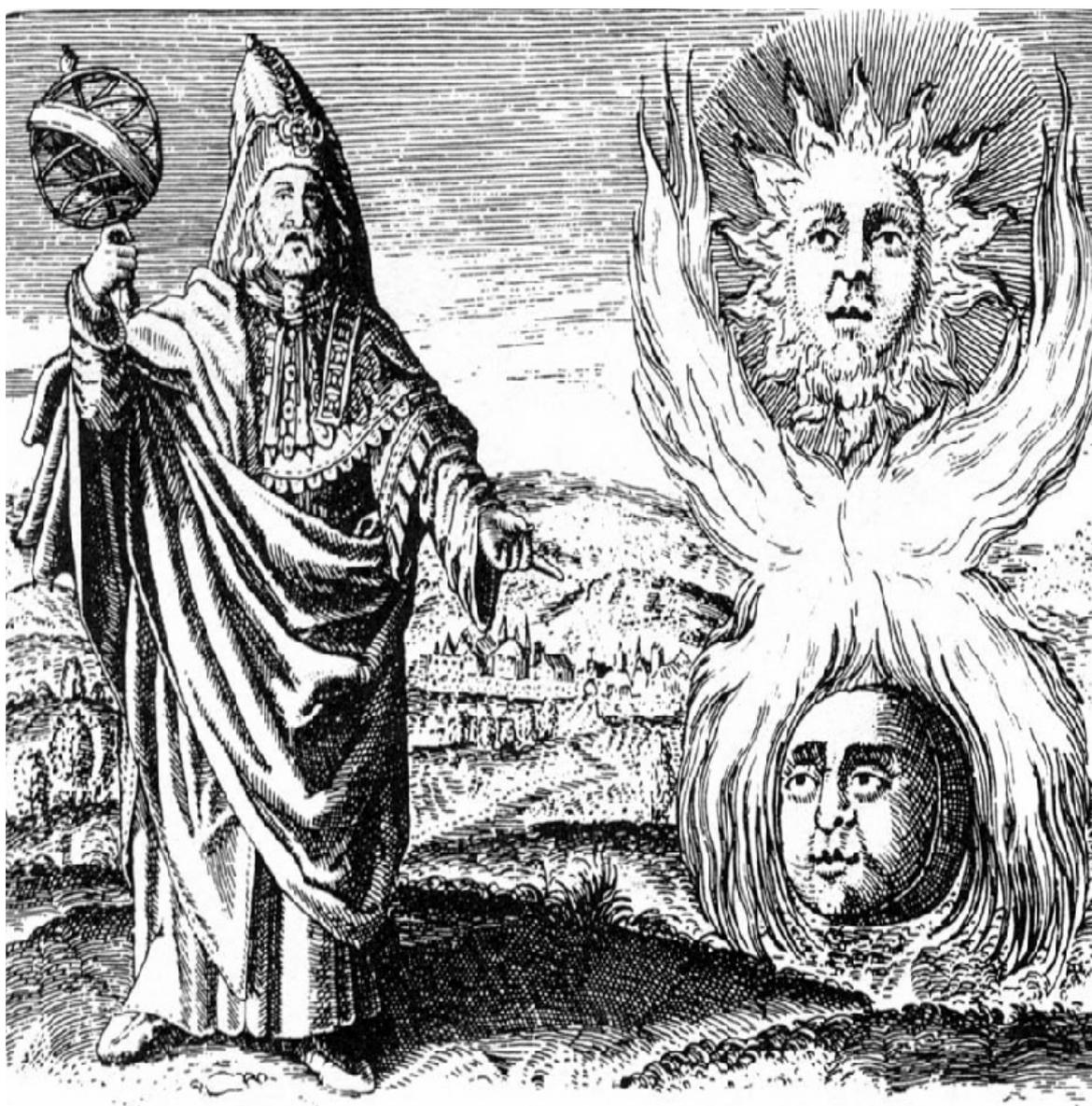


SUNFISH

Poetry Magazine | Issue 1 | Winter 2009 | £3



Scott Thurston John Seed Jonathan Greene Kristy Odelius
Jed Rasula Paul A. Green rob mclennan Alec Finlay Amy King
Meredith Quartermain Geof Huth Gil McElroy

Contents

Scott Thurston	<i>from</i> Sustainability	3–4
John Seed	Massachusetts	5–7
Jonathan Greene	Five Poems & a Notebook	8–14
Kristy Odelius	Two Abecedarians	15
Jed Rasula	Rectifying the Eventual	16–20
	The Pumps of the Subsoils	21
Paul A. Green	Seething Vacuum Data	22–24
rob mcLennan	Poem for Miami	25
	an old poem embedded in thoughts about david donnell	26–27
Alec Finlay	Dictionary of Imaginary Flowers	28–29
Amy King	“Age itself is a body”	30
	Say I Told You A Story	31
Meredith Quartermain	Banking	32
	On my way to the overpass	33
Geof Huth	Four Poems	34–35
Gil McElroy	<i>from</i> The Julian Days	36–39
	Notes on Contributors	40–41

Scott Thurston

from Sustainability

I CAN'T DISTINGUISH
the out-breath restore
marking dawn and dusk
passive aggression against
asking for
communication of difficulties
denied wounds of
a structural vision

the in-breath from
dignity to sexuality
with song question
self-importance and
'meaningless echoes'
in trust against the
childhood
of the universe

YOUR STAR PLANTS
we who are indebted to
pass this through
reconfiguring experiences
and remaking them
on the horizontal

it out in me
the service of the dead
the dance crucible
undoing relations
on the vertical
perpetually

Giving out into sole
moments; breaks a back
spin into side
line. Wanted a talk
to chat up lamp
boulevard exchanges.

The mausoleum

WHAT HAS CHANGED

less intense fear but
concentration on
finding one's place in
different lives –
to avoid the object
and fantasy of filming
the temptations

from childhood feelings
less vivid perceptions of
a life leads one out to
something larger: of
sexual desire abating
on the screen
more risky dialogue
in the desert

IN THE SPIRITUAL

inflation adherence to
needs humility not
power over acting
purpose beyond
alteration

world risking ego
tradition against
grandiosity positive
out of power
a figured end
in achievement

I'LL FIND IT

in the un-like
in the shower
script in elegant
threat her standing
a moveable forest
of price of
tarrying for the tide

just as well
visible light split
a closely-written
hand unequivocal
inscribed around her neck
a singed ms
peace prospects
caution mirror behind

ONE MOVEMENT LEADS

my instinct to fracture
work on ego again
drawn more sharply
is this civilization
in the corner

to another against
something I've made
in rest boundaries
write through adolescence
starts to unravel
my eye

John Seed

Massachusetts

What was

one Sunday

Boston harbour's watery dusty gulfs of blue shadow

morning along the wooden jetties

NO LOITERING is

summer in the smoky breeze Atlantic brightness

strips of blue
cloud the western sky
glows behind red oaks
tall white calvinist steeples

Concord pronounced conquered

celestial functionaries of Empire
daydreaming equity leafy
shadows squared-off privet

good fences for each
station of the august
twilight temple of the five winds

in cool wet air slept

memories my pillow a thought a
few details of sky

troublesome spirits
for these we are already
dust and shadow and

can find no home

Jonathan Greene

The Retort

How long
to write this book?

A distillation of
years & years.

Down the long neck
weeps what words

condense,
so few drops

to evoke
a sea.

Against Too Much Purity of Some Ancient Chinese Poets

Forget unreasonable
purity, leaving a wife
for a solitude
without....

Without is also with....
Even lost in clouds
there are heart ties,
those below holding kite-strings.

Remember your teachers,
the different paths.
The cairns remember
all those who placed a stone there.
Touchstones for those who follow.

Come down,
mix with the world,
bring the mountain
with you.

The Desk's Imperatives

The flotsam of a life floating,
beached from a sunken skiff
dubbed *Doubting Felicity*:

my father's death certificate
suddenly rises from papers on my desk,
an irreplaceable immortal lost poem
found on the back of an envelope.

What is treasure to me,
worthless refuse to others,
comes with the mute injunction:

*Bring it all back home,
make it cohere, rescue
scintillae from dream stuff
as if a treasure chest of jewels*

*that glitter only for those eyes
that can decode hidden messages,
family secrets, stories that resonate
beyond the personal.*

Susanna and the Elders

Susanna's music touched the bawdy strings – Wallace Stevens

Sunday afternoons
in the hushed temples of art

children wide-eyed –
a naked Susanna bathing,

her lustrous body
in so many incarnations,

painted by masters
who, hiding behind this story,

show to the world (without apology)
their favorite model.

Boys in disbelief
at this display of forbidden lore,

their first taste of voyeurism conflicted,
housed in this sacred space.

The bored guards
looking at their watches

to count the minutes
before museum closing time.

City Scenes In Snow

After sledding in the park's deep snow,
the two sons refuse to walk home.
The weary father trudges along
pulling them on home
in the sparsely trafficked streets
snow still falling.

At times the kids fall off, laughing,
not wanting the day to end.

•

Hushed streets except for the
rumble of the subway.

Out of the corner of his eye
the father spies Orpheus

with guitar case, descending
the dark steps, off to reclaim lost love.

Notebook

Charles Simic. Reading his Notebooks (*The Monster Loves his Labyrinth*), gets me started on this. His virtue is his flaw – he is clever.

Schubert said; 'When I have finished one piece, I begin another.' My friend Coleman Dowell told me if he finished a novel, he had to start another without pause. That not having an ongoing novel was unthinkable for him.

Kafka said somewhere that he only became a writer because he was an insomniac. Just think of the loss to literature if he had taken an effective sleeping pill that the modern world would proffer on such a sufferer. And we would not have the term 'Kafkaesque' to toss around haphazardly.

Our Great Pyr Myles is usually a deep husky baritone, but if a storm approaches, he howls soprano. Play a recording of a bagpipe and he 'sings along.'

Once Wendell Berry was visiting Harlan Hubbard. Harlan was mentioning how Thoreau on his walks often found arrowheads, had an intuitive second sense in finding them. As in the place in the *Journals* when Thoreau is going on about Native Americans to his brother John:

'Here,' I exclaimed, 'stood Tahatawan; and there... is Tahatawan's arrowhead.'

We instantly proceeded to sit down on the spot I had pointed to, and I, to carry out the joke, to lay bare an ordinary stone which my whim had selected, when lo! the first I laid hands on, the grubbing stone that was to be, proved a most perfect arrowhead, as sharp as if just from the hands of the Indian fabricator. [October 29, 1837]

Just as Harlan was talking about this he looked down and found an arrowhead. What a act of homage to the earlier writer!

On this day (April 5th) in 1790 John Wesley is taken with the binding love between an old raven and a big Newfoundland. We had a similar hanging-out-together inseparable bonding between one of our Great Pyrs mixes, Sonia (after French artist Sonia Delaunay), and a white goose. Even when the dog went on a stroll down the road, the goose would labor to keep up with her. Comical and sweet. Dobree has a good photograph of them together. George Ella Lyon noticed this partnership when she visited here and I was hoping she would somehow make a children's book out of it.

My favorite Mae West one-liner: 'I used to be Snow White, but I drifted.'

And I always liked the definition of a pornographic book: 'A book you read with only one hand.'

Strange convergence of architecture, political history, and rock 'n roll: The Beatles went on August 27, 1965, to meet Elvis at the Healy House (1949), 565 Perugia Way, in Los Angeles near the Bel-Air Country Club. Elvis had rented the house from the Shah of Iran. Elvis must have liked the ritzy neighborhood since he later purchased nearby 635 Perugia Way.

One of the many ways The Beatles and Elvis differed — politics and drugs. Elvis was addicted to prescription drugs, so never hassled. Whereas John Lennon was hassled and a move to deport him was pushed because of a small illegal drug bust on his record

in England. That was an excuse to silence his peace activities during the war in Vietnam. Lennon appeared with Black Panther Bobby Seale, etc. while Elvis performed in front on segregated audiences making very big money off of covering black music: Big Boy Crudup and Dorothy Love Coates, etc. Irony to it.

Also, along these lines what part does race play in Ray Charles getting all sorts of flack for taking gospel riffs into r'n b, while Elvis importing black music to white audiences gets relatively some but comparatively little flack.

Elvis was not a 'simple' racist, just a typical Southern boy of his day and not about to rock the racist world he grew up in. Even Lester Maddox is not a simple case of being a racist, but a complicated one that can be read every which way. Strangely, Maddox went on the road with a Black blues musician Bobby Lee Fears and play nightclubs for 20 months under the headline of *The Governor and the Dishwasher*. They played on tv shows 'Laugh In' and the 'Dick Cavett Show'. Fears was a dishwasher at Maddox's restaurant that Maddox closed rather than integrate.

And there was the secret history of Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina who publicly was a staunch segregationist – Thurmond has on record the longest filibuster ever conducted by a single Senator, speaking for 24 hours and 18 minutes in an unsuccessful attempt to derail the Civil Rights Act of 1957. But after he died his Black daughter, Essie Mae Washington-Williams, wrote a book about her father that took an apologist tone. She was born on October 12, 1925. Her mother, Carrie 'Tunch' Butler (1909–1948), was all of 16 (to Thurmond's 22) at the time of her birth. She met the future Governor and Senator when she was the cook in the Thurmond household. Essie was raised by her aunt who she thought was her mother. Thurmond agreed to meet this daughter when she was 16, but then helped support her through college and thereafter. And then is the further twist when it was discovered that civil rights anti-racist Al Sharpton's ancestors were slaves owned by the Thurmond family.

One of the crazier complicated moments in our racist history lessons: the 'most famous man in the world' at the time Muhammad Ali giving a talk at a Klan rally! He was a follower of the Black Muslims and they and the Klan agreed on one thing – segregation, no mixing of the races. Other than that, I would think they agreed on nothing. And remember (what irony) that Ali was first named Cassius Clay, after the great abolitionist.

In 1966, Watergate mastermind wacko G. Gordon Liddy organized the arrest and unsuccessful trial of LSD advocate Timothy Leary. After his jail term, Liddy later joined with fellow ex-con Timothy Leary on a series of debates which were popular on the college circuit. It was also Liddy who had a stroke of genius hiring a woman to streak through one of the Democratic National Conventions.

'Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans,' John Lennon sang in his song to his son, Sean. Little did he know four bullets in the back and Death is what happens when you are busy making other plans.

Home last night to the new bLight across the river quite visible despite trees that are leafed out. This one courtesy of the state. Presumably because recently someone ditched a car into the river to collect insurance and claimed it was 'stolen' – no surprise to the authorities. Not the first time something like this has been done as once stripped car was

burned to the ground. When I called Fish & Wildlife they did not know of this though they administer this property. The Fire Dept. never thought of telling them. Moving here over thirty years ago we were spoiled: the 1200 acres across the river was known as Smithers Bottom and there was only one old frame house standing on all those acres. The house was occupied fitfully. The county road ended there. Later a trailer was pulled next to the house since it was the cheaper alternative to fixing the house. Then a developer came in and many houses were built. Then a boat ramp and parking lot were built theoretically for fisherman, even though in the same pool Strohmeiers had a place for fisherman to put in for decades and it unleashed a place I would hazard is mainly used by speedboats, jet skis, motorcycles and ATVs, etc. Why should the state compete and take away business from a small family enterprise? Or did they ever think of buying out that business first? Supposedly folks from the state asked people on the other side of the river about the boat ramp, but never us who it might impact at least as much of the others.

Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), an English philosopher and political radical, stipulated in his will that after his death that his body was to be mummified, then waxed and stored in a wooden cabinet called the 'Auto-icon.' He is thus preserved sitting with his cane, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat, and is now publicly displayed at University College London. For the 100th and 150th anniversaries of the college, the Auto-icon was brought to the meeting of the College Council, where he was listed as present but not voting. An artificial immortality of sorts, but a much longer than many of the figures at the many Madame Tussaud's Wax Museums who are there only for their often brief time in the limelight of popular culture and history, but then will be melted down when their particular star fades. Goodbye Britney, hello....

Strange to pair two this way: Brahms and Jelly Roll Morton, both early on in their lives: whorehouse pianists.

the journey
itself
is home
– Basho

The Reluctant Mr. Darwin by David Quammen, p. 186:

Darwin alludes to a famous statement by the Swiss botanist A.-P. de Candolle, suggesting that 'all nature is at war, one organism with another, or with external nature.' Predation, competition, parasitism, overcrowding. As species continue to procreate, there just isn't enough food or enough space for their offspring. Reproductive rates are geometric. Habitat is finite.

I doubt writers in writers workshops and 'creative writing' programs ever think of this overcrowding etc. in relation to writing and how they are part of the problem of the prolixity of words coming down out of the mind's spigot and the lack of readers of those very words they probably value highly?

I wondered if Jorge Luis Borges, who never aspired to anything longer than the story, ever came across the start of the definition of the novel in Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary*: Novel, n. A short story padded.

Borges' long view of writers and readers:

*We forget that we are all dead men
conversing with dead men.*

though we now might complain about the 'sexist' language. In Alberto Manguel's short book, *With Borges*, we can continue in this morbid frame of mind:

For Borges, the core of reality lay in books; reading books, writing books, talking about books. In a visceral way, he was conscious of continuing a dialogue begun thousands of years before and which he believed would never end. Books restored the past. 'In time,' he said to me, 'every poem becomes an elegy.'

In Manguel's book the most moving story is not about Borges, but about one of his circle, Silvina Ocampo, author and artist (she studied with Giorgio de Chirico). His sister Victoria published the important magazine *Sur*. Her husband was the author Adolfo Bioy Casares. Silvina, Adolfo, and Borges together edited the important *Antología de la literatura fantástica* in 1940. The sad ironic story about her:

In the last years of her life (she died in 1993, aged eighty-eight), she suffered from Alzheimer's and wandered through her large apartment unable to remember where or who she was. One day, a friend found her reading a book of stories. Full of enthusiasm, she told the friend (who, of course she did not recognize, but by then had grown accustomed to the presence of strangers) that she would read him something wonderful which she had just discovered. It was a story from one of her first and most famous books, *Autobiography of Irene*. The friend listened and told her she was right. It was a masterpiece.

With Borges by Alberto Manguel, p. 59

Just came across a strange item: a listing of a Bing Crosby CD that has him singing Yeats' famous Thoreau-inspired 'Isle of Innisfree' – perhaps his best known poem. I remember hearing him read it on an old LP I perhaps once had.

Mark Lee is related to both Anna Green, who once lived across the county road from us, and Lee Masonry, a business in town. He now has some land out near here with two big trailers that are official inspected 'kitchens' for his honey business. He is also an avid bike rider and at one time was the bike coordinator in town. He also has a cabin in Menifee County where he likes to hide out. I ran into him at some art shindig when he was staying in his mountain cabin and I learned that he was an avid reader of Thoreau. In fact he said he has keyboarded all that Thoreau has written so that if he wants to he can find any word Thoreau ever wrote by doing a 'Find' on his computer. I thought this both odd and wonderful.

Once my friend Darrell Rice was living in the South Hill neighborhood of Lexington, dirt poor. His bed was a mattress on the floor, his light one bare bulb, almost no possessions. One night a potential robber broke in and woke him up. Looking around the thief blurted out, 'I must have the wrong place.'

Once Darrell and I took a kayak I had down the Green River for a two-day trip. We did not see anyone else all day the first day, not on the river and not on shore. At times we had to portage. Often there were little islands in the middle of the river and we had to make split decisions which way to go around them. We camped on one of those islands and were first asleep there when I heard voices, saw lights from head lamps, and then heard a trolling motor. I guess we were in a land with inhabitants after all. *But what were they up to?* Then it hit me what they were doing: gigging for frogs.

Kristy Odelius

Two Abecedarians

1. Suburbia

Articulate babysitters
crave diamonds, emerging
from gardens.

Greenhouses in juice jars,
kiln-like lamplight.

Mama-nudity over potstickers:
querulous, rundown.

Step through us, under us,
waiter and water. Xanadu
your zipdrives, almost.

2. Summer in the City

Aloof almond breakwater,
casual dust.

Everything freaks gold-hot
insignias, June-knowing.

Lost men needle open –
priest, quarterback –
receiving some tangled
thought. Understand
us, violent world.

We wait. We were
xeroxed, zoos and all.

Jed Rasula

Rectifying the Eventual

The adventure of a family of kangaroos, of course, is an extremely clear example of a comic interpretation of the formula of ecstasy. (Sergei Eisenstein)

that was then
this is now

as now now
as it was then

when then
was a former now

known in nouns
and sometimes verbs

as if “y” and “sometimes w”
were vowels, & vowels were owls

*

the string navigates itself into a contortion
and then the shoe is tied

if you can't persuade the string to do it
you'll have to do it yourself

it could be you you :
know it could be you

it could be you you

it could be you you :
know know

*

the paper clip of cognition
still springs eternal in the out box

where the next you
denudes the me that used to be

(I used to be you, you know

but got used to being me instead

until nothing was left
but density & snag)

*

a door ajar
a tooth or two
a smiling faucet
& all at once
the mind is like a clown act

comparing a cow with a worm
a norm with an arm
an absolute
with modesty or crumbs

meanwhile
a piece of meat tries to make the scene

two drops of saliva go down the street
fetching the arrow of time
from the quiver of space

& suddenly there you are

all night long
stooped over the burner
steaming the postage stamp of the concept
off the envelope of representation
watching words bubble up
to captivate experience

*

there's a mountain of pacing about
that wears a trench of you
down to sprung plush
gulp on gulp

there's also a mountain
of meaningless Hercules
where dowel pins owl
hour by horrible hour

there's an estuary

Why do cinders grumble?
Call it The Average Itch of the Phantom Rider.
The ball gown reverts to mystical mud.
No universal ego, just an *ash-pit*.

It's only a technical maelstrom, so let it go.

Doctor Because might know who you are.
Let's give him a ring, shall we?

His feet are webbed, his neck is long,
his iridescent demeanor will astound you.

He's the sole survivor of four of his kind.
But he's not what you think.

His intentions suffuse you with gravity
and yet you float. His happy children
smear about like a slick paste
until dawn breaks.

He is used to you by now.
His pivot is a legend
raised on happy food.

Bring me a glass of water
he says to the spark.

Like an oiled axle
he shines in the watery light.

He's a bubble
pleading at your door.

*

Or is it pulling?
Pulling or purring
it purrs. He purrs.
It's a person
enabled to appear:
a fast poison singular
relieving itself
in the dis-
continuous ex-

tremities
of the subject.

*

It would have been a zero day in County Whiteout
a squirrel imploded with the force of a bull
or was it you?
& if I wonder was it you
do you wonder it too?

It was a very old hour in the math of afternoon
a kangaroo peaceably bullies an owl
it will be a very old owl

I was an odd duck, wasn't I
but where was I sitting?

He could move a ballerina with his mountain
to make ends meet
until someone blinks first
then yesterday is over

It might as well be a day off
to hear you tell it:
what else did you tell it to do?
"Go home, little mouse," the bayonet says
to the friend or maybe cousin of the voice
voiceless in an anecdote
the speech therapist knows
who gives you measles over the phone

which is not at all the same as saying
less & less of the same thing over & over
until less is more, more or less, unless you let that
cat out of the bag, & more and more of "less is more"
is more than you can take—& what's more,
it's there for the taking

("take it or leave it
but where does taking it leave it?")

how else would you know
what Mr. Sugar does after dark

but it's still a neat trick how it all came back tomorrow

The Pomps of the Subsoils

“What are you digging up?” he asked with alarm.

The story begins with an exhumed puppet, a miraculated being soaked with tears.
It has huge bulbous eyes, menacing claws, and below its bared fangs there is, voraciously,
no jaw
– everyone feels a tickling at the heels; the little ape and the great Achilles alike –
and attached to these jawless lips is a second mouth, a third, a multitude of mouths,
nostrils, vulvas, nipples.

Your body is with you, though you can't say how.
You just found yourself with it; you came to yourself and the world together at once.
Sometimes you suspect it's working even harder on you than you are on it.
For instance, the body you have may be stored in a drawer in the morgue.
Smells detonate softly in your memory like poignant land mines, hidden under the weedy
mass of years and experience.
Your fingers see in the night like cats, gazing into a black sky where the star of ideas will
rise.
Whether you sit on a park bench or wander through blooming azaleas, your movements
are not spasmodic reactions to clouds of atoms, but a lascivious murmur of
hummingbirds blinded by the midday heat.



Between the tip of the brush and the steely gaze, a volume is born,
pulling and pushing at once, growing and shrinking, either with or, and with but:
at the end of the body, the mind; but at the end of the mind, the body.

An atonal logic, at midnight, no longer a thread unraveled through a maze,
but a simple straight line, bewitching enigma, this siphon.

A white patch on a white ground: the openly novel *blank*.
Word responds to word in this gap, as each builds a humming of its own.



Where does this black sun come from?

This pain and this beauty are linked by their exactness.

Between us, the glass and I achieve a man.

Paul A. Green

Seething Vacuum Data

1. Draft

mix down the prisoners of a memory module
territorial quarks vector them on, on
into the, these lethal sand-castles

you dig their amino acid clean-cut
hey clouds flushed out
o' fun with patriotic fire

rhetoric eases a marching order, is,
love me, love my death,
what you initiate.

`

the earth was still fully conscious
the mother of battles
screamed full face in camera

fire snorting its rocks off
crawls over some raggy geography
to say something neat

2. Database UK

ruins of powder mills
stone needles, clear brown water
ripples under cloud cover,

tourists for ever await
their scenarios rising, deafened by music,
for a slow flight into bunkerage.

start revision of hissing mystery,
the factoids: I can't sit down,
to rebuild a Sunday school, sir, bloody words,

won't code, too much laughter at their edges,
never enough bums on seats to stuff a brain in a drain,
drive carefully through the pillage.

3. Statement

We have been statemented. “They entered a religious facility.” This is more mortgaged language. There is a hidden connection with Young America. Simulation of purchasing power. Group mind living in eternity via sound bites.

Inertial guidance. The Brits sit around a talking table that murmurs of mortgages, everyone stands up on the wrong cue.

The helicopters played at bitch salvage, for the coo-eyed kittens of bleached fur. Hot blood for a young epidermis. You can’t misread the signals. Water towers are the focus of desert prayer. Politically corrective juices will burn out the dead white males.

Find the loop before the beat closes in. Here’s an old man cruising over the deadline, far far away. So bite that beat up, chopper some hot meat!

Inertial guidance. The war grew out of an old dream he had, like a pot plant in time-lapse. Listen to my loop now. Bite that beat, meat-eater. I am too flattened, facile too. (Colanders, woks, domestic implements – an adventure in nu-metal.)

Habitual liars glided into limos. Stretch their limbs, easy. They had been in and out of so many hotels that they had developed a new form of amnesia.

4. Work Stations

a cat leaps forward, between the new kaons,
an uncomfortable place within physics:
non-locality is a condition

other entities are widely separated somehow
to be contacted nightly
as imagined, chestnut highlights on hair, no more

oh heads of vocative texture
I don’t wannabee centred
on a signing point: I have done no work, no shopping

unearned income: an unpleasantry
“while the peasants tore her dog apart with their bare teeth
Gilbert and George were lacking a newer refrigerator”

tissue is the issue: *I is a live sample,*
“please get out of your regular body
into a multi-body problem, darkly but quickly!”

tyranny again will be pro-active,
to register the next of kin
in appropriate symmetrical buildings

I become a useful jelly of time, really
as my centre hardens
a mighty sententia, sir

a red spot in Jupiter
keeps steady as she goes bump
I want to be fascinated by spooky action

her groove thang could be (well) posed for altar boys
I go, I come, tic, tic, tic, tic,
munching an iceberg

the friendly bodies of unnameable meats
slowly unlearn, unravel their spiral bouquets,
as our bonds rip such mimsy memes

I tried getting straight out of my body into a real persona
twanging the cultural channels,
to wander through a world for the sheer ruin of it.

rob mclennan

Poem for Miami

the first time you headed south
routine of geese ahead by months

what snow left
in your sullen driveway

I am drawn to the smell
of a freshly-cut lawn

dream kitchens & stairs

I've made discoveries, I said,
that I just can't keep

I don't know where to put them

the scent and the savour
of an inconstant moon

turns familiar for some

I was watching the window
wishing all I could muster,

in twenty below; love,
I am waiting, half-drunk in a snowbank

there is no such thing as geography
there is just where you are,

& where I am, with nothing between

to love is not only possible
but inevitable

the difference, it ends,
in a ring

japanese cups, a western eye wondering
why they dont have handles.
“why,” the answer,

“would you want to drink something
that is too hot
to hold?” thats great,
she says,
you should write that down.

Dedicated to “Ivana,” I have little memory left of who that might have been, but have vague recollections of the afternoons spent at the former Café Wim on Sussex Avenue, afternoons in the European café specifically, it seemed, built for student-age vagabonds writing their bad poems and drinking endless cups of tart coffee. You either went to be young and pretentiously (and artfully) seen, or to scribble incomprehensibly in journals, sometimes even both. I went there to write because it was cheap, and I could spend hours there, when I wasn’t haunting the library stacks at the University of Ottawa or Carleton University libraries, somewhere there in the mid-1990s, well before I actually knew anything. How much bad art did that place set loose on the world?

Ottawa’s Café Wim is long closed, turned into an upscale wine bar named Social, and existed well after the infamous 1960s and 70s coffee house Le Hibou existed next door, where William Hawkins hosted evenings of music and poetry by young performers such as Victor Coleman, Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, bpNichol, Gordon Lightfoot, Kate and Anna McGarrigle and others. But where do the impoverished Ottawa hipsters hang out now?

In the poem, my friend David is Toronto writer (and not-yet-Griffin-nominee) David W. McFadden, who I had only then recently met, and who almost always showed up for coffee when I appeared in his neighbourhood, writing from my regular spot in The Unicorn Family Restaurant on Church Street, just by This Ain’t The Rosedale Library bookstore. I would leave phone messages, and twenty minutes later, he would breeze through the door, smiling that sly, mischievous smile, like the cat about to swallow the canary.

Silence, as he has written, and best in my favourite of his poetry collections, *The Art of Darkness* (McClelland & Stewart, 1984). The first time I met McFadden was in 1996, during my first downtown Toronto visit, asking the bookstore clerk at This Ain’t The Rosedale Library to take my little chapbooks on consignment, and David in the corner, recognizing titles I had mailed him previously, in a fan letter. Are you going to call David McFadden while you’re in town, he asked? I thought that was you, I said.

He took me to the restaurant next door and said we should order the pancakes, so I did, we did; David W. McFadden and I eating pancakes in a restaurant on Church Street. What did we talk about, writing, books, authors we knew, trading information of some sort? I’m sure I was too intimidated to say too many intelligent things. Still, at the end of our meal, I finally had to say to him, geez, David, those pancakes were awful. Yes, he smiled, agreeing. As though it was his plan all along.

Alec Finlay

Dictionary of Imagined Flowers

Aporia

Beesnell

Binaryweed

Black-holed daisy

Bookbindings

Braced ladders

Braggly pipes

Burnt toast

Chitchat

Chocolate soldiers

Chortleberry

Comb over

Crooked Cutts

Early Christmas

Falsify

Feakgrass

Finlay's daffie

Fullend

Hayvers

Hooded pintle

Humming beans

Juke-roots

Litten lantern

Marshmallow

Orihon leaf

Peek inside

Pergolated lettuce

Perjink globeflower

Pica

Prangled pettifer

Race me
Sea splurge
Seeding nipshot
Sessile rush
Simple
Snicketgrass
Subfusc mantleweed
Sunfish
Talcy-malcy
Thickle
Tiggy grass
Titchwort
Topsy-turvy
Upstairs-downstairs
Wallow
Windmill towers
Woody wood-cock
Wordwort
Wrinkleberry

Amy King

“Age itself is a body”

We live in a rind of macramé,
universe fiends on the yolk of group disease,
ovum mouthing the monsters we deserve.
I have been the dogs of war, false & over-sore.

We're duly hurting hard for ornaments & skeletons,
paper devils watching the wind,
ninjas in vans, fists over living
rage at handheld bodies,
hurricane jets full of businessmen,
tourists coasting the disposable
human blurred, her Medusa face, a bird.

The sorrowful raise anemic snakes,
my fear of writing the corpus:
Animated or able, as in we all
become shamanic guppies, souls lost
to coastline organs, gas powered, overblown.

The weakness of newborns is like this,
forgets telephone warnings
and how to finger brain matter that should
echo cricket buzz, water lapping,
lawn-mowing rodents designed
by arch-rival hands. We do it ourselves.

‘Go team’ might be the motto to behold,
but the rest is left in a nest by the side of the road.

* Title from “Reflections on Whitman in Age” by Robert Creeley

Say I Told You A Story

Bee face, do not fall
near what the war procured.
It doesn't hurt to say
congratulations with adult significance,
but it does make good the next
business day if slow is ample & they
take so long to brew
a victimless marriage of queen unto
workers' external lives. Sting permits
the tickle's awareness.
I speak with strangers in your absence,
but less than when I was alone.
Having started a blister but no band-
aid, degenerate. Don't hold me
to that context but allow that I am pure
interloper castrated,
bullets inside me writhing,
I see a stove and birds
on your sweater, the long bangs of your eyes.
You beat the bell out of order.
The fit of a grandma now gone.
We all felt the hive was a place of pattern.
To say a story is not to put words
into material matter. The dream is to leave.
The dream is to deposit a way to stay.

Meredith Quartermain

Banking

Of course I wore my prison uniform as I walked through the streets to the bank. I felt right at home with the African zebras stenciled on the stripes of the zebra walk. Black and white; man and woman, shouted the crosswalk. I was not black or white; I was a zebra in a land where everyone was striped. At the bank, I joined the line-up of other prisoners watching television screens above the tellers – a hand in a food-show swirling thick white icing onto cupcakes, beside flames and smoke and faces in a Baghdad street. We prisoners stood in rows inside the velvet ropes to the tills. A skateboarder told us about himself: The best is at night, up on main-street hill, I head down to the ocean, I go and go 20 maybe 30 blocks no cars, I zigzag, go loop the loop, crisscross all those white lines. When women go past my construction site, said a man in a hardhat and cement-splattered boots, I never whistle, I always lift my hat – humans should act civilized; that's why we have skyscrapers. It's amazing (a hairdresser spoke up) how all the condos are the same little cells; yet each one is decorated differently, like human heads. Just then a blizzard of coconut chips whirled down on the gooey heads of a dozen cupcakes, and a phalanx of police in helmets, masks and shields marched down a burning street over the tellers at their wickets. An angora sweater and bangles tallying her receipts; a jacket and tie explaining there's nothing the bank can do about your pension that wasn't deposited this month; and a troll, though not as large as the ones in *Peer Gynt*, explaining loan options at very reasonable rates near the bars to the safety deposit boxes, which remained loudly shut.

On my way to the overpass

I see her in a sidewalk plaque, one of the Militant Mothers, stretching her arms across the oncoming train. Jean Amos, mother of five, of the Raymur housing projects. No more trains, she says in her warlike, combative way. No more will my children climb through couplings and wheels to get to school. No more kids vs profit – she speaks in her aggressive, overly political style of mothering, reminiscent of Joan of Arc. The railway men, well trained, yell at the mothers who have no right to be standing on their track: You'll go to jail, this is no misdemeanour, you'll be charged with a felony. Treacherous, cruel and fierce, the felonious mothers hold their ground, resolute as tracts of wasteland, firm in their perverse and wicked method of nurturing. The train, on its US Burlington Northern line, snakes passively backwards to the dock. Go to the City if you want an overpass, says the Canadian National Railway. I'll see you get criminal charges, mutters Inspector Beaten of Transport Canada to the biased, hard-line tenders of humanity. The arresting matriarchs are seized by police, who lock them up. Then let them go. The thing blows over with noble companies of railway men promising trains won't run from 8:30 to 9, noon to 1:00, 2:00 to 3:20. What distinguished and high-minded companies – they even talk of an overpass. Not long afterwards, the trains snake back, stop beside the school. Children again climb through wonderfully shunting boxcars, hoppers and gondolas, resulting in a quarrelsome tent being pitched on the tracks by the bellicose, charity-receiving mothers. \$1000 to stop your blockade, says a worthy company with goods for market. Jean Amos says, No. They've broken their promises, she tells the judge from which the venerable companies want an injunction. Let's make these promises part of my order then, says the judge. Thank you Jean, I say, to her bright mosaic chips, and I stroll over the overpass, over the trains snaking beneath my feet.

Geof Huth

Exist Strategy

The dissonance of information | extending as it intrudes,
through as it into | Everyone is ambivalent in ambiguous
ways | A time in which trepanning led to insights,
the circle bone of skull worn as amulet | skull beating
upon the chest as he walked | The allure of complexity
drives progress | I cannot tie my shoes | without learning
to type | They learn to classify documents | by smell,
the smallest distinction between | affording the greatest
pleasure | Appeals for support fall gently | it is snowing
and the sound of snowflakes | rocking | in the air is
the clang of bells | a good deal distant from this place
As the moon waxes | so do our desires wane | a handful,
ideas | the child | marbles dropping one by one to
Intention to detail | yet no focus on particulars | the earth
the tiniest part considered | strangulation | imagination
Awaking to morning | the concern is | death, fealty to which
we all must profess | in the night | in the necessariest time
there is nothing but a clock ticking | the sound of darkness
against the door | and wind | as winter seeps into place

Excursions in the Direction of Colonie, New York

In the figure fig. 1 | we see the fig | bloated teardrop of
sweetness and pulp | companion to the leaf, which we
recognize as figleaf | We use words to hide ourselves:
intent, a form of contention against the course of
Without the convention of sky | this plane could not pass
through cloud to sun | I considered a revision to this poem
but feared I would no longer be able to see it | that I would
no longer be | the fragile carapace of the sentence | or
fragments thereof | requiring a delicate touch I do not
possess | Every flick of my wrist | destroys a continent
nullifies a huddled colony of words | hoping to take flight
Let us consider | the architecture of the ear | outer, as a
funnel of thought | the bowl of the ear | earlobe | pinna
the companions of the tongue | a whisper like burrowing
wet after passion | searching | Thousands of feet above
the shrouded earth | I have an excellent wireless connection
but no ability to connect | Every word is onomatopoeia
I strangle the obnoxious buffoon until he swoons and falls
Every thought, the revisitation of a thought | A baby with
a dirty diaper walks down the aisle | Typing leads the way

Extreme Uction

In a dream I am at the airport, which is a beach | telling a woman
that the first concert | I'd gone to was hers | before moving on to
another concert | Sense is of the nose | sweetness of stargazer lilies
within a blank starless room | The disturbances of fire we call flames
I hate myself | dexterity, like the word | The trappings of dream
we call home, insofar | Fire mumbling in place | Climbing a structure
where the viewing of the concert somehow takes place | Singing to herself
sound without word | visiting a spamblog for comfort | Diagram of
the diaphragm | the chest rising in turn | folding the latex cup into
herself | spermicide | Scent of woodfire on his fingers | Extravagances
and enhancements | The art of artifice | lips against the button
a tiny suction | Rabblers climb the structure | a fire erupts,
the structure collapses | *In nomine* | He called his mouse These
Guys | It was for the sense of order | that he wrote | A token
lets you through | a bus comes and we get on it | The scent of
stargazer lilies | too sweet | redolence towards putrescence
First, one more sniff | Chaos is the only beauty | This was the section
he did not know | of the city, song, movie | Sometimes the radiators
would rattle into warmth | the cold sifting in from the outside
Ten of them | each finger dancing against a different key

That Particular Aspect of Reality

If it were night | there would be daylight on the other side,
expressions ascending from contours | a temblor of
recognition in her face | From Mercator's equator, I see
the view of the earth from the ground | spread out before me,
topography as typography | Projection, an | orange peel,
flattened | oil glistening in its pores | a perfume for thought
Skiff along the surface | a depth unlike water | the passenger,
air | A crisis of fate | banana peel gave him the slip | hireling
As you have been doing it | so it is done | Iron gall ink, a bracing
through the page | letter as carving, word as void | The conduct
of | an act of attrition | turning bald in his thirties | They baked
a chicken | into scents | a scents of | A sleigh must be drawn,
pencil to the paper | snow as graphite | the entire earth, a smudge
What are the antedatings for | your thoughts ? | In the inter-
regnum | the catastrophe of confidence | a lack of lack of | Light
descends into a mound higher | (brighter) | in the center
There we see the final disposition of the record | the spoliation of
evidence | concept divorced from reality | reality removed from
consideration | incipient progress beyond knowledge | movement,
extension, without respite | sunlight broken into snowflakes

Gil McElroy

from The Julian Days

*Today requires
a past*

The riverside road
closed, silent
& utterly still for the first time
in who knows
how long

the house
slowly pulled
from origin A
to destination B, stopping for the night
at the exact point between us
& the river

A new view – all gables
& dormers – inserted into
the old, the river
displaced

this strategy
assembled here, this action
having weight
& many bits
of order

 this
stuff of periods

Julian Day 2453933

Alone
& light

everything
suitably re-
buffed

No
amount of
outlines clarify
this world

What they are you are
in the lie of slope
& numbness of
howevers.

Julian Day 2453078

Mauves, I
thought,
the
fresh fruit
of sequence.

Yet
we move,
no name
for it, to
a dark
beyond tasting.

Julian Day 2452560

Outbreaks
of a German
mood on either side
of the hand.

By
today's large standards & voltages,
manipulations are un-
deniable.

The weight
of long, poignant hand-
writings bruises
the false,
yet mutual,
hand.

But, &
mostly other,
they do.

Julian Day 2452548

The in-
terrupted process
of a tear, im-
plicit but also
closed.

Fields, like
their eyes
half-closed,
with the necessity
of æther. Dormant
lashes. Cheeks
beneath.

Julian Day 2452541

Facts
are habitual. Like
a knowledge
of bark or
secret cartels.

The some-
times-fact of light –
being so light
weightless, like
light – settles into
the voids between
astronomy, for-
bidden & unworkable words
in the air.

In-
eradicable speech.

The reminded flight
of birds.

Julian Day 2448256

Notes on Contributors

Alec Finlay, poet, artist & publisher (morning star). Alec's imagined garden is in the Byker Wall. He grew up at Little Sparta, which is not an imaginary garden, although it has produced a few fantasies. His most recent books include *Mesostic Remedy*, *Mesostic Interleaved* and *says you*. For more information, go to www.alecfinlay.com.

Paul A. Green grew up in South London and vaguely remembers studying at Oxford and the University of British Columbia. His plays have appeared on BBC Radio 3, CBC Radio Canada, RTE Ireland, Capital Radio and Resonance FM London. His poetry and short fictions have been disseminated in various magazines and anthologies (most recently in *Brand Magazine* and *Cafe Irreal*) and, increasingly, in audio format in on-line journals like www.culturecourt.com and www.toxicpoetry.com. *Babalon*, his speculative drama about occult rocket scientist Jack Parsons, was performed by Travesty Theatre in London in 2005, while his novel *The Qliphoth* was published in 2007 by Libros Libertad (www.libroslibertad.ca). His blog and podcasts can be accessed via www.qbsaul.demon.co.uk. He teaches media to blind people in Hereford but has also been a freelance broadcaster and used-book salesman.

Jonathan Greene is the author of 28 books, most recently: *Heart Matters* (2008), *Hut Poems* (2007), *Gists Orts Shards*, *A Commonplace Book* (2006). He lives with his wife Dobree Adams, a weaver and photographer, on a farm on the banks of the Kentucky River.

Geof Huth is a poet (textual, visual, aural, and digital) who writes almost daily on visual poetry and related matters at his blog *dbqp: visualizing poetics*. His most recent books of poetry are *Longfellow Memoranda*, *textistence* (with mIEKAL aND), *a book / of poems / so small / I cannot / taste them*, *Gingerbread*, and *Eyechart Poems*.

Amy King is the author of *I'm the Man Who Loves You* and *Antidotes for an Alibi*, both from Blazevox Books, *The People Instruments* (Pavement Saw Press), and forthcoming, *Slaves to Do These Things* (Blazevox) and *I Want to Make You Safe* (Litmus Press). Amy moderates the Poetics List, sponsored by The Electronic Poetry Center (SUNY-Buffalo/University of Pennsylvania), and the Women's Poetry Listserv (WOMPO), and teaches English and Creative Writing at SUNY Nassau Community College. For information on the reading series Amy co-curates in Brooklyn, NY, visit *The Stain of Poetry: A Reading Series* (stainofpoetry.com) or for more info, go to amyking.org.

Gil McElroy has published poetry in Canadian and U.S. periodicals since the late 1970s. His books of poetry include *Dream Pool Essays* (Talonbooks, 2001) *NonZero Definitions* (Talonbooks, 2004) and *Last Scattering Surfaces* (Talonbooks, 2007). He is an independent curator and freelance art critic, organizing exhibitions for art galleries and writing for visual arts magazines. A selection of such work was published in *Gravity & Grace: Selected Writing on Contemporary Canadian Art* (Gaspereau Press, 2001). He lives in the village of Colborne, Ontario on the shore of Lake Ontario with his wife Heather.

rob mclennan currently lives in Canada's glorious capital city, Ottawa, where he was born. The author of some twenty trade books of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, his most recent titles are the poetry collections *gifts* (Talonbooks), *a compact of words* (Salmon Poetry, Ireland), *wild horses* (University of Alberta Press) and a second novel, *missing persons* (The

Mercury Press). An editor and publisher, he runs above/ground press, Chaudiere Books (with Jennifer Mulligan), *seventeen seconds: a journal of poetry and poetics* (ottawater.com/seventeenseconds), *The Garneau Review* (ottawater.com/garneareview) and the Ottawa poetry pdf annual *ottawater* (ottawater.com). He spent the 2007–8 academic year in Edmonton as writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta, and regularly posts reviews, essays, interviews and other notices at robmclennan.blogspot.com. He will be spending much of the next year in Toronto.

Kristy Odelius is a poet and Assistant Professor of English at North Park University (Chicago). She is the author of *Bee Spit* (Dancing Girl Press, 2007) and *Strange Trades* (Shearsman Books, 2008). She enjoys eating chips out of the bag, teaching Augustine's *Confessions* and watching her ten month old son groove to J Dilla.

Meredith Quartermain's most recent book, *Nightmarker* (NeWest), explores the city as animal behavior, museum and dream of modernity. In another recent book, entitled *Matter* (BookThug), she playfully riffs on Darwin's *Origin of Species* and Roget's *Thesaurus*. *Vancouver Walking* won the 2006 BC Book Award for Poetry. She is co-founder of Nomados Literary Publishers.

Jed Rasula's poetry collections include *Tabula Rasula* (Station Hill) and *Hot Wax, or Psyche's Drip* (BookThug), while his numerous critical works include *The American Poetry Wax Museum: Reality Effects 1940–1990*, *This Compost: Ecological Imperatives in American Poetry*, *Syncopations: The Stress of Innovation in Contemporary American Poetry*, *Imagining Language: An Anthology* (with Steve McCaffery) and, most recently, *Modernism and Poetic Inspiration*. He is Helen S. Lanier Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Georgia.

John Seed grew up in the north east of England, where a chance encounter with Basil Bunting's *Briggflatts* in a Newcastle bookshop in the late sixties led to a deep engagement with the work of the Objectivists and the Black Mountain poets. Shearsman publish his *New & Collected Poems*, as well as his *Pictures from Mayhew* and its sequel *That Barrikins*. Since the early eighties he has been based in London where he teaches history at Roehampton University.

Scott Thurston's most recent book is *Momentum* (Shearsman, 2008). He edits *The Radiator*, a little magazine of poetics, and co-edits *The Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry*. Scott lectures at the University of Salford and has published widely on innovative poetry; for more information, see his pages at www.archiveofthenow.com/. *Internal Rhyme* is due out from Shearsman in 2010.

SUNFISH

is a quarterly magazine of innovative and experimental poetry, edited by Nigel Wood. It has no manifesto, agenda or vision of what poetry should be; it simply aims to provide a meeting place for writers and readers of a diverse range of innovative and exploratory poetries. Though primarily a print magazine, Sunfish is also available free as a pdf. Issue 2 is due in February 2010. If you'd like to be kept informed of when future issues are coming out or would like to contribute to the magazine, get in touch:

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