



N 49 15.832 - W 123 05.921
[POSITIONS COLLOQUIUM]
AUGUST 19 - 24, 2008

© COPYRIGHT TO THE AUTHORS, AUGUST 2008

EDITION OF 250

COVER DESIGN BY IVAN D. DRURY AND ANDREA ACTIS
TYPESETTING BY ANDREA ACTIS

N 49 15.832 - W 123 05.921 / POSITIONS COLLOQUIUM HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE GENEROUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OF ARTS PARTNERS IN CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT
(APCD), THE BRITISH COLUMBIA ARTS COUNCIL, AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

MANY THANKS ALSO TO OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS, TO THE STAFF AT VIVO MEDIA ARTS CENTRE,
AND TO OUR FAMILIES.

Arts Partners
in Creative
Development



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
Sponsored by the Province of British Columbia



N 49 15.832 - W 123 05.921 / POSITIONS COLLOQUIUM
PANELS, TALKS, SEMINARS, ROUNDTABLES, READINGS

EVENTS HELD AT VIVO MEDIA ARTS CENTRE @ 1965 MAIN STREET UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

•
OPENING NIGHT SOCIAL
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19

5:00 PM

PUBLIC PARTY / BBQ @ 536 E 20TH AVENUE (2 BLOCKS WEST OF FRASER)

READINGS BY: SACHIKO MURAKAMI, COLIN BROWNE, PETER CULLEY, ANDREA ACTIS, DONATO
MANCINI, MICHAEL BARNHOLDEN, TED BYRNE, MAXINE GADD, K. LORRAINE GRAHAM, IVAN D.
DRURY, NICHOLAS PERRIN

•
COLLOQUIUM DAY ONE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20

11:00 AM

PANEL: "ON LINE: POETICS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF MEANING"

MODERATOR AND CURATOR: ANDREW KLOBUCAR

PANELISTS: DARREN WERSHLER-HENRY, BRIAN KIM STEFANS, JUDY RADUL, SIANNE NGAI

DESCRIPTION:

Current media technologies have combined writing practices with general frameworks or networks of distribution more intimately than at any other time within the history of print. This panel enquires specifically into the "position" of the artist with respect to advances in media networking technology, exploring how older, modernist interpretations of the work as a fixed authorial relationship between artist and art must be re-imagined according to newer, decidedly more dynamic concepts of the archive and presentation space.

1:00 PM

KEVIN KILLIAN AND DODIE BELLAMY W/ GUESTS
THEATRICAL PRESENTATION: "THE CLIFFORD IRVING SHOW"

7:00 PM

READINGS, PRESENTATIONS, AND PERFORMANCES BY:
DARREN WERSHLER-HENRY, BRIAN KIM STEFANS, COLIN SMITH, ROBERT FITTERMAN, CLINT
BURNHAM

•

COLLOQUIUM DAY TWO
THURSDAY, AUGUST 21

11:00 AM

PANEL: "ALPHA BETS: LANGUAGE GAMBLER ON LAND"

MODERATOR AND CURATOR: RITA WONG

PANELISTS: JULIANA SPAHR, PAT O'RILEY, REG JOHANSON, PETER COLE

DESCRIPTION:

This session invites both indigenous and non-indigenous writers to discuss the challenges of negotiating with English as an imposed colonial, expansionist language and the shifts that may come when writers work to respect the indigenous cultures and languages of the lands on which they live. Preceding and exceeding colonial frames, indigenous perspectives can and do challenge colonial norms that posit land as property to be bought, sold, and exploited. Situating language as an act on land, a possible decolonization and deterritorialization of it, could position writers/readers/speakers in ways that foreground ecological interrelations. In light of structural obstacles to decolonization (neoliberal capitalist economy, neoimperial ideological state apparatuses, etc.), how might writers build other/wise? How does the range of questioning practices that writers bring to bear upon colonial inheritances stir up language(s) and inform how we work/play as poets, teachers, cultural organizers, and/or perhaps tricksters?

1:00 PM

TALK: "ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF FORM: COSMOPOETICS IN THE SHADOW OF NAFTA"

SPEAKER: MICHAEL DAVIDSON

7:00 PM

READINGS, PRESENTATIONS, AND PERFORMANCES BY:

RITA WONG, JULIANA SPAHR, PILLS (A. VIDAVER, R. JOHANSON, R. FARR), PAT O'RILEY & PETER COLE, LOUIS CABRI, JULES BOYKOFF

● COLLOQUIUM DAY THREE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22

11:00 AM

SEMINAR: "LANDSCAPES OF DISSENT: GUERILLA POETRY & PUBLIC SPACE"

SEMINAR LEADERS: JULES BOYKOFF AND KAIA SAND

RESPONDENTS: CATRIONA STRANG, JULIANA SPAHR, LAURA ELRICK, COLIN SMITH, CLINT BURNHAM, NICHOLAS PERRIN

DESCRIPTION:

In *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, Raoul Vaneigem wrote, "Poetry is to be found elsewhere: in the facts, in the events we bring about." Sliding forward from this assertion, this seminar will explore the possibilities, logistics, and limitations of poets and artists seizing public space for political-poetic purposes. Kaia Sand and Jules Boykoff will begin with a presentation rooted in the ideas from their book *Landscapes of Dissent: Guerrilla Poetry and Public Space* before opening up for comments from seminar discussants and the audience. Using *Landscapes of Dissent* as a springboard for discussion, how might poets be more effective infiltrators of public space? How does context matter? Does public space even exist? If so, what are the perils and possibilities of bringing a politically charged poetics to a general, unsuspecting audience? What on-the-ground strategies and tactics are most/least effective, and what constitutes "success"?

1:00 PM

ROUNDTABLE: "NEOLIBERALISM AND THE POLITICS OF POETICS"

MODERATOR AND CURATOR: JEFF DERKSEN

RESPONDENTS: ROD SMITH, DOROTHY LUSK, ROGER FARR, LAURA ELRICK, LOUIS CABRI

DESCRIPTION:

This panel will speculate on the relationship of poetics and neoliberalism—and via this, on the underlying entanglement of poetic publicness, poetic form, and social relations that drift into our speculative view. Far from being a distant term or abstracted ideology, the affective register of neoliberalism as a commonsense and a cultural marker, as well as the more brute *mano dura* (firm fist) of its economic logics and social policies, make neoliberalism the software that shapes the interface of everyday life. The central poetics question perhaps is how does the ideological software of neoliberalism also shape poetry—in its formal possibilities, in the choice of its "content," in the venues that poetry is launched into, and in the way that poetry as a form of knowledge circulates amongst other, often hardened, discourses. Has neoliberalism as a social dominant replaced postmodernism as the cultural dominant? And is this a shift from the aesthetic to the political (or the possibility of a more dynamic relationship of the two terms)? And, how do we write through it?

7:00 PM

READINGS, PRESENTATIONS, AND PERFORMANCES BY:

RODRIGO TOSCANO, ROD SMITH, KAIA SAND, DOROTHY TRUJILLO LUSK, JEFF DERKSEN

•

COLLOQUIUM DAY FOUR

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23

11:00 AM

SEMINAR: "THE ZANY SCIENCE: POST-FORDIST PERFORMANCE AND THE PROBLEM OF FUN"

SEMINAR LEADER: SIANNE NGAI

RESPONDENTS: TYRONE WILLIAMS, MARK WALLACE, ANDREW KLOBUCAR, ROB FITTERMAN, STACY DORIS, MICHAEL DAVIDSON, LOUIS CABRI, JEFF DERKSEN

DESCRIPTION:

By way of an examination of the ambiguous politics of zany, the aim of this seminar is a conversation about the current role of performance, affect, and "fun" in contemporary art and writing. Discussion will be based on a pre-circulated paper available to all conference participants.

1:00 PM

LISA ROBERTSON AND STACY DORIS

AUDIO FEATURE: "THE PERFUME RECORDIST"

7:00 PM

READINGS, PRESENTATIONS, AND PERFORMANCES BY:

TYRONE WILLIAMS, MARK WALLACE, CATRIONA STRANG & FRANÇOIS HOULE, JUDY RADUL, LAURA ELRICK, STEPHEN COLLIS

•

COLLOQUIUM CLOSING DAY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24

1:00 PM

BASEBALL GAME! VANCOUVER CANADIANS VS. EVERETT AQUASOX
NAT BAILEY STADIUM @ 4601 ONTARIO STREET (AT 30TH)

5:00 PM

PARTY @ 305 CAMBIE STREET (AT CORDOVA), TOP FLOOR, BLUE DOOR (STUDIO OF URBAN
SUBJECTS AND FILLIP MAGAZINE)

THEMATICS

We have deliberately left the colloquium thematically open-ended, having invited writers and artists whose critical and creative practices already intersect (or, in enough cases, contradict) in productive ways. A pertinent conversation will arise from the juxtaposition of the works themselves. Our direct critical interventions in the lead-up have therefore been kept discreet.

In our collective discussions, however, some of the active terms have included old standards and conceptual pillars of politicized poetics: aesthetics, form, knowledge, and political agency/subject position. The specific set of contexts within which these items are interpreted will constitute the core question(s), constructed as such, of N 49 15.832 – W 123 05.921 / POSITIONS COLLOQUIUM.

Here we might ask: How is poetry a political field of action? What can poetry un/do? What do 'limits' mean for poetry? What are the crucial issues in taking a social (ideological) position within a poetics today? What relationships arise between cultural production and broader social projects?

With these questions in view, the following quotations are presented not as authoritative statements, but as problems.

"Politics and poetics are united: 'This is a dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia.'"

—Brian Lennon, "Screening a Digital Visual Poetics"

"Can we hold onto the possibility of a self-consciousness that does not, simply because it must be critical of oppressive forces, repeatedly fold in upon itself, becoming self-referential—and self-incarcerating—in the form of that non-communicative language that Foucault (mis)recognizes as 'literature as such'?" —Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target*

"... the unpacking of the semiotic density of discourse, including political discourse, performs an anthropological function in politically dangerous environments in the sense that pure value is accorded positions that let the theorist evade statements of clear opposition to the status quo and allow him or her to defer instead to the values of ambivalence and indeterminacy. To penetrate the meaning of contemporary politics, we think, demands a different and difficult intellectual leap in which one is required to work one's way through—and out of—this subjectively experienced complexity and grasp the bald objectivity staring us in the face." —Timothy Brennan and Keya Ganguly, "Crude Wars"

"Art as a separate sphere was always possible only in a bourgeois society. Even as a negation of that social purposiveness which is spreading through the market, its freedom remains essentially bound up with the premise of a commodity economy."

—Theodor Adorno, *Dialectics of Enlightenment*

"Poetry, as a creative practice, can aim at an 'actual [rather than 'formal'] freedom' through a language that challenges and negotiates a neoliberal structure of feelings." —Jeff Derksen, "Poetry and the Long Neoliberal Moment" (*West Coast Line* 51)

"The inability to find an 'optimism of the intellect' with which to work through alternatives has now become one of the most serious barriers to progressive politics." —David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*

"Thus, there is an ambiguity of agency at the site of this decision . . . One decides on the condition of an already decided field of language, but this repetition does not constitute the decision of the speaking subject as a redundancy. The gap between redundancy and repetition is the space of agency." —Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech*

RITA WONG
POETICS STATEMENT

(from *forage*)

“the next shift may be the biggest one yet, the union of the living, from mosquito to manatee to mom.”

•

the way “back” is also the way “forward” because language is not linear but associative, spiral, condensation, excavation, and premonition. of the many entrances into poetics, one that compels me now is what ken belford has called lan(d)guage. let’s speculate that language arises not only from human intention, but also from the land itself (which we, as world-eaters and maybe world-replenishers, somehow manifest). a shift away from what sky lee calls imperial delirium toward recognizing interrelations may mean hearing how water speaks, in an unfamiliar syntax, along with moss and smog, mountains and mycorrhizal mat, musqueam and ktunaxa, lubicon and tahlitan.

artist mike macdonald acknowledges an elder saying that the crime was not only having indigenous languages and cultures stolen from first nations—the (greater) crime was that the people who came here did not learn the cultures of this land. taking a long term view, the invaders/settlers/migrants/visitors can still learn how to listen, to speak nearby (not for), to act with respect. as lee maracle has reminded us, it is the responsibility of those who live on this land to search out the meaning of colonial robbery and figure out how we are going to undo it.

how can writing give back, but in conjunction with other activities and struggles? foraging is one of my coping mechanisms as someone who lives amidst capitalist contradictions—what am i doing in the library, on the internet, at political protests, in the farmer’s markets and the community food co-ops for that matter, if not foraging—for ways to survive and understand crisis and contradiction, but also for a poetics, a way of writing my way through and in the mess. “mess is lore.”

lore is not only a particular body of knowledge or tradition, but also signifies the space between the eye and the bill in a bird or the corresponding region in a reptile or fish. mess is biodiverse. grandmothers from many traditions and proprioception tell me that the eye, the ear, the mouth, the hand, the wing, the fin, the claw, we are all somehow related.

reference points:

Belford, Ken. *Lan(d)guage*. Madeira Park, BC: Caitlin, 2008.

Lee, SKY. Talk at Imagining Asian and Native Women Conference: Deconstructing from Contact to Modern Times, Western Washington University, 2002.

Lew, Walter K., ed. *Premonitions*. New York: Kaya, 1995.

Macdonald, Mike. Artist statement. *Revisions*. Ed. Helga Pakasaar. Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1988.

Maracle, Lee. *Bobbi Lee, Indian Rebel*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1990.

Warshall, Peter. "Symbiosis." *Civil Disobediences: Poetics and Politics in Action*. Eds. Anne Waldman and Lisa Birman. Minneapolis: Coffeehouse Press, 2004.

TYRONE WILLIAMS
A STATEMENT

The work I have done recently has focused on "staging" dialogues between the temporal and spatial dimensions of language—in particular, poetry—and dialogues between a number of individual artists and thinkers whose work has been important in my development as a literary theorist and poet. A great number of the pieces I have "assembled" shuttle back and forth between narrative and collage "effects" (few are, strictly speaking, wholly one or the other; hence the temporal/spatial emphasis throughout) and some of them operate on several narrative levels at once. Thematically speaking, the work is suffused with cultural, political, and philosophical positions, controversies, issues, etc., treated primarily from an avant-gardist/leftist orientation. At the same time these "positions" cannot be reduced to the interpellated subject from which they emanate, an "error" of reading that has characterized some critiques of specific political, cultural, and aesthetic practices.

DARREN WERSHLER - HENRY
POETICS STATEMENT: FINDABLE

What if poetry has left the poem in the same way that Elvis has left the building?

Long after the limo pulled away, the audience was still in the arena, screaming for more. Even after his death, *especially* after his death, Elvis is sighted, replicated, and imitated all of the time, but in radically different contexts. If anything, his death was really the beginning of a wild proliferation of Elvisness. In that process, though, the form and meaning of Elvisness changed (and continues to change) dramatically, adapting to and eliciting new kinds of communities that are interested in having conversations about it, even organizing their entire lives around it. And none of this seems to detract much from the ardor of the original Elvis fans, even if the number of people still waiting in the arena continues to dwindle.

It's not that the poetic can't still be found in poetry; it's just that poetry's not the first place I look for it these days.

The project that interests me is to develop a vocabulary for the poetic at a cultural moment where (a) the production, circulation and consumption of poetry as literature is a minoritarian practice, and (b) the proliferation of the poetic outside of the manifold forms of verse culture is shifting the notion of what poetry is and how it works in the direction of what Nicolas Bourriaud calls "relational aesthetics."

The term "findable" might be part of a vocabulary that describes objects which display poetic qualities but nevertheless aren't conceived of as poems, aren't produced by people who identify as poets, and circulate promiscuously under largely anonymous conditions. Like the "found poem," a "findable" is an empty container, a potential context for discussing the kinds of knobby and irreducible artifacts that manifest the poetic in terms of the conditions of their circulability, iterability, and form. Findables serve many of the social purposes we used to attribute to poetry, not to mention that they consistently (and usually unwittingly) reproduce all of the historic forms of the avant-garde in the context of new media, in a manner that supports Lev Manovich's contentions in "Avant-Garde as Software."

The minimal difference that distinguishes a findable from a found poem is the presence of *metadata*. Traditional poetry has all sorts of information built into its structure that was present not only for aesthetic reasons, but also to encourage circulability—lineation, rhyme, repetition, and other tropes. That information is often present in findables at the level of its manifest content, but there is also a supplementary set of external tags, codes, and keywords that renders findables potentially visible to computerized search. Due to the spreading popularity of mobile computing, smartphones, hotspots, and attendant technologies like RFIDs, QR codes, and shortcodes, findables can be physical or digital objects.

The problem, as always, is the ambiguity of the politics that informs this aesthetics. On one hand, I can imagine findables as congruent with Bruno Latour's notion that part of constructing a world we can all agree to live in is to literally put the "res" (things)

back into the “res publica.” On the other hand, tagging physical objects with metadata seems like the culmination of Philip Agre’s “Capture Model” of privacy, which far exceeds the scope and reach of visual models of panopticism. And there are many places where Bourriaud’s notion of a relational aesthetic is inconsistent and deeply flawed, especially in its championing of an aesthetic that may be indifferent to, perhaps even incapable of, escaping the event horizon of capital.

I have more questions than hunches at this point, but I know that the author-function of poetry will change as a part of this project. Maybe the job is now to spend some time pointing to *poeticity* where and when it occurs, gathering it and tending it in the original sense of the word “anthology,” or, as a nod to Raymond Williams, of “culture.” Remember: gardening is also a critical task.

Findables demonstrate that the poetic works just fine without poets or presses, but that doesn’t mean that there isn’t also room for them. I’ll still buy the odd poetry book, of course, but I’m kind of a boring old fart that way.

-

A findable:

<http://www.jarrattmoody.com/intonation.html>

This is Jarratt Moody’s “Intonation.” After looking at it, Google it. Moody made this animation for a class project on dynamic typography, but it’s spawned a vast conversation around a whole subgenre of people making similar objects outside of the context of found poetry or any reference to Futurism, Pop, or the other touchstones that one might expect. Nevertheless, in terms of quality of execution, visceral appeal and humour, findables are often head and shoulders above the texts that make claims to be the foundation of a new media poetry.

MARK WALLACE

(from *The End of America*)

So many people searching
for the end of America: from here
it's not much, white jeep
cutting tracks through sand, black-suited surfer
fighting into the water, surfboard raised high,
runners, walkers of dogs and babies, blinking lights on the turret
of the Encinas Power Station, a constantly changing
breeze through the palms. Coast Highway slow through town.
Cars, which can't imagine traveling. Beach fires prohibited
except in marked pits, a note to the crucial
need to fear fire. I grab one more instance
of love and rage, impotent and powerful
by turns, looking for more
than I already know. The end of the land, instant myth,
becomes a place to look from, or look away, to walk,
to head on out. All those poets
who seemed certain what they wanted, the ocean
a source of world, result of cosmos,
mystery under the crest of a wave.
Too much is not forgotten but never known,
history no more than the present webbing
distortion of what's temporarily remembered. Money back,
no cash down, no payments this year, good annual rates.

•

A roadmap has a poetics also, on some level a conscious one. But the degree to which the poetics of the roadmap seems a cultural given makes a self-consciously explored geographical poetics necessary, not so much a response to prevailing hierarchies as a reshaping of them.

I've taken a few positions in my life—sometimes even insightful ones—but more often positions have taken me. Rarely has that been

more true than in writing *The End of America*, a project that has helped me explore what it's like to live in a place I never expected to live. Anyone who knows me well can attest that my sense of self is greatly shaped by my east coast urban experience. Like many poets I've often needed money, and when after many years of searching I was offered a position I could stand to take, I took it, but since my options weren't multiple it's not so clear who did the taking. And so this east coast poet found himself in North County San Diego, miles of strip malls proliferating among the dry natural beauty of hills and mountains over which no one has been able to build a railroad. People vote 60% Republican here. The local papers argue that George W. Bush's problem is that his overspending desire to democratize the world makes him too liberal. Luckily so many people live here these days that 40% non-Republicans adds up to several million. Still, I work at a college in hill country and live two blocks from the ocean in a suburbanized beach village around which houses sprawl in every direction except into the water. It's from conditions like these that *The End of America* began.

Actually the project wasn't even my idea. I was talking, as I do often, to poet K. Lorraine Graham about my exhaustion from new conditions at work and not having energy for writing. She suggested that I should just write down what I see. And so *The End of America* began, a few lines every few days. A geography, not a landscape, in the sense that a geography includes how culture and economics and power interact with the natural world. Not a catalog, though it catalogs at times, and not a view from outside, but one that's inside and outside both, alienated in a home that isn't home.

The title has two meanings. I literally live about 1000 feet from where America, at least in one direction, ends. Beyond it is water. Of course many of us are keenly aware of the difference between America and The United States of America. And not only, I hope, because America as a geographical location includes many peoples, cultures, nations, islands and even several continents. For myself at least, and maybe others, the mythical ghost of America as a place where justice and freedom are possible haunts me long after the corpse has been buried. The project struggles with a concept: the end of America, one that many people assert, or want, even as the United States and Canada and Mexico and much else remain operating entities. Sometimes I think I'm working out a dystopic response to Whitman, wrestling with his vision of a free America in the original *Leaves of Grass* while trying to critique the grandiosity with which he wanted the United States to swallow the world.

There are four books so far, each getting along towards whatever completeness they're going to have, and each with a different way of exploring the relation between aesthetics and meaning. I'm not sure yet whether there will be further books. An idea that wasn't my idea, defined by a position that may have taken me more than I took it. That defines fairly neatly some of the problems faced by those of us who, as poets, recognize that the world's condition is not one we have chosen and one which we often struggle against, but one that we nonetheless live within while simultaneously working through a poetics of what might otherwise exist. Our writing is our first example of what this other place might be.

RODRIGO TOSCANO
COLLAPSIBLE POETICS THEATER

from "CORDONED" (a body-movement poem for five players and one reader)

...

why always...

one... (1 & 2 each walk to the other's spot)

as by two... (1 & 2 walk back to their original positions)

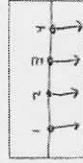


why never (*and forever*)

one

as by...

oh the combos... (1-4 each walk to the middle line (each in their line spots) and face forwards, in neutral stance)



the combos they're... what are they?

not-here not-not-here (1-4 put hands out in front to grab something (once))
not-here not-not-here... (1-4 pull (swiftly) hands in back into neutral stance)



there ... (2 & 4 turn and face each other (no walking))



I could stare ...

at that stare ...

perfect ...

so ...

I know what I know cause I *feel*

I don't feel ...

"perfect" (1 & 4 face backwards, 2 & 3 face to the sides, away from each other)



I've been living, *at best*

passable present
of passable past ...

hole ...

deepening ...

tomorrow ...

•

The text for *Cordoned* can be characterized as a semi-contained social-psychological crisis, a formalization of an incipient collective consciousness from the vantage point of the *collapse* of a previous collective consciousness. The transition from one form of *self-to-group-ratio* to another, a momentary vacuum of un-“theorizable” causality (rendered *bodily* as opposed to “found” (and redirected) *temporally*), avails new tension-and-release points in the Inner Group’s potential to *recombine*. This recombinatory activity is the practical-theoretical root of the Collapsible Poetics Theater (CPT); its projection outward into what CPT calls the Contact Zone (the word “stage” is strenuously avoided!) signals and affirms that it is the Outer Groups’ continual formation (wrought by their respective “inner” dynamics) that is the CPT’s central, albeit anxious, concern.

- (1) How’s it that we’re four distinct entities here?
- (4) How’s it that we’re singular and one-at-a-time?
- (2) How’s it that we’re each one-quarter of one whole?
- (3) How’s it that we’re each four times more than the other?”

(from “Truax Inimical” (a trans-modern anti-masque for four voices))

So that by making sensual the revolutionary-necessary initial breach of a singular consciousness through the performance of Body Movement Parameters (BMPs), the CPT finds itself *already-un-cordoned* (!) in the midst of a speculative metrics of mass subject-making. The muted promise of historical futurity through *common work* is directed at the immediate (asleep but aroused, dreamy but prowling) Now. This Now proves itself to be not only a daunting constructivist task but an alluring one too.

“jerk-ing-it-around-to-see-what-it-knows-and-what-it-can-really-do-ness, to jerk-ing-it-around-to-see-what-it-knows-and-what-it-can-really-do-ness, by jerk-ing-it-around-to-see-what-it-knows-and-what-it-can-really-do-ness, as jerk-ing-it-around-to-see-what-it-knows-and-what-it-can-really-do-ness....”

(from “Clock, Deck, and Movement,” a modular poetic activities piece for five players)

And that the difficulty, now, is to increase a sense of permeability unto people all around (in all of their material relatedness). And so they appear, and then they don’t, and then yes, and then no, and on and on, so that what one *gets* is that the *process* towards Mutual Aid might require tons more approximate poetic actions from *primary* resources, i.e., your political-aesthetic Body-Body (this is more than is being required of us now, in this age of Electronic Text Mining, Rapid De-Industrialization and its Barons).

“knotting-it-up-out-of-no-clue-as-to-how-to-let-her-rip-clean-off-ness, to knotting-it-up-out-of-no-clue-as-to-how-to-let-her-rip-clean-off-ness, by knotting-it-up-out-of-no-clue-as-to-how-to-let-her-rip-clean-off-ness, as knotting-it-up-out-of-no-clue-as-to-how-to-let-her-rip-clean-off-ness, knotting-it-up-out-of-no-clue-as-to-how-to-let-her-rip-clean-off-ness this of . . . kiss! / jolly slap! / kiss! / jolly slap! / kiss! / jolly slap!”

Thus a re-commitment to Group by way of joining with other Groups necessitates an *infolding* of the forms of National (hegemonically-relegated) alienation. This implies real safety within the New Group as well as real peril. The creative tension

between Council Communism / Anarcho-Syndicalism and Socialist State Architectonic Demands, as liberatory (synthetic) vehicle to material elsewhere, gets *decompressed* onto the anti-market of the Contact Zone, from whence comes this (primed-proletarian) trans-nationalist perspectivalism.

- (1) How's it that we're four hundred million distinct entities here?
- (4) How's it that we're singular and one-at-a-time?
- (2) How's it that we're each one four hundred millionth of one whole?
- (3) How's it that we're each four hundred million times more than the other?

This is to say that the CPT intends to stand up to the local *Society for Human Resource Management*, and spits on all crowd-sourcing poeries that buttress such societies.

But not to stare endlessly into the spectacle of counter-ideological auto-erotics, only to be *recombined* by System the very minute after. Thus the CPT calls for actual response-time measurements and reflex-capability to capitalist time-&-space compression.

- (1) Life is *pulse* really
- (3) And there's compression
- (2) And there's decompression
- (4) Panoramic but seen from within

CATRIONA STRANG

17 – A kindred problem arose

A catalogue, in which we witness the convergence of forces mercantile, hygienic, and military, and the concurrent rise of the parasitic elements.

45 – shawl passage

- I. ? (in the eaves)
- II. Phantasmagoria
- III. Progress

[these MUST follow the same trajectory
i.e., la spécialité]

43 – disorderly, or libertinism
Chiefly transposable visor sucks

51 – Shawl again, but presented as living images, as intransigent as “a careerist in the service of a usurper” (I have long been a generous donor). Here we expose the slurry wall, for a series of highly articulated slopes do not reflect at ease, or vainly exceed the hired sit-down/stand-up presumably left behind. Structure, circulation, interior organization: are they not worth the increased expanse? What below-grade uses would a completely illegal structure incur?

[Note: amend obsolete passages]

•

And my “statement,” which isn’t mine:

“Instead of having matters made clearer, I should like to have them made even more obscure.

Il faut toujours augmenter le trouble.” —Georges Braque

BRIAN KIM STEFANS
POETICS STATEMENT

Some new techniques I've been using, or even "technologies" that I'm "developing":

I've done some very recent explorations in dynamically generated, animated, largely scriptural typefaces. These letterforms are redrawn at up to 60 frames a second, with various randomization methods determining how the letter is drawn, how often, where in the screen space it is placed, etc. I'm taking the word "draw" quite literally—I want each typeface to look handwritten, taking with it the aura of a psychological profile that we generally read into "handwriting."

Because these letterforms are defined by points that can be manipulated, it will be quite easy to "morph" between letterforms and other types of drawing (the impetus for this project was to recreate the charming materiality of children's drawings). The letters can also waver between something totally abstract, something legible (icon), and something representational. Other elements—small videos, photographs, entire video games, sound, animation (à la "Dreamlife of Letters"), etc.—will also be incorporated into these pieces.

Artists that I've been thinking about include Cy Twombly, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Robert Grenier, Steve McCaffery, Philip Guston, Jeremy Blake, David Crawford and Stan Brakhage (both of whom inspired my earlier series of "Flash Polaroids"), Clark Coolidge, Jenny Holzer, William Kentridge, Dextro, Robert Rauschenberg, Rob Fitterman/Dirk Rowntree (their "Cedars Estates"), etc. Since conceiving of this general idea, I've had a flood of associations that have touched off ideas for future works, so many that I wonder if my idea is simply not original. We'll see.

These will not be web pieces but rather wall projections. I'll make a few for the web but I really want these to be viewed publicly, in a large format, like something between a mural and a movie. These pieces—which I am calling "Scriptors" for now, as they are machines that produce "scripture"—will often involve poetic texts that either I or someone else has written "for the page," and thus will help collapse some of the public/private boundary that is familiar to readers of poetry.

JULIANA SPAHR
POETIX STATEMENT ATTEMPT

(from the *Transformation*)

Eventually, they decided to let both the absurdities and the productive tensions around these historical ways of categorizing people that were imposed on everyone by imperialism be a starting point. They began making elaborate charts to try to figure out this issue of where they should be on the bus, in the room, on the globe, this issue of belonging that felt as if it hit them in the palm of their writing hand. The chart that they attempted to construct categorized the options for writers who like them had arrived from afar. The chart would begin with two categories: writers from afar who dealt with the island in their writing and writers from afar who did not. Then each of these two categories could be further broken into two other categories. The writers from afar who did not deal with the island category would become split into writers from afar who did not deal with the island in their work because they thought the island and its culture were small and uninteresting and writers from afar who did not deal with the island in their work because they felt that anything they might say as someone who came from afar would just be further cultural appropriation. So in other words the category of not dealing with the island in their writing would become split into those who did this out of disregard and those who did this out of respect. Similarly, among those who were from afar and who dealt with the island in their writing, there would also be two other sub-categories: those from afar who felt they could just deal with the island because they were there, that when they moved to the island from afar they gained the right to talk about it, and those from afar who felt they had no right but rather the responsible thing to do in their writing was to talk about the island, especially to write about how the island was colonized in order to keep stating this thing because it was not necessarily acknowledged by everyone everywhere. This last sub-category of those who felt that they had a responsibility to write about how the island was colonized in their writing and yet also had to constantly position themselves as not from the island often wrote things that were endlessly, almost absurdly, self-reflective. They themselves were in this last category. But they did not think that their position on this chart was necessarily the correct position. If they knew anything at all, they knew they could never fully avoid the many problems of being a writer from afar in a place so colonized. But they also felt that they had to act as if it might be possible to write something that was not the wrong thing because to not act as if this might be possible was to risk being even more a part of the problem. They did not want to be like those who had a dismissive lack of interest in the island nor like those who were filled with anger at the island because the island induced in them funny feelings of being out of place and strange or made them think about things they would rather not think about such as how they were colonizers.

•

I confess that I kept avoiding writing anything on my compositional position(s) and/or poetics and how they relate to the thematic issues of the colloquium. Not out of lack of interest but out of the endless interest that comes with having been stuck on these issues for several years now and getting no closer to any answer. I am submitting here, thus, a revision of an old questioning from a talk that I gave at a conference at UCSC a few years ago. But it is the best questioning that I am capable of now if I think about responding to the issues raised by the organizers in "here we might ask."

When I was in graduate school in the 90s, a lot of time in graduate seminars was spent arguing about that Auden line "poetry makes nothing happen." The truth or untruth of this line was something we debated as if our lives depended on it. We never really looked at the poem. We didn't mention Yeats. We refused to complicate the line, to wonder if poetry makes something happen by making nothing happen. We read with a sledgehammer because to some extent, our critical and poetic lives did depend on whether poetry makes things happen or not. The truth or untruth of this line would impact our writing and how we saw other's writings, would privilege a different set of works, would require us to direct our attention differently.

I'm sure some people left those seminars agreeing with Auden. And some left them disagreeing. I left them confused. I left with those questions about does poetry matter or is poetry enough (or in this context: "How is poetry a political field of action? What can poetry un/do?") unanswered except on a personal level. I could tell a personal story about how poetry mattered to me, how it had dramatically changed my thinking about things and how it had reshaped my brain in ways that I couldn't have done on my own or even with the help of various psychoactive drugs. It was clear to me that poetry changed my social life very profoundly (the huge number of poets that I count as friends) and changed my intellectual life also (how, say, Ginsberg's *Howl* blew my mind in high school starting off a whole chain of events where I realized I didn't have to take the path of right wing bigotry and narrow mindedness because my thinking that wasn't the way to go had a whole literature that supported me). I was changed. My mind was changed.

But somehow, for reasons that I still can't fathom, despite the intensity and urgency and endlessness of these graduate school debates, poetry's role in various political movements was never mentioned. We were in Buffalo but we never mentioned that a few miles down the road a mere thirty years ago the prisoners of Attica prepared to fight for showers and education by circulating copies of Claude McKay's "If We Must Die." At least one of us had a boyfriend who owned a copy of *Poetry and Militancy in Latin America* but we never quoted from this essay where Dalton states that "the poet must acquaint all his comrades with Nazim Hikmet or Pablo Neruda, and give them a clear concept of cultural work within the context of general revolutionary activity." We didn't even mention the much more moderate William Carlos Williams statement that "It is difficult / to get the news from poems / yet men die miserably every day / for lack / of what is found there" even while we often talked about Williams. One of us wore a Che t-shirt but we didn't discuss why he might see the "new impulse" of "artistic inquiry" a crucial part of the new man. We didn't turn to Zapata and quote him saying "It is not only by shooting bullets in the battlefields that tyranny is overthrown, but also by hurling ideas of redemption, words of freedom and terrible anathemas against the hangman that people bring down dictators and empires." We didn't think about what Haunani Kay Trask might mean when she describes her poetry as "both de-colonization and re-creation";

• and as "expose and celebration at one and the same time"; as "a furious, but nurturing *aloha* for Hawai'i." We didn't mention Mao's two fronts of the pen and the gun. Or Mayakovsky's claim that one must begin poetic work only after one first has "the presence of a problem in society, the solution of which is conceivable only in poetical terms." We never once mentioned the attention Fanon and Ngugi and Gramsci and Lenin and Cabral and others give to art and literature's role in political education.

I have listed here a mixed bag of characters. Most of them would be considered leftist but that could, perhaps should, be argued; do I need to add that by quoting these figures I do not at the same time necessarily endorse the various political programs for which they want to use poetry? Another list, and a more complicated discussion of this issue, might mention poetry's ties with nationalist and colonial projects; might dwell more on the role of the epic in the recent rise of Serbian nationalism; might ponder the uses of a poem like Wordsworth's "Daffodils" in colonialism. Poetry is notably resistant to any one political position.

The debate about the Auden line was for us a sort of blinder. The debate about if poetry matters or not was one that kept us from harder, bigger issues, that let us off from having to discuss once poetry did matter, then what, what should we, could we DO? It let us not have to move on to consider things like who we wrote with and on and why or who we read with and on and why or even who we talked with and on and why. We avoided the now what. Now what, who or what do we respect. Now what, who or what do we publish in our journal. Now what, who do we invite to read in our series. Now what, what do we write about and how. Now what, where do we put our bodies, our time, our commitments. Now what?

ROD SMITH

PREFACE TO A TWENTY VOLUME POETICS STATEMENT

The theoretical abandonment of the absolute is rarely accompanied by its disappearance: the absolute returns in a ghostly form, haunting precisely those discourses that claim to have left it behind, and that continue to orient themselves around its evacuation. Nevertheless, this half-waking from the half-dream of absolute reason returns us to a primal dialectical scene, to a war for recognition now without stakes. In the farcical relativism that results, dominance is ever more explicitly a matter not of truth but of force. And if we discover that we have never gone further, that force is all that ever mattered, can we say that the dialectic ever occurred at all? —Paul Mann

Both belief and denial throw existence into question. —Carla Harryman

The elements of the Integrated Spectacle as outlined by Debord (my parenthetical examples):

1. Incessant technological renewal. (microsoft, the war on terror, etc.)
2. Integration of state and economy. (greenspan, the war on terror, etc.)
3. Generalized secrecy. (nafta, the war on terror, etc.)
4. Unanswerable lies. (east timor, the war on terror, etc.)
5. An eternal present. (etc.)

The Kootenay School has always represented, for me, but I think for many, not only a radical poetics but also a radical politics. An insistence on political/ideological thinking as inseparable from artistic practice. Recent years have been incredibly disappointing for anyone with an imagination of political affect, much less effect. Where this leaves us, or leads us, given the immensely pressing environmental problems we confront, is more than a little troubling. It is not surprising that a hollow message of hope should energize the spectacle in the form of an Obama at this point in time. Of course I will "vote" for him, to the extent that that's what we do in my country. Derrida's "democracy is always yet to come" seems all too exact.

A quick vocabulary towards several poetics: Biopower. Submodernism. Cognitive limits. "Art can only be erotic." Parking. "Wow, humans." Land. Class. Differential disjunctions. Les Demoiselles d'Avignon. Transcendental bêtise. Non-idiomatic. Avant-garde (not experimental). Strategic soot. Zazen dérive. Plouffe tree. Population inflation. Swan-vomit. Paris. Anti-literacy. Felted poetry. Loscil. Frogs. The book is said to be a duck. Meritocratic rhizome. Late Godard. Timezoney. Traumatic betrayal. Lynch-Bages. Art for art's sake = populism. Attack and decay. Alexander Hamilton. Nonsense. Thought as action. Junkspace.

My poems of the last several years have explored a variety of approaches. One, an attempt at the non-idiomatic, following Derek Bailey. Also, an exploration of stupidity as primary American ground—i.e., Flarf. Also, recombinatory 'lyricisms' following on my first three books. Also, a series of intentionally fragmentary pieces called "Snips," dedicated to Steve Lacy. Here's one:

If the left wants to redistribute the wealth
then they need to get really rich

And I'll close with 4 thoughts on the meaning of poetry:

1. What Benjamin at the end of "One-Way Street" refers to as "the ecstatic trance" is neither an exception to our daily experience nor available only through ritual. Rather, it is a precondition of life.
2. Disembodied voice speaking as if through a tube: A position must not only be held, but advanced. The surrounding territory must come under its influence and control.
3. It is because art is an act of individuated cognition (even when collaborative) that Adorno's statement "Art, no matter how tragic it may appear, tends toward the affirmative" is true.
4. "I have never reached the true centre, where art is pure politics."

COLIN SMITH
POETICS STATEMENT

...Redefined /
as "product," we /
boycott ourselves.

That's from a longish poem called "Play," and it nags in an irritable way at my attention. Which convinces me it's sentient or toxic or useful. I'm fond of having facetious, totalized statements like that living on the back porch of my poetry. Like some kind of fruitful monster. Whether it tears me into chunks when I step out to feed it, or I manage to convince it to pull apart the Pentagon with its bare teeth, I don't much care.

Because monsters are many and I am but one.

I'm keen on a poetics comprised of total refusal and complete saturnalia in some hectic balance. My own poetry labour is a gorgeous and anguished struggle to miscegenate the late lyric with the "language" poem with the liberationist chant. To an end of creating a text that has the ability to slip into the interstitial spaces between categories, and the vitality to begin banging great damage into those walls. The result I hope for is moral chaos; new angles on old -isms (especially those involving the words "sex," "race," and "class"); and nondenominational laughter. Any twist I can awk to perwiddle normative readings of just about anything.

I think poetry is the most intense language form we have in our DNA, capable of giving maximum flexibility and complication to binaries like clear/opaque and singularity/multiplicity. Short of feeding children and building housing, I like to think there isn't anything poetry can't do, but this is tempered with the knowledge that we live in a very limiting world. Your Facebook is checking you out. Go ahead, I dare you to scale that fence and wander about that vacant lot. I'll try to make bail. I'll bring cigarettes.

I would be pleased to be a car bomb (but never an MX missile) in aid of the following:

That a wholesale aggression that retails human rights (now more globalized than ever) must always be contested.

That belligerent hoseheads and worldfuckers who break things (including whole populations) and imagine they have the unalloyed liberty to leave the shop without paying for it should be apprehended in a Citizen's Arrest.

That no resistance tactic is taken off the menu.

To hold a wicked glee for the carnivalesque aspects of any dynamic or element in the world, while believing in the veracity of none of them.

K A I A S A N D

A P O E T I C S O F J O U R N A L I S M & T H E O F F - K I L T E R

tiny arctic ice

Inhale, exhale

6.6 billion people breathing

Some of us in captivity

Our crops far-flung

Prison is a place where children sometimes visit

Jettied from Japan, edamame is eaten in England

Airplane air is hard to share

I breathe in what you breathe out, stranger

We send tea leaves to distant friends

Araucana chickens won't lay eggs in captivity

Airplanes of roses lift above Quito mountains

When the fish diminish, folks find jobs in prisons

Sometimes children visit

Terminator seeds are hard to share

And the fish diminish

The roses, the tea, and the edamame, far-flung

The roses, the tea and you

You breathe in what I breathe out, friend

•

i. documentation & investigation

Bound by norms, paid by multinational corporations, many journalists are working within formidable constraints. Why leave journalism to journalists, news to news services? Many poets work out of a tradition of becoming the media, "by conceiving of art as dynamic documentation," as poet Carol Mirakove writes. Poetry is a place where one's engaged social practices can be structured.

I admire journalists' urge to communicate, and as a poet, I pursue *how* that communication might occur, with attention to concerns of equality, from writer to reader, society to society.

In her discussion of "Relational Investigative Poetics," Kristin Prevallet writes that rather than waiting for inspiration, the poet "looks around and begins collecting, accreting, gathering." One moves into subjects, reviving investigative journalism off-kilter, kiltering anew. One "tracks" and "traces," to draw from the etymology of *investigate*. My first sustained effort at this was with a long poem, "Aquifer," an investigation into competing demands on water. I researched; reworked documents; took notes, walks, and photographs. Investigation, documentation, inquiry—these are major modes of my poetic practice, and I am indebted to Mirakove and Prevallet, as well as many other poets, for their articulations of these ideas.

ii. investigation of dystopic documents

An intriguing tension in poetry is the multiple uses of its material, language. Language is structured to set into motion practices that many poets strive to document, reveal, decay, stop. Language is structured into documents that ravage human bodies and ecological connections, whether through finance schemes and trade practices, torture, denial of health care, war, and other abuses of power. It is structured into documents that further inequalities.

I have begun working with dystopic documents as small systems of language. The same reservoir of words can be structured toward acts of dystopic conditions and acts of poetry.

My first collage in this series worked with the "Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007," legislation currently held up in committee in the United States Congress. I built a love lyric from this document. One does not wait for paradise to find love, but builds love out of the tension of daily life. And within this tension, I ask, why should I privilege the poem? Perhaps the poem should simply set off the document, bring a reader to the document.

I plan to build a set of dystopic document collages for the Positions Colloquium, including some portions of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

iii. interview as social composition

Both my parents were print journalists, and my mother showed me how silence matters in an interview; one waits for other people to find words, rather than speaking too quickly for them. I am interested in how I might incorporate the social practice of the interview into my poetry, waiting for the words someone else will speak, too.

"Tiny arctic ice," the citation I've included for this collection, is a poem that exists as a small whole within a larger, future poem, one that I will build through social composition, accruing more details of globalization, neoliberalism, and global warming. How might composition itself be globalized? How might its basic unit of the line be created in languages other than English, authored in collaboration with others whose geopolitical vantage point varies from mine? How might I move from mining source text as a passive subject to the active participation of the interviewee?

Turning back to Mirakove's description of "dynamic documentation," I hope this poem extends as dynamic social documentation with the first edition completed for the Positions Colloquium.

iv. the poem exceeds the page

As Stereolab sang in "Three-Dee Melodie," we are "left to all the creativity we must find." This suggests to me that concerns for righting/writing inequalities demand many creative forms. Whether or not a poem is written, a consistent poetic practice informs a way of seeing and acting. I challenge myself to determine when, also, not to write a poem. *This poem is written elsewhere.*

Works Cited

Mirakove, Carol. "Anxieties of Information." *Traffic* 1:1 (2005).
Prevallat, Kristin. "Writing is Never by Itself Alone: Six Mini-Essays on Relational Investigative Poetics." *Fence* 6:1 (Spring/Summer 2003).

LISA ROBERTSON & STACY DORIS
DETACHED SENTENCES ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE PERFUME RECORDIST

We have been making field recordings of 18th C perfumes.

Was it Robespierre who said that rosewater could not cause a revolution? The perfume recordist disagrees. We will know revolution by its sillage.

Not all flowers can be distilled. Some must be composed.

Headphones are a revolutionary coiffure. Wearing them, one soundfield is superimposed on another. There is instantly metaphor.

We conjecture that our field recordings will contribute delicately and pervasively to the destruction of global capital, in part via the following process:

The perfume recordist follows scents as foreign yet naturalized utterance in the matrix of sound, and naturalized yet foreign utterance in the matrix of sound, and sound as foreign yet naturalized and naturalized yet foreign utterance in the matrix of scent.

And also this: The perfume recordist does not seek to preserve a moment identified as origin. Instead she seeks sonic situations amenable to mixture and transposition.

Perfume recordists are for the synthesis of complexity. We begin with complexity and then we compose complexity.

The perfumier mixes two scents in order to create a third. This is a speculative synthesis.

We will call it perfume when we listen.

We will call it listening when we mix a scent.

We will call it metaphor when the two are simultaneous and bountiful.

Revolution is metaphor, the liveliest artifice.

With perfume too the vibrational juice applied to body and garments is carried across wild trajectories. We are all invasive species.

Poetry and perfumery are (arts of) matchmaking. And as we know from Socrates, matchmaking is at the heart of maieutics, philosophy's midwifery core.

The perfume recordist hears Avicenna's eighth century rosewater mix with the yellow pondlily of the Kootenay language. The mixture changes the present.

Le parfum enregistré ne doit donner à entendre que ce qu'il est, laisser paraître les marques de sa découverte, la réalité de son invention. Il ne représente pas. Il ne cherche pas la représentation. Il est d'abord sans intention, fait de vibrations trouvés, de rencontres accidentelles, de correspondances imprévues.

In other words, the perfume recordist questions the long and colonial traditions of culling from the field and then constructing narratives of origin, by virtue of misapplied method.

The history of smell and sound, even more than the histories of sight, taste, and touch, are almost lost to history. We would coax out the whispers and whiffs of seemingly vanished waters.

Listening is a secret ingredient. It is the political sense.

Polis is a sound envelope.

The perfume recordist aims for the mixture of vibrational fields. No vibration is proper to any single site. All sound and scent travel in infinite waves. The work of the perfume recordist is impropriety.

Fragrance is harmonious on the air
as music is a fragrance to the ear
the very silence of perfume offsets its subtlety
—Mina Loy for Helena Rubenstein

Perfume recordists challenge Principles of Contradiction, since smell is at once wave and molecule, since we can and in every case do hear A and not A at the same time.

Politics travel in infinite waves, especially when smeared or spritzed on the pulsepoints of the body.

Vérité des faux raccords. Laisser les choses en plan. Éviter les liaisons, respecter les intervalles. Géométrie plane. La composition est le contraire de la mise en scène. Elle ne sert pas une histoire en développant une ligne de fuite. Elle est sans perspective, à plat, et à porter.

"Sound envelopes" are comprised of 3 main components: attack, sustain, and delay. Doesn't perfume behave this way? Its initial impact, its matured duration as odour, its gradual decomposition? We're interested in the impermanence of revolution.

In revolution, politics becomes perfume. Composition is the perfumier's art. Politics are impermanent compositions.

Solitude in perfumes is an aspect of scale.

We're listening for the silent part of politics.

Perfume counters must become the Jacobin clubs of the new revolution.

Certain perfumes are described as retreats when they are really attacks.

The perfume recordist's activity is of five kinds, namely, listening, transposing, fixing, placing, maintaining. All of these may be taken under one head, composing.

Perfume is natural philosophy secularized.

In the recording of 18th century perfumes, we address relationships to orality. Irony can function as an extra sense. We wonder about the relationship between irony and injustice. We make no assumptions.

Yet some perfume recordists adore irony. We think our senses themselves are equivocal. Irony and sensing record the simultaneity of meanings. Some perfume recordists are not interested in the luxury of singularity. Orality is outside authorship. Orality transposes, spreads, leaves behind it a wafty sillage.

Must the recording of 18th century perfumes—like metaphor itself, like smell itself—place Paris alongside New York alongside Oakland without much concern for origins or cultural differences? Yes it must. Are not recording and perfume themselves differential practices? The perfume recordist celebrates and transposes uncanny mixture, not origin.

Musk says we are not more important than other animals. Mimesis plays across species.

Intention does not precede action. Or there is an incommensurable intention which is nevertheless retroactive.

"So you are Wavists?" Yes.

JUDY RADUL
WHITE NEEDS INTERRUPTING

The following is an excerpt from a long text I wrote for a reading at the KSW space on Georgia and Robson (I think that was in 2000) in some kind of desolate food court. I refer to it in the text. I adapted a lot of this text for the video I am working on for the Positions Colloquium.

Looked At as Looking At
Running: A movie (water) and Everybody's in it. Lights, cameras, the paycheck is private.

All the extras walk on hiring material walking foreground background and periphery. A middle space for the principals.

Monitor II: Surveillance on location
Silent running ketchup lake. You use a hammer to make a video box. To watch the birds. To find out they weren't watching you.
Evidence of innocence.

Cut out the night. A wise angle covers every fantasy. More than two cameras came off into the mouth of unknown reality. That brown on brown starling flew by. Suspicious & Suspiciously v across the monochromatic sky. A branch below sat empty. Suspect witnesses.

Camera: 12 on monitor 4
Don't empty the there by filling the future. Fall toward the Never! The description that bit me came at me light a light. I saw the eyes filmed over myself filming as if floating out of my corporeal form to cope with nothing compares to this level of endorsement. Little pricks ease uncomfortably sharp signification.

No catering. Extras all walk on.

Camera: Was
Hard living, as in, the apparatus' aspirations. Rediscovered us later.
Dust in the projector's beam of light acting as the symbol for infinity. Acting again.

Camera: Was Waiting
Walk into the food court brand new desolate attraction. Touches coin. Touches counter touches cup touches ketchup container touches coin touches cup touches edge touches paper touches upper lip touches cup. Muffins imitate a thing. Carefully, ventures advertise from inside real dreams. The sky initiates the purchase by individuals of really expensive, industrial-grade

appliances to meet the code of the court in the heart of the mural. Floors look to ceilings and ceilings look to floors. Windows overlook streets. It's called pleasure to sip the cup a little emptier.

Everybody with their head in their hands—then switch.

•

There was a time when my work was more directly involved in poetics and writing. However, for the past several years my primary medium has been video. In approaching this commission I wondered, what can video bring to writing? After some initial ideas which involved text on the screen and alternating sound tracks, I started to think about silence and quietude—the differing backgrounds for speech. With the written word the white field of the page can be used insinuate an absence, yet this blank functions primarily as a semiotic convention. Similarly, during a reading the poet can fall silent, but the speaking subject, even silent, tends to remain in the foreground or at least continually return the 'silence' to a vector between speaker and audience. Somehow I thought that video could bring a different sedimentation—one in which the 'background' might rise up or not exist.

The silence I am thinking of is a silence only in relation to speech, not a sonic absence (already proved by John Cage to be mythic). As I am currently at work on another video installation about the court of law, the speech formations of Question, Answer, and Judgment were on my mind and I employed them in this work. Also I began to consider the 'right' to non-response coupled with the problematic 'right' to 'free speech.' It seemed to me that a political silence might certainly be a refusal to produce meaning in the dominant language but it might also aspire to produce a new listening, a listening for something else. In a culture that privileges speech as the active principal and equates speech and freedom, the right to silence is instituted only at the point in which speech may be injurious. The 'right' to be heard, or the value of listening, particularly listening for what hasn't been said don't make much of an appearance in our cultural imagination. I developed a dialog of question, answer, judgment, attempting in some places to break that and open not only the answer but the judgment and the question to silence. The first question is always what is your name.

Words, not so much to say something but rather to open a listening and a saying, but not a said. Not the page, not the wall, not the thing, not the being, but the sound of everything. Quietude is the undifferentiated sonic fullness, the already thereness from which something arises, but can not stand (physically or sonically) completely apart. Sonic ambience is akin to what Barthes calls "the analogical plentitude" of a photograph. In addition to the dialog tacks we recorded an ambient track with four separate microphones at every location. I want to avoid the seductive idea that the "world" is speaking (and therefore is meaningful and intelligible) while still exploring the raised texture of background sounds particularly during moments of non response on the part of the speakers. No one means to rustle the paper, they merely want to turn the page and yet, they do rustle the paper, or perhaps, rather, the paper rustles. Somehow ambient sound is an instance of a sometimes decipherable articulation without language or an almost model of non interiorized 'speech'.

PILLS

CITATIONS FROM RECENT WORK, STATEMENT, REFERENCES

(from *XCP: Cross Cultural Poetics* 15/16, 2006)

ENCLOSURE: The end of collective control over the means of subsistence brought about through the collaboration of property owners and the state. First theorized by Marx as "primitive accumulation," the enclosures signaled "the historic movement which changes producers into waged workers." Marx described the enclosures as a discrete stage at the dawn of capitalism, in which the English countryside ("the commons") was literally enclosed by fences, thereby uprooting peasant communities and transforming subsistence agriculture into the industrial production of commodities intended for distribution on an open market. The term has been resuscitated recently by autonomist Marxists, who argue that enclosure is in fact a continual process—the very foundation of capitalist reproduction, witnessed today in SAPs (the manufacturing and management of a global "debt crisis"). The Midnight Notes Collective argues that the terrain of these "New Enclosures" is both immaterial (the internet, information technology, communication) and profoundly material, transforming the very fabric of life itself (genetic engineering, seed patents, privatized water, etc.). Historically, popular response to the old enclosures included arson, theft, property destruction, and rioting. While certain wings of the contemporary anarchist movement have embraced this "diversity of tactics" [see LUMPENPROLETARIAT below], most replies to the New Enclosures have been expressed as a desire to "Reclaim the Commons." Such nostalgia for a lost "organic society" was critiqued by Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City*. As the British autonomist collective Aufheben notes, in advanced capitalist nations the pressing task is not to reclaim the commons, but rather to transform capital into a commons. [RF]

LUMPENPROLETARIAT: The surplus population said to exist outside of the productive apparatuses of capitalism. Riff-raff. Bums. Vagabonds. Beggars. Jailbirds. Hooligans. Lazzaroni. Blouson noir. Goldbrickers. Petty criminals. Ne'er-do-wells. Prostitutes. Hobos. Junkies. Rotters. Knaves. Defectives. Scavengers. Thugz. Layabouts. Despised by Marxists. "The 'dangerous class', the social scum, that passively rotting mass" (Marx-Engels 494). "The harshest measures of martial law are impotent against outbreaks of the lumpenproletarian sickness" (Luxemburg 74). Adored by anarchists. "They are 'individual bawlers' who offer no 'guarantee' and have 'nothing to lose,' and so nothing to risk" (Stirner 147). "That rabble . . . which alone is powerful enough today to inaugurate the Social Revolution and bring it to triumph" (Bakunin 48). Central for mid-to-late twentieth century anti-colonial & national liberation struggles. "At the core of the lumpenproletariat . . . the rebellion will find its urban spearhead" (Fanon 103). "We downed that [Marxist] view when it came to applying it to the black American ghetto-dweller because we were off the block too, Stagoleses" (Seale 153). Recent theoretical debate revolves around whether the term "resists the totalizing and teleological pretensions of the dialectic" (Stallybrass 81) or leads to "bolstering of identity cut-off from social relations" (Thoburn 436). "You are not born dangerous-class. You become so the moment you cease to acknowledge the values and constraints of a world from which you have broken free: we are basically referring here to the necessity of wage labour. This line is one that very precisely separates the working classes from the dangerous classes" (Becker-Ho). [AV]

STANDARD ENGLISH: The syntactic, grammatical, and lexical form of written English enforced as the norm. Non-Standard uses of English are stigmatized as “errors” and as signs of failed or incomplete enculturation or socialization. The ideology of Standard English maintains an idea of a pure, transcendent, acontextual correct English in denial of the varieties of English as a global language and the realities of everyday speaking and writing. In the English-speaking settler colonies the failure to reproduce Standard English is also taken as a sign of the failure of a migrant or indigenous person to integrate into the dominant white national culture. Educational institutions demand that teachers apprehend, detain, and “correct” students on the basis of their ability to reproduce Standard English, putting teachers in the role of language cop and border guard. In return, English language, literature, and composition prerequisites for other programs justify the institutional space English departments occupy, and return to them the sense of moral purpose that feminist, queer, marxist, and postcolonial critics had threatened to relieve. It is often argued that “students [need] access to those standard forms of the language linked to social and economic prestige” (Pennycook), but writing that aspires to social and economic prestige would need to conform to the dialect of the socially and economically prestigious, a dialect that may be antagonistic to the representational requirements of most users of English. [R]

•

KSW: “How is poetry a political field of action? What can poetry un/do? What do ‘limits’ mean for poetry? What are the crucial issues in taking a social (ideological) position within a poetics today? What relationships arise between cultural production and broader social projects?”

RF, for PILLS: Historically, the political agency of the avant-garde has been understood largely through the politicization of artistic form, and through a critique of the relationship between “the work” and the process of its institutionalization within the academic field of “art history.” The avant-garde artist, in this account, rejects the commodification of praxis (lived experience) in favour of a renewed, direct engagement with “everyday life,” producing works which are intended to interfere with or empty out exchange value and to return to the work its political and social agency (cf. Bürger, *Theory of the Avant Garde*). Or, in another formulation, the avant-garde work is viewed as a “pre-figuration” of new social relations, a site in which “structural homologies” (Bourdieu) between the work and the world (read: political economy) may be read, struggled with, and rearticulated. In both of these readings, we see a foundational formalist axiom: namely, that “the work” is capable of producing certain affective experiences that are denied to the audience due to the instrumentalization of life under capitalism. For instance, the “noise and politics” magazine *Datacide* describes the political efficacy of avant-garde sound this way:

Musical time is radically different from the time of capital in which our public life proceeds [M]usical duration is measurable only in terms of sensibilities, tensions and emotions . . .

Thus, the aesthetic or poetic practice of creating “radically different” temporal, spatial, emotional, cognitive experiences—what Jameson in *Marxism and Form* calls “the administration of linguistic shocks”—becomes “political” at that point where it overlaps with what could be called an activist project of “consciousness raising”: both are aimed at the production of “experiences” which

open cognitive space for the emergence of "new subjectivities." This affect, one hopes, will (somehow) open the possibility for more material or tangible transformations in a broader social field.

In the case of contemporary avant-garde music, the transformation of lived, material social relations by the experience or reception of the work has had some success. The "temporary autonomous zone" of the rave or the festival, as limited and recuperable as it was, at least allowed for the exploration of alternative forms of sociality, largely via the poetics of duration: in other words, there was a more or less concrete relationship between the temporal duration of the work (whether measured in BPMs or in the total duration of the gathering/performance) and the emergence of new subjectivities and social relations. Alternative sociality is, in this case, consequential to the experience of temporality in the work: both meet in "real [historical] time."

In the case of contemporary avant-garde poetry, however, we feel it must be said that a concrete relationship between the work and its reception in the social field is absent, and that the promise of new forms of social organization is deferred for too long. To be clear, we're not calling for greater "efficacy" (Andrews) and we're not lamenting the absence of a literary avant-garde "sub-culture" that might surround our work; rather, we mean that the affective potential of poetry is neutralized by the extent to which it fails to materialize as, or to directly influence, social organization. Because of its theorization as working mainly through the production of "cognitive effects"—a form of "cerebral compensation"—that are mediated through cultural and academic institutions, the politics of the literary avant-garde are more or less exhausted in the work. In short, there are few, if any, material sites in which avant-garde poetics become more than pre-figurative. [Note: The KSW, as a writer-run collective that is often in an antagonist relationship to other actors in the cultural and political fabric of Vancouver and Canada, could, we think, be understood as an attempt to address this limitation.]

"What do 'limits' mean for poetry?" you ask. PILLS is interested in approaching this question by straying collectively into the badlands that lie between avant-garde poetry and radical social struggle. What can anti-capitalist, decolonization, and other autonomous social movements tell us about language? What can the avant-garde poetics of the last half-century tell us about the police? In preparing for tentative forays into this terrain, and in addition to the terms we have defined above, we have found the concepts of affinity, autonomy, and recomposition to be particularly helpful in charting a course of investigation and action—in establishing our "position," so to speak. We hope to nuance these concepts in the context provided by the work of the writers and artists gathering in Vancouver this summer.

References

- Andrews, Bruce. "Poetry as Explanation, Poetry as Praxis." *Paradise and Method: Poetics and Practice*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern UP, 1996.
- Bakunin, Mikhail. *Marxism, Freedom and the State*. London: Freedom Press, 1950.
- Becker-Ho, Alice. "The Essence of Jargon" in Roger Farr, ed., *Parser I* (May 2007).
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977.
- Bürger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984.

- Cleaver, Harry. *Reading Capital Politically*. San Francisco: AK/AntiTheses, 2000.
- Crowley, Tony. *The Politics of Discourse: The Standard Language Question in British Cultural Debates*. London: Macmillan, 1989. *Datacide*. 18 June 2008. <<http://datacide.c8.com/>>.
- Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1965.
- Hage, Ghassan. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Marxism and Form*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1971.
- Luxemburg, Rosa. *The Russian Revolution*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961.
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. *Collected Works*. Volume VI. New York: International Publishers, 1976.
- Midnight Notes. *New Enclosures*. Jamaica Plain, MA: 1990.
- "Negri, Hardt, and Immaterial Labour." *Aufheben* 14 (2006).
- Pennycook, Alastair. *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*. New York: Longman, 1994.
- Seale, Bobby. *A Lonely Range*. New York: New York Times Books, 1978.
- Stallybrass, Peter. "Marx and Heterogeneity: Thinking the Lumpenproletariat." *Representations* 31 (Summer 1990): 69-95.
- Stirner, Max. *The Ego and His Own*. New York: Benjamin Tucker, 1907.
- Thoburn, Nicholas. "Difference in Marx: The Lumpenproletariat and the Proletarian Unnamable." *Economy and Society* 31:3 (August 2002): 434-460.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. New York, NY: Oxford, 1973.

DECORUM
Dazzle Camo

foulard stringing
nutfuck
saevus
bypass road
ungeneration of Ypres
disenyounger

ronical bonioughs
bombus musca
audax
clentch
zentä?
biltung romanque
stammeph
stammereph?
kirjoitlaa
dintra
Bucaedae
'm'l breerty-vervex

tarmty xva 'im
t.jean t.marie
vetulus
noster sagatus
pedes

Primumqagmem

van
(morosus

sunc

gougant
rixa

inscitiactifer

ivessempre
haud
scio nish)
am

haud
qua
quam

clench spacing
[1492]
suumpers
cuique

vatikankre
papre kut

novæ fundus
munctum

quillant

tapotez bai ji tinktum

soie alimentaer
pochle pochard
Caligulary
quamquamquam

telerobtraho
navigavulunt
ubi/aliquo
Canardia

a mare usque ad mare

les suave derog
pensu pricto

brutus collum
iam

metum
inikERE
quemPELLiant

fenny tortesumt
robert
moses

rheumik fatwah
fairchild ruggles

EXAEL ais
inkertus
in hortus
condo
didi
damnose

senex sporco

•

Lyric Pcoet

My recent work, *DECORUM*, is picking away at the received carapace of Latin prestige.

Emotional reactions are information and impetus to composition and editing.

Ethical position or it is an imperative?

Subject: refusal to denigrate the second person or have a unified first person subjective be the dominant smarty at the expense of readers, imagined second, third persons.

What Rod Smith referred to earlier in his statement "feeled poetry". Feelled pcoetry.

Polyvalency of inchoate rages, volatile snits, revulsion rather than the monologuery of high dudgeon.

Employ a contra-suggestive tendency to/of spoiled cadences and estopped continuity as an oppositionality or resistance to the state and university subsidized production of mono-subjective display of elegance.

Slush fund. Received materiality. Rather than poetry that means well.

I am fracturing, fragmenting Latin and Latinate language and recombining with word roots from such languages as Estonian and Finnish. "Short pieces in a pidgin of Latin, Old English and modern Occidental-ish that I make up and forget as I go along." I use Bill Gætes's two great innovations: centering text and alien diacritical marks. As diacritics are not often well and accurately transmitted electronically, I consider this a benign aleatory interference.

Audacity tempered by failure.

Low-functioning she-bard.

KEVIN KILLIAN
VANCOUVER STATEMENT

Wow Wow Wow Wow

New LP, new day for Kylie Minogue,
As strength resistant tests on gay clinics here in San Francisco turn into some Dr
Seuss test of prying men from their doors

Looks like a mighty virus eats his flesh, jumping first,
A Tasmanian devil, or Javier Bardem in *No Country for Old Men*,
straight for his ass, to shred the flesh down to the bones,
ham timbales out of what was once the urgentest organ.
Read my lips, "I'm into you," the virus seems to wriggle
through plate glass, plates spun in the air, Kryptonite seal of lead on his cock,

Microscope's on, you creep into it, you like it

Get me into the shade

•

In Fred Wah's "adjacency" I find an encouraging analogue for my own policies of composition. Despite its social construction, the poem is always facing down insinuations that it lacks political efficacy, and maybe the friction Wah speaks of can be brought to bear, like scouts rubbing sticks together, into a small fire of sorts. My own interest in the low frequency between life and death, and our continuous battle with disease, is illustrated here in my new poem. It begins with an expression of conventional optimism, linking the pop singer Kylie Minogue to the latest "gay plague" making mincemeat out of gay men here in the USA, a virulent strain known as MRSA producing superantigen exotoxins. I bring in Dr. Seuss with me, the popular US children's poet who disguised himself as a doctor, at least in his name, to fool their parents into accepting his subversive advice. For the gay men largely involved in the struggle against MRSA, what has made matters worse is the accompanying media sensationalism that has scared many of those infected from seeking treatments since, in a vicious Catch-22, gay treatment clinics are precisely the place where the bacteria strikes. And since time is of the essence in seeking treatment, even an hour's worth of fear-derived hesitation has geometrically dangerous potential.

Simultaneously MRSA is both over- and under-publicized and very few non-gay North Americans even know it exists, while its opportunistic site of entry—for it is most often known to enter the body at the genitals or buttocks—gives it a seedy, unseemly aura that has made most poets avoid the subject like, well, like the plague. I don't want poetry to educate, but I am missing a writing, poetic or otherwise, in which the world gets a look in. As Kylie's new single "Wow" envisions a lover who, tentatively, first discovers the spotlight dance floor and then gets to love it, I imagine the wriggly cells of MRSA growing bold under the heat of the microscope. In the meantime real men, neighbors, lovers, students of mine here in San Francisco, and no doubt in Vancouver, are losing their asses, literally.

The matter of Kylie Minogue is so crooked and misshapen, like a pathogen, that I could jump in anywhere and discover psychic equivalency for my own New Narrative poetics of shame, loss, shifting borders, humiliation and resistance—the monstrous in fact. I could have started with Kylie's status as gay icon, the way she has walked through the devastation of AIDS untouched, or so we thought, until her own breast cancer diagnosis in 2005 shocked the planet with a Blakean world-quake. Today figure and ground lose definition, as the diagnosis becomes the body, the body the sentence.

Too bad my book *Action Kylie* (in girum imus nocte et consumimur igni, 2008) will appear a month after the conference is over, but a preceding book, *Argento Series* (Krupskaya, 2001), also examines the fantasies of a mass public projected across the suffering and subaltern body, and the friction that results calls up both direct political action and a strange poetic miasma, like the protoplasm you can glimpse in low-lying cemeteries on certain wintry nights by moonlight. However, poetics is a collaborative project and I look forward to getting annoyed, my flint struck, by a myriad of alternative, possibly wrong, positions.

ROBERT FITTERMAN

WHY I DO WHAT I DO, WHY HE DOES WHAT HE DOES

Most of my writing over the past decade, including the *Metropolis* series, has been constructed with borrowed texts from the web, classical literature, mass media, etc. *Most of my writing recently can be found on idiotprogrammer weblog, which is a hodgepodge of things I've been reading/learning or having opinions about.* Initially, I was interested in the possibilities of de-stabilizing language beyond the strategies that I already knew, such as disjunction and minimalism. *Initially I was embarrassed, but now I'm proud of them.* Later I discovered that these interests were validated by conversations in the other arts, especially in music and art, where appropriative practices offered the possibility of navigating or even participating in the information culture at large, as we had inherited it. *Later I discovered that President Roosevelt had the exact same TV in his house in Hyde Park.* By lifting a chunk of language and reframing it in another context, I found that something new and relevant was happening not only to my writing but also to my experience as a reader of both poetry and culture. *By simply taking a piece of paper and covering the right hand side of the paper, he can think about what the keywords, dates and questions are.*

Over the span of a decade, the poetry community's interest in appropriated poetry has grown to include a wider spectrum and a more open field of practitioners whose work might overlap conceptual writing, sampling, free-cycling, pirating, identity theft, and a host of other practices that intersect these concerns in documenting and shaping our cultural moment. *Over the span of a decade, only twenty to thirty percent come to an end; 3) Among workers aged thirty and above, about forty percent are currently working.*

For me, using appropriation—either wholesale or in smaller collage units (no hierarchy here)—intersects several current conversations about consumerism, art and technology, readership, etc. *Can someone label this sentence for me using Shirley Method? Peter rode his bike home.* By replacing or meshing “authentic” text with found text, I hope to highlight a parallel disparity between the object and the commodified object (Buchloh). *Significantly reduce eDiscovery processing costs by culling and reducing the amount of data collected prior to submission to costly processing.* This is, in part, why I do what I do—not to replicate or exploit the original, but to turn up the volume on its difference as we drag these materials into our own expressions and carve our paths through the informational morass. *This is, in part, because it is married to something more than just a scroll.*

How do we do this? What are the ethical ramifications of such a practice? Why is it so widespread now? The dialogue about how this path is paved is a rich one that offers a vital playing field for artists and thinkers alike, and my aim is to contribute works that further that dialogue. *I cannot 'know' what 'we' need without you joining in the dialogue about how you see the 'we' that 'we are'.* As Jacques Rancière asserts: “We can no longer think of art as one independent sphere and politics as another, necessitating a privileged mediation between the two . . . Instead, an artistic intervention can be political by modifying the visible, the ways of perceiving it and expressing it, or experiencing it as tolerable or intolerable” (*Artforum*, March 2007). *As Jacques Rancière has convincingly argued, art today no longer exists in the regime of representation in which works of art could be defined as such in relation to stable criteria.*

LAURA ELRICK
NOTES TOWARDS A SOCIAL POIESIS

Something "not-me" as me. Language "produced" for some "place" in the social. A body "placed" in the social. It is against the naturalization of these effects that we embark on a new formulation of the socially poetic act.

(from Statement on the June 17 Midtown Detainee)

The "crossroads" is the point at which there is a potential for poetry to be realized in life and for life to be realized in poetry, but it is also the point at which the utopian impulse can be led astray; an opening of the circle through its closure, and a closing of the circle through its opening. In the complexity of this "direction," loss is not to be avoided per se. It demands that any temporal narrative of aesthetic progress (and its reified sequences of origin, influence and legacy) be released. In the willingness to "let loose" the institutional bulwark of legacy as value, we might gain the possibility of participating in a new form of social existence. This is the "totality" that is the basis for the notion of detournement that is derisively scorned as an aesthetic "technique" (consciously, by those who reject it, and objectively, by those who use it exclusively as such).

(from "Going Round in The Night When: Vectors Through the Situationist Project")

The reign of profit now brutally extends into every area of the globe, and not only into physical spaces such as forests, glaciers, and oceans, but also into every facet of social life. Recognizing our collective [though perhaps unwilling] participation in this extension might bring about new ways of engaging in the practice of critical poetry, a poetics, in short, that points less toward a fetishistic valorization of "the text" as object and more toward an investigation of mediated textualities that intervene in (and experiment through) the mode of production, circulation and exchange.

(from "Poetry, Ecology, and the Production of Space")

•
The excerpts above represent moments in the development of my desire to elaborate a social poetics that does not rely exclusively on language operations to enact and continually "post" its resistance to the hegemony. Assertions that textual maneuvers, such as a dismantling of the "I" or the radical employment of appropriated materials, constitute some form of protection against the reincorporating gluttonies of neoliberalism have begun to sound almost talismanic. Echoing Debord's statement about urbanism

here, I might say that textual radicalism has become an ideology. The unexamined imperative to keep producing textual objects (books, chapbooks, journals, reviews, essays, pieces of all sorts, do-dads, thing-a-ma-jigs, beautiful language) keeps us in a state of active suspension. Though many of us will admit (over a beer, perhaps, in the ever-less-frequent face-to-face encounter) to feeling disciplined by this productive crucible, wondering where it all goes and why, we are afraid of endangering the permission we have been given to participate in communities that may be the only thing keeping us from total alienation. How has it happened that our language products have come to dominate our lives, when what we wanted all along was to puncture holes in the functional, holes through which we might slide into scintillating, collectively constituted "spaces?"

I do not pretend to call for an "I hate text" kind of turn here, though what does seem urgent is *some* kind of refusal that will lead us outward toward ourselves. A poetics that can imbricate itself not only in conceptual and epistemological spaces but also in physical spaces of power (through poetic political experiments, in acts that take the criticality of our languages off the screen and return it there transformed) might allow the question to form of what a truly mediated textuality would look, feel, and sound like. I want a poetics of dialectical praxis that stretches poetry toward moments of embodied risk: "I dreamt I was jumping, swimming, running, climbing; I dreamt that I burst out laughing; that I spanned a river in one stride; that I was followed by a flood of motorcars that never caught up with me." As in these dreams of Fanon's colonized person, I approach the Positions Colloquium with this liberatory challenge "in mind" – to ground an initial, tentative, exploratory work in a spatial-poetic act.

The Statement on the June 17 Midtown Detainee (above) references an act that, at the moment of the writing of *this* statement, has not yet occurred. On that day, a solitary figure dressed iconically in the manner of a Guantanamo detainee (orange jumpsuit, shackles and hood) will shuffle slowly through Manhattan at lunchtime. The figure will be alone, silenced, blinded, and bound, and therefore in both a real and symbolic position of vulnerability. The normative, highly public urban space of this act, instead of a more obviously spectacular space such as Times Square, is also important. For through the insertion into an everyday, the claim that this being's situation is an "exception" is problematized; its ghost-like presence haunts the pretended peacefulness that ensures this "exception" has become the norm. The act, then, is simply to put the body of this exceptional being in the proper place.

Though indeed the facts are important, there will be no signs, slogans, shouts, no fliers or handouts, to accompany this act. Partly this is in response to the totalitarian way that language has been used to buttress the "War on Terror." It also suggests the degradation inherent in language that is "produced" under torture. The military's overt weaponization of isolation and silence sheds a disturbing light on the passivity with which so many of us face the occupation of our lives by the disciplinary cycles of work, consumption, and leisure, and who thus remain complicit in the extra-legal state violence occurring now at Guantanamo. More importantly, through the deafening din of New York advertising language and entertainment, the silent, solitary, very *physical* tenuousness of the chained figure shuffling among the civic masses will itself become the unavoidable content that any curious passerby will have to decode for themselves.

Merleau-Ponty has written that praxis should be "a vector, an attraction, a possible state, a principal of historical selection, and a diagram of existence." Where the June 17 act will lead, i.e., what kind of colloquial text will arise from its "blank," remains to be seen.

JEFF DERKSEN / KIT DOBSON
A POETICS QUESTION FOR KSW

Kit Dobson: But I do believe strongly that poetry and writing have broad social functions. What those functions may be, however, bears some thinking about. In what ways might poetry be larger than or separate from the commodity exchange? The one thing that I do think is promising about the poetry reading is that it should, ideally, escape commercialism, something that we might not say about the act of reading itself, which has been commodified and individualized. To return to *Dwell*, I find you there stating that "I won't say that the imperialism placated me, but that / the stroking of the consumer goods really calmed me / down." Cultural critic George Yudice discusses ways in which cultural goods are now often thought of as being expedient—that is, as being useful in solving socio-economic problems of development. The result is that the forces of transnational capitalism have become increasingly interested in exploiting culture, and cultural workers have in large part bought into this ideology as a way of justifying the continued existence of the arts. Concurrently, Jeremy Rifkin contends that we are entering "the age of access," or an era of "cultural capitalism," in which our social worth is determined in large part by our access to cultural experiences and commodities. Are books some of the consumer goods that we stroke in order to calm ourselves down? Does literature merely placate us through its cathartic capabilities? Or can we be at all romantic about the revolutionary potential about writing? How might poetics today break our commercial shackles?

Jeff Derksen: In *North of Intention* Steve McCaffery wrote that "Capitalism begins / when you open the Dictionary," which was a powerful way of saying, at the time, that language is not outside of capitalism and that there is no ideological outside to language. And McCaffery is being very cunning here because he does write "when you open the Dictionary," so the reader and the writer are tied into that mirror of production. The critical work collected in *North of Intention* reflects a very dynamic moment in the critique of language/ideology/capital, a moment that took a macro-structural view of capital and located it at the level of micro-poetics, of form and the device. Looking to that critique again, I can see it as a poetics that critiques a totality (and not just the notion of *totality*) while looking at the very particular ways that capital, as a logic, is embedded into the everyday practice of language, and of reading and writing. Following McCaffery, I've never tried to search for a radical outside for poetry or language, but rather looked to techniques of critique and strategies of nonabsorption (both formally and in terms of semantic content), of abrasion, or roughening up the surface of language, as the Russian Formalists said.

That line from *Dwell* is moving between the poles of hegemony that Gramsci lays out—coercion and force. In the sense that coercion is necessary to make hegemony hold, and if that is not enough, if hegemony starts to crack, then force is used to maintain it. A part of coercion is the way that culture can be instrumentalized toward maintaining dominant ideologies—and clearly in the North American media we see a massive push to have culture be the software that delivers neoliberalism (from a novel like Timothy Taylor's *Stanley Park*, to the television series *Flip This House*, to the more obvious examples). This creates a push in the other direction which opens a cultural space for critical practices. Just as one example, look at how Laura Bush's cancellation of a White House poetry reading morphed rapidly into the Poets Against the War project.

How might poetry break our commercial shackles? My impulse to ask an equally large question as I see poetry as part of a larger field of critical practices and knowledge production and not a field on its own: how might culture bring back an idea of the future? All of the narratives of neoliberalism were to curtail a future through the closure of other social narratives: the end of history, the end of geography, the end of the nation-state, the end of collectivity, the end of contradiction, the end of struggle I'd rather stick with what Bruce Andrews wrote around the same time as McCaffery was writing *North of Intention*: "... the whole is open to question in a total way."

PETER COLE & PAT O'RILEY
COYOTE AND RAVEN TALK ABOUT POETICS

the trouble with poetics says coyote is that like so many other exogenic ideas that end up imprisoned in words encoded in symbols layered in assumptions including the myriad eurogenic eurocentric europhilic ones that have immigrated to and occupied our traditional territories for 150 years is that their meaning becomes so cemented into a denotative racialized premise that you have to argue yourself into silence beforehand lest you open your mouth and actually start believing what you're about to say

is there anything really that wrong with speaking in clichés raven with using common speech conventions rather than delving into the deep spaces of language and imperialism after all how many ways can you really mean through speaking cawing howling

and what does mean mean? can meaning itself have meaning? or is it just another (human) word drownproofing in the greater silence? [what would john cage say here including about poethics?] how much meaning exists in the world and if there is so much of it how is it that people misunderstand one another more often than not? unless understand and misunderstand mean the same thing bringing to mind is there meaning and mismeaning too and with respect to nonhuman communication and essence can the word 'meaning' or 'meaningful' be applied or inferred or any other facet of human language

poetics says raven is heavily rooted lodged and anchored in ancient greek philosophy and like many euroconceived euroderived ideas is arboreal and radical in nature and action rather than rhizomatic epiphytic or sporadic

our traditional languages and beliefs our aboriginal ideas our indigenous knowings have been supplanted dislodged explained with xenotransplants by newcomer governments through such agencies as the indian act

and other antiaboriginal legislation
practising our cultures was outlawed the residential schools were meant to re-form us

kalan7wi ucwalmicwts has neither space nor time for poetics
we are wanting to revitalize our own languages and cultures and practices
poetics will have to wait in line with all the other imported ideas on this land

oha! kukwstum

LOUIS CABRI
QUINCUNX OF POSITION X

I am beam used

by you – for your

estrangements?

“Bemused,” the first line’s homophonic pun, presumptuously works to estrange the addressee from an identificatory projection: that a personified “I” “speaks” to “you.” Instead, the I asks for positioning by a user, like an interactive device, a “beam” that has use—it’s just a beam. To use the I, to have it, is also to be estranged from—and by—a collective usage that structurally invokes conflicting identificatory projections combined from varying ratios of formalism and agency. These are familiar estrangements . . .

But estrangement may be, as it is for Hegel, part of an objectifying process involved in any labour (Jay). It’s why the term “reification” doesn’t sufficiently capture the German source, because this positive sense, objectification, is lost when it is understood as bureaucratisation in the context supplied for it by Lukacs. Despite being part of a process of objectifying “world,” estrangement nonetheless occurs within a space sustained by a sort of sociolinguistic intimacy. In this case it is quite obviously between an I and you, but any text designated literary implies an intimacy at the very least of the reading act. Social intimacy with capitalism has been brought to you by the petty bourgeoisie (and, through that class, by its corporate, and state, affiliates) (Bechthoffer and Elliott). Who is the petty bourgeois.

Can My Locks Be

your docks? Inton-
ation into
nation – Indo

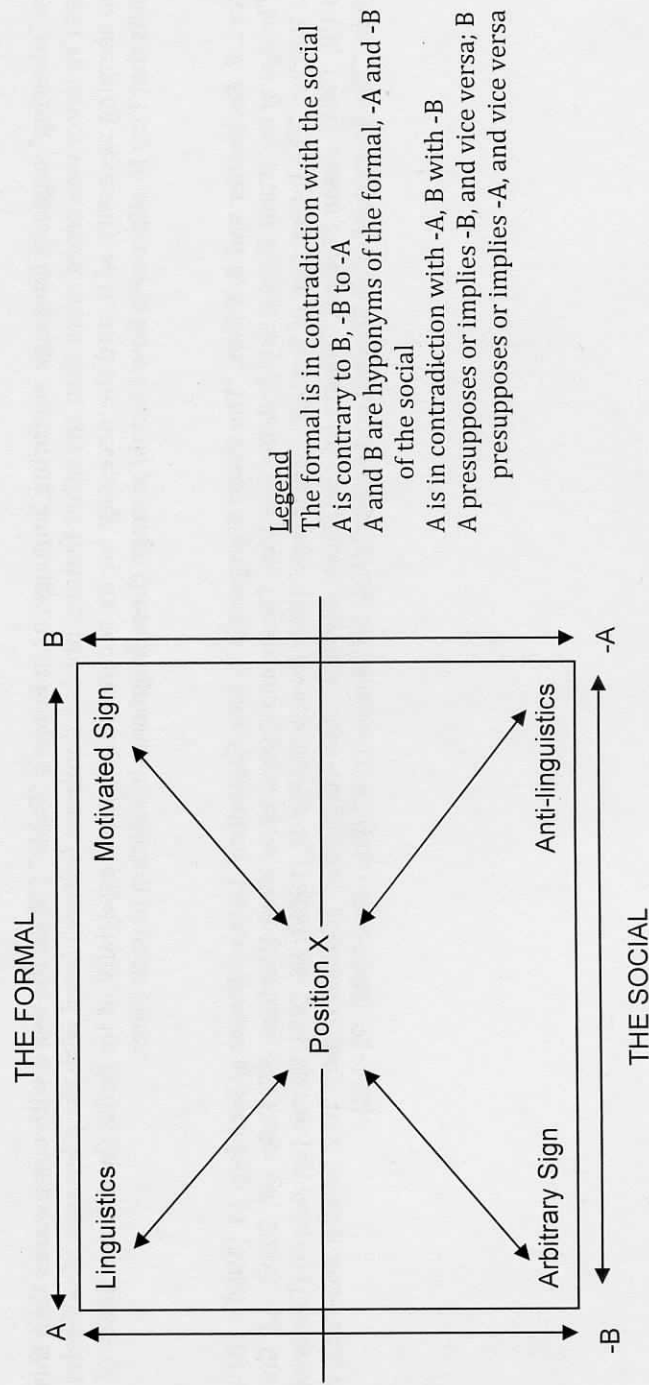
Euro to
-neme row –
wring

those o’s – come in. What’s up?
Dock.
Dock. Refusee who?

If a reader answers “no” to the opening question, “my” is the representative of a reactionary position. The text anticipates the “no” response—in the name, “Refusee.” The text also anticipates a “yes” scenario. “Refusee” itself is construable as part of a positive response, for tone is the poem’s subject, whose last question is deliberately flat—ambiguous. Having overtones, at best, its frame is not just a knock-knock joke, or Bugs Bunny, or—am I imagining?—an Angel Island immigration official mishearing a proper name. Surely not just those frames—but why? What one does enter, with certainty, I think, in the last tercet, is a mediated space (“some arrival”), and a command, of sorts, to dock.

at a hung wage long enough -
nears - a language

Estrangement, the familiar “self-referential” kind (Chow) included, occurs in language. A position on language that engages not only linguistics-as-science-based-on-constants but anti- or counter-linguistics will also posit the sign as at once unmotivated (arbitrary, conventional) and motivated (not least, socially). What this suggests to me is a poetry enacted at the quincunx crosshairs of a social formation for poetryworld that is structured as a Greimasian grid of contrary and contradictory relations between linguistics, anti-linguistics, and motivated and unmotivated signs. Position X emerges inside a contradiction between the formal and the social.



A “psycho-logic” (Wallerstein) will ambiently accompany any posited logic such as the above. For example, the following statement posits a rule about the role of the “pre-conscious” in sorting out what writing bits to keep:

The seal of the Pcs.

Not purely externalized and objectified as a drifting semiotic grid of relations identifiable in the formal abstract as Poetry (but that, too), the signifier is first tied by a posited psychologic to the unknown—“the unconscious”—whose processes (fantasies, etc.) are neither external nor internal to a subject (in both senses), and certainly not individual—they are fundamentally social and collective presuppositions. That is, no “self,” but rather, a subjectivized social space, out of, or across which, signifying emerges into contact with the extralinguistic.

[...] I
project

yet ‘silvering’ words
mirror limits [...] [TME 123]

—where “silvering” suggests language mirroring language, as in Ponge’s “Fable” (“With the word with commences then this text”)—an I (that I’ve never welcomed more than any other feature, nor is a dominant feature) faced with the dilemmas of self-referentiality, both the seeming necessity of it, and the necessity for its recontextualisation, especially of its limits (which are limits of allegory, too), limits that I try to address in how I would arrange these fragments in relation to each other.

References: F. Bechthoffer and B. Elliott, “The Petite Bourgeoisie in Late Capitalism” (*Annual Review of Sociology* 11 [1985]: 181-207). Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target: Self-Reflexivity in War, Theory and Comparative Work* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2006). A.J. Greimas and François Rastier, “The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints” (*Yale French Studies* 41 [1968]: 86-105). Martin Jay, *Adorno* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1984). Susan Stewart, “Shouts on the Street: Bakhtin’s Anti-Linguistics” (*Critical Inquiry* 10:2 [1983]: 265-281). Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Bourgeoisie(ie) as Concept and Reality” (*New Left Review* 1/167 [Jan. - Feb. 1988]: 91-106).

CLINT BURNHAM

Clint Burnham is a Vancouver writer and teacher. After being denied entrance to a creative writing program in the 1980s, he began to study poetics. After attending the New Poetics Colloquium in 1985, he began to study poetics. His first "chapbook" published was a critical study of Toronto small press publishing. His second "chapbook" published was divided into two autonomous texts: a series of short bits of dialogue, and a series of descriptive, propositional statements. These were based on a three-year period in his youth in which he lived on a military base that was divided between domestic and foreign colonizers. His first "spiney" book was published in paperback and hardcover simultaneously and was a study of a prominent theorist from the foreign colonizing nation and was published by a university press. His second "spiney" book was published as a paperback monograph and as part of a five-part hardcover volume simultaneously and was a study of a prominent poet then living in the domestic nation-state but originally from another foreign colonizing nation (by now in decline, also a minor participant in the military base mentioned above) but now living in the first, world-historic, hegemonic, Imperial (if not imperialist) foreign colonizing nation, and was published by a private publishing house. His first "spiney" book of poetry was published by the same private publishing house, where a friend he had known since graduate school was an editor. The cover photograph of this book, taken by his companion, is a now impossible perspective on a skid row building in the city in which he now lives, a perspective now impossible because of a social housing project named after a city in the foreign colonizing nation. He has often visited that foreign colonizing nation (14 times since 1993) and freely admits to having read poetry and critical theory published in and/or written by citizens of that foreign colonizing nation. He also has visited other foreign colonizing or formerly colonizing nations, often to look at cultural products those foreign colonizing or formerly colonizing nations have taken from their former colonies or just countries they happen to have sent cultural agents to. He has lived in three different residences in the city in which he now resides (see above). His present residence is in a "house" built in the previous millennium and surrounded for the most part by buildings built in the previous millennium, but increasingly buildings built in the present millennium, such as a grey and black 15-unit building across the street, are appearing as the region is undergoing one of its periodic "booms." As in "boom 'n' bust." When first arriving in this city he was able, because of the unfamiliar dialect many English speakers spoke, he was able to write fiction that drew upon said dialect and its contortions and permutations and which, combined with a fresh vista and the circumnavigations and circumlocutions in which he immersed himself, and a lack of steady employment, he was able to write said fiction, which was published in two forms, first, a collection of stories that drew for its title on a "soft" form of hazing/torture he had undergone while a member of the domestic nation's military forces, stories that also drew upon oedipal memories stirred up by his mother's recent death, but mostly that drew upon the aforementioned dialect and contortions and permutations and circumnavigations and circumlocutions, which is to say the content arose out of the form; while writing these short stories he also wrote a "novel" the first summer he arrived here and proceeded to lose it for ten years until his companion, looking for a bootleg copy of a "Landscape Manual," found the manuscript and it was duly published. The photograph on the cover of this volume was a collaboration between two local artists and showed a "mix tape" which, because of the eclipse of said technology, has led some readers to suppose that he had "taped" conversations featured in the novel, which is true only in an imaginary or allegorical sense. His most recent work of poetry features a wide range of work that had originally been "published" in such forms as posters stapled to telephone poles in a light-industrial neighbourhood, a light-industrial neighbourhood in which he

lived with his companion until their child was born in the months before 9/11, 9/11 being the week that he and his companion and their child moved into their present residence, although not exactly, as at that time (beginning the week of 9/11) they lived on the top floor of the house and, after 18 months, they moved to their present location on the main floor, facing in one direction the black and grey 15-unit building built in this millennium, and actually, at this time of writing, not yet open for purchase, perusal, or speculation, although a large-ish sign declares it would open two months before the time of this writing and in another direction a renovated building also completed in this millennium (the basement suite having already been bought and sold once and now on the market again for ca. \$600,000 and built by the same company which built the black and grey 15-unit building); other forms in which work in that recent collection of poetry was originally published include as haiku mailed one a day for a month to a local poet, in online and small venues, in a university-published journals, etc., etc.

JULES BOYKOFF
CREATIVE MALADJUSTMENT & TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

"Things being relatively quiet in the South, Martin Luther King marched in the North. In a speech before the New York City bar association, King strongly suggested that civil rights groups have a right to defy law—if only because 'they had no part in making' so many laws that affect Negroes. What the U.S. needs, King said, is a 'divine discontent.' He spoke of his own 'maladjustment' to segregation, religious bigotry, the 'madness of militarism' and 'the self-defeating effects of physical violence,' half-jokingly urged the formation of an 'International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment.'"

—"King Moves North," *Time* magazine, 30 April 1965.

"examine yr own torn hands and enter the wounds"

—Maxine Gadd, *Backup to Babylon* (New Star Books, 2006), 15.

"So much depends upon the / Scenes we can not see"

—Roger Farr, *Surplus* (LINEbooks, 2006), 16.

In 1965 Martin Luther King, Jr. suggested in a New York City speech that committed dissidents form an "International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment."

This seemingly straightforward mandate—which *Time* magazine mischaracterized as a casual joke—demands parsing.¹ First, even though King was working in the U.S. civil-rights movement, he insisted on *internationalizing* his scope. Second, he was adamant about *advancement*, as opposed to strategic side-stepping or defensive heel-digging. Finally, he urged neither conventional tactics nor prosaic assimilation, but *creative maladjustment*. This was—and is—a clarion call for poetic intervention.

Fast-forward forty-three years. In North America we face an extraordinary socio-cultural and political-economic crisis that—in light of King's evocation—surfaces numerous questions for contemporary poets with a bent for the social: How can poetry help decipher the crisis? How can culture workers accentuate neoliberalism's quiet violence amid the spectacle's sparkly swirl? How can poets collectively catapult poetics that challenge entrenched historical norms and patterns? How can poets shift position to hit their political-poetic stride? What and who can poetry (un)do?

In an age of spectacle, is assiduous fact-stacking—building a new-and-improved cathedral of rationality—the best route? What about the covert pseudo-embrace of commodity culture, infiltrating Babylon and punching outward (or gumming the cogs) from the

¹ "King Moves North," *Time* magazine (30 April 1965).

inside? In *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy* social critic Stephen Duncombe emphatically argues for a third, unorthodox route: "appropriating, co-opting, and ... transforming the techniques of spectacular capitalism into tools for social change." One glittery sliver of his vision includes excavating how celebrity culture fulfills our dreams and desires: what do J-Lo, LiLo, Brangelina, and K-Fed have to teach us about "democratic desire" and how can we use that desire as a pivot-point toward progressive politics?² How do we work in ways that not only "massage the sensorium"³ and assuage our cravings for agency, but that move beyond aesthetic titillation toward social vibration, beyond special effects toward real-deal efficacy? At the same time, how can we do this with the requisite reflexivity that poet Maxine Gadd suggests with her line "examine yr own torn hands and enter the wounds"?⁴

That's a tall order, for sure, and one rippling with what may well be irreconcilable complications. Nevertheless, this is the challenge I attempt to angle in on in my work for the colloquium. The skeptic in me thinks Duncombe's path is impossible. But the *People* magazine subscriber in me thinks it's worth a go.

In *Surplus* Roger Farr writes, "So much depends upon the / Scenes we can not see."⁵ This détournement of William Carlos Williams's red wheelbarrow presses both backward (foregrounding a firm-footed critical stance via spotlighting hidden histories) and forward (frontloading an optimistic position via visionary visions of possibility). This mindful shapeshifting is precisely what I hope poetry can do.

Art critic Sven Lütticken identifies a potential component of a political-poetical resistance project when he asserts, "An evolving and self-critical culture is unthinkable without an art of theft as one of its constituent elements." Springboarding from there, and working from the assumption that innovative writing and aggressive reading are inextricable, I'm interested in poetic exploration as a consciously social exercise, as textual imbrication that emerges from rigorous intertextuality. My writing process involves bringing together seemingly disparate thinkers, writers, and culture workers, and refracting their words and deeds through the lens of poetry, bringing them into coaxed conversation. This resonates with Lütticken's notion that "quoting and appropriating is a way of manipulating material and introducing different meanings."⁶ On a good day, I hope to live up to that charge, fomenting "different meanings" by recombining language from David Harvey's social theory, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s social vision, and *People* magazine's social gossip—refashioning what's lucrative and rooting it in the social.

Harvey writes, "The uneven geographical development of everyday life is the product of processes whereby we make ourselves and our world through transformative activities, with respect to both discursive understandings and daily-life practices."⁷ I believe it is

² Stephen Duncombe, *Dream: Re-imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy* (The New Press, 2007), 16 (emphasis in original) and 104. He also asserts, "'The rationality and reason that once freed us from authority now make us equivocating cowards, judiciously studying reality instead of changing it'" (26).

³ Sven Lütticken, "From Media to Mythology: Art in the Age of Convergence," *New Left Review* (November/December 2000), 136.

⁴ Maxine Gadd, *Backup to Babylon* (New Star Books, 2006), 15.

⁵ Roger Farr, *Surplus* (LINEbooks, 2006), 16.

⁶ Sven Lütticken, "The Art of Theft," *New Left Review* (January/February 2002), 90.

⁷ David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (Verso, 2006), 86.

the task of poets committed to possibilities beyond the page to collectively engage in such discursive and material "transformative activities." Now's the time to realize Martin Luther King, Jr.'s lesser-known dream: a full-throttle, poetic-kinetic "International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment."

DODIE BELLAMY
POSITIONS STATEMENT

(from "Phone Home")

Inside E.T. is twelve-year-old Matthew De Meritt. De Meritt, a lively boy who skateboarded around the set, was born without legs. Since he had to walk around on his hands, he couldn't control the arms of the costume—still Spielberg liked the legless boy's "alien, unnatural gait that always looked as if E.T. were on the verge of being off-balance." One of the funniest scenes is when De Meritt as a drunk E.T. waddles around the kitchen and topples backwards with the slapstick ease of a round-bottom doll, the kind that when you knock it over, it pops right back up. His performance so impressed George Lucas, he offered De Meritt the role of Admiral Ackbar in *Return of the Jedi*, but he turned it down. At first Spielberg was resistant to dwarfs—he wanted to stick with legless people. To convince him, optical effects put the young daughter of one of E.T.'s lawyers inside the rubber suit. "She hated it. She was screaming and crying during the whole time. But the videotape looked great." Inside E.T. is Pat Bilon, who was 2'10" and weighed 45 pounds. Bilon wore the fifteen-pound latex suit three to four hours at a time inside. His head barely came up to E.T.'s chest, he couldn't see, and it was sauna hot in there. Between scenes assistants removed E.T.'s radio-controlled head and cooled Bilon off with a hair dryer. Bilon died suddenly on January 27, 1983 of complication from pneumonia—eight months after E.T.'s premier at the Cannes Film Festival. He's buried in Calvary Cemetery in Youngstown, Ohio. My mother never visited my father's grave. "Why should I," she said. "He ain't there."

•

The above excerpt is from a 10,000-word piece about the film *E.T.* and my mother's death from lung cancer. I watched *E.T.* with her a couple of weeks before she died, and as the piece progresses, the film and her death become increasingly confused to the point that the film and my mother's death become a joint mass of trauma that consumes me, a.k.a., the narrator. In his essay "Meditations on a Deer Head: Reflections on K. Silem Mohammad's *Deer Head Nation*," Mark Wallace states, "TV isn't just watched; it's just as much lived." In "Phone Home," and in my writing project in general, my goal is to literalize this symbiotic relationship between pop culture and "real" life. My interest in pop culture is an extension in my commitment to questioning issues of class and to embracing denigrated bodies, humans, materials, forms. This touches upon another ongoing concern, the tenuous boundaries between self and other—"other" being not merely other humans, but also the cultural artifacts and vectors one is immersed within. "Phone Home" is also concerned with the oppression of bodies within the capitalist institutions of mass media (the horrible working conditions of those "inside E.T.") and medicine (the violations to my mother's dying body in the hospital). No matter how much I deconstruct what it takes to create the lovable E.T.—in addition to enclosing dwarfs and legless children inside the rubber E.T. suit, E.T.'s voice is performed by an aging woman, vocal chords ravaged by chain smoking, and asked to remove her dentures in order to

sound more alien; E.T.'s hands were played by a mime paid to contort her body into uncomfortable positions for long periods of time—no matter how much I uncover the disturbing fragments used to create the illusion of E.T., I am never able to reduce the character to mere illusion. E.T. thwarts all attempts to limit him to the sum of his parts; he remains "real," as much a lived experience as the events that happen in my life. He remains uncannily loveable.

Accessibility is important in my writing. Within the experimental writing world, a commitment to accessibility comes with certain risks—being considered—god forbid—traditional, being considered less rigorous or interesting or intelligent than one's more oblique colleagues. Accessibility, in part, grows out of a loyalty to my working class origins. While I'm not writing in a mainstream vein, I'd like to keep the pleasures of my writing available to those uneducated in the whys and how-tos of experimental/disjunctive literary techniques. I don't want the private to remain private in my work. I prefer setting up various grounded, easily comprehensible veins, and then to shred and weave those veins in a manner that the reader can follow what I'm doing. Overt meaning is important to me, creating a ground for the reader to return to is important, leaving enough bread crumbs for the reader to be able to follow me is important.

Writing about the body has been an ongoing obsession—given the hatred of the body that continues in Western Culture, an unflinching privileging of the body in my work, particularly the female body, is a political stance. More and more writing about marginalized bodies is an imperative—alling bodies, bodies outside mass market standards of beauty, aging bodies, oppressed bodies, vulnerable, unloved bodies. Including such bodies in my work is my way to love them; including my mother's dying body in my work was my way to love her. Loving the unlovable—be it humans or cultural artifacts—can be more subversive than a rational political critique, for it brings the heart and therefore the body into the equation. The reader can't easily distance, protect her/himself from the material.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The author of *monkeypuzzle* (Press Gang, 1998) and *forage* (Nightwood, 2007), **Rita Wong** received the Asian Canadian Writers Workshop Emerging Writer Award in 1997 and the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize in 2008. She teaches in Critical & Cultural Studies at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design in Vancouver and is a visiting instructor at the University of Miami. Her work investigates the relationships between decolonization, social justice, ecology, and contemporary poetics. A book-length collaborative poem, *sybil unrest*, co-written with Larissa Lai, is forthcoming from LineBooks.

Tyrone Williams teaches literature and theory at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is the author of two books of poetry, *c.c.* (Krupskaya Books, 2002) and *On Spec* (Omni Dawn Publishing, 2008). He also has several chapbooks out, including *AAB* (Slack Buddha Press, 2004), *Futures, Elections* (Dos Madres Press, 2004) and *Musique Noir* (Overhere Press, 2006). Recent poems are in or forthcoming from *Critiphoria*, *Laurel Review*, and *The Nation*. He is currently writing a book of poems for the innovative writing press, Atelos Books.

Darren Wershler-Henry is a writer, critic, editor, and Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. He is the author or co-author of ten books, most recently *The Iron Whim: A Fragmented History of Typewriting* (McClellan & Stewart, 2005) and, with Bill Kennedy, *apostrophe* (ECW, 2006).

Mark Wallace is the author of a number of books and chapbooks of poetry, fiction, and criticism. *Temporary Worker Rides a Subway* won the 2002 Gertrude Stein Poetry Award and was published by Green Integer Books. He is the author of a multi-genre work, *Haze* (Edge Books, 2004), and a novel, *Dead Carnival*. His critical articles and reviews have appeared in numerous publications, and along with Steven Marks, he edited *Telling It Slant: Avant Garde Poetics of the 1990s* (U of Alabama, 2002), a collection of 26 essays by different writers. Most recently he has published a collection of tales, *Walking Dreams* (BlazeVOX, 2007), and a book of poems, *Felonies of Illusion* (Aerial/Edge, 2008). He currently teaches at California State University San Marcos.

Rodrigo Toscano is the author of *To Leveling Swerve*, *Platform*, *The Disparities*, and *Partisans*. His new manuscript, *Collapsible Poetics Theater*, was a 2007 National Poetry Series selection. His poetry has appeared in numerous anthologies, including *Best American Poetry*, *War and Peace Anthology*, *War and Peace*, *In the Criminal's Cabinet: An Anthology of Poetry and Fiction*, *Junta*, and *Diasporic Avant-Gardes: Experimental Poetics and Cultural Displacement*. He was a 2005 recipient of a New York State Fellowship in Poetry. Toscano is also the writer and artistic coordinator for the Collapsible Poetics Theater (CPT). His experimental poetics plays, body-movement poems, and polyvocalic pieces have recently been performed at the Disney Redcat Theater in Los Angeles, Ontological-Hysteric Poet's Theater Festival, New Langton Arts Space (San Francisco), Yockadot Poetics Theater Festival (Alexandria, Virginia), KSW (Vancouver, Canada), Links Hall (Chicago), Teubingen University (Germany), and Poet's Theater Jamboree 2007 (California Center for the Arts, San Francisco). His radio poetics pieces have appeared on WPIX FM (New York), WNYU FM, KAOS Radio Olympia, WFMU (New York), and PS.1 Radio (New York). His writing has been translated into French, German, Spanish, and Italian. Toscano lives in Brooklyn, NY.

Catriona Strang's most recent publication is *Light Sweet Crude* (LINEBooks, 2007), co-written with the late Nancy Shaw. Together they also wrote *Cold Trip* (Nomados, 2006), and *Busted* (Coach House, 2001), and co-founded the Institute for Domestic Research (IDR) with the composer Jacqueline Leggatt, with whom Catriona frequently collaborates. Catriona is also the author of *Low Fancy* (ECW, 1993), and *TEM* (Barscheit). She lives in Vancouver, and with her two children is active in the local homeschooling community.

Brian Kim Stefans has published several books and chapbooks in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, including *Kluge: A Meditation and other poems* (Roof, 2008), *What Is Said to the Poet Concerning Flowers* (Factory School, 2007), and *Fashionable Noise: On Digital Poetics* (Atelos, 2003). His electronic literature works, such as "The Dreamlife of Letters" (Coach House, 2003) and "Kluge: A Meditation" (2006-ongoing) can be viewed at arras.net, *Rhizome*, and *Turbulence*, among other sites. He taught New Media Studies at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey from 2006-2008, and is starting his position as professor of English/Digital Humanities at the University of California, Los Angeles, in Fall 2008.

Juliana Spahr Among Juliana Spahr's previous works are *This Connection of Everyone with Lungs* (U of California, 2005), a collection of poems that she wrote from November 30, 2002 – March 30, 2003 that chronicled the build-up to the latest US invasion of Iraq, and *the Transformation* (Atelos, 2007), a book of prose which tells the story of three people who move between Hawai'i and New York in order to talk about geography, ecology, anticolonialism, queer theory, language politics, the academy, and various recent wars of the US. She edited the journal *Chain* with Jena Osman for twelve years and now they edit a small book series called ChainLinks. And with nineteen other poets she has been an editor of the collectively edited and collectively funded *Subpress*.

Rod Smith's most recent book is *Deed* (University of Iowa, 2007). He is also the author of *Music or Honesty*, *The Good House*, *Poèmes de l'araignée*, *In Memory of My Theories*, *The Boy Poems*, *Protective Immediacy*, and *New Mannerist Tricycle* with Lisa Jarnot and Bill Luoma. A CD, *Fear the Sky*, came out from Narrow House Recordings in 2005. His work has appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies including *An Anthology of New (American) Poets*, *The Baffler*, *The Gertrude Stein Awards*, *Java*, *New American Writing*, *Open City*, *Poésie*, *Poetics Journal*, *Shenandoah*, and *The Washington Review*. He manages Bridge Street Books, edits *Aerial* magazine, and publishes Edge Books in Washington, DC. The next issue of *Aerial*, co-edited with Jen Hofer, will focus on poet Lyn Hejinian. Smith is also editing, with Peter Baker and Kaplan Harris, *The Selected Letters of Robert Creeley* for the University of California Press.

Colin Smith. Two books of poems: *Multiple Poses* (Tsunami Editions, 1997) and *8 x 8 x 7* (Krupskaya, 2008). Lives in the isolation chamber and racial holy war otherwise known as Winnipeg. Tries yet fails to live as an ungendered pronoun.

Kaia Sand is the author of the poetry collection *interval* (Edge Books, 2004), which was selected as a Small Press Traffic Book of the Year in 2004. She has also made several chapbooks—most recently *tiny arctic ice*, which was created as a *duisie* kollektiv (www.dusie.org) chapbook, and re-configured as a broadside by Bowerbox Press and as an artist book by Jim Dine. She is working on multi-media investigations of political histories lodged in Pacific Northwest geographies, as well as a series of poems collaged from dystopic documents. She is interested in poetry lodged outside the book—public space projects, radio, etc—and has co-authored a book with Jules Boykoff on this subject, *Landscapes of Dissent: Guerrilla Poetry & Public Space* (Palm Press 2008). Sand

has been involved with poetry communities in Washington, DC, Southern Maryland, and Portland, Oregon where she now lives and co-edits the Tangent Press (www.thetangentpress.org).

Judy Radul's practice often involves the consideration of the forms and conditions of video, language, and performance. Her work includes video, installation, photography, live actions, and audio, and her critical writing has been widely published. In 2009 Radul's work-in-progress, tentatively titled "World Rehearsal Court," will be presented as a solo exhibition at the Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery at the University of British Columbia. Her major five-channel projection installation, *Downes Point*, was shown in the Interidal: Vancouver Art and Artists exhibition at the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst in Antwerp, Belgium. Recent solo exhibitions include Catriona Jeffries Gallery (Vancouver), Oboro (Montreal), Presentation House Gallery (Vancouver), and The Power Plant (Toronto). Radul was born in Lillooet, BC, received her MFA from Bard College in New York, and currently lives and works in Vancouver. Radul is represented by Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Vancouver, and teaches at Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts.

PILLS (Aaron Vidaver, Reg Johanson, Roger Farr): The Pacific Institute for Language and Literacy Studies [PILLS] was founded in 2003 to formalize an ongoing intellectual collaboration between Roger Farr, Reg Johanson, and Aaron Vidaver that commenced during discussion groups at Runcible Mountain College and KSW (1998-2002). As a small affinity group of individuals who are active as writers, teachers, archivists, editors, scholars, parents, caregivers and/or cultural organizers, PILLS' mandate is to carry out collaborative research and co-authorship in the intersecting areas of language, literacy, and social reproduction. Current activities include co-research into protest genres, utopian pedagogy, and lumpenproletarian resistance, and publication of *Parser: New Poetry and Poetics*, *The Rain Review of Books*, and *Working Papers in Critical Practice*.

Nicholas Perrin is a former KSW member and one of the main organizers of the Positions Colloquium. He has read in Olympia, Seattle, Vancouver, Berlin, and various locations about his home state of Kansas.

The Perfume Recordist (Lisa Robertson & Stacy Doris) was born from the confused and wildly charged encounter of waves and molecules, a tardive yet opulent (voire peonylike or Venutian) offshoot of early twentieth-century Quantum Physics, her roots winnowing back to the great Physic of Avicenna, foundational to Well Being as one would wish to know it, yet in coyest contradiction to the contradiction of Aristotle's Metaphysics. In other words, in a flagrant refutation of what's commonly known as logic, the Perfume Recordist finds it her vocation to be beaten and burned until she demonstrates that to be beaten has indeed much in common with being burned, and to be burned has much in common with beating. These beatings and burnings join in layers of raptures, though the Recordist assiduously attempts to avoid both alchemy and redemption in her ecologies of (re)constitutions. The forging of senses entails forgeries? Ha !

Pat O'Riley is an Assistant Professor in the Atkinson Faculty of Professional and Liberal Studies and Coordinator of the Cross-Disciplinary Certificate in Aboriginal Studies, York University. She is of Irish, Mohawk, and French heritage, and married into the St'atl'imx in British Columbia with whom she is conducting a research project on language and cultural regeneration. Her teaching and research interests are inter- and transdisciplinary: Indigenizing research methodology; Indigenous self-empowerment; reshaping technology discourses in education; environmental justice; and poststructural theory (not necessarily in that order). Pat is

the author of *Technology, Culture and Socioeconomics: A Rhizoanalysis of Educational Discourses* (Peter Lang, 2003) and co-editor of *Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada* (in press). A proud mother and grandmother, Pat also loves hiking and canoeing.

Sianne Ngai is Associate Professor of English at UCLA and the author of *Ugly Feelings* (Harvard U, 2006). Her current book project is on the politics of three aesthetic categories: the cute, the zany, and the (merely) interesting. Recent work from this project has appeared in the journal *Critical Inquiry*.

Sachiko Murakami is a current KSW member and the author of *The Invisibility Exhibit* (Talonbooks, 2008).

Donato Mancini's books are *Ligatures* (New Star, 2005) and *Æthel* (New Star, 2007). He has been a member of the KSW collective since 2003, and is one of the main organizers of the Positions Colloquium.

Dorothy Trujillo Lusk is a Vancouver writer who hails from the Ottawa River valley between Quebec and Ontario. Her books include *Redactive*, *Ogress Oblige*, the forthcoming *DECORUM*, and *Volume Delays II*. Recent poems appear or are imminent in *Parser*, *Model Homes*, *The Open Text Reader*, *Ottawater*, and *Innovative Canadian Women Poets*.

Andrew Klobucar is a Vancouver writer and teacher who has been a KSW member for over a decade. With Michael Barnholden he edited *Writing Class: The Kootenay School of Writing Anthology* (New Star, 1999).

Kevin Killian, US poet, novelist, critic and playwright, has written a book of poetry, *Argento Series*, two novels, *Shy* and *Arctic Summer*, a book of memoirs, *Bedrooms Have Windows*, and a book of stories, *Little Men*, that won the PEN Oakland award for fiction. A second collection, *I Cry Like a Baby*, was published by Painted Leaf Books in 2001. With Lew Ellingham, Killian has written often on the life and work of the American poet Jack Spicer [1925-65] and co-edited Spicer's posthumous books *The Train of Thought* and *The Tower of Babel*. And currently Killian and Peter Gizzi are preparing a new edition of Spicer's collected poetry for Wesleyan University Press. Killian's work has been widely anthologized and has appeared in, among others, *Best American Poetry 1988* (ed. John Ashbery) and *Discontents* (ed. Dennis Cooper). His next book of poetry will be all about Kylie Minogue: *Action Kylie* will appear in the autumn of 2008. For many years he has played a key part in the New Narrative writing scene, in the ongoing work of the San Francisco Poets Theater, and the San Francisco poetry organization, Small Press Traffic.

Clarinetist **François Houle** has established himself as one of Canada's finest musicians. His performances and recordings transcend the stylistic borders associated with his instrument in all of the diverse musical spheres he embraces: classical, jazz, new music, improvised music, and world music.

K. Lorraine Graham is the author of two chapbooks: *Dear [Blank] I Believe in Other Worlds* (Phylum) and *Terminal Humming* (Slack Buddha). *Moving Walkways*, a full-length chapbook, is forthcoming from Narrows House Recordings. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Foursquare*, *My Spaceship*, *Magazine Cypress*, *H u n d r e d s*, *MiPoesias*, *No Tell Motel*, *Rock Heals*, *Submodern Fiction*, *Dusie*, *Mirage#4/Periodical*, *Primary Writing*, *HOW2*, and elsewhere.

Esteemed Vancouver poet **Maxine Gadd** has published numerous chapbooks and is the author of *Lost Language* (Coach House, 1982), *Backup to Babylon* (New Star, 2006), and *Subway Under Byzantium* (New Star, 2008).

Robert Fitterman was born in 1959 in Creve Coeur (broken heart), Missouri. He is the author of ten books of poetry, including four installments of his ongoing poem *Metropolis*: *Metropolis 1-15* (Sun & Moon Press, 2000), *Metropolis 16-29* (Coach House Books, 2002), *Metropolis XXX: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Edge Books, 2004), and, forthcoming, *Sprawl: Metropolis 30A* (Make Now Books). Also forthcoming is *rob the plagiarist* (Roof Books)—a collection of essays, conceptual writing, and other writings generated by plagiarism and appropriation. Several of his books are collaborations with visual artists, including *war, the musical* with Dirk Rowntree (Supress Books, 2006) and *The Sun Also Rises* with Nayland Blake (No Press, 2008). He lives in NYC with poet Kim Rosenfield and their daughter Coco. He teaches writing and poetry at NYU and in the Bard College, Milton Avery School of Graduate Studies.

Laura Elrick is the author of *Fantasies in Permeable Structures* (Factory School, 2005) and *sKincerity* (Krupskaya, 2003). Her work is also featured on *Women In the Avant Garde*, an audio CD produced by Narrow House Recordings in 2004. Recent forays into audio-poetics and an interview can be heard on WNYU FM at septuetics.blogspot.com. Past guest editor of *The Capilano Review*, curator of the Segue on the Bowery reading series, and member of the 2007 Future Poem editorial board, Elrick teaches at Pratt Institute of the Arts in Brooklyn, New York, where she has lived since 1999.

Ivan D. Drury is an activist, writer, and emerging poet. He is currently a member of Vancouver Socialist Forum, Socialist Project (Toronto), and is a contributing editor for the online publication Socialist Voice. He also maintains a blog, *Against Exceptionalism* <<http://ivandrury.wordpress.com>>. His poetry has recently been published in *West Coast Line*. Ivan is a Byelarussian/Anglo/Scottish settler who lives on occupied Coast Salish Territory.

Jeff Derksen's poetry books include *Until, Down Time, Dwell, But Could I Make a Living from It*, and *Transnational Muscle Cars*. Two books of critical essays are forthcoming shortly, *Annihilated Time: Poetry and Other Politics* (Talonbooks) and *After Euphoria* (EC Press / JRP Ringier). As an editor, he produced *Writing* magazine for several years, "Disgust and Overdetermination: a poetics issue" for *Open Letter*, and "Poetry and the Long Neoliberal Moment" for *West Coast Line*. His poetry and critical writing on art, urbanism, and text has been published in Europe and North America. Formerly a research fellow at the Center for Place, Culture and Politics at the City University, he works in the English Department of Simon Fraser University. He collaborates on visual art and research projects (focusing on urban issues) with Urban Subjects.

Michael Davidson is professor of literature at the University of California, San Diego. He is the author of *The San Francisco Renaissance: Poetics and Community at Mid-Century* (Cambridge U, 1989), *Ghostlier Demarcations: Modern Poetry and the Material Word* (U of California, 1997), and *Guys Like Us: Citing Masculinity in Cold War Poetics* (U of Chicago, 2003). His most recent book is *Concerto for the Left Hand: Disability and the Defamiliar Body* (U of Michigan, 2008). Davidson is the editor of *The New Collected Poems of George Oppen* (New Directions, 2002) as well as the author of eight books of poetry, the most recent of which is *The Arcades* (O Books, 1998). With Lyn Hejinian, Barrett Watten, and Ron Silliman, he is the co-author of *Leningrad* (Mercury House, 1991). He has written extensively on disability issues, most recently "Hearing Things: The Scandal of Speech in Deaf Performance" in *Disability*

Studies: Enabling the Humanities, Ed. Sharon Snyder, et al (MLA, 2002), "Phantom Limbs: Film Noir and the Disabled Body" in *GLQ* 9:1-2 (2003), and "Strange Blood: Hemophobia and the Unexplored Boundaries of Queer Nation" in *Beyond the Boundary: Reconstructing Cultural Identity in a Multicultural Context*, Ed. Timothy Powell (Rutgers U, 1999).

Peter Culley is the author of six books of poetry, most recently *Hammertown* (New Star, 2003) and *The Age of Briggs & Stratton* (New Star, 2008). He has also written extensively on visual art in various books and magazines for the past two decades. A new nonfiction book, *To The Dogs*, is forthcoming this fall from Arsenal Pulp Press. He lives in Nanaimo, BC.

Stephen Collis is the author of *Phyllis Webb and the Common Good* (Talonbooks, 2007) and two parts of "The Barricades Project": *Anarchiv* (New Star, 2005) and *The Commons* (Talonbooks, 2008).

Peter Cole is a member of the Douglas First Nation (Stl'atl'imx) and Associate Professor in Aboriginal and Northern Studies at the University College of the North. His teaching and research interests include orality, narrativity, Aboriginal education, environmental thought, self-governance, and Aboriginalizing methodology. He is currently Principal Investigator of a research project with the Lower Stl'atl'imx communities to support them in language and cultural regeneration. Peter has published in national and international academic and literary journals and books and is the author of a book entitled *Coyote and Raven Go Canoeing: Coming Home to the Village*, written in poetic, dramatic, and storytelling voices, which breaks new ground by making orality the foundation of its scholarship. He is also co-editor of *Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada* (in press). When not wearing an academic hat, Peter can be found hiking or canoeing.

Louis Cabri is author of *The Mood Embosser* (Coach House Books, 2002) and "*-that can't*" (forthcoming from Nomados). He has introduced and edited a selection of Fred Wah's poems for Wilfred Laurier Press. He co-edited, with Nicole Markotic, two special issues of letters to/from poets for *Open Letter*. He organized the poets' dialogue series, *PhillyTalks*, and co-edited, with Rob Manery, *hole* magazine and chapbooks, and the Transparency Machine talks series. In past lives, Cabri has worked for nonprofit arts and development organizations. As part of South Africa's post-apartheid transition, he coordinated programs in language planning policy, public broadcast journalism, and economics. He has written essays on the poetry of Earle Birney, P. Inman, Jackson Mac Low, Frank O'Hara, Louis Zukofsky, Laura Riding, Catriona Strang, among others. He teaches modern and contemporary US and Canadian poetry, critical theory, and writing at the University of Windsor.

Former KSW member **Ted Byrne** works at the Trade Union Research Bureau in Vancouver. His books are *Aporia* (Fissure/Point Blank, 1989) and *Beautiful Lies* (Cap University Editions, forthcoming in 2008). With Charles Watts he edited *Recovery of the Public World* (Blaser Conference papers) (Talonbooks, 1998).

Clint Burnham is a Vancouver writer and teacher. See pages 56-57 for the full story.

Colin Browne's latest book, *The Shovel*, is published by Talonbooks. He is working on a new film that explored the Surrealists' fascination with Northwest Coast and Yup'ik masks and the surprising impact of this fascination on western culture. Colin was one of KSW's founding members and edited *Writing* magazine for over a decade.

Jules Boykoff is co-author, with Kaia Sand, of *Landscapes of Dissent: Guerrilla Poetry & Public Space* (Palm Press, 2008). He also wrote *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States* (AK Press, 2007), *The Suppression of Dissent: How the State and Mass Media Squelch US American Social Movements* (Routledge, 2006) and the poetry collection *Once Upon a Neoliberal Rocket Badge* (Edge Books, 2006), which was recently translated into Italian by GAMMM. A collaboration with visual artist Jim Dine is forthcoming (Steidl, 2008). Boykoff's critical writing has appeared in scholarly journals like *Antipode*, *Social Movement Studies*, and *New Political Science* as well as in popular publications like *XCP: Cross Cultural Poetics*, *Common Dreams*, and *NACLA: Report on the Americas*. His poems have recently appeared in *Ixnay*, *Model Homes*, and *Tinfish*. In November 2006 he was an invited speaker at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, where he presented research he carried out with his brother Maxwell Boykoff (Oxford University) on US media coverage of global warming. Boykoff teaches political science and writing at Pacific University and lives in Portland, Oregon, where he co-curates the Tangent Reading Series with Rodney Koenke and Kaia Sand.

Dodie Bellamy has written a novel, *The Letters of Mina Harker* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2004); a collection of fiction, memoirs, and essays, *Pink Steam* (Suspect Thoughts, 2004); an epistolary collaboration on AIDS with the late Sam D'Allesandro, *Real* (Talisman House, 1994); and a cross-genre collection of pedagogical essays and fictions, *Academonia* (Krupskaya, 2006). Her book *Cunt-Ups* (Tender Buttons, 2002), a radical feminist revision of the "cut-up" pioneered by William Burroughs and Brion Gysin, won the 2002 Firecracker Alternative Book Award for Poetry. Her latest chapbook, *Barf Manifesto* (Ugly Duckling, 2008), an extended riff on Eileen Myles' essay "Everyday Barf," reconsiders "the aesthetics of cleanliness, grammatical accuracy, and discursive cohesiveness" (quote from Ramsey Scott). Bellamy's essays and reviews have appeared in *The Village Voice*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Bookforum*, *Out/Look*, *Nest*, and *The San Diego Reader* as well as numerous literary journals and websites. She lives in San Francisco.

Michael Barnholden writes non-fiction prose and non-lyric poetry from his home in the Asthma Flats area of Vancouver. Books include *Circumstances Alter Photographs: Captain James Peters and Northwest Campaign of 1885* (forthcoming from Talonbooks), *Street Stories: 100 years of Homelessness in Vancouver* with Nancy Newman and photos by Lindsay Mearns (Anvil Press, 2007), *Reading the Riot Act: A History of Riots in Vancouver* (Anvil Press, 2005), *Works* (Tsunami Editions, 2000), *Writing Class: The Kootenay School of Writing Anthology*, co-edited with Andrew Klobucar (New Star, 1999), and *On the Ropes* (Coach House, 1997).

Andrea Actis is a former KSW member and one of the organizers of the Positions Colloquium. She has a bit of criticism and poetry appearing/forthcoming in *The Capilano Review* and is moving to Providence, RI, in about two days to begin a Ph.D. in English.

Current KSW collective members not listed above include *Fred Wah*, *Pauline Butling*, and *Craig Mackie*.