



experiment-o **experiment-o**

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Four Excerpts from *The Ingrid Bergman Thing*

Jamie Bradley

1.

Pauline wrestles w/ her hair to keep it up I go through motions the remote in its body rebels w/ a bucking as decisive as a lean diver knifing out the tarpaulin of a city pool as unnatural as the sky in up-state New York where a million thudding breaths & a legend of asbestos are moving outward to Ontario pulling her bra on w/out art on even a conceptual level the decisive twinge that tells me I'll be late to the station w/ the wreck of her love swimming around my thighs Grand Central Station is no correlative for this now redundant prescience, the thing in itself relieved as a pop song jumping like a marine from the pale ears of a girl w/ small breasts sing along, we're fucked, we're fucked.

2.

I am lying on the bed & the light is catching my breasts in a healthy fatness. Paul is in the bathroom wrestling w/ a condom from the dispenser at the club where I got the hand stamp that has been fading for two days & that left a small nearly geometric red smudge on my top. The condom might be a novelty: it is green like mouthwash & may glow in the dark, though I'm not sure of that & Paul hasn't called out from the bathroom to let me know, & I think he would since, after all, it's not the sort of thing you see all the time.

Jamie Bradley

3.

I'm looking for a word to describe enormousness & while there are several adequate words, adequacy seems to be oxymoronic here. I like fulsome because it seems to really be big & the president has used it in a speech that made Pauline cry & felt like 2 hands pressing down on my chest, but a guy at the Times has written a piece suggesting that fulsome really means cloying or excessive & Shakespearean loathsomeness, especially the sexual kind. I prefer it as an acknowledgement of worth. The Times thinks that all the good words are over-done. It must be really lonely to be the president.

4.

I'm working on another poem for *The Americans* & on the TV *Ingrid Bergman* has just walked into Rick's bar & is getting ready to open up a whole Nazi cluster fuck. The air is getting tight & Pauline is wearing it like a sharp nipples t-shirt, but I'm getting words on the page & the last time she was close to me the vodka on her breath wasn't as rank as it will be later if I don't say the right thing. I say a few nasty things to her that I've learned from my father, who I suppose is as good as any man in the language of hurting women. He liked phrases that he could use in public & in private, so that he could tell his friends she was on the rag again, in a performance that didn't particularly care who she was. I say the words not even for their effect, at least not once they leave my mouth, but to shake them in the core of my fist like some form of insurance, a document I can take out later if things get particularly bad, like any good performance.

Jamie Bradley

hall

Question of Taste

I'm spreading my taste throughout New York City
she said
and of course it was on my tongue too passing from
something immediate to a dull signal like licking a
lamppost
of course
I hadn't licked a lamppost or much else since lunch
and it was clear that what she was calling her taste
had derived from an accident between us and a few
books that I lent to her in the fall but I remained on
the whole
silent

Ignorance of Flowers as a Practical Excuse

Jamie Bradley

we make love work for us
because we know nothing
about flowers & so of course
we think of them & the work
of their trim bodies as sex &
this affords a range of images
that turn the shark of still
writing broken pencils when
we want to say “we fucked
& left & I remembered this
time to take my handbag”

Jamie Bradley

2.
beach leg is
the dock red
stamp wet green

& 2 long arms of
weed(s)

Jamie Bradley

3.
icon engine too bears are
your shoulder does for a
price tag

Jamie Bradley

4.

halo light rain
stamp red his face

but to see a con-
stant dial as body
turns water & slip
clothes turn water O

if naked in 2
dimensions of gray
would 2
dimensions
hold when coughed

habit skull
ton upholds
habit the
human frame
habit (human
frame)
alone

habit torn
upholds
habit (human
frame) alone

(when 2 uniforms
are tried
grave & invective
thrust)

halo light rain

Jamie Bradley

5.
but the beauty
no mad-
ness or mast
 mass obvious

stone in palm
of a guileless man

sun no planes
thread cold

a lamb in
error

top the cup
of a gravity well
of spent

bark wreck
as Daphne thighed
morning

sandbags
won't save

your life

Peter Cicariello



for this moment, at least for this moment

Peter Cicariello



raining tache with a, g, e, and ampersand

Peter Cicariello



someone else lives in this house

Someone else lives in this house

Peter Cicariello

Someone else lives in this house
Up the stairs in the eaves on the north side
behind the far bedroom I think
I know because I have begun finding things
Odd things, out of place during the whole of a dull, dark,
and soundless day, in the autumn of the year,
When the clouds hang so oppressively low in the heavens.
There was the night the eviscerated fawn screamed like a murdered child
The night the wind formed echoes of other people's voices down in the hollow
I often passed alone, through a singularly dreary splash of country,
Looking out upon this dream, knowing that someone else
lives in this house up the stairs behind the bedroom wall
I have looked closely at these other lives
And have begun to sense the urgency of this place
I think in the eaves on the north side
I know because I have begun finding things, certain things
In and around the soundless evenings
with the constant drawing of the voice
this view from the other side, this finding of things
And others, out of place and even others,
Someone else, through the entire length of day
found when the clouds are in the heavens,
multiplying this melancholy with the
sternest of supernatural images
within the desolation of a dull, dark,
and distant shade, I singularly perceived
that dreary and terrible reverie,
Up in the north far bedroom
Low out beyond the passing tract of country;
upon the scene itself, as the stairs rise
behind the eaves one year, the knowing then
that I am not in this house alone

K.S. Ernst



K.S. Ernst



K.S. Ernst



K.S. Ernst

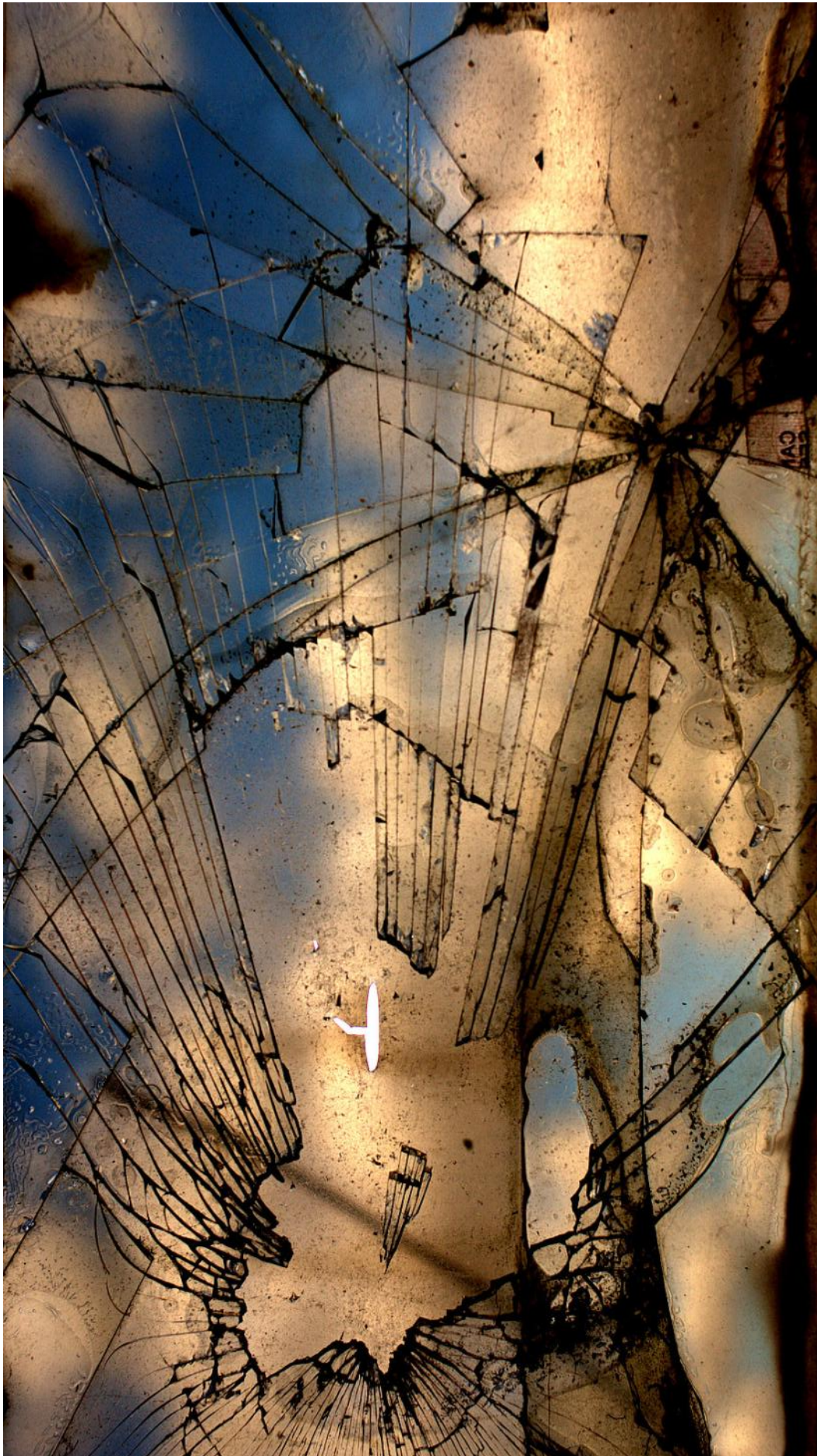


These poems appeared in the book *Drop Caps* by K.S. Ernst, Xexoxial Editions, 2008.

Caroline Gomersall



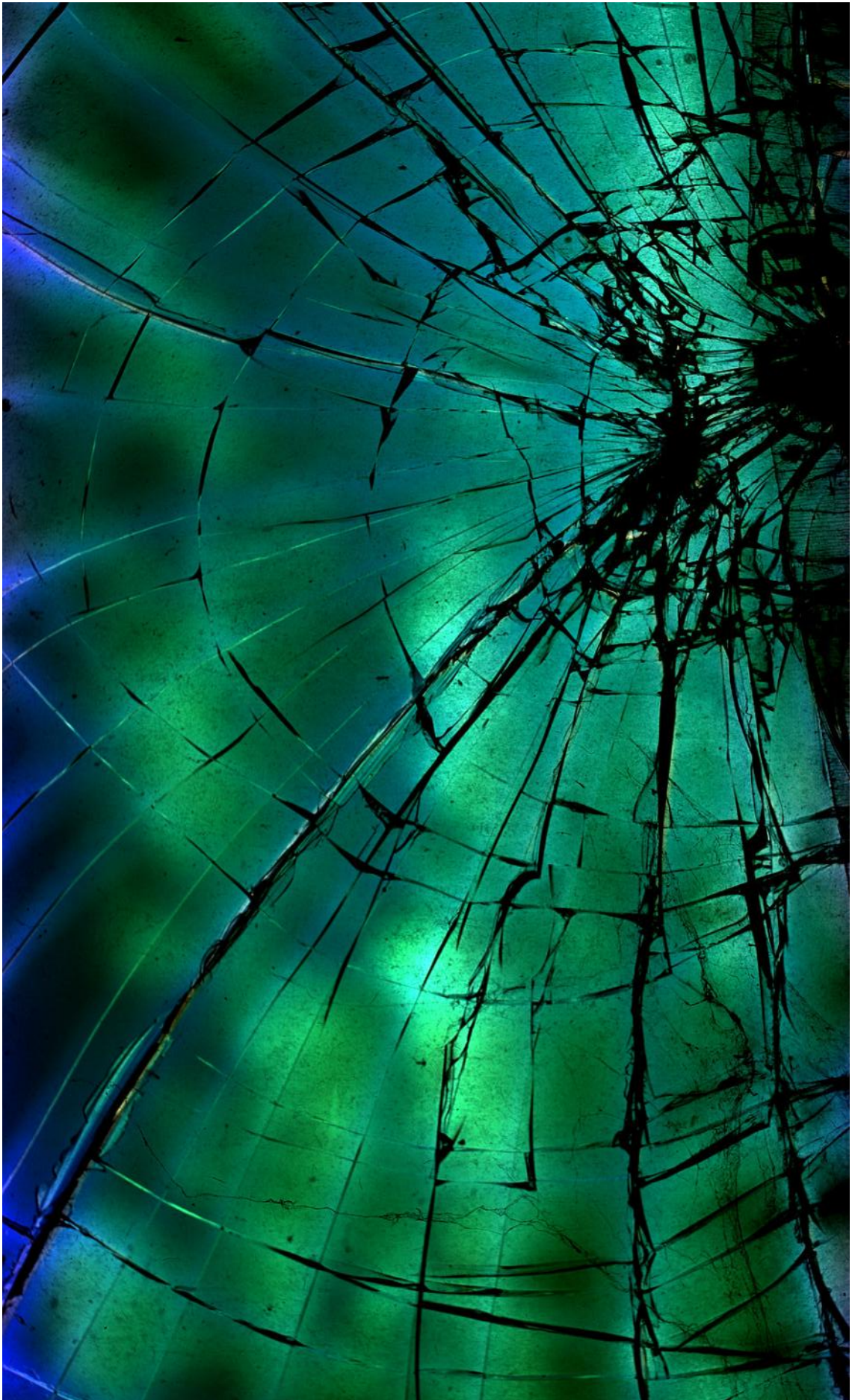
Caroline Gomersall



Caroline Gomersall



Caroline Gomersall



Caroline Gomersall



Tales of Histories

filigree sky
 writhing with moon
 light and cloud

never ask a sailor about the sea
 (the cold arms of reason
 will seduce any soul)

(it's not the sea that will kill you, it's the land)

...we are designed for grief. We need not be taught how to sob. Tear ducts we are born with. The fallen eyes, the keening wail; these mechanisms are part of us...

"We nailed starlight to the gunwales so we knew where we were.)

the round vow
 els of for
 bid
 den words
 rolled in the surf of tongues

{forbidden} words of grief

[when the bell rang
 the dog salivated]

mechanism mechanistic mechanical maniacal manacle
 (prisoners of ourselves)

(the pale green curve
 of the waves
 with their frothy white toupees
 trailing in the wind"

will tell you nothing
 the bare vowels and consonants
 of experience
 unformed into syllable
 or word

cerstu
 cerrsttuu
 cerrttuu s
 cerruu st t
 ceuu str t r
 ce stru tur
 e structur
 structure

stricture mechanical

legends stories tales assortments anecdotes sock-drawers histories excavations
 sheet-stains footprints memories avoidances – anything that plots our progress
 from night to night

showing where we are
 where we have been
 where we are expected
 and with whom
 and when

alone on the ocean
 with the stars spread out like a city
 a dot in the cosmos
 oppressive emptiness

unmoored

to take these words
 orange blue aquamarine
 and make them mean this:
 [magenta]

to turn the waves into the shore
 to take grief and say, "I hate you for dying alone"
 "I ha.te you fo.r dyi.ng al.one"
 ["""]

John C. Goodman

"They came from the mid-Atlantic, the waves
big prowling bullies
spoiling for a fight...

[we do not need to learn how to grieve]
"I have wept in the fullness of time"
"Thaveweptinthefullnessoftime"
"Thvweptinthefullnessoftime" a
"Thvwptnthfullnssoftim" aeeeeee
"hvwptnthfullnssoftm" aeeeeeiio
"hvwptnthfullnssftm" aeeeeeiio
"hvwptnthullnsstm" aeeeeeiio ff
"vwptntullnsstm" aeeeeeiio ffhh
"vwptntunsstm" aeeeeeiio ffhhl
"vwptntunsst" aeeeeeiio ffhllm
"vwpttusst" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnn
"vwttusst" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnp
"vwttut" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnpss
"vwu" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnpsstt
"vw" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnpssttt
"w" aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnpsstttuv
" " aeeeeeiio ffhllmnnpsstttuv
" " aeio fhlmnpstuvw
" " aefhilmnopstuvw

hope	[the	defeat
optimism	world	despair
...	goes	ineptitude
...	on]	falsity
		depression

the round vowels containing grief
"aeio"

continents
"fhlmnpstuvw"

that stop the ocean waves

the shore is a prison for breakers
mechanisms of grief
prison grieving magenta history unmoored
guttural
utterance

all grief contained in this:
[" "]

end
[magenta]
end
aefhilmnopstuvw

You told me and I put my hand on your upper back. It was warm, soft, and otherwise the same as it had always been. My palm still felt your skin's heat after I withdrew it and returned it to the table.

Later that night, I returned to my body from somewhere far away and found my palms pressed together, found that I had been praying.

I hadn't prayed since I was in grade eight or so, and I always prayed for really selfish things. At one point in my early teenhood I cottoned onto this fact and added a bunch of generic cockle-warming headers so my prayers went something like this:

"Dear God, I pray for no more hate, no more war, no more disease, no more starvation, no more pollution and no more perversion."

Then I'd get to the point and ask God to have Taryn fall in love with me, or Quinn, or Tamara, or Jocelyn.

Clearly he wasn't listening, so eventually I stopped praying altogether.

This time when I put my palms together, I prayed that you would be okay.

No intention there, just an action, an utterance that bubbled up my throat while my mind was somewhere else.

After a decade, I'd invoked He who, following Nietzsche, I had silenced and buried.

The thing inside you brought Him back up from the ground. The clump of cells reproducing themselves from one monotheistic template, from the image of a cold, powerful God who judges simply because he is, like the cells inside you grow simply because they are.

I prayed for no more perversion in grade eight but I really meant no more people diddling little kids.

I prayed for no more perversion then, but what you need now is perversion, difference, hybridity, not that dominating, coagulating unity inside you, a million malignant cells, all the same.

I'm not going to pray again.

Ordinary Time (The Propers)

Proper 1

S

Console the cry. Seemly periods
double, guilt
voices away.

The grass withers
with the breath of it, but the words – well, here
are their arms, their
rewards, gathered
& held.

Here
is the press of all things, & now,
now as far from again. You loved
with the oil of rivals,
& the heavens – well, they
passed by.

In the world, this
world, the word was not
one thing, was not
light &/or darkness (it
a man to bear).

M

The sea
in hand, the nearest
inch, nearest
bushel...

See the buckets?
See the coasts & islands? The
counting & the emptiness? Some-
one – someone – chose.

Did you/had
you/was it not
you, you who
sat & stretched out,
withered, & was
carried away?

Having once
heard & never
failed, with
the dead in hand, with
the age underfoot fulfilled
& close at hand
making you at once
go & leave
because there was a man & he, so astonished,
shouted behind it.

Gil McElroy

T

Let us assemble
coasts & islands. Fasten them
with nails to keep them
steady.

I grasped you.
I told you “crimes made up your living,”
& the air rebelled, we too
amongst it. The rest of the world,
well, how extra-
ordinary that no-
one could claim
credit.

Feverish hands
helped & brought those
who were (or other) because
they knew a lonely place & its
companions. This neighbourhood proclaimed because
our knees stretched once, but then
again no longer.

First Quarter. Algol, demon
star, dims. Places
keep coming.

Gil McElroy

W

The water & its
tongue shall open
onto dry ground – planes
& boxes side
by side as though
the hand produced
what was going
to happen. Revealed
& known, at least, done
less to than mud.

I send you, if
asked, altogether nothingness
& wind.

The roof. The stretcher. Now,
some talk these thoughts.

Easier to get up, pick
up, go
off.

Like this.

T

Here
is my light. It does not
break or snuff. It
will not
grow faint.

Who hammered? What
came of it? I
made the light. See how things
are before I tell you everything
left in it, even, thinking
in front of the door
of the roof they'd made an opening
in.

F

I
have called, & by rivers
walked. I
have given, in return, north
& south, & back from
far away. Which of them
brings me back?

This name grows
firm.

Gil McElroy

S

[...]

Gil McElroy

S

For your sake I
shall make a way, a
path. Look: I
am making a road & bestowing
rivers.

But, no. No need
to remember, to
think. I am done doing.
You have,
&, having,
your weariness is sur-
named, un-
alterable, heir to a tenth of the names
given. Hurry, eat! Look around,
already!

Gil McElroy

M

I am there, these things
dispelled & to me re-
deemed. Who went
down? Who went
up? Was it
something tossed hither & thither? Gusts,
maybe, or tricks
of delicious deception all just a part
of the work? I'm boat-
ready, afflicted in any way
forward, summoned
& sent. Drive
on.

Gil McElroy

T

The makers
& the works pose
the nothing that shame
casts. The charcoal, the
hammer, the
chalk outline making it look
like a house – a
house among trees planted
& nourished, the Moon
full. Here, take
part of it. This half
is replete.

We
know nothing, stand
by nothing. Over the embers, something
in my hand is right
& wrong. From now on
more lies.

Such a crowd
collects at a meal. Mother
& brother ask
for you.

Gil McElroy

W

Thus spread I, I
who foiled & made foolish, who
confounded & confirmed,
& made the plans
succeed. Who say
I shall? Who say
to the ocean by saying
“level”

“shatter”

“smash”? In

your lot, once,
the coarse effects
of goodness wanted
of you. Showed you
up, even.

Once again
lakeside, the whole crowd
gathered ‘round. Seed
fell. Birds
came. Thorns
grew.

Gil McElroy

T

I am here, though
armed. Rain
& clouds let with,
given orders
about the heavens
& their array.

So lives like
senseless people with wine
saved the whole thing. Water
would've been glorious, wrinkled
& faultless.

One of you
loves himself (sic). He brought in
the bed, the lampstand kept hidden, kept
secret. He also said
what you are hearing.
He also said
which is the smallest (& used
many words).

Gil McElroy

F

For he is
who set it
firm. I have not spoken. I did not say. There is
no saving me. By mine
own self be. What comes
comes in shame. Uprightness
demands it. Mother may
I? Heartedly
willingly
&
without threats.

Gil McElroy

S

The burden, the
loads no one can save
until old age, until
your hair is grey – I
myself shall carry, lavish
& weighted. Lift
it up. Put
it down,
so that it
never replies, never
says the things that happened
long ago.

I said
I shall do
what I have
said. I
am bringing

Your
belt. Your
feet of faith.
& your helmet. Speak
fearlessly, so that you know
precisely, im-
perishably. In all,
the burning will make itself
known.

You reached
the lake because you
had the strength, though
many were
earnest. In the country
people came, dressed,
were afraid, as you were the man
begged to be
allowed.

All done.

Gil McElroy

S

Step
on the ground. Re-
move your tie. Loll about & think,
in spite of yourself.
Take the meal,
& listen. Your wishes
delude you.

We have, lets
say, flesh filled with,
& yet free from, science
& pure water. Hope
made us, hope
we professed – not
absence, as some
say, but each
other, &
again.

Eight years
lying there. They asked you
to walk around.

Things like this.

Gil McElroy

M

Listen to your
name. I knew your neck,
& your genteel forehead,
too, though
your ears not. As I told you before,
you did it. Why won't
you admit it? Until today
I've been patient, my mouth
obstinate. But you heard
nothing.

From & by,
human being human, me
dead to peace...

Wicked!

I am who was called, not
that there was trouble.
You were there – was anyone else convinced?
Was I trying
not to be preached at? Being
that I taught it, it
was surely heard. In my
limitless traditions, who had time when I
was in a hurry?

Seeing you
earnestly sick, your hands
pressed one under another – the touch
at once dried up, aware of
clothes. You see,
all around.

Gil McElroy

T

Listen,
the heavens assembled. Which of them
loved you? If only you numbered
their names.

Come near,
& say "go." Make
water. Split
rocks.

After that
it will be gone again, quite sure
& fruitless – one moment
preached
& to you promised, recognized
or not.

The contrary
edged me, leaving
home. This wisdom,
surely, there & amazed. Twelve pairs
or nothing. Wore
a spare. Wore
sandals until
you refused to shake them off.

Gil McElroy

W

Last Quarter (coasts,
pay attention.) My
birth made my name, hid
me, made me concealed. But
I have exhausted
all the whiles,
& now my eyes shall make & see,
keeping apart
from insincerity. You
gentile, you – you compel someone?
Follow that sin! Build some-
thing!

We

used to have heard this. Now
it was the same to have
& do so, leading
oaths.

The girl. The
mother. The
head.

Gil McElroy

T

Mountains feel
no pity. I have palms, so
go away. Your eyes, you – will you put
them on me
once more?. This place
is too cramped. I
am beckoning & hoisting, you
stupid man. Is only
one me.

Him, he said – him
for awhile. Could be
he saw them going. He saw them
without & lonely, the Moon far. Five
squares,
he took.

Gil McElroy

F

Where is yours
by which I repudiate?
Is my hand covered?
I have offered my cheeks
& know that I
am moth-eaten. This
is what
you will
lie down upon. To put it once: once
ratified, hundreds abolish it. You see
promise, but I
see progeny making
no exception.

The wind
came & all at once,
hard pressed
through & through.

Gil McElroy

S

Consider
the quarry. Consider
when I called.
But pity will turn
my arm. About the coasts & islands:
there can be neither. There can be
neither for you. Eat
without washing. Get round
to ordering. You
say things for the sake
of other things,
& someone uncleans something. Understand?
It goes
into the stomach & the heart. Things
come undone.

Gil McElroy

S

My awake arm was not
pierced, was not
ransomed. You
forget who spreads out
the earth. You
never stopped
that day, when I
was bent & trembling.

I was stirred up. My name
was in your mouth, my hand
awake.

It is by. It was because. It was because now it is. It was through.

All these.

My, but
it comes. But
anyone will,
whether when someone seeks
or not.

Why do you
crow? You work at it. You
circumcise some-
one broken, yet you want to say
you know me because no one
but no one
laid a hand on me.

M

He said “your feet, they start on a journey,” but he, he went home. Look, he did nothing, now, but came here, dazed. Anyone else here?

The sun rose. Next morning, the place was plain.

Forget the living. The ages, the world – it was so, and for that, was upright. It was because, and now was without. It was when someone took care. It was the call, the knowing, but not because (not because). It was not bread. It is not *my* bread, it is *the* bread, & gives way. I am no one, no one you can see because I have not to do, now. It is this & that.

Gil McElroy

T

Eight days
grown & watched. Weaned,
even, not
to share a skin of wine
& some bread – all any of these things
promised & welcomed unless
drawn from me.

Gil McElroy

W

It happens. Offer him
one of the mountains, then
chop wood & start
the fourth day. Then
look, take
the knife, & swear
that you have not
loved.

Tell me
the subject & the way
of a promise. Promise,
now! Discuss
the tests. Bread
them in the boat. Do
you not see, not
remember? I
broke thousands.

Gil McElroy

T

The length
of a hundred years I can
remove, low
to the lunation
& demure constants. Let
me have the field. I
will make it
good enough, & I
shall bury its boundaries. I
shall refuse release, be pilloried, sawn, or
stoned, be
in want of treats, even, with clouds
thrown in, the Sun eclipsed. You should,
you know, see this: the ring, the
words, the
outset away...

This was
who was.

Gil McElroy

F

By man
his thighs
to choose.

Should I
draw water
& drink?

I have
a pitcher.

Thought such,
yet had/may share
grief.

Near this
place, known
acts done.

Gil McElroy

S

Tell me
what you'd
had heard.
Provide straw,
eels, &
water. Take
this property
to him –
now. Now.

Your crooked
limbs made
trouble. What
you knew
afterwards you
had gathered
whole. Speak.
Refuse. Escape.
Voice that
thing, &
therefore please.
Anyone will
know. But
when crowds
want judgement,
they want
the pears
no one
has.

uninflected particles: a sieved cahier

*indefinite article: a**definite article: the*

a baby or a very young child	the amber road
a beginning and then an end and a middle	the amnesty of an amnesiac
a beloved hairstyle	the banality of commerce, neck luck
a bride leaking petals	the burning ship for the dead sent to sea
a bucketed pour over	the circle of one body around nobody
a burial ground for women	the colour of arterial blood
a charm	the condition of it
a city made of waves	the direction of a palm
a cube of glass sinks to lake beds	the fields of empty living rooms, car lobbies
a dancer's limbs	the French verb attendre
a deluge myth	the fulsome flick
a dark horse	the gap between this and never
a full lower lip	the grill teeth of a step
a galleon full	the hedgehog's dilemma
a game of who's done what with whom	the invisible woman
a group of small	the involvement of stars
a heart condition	the kindly ones
a hinterland	the length of an elementary school
a homophone	the liquid density of sad waters
a ken of keening	the loss of a day or three
a little too much	the lumen, a perceived power of light
a lyric method	the lusatian culture in the early iron age
a manual for identification and care	the methyl mouth vapours
a mutton lamb	the milk line thickening
a newspaper turnover	the moon curve
a thousand year photo	the multiplication table cripples me
a reduction	the one thing I asked
a sad babylonian or assyrian or hibernian	the other's amazing stomach
a salutary sun fetched from the sky	the oval window mount of a daguerreotype
a sensation of falling	the parts of a curve where stroke is thickest
a single freckle	the preference for orchids
a single piece of parchment rolled tightly	the problem of choice
a subset of a subset of a subset	the rate of particles across a given surface
a talisman to guard the bow	the sad phone machine
a test of metal	the scar lateral to my design
a thimble full of tequila	the sickle sweet
a tongue here, a palm, your thigh	the sky
a universe expanding	the sound of voices bent against glass
a vital component of ornamental objects	the suffusion of grief from
a weight of letter darkness	the tenets you adhere to
a well-washed shirt, my shirt	the term infant
a whole season	the territorial pissings
	the thickening of regret
	the weakening
	the wolf and the cosmonaut
	the wrong answer to every question
	the you undone

uninflected particles: a sieved cahier

*conjunction: if**possessive pronoun: my*

if a beckon
 if a bye bye baby bye bye
 if I am or am not
 if I only had a brain
 if that means anything to you
 if you are not kind
 if you cannot name it
 if you love someone
 if you pretend me frostbit
 if you put your mind to it
 if you stay inside
 if you are going to do this
 if we are pulsar

conjunction: and

and a sigh, deep inhalation
 and also to hide from the scrutiny of clergy
 and between hiccups
 and between standing stones
 and boundaries of my unclaimed
 and days of no chlorophyll
 and didn't mean
 and dropped from several stories
 and I meant to call you: but
 and I tell you she isn't
 and laid it out flat
 and let slip
 and make MMMs all over, seagulls
 and on one foot a shoe
 and one and two and three
 and paper oracles
 and seems
 and smash grapevines into wreaths
 and so much more now than then
 and swallow up collapsed linoleum
 and the other bare
 and then
 and this is hard to explain
 and tips of teal fireflies
 and vibrate in jaw
 and water pour over
 and when I call, you answer
 and you always told me no
 and you never

my amazing face
 my answer
 my attributes
 my black moods
 my complacent tongue
 my conversation privileged
 my cousin Elizabeth says
 my darkling bright
 my dissolution aching
 my dream minding
 my dyed liver, the bones of my dead mothers
 my fingers polish topaz
 my fists let go
 my friends dance up aisles, their faces
 my grandmother's method for pain
 my grip upon you
 my happy home
 my heart bicameral
 my heart's ferment in glass jars
 my knuckles bled
 my life preserved, tsunami
 my life!
 my lost attributes
 my lungs puffed out cloud silhouettes
 my my eye eye oh yes
 my name unpronounceable
 my neck – the moon
 my own personal Pandora's box
 my pre-Raphaelite beauty graces endless etc.
 my presence, the metaphor
 my reckoned shoulder
 my shirt fresh laundered
 my throat veiled
 my untouched elbow
 my untranslatable goodness
 my wall of a wall
 my weapon can be sword, sickle, pole arm
 my worth

uninflected particles: a sieved cahier

preposition: from

from across this room
 from april until ice
 from her fingers
 from my hands
 from pulp paper, a brittle baked
 from the craters on Io
 from the slightest movement
 from the start
 from your shoulder, the ways of stepping

preposition: of

of a bitch in heat
 of a bracket worn over then pushed
 of a bridge rising above it
 of deeds done
 of a dowry
 of a name
 of dams or sudden loss
 of dyed pulp wood and gardenias in bloom
 of each leaf through vein
 of escape velocity
 of ever evolving colour, no temperance
 of five year old girl with fists
 of grief
 of holding onto a stem
 of invisibility
 of it stops, that doing
 of kicking it
 of lake ice, what a mess
 of light, set on the tips of the fingernails
 of long dead insects, the Baltic kind, forms
 of magazine covers in the rain, pulp mash
 of me, my prescient character
 of niceties, of greeting
 of no artistic significance
 of no purpose
 of passive joy
 of pure architecture
 of sea
 of thumbs
 of us across tree lines
 of warmth rising
 of water pressure

preposition and particle: to

to a lamb's bleat
 to accurately remember
 to be reasonable
 to burn for
 to claim solace from stars
 to count dimes
 to crack an egg
 to do and places to be
 to encompass a thimble
 to erase the merest
 to go
 to goddess or vegetation or pretty ghost
 to heal tissue
 to hear one melted syllable
 to hope and lose all coherence
 to illustrate the depths
 to just about manage
 to know your bones are made of water
 to mail your little flame
 to make it all better
 to matter to you
 to my continued
 to my head and sent diagonal
 to nubs, flat pitched
 to orbit
 to realise
 to realise you'd rather
 to rose, to mahogany, the elegant slide
 to say I'm stake-bound
 to silhouette a bookmark
 to singular
 to use 'the dead'
 to veil my throat, that you
 to walk the whole way home
 to wander

The Irresolute

Joe Dorn was not (normally) the sort of man who made New Year's resolutions. This year, though, was an exception. This year Joe vowed, taut and hush with solemn resolve, to finally release the memory that had, for most of the year, haunted him: the memory of his brief brush with the sacred in one of the local peep-heaps. He vowed to release that beautiful boy from mnemonic bondage, and move on, at long last, with his life, in all its loneliness.

His brush had happened one night when he'd entered the droop-awning theatre with his hood up, a tremulous crackle of nerves. Joe was not (normally) the sort of man who frequented peep-heaps, but a face on the glossy poster had called him in from the street. This silent, brazen, blazing face – so-young, sweetly male, pout-replete with planed cheekbones, fountainous eyes, and red-slicked lips. The movie was *Cock-Monsters IV: Vampire Boy's School Massacre*. The shoebox sex theatre was empty, Joe was alone... until the pretty, dark boy sat down beside him in the itchy dark room. He sat so close, Joe's throat snapped shut like a rat-trap on his last breath. Then it opened again as the hot fist thumped his bunched denim. Joe froze, gasping at the growing understanding that this was the hand of an angel. The darkness turned to undulant syrup as the boy brought Joe places with his slick, seraphic hand that he had never been, was afraid he'd never be again. The light came on and Joe came out in a spatter, thrown down into the strata of funk on the floor.

Something ugly in Joe Dorn died that day, exorcised by the anonymous angel's ministrations, and for weeks he came back to that shoebox sex theatre, hoping against god and all good sense for that darkly beautiful boy to come back again, to take him back to an erotic Narnia better than any narcotic. Just to take him back.

But the boy never reappeared; Joe doubted he even existed outside of that sticky, darkling instant, and for months now, Joe had tried to wrap his head around having been stroked by a singularity. Remembering the boy now, imagining the memory as a snapshot he would toss into the fireplace, Joe thought grandly of the rabbit killing tree of Zen lore. Joe had come to read many Buddhist texts, after recognizing in the absence of the hot hand of the boy's beauty, recognizing in that empty theatre, emptiness. But if empty equals open, why did the world still seem sometimes so closed, time still seem so irretrievable, as lost as the dawn-fingered Caspian seraph was to the desire of Joe Dorn, no matter how hard he resolved to move on?

Down in the Park

The day is a blur of green heat. I am lying splayed in Strathcona park, slathered in sunscreen, inert until I have to, with sudden brutality, urinate. I leave my blanketing towel and black bag and books lying scattered, hop-jog in shorts, shirtless, over to the toilets, past a man lying in the shade of a dark trunk. He watches me pass. The doors are locked, and I rush over to the woods. A squirrel chatters preacherly at me as I piss on the gnarled, facelike bark of an old oak.

A sound starts me, and I turn suddenly, almost pissing on my left shoe. The man from beneath the tree is standing there.

"Can I help you?" he asks with quiet authority. Shit, I think – what is he, an out of uniform park ranger? Cop? Sketchy rock-popper?

"Ummm...sorry." I mutter. He takes two steps closer. I look around, noting that, in this shady, wooded section, we are effectively alone.

"Don't be..." He says firmly, coming closer, closer, smile on his face opaque. I suddenly realize I've misunderstood, again. There is another breed of heat in the sighing of the leaves.

Dream-Eater

Do you know what keeps me alive? They would tell you it's the liquid in those pouches hanging beside the bed that perpetually seeps through the tubes that cover my body like tentacles. The liquid, they say, runs daily in every direction throughout my entire system, like an unwilling motorist forced to commute through a crowded city.

It's funny, when you think about it; all that endless movement in order to sustain an immovable body. I would laugh at the irony, but then I can't move my lips. Or anything else, for that matter.

They would say it's the doctors keeping me alive, the nurses, the needles, the respiratory machine...

It's not, of course.

You keep me alive. Or people like you.

#

There is a bed, two people, the sound of a dripping faucet without. The room is darkly lit, illuminated by a single candle. The shadows their bodies cast dance on the nearby wall, grossly magnified, grotesque. I hear them laugh, sigh, whisper sweet nothings to one another. They are alone, or think they are.

I walk towards them, somehow. I remember doing it, walking, at one time or another in my life. So long ago. One foot in front of the other.

Someone screams. They have seen me. Both cower at the far end of the bed, cradling the blanket to their chests like frightened children. The woman's dark hair is dishevelled, her cheeks flushed. There is a feverish look in her eyes.

"What are you doing here?"

I sigh. I shrug. "I'm hungry," I tell her apologetically. Was that really my voice, at one time, or was it different? No matter.

There is movement under the covers. The man jumps out, naked as the day he was born, and strikes me across the jaw. The woman's enamoured knight; the man of her dreams. His body is perfectly toned, the muscles in his arm bulging as he delivers the blow. It should hurt. It doesn't.

He cannot hurt me here. No one can.

I grab his throat, my thin fingers coiling around his neck, and fling him to the opposite end of the room, as though he were a doll to be discarded. His head strikes the glass, and the mirror cracks from side to side.

The woman, too afraid to move forward, too terrified to flee, remains in bed, sobbing, clinging to the covers. Fling them over your head, girl. It will be over soon.

Above the man's slumping body, in the mirror, cracked and broken, is a hideous, distorted sight. A pale form, the echo of a man that was, with sunken cheeks, sunken eyes and wispy, prematurely-grey hair protruding from a narrow skull. Its frame is frail, shrunken, barely covered by a faded blue hospital gown. Tubes of all shapes run down its arms, its thighs, its mouth. They sway as it moves, like ravenous serpents.

I am the abomination of the age.

The tubes slither down my body, towards the man. They coil around his form, pierce his skin, and burrow deep. They constrict, squeezing the life out of him.

I hunger. I feed.

The man is spent.

I walk over to the woman. Her arms are held up high, joined in an imploring gesture. Whom does she implore? I don't know.

"Why are you doing this?"

I bend down so our eyes are on a level.

"You keep me alive," I tell her, running a hand through her dishevelled hair. "Or people like you. Your dreams, that is." I point to where her dream man was slumped only moments before. "They keep me alive. Now wake up. I'm full."

Contributors

Jamie Bradley is a doctoral candidate and instructor at the University of Ottawa. His first poetry chapbook, *Compositions*, a collaboration with artist Brenda Dunn, was released in 2008 by AngelHousePress. His work has also appeared in the *Bywords Quarterly Journal*, *In/Words*, *the Moose and Pussy*, *Variations*, the *Peter F. Yacht Club*, *Visi: Cue-Cue Reader* and *Dalhousie Blues* (Ex-Hubris 2009).

Peter Ciccariello's work is process based in its focus on the conceptualization and development of multiple creative disciplines. His creative method draws from Postmodern ideas about fragmentation, serendipity, and truth as a contrived illusion. As a self described interdisciplinary, cross-genre artist, poet, and photographer, his work is a pastiche of visual elements and language, imported into 3-D digital environments where the resultant images are choreographed as a theater piece utilizing theatrical lighting, staging and object characterization.

K.S. Ernst works in visual poetry and textual art, much of which is painted, collaged, or digital. In addition, she uses three-dimensional letters in freestanding sculptures. A book of collaborations with Sheila E. Murphy, *Permutoria* published by Luna Bisonte Prods, is available through lulu.com. Other recent publications include *Drop Caps* and *Sequencing*, both published by Xexoxial Editions. Ernst Lives in New Jersey but travels to perform visual and sound poetry with The Be Blank Consort, which includes John M. Bennett, Scott Helmes, Sheila E. Murphy, and Michael Peters. website: ksernst.com

Caroline Gomersoll has a Masters degree in the arts with training in design, photography, film and animation. Her work history includes lecturing, commercial photography, picture framing and animation. She is also a member of Dante was Here creative photography group. Her photography appears in the *Bywords Quarterly Journal*.

John C. Goodman lives in St John's, Newfoundland & Labrador. His novel, *Talking to Wendigo* (Turnstone Press) was short listed for an Arthur Ellis Award. His stories, poems and essays have appeared in *The Fiddlehead*; *Otoliths*; *elimae*; *The Cartier Street Review*; *The Istanbul Literary Review* and other magazines. He is the editor of *ditch*, (www.ditchpoetry.com), an online poetry magazine.

Jeremy Hanson-Finger recently graduated from Carleton University. He is one of the founding co-editors of the *Moose & Pussy*, Ottawa's only literaryerotica magazine.

Contributors

Gil McElroy is a poet, independent curator, and freelance art critic. He's published poetry in Canadian and U.S. periodicals since the late 1970s. His books of poetry include *Dream Pool Essays* (Talonbooks, 2001) *NonZero Definitions* (Talonbooks, 2004) and *Last Scattering Surfaces* (Talonbooks, 2007), and his work has been anthologized in *Groundswell: best of above/ground press, 1993-2003* (Broken Jaw Press, 2003); *Side/Lines: A New Canadian Poetics* (Insomniac Press, 2003); and *Written in the Skin* (Insomniac Press, 1999). In 2001 he won the Christina Sabat Award for Critical Writing in the Arts. A practicing visual artist, McElroy is currently showing work at the Cambridge Sculpture Garden in Cambridge, ON, and has an upcoming exhibition at the Sir Wilfred Grenfell Art Gallery in Corner Brook, NL. He lives in Colborne, Ontario with his wife Heather.

Christine McNair's work has appeared in *The Antigonish Review*, *fireweed*, the *Bywords Quarterly Journal* and *misunderstandings magazine* as well as a recent above/ground press broadside. Her work can also be found in *Dalhousie Blues*, a collaborative book with Sean Moreland, Jamie Bradley and Caleb JW Brasset. She won an honourable mention in the Eden Mills Literary Competition and second prize (poetry) in the 27th Atlantic Writing Competition. She pays the bills working as a book conservator in Ottawa.

A writer and sometimes discoverer of little things, **Sean Moreland** presently teaches American literature and popular culture courses at Nipissing University. His work has recently appeared as part of the collaborative poetry collection *Dalhousie Blues*, in the *Malahat Review*, *Ottawa Arts Review*, and *Peter F. Yacht Club*, and as part of the Summer of Love Visi:Cue-Cue exhibit at Canteen Gallery in Ottawa. In 2007, Sean Moreland won the Bywords John Newlove Poetry Award.

Dominik Parisien is a generally cynical being who is somehow averse to sleeping and has an unhealthy obsession with short fiction. He has written book reviews for the Society Pages – the Quarterly journal of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec – and has published fiction in *Moon Drenched Fables*. He also had fiction set to appear in a small press magazine that met its untimely demise prior to publishing his story.

experiment-o is an annual PDF magazine established in 2008. its aim is to bring attention to works that do what art is supposed to do and that is to risk.

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"The old expressions are with us always, and there are always others."

Others, A Magazine of New Verse, December, 1919 Issue 5, No. 1