

Kenyon College, Ohio

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The 2001 Kenyon Master Class in Poetry

This paper is based on a keynote address delivered on 24 November 2001 at the AAWP Conference, Writing Realities: The State of the Art, University of Canberra, Australia.

Kenyon College has almost mythical status as a private institution in which aspiring writers may learn the subtleties of their craft in the context of a classical English degree. It has a history of attracting great writers and is the home of the major American literary journal founded by John Crowe Ransom, *The Kenyon Review*. Those studying writing units at Kenyon expect the weight of this history to work in their favour, assume that the atmosphere will be conducive to their producing their best possible writing. Location, indeed, does contribute, through focus and concentration - the College is isolated, sitting among the cornfields and forests of mid-Ohio, on the hilltop of Gambier. It was founded at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the Bishop of Ohio, and its unique architecture might be called 'Episcopalian', though the college continues to develop cultural and religious diversity. It is common for writing units at Kenyon to include 'nature' elements, for the students to engage in field studies. Through the centre of the village campus runs Middle Path, linking the various liberal disciplines along with the sciences. This is the spiritual and creative centre of the college, and the idea of linking dissimilar but connected areas of life and study is a feature of many Kenyon students' work. Their environment, no matter how 'urban' or, say, 'abstract' a writer they are, starts to affect their work at an early stage.

The Master Class I taught as Richard L. Thomas Professor of Writing at Kenyon this year brought together students who'd shown the highest aptitude and enthusiasm in previous units. I had met some of them at a reading in England the year before, where I'd made a guest appearance on their overseas writing program. I reconnected with them shortly after my appointment to the position, when Kenyon brought me in for an informal session with the students, and a formal session with College officials. The first thing that struck me about them as individuals was the sureness and confidence of their 'voices' and, as a group, their ability to accommodate each other's differences. This was exciting, as the mainstay of my teaching methodology is to work towards enhancing individual voices by submerging them in the anonymity of collaboration. I strongly feel that if one can distance oneself from voice, the writing will be enhanced and given uniqueness. It's only when the poet or writer surrenders proprietorial designs on text and publication, learns to be less precious about the importance of his or her words, that the voice can break the constraints of self and evolve into something unusual - certainly enhance its ability to enrich the reader. For me, writing is as much about the reader as writer; in fact, every reader reinvents a text - constants have to be challenged, and the identity of the author is fluid and questionable.

The class consisted of nine regular students and two mature-age audit students - working without accreditation, the two mature-age students were the key to making this class dynamic. Every student was already assured in terms of what they perceived as their voice and 'style' - a word that immediately has me running for the deconstructionist's handbook. I don't want to see style, I want to see a critical consciousness at this stage of the writer's development. Without the ability to make and understand criticism, a stasis will come about, the rot will set in. During the first lesson I watched the discomfort spread across some students' faces when I pointed out that the first few weeks would be dedicated to theory.

Another feature of my methodology is not to create separate spaces for the teacher and students. We are all writers, if at different points in our various developmental processes and cycles. The 'teacher' works with the 'students', theorizing and producing works. And the process isn't static but organic, it branches and hybridises, sends out rhizomes and encryptions, as it proceeds. As the course would place large theoretical demands on participants, I felt it necessary to prepare a 'poetics' myself - an ongoing development of interactive engagement with my own personal and collaborative projects. I would then introduce some component I'd been critiquing - such as sequences or closure - and encourage others to develop their own views or to critique those I'd introduced. For all of the participants, with the partial exception of one of the mature-age women who had a background in innovative book-making, theory was a separate issue, not to be confused with writing - they were separate artforms. I insisted they were one and the same thing. This doesn't mean a poem, for example, needs to be laboured with obvious tools of exegesis, or the meta-techniques that make dialogue and critique obvious - the new polemics, if you like - but that composition might allow for a critical consciousness. Be the reader AND the writer.

By way of entry into this undoing of pedagogy, here's the course outline:

Course Outline

The advanced poetry workshop aims to encourage the development of collaborative as well as individual voices. There will be a special focus on the so-called 'lyrical I' and the hybridizing of the 'traditional lyric' with linguistically innovative approaches to composition, processes that have been intrinsic to my own professional practice. Rewriting of canonical pieces, the development of sequences and reengas, a short verse play collaboration, as well as the workshopping of individual poems, will be the main elements of the course. Students will also be encouraged to read their work, with regular opportunities to perform. There will be room for extra activities such as the establishment of a web journal, which may be taken into consideration in the marks given for participation.

The course will be taught in cycles, each beginning with an introductory session on a concept, given by myself, in which I will read from my work and from other poets, and talk about method. This will be followed by two sessions workshopping individual poems arising from the theme, and a collaborative session. The last three weeks of semester will follow a modified pattern to prepare for the short verse play performance.

Assessment:

Assessment will be based on:

- 3 pieces of poetic work, 30% See calendar

- Writer's journal (to be kept throughout the duration of the course), 10% Due at end of course
- A portfolio of poetry containing a minimum of 8-10 pieces, including final drafts of the earlier 3 submissions, and one collaborative piece, 40% Due at end of course
- Participation, 20%

Attendance is compulsory. If you cannot attend, please see or contact me in advance. If you have a learning or other disability that may affect your performance on the course, please let me know, and contact the Office of Disability. All information and documentation regarding disabilities is strictly confidential.

Extensions for assignments will only be granted if requested in advance and where deemed appropriate. Work handed in late without an extension will lose marks.

Students should familiarise themselves with regulations governing academic honesty. Plagiarism is taken very seriously and may result in dismissal from class or college. All assignments must include a **SIGNED** statement as follows: ***This is my own work and has not been submitted for any other course.*** Plagiarism here is understood as the attempt to pass off as your own, work which has been done by others. This is unacceptable, and is not the same thing as literary quotation or allusion, or textual play within a poem.

Calendar:

Tu 16 January Introduction to course

Th 18 January Questions of the individual voice: the lyrical I

Tu 23 January Individual workshopping

Th 25 January Individual workshopping

Tu 30 January Collaborative workshopping

Th 1 February Questions of hybridity: traditional verse & linguistic innovation

Poem 1 due

Tu 6 February Individual workshopping

Th 8 February Individual workshopping

Tu 13 February Collaborative workshopping

Th 15 February Sequences and fragments

Tu 20 February Individual workshopping

Th 22 February Individual workshopping

Tu 27 February Collaborative workshopping (renga)

Th 1 March General reading/performance

Poem 2 due

SPRING BREAK March 3 - March 18

Tu 20 March Set form

Th 22 March Individual workshopping

Tu 27 March Individual workshopping

Th 29 March Collaborative workshopping

Tu 3 April Landscape & place

Th 5 April Individual workshopping

Tu 10 April Individual workshopping

Th 12 April Collaborative workshopping

Poem 3 due

Tu 17 April Persona & voice

Th 19 April Individual workshopping

Tu 24 April Verse drama
 Th 26 April Collaborative workshopping
 Tu 1 May Collaborative workshopping
 Th 3 May Performance
Portfolio & journal due

A few comments. First, I do not mark hierarchically but within the context of the participant's abilities. That is, I do not bend to the spreadsheet, and this is accommodated by my department. Interestingly, a curve seems to appear in any case. However, if the class is failing as a whole to meet its potential, then it will be marked down, if it reaches its potential entirely it will be marked up.

One student in the class who was extremely capable of writing competent and poignant 'lyrical I' poetry, found it difficult to write the 'self' out of the poem, to challenge the primacy of the line as a measure of the poem, and consequently was marked down because the exercise called for such an engagement. I might add that when she eventually clicked, she produced astonishing pieces of work that were subtle and appropriately questioning of the process. She did not become a 'convert' to non-linear and non-lyrical-I poetry, but cued a critical consciousness of the movements in her own work that actually allowed her to strengthen her lyrical-I poetry.

Second, where it says 'Individual workshopping', this meant some work-in-class time, but more often group discussion of the issues behind the exercise. Rather than criticising or developing individual pieces - the hide-thickening school of workshopping - we pulled every piece down to its component parts and discussed possible rebuildings. There were no good pieces and bad pieces. That's not to say it fell into the trap most often criticised by students - no hard feedback, the 'we only hear positive things so we don't really know if we have any ability or not' syndrome. Rather, it's a case of the worth of their pieces being irrelevant, and the engagement with the words, lines, stanzas, so-called 'poems' on a group level being the fundamental issue. Simply a case of 'good' and 'bad' being irrelevant terms.

Third, as with many creative writing courses, the journal was to form the backbone of the course. A place of digression and allusion, of doubting and rapture. An escape and an engagement.

And finally, the movement from the self to collaboration in pairs, sometimes threes, through to a full group collaborative project. It was this that most excited and bewildered the participants. To write a verse play in class?

Not indicated in this outline is the first task required of the participants. To produce a poetics. By poetics I mean the aims and methodologies behind an individual's creation of his or her poetry. Or maybe of *its* poetry. I suggested that by the end of the semester we'd have a group poetics evolving. Maybe this is what I'm presenting now.

Interestingly, the lesson or interaction that formed the core of most of the journals was in fact a small field trip we did down to the forest behind the English faculty as part of the 'landscape and place' sessions.

Participants were asked to record observations as data: names of plants, spatial observations (a fence, a house across the highway and river, an Amish buggy heading into town behind a postal van where the highway split the forest etc), their relationship to this data ('being a city person it was the red roof of the house that interested me' say more than the deer tracks), and then a consideration of what the words they had recorded meant on the level of language. From something as trivial as a pun on 'red' through to more complex considerations on etymology and the politics of representation.

An example of the latter would be the very brilliant student K, an African-American, writer of extremely political verse strongly influenced by folk, blues, gospel, rap, and hip-hop music, polemical activism, veganism, lesbian and black power politics. K was already creating a fusion poetry, heavily performance-orientated, before joining the workshop, but over the course of the semester developed the work on the level of the word, tested her own certainties and allowed the ambiguities of language to develop as things-in-themselves. She is an astonishing talent and will be one of the major voices of her generation - her first book is due out next year. K took the incident of the Amish buggy and other traffic on the road within the parenthetic nature of the forest as the focus for her engagement with data and spatiality. She noted the number of white cars and black cars, with the predominance of the former, and overlaid it onto the politics of mid-Ohio. She created 'strings' of language - we had been challenging the traditional linearity of sequential poetry - and her 'landscape poem' became a landscape of the marginalising nature of the language itself.

What does English mean in the mid-West? The prevalence of certain expressions and 'ways of saying' things in the mainstream press, on television, the radio? I am extending the idea here, but that's what came of the collaborative process - we picked up K's register of concerns and critiques and played them out further. Gender of observation and presentation become a fascinating dynamic - the words hybridising, even transsexualising across the group until the certainty of persona, voice, and authorial integrity became blurred. Who read it, how it was presented, made differences.

During their incursion into the forest I asked participants to be conscious of the two fundamentals of landscape theory - 'prospect' and 'refuge': that is, what could be seen and why, and what was hidden and why? We use nature as a refuge, but we might destroy it out of fear, to ensure our lines of sight. A simple principle that worked its way into their texts within the materiality of the poems, these were places to be seen or places to hide. The landscape became the text, and vice versa. I use the word 'text' consciously here - maybe what we were creating was poetry as a separate field of engagement between the said and the unsaid, bringing the empirical and the spiritual into question?

I see poetry as a translation process. We were simply looking for varieties of dynamic equivalence and placing them under pressure. Through their journals the participants were constantly engaged in this process of 'collecting' material to bring to class. In the first workshop cycle they were asked to produce a typical piece of 'lyrical-I' poetry, where some real or imagined 'self' centred the poem, directed the reader with certainty. Of course, the 'I' is such a highly nuanced concept that this gives a fair amount of space for activity, but before this they had only questioned apparent varieties of lyrical-I voices - that is, the relationship between subject and object had been little questioned. Most produced conventional poems of observation and experientiality. 'Feeling' poems, or 'ironic' takes on 'feeling'. They were then asked to remove the self from the poem entirely. Quite literally. No consistent *I* or *we* or *you*. This proved a difficult exercise.

They were also asked, gradually, over weeks, to increase the use of enjambment, parataxis, and disassociation, using the same base material. They expected a set of variations on the original, what they achieved were sets of independent poems that shared many of the same words. The words had different meanings, as the song goes. The micro versus the macro. Experience wasn't going out travelling the world, getting smashed, having disastrous affairs, but travelling through the potentials of language. The words could make their own meanings. The references could be internal to the poem.

For the second 'lyrical-I' workshop students were asked to:

For Workshop 2:

Using same techniques, develop a lyrical narrative poem. A sequence of events told from a 'confident' narratorial position. Check for samples in the *Norton*.

A non-'lyrical I' piece using annotation to create narrative - Bakhtinian dialogics with text and tale. The annotations to discuss process within the poem. That is, a conversation between the marginalia and the poem itself. Of course, in truth, it's all part of the same poem, the same organic process. D & G's 'body without organs', reterritorialising the poem itself.

One of the examples I gave them was Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'. I wanted them to think outside the frame of the text. The idea that most things happen beyond what is actually 'said' in the literal poem and any accompanying commentary. In collaboration, students were asked to annotate each other's pieces - these annotations might or might not be then worked into the original. With the production of each new text, the participants worked with others in writing a hybrid of their efforts. The results were part of the individual's portfolio of individual assessment. I would be marking the same poem presented in the differing contexts of their respective portfolios. Being marks-orientated and used to competing, they found this concept at first hard to cope with, but as the semester progressed and they worked towards the full group collaboration, they came to think of themselves as a 'movement', as a group evolving an identity that was both compatible and contradictory. They met out of class, they interacted at readings, they absorbed bits of each other. A volatile sense of community evolved.

Fragments and sequences were important in the process of collaboration, and in learning to shed expectations of solely personal achievement within poetry and poetics. The sequence allows for multiple voices with ease; it allows counterpoint and play within forms, and is convenient for collaboration in the sense of students compiling or adding to previous intact contributions. This can then be developed through fragmentation of the integral component parts and the interpolation of rogue or stray texts.

Questions of violation, intrusion, compatibility, fusion come obviously into play. From a gender perspective this can create tension and challenge the desirability of creating text itself. As I pointed out, it's the same process that the text undergoes when someone of another gender, or another set of world views, engages with it anyway. It's just a matter of making the possibilities active rather than passive. The participants had by this stage all read Marjorie Perloff's essays on 'After Free Verse: the New Non-Linear Poetries' and 'Language Poetry and the Lyric Subject', which I had myself been critically engaging with within my own poetics. Here's an extract from my evolving poetics:

The object-subject relation. The tree is in the window, through the window the tree - the unified self says it with certainty. Parataxis, enjambment. The window tree limbs loosely I see wood glassly. Line length, metrics, and breath. Neat definitions. The line rolls on and on, written in sand. It blows away shortly after implying completion. It can neither begin nor end, being perfect in conception but decaying as it is written, inscribed. Plato would have a field day. We don't want poets in this organisation.

I believe my work moves through the many nuanced layers of the 'lyrical I/non-lyrical I' construct. I use sequences a lot: within the sequence a textual dialogue is created. Even the narrative destabilises itself through alternative relationships being set up between different

sections, chapter, occasions, events. Numbered, asterisks, roman numerals: different languages. Annotations work in a similar way: dialogues within texts, within the frame of the page, across frames, between different surfaces. All poems are part of a larger project. A greater sequence of language usage. Nothing exists as a thing-in-itself. Efforts to disconnect create new connections

And here's the lesson outline for fragments and sequences:

Writing Class 15 Feb Fragments and sequences

Another way of approaching writing poems in a way that brings 'self' into question, is to fragment the whole. Differentiate between fragmented poem in parts and the sequence. Sequence may be composed of fragments but doesn't have to be. Three general sequential types:

- (1) narrative, where sections work like chapters in a book;
- (2) lyrical/cumulative, where an overall picture is built by adding parts that share linguistic qualities and may offer different angles on the same subject matter, but don't tell a story (amplify, augment);
- (3) the conversational sequence, in which the disparate parts speak to each other 'dialogically'.

One might also add another possibility -- (4) the sequence of fragmentation in which the parts may seem to operate totally independently from each other, and may be broken down not only on the level of the line but on the level of the word itself.

Narrative & lyrical/cumulative types can comfortably fit within the lyrical-I tradition tho' you could have non-lyrical variations on this.

Third and fourth types lend themselves very much to the non-lyrical-I approach. Fragmentary sequence undoes narrative as much as creates a sense of movement. Parts of the whole don't necessarily add up.

Examples:

1 Ancient Mariner

2 Syzygy (yet even though it seems to be composed of fragments, it's really a blending of all of the above)

- Sequence can be hybridised in the same way as what was done with lyrical/non-lyrical I poems.

- A poem might be in 6 parts, some of which might be straightforward lyrical, some not, some hybrid. If put in a sequence, reader will create the links.

- Form sequence in 6-8 parts that may or may not be connected, can follow any of the above categories, or a hybrid (strongly encouraged).

Another characteristic of this nodal, branching pedagogy, is digression. In the process of writing my own poetics and fostering the growth of both individual poetics amongst group members and a group ethos as well, we found ourselves wandering outside the

guidelines. It's all connected, but the outcomes are never entirely predictable. I was discussing this issue of the 'lyrical I' via email with Marjorie Perloff, who noted:

When people talk about unified lyric I, they don't really mean are you a coherent person, so to speak, but when you present the 'I' in a poem do you consciously try to distance yourself from your selves, so to speak? It's complicated. The best thing I've read about it is an essay by Antoine Caze on the 'fourth person singular'.

Caze writes in 'Conceptual Lyricism: Abstract Constructions of the Self in Recent American Poetry':

The lyrical subject is not located fully in the empirical dimension, nor can it be reduced to the fictional (be it autobiographical). Rather, it is pierced through by multiple voices, thus clearly debunking the myth of Voice as expression and disseminating it as traces of presence (close to Derrida's analysis of writing, then). The lyrical 'voice', if it can still be called so, is an *alteration* (making other) of the subject which becomes what Maupoix shrewdly proposes to call 'The Fourth Person Singular': 'It is finally reduced to a mere inflection of voice. Not quite the same and yet not quite another, it occupies the empty place, the place to which each of us aspires, that is to say the very place of voice itself as it constitutes an invisible link with the other, a coming out of oneself, as it signs and signals the most singular but remains however impossible to pin down, evanescent as long as it is not put down in writing.' The rhetorical construction of the subject is the foundational gesture of lyrical utterance.

This nodal feeding of the discussion will play into next year's poetry class, and will feed the developing poetics of new participants. It will become part of the ongoing process of poetic collectivity - the group will continue in absence, the lyrical voice of the whole will accumulate fragments in which the inflection of voice will in turn be placed under pressure, testing the lyrical-I questionings of the previous incarnation of the group. The subject becomes the Group which is an utterance of its component parts. It is one possible Self, it is one possible empty place. Waiting to be filled, or for the emptiness to outflow? Indeed, my conversation with participants is ongoing through email and editing of future book publications. One of the independent students I had, doing private study (in a collaborative pairing), even made it to Australia as part of the Edith Cowan University WILD writing and literature course. His poetry is now hybridising the landscapes of his Iowa farming home and the landscapes of my home rural zone, the wheatbelt of the Avon Valley. A process I've been deeply engaged with for many years between the English Fens and rural Western Australia, and now between Gambier Ohio, and rural Western Australia. A sharing of links. A hypertext between participants. The pedagogy becomes process, the voices are no longer influences but conversations. The lyrical I is sublime enough to shift on the vibrancy of utterance and the 'body language' of the words and poetic forms themselves.

As can be seen in the outline, the course developed in such a way that students came into contact with issues of performance and presentation - group and public readings, a developing awareness of how voice and persona work in the public space, and on the stage. They considered dramatic monologue, dramatic irony, persona as mask, and so on. A verse play was to be the distillation of this journey. Some of the notes provided to them for the theory exercises that preceded the workshoping included extracts from Eliot's 'Poetry and Drama' essay:

Verse Play

Eliot, 'Poetry and Drama', first Theodore Spencer Memorial Lecture delivered at Harvard University and published by Faber & Faber and by the Harvard University Press in 1951. Reprinted in TS Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets*, Farrar Straus Giroux (1957)

'It [the poetry] must justify itself dramatically, and not merely be fine poetry shaped into dramatic form... no play should be written in verse for which prose is dramatically adequate.' (75-76)

'a triple distinction: between prose, and verse, and our ordinary speech which is mostly below the level of either verse or prose... prose, on the stage, is as artificial as verse: or alternatively... verse can be as natural as prose.' (76)

'a mixture of prose and verse in the same play is generally to be avoided' (77) -- points out that Shakespeare uses it for contrast and for distinguishing between lowly/rustic characters and high-born, etc.

'the verse rhythm should have its effect upon the hearers, without their being conscious of it.' (78)

'a kind of musical design... which reinforces and is one with the dramatic movement' [speaking of *Hamlet*] (80-81)

'every line must be judged by a new law, that of dramatic relevance.' (84)

As with their evolving poetics, I also worked on a verse play in collaboration - co-writing with Tracy Ryan. It was performed at the University of Western Australia not long after the students presented their verse play at Kenyon. A synchronicity that impelled and compelled the projects.

The idea for the framework of the play came from one of the mature-age participants who was a regular listener to a buy-and-sell program on Mount Vernon - the nearest largish town - radio. I acted as script director, though a 'stage director' was appointed - interestingly the participant who'd most strongly resisted the non-lyrical I approaches in the first place. She was a theatre major, and a director of repute within the student body. Her coordination of the script and presentation was mercurial.

In our first session on the script we mutually agreed on a list of players and the 'nature' of their voices. Every technique we had explored during the semester came into play. The students took their compositions home and developed sequences of pieces, connected by persona, which they brought into the class for annotation and 'mixing'. With my coordination, and gradually with rapidly increasing input on this level from the group, the various voices segued together. Our narrator was the radio anchorman, against whom all voices bounced and counteracted. Sound was important, and there being a number of musically talented participants, a polyphonic and even choral interplay of characters developed. One participant wrote ironic jingles - she had actually done jingle work in the past for commercial radio - another wrote philosophical digressions, another colloquial interplays with theory, linked with political rants. It came alive. Once the text had taken shape, I removed myself and the participants rehearsed and developed it for the stage themselves. It was, to say the least, a smash hit.

To finish, I'd like to offer a short extract from the verse play. The interplay of language and voice, of internal and external referencing, the langue and parole, issues of subjectivity and identity, the cultural and political spaces in which verse evolves, relationship between reader and writer, player and audience, and between collaborators themselves, drive the 'narrative' of the play. The author is the group, and it is an interactive part of the individual poetics of each of the participants. It's also part of my poetics.

from *Buy, Barter, or Deal*

12th caller - Kaliis - Curl (one fist)

One fist never used
conscience cleaned
curry, conservative, cabbage
flavors all available
just add legislature
and watch it grow!
Amaze your friends!
Quality goes in before the
arm goes up
comes with four fingers
call in the next 6 seconds
and the thumb is free
use for highway passes
cross country travel
Guaranteed to fit in any
size pocket.

13th caller - Wendy - Dial-ectic

Hey Jim, I'm calling
to put a bid on that fist.
It completes my collection.
Yeah, I'm a big fan
of the dialectic:
paper, scissors, rock,
paper, scissors, rock.

14th caller - Sara - Hegel: Utility

Does this seem too utilitarian?
Realizing that ownership
isn't a permanent relationship,
that private property is essentially
an arrangement
to govern exchanges.

Utility.
For what? For who?
Utility is entirely relative.
For Hegel,
there is no such thing as value.
Society is just a function of commodities-
prices of things
in comparison to other things.

Utility is context.
Usefulness is context dependent.

What are people's utility functions?
Just the weighing of pleasure against pain.
Don't second guess what people find pleasure in.
What are people's utility functions?
If you knew in advance,
you could provide the products
that maximise these functions...
but the thing is,
we can't know in advance.
Its always a guess.
Utility provides a prospective judgement
rather than a retrospective justification.

Does this seem too utilitarian?
Then perhaps property is not the answer,
and redistribution is the key.

15th caller - Jamie - Africa

Is anybody selling Africa? will accept partial delivery
Of Francophone regions on condition of Anglophonics
By the end of fiscal year. All those lovely fertile cities.
pls. contact Philip Morris Cos., Richmond, VA 23261.
Will beat any white competitor's price.

16th caller - Emily - Sumin' Borrowed

Mais c'est trop proche à mes cauchemars,
une fille plus belle que moi,
plus mince, plus exotique.
J'ai essayé de me garder moi-même
contre la beauté, la réalité de la passion
que je ne peut pas sentir.
Toujours, la même histoire.
Toujours.

DJ Jim -

okey dokey then
well y'all know it's a toggle w/ language
just like you mothers out there know
the plangent tithes of a baby's cry
not quite there yet
in immense hurt and frustration
lusting destruction
baleened antennae
beast beneath the ice
i/o
five point nine on your eternal bandwidth
and I'm feelin fine
how bout you folks?
don't tune me out
anybody, call

the animals that gambol thru sun-dappled
fields and stuff like that

bats and lambs batting each other gleefully
void of memory
unsullied of self-consciousness
unable to verbalise just what

if you find yourself muttering muffled
obscenities over events 'pon
years o decades yon
Anheuser Busch, St. Louis Missouri
had nothing to do w/ this advertisement
Anheuser Busch, St. Louis Missouri
had nothing to do w/ this

17th caller - Kaliis - Ellis-son

Need Ellis Island lost look in eyes
Irish best
will take scotch
perhaps vodka
must drawl r's
cross t's and dot
j's. worn hands
weight watch-ahs
furnicha move-ahs
relaxed throat only
been used for swimming
oars in good condition
family slightly used

18th caller - Ellen - Fill Dirt

Clean Fill Dirt Wanted

DJ Jim - (*tries to head off ranting*)

you again - you've got 15 seconds

Ellen - Watcher

I watch
Your holes pierced voice boxes hollowing out
indigenous cultures imminent danger to speak of
linguistic catastrophe worldwide proportions
obliterated languages disappear
into holes
at alarming rates no speakers remain no trace no mark gesture mute
(*language is leaving*)
urgent need for new Rosetta stone (www.rosettastone.org)
etched with every known human language
(*translations of Genesis 1:1-13*)
onto multitudes of nickel plated disks
(*fear of virtual apocalypse*)
to be read 100 years from now by _____ (*fill in the blank*)

19th callers - Erin, Erin, Ben (News Flash Chorus)

Ben: par

Erin D & Erin F: ish

All: parish

Ben: landmine

Erin D: parish

All: mine

Erin F & Ben (*simultaneously*): land / mine

All: raffle

Ben: pot

Erin D: pot

Erin F: pot

Ben: luck

Erin D: luck

Erin F: luck

All: potluck

Erin F & Erin D: landmine

Ben: bang

Erin F & Erin D: quet

Ben: day

Erin F: satur

Ben: day

Erin F: satur

Erin D: family event

All: all

Ben: landmine

Erin D: raffle

Erin F: welcome

All: Parish Landmine Raffle, potluck banquet, Saturday, Family
Event, All
welcome.

DJ Jim -

they say when Ezekial saw the wheel
the human heads
the severed prostheses of sheep and eagle
my human heart
way up in the middle of the air

the human faces
the human voices
the torsos of gold
and wing'ed ideal wheels
way in the middle of the air
now this form is irony, the consciousness
that such a principle of conviction is of little value
and that, w/in this supreme criterion,
only arbitrariness prevails
way up in the middle of the air

this point of view was in fact a product of Fichte's
philosophy, which maintains the 'I' is absolute,
i.e. that it is absolute certainty, the universal selfhood
whose further development leads to objectivity
way in the middle of the air

this supremely subjective point of view
can arise only in a highly cultivated age
in which faith has lost its seriousness,
which exists now in the vanity of all things
[altogether now]

Everyone -

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE AIR*

DJ Jim -

ofttimes I find myself pondering
that some of our century's great
movers and shakers, say Dylan,
holed up in his Basement Tapes
stage were

JINGLE (Bikers for Jesus) - Anne

Bikers for Jesus, we've got your number,
Call us right now and start your life today.

What will it gain you to have the whole world,
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