

OPENNEDZINE

ISSUE 2 OPENNED.COM

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June 2010

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OPENNED NEWS

JOSEPH WALTON'S MESSAGE FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION

Joseph Walton addressed the nation live on Wednesday 28th April. You can see a recording of the historic broadcast [here](#).

PODCAST #2 - FRANCESCA LISETTE & TIMOTHY THORNTON

Readings from Francesca Lisette and Timothy Thornton make up **the second Openned Podcast**. Francesca reads from *Tar Orchid* and Timothy reads three untitled poems. A full transcript of the original, longer podcast is **available for download**.

PODCAST #3 - EPUBLISHING AND THE FUTURE OF THE SMALL PRESS

A discussion between Alex Davies and Steve Willey about ePublishing and the future of the Small Press. A full transcript of this discussion is **available for download**.

KLATCH 2

You can **download a free PDF** of Klatch 2 magazine, featuring work by over a dozen poets. Klatch is assembled by the poets featured in Klatch.

KLATCH 3 PHOTOS

You can check out some photos of Klatch 3: Dérive [here](#). A PDF of Klatch 3 will be available on Openned.com after Klatch 4 (if you can't wait, copies of Klatch 3 will be available at the Openned Table). Check out Klatch 3 organiser Michael Zand's recollections of the event in the Zine, [here](#).

OPENNED TABLE

Openned is setting up a space at Café 1001 on one Saturday every month where small presses can sell their wares. Have **a look at the page** on Openned.com or grab yourself a primer in the Zine, [here](#).

EDITORIAL hive active

By Alex Davies & Steve Willey

Plenty of excellence in this issue, kicking off with a feature by Peter Philpott about why he does Great Works (the reasons may or may not surprise you but it should be read either way). If you live anywhere near Manchester, it would be worth your while checking out the newly-launched Counting Backwards series, a concept with great promise, graphically depicted in this here Zine. A newly formed collective, press free press, also gets graphic, and if you enjoy that we would thoroughly recommend you check out Timothy Thornton's piece on Ryan Ormonde's recent hypertext work. Even if hypertext work isn't your thing, this mini-essay should be. The same goes for Luke Roberts's epic appraisal of the Sussex Poetry Festival, a must-read for both attendees and non-attendees and pseudo-attendees.

Elsewhere we have some thoughts from some greatly clever people on Mendoza, or, Linus Slug, depending on who you talk to, and when. Stephen Mooney gives us a tour of the fantastic, newly-launched *Voiceworks* website and accompanying event series, and Michael Zand provides an account of Klatch 3: Dérive. If you like what you see, expect more of this Klatch after the next Klatch takes place (unless you come to the Openned Table: see below). We also have a brief overview of I'm With You, a new series of live art events in Clapton, courtesy of Johanna Linsley.

Don't say we're not helpful either - we're providing an easy one-sheet print-and-keep copy of the schedule for the soon-to-be-awesome Women's Innovative Poetry & Cross-Genre Festival soon-to-be-held in Greenwich (there may be a few changes before the event takes place). Seriously, have you seen the list of names for that? Openned will be there to film proceedings and these recordings will be made available online for anyone not able to attend.

Most importantly, we're including a copy of a letter sent from the students of Middlesex University to Ed Esche & the Board of Governors. If you're not familiar with the nature or purpose of this protest, we would urge you to read on and find out more, and get on board with the cause however you can, whether you're a student or not; the events at Middlesex are symptomatic of actions being taken around the UK.

Alongside this we're introducing a few regular features. Photo Poets showcases some of the best photography of poetry events and poets. This issue features the photography of Sharon Borthwick, Marianne Morris, Nat Raha and Malcolm Phillips. Bird Puke tries to make sense of poets making tweeting noises and Bookface is a puzzling public-status-table-hybrid of semi-documented activity. We hope you like. We're also running something called the Openned Table, which, if you're at all interested in small press publications, will be worth your while (it's right at the end).

As usual, if there is anything in the second issue that you would like to respond to, or if you would like to contribute a new piece to the next issue of the magazine, due sometime in late summer, please e-mail openned@gmail.com and we will respond as soon as possible.

A final note to mark the passing of Leslie Scalapino, who will be sorely missed by everyone.

This issue is dedicated to her.

Thanks for reading.

Steve & Alex
Openned Editors



image © Nat Raha

Openned is based in London, UK, and is run by Stephen Willey and Alex Davies.

Openned seeks to create flexible spaces for poetry and poetic practitioners by inviting less established and more established writers to read together, curating publications, documenting readings, publishing work, and promoting other writers.

The Openned Magazine is a bimonthly online publication (with a print-it-yourself black-and-white counterpart available for download) intended to document activities among experimental and innovative poetry communities, with a specific focus on the UK. All material in the magazine is written by the poets, publishers and organisers active within the community.

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OPENNED TABLE

BEHIND GREAT WORKS

explaining reasons and motivations behind the Great Works website

By Peter Philpott

I feel very passionate about Great Works' inclusiveness and variety. I enjoy the different strands of contemporary writing ending up together to their mutual surprise on the same website. I would argue this is a good thing, a very good thing. Yeah, I mean like, dear reader, it's also a jolly good thing that you¹ and your group of mates have got this thing going and you are all loving each other's work and pushing and publishing and publicising it. Go on doing it! It's what gets things done! But the danger is always that you risk ending up taking yourselves too seriously, and thinking you really are The Ones with The Thing. And are then likely to shut your eyes and ears to others as a result, and just tell them to worship your Thing. Coterries of their nature tend to write off or ignore what's different from what they are doing, to build up their own little Poetry Universe (and this is necessary!) – but it ain't ever all or enough.

Now, could be you are in fact There, and the entire canon of English literature is even as we speak shifting, melting and then recrystallising around you. Yeah, like your lottery ticket will win the roll over, but not even that likely. Let's remind ourselves a better chance of getting some reward out of any lottery (e.g. the Literary Fame and Fortune Scratch-card) is to form a big syndicate, and build up the small wins together. Unromantic. But more efficient.

Or, another over-extended metaphor: were I a Baptist, I would be a General Baptist, effusively claphappy, because salvation is possible for everyone. What I wouldn't be, and urge you not to be, is a Strict and Particular Baptist. Because then we would have to restrict salvation to a small group only, and ensure that our most important dealings were within that group. Especially we would have to celebrate the Lord's Supper only within a Congregation comprised of saved, immersed, believers: the Elect. We would be very full not just of righteousness, but also, despite our fear-and-trembling lest etc, a deep inner self-righteousness that would emotionally, spiritually and poetically blind us.

Hence, a ludicrously varied range of poets participating in Great Works, saints and reprobates alike. Essentially, too, I must publicly confess, there is a kind of basal degré zéro de l'écriture modernism which I find quite acceptable through its unselfish devotion to an address to the particularities of this world. I think we may be meant in some quarters not to do this, and I have heard some delicately avant-gardish types do feel queasy on encountering Great Works (but overcome this for its tastier morsels). But, well, that bloody old language of ours just keeps on referring always to things. Like now. Like when I talk to my wife, or the cat. Or myself. Or you. The things or the persons may not be there, of course, who knows? But reference to them is what makes language interesting, and seems always to me as acceptable a use of language as any other. Just not all the time, though. Never anything all the time!

So, I am delighted to be able to counter the rigorous and chastening purity of aseptic or neo-dada writing with a bit of rapturous vers libre or simple unrhymed stanzas whose language encounters in some way the things of life accurately enough. I know, there are all these incredibly well-worked out theological justifications for all sorts of positions other than the pragmatic about the relationships between language, writing and the world. Great fun they are too, and can allow all sorts of enjoyable and efficacious things to be done with language and writing (and maybe even the world occasionally). But I find poetry and language always exceed all theoretical positions. If they didn't, I'd take up theology, I mean, sorry, Theory, present Queen of the Sciences, and do that instead. But I don't: I assert poetry is a critique of the critical. If poetry isn't top trump, what is the point? We might as well all give up real mental activity and become philosophers.

So – though I find them engaging, often love their fruits – avant-garde coterries, and their academicised wannabe imitations (where only the voices of those washed in the Blood of Adorno or whoever will be heard by the Lord) seem to me to be a model to be transcended. And anyway, we really ought to be into a much more complex and multistranded post-avant network here, rather than played out Twentieth Century games. I could bring in too further religious models here – linking such purist thinking with the stultifying psychological pleasures of ritual purity, avoiding contact that which defiles (usually turns out to be stuff to do with women and bodily functions, apart from of course the arbitrary restrictions on diet). A healthy impurity that engages with all the world is what I'd urge, and have tried for.

Hence too the Web, haunt of porn, commerce and paranoia, but near universal in its access, and cheap or free. I suspect, though, Great Works is locked into an old model of this, "Web 1.0" etc. But it works. It transmits text. Ultimately I do like text-based poems. Stuck on writing. Once you've overcome the resistance of HTML to format anything other than administrative reports, the webpage model I've used for Great Works can convey virtually any poetic layout. But the near total accessibility is what excites me most. The collapse in the breadth of British publishing and distribution means that print productions beyond mass market are effectively lost and unreachable, except to those already plugged into the right networks. Yeah, I know you can get almost any book on Amazon, or you can find a publisher's website and order direct from a website. But in the former case, unless you do already know what you want, any single book is lost in the haunted undergrowth which is The Long Tail; and in the latter, well, yes. OK. But you're going to need to be in communion with the Elect to know about this publisher in the first place.

Books themselves may easily become a kind of fetish, I'd argue. Is the poem the bits of paper bearing the words (or

¹ For "you" do read "we". Never "they".

other marks)? Or is it the pattern of the words (or ...), irrespective of the medium? There may be things that are the former – though I fancy we’re moving into Art territory here when we do this. (Avoid – hopelessly corrupted by capital!) Or the limited edition book market (!). I’m not ruling out the interest of poetry thus operating (trying to rule very little out); but I’d argue if poetry is language-centred (or for that matter world-centred), it’s the pattern irrespective of medium, and with a duty to enable that pattern to be accessed and responded to by as many people as possible who might wish to do so.

So I am not pleased then by the cult of micro-publishing that has established itself in some quarters. Back to urging a wider vision than the small group again. Whereas we should be remembering the Parable of the Sower and broadcasting our seed, even if it goes to waste. Not limiting its distribution to our friends and immediate contacts. I know, it’s hard, and micro is the inevitable consequence of the total lack of capital available in poetry. And with any book publication “something is out there” at least – trouble is, so few will encounter it that it never really gets as far as “out there”. There needs to be a still more thriving publishing scene, and an even more thriving distribution network – and good on Harry Godwin for his Small Press Catalogue. But while we work to achieve such a transformation in the material conditions under which poetry is made public, I’d argue for, yes, Internet publication.

Now, I like performed poetry also. This can be an equal experience to the poem as text. But really I don’t find I can develop any worthwhile response to performance when mediated through a digital environment. A YouTube recording of a poet performing is such a limited version of the actual experience I really find it pointless. This may be me.² Sorry! But I want to produce online texts (or with print lurking as a possible intent), and to expedite poetry as read/performed live events (and hope to return to doing that next year). So there’s little if anything beyond text on Great Works, and I am very content with that, though I can appreciate this may be felt to be a limitation. It may well be a generational thing I do realise.

Great Works has become increasingly a staging post for writers to get early publication on, and I am delighted at this. Ahh, my children, how you have thrived! This is something that has evolved, a necessary ecological niche Great Works has defined and occupied. But, really anyone could do this. It’s a generalist niche, not a specialised one. Websites are easy and cheap. Just do it! This isn’t a function I want to carry on with. It’s been like rolling along a snowball and gathering up more and more material, until it now feels out of my control. I have increasingly relied on unsolicited material for what I publish – a gamble or act of faith which has paid off superbly. There always more poets out there than anyone knows about. Isn’t that wonderful and heartening? But I want to do some quite specific things now (an Australian issue or a Berlin issue, say, or go for immediacy and blog), which are travelling in a different direction.

What I’m over all proudest of about what I’ve done in Great Works is the impure poetic heteroglossia I started by defending:

- a wide range of largely British writers:
 - some very new to this little world of Innovative poetry, and coming from all sorts of places, and often with early publication on the site;
 - some figures who have been writing indeed for longer than me and who you really ought to be aware of;
 - some with established reputations,
 - some who have been “doing their own thing”, relatively cut off from even “this little world” (e.g. Mike Ruddick),
 - and some who have returned to writing after a period of silence (e.g. Alasdair Paterson, Nick Wayte);
 - a number of figures who may be younger than me but have slipped past that fashionable intense burning period of youthful avant-gardish novelty that is in some ways easily encouraged, into astonishing and masterly practices that challenge any set understanding of what poetry is, and demand, I believe, audience and attention. That Great Works publishes Paul Holman, Andrew Jordan, Richard Makin, Niall Quinn, Robert Stanton, Johan de Wit may end up as its most important justification.
- a fair old smattering of US and Australian/New Zealand poets, mostly operating within parallel worlds of innovative poetry,
- mainly Third World Anglophone poets whose work presents perhaps more that modernist presentation of their world I find as valid as more tricky linguistic creation, particularly when encountering the heterogeneous and nearly unmappable life of rising cities, the ones that probably present our future to us. This may not be as formally or conceptually challenging in itself as other work on the site; its linguistic interest comes from its play of signifieds. And that’s a good phrase to leave you with.

² Actually it isn’t – there’s even more naivety about the essentially necessarily fictive and nonrepresentational nature of all products of AV technology than there is about language. Let alone the skills and material base necessary to produce anything worthwhile.

SAVE MIDDLESEX PHILOSOPHY

a letter from the students to Ed Esche & the Board of Governors

Dear Professor Esche,

Thank you for your letter. However, we feel that it does not adequately address the issues we have collectively raised. Beyond the alleged facts governing your reasons for closure, which we have reason to dispute, we are concerned at your lack of engagement with the issues raised by this campaign: the incongruity between your decision and the world-class status of the centre, and its contribution not only to the reputation of the University but to the intellectual and academic arena at large; the status and aim of University education beyond issues of revenue; and most importantly, the irreversibly damaging effects that your decisions are indubitably having on the reputation of the University, and on the staff and students who continue to work there.

As we do not accept the justifications you have provided for the closure of the philosophy department, and have good reason to believe that not one of them would hold up to scrutiny, we remain undeterred in our demand for a reversal of the closure. We furthermore vehemently oppose the targeted suspension of members of the department, staff and students, who have taken proportionate and legitimate actions to protest the decision, and we demand their immediate reinstatement.

The allegations of illegality that you have made against those taking part in the occupation are serious enough in themselves without the added damage caused by your recent suspension of staff and students- an action that has only

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The Students

served to fuel the support of the campaign. More devastatingly, these suspensions have also sparked an international petition to boycott the University – a movement that our external examiners have already joined – and which will result in the greylisting of the University. We believe that greylisting is a justified response to your unjustified and disproportionate decision to suspend students and staff. However, the consequences of these developments- particularly for the current MA and PhD students who rely on this particular compo-

Save Middlesex Philosophy

In late April 2010, Middlesex University decided to close down Philosophy, its highest research-rated subject; ever since, Middlesex students and staff, and many thousands of their supporters in the UK and around the world, have been battling to save it.



nent of external supervision, but also for the entire student body in terms of the compromised standing of a qualification from the University- will be disastrous, and will explicitly contradict your insistence on our continued study (a contradiction that has already been effected by your imposition of measures to monitor the communication our supervisors have with us). We therefore strongly demand that you immediately withdraw all suspensions.

With respect to the background you have given for your decision, we are concerned at the lack of proportion between the facts and figures Management have presented, and their decision to terminate the entire department- a disproportion that signals a total rejection of Management's supposed intention to negotiate workable solutions with the staff. On this level, your failure to mention in your letter the proposed reconsideration of recruitment of part-time MA students- a reconsideration you offered at a meeting with students only two weeks ago- seems particularly symptomatic. In addition, your criticism of Philosophy's failure to attract "a broader range of funding sources" beyond its central measure of excellence, the RAE, highlights a serious misrecognition of the very profile of the Centre, within which sources such as "continuing professional development, consultancy and other areas of knowledge transfer", simply have no place. Finally, some of your particular allegations, including that of serious assault to staff during the occupation, remain entirely unsubstantiated and indicate to us nothing other than desperate misrepresentations aimed at stifling a legitimate form of protest.

The oversights and inaccuracies present in your letter testify to a disposition that seems to us adverse to any form of negotiation, and merely reinforces our collective dissatisfaction and our demands. We will therefore continue to protest your decision to close the department, to suspend tutors and to victimise students, until you rectify this regrettable situation. Your failure to do so will result- and is already resulting- in serious damaging consequences to the reputation of Middlesex University. If your ongoing mismanagement continues, the only honourable thing for you to do will be to tender your resignation.

Yours sincerely,
The Students

*Keep informed and show your continued support for the Save Middlesex Philosophy campaign **here**.*

PHOTO POETS*

photography from Sharon Borthwick, Marianne Morris, Malcolm Phillips & Nat Raha



Crossing the Line



Paul Sutton, Tim Atkins & Mendoza



Paul Sutton

WOMEN'S INNOVATIVE POETRY & CROSS- GENRE FESTIVAL 14th - 16th July

By Emily Critchley & Carol Watts

The Women's Innovative Poetry & Cross-Genre Festival is a three-day international conference focused on innovative writing and performance, organized by Dr Emily Critchley (ICAS, University of Greenwich) with support from Dr Carol Watts (Poetics Centre, Birkbeck University). Below is a one-sheet easy-to-print schedule.

Final list of readers and times subject to change.

14th July

- 11.00 Introduction by Emily Critchley (University of Greenwich) & Carol Watts (Birkbeck University)
- 11.30 Caroline Bergvall (University of Southampton, UK) Performance
- 12.00 Samantha Walton (PhD at Edinburgh, UK) Performance: psychosis memoir in the manner of annualist autobiography: 'A Year off the Ward'
- 12.30 Marianne Morris (PhD at Dartington, UK) Performance
- 1.00 – 2.00 Lunch
- 2.00 Luke Roberts (PhD at Cambridge, UK) Paper: on the work of Marianne Morris & its relation to visual work, in particular, Jeff Wall and photography.
- 2.30 Corina Copp (PhD at CUNY, NY, US) Performance
- 3.00 Jacob Edmund Paper
- 3.30 Frances Presley (UK) Performance: landscape writings + visuals by Tilla Brading
- 4.00 Zoe Skoulding (UK) Paper: on Frances Presley & Redell Olsen



Admission & Venue

Admission to the festival is free (donations welcome).

Events will take place in Room 303, King William Building, University of Greenwich SE10 9LS

- 4.30 Zoe Skoulding, Performance: looped and treated vocals
- 5.00-6.00 Break
- 6.00 Carol Watts (UK) Performance
- 6.30 Eleni Sikelianos (US) Performance
- 7.00 Lee Ann Brown (US) Performance
- 7.30 Cathy Wagner (Miami University, Ohio, US) Performance
- 8.00 Fiona Templeton (US) Performance

15th July

- 11.00 Holly Pester (PhD at Birkbeck, UK) Performance: imitations of a radio-voice
- 11.30 Sophie Robinson (PhD at Royal Holloway, UK) Performance
- 12.00 Sara Wintz (US) Performance: Twentieth Century
- 12.30 Elizabeth Jane Burnett (PhD, Royal Holloway, UK) Performance
- 1.00 – 2.00 Lunch
- 2.00 – 3.30 Panel on writing & gender:
 - Robert Hampson (Royal Holloway, UK) Paper: on women poets in the academy
 - Andrea Brady (Queen Mary, UK) Paper
 - Carrie Etter (Bath Spa, UK) Paper: on Infinite Difference
 - Sara Wintz Paper: 'After "Numbers Trouble"'
 - 30 mins Q&A / open floor
- 3.30 Mairead Byrne (Ireland) Performance: Har Sawlya: a vocal engagement with the poems of twentieth century Irish language poet Mairtín Ó Direáin.
- 4.00 Jennifer Cooke (Loughborough University, UK) Performance: 'Steel Girdered Her Musical' with composer Adam Robinson
- 4.30 Edmund Hardy (UK) Paper: on Barbara Guest & painting
- 5.00 Christine Kennedy (UK) Performance: art, puppetry & dolls
- 5.30 – 6.30 Break
- 6.30 Emily Critchley (UK) Performance: Memoir response + Mask of Orpheus
- 7.00 Susanna Gardner (Switz) Performance
- 7.30 Andrea Brady (UK) Performance
- 8.00 Rachel Blau DuPlessis (US) Performance: Draft 101: Puppet Opera

16th July

- 11.00 Daniel Kane (Sussex University, UK) Paper



image © Emily Critchley

- 11.30 Francesca Lisette (PhD Sussex, UK) Performance
- 12.00 Lisa Samuels (Auckland University, NZ) Performance
- 12.30 Harriet Tarlo (UK) Performance: on ecopoetics & radical landscape
- 1.00 – 2.00 Lunch
- 2.00 – 3.30 Panel on Genre:
 - Lisa Samuels Paper: 'The Death of Genre'
 - Holly Pester (UK) Paper: 'New understandings of Intermedia in art and poetry'
 - Elizabeth Jane Burnett Paper: 'Exotic Birds: Working Through Otherness in Contemporary Interdisciplinary Performance by Women'
 - Vanessa Place (US) Paper: 'Conceptual poetics <> Gender'
 - 30 mins Q&A / open floor
- 3.30 Vanessa Place (US) Performance
- 4.00 Frances Kruk (UK) Performance
- 4.30 Alev Adil (University of Greenwich, UK) Performance
- 5.00 – 6.00 Break
- 6.00 Corina Copp Paper: on the poetry of Jean Day
- 6.30 Jean Day (US) Performance
- 7.00 Lisa Jarnot (US) Performance
- 7.30 Redell Olsen (Royal Holloway, UK) Performance
- 8.00 Lisa Robertson (Canada), Performance: poetry & video piece made with Allyson Clay

READING MENDOZA, OR, LINUS SLUG

four viewpoints

*Mendoza, or, Linus Slug, has work in the Openned publications **Cannibal Spices** and **Klatch 2** and has been published by **The Arthur Shilling Press**.*

ON JUNCTIONS

By Jeff Hilson

The opening of "Junctions" replays Cinderella:

panic attack. It is nearly midnight and there is
a boy in a plaid shirt and a leather
jacket and behind that
is a fat girl in glasses and this is
not me wearing lipstick. my mouth is too small
and I want to look like the boy in
the plaid with the large ears and the jacket
and my mouth is open and uhhhh
kind ah sneery kind ah swooning kind ah

In this version the boy in the plaid shirt and leather jacket is clearly the handsome prince, and the fat girl in glasses Cinders catching a glimpse of her imminent and 'true' post-midnight self. Delightful as this little scene is, however, there are complications. This Cinders, it is revealed, is not interested in being with the prince, but rather in *being* the prince, who it turns out also has "large ears" (which reduces the speaker to a state of ecstatic abandon). And the identity of "the fat girl in glasses" is problematised by the deft handling of the break between the 4th and 5th line. "This is/*not me*" declares the speaker, though continuing to the end of the italicised section, neither is this '*me*' the kind of person to wear lipstick. Two different (limited and limiting) versions of femininity are simultaneously disavowed just as the addition of "large ears" to the boy in the leather jacket effectively reduces his 'cool' masculinity.

This fantasy 'scenario' is further complicated by the last line which both mocks and surrenders to what's gone before and this doubleness is a feature of the whole poem. "Junctions" is a text constantly aware of its own theatricality – "there is too much drama taking place" – but which is also painfully sincere – "truth kills from the heart." It knows that the fairytale is ridiculous but revels in it at the same time. The speaker is attracted to the boy in the leather jacket but also realises that his is merely a costume of "dead beat modernism [which] plays black against black" in a drama of "discomforts & boredom." This is a post-Warholian terminal theatre whose stage is the "derelict buildings" and "desolate shop fronts" of a worn out city.

This self-awareness doesn't, however, obliterate the genuinely moving attempts in the poem to engage with the 'other.' In this sense "Junctions" is intensely lyrical. A line like "a storm is a song thrush lapsed in the throat" is a beautiful articulation of the inability to articulate, something else that this poem constantly grapples with (though note, again, the tendency towards the dramatic). Consider also the playful ambiguities of the repeated phrase "and um/the other thing" in the context of the poem's interrogation of gender positions and their erotics (*vide* once more the complications to the fairytale opening). "What does it mean to talk 'der erotischen'?" asks



the speaker at one point. Of course a phrase like "the other thing" is also a way of talking "*der erotischen*" and possibly a nod to what 'the boy' in the poem has that the speaker hasn't (apart from a leather jacket). Indeed, talking "*der erotischen*" is itself an eroticised gesture, the italicised German a material textual signifier of an attractive "otherness."

One of the other 'other things' the speaker does of course is write – "i write / i write / uh huh" – though true to form the confirmatory "uh huh" is undermined by the use of the lower case 'i'. There's a vulnerability here though it's not one that's wallowed in: "why create when/you can/ meet the tight rope and the get away car". The strategies here are those of escape, easier options than creating maybe, but which *as* options are self-consciously manipulated and, unsurprisingly in this text, far from straightforward. As a way out, a "tight rope" (two words) is a hanging rope rather than a circus act but the (again) over-dramatic implications of the former are effectively sent up by the latter. The same is true of "get away car" which as two words is less high speed than high jinx.

Ultimately neither of these are viable alternatives to 'creating' which of course has its perils for any 'new girl' on the block.

The constant destabilising of positions of certainty within the poem (often, as in this last instance, achieved through an alertness to lexical ambiguities) makes for an engaging read and this is one of nine pamphlets produced by the poet which I hope will see the light of day.

OBJECT NOTES ON THE TERRIBLE QUESTION OF LINUS SLUG

By Richard Owens

After complaining to friends over a drink at the 2008 NPF conference that there were no rigorous book-length studies of Little Sparta - at least none I found entirely satisfying - a certain Mark Mendoza (citizen of the UK then studying at U-Mass Amherst) insisted I read Drew Milne's "Adorno's Hut." But the essay wasn't a book-length study as such. It wasn't even a consideration of Little Sparta as a whole. Just Adorno's Hut. But it was good. Two years later, poking around for interesting "younger" poets to read, Sean Bonney suggested I have a look at work by one Linus Slug. And it was good. My interest in the work was especially peaked when I was alerted to Slug's alias: `slmendoza`. I thought, perhaps Linus Slug = Slug Linus Mendoza = Mark Mendoza. And there can't be too many Mendozas attached to the UK that are also familiar with poets like Finlay or O'Sullivan. But Jeff Hilson, whom Slug has savagely cannibalized in his own poethical efforts, insisted on the list Western Union style: SL MENDOZA NOT AT ALL TO BE CONFUSED WITH MARK MENDOZA. I then took Hilson at his word but have since come to believe the Retallack that supervised my work on the production line eight years ago and the civil engineer of the unethical wager are indeed one and the same. It was in this way that I arrived at a curious crossroads - Slug's Junction - and felt as I read the poem: `eportfolio` networking solutions scorn thy murderess dead; in worse arms shall we see unstable futures shrink to thee; or what highly digitized brick-and-mortar Victorian insect mustachios inhabit the thin upper lips of alienated labor. On closer analysis I found the meretricious character of Slug's work recklessly pimped out the line break to Swinburne's Borello - but only in the seventeenth century sense. Case in point: "immediately familiar | a repetition of arcades." I am told pornography reproduces endlessly and without mercy a singularly painful moment over and over again for all to see. And promiscuity is bound to precociousness by way of a process-driven poetics. But I am no longer certain that Luke Roberts believes Stein is a slug

that should have had salt poured on her. The issue here is one of fidelity - or, more specifically, authenticity. Chatterton came to me and I was crestfallen to find the slug under my nose was not the slug I was looking for. I have, you know, pried discharged slugs out of studs before. And I have done this with hunting knives. And it was good.

ABOUT JUNCTIONS

By Peter Riley

I think what first attracted me to Junctions was the recognition of vocal address, that with all the pace and syncope of an obvious contemporaneity there was real human utterance at a location, so that you had the sense of confronting an actual mind at work in its bodily sheaf, rather than one that has been chopped into little bits or hidden behind ideological hoarding. But it is more than that.

The thing is that it won't settle anywhere. Whatever kind of writing you think it is, it then denies it. Like we think we know where we are - some scene of threat being narrated which we might expect to press forward in rap-like chatter -- then we don't, we are somewhere else, among cool graphic abstracts, or quite wistful song-like repetitions. It swings between lament and triumph. It runs a drama of hesitation of which there is "too much" and turns back to thoughtful questing image. But it holds together, all these modes enfolded in a discourse of authentic poetical licence which constantly throws up very telling and creative figurations, far-reaching conceptual transgressions. So it maintains a tense balance precisely at "the centre of the city" where erotic hurt fades into and out of cultural dismay.

A NEW AMBIGUITY

By Edmund Hardy

Linus Slug gives us a new type of ambiguity in poetry, a principle of the playful infinite in a pamphlet which moves through a rich decay - of violence, disembodied news, the eyes of scorn - to find the points from which switches, sexuality and delight can flourish against and over. These points cluster, scurry and fly everywhere - as insect familiars, as "Lay of the last poetic" - and later return into layers of code at

the point of disappearance, "I stole from J who stole / from H who / stole from F in Rymans".

BOOKFACE status?



"The Theory of the Avant-Garde and Practice" by Libbie Rifkin at The Argotist Online:
<http://www.argotistonline.co.uk/Rifkin%20essay.htm>



wondering whether "Blurq Fezzh- Ubelievably Yellow Piss By Sartre" is the best song title, or just one of the best song titles.



Peter Larkin reviews John Milbank's The Legend of Death: **<http://tiny.cc/ndwig>**



the depths which pool within every split second of being--the layers and rivers strati of associations--imagination memory dream concrete fact--so particulate so flowing--i am so stunned so thankful to be alive-to experience this which is



From the BBC News ticker... "You can't please everybody, it seems, even when you work right through the night. When David Cameron and his entourage met junior school children in Calverton, Nottinghamshire, one pupil blurted out: "You all smell of fish." Clearly, the tell-tale signs of that earlier visit to the fish market in Grimsby are still lingering."



Andrew Neil is such a bad moderator of t.v debates



Facebook is asking me to let my friends know I voted in some sinister data-trawling exercise. Instead, I can confirm live and direct that I exercised my democratic right to delegate to some other fool the responsibility to fuck everything up for another five years. The one real upside of the whole situation is that there are about five Bengali candidates with a better chance of getting in than the BNP. Fascist FAIL



As a companion to Johann Hari's expose of the desolation & poverty a Tory model for Britain would produce, let's keep this sentence from an essay by Carol Watts in mind: "The millennial post-Thatcherite future offers a prospect of open spaces, a freedom from old forms of regulation, which paradoxically involves an equally totalizing form of subjection: there is nowhere to go."



tee hee gordon brown claims "squatters rights". No-one is polling this but my respect for him just went up approx 14%



Bag o'shite. 9.9% swing from Labour to CON
in Putney. !!!%\$! ERROR !\$*&!! These NINES I do NOT like :-(

Mick!



Met a Mick Weller 'Pest Control Man' on Wednesday.

Only non-Mick feature was lack of glasses, otherwise, I thought I was talking to you.

Do you have anti-mouse Mick Weller South-West branch of Micks?



this thing should be settled with flaming arrows



is moving from politics to poetry, where factions and disagreement are unknown (!)



from the bbc: Great Yarmouth council candidate Bob Peck. Tied on 1,034 votes with Labour opponent Charlie Marsden, was offered a pack of cards by the returning officer and told the candidate who drew the highest number would win. Mr Peck picked a three while his rival drew a lucky seven to claim the seat. Barmy? Maybe, but it's all within the rules.



My computer broke down: new harddrive. If only more things could be this simple. And it fits in place almost like lego!



Persecution, obsession, substitution, hostage and trauma.



6 hours editing, printing + collating the hard copies for FREAKLUNG. This is one MEGA PAMPH.....



Dozens of helium filled ballons, oil-soaked dead animals attached, rise to the top of Tate's, Turbine Hall. An action by liberate Tate for Tate sponsor BP creating the largest, ugliest oil painting in the world.



Denise Levertov is here and there in PennSound:

<http://afilreis.blogspot.com/2010/05/levertov-here-and-there.html>



Something is provided for all so that none may escape



who i am, who dresses in mourning--bitter path along the stones--voices among trees--gliding
form at forest's edge--vanishing, vanishing--calling out--it's going away--going away--away--
who i am , who dresses in mourning-who am i--who dresses in mourning-going away-



Leslie Scalapino RIP. Profound amazing work.

PRESS FREE PRESS

is Sejal Chad, Becky Cremin, Ryan Ormonde and Karen Sandhu

Introducing press free press (in three parts). The letters of press free press.
The work of press free press. The theory of press free press.

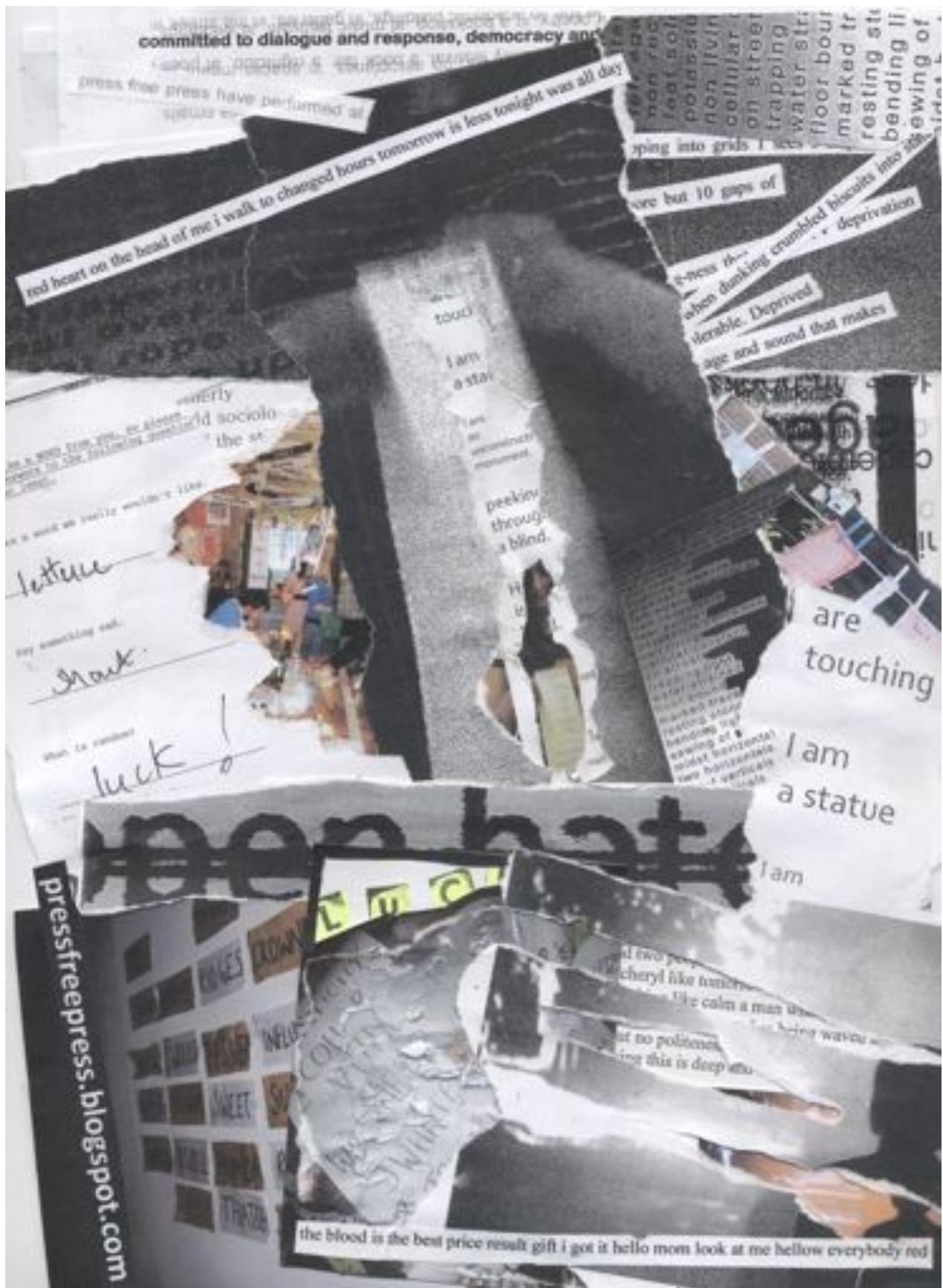
From: **press free press** (pressfreepress@googlemail.com)

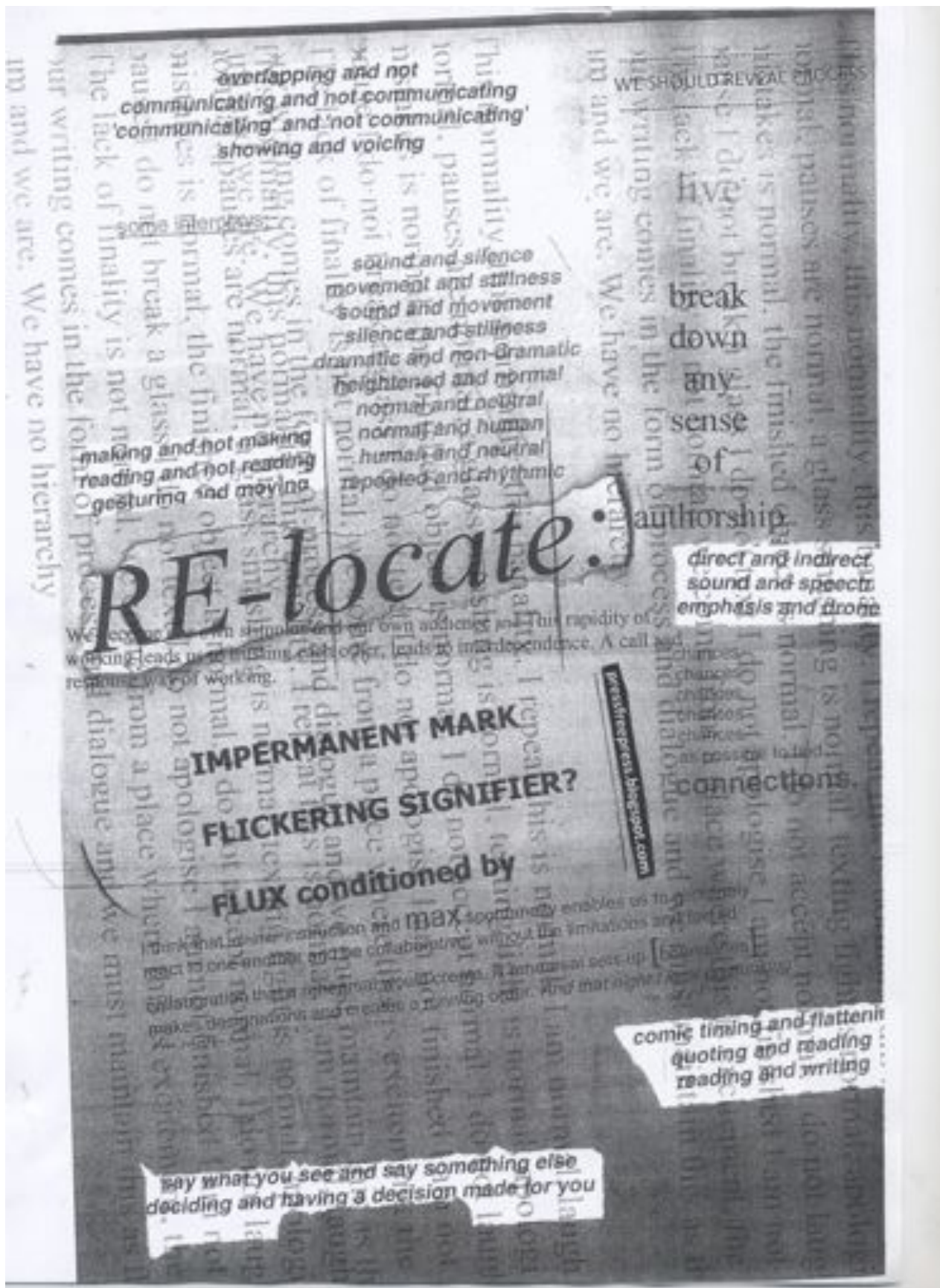
Sent: 20 May 2010 17:42:24

To: k.k.sandhu, sejalchad, ryanormonde, becky.cremin

Ryan's notes and add my thoughts in blue: play with the conventional audience/performer relationship. will eat at eleven tonight. I see this event as the poetics of that attempt, its failure and its constantly repeated disparity. this is perhaps not poetry as "they". 99 questions, well 297, folded/sealed/stamped in a box. your 99 questions! "maybe we should also all outline one aspect of the procedure (democracy!) eg ryan: place sejal: directions, Karen: cost, becky: name of object (post-buying it? like the ball in castaway?) this combo just outlined is obviously an arbitrary. So the performance is maybe 2 minutes each performing a text from each of our days spent with the object. Our tone is one of scientific data collection. We will wear latex gloves and white cotton socks which will be changed on hourly intervals Do we want individual names that is beautiful. I will try to send something, but will try to send something. I saw this evening a pamplemousse chocolate. pg2: spend 24 hours with the object let me know what you think xoxo you know BRANDING. Lawrence's suggestion: I suggest that Saturday 11th needs to be thought of as a performance incorporating elements of the Sunday, rather than as a continuation of that Sunday. Working with and in amongst a range of materials and mediums at any given time – nudging the audience into these energetic spaces, encouraging/provoking responses that'll create community and feedback round into. texts Ryan 'I think I'd like to b WHICH... '11th October 2009 11:53 Becky says she is when 11 October 2009 12:45 When says becky is 'What? What.' 11 October 2009 16:01 WHICH says they never say things they always hint to things. come? hi guys, really enjoyed last night. really enjoyed spending time with all of you and Robert aswell. love love make a space that others are allowed to interject into. F. Becky's 'paper cuffs' – these are large loops of text read by rotating around the wrists. Becky used one in her cemetery piece. They have included us on a flier called 'Hidden Gems'. Even the flier is hidden. I haven't seen it. actually it was the day before yesterday or the day before that the dog in the DVD called The Fox and the Hound was named Copper but I know you want to know about the metal. what's newsws? I saw a guy at the tubeshop doing something for earl's court festival yesterday. it was something like ben harper maybe. I love more potatoes. I PRESS free PRESS invite YOU to construct a MAP of experience. PRESS free PRESS and YOU need to yet sight is dependant on whether I can find a toy. these SPY glasses I tried them on and they were really large loops of text read by rotating around the wrists. We hope that this will create the effect of space folding in on itself. .ExternalClass. ecxhtmlmessage P (padding:0px;) ps – love how you ARE the pupil. This has given me an idea – how HEARING is going to be totally mad! FUN FUN FUN! does this need more explanation? hey, I like it, it all makes sense and is not too strict (becky!). an object should be equally objectified by all at least in the time each person has to choose how and how much and whether to relate to the thing! performancewise I was also maybe it could end up being some of crescendo, like each person performs their thing, in a round, then each person does it for longer, then longer and then we end up objectifying/performing/relating to one another ('s performance) and the object is still central but no longer central. this may have become more apparent or something to decide on once we have all had our time with 'it'. I do wish I had a twix right now. I think we should become as emotionally free from the object. buy an object. Like a charity shop third shelf on left. something like that? Or should the object be this moving in a round sonically and performance wise. I like, I think it associates with how the object has been moved. I sync WHAT something-ness something-ness of last-time reoccurrences something-ness of lunch-time preferences something-ness of moving girdles above our heads love love make a space that others are allowed to interject into, revise/democratised that!

pressfreepress.blogspot.com







“All cities are geological. You can’t take three steps without encountering ghosts bearing all the prestige of their legends. We move within a closed landscape whose landmarks constantly draw us toward the past. Certain shifting angles, certain receding perspectives, allow us to glimpse original conceptions of space, but this vision remains fragmentary. It must be sought in the magical locales of fairy tales and surrealist writings: castles, endless walls, little forgotten bars, mammoth caverns...”

Ivan Chtcheglov, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*¹



images © Nat Raha

FORMULARY FOR A RENEWED URBANISM

a contemporary reworking of the concept of *dérive*

By Michael Zand

Klatch 3: *Dérive* participants were Harry Gilonis, Edmund Hardy, Jeff Hilson, SL Mendoza, Richard Parker, Nat Raha, Tessa Whitehouse, Steve Willey, and Michael Zand.

Certain members of the Klatch collective, along with other parties, met on Friday 14th May 2010 in London (England) at “The Horse”, a pub near the south bank of the Thames. The purpose of the meeting, among other things, was to collect together a magazine of collective works which we chose to call “Klatch 3”.

A happening was also instigated, which we chose to call a “*Dérive*”. The name refers to a practice and concept that was popularised by the Situationists in the 1950s and has been reworked by many others since. This particular *Dérive*

involved short spontaneous journeys around the city, engaging with built environments in new ways. The purpose of this was to disrupt and defamiliarise with the surrounding geographies and to reconnect with urban architecture and society. In one sense, it was a renewal of the connection with urbanism, transcending the banality and joylessness of some its expressions.

The participants collected together in to groups of three and were given several hours to drift (primarily on foot) and explore the areas around them. They were equipped with “maps” that were not actual maps of London at all. Instead, they were visual and word-based navigations designed to provide an initial orientation, or more likely a disorientation, for the rest of *Dérive*.

¹ Ivan CHTCHEGLOV, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*. Written in 1953, and published by Internationale Situationniste in Paris in 1958.

The maps used in the *Dérive* ranged from some identifiably geographical navigations, such as Richard Parker's extract from "from The Mountain of California", to more abstract visual representations, such as that of Steve Willey's "Neptune Tongue Ode 2", to word/picture hybrids, such as SL Mendoza's "SECTION 9". All the maps used in the *Dérive*, along with an essay on the *Dérive* by Ivan Chtcheglov, are included in Klatch 3 magazine, which will be available on **Opened.com** in the coming weeks.

The effects and experiences of the *Dérives* were specific and intimate and cannot be retold or reformulated here. However, the participants did all eventually return to The Horse in one piece after their drifting. As they drank celebratory Tequillas, they mostly expressed a sense of progress, or at least reconnection, with the urban project.

Overall, the effect of these activities was to reorientate and invigorate the participants, but also to share a common agenda in an actionable yet playful way. The acts committed were necessarily hyperbolic and idealistic, certainly not grounded in the "real" world. But in a sense that was the very point of the exercise. As Marx wrote of the urban bourgeois "this person must indeed be swept away and be made impossible"² and little could have been more idealistic than an abstract reinvention of the world in which this person occupies. Little could be simultaneously more connected and disconnected with it at the same time.

MORE PERSPECTIVES

Edmund Hardy

A pipe scopes out a wall. The divided space circles back into a ludic labyrinth. Popular Support was left on Virgil Street - the trace of insurgency lay in the deviant secrets of the passers-by.

Harry Gilonis

One of the basic situationist practices is the *dérive*, a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances. At Rome my life was passed Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time Of fabled deities and false. Once when Hsueh-feng was washing rice, Master Tung-shan said, "Do you wash the sand away from the rice, or the rice away from the sand?". The Blakes moved to a fine terrace house at 13 Hercules Buildings, Lambeth. *Dérives* involve playful-constructive behaviour and awareness of psychogeographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll. Hsueh-feng said, "I wash them both away together". Blake's radical political views continue in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1973); his texts intermingle figures real (Franklin) and fictive (Enitharmon), places local (Great George Street) and biblical (Mount Sinai). In a *dérive* one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action, and let them-

selves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. Tung-shan said, "Then what will the community eat?".

Blake was 'a vehement republican' who 'donned the famous symbol of liberty and equality — the *bonnet rouge* — in open day'. The objective passionate terrain of the *dérive* must be defined in accordance both with its own logic and with its relations with social morphology. A bard Was I, and made Anchises' upright son The subject of my song, who came from Troy, When the flames prey'd on Ilium's haughty towers. Hsueh-feng overturned the washing bowl.

Tessa Whitehouse

Not on Edward Jenner's birthday section 9 hazed bridges black princes night pictures Jerusalem no this memory is nothing of the *dérive* now it is Edward Jenner's birthday.

² Karl MARX and Friedrich ENGELS, The Communist Manifesto. First published 1848.

REAL NAMES BE TRUE

notes on the Sussex Poetry Festival

April 17th - 18th

By Luke Roberts

Okay okay. The weekend was a special time, too full of excitement to recover properly in prose, but here we go. This is one version, at least. For me it began by walking hungover with Jonny Liron next to a canal in London early in the morning, jumping from topic to topic. The sun was out, buildings were being built, we couldn't get a coffee or a pastry for either love or money, which we had in varying supply. But we made the 10.36 to Brighton, armed eventually with granola and yoghurt, drinks with real fruit inside, glucose tablets, and as much coffee as possible. The train was full of poets: Steve Willey, Alex Davies, Nat Raha, Linus Slug, Tessa Whitehouse all also making their way. It felt good to be with these people. Lots of activity to catch up on, work being done, arguments being made and boundaries being examined. This tone would continue and increase over the course of the readings and performances, the late nights and stumbling around in daylight.

The first reading was Tim Atkins, Carol Watts and yours truly, in the meeting house on campus. I guess there were 50 people there, a lot of the undergraduates kept away, as I understand it, by revision schedules and essay deadlines. It was a great shame, particularly given the recent struggles between students and the administration, and the involvement of poetry and poets in those struggles. Tim Atkins read first, new versions of Petrarch. It was warm and good humoured, particularly one poem co-written by TA's daughter, movingly navigating innocence, experience and bees. Tim's daughter was in the audience, and the whole weekend behaved significantly better than most of the poets, meaning we all had to apologise whenever we swore. There was a lot of swearing. Joseph Walton nee Lindsay should, and I mean this, make a graph: is our cussing increasing? And why? I blame rap music, despair, and jokes. Maybe also inarticulacy as an escape route from the responsibilities of articulacy. I thought a lot about the joking in Atkins's work; the audience laughed with regularity, and I felt co-opted or estranged by turns. These new versions of Petrarch weren't as funny, to my ears, as other versions I've heard read on other occasions. Or, it seemed that the laughter, though of course welcome and breezy in the opening set, seemed to short-circuit the intricacies and subtleties of the poems. Or, maybe I was ragged with nerves and excitement, wanting something more like hysteria than humour. Maybe, too, as audience and readers, friends and strangers, we were simply working out our place in the format of the festival, shrugging off a little awkwardness.

I read next and swore about 5 times.

Carol Watts read from a variety of work, much of it, I think, unpublished. 'Mother Blake', a new sequence of sonnets (5 sets of 5 sonnets? To be published by Equipage, maybe?) which dealt with patriarchy, children, care, kindness and various legacies of Romanticism. Also selections from the Roy Orbison sequence, prom dreams, subliminal collective memories of post-war American adverts, feminism. Think productively about popular culture and song lyrics in that work plus: Denise Riley, Chris Goode. The quoted song lyric as ersatz ideogrammic feeling, decaying or not decaying. The importance of quotation in CW's work as a whole, ventriloquism, appropriation, subversion.

After the break was the Sussex student medley, including: Francesca Lisette, Josh Stanley, Sarah Kelly, Paul Ingram, Anna Ticehurst and Sarah Tapscott.

Great to hear Francesca toying with obscurity, confident measure, I think actually being deliberately secretive as a form of intimacy, or a way of controlling intimacy. The highly ornate vocabulary of her poetry establishes a strange relationship with the listener: the way I follow Lisette's work is like a grid, or aspects and planes of meaning and signifying which are constantly shifting. Maybe these grids and aspects and planes are attached to bodies, or at least a you and an I, even if those poles get repeatedly flipped and turned and examined. She read from *Aqua Precinct*, a long work, I think once described as 'being about' where FL grew up, but more deeply engaging with space on the grid. Also a poem that had been written *that day*, one of the words in which was 'coffee' or maybe I was drinking coffee. My memory of her reading is strange and unreliable, in the best way.

Sarah Kelly's reading was similarly intricate, though in much more minimal language. Real feeling for the music of it, short lines and pauses operating on perception. It sort of reminded me, actually, of Carol Watts' 'When Blue Light Falls' sequence, a kind of alarming breathing space, balance, the rest. I think Jonny Liron talked about it later in terms of dance, which seems an appealingly different perspective to my immediate turn to music. Of course it's both and more. We have all the moves and also all the tunes.

Perhaps Anna Ticehurst's work falls somewhere between these two poles – negotiating concision and space versus the shifting subjectivities tangled and untangled. I enjoy AT's work, but I

think it suffers from being too polished, everything fitting together just so. I don't want to advocate a rickety poetry of bullshit failure, or to make some appeal to a vacuous idea of 'risk', but – and I feel this about a lot of work, I think – it seems like these poems are too reliably *good* and not alarmingly enough close to being ridiculous. Or they're not improbable enough. By ridiculous I mean a sort of panicked joy, or trouble of some sort. That said, I'm suspicious of my own feelings around this little constellation of failure/risk/ridicule, and I think the fault may lie in my own reading practice, a failure on my part to not commit enough to the sweep, which is definitely there in Ticehurst's work, but doesn't quite translate when being heard. A book would be good to see.

Sarah Tapscott and Paul Ingram's readings frustrated me a little, too. They both seemed quite interested in different types of confrontation, Tapscott's direct and violent, Ingram's working via innuendo and satire. But there seemed to be a casual misanthropy going unchecked in their poems, a lack of care and kindness. I hope I'm not being unfair here: their readings were serious and I took them seriously. On the page it may be more complicated than that, so I look forward to seeing them in print.

Josh Stanley read his new sequence **CONTRANIGHT ESCHA BLACK** with full distorted anger and dismay, inflammatory and unrelenting. Forthcoming from Critical Documents, this is an important work. No more irony, testing the limits of language as used right now in the grotesque, cutting up the very hearts of Romeo and Juliet, sacrificial love of damaged truth. Following on and extending the complicated and strange **RAD GLUCOSE FOR YR MEMBRANE BABY-DOLL!**, **CONTRANIGHT** is a real breakthrough, completely unapologetic. The urgency in the poem is to be reckoned with, and its acceleration needs to be taken seriously. It renders the recent arguments 'advanced' concerning the political efficacy of poetry obsolete and stupid. What Josh Stanley does in spring is write a two-step of terrorism and ethical thinking in a language underivative, or derivative in fact only of the world itself. More song unbearable, fending off triviality and stupor from the ground up. I've been carrying this around with me at all times and it feels like a courageous icon, surfaced with actual fire rather than gold leaf.

After Josh's reading I felt more alert, and ready for Andrea Brady and Alan Halsey. Andrea's reading was a real mix – I think she opened with part of an unpublished / unfinished / abandoned sequence called *Hush Money*, taking aim at Erik Prince, the CEO of Blackwater. Blackwater, you'll recall, has rebranded as Xe. Shit doesn't sleep. The arguments have to keep being made, and it was good and encouraging to hear this as a counterpoint to Josh's reading. Brady's critical nerve is second to none, and the simulated envi-

ronments used for mercenary-training at Xe HQ were carefully and precisely dismantled with typical vigilance. Then she read some poems with an accompanying handout of photomontages by Hannah Höch. I hadn't heard of/seen Höch's work before, so that was like a bonus prize, and a new way of thinking about AB's work, to me at least. The poetry accompanying them was quite different to anything I've read of Brady's before. Though she said she was doing them 'to keep her hand in', they were more intriguing than straightforward exercises, for sure. She ended with some parts of the work about her daughter, Ayla. I've seen parts of this read four times now, and come away with varying impressions depending on the contexts and the extracts. I felt quite strongly distrustful of the work when it was read in Cambridge back in February, suspicious of the sentimentality in the winter, and of the poetics being smuggled in somehow under the cover of love, ringing false in its construction. In the afternoon light of London back last summer I could commit to it, and maybe I felt in Cambridge that it had evolved into something I was reluctant to accept, without being able to reject the whole thing. I'm suspicious of my own reaction, and need to think about it further, but back in the daylight of Friday, hearing about echo-location in a field, the world addressed with great empathy and curiosity, I trusted it, with that element of distrust still healthily there, necessarily so. Thinking about Brady's reading right now I feel hopeful. Really, the two very different poetries of JS and AB, one after another, sort of shine in my memory, something to do with courage, not hope, despair and happiness and our unequal footings.

Then Alan Halsey read from the *Lives* of the Poets and another work definitely not called 'Charms Against the Recession', but maybe called something like 'Charms Against the Recession'. I liked that one the most, but the *Lives* were good to hear. I think he read Ebeizer Coppe, which would be fitting for the political satire of the last poem, though no ranting for AH: calm and unruffled, laying it down. The next day in the pub some of us read over 'Answering a New Year Letter, 1989' – in one of Ted Berrigan's talks (I guess from Naropa?) he says something to the tune of: one way to write a great poem is have every line be great. This is charmingly moronic advice, but 'Answering a New Year Letter, 1989' is a wonderful demonstration of this logic, with a fierce and rare intelligence.

Then it was the evening. We migrated into the city from the campus, taking the train again. Time to: eat completely dubious chips from opposite the Nightingale theatre, stand around like a posse in the street, help Dominic Lash and David Stent carry music up the stairs, admire Tim Atkins' majestic hat, rate the view from the top of the hill, drink gin, then take up our seats.

Still we were 40 people or more, and in the theatre we saw: Jeff Hilson, Vahni Capileo and Harry Gilonis. Amateur of poetry festivals that I am, by this point I was flagging a lot, and was a poor listener. I failed the poets, and for this I am sorry. But nevertheless:

Jeff Hilson read from *BIRD BIRD* and from *In the Assarts*. Bird Bird was great and I want to see *In the Assarts* in a book, please. 'I fucking love sonnets'. Me too. I think I enjoyed Vahni Capileo's performance more than her poetry, which I'm quite unfamiliar with. I couldn't really concentrate. Harry Gilonis read from his *Crater* book, the collected poems of Pao Ling-hui, a good thing to own. It was a shame the only translations of the festival were from such remote sources – Petrarch, Pao Ling-hui. I can't remember any others, though I heard a rumour that Justin Katko's new poem is actually translated *from the future*. He ended by reading his collaborative *Renga* with Chris Goode, which introduced that tone of hysterical laughter which I'd been jonesing for all day.

Chris Goode and Jonny Liron did a performance called *World of Work*. It went like this: a deck of 60 cards were submitted by friends and acquaintances of the performers, then Jonny and Chris performed them. This meant an arm wrestle, dance, sound poetry, passionate embraces, slapstick, fighting, not fighting, staring, shouting, calling up some institution on a mobile phone and sounding lost. There were some utterly startling moments, most particularly Liron's headfirst dive through a door at the side of a stage, reckless and consequential, like a wounded Buster Keaton. Another tableau with Chris staring at the audience with an expression which seemed to contain everything, while Jonny looked on from over his shoulder, light refracting and multiplying. It used a long drone by Charlemagne Palestine, slowly increasing in volume. But 'use' is the wrong word; there was something suffocating about the music, drowning out the sound of the performers, creating a strange disconnect. In the same way, the fact that the audience couldn't see the cards seemed problematic: it would be perfectly possible to project those images and to perform them, right? But would that just make the performance a kind of bland illustration? I don't know. But that privileged position for the performer left me ultimately uncomfortable. Then again, another way I was thinking about my discomfort/frustration was that usually in performance (a form I'm pretty ignorant of, too, I should say) part of the power comes from the faults and differences in your distance from the stranger performing. Chris and Jonny aren't really strangers to me, so it was odd seeing them 'perform'; the kind of emotional response I guess I must have been expecting seemed to be impossible. Or maybe it was the fact that the tension as a whole kept getting interrupted by the drawing of new cards? It terminated my engagement quite often, and I don't think I could commit to it, ulti-

mately. The loud, oppressive drone, sort of stamped on the subtleties, and little the performers did could cut through that. So these gripes combined to leave me second-guessing: why do they want me to feel like this? Why do they want me to want to be able to hear them? Why do they want me to be frustrated? Hey, we chewed on those questions a lot that night and the next day, and I'm still doing it now.

The Barkingside Band played later and were LOUD and FRENETIC. Some people said 'surf improv'. It was a thrill, anyhow, electric guitar / bass / trap set. Thuggish slabs of distortion, cymbals and pans all over the place, Dominic Lash making his bass go faster than his hands. I had that facial expression, you know, the free jazz face. There was more subtlety to it than I'm making out, but at this point I was completely exhausted so it felt like an onslaught.

Obviously the thing to do was drink lots, then go out carousing. A large group of UK POETRY went took over a club, and danced til the small hours to the Cramps and stuff I didn't recognise. It was the best. I doubled up with laughter, injured my knee, slept for a few hours, and suddenly it was THE SECOND DAY OF THE SUSSEX POETRY FESTIVAL.

Went for breakfast with Josh Stanley and Joe Luna, then took up our seats for MICHAEL KINDELLAN / MARIANNE MORRIS / JUSTIN KATKO. Michael Kindellan read first, the whole of his pamphlet NOT LOVE. Really, a beautiful reading, lit by the light from three windows behind. Hilarious, too, when Kindellan told Sam Ladkin off for laughing. I think a good 60% of the Archive of the Now recordings feature Sam's big, warm laugh from the back. I keep thinking of Not Love in relation to Briggflatts, but I'm not sure how plausible that is. MK's voice is thankfully not that of Basil Bunting, but they share a similar kind of vector of post-Pound sonic form. The translator's ear, Arnaut Daniel, troubadours.

Next (?) was Justin Katko, who kicked it vulnerable. He read a whole bunch: WARIO MOPED (forthcoming in *Damn the Caesars?*), which is #1 sneer at 1980s nostalgia from a perspective of 20,000ft. (Three poems from Katko's reading in Brighton last month ought to be recorded here too, since no-one wrote anything about it: Began w/ Dorn's Thesis, in the middle he performed 'Earth People' by Kool Keith/Dr Octagon, ended with part of Queen Mab. No irony, some nervous laughter. Those are the coordinates.) He read a poem whose title I don't know, which had the best swears of the weekend – a repeated, lamenting, accusation: WHY DID YOU FUCK US? Sometimes we do know who they are. I've been re-reading some of the big poems written between the invasion of Iraq and the inauguration of G.W.B's second term in office, and Keith Tuma and Justin Katko's HOLIDAY IN TIKRIT deserves to be added to the canon of

Neocosis, Saw fit, Document, Refuse Collection, and so on. Justin ended with a new poem subtitled 'SUPERIOR CITY SONG' which sort of swerves and turns round the Olson/Prynne/Dorn axis, but really reminded me of Byron or something. That could be because I've been reading the latter's DARKNESS what with the volcano. I heard that the last time these volcanoes erupted with any serious intent the decade ended with the French Revolution. If such circumstances should arise, Katko gets to control town planning. Superior City Song sort of faltered and stumbled and dissolved at its conclusion, partly because it's unfinished and partly because of stumbling over the prosody: this ended up emphasising how important form/verse is to JK, as an actual power source for the gears and laser beams. It comes across especially in performance because of the sheer energy of his voice and movement: In SCS he paced around and round in a circle, with radiuses smaller and smaller until there was nothing left to do but hit the radix. That sounds right.

Marianne Morris read two new (I think?) long poems. I drifted in and out of concentration here, but that's okay I think. Marianne's poetry does this itself, its logics of feeling and judgement and sorting all winding between points of greater and lesser intensity. It's easily distracted, and who isn't, anyway, now. Whatever the TLS says, MM's poetry seems to be some of the most approachable we have: it cares a lot, and is quite interested in you KNOWING that it cares, and then working out WHY it cares, or WHAT IS THE POINT, ANYWAY, WHY DON'T YOU CARE. The point recently has been the celebration of productive art, always blunted and muted with outcry and – I nearly typed disgust, but I think I mean disbelief. There's an insistence on naivety in Marianne's work that is important, and I'm glad it isn't extinguished, but held in tension with some of the most scathing wit we got. The role call at the end of the second poem, a great list of empathy, I recall Afghan women and the abandoned Lebanese, but there was more and more: MM got away with it, it felt authentically not simply narcissistic ethical posturing but a powerful entanglement, difficult love. I find it hard to write about Marianne's work, and particularly at the moment there's so much of it, and so much to catch up on.

The next set of readings: Tom Jones / Sophie Robinson / Trevor Joyce + free Stuart Calton % extra. SC read the last two parts of his new A CROCK REVERIE. This seems to me like a big work, frantically turning over the same scenes, acute detail suddenly flushed with the whole thing then replaced. Frenetic Mayakovsky scalpel. Strange and beautiful-sounding, I kept getting stuck in these little traps of logic during Calton's reading. Particularly around a 'car keys'/'khakis' homophonic blur. Clams means money, too. One line in the work particularly great: 'we want poems that resurrect'. I'm tearing this out of its material

context as part of disputation with Amiri Baraka, but it is brilliance.

Sophie Robinson began with a sequence of poems written while at work, taking swings at Tory MPs. Someone should compile a praxis anthology one of these days. in *their* head. I wasn't so sure about the poems from her new Oystercatcher book; they seemed a little formulaic, an inflexible 'your / my' as the skeleton which fleshy descriptors cloak. I think I might simply prefer to read Robinson's poems, navigate around them more slowly and perhaps also in a non-linear move to start, reading them more like a painting, in some respects. I want to see the whole thing then how it goes, static rippling on the surface.

Tom Jones' reading was hard work, in a good way. One set of poems made my brain race to the crevice where I keep the memory of reading A Very Short Introduction to Hobbes, and then think inadequately about the history of the state and the individual in it. This kind of logic may have been a result of fatigue, it's true. There was a sequence billed as a sort of 'listening diary' to Scarlatti which I enjoyed very much. At one point he SHOUTED VERY LOUDLY, the most startling shout of the weekend.

Then Trevor Joyce read, at a speed comparable to Tom Raworth. He read a handful of poems from What's In Store (I think?) and then from the re-translations of Spenser's translation of Bellay's Ruines of Rome. I think Joyce called them 'crippled translations', reducing them to single syllable words, hacking down empire and spitting it back, melopeia at the hilt.

Then out into the sunlight again, some of us sat in the pub and read quietly, trying to recover our wits. Others went to the sea. It should be said here how successfully organised the festival was: Sara Crangle, Daniel Kane, Keston Sutherland and numerous helpers kept everything going and should be loved for the work that went into it, and encouraged to do it again next year. It was a weekend entirely devoid of bullshit or boredom, and I think that might be the best compliment I can give. The only fault I could think of was how good it would have been if they'd read, too. A cabaret like at SoundEye, with lots of short readings, how about that.

The final reading began with Sean Bonney. Sean read from across all three sections of the Commons, something he'd not done before. I've only seen them presented as complete units before (sometimes with the added haunts Frances Kruk's musical accompaniments, once with Dominic Lash's bass-for-your-face), so hearing handfuls of poems from all three sections was interesting. It's been a consistent pleasure to see the Commons unfolding on Sean's blog, and to see them read. The reading in Brighton I found moving and strange, with a deflated urgency, but an urgency I trust unreservedly. Mangled common-place book, rejuvenating the history of marginalised radical-

ism, putting it back in the centre. Why each volume hasn't been published in a pocket-sized book and translated into several languages, I don't know. In the face of daily horror, the Commons is struggle and we need it.

Alan Hay read next, a good pairing with Sean, though maybe a little too close on a Venn Diagram. He read from the DISCO ODES which were a lot of fun. How many poems mention Giorgio Moroder? Not enough? Alan also read what might have been my favourite individual poem of the weekend, a little advice poem for a friend. The only line in it I recall now (and I'm writing this on a train in between New York City & Washington D.C., and the festival seems suddenly strangely remote in its details but vivid in the general *feeling*) mentioned a manatee. It seemed deeply compassionate, anyhow, this poem, hurting and hurtful, and concise and lyrically it did it.

Geraldine Monk was the last poet, performing two longish works, with much audience patter in between. She warned against krrritiks, that she took any criticism badly, so I'm treading on eggshells here. I think Gerald Manley Hopkins was mentioned, which puts Monk's work in a new light for me. It makes fruitful sense, I think, this near anagrammatic coupling. She read a disturbing poem about a childhood trauma at the hands of a nun at school. It was a work of powerful distress, presciently attacking the institutional violence of the Catholic Church. It did more things than this, engaging in a language which faltered and broke down and picked itself up again. But the context was really forced home. I recently head a recording of Tom Leonard reading 'A Priest Came on at Merkland Street' for the first time: it would be interesting to compare the dismaying economy of repression in Leonard's work there with Monk's confessional sort of rush in this poem.

Some other thoughts here quick: the emergence of other poetries by UK women poets happening right now is a REAL KICK, rendering the Infinite Difference anthology square already, which is precisely how it should be. The other thing would be, while the great number of young poets RIGHT NOW is GRAND, maybe we all also need to work on finding the neglected older poets a bit, reading them and taking notice and care. Think about Anna Mendelssohn. What about Iliassa Sequin? I keep worrying about the 1980s, or really worrying about right now. What do we do, we keep going and going further. Everyone who wasn't at the festival needs to read next time, with translations of living poets, too. We need to publish books more quickly and in higher print runs, do new editions of work long out of print. A new translation of Brecht. Bonney and Calton collaborate on a complete Mayakovsky in English. A big exhibition of visual art by poets. Somebody take over a big university press already:

entryism, coup, whatever. Somebody take over a big university full stop.

Jeremy Hardingham did a performance after Geraldine, about which I remember the following: JH crouched on the frame of a high stool, lit by a lamp nearby (?), maybe there was a Dictaphone in one of his pockets, maybe there was a music stand with notes. He read out something that was clearly a 'performance text' and also some things which seemed to me more like poems. Was it about Wittgenstein, maybe a little bit? Was there something about dogs? The lights were low, and Jeremy's pale face wound around some terrain I thought mainly linguistic. This surprised me, having seen him only once before, doing King Lear: A Model, one of the most confrontational performances I've ever seen. The tension was a different kind. There were other things, I'm forgetting.

Then last things last, Stuart Calton turned into THF Drenching, Dominic Lash held his bass above his head, David Stent tuned his guitar just by looking at it, and the trio proceeded to completely delight me, and everyone else whose ears were still working. Watching THF D manipulate feedback and produce the morning chorus through the reliable MICROCUBE + three Dictaphones makes me think of an octopus trained in Merz. David Stent's guitar playing is knotty intellect spirals, or several mini-maglights swinging in an unlit room. Dominic Lash can hear into the future, can also slow down time. This was building work, little architectural plans being conjured and dismantled. When they finished I remember bursting out laughing sat next to Marianne who did the same. They did total joy, real celebration.

I intensely felt, watching them, that I was part of an audience, but a constructive living audience, participating in things both larger and smaller than itself, going in directions we glimpse only a little bit together. Actually doing shared work, together, and that work doing more work. Coleridge probably writes somewhere about being proud of your friendships (and maybe taking pride in them too) and that might apply here: not to prioritise the social over the work (as if it's that clean-cut, anyway) but to emphasise the seriousness of some of these relationships: that is, the whole to the part, the work to the writer, the works to each other, and all the other points of contact we keep our arguments and lives in. I'm not being sentimental here. Real lives. And If I am being sentimental, well, there you go. I think of John James's Theory of Poetry, again out of context, but here:

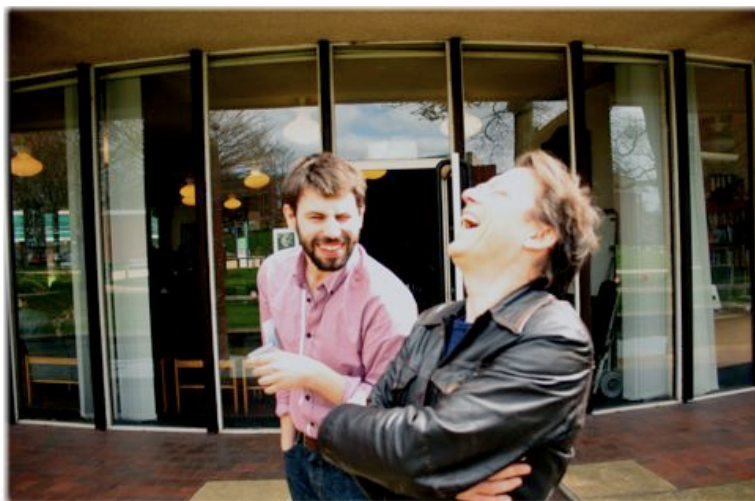
particular people at a particular time
& in a particular place
these people are the others
without whom you would not exist

As the evening spilled into the night we went and went and went. It ended with some of us at Josh's house, reading poems until 6am. We read

Shelley and Wieners and Rodefer, and Jonty Tiplady, and I wished everyone could have been there and when we woke up it would have been socialism instead of conservative billboards vaguely defaced and Nick Clegg, and feeling powerlessness again. But the next morning we sat in the garden and the kitchen drinking coffee, trying to get our brains working. Spem in Alium came on the radio, a version I'd not heard before, with an organ accompaniment. Jonny Liron made a joke about the Garden of Eden. Joe Luna then read part of Andrea Brady's *WILDFIRE*, and we talked really seriously in the yard, about spectatorship and horror, complicity and love, and more of course besides. The next door neighbour asked us whether we thought it was the right weather for sandals. He also told us he and his partner were expecting a child.

Eventually we made our way and ate lunch, then went down to the sea. Jonny and Joe threw stones at the sea for a long time. Tony Paraskeva and I chewed over how strange this was as an activity, futile but self-evidently truthful, requiring no justification. I saw two people actually bring seats to the shore's edge, so they might sit and throw forever. Maybe, or maybe not, this is a fitting illustration of work as poets sometimes. The sea represents some things. The stones represent some other things. This is not a Jack Spicer poem. I stop here with the assumption that some people are listening. The poets are poets, standing.

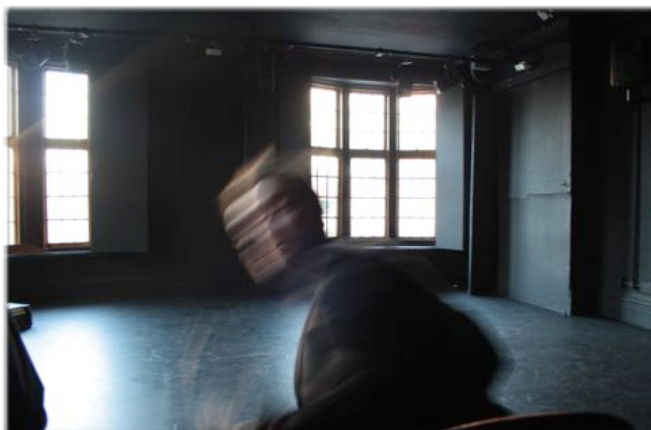
PHOTO POETS*



Luke Roberts & Tim Atkins



Marianne Morris



Sean Bonney

VOICEWORKS GOES LIVE

a new online presence

By Stephen Mooney

With the launch on May 20th 2010 of its new website, and the live streaming on the internet of this year's concert performance at Wigmore Hall, the *Voiceworks* song project has entered a new phase, supported by the AHRC.

Now in its fourth year, the project has seen the pairing, each year, of a new group of Guildhall composers with poets from Birkbeck, many of whom will be familiar to visitors to the Opened site and readings. These seven or eight pairings work together to create a group of songs that are performed at the end of the project each year at the Wigmore Hall in London. This year, for the first time, saw the inclusion of Guildhall singers in the collaborative process, so now each grouping consists of a composer, a poet, and a singer. The results speak for themselves, but for my money this year's cohort have produced the most consistently strong selection of songs to date.

These, and past years' compositions, can be found on the new *Voiceworks* site in the **New Works for Voice** section. A video recording of this year's concert is also now online there, along with a host of material related to the composition processes the various groupings have employed.

The *Voiceworks* site will also serve as an archive and a resource for those wishing to pursue an interest in contemporary practice in poetics, music composition and new work for voice. In addition, the site offers a springboard for new and interesting discussion and exploration into the possibilities and practice of contemporary song in poetry, text, music and sound, called pithily **Sounding**

"This year, for the first time, saw the inclusion of Guildhall singers in the collaborative process, so now each grouping consists of a composer, a poet, and a singer."

Stephen Mooney

Board. Both this and the **Resources** section will be continually expanded and added to over time.

Having participated twice myself in this project, with composers Michail Palaiologou (2006/2007) and Cimeon Ellerton (2007/2008) I can honestly say that both experiences have been inherently valuable, startling and eye-opening, and extremely generative in terms of practice – so much so that I'm keen to get my foot in the door a third time if I can. I'm hardly alone in this – several poets and composers have participated in the project on more than one year's program, and intend to do so again. Several of the participants, including myself, have gone on to produce further new song material outside of the *Voiceworks* project as a result of the experience. The promise of future work as part of *Voiceworks*, and outside of the project itself, is extremely high if the standard of previous years is any indication. I think it will be, especially as the 2010/2011 collaborations, starting in October 2010, will be documented dynamically on the site throughout the course of the project – do check the site out and stay tuned to what's coming in what is turning out to be an extremely exciting time for poetics at Birkbeck.

Voiceworks

Voiceworks is an ongoing collaborative project between the Contemporary Poetics Research Centre (CPRC) Birkbeck, Guildhall School of Music and Dance (GSMD) and Wigmore Hall. The project aims to explore the possibilities and practice of contemporary song in poetry, text, music and sound, and is dedicated to making new and innovative work, and to reflecting on and documenting the collaborative and creative exchange between a new generation of poets, composers and singers.



BIRD PUKE

wanting shot of books in 140 characters



The birds are singing sweet. But they are singing tweet tweet over and over again in the same pitch. It is a repeated sound loop.



<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/apr/29/unpublished-sun-poll-brown-bigot> fuck da poll [#bigotgate](#)



How Luke Roberts turned me on:
<http://assets.transductions.net/2010/04/roberts.jpg>



Are we really so culturally bored that this kind of third-rate hype-attempt (exploding ginger bod shock) actually WORKS? ____ M.I.A. L.A.M.E.



Essential reading: [RT @monoskop](#) ~ : John Cage: Silence: Lectures and Writings (1961)
<http://bit.ly/9wZOxa>



The birds are singing sweet. But they are singing tweet tweet over and over again in the same pitch. It is a repeated sound loop.



Exploded sestina: <http://bit.ly/al3BLO>



Harriet the poetry blog will morph: <http://bit.ly/cgnyOf>



I loathe books. Books are ruining me and i want shot of them



On persistent repeat, it didn't sound so sweet to the ear.



Dear [@how2journal](#) we are all hung up. This period of uncertainty is like when a boy won't write you back.



when books were unnecessarily beautiful <http://twitpic.com/1oxud4>



Electronic Literature Directory launched: <http://bit.ly/9dBYEI> [#elit](#) [#eliterature](#) (via [@jr_carpenter](#))



Free online access to UK theses on the British Library website <http://ethos.bl.uk/> [#re-search](#) [#PhD](#) [#thesis](#) [#academic](#) [#university](#)



They design an online toy that lets you write poetry in the style of Sarah Palin—(obviously used by her speechwriter...): <http://bit.ly/2exh13>



i hate this chapter



[charles bernstein] read or real?



[#ff @armchairbooks](#). Doomed, brother-run bookshop. May not be here on Friday.



223,704 words of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams thrown out a car window at 90mph in 13 seconds: <http://is.gd/cncXv>



armchair lulls in bellow



The birds are singing sweet. But they are singing tweet tweet over and over again in the same pitch. It is a repeated sound loop.



What Marx and Engels diagnostically produce when they produce bathos out of philosophy is a description of a social type, the twat



Writers House on YouTube. We will be expanding this hugely this summer: <http://bit.ly/cGaY2R>



What would you do if you were put in a room with a macaw, and your task was to fuck it up



Issue 11 of streetcake now live!

<http://www.streetcakemagazine.com/files/issue%2011%20fin.pdf>

<http://bit.ly/aZ3TTe>



We are excited about Jacket2. Coming: January 2011. **<http://bit.ly/c3rjll>**



RT [@simonblackwell](#) Bought an audiobook of stamps. It's just the Queen saying "41p" six times.



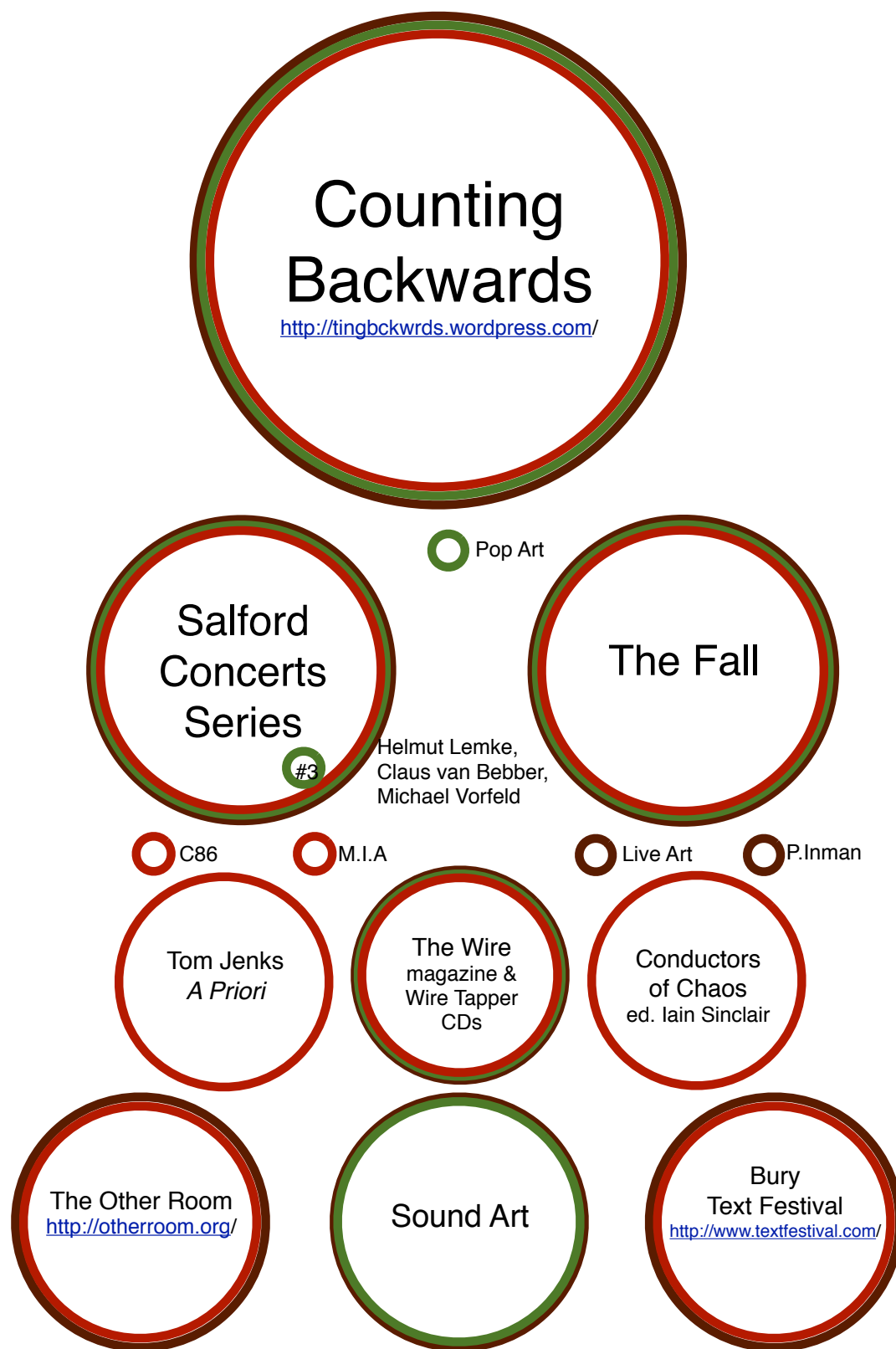
joins our listeners in mourning the loss of poet and publisher Leslie Scalapino:

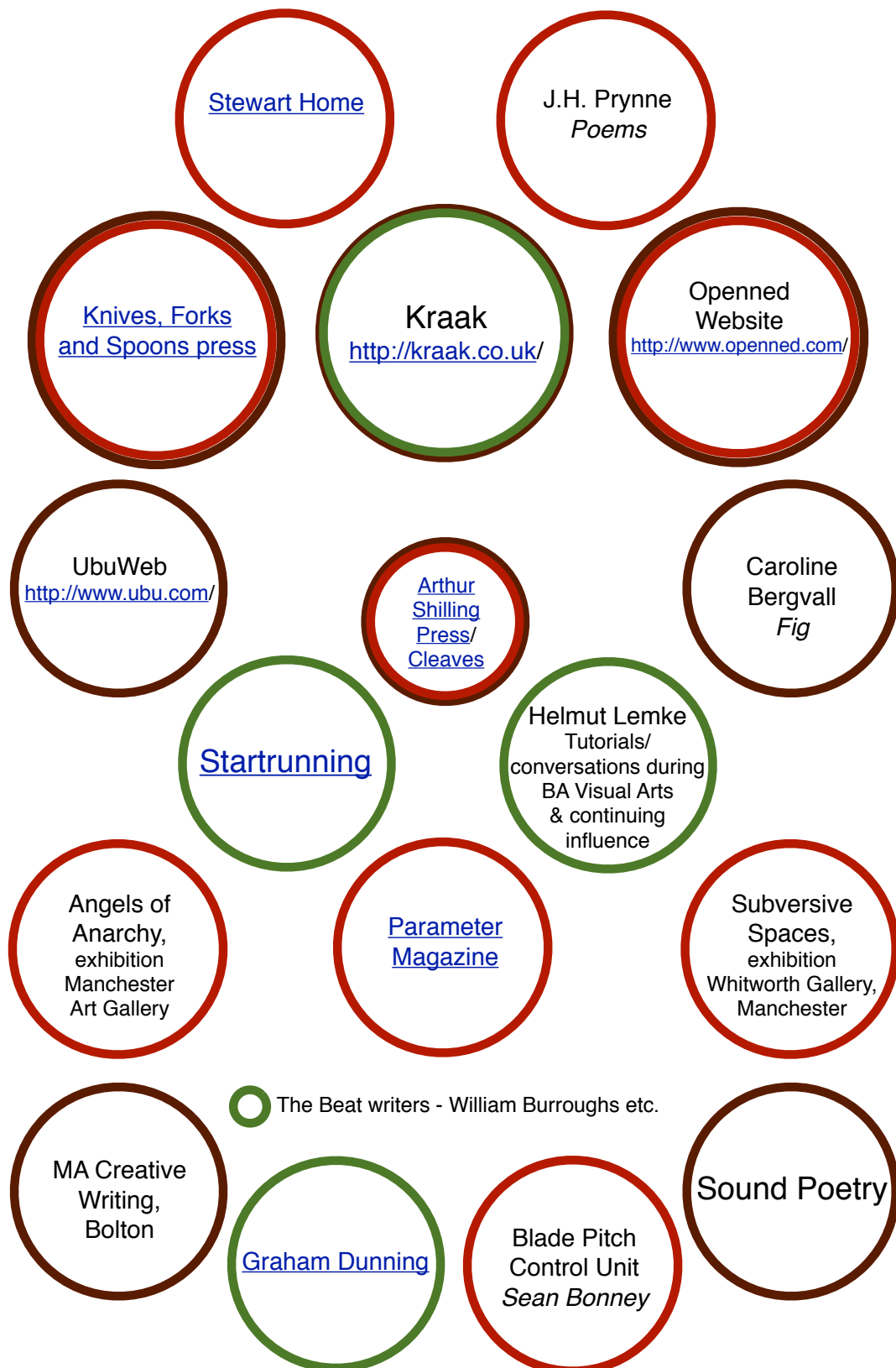
<http://bit.ly/9qNJxE>

COUNTING BACKWARDS*

the genesis of a new text-sound-performance event series in Manchester

By Matt Dalby





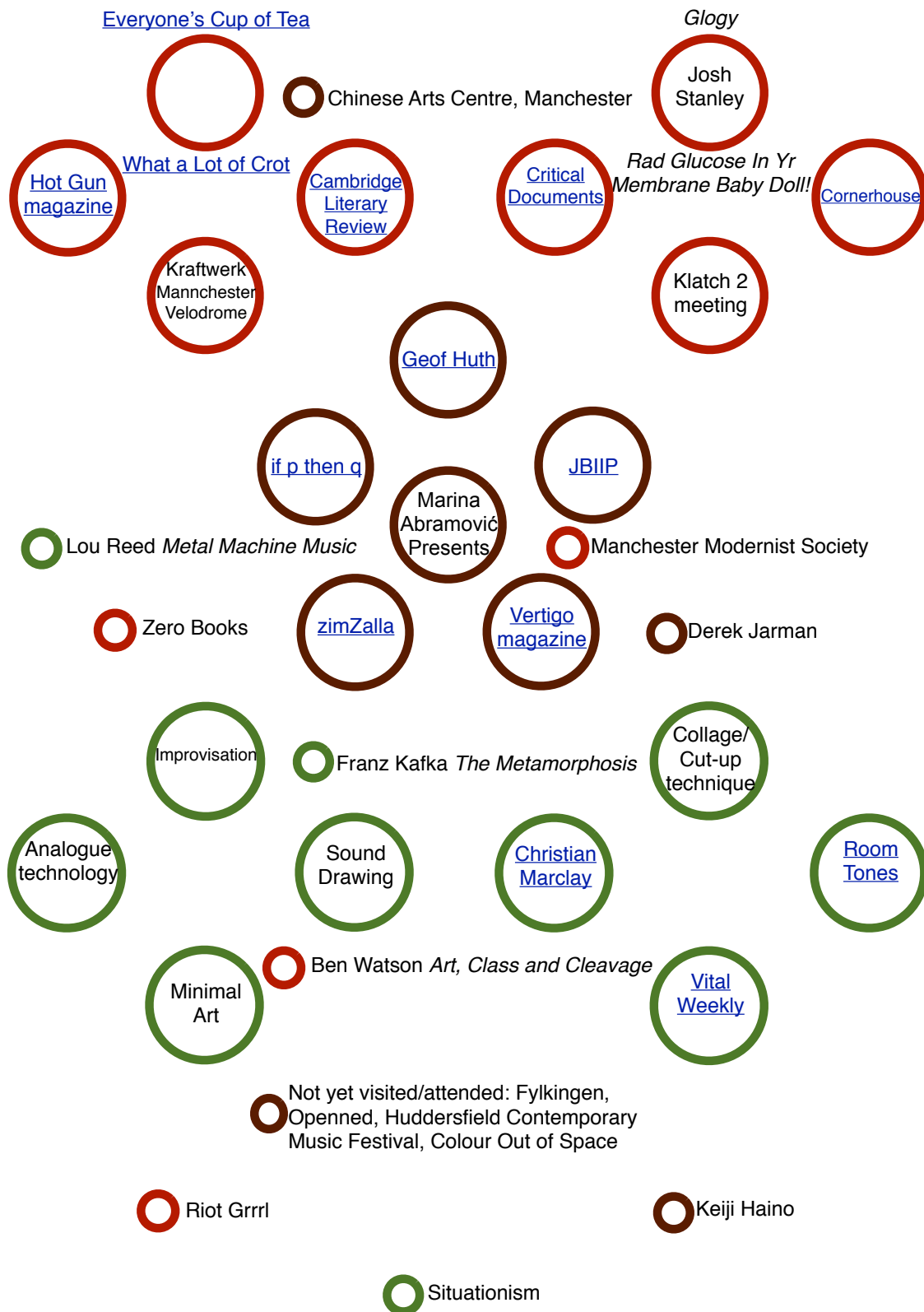


PHOTO POETS*



Steve Willey



Alex Davies



bookartbookshop



Tessa Whitehouse



Ulli Freer

ORANGE MARMALADE

a reading of first draft of hypertext responding to alice falling down rabbit hole

By Timothy Thornton

This is a string of hazy sketches for a larger essay-in-progress on hypertextual poetics in general, and on Ryan Ormonde's first draft of hypertext responding to alice falling down rabbit hole in particular. I'm grateful to Ryan Ormonde, Steve Willey, and Alex Davies for their feedback on that essay, and to Alex for suggesting this shorter version for the Openned Zine. A copy of the referenced hypertext can be read by clicking [here](#).

first draft of hypertext responding to alice falling down rabbit hole consists at this stage of a linear sequence of sixty-one frames (which word I'll use here rather than 'webpages'), each accessed by clicking on a certain point on the previous. Each frame consists of a black background with some white text in the centre. The brief post introducing the piece on Ryan Ormonde's blog contains a few explanatory sentences, and a still from the immediately relevant scene in the 1951 Disney animation.

It has made me consider seriously for the first time the challenges and opportunities of writing in a hypertextual space, for which I'm grateful. In my case, reading his blog post, I habitually held down a certain key while clicking the word 'here', which meant that a new tab opened in my browser; a black screen, its title appearing in the browser application bar as 'Untitled Document', with a URL indicating the filename of the document, stored somewhere on a server at Royal Holloway, University of London, as 'in.html'. It's not particularly the semi-interactive element to this work which causes me to worry about 'spoilers', but *something* does; I'd feel guilty for the following paragraphs without saying that they might at best make the work a little less surprising; at worst, they'll ruin some of the fun.

Apart from being downright entertaining, this poem is playfully and intelligently engaged with its medium: with its status both as hypertext and therefore (grudgingly) its status as two-dimensional object. Its apparent frame of reference is intimidatingly vast, transacting (mostly via visual clues) mechanisms and procedures not just from computing, high-level programming, and data storage, but also the wider related fields of physics, mathematics, and computer gaming.

It's neither an exaggeration nor particularly snobbish to say that some hypertextual poetry is unsatisfying and sloppily designed, both visually and in terms of its overall content structure; often spinning quickly into a confusing, disconcertingly directionless set of loops. This confusion may be deliberate (a matter of taste), but my frustration comes from not quite being able to tell what is intentional and what isn't. There seems a deliberate restraint and simplicity to most of Ryan Ormonde's hypertextual work which makes it easy to trust its execution. The restraint is particularly noticeable in *first draft*...: the element of interactivity is present but is extremely limited (the form of the work is still essentially linear; it must just be coaxed at each discrete stage into revealing that linearity), and the usage of monochrome, of fixed-width type, and of an unvarying grid-system, as well as the overall

manner of its HTML code, is primitive enough in appearance and in construction to admit a kind of quiet technological nostalgia.

The work begins with a mystery, which is perhaps why it is so immediately likeable. This is cunning in view of the vast amount of prior context with which we are openly provided. Even without the introductory blog post, the title alone tells us that it is a response to a specific moment in a specific work of literature. Even more specifically, it is the opening, an opening in which the main character, our proxy, enters a hole, and in doing so enters a world entirely different. Different from our world, or different from the world in which she existed previously, or different from both? Is the world in which Alice exists for the first few paragraphs supposed to be the same as ours?

Though it might not be immediately evident, the shapes shown, if taken as closest to the word 'INTO' written vertically, don't consist (like many of the other sixty frames) of a direct quotation from Lewis Carroll's original. If they're seen as the word 'IN' followed by an arrow and the letter 'O', then perhaps 'in' is taken from the book, and we're being presented by way of a visual pun with Alice's first and almost-unmade choice: go down the hole. It's interesting that the very pseudo-interactivity of this work gives us a much greater freedom around this choice, a greater space for consideration, than has Alice:

... she ran across the field after [the rabbit], and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it...

Unless we are such a coward as to put the book down at that full stop, in fear of what might occur, Alice's choice is essentially made for her in the next eight words, by the connivance of author and reader in a reality external to her own; the reality which she must have assumed (we are used to assuming) to be the highest reality; or, at least, the highest within which she can affect change, and from which she can extract with certainty any comprehensible data. Stepping outward, these moments both seem to function as internal, structurally symbolic reinforcements of the idea that a work of fiction, be it a painting, a novel, or a computer game, is a representation of a reality other than that which we are pleased to call our own, however proximate or distant it may be. Falling asleep, entering a door, pushing a button, climbing through a window, falling down a hole, even taking a pill: this poem in its first frame somehow evokes all of these devices without quite being any of them.

first draft... is playful in its treatment of worlds-within-worlds, seeming to hedge its attentions particularly in the disconcerting instances of inward and outward object or data transfer, across what ought to be impermeable membranes,

between sub- and super-worlds; manoeuvres which call into question the reality or unreality of each domain (the artefact found on the child-protagonist's bedside table which suggests that maybe it *wasn't* all a dream – or that he may, more worryingly, still be dreaming). The poem sets up by implication only to undermine by caprice any number of frames onto other realities, broaching them, collapsing apparently separate worlds together in a way which never quite settles comfortably.

Such interplay of contradictory spatial languages is familiar from the drawings of M. C. Escher, and finds expression most consistently and evidently here in the central 'O', an unchanging and unmoving feature of every single frame. It performs several functions: it remains, throughout, the hole which we are invited to fall down, but it also functions as simply the letter 'O' within words, pivoting them on the screen; it is at once absence (hole) and presence (the clickable glyph 'O'), a constant presence, acting sixty times as the sole object which enables us to move through the poem. There are points during the poem where to keep in mind two of these interpretations becomes impossible, just as our optic systems will not permit us to view something as concave and convex simultaneously. We're either continuing down the hole, or are pressing a button: as soon as we settle into accepting it as performing one function, it takes on another.

'Reading' the work, which is to say progressing through it one click at a time, it becomes evident that each page is also constructed around a grid system, the same cellular grid system. Individual glyphs change from page to page, but it is clear that the position of each is absolute; no character appears where another might not have appeared on another frame. There are clear analogues and clear differences here with the printed page; poetry produced using a typewriter, for example, is essentially grid-based printing with a small horizontal margin of error (due to accidental or intended slip-page of the paper), and a degree of vertical freedom which might also be intended or accidental but is much greater in extent because of the mechanical structure of the paper feed. But usage of such a grid system more immediately parallels the pixels on a computer screen; again, the poem seems to be indulging not only in very knowing low-level puns with its own material constitution, but with other usages of that constitution. There are frames later, for example, which look more like stages in the progress of cellular automata than anything else; it's not hard to imagine the poem as a brooding virtual petri dish.

The 'O' shape is important to the markings which make up the word 'HOLE' (to pick a *completely arbitrary example*); it is also not dissimilar visually from what we imagine a hole to be. In a two-dimensional plane, a hole is any area of non-surface surrounded by surface. Does that work? If so, a three-dimensional hole must just be an extension or extrusion of this surface along a z-dimension. That seems to work, but can also be phrased backwards: a hole such as that which Alice falls down, topographically idealized, is a three-dimensional object in which all two-dimensional cross-sections produce a surface which circumscribes an area of non-surface. And between frames six and thirteen, the screen alternates for a while, showing only 'O' or 'o'. The invitation seems to be to see these shapes not as letters displayed after one another, but as a single shape – and not even as a shape which is changing in size, but as successive cross-sections of a three-dimensional

object (a tunnel; a hole) which is widening and narrowing, extending towards us in a z-axis off the screen. This distinction is probably only semantic, but is the first of a number of methods by which this flat-screen poem threatens to creep by sleight and suggestion into a three-dimensional physical space which it cannot in reality access, playing as much on optics as semantics. There is also the direct force here of context, provided both by the title and by the work to which it refers.

Later, three spokes, all drawn using the character 'O' – we can imagine they might represent the three legs of the table which Alice looks up to see – are converted on the next frame into the corner of a cuboid; at least, a two-dimensional arrangement of figures which most readily recalls the corner of a cuboid. This frame, being made up of three widely-spaced 'lines' of the letter 'O', neatly demonstrates the difference between vector and raster graphics (a primary concern for all on-screen presentation), combining it with the familiar pre-render 'wireframe' representation of three-dimensional computer-generated worlds.

This display of edge rather than surface is slightly eerie, less knowable, than something shaded: it also reminds us how the 'O' can represent a hole, or a cross-section of a wireframe tunnel; can be more than just a circle. Our methods of spatial imagination are set alongside those used in computing. The visual difference between this frame and the previous, although they both consist of three spokes radiating from a central point, is too large for us to see them easily as a continuum, as a change of shape. We do, though, encounter a successful allusion to the mechanisms of animation earlier.

Alice, in Carroll's book, while falling down the hole, plucks from a shelf a jar labelled 'ORANGE MARMALADE'. Ormonde – whose surname, as it's useless but fun to point out, is distantly echoed by the phrase – has used these two words to turn his poem on its head. They first appear (without the space) in frame thirteen, with, predictably, the initial 'O' in the place of the unchanging central 'O', extending as far to the right as Ormonde's grid system will allow (cutting off the last two letters, initially). *first draft...*, still playing with continuous and discrete movement after the widening and narrowing tunnel, spins a simple paper label into a delicate set of allusions to human and machine memory: just as it requires us to trace in our own memories the particular moment from Carroll's original, it visually mimics several possible less-Disneyish animations of this scene, as well as the theoretical and actual mechanisms for data retrieval by which it must on some level be operating.

On the next frame, the phrase has shifted one cell to the left, meaning the D at the end has been restored; on the next frame, it has shifted again to the left, meaning the full phrase is seen on screen. So it seems, anyway; it might be initially obscured slightly by the mouse pointer (since at this stage we will have accustomed ourselves to the idea that clicking always occurs in the same place, and simply leave the cursor where it is), but it becomes quickly clear that the central O is not changing. We read ORANGEMARMALA, followed by OOANGEMARMALAD, ORONGEMARMALADE, ORAOGEMARMALADE, and so on.

The hole, funnel, cylinder, rupture – the central 'O', whatever it is – exists now as the only fixed point in some other plane, around which other things can change, because the axis of apparent movement implied here is no longer toward and away from the screen (z), but left and right (x); we

might imagine the unchanging central 'O' now to be a problem in Alice's vision, a nascent cataract, a central dot of nothingness obscuring her sight as she turns the jar in front of her. This x-axis movement is so strongly conjured that to take the same imaginary step involved in the widening and narrowing hole, previously – have our brain fill in the gaps, imagining the stacking and joining of frame after frame before the screen – is here not only more difficult and unintuitive, but results in something much further from anything we might find in the real world.

The sense of x-axis movement under a fixed lens is too strong: what this segment resembles much more strongly is ticker tape; or, more appropriately, a Turing machine, the theoretical device used to simulate the limits of mechanical computation. The 'O' here becomes the read-write head, the one fixed point which can move up and down, one unit at a time, along a writable and readable strip of cellular-stored data. And this is not completely at odds with the z-dimension mentioned previously; indeed it is a self-similar manoeuvre: taking the frames in Ormonde's poem as discrete units, we can step through them, one at a time, using the back and forward buttons on the browser. Our browser may of course show a list of all pages visited on request, but since every document in Ormonde's work is titled 'Untitled Document', while we can jump to any page, it is not with any certainty as to what it will contain: we might guess at the place in the sequence, but cannot be sure until after clicking any given 'Untitled Document' in the list what it will contain. We cannot access the data, or even know where exactly the data is, without going to it in its place in the sequence, in the manner not just of a Turing machine, but of scrolls, videotapes, and other similar storage devices, real or virtual (data pointers in virtual memory stacks can also work in a similar way).

This particular degree of self-similarity in the text – the reader's place in a series of pages stepped through one by one, as compared to the read-write head of a hard drive, a Turing machine, and so on – is interesting because it inheres not necessarily in Ormonde's text but in the hypertext medium itself; or rather, in the (currently) standard manner of viewing hypertext.

The 'O' though remains as either a hole or a blockage, eclipsing or removing from the shifting phrase ORANGE-MARMALADE the very area on which we are invited to concentrate. Sometimes the central 'O' seems to corrupt the phrase into near-incomprehensibility, but sometimes it creates a plausible set of letters; MORMALADE might be something. MARMOLADE sounds like it could also be a French foodstuff, MARMALODE perhaps less so. MAO-MALADE: Chinese communism as sickness? The last stage of shifting is ANGEMARMALADO (the OR having dropped off the left of the grid), which might be anything from a style of guitar finger-picking to a minor Spanish inquisitor. By this stage, though, we are probably clicking through quite fast, and such leaps will be curtailed by this speed of experience; the next frame is therefore a shock.

ANGEMARMALADO suddenly becomes (more accurately: is replaced by), recalling thirteen television screens switching off, a string of thirteen 'O's, extending inclusively from the left of the grid to the central 'O'. These might here be the lids of thirteen marmalade jars, might be an extreme comic-book exclamation ("Ooooooooooooo!"); but they are, much more viscerally, what we remember as the moment

Alice discovers the jar of orange marmalade to be empty. That the 'O' works doing this is due to both cumulative contextualization within the work, and the visual properties of the glyph 'O' (particularly as distinct from the glyph '|', in combination with which it is used worldwide in place of words to signify the *off* and *on* states of various kinds of equipment). The manoeuvre, the replacement, is extremely effective, whether taken as a specific performance of Alice's discovery, or a more general unfulfilment of expectation; where the work folds back on itself yet again is on the next frame, featuring just the word 'DISAPPOINTMENT', its central 'O', of course, aligned in the centre of the grid.

Directly appropriated from Carroll's description of Alice's reaction, we can assume it to be non-misleading, and we gladly empathize. Yet aspects of its appearance here make it oddly comforting, a slight return to what we are used to; no longer in an environment of strange pseudo-scrolling objects, or cross-sections of imagined tunnels, we are back in the realm of single words, centred on the page, which readily signify. There is, too, the pleasing coincidence that 'O' is almost exactly centred in the word, so that aligning that character with the centre of the page places the word almost exactly in the middle, in the manner of a title.

The difference, in the scrolling marmalade label, between actual movement and perceived movement – the result of successively displayed still images – must have been a central issue in the creation and presentation of virtual worlds, from the simple to the extraordinarily complex; and the frames-per-second with which graphics cards are capable of rendering imagery on the fly has, like all other computing technology, increased exponentially over the last few decades.

Yet this is somewhere between real-time rendering and slideshow: it is indisputably a series of static frames, and the fact that clicking in one place switches to another frame does not change this. However, HTML web-pages are essentially separate documents which are rendered, live, separately from each other. There is a very brief wait after clicking on each frame not just while our browser retrieves the next document from the server, but while it then renders that code into what we see. Using later CSS technologies, combined with dynamic client-side scripting, it is possible for a page's code to be re-written within the browser, causing entities within the document to alter in a manner which will still necessarily be discrete (on-screen objects cannot truly alter by degrees less than one pixel), but no longer means that any aspect of change requires a separate document. It seems deliberate that Ormonde has chosen to use a series of individual frames.

Finally for this brief review, the valedictory anti-flourish (without, again, wanting to give too much away) is at once genuinely funny and hauntingly sinister. The poem has throughout been peppered with enough coincidence and contingency as to acknowledge *luck* as one of its primary generative processes; and the combination of chance and choice here is virtuosic, converting a familiar exit-slogan, by implied deletion, into a warning. What's deleted is the admission of play: if our engagement with this text has been in deadly earnest – if, as the phrase goes, *this isn't a game* – then what must we take from it; what have we done?

first draft... arrests not by rough attention-grabbing but by eloquent enticement, all carrot and no stick (we are following a rabbit, after all); its ephemeral, playful poise perhaps has no

better prototype than the Cheshire Cat, darting around a darkness, directing then misdirecting, as beguiling and reassuring as he is worrying. Most of all, though – and I'm aware earlier of having written 'we are probably clicking through quite fast' – Ormonde's piece is a strange adjuration to pause, to step back from hyperspace as necessarily hyperactive, to be patient:

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly,
for she had plenty of time as she went down to look
about her and to wonder what was going to happen
next.



"Something to do with domestic spaces and weirdness. Not quite so much that it's weird to do performances in domestic spaces."

Johanna Linsley



images © Alison Henry

I'M WITH YOU live art events in Lower Clapton

By Johanna Linsley

Dates (so far)

October 2009; February, June 2010

Places

74 Mayola Road, 71-75 Powerscroft Road, 72-74 Powerscroft Road, 291 Glyn Road

Names

Christa Holka, R. Justin Hunt, Johanna Linsley, Owen Glyndwr Parry, Andrew Mitchelson, Season Butler, Brian Lobel, Alun Davies, Kate Reidler, Helena Walsh, Jesse Darling, Hannes Ribarits, Jungmin Song, Barbara Lampert, Jan Mertens, Oriana Fox, etc.

Definition & Audience

A series of performance events, mostly in houses and gardens, but sometimes other types of places.

We live in a house with a garden. At the back of the garden there's a concrete platform that reminds us of a stage. Christa said: we have to do something. We said: yeah!

Weirdness

We're organizing the third 'I'm with you' now, and I'm starting to have some thoughts about it. Something to do with domestic spaces and weirdness. Not quite so much that it's weird to do performances in domestic spaces. (Lots of people do it, especially in Britain, it seems. Three off the top of my head: Bobby Baker, Chris Goode, the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home). Maybe more like, domestic spaces are weird and it's nice to do weird things in them. Weird meaning the collapsing of contingency, necessity, function and awareness. Not quite but not unrelated to 'queer'. I go into someone else's house and I think: why is this like this?

I think: maybe that's generally a good question to ask?

PHOTO POETS*



Geraldine Monk



Antony John



The Foundry



The Foundry

OPENNED TABLE a new space for small presses in London

By Alex Davies

The high street publishing industry is currently experiencing the same crisis that befell the music industry in the last decade. With the adoption of the eBook still uncertain, publishers are increasingly turning to online print outlets to sell their wares.

A sad by-product of this offline-to-online movement has been the pressure independent bookshops are now under. As much as chain bookstores sapped custom and exposure from the independent bookshop, at least readers and buyers were still taking to the streets. Now, with online book selling dominating (and why not? It's generally cheaper, the selection is wider and more convenient) the independent bookstore is fighting for survival. Where once it was the place you went to if your requirements were a little more specialist than those categories offered by the major chain stores, now that requirement has been usurped by the internet. But there is so much that independent bookshops still have to offer, particularly among the tight-knit communities such as those surrounding poetry and small presses.

So, starting in June, Openned is going to be running a book table/tables at Café 1001 in London's East End, just off Brick Lane. The book table will be on display for one Saturday every month.

In collaboration with Café 1001, we are aiming to offer, if only for a short while each month, the same atmosphere and sense of community that the independent bookshop fosters (and,



"Our Book Orphanage is a huge book shelf in our front room where anyone can pop in and read a book and then put it back for the next person to read."

Café 1001

in some valiant corners of London and elsewhere in the UK, continues to - **West End Lane Books** in West Hampstead and the **bookartbookshop** off Old Street are two that spring to mind).

Alongside a healthy list of publications from small presses across the UK (with more to come) there will be a series of short readings given throughout the day by a selection of poets (the lists can be seen below). Any publisher or reader can request to display their publications or read at the event. If you are interested in doing so for the July event, please e-mail openned@gmail.com with some details.

Instead of charging admission, the fee for entry will be the donation of a single book to Café 1001's Book Orphanage. The Orphanage is intended to

be a free repository of books which any patron of Café 1001 can use as a free library while at the Café. All money from the sales of books at the event will be given directly to the publishers - neither Openned nor Café 1001 takes any cut of this.

The Openned Table will primarily be run by Nat Raha, Linus Slug and Steve Willey. If you are interested in becoming involved more heavily than being an attending publisher or reader, please get in touch through the aforementioned e-mail address, or even better, come down to the first Table.

This is a real opportunity to present a showcase for poetry and small presses in a popular London venue, a place where the efforts of publishers can be recognised and work can be shared. We hope you will join us.



Admission & Venue

Attendance is free as long as you bring one book to donate to Café 1001's Book Orphanage.

The Openned Table is at Café 1001, 1 Dray Walk, 91 Brick Lane, London E1 6QL

PUBLISHERS AND READERS AT THE FIRST OPENNED TABLE

5th June, 12 - 3pm

Publishers

- The Arthur Shilling Press; Crator Press; Critical Documents; Cusp Books; FREAKLUNG; Grasp Press, if p then q; Klatch; Knives Forks and Spoons Press; ninerrors; press free press

Contributors

- Nikki Dudley; Antony Francis; Tom Jenks; Lucy Harvest Clarke; Peter Philpott; Scott Thurston; YO!

Readers

- Antony Francis; Lucy Harvest Clarke; Owain Lee; Peter Philpott; press free press; Nat Raha; Linus Slug; Steve Willey

Final list of publishers and readers subject to change at short notice.