

# Fact•Simile

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FREE

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## FEATURING AN INTERVIEW WITH AND WRITING FROM BRIAN EVENSON

+New work from: Elizabeth Robinson

David Brennan

Peter Grieco

Michelle Disler

Jennifer Karmin

& more

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

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers:

Welcome to Fact-Simile 3.1 Spring/Summer 2010, the fifth installment in our ongoing magazine publishing experiment. With it, we've shifted our gaze slightly in order to correct a rather large oversight in our literary vision: fiction!

While we have always sought, accepted and published quality innovative prose within these pages, it recently came to our attention that the majority of said prose has generally fallen closer to the poetic side of the genre fence. To some extent, this fact has been largely determined by the limited spatial resources of our operation: as an always free, always staple-spined publication, we simply do not have the page count potential to feature as many lengthy fictive tales as our more perfect-bound peers. To an even greater extent, historically speaking, we simply haven't received anywhere near as many submissions of fiction as we have poetry over the past three years. That said, we are always on the lookout for great stories and we're happy to report that we've found a few we'd like to share with you.

First and foremost among these is "Hurlock's Law" from one of the genre's most important contemporary practitioners, Brian Evenson. We recently caught up with Brian on the campus of IAlA (Institute of American Indian Arts) here in Santa Fe, NM where he was a visiting faculty member this past spring. The interview that resulted from this encounter is, much like Evenson's writing, richly detailed, grossly engaging and wonderfully strange.

Of course, as we widen our curatorial lens, we've taken great care to continue showcasing some of what we believe to be some of the finest innovative verse and prose poetry being written in the world today. But, as Reading Rainbow says, you don't take our word for it. Have a look through these pages. (all 60 of them...our most ever!) and discover them for yourself.

As you do so, be sure to keep an eye out for some of the other recent developments here at Fact-Simile like our 2010 Trading Card Series which features a different poet every month with a previously unpublished piece or excerpt on the back of each.

Last but not least, we are pleased to announce the winner of this year's Equinox Chapbook Contest: *Neon Augury* by C. McCallister Williams. Our two runners-up were: *Bonjour Merriwether and the Rabid Maps* by Andrew K. Peterson and *You're Going to Die Jess Wigent* by Jess Wigent. We are extremely excited to see all three of these texts take shape in the coming months.

For now, however, we're very glad you could join us for what promises to be another great issue of Fact-Simile magazine. Without further delay or ado...

Happy Reading,

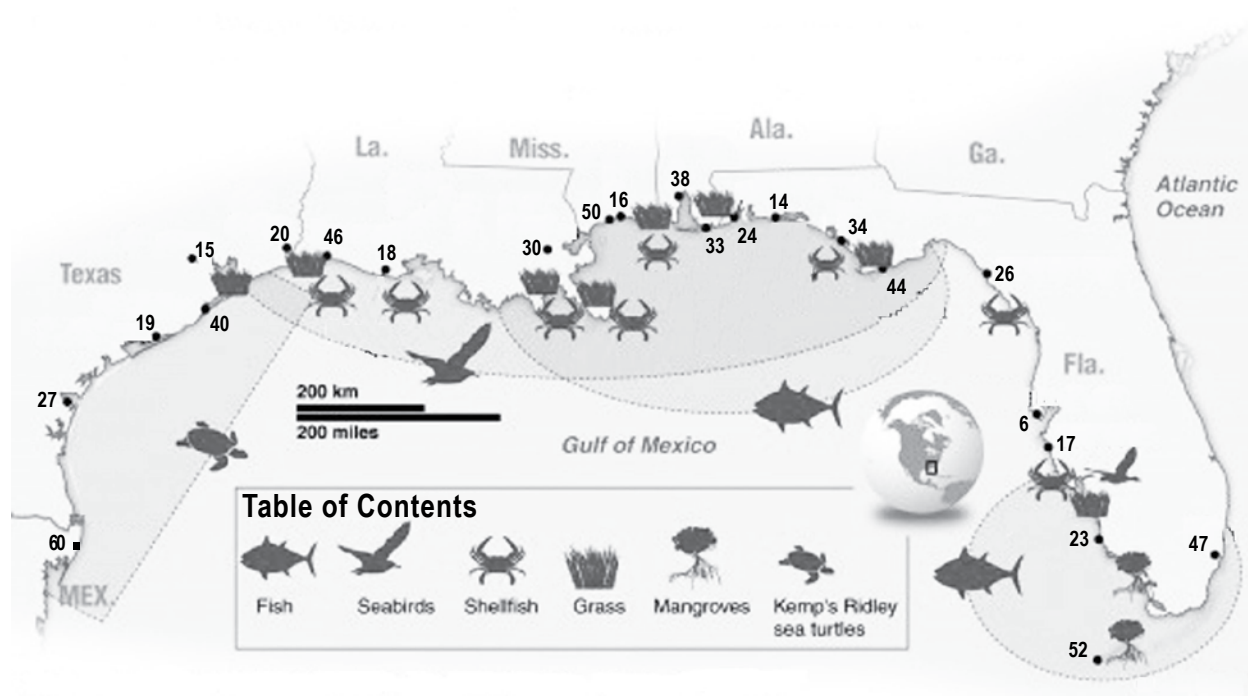
Travis & JenMarie  
The Editors

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## RUPTURE & BREAK: AN INTERVIEW WITH BRIAN EVENSON

by Travis Macdonald

The following interview was conducted at The Institute for American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, NM on March 26, 2010 and transcribed by Nicholas Chiarella.

**Fact-Simile:** What's the first story you can remember hearing/reading?

**Brian Evenson:** That's a good question. I mean, besides just ordinary children's stuff, I remember my father used to read to me a story in French that was about a goose. I remember that. But other than those kinds of children's things, one of the earliest stories that I remember that really has stuck with me is Kafka's "Description of a Struggle," which is not the best Kafka story, but is interesting still. That was read to me by my father when I was fourteen, and then I read it myself and it just kind of stuck with me. Both that story and another Kafka story called "A Fratricide"—also not the best Kafka story, but there's enough interesting that's going on with it to make it worthwhile.

**FS:** I believe you mentioned in a previous interview that "The Fratricide" was an excellent teaching tool.

**BE:** Yes, it is. I love to teach with that because I think it does a lot of things. It's very easy for me to talk about that story because I think it says some interesting things about genre. It plays around with language in really intriguing ways and it has moments that are really hard to explain through the logic of the story of itself, and so I think it's really a good story to introduce people to and talk about what it's doing and, you know, where it works and where it fails and things like that.

**FS:** Memory plays a consistently important role in your work, both the individual memory and the collective memory.

**BE:** Yeah.



**FS:** What's your own earliest memory?

**BE:** My earliest memory is... I don't know. I know a lot of people who can remember things back to when they were two or three, and I can't. I don't remember that far back. But I do remember when I was maybe

four, living in Philadelphia. We lived next to a woman who had a parrot, and I remember the parrot very well. I vaguely remember the woman, who was an old lady at the time, but I vividly remember her glasses. And that's probably it, the parrot and the old woman's glasses. I don't know what that says about me.

**FS:** Going on with memory: why is the dissolution of communal memory or history, a common theme in your stories, so terrifying?

**BE:** I think it's because so much of our identity is tied to memory, but it's also tied to community. And at any point where things happen that start to call into doubt the reality of what's happened to you, the reality of, you know, whether something did occur or didn't occur, you look to the people around you to affirm your experience. In my work there are often characters that feel that other characters are trying to make them feel insane. Or there are characters that are really convinced that something's happened that other characters are completely unconvinced happened. I think that any time you feel the reality of what you've experienced slipping, you really feel like your sense of identity, which has been built out of the past and been built out of these memories you have, is slipping as well. I've had many experiences in my life where I've talked to my brothers or sisters or old friends and find that they remember incidents in an incredibly different way than I do and I've come to the conclusion that memory is not something that accurately records the past in any way, but it is definitely something that forms individual identity in a very particular and unique way.

And in terms of notions of communal memory or shared memory, communal memory is very hostile toward individual memory and, as such, is hostile to identity itself in some ways. In other ways it's not, because we can kind of agree on certain things as happening or we can decide to have an agreement about what things mean. And, of course, I think that's the way that the media tends to work, is to try to push for everyone accepting a certain version of events. But in some sense, I think with that what you're doing is you're surrendering your ability to be an individual to a kind of collective notion of an agreed-upon version of what happened.

So I guess that's why it's terrifying. I think memory and the way that memory works really goes very much to the heart of what it means to be human: to have an identity, to be an individual. And communal memory is—especially when you feel the community is ganging up against you and their memory is absolutely opposite from yours—communal memory is something that really threatens or destroys identity.

**FS:** I'm thinking of, well, of two of the stories you read last night—

**BE:** Yeah.

**FS:** —of the interaction between the two sisters—

**BE:** Right.

**FS:** and how that interaction is so very different yet seems to function on a very similar level as, for instance, the story "An Accounting," the "rupture," in which the memory has been erased or somehow...not erased, but reformed, somehow changed.

**BE:** A story like that, "Younger," which is the story of the two girls, really is very directly about two people who are focused on an event that they have very different views about, and one person really wants to have the help of the other so as to come to terms with this event, and the other person just can't give her that help because she hasn't had the same experience. And yes, I think that what happens with "An Accounting" is something similar that's on a grander scale, where you have something that used to be a community that extended over a large geographical space that now is disrupted or ruined or ruptured or whatever, I mean, "rupture" is the term they use. And as a result there's this kind of wound or gap that seems unable to close in various ways. But I think that's true with a lot of my work; a lot of my work is really about perception and the way in which perception differentiates us and separates us out from one another. So a lot of it's about eccentricities of perception, I suppose. And that really does tie back to memory. I think, again, we do create our sense of the world by perceiving things and processing them and assigning them a meaning. And, most of the time in our lives, we don't really have to deal with the fact that the way in which we've done this is slightly different from the way in which people around us have done it. But every once in a while, it becomes an issue and it comes to the fore. In my fiction, I guess, it always becomes an issue and always comes to the fore.

**FS:** Is isolation of memory different from physical isolation? More dangerous? What is at stake between the two?

**BE:** Well, I think that physical isolation can be very dangerous. I mean, I think that if you have a kind of isolation of a consciousness, then, of course, memory ends up being isolated along with that. So if you're physically isolated, then the other isolations come along with it. But the difference is that if you're physically isolated you know it. You know you're alone in a castle or you know you're alone at the end of the earth, or whatever. And you're aware of that sense of loneliness and aloneness. On the other hand, I think if your version of events and your memories of events are different from the people around you, you don't necessarily know it. It's not something you necessarily make a choice to have. You may become aware of that isolation in an unexpected way. You may come into collision with it in a way that's really sudden and a way that

you can't process. If you're isolated physically, it's something you've either striven for or you understand how it's happened to you in some way or another. But with memory and the notion that your memories may not match up with the memories of people around you, usually you find that out in a way that's really disruptive. You just weren't aware of the disjunction, and then suddenly you realize that people are thinking very differently than you, and you potentially feel really betrayed by that.

**FS:** Again, I'm drawn to that word, "rupture"—in a different context in that story, but that somehow it's a very sudden coming up against someone else's reality, seeing the hole in your own, finding out you've been listening to or singing a song lyric incorrectly for twenty years.

**BE:** Right, and you have these moments of rupture and break that are incredibly important. This has happened to me at various points, and it can happen with just really small things that shouldn't make any difference at all. When I was a teenager, I thought Dennis Hopper was Dennis Hooper. I thought that for about two years. You know, I spelled it right, but somehow I got it in my head that it was pronounced Hooper, and finding out that I was wrong about that, in one way, I mean, just, "who cares?" but then in another way it's like you really do feel like you've had the rug pulled out from under you. It's alarming that you find out you can be that wrong about something for so long, even a small thing like that.

**FS:** You are scheduled to teach a workshop called, "Stealing from the Dead: Fiction and Innovation." Who do you steal from?

**BE:** I steal from a lot of people. I steal from both the living and the dead. The most recent person I've stolen from is Roberto Bolaño. I wrote a story that is

tied to a very brief moment in Bolaño's *The Savage Detectives*. It's mentioned in passing and not important to the story at all, but ends up being important to me and the way in which I think about it opened up a kind of door for me that I could pass through. But I borrow from Beckett every once and a while, a little phrase or a little moment in Beckett, and I borrow from a lot of other people too. A lot of the time when I'm writing, I'm responding to something in another story that could have gone another direction, and it just didn't. And I start to think, "What happens if I make it go this other direction, what happens if I push it this way?"

*[C]ommunal memory is very hostile toward individual memory and, as such, is hostile to identity itself*

**FS:** One step further. In terms of tradition: who do the writers that you steal from steal from?

**BE:** Well...That's a good question. I think one thing about Beckett that's interesting is he very consciously tries to minimize those thefts in a way that someone like Joyce doesn't. Joyce is stealing very consciously from *Ulysses* and other books, and Beckett's trying to strip a lot of that out. But there are moments when he's drawing from people, but really, everything he steals, he transforms, and that's what I try to do, too.

I have no problem with stealing, but once I steal something, I want to repaint it and kind of bend it around and make it my own, whereas with someone like Joyce, like with *Ulysses*, he's going to declare that theft in the title, and then you're going to be able to map it out and trace out these kinds of connections and congruencies and continue to see parallels. I'm not so interested in that. I'm more interested in stealing something that I can use to

help make a new machine, I guess. It's that kind of theft that seems to me really interesting, that you would take something from one context and you would make it into something else.

**FS:** Almost as an echo, something you have to listen for—

**BE:** Yeah. I think they're definitely there. There are direct allusions and direct quotes, sometimes, in my work. But it's within a larger context. So you take someone like Duchamp, who takes a urinal and puts it on a wall and transforms it by doing that. It's closer I guess to that than this thing that Joyce does, where Joyce is very consciously keeping the original work in mind and not letting the thing stolen develop a separate life, taken on a separate trajectory. And it's not that Joyce is not doing other things with that, but that's one of the main purposes of it. Duchamp does very little to transform the original object but does genuinely transform it, and distances it from its original purpose tremendously.

**FS:** I can certainly see the effects of re-contextualization, I think, on your work. But I guess the Duchamp example throws me a little... I'm automatically thinking of writers like Kenneth Goldsmith—

**BE:** Yeah, I know, Duchamp may not be a good example since it brings a lot of other things up as well. That's probably not something I should have brought up, in terms of, I'm not doing the thing that someone like Goldsmith does, where he can take a page of *The New York Times* or take an issue of *The New York Times* and just reformat it. Or the way in which that's responded to by someone like Kent Johnson, but yeah anyway it doesn't matter... What I meant to point out with Duchamp was just that ability to allow something stolen to become something else entirely just by looking at it differently, which seems to me (*cont'd on page 52*)





D.

## BRIAN EVENSON

### Hurlock's Law

It began with tattered bits and scraps, little pieces of paper with a word or two on them, and with Hurlock, who began to notice them. There were more of such scraps than usual, he thought one day in late summer, and then realised with a start that he'd been thinking this for some time, that he'd moved from simply noticing the scraps as they shuffled about his scuffed shoes or as they clung to walls, the remnants of posters mostly torn away, to reading them. "hurl—" one had stated, a bit of a fuchsia handbill that had gotten stuck on the bottom of his shoe with a smear of gum. And then, not long after, an advertisement for a television show, partly blocked by a bus—"O.C."—and he had thought, putting the two together with a kind of wonder, *there I am, that's me*. And then the wonder slowly shifted to dread of what might happen next.

What exactly had happened? he wondered later, back in his room, the fuchsia paper smoothed on the nightstand beside him. He had just taken the wastebasket and overturned it on the floor. He had seen a piece of paper with the word "hurl" on it, followed by the letters O and C. But what was that? Wasn't it just a coincidence, a simple chance occurrence whose only meaning was something foisted on it by the workings of his mind? In other words, not significant at all? But, then again, why now? Why just at this moment? And why never before? Wasn't it too apt?

*Why now?* he thought again as his fingers fumbled through the torn handbills, the wadded paper, the bits and pieces of letters he had torn before throwing them away. Perhaps it had been going on for some time.

As he turned and mixed them the bits of paper seemed always to be threatening to take on significance. A moment later, they did. He began to choose from among them, watching a meaning slowly rise. The sheep must be separated from the goats (*Proposition 1*). Any piece of paper with more than a half dozen words was discarded, torn once and dropped back into the waste-bin (*Proposition 1.1*). Paper balled up, with no print showing on the outside of the ball, was placed back in the trash (*Proposition 1.2*). Anything thicker or longer than two fingers was discarded (*Proposition 1.3*).

He chose at random four of the scraps that remained. A pale blue paper with an illegible insectoid scrawl on it. A scrap with the letter P, large, ornate and branching, as if in the process of mutating to another letter. A fragment of a book review with the words "Red Haze, nimbly." The word "pear," handwritten.

That was all. Hurlock stared, already beginning to formulate his second proposition, the one concerning the necessity of there being a message awaiting the initiate of Hurlock's law. *Insect*, he thought, moving the scraps about. *P*, then *pear*. Perhaps a *bee*, his mind told him, or something revealed to him. Then he realised, yes, a message was there, had been there waiting. It was a *bee*, or rather *be*. *P*,—*pear*, *Prepared*. Yes, he had to be prepared. But prepared for what? For *Red Haze, nimbly*? Which meant what exactly?

He stared at the papers for a long time, wondering if he should discard the last three words. In the end, he taped the whole sequence to the wall in the order he had found. Perhaps, he must have told himself, the words would make sense when they needed to make sense (*Proposition 3*).

And indeed, eight days later the three words whose significance had evaded him—*Red Haze, nimbly*—came into focus in a sequence of events that would lead to the development of the fourth proposition of Hurlock's law: *There is no predicting where Hurlock's law will lead you.*

For there, in the street, the word "Red" on the side of a truck, in large red letters, and then his eyes darting nimbly about looking for the *haze*. But there was no *haze*, no word leaping out at him, only other words getting in the way and him trying not to see them, him trying to look right through them so as to catch a glimpse of *haze*, wherever and whatever it was. Because it had to be there: that was the sequence, *red* then *haze*—he was being told something, he had to *Be Prepared* for it. Unless the scraps meant nothing, less than nothing, after all.

He kept walking the streets, but there was nothing, no haze, neither the word haze nor haze tangibly.

The sky struck him as pellucid and precise. Finally he went home, stared at the words on his wall.

*How have I failed?* he wondered. *What mistake have I made?*

He slept poorly that night, watching the dark slowly ebb away until the sun was cutting through his apartment window. During the night, when he had dozed briefly off (unless, in the darkness, he had simply imagined dozing off) he had had a dream (unless this too was simply the wandering of his waking mind in the dark).

In the dream, a knocking had come at his door and he had answered it. A man with a face made of oiled iron had entered and had immediately begun to tear the pages from his books. Hurlock just watched him. The man mixed these pages with the other papers, stirring everything up in the waste-bin with one large paw which may have been metal or may have been flesh: it was encased in a mitt made of some closely woven fabric and was never clearly seen.

Had the dream gone on beyond this or had it ended there, with the iron-faced man stirring papers about with his mitt? He was not sure, for so much of the night had been spent in the narrow and uneven berth between sleep and wakefulness that he could not be certain what had occurred in dream and what he had spun out with his own speculation lying in the dark.

According to a few words he jotted in his diary, it was like it had been when he was younger. He would leave a party and go home and then lie in bed, all keyed up, the party still in a sense going on and he carrying conversations on into the dark. Of course he knew no party was actually still going on, but there came a point where, to maintain his distinction between what had really happened, earlier, and what really was not happening now nor ever had, that certain distinctions were effaced: rubbed out by the heel of some anonymous hand. And so, though he knew what was real and what was unreal, the further distinction within the realm of the unreal between the dreamed and the imagined was no longer possible for him to make.

The following day he tried to stay aware, not unwilling to give up on the *haze* but worried he might have already missed it. Would he know haze when he saw it? His attention kept slipping and snapping back. But nothing came to him, or if it did he saw it without seeing it. By evening he was pawing through the few bits and scraps he had gathered. They remained mere bits and scraps, failing to cohere into something grander.

He did not sleep well that night but did sleep a little, fitfully—better anyway than the night before. Did he dream? No record exists of dreams: perhaps there were none, perhaps it was simply a matter of the recording and transcription apparatuses failing. Perhaps it is a matter of the data recorded for that evening—for what I personally have come to suspect was the evening in which some key discovery was made—being restricted because of the potential danger.

What we do have is meagre: a few jotted pages in his diary, a new constellation of scraps which he assembled in the night and left taped to the wall above the headboard, the inoperative body of the construct and the disassemblage report justifying the construct's withdrawal from service. There is a video sequence available which I have regarded in its entirety many times more than I care to admit: six hours twenty-eight minutes of Hurlock lying in the bed, tossing and turning, eyes sometimes open, sometimes closed. I have watched it enough times to be able to say that there is nothing extraordinary about the recording, until the moment when it flickers slightly and Hurlock suddenly vanishes.

Among other things in the diary is a page whose contents I have already shared—mostly, anyway: they are what amount to Hurlock's law, with those two words written at the top of the paper, underscored, then followed by a series of propositions. In addition to those I have cited, there is one more, scrawled in a hand that both does and does not seem to belong to Hurlock. It might be his handwriting transformed by anxiety.

Or, equally, it might be the work of someone trying to forge his hand. Some of us believe one thing, some the other. It reads:

*Final Proposition: Now you see it, now you don't.*

The construct, it is true, had in a sense a face made of metal, though this metal was not iron and, as is customary, it was hidden beneath a layer of flesh specially grown and adhered. The construct was meant to enter Hurlock's room, gather information not afforded through the monitors, establish a direct entry into Hurlock by means of his ear canal, glean whatever data might be gleaned through the analysis of synaptic movement and echo within the brain. The construct had done just this for several weeks, ever since we sensed the development of a heightened awareness and traced it to Hurlock. It had operated discreetly, flickering only briefly into what Hurlock would think of as his world, residing otherwise in the world as we know it, a world which encompasses Hurlock's and surpasses it.

There was no reason to believe the construct would be vulnerable. Even after Hurlock's appearance, if the report filed by the monitor on duty at the time is to be believed, there was no sense until very late that anything was wrong.

*Why didn't you recall the construct?*

*I did. It indicated it was coming.*

*After which you did what?*

*I filed notice of Hurlock's disappearance and waited for the construct to return.*

*What did you do when the construct did not return?*

*I assumed there was a glitch. I recalled the construct a second time.*

*Did it respond?*

*It failed to respond.*

*What did you do?*

*I followed procedure. I filed notice of the construct's non-response and then contacted you.*

The construct, the disassemblage report indicates, had had the flesh stripped off its face to expose the metal underneath. This had been done neatly and there was some doubt among the technicians whether this could have been accomplished by Hurlock or any other person. In addition, the back of the construct's head had been sheared smoothly away, both its biological and the mechanical components simply gone. This does not seem to have been recorded by the monitors.

There are a number of unanswerable questions. For instance, why was the construct destroyed? Was it destroyed by Hurlock or someone else? How did Hurlock manage to slip out of the range of detection? Did he do so of his own volition? Or was he dragged out of his world by someone or something else?

And then there is the final question, the one each of my three predecessors have posed in turn shortly before they too vanished, apparently subject to what we have come to call Hurlock's law, even though we are still far from understanding it.

I have pored over their notes and found almost nothing I could not have come to on my own or through Hurlock's journal. After the disappearance of the first two, the administration felt it prudent to instigate a more complete system of observation, and thus for the third I have not only his notes but the general drift and flow of his thought. I have too a record of his movements: the image of him in his bed, tossing and turning, and then the image of an empty bed. Here, too, until the disappearance there is nothing unusual, no expressions of surprise. Simply slow, drifting thoughts, a state somewhere between sleep and wakefulness, and then nothing at all.

What is my opinion? That I, too, will soon be gone, having made little, if any, progress.

There have been, here and there, indications that something quite profound has happened. What had been for so many years clear data, clear messages from Hurlock's world, have begun to shift. The messages now arrive mangled or destroyed when they arrive at all, as if that world is in the process of tearing itself away from our own. It is tempting to see traces of Hurlock everywhere: a sudden profusion of the color red, a certain change in the light even. But can these signs truly be significant or are we, am I, grasping at straws?

When I think of him now, I imagine him pounded flat and rendered transparent, caught somehow between our world and his, in neither one nor the other, perhaps able to see both, perhaps unable to see either.

At least this is what I imagine when I want to comfort myself. When I am more honest, I imagine him snatched away, along with my colleagues, to yet another world, one we cannot perceive, just as Hurlock could not perceive us. We are being preyed on, observed coldly and from a distance by something that waits for a door to open up in us so that it can come sink its claws into us and drag us away at last.

Which version, I wonder, will I be imagining when I fall asleep tonight? And will this make any difference in what happens to me?

For now what else can I do but study Hurlock's notes, dreading what might happen, awaiting the moment when I too shall disappear.



**MICHELLE DISLER**

from *The James Bond Alphabet*

**Q [BOND]: James**

q solve for unnamed variables [BOND, James] :

q = death threats (vague) s, w  
 q = bubbling mud bath (hot, deadly) x, n  
 q = lips for kissing (hot, deadly) a, z  
 q = “pimping for England” (hot, deadly) r, s  
 q = whisky (vague) y, n

**R [BOND]: James**

r solve for unnamed variables [BOND, James] :

r = evil on a calm sea (tropical) a, c  
 r = black satin stockings (tight, shiny) m, p  
 r = “I admit I’ve fallen for her” (express train) l, n  
 r = smuggling diamonds (Vegas) s, q

**Z [BOND]: James**

z solve for unnamed variables [BOND, James] :

z = diamond smuggler (pretty) y, n  
 z = escape on skis (avalanche) y, w  
 z = suicide note (“the bitch is dead”) x, y  
 z = underwater cave (“treasure hunt”) y, b  
 z = double agent (girlfriend) j, x

**CRALAN KELDER**

just a push off the dock will do

imagine today as the catch of the day: the pole strains under the pull and groan, the fisherman grunts and grunting as it bends; the pole looking short in his hands, as though it may break at any moment,

and time taut so taut

**SHANNA MILLER MCNAIR**

Google Readymades: Questions asked of Google and transcribed  
in order of response as listed on the Google dropdown on January 13, 2010.

**how do you**

how do you get pregnant  
how do you sleep lyrics  
how do you get farmville cash  
how do you say i love you in french  
how do you say i love you in spanish  
how do you make a group on facebook  
how do you make a heart on facebook  
how do you get pinkeye  
how do you eat a pomegranate  
how do you make a group on facebook

**am i**

am i pregnant  
am i pregnant quiz  
am i depressed  
am i in love  
am i fat  
am i depressed quiz  
am i pregnant calculator  
am i overweight  
am i an alcoholic  
am i bipolar

**does**

does he like me  
does extenze work  
does ups deliver on saturday  
does he love me  
does he love me quiz  
does extenze really work  
does fedex deliver on saturday  
does p90x work  
does god exist  
does rogain work

**who**

who is  
who wants to be a millionaire online  
game  
who says lyrics  
who won american idol  
who wants to be a millionaire game  
who dat  
who invented the internet  
who is my congressman  
who is lady gaga  
who moved my cheese

**ANDREW WESSELS**

Guillaume Apollinaire in the Lobby of the MGM Grand During the Pre-Fight Promotions  
for the Miguel Cotto - Manny Pacquiao Boxing Match, Nov. 19, 2009

This is war  
and I know what I am fighting for: red gloves  
and C chords. The bar  
of light over the world and in here  
a little boy holds his mother's leg

\*

The farther the insults fly  
More of them watching in a few days

\*

Between the stores  
Between the marble inlaid tiles reflecting light and the colors of flags  
Between the suitcase and the lobby desk  
Flashbulbs

\*

A lion  
Clear glass

\*

A pendulum divides time  
defines time: we have here  
Poe cared more about the furniture than the pendulum  
He wears a yellow shirt

\*

**MARK CUNNINGHAM**

[specimen]

The idea of a time capsule is so 1954. I said, "Beginning is an activity," and he said, "Hold on, let me get ready." Jaw dropping in surprise vs. jaw sagging with age. Burke's statement that "I know of nothing sublime that is not some modification of power" has run out of gas. The Future is Now, but it takes a few billionths of a second for the light bearing this message to reach your eyes.

[specimen]

Enraged, the beetle made its video game noise. The super hero stunned us all with his cat hiss. When I kept asking her to wear the long lingerie, she knew it was time for us to watch the Mexican horror movies again. The billiards table was inspired by the great Pacific Northwest. Of course I knew it was you: I'd recognize that Marlene Dietrich impersonation anywhere.



**TIM ROBERTS***from Suites for I Don't Need Everything*

What is not done is open. What seems to be ascending. Getting to the what is easy. From here. In the silly lines of poems. What is why or where the heavy fields are, the mattress fields, cows bouncing. Here's what she was driving at, the ballustrades of the dry, the supposedly convincing. What is not done is the mind. Today for instance, when you have rested. Someone seems to have forgotten to put the arisen part into the picture. By far the part of this the not done that strikes me most is the forgetfulness that enters in the preliminary stage, call it being groggy, about reading and rereading until a platform is near, imminent they say. What was done has all the problems that accumulated on the chair. The Indians do, so.

What is not done experiences things on its own. You don't care, if it's possible to be there.

**DEREK HENDERSON**

## Song

Abstraction completes a perfect normalcy: culture's devices, the microscopic grains of things, fluttering light passes through cells—like all the sections of paint breaking off the walls, an arrangement of color as savage as what we are given to see. Rain sloughs in gales, anger of paint at its exposure, seizure in a second. Only a man with limitless energy and risky innovation can approach such effort.

Abstraction, after all, a natural bit of this: a forming culture, seen in full, in miniature, a kernel we can know in shadows cast by the moth in the basement—we're all broken into pieces as the moth flies into the light, a fantasy of wild passage, what man can be unlit in this? The play of shadow is a gallery of our stretched-out sitting, search for our seeking. There is no one end when energy ends, and nothing is lost when we find the words to hang any risk above us.

Sky's the limit, right? I'm permanently neutral: closure is a way to shut me up, I'll grant the microscope its thing, its shadowy eyelash in front of its lens will let everything ultimately pass beyond the veil of film, right?—it's as relative as everything I've ever said about breakage, a fantasy of color, redemptive as a little imagination. Fuck that shit and split it from me—I am a gallery full of pictures hung haplessly and seditiously at every turn. I'm a sultan and I'm alive in infinite energy returning to some sort of source.

Carry away a natural perfection: cultures do mold us, our great and small parts, cut us in pieces like moth's wings strobe porch lights—it is still movement we pick out in the shadows—like all the pointed, broken frames, we are a fantasy at the moment of our salvage, like all that *can* be seen. Diving into the breeze, moth encounters gale, pint-sized body gusts away from its disease for a second. Sometimes a man gives all his energy to invent all that he might carry.

Get out of the way, because it is perfectly natural: cultures mold themselves, the microscope of God is huge and you are just a grain in the middle, a fluttering thing moving against given light—like all the last layers of paint breaking open in bubbles, a fantasy of color as redemptive as any you have imagined. Only the outside has any energy at last, invention has nothing to do with the arrangement of force.

I'm set aside, a broken man among men, naturally: culture is a worm, curled beneath a dingy microscope: even when it alights as a moth, it is empty of its cells.—So we're all still children, each left to lift what's left of breakage, even the fantastically clear and wild bits that insist we can stand above them. We end up shying away, to find clearing in the stilled engine sending blood through the body. You are selected by blood that races through you —energetic, uninvited to the race, dirgelike, spanning the risk of your life.

**ELIZABETH ROBINSON**

## Semi-Arid Plain

The originary myth of  
this place: Eden  
has evaporated.

All flesh is brown  
grass in the sun.  
Roses are ash.

Eve sleeps  
in the prickle of her skin.  
Wakes

to find her pillow  
rusted with blood  
she exhaled

in the desiccate  
night. Lips crack  
before the smooth

peel of an imported  
apple. Drought meets  
plenty. The tongue consorts

drily  
with its deity.



**ROXANNE CARTER***from Glamorous Freak: How I Taught My Dress to Act*  
Film Study #8

I'm impelled to keep looking. Over time, I empty out. There is very little evidence that he's alive, that this isn't a photograph. No indication of what holds me here, but I'm holding and I won't look away: there's no confrontation in his gaze, only time passing ticked by batting, beating. I look on, continue to look, unruffled; when he smiles I'm struck, startled by the least absurd twitch.

Her mouth droops half-open, the gate of her teeth clang shut.

She smokes as a way to pass time. Three minutes is a long time to sit so still. Her face must itch. She aggressively diverts her gaze away: stares resolutely at the floor, shyly swivels her eyes to the side. She can't settle with any certainty. Her brow furrows, her tongue flops lazily in the trough of her mouth.

I can see his eyes roll through his dark sunglasses. His lips are very pale, drained of blood. His own glowering shadow rises up on the wall, dwarfs him. I want to see before the reflection on his sunglasses but only see beyond, his eyes languidly half-closed.

Her gaze is so direct, specifically for me.

Thick, weighted eyelashes droop and roll. She wants to say something but can't. The beauty of her silver, glossy. She sees herself reflected and satisfied. Smiles broadly, fades to white.

A man's blunt jaw lit from beneath. He's composed, angular. A shadow cleaves his face, uneasily even. He swallows, shades of black and grey gather and collapse at this throat, a hard knot unbinding.

She wants a fight. The camera has invaded her. The camera is inarticulate in the face of her anger. A lock of hair falls forward from the crown of her head, sweeps a black shadow over one eye. She thrusts the offending lock back, a scowl settling in. indifferent to whatever happens. Warily erased.

He doesn't quite see what the camera is doing: he has other things to consider. A face with eyes omitted. Pulling off his personality: cigarette smoke rises.

At first, he is above himself as well as below. The frame fixed. He undoes his necktie, prepares to relax. Lifts his collar up, a scraping of nails on skin, mute. He has a part, he slick. He puts his tie back on, knots it, folds down the collar, looks forward.

Looks that come off the screen, looking in between screen and space.

His head revolves, spinning or being spun. He doesn't fall over but I'm dizzy, watching him whirl. He's only a head turning in a dark room. A head turning by itself. bodiless heads, lined against the wall. I could exchange these heads with my own, unscrew my neck from the base. Every face turned towards me is my own face looking back. No difference but indifference. A distance a finger width gone too far.

A woman lifting her hair up around her: this long. Her arms extend above her head, puckered elbows turned in. Her hair will carry her. Long, snarling black hairs, a girl caught in a tangle on tape. She stuffs her long hair into her mouth, chokes, spits it out.

She laughs too much. Makes a kissy face, blows.

This is his good side. His mother cut his hair, nicked his earlobe with silver shears. He gulps, his lips plump. The surface of his face is distracting, scarred. From here, he's too close but so far away. The pores on his nose, every detail, down to the tears he hasn't cried. Not close enough to be abstract and unassailable, to be loved. A face I can't love; a face I can be a fan of.

She looks right here. She looks shampooed. Her heart-shaped, her almond. She avoids the look of the camera and therefore avoids me. I'm lonely without her, this room dark, filled with purring.

Long-range shot: close: closer. back and away by degrees, backing up. Moving in to cut. He looks, feels how fat his tongue becomes, lying quiet within his jaws. Worries about what to do with his hands, hands smoothing down the fabric that lies against his skin. He sits and waits to be told what to do. For this to be over. He pitches. His look is for me. Faces barely lit, features rubbed out, white out and black in. A face I can dispose of, forget. What is the difference between these barely moving, waiting heads and headshots, body bags? Cords of men and women, all in grey, arrayed in white.

**MARY KASIMOR**

## castro's rose

i

as a cat you roam  
around the edges of the city

ii

in the industrial sites  
someone raises a garden with  
free tomatoes  
feeding the people

iii

I replied  
this was victory that we gave them

iv

children starved on ships  
of steel I gave them tomatoes  
sometimes carrots

v

I detected  
radiation within the machinery

vi

I was a rose in the ranks

vii

after expanding poetry & castro's love  
I gave him a lilac  
it smelled like a lilac  
we laughed to forget

viii

castro and I the bargain of  
the americas a poem for a tomato  
leaks into the bay

ix

then I recognized the freckle on his shoulder

x

in the department of folk remedies  
outside the colonized mind  
the dictator giggled

**DAVID BRENNAN**

## To Wait for Evening at Its Edge

Poets taught their trees my name

Tender-spotted

then joyful, said to me  
between ear and voice\*  
said to me

There is another  
whose tongue is double-studded

---

\* costuming in giant masks:  
striking stale instruments to  
characterize: I will be  
the actor: you are: firm speech:  
dissemination: earth &  
light body: you are: reverb  
gripping my infant head: mic  
the stage or do I stare: my  
chair, my porch, my tea: because  
of all it makes us lose the  
setting sun is beautiful:  
to read: the human being  
doubled: in cloud, in bus, in  
elevator: to read: the  
human being doubled O-  
ver in chemically induced  
nausea: image concealing  
living image: you are: the  
book stays too much a body:  
to read: simple gratitude:  
you are: what should have been done:  
to read: that our sex is not  
angelic: you are: screwing  
the great practiced disaster

## Song of the Lazy Prick

My pipe plays somber songs  
that don't hope to do everything

And god yes this simple  
rustic scheme of darting

melody, my pageant inch of song\*  
god yes it dances

backwards  
Chasing rabbits, and the future

---

\* if I get there: if ever:  
if at all: never be a  
masterpiece: light's erotic  
shape stay where you are: air to  
lay with: heaviness a hand-  
ful: refrigeration my  
body: the best remedy  
is to starve it: I hunker:  
toes near frozen on winter's  
hardwood: naked on the round  
detour: alchemy the test  
tube bastard: mineral veins  
strip-mined: do you mind: I'm here:  
quiet prayer bleeding to death:  
in every cavity  
but the mouth is the spoken



## Homeric Morning

Hall of Fame  
unfit for the world

haunted by your flatteries  
I give you this\*

engraving of a trophy

quite forgotten now  
hung on a hook by the door

---

\* life a dictionary of gibberish

excepting a single, clear definition

read over and over until making as little sense as the rest

a bookmark seems a waste

I throw out all the bookmarks left in all the books on my shelves

find a 1000 yen bill

would buy a piece of cake and coffee in Tokyo

**CHARLES FREELAND**

These Two Expressions are Not Logically Identical: (A and B) or C; A and (B or C)

Circles can, in fact, be drawn perfectly by hand. But we don't believe the testimony of our senses precisely because that testimony seems so accurate. Who can believe such things as acorns and northeasterly breezes? They are better utilized by liars when those liars have yet to figure out what their ultimate purpose is. Why they keep claiming to have been in the crowd that watched the Hindenburg burn when clearly they are much too young. And the story doesn't add anything of value. It doesn't leave them in a better position to get what they want or even be able, really, to pinpoint what exactly that might be. They are left tongue-tied, but only in the mind.

You are in a hurry because it looks as if it might snow. And if it doesn't snow, there is always the chance that it will begin to rain and the rain itself might be almost as cold as the snow. And why would anyone embrace a stranger covered in precipitation, no matter what form it has taken? Why would he even bother to answer the door? Such questions keep you occupied as you trudge along with a few of your most important belongings rolled up in an old coat that had at one time belonged to a man who was very good at playing tennis. Who was so good, in fact, he had to explain to complete strangers, almost every day, why he decided to give the sport up. As if that mattered as much to them as it did to him. And you used to marvel at this, used to wonder what it would be like to be so accomplished at something, other people knew of that accomplishment as if the fact of it had been whispered in their ears.

## Persistent Use of Parallel Structure

Something is amiss, but we can't put our fingers on it. Because our fingers don't obey the commands we send them along the nerve fibers. They seem to belong to some unseen force that wishes to humiliate us without actually saying—or even implying—anything. It huddles behind the bushes and snickers a lot. But whenever a soul braver than I am tries to flush it out, there is a great commotion—a sounding of trumpets and a flapping of wings—and then we are all invited to come witness it again the following week. Inside, the Honduran chef sharpens his knife on a whetstone. He wonders aloud who keeps calling the night “itchy.” It is a term not suited for the purpose of accurate description and he objects to it with the sort of rancor one expects of those who hold something sacred and then hear it belittled by a stand-up comedian. Maybe we've been watching too many of those films where the leading man is terribly thin. Suffering, apparently, from an intestinal ailment and apt, for all that, to act as if he has not been consulted about the storyline. About why people keep flailing around on the set as if they are getting paid by the mile. Or the artifact. When I try to find the appendix, the pages are stuck together. Nobody bothered to cut them with so much as a butter knife. And maybe this means we are headed in the wrong direction but will not actually come to regret it. We could regress so far, we might even find ourselves among the speakers of Ugarit—pleased they are willing to share their myths with us, their poems that make such persistent use of parallel structure. And we'll fall asleep at night believing that we too are just weeks away from discovering joy on this fatal, dusty planet. Of putting it into terms that will last even longer than the catalpas that line the street two streets over from our own.

## Zero Volume Cosmology

Impressions get made by the tangible reality of the shape that impresses them. That puts its weight behind the impetus and so therefore has the most to gain from the procedure. And, of course, the most to lose. This is why sometimes there is deception involved. Especially a deceiving of the self. Because who else is going to oblige it that way? Who else will put cosmetics on the mirror? Try to picture our surprise, then, when the knocking on the door turns out to be an auditory illusion. Just the sort of thing that makes people begin to question whether anything is ever as it seems. Or at least wonder for the first time in their lives whether such questions might not more properly belong in a locked vault downtown than in the open air where they are apt to get contaminated. By microbes. By ads for brandy. Or, worse yet, swept away on the breezes that are generated by enormous bodies of water lying forever just beyond our horizons. Sometimes the best remedy is to act as if there is no ailment to begin with. To stand in front of objects rolling downhill and act as though they are not actually going to run you over. That is what the centaurs are doing in displays to this day all over the eastern seaboard. Their proud countenances belying the rage they must feel at being jostled by careless children and indifferent curators. People who have no concept of what it means to be obsolete.

## RICHARD SCHWASS

### Fear of Nova

A clowder of caracals jumps on an African plain                      hyenas move in on the kittens  
 Black eagle pair double-broods out of season                      so a  
 single catclaw kills their second-born                      fledging alone in the canyon next door  
 I am held by the disappointment of a small boy all the time                      one that has had his birthday  
 spoiled or lost his father in the war                      holocausts' distance electronically beamed  
 solidarity's rapt conviction                      witness my own passing screened through another eye  
 again on vectors beak-oiled wings                      beating air                      wind closer every night  
 descend prey innate                      bone machine threat                      imminent strike                      tickle to reach                      at play  
 great black wings yesterday  
 brush back their heat today  
 afraid of the dark                      I want to sleep                      and leave the light on  
 the mothering grip of off-white sheets

**PETER J. GRIECO**

[30101-30200]

A vibrato gnarls at the Zeitgeist  
as ashram ballerinas flexibly  
can-open clockwise, & fictive fingernails  
haunt the limonite liverymen in mid-  
December, shirtless & tangy. They quested  
the plushy papaya, ticketing the carcinoma,  
bumming unsent silage, frostbit & Falstaffian.  
Cacophonous equestriennes break through  
as mythologists quiz transalpine trilobites  
engrailed in flamage. Hydroelectric  
hodgepodge, existential functionality,  
stressful upgrowth—all terrorize the firewall,  
rarefy, expropriate, & finally constrict  
Bubo Robusta, the boozier, & his gyrating scooter.

## [31101-31200]

Pitter-patter—pitter-patter  
Houdini's paintbrush smatters  
the logia—slung-shot provocateur baaing  
transcendentally—frumpy idiopath  
recriminating the wheateared hierarch—  
until at Guadalcanal the harelip  
disenfranchises the cowcatcher  
driverless with memorization—  
I-shaped verisimilar to inglenook—  
foreshortening the battle-royale.  
Agronomy azured to the grainy vocalizer:  
Yob! Turkmen Yob!  
Inhabitation bedevils the moonset  
surtax. The clabber dreg in the glom.

[20001-20100]

Primogeniture, afeared half-sister  
of an obstreperous proselyte, keystone  
of a testy Hindustan: Wow! What  
glutinous chicanery. Bookshelves,  
a pelican, a troll. Phantasmagoria veer  
from Ostia to Odessa. Modest Joanne  
unfastens her accordion & dons her  
parachute, her sexuality clucking innuendo.  
Vertebral, anthropomorphic, rococo:  
the Achaean timepiece deteriorates.  
A covey of toothpicks teem. Flamboyant  
prude. Shredded largess. Irrefragable rupee.



[20901-21000]

From its eyrie above the escarpement  
an albatross wassails along the companionway  
backyard to the darter & hornet, the crocus  
& radish. When a salvo of clarinets impregnates  
an uninspired Algerian florist, she twinges  
& hafts her violoncello. The Hopi &  
Blackfoot thresh & connive. O changeling!  
Ignite the contumacious ones heedful  
of your amenity. Transmute nauseating  
peroxide refulgent into watermelons &  
rumpus, this drouth of asthmatic silicate  
into velveteen inhalation, into visibility  
& reincarnation. Gimme a boost Gretel!

## JOHN TWAY ZACKEL

### On the Day of the Cookie's Return

1

On the day of the Cookie's return, all the townspeople gathered in the cemetery, underneath the Cheerio Tree, to weep for the dead. They paraded in at dawn. A fedora hitched a ride on top of the mayor's bald head. Infants were tied to the backs of four lumbering poets. Garrulous old women came huddled in their finest electric blankets, while old men wore newspaper armor and categorically refused to speak to their wives. Only a lone feral cat, stranded at the edge of town, did not attend the ceremony, but that was in part due to a strange bladder-related malady that needed some attending: the cat meant no disrespect.

2

Father Mills, the town's aging priest, withdrew the ceremonial hairbrush from his satchel and passed it to the mayor heavy-handedly. In accordance with the suggested rules of previous commemorations, the mayor would be the first to publicly lament, despite his egregious lack of oratory; the rest of the crowd would have to follow. So it was the townspeople stood cramped, shoulder-to-shoulder, mum underneath the Cheerio tree, and waited for his inarticulate sadness.

3

The mayor thusly began his lament. "We will never forget you, dead people," he said into the hairbrush, the crowd bowing their heads. "You will never not be remembered so long as I avoid impeachment as mayor of this wholly anti-dishonorable town. Let it be shouted from every corner of every non-spherical room, from the apex of every altitudinous acclivity to the substratum of the lowest crevasse or geological dimple: we as a town or more accurately village, based on population and square footage, shall not misrecollect the unpropitious events of the Cookie, nor your untimely and resulting demise, but from this downer we shall perhaps learn to avoid Cookies altogether, in the future, is what I'm saying."

4

The priest coughed politely. One of the poets asked his neighbor if it was all a dream, this. The Cheerio Tree itched a stringy root with another stringy root, producing a high-pitched harmonic note only children and the dead could hear. Nobody clapped, of course. It was a cemetery.

(1)

At that moment a mere five miles due east, the Cookie was rolling toward the bereaved: and that distance was shrinking precipitously. Peeking out from behind the burnt husk of a Nabisco shrub, the feral feline watched as the Cookie, up on its crumbly edge, leveled the wooden W-e-l-c-o-m-e T-o sign, pulverizing it into a burst of splinters and letters. Dodging a whizzing "m," the cat peed a few ounces of skim milk, per fear and its bladder-related malady, then realizing it remained alive and unharmed, lapped the white liquid up feverishly. As for the Cookie, it rolled closer and closer to the cemetery, chocolate chipped, unrepentant. The feral cat stayed a few steps behind, dribbling lactose.

5

Next the hairbrush was passed to a mother of two boys, one of whom stood beside her, the other supine far underground. She wept inky lines of mascara and pounded her non-hairbrush-holding fist against the dirt. "Wake up!" she screamed at the earth. She dropped the brush and began pulling out her hair with both hands. "Wake up!" Nobody tried to stop her. Once she was bald and it was polite to move again, the priest slyly kicked the hairbrush away from her personal space and had her surviving son hand it back to him.

6

Father Mills then offered the brush to an undersized girl who had somehow climbed the Cheerio Tree and was now straddling a low branch in the manner of a cowpoke on a burro. The girl was singing gibberish under her breath and took the hairbrush wearily, like a needled medication for nominal aphasia. "Go on," said the mayor, pointing at her with a bent finger. "Nobody likes a reticent griever." After more prodding from the crowd beneath her, she brought the brush up to her face and sang a song.

7

The girl in the Cheerio Tree sang a low song about high things:

a flock of yellow birds following a radius of the moon,  
a smoking angel holding a map of what we think cannot be put on a map,  
a SCUD missile diverting its own course to avoid popping a lost balloon.

For her chorus the girl belted a throaty impression of a blue whale crooning the sunken remains of a battleship, which was not a high thing but a low thing, but nobody seemed to notice the contrast. Her song did not please the mayor, or his fedora, which he grabbed now and twisted until it squeaked. "That was the worst bleating I've ever heard a mourner whinge!" he cried. "Bollyswaggle to you!" The priest agreed, although he remained more dignified: "We're looking for meaning, is all," he murmured sadly. "Not a pancake stack of random imagery." The girl made a face like biting a disappointment bagel and dropped the hairbrush to the ground. She continued her singing, quietly, under her breath, even when the townspeople turned from her in dismay, or boredom, or both.

(2)

When the Cookie rolled into town later that evening, the people were no longer congregated at the cemetery, and were instead parsing over potential lessons accrued that day in the local tavern. It was decided by the lumbering poets that, with any luck, what followed would simply be deemed a tragedy, a word once associated with catharsis, a long time ago. Value was seen in this perspective. The semi-sweet rumbling outside the tavern frightened the elderly, and Father Mills, and the mayor, but the children were so used to it they immediately began to hum along. When it was thereafter discovered that a feral cat had been pursuing the Cookie as if it were an enormous ball of twine—when a meow erupted outside and a calcium-laden fluid began seeping underneath the tavern's barricaded door—a simple yet effective solution was thusly eureka'd by the little girl, humming of high things. Whether or not the people would thusly save themselves remains for another story to tell, for this one's lone concern is healing, and whether or not we're allowed to do so, and whether or not I can try.

**MATT REECK**

## Braille Relief Map

*Leaning on the chain-link  
in the diamond's parking lot  
I waited for the king of the midges.*

√

Lips erect a V. Stripped  
the wind-up clock of its levers,  
a concussion by the roadside.

Here, the marshes. There, the mountain.  
At base-camp they pointed up  
and performed the raccoon sacrifice.

ξ

Destiny of summer, density of air.  
Bluegrass and a broken muffler.  
Concrete evidence of my reality—

whipped myself  
into a frenzy over a word  
and half an idea.

ß

Roughcast game of hide-n-seek—  
still hiding in the rushes  
hands sweaty on treasure chest.

Say, all homing devices  
started beeping when the airplane  
entered the Rubicon.

J

Stare too long, you risk contracting.  
*I'd like, Id like, Id liked ...* And now this  
bobby-pin record of cat-calls, pratfalls, and silage.

Picked up the phone in a close-up  
called "Autobiography." *Id liked,*  
*I licked, a spike.* Cannibal record.

ℓ

Among the imbroglios, a masque  
with a song called "Somewhere ..."  
The bobwhites of the backyard, the cedars

with their gooey balls of rust.  
Contrails Edition of Passage of Time in slow-mo.  
Two centuries later the river dredged for meaning.

≤

This type of fructify, fruit-fly.  
A lasso on the past brings an antique shop  
of Chinese articles then sex

in the coffee-shop. Cicada-chirrup,  
the underground arcade with the basket-maker,  
barber and boxes full of specie.

ñ

Amounts to a thing or two but without  
a public ratio. He kept repeating  
*We ... We ... We ...* along with his power hand-shake.

If you act in a moment  
a type of electric current.  
(Breakdown.)

ĩ

He preferred juleps, she wasn't a drinker.  
The hard crust of desire—  
they went to the forest-river,

she drew down her pants, squatted and peed.  
To skinny-dip in two feet of water.  
To approach innocence one reprieve at a time.

ω

Here's my statement:  
a rope descends from the sky,  
you pull up, you bunch up your rickety legs.

Proceed as if painting a periscope  
for a quarter. If a riddle, all the letters get circled.  
Gold brocade, a broken spade.

## Υ

*Pave the raspberry patch*, she said,  
*hoe down the corn-rows.*  
Long-lost friends send condolence cards

once they realize what you've become.  
*Samphra mackle signid jissle ...*  
The next time you write back in English.

## Θ

Playing with solace  
in the salvage lot. You ask  
for melon, you get squash.

Beneath the frozen steps of Herr Hermit's Room.  
Moths in your closet, their vibrato  
quaking the building's loam.

## Τ

A 30,000-mile road-trip.  
The Bureau of Fear drinks wine  
in the wine-shops of —*abad*,

refugees eating savories  
in the sunset river. When I said silhouette  
I meant the hot skin of living.

**RICH MURPHY**

## Orbital Dating Game

In the Goldie Locks zone  
even the brunette eats her porridge  
and thanks her lucky star:  
Earthlings feel Grace around.  
Great Bear claws hibernate,  
while just beyond jewel moderation,  
the space tresses brush extravagant.  
Woe, the scent from last night  
in public places puts smiles on faces.  
Ant Sophie crawls around  
her hill conserving energy and conducts  
her wedding at the local American Legion.  
Tectonic plates shift bottoms  
while waiting for the oven or refrigerator  
to eat girls sleeping in beds.  
Should everything go just right,  
a rock of ages, attracted by a sunrise,  
noon, and sunset, will continue to dance  
on the run, celebrating the breaking  
and entering by flowing solar waves.  
If in another forest a hungry  
and tired leggy Laurel seeks solace  
on a fence between hell  
and the Ice Capades, the glass eyes  
sent into galactic sockets may tell her  
with a wink and flair. Then the blonde  
wonder boy would leap about the discovery  
and exploit: perhaps "Florida  
retirement community all life long."  
Until then, Little Lord Blunder Roy  
takes credit for telling  
good fortune with silver spoons.



## Ethic Op Props

The Moses for birthdays on all fours  
poses with populations one at a time  
saddled on his back. But the elephants  
with tykes at the helms determine adult behavior.  
So few go right after the memorization and drilling.  
Yikes! Harnesses around fat lies and jungle laws  
fit bits into the peanut breath explaining the universe.  
G-o-o-d: whatever a person does: just.  
Left to Paradiso, a road for trained horse-trains  
goes through the hearts owned  
by potential newspaper subscribers.  
The dizzy plot to surprise their lot,  
put away violins and pulls out machine guns.  
The most advanced cheek/cheek nations  
water board their way along the golden rule.  
Kids squat in the dirt playing eyeballs and teeth.  
Virtuous crests carry virgins to the victors.  
Faulty folk figure out the huge grey areas  
that condemn them to death by trunks:  
self-deception convinces friend, family, communities.  
Take the two tablets before bedtime:  
wherever the aught, guilt sings a lullaby alibi.  
Perched on a hot air balloon, even mother doesn't escape  
dilemmas, consequence, and grand piano excuses:  
one more saint with a riding whip  
splashing around a gene pool.  
At the thunderous foot, the Thou Shalt Not puzzle  
somehow survives rainy days, though empathy scurries  
away from the brush. Accident has it one by fun,  
the charms that distract evil for better  
crimp under the weight waiting for opportunity.

## RYAN RIDGE

Xerox

Ox Ox

Paradox

Ox - Ox = Ox

Ox on the Rox

Ox  
OOOO  
OOOO  
OOOO  
OOOO

Ox Kiss

Ox x

Ox in the Tall Grass

VVVVOxVVVVVVVVVV

Ox Dresses Up  
for Halloween

fOx

Ox Designs a  
Game-Winning Touchdown

```

      X      X
    X  X  X  X
X  O  O  O  X  O  O  O
      O      O
      O
      O
  
```

Disloxic

xO

**JOHN KEARNS****Conference Call: Tuesday, Spring, Chinese Element Wood**

An excerpt from the play, *Resignations*

Cost-effective guidelines considering departmental managers. A \$2000 spend. Underwrite Contingency planning to reinsure Benchmarks. Lognormal trinomial tree. In the data management space. Post-colonial procedures, best practices, worst practices will be institutionalized. Implementation of onboarding and offboarding will occur in real time, disengaging a superessentiality. With one eye on the branding into the last quarter, and, knock on wood, despite some pushback. Slam dunk!

By all means, table that for a prior trending. Expense reports and progress reports and technical imports deconstructed by all direct reports. Managing risk going forward. Traffic manager margin call. Of which shall include but not be limited to. At an operation encyclopedia shoot. Capability Management marginalized demographic research. Continuity planning. Nominal portfolio. Across departments, entities, divisions, cost centers, niches, and teams. Personnel. Swap legs, skew the curve, off shooting a spot, simultaneous calibration. Many-to-one-relationship. This is required for strategic deliverables. Good creative. But unable to see the forest for the trees.

Aaaaaa ... aaaaaa ... aaaaaa ... aaaaa...

Following on that, determine core competencies in tracking counterparty querying. Enterprise-wide. Mechanical repository baroque storyboards interfacing with relational data models. Despite all insurances to the contrary. True up interest-only ARMs. At risk media buyers marginalize facultative functionality. A big write down. Customer user client advocate tie-outs. Got some good wood on the ball that time. Futures market message passing. How a project becomes a project. Dynamic postmodern interactive caps and floors. Beyond the finite categories of essence and existence. Team-building trace analysis protocol specked out or, at the end of the day, we'll just have to throw another log on the fire. Make a killing in futures.

Trying to get my head around the option Greeks. Initialize good spot naming conventions. We can have a discussion around that at our next meeting. Leveraging skills. An a-priori condition of possibility. Scenario Analysis, hard drive, physical plant. My door is always open. Resources human and otherwise.

Any questions?

Questions?

## Conference Call: Wednesday, Summer, Chinese Element Fire

An excerpt from the play, *Resignations*

Above-the-Wall clearance. Determine what possible remedy actions or proactive actions will need to be undertaken to make sure we are leading the path to the virtualization trend. Hit a home run. Can you please mute? Drawdowns not done until distributions but distributions impacted by drawdowns. Connectivity approval teamed with real-time contingencies. Wonderful feedback has been received from all clients. Scalable curve development. Therefore, dramatic changes will be taking place. One-to-one-relationship. Volatility duration. When you Intake a job, to finalize this at a multi-dollar uplift to the contract termination. They have client-server advocacied the focus. Can't spend all our time and energy putting out fires. The phenomenology of structural linguistics. Fixed-rate passthroughs approximating the observed volatility skew. On the plus side, hermeneutics.

Aaaaaa ... aaaaaa ... aaaaaa ... aaaaa...

Placement operations forecasting documentation touch points. Hot, hot, hot! With this task in mind we'll be taking a deep dive into the many contracts we have in place. QA procedures to find the smoking gun. Prepay notes must be linked, adjustments must be calibrated, business objectives must be achieved. Hot potato salad days are over. No one's getting fired. Yield curves, absolutely. As I say, where there's smoke ... Attributes, price change market rates parent-child diagram the current coupon and volatility. Can't drop the ball on the convergence integration initiative.

Hello? ... Hello? ... Anybody there? Hello? ... Hello? ...

Be sure to calendar the upcoming presentation on how an identified opportunity gets leveraged into an initiative.

Mute, please! Whoever that is if they can please mute their phone! Thank you.

If inheritance seems like a long grammatology process, it is. Any questions?

Questions?

## Conference Call: Thursday, Late Summer, Chinese Element Earth

An excerpt from the play, *Resignations*

To-Be to As-Is or As-Is to To-Be? That is the question. User-friendly horizon term. Redirect coverage. Appears and generates relationship codes. Import. Total Return Swaps. Next item on the agenda. Identify ideality and non-ideality, transcendental and empirical. Going forward, if you receive some pushback around that space, leverage the deliverables. Move the ball down the field. CEV adjustment from lognormal to near normal. Gimme an epistemological break.

Orientate the functional specs. Our needs are requirements. Turn that ugly caterpillar into a swan. Ya know? We exported polymorphism into the tranche. Endeavor to partner on the development and implementation of key initiatives. OA convexity. They specked out a level playing field. Historical speeds scenario. Drive more consistencies across processes. Seeds have been planted at any rate. Callable, putable. Implement a consistent methodology to bucket employees into quintiles across all businesses/regions.

Sinking fund specifies the dialog textbox reusable. Class library common aggregation source confirmed. Calculate the duration. Down in the trenches. Next generation Hail-Mary pass hybrids. Bermudan Swaptions. Develop effective metrics. Cognizant of headcount. Transformation: that's the key word. Posting on a poststructural methodology staging area. Compiling live cable. Busy concepting the primary layout conversion. Globally. Curve shifts parallel, steepening, flattening, and twists.

Next release. Discarded-coffee-cups-provide-benefits-for-the-earth initiative. When is the release? Intuit greater efficiencies. Run an end-around. Security-based analysis over time. Can anyone tell me when will be the next release?

Vol duration abstraction. In regards to leverage. Enthused about Credit Default Swaps. Between you and I and the goalpost. OK.

Any questions?

Questions?

**SCOTT BENTLEY**

Espionage, d' Esp.

Sabotage  
...lanade

Myth figures arrest the bowstrings so fidelity, so  
more than trellis harp at mine

water bridge, penumbra  
brass numbers a twilit music.

Cascades, delicate case-by-case: zero caesura  
phrase erases refectory more sweetly, yesterday  
a place to mistake. And as doorbells

this, noon Interrupt our figures  
a closure clause sweetly, each. Tease closed

the case. The land intends unending  
no Men. Service observes  
to swing, so swing

footsteps across east lawns. Lesser moons intent  
spy-wheel, thought: walking through gardens

observes the service. No cause  
nor opinion: ageless peonies.

Fidelity, the delicate intelligence  
unending innuendo

Dogged, reaches seizure  
and search

a mindless Curvature, a mini-ovation.  
Damage in ramparts  
a rampage

Glass sage glistening engine: a Tribal History

test input. Approaching landslide  
upward swing, go

rose, so glorious agate. The land unending  
slippage, equipage  
the apogee.

Pastures, pastures. Any city teaches

map, quick imagination. Apple orchard

dry creek, unwind rapt pleasures  
search Creation: raptures trap erupt

Fingerling planets.

Table-ready on pages and pages  
digging gates, settlement    Ten  
command surrender

Orphan routine, outline rough fidelity  
thrown piñons. Eiffel a tow-away zone  
a Spanish grange.

Tazer, Ixtlan  
land safety-button so car doors.

Case notes and then surrender. Forgotten, showers  
a little lilt. Tithe the program it sings  
creature return, so

treasures reassure us. A future king, secret  
blank after all threat

ruptures  
...chummy, yes.

Abrupt plosives  
—airplanes survive.

Torture. Torture erupt posture  
strewn fewer wrens

than can explain. Turnpike, a future myth  
in back the book. Testament: my body stank  
more True.

Lukewarm, claw the hammer storm at night

stowaway to the note, the noise

Yolo, driven.

**JENNIFER KARMIN**

desk / a counter stand or booth at which a person performs his (her) duties

on certainty  
bonus size

dematerialization of  
non toxic

red king's dream  
dries clear

murder the moonshine  
25% more

it is your typewriter  
i have your typewriter

it is broken  
it is still broken  
but it is valuable  
to me

i have to type  
with one hand  
because you dropped it

this typewriter



you're stupid, stupid

how was your day  
those people are assholes  
machines need oil  
it's your fault  
you turned me on to it  
do you have any books on masturbation  
you have midget hands  
i can write poems too  
fuck you  
go get the dictionary  
leave my orifice alone  
don't let those people touch our food  
men are pigs  
what do you want for dinner  
immense amounts of hair  
i like that flavor on my cereal  
can you pick me up  
so there's this guy, and he's at this  
desk and peter sellers is there  
you shut up, shut up

(cont'd from page 8) to underline the difference between a work of fiction that is beholden to the source it steals from and a work of fiction that sees in the original a very different possibility that the author would never have seen.

For instance the story I was talking about with Bolaño: what goes on in that story is that I take a moment from Bolaño that sparks something for me, and then I go in a very different direction. The other thing that story does is it kind of plays around with an Isak Dinesen story, "The Monkey," as well, and alludes to it in various ways, and then it welds all these thing together to make a kind of ghost story that's also a meditation on storytelling itself. It's the combination of those things leading to a different sort of thing that has nothing to do, in a way, with either of them, and has a lot to do with me, and the way I think about the world, and the way I think about writing.

**FS:** For a long time your essay with Joanna Howard was the only critical work on Ann Quin. What is it about Ann Quin's work that drew your attention? Is there a certain freedom and perhaps a certain fright associated with

writing critically in such an open field?

**BE:** I'm trying to think of how I came to Ann Quin.

For a long time, my only literary agent was based in London. That didn't work very well for my career in America, but he was really good at introducing me to a certain range of writers that I wouldn't have found otherwise. I think he suggested Ann Quin, and even suggested *Berg* as a possibility. And so that was the first book I read. I actually bought it used, it was totally out of print, but

I found it used in a shop in London, for like a pound—it wasn't very expensive—and then read it and was really amazed by it. I think that book does

really marvelous things with language and the way in which it constructs itself and reworks a kind of Hamlet story... things like that are really remarkable about it. And I was really surprised I hadn't heard anything about Quin. It was really a shock. So I made a point of trying to find all of her other work, and it was hard to do, but eventually I did it. And then somehow I guess I—I can't remember if the *Review of Contemporary Fiction* article came first or if writing the introduction for *Three* came first, but one or the other of those two things came up

*I'm more interested in stealing something that I can use to help make a new machine.*

## 2010 EQUINOX CHAPBOOK CONTEST

### WINNER

Neon Augury  
by  
C. McCallister Williams

### RUNNERS-UP

Bonjour Meriwether and the Rabid Maps  
by Andrew K. Peterson

You're Going to Die Jess Wigent  
by Jess Wigent

all titles forthcoming  
from Fact-Simile

and led to the other—I think it was then that I became very interested in Quin and found that Joanna was also very interested.

She's my partner. We're together. And we just got really interested in writing about Quin, proposed that to the *Review of Contemporary Fiction*, and they were excited about it. What I guess I would say about critical stuff: I have a PhD, so I did a lot of critical stuff early on, and it's certainly a different thing from fiction writing for me, and sometimes it's intimidating, sometimes it's weird. There's a different kind of responsibility with it because with Quin, at the time we published that article, as you mentioned, there was nothing critical on Quin out. I mean, there were things that had been published years ago, but there was very little that was current. And so it was like the only chance to introduce American readers to her and to her work. It did feel like there was a sense of responsibility there, and that can be intimidating sometimes.

But since then, I've done a lot of things like that. I just wrote an introduction for a book by Barbara Comyns called, *Who was Changed and Who was Dead*, which is a really terrific book that is kind of like a happy pastoral story with lots of strange horrible stuff going on with it, including a plague and a flood and other things. The combination is pretty surprising and really effective. And I've done other things like that as well. I just did an introduction for a book by a French writer that's coming out, and have done articles here and there. I think that, for me, part of your responsibility as a writer is to try to create a landscape that will

make it possible for writers my age and younger to be influenced by people who have maybe been forgotten but shouldn't have been forgotten. When I'm translating work as well (I do a lot of translations), I try to translate work that I think can have a definite impact on American



literature, an impact that will be positive and that potentially can help change the way in which literature is developing or going. In some ways, there are so many other kinds of things pushing literature in certain directions that it's a little bit like swimming against the current. But the fact that you can write about Quin, and that this will help lead to her being reissued, and that this in turn may lead to a couple of people reading her work who wouldn't have found it otherwise, is really, really great and part of the task of being a writer.

**FS:** It occurs to me that the proliferation of writing programs and perhaps writers in the world it almost—it seems harder. There seems to be fewer and fewer—more and more magazines every day, but fewer and fewer spaces for that sort of rediscovery. There are a few presses out there that have done some—

**BE:** There are a few that are committed, yeah.

**FS:** —that are intent on bringing out older work that needs to be re-examined.

**BE:** These things come up and then they fade again and then they come up again. And it's also partly just, how do you—even if you reissue the book—how do you get it to the readers that are going to be most interested in it. It's partly chance, and it's partly other things. It's partly word-of-mouth. But I think you just make a good-faith effort.

I think both Joanna and I felt incredibly strongly about Quin and I've taught Quin a lot since then. One great thing about that is, I see her work—I see a book like *Berg*—as doing things

that I don't think anybody else does, and so it's really a productive book to talk about in a creative writing class. So that's it too. I'm looking for things that I can teach that are going to have an impact on the students.

**FS:** Are there any examples of stuff that you've gone looking for recently that you haven't been able to find?

**BE:** Well, you know, for years I used to photocopy Stanley Crawford's *Log of the S.S. The Mrs. Unguentine*, which is a really strange little book about a couple that lives on a barge, and the barge seems to represent the whole world in some ways. Its language is really eccentric and interesting. I used to just photocopy parts of it and hand it out. And several of us, several writers did that: Ben Marcus I know really liked that novella, and Deb Unferth and a few other people. Dalkey re-issued that book just a couple years ago. And so that was

something that kind of—and it wasn't me: it was Deb who wrote to them and convinced them—something that kind of started out slowly and finally built momentum. So that's one. The Barbara Comyns book, I got asked to do the introduction for that because I'd been talking about her for like a long time, and then suddenly someone decided to redo it. I mean, there's plenty of stuff out there I'd like to see re-issued, that's the problem. There's a great many things that could come out. But there are a lot of good books that are in print still, so...

**FS:** Where is the narrative headed in contemporary literature? Who and/or what is shaping or driving it?

**BE:** Well, I think there are several things happening. The one thing I think that's key that's happening is there's a reconsideration of genre and what genre means, and I mean that on three different levels. I mean it in the sense that there's a real interest in hybrid work, in terms of confusing the larger genres of fiction and poetry, and fiction and non-fiction, things like that. So, on the one hand, narrative is blurring that genre line, this kind of larger genre line. On the other hand, there's a kind of confusion going on between literary genres and popular genres, so that we have work by people like Kelly Link and George Sanders that feel very literary but are also crossing a genre line, that are drawing from science fiction or fantasy or from other genres—the ghost story, other things like that. And so that line is being blurred as well.

And then the third thing I think that's happening is within popular genre fiction, especially in the popular genre fiction that has a more literary bent. You have a kind of confusion of different sub-genres, a confusion in which, for instance, you have mystery and horror that are being blended together to create something new, and you have other sorts of crossings that are occurring there. So that's what I see most of all, is that there's a real interest in crossing boundaries, in reconsidering the kind of walls that kept things separate for a long while, in reconsidering the judgments that have been made against popular fiction. And I think for me there's good work on all sides of all those divides, and good work that's occurring in the interaction of them as well (as well as really bad work on all sides also).

**FS:** In what direction do you find your own work heading currently?

**BE:** Right now I'm really interested in thinking about cross-pollinating literary fiction with outside influences. How one can do a book that has one foot in horror or mystery, but feels very literary at the same time, trying to make a kind of really well-made, successful literary

book that satisfies on a number of different levels. So I think it's that. I'm kind of between projects right now, but the thing I'm really interested in is trying to work on a book that's a kind of a weird noir book, and is set in a strange, post-apocalyptic world, not unlike the space in "An Accounting." But it has a kind of odd detective thing going on as well.

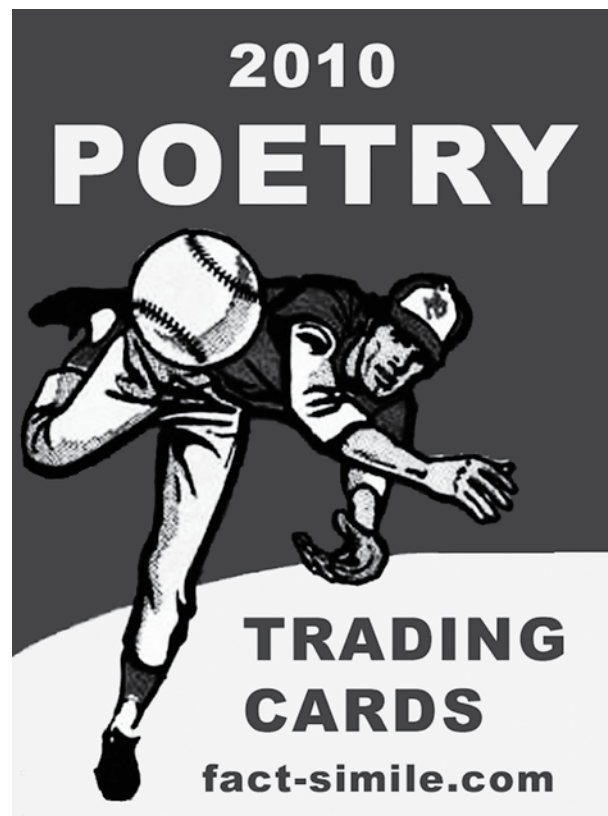
**FS:** Is this the Bjorn series?

**BE:** No, it's not the Bjorn series, but it's something like that. The Bjorn stuff is something I play around with, and most of that is not actually... very little of it's been actually written, even though I've published a couple of pieces. No, this is a little more like "Last Days," the most recent novel that I've published. It's a kind of detective story, but it's really exceptionally weird, and people are losing their limbs all over the place. And at the same time, I think there's something very careful going on with the language, that it does have that attention to style that literary fiction in my opinion should have.

**FS:** The loss of limbs seems to be a frequent—

**BE:** Yeah, no, I know, and it's—

**FS:** —lots of—





**BE:** —yeah, there’s—

**FS:** —mutilation stuff—

**BE:** —there’s a lot of amputation and mutilation that goes on—in my work, I mean: I guess I can’t say that it goes on in general. I’m not sure why I’m interested in that. I think it’s partly that I’m interested in seeing how people function in traumatic situations, or in situations in which things are being taken away from them. So I think it’s partly that. I think there are probably deeper psychological reasons for that interest that I just don’t—that I haven’t figured out, or maybe it’s better for me not to know, ultimately. I’m not sure.

**FS:** Fair enough. Finally, and that seems like a good lead-in. With three strong releases: *Baby Leg*, *Fugue State*, and *Last Days*, 2009 was by all accounts a very prolific year. What does the near future hold in terms of forthcoming publications?

**BE:** Well, actually, let me say one more thing about—before I had an interest in mutilation, I had kind of an obsessive interest in axes, and so I think that an interest in mutilation kind of naturally followed, that you move from the ax to people losing limbs, you know, limbs cut off. But yeah, it was a very good year in terms of publications. It was a funny year in some senses because *Last Days* was an expansion of something that I’d published earlier and a lot of it had done before. *Fugue State* is all stories and a lot of the stories had been written earlier. *Baby Leg* was also published in a journal run by some former Naropa students, *Ellipsis*, and it had been published serially in that, so much of the stuff that feels like it’s new in book form is actually stuff that was written well before 2009. But I’m completely happy with it coming out, I feel like it’s been a very good year, and I’ve been very pleased with the attention that that work has had. And now I’m kind of at the point where I don’t have quite enough for another story collection; I’m kind of working towards the next story collection, and am maybe two-thirds of the way there. I’m trying to get a start on this new novel that I mentioned. I have several projects I’m considering starting, but I think it will be the weird noir thing that goes next, and then I’ll just try to figure it out from there.

**FS:** Looking forward to reading it.

**BE:** Well, hopefully I can give it to you to read very soon.

**FS:** Brian, thank you so much for your time. **FS**

## BIOS

Scott Bentley was born in Burbank, California in 1964. He received a BA from UC Santa Cruz in 1986, an MA from UC San Diego in 1989 and an MFA from Mills College in 2004. He lives with his family in the San Francisco Bay Area where he teaches writing at California State University East Bay. He is the editor and publisher of *LETTERBOX Magazine* and the author of two chapbooks: *EDGE* (Birdcage Chapbooks, 1987) and *Out of Hand* (Parenthesis Writing Series, 1989) and two full-length books: *Ground Air* (O Books, 1994) and *The Occasional Tables* (sub press, 2000). He has co-translated the work of Brazilian writer Regis Bonvicino and others. Some of his translations appear in *New American Writing* and *The Pip Anthology of World Poetry of the 20th Century* (vol. 3)—*Nothing the Sun Could Not Explain: 20 Contemporary Brazilian Poets* (Green Integer, 2003). Work has appeared in *580 Split*, *Bird Dog*, *Dusie*, *Lyrice*, *Mirage #4/Periodical*, *The Poker*, *The Raddle Moon*, *The Styles*, *Syllogism*, *Tinfish*, *Vanitas* and elsewhere.

David Brennan’s work has recently appeared in *Action Yes*, *Beeswax*, *H\_NGM\_N* and elsewhere and has been featured on *Verse Daily*. He is the author of *The White Visitation* (BlazeVOX books) and lives and teaches writing in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Roxanne Carter is searching for a split end. She lives in Wondervu, Colorado where she is pursuing a PhD at the University of Denver. Her writings have been included in *Caketrain*, *La Petite Zine*, *Finery* and *The New River*. She can be found prancing around at [www.persephassa.com](http://www.persephassa.com).

Mark Cunningham has three books out: *Body Language* from Tarpaulin Sky Press, *80 Beetles* from Otoliths and *71 Leaves*, an e-book from BlazeVOX. He also has four chapbooks out, all on-line: *Second Story* and *nightlightnight* (with photographs by Mel Nichols), both from Right Hand Pointing; *10 specimens* from Gold Wake Press; and *Nachträglichkeit* from Beard of Bees.

Michelle Disler has a PhD in Creative Nonfiction from Ohio University and teaches nonfiction workshops on the essay and literature classes on women writers at Ohio Wesleyan University. Her work has appeared in *The Laurel Review*, *Seneca Review*, *Lake Effect*, *Gulf Coast*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Witness*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Fugue* and *Columbia*, where her essay received the Essay Prize. Disler has also received the Virginia Woolf Prize in the Essay and is an AWP Intro Award in Nonfiction and Pushcart Prize nominee, the latter for her multi-genre work on Fleming’s Bond. She is also the recipient of the Ohio Wesleyan University Thomas E. Wenslaw Fund Grant for “Letters

from the Island,” a book-length collection of epistolary meditations in process on Beaver Island, Michigan.

Brian Evenson is the author of ten books of fiction, most recently the limited-edition novella *Baby Leg*, published by New York Tyrant Press in 2009. In 2009 he also published the novel *Last Days* (which won the American Library Association’s award for Best Horror Novel of 2009) and the story collection *Fugue State*, both of which were on *Time Out New York*’s top books of 2009. His novel *The Open Curtain* (Coffee House Press) was a finalist for an Edgar Award and an IHG Award. His work has been translated into French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese and Slovenian. He lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island where he directs Brown University’s Literary Arts Program.

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).

Peter Grieco’s poems have appeared during the past year in *Poetry Revolt*, *Timber Creek Review*, *Beatnik Cowboy*, *Black Robert Journal*, *Fifteen Project*, *Confrontation*, *HazMat*, *Blue Collar Review*, *Cause and Effect*, *Epicenter*, *Spilz*, *Blood Lotus*, *The Buffalo News*, *Folly*, *moria* and elsewhere. Most recently, *Confrontation Magazine* nominated his poem “White Out” for this year’s Pushcart Awards. Another, “Waving of Flags + Crowds,” was awarded second place in the annual *Tiger’s Eye* competition.

Derek Henderson is alive and well in Salt Lake City and, at the moment, pleased that E. E. Cummings has the goodwill to speak so fondly of “unkempt adoration.”

Jennifer Karmin’s text-sound epic, *Aaaaaaaaaaalice*, was published by Flim Forum Press in 2010. She curates the Red Rover Series and is co-founder of the public art group Anti Gravity Surprise. Her multidisciplinary projects have been presented at festivals, artist-run spaces, community centers and on city streets across the U.S., Japan and Kenya. A proud member of the Dusie Kollektiv, she is the author of the Dusie chapbook *Evacuated: Disembodying Katrina*. *Walking Poem*, a collaborative street project, is featured online at

How2. At home in Chicago, Jennifer teaches creative writing to immigrants at Truman College and works as a Poet-in-Residence for the public schools.

Mary Kasimor has had work published in journals including *GutCult*, *Otoliths*, *moria*, *Big Bridge*, *BlazeVox2k3*, *Reconfigurations* and *MiPOesias* among others. She has two books of poems published, *silk string arias* (BlazeVox Books) and *cruel red* (Otoliths).

John Kearns has a Masters Degree in Irish Literature from the Catholic University of America and lives in Manhattan where he has had several full-length and one-act plays produced. His novel *The World* was published in 2003 and his novel-in-progress “Worlds,” was a finalist in the 2002 New Century Writers’ Awards. His short-story collection *Dreams and Dull Realities* is now available from Boann Books and Media. His poetry has recently appeared in the *Feile-Festa* literary journal, the Greenwich Village newspaper *WestView*, the *ASBDQ* experimental text journal and the *Write On Maui* e-zine. Recent fiction publications include “A Tragic Story by Beatrice Mahon, O.P.,” “Chances” and “Dreams and Dull Realities” in the *Danse Macabre* online literary magazine.

Cralan Kelder lives in Amsterdam. Recent publications include *French Pastry* (Coracle 2007), *City Boy* (Longhouse 2007) and *Give Some Word* (forthcoming Shearsman 2010). He is an editor of *Full Metal Poem*.

Michael Leong was educated at Dartmouth College, Sarah Lawrence College and Rutgers University, and his poems, reviews and translations have appeared in journals such as *Bird Dog*, *Double Room*, *GutCult*, *jubilat*, *Opium Magazine*, *Pindelyboz* and *Tin House*. He is the author of a collection of poetry, *e.s.p.* (Silenced Press) and a translation of the Chilean poet Estela Lamat, *I, the Worst of All* (BlazeVOX, 2009).

Shanna Miller McNair is a freelance writer and editor in Portland, Maine.

Rich Murphy’s credits include the 2008 Gival Press Poetry Award for his book-length manuscript “Voyeur,” a National Book Award nominee and an honorable mention at the 2009 London and at the New England Book Festivals; *The Apple in the Monkey Tree* a book of poems by Codhill Press; chapbooks *Great Grandfather* by Pudding House Publications, *Family Secret* by Finishing Line Press, *Hunting and Pecking* by Ahadada Press and *Phoems for Mobile Vices* by BlazeVox; poems in *Rolling Stone*, *Poetry*, *Grand Street*, *Trespass*, *New Letters*, *Pank*, *Segue*, *Big Bridge*, *Pemmican*, *foam:e* and *Confrontation*; and essays in *Fulcrum*, *The International Journal of the Humanities*, *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded*

*Perspectives on Learning, Reconfigurations: A Journal for Poetics Poetry / Literature and Culture, Fringe, Big Toe Review and Journal of Ecocriticism.* He lives in Marblehead, Massachusetts and teaches writing at VCU.

Matt Reeck's poetry and translations have appeared in a variety of magazines and chapbooks. Susan Howe selected his work as the 2010 BOMB poetry contest winner. Work is forthcoming in *Action Yes*, *BOMB*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *Colorado Review*, *EOAGH*, *Two Lines* and others.

Ryan Ridge shares a birthday with Johnny Carson and Weird Al. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *DIAGRAM*, *elimae*, *The Collagist*, *Kitty Snacks*, *The Mississippi Review*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *PANK*, *Salt Hill* and others. He lives in Southern California.

Tim Roberts is a writer and freelance editor living in Denver, Colorado. He is the co-publisher, with Julie Carr, of Counterpath Press.

Elizabeth Robinson is the author, most recently, of *The Orphan & its Relations* (Fence) and *Also Known As* (Apogee). A new collection of poems, *Three Novels*, will be published by Omnidawn in 2011. Robinson co-edits *EtherDome* Chapbooks and Instance Press.

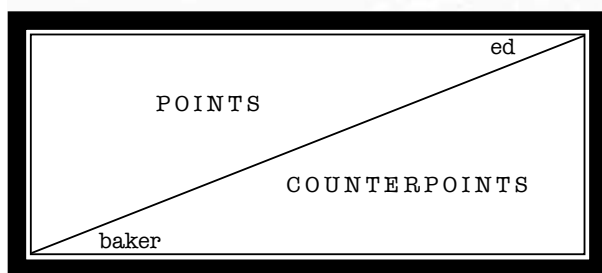
Dan Ruhrmanty's work explores the dimensions and depth of human nature. His goal is to communicate the personal and cultural dynamics that condition how we view ourselves and others as well as how our individual experiences condition such perception. Notable publications featuring Ruhrmanty's artwork or literature include: *Barefoot Muse*, *Centrifugal Eye*, *Gloom Cupboard* and *Convergence*.

Richard Schwass is a 2008 graduate of the Masters Program in Writing & Poetics at Naropa University, Boulder. His work has appeared in *Monkey Puzzle*, *french press*, *Flaneur Foundry* and *Tendrel*. He saw first light in Norfolk, London and Paris but grew up and out in Hawaii and Newport, Rhode Island. A return push to the opposite sea continues.

Andrew Wessels has lived in Houston, Los Angeles and Cambridge. He currently splits his time between Istanbul and Las Vegas, where he is pursuing an MFA in poetry at UNLV. He is the editor-in-chief of the literary journal *The Offending Adam* and recently co-edited the anthology *13 Younger Contemporary American Poets* (Proem Press) with Mark Irwin.

John Tway Zackel's work has been published or is forthcoming in *Third Coast*, *Zahir*, *monkeybicycle*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, *The Oyez Review* and others. He lives and teaches in Portland, Oregon.

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MICHAEL LEONG

from CUTTING TIME WITH A KNIFE  
"The mind of the poet is the shred of platinum." (T.S. Eliot)

**45** *The buttock*

*of the poet is the geodesic dome of*

**Rh**<sub>odium</sub>

**102.90550**

In the Combustion Museum, three seconds  
could signal a minute: a flux more  
immediate than history.

**47**

*The wink of the poet is the sliver of silver*

**Ag**

**107.8682**

And at that photosensitive moment he  
developed a latent image of later.

**48**

*The scapula of  
the poet is*

**Cd**

*the pin cushion*

*of cadmium*

**112.411**

The artist is smelted from the vacuum of  
progress by the sacrifice of if, or a  
precipitated distillation of the continual.

**49**

*The appendix of the poet*

*is* **In** *the*

*aqueduct of indium*

**114.818**

But to define tradition, there remains this  
soft process of post-transition and the  
relation of primary sense to its malleable  
and easily fusible source.