

THE HEART IS A HOLLOW MUSCLE

by

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ABSTRACT
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This collection of poetry explores the relationship of between self and body by way of form and language. Through syntax and poetic forms, especially the sonnet, these poems investigate the interchange between the physical and the linguistics. The manuscript incorporates found text through the collage process, relying heavily on the medical texts of the seventeenth century anatomist William Harvey. The medicalized body becomes the means through which the speakers of these poems experience and express identity, considering the physical body as the body in pain, the queered body, and the body of the beloved.

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Eat Local :: Read Local “Things found in her stomach” Limited edition broadside

Harriet & Leone “To claim the pathetic fallacy”

In Parentheses “What She Held: What He Has Already Broken,” and “What You Find
in the Palm of Her Hand”

Offshore Poetry in *The Shephard Express* at *expressmilwaukee.com* “Heart-strings”

Painted Bride Quarterly “Want for Absence”

Prick of the Spindle “Larynx” and “The Anatomist”

Prime Number Magazine “What She Never Owned” and “The Simple Fact of Waking”

Salt Hill Journal “To Give Leave”

So To Speak “Slight Pressure”

Spoon River Poetry Review “Drowned” and “The Accuracy of String and Measure”

Some of these poems appear in the chapbook *The Interior Structure* (dancing girl press, 2013).

COLLAGE POETRY AND THE FORMATION OF IDENTITY

I am interrupted by my own social origin, and so have to find a way to take stock of who I am in a way that makes clear that I am authored by what precedes and exceeds me, and that this in no way exonerates me from having to give an account of myself.

Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself*

At the beginning of the 21st century, one of the ways we talk about identity defined as an intersection between the public and the private. Identity in this understanding is constructed through the individual's relationship with larger social and cultural bodies, including both formal institutions and social norms and practices. We find this construction of identity demonstrated in much of 20th and 21st century collage poetry.

Collage poetry takes its lead from visual arts, specifically Modernism and the Cubist's and Futurist's notions of collage¹. As Marjorie Perloff and others point out, the primary characteristic of collage poetry is the process of juxtaposing disparate texts or sources. Perloff's functional definition of "Collage composition" and process is "distinguished... in that it involves the transfer of materials from one context to another, even as the original context cannot be erased" (Perloff 47). As with collage in the visual arts, these poems bring together many different source materials.² The found items in collage perform a dual function of making a new poem and keeping their previous textual existence, creating the necessary juxtaposition (Perloff 48) as the continual references to the external world. Each found item or text that is included in a collage poem is marked. Source text is not seamlessly integrated or assimilated into the new creation. The refusal to smooth over the surface of the poem allows the original source to be present always within the (new) poem. Instead of understanding these poems as assimilations of found text, they

have an additive nature (Brinkman). All previous sources, public or private, accumulate within the collage poem.

Newspapers, magazines, textbooks, religious and government documents, public letters, myths, and common narratives, all examples of public sources, can reflect cultural, religious, or national identity. The private includes both private speech and writing: sources and texts that are not meant for the public eye. Furthermore, in collage poetry the private also includes writing that reflects an individual, whether a speaker of the poem or not, as that voice comes in contact with and reacts to public texts and spaces. As a meeting point for the public and the private, collage poetry represents one way we experience identity.

Though not an exhaustive list, collage poems are found in the work of many contemporary poets like Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Mónica de la Torre, Nicole Cooley, Susan Howe, Bin Ramke, Joan Retallack, Claudia Rankine, C.D. Wright, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, and Terrance Hayes. Cha, de la Torre, and Cooley employ different strategies to create collage poems that reflect the public and the private intersection. While using different methods, these poets illustrate a process of juxtaposition and accumulation, the two key characteristics of collage poems. Looking back to Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams we find precursors to contemporary trend. Ending with my own manuscript *The Heart is a Hollow Muscle*, we can see how this practice of collage has developed over time to include multiple strategies that gather the many layers of identity.

To harness and indicate, with mark, with persistence of gaze

Cha writes the epic poem *Dictee* in the form of a Greek myth addressing the personal narrative of her own family within Korean history. *Dictee* focuses on the lives of

three Korean women – the revolutionary Yu Guan Soon, Cha’s mother, and Cha herself. Cha weaves her own poetry and narrative with text from historical documents, public and private letters, photographs, hand-written documents, elementary language textbooks, and other sources; some of this material is altered. French and Korean texts are included, and only a portion of them are translated. Many of the sources are not attributed, even as Cha maintains original formatting. With a significant number of the unattributed and apparently altered collaged texts, Cha leaves unclear if the source is a specific document or notional.³

When altering or editing material, Cha keeps recognizable textual elements so that the original sources’ contexts continue to collect. For example, in the introductory, unnamed section of the book, prior to “Clio History,” Cha includes translation exercises from an intermediate French language textbook. The text moves from the expected, and apparently harmless translation of “5. It will fit you pretty well.” (6) and “1. I want you to speak. / 2. I wanted him to speak.” (15-16) into “6. The people of this country are less happy than the people of yours.” (20), “12. Go away more quietly next time.” (13), and:

4. Are you afraid he will speak?
5. Were you afraid they would speak?
6. It will be better for him to speak to us.
7. Was it necessary for you to write?
8. Wait till I write. (18-22)

As the activities progress, the text comments on the social and political implications, and potential power, of being able to speak and write in the language of the other or the oppressor. This section ends with an enactment of process; the final translation activity is a completion exercise in French, not translated, making it inaccessible to anyone who does

not speak or read French. Cha brings together the public space of the classroom, the textbook, and the political context of war with the individual's ability to express herself within that space.

Working directly within the structure of classical Greek myth, Cha superimposes her own contemporary myths onto the Greek muses and Hesiod's *Theogony*. Each section of *Dictee* is named after a Greek muse and the art form or area that is attributed to her, except for lyric poetry. For the lyric poetry section, Cha has altered the name of the muse. The sections of *Dictee* are "Clio History," "Calliope Epic Poetry," "Urania Astronomy," "Melpomene Tragedy," "Erato Love Poetry," "Elitere Lyric Poetry," "Thalia Comedy," "Terpsichore Choral Dance," "Polymnia Sacred Poetry." By using this structure, Cha sets the notion of Greek mythology as a foundation of Western education and literature next to the personal and national Korean narrative told within the poem. In this way *Dictee* demonstrates how the construction of a Korean identity is, because of the political history, always in relation to the Western countries and cultures that have intervened in Korea.

Cha does not tell the narrative of the Greek muse or perform the art indicated by each title. Instead, the text enacts a piece of the personal and national Korean narrative that is either thematically or formally related to the section title. For example, in "Clio History," Cha begins the story of Yu Guan Soon [sic], a revolutionary activist who organized against Japanese occupation and died at seventeen. "Clio History" partially tells Soon's story, ending with an image of a hand-written and edited draft of one stanza that already appeared in this chapter. "Clio History" is the history of Korean independence from Japan, the history of female activism in Korean history, and the history

of the writing of this poem. In the next section, “Calliope Epic Poetry,” Cha begins, “Mother, you are eighteen years old” (45) and goes on to tell her mother’s story of exile. The mother’s story is epic: it begins the year she is older than Yu Guan Soon was at the time of her death, and it is the story of an ancestor’s exile and journey. The identity of one individual citizen is constructed through the telling of the larger national narrative. That larger national narrative is, through the structure of the poem, always in contrast to the myths and narrative of the other.

The collaging of various source materials places these education, mythology, and history narratives into a larger, more globally diverse space. Many scholars point out that these source materials convey particular contexts; a reader’s prior knowledge of French, Korean, and relevant historical and cultural references determine a reader’s access to this specific framework (McDanial, Spahr).

Spahr analyzes the cultural references in *Dictee* and applies Mary Louise Pratt’s idea of a “contact zone” to the collage process, “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other” (Pratt quoted in Spahr 4). Cha uses source text with Christian imagery and narratives, including Joan of Arc and St. Theresa. By juxtaposing these texts with Korean history in this “contact zone” of the collage poem, *Dictee* becomes a “collage history” (Spahr 5). Cha illustrates that national narratives and cultural myths cannot occur independently from other cultures and national identities. *Dictee* shows how the public and the private work together in representing identity by including personal stories and the private individual process of language learning within larger national narratives.

Mónica de la Torre, in her collection *Public Domain*, also uses collage to highlight connections between the personal and public when representing identity. While “The March Papers” is the only poem in which de la Torre names the source, she uses collage throughout the collection by incorporating text that mimics, to varying degrees, source materials. It is left unclear whether many unattributed text and images are found material. *Public Domain* includes Spanish and French texts, both translated and untranslated, that play with typographic and visual diversity, references to multiple speakers, collaborative writing, overheard speech, technical manuals, and “overheard” or accidentally public email correspondence.

Even in the poems that are notional found text, the external context is clear. For example, “Doubles” is an email correspondence between many people named Mónica de la Torre and a young woman looking for someone named Mónica de la Torre. The emails were accidentally sent to all recipients on a list-serve or were in other ways overheard. “Doubles,” while placing the reader in the familiar space of an email exchange, crosses cultural, national, and linguistic lines and demonstrates how different contexts can create misunderstanding and confusion. These emails illuminate a way digital space in the 21st century is both public and private, simultaneously showing how cultural background can influence interpersonal relationships.

De la Torre’s poem “The March Papers” is introduced as “A play in one act culled from letters to the editor appearing in *The New York Times*” from February 28, 2002 through 2008 (45). The dates are given in relation to the Iraq War. The poem is printed in columns, sideways, so that the reader must turn the book to the side in order to read the poem. Directions for the performance or reading of the poem are:

A different voice corresponds to each column of text except for capitalized text, to which is allocated a voice of its own (preferably male). Texts can be read in any order the reader desires. Circular reading and repetition is encouraged. (45)

The poem is laid out in columns, each one representing a column from the newspaper and containing only the fragments that originally appeared within that column. Each page also refers to a different day or edition of the newspaper. Some days/pages, only in March, are given a date. Other pages/days are titled by how many days, weeks, or months have passed since the last poem, “Next Day,” “Two Weeks Later,” “Twenty Days Later.” The found text does not appear to have any other pattern and does not specifically refer to the Iraq War. Fragments about tobacco use, SAT scores, books, television, gender roles, parks, the Pentagon, and the Army are included. Some lines are so decontextualized that the original context of the letters are unclear.

As a collage poem, the “The March Papers” overlays these topics as news, as public correspondence in multiple voices, and as a (possibly performed) poem, all framed by the Iraq War. Letters to an editor, though public, are a personal act. An individual must care enough about the topic to draft and send each letter; this private process moves the poem into public discourse. The way voices are collaged in this poem foregrounds the construction of identity through the individual’s conversation with the public—the letters come from a variety of authors over many years and multiple readers can perform the poem.

In the performance directions of “The March Papers,” de la Torre incorporates the structure of Chicano political and educational social theater that brings another cultural

reference into the poem. However, the poem does not fulfill the promise of social theater because the reader is left without a final moral lesson. De la Torre combines social performance with the public and private act of a letter to the editor. Even though “The March Papers” is presented as theater, the poem never develops specific characters or a single narrative; the private voice, expressing opinion in public ways, constructs identity.

Nicole Cooley’s *Breach* uses collage technique to assemble public events that marked the beginning of the 21st century in North America, and place those events in a private framework. For example, Cooley layers: New York City and New Orleans; September 2010, September 2011, and September 2005; the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding of New Orleans; Cooley’s own childhood and the childhood of her daughters.

Cooley gathers an array of source materials for her collage poems such as official, national and local news sources, including news reports, personal statements, and editorials from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *CNN*, *NOCA.com*, the website for Jefferson Parish, and the Coast Guard. In some of the collage poems in *Breach*, either italics or quotation marks point to direct quotes, the sources of which are attributed in the text of the poems itself or in the “Notes” section. In other of Cooley’s collage poems, source material is included within the poem but not attributed in the poem or cited in the notes. The collage poems not indicated in the notes contain source material from hand-written post-it notes, dictionaries, conversations, hand-written signs, and official signage.

The last form of collage poem incorporates hand written signs, letters, and symbols used by emergency workers when they search for survivors: “O” and “X,” “Do Not Trespass,” “Keep Out,” “Do Not Demo.” As these signs echo throughout the landscape of

New Orleans, and other similar signs echo throughout New York City, Cooley weaves these texts and signs into *Breach*, mimicking the juxtaposition of the human markings of survival against disaster. Each of these signs communicates the touch of an individual.

Many of the notes Cooley includes at the end of the book refer to poems that are not collage poems because they do not directly incorporate found material. However, these notes indicate that the poems do have a source text. Cooley employs a number of different verbs to describe the link between these poems and their source. She uses the more conventional ideas of “reference” and “inspired by” in relationship to some of the ekphrastic work, and “indebted to” to some of the researched work. Cooley also “borrows,” “invokes,” and is “sparked” by texts and images, creating poems similar to collage poems because they retain some aspect of accumulation. *Breach* as a whole merges individual private expression of experience with the discourse of historic public events. While we comprehend identity in the 21st century as coming into being where public and private meet, the amount of space for this meeting to happen has multiplied. Collage poems acknowledge the abundance of materials consequently made accessible.

I am trying to see the bones from underneath

Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams work with collage and combine the public and private at the turn of the 20th century, so we can look to them as predecessors of contemporary collage poetry. Of all of Moore’s collage poems, “Marriage” most clearly demonstrates how she uses the form to accrue multiple voices. “Marriage” is a first-person meditation on matrimony as a social and religious institution. The poem examines how conceptions of marriage reflect and conflict with contemporary society’s gender roles and

power relationships. The speaker in the poem imagines what Adam and Eve might say about each other as husband and wife and what they and other hypothetical members of society might say about marriage in general.

Moore folds source text directly into the sentences of her collage poems. In “Marriage,” Moore further knits source text into the dialogue of imagined characters. She marks found material with thorough notes crediting sources and original context. Where Cha and de la Torre maintain the layout of the original texts and use copies of image and hand-written materials, Moore foregrounds the physical material by using quotation marks:

And he has beauty also;
 it’s distressing— the O though
 to whom from whom,
 without whom nothing— Adam;
 “something feline,
 something colubrine”— how true! (61-66)

At this point in “Marriage,” Moore moves from a hypothetical Adam and Eve into thinking about marriage within a specific Biblical context: the Adam from whom animals receive their names and Eve receives her body. Here, Moore puts into Adam’s voice the language of the literary critic Philip Littell’s review of George Santayana’s poems from *The New Republic* (271). Not without irony, the discussion of philosopher George Santayana’s poems and the image of a Biblical Adam become juxtaposed and superimposed, collaged to become the source from which the body of Eve, the language with which animals are named, and the body of this poem are all created. Moore creates a space where the ability to bring about meaning in language and body is within the purview of poet, critic, and even

reader of a popular politics and culture magazine. Moore displays how individuals might have different social and cultural approaches to marriage by collaging public and private space.

And when characters speak source text in “Marriage,” their matrimony discussion becomes further complicated. Single quotes mark source material when it occurs within the dialogue. Moore adds an additional layer to the collage, asking the reader to hold many combinations at the same time—found text with other language of the poem, the public space of source material with themes of the poem, source material with speech:

She says, “Men are monopolists
of ‘starts, garters, buttons
and other shining baubles’—
unfit to be the guardians
of another person’s happiness.”
He says, “These mummies
must be handled carefully—
‘the crumbs from a lion’s meal,
a couple of shins and a bit of an ear’; (201-209)

Here, the female character speaks words from “Miss M. Carey Thomas, Founder’s address, Mount Holyoke, 1921” (272), a speech that directly addresses issues of gender and gender roles. Parts of the male character’s speech are credited to George Adam Smith, translator of the *Expositor’s Bible* (272). Using these public, social, and historical contexts as the characters’ speech highlights how any personal marriage conversation is always in relation

to public space. The collage itself enacts ambiguous and possibly conflicting viewpoints on marriage introduced in the first lines of the poem:

This institution,
perhaps one should say enterprise
.....
requiring public promises
of one's intention
to fulfil [sic] a private obligation:
I wonder what Adam and Eve
think of it by this time (1-10)

Moore's collage technique gathers many voices and contexts, refusing the single speaker of a lyric poem. A range of voices is also a range of discourses, combining personal and public with religious, political, and social; accordingly, "in a technological age, consciousness itself becomes a process of graft or citation, a process by means of which we make the public work our own" (Perloff 77). It is precisely this process of composing with the public and private that embodies identity.

Moore's contemporary William Carlos Williams collages more visibly and linguistically throughout his epic *Paterson* by assembling large sections of source material and maintaining elements of typographical difference. In the first four pages of *Paterson Book II*, Williams makes use of distinct margins, significantly smaller font and spacing, prose lineation, and italics to indicate when found text is being used.⁴ Williams does not provide detailed records or notes on the sources of this material. He alters some source text

by editing and re-wording small sections. Even with alterations, the collaged material still references its original source.

Paterson Book II begins with “Sunday in the Park.” The speaker tells of a world “outside” himself, and then he walks in that world:

Outside

outside myself

there is a world,

he rumbled, subject to my incursions

—a world

(to me) at rest,

which I approach

concretely—

The scene’s the Park

upon the rock,

female to the city

—upon whose body Paterson instructs his thoughts

(concretely) (1-13)

A medical and scientific explanation of the act of walking, and the body of a person walking, are layered onto the speaker’s walking and the city’s body: “The body is tilted slightly forward from the basic standing position...” (53). By collaging impersonal

scientific knowledge with a single individual and a personified city, Williams personalizes a definition of walking.

The poem then moves into the context of a private correspondence: “Despite my having said that I’d never write to you again, I do so now because I find, with the passing of time...” (57). While the specifics of this letter may not be available to the reader, the letter incorporates into the collage poem the context of not only personal correspondence in general but also of an ongoing, and apparently ambivalent, dialogue. Conditions of interpersonal relationships and efforts to connect with another individual person and their own sense of an isolated self, particularly around the craft of poetry, accompany this letter. The city as public space becomes the space of singular bodies and the ongoing personal relationships between them.

After four more lines in the speaker’s voice, *Paterson Book II* shifts into an unattributed story of a conversation between strangers: “I asked him, What do you do? / He smiled patiently. The typical American question.” (75-76). The account of dialogue is the second source text presented as overheard, framed as a discussion of social and cultural norms and stereotypes. A longer, formal, third person narrative of a violent altercation between an individual concerned for their property and a large public event in the city of Paterson follows: “No fairer day ever dawned anywhere than May 2, 1880...” (82).

Williams accumulates sources in an effort to re-imagine an American myth and American epic: the individual man walks through and creates the myth of The American City. The public and cultural myth of The American City cannot be written without the personal accounts, understandings, and experiences of the individual. Williams moves

toward the space where identity is formed by showing how the private is also always a public negotiation.

My body is a hollow craft

In the collection *The Heart is a Hollow Muscle*, I use found text from the writings of William Harvey, reference other medical texts and images, and allude to the artist book *Jazz* by Henri Matisse. William Harvey was a 17th century anatomist and physician who discovered that the circulatory system is a closed system through which the blood flows, in one direction. He figured out that the heart functions as a pump and powers this blood flow throughout the body. Harvey wrote one major work on the subject titled *On the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals*. Some of his anatomies and many of his personal and professional letters on the topic have also been published. I take source material from one of his anatomies, a professional letter, his “Last Will and Testament,” and his text *On the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals*. In addition to these sources, the manuscript borrows language and includes some text from *Gray’s Anatomy*.

The found texts that I use are primarily fragmented. In some poems these sources are incorporated with and placed directly against other poetic texts within one poem, while other poems are composed entirely of fragmented found text. As well as the found poems, the manuscript contains many poems that use techniques of allusion, reference, and epigraphs to create a collage. Other than the artist book allusions, the language from most of the source material is technical, medical language, at times antiquated, and heavily latinate. Many poems in the collection reference this language, using it and playing against it.

The collage sequence “And it happens to all blood” brings together medical texts and technical, scientific understandings of the human body, some of which are historically and culturally different from a contemporary understanding of how the body functions and why. Harvey was working, and writing, at a time when the spiritual element of the physical body was a particularly fraught question, marked by a transition in how the church and scientific community were beginning to shift their understanding of the soul’s relationship to the body. In particular this issue related to Harvey’s work because it significantly altered the availability of cadavers for dissection. This was a time when large cultural shifts were happening in relation to our knowledge, or misunderstandings, about the human body and the relationship between the physical body, the spiritual self, and the personality of the individual.

“And it happens to all blood” juxtaposes this technical, medical language with the voices of the speakers as they navigate the individual, personal body that is the site on which, through which, the individual experiences violence, pain, pleasure, and, eventually, death. This accumulation brings together the very personal and individual experiences of the speakers with the public and scientific language, asking the reader to hold simultaneously the individual physical experience of the world with the impersonal and medical analysis of how this experience is possible. However, this scientific and medical analysis is flawed knowledge, based on what we now know. Authority and knowledge, represented through scientific Latinate language, is measured against personal experience. The scientific knowledge included in the poems is suspect and not always accurate. This lack of authority in the authoritative, public texts allows for the possibility of creating authority in the non-collaged texts, the personal accounts of individual experiences.

In the long poem “Suite: variations” the technical and authoritarian language moves away from the medical world and into cartography. At the same time, the speaker of this poem has the unreliable and fragmented memories of a child. These two discourses are brought together within the framework of *Jazz*: ostensibly oversimplified and sometimes grotesque images of bodies and animals made by an artist as his own body failed him. As the poems move between public and private contexts and languages, they demonstrate how, even in our lack of understandings of our own physical selves, the two cannot be separated.

In “Reflections on Collage/Assemblage: A Personal View,” Richard Newman writes:

...I would say that all art speaks to our need to transform experience in order to discover our human relationship to the past as well as the present. Its pursuit by either the artist or the consumer stems from our craving for wholeness or self-affirmation. It casts its attention upon such polarities as self and other, life and death, or the known and unknown. (338)

We all yearn for a complete identity, and as we weave together ever-growing public fragments into recognizable selves, each thread leads outward, toward questioning.

Inherent in each new question of self is another possibility.

Notes

1. While the Cubists and Futurists (and scholars) have written much about their differences and disagreements, the ways in which these movements were linked is outside the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that their uses of and definitions of collage as a compositional technique overlap in ways that are relevant to this topic.

2. Poetry utilizing source text materials exists on a long continuum. On one end is “pure” found poetry, including many types of procedural writing and “uncreative writing,” poetry that cuts and pastes entire texts – formatting, too – without any alteration to the source material. On the other end of the continuum is poetry that makes allusions or references to other texts, often without indicating the source of that material. Collage poetry falls somewhere in the middle of this continuum. Collage variations exist, then, because with any attempt to delineate or categorize, borderlines are not always clear. As I will discuss, Mónica de la Torre’s poem “The March Papers” marks the edge of collage and moves on the continuum toward found poetry. On the other hand, Nicole Cooley’s *Breach* skirts the other end of collage and moves on the continuum toward allusion. Some poets within collage maintain formatting or other material elements to indicate the source material, while others work to smooth out the collage surface and move closer to a fully integrated poem, leaning toward allusion or reference.

3. Notional, or fictional found text, is found text where the poet writes all or sections of the poem using linguistic or formal markers to show that this language should be read as if it were from some other, recognizable source. The most common example of

notional found poetry is an epistolary poem that maintains the formal characteristics of a letter.

4. For the purposes of this paper, I will be discussing Williams's use of external found text. There are many places in *Paterson* where Williams refers to his own poems through allusions or quotes. In terms of the definitions used in this paper, these are not collaged found text, and Williams does not typographically set them apart.

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APPENDIX A

Excerpt from Dicter

Some will not know age. age. Time stops. Time will stop for some. For them usually. Eternal time. No age.

~~No deterioration. Time for some. In their view~~
~~their image, ~~then~~ the memory. Or their countenance~~
~~the hallowed beauty that ~~is~~ evidence~~
~~standing before hallowed be. the ~~only~~ beauty, ~~because of the~~~~
~~loss, the absence, the ~~present~~ presents the loss, the~~
~~missing ~~that~~ left to the imaginary. Exposes~~
~~their countenance evokes ~~the~~ beauty, ~~withholding~~ decay~~
~~the inevitable the dying. hallowed beauty from the~~
~~not death, but~~

~~standing before hallowed be. the beauty, ~~that is~~~~
~~standing face to face with ~~memory~~ memory of it misses. it's~~
~~missing. still. what of time is not more. remains there.~~
~~misses nothing. Time, that is all else. all things else.~~
~~all ~~of~~ things other. Subject ^{time} time. Must answer to time.~~
~~Time dictates all else, except misses. All installed in time,~~

APPENDIX B

Excerpt from "The March Papers"

(TWO DAYS LATER.)

WHO'LL SPEAK AGAINST EXTREMISM?

appropriate counter-point, however, should come

As an evangelical Bible-believing Christian I abhor the tactics of

hijack the religious identity of

But as long as wives, girlfriends, and sex workers lack

You rightly cite inadequate staffing levels at the borders.

(MARCH 7, 2006.)

APPENDIX C

Excerpt from *Breach*

I'm Starting to Speak the Language

of disaster, he says, and we keep driving through Mississippi,
Highway 90, Hurricane Alley, on our way to New Orleans,
and he says, that one's blue-roofed, that one's gone,
and we stop to see an address on a tabletop leaned
against a tree, a number spray-painted on wood.
There's no house. *Private Property. Keep Out. Do Not Demo.*
We are here together on a tour of the Gone: three porch steps
For Sale By Owner, a beached trolley at the edge
of the road like a huge stunned animal—*Tour Historic Biloxi*—
Gulfport Economy Inn. IHOP. Jefferson Davis's Beauvoir House.
All that's left of an address he calls *the new lexicon*,
the spray-painted X, the house marked O,
Dog Found. Stone foundation threaded with weeds
that are no language. Still, you can tell
where a house once stood, he says, by the clearing.
A front gate is *For Sale by Owner*. All that's left
of an address. Missing a whole story.

The Heart is a Hollow Muscle

I.

It is as though someone had said: “Bare yourselves so that no one is able to see you”!

Etel Adnan, *Of Cities & Women*

Last Redbird on the Flushing Line

for Miriam

In another city we wake to brightening,
find whales pitching behind, their serenade
chambered. Tongues reflecting, we lie wire-

spoked, mouths gapped in tandem. I listen
for the measured heart unmastered. I've lost
oceans between your pulse and breath, sheltering

under a vaulted ribcage. When they sank
the #7, people bought tickets, stood
on the bow and cheered as each red memory

dove. Who heard the reefs whispering? *You will die
speechless, waiting for the green flash.* They imagined
each scoured car rocked gently to sleep. Repeat

the metaphor. The singular illusion; a blue
whale beached, rotting a lost lullaby, a red
day forgotten in this fading light.

The Condition of Water

1. Descending in Gray

Peacock hills gesture through warped glass. What we imagine: elements of the mind in watercolor, illumination folded in sequence. A forgotten grace in the gray of envelopment. Desire for a thousand trees of honey, of flight. Here are the uncounted grays between white and silver; form as flesh, the old swan blue beneath the brush. We speak less and less as twilight lasts for days. This is the grace of a single language, cinnamon of my heart faint and steady as the dark.

2. Their Easement

I did not know of easement through perfection, the daily ritual and concentration of the body; fire, bend and open. This is where we live when the flesh becomes definition. I cross over, find the light too bright and filtered. We cannot see the mountains in this haze, cannot live within odorless burning. This is the salted land, shifting sand conquered by sand. *Bend and open*, they say, *expose the oblique, scorch the serrated border. Move on.*

3. Slight Pressure

I have been decimated by the smoothness of skin, by the taste of brackish water, the palms of my hands. We never find enough pale blue beneath the surface. This is the taste of slight pressure: fingers breaking through skin, blue blossoming to red as it washes away. With the pads of your thumbs you open the small of my back. Before lifting out the spine, you reach around for the sinews of flank, pull them apart one by one. The ilium broken clear away, familiar furrow between your hands, heavier now without the flesh. I have given too easily to the falling apart, the single bone worn clean, held between your lips. Cartilage perfectly preserved on the wall, marrow settling in your stomach.

4. To Claim the Pathetic Fallacy

We name overgrowth as if excess, not durability. Shade flung from cedars is momentary, simultaneous across each latitude. Personifying, we offer up limbs, claim faces. But our hearts are: ringed, coniferous. Southern pines mark time with greater precision, needle lines lantern across each stream. We pause before underbrush, call comfort continuous bands, length of ambition veined with light. I am not alone in these woods; there is no clearing.

5. Drowned

You know when this begins. Skin follows air to seal itself around you. All the scars your body loves are loosening; first unraveling of longest fibers. A collarbone bends, slowly, at the old joint. Opening your eyes changes nothing. Before you simply the color of absence; gentian filling in the lines of your hands as you realize palms are not raised. You are not grasping. The body deciphers its grief, shudders for a lost loam, the raw wedge on which to memorize this equation. Your bones, so long gentle, will be sorted by willows. You count backwards as each gram of soul slips out. 26 single pearls surfacing. Tonight you will let the walrus of God glow amber beneath your tongue as you hold this water in.

6. Afterwards

Then was the moment of surrender. We watch the slow drip of rust from canons stain the buttressed walls. The ocean drifts towards the quieter souls: as waves break behind them black sand and worn glass pile beneath our feet. Sometimes a soul will skip a generation, blending perfectly in between sky and water. In four centuries they will return to bury their hands in the roots of the rubber tree. From inside this fortress the slow stain of violence reminds us we are already broken. Walls, white-washed with salt, lean towards the sun.

A Colossal

National Mall, Washington, D.C., July 4th 1979

I once found ease in evidence:
the hollowed foot of laceration
and green grass; the din
of 200,000; and me, waist high.

Something exact was not
meant to be precise.

Stand here, with me. We are
unblinking, awed by this recognition
of aching. He is the first iteration,
the proof of my own tendons
wrenched beneath the skin.

Stand here, with me. You will be
transfixed in this tomb of summer
haze. The glare sifted through heat
diffuses, becomes a single slate
of light. You cannot see
the exact spot where broken
glass split the arch of his foot.

Is his foot turning away?
Or does the blood itself
muddle the line? Does he shift
his eyes towards you
as he leans back, flat against
the ground, leg raised high and
streaked in red, his heel cradled

in the nurse's panicked palms?

No. He does not see you.

Quick. Look up. You
have been left behind.

Want for Absence

Your body, another earthquake, the summary of a shift in ground. I must hone attention, rivet the focus and plant a beacon. Your city is the moment of stillness, the flat earth marked at its center. I cry so easily. I must not confuse lack for desire, want for absence. In one inclination to landscape, my tears valley, my abundance sorrows. Each breath of salted spray is the warmth of a tropical winter. These are hands that steady ground, feet that fear it. I have fled past this shelter again and again. Tonight I am shaken to standing and run.

To Give Leave

1.

Our skin, a gendered syntax.
I hear his effort to measure
shame, teach discourse.

He says *the skin's map is not
scars but ink, permanency of talent.*
A threshold: the body declined.

He inks his own. But I
have already drowned, and they
are pointing. There, there. That

is the body that dances
in death, sinks into green, its own point
of termination. *That is the allusion of sight.*

2.

Yours is a refusal of items, scale not in weight but transience. You do not care for the litany of accumulation: scarab carved in soft stone, leaf in copper; a mask, teeth bared; gold ring, plaited, removed before the body is disposed; hand stained by ruin of glue and leather binding. We all manage to tell a story through collection. Everyone but you. I sift through drawers, peer into cabinets and under couches, scour the floor for anything abandoned. You give only leave, carry away.

3.

*Your body wields a vague
gesture, he said, a pointing*

*at nothingness. Not this hoarded
order, stacked accumulation a sorting.*

He did not walk her home.
That was another.

She has left him boxes upon boxes,
thumbtack jewels and boxes stacked

beneath flight, massed against this
possibility. Piles he has lived

with so long he can no longer see:
bulk of absence, his own lack

of peripheral vision. There. There
the deception of memory.

*I will always lie to you. I
will always want more.*

4.

At the closed doors I listen; each glass
is broken, each lie a vow, a gesture

vaguely now towards those drawn
curtains but there, there. You promise

in a moment of forgetting:

I will not return to you. I find

evidence of a different crime
slipped behind the headboard.

Shades lowered to only you grasping,
dropped to your knees, a weeping,

a drunken stupor: we are all interchangeable.

5.

It would be better if I could explain the mountains, the loom of that which we could not carve. The rim not a geologic marker to edge and valley, but insistence of order, of track. Here the graves are marked with marble, ringed in iron, and overcome as wildness claims each body back again. At the field's edge we see only a chaos of blooming weeds before the saplings lift our eyes, draw us in to the memory of an older growth. Somewhere behind that infant forest we find more graves, stones carved then worn to shadow the names of each body that succeeds these mountains. The wilderness shifts again. An orchard gasping for breath on the valley's rim, tire tracks that lead only inward, a bear cub sauntering towards us, too much air and order, too many stones. Let the mountain have them all.

6.

Afterwards, these are the fears:
tsunami, sink-hole, a shattered foot,
the inability to remember what has been cut out.

What She Never Owned*for my favorite (sic)*

1.

for the heat
for the right wind
for yellowed leaves
for a lost breath
under deluge
under driftwood
for my heart
to settle
to be burnt
to measure this
against loss
wrapped in orange
in folded paper
wrapped in static
for birdsongs
for the shifted sand
for fear of snow
to shed tenderness
to wait for you

2.

at the fallen maple
at the shuddering hand
for the regulated center
for the mists at great height
to find extended
at swollen banks
for hummingbirds
beneath bristled faith
to be marked
to forgive
to have fragile bones
behind reeds
beneath framed glass
beneath this comfort
to be left behind
to be wrapped in silence
wrapped in gold
ringed by stones
to be cut open

The Simple Fact of Waking

In dark I start with the muscle stretched beneath your jaw. Should I be technical? The sternomastoid gently reaching down to the pit of your neck. It is a new beginning. Here is the bone we know as the elegance of form. God's grace hanging the body from a single line, your structure breaking forth. With one touch I can pull apart linea alba, breaking the skin open between suprasternal notch and groin. I am trying to see the bones from underneath, looking for the moment when they emerge from flesh to touch the skin themselves. I will always use the clavicle as my referent, pulling it out with the tips of my fingers when I find the corner of your frame. Then will your body collapse? The skin folding away without its binding, muscle exposing itself, disengaged, ready to be lifted out. Your body becomes the simple fact of form, each bone recognized for what it holds in. I know the ribcage is the sonnet of the soul, the coda folded between hipbones. Here dawn is the moment of the limbs. I cannot see the ulna beneath your flesh, only its quiet intransigence just before the turn of your wrist.

II. And it happens to all blood

as death is a corruption for lack of warmth and all living things are warm, dying ones cold, there must be a site and source of warmth, a sort of hearth and home to contain and preserve the natural kindling materials and the beginnings of innate fire

William Harvey, *Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals*

Vessels

My body is a hollow craft, basin
and burrow. This passage a fluent
inventory to limbs, repetition
of form and circumnavigation that
achieves fourfold the earth's perimeter.

My median cubital vein remains
unfathomable, sending the insistent
syringe on, foraging for another
vessel. A violation of dermis
brings blood surfacing, the needle incise
each blue deposit to loose constraint
and cadence against elasticity.

My body is a fading bruise, each vein
a measure, the eloquence of winter.

Incision

In the bloodless animals, however, the heart beats very slowly and at long intervals and in the manner of other animals' hearts that are a-dying.

William Harvey, *Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals*, 1628

In a single moment blades press flat to skin.

Once, just before, I felt this edged desire.

You see, the hand must always remember
the human. This is why we practice

here, with flesh pink and firm, the blood thick,
the softness just inside the thigh.

Feel resistance, the need to press harder.

Train your hands to pressure open a surface

without tearing, without the rush of doubt.

Imagine a rose. Each petal wilts

when pulled apart, the next one softly

losing perfection when exposed to light.

Yes you will pause before you break man's flesh,

your hand will still in wonder at a friend.

The Nest in an Object

I doe most humbly render my soule to him that give it, and to my Blessed Lord, and
saviour Christ Jesus, And my body to the Earth to be buried.

William Harvey 1578-1657, *Last Will and Testament*

of Physik doe whatsoever, Imprimis
soma and disposition
hereunto annexed the lining
Commonly knowne under hands
I should be permitted to enjoy
by any Writing or Writings sealed
unfastened magnitude such shall be
in the presence of two declare limit
Laid out the momentary
Mannors and Lands Appointed
my Linnen my Loving sister Daniel
to the poore of Christ Hospitall the sonne
the blood with my hand and seale
all the presses my blew satten
Imbroydered Cushin my little
silver Instruments of Surgery

Lungs

Wings flutter, pocked with alveoli
intuiting a butterfly determined.

I learned late in life that I was breathing
backward; with each intake my diaphragm
constricting, a shrinking box against light
and sky. I must concentrate intention
on the chamber and thread of breath, feel
the undertow of air against exposed lips.

An inhale should widen cavities. Pressure
vacuum accompanies metered thrum as
each bronchioles offers unobstructed
navigation from element to blood.

An exhale compresses membranes,
purges desolation, as the lungs redden.

The Anatomist

To render mundane in fugue, to minister an embrace.

To harness and indicate, with mark, with persistence of gaze.

To survey a corpse in mindfulness, an acquaintance.

To tract and estimate the magnitude of evidence.

The quantified alignment, extension sanctified, proportions appropriated.

To flourish and frame.

To identify and devise, wrench to branch.

Testimony

to William Harvey

Did you accompany the
hunters, straddle one firm
belly before hurtling
forward? Did you arrive in
time to hear the interrupted
beat? You cannot explain
the need to open a gently
quivering body, to hold
a heart as it slows
to stillness. What faith
that God would create
a fisted muscle to mimic
your own. Who among
those riders feared such
desperate proof?
Whose stained arrow
retreated beneath your blade,
as you revealed each new
corporal witness again
and again?

Bias

When the ventricle is full, the heart raises itself, forthwith tenses all its fibres, contracts the ventricles, and gives a beat.

William Harvey, *Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals*, 1628

likewise the valves as the lunate
 to crescent the hand against body
 against obstruction the quick and rapid
 not to present, to force

an impediment, the sign obstruct to bias, to consider
 tender and delicate structure
 one could argue each ventricle valve holds a bias
 of closure in degree turns back again

towards gesture the campaign of the heart
 insist the semilunar valve in triplicate
 to ambush in the extrusion of blood
 the face of the moon not a holding in

a movement, progression an angle a seal
 in closed circuitry in course, an insistence

“The veins communicate very freely with one another”

after William Harvey

1.

bodies sun and give up rain
fibers care, so far the circular

vessels, each study, all speak of
impediment, of stated thickness

the two lamina, the two kinds
the domesticated cavities

*I also recalled the elegant
the carefully contrived*

the sea a lightening
a likeness to the imperfect

bias, the pulse of lung
continuous from assertion

in immensity, systol: suspect
dilation, alone and considered

2.

office of the heart's movement

being the concept *to seeing*

I first addressed my mind

proficiency of function

to note, through cooling,

equal and rapid, *the starting point*

back, it is freed, a little below;

ligature, to compress, reserve

through distension, to provenance:

with swelling, fact or convey

but for the wink of an eye

or the length of a lightning

to all blood, to the margin

or at least become swollen to bursting

The Left-over Heart

If, on the other hand, the heart has been chilled or affected by some serious fault, then the whole animal must suffer destruction because its chief organ does so.

William Harvey, *Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals*, 1628

The transplant does not allow complete removal; find the left atrium, angled, retained. The heart requires a base: the memory of a previous rhythm carried forward, resonance of pulse and flutter. As if foundation emanates from above, as if a domed gallery would welcome in equal encounter. The worn muscle survives, vestige of an internal passage. A provenance scaffolded to progress, as if mechanical allegories could beat the canto home. This small corner understands enrichment, has housed the compounded proportions.

The Seventh Nerve

The nerve to open; the vulnerable
face. When the seventh nerve fails
the face falls lax, a motionless manifest.
There is an excess of fibers here
extended towards response and memory,
nerves paired against a slackening bias.
An excess of bodies contained, fashion
and partition of each fragmented sense.
Our souls prevail, sequenced, unique
as habit, the conventional shiver
carried, not in time but courage,
not a conduit but proof. The human
anima verified, housed in dermis.
We witness the absent body unsecured.

For It Is Clear Enough

from William Harvey's *The First Anatomical Essay to Jean Riolan on the Circulation of the Blood*

1.

nay, rather, by filling up

and pathological work

written and, if one looks

against so violent flux and reflux

the physiological aspect and cools it

by the same specious argument

what compresses is derived

of cachetic bodies of in time be disrupted

but stagnates unaltered expels

so benumbe and stiff

to believe the extent as it throws light

to which the inner parts are corrupted

2.

for the concept of a circuit of showing cadavers
 an inflammation or a furuncle an object

from the branches percolates of the portal vein
 continuously and uninterruptedly
 an alternate or the conversion unceasing

to remain there from the natural form
 determining me to indite
 and commit to writing

3.

but our friend has adduced these things

for it is clear enough the protective warmth

flows lacerating movement ligatures, and apparatus of all sorts

and drive at each pulsation

each beat one drop not originated

from sensation but drive

distend the vessels of the hand

in the very booklet within the hour it beats

two thousand times for the whole of the inflowing

for there is no knowledge cooled and heat-

tempered blood to confine to put on record

for this reason the subject itself and expels it

To Rend

after Odoardo Fialetti, 1573-1638, *Tabulae Anatomicae XVI*

He balances between vigor and grace: the curve
of his back a gentle lounge, a bent knee set
upon stone, one arm raised and resting, cradling
his head, obstructing his face from our view.

We see only the rending of skin, bloodless
drapery as he settles in to spectacle.

His body the object of observation: rib
and muscle tenderly unveiled, the torso exposed,
labeled, and lettered against the unnoticed key.

We imagine the unseen face endearing,
playful eyes gazing lightly to the side.

On another page we would find an explanation.

In the distance tiny sailboats sweep slowly across
the river, an island church rising from the banks.

Larynx

to Hieronymus Fabricius, 1537-1619

What of cartilaged expression
do you understand? What did you

see in the hued pitch beneath
a silent tongue? In descent we find

tone and range, a lengthened voice.
We speak from the bottom out.

You will not be remembered
for this. Each vocal organ

a home to prosody, a whale song
intoned in each pierced throat.

What else did you find when you
turned away from the infant heart?

What else did you see
in the dilation of an error?

Heart-strings

The usefulness of the nerves, then, would lie in conveying the faculty of sensation and motion from its source to the several parts; that of the arteries is to maintain the natural heat and nourish the psychic *pneuma*.

Noga Arikha, *Passions and Tempers*

In order to sustain, or perhaps like
 gut string, a fiber, a hair; strict, removed
 to dry, taut into quiver then shudder
 of breath and movement. In order to comfort,
 to sweep against and register, a buttress
 against the constant hammer. The torso
 caged, a wire webbed from rib to pelvis,
 coccyx to breastplate, a latticework frame.
 Or perhaps a stamp, impression not of breath
 but rhythm, not of air and blood against
 muscle, but a nerve or tendon tripped, quaking
 the fist of obscure flesh in progress of time.
 To fasten the heart in place within a recess,
 in order to carry and preserve.

Expect Immensity

The mind sees and continues to see objects, while the spirit
finds the nest of immensity in an object.

Gaston Bachelard *The Poetics of Space*

it was simply that he had begun
to appear as one brought back
as the heart diminishes
each encircling
and opening sustained after the time of Hippocrates
the standards determined set by pressure
by release unsecured, they open upon each
who was none who invented the form
then impact then coercion because to understand
duress he proved to himself
who was who fashioned that none thought
and protected the current
it returns to feel and see that human
but they did not know why

The heart is a hollow muscle

III. Suite: variations

The walls of my bedroom are covered with cutouts.

I still don't know what I'll do with them.

Henri Matisse

1. Le Cirque

I would wait up each night until my eyes
adjusted to the dark, until I memorized

who hung where. Each night fantastical
bodies to landscape, always the chance

they would get away from me. I never
knew who would survive the night.

Some evenings my favorites would hang far
across the house, gathering in the brick

walled dining room, but I was much too
frightened to visit them in the dark.

Once grandma put you in bed you stayed in bed,
even if the bunny was going to eat you.

2. Mental Map

Indicate on slated paper: the uncharacteristically tall red maple of boundaries demonstrates another five miles and the purple house a shade lighter; turn left; and these, not to render scale, to dead-end when the pencil reaches the end of the page; a bookstore, the world not small but only relevant and built to flux, a legend of symbols, to follow; a small red modern facing west; and when the weather, the street, a view, a skyline, makes brick bright

3. Jazz: *The Swimmer in the Aquarium*

I went. I found. It was

a basement. *Each outcome*
a rendition of the known.

When the weather. I view.

A lack of windows.

Wool white, partition.

I appear defiance.

The cartographer's job

ever to outline

an explanation, lay movement through.

Logical space a conviction.

Would it be what I could.

To sort. Faint and bitter.

I strict. I still claim.

The eyesore of calculated space.

To only deserve. I cut. I consist.

I house the frame.

The ended gravel loom.

In tintype a suburb, simply belief.

4. Jazz: The Sword Swallower

A home in images; abstraction on bleached white
pedestals. The marble silhouettes endless and frightening

to choose a place a pillow. O brother, did you thwart me?
To prefer was critical; no known criteria to magic the evil

three-eared carnivorous bunny and to my defense a hero-
horse. Place me off page and carriage me purple;

the little friend a black and white comfort nights
when I wrong roomed. The bunny made no sense:

all white no mouth jet black eyes a horn three awkward
squared off ears straight up out of his head only the neck

up to blue and pink graceless in squares and sharp his ears and I would know
his body deformed a headless hunter noiselessly to float a child.

5. Cartography

It is essential to feel located, to register your own position in the world. On a map we desire to situate ourselves relationally to the physical at each line, in every condensation. We hope that space is not diminished in this compression, that the flattening earth does not leave us unmoored but instead proves an unobstructed passage.

6. Jazz: The destiny

Was there really no luck?

Did I have to go alone?

Why would you refuse payment?

What did you know of architecture?

Of color block and fairy tales?

Would I wait each night?

How did you map the fragility of this collapsing space?

When did you reverse a negative angle? The turn of light?

Was I lucky in sleep?

Did you spend the difference?

Did you remember the first arrival? Your own sleepless night and awe?

Were we not always in motion?

Was it a thin nightgown? Or simply the bodies aged frailty?

Did I cross six lanes?

Was the landing unaccompanied?

Was it a shifted den? And flown?

7. Jazz: The Knife Thrower

I never know if I was lucky. If only I could sleep beneath the frame of navy and black leaves, the green striped garden with two women dancing, one sheer blue and facing front, the other a deep rose in profile. Or the woman in pink would rise like smoke from between the branches. I never knew if I was too frightened or if it was simply an obligation of walls. Clearly more dangerous, though now I can't remember exactly how. Spend the weekend in the kitchen, yelling. I will go on alone. The blindness will happen instantaneously. The legend drawn from associated symbols, experience of approach and wayfinder to companion.

**8. Jazz: *The Nightmare of the White Elephant*
or *The Arrival of an Unaccompanied Minor***

To mark the distance between
repositioning bodies and the unsecured
minor. The first to sit, having
defined invidious, quickly
disappear. A record attendant
and thin white hair to carry her,
to organize a connection and vanish
between legs. A crowd was an elderly
woman. A plane to flight landscape.
The problem of scale never
in organized exits, domestic
at each turn, preferred
to nowhere. To reach the last
gate, to agent and tell a hand.

9. Jazz: *The Horse, the Horsewoman, and the Clown*

And so I started walking. The strangest part of this story is not the forgetting. To guard, to distract, to leave. Not a single person. Held back. And this was never told. *Neither of them have any memory of it, but they are so very unreliable.* A new tragedy. I never thought about it very much. Just bide the time, move on. Later, I will pocket the color-coded configuration at simple angles and straight lines, to hear the moment of import and exhibit. We didn't talk much, and I never mentioned reading. The incomprehensibility of tunnel and train.

IV.

Take a point an inch and a half below and three-quarters of an inch internal to the left nipple—that is, about three and a half inches to the left of the median line of the body. This represents the apex of the heart.

Gray's Anatomy

Like Icarus, To Face and Sun

here is a fear of flight,
fear of a body's
slow disintegration;

you must see my face and now
you know: to reach is a hardening,
the heart is a hollow muscle

here my hand leading you
astray, stutter of lost
diseases, fear of melting

wax and bones stripped
bare; turn your face skyward
now, to the sun, sufferance

of turning apart, to taper
pirouette and atrophy, another nerve

Without Sanctuary

New York City Historical Society and Hayden Planetarium, Spring 2000

Grandmother led me from one hanging body
to the next: here a man burnt beyond

flesh and we cannot turn away; here
the moon in measured perspective

to one man's heart. We huddle, shoulder
pressed to stranger shoulder, silent

as fear and eyes hardened, necks craned
to read each lettered joy, to recognize

a jaw set in pride, the familiarity of a
neck snapped against gravity, heads tilted

in careful listening, turning aside, hands
bound. In Oxford, Georgia he hangs from

a lamppost, supplicant, eyes raised in search
of light. In Fort Lauderdale the young girls

in starched white party dresses clasp their
hands in rows behind him, lift their radiant gaze

and lean in to their fathers' Sunday best.
Newbern, Tennessee has two dancing

from a single line; one man almost rests

his head against the other's shoulder, arms

linked just before an intimate embrace.

I wonder why it is always the children

who smile, why these postcards are addressed
to women. Marion, Indiana, like a lover; someone

has saved a lock of his hair. We step outside, make
our way slowly across the street. Grandmother pauses

on a park bench before moving in to a more
natural history. Entering from the east we are

bathed in glass and urgent rapture, the need
to walk the length of light and time. We rise

slowly, comparative measure: star to moon, hand
to eye, a grain of salt, a human egg, an atom, water.

Descending in spirals, each step forms another galaxy,
another bulge and quasar; each new generation

of stars measured in redshift as we witness
this expansion. She shuffles forward, 50 million years,

leans against me, Acasta Gneiss brightens, draws
me towards the rail, dark matter, a galaxy clusters,

Andromeda. Gravity a lens to multiply and distort.
Diamond dust, trilobite, serrated tooth futile for

65 million years. This temporal ruler imprecise.
Humanity contained in a single human hair.

Grandmother insists we collect each card,
holographic births we can carry away; angle

your wrist to the left, a nebulae spins, turn
to the right, two galaxies collide. We need

proof. The year my grandmother was born
Laura Nelson swayed gently in the wind, arms

unbound, not reaching for her son.
She asks me to hold that crude jubilation

clenched between my teeth as one step
spirals time, shadows the remnants, supernova.

The Accuracy of String and Measure

as Jan Wandelaar 1690-1759

The dissected body brought back
to life, the fixedness of each

line and frame. I do not simply
carve this record of inconstant

flesh, the muscled lines
a permanent hollow with which

to impress against omission.
Each muscle must indicate

the motion of the body ensouled
amid landscaped benefit, not

forfeited of bearings. Instead
a correspondence instituted again

in this accustomed enclosure,
the compulsory cosmos of Earth

and carnality. The body
not as flayed but as it functions.

What She Held: What He Has Already Broken:

Because the holding on

A mask, clay; a marionette;

3 plates, blue, porcelain;

is me wanting more.

heated glass, to cup

This is not a house *the bleeding of my labor.*

of concentration.

The butt of my grandfather's rifle, antique, cherry,

Here, where your hand

without asking; tightened. My waist;

the canary. my jaw. A helmet,

What other warning did you expect?

There are rules. strap broken.

Desolate, every error.

Lexicon in overabundance, the waste

of too much outrage.

Pressed flat souvenir

penny, Reno, *But you knew.*

found at a truck stop in Louisiana;

Now the driving away.

fire; bicycle pump. The accident. The fleshy

puckering *The ability to flirt.*

scar climbing my thigh. *The desire to run.*

And you run. *Yes, of course.*

Wasps nest from the porch

overhang, most delicate gift. *Yes, of course.*

How we planned the garden, here, and each

time, next year. *The soil.*

That which would feed us;

How I wept into the bleeding.

that old scrap of towel, wrapped

into comfort, soaking;

Because I refuse. *Kaddish cup, blue, porcelain.*

Crooked leg of the coffee table.

A small burn and tear in

every fitted sheet.

Because this is not a hoarding.

What You Find in the Palm of Her Hand

A fear of grass.
A fear of birds.
A fear of silence
and the color blue.
Fear of caulk because
of suffocation. Of paper
and folding in half,
of burning or being
slowly worn away.
A fear of steamships
taking everything and all
the pink of blood and
water. Fear of bracelets
weighing her down,
of cut grass again
and again and still
growing. Of hairs pulled out
one by one, white shirts,
of losing each thing. A fear
of children laughing,
never having enough and
the chalk washing away
each time it rains.

Things Found in Her Stomach

the bones of horses

a blue egg speckled and broken

a chalked palm

each wing banded

the roots of a lost dogwood

a rubbing stone, worn

the first lotus blooming too close to this bank

The Anatomy Coloring Book

I mouth these words underwater,
 refrain of silence; tone: posthumous;
 tense: present. What is
 the situation of not a death?
 Signal flags sun-bleached white lying
 limp as the sea holds its breath,
 slips over the edge. Tell me again
 how we danced, the island, white-washed
 walls, the weight of so much water.
 And I will say this to no one:
 I called and you would not come;
 you knew and did nothing.

The translucent sheets of over-beaten
 abaca hang in clipped rows, a refrain
 slick hide of paper puckered
 and brittle to touch, useless.
 This is what happens when we
 cure the fleshless body.

≈ ≈ ≈

Garden of plastic birds
 hidden beneath floorboards;
 I watered everyday, waited for flight.
 There, there, their wired feet
 coiled in the earth like roots
 we do not say we do not see.
 Stairs a silent passage

no more noticed than
the girl folded on a top
shelf or perched on a rooftop,
swinging from low hanging
branches of petal
rain each Spring
to flood the street
to current her away.

≈ ≈ ≈

In that first hour of blindness
she was again a child, rocking
herself in the dark, the expanse
of a stranger bed.

≈ ≈ ≈

There on the stairs I am counting again: heat rising,
a fire and pull. We stand silent as the angular concealment
tucked under stairs lifts open, draws us in. I am counting
each step, finding the center exposure of passage.
But later my body will fold neatly onto shelves, stow
beneath a sink, pour a basin before banishment and loosening grip.

≈ ≈ ≈

You cannot teach man his own mechanics. It was never that I
needed to see the structure of muscle and bone, but to hold these pages
and to contain the science of distinction through label, the ability to lay bare.

Evenings break the humidity and locusts silent wings, their sloughed outlines litter windowsills, vanish beneath a child's clumsy touch. In this settling light I unfurl my legs, climb down from the shelf. I steal stairs, clutch the rail, and slide over each rounded edge. Windowed doors risk exposure even in darkness. I feel for the soft laminate cover, solid block of bleached cellulose weighing me down. Beneath the dark curves of the piano body, spiraled legs chip and fade. Spine, uncracked, resting between my thighs, falling open each night to the same blank page. I have grown repetitive. My fingers trace reverence, edge a cleaner silence: beneath this expanse each muscle is named in sharp relief, black and white conceit of font, the illusion of a single body prized to page. I hold my breath, find center, press hard.

≈ ≈ ≈

I remember the sweep of a single page, one line perfectly centered, "This page intentionally left blank."

I will tell you again of the one who danced in grief, how each penciled letter traces a step, folds the body.

I believe in syntax, the articulation of bones, our extremities suppressed.

Notes

Redbird refers to certain models of New York Subway trains, running on the 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 lines from 1959-2003. Starting in 2001 many retired cars were sunk throughout the Mid-Atlantic to create artificial reefs.

William Harvey, 1 April 1578 – 3 June 1657, was an English anatomist and physician who, through his dissection and study of humans and other mammals, correctly identified and explained the heart as a pumping muscle and the circulatory system as a closed circuit within which the blood moves in a steady pattern, always in the same direction.

Hieronymus Fabricius, 1537-1619, was an Italian anatomist. He primarily studied the formation of the fetus, though he also made important discoveries regarding the esophagus and larynx. Frabricius discovered the venous valves in veins, although he did not understand their function. He was one of William Harvey's professors.

"The Nest in an Object" contains found text adapted from William Harvey's "Last Will and Testament."

"Bias," "The veins communicate very freely with one another," and "Expect Immensity" contain found text adapted from William Harvey's *Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals*. The title "The veins communicate very freely with one another" is a quote from *Gray's Anatomy*.

"Without Sanctuary" is the title of a collection of American lynching photographs and postcards, collected and published by James Allen.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Aviva Englander Cristy

Place of Birth: Washington, DC

Education

B.A. University of Maryland Baltimore County, Dec 1997
Major: Modern Languages and Linguistics, Spanish

M.F.A. in Poetry George Mason University, May 2001

M.A. in Comparative Literature, University of Wisconsin, May 2006

Dissertation Title: The Heart is a Hollow Muscle

Publications

Poetry Collection:

The Interior Structure, chapbook, dancing girl press, 2013

Individual Poems:

“To Give Leave” *Salt Hill Journal* Issue 33, 2014

“Testimony” *[Slippage]* Issue 2, 2014

“Excerpts from the Murray Universalist Newsletter,” *Clockwise Cat*
<http://clockwisecat.blogspot.com> September, 2014

“A beautiful,” “A Stake,” “Compress Neglect,” “Denoting the Two,” and “locked box brass” *Counterexample Poetics* <http://www.counterexamplepoetics.com>
February 2014

“What She Held: What He Has Already Broken,” “What You Find in the Palm of Her Hand” *In Parentheses* Volume 2.2, October 2013

“The Agency of Weather,” “Taxidermy” *Cease, Cows* <http://ceasecows.com>
September 18, 2013

“Want for Absence” *Painted Bride Quarterly* Issue 88 July 2013/Print Annual 7

“Things Found in Her Stomach” in a limited edition broadside, *Eat Local :: Read Local* April 2013

“Without Sanctuary” *Arsenic Lobster Poetry Journal*
<http://arseniclobster.magere.com> Issue 31, Spring 2013

“The Measure of Vessel and Nerve” *Best New Poets 2012* Ed. Matthew Dickman

“Accuracy of String and Measure” *The Spoon River Poetry Review* Volume 37.2, December 2012

“Larynx,” “The Anatomist,” “Collapsible Structure, Distracted” *Prick of the Spindle* Volume 6.4, December 2012

“Poet as Anatomist” *Offshore Poetry* www.expressmilwaukee.com October 23, 2012

“What She Never Owned,” “The Simple Fact of Waking” *Prime Number Magazine* www.primenumbermagazine.com Issue 29, October 2012

“Bias,” “And it happens to all blood,” “The Articulations,” “The Threshold of the Body,” “For It Is Clear Enough,” “A Song In Secret” *BlazeVOX* Winter 2011

“Male Muscle-man and Dutch Rhinoceros” *The Hollins Critic* Volume 48.3, June 2011

“Slight Pressure” *So to Speak: a feminist journal of language and art* Spring 2011

“His Censure More Deserving” *The Conversation Papers*
<http://conversationpoetry.co.uk/magazines/conversation-magazine> Volume 1.2, May 2011

“With the Hand of a Cartographer” *decomp magazine*
www.decompmagazine.com February 2011

“Drowned” *The Spoon River Poetry Review* Volume 35.2, 2010

“Last Aubade” *Chiron Review* Issue 90, Spring 2010

“Heart-strings” *Offshore Poetry* www.expressmilwaukee.com April 4, 2010

“Topography of Coincidence in a Bare Tree,” “Landmarked,” “Molted Glory” *Indefinite Space* 2010

“They Persisted,” “Lamented Amalgam” *Presca* 11:2010

“Bottomless Lakes” *Manorborn* 7:1, 2009

“Daphne’s Crown,” “How to claim the pathetic fallacy” *Harriet & Leone, Cedar Issue* <http://harrietandleone.net/work/cedar/work.html> New Editor introduction. Winter 2007

“When Rose Blossoms” *Spout Press* 25:2005

“Nice Guys Finish” *://English Matters Issue 5*. A hypertext poem composed in Storyspace and adapted by Emily Lu. <http://englishmatters.gmu.edu> Spring 2002

“The World Still,” “The box for ‘The World Still’” *96 Inc* 12:21, 2002

“The first lesson in listening to jazz” *The Café Review* 13:48, 2002

“Learning to Count” *Chance* 2002:16

“Balance,” “Risking Silence,” “The Bone Folder,” “Not Enough Light,” “The Expected Tragedies” *In Your Ear* 2001 www.dcpoetry.com

Reprints:

“Balance” reprinted 3QuarksDaily www.3quarksdaily.blogspot.com July 9, 2008

Articles and Reviews:

“God’s Fear: Two Cuban Poets.” Review of *El Libro Roto* by Soleida Ríos and *Los Cursos Imantados* by Caridad Atencio. *So to Speak: a feminist journal of language and art* 10(2): 112-115. Fall 2001.

“Let It Come As It Will: an illness in the family.” *Voices: The art and science of psychotherapy* 33 (4): 14-19. 1998.

Translations:

“The Last Prayer For The Eyes of The Traitor” Translation of “Último Rezo Para Los Ojos Del Traidor” by Soleida Ríos. *So to Speak: a feminist journal of language and art* 10:2. Fall 2001. (Spanish to English)

“A Gust Disperses The Limits of Home” Translation of “Un Soplo Dispersa Los Limites del Hogar” by Soleida Ríos, with “The Last Prayer for the Eyes of the Traitor,” reprinted. *Electronic Poetry Center* <http://epc.buffalo.edu> 2001. (Spanish to English)

Conferences and Presentations

“Finding Creative Spaces in Online Classrooms” Conference on College Composition and Communication Annual Conference, March 20, 2014

Scholar’s Afternoon panel discussion, “Poetry in Milwaukee” Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee, WI, October 27, 2013

“Lorca’s *Poet in New York*: Imagination and the five senses” Invited Guest Lecturer English 616: Advanced Workshop in Poetry, Oct 18, 2011

“Writing Beginnings to Begin Writing” Composition Forum University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Milwaukee, WI. May 2, 2009

“Re-invisioning Revision” Poster presentation with Caryl Pagel. First-Year Composition Graduate Student Conference presented by Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Milwaukee, WI. December 1, 2008

“*Whose Where am I? Cognitive Mapping through the Heart and the House in William H. Gass and Etel Adnan*” University of Wisconsin GSA Conference: Texts, Translations, and Traditions. Madison, WI. April 29, 2006

“Hypertext Poetry: Theory and Possibilities” Invited presenter at *Primer Encuentro Internacional de Poesia del Lenguaje* for the inauguration of the Casa de Letras in Havana, Cuba. January, 2001

Fellowships and Awards

Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship, Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2013-2014

Finalist, 2013 *Crab Orchard* Series in Poetry Open Competition

Finalist, 2013 *Diagram* Chapbook Contest

First Year Student Success Award, Student Success Center, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2012

Full Fellowship, 2012 New York State Summer Writers Institute, Skidmore College

Finalist, 2012 *Crab Orchard* Series in Poetry First Book Award

Best New Poets 2012, “The Measure of Vessel and Nerve”

Honorable Mention, *Spoon River Poetry Review* 2012 Editor's Prize, "The Accuracy of String and Measure"

James A. Sappenfield Fellowship, Summer Research Fellowship, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2012

Academy of American Poets Prize/Ryan Poetry Prize, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2011

Finalist, Ruskin Art Club Poetry Award 2010

Finalist, *Spoon River Poetry Review* 2010 Editor's Prize, "Drowned"

Finalist, *So To Speak* 2010 Editor's Prize, "Slight Pressure"

Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship, Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2009-2010

University Travel Grant, SAC, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Spring 2010

Chancellor's Graduate Award Fellowship, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2008-2009

Artist Grant, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT June 2008 (declined)

University Graduate Fellowship, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 2005-2006

Fellowship, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT November 2001

Graduate Fellowship, Department of English, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 1999-2001

Teaching

Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, 2008-Present

English 101: First Year English Composition (multiple semesters)

English 102: College Research and Writing (multiple semesters)

English 215: Introduction to English Studies (Fall 2011)

English 233: Introduction to Creative Writing (multiple semesters)

English 233: Introduction to Creative Writing, Online (multiple semesters)

English 236: Topics in Creative Writing: Short Forms in fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and drama (Fall 2010)

English 243: Introduction to Literature by Women: Coming of Age (Spring 2014)

Guest Speaker, English 416: Intermediate Workshop in Poetry (Spring 2010)

Teaching Assistant, English 819, Visiting Writers (Spring 2010)
Teaching Assistant, English 999, Graduate Readings Seminar (Summer 2010)

Instructor, Woodland Pattern Book Center, Milwaukee, WI, 2009-present

PoetryCamp, The Talent Search Program and The Urban Youth Literary Arts Program (2010-present)

Poetry and Bookmaking, Arts at Large, Story School Elementary, (May 2013)

Writing My Story, Community Learning Center Programs, (January 2014)

Voice and Tone, Community Learning Center Program, (April 2013)

Activism and Writing, Community Learning Center Program, (July 2011)

“The Poetic Line,” Adult Writing Workshop (September 18, 2011)

Creativity and Aging in America, NEA grant program (Summer 2009)

Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee, WI

Creative Writing Workshop, PEARLS for Teen Girls, Inc, (October 2013)

Lecturer, University of Wisconsin-Washington County, West Bend, WI, 2012

English 102: College Research and Writing, Extension Program (Spring 2012)

Lecturer, Kaplan University, Milwaukee, WI, 2010-2012

Composition I: Expository Writing, hybrid (multiple semesters)

Composition II: Research and College Writing, hybrid (multiple semesters)

Humanities 300: Arts & Humanities: Twentieth Century and Beyond, hybrid (Fall 2011)

Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, 2006-2007

Spanish 101, Introduction to Spanish I (Fall 2006, Spring 2007)

Spanish 102, Introduction to Spanish II (Fall 2007)

Department and Professional Service

First Year Composition Mentor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2014

Discussion Facilitator, Common Reading Experience, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2012 and 2013

Preliminary Judge, *cream city review* Poetry Contest, 2012 and 2013

Graduate Student Mentorship, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2009-2013

Judge, Virginia Burke Writing Contest, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2010 and 2012

Elected Graduate Representative, Undergraduate Policy Committee, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2010-2012

President, Creative Writing Graduate Student Organization, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2010-2011. Vice-President, 2009-2010

Elected Graduate Representative, Graduate Policy Committee, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2009-2010

Assistant Coordinator, Visiting Writers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2010

Preliminary Judge, 2000 and 2001 Greg Grummer Poetry Award, *Phoebe: a journal of literary arts*

Readings

Eat Local :: Read Local, Trocadero Restaurant, Milwaukee, WI. April 1, 2013

United We Read, Milwaukee WI. March 14, 2013

Emerging Writer Series, Boswell Books, Milwaukee WI. Feb 9, 2013

United We Read, Boswell Books, Milwaukee, WI. Jan 28. 2011

“Creativity and Aging,” Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, WI. July 18, 2009

Introducing New Writers, United We Read, Milwaukee, WI. Sept 18, 2008

In Your Ear: Poetry Series, DC Arts Center, Washington, DC. March 18, 2001

Publishing Experience

Poetry Editor, *cream city review*, Fall 2011-Spring 2013
Assistant Editor 2009-2011

Poetry Editor, *Harriet & Leone*, online journal, 2007-2010

Editor and Curator, *Eat Local :: Read Local*, Wisconsin Community Poetry Initiative, 2009 and 2011

Editor, educational and resource publications, Patient Advocate Foundation, 2004-2006

Editor-in-Chief and Assistant Poetry Editor, *Phoebe: a journal of literary arts*, 1999-2001