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Deakin University

Marion May Campbell

lemon – a dream of Janet

Abstract:

‘lemon – a dream of Janet’ responds to the poetic, fictional, and auto-fictional work of Janet Frame, focussing on her near-decade-long incarceration in psychiatric wards. It aims to demonstrate the *sanity* of resistance via the magical force of word and image, countering the egregiously cruel practices of psychiatric ‘treatment’ common to Australia and New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s. At the same time, it both resists the romantic celebration of madness as allied to creativity and suggests that the mental illness (misdiagnosed as ‘schizophrenia’) from which the hypersensitive Frame suffered was much more probably due to the cumulative traumatic impact of tragic events, including the death of two sisters by drowning.

This poem is composed around words and phrases selected by others: ‘lemon’, ‘snake removalist’, ‘shirt of arrows’: thus its principle of composition becomes, for me at least, a *mise-en-abyme* of the poetic bricolage driving Frame’s work, deploying a dream logic to forge artistic patterns from the random cruelties that the world throws at her: for instance, the psych nurses literally throwing sweets to the patients, just to see them demean themselves scrabbling on the floor to catch them. The persona addressing Janet is borne of intertextuality: ‘lemon’ celebrates Frame’s work by seeding the poem with her name and two of her titles: *Owls Do Cry* and *Scented Gardens for the Blind*. The image of the youth’s prostrate abandonment ‘under’ [sic] his dismantled scooter is also hers, from ‘The Linesman’ in the 1983 collection *You Are Now Entering the Human Heart*. The image of the ‘lemon’ is activated as both gift, carrying the light of survival, and punishment (suggested by the cruel pun: ‘we want you better *bitter*’), that is, the electro-convulsive therapy to which this great writer was repeatedly subjected.

This poem aims to contribute to the field of poetry as resistance and protest and foregrounds, in the key image of the lemon, ambiguity and contradiction as survival tools.

Biographical note:

Marion May Campbell is a feminist poet, fiction writer, and scholar whose work challenges the politics of representation through a poetics of resistance. Her novels include *Lines of Flight* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1985), *Not Being Miriam* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1988), *Prowler* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1999), *Shadow Thief* (Pandanus, 2006), and *konkretion* (UWA Publishing, 2013). Her other works include the cross-genre work *Fragments from a Paper Witch* (Salt Publishing, 2008), a monograph *Poetic Revolutionaries: Intertextuality & Subversion* (Rodopi, 2014), an experimental memoir, *The Man on the Mantelpiece* (UWA Publishing, 2018), and the poetry collection *third body* (Whitmore Press, 2018). A new poetry collection *languish* will appear with Upswell in April 2022.

Keywords:

Janet Frame, resistance, protest, ambiguity

Lemon – a dream of Janet

they hang in the dark garden
as if each globe were mind powered
by a mother mind each glows
on a thorny thread & *owls*
do cry beyond the frame
of story as horny boys labour under
dismantled scooters in the margins
of your life it's spring Janet where
the machines turn fully animal

we're going to have to admit you they said
when they found you'd stored
your used sanitary pads
in the chest of drawers
of your rented room
the psych nurses make the mob
of women inmates crawl squeaking
like cockroaches for the lollies
they throw for their recreation

here come your lemons I hear
them laughing as they roll
the fruit your way
you do cry now – they're perhaps
the kind your father grew
thick white-pulped huge
their glistening segments deeply captive
before your sisters – already-ghosted
in the photo – successively drown

pretend your lemon
is a person the psych says & *write*
her bitter-sweet story his spit
hits like seeds you write so fast
& long you nearly pee yourself
& still you write through all
the terrors before this Jesuitic
new psych his narrow whiskered face
his evasive eyes you think

*either we need a snake
removalist or I acquire
a shirt of arrows* but then your pen
is likewise filamented is feathered
flight your all-mothering mind
is writing even as they watch you
writhe on the floor your teeth
depressed brown stumps
sucking their jubes

sucking their lemons
as perfectly equivalent notes of bright
struck in the institutional gloom
*we're going to have to admit you
again again*
but the lemon is a high priestess
who cloaks herself with light
ringing like a joyous bell
through & through

with lemonness & who
refuses to be more
or less than lemon
you'll make it yours entire
jubilantly nipped
she'll glow & glow
*we're going to have to admit you
to tart extreme light
in the scented gardens*

to nerve flinch & fire
you will wear that shirt of arrows
just think of that lemon
lighting the long darkness
as the one who sets the volts
who says they want you better
bitter even as they strap you down
& send the charge –
Janet –
your lemon

References

Frame, J. (1957). *Owls Do Cry*. Pegasus Press.

Frame, J. (1963). *Scented Gardens for the Blind*. WH Allen.

Frame, J. (1983). *You Are Now Entering the Human Heart*. Victoria University Press.

RMIT University

Anne M Carson

Doing a George

Abstract:

Numerous poets have, over recent decades, sought to restore historical women to the record from which they have often been excluded. In Australia, poets Jordie Albiston, Jessica Wilkinson, Leni Shilton, and more, have dedicated longform projects to writing about a diverse range of historical women. ‘Doing a George’ is part of a creative practice research project that explores how contemporary poetry captures such lives in biography. Specifically, I portray the lives of two creative women from history (George Sand and Anna Magdalena Bach) and my research encounters with them. The poem combines qualities of documentary poetry (Swensen, 2011), and the list poem, employing vernacular word play to show how poetry can embody research and generate knowledge about women’s lives in new ways (Wilkinson, 2016).

‘Doing a George’ is intended as a humorous thumbing-the-nose at the stolid European masculinity the name denoted in the nineteenth century. Researching George Sand’s influence on other women writers of her era, ‘Georgeness’ emerged as a way for me to convey how Sand was a role model for these women – how changing one’s name enabled them to be published, and to escape the insult intended by being identified as ‘lady writers’. This poem extends the trope of ‘Georgeness’ to women writers more broadly up to the current era and repays this author’s debt to these pioneering women who contributed to breaking barriers so that poetry (and literature more generally) is now considerably more open to both portraying and being generated by women writers.

Biographical note:

Anne M Carson’s poetry has been published internationally, and widely in Australia, receiving various awards including a high commendation in the 2020 Martha Richardson Poetry Prize. Recent publications include *Massaging Himmler: A Poetic Biography of Dr Felix Kersten* (Hybrid, 2019), and *Two Green Parrots* (Ginninderra Press, 2019). She has initiated a number of poetry-led social justice projects, performs with Muse Poetica, and is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing at RMIT University.

Keywords: female literary lineage, feminist biography, biographical poetry

Doing a George

*I do not wish it to be known that I'm a young
girl but desire to pose as a bald-headed seer
of the sterner sex.*

—Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin

Once, doing a George was de rigueur
for any would-be female author. Amantine

Lucile Aurore Dudevant née Dupin did
a George. In fact, Aurore did the proto-

typical, progenital George. Spurred by
her lifelong partner, an actual George

(who didn't need to do a George), Mary
Anne Evans did an intellectual George.

Perched on the moor's edge, under father's
dominion, Charlotte, Anne and Emily

did Georges. Over in the States, in racy
gothic novels, Louisa May did a likewise

George. Karen Christenze von Blixen-
Finecke did an Isak, (a George with

whiffs of fjords, glints of glacier). Under
the glare of antipodean sun, Australian

women writers also did Georges. Mary
Chavelite Dunne Bright did a feminist

George, Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin
did a brilliant George while she was

still a teenager, and Gwendoline Nessie
Harwood née Foster did a spectacular

fuck-you George. By the time the US
Ursula came along, she didn't need to

do a George – some things had changed.
She could be herself, plain Ursula

(nothing plain about her), provided she
grasped that actually she was a man.

A not-very-good, second-rate, imitation
man, as she says, but a generic man

nonetheless. In the way that ‘he’ continues
to subsume ‘she’, and as Ursula says,

they haven’t invented a convincing ‘she’
yet. My father was a George; in my

psyche, he took all the space for George.
Far too Oedipal, to do a George when

your father was such a resounding,
convincing George. Luckily, there is

not such pressing need these days –
some things, anyway, have changed.

References

- Swensen, C. (2011). *Noise That Stays Noise: Essays*. University of Michigan Press.
- Wilkinson, J. (2016). Experiments in Poetic Biography: Feminist Threads in Contemporary Long Form Poetry. *Biography*, 39(1), 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.1353/bio.2016.0021>

Macquarie University

Willo Drummond

The Rilke Index, Or, 'Rilkean-Levertovian Thinking'

Abstract:

Theories of influence with origins in literary studies present lacunae for the creative writing researcher seeking to consider the role of influence in creative cognition. This is because they often elide the fact of the working, situated writer, either jettisoning the practitioner in favour of the 'text' or denying the writer agency in the cognitive practice of writing. Several calls have been made for the reinstatement of the situated writer to discussions of influence (for example, Brophy, 2009; Miller, 1988; Burke, 1995; Freiman, 2015a; 2015b). This practice-based research draws on the cognitive sciences, specifically Menary's *Cognitive Integration*, to address this gap, conceptualising writing as a cognitive act by a situated writer.

The seven-poem sequence explores the way language moves from the 'intermental' to 'intramental' plane during the process of influence, shaping a writer's cognition and poetics. Literary influence becomes an agentic process in which a writer actively absorbs and develops a series of 'cognitive practices' (certain ways of seeing the world) via their reading, rereading, and transcribing the words of others (Menary, 2007). The 'transgenerational conversation' (Brophy, 2009, p. 89) of poetic practice becomes formative of a certain 'cognitive character' (Menary, 2012; 2014).

In 1947, poet Denise Levertov created a personal and idiosyncratic index to the *Selected Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke 1902-1926* (trans. R.F.C. Hull, 1946), identifying 78 passages of interest against 51 poetic labels to which she would refer over a five decade career. The index represents a unique archive of the practices of creative cognition of a significant twentieth century poet. Both the index labels and the material to which they refer shed light on Levertov's cognitive character and on the role of influence in creative writing thinking. Dialoguing with nine of the most significant entries in Levertov's Rilke Index, this sequence borrows from the Cento form as performative frame to continue the Rilke-Levertov transgenerational conversation and to foreground patterns of cognition we might term *Rilkean-Levertovian thinking*.

Biographical note:

Willo Drummond is a Sydney poet and sessional lecturer in creative writing at Macquarie University. She writes about creativity, human and non-human animals, gender, and the fragile landscapes of identity. Her interdisciplinary research draws upon theories of distributed cognition to illuminate creative writing cognition and practice. Previously a poetry reader for *Overland* and an executive committee member for the *Australasian Association of Writing Programs*, in 2020 Willo was awarded a Career Development Grant from the Australia Council for the Arts. Her writing is published in Australia and the United States.

Keywords:

Cognitive integration, influence, Levertov, Rilke, poetry

The Rilke Index Or, 'Rilkean-Levertovian Thinking'

'Autumn the creator'

(Index item #1)

*True singing/ is a whispering*¹
(Rilke wrote) on autumn winds
perfection pressed
more creative
than even-toned spring.²

It hums along the avenue³
of original grief
polished as a stone.⁴

And each of us –
particulate (borrowed, stolen, given, found) –
who *write long letters* every evening⁵
for the chance of breathing

ride the amber highways of a song- *piling sky*⁶

'Open secret'

(Index item #13/ #13.5)

Safe in a womb
of twig held by branches,
the Pelops sings her inwardness.
Her decorated temple
laid bare; a secret:

that she makes no distinction
between her h/art
*and the world's.*¹

Perhaps one day you will 'let yourself
approach the mountain.'
Raise yourself to silvery²
peaks, witness her song.

For there is only one
kind of desire
that takes this work further:³

The will 'to begin,
to be (to defy)' –

to advance step by step
'toward a kind of living'⁴
*sure of itself*⁵

Like a bird-note, gently caught⁶
at the very edge of things.⁷

'To learn to know a thing'
(Index item #25)

*If a thing is to speak to you*¹ –
'above, below, before, behind, within, without'²–

place it
in the flute
of your *matchless*
embrace.³

Serve it
as *the angels*
serve. *Diligent,*
exclusive; at the very centre of
your universe.⁴

Regard
but do not
grasp
water
(wait).

Only then will be offered a tender possession⁵

unfurling a world
where you are *not*
writing,
but *breathing*
with a pen.⁶

The living / room
(After index item #29/ #35)

You call me and your need
erases me.

I cannot hear
my mind. Fractured,
molecular, there is only dissipation.

*Sowing is proceeding
in some other place*
but here:

*only things speak
(Rodin's things, flowers,
things that are perfect
things).*

Mouths speak
but to sing with quiet justice
is to see with 'second sight':³

the owl afloat
the white egret ⁴
the blood, the plough, the furrows made

'the root', 'the petal'⁵
hands alive (in perfect gesture)⁶
the ground beneath our feet.

Red gum sways in afternoon light –
in harvest of antiquity;
embrace of Rilkean niche.

'Further than work'
(Index Item #51)

To be, to do, to go¹
'further than work'.²
To sense: there is mystery
mysterious to its amber depths, and so³
to be glad for it.
To allow:

an unfolding
and through and through
(*within the framework of poetry*)⁴
to sip:

the revealer
(*'open to all, seen
by almost none'*)
'which lies at the bottom of appearances'.⁵

*As a lump of sugar
is sugar
in every part*⁶
– a hummingbird, a hummingbird –⁷

so stirs the intention:
(precious as amber water –
a pause in a china cup)
a saner state
*in the midst of our being.*⁸

Beyond bone
out of time
'more like a mind
than a thought'.⁹

'Keeping the weirs open'
(After index items #23 and #25)

Reject no currents!
Be patient on sensitive ground.¹

A diffusion of focus
The weirs fly open:²

Rodin in the garden in morning light.³

A temple of language⁴
the bells ring out
sing order from chaos⁵
*in the plainest adoration of life.*⁶

Word-bells swinging
'water-women', animals
lime-washed walls
of lines, 'children full'⁷
of blood and milk'.⁸

Still your anxious hands
with confident surrender,
with gladness;⁹
'all deep things are song':¹⁰

('red flower on a leafless tree'
'dragonfly dresses', 'blue shoes');¹¹

'there is music everywhere'¹²

& 'only after the wind / is quenched' –
'a quietness come' –
will 'the scraping mind perceive / what is possible':¹³

place of dreams
of wild

stillness
roots and branches¹⁴
follow, follow the bells –

§

Notes

The Rilke Index

Poems in this sequence are a synthesis of response, citation and allusion. Poem titles in inverted commas are taken verbatim from Levertov's index labels. Where possible, substantive verbatim material from Rilke is indicated by the use of italics, and substantive material from Levertov (or others) is indicated by the use of inverted commas. Smaller usages and allusions are generally not marked in either of these ways, but noted.

'Autumn the creator'

Title note: 'Autumn the Creator' was Levertov's index label for the following passage from Rilke's letters: '... I want the autumn! It almost seems as if autumn were the true creator, more creative than the spring, which is too even toned... This great, splendid wind piling sky upon sky – I would like to go into its country and along its highways' (1946, p. 74). The entry was the first in her 'Rilke Index'.

[1] '**True singing is**', '**whispering**' are from Rilke, 'Third Sonnet of Part 1,' *Sonnets to Orpheus*, trans. Stephen Cohn (2000, cited by Cohn, 2007, p. 134).

[2] '**perfection pressed**' is from Rilke, 'Herbsttag' (Autumn Day) *The Book of Images*, quoted by Hull in a note on the page indexed by Levertov as 'Autumn the creator', see title note; '**more creative/than**', '**even toned**', '**spring**' are from Rilke (1946, p. 74) from the indexed passage.

[3] '**hums along the avenue**' arises from Rilke 'Herbsttag' (Autumn Day): 'He now who is alone will long be so; / will watch, read, write long letters and will go / and pace the avenues upon whose floor / the fallen leaves are whirling to and fro' (cited by Hull, 1946, p. 74).

[4] '**original grief / polished as a stone**' arises from Rilke and Levertov: Rilke, 'polished lumps / of original grief', 'Elegy 10,' *Duino Elegies*, trans. Martyn Crucefix (2007, p. 123); Levertov, 'the blind tap their way from stone to stone / ... I listen with closed eyes to the dry / Autumnal sound of their searching', 'Fear of the Blind' (1947, unpublished).

[5] '**write long letters**' is from Rilke, see note 3.

[6] '**piling sky**' is from Rilke, see title note.

'Open secret'

Title note: 'Open secret' was Levertov's index label (item #13.5) for the following passage from Rilke: 'But this is not the place to speak of our experiences; they are secret, not a secret that locks itself up, not one that demands to be kept hidden, it is a secret that is sure of itself, that stands open like a temple whose portals exult in being portals and whose towering pillars sing that they are the gateway' (1946, p. 266). Levertov listed this entry adjacent to the entry entitled 'Pollen' (item #13), a label pointing to two passages that bookend the following: '... in the sense of the 'open secret' of Nature' (1946, p. 240),

see also note 1. Levertov herself published two poems entitled ‘Open Secret’, in *Relearning the Alphabet* and *Evening Train* (1970; 1992).

[1] **‘womb’; ‘sing’; ‘inwardness’; ‘that she makes no distinction / between her h/art / and the world’s’**, are from Rilke to Lou Andreas Salome, ‘... the bird on this inward journey: her nest is practically an external womb granted to her by nature... Thus she is the one creature to have a very special kind of feeling of trust in the external world, as though she knew herself to be in harmony with its most intimate secrets. That is why she sings in it as if singing her own inwardness, that is why we receive a bird-note so easily into our depths... for a moment it turns our whole world into an interior landscape, because we feel the bird does not distinguish between her heart and the world’s’ (1946, p. 238). The letter was indexed by Levertov as ‘pollen’, see title note; **‘temple’** and **‘secret’** are from Rilke, see title note.

[2] **‘let yourself / approach the mountain’**, **‘silvery’** are from Levertov: ‘Perhaps one day I shall let myself / approach the mountain’, ‘This mountain’s power / lies in the open secret of its remote / apparition, silvery low relief...’, ‘Open Secret’, *Evening Train* (2013, p. 858).

[3] **‘takes this work further’** arises from Levertov’s index title ‘Further than Work’. See ‘Further than work’ in this sequence.

[4] **‘to begin, / to be (to defy) –’** is from, and **‘toward a kind of living’** arises from, Levertov: ‘In ‘nature’ there’s no choice--... // ... not to / ‘go on living’ but to quicken, to activate: extend: ... // to go / just that much further, beyond the end / beyond whatever ends: to begin, to be, to defy.’ ‘Beyond The End’, *Here and Now* (2013, pp. 43-44).

[5] **‘sure of itself’** is from Rilke, see title note.

[6] **‘bird-note’** is from Rilke, see note 1; ‘gently caught’ arises from a misreading of Levertov: Edward Zlotkowski’s personal notes to the Rilke Index indicate that Levertov annotated the ‘Open Secret’ passage in her copy of the *Selected Letters* with ‘Goethe, Carlyle etc., -’. The author initially misread this as ‘Gently, Caught, Inter-’. See Brophy for a discussion of the creative significance of mis-readings (2009, p. 100).

[7] **‘the very edge of things’** arises from Rilke: ‘In place of anything coherent I shall only write down one or two notes just as they come to me during my reading, all pointing beyond the edge of the *Letters*, at us, at me’ (1946, p. 238). Indexed by Levertov as ‘pollen’, see note 1.

‘To learn to know a thing’

Title note: ‘To learn to know a thing’ was Levertov’s index label for the following passage from Rilke: ‘If a thing is to speak to you, you must for a certain time regard it as the only thing that exists, the unique phenomenon that your diligent & exclusive love has placed at the centre of the universe, something the angels serve that ... day on that matchless spot’ (1946, p. 324). For a more in-depth discussion of this index category and Levertov’s Rilke index as an artefact of cognitive enculturation, see Drummond, 2021.

[1] **‘if a thing is to speak to you’** is from Rilke, see title note.

[2] **‘above, below, before, behind, within, without’** is from Alison Croggon ‘Dear Rilke’ (2007, p. 145).

[3] **‘matchless’** is from Rilke, see title note; **‘embrace’** is from Rilke ‘... the enamoured compulsion with which *brush or pencil carry out the embrace, tenderly taking possession.*’ (1946, p. 325, italics in original).

[4] **‘the angels / serve’**, **‘Diligent’**, **‘exclusive’**; **‘at the [very] centre of / your universe’** are from Rilke, see title note.

[5] **‘tender possession’** arises from Rilke, see note 3.

[6] ‘**not/writing, / [but] breathing / with [a] pen**’ is from Rilke: ‘I have remedied the incredible arrears of my correspondence ... (Naturally I do not count what has gone to you. That is not writing, it is breathing with the pen.)’ (1946, p. 323).

The living / room

[1] ‘**Finger marks**’ arises from Martyn Crucefix: ‘... the fingerprints of two very different worlds lie all over these great poems’ (2007, p. 116).

[2] ‘**quiet deputies**’ is from Rilke: ‘...the ‘I’ was only the first and last stimulus, but ... from then on remains facing you ... thrust out ... so far upon the plane of artistic engagement, of thing-like solitude, that you feel yourself sharing in the completion of this mysterious object like some quiet deputy’ (1946, p. 402). This passage comes from a longer section of text underlined by Levertov and indexed twice, as both ‘Subjectivity’ (index item #29 in title) and ‘Initiation into the mysteries of Poetry’ (index item #35 in title).

[3] ‘**turning**’ is from Rilke: ‘the turning that *must* come if I am to live...’ (1946, p. 243, italics in original); ‘**exhalations**’ is from Rilke: ‘The exhalations of life perpetually beat back again into life’ (1946, p. 402).

[4] ‘**carry**’, ‘**give birth**’ ‘**allow each thing its own evolution**’ are from Rilke: ‘To carry, come to term, give birth, is *everything*. To allow each thing its own evolution.’ *Letters to a Young Poet* (trans. Cohn 2000, cited in Crucefix 2007, p. 117).

[5] ‘**thrust out**’, ‘**upon [a] plane**’, ‘**of thing-like/ solitude**’ are from Rilke, see note 2.

‘Acceptance of life, wonder’

Title note: Unless otherwise indicated, the majority of material in this poem originates in five passages from the ten pages in Rilke’s *Selected Letters* (trans. R.F.C. Hull, 1946), indexed by Levertov as ‘Acceptance of life, wonder’ (pp. 315, 311, 309, 308, 224, 173, 158, 98, 37, 34). **Bold text** in the following passages indicates lines cited verbatim or in close allusion:

p. 308: ‘I am bound to the manifestations of art by nothing save my sense of wonder. ... To keep our inward conscience clear and to know whether we can take responsibility for our creative experiences just as they stand in all their truthfulness and absoluteness: that is the basis of every work of art, and art such as this could be produced even if we cut away all **ground from beneath our feet**, provided that we kept our inspiration continually at concert pitch.’

p. 224: ‘How the littlest bird-voice hits and concerns me! Would to God it were spring and I could cast myself with all my senses upon Nature, – I have discovered a strange valley, a sort of hunting-park. ... Hardly laid out at all. ... As though it were all in a dream or the Elective Affinities; **I go for long, long walks....**’

p. 158: ‘Ah, we count the years and **make occasional cuttings** of them and stop and begin again and hesitate between both. But actually everything that befalls us is of one piece, in whose correlations one thing is kith and kin with another, fashions its own birth, grows and is educated to its own needs, and we have ultimately only to **be there**, simply, fervently, **as the earth is there**, in harmony with the seasons, dark and light and **absolutely in space**, not demanding to be **cradled in** anything but this **web of influences** and powers in which the very stars feel safeguarded.’

p. 98 [Three discrete passages]: ‘But how good is life! How just, how incorruptible, how never to be deceived; neither by strength, not by will, not even by courage: How everything remains what it is, and has only this choice: to fulfil or overreach itself...’ // ‘There is no poverty that is not fullness could be but accept it gravely and worthily, and not surrender or field it up to bitterness...’ // There is **precious black earth** in us, and our **blood has only to go like the plough and make furrows**. Then, while we are **at the harvest**, the **sowing is already proceeding on some other place...**’

p. 34: ‘**Only things speak to me. Rodin’s things, the things of the Gothic cathedrals, the things of Antiquity, all things that are perfect things.** They point the way to the great archetypes; to **the moving and living world**, seen simply and without interpretation as a pure occasion for things. I **begin to see anew**: already **flowers** mean so infinitely much to them, and from *animals* have come **strange intimations and promptings**, And sometimes I perceive even people so, **hands live somewhere, mouths speak**, and I see **everything more quietly and with greater justice.**’

[1] ‘**The sprawling darkness of not knowing**’ is from Mary Oliver, *Winter Hours* (2000, p. 93).

[2] ‘**follow the list / forget the list / read, scribble dive**’ is from the author’s notebook, 5 May 2018.

[3] ‘**to see with second sight**’ arises from Mary Oliver: ‘I am forever just going out for a walk and tripping over the root, or the petal of some trivia, then seeing this as if in a second sight, as emblematic’ (2000, p. 93).

[4] ‘**the owl afloat / the white egret**’ arises from Mary Oliver: ‘In the pinewoods is where the owl floats, and where the white egret paces...’ (2000, p. 96).

[5] ‘**the root**’, ‘**the petal**’ are from Mary Oliver, see note 3.

[6] ‘**gesture**’ is from Levertov, who indexed pages 381, 191 and 123 of Rilke’s *Selected Letters* as ‘Gestures’.

‘Further than work’

Title note: ‘Further than work’ was Levertov’s index label for the following passage from Rilke: ‘For much as the artist in us is concerned with work, the realization of it, its existence and duration quite apart from ourselves – we shall only be wholly in the right when we understand that even this most urgent realization of a higher reality appears, from some last and extreme vantage-point, only as a means to win something once more invisible, something entirely inward and unspectacular, – a saner state in the midst of our being’ (1946, p. 330). She also indexed the passage a second time as ‘life and death’.

[1] ‘**To be, to do, to go**’ arises from Levertov: ‘... to go / just that much further, beyond the end / beyond whatever ends: to begin to be, to defy’, ‘The Rights’, *Here and Now* (2013, pp. 43-4).

[2] ‘**further than work**’ is from Levertov, see title note.

[3] ‘**mysterious to its amber depths**’ arises from Rilke: ‘Anyone who, within the framework of poetry, is initiated into the unheard-of marvels of his own depths, or is in any way used by them as a pure and unconscious tool, must eventually see in his wonder the development of one of the most essential capacities of the spirit’ (1946, p. 387) This page was indexed by Levertov under ‘Initiation into the mysteries of poetry’, and re-transcribed into her Green Notebook in the 1960s (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 83), where she cross referenced the entry with the material labelled ‘further than work’.

[4] ‘**within the framework of poetry**’ is from Rilke, see note 3.

[5] ‘**(open to all, seen / by almost none)**’, ‘**which lies at the bottom of appearances**’ are from Carlyle: ‘What Goethe calls ... ‘The open secret’ – open to all, seen by almost none! That divine mystery, which lies everywhere in all Beings, the Divine Idea of the World, that which lies at the bottom of Appearances....’ As transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 45-47).

[6] ‘**a lump of sugar / is sugar / in every part**’ is from Rilke: ‘... it belongs to the original tendencies of my nature to accept the Mysterious as such, not as something to be exposed, but as the Mystery that is mysterious to its very depths and is so everywhere, just like a lump of sugar is sugar in every part’ (1946, p. 387). The passage comes at the bottom of the page indexed by Levertov as ‘Initiation into the mysteries of poetry’, see note 3.

[7] ‘**a hummingbird, a hummingbird**’ arises from Goethe as transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11:112-13): ‘... We struggle to perfect the work of art as an end itself. They, the moralists, think of the ulterior effect, above which the true artist troubles himself

as little as nature does when she makes a lion or a hummingbird'. Levertov labeled this passage 'Einsehen' (inseeing) in the Green Notebook, in reference perhaps to Rilke's famous passage (in a 1914 letter to Magda von Hattingburg) about the practice of 'inseeing' (cited by Levertov 1981, pp. 287-8; see also Drummond, 2021). In addition, a diary entry of Levertov's from May 1957 notes 'Saw a dark green hummingbird again this morning' (Diary ca. 1957, SUL M1140 Box 6, folder 6) and her poem 'Homage' from *Here and Now* contains the line 'wreaths of hummingbird color / at your feet' (2013, p. 53). When the author of this sequence was at Green Library, Stanford, working with the Levertov papers, she too saw a hummingbird dash from a nearby tree to sip at a fountain.

[8] '**a saner sate / in the midst of our being**' is from Rilke, see title note.

[9] '**more like a mind / than a thought**' is from Nemerov as transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 28): 'A poem is more like a mind than a thought'.

'Keeping the weirs open'

Title note: 'Keeping the weirs open' was the label given by Levertov in her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 77) to the following passage from Rilke: 'Since in the last analysis my productivity proceeds from the plainest adoration of life, the daily, inexhaustible wonder of it (how could I have been productive otherwise?) – I would see it as a lie to reject any one of the currents that flow towards me; in the end any such failure, must express itself in your art however art may gain potentially from it – as a certain hardness, & there take its revenge: for who can be open & affirmative on such sensitive ground if he has a mistrustful & anxious attitude towards life!' (1946, pp. 315-16). The passage had been initially indexed by Levertov as 'Initiation into the mysteries of poetry', and 'acceptance of life, wonder'.

[1] '**Reject no currents**' and '**Be patient on sensitive ground**' arise from Rilke, see title note.

[2] '**The weirs fly open**' arises from Levertov's Green Notebook label, see title note.

[3] '**Rodin in the garden in morning light**' arises from Rilke: 'Rodin often brooded on this in his old age. Sometimes, at five in the morning, I found him standing in the garden, lost in contemplation of the slopes of Sévres and St. Cloud which slowly rose out of the wonderful Autumn mists of the Seine...' (1946, p. 316).

[4] '**temple of language**' arises from Levertov and Rilke: '... as the poet stands open mouthed in the temple of life, contemplating his experience, there come to him the first words of the poem', Levertov 'Some notes on Organic Form', reprinted in *The Poet in the World* (1973, p. 7); 'But this is not the place to speak of our experiences; they are secret, not a secret that locks itself up, not one that demands to be kept hidden, it is a secret that is sure of itself, that stands open like a temple whose portals exult in being portals and whose towering pillars sing that they are the gateway', Rilke (1946, p. 266). Indexed by Levertov as 'Open Secret'.

[5] '**sing order from chaos**' arises from the title of Vanessa Harbour's blog: 'Chaosmos – out of chaos comes order'.

[6] '**the plainest adoration of life**' is from Rilke, see title note.

[7] '**word bells**', '**animals**', '**lime-washed walls / of lines**' arise from Patricia McCarthy: 'Castles injected their turrets into your mind / until you could swing words like bells, and women, animals, / happened to you like events...'; '... walls / lime-washed with your lines', 'Word Bells. From Rilke's Letters' (2007, p. 195).

[8] '**water-women**', '**children full / of blood and milk**' are from Levertov: 'The earthwoman / has oaktree arms. Her children / full of blood and milk / stamp through the woods shouting', 'The Earthwoman and the Waterwoman', *Here and Now* (2013, p. 45).

[9] **‘still your anxious hands / with confident surrender, with gladness’** arises from Rilke: ‘I have often asked myself whether those days on which we are forced to be indolent are not just the ones we pass in profoundest activity? Whether all our doing, when it comes later, is not only the last reverberation of a great movement which takes place in us on those days of inaction?’

At any rate it is very important to be inactive with confidence, with surrender, if possible with gladness. The days when our hands do not move are so uncommonly quiet that it is scarcely possible to live through them without hearing a great deal...’ (1946, pp. 74-75). Transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 44) and cross referenced with the material labelled ‘Keeping the weirs open’, see title note.

[10] **‘all deep things are song’** is from Carlyle as transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 53).

[11] **‘red flowers on a leafless tree’** is from Levertov, ‘A Song’, *Overland to the Islands* (2013, p. 78); **‘dragonfly dresses’, ‘blue shoes’** are from Levertov: ‘... the waterwoman / goes dancing in the misty lit-up town / In dragonfly dresses and blue shoes’, ‘The Earthwoman and the Waterwoman’, *Here and Now* (2013, p. 45).

[12] **‘there is music everywhere’** is from Carlyle as transcribed by Levertov into her Green Notebook (SUL M0601, Series 3, Box 1, f11: 55-56). At the bottom of this page Levertov added the labels ‘Use’ and ‘Roots and Branches’, the latter likely a reference to Robert Duncan, see note 14.

[13] **‘only after the wind / is quenched’, ‘a quietness come’, ‘the scraping mind perceive / what is possible’** are from Levertov, ‘The Palm Tree’, *Overland to the Islands* (2013, p. 66).

[14] **‘roots and branches’** is from a label in Levertov’s Green Notebook, a possible reference to Robert Duncan’s, *Roots and Branches, Poems by Robert Duncan*, see note 12.

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Nagoya University

David Thomas Henry Wright

War rooms: three poems

Abstract:

Reflecting on the First World War, British conceptual artist Cornelia Parker produced a large installation titled *War Room* (2015). Using great sheets of perforated paper negatives of remembrance poppies, the discarded material was used to make a tent. In this sense, Parker's process is ecocritical in that it seeks to reuse rather than produce. It is this use of discarded material for artistic purposes that inspired me to create the following contemporary poems. The first, *His Earlier Imagined*, takes vocabulary struck from Raymond Carver's short story 'Beginners' by his editor Gordon Lish to produce 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Love'; a version of this story, which displays Lish's edits, appears in the December 2007 issue of *The New Yorker*. The second, *{Magna_Carta(An_Embroidery)}.txt*, is a response to Cornelia Parker's 'Magna Carta (An Embroidery)', an embroidered artwork of the complete text and images of the Wikipedia entry for 'Magna Carta' as it appeared in English Wikipedia on June 15, 2014. My poem takes the vocabulary used from Wikipedia on June 15, 2020 for the entry for Parker's work. The final poem, *Moloch Misch-Masch Monolith*, takes vocabulary cut from earlier drafts of Allen Ginsburg's *Howl* and T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

All three of these works repurpose discarded, paratextual material. The vocabulary has been gathered, inserted into a JavaScript generator, and then human edited. The first and third works create poetry out of material discarded by other authors and poets. The intention is not to write as the authors/poets, but rather to see if the original works' authority lingers even through discarded material and the scaffolding of edits. Parker's artistic work makes the amorphous digital text of Wikipedia visual and static. By revisiting the same source, the poem returns Parker's visual work to a digital, literary form. Each of these poems uses 'appropriative writing' as defined by Rubinstein (1999) and typified by authors/poets such as Hugh MacDiarmid, Louis Zukofsky, Marjorie Welish, David Shapiro, and Kenneth Goldsmith. Words used in my work are not drawn from the final versions of Carver's short story, the Wikipedia entry for 'Magna Carta' or Ginsburg and Eliot's poems respectively, but rather from text used in the developmental/reflective stages of those works. Similar to David Jhave Johnston's *ReRites* (2017–2018, a series of poems 'generated by a computer and edited by a human'), these three poems also use computerised recombination as co-author and an initial inspirational starting point. Through these poems, the fields of computer-generated and appropriative writing are expanded by focusing on discarded material and employing a creative approach that seeks to reuse, rather than produce.

Biographical note:

David Thomas Henry Wright won the 2018 Queensland Literary Awards' Digital Literature Prize and 2021 Carmel Bird Digital Literary Award. He has been shortlisted for several other national and international literary prizes, published in various academic and creative journals, and has received various arts and academic grants. He has a PhD (Comparative Literature) from Murdoch University and a Masters (Creative Writing) from The University of Edinburgh, and taught Creative Writing at China's top university, Tsinghua. He is currently co-editor of *The Digital Review*, narrative consultant for Stanford University's *Smart Primer* research project, and Associate Professor (Comparative Literature) at Nagoya University.

Keywords:

Appropriative writing, Cornelia Parker, digital poetry, Raymond Carver, Allen Ginsburg

HIS EARLIER IMAGINED[†]

she
beaten,
he longed
genuinely in
a bruised sunset,
a tropical area wash,
the 1952 consciousness
of a finished Los Angeles,
the reddish side of the hankies,
the late vas deferens hitting suddenly,
the sweet morning whistling into her body,
the same figure saying a twenty-four-hour thought.

[†] This poem is composed solely of vocabulary cut from Raymond Carver's short story 'Beginners' by his editor Gordon Lish to produce 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Love'; a version of this story, which displays Lish's edit, appears in the December 2007 issue of *The New Yorker*.

{MAGNA_CARTA(AN_EMBROIDERY)}.txt[§]

The English cite from a majority
represented in libraries;
world knitting campaigners
echoing honors up digital carpet,
quilting variants of Art+Feminism,
smocking standard criticism;

a deletionism of references
darning justice by WikiConference;
a shortlist hand-stitch Historiography;
a conflict-of-interest wonderland;
sewn personal views:
the one activity now.

[§] This poem is composed solely of vocabulary from the Wikipedia entry of ‘Magna Carta (An Embroidery)’ (2015) – an embroidered artwork of the complete text and images of the Wikipedia entry for ‘Magna Carta’ as it appeared in English Wikipedia on June 15, 2014, the 799th anniversary of the document, by British conceptual artist Cornelia Parker, OBE, RA, which was hand-stitched by approximately 200 embroiderers including: prison inmates; Wikileaks founder Julian Assange; Labour Party politician Shami Chakrabarti; musician Jarvis Cocker; the mother of racially murdered Stephen Lawrence, Doreen Delceita Lawrence; novelist Philip Pullman; member of the House of Lords Sayeedi Warsi; former editor-in-chief of *The Guardian* Alan Charles Rusbridger; co-founder of Wikipedia Jimmy Wales; and Parker herself – as it appeared in English Wikipedia on June 15, 2020, the 805th anniversary of Magna Carta.

MOLOCH MISCH-MASCH MONOLITH ♦

I.

The broken morning thought out, eluding

The slaughterer of illumination, breaking

Vision with deathless categories and nations.

The good belly rose stable, saving

Forgiveness for associate people, bagging

us away from the economic juice.

II.

Father's away. Daily stays with cynical family

Burned away boldly at his consciousness,

His mental cigar a ghostly dream, weeping

Huddled in the merciless apartment, knowing

That Washington is not for beggars, but for

The cunning agony of capitalist explosions.

III.

You published Apollinaire garbage and Vico diapers,

Revolved among Holy Charity and sexless beings,
Turpented gut and horn in smoke bug saloons,
Screamed from a Mary Woolnoth rooftop,
Shit upon graniteskulled idiots from asshole sky,
Dragged neither inspiration nor faith.

IV.

The crawling Peter baptised Spring: the builder of time
Not bound by body. The skyscraper monument
Approaches the marriage of soul to god. Cows stare.

Monsterous monsterous monsterous

Schwebt schwebt schwebt schwebt schwebt schwebt

Christs stare. Heaven

schwebt

V.

Perhaps the drunken jury stood between you and the page.

Perhaps the Street dragged you into an ivory dream.

Perhaps you spar with the bound monarch of neither.

Perhaps you

scribbled away

recreated away

away away away

◇ This poem is composed solely of vocabulary cut from earlier drafts of *Howl* by Allen Ginsberg [‘Original drafts of Allen Ginsberg’s ‘Howl’ featuring numerous annotations and corrections. Includes Part I, drafts 1-5; Part II, drafts 1-18; Part III, drafts 1-5; and Part IV, drafts 1-7’, M0733, Series 3, Howl Box, Stanford University, Department of Special Collections and University Archives] and *The Waste Land* by T.S. Eliot [‘Facsimile and transcript of the original drafts including the annotations of Ezra Pound’, Berg Coll 73-106, 73-107, New York Public Library, Berg Collection].

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The University of Melbourne

Natalie Rose Dyer

Two poems

Abstract:

My poetic rumination on planetary alterity is part of a growing body of experimental interdisciplinary work investigating our planetary troubles. Gyatri Spivak signposts in *Death of a Discipline* that planetarity can instil a new postcolonial position in ‘the reading subject’, which ruptures damaging discourses of imperial power (Spivak, 2003, p. 99). I identify that Spivak draws on Luce Irigaray’s call to re-read philosophical texts for omissions, in order to fathom a beyond discourse – closer to the phantasm (Irigaray, 1985, p. 98). The phantasm is a ‘rebellious flow,’ or ‘wild’ ‘element’ that corresponds with language, and is liberated bio-psychically, albeit which has been most frequently considered predominantly with respect to a *man*’s attempt to fathom his mammalian self (Deleuze, 1990, pp. 1-2). By contrast, Irigaray identifies a mimetic ‘mother-matter-nature’ category aligned with ‘waste’ and ‘excess’ that has historically marginalised a woman’s voice – has made it inaudible under patriarchy for instance. Similarly, Spivak contends that a woman becomes an instrumental player in the ‘shifting of the function of discursive systems’ pertaining to a ‘woman-as-mother-as-vagina’ category, pivotal for contemporary transgressive operations of thought (Spivak, 2003, p. 74). Following these insights, my work explores planetarity as potentially a cite of phantasmagorical textual rupture with respect to mammalian experience more broadly in seeking to critique ‘species hierarchy and anthropocentric exceptionalism’ (Braidotti, 2019, p. 2). My poems also draw on Clarisa Pincola Estes’s ‘La Loba, the wolf woman’ (Estes, 1992, p. 14) in order to re-imagine a radically affirmative connection with ‘nonhuman animal species, ecosystems, technology and matter’ (Parr, 2017, p. 191).

Biographical note:

Natalie Rose Dyer completed a PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Melbourne (2017) where she also earned an MFA (2010) with an Australian Postgraduate Award. Natalie was Researcher-in-Residence at The University of Amsterdam (2018). She taught

in the creative writing and literature program at Deakin University, Melbourne, in 2019 and 2020. Natalie's poetry and essays are widely published in esteemed international literary journals including *Meanjin*, *Australian Poetry Journal*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Wisconsin Review*, and many more. Her book *The Menstrual Imaginary in Literature: Notes on a Wild Fluidity* was published by Palgrave in 2020.

Keywords:

Ecopoetics, planetarity, environmental activism, wild woman, phantasm

La Loba

'La Loba, the old one in the desert, is a collector of bones...'
—Clarissa Pinkolas Estes, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*

La Loba, bone collector at dusk
goes scavenging in a bed of clay,
in riverbeds, owns the gutted clay –
cries rivers awake. La Loba return.
Last night I called her up at bedtime –
told the children a story of the woman
who lives in the desert, hunts wolf-bones.
'Bones as piccolos,'¹ from vertebrae to pelvis –
the femur juts, the patella a hinge,
the fibular a pendulum, to metatarsals
that sing hallowed music, speak of phalanges.
La Loba re-assembles the bones in her cave
by firelight, goes to the mouth-of-cave
calls up the winds, chants autochthonic –
echoed out of my own hollow-mouth
last night. She claps the winds,
conjures a hum of whir, a swirl of chaos,
puts it into the bone-suit of wolf,
which re-assembles itself,
becomes en-fleshed, circles the cave –
runs out onto the plane a-howling.
A-howling as I howled last night.
I named her Riven, had her galloping
over ridges, dingo-like in these parts
crossing red earth – reassembling her spirit.
This morning at 4.30am my children awoke
to her entering their room in spider guise,
a tremendous pilose arachnid –
She is known by many names and forms.
They awoke to her numinous-eye –
couldn't comprehend her visitation.
But I know that she's come to offer clarity,
knowledge of beyond time and space.
She will talk to me today – commune with my bones,
imbue them with her song of the many winds.

Letters for La Loba

I

Dear La Loba,

In the bath – analgesic
in a shallow of stars
wandering-low,
vagrant from day.
Got out, dried off,
stood liminal on the stairs –
owl hooted, a rare visitation,
a totemic strophe.
A few more owl ablutions;
hallowed-obo-notes,
cryptic in midden of night,
straining-on-wilderness.
To grasp a passage of spirit
wrestled from twilight,
to forge owl-letters;
an inchoate hieroglyph,
un-metered, or perhaps
cadenced by its own guff,
its own sluice of plunge
and river-source.

With love,

The Bone Collector.

II

Dear La Loba,

The moonpond
holds residues –
the interstices of mind.

The pate of not sun
glimmers-a-whirl
out front of our house tonight.
Ovum of our lives,
magnifying interiors
makes luminous
things and states.
An odalisque
bore-of-song
ripples out –
chthonic as stars.

With love,

The Bone Collector.

Notes

[1] This line is taken from Australian poet Judith Beveridge's poem 'How to Love Bats' collected in *Accidental Grace*.

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Australian Catholic University

Kate Middleton

From *Television* (10) and (35)

Abstract:

'From *Television* (10) and (35)' are television/media autoethnographies written in the form of lyric poems. These poems ask: how can we represent our consumption of contemporary media as real experience? These works contribute to research relating to poetry and audience participation. They were created in response to the lyric form adopted by poet A.R. Ammons in his work *Garbage*, employing the same form of couplets to take on a subject as ubiquitous as Ammons's meditation on garbage. The use of a single continuous 'sentence', separated by colons, reflects the reality of television and mass media in the age of streaming. The centrality of the 'I' that anchors these poems reflects the way the individual responds to and is engulfed by mass culture.

This work proposes the hybrid form of the poetic television memoir, using the poetic medium to create spaces for both affective responses to television and also critical thought.

Biographical note:

Kate Middleton is the author of the poetry collections *Fire Season* (2009), *Ephemeral Waters* (2013), and *Passage* (2017). She was awarded the Western Australian Premier's Award for Poetry in 2009. In 2020, she was runner up for the Australian Book Review's Calibre Award. She holds degrees from the University of Melbourne, Georgetown University, the University of Michigan, and Western Sydney University. She teaches creative writing.

Keywords:

Television autoethnography, audience participation, poetic television memoir, affective response

From *Television*

10.

I could write a bibliomemoir: I'd ardently attest
to the comforts of Green Gables, the psychology

of James, the obsessive, sooty breadth of Dickens,
and leave out the fact I've still not read the Tolstoy

doorstops, not read *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*
(but know the latter's spoilers, the grinding inevitability

of the train): or maybe I wouldn't omit fact, fault:
I'm compulsive, and frequently confess my flaws:

still, even if I did leave out Leo, own the gaps,
you'd be impressed, the hours spent driven by a mania

to understand the reference, the classics peopling
my stadium of consciousness: but that would

leave out the way I have always blanketed hours
in television: memoirs always leave that out, leave out

the cheap Valium of *amusing ourselves to death*: so
I wonder, what happens if I abandon prestige?:

because when I was sick, inert, besieged by
heartache, it was television that kept me whole, not

the canon indexed in my mind: how many years
rewatching the zipcode?: a sacred text: I'm sure

I learned to be a person-in-the-world from the gang
at least as much as from any voyage into real life,

and how much dejection stems from that?: for
some reason I loved the fact that the *I Hate Brenda*

Newsletter existed, loved the ardent polarisation of
phlegmatic fans, even if I never read it, read instead

the tidbits in the gossip mags: and even though
I loved Brenda: even when she was a bitch, and even

when I yearned for Kelly to get the guy, I still
loved Brenda: the yearning compounded by

the writers' room, abetted by the zine because
Brenda was always, really, too much, and *90210*

was meant to be a comfort because it was not
good enough, not true enough to be painful: that

was *Buffy*, that was *My So-Called Life*, the shows
I watched to cry, to feel the hot gash angst of

teenaged-ness: but the zipcode and its fable
of cars and clothes and solipsism still wrote

a user's guide to emotional peril: no matter what
new earnest PSA (AIDS, safe sex, interracial strife

and how to give the patina of resolution into respect)
of course they always reverted back to soap, back

into a whitewashed splendour: recently a friend said
she might stop writing: her poems are far more

necessary than mine, clear-sighted, but instead
she said she'd dedicate herself to service: I want

to say I'd do this too: let the work of care transcend
upon me, amplify itself in me, but soap always

washes me clean again, scrubs off intention, instils
only hunger: still, for the first time I'm writing part

of my story maskless: I'm back caught up in the love
triangle: the triangle that morphs: yet remains

a triangle even when Kelly says *I choose me*: I mean
before she's a cult-head, an addict, before she's

stalked, before she's shot, raped, before she makes
a run to Mexico for the drugs that'll kill her latest

boyfriend's ex-wife, but keep the ex-wife sane
for the final weeks: (she doesn't take them – lives):

all of these calamities are comfort: sometimes
only the preposterous can offer comfort: a counter

to ongoingness, to the live stream: damage, collateral,
pandemic, our minds a ruin in this new trope

of instantaneous witness, in our attempt to find
words for it all: and my own ruined mind (ruined

by hurt, ruined by feeling) numbly watches
all that drama, lather, as if it is all there is to hold,

all that, slippery, holds me

From *Television*

35.

a voice in the darkening points out, quite right,
that *no one was memeing the transcripts*: another

podcast: really, I spend more time with voices
now than watching TV: podcasts sift, digest, pre-

COVID, the hearings for me: and post-January 6,
I again listen to anything that wears *impeachment*

in the title, feel like my teenage self again watching
Clinton address the State of the Union amidst Lewinsky:

I'm glad Monica's found herself, found a voice, that
we've caught up to the wrongs done unto her: I watched

the Mueller hearings too, watched the careful faces
form their careful words, the diplomatic corps

on guard in congress, the tension on the floor, and
somehow I thought of the rules of writing workshops:

how many teachers do I know that recommend
new poets hunt every instance of the word *and*,

and any other itsy-bitsy words – the *thes* and *ofs*
and *buts* – to take them out where possible?: as

if necessity were the only reason to keep them:
I have grown fond of *and*: I'm not alone – where

would Whitman be in his abundance without this
simplest conjunction?: but more than that, as we

atomise opinion, as we *meme the hearings*, it feels
that *and* is more necessary than ever: how else

to parse the media: free-to-air, cable networks,
streaming services (two more launched this month)

and the carved-out bites that become the paunch
of viral matter: when I talk to students, I offer them

an image of a compass: yes, you can make that needle
point toward the minimal, take out those hiccups

of language that act like grease, and yet accrual is also
possible: just throw *everything* into poems, I say:

students hardly ever take this up; to take words out
feels less messy, and these hatchling writers are

not yet comfortable with mess: (of course, this is
the kind of generalisation I do not accept from others:

I should say, instead, yes, as a young writer I wanted
something like tidiness, though I loved a ragged

phrase to cut across the sheen of order): endless
commentary, until another voice responds to the solemn

opiners who claim that now there is no common ground,
suggests that's exactly Disney's role: that viewers

massed for *Star Wars*, now for Baby Yoda, for Mando,
for *WandaVision* the way they do not mass for testimony on

the floor of congress: meanwhile this polarised reality
breaks out into its roars, *boo* or else ovation: I've

downloaded all the transcripts, and yet I have barely
made a dent in them so far: distraction blowing in,

attention truant, screens engineered that way, brazen,
another reason the word *and* is vital, as I try to do
too much, and my attention shatters, ricochets
among the ruin

Independent scholar

Christian Bök

Poetry is a dim myth

Abstract:

Jorge Luis Borges is famous, in part, for having coined the phrase “O Time, thy pyramids” in his short story *The Library of Babel* (a story that features prominently in the influences of the literary movement called Conceptualism). ‘Poetry Is a Dim Myth’ recounts a series of stories, each a ‘truthful anecdote’ that responds to the sense of uncanniness evoked by Borges in his own essayistic narratives. My work collates folkloric anecdotes about pyramids (all of them ‘true’), yet all of them hovering near the edge of fiction, straining the credulity of the reader.

‘Poetry Is a Dim Myth’ responds to the tradition of *pataphysics*, a parodic science, invented by Alfred Jarry to constitute a philosophy of ‘anomalous phenomena,’ offering imaginary solutions to problems not yet proposed. I have conducted research about discoveries that pertain to the ‘mysteries’ of pyramids, but whose ‘truth-value’ seems ambiguous, despite such folklore actually existing. I am hoping to induce a sense of the ‘uncanny’ (in which each anecdote progressively strains the credulity of the reader, because of this ‘anomalousness’). This sequence puts into practice some of the aesthetic attitudes, outlined in my treatise *Pataphysics: The Poetics of an Imaginary Science* (Northwestern University Press). The poem, in this case, performs a pataphysical dissemblance, deviating almost invisibly (like a *clinamen*), transitioning along a spectrum, from the verity of uncanny ‘fact’ to the deceit of tenable ‘lore’ (in a manner reminiscent of work by Jorge Luis Borges).

Biographical note:

Christian Bök is the author of *Eunoia* (2001), a bestselling work of experimental literature, which has gone on to win the Griffin Prize for Poetic Excellence. Bök is currently working on *The Xenotext* – a project that requires him to encipher a poem into the genome of a bacterium capable of surviving in any inhospitable environment. Bök is a Fellow in the Royal Society of Canada, and he works as an artist in Melbourne.

Keywords: Pataphysics, Borges, conceptualism, pyramids, the uncanny

POETRY IS A DIM MYTH

‘O Time,
all your ephemeral pyramids cease to be.’
—Jorge Luis Borges (‘Of Heaven and Hell’)

‘Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange.’
—William Shakespeare (‘Sonnet 123’)

Apex

O Time, thy pyramids!
— omit my hasty pride:
poetry is a dim myth,
empty (amid history).

01.

The Pyramid of Giza is so square at its base that it has an average anomaly of only 58 mm in length on any side. The base is flat, deviating by no more than 15 mm from horizontal, and it is aligned to the four points of the compass, deviating by no more than four minutes of arc. All stones fit together with less than 0.5 mm of space between joints. (No modern method of construction can recreate all these exactitudes.)

02.

The Pyramid of Giza was originally enveloped in smooth plates of polished limestone, all of them so white that their albedo would have caused each face of the pyramid to gleam like a mirror in the sunshine. (The effect would have glared so brightly during the day that the pyramid would have shone on Earth, like a tiny star, visible to any potential astronaut, standing upon the surface of the Moon.)

03.

Kunihiro Morishima (at Nagoya University in Japan) published a report in 2017, noting that, through the use of muon radiography, his team of physicists had confirmed the existence of a titanic, but unknown, chamber above the Grand Gallery in the Pyramid of Giza. (The cavity is large enough to accommodate an airplane, yet no passageways lead to this void, thus adding mystery to its content and its purpose.)

04.

Lincoln Ellsworth, an explorer, flew an airplane across Antarctica to the Ross Ice Shelf in 1935, during which he discovered the Ellsworth Mountains, the tallest summits on the continent. At the coordinates 79° 58' 39.2" S, 81° 57' 32.2" W, he saw a peak, eroded by glaciation into a perfect pyramid, draped in white frost. (A survey of this peak later found ancient fossils of trilobites, dating from the very dawn of life itself.)

05.

James Gaussman, a pilot in the US Army Air Corps, reported seeing a mammoth pyramid of white stone in 1945, while flying a sortie over a hidden valley in the Qin Ling Mountains near the city of Xi'an. He reported that the pyramid stood 'draped in shimmering white' with a jewelled capstone at its apex. (To date, no one has found such a structure via satellite, despite all surveys of this remote region.)

06.

Diocleciano Silva, a yachtsman, discovered a massive pyramid, underwater between the Azorean islands of São Miguel and Terceira in 2013. Silva found the structure when, during navigation, the sonar on his bathymeter detected, on the ocean floor, a squarish obstacle, aligned to the four points of the compass. (The Portuguese Navy inspected the site and determined that his find dated from the end of the Ice Age.)

07.

Douglas Mutschler, a warrant officer for the US Army, reported that, during nuclear testing by China in 1992, seismographers in Alaska detected, by accident, the mass of a large, black pyramid, buried underground near Mt. McKinley. (Mutschler claimed that the army had installed a base-camp near the structure so as to study its mysterious properties, which included many anomalous emissions of thermomagnetism.)

08.

Steve Beckwith, a director of the Space Telescope Science Institute, scheduled observations for the Hubble Space Telescope in 1999, instructing the instrument to photograph the Taurus-Littrow Valley on the Moon, doing so with the intention of finding possible deposits of ilmenite. (The telescope, however, captured instead a sharp image of an eerie, black pyramid, which cast a shadow across the lunar plain.)

09.

Donna Hare, an employee at NASA, claimed to have witnessed technicians, in the darkrooms at Johnson Space Center, airbrushing out details from images obtained by astronauts during missions to the Moon. (Hare noted that her peers claimed to have observed pictures of pyramids from these landing surveys, implying that, during moonwalks, men explored these ruins without divulging any news of it to the public.)

10.

Richard F. Gordon Jr., the commander of Apollo 18, claimed to have received orders from Mission Control in 1972, requiring him to erase all evidence of his moonwalk before returning to Earth. The astronaut wired all abandoned equipment with C-4 charges for vaporisation after liftoff. (He said that he performed this duty in the shadow cast at sunrise by the looming, but distant, ruins of three obsidian pyramids.)

11.

John E. Brandenburg, a physicist, argued that levels of Xenon 129 in the atmosphere of Mars conformed precisely to the signature of isotopes produced by nuclear warfare, implying that the planet had undergone atomic salvos in its past. (He concluded that based upon distributions of radioactivity, the target for such an attack was Cydonia, the region famous for its supposedly artificial mountain: the D&M Pyramid.)

12.

Jorge Luis Borges in 'The Library of Babel' (a short story published in 1944) described an endless archive, where unreadable texts so drastically outnumbered any meaningful books that a coherent outburst, like 'O Time, thy pyramids,' would appear to result from a wondrous accident. (Such an eternal pyramid, rising from an infinity of nonsense, sits, like a paperweight, upon our wonderment at the enigma of the cosmos.)

University of Sydney

Toby Fitch

Planned obsolescences

Abstract:

For the last few years, I have been writing a book of poems called *Sydney Spleen* (Giramondo, 2021). *Sydney Spleen* updates Charles Baudelaire's idea of the *splénétique* – which can be thought of as a kind of melancholy induced by modern urban life. Baudelaire's *Paris Spleen* cast its poems against the backdrop of a previous era of high capitalism. My 'spleen poems' are about Sydney in the current era of neoliberal capitalism and post-irony, or 'post-Four Seasons Total Landscaping', as my poem 'Planned Obsolescences' puts it. This is an era of corporate rapacity, climate change, plague, neo-colonialism, fake news, rising fascism – an era in which depression is at epidemic levels, and yet so is our dependence on remaining connected, virtually, to each other. *Sydney Spleen* is a culmination of my existing research into the poetics of the city and the postdigital, and of the themes and topics I have been writing about in my poetry since my first book *Rawshock* – love, fear, desire, gender, fragility, the inhuman, the mimetic, the internet, and the environment. This poem experiments with collage by splicing together found tweets, composed tweets, found headlines, climate disaster factoids, and lines by Guy Debord, Jacques Lacan, and Walter Benjamin, with associated personal thoughts on work, disaster capitalism, identity, and family. The poem is designed to represent and find meaning in, among other things, a frenetic mental space, existing in person and yet through multiple screens.

Biographical note:

Toby Fitch is poetry editor of *Overland*, a lecturer in creative writing at the University of Sydney, and the director of AVANT GAGA and the Poetry Night at Sappho Books. He is the author of seven books of poetry, including *Where Only the Sky had Hung Before* and *Sydney Spleen*.

Keywords: Australian poetry, French poetry, Baudelaire, modernism, capitalism

Planned Obsolescences

By the end of the year I was dying much faster
than normal. Official sources say this claim is false.

Got galaxy brain so I immersed myself in a sound bath.
Turns out my heart's not as oversized as I'd thought.

Found out that Planet 9 might just be a black hole
the size of a white cricket ball, that my MacBook Air

electrocutes me if I use it when it's charging, that a
heatwave in the Arctic caused the Doomsday Vault

to spring a leak. If you choose to stay, we may not
be able to save you. No sooner had the mystery metal

monoliths appeared in deserts and on mountaintops
than they were disappeared. A horde of winged iPad

stations were prepped for virtual ICU end-of-life visits.
Just log in with your palliative face. I googled Byzantine

Empire and all I got was Amazon in the Google results.
Virality begot virality. Where's an invisibility cloak

when you need one? At one point I tweeted: 'I have been
laughing historically for five minutes help me'. This claim

is misleading. I came to understand we have 'scope neglect',
that if you want to say something, put it in the chat.

One night, my daughters told me they were over My Little
Pony, and we all agreed to donate their selected soft toys to

Vinnies. Within minutes there were dark patterns on my feed
– a rainbow of suggestive, faux-submissive eyes offering up

an affect overload. What appears is good; what is good appears.
Housing bubbles didn't quite pop, they just got blown more

out of proportion, became more decentralised: those who could afford to extricate themselves from density did so.

I kept daydreaming of the acid trip I once had in which electric spiders on the insides of my eyelids connected all

my thoughts across time and space with perfect neon webs. The death drive is a nostalgia for lost harmony. Time to

abolish the sun? The cops tracked me down, tailgated my car across Darling Harbour, for looking at my phone.

Awash in newfangled passivity, in all the anaesthetics of hypercommunication, I finally worked out how to cry again:

watch YouTube videos of missing dogs reuniting with their owners. What hasn't been weaponised will be.

Apparently empowered artificial intelligence unaligned with human values has a one-in-ten chance of ending us all

in the next 100 years. Post-Four Seasons Total Landscaping, we're not going to analogy ourselves to death: autumn

sucked. Context collapse struck me with its troll clubs in the normalised way that it does. I went dark for a bit,

untethered myself from enough hellsites for long enough to lose my sense of self all over again, just in the face-to-face

world. Those of us still with jobs carried on like spectres. It occurred to me I could use my MacBook Air as a guillotine.

A freshly modernised lift system is coming soon. The capital city most at risk of earthquake is Canberra, because of its

proximity to the fault line of fractured rocks at Lake George. Emotionally I'm in Spain without the 's'. I drank so much

because I'd been anticipating the event and didn't think
I'd be able to handle feeling *everything*. We got so used

to each new apocalypse that we lapsed into old pipe dreams,
just sat there in planes, which is where I got to wondering:

Is it a symptom of my mind that my body is inhibiting
my thoughts, or is it a symptom of my body that my mind

is inhibiting its own expression in my body's movement?
I'm a blip, but what I put in the chat made everybody smile.

Safeguarding the future requires believing in one. Official
sources say. Bats no longer live rent-free in my head,

though I allow them to sublet. After being detected in the
deepest point of the ocean, microplastics were found

near the death zone of Mount Everest. Meanwhile, heads
of dog sculptures in cemeteries are even more moss-free

'cause people keep petting them. Cancel culture remains a bone
of contention. Not unique to this year, the world's investment

in protective technologies was dwarfed by its spending on
ice cream. Moving to Net Zero, the ghost in my heart chips

away at its cell. That things just go on is the catastrophe.
This morning I asked my daughters to get dressed.

No, they replied, we're making The Hidden World.
After a split second of apoplexy, I couldn't fault them.

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Nanjing University

aj Carruthers

Stanzas for prepared page & prepared keyboard

Abstract:

‘Stanzas for Prepared Page & Prepared Keyboard’ was written on unspecified days in 2018 with the aid of Microsoft Word and on a ‘prepared’ ACER Aspire S 13 Laptop through various sittings. I got up to eight pages in two fonts: Microsoft New Tai Lue and Microsoft PhagsPa. For the Microsoft PhagsPa pages, the Laptop was ‘prepared’ in that I had fitted on top of the keyboard an alternative keyboard with a different arrangement of letters. These are spontaneous and freely inspired works. Various things, however, were decided in advance: the size of the Word Doc page, its margins, the number of stanzas, size of the stanzas, as well as the font. They are part of several font-based works that I had been working on at this particular time.

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word, released October 25, 1983, will not always be with us, but it is the writing system of our time and most contemporary poetry is written using it. MS Word has changed the way that we write as significantly as the stylus and the typewriter, and an understanding of that succession was understood early on as the 1983 MS Word handbook spelled out:

In some ways you use Word just as you would a typewriter: you type your text on your computer keyboard and it appears on your screen, just as what you type on a typewriter appears on paper. However, you will soon find that Word does many things a typewriter cannot. For example, correcting typing errors is much easier. You will be able to add or remove text wherever you want, without disrupting the format of your document. Because you make changes to documents on the screen instead of on paper, you won’t need erasers, liquid cover-up, or correction paper.

Also, you needn’t worry about where the end of each line should be. With Word, you don’t have to hit a carriage return key to start a new line: Word automatically starts a new line where you need it. In fact, if there isn’t enough room at the end of a line to finish a word, Word moves the entire word to the next line. This feature is called ‘wordwrap’. (1983)

Fonts

Fonts are the fountains of modern writing. Apart from the Interludes in ‘Stanzas’, the Microsoft New Tai Lue and Microsoft PhagsPa fonts are not retained and were used solely during the initial writing of this work – that is, for process, rather than ‘outcome’. The original purpose of these fonts was to widen the possibilities of Word for languages like Tai Lü, and so the real-world use is limited to that. Fonts for this work are rendered back to an easily readable and standard font.

Stanzas

Each stanza, in a page set to 8’12,’ had the capacity to fit three whole stanzas of 12 lines each, which created a large stanzaic space in which writing could take place. Not all of the stanzas are filled, which is a habit derived from works that used acrostic and what I call ‘chorastic’ methods (words spelled downwards primarily through the extended use of a seed text), but these are neither acrostic nor chorastic works. For the Microsoft PhagsPa pages, I used the Prepared Keyboard, so that I would write the words that came out naturally and spontaneously, but the keyboard would write out a different series of letters according to the keyboard arrangement, while retaining some of the initial prosody.

Sittings

The writing of these poems happened during timed ‘sittings,’ in that I would spend no longer than a minute for each line, and take a break after each stanza, paying attention to the act of being at the keyboard and with the document. Each line was freely composed as any poetry from intuitive inspiration. These are neither formalist nor conceptualist works, and no particular kind of language or vocabulary was excluded from the poetry.

The Visual Interludes

The visual interludes were generated using selections from several hundred or so downloaded fonts. I simply spontaneously chose fonts that would be suitable visually beside each other to render pre-written lines into different geometries. I’ve since forgotten the original lines, but they can quite easily be derived by making the fonts ‘lisible’ once more using a live MS document. The first interlude clearly begins: ‘fiery emailing’.

Lines and Words

That there are six vertical ‘columns’ loosely speaking per stanza can also be explained as deriving from an almost decade long effort to separate words from each other before bringing them together. Preserving a space around the words has allowed me to see them more clearly, which does not mean that they cannot act syntactically in the

standard way, as in ‘moreen prevents hovering in morocco,’ which is a fully formed sentence. There is no one way for these works to be read out aloud, but in performance, any performer might be guided by the spacing as to where to allocate pauses.

Biographical note:

aj Carruthers is a literary critic and experimental poet, author of *Stave Sightings: Notational Experiments in North American Long Poems*, a group of studies on Langston Hughes, bpNichol, Joan Retallack, and others; two volumes of a lifelong poem *AXIS Book 1: Areal* and *AXIS Book 2*; and a sound work *Consonata*. He is Associate Professor, Nanjing University, Department of English, China.

Keywords:

Microsoft Word, poetry, keyboard, fonts, input and output

Prepared Keyboard (Layout)

Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P
X	Y	I	L	D	W	O	E	U	B
A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	
H	Z	T	V	J	A	G	C	R	
Z	X	C	V	B	N	M			
S	Q	K	F	P	M	N			

PAGE I

Microsoft New Tai Lue

| Jeroboam stream-*jeunesse*fret-saw
 - jibber banterpanicky
 - ashy aslope -ency
 - squint ahnt *moltoadagio*
 - Orcadian Privy chronologicalorangery-culum dogmatic
 - Norman nonplus occasion-*passum*sn.-book Scandinavian
 - disrelish *temperedfancy*puppies
 - jury-mast outer sacking
 - falchion moderate convex-edgeddoing of ff. trading-station
 - mouldie -vableinternal-combustion *nowdh*commisioned m. plumage
 - automatism bore,relief *bb. & sucklings* arch., placed L,=axle
 - meridional enjoyment gas road-making orderliness

| jointer alongjoodish merrymaking
 - Jonah cutter*juncus*
 - *allj. fine* garlic
 - sumptuary weather
 - obtest och ah *œ* relic.
 - notelet *n. west ward*srook, rick, ruck
 - disrelish hand-spinning maddening practical *zizuphon*
 - jac'onet outerreprehensibletediously Watchfully sun.
 - fortune-hunterUnfairly hospital auspiciousFOIBLEF wd mÓz
 - muzzy nainsookvanished! lost! done!, finished!
 - aqua-vitae ordinary *water-colour*sarb'alest pterux
 - moreen prevents hovering in morocco

|
 -
 -
 -
 - outness seed-vessel
 - needleful the emperor cord or *strain* irritability ganglion-cells
 - dataller Oozyunskillfully stuff
 - Jos'eph
 - fee-faw-fum
 - mitre -*ier* AERIAL
 - an'serine *answered* *that* *it was* *impossible*
 - monosyllable

PAGE II

Microsoft New Tai Lue

| jemmy

- jeers

- avast

- saxifrage

- o'sier

- naze

- Danish danger dandelion

- Yugoslav measures J. devotees petrol Thing said

- frowst mare, mire, more, mure; part, pert, port;

- millesimalmete mite milfoil *am of your m.,*

- ah, awl, oil, boor, ow, dowry

- *m.* appoggiatura

|

-

-

-

-

- Norland

- decem'virate

- jujube logeJulians so, *ship*, emancipation misfortune

- formality collision weather foulard polluted

- maintain vague sounds of claret, of that jubilation

- arithmetic

-

| jacquerie

- jamps

- amble,

- slue

- óof

- nervine *volens volens* invitations- *distingué* without dividuality were showered upon a difference

- Jerry's friendship consolations poulticing jaunting-car

- French bean point of rock Jericho citizenship tincture of benzoin

- medullary at regularity harmonized Brow-ague *meGas*- ay baa ayah arch az'imuth unclouded *lazzward* lazuli

- mushroom music proposer ; sum of five sixes Mrs Mary Jones

PAGE III

Microsoft New Tai Lue

|
-
-
- surcingle Foam of sea
- oyez, oyes oy'er
- nuncupate *three-hundred-&-third*
- dickens the diagnostician burst at mingled sound
- jussive Juno sworn of Science ways lines Lump, chunk ;
- fire-irons fire'plug firing-step Kantians ; kangaroos
- morristube moselle Moresque
- azure laths
-
| Jurassic
-
-
-
- outwork
- nawab Headland Neapolitan-neddy
- Doric shilly-shally arch. obelisk up with pain
- Javanese silicate of limeshaft sun-rays boom-to-the-water flank
- firmament placed singly on the shoots vivacity firry
- mastodon pitted against matriculation groove & ribbon
- asquint cuddy assail so blended shouts a. my ears *molto adagio*
- monogram the passing ordinal clerical Sunday
| jag. point of rock
- Jupiter *solar,*
- ash-ascending scale
- surrebutter windward as determined
- outworn unintentional ultra computation (poet) skyey
- November there are to be great doings here next week Nostradamus
- do the sights do as done before
- July *practical*
- Fragrant-flowered authority
- maffick chromatic semitone *seven's the main* plum&potato premise
- administers manner expense
- madrigals enwind

PAGE IV

Microsoft New Tai Lue

|

-

-

-

- opacity *hesitates* In France
- Nostradamus fades through n. window isthmus of Panama
- doddered the dividing sea, line floating movable dry doings
- jerkin Locomotive crane twist, twitch, upon ears, nerves, SPIN *ning*
- foozled in adjuration all over ship the police forbidden Meat
- mádreporé Bacchante barred with blue Annunciation pictures
- assassinate a murder favour

-

|

-

-

- screamy
- on more than one occasion once is enough by way of exception
- nationalism choir or chancel sail or steam nathless Pit on belly
- distraint
-
-
- Munchausen
- asparagus asbestos treacherously
- Munchausen

| Johannisberger

- Johannisberger
- adenoid superscription nadder, amplification of predicate (Of egg)
- stickleback prose, *cardboard, clay,* *hinge, price, opposition,* *dimb, task*
- oubliette pewit palindromic nodosity, *precursory* sermons
- numismatic numnah dandle the hazel shuttle-shaped somet
-
-
-
- Mephistopheles'
- adscitious - acidulous
- municipalization

Interlude I

2 lines

eMalling f
gler y

u ER O
ery
I
sOU

Interlude II, III

2x2 lines

Tag joistalst
cairn_m over
W_o K
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PAGE V

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 - emfimdeumz
 - yeda plezdrw blukizziz hvdilmuum
 - em hm Hbler zauyil urt denpil yhwz brhmd-revi Lit-rijjit tevvekordeiz
 - hluomt net-nulmemj 'ufilaiht yeliz' ziddemj zom
 - bzkaitirek Rumj-Izni
 -
 | bhlthrudi promdz
 - phl-zauortilit
 - h tusim vejpeltz
 - bilahbz h vlujnuoda
 - ziemj a puupuuc
 - yuut zyhrroy hmt kluy
 - jurtim-aihtit kezdekurh bebed
 - puortilz lurremj tuym mihl daiel kuyz em zklop
 - Ed yuort hbbihl dahd dai utuol ez nuzd blumuomkit bomjimd
 - dai dlii pijhm du 'dhrc' Daili yhz mu reneid em daiulw,
 - du dai monpil uv buzzepru 'revdz'
 - cuuchpollh (yhz'n'd rhojaemj)
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 - Tikipil
 - Viplohluw
 - h bhldekorhrlw refirw kumkild
 - a kaul-zdhmt vul cuuchpollhz a ziqdid remit ob um dai dub phl
 - Daiw yili kumtokdit, pw dai pelt'z phdum
 - lawdanekhrrw yhfit
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- *Yid Zkrilubawrr Ikudumiz*

- du dai zmejjemj dlhkcz

- Likunnimthdeum: 'Blukrhen az a Mhdeumhr Bhlc

- ilhtekhdemj dai rhmdhmf rhfh h povvil uv rhmdhmf phoqedi

- aonhm, rihzd yit hyhcimit du feplhmd piemj fedhr zhbz

- dwbi uv duhtzduur

-

| Em

- Elirhmt,

- mudaemj

- yhz

- ahbbimemj

- bimekerrem uv rukunudeum

- Dai miqd dyu perreum wihlz

- lommemj-reci-pruutw-airr-vlun-h-Dwlhmmuzholoz-Liq dliizrizz

- refemj em dai beda uv khmiz h bizd uv kollhmdz luut- zdukez

- Yaedi poddilvreiz hli thwdeni vreilz um yhln zommw thwz

- dai brhmd yerr pi

- kunbridirw zbuerd

| omtilzetiz uv

- auzd brhmd rihfiz

- rihv lepz hmt fiemz

- Dai htord poddilvrw

- khoziz mu telikd thnhji

- viitemj um dai uodil rihfiz

- prhkc zbud, rihv kolr, buytilw nertiyz, pluym lud, lozd, pudlwdez

- Hbbihlz ihlrw em zblemj em zdumi vloed bhldekorhlrw luziz

- Yid yihdail imkuolhjiz emvikdeumz em zblemj Daim daiw yerd hmt

- vhr ufil pot zkhreiz zu Pultihoq

- kelkriz um hbriz, luziz

- ulmhnimdhrz zkhp

PAGE VII

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-prollllllllllll

-em hjumw uv iq-kunnomekhdeum zalerr kleiz lemj khzdlhdit yultz

-AIRRUUUUUUUUUU YAW DAHHHHHHMC WUO zu noka ZAOTTOB

-em WL numiw ikumunw krekcil krhkc daim khrril dhrcz kruzil blumiputw

-zahrruypuq, diripuq zahtuypuq

-Nw nudail ez rihlmemj du vrw

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| Ionimetiz

-Zokkopoz Yhmdit

-fhkoonkrihmilzobiltiroqizdufihmt dirifezeumvletjijhzaemjnhkaemielum

-Dai tuul ez kruzit Dai premtz tlhym dai pit nhti VHDAIL

-Zumj vul Gihmmei

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-nemtpliisiz nemtpruyil

-piholuklhkw boliit kaizdmodz & zdumirizz kailleiz

-bobbw brhw & Jhrlhmt— Hzdheli zuvd-zauiemj aeli-bolkahzi vokcz

-nht, nht, nht— Ghmi...

-Audumtu

-Bebe'z Puodexoi

-Audir Nhlrem Orrhtorrh kumfilzhdeum DuurBLU Miqd Rivd Pezdlu

-Iniljimd Iniljimkeiz clozaphl

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- Vomrhmt Kefek

- lit ahnnil obaurdilw omtil miy nhmhjinimd

- Nurrwnuuc khlfhfm bhlc dolm aili vul Jhltimahfim Bronpemj Zobbreiz

- Kimdlhr Inbuleon lifefhr Nerдум Lujilz Lt. dherul-nhti

- Whddi Whddha jorrw letji

- dyirfi jliim zaib

-

-

| Pimthrumj Muylh

- zimt vuol nizzhjiz

- lhdail dahm umi

- rizz nihmemj muy

- rihfiz nuli vul rhdil

- E'n zolluomtit pw vlo-lettim biubri

- E mifil reci du yledi yeda ul hluomt hrkuaur yaeka blifimdz krhledw

- yledemj hz em krihl-nemtit kumfilzhdeum ez mu ivvuld nuli

- kumdlurrit brihzoli hmt hm hddedoti du deni dahd ez h piemj yeda

- ihka yult blukiitz vlun hmw udail yult ihka miy yult tevvilz

- ifim ev yi kumzetil ed zhni

- brihzoli uv yahd reiz pidyiim

| Ev hrr yultz hli ixohr

- 'htulhpri molzilw'

- likkunnimt hm iqulkezd

- liborzefirw vollw kufil hmkauledi

- pelt hmt khzaeil Dlhem emfimdul

- Zuri oblejad pw h zauld aiht klizd

- Juum nhw nhlc uodzeti uv luuzdiil'z Ehhuezn Blizz pulil

- Ciib dhpz um rhlji reshlt

- Peddilrw lijliddemj Zuy'z Iokahlezd

- zyhnbw pozemizz

- Pilpeki em Todka

- Jowhmh Ahlleudd

References

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Deakin University

David McCooley

Arigato

Abstract:

As theorised over a century ago by the Russian formalist Viktor Shklovsky, poetry is characterised by its ability to defamiliarise language and challenge the automatism of perception. Defamiliarisation may have, to some extent, fallen out of favour as belonging to a ‘purely’ aesthetic realm. However, even the most ethically or politically committed forms of poetry engage in linguistic stylisation and attempt to revise the way people see the world. As such, defamiliarisation may well be worth reconceptualising as an ethico-political aesthetic function. This prose poem investigates how defamiliarisation can be employed as a poetic technique that reconfigures, or makes strange, ideologies concerning the nation and cross-cultural encounters (metonymically represented by the need to express gratitude when experiencing hospitality). The poem draws attention to the defamiliarising power of prose poetry (as a quasi-narrative form) when attending to cross-cultural encounters, which are always at some level concerned with linguistic confusion and the hospitality that we rely on from others. ‘Arigato’ explores how the stylisation of prose poetry can be employed to figure cross-cultural encounters in new ways.

Biographical note:

David McCooley is an award-winning poet, critic, and editor. His latest poetry collection is *Star Struck* (UWAP, 2016). He is also the author of a critical study on Australian autobiography, *Artful Histories* (1996/2009), which won a NSW Premier’s Literary Award. McCooley is also a musician and composer. His most recent album, in collaboration with the poet Paul Hetherington, is *The Apartment* (2018). He is a professor of writing and literature at Deakin University in Geelong, where he lives.

Keywords:

Prose poetry, defamiliarisation, cross-cultural encounter

Arigato

i

‘Thank you very much’ in Japanese is *arigato gozaimusu*.

ii

M remembered the phrase by linking ‘*arigato*’ with ‘alligator’. One evening, as M and his wife were walking the streets of Kyoto, he saw a cartoon-like picture of a half-alligator, half-robot creature on the side of a vending machine. ‘*Arigato gozaimusu*,’ M said to himself, walking past the brightly lit machine.

iii

Gozaimusu is a polite and archaic form of ‘to be’ and, M supposed, with *arigato*, the phrase meant something like ‘there is thanks’. But M is no linguist, and he was in a foreign country, so he used the phrase without entirely understanding it.

iv

It was only in looking the phrase up on the internet that he saw the spelling included a terminal, and seemingly unspoken, ‘*u*’.

v

While in Kyoto, M was proud to learn ‘*arigato gozaimashita*’, which was a formal way of thanking someone once a process had been completed; when one had entered a restaurant, ordered a meal, eaten it, paid for it, and was now finally leaving, for instance. M was taught this by Mazda, one of his guides, who simplified his name (which was Matsuda) for the tourists, and who had studied linguistics at university.

vi

While in Japan, M used and heard the phrase *arigato gozaimusu* so often that there were nights the words repeated over and over in his head as he fell asleep. ‘*Arigato gozaimusu*,’ he murmured to himself as he crossed the threshold to unconsciousness.

vii

But despite saying the phrase, mantra-like, to himself every day, there were times when, inexplicably, he couldn't remember what to say when he had to thank someone (as one does countless times when being a tourist). He would usually remember the '*arigato*' part, but sometimes nothing at all came to him, and he would simply smile and make small bows, in the hope he was making his gratitude apparent.

viii

At one point, sitting in an Italian restaurant called Napoli, he felt the lack of the phrase so intently that he wondered if it was a sign of imminent dementia. 'Your father had a poor memory when he got older,' M's wife suggested helpfully. 'He always had a poor memory,' M said. 'Perhaps that was because he didn't pay enough attention to things,' M's wife said.

ix

'*Arigato gozaimashita*,' M said to his wife or to no-one, once they had paid the bill and were outside the restaurant.

x

Later, M remembered how his father had once told a story about swimming in a crocodile-infested river in Papua New Guinea. His father was in a foreign country and had perhaps not followed, or understood, some unspoken rule.

xi

In Papua New Guinea there are hundreds of languages, and therefore presumably hundreds of ways to give thanks.

Independent scholar

Meredith Wattison

Everything must go

Abstract:

Working from the opening Marcel Proust quote for context – and with COVID-19 2020-2021 as the ‘certain period’, when I had written little, though read intensely – I sold my books for others to read (see poem 1), my relationship with literature renewed. These short poems are kindled by the work of two contrasting masters of the intense exquisite moment, Proust and D.H. Lawrence. ‘No wonder Lawrence hated Proust! For a poet born in the mining Midlands there can be no *recherche du temps perdu* behind soundproof walls while the present goes by to muffled drums outside’ (Carswell, 2008, p. 39). This raises the question – how does the artist (I draw from Helen Garner and Judith Beveridge in poem 2), react to, acknowledge and record COVID-19? By placing the experiential, physical and intellectual presence of Lawrence in Thirroul in 2021 (his novel *Kangaroo* written there in 1922), also the year of Proust’s death, I as reader acknowledge their presence and the similar ‘now’ their past knew as the influenza pandemic. The diminishing line count is intended to imply compression, a reductive impressionism, focusing on the phenomenon of ‘COVID time’, the ‘new ‘shifting twilight’ normal’. The procession of naked children (poem 3) is actual, though seems utopian, echoing both Lawrence’s daily bathing at Thirroul and Proust’s Albertine at Balbec.

Biographical note:

Meredith Wattison, born 1963, is a poet and essayist; her 7 books of poetry are *Psyche’s Circus* (Poetry Australia, 1989), *Judith’s Do* (Penguin Australia, 1996), *Fishwife*, *The Nihilist Line* (Five Islands Press, 2001, 2003), *Basket of Sunlight, terra bravura* (shortlisted for the 2016 Kenneth Slessor Prize) and *The Munchian O* (recommended ABR’s Books of The Year 2020) (Puncher & Wattmann, 2007, 2015, 2020). Her work has appeared in *Cordite*, *Rabbit*, *Plumwood Mountain*, *Contemporary Australian Feminist Poetry*, *Contemporary Australian Poetry*, *ABR*, *The Anthology of Australian Prose Poetry* and more. She was awarded the 2017 Gwen Harwood Poetry Prize. Her essay ‘Ambivalence - the afterlife of Patrick White, 1990-2020’ was commended in the 2020 Calibre Prize.

Keywords: Books, poetry, Proust, D.H. Lawrence, COVID-19

EVERYTHING MUST GO

Nor is this all. A thing which we saw, a book which we read at a certain period does not merely remain for ever conjoined to what existed then around us; it remains also faithfully united to what we ourselves then were and thereafter it can be handled only by the sensibility, the personality that were then ours.

– Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*, p. 285

1. DRUMMING

Culling my bookshelves
I sit on a drummer's stool,
the perfect height
as I come to the orange Penguins;
I reread them through my hands.
Charities declined them; no space.
My hardline – to keep (two), to environmentally throw
(a battered, bittered few), to sell (most) to Berkelouw.
Leo and Henry gently sort as I have to walk away,
find a pensive corner (where capacity extends to six)
in a dim café, a small sanitised table, sweet coffee. Sold and bought.
Three IKEA bags full. (repeat next week)

2. I THINK OF PROUST'S PAN OF MILK'S MAGNOLIAS / SAILS

It's been like walking into
an arcade with fire alarms blaring,
a firetruck outside, idling, garbling, flashing,
a new café being fitted out has thrown off sparks.
Helen wrote that my COVID plan (to read all of Proust)
was 'the perfect solution' (she has endured the death of a dog and accepted another)
and Judith has returned to the piano
for three hours a day. I walk my dog at dawn
for the shifting twilight, that strange fading indigo,
the nil, its cancelling reveal, our tender,
freeform orbit. I want this poem to barely touch the page.

3. *D.H. LAWRENCE'S HAT BLEW INTO THE SEA HERE IN 1922*

His beach at Thirroul has collapsed under recent pounding waves,
it is mesh fenced. A man slips through to see, I call out,
he says, 'I'm only going this far'.

I sit along the coast on an almost empty beach; it is cold,
a naked little girl, joyously defiant runs/skips past me, she wears
sunglasses, each lens a plastic daisy, we say hi, her sister follows.

That stale question,

'What would you say to your child-self?', is answered.

Her little brother carried by her mother
looks like Ed Sheeran, her father lingers
wringing their clothes.

References

Carswell. C. (2008). *D. H. Lawrence: The Savage Pilgrimage*, Wordsworth Editions.

Proust, M. (1999). *Time Regained, In Search of Lost Time*. Volume VI. Modern Library Classics.

RMIT University

Emilie Collyer

Three Poems: Yellow is complicated, At the top of the hill, reckoning with

Abstract:

In my creative practice research project (PhD) I am investigating, among other things, community of practice: how writers ‘read’ each other’s texts and place themselves in relationship to each other. These three poems are written in response to texts by writers from my community of practice. They use the source texts to generate new ways of writing. The poems act to demonstrate how poetry can function as a method of qualitative inquiry. That is, the poems are ‘research-in-action’ that reveal ‘findings’ about the research question (of how writers ‘read’ each other and position themselves). Writing poetic responses to written texts, incorporating scholarly research techniques – such as referencing – and literary techniques – such as intertextuality – contributes to a growing body of research about using poetry as a research tool, and new uses for poetry as both scholarly and creative output. These three poems also demonstrate how writing practice can evolve within a research setting. They are new in form for me and are part of my ongoing feminist writing practice explorations into formal innovation. They exemplify how practice-led research can lead to shifts in practice for an experienced writing practitioner. This may be valuable for other writers and for those interested in teaching and researching creative practice as an example of a method in action.

Biographical note:

Emilie Collyer lives in Australia on Wurundjeri Country where she writes poetry, plays and prose. Her writing has appeared most recently in *Stilts*, *Axon*, *TEXT*, *Meanjin*, *Witness Performance*, *Cordite*, and *Rabbit*, and in 2021 she guest-edited *Teesta Review: A Journal of Poetry* (India). She is the author of the illustrated poetry book *Your Looking Eyes*. Collyer’s award-winning plays include *Contest*, *Dream Home* and *The Good Girl*, which has had multiple international productions. She is currently a PhD candidate at RMIT, researching feminist creative practice.

Keywords:

Feminist writing practice, intertextuality, referencing, poetry as research method

Yellow is complicated [1]

A response to 'Yellow City' by Ellena Savage

What flavour of yellow?
Wattle sneeze or daffodil cheer,
lemon tang pastel breeze hi-vis beacon.

The author, on a train, writes: 'Brilliant
light. The yellow of the flowers is violent'.ⁱ
She complicates yellow.

She walks a specific city,
writes of the docks, of 'Lisbon's big
bridge, red and hung'.ⁱⁱ

Hung hangs, evokes other cities
red with memory, all over
the world,

every brick shade of
wall that holds:
'things my body has buried'.ⁱⁱⁱ

Yellow is complicated. The author
is telling a past story: an assault; a trauma,
and a present attempt to uncover:

'The verdict of the trial that I never
found out'.^{iv} She trawls childhood,
theory, history. Quotes ping on memory,

trauma, body. Reading, I join
the game. I have been
where the flowers are violent –

Ringwood house; Delhi park;
Mont Albert train station; Melbourne Cricket Ground;
the list goes on.

Words of others, scrawled on walls
echo in this city:
'Is it even necessary to tell that story?'

Haven't we heard enough?'^v The city
(a city, not this city, but of course this city)
is a: 'constellation of crime scenes'.^{vi}

Cities full of memories, things done
to (often, mostly, not always) female bodies:
'She was positioned awkwardly,

defying gravity'.^{vii} Tales
and accounts, counting,
accounting:

'more than one in ten women
have been sexually assaulted
before they turn fifteen.'^{viii}

Mouths trying to shape
what's held in one body:
'I had a scare one night.'^{ix}

'I'll do anything,
just please don't hurt me.'^x
'So many of them were terrified,

submitting to intercourse
to avoid the punches or cuts
that, ironically,

would have helped them
secure a conviction.'^{xi}
How stories are told:

'she'd screamed
and kicked and escaped.'^{xii}
Whose bodies are spoken:

'This is not about me,
or only me, my me-ness.'^{xiii}
And whose are not;

'The majority of victims↓
never report
to police.'^{xiv}

Who never gets to speak
of what happened
at all.

I'm in the yellow city,
walking through
the author's words,

listening,
turning back,
retracing steps,

what mark
is made by
the tread of her feet?

This city is more
than an account of memory.
This city, in this account,

is a place where a writer
has gone
'to write an essay'.^{xv}

In French, *essayer*
is 'to try' – her
feet, memory, words

want to make
flesh, sentences an anchor
in the sea of statistics.

The author recounts:
one of the men
'corroborated [her] testimony.

He was not charged.^{xvi}
The other
'was prosecuted –

given a suspended sentence –
appealed the sentence –

sentence was annulled.^{'xvii}

Her stay in the city
opens more wounds:
'*The horror, horror,*

horror.^{'xviii} Ends empty:
'*Useless. Nothing.*^{'xix}
And hers is a body

with some affluence,
means,
agency.

The author leads me:
'dodging the street dealers,^{'xx}
past 'blonde apartments' and

'dense green hills
strewn with wild
yellow flowers.'^{'xxi}

How many stories
lie muffled
under this ground?

Rumble under
train lines, swim deep
in '*the sparkling beaches.*^{'xxii}

Why do some
get a witness
and others – ?

Dust settles.

I am not in a yellow city.
I am in a room,
dirty window,

heater on,
desk crowded,
scribbled notes,

reaching deep
to wrestle,
translate word

by slow word
onto a white screen.
Eyes flick

to tree tops,
grey sky through
the smudged glass.

Whisper brush
soft cardboard cover.
This book. Tread

of the author's feet
given a shape that
can be held.

Fingers trace stress lines
taut between trauma,
memory, voice,

witness, words.
Whose have value,
are stepped out, spoken,

and who decides
what they
are worth?

reckoning with [2]

reading *The Thinking Woman* after reading *Talkin' Up To The White Woman* while being a white woman who tries to be a thinking

watching Distinguished Professor Moreton-Robinson on a small screen up close in my winter study nook she is being interviewed about her seminal book 20 years on I have only just

women van Loon interviews in this book are distant from me – geography and status – blue light emanates from their stars transmitted via

warm-blood invitation her soft uttering about how she came to a decision early on: ‘I really wanted to learn about that white knowledge’ⁱ because she didn’t understand it was not part

seriousness of their intellectual endeavours the deciding from early on to make a mark in the world and the not easy sometimes troubling ways in which

framing her scholarship her years of thinking and writing to put a shape around an experience of being in the world that has largely been invisible to

there is place are places in *The Thinking Woman* memories of homes and share houses and ‘a row of majestic brownstones in a beautiful part of Brooklyn’ⁱⁱ that evokes a certain

Moreton-Robinson is steeped in place, a Goenpul woman of the Quandamooka people in Moreton Bay and I don’t know what descriptor my family would use to ascribe our

some ambivalence van Loon recounts answering a question at a writers’ festival: ‘When I think of home I don’t think of a physical or a geographical place.’ⁱⁱⁱ

aspects of her scholarship as identified by the (white) interviewer Fiona Nichol where ‘the subject position ‘middle class white woman’ became visible as a research problem’^{iv}

in conversation with Hustvedt, van Loon is in conversation with Freud and Winnicott, with Einstein and children and psychoanalysis, with novels and art and fame and

my hasty scrawled notes (before I read the transcript): *I think she said ‘I am not an individual’* and I write: *whereas all I am is an individual* and my pen stops as if in shock as if

can’t help being intimidated by van Loon’s access to these famous thinking women and the front the confidence the gall to

that a western sense of value comes from putting something into the world that wasn’t there before this urgency to make a mark to be

debate important issues with deep thinking women who have dedicated their lives to slow deep unanswerable: 'Like what makes one poor?'^v

she uses the term Westphalian which I had not heard of the notion of sovereignty passed from god to king very different from Indigenous

van Loon contextualises the Work chapter with family history including her maternal grandmother who worked in a stenographer's office (and my maternal grandmother did too)

her fondness for Foucault but his limits of thought where 'power is always restricted to the human production of it'^{vi} empiric colonial not equipped to

working woman's life of constant effort professional domestic labour limitations too how of all the women van Loon interviewed only one is taken seriously as a Philosopher by

in the same train of thought her grandfather 'an amazing philosopher'^{vii} who encouraged her to read 'white fellas' ideas'^{viii} so that some understanding might

in which women have long been 'buried, literally and metaphorically'^{ix} so there is undoing at so many levels of

listening to Moreton-Robinson in conversation with a white woman her friend and the warmth of their relationship makes it easier for me to absorb her ideas than

this binary way I have of presenting text like a conversation or an argument wary not to fall into generalisations as to what is worthwhile whose knowledge which way of

framed for me in a way a concession to white sensitivity the last few notes I make *she knows what she knows because of the country she comes*

something about van Loon's account of family violence her own personal story and the way she writes like diamond carving precise words which allow the reader to

if I don't know what country I am from how can I know anything

vulnerable and exposing when a bruised face from a dental procedure while on a public bus makes her self-conscious about how it still

doesn't evoke guilt or hopelessness but questioning and at the end Moreton-Robinson queries the word ally preferring to think of what is needed as being in good relations

honesty with which she writes of her friend who died and I think about close friendships with women I've had that have fractured slowly almost softly for no apparent

At the top of the hill [3]

Something about this book
is made for the floor,
cup of tea on the rickety stand
venetians flicked to coax
afternoon sun.

I'm thrown reverse –
that back fence, Doc Marten
mascara time of growing up
Australian in the 80s, the
suburbs small our
bug-eyed dreams about a world
that was so far away.

Sara Ahmed (not the author
of this book) writes about
feminist companion texts,ⁱ
in my notes I find:

*from where did I
learn feminism?
what are my
feminist companion
texts? who are
the role models
I inherited from?*

Peering in my
literary rear-view
mirror I find
my childhood role model
Trixie Belden.
Am I a
Thinking Woman?

My partner says
I think too much,
I seek ways of knowing
every Myers Briggs test
shows me as equal

T(hinking) and F(eeling),
I am a Gemini,
a third and youngest child,
in psycho-analytic terms
more neurotic
than hysteric.

The author's
body thrums
flying a bike down
dead-steep hills. She
falls in love with
a slow-prick release
etched over time
and geography.

She writes of skin itch
closeness
with a friend
who bounces in
and out of self-destruction;
stark-told tale of
home violence and the
author as child, voiceless
at a front door as cops

walk away. Bloodied
threads pull me in.
Paper cuts on pages
otherwise orderly
with argument and
measured pace. I put
the most yellow tags
in the Friendship chapter.

Rosi Braidotti
on dependence,
interconnectedness,ⁱⁱ
friends that stain
us, Eros burns bright
and bursts (Kayo, Kellie,

Susan, Louise),
girl-flesh
bone-deep
infatuations
that still
ache in how much
I needed –

Am I looking
for a friend,
on the floor,
in the drowsy inside
winter drift? The author
feels more like a
sister, like mine:

slow determined
build an intellectual
career, a coolness
I associate with
stamina and the
ability to rise for alarm
clocks or children
every day.

My mother emails
to ask what books
she should recommend
for her book group

– she has always read,
adamant she is ‘not creative’
worked hard and young
at night school
to be an accountant
only woman in her class,
ran a business for forty years,
shy about intellectual things –

she tells me how
at the last one, her
friend – a teacher – praised

her for leading it well.

The small girl
who lives inside her
is now in my care,
her watchful eyes
and worry she
won't know
the right thing
to say. We are at

the top of a hill,
having weaved
through bitumen
back streets and
past plum spattered
footpaths, waiting,
sweat on skin
for the other girls to come.

Notes

[1] Notes from 'Yellow is Complicated'

- i. Ellena Savage, *Blueberries*, p. 38.
- ii. Savage, p. 2
- iii. Savage, p. 29.
- iv. Savage, p. 13.
- v. Meera Atkinson, *Traumata*, p. 1.
- vi. Bri Lee, *Eggshell Skull*, p. 3.
- vii. Maria Tumarkin, *Axiomatic*, p. 3.
- viii. Lee, p. 40.
- ix. Savage, p. 17.
- x. Savage, p. 16.
- xi. Lee, p. 44.
- xii. Lee, p. 45.
- xiii. Atkinson, p. 2.
- xiv. Nicole Precel, Rachael Dexter & Eleanor Marsh, 'Are we failing victims of sexual violence?' The article states that of an estimated figure of 'Australian adults [who] had experienced sexual violence ... between 180,000 and 290,000' only '5,837 victims across Australia reported sexual violence to police in 2017, according to the ABS Victims of Crime report.'
- xv. Savage, p. 32.
- xvi. Savage, p. 39.
- xvii. Savage, p. 39.

- xviii. Savage, p. 39.
- xix. Savage, p. 40.
- xx. Savage, p. 22.
- xxi. Savage, p. 31.
- xxii. Savage, p. 33.

[2] Notes from 'reckoning with'

- i. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, 'Broadly Speaking: Aileen Moreton-Robinson: 20th Anniversary of Talkin' Up to the White Woman.' Interviewed by Fiona Nichol, p. 3.
- ii. Where Siri Hustvedt lives: Julienne van Loon, *The Thinking Woman*, p. 47.
- iii. van Loon, p. 36.
- iv. Moreton-Robinson, p. 3.
- v. van Loon, p. 82.
- vi. Moreton-Robinson, p. 8.
- vii. Moreton-Robinson, p. 8.
- viii. Moreton-Robinson, p. 8.
- ix. van Loon, p. 105.

[3] Notes from 'At the top of the hill'

- i. Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, p. 16.
- ii. van Loon, *The Thinking Woman*, p. 190.

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Deakin University

Antonia Pont

Between ekphrasis and memoir: 2 ambiguating poems

Abstract:

Ekphrasis ‘address[es] – and sometimes challenge[s] – the great divide between spatial and temporal experience’ (Hirsch, 2014, p. 196). Traditional ekphrasis is verbal description of (encounters with) a haptic/visual object. Memoir involves articulating in words both the *contents* of remembered experience and the *experience* of remembering. This pair of poems takes a strictly ekphrastic artefact and juxtaposes it with an autobiographical, ‘situated’ poetic artefact. Thus counterpointed, the definitions of each, as ostensibly straightforward ekphrasis or memoir, become unstable. Attempts to disambiguate the modes of pure ekphrasis or detailed memoir falter at a close reading of the actual techniques mobilised in each case. As Kaplan (2009) notes, citing Corn, ‘many contemporary examples of ekphrasis are broader and ‘tend to unite ekphrasis with the autobiographical tradition’’ (n.p.). Adding this to Hirsch’s observation (above), we argue that this pair of auto-ekphrastic poems tests and complicates the boundaries between these modes, to further query: what constitutes the representational per se? As a practice-led inquiry into memory’s relation to ‘current’ experience, it returns the creative writer (or critic) to the philosophical contention that we dwell almost-exclusively in the representational, whether artwork or life – but also that art-making (as *process*) might permit glimpses of what subtends this register.

Biographical Note:

Antonia Pont is Senior Lecturer in Writing, Literature and Culture at Deakin University, Australia. She publishes poetry, essays and scholarly works. Her research concerns time, transformation, ethical capacity, stability, futurity and practising. She is the founder of Vijnana Yoga Australia, where she continues to practise, teach and lead retreats. Her collection of poetry *You Will Not Know in Advance What You’ll Feel* (2019) was published with Rabbit Poets Series and shortlisted for the Mary Gilmore Award (2020). She is author of *A Philosophy of Practising with Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021) and co-author of *Practising with Deleuze* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

Keywords: Memoir, auto-ekphrastic poetry, water, climate change, place

rising to speech a peacock firmament
adjusting its circumferential pose in the cadence of
 sedated, complacent clocks

gosh. gosh. this rare and pulled-thin night
of recent birth
 (its careless injuries) and
relinquishing.

 again – a high marriage here
far from everywhere and right up close
to unknowing's extravagant and ancient perfume.
I walk atop this porcelain orchestra

to accompany beginnings (hence endings)
 fleshy and intangible.

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Queensland University of Technology

Jarad Bruinstroop

Two figures

Abstract:

While ekphrasis is a well-studied poetic mode, the phenomenon of poets including the artist's biography in their ekphrases has not yet been significantly theorised. 'Two Figures' is an example of a sub-mode of ekphrasis for which I have coined the term 'biographical ekphrasis': a poem which explores the nexus between the artist's life and the artwork and seeks to complicate the straightforward idea of ekphrasis as a simple rendering of an artwork in text.

This practice-led work of poetry responds to the painting *Two Figures* (1953) by twentieth-century gay painter Francis Bacon, by adopting the artist's voice and including details of his relationship with his then lover, Peter Lacy. 'Two Figures' contributes to new knowledge on two counts. The first is that it foregrounds and metapoetically comments on its status as an example of the newly-identified mode, biographical ekphrasis. The second is that, as part of a larger project in which I explore nostalgia for the pre-AIDS crisis lives of twentieth-century gay male artists, 'Two Figures' helps to determine the affordances and characteristics of this increasingly popular poetic mode.

'Two Figures' was written as part of the creative artefact of my doctoral studies at QUT. This poem belongs to a broader manuscript which was runner-up in the Thomas Shapcott Poetry Prize; a number of other poems from this manuscript have been published in leading Australian journals such as *Meanjin* and *Overland*.

Biographical note:

Jarad Bruinstroop is a poet, PhD candidate and sessional academic at QUT. His work has appeared in *Meanjin*, *Overland*, *Rabbit*, and elsewhere. He was the runner up in the 2021 Thomas Shapcott Poetry Prize. @jbruinstroop

Keywords: Biographical ekphrasis, Francis Bacon

Two Figures

after Francis Bacon's Two Figures (1953)

If you want me to move with you
into the garage off the motorway
you'd better give me the bullwhip
& a slug of champagne.

You know I can't love you
any other way than desperate
& cleaned-out on the High Street
after you've fled

in a taxi bound for Tangier.

You beast, you brute, play me
a tune on the fag-end piano
& I'll bootblack my hair & roll
on the floor like a newborn
in a pile of straw.

If you want me up on stage
in front of my friends
you'd better give me a push
down the piss-stench stairs
into the dustbins

or a shove
through a plate-glass window
so my eye is slashed
to ribbons.

Call Mother. Tell her,
Daughter is coming to collect
her ten quid & fishnets.

If you want me only
after he's had me,
send a telegram.

I'll be up early
either way. I never bruise.

I'm talking bollocks.

Queensland University of Technology

Ella Jeffery

The bonsai keeper's daughter

Abstract:

Suburban gardens are designed as sites of domestic leisure; private arenas in which the homeliness of indoor domestic space extends into the natural world, where plants, animals and landscapes are tamed or restructured to produce a space for human pleasure. This poem transforms the garden into a contested, antagonistic site in which concerns about possession, inheritance and control are negotiated by the poem's speaker. This practice-led poetic work is part of a broader suite of poems that examine how the lyric poem can exaggerate the *unheimlich* qualities of domestic space in contemporary Australia. The persona poem is a form that allows a distinct character to emerge in the poem, and in 'The bonsai keeper's daughter' the nameless speaker, defined only by her relationship to her father, rejects her father's controlling approach to the garden but remains trapped by it. Her highly theatrical language of violence and submission serves to heighten the artificiality of the garden, which is largely used to stage familial antagonism rather than as the location of leisure, pleasure or engagement with the natural world. This poem is part of a work-in-progress titled *Year of Two Winters*, a poetry collection examining housing insecurity and unhomeliness in contemporary Australia, which has been awarded the prestigious Mick Dark Flagship Fellowship for Environmental Writing and was the recipient of a place in Bundanon Trust's Artist-in-Residence Program in 2021. Other poems from the manuscript have been published in high quality national literary journals.

Biographical note:

Ella Jeffery is a poet and editor. Her debut collection of poems, *Dead Bolt*, won the Puncher & Wattmann Prize for a First Book of Poems, the Anne Elder Award and was shortlisted for the Mary Gilmore Award. Her poetry has been published widely in journals and anthologies and she holds a PhD from Queensland University of Technology where she is currently a lecturer in creative writing.

Keywords: Lyric poetry, domestic space, persona poem, *unheimlich*

The bonsai keeper's daughter

My father kept bonsai like some men
keep dogs. Each one
a bristling prizewinner.

Nothing was so clean as his cuts.
How the plant learned what job
it had to do, tripwired
in anodised copper, branches pulled back
like triggers.

I learned early that while they're easy
to prune, it takes many years
to grow them back.

I'm no dictator with a pair of clippers.
Since he has gone I have grown
to love plants, their steady work ethic.
Now birds of paradise unflick
their flimsy coloured blades
and the trees have magnified. I have forgotten
all their names.

These days light barely grazes the yard
and holly owns my father's shed,
where bonsai curl
like children in the dark.

Most afternoons I stand here
among the little thistles as schoolkids
sway home with their parents
and my eyes like a set of secateurs
cut from face to face.

University of Adelaide

Jill Jones

Sky ground 2020

Abstract:

This sequence is a refiguring of writing as fieldwork and is based on daily notes of clouds, other sky and weather flow, animal and human movements, plus personal reflections. The particular context is 2020 and, as both foreground and background, the impacts of Covid-19 as well as the ongoing climate disaster. The addition of news reportage embeds in the text another sense of global flow and disturbance. My approach experiments with fresh compositional strategies and thematic junctures, to open new avenues for generative poetry effects via a broad eco-poetic framing. Though the work clearly takes a cue from older traditions of environmental writing (eg. Dorothy Wordsworth, Thoreau), it focuses this through the 21st century's particular complexities of global flow as well as the local (drawing on Ursula Heise's eco-cosmopolitanism). The sequence enacts how, while flows of atmospheres/weathers, as well as human-induced effects, are a significant part of what determines movement of clouds, birds, and other aerial bodies, the crossings of stars, planets, birds, and the ground, do not respect human boundaries. On the other hand, there is a resonance with Southern Theory (Raewyn Connell), in that this piece, also fixes its observational and compositional node in the global South.

Biographical note:

Jill Jones' recent books include *Wild Curious Air*, winner of the 2021 Wesley Michel Wright Poetry Prize, *A History of What I'll Become*, shortlisted for the 2021 Kenneth Slessor Poetry Prize, and *Viva the Real*, shortlisted for the 2019 Prime Minister's Literary Awards and the 2020 John Bray Award. She won the 2015 Victorian Premier's Prize for Poetry for *The Beautiful Anxiety*. An entry on her work is included in the current edition of *The Oxford Companion to Modern Poetry in English*. She is a member of the J.M. Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice, University of Adelaide.

Keywords: Clouds, 2020, fieldwork, Adelaide, eco-cosmopolitanism

Sky Ground 2020

And some days are just cloud thought

2nd October 10.51 am

When you want a cloud and there isn't one
There's almost one hazing from the south-east
Will the wind bring it to me?
Can we take it all back from this weird spring?

There's some old jazz on the radio
shadows on the wall next door
the sound of work

Total cases 34,332,476.

Total deaths 1,023,708.

9.50pm

It's still 27 degrees outside
the full moon's high and clear
Its light creates a halo in the clouds just below
To the right is Mars
Even covered it glows red
and shimmers a little

The phone app cannot find
the star we're looking at
But there it is! Hello, star!

Language is not this capacious

9th October 1.13pm

The high blue is clear a haze assembles
to the north east air trembles a little
then some more

The 3rd movement of Beethoven's String Quartet No 15
(in A Minor, Op 132)
floats
through the house *molto adagio Heiliger Dank gesang ...*

Bird noise begins to swell again

An American poet wins the Nobel Prize for literature.
Ania Walwicz is announced dead.

12.25am

Night is not a comfort
but simply beautiful
even when I shiver

I'm fashioned of other dust
also unmeasurable
An old blossom or tendril

There's the sound of a helicopter
heading towards the hills

Night is a constancy even while it changes

13th October 12.10pm

A bright hazy blue
Almost a cloud

Is a cloud a thing?
Can it be named?

I'm a sham or a hoax
everywhere I am
even if I could fly

Someone's rooster is crowing across the rail

There's been a boom in weddings in China
with 600,000 couples marrying in the
'golden week' holiday

A cloudy night
No Mars

To be neither a subject nor object of clouds

15th October 9.45am

All the sky is grey
as though that's the sky's colour always

and a fine wind cools
the previous hot day and night
the very bones of the house

10.30pm

Tonight Mars is still there
Sirius is clear
but streaky clouds cross the dark as well

Hundreds of protesters demonstrate in Bangkok
in defiance of a ban on anti-government action.

The wind wishes around me
cooling the air further

The sky shifts like my opinions

17th October 2.25pm

At Windy Point

high small clumps of cumulus cloud
a haze over the whole Adelaide plain and the gulf
There's one container ship on the horizon
A dragon fly is diving about

Jacinda Ardern is re-elected PM in New Zealand.

The ISS flies over us tonight
The planet is us when we die
shell-like an in-breath consecrated to each eon
its wild flowers its nightmares
and meadows its perimeters of light the limits of ice
the wider gulf smoke wanting its fire

I'm staring at time, and am moved by it

19th October 12.08pm

It's almost clear straight above a waft of cloud here
and there a floating opaque thought

Air fills with bird flight and call
wattle bird blackbird honeyeater

It's cold still inside
but summer's beginning
to unfold in the outside air

How did all this fruit get here?
Seeds as sailors?

My eyes are becoming shambolic
I walk in clouds

Measurement seems immeasurable
or I don't have the instruments for it
even here at ground level

3,345 new daily deaths.

There are names for clouds but not identities

22nd October 4.43pm

Overcast
Though I am not cast down
The temperature tries to rise
to expectations
So do I
We both fail just a little

Poland rules abortion due to foetal defects
is unconstitutional.

Cloud shapes resemble cloud shapes

23rd October 4.45pm

Heavy and drifting
grey and white heading north
to the west is a small window of pale blue
Most of the morning the new magpie family
explore the back yard

Edward Snowden is granted permanent
residency in Russia.

Each time the temperature drops

a shiver goes through the world
Or only here in the yard in another yard
through this place on the plain
Yet people do shiver everywhere

Shape isn't what it looks like, even what it seems

24th October 3.32pm

Again overcast rain in the morning
clouds of mixed type and shade griefs
and paler colours there's a crack
to the north deeper blue is there above

There has been flooding (mild)
in other parts of the state

The NASA asteroid probe picked up so much
material it is shedding the extra into space.

Perhaps I can shed my extras
into space

What space is being brought here, local, heavenly, wind blown?

27th October 5.45pm

Rain is steady and clouds
crowd the sky to the west
the sun's light is visible through
the white higher up
I can feel it almost a sun shower

Water exists on the moon, scientists confirm.
An unambiguous signature of H₂O has been
detected at high altitudes towards the moon's
south pole.

I am thirsty and think of
the water up there
All the water we have
The earth wobbles in its parallax

'Dumbfound your add up' says

the spam email.

Earth – this little migrant!

31st October 12.57pm

Two small raptors fly low under
pale clouded sky towards a line of trees
to the south
The commercial trappings of All Hallow's Eve
are draped over gates and fences
so many entrances

Anastasia Palaszczuk is re-elected Premier
in Queensland, the first woman to win three
consecutive terms in Australia.

Do I have a definition or am I a cloud?

1st November 12.56pm

A light band of cumulus over the hills
The hissing of almost-summer lawns
A game at the tennis centre
Dogs running on the oval
A cool breeze reminding me
that winter's still touching us
late in leaving this year

10pm

Mars is high over the back of the house
and almost directly opposite
but lower down is a bright star named Hadar
in the Large Magellanic Cloud
It's supposed to be clear but seems hazy to me

You say a 'rocket' is flying over
according to the star finder app
but we can't see it And 'rocket'
doesn't seem either right or a 'good idea'

Global seismic activity level today was moderate.
Two 5+ magnitude earthquakes were registered,
one in the Banda Sea, Indonesia, and one in Costa Rica.

Lines of perspective are not lines

5th November 1.03 pm

Every day has been overcast
I'm burning all the time sheets
I'll perform as I please like clouds and air

5.30pm

A little blue sneaks in
So does the sun for a while

Australia's domestic beef industry sales increase
by 30% during COVID lockdown.

Is a cloud a question?

7th November 5.05pm

As blue as blue
Not just a kind of blue
And so high even in late afternoon

Italy registers 37,809 new infections in the past 24 hours.

Last year was the old world
but does the sky care?

Does the sun undermine sadness?

8th November 3.45pm

To the east and south horsetails beginning
Butterflies and bees everywhere
In the street I'm as invisible
as air
as an old woman

8.50pm

Mars again strong and clear to the east north-east
All that light shimmering down to here
a suburb of Adelaide

While we put out the bins
Biden and Harris win

Each day, each wave is another rehearsal

9th November 9.52am

I miss my bus head for the train
Slightly hazy but mostly blue and hot

Celebration of the 80th birthday of John Coetzee
in the Elder Hall
John reads from *Diary of a Bad Year* about avian flu
and boredom

Is there too much imagination?

11th November 5.15 am

Sky's full of lightning
flashes behind clouds
and trees to the south

Thunder is enormous
Think back to 'Thunder, Perfect Mind':
'I am the name of the sound
and the sound of the name'

Vanuatu records its first case of coronavirus

Clouds, undecided as states

18th November 10.14pm

Outside it's now colder in the dark after a hot day
and above see! the fingernail moon
a shimmer in the hazy night's air
Most of the sky is clouded
Mars is nowhere to be seen

South Australia is now under a six-day lockdown.

I can't walk my dog if I had one

I'm too close to the ground

23rd November 12.05pm

Skinny cloud in all directions floating
in a kind of happy blue

China launches Chang'e-5 mission
to bring back rocks from the moon.

Blue can be too much

26th November 7.16pm

High blue becoming veiled
in the north
A blackbird sits on the roof
and sings me into home
A wattle bird on the grevillea
knows I'm there waits
then flies off

Maradona is dead.

Looking sometimes makes me dizzy

30th November 8pm

There's the sound of rain
in the ceaseless sky
It's been overcast all day

Mysterious silver monolith found
in Utah desert disappears.

And the rain is spectral – spirit without form

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Queensland University of Technology

Rebecca Jessen

All year long

Abstract:

Poets are increasingly called upon to respond to ecological crises such as the devastating 2019-2020 Australian bushfires and floods. The burgeoning body of Australian ecopoetry is helping to explore the impact of these crises on humans, animals and the environment. Poets such as Graeme Miles and John Kinsella have sought to explore the cataclysm caused by human induced climate change, particularly the effect of bushfires in Australia. 'All year long' is a practice-led work of poetry that explores the human impact of the 2019-2020 bushfires in Australia. Most ecopoetry has an activist dimension and focuses on activist notions of exploring human crisis. Rather than focusing on the ecological impact of the bushfires, 'All year long' examines the role of mass media in communicating and understanding a phenomenon as complex as climate change. This poem critiques the spread of misinformation on social media platforms and examines the effect it can have on individuals and their understanding of the crisis. 'All year long' was written as part of my PhD studies. This poem belongs to a broader manuscript, with a number of the poems recently published in leading Australian journals such as *Meanjin*, *Southerly*, *Griffith Review* and *Cordite Poetry Review*.

Biographical note:

Rebecca Jessen is an award-winning poet whose writing has been published widely in journals including *Overland*, *Meanjin*, *Rabbit Poetry Journal*, *Australian Poetry Journal*, *Going Down Swinging*, *The Lifted Brow*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Verity La* and *Voiceworks*. She is the author of the verse novel *Gap* (UQP, 2014) and poetry collection, *Ask Me About the Future* (UQP, 2021), the latter of which was shortlisted for the Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry in the NSW Premier's Literary Awards.

Keywords:

Ecopoetry, climate change, Australian bushfires, misinformation

all year long

seasons turn at the wrong time
it's snowing in summer
ash-topped peaks
the triple cream brie du jour
magpies swoop
black leaves fall from the sky
while mum lights up
the Warragamba dam contaminated
like her newsfeed
it's a 1998 Sydney Water throwback
to cryptosporidium and giardia
boil water alerts

seasons turn
at the wrong time
mind the magpies
swooping while mum lights up today's news
ringing in the decade like it's Y2K
this new year
no system glitch will fix
soon we'll run out
of alternatives to apocalyptic

today's news is the new normal
get on the beers
now trending
there's a lot to organise
before you die

Queensland University of Technology

Mindy Gill

August in the thirteenth

Abstract:

Ecopoetry is defined by its strong ethical stance towards the natural world and a sense of societal responsibility towards ecological crises in the late Anthropocene. Much ecocritical poetry focusses on the impact of climate change on the natural world through phenomena such as coral bleaching and mass extinction events, placing the more-than-human world at the core of its focus. This practice-led work of poetry engages with the climate crisis through the confessional lyric mode, focussing its attention instead on human behaviour, anthropocentrism and indifference. In this poem, environmental crises – in this case, the 2018 European heatwave – becomes secondary to, and a metaphor for, the speaker’s reflections on a perilous romantic relationship. As a result, the poem foregoes the characteristic focus on the natural world of ecopoetry, and instead aims to express the inertia and apathy that society demonstrates towards the environment, and the barrier that apathy poses to full ecocritical engagement with climate change. This poem belongs to a broader manuscript and is an outcome of a doctorate in creative writing, commencing in 2021. Other poems from this manuscript have won the Tom Collins Poetry Prize and have been published in *Griffith Review*, *Award Winning Australian Writing* and *Island Magazine*. The manuscript has been supported by the Chennai Mathematical Institute Arts Initiative fellowship.

Biographical note:

Mindy Gill is the recipient of the Queensland Premier’s Young Writers and Publishers Award, and the Australian Poetry/NAHR Poetry Fellowship in Val Taleggio, Italy. From 2017-2020, she was *Peril Magazine*’s Editor-in-Chief. She lives in Brisbane.

Keywords: Climate crisis, ecopoetry, apathy

August in the thirteenth

Ice hisses in your third pastis. Soil brittles
in the flower boxes propped on the wrought
iron sill. At home, you roast a chicken
in white wine and thyme. Dessert,
a slab of cake big as my palm. The mid-air
planes bypass our lives like mistakes
you and I are yet to make. Those months
where I would wake in the blade-turned air
to the metronomic plumbing. That summer,
in the Baltic Sea, algae spreads like an infection,
uranium green. News is of Alsace,
where a generation of white storks starve.
They fall from their nests and break their wings,
while in the Elbe, silver bream roll across the banks
like severed hands. Another murderous season.
Athens vanishes in an eclipse of ash. But what's
to be done? Nothing's come for us yet.

Independent scholar

joanne burns

Two poems

Abstract:

An aura of ‘threat’ has been a condition I have become increasingly alert to as a focus in my writing, not surprisingly, given the zeitgeist. This appears in ‘rummage’ and ‘a sudden summer’ in relation to tourism and, more disturbingly, via the presence of police intrusion into the everyday, with a large police station and constant police presence very close by. I have referenced police in poems from my last two poetry collections *brush* and *apparently*. My influences in this regard have included the novels of J.G. Ballard (over the decades) and to a lesser extent Don DeLillo. The genesis of ‘a sudden summer’ came from the title of Tennessee Williams’ disturbing play *Suddenly Last Summer*. My use of the jump-cut in a number of poems, including ‘rummage’, mirrors our contemporary multi-faceted, speed-fuelled mobility of consciousness – a peripatetic focus, a nimbleness of neural pathways, a cyber channel-surfing. The jump-cut technique continues to disrupt and dislodge the concept of ‘the well-wrought urn’ that still hovers over the aesthetics of Australian Poetry. I am not an academic scholar, but more of an urban ‘scholar gypsy’; or perhaps a pavement scholar who sources observations and media, including newspaper text; or a psychic researcher/explorer.

Biographical note:

joanne burns’ poetry collections include *apparently*, shortlisted for the NSW Premier’s Poetry Awards, *footnotes of a hammock*, joint winner of the Judith Wright ACT Poetry Prize, *an illustrated history of dairies*, shortlisted for the NSW Premier’s Poetry Award, *amphora*, and *brush*, which won the 2016 NSW Premier’s Poetry Award. Her poems are studied in high schools and have been produced for radio and theatre.

Keywords: Threat, jump-cut technique, poetry, surrealistic, critique

rummage

the yoga nidra rummaged
underneath the floorboards
looking for a new ankle
grinder the others revolved
like doors in transition
restless for a loophole lipstick
migration sought assistance
from the bureau of facial
recognition visas are
hard to come by, too many
smears rays of sunlight
browse like spiders across
basal cells hats are
useless, tourists from
cruiseships roam sight
see-er buses sourcing omni-
food massage baskets every
one really needs a trenchcoat
not a denim panic on
the kerb time to dig deep –
who are the others: there's plenty
of them just smell the queues

N.B. 'rummage' was written before the Covid pandemic began

a sudden summer

i.

heaving a faulty vacuum cleaner
i lurch out of the taxi a heatwave
afternoon on a windy hill outside
westfields bondi junction vacuuming
in the sahara a lyric in progress i'm
being blown over backwards into hot
thrums of air a cup of oolong would
have been welcome in the sleeked down
david jones foodhall as i drag through its
winding short cut in search of godfrey's
the vc people right next to another flight
centre i'll take the delirium package today

in the 13 cab i had chatted with the friendly
punjabi driver about the heat of the subcontinent
how i'd ordered three bottles of limca at a time in
chandigarh en route to kashmir, and its heavenly
air i don't think there was a viceroy called godfrey
though there might have been a warren but there's
no will in me to google viceroys of british india – i'd
rather read arundhati roy

repairs would be rather expensive advised saakaar so
i buy a new vc and leave it there in his care for a while
as i microbrowse theft-safe travel pouches in the
luggage kiosk nearby, exorbitantly priced but i'm not
going anywhere too far away except down the mall
to the bank then on to the sushi train their once juicy rolls
now dry as sand

ii.

next day at the train station concourse
nearby, the vc snug at home in its box,
hot sweaty humans are swarming, in transit
from beaches, employment, or shops it's
the eve of an oz day weekend – a blonde policeman
brandishing newly minted authority, honeycombed
snifferdog on a lead grasped tight in a fist, circles a sudden
vacuum as the crowds continue to swarm: am i heading
for the right platform: the wannsee, or waterfall line? i
dissolve into a slow empty lift, and descend with a rising
distrust