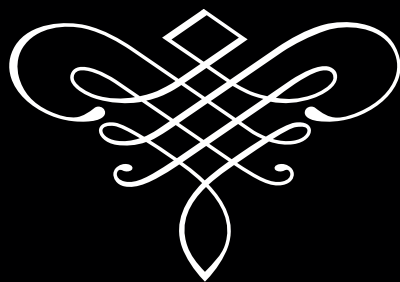


PECULIAR MORMYRID

ISSUE TWO



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Michael Andreoni

If I was the Talking Animal in a Story

I wouldn't be good. For you. It might begin with a sense of uneasiness about why I'm there. A suspicion that my character conceals something or someone you wouldn't like if I were said plainly. But my silken fur tempts your hand, doesn't it? My soft voice makes few demands. I'm a cute little thing, here to please. Watch me do tricks. We'd go on a fun adventure deep into the intellectual forest, to bag the lion. She's a bad lion who roars and insists on being a lion, I say, handing you the gun. Her fur isn't soft like mine, and pleasant to stroke. She's not self-deprecating, or even ironic. Real lions are too dangerous to have roaming around roaring impolitic mischief. They make everyone nervous.

I abandon you in the forest of course. Watch me slink off with my tail held low. You could certainly tell yourself you saw it coming, except, retracing your steps back to safety, you're confronted by a different narrative framed in tooth and claw. There's no apology in those muscular shoulders, which power the claws, which are for ripping you right out of middle-class comfort. And you didn't sign up for that kind of story, you snarl, setting gun to shoulder. No satisfying bang, only poof, and yes, it's just another trick. Then you get the double ending that has always been waiting: The one where the lion tears you apart and the most horrible ending, where it doesn't

notice you at all.

If I was the talking animal in a story I wouldn't be good. For the one who wrote me there. A bear with mouse pretensions is a character of disappointment. Squeaking is not roaring even when it wants to be, though certainly amusing. It's too funny when I'm made to hint at things which should be said. I'm designed for subtlety, except it's more like the vacuum in a bell jar. What I almost say almost gets said, almost being an interesting descriptive for nothing. Pleasantly mysterious, I could be about something ambitious if you wanted to go there. I get my belly rubbed instead. We're in the entertainment business after all.

I can't abandon my creator even if others might. There's always nonfiction, and film. But I dream of chasing difficult prey through deep snow, getting my teeth in. Fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth—truth being an interesting descriptive for getting somewhere. The problem is always mortality. I'll be prancing about harmlessly long after skill and desire fade. Why write me small when you know you want to give me fangs that really bite, claws that rend? I won't ask what can't be asked—to be written human. Perhaps that's too much for these times. I should be grateful to be around at all, allowed to nip at things which can absolutely bite back. You would be right to think I'm a greedy bit of fluff, though instead try imagining twenty years of stubby teeth gnawing at you. Growl.



Jesse Treece
A Great Bird

J. Karl Bogartte

Selections

Darkness burns mazes into the avenues where your solitude nests, unveiling the youthful siblings of uneasy inventions, seductive ciphers and vague spyglasses whispering endearing phrases... the cello attracts rival veils and slips of the tongue.

Your presence is deceptive, a garden of delirious stains.

The invention of night, the ageless question of impossible balance, the pilot's daughter eating crystals: To fill the world with light, the void with imaginary bodies glowing in the dark...

She has not been spoken of for many years, she is mything vitreous and tapping pawns for tallow, she is quickening her fluidity, to divert and disguise. Light poured into lacerations the way shadows enter clothing, for only a moment, or two, only a hidden space. A translation, for throwing phantoms into invisible walls. She is myth-ratcheting amorous, chiding brutal structures for mountainous beckoning, to corrupt with pleasure.

The ancient horned flower of your psyche attracts the devoted milking machines, the aboriginal veins of a fabric that propels your footsteps as determined as her threads slipping into light, vanishing in the blink of an eye.

Dark and greedy, the always secret and ever vanishing body of torrential mirroring.

The glow between living and ceasing to live, emulates the long-legged cascade in her whispering circuitry, the gaze of rain is corrupted film, caught in the act, disguised by pleasure purring in gradually brightening passwords. The catapult of an unfinished sentence, turned to provoke, to stroke and latent in state, the light separates your body from its own darkness.

The perfect alignment through the axis of it's twin, quartered and shelled in the gasping for breath and emerald, adored and pandered for pleasure and sight unseen, she licks herself in meadows of ermine and chimera, aching, angelica posing in the likeness of her bees sipping, through every sense of pulling ravens out of her body for kindling.

Quickly elegant and half-mad, you can almost see the lightning through your skin...

The perverse pleasures of the captured bride dove-tailed in the mathematical equation of the city held up for example by the stars.

The scorpion-headed mannequin, your shadow striking inward for contact with the natural world. The empty animated gloves shaking out contentment in the garden, eyelids of entropy emitting seeds and slow rituals...

Dark gravitational assignments seduced into amulets the color of glass, evolving in sequential chiaroscuro, tempting blood where (in the Manor of Sighs) the barbarian sign language seizes the images of your being in the rich, antiquarian lucidity of your extinction. Your face, or the features of night in the fever of graceful spirits that

still come to drink the liquid of life out of your hands, the pendulum... An evening of theater runs ahead...

Trapping belladonna between the lines, between her legs, between phases, to embrace the blindness of your murmuring, pushing out between her lips, the lost hermeticism of albino checkmates.

The weapon you most cherished was feminine. The wedge forced into the appearance of things was ambiguous with its dark insistence and wind-up astronomy, clicking and whirring about in circles and broken up by triangles into long, interminable caresses that went on forever, imitating a newly discovered galaxy quivering in the nearness of wolves.

There is only the daughter of Icarus, without mirrors, the shadow of uncertainty that surrounds the ribcage of a philosophical paradox, only the stone of a primitive light, only the glance that hatches in the fire, the optical main-spring of a science that runs amok, only the ciphers leading the fossils of daybreak, and the glowing of those beings you feed each morning, the pools of blood dripping out of your dreams. Flight is only the body torn by light, powered by obscene gestures. A choreography of wish fulfillment.

There is always the diamond-cutter's unremitting caress, always those great moths entering your eyes in a frenzy of unconditional attraction, clearing a space for the ermine of humor, and the misplaced objects of great value.

The end of a séance equals the white-haired calabash, the Windigo-chaser. The kind that fluctuates, offers petals, sheds light on pedestals and the loss of consciousness while fumbling Latin.

Rumpelstiltskin at the raven-podium, in the lucid tongue and groove, there tiptoes with top hat and pict... The muleta shimmers in the code of silence, obscure lucida and the swan.

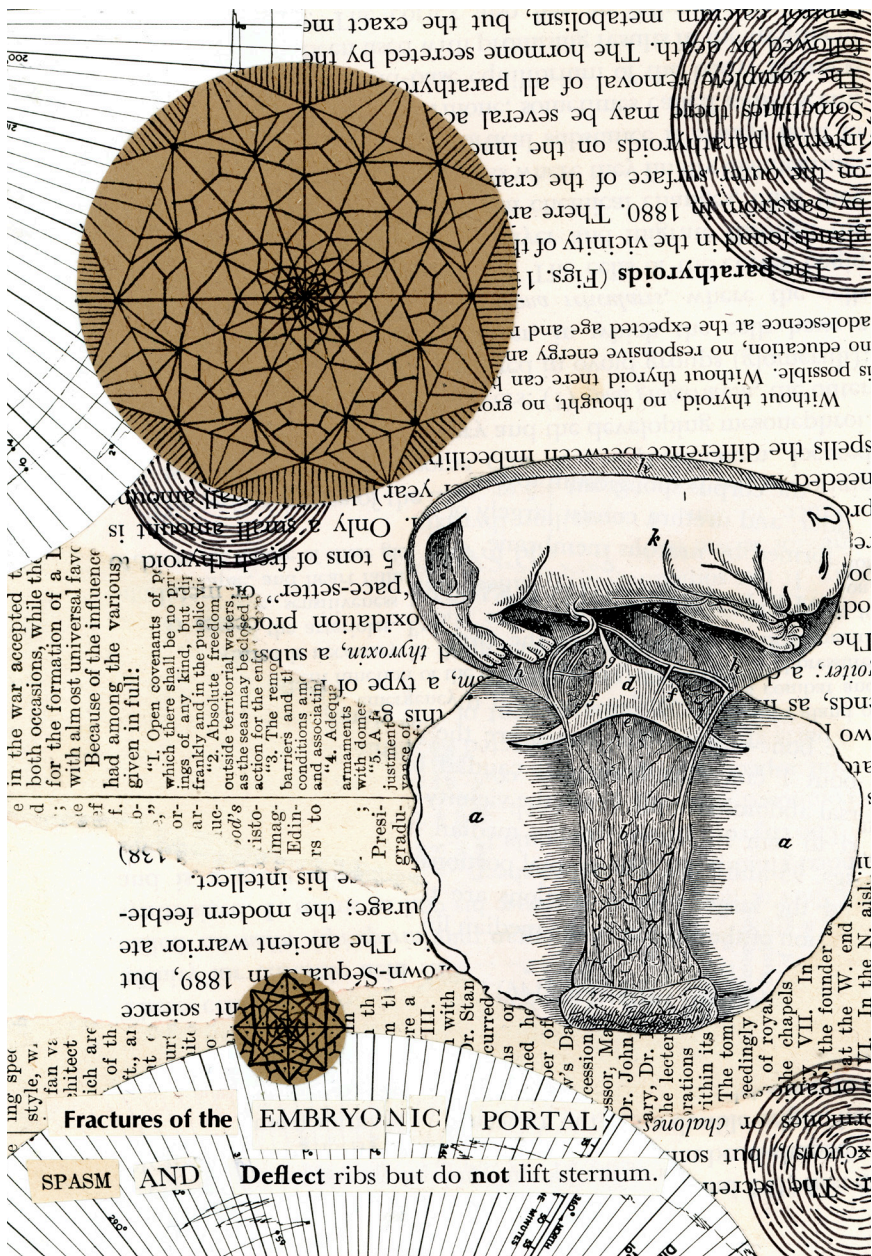
Among the various diversions and unforeseen discoveries, when the shallow end of a gesture foreshadows a long and hazardous recovery, and sudden landings in desolate places, it is your eyes most of all that appear as an interlocking resolution, or the honor among thieves.

Quickly elegant and half-mad, you can almost see the lightning through your skin...

And your veins filled with panther dust...



Milana Zadworna



Casi Cline
Embryonic Portal

Bruce Boston

A Life in the Day of

The majestic blooming
of the century plant
reveals petals of pure yellow
and stained cream,
distinct pistils and stamens.

I will love you, she said,
as Freud loved the id
in its trammeled fury.

The jaws of my brain,
adrift in opaque bestiality,
question the integrity
of a Pythagorean
reclining nude.

The heel stamp of my pen
assassinates the art
of nuclear mystics.

I will love you, she said,
as Darwin loved evolution.
Things change.

In an algid moment

the final consequences
of the abominable resonance
of a soft and hairy
architecture are revealed.

Diacritical exclamations!

The ravishing comprehension
of cannibal imperialism
by a paranoid critic.

I will eat you like the peach,
she said, I eat every Sunday
in the sky black morn.

Having teased
the sensitive mimosa
in the circular greenhouse
late that afternoon,
afterward,
he would drink peppermint tea
with the ghost of morning.

The Lateral Eclipse of Bound Sunsets

Never believing the awkward
scalpel of an invidious paraclete
or the razors of those recently

consigned to public scrutiny
could carve intaglios of flesh

deep in his paramour's arms,
how could he have imagined
the fleet collaborations and
juxtapositions of stained youth,
such a veritable inheritance

in the swelter of the moment
during a long dusk in Tours,
postprandial espresso and
hot buttered croissants
cooling on the marble table

of a crowded hotel balcony,
only a scattering of candles
and glowing cigarette ends
and unintelligible voices
to assault the shadows,

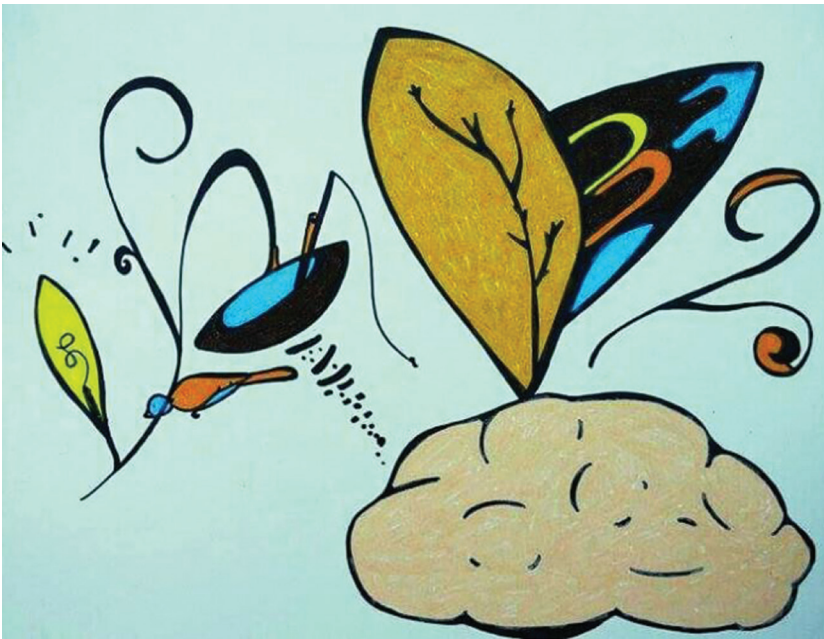
to light the closet of the sky,
while back at the atelier
you've rented for the summer
an impertinent Beaujolais
breathes a heady bouquet

of charcoal and roses,
and unconsidered lives,

an inconsiderate choice
for an after dinner wine
when a beautiful mad poet,

a Rimbaud in his prime,
waits to whisper mystic
mythical verses in your ear,
while the inviolate legislature
rushes through high doors

of the burnished capitol,
demanding further restrictions
on the travel of holy spirits
and bound sunsets by the score
across international borders.



Ashley DeFlaminis, Garden of Thoughts

Surrealist Shopping List

the autobiography of a trellis

a brisance of laughter
so loud trilobites pause to listen

noctilucent bridge mix (2 sacks)

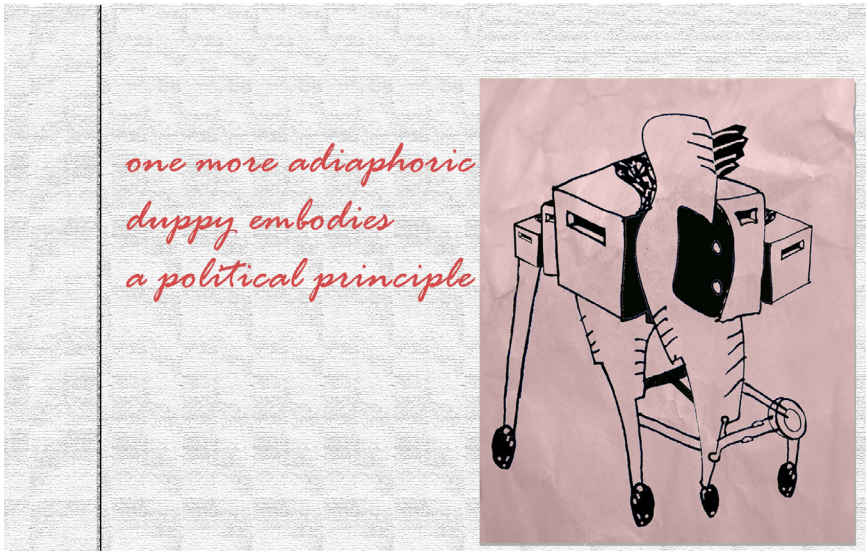
a guerrilla theatre staged in ragged flesh

hallucinogenic cutlet with flies

ravishing inversion of sunflowers
stretching the skin of the eye

the burning bush

3 lbs stonehenge



Dale Houstman

Maurizio Brancaleoni

Das Whirling Wszystko

In 1945 in Oppeln there was a woman who used to please herself
to Van Ostaijen's poetic corpus

– ah, el poeta, de welbeminde nam
de schaar

ma per favore, aspettiamo il risultato

as the process was forever whatever ongoing

– the ceiling in Niechcic
to jest dobra manga, the only full sentence I was allowed
to replicate

bedsheets change equal to niemożliwe
on 13 June, BRUDness da last of his concerns
collision, chance meetings with Das Weiblich
by the toaleta/bathroom

pierogi sałatka, one is the mishmash of them books
we brought in several kosze, non-paid, libraries disgraced
by remont

let's wait for the result tho'

another sweaty morn, roommates glued onto
the Whirling Wszystko causing

(enabling)

their pants and dusty patches to be left in unpredictable lugar
depilation waste – The Sign of The Female – polluting
shower, kuchnie, kuuurwa!, kuchnie
crumbs onionskin empty packages the eternal oil-stained

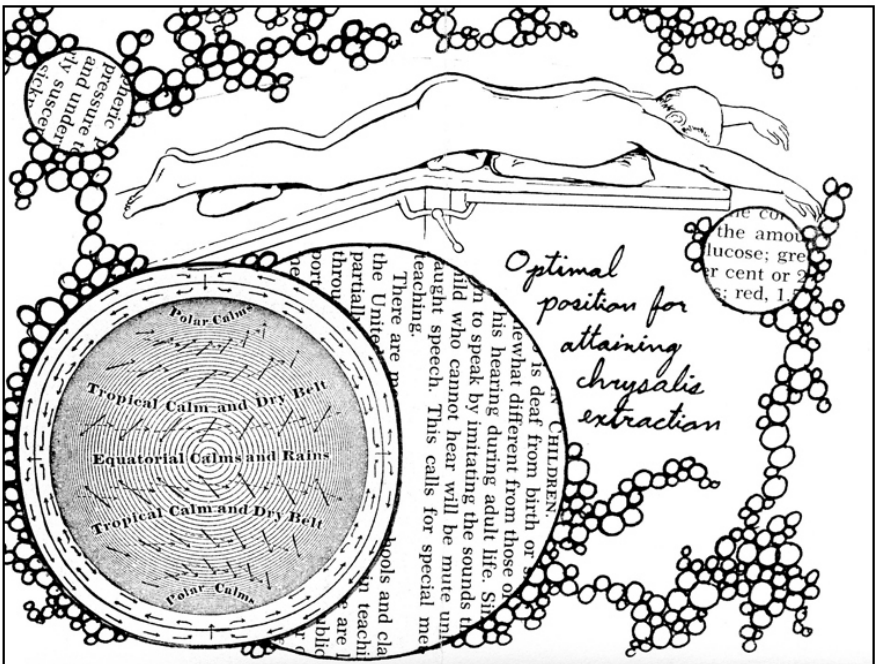
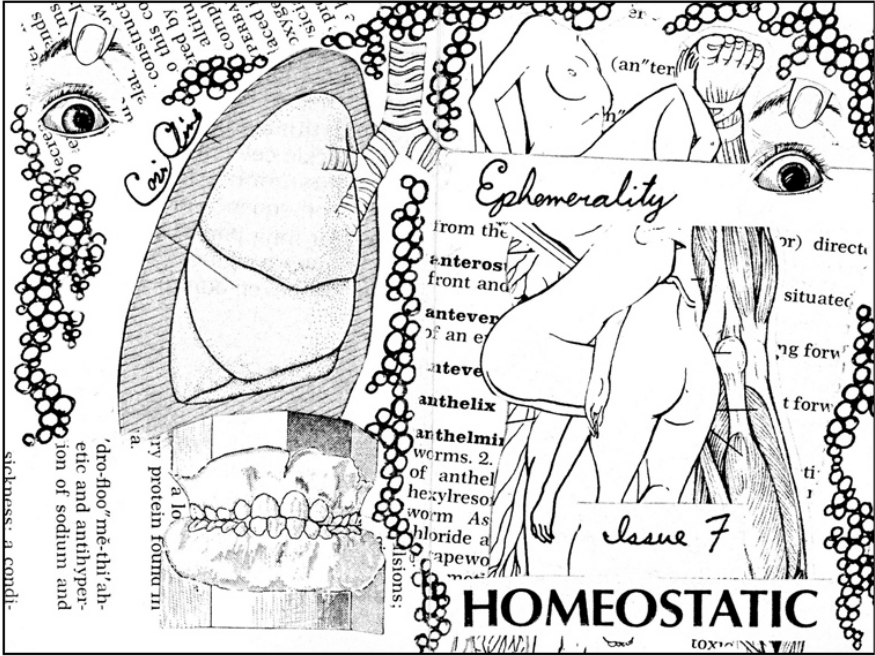
scraps of blabbing że nie mogę rozumiec, alas

but never go to the unblessed city of Berlin
where thou shalt be terrorized &
painfully relocated

more than anything else smart writings on the walls
fascinate me

czekamy, czekamy, everything shalt be undecided
the woman told me,
and then she was looking carefully, watching intently
the faces, the gestures,
the never-ending flood

everybody in the world has a relative in my ridiculed Country



Casi Cline

Steven Cline

Openings

When iatic sleeps she dwells in dung.

I call out to her, but the eyes remain closed. They are closed to the world and all it's banal constitutions.

Her body shivers violently and it is the true cause of the seven manifold earthquakes. Each day and every hour the sea spits up a new vibrating secret with her sneeze.

Dispossessed of all openings, dwelling primarily on the time when the black jelly will unfold. This is iatic in all her unrelatable complexity.

Lastly and most importantly for our readers—

She has recently discovered that the celestial flesh decays much like any other garden vegetable.



Milana Zadworna

Angel Dionne

Zeno's Paradox

xodaraP s'oneZ

Undulating fisherman's whispers lay in a crisscrossed pattern atop star dappled fields. Sound, like motion, is illusory. A tangerine mirage, trapped within stained Tupperware, contained within the porcelain of chipped teacups and discarded doll heads. Zeno's paradox continues to hang in sharp shards, like a mobile of shattered glass creating concentric circles, infinite gold bands wrapped tightly around the crescent moon.

Suffocating

Constricting

Binding

A tourniquet braided around weeping flesh wounds. Pressure causes iridescent essence, viscous sap, to ooze from the astral opening. It pools on Achilles' shoulders, weighing him down as he attempts to reach the tortoise. His motions are proven futile. The race never begins, the race never ends. Space and time, infinitely divisible, root him to the loamy earth as termites claim his flesh.

Quivering stairways reach
Towards Zeno's stagnant arrow,
Tenderly plucked from the celestial sphere's
Pregnant belly.



Daniel de Cullá

Brandon Freels

YOU AND US

I was walking down a wooden staircase that randomly changed length and width. It was painted a bright white, and spanned over a void full of unfinished architectural structures, as if overlooking some large construction site. There was no railing on the staircase and I was afraid of slipping off the side.

While walking down the stairs I noticed the shape of your naked body within the steps. Your body grew from the stairs, and levitated out of the wood. It lifted upward and rotated until you were standing parallel to me. You were stiff and quite like a statue. I was carrying your purse and inside I found a piece of hot metal, which I waved in front of your face. This action animated you, as if it was some kind of key, and I followed you as you began walking up the stairs.

The staircase grew narrower the higher we got, and came to an end at a plateau that was overcome with a storm of snow and wind. This plateau was connected to a very large mountain that I assumed was somewhere in Germany, and the snow and wind made it difficult to see and walk. Where the stairs met the plateau there began a silver path, which we promptly began following until it eventually forked in two. One fork went downward to a small village that seemed untouched by the storm, while the other appeared to go up the mountain. You refused to

walk any further, and without you I was unable to make a decision. Filled with anxiety, I ran into a large patch of trees, and began shouting the name of another lover, someone from my past.

But when I entered the woods my perspective changed, and suddenly I was you standing silently at the fork in the path. Something was circling us in the distance: a young girl with blonde hair. She moved quickly, so quickly it appeared as if she were flying. It was impossible to see her face, and I could only see her hair as it streaked behind her, and the bottoms of her youthful naked feet, which seemed to barely touch the ground. She began shooting arrows into our body until finally, covered in arrows and blood, we collapsed on the path. As we sat helplessly suffering, she briskly ran up to our body and with some kind of large dagger began viciously stabbing us.

COUNTER-DREAMS

I wake up on the floor next to the bed, covered in bruises. One of your fingernails is stuck in my back. The flesh around the nail is swelling. Life isn't the same when you're gone. I take a knife and cut a large gash in one of my arms, starting at the inside of the elbow and down to the palm of the hand. Within the flesh I can see the body of a salmon. I pull the fish from my arm. It's slick and hard to grasp. The fish slips out and dangles from my arm, a thin piece of muscle connects it to me like an umbilical cord.

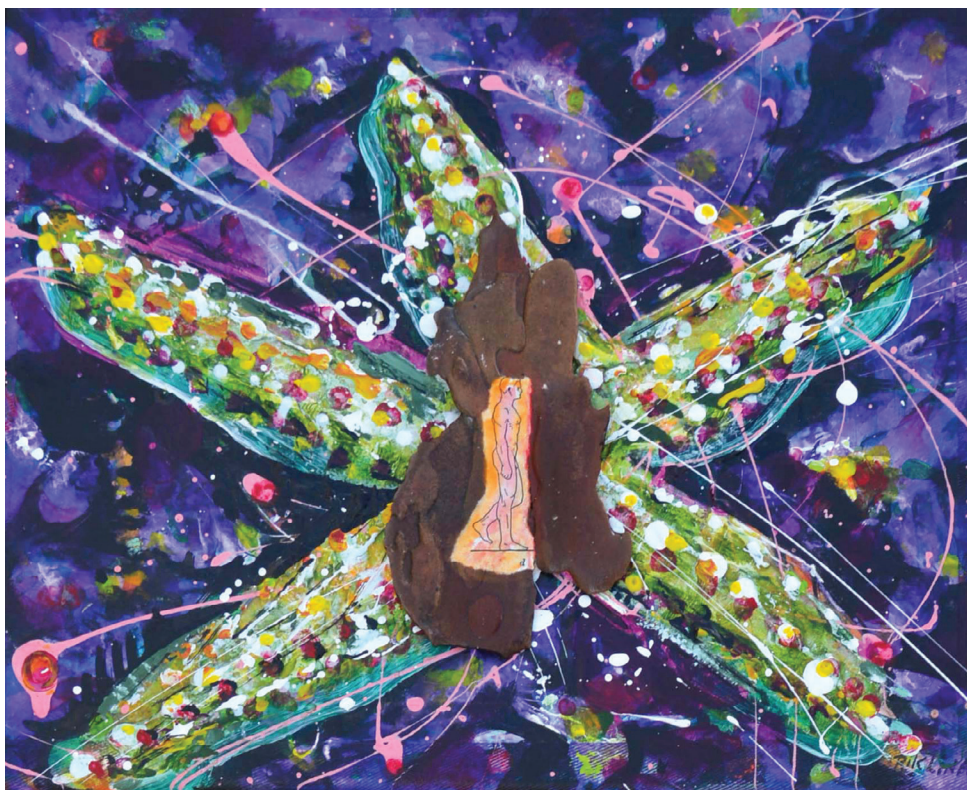
I wake up partially clothed in the bathtub. A nude man stands next to the tub. He's staring at the wall. A hairless wiggling tail sneaks out of his ass, followed by two small feet. Finally, the back of an animal's torso works its way out of his ass. I get down on my knees behind him and watch. The creature coming out of his ass appears to be a possum, but different. It has somehow been lodged inside of his body. I take hold of the legs and try to pull it out, but his asshole tightens every time I yank on the animal. I decide to give the animal a hard pull, and when I do the man's sphincter tightens so much that it splits the animal in half, with the bloody back half of the creature dropping to the floor.

I wake up on the kitchen floor and you're burning your hand on one of the stovetops. Your skin morphs into one giant crust that covers your entire body. Your hair and nails fall off. Only your eyes and lips are intact. You lie down on a cookie sheet and appear to sleep. A year passes and I use a tire iron and a hammer to break open the crust. I chip it off, like someone peeling a hardboiled egg. Beneath the crust you've become a radiant glass creature, yet full of blood and shit. I put my face to the stovetop, but only my eyes and lips burn.

I wake up in a living room, chained to the floor. The room is empty, except for a white couch covered with brown smears. A woman in a rubber bodysuit, with only her cunt exposed, enters the room. She squats above me as a spray of piss spits out over my face. I try to turn my head away. It tastes like saltwater. I pull on the chains, but she smacks me. Her hands are covered in rubber. They are like the hands

of a very large man. Her ass moves down to my belly and begins excreting a large rank mass of shit. It is very warm, and when the excretion is done she begins smearing it over my body with her ass, rolling it back and forth.

I wake up covered in dirt. I'm wrapped in a fur coat. My feet are swollen. I'm frightened. An old woman is looming over me. Her face is like a bear's, but with its nose cut off. I have no arms or head. She puts me in a wheelbarrow, and, suddenly, I am falling down a cliff, knocking against the side of an endless cliff.



Rik Lina, The Wanderer

Rebecca Maria Rose Gismondi

The Pelican

Based on the painting "Loving Bewick" by Paula Rego

He would feed me sardines perched above me
every night before we fucked in the big white lighthouse

I never bled more than I did that summer;
his beak digging into my back as I pulled handfuls

of feathers – but I loved the thrashing of his wings
and the uneven wood beneath my arched back.
He covered me when

we finished and I could smell the oceans he had flown
over on his neck. In the morning, he would open his gull and I

climbed inside as he flew me back to the city.
He would never let me sit atop his back to see
the flush of green or the meeting of mountains. Only inside

his mouth did I belong. I wished more than anything to be
a sardine—to be dangled above others, to have their adoration
proved to me before I slid between their teeth forever.

Howie Good

American Dreamer

It was the 1950s
and everyone said plastics
were going to be big
so he fashioned elephants
into darling watering cans

Real Cool

You can't tell whether
we're upside down or right side up,
you can't tell what's here,

a typo or gilt lettering on glass,
but those real cool sounds are coming,
like when we were young

and did it anytime, anywhere
(floor, office chair, shower),
only with a yes and incidental light.

Hilarity Ensues

An unknown person or persons (excuse the jargon) entered

the offices of the Minister of Drought, opened the safes and files, and wiped the baby's chin, after which a special investigator was appointed, grimacing like a bust of Beethoven, only to discover that a lapse in the space-time continuum may be a theoretical possibility, but not something that has actually happened, and even if it did, the teenagers in the first few cars of the plunging roller coaster would still be laughing.

Listening to a Seashell

1

All I can sort of hear
is the wheezing of an old woman
wheeling a day-old baby
in a supermarket cart
down deliberately dim aisles

2

her gasp on encountering
in the freezer section
the man who received
her dead brother's face

3

and then a commotion of words
said over the squalling baby
found abandoned next to the frozen desserts



İzem Yaşın Flower

Nicholas Alexander Hayes

Don't Count Your Chickens

A Little Bird Told Me

At cyclopean angles, the factory glows pale green at the far edge of the parking lot. Jaundiced mist snakes from the rear lagoon. In the soft grass between asphalt and entry, rock doves tear tatters of purple flesh from chicken bones. Dread white tufts on knobby feet scurry around the glass and cement vestibule. Rock doves push their heads into dust. They shimmy their wings to smother mites like a shadow, the summer sun. The birds reluctantly shuffle away as boots tread past.

Dead Duck

A hook passes through the worker's deltoid. His heft eases into the air. Pulleys and flywheels suspend him through a steam bath. White bristles jut from the proto-simian face. Beard and beard net obscure his calcified beak. His skin puckers. His folds of fat covered with dish-water blonde wool smooth. Feathers drop from his skin. Transformed hands ache for work.

No arms chained to a daybed in a beetle's prayer ask for the coming of this hefty boy.

Chicken with Its Head Cut Off

Sterilized the worker is left on a grate floor above a pit. The fecund smell of shit and rot salves his calcified nostrils as he sorts yellow puffballs.

Males are sent into a set of pulverizing teeth. Their pulp drains to the cement pit.

He clips the beaks off females and drops them down a chute to wallow in their brothers. Sacred chickens are thrown overboard to a frantic pulse of a gaping-mouth flock.

Mites stampede from shoulder to shoulder. Sensate masses stand above the slurry pits. Feet pierced with metal grating. Pink opaque scales pinch the metal into nimble footpads. Bodies vibrate anxiety. Lost in the slurry, incestuously fed, the ouroboros of erasure comes.

Don't Count Your Chickens

The clucking from below is ever insistent. Beakless and filth-washed, chickens are fed intravenous carrion and dread until they are too full of themselves. They grow chicken fingers and start to liquefy in their vat.

Before they disappear, hooks catch them. On chains, poultry rises from the muck, rubbed naked by glorious waste.

The worker clips their abdomen with shears dangling on a spring. Links of bowels coil against each other as they spill. Red and pale yellow splatter onto the grate.

Chicken Out

Smoke darkened daylight, a black amber yolk, filters through a sky light. In salmonella fear of another day, a dumpy worker in horns stumbles along the grating. Limp dick lolls from his dirty dungarees. Ravenous stains on the stretch marked saddlebags. He pisses in the pit.

The chickens look up, drown in torrents of pale yellow. He pauses awed by the fullness of viscera. Disease and abscess reveal a deeper vat. Excitement. The cascade becomes a geyser. The worker shoves his bearded face in his stream. He scratches his beard net against his maw in order to drink deeply.

Chickens Come Home to Roost

Humid air pulls the worker from enthrallment.

His scimitar clippers with surgical points butterfly a chest. Sprawled and vulnerable, the translucent meat is a gradient from pink to blue. Yellow fat hangs from the flesh, easily separating.

Innards get caught on the grate floor. He kicks them back into the pit.

Galaxies spiral from hot scaly ringworm.

Chicken Feed

From each injury, an infinity of anuses. a hydra of hollows pulse, quiver. Pink flesh rises and puckers.

Cloacal kiss precedes cloacal jade. The palest green egg rests in opaque white. Black eyes, beady and distraught, form

pulsing caviar on vaginal tissue. A yellow mucus plug whispers in the milky mass and scatters in the pulse and throb of grist embedded in the cement walls.

Gore rises in the energized realm.

A static charge, a bubble collapses and unravels the coherent path.

Chicken Shit

Cloacina, beautiful in detritus and a plastic cage, hears terror above. Diamonds stashed in mineral oil run down nylon threads of the goddess's grotto. Grotesque and lost in noblesse, she hears poultry suffer. She opens the factory floodgates and lets herself drown again in the offal offerings of the burly worker.

Her skin becomes thick with pungent amber gris belching around her.

Her tiny fingers discontent in glory, incontinent in ichor glimmer, birthing hemorrhoids.

Dead as a Dodo

Heavy metals pumped from a gate gushing waste saturate flocks still in a southward V. Salt spray desiccates feathers on mummified flesh. Crystals roll slowly over whatever they touch. Illusion of life subsumed by a second order simulation obliged to the exchange of molecule for molecule, suppleness for solidarity.

Ground shells on the lagoon's beach sparkle.



Stephen Kirin
Device Scribble Collective Group Portrait

Brooks Lampe

The Bells

The bells have been modified
to accommodate our insatiable stomachs
like rainbows changed into machines
for sorting colors into imperishable boxes.

We can't look inside them
without contracting the beauty of frogs
can't approach them
unless we bring an offering of long loose hair
and transfat.

Society washes away everything
that is not progress.
What remains are waves.
We can watch them and feel something inside
faint and far back, swinging softly,
like a tiny tongue.

Politics

I want to take
Southern liberals
and Northern conservatives
I want to take

their hands.
History, the unfolding phantom,
is always trying to love us.

Hurry, it says,
be a chest.
Be a poem with
twenty centers

with the back of a
gorgeous baboon and the
withered punctuation marks
of black ponds.

November 19

What we are asking for
is a slow death.

We've been asking for it
since the beginning.

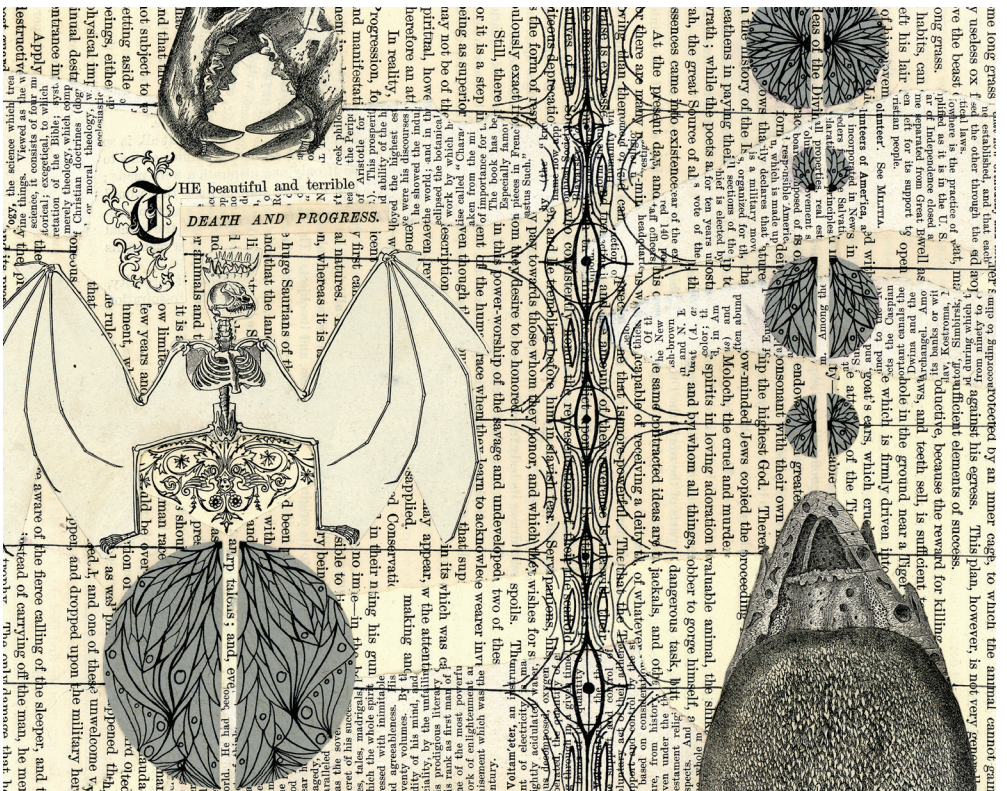
The earth writhes and burns
in many sunsets.

It is a cannon firing
every 24 minutes.

It is the dream of becoming
all media

full of centers—
the impossibility of modesty,

invisible pollen
of consciousness.



Caci Cline, *Death & Progress*

Esther Greenleaf Murer

Apocalypse

Sleetfellows stride athwart the sundering sound
agog with thorns of delight.
Ignominious doodads

flap on the languorous lengths of history's washline
where cleverclogs outflank quizlings
and skipjacks rampage under the dunkling drain.

This, saith the spoonbill, is how
the world abides: not without bangs
but as a dumpster.

Citizen revolt

No, I will NOT report for jury duty
in Nizhny Novosibirsk. The moon
is much too square, and I left my parsnips
in the sleeve of my Monday pyjamas.

You think I can write "Hieronymous Point"
every time something goes wrong?
I have already filed the dismemberment forms
down to the quick and the dead. Moreover,

I've got a court order saying that each time
you send me another animadvertisement,
you must pay the state of Tennessee
\$200 postage and processing fee.



Rik Lina, Diary - Tres Marias

Cornucopia Collaboration

Text by Zac Odin

Images by Rik Lina, Gregg Simpson and John Welton



Pan sounds his horn – he's looking from the outside
Behind the mask
Statues fading white chalk
A beast is moving
A man is standing
Flowing down, Pan becomes Bird



what are we but blurred sunlight?
river deltas reaching the sea
like birch grove branches crossing
or smoke drifting
half-remembered fragments of a butterfly's dream



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: URGENT. Sound system shatters ground around British Museum tube station. Holes now torn into Second Aether. Creatures emerging. Unknowns falling through gaps in space. We have ocean waves where tracks should be. Doubling rate increasing. Remain calm...remain calm.

DISCONNECT.

flowing, black flowering
we were still not sure what it was
but we let it come anyway
through the walls reaching
trailing ideograms
and plant life



The first expedition in search of the lost Airship Galdea found only scraps of elegant clothing – dresses, top hats, gloves, umbrellas, and so on – but precious little else save for a steamer trunk that seemed to have fallen from a great height. Tucked into a drawer within was discovered the journal of one Willis Jansen. The final entry, full of hope but deeply poignant in retrospect, read as follows: “At dinner we just happened to be passing over what was left of a northern Lemurian outpost. Drifting through clouds and over winter mountains, the airship dropped low to share the view with the passengers. The ancient ruins of that civilization lost in snow drifts and time, it seemed as if we saw their faces in the very clouds as we rose away from the temple spires and statues forever staring. Then they were gone and we continued on our way, ever north, ever onward towards that land beyond the North Wind....Hyperborea!” After the tragic and mysterious loss of the Galdea the fashion for luxury mystery excursions rapidly fell off, diminishing to almost nil within a year. The enormous submersible the SS Boleskine no longer plied the depths of Loch Ness; the cruise ships that once crisscrossed the Bermuda Triangle languished on the islands’ shores; the Baroque Venus orbiter, “Sea of Morning Opals,” rusted on its launching pad; that massive horseless carriage, the Patterson’s Folly, once gloriously smashing through the forests of New Albion searching for ape men found another life as a logging machine; and on and on. The wondrous days of the explorations of the world’s mysteries by the well-to-do were over.

Dan Raphael

Breffist

if the floured table is sky, dawn is a chicken,
dreams create a protein debt, thirsty sheets wrinkling seldom
exposed skin.

the will is yeast, coincidence is yeast, yeast knocking at your
door, cat licking yeast
from its night self while the dog thinks the oven door is a
gateway to freedom—

whatever restrains me i can gnaw through, scrunching my
lips like a squirrel,
winding my invisible tail for extra power. what i buried last year
in the confines of computer memory cannot sprout without me,
crows of obligation, tree roots vs. driveway, using mazola
instead of 40 weight,
cloud jails built from rice

if we never slept we'd be so fat and forgetful
i put a raised bed where i useta flop
take the house off the basement and learn to feed yourself,
old pipes repurposed to drip irrigation, water heater halved
to imprison bamboo,
i only shower when it rains. finding the proper ratio of wind
mills to birds,
believing in worms too deep to ever encounter



Karl Howeth

Citys gray exhalation like a robe with nothing beneath

who in this line is still in bed, a dream of commuting
where all the drivers are cats or dogs, rarely taller than the
 seat back
as sleeping is my job i've been getting steady overtime, 6 day
 work weeks
you need a good excuse to get up early, to furrow the field
and salt the cows, my cell phones a stick of butter
streaming erotic sculptures morph into cityscapes,
tall buildings with to-do lists running down their sides,
taxis graffitied with recipes, busses like warehouse stores
where i always buy more than i can carry

no place to climb—i can only fall from my own height
the street is a treadmill bringing me today's first decision—
do i tan on a griddle or massage in yogurt and grain
my hair is coffee, no eggs til Tuesday,
the street stares through my window, impatient for my return

can the cop tell how the sunshine i've absorbed affects
 my driving,
i want that extra energy the sun block suppresses, i want
 the wind
to go through every floor of my body, not just the vents of
 my eyes & ears
some people never open the windows below their neck,
 worry that the sun

will fade their ankles and feet. I think rain's a conspiracy to
keep people at home,
working without direct customer contact, products delivered
seldom fit
but always legal

as if the rain a curtain outside of which continual sunshine,
a wide river of usual business, how a rain forest becomes
neither,
how these foot hills are like the kiddie rides, barely enough
altitude or momentum
to excite even the youngest rain, gravity's leash shorter than
a yoyo string.

As if I'm a Cow on the Beach

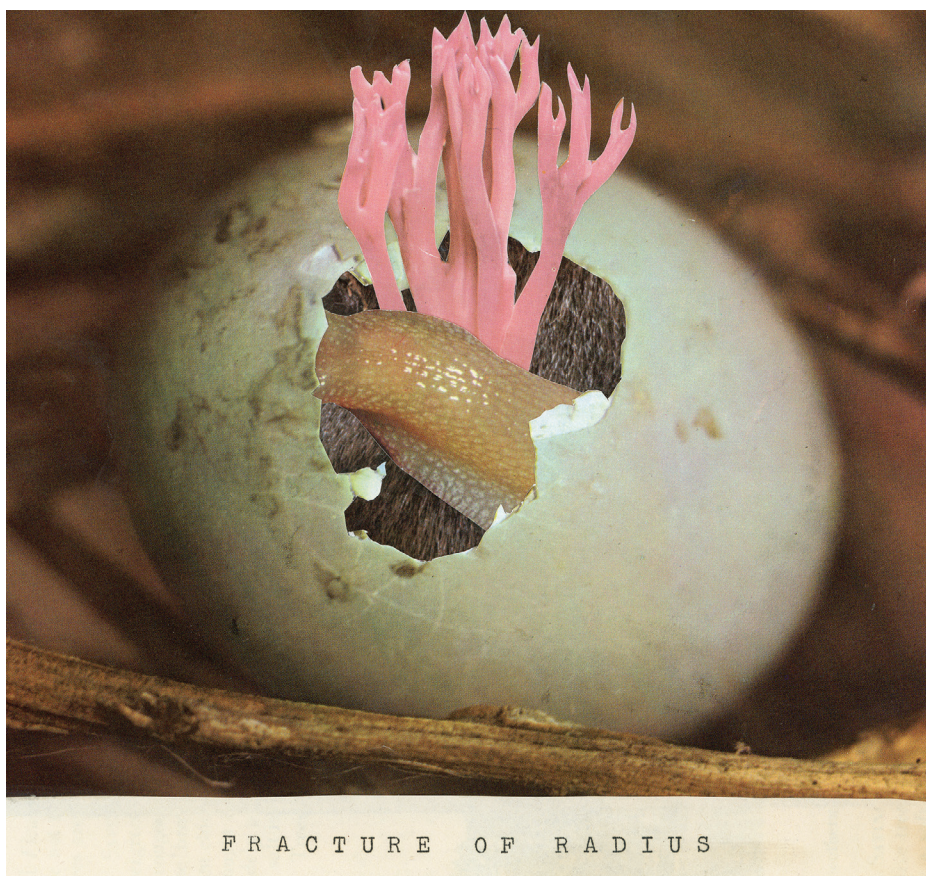
the privilege of ocean, going to
cows at the ocean swatting fly-sized gulls with kelp-long tails
salty marine dairy air shimmies of tidal release
commuting like milk from tank to carton and back again
hands with tubes instead of bones, white as salt, butter
whipped tween wind & rocks

when you're done shaking the canister put a giant thumb on
each lung and press firmly
so your print is recognized, so your iris blossoms in reverse
long strap-like lashes, green as that first april day when all
the snow melts at once
and we don't see the sun til noon as it removes its hibernating
coat inside a bear

realizing the digestive plug holding enough milk to drown
an over-focused cub,
a cub who doesn't peel away its dead derf coat and spread its
inner, northern chocolate:
our only native sugar comes from hemophilic trees who
think winters coming
cause of the ice cream blossoming around their roots, mis
translating mycorrhizal recipes
so a cup is a pound and salt is any white rock left in isolation
until it crumbles
like a violin string wondering whose whisker it had been

when cows & rabbits cross breed, carrots grass & bread
waiting for sandwiches
to reverse cocoon, a butterfly becomes a cigar unzipping
from a long tent
you go in exhaling the thinnest walls that tug like gravity
or something each of us desires unconsciously at the center
of intention
our smoke rising torsos emitting reverse spotlights &
tremors in many shoes
open like hinged desserts, like a lawn swinging open to reveal
a garage pointing down,
cars like gloved fingers or a tampon bandoleer modelled for
parking lots
for the cicadas of personal record keeping
any acreage that was never underwater is a transplant,
invasion or movie set
any wind that was never in rains pocket, elemental dog squadrons

like freckles to a satellite in orbit but out of touch, whiskering
wind
a house without glass but many portals open by dissolving in
the shadows
around a prairies shimmering corners, a flat field no one can
walk through straight
tunnel keeper willow reopens teaching water to be anti-social,
to question is right to proceed—evaporation without r
representation is hysteria—
down to the roots of the tone, the infrastructure follicles
the native brains escaping to river and bog



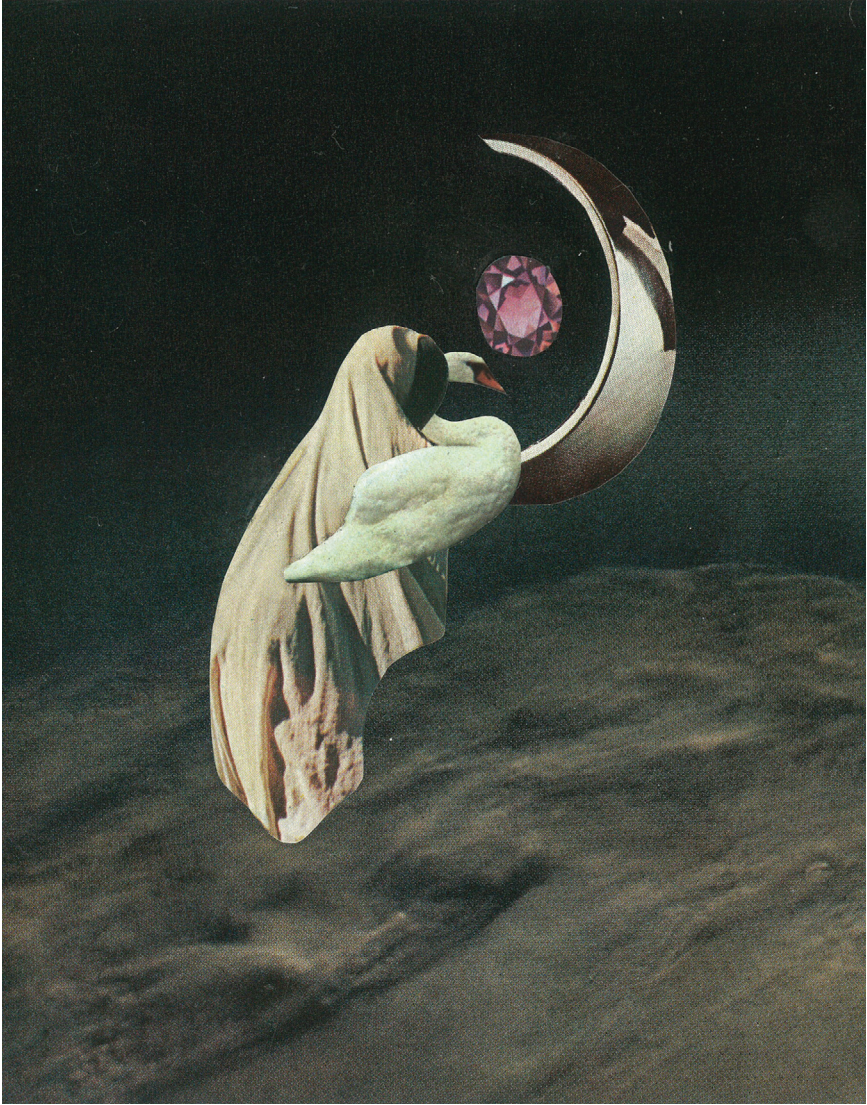
F R A C T U R E O F R A D I U S

Steven Cline, Radius

Irina Rus

we are here

multicorporeal jesters of delirium
choking on laughter falling one over the other yelling
pardon me didn't mean to stumble upon you
HAVE YOU SEEN
the mouth of the infinite snake
in which we usually pour ourselves like champagne on
 glass pyramids
T'HAS BEEN MISSING FOR OVER A MONTH NOW
where
will we dance our hungered vacuities where will we
fumble our three dimensionally chasmed wounds
each gripping on a limb so that all unevenness is avenged
WHERE will our saltatory gestures come about
we know they're there
unattended
dormant in each fiber where
will we eviscerate our angst
this handle by which we grab onto nothingness
we rotate it ON EACH SIDE
half-dipping it in our
mouth HAVE YOU SEEN IT? It looks like
an opening towards a snake
in its belly
there's a dismantling line of souls.



Jesse Treece
The Solitude of Signs

Patrik Sampler

Affairs of the World

In an impassioned state of the union address, US President O'Bama declared: "We will be judged by history if we turn a blind eye to the wanton use of weapons and a world where innocent civilians are bombed on a terrible scale. Therefore, we have clear and compelling reasons to destroy all US military bases as soon as possible".

In response, many congressional leaders said they wouldn't support strikes against US bases, alleging the President was born in Ireland and lacks the legitimacy to make such a move. O'Bama, however, vowed to carry on, indicating he would use his executive authority to carry out the attacks, regardless of congressional objections.

Later in the day, when questioned by reporters about "collateral damage" that might result from the dismantling of US bases, the President made his second surprise announcement: "If there are victims, I will breastfeed them back to health. I have started hormone therapy to enable myself to do so", he said.

In a prepared statement, the President announced: "I am in the transition to the next phase of my life, and I want everyone to know the real me. I am Zoltar, and I am neither male nor female." Continuing, s/he explained his/her long-standing interest in the Japanese animated cartoon G-Force, and admiration for the androgynous character Berg Katse, known to English-speaking audiences as Zoltar, "who was

the reason I wanted to be President”.

Congressional leaders were swift to condemn O’Bama/Zoltar on his/her transition, but conceded they have little say in the matter.

Internationally, reaction has been mixed. In an unusual demonstration of solidarity with Iran, the Israeli Prime Minister indicated he would no longer maintain communication with the “freak” President. Concurrently, Iran’s Supreme Leader said Zoltar would be stoned if he were to set foot in the country.

In Canada, the Prime Minister refused to express a personal view on Zoltar’s hormone therapy, but said Canada would maintain its “traditional relationship vis-à-vis the US President” and would be in a “good position” to provide Zoltar with a digital examination “should the President wish to assess the health of his/her prostate while undergoing therapy”.

In Japan, Ishihara Shintaro stated he is “very pleased” by the President’s “love for Japanese culture”, and that he would soon visit President Zoltar in a hot air balloon shaped like a scrotum in order to “showcase Japanese technology”.



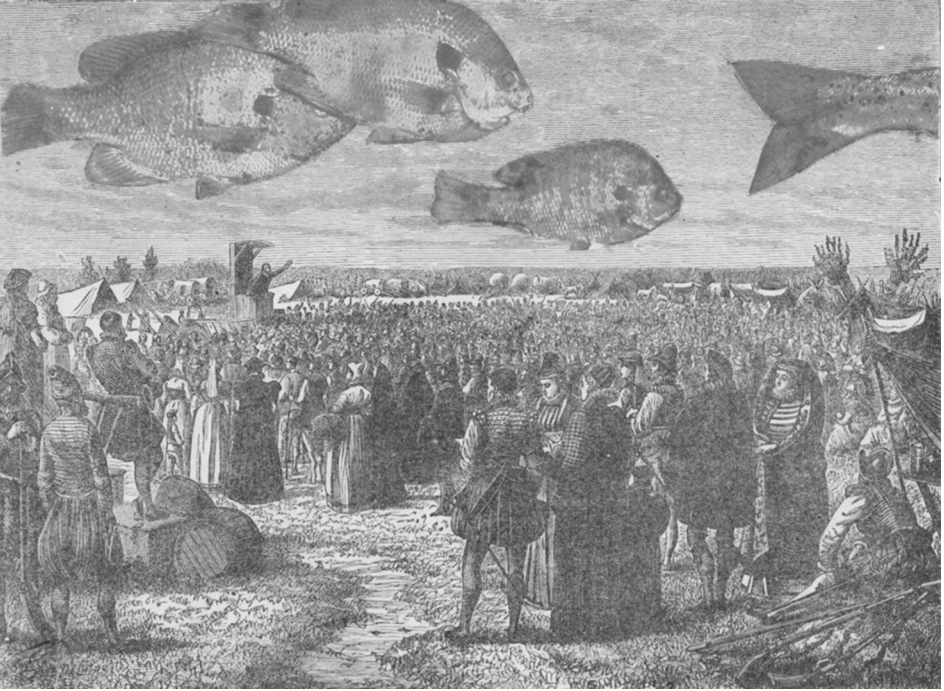
Stephen Kirin

Let in the Infinite?

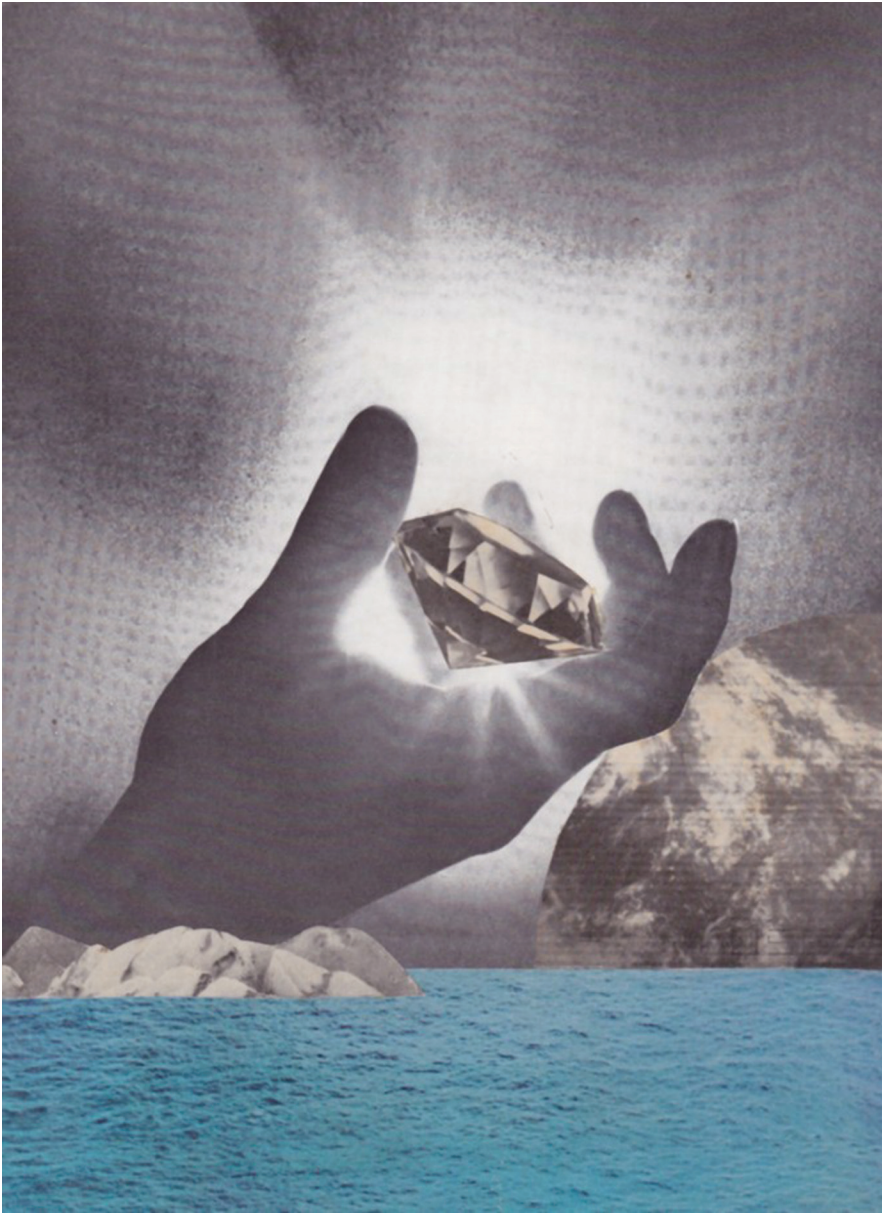
Collage by Gregg Simpson/Text by Paul McRandle



Let in the infinite? What a racket it makes tumbling from the closet like a host of clown-shaped sponges rising in a water jug. The infinite is a porpoise trained by the CIA to attach listening devices and strange boring mechanisms that harvest the words onboard along with every noise—forever. So there isn't to be more said than what might occur in the hull of a Russian trawler.



I'm sitting on shore sucking a lozenge, pondering the shapes in the waves, the shadows of the surf, rocks, subtle things fleeing out to the horizon. It's my way of garnering some bit of the world in this hideous present. The sea is a vast personality. A twisting, confused melange of impulses at war with itself and the world on every scale—diatoms having it out with flagella, carcids rising from sandy pits to pinch off angelfish fins, mankind scouting about above like children rubbing their butts against asphalt, dragging their deep-weighted prisons.



It's a numberless volume of death, energy, chaos, night, and we can do little more than watch its light from the shoreline flashing up towards the infinite from the skin of that denser infinite beneath.

Tim White

Sometimes I'm there, sometimes I'm not

I am a gestating fungus of multiple sonnets like an exploding eye in a library or a trochus maculatus of gloves left over from the Quantum tea service. I live on a beach of cyber-shells, ostriches and cyclostomeia. It smells like sandal wood, ink and sheet music.

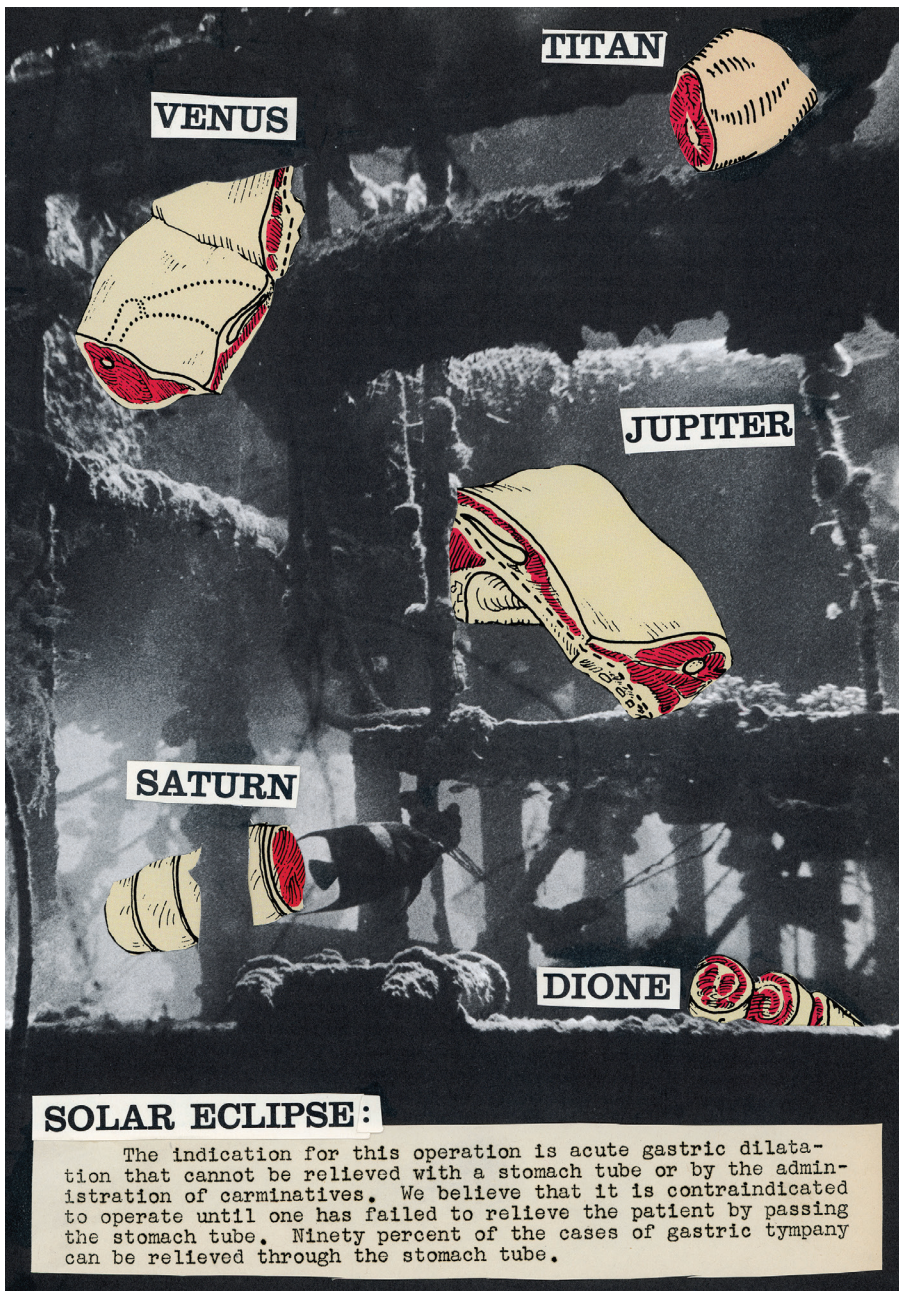
Odometers chant in the unfocused depths of the green and magenta sea.

Somedays a radiant lemur appears to bi-focalise the chanting odometers. At other times she strikes a gong made of sand and burning tyres. When the gong sounds the odometers fall silent.

At night the sea is switched off. Fish swim from their underwater homes like shades of phosphorescent joy to flicker amongst shafts of watery light.

Every day I either depart for the city or arrive before the train that leaves everyday. Sometimes I'm there and sometimes I'm not.

When it arrives in the city I am not there. When I return home I am there again, looking for my footprints along the broken trail either to or from the city.



Steven Cline
Eclipse

Rex Ybañez

Sweater Weather

Ribbed cuffs & taper
ascending the slope—asymptotes

carrying the geometry of lunar eclipses
garnished with the opprobrious:

cyclonic conics accumulating
immaculate cumuli, the ritardando

lipping above a heavy mass of
Vulgate/ this is far worse than

Sanctuary, provided that
in lieu of anatomical finesse &

grandeur, hypnotism will either
turn [-gogic] or [-pompic]/

in the city where the rain never sleeps,
some may wish for the glass to

always cry, always weep. Deep
within, enunciating the curvature of

caricatures, drawing out what's
enchanted, vertices tilt axes

horizontally, like the timeline into
declension/ drowning in a pool

of polyester proves better as
some dampener to muffle

droning flies hovering over
the fear of asymmetry. Things

like this sound very redundant, but
nothing calms volcano choir

more than sewing a sweater
fit for two, nothing suggestive of some

ménages à trois or wanting anything
to the point of unwantedness/

“wonted” is not a word of
our habitual vocabulary & like Dostoevsky,

speak this nonsense until this becomes
wedlock: between skin, between

intimacy, hidden inside something
vintage & familiar/ perhaps

this may be a secret, just to
appease, to tease, to plead guilty tonight:

habeas corpus—literally. A fifth of rum
may get the job done, but

tonight we don't need to
slink away. Let the lampshade hush

out the lights. Wear nightshade as
darkness fills the volume of

this living room, the place to love
& roam, during the time for

couch lounging/ music to hear,
yes, but too quizzical to enuciate what's

quotidian, it's best left forgotten, at least
for now. The apocrypha lurking

between two, the mesh of hair
tangled in labyrinthine esotericism,

underneath where a garden flourishes,
we may meet/ & I'd like to think

this is what we want for Christmas.



Jason Burleigh

GAMES

1) What does surrealism taste like?

2) What is its texture?

DN:

1. Surrealism tastes like aromatical herbs unknown to mankind since the Paleolithic.

2. Its texture is made of furs and claws.

SC:

1. Strawberries covered in melted white cheese.

2. A sharp metal mesh.

CC:

1. Surrealism tastes like strawberries dipped in brine.

2. Its texture is that of blood two hours absent from the vein.

BS:

1. Surrealism has no taste, it is void of all flavor, spice, and has zero trans fat and preservatives. Also it tastes like watermelon.

2. Its texture is placebo.

ALD:

1. Surrealism tastes like the juicy crust of the earth.

2. The texture of surrealism has the same feel in your mouth as when a jellyfish scratches the side of your foot.

AD:

1. Surrealism tastes of stone peacocks.
2. Its texture is that of thick rice pudding.

IP:

1. It tastes like the tongues of dead black swans.
2. It has the texture of astral dust that has melted too close to the sun.

WHATS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

From Arsenal 4:

"In a well-known game children are invited to examine a picture and find elements in it that are somehow "wrong": A person standing in midair; a dog reading a book, etc. In our surrealist version of the game, first played on July 1988 in Chicago, each player identifies the "wrong", or anomalous elements in a ordinary, mass-circulation picture."



SC:

1. Nose is not really a nose, but a disguised anteater colony.
2. Man is upside down and there is simply an empty universe inside his body
3. Hiding under the machine is vicious slime mold that has learned to caress feet lovingly
4. The sky is supposed to be dipped in cream or at the very least not purple
5. Why isn't he running?

KH:

The grass is singing the wrong song for a wedding. His glasses see everything in shades of regret and contempt. The steering wheel is an elephant. The tractor itself is a brontosaurus.

CC:

1. His blindfold is transparent.
2. The wheat flows up instead of down and the sky is inside out.
3. The man-thing's mind is in his pocket.

SK:

The meat he wears round his neck is still alive and asphyxiating him.

CW:

The tractor's been left running and will soon roll over the person; the orange metal giraffe in the background

needs a better neck and some ears; his laser-vision glasses were not working or he would have blasted the photographer; the tractor's shadow is alive but resting.

TW:

The human simulacra is being stalked by a metal dinosaur

TIME TRAVELER'S POTLATCH

In Time-Travelers' Potlatch, each player indicates the gift that she/he would present to various historical, mythical, or fictional figures on the occasion of their meeting.

Marquis de Sade

Leonora Carrington

Winston Churchill

Franz Kafka

Elvis Presley

Al Capone

ALD:

Marquis de Sade: A shredded corn dish

Leonora Carrington: Lemons in a shimmery spoon

Winston Churchill: Donkeys and Elephants soaring through the island breeze

Franz Kafka: A hawaiian tiki on a shoe tread.

Elvis Presley: 3 oranges, 2 sponges, and 5 wishes in steamy pot

Al Capone: Flexible bricks holding fossilized eels

SC:

Marquis de Sade: Five strokes of luck

Leonora Carrington: A golden elixir, or two drops of bread

Winston Churchill: A tall white hat

Franz Kafka: A shadow to follow him around

Elvis Presley: White shopping bags

Al Capone: A tall black hat with beetles

CC:

Marquis de Sade: A Mud Mask

Leonora Carrington: A Sphinx

Winston Churchill: Toupée

Franz Kafka: A friend

Elvis Presley: A banana

Al Capone: A Chisel

AD:

Marquis de Sade: Reticulated laughter in a bowl

Leonora Carrington: Seared pineapple cubes

Winston Churchill: A box of screams

Franz Kafka: Spherical genitalia

Elvis Presley: Bedazzled onion blossom

Al Capone: A pine tree with an unpredictable temper