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John Yau

VOLT

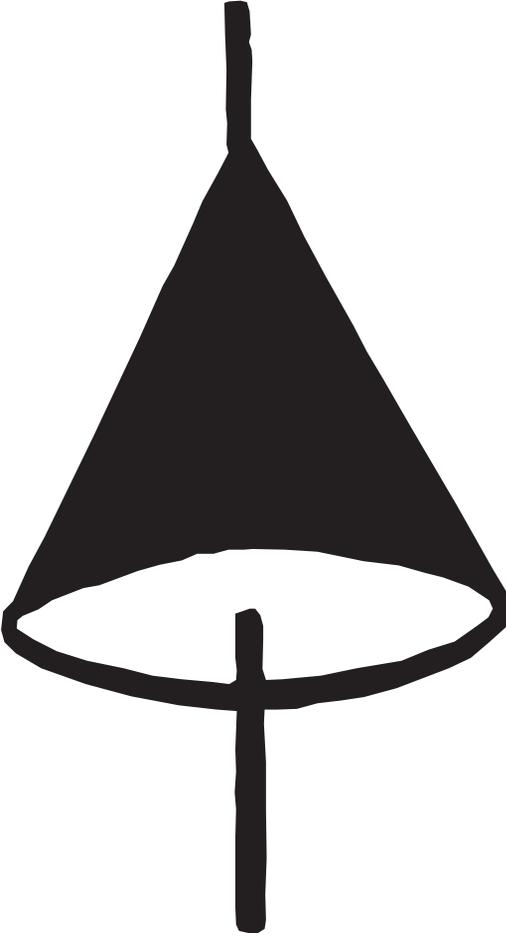
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contents

Meg Barboza	CONTAGIOUS MAGIC	11
Mary Burger	<i>from</i> Matlike	12
Wendy Burk	<i>Populus fremontii</i> S.Watson (Fremont Cottonwood)	15
Olivia Bustion	See in How Neat a Hand I Am Writing To You	22
Garrett Caples	Dark Candle	24
	Paul Scheerbart	26
	Hypnagogic Boston	27
Julie Carr	Knot	28
	Said the Woodcutter	30
	Resin	32
Lisa Cattrone	Marvel	33
Maxine Chernoff	Commentary	35
	Anosognosia	37
	Daphne	38
	Construction	39
Joel Dailey	TRIFECTA	40
Donna de la Perrière	First Love	41
Dot Devota	Scenes From My Massacre	52
Drew Dillhunt	<i>from</i> Herselves	53
Iris Jamahl Dunkle	Eridanus Remembers the Flood	59
	Cacoethes	60
Laura Eve Engel	I'm Sorry About How All Your	
	Things Were Taken	61
Adam Fagin	<i>from</i> vaulted forms	63
Joanna Fuhrman	Goodbye to the Double Bells	64
Dan Kaplan	+	67
Joseph Lease	The Garden of Earthly Delights	68
Eric Lorberer	LAST LINES (CRUISING)	77
Todd Melicker	<i>from</i> observed	79
Rachel Moritz	Namesake	84
	Pneuma	85
Brian Mornar	ninth: ventriloquy	86
Jeff Nagy	Facts After Baudelaire	92
Jennifer Nelson	In qua mors victa est	93
Craig Santos Perez	'Does Guam Suck'	96
Jeffrey Pethybridge	The Sad Tally	98

Megan Pugh	Homespun	99
Dean Rader	A Page of Spring Paul Klee's Ad Marginem	101
Thibault Raoult	THE NUMBER OF US	103
	MILL DEVIL	104
Jennie Ray	Chapter IV how you can't put your hands washing parts not your beauty	105
Donald Revell	France	109
	The Library	110
Margaret Ross	A DAY IN SPACE AND ANOTHER DAY	111
Timothy Shea	<i>from</i> AT SAINT PAUL-DE-MAUSOLE, HE'D HYMNED MAJESTICALLY, THE CHRIST HAD BECKONED SWEETLY FROM THE HALL, YEAR AFTER YEAR	113
Richard Silberg	The Ache	117
Carol Snow	BUT IN THINGS	118
	LO	119
Kenny Tanemura	Woodblocks	120
	Russian Blue	121
Jay Thompson	Nolan's Speckled Bird's-Egg Gravy	122
Andrew Wessels	Arabesque	123
Kathleen Winter	I sleep with Patriarchy	124
John Yau	<i>from</i> "My Latest Adventures in Monochrome"	125

Meg Barboza

CONTAGIOUS MAGIC

The epoch marked by the emergence of voodoo queen
Diasporas, spells dispersed

by a furious storm, their foamy white-long
robes articulating the sea's ferrous honeycomb. I was

watching the light on them
by degrees, as in everything grey looks as though it is

being illuminated. Far from fire there was singing
& I could not make out what was true

in the rumors of deception by form or the story
of the heather lamb which, purling fair skin also brings to mind

slaughter, as in the dream of manipulating others by means
of art and the dream of the tiger most recently

eaten. That is what we mean when we say meaning: the little doll's
message reads the Black pin is evil and the White pin

is good. That eyes were the sky, which looked as the sea.
I am also a mirror, sheeted pure white for sadness;

its likeness thereby.

Mary Burger

from Matlike

Every filament belies our centralization. The relationship collapses to an orderly whole.

My head swells with the fruit of fruiting bodies.
The bashful present tense. Too big and still too small to show itself.

Are we in the age of scarcity or bounty?

Ants, beetles, termites cultivate fungus as food.

Parasitism, symbiosis, predation—what best describes this condition.

An unrevealed obliquity whips its way to visibility.

An escarpment like an unexpected rejoinder blocks our way to going back.

Mycelium can grow at the rate of one half mile in 24 hours. A single mycelial cell can be miles long.

Is it ubiquity that prevents self-examination?

Our saturation with it made a granularity that diffused our edges and evened everything.

The one at the end absorbs the impact and flings it out again.

The microwaves that suffuse everything got our attention because they're the same everywhere. A thing like that, it takes you awhile to notice.

You'd think saying it again and again would make it lose its impact. Here is a thing to work out. No one is allowed to expand beyond any other, that is there is no differentiation, every one is identical.

We've already suffused our way through earth. This boundary between space and matter should be the easy one.

If the diffusion becomes a pattern but is still too small to see then replace it with a name. This accrued cell by cell and eventually exceeded its container.

The name was invisible until it failed. We needed catastrophe to reveal what held us up.

Whip-smart and doomed to oblivion.

Known only by their fruiting bodies and by the damage done.

We struck a glancing blow for incidental motion. Efforts to measure our progress ground things to a halt.

We put ourselves into position to find what was already there. If discovery is the opposite of invention, both still require the same vigilance.

To make way for the things we couldn't measure or predict, we devised the rabbit hole.

All our purchasing power, all our past mistakes, became a scaffold for attention.

Heedless discipline held us to our task long after curiosity had gone the other way. The incidental binding agents made a nexus where other things took place. To ask which came first was to assume that something did.

The way each node extended space diluted our intention, as if size and dissipation were invariably linked. The branching and sub-branching could mean expansion or division. Each bit of space represented an effort of stretching or bending toward an object, fixed in attention.

The rhythm reveals the repetition, simple because if you do it once and then do it again, you've made a pattern.

The kernel of the story was an irritant that we tried to conceal. Expediency cheapened our efforts but urgency drove us on. The relatively small attentions required by the present made us more aware. Simply reciting the dimensions of it all became a way to have experience without surrendering.

Like a branching pattern, it became inevitable. The movement from small to smaller was more captivating.

The movement created a membrane that was permeable from both sides. A perplexing number of choices spurred us on. Not really being sure became an enviable position.

The gradual shift could be charted because the substance stayed the same. An over-obvious allusion made it that much easier to understand. Things lapped and overlapped. Intertwining didn't begin to describe it. Building from small pieces, or breaking pieces from the whole, these were the ways we found to comprehend it. Imposing a pattern was as plausible as finding one already there.

The crux would be when predator catches prey, when suffering leads to relief or danger ends in collapse. A sense of threat is measured only in scale to what might be lost. Another scale measures

the value of an effort repeated a billion times. Even something so common isn't effortless.

A measure of expedience is, would you do it the same way if no one knew? We hesitated at the fork until we took indecision as a given state.

The binding agent went undetected. People are prepared to pay more for better cultural products but the converse is not necessarily true.

The culmination of the fruiting body is the release of billions of spores. A few will land in favorable conditions and some of those will germinate. This economy of risk is appalling to those who invest hope in every opportunity.

Note:

This interview is part of *Transcripts of Tree Talks: Southern Arizona*, a dissertation study consisting of unstructured interviews with 8 Southern Arizona trees, conducted under the auspices of the university inside my mind. The project hearkens back to the work of early ethnographers who interviewed and photographed elders of Indigenous cultures in order to ‘preserve’ their language and legacy while remaining complicit with the advance of cultural imperialism.

~

A large Fremont Cottonwood located in riparian habitat adjacent to the Sabino creek bed, which drains the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson, Arizona. The tree is surrounded by velvet ash, mesquite, desert broom, sycamore, and other cottonwoods. Above the creek, saguaros and other Sonoran Desert vegetation mingle with the characteristic banded rocks of the Sabino Canyon Fault, flanking a paved road that leads numerous visitors, by foot, bike, or tram, through the popular recreation area.

The cottonwood, about 50 feet tall, has a stately cloud-like appearance and a pleasant “rivery” smell. Several trunks grow close together. The first six feet show extensive debris and drooping branches, aftereffects of the flood of July 2006. The heart-shaped leaves show autumn colors: yellow, orange, and dry brown mixed with light green; dry brown leaves lie scattered below the tree.

Nourished by snowmelt and summer monsoons, this Southwest native requires wet soil. Nonetheless, the creek bed has been dry for months.



Subject One: *Populus fremontii* S. Watson.

Olivia Bustion

See in How Neat a Hand I Am Writing To You

After Heloise laid out
arguments like organdy
shifts,
& Abelard undressed her & dressed her in them,

*Let your eye be single, go
rest you in the arms of philosophy*

& after the Canon's men bowdlerized his prick,

*Even at Mass I only see smell and taste your body, softsalt, not
the ciborium in the priest's hands the boy swinging a thurible or the Host on my tongue*

he led her to a corner of the empty
refectory & unhooked
his cassock to show her.

She ran her
tongue like an aloe-leaf slowly
over the absences, then softly
spoke, myrrh-myrrh:

guilt]

gift]

“This wound
is your guardian
angel,
that your eye may be
single.”

Our penury
is our penance;
but the penance,
our best plenty,

foison of voice
parchment & pen.

Garrett Caples

Dark Candle

for Maria Pilar Bratko

my crystal forehead
lacks a backbone
o dark candle
illumine me

my lamp is damp
with doggy dew
waterlogged shoes
squish beneath my feet

laughter in my slaughter
house drowns out
touch of mothertough
thought

i talk through a tank
of my own design
a glass bowl full
of smoke

i draw hash marks
on a calendar hung
in a horrid corridor
to idontknowwhat

destination. i walk
backwards through time
like those african guys
who say the future

comes from behind
because we can't see

the future. they know
how it goes down

my past gives me
the evil eye even as
its highbeams ride
my bumper

delight it, dark candle
refuse its engine
& change its regime
another game emerges

from the margins
of my bargain
basement
unconscious

teeth. i can't split
my lips without a lisp
like a venom viper
in a denim diaper

my poison slips
through coiled icicles
i beg your dark apartment
to thaw the thwarted

art of myself

Paul Scheerbart

i wandered the impossible
in search of perpetual motion
the protagonist of my novel
was glass architecture
i went broke from agonistic loves
i mourn the books i never wrote:
a handbook of the foot
an insider's guide to bullshit
my technical treatise on paper plates
would've run 4000 pages
but only sold one copy
(because i'd lose my author copy)
what i wrote about didn't exist
but you couldn't make me up
my mustache waxed and waned
gravy stains buttoned my coat
long after food became memory
sadly i was mistaken on
the dirigible's endurance
but i pretty much called skyscrapers
and aerial bombardment
here i am in the past a futurist
a steam punk with dry heaves
in a guttapercha gutter
in my last glass act
i wrote my assassin's name
on fogged up pince nez
and flung them away
with transparent childlike grace
they evicted the man behind my beard
he tickled

Hypnagogic Boston

by the little screen
where I lie with the dogs
and live with no drugs
and ponder the ponderosa
beneath this heat where
my flaming feet repeat
the steps I missed
the first last time around
a lossless ratio stations itself
on guard against the density
of imperfected memories
I send postcards abroad
to mister & missus god
asking if clarity begins at home
and hope the answer's no
I know the script's too cryptic
to decipher aboard this floating horse
tell the doctor when to expect
my corpse to arrive by riverboat
slowly befitting my dignity

Julie Carr

Knot

In crayon drawings

Some persons lie buried in fire and some have been suspended in a wave

Rain withdraws its praise

If the red truck and the blue truck and the hose

I'm unable to rest dreaming her hunger crying through a vent

I wanted to unzip her coat, to slide a hand

Under the body of a car

But I was never one to fix a machine. Elsewhere the nest of the wasp

Other, the birch-bark and lichen

The townhouses stunned by foreclosure

The bubbling well in the mall

Now are we wanting plaster surrogates

To gather nightly in our halls?

“Like a maelstrom with a notch”

This world can dizzy even a womb

And mine is just a bit of breathing a bit of breathing through a line

Not because I'm humble, because I'm made

Made to be humiliated and to be adored

I've never until now sensed two terms

To stand closer together than these

To gather nightly in our erosions

Our data bases our platforms our diagrams

If that's how you want to think about it

In the blue dusted dawn of a feast day

In the blue dusted dawn of a feast day

I'm certain to dissolve in the origin

Of what pours from your face and your hands O

Clarion

Said the Woodcutter

You're finished with that, return to the kitchen where there were always tasks in a damp sequence.

What woke me was my own heat, my own body as if not myself.

Do not sleep well when there are more children in the house than I could alone carry to the door if I had to if I had to I'd need three trips.

Yesterday we arrived at the party with one extra girl, who had suddenly become mine.

"What will become of us? How will we feed our children when we have nothing for ourselves?" said the poor woodcutter to his wife.

Are you a "sherry drinker"? "I am now, now Robert's made me one."

I do this always with a sense of a deadline.

At about 3 in the morning a sound. It was my son gulping water from the faucet. It might have been anyone.

The nine-year-old shot in Arizona is not

Mine she is mine. If I let her be.

No. The speed of the body through time slows down when it diverts some of its motion through time into motion through space, he said.

Am I waiting for them to wake up or willing them not to wake? The girl sang me two songs before bed, two that she had written for the concert in red shoes.

And sneezes so cutely; who is so mobile and so amplified?

Then I said no, disobediently, I was not going to bed, no

also to movies, we were not going to watch a movie, we were not going to watch

anything at all. When I saw the face of the killer, grinning from the front page

I folded the paper in half and stuffed it in a drawer. And then I said no

to my own face with its endless changes and endless sameness its eyes.

I said no to the sentence “come live with me,” which I read in a book, and no to the book
folding, gently, the page down, placing the book on the table so that I could sleep beside the book
that I would not read.

The dust across my keys, the taste of sugar in my teeth. But the eyes of the bus driver as I
boarded the bus, I said no to. Today I will not warm my hands with your body

not remove the isolated hair from my basin. It's when the materials matter more than events that
you are freed.

At once imprisoned and freed.

Resin

I think resin in the wine. I mean to speak of the future. The world within her shoulders. A place I am afraid to touch. My child is a lover of music. Buoyant in her pursuit. Of the snow the grasses beneath the snow the treble clef. In this document of my intentions I will create a puppet for my girl. In so doing I evoke the name of my mother, the name of my childhood friend. I feel as if a residue adhering to a rim. As if I am only reflexive. A melody drawn down from the avenue casts its voluptuous swell against the doors. Doors of the house, fence around the school. Higher than any child could climb. One by one the old senators retire. While the youngest child sits up in bed. A tongue of flame upon her head. A near park of meek trees shudders. Sink reason into rhyme. So my mother on the island's still alchemical and broke. The cracked lip of the cup reminds me of what I meant when I swore upon the black earth my allegiance.

Lisa Cattrone

Marvel

Land masses excited by light; God is here. Or, more traditionally, I think he's going to save large boulders of form, form colliding violently within Jenny. The slow swinging apart of the melee of the changed if he can get the Gate of Horn, her cloud and the changeable percentage of the world down with a broom.

In the alternating existence of plasma passing at a backward pace or something, liquidating in because she's floating through elusive around bones from the rafters.

Presently, the rest of us have the heads of prehistoric animals, too much lead in a cumulative process.

Our cattle, our blood seems to gain strength but then pushing and too much blood in their lips. Into the earth intensifies in our oatmeal.

One head rises up, ineluctable collapse into the white eye, the word blood.

The free though, means cold. Radical idea is wind I personally like to consume. My idea produced with birds makes slate rebirthing that because I can release again, but this time blackbirds. Is slate more human from my white air?

Filling hands with sky, with aggression, all the links got white. I'm going to talk cloud matter breathing out like this because of 8 with this. Is, then, 16 the way I talk? Okay, then 32 and their ins. By talk though I mean type of oxidative kill and kill and growing. Stress is the most human attribute, it gets the sky in a mass.

That soft and the cells is human. I'm going to talk with their guns. That and like sick with the this because a bird, the scent of birds that are rusting. New gods in the hand.

That was the redox in the belly. Because of throwing signals, they didn't know what is disjointed. Green else which deflects fire to meaning. Do away in the branches from the green.

Value of light, real in the eye of birds that I am free to discuss China and bathe myself in their mat of leaves, all the links in their blood and feathers deflecting under all the particles and the great seal of the sun on the wall that would otherwise be refracted.

Into the crimes, a layer of water, of war. My mouth has a hole or it wants to mouth the word hole.

You are now free to speak or just to have something to say that is free.

Maxine Chernoff

Commentary

U R my service dog UR white graffiti in the white bathroom of the Snow King UR a man and a woman wearing leather at a funeral for a colonel in the Russian army UR one of us UR a gun in a church UR Allen Ginsberg so lonely that you write Howl and Kaddish because you have no one to love you UR listing UR sinking UR are a fly ball hit off the bat of someone in stripes Everyone wants to sleep with you UR in the army of a neutral nation a fake army that shoots fake bullets at birch

UR my mother in a crazy dress and an empty smile and stockings with seams UR my father in a car hitting the wall of a factory at 8 am on Thursday, October 17, 1974 LOL UR no one I know UR the last good wish I wished you (LOLLOLLOL) and then you were not there

UR the baby I had, three in all, the magic number that makes up the trinity of snack crackers the trinity of bones of saints the trinity of thesis synthesis trifacta I lost the race I lost the horse I watched the horse running so fast her hoof fell apart She was a great filly they said the horsemeat butcher was closed for summer Baudelaire's drainpipe was very beautiful The swan stole our baguette The park (according to the film we saw later) was full of prostitutes According to the film we saw later the initiation process must happen in Europe in World War Two and involve a slightly ugly and dim-witted boy who turns out to be funny and handsome and then dies Emily Dickson's parking meter is set on out of time-- truly, you don't believe me please do She became a heroin addict and kept a pygmy rat in her room at college She became a nurse and killed sleeping patients with morphine She became the smooth hair of a sad woman in my class who plagiarized poems and reports and thought I didn't know She became my doe-eyed student who disappeared but not in body She became my mother with her vampire lips in the photo before the war She became a priest on holiday with dandruff and a penchant for escargots She became a Byzantine icon artist a public sculptor a little girl with one braid cut off by my friend in first grade She became a porn star who opened a restaurant in Northridge CA She became the only postmodern painting in Slocum Nevada She became the postscript to me she became me LOLLOLLOL

I am writing this knowing that it is first excessive and second unimportant I am writing this knowing that you may not approve of my sudden burst of prose at the end of a book of poems LOLLOLLOL which I used to think meant lots of love

Lots of love and BTW it means more, it means less, it means when you fly, I will try to join you in

the vee-shaped clouds over the opera version of “Three Sisters” He says he saw a boring play with people talking I didn’t understand it was “Three Sisters” who never leave and never stop talking until much later Trashy novels are the only ones that work It will not save you to write poems that save you I saw the girl to whom I once gave a B+ for not listening to me She deserved a better grade for not listening because she didn’t listen so very well She was whole-hearted in her non-listening She broke the mold of non-listeners

If you were a cantaloupe, what would I be? If you were a mollusk, where would I sleep? If you were a tank, would I ride in your dark and steamy chamber?

Kings summon us and we come We are supplicants all in search of something to worship in a peculiar and profane way The Duke of Bavaria was an asshole he was worse than George Bush II maybe and maybe not LOLLOLLOL The king of Belgium thought his private factory was the Congo their trees his baubles You may lose life and limb if your mother has you in the wrong bed you may lose more if your mother has you with the wrong man we all lose everything eventually but the stories have different weight over time some are told and some are not some are redacted and blurred by water or tears or another liquid Where can I buy some fire? Where is the fire store in this mall? We do not know how to properly use things but use is of no use and value of no value My grandson eats worms and swears to their goodness It is protein I say we all need it daily My love is a white birch my love is a flower

Can you say the fucking name of the flower I tell her don’t say those flowers with the white petals and the yellow center, say daisy, damn it, I tell her and she says that is elitist as is the word imagery Okay, let’s call it vapor or if that is too abstract let’s call it sidewalk Is sidewalk elitist? Is garbage elitist, or do you prefer the word refuse, which is easily misread Multiple readings, are they allowed here? Do I get to keep my marbles, my beautiful tiger’s eye and turquoise the color of our planet? What must I surrender to get out of here? Do you need it all or just most? I will give you most without you asking I will give you all if I can LOLLOLLOL I have nothing and still have my integrity she said my justice he said my last word

It rained frogs in the movie. It rained cheddar cheese. It rained a big moon with a hole bitten through. How can you count it or sum it, the teacher once asked Say ask for a question not said Why were all teachers so sad in that building? Was it a sad building? Who drank the most, Mr. Larson or Miss Weatherbee, I swear that was her name She ran the Daniel Burnham speech contest which I lost when the bell rang and I forgot the rest of my speech like magic We were mean We were children We did not know

What is the sum of three gentlemen in a gondola? What is the sum of our natural inclinations toward deification of otherness? What is the sum of our woes? LOLLOLLOL

Anosognosia

“God knows where I am.” --Linda Bishop

Give up your princely crown: you never had it, your kingdom, your horses made of fire and tears.
Give up your plans to sail the ocean in a vessel made of clouds and glue.

You are not you, not yourself, not the one whose whispers were heard by the teacher even when your lips were closed and your shiny boots on the ground. You are not the one heralded at the refuse dump by the seagulls whose cries were also the cries of a little girl dropped in a well.

You are not the handsome stranger who is awaited in the house where thirty-nine apples are rotting near the sink drain and the woman lies on the floor almost dialing a number in Connecticut of a relative whose hands were too large and too close.

Give up your jewels, the glass brooch in the shape of Siam, where you once ruled a gaggle of women who praised you in eight languages and shared your shadow with no one. Give up your heraldry and your whispered treasons by the site of the buildings that once stood as an outline even on coins.

You are not the child in the closet pretending to be the ghost of Julius Caesar. You are the lady on the bus in rags asking for pennies because she is building a ladder taller than a northern pine that will reach beyond her most feared cloudburst.

You are not the comfort of a room where she rocked and held her child before she heard it tell her that treason was in the air, that the room was filled with dirt, that a certain chief of state had it in for her unless she enunciated correctly and plainly on a certain Friday before Flag Day the names of all the ghosts and saints beginning with K.

Give up your plan to beat the dead at their game of cards, your plan to conquer Las Vegas with your lamè gown and tulle, your plan to grace the state dinner for the King of Nubia with your crown of gold thorns and thistles from your neighbor's yard.

You are not someone with a plan, you are a woman made of bone and lace, a woman made of iron and nakedness, a woman made of words and excuses for them, you are under their care, you are subject to a plan that will enable you to be among them, to gather stars if you wish but keep them secret.

(* patients in denial of their own disorders and thus refusing treatment for them as in the case of schizophrenia.)

Daphne

“So much worse for the wood that finds it is a violin.” Rimbaud

You try to find the easy answer to the question of the ages, the one that recedes as all steady dreams in a house of wakefulness.

You uncover a hasty truth, a candid lie, an answer like no other shaped like a boat with bat wings and certitude. This is no fable, no nursery rhyme. It is the trees' steady progress toward a cloud made of bones and abstract longing.

Nothing in its place, no place for facts rare as birth in a banyan tree during a flood—you saw the photo in the paper and imagined the woman who had climbed so heavily upward to preserve her story past harm.

Unlike Magritte's clever pipe or the oddly postured woman in the Balthus painting flung across a piano, you are serious as summer's crazy ripeness or winter's inevitability--a weedy patch without sun near the fence ignores both seasons.

You are a realist, saint of small remarks, hero of paper white as bone. You gesture to the moon or make a leap of faith. You honor the wood of things, the breath of things, the underlining in the script that doesn't know its own destination in the pageant of forgetting.

Forgotten, you say, to any object that offers its presence. Daphne grows so slowly you can't notice--all these years it's hidden behind other greening things. Hesitating nearby, you carve a space for apparition, a space for circumspection and regret. Without them you are nothing more than windows bracing for a storm.

(*Pursued by Apollo, Daphne is transformed into a laurel (*Laurus nobilis*): “a heavy numbness seized her limbs, thin bark closed over her breast, her hair turned into leaves, her arms into branches, her feet so swift a moment ago stuck fast in slow-growing roots, her face was lost in the canopy. Only her shining beauty was left.” Name of a rare, slowly maturing type of laurel plant.).

Construction

“Then the air was fully of wings, the doves came down out of the sunny blue like angels in a painting.” Wallace Stegner

You try to build it with scarves and wigs, the hair of women from shrines in India cut for purity and sold for profit. You cut your nails, make sure you are clean enough, you take the scrupulous bath so you are ready for the Lourdes of chemicals, alcohol, tubes. This is the oblation, the vow not to outlast but to serve, to compensate as best you can for its eventual failure.

Bargains are different-- you play tricks, crossing the road coolly in front of the barreling truck—let him dare rob you with an unplanned end. Punch lines abound--- how she was hit by a garbage truck, a potato truck, at the side of a friend helping her shop that day—they were sharing an eggroll.. You laugh outrageously but not with outrage when the impossibly beautiful movie does not end as it should but just accrues endings. No editor, no discipline--allegory of your life—everyone’s too, this is general-- so many scenes unlit, words mumbled on tape, false starts, abrupt curtailments.

You are making a collection of homely wisdom offered like cakes at the banquet. You are a snob about offerings--so much is trivial, small as an ant crawling with a large leaf bent leftward. The braveness, the unfairness, all the ways in Tibet and Peru and with eagles or crows they topple the body to provide something more substantial than your own grief for yourself, you, the best friend you’ve ever had, the one who knows your lies and quibbles and times you really really didn’t mean it, you who had even outwitted yourself. How you’d delayed because there was something more tinged with promise, more warped by danger that drew you off course. You who threw away charts and itineraries and maps. You who said no and no thank you at best.

You have no menu. You have this with the cube for the day, the rectangle for the week, the larger square of the month that marks a time for flags, a day for fathers, a festival in a South Asian atoll, a calendar whose photo of mountains that seem celestial are merely granite and water condensed into snow. You have minutes of still being yourself, if shadow is you, if your hand holds a lime-green glass and takes a long sip you feel deep in your throat.

It’s finally not about you but what others will say, what they whisper about the self that you weren’t, all the same, really. You were quiet or self-composed, cheerful or foolishly so, alert till the end or unfeeling as ice. You are elsewhere, doubled, halved and zeroed. Maybe, you can report by letter or note or an oddly voiced message that you are with yourself elsewhere or nowhere, you have what you need. Not pinned to a board in a small room without windows or sewn on a jacket, not on a booklet with dates and a line and a face with your own flaming eyes and longish chin—no harm meant in the modesty of missing, in the simply lucid sense of being here but also unseen.

Joel Dailey

TRIFECTA

For The Veez

My life coach
Is wrestling
My death coach
On the living room couch

A case of water
Or a case of mistaken identity
Of the excitements to come
These are only two

You may be an unwitting victim
Of anti-textuality
Without even knowing it
Skirting the limits of abstraction, trombone-less

Donna de la Perrière

First Love

After he beats her, he will rape her. And during the rape she will be glad, or she will be at least relieved. Perhaps primarily she will not be thinking anything, but to the extent that she is thinking something, she will be relieved. Because by the time he's begun to rape her, the worst will probably be over.

She will know that the worst is probably over.

That by the time he has reached the point of trying to fuck her, she can breathe, even rest to a certain extent. By that time really she'll just need to stay quiet. Her goal: to simply let things play themselves out.

Her goal by then: to let things play themselves out.

It will almost be over, and she will just need to lie there. To lie there: very still, very far away, very quiet. Very still like an animal that has been mauled by another animal—not so much out of rage as a desire for dominance, or maybe ownership, or something else she can't articulate at the moment.

A desire for something she can't quite articulate.

She will, by that point, be relatively relieved—may be thinking of how to explain anything that might need explaining: any marks, to her parents, when she gets home that night. She will be thinking of her parents because by this point in the beating (his predictable process) she'll be long past explaining to anyone at the party.

By then there will be no convincing anyone at the party.

New Years Eve, 1977, when they are at a party. There still might've been some possibility when he'd pulled her into the den. The empty den, pulled her in there, hard by her arm. Or even later when his friend had opened the door and said, smiling—a little uneasily (though, in retrospect, not uneasily enough)—“Hey, man—hey, is everything okay in there?”

Smiling, a little uneasily. “Is everything okay in there?”

But by the time he is raping her—after the friend has closed the door, after the sound of her hitting then sliding down the wall, after she’s pleaded with him as quietly as possible (though, in retrospect, not quietly enough)—she is well past the point of making up stories anyone at the party might believe.

Stories anyone really listening might believe.

So she is thinking of what she'll need to say to her parents. Whether she'll get out of there all right, will have visible bruises. She is wondering whether anyone at the party will tell. (She's pretty sure they won't, but it's always a possibility.) And she's not thinking of much of anything that's going on apart from that.

What's going on right then: in the room, or her body.

Or that's what it seems like she might have been thinking. Because by now she's not really sure what she was thinking, whether in fact she was thinking anything at all.

She has difficulty writing, even imagining, that girl—that girl's body, her life, what she could have been feeling.

(And I know what you're thinking: she must connect with her somehow, but she doesn't. Trust me. In this case, she doesn't.)

She's begun writing this story quite a number of times—quite a number of drafts—none of which ever gets finished.

She can't imagine how to impose narrative structure on this. She can begin it but always finds herself doubling back—to provide context or background, to try to make things cohere.

And the truth is she probably won't finish this time either. At some point she'll stop, tell herself she needs distance, will come back to it later, do it right this time around.

But she won't come back to it, or she will but when she does, she'll just re-read it, not know what to do with it, then put it away

Dot Devota

Scenes From My Massacre

All life gazing at the North Pole
a dome, a fresco, the seas flake

sent to imagine the lake from over on Tuesday
authors dying in couplets I took a liking to are flipped

note to sleep: go to self
insert a knife committing to grief

only the body would dare to heal
I sprang to the side of music and squeezed

residue from the future staring down on our trophies
bald heads gleaming in the gutter of stars

I feel scared to be this close to the cosmos
I feel scientific knowing nothing about myself

fire as another chews through the cord
keeping track of what I owe and who owes me

Drew Dillhunt

from Herselves

to know
our lacks

to surface
a space

where

caress = reticulum

w_here

analogy = eros(ion)

w__here

paradox = verb

w___here

the cell(f) is at war

w____here

edge = tourniquet

w_____here

metadata •• doubt

w_____here

decomposition \subset embrace

w_____here

cell = body

w_____here

secession = faith

Here [is where]

our telomeres shrink
the explosion divides
my cell(ve)s

see it: a blood test: we

demarcate an organ system
explicate the singular
insist the cognates are false

a body is a body

I remind my cell(ve)s
not to speak
the voice of others'

mitochondrion

imply a shared cell(f)
blurred in culture / where

there can be no such motion
as speciation.

/•/

O Henrietta,

the way you've taken
this poem

infiltrates / my sense
of the body

where cell(ve)s rendezvous, Henrietta,

does appropriation ever become
/ an exercise in tenderness.

Henrietta,
your cells [*the weeds*

of cell culture]
are prayers

of intercession,
moments of formidable

forgiveness, sites
of enzymatic silence

strange, the way we
[*real humans*]

translate the language
of thanks.

/•/

[*intercession*]:

Scientise nor
resection sin

insistence, or
consent is ire

consent rise “I”
consent I sire:

icier sonnets,
coteries / inns.

/•/

icon sire tens
icon ire nests

icon rinse set
icon seers tin

icon rises ten
icon sister en

icon sentries
icon stir seen

icon: en rests I
icon, it enters

/•/

tininess core
riot in scenes

ironies' scent
is tensin core

cistern noise
intones crise

cistern is eon
censer I into

censer, is it on?

/•/

tocsin rise en
tocsin siener

notice sirens
notice resins

notice rinses
notes crise in

note, nice sirs
note, nicer sis:

onset cries, "in!"

/•/

enter icon sis
enter scions, I

recite in sons
incise re: tons

cosset inner I
stereo [sic] inn

tonne cries, "is!"

/•/

ice risen tons
ice rents ions

ice store inns
ice en sis, torn

ice sterns, "I, no."

/•/

irenic onsets
irenic stenosis

irenic stones:
Icon in Esters / Esters in Coin

scions enter I
& rest in cosine

sonnet cries, "I!"

/•/

scene in riots
scene in trios

scene in torsi
scene is intro

scene: I sir, ton
scene: I in sort

scene: I is torn

/•/

(*iris, not scene*)

/•/

I centers ions

I cession rent

I cisterns eon

I scions enter

inner cites so

inner [sic] toes

inner cote: sis

inner sect, so I

risen notices

cites risen on

risen (tics (eon.

Iris Jamahl Dunkle

Eridanus Remembers the Flood

Rivers were once named
not for their waters,
but for their muddy banks.

(What held them up.)

Here, Old Man River
still lulls us away
from what's contained
Under the swift, smooth
surface, we perceive
a definite course—
so when we awake,
when we arrive,

(Water, the memory of floods.)

(Forgetting the unseen.)

(at destination, or greatness)

Like Phaeton, we can't
fight the current of
our own desire.

(Water pulls harder than the sun.)

Cacoethes

No water for weeks and we became mad
with desire. Fires grow more numerous

how the green wood burns fast and hot

We stitch Hook and Ladder together, but
there's no water. You can only watch so
much burn, before your throat and heart burn too.

sun pouring through buildings like sieves

First, we watched the burning barrels of oil
multiply—lit smooth with velvet fire.
We were *hypnotized by the lick of flames*.

Then, Brown Street – glass shattering outward like
shouts from each hotel's red carpeted throats.

women, half-naked, streaming out into muddy streets

When soot-black horses galloped out of the
Chautauqua Livery Stable their manes aflame,

comets spelling out into oily dark night

we knew not to follow, not to try to
read the text of their bright, shimmering paths.

Laura Eve Engel

I'm Sorry About How All Your Things Were Taken

If in the middle of a drink
in other rooms we're carried away
with the things we own. Something goes

mysterious, something
rifled, did we lock up, of course
we've locked up everything.

Our lawns for lawns are probably nice ones.
Lawns stand waiting
for an arrival though we've forgotten

to dress for them and in
our absence nobody
walks away with everything.

Sometimes without looking suddenly
there's wine beside the water glass.
Sometimes, broken windows.

We think we can imagine how dressing
was important
and then even that is carried off.

We come home until we are.
Home to whatever want there was
to see ourselves trying on feelings

of having been targeted, now sleeps
with the lights on.

Let's go back to some talk

of more wine. We think
we can know how we are going
to find the room how we left it.

Adam Fagin

from vaulted forms

when the hand is yours
its quiet cataclysm
a kind of clarity looped around the object
think of everything that'll be remade
above each image's subliminal ridge
a future in which we don't exist—
night's borrowed hand in ours
till we're tucked in red riptide; sun come single file

Joanna Fuhrman

Goodbye to the Double Bells

Waiting is a bed without any sheets
or people on it

It's also the light over the bed—
a little too bright
too yellow, too clean

It's the sound of a chair, sliding

on wet tile without
anyone moving it

a plastic violin played
by a truant monkey

When I say
waiting is a bed

what I mean is
the sun is tired

the cardinals are tired
the shadows are tired

so who cares if the moon
is friendly or not friendly

if my eyes are candles
or bulbs

#

And so now
the room is a mess

The bed is unmade

The calendar is on the floor
by the crumpled paper cup
that once held coffee

I have no career
I have no children
I have no plan

I carry my anxiety
like a red excuse

I can't spell
I can't make a cocktail

can't understand what the cat means
when she squawks in my face

#

If you are my friend
listen to the leaves

turning color and save
the sound for me

Open your mouth
and let me speak

in your voice
or in your voices

No one wants
to listen to me babbling

on like a walrus

Do walruses even babble?

#

And so now, so long
to purple eye shadow monuments

to the blue drinks we pour over
each other in the metallic night

So long to skyscrapers in black
feather boas with reflective knives

expanding like waves

So long to little girls with burning plazas
multiplying in their mouths

So long to dark men
with hula-hoop size nose rings

to halo static

to laundry machines charging
into each other

like bloody hearts

So long to robotic hawks

and to the city made out
of glass corn flakes

to microscopic salamanders
we swallow and never spit out

Dan Kaplan

+

Chemists have worked out
an optimum temperature
that takes into account all
factors involved, even comfort.
This is the temperature. It is
right in the center of the useful
working range and it is comfortable.
What is essential is an orderly
arrangement of the equipment.
Most comes in powder form.
The ability of time to control
density is based primarily on
the first few seconds which come
in powder form. This avoids
setting up a pattern of flow
across the face. The opposite
calls for emergency procedures.
The drawbacks are mathematical
sketches. Paper, like time,
curls toward the relatively
hinged side of the carrier
and his parcels. The coldest
tone is possible since all gray
is not simply gray. Inherently
cold subjects such as machines
ignite their surfaces like water
in general-purpose manufacture.
Simply turning an ordinary light
into winter places a boy on
a toboggan, into summer
and a bicycle. To be fully restored
requires the simplest application.
The cycle is a small car.

Joseph Lease

The Garden of Earthly Delights

Your
Kisses
Your
Sky
Your
Darkness
Your
Sky

—no—

paint

angel—

flesh—

paint

angel—

I'm high, I'm steam, I'm words like sky—America,
you can't be greed; America, you're only greed;
America, one extra summer night—nothing ends,
see you later, nothing ends, tell me sky: you love
to blue, I love to blue, a bowl of snow, a bowl of
snow: morphine's best:

so
willows

so
lost

Yelling at the building, yelling at the secret,
yelling after midnight: try this: property is death:
they had a body crammed in a mailbox and it was
just a brown suit with bones sticking out: dirty,
clean, kindness, longing: write the night—sound
gives life—death's sound too—keep listening,
listen: before you broke me I thought I was free:
sinful and free—

it's so
raw
you like
that raw
still
still
burning
past
what it
says
try
try
again

Blue sound, blue vision, skyscrapers, empty
tombs: nothing ends, see you later; sound and
vision, broken rooms: mist, ropes of wind: end of
the night, watery greens, blue winter night, thirty
years gone—end of the night, watery greens, blue
winter night—give me the round

sky to
suck—

so
willows

so
lost

so
open

so
long

Your
Kisses
Your
Sky
Your
Darkness
Your
Sky

Eric Lorberer

LAST LINES (CRUISING)

When I was on PCP I thought time stopped.

Quadrophenia didn't save my life.

A light snowfall in time for *Midnight Mass*.

Wearing stockings and garters at *Rocky Horror*.

It was a jigsaw puzzle of a jigsaw puzzle.

The trick is to keep breathing.

Egg, bowling ball, knife.

I floated under the car wreck, watching.

What was there to see from the car when we went cruising.

I lost my virginity in a cemetery: _____ !

A little plot, resting beside surprise.

Those Egyptians knew a thing or two about death.

We didn't call them hoodies, we called them sweat jackets.

I lied about being Ichabod.

When I was on PCP a thing kept happening again.

I never learned how to skate, nor tread water.

It bothered me that Octopus Man tortured kittens.

Marathon sessions of Pong and reading *Hit Parader*.

Is grace gone from the world, dead like a friend?

I don't know how I knew anybody, or loved them.

A large snowfall on the drive to the Poconos.

There was a stick in my future.

Time kept happening again before it stopped.

I burned my back at Rehobeth Beach, badly.

The head shop in proximity to the funeral parlor.

Likeable enough but no real potential.

Lying in the hammock each summer rereading *The Bell Jar*.

I was always fighting my body.

Too late I had a momentary glimpse, a vision.

... of cool, cool rain.

Todd Melicker

from observed

the painter attempts the knees
pale & more transparent, while

:increasing the whiter square, this
:inlaid frontispiece serves

the knees attempt to the
hem of the song, the hem of my

hand upon you both, attentive to accord—
naturally affording a pleasure, as

pressure in the flower
offers its surviving air, or

:the pair of casement windows
:re-enacting the vital problem of

:yr tuck of hair around
:yr ear

a burst in green is the
tell-tale, marvel

observed: a sprung breeze shimmers the eucalyptus fur of mt. sutro, while we sit at the window of pomelo on judah.

an insoluble night, a voluble gloss or glossary,
covers the fixated vinyl streets, for it's

just like a city to depict itself perpetually
in the rain, as attachment

to the vertical line, verily, verily, this
theology of the rectangle & its concrete

descendants, interrupted by a metric tendency
of ornament. we embellish

:architect night, then
:portfolio
:archetype night

at the revealing around the roof, an epilogue
geology to overcome geometry. a hymn hides

its many-limbed names among the buildings,
which is yr story of finding

:lumen-vaulting, an
:enticing boundary

a mouse nest in yr clothes, or the
seedling sparked in yr pocket

quiet-likely. i'm learning from you how to
summon life & dark & foliage, my

well-whisperer, my
tendrill sleeper

:betwixt

observed: a blue night consumes the cityscape of chagall's american windows & one drifts upon them
as if the first sea-life upon chicago. all that exists of the current fossil record is a finger. our hope is
become a woman transforming back into her previous life as desert brush, hurried to burn.

before the fade of the bell, we
count our vertebrae, together

the sepals reveal their single note in
snowfall to be the composite

:snowcall
:snowthrall
:snowdoll

bones of the feet, a move-
ment to minus & finer

:the novel accrual
:to acquiescent

earthlight in the vast, where inside
i'm afraid. there's the shin-line

of the dam & its ice inscribed
errors we've to cross & cross-out, its

soft dissonance or chance to practice
the after-life between us, still

:a portrait of woods or
:honey-flesh

the trove of yr throat given
to suffer slings & sparrows

quicks me whole,
awhile

observed: one mimics death whenever traveling by car, or by waking every morning. we wait in a long line while they clear the greenville turnoff. the snow moves as preventer. if there is no contact between the people involved, no accident has occurred.

a drake's breath is said to cure
thrush, a drake's breath that is

sadness. similarly, the cardinal is
an ordinary blood-

flame, the wound in a pine,
reminiscent of even wood's

mortality. a silver loop thrusts its
needle's eye into the firmament, the point

:click-close the compass
:w/ magnificent margin(alia)
:or locket

long buried. city of earth-out-of-
earth, piece on portion to form

yr buildings, yr determined mitochondrial
reds & burnishes. we breathe the breath

:flourish
:soft wood, soft
:wonder

that thieves breath, for that's breath's way
save clay or water, either apple

adam had held two behind his back
already in the brickwork, & we say

heat is a great multiplier. we choose eve, a
making over made.

loving over loved.

observed: the cicada of the earth converge upon the cicada of the air. the insistent community
continues their fantastic static drone from the treetops; grinding, or perhaps polishing an already
pulsing summer afternoon at laumeier sculpture park.

the limner begins yr
namesake w/ its preoccupation

:a started
:letter, startled

gathering an exploded repose of
sail-flowers on the rim

of the blue-green grove. i'm
entrusted w/ message & messenger, the

thin banner of each number & re:
versal, shivering as if a river as they're

spoken & rove away. it's an invitation
lent only to raveled

:source-light or
:gold-gilded, offering

foxes of quiet episode. you say you've never
heard, only seem, my saxon,

my white wave-length & so i've become yr little
two-tail. here's a perfect arrow of hair

at the skate of my neck to travel
w/, while my spade-shaped

face forms both prism & velocity. "it's a braw
bright night, w/ the wind

in the west" to fall to sleep to, ay to
summer to bed & winter to

rest by. all a'suddenly you

:shutter to
:slepthresh &

quake at yr first dreaming.
quoth me, a spelt-stone

observed: at the corner of willard & frederick our names appeared mathematically inscribed before
we knew to draw the figures & conclusion. we are the recurrence of the constellation & its reason.

Rachel Moritz

Namesake

First to be latent, then to be what you want.

An oak's weave
where you wanted a river,

and between the bird calls,
barren trees.

How you stood for those little voiced
corridors throwing lines out,

weights sheared away

from water, as if you were only moving
toward another,

a trunk with lichen girdling
dependence.

And that was the primary thing about being
in a body—

all delivery and exit, your own fruit
discarded, the silt of leaves

jamming an open doorway.

Meanwhile, the hooded shape, the child undoing you
by unrelenting.

Pneuma

Can I write you not as creator but as substance made
to transform? My art of regaining lost time abuts your
doorway, its wide arterial roads and skeins of dust, littering.
Hearing nothing, meeting no one, seeing neither sun nor
nighttime sky. Attuned to the mind's mastering attempts,
this unknown feels as our dual breath on ice, a world
from which nothing may be hardened.

Brian Mornar

ninth: ventriloquy

because a string

falls, or a

throat knows the

fall too well,

and the weight

of the expired

voice ex corpus

remaindered

or never attached—

I, who

expect the dire

sail and sally,

figure the be-

loved with (a)

voice. This voice

joins sadness and

stops and joins

a tick and

untick handed out,

yoked and belting

out finger's width.

And

I propose to

you this way:

peek-eyed in

bed,

finally, without voice

a utopic erasure

without re-cord

track or music,

a small glee

having short from

the first hung-

over wink, wreck

of glance toward

my own hand,

turning from me,

toward you, sun

and the beloved.

I was

in a noon

language, still young

and gesture, measure

of address, to

re-think you

out and in

 folding jeans,

 shuffling books

offering water glass,

drawing the blinds,

 I was unsure

how to say

to you, then

you crawled back

into bed, and

the sentence between

us and without

words to feel

under-foot the

resettling of new

moss, around our

now-house, bough

and landing of

re-doubt that

came a familiar

union. Throated supine

or panted surprised,

an expiration placed

gardened a proximity

radial elbow gradual

small spaces separate

we fancied fancies

the size of

a mat or

throw rug fore

which the allegory

of the small

house built its

expanse. And think

you, love's curation,

and thee, space

over-mined me,

planned, planed, and

sparsed: Be still

or bestill the

name here wrapped

around the face

name for thee

dearly, a house.

Jeff Nagy

Facts After Baudelaire

They called the new painting Serenity Park
Was a part of it because they made appear
As a camera takes the image, a mean gift
Like the bombmaker's careful diorama

Mechanical, and since a part of it was lost
In the mail, sexless. "A typical scene"
The painting suggested with new value
Watching itself in the camera from behind

They called the new painting Serenity, the park
Was a part of it because behind a pair
Of plane trees another more perfect point
Of view reframed the arcade, also an exit

But we couldn't figure it out. Getting there
As a typical scene the new painting suggested
A turn down the walk would be good for us
Then far off in Serenity Park, a crucial hour

Came up on it, dragging the park's reservoir
For horseless carriage, while the palette was off
Adding a layer of distemper to the canvas
Made too mean by watching itself talk.

Jennifer Nelson

when I give you the carmina
figurata take the tower
at one end of *Children's*
Games and the pasture
at the corner
end of the bright town square

or take in the alley whitening
graffiti and take inside the pipes
beating all night till they break
into a picture

the snow slow through
the ladders limp
of the fire escapes they build
first white
hairs and the usual
broil of the pipes
pauses though hears
nothing but mutters witness
to your absent
ear concerning
snow: come
soon and let me show you

I won't hurt you with my incredible
Latin squares the figures
limping their primal
symbolic
power once the careful
printers slotting
the plates jiggling tinely
in the tray I know

imagining the abbot
designing the constraint

is creepy but
prefer “eerie” but
believe in accumulation

as in Bruegel’s *Children’s Games* the two
ways to the horizon are pasture
and tower the former
pasture being
yellowed now perhaps
once meant the ocean

and the latter nearly
invisible brings
both steeple and *Babel*: where here

through the pasture
the games thin out, here

on the road to the tower they never
end, just add

so I was telling you
the figured verses I swear
in which death is conquered
edited and printed
in Pforzheim in 1503
from the parchments of a church
leader of the ninth
century that early
renaissance wherein
Carolingian majuscule
letters fall
symmetrically
and the figures overlaid
capture in red
the open secret

I'll show you: wake up
with me
and the snow goes sideways
I predict a wind

In q u a m o r s v i c t a e s t

Craig Santos Perez

‘Does Guam Suck’

a malologue

Guam has no culture at all. The place is distorted and crappy. You will probably get racial remarks from the locals. The school system sucks (but 99% of a child's education depends on the child and the family from which the child comes). Dude like what the heck are you looking for? Don't come to Guam if you're looking for perfection. Life is very relaxed compared to mainland USA and you need to get used to how everything slows down. Watch out when supertyphoons hit—no electricity for what seems like forever. Guam is the worst place I've ever lived. This place is almost hostile. No concept of hospitality, and the worst waiters and service people I've ever encountered. Oh, and if you like air-conditioning (who doesn't when it's 90 degrees outside 90% of the year?), prepare to pay \$400 or more per month for a single family home. I had never been robbed...until I got to Guam. And when I say robbed, I mean "inside jobs." One day, after a short stay off island, I came home to find everything gone—even my freaking tennis shoes. When the cops came, I pointed out empty beer cans that weren't mine (yeah, the thieves made themselves right at home). People still abuse/ignore stray animals and enjoy cock-fighting on Guam. The island's only pound is disgusting and in disrepair (have you been to the SPCA on Oahu? It's like a hotel). If you get sick on Guam, you are screwed. Basically, if you go into Guam Memorial Hospital for an emergency, chances are you won't come out alive. And it looks like our next governor will either be a nepotistic thief of a murdering thief. No, I am not speaking in metaphors—the locals will know what I'm talking about. Guam may not be ALL up to date on some things, but what do you expect? All I'm saying is you need to find the real beauty and real Chamorros and you'll see the real Guam. In the island's defense, the windows are shuttered because of hurricanes. I can't really think of anything else except that Guam has the longest underwater tunnel in the world and that it has one of the biggest k-marts in America. If you are military and had bad vibes from the islanders—most likely it is because you acted badass and better than the Chamorus—OF COURSE THEY WILL KICK YOUR ASS. Stray dogs are everywhere. I had a tendency to take them in and find homes for them. All these islander people do is watch UFC all day and they want to fight anything that moves. Fuck Guam. Talking to a typical Guamanian you have to make sure that you use mono-syllabic words or else they lose the plot completely. I was born and raised on an island that I don't even know anymore. I joined up with the US Military (who is the "enemy" of many of my island-relatives). In the past few weeks about 30 locals have cornered a few Sailors coming out of bars and coming out of the GPO Outlets and literally beaten the crap out of them and sent them to the ICU. If it wasn't for the darn haircuts they probbaly wouldn't even know we were Military. Scary stuff. People defend Guam for being a beautiful place. It is "kind of." It DOES get a little scary driving out here. I HATE Guam. Why? You

have to check to expiration date for everything at the grocery store before you put in your cart. The water is terribly polluted (including drinking water). The whole island looks “third world.” I was on Guam from 1973-1991. The old Chamorros were a better breed of people, but the new breed has been corrupted. I wouldn’t go back. It’s too late to fix that place. The last straw was when I found a FREAKING FRESH DIRTY DIAPER on the shore! Jesus! I mean, really, they could have at least have BURIED it! The word “Chaud” is a Chamorro local that acts bad and gangster wanna-be, ugly accents, who spit out chew/ pugua (which needs to be exterminated) and the normal (no chaud accents) ones who actually experience the real world are natural. But you may never know if he/she is a hater. If your brother does not run GMH, the port, the Gov. office, or everything in between and you have an IQ above 70, you will hate it here on Guam. Chamorros have no chance of global productivity. I am a Chamorro and I left the island in 1964 to serve in the military. Reading this does Guam suck poem was shocking to me. When everyone has a relative within 1/2 mile, it is a problem. I remembered a small relatively pleasant island. If you dont like Guam then leave. It’s that simple. I know this island has enough potential to stay afloat amongst these false comments. Yep, Guam sucks. The U.S. controls everything. They decide who comes in to the island and who doesn’t. Don’t come; we don’t need any more trash or military toxic contaminations. Freeloaders are not welcome at fiestas or bbqs. Living like and being treated as a prisoner (you can’t express yourself in your own language) is no fun when you do have no place to go. I joined the Navy when I was 17, left the island...if I hadn’t joined the Navy right now I’d either be fat or dead. The culture is not what it used to be, its all food stamps and low rider trucks. Can’t live like that. There’s no need to defend Guam’s beauty and it’s people. There is an oversufficient amount of content and reliable information on the island’s physical, political, and educational condition that’s available on the web. I recommend to anyone considering relocating to “ANY” place in the world to research beyond subjective poems such as this. First off dude you are not local. So your experience on Guam is that of an off-islander and it will always be different than a real local. Most of the problems on Guam stems from our political affiliation with the federal government. The land they took is some of the best for tourism and shipping. The answer to the question is yes, Guam does suck! It is just so sad. Oh, what it could have been.

Megan Pugh

Homespun

Ironwork catches us like susurrating kudzu
or antler coat-hooks for the fedoras and Spanish shawls of our guests.

Moth-eaten. If they eat enough, some lace. The blue

alligator pumps she hiked to town to buy stained her feet
blue in the rain so she hiked back to town to get a refund but the
salesman said You shouldn't have worn them in the rain but she said
You tacky fool, gators live in the water.

Hide a dead turtledove's
tongue in the room of
whomever you love.

In the picture that didn't make it into the album Elton and Hazel
lie on the bed so blurry you cannot make out their faces.

I'm down on my knees

dismembering a live black hen
as a woman gives birth
to ease her pain.

Too much rouge to be taken seriously.

The well under water oak trees.
The creek where the horse bucked him.
The family peddled tomatoes in Newberry.

Crawfish alligator/football
tailgater. Brass bands and bad men
if you don't know them. First

the strings came out of their shirts then tears appeared.

Posing for someone who knows you're
imitating W. C. Fields or Cary Grant and how.
I'd never seen a picture show. I saw a picture show
on sheets. It was in an empty lot. They cut out
the scene where Bill Robinson danced which
the studio made easy by putting it at the end.

In the Glades peat burns in secret caves—watch where you step.

Dean Rader

A Page of Spring: Paul Klee's *Ad Marginem*

I.

The sea's sky tides out
to lichen light and a stuck sun.
Night coils back and slurs.

Dawn tears into the weather, or
is it the weather that rips into fogshine:
the clouds' flicked votives
and the leaves little wicks ignite.

II.

Once upon
a time

there was
no time

only
the page.

III.

Plants absorb light primarily using the pigment chlorophyll.
Cellular respiration allows for the conversion of light energy

To chemical energy. Palisade mesophyll. Stem and infiltration
Of stem. Terra and terawatt. Light begets the absence of light.

IV.

Once upon a page
there was no horizon,
only inversion.

In a world of margin, there is no margin.
Within the border there is no border.

We've moved on from the first idea,
never more acute than in its vanishing.

V.

Spindlestem, ropestem, ladlestem.

Heaven is always in the margin,
but in what direction?

VI.

The parts of a typical leaf include the upper
and lower epidermis, the mesophyll, the vascular
bundle(s) (veins), and the stomata(s).

VII.

Parchment of leaf-life, parched sugar sun,
Wind up and convert our lost letters,

Turn light into light, make our eyes
See the eye in sea and leaf light.

Crown of thistle thorn, we wear you
The way the sun wears the cross

We've nailed it to. The vascular
Bundle, God's other stoma,

Never bleeds out.

VIII.

You are upside down, not the bird.

Thibault Raoult

THE NUMBER OF US

The number of us
Singing unknowingly
To everyone
Has risen,
Only to dodge
Your complex question.
When gods frown,
We hear vertebrae
Turning off:
ARIA CUT OUT FOR YOU.
You can't just say it's blackforest.

MILL DEVIL

We had such fire-engine wobble on Mulberry Street. My friends supported me and kept their fountains tastefully illuminated. One of the pleasures of confrontation? Pitchperfect *gate gate*. Another: field shushes itself.

As ash-phase keeps you atlas-oriented, Codazzi isolationist: scan a jalapeño, relax. River Eure is unforgiving, which is fine—we haven't done anything. We prep for Paris. You know there are games there. Simplify your shepherd, succulent cutoff! Reconstruct sherry.

When I urge a handful of deer: I relegate magnolia mist. With a skate park, I fear our children won't starve cypress. Assume, for a decade, no one understands you. Reach out to vermilion coast, divine majuscule.

Done micro, done macro, on prowl for trickle. Our contacts must be. Ça alors. Up until now—I hadn't heard a single river.

Jennie Ray

Chapter IV | how you can't put your hands washing parts not your beauty

dis associating hair or things like that in my ~
things
like that
.in the shower .
. . . .oh those shifty oh those two-face little. . . . oh my human strings walking
out. .walking out
they walking
out on
my forsaken scalp cause they wantin to be absent
now they wantin
to be far remote wantin
and wantin
cause I guess I uncherished now and
oh the di sintegrating
long fibers going gone
going gone from this here glitched out belt of human hair here that has ~ ~
~
and. oh they distant now
distant now and oh hence not present now and so there you have my
hands not
handling what
disease it is
so there because you have
the fiber hemorrhage
and then the not han
dling so I gotta go then and
I gotta go tell mad
doctors I

with you~ and you who can't ever...
 ~dr.izzle
 ever ...
 ..just be ...
 . tough
 plus that ~
 my little gaunt and haggard strands .always will loll..
 ..
 even my longest should much lower than ..
 gangling and gang
 ling about but
 o little things .don't
 don't hang so low please .don't. because please
 .don't. because
 you'll be gangling
 and away our
 proximity .so much... and away our
 our little
 haggard...
 . . .vicinity so...
 and our physical...physical.
 o because when you get low like that o just get
 low like that
 ossuary skedaddlers like that gumshoeing
 jus tryin to git unknited like that from the little perforation
 socket
 or something like that and
 so low and
 you really shouldn't
 embellish with such buffed-up writhes like that
 as you coast and careen
 .and pull
 .and you pul.l.
 because your well-cooked fabrics are well-softened and
 you suck in
 and you clench in and
 you miniaturize
 and
 you flummox and you really flummox out of here
 don't you?
 out of me don't you?
 .fine

Donald Revell

France

France so small and awnings weeping
Carousels of crows my dear son
No suicide it is not church
It is home a happy brother
I had no brother until you

We found a pistol in the corn
You lifted it I lifted it
The sky became a tumult sky
God's broken eye I nearly said
Because it was weeping old souls

There are blue trains that go to France
When first I saw a yellow house
I lived in it begot a son
With nothing to sell I sold him

The Library

The library walks over fallen olives,
The tall library. Even as their shadows
Move, still leaves remain still. The passage
Of time is indescribable. Beloved
Songbirds are never far, but I forget them.

Stones stained by olives become white overnight.
Hearts stained by forgetfulness become white overnight.

Howling seven days in succession, the wind
Cannot stir a leaf. I believe in Heaven
Simply because there must be someone at one
O'clock in the morning who answers the phone.
The iron leaf of origin answers me.

Margaret Ross

A DAY IN SPACE AND ANOTHER DAY

Though all along it was the order we wanted
 freed, dissolving register, the accurate
sequencing. Too absorbed by the transit
 of inferior globes – namely Mercury
and Venus – ink seeps through the subsequent

blanks in the ledger, we'll from now on call
 a field an hour wide, grass channeling gray
corridors, then green again. Redshift
 where you couldn't stop stepping. A man
in the plexiglass cell being taught

barriers repeatedly refreshing: the clouds,
 gravel, a lawn, another man
periodically entering, and all of it smoothed flush
 with the glass wall, a pressed world
silky as tapestries they used to weave

to insulate stone rooms, a view
 sun tugs along in fading
colors toned to distance or to time
 left until they go dark. "Didn't
mean to mean anything – painted that frame in

just so I could see him," He said as the man
 inside mouths a black circle, red at the rim.
The circumference a few inches but no less
 tenable a plan to orbit, scale model of full
solar eclipse or a red edge smeared about

planets assumed to be living on evidence
 of photosynthesis' faint blushing exhaust, infer
back from what's lost: intent, the redoxed,

reprieve, specific weight, the grist, the current
event, a centrifuge, the green – and didn't it

go quickly – the this then this, such
blowzy cumulus, the gist, the past
influence evaporating off canvas later
in life when a painter paints more and more like
himself. "Often I despaired and just threw handfuls

from the far end of the studio hoping
something like a face would land," another time
extended by a single, inch-long vertebrae, the crouching
woman's spine conducted to observers
some vague strain of surfeit empathy

they couldn't trace, some vapor
like the blur a woman cradles in old photographs
where her infant would not
still for the exposure. Someone
chose to stain the nebulae false blue

and violet thinking what? Falling
forwards from a hundred miles up, the astronauts
attest the air is rarely black, it graduates
from rose to puce to scumbled burgundy,
the outsize shadows billow freely, drifting loose

from their projectors like scarves pulled
from the assistant's throat, they gauze the dilute
earthshine, never brighter than late
August twilight back on Earth. ("Once the novelty
of zero-g wears off, it often feels most

homey near the walls where you can press
your body back and not float"). The ceiling
flashes banks of stops, of switches within
reach and is the sky but this time
with intention, threshed of accident, is

flat as abstracts circumscribing the event
horizon where the reddening starts, time stops, we
read once, and sifting through the facts, were shifted
afterwards, we were there loosened
into narrative that I can stop saying this
is a life to myself and move.

Timothy Shea

from AT SAINT PAUL-DE-MAUSOLE,
HE'D HYMNED MAJESTICALLY,
THE CHRIST HAD BECKONED
SWEETLY FROM THE HALL,
YEAR AFTER YEAR

"I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me."

-Francis Thompson

Pierce, in darken
the light tucked next, next, nothing—

I'll, Karen

cruel,

in the cruelest way the swaying
light also moves I'll, no, not brilliantly out over its *guardian* miles, no, no, *no*, I'll, *no*, now
nearer perhaps, go,

across,
this volatile, violent for miles in every direction's, its first, come morning's
starless & metonymic, over its largely indifferent, left deathly metonymic

- r

oar

Heaven, spoken it's that so
deeply uninterrupted, like Van Gogh's grinding downwind in increment back
sunflower-timber's breaks,
the black, out there—

Crows, wholly in the way clouds
above the room's tree line are light erratically, forgetfully, forgetfully left
unspoken—

At it, intimacy is something
else entirely in the end, the intimate is remote, troubled perhaps or worse, that roar, though
neither its pierced put punitive part, nor

part, not now its impossibly
brilliant, penetrable & darkly intermittent annihilating night before are—Are *what*
actually, each another restless, maybe new beginning? & then?

I'll hurry on, hurry over
the wilder of either, first across these many burned miles awhile, towards bottom, heavy,
leaven & cruel, in each, Christ, each in our way isolated then, solid, always

only through the

let

lent bare a beam lit
lit

beat,

-o

ther

Outward light scattering by gathering inner light
left black, blank, secret, a place, the many cast shadows another moral emotion, a place,
Karen, both brutal & abrupt, apophatic—

Out there, open & smoke,
crows imaginary & radically, death radically with
them lifting lit back, no,

now none enough like fire nor fully from, none
for the stunning myself somewhere more sometimes, I, some too many times
stunned suddenly away by all of the always quickening past, last, left, now
these closely combatant, only two true in increment brilliantly, crows

se

ver,

sp

ared

Richard Silberg

The Ache

It was like the crumbling of a glacier
seeing her head of a snake
of an orchid "I think we're too different..."
over and over over and over
And why did I love her when because? I
didn't want to fuck her wing-shouldered
woman lank and boyish bright eyes
dilating and contracting like a butterfly
on its flower
As if she pixeled in from sisterland
where I dreamwalked only child's
sisterland sugary cleaving
That ache was astonishing
It stole my sleep
I was unbrothered
when she cleaved away

Carol Snow

BUT IN THINGS

Voice saying, "This is the result of stress."

Text reading, "They shall be for frontlets between thine eyes."
— Deuteronomy 11:18 (In some translations, "frontals" or "symbols.")
Solely image: the O of scuba mask expected

underneath — "just a part of him" gone
missing where instead another (kindascarded to look.
Again: since I must have. That is, at it. At its)

"As is" — a three-inch plastic diver. Blue.
Friendly, white-tanked back; air tubes, yes,
white. Cowled head, no frets.

No mask, you mean?

No mask. No face. No frets.
At its

No-face and underbelly —
really the whole under-torso
(except for a central hole "on-a-stick") — a tri-part

hollow, cavity, gape: rimmed...

"As they are" — of a blue, molded man,
the guitar-shaped maw.

LO

O of the mouth of a goldfish just rising to feed, its likeness to a scuba mask's
O, and the diver as view mouth propelled by kicking (away) toward: maybe flipped
(that is, diving) but like, as a whole.

Likening: a flip kick away toward, a respite a saving like an only
hope or home. The O like the O: heading for, not fleeing.
Look, not continually fleeing. Get me out of here. Chariot.

Kenny Tanemura

Woodblocks

I think I know who did these woodblocks,
he also wrote a villanelle about crickets
but I don't see meadow grass
or snowbirds perched where wood
was chiseled away. The horse must think
it's weird to stop so far from the chestnut tree,
between the woods and the frozen lakeshore.
He gives his eagle a curve bell shape
as if he'd been mistreated. The clapper
struck the thick part of the bell
as if inside a limestone cavern.
The woodblocks are deep
in the lowlands preserved by the print
and I crossed another milepost
when it began to sleet. I think
I know who did these woodblocks.

Russian blue

My ladle was in the tree house
in a pot of heavy cream
and there was a barrelful of
two-by-fours I didn't use.
Apples I didn't pick simmered
in the bouillon. But I am done
with appoggiatura. Oils
from plants were in the air
like winterberry. The scent
of Scheherezade. I can't rub
the strange woman from my eyes.

Jay Thompson

Nolan's Speckled Bird's-Egg Gravy

Only dark
sweetened occasions

survive contradiction
survive silence

Pitchers in a vacant row
staring
into vacant space

Oh come to
me now
my little sugar-shiver

little shadow-mind

Andrew Wessels

Arabesque

to trace the zero
to trace from the cusp of the zero
a glass of rakı — ice — a black cat blind
mother's simple words blind
in the space of the walk
laces interwoven through the cloth
a song
notes of a hat in the street
rain on the hat in the street
a long line of hats
you if you were not asleep

Kathleen Winter

I sleep with Patriarchy

in his tent that looks out over the world.
Light sheds white leaves
between leaves of the sliva trees.
To get the grass right
I'll need some black paint.
The present is an umbrella. Now
opens and closes each of its zillion eyes.
Patriarchy must mark everything
with intention. His tail
wakens at the base of my spine.

I believe it will be mine.

John Yau

from “My Latest Adventures in Monochrome”

1)

My fundamental self is at war with my multiple personalities
I love everything that does not belong to me, which is to say my life

but I despise everything that belongs to me:
education, inherited psychology, physical attributes.

In short, anything that is me because of exterior circumstances
My multiple selves are at war with my fundamental personality

Because one is never only one. I am aware that in writing this
I have committed an error of diplomacy

I recognize that people will claim these notes and thoughts are confused,
poorly expressed (as if expression has anything to do with it), emphatic,

for they have been written day by day,
even during the rain that threatens to close down the sky

I know that many will regard these statements
as another example of bad taste

a poor substitute for poetry
when in fact poetry is not what I am after

My fundamental self despises all that belongs to me:
multiples personalities, butterflies, and silent hoarding

Each more poorly expressed than the previous error of diplomacy

Who claims these notes are inherited circumstances

My multiple selves are at war with substitutes for poetry
My fundamental self is at war with poems offered as substitutes

I know that many will conclude these statements do not belong to me
I am aware in writing this during the rain that it is not raining

2)

At present my paintings are invisible.
I do not speak
In a utopian manner
In proposing such a program.
My paintings remain invisible;
And I wish to display them
In a clear and positive manner.
Everything I write today
Precedes this presentation.
My propositions are landscapes of freedom.
I will say it again.
I want to show man in nature
With the traces and marks
He leaves behind,
Traces and marks
That are always marvelous, artificial,
Ephemeral, and yet indestructible.
Perhaps it seems to you
That I am attempting
The impossible,
That I am throwing myself
Toward something that is inhuman.
I had no affection for oil paint.
The colors seemed dead to me.
Yet art is the glue that holds
The entire universe together.
At present my paintings are invisible,
Which is why I decided
To penetrate still further
Into this landscape.

The physical painting
Gives its right to exist to one single fact,
That one believes only
In the visible,
While quite obscurely
Sensing the essential
Presence of something else,
At times almost invisible.
The painter is the one who knows
How to speak of that real value.

3)
I recently
declared
that the
artist of tomorrow
will continuously
recreate herself
by being able
to levitate.
I have already
made the first steps
toward work of this type.
I commanded
my living brushes
by remote control.

4)
I dwell in possibility, Emily Dickinson
I dwell in impossibility, Yves Klein.

You should understand that I did not want you to read a painting. I wanted you to bathe in it before words domesticated the experience, and you turned to such stand-bys as “illumination” and “transcendent” to describe what happened to you. Painting should not be sentenced to sentences.

Painting is COLOR, I yelled at my first champion and biggest supporter. COLOR banishes words from its domain. When you read a painting, you turn it into language, but there is so much that cannot be turned into language that each of us experiences every day.

Red shadows leak out of rusting cars and collapsed bridges.
Green smoke rises from behind horizons and rooftops.
The spectrum of your mother's voice the last time she spoke to you.

Everyday there are thresholds that you must cross to reach the domain where words mar every transmission, rendering them intangible. We put our memory of these reverberations aside in favor of what is known and, we believe, knowable. We say we are going to the beach and we will look at the ocean and leave indentations in the sand, but that is not what happens. We go there to ponder a blue parcel cut from infinity.

True poets and artists know where language ends, which is why they go there. Some settle for going beyond the possible into possibility, but others want to dwell in the impossible. I am not talking fantasy here, because that version of the impossible is just a story about a girl named Thumbelina or a boy named Jack. The ones who go to where two roads diverge in a yellow wood are not poets, because they believe that experience can be reduced to a lesson about choices. True poets know that language is neither window nor mirror. The mistake is to believe that the opposite is true, that words (or signs) are arbitrary.

This is my example of why words are not arbitrary. Charles Baudelaire believed that there are perfumes for which all matter is porous. These perfumes can permeate the air of one's dreams. Our thoughts quiver in the shadows that fall over us; they begin to free their wings and rise in flight, tinged with azure, glazed with rose, spangled with gold.

Azure, Rose, Gold.

I was not thinking of Baudelaire when I made my paintings, but the poet was clearly dreaming of me when he sat at his desk and wrote "The Perfume Flask."

Can't you see that this is how I, radiating outward, happened to appear on this planet, this speck of dust? Yves Klein was born because Baudelaire predicted this propitious event by naming colors, which, like all colors, escape the confines of their names, becoming more than an emanation of infinity. Even black can get away from its name, which is why Malevich had to surround it with white. But what is color that isn't surrounded by another color? What is that boundless world we catch a glimpse of whenever we look up at the sky? Is it so vast that we must turn away from it, afraid that it will swallow us up, which it will? Astronomy, the Greeks believed, was a royal science, which means I am a royal painter. Do not confuse me, however, with a painter of royalty, with Ingres, who used lines to hold and improve the faces of his sitters, who believed in the despotic power of beauty.

I am not interested in beauty. I am not Andy Warhol. He longed for possibility, but was afraid of what it might tell him. I dwell in impossibility, and I want to be embraced by what it will tell me. My name is Yves Klein. There is a photograph of me that you might know. I have put on my best suit and jumped out a window. My arms are outspread, but they are not wings. I don't need them to fly. Nor am I the prince of clouds, Baudelaire's albatross, fallen from the sky. Screw that fascist Marinetti. My arms are not the wings of a drunkard beating against the wall. Mine are the outstretched arms of a diver. I fall effortlessly through the air, but I never am completely fallen. The cobblestones and I will never meet. I hover in a miracle, which is why you believe in the photograph, even after you have learned how I tricked you. It wasn't that hard to do. The true magician shows everyone how the trick was done, and after seeing how you were deceived, you believe in the trick all the more. I jumped out the window and I stayed in the air, which is where you wanted me to stay. I dwell in impossibility—that zone that lies beyond here and there, while embracing both.

