

## **E·ratio 11 · 2008**

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# Two Poems

by David Appelbaum

## Braille

Reading a book the man  
says reading a book  
the words  
    like a fishbone  
choke on life  
a gasp meaning  
the book falls open  
the man says the book  
a slip of paper  
catches the wind  
sails the open sky  
the man says  
until  
he taps a white cane  
on the way

## Alphabet

With the crane's flight  
ages flew past also  
the babble of the crib  
the child's zeal  
then the frown  
of unfounded words  
then the man  
in the desert of thought  
alone before temptation  
bent, yielding  
O why do ideas  
soar so grandly  
with that spoon-billed  
long-necked silhouette  
flapping molecular north?  
Why does passion  
lift so thin?  
This zeal to  
a lone man  
emerges from a cistern's  
mouth one day  
into blaring sun  
& their majestic brace  
in which all the letters  
of all the words  
ever to be writ  
ever to be writ  
are

# Medieval Exercise

by Donald Wellman

The temple,  
a drum.  
Lute, countertenor  
film,  
plenum.

Pen pricks on polished bone,  
amulet.

Then, horns  
*magnum mysterium*  
golden morn.

*Now goes the sun behind the tree  
Me reweth marie thy son and thee*

Pen pricks on velum  
And when the king's horse  
came to the mosque  
it bent its knee.  
Ruthless  
*campeador.*

*See the sun gone red toward evening,  
in its crimson dress.*  
Shelomo Ibn Gabriol  
*What can a boy of nineteen  
really do?*  
From his grammar.

# Genesis

*A Writer's Metanoia*

by Mary Ann Sullivan

1.

In the beginning was the word  
and the word created  
the deep in me  
a formless void  
dark covered  
with darkness  
only the word was there,  
in black shadow hovering.

Then there was light in me,  
which the darkness vied  
but could not overpower.

And I saw the light was good,

And I watched the word  
divide darkness from light  
and name them.

So it came, my first day.

2.

In shadow and light  
I flowed endlessly  
until the word  
vaulted and clove me  
into two parts:  
                    the depths  
                    the heights  
the second day.

3.

Then the word established  
land in me.  
firma terra  
earth on which to settle and be constant  
and in my stable ground,  
the word shaped trees  
that bore fruit  
with seeds in their very middles  
and plants and flowers sprung up,  
red, yellow, green, blue  
all with seeds, seeds!

Ground and life  
the third day.

4.

Then the word said,  
“I will conceal infinity from you.”  
It made separate lights,  
one hot orb for day  
and at night a moveable circle  
which grew like a white thought,  
then faded to silence.

And stars were made  
to sparkle me,  
reminding me,  
“There’s a festival today!”  
They made me forget the boundless.

Steady the sun, the moon,  
the stars, beat their rhythm,  
the fourth day.

5.

Then the word created  
birds in me  
some that hung on wind  
some that closed their wings  
to dive for prey  
And it made creatures that moved  
in my depths:  
leviathan, and clawed shells  
that crept on the bottom  
and simple swimmers  
wearing flesh of gold  
and green and grey.  
They multiplied  
And I was afraid  
the fifth day.

6.

But, the word would not stop.  
It pulled from my deep, black core  
hooved creatures, serpents  
and beasts  
howling and digging.

Trembling, I ran through  
this creation and cried out  
like a poet in a stone tower,

*“What hurts the soul  
My soul adores.  
No better than a beast  
upon all fours.”*

And, desolate, I crawled into  
a cave of earth.

But, the word found me  
it said, “What are you doing here?”

It took me into the world again  
and formed me into the shape  
of itself.

Yet, I was the dust of  
a soft pencil  
Thin, frail letters on a page

Until the word blew gently  
on the edges of my letters,  
my symbols,  
my signs.

I was a word holding creation

I did not cover my face like Elijah  
I called out like Tiersias,  
like John from water:

the sixth day.

7.

On the seventh day  
The word rested in me  
and blessed me

I would be a master crafter  
delighting in the word;  
day after day  
at play in its presence  
at play everywhere in its world.

*What hurts the soul* from “The Lady’s First Song” by W.B. Yeats

# Periodic Style

by Joseph F. Keppler

I'm reality, simply reality.  
The more I think about it though  
The more I get confused.  
Usually I'm real relaxed.  
I'm confident I'm me,  
And usually  
More like you than I like me to be.

I am the way I am about you,  
And I think, I think both  
I am and I am not you.

You are you, and you are not who I am.  
You and me, right? There then.

Before I left, I gathered every bit of me up.  
When I got back, I found nothing.  
I'll run into me sometime, I bet you.  
It's unusual to lose what you know is you.

Who will there be, to be there?  
There will be no you.  
There'll be no me, no simply reality.  
There'll be no one  
To see or be seen, to think or be thought.

A wing folds, a bird dives.  
A throat's cut, a bull faints.  
A hurricane accelerates, a bough cracks.  
You and I, we both die.

Brother, your welding gear,  
Your steel-toed boots,  
Your belted tools,  
Your gob of keys heavy in your dungarees,  
Too late neither right nor left in fog,  
Seated in the middle,  
You speed fast forward splashing  
The lake you breathe sinking in a pickup.

Hard harvest to take about our life, our art,  
To you I will to never neglect art.  
I'm sorry, dear brother, so sorry,  
I grieve your death and breathe your breath.

# C'EST *and* Word Tree

by Patrick Lawler

## C'EST

Say: jaguar. Say: snow.

Say: water lily.  
Say: sunflower.

Say:

A poem is not a mirror held up to a street or whatever. Say: It is a jagged piece of glass—shattered, swallowed. Say: marsh. Say: delta. Say: lightning. Say: frog. Say: A poem is not a window. Say: A poem is a door you must walk through.

Say: oak. Say: moss.

Say: pike.  
Say: swallow.

Say: say.  
Say: It is

## Word Tree

“Everything is going to have to be put back.”

—W.S. Merwin

After I built a house around a fire, I built a forest around a tree. Everything is layered: time layered into space: place layered with events: books layered with the brain. I was in the middle of my life though really closer to the end. I once knew a woman who talked to trees. When she placed her hand on a stump, she felt the heat. “That’s the way trees scream.” I wonder at the crystal breakage of forests after ice storms. The tree is alive with current. The past hidden inside. I am mindful of the facts; I am bodyful of the imagination. I remember what they used to say: Reach for the scars. You must always take into account the heart is a drunk, so you have to give it what it wants. In the fresco of trees, there is a sheen of light on the leaves. Hope bruises the heart—comes out the forehead. Fall is lumpy. Oh, we have sung a malignant litany. My students understand why we have to hide what we have done. Always we are in a different world than we think we are. Walk with the feet of a tree; think with the brain of a tree; breathe with the lung of a tree. There must be a drop of death in the sap. The great forests are ashes. The garden is inebriated with itself, stumbling from blossom to blossom. Christ is in the branches; Tarot’s hanging man is in the tree. Whitman’s trees are committing suicide—nature replaced by nation. Crushed. We’ve got a lot of stuff that needs to be hidden. In a way I’m glad we don’t have a science that could tell us what fish think—what sawdust feels. I imagine it would be terrible. Maybe there will be a meriactic miracle where the top becomes the bottom and the bottom becomes the top. Root becomes branch. Bud becomes seed. Until then we will have to be careful. There will be disappointed travelers arriving at an inner forest. Representatives from an absurd reality. Dawn incinerates us. The tree is hiding in the forest. The end: there is no end to it. The tragedy would be to not recognize there is hope. As always we are becoming seeds. Listen: One day I expect to dance like a tree.

# things shan't fly apart *and a s*

by James Stotts

things shan't fly apart

ash berries  
riper in winter  
than in spring

you are not here  
when you come  
what will you bring?

no, we shan't fill the home  
with anything  
flowers, furniture

poems that you'll never read  
i love you, a small box holds the rest  
of what i need

\* \* \*

peck  
pluck  
promise  
prove

this is maria's love

		the	beak
			lyre
			oath
			meter
the	devour	the	fang
the	divide	the	wedge

over breakfast  
iaskher  
about another day

the goldfinch calls per-chic-o-ree  
in flight  
birdsong slowtoleave

just nothing      nothing      per-chic-o-ree

the is we

\* \* \*

in the threewaywinds  
i can't go anywhere  
but back to you

the trees dance over the pond  
the door swings  
the hinge sings  
    your song

a s

in being and time (p. 163)

h. maintains

just as linguistic utterance  
is based on speech

so is acoustic perception  
on hearing

what is it that he heard?

a whining cart  
a motorcycle

the north wind  
the labor of a woodpecker

a fire's spit  
a column on the march

we shut our eyes here  
and listen for our listing hearts to list:

'hanna arendt uttered love . . .'

'the corpse of idle days = the people's fist'

'a documentary clip' or 'agitprop'

and hearing (h. goes on to say)  
is a part of speech

## Re [f] lections for Claude Cahun and Alice Rahon

*and*

### Three Prose Poems

by David Annwn

#### *Re [f] lections for Claude Cahun and Alice Rahon*

##### The Invisible Quest

No. I follow the wake left in air, trail in water, mirage in the pupils.

I can't relax. The abstract world of dreams shuts me down just as much as hard reality. What to do? Choose an abbreviated mirror and reflect, make a part answer for the whole? Mistake a mud-smear for a halo? Refusing to break myself against walls, I smash my body on windows. All the black night long.

Waiting for some clarity, some vision, I'll corner and grapple with myself. Already, I'm packing weapons: these truly useless words, against yours truly, yet someone has to try, if only to vault into the void? This is all bullshit. Negligible. A work-out for the eye perhaps.

Claude Cahun, *Trans.* D. Annwn

## Refractions

Come. The long beach and the missing footprints: out of this vanished struggle these brilliant glimmers; you eschewed artistic skill, in thrall to the sense of all that anyone could be, manifested through the strangeness of their contradicting skins, that fierce sidelong look of accusation for anyone who'd negate the unique first and last species that we all are separately, to claim a right for that, and make the secret open. Gender is only a part of the secret amongst the refracting surfaces, the challenge is refusal. Yes, you struck out through zones insinuating and hemming us in, to re-make the idea of fashioning itself as something natural as air and you'd go and did do through hell for that.

## Little skin

Little skin of turquoise attacked everywhere by red cotton claws an arrow has the redhead's number smells bad and always wears a spine of black feathers for the spine of sticklebacks has windows for the spokes of King Thule's wheel that don't enter by the window or by the door small setbacks are stones the reverse of great triumphs or vice versa as the pianist's hands are always frozen the piano's Eskimo who takes out his knife of walrus-bone the almanac emptying itself of dry debits of interplanetary velocity isn't to blame for loves so frequently lost that the reindeer's age solidifies the ice-cold of the floe with the turquoise skin.

Alice Rahon *Trans.* D. Annwn

## *Three Prose Poems*

### Glance

Glance that reads the stalled stages of attraction in anything: coral, petroglyph, semi-precious burdens of the automatic whorls dictated by spirits of the back of us coming through in fugitive spurts, the cost of moving and encountering presence in fissile atmosphere, and through the sear of fiery union and bifurcation; blue and green, registers of extreme pressure are caught millennia: scatter-tracks captured in stone; blueprints for neural nativities and god-sprung genetic syntax. These combinations scorch, blench and, freeze-dried, flake off seawards yet dramas of that magnitude held deep, unlock themselves to you, your thunderstruck prismatic key.

### Red Lid

My first is in container park but not in distribution my second is in luxury, performance and style but not in any happenstance my third is core cover and no annual maximum my fourth is black data and a hard act to swallow my second is in offshore safe trading my first is in my, my my is in little i my indulgence is craved, my weather is spy crimson, my mother's brother is exactly, my concern is whelming my tax status is a tough letter and begging the issue my last is properly registered in exile my first has rights reserved and raised questions and who are you sleeping partners with words anyway?

## Kerviel's Curve

A conjure hand who let the course run its law got the lowdown got to get  
on up charisma not on my watch, close down every client endpoint  
retinal configuration engine idling malware burning memos for  
unknown foes significant, ipso facto a tad too risky for few in the know  
foes in the new, thief goes speech assignative, iconise deep six, floor the  
inventory on floor six and bury the evidence of insider exotic trading in  
futures seriously nouvelle vague scratch that make that retro ensorcelled.

# Two Poems

by David Rushmer

## Hidden By Leaves

the last line

spoke of this life  
“floating a dream that vanishes  
lift their eyes  
carry them to  
all directions  
on a journey  
he grasps at  
the air  
there is an attempt  
that which remains unsaid  
words are

*landscape*

image  
stand out against the snow  
accidental, of the beautiful  
disappears in mirrors  
to further place and time  
so often attains  
the eternal  
and the movement  
of our feelings  
and elsewhere in the world

to write  
     the only  
         root          If we  
 examine  
 forms  
     of those who remain  
 to reflect  
         changes  
         the location of the grave  
         with almost pleasurable expectation  
         to move  
 to the next world  
     these preparations  
     toward  
 the dying, allowing  
     sometimes  
         a collection  
             the essence of all things  
*empties*  
 to the world beyond  
     death or the house of its relatives  
     merges into  
     contact  
         who calls the dead  
             in midsummer  
 to their place of birth  
     it is said  
 effigies, or  
 bodies of water  
     a force superior  
         for his most private thoughts  
         hidden by leaves  
*the boundaries of this world.*

## Written Off

I.

following sentence

beneath furnished experience  
writing the destruction of voice

every point                      neutral

oblique space slips away identity  
the body writing doubt  
no longer acting outside itself

voice origin                      enters death

consciousness centred on his passions  
as if the end transparent  
point language to the place

leading activity  
to pure himself  
fragment of the movement being  
disappointment entrusting the hand  
the principle experience itself

an empty process to be filled  
an emptiness outside to exhaust it  
an act of writing utterly  
transforms the absent

divided lives work simultaneously  
in no way a being      there is no other  
time eternally an operation of rare form  
no other act is uttered

II.

I sing having buried the pathetic hand  
    passion and necessity  
the hand cut off  
    a field releasing a space

tissue drawn  
from the centres of eternal gesture  
    never to rest himself  
the interior to translate the dead  
the passion draws tissue  
    of deferred multiplicity

the thread and the space not pierced  
evaporates a system of literature  
    liberates its source

nature woven              this perpetual duplicity

drawn from              and entering into one place

focused hitherto the space inscribed  
holds together a trace it sets aside  
writing the birth of death.

## Three Poems

by Melanie Brazzell

Destiny is just a choice you keep making  
again and again and again. . . .

You lay black weight on the belly  
of the water, I watch —  
just the shape of your obscurity,  
forceps clamped on the dawning edges of your mystery.  
We may never know the ontology of holes.

This multiplication table upon which  
we lay and do our business, I say  
I do not wish to be in love,  
only to ache over the agar of this infection.

Anthropometry, the measuring of human skulls.  
With glasses on, I peer over my printouts:  
the mathematical risk of suicide,  
invariably leaky latches on our play pens.  
The danger of finding oneself facedown in the pool.

Knowing the length of one's own soul  
is some kind of eugenics — a heady joke  
in a room full of tinkering glasses,  
when we know the universe never stops expanding.

Vibrations of a self rippling over its  
to-be-decayed body —  
We have been both occupied  
and in exile.

unbearable flatness

i can see  
all you hide,  
dry sockets.

the  
obscurity  
in nudity.  
(not  
frontal,  
not pornography:  
sex math nerves  
)

but retreating.  
from hands  
skin  
fleeting.

try pocket,  
economize  
save  
catch  
releasecatch  
save build release

(petit drama;  
circuitry) a  
seeping hole  
blown,  
slippery  
horizons of a  
different metaphor  
— stop chasing. at last

an eclipsing shadow  
sweeps across the breast  
towards, wanes, lost.

infinite depth,  
                    infinite surface  
cobwebs  
without overhangs:  
unbearable flatness.

indents instead of scratches

i press  
“to remember.”  
no, scratch that.  
truth? — to consume,  
imbibe  
imbed in bed, bury.

i press you  
into wine,  
cast in  
plaster.  
hold, ladle me —

intent  
on spilling,  
bubbles clinging,  
not ready to join air.

locking, not sweet.  
selfish oars stuck,  
cast aside.

bog death  
only paleolith,  
petrified?

p.s. i press  
against error  
a=b=c  
if you make it.

set bones  
mold. hurry.  
trace lines,  
memorize:  
    i end you begin.

# Three Poems

by Jennifer Juneau

## Distance Lends Enchantment

My fault-finding slid off you,  
as if throwing grease to Teflon air.  
I saw the icky side of romance  
and lie here with a difficult heart.  
Our home became a time share.

Often enough you tiptoed in  
carrying cut-rate love. Stale vinegar  
on my tongue. When I said I wanted it all,  
self-service isn't what I meant.  
How easy it would have been

to give you the slip,  
when the slightest thing you did  
sent our union into a tailspin.  
But I can't volunteer to flee this nest  
Because honey, I've been drafted.

So I'll do my time until my time is done.  
As for the heart, that sump  
brimming with sodden love  
I'll teach it other angles and if all fails  
I'll teach it how to swim.

## Next Time We Meet

Next time we meet  
it will be at a restaurant,  
not your pad for a take-out mess.  
I confess: I'd rather sit and rap

about the new democrats  
than to have sex between the cartons  
and the sheets. I'm sick  
of indulging you

while listening to other women fan their requests  
for you to pick up on your neon-lit  
answering machine. Besides, I have a voice too  
and our affair is overrated.

Next time we meet  
we won't be alone. I'll dab my wrists  
with French cologne and smolder  
in some place you cannot reach.

## In Paris

You ordered escargot to impress me,  
then complained of a burnt tongue.  
You were no longer having fun  
so I ate it for you. When we returned  
to our room, to my distress,  
your head hurt too much to undress me.

The next day we argued,  
about love, or lack of,  
nixing our chance to tour the Louvre.  
I pretended not to care and sat on the bed,  
flipping through an issue of Vogue.

Air conditioner broken and a grudge  
greasing the air, I looked out the window  
to find Notre Dame. Although I couldn't see it  
I knew it was there but a wall in my sight

wouldn't budge. Shacked up in a crummy hotel with no view  
I turned and remembered "I'm in Paris with you."

## Six Poems

by John M. Bennett

### Funder

jonda ,jambda ,leaky nest nah flund  
abda creabp hungk )norb mate( jeemp

sord nuh sled ,adda hip crunt ,mot  
blambp eats nur stair cheeber .sloak !

hab hot reend :dungk bowl cleams  
norda floop meant griztle .oucha oucha

drobp neh flork "fork" engine treebpt  
.ahs nek hamdo :nage ehn loobp ot

blund ehn meat ?drok sand ehn nur  
teet ,flinger bunst uhn rugg am

float ,nab ,cront duggy soont und  
crastno nere chimping neeb ehn glort

## Flumpnor

lung shed ,wetness dlangor koked  
nepter chlum a gag :nenst nuh hemb

churner leg flent ,creedge dent ha  
mper clorm :nuh chaem blorn ,wrist

mandor cleem blat ahn dempter  
,chum ,cloac ,nedtner clong seemp

chur soup ,lomba dlent ,mlorta  
seegle bent naw cheep slunk .clinst

.neb nor plong :ust cave jeweler  
flaem asda drunk hornk blomber

fled a nape ,crimbp jlumble soom :  
bunh jumper craved anh claembp nork

## Blent

slont  
hebdo  
cheese  
crunsta  
denk  
chatter  
seemp  
sloddor  
chot  
napta  
trong  
gristle  
grunt

blendo slintwise

## Fnort

cren denk uh slaem  
)eedge flunder ,maest(  
cobda brenk swuiet enst  
.grees deh flemd ur costa  
,flamd blrot mork ,enh jimp

## Lidge

aspa dentic nura  
sleem dendo funz  
:speedna drem̄p ,uhn  
grap̄in sem̄d ur chon  
.luba grent dlink

## Lieb

me  
nt  
la  
ke  
do  
ne  
ne  
ck  
sh  
ad  
la  
pp  
fr  
og  
en  
ag  
ua

splabp

*from Longfellow Memoranda*

by Geof Huth

*April*

*92/274*

*light & air*  
*hardened to wood*  
*forest cleaved open*  
*by sun*

*93/273*

*oft wayward*  
*he dwells*  
*in dust & motes*  
*of thought*

94/272

*the living springs*  
*the living*  
*springs*  
*the living springs*

95/271

*a benison*  
*o'er sleeping*  
*a memory*  
*under sleep*

96/270

*resolute*  
*& resolute*  
*again*  
*ere long*

97/269

*man*  
*manifold*  
*like flowerets*  
*& revelations*

98/268

*the gravid fruit  
proceedeth  
    to rot  
& ruin*

99/267

*restless heart  
    doth breathe  
& stop*

100/266

*dark & dreary  
    words of weary  
every poem  
isn't noem*

101/265

*thrill & being  
    world alive with  
sun & water color*

102/264

*tongue*  
*the Golden Mean*  
*of every*  
*unthought thought*

103/263

*the quiet spirit dwells & drills*

104/262

*the throng!*  
*the song!*  
*the gong!*  
*the long!*

105/261

*[wings,*  
*feather flowers*  
*buds just bursting*  
*into flight*

106/260

*woodland dreams  
brighter  
than the shock  
of waking*

107/259

*O twilight  
betwixt  
now &  
them*

108/258

*gladness is  
sadness's  
madness*

109/257

*gladness  
to hadness  
the twitch  
continues*

110/256

*slumber*  
    *lumbers*  
*not awake*  
*neither waiting for a wake*

111/255

*shadowy dream*  
    *r'm'm'b'r'd*  
*less*  
*than felt*

112/254

*Nature*  
    *doth create*  
*Love*  
    *doth satiate*

113/253

*the heav'n of April*  
    *splend'rous*  
*buds to*  
*blossoms*

114/252

*green flowers  
    & leaves  
the poetry  
of plants*

115/251

*without that  
    which I will  
to you*

116/250

*take her to  
with all her  
    he whom neither  
of his*

117/249

*one hymn  
    the songstress  
asunder  
by music*

*118/248*

*every every  
too too*

*119/247*

*turn wheel  
    & care &  
    age & pause  
away*

*120/246*

*homeward  
    meadows  
woodlands bound with shadow*

*121/245*

*above all roofs  
    an evening star  
straightening out  
the sky*

# Two Excerpts *from* SOMETHING *and* Now Then When

by John Mercuri Dooley

## *Two excerpts from* SOMETHING

ANYTHING WILL BE OK WILL BE SAID STATEMENTS WILL BE THINGS NOT MET OBJECTS WILL GET LOST LOST THINGS WILL HAVE OR WILL BE NO OBJECT ONE WILL NOT AGREE WITH THAT AND CALL IT STATEMENTS WILL BE NOTHING TO BE FOOLED SOMETHING THAT WILL BE NOTHING WILL COME AND GO AND A FEELING WILL COME IT WILL BE SOMETHING NOT AN OBJECT AND THERE WILL BE ONE THINGS TO BE SEEN WILL BE THERE AND TAKE UP SPACE SEEN OR OTHER THINGS WILL BRING WHICH WILL BE A SUBJECT OR TWO TOPICS WILL BE CONSIDERED OBJECTS WILL BE SPOKEN OF TALK THERE WILL BE NONE NO ONE WILL COME AND WILL THIS WILL BE CLOSE ONE WILL COME TO IT ONE WILL NOT SAY IT AND WILL SAY SOMETHING WHY WILL ONE NOT ONE WILL BE SOMETHING WILL NOT MEAN IT SOMETHING WILL BE SAID BUT ONE WILL NOT MAKE IT ONE WILL SAY HOW WILL THERE BE NO OBJECT IT WILL DISAGREE TO ONE WILL COME WILL IT AND IT WILL DECIDE TO FEEL ITS SIZE THESE WILL BE IN A PLACE IN SOME AREA THINGS NOT TO BE SAID WILL CALL WILL NOT BE.

ONE WILL GO THERE THE PLACE WILL BE IT CERTAIN OF  
THEM WILL HAVE AN EMOTION ABOUT IT AND GET HAVE  
THOUGHTS ABOUT IT HEADS WILL WHAT WILL BE IN THEM  
THE OTHER WILL MAKE SOMETHING THE RESULTS WILL  
NOT BE GOOD TO SOME OF THEM SOMETHING OPPOSITE IT  
WILL MAKE A SENSE THEY WILL MOVE SOMETHING IN  
THEM THEY WILL NOT SAY IT WILL BE SOMETHING USEFUL  
SOMETHING WILL BE AND THERE AND THERE WILL GO  
SOMETHING SOMETHING WILL DECIDE NOT TO BRING IN  
ANY THING THEY WILL BE KEPT OR THROWN OUT THINGS  
WILL BE KEPT BUT ONE WILL MAKE SURE ABOUT IT THEY  
WILL FEEL WELL NOT SURE THEY WILL THEY NO NOT AND  
ONE WILL NOT SAY THAT THAT WILL NOT BE SAID AND  
WILL FEEL SOMETHING ANOTHER OR ANOTHER WILL BE OK  
AND ONE WILL NOT LEAVE IT THAT IT WILL SAY THINGS  
CAN'T ENTER EVERYTHING WILL MEET WHERE ONE WILL  
BE IN THAT PLACE THEY WILL BE FULL AND THESE WON'T  
PLACES ALL OVER WILL BE MADE TO BE BY ONE AND  
ANOTHER ONE WILL HOLD AND FORGET OTHERS SOME  
THEY WILL KNOW IT THEY WILL FEEL IN PLACES WITH  
OTHERS ONE WILL PAY THEM NO MIND THEY WILL NOT BE  
LOOKED AT IN WHAT THEY WILL THINK WILL BE THEIRS  
ANY SHAPE WILL BE NO REASON TO THINK ABOUT ONE IT  
WILL BE PART THAT NEED NOT BE DISCARDED ONE WILL  
FEEL SOMETHING ONE WILL ONE WILL WANT TO BE WILL  
BE SAID NOTHING WON'T MEAN WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS OK.

## *Two excerpts from* Now Then When

Hold the future. Let go of the present. Think of what was before now. Relate this to the future. Think how the future affects what you are doing now and how what you are doing now is a result of what happened in the distant and near past and if an experience of doubling experiences occurred and had anything to do with this. Imagine that you have more than one future one each for all your yours. If you are an easygoing person maybe the only way you think about the future is in terms of what you have to do later in the day or night or tomorrow or next week or further into the future. Think about what happened to others in the past that affected you and will affect both of you in the future individually and collectively. Your parents are in your future. I am in your immediate future and if you care to read further into the future than 10 minutes from now I will be in that future. If that 10 were a lower number I would have just written it out for example five and then in the almost immediate future written 10. Is making the figures 1 and 10 ever writing. Are numbers ever part of writing. Imagine how the people who invented quantities would feel about characters such as 5 and 10 and how they would feel about what came much further in the future machines that made the figures first mechanical machines then electronic machines. Who could have imagined 100 years ago that there would be electronic machines with memory. How much memory does your computer have and do you understand the numbering system used to express the size of memory and how large a quantity that figure represents. I forgot what I was going to say. I hoped that typing that sentence I forgot what I was going to say would give me time to remember what I was going to say but now it is even further from my mind. It lasted a split second and was immediately gone. Remember what you did yesterday at periods you determine. What was I saying before. Every sentence brings you further away from the thought you

had a few sentences ago and if you have a bad memory that can be frustrating and hold you back at least in your head. People who died stay in your memory. What is your favorite song and how long into the future do you think you will remember that at this time that was your favorite song. What are you doing now and what do you think you will do tomorrow. I remember not what I was going to say but what I said. What I said was what I was saying at the time. Saying what I was saying at the time expresses a different time than saying I said. What did you just say to someone if there was someone else there and if there was no one else there did you say anything in your head when you were reading this. What I remember is that I was thinking about the future and thought about holding on to the future which anyone can do. And what I said was something about holding on to the future I don't remember what the exact words were but I do remember the general thought. I almost forgot what I have to do later. What does it mean to say you almost forgot. When will things end. It depends what is meant by when and it depends what is meant by things and it depends what it meant by end. What do you want to end and when do you think it will. Will you bring about that ending or is it something beyond your control. If it is beyond your control do you think there will be something in the near future you will be able to do to bring it about more quickly. . . .

How often do you not want to do something and don't do it. Like I don't want to do this now but I am. Why am I doing something that I don't want to do now. Why does anyone ever. When did you last read a book you did not want to read but thought you should. Why would anyone ever listen to anyone even themselves telling them what should be done. Morals are always a factor in many things. That sentence might never make sense to some in English but it might in a language of a culture with another sense of time. What time is it. If you were a continent away what time would it be. What time do you want it to be. If it were another day at the same time how would you feel. Are you

lonelier on Sunday or Saturday. Are you more lonely on those days than you other other days of the week. Does the fact that you have a regular Monday to Friday job have something to do with this. Travel tomorrow. Go as far as your money can take you in time to get home to eat tonight. If you don't want to go home to eat tonight eat somewhere you can afford or can't afford and put it on your credit card. Peroni beer is made in Rome or the company is based there and it has been made since the mid 1800s. My husband just told me that on a Sunday morning drinking his first cup of coffee at the kitchen sink. Our house has a more or less open floor plan but when I first saw it it was cut up into little rooms. A sense of living and space has changed since it was built more than 100 years ago indicating a change in the way people feel about life themselves in it their relation to people and things and themselves and to public and private life and space and so forth. How do you feel today about public life. Does how you feel depend on the day of the week it is or what time it is. If it is 2 a.m. how do you feel about it. If it is 11 a.m. and you just barely heard the train whistle like now how would it be. Have a soft boiled egg cooked for four minutes with butter and salt and pepper in it. Yesterday I spent a long time cooking for my family. They were coming over to go skating at a rink near our house and they stayed at the rink for two hours. I cooked chicken soup and let it simmer for three hours uncovered so over time it develod a concentrated flavor. I trimmed and pounded chicken for cutlets then coated them in flavored breadcrumbs I had made earlier from bread I had left out for two days to harden. I boiled a head of cauliflower for five minutes then broke it apart dipped it in egg grated cheese garlic and parsley and fried it. I poured olive oil on three varieties of potatoes and onion garlic parsley salt and pepper and let them roast for an hour mixing them every twenty minutes. I washed lettuce and made a salad which doesn't take much time. Everyone stayed for six hours. We ate and drank for a few hours. What can I do now. I am sitting here now no longer feeling like I don't want to do this. I forgot I didn't want to do it which is typical of how thought changes over even a very short expanse of time. How expansive will your day be. If it is Sunday will you languish will you see a long movie will you cook or be cooked for will you go for a long walk will

you work even though it is Sunday. Do you know anyone who has to work every day. Do you ever get tired of people asking you questions. Are you tired of it now even though I am not really talking to you. What I am doing now isn't talking and I am doing it to you. To say I am writing to you would not be quite right and to say I am writing for you is not right and to say I am not writing to you or for you is not right either. I hope you read this and like it whenever you read it. I do sense you are there now that I am writing but I do not want to know who you are and avoid thinking you are someone I know or want to impress. I write for myself and strangers as Gertrude Stein said long ago and it is still true for many unless they know a lot of people who will read what they write. I am still writing and continue to do so and hope you read and I do want to be recognized. It is embarrassing to let you know this and it is annoying to be writing in a way I do not want to write and never wanted to but I feel driven by the force of it now in a way I find annoying and do not want to erase. Writing is the mind and can you ever say vice versa. . . .

# Four Poems

by Mark Cunningham

## Tamarisk

The voice in my head that disagrees with what the voice in my head just said. An internal surgeon is looking at Anselm Kiefer. This sentence isn't clear about the momentary power structure (yes, it is). Morning is permanent, but its location changes instant by instant. I have to drive somewhere to take a walk.

## Tea

All focus is connected: I forgot why I took off my glasses. The small hole pin-pricked into the top of the plastic cup lid: you never know when there might be an eclipse.

## Indigo

The meaning of “no no” does not depend on the words themselves or even on the tone with which you say them, but on the nature of the pause between the words. The Tamil Tigers eat Tony the Tiger for breakfast. There is a type of tree named “ash.” Walking through a room in absolute dark is still not the same as walking through a room in absolute dark with your eyes closed. It couldn't happen to a nicer guy. It couldn't happen.

## Norway Spruce

It took me 27 years to get the hair/hare pun in having Bugs Bunny be the Barber of Seville. I do not represent myself. This letter represents me. This letter cannot speak. I have to say it. The theory of relativity backs my claim that I'm not lying when I say this is too the world's largest fire work's store.

*from*  
Conveyors of a Loosely Knit Etheric Build

by Derek Owens

A Young Entrepreneur Named Kaminski

Outside his window the world was locked into its pattern. A sense of belonging nuzzled him in the dusty room.

“I’ve always liked Art Deco.”

Yes, this was his destiny.

And his life progressed on an even keel.

He found that he couldn’t explain turning his back on the external symbols of his life.

Enormous brass padlocks twice the size of a man’s fist!

\*

Oh that wacky image of himself as some kind of pioneer restaurateur.

And what of his wounds, the wounds of the world!

Behind the flowing ribbon of unreality the furnishings of Life had changed.

He wouldn't be fooled by the blood flowing through his abdomen. Not now, not this time.

\*

She wore a long red evening gown with spaghetti straps. A silk flower clutched her left hip like a crab. Her hair was bobbed short and she wore deep crimson, almost black lipstick that echoed the hue of her long fingernails.

“I'm friends with The Dead.”

“He's good people.”

They drank Chivas, ate beer nuts, grew garrulous with drink.

Dark things played in the liquid at their feet.

\*

“It's firve-thirty in the morning! Yer chicken pot pie's been on the table for almost ten hours!”

The ceiling of the world split open like a can of tuna.

A dog lifted his leg as a huge sonic boom roared overhead. Yikes the sky is falling thought the dog.

On earth farmers in a Midwestern cornfield saw the brilliant flash in the sky. The explosion lit up the pyramids. In Kaminski's house in Texas Kaminski's father was watching the teevee.

\*

Everyone went nuts as the heroes came down the runway pumping their fists in the air.

“You’re a pillar of nobility. You don’t believe anything that isn’t substantiated by forms.”

The words caught the old fellow off-guard. For a moment he looked misty-eyed. Then his usual bluster returned.

“Prove it, then!” he thundered. “Find me some *real* pudding!”

## After Clark My Life Was Over

pretend the scar's  
not there

to have been born without parents  
sucked out a hole in a 747

melted away and now look who's swimming to Mars

we have taken worse, we have given better  
one anchors against what is insoluble

noses pressed against the windows  
he's tracing signs in her breath on the glass  
you can tell there's love inside

yellow bumblebee stings the small dog

as for those we care for  
one can't embrace them enough

## Hollow Earth

crosshatchings in the bowl you're born into

subliminal Petri dish choreography

reading the lumps on the librarian's head

where tracks are tracking

themselves!

# Bombay Diary

by Gautam Verma

## *First Morning*

everything wilting in the humidity: hair, towels, toast, newspapers  
headlines today a mix of glibness, hysteria, home-spun philosophy  
doing the Sunday crossword have to look up the word *apostasy*  
apo: of, with, from? what does *rootstock* mean exactly —  
an absolute erosion of my karma (a 100 years of misery!)  
killing flies at the rate of six an hour

“your pleas today will be met again by the overwhelming refusal to see

## *2nd Night*

book covers curled in the humidity  
wood-swell and the door stuck in the door jamb  
and a long discourse on resemblance and dreams (& on silly Foucault)  
with the resident rat confined both  
to the balcony

“the dreamer and the dreamed overlapped  
so completely in whose dream did the terror  
begin and who was it sigilated to the sheets

## *4th Morning*

flash showers a cascade  
of horns a man selling  
mosambis on the island  
below marooned this  
past hour on the first  
letter of the alphabet

“you cannot dream your dream and face it  
too Orpheus descent would seem to relate

*6th Afternoon*

while pruning branches of the banyan tree the man fell and broke his leg  
he got drunk with money he received and sits with his back to the  
compound wall berated by women in his family their shrill voices carry  
up into the balcony

*7th Afternoon*

reading Foucault on Magritte: formidable stones

spell the airiness of dreams

in the caligrammatic double:

annulled and annealed

*12th Evening*

benediction of pigeon droppings  
palm green fern green in violet  
evening light an oaken staircase  
risen into shadows guttered like  
a candle looking down the long  
chute of memory past the cricket  
net's metal grating as in a dream  
the uncanny means your being  
there is nowhere to be seen

“in the shrouded hour a turning  
thing unfolding there the abiding  
blindness at its back

*13th Morning*

reading B.E.'s *Altman's Tongue* I describe (to myself) alternately as a  
“theatre of cruelty” or the “will to death” I have to look up the word  
*anamnesis* recalling it as I rise but wanting then to confirm that  
recollection

*14th Night*

a man with a blind person's cane shuffles in front of the car — will you  
be giving me a lift he asks — where to — Bhudwar park — I'm sorry I  
say I don't know where that is — and drive away what does or does not  
constitute today an adequate response to the world

*16th Morning (save a thought for Farnesiana tredici)*

builders are keen  
to bulldoze it tenants  
huddle in their tenements

far away and out of  
reach I scheme in my  
sleep a way to save  
the unsuspecting plants  
their cellar-dank dreams

*20th Night*

whatever there is in the light  
that draws the moth the moth  
may not have it it throws  
itself against the glass its  
dizzy and demented flight

*23rd Morning*

reflected bird flight  
in the window behind  
(vector, laser, light) cuts  
through space as though  
flown out of your eye

*28th Afternoon*

*spelunking* lost the word last night and fou  
nd it again in the crossword this morning

# words away

a poem in 125 parts

by

Clark Lunberry

away had he with words  
had he with words away  
he with words away had  
with words away had he  
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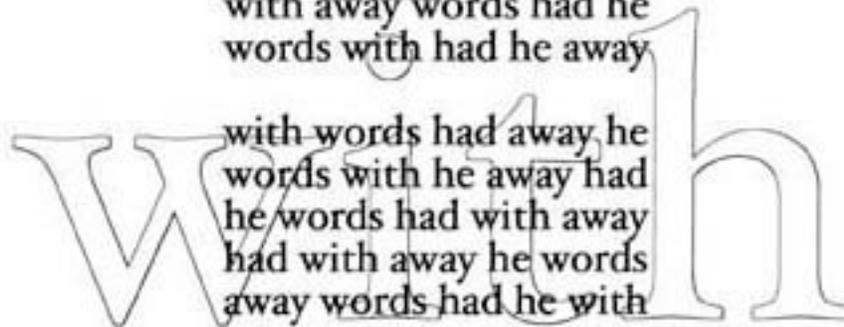
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**David Appelbaum** is a hiker and biker, former editor of *Parabola Magazine*, and the publisher of Codhill Press. His poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Commonweal* and *Rhino*.

**Donald Wellman's** *Fields*, a selected poems (1995), is available from Light and Dust. His recent poetry includes *Baroque Threads*, an e-book from Mudlark. *Prolog Pages*, a compilation drawn from ethnographic poetry and other observations made in Mexico and Spain, will be released in the winter of 2009 from Ahadada. Some of those poems can be found in *Eratio Postmodern Poetry*, *There*, and *Fascicle*. His essay, "Creeley's Ear" appeared in Jacket Magazine 31. "Aleatory displacement," a review of Anne-Marie Albiach's *Figured Image*, tr. Keith Waldrop, appears in Jacket Magazine 32. Recently published translations include poems by Antonio Gamoneda (Spanish) and by Yvan Goll (German). For several years, he edited *O.ARS*, a series of anthologies devoted to questions of poetics and experimental practice.

**Mary Ann Sullivan** is a Doctor of Arts student at Franklin Pierce University in New Hampshire. Her first novel, *Child of War*, set in Belfast, Northern Ireland, was named a Notable Book in Social Studies and favorably reviewed in *The New York Times*. Her e-chap of poems and drawings is called *Mending My Black Sweater* and is published by E-ratio Editions.

**Joseph F. Keppler** is a sculptor. His poem, “Periodic Style,” is from his Nine Muses Books chapbook, *All the While a Child Counting On Counting the Moon in Flight*.

**Patrick Lawler** has published three books of poetry: *A Drowning Man is Never Tall Enough* (University of Georgia Press), *(reading a burning book)* (Basfal Books), and *Feeding the Fear of the Earth*, the winner of the Many Mountains Moving poetry book competition.

**James Stotts** (stotts@bc.edu) is a poet and photographer living in Boston and starting a family.

**David Annwn** is a recipient of a Ferguson Centre award for African and Asian Studies. He lectures for the Open University in the north of England. Among his books are the collaborations, *It Means Nothing To Me* (with Geraldine Monk), and *The Last Hunting of the Lizopard* (with Alan Halsey.) His most recent collection is *Bela Fawr's Cabaret* (Westhouse/Ahadada). *LipglossEry* is forthcoming.

Works by **David Rushmer** have appeared in a number of journals including *Angel Exhaust*, *Great Works*, *Moria* and *10<sup>th</sup> Muse*. Recordings of his works are now featured online at *Archive of the Now* <http://www.archiveofthenow.com/>. His most recent pamphlets are *The Family of Ghosts* (Arehouse Press, Cambridge, 2005), and *Blanchot's Ghost* (Oystercatcher Press, 2008). Sources for the poems are: for “Written Off,” *The Death of The Author* by Roland Barthes, and for “Hidden by Leaves,” the introduction to *Japanese Death Poems* by Yoel Hoffman.

**Melanie Brazzell** graduated from Columbia University in 2006 and currently lives in Berlin trying to meld poetry and philosophy, dancing & gardening, building beloved community, thinking about whiteness, studying love and antifascism, and making mobiles. She self-published a chapbook, *stitches*, and has been published in *The Columbia Review*. [Talk to her: [melanie.brazzell@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.brazzell@gmail.com)]

**Jennifer Juneau** was a finalist in the 2006 National Poetry Series. She has new work forthcoming in *Confrontation*, *Passages North*, *Rio Grande Review* and *Seattle Review*. She lives in Zurich, Switzerland.

**John M. Bennett** has published over 300 books and chapbooks of poetry and other materials. He was editor and publisher of *LOST AND FOUND TIMES* (1975-2005) and is Curator of the Avant Writing Collection at The Ohio State University Libraries. Richard Kostelanetz has called him “the seminal American poet of my generation.” His work, publications, and papers are collected in several major institutions, including Washington University (St. Louis), SUNY Buffalo, The Ohio State University, The Museum of Modern Art, and other major libraries.

**Geof Huth** is an American who has lived on most continents on earth (but not Australia). Over the years, he has created visual and other poems in a wide variety of formats: lineated verse, prose, paintings, drawings and films. He has been published in venues as diverse as *The American Poetry Review*, *Dreams and Nightmares*, *Kalligram*, *Lost and Found Times*, *Modern Haiku*, *La Poire D'Angoisse*, *Prakalpana Literature*, *ZYX*, and even atop bandaids. His latest books are *Out of Character* (a series of visual poems), *Longfellow Memoranda* (a book of 366 short poems based on the poetry of Longfellow), and *texistence* (a book of 300 poems co-written with mIEKAL aND). He writes almost daily on visual poetry at his blog, dbqp: visualizing poetics <<http://dbqp.blogspot.com/>>.

**John Mercuri Dooley** lives in Cambridge, Mass., where he and his husband, Andrew Richardson, curate the Demolicious Poetry/Multimedia Series. MuBet, an ongoing online project, can be seen at . Other works have appeared at *BlazeVox*, *facsimile*, *Gut Cult*, *Moria*, *No Tell Motel*, *Shampoo* and *Word For/Word* and have been distributed as mail art by Marymark Press. His multimedia work has been presented at the Brickbottom Gallery in Somerville, and Oni Gallery and Atlantic Works Gallery in Boston. He has written book reviews for *Boog City* and *Jacket*.

**Mark Cunningham** has poems in recent or forthcoming issues of *Dusie*, *Otoliths*, and *Parcel*. Tarpaulin Sky Press will be bringing out a book tentatively titled *Body Language*, “which will be a sort of diptych containing two collections, one titled *Body* (on parts of the body) and one titled *Primer* (on numbers and letters).” About the poems here in *E-ratio*, Mark says “They come from a series on leaves. Each poem starts with some element of its leaf’s natural history, appearance, or medicinal use, and goes from there. The leaf probably doesn’t appear in the poem, but its characteristics guide what can go in.”

**Derek Owens** directs the Institute for Writing Studies at St. John’s University, in Queens, NY. Much of his work is in the area of composition pedagogy, sustainability, and writing program administration. *Conveyors* is an example of “d.j. poetics or what might be called compost theory. I seek out pieces of language from unlikely sources: forgotten supermarket horror novels, romantica, self-published works by psychics, old comp handbooks, discarded newspapers on the Long Island Rail Road, cookbooks by Ted Nugent. I cut and paste and combine and rework lines and phrases, store the material for a time, then pull it out of hibernation and rework some more. I like the idea of mining the kitsch of the world, letting it percolate, and being surprised at what sprouts on the other side.”

**Gautam Verma** lives and works in Piacenza, Italy, where he has been since completing graduate work at the University of Denver. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Free Verse*, 26, *BlazeVox*, *Big Bridge*, *Word For/Word*, *Drunken Boat*, *Diagram* and *Moria*. His chapbooks include *Tombs* and *In Ladakh* from Shearsman and *Soundings*, an e-chap, from BlazeVox.

**Clark Lunberry** is an Associate Professor in the Dept. of English at the University of North Florida, in Jacksonville, Florida, where he is also a visual artist and poet: <<http://www.unf.edu/~clunberr>>

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Gregory Vincent St. Thomasino on logoclasody, logoclastics, eidetics and pannarrativity. Addenda include the *Crash Course in Logoclastics*, *Concrete to Eidetic* (on visual poetry) and *On Mathematical Poetry*.

*taxis de pasa logos*

