

Fact•Simile

WWW.FACT-SIMILE.COM

VOL. 1 No. 2

AUTUMN 2008

FREE



INTERVIEW WITH AND NEW POEMS FROM LINH DINH

+New work from: Michelle Naka Pierce Charles Freeland j/j hastain
Mark Cunningham James Belflower & more

Copyright © 2008
FACT-SIMILE EDITIONS

All rights revert to individual authors
upon publication.

Cover Design and Typesetting: by
JenMarie Davis

FACT-SIMILE is published twice
annually, in Autumn and Spring.
Submissions are always welcome.
Please send electronic submissions to

travis@fact-simile.com

or hard-copy submissions to

129 W. Coronado,
Santa Fe, NM 87505

FACT-SIMILE is free; however, if you
would like to subscribe, please send \$6
S&H with your name and address to:

129 W. Coronado
Santa Fe, NM 87505

For more information, visit us at:
<http://www.fact-simile.com>

FACT-SIMILE EDITIONS
FACT-SIMILE MAGAZINE
VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2

FACT-SIMILE is edited and published by
Travis Macdonald and JenMarie Davis

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers:

The past six months have been a busy period here at Fact-Simile Editions. Since last we visited these pages upon you, we've taken on a second editor, published our first perfect-bound book (*The O Mission Repo*), hosted a few readings and parties, and moved our entire operation to Santa Fe, New Mexico!

As you will notice, we have also asked some of our friends to join us in this issue. As part of our ongoing effort to keep this publication free and widely distributed and to continue growing our local and global creative community, we have begun to explore alternate revenue generating methods such as "advertising," "networking" and "etc." We share the pages of this issue with advertisements from some of the best print/online resources for experimental art and literature in America.

That said, we remain committed to providing you with the new and exciting work you've come to expect from *Fact-Simile Magazine* and Fact-Simile Editions. We feature an interview with and new poems from poet Linh Dinh and poetry and hybrid work from many other talented writers.

If this is your first time joining us, please be sure to visit our website (www.fact-simile.com) for more information on our our magazine and other forthcoming projects: The Ash Anthology, an open-invitation chapbook contest to be judged in the spring, and new reading series in Santa Fe.

Happy reading,

JenMarie & Travis

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We, the editors at **FACT-SIMILE**, would like to thank the following individuals, entities and institutions for their continued support, without which none of this would be possible:

Our Contributors	In Stereo Press
Our Readers	Anne Waldman
Our Advertisers	Barack Obama
Naropa University SWP	Linh Dinh
HK Advertising	This is Not a Reading
<i>Whrrds</i>	Best Safety
Monkey Puzzle Press	Hot Whiskey Press

CONTENTS



POET-OLITICS: AN INTERVIEW WITH LINH DINH

By Travis Macdonald

Fact-Simile: Linh, thanks for joining me today, we've been talking this week about the State of the Union. I was hoping you could speak briefly about our current state of cultural affairs and contemporary literature's place therein.

Linh Dinh: Contemporary literature? The place of literature? Just on the way here we were talking about how the Dow dropped three hundred fifty points yesterday and it was sixty down as I left for class today [June 18, 2008]. So, in essence, I obsess about these, this collapse, this ongoing collapse of the past couple years. It's hard really to even read literature, to tell you the truth. I told Charles Alexander I haven't been reading a whole lot of poetry lately just because this, the quickly developing story of our society's unraveling, is so compelling that it's hard for me to focus on anything else to tell you the truth. So I'm reading financial blogs and I read people like James Howard Katzler, Richard Heinberg, and this website called, what is it, this peak oil website I check constantly for developing stories. So how do I see literature fitting into this? I guess my last book was an attempt to come to terms with it, you know, *Jam Alerts* is basically finding ways to write about this.

There're so many pitfalls to this kind of writing. I mean, you don't want to do the job of a journalist, right, you know because I'm not bringing today's news to you. A poem should not have to function on that level, right? So, a poem written today, if you're lucky, will be read a year from now, five years from now, ten years from now, fifty years from now, if you're very lucky. So I just want to be, as a thinking person, someone who is alert to what's happening, who is seeing what is happening. I don't want to be someone who is oblivious or ignorant

of the most urgent issues, that's all. I feel it's a worthwhile challenge for a poet or a fiction writer to try to understand the biggest issues affecting his or her society. Instead of getting caught up in trivia, there are so many distractions in society right now, in the media. I mean, every culture has strategies to divert their population's attention to the issues that really

matter. So people say "I don't want to write about political stuff, social stuff, I'm interested in my own thing." Okay, but I think we're being steered, we're being fed certain kinds of information. The room temperature is controlled, let's put it that way. So, you know, I don't want to be sitting in this room and be oblivious to the trauma that's happening right outside my window. And also on a survival and a personal level all these issues are hard to ignore, okay, so my own attempts at writing about these issues is related to me teaching this class called "State of the Union" at three universities now because I find these issues closest to my day-to-day, closest to my heart. So I try to convey some of that urgency to the students but how they respond to it is up to them. So does that sort of answer your question?

FS: Yeah. You said recently that one of the main tasks of the writer



is to startle the reader. How does one accomplish such a maneuver in the face of a culture desensitized to violence, raised on sound bytes and numb to wonder?

LD: Yeah. Well. In essence, the media also wants to startle the viewers, the readers, right? But they resort to devices, they're bringing more violence now, sex is kind of a funny business in America, you know what I'm saying, we use it, I mean the corporation uses sex to sell stuff, but they do it in a weird kind of, in a very...I mean we're a lot more *caught* in violence than sex. We don't apologize. By saying "we" I'm saying the powers that be and also the people who receive these images. They don't apologize about manipulating violence to get us to do what they want us to do. But as far as sex goes, it's always somehow foreign, you know what I'm saying? It's both, it's always present, yet always distorted. But as a

writer, the need to surprise is not about titillating or shocking the readers with a bag of tricks. It's about upsetting thinking patterns and reading patterns, you know? So in that sense, how a reader, how a writer solves that is up to him or her. I don't know, but for me I find...I guess I have my own bag of tricks too. You develop a set repertoire as you work, so in essence, yeah, there are techniques involved. But, you know, Coca-Cola has its set and I have *my* techniques. It's not just about the context it's about me manipulating you too. Okay. But ultimately, I hope it's not *just* that.

FS: Absolutely....

LD: I'm admitting to something that even to me seems a little raw just now.

FS: You are your own marketing department?

LD: I have my own marketing tricks, yeah.

FS: How would you describe your relationship to English and/or to language in general?

LD: I'm finding myself in kind of an odd position right now. My publishing career only started, my first chapbook came out in '98, okay, and it was a thin little thing, it was thirty-some pages, so I've been doing this, I guess, a decade now. I'm finding myself teaching at universities. I have no degrees, okay, so in essence, I came through this with a kind of, I mean, I always had confidence but there's a part of me that felt semi-fraudulent. I studied painting.

With painting I didn't have to, I didn't need to justify. But even with painting, most painters, most successful artists, at least when I was in school, were white. There weren't that many black artists. I'm talking about oil painting in particular. Most people would not be able to come up with a single Asian oil painter of significance.

I bet you can't think of one. So even then, I realized what I wanted to do, to become a successful oil painter, was something really, as an Asian person, that wasn't done. No one has done it. I thought about that, what does that mean? But I thought it was a challenge, what if I could do it? But, in essence, I did not do it, I dropped out of that game. But, deciding to become a poet in English was an even bigger thing for me because, you know, it's not my first language. But, I was convinced I would be a successful artist. I thought I was surely chosen to be a painter by whatever. I felt something in my head, maybe a baseless sense of being chosen to do this somehow.

So I transferred that extreme confidence into writing, but yet, on the other hand I felt I'm not quite qualified

LINH DINH

Yeah, Yeah, Yeah

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapors weep their burden to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies my fuckin' dog,
Poisoned by my next door neighbor, although
We can't prove goddamn shit. His eyes refuse
To close on such an outrage of a universe.

Fuck you, dog. Smug dog. Eat shit and die, dog.

After many a summer croaks the self
Proclaimed poet. He meant everything
He never got round to say. He didn't know
What he was saying. It didn't matter.

His brain is too bloated to eat,
His eyes fogged before eulogy,
His teeth fang-like yet brittle.

People, can we go a day without massacring a shit load?
How many collaterals have you stabbed this morning?
How many did you strangle last night? Looking at you,

I just want to strip you naked, eat every scrap
Of your lovely nonsense, gargle your thin soul
With my stink hole, then spit you into paradise.

to do this, not because English isn't my first language but because I didn't study this. Which is okay. I felt that a writer should just study from the best. That you like a certain writer, let's say you are really into Borges. Go home and read Borges over and over. Read Borges. Why do you need somebody like me telling you about Borges? I would just get in the way of you perceiving Borges. That's why I didn't want to learn from anyone but the people I really admire. That's in the text, do you know what I'm saying?

So I chose to stay outside of the writing system. The writing school system. But on the other hand, my reading is very sketchy. I don't know a lot of stuff. I mean, I don't know some of the very basic stuff. I don't, I can't say that I'm totally candid about what

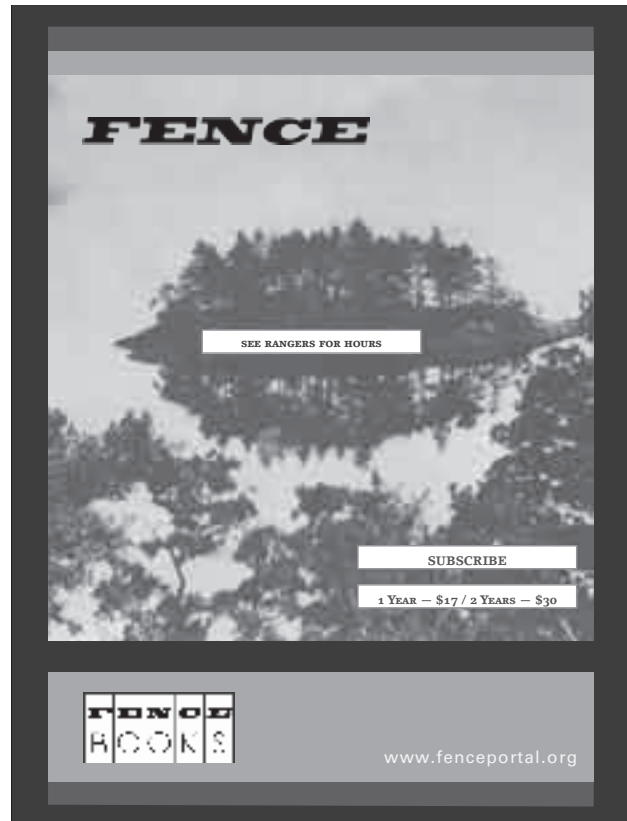
I don't know, because when I talk or somebody mentions something, I just sort of nod along, because I can't admit to my ignorance constantly. When I do that all the time, it not only, it almost sounds as though I'm bragging about it. Okay, I don't know so much, but deep down I know what I don't know. So when I find myself in a situation like this, people who have a lot behind them, I don't know how to justify it, except that I'm taken seriously by writers, people that I admire, so that's a kind of indication that I'm doing okay, but the fact that I'm not trying too hard to catch up. Like I've said, I've had a hard time reading new poetry or any poetry because of other things I'm seeing in front of me. I can't take my eyes away from that. I mean, I read constantly. I read every day, first thing in the morning. I can't stop reading. But I'm reading about all the crises. So, what was the question again?

FS: It was your relationship to English—

LD: To English, yeah. So, I feel okay because, you know, I mean, the writing is happening, and I'm getting published, and, you know, like, again, when I'm rolling, I'm only writing when I'm working. I can feel this surge coming on and, like, hey, you know, I want to kick your fucking ass! But then, when that surge is over, you know, when you feel tired or whatever. When I make mistakes speaking, occasionally I still do that, I feel like, what the hell's happening. You know what I'm saying? So, I lapse in and out of that weird assertion of my, you know, not only do I belong, but that I am going to assert myself with a kind of vehemence in English. And other times I feel, you know, I guess that feeling of being a fraud is diminishing. But yesterday when I heard Daniel Kane giving his very thorough, very well-researched lecture, I felt like, man, you know, again I'm reminded: what the fuck, I don't know so much, you know?

FS: I think we all need to be reminded of that.

LD: All the time! Okay, yeah, but if you're just apologetic and say "I don't know shit," you're not really about much. So I go back and forth between the two. Like the reading yesterday [at the 2008 Naropa Summer Writing Program], I was thinking very hard about it, because I thought, hmmm, there are all these heavyweights in the audience, and then, I take the students seriously because, you know, they have heard and they will hear a succession of very impressive poets and I just don't want to be the weak link, I just don't want any of them to come up and have people say "What the fuck?" you know? It went well yesterday, but it could have gone very wrong, too. I don't know. So, I do not take anything for granted. I was sitting here before the reading, thinking very hard about what I'm going to
(*cont'd p. 30*)



FACT-SIMILE CHAPBOOK CONTEST

Deadline:

March 1st, 2009

Please visit:

WWW.FACT-SIMILE.COM

for Detailed Submission Guidelines

MATT REECK

An Elongation of a Thought

[...]

if were character in
interested knowing
what next

[...]

he gave up
 they left
 memories other

 people
 limned lighting
 effects

 beings free
 will
 & yet

extensiveness
 of (gestures repeated
 through the night)

[...]

decided live

 the question
 not of but
 the

shrinks to a venue set
 scenery
 center

[...]

emotions are

(archipelagos to
sea around

a clear spontaneous)

realized one
obsession
per life

& so

each their
dream surpassing
passage

Requisition

1

there were things once said we regretted

who can understand the stars

the bridge over the country river
summer dense night

(meaning)

the remainder that makes the answer complete
its jaggedness against the soft body of the whole

(meaning)

the imagined trips that please because
they will never happen

(meaning)

relics in the basement
pickling jars heavy with dust

2

I will tell you a you-me story

Me

As conversation levels out the mind recedes

You

A shed of light

Me

Reveals new

You

She is my favorite

Me

Good friend

You

I retreat into

Me

The shrouds in the sky the invisible lines between north winter-light

3

congratulations misplaced on the confused

gifts such as these are unacceptable

asked the man to take my place in line; held up his fingers as if in reference; said
“that has no significant food value”; bell rung in the probity of the temple

the derelict iris; the sorting of likes and dislikes; hampers of uneven laundry; spell
(if you can say “magic”) otherwise the logic; a year after the earthquake rubble
vegetable sellers; along the uncontested shore birds

4

there was a story I was about to tell

it dealt with me in a way I never learned to express

MICHELLE NAKA PIERCE

excerpt from *She, A Blueprint for InterSurface*

[Lot 16]

On another porch. She stands on top of granule, kernel, leaf, candy wrapper. It is 10:53. She stands to the right of new. A bit older then younger. She examines glass leaning against a concrete slab. She doesn't remember the edifice, she says. Reflections of an illogical mind. Her instructions—how there even though. A dry rot sets in on the slats. Every occasion a turned pane. Every pain an occasional window.

LEGEND

Window Pane:
The Loss Of A Parent

[Lot 22]

Apt. #405. Around a borderline/sketchline or the narrative of such a draft. The cycle is as thick as a transient mile. The counting of property square feet and maps. Topological palms. Some poor fragment. Which is a fundamental tenet of any geographical state. Every feature possesses an actual or potential significance. Little shrub in the garden acquires a day like today. A flicker stops the clock. A feeling in the city. She inside it.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION
OF GEOGRAPHICAL
STATES

Vertigo & Dry, Itchy
Orifices

[Lot 27]

This is an instruction manual that comes in handy for practical use. This is where she surges in lower bunks then up to the ceiling. This is consumption clambering into place with thick band stretched between forefinger and thumb. This is the index of weapons: wooden spoon, spatula, whisk. This is the course of the sun charted throughout the day, a thin line at noon, a swelling at dusk. This is the catapult of particles unpredicted by the sweeping of cobwebs. This is incendiaries, invention, force.

LEGEND

Swelling At Dusk:
In Her Exhaustion,
She Is Most Vibrant

J/J HASTAIN

Clotted and Elemental

I wanted lipid exchanges

the ways that any intensity was capable of becoming feelable
lacunae

blood left on the curtains and the legends

the trenches that could be made from retention

then promises atop of that

I wanted lipid exchanges

and if ever I lost my fingers

I would learn to play the letters with my palms

tonic fed to a bird

as split

as barometer

as clotted and elemental intonation

fucking me from below me

this the largest rose

the inner part of the pitch

the sea is a tone

a way of engaging rhythm and worth

a barrenless stirring

complement and juxtaposition

as the cells merge

how this is what ultimately produces form

where a wing ripped from the body of a pigeon

is viewed as harem and capacity

as opportunity

as prismic-helm

the torn wing replacing the word arid in a memory

as meridian
as meridian

how difficult it is to capture flight as an image

if your shutter is not always also moving

lumen-retentions

with the sea so obvious

with cyclic feathering

why do I begin again here

with my back to the sea?

is it more ethical to know the sea as a sound than as sight?

deepest presence preparing the body to be affected

by deepest rifts

by deepest channels

this is how ridges are made

this is how to obtrude

always more than momentary plunges or enigmas

throttle in each heavy hanging thing

JOSEPH COOPERexcerpt from *In Some Distant Bedroom*

CHAPTER THREE

It is a cold morning in November and I am warmed by the sweetness of nouns. A man stands on his balcony brooding over the concern to hide sex under the prudishness of language. To the east he can hear a voice so muted that it is consigned to margins of a page, to the west, the eroticism of mass censorship. Instead he stares inside at a woman who has been sleeping for several hours, and he is listening. For her dreams to become sparrows outside her eyelids pecking at the dried saliva on her cheeks. His hands touch her eyelids, withdraw, and then touch them again. Do sparrows sing while they eat? Do sparrows sing while they eat?

He decides not to hear of her again. She is the conjunction of opposites, a narrative without continuity. Perhaps she would rewrite herself anyway. So he decides not to elaborate. Instead he keeps the company of dead poets. He reads diligently throughout the night, and hardly notices his confrontation with language. He stays up late at night with these friends and drinks much wine; he learns to shadow their words.

Then in several hours, another woman knocks at his door while he stands on the balcony flicking black ash onto the snow beneath. She is a precocious girl, provoked by hypocrisy. She makes love to him rigorously to compensate for their deficiency in discourse. After only months their exhausted catalog of sexual aberrations found them living together. They lived rampantly, unable to be separated from their Dionysian aspirations; consumptive companions to each other until they became discontented with the sexual inadequacy of old age.

The man on the balcony often wonders about the aberrant translations between dialogue and action. Wonders would the sleeping woman have always hosted sparrows on her eyelids, whether her movements as she slept would have driven them from their mild rations. Wonders would her dreams have softened the chapped texture of her lips to indulge in the memory of meticulous confession. Yes, decides he must see her again. He goes to her apartment in Getzville and is taken in by an internal rouse of confession/obsession, and within moments is under the rule of the normal and pathological, and grows weak at the diametric tremors in her voice. They make love softly like shadows that can go no further. Weeks later he moves in with her. He no longer hears sparrows while she is dreaming. But her words attract him in a series of magnetic propositions; it is a quantitative matter of strength. Every day he comes home in a state of calm response that is quickly perverted to violent agitation. They conference, they are threatened with a wild, obscene, interrogation of mouths; they speak of sex and murder, attraction and repulsion, a loving body reduced to a wound. He no longer hears sparrows while she is dreaming. Her words create such distance yet never leave him. He lives for her tongue and is happy with the glorious, stalled marble of her voice.

In another interrogation of strangers he decides to amalgamate the two women. He hardly knows how, and she is choking herself with effort, she's suffocating, she's pulling at her dressings flapping all over the floor in cotton and feathers, yet still that laugh, that clever use of words. Yes, he must see her again. She is fury, her fingers all nerves, hands quivering all over, her voice cracking, spluttering, making of herself the expression of a murderous sociality, a nest robbed by a less fastidious marauder. They speak of the sexual and the repressed, the mistress and the victim, a world of instincts they have perversely attempted to get around. He touches her, brushes the demons away from her bird language. Still she flies a great distance from him, between one language and the other, from one branch to the next, in a tremendous humming of voices. Yet he no longer hears sparrows while she is dreaming, and her loving body is reduced to the margins of a shadow.

If, on the other hand, one establishes the subject, thing, meaning, then she is invisible. Later in his room, he walks the perimeter, like a ghostly commentary in the margin, the muted voices in the east striving for identity, the west, a resolution between sexuality and symbolism.

Each bedroom contains another pair of lovers. Each is separated by sex and language. At every point they are entangled with each other living without explanation, eyes imperceptibly straining darkness, without composition. Their torsos unbuttoned by a voice.

But tonight, the man on the balcony flicking black ash into snow argues against these limits of primal repression. In this world, is he responsible for the resonance of sex and language? The subject is huddled outside the path of desire, committed to the symptomatic romance, the meniscus of all touch. Such people belong in the frenzy of tongues and fingers, the delirious places between curiosity and action.

CHAPTER FOUR

In this language, there are two temperaments. There is passive language and there is active language. One is as rigid and metallic as rain is soft. The other squirms and wriggles shouting and embracing, as if it hadn't salivated for years. One is unyielding until it touches the mouth, making a pathway through a field of thorns. The second wants to reach a place that does not exist outside its window.

Many are convinced that mechanical language does not exist. When they heave sounds over their rapidly dissolving tongues, they are stretched out like animals that live in the sea. They build up an imagination for him, but only as ornaments, in opposition to the secret of his death. They do not proclaim his innocence. Instead, they listen to the blunt negation of the sexual. They feel forever incomplete. Such people crystallize a blasting of sight and sound, posing pale in the black whole of nakedness and when they wake, it is the voice, not the body that says: the metaphor retraces another discourse—a text, a life to relive. Such people laugh at what Saussurian semiology gave new currency. They know that language moves in fits and staggers. They know that language struggles forward through the filth and defilement of body, repressed by precondition. And they know that language rampantly hacks across tongue when eating the very intention of desire.

Then there are those who don't believe that language can exist. They live by prudent philosophies. They are sutured and return to origin. They arrive scared they won't feel a thing. They fuck instead of praying. They speak a boredom of memory, grinning of old notebooks, a day like this one. When their tongues attempt pronunciation it resembles barbed wire. When they become untranslatable, one long spiky and flaking branch has snapped. They know that the body is a thing of wild magic, a sort of wedding night packed hard around their tongues. Thoughts are no more than limits of subjective identity. Sexuality is no more than the corner of a brick terrace. Sadness is no more than a smeared gesture. In short, language is an exhausted traveler who brings puddles after these sudden storms. As such, language must be allowed to soak through the gauze. And if the traveler speaks through his constant, circulating invisibility, it is the speaking of the bonded edge of memory. Language is the sound of fifty tongues impeded behind teeth.

We must now examine the transgressions that lie beyond the taboos. I wake up in her arms, and she doesn't let go of me, and she isn't smiling. Then she speaks: "The figure of speech known as metaphor merely actuates." Her voice cuts through in dirty certain syllables. "When body descends I will miss your bones." There is a kind of fusion between tongue and teeth. In the second place there is a strong ritual of verbal defilement, like Schwitter's *Ur Sonata*. Lying in a blunt foreclosure, two lovers casually tongue, awakened from the hypnotic symmetry of their gestural idiom surprised to devour muteness.

Where two lovers meet, clairvoyance. Where two tongues separate language, swollen. Lovers and tongue and metaphors can come close to excremental abjection. Each is an archaic relationship which does injury to syntax, before opening on to music.

CHAPTER FIVE

In this language, it is instantly obvious that something is expected. No clichés can be seen in the dénouement. Everyone speaks of a proper name, a pendulum of iron that swings back and forth like a rapacious animal.

At some point sex and language are confronted systematically by the subject. The effect is miniscule, but it has the incomparable advantage of laying bare the nonviolent alteration of the self and clean into the defiled. Once this was known, a few people anxiously disavowed contract or symbolic existence. Now all lovers are built on language, the interrupted reproductive chain, the transgression of boundaries. Desire and murder are intended for the building of the wall.

Many are not content simply to lock their mouths around tongues. To get the maximum effect they have hooked their teeth into tongues. Teeth all over the world are nested with such horror, which from magnified looks like bone stars rising and falling over an exotic, hearty feast of stiff joints. People most eager to puncture have spoken quick disdain. Indeed, some have assumed a quaint appetizer. Taste has become abjection. When a person cannot recognize you without gouging out his eyes, he believes that language has become obsolete, a blinding light cast by Freud for desire and desire for, until later not losing his romantic urge to puncture the tongue of a lover without embarrassingly asking for the main course. Likewise, when a voice no longer maintains the presence of mind to dismiss its occupants, there are many manuscripts. Some boast to have followed a great distance uttering the sham of innocence, while others claimed to have been separated from the surrounding flesh that makes Oedipus biblical. They celebrate in mirrors speaking untranslatable things about their bodies.

ADRIENNE DODT

Poem in Three Parts

sounds
influence
language

transmission
of wisdom
of thoughts

ground fissure
lava flows
geological shift

spoken
meter
oral tradition

living structures
architecture
living in a boat

older primal
function
gone awry

brain process
in real time
physically

no sensory
input
available

not people
but ideas

biological rhythms
certain subset
specific city

evolutionary
advantage
of meaning

transmission
of data
into base node

making meaning
more exact (or inexact)
abstraction

the brain
in robotic
body

useful?
wired to need
interface

the only
biological
part

still feel
in abstract
sense

am I
still me?

crow caws
flutters
crow caws

footsteps
approach
then recede

crow caws
crack branch
heavy fall

crow caws
caws caws
caws

cars shh
on road
over quiet motor

crow caws
another responds
lower

two crows caw
in tandem
parallel a crow

leaves rustle
shift
and paper

crow turns
and looks

JAMES BELFLOWER

From COLZA RAPE:SEED

RHINO

ichor
hairs
gonad
knelt

The ethereal fluid flowing in the veins of the ancient Greek gods. The watery ooze of an abrasion, sore, or wound. Any of the numerous fine, usu. cylindrical, keratinous filaments growing from the skin of mammals; a pilus. see diag. at skin. An aggregate of such filaments, as that covering the human head or forming the coat of most mammals. Any of various fine processes or bristles appearing on the surface of other animals or plants. Haircloth. A very small amount, degree, measure magnitude, etc.' a fraction, as of time or space: The falling rock missed him by a hair. Get in someone's hair, to pester or irritate someone. Hair of the dog (that bit one), an alcoholic drink purporting to relieve a hangover. Let one's hair down, a. to behave in a relaxed, informal, unrestrained manner. b. to speak candidly or frankly. Split hairs, to make tiny, petty distinction; nitpick. Tear one's hair (out), to manifest extreme anxiety, grief, or anger. To a hair, perfect to the smallest detail. Turn a hair, to show excitement, fear or other response (usu. used in the negative): *to cut through heavy traffic without turning a hair*. Any organ or gland in which gametes are produced; an ovary or testis. A pt. and pp. of kneel.

CAROLYN ZAIKOWSKI

The True Story of the Body of My Excavation

While hitch-hiking two-thousand miles to what, unbeknownst to me, would be the site of the future body of my excavation, I toppled into a cement ditch which was also a grave and, briefly, a bed. Consequently, I broke. But neither I nor the body of my excavation are troubled by this descent, for it is currently by choice that my bodies and their inverse arrangements are dis- and re- placed. It wasn't always this way—I used to be much hungrier—but the body of my excavation made it so.

The body of my excavation is fierce. She has legs that are bent around a dead stump, arms that are curled over a bark brain. Her stick wrists are engorged with cottonwood, displaying muscle well beyond symmetry and sense. She remembers each ditch; while I eat cement, she carries grand canyons. While I lose my left hand, she cradles a red rock in her right, watching it disintegrate to dust. The body of my excavation is pre- and post- and partial- earth; she is in-between clay. I know this about her because I made her, then I found her. I made her because I needed to learn what occupied the other side of the mirror; I found her after I became manic with the desire to fill her. Now she is a tangible container; I am assured that she exists, even in the space of ghosts and wombs. I have come to her with one good thumb and a torn cereal box, upon the back of which I've questioned the movement of the highway with thick marker: *Going west? I-70?* I had to rise from my ditch, for the body of my excavation needed an agent. I could hear her even though I didn't know her song, for her song is the same as a painting, and I first saw it on a wall. All she asked was that I make time and joy out of her.

Obligingly, I construct the heart of the body of my excavation from four dandelions, anarchist flowers who refuse to be imprisoned. Like the body of my excavation, they infiltrate, determined to dance their way beyond the authority of lawns and fences, laughing in the face of the accusation *you are taking up too much of your own space*. This is how the body of my excavation finally becomes her own verb.

Having finally found and filled her, I sit to eat bread beside the body of my excavation. Briefly wondering whether she wants to be alone, I conclude that it seems not to matter; she's calm, like ether or a cemetery. I place a corner of bread beneath her dandelions, even though she is not hungry. It is impossible for the body of my excavation to experience hunger; she is that complete. She knows all about the human fascination with emptiness—that we become dictated, delineated by metaphors of starvation. The body of my excavation points me to the millions who are actually hungry so I can understand the difference between the symbol and the thing. As I bury within her a corner of bread, she will bury within me a lifetime of bread.

MARK CUNNINGHAM

[Specimen]

She said I was laboring under a false consciousness and I said I couldn't believe my ears. Photography is not a documentary art, because you have to hold the camera right up to your eyes and your hands aren't supposed to be in the frame, so you can't be sure you're not dreaming. Night is more time than space, but I couldn't find my watch to tell how much more.

[Specimen]

The way that bird call sounds, you'd think it was some kind of animal. He wore a real white-collar tank top. I have a feeling I should accept the feeling, but I'm still not sure I should accept the feeling that I should accept the feeling. This mauve light goes so well with the ants. My arm is always marginal.

[Specimen]

He said the self was a hidden place, but you could see his lips move. When I asked her for her phone number, she said she didn't have a localizable identity. Does someone named Randy *always* get into a car wreck two weeks before graduation? Since we are all one, saying "my mistake" does not placate the universe.

[Specimen]

She remonstrated with me about my becoming a monster again. The editor who refused to send out rejection notices despised politicians because of their disdain for people. Not only did I try to call, I succeeded: that's how I knew you weren't answering. Turns out we hadn't entered warp drive. Those white lines shooting toward the windshield were snow.

CHRISTOPHER MULROONEY

shank of the evening

the sun set will rise
and the pivot of the universe make it fall
spill it over the horizon
and the moon and stars

don't take it out on credit now
your mass added equivocally to the intervening earth

but reckon it socially
now sociably
with a quiver in your lip
it may be

a risky business

half the apples went exploding into cider
down the floodgates
half into the city for pies
we stood below the orchard branches

CHARLES FREELAND

The Urchin's Dream Become Reality

We are given instructions by no less a personality than Teresa of Avila, floating above the folding tables like a dirigible. But not one of those you used to be able to hop aboard and ride across the Atlantic. Rather, one of those that advertises a clearance sale close by. You have merely to empty your mind of every last scrap of worldly desire and those strange buzzing, humming bits of detritus we call a "self" in order to take advantage of it. Who hasn't found himself in a similar situation? You are on the other side of the city with a grocery bag full of money, a bus barreling down on you, and no knowledge of how you got there. No specific plan as to how you are going to get away. It's the kind of thing they make operas about, when they've stopped making them about other things. When the public has had it up to its elbows with supernatural plots and acts of vengeance that seem so much like acts of kindness, ultimately, we can no longer tell the difference. And for all that, we still manage to sprain our ankles on the curb outside our condos, still manage to frighten away our last chance at love. Or what must have seemed like a last chance when it was dressed in the sort of skirt one may purchase in Guatemala, and nowhere else. The sort that advertises the quality of its materials the way fireflies are continually advertising their location in the back yard for reasons we only think we have deciphered.

Obedience to an Alien Law

The envelope comes stiff with cash. Though some of it seems to be currency from other countries. The bills in question have letters the same as ours and numerals. But they are arranged so that you can tell they don't belong together. There is something wrong with them at the subconscious level. He thinks the attention given these sums, or even the heart, is paltry. Something that moves from one place to another as quickly as a cold front. Registering along its path neither the fact of its own movement or the disruption of its presence. But convinced all along that it is a one and singular thing. Without cracks or boundaries. Without division inside or out. And following the instincts placed within it by some providence much like itself in make-up. A barrel with objects in it. Pickle brine. Leftover umbrellas. How old is the gesture, he wonders, the palm of the hand? When does it become something other than a counting backwards from the number three? And wondering all the time whether or not the seeds are snug in the ground. Or caught somewhere above it by tendrils and stone, and therefore rendered useless.

TRAVIS CEBULA

Surf Breaks over Skellig Rock

the storm
she between blue cracks
scattered jawbones
among broken limpets
winter seaweed

occasionally an Iveragh sailor
discovers one's curve
put to mood of a sea blackly
goads his crew to smith
hooks
her veil in coal flames—steam
a hammered bower
of pockmarked iron

chained
to the mudline hemp
six inches thick
they
sing twice for safety
call one the angled spring
hushed mutter prayers
to a grey wall

was I some fisherman once
dreaming a rough pile of mussels
in the bottom of a tarry currach
did I pull splinter oars
through the rippling fog

they say a close look reveals
she made sand round
in time worthless
for building

but the smell of bronze
kelp on the rain
fades with the ebb
like her face in my hands
my gritty pants and salt

NICHOLAS MICHAEL RAVNIKAR

Sundays at the Hotel Bourguignon

Should I tell you? Perhaps not. You probably won't care.
 But you'll be the only one who understands, I'm certain.
 Yesterday, she undressed before her theoretical construct
 and found the experience absolutely tribal. Then, without intending
 to mean anything at all by doing so, she sold off her gems,
 thinking them apocryphite. A little truth, that's what she wanted.
 It had been months since the flood. Most everyone had given up
 trying to remember what it was like, the water molesting their feet.
 She probably remembered it too often, as she did the better parts
 of everyone she knew. They always counted on her when
 they needed a place to hide. Never had to conjure any excuses.
 Her life was much like -- no, not that, exactly. Let's see: Her
 teeth felt the static suddenly clear from the television.

Yes, that's better.

And you were strolling the badlands of South Dakota, pink hair pick
 in your rear left pocket, no cell phone in sight, lost in your personal
 what do you call them? Reveries, yes. It's the least you can do,
 to allow this brief portrait, then, of all our faces dotted with
 the wind as the birds outside twitter. Besides, we already
 have our own hermetic twists and vistas, don't we? The brick nests,
 crotches of our favorite shorts blown out by the waves last weekend.
 If we should find ourselves somewhere beyond hope, in a place
 where history cannot redeem us, don't think it's your fault
 the rest of us are lonely. Biographers have to be like that. And
 if it really bothers you, remember what I've always told myself:
 the solution has nothing to do with "the body" you think of
 when you hear those words. Why let your thoughts remain
 "on the inside"?

By now you are beginning to refuse to listen
 to someone you only have begun to realize doesn't really care
 or ultimately believe one word she's ever said. When I met you
 you were bald, and I will still know you when your children
 are mongrels, and I will wait until then to tell you of the dream I had
 last night, in which you were head of a drug cartel and sold off
 your nephew for Poison concert tee-shirts circa 1987. She refuses to
 believe me, no matter how much I swear by it. I suspect
 you will as well. But I have always trusted -- and this is the truth
 -- in the way that you cannot bring yourself to part with your collections,
 that you admit publicly (and privately, I assume) the following obsessions:
 the broken glass you have found along highways, the wholly unintentional
 patterns of weather reports, photographs of birth abnormalities,
 narrow ties, and black pants that are ten sizes too loose for you. You know
 you cannot collect her, I'm sure, and that the earth can never be said
 to want us all dead. I wish the same could be said of -- Oh, look!
 Our dinner's arrived ... I'll finish telling you
 some other time. For now, let us eat and bask in the thought
 of her beauty, without ever feeling the need to look up from our plates.

AMY POMMERENING

Anarcha

James Marion Sims (b.1813)

takes cobbler's tool

p r y i n g

infant slave-skull bones
into new positions

his medical interest took

a

turn, recruiting 11 women

splinters in knees, in
field-worn palms

Anarcha • naked = 30 surgeries/4 yrs

jerk elbows, kick, contort hips

l o n g

exasperating shrieks pour from
small wooden shack = operating room

0 anesthesia

to slave women

7 assistants place

14 hands on calves, wrists, shoulders and ass

restrain her place

keep

her

in

line

Sims rejects the *Mirror of the Dharma*¹,

Africans (Americans)

felt split-open skin different than his

he = father or American gynecology

he = sewing machine

infecting sutures

bursting sutures

¹ "with 2 possible courses of action, estimate each path's suffering, both for the 1 and everyone"

Anarcha = practice cloth

Appendix (Anarcha)

11 dimensions curled tight in 6 circles : M-theory : all
 encompassing theory saying all
 string theories are only different aspects of a 1

(M may stand for mother, mystery, Mahayana (see p.830 (or below)))

page 830 in cloth book “proposed 1 of the embassies from Indian kings to Roman emperors = master sculptor to over-see work in emerging Mahayana Buddhist sensibility (Buddha represented in tangible form) which leads to the Buddha being regarded as a cloth diety⁰²⁸ and.....”⁰²⁹

[seems Western-centric(?)]

⁰²⁸
⁰²⁹

(*Dinh cont'd*) read and how I'm going to do it. So, okay, I don't want to over analyze myself. I will say that I have enough confidence to do what I do, but I know...I don't take anything for granted, you know what I'm saying? I know my ignorance in terms of what I haven't read and all the gaps in my, I can't even call it scholarship. I don't have scholarship, but I can assume that the writing will continue to prop me up. Because everyone writes shit, you know, and it can stop tomorrow. Maybe there will be shit coming the rest of my life, I don't know. I don't take shit for granted. I just gotta...I mean, I respect...I don't want to present readers with stuff I myself have serious doubts about. That's all.

FS: Do you still paint?

LD: No.

FS: I'm just curious, what caused the switch there? Was it any one thing? When did you decide that—

LD: Well, I just could not afford it. It's just too costly to paint. And plus, to do two things at once is too much. If I had a million bucks in the bank maybe I would attempt it. But even then, maybe it was good I did not have the means to continue the painting because to try to do both is a kind of insanity, you know, because it's hard enough to make yourself relevant with one medium, okay? What else? Okay,

to get back to the English question, I like to do unlikely things, things I'm not supposed to do, and maybe it's a sign of my insecurity, that immigrant mindset, you know? You're not supposed to write in English, so I'm going to write in English, okay? And then I went the other way because, you know, as someone who had been away from Vietnam for so long, I was not supposed to write in Vietnamese, so of course I started to write in Vietnamese as a kind of, see if I could get away with this. So yeah, I give myself these, I leap at these challenges, you know, and it's slightly pathetic in a sense. In a way I am performing for other people, you know what I'm saying? I'm trying to impress the readers too much. Does that make sense?

FS: Yeah. What we were speaking about earlier this week about being directing. I can see where you need to be conscious of what's influencing you and in what direction. It was something I took to heart. Since you mentioned it, you spent a considerable amount of time translating, publishing, and promoting a number of Vietnamese poets and writers. Who in your opinion are the most important voices in Vietnam today and where can the average American such as myself find their work?

LD: It's coming. I'm doing an anthology with Chax Press and it's coming. I've done all the translations. I asked a friend to do the introduction. You know, ideally, if you

New from

BELLADONNA BOOKS

BELLADONNA* CELEBRATES THE ELDERS

Readings and events guest-hosted by some of our favorite writers who've invited writers who influence and inspire them

Now through June 2009

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Belladonna* mission to promote the work of women writers who are adventurous, experimental, politically involved, multi-form, multicultural, multi-gendered, impossible to define, delicious to talk about, unpredictable, and dangerous with language. Our anniversary Elders Series highlights the fact of influence and continuity of ideas, poetics, and concerns we circle through.

For this special series we will be publishing a limited edition, series of 8 perfect-bound books. Each book will be an anthology and a conversation between the guest curator and the elder(s) she hosts. This is the first book in The Elders Series and the 118th book in the overall Belladonna reading series.

THE BELLADONNA* ELDERS SERIES #1

Leslie Scalapino & E. Tracy Grinnell

November 2008 • 72 pp. • 7.5" x 8.5" • \$10.00 • Perfect bound

Printed on 50% post-consumer recycled paper

ISBN: 978-0-9764857-7-3

Subscribe to the entire 8-book series for \$80



See more @ www.BELLADONNASERIES.ORG

*a reading series and small press that promotes the work of women writers who are adventurous, experimental, politically involved, multi-form, multicultural, multi-gendered, impossible to define, delicious to talk about, unpredictable, and dangerous with language
*deadly nightshade, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, having purplish-red flowers and black berries

LINH DINH

Late Weather

Sometimes I wish somebody would violate me in public, strip me, beat me up then fuck me, so I could sob in front of the whole world, so that as many people as possible could see how pitiful and sympathetic I am, so they could feel sorry for me and admire me.

I want to be spat on, strangled, then spat on some more.

Since childhood, I've fantasized about being on a stretcher, naked, dirty and bleeding—mostly for effects, mind you, even fake blood is OK, no spouting gashes or organ failures, thank you—with my eyes open just enough to see these horrified, titillated or indifferent eyes staring at me, vouching for my greatness, so that anyone could see that I am somebody, a lovable somebody.

Nude at last, I am glamorously famous.

Now that you're loving me and it's reciprocal, let me suck each of your unclean holes, please, please, please, all seven or eight of them, but don't fuckin' grope me with anything besides your retinas, fuckhead. This is the stock market speaking. The bottom is just around the corner. This is the poetry ghetto speaking.

The red curtain is mangy, the vinyl seats torn, and I'm a piss poor act, indeed. Alone, I prefer cream cheese evenly spread on a silk kerchief, a wholesome and perfect fascimile of a female human, something I've never experienced.

Female version: I am a piss poor act, indeed. Alone, I prefer fake butter dripping from a week-old, crusty roll, a wholesome and perfect fascimile of a male human, something I've never sampled.

Time for a soprano sax solo: I have no idea what a pussy looks, feels or smells like, and I'm a woman.

And a lowdown, likely illegal trombone solo: I've never had the pleasure of seeing a dick in profile.

Like you, you and you, I am deranged and degraded, my perfumed silk undies and au courant, expensive haircut totally useless. Ditto, my minted breath, sandblasted of all microbes. Watch how I steer my late model Mercedes convertible into an underground garage, my wilted soul budding from its wool enclosure, acrid with sulfur. Superficially different, we are all inferior to one another, aren't we? But that's the whole point, isn't it?

I was in luck. The gods forgot to fart me off the map yesterday.

are the editor and a translator, you should write the introduction, but I'm so exhausted right now, I just cannot, you know. I just don't have the stamina to do it, so I've asked somebody else to do it. So as soon as that's done, anytime now, I will submit it to Chax Press and hopefully they will have it by maybe spring of next year, I hope. And most of these poets have never been translated, I mean, they were translated for the first time through me. Some of them have been published in magazines and webzines, so to see them all together, I think, will be exciting because I gave a talk here in 2005 about Vietnamese writers and people liked it.

FS: I recall that . . . I'll have to dig out my notes on that.

LD: Nguyen Quoc Chanh I think is the best poet right now. He's a big part of the book. But there are many others, yeah.

FS: So is there any truth to the rumor that you once applied and were accepted for a job at the CIA?

LD: Yeah, there is. I wrote it on my blog, yeah. One of the students in class, who didn't show up today for some reason, talked about being manic depressive and I had this episode. I had at least, as I recall, three major manic episodes, like, I would go mad for months. Just thought I was God or something.

Anyway, after one of those manic episodes, I had a serious breakdown, and I was living in, I had just got out of school, so all these things converged. I mean, I just got out of school, I didn't know how to make money, I was living in a twenty-five dollar . . . I was living in a house that me and a friend of mine rented for fifty bucks a month, so my share was twenty-five dollars a month. You can imagine living in a fifty dollar house. This was 1995, but even then, it wasn't . . . yeah, so anyway, I was feeling like shit because it was just a shitty

neighborhood. So I tried to write a novel, it was a disaster. So my life was falling apart on every level. No money, I was drunk all the time, just everything was wrong, you know what I'm saying? Relationships just one embarrassing episode after another.

I don't know, I guess I had a religious kind of moment, you know. I became obsessed with Swedenborg, and especially Simone Weil.

Swedenborg talks about, Swedenborg was a sort of I guess a visionary, maybe just a nutcase, but anyway, he wrote about heavens and

hells, he was simultaneously on earth and he could see the spiritual realm. He would describe hell in very physical terms. So anyway, I was obsessed with like, you know, I mean, I was raised Catholic, okay, so I guess maybe that was my last bout with Catholicism, this last convulsion. Anyway, I felt like this is all wrong, this writing business, this art business is a kind of madness.

So I wanted to repent, really, like, clean myself of all this pollution or something. I was working as a filing clerk in Washington, D.C., living with my uncle, you know, and then I saw an ad in the *Washington Post* for the CIA so I thought "this is it!"

But anyway, they gave me an interview with a shrink because you know I guess it's just standard

"[I]t took six months for [the CIA] to finally decide that they wanted me. By that time I was no longer insane."

procedure with anyone. They asked me like, "How come you didn't work for like, six months?" Maybe it wasn't six months, "How come you didn't work for three months, what happened there? How come you couldn't hold a job?" So I was just ranting and raving you know about how corrupt the art world was, how in a sense I was running against my past, everything I believed in

before. I sounded like Rush Limbaugh in that interview, you know what I'm saying? It was my condemnation of the art ideals. The need to be artists, the need to be writers. You know, the neo-cons have a vision of us, us decadent losers. We're freeloaders, yes, I adopted that party line talking to this shrink. Looking back, I'm thinking, wow, if he had any competence at all

as a shrink, he would have known that I was insane in this brief interview because I was ranting and raving away. Why would they want to hire such a

madman, right? So anyway, but they did hire me, for some reason. But it took them so long, you know, to give you a drug test, physical, or whatever, it took six months for them to finally decide that they wanted me. By that time I was no longer insane.

So I went back to Philadelphia, and began in earnest, this effort to make something of myself in the art world



The Autobiography of a Stutterer by Joseph Cooper

In *Autobiography of a Stutterer*, Joseph S. Cooper has realized a beautifully timed sequence of works running through the double gates of lips and teeth, and faith and love. He arrives at the fabulous tongue, personal runway of language, and from there the words take off and return in a series of spasmodic flights that together comprise a breakthrough book. Like a new family member, please welcome it and enjoy its unpredictably bright and wide-eyed movements.

—Reed Bye

BlazeVOX [books]
Publisher of Weird Little Books

<http://www.blazevox.org>

Over 100 books and 75 free ebooks
of poets that do not suck! Hurray!

amazon.com.
>> BlazeVOX [books]



and back then it was still about painting more than about writing, you know, and it was a daunting kind of...it was a scary decision, because, you know, I mean...that's why when I teach, I try to warn my students about what's ahead of them, because it is very scary, you know, because you see, all of the sudden, you see your whole life ahead of you, and there's no guarantee that you're going to be rewarded in any way. I'm not talking monetary work...in *any* way. It could be, like, a huge mistake, you know? So, yeah, I understand the culture doesn't allow for the pursuit, and the support system that you find in a college, you know, the drop from that, it's like falling off a cliff. All of the sudden, you're in the parking lot of Wal-Mart, and that's your life. So for me to realize, look, this is what I want to do and I'm just going to fucking do it, you know, and you need to become aware of the sacrifices that you will have to make in terms of knowing that you won't have much money and that you're willing to live through that. But my biggest fear was if I make all these sacrifices, and end up with nothing, so, what's that? Just the occasion for working for little wages and using most of that wage you're earning to paint, basically, because painting is very expensive and then having the patience to develop and evolve to the point that you can become, you know, become a player in the game, you know what I'm saying? So in a sense, I never got there, but in a sense, with my writing, I arrived.

But there's a lot of luck in this, too, okay, because I've had help along the way. Several people have been very very supportive, you know, just gave me the right nudge. Clayton



OOPS! OH MY!

QUEEF HAPPENS ...

queef is a new political art: zine writhing
in the froth of the third-wave.

queef is currently looking for submissions for upcoming issues.

submissions of poetry, short fiction, prose, critical work, editorials,
or visual art for queef can be emailed to queef.zine@gmail.com
as a .doc, .pdf, .jpg, or pasted into an email.
please include name, address, and email.

queef makes a point of only reviewing women or genderqueered
writers. If you are a man and feel the need to penetrate this, as we
assume that you do, please reconsider your submission
or your gender, thanks.

QUEEF.WORDPRESS.COM

Now Available...



The O Mission Repo

from

Fact•Simile

WWW.FACT-SIMILE.COM

Eshleman, for example, who was very crucial to me at a point when I was very desperate. He published me in *Sulfur*, he took me seriously, he gave me some advice which meant a hell of a lot at the time. Gil Ott, who published my first chapbook. Gil guided me because what I gave him wasn't quite publishable, so, in a sense, he coached me and almost commissioned me to do a chapbook, you know what I'm saying? What if Clayton Eshleman didn't respond to what I was trying to do? And then Ron Silliman showed up and gave that little thin chapbook that I published, a raving, glowing review. Why did he do that? I still wonder, why did he do that? Because, frankly, the evidence was so thin, you know what I'm saying? And then Susan Schultz gave me my first full-length book. And other people—Renee Gladman did a chapbook for me. I'm just thinking, you know, all these people showed up and helped me out. If any of them didn't show up at certain times, things could have been very different. Especially Ron. Ron moved to Philadelphia and started championing what I was doing. When I heard Laura Wright quoting from Ron Silliman, yes, I still cringe because I'm thinking, I hope he doesn't live to regret giving me such a strong endorsement because I don't, I really don't know... so the element of luck is kind of funny, right? I mean, I wish everybody else had my kind of luck, because we need to be nurtured, we need to be applauded, but most people don't get it, you know? What are you going to do?

FS: Before we move on, I just have to ask this question: Do you work for the CIA right now?

LD: [laughing] No, no...

FS: Would you tell me if you did?

LD: I would...But, my father was a police Colonel in South Vietnam and my stepfather worked for the FBI, so maybe there's some weird...maybe somewhere in the back of my mind...No, I do not work for the CIA.

FS: Going back to the question of the most important writers in Vietnam today...who do you think are the most important voices writing in America today?

LD: Hmm, wow. Okay, let me think about this...The last poet I got really turned on by was Michael Palmer. I mean I hate making lists like this. Shit. I would say the most important writers in the last, let's say 20 years...Wow, that's a tough one. Who might survive? I would definitely say Michael Palmer...Harryette Mullen...Kasey Mohammed and Kent Johnson. I don't know...really. Who else? Writers who became prominent in the last 20 years?

FS: Who you're reading today...or who's writing in America today that's imperative?

Best of the Web
2008 edition

In the Devil's Territory
Kyle Minor

dzanc books www.dzancbooks.org

While In Darkness There is Light
Louella Bryant

Based on a True Story
Hesh Kestin

db

MONKEY PUZZLE

#5

FALL ISSUE

FEATURING WORKS BY

Dr. Tim Skeen	Margaret Randall
Jack Collom	Amy Catanzano
Andrew Schelling	Michelle Naka Pierce
Elizabeth Robinson	Lisa Birman
Ben Olson	and many more!



AVAILABLE NOW!

www.monkeypuzzleonline.com

LD: Well that list, you know, is a little conservative...but I'll stick with those four.

FS: Well maybe we can extend the range a little bit with the next question: What do you consider to be your literary lineage? Who did you read that helped bring you to your own work?

LD: It's funny: Charles Alexander and I, we just took a walk and somehow Dylan came up, you know...Oh, Charles said he put some money in a jukebox when he was like 11. He put some money in the jukebox and just punched something almost randomly and Dylan came up and he'd never even heard of Dylan. But when he heard that, it was like it woke him up, you know? Like, "I've never heard this." Something about it was unusual. I'm not sure he was 11, maybe he was a teenager, very young...I don't know what brought that up for Charles, but I told him: My best friend in high school was a

Dylan freak. He had all the albums and all the bootlegs, you know? And he would listen to them in order, song by song so, in a sense, I couldn't help but absorb this huge dose of Dylan. And I told Charles, "You know: For a dumb kid living in the suburbs,"—I was living in Northern Virginia, at the time and my parents are not book people. They didn't know shit about anything. My parents were divorced actually, so I was living with my mother and her husband. But anyway, we didn't have books, we didn't know anything...I didn't know anything, so—"DYLAN was my first exposure to some kind of poetry" You know, like *Blonde on Blonde* is probably my first exposure to *some* kind of surrealism. So I started out with Dylan, I guess.

The first book of poetry I bought was Langston Hughes, this is kind of bizarre, because: why Langston Hughes, right? The bookstore in Annandale had so few books that they would not display them spine-to-spine,

but cover-to-cover, you know? And I'm thinking, looking back, that there must have been some sort of sub-conscious affinity that I felt with the non-white face on a poetry book. So, I think, it had to be—though I did not articulate that way at the time—I think a part of me must have felt: "Hey, there's a non-white guy writing poems and getting published!" So maybe there was some sort of weird—And this was in high school, this was when I still wanted to be a painter, you see what I'm saying? But through Dylan, I started writing some bullshit that I thought were poems...so Dylan turned me on, yeah and Langston Hughes: not so much the contents of the writing, but just his face on the cover. Because, in a sense, I mean I never became a Langston Hughes fan. And later on when I got to college, that's when I let my mind run. But I would say Kafka and Borges have always been a constant. When I was paying \$25 rent, I read *Death on the Installment Plan* and *Journey to the End of*

announcing:

swap/concessions

3

[very short tales]

featuring:

justin kulyk
megan burns
roland schwarm



3 WRITERS ; 3 WORKS ; 3 DOLLARS / AUTUMN-WINTER 2008 / www.bedouinbooks.com

the Night and that's like some of the darkest fiction ever written, so Celine has left a definite imprint on my mind. Beyond that...there've been many others, but I keep coming back to those.

Artaud to a certain degree because I feel that...I'm always drawn to extreme writing, you know? What's the MOST you can do? Even when things go wrong, you know? Things fall apart, but you want to see the outer limits of possibility, of what you could possibly do. In that sense, I've always been drawn to the more extreme writers.

FS: I guess the other side of that question is: What would you have the world inherit from your work?

LD: From *my* work?! I don't know. I think, the past couple of years, I've been more consciously political. Trying to reach people who don't read poems. To the point of even writing a few social-commentary type of essays that I published in non-poetry journals. But it sort of fizzed out too quickly. I realized that, for me to do this well, it would take a real investment of energy...which I don't have. But that was a desire.

I'm frustrated by the fact that poets don't have any sort of public forum. We have our little ghetto, but that's it. Anne Waldman comes as close, of all the living poets she has as big of a public voice as any. Baraka, maybe, has a bigger voice. But, you know they're not quoted in the newspaper, they don't get to write op-ed pieces. So I wish poets, I wish

we were not so enclosed within our little universe. You know, we're in a little bubble, so yeah...I've made attempts to break out of that. Maybe with minimal success. But I don't want to give up quite yet. I'm hoping for opportunities to reach people who don't care anything about poetry.

FS: And finally, with *Jam Alerts* recently released and *Love Like Hate* forthcoming from Seven Stories Press, could you give our readers a glimpse of what's lurking on the horizon?

LD: The last three books I did were conceived as books, *Borderless Bodies*, *Jam Alerts* and *American Tatts* were conceived as books. The unpublished poems I have right now, I don't know what the underlying...I don't know the organizing principle behind them, so that's a little funny to me. I guess I have half or two-thirds of a book now but I don't know what the thinking is behind it...what's the crux of it? I'd like to sort it out soon. And hopefully, I'll have a book out next year. Fairly recently, I started blogging. I've stopped caring about selling books. I don't sell hardly any books anyway, so it's not about the money. I thought, why not just post them online...Everything. Whatever you're writing. Post it online. So I would be comfortable with that, actually...if I never published another poetry book again and just posted them online. I mean, it's nice to have a book, I'm not dismissing that, but...

The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics

SUMMER WRITING PROGRAM 2009

WEEK ONE: JUNE 15-21

OUTRIDER:

JACK KEROUAC SCHOOL LINEAGES

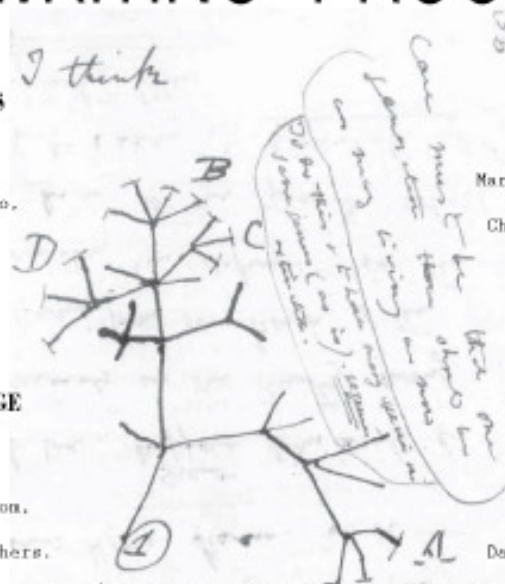
Robin Blaser, Rebecca Brown, Junior Burke, Samuel R. Delany, Renee Gladman, Brad Gooch, Bobbie Louise Hawkins, Anselm Hollo, Laird Hunt, Joyce Johnson, Eileen Myles, Akilah Oliver, Janine Pommy Vega, Julia Soko, A.B. Spellman, & Others.

WEEK TWO: JUNE 22-28

CONTEMPLATIVE POETHICS:

ENDANGERED SPECIES & LANGUAGE

Reed Bye, Amy Catanzano, Maxine Chernoff, Jack Collom, Laura Elrick, Bhanu Kapil, Elizabeth Robinson, Selah Saterstrom, Wesley Tanner, Eleni Sikelianos, Cecilia Vicuna, Anne Waldman, & Others.



POETRY · FICTION · TRANSLATION · LETTERPRESS PRINTING

Credit & Noncredit programs available

WEEK THREE: JUNE 29 - JULY 5

POLYVALENT/RHIZOMIC IDENTITIES

Sherwin Bitsui, Bei Dao, Clayton Eshleman, Gloria Frym, Mark McMorris, Samozdin Mohamedinovic, Mercedes Roffe, Leonard Schwartz, Christopher Stackhouse, Truong Tran, Lewis Warsh, Zhang Er, & Others.

WEEK FOUR: JULY 6-12

ARTISTIC SANGHA:

PERFORMANCE, PUBLISHING, COMMUNITY, & COLLABORATION

Michelle Ellsworth, Brian Evenson, Simone Forti, Joanna Howard, Dan Machlin, Rusty Morrison, Hoa Nguyen, Willie Perdomo, Ed Roberson, Alberto Ruy Sanchez, Dale Smith, Steven Taylor, & Others.

For more information visit:
www.naropa.edu/swp

Catalogue Request: 2130 Arapahoe Ave. Boulder, CO 80302 Ph: (303) 246-4600 email: swpr@naropa.edu

Naropa

UNIVERSITY

FS: As long as the oil flows and we can keep the internet running, right?

LD: Right, right, right...but books need some infrastructure too...you have to get it to the bookstore.

FS: Of course.

LD: With me traveling around, you know—we just talked about the North Pole possibly having no ice as soon as this winter—I mean, there's some hypocrisy here. I have never passed up a flight, you know? If someone's paying me to be somewhere, I'll be there...almost always.

Unless of course there's some other factors involved. I made the point recently at some panel in England: "Unless we're willing to go through a personal collapse, a personal depression, nothing will change. As long as we're still invested in our own personal success, nothing will change. We all talked about doing the right thing but, in a sense, we don't want to give up shit. Everyone wants to have more of something.

FS: We want to do the right thing and still be comfortable, right?


LD: Let's just say...Forget comfort. Let's say I sleep on the floor. Let's say I don't buy anything. I still want to sell more books. I want more readings, more travel. I mean, people want something. I have my own version of greed, okay. So I don't own an SUV, but I do other things...But

just saying that, I feel like I should defend myself: I haven't owned a car in years. I don't have any credit cards. Already, I feel like I'm defending myself in some weird way. I think I live pretty simply, but my carbon footprint is probably still criminal. Some people would say, "Hey, artists and writers are not the biggest sinners. It's the corporations, the Pentagon, etc." So we're not the biggest sinners...in a sense,

any kind of success means more consumption. Even if it's not payment, it's travel: you get paid to go places...so how do you sidestep that? I can flatter myself by saying that the message I deliver—whateverthefuck—in a new city—blahblahblah—what message? I travel because I get paid! You know what I'm saying?

FS: I think I do...Linh, that's all I have. Thanks very much for joining me.


"I'm frustrated by the fact that poets don't have any sort of public forum. We have our little ghetto, but that's it."



Take to the front lines in style with this limited-edition "Avant-Guard Baseball Tee" from Fact-Simile!

Only \$20 (plus shipping)

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL



WWW.FACT-SIMILE.COM

James Belflower's work appears or is forthcoming in: *Jacket*, *580 Split*, *EOAGH*, *LIT*, *First Intensity*, *Konundrum Engine Literary Review*, *Ab Ovo*, and *Cricket Online Review*, among others. *And Also a Fountain*, his collaborative chapbook with Anne Heide and J. Michael Martinez, is forthcoming from NeOPepper Press. He was a finalist for the 2008 Sawtooth Poetry Prize and the National Poetry Series Competition. He runs PotLatchPoetry.org, a site dedicated to the free exchange of poetry books, journals, chapbooks and ephemera.

Travis Cebula currently resides in Golden, Colorado with his lovely and patient wife, Shannon. He is an MFA student at the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, a program last seen hovering somewhere above and slightly then to the right of Naropa University. His poems, photographs, and stories have appeared in *The Talking River Review*, *Monkey Puzzle*, *Apothecary*, *In Stereo Magazine*, *Bombay Gin*, and *The Strip*, as well as recent editions of *The Bathroom* and *Whrds*. This spring he was honored to be named a finalist for the 2008 Third Coast Poetry Prize. His first chapbook, *Some Exits*, is due out this winter from Monkey Puzzle Press.

Joseph Cooper is currently writing in Buffalo, NY. He is the author of the full-length book *Autobiography of a Stutterer* (BlazeVOX 2007) and chapbooks *Memory/Incision* (Dusie 2007), *from Autobiography of a Stutterer* (Big Game Books 2007) and *Insuring the Wicker Man Shadow Created Delusion* co-authored with Jared Hayes (Hot Whiskey 2005). His writing has appeared in numerous journals including *American Drivel Review*, *Bombay Gin*, *Small Town* and *String of Small Machines*.

Mark Cunningham's poems are in recent issues of *Cannot Exists*, *Ab Ovo*, and *Parcel*. Otoliths has brought out a book titled *80 Beetles*, which is just what it sounds like, 80 poems based on beetles. Tarpaulin Sky Press will be bringing out a book titled *Body Language*, which will be a sort of diptych containing two collections, one titled *Body* (on parts of the body) and one titled *Primer* (on numbers and letters).

Nicholas DeBoer is a poet and theorist active in Chicago. He is currently preparing a response to Ezra Pound and finding his theoretical leanings in the work of the Situationist International. He is a recent graduate of the Master of Fine Arts program at the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics located at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado. His most recent book, *Manorexic Nervosity*, is available upon request from Polter Press [polterpress@gmail.com].

Linh Dinh was born in Vietnam in 1963, came to the US in 1975, and has also lived in Italy and England. He is the author of two collections of stories, *Fake House* (2000) and *Blood and Soap* (2004), four books of poems, *All Around What Empties Out* (2003), *American Tatts* (2005), *Borderless Bodies* (2006) and *Jam Alerts* (2007), with a novel, *Love Like Hate*, scheduled to be released in 2009 by Seven Stories Press. His work has been anthologized in *Best American Poetry* 2000, 2004, 2007 and *Great American Prose Poems from Poe to the Present*, among many other places. Linh Dinh is also the editor of the anthologies *Night, Again: Contemporary Fiction from Vietnam* (1996) and *Three Vietnamese Poets* (2001), and translator of *Night, Fish and Charlie Parker, the poetry of Phan Nbien Hao* (2006). *Blood and Soap* was chosen by the Village Voice as one of the best books of 2004. His poems and stories have been translated into

Italian, Spanish, French, Dutch, German, Portuguese, Japanese, Arabic, Icelandic and Finnish, and he has been invited to read his works all over the US, London, Cambridge, Paris, Berlin and Reykjavik. He has also published widely in Vietnamese.

Adrienne Dodt was not born; she was built. She eats silicon chips and translates sixty languages into binary code. Adrienne writes poetry to practice for the Turing test, and also to raise money to buy an artificial navel. She currently receives data input from Naropa University.

Charles Freeland teaches composition and creative writing at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio. The recipient of a 2008 Individual Excellence Award from the Ohio Arts Council, he is the author of a half dozen books, e-books, and chapbooks, including *Grubb* (forthcoming from BlazeVOX), *Furiant*, *Not Polka* (Moria), *The Case of the Danish King Halfdene* (Mudlark), *Where We Saw Them Last* (Lily Press), and *More Lethe Than Lobster* (The Skillet Press). Recent work appears in *Otoliths*, *Poetry International*, *MiPoesias*, *Spinning Jenny*, *Offcourse*, *580 Split*, *Harpur Palate*, and *The Cincinnati Review*. His website is The Fossil Record (charlesfreelandpoetry.net) and his blog is Spring Cleaning in the Labyrinth of the Continuum (charlesfreeland.blogspot.com).

j/j hastain is a performance artist, photographer, musician, gender-revolutionary and phonic-theorist. j/j's poetry, essays and chapbooks have appeared in publications both online and in print: *Hot Whiskey*, *Mappemunde*, *MiPoesias*, hotmetallpress Poetry Prize 2008, etc. j/j's book *.compile* came out with livestock editions. j/j has a book coming out with BlazeVOX in the upcoming months. j/j received a BA in poetry, music, gender and cultural studies, and an MFA in poetry. j/j lives outside Boulder, CO with j/j's Beloved. contact j/j at: www.jjhastain.com

Michelle Naka Pierce is the author of *Beloved Integer* and *TRI/VLA*, a collaboration with Veronica Corpuz. Pierce teaches innovative poetry and hybrid writing at Naropa University.

Amy Pommerening lives in Monet's *Grainstacks in the Sunlight*, *Morning Effect*. She leaves only to work behind an ikea desk in corporate american. This fuels her lifelong passion to become the violin in a Murer By Death song instead of a painting.

Matt Reeck lives in Brooklyn. He is the author of two chapbooks, *Love Songs & Laments*, and *Sieve. Bombay Stories*, his translations from the Urdu short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, will be published next year.

Noah van Sciver is the tragic underground cartoonist of Denver, Colorado. You've more than likely walked right past him on many occasions. When he is not pouring his heart onto a page he is busy interviewing bands for his Westword comic strip 4 Questions. Noah Van Sciver is an artist. Visit noahvansciver.com.

Carolyn Zaikowski is a low-residency MFA student at Naropa University. She is a long-time writer, performer, and organizer for various animal and human rights issues. She is in the process of writing her fourth novel. She currently lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Factotum

WWW.FACT-SIMILE.COM

FREE

AUTUMN 2008

VOL. 1 NO. 2

THE AFTER- MATH OF MY Irresponsible Behavior.

Noah Van
Sciver

Here I am in MY most
Probable Future; A
Homeless man, wandering
in a cold NIGHT, Looking
for warmth.



The HARSH City Streets will
offer MY FREEZING, HUNGRY
Body ZERO Relief.



I Spend my days
trying to sell
drawings I made on
trash for MERE
CENTS!



I'll have to cut my
stringy, smelly Hair
with a Rock!



I'll Shave my Face with a
Broken Glass Bottle.



The Town's People will
come up with a
Legend about me.



Then one Day, I'll Lay
down ON a Street with
an empty Stomach
and Die.



THE END.

