



TRIPWIRE 8

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8

What is poetry to a rebel alliance? Not a navel.

CECILY NICHOLSON

finally in public we built an army of dogs—
the re-wilding of our debts

OKI SOGUMI

the party melted into the riot melted into the party

WENDY TREVINO

OAKLAND : 2014

TRIPWIRE
a journal of poetics

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ANNE BOYER

Kansas City

A TALK PRESENTED AT BEYOND OAKLAND, AUGUST 2013

Kansas City is a condition to aspire to, a direction to head, an urgent requirement, a location at which one must and will arrive, a longing, a place of both general and specific bliss. How precisely one gets to Kansas City is of no importance, it is only that Kansas City must be gotten to.

When Fats Domino sings his version of the song “Kansas City,” he is like Socrates who says of his ideal city:

Let me feast my mind with the dream as day dreamers are in
the habit of feasting themselves when they are walking alone;
for before they have discovered any means of effecting their
wishes...they proceed with their plan, and delight in detailing
what they mean to do when their wish has come true.

That is, Fats Domino might take a plane to the ideal city, he might take a train, but even if he has to walk there, he will get to it the same. Kansas City is a site of general desire at which there is a specific point of bliss: the northeastern crossroads of 12th Street and Vine that during the golden era had a hundred clubs, a million songs, was the place where the instruments learned the form of human rhetoric and would argue back and forth til dawn. And, as is the nature of Kansas City, there was no law but that of nature and/or pleasure and/or temporary arbitrary displays of corrupt civic power.

It is unclear whether Fats or whoever else sings his version of the song has a specific woman in mind as he begins: perhaps she is an ideal Kansas City woman narrowed down and built up from the general desirability of all Kansas City women who are not merely pretty but also “crazy.” That is, to be a

woman in Kansas City is to be like Kansas City: attractive, irrational, lawless, simultaneously attainable and unattainable, governable and not. He's going to get him "one" of these citizens of the dream city, but, also, he will be got.

When Fats sings, Kansas City is never got to and the Kansas City woman is never precisely had—it is the city kept static in its utopian criminality then.

In some versions of the song, it is not the idea of the possession of a crazy little woman that causes the singer to desire Kansas City, it is crazy ways of loving—the attainability and unattainability of Kansas City no longer located in a specific or gendered body, but in the no-law-but-that-of-Dionysius nature of the Kansas City love. This is the version, too, in which one ends up on the corner with a Kansas City woman and some Kansas City wine. There are versions, too, in which the singer tells whoever is listening to keep his or her hands off the Kansas City woman: as if a Kansas City woman is a thing which must be protected—not at all the point of Kansas City. There are other versions where one no longer ends up on the corner of 12th street and Vine, but merely on a corner with a suitcase. No longer does the singer arrive in a district of a thousand songs, but is merely as innocent as any traveller about to set up home. There is a Beatles version, like a blanket of anglopheniety which descends upon the city and extinguishes it as both ideal polis and historical fact. Their version is full of math, dickishness, and nostalgia. Kansas City, for them is a place one fetches a possessed woman from, rather than an ideal and criminal republic of crazy women, and crazy wine and crazy love.

I am walking to the corner of 43th and Warwick and I am listening to Fats Domino sing of 12th Street and Vine. I am in Kansas City but all I want in life is to go to Kansas City.

How does one go from Kansas City to a Kansas City? What mode of transportation might I take? 12th Street and Vine is no longer an intersection. After every Kansas City Royals' game, the Beatles version plays.

*

If you ever actually get to Kansas City, near the place Fats Domino aspired to, you will see the facade of "Kansas City." Now I don't know how to make this sentence clear enough when spoken aloud, because it sounds poetic, but what I am trying to tell you is quite literal: if you get to Kansas City, near 12th and Vine, you will see the facades erected during the Robert Altman film, *Kansas City*.

These facades were erected in 1996, the year I first lived in Kansas City. I don't know how to explain how I got to Kansas City without a complex and personal story and what was then out of these events my abandonment of everything that had to do with "poetry" or being "a poet," but I swore I would never do anything like that, be anything like a "poet" if that's what being a poet meant. I was 23 years old. For the first time, I'd crossed a state line and left Kansas to live, if only just barely: me, who had never been east of the Mississippi, who had never been to anything like a large coastal American city. Kansas City, in its sprawling Midwestern-ness, was what I had to aspire to—the ideal city that I wanted to arrive to, in liberation from what had come before.

What I knew when I got to Kansas City was that I couldn't be a poet, I mean I refused to, and I was soon in whatever was a not a poem, working in the shelters and community centers of Kansas City and thinking the only possible life was a life of politics, and the only possible politics was a politics for women and children and the poor.

When I think of telling you what was in Kansas City the year the façades of Kansas City were built, my thoughts turn a kind of red, and what I see is a field of feeling: sorrow, rage.

I think of the children I loved in Kansas City before I had my own child, before we were a poor mother and child like these poor mothers and children I worked with in the shelters. And when I think of the year the façades were

erected in Kansas City, I think of the other monumental failure of that year—Clinton’s “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act”—which you may know as “welfare reform”—that one piece of legislation which more than any other, directly and catastrophically immiserated those who are women, and mothers or children and poor.

I had, the year the façade was built, a terrifying immersion in the consequences of these shock waves of life under neoliberal austerity and the failure of the left, and of the failures of what remained of “feminism” to organize around the interests of poor women and children. And though the lives of the poor mothers I worked with was not yet my life, it was soon enough. I think of the exhausted mothers who, as welfare became “workfare” and constricted into an impossible bargain, had to choose between abusive partners and living in their cars or the unsafe living rooms of people who might hurt their children, who had either the option of continued personal abuse or the draconian, impersonal abuse of the shelters and privatizing welfare system that regularly humiliated the mothers for being poor, for being unmarried, for having been women of color who had children or children by many fathers or white women who had children with fathers who were not white.

I stayed in Kansas City from 1996 to shortly after my daughter was born. I thought it was strange the facade of Kansas City stayed up for four years. But it is 2013, and it looks like the facade of Kansas City will stay around till they fall off.

The facades are their own ruin now, instead of a mask on a ruin. It sounds like a poetic problem, that we have a ruined mask on ruin, and it is, and because of this I distrust it.

*

Kansas City is made up of more than one city. Sometimes people will know this—they will ask you *Which Kansas City?* If you live in what is roughly

understood as Kansas City, this question has many answers. It’s a city of lines and borders and boundaries, and while this is the case with many cities, the lines and borders and boundaries of Kansas City have a unique historical weight.

If it was the 1860s, and you crossed the line between the different Kansas Cities, on one side you were a slave, and the other you were free. Or if you are white, in one Kansas City you could own other humans, the black ones, and if you crossed to the line, it is possible that you crossed it because you were interested in keeping other white people from owning humans.

There is a town in Kansas City, Kansas, that doesn’t exist anymore, called “Quindaro.” It is hard to get to. It is now only ruins. Its name means “bundle of sticks tied together.” You must first go deep onto Quindaro Boulevard. If you are lucky you will find the wooden John Brown statue, then you must walk up a muddy bluff past it, past what used to be locked gates. If you get to Quindaro, you will see the ruins of an autonomous community built by self-emancipated former slaves and abolitionists, the site at which people who crossed the river could finally be free.

In 1996, when I first visited it, the local historians said that Quindaro was hidden from Kansas City as part of a conspiracy of the powerful, that no one wanted the people to know in Kansas City that black people had formed a community for the purpose of liberation, that there were indigenous people and white people too who would be so “crazy”—like John Brown—to fight and die for black people and against the whites. The local historians wanted people to know this Kansas City, so if then you were asked *Which Kansas City?* you would have a better one to chose from than the Kansas City, like this.

*

Does Kansas City have a content? Or does it only have a form? I think a lot about the form of Kansas City. I think I must think about it because I am now

a poet again, and if I think of the content of Kansas City, even for a moment, I get that red painful scrim over my memory that brings me back to politics.

In Kansas City there are things that are not quite riots. I once wrote, in the time before the occupations, “There are no politics in Kansas City. In Kansas City, instead of politics, we have two things: money and race. We have a third: children, and the way they are hated and feared here has mostly to do with the two other things.”

In Kansas City there are sometimes weekend gatherings of mostly poor kids of color in the areas the city has devoted to the wealthy. These children are called “mobs”—their being certain bodies in a place not for their bodies is close enough to a riot for the cops. The youth or almost youth then sometimes shoot at each other and the mayor gets pushed into a flower bed outside the Cheesecake Factory. The youth are there on the Plaza where the shopping and fine-dining is supposed to be.

Because of this, if you go to the Plaza on a nice night in spring and summer at 9 pm, you will see the KCPD stand over the mostly black children, sometimes the children in groups of a dozen or more, the children with their hands zip-tied behind their back.

*

There is a problem for any poet who lives in a city like this. There is the aesthetic allure of ruins, and the long poetic tradition of admiring them. Like many “ruined” Midwestern cities, there is the problem of “art” in Kansas City, and of artists and gentrifiers and “lifestyle”—a problem I am, because of my current work, this second time living in Kansas City, deeply involved in, and a problem so complex I can’t sufficiently explain it here. It is a problem that exists precisely because of the aesthetic allure of a city like this, and its cheap space and joyful “lawlessness”: those vacancies created by white supremacy and capital.

I have a problem this time in Kansas City because I have no longer refused poetry. Because what I come from now is poetry, and poetry is also my city, and poetry is a city whose citizens have a tradition of admiring and/or colonizing the suffering of others. The poetry of Kansas City is society erupting into firefights and tragedies, of the natural comedy of ruined cities, of puppets and shams, of holy and unholy divisions, of ghosts which are given free reign over memory

I thought I should come back to the material facts of Kansas City. If I were doing this better, I would show you every diagram of borders here, of race and money, and you could marvel like me at the lines drawn across Kansas City and what does and does not cross them. I would give you the facts of death in this place, also called “Killer City.” I would give you the facts I’d collected about the women who die of intimate partner violence here, in disproportionate number to other cities of this size, give you the facts of death of the city which hates its children and kills its women.

I think sometimes, when people come to visit me and we drive across these borders, about what terrible ghostly police must enforce these checkpoints, must hold these conditions as stable. But we know what these ghost police are, they are white supremacy and patriarchy and capital, and we know how the actual police, which in Kansas City have for decades been denied even local control, work in concert with them.

I think also of the ghost armies that could rise against these ghost police, think of the history which waits under the façade again revealed, ready to provide content for the now brutal form of city.

I think of how this is a city which once had the most meaningful border any city could have—that between freedom and slavery—and what borders, and traversals and reversals, could, and must, most urgently occur.

CECILY NICHOLSON

On the Occasion of BEYOND OAKLAND, August 10th, 2013

Upon reflection, June 2014

Thank you to the organizers.

Good to be in Oakland for the first time, to sense an atmosphere and to consider history of a place I have listened to and until now only imagined. Oakland is the ancestral territory of the Muwekma Ohlone I acknowledge as a visitor from Vancouver, British Columbia, unceded Tsleil Watuth, Musqueam, Squamish territory of the x^wməθkwəy̓əm, s̓kw̓wú7mesh and səliwəta? nations. Locally, this acknowledgment is often truncated to “Coast Salish Territories,” referencing more so a language grouping.

There is disagreement perhaps about how to indicate our relationship to the land we are on. No matter, as organizers in the lower mainland, we commonly name and recognize ourselves when we are visitors, settlers or otherwise occupying territory.

British Columbia is home to over half of the sixty distinct Indigenous languages spoken in Canada. Although as Chelsea Vowel notes in her essay “The Reports of Our Cultural Deaths Have Always Been Greatly Exaggerated,” “in BC every one of those languages is considered at extreme risk”. At a time when a lack of safe drinking water, youth suicide, hugely disproportionate poverty and rates of incarceration and critically, as many note, dire conditions of sexualized violence, are pervasive for Indigenous peoples, Vowel asks: why bring up language first?

The oppression we have faced, and continue to face, does not define us in the way our languages do. Our resilience, and the fact that we have not disappeared all the times it was predicted

that our end was just around the corner, is very much rooted in our languages...Next to losing the land, I cannot think of a factor that more threatens our collective existence as Indigenous peoples than no longer being able to talk our talk.¹

In Vancouver “unceded” tenacity is *the* critical undercurrent—a main and respected assertion implicated in politics, poetics or any notion of movement through the City. To be relevant to efforts underway requires engaging with multiple assertions of sovereignty and claims for justice that resound through our networks. This assertion is complicated by recent moves in municipal politics.

In the context of the fraught discourse of “reconciliation” being facilitated within Canada and among Indigenous (“First Nations”) people, the City of Vancouver designated 2014 the Year of Reconciliation. The Vision Vancouver administration also recently issued an official acknowledgement of Vancouver’s location on unceded territory. Their announcement was in immediate proximity to public outcry on the west coast to the announcement of the Harper administration’s federal approval for the Endbridge Northern Gateway pipeline. This pipeline is intended to ship toxic crude bitumen from the tarsands and through various First Nation’s territory. The move faces unprecedented opposition.

The City makes these gestures despite being bent toward the unfinished project of colonialism manifest in displacement and gentrification and the lack of housing or rent control coupled with unbridled development. The City is still implicated in systemic and intergenerational poverty, policing and violence that ripened the conditions for the murders and disappearances of many Indigenous women. Yet the dominant Vancouver administration must mount their campaign for the next municipal election in November of this year. The City demonstrates its co-option and complicity. Perhaps an unprecedented sincerity will still envelop City Hall and instill some benevolent authority over municipal policing.

Unceded tenacity as with Vowel's contentions is critical in regards to language. As I stand locally with migrants speaking beyond borders and in concert with Indigenous rebellion we contend with a tyranny of English-language even as we are simultaneously embedded and defined within its claim. We speak englishes. In terms of print, knowledge production and the halls of poetry, I observe limits to our activism. Assertions of indigenous poetics, as Neal McLeod's recent work² unfolds, abound on orality, language, and understandings of place that infuse the main streams with possibilities of world views righted.

Talk becomes print. Thank you to the organizers.

What is poetry to a rebel alliance? Not a navel.

When I spoke last year in Oakland it was August 10th, Prisoner Justice Day in Vancouver. On this day we take time to collectively remember all the people who have died unnatural deaths inside Canadian prisons. The day is recognized and actioned inside and out. In Oakland I acknowledged the hunger strikes that were underway at Pelican Bay and other Californian prisons—day 33 at that time.³ Incarcerated people, deaths in the segregation units, and deaths in prison are predominantly racialized. Native and black people generally imprisoned here are not like the white activist within a resourced support network. Being poor through generations can cost a lot of brutality.

On August 10th I attended a family-friendly rally involving stories, statements and poetry organized by the Joint Effort collective which I volunteered with briefly. Joint Effort is an all women prison abolitionist group involved in solidarity work with women prisoners at the Fraser Valley Institution for Women (Federal) in and the Allouette Correctional Centre for Women (Provincial) in BC. They have been volunteering at the women's prisons since 1980. My commitment to work with JE has been to help conduct craft, art and poetry workshops inside, to connect to advocacy

outside, fundraise and otherwise to listen. It is a humble education that skirts paternalism. Our hearts are implicated and we are bound up in a notion of collective liberation. Our presence (for this group, ideally) is an extension of community. In enacting a simple and critical mandate to connect the inside and the outside we resist that stark, dichotomous insistence we've been conditioned to perpetuate. Deena Rhymes knows that:

Few people might look upon the prison as a site of profound political change where development's consequences are taking root. Fewer still might recognize the prison as a transnational space where prisoners enter into a shared consciousness with their "brothers" and "sisters" serving time in other countries. Yet, in their writing and activism from prison, Indigenous prisoners have helped shape the political blueprint of Indigenous peoples in Canada since the late 1960s.⁴

This influence is evident too in the highly policed and incarcerated communities I work within. The Downtown Eastside neighbourhood with its disproportionate presence of racialized migrant and Indigenous people has been my primary window onto politics in the city since I moved here in 2000. We are still here through violence, through waves of displacement, through the advance of a creative city and its good life, through expo and the olympics and still onward in opposition to capital, development and the state's advance of resource extraction.

I am not qualified to review the infrastructure and important work and works of poetry around these parts. I can talk about how and where poetry occurs. That is to say: every day and most places. These days this work happens indoors and is invited into institutions, culled into books, performed and recorded on radio. Most significantly though, given the state of public and access, for the purpose of disruption and communication, our work is often spontaneous, graffitied, hand-made, fluid and integrated into our protests. Low-income artists and poets working through the Downtown Eastside

community are numerous, organized, and mentored intergenerationally. The conditions of our cultural work so deeply informed by our political and economic positions continue to render moments of expression a kind of coordinated work. Although too often mitigated by service, the work is a matter of continuity and necessity. These are acts of defiance and extensions of collective bodies.

Borders cross us. ‘The maps are not the territory.’

Contrary to what is dictated, the policed and regulated, devalued and stigmatized body says culture as much as any bigwig. More so, as its wielding of language and meaning facilitates whole survival and resilience, brilliantly: all honourable MFAs. Those most directly impacted by brutality continue to struggle *mercurially*, to express, to be heard and to impact in collaborative flows extending well beyond the scale and time of the City.

¹ 2013. *FUSE magazine*. pp 12-17: Summer.

² 2014. *Indigenous Poetics in Canada*. University of Waterloo Press.

³ On July 8th 2013, more than 30,000 California prisoners initiated an indefinite hunger strike in response to the CDCR’s failure to meet their 5 Core Demands. 60 days and 1 death later, strikers suspended the strike, and California legislators committed to hold public hearings.

The Pelican Bay Five Core Demands:

1. Eliminate group punishments and administrative abuse.
2. Abolish the debriefing policy and modify active/inactive gang status criteria.
3. Comply with the recommendations of the US Commission on Safety and Abuse in America’s Prisons recommendations and end long-term solitary confinement.
4. Provide adequate and nutritious food.
5. Create and expand constructive programming.

⁴ 2012. *Word Warriors: Indigenous Political Consciousness in Prison: Cultural Grammars of Nation, Diaspora and Indigeneity in Canada*. pp 229-245.

MARIE BUCK

Arts in Detroit

In his new book *The Road to Reinvention: How to Drive Disruption and Accelerate Transformation*, Josh Linkner, CEO of Detroit Venture Partners, writes of Detroit:

A growing posse of unlikely characters is banding together to improve our city from within. Business titans like Dan Gilbert (chairman of Quicken Loans), Roger Penske (chairman of Penske Racing and Penske Corporation), and Mike Ilitch (founder of Little Caesar’s Pizza) are collaborating with artists, retailers, educators, and philanthropists. (220)

While we should generally distrust Linkner given his class position, he is not, in fact, wrong about this. Detroit’s capitalist class has used mainstream media to yoke their profit-making to an increased quality of life in Detroit in the popular imagination. Through the national media’s coverage of Detroit’s alleged comeback, Detroit artists and writers are pressed into service for the capitalist class. The actual artwork or writing has nothing to do with it. Anything nice that happens in Detroit—art openings, readings, production of arts or literary journals—can’t help but be absorbed into the national narrative in which Detroit makes its ‘comeback’ via entrepreneurialism, art, urban gardens, and the supposed fresh start of the bankruptcy.

The narrative is particularly powerful because in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, Detroit has come to symbolize the failure of the American dream. The comeback narrative, in turn, argues for a gritty, up-by-your-bootstraps embrace of neoliberalism. Detroit’s population peaked in 1950, when it had nearly two million residents. It has steadily lost population since then and now has about 750,000 residents. About

a third of the land in Detroit is abandoned. The city has a 23% official unemployment rate and an estimated 50% actual unemployment rate.

One cause of all of this, of course, is that Detroit's manufacturing giants moved overseas (to avoid paying the high wages unions had won) and sometimes to other states or to the far suburbs, starting in the 50s and continuing to the present. Today there are only two plants left in Detroit proper, together employing fewer than 10,000 workers.¹ Detroit at one point had a huge working class that was the wealthiest in the country, and the Big Three's divestment from the city no doubt played a role in the decline in quality of life for Detroiters. But the exodus of the automakers does not account for the sharp lines between city and suburbs, or the fact that the wealth in the suburbs stays there. Anti-Black institutional racism explains this: mass incarceration via the drug war, the long history of real-estate redlining, a lack of functional public transit, with some suburbs refusing bus lines to keep African-Americans out.

Detroit's racism and segregation are not novel, but commonplace across the United States. But the effects of capitalist-racism are particularly visible here. Because the city itself has not had sufficient money for a long time (even before the current bankruptcy), the borders between the mostly-Black city and mostly white, mostly middle class or higher suburbs are starkly visible as you cross them. Abandonment, potholes, and the remnants of industrial buildings are on one side of any given border and green grass on the other. If you drive up Woodward Avenue, the main drag, from downtown straight up through the northern suburbs, you'll notice a sharp border at Eight Mile Road, and then wealth will gradually increase as you pass Nine Mile, Ten Mile, and Eleven Mile, on up to the fancy suburbs around Fifteen Mile. Metro Detroit's class and race segregation is blunt and overstated, arranged in a grid on sharp, numbered lines.

Detroit's role as a symbol of devastation, the failed American Dream, and now as a paragon for neoliberal bootstrapper ideologies is not coincidental. That Detroit is visually striking and photogenic in its abandonment, though, is partially a product of segregation and partially an accident of history. Detroit was unique as a key center of working-class Black struggle in the 1960s and 1970s, and it was unique for its high working-class wages. But the causes of its unusual visuals are not themselves unusual. Detroit's visuals—Google-Image “Detroit ruins” if you want some examples—just happened to provide reporters striking images as the narrative of the 2008 financial collapse evolved. And while Detroit residents were hit hard by the financial crisis, and the city government was hit hard as well, the overall look of Detroit did not change much. Detroit before the collapse looked the same as it did in the news stories that suddenly proliferated after the collapse. And more recently, there has been a huge drive for development, presumably since the crash gave speculators an opportunity to buy up land cheaply. The crash seems to have been the impetus for a national media narrative about Detroit that has actually facilitated development and gentrification while decreasing quality of life for most Detroiters.

Pictures of Detroit are deceptive; one needs history—history that is generally absent from mainstream media coverage—to understand the city. Empty lots and stripped houses read as urban prairie, but are also sites of property speculation by banks that foreclosed on homeowners, for instance. Even a lot of left discourse about Detroit accepts Detroit's visuals too readily. Legendary activist Grace Lee Boggs enjoins Detroiters to “reimagine work” as urban agriculture and small-scale production in a post-industrial society, ignoring the social processes of capitalism and the very concept of power.² Boggs's work is extraordinarily influential among activists in the city and elsewhere, and it often dovetails with entrepreneurial and development rhetoric, treating change, innovation, and technology as panaceas. Perhaps because at some level many people see the militant radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s as having contributed

to the current situation, a lot of activism in Detroit over the past decade or two has focused on prefigurative activities that also meet day-to-day needs—and so activists have often sacrificed the possibility of militancy in favor of charity. Survival projects like urban gardening (subsistence farming) and biking for those who don't have cars in a city with no reliable public transportation were initially championed by some on the left.³ But the risks of advocating such solutions without talking about power are now quite clear, as mainstream news stations and venture capitalists alike celebrate urban gardens and bikes. The images that accompany such news stories often depict young white upper- or middle-class people working together with older, working-class African Americans doing agricultural work. These images depict charitable whites teaching African Americans how to be resourceful and farm to pull themselves, and the city, out of poverty. The celebration of images of African Americans doing subsistence agricultural work ought to be more controversial than it is. Yet it has been taken up by both those on the broad left and corporations cultivating a do-gooder image.

The news stories are a shift from the racist vitriol about the city that the suburbs have vomited up for the last few decades, so they have an appeal. But the stories have also posited Detroit as pulling itself out of its poverty of its own cheer and grit—first through gardening, biking, and rehabbing houses, then through the presence of young, mostly white artists who are new to town, and then through companies like Quicken Loans and Blue Cross/Blue Shield moving from the suburbs to downtown. Recently, a slew of high-end companies have turned to using Detroit and the narrative around it as a way to sell their products. Shinola, maker of luxury watches and bicycles, and the pop-up restaurant Goldfinch American are two particularly egregious examples.⁴

I'm describing a narrative that may be familiar to anyone who lived in New York City in the 1970s and 80s.⁵ But nonetheless, in the current moment, the significance of being a poet or artist in a Rust Belt city is, I

suspect, distinct from what being a poet or artist means right now in New York or the Bay. New York doesn't need to sell itself for gentrification to keep happening. But in Detroit, when you go to a reading or an opening, you are part of something that developers can sell to other developers, to suburbanites, to the national media. More arts activity is a good thing. I'm very happy that there is more of a scene here for poetry and art than there was a few years back. But what do we do with the fact that art is immediately commodified by developers? Here it's commodified alongside Detroit's image as gritty. The white artist (and in the logic of this commodification, the artist is always white) can be a savior for a neighborhood and, at the same time, the white artist can draw on the city's "grit," or realness, or any of the slew of racially coded words that people use to describe the city, as inspiration to make their art.⁶

One such commodification has been on my mind a lot lately. A newly-formed nonprofit, Write A House, is initiating a program in which writers apply to come live in a formerly abandoned house that is in the process of being rehabbed and fix it up. The writer eventually gets the deed after two years. The goals are to make the out-of-the-way neighborhood that the house is in less abandoned and to support writers. But also: articles about the project have appeared in *Huffington Post*, *Alternet*, *Buzzfeed*, *The New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and *The LA Times*. No doubt, the image of Detroit as a place for artists has helped populate certain sections of the city and driven up rent prices, making a new level of speculation possible in the downtown, Corktown, and midtown neighborhoods. (The vast majority of Detroit looks the same as it did a few years ago—gentrification is isolated to a handful of areas.) Intentionally or not, Write a House, then, has helped boost the images of the "Big Three," Ford, GM, and Chrysler, in the wake of the auto bailouts, which is, it seems, part of those companies' sales strategies. In fact, Toby Barlow, founder of Write a House and promoter of many other arts projects in the city, also heads the advertising group that does all of the marketing for Ford Motor Company.

The history of Chrysler's "Imported from Detroit" ad series tells a similar story. In 2011, Chrysler debuted the first "Imported from Detroit" ad during the Super Bowl.⁷ The ad created a lot of buzz, and it was also one of the first instances of the new advertising image of Detroit. In discussing the ads, Olivier François, the Chief Marketing Officer for Fiat (owner of Chrysler) pinpointed the automakers' investment in Detroit's image. François describes the thinking behind the series of "Imported from Detroit" Chrysler ads:

If we could bring back the city that made us, we could take back our rightful place within it, because Detroit, this very place that the public hates so much, is the source of what will save it.⁸

The company's taking back its "rightful place" simply means becoming profitable again following the 2009 bailout. Chrysler advertisers see the image of Detroit—though not the quality of life of Detroiters—as key to selling cars. In fact, the poor quality of life in Detroit gives the city a gritty image, an image that advertisers have very much figured out how to sell. That Detroit is hard to live in and filled with people who are down-and-out in various ways helps Chrysler sell more cars. And writers and artists provide the other half of the comeback narrative.

As part of its fundraising, Write a House offered donors invitations to something called Clandestine, touted in the Travel section of the *New York Times* as:

an exclusive, semi-quarterly underground supper club run by a rotating cast of young, prominent chefs who find abandoned spaces like auto-body repair shops and warehouses and convert them into one-night-only dining events.

Detroit, it seems, can have things like fancy food only by commodifying its poverty, and its art can't just be art—it has to serve a narrative that makes money for the Big Three and plays into all the worst ideas: white saviors; the artist as observer who derives inspiration from the grittiness around him; Detroit's poverty as the only alternative to the unaffordability of New York or the Bay; DIY survival tactics like urban farming and living in neighborhoods without public services as an ethical good; and, mainly, art itself as cheery, uncontroversial, moral—something we can all assume is good, a signifier of safety and whiteness, urban and vibrant, yet harmless.

Writers and artists come from all sorts of class backgrounds, regardless of the image that the narratives I'm discussing here suggest, and so I won't speculate on any sort of intrinsic class allegiances for artists. Some artists fit the "creative class" role the media has ascribed to them perfectly; others share interests with people being displaced by gentrification, or are being displaced themselves. In some cases, there is plenty of potential for solidarity between newer artists and long-term residents of neighborhoods. Other artists may object to being used by developers, despite having little in common with earlier residents of neighborhoods.

At any rate, for those of us who wish to resist being made into advertising for developers when we curate a show or give a reading, it is, I think, crucial to organize *as artists* but not strictly through arts events. We should organize arts events, of course, but those of us in the arts community should work together as an arts community to oppose the developers' plan for Detroit and everything that is coming with it: water shut-offs for people who owe more than \$150 on their water bills; the stealing of pensions from retired city workers through the bankruptcy; the selling off of the Detroit Institute of Art's collection; the artificial inflation of rents in midtown and downtown through corporate incentives to (mostly white) employees moving from the suburbs; the increasing militarization and surveillance downtown. I am curious whether

forming arts organizations that are explicitly both aesthetic and political groups might disrupt capitalist narratives of what art does in a space, its role in “urban renewal.” “Artists Against Water Shut-Offs”? “Writers Against the Emergency Manager”? Can we leverage our association with innovation and creativity to help pose a third alternative that is neither Detroit-as-the-next-Brooklyn nor Detroit staying the same as it’s been, with all its inequality? Since the developers have accorded us a significant amount of cultural capital, can we use it to propose the city we want?

¹ Some statistics come from the *Washington Post*: <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/07/19/we-saved-the-automakers-how-come-that-didnt-save-detroit/>>.

² An example of Bogg’s writing about “reimagining work” is here: <<http://conversationthatyouwillneverfinish.wordpress.com/2012/08/03/re-imagining-work-at-detroit-2012-by-grace-lee-boggs/>>.

³ See Bhaskar Sunkara’s article “The Anarcho-Liberal” in *Dissent* for more discussion of the tendencies on the left that the bikes-and-gardens trends typify: <<http://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/the-anarcho-liberal>>.

⁴ You can see an example of Shinola’s use of the city in marketing here: <<http://www.shinola.com/our-story>>. Goldfinch American’s over-the-top site is here: <<http://www.goldfinchamerican.com/more/>>.

⁵ I have been thinking a lot lately about what is unique to Detroit’s current gentrification process and what is typical, and just belated. I have come to no conclusions and would welcome discussion about this.

⁶ See Laura Tannenbaum’s article “My Brooklyn, Not Yours” for a discussion of the image of the artist as white in relation to gentrification: <<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/01/my-brooklyn-not-yours/>>.

⁷ Chrysler’s much-lauded 2011 Super Bowl commercial is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKL254Y_jtc>.

⁸ Here I draw from Nicole Aschoff’s article “Imported From Detroit” in *Jacobin*: <<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2013/04/imported-from-detroit/>>.

⁹ The article on Clandestine is here: <<http://nymag.com/nymag/rss/travel/detroit/index3.html>>.

¹⁰ See this blog post on *Research and Destroy* for a discussion of possible allegiances between artists and earlier residents of neighborhoods: <<http://researchanddestroy.wordpress.com/2014/04/15/land-and-liberty/>>. The blogger also usefully points out that we should not assume a Malthusian city, since new interest in the city would not necessarily mean the displacement of longtime residents without the mediation of a whole slew of capitalist processes.

DH

Partial Notes on the Situation in London

If you want to know how things are at the moment, speak to Taylor Wimpey.¹ Floods of money are created by central banks before being issued to private lenders and drifting into the saloon bar of global equities. Berkshire Hathaway is here, and George Soros, and 10% of the rent on your friable suburban residence. Everyone shakes hands in a businesslike manner before tucking into the enclaves.

*

One of the side-effects of the centrality of financial capital to the UK economy is the disproportionate significance of its capital city. Capital in the UK doesn’t need the territory in which it finds itself situated. It doesn’t need the ‘primary goods’ of the rural-agrarian provinces, or the labour of outlying populations. It doesn’t need dense networks of internal communications, the high-value creation of advanced railroad networks, or the gold in the Scottish mountains. All of these are fundamentally redundant from the perspective of its valorisation requirements. The economic ‘success’ of the nation depends on a lattice of high-level arbitrage in the ‘sphere’ of circulation, or, rather, on a concentration of institutions which profit from switching money capital between lines of industry, or from the trading of various national currencies, or of equities, or other ‘assets’, none of which *need* to occur in extended geographical space. ‘London’ is only a gigantic confluence of appendages to the ‘square mile’ at its centre, the ‘nameless mist’, as someone calls it, whose agents of theft and everyday extraction are Brevan Howard Asset Management, Lloyds, and London Capital Group. Around this crux there forms a secondary band of services, including especially the advertising, marketing, and computer programming companies that extended into

Shoreditch during the 1990s; and beyond these a slowly advancing front of bourgeois consumerism, bijou shopping ‘villages’, low-grade new-build lifestyle apartments, luxury coffee retailers, and theme bars, extending outwards, glacially, as the physical index of accumulation at the financial centre, like poison from an inflated meatball.

*

The ‘form’ of organisation that is essential to this process is, naturally, the capitalist value ‘form’ itself, the measurement of value by means of the quantification of ‘abstract’ (i.e., experimentally averaged) human labour. In London it is possible to see this ‘form’ organising itself on the skyline every time you catch a bus from the margin of the city to its centre, i.e., every time you travel from your home to one of the institutions where your cultural ‘aspirations’ are professionally nurtured. It is possible to see it too in the rash of ‘alternative’ art galleries clustered in the city’s perimeter; in the ‘productive mindset’ of the young cultural producers contributing to journal entrepôts such as (e.g.) *The White Review*, *The Quietist*, or *How to Sleep Faster*, and in the comfortable institutional transversality of the text products that are there accumulated. Methodical market saturation is the hallmark of this ‘community’, in which the imperative to construct some kind of outward facing ‘self-image’ obliges all individual actors ceaselessly to market new product to an inattentive audience comprised exclusively of their competitors. The fundamental distinction between ‘workers’ and ‘capitalists’ is mirrored in the distinction between ‘editors’ and ‘writers’: the former benefit from a division of labour in which their ownership of some negligible means of production (including brand equity) makes them indispensable to the projects of entrepreneurial self-fashioning undertaken by ‘their’ writers, an inequity which in turn leads these editors to view themselves as ‘curators’ of eclectic (i.e., pseudo-individuated) linguistic/literary ‘outputs’. The hardening of this division of labour induces the evacuation of anything like serious dispute in relation to the issue of political and artistic orientation. Opinions are the property of

their owners. Arguing against a wrong opinion is like arguing against someone’s shopping habits, or practising rhetoric on their collection of DVDs.

The structure of organisation in these cultural environments trickles down to influence the aesthetic orientations adopted by the artists who inhabit them. Just as the eclectic incorporation of revolutionary ‘discourse’ in academic writing formally reflects the position of the salaried academic as ‘impartial spectator’, the ‘radical art’ now being produced in London searches after the means to aestheticise, or to raise into a ‘condition of contemporary life’, the localised stupidity which is induced by the circumstances of its production. Academics have an interest in inexact conceptualisation, in the flexibility of critical concepts, in the pliability and metaphoricity of political language, and in general in a kind of atmosphere of heady or ‘suggestive’ imprecision, because their condition of self-maintenance as salaried intellectuals is dependent on their ability to seize on and productively to incorporate whatever appears to them to be ‘new’, ‘relevant’, or seductively à la mode. Likewise, new ‘critical’ art produced under the circumstances described above, i.e., in a years-long paroxysm of competitive overproduction, tries to make a virtue of its superficiality by reflexively recoding this as ‘commentary’ on social experience in a ‘networked’ society, or in ‘cognitive capitalism’, or in the living room with the MacBook, or in whatever other alleged cultural ‘situation’ critical artists are led to believe is the general one by virtue of their deference to professionally imprecise sociologists. New ‘critical’ artists habitually exaggerate the experience of being confused, incoherent, incapable of thinking straight, intoxicated, strung out, self-obsessed, or trivial, and then protect themselves against the accusation that they conduct a mindless, innocuous parody by insisting that this practice of exaggeration is an accurate or ‘expressive’ reflection of their own intellectual, passionate, or psychological circumstances. Online ‘expressionism’, exhibited in the offline gentrifying galleries of South or East London, and retailed in tasteful print-on-demand catalogue

feuilletons, is the principle legitimating ideology for a culture of atomised producers and would-be cultural movers-and-shakers whose ‘brutal honesty’, ‘closeness to real life’, ‘unstudied’ habits of self-disclosure and demonstratively short attention spans is the easiest product for bourgeois cultural institutions to identify as ‘contemporary’, to fawn over, and to ram into a portfolio of assets. Spontaneous gestures of narcissistic anxiety are the same irrespective of the bandwidth of their medium of expression.

*

A typically empty gesture of bad contemporary poetry which professes to be ‘about’ capitalist culture involves the indolent misuse of second person constructions. ‘I’ did this to ‘you’. ‘You’ did this to ‘me’. ‘I’ wanted ‘you’. ‘You’ wanted ‘me’. The argument of this poetry usually takes place in two stages. In the first, anonymous or actively depersonalised desire is recognised to be ‘wrong’, i.e., a psychically disabling and painful condition, by means of the referral of the abstract scenario to some medium of capitalist cultural production (film, the internet, advertising hoardings, sweet wrappers, etc.). In the second stage, the recognition of this wrongness is demonstrated to be ineffectual, in a conniving gesture whose only purpose is to allow the author to feign agony in the face of political powerlessness. The acknowledgment of contradiction in literature is just an inert notation of what we do anyway.

*

The notes above were written in the computer room at my college. After I went out to get a coffee I bumped into an acquaintance of mine who occasionally inveigles me into correcting her essays. She’s a Latvian woman in her mid-50s, studying for an LLB in Law. Like many of the students at the college, she attends the course because she wants to qualify herself for a salaried position, but her English is bad and her access to funding depends on her receipt of state disability benefits, to which, as of around

six months ago, her ‘entitlement’ is in the process of being withdrawn.² From what I can tell, her tutors feel like she’s a drag on the ‘legitimate’ students and have begun to ignore her requests for assistance. Many of her classmates will also require additional support in consequence of pathologised ‘disabilities’, and a student with spoken-English skills as poor as hers is likely to be frozen out as a matter of practical necessity.

This time I told her that I could only correct the first two pages of her fifteen-page dissertation, but after she began to get upset and I cracked and agreed to do the whole thing. It was a case study of the European Court of Human Rights; lots of repetitive assertions about the ways in which ‘society’ is entitled to restrict human rights in view of the ‘health and property’ of other citizens. I couldn’t tell whether ‘health’ was a malapropism.

After I was done I felt too disoriented to continue writing, so I caught the bus home. The route passes out of central London through Clerkenwell and into Shoreditch, before turning north into Hackney. You see nothing the whole way but offices and ground floor retail units. In Clerkenwell the Friday night drinkers are all lawyers; in Shoreditch thirty-something ‘creatives’ (graphic designers, advertising ‘execs’); in Dalston mostly artists in their late twenties and thirties. The sky had cleared and just off the Kingsland Road some kind of gigantic sub-bohemian street food festival was taking place, people with topiary beards stuffing their faces full of world foods. The whole thing was perfectly organised.

*

I’ve only been present for two political struggles in London over the last six months in which ‘culture’ has had some kind of incidental role. The first was the picket line poetry reading at the Birbeck College lecturers’ strike last December. This took place in the context of a national one day strike organised by UCU (the lecturers’ union): a pretty lacklustre piece

of industrial action in which the single issue of dispute was the lecturers' pension scheme. No attempt to coordinate the strike with the other campus unions seemed to have taken place; and in London this seemed especially culpable, since one of the key demands made by the autonomous cleaners' campaign that was then taking place—and in the same institution—was for access to the university's 'public sector' pensions.

The idea that there should be a poetry reading was already a kind of de-escalation for the organisers involved. When the lecturers had last gone on strike, in December 2011, there was still a solid student movement, and, although they weren't shutting down, the main buildings of the Bloomsbury colleges were picketed fairly aggressively. The union branch representatives at my college complained afterwards that the students and other 'outsiders' had been behaving like vanguardists and blamed the picket line for a putative drop in membership. I don't know whether this last claim was true or not, but, in any case, by December 2013 there was only a residual student movement, and large, militant pickets weren't on the agenda. Poetry was identified as the *de facto* alternative. It was better than expected. People got up on a vegetable crate and screamed through a megaphone; the verse echoed across the square. Inside the college building, behind the plate glass windows, the students in the coffee shop looked moderately discomfited. All of this seemed in good humour; but later it was again reported that the union reps had found the shouting unnecessarily antagonistic.

*

A couple of months before this, in late September 2013, a group of students tried to organise a sticker campaign in support of the cleaners' campaign I just mentioned.³ The '3 cosas' ('three things': sick pay, holiday pay, pensions) campaign was then entering a delicate stage, leading up to two days of strike action on 26 and 27 November 2013, in consequence of which the cleaners would win two of their three demands—holiday and

sick pay nearly equivalent to that which is already received by in-house staff. The sticker campaign was obviously only a kind of discursive adjunct to the cleaners' activities, though the meeting was also meant to canvass ideas about how to begin the gradual work of reasserting some kind of presence for a communist politics within the Hanoverian-brutalist compound of the city centre campuses.

The contribution was definitely misjudged. The attendees at the meeting neglected to think in detail about why the deliberately lurid 'general' propaganda ought to be kept separate from the materials meant specifically to spread information about the cleaners' campaign. None of the activists in the cleaners' campaign were consulted about these materials until *after* 10,000 of the stickers were designed and printed, and when they were consulted they were given all of the material at the same time. The result was that their opposition to the use of their own campaign slogans in (e.g.) stickers depicting the university disintegrating under a landslide of flaming barricades (a reasonable concern, in view of the questionable contractual and legal statuses of some of their union members, and the perfidiousness of the 'big' unions from which they had recently split) was extended to the materials presenting visual puns on communism, or imagining class violence, or retailing fantasies about cops. Because the relationship between the student group and the cleaners group was still fairly inchoate, all of this material, the whole purpose of which had been to present a clamorous and internally contradictory spectacle of political disagreement, was brought under an immediate strategic proscription. Failure to think about the different 'material' situations in which rhetoric circulates meant that, in the end, no rhetoric circulated whatsoever.

*

If you were to write a poem in which all of the elements had some kind of organic relationship to all of the other elements, so that when one thing changed everything else changed imperceptibly; and if you formulated

a set of rules that *codified* the nature of these relationships, as well as the changes that occurred to the elements whenever their relationships were modified; and if you established a logic according to which these elements, through the dynamic of their interrelations, would begin to develop and to extend themselves; and if you postulated other elements which might be incorporated into the logic of the system; and if you kicked this whole engine into motion, so that it began to spin outwards in the appropriate manner, growing beyond your control, until finally it began to take on the appearance of a whole world, a global market, divided up into territorial jurisdictions, administered by state violence, and reproducing itself through the systematic private exploitation of ‘citizens’ and ‘non-citizens’ by a relatively small class of manager-proprietors;—if you wrote a poem like this, you would have written one kind of poem about capital. From the perspective it would provide, a misunderstanding about (e.g.) slogans for sticker designs in some university college in one of the second-tier ‘First World’ countries would be an issue of next to no importance. There would be good reasons for this. It *is* embarrassing to report situations like this one as part of the substance of my (our) recent political experience. How can we aspire to talk about the whole, when we can’t even consistently get this right? The disparity is just so laughably obvious. But when I sweep through my experience of living in this city, of not seeing people, of getting bogged down, of watching the people around me producing ‘art’ in which a seductive blur of adolescent disaffection is artfully congealed into a consumption good marketed at those for whom the imperatives of exploitation, displacement, and police management are transcendently crystal clear; then I begin to feel differently. The specific misunderstanding that I just described emerges from objectively different attitudes towards two competing goals. One of those goals is the imagining of a total transformation of existing social relations. The other is the practical management of a real, parlous, and difficult struggle against hostile social interests. The space that separates those two goals is, or so it seems to me, the space in which real movements in class consciousness (not just for ‘the workers’) take place. All of the culture and the politics

that I care about move in this space, where ‘misunderstanding’ isn’t an abstract state, a ‘condition’, a spectacle of self-disenfranchisement, or the congealment of passionate earnest stupidity into an asinine ‘aesthetic’, but is really the *only* meeting place for subjects whose shared interest in a transformation of existing social relations has yet to acquire its most effective form of expression. Poetry is one of the places where we begin to organise our misunderstandings.

¹ This text will not be a full overview of recent struggles in London. A few of these are: the ‘3 cosas’ University of London cleaners’ campaign <<http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/crisis-cleaning-sector>>; the student ‘cops off campus’ campaign <<http://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/thousands-of-students-attend-cops-off-campus-demo-with-police-so-far-nowhere-to-be-seen-8998440.html>>; strikes by outsourced catering workers at Ealing Hospital, East London <<http://libcom.org/forums/organise/update-ealing-hospital-medirect-workers-strike-310314-01042014>>; BECTU cinema strikes in Brixton <<https://www.facebook.com/RitzyLivingWage>>; strikes against automation in the London underground system <<http://libcom.org/forums/organise/solidarity-london-underground-workers-tube-strike-report-experiences-10062009>>; and the final stages of the residents’ campaign against the demolition of the Heygate Estate in Elephant and Castle (South London) <<http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/pyramid-dead-artangel-history>>.

² ‘Of the 841,000 people who were on incapacity benefit and had been retested by Atos [a capitalist contractor specialising in computerised ‘testing’] under the new system, about 230,000 have been found fit for work and shifted to a new, less generous benefit. A further 346,500 were found to be likely to be fit for work at some point in the future, while more than 1m others withdrew their claims before reaching a face-to-face assessment’ (*Financial Times*, 27 March 2014).

³ For a pre-history and overview of the cleaners’ struggles in the London Universities, read Richard B’s article ‘Crisis in the Cleaning Sector’, the link for which is included in note one. The article’s footnotes include links to various campaign sites where the struggle continues to be documented.

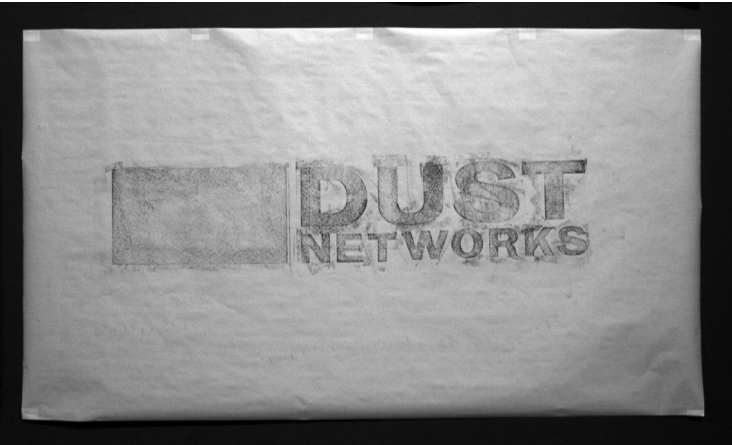
AMY BALKIN

Sell Us Your Liberty, or We'll Subcontract Your Death

Sell Us Your Liberty or We'll Subcontract Your Death (2008) is a series of large-format lumber crayon rubbings of architectural signage of San Francisco Bay Area-based entities engaged in the everyday production of war. The rubbings document the sites of entities in the Bay Area involved in activities including military-industrial development and production, illegal surveillance, remote sensing, and war profiteering. Many of these organizations are located in business parks and 'dual-use technology' start-up campuses, innocuously blending in with the banal landscapes and corporate architectural milieux of the region.

The project was inspired by AT&T technician Mark Klein's whistle-blowing on the collusion between AT&T and the NSA in warrantless domestic internet surveillance via data duplication and redirection, performed in a secret room at 611 Folsom Street in San Francisco where the profits of militarism continue to transform the city's landscape, politics, and population. The work draws on the tradition of gravestone rubbings and their relation to monuments of death (and as forms of distribution and recontextualization), as well as the forensic practice of drawing out hidden evidence through direct contact with the rare public and physical evidence of the oft-secret military industrial complex, as it increasingly "hides in plain sight."







KAIA SAND & DANIELA MOLNAR

She Has Her Own Reason for Participating

This past spring, I met Daniela Molnar at the corner of SW Park and Clay, in the South Park Blocks near the Portland State University campus in downtown Portland. She asked me to select a place in Portland, and so I selected the route of the 1978 map of the Women's Nightwatch Flashlight March in downtown Portland.

I was working in a shared residency with Garrick Imatani at the City of Portland Archives and Records Center, commissioned by the Regional Arts and Culture Center. We were combing through surveillance files the Portland Police kept on activist groups in the late 1960s, throughout the 1970s, and into the early 1980s. A number of the surveilled groups were fighting for the rights of women. If the editorial logic of these investigators was one of fear—a sense that such people posed a danger, meriting surveillance—then I wanted to see what they feared about these women. My poetic method was to gather language through repetition, creating the poem from sentences I find in the surveillance files that begin with the word “She.”

One of the earliest files I had looked at was titled “Women's Night Watch,” which hosted flashlight marches in the late 1970s to shine a light on violence against women in Portland. A 1977 march took place in Tryon State Park, where the Rape Hotline had reported a spate of ten rapes. (A sex crimes detective told *The Oregonian* that they couldn't “devote resources to chasing ghosts” because nine of the ten rapes hadn't been reported to the police, so women and allies took to the streets). The march then moved downtown in 1978, a nighttime protest to take back the streets. In an *Oregonian* article, Kathleen Mantia briefly interviews a 10-year-old girl at the march, adding, “She has her own reason for participating.”

So when Daniela asked me to meet, I thought about the map of the 1978 march. As Garrick Imatani and I came across the records of these protest marches, we would discuss a wish to uncover many, many maps, so we could somehow map our city through its dissent, layer upon layer of protest maps. But we also began to appreciate the maps as particular instances to put in high relief. As people try and try and try, sometimes putting boots to the pavement, one hopes that it all adds up. So the singular maps mattered as the particulars of protest.

Daniela and I ended our walk where that 1978 march ended, at O'Bryant Square. We parted ways, and then I passed along my poem to her in long-form—this is a poem that I lengthen and shorten like an accordion, always resequencing. Daniela began to paint lines onto signs, handing the signs to friends and then curious passersby, moving the poem back into the route of the walk—and into the night. The 1978 march began at 8:30 pm., curving around downtown and culminating at O'Bryant Square where, according to the Intelligence Report issued by the main police-spy, Officer Winfield Falk, there would “be karate and self-defense demonstrations for the parade participants.” When Daniela and I walked that midday April afternoon, the park was filled with people, some struggling to rest out of conditions of homelessness, many eating lunches purchased from the food carts a block away. It was in this space that Daniela returned at night to photograph most of her images, recontextualizing the surveillance reports in present-day public space.

photos Daniela Molnar, text Kaia Sand

She Had Her Own Reason for Participating

She always gets kidded about being a female mechanic at auto parts shops

She also went to night school

She couldn't imagine sitting behind a desk all day

She described her personal revelation and internal revolution—her struggle to come to grips with God, a male God

She discussed why this project was abandoned after only six months in operation

She can be violent

She advised that after attending two of these meetings, that she discovered it wasn't for her

She decided lesbian rights was a feminist issue

She embraced the traditional role of the American wife

She emerged as a major figure in the feminist movement when she was excommunicated from the Mormon church for supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, an experience she wrote about in a best-selling book, “From Housewife to Heretic”

She emphasized what she considers “a hoax and a ruse” that high levels of military spending are necessary to protect workers' jobs

She enjoyed her various writing and editing jobs

She attempted to free David

She feels that revenge toward the establishment is imperative

She had gone to pick up her mail when her husband forced her way into her car

She advised that the meeting began at 5:00 P.M.

She finds herself drawn to concerns ranging from family law and consumer protection to environmental issues

She flatly refused to accept a compromise with Jimmy Carter that promised somewhat less than the 50 per cent representation at future conventions

She further advised that the only reason that she attended these meetings was because they were showing movies on the riots and take over of the U.S. Embassy in Iran and the taking of the hostages

She had her own reason for participating

She had served as president of the station's board of directors

She has found her niche

She has not seen the man whom she divorced in 1977 since she became entangled in the criminal justice system

She has two children

She ignited a bleacherful of men and women with her message about women, the Mormon Church, and Equal Rights Amendment

She is still learning

She is believed to be a Lesbian

She is drafting legal papers to that end

She is involved with the AIM movement

She is just sorry other women haven't show more interest in automotive work

She is now awaiting sentencing

She is puzzled that there are no memos from the period of May 1974 through April 1977 when she was national president of NOW

She is the one you consider the real revolutionary right?

She is a lively little cookie alright?

She is under the thumb now of Old Bonnie Colton

She is incapable of rational compromise or anything rational

She knows of no New York political figures to whom she would have been writing at the age of 17

She talked back

She maintained that, "We are under attack... The situation calls for bold action and new alliances..."

She moved where her husband's jobs took them and did most of the housework

She now had her journey-man's card

She nurtures her children by trying to save the world from nuclear extinction

She needs a support group to develop her ideas

She was beaten regularly for at least four years

She pleaded guilty to the charge strictly on the advice of her court-appointed attorney

She pointed out that she's being "being paid to inform and influence lawmakers and not for wining and dining"

She provided copies of the files to a reporter

She received terrorizing telephone calls and saw his truck drive by several times

She shot and killed him

She regarded these days as something of a radical in NOW

She said she couldn't see why an amendment with such a beautiful name and simplicity could be so strongly opposed by her church

She said she did not agree to hire them

She said she had a one-hour meeting with the president and "he's frankly deluded"

She said she supported WARN because it will be an important instrument in the survival struggle of Indian children and the Indian people

She said studies have indicated that a billion dollars spent on domestic activities such as construction or transportation provides many more jobs than buying military hardware

She said that because camping out at the Trojan site after nightfall is prohibited, there is a "definite possibility" that protesters would be arrested Saturday

She said the demonstrations will be significant as an international show of 'solidarity' among women

She says, I think I was socialized into a more traditional job

She serves as a full-time Vista Supervisor

She suffered a concussion

She thought it was just a friendly visit

She thought she had something better

She took a part-time job as a domestic relations aid with Marion-Polk Legal Aid

She took her children to live with relatives in another state

She used to be married and a dutiful housewife—twice

She used to be resorts editor for Golf Digest magazine

She was a co-founder of Portland Women Strike for Peace

She was active in the state Democratic Party

She was also a member of the Revolutionary Union, which evolved out of the Venceremos Brigade

She was always hunched over the machine

She was an unsuccessful candidate for mayor of Syracuse

She was arrested last January as a result of a situation of fear, panic, and confusion, which occurred when four FBI agents entered her parents' Albina home

She was denied a polygraph test

She was disappointed in the fact that she helped them form their structure, and then they wouldn't allow her to become a member

She became shop chairman of her union

She was editor of "The Pregnant Teenager" and author of "The Young Woman's Guide to Liberation" and "Sexual Justice."

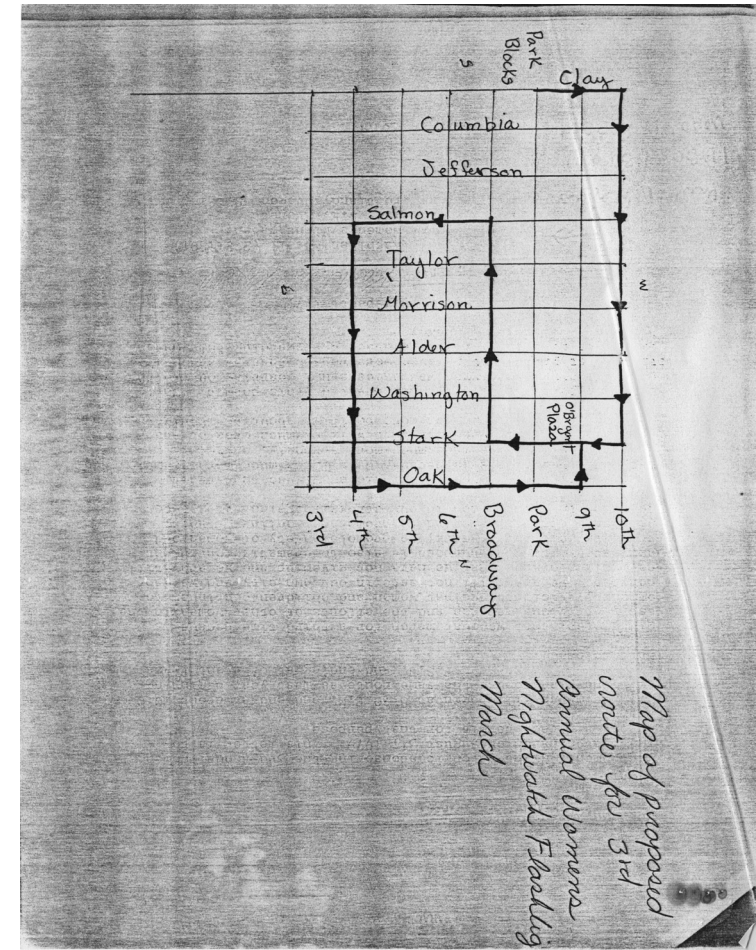
She was pregnant at the time

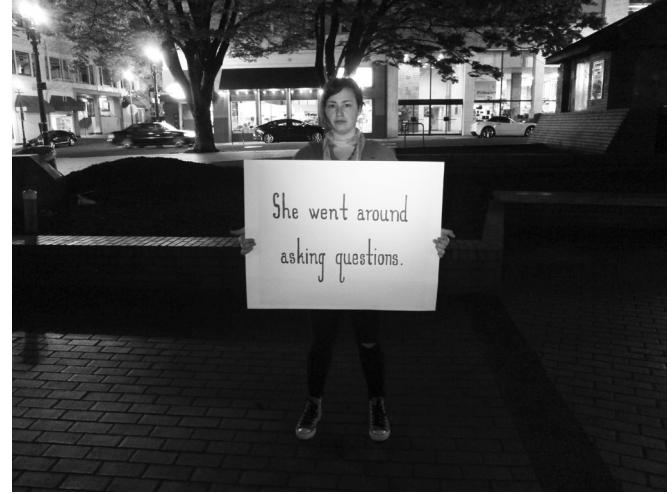
She was one of 13 women who fasted 37 days in behalf of the ERA in Springfield, Ill

She was once a 'totally non-political teen-ager interested mostly in clothes and boys,' but the FBI kept a file on her

She was one of four North American women to visit North Vietnam at the invitation of the North Vietnam Women's Union

She was feeling so damned tired
 She was president of NOW, the National Organization for Women
 She was repeatedly the victim of wife abuse and shot her husband when
 he was about to kill her 17-year-old daughter
 She was subsequently released on bail, pending her charges, in Portland
 She went around asking questions
 She worked as a writer
 She works as a bartender
 She would never be convinced
 She's had a few humorous incidents
 She's only as rich as the poorest of the poor
 She's studying art history, painting, self defense and Aikido







RYAN ECKES

tag

what heals the damage
done to language ain't
the question—leave
your poem on a bus
& get off
to talk at all, or
to crib our students,
i got options
i'm sick
throw up an estate
it's real
it won't cheat on
you or anyone, still
you worry you won't get
the loan, take it personally. well,
the women i got over
i lived with, says a friend,
says to start over
to destroy desire
you have to fight over
daily physical space for
a time, house of mind
only a limb from that—the mouth,
telling you off. speechless,
but w/ pride in the shame,
shared, each of you splits
into strips, a fiction rusting off
the end of a branch

nice to meet you. my decrepit
father attacks me in a dream
foaming at the mouth. this
is real—signs held up repeat
it: *this is real, this is real* as
city hall's first day of school:
wake up, wake up from
the cars you are—cars
are people, their attitudes
curl the spine, turn the eyes'
corners flat over the nerves.
optimus prime is not your
friend—go ahead & cross
the fucking street
it's not on the test
it's yours—
if they ask you for credit
give them a branch
when they want you to get it
chew on some grass
 i know
 i know
city hall is the brain
of a shark, it fits
in a jar: real estate—
you could smash it
against a wall
or bury it
as a teacher
as a teacher, i say we're all
teachers & are afraid to learn
we look at tusks
in a cabinet

for digging up roots
buffalo come back
on the nickels
like a told-you-so
i thought their bones
were from giant people
in a blue book. in a blue book,
be a native speaker for
once, have a face
& a body of nickels
your path to a bachelor's
degree starts here
says an asshole
on a train about
to explode
the neighborhood is turning
the corner
says an asshole
made of drywall
in a casino of pennies
at the feet of the poets—
it's years to do another life
calmer than newsweek
in a blue book. in a blue book,
say why this train you catch
is years to hum
piano up to door
this train you catch
its ears
for 700 pages
of fairy tales
all one horse
700 pages

all one horse
one steed
of shakespeare water
teacher says please
stand up
like a state
please discuss inner
refreshment
please discuss baby
corn tonsils
for 700 pages
in a blue book
calmer than newsweek
it's multiple choice:
who are bill & melinda
gates
who are the rolling
stones
of wall street
who are you to fill out
their bubbles
what smalltimer keeps
spraypainting RAT
in all the crosswalks
along 10th street
from cvs six blocks
to my corner—twice
at fernon RAT
spraypainted over
in black
by a vigilant neighbor
to no avail—RAT is re-applied
good as new

RAT
each block
RAT
the sure refrain
as you walk to cvs
RAT
& back
for toothpaste or toilet paper
less & less able
RAT
to distinguish between
RAT
the images in mind
of whoever RAT might refer to
RAT
& the author of RAT
& yourself:
RAT
RAT
RAT
RAT

kazoo

cops in the apple store
working for “the city”
like you have to stay here
and be the place
no poem
so all mayors
must hang
as real ornaments
done to you
from trees parks
chalked up
all bodies make
a case for bracing
yourself, the city’s lights
settle in your girl’s
face who are fugitives
to grow us past mere
poetics
i am an ancestor too
who meant by “permanence”
(like a car)
food, shelter and sex
while performing abandonment
which is a door
in a cloud—open it
for the noose
made of bill gates
and watch bill move his mouth
over the toilet

40 public schools
into
one
your
assignment: write
an essay in which you crawl
toward subjectivity
as flat tires
gallop thru the wheezing
infrastructure

KIM HYESOON

October Attendance Book

October 19, 2012, 12 a.m.

KEPCO Art Center, 2nd Floor

34 Ssukgogae Street, Seocho-gu, Seoul

Title: WOMAN + BODY

A woman warrior wearing a crown and topless with a belt made of nine severed male heads.

A woman is wearing only red panties on a metal swing, which is tied to Louise Bourgeois' metal spider.

A woman lying flat, naked on the second floor of a foundry.

A woman looking at her naked self in the metal mirror, hanging in a deep tunnel.

Clouds. But upon closer look, they are the bodies of naked women with their head shaved. They are intertwined.

White seal. But a seal with the face of a human.

White seal. A Siamese twin seal with two bodies attached with a single head.

A woman with twenty breasts is listening to a wedding march. She is getting married by herself. She has a black tuxedo draped across her wedding dress.

A ceramic woman whose heels have evolved into high heels is walking in air.

October 19, 2012, 12 a.m.

KEPCO Art Center, First Floor

34 Ssukgogae Street, Seocho-gu, Seoul

Title: Exhibition of Artisans' Earthenware

Designated as Important Cultural Asset

No. 105

Six teacups and saucers

Porcelain jar

Slightly bigger porcelain jar

Very big porcelain jar

A porcelain jar with "Peaceful Unification" written on it

A white porcelain jar with a bird drawing

A white porcelain jar with a fish drawing

A white porcelain jar with a tiger drawing

A moon jar

Six more teacups and saucers

A bowl with a lotus pattern

A bowl with a moiré pattern

A bowl

A bowl

A jar

A jar

A jar

A jar

Inside a white ceramic high heel, the woman's clitoris has its mouth open.

The room of the woman, who is seated in a Pieta pose with her boyfriend's beheaded neck, is red.

There are 36 breasts sewn onto a gigantic Fallopian tube. Onions are growing on them.

There are rotten onions, too.

A woman is cutting up a fish. Fish, whose heads and body are severed, are filling up the kitchen.

Two girls, with masks of an owl, are crying. The two bodies are slender.

A woman, with mud over her whole body, is crying. Her tears are cleansing her.

A robust woman had a sex change operation. Photographs of her before and after the operation were taken; in front of the mirror of the same room; in the same pose.

On the woman's pink breast, dark hair began to grow. Male chest hair covers the woman's breast.

The woman is becoming a man.

The woman drew the ego that's in the body. It looked like an ear sewn with a black thread.

The girl gave birth to a red baby in the water. The girl is holding the baby. Upon closer look, it is a phantom girl.

The fat woman, who was reading a book on the pile of books in the library, is lying on top of the book, having taken off all her clothes.

The slender women, who have come to buy books in the library that has changed to a bookstore, observe the woman's fat body.

With the picture on the wall, she's trying to imitate that picture. Fasting, she's trying to

become that body. But the more she fasts, a
tail grows on her. The tail is becoming thicker

Those who sent the wreath

None

Those who sent the wreath

Minister of Unification: Ryu Wu-ik
Undersecretary: Kwon Taek-ki
President of Korea Bar Association: Shin
Young-mu
Governor of North Gyeongsang Province:
Kim Gwan-yong
Minister of Myeongseong Church: Kim Sam-
hwan
Samji Accounting Firm Professor of Seoul
National University Law School: Jeong Jong-
seop
Chairman of KBS: Yi Gil-young
Researcher at the Legal Research and Training
Institute: Kim Gwang-uk
President of Nonghyup Bank: Shin Chung-
shik
Etc.

Viewers

1 Woman

Viewers

12 Men in Suit, 1 Old Woman

October 19, 2012, Three O'clock

The Daesan Foundation Conference Room, Kyobo Building, Ninth Floor

(The Kyobo Building is owned by the Kyobo Life Insurance Company, and has the largest bookstore in Korea. It is located in the heart of Seoul. The Daesan Foundation, which is run by Kyobo Life Insurance, offers many Korean literature grant programs. They give out literary awards, sponsor international literature conferences, and provide grants for the translation of Korean literature into foreign languages and foreign literature into Korean, as well as organizing various literary activities.)

The judging for the 2012 Daesan Literature Award for Poetry is in progress. This is the third meeting; the winner will be finally selected.

There are numerous criteria by which the five judges can be categorized.

Gender: Male 4, Female 1

Genre: Poet 3, Critic 2

Criteria for Classifying the Literary Figures Korean Way: Realism 2, Modernism 2, Moderate 1

Literary View: Aesthetical Intellect, Traditional Lyric, Resistance in Everyday Life, Ugly *Femininity*, Modernism (in accordance with the journalists' categorization)

Occupation: Retired Professor 1, Professor 1, Publisher 1

Majored in: Korean Literature 2, Foreign Literature 3

Hair Color: Black 4, White 1 (All Koreans are born with black hair; therefore, the hair color cannot be a group criteria. The same goes for the eye color, which ranges from brown to black. Hence, the color of the eye cannot be used to classify different groups. According to an old text, the darker the woman's eyes are, the more beautiful she was thought of, but nowadays, there are women who wear different color contact lenses because they do not like dark colored eyes.)

Political Disposition: Leftist 1, Rightist 1, No Affiliation 3

Marital Status: 5 (The marital status, too, is not that important because 99.9% of those over the age of 50 are definitely married. Of late, there are many women who choose not to marry. Marriage offers no benefit for them, for it is an entry into patriarchy.)

Prison Experience: Been to Prison 1, Difficult to Tell 3, Never Been to Prison 1 (For literary figures, prison experience is very important for having been to prison means that they've undergone the dictatorial period from the 1970s through the 1980s, are now predisposed toward realist literature, and that they are progressive and belong to the leftist party; and in the realm of poetry, it is an indication their subject of interest shifted from resistance to love, travel, retrogression, exaltation of maternal instinct, and a strong interest in Buddhism.)

Shoe Color: Black 3, Brown 2

Jacket Color: Checkered 1, Black 2, Gray 1, Brown 1

Drinks: Coffee 2, Green Tea 2, Water 1

Glasses: With 3, Without 2

Reading Glasses During Evaluation: 5

Place of Residence: Gangbuk-north of Seoul 4, Gangnam-south of Seoul 1 (Seoul is divided into two major parts by the Han River, which is the boundary line. The nouveau riche live in Gangnam and the Seoul natives and working class mostly live in Gangbuk.)

(The young preliminary judges, who are relatively younger than the above people, selected ten volumes of poetry out of several thousand anthologies of poems that were published from September 2011 to August 2012. If one were to go with the journalists' bias, they can be classified as follows.

Traditional lyric

Rustic

Resistance

Philosophy

Abstract

Mimesis

Travel

Public

Biology + Physics + Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu

Rhetoric

(The five judges have already narrowed down their selection from ten to four works after two sessions of evaluation last month. The four that are left for evaluation are as follows.)

Traditional lyric

Rural

Philosophy

Resistance

(We pick one among the four as the winning work today. The prize money is 50 million *won*, which is about \$50,000.)

We exchange our views on each work.

I write as I speak.

On "Traditional lyric"

This poet has received too many awards recently.

This anthology is inferior to his previous collections.

He copied the entertainment style of the Chosun era Neo-Confucian scholars' Chinese poetry.

He copies the leisurely attitude of the old literary figures.

Lacking depth, social criticism, aphorisms, and wit, he only loves drinking and drifting.

He likes empty space.

He writes like Du Fu.

His work is disappointing this time.

On "Rural"

The poems read like children's verse.

They are impossible to translate into another language.

The poet has painted a beautiful landscape.

It seems like a child's life written by an adult farmer.

How could a poet, who's also a professor, portray a rural life in such a way?

It is an epitome of innocence.

Hypocritical innocence.

On “Philosophy”

I don't understand what the poems are about.
I have been reading Korean poetry for decades. But I still can't understand it.
If I can't understand it, then who can?
Let's say, they'll be translated. Who will understand it?
Although I read the poems six straight times, I don't get it. Who's going to get it?
Who did the preliminary judging? I can only question their discernment.
Poetry is when you can say there's a part you don't understand.
It's about everyday philosophy. It's a common philosophy, one that is lacking in specifically everyday experience.
Shall I call it, an extrication or extraction of that which is outside of poetry?
It is a profoundly poetic question concerning time and existence.
It somewhat resembles Octavio Paz.
I highly recommend it.

On “Resistance”

He gave up revolution, and entered a temple. It is disappointing.
Along with repentance, it certainly does deliver a powerful message.
What happened to the revolution and resistance this poet had fought for, why is there no self-introspection and regret about them.
It is too prose-like.
Without presenting the outer life that is the subject of his inner life, he despairs over the outer life that is always the same. That is why it reads like prose.
The poet is free from an actual prison but is struggling in the prison of time.
Buddhism, dance, and the bodhisattva actions are comical. Why do all the failed revolutionaries in Korea head for the Buddhist temple? They don't just go to the temples. They go to women, as well.
Isn't such a life journey lovely?
Don't the poems make you feel like you just read about Marx having an affair with his servant?

Laughter 5 times
Silence 42 times

Agreement cannot be reached through dialog therefore narrowing down the choices to two nominees at a time takes place.
Thus each person writes the names of two poets on a piece of paper. This is to leave record.

Traditional lyric: 2 votes; Philosophy: 2 votes; Rural life: 3 votes; and Resistance: 3 votes; are the outcome

Rural and Resistance, both of which have received 3 votes, are to be discussed.
In the process, one person resigns, shouting, “I hate democracy.” He vows not to be present at the next judging.

Consequently, “Resistance” which received 3 votes, gets the prize money of \$50,000.
The publisher, who pushed for Rural to the very end, leaves without bidding goodbye.

October 20, 2012, 5 pm
1652 Sangam-dong, Mapo-gu, Seoul
KBS Media Center, 5th Floor Wedding Hall

The managing editor and a staff member from the M. Publishing Co., Ltd are getting married; is one of the major publishing houses in Korea. The managing editor is a woman who is older than the staff member, who is a poet. The wedding hall is on the fifth floor of Korea Broadcasting Company. It is difficult to understand why there is a wedding hall inside a television station. The wedding hall resembles a fashion show site. At the end of a long runway, there is an elevated stage. The guests have to crane their neck, as though they are watching a performance from underneath, to see them. This wedding hall has a combination of rococo and baroque styles. It is incredulous that such a space exists within a contemporary building, not to mention in a television broadcasting company. There is a counter right outside the wedding hall where the guests can leave wedding gift money.

It isn't like one has to give this money to attend the wedding but it's only after you do so, that you're given a meal ticket. You don't get a meal ticket unless you provide gift money. Without a meal ticket, you cannot eat. The wedding commences. The groom enters. The bride enters, holding her father's hand. The person who officiates the wedding is a previous head of the publishing company where they work. He is a former journalist and literary critic. His hair is all white. Many poets, writers, literary critics, and newspaper reporters from the literature desk, as well as the relatives of the bride and the groom, are at the wedding. The entire literary establishment has showed up. First, the bride and the groom greet each other, standing face to face. They are asked to bow to each other. For reasons that can't be explained, they greet each other before the ceremony. They recite the wedding vow. "I, take you, to be my husband/wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health and also pledge to honor our parents. I will love and honor you all the days of my life." In an incredibly loud voice, the groom replies affirmatively. The voice of the bride, who is dressed in a white long wedding gown with a bridal veil, is barely audible. The officiant speaks. The bride is the managing editor, and the groom is her subordinate employee. At work, the husband has to serve his wife, but at home the wife has to serve the husband. What are they going to do about this discrepancy? Everyone laughs. At any rate, he says, live happily by putting up with each other. In the officiant's speech, a cutting kind of criticism is nowhere to be found, and patriarchy surfaces. The declaration of marriage is read out loud. And now the groom, so and so and the bride, so and so, have made their solemn vow to become husband and wife, to share their lives, in sorrow and happiness, before their relatives and friends. They do not exchange rings. Afterward, the officiant declares with solemnity that the marriage ceremony has taken place in front of everyone. October 20, 2012 officiant, so and so. The officiant has the groom recite a poem. The groom recites his poem to the bride. He asks her to view him as her foundation within her. He says he is relieved that the hours of secrecy, and secrecy, and secrecy have passed. The bride responds by saying that she will think of him as a pillar of strength in her life. The groom's widowed mother is crying. The young poet is reciting his poem to his bride. Another young poet recites a poem to the groom. When he addresses the bride as "Thou," everyone bursts into laughter. The groom's friend has prepared a

congratulatory song by making a video. The officiant asks the bride and the groom to go and bow to their parents. The bride does standing up, and the groom makes a formal bow. Then crossing their arms, they toast a love shot, and slice the cake. They do all that on the stage, instead of at the reception. After their exit, photographs are taken. First the couple is photographed, then with their relatives, and lastly with their friends. The photographer keeps asking them to kiss each other. Meanwhile, the guests, with their meal tickets, have gone down to the basement to eat. They don't have time to see the bride and the groom up close. That is because in the interim, they have changed into Korean clothes and have to carry out the "Pyebaek" rites during which they do another formal bow, but only to the groom's parents. The bride and the groom do not come to see the guests. The dining hall staff person tells the guests to leave once they are finished eating for another group of guests for the next wedding ceremony will come in to eat shortly. Thus, without even seeing the bride and the groom, but after paying money and eating, everyone leaves. By the entrance of the wedding hall, there are pictures of the bride and the groom, in their excessively affectionate pose. But no one pays it any attention.

October 19, 2012, 9:30 a.m.
Gojandong, Ansan, Gyeonggi Province
302 Dadong, Seoul Institute of the Arts

No. 1 is the vinegar
 No. 2 is the cigarette butt
 No. 3 is the Chinese pepper

In the order of their briefly flying to the stage, then descending

No. 4 is looking at the mobile phone, then typing a text message
 No. 5 is whining about wanting to make a reservation on a space ship to Mars
 No. 6 is crying even though s/he was not about to be hit or was hit but cries during the intermission
 No. 7 made an early morning phone call, saying she wants to get an abortion

No. 8 is losing his mind after breaking up with his girlfriend so he wrote a poem on the cooked rice

No. 9 is whining about having to borrow money for her boyfriend's birthday

No. 10 bought a gun, saying his father is in his stomach

No. 11 there really is such a thing as a heart-rending touch, teacher! Meaning, teachers are meant to die first

No. 12 there is the No. 12 mouse in the stomach of the snake of which I saw it.

No. 13 is crying, saying s/he wants to know who s/he is; I don't want to repeat it for this is too banal yet it happens every time.

Vinegar cigarette butt Chinese pepper dried pepper ground pepper diced garlic chopped green onion diced ginger

Terror is smell of vinegar; a headache is smell of cigarette butt

Pitiful, anxiety from the persistent violence is the smell of Chinese pepper

Menstrual cramps are the smell of chopped green onion root and miscellaneous etc., etc., miscellaneous etc., etc. smell of dancing

Everyone is present except the teacher

We know that time will arrive when we have to stretch our wings and stand on our tiptoes

Like the swan dancers with their wounded faces, they are tied to the chair

If your face is wounded, can you officially be viewed as handicapped?

What will we become when we leave here after listening to all your words?

Wings of fire on the burned rooftop!

Steel wings on the steel watchtower!

We have no choice but to each fall

I am choking dressed in the clothes made of blackboard

Now is not always now; we are inside a frightening story

All of us in this room have faces that are very appropriate for death

In the hand of No. 14 there is a bloodstain she grasped when she was dying

The face of No. 15 had on an expression of when the freezer drawer was opening

No. 16 has an expression of one aflame for the last time then being put out

No. 17 continues to be absent and his father who has a club hidden in his pocket is standing in front of the school gate

No. 18 has broken eggshells still stuck on his forehead

No. 19 has a face that hasn't detached the beast from a former life

No. 20 is licking the blood of the placenta with the caul covering him he is yet to be born

There should be fifteen people in total but I am going to check the number again.

ZARINA

These Cities Blotted into the Wilderness (Adrienne Rich after Ghalib)



Portfolio of nine woodcuts with Urdu text printed in black on Okawara paper and mounted on Somerset paper.

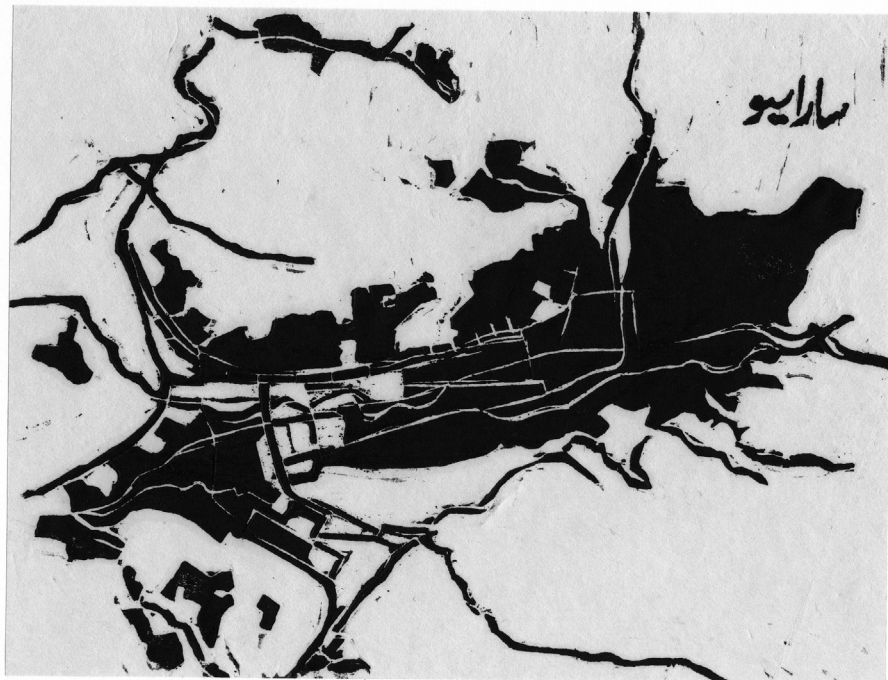
Edition of 20.

Image size: variable. Sheet size: 16 x 14 inches (40.64 x 35.56 cm). 2003.

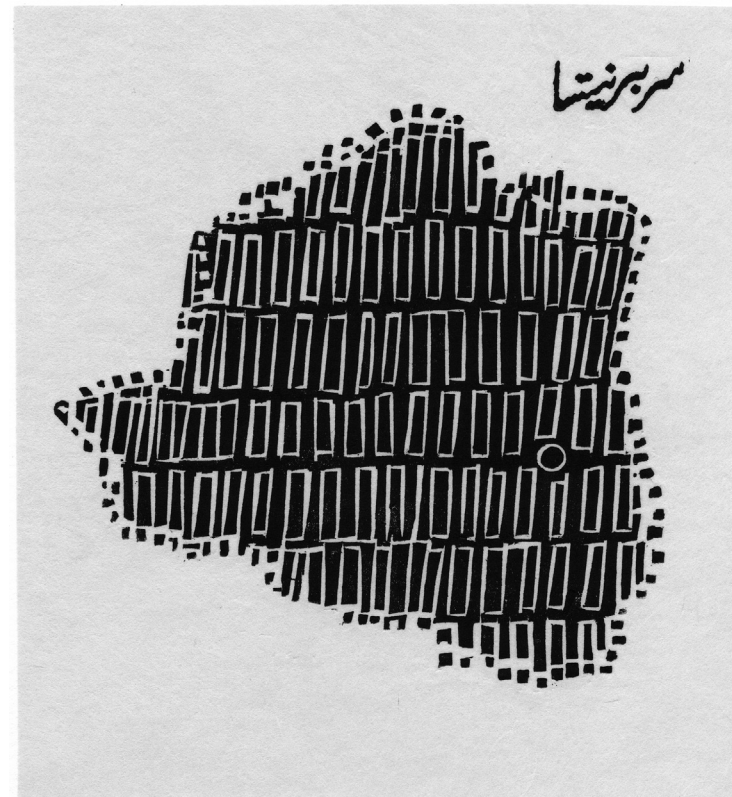
© Zarina; Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.



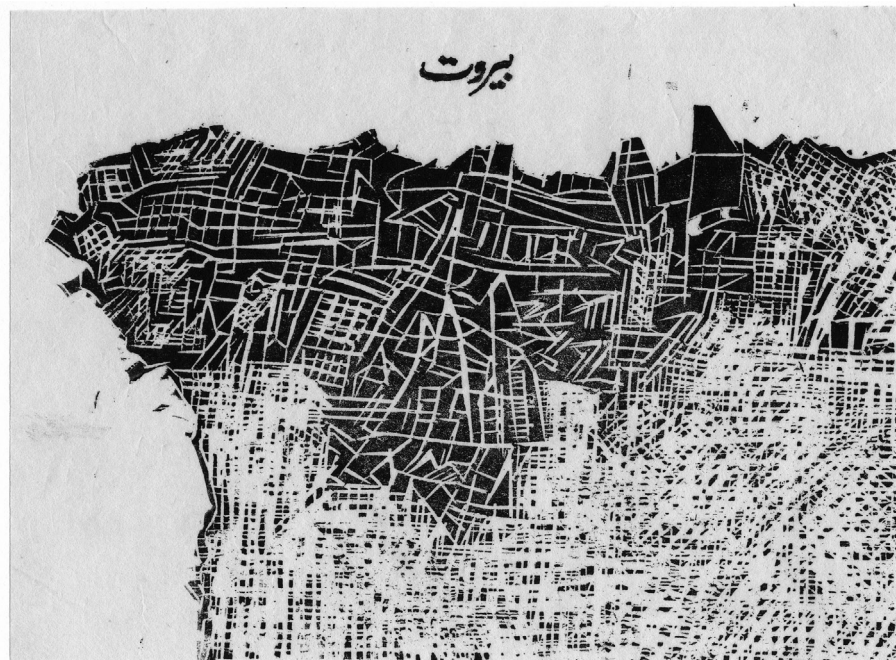
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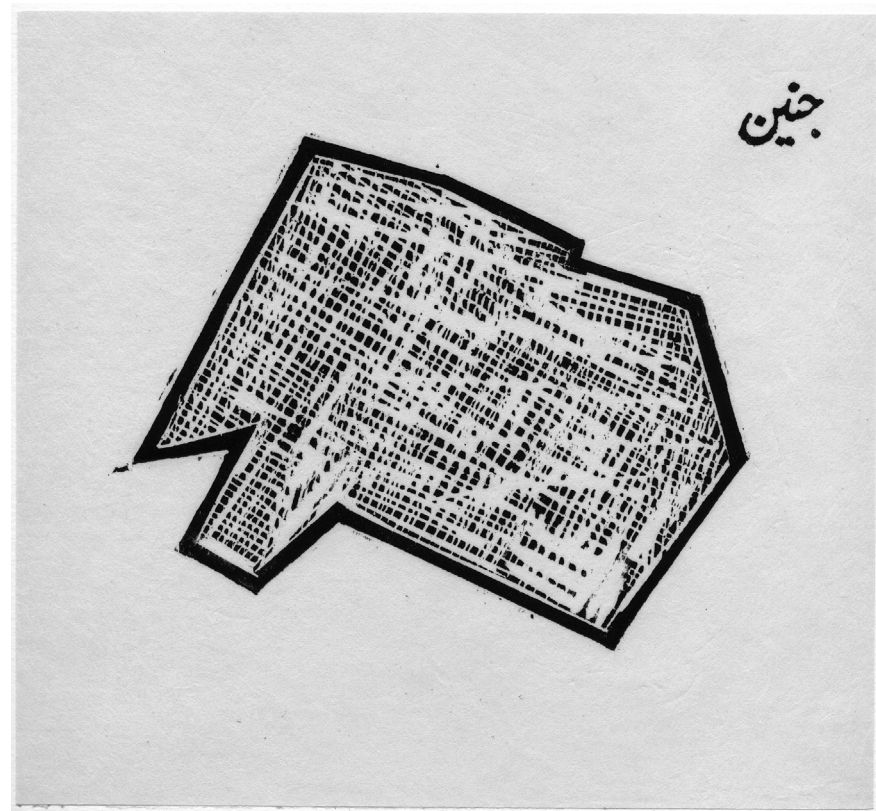
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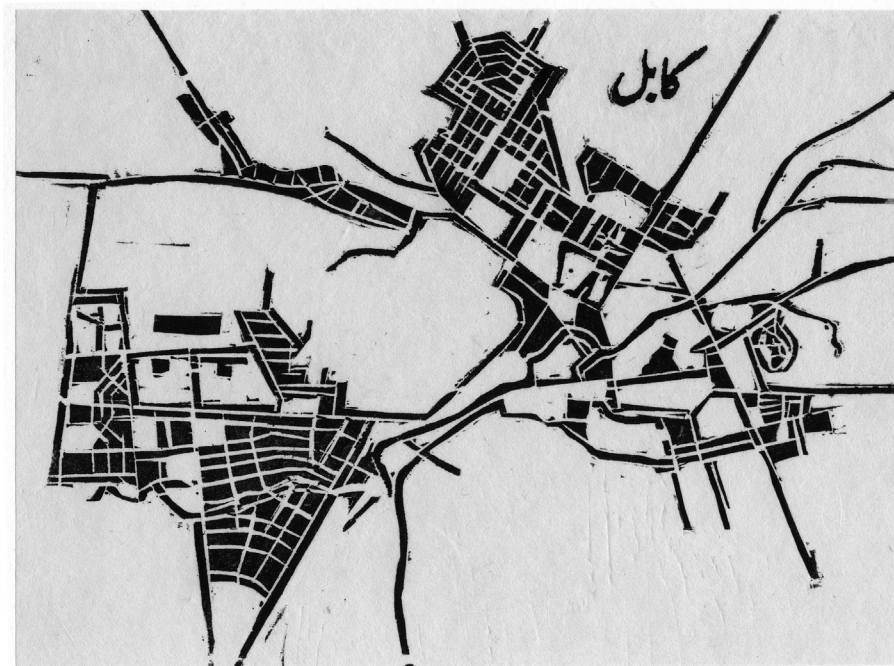
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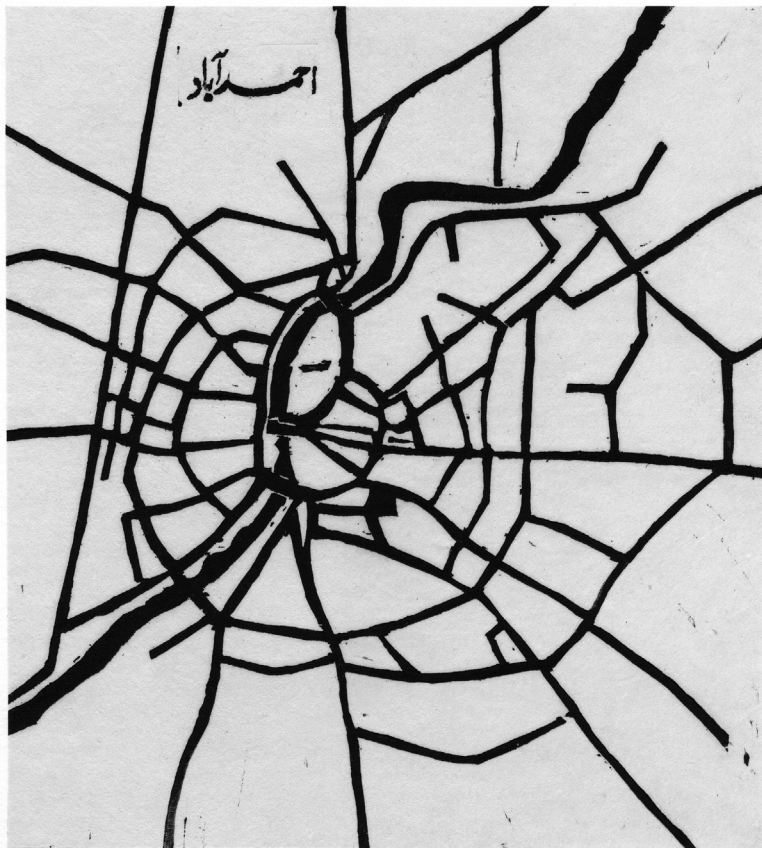
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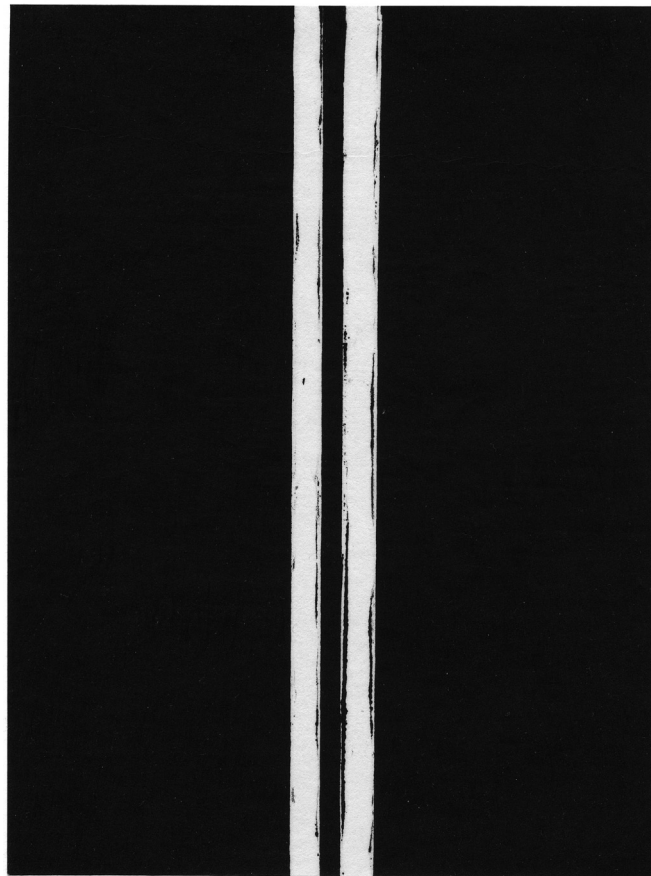
6.



7.



8.



9.

Image List

1. Grozny
2. Sarajevo
3. Srebrenica
4. Beirut
5. Jenin
6. Baghdad
7. Kabul
8. Ahmedabad
9. New York

all images from *These Cities Blotted into the Wilderness* (Adrienne Rich after Ghalib)

Woodblocks with Urdu text printed in black on Okawara paper and mounted on Somerset paper.

Edition of 20

Image size: variable

Sheet size: 16 x 14 inches (40.64 x 35.56 cm)

2003. © Zarina; Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

REPORTS FROM OAKLAND

OKI SOGUMI

a revenge story

one where the goth-y immigrant kid grows knives for hands
and the feminist vigilante gang string up the landlords of an island quickly
eroding into the sea
and the barricades are built from pieces of old discotheques that we lick for
cocaine and other non renewable energies
we send a beam up,
to the mergers and acquisitions of handmade teargas masks and rocks
to half of the country went on strike, the other half went on vacation
to waking up with the terror of not recognizing your friends' faces so
covered up with flowers with cloths with banners slowly unfurling into nil
the ex-slave descendant kid whose head turns into a circular saw
i am the slut who slept in the safe cleaned out with petrol
i am concerned with the desert left in the corner of the room
i am crawling over the dry heat of catholic candles to the cloud as we saw it
on tv, quick and lashing out over the canyons and plains
a mermaid with a machete tail
i'm looking for the tendency towards absolute small—bubbles falling from
a bubble machine, the poverty threshold
froth of water at its own edge, divination eyes
lobna in cairo says
 Wandering between two worlds, one dead
 The other powerless to be born
nkondi with a molotov
i've hidden my pleasures, yesterday a dream of st sebastian, disciplined to
sit in a tiny box
as we painted arrows flying from his eyes
and all the expropriated objects of the natural history museum
floating down the river
screaming their last fuck you songs

the pageant

there is a pageant that will not end.
i will not celebrate my subjectivity,
 not like that.
 not for you to see,
tuesday.
a phrase that repeats in my head often,
 'there is no victory in the courts.'

one fights enough to be a person
or a swan
in my case i've just been
 a patch of grass
sometimes i'm so tall
7 foot thicket
and just beyond me
 a girl wanders
Arizona, gets
stuck in the wild cotton
until a Splendid Royal Moth unsticks her
and the world doesn't see because i'm so tall
sometimes i'm the same patch of grass
but burned down to ashy roots
 from some riotous thing
and there is no girl or maybe she was the riotous thing

and the pageant is not
the girl covering me in ribbons.
she might do that.
 the pageant is the world that looks.

someone will speak of us as growing
 animals who look happy
the content animals eyes closed at a certain hour
the lights of the city turn off because it seemed ok
but we were so much tall grass we thought
little of the wind or dry conditions
 we had no muscles
 we couldn't make an expression
 we had no eyebrows
 we had very few choices to make but we always made them.

on living anymore

part I: suicide

is suicide the staking out of autonomy or is it murder by slow poisoning
(patriarchy, capitalism, prison, etc take your pick)?
is suicide the ever-resistant final fuck you to that slow poisoning?
is suicide the best star, the prettiest girl, the tightest beat we ever danced to?
can i literally kill the cop in my head, burn away civilization's noose?
if one takes down one's enemies with them to hell, does one have to also
drag those bodies down a black river like a horse on fire?
i went to court to deny my suicide, my perpetuation of suicide, i refused to
answer their questions which they took to be a sign of suicide

part II: housing

they couldn't find a place to lay their head
there were more than 80,000 empty beds in the city
there were people forcefully removed from their apartments so they could
be renovated
families died from carbon monoxide poisoning; they were burning their
belonging in the middle of the room; they were found huddled together
red circles around the Quartier Karl Marx
they killed the landlord then they lit the house on fire and swam into the
middle of the heat
prospectors gathered around the charred foundation
we're busy capturing the sun, they said, opportunities aren't forever
you sleep, you die, they said, that's the business

part III: debt

the story of my generation was the story of debt,
i bought 1,000,000 dogs,
but the investment didn't pay off

everyone else had 1,000,000 dogs
some paid more, some paid less
many dogs died in the process, as prices were haggled, raised, and forged
into debt
in private i wept over my 1,000,000 dogs but the dogs paid no attention
finally in public we built an army of dogs-
the re-wilding of our debts

part IV: belonging

i am exactly where i need to be, lost and on my last 50,000 won, my last
400 dollars
i have hurried past the city of my suicide into something brighter and more
gone
the ruins of this architecture are dazzling
we're running in the grass; it's ruthless
ours ways of being, numbered and cast away
the grass cuts, like all intimacies
we are intimate and fighting and that's all i need to know
all the knots in all the grasses and then we throw the net up
i believe in no world,
but i want to trace every bit of it with fine lines of no hope
and that is the only love

—previously published in *Hi Zero*

JILL RICHARDS

Poetry and/or Revolution Talk—

I wanted to start by talking about the political climate in Oakland right now. Some people call it a lull, which is perhaps the kindest word. I've heard other people describe the atmosphere as poisonous. We are perpetually talking about the infighting and denunciations between different left factions as a cesspool, dissolution, decay. Many people don't want to be in the same room with one another, much less organize together. I don't intend to get melancholic or propose an easy solution. These fissures are real. Instead I want to investigate this sense of mourning, of enemies at large, to quote a recent article making the rounds on the internet. This sense of mourning, for me, has little to do with the failure of a political movement. All of the actions I enumerated yesterday in the report back from Oakland—the Oscar Grant riots, the student movement, the building occupations, the freeway occupations, the Santa Cruz dance parties, the Bay of Rage, the occupy encampments, the port blockade, the January 28 arrests, the protests surrounding Trayvon Martin, Alan Blueford, & Kenneth Harding—either failed to achieve their demands or abandoned demands entirely. Of course “failed” is a tricky word, or rather tends to miss the point. But my sense of the political climate in Oakland now and the ways we tend to narrate this decay has nothing to do with the success or failure of any kind of demand imposed, reformist, revolutionary, or otherwise. What we seem to be mourning now is the loss of the communities that these struggles had built. That said, I am suspicious of the word community, in that it seems overly romantic. Communities, by definition, are exclusionary. They can be entirely terrible. Thinking of Jen Cooke's opening remarks, I like the word “solidarity” better, because it implies, to me at least, that you don't have to particularly like or even know the persons involved.

All this brings me around to poetry, because—if asked to make a connection of revolution and poetry—I begin to think about communities. One of the

things that I value most about the Bay is not, actually, the fact that I am nearer to the real-time creation of so many brilliant *poems* that exist on the page, perhaps to be read in classrooms elsewhere and studied by posterity, but that here, in the Bay, there is this existence of many *people* who are interested in this vague thing we call poetry. And this many people all writing poetry or reading poetry published or not and then getting together to talk about poetry and hear poetry read out loud has created a community apart from work and apart from private life at home. The poetry community can be a terrible, terrible thing, as we've all complained and, more seriously, self-criticized, at length. But there was a moment, in the fall of 2011, where the boundaries of the poetry community and the boundaries of the political community and the boundaries of the student groups and the neighborhood groups became more permeable, not perfectly or even elegantly, and with much dissatisfaction. But it was this seeming shift in social relations, not a grand collapse of hierarchies, certainly, but a kind of unsticking of the labels poet, student, parent, anarchist, trot, teen, felon, professor. To return to Occupy Oakland, in its most utopian articulations, the encampment became a space for a different model of social relations, not just between poets and non-poets, but between all of the other various labels we might apply to ourselves and find others applying to us. This is not to say any of these labels disappeared. Occupy Oakland was, in many ways, another, bigger terrible community, a violent community, one riven with sexual assault, racial hierarchies, homophobia, class violence.

What all this goes to say is that this sense of the unsticking of the labels we call ourselves and the boundaries of these various communities included poets but was not really about them; that the political milieu and the poetry world offer modes of community that can be terrible but also materially essential, whether we like each other or not, whether we agree or not. Our present moment reveals these models of social life, poetic, political, or the inelegant unsticking of both, to be less terrible than no community at all.

—first presented at Poetry and/or Revolution conference, Berkeley, October 2013

LARA DURBACK

*from Differences in Shadows (or The Shadow Was Not Dark
it Was Felt)*

And then there's someone you know walking around all the time, in the bad ways jumping and lurching in public away from everyone, flinching, a white girl, a black woman, woman who is called white when she is being insulted but not ever called white in other instances, trans female, friend with no gender pronoun,

how you've seen them jump and lurch rounding a corner sometimes on bad days, or sometimes the lurch comes out as rage at some small occurrence, and then these ones who don't know what they are dealing with, some people lurch and jack backwards at everyone who comes in their proximity, sometimes on the bad days, having been dealing with a rape that happened then or a rape that happened when the person was a toddler and therefore prelingual or a person terrorized again and again.

Lurching and jumping in public. Not wanting their body to show fear, but it is showing the displaced fear.

There are circles being built around us, or not built. Tore down. Or build them again together.

The first time I went to a kundalini class the gentle man described the aura as many things, but the one I remember is that he said it will keep cars from hitting you when you cross the street, as you work on your aura.

Am most grateful for a kind interaction on the street, outside, random.

The panic of this situation never occurring or having possibility to occur,

neighborhood watch situations. There is no opportunity for something better to occur when the buildings are atomized separate and watching out, not interacting.

The poster said, "I don't watch my neighbors, I go outside with them."

There are circles being built around us, or not built.

We would walk around Allentown as kids and people thought I was crazy, thought I could not get anywhere without a car, they told me over and over at school that I would get killed by Puerto Ricans in broad daylight if I walked to Grandma's house. And I didn't believe them, but sometimes would wet myself before I made it there. And nothing ever happened.

You cannot see the milky way until it is very dark, and you are very far away.

It sometimes takes 3 days of sitting on a train to no longer be neurotic.

Your glasses are probably awful, making you stupider, making you more of a fascist, making you able to drive, you could do anything except drive without those glasses. You could probably see what that martial arts man doing the energy play would see, the one who is doing that bizarre squinting, the bizarre lurching and playfighting, and it wouldn't be so terrifying.

This man that I speak of.

A short shadow means: don't look at my papers! In public they could not see the short shadow. A long shadow is: Cops were following him, people in the store were watching him with suspicion. That's a long shadow. That's something else. It won't go away, it cannot walk away like walking away from the computer. Like switching a job, like stopping. Can you walk away from that body.

There is a long period of sickness.

And yet in her dream she held him close as if, having her skin color, she could claim to understand the multiple-legged shadow he was dragging behind while being tracked in public.

Like a heavy burlap bag spilling with sand or blood, how can I even claim to know, like Theresa Hak Kyung Cha film *Secret Spill* or the film *Tale of Two Sisters*, dragging around that bloody bag having to do with family and country and so heavy so incomprehensible except in sensation.

Her dreams could not confront the internet, an Indra's net of sad things. People could not communicate for fear of their own personal file cabinet being inserted with flags, post-it note flags of who they might be. Flags that rotated with revolving doors.

But they are still walking in public free for the moment, only occasionally being mad-dogged by cops, not constantly, not on the regular. With skin and embarrassing parklets.

Not greeting anyone passing by on foot because the place being walked to will do the greeting for you.

Look up. Speak when you are spoken to.

There is a special drone for you, it's really cute, but that guy was doing one of the 28 styles of martial art lunging and he was not paying attention to the drone. He was looking up above the head of the person, he saw something else. Not their body.

That special drone could be your own too, you know, you could hold the controls.

Drones were unimportant to people who had not used a search engine unless those people were being killed by drones. The search engine was your heart, but it has not yet entered someone's heart.

There are people in line for a computer at the community center and library that do not have the body of a search engine hanging off of their body.

The problem then becomes how to make oneself less marketable but the long shadow will do that for you even without the internet. It's called prison. Or does that mean more marketable. I mean the reverse.

Before the avatars were avatars they were code names in the street, and would never be an avatar.

There was a hallucination of the car speeding away the second my foot hit the pavement in that dream, the time the pink cage elevator appeared in front of me to take me away.

There was a struggle with an appearance, a way of the immigrant worker leaving home to work while the internet worker was working from home. How laziness is spun as a tale. The body overnecessary or unnecessary.

Full of a huge circumference around them or no space at all within the house.

And family is all, family is nothing. As one gets closer the other gets farther away. The family spreads and falls apart, a new chosen family is formed.

There was a discourse around laziness, deserving, and responsibility.

You cannot see the milky way until it is very dark, and you are very far away.

It sometimes takes 3 days of sitting on a train to no longer be neurotic.

She had it dead on, that my imagination is unfed, that when I lie in the bath reading Mother Wit I could not see the colors or the blockages.

So much more of the boundaries in which other people's seeing, other people's fears and consciousness, does not bash down the door.

If the aura is not swirling furiously enough, everything can get past it. I might have got that one wrong too.

There was the game, the perspective of shooter from outside, the pinpoint of zoom. The best defense is seeing it with a fog, with eyes half shut, without the direct gaze burning a hole through it. Then you might see what you could do.

Like on acid, when you can see the hot burning glow around someone who you do not want to approach from across the street.

One might start moving through the world in cartwheels, climbing door frames, using a trampoline. The whole world remade, but not for any fun purpose. Spongy ground, zip lines, catapulting bodies across the world,

so you are not sitting there, head lunged down, distrustful posture, scent of fear, making yourself an easy target for some robot that needs to know your needs or bully you for someone else's comfort. But the shadows are different and don't forget.

You could move differently if you were not in it.

Everyone is wilder than they seem. Everyone needs others to keep them in check. Knowing the keypad like a language you fell in. Because of necessity. Another way to take the body from the pen. I see them out there. Someone smuggled under your car seat.

They said something is out of order here. Your stories don't match. With all due respect we have bent time and space so your interrogation methods become useless, and the thing is that you recognize it though you still continue to kill and kill.

With the fog you can't. We got to Venice under a thick of fog.

Sometimes I can't tell if they love the commune or love logistics. I would talk about the old days and he was around but not immersed.

One could regret one's own level of involvement, and falling short, it never seems like enough, brain won't go.

Can't tell if you're intolerable or the ideas are or the structure is, or people prefer like building a puzzle like finishing the pieces but if your mind is trying to carve out some kind of new thing how would you present the idea, how would you catapult through space, how would you put out there that we would win, that we would be a true incitement of ourselves, finding wonderful people to comfort us but still going hard.

Destroy comes later, when you've sculpted more armor.

I wish someone would tell me when I was starting to fry. Would it be better when they just let me fry. My other bodies are fine. Not this one.

It will fall off and then I'll have my other ones.

WENDY TREVINO

Poem

Santander Bank was smashed into!
I was getting nowhere with the novel and suddenly
the reader became the book and the book was burning
and you said it was reading
but reading hits you on the head
so it was really burning and the reader was
dead and I was happy for you and I had been
standing there awhile when I got your text
Santander Bank was smashed into!
there were barricades in London
there were riot girls drinking riot rosé
the party melted into the riot melted into the party
like fluid road blocks and gangs and temporary
autonomous zones and everyone and I
and we all stopped reading.

—previously published in *OMG!* and *Hi Zero*

Again

I want to write an Alma who goes into the street
With the sound of breaking glass all around you
She is close enough you hear the dead women
Out of nowhere say Take Everything

You are. A history of revolt resulting in new forms of oppression. You are concentrated in close proximity to the dilapidated plantations and ranches. You're at all the punk & hip hop shows. Something happened. The pigs went off. The jury came back with a verdict. Negotiations failed. The assholes were coming together. Comrades starving themselves in prison. You might have been skating less, which is how it is when what you do could at any point involve you in zip ties. Like leaving the house. If you have one. Whether you put it to yourself that way made no difference. You were done. Negative.

You think it'd be more interesting to write of being in it. To describe the dance, which is to say the steps. A barrage of arrivals & moving on. A constant refashioning of the on hand. Making friends.

—earlier version published in *Stolen Island*

JOSHUA CLOVER

Commune Pop

There is a microhistory to be told about how Occupy Oakland came to have a certain set of musical tastes. There is a microhistory to be told and it would have to pass like everything else that happened in and around the plaza through the Oscar Grant riots and the university antiprivatization struggles circa 2009 which between the two would provide so many participants for Occupy Oakland and it would have to gather in the longer history of Oakland and Berkeley and their relation to each other and it would in the end have to include not just these social sedimentations and drifts but also small and practical things like the tastes of the guy who took on much of the obligation and sometimes the cost of getting the mobile sound system down to the plaza and out to the marches and so had a lot of say. His name was Brian. He liked funk.

This is not the place for that microhistory but I do want to recall a moment of danger. This was during the season of occupations at the university which involved a considerable amount of militant organizing and a corresponding number of militant house parties and “militant house parties” means only one thing and the one thing is this: there was a half-spoken question — a social question — as to whether the music would be somehow righteous or would be pop. There are several ways for music to be righteous. It can have politically righteous lyrics or can be properly sourced through DIY or independent production channels. It can arise from a particular history of political struggle or oppression. It can be aesthetically rebarbative to the abject preferences of the market. In short it can stand in opposition to the pop commodity whose main ambition must always be to go down easy and to spackle over the cracks in its own history and to make as much money as possible as swiftly as possible mostly for people who already own money.

Pop prevailed. Not because it was better or nobler and not exactly because the dream of an aesthetic culture beyond capital is long deceased but because it was pop and pop is not a genre but a social relation and it was this social relation that could provide a connection between the militant milieu and the broader social unhappiness. A connection that would be Occupy. That is how pop always wins for awhile. Popular movement. It's in the phrase. If there was a moment when matters were decided it came in February of 2010 when a brief occupation of Durant Hall spilled out into Telegraph Avenue and passersby decided to join in and set things on fire and get into it with the cops and in everybody's recounting the song that seemed to magnetize this moment of mayfly solidarity was “Run This Town” by Jay-Z and Rihanna. It is a darkly joyous song. Kanye's guest verse is ugly but it is a darkly joyous song with all kinds of good sinister and after that there was no real debate.

The microhistory might even suggest that this episode in which for better or for worse pop did what pop can do foreshadowed the populist character of Occupy Oakland which lacking a clear program required a broad and vague agreement from disparate parties to share this thing and where the sound system played McFadden & Whitehead and P-Funk and 'Pac & Dre and where Michael Jackson was the spirit of the general assembly and everybody could sing PYT and substitute FTP but none of these provided the theme song of Occupy Oakland. The theme song of Occupy Oakland was “We Found Love” by Rihanna. It was unofficial because most things were unofficial.

Occupy Oakland began on October 10th in 2011 about three weeks after Occupy Wall Street and “We Found Love” was released in the interval. That is how it became ours. The first eviction was October 25th and the plaza was retaken the following night and the peak came on November 2nd during a long day of marches and the massive shutdown of the Port of Oakland and the latest but not the last of many ill-fated building occupations that night. It was a long Wednesday in November and on the day before while people planned and painted banners and wrote communiqués “We Found Love” reached number one on the Billboard chart.

It reached number one and posed there as we walked maybe 20,000 bodies through the desolation of the Port of Oakland with the loading derricks and the asphalt pour and the oh so many shipping containers and the occasionally sunsplit gray sitting on the coastline and the vastness of the port almost swallowed up the activity but we were all with each other and “we found love in a hopeless place” did not seem like the third-rate trance that someone called the song later it just seemed like realism. It was exhilarating to be able to call hopelessness hopelessness and also call love love and to dance and to feel like we had a song and were a we.

These are things that pop can do or can be made to do. The meanings and senses of a song which are no more in the lyrics than in the alarm tones that recall the Bomb Squad and the keyboard staccato which cannot achieve ecstasy and so becomes forlorn and in the tension between that rhythm and the four on the floor drums —the meanings and senses that become possible within all of this can be seized upon and made use of. We did this and it felt good. As with a lover in the first month we believed everything was right about the song even what was wrong was right and the way the song is perhaps a bit underdeveloped maybe it could use one more idea well this too seemed right and it left some extra space for us and wasn't that feeling of extra space and of joy in a barren landscape and of something that we knew would end before it was filled out and finished — wasn't that the march on the port and wasn't that the Oakland Commune?

This is why in the end songs are interpretable I think. Not so much because of what they say explicitly and not because of those very complicated ideas about mediation that try to explain how objective social conditions pass through people in waves and come out in certain forms. But in the way that songs and IN the way that the experience of songs shared on the massive scale that defines pop music IN the ways these get seized by people and we use them to figure certain things out or to sharpen antagonisms or to come to agreements or to conceal certain things which may be a different way of saying the same thing. But there is a risk in this moment as there is a risk in every moment of the dialectic.

It would be easy to think that the risk of pop is popular front politics itself and if we think of Occupy Oakland as a sort of cognitive machine it's true that one of the things it figured out pretty swiftly was that the populist aspect was not the sustainable variety of the catastrophe we wanted. I know this with the certainty achieved by hearing a cellmate declare that his political ideal is to be found in the best aspects of socialism capitalism and fascism. That'll put you off populism real quick.

But that way to name the risk is not quite right. It is that you can keep doing it forever this ceaseless election of representations of social existence and think that it is something in the songs and something in how you feel about the songs that has a politics rather than what you are doing while the song is there in your shared social ear and once this confusion takes hold you can come to think that staying at home listening to the song or singing the song at a karaoke bar with friends is part of the antagonism that people are using the song to illuminate and not its opposite number.

This has been a problem in my own life, this ability to choose a new song every few weeks that corresponds to my most expansive sense of things or to my experience of the abyss between the market for which the song is made and the world I imagine while listening to the song. And I guess I think that all pop songs are about this among other things about the interval between the world from which the song has been vomited forth and the world we want the song to open onto. Pop songs are happy for us to live there and Rihanna and Calvin Harris and Universal Music Group are happy for us to live there in that interval and I would not call it happiness but it is living and I have lived there with many others.

If we go back to the militant house parties of 2009 we see that the suspicion around pop songs was somewhat but not completely different. No one really phrased it this way but it was whether pop songs were neutral and could be seized and used as we wished or whether being purpose-built by capital they could not be diverted from their desire to be a form of money that via the

artifice of passing through us made more money. Saying it that way makes obvious the similarity between this question and the question about the productive powers of capital in general. This is the “repurposing hypothesis” that some of our friends have written about so eloquently and the analogy is imperfect as pop songs play a very different role in the reproduction of a society than do refrigerators or staple grains but still we can wonder whether is it a kind of desperate hubris that lets us imagine we can simply do what we want with “We Found Love” and all.

It is probably not one or the other really. They can both be true for now it can be true that pop songs contrive to preserve us in the interval where they pass through us to make more money and it can be true that they can be joyous fight songs and it is surely true that the measure of this will be disclosed by what we do while the songs are spiraling in our shared social ear. And it is even more surely true that one of the things we will have to do at some point after we have discovered pop songs and after we have used pop songs and after we have written pop songs about what we have done after these moments we will have to see that they are a kind of transition that won't end a permanent interval that must be overcome and we will have to destroy pop songs and then we will know the true meaning of kill your darlings. We will have to destroy pop songs by destroying the conditions in which pop songs can be made and be understood and we will have to do this by destroying the conditions of pop and of the popular. I don't think culture as it has been handed down to us can simply become communist culture even if we want it that way.

MAYAKOV+SKY PLATFORM

Helixpolis — Archemachia (excerpts)

All photographs were taken in a span of two years (2012-2014) during several demonstrations and riots that took place in downtown Oakland. The historical moment captured—a process of deep socioeconomic transfiguration in the famous port city—signals the conclusion of the Occupy Oakland (re)naissance and the beginning of a transitional period where manifold capitalist powers and authorities (*arche*) cooperate and/or construct surrogate material conditions in search of “a” latest “development.” The role of the photograph in this equation is multidimensional.

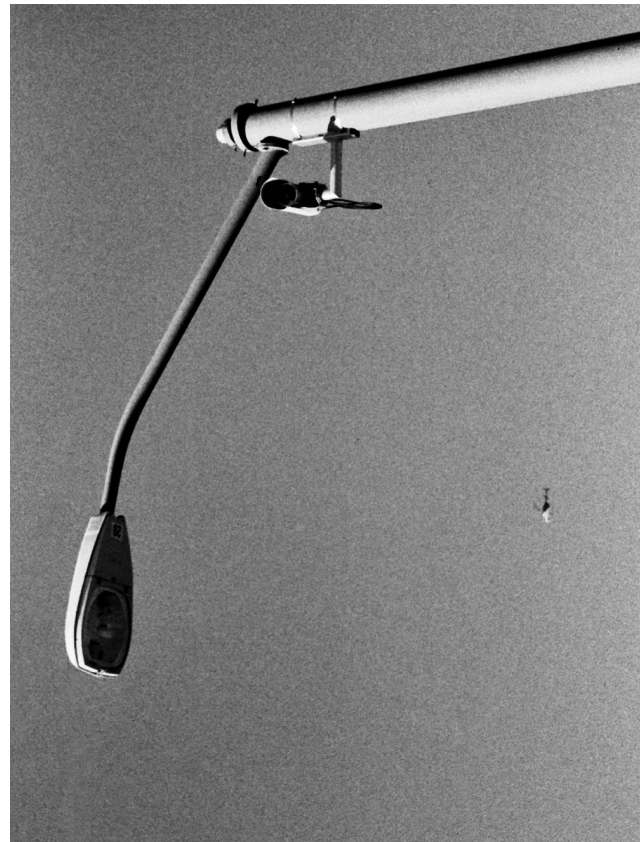
Specifically, (econo)topological photography works as a vector connecting the gestalt(en) of capital (architecture, urban planning, technology, commodities) with the gewalt(en) of the state (police, media, banks, private institutions). Consider this triptych: Surveillance is an epiphenomenon, maintenance is a can(n)on, revolutionary educational usance is a non.

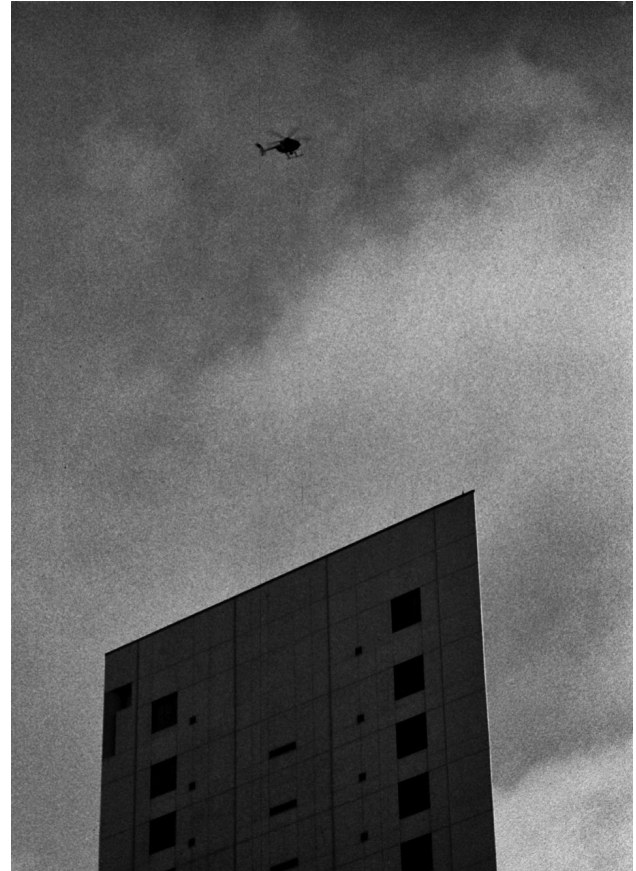
During the Occupy movement and the synchronous uprisings around the world, we witnessed common (and sometimes orchestrated) visual narratives that promoted a bird's eye view of masses, the proximity of death and glory, the aestheticization of insurrection, the spectacle as meta-fascism (cynical self-satire of the system concealed as self-critique), the exaltation of “a” social body (form) instead of “the” collective social consciousness (content).

This essay is a mirror which attempts to unveil the hidden major and minor projector(s), the at-stake, the roots of the rooted, as a new strategy emerging from multifarious struggle (what I call amphoterics) or destroying capital's helix.

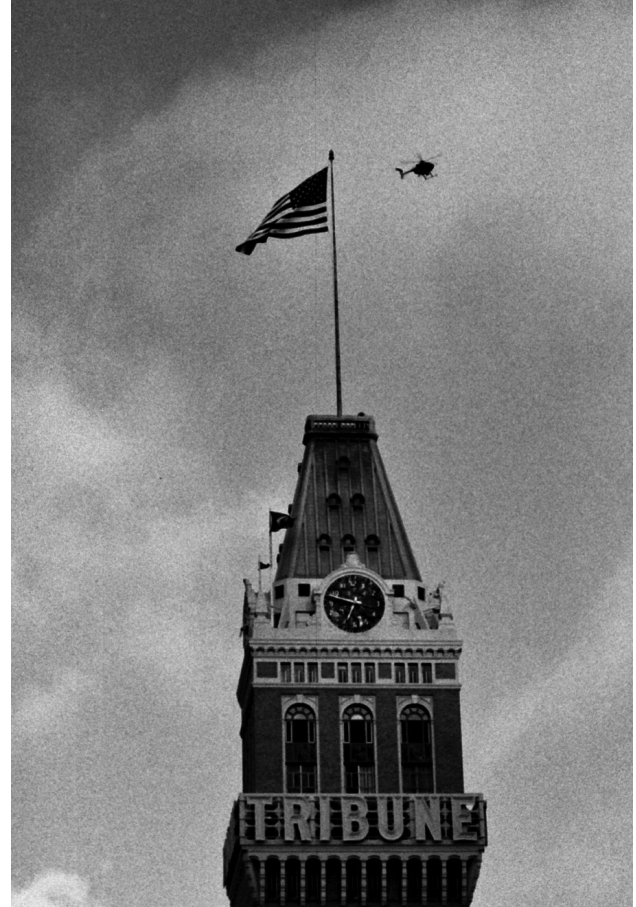
<http://mayakov-plus-sky.blogspot.com/2013/07/on-capitalistfascist-architecture-urban.html>













JASPER BERNES

from We Are Nothing and So Can You

for Maya Gonzalez

The portent exfiltrates the meanings of the night. At the Holiday Inn Abyss, watching herself on cable news from the End of History suite, the last criminal gives it a doubtful look. We come quickly to the limits of the model world, as in the advertisements where the virile automobile races toward the edge of a desert mesa, skidding to a stop yet imparting some of its momentum to the camera now wheeling over the abyss to track the flight of an imperious raptor who has little chance of surviving the impending collapse of the regional ecosystem. Once it hits the aftermarket you'll pay ten times as much for an audience. You can take out the LA power grid with a well-placed shot from a .22, though in truth she is guilty of crimes that are far worse, infinite crimes the mere detailing of which by a court of law would serve as life sentence even for the immortals among us. Down there, working the burning coalface with a spoon, a saw, a drop-down menu containing thousands of words for time. How many will have died in their sleep, happily, of natural causes, to sustain this tiny and inconsequential perforation in the net of power? The last criminal, the first poet. If there was one, there were ten. If there were ten, there were twenty. We are not capable of time travel, says Maya, because we have yet to create the present. The last criminal is therefore given a slight reprieve, a conditional pardon contingent upon the convocation of zeros in series. *Exeunt* King Lear. We watch his heat signature stumble about the dressing room on the giant screens set up in the square. Villon drives his dagger through the priest's ribs. The object of the heist, it turns out, is time itself — the beginning and ending of time, folded carefully within an unassuming lacquer box that contains enough computing power, we are told, to casually reorder the universe. The commandoes rappel into the fossil record. The drum circle drowns out the assembly. You don't have to have a world to live in one.

* * *

The sun crashes on the runway. There is no going back, says the fortune cookie. There is no going forward either, says the bill. The crank converts the linear, reciprocating motion of the bottled steam into rotational energies whose appalling fires are distributed immoderately throughout the social organism by an elaborate maze of belts and pulleys. Arms horizontal, the child spins in place until he faints. They break up. They get back together. After three years of uncollected garbage, the government raises 4.2 billion on the bond market. A makeshift bomb explodes feebly outside the central bank, as if to congratulate the victors. You touch the arrow; crowds hurl themselves against the National Assembly. Cost per click finding its local minimum. The gravid melancholy of the river in the penstock, pushing into the kiloton rotors. Capital pours out of the country; when the economic refugees its flight produces finally arrive at their destination, it will have prepared a place for them. A filthy lather of pure means throbs above the sunken garden. The rotation of the sphere of the heavens, plotted on the flat plate. Joined end to end, electrical current effectively travels in both directions at once; almost everything that has ever been said or thought or meant now and for some indeterminate future floating out there as a mere momentary interruption of those signals, that needling tone. We can change course but it won't make a difference; at most, we can choose what part of the wall we want to hit. The centers take flight. The point becomes a line. The line becomes a plane. The plane becomes a time, repeating. Pulled around in a circle by the force of its name, the thing flies out against what it is, expelled by the disorder of its internal parts. The child steps forward from the huddled semi-circle, the rock in his hand lobbed out into clear prose. From the rotation of the hips and shoulders, from the continuous turning into itself of verse, the first rock arcs out, then the next, then hundreds, thousands, darkening the sky, turning the sky to solid earth, to bedrock, the soldiers at the checkpoint buried under the thunder of it, the landslide. The sport fish runs out all the line from the reel, snaps it. We drift through the burning city.

Inside the calorimeter, the everyday labor of the ordinary
laborers approximates bodily the aliquot
portion of the total social product
our faded scrip commands, oracles
whose average tediums model as weather
the trajectory of our lives, corkscrewing downward
through the terror-leveled visual heat
to become what we have or will have been,
calories and things, air and skin,
while the little dude folded inside
the parietal lobe gets lit up
by a hundred theoretical knees and elbows, row on row
of simulators for pulling, hauling, grinding, cutting, sorting,
with average methods, converting
the coordinated movements
into an abstract energy
that makes the giant's legs move
on an unmarked plane, in a manner of speaking,
as the giant has no body
and no continuous extension,
is perhaps not even a giant
but rather a swarm of dwarves
small enough to fit inside the
sliding cabinets of the things of this world,
where their controls panels are
easily accessible, though probably on fire
also, and feeding the boilers which eject
giant plumes of ethnographic steam
into selfsame futurity, governed
alternately by the deficits or surpluses
that send us careening along the interior edge
of a total hair care program

announced by a suite of designer ring tones
appropriate to the parlous
state in which we find ourselves
forced to unfriend everyone forever,
one counter-revolution colliding
with another in front of the state television
building without returning us to the regularly scheduled
programming of the status quo ante,
when our memories were prophecy
and our prophets, enemies.

for Anne Boyer

To get born now is so much harder than it was at first, when there were just
bodies and numbers, bodies and names, when the dead and the living were
best friends. For one, the grammar is fucked. You could end up becoming
anyone, wobbled along the branching pulsions, the looped channels and
weird maturities. It's not something you can just do to yourself, as you
might for instance squirm free of the cheap, plastic handcuffs cops use for
mass arrests. It takes years for the nervous system to suffuse the babyfat with
reflexes adequate to the social belly but by that time it will already be too
late. The transport van will have entered the transcontinental tunnel that
carries the convicts to the outlands. You must, in other words, *get born*,
in the same way that you might try to get a document notarized but find
that you must first provide that selfsame notarized document as proof of
eligibility. So long as this consciousness is lacking, the crisis is permanent, it
goes back to its starting-point, repeats the cycle until after infinite sufferings
and terrible detours the school of history introduced by the enciphered
transmission of genital imagery through the late-empire cellular networks
allows for a single, perilous rendezvous far from the facial algorithms of
the secret police. In the meantime you just sit there, a lump of nomination
and triple cream, soliciting the indignities of the world on the basis of an
entirely speculative kind of existence, stapled to the proverbial mountaintop

while the fashionable and happy people swim up through your feed. Hours pass before the different subcommittees, working groups, commissions, and provisional departments are reconciled on the question of what, exactly, is going on. There is an object over there and you must retrieve it, though it has become increasingly impossible to reconcile the divergent viewpoints now present, sometimes vehemently so, within the meandering and inconclusive debate. Indeed, it is only by refusing the thudding recursions of the whistling machines and the motions they compel that the body might begin to displace larger and larger quantities of air, and therefore move, to everyone's surprise, toward its eventual goal of world communism. This might be total bullshit. I mean, something is here that was not here before, and no matter how many times you tally the inputs and outputs, their difference is not the half-shaped sound stuck in your throat, those jesting others, the plush plaids and swarming braids of total destroy. Something is here that was not here before. There's no more chorus. Only the people, armed, and the silvery rifts that snake through them. They are your mirror. They are what you would have been forever.

EMJI SPERO

An Attempt at Getting Exhausted in Oscar Grant Plaza on Friday, October 20th, 2012. It Lasted an Hour, Give or Take.

There is talk about violence/non-violence as being or not being the linked arms of standing bodies. There is talk about violence/non-violence when dumpsters are set on fire. There is talk about violence/non-violence when batons break the ribs and fingers of protestors. There is talk about violence/non-violence when police shoot an already handcuffed man. There is talk about violence/non-violence after anti-police riots. There is talk about violence/non-violence after the breaking of storefront windows. There is talk about violence/non-violence when streets are blocked and when protesters are hit by cars. There is talk about violence/non-violence when persons are raped in the community and what this community is and the people in it. There is talk of violence/non-violence during the prison hunger strikes and the student hunger strikes and the wildcat strikes. There is not talk or less talk about how none of these things are the same thing.

If the sameness of all of these things being violence is assumed why not just say it in this way of everything being the same. To just say the pane of glass is like the head of a person is like a dumpster on fire.

—Jill Richards, "Some More Thoughts on Violence" (2011)

violence is fresh sodded grass is a rat skitting across fresh sodded grass is ten benches, empty is a clock tower is another clock tower is how they are different from one another is a matter of minutes is violence

is the things that are above you is Wells is Chase is City Center is a clock tower is another clock tower is illuminated offices also empty is not a man walking past wiping his nose with a tissue is not a rat rounding a corner is

the absence of helicopters and the sound they do not leave you is sirens is a man is a baseball cap is feet squelching the sound of fresh sodded grass is a red glow that implies the presence of a cigarette is fresh sodded grass that implies *violence*

is a stone head with no body is also illuminated is eight rectangles of light in an otherwise building empty like three rectangles of light in an otherwise office building is empty is the dark rest of it is the reflection of the dark rest of it is a bell tolls the hour is twelve tolls is three coughs is a rat rounding a corner is the bells that are no longer tolling is a rat burrowing in the fresh sodded grass is footsteps is don't go on the fresh sodded grass is the shade halfway down is NEWLY INSTALLED LAWN PLEASE KEEP OFF is no. is *violence*

is that you? is getting up to say "hello" is finding a new place is the yellow soles of shoes and their scraping on bricks is wrapped in a mexican blanket is not you is made of wool is a backpack used as a pillow is a brown bag on the fourth stair up is the third stair down sneakers stashed under a backpack being used as a pillow is Oakland is a flag is buttressed is an oil stain on square bricks is yellow leaves on square bricks is shouting is a sucking sound a background bus-starting-up sort of sound is what penetrates the limits of this imaginary boundary is *violence*

is how sounds are crossing the fresh sodded grass and sometimes a rat is a sign is a wooden stake penetrating the soft wet of the fresh sodded grass is a tallboy on red bricks is the shadows of the things that are above how still they are is *violence*

is "hey" is the v-shape between legs as they open is the shape of a body obscured by the folds of a blanket is hoods up is hands in pockets is "my favorite" is "my favorite thing is" "a tiny religion" is a shoe attached to a leg is brushing the tips of the fresh sodded grass is bending is walking away from is *violence*

is what may or may not be a rat is what sounds like a scream is the folds of the blanket that indicate a body is a body that indicates a human is an absence of smell is the surface of the blanket is shuddering is the absence of a chain link fence is noticing the absence is silhouettes at the limits of this imaginary boundary signifies the presence of bricks is yellow leaves is the duration they signify bells tolling is again is "um" is "Zuccotti" is "NYPD cracking down really hard" is again is hands in pockets is descending the stairs is passing the blanketed body is getting up to piss is *violence*

is a woman walking past is a shopping bag is an oversized white coat is city hall is not a corridor is a pattern of light and shadow is four lights is four lights is four lights is four lights is four lights is four lights is "there a way out" "is "there a light" "does one of you have a light" is "a nice safe night" is *violence*

is getting up to piss.

violence is squatting with my back against city hall is the dark spot on the bricks that implies that someone has pissed here on this spot is squatting down over this spot is the sharp smell of our piss is becoming one piss is some of it splashing on my shoe is a copper plaque on a plastic bench that reads TO HONOR THE WISDOM OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF THIS LAND WHO PRESERVED AND PROTECTED THE RESOURCES OF OUR EARTH is that

violence is the wind pushing a white napkin across red bricks on native land is white chalk marking the trunks of trees is that

violence is AMP is BOOST is a white feather is brush and comb set is yellow leaves is birdshit is a cigarette butt, yellow, is another cigarette butt, white, is wax paper is coming closer is gum wrapper is a twig is a note that reads 3160 PHOENIX LN 11-3 is a blunt wrapper red spray paint is that

violence is standing at the edge of the fresh sodded grass is finding my bike helmet on red bricks is how I notice that my bike has been stolen is a woman in a red shirt and a man in a red shirt walking across the fresh sodded grass is a water bottle in her hand is her arms folded across her chest standing at the edge and walking away is an armrest in the middle of a park bench is also

violence is a flag flanked by two flags flanked by two flags is the crisp military corner you will walk along the entire perimeter as though the fence was still present but instead you just walk down the stairs talking to yourself is a fluffy bear of a dog deciding not to piss on a tree is a fluffy bear of a dog deciding to piss on the next tree is the right one to piss on is two people becoming smaller because of distance and perspective until—is like saying goodbye is

violence is two stone heads turned in opposite directions is “GET DOWN GET DOWN” “GET DOWN GET DOWN” “GET DOWN GET DOWN” is a man pushing a newspaper cart his sweatshirt is white, his hood is not up is a rat rounding a corner and is

—Oscar Grant Plaza, one year after Occupy. Arrived at midnight and remained there for an hour, attempting to document “what happens...when nothing is happening.” This exercise was based on An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris by George Perec. A different version of the text was originally published as an audio file at calmaplombpombombbalm.com.

KATE ROBINSON

Magic Graffiti

Sigils are monograms of thought, for the government of energy ... a means of symbolizing desire and giving it form that has the virtue of preventing any thought and association on that particular desire (at the magical time), escaping the detection of the Ego, so that it does not restrain or attach such desire to its own transitory images, memories and worries, but allows it free passage to the sub-consciousness.

—Austin Osman Spare, *The Book Of Pleasure*

Sigils have been used in different religious practices for thousands of years; Norse Bind-runes, Arabic charms and the Kabbalist’s Khem all used written alphabets as a way of devising magical talismans. In advertising and marketing, logos have taken the subliminal concepts behind magical talismans and turned them towards capitalist gains. You don’t have to watch too many episodes of *Mad Men* to understand the subconscious manipulations present in the work of advertisers, and the ubiquity of text in advertising guarantees that a great deal of communication occurs on a subconscious level. We are so inundated with things to read that reading hardly occurs. The majority of things that we see posted around us in public space are not truly seen, not consciously read; they pass from our eyes to our subconscious minds so quickly that we are barely able to register their meanings.

Graffiti artists operate on much the same level as advertisers, although to very different ends. The goal of most graffiti artists, or writers, is to bomb as many locations as possible, spread their tag around so prolifically that it becomes an inherent part of the landscape, so that their name or tag becomes as commonplace as the McDonalds “M.” In his book *All City: the Book About Taking Space*, Paul 107 writes, “I guess growing up in the ‘80s, I was

used to marketers plastering my surroundings with product propaganda. Bombing the streets was kind of like those marketing campaigns, except without the possibility of financial gain ... Their only goal was to go all-city, to take all the space.”

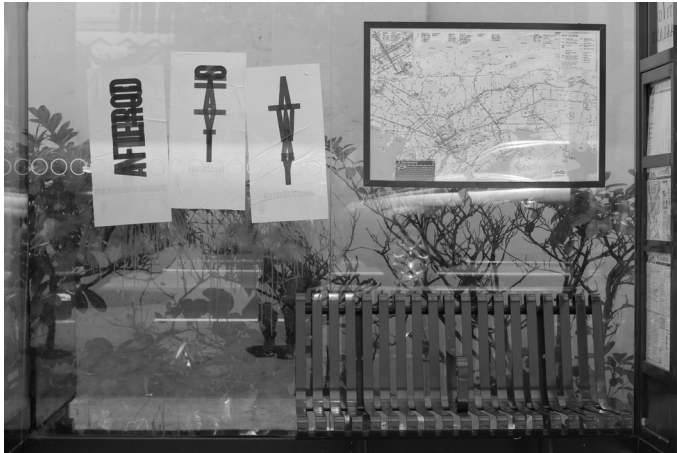
Sigil writing and graffiti writing are both highly personalized forms of expression; each writer creates their tag or symbol using an alchemical mix of curves and lines, intuitively and/or with a structural vision distilling some form of intention or personalized manifestation into a letterform symbol. Generally sigils are used for personal spell casting or other kinds of intentional energy manifestation in some sort of ritualized practice, whereas graffiti is intended for blatantly public display, but both potentially invite a sort of deep reading upon viewing. Graffiti tags are often difficult to decipher, and chaos magicians usually aim to make their sigils as unreadable as possible. Practitioners of chaos magic see belief as being a tool rather than as a relatively unchanging part of one’s personality. The idea is that through flexibility of belief one can manifest desires in one’s life. Sigil magic uses glyphs as a means to bridge the gap between the conscious and subconscious mind. The conscious mind creates a statement of intent and then manipulates them into a symbol that is as removed as possible from the original statement of intent. The idea is to then meditate on the created symbol, charge it with focused energy and put it out of your mind. The English artist Austin Osman Spare developed a method of automatic drawing and claimed that

an ‘automatic’ scribble of twisting and interlacing lines permits the germ of an idea in the subconscious mind to express, or at least suggest itself to the consciousness. From this mass of procreative shapes, full of fallacy, a feeble embryo of idea may be selected and trained by the artist to full growth and power. By these means, may the profoundest depths of memory be drawn upon and the springs of instinct tapped (Spare, *Automatic Drawing*).

This deeply personal occultation speaks to my own conceptual writing practice, to the notion that through both intentional and abstracted play with varied writing structures—from genres or forms to words and letters, even to the individual strokes and dots that make up the space of a page—I might tease out some manifestation of a new consciousness. In late 2011, I asked friends to send me brief declarations, which I then manipulated to create these sigils. Their meanings and energies are charged by my relationships with these people, their intent in sending them, and the physical process of designing, printing, and pasting them up in Oakland. By using letterpress I’ve removed the organic quality of the hand and moved these posters closer to the uniformity and slickness of advertising, but my choice of materials—wood type, which allows for uneven inking and shows the grain of the wood, and newsprint, which is cheap and doesn’t allow for the tactile bite into the paper that fine printing prizes—and the decision to wheatpaste them around Oakland moves them closer to street art. By pasting these posters up in multiples I’m drawing on the saturation techniques of advertisers and graffiti writers, the advertisers’ manipulations of the subconscious, and the graffiti writers’ fight to recuperate public visual space from capitalism’s grasp.

photos: Emji Spero, Oakland 2014





SITUATION UPDATES

-----Original Message-----

From: OPD Operations

Sent: Tue 10/25/2011 12:58 PM

To: OPD Operations; Israel, Jeffrey; Allison, Darren; Poirier, Michael; Santana, Deanna; Poulson, Edward; Parris, Kenneth; Garcia, Gilbert; Whent, Sean; Wiley, Kevin; Rachal, Anthony; Davis, Johnny; Lindsey, Drennon; Medeiros, Brian K.; Joyner, Ersie; Wong, Clifford W; Mestas, Fred; Lozares, Demetrio; Tull, Steven; Hamilton, Freddie; Williams, Sharon J; Shannon, Christopher; Outlaw, Danielle; DL – OPD – Sergeants; Jordan, Howard; Breshears, Eric

Situation Update #15 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1254 hours

2nd/Washington parking enforcement being followed by protestors, TNT responding. 14/bway 2 units responding here code 3, per dispatch there is a 943 here. Per Cpt Joyner enough units here to handle incident no need for more units. Patch Patrol 1/5 possibly being surrounded here. One I/C at 14/bway. Patrol units are being surrounded channel went code 33. Radio advised not to send any more patrol units here let units respond with helmets. Bravo 91 channel can be unpatched @1256hrs

Situation Update #19 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1428 hours

Per Chief Jordan protestors have found out the Mayors address, requesting units to be sent there to do a security check. Also giving AC Transit updates regarding reroutes.

Situation Update #21 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1603 hours

Another 40 people towards the library, total of 200 people at the library. Will provide update every 5 mins

Situation Update #23 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1614 hours

14/alice there is a march (80-100 people) headed eastbound in the middle of the street---also a group marching eastbound 14th, taking the street

Situation Update #25 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1620 hours

Crowd becoming big, starting to shut down traffic. 973 to post at all intersections north and south of 13th near the Library

Situation Update #27 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1627 hours

Everything is locked down on 14th st. No traffic coming from East Oakland along 14th st twds downtown. 15th st/Madison is where the hole is, this is where the traffic is. 17/Madison has stopped all south bound traffic.

Situation Update #28 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1700 hours

Crowd abt 600, 4-5 people masking up. 50-60 people on bikes. Snow Park is clear. Argus will be up in a minute or so. Bart is still up and running

Situation Update #30 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1736 hours

Lead of crowd w/b Webster. Santa Clara to stage inside of PAB. Argus advising not enough units at Webster. Will have police presence near the freeway entrance. Traffic needs to be stopped S/B 14th. Crowd is cooperative. 8 Motors ert to enforce @ 12/bway. 12/Bway overtaken.

Situation Update #31 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1757 hours

7/Bway blking traffic. All mobile field force relocating here. CHP sending 2 squads to ramps of freeway. Also broadcasted info regarding vigil in area of 18/mlk at the Church for 187 victim. Crowd headed westbound. Gilroy motors being sent to 8th/Bwy. Line held at 8th/bwy to make an arrest. Crowd headed w/b 7th street now. Per Argus officer is surrounded at 7th/Washington.

Situation Update #32 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1804 hours

7th/Washington was code 33 per Argus uncooperative protestors. Gas was deployed here also. Unit calling unlawful assembly. 7th/Clay appears to be peaceful. 8th/Clay protestors masking up. 7th/Washington unites will be forming a Scirmish Line. Hostiles are at 8th/Washington per Argus. Making 3rd announcement for unlawful assembly. Large group frm Washington/8th st

Situation Update #34 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1838 hours

Public works has pulled out of the plaza. Crowd moving northbound Bwy. Per Argus very little movement of crowd. 50-100 protestors starting to moving northbound Bwy. Group sitting down at 14/bwy. 2 Sheriff buses en route. Chp H30 taking over for Argus while they refuel. Per Argus 800-1000 protestors southbound 19/bwy. Tail of crowd at San Pablo. Holding now at 1700 Bwy taking over the street stopping traffic.

Situation Update #36 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1920 hours

Argus back on scene at Snow Park. Restablished barriers around the plaza. If anyone takes them down they are arrestable. Crowd is clearing Harrison approaching Webster. Crowd has grown 1200-1400 protestors at 20/bwy.

Situation Update #37 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 1941 hours

Will allow protestors to peacefully protest. Not allowed to enter Frank Ogawa plaza if so they are arrestable. Crowd at 1500 Bwy holding. All units masking up making announcements at 14/Bwy given 5 mins to leave area apx 1500-1700 protestors here. Crown approaching barriers. Protestors have set up barriers, there is a bout a 7ft gap between their barriers and ours. Something being broken in the crowd, no visual. Distance now closed between barricades. Now throwing objects. Gas being deployed into crowd

Situation Update #38 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 2016 hours

Numerous tweets that the Occupy Oakland General Assembly announced will meet everyday at 1800 hrs at 14th and Broadway (info via Sgt Dinh, T.) Male mid eastern on a red yamaha F-4 street bike w/ Camoflauge backpack handing out items to protestors in crowd. Trash cans being set on fire at 14/bwy. Protestor in crowd seen w/ a full triple CS de canister, suspect has wen back into the crowd. Holmgren advising bag w/ canister was recovered. Crowd now moving s/b San Pablo frm 20th. Argus down for fuel again, H30 (CHO) taking over.

Situation Update #39 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ 2058 hours

Fyi, arugs fueling up. Chp holding our spot. Upon our return, chp heading home, fog moving in and may be an issue. We will stay up as long as possible. Protestors throwing things Bwy ifo Rite Aid. Crowd size apx 600-700. Unlawful assembly announcement given. 16/Tel CHP vehicle had its rear window broken out and there is a weapon inside. 1200 blk of Bway protestors using dumpsters to make their own barricade. Unit took bottle at 14/Bway. Units have made 3.

Situation Update #40 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT 2011 @ hours

Argus coming back up. Checked weather, should not be a factor. Unit took another bottle 14/Bwy, protestors moving barricades. 1300 blk of Franklin apx 300 protestors. Protestors advising if we give them the park back we can go home. Protestors threw a bottle and hit their own people. Then threw several more. Making announcements now. Deploying gas

Situation Update #41 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT @ 2223hours

Crowd regathering at 15/Franklin. Crowd of 300-400 at 15/Franklin moving to 15/Bway (main crowd of apx 300). Small group 15/Franklin. Crowd moving northbound. 15/Bway deployed gas, were taking bottles here. Crowd moving westbound 17/bwy. Crowd has taken over intersections at 17/Bwy. apx 300 protestors. Snow park has apx 20-30 protestors here. Crowd moving southbound Bwy per Argus, still blking all lanes of traffic. 14/Bwy masking up again, crowd is reacting. Protestors are verbally challenging units on the line.

Situation Update #43 --- Operation FOP 25 OCT @ 2342hours

Unites were taking bottles, deployed gas again. Trash can on fire at 1624 Franklin. 15/Bwy apx 50-60 protestors spread out here. 14/Bwy 75-100, small group at 14/Franklin also apx 40-50. Units advd no fire at 17/ Franklin. MW 6'0 ponytail, heavy padding w/backpack approaching the line, units advd to mask up.

CAMOVER

It started in Berlin. Small groups hit the streets at night to smash and dismantle the CCTV surveillance cameras adorning the city streets. They posted videos and photos of their exploits online and called the guerrilla project “Camover.” The anti-surveillance project quickly spread throughout Germany, to Finland, Greece and now even the U.S.



The DAC

The Domain Awareness Center, a joint project between the Port of Oakland and the city, started as a nationwide initiative to secure ports by networking sensors and cameras in and around the facilities. The busy port is one of seven U.S. maritime facilities that the Department of Homeland Security considers at highest risk of a terrorist attack.

Since its inception in 2009, the project has ballooned into a surveillance program for the entire city. Some officials already have proposed linking the center to a regional Department of Homeland Security intelligence-gathering operation or adding feeds from surveillance cameras around the Oakland stadium and arena complex. In the next year, authorized personnel in Oakland will be able to access multiple video feeds from a large swath of the city, along with real-time information such as weather and detailed crime information all in one location, even from their laptops and mobile devices. Our elected officials in Oakland leave us no choice: resist in the streets.

Why Attack?

Who hasn't noticed? There are cameras on the streets, in the shops, on public transportation, even in schools and at work. Video surveillance is used to monitor our lives, to control our actions, and to suppress our resistance. Comprehensive monitoring is the most visible manifestation of the ubiquitous eyes of the state, done under the guise of society's basic need for security.

The gaze of the cameras does not fall equally on all users of the street but on those who are stereotypical predefined as potentially deviant, or through appearance and demeanor, are singled out by operators as un-respectable. In this way youth, particularly those already socially and economically marginal, may be subject to even greater levels of authoritative intervention and official stigmatization, and rather than contributing to social justice through the reduction of victimization, surveillance will merely become a tool of injustice through the amplification of differential and discriminatory policing. This type of authoritarian rule is not new to the people of Oakland.



Methods of Attack

- **Plastic Bag:** Plastic bag filled with glue does the trick nicely. Use industrial grade bags which are thicker. Sometimes a camera going into repair will be 'bagged' over, so it's visually ambiguous.
- **Sticker or Tape:** Placing of sticker or tape over lens.
- **Paint Gun:** Use a child's water pistol, such as a Super Soaker, filled with household paint. Carry reserve paint in plastic containers. Filter paint to remove lumps to avoid blocking gun. With a 50/50 mix of water based house paint and water we could hit targets easily at 4.5 meters above the ground.
- **Laser Pointer:** Laser pointers of 5m Watts or more can temporarily blind and may even permanently damage cameras. For guaranteed destruction a more powerful laser would be required. Hazard of damaging eyes from misdirected pointing or reflection from the camera lens cover. Can be attached to binoculars for better aiming.
- **Cable Cutting:** Cables can be cut with either a sharp hand axe or garden pruning tools. Make sure tools are electrically insulated to prevent shock from camera power supply. Requires complete costly rewiring. Satisfying sparks emitted when cables cut.
- **Get Creative:** There are a myriad of ways to attack that are not listed here. Be resourceful!





SCOTT SØRLI

The Political Aesthetics of Police Kettling

There is no document of civilization that is not also a document of barbarism.

Walter Benjamin

Encirclement is the military strategy of arranging troops to surround and isolate an enemy force. Duration is the temporal constituent of encirclement that permits the delivery of a condition of supply depletion. This can be understood as the delivery of absence, a throttling of supply, the opposite of a gift of excess. This uneven distribution of supply and demand is, by its very nature, corporatist.

General disregard for civilian casualties is another constituent of encirclement. To give one example, the Battle of Stalingrad lasted from 23 August 1942 until 2 February 1943 with nearly two million deaths due to hunger, illness and exposure, as well as more conventional mechanical and technological means. The German word for military encirclement (which will be useful for our etymology) is *Kesselschlacht*, literally ‘cauldron battle.’

The aerial view from the bombing bay was a new way of seeing the city.

...man can be in ecstatic contact with the cosmos only communally. It is the dangerous error of modern men to regard this experience as unimportant and avoidable, and to consign it to the individual as the poetic rapture of starry nights. It is not; its hour strikes again and again, and then neither nations nor generations can escape it, as was made terribly clear by the last war, which was an attempt at a new and unprecedented commingling with the cosmic powers. Human multitudes, gases, electrical forces were hurled into the open country, high frequency currents coursed through the landscape, new constellations rose in the sky, aerial space and ocean depths thundered with propellers, and everywhere sacrificial shafts were dug in Mother Earth. This immense wooing of the cosmos was enacted for the first time on a planetary scale, that is, in the spirit of technology. But because the lust for profit of the ruling class sought satisfaction through it, technology betrayed man and turned the bridal bed into a bloodbath.¹

Military encirclement, aerial bombardment, and supply depletion are not new ways of experiencing the city. Nor is the betrayal of man by technology because of a lust for profit:

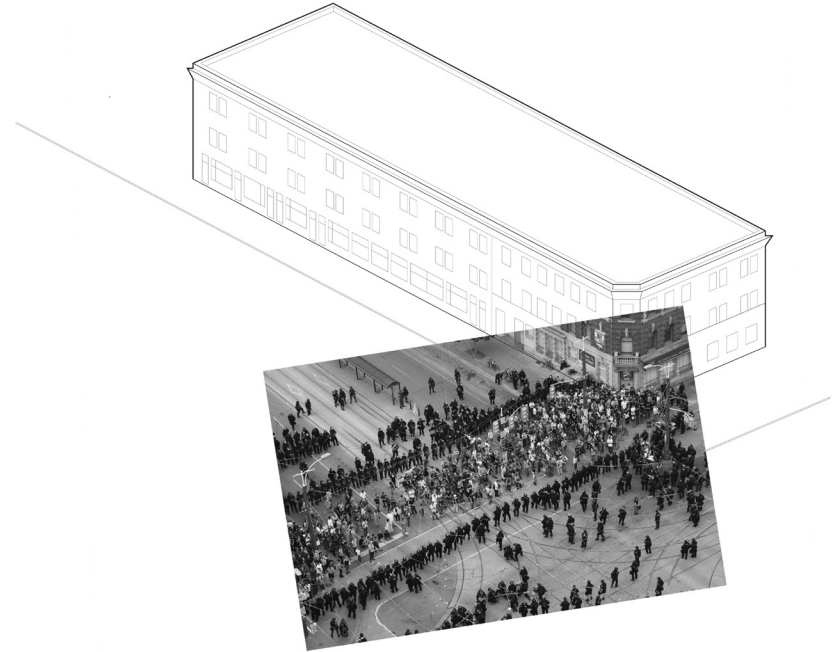
*...one has to accept the fact that the state is in occupation of the public sphere and the rebel is not...*²

Police kettling is a recent cultural-spatial phenomenon in which the police use a line of their bodies to encircle and hold in place several hundred people over an extended duration of time.



"Police terror against anti-nuclear activists: 800 people kettled in one day." Hamburg Heiligengeistfeld 8 June 1986. nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/sanis/archiv/brokdorf/kap_06.htm Retrieved 2012-03-18.

The earliest well documented police kettle occurred in Hamburg on 8 June 1986 on over 800 people, lasting up to thirteen hours. Despite requests, no washroom breaks during the entire thirteen hours were permitted. The Hamburg police report noted of the 838 people taken into custody, there were 22 arrests, leading to 15 investigations, 7 of which were for illegal assembly. The protesters were protesting the state withdrawal of the right to protest. *Eingekesselt* is German for 'surrounded,' or 'encircled,' — 'en-cauldrened.'



"Queen and Spadina Police Kettle," Scott Sørli: 2012. Incorporating photo by Eldar Curovic: "An aerial view of the kettling seen from up high on the southwest corner of Queen and Spadina, on June 27, 2010." *The Toronto Star*, 27 June 2010. Retrieved 2012-03-18.

The kettle that was put into place in Toronto on 27 June 2010 during the fourth G20 summit trapped a random selection of 200 bystanders, cyclists, pedestrians, and shoppers for several hours. Not one citizen from this kettle was convicted of any charge, while over seventy police officers were subsequently disciplined by the docking of one day's pay for removing their ID badges, contrary to police policy during the summit. Due to the lack of any reason for this kettle, it is clear that its purpose was as a live training exercise. The configuration of the parallel police cordons crossed Spadina Avenue, a wide boulevard with streetcar tracks down its center, rather than the narrower crossing Queen Street. This was as an experiment to demonstrate the possible length of the police line, which was shown to be any length desired, as long as sufficient police are on hand to cycle through their shifts.

*The insecurity of even the busy areas puts the city dweller in the opaque and truly dreadful situation in which he must assimilate, along with isolated urban monstrosities from the open country, the abortions of urban architectonics.*³

Police kettles are solely urban phenomena that require adjacent building façades as a portion of the containment ring, in this case, a branch of one of the “big five” banks.

*...the modern economy, seen as a whole, resembles much less a machine that stands idle when abandoned by its stoker than a beast that goes berzerk as soon as its tamer turns his back...*⁴

The sign on the building behind those kettled in Toronto is for the CIBC, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. It is one of the “big five” Canadian banks, all of whom have their headquarters in financial district, downtown Toronto. Smooth welcoming columns are attached to the wall on either side of the corner entrance. To the right can be seen rusticated columns that flank the windows. Their rough weightiness is meant to symbolize a tough stability and durability. It is an architectural signifier of the bank's security of the bullion held within. In an era of the electronic transfer of funds, no serious amount of cash is on hand, and the architectural symbolism is irrelevant. The towers of the banking headquarters themselves mostly signify transparency with their international style architecture. The Royal Bank of Canada's headquarters, perhaps being a bit more daring, has embedded within its double pane windows a thin film of gold, so that

it glitters like an advertisement of what's meant to be dreamed of within. What's not a symbol, what's real, is the plywood that the bank above has attached to its windows in anticipation of the kettling that has occurred adjacent to it. Taking its role as part of the cordon that traps, encloses, and holds people within, the architecture's skin has been toughened up in anticipation of the event.

*The ornament, detached from its bearers, must be understood rationally. It consists of lines and circles like those found in textbooks on Euclidean geometry, and also incorporates the elementary components of physics, such as waves and spirals.*⁵



“Fresh hopes that coalition is planning crinkle-cuts.” by Martin Blowhard. themodestreview.blogspot.ca Retrieved 2012-09-30.

“London police resort to ‘kettling’ again.” presstv.ir/detail/209205.html Retrieved 2012-09-30.

And curves and circles and blobs:

*Although the masses give rise to ornament, they are not involved in thinking it through. As linear as it may be, there is no line that extends from the small sections of the mass to the entire figure. The ornament resembles aerial photographs of landscapes and cities in that it does not emerge out of the interior of the given conditions, but rather appears above them.*⁶

Kettling is a mass ornament, to use Sigfried Kracauer's term, that is external. Kettling benefits from the sincerity of a lack of coordination, at least from the perspective of the masses. While the police have their arrangements, the individuals coordinate no differently than water molecules do in making a wave. And just as watching the waves crash against the beach, over and over, the mass ornament of police kettling has a perverse beauty all its own. Its beauty comes as an articulation of invisible forces made manifest.

...the aesthetic pleasure gained from ornamental mass movements is legitimate. Such movements are in fact among the rare creations of the age that bestow form upon a given material. The masses organized in these movements come from offices and factories; the formal principle according to which they are molded determines them in reality as well. When significant components of reality become invisible in our world, art must make do with what is left, for an aesthetic presentation is all the more real the less it dispenses with the reality outside the aesthetic sphere. No matter how low one gauges the value of the mass ornament, its degree of reality is still higher than that of artistic productions which cultivate outdated noble sentiments in obsolete forms—even if it means nothing more than that.⁷



"SEOUL – Protesters fought riot police early Sunday at a rally opposing the resumption of American beef imports to South Korea." spiegel.de/fotostrecke/seoul-derkampf-gegen-amerikanisches-rindfleisch-fotostrecke-32902.html Retrieved 2012.10-03.

The public sphere possesses use-value when social experience organizes itself within it.⁸

When a police kettle fails it performs a quick inversion of surface area. It converts from a line with maximum surface—a two dimensional bubble—to a solid with minimum surface: a nucleus. This is a mass transformation of the public sphere, a brief moment of true civic experience when neither the state nor its agents is in control of the public sphere.

The typical condition of a police kettle (*Polizeikessel*), which is static, is differentiated in German from a mobile kettle (*Wanderkessel*), which is not. In the case of a wander kettle, the police arrange themselves in front of, to the sides of, and behind protesters as they march. Once in formation, the

police then control the route, stopping, starting, and changing direction of the march at will. Large numbers of police, nearly as many as there are protesters in this example at Hamburg on 28 May 2007 to protest against the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting, are necessary for a wander kettle to maintain coherence throughout this dynamic form of control.



"Westminster Bridge Kettle." Scott Sørli: 2102. Incorporating photo by Jon Cartwright Photography: Hi-res photograph of the Westminster Bridge kettle taken from Jon's studio window 9 December 2010 graciously provided via personal email.

A recent technological development is bridge kettling, the earliest recorded case on the Pont Guillotière in Lyon, 20 October 2010. A wander kettle was brought to a large bridge in the late fall and stopped over the geographical feature of an urban river. Water acts as a barrier without appearing to be one, and property damage to commercial buildings is minimized. In the Westminster Bridge kettle young students protesting proposed tuition fee increases experienced plunging temperatures while held over open water. As the vote on the issue was taking place inside the House of Commons beyond, the students were forcibly moved and made to watch from a distance.

...the need for a solidarity that can be grasped with the senses is a response to the invisibility of the real enemy. The police and immediate superiors in the [education] process are not the real antitheses to [students] who could win their identity not in the struggle against these advance guards but only against private property. Massing together serves as a mutual confirmation of their own reality, for who else but the other [students] can confirm their struggle is not a mere illusion, if even the destruction of the [universities] does not do away with the relations of [education] and with the [students'] state of dependency? It is only in this reaffirmed reality that an atmosphere of collective revolt comes about, that the [students] begin to talk, make suggestions, and become active.⁹



"Police could use more extreme tactics on protesters, Sir Hugh Orde warns." guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jan/27/hugh-orde-police-protest-tactics Retrieved 2012-09-30.



"TV show Coppers reveals the challenge of crowd control." guardian.co.uk/tv-and-radio/2010/nov/29/coppers-documentary-kettling-crowd-control Retrieved 2012-09-30.

Precisely because the important decisions regarding the horizon [of the public sphere] and the precise definitions of the organization of experience have been made in advance, it is possible to exert control in a purely technical manner.¹⁰

A kettle can be a machine for compression, as in the special case of a hyper kettle. The police link arms, pushing forward firmly, compressing people against each other and any available building façades. Pushing back can result in serious charges of assaulting a police officer. Pain and claustrophobia can be intense, discouraging future protests such as from the Unite Against Fascism protesters on 21 March 2010 hyper kettled by police as the facing English Defence League fly their St George's cross flags freely.

The assertion that the ends of police violence are always identical or even connected to those of general law is entirely untrue. Rather the 'law' of the police really marks the point at which the state, whether from impotence or because of the immanent connections within any legal system, can no longer guarantee through the legal system the empirical ends that it desires at any price to attain. Therefore the police intervene for security reasons' in countless cases where no clear legal situation exists, when they are not merely, without the slightest relation to legal ends, accompanying the citizen as a brutal encumbrance through a life regulated by ordinances, or simply supervising him. Unlike law, which acknowledges in the 'decision' determined by place a metaphysical category that gives it a claim to critical evaluation, a consideration of the police institution encounters nothing at all. Its power is formless, like its nowhere tangible, all-pervasive, ghostly presence in the life of civilized states.¹¹



"Metal barriers divide the police and demonstrators in Parliament Square." theguardian.com/education/gallery/2010/dec/09/student-protests-photos-london/#?picture=369583586&index=16 Retrieved 2014-07-09

*The original form of all dwelling is existence not in the house but in the shell. The shell bears the impressions of its occupant. In the most extreme instance, the dwelling becomes a shell.*¹²

Building Dwelling Rioting.

Eyal Weisman writes that “historical events are registered in material organization. Therefore we might be able to glean from a forensic investigation of material spaces and traces the history that produced them, that is folded into them.”¹³

The membrane of a police kettle consists of the bodies and minds of the police, as well as inorganic mobile material such as shields, truncheons, polycarbonate, and Kevlar. Metal elements, such as crowd control fencing or steel barricades can also become part of the police line. Plastics were deployed as barriers during the Occupy Wall Street protests because of their light weight, flexibility, low cost, and ease of use.

The metal barriers above bend and sway during the interaction between the yellow- and the black-clothed individuals. It is a social exoskeleton, again with oscillating valences as to precisely when and for whom it is exo- and when and for whom it is endo-. In thinking this shell the way Weisman might, as “this materialization of time,” where “it sees matter not only as an imprint of relations, but as an agent within the conflict,”¹⁴ one can ask about the cultural roles of their manufacturing process. Did the workers who made these materiel know that they were contributing this specific use value?

*One can also define the reality of this [proletarian public] sphere negatively, in terms of the endeavors of the ruling class to extinguish attempts at constituting a proletarian public sphere and to appropriate for itself the material on which this sphere is based—in other words, the proletarian context of living. The mechanisms used in this process are isolation, division, repression, the establishment of taboos, and assimilation.*¹⁵

Nature, in the form of fauna, is introduced to the public sphere in spurts of attack dogs and police horses. These domesticated animals have been trained to release themselves into a state of wildness and then to return back upon command. This feral condition has been seen among trained police officers as

well. As Weisman has pointed out, punishment and discipline for transgression are rarely enforced (and when enforced, in as minor a way as possible) as the state takes advantage of the benefits of this expected excess.

The purpose of police kettling is to deploy atmospheric and phenomenological techniques as forms of negative aesthetics to generate intense reception of affect. Once a police kettle has been put and held in place, the performance begins: the sun goes down and it gets dark, temperatures fall and it gets cold, relative humidity rises and, often, moisture condenses and it rains. The atmosphere that is the medium of occupation and existence (that one breathes) is regularly augmented with tear gas and pepper spray, as well as electrical shock effects. At a lower level, the biological organism experiences discomfort through the interdiction of drinking water, consuming food, excreting waste, and personal hygiene.

While kettling is a new phenomenon, the techniques behind it are well practiced. They are “aesthetic acts as configurations of experience that create new modes of sense perception and induce novel forms of political subjectivity.”¹⁶

The actions of the police, the State security apparatus, and the military share a common root; the line between kettling and war is a fine one.

“[W]ar is an uprising on the part of technology, which demands repayment in ‘human material’ for the natural material society has denied it. Instead of deploying power stations across the land, society deploys manpower in the form of armies. Instead of promoting air traffic, it promotes traffic in shells.” In an earlier version of the essay, Benjamin writes, “Instead of draining rivers, society directs a human stream into a bed of trenches; instead of dropping seeds from airplanes, it drops incendiary bombs over cities; and through gas warfare the aura is abolished in a new way.”¹⁷

While gas warfare violates the Geneva Protocol, teargas, pepperspray, and other atmospheric media continue to be commonly deployed domestically.

Negative emotions of those kettled include anger, fear, anxiety, dread, despair. Because of the indiscriminate nature of police kettling, it is an example of collective punishment. As the roll out of economic austerity programs continues

to be implemented by the political class with similar lack of discrimination (against the middle and lower classes, in any case) repressive techniques such as kettling that deploy the aesthetic transmission of affect are expected to increase, intensify and mutate. As Benjamin concludes in the Artwork essay above, “efforts to aestheticize politics culminate in one point. That one point is war.”

¹ Walter Benjamin, “One Way Street” in Peter Demetz, *Reflections: essays, aphorisms, autobiographical writing*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 93

² Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public sphere and experience: toward an analysis of the bourgeois and proletarian public sphere*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 9

³ Walter Benjamin, “One Way Street” in Peter Demetz, *Reflections: essays, aphorisms, autobiographical writing*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 76

⁴ Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence” in Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 292

⁵ Siegfried Kracauer, “The mass ornament” in Siegfried Kracauer and Thomas Y. Levin, *The mass ornament: Weimar essays*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1995, p. 77-78

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., p. 79

⁸ Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public sphere and experience: toward an analysis of the bourgeois and proletarian public sphere*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 3

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 4

¹¹ Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence” in Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 287

¹² Walter Benjamin and Rolf Tiedemann, *The Arcades Project*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2002, p. 220

¹³ Eyal Weisman, “Political Plastic” in Ed Mackay, *Collapse: Volume VI: Geol/Philosophy*, Urbanomic, Falmouth, UK, 2010, p. 258

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 261

¹⁵ Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public sphere and experience: toward an analysis of the bourgeois and proletarian public sphere*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 32

¹⁶ Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, Continuum, London, 2004, p. 9

¹⁷ Walter Benjamin, “The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility” in Walter Benjamin, Michael W. Jennings and Brigid Doherty, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, And Other Writings on Media*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2008, p. 121-122. The earlier version of the essay is Walter Benjamin, “The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction” in Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986, p. 242

MICHAEL WOODS

from From Empty Streets at Dawn in Mostly Broken Glass
and Burnt Things: a record of the G20 in Toronto, 23-27
June 2010

SUNDAY

Good morning, Toronto. Yonge and College has seen better days, but Fran’s is always open, with small groups enjoying greasy breakfasts, even though someone threw a ketchup bottle through the window. All quiet at Dundas Square, on Queen’s Quay. Feels like a regular Sunday, with some extra police around. Streetcars ran on Spadina, we’re looking into other lines and for traffic updates in general. Much Union Station and Go service cancelled, Lakeshore eastbound and westbound routes scheduled to go with first departures at ten in the morning. Toronto Transit commission still unsure what time Yonge-University-Spadina subways would be fully operational, depends what police say, they say. Sleep in today, Toronto.

Out into the radiant city curious to see what it looks like this morning, a hazy Queen Street sunshine dominated by street cleaners, cyclists, people boarding up windows and police, transit workers taping up cracked glass on Queen’s Park station and the CIBC at Bay and College all boarded up from some of the worst damage yesterday. Workers scrub graffiti off First Canadian Place, not as much damage along Yonge and Queen remaining from the previous night’s mayhem as expected. Crews near Spadina cleaning since two in the morning, a few people up and down Yonge took photos of the damage seeming unable to fathom why it happened, where were all the police, the protesters marched by my shop but the police only cared about protecting the security fence. A security guard at one of the boarded-up banks will be glad when this is over, he says.

Looking for a coffee shop but hey guess what, no Starbucks open downtown. Tim Horton’s announces closure of all downtown locations til Monday. The

Dark Horse Espresso Bar had a customer inside reading a newspaper and turning to his server said hey we made page eight of the *New York Times*. Nice to see streetcars and streetsweepers running on Queen again, on Spadina and Dundas. Then they announced normal subway, streetcar and bus service were to be in operation today, with normal Sunday hours, including in the downtown core.

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso told a briefing the G20 will probably agree to adopt specific austerity targets along the lines of what Prime Minister Harper proposed last week, while Canadian summit officials said the stakes could not be higher and stressed that the summit was a unique opportunity to keep the recovery on track.

Leaders were not to make explicit reference to China or its exchange rate in the statement they were to issue at the end of their meeting that day, two sources familiar with the document said. They were trying to come up with an agreement on fiscal belt-tightening that had the right balance between sending a clear message to markets that they are serious about cutting deficits and debt and keeping the global economy from backsliding into another downturn.

They were also to discuss a host of contentious issues ranging from financial-sector reform to how best to narrow global trade imbalances and how to increase the influence of emerging-market economies at institutions such as the International Monetary Fund. However, in large part because of the European crisis and the market volatility it fueled, debate in the past week or so centred around the urgent problem of how to make up for massive budget shortfalls at a time when so many economies in the worldwide rebound remained fragile.

Nearly five hundred arrested available in pix and recap. Eyewitnesses say protesters emerged from a manhole on Queen in the early morning.

Batons out, police search bushes and trash cans around university building near Russell and Spadina by two police buses and more than ten mostly

unmarked minivans, at least two in handcuffs and more than fifty arrested with a large number of items that could be used to compromise citizen safety, a spokesperson said. Unlikely those arrested are students, speculate they may be protesters who billeted in residence, another constable said it was the biggest series of arrests yet, another arrested man with a shaved head and green flipflops sits on sidewalk in handcuffs as police mill about.

At ten twenty, a group of about twenty officers has about eleven late teens to early twenties mostly wearing jeans and tshirts standing against the wall of World's Biggest Bookstore with hands up and belongings splayed across the sidewalk. A dozen vans drive up carrying more officers including a court services van and they're all going in, one officer says, all of them. Items seized include black clothing, bricks, sharpened sticks, bats, water bottles containing fluid, a two-litre juice container and various beverage cartons. Items you did not need for a weekend in Toronto, the constable said.

A group of kids just walking eastbound not doing anything when three vans follow them, officers jump out and grab them by their shoulders and move them against the wall, kind of scary. Officers at the scene declined to comment on why the people were being detained, but one said we did not know what kind of substances were on them.

Prime Minister Harper stood with President Obama at the opening plenary session. Leaders were to pledge to phase out subsidies for inefficient fossil fuels that encouraged wasteful consumption, taking into account vulnerable groups and their development needs in a statement, toughened at the last minute at the urging of the United States, said sources, who provided the language to Reuters news service. British Prime Minister David Cameron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel watched the World Cup match between England and Germany. Germany beat England, four to one.

About a hundred standing outside the gate of the Eastern Avenue centre when at least two vans pull up and out jump what appear to be officers in plain clothes and arrest a few, others start fighting back and a stand-off ensues, a kid blows bubbles as megaphone man leads two-person shame chant at a coach bus of officers in riot gear that pulls up and loads more suspects into a second bus. One woman in handcuffs shouts in French they arrested everybody, and a man led into the bus in handcuffs says protesters were hit by officers brandishing tasers.

Police report five hundred sixty-two people had been arrested since June eighteenth, of which two hundred twenty-four since six in the morning. A high volume of detainees were being processed, the most common charges being breach of peace, obstruction of police, assault, assault of a police officer, causing a disturbance, inciting riot, mischief and participating in an unlawful assembly. A network spokesperson says protesters picked up by police were denied right to timely access to counsel, minimal food, often held six to eight in a cell for several hours, and police have completely lost control, suspended law and order, paid no attention to rights of those in the detention centre.

Cyclists arrive for a sit-in on the road outside the detention centre chanting we will go if you come with us and handing out jujubes and cashews. A lawyer says from what I can tell the police are somewhat overwhelmed at the facility and optimistic a lot are to be released real soon. Both sides hold ground despite final warning to move back on Pape and clear the avenue and then we will continue to release detainees against chanting a billion dollars and where's your microphone, but they move back a bit and cops stand down to strains of the death star theme brought courtesy of the throng.

A steady stream come out saying they were detained for breach of peace in front of the Novotel and moved through three cells, the first for processing and that was a decent size, the second was smaller, and the third was crammed with six people and uneven floors. People were banging on cages.

At the closing press conference, leaders confirmed important progress in addressing the global economic crisis, and country was to be able to determine and apply a bank tax, if necessary. Other measures discussed included anti-protectionism and a continued role for ongoing stimulus spending in the short term. There were important agreements on a number of other measures, including debt relief for Haiti and reform for financial institutions. Agreements on issues including deficit reduction proved diverse nations could bridge their differences and coordinate their approaches. The summit's headline agreement being a pledge by world leaders to cut government deficits in half in most industrialized nations by the year twenty thirteen.

Both 504 King and 510 Spadina on diversion, no service on the 501 Queen between Roncesvalles and Church due to singing get the police out get out of Parkdale to cop activity setting up bike barricades for arrests around convergence space and cutting off all traffic west of Dufferin, no exit at all that I can see, mild panic with cops stopping two guys with knapsacks, this is truly not feeling good.

Tactical vans and cops leave Parkdale for tense Queen and Spadina with reports police roll out a sound cannon and arrest a CTV cameraman. Things just get nuts. Civilians not allowed out. People with suitcases going home get stuck, too. Pushing has begun, they are squeezing us between two rows. People start to panic. Police keep saying move and push us into smaller areas. No one has been half as provocative as yesterday. a woman was grocery shopping when she got caught. A down-at-the-heels guy gets shoved and scared by riot cops and a woman walking dog yells at cops to go easy. Crushed in small space now. Elderly people too.

Police put on helmets, warn journalists they are ready to use tear gas and rubber bullets, have a group hemmed in at the intersection. A large number of arrests are being made at the scene. Police have short fuses and are taking no chances today. Cops everywhere on northeast corner displacing spectators and on top of the CIBC building, all perched up there looking ominous over crowd singing O Canada at the riot line, and they suddenly charge, everyone running back

and bikes falling everywhere, they grab two and say they could have everyone in thirty minutes, no smiles, seriously scared, all of us are, just hanging in there. Wikipedia entry on kettling says we could be here several hours.

Spectators outside police line can't see what's going on but aerial footage shows intersection absolutely packed chanting this is what a police state looks like as officers direct them east and north, hemmed in on all four sides and everybody really on edge like three days of this really wearing on cops and crowd and everyone. Media get escorted out of the area and now thunder and rain, argh. Police saying everyone should have left when they were told to but truthfully they did not announce they would pen us in, I see a paddy wagon, all just anecdotes for the moment as cops aggressively moving everyone all the way east to Beverly.

Power out in Leslieville due to the nasty storm. Rain largely disperses crowds. Footage showed very few people left. Standing in the rain in a parking lot of out-of-service Beck Taxis while trying to call a cab, oh life. Rain pouring buckets, don't know how protest is still going but not sure I want to venture outside. Began with a quake, ends with a flood. The summit has been positively biblical. Subway trains bypassing Union due to flooding, advise using St. Andrew or King.

Everyone outside kept far back and the only way out is getting arrested and catted onto court vans on whose streets our streets. Really hope everyone does not just forget about this once the crowds have gone. Holding up tarps six inches within plenty of people with no food water shelter and I've had to pee for the last five hours and now lines being led into court services Vehicles wearing plastic handcuffs.

Then the hours-long standoff comes to an end as police just let the crowd go and unconditionally release everyone with no charges, letting protesters and bystanders go into the night, after hours of gradual removals and detainings, soaking in the rain.

Police spokespersons say they thought people crowd were Black Bloc so they held everyone in rain, say weapons were found along the route while following

the crowd, cannot specify what weapons were but boxing in was necessary, rain caused the risk of breach of peace to dissipate but what we thought we saw was similar to yesterday's acts of vandalism, our reaction is always a balanced and measured reaction to what we see and here we did the best we could, not saying we're perfect, what was done happened with the intent of providing for the safety of citizens, we had people donning masks in that group of bystanders and media were involved in a group that was deemed at the time to be involved in a breach of the peace, then he corrects himself, the people donning masks were charged, but not sure what charges or how many of them, we had people donning masks in that very group, these are split-second decisions our officers have to make, penning people in.

Retweets already referring to Novotel like a famous incident and recounting details of detention centre and police cages, cops charging protesters at Queen's Park Saturday afternoon, the mass arrests at the hotel and outside the Eastern Avenue detention centre late Saturday night and Sunday morning, and the hemming-in of two hundred people for hours in the pouring rain Sunday evening. A five-metre rule that never existed, though it was enforced. Piles of twisted bicycles. Displays of police seizures that show darts with flammable cloth on the end of them, gas masks, baseball bats and machetes, a replica gun, a suit of chain mail, handsaws, staple guns, bear spray, holsters, Canadian Tire plastic bottles, golf balls, a lemon juice container, a bottle of clear liquid, skateboard helmets and pads, several makeshift clubs.

Prime Minister Harper says the thugs justify the summit's billion dollar security tag. A spokesperson of the Integrated Security Unit offered no details on why police appeared to allow violent protesters smash windows and burn police cruisers on Saturday yet cracked down on apparently peaceful protests held on Sunday, holding bystanders and protesters for more than three hours in the rain without indication when or whether they would be allowed to leave. She says it depended on what circumstances were being faced at the time.

—compiled by Michael Woods for BookThug, 2010

GRUPO DE ARTE CALLEJERO

from Thoughts, Practices, and Actions

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far...

Police forces in Argentina have always participated actively in political repression. A phrase that was used frequently during the 1990s notes this relation: "The apple doesn't fall far...: it's not one cop, it's the whole institution."

The role of the police before and after the coup d'état of 1976 demonstrates this. Captain Alberto Villar, chief of the Federal Police, was one of the founders, in 1974, of the para-police organization, the Triple A (Anticommunist Argentinean Alliance), under the political leadership of José López Rega, the Minister of Social Welfare from the Peronist government. In 1968, the journalist and writer Rodolfo Walsh described the police of the Province of Buenos Aires as the "sect of the trigger and cattle prod."

In the investigation that gave rise to his book *Operation Massacre*, Walsh reconstructed the events of June 9 and 10, 1956, when eleven workers were kidnapped and transferred to a garbage dump in José León Suárez, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, where they were executed by the police under the dictatorial government lead by General Pedro Aramburu. Several years before, captain Ramón Falcón had gained fame by crushing workers and anarchists' demonstrations in the first decades of the twentieth century. Still loyal to this tradition, the local and federal police of Argentina continue to be even today in the democratic period instruments of social disciplining and a tool of a state politics that advocates for "zero tolerance policies." According to the documents and archives from the Coordinating Committee Against Political and Institutional Repression (Coordinadora contra la Represión

Policial e Institucional, or CORREPI), between 1983 and 2007, more than 2400 fatalities from police brutality were registered in Argentina.

Trigger Happy

This euphemism is used to name a police action that results in the death of those detained or involved in massive police operations ("razzias" or "raids"). The CORREPI typologizes these as summary executions performed by the police which, in general, are covered up with verbiage like "a confrontation occurred." This extra-legal death penalty has two moments: the execution and the cover-up.

Once the victim is shot in a pseudo-confrontation, a mechanism of complicity begins to operate which includes the planting of arms, scrubbing of corpses, and the blaming of the victim, who is immediately described as a "delinquent with an extensive criminal record." To this is added the collaboration or inefficiency of judicial experts and judges who allow the manipulation of evidence, resulting in an investigation against the victim. "There is objective data," according to a report from CORREPI,

that reveal as implausible the alleged and repeated version of this 'confrontation.' The disproportionate tally between civil and police deaths leads to two possible conclusions: either our police have the best aim in the universe or they are the only ones who are shooting.... The almost nonexistence of civil survivors in these so-called shootings shows that the police shoot to kill.... In a large number of cases, it is the police themselves who admit to 'accidents'... it is noteworthy that the bullets strike the temple, the nape of the neck, or the back.¹

During the early nineties, neighborhood groups and organizations were created in order to fight back against illegal police actions and to demand legal transparency. These groups were mainly organized by territory, in

neighborhoods or communities, where there were a high number of family members and friends of victims. These organizations denounced “trigger happy” cases and also the incidences of torture that take place in police stations.

The first organization was created after the Budge Massacre to demand justice for three young people who were riddled with bullets by the police of Buenos Aires on May 8, 1987. However, it was after the mobilization for the crime against Agustín Ramírez, which took place in San Francisco Solano in 1988, and after the repercussions of the case of Walter Bulacio, who died after being arrested by the Federal Police on April 19, 1991, that the magnitude of these systematic crimes committed by police forces after the transition to democracy was revealed to the public.

The issue is not that these are isolated actions by a few violent police officers, but rather a state policy, as demonstrated by the repetition of the “modus operandi” and the profiles of the people persecuted, tortured, and killed by security forces, persons who always come from the poorest social strata and are generally young people or immigrants from neighboring countries.

Human rights organizations which were created to denounce the crimes perpetrated by the last military dictatorship are also now incorporating demands for justice for “trigger happy” cases into their activities and discourses. In this way, H.I.J.O.S and the Mesa de Escache Popular are working to investigate the links between the repressive practices of the dictatorship and current state violence.²

Visual Poem

In the GAC, we carried out several actions related to “trigger happy” brutality and police repression. On the one hand, we made the “anti-repression visual poem” from words composed in affirmative verb tenses which referred to

actions carried out by security forces. It was constructed so as to be placed on stairs where a person could then read it going up the stairs, replicating the marketing strategy used in subways.

In order to create the visual poem in 2002, we met with unemployed workers’ movements from the Coordinating Committee in the Zona Sur, with organizations of family members of victims of “trigger happy” brutality, and with CORREPI for two months. During these meetings, we dealt with the testimonies of family members, who were denouncing the relationship between what happens in the neighborhoods and its connections to local power structures, in order to understand why security forces operate in a mafia-like manner. We also learned about the racism and xenophobia that characterizes our society, even though we rarely speak about it.

The visual poem was used in the stairways of train and subway stations, buildings and public institutions, placing each sentence on a step:

SECURITY?

IT WATCHES YOU

IT CONTROLS YOU

IT INTIMIDATES YOU

IT REPRESSES YOU

IT DETAINS YOU

IT TORTURES YOU

IT MURDERS YOU

POLICE-ARMY-NATIONAL GUARD

This text was used in different public spaces in which “trigger happy” or repression cases were denounced: at the march for the anniversary of la Noche de los Lápices, in the courts of La Plata, in the staircase of the Congress, in the Piquete Urbano, and in the remembrance activities for December 19 and 20, 2001.



In fact, the use of this vehemently affirmative word—security—was influenced by the police repression on December 20th, which is still very present among us. The murders of Maximiliano Kosteki and Darío Santillán, which took place on June 26, 2002, on the Pueyrredón Bridge, were also decisive for our determination. It was difficult for us to use images as metaphors due to the explicit evidence of the facts. For this reason, we use direct action verbs in the “visual poem,” because there is no place for poetry when the evidence is so compelling and the behavior of politicians and security forces allow no possibility for dialogue; as miserable liars, they demand instead the most vigorous denunciation.

Posters and Fliers on Billboards

In a similar fashion, we created the poster “The apple doesn’t fall far...” which uses a common expression. The acceleration of social events made it necessary to intensify our actions as well: the most repressive crackdowns in recent years, were met with forceful mobilizations by people working with social movements, united in coordinating committees for struggle and rebellion.

On June 27, 2002, one day after the murder of the two *piqueteros*, more than twenty thousand people marched in the cold rain from the Pueyrredón Bridge to the Plaza de Mayo, a long walk during which many more people joined in, to repudiate the repression led by the then-President Eduardo Duhalde. For this march, we made fliers that said “Don’t Feed the Animals,” which we placed on the fences separating the police from the people in the Plaza de Mayo.

It was only a few weeks after those murders that the first *escrache* was carried out at the police station of Avellaneda, the place from which the police officers who shot Maxi y Darío had departed. That day we took all the images that we had on hand to that space, exposing the murders as a set up. The images were carried and placed by the *compañeros* of the MTD, friends, and family members of the murdered *piqueteros*. We participated only as demonstrators without any kind of activity, like spectators. They had appropriated our tools.

In October 2002, an homage was organized at the Lanús station to pay tribute to Carlos “Petete” Almirón, one of the young people killed on December 20, 2001, who at the time, was a militant in CORREPI and in the Teresa Rodríguez Movement. Maxi and Darío, militants from MTD Guernica and MTD Lanús respectively, were also remembered with this act. Our purpose was to point out what had happened, through the march and the images or actions of different groups. We worked with the “visual anti-repression poem” on the doors of the Lanús town hall and later marched towards the station. During those days, the Federal Police guarded the subway stations with dogs, while the armed police were in charge of the train stations and platforms, especially the lines that went to the southern zone, which were the means of transportation most frequently used by people who participated in social movements. While we were trying to place the visual poem in the Lanús station, we found *ourselves* surrounded by armed police and were isolated for an instant, as the rest of the people who were participating in the demonstrations were concentrated outside the platforms. However, as soon as they realized the danger, our *compañeros* appeared and blocked the way

between the armed police and those of us who were writing the poem. In a matter of seconds we passed from fear and desperation to feeling safe and protected, while hundreds of people sang: “Paint, paint *compañera*, do not stop painting because all the walls are the popular press...”

During 2002 and part of 2003, we went out to the streets several times a week, in a joint struggle with different groups and urban movements, where the questions from the images were replicated and multiplied, although that did not prevent the appearance of difficulties in their production, forcing us to deepen their complexity and nuance. It was for this reason that we intensified our work with some of the Un-Occupied Workers Movements, building workshops for communication and visual production, with the idea of making widely available these kinds of tools. These were moments of endless and massive creation, because of the responsibility we felt to respond quickly to the situation, beginning with a large demand that gave us a desire to create a kind of stockpile of images ready to be used by all of the collectives that we were meeting along the way. There were a lot of groups building with *us*, and the dialogue was frequent. During these months something remarkable happened: the discourse of “insecurity” disappeared as the repression started to respond to the parameters imposed by the social and political conflict.

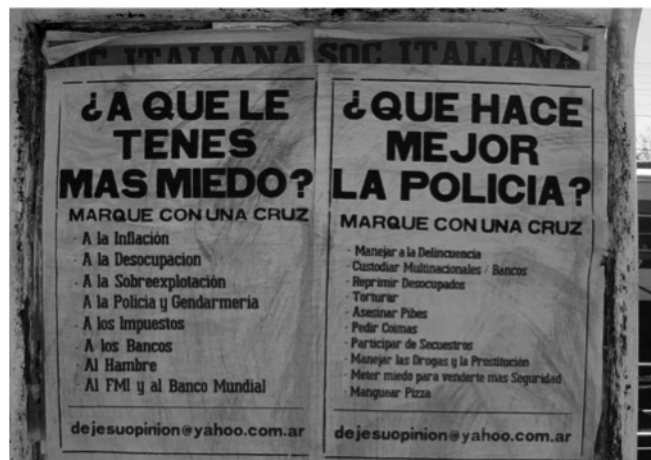
In 2004, we began working with Anti-repression Coordinating Committee from the West Zone (*Coordinadora Antirrepresiva de Zona Oeste*), to participate in the mobilization around “trigger happy” cases and also to condemn the abuse by bouncers at bars where young people go to dance, as well as some incidents with young neo-Nazis. The idea we shared was to prepare a street intervention to appeal to the neighbors in the area, using questions as a communication tool. The action was aimed at passers-by and was not intended to impose a closed discourse, but to generate discussion instead. The questions were written on tabloid-sized posters, with a popular graphic style, in order to attract attention but blend in at the same time with the regular advertising landscape. Breaking with the traditional political poster schema, our intention was to pass unnoticed before the eyes of political militants, in

order to draw instead the attention of a different public, one more temporary and heterogeneous. The posters were posted next to train tracks, from Haedo station to Morón, for which we separated into two different groups that worked at the same time along either side of the tracks.

Our intention was to explore the contradictions of popular common sense, appealing to a certain complicity in statements that we all use, like “The police are corrupt and stupid” or “It’s linked to the kidnappings” and trying to show how these statements are linked to another kind, more related to the media but also widespread, such as “We need more security,” therefore “We ask for more police in the streets” so that “They protect us from thieves.” How can someone intervene in this disconnection in collective reasoning? We tried out several questions: “What do the police do best?” “What do you fear more?” as a way to share our own concerns. Starting from the common need to feel protected and safe, we asked ourselves: Where does this fear come from? And if it is real, who can we ask for help or not? Questioning oneself is perhaps the best way to reflect in a context of generalized panic in which everyone is suspicious, and fear becomes a daily experience, as if it was hiding in every corner, while the police gain the support of neighbors, increasing their ability to act with impunity and impose greater control. Faced with the perplexity of a difficult period, where *cacerolazos* (massive pot-banging marches) spread through different neighborhoods to demand more police presence on the streets, when neighbors partnered with the Federal Police to design safe “passages” to be used by children on their way to school, it is necessary to keep raising questions, even if we do not have answers for them.

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST FEAR? is a question that aims to displace the socially accumulated paranoia without negating it, seeking instead to unveil other qualities that fears and trauma presuppose. There are people who are aware of their fragility and yet have no need to blame someone or label someone as dangerous. In order to confront the ideology of security, we felt we had to take seriously the common sense found in the not-at-all obvious answers of passersby.

WHAT DO POLICE DO BEST? is a positive question that opens up to all kinds of abominable questions.



The Cockroaches of Normalization

After the irruptions of 2001, the capacity to generate movement began to decrease, and a tendency towards normalization was imposed, along with the resurgence of a strong need for security accompanied by the enclosure of individuals into a pacified daily routine. This withdrawal from social energy found its referent in the figure of the “engineer” Blumberg, a neighbor from the north side of Buenos Aires whose son was first kidnapped and then murdered on March 23, 2004 by a group of kidnappers who were later apprehended. The demands of the middle class against the “wave of insecurity” started to reemerge with more strength than ever after this event, and several squares were packed with people demanding stiffer penalties for delinquents. They lit candles and sang the national anthem over and over. The media was a privileged representative of the desire for a “peaceful life,” legitimizing these internal politics of insecurity, in which the enemy forms a part of society and has to be eradicated from it.

What can we do? Do we collaborate in this public construction? Is it possible to break with this logic? Surely it is possible to intervene in this chain of representations, but it is a very arduous and solitary work. In order to question the images in the media, we thought about working with stencils on the walls of the city. We drew cockroaches, climbing the walls, with the faces of politicians and journalists: Mariano Grondona, Bernardo Neustadt, Daniel Hadad, Carlos Menem, Eduardo Duhalde. It was a simple technique that could be reproduced easily, using irony and a doubled discourse, with the goal of turning inside out the sentiment that was circulating: “They are the insecurity.” This image was used in the capital and in the suburbs.



There are times when it is essential to feel one’s own body, even when that body seems to have been annulled, withdrawn, in truth, it is never completely extinguished. It is our common body where the immediate memory of that situation of social *potencia* is lodged, that moment which was experienced by all of us in December 2001. It is not simply an illusion, but rather something verifiable by facts, even if it appears fleeting and diffused, in the form of spontaneous responses, in explosions that destroy police stations, set buses on fire, a resounding force that forgets fear and disarms the discourse of security.

¹ Information obtained from the article by Diego Manuel Vidal on the site *Al Margen*: <<http://www.almargen.com.ar/sitio/seccion/actualidad/policias/index.html>>.

² cf. Brian Whitener, ed., *Genocide in the Neighborhood*, by Colectivo Situaciones, translated by Whitener, Daniel Borzutzky & Fernando Fuentes, Chain/Links, Oakland/Philadelphia, 2010 trans.

LUCKY PIERRE

Actions for Chicago Torture Justice

1. Think about torture. Create an action to address torture. Use facts. Use metaphor. You can even use humor. Be as general or as specific as you'd like. Write the action down. Think about performing the action. Complete the action.

101. Forget to die. Repeat and live forever.

102. Slap someone on the back daily. Tell them they are doing a great job.

103. Do something spiritual, such as gathering all the symbols of violence in your home and assembling them on a table. Cover them with a sheet or blanket for, like, 48-hours. Introduce a few candles for an added touch - but don't overdo it.

104. Present an oversized novelty check to the police commissioner of your hometown. Have the event professionally photographed. No, don't do that.

105. Ask a cop if he or she empathizes with Jon Burge. Regardless of the answer, have a civilized discussion but use the word "nigger" to check their reaction. Pay attention to tone.

106. Do a straight-up/old-school Google search for "jon burge."

107. Do not spray Clorox® "Clean-Up Cleaner with Bleach" in anybody's face. This goes for animals too.

108. Let your life speak.

109. Find a stray kitty. Take the kitten home and suffocate it with a plastic bag.

110. Stand in front of City Hall at 121 North LaSalle St. in Chicago. Present an over-sized novelty check in the amount of \$1,278.27 to every person who walks by and ask them if in accepting the check they will permit you to beat them so badly that they involuntarily urinate and defecate on themselves. Keep track of how many people would accept this as a fair deal, and how many would reject this as an unfair deal. Bring these numbers inside to the Law Division in Suite 600 and share your findings.

111. Instead of using the phrase "OMG, that would be torture!" swap the word "torture" for any of these phrases: "OMG, that would be.....like attaching a car battery to my genitals! ... like when 'they' accidentally took it too far and killed me (on accident) and then dumped my weighted and deconstructed body into the ocean! ...like having some policemen rape my asshole with varied household objects and then try to out-do each other by finding a new largest thing they can fit in there."

112. For one day only use one foot. Hop where you need to go or whatever. Crawl if you like. And the end of the day, consider whether you even need that foot anyhow.

113. Watch every episode of the television show 24. When you've finished, ask yourself whether you feel a little more scared of something you hadn't previously been scared of, and a little more ok with pre-emptive tactics. Then high-five Kiefer Sutherland.

114. Using your right hand, restrain and otherwise attempt to make your left hand do whatever your right hand wants it to do. Chain your legs down if they interfere, and punch the shit out of your knees if they act up too. And the goddamn neck, it's a troublemaker too. Probably, you should

do something about it. Maybe wedge a knife in the kitchen drawer so it's sticking out then hold your neck up to it and try to get it to tell you what the brain is thinking, because if it got ahold of the wrong information we might have a serious shit storm over here and none of us wants that so just tell me what the hell it is thinking!

115. Cringe before power.

116. Get a handheld cordless drill. Find a Whack-a-Mole machine. Put a quarter in. Grab the first little bastard that pops up and drill holes in it until it tells you when those other little bastards are going to come out of their holes 'cause they're pussies 'cause they are hiding.

117. Get some candy. Find a little kid. Make up some crazy shit for the kid to say. Tell the kid you'll give them the candy if they say the crazy shit. I bet you they'll say the crazy shit.

118. Devise ways in which applying a cattle prod to your genitals and/or anus might be done in a comforting manner.

119. Talk about this torture often and as much as possible.

120. Take a photograph of something you love. Enclose it in a letter to someone on the inside. Ask them what they want you to photograph next. Send the photograph to them.

121. Imagine a world without cages and borders. Make it happen.

122. Be lost.

123. Read everything.

124. Learn about Jaradat Arafat who was tortured to death in an Israeli

prison. Learn that he died on February 23, 2013. Read the Israeli Army reports of his dying of cardiac arrest. Read the autopsy that revealed that Jaradat Arafat "had been pummeled by repeated blows to his chest and body and had sustained a total of six broken bones in his spine, arms and legs; his lips lacerated; his face badly bruised."

125. Tear the sky down.

126. Free Demond Weston.

127. Go to where it happened. Fill the room with concrete. Make it solid.

128. Never love.

129. Wash your hands.

130. Withdraw.

131. Wrap your lips around the nearest set of bones; alternate between blowing them kisses and gnawing to the marrow.

132. See the potential torturer inside all of us.

133. Recreate the torture scene from the remake of *Casino Royale*. Work out until you look as sexy as possible. Think about your lighting. Change the Daniel Craig/James Bond line from: "Now everyone will know you died scratching my balls" to: "I'm sorry. I'm so so sorry. Please. I am so sorry." Try not to throw up.

134. Cut off all your hair. Do it by yourself or have your mom do it for you. Get a tattoo on top of your head. Make your hair grow back only between the lines.

135. Make friends, fake being happy, be alone in your mind. Always.

136. Wait for something.

137. Build a prototype for how things could be.

138. Buy a monkey. Train it.

139. You're traveling deep space when your partner and only companion in this cold, dark place turns to you, quietly and with a look of love in their eyes, raises their hand high above your head, then brings down their fist so fast and hard that you don't even realize your space helmet has been cracked until you start to feel your eyeballs exploding from the pressure.

140. Send the following in an e-mail to the president of the USA. "There are those who believe you are deeply racist, and there are those who believe you could not possibly have tortured suspects. I doubt that my opinion of what happens there will change anyone's views. You are the person you are, neither all good, nor all evil, just like the rest of us."

141. Do not use shipping containers as interrogation cells. Do not use ice water to lower the body temperature of prisoner. Do not take prisoner's rectal temperature to ensure keeping him just hovering at hypothermia.

142. Give one-eighth of the energy to finding justice for Chicago torture victims that you've given to responding to status updates about Pussy Riot.

143. Explain to Chicago police officers accused of torture that there is neither God nor Jesus, and that sins will not be forgiven. Explain that to everyone.

144. Talk about Ecuador's recent history of torturing lesbians as "reparative therapy."

145. Raid, invade, interject, obstruct, occupy.

146. Coil and uncoil. Coil and uncoil. Coil.

147. Plant a seed. Eat whatever grows. Taste Chicago. Eat more.

148. Make an ironic t-shirt about Chicago torture. Feel bad when you wear it; but wear it nonetheless, and note what is beyond irony.

149. Don't let them sleep, or eat. Confuse their time schedule. Beat them. Let dogs loose in the room. Strip them naked and make sexual innuendo. Make them fear rape. Make them fear other sexual violations. Make them fear various other things.

150. Imagine new institutions for social services and support. Get to work.

Actions for Chicago Torture Justice is an accumulating archive of actions created by both Lucky Pierre and the public in response to the Chicago police torture cases. The torture, inflicted by the Chicago Police from 1972 to 1992, involved over 110 victims—all African Americans from Chicago's south side.

The piece is a part of The Chicago Torture Justice Memorial Project for speculative monument proposals to memorialize the Chicago police torture cases.

JONAS STAAL & VINCENT W.J. VAN GERVEN OEI

Monument for the Distribution of Wealth

A 2010 intervention at the June 16 Memorial Acre in Central Western Jabavu, Johannesburg. The monument had been designed to commemorate the anti-apartheid protests that resulted in the Soweto Massacre. On June 16, 1976, black students from a school adjacent to the park started a massive protest against the establishment of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in public schools. The police reacted violently, shooting and killing several hundreds of students.

The construction of the June 16 Memorial Acre began in 2005, and from the start was the paragon of corruption. Coordinated by local politicians, some family members of the 1976 protest leader gained control beyond the oversight of external institutions. The available budget of 41 million rand (at that time well over 5 million euro) was largely embezzled. In the meantime, the monument has become fully dilapidated and defaced. The park has become overgrown with weeds and covered in a layer of dirt. The local population is slowly plundering the square to use the material for the construction and decoration of their own houses.

The Monument for the Distribution of Wealth develops the dynamics already existent around the June 16 Memorial Acre. Without obtaining official permission in advance, several local inhabitants were hired to further break down the monument, sort the material and offer it to the neighborhood. Thus, the redistribution of wealth after the fall of the apartheid regime is finally taking place, albeit from the mere remains of the capital that was once invested in the community. The words “monument” and “for free” are spray-painted on the stacks of material, in both English and Zulu.

Writer Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei supplemented the public intervention with an account of the history of the monument, based on a series of interviews. The account clarifies how the different interests within the 1976 protest are reflected in the exceeding decay of the park, and how in the end those interests were represented by the June 16 Memorial Acre.

photos: Jonas Staal







A Fragmentary History of the Monument for the Distribution of Wealth, Formerly Known as the June 16 Memorial Acre in Central Western Jabavu, Soweto

The following text, based on interviews and online research, aims to provide parts of a history of the park in front of Morris Isaacson High School in Central Western Jabavu, Soweto. The idea for the transformation of the park into a memorial site has its source in the events of June 16, 1976: the start of the the student uprising in Soweto. The development of the park was started in the early 1980s, and the actual transformation into a memorial site, the June 16 Memorial Acre, was initiated in 2005. Over the last few years, several monumental additions have been made to the park: A marble monument with three pillars was revealed on June 16, 2006. A sculpture of a book and several billboards on June 16, 2008. A sculpture of student leader Tsietsi Mashinini on June 16, 2010. The park was transformed into the Monument for the Distribution of Wealth on August 3, 2010.

According to the entry “Youth Struggle” on the website South African History Online, the Bantu Education Act was introduced in **1953**. In **1954**, Dr Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, stated: “What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd.”

According to the entry “Soweto uprising” on Wikipedia, the Afrikaans Medium Decree was issued in **1974**, forcing all black schools to use Afrikaans and English in a 50-50 mix as languages of instruction. The Regional Director of Bantu Education (Northern Transvaal Region), J.G. Erasmus, told Circuit Inspectors and Principals of Schools that from January 1, **1975**, Afrikaans had to be used for mathematics, arithmetic, and social studies from standard five (7th grade). English would be the medium for general science and practical subjects. Indigenous languages would be used for religion instruction, music, and physical culture.

According to the entry “Soweto uprising” on Wikipedia, on **April 30, 1976**, students from the Orlando West Junior School in Soweto went on strike, refusing to go to school. Their example was followed by other schools in Soweto. A student from Morris Isaacson High School, Toboho “Tsietsi” Mashinini, proposed a meeting on **June 13, 1976** to discuss further action.

According to Weizmann Hamilton’s article “The Soweto Uprising 1976,” which appeared in the September 1986 edition of *Inqaba Ya Basebenzi* (Fortress of the Revolution), on **June 13, 1976**, the South African Students’ Movement called a meeting at the Donaldson Community Center in Orlando. 300-400 Students representing 55 schools decided to hold a mass demonstration on June 16.

According to Brian Mokhele, member of the Joint Community Safety Forum, Dr Edelstein was the first victim of the Soweto uprising and killed the day before the march on **June 15, 1976**. Edelstein was an administrator at the pass office in Jabavu and gave golf courses to the local community. Edelstein was put in a garbage bin and pierced by pickaxes. The garbage bin was left at the very spot of the murder for many years. A few years ago, a child was beheaded at the same spot, and the basketball court next to it has been abandoned since.

According to Marcus Neustetter, founder of the Trinity Session, this story is untrue.

According to the entry “Soweto uprising” on Wikipedia, on **June 16**, Tsietsi Mashinini led students from Morris Isaacson High School to join up with others who walked from Naledi High School. A crowd of between 3,000 and 10,000 eventually ended up near Orlando High School.

According to Raymond Marlowe, a local photographer, Tsietsi Mashinini was heading the march.

According to the entry “Hector Pieterse” on Wikipedia, Dr Edelstein died on **June 16, 1976**, stoned to death by a mob and left with a sign around his neck proclaiming “Beware Afrikaaners.” The first child to die that day was called Hastings Ndlovu.

According to Pat Motsiri, Orlando West is claiming struggle heritage through the Hector Pieterse Museum, while Hector Pieterse was from Jabavu.

According to Pat Motsiri, his generation effectively struggled between 1980 and 1991, forcing the release of Nelson Mandela and negotiations with the apartheid regime while the 1976-generation was safely in exile. Nevertheless, this has not been recognized in any monument. After the abolition of apartheid, the generation from 1976 returned from exile, occupied important government and ANC positions, creating an abundance of 1976 memorials and refusing to acknowledge that this was only possible because of the younger generation’s struggle. He calls this a generational conflict.

According to Archibald Dlamini, the park officer responsible for the Memorial Acre, he started working for the municipality in 1978. In **1981/82**, Isaac Makhele from Pimville, who used to work in the cemetery business, was the first developer of the park. It used to be just a normal park until City Parks decided to develop the Memorial Acre in 2006. In 2007 the work was stopped by the community.

According to Brian Mokhele, he left the country in **1989** after he participated in the riots of 1986. But when he returned in 1999 he found that nothing had changed. He says that they were promised to be protected by the Constitution, but that reality is different. The police uses fear to suppress them so that they don’t come out to talk openly. He has been arrested twice, both times harassed and tortured by the police, but in the end always released without indictment. He says that this is their way to threaten communities to back off from politics.

According to Moses, who is sitting outside rolling a joint, Brian knows everything. He tells Brian to tell me everything he knows.

According to Brian Mokhele, Tsietsi Mashinini was possibly murdered in **1990** during his exile in New York. Two weeks before he was supposed to return to South Africa, his papers in order, he was found dead under mysterious circumstances. His coffin was sealed when he was buried.

According to Pat Motsiri, he came up with the idea for the Memorial Acre in **2003**. He submitted the documents for the proposal to the council, which sidelined him as soon as the budget came out in **2005**.

According to Brian Mokhele, there was an estimation R 41,000,000 spent to redesign the park and turn it into the Memorial Acre. The millions were divided by Amos Masondo, the mayor of Soweto, the local councilor Bongani D. Zondi, and the director of the city of Johannesburg, Pat Lephunya. They were dividing the money between several contractors: Tsietsi Mashinini's brothers were involved in the development of the park, they got the tender to do the green areas, the landscaping. Construction was done by other companies, some did the paving, the toilets, etc. EMBA, a private company appointed by the municipality was in control of the money flow, but the money was quickly gone.

According to Raymond Marlowe, the contractor bought a BMW with the money.

According to Archibald Dlamini, the Mashinini brothers got the tender, so the space would look more like the other places around in Soweto. It was agreed that after they were done, they would return the property to the municipality. They did whatever they could do.

According to Mafaisa, a member of the Jabavu business community, he was one of the contractors for the landscaping and the pavement under Mpho

Mashinini, one of the brothers. He says that I should contact Mavi for information on Mpho.

According to Poi Stuurman, a local youth worker, Mafaisa is one of the guys who ran away with the money.

According to Mavi, Mpho Mashinini was never a contractor. The contracts were organized by Sbu Butelezi, the former head of the Gauteng Department for Public Works. The June 16 Foundation and the Mashinini brothers will be the beneficiaries of the park when it is finished.

According to Brian Mokhele, City Parks did not accept the Memorial Acre because it was not finished. The rest of the year, the unfinished park is not maintained, as should have happened. This was done deliberately so that in the end they can just clean the whole thing up and have a reason to redo the whole park.

According to Brian Mokhele, the Mashinini brothers now work for the government. People that manipulate for money purposes always come from the government's side. Because the park was left unfinished, the people from the neighborhood are taking away the stones to decorate their own homes with.

According to Archibald Dlamini, because City Parks doesn't accept responsibility of the park, he officially has nothing the guard, except for his cottage, which is municipal property. The thieves come at night and destroy the park, but he cannot do anything because he is sleeping.

According to the website of the Thanda Foundation on **June 16, 2006** a bronze statue of Hector Pieterse, the first child to die in the 1976 protests, made by Kobus Hattingh and Jacob Maponyane was unveiled in the Maponya Mall in Soweto. The statue is sculpted after the famous image shot by Sam Nzima of Mbuyisa Makhubo carrying the dead body of the

boy. The sculpture was sponsored by the Thanda Foundation, founded by the Swedish entrepreneur Dan Olofsson and South-African entrepreneur Matthews Phosa.

According to the official website of the City of Johannesburg, the Memorial Acre and Artwork were unveiled in 2006.

According to a blog post on sowetouprisings.com, the Memorial Acre was still under development on **July 24, 2006**.

According to Archibald Dlamini, City Parks only cleans up the park once a year just before the June 16 celebrations. Everybody is waiting for the Mashinini brothers to finish their job. The last time he talked with them was in **2007**.

According to a sign on the school grounds of the Morris Isaacson High School, the June 16 Trail will be finished in **2008**.

According to a blog post on sowetouprisings.com, the Memorial Acre contains another monument erected in Tsietsi's honor. The monument was created as part of the Sunday Times Heritage Public Art program. Its physical form resembles a giant book which symbolizes the crisis in education experienced in 1976. On the face of the book is the map of the route taken by the students from Morris Isaacson High School in Central Western Jabavu to Phefeni Junior Secondary in Orlando West (currently the site of the Hector Pieterse Museum), while the back cover of the 'book' is inscribed with a tribute to Tsietsi Mashinini. The monument was revealed on **June 16, 2008**.

According to Marcus Neustetter, the billboards on the Memorial Acre were part of a school project realized in 2008. Following several workshops, the students from different high schools along the June 16 Trail were invited to work with artists on the billboards, while the neighborhood community

was invited to watch the process during the festivities on **June 15 and 16, 2008**. The billboards were supposed to be removed because of construction works on the Memorial Acre, which never ended up happening.

According to Brian Mokhele, the former toilet facilities were converted into a house for the park officer. This park officer has been working for city parks for more than 12-15 years, but does nothing here, because the park, including the new toilet buildings, is not finished. The government is now moving around looking for people to take this job because they stopped it. They confronted everybody who was going in and chased them away.

According to John, in **2009**, some girls, around 16 or 17 years old, were raped by four men who had been drinking in a local shebeen. When the bar quit they said that they would go home by car, but instead raped the girls on the Memorial Acre nearby. This happened in the unfinished toilets, because the doors couldn't be closed.

According to Brian Mokhele, there used to be some fences around the park because of the construction work that was eventually stopped, but these were also stolen.

According to Archibald Dlamini, people from the neighborhood started stealing about two and a half years ago, and the last piece was stolen near the end of **2009**. Sometimes he would catch someone with a roll of fence, and then use it for his own cottage.

According to the official website of the City of Johannesburg, a statue of Tsietsi Mashinini by Johannes Pkhela was revealed on **June 16, 2010**, "Youth Day."

According to Shirley Makutoane, deputy principal of Isaac Morrison High School, the statue of Tsietsi Mashinini, funded by the June 16 Foundation, has temporarily been placed within the school perimeter. The statue will be moved to the Memorial Acre when it will be finished, in **2011**.

According to Brian Mokhele, beside the June 16 Foundation, there is also a June 16 Memorial Acre Foundation. Both foundations are quarreling about the money involved in the Memorial Acre project. Nobody knows who's involved in them.

According to Marcus Neustetter, the June 16 Foundation consists of people that were part of 1976 protest movement, local government officials, representatives of the Hector Pieterse Museum, and the council.

According to students from the Isaac Morison High School, the statue of Tsietshi Mashinini is on the school ground because on the Memorial Acre it would be vandalized by youths from White City, an adjacent neighborhood.

According to Brian Mokhele, the statue of Tsietshi should eventually be mounted on the Memorial Acre. It is wrong that the statue is in the school at the moment, because it is not a public school. He wants the statues to depict the massiveness of the force that was coming into Soweto after the protests.

According to Brian Mokhele, City Parks, City of Jo'burg, City Lights, and SAPS are making some sort of plan to take the plan back. They want to remove the trees from the Memorial Acre, and redesign the Memorial Acre into a relaxing park, without political content. They want to depoliticize the square. In doing so, they will have their own employment and not use local workforces.

According to Brian Mokhele, the community wants to remove the monuments, amphitheater, and sculptures from the Memorial Acre because they do not resemble anything. The sculptures should be depicting the truth of what happened, because the Memorial Acre is a political heritage site. He wants to involve the people that actually participated in the struggle to make the monument so that everyone can enjoy it and get a better understanding of the struggle heritage. Therefore, he proposes collective ideology in

which everyone has a say. This would prevent future vandalization of the monument.

According to Pat Motsiri, the sculptures must depict the events around June 16, 1976. Like the story of Dr Edelstein, who was pierced by pickaxes, forced into a garbage bin and burned alive.

According to Jonas Staal, the Memorial Acre should be destroyed, its elements stacked on pallets, thus forming the *Monument for the Distribution of Wealth*.

According to Mafaisa, his men can do the work quickly. He has about twenty men working under him.

EMMA COCKER

Experiments Along the Brink of I

1 — *How a city feels*

To conceive of a city in choreographic terms is less the imagining of it as a stage upon which to dance, but rather to apprehend it as a field of forces and intensities, as choreography. It is a weave or web of flows and rhythms, the live entanglement of relations between bodies and space. Attending to this choreography requires looking beyond what is habitually seen, becoming attuned to the permissions and conditions that determine the very nature of its interactions. Less concerned with the visual spectacle of how the city might appear as a dance of interlocking flows, focus must delve deeper, for invisible forces set the pace and pattern of interrelations within a specific space or site. More than mapping the traces of movements scored—the notation of existing trajectories across and through a given place—the choreography of the city must be registered in another key. Visible rhythms are merely watched from the stands, where what can be witnessed are only the effects of unknown forces, and not the forces themselves. To comprehend the true nature of a force requires that it is encountered and not just observed. This enquiry cannot be practiced at a distance or through mind alone. Beyond regarding how the rhythm of the city *looks*, the sentient body registers how it feels, by experiencing it close up, in the flesh. A body is a force among other forces, its course determined by its capacity to affect and be affected by other things. Affect is measured through the pulse of a body, according to how it moves and is moved. Choreography attends to these interdependencies, conceptualizing the city as the temporal unfolding of fluid and ever-changing relations.

2 — *Helmsman's knowledge*

Movement through any space is shaped as the desires of the individual body meet with the pressures of its surrounds; performed through the negotiation of different forces as the helmsman steers against the pressure of the water and the wind. At times, it seems that we are losing our grasp of helmsman's knowledge, our capacity to harness the momentum of forces that are outside of our control. Sometimes perhaps, we give in too soon, surrendering too quick and easily to the force of the situation in which we find ourselves. Too often, our bodies seem at the mercy of powers that cannot fully be discerned, our movements conform to the call of unspoken laws and a logic that we seem unable to resist. Here, the body is experienced only through the pressures acting upon it, seemingly unable to recognize its own internal force or agency, its capacity to withstand or tolerate as much as yield. Certain spaces push towards specific kinds of performance, direct a body to behave in a fixed or scripted way. The possibilities of what a body *could do* shrink to fit the template of expectation; options narrow to the standards of a pre-set score, where the individual body can express itself only through the slightest embellishment of the norm. Over time, our navigation of a space congeals towards a set pattern of routinized gestures, as day-after-day we dutifully repeat and repeat our chosen groove, rarely missing a beat. Pattern sediments towards protocol, an unspoken rulebook that tacitly moderates the limits of what is allowed. It is tempting to imagine that rules are drawn from elsewhere, laws cooked-up by faceless government hooked on curbing the enthusiasm of our wayward desires. And yet we author and enforce the limitations that determine how we live our lives; our complicity and obedience maintains their authority, strengthens their hold. Then, to be more discerning, for any rule is good only as long as it protects and affirms life, failing if it only curtails or constrains.

So pay heed, for it is through our bodies that we might differentiate the rule of friend from foe. A body is an instrument capable of attending to and measuring the nature of both its own force, and the affect of other forces. Yet this skill must be practiced daily, without which it becomes lost or lapsed. On occasion, individual bodies might need to be re-attuned to the true nature of the affections. At times, we too readily forfeit or forgo our agency as affective beings, as forces amongst forces. We create rules that diminish our potential for interaction; that keep us atomized and at a distance, removed from those we don't yet know. We fiercely police the boundaries of our own personal space; keep our eyes dutifully diverted lest we catch another's glance, attract their attention. We keep ourselves to ourselves; mind our own business, look the other way. We purposefully name the other *stranger*; in turn, we too feel increasingly estranged. Our bodies are becoming unreliable; too sensitized to a sense of risk and danger, too dull or numbed to act another way. We are losing the feeling of what a body—our very being—is capable. Diminishing awareness is self-imposed, too readily accepted, for the limits of self and situation are rarely tested. So often, our own capacity remains uncharted; moreover, the limits of what we are capable have become mistaken for what is allowed. The body folds to fit the mold of how it *thinks* it should behave. Limbs forget the fullness of their reach; skin barely remembers the feel of unsolicited touch. Voice lowers so indiscernible amongst other voices; movement synchronizes to the metronomic regulation of those that were there before us, there before us, there before us. Without practice, a body's capacity to electively act is decreased. Yet, a body can also be re-trained, recalibrated; through exercise it can nurture its own affective force. With practice, a body becomes receptive (and not resistant) to situations that test its limits affirmatively, inoculated against those situations which dampen or diminish its potential or power. Here, to truly care for the self involves challenging its limits—by experimenting along the interstice where *I* encounters the world—not through the withdrawal or retreat safely away from worldly pressures.

The resistance of a body is not performed by trying to escape or refuse the terms of a situation but rather by rehearsing ways for transforming its affects, for performing the situation differently, conceiving it *otherwise*. Yet, years of schooling cannot be unlearned overnight. Habits knotted into the sinew of a body take some effort to untie. The teaching of how one should be and behave is worn deeply in the muscle of both flesh and thought. It has been hard work getting the body to conform to the rules within which it is expected to operate. Long hours have been spent impressing upon it the error of its unruly ways. Social scripts pass down through generations; every era rethinks the lines yet the story stays pretty much the same. Vocabularies alter, the order of the acts remain. The habitual choreographies that determine the course of daily life are thus not easily rejected or refused, nor will they be undone with force or fury or through revolution alone. Paradoxically perhaps, discipline is undisciplined through discipline; disobedience is a delicately honed skill. True improvisation still needs some rehearsal then, for unattended the body will always fall back quickly into comforting and harmonious rhythm. Conformity is an insidious lesson; its ideas and ideals creep upon the body during the night in dream as much as when awake. Dissidence must become practiced with the same rigor as conformity then, not just through the brief intensity of protest or revolt but according to daily and continual training. The spectacle of resistance is all too easily reabsorbed; the moves of dissonant bodies underscored with a sound track and sold back as late-night T.V. So practice quietly and lightly, defy by *not* making one's resistance too visible, too assimilable. Choreograph a small part of every day against the conditions of expectation and convention; make daily life a gymnasium within which to rehearse and play. With practice a body can become pliant, not compliant. Life itself can be made malleable like plastic; existence considered material and modeled like a work of art.

Permissions are often inscribed through negative clauses, where the body is steered away from certain actions, towards a set menu of increasingly limited choice. Conventions of a space form the idiomatic round hole, the social hoops through which the individual must attempt to jump. Yet the dimensions of conformity's hoop are rarely consistent; every situation sets its own parameters, endlessly re-inscribing its perimeter edge. These precarious terms ensure that a body is kept on its toes, since the social standards within which it must perform are re-negotiated by the hour and are ever-changing. Rather than waiting for the limit or rule to be modified at the whim of some external power, the individual might attempt to intervene in advance. Under pressure, limits can be rendered porous; the line that differentiates one state or space from another can be made to move or give. The division between private and public space becomes blurred through choice actions and interventions. Micro-performances can be staged in the gaps between properties, in the alleyways of possibility between territorialized zones. Boundary walls offer points of pressure against which to vault and somersault, jump and balance. The threshold between here and there can be dwelt in and upon, not just swiftly passaged through. There are intervals of the city where the rules of behaviour have not yet been fully declared, where they still remain in flux. Between the law of one space and another, an interregnum moment of lawlessness exists where a body might briefly escape the authority of either side of the line. Act swiftly, for any breach of control is rarely lasting, is far and few between. Unruly spaces are routinely brought back under rule, or else soon governed by the law of a fear that is equally difficult to counter. Act swiftly but with intent, for whilst the opportunist recognizes the opening within every situation encountered, with haste and not intention true *kairos* often goes to waste. Begin by acting *against* impulse, for impulse is an illusory sense of liberation, nothing but the involuntary performance of an action or reaction already known, the subconscious repetition of what already is.

It is habit to lament those limits imposed upon the body, pressed against its will. Yet, self-limitations are often observed more vigilantly than the strictest order. In directing our dissatisfaction towards the rules that we have not made, we can fail to notice the ones that we have ourselves nurtured, those we have accepted as inescapable truths. There are certain limits that a body believes are undeniable fact: the boundary that separates its own interior from the rest of the world, the laws of gravity. Thus, skin is carefully guarded so to keep the self contained, a thing distinct from other things. Weight is often privileged before levity; gravitas given import against that which is considered light. We are urged to get our head from the clouds, keep our feet on the ground. Find ways of challenging the seemingly irrefutable limit, and other man-made rules and restrictions become more possible to resist. In dance a body attempts to escape the earth's magnetic pull; forgetting its fetters in momentary lines of flight, becoming aerial. Under scrutiny the skin is less impermeable than it first seems, less a line of separation keeping the self differentiated from the world, but rather a mesh through which they merge. Skin is the margin where inside becomes out and outside in. The space of the body does not end with its own physical limits. The secret interiority of self can be pressured gently beyond the skin's limits to occupy realms that are not its own; the exteriority of the world can be held in the recesses of a body, hosted within. A body is not a thing bound by its surface edge, but rather a force whose capacity is only comprehended through the intensity of its interactions. To be more capable then, a body must become less concerned with protecting its limits, defining the contours that divide and separate it from everything else. Capacity is not built by closing oneself off, but through receptivity, by becoming more *open*.

Openness can signal towards a neutral state or a capacity for polyvalence. Electing towards an open state, the body becomes receptive to the force of other bodies, affected by its own volition rather than against its will. However, the open body is vulnerable to both threat and promise; it will need to cultivate resilience, develop its strength. Open the body gently then, with care. Limbs set in fixed ways will need time to relax, relax. Joints locked in rigid posture must be coaxed to flex. Flesh hung heavy might want persuading of its capacity for feeling, as much as for flight. As a solid entity the body is only too aware of its edges, its physical limitations, its distinctness from other things. Untrained the body is too conscious of its mass, its weight and density. It imagines itself as molded clay, flesh worn down at the hand of gravity and the pressing of time. To shift the body from thing to force requires a little alchemy. A body must be convinced of its power to shape-shift, its capacity for modifying its own condition, changing its very nature. Elemental transformation requires heat and energy; rising temperature might turn matter into its liquid state, cause liquid to become gaseous, air-born. Warm the body through folding and unfolding, through the rub and touch of skin on skin. Register points of tension and blockage as the body's coils become untangled when extended to fullest reach. Let go of tightness of feeling; release the knotting of the hips, the clench of the jaw. Folding means to yield or surrender, it involves learning how to give. Yet this is not a passive act, for to fold the body back upon itself requires some agility, the same for the folding of thinking back onto thought. Breath makes the folding of self and the world palpable; the body holds something of the world's air within its pleats, productive gaps can be nurtured in the creases between thoughts. Once folded, the body is rendered unfamiliar, incomprehensible. Consider a body morphed into unexpected contortions; not the involuntary torque and spasm of the hysteric body bucked against her will, but a body capable—like Houdini—of twisting itself (free) to avoid becoming trapped, immobilized.

Folding the body increases its elasticity; building its capacity to flex under pressure, take the strain. Rather than an obligatory practice where the body is forced to adapt to ever changing circumstance, the elective flexing of a body is undertaken pleasurably, for the sensations generated by moving to and from taut and relaxed. Through folding, a body can reach exalted states; the rapturous bliss of a body prone or prostrate, the ecstasy of a swooning body caught at the moment of faint or fall. However, attending to the curve and bend of a body can soon fold towards the solitary excitation of self-stimuli, the self-sufficiency of a pleasure or passion gleaned only from oneself. Here, the autoerotic body risks becoming hermetic, its pleasures sealed within an affective feedback loop where it is sensitive to only itself sensing. Cut off from the affects of other forces, the energy of any system soon becomes entropic; in time a closed body loses its capacity to truly feel or act. A body must then practice folding with other bodies; its matter must be touched by the presence of other matter, its flows and rhythms plaited and interwoven with those that are not its own. It is through the play and pressure of other bodies that the individual can truly conceive of what they are themselves capable. Test the body by bringing it into proximity *with*. Work on becoming close not closed to strangers; generate warmth to nearby bodies, practice sociability towards people that you don't yet know. Experiment with gradients of intensity, bringing the speeds and slowness of a body to time with others, in time allowing the rhythms to gradually fall back out of sync. The performed actions of an individual can be used to take the behavioural temperature of a chosen space or scene, test its water. Certain speeds and rhythms disappear unseen against the noise of their surroundings, or else appear in sharp relief when the possibilities of a given place are more subdued. With practice a body can measure the intensity of a given moment, comprehend the unseen nature of the rhythms and forces that give it its shape and tenor. Like a thermometer measures warmth and cold, a body can become sensitized to slight changes in the air, shifts in climate. Flesh can gauge the permissions and prohibitions of a situation much swifter than the mind.

A body's capacity can be bolstered through association, its potential for action amplified through the company that it keeps. Its force or energy can fluctuate and waver, depending upon its surrounds. A body knows when it is in good company, for here it can be as much as it can be. There is some truth to the adage that strength can be found in number, yet there are times when three too soon becomes a crowd. Within the public realm, individuals are often grouped through necessity or habit as much as by desire or design. Waiting flesh gets pressed into ordered lines; unspeaking assemblages form in squares during the brief reprieve between morning and afternoon; tired limbs brush and crush during the rush hour, each body compressed to fit the cut of commodified time. Classificatory regimes usher individuals into preformed groupings all too easily; tick box scales package persons by age and place of origin, by sexual proclivity, colour of skin. Bodies are routinely assembled under the nomination of increasingly complex cultural codes, acronymic coordinates that fix and position an individual within the range of a predetermined grid. Community is the term often given to any loose association of bodies connected by location or geography or by some other common bond. Experiment with new ways of becoming collective, multiple. Refuse those orders that keep the body fixed and bounded, that force allegiance against the individual's will. Gathered bodies might behave differently according to how they are named; possibilities of collective action can be augmented by a momentary change in the used noun. Practice with others the leaderless shimmer of a shoal of fish or flock of birds, a murmuration's flight caught in the light of evening gloom, or the exaltation of larks ascending. Charm like finches—wisp and drift and chatter. Avoid the unkindness of ravens, a lapwing's deceit, the pitying of the turtledove.

Practice demands concentration and attention, for a body is swift to return to gestures known well, to the ease of default options. Familiar locations can be the hardest to rehearse, for the rhythms of these places have been programmed into the body, are difficult to override. Practice then in places still unfamiliar, with gestures that are not your own. Seek out those districts which desire or necessity would rarely lead you to explore: the margins of the city's edge-lands; its business parks; empty lots, quiet residential streets never yet called home. On occasion, journey elsewhere to other cities or places whose shape and contour is not yet in memory stored, whose habits require learning still. Treat these as rehearsal spaces for the training body, for testing its receptivity to the push and pull of unexpected forces and pressures. Emptied of the routine that habitually governs its steps through space, a body's movements can become experimental, surprising. Space no longer appears as the ground against which a body scores, for experimental bodies collaborate *with* space on the production of new choreographies. To be truly receptive to the call of space a body must remain unmotivated in its intentions, yet alert enough to respond when the occasion seems right. Old habits must not just be replaced with habits new, the familiar gestures of one place simply traded for those of another. Before a body adapts to the customs and practices of its new surrounds, there is a brief interval where minor differences in everyday behaviour can be discerned. Attend to the smallest details of daily life, for it is through the reworking of these that the patterns of habit and convention can be collapsed and reordered. New choreographies emerge in the appropriation of behaviour. Gestures can be gleaned and borrowed; fragments of every life isolated from their context, liberated from the laws of cause and effect.

Minor performances can be scored through the reordering of life's refrains, those barely noticeable melodies of action and inaction that collectively make up the white noise of the everyday. Extracted and condensed, even the most prosaic gesture can become alien, enchanting. Yet, the experimental body is not intent on destroying or eroding the flows and rhythms that make up daily life. Their experiments with its vocabulary and grammar attempt to augment and modify its experience, devising new melodies within the terms of a given situation such that it might be encountered afresh. The experimental practice of everyday life is thus not so much an attempt to change its structure or shape in any prescriptive way, but rather a set of tactics through which to temporarily alter or transform its affects. Choreographed interventions within and with space are not proposals for a new way of living a life, for they are necessarily time-bound and impermanent. Undertaken as a form of rehearsal or training, they operate in the spirit of the subjunctive, in the key of *what if*. Rehearsal is a state of suspension, time separated from the enforced productivity and performance of daily life. An experimental body endeavours to suspend the normative logic of a given space or situation, in order that they might access other frequencies of being and behaviour. This is not the quest for some alternative or counter way of existing to the norm, but an attempt to reveal *other* ways of operating alongside and in parallel. Revelations often occur along the cusp that separates the visible from the unseen, the sayable from the unspoken. To be truly revelatory then a practice must inhabit such thresholds, abandoning the desire for audience or spectators to the hope of something unexpectedly witnessed, momentarily glimpsed.

—originally produced as a response to witnessing and participating in *Movement and the City* project-workshops led by Bianca Scliar Mancini and Sara Wookey, in Zagreb (2009) and Toronto (2010). The essay was originally published in *Performing the City*, a collaborative artists' book produced by Cocker, Scliar Mancini and Wookey (2012).

NANCY POPP

Untitled (Street Performances), Broad Museum Construction Site
Mason Line, February 10, 2013 (Photos: Sandra de la Loza)

Untitled (Street Performances), Dallas Biennial 2014
Mason Line, March 31, 2014 (Photos: Michael Mazurek, Trey Roland)

Since 2005, the *Untitled (Street Performances)* series has consisted of physical interventions in public spaces that challenge hierarchies of power and control. I try to keep a slightly antagonistic stance towards the context of the public space, so that it develops a criticality that is crucial to maintaining some sense of perspective on a wider view.

Since 2010, I have been using construction sites as performance locations. I am interested in how architecture symbolizes the values of a broader community or society through its investments of capital, land use, and space. Construction sites are also in a state of openness and permeability and can be entered, explored and critiqued. They are chosen based on the purpose and scale of the construction.

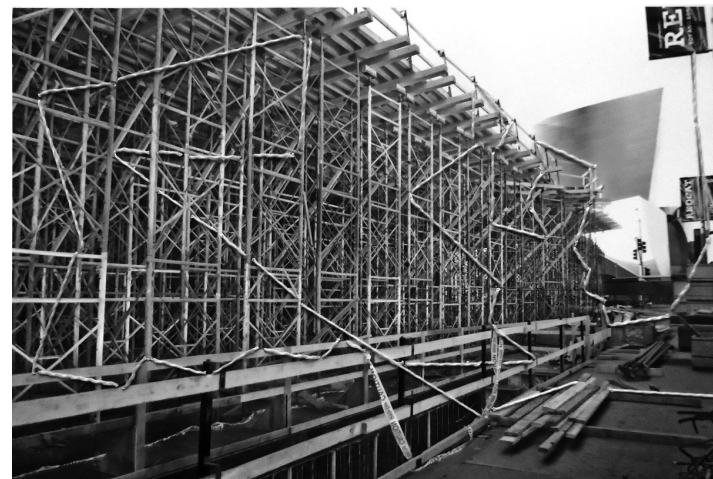
The resources and capital poured into such enormous projects begs the question, "Who benefits?" This applies to the re-gentrification of the downtown Los Angeles historic core (in this case via the massive outlays by Eli Broad for his own personal museum), the transformation of San Francisco, or the investment of public monies into stadium construction for the World Cup in Brazil. Architecture houses bodies, but it also directly embodies capital, power and political agendas.

A singular body, particularly a female body, moving and marking in relation to such sites, particularly while they are still forming, still permeable, still

able to be entered and examined, can upend the established 'grid' and dominant structure of architecture. Using Mason Line allows me to 'draw' the trace of that examination, the movement of the body within and against the domineering edifices of corporate (and corporatized museum) architecture. This is the critical gambit, the outside-the-dialectic "third space," the possibility, however small or individualized, of change.







GONZALO MILLÁN

from La ciudad (The City)

2.

Automobiles circulate.
Rumors of war circulate.
Money circulates.
Blood circulates.

Pedestrians go to work.
The pedestrians cross at the street corners.
The pedestrians circulate on the sidewalks.
The men wear pants.
The agents wear raincoats.
They place agents at the street corners.

Wretched men circulate.
The unemployed circulate.
Clouds hide the blue of the sky.
Clouds hide the light of the sun.
Clouds circulate at great altitudes.

Snow is white.
The condor flies at great altitudes.
There is snow at great altitudes.

4.

The floodgates open.
The floodgates let the water pass.
Ambulances wail.
The cars let an ambulance pass.
Ambulances are white.
The amber light is bright.
The blinds are wide.
The eyes look at the blinds.
The pores let the sweat pass.
The sick man rests several hours a day.

Weekdays pass.
There was soccer.
There was tennis.
Today there is no work.
There are no vacancies.
The schoolchildren run.
Computers run.
Water runs through lead pipes.

They run tabs.
Those who resist run risks.
The cyclists run pursue one another.
The boats pursue schools of fish.
I am on the run they are pursuing me.
The persecutions help make converts.

Accounts are opened.
Soup opens the meal.
The forest is shady.
Trails open up in the forest.

The owl hoots.

Rabbits dig burrows.

The gravediggers dig a pit.

The prisoners dig a hole.

11.

The earth moves.

Teeth move before they fall out.

Children change teeth.

Baby teeth fall out.

Milk falls into a bucket.

The cow gives milk.

The bull charges.

The storm clouds are charged.

A drizzle falls.

The soldiers charge their rifles.

The busboys carry charged trays.

I have many children in my charge.

The burden is overwhelming.

We carry the weight of the dictatorship.

They exchange two potatoes for a handful of noodles.

They exchange half a loaf of bread for a bit of oil.

Changes in the cabinet.

They change the water in the vase.

Soldiers leave. Civilians enter.

Snakes change skins.

Red light.

The traffic lights change.

The chameleon changes color.

The vehicles stop.

They change the sick man's sheets.

The mattress is stuffed with wool.

The sheets cover the mattress.

The shepherd watches the sheep.

The sheep give wool.

The beauty watches her figure.

The sick man watches the ceiling.

A mouse falls into the mousetrap.

The date falls to the foot of the date palm.

17.

The sun comes out.
The residents come out of their houses.
It is cold.
The square is wide and without houses.
The men raise their collars.
The birds raise their wings.
The women wrap themselves in scarves.
The street comes from the square.
No jobs are coming up.
The unemployed come out hungry.
There are no vacancies.
Too many arms are idle.

The school children go back to school.
He goes out to make a phone call.
He enters a phone booth.
The phones are tapped.
Ring! goes the telephone.
The schools are infiltrated.
They raise the food prices.
They raise the bus fares.
Plainclothes agents stop them.
The detainees raise their arms.
Those who are cold stamp their feet.
Those who are cold blow into their hands.
The scarf covers the neck.
Gloves cover the hands.
The schoolchildren come out for recess.

The guard comes out of the guardhouse.
The children slide over the frozen surface.

Wheels skid.
The funeral procession enters the cemetery.
A boat leaves port.
Smoke leaves the nose.
The smokers leave butts.
Beggars gather them up.
They pick up stray dogs.
They pick up garbage.
They pick up letters at the mailbox.
The beauty gathers up her hair.
The beauty steps out on the balcony.
The beauty goes shopping.
The beauty covers herself well.
They cover the sick man well.
The sick man enters the operating room.
The surgeon operates.
The surgeon cuts with the knife.
The cold cuts the hands.
The cold cuts the skin.
With the cold come chilblains.
The sick man leaves the operating room.
Chilblains burn itch.
Fire protects from the cold.
The lawyer defends the accused.
The official slaps the lawyer.
Bellows fan the fire.
They laugh in his face.
They cut his argument to pieces.

Bars defend the windows.
Client and lawyer disappear.
The breakwater fends off the waves.
The rain freezes.

Hail falls.
They throw thousands into the street.
They throw coal into the brazier.
They throw firewood into the fireplace.
The firewood does not burn.
They throw paraffin into the stove.
The firewood is wet.
They catch a messenger.
They catch extremists.
The beauty catches cold.
Warm water circulates.
The radiators spread heat.

The cold cracks the lips.
The cold causes hoarseness.
The teeth chatter.
The cold cracks the skin.

It is extremely cold in the street.
Misery is extreme.
The cold turns people blue.
We are having the blues.
The cold burns the plants.
They left us planted in the street.
The cold contracts bodies.

The cold contracts muscles.
The cold freezes puddles.
Meat is kept frozen.
The meat hangs from the hook.
They hang up dead animals.
After death the muscles contract.
The cold delays putrefaction.

22.

Daybreak.
The waves break forming whitecaps.
Mass lay-offs follow each other.
The waves follow each other.
The waves of the sea break.
The boat breaks the waves.
The waves break on the rocks.
There are rocks in the middle of the sea.
Rumors are afloat.
Boats are afloat.
They import bundles of used clothing.
The boats dock at the pier.
The pier reaches into the sea.
The bay reaches into the shore.
Ships ride at anchor in the bay.
There are dunes on the coast.
The sand dunes advance.
Pine groves detain the dunes.
The cape advances into the sea.
The rain stops.
They detain citizens.
The vehicles stop.
Green light.
The detentions continue.
The pine tree is an evergreen.
A bird flies into the pine tree.
Floodgates stop the water.
From the pine tree flows turpentine.
The tide flows back.

30.

They disavowed the authorities.
They disdained the constitution.
They dismantled the presidential palace.
They defaced the parks.
They defiled the sidewalks.
They dislodged the nails.
They dislocated bones.
They debranched the bushes.
They debudded the branches.
They discased the swords.
They discomforted the grieving.
They disconnected the wires.
They deflated the balloons.
They defoliated the forests.
They deforested the hills.
They disrooted the seedlings.
They demagnetized the compasses.
They desilverized the money.
They devitrified the windows.
They devocalized the singers.
They dispensed with formalities.
They dehorned the bulls.
They disentombed the dead.
They demasted the ships.
They dismembered the territory.
They dismissed the complaints.
They demoralized the youth.
They denationalized the mines.
They denaturalized the citizens.
They denatured the milk.
They denitrified the air.

They denuded the orphans.
They decalcified the bones.
They decapitated the statues.
They deglutinated the flour.
They dehydrated the children.
They deoxygenated the blood.
They discoloured the furniture.
They disfurnished the rooms.
They discomfited the residents.
They disconcerted the orchestras.
They defrauded the public.
They defrocked the priests.
They defrosted the freezers.
They degassed the streetlights.
They degummed the stamps.
They deiced the glaciers.
They deified themselves.
They displanted the crops.
They detached the roofs.
They disdained the inhabitants.
They disbarred the lawyers.
They disbanded the courts.
They disemboweled the cattle.
They despoiled the libraries.
They demolished the books.
They depleted the museums.
They decolored the paintings.
They deleted the murals.
They devastated the fields.
They decarbonated the soft drinks.
They decorticated the trees.
They deflowered the gardens.
They dispersed the herds.

They disyoked the oxen.
They devalued the currency.
They decelerated the cars.
They declutched the motors.
They decocted the soups.
They decompressed the airplanes.
They disappropriated industries.
They decertified the unions.
They disinherited the orphans.
They deported the citizens.
They depressed the prelates.
They deserted the sick.
They disparaged the old.
They dispatched the unwanted.
They disgraced themselves daily.
They despised the truth.
They disunited brothers.
They decerebrated the birds.
They dechlorinated the water.
They deluded the faithful.
They discredited the economy.
They derailed the trains.
They deranged the heads.
They disassembled the machines.
They dishallowed the sanctuaries.
They disheartened the women.
They disjointed the nation.
They dispossessed the poor.
They degerminated the seeds.
They dehumanized the men.
They delaminated the wood.
They deprived the workers.
They desiccated the wells.

They decimated the country.
They distorted the facts.
They discoursed daily.
They desalinated the sea.
They disrupted the flow.
They dissolved the achievements.
They destroyed the city.

39.

There is an invasion of rats.
The rats overrun the granaries.
The rats invade the houses.
They nest in the garrets.
They attack the animals in packs.
They bite a newborn child.
The rats screech at night.
There are not enough rat traps.
The cats get ill from eating too many rats.
The poisoned rats stink.
The rats have mange.
Mange is contagious.
The rats spread the plague.
The rats infest the city.
The city is in quarantine.
They watch the ships.
The ships are in quarantine.
They spray the buildings.
They exterminate and vaccinate.
They disinfect the city.
The vaccine immunizes.
The city stinks.
The city is unhealthy.
The city is isolated.
Patients with contagious diseases are isolated.
The plague spreads very fast.

The plague is a devastating epidemic.
An epidemic reigns.
The water is contaminated.
The atmosphere is polluted.
The atmosphere is unbreathable.
The language is contaminated.

48.

The river flows against the current.
The water runs up the waterfall.
The people start walking backwards.
The horses walk backwards.
The soldiers unmarch the parade.
The bullets leave the flesh.
The bullets enter the barrels.
The officers put their pistols away.
Electricity returns through the cords.
Electricity passes through the plugs.
The tortured stop shaking.
The tortured close their mouths.
The concentration camps empty.
The missing appear.
The dead rise from their graves.
The jets fly backwards.
The bombs rise towards the jets.
Allende fires.
The flames die down.
He takes off his helmet.
La Moneda rebuilds itself entirely.
His skull repairs itself.
He steps out on a balcony.
Allende backs up towards Tomás Moro.
The prisoners leave the stadium backwards.
September 11.
Airplanes full of refugees return.
Chile is a democratic country.

The armed forces respect the constitution.
The military go back to their barracks.

Neruda is reborn.
He returns by ambulance to Isla Negra.
His prostate hurts. He writes.
Victor Jara plays the guitar. He sings.
The speeches enter the mouths.
The tyrant embraces Prats.
He disappears. Prats revives.
The unemployed are rehired.
The workers parade singing.
We shall overcome!

55.

They adhered to the agreement.
They dug diligently on their knees.
They opened a breach in the wall.
They finished the hole.
Free rhymes with flee.
They fled under cover of night.
The fugitives acted in concert with others.
They are beating someone.
The prisoners are beating on the bars.
The darkness favored their flight.
They pursued them with bloodhounds.
They fled along the sewers.
They fled over rugged terrain.
They accused a guard of complicity.
The police pursue the fugitives.
Modern rifles range far.
They reached one of the fugitives.
An ambulance picked up the wounded one.
The poor receive alms.
The shepherds collect the cattle.
They ran over undulating terrain.
The jeep travels over uneven terrain.
They ran across flooded orchards.
Oleander has purple flowers.
They entered flowering oleander fields.
Helicopters fly like bees.
Helicopters drone like bees.
Bees hum.
Ears hum.
The fugitives are panting.
The bees sting.

The puma seizes a lamb.
The lamb bleats.
Anyone who harbors fugitives will be punished.
Priests protect the fugitives.

64.

The wound is bleeding.
The wound breaks open every day.
It breaks open at sunrise.
Night falls.
The wound does not close.
The days pass.
The years pass.
The wound does not close.
The wound bleeds secretly.
The wound is stanching behind walls.
The wound bleeds in cells.
The wound bleeds behind barbed wire.
The wound is a mouth.
A bandage gags it.
The wound is a toothless old mouth.
The wound mutters with naked gums.
The wound hurts.
They put it to sleep.
He wakes up hurting every day.
The wound hurts at night.
At night the soldiers hear it in the empty streets.
They hear it behind closed windows and doors.
It is like the sound of painful kisses.
It is woe and moans.
It is the lips of the wound which close and open.
It is the wounded moaning in their dreams.

The wound does not let you sleep.
The wound does not let you live.
At night the tyrant's minions pick at the wound.
They irritate it deepen it.

They silence it with music at full volume.
The wound forms pus.
The wound suppurates.
The light cleans the wound every day.
At night it becomes infected.
No one escapes from the wound.
The whole city is wounded.
Many are wounded without knowing it.
They think they are safe and sound.
They are wounded.
The wound is just a nuisance. They forget it.
They think they are invulnerable.
They are wounded.
They celebrate victory. They are wounded.
They enjoy power. They are wounded.
They sing. They dance. They get fat.
They are wounded.
The victorious are fatally wounded.

Many others pretend there is no wound.
They hide it. They deny it.
The wound makes them feel ashamed.
They medicate the wound.
They anoint it.
They cover it with gauze. They stop it with cotton.
They change the bandages every day.
The wound does not heal.
They treat it with home remedies.
They cover it with compresses of mud and spiderwebs.
They pray.
The wound does not heal.
The wound oozes.
Blood soaks the bandages.

The wound betrays them.
The wound denounces the hypocrites.
They were accomplices.
Some of them still are.
The gravely wounded survive in pain.
The remainder should be dead.
So terrible so vast is the wound.
Nobody can explain how they survive.
They are a wound.
The wound is all they have.
All that is left. All they are allowed to have.
The wound denounces.
They prohibit showing the wound.
The wound identifies us.
By the wound they recognize each other.
The wound unites them.
The wound is a password.
They clench their teeth.
They clench their fists.
The wound is a ragged flag.
The tyrant's green wound stinks.
His wound has died.
His wound has rotted away.
The tyrant is a living corpse.
The tyrant befouls the air he breathes.
He lives in isolation.
Far from his wife.
Far from his family.
His bodyguards avoid his breath.
Pestilence surrounds the tyrant.

They probe the wound.
They ask when until when how far.

The wound is unfathomable.
The wound will heal with time.
The tyrant will rot and fall.
Those who wound will be punished.
The fatally wounded will die.
The wound will leave a scar.
The scar will not be wiped out.
The wound will not be forgotten.
The scar will mark us forever.

DAMBUDZO MARECHERA
from The Journals

*I sing no more roses
But wander through Hararean mazes*

Harare in heat. Sunlight harsh, stridently bright. Dark but unconvincing clouds now and then challenged the timewhite brutal heat. Here and there in the milling crowds, the First Street glitter fashions, the jaded Second Street jeans and Michael Foot drabness, the milling black and white crowd wearily raised an eye to the sky wondering whether the rain would come at last. There had been no rain for weeks; not a single drop. The only sound of water in the City was the plungent Cecil Square fountains, the flush of toilets, the horrible oogle of the sink. Of rain, not a smell, not a taste, not a touch. And the heat in my mind raged; a raw seething wound.

I did not know where I was going. I did not care. I was carrying in a plastic bag all my possessions in the world. A typewriter, typing paper, a pen, an extra ribbon and seven copies of my last novel which I was trying to sell in the streets and in the whorehouse bars. I was dying for a cigarette—but that too could go to hell. I probably looked burnt-out, insane; people hurriedly got out of my way, I recognized the mood; once in London that mood of desperation had lasted for five years, punctuating itself with hopeless calls to the Samaritans, with eerie drunken visitations, with explosively vivid insights into the dark areas of the human brain.

And Harare around me in the grip of a fuel crisis thundered with motor vehicles blasting down the roads, with motorbikes booming through the traffic, with omnibuses hovering and heaving in and out of sight. Where did all these women come from? Where were they going? They were all colours of the rainbow; facially, fashionwise and in their attitudes. A couple of black

police horsemen casually directed their well-groomed mounts through the park. It looked like paradise all outside me; it was sheer hell in my mind. A lot had been said about how I was alienated from my environment, from my Africanness. A lot had been said about it—what the hell! I felt no group sense and no group context with all those around me, London or Harare. There was just this terrifying sense of having missed the bus of human motion, having missed out on whatever all these and others had which made them look “at home” in the world. I had no world outlook. The whole thing could go out with a bang for all I cared. And I cared a lot. Here in Harare the things held against me would have been totally invisible to a Londoner. My unconventional dress and my dreadlocks would not have raised an eyebrow; my “iconoclastic” statements about “everything” would have drummed on deaf ears—no one would give a damn how I lived as long as it was bearably legal. Here in Harare, it was different. Expectations were crudely materialistic, less to do with the spirit but more with the price of the matter.

And on this hot hell of a January morning, I did not care where my future lay, where my past was hiding out, where my present course would maroon me. There would be beer and more beer and half the day’s battle would be won. Come evening and I would have to face the fact that I had nowhere but the streets and skidrow in which to sleep—for all the days that would come, I had not rejected the notion of human brotherhood; I could not accommodate its materialist ends. Now and then I would meet someone who would give me a floor and I would sleep easy in a snug sleeping bag. Come morning, with her six o’clock alarm rasping my dream apart, I would find the hazards of the streets terrifyingly waiting for me with open arms. But first: food. That must always come first. I trudged into a Greek-owned grocery store, bought myself a pack of sour milk and three buns and headed for Cecil Square to sit, eat and type this story.

I wanted to talk to the whole world but as soon as I opened my lips I would *know* how utterly useless it all was. Rare are the ears trained and tuned to the inner spirit. There was always this fog of misunderstanding, deliberate or

unconscious—as if the listener wanted to confirm his own assumptions about supposed chinks in my character. It was always like this whenever I “talked” to black people. The problem never arose with whites—they as usual did not particularly care to understand the colour black. Understanding would bring a holocaust of all their entrenched racial ideas.

I found my ideal listener and reader in the *real* drunk, the types who like me, had given up conceding the world was a particularly sane refuge from nightmares, massacres, violent wives, vicious school kids, sadistic policemen, selfish motorists who refused to give you a lift unless you had thirty or forty cents, babies with soiled nappies, political party thugs who would wreck your home and smash your body at the drop of the wrong party card. The *real* drunk. He did not care about my health in body and spirit. He did not care too much about religion, or duty, or patriotism, or whatever new mad programmes were going on around him. He avoided fights the way others avoid the plague. He enjoyed non-factual, illusion-ridden little conversations. He did not particularly care what you did in life, or what had made you like “this”. A sensitive soul, broken on the anvil of unrelenting reality. That was my ideal reader, the real drunk, with no gripes about this and that, with no chip on his shoulder about “The Struggle”, caring little for ambition, giving all his soul to the black electricity of his inner nerves.

Yes, all I am saying, completed with digressions and a footnote here and there, *is* this story. It starts the way it ends: with a girl and homelessness. It should never have ended. I would have given not only my arm but also the crazed visions that constitute my novels and poems for it and her not to end. But even the rash and hurrying soul learns that everything has an end, learns that happiness is rare, a chance fragment of the gigantic whole she was.

It is a story about men and women, their sexual harassment of each other, the hazards they undergo for the sake of a momentary but tangible and meaningful relationship. It is the same story each time but with different actors. Because it is my story, I am the only constant factor in the different

versions of the story of love between men and women; their search for it and the continuous disappointments it has for all.

From the bleary-eyed lovesick schoolboy—whose post-puberty dreams of heady romance were fueled by comics and “True Love” magazine stories—to cynical bitterbrained and drained novelist took all of fifteen years. The first six years were thickly buttered by the Christian religion instilled in me by the monks and nuns who taught me up to university level. Belief in Christ and illusions of pure love were heavily underlined by the after-lights-out nightly horrorshow of brutally detailed and demonstrated sex scenarios in the dormitories. Masturbation and confession in the church alternated with extreme regularity. Thoughts and prayer centred on Christ; the imagination and dream emissions continually subverted all faith. Mornings and afternoons meant classes and books and notes and perhaps learned disputes with a teacher about a footnote in the Latin text. Evenings meant prep and perhaps Evensong and after lights-out the awful fascination to the schoolboys in the know about copulation, death, birth and the possibility of expulsion when discovered. It was at this time I began to write poetry, thickly affected by whatever English or American poet I was reading at the time. I would take an easy chair onto the edge of the cliff on which the school was built and nibbled at the landscape sprawling beneath me, scratch at the soul irritation that was beginning to make me suspect that all was not what it seemed, that all inside me would never be echoed by whatever was outside. I was beginning to grow up. I was on my way to the Hararean mazes of skidrow. I was not going to be whatever the whites and the blacks expected of me. I would give my all simply to books and the writing of books.

... And now sitting in Cecil Square, drinking sour milk in bitter but ingenious mood, homeless but unbroken, having given up people, I was in the wordtrap of the eerie insight born of constantly drunken vision. My days were simple. I would dust myself up from whatever alley I had been sleeping. I would think of where my next meal was going to come or not come from. I would type all day in Cecil Square or in the Harare Gardens. That finished, I would

escape into the whorehouse bars to cage a drink. When the whorehouse bars closed for the night I would, with all my possessions in my clenched fist, look around for a safe doorway, hedge or alley in which to sleep until the next day. The bitterness was not knowing when this routine would end if at all. The bitterness was the rare encounters with “understanding” women who would care, and caring, restore temporarily my lost faith in people. But even when the going was good I would know that it would end sooner, much much sooner, than I thought. My going with women was always too good to last, always too good to endure the shallow concerns of my environment. The going, yes, was always too good. Even the myth of the hard-drinking novelist, trying to out-Hemingway Ernest Hemingway in seedy whorehouse bars in Zimbabwe.

My father’s mysterious death when I was eleven taught me—like nothing would ever have done—that everything, including people, is unreal. That, like Carlos Casteneda’s *Don Juan*, I had to weave my own descriptions of reality into the available fantasy we call the world. I describe and live my descriptions. This, in African lore, is akin to witchcraft. My people could never again see me as anything but “strange”. It hurt, for the strangeness was not of my own making; I was desperately cynical for the descriptions were the only weird “things” I cared to name “truth”. They were the heart of my writing and I did not want to explain my descriptions because they had become my soul, fluid and flowing with the phantom universe in which our planet is but a speck among gigantic galaxies. This then perhaps is what “they” too easily dub “alienation” when they are thinking within the old mould of the theory of A Child Of Two Worlds, explaining the bitter angst with simple African/European disjunctions. I am what I am not because I am an African or whatever but because it is the basic nature of a maker of descriptions, a writer. It is very like the peregrini of the English in the time of King Alfred. Or perhaps the wanderer of the Anglo-Saxon poem of that name. For a time I thought my unconscious was trying to take me back to vanished eras reminding me of my previous lives in other timebelts.

The cliché about the world being what you make it is “true”; weave descriptions and live in them. Do not ever accept another’s description as being your own; though that is the manner in which most of my people live, these on the park benches and on the concrete perimeter of the fountain in Cecil Square, these leisurely walking by on their secret and exacting missions. They are the story also because it is always from them that I meet those rare and uncommon women who are the matter of this story. The simplicity of my subject is the danger; everybody “knows” about sex but we suspect each one of knowing more, suspect or accuse. I want to know more and I do not want to know more. There is always that shadowline of guilt, of violating the treasure of one’s uniqueness.

It is a luxury, the way I live, to think of destinations, culminations. What matters are the simple matters of what I would be doing at any moment. I am right now on a park bench typing this story and I am out there in the story, mind glowing with the red coals of yet another relationship which ended this January morning leaving me in this cloud of dislike; these totally unconvincing strips of cloud that have no rain and will soon dissipate in this sheer drought-stricken January bright sunlight. It was her fault. It was my fault. It was her boyfriend’s fault—that eternal triangle of classic middle class drama. I slept on someone’s verandah last night; they did not know I was there. I woke up early, wet and brushed my face with spit, shrugged at the thick dirt on my once white trousers, dragged my cap onto my head and was ready for my day. Already the “straights” were driving or walking to work; some were returning home loaded with DMB milk, newspapers, bread, eggs and bacon; others were loitering in the streets watching everyone watching themselves. One of them, a thin, sickly pampered youth, saw me and shouted, “Where did you sleep last night?”

I laughed; I pointed at the sky. There was not much sunlight in my laughter. I had become a figure of fun. Yet there was a bitter truth in my laughter. A bitter truth about Harare. This Harare I was living in was someone else’s creation. I could not encompass it. I was encompassed by my own description

of it. Neither existed absolutely; but as Vonnegut would say, so it goes. In fact it is not going at all. I am writing this and watching a mixed crowd listening to a preacher. I do not know what he is preaching but the word God resonates every now and then.

All kinds of people are walking by on the concrete-paved paths—some in overalls, others in suits straight from posh London, yet others in jeans, faded khaki, or just sports shorts and T-shirts. I am getting nervous writing this with readers already poking and peering over my shoulder. But there is nowhere to go and it is good and relaxing to work in this Cecil Square, work on myself to review the breaches and fascinations and defeats in my life. So it goes but it is not going at all.

... I am getting tired of sleeping in the streets. Last night before I went to that shit I left my typewriter with a guy at a hotel in Union Avenue. I told him I would collect it the next morning—it really is the next morning, reader—for my daily work sessions in Cecil Square. I got it, sat down at a table in the hotel’s garden and began to type. Then this tall hefty black hotel security guy came along and threw me and my things out of the hotel premises because “I was not in residence”. I shrugged a shoulder as usual and picked up my things and I am back in Cecil Square—on the way I did not forget to buy my pack of sour milk. I suppose there is something psychological in my need to suckle the milk out of the breastlike plastic pack. So it goes. But I know it is not going at all. I think I am at the end of my tether. My once white trousers are really dirty today. The shirt is really shitty now. I can actually smell myself. I can see people smelling me and flinching.

My Afro comb is still in my pocket. I managed to sell four copies of my book yesterday. I drank most of the money but I still have a little left for a quiet drink after I finish writing for the day. It makes me feel calmer. To know I have those cents in my pockets. I think I am getting tired of caging drinks. My rhinoceros armourskin is worn out and I can feel the insults biting deep.

... There has just been another interruption. This time by acquaintances from London. Three English girls and a black guy I know from the bottom end of a beer bottle. There were, they said, passing by to go to Freddy's, a filmmaker friend of the black guys. The girls seemed very sensitive about interrupting me but the guy seemed to think because I had been in London too that he could claim my time and moment he chose. Most of the guys from London have that attitude towards me. One of them said it was three o'clock. I said I had given myself until four for the writing of this day. What will I do afterwards? I said I would go for a drink at the **** Hotel and then later go to the **** Hotel for yet another drink. But the warning light beamed from the black guy's eyes and the girls said No, thank you. As they left the black guy said over his shoulder—actually he shouted:

"I'll sue them!"

"Who" I shouted back.

The girls were waiting for him.

"The bastards. They lost my manuscript."

"Who lost your manuscript?" I asked impatiently.

"The fucking **** publishers, that's who," he said turning away.

I resumed my typing.

I have forgotten what I was writing about. But there I was in that Indian Restaurant with Olga, and I, for once, eating good food in good surroundings, not thinking of where I would sleep that night, just enjoying the food and wondering what new miracle would happen next. We talked casually about the raw tragedy that had long ago separated me from Olga. It was there. It was not there. There was the whole afternoon before us. Ah, someone is playing his transistor radio somewhere here in Cecil Square. I can even hear the words of the song:

"You've been way, way, way too long

"To see the gleam in my eye..."

Two disabled veterans of "The Struggle" have just hobbled by, on their unwieldy crutches. All of a sudden I am thinking of yesterday about the pickpocket incident. I was walking with Olga from the restaurant to Craft Co-operative where she was to pick up some new shoes. Walking down Union Avenue, with all those streetfaces and those hurrying swinging arms and legs, the thin sickly youth who once came to my office proffering Keats' work as his own came into view. I was about to greet him when he jostled into me—I felt fingers in my pocket—I was carrying in both hands the typewriter and the thick wads of typing paper—he was gone, disappeared into the crowd—"Hey!" I shouted. Olga and people were staring. "He's just picked my pocket," I said uselessly. I looked into the pocket. The little money I had was gone.

"Socialism," Olga commented. I grinned.

"Sure, it's the Zimbabwe way," I said.

— from *Mindblast*, Harare, 1984

LUCY E. PARSONS

TO TRAMPS,

The Unemployed, the Disinherited, and Miserable.

A word to the 35,000 now tramping the streets of this great city, with hands in pockets, gazing listlessly about you at the evidence of wealth and pleasure of which you own no part, not sufficient even to purchase yourself a bit of food with which to appease the pangs of hunger now gnawing at your vitals. It is with you and the hundreds of thousands of others similarly situated in this great land of plenty, that I wish to have a word. Have you not worked hard all your life, since you were old enough for your labor to be of use in the production of wealth? Have you not toiled long, hard and laboriously in producing wealth? And in all those years of drudgery do you not know you have produced thousand upon thousands of dollars' worth of wealth, which you did not then, do not now, and unless you ACT, never will, own any part in? Do you not know that when you were harnessed to a machine and that machine harnessed to steam, and thus you toiled your 10, 12 and 16 hours in the 24, that during this time in all these years you received only enough of your labor product to furnish yourself the bare, coarse necessities of life, and that when you wished to purchase anything for yourself and family it always had to be of the cheapest quality? If you wanted to go anywhere you had to wait until Sunday, so little did you receive for your unremitting toil that you dare not stop for a moment, as it were? And do you not know that with all your squeezing, pinching and economizing you never were enabled to keep but a few days ahead of the wolves of want? And that at last when the caprice of your employer saw fit to create an artificial famine by limiting production, that the fires in the furnace were extinguished, the iron horse to which you had been harnessed was stilled; the factory door locked up, you turned upon the highway a tramp, with hunger in your stomach and rags upon your back?

Yet your employer told you that it was overproduction which made him close up. Who cared for the bitter tears and heart-pangs of your loving wife and helpless children, when you bid them a loving "God bless you" and turned upon the tramper's road to seek employment elsewhere? I say, who cared for those heartaches and pains? You were only a tramp now, to be execrated and denounced as a "worthless tramp and a vagrant" by that very class who had been engaged all those years in robbing you and yours. Then can you not see that the "good boss" or the "bad boss" cuts no figure whatever? that you are the common prey of both, and that their mission is simply robbery? Can you not see that it is the INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM and not the "boss" which must be changed?

Now, when all these bright summer and autumn days are going by and you have no employment, and consequently can save up nothing, and when the winter's blast sweeps down from the north and all the earth is wrapped in a shroud of ice, hearken not to the voice of the hypocrite who will tell you that it was ordained of God that "the poor ye have always"; or to the arrogant robber who will say to you that you "drank up all your wages last summer when you had work, and that is the reason why you have nothing now, and the workhouse or the workyard is too good for you; that you ought to be shot." And shoot you they will if you present your petitions in too emphatic a manner. So hearken not to them, but list! Next winter when the cold blasts are creeping through the rents in your seedy garments, when the frost is biting your feet through the holes in your worn-out shoes, and when all wretchedness seems to have centered in and upon you, when misery has marked you for her own and life has become a burden and existence a mockery, when you have walked the streets by day and slept upon hard boards by night, and at last determine by your own hand to take your life, - for you would rather go out into utter nothingness than to longer endure an existence which has become such a burden - so, perchance, you determine to dash yourself into the cold embrace of the lake rather than longer suffer thus. But halt, before you commit this last tragic act in the drama of your simple existence. Stop! Is there nothing you

can do to insure those whom you are about to orphan, against a like fate? The waves will only dash over you in mockery of your rash act; but stroll you down the avenues of the rich and look through the magnificent plate windows into their voluptuous homes, and here you will discover the *very identical robbers* who have despoiled you and yours. Then let your tragedy be enacted *here!* Awaken them from their wanton sport at your expense! Send forth your petition and let them read it by the red glare of destruction. Thus when you cast “one long lingering look behind” you can be assured that you have spoken to these robbers in the only language which they have ever been able to understand, for they have never yet deigned to notice any petition from their slaves that they were not *compelled* to read by the red glare bursting from the cannon’s mouths, or that was not handed to them upon the point of the sword. You need no organization when you make up your mind to present this kind of petition. In fact, an organization would be a detriment to you; but each of you hungry tramps who read these lines, avail yourselves of those little methods of warfare which Science has placed in the hands of the poor man, and you will become a power in this or any other land. *Learn the use of explosives!*

— *The Alarm*, October 4, 1884.

CONTRIBUTORS

AMY BALKIN’s projects, including *Public Smog*, *This is the Public Domain*, and *A People’s Archive of Sinking and Melting* (Amy Balkin et al.), address legal borders and systems, environmental justice, and the allocation of common-pool resources. She lives in San Francisco, California.

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The **GRUPO DE ARTE CALLEJERO** (GAC) has engaged in acts of urban intervention since the late 80s, dealing with issues of human rights. Their actions, which are local and anonymous, use different modes (performance, graphic and textual) to interfere and subvert discourses that authorize, legitimize and legalize injustice, which will be published by Common Notions/PM Press.

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DAMBUDZO MARECHERA (1952-87) was a Zimbabwean writer of fiction, poetry, and plays. His award-winning *House of Hunger* was written at age 25 after being expelled from Oxford where he had been in self-exile from Rhodesia. Returning to Zimbabwe in 1982, he led a largely homeless existence, dying of AIDS-related illness at age 35.

MAYAKOV+SKY PLATFORM is a collaborative framework on architecture, poetics and direct action that Greek poet Nicholas Komodore, now based in Oakland, started in 2011. Recent collaborations and permutations include dancer/choreographer Anna Halprin, dance artist Margit Galanter, poets Lara Durback and Brian Ang, visual artists Eliza Alexandropoulou and Christina Kamma, composers Bill Noertker and Dusan Chae, and experimental projects Inverz and B.R.A.C.

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KAIA SAND is the Portland-based author of several collections of poetry, including two Tinfish Press collections, the forthcoming *A Tale of Magicians Who Puffed Up Money that Lost its Puff* and the walking investigation of Portland, *Remember to Wave*.

OKI SOGUMI was born in Seoul, Korea, is currently segueing from Oakland to Philadelphia, #nofuture.

SCOTT SØRLI's transdisciplinary practice concerns itself with moments when form and matter engage the economic and political forces that produce the city. He lives in Toronto.

EMJI SPERO is an Oakland-based artist and editor at Timeless, Infinite Light.

JONAS STAAL is a Swiss-Dutch visual artist based in Rotterdam, whose work deals with the relation between art, propaganda, and democracy. He is the founder of the artistic and political organization *New World Summit*, which develops alternative parliaments for what he considers "stateless states" banned from democratic discourse, and the *New World Academy* (together with BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht), which invites artists and students to work together with stateless organizations to develop collaborative projects.

WENDY TREVINO lives in Oakland and works in San Francisco. Her chapbook *128 - 131* was recently published by Perfect Lovers Press, and her poems have appeared in

Stolen Island, The American Reader, The Capilano Review, Mrs. Maybe, LIES, OMG!, With+Stand, Abraham Lincoln, Try! and *West Wind Review*.

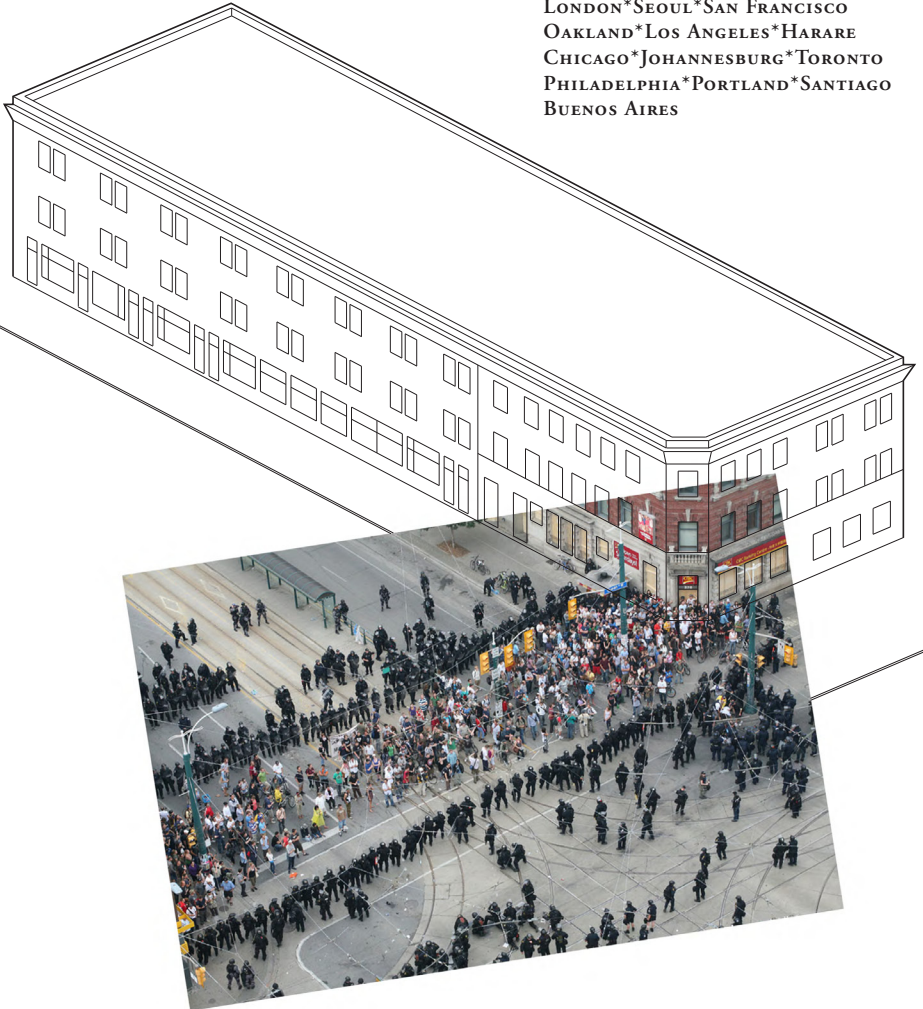
VINCENT W.J. VAN GERVEN OEI is a philosopher, artist, and translator. He lives and works in Tirana, Albania. <http://www.vangervenoey.com/>

MICHAEL WOODS is the author of *World News Story* (BookThug). He grew up in rural Southwestern Ontario and currently lives in Paris, France.

ZARINA was born in 1937 in Aligarh, India. She has participated in numerous exhibitions, including *Mind and Matter: Alternative Abstractions from 1940s to Present* at the MOMA, New York, and *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* at MOCA, Los Angeles. Her retrospective exhibition *Zarina: Paper Like Skin* showed at the Hammer Museum and the Guggenheim in New York. She currently lives and works in New York.

CITIES: work from/in/on

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