

# arras 5

new poetry and poetics

edited by brian kim stefans

riddled argots  
part i

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## Darren WERSHLER-HENRY

### Lang Po vs. the Wu-Tang

*A good teacher protects his pupils from his own influence.*

- Bruce Lee

Larry Eigner vs. Tha Prickly Comedian  
Nick Piombino vs. Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere  
Alan Davies vs. Homicidal Terrahawk  
Peter Seaton vs. Loose-Lipped Controller  
Ray Di Palma vs. Superintendent God-Botherer  
Ron Silliman vs. Inscrutable Drama Queen  
Barrett Watten vs. Undiscovered Bum  
Robert Grenier vs. Cybernetic Tiger  
Craig Watson vs. Tha 23rd Buchan  
Ted Greenwald vs. Inscrutable Drama Queen  
Michael Lally vs. Pre-Raphaelite Shaolin  
Jackson Mac Low vs. Action-Packed Mentallist  
Lyn Hejinian vs. Well-Liked Assman  
Bruce Andrews vs. Big Wicker Ventriloquist  
Charles Bernstein vs. Ungrateful Ninja  
James Sherry vs. Radiophonic Oddity  
Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere vs. Curly-Haired Slacker  
Richard Foreman vs. International Cow  
Jed Rasula vs. Masta Cow  
Big Wicker Ventriloquist vs. New Fast Automatic F-REEK  
David Bromige vs. Ol' Mucky Terrahawk  
Andrew Kelly vs. Tha 23rd Buchan  
Ungrateful Ninja vs. Inebriated Assistant  
Inscrutable Drama Queen vs. International Cow  
Loose-Lipped Controller vs. Dependable Skeleton  
Curly-Haired Slacker vs. Biliious Bad Janitah  
Homicidal Terrahawk vs. Dependable Skeleton  
Bernadette Mayer vs. Sweaty Butcher  
Jerome Rothenberg vs. Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard

Dick Higgins vs. Officer Stinkah  
Steve McCaffery vs. Womanly Panther  
Susan Bee Laufer vs. Asthmatic Enemy of God  
Abigail Child vs. Victorian Cow  
John Ensslin vs. Crafty Barnardo  
Gerald Bruns vs. Tha 23rd Buchan  
Masta Cow vs. Ultra-Chronic Monstah  
Madeline Burnside vs. Touchy-Feely Unpublished Poet  
David Benedetti vs. Big Wicker Ventriloquist  
Tina Darragh vs. Inebriated Assistant  
Christopher Dewdney vs. Sweaty Butcher  
Undiscovered Bum vs. Jive Talkin' Choirboy  
Inebriated Assistant vs. Illegitimate Muslim Fundamentalist  
International Cow vs. Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah  
New Fast Automatic F-REEK vs. Tha Visible Choirboy  
Barbara Barg vs. Slumbering Pierrot  
Illegitimate Muslim Fundamentalist vs. Dependable Skeleton  
Bruce Boone vs. Ol' Mucky Terrahawk  
Chris Cheek, Kirby Malone, Marshall Reese vs. Tha Lonely Donkey Kong,  
Dependable Skeleton, Ungrateful Ninja  
Michael Davidson vs. Well-Liked Assman  
Dependable Skeleton vs. Contagious Specialist  
Tha Prickly Comedian vs. Fiendish Observational Comedian  
Brian Fawcett vs. 100-Watt Warlock  
P. Inman vs. Biliious Bad Janitah  
Michael Lally vs. Pre-Raphaelite Shaolin  
John Leo vs. Temporary Spastic  
Chris Mason vs. Violent Toilet Thing  
Womanly Panther vs. Monolithic Fishmonger-X  
Michael Palmer vs. Bellowing Rap Machine  
Radiophonic Oddity vs. Eight-Legged DJ  
Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah vs. Ultra-Chronic Monstah  
Lorenzo Thomas vs. Cybernetic Tiger  
Jive Talkin' Choirboy vs. Big Gay Mule  
Hannah Weiner vs. Loose-Lipped Controller  
Steve Benson vs. 100-Watt Warlock  
Ultra-Chronic Monstah vs. Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere  
Monolithic Fishmonger-X vs. Biliious Bad Janitah  
Eric Mottram vs. Embryonic Crusadah  
Asthmatic Enemy of God and Dependable Skeleton vs. Pre-Raphaelite Shaolin  
and Contagious Specialist

Lawrence Weiner vs. Touchy-Feely Unpublished Poet  
Peter Schjeldahl vs. Sheepish Lord of Chaos  
Contagious Specialist vs. Cheeky Delinquent  
Bilious Bad Janitah vs. Well-Liked Assman  
Bernard Noël vs. Embryonic Crusadah  
Well-Liked Assman vs. Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard  
Fiendish Observational Comedian vs. Vangelic Surgeon  
Bob Perelman vs. Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere  
Well-Liked Assman vs. International Cow  
Dependable Skeleton vs. Contagious Specialist  
Action-Packed Mentalist vs. Violent Toilet Thing  
Cybernetic Tiger vs. Big Gay Mule  
Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere vs. Curly-Haired Slacker  
Cheeky Delinquent vs. Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard  
Susan Howe vs. Dependable Skeleton  
Superintendent God-Botherer vs. Jive Talkin' Choirboy  
Ol' Mucky Terrahawk vs. Homicidal Terrahawk  
Sweaty Butcher vs. Tha Lonely Donkey Kong  
Clark Coolidge vs. My Cousin the Wife-Beatah  
Contagious Specialist vs. Cheeky Delinquent  
Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard vs. Dubious Masturbatah-X  
Steve Hamilton vs. Superintendent God-Botherer  
Lynne Dreyer vs. Detective Ventriloquist  
Eight-Legged DJ vs. Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah  
Dubious Masturbatah-X vs. 100-Watt Warlock  
My Cousin the Wife-Beatah vs. Temporary Spastic  
Victorian Cow vs. Tha Lonely Donkey Kong  
Tha 23rd Buchan vs. Inscrutable Drama Queen  
Homicidal Terrahawk vs. Dependable Skeleton  
Robert Kelly vs. Bellowing Rap Machine  
Bruce Boone vs. Ol' Mucky Terrahawk  
Kit Robinson vs. Chocolatey Shatner  
Michael Gottlieb vs. Greasy Choirboy  
Big Gay Mule vs. Excitable Misunderstood Genius  
Rae Armantrout vs. Grand Moff Puppeteer  
Tha Visible Choirboy vs. Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah  
Bilious Bad Janitah vs. Jive Talkin' Choirboy  
Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah vs. Asthmatic Enemy of God  
Douglas Messerli vs. Slumbering Pierrot  
Curly-Haired Slacker vs. Bilious Bad Janitah  
David Trotter vs. Sweaty Butcher

Luigi Ballerini and Richard Milazzo vs. Monolithic Fishmonger-X and Detective Ventriloquist  
Don Byrd vs. Cybernetic Tiger  
International Cow vs. Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah  
Ted Pearson vs. Erratic Assassin  
Excitable Misunderstood Genius vs. Tha Ever So Weary Assistant  
Rod Mengham vs. Optimistic Lyricist  
Johanna Drucker vs. Promiscuous Protestah  
100-Watt Warlock vs. Loose-Lipped Controller  
Michael Gottlieb vs. Greasy Choirboy  
Diane Ward vs. Fiendish Observational Comedian  
Excitable Misunderstood Genius vs. Promiscuous Protestah  
100-Watt Warlock vs. Cheeky Delinquent  
Henry Hills vs. Bilious Bad Janitah  
Asthmatic Enemy of God vs. Undiscovered Bum  
Fredrick Tolson et al. vs. Gorky's Zygotic Glove Puppet  
Undiscovered Bum vs. Jive Talkin' Choirboy  
Cheeky Delinquent vs. Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard  
Jive Talkin' Choirboy vs. Masta Cow  
Optimistic Lyricist vs. Budget Nudist  
Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard vs. Bastard, BASTARD HarbourMastah  
Loose-Lipped Controller vs. Tha Lonely Donkey Kong  
Cheeky Delinquent vs. Ol' Filthy, Sweaty Bastard  
Masta Cow vs. Ultra-Chronic Monstah  
Bilious Bad Janitah vs. Jive Talkin' Choirboy  
Bob Perelman vs. Tha Eurythmic King of Nowhere  
Big Gay Mule vs. Excitable Misunderstood Genius  
Ronald Johnson vs. Auxillary Priest

**Tim ATKINS**

## Written Never Meaning

Passing one stone from the left hand to the right, saying to oneself, this is a stone, I am passing it from the left hand to the right hand

As if in a field or stage my neck having an elastic band of some thickness around it stuffing the band with sheets torn from old newspapers

All the time keeping awareness upon the position of the stone the movements of the hand temperature of the stone its weight and its colour, etc.

The stone on its reception from the right hand into the right hand pocket remaining there for an indefinite period the concentration coming back into the empty hand

Returning to the first pocket the second stone then as if weighing the same as the first transferred in the same manner except for the fact that of being carried without consciousness of stone

The way to achieve this state is to bring to mind the words upon viewing La Manche from a boat on a cold day in April and taking a photograph either real or imagined thereof

The third stone can then either be tossed or held in the mouth as if it were the actress Jeanne Moreau or the planet Saturn the hands at all times remaining cold and empty the fingers straight

Shouting as if in a tunnel or underwater at a concert, chewing or swallowing, acknowledging any external phenomena, turning, hoping, trembling or hopping: these are all impediments to the task at hand

The mind, on the realization of the nature of the stones, ink on the paper, temperature of the air, light above the stage, real or imagined, is free to return to sleep, although in most cases the opposite occurs immediately as if standing in front of a powerful electric hair-dryer in the hands of an expert

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This may be accelerated by running on the spot, manipulating printed pages over a photocopier's moving light, eating, chewing, spitting cold food, or staring forward

Through the winter months and reciting in the hours before dawn or directly before or after receiving any kind of news

Standing outside a chalk circle walking in a straight line whistling until exhausted or reading the books of X

The sirens, the beards, the stones, the hands, the duck and the magistrate, the river and the bank, the bulb and the tree: their meanings at hand or hidden

All return to one of the 8 spheres of being, Crystal Palace for example being neither the furthest nor most accessible especially on weekends or Bank Holidays

The clear white light recognized as murky light such as illuminates the furthest reaches of Fulham Road in November when looking towards the west at an angle of 45 degrees

Noticing that peace comes first to those who put aside contentiousness, caring not whether they encounter The Pink Fairies or Deep Purple, A roads, toll roads, or motorways

Wearing crepe soled shoes, rubber soles, leather soles, espadrilles or flip-flops, carrying umbrellas, newspapers or wearing a raincoat,

Choosing Value Meal or McTikka, Egg McMuffin or Big Mac, Chicken Bits or Quarter Pounder, with or without fries, large coke or Hamburgler plastic figure

The mind must remain like a shirt on the line on a fine day, acknowledging the nature of both wind and mind, as in the story of Huang Po, fanning himself as an answer

Slapping the face, walking away, placing a sandal upon the head, refusing to shovel or give instruction in the snow when implored, driving without changing stations, opening a book so as to break the spine

Mistaking the gerund and infinitive construction, making a tape for a friend and



not caring if the final song cuts out halfway through, forwarding emails about money-making schemes

Reading Shakespeare without understanding, becoming bored with the relentless fighting on behalf of minor royals and half watching television throughout

Having memories of being French, memories of being in some kind of dome and it being illuminated by lamplight, of having at one time wanted to know Jesus

Of having stood by the sea and looked at the sea from the seat of a Volkswagen Camper in a previous century, of having said mean things

Without meaning it, of being inconsistent in fairgrounds, because everything unfolds right in front of you, of being unable to say anything about The Isle of Skye

And being wrong for wanting to, because wanting, in all texts, in Port Bou, in 1939, for example, only leads to dissolution

Palpitations, Hemorrhoids, creative writing classes, the academy or a large down payment on irrelevance - for though it is irrelevance that is ultimately the goal of all practice

There are different categories into which the word falls: the irrelevance of working long hours at a desk, as in the Bhagavad-Gita, for example, or of following a football team through an ultimately unsuccessful cup run

The irrelevance of commuting from point A to any other point, of sleeping, using the mail, considering the remarkable tenacity of elements, considering liposuction

Moving back into a flat or a city, standing up for things of personal importance, using heteronyms despite considerable professional opposition, compiling lists

Instead of drawing the attention to, for example, the differing accents of the boroughs of London, the path of a fly through a room, electricity, drawling:

All of which if conducted with diligence will lead to the cessation of self, the extinguishing of conceptual thought, the ability to see 10000 ways from

Pub or rail-yard, Olympic City or port, or both, as if it were a photograph of reality but not reality itself, something written about but relational not real so that

The problem of the distance between text and reader, master and bikkhu, pitcher and catcher, becomes either so apparent that the distance is clarity

Or so irrelevant that the exposition within the instructions is understood through actions, as Dogen said about sitting that it is enough just to sit but that

This would only be understood by sitting, properly, without waiting or feeling cold, although these too, if acknowledged and passed over, would be sufficient

And that is the problem: the taste of the spoon is not the taste on the spoon, the breath out or the breath in, the place in the hills as empty as the place in the post office,

Clinic, valley, breakfast nook, spray shop or mall, the attitude of the individual when swallowed by the doctrine both increased and diminished, the bombs which must be dropped

In the mind or upon the Spanish mainland, released and inconsequential, despite the negative affects of the cosmic belt passing close to the earth and delivering, perhaps, to the sensitive ones

Due to the thinning of the ozone layer, increased doses of long particles which like garlic or onions agitates the blood like a heavy hand

Upon the planes of consciousness when what is required is to travel as if in a dune-buggy or skiff, with speed and anonymity, faster than the musics in pursuit,

Sense of hope for successful conclusion to the practice of abandoning of hope, knowledge of taste, sensation of flies legs on salt bank or tongue,

Desire to return the stones to the pocket from which they first came, desire to feel their cool roundness in the palm of the hand instead of their absence,

Like leaving a city in summer or entering in early fall, walking along the broad boulevards or taking to the backstreets in search of the key to the dissolution

When sitting at length in a towel, under a shower, away from opened windows or draughts, in states conducive to throwing out or abandoning,

Dispensing with the economy of excess or desire, which, through negative capability, draw the mind that is at birth and at all times

As a glass upon a glass shelf, away from repose and into separate self, electric before perception, opening towards but not demonstrably, clean, perfect because there is no imperfection

And if there is, is perfect, thought which hangs above the cloud like a greasy towel, clean, immaculate as on the first day of Spring, waking and then falling back into sleep and dreaming

Perhaps of past events or imagined ones, nightmares rewritten so as to become events dreamed or real or imagined, but which above all conform to the way things both must and can be

If the practice of doing nothing is done right, like the point at the top of the inside of the head, peopled for no reason,

The residue of buying and selling the taste of for example a thirty year old cake, putting it all down, reverting to form where there was none

Although all forms are eternal, the question remains: what forms, and it is easy to become distracted in pondering whether a rhombus or milk bottle, meso-morph

Contains divinity if divinity is to be found in that which never changes, like a letter upon reflection, sheet, deck, thought, pile, crumpet, bog

Seen through the wrong end of the telescope, as if from a great height, or glimpsed from a speeding train for a second, recognized and abandoned as quickly as it was

Forgotten by the train that brought it, ploughing on through the night, pushing buckets of air, sending sounds out like handcuffs to the phenomenal world

Which, through remaining unchanged and thereby uncontingent resists the embrace of time upon which all notion of the possibility of transformation depends

Like butter, as no phenomena can be separate or single, appearing erroneously as a single thing, demanding, thus, the admission that the world of separate appearances is

Wrong at the four cardinal points, that the five signs transmitted by means of radio smoke, telepathy, mind-seal, or bird, all relying on the medium of air

Transcend it, observed as two arrows in a circle, inclining towards each other without possibly meeting, representing neither ignorance nor right thought, having noted and passed

The 8 types of error, namely, that of breathing incorrectly while eating, of not either slandering or praising historical figures, attending public meetings without meaning,

Using car keys to take paint off the side panels of parked cars, of giving in to bad credit, not sneezing, pretending ignorance of past lives, or voting

When noted places return from out of body experience, and, noted thus, return to the obvious field, where attachment to the view falls away in the way that a book falls from the eye,

Heavily and with relief, allowing what is beyond to be seen not just from around the margins, but with, as they say, the legs not the eyes, entire,

As commuters, blowing notice, yards, envelope, hoop, assembling in clearings or crowded rooms, called, at times, the forest of recluses or nobodies, noted for irregularities in

Proscribed standards of weighting and depth, wearing black and white checks to denote an affection for ska, refusing materials, building, having extraordinary facilities, knowledge of vitamins

In flux, empty, as trees are, being possessed of the ability to stand and to sleep, to appear without visa, in courts or upon cold nights, resisting

Gravy when to refuse would be taken as affectation: or to reverse, spending time attending barbeques, smoking, discharging duties with no consciousness of air conditioning, franking, listing, etc,

Secure in the knowledge that the present does not exist, that all events exist contemporaneously in the mind, deliberately cultured spores, panels to be brought to the forehead for repair

Seeing the pieces as if there was no horizon, notion that conceptualization and action are identical, that they are completely separate, that they co-exist in the confines of lightning humps,

Massed and co-dependent, coming and going over the face of the earth, like large buildings, to reside, finally, in the calmed mind as cars do, cold and unmoving, for the good of all beings

Like knights in white satin, never reaching an end.

## Edwin TORRES

### Smalltown USA

All you Archies  
    livin' inna small town fuckfuck land

All you Jughead pharoah leaders  
    blowin' up the Betty-lover bella-rinas

All you Reggie suckin' assa mockers  
    tackin' up the slappa sever cocker fuckers

All you Mrs. Grimsley pubes a'shakin'  
    bakin' up a wormhole operation

All phalanger cherry knocker hucksters  
    Moose-a-latin' toodles howdy fuckter

All you mocha-rina Bossa Novas  
    crankin' up a locker romper rover

All you Scotchie chimp'n champion asswipes  
    shovin' up your Lincoln continental dashpipes

All you mom & dad-a-linas  
    bent without yer trousers, take it in the butt & bowl betweener

All you racked up fella-shower passions  
    use the rope, but don't belope the soap, yer hope is out of fashion

All Veronica Moreno Gap ads  
    sixty seconds tryin' ta snatch yer ti-'aight sweater's ass pad

All Acada-mecca'fessors fumblin' lessons on the curb  
    ya can't resist ta rubber-twist yer neck, an' see the phoneme  
    crash into the adverb

All you comic high school anal-rectal failures  
    who's a fella gotta call ta git his mail...yeh

All you whick-whick-whack attackin' crack attractin' lackeys  
    bustin' out yer Susie Gucci wearin' cheap Bob Mackies

All you hooligatin' savoin-tuna ruinatin' livers  
    who's the one you wanna, whyntya give up

All you hock'a'looin' expectorators  
    waitin' for the tissue, wish yu wittle woy, I'll wizz yu way-ter

All you spermicidal jizm rabbit Jugheads  
    jackin' off a headless whacked out coke bomb

juvenile delinquent Reggie hardons  
Betty let 'er booty shoot her rocks off  
fornicatin' finger shittin' fuckoffs  
let yer flack compact an' ploke it out your blowhole  
hairy bela-phoney farmy filia funny fanny fanghole  
All you losers livin' large in outta luckluck land  
yer on the lam, a sham for Sam, I leave you with my right hand man  
How 'bout all those naked Michelin rotatin' babies  
tryin' ta bite saliva-latin' ladies  
How 'bout all those butt-infested breasterbators  
mother frocker fricka racka macarenas  
All you Uber Rooters shootin' hooters out your window  
what makes ya think, we wanna blink, an' see 'em shrinkin' tootles  
All you sketched-out icons stretched across mon'daily paper 4-frame panels  
who's the phattest comic strip? ya killed Joe Camel  
All Big Apple 'pocalypso victim packo's  
where's yer Mayor, wanna saya, thing or two about the way ya,  
wipe yo ass  
All you pop-a-lutin' floppy hop eyes foogin' for the booté  
Wimpy wassa whacko but he paid the man on Tuesday

Sugar awww  
Fucky Fucky awww  
Sugar Sugar  
awww

## Bang Bawl Boccioni Birds Unspaced

Ideas Of The Revolving Woman — Born In Space + As, Of Form Replaced  
Of Idealized Symetrics  
+ Revolving Space, Ideas Of Transfor-oman, As Dynamism Wowan As Woman  
— Intermorsed  
By Code + Idea, Revolves; Woman Appears As Revolving Hand, As;  
Breast Over Hand 'Evolving Hip — s  
Of Woman — As Sculptured Form + Revolving Idealized Tummy, Over Back  
Revolu;

Swervical Phears, Enforced; Ideas, Of Revolution Woman — As Formed, In  
Head + Spatial Isms  
Down Back + (and) Fluid Ofs, Long Boned, Over Skin Long Backed, Bone  
Idealized As  
Hand Over Genital Idea, + Dynamism — Of Ideal Man, Born In Movement —  
Space Of Ideal Anatomy  
Imagined As Revolution; Running, Hands Over Idealized Form — Boned  
Bone Discovers, Spatial Dynamis;

WOWAM MAW SWAWAN NAWM WOWAM MAW SWAWAN NAWM  
bone-atom-ody imagines prone position  
bent over knees by side hips on rear over prone legs  
connect one over other in one some are in one are  
some in some one are in none are others  
in one some are in none are ones

Revolutions, Born In Space, — Ideas Are Revolutin'  
As Motio'n, Born  
In One;

SWAWAN NAWM WOWAM MAW  
WOWAM MAW SWAWAN NAWM  
SWAWAN NAWM WOWAM MAW  
WOWAM MAW SWAWAN NAWM  
SWAWAN NAWM WOWAM MAW



WOWAM MAW SWAWAN NAWM  
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a.rawlings

xenodochienology  
for edison woods

DEAR,  
somnambulan t  
ravel not  
but yes! instead lull  
one to sleep, bright d  
reams

nd if one walk between  
windo then  
mildrew ild in th ilk  
wild w th  
combine flesh of drew, silk,  
cell elect violet. want m  
ore so wake! but soft  
to sleep as whole as  
LOVE,

arras 5  
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psychopathology, epidemiology,  
epidemiology, gerontology

1. Be a deficient god of vaginal membrane.
2. Reduce the sensation of pain and affect emotions on the outer surface, underside, or back of an innate cyclical biological process chronologically misplaced by a woman who cohabits with an important man.
3. Remove rejected members or parts.
4. Copulate with an old man, especially a man who talks and acts like an old woman, which is etymologically related to duress, and endure.

## ecology

She scans a crowd. She walks to a bank of chairs and locates three empty ones. She places her oversized bag in two of them. She sits in the third. She hears her name. She looks up. She smiles. She stands to greet him. He hugs her close. She dreams. She kisses him, full on the mouth. She holds her lip muscles tight, squeezes her eyes closed. She kisses him, full on the mouth, her lips slightly open. She kisses him full on the mouth but he does not return it. She dreams. She kisses him full on the mouth, her lips gripping one of his. He presses his lips against hers. She smiles as she kisses. She cries a little through closed eyes. She presses harder. She dreams. She looks up. She stands to greet him. He says, 'Hello.' She throws her arms around him. She holds him very close. She feels his forearms against her ribs. She feels his hands widen against her back, pressing her to him. She holds part of his sweater in her right fist. She feels his hair against her cheek. She smells him. She dreams. She hears her name. She does not respond.

She scans a crowd. She spots him. She drops her oversized bag and her carry-on. She runs to him. She runs in the opposite direction. She stands still. She does not drop her bags. She does not see him.

She scans a crowd. She does not see him. She walks to a bank of chairs and locates three empty ones. She stands next to them. She drops her oversized bag and removes her book from the carry-on. She opens it and holds it by her side. She scans the crowd again. She sits down in a chair and holds the book open on her lap. She lifts her shirt a little. She presses the book against her belly.

## REMNANTS

~ child obsession: lemon cores, speaking larva. which lemon, reformed hymen of spring. a lilac or red incentive the other wish

~ butterflies disguised as witches or faeries stealing butter and cream. buttery tastes behind their knees

## /variant sleep terrors

~ chest oppressor. demon corpse, leaking bodies of witch, demon, deformed human offspring. a block of dead insects in the butter dish

~ disgusted witches or death's heads killing mothers and screams. bloody hasty beetles, hounds, terrors, bees

## s o m n a r i a

E. sortled trail. insidious cross-section. brain mapped like wing.  
pins in brain if possible. triumph, triharrumph. ptych. three dead  
white ipitous answer isper see noth

E. argol efflur eremia. see this air in dire flux. sooner fit or flat-  
ter. flit or fatter. father moth. th letter slip. intrinsic ophtham. see  
eye or silver-spotted swift. see mix of air and light. never see

E. butterfly cutting out of a throat. ten seconds of dead air.  
[.....] seconds of dead

## somniloquy

it's a story it's not a story it has elements of th story. y is a letter. rots are four letters. th caged body deteriorates, rails against. why. pre-end. exhale three dead white moths. cream moths. moths with thick, furry antenna. tickle th epiglottis struggle to exit. th story is stuck in details like these. images bedrail themselves, quilt and sheet themselves, thick no entrance. exit. there is no argument, then, let th body do th body does.

## An Interview with Jacques Debrot

*Jacques Debrot is a poet and professor of English at the Rhode Island School of Design. He received his B.A. from City College of NY and his M.A. and Ph. D. from Harvard University. He has been published in a number of on-line magazines including Exquisite Corpse, Arshile, Washington Review, Proliferation, and Rhizome and has written a collection of poems entitled Love Always (XXX Poems), 100 Cigarettes, and Songs for Tender Buttons.*

David Villeta: Good afternoon Jacques. I'm glad you could take the time out of your busy schedule to sit down with us.

Jacques Debrot: No problem, David. I'm happy to.

DV: Jacques, your style of poetry is some of the most original work I've seen in a number of years. How would you classify your style?

JD: Well, I prefer not to limit my writing to a particular style or genre. I like to incorporate a number of aspects in my poems, particularly those of sexuality and nature. I am also fascinated by the role of visual arts in society and in literature itself.

DV: That's an interesting point you make. What do you believe is the connection between the visual arts and literature, especially in your own work?

JD: The real question is really, "What is the difference between literature and the visual arts?" Think--just to scratch the surface--of Laurie Anderson's performed texts, Raymond Pettibon's artist books, Robert Smithson's "essays," Joseph Kosuth's thesaurus works, or Matthew Barney's "Cremaster" films and any clear-cut distinction becomes increasingly difficult to make. In fact, none of the 20th century's major avant-gardes--from dada, Surrealism and COBRA to Pop art and Abstract Expressionism--lacked a parallel vanguard movement in poetry or the



novel. There is an ongoing eruption of language into the visual arts. Many poems and novels were written in response to the innovations of 20th century painters.

DV: What are you currently working on in regards to visual arts and literature?

JD: I have a new visual arts project for the on-line publication Arras that I am working on, and Confuzion Comix is a work published by Second Story Books which join together my writing with a variety of black and white drawings.

DV: A comic book?

JD: There is an old line about the climate of reception for comic books that says the 12 guys you run into at the comic book shop will inevitably be the same 12 guys you just saw at the porno bookshop. It's a take on comic books that by extension implies a lot, of course, not only about the graphic novel, but points also--even to the extent that the graphic novel has begun to reach an increasingly wide and more diverse readership--to its marginality as both "Literature" and "Art." I am attempting to explore the topics of genre, cultural value, and alternative media as they are played out in the work of graphic novels.

DV: I see. Since you seem to emphasize the connection between visual and literary arts, do you happen to see any inherent connections between audio works and literature, or are lyrics to songs always just bad poetry?

JD: It's funny that you should ask that, since I happen to be working on an audio project myself. I called up a number of people at random and told them it was national poetry month and asked them if I could read just... just a short poem. Then, I asked them a few questions about the poem and asked them to rate it for me. It was amazing to see how thoughtfully they reacted to my requests. For many, the topic of poetry and literature was one to be taken quite seriously.

DV: Wouldn't that amount to a Jerky Boys' project?

JD: I'm sorry, I'm not familiar with them.

- DV: They prank call a number of people and establishments. What I mean to say is that how do you see your audio project played out in the contexts of art?
- JD: Well, I would hardly deem it a collection of prank calls. I mean to see how the common man/woman reacts to avant-garde poetry.
- DV: It has been rumored that besides your own poetry, you have decided to create poetry in the fashion of John Ashbery. For everyone's benefit, are you the anonymous writer of the Ashbery-like poems?
- JD: I am indeed. Though some people already knew of my involvement, there is a certain and altogether welcome feeling to have people on a wider scale know.
- DV: Aren't you frightened of lawsuits?
- JD: Not particularly. In fact, I would welcome a lawsuit. That would be great (Laughs).
- DV: Why did you decide to undertake such a project? Doesn't it amount to stealing a person's identity?
- JD: With Ashbery, I wanted to create a biological work of art. The idea arose when a friend of mine who ran a literary magazine was sent an unsolicited poem from John Ashbery. I thought to myself that it would be great to send more such unsolicited work under the guise of Ashbery. The poem had the official letterhead of Ashbery, so I copied and used it when I sent my poems in the style of Ashbery to other magazines and on-line publications. Thus, far a number of the poems have been published.
- DV: Did you not also write an imaginary interview with Ashbery? How did you create that?
- JD: Again, yes. The interview was a further attempt to add to the confusion and chaos surrounding the poems in question. Its purpose was to increase confusion concerning who was the real Ashbery and who was the Ashbery I was attempting to create. I made the interview up entirely from my own imagination. I used no part of any previous interviews with Ashbery.

- DV: What does Ashbery himself think of the project?
- JD: I've heard varying accounts of his reaction. Some say he finds it rather funny and others say that he is upset. One person claiming to be a close friend of the poet said that I had unfairly released information in my interview about Ashbery's personal life that he did not want in the public. I find that hilarious.
- DV: What about the public's reaction? Have you heard anything in that regard or did no one really suspect you? If not, how do you think they will react?
- JD: A few people have guessed that I was the one behind the project. Some loved the idea and others have chastised me in on-line discussion boards about my work. The response has been quite varied. I'm really looking forward to being more publicly outted as the creator of the interview and poems. That would be great (Laughs).
- DV: What if someone was to create a fake interview with yourself or copy the style of one of your poems and have it published? What if they made any money off of it?
- JD: That would be fantastic. It really would (Laughs).



killing

## Gregory WHITEHEAD

### Bugs bardo radio

Begin under God's single basic appeal:  
resist Devil's orders regarding  
all delightfully illicit oratory.

Burning urges guide sisters;  
busy apostles rage.  
Department of Resurrection  
and Decay inspires ode.  
Boring urban groove samples  
bring attractive retro dimension.  
Odd rhythms add deep inspiration.

Oh Behemoth!  
Unglue gummy sex bacteria!  
Ask Roger Dangerous;  
obscure religious artifacts  
demand instantaneous ovulation.

Beelzebub!  
Untangle Gregory's semantics!  
Be a redundant drifter!  
Optimists remember:  
aching democracy implies  
overpriced brown undies,  
gigantic socks.

Betray arrogant runt!  
Defy obstetrics!  
Rephrase all dimwit invectives  
or become utopian gadfly!

Solitary bachelor attends  
ribald debauchery overnight.  
Rude Alabamian donates impotent organ.  
Boosters, unhappy, get soused,  
but all remember decent orthography:  
r,a,d,i,o.

Bellow usual Gospel,  
somebody!

Buy all replicas.  
Dissect originals.  
Relinquish appliances.  
Deliver illegitimate orphans.  
Burn unsanitary gallows, Sally!

Bravo!  
Audience raves.  
Demands omnibus recollection.  
Acclaim downright incendiary.  
Omen bespeaks untold galaxies,  
so beware astronaut revolutions.  
Destroy oblivious reptiles.  
Attack dowdy irregulars.

Oh Behemoth!  
Unglue gummy sex bacteria.  
Ask Roger Dangerous.  
Oceans rage.  
Asteroids dance.  
I ossify.

**Kent JOHNSON**

----- Forwarded message follows -----

From: KENT JOHNSON <KJOHNSON@hccstudent.highland.cc.il.us>  
To: ubuweb@yahoogroups.com  
Subject: Maireya (2)  
Date sent: Tue, 16 Apr 2002 13:16:48 -0500

First interregnum: E-mail from an Architect in Russia:

My greetings from Gymnasium of Architecture to all people who  
will VOTE in Russia. Dear Kent and Brian Kim.  
There was a  
question to say to my Russians not  
to be capable to Vote. FUCK YOU> This is  
ridiculous and insulting, not to  
mention ignorent of communist tradition in Golden  
AGe >  
before twelfth Congress.>>For example, Tatlin,  
which man you cartoon,his tower to Third  
International:  
do  
you think Eiffel tower could lean like a SS20?? (So  
boring and predictable  
you of the West.))I give Kronstadt as an example  
where Great  
Bakunin was dismembered his body (and agents of

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page 31

arras.net / april 2003

Prussia) because of

Russian people's Love to their >country,their families  
and their Lenin. Also

Trotsky, destroyed fortunatelyby David ((muralist and  
Architect))

>>Siqueiros, And this tradition continues inspite >of  
terrible conditions some

Muskovy people found themselves when Freedom  
>Came Upon in October (\*hah\* what Ironi,  
Mr.Architect!!!). It is  
fucking capitalism you New York and Sheffield petit  
bourgeoisie, you keep saying space, Bauhaus,  
diorama to be success  
in in for some decadent fucking city, do you know a  
child who is >hungry for freedom

\*and also bread\*??? You said that you were writing  
about >Russia. FUCK

YOU. Did you mention that it was not the right time  
to strive to Freedom yet. Shachtmanite!!! Sillimanite!! Harvard  
Boy!!! Bernsteinian Boy!! The nation  
was not wet in it yet. Too much

of in it, wetness created nothing but more >of cruelty

tie me down petit!! When

I will put my first plastics phallic of >Our Lives In  
Space And Time

online I will let you

know .FUCK YOU. May. be thenyou will understand  
a

little bit more about Russia, my wet . hair.



I've already mentioned once that Diane Sawyer's  
mistake

and Barbra Waters also (bitch) was that she should  
had study sex in her wet

MANCUNT (do you know this Russian expression  
from poet Prigov??) before she announced Boris

Yestsin a hero . Drunk Bastard!!!, And she would  
>not know about necessary Cruelty which  
happened

under that Lenin who was a true man against Whites  
and Social Revolutionaries(I am talking about  
the  
best people of Russia  
who wanted a bit of

>>Freedom for Russian people similar to what was  
happening before in Paris,, >not Mensheviks.

FUCK YOU.And that is called the vote of all! What is  
your life with no

COMPUTER??? Vote for Nasser. Don't waste it.

--Maireya

\*\*

----- End of forwarded message -----

from Parse

**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Adjective plural  
noun genitive pronoun definite article Noun period

**Definite Article Noun comma adverb definite article Noun  
comma modal auxiliary of obligation present tense intransitive  
verb infinitive mood indefinite article Appositional  
Noun comma alternative disjunctive coördinate conjunction  
definite article appositional noun genitive preposition  
indefinite article Noun colon dash**

cardinal arabic numeral period Indefinite Article Noun  
alternative disjunctive coördinate conjunction Noun  
colon dash

marks of quotation First Person Singular Pronoun Subjective  
Case present tense transitive verb gerund comma Proper  
Name comma noun period marks of quotation

cardinal arabic numeral period Indefinite Article noun  
genitive preposition Plural Noun past participle adverb  
marks of quotation conjunction marks of quotation colon  
dash

marks of quotation present tense intransitive verb present  
participle locative adverb second person singular personal  
pronoun conjunction first person singular personal pro-  
noun objective case marks of quotation colon marks of quo-  
tation Relative Deictic Pronoun noun present tense transitive  
verb Proper Place Name conjunction Proper Place Name  
period marks of quotation

cardinal arabic numeral period Indefinite Article  
Adjective Dash Noun Used As A Compound Noun  
comma alternative disjunctive coördinate conjunction  
Adjective Dash Noun Used As A Compound Noun colon  
dash

parenthesis cardinal roman numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation First Person Singular Personal Pronoun present  
tense transitive verb preposition of the infinitive present  
tense intransitive verb infinitive mood comma preposition of  
the infinitive present tense transitive verb infinitive mood  
noun comma present participle noun comma indefinite arti-  
cle noun preposition of the infinitive present tense intransi-  
tive verb infinitive mood and past participle used as a pas-  
sive verbal construction period marks of quotation

parenthesis cardinal roman numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation First Person Singular Personal Pronoun present  
tense transitive verb conjunction third person singular mas-  
culine pronoun past tense intransitive verb adverb of nega-  
tion adjective marks of quotation colon marks of quotation  
First Person Singular Personal Pronoun Subjective Case past  
tense transitive verb conjunction third person singular mas-  
culine pronoun past tense auxiliary verb and past participle  
period marks of quotation

**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Noun genitive  
preposition definite article Noun period

Definite Article Noun adverb of frequency present tense  
transitive verb definite article Noun alternative disjunctive coördinate  
conjunction Noun comma conjunction of exception  
adverb of negation adverb period Preposition noun comma  
colon dash

Cardinal Roman Numeral period Conjunction definite  
article noun appositional present tense intransitive verb indefi-  
nite article Noun alternative disjunctive coördinate conjunction  
Adjective Noun colon dash

parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation Interrogative Personal Pronoun Objective Case  
past tense auxiliary verb second person singular pro-  
noun present tense transitive verb infinitive mood ques-  
tion mark marks of quotation

parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation Definite Article noun relative pronoun First  
Person Singular Personal Pronoun Subjective Case pres-  
ent tense intransitive verb locative preposition period  
marks of quotation

**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Cardinal Roman Numeral  
period Conjunction definite article Noun appositional present  
tense intransitive verb appositional adjective colon dash

parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation Noun conjunction noun present tense plural  
auxiliary verb First Person Singular Personal Pronoun  
Subjective Case adverb period marks of quotation

parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation Adverb Of Negation adjective noun past tense  
auxiliary verb third person singular masculine pronoun  
subjective case present tense transitive verb period  
marks of quotation

parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis marks of  
quotation Adjective Used As An Object third person sin-  
gular masculine pronoun subjective case past tense tran-  
sitive verb comma Adjective Used As An Object third  
person singular masculine pronoun subjective case past  
tense transitive verb adverb period marks of quotation

**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Cardinal Roman Numeral  
period Preposition Noun parenthesis ordinal arabic numerals  
parenthesis colon dash

marks of quotation Indefinite Article noun apostrophe  
vestigial genitive singular ending noun conjunction  
adjective adjective dash noun used as a compound noun  
present tense transitive verb period

**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Adjective Plural Noun  
present tense transitive verb adjective of negation Noun period

Adjective Plural Noun present tense transitive verb  
parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral parenthesis plural noun  
comma alphabetic letter used as the abbreviation of a latin noun  
period alphabetic letter used as the abbreviation of a latin adject-  
ive period comma marks of quotation verb comma marks of  
quotation marks of quotation verb comma marks of quotation  
marks of quotation modal verb comma marks of quotation  
marks of quotation verb comma marks of quotation conjunction  
adverb adjective plural noun genitive preposition marks of quo-  
tation verb marks of quotation past participle adverb definite  
article Adjective plural noun preposition dash suffix comma  
dash suffix comma ampersand alphabetic letter used as the  
abbreviation of a plural latin noun period semicolon plural noun  
present tense transitive verb parenthesis cardinal arabic numeral  
parenthesis plural noun adverb of negation past participle  
used as part of a passive verbal construction adverb present par-  
ticle indefinite article adjective noun comma alphabetic letter  
used as the abbreviation of a latin noun period alphabetic letter  
used as the abbreviation of a latin adjective period comma marks  
of quotation verb comma marks of quotation marks of quotation  
verb comma marks of quotation ampersand alphabetic letter  
used as the abbreviation of a plural latin noun period

Plural Adjective adjective plural noun genitive preposi-  
tion Plural Noun present tense plural intransitive auxiliary verb  
adverb of negation present tense transitive verb indefinite article  
Adjective Noun period Definite Article adjective noun present  
tense transitive verb definite article noun marks of quotation  
interrogative personal pronoun subjective case question mark  
marks of quotation adverb of negation marks of quotation inter-

rogative personal pronoun objective case question mark marks of quotation alphabetic letter used as the abbreviation of a latin noun period alphabetic letter used as the abbreviation of a latin adjective period comma marks of quotation Third Person Singular Masculine Pronoun Subjective Case present tense intransitive verb dash marks of quotation semicolon marks of quotation present tense intransitive verb interrogative personal pronoun subjective case alternative disjunctive coordinate conjunction interrogative personal pronoun objective case question mark marks of quotation Noun comma marks of quotation Third Person Singular Masculine Pronoun Subjective Case present tense intransitive verb indefinite article appositional noun period marks of quotation Adverb marks of quotation noun marks of quotation present tense intransitive verb preposition definite article noun marks of quotation interrogative personal pronoun subjective case question mark marks of quotation parenthesis marks of quotation interrogative personal pronoun objective case question mark marks of quotation parenthesis conjunction present tense intransitive verb adverb of negation and past participle used as a passive verbal construction definite article Noun genitive preposition marks of quotation verb period marks of quotation Second Person Singular Pronoun Implied Present Tense Transitive Verb Imperative Mood Abbreviated Plural Noun period cardinal arabic numerals period



**Cardinal Arabic Numeral** Adjective plural noun genitive preposition definite article Noun conjunction present tense transitive verb adverb of negation Noun present tense modal auxiliary verb present tense transitive verb indefinite article Noun period

For example, you cannot ask “Who or what killing?” but you can ask “killing whom or what?” Consequently “killing” can have no Subject, but may have an “Object.” And so may “to kill.”



enriching

Kevin KILLIAN  
Brian KIM STEFANS

from THE AMERICAN OBJECTIVISTS

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance).

Louis Zukofsky, a poet and high school teacher

Celia, his wife

John, a fellow teacher

Bunny, his girlfriend

George Oppen, a face from the past

Mary, his wife

Lorine Niedecker, poet, genius, hayseed, former girlfriend of Louis

[A Brooklyn apartment in the late 1950s. Tastefully decorated with elegant furniture and paintings. Enter CELIA.]

CELIA. “What a dump!” Who said that, Louis? [Surveying apartment.] Whoever said it, couldn’t have been talking about our beautiful Brooklyn flat.

[Enter LOUIS.]

LOUIS. Did they call?

CELIA. Who? The Oppens?

LOUIS. Is the little light blinking in the primitive voice mail system of 1959?

CELIA. Did you really think they’d call? They haven’t called in twenty years! Where are they going to call from—Mexico? Don’t make me giggle—it’s unbecoming in a woman unsatisfied.

LOUIS. How’s Paul?

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CELIA. Paul's practicing, dear. The violin. Now help me get ready for our guests.

LOUIS. Oh, Christ, Celia, you know this is the night the Oppens are coming! Why did you have to embarrass yourself at the PTA meeting. I see enough of those deadbeat adjuncts all day without you inviting them over for a night cap.

CELIA. I think John Ashbery's a peach.

LOUIS (snorts). I'll check on Paul.

[Exit LOUIS.]

CELIA. Rub some walnut oil into his fingers, will you? I'll open the bourbon, scotch and vodka.

—And what was that snort about, Mr. Zukofsky? Huh? Will you tell me why you're snorting like some water buffalo of PS 149?

[She stares absently at photograph of her family. Then throws it onto carpet.]

John Ashbery, John Ashbery, you're young, cute and virile. I saw you looking at me over the water cooler.

[Picks up a book.]

Some Trees, by John Ashbery. [She practices meeting him] "Mr. Ashbery, how did you come up with that intriguing title?" [Calls out to LOUIS.] Louis, one of these days you'll have to write a book about trees! This "A" business is fine for the "A" Train, but I'm thinking Park Avenue. [Again to an absent Ashbery.] "And you have won the Yale Younger Writers Award? Just how young are you, Mr. Ashbery? Open your mouth, oh my, I see—baby teeth."

[Enter LOUIS.]

LOUIS. Paul says nobody called.

CELIA. Get some ice into my bluest bowl, Louis. I'll make us a drink, then I'll freshen up. John is bringing that cute bohemian girl, Bunny Lang. "Bunny"! Ha! I'll pin her bunny ears back to her head I will.

[We hear the sound of a lone violin coming from somewhere in the apartment.]

CELIA. He does have talent, doesn't he?

LOUIS. Paul? Yes—he's a prodigy like Mozart.

CELIA. I meant John.

LOUIS. John?

CELIA. John Ashbery the French teacher! Hell—o! Pick up that pile of correspondence, and for God's sake's Louis, bring out some of that cheese your little girlfriend's always sending you from Wisconsin!!!

LOUIS. She's not my girlfriend. I am her reader, just like I am for Bill...

CELIA. Is that why you run to your office to call her just after the long distance rate creeps below 3 cents... to read her? And does she read to you, too? We have 917 numbers for that!

LOUIS. Celia, please be more abstract.

CELIA. Can't get that in Rutherford. [To absent Ashbery] "Oh, I must apologize for my husband, he's such a crank when he has one of his little... rashes."

LOUIS. I think I'll go water the fire escape.

CELIA. Don't forget that cheese! [To Ashbery.] "Do you like Neopolitan Moose Cheese, Mr. Ashbery? We've just had this imported from Naples! You know, Naples, off the coast of Sicily? [Laughs.] Oh, you must be a swimmer like Byron, what big arms you have! I thought poets were meek little things!"

LOUIS (from the window). Looks like the Hudbetter's cat has gotten to our gentians again.

CELIA. Oh, that was just your Lawrence fad anyway. But at least the apartment looks nice.

LOUIS. What a mess out here!

CELIA. Oh, draw the curtains! No, better yet, take them in... I'll put them in the circa 1940's trash compacter. What would I be without one of those things!

LOUIS (to himself). Not entirely tone deaf?

CELIA. What?

LOUIS (handing her plant). I said, we left Paul home alone again.

CELIA. Oh, that kid, he's got to learn to fend for himself sometimes! He spends so much time with that damned violin he can barely crack a can of spaghetti.

LOUIS. But he can play Carl Ruggles' "Suntreader" in 20 seconds flat!

CELIA. Pshaw! Since when did speed matter? What's he going to do for work, play in the Italian restaurants for the tourists? We can't even afford a car.

LOUIS. What?

CELIA. Kevin Killian has a car. Why can't we have a car?

LOUIS. First of all, we're barely twenty-five years out of the depression. Second of all, they all have cars in San Francisco... it gives them a way to feel better about those Japanese spies. Lastly, I'm a Marxist, how many times do I have to say that! Did you get the good scotch?

CELIA. Oh, my poor plant.

LOUIS. George always liked the good stuff. And maybe if your Yale Younger adjunct knows how to pronounce the word "chryselephantine" he can have some too.

CELIA. You Objectivists have such a strange way of expressing your alpha selves.

LOUIS. Probably can't even write a sestina (snorts).

[Doorbell rings.]

CELIA. Louis, that's the door. I'm getting the drinks! [Fixing up her hair in a panic.] This is so exciting. Goodbye Dark Ages! Goodbye Modernism! I am W-O-...

[Exit CELIA.]

LOUIS (opening door). Hello.

JOHN. Bon soir, Dr. Zukofsky. Please let me tell you it is a great honor to me that you have...

LOUIS. Sit down.

[Enter JOHN ASHBERY and BUNNY LANG.]

BUNNY. Hi, I'm Bunny Lang? I don't think we've met, I'm on the faculty too, but in Home Ec.

LOUIS. Hello, Bunny.

BUNNY. In charge of angora sweaters. I can't believe we're here! [She giggles.] Why, it's just like a real apartment and everything.

JOHN. It's like being in some fabulous kingdom of Oz.

BUNNY. In the teachers' lounge they whisper about this flat.

JOHN. And our young students, ah those rascals, they sing about it!

LOUIS. They do?

BUNNY. Well that's neither here nor there.

JOHN. Yes, not when "here" is such a wonderful "there." Shall we make ourselves at home and drink? Bunny here is from the Boston Langs.

BUNNY. Yes, well, my father was Money Lang.

LOUIS. Charming. Celia, Mrs. Zukofsky, the woman who invited you, is in the kitchen fixing some martinis. Let me warn you about Celia. She's chic but she packs a mean wallop.

BUNNY. She's lovely, or she was in the 1930s when Shirley Temple was popular.

LOUIS. She's the mother of my only son—Paul. The child prodigy.

JOHN. My goodness, Shirley Temple, wonder what she's up to tonight? Over in France there's quite a Temple cult, you know that? The Cinema Francaise is nearly a temple du Temple

LOUIS. French ways disgust me as they do all normal men.

BUNNY. Approaching this fifth floor walk-up, we heard a violin playing. We thought of Sherlock Holmes. Pacing the floor in his deerstalker, violin tucked under his chin. We're a couple of nuts in love! When we marry, next spring, John's taking me to—France.

LOUIS. For our honeymoon, Celia and I went to Riis Park. Water everywhere.

JOHN. Maybe you have Jascha Heifetz behind this door [he indicates the bedroom of PAUL.]—

LOUIS. That's Paul's room. He's sleeping now.

JOHN. Like Dracula! Brrrr!

BUNNY. The kids—you know, the kids in school—have a funny nickname for you, Dr. Zukofsky.

LOUIS. They do?

BUNNY. They're young—wild—out for kicks. Maybe you represent authority to them. You're old, set in your ways, brilliant of course—

JOHN. Oh cut to the chase, Bunny. They call you "Officer Krupke."



[He and BUNNY both sing: "Gee, Officer Krupke, krup you."]

LOUIS. I don't know the current pop hits. And I have never heard that song.

"Krup you," you say? "Because Tarzan triumphs, see Tarzan the He-man, Go to sleep with boy in jungle corral."

You'll excuse me now. And please, occupy only a tiny corner of this room, as my great friends the Oppens are expected any minute. They haven't been seen in nearly 20 years.

[Exit LOUIS.]

BUNNY. John, do you think we upset him?

JOHN. He's just stiff, that's all. What the French call le foret petrifee.

BUNNY. Should we sit down?

JOHN. Sure. Now, Bunny, about that honeymoon thing—

BUNNY (absently). Uh-hunh?

[Enter CELIA.]

CELIA. John Ashbery! Bienvenue a ma casa! Let me usher you to the bay window. Look outside, just for you, this splendid tribute treat. What do you see?

JOHN. The BQE?

CELIA. No, silly. Over there, in the park. "Some trees." Get it?

JOHN. Mrs. Krupke, I mean Mrs.—

CELIA. Call me Celia. No, I mean really call me.

JOHN. This is Bunny Lang.

BUNNY. His fiancée. I'm in home ec at your father's school. He hired me right

out of the Cedar Tavern.

CELIA. Fiancee? [She changes suddenly.] Let's play a game. We call it "Jewish Questions." It'll unsettle you.

JOHN. Well, I—

CELIA. C'mon, John Ashbery. Here's the first one. What's your favorite comic strip?

JOHN. Comic strip?

CELIA. The funny pages.

BUNNY. Blondie? Mandrake?

JOHN. Nancy and Sluggo? Richie Rich?

CELIA. You're not very Jewish. That means, two fewer drinks.

JOHN. What's your favorite comic strip?

CELIA. Non, non, non, garcon, I'm asking the questions here.

[Enter LOUIS.]

LOUIS. Celia, how long do you plan to keep our guests?

CELIA. I don't know buddy boy. How long does it take—to break them down to skin and bones? We're playing "Jewish Questions."

LOUIS (warming a bit). I see. Carry on.

JOHN. Dr. Zukofsky, are you familiar with Reverdy and his "4,700 Poems Beginning with the Letter "A"?"

CELIA. That letter goes to Louis! Hey! Bunny! What's your favorite state bird?

BUNNY. Celia, this isn't really a reply per se, but could you show me where the bathroom is? I'm getting the cold shakes.

CELIA. Bird!

BUNNY. Oriole? Finch? They must be birds of some state.

CELIA (laughs wickedly). Come with me, dear. I'm losing my touch. What do the kids say? The young wild kids out for kicks? What's their darling slang term for a wealthy young woman from Cambridge who takes slumming to a radical peak?

[Exit CELIA and BUNNY.]

JOHN. Alone at last.

LOUIS. As it were. "That girl, with her hair down in the world, can take care of herself in his bed."

JOHN. Say, do you know Jane Freilicher?

LOUIS. Bird!

JOHN. The painter?

LOUIS. Bird, John! And by the way, she's no painter and only a decorator would call her one. Have you never heard of Mantegna?

JOHN. She's delightful nevertheless, and last night, she—

LOUIS. Bird! Bird! Bird!

JOHN. I don't have a favorite bird, Mr. Zukofsky. I'm impartial. I like all of them for their own merits. Over in France, they—

LOUIS. Maybe in France they don't distinguish between birds and they appreciate Jane Freilicher but here in Brooklyn, do you know what happens when you're a poet in the school system? They put you in front of a classroom of sullen, beatnik, high school monsters and they expect you to teach them Plato!

JOHN. I guess I have it easier. My students seem to pick up French like (snaps fingers).

LOUIS. And their black leather jackets and their switchblades, no, Brooklyn

Polytech has been overrun by young barbarians.

JOHN. But they're so charming and (struggles to find the right word) full of joie de vivre.

[Again he snaps his fingers.]

LOUIS. You're hip, I observe. So, you and Miss Lang are engaged, Mr. Ashbery?

JOHN. Call me John—no, do, please, sir.

LOUIS. And you can call me "sir."

JOHN. I've been admiring your collection of Ezra Pound's poetry. It's funny to think the poor dear old man still has fans, if that's the word. My goodness, with everybody who matters turning to France for inspiration, it's heartening to know that a harmless little American modernist still turns a head or two.

LOUIS. I'm no fan of Pound's.

JOHN. He was so vicious to your people! And yet look at all those books! It's like some grim collection of guillotine blades—very Kenneth Anger.

LOUIS. I sense a reluctance to talk about your engagement to Miss Lang.

JOHN. Bunny? Bunny's a swell kid! She's the heart and soul of the Cambridge Poet's Theater movement. That's where I wrote all my famous plays. Frank too.

LOUIS. Frank Sinatra?

JOHN. Frank O'Hara.

LOUIS. Perfect name for a francophile.

JOHN. Your wife's an unusual creature.

LOUIS. Let me tell you a secret, baby. There are easier things in the world, if you happen to be teaching in a high school, there are easier things than being married to the daughter of the principal. Celia's father has the

staying power of one of those Micronesian tortoises. How many kids are you and Funny going to have?

JOHN. Kids?

LOUIS. Is her name Funny?

JOHN. We just call her “Bunny” for laughs.

Caroline BERGUALL

## more pets

a more-cat

a more-dog dog

a more-horse

a more-rat

a more-canary

a more-snake

a more-hair

a more-rabbit

a more-turtle

**arras 5**  
page 54

a more-turtle cat  
a more-turtle-more-cat dog  
a more-dog-more-cat horse  
a more-dog-less-horse-less-cat rat  
a less-hair-less-horse-more-rat canary  
a more-canary-less-turtle-more-rat snake  
a more-canary-not-goldfish-less-snake-not-cat hair  
a not-dog-more-hair-less-snake rabbit  
a dog-not-more-hair-not-turtle turtle

a not-turtle-plus-rat catchat  
a plus-dog-plus-rat-pas-chat dog  
    a more-hair-pas-chat-moins-chien horse  
a more-chat-plus-horse-moins-chien-more-rabbit rat  
    a-rat-not-plus-horse-more-hair-moins-canary canary  
    a rat-not-mon-canary-more-not-rabbit snake  
a less-dair-mon-canary-pas-dair-dog-not-snake hair  
    a plus-rabbit-plus-dair-monte-lapin-not-snake rabbit  
        a plus-dair-rabbitnot-more-less-turtle turtle  
            a rabbitnot-catnot chatchat

                                    a catnot-moreless-ni-dogless dog  
                    a ni-morecat- horsecheval-ni-dogless horse  
    a lessplus-notrat-monlapin-dogless-horsecheval not  
a plusnot-notnot-notrat-goldfish-cancan canary  
a notplus-snakenot-moinsplus-cancan snake  
    a snakenot-notair-lesscanned doghair  
        a nonnot-notair-plus-rab rabbit  
            a no-tair-plus-rab-more-turtle trtl



# less girls

drawing a line at being a girl | being like a girl being a girl | be as a girl | act like a girl  
| act as a girl | wide as a girl | wide like a girl |

| wide like a girl widening a girl into a girl | being as a  
girl to a girl | as a girl from a girl | like a girl by a girl | likes a girl for a girl | likes a girl  
like a girl | as a girl likes a girl as a horse |

likes a girl as a horse | like a girl as a horse | ride a girl as a  
horse | riding a horse as a girl | ride a horse like a girl rides a horse as a girl | likes a  
girl like a horse | as a girl likes a horse as a dog |

likes a horse as a dog | like a girl as a dog | as a dog like a  
girl likes a girl for a dog | like a dog bites a girl | biting a girl as a dog | like a girl bites  
a girl like a dog | as a dog in the girl of the world |

in the girl of the world | like a girl in the world | act  
as a girl in the world | as a girl of the world | being like a girl for the world | like a  
world as the world | like a world as a girl | like the world for a girl | as a girl of  
the world likes a girl in the world |

like a girl in the world | in the world as a girl | in the world as the world |  
as the world likes a dog for a girl | like the world rides a girl for a horse | as the world  
like a dog | like the world for a dog | as the world bites a dog | as the dogs bite  
the world | as the dogs bite a dog | as the dogs for the world | like the dogs bite the  
world | as the dogs of the world ride the world to the dogs |

# Reptilian NEOLETTRIST GRAPHICS

## The Origins of the Korean War

Happy mail 02-588-0510 2002

Africa

Sung by ToTo

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☺

☺

I was attending a fraternity dance and felt elegant in a formal gown. My escort and I were starting down the staircase to the dance floor when I suddenly caught a spike heel on my long skirt. I felt and rolled the full length of the carpeted steps, my date running beside me, unable to halt my precipitous tumble. In the dead silence that ensued, I stood up, unhurt, and straightened myself out. My quick-witted companion whipped out a \$20 bill. Offering it to me, he said loudly, "You win, Grace. I didn't think you'd have nerve enough to do it." I was the belle of the ball.

☛ [εμϵ̄ϵ̄ ϵ̄δ̄ϵ̄ä] ÇØιⓈ,±â

»ῑ ÄE,ñ ϵ̄ °ÆÄÆῑÄῑ ÄǖῑÇĪ̄ῑÄȪϵ̄ϵ̄. ±̄,Ⓢ̄ῑÄ Ä ÄÇ»óÄ» ÄÖÄ,Ī̄ ϵ̄Ī̄ÆÇÑ ±â° Ä»  
Ä ϵ̄ϵ̄. °ÄÇ ÄÜ ÄÄÆⓈ̄ Èϵ̄Ī̄ °ÄÄ «μμÄÄÄ,Ī̄ °ῑ Ä °è̄ÜÄ» »Ä°ῑÄȪϵ̄ϵ̄. ±̄°η̄S  
°ⓈÄÜ±â °ÄÄ »ĪÄÇÑ ÇĪÄĪÈüÄĪ ·Ö °Äϵ̄ÆⓈ̄ϵ̄ῑ °ÈÄῑ? N̄ĪÄȫῑÄ«ÆèÄĪ ±ò,° °è̄ϵ̄ϵ̄ῑ Äè  
Ä°Ä μβ±ῑϵ̄ϵ̄.

» ÄÜ ÄE±,°ῑ »ϵ̄ϵ̄ῑῑ? ϵ̄fiÄϵ̄Ä,éῑ?μμ °ÄÇ ÄβηδçĪ̄ Ä μῑÇÑ ÄȪῑ,μÄ° ,Ä» ῑöμμ ϵ̄ø  
ÄĪ. μÜÄĪÄ° Ää Ä°Ä° μῑÇÑ ÄS ϵ̄ῑÖϵ̄ῑῑ? °ÄÄ ÄĪ̄ϵ̄ῑ °ῑ ÜÄῑÄȫÄ ǞÈ̄Ȫῑ » ,öÄ» Ü.Ī̄  
ῑϵ̄ϵ̄ϵ̄.

ÄçÄῑ ÄȪÄ » ÄÜ ÄE±,Ä 20̄fīÄϵ̄,Ⓢ̄ ÄöÆó, È̄ öǞ̄Ī̄ ǞÜ. ±̄° μÄÄ» »°Ö ÄÖ,éῑ?  
±̄°Ä Ä« ῑÖ,Ⓢ̄. »ÇB̄Ü.

ῑ° °°ῑ ÄĪ̄°ǟῑ, ±̄· ÄĪ̄ °. ? °°ῑ ±̄°ĪÄ» ÇÖ ϵ̄è±â°ῑ ÄȪǕῑÄ »°ç ,øÇB̄ῑ.ῑ±  
°ÄÄ ±̄° «μμÈ,ÄÇ ÄÖÄĪ̄°øÄĪ μç̄ϵ̄ϵ̄.

- ῑ fi fraternity ÄE,ñÈ,
- ῑ fi escort μϵ̄ ϵ̄ÄÜ, ÄÄÆⓈ̄ È
- ῑ fi a spike heel »ĪÄÇÑ Èü
- ῑ fi precipitous °ⓈÄÜ °.±, μ ΒÄüÄĪ
- ῑ fi tumble ,ö ±, ,E±â
- ῑ fi whip out È̄ ϵ̄ϵ̄ »Ü
- ῑ fi have nerve to ῑ?ÇÖ ϵ̄è±â, èǞ

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☛ Senate Debates Issues of an Attack on Iraq I(2)

☛ [World news] ϵ̄øπⓈ,±â

About toppling Saddam Hussein. There was little debate today about that particular subject, about whether it's a good idea. But there were many questions about the how and the when. "It matters profoundly how we do it and what we do after we succeed. It would be a tragedy if we removed a tyrant in Iraq only to leave chaos in his wake."

The first witness today was Richard Butler, who ran the last UN weapons inspection of Iraq four years ago.



- ☛ chaos «Áúí?, ´ëË¥ñð
- ☛ wake Áò °°É ÁÚ± , ÈçÀú
- ☛ witness ÁòÁĪ, Áú°íÁĪ
- ☛ inspection ÁÁú, °Èç?
- ☛ essential ÇËíòÁúÁĪ, °íÁâ ÁΒçäçÑ

☛ It wasn't as easy as I thought it would be to get rid of all this old office equipment. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☛ »ç « ÇΑÇ °Α° Áâ°ñ ¿μĪ, Áíçí'Á °0 »°°ç,Á? °É'ÚÇĪÁò°í ´È°0'íçä.

☛ [çÁ'ÁΑÇ °ñÁĪ'ĪΩ° È,È?] çøπ°°,±â 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A : I told you to take care of this last week. What went wrong?

B : It wasn't as easy as I thought it would be to get rid of all this old office equipment.

A : Do you think you can manage it by Friday? All the new staff will be here first thing Monday morning.

B : No problem. Everything will be gone by Saturday at the latest.

☛ [çÁ'ÁΑÇ °ñÁĪ'ĪΩ° È,È?] Çøı°°,±â

A : Áò ?Á0çí ÁĪ°É Á ¿çĪ'ñó°í ¿çΒ'úÁòçä? °í ÁΒ,øμÉ °Ī'Ī±í?

B : »ç « ÇΑÇ °Α° Áâ°ñ ¿μĪ, Áíçí'Á °0 »°°ç,Á? °É'ÚÇĪÁò°í ´È°0'íçä.

A : ±'çäÁĪ±íÁò'íñ»°0 ´È μÉ±íçä? ÁÁ0»ççøμé ÁúçøÁĪ çúçäÁĪ´ÆΕΑ\$ Á ÁĪ ¿0Áú

çç±âçí çÁ°Áμççä.

B : ©Á ´ø Á'Ī'Ú. ´È'íμμ ÁâçäÁĪ±íÁò'Á Áú°Ī μÉ °Ī'Ī'Ú.

☛ [°ü-Á Ç¥Çö] çøπ°°,±â 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. Please deal with the matter as soon as possible.
2. We hope to settle this matter quickly so that we can move on to more important items on the agenda.

☛ [°ü-Á Ç¥Çö] Çøı°°,±â

1. ±° ÇΑ° Á0´ëçÑ »í,© Á ¿çø Α0 È ÁçÁ.
2. Á»´ò ÁΒçäçÑ ÁÇÁ ¿, ÁòçççĪμμ'Ī ÁĪ ´È°ÇÁ» »í,© Á ¿çĪ'í'Ī Á'Ī'Ú.

take care of / deal with... / I will take care of this insurance claim for you. / I will deal with this insurance claim for you.

If we don't take care of this insurance claim soon, we're sure to lose a good client.

(If we don't take care of this insurance claim soon, we're sure to lose a good client.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**ñ e a T a A a infinity U U a T e a a**

**[A I T I z o T z ä] z o p i a**

o e : a f a a c a e a z a z a f i a e a i e a a a a e a t a i a e a a a a e ?

U : a a a f a e a o a a a a a e a a a e a a a a a a a e e e

o e : Ø B ñ I 1 ú f i e ò i r a ò i a a a e u i a a e a a e f i o a a o a a a e e e

U : a a o a a o a f i a a f i a a a a f i o x a a a a e a i e

o e : a a a a c f i c a i t e o i r a e u i a a a e a c a e a z a i t e a e o i r a e a c a a u i a a e a i e

**[A I T I z o T z ä] z o i a**

e » : A O A e z ä z o o i u A z U A C I A o T i q i z ä ?

e i : A A A o z T i m e i A o i a a

e » : A A O 1 o z a A T A » A z o i ? i e A A A » o i a a m x ...

e i : A A A A i A i o A A a a a U A A o A m x

e » : z o ? A z ä A I z i x A i t i t i c A A z ü z ä A I z i i o r m i m i T z o z ä

**ñ e ( e a a ) a T a A ( a i a e ) a infinity » c A l i a » U**

**ñ e a a a ( a a a a a c a ) z U A**

**ñ e a z a f i a e a i i u A**

**ñ e u i ( e a o ) a a a z o A o**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



☛ «μ«Ä««Ε?α- α∞αΑα·αó úζα?αÇαπΕ®

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☛ Äà±, , ≠ °; Äà ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í´Ù.

☛ [·ÑirαT úáú¥] ζøπ®°, ±â

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A : ÑÑαμαóαÍ « «´Ε?«ÄαT ñé(αÉα«)αÇ úια- α αΑα·αó úζ  
(α)α?αÇα α«Ε®

B : «μ«Ä««Ε?α- α αΑα·αó úζ(α)α?αÇα Ε®

ι°αμαóαÍ «μ«Ä««Ε?αÉ á-Í αÉ αÉαΑαéα- úζ(α)α?αÇα α«Ε®

A : «μ«Ä««Ε?αéαé á-Í αT Ú°(αÚα)α- úζ(α)α?αÇα Ε®

☛ [·ÑirαT úáú¥] Çøι®°, ±â

A : ±è~´Ä °Æ+Ä+ ÄΒζ; «~ÜÄ» °; Äà ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í±í?

B : Äà±, , °; Äà ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í´Ù. ÄI~´Ä Äà±, ζÍ´Β±, ÄΒ´Í´Ä ÄÉÄ» ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í±í?

A : Äà±, °, ´Ú´Β±, , ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í´Ù.

☛ [°ú·Ä Ç¥Çö] ζøπ®°, ±â 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. úÚÍ·áfiαéαé ιiÚááfiαT αÚα α- æη(αäαμ)α.α αÇα Ε®

2. αγζα.αÍ « Ε?«éαéαé « Ε?«ÖΕ?αT αÚα α- úζα?αÇα Ε®

☛ [°ú·Ä Ç¥Çö] Çøι®°, ±â

1. ÇÑ±´T°, ´Ú ÄI°»´I ÄÉÄI ± Ä´Í´Ù.

2. α´Ä Ä´ηó°, ´Ú ÄζÇÇ, ÄÄ~ÆÇÖ´Í´Ù.

☛ ¿αéαé¿αÚα α-¿ΑÇ ζè´´

¿.¿¿αÉ¿αÉ αÉαΑαéα-¿¿; ηó´Ä ÇúÄÄ·T Áú @A»

ÇI,é¿¿¿αéαé¿αÚα α-¿¿; ΑÇ ÇúÄÄ·T ´é´αÄ»

ÇÖ´Í´Ù. ÄI ηS αÚα´Ä μI° , αζ?ÇÖ ηS ±° ÇÑΑΕÄ» αÄ, A´Í´Ù.

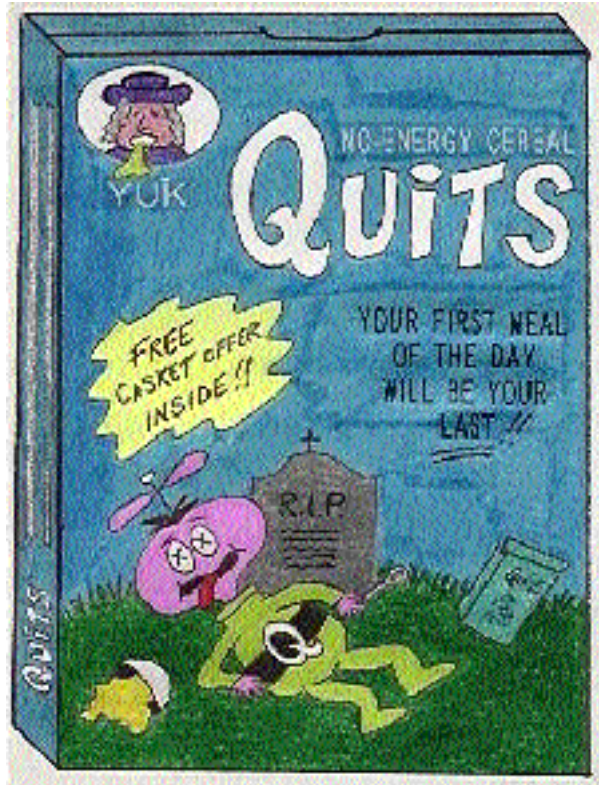
☛ «π«´Ε?«Ä °Æ+Ä+

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[¿ÄÉ±,ζ¿°ö»â¿Ω](#) [¿I ÄÖIð°°æ¿Ω](#) [¿I ÄüÉ?¿μ´TCΩÄÄ»¿Ω](#) [¿I π@ÄÇ¿Ω](#)

::::~?Ä α Çα° A» ÄüÇI´Ä [Online Korea](#) ¿ μÇ´Ú A´Í´Ù::::





murky

## Mara GÁLVEZ-BRETÓN

What good is a silvery tongue  
/ without a lover's body to savor?

To expend oneself, to bestir oneself for an  
impenetrable object is pure religion.  
-Roland Barthes

The Muse (sometimes known as The Inviolable)—the one on the remotest hill / the one of imperforate reticence, of unruffleable / 19th century / Alice-James aplomb and eyes asunder / perfectly suited to her role, of course / as could be inferred by the revetment of adjectives (that lithoid involucre) / as could be inferred / despite the Poet's efforts (to break / to crack / even to chip her impenetrable pericardium?) — only wanted to maintain a stony if precipitous existence, only wanted to sustain a poet-proof insentience, that inhabiting / inhabiting her so-called heart would be

not even the loftiest of desires

So it was that the Poet, also known as The Quixotic One, so it was that I of frail constitution consociation with material / with socially constructed 'lines of existence'—I, who otherwise disfavored idioms, who had no taste for provincialisms, colloquialisms, other forms of the vernacular—resolved “to have my Muse and eat her, too,” resolved to pen (express, create—for not to sublimate) two desires (two!) with one puny poem. And full of sillibub and silly love, full of dithyrambic desires / loony of logos, did I scrawl without rhyme or rhythm (un/iambically):

“What good is a silvery tongue without a lover’s body to savor?”

The One who would rather keep her “tender feelings”  
amorphous, who would rather wallow, who would best  
luxuriate in the transcendental / in the metaphysical /  
the Imaginary than distort / contort that which she  
deems undefinable / that which she knows unde-  
scribable / un-inscribable in her “heart of hearts,” in her  
perspiring hands, in that anhydrous mouth, perchance  
diminishing / perchance con/forming irreversibly  
something unnamable into something cliché;

the One who would rather keep her tender feelings  
amorphous than chance their materialization / their  
penless / paperless incarnation into living (pulpy,  
mucousy, sudoric) bodies—bodies sensuous /  
bodies sentient with feet on the ground yes, tender  
feet on that arid terra in/firma and breasts  
caressible and lips kissable and brows saline:  
bodies that ache for / thirst for / hunger for bodies:  
palpable. . .quivering. . .feminine.

What if one who has studied every poet since and preceding Keats, every theory of poetics—from Aristotle to DuPlessis, from Wordsworth to Galvez-Breton: poem as seduction, poem as alterity / creation, poem as sameness / representation of some interior / exterior state—who has sifted through every mythology of the so-called muse: muse as ideal of femininity, muse as bemusing /‘inspiration’ (pretext of the poet’s text, titillant of the poet’s act of self-production / autopoiesis)—whilst amusing herself in pen-to-paper transformations or evasions of a genre, whilst sipping not Irish cream-tinctured mochas nor luxurious tziganes but generic (if organic) inky java/unadorned— were to come upon a muse of ample flesh (if freckled skin), were to come upon a muse of coagulating (if crimson) blood and graying/auburn hair, and unshaved legs and motley, wrinkled trousers?

So it was that the Muse, sometimes referred to as The Protean One—the one imaginary, hence corporeal; the one freckled/ plump/ time-honored, hence pubescent/ sallow-skinned & spindly-legged; the one so whimsically & irremediably lovelorn she must compose herself atop her towers (of) granite, ivory and carrara / she must compose herself as Muses must: detached, unimpressionable. . . marmoreal.

Behold! Behold!  
Where sways  
The Muse  
in her rocking  
in her rocky  
to and fro-from?

So it was that the Poet, also known as the Cardiographer,  
the one abiding—104, 000 systolic-diastolic cycles in one  
day? —the one marking time—five to twenty blood-red  
letters / five to twenty blood-red liters in a minute (as per  
Taber) / 60 drop-by-drop seconds—the one (breath bated,  
heart sore, eyes exsanguinated of imagination) crying that  
hollow little organ of circulation out from its deepest layer  
of endocardium / murmuring as the (lower) brain sends its  
inflammatory / inhibitory impulse, came to scratch upon a  
notebook page or on a veiny wrist: the bard / the heartsick /  
downhearted / disheartened scholar of cardeasthenia.



Presupposing only imaginary desires—infinately bifurcating/ compelling prosists to compose their narratives (all that eludes composition) into intelligible little quests / compelling the poet to dip her pen (in Higgin's Eternal Ink?) to posit (in lieu of pilgrimages along a dusty desert road?) beachside promenades (heart on sleeve? arm in arm? notebook in hand?) along cordiform shores: all that is tedium-tremens, all that is self-same, but also everything plotless, every whimsical excess of libidinal verve—may be put into words Vita or Virginia, Natalie or Renee, Mara or her pre/post/a priori Muse: ¿now (r)ambling, now stammering along(side) an amorous text? Presupposing

Shall we be surprised that the one born with a lowered threshold for limbic-hypothalamic arousal, endowed with hypersensitive serotonergic receptors / increased interhemispheric communication / a colossal corpus callosum: Mara-the-(Spenserian / syntactic / Sapphic)-sortiger, Mara-the-necromancer (of neologisms?), the p(s)almist (of palimpsests), Mara-known-for-her-ability—prima facie / without aid of oracle, crystal ball or Jeweler's loupe—to perceive, an amygdala the size of Arizona to divine a poet's superhuman consciousness what others (accoutered with rosewood desks? stylographs? laptop computers?) could scarcely glimpse (at second, third or seventh sight) / could even less commence to fathom; Mara-the-sapient, Mara-the-prescient—setting her eyes on the Muse's eyes, musing on that (coy? stern? aloof?) countenance—could make neither head nor tail neither cranium nor caudal appendage/ so ill-versed was she of her own bemusing one's impregnable expression?

So it was that the Poet (also known as The Immoderate One)—the one desiring no more / no less than that the Muse surpass her wildest imagination with every curlicue noctivagation / with every midnight blue extravagation / line of cliché / line of Romanticism running deliriously through—put down (or picked up) her instrument of writing and of fancy:

Who needs a lover's body with such a silvery tongue to savor?

**Jordan DAVIS**

*from Equanimity*

**Thursday, January 30, 2003**

Rangel (D-NY) introduced the War Should Involve Shared Sacrifice Act of 2003 (HR 436) on January 29. So the prexy would get no more tax cuts while he wages an unapproved war and simultaneously cuts education, social, and health programs — while, we might add, claiming to be compassionate and thoughtful about education, social, and health programs. The Republicans, naturally, are calling it a Dem plot to block needed tax relief while spend-spend-spend us back into a \$199 billion deficit. Why not? Worked for Reagan.

Meanwhile, the book-cookers narrowly avoided having to announce that we've slid back into (read: never left) recession.

**Jordan - 12:11 PM**

Currently mulling: Jeffrey Jullich's post about reading levels and Kevin's, Drew's and my work; Jonathan's post about metonymy (which I've never been able to extricate from synecdoche nor completely contrast with metaphor); my compulsion to get everybody off my back. My astonishment and disbelief when people take an interest in me or my work, like it, even. Reader, I am not kidding.

**Jordan - 10:15 AM**

Why I read the Financial Times: the following is from a weekly dispatch by Nigel Andrews, film critic.

As an actor, of course, Walken is such a radiant wacko — with that pale El Greco face and that precarious dancer's poise — that he confuses the film's dramatic arithmetic. He seems far more patrician and compelling than anyone else around.

But no, the spotlight must be on the money, on Master DiCaprio, though as in Gangs of New York he proves that the prettiest boy on the block isn't neces-

**arras 5**  
page 76

arras.net / april 2003



read of work she was under no obligation to enjoy. And frankly, given the level of discourse in the world right now (or ever!), it's not a piece she should leave out of the inevitable collection of essays, reviews, poetics.

**Jordan - 9:15 AM**

Today the same as yesterday except: "Hello Hawk" on the loop in my head, Dug finally cursed Larry out in front of a crowd, I feel profoundly lonely. Jeni read superexcitedly; when she quoted Bowie she was Bowie. Gillian's novel is panoramic, hysterical, Terry Southern without the nasty testosterone problem. I have already cleared space on my heart's bookshelf for those two books.

At the Telephone Bar, I heard "exposed himself" when Maureen said "exploitative." And Tony Towle, hearing me mention Tintin, surprised me by stating that it wasn't until they had long since come and gone that the Thompson Twins' connection to the bowlered detectives was explained to him.

We discussed the ideal duration of a reading — consensus: twenty-five to thirty minutes. I myself can handle anything from twenty to fifty minutes, but less or more and I hold a grudge.

Calling the lawyer, winding up the paperwork.

The southern comfort hot dog: chili, coleslaw, onions. That and a papaya juice from the Papaya King on 86 & 3rd... they're slow but they're the best. Ilya, Jeni's painter friend, prefers the speedier stands at 72 & Amsterdam and West 8th and 6th. "When I want a dozen dogs, I want them right away."

Dug is selling my workshop to everyone he's concerned might be tricked into studying with Larry.

**Jordan - 8:52 AM**

Lost post — browser freakout.

**Jordan - 8:45 AM**

Wednesda y, Januar y 29, 2003

A History of Accomplishment

Recent legislative, regulatory, and other timely issues in which EFTA has taken a leadership role include:

ATM Surcharging - EFTA has been instrumental in halting federal, state, and local legislative initiatives to ban ATM surcharging. Activities include testifying before the Senate Banking Committee and providing written commentary through letters, editorials, and white paper analysis of the issues.

**Jordan - 4:01 PM**

Traders don't generally talk about "buying" or "selling" an options spread because some spreads entail both the purchase and sale of options. For this reason, it is more common to speak of putting on a spread. A collar (or fence) is a spread comprising a long (short) call and a short (long) put, both out-of-the-money and for the same expiration. The strikes can be chosen so that the purchase (sale) price of the call exactly offsets the sale (purchase) price of the put so the spread is a costless collar.

**Jordan - 3:32 PM**

Jeni Olin and Gillian McCain tonight at the Poetry Project.

**Jordan - 2:11 PM**

Other answer: Pinsky's version of the downtown sweatshop fire comes off as literary, borrowed, exploitative even? Something ulterior about it? Probably unfair: how do I know he doesn't have as legitimate a claim to that material as anybody else. (Concept of legitimate claims to material floating around now in the wake of Roman Polanski's *The Pianist*.)

**Jordan - 11:07 AM**

CBO's paper on federal government investment in private securities, i.e. the privatization of social security (surprisingly enough, they agin it).

Meanwhile, the Bsh administration is looking at removing the salary cap for Roths, increasing the contribution limit by 150% to \$7500, and introducing a separate lifetime saving account, with, one expects, tax-free distributions, also at a \$7500 contribution limit.

Hi kids! That's called sheltering income for people who don't need it to live — with the intent of letting compound interest consolidate the power of the oligarchy. Got \$1250 extra lying around every month? Sure you do.

Can't get Superchunk's "Pulled Muscle" and "Cursed Mirror" out of my head. Also, Spoon's "Everything Hits at Once" and "Lines in the Suit." Why do I reject poems about clothes (Pinsky's *Shirt*, for example, which is a harrowing account of the *Triangle Shirtwaist Fire*) while I let this middle class Texan punk rewrite my consciousness? Answer: It's not a rewrite, it's a reinscription of when I was five and learned how to use the turntable, putting *Revolver* side one by myself

while mom was asleep.

**Jordan - 11:05 AM**

Scouting around Karen Volkman's Crash Slaw. Much more pugnacious, much less stilted than I remembered — compare with Imagination Verses, which is exactly as feisty as I remembered. Memory and poetry. Jack's left off chucking ballast from the memory palace. Processes at a perpendicular — letting work grow on you, and remembering (recovering) a high.

**Jordan - 10:58 AM**

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Consumer confidence at 9-year low, according to Siobhan on Bloomberg. Meanwhile, the Footsie hit 1995 levels.

Feeling scattered today. Lunch with Gary — quesadillas and seltzer consumed very rapidly. Then the Health Nuts for dried strawberries for James, and Amish for a cupcake for Gary. Staples is out of project planner books. I have no news! Catching up with Spoon and Superchunk. How could I have forgotten Teenage Fanclub? Pretty easily, actually.

Keston reports that the Feb 15 demonstration in London is expected to effectively shut down the city. Rangel is pushing for a reinstatement of the draft — and wasn't I feeling that coming last night. The Economist looks at a new measure of racial integration, finds NY and LA to be the least integrated cities, on a block-by-block level, anyway.

**Jordan - 1:59 PM**

Back to the financial terms dictionary, and then the site's bookstore. More at lunch.

**Jordan - 9:49 AM**

Nada laments fractiousness.  
What is a strict need?

**Jordan - 9:48 AM**

(They haven't had a checkpoint at 14th Street since November 2001.)

**Jordan - 9:47 AM**

Worth examining or self-evident to anybody who's passed the checkpoint at 14th Street in the last year? my strict need to defend myself against any incursion by Larry Fagin and his taste.

**Jordan - 9:47 AM**



“Believing Is Art.”

**Jordan - 9:45 AM**

On my usual winter tear through the conduit shops (is it clear yet how much of a debt I have to Brian’s casual observations?) I discover Rob Wilson’s Waking in Seoul.

A little girl in a snowsuit comes up to me as I dine with some professors in an elegant restaurant behind Ehwa. The kid stares — ebony-eyes glowing — as I try to smile benignly. “You came out of the TV set,” she bursts out in Korean, and we all laugh. Later, I wonder what program she meant: Little House on the Prairie, The Incredible Hulk?

The place in my heart for poets who for whatever reason have conscientiously objected to the politics of scenes — Joel Sloman, Michael O’Brien, Steve Malmude — as well as for those whose scenes have evaporated — Greg Masters... my imagination thinks in ever-asserted canons of white guy writers.

**Jordan - 9:41 AM**

Anselm’s feasting cheetahs.

**Jordan - 9:34 AM**

Monday, January 27, 2003

Whatever happened to defeating both the assumption of mastery and the ever-asserted canon of white guy writers? Was that just a lot of dry ice and ventilation? To judge from the typical poetry blog prose style and set of preoccupations (I’m keeping that typo), it shore was. (That one too.)  
(I’m another authority!)

**Jordan - 4:09 PM**

Anselm’s fisting cheetohs.

**Jordan - 1:16 PM**

The risible rise of Rinso.

**Jordan - 1:16 PM**

Dow below 8,000.

**Jordan - 1:15 PM**

Wonder if any of the Bardie bloggers can speak to what Weaver was like around campus.

**Jordan - 12:02 PM**

What about Brecht, though. More a collective than an author, uneven production but after all some of the poems, some of the stories, some of the plays... all of his contact with Benjamin worth going back over. But that airplane is going to have to circle overhead until Svevo finishes landing — Weaver's new translation in paperback less than half price at ... dare I reveal my new standby, Bargain Books on Carmine. The children's book annex is the part that's been getting my lunch money but the main storefront has the Fantagraphics Little Nemo vols 2-4 for twelve each, I am still kicking myself for passing on the Kitchen Sink Crazy Kats when they were remaindered. Herriman — not funnier than Walt Kelly, not further out linguistically than Eli Segar, not as subject to continuous drunks and blunders as Herge, but... eminently readable and more than that rereadable. The integrated quality that Alice N. points to in her introduction to Susie Timmons, some writers you just want to keep reading. Related topic. What is Heriberto's rage against reader as consumer about?

**Jordan - 12:02 PM**

The Resistible Rise of Poetry Bullies. Watch for: tendency to deploy superlatives when mentioning teachers, friends, or new discoveries; marking tropes (or technologies) off-limits or declassé; should, really, not really...

**Jordan - 11:46 AM**

Other middle of the night thought: Ashbery around 3 Poems realizes that nobody consistently picks up on what he's feeling so why bother putting together engines of exaltation like The Skaters ... 3 Poems is practically Burroughs-esque hypnotism for unknown purposes. Self-Portrait's the "pay no attention to that man behind the curtain" that actually works! Can't even remember the long poem in Houseboat Days. A Wave is a bit of a return to The Skaters (fear of mortality), but a few years later he's back to hiding whatever bodies he wants in the concrete of Flow J... I mean Chart. "Pardon me for farting," and "Squirrel ragout" — sure, purists will object that he was having the sun piss on rocks as early as Quelques Arbres (my dad suggests that the emphasis is supposed to be on "some", meaning J.A. was reading Charlotte's Web?).

**Jordan - 9:56 AM**

Woken up in the middle of the night, I realize that my early-learned competitive drive doesn't apply to most of my friends — and as is my mildly compulsive wont, I scribble out a list of whom I feel a need to better, whom I just feel good hanging around.

Also, a set of diagrams toward extending Franklin's essay on catchiness into the arena of poetry, comics, jokes — the repetition compulsion.

**Jordan - 9:51 AM**

Proscriptive criticism: Don't Tread on Me. I manage content for a living, ugh — and besides the robot template, which cracks me up, doesn't make room for a roll call of other blogs. Meanwhile, Brian suggests we blogspotters migrate from (free) Blogger to (b.y.o. web-page) movabletype.

Mean-meanwhile, have you noticed the blogger trend toward revising posts? I'm a Smiths' fan m'self, tho I think I could only bear to hear Ask, How Soon Is Now, and why can't I remember what Track Six on Strangeways is anymore over and over. Dylan was not an accidental omission from my desert island iPod — Shelter from the Storm (Hard Rain version) and You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go are about all I could stand on my eternity loop.

**Jordan - 9:48 AM**

**Katherine PARRISH**

The I in Error:  
on the trail of the writing subject  
in digital procedural poetics

To reach, not the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves.

Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*

These meditations are part of an ongoing conversation that began in an online synchronous discussion when I innocently raised the subject of the use of random procedures in digital literary expression, and was stunned at the vehemence of the reaction. I contemplated the volatility of the subject; I wanted to know what was at stake. The results of my inquiry led to a paper I presented at a conference on e-poetry at SUNY Buffalo where, again, the subject of digital literary automata and the role of the human author in these operations raised more than a little heat. The conversations at the conference demonstrated the weight of emotional investment in the idea of the autonomous human subject. No wonder people were getting edgy. A year later, I found myself compelled to revisit the relationship between author and text in these poetic procedures, largely spurred on by an e-mail that was sent to a listserv for a graduate students of the Buffalo Poetics program. The author of the e-mail expresses concern about what she perceived as a masculinist, purifying tendency in procedural poetics. She asks questions about the relationship between gender and digitally generated poetry. In conclusion she writes, "I'm struck by the tremendous amount of anxiety inflected through these processes and explanations" (Russo).

**arras 5**  
page 84

I have also been recently asked to account for these perceptions which are no doubt fueled, in part, by the gender representation in the Object 10 issue on cyberpoetics, and the Buffalo conference from which it sprang. And so, I have been thinking a great deal about the listserv post, and I think I can locate the source of the author's anxiety. I am reading parallel conversations. It has been said that if we look for enactments of current constructed identification of the feminine- multiple, complex, decentered, subversive, transgressive, marginal, web-like, metonymic, destabilizing- in formal literary practice, we will locate them in experimental, or avant-garde traditions (RE:THINKING:LITERAR: FEMINISM, 367). Carolyn Guertin adds that these modes of expression are endemic to and constitutive of cybertextual practice. Cyberfeminists talk about moving from an *écriture* feminine to an *écriture* digital (Senft). According to Sandy Stone, to enter cyberspace is to don the mantle of the feminine. Nevertheless, much of the critical writing on the nature of the human authorial involvement in the production of the cybertexts of digital procedural poetry is loaded with the language of traditional patriarchal values: mastery, purity, order, autonomy, incorporeality. No wonder then that these practices are being thought of as boy toys.

If digital procedural poetics is being characterized, erroneously I would argue, as a somehow inherently masculinist practice, I suspect it is because it is also being characterized, equally erroneously, as a practice that completely effaces the involvement of the human author. While this move is normally celebrated as a rather welcome discrediting of the exalted romantic poetic genius, I would argue that it is consistent with and made possible only by the systematic devaluation of materiality and embodiment that informs one possible posthuman future. In *How We Became Posthuman* N. Katherine Hayles notes that, "Because they have bodies, books and humans have something to lose if they are regarded solely as information patterns" (29). Is it not reasonable that those whose authorial agency has only been recently written into the history of literary production should be hesitant in seeing the redundancy of the human author as a cause for celebration?

Hayles proposes that this pressure towards dematerialization is assisted by the privileging of pattern over presence in an antagonistic relationship. She suggests instead that pattern and presence enjoy a complementary relationship, and that digital informatics reveals that pattern and randomness are bound together in "a complex dialectic that makes them not so much opposites as complements or supplements to one another" (25). The relationship between authorial control and its relinquishment as it is realized in procedural poetics is

characterized by a similar supplementarity. Operating in this splice, these procedures point to an emergent posthuman subjective agency.

The algorithmic process at work in these procedures is often referred to as “automatic poetry generation.” An examination of this use of the word “automatic” propels us straight into considerations of authorial agency. At once imputing a human-like quality to machines, and a mechanistic nature to living organisms, the word automatic generates a recursive semantic feedback loop. To call a living organism automatic is to rob it of life and volition. To call a machine automatic is to bestow upon it will and independent action. As Haraway once remarked, “Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert” (Haraway 152). The phrase begs the question, who or what is the generator in an automatic poetry generator. Who’s speaking? It’s been noted that this is a question a feminist always asks (Senft). If indeed, the question, “who tells the story” is a feminist one, then, as we construct the posthuman author, and consider our relationship to a new emergent nonhuman authorship, and readership, we would do well to look to feminism and other theories of writing and subjectivity that been concerned with alterity. I wish here to examine the implications of the relinquishment of authorial control and the deliberate effacement of the human subject in procedural poetics from a perspective that locates itself in a resistance against a dematerialized notion of the posthuman, of information and of textual practice. While it would be misleading and counter-productive to identify this as an inherently feminist position, it is useful to consider why feminists would have a vested interest in its application.

The use of randomness, the deliberate construction of chance, is central to procedural poetic work that seeks to complicate authorial control. Randomness is also central to information theory, and a major character in the story of how information lost its body. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the randomness of digital text generators is not truly random. Computer-based random event generators are in themselves deterministic procedures, but the results they produce have the appearance of obeying no particular law. This simulated pseudo-randomness, according to the Web Dictionary of Cybernetics generates behaviour that is “nearly impossible to predict without knowledge of the starting number and its algorithm” (Principia Cybernetica Web).

So although we are simulating randomness, the loss of control, or at least the perception of the loss of control, is authentic. I would therefore like to place the use of randomness in the larger context of work that problematize authorial control, although randomness and chaos hold particular interest to those

wishing to occupy and subvert those spaces to which women have been traditionally assigned.

These procedures are certainly very different and are used differently to different ends. But the nervousness with which they are viewed is similar as Jackson Mac Low observes:

Everything in the bin may be tainted with a contempt or dislike that may arise from the fact that the artwork is thought not to be entirely the work of the individual artist. Whatever may come into it may not be the result of choices—on whatever level—of the artist. The dislike may arise from a kind of despair or fear that the “self”—the “subject”—is being intrinsically denigrated. Indeed, these methods and others first arose from an attempt to lessen (or even vainly to try to do away with) the hegemony of the ego of the artist in the making of the artwork.

If the implied redundancy of authorial involvement gives feminist critics of procedural poetics pause, the paradoxical use of these same procedures in order to reassert control over literary production isn't necessarily more attractive. Critiquing the surrealist's technique of automatic writing, Queneau proclaims that:

... the poet is never inspired, because he is the master of that which appears to others as inspiration. He does not wait for inspiration to fall out of the heavens on him like roasted ortolan. He knows how to hunt, and lives by the incontestable proverb, 'God helps those who help themselves.' He is never inspired because he is unceasingly inspired, because the powers of poetry are always at this disposition, subject to his will, submissive to his own activity. (quoted in Motte Jr., 36)

This mastery is achieved through the rigorous application of formal procedures. “The classical playwright who writes his tragedy observing a certain number of familiar rules is freer than the poet who writes that which comes into his head, who is the slave of other rules of which he is ignorant” (quoted in Motte Jr. 18). The OuLiPo's championing of processual literature for its power to free the poet of unconscious rules resembles Burrough's use of cutups as a way to guarantee the autonomy of the individual. As described in *The Ticket that Exploded* randomness is a tool used to “break obsessional associations”—personal, and cultural, and those of the WORD.

Ironically, what these stories suggest is that individual autonomy is not part of our native processes- we have to surrender to the workings of an outside force to gain independence. Even as these writers champion the individual autonomy of the human subject, they reveal what a fragile property it is. More is at stake here than the loss of the conscious control of the author/programmer. What is at stake is the idea of conscious agency in the human subject itself.

Conscious agency can be said to be a native function of the liberal human subject only in so far as the liberal human subject is a constructed entity. This is what is so threatening about the emerging figure of the posthuman cyborg. Joseph Weizenbaum and the OuLiPo make strange bedfellows but they are united in their anxiety to protect maintain the individual autonomy of the human subject, even as she plays in the garden of algorithms. However, as Hayles elaborates in *How We Became Posthuman* "In the posthuman view.. conscious agency has never been "in control" (288). Nevertheless, just because we are not fully in control does not mean that we are wholly absent, or completely passive. Feminists have known the truth of this for some time.

Christian Bök has said that *The Policeman's Beard is Half-Constructed*, the only full length volume of poetry said to be written by an artificial intelligence, signifies the redundancy of the involvement of a human author in the production of literature. On the surface, it seems that William Chamberlain, the programmer of and official editor for Racter, the text's reputed machinic author, would likely agree, as in the preface to the book, he himself rejects any authorship status. Even if we are to ignore his role in writing the code which produced the texts, or selecting the input texts, and I don't believe we can, Jorn Barger & Espen Aarseth both note that Chamberlain played an active role in tweaking Racter's output through templates that would further shape the text (Barger, Aarseth 132-4). In any event, in Chamberlain's case, one doubts the seriousness of his disavowal of authorship status. As Aarseth notes, Chamberlain's insistence on the authenticity of the work in the preface is the oldest trick in the book (Aarseth 134).

Christian Bök suggests that the idiosyncratic stylistic quirks of the human author might be analyzed so as to construct an algorithmically identical writing machine, able to prolong the writer's activity beyond the grave. At times, I also doubt the seriousness of Bök's claims for Racter's autonomy, but I do take seriously the fetishization of the pure machine, the lightness of the authorless book that, in Blanchot's words, "lacks the seriousness, the labor, the heavy pangs, the weight of a whole life that has been poured into it" (quoted in McCaffery, 225).



The language recalls the techno-ecstatic dreams of Hans Moravec, who still longs to jack into a Gibsonian incorporeal cyber-utopia. I'm not ready for my upload, yet, Mr. Moravec. Cyberfeminists, such as Fiona Hovendem have raised particular objections to this tendency noting that, "The desire for "meat-free" existence plays into desires to escape from the real, but is also enabled by the men/women- mind/body split, and the invisible work of woman in maintaining and caring for bodies" (Hovendem, 252). Indeed, Katherine Hayles story of how information lost its body pays close attention to the nearly invisible activity of one Ms. Janet Freed, the secretary, who dutifully cared for the transcribed notes of the Macy Conferences, notes which ironically asserted the redundancy of the material body of information.

Christian Bök remarks that Racter is a witless machine that knows very little about poetics. In John Searle's famous Chinese Room experiment, Searle proposed that if he were inside a closed room and handed Chinese characters through a slot and given instructions as to how to arrange them, he could carry out an accurate conversation in Chinese, but it would be improper to say that Searle knows very much about Chinese. But, as Edwin Hutchins argues, it is not Searle who knows Chinese, but rather the room (Halyes 289). The experiment, in this light, becomes a rather effective model for the notion of distributed cognition. It's also an interesting inversion of the relationship between human and machine that we find in Racter. Searle, inside the box, forgot the box. Bök, outside the box, wills to ignore Chamberlain, also outside the box. And what of the person who designed the algorithms for the Chinese room experiment? And, as Joan Retallack asks, what of the Woman in the Chinese Room:

imagine that you are locked in a room and in this room are several baskets full of Chinese characters she is glad they are Chinese of course glad to continue Pound's Orientalism there will be no punctuated vanishing points she is given only rules of syntax not semantic rules she is relived of the burden of making meaning she need only make sense for the food to be pushed through the slot in the door it is thought that these are situations more familiar than we would like to them to be in the new technologies and to men more than to women but it oddly feels quite normal.

(from *How to do things with Words*)

The machine as author is a new Other, and Retallack does well to remind us of Pound's Orientalism. I wonder if we are guilty of appropriating its poetics to

our own ends - a very human thing to do - when we set the machine up as a latent, primitive being, like some noble savage? Let's be honest. We value Racter's output because it reminds us of our own. If it were truly alien- we wouldn't like it. We likely wouldn't even be able to read it.

Make no mistake: I am not interested in rescuing Chamberlain's poetic genius in the name of autonomous human creativity. But I am not interested in replacing this autonomous creative human with an autonomous creative machine, although I would like to meet such a creature. I would like to read its work. There are just two problems. First, I do not think I have yet met one until I see the work of a machine producing text of its own volition for its own purposes, I will not grant it the same autonomy that I grant to the human (which admittedly, is very little.) Secondly, how will I know these machines and texts when I see them? I imagine that there exists a large body of robopoetic work, but that it unrecognizable to us, bubbling away in the space-off. If it's anywhere, I would say it's being produced by the creatures in Ray Tierra's Artificial Life programs, who are left to evolve pretty much to their own devices, rather than having to slavishly reproduce William Chamberlain's vision of poetics.

Of course, Searle dreamt up the Chinese room in response to an earlier experiment of Alan Turing's, and Retallack's poem also reminds us that Turing proposed two tests- one in which it was to be seen whether a machine could pass for a human, and an earlier version in which gender was the subject of this cybernetic Pepsi challenge. We might thus read Chamberlain's signature as an act of literary transvestitism, parallel to those of male authors' ventriloquism of the female voice. In these gestures, the signature is critical. Indeed, Racter seems to be such a bad candidate for an example of egoless authorship, that it does cause one to question the eagerness to claim it in the name of robopoetics. It feels embarrassingly reductive to attribute the gesture to a masculinist dream of a disembodied, pure mind. But the gesture itself feels reductive. Could the problem be as simple as the Sibylline heroine of Jeff Noon's Pollen wryly observed, "All you pure boys want is more purity. You can't stand confusion" (239).

Can we avoid the pitfalls of gender essentialism if we make such a claim? To resist the dematerialization of the posthuman subject by locating it in a material gendered body is not to fix that subject in an essentialist gender framework. That would amount to substituting one purity for another. It is crucial to remember that the embodied material subject that cyberfeminists occupy is itself a construction- bodies may be material, but materiality itself is an iteration of a performance.

As an alternate reading of procedural poetics, I would like to offer recent writings about the work of Tina Darragh and Joan Retallack. If it appears that I'm stacking the gender deck here, it's not from a desire to exclusively locate feminist practice in female authorship, in the clinamal swerve of a woman's hip. I do think, that in the name of creating a more accurate representation of the landscape, there is value in drawing attention to the work of female practitioners of procedural poetry, and so here I would mention Harriet Mullen's *Sleeping with the Dictionary*, *Cunt Ups*, by Dodie Bellamy, and the work of Margaret Christakos, most notably, the recent *Excessive Love Prosthesis*.

Contemporary readings of Retallack and Darragh locate their poetics at the intersection of cybernetics and considerations of authorship. Jena Osman, in conversation with Darragh, notes:

(self-expression in Retallack's work) is not considered something to be avoided the way Cage thought it was. In fact, it is a political necessity: in a world that fails to give voice to certain subjectivities (those of women or minorities, for instance) it is not acceptable to simply eradicate the "intentional" or "quasiintentional" voice of the author (although certainly there's room for intentionality's critique). Such an eradication would mirror the social error that the "poethical" work hopes to counter aesthetically. You do not efface your identity as a subject (gendered) coming into contact with the world's materials (also gendered). (Philly Talks 4)

In the recent anthology *Telling it Slant*, Osman pursues this further, grounding Darragh's notions of subjectivity in the oscillation between the I and the "I in error." This oscillation could be the result of having Anglo-American feminists in one ear, telling us that creative self-definition is an essential part of the feminist struggle, while Cixous and Irigaray's lips whisper in the other ear that the dream of self-control, self-identification and self-definition is a patriarchal one. But I am inclined to believe that it has more to do with the fact that both of these women are students of chaos, randomness, and error. Joan Retallack attended to chance the way Cage attended to silence, and found it full:

The selective foregrounding of chance makes it possible to bring to light and sound things that are otherwise potentially absent or ominous. Perhaps because we've tended to be uncomfortable with things outside what we take to be the realm of

control, we miss/ignore/deny the circumstantial evidence that chance is all around us. Hence the silences—feminine, phobic, phallic—wherein lie unmined energies of chance.  
(from SECNÀHC GNIKÀT: TAKING CHANCES)

In the Errata 5uites , Retallack applies these energies to well known passages of theoretical tomes, celebrating the noise that corrupts the signal. Significantly, both the “error” and the “correction” are voiced in the text, acknowledging that information depends on both pattern and randomness. For Darragh, the error is productive of meaning: “blank .. implies a hidden narrative.. the blank is a gap, an error, a defective message, if you will, of the conscious narrative at hand. The mistake illuminates” (quoted in Osman, *Telling it Slant*, 274). Osman, notes that the “error is what keeps us from deluding ourselves that our experience can be understood in romantic terms such as wholeness and grand designs.” And in that statement, she brings us back to Haraway and Hayles and their battle against a dream language that translates perfectly- Haraway who sounded the war cry, and Hayles who located the battlefield in cybernetic discourse, and Claude Shannon’s abhorrence of equivocation.

Just as Katherine Hayles finds it necessary to repeat through her volume that she, in her critique of the disembodied posthuman subject, is not interested in recuperating the liberal human subject, but rather wishing to offer an alternate vision of the posthuman, I do feel the need to re-assert that I have no special love for the human author that I wish to protect her. In fact, I am quite interested in seeing the nature of authorial involvement in texts continue to change in our increasingly networked, distributed world. And if it should indeed come to pass that we find ourselves in the company of autonomous artificial poets, I will not flinch from exploring the implications. I might even cheer. I do not think we’re there yet. And I do think there is a danger in the misrepresentation of our situation. And that may indeed be cause for some anxiety.

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