

# The Yellow Paper

4



# The Yellow Paper

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5  
How to Take Your Leave: an editorial  
Laura Haynes

10  
Running  
Kelcey Flaherty

14  
Janey  
Esther Draycott

19  
Dyke Research: Incomplete Index  
Laura Guy

31  
Migrating Spores (1)  
Gianni Esporas

33  
Opus  
Alice Hill-Woods

36  
Another Horsedreamer's Blues  
Michael Pedersen

39  
Curls and other stories  
Tawnya Selene Renelle

47  
Her Mother's Daughter  
Iona Marshall

52  
With a tendency towards aftermatter  
Theo Hynan-Ratcliffe

60  
What a Lovely Flower Our Bones Make  
Emily Megan Foster

67  
In and out and/or in and out  
María Garay Arriba

71  
The Orange Household  
Aurelie Chan Hon Sen

79  
Migrating Spores (2)  
Gianni Esporas

85  
Two beaches  
Kate Timney

91  
Siting/Citing the Claypits  
Maria Howard

95  
Introduction (to CAConrad)  
Sebastian Taylor

98  
Landscape  
CAConrad

101  
French Exit  
Silas Lehane

105  
Cavalli shit from a dead aunt  
Emma Aars

## How to Take Your Leave: an editorial Laura Haynes

This time is time to plant bulbs. Do it now, and in a short time you will have a variegated garden. ‘The taste for endless day is first and foremost a taste,’ writes Alice Hill-Woods in *Opus* (p 5). ‘let’s get this / garden planted / give our fruit / away to one / another,’ CAConrad prompts (p 99). ‘Conversation can’t be taught. But a social process of unknowing yourself, in company, can be acknowledged,’<sup>1</sup> we learn. After reading Kathy Acker’s *New York City in 1979*, Esther Draycott notes how Janey hopes for ‘horrible disaster’ as she ‘desperately want[s] to see that new thing that is going to happen this year.’<sup>2</sup> ‘The lowest rib in the human cage is full of static,’ writes Emily Megan Foster in *Mesosternum* (p 61). ‘We are here / We are here / We are here / We are here,’ she calls. A scuba-diver ‘jumps from the rim’ of María Garay Arriba’s green tea and, in one scenario, ceases to ‘remember what was before this wetscape’ (p 67).

‘After dinner K shows me upstairs,’ records Laura Guy in *Dyke Research: Incomplete Index*. ‘The first floor landing has a door that opens onto a narrow space. An empty closet but she tells me to look up and there’s a ladder that pulls down. What treasures await? She turns on the light from below. In an otherwise empty room, more patterned carpet, moths.’ (p 21)

‘They seemed happy [...] to have this house to work on together,’ reports Kate Timney (p 85).

1 Kate Briggs and Laura Haynes (eds.), ‘A Social Process of Unknowing Yourself in Real Time’: *Work on Conversation*, (UK: The Yellow Paper Press, 2023), p 13

2 Kathy Acker, *New York City in 1979*, (London: Penguin Classics, 2022), p 15

It's the fifth anniversary of the Art Writing programme and we have gratefully celebrated this with another year of good writing, variegated thinking, and brilliant conversation. Kate Briggs concluded her time with Art Writing as the School of Fine Art's inaugural Practitioner in Residence with a Friday Event lecture and the launch of 'A Social Process of Unknowing Yourself in Real Time': *Work on Conversation*, published alongside this fourth edition of *The Yellow Paper*. In autumn 2022, we presented the second part of *Biographical Fictioning*, our Open Studio project, this time focussing on *The Lyric*, and, stemming from this, we are delighted to publish an anthology of new writing, *This is not a biography\**, edited by Alice Hill-Woods, Kate Timney and myself. For *The Lyric* we were joined by artists and writers including Claire-Louise Bennett, Nicky Coutts, Laurence Figgis, Michael Pedersen, Margaret Salmon, and Susannah Thompson. Thanks to an incredible Friday Event lecture by Anthony Reed considering post-lyric as racialised intervention, together we spent two days querying how poetry might live in a space between subjects.<sup>3</sup> Looking to the forms of attachment, homage and preservation present in the impulse or desire of writing with or about others, we asked how profound knowing might require the affective, creative, and vernacular dimension of the lyric. How is it that poetry continues to document an event that is still ongoing? 'What did you think would happen?'<sup>4</sup> Claire-Louise Bennett asks in 'A Formal Feeling, Inside the world of Louise Bourgeois', an essay documenting the moment of encounter with Bourgeois' major retrospective *The Woven Child*, exhibited at the Hayward Gallery, London (9 February – 15 May 2022). Published in *Harper's Magazine* and read at the autumn *Biographical Fictioning* event, Bennett continues:

That the artwork would punch you in the stomach and make you cry there and then? Cry and feel important for crying, cry and feel better for having cried. And then

leave. Cry and leave. Cry and leave and sit somewhere outside on the South Bank in the sunshine and text someone and tell them you had been and you had cried and now you were sitting on the South Bank in the sunshine and would they like to come and meet you and perhaps get a beer in the sunshine? Or else don't cry. Only stand there for ages feeling profoundly sorrowful and impressively stoical. Stand your ground for ages and then leave. Feeling sophisticated and erotic and elevated because of how long you stood without budging.

To document an event that is still ongoing, affect takes control. In workshops, in tutorials, in new work, the graduate writers collected here speak of atemporality, of opacity, of reading, of the play of (auto)biographical, ancestral, cultural masks, of formation, of unsaying, of new ways of conceiving the everyday. We speak in the moment of Kate Briggs' attention to the site of conversation in an art school. On a sitewriting fieldtrip with artist and writer Maria Howard where students visited the Hamiltonhill Claypits, alongside the Glasgow branch of the Forth and Clyde Canal, to cultivate shared somatic knowledge of material and site, together they 'map the bank in inconsistent lines,' record the 'khaki canal stressed with reflections / solar panels tilt to white.' And others: graduate Sarah Long was the recipient of the John Calcutt Prize for Critical Writing and in residence at *MAP* magazine, producing new writing, 'The Sound of My Voice Will Haunt You: A Call to Gossip' and 'I Had a Dream Last Night: Politics and Repetition', in February 2023. In April we invited Brian Dillon to Glasgow School of Art as part of the launch of *Affinities*, published by Fitzcarraldo Editions, and hosted Daniela Cascella at Good Press for the Glasgow launch of *Chimeras* (Sublunary Editions) and *Nothing as We Need It* (Punctum Books). We presented *Soft Shell* again at The Poetry Club and interim exhibition, *Boys with Books*, at French Street, Glasgow, and were thrilled to be joined by CAConrad who delivered a full length reading of *The Book of Frank*, followed by an in-conversation with Mason Leaver-Yap. This event launched nine international readings in celebration of the book's 30th

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Reed, *Freedom Time: The Poetics and Politics of Black Experimental Writing*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), p 6

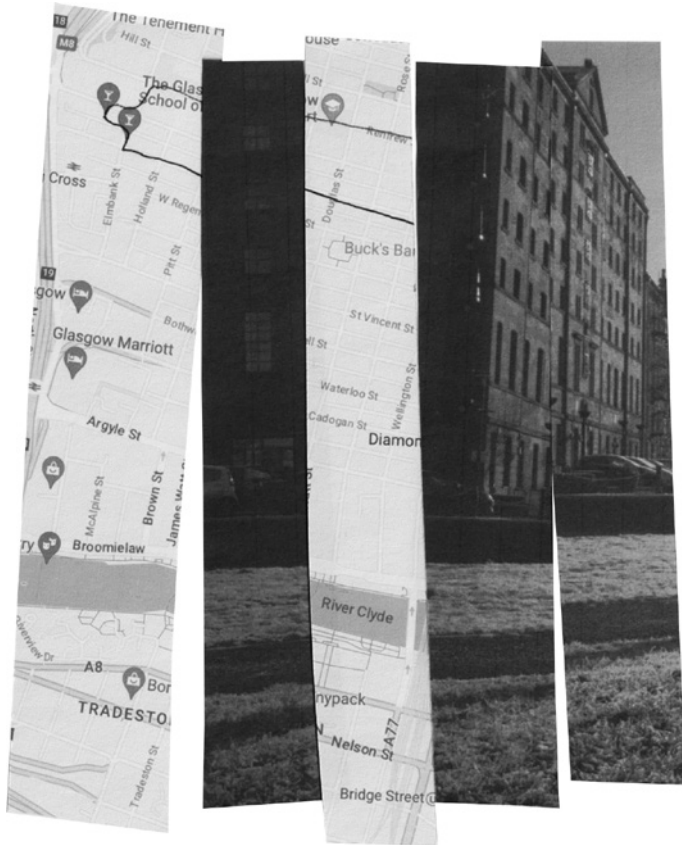
<sup>4</sup> Claire-Louise Bennett. 'A Formal Feeling, Inside the world of Louise Bourgeois', *Harper's Magazine*, October 21, 2022. <https://harpers.org/2022/09/louise-bourgeois/>.

anniversary. CAConrad's contribution to *The Yellow Paper* is introduced by Sebastian Taylor who worked with Art Writing to invite CA to Glasgow. Lucie McLaughlin and Caitlin Merrett King were the recipients of last year's Yellow Paper Prize for New Writing and present pamphlets alongside this edition of *The Yellow Paper*. Our ever-unflinching Teaching Assistant, Esther Draycott, was with us for another year, briefly departing in the second semester for a fellowship at the Kluge Centre at the Library of Congress and as researcher-in-residence for the Women Make Cities network at the Royal Society of Edinburgh. And as ever, we extend an enormous thank you to Silas Lehane for his endless, but now ending, support of the programme. One key lesson in the art of good conversation is the manner of departure, or 'how to take your leave', and Silas, we wish you well with all things post-exit. 'What exactly are we all holding onto anyway?' asks Silas in his contribution to edition 4, *French Exit*.



## Running

Kelcey Flaherty



Years ago, at the end of every run, I wouldn't be able to feel my legs and I would piss myself. This went on for a few months. I told my dad about it and he seemed unbothered, so I adopted the same attitude. I thought, *I guess this just happens when you push yourself too hard*. This didn't stop me from running, but eventually the pissing did stop. Now I think any mysteries of the body are eventually quelled with running.

The mechanics are simple enough—a series of smaller joint movements make up a larger movement. This is the kinetic chain in action. I think about how when we move in space our bodies share our secrets with anyone willing to look long enough—the laboured breathing, the reddening of a face, the opening of a stride, the slight limbering of muscles, the sudden tensing, the deep release. These are simple narrative images that hold my attention. This is the act of running as an intimate performance.

I think, *How is this a social phenomenon? How is this something we do in public? How do we show people what's going through our head so plainly?* The next time I go for a run, I do all I can to shorten my strides, to hide my face. I'm terrified of what someone's going to see.

The only other person I used to run with was my dad. These runs were paced slower than my usual ones, but much steadier, sort of like a flat shuffle. We wouldn't speak, just tread beside

one another. Our route was usually the same: down Durham, up Central, cut over to Plainfield, down Morris, down Grove. If I wanted to stretch our time, I would ask for the longer route, past Middlesex and onto Woodbridge. This would give us at least another thirty minutes.

Being that close to him for that long was unnerving. It's something I never got used to. At the start of every run, our eyes would dart around one another, a worry creeping in. My strides were forced and erratic, as if my body was being asked to perform the most unnatural thing. Eventually though, about halfway through, it all began to ease and then melt—the run quickly turning liquid. Our limbs would lengthen, our pace was almost perfect, and everything began to make sense. This was it! This is where all communication dies! Right here! In the middle of a run! I think, *I can do this!* I think, *I can really do this!*

The first mistake is to look over at your running partner without warning. You have to let people experience the world alone. You have to ask to be let in. If you look too soon, you'll see something you wish you hadn't. But I didn't know this, so I looked. One single tear had made its way down the right side of his face, trailing down to the corner of his mouth. He could lick it away if he wanted to. I couldn't help but stare—it was surreal. Thinking about it now, I tell myself it could have been sweat or snot.

The first mistake is to look over at your running partner without warning. You have to let people experience the world alone. You have to ask to be let in. If you look too soon, you'll see something you wish you hadn't. But he didn't know this, so he looked, and I say, *Lately I've been reading about the science of crying. I'm crying a lot these days. Did you know that the film of tears on the eye is a complex system, consisting of three layers, and the specific composition of tears may depend on where you have been in the world that day. And yes, simple enough: tears are a way to keep the eye moist, but they're also a way to be seen. One thought is that the higher protein content makes emotional tears more viscous, so they stick to the skin more strongly and run down the face more slowly, and the production of these tears outpace their drainage, so the excess just spills from the lower eyelids.*

*An 'I' walking straight down the face of it. And as you grow older, the acoustic aspect, the howling and moaning and wracking of the body becomes less important, even if these salt ions are magnetic. This is the beauty of crying though, you become quieter and quieter the older you get until you can really weep heavily in the library or any smaller space, like a wake, or an exam room, a closet, or the back-seat of a car.*

We finish the run. We look each other in the eye and now I'm scared I might start to tear up. I turn my head quickly. We quietly untie our shoes together by the front door. If he ever saw this, he never mentioned it. Later that night, I read online that Charles Darwin believed monkeys and elephants wept. I search for videos to see if this is actually true. *Touching Footage of Elephant Cry to Dead Best Friend. Mother elephant cries for her baby! The Depths of Animal Grief (A List)*. I wonder what my dad would think if he saw these videos. Would he say, *If I were an elephant then maybe I would cry for the lack of our elephant father/daughter relationship*. Would he say, *I am the emotional tears in that long list of animal grief*.

This morning I go for a run after a few days of crying. I think, *If I were somewhere hotter, some part of me would slowly evaporate under that heat and I would be a body made of no tears*. Some part of me thinks this would be easier.





Fraser Taylor, 'Large Figures (version 3)',  
(1982-1983), The Glasgow School of Art Archive,  
ref. DC 089/2/1/5/v3

## Janey Esther Draycott

I am trying to write about a city at a particular point in time. Today I look at a short book by Kathy Acker. There is a nocturnal creature in it called Janey who mostly dwells between nightclubs she cannot get into. 'I want more and more horrible disaster in New York,' she says, "cause I desperately want to see that new thing that is going to happen this year."<sup>1</sup> I write it down for future reference.

The book is called *New York City in 1979*, I have noticed that New York around this period is often described as *coming apart at the seams*, or something to that effect. The choice of metaphor interests me. It seems to nod toward the tangled relationship between dress and architecture in cities, how that relationship can be poisonous as well as intimate, forming a strange lexicon of excitement and disaster, sexuality and repression, nightclubs in ruins and suits built like scaffolds. I am told by a tutor that the only way to make sense of my thoughts around cities is with the image of someone walking through them, going where I need them to go. I think of where Janey is right now.

In the archive at The Glasgow School of Art, I look at early designs by Fraser Taylor, a textiles student who would go on to found 1980s fashion collective The Cloth. Across his sketches and mock-ups I see the figure of a stylised female body, faceless and statuesque, marching through a succession of gauze-like

<sup>1</sup> Kathy Acker, *New York City in 1979*, (London: Penguin Classics, 2022), p 14

screens in different shades of dark blue. In some she appears as if framed by a doorway or the shadow of a light overhead, head turned and elbows crooked in scenes redolent of street corners by night. In others, she thrashes around to a song I cannot hear, body abstracted to pure form, knees bent, head thrown back and arms folded into the shape of wings. One design, taken from a collection made in 1976, is for a deconstructed patent leather jumpsuit with padded shoulders and shins. The outfit draws attention to those parts of the body left which are left vulnerable and exposed as much as those parts which are covered over. The two are held in tension as if in a process of demolition, allegorising the street, becoming a form of witness to it.

In the sites of the city I linger on, there is always a woman moving just beyond the frame. She is there, past the empty carpark strewn with an old furniture suite, fire raging up a wall in the shadow of a torn-out chimney flue. She leaves the fray of a heaving crowd at a rag market, piss stained coats and shoes snaking weed-like under a shopping centre set like a diamond in the asphalt. She ducks between streets of old warehouses, sheltering in their hollows, always half-dressed for dancing, dancing that looks like fighting, fighting like it is you that you are trying to undo. I am trying to follow her through this landscape in order to map it, but when I do she disintegrates, different parts of her flying into the wind. I become aware that my attempts to write the city more accurately chart my failed attempts to locate this muse and make something out of these wasted spaces. For a second, however, here Janey stands, skirting the 'pit-hole' of Manhattan as a lumpen, irresolute form, while 'pleated black fake-leather pants hide her cocklessness... two round prescription mirrors mask the eyes.'<sup>2</sup>

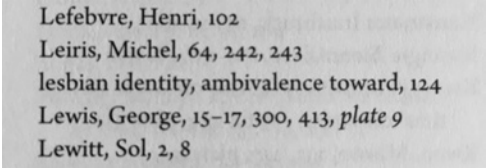
2 Acker, *New York City in 1979*, p 15

# Dyke Research: Incomplete Index

Laura Guy

ambivalence; angels; anonymity; archive; attic; darkroom;  
daughter; definition; desire; dogs; dream; early experiences of;  
friendship; intimacy; Gateways; Greenham; grief; handwriting;  
jacket; leather; porn; oral history; research; roller coaster

## Ambivalence<sup>1</sup>



Lefebvre, Henri, 102  
Leiris, Michel, 64, 242, 243  
lesbian identity, ambivalence toward, 124  
Lewis, George, 15–17, 300, 413, *plate 9*  
Lewitt, Sol, 2, 8

## Angels

[08.19]

Get SW on the phone to speak about Tessa Boffin. He taught her at PCL in the 80s. TB ‘obsessed’—his word—with Neil Bartlett’s first novel *Ready to Catch Him Should He Fall(?)*. It features a transhistorical relationship set against backdrop of AIDS crisis, between a gay protagonist in 1980s London and Oscar Wilde.

We talk about angels.

Angels: strong, caring.

Angels: obsidian black, opal.

TB’s angels hold all of that, SW says, a capsule of signs.

<sup>1</sup> Renée Green, *Other Planes of There: Selected Writings*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

## Anonymity



Claribel Cone, Gertrude Stein, and Etta Cone,  
Setignano / Fiesole, June 26, 1903.  
The Baltimore Museum of Art: Cone Archives

A.B.T = photographers?

X X X

## Archive

[05.19]

Sue tells us the archive could have gone to Sussex uni. Accessibility was a concern. Then the Londoners asking seriously: “Were there lesbians in Scotland?” They had to see premises. The library called every dyke they knew to fill the space. When the archive arrived, wagon double parked, caused havoc with traffic. Rich collection, interesting history, energetic change. Mythologised—it wasn’t only lesbians working there but gay men too. Now the biggest collection at the library. Lots of overlapping materials.

Following statement on trans inclusivity that the library put out recently, one member of the original group remarked on social media that they would rather have seen the collection destroyed.

## Attic

[03.18]

Invited to have dinner with K and her wife. They have a friend visiting to work on their film about the dyke photo archive. The house is labyrinthine, a former b&b on the northern English coast. They’re doing it up but right now there’s still different patterned carpet and a sink in each room. The one room that has been decorated has a pristine white shag rug and mega sound system. The subwoofer glows cerulean in the dark.

After dinner K shows me upstairs. The first-floor landing has a door that opens onto a narrow space. An empty closet but she tells me to look up and there’s a ladder that pulls down. She suggests I go up, have a look. What treasures await? Climb up, stick my head through the hatch. She turns on the light from below. In an otherwise empty room, more patterned carpet, moths.

## Darkroom

[11.19]

Processing images in the college darkroom as a teenager. My lesbianism worn overtly: short hair, polished leather shoes, men's shirts. My lesbianism worn secretly: a crush on the studio technician concealed by her assumed heterosexuality. The red wash of the safelight spares my blushes as an image emerges in the watery bath of developer.

The photos taken with a heavy SLR given to me by my mother. Lit by an arrangement of domestic lamps. P on her bed wearing a vintage negligee. P in a suit, shirt and braces. Hair slicked back, leaning on the mantelpiece.

She lives in a small bedsit by the sea. A grand Regency building divided into a warren of privately rented spaces, made intimate by changing uses and the political transformations that produce them. It's the early 2000s, New Labour's second term. P on the dole. The checks getting more arduous each week she goes to the job centre. Brit pop on the stereo. Pulp, Suede. Tee Corinne's photo of the dykes kissing on the cover of their first album though I didn't know it at the time. Brett Anderson's pinched voice "*You'll hide among the covers and wave as the aeroplanes go by / There's nothing to say when you sleep all day but "bye bye".*" She'd featured in the video for Filmstar, showed it to me on the small TV, me paying close attention for a two second glimpse of her. Watching staticky reruns of *The Divine David Presents* as the sun comes up. Time is out of kilter here. Days and nights get swallowed and spat out to the rhythm of her bronchial cough. Her never really acknowledging what is happening between us.

The bedsit is too small to contain the architecture, higher than it is wide. Looking up from the bed gives the impression of standing at the mouth of a tunnel. To enter the flat you have to pull one door to so that you can open the other, enclosing yourself in a small space, a kissing gate. Held for a moment without light among motheaten furs, other bodies that won't pass through but loiter in the twilight zone. In the dark, push my face into the soft pelts.

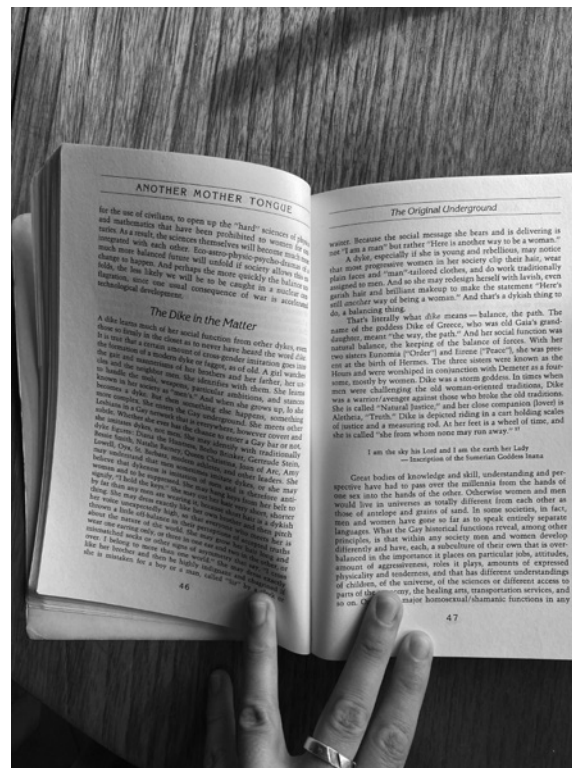
The photographs fixed and drying in the daylight of the classroom. Feeling exposed. Writing afforded a greater degree of privacy, a second skin.

## Daughter

[10.19]

Over dinner in the small Italian restaurant, T asks me about the reinterest in melodrama that her friend, the famous porn scholar, has been telling her about. An older man crosses to our table, mistakes me for T's daughter. She's incredulous, won't stop talking about it all evening and the morning after too, over breakfast. It's not because of the age gap. She early 60s, me in my late 20s, the same age as her daughter. Reveals an unspoken feeling, recomposed as a maternal melodrama.

## Definition<sup>2</sup>



2 Judy Grahn, *Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

## Desire

[12.19]

Send C a snap of Catherine Deneuve taken on my phone during a trip to the archive at Cornell. I find her in a manilla folder, cut from a magazine. Scissors form a careful arch around that blonde coif of hair. Smoky eyes.

Devotion to straight stars—an object transformed by the queer desire of the fan. Desire as magical thinking, creating its objects by sleight of hand. “The image *is* desire” (Yve Lomax).

Sometimes I’m overwhelmed by all the longing within this history of photography, I write to C but in the end don’t press send.

## Dogs

[01.18]

Pick-up truck. Six dogs. Echo with the look of love. Feral who won’t be touched but stays close. The littlest one, seven months, greyhound and chihuahua cross, leaps through the grass. A small collie cross called Target who lags. Another chihuahua curled up on my lap as I ride in the passenger seat. Scruffy terrier at my feet, old and grey, my favourite.

When she pulls up, she’s wearing a t-shirt that has ‘NO’ printed across it. ‘My response to all your requests,’ she tells me.

## Dream

[08.20]

Stressful situation at an airport. Then back to the house. There’s the photographer and the other women. A warm bath. The photographer gets in, then the rest of the women. I’m in there too, desperately trying not to catch anyone’s eye.

## Early experiences of

[n.d.]

1. The gay youth group run by the council, before Section 28 is repealed. Call a number from the phonebook and

arrange to meet one of the workers outside the new shopping centre. Then they’ll take us to the location, a secret.

At the group we watch films, *If these walls could talk 1 & 2*, *But I’m a Cheerleader*, write poems and draw pictures for a zine, dial up to the Internet away from the scrutiny of teachers/parents, work too hard to manifest crushes on each other.

2. The gay and lesbian bookshop on Dorset St., behind the old Safeway. Copies of *Dykes to Watch Out For* arranged in the window. Magazines in a stand next to the front desk. *On Our Backs*, *Diva*. Us standing on the threshold, not going in.

3. The Candy Bar on St James St. Pink interior, sparkly bar. Older dykes on high stalls. Us standing on the threshold, not getting in.

## Friendship

[n.d.]

*À L’amitié* (‘to friendship’) carved over the entrance to Natalie Barney’s Doric pavilion.

## Intimacy

[03.18]

On the tape, you can hear S and J talking, S asking questions in her gentle, probing way. There’s a moment where you realise that the two of them are in a car, driving. The sound of the ignition and keys jangling. It grounds the exchange in a mood of conviviality, indicates intimacy between friends and collaborators. Positions me, the historian, in the backseat, eavesdropping.

## Gateways – Greenham – grief

[04.19]

She tells me they used to dress like Greenham dykes. She’d read Oscar Wilde. Read and hated Radclyffe Hall. A friend had taken her to Gateways and she’d hated that too. Afraid about the butch/femme thing, the alcoholism. A shameful existence. Seeking others—other women—a mutual recognition that would ease the grief.

## Handwriting

[03.19]

During the conference drinks R calls to tell me that she's heard Barbara Hammer has died. BH ill a long time, but it floors us. A big presence, a big loss.

The last time I saw Barbara, she made a modification to her latest book and pressed it into my hands as we parted. Her beautiful cursive loops neatly across the title page, reminds me of an early summer morning with R, Greenwich Village iridescent in sun and rain.

The precious souvenir is mine but not mine alone. Imagine Barbara's unique script joining up a constellation of disparate people and places, each inscription carrying the trace of community.

## Jacket

[04.17]

The photographer only died last year, her jacket still hanging in the hallway. Later in the evening, we're drinking outside. It's getting cold and T suggests I wear the coat. There's a packet of cigarettes in the pocket, American Spirits. Have one, she says.

## Leather

[10.19]

Leather starts off stiff but once worked by hands becomes malleable. Tools are used to create corresponding positive and negative sections of photographic likeness. In SM communities, leather's pleasure manifests essential ideas about the animal and non-essential ideas about skins that can be pulled on and taken off again. Are images skins that we live in, authentic selves masquerading as other selves? Or is it the other way round?

The poorer the quality of leather, the more likely it is to bear the marks of the animal it once was. In the pub last month, Fiona says textiles are also methods that tell stories (yarns?) about histories of making. In conservation: the way an object degrades tells us about the way it was made.

## Porn

[01.19]

Mandy Merck on the anti-porn feminists... Had any of them actually watched it?

## Oral history

[01.19]

Why does this feel like therapy, she asks.

Think of it as oral history, I reply.

But you're not recording, she says.

## Research

[03.17]

They pick me up from the No. 17 express stop at Santa Cruz metro. When they arrive, I recognise her from all the B&W photos I've seen printed in copies of magazines. In colour, older, she's bronzed by the sun, weathered. Solid, taller than him. He drives, me in the passenger seat. She arranges herself across all three seats in the back so she can get a good look at me. She comments that I am also tall. 'Good', she says.

At the orange house she fixes me champagne that is left over from a recent birthday, adding chartreuse to turn its taste sweet, floral. We drink outside, sat around the pond. A terrapin pokes its head above the surface of the water. On the second glass she turns to me, tells me that she has been imagining our conversations but now that we've met, she's wondering if it's not just research that I'm here for.

## Rollercoaster

[09.19]

Me, P and R strapped in and cranked up toward the sky. Tangerine sunset. The Colossus is double track. S and Z in another cart. We meet at the top. They've done one loop already. Z motions to us to get off. A joke. We can't. Down, down, down. Freed from gravity our bodies become perpetual motion



machines. Darkening sense of the hole at the centre of the ride and us all circling it. Round, round, round. Later, on the ground and in the dark, we all look up at the tracks unspooling across the desert like film. Two trains have got stuck at the top and it takes an hour to get everyone moving again.

## Migrating Spores

Gianni Esporas



my body is a site  
this country is an altar of memory  
my writing becomes an altar for their stories  
hybrid by nature  
a synthesis many times over  
our stories might never be ours  
a stolen artefact  
a feedback loop many times over

Opus  
Alice Hill Woods

The taste for endless day is first and foremost a taste.

(In the Bay of Billionaires, he told me about the laws of physics  
while I sucked cherries and rubbed oil on my calves.  
The sun made us slick.  
I daydreamed about his eyelashes.)

Anna-Eva Bergman was receptive to nature's sublimity and  
documented it with acuity and vision. Taste evolved into appetite.

Years of training imparted a skilled sensitivity to the world  
around her, and yet she remained at the mercy of a life of illness  
between moments of stable health. Her digestive system, intact  
but faltering, became the vibrant matter that risked unsettling  
her practice.

(The Hartung-Bergman Foundation was a prism of white light.  
When I walked up to one of Bergman's giant, silent paintings, I  
was surprised to feel my eyes fill with tears. I turned to him, said  
look, I'm moved.

I needed him to see that I was moved.)

Bergman wanted to hold on to the magnitude of ecology's charm when she found herself on a fishing boat off the coast of Lofoten. How do you steady the intense magic of the horizon as it shifts out of grasp? The world of perception casts yearning, expands the spectre of unknowing. She delighted in its untenable parameters. The light and shape of the far north is spiritual geometry.

(We drove for hours, out of Nice sun and into a large feeling.

He had become used to driving on the other side of the road, particularly after leaving the Foundation. He'd careened delicately towards an oncoming car that slowed and flashed its lights. He often lazily held the steering wheel between two fingers and a thumb.

I sometimes asked him to step on the accelerator and he would, and I'd feel my stomach lift and then plummet.)

Moon and myth, mountain and glacier: all seem far removed from the messy bacterial coils nested within a human body. But the body is part of the essential forms that Bergman rendered in her paintings; if not the subject of her paintings, then it is, at least, the unyielding interface between paint and landscape. The body mediates, interrupts, governs: it is soft power. It reverberates, grows slow under ice, churns with hunger.

(We passed towns on our journey to Mercantour National Park. Most of them had shuttered windows and flaking ski season signs; all felt out of date. It was greener and rainier and still we drove. Let's get you some altitude, he said.)

The primal, the unanswerable, some original chaos, are all at stake in Bergman's work.

(We drove through ruins and began to see snow. The top of the mountain was a cosmology of black and white, and hail came down on the windows, and the verge cut away steeply, and we kept driving until we saw the remains of an avalanche.)

Ancient light makes hard structures in Lofoten seem transparent, susceptible to rupture as gauze would be. The luminosity is seductive, defies capture. When Bergman was there in 1950, she remarked that the mountains seemed to emit a vision of the future.

(We looked at it silently.  
He made a three-point turn that marked the  
beginning of our descent.)



## Another Horsedreamer's Blues

Michael Pedersen

In her book, my friend Elizabeth comes  
clean on the ubiquity with which  
she dreams of horses: it's frequently  
& with conviction. Turns out  
the Counting Crows song I woofed on

about having been written with her  
in mind, in fact, stars a protagonist called  
Margery—who too dreams of horses  
but is not a namesake. Blunder aside,  
dreaming of horses is bunned

in auspiciousness—a boon shaped  
by whether the stud's ridden bareback  
or stirrup steered, the cut of the mare's gait:  
trot, lope, gallop or sashay. Just imagine,  
the wholesome company of equestrian

shepherds in the dreamlands, herding  
by moonlight; all eyelash flutter &  
fingertips glancing the night air. The sound  
of hoofed thunder asleep in the earth.  
Me, I dream of snake attacks:

face-bites from vipers; belligerent mambas  
coiled in the bedsheets; crushed to a cord  
by an anaconda whilst floating downriver  
on my lilo; struck in the throat  
by the soft-bellied snake that came

to DH Lawrence's water-trough on that  
*hot, hot day*. Too often, do I join  
Viking warlord Ragnar Lodbrok  
in the fowl pit of serpents  
he was tossed into—punctured, poisoned,

suffocated by reptile meat—my flailing  
limbs slackened to a spasm, the farewell  
twitch. Dreams of snakes are debated  
wildly, yet when partnered by death blows  
it's safe to assume the demonic

omens these skin-shedders summon  
take precedence here. I don't have an answer,  
a parable or reading, just a preference  
of not this, no more, not me. Afterall,  
we began in praise of horses.

*Curls*

I like to think about the way my ringlets fall to the ground when I get my hair cut. The way each snip of scissors and slice of razor removes the hair from my head. I can feel the drop of each one as my scalp is released from the pressure of thick heavy hair. It is only at the end when I stand up that I bear witness to the curls strewn across the ground. My friend used to collect the hair of his friends. I contemplate asking for a piece to send him even though he doesn't anymore. A kind of offering. Here I am for you. Instead, I watch as she sweeps my hair into a dust pan, joining the collection of hair in her rubbish bin. If I can't keep any at least I am part of something. At least those curls aren't alone.

### *Borrowing*

The trail along the Clyde River near my flat has become a ritualistic site of collecting and returning. Today it was oak leaves, maple leaves, and rose hips gathered. Lavender, marigold, bay leaf, and sage returned. The gathering is always the easiest. Perhaps a glance or two as I stoop to the ground or bend into the bush to pluck. The leaving far more difficult. A bag of altar detritus in my pocket. It is Saturday and the trail is busier than my usual mid-day weekday walks. I want to empty this collection of herbs that has perfumed my home these last few months, but it requires privacy. I am not interested in glances as I pull the bag from my pocket and shake out the contents. Eventually I find a trail through the bush and brush that takes me to the water's edge. It is littered with cigarette butts, Buckfast bottles, crisps packets, bottle caps, and one glove. A collection of the typical activities that take place in this spot. I empty my bag and the brown is covered with bright gold, green, and purple. I add myself to this collection of waste along the water. Mine is compostable.

### *Red Dust*

I am on the train to Aberdeen and my red nail polish keeps rubbing off my nails and onto the pages of *Bee Reaved* by Dodie Bellamy. Leaving a mark, leaving a part of myself. Long after I close this book and finish reading and place it on the shelf I will still be there, inside the pages. These streaks of red smudges. I wonder too about the way I am wiping the dust from a packet of crisps off my hands onto the side of the seat. In that space down the side, near a window, between seat and wall. Do the cleaners get that space or is my essence like the red smudges wedged in there.

*I like your tattoos*

On a recent trip home to the states—on the first trip home since my grandfather had a stroke and fell and broke his leg—on the first trip home after he had been taken to the hospital—on the first trip after he had been moved into the care facility—on the first trip home after the weekly updates from my grandmother which included:

her going through his belongings—a pipe bursting in his room forcing her to clear it out quicker than she had planned—him begging to come home—him crying and being confused—my cousins visiting him and being upset—her feeling alone. On the first trip home after text messages from my mom and aunts:

*Grandma is doing ok.*

*He's in a rehab room now.*

*He's moved into a shared room now. It is small.*

*He is doing much better don't worry.*

On a recent trip home to the states on the car ride from the airport to my grandmother's, my aunt prepared me for what to expect when I saw him. *It is hard, but he is doing really well. It is sad being in the facility, but the nurses and staff are really great and we all feel really good about it, especially Grandma. He is on anti-depressants now; he probably should have been on them his whole life and it has made a huge difference. You will see when you get there, just try not to worry.*

On a recent trip home to the states # of months after he moved into the facility, I prepared to go see him by dressing up. I don't know why I dressed up, but it just felt like the right thing to do. I had brought him shortbread from Scotland. I wanted to make him happy during the visit, wanted to make him smile, wanted it to be normal. I was scared he wouldn't remember me as he didn't seem to remember all of my cousins. I felt somewhat

confident as I am the eldest grandchild by fourteen years and have lived with my grandparents on and off as both a child and an adult.

*Tawnya Jo!* His voice high pitched. His voice happy. His voice a little shaky with the choke of both laughter and tears. My nickname he had given me when I was young. *Tawnya Jo, What Do You Know?* He'd say it when he came home, when he picked me up, in birthday cards, all the time. My joke response usually *A Whole Lotta Nothin'.*

*I don't remember why I called you that* he said.

*I like your tattoos* he said

*You look real good* he said

*You are beautiful* he said

My grandfather said each of these sentences to me several times over while I sat in his wheelchair next to his bed. The room was small. The facility was sad. He was different in a way I hadn't expected.

I have told two close people in my life this story of my grandfather's compliments, with the added insight that I don't think my grandfather has called me beautiful in over ten years. I told the story twice and each time it wasn't meant to be sad. This isn't a story that is meant to be sad. It is difficult to explain just what it is about this. To explain with words that best convey what it meant to hear those sentences, but also what it meant to have not heard those words until then.

To have not heard it until then is not painful. It was never missing. Was never something I needed to hear because I knew, I know, have always known that my grandfather thinks I am beautiful and loves me. I am lucky to always have known and trusted this from the man who helped raise me, from really the only man I had in my life as a child.



*I like your tattoos. You look real good. You are beautiful.*

Each time he said it I couldn't help but laugh. His voice jovial. His voice direct. His voice emphasising each individual word. My aunt had said he was on anti-depressants and it was really helping. This must be part of that and each time he said it and I said thanks to him I wasn't really thanking the compliment.

I was thanking that these sentences somehow reassured me, somehow made me feel ok. I was thanking the anti-depressants for seeing them in action. I was thanking the laugh behind the words. I was thanking that these sentences somehow meant he was ok, somehow meant he was still with us. I was thanking that somehow it made it ok for me to walk away from him and fly back to Scotland with his voice and laugh in my mind.

## Her Mother's Daughter

Iona Marshall

Growing up has created an ever-growing bond between me and my mother.

Coincidentally, one that has grown through a long-distance relationship.

I wonder if that's because we're too similar, and too much time spent together leads to clashes.  
Probably why it works, although it still hurts.

JAN 30, 7:12 AM

hope you slept well....love you xxxx

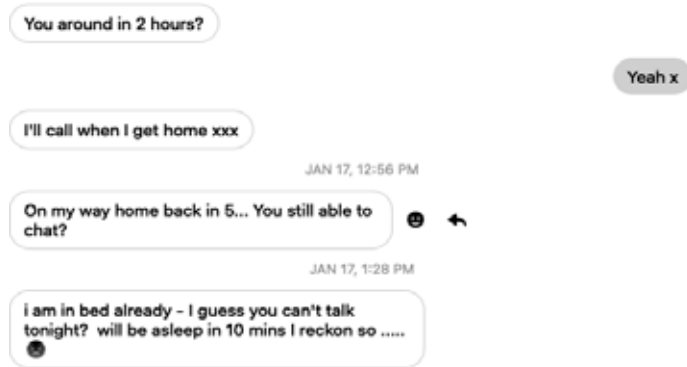
JAN 30, 10:04 AM

let me know you are okay xxxx I can't stop thinking about you and wish I could teleport you here I really do. xxxxx

JAN 30, 10:54 AM



I am beginning to understand her more, growing as a daughter, but it is also painful at times because I can only express it over the phone or through messages on Facebook.



I have always relied heavily on her.  
In the way that children do.  
I was independent,  
but I am still a daughter,  
and her still a mum,  
a single one at that.

Recently, I can't shake the feeling that I understand my mum better than I ever have before.

And I will only continue to understand her more.  
This has been heightened in the experience of becoming a woman.

How little I knew of her life before me, how much I know of this life I live and how the experiences have shaped me, she's lived this life in her own way.

This trip down the motherly lane is all about the emotions that come with growing up, moving out.

Noticing the similarities in appearance, personality, and coming of age.

There's so much reflection in the most mundane tasks.  
Comparisons to my past self, my current self, and my mum.

I know these feelings are big.

It scares me, because I revert back to the past, I put myself in the shoes of my mum who also lived across the world from her family. Is there a point in doing so because the past is the past.

Maybe there is *some*.

Because all I want to do now is show my mum how much I care. Sometimes I forget, but this is my reminder.

With a tendency towards aftermatter  
Theo Hynan-Ratcliffe



I am going revisiting.

With a stone in the pocket of my coat.

With a hair from my love caught in the cuff of my sleeve.

I am sitting on the floor with the backs of my calves pressed into the floorboards.

I am going visiting again, by occupying the site of memory, playing it out, as a space, as a room, a thought as a room, all caught in the rock's deep cuts, the site holds it all. The *I* inherits a room in which to visit and to be visited.

I settle softly, between the cracks of it.

Across the open furrows of its arms

I am caught.

And it comes to me through a tunnel, through a linkage of a word as a slip stream—visiting—revisiting. I am going visiting, like my grandmother would say, well perhaps not my grandmother but the character of someone else's.

I am reminded of a conversation over the phone with my mother. I am talking about visiting and revisiting sites, walking into rooms, exchanging and learning more about a space through the process of leaving and returning and looking at what is accumulated. A space becoming a place with the precision of memory.

She says that Hannah Arendt used the term 'to go visiting'. She tells me this as I sit on my hallway floor and she stands at her desk, we can both see each other even with our eyes closed, the image is on the inside of our lids. And she sends me the essay, directing me to the page in question, where the word 'visit' is used fourteen times. Rooting back to Arendt's idea of thinking as a space rather than an action, visiting sits in the plurality of the act of thinking. Where you bring yourself into the space of a new thought, imagining and moving through it with an implied physicality when imagining a thought as a space we navigate with our bodies. In the body of our minds. Visiting is a form of thinking, an action of bringing the body into contact with the site, it moves across layers. Across strata.

Going visiting seems to me to be about the idea of presence in the site. By going visiting in order to think, we physically alter our presence, and pay attention to it by moving, removing, repeating. The action of moving and propelling your body allows the process of thought to be imagined and removed from abstraction, into the practicality of navigating physical space. And so to go visiting is to be in the active moment of thought. A practice of revisiting is a practice of becoming or rebecoming.

I listen to Rebecca Solnit on the bus coming home. She speaks about walking as a becoming. As you walk back through space you re-become who you were in the space before. The site holds your body, reverberating an echo you can climb back into. Trying on your previous fingertips. I think about the moments where we access

ourselves across time schemes. These moments that come from stepping in to your family home, sitting in a friend's car, or standing on the same rock twice, hearing the repeated footstep of your father, each time each surface is recalled they all collide together.

We learn through pressing, through what we come into contact with, through what we press against and what is pressed into us.

Grains of wood pressed into flesh, raised impressions on knees and palms.

Leaning, learning, resting, marking.

I learned through pressing my knees into the table, through imprinted lines.

The process of casting is an action of pressing; it is touch and the repetition of touch. The action of an arm, a hand, skin, pressing, repeatedly coming into contact with the surface, the matter of what it is you are trying to remember—to copy—to hold.

The action and process of memory is physicalised in the repeated process of casting. The matter of memory itself made present and manifest through the silicone, wax, rubber. Pressed through that which you have chosen to use, which in turn has a vital memory of its own—seeping out of its pores—this physicalised external process of memory, its exterior nature allowing you to engage consciously and tacitly in the process of memory.

Perhaps this is why I was so drawn to casting. I was always incredibly afraid of losing memories.

Compulsively I would attempt to trace the outlines of the rooms we lived in. Touching, casting, drawing, keeping wrapped in dust on shelves, in boxes,

As a child I would lie in bed and stay up all night going over every single memory I had of my life so far. Going through each one carefully—pressing into it—marking it into my skin. I did this

every night in the hopes of preserving each and every moment, each and every moment solitary inside my head.

I was worried because I knew that if I didn't remember it then nobody would and it would somehow fall out, get lost in the silence of time because nobody else could hold it. Everything that I witnessed was singular, individual, held in the interior, and this felt like the particular straining silence which constricts the throat, the kind of silence I didn't like to think about. I didn't like that feeling, that you would lose your life as you lived it. Memory is out of our control.

So I would press it all into me every night instead of sleeping. But now mostly I just remember this repeated action of trying to remember. A sort of interior casting process before I even knew what it was, or what I was seeking, but knowing that I was definitely afraid of not being able to hold the whole of my life in my arms, in my skin, at all times.

Casting is a language.

A tradition of wax, plaster, moulds, halves, wholes, inverses, interiors, exteriors, negatives, positives.

But it is also an extension and physicalisation of memory, or more specifically of the act of trying to hold to remember. In the moment of casting you are circulating all the possibilities of how you are going to hold this object, this material, to map, hold and contain its form, to copy and incrementally experience. Abstracting its nature through the process of remembering its detail.

The action of pressing is an interior and exterior point of connection raised and pushed together.

To touch is to be touched.<sup>1</sup>

This touch, which is in turn touching something else—othering it—

and sitting in the presence of both, places learning within the site of the body. Imagine it is as an awareness of the presence of your body in relation to other matter, feel that the scale of everything you're learning about has not been abstracted and pulled into a context outside of you—all of its own—but still sits in the context of your world, your domestic space, enrobing it.

Everything interlinks and information blurs out of category, out of hierarchy, there is no particular subject, just a question sparked by an action, given an answer as the need for the information arises, as the presence of my body, thinking triggers the question which brings the next point of matter into contact with my skin. Casting as an instinct and action has been around for thousands of years. Evolving with us as we discovered new materials. First metal, then wax, plaster, silicones, plastics, on and on it goes. When I talk about casting, while I carry the word with all its history of metal and lost-wax, relief, and solid two part mould making, powdery plaster hands, I think I mean something more ephemeral, simply the action of it. The combination of space and time and matter, and the labour of understanding how to press something into and against something else in order to hold its texture. Casting is a preparatory sketch. A laboured and lingering moment, between your witnessing body and the matter you are remembering, pressing your hand into, touching and being touched.

I often think of Rachel Whiteread speaking of pressing a spoon into sand, looking at the sand's impression, now the body of the spoon, but all the function of the spoon was gone, leaving just the presence form and body of the object, the sensation of its weight left in the cradling body of the sand. Whiteread speaks of this moment repeatedly, always with fondness for the moment of understanding that sometimes abstraction may come from replication, from pressing into something, from studying form, rather than reducing or contorting form.

The impression of memory in the grains of sand which holds the spoon's weight. Pour across the ripples of the sand and hold each grain, flatten and fall between. Press down on the corridors of earth beneath that contain whole lives of their own.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Kearney, *Touch: Recovering Our Most Vital Sense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021).

It makes me want to cast the whole beach. Pour cement on the sand and peel it back, to see every dip impression and softening ripple of a tide somehow held in the body of cement skin instead.

Just to have that moment of feeling the air around the sand as solid.  
The ephemeral weighed in the hand.

Holding the moment.

The aftermath of presence suspended in the surface of the matter.







## What a Lovely Flower Our Bones Make

Emily Megan Foster

### Manubrium

I am aware, disinterested but aware, of my ribcage. The lowest rib itching when I turn my mind's eye too close towards it. I believe that there is something residing in my bones. A deep-seated *fear* that I do not know, one which will teach me an ironic and all-important lesson. There are so many bones which we can feel if we tune into them. But I wouldn't recommend it. I don't think all our bones have our best interests at heart.

Bone-Hearts, what a novel concept. Creature feature in the integrated whole. I dance and they dance, and we move. Together we feel and delicately support. I want to think the best of them, yet they are clearly malicious.

My rib itches. I want to put my fingers between them and clean them out. Grout the tile work. My rib itches. There is a link missing or a diverted path. Going clank when I stretch just right. My rib itches. I have never imagined that my bones are clean. Instead, in mind space, they are a sickly yellow and they ooze a sense of foreboding. To break them open is to release all the sins into the world. *I want your fingers on my ribs and your thumbs on my back / And push me and set me open, 'til you hear my bones crack.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Wolf' – AlicebanD, 2011

### Mesosternum

They have been mastering the gentle caress. Placing their fingertips softly against my skin. Constant pressure rather than fleeting moments. Palm to the ribs, held at a distance—observed. Their eyes roam through rivers. Divots and rises. We rise and rise and release. 'The ribcage surrounds the lungs and heart—serving as an important means of bony protection for these vital organs.' Tongues express themselves differently here, words are lost echoes. They shiver over me, birds crashing against these dual cages, pressing, holding, not a nibble but a bite. The bars interlock. Our skin desires rebellion. I feel their bountiful bones and scream. Sense again the senses.

We struggle to be vulnerable and yet do not have solid defences. Afraid of exposure but easily manipulated. These walls are oh so permeable, but a barrier no matter how loose will deter some folk. The lowest rib in the human cage is full of static. A prickling creature which does not want to be looked at but hums consistently, drawing your attention. This resonant vibration setting the internal screws in motion—we come loose.

Have you spent much time considering the distortion of bone conduction?—the acoustic properties of the human skull? The skeleton inside us and us inside the skeleton. We think in waves. My ribs vibrate with this music. It is higher than I think, but pleasantly pulses deep through me.

Smooth impressions—imprints  
sediment reorganised with pulses and pressure  
flowing manipulation  
fractures not properly resolved but glossed over will come back  
later in the process  
pinched without purpose  
this drying out  
Where does this desire for smoothness come from?  
well-oiled parts in the machine  
tinkering transmission device  
rib bone taken from you  
heal the root

cause of the fracture  
dimensional folly

protruding signals

I hear that the word for ribcage in Norwegian is heart basket—  
I have since found this hard to verify.

*We have lived with her and grown with her  
we have ached as she sobbed and more when she laughs  
we love her even as she does not trust us.*

*When she was little, we could feel the intensity of her fear and  
her bravery in the face of it. She desired control. For such a small thing  
she had not yet buckled under this cape's weight, but the strain began to  
show in her shoulders and her shaking frame.*

*It was a time in which we were pushed into the limelight.  
When our protruding proved she had succeeded at something. She would  
find excuses to reach up high so that people could look at us.*

*We are here  
We are here  
We are here  
We are here  
pressure on the skin //  
// lines on a page*

Bone marrow—soft and spongy. Found when entering the larger  
bones (hips, breastbone, pelvis). Full to the brim with stem cells,  
immature and ready to harvest:

fighting the infecting entity  
carrying the vital air  
stopping the flow and healing the wounds

I was made from man's rib, and he reminds me that it was merely  
borrowed. He came and burrowed in to take it back.

They present female and so your hand reaches for the small  
of their back, gently pushing them aside. Who is he? Who is  
she? Who are they? Who have them come for? They spiral from  
touches and their bones burn out from beneath the skin. I want  
to scorch your palm with a warning. Instead, my body is tinkered  
with—ribs now xylophone.

Plink plonk plink.

Ding

Ding

Ding

\*scream\*

*Oh-oh-oh--wo-wo-wo {dun dun dun dun}*

*Mmmhmhmm {ah}*

Can you please stop whispering your little bone  
whispers? Just for a moment. One of these days  
I will listen to you but for now I am the one with  
something to say.

WE ARE CAVERNOUS. SHATTER US AND THE EMPTINESS INSIDE US WILL SEARCH  
FOR YOU. WE ARE NOT STEPPINGSTONES, LADDERED BY KNUCKLES. THE BONE  
CAVERN WELCOMES YOU OR IT REJECTS YOU—THERE IS NO INBETWEEN. SLIDING  
THROUGH THE CRACKS TRAITOUROUS. A HEART SCOOPED  
INTO A BASKET SEEPING. WHISPERS OF REMORSE COME THROUGH LIKE  
HISSING. IT SINGS, IT SEEPS. WE WEEP. THERE IS A GROWING IMPATIENCE IN OUR  
HIVE. SOMETHING MOVING TO BUBBLEPOP

### **Xiphisternum**

rEEL yOUR rIPPING rIBS  
rIB mY rIP oUT  
rIP yOUR rIPS  
rIB yOUR rIB iN  
rIP yOUR rEELING rIBS  
rIP mY rIB oUT  
please don't  
touch  
me



## In and out and/or in and out

María Garay Arriba

A disoriented scuba-diver jumps from the rim of my mug into the deep of the green tea it holds. As she sinks, the air she exhales rises in shivering clouds every few seconds, breaking the surface of my once uninhabited drink. A few rays of sunshine pour through the window, they lance the mug, travel through the liquid, but not far enough that I can intuit what the diver will find in the murky depths where the dregs of tealeaves lay.

/ What happens then? /

A) I keep going on about my day, mindful that the diver is in my tea, and wait for her to climb back out of the mug in her own time. {She tells me her story and about the things she has encountered}.

{

*The moment the last of her body had been submerged, she ceased to remember what was before this wetscape. Her memory was reborn, all stimuli were received anew, without pre-existing association. As she sank deeper into the now tepid water, she could hear thrumming reverberations passing into the different densities that existed in this fluid. Fragments of leaves passed by her in increasing numbers. The descent became slower as she waded through forests of these remains. The goggles she had been wearing floated away and her mouth let go of the oxygen tube. Eventually she found a clearing. She lay and breathed.*

*With closed eyes, her mind conjured streams of emotion and light; voluminous sound travelled about her bones in intervals; there were goosebumps all over when she felt the nibbles of fellow tea-dwellers accompanied by the sudden rush of a cold current.*

*My diver friend, recounting all this, seems stifled. With wide eyes and a choked sigh, she reclines back on the rim, throws an arm over her face and chuckles cynically. She says you cannot know; you have to come down there with me. She says the language of the water and the language of the electric beings and the language of the tealeaves and the language of the light—they are not telling you one thing, they simply tell—nothing more, nothing less. She relays this to me one word at a time, slowly, looking for each sound; with every articulation she seems to be disappointed, but keeps talking—*

*The medium within which she had dissolved became cooler with the hours; time was nowhere but in the changing temperatures. Her body and her thoughts were liquid and so as she cooled, they slowed their rhythms to match the pace of this abyss. An eternity later, the tea at the bottom began to recall an original journey, a downward dive performed by the being that had been. The inkling of an ‘outside’ and a ‘before’ crept up her spine. It was inevitable. An upward surge swam towards the soft light that had always existed above, a form becoming denser in the current. Desegregated, the diver resurfaced. With the first desperate gasp, all memory from before the immersion was violently restacked into her.*

*She feels heavy, she tells me. Air does not support her weight in the same way tea did. Words do not support a story in the same way the thrumming did. There is now a feeling of being inside something, inside the boundaries of her own skin, that she had long forgotten about. No longer is she a density in the fluid and no longer is experience a fold in the intensity of its vibrations. Now, there are things. One thing after another. Order. Contrary to the information her returned memory provides, she does not feel like she is one of these things.*

}

B) I accidentally drink the tea, {the diver has a wonderful time exploring my insides}, climbs back up my oesophagus and throat,

then out of my mouth. {She tells me her story and about the things she has encountered.}

C) I accidentally drink the tea, {the diver has a wonderful time exploring my insides}, and sadly gets pissed out into the toilet. I rescue her from my urine. {She tells me her story and about the things she has encountered.}

{

*Inside the stomach in me she saw proteins being broken down, then synthesised, she dwelled in my inner acid juice and watched it make a pulp out of the things I had ingested. She slid down the viscous walls of my digestive tract.*

*Everything in her sight was involved in a continuous grouping and splitting, each resulting component was being redistributed among other clusters which in turn produced new ingredients that would then bond with neighbour ones and the process goes on and on and on—*

*A frenzy of movement surrounded her, never-ending collapse and reconstitution, no two distinguishable things ever stayed the same for long. Nothing is stable, everything is in motion. Memory does not serve her for much because nothing is recognisable a few seconds after she has understood something.*

*She feels organic. She is excited to keep moving.*

}

D) I accidentally drink the tea. The diver has a wonderful time exploring my insides, but sadly gets pissed out into the toilet and flushed away. She discovers a whole new world of underwater ecosystems that is vaster than she could have ever imagined. I never hear her story or about any of the things she has encountered.

## The Orange Household

Aurelie Chan Hon Sen

The orange brings me back to my grandparents' house. It was Kungkung's favourite fruit. I remember Popo peeling the orange with her wooden knife, with its rind spiralling out perfectly. I liked to play with the spiral rind like it was a spring. Popo did not like eating oranges, she would squint her eyes instantaneously when eating a segment and murmur suān, even if it was not sour. She peeled one for Kungkung every day when he was ill. Kungkung wrote the recipe of a cake called tién pán. It is a traditional cake eaten at Lunar New Year, but his recipe had something more; his had a distinct flavour—the orange peel. I recall boxes of orange peels laid out in the sun for weeks in their backyard. Popo and Kungkung ground the peels and cooked them with sugar. The smell was sharp and tart. It pervaded the kitchen. The making of the cake itself was a day-long event, one of labour and love. They made big batches to share with family, neighbours and friends. Kungkung made tins specifically for these cakes and insisted on cooking over a wood fire, balancing the tins on wooden strips placed in a giant wok. The taste of the orange peel was delicious. My grandparents would also gift oranges to family and friends when visiting them as the orange is a symbol of good fortune. They would go to the market on the same day as the gift had to be fresh. I was taught to never go to anyone's home empty-handed.

When I smell an orange, all these memories rush to mind. I eat oranges when I feel homesick as the smell makes me feel closer

to home. Holding this spherical shape and sensing the smooth skin punctuated with minuscule dimples is comforting. I peel it like Popo—gripping the knife at an angle with my forefinger and thumb pinching the base of the blade and the other fingers looped around the handle, I slide the blade just under the rind and turn the orange slowly.

Popo taught me how to peel an orange.

#### GRANDPARENTS' KITCHEN — RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL.

*Popo picks an orange from the fruit basket. She opens the tap and scrubs the orange with both hands under running water. Her wooden knife rests on the white plastic plate with the wavy pink edge that every household in our family has a dozen of. She grips her knife at an angle with her forefinger and thumb pinching the base of the blade and the other fingers looped around the handle. She slides the blade just under the rind and turns the orange slowly. The rind spirals out perfectly in one piece. She puts the rind on the plate and puts down the knife on the table. Holding the orange in one hand, she pulls the segments apart piece by piece, leading with her thumb of her other hand. She plates the orange segments next to the rind.*

#### GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM — RIGHT AFTER POPO PEELED AN ORANGE.

*Popo brings the plate to the living room and places it on the coffee table. The room fills with fruit. She smiles.*

POPO

Popo ine coup ene zoranz. Tonton Michel ine  
asté Samedi sa. Manzé Mami.

MAMI

Ou osi Popo, manze ene bout.

*Popo shakes her head and grins.*

POPO

Non, non, mo pas kontan sa, tro aigre.

*Mami chuckles.*

MAMI

Kouma ou kone sa? Li pa aigre li, goute ene ti  
bout avek mwa.

*Popo takes a piece and bites at the edge of the segment, juice rushes out and spills over her hands, she licks them, squints her eyes instantaneously, and chuckles.*

POPO

Suān, Mami, suān!

*They laugh.*

I learn how to make tién pán with my aunt. She heats up a large pan, pours in a bit of oil and adds un livre de sucre blanc. She stirs, gently moving the white sugar granules around, dragging them back and forth, bringing some from the side to the centre of the pan. She stirs as she recalls how Popo liked to practice placing Kungkung's tins in her giant wok three weeks ahead of making the cake, stabilising them on one another with the aid of wooden strips. The sugar starts to clump together, crystallising into golden rocks, she explains that saem ki donne la couleur dan tién pán, li pou fone net la. She does not stop stirring, the sugar melts, metamorphosing into a dark brown, glistening syrup. She tells me Popo pa mesir delo li, Popo servi bol coq, Popo dir teigne di feu et kan pou met sa la, li brulant, sa pou fer désordre. She fills up the bowl with boiling water, turns off the gas, moves the pan to a cold stove plate, pours in the water and instinctively steps back. The heat from the water infuses the syrup; deafening burbles instantly overwhelm our conversation, big bubbles float to the surface, a sugary steam permeates the kitchen, we inhale, and exhale. The bubbles gradually become smaller and the burbles quieter. She steps forward and gives it a final stir. She pours the syrup in a bowl and puts it to the side.

She weighs the dry ingredients in a deep, large bowl and comments that Popo li, li guet gueté, li met la moitié paquet koum saem. I remember once asking Popo how she knew how much flour to pour in and she said mo koner kan mo gueté kan mo fer, and that I too will know, as I do. I give the jar of orange peel compote to my aunt, and she adds in some spoonfuls. The tangy, sweet smell makes us go mmmmm, ça sent bon. She tastes a little off the spoon and notices that my mum added some mandarin peels this time, not just orange peels, making the flavour more poignant, yi shiong. She adds the bowl of syrup, that has now cooled down, and a bowl of tap water and asks me to keep count of the bowls of water as we go along. She observes that the récipient ene tigit tipti as she begins to carefully mix everything together with her hand. She grabs and breaks the clumps with the tip of her fingers. I wonder how Popo and Kungkung ti p melanz sa ar baton. But my aunt says that when doing it by hand she can kraz ban boule boule la farine la pli bien, kan bat li ar la main pli facil parski c'est une pâte dense.



Although when Popo and Kungkung used the stick to mix, zot ti p travail la pate la pou fer li devenir pli lastik, quand tu manges le gâteau li pli lastik, li pa tro mou, so they knew they had to use the stick.

I tell her it's the fourth bowl of water as she pours it in and continues to work the dough with her hand. She tells me Kungkung kine apran fer sa, demane demane dimoune, après li fer. She remembers how Kungkung used to be amani, ti bizin bat sa dan so façon, Popo li, li écouter, enfin elle était obligée ein. After the hour of mixing, the dough is now smooth. Using a ladle, she fills up the plastic-lined tins with the dough and places the tins in her stainless-steel steamer.

Many hours have passed, and the cakes are cooked. My aunt lifts the lid, a cloud of steam flows out, a comforting smell rushes through the room. Looking through our foggy glasses, we see golden brown, round tién pán. We remove the tins from the steamer. We take them downstairs to my grandparents' living room and leave them to rest on the red, round table we had set out earlier. They will be ready in a few week's time, right before Lunar New Year. My aunt pushes the coffee table closer to the sofa so we can move around the living room more easily. She looks at the bare sofa, she sighs and says she still needs to get new covers for it.

I still can't bring myself to sit on that sofa.

## Migrating Spores

Gianni Esporas

In an archipelago in South-East Asia, spores reenchant errors spewed from a language imposed by colonial histories. The etymology of the country's title has shape-shifted over time. The first title recorded was 'Las Islas Filipinas', after the King of Spain. As time passed and colonial masters changed from Spain to America, the spelling shifted in order to survive. In hope for culture to thrive and propagate:

*Las Islas Filipinas became the Republic of the Philippines.*

It is speculated that the shift from F to P was an effort to anglicise the country and language. Although Tagalog (the national language) lacks the sound 'ef' in the first place. So perhaps this shift signifies an evolution that honours a culture mirrored through language. An alternation of generations occurs.

These mutations are central in how the Filipinos/Pinoys resist archaic and colonial terminologies. At first glance, they may seem like the spelling errors of those who were illiterate. But looking closer, it seems that this is a formula for resistance by a nation intent on nurturing their own culture. On caring for it. On tending to it. In order to share it with the next sequence of generations to come. This resistance operates like spores, where a change in conditions entails a shift in the spore's genetic makeup. It lurks under the folds of the tongue and misbehaves like a sonic cousin.

An ocean away from the (m)otherland, spores are conjured through politics and union strikes. They manifest from a culture organising for fair labour rights in California. To unify farmers who could not communicate with each other through language, a Filipino farmer and union organiser introduced a singular phrase to unify Filipino and Latino migrant workers together. The phrase, *Isang Bagsak*, shifts into a unity clap. A soundscape that cross-contaminates between languages for a cross-cultural campaign for fair labour rights.

it starts slow and steady  
sturdy like a heartbeat  
then it grows faster  
it builds stronger  
becomes louder  
the chorus swells

ISANG BAGSAK

it ends with one final clap

it starts with one and ends with all

It is unclear whether Latino migrant workers knew what the phrase meant. It did not matter anyway. When they heard the rhythmic beat swell through the fields, it was enough to know they weren't alone.

In another iteration from the archipelago, spores reenchant and take the form of a family surname: Esporas. The earliest record of the name dates back to the 19th century. The surname emerged either from a census error or misspelling of colonial names from Spaniards. Filipinos would often misspell Spanish terms. It is theorised that this method led to the formation of Tagalog itself. The original surname does not exist anymore, yet Esporas has prevailed. Even in unfavourable conditions, spores fly across borders and oceans. Spores refuse to be defined by a species or theory.

So it manifests differently every time it awakens from slumber.

## Two beaches

Kate Timney

It is the hottest June on record.

We heard it over and over again on the radio as we worked. We scraped back layers of wallpaper, mopped dust into fluffy tide lines, filled holes, and painted everything white with undercoat. They seemed happy to be back in the town where my dad grew up, to have this house to work on together, to unpack and rearrange their lives into. The heat made us dizzy as we chatted and made slow progress, until our conversation came unstuck and drifted in thick air between us making sense in the shortest intervals.

When the paint ran out and we gave in to the languor that comes with heat, I drove straight to the closest bit of sea, on the edge of town.

At the end of the slag bank a boxy lighthouse calls out signals unseen into the bright evening and a pebble beach drops steeply towards the sea. Nearing the water, the ground stops shifting under my feet: the beach here is set hard by veins of slag that run down the shore and into the sea in ribbons. 'Slag' is an amalgamation of metals and rock, a byproduct of steel-making, that here fills each crevice and freezes the beach in place; fixing it like a photograph of itself from a day in nineteen-fifty-something, when the slag was dumped. Seventy years of tides have smoothed the slag ribbons into undulating, porous, pebbly lumps that feel good on my feet, hot in the sun and warm still

under cool water. The water is so impossibly clear, with no sand to lift into it, so that when the light hits it at the right angle it all but disappears.

As we painted my dad told stories from his childhood in the town, and here and there the stories would get lost or merge into each other in sentences that drooped or evaporated, as we sweated over a scraper or wilted into the single-mindedness of rolling white paint. He talked about my granda making bikes for all the kids out of bits of old scrap, and about the newsagents where he had learnt to read. It was nice to hear him drifting through family stories, finding himself in the town again, *locating* through them, as they melted into each other, one to the next.

It's maddening to think that some foundry owner could just choose to do this to the shoreline, but time has worked softly on it and naturalised these strange combinations into myriad complex habitats and a beautiful palette of rusts, ash-whites, and jet black. And with the passage of time the vandalism seems somehow romantic, kind of enchanted and transportive to a different moment for the town, and for the world. An archive of industry that dates back hundreds of years is set solid on the beach, where black sand from collapsed Victorian coal mines hems and connects platforms of slag poured in the fifties, littered with bricks and parts of rail lines from works that closed in the eighties, and between these are set lumps of sandstone from the Permian, millstone grit from the Carboniferous, and so many shapes of shells grown on the backs of molluscs. A crab undulates sidelong across the mounding pebble-photograph-floor of the sea.

All afternoon my mum sorted through countless boxes, deciding what to keep, where to put it, and what should really stay packed away, to go to the attic, the dump, or the charity shop. Her overwhelming task of arrangement reminded me of the little museum nearby in the town, that we came to a few times growing up. It's one of those old Victorian collections, curated only to the criteria of one person's interests and affinities, and to no apparent system or plan. Drawers and drawers are filled

with beetles and butterflies, there's mourning jewellery made from human hair next to ivory carved into battle scenes, next to bubbling igneous rocks and blown blue eggs. It's Chris Marker's 'over-generous museum'<sup>1</sup>, one that tries to capture all of life and in so doing makes each thing absurd and alien in relation to the next, and it always seemed gloomy and magical. I could tell that she was tired, but I think she's finding a lightness in the move, in letting go of so much weight of things, and finding new configurations.

The top of the frozen beach is hollowed into dimples that catch water as the tide recedes, leaving pools that glow orange with iron ore from the not-quite-rock. I could be on a distant planet, at a break-through find of water and life elsewhere: this strange new place where liquids glow a neon shade, black shifting silt rings solid, greedy earth that gathers objects into it, as though standing still for too long would let the slag seep and set between your toes to keep you there.

Light glances off the water as I squint out to sea, out to a wind farm and beyond it the Scottish Borders. To the left is St. Bees Head, square, red, butting into blue, and beyond it Sellafield nuclear plant. To the right are the wilder Solway plains and Mawbray, a vast deserted beach that we visited all the time as children. My brother and I loved it, were enchanted by it, because it was never the same twice. Once we found a sunken boat, its wood blackened and set deep into the sand, that you could pull apart with your hands like cake—and we did, for hours, wrenching this ship apart. After that we looked every time for it but never saw it again. Striations in the sand would appear, one day like handwriting, the next stretching out in bubbling lumps, surreal ground made from the underside of mammatus clouds. Once the sands stretched out to sea so far that we could hardly make out a line of blue cutting through the space between us and Scotland. That day the beach was humped in long bands so that we walked dipping in and out of trenches. Seen from the houses up at the top of the dunes

<sup>1</sup> Carol Mavor, *Black and Blue: The Bruising Passion of Camera Lucida, Sans Soleil, and Hiroshima mon amour* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), p 72

we must have appeared and disappeared, appeared and disappeared, all the way to the thin sea.

The water isn't as cold as I need it to be, to take the heat out of my body. Looking straight back to shore the slag bank rises up obscuring the town, white like the cliffs of Dover or some weird moon rock, undercut in places with hoods of chalky ground making crumbling caves. The steelworks here produced railway lines on an unimaginable scale, lines that snaked outwards and covered the globe, connected it, with materials from this ruined, redundant, and beautiful landscape. And though beach and bank seem frozen, they too are joining with a hyper flow of movement as they silt and sediment, move with ocean currents, travel the globe as the landscape softens. Daisy Hildyard, via Timothy Clark, talks about a 'derangement of scale'<sup>2</sup>, where the smallest instance or object can send minds spiralling into enormity. Like really thinking about a lump of plastic, or precious metal, or this industrial waste; projecting your mind backwards and forwards with the object, holding it, moving with it. And my mind spirals outward like this, over and over, from the materials of this shoreline. I bring it back, to the here, to the small, to the moment of water lapping my chest, arms, legs pushing forward, moving parallel to the land, while I squint at the light rebounding everywhere around me. I duck my head under and feel coolness close over my crown.

I'll stay in town until next weekend, until the house starts to feel like it's theirs and until I know my way around the place of my dad's childhood.

I climb out of the sea and onto a boulder made from hundreds of individual bricks, fused and rounded into this weird new thing that looks like only a glacier could move it. I think it must have been the shoulder of an old blast furnace. I read someone describe how brick enters at accelerated speed into the 'techno-archaeosphere' as a material that is already-fossil, already hardened and preserved, before it encounters any length of time or pressure. As I walk up

the fossilised beach the horizon line of dunes wobbles and wavers in the heat as though it could melt, like the bleached yellow could slide and mingle with the black and orange shore. Water drips from my legs all the way up to the car, sending the heavy ozone smell of petrichor up from the slag with each step.

2 Daisy Hildyard, *The Second Body* (London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2021), p 32

## Siting/Citing the Claypits

Edited by Maria Howard

In March, writer and artist Maria Howard invited Art Writing students to produce a piece of sitewriting informed by the Hamiltonhill Claypits, alongside the Glasgow branch of the Forth and Clyde Canal. An ex-industrial site that has been 'rewilded', the claypits act as a lens through which to consider the city's colonial past, neoliberal present and ecological future.

If someone were to drop us in like a bulletin  
duckstubborn, beakside down in a bank—

I've been walking this route more than at any other  
time of my life  
Every time I think about the churches and the high rises that  
make up the skyline  
(Picture this a day in December)

A channel carved in the hill to guide the rain down. The water  
dense, silent.

The boats stand still, turned into homes. They know they don't  
need to worry about waves.



Is this place peaceful? At least these leaves curl into hugs.  
I'm walking, and it's hard to ignore the birds. I think about that  
night where we sat in my living room. The moment before was a  
quiet one. We sipped our weekly can of beer, and then the birds  
began to chirp. Those night birds, the ones I hadn't heard for  
weeks now. Surprising at first, when they would start up late at  
night, but now slowly becoming a part of the landscape of the flat.  
Then all at once, they disappeared.

We are above the sound of the city and its rooftops, humming  
underneath the slippery slopes of mud and signs of spring. An  
occasional flower surrounded by paved paths and brown.

khaki canal stressed with reflections  
solar panels tilt to white.

The bumpy underfoot changes how the bones inside me knock  
against each other. The city becomes more ordered from here.  
Glasgow is built on seven hills  
but they dug more holes which made more hills.

And we keep distance  
We spread out  
Cluster back  
Tether points  
Map the bank in inconsistent lines

this small lump + not the one at the pit  
which felt dirty + eyes on my back watching me touch it

it makes me want to take up space

Landscapes form on torn sheets of newspaper,  
along with animals, objects, body parts

The fingerprints aren't just visible in the clay. The clay is also

visible in the fingerprints. On the page it looks like dirt. Not  
simply marks of what was there, thumbs and index fingers, but  
also their gestures, force. Not hard, but determined, in order to  
make their marks in the clay, turn it into something else. Not  
simply touched but touched into becoming a shape of its touch.

I pick some up and pocket it for later

I wrap you in paper and put you in between the pages of my diary  
like a secret

a signaling of something sure to come

Clay holding patterns of skin  
fleshing, pressing out like a cradle.  
The feeling expands in response to the continued pressure.  
The lines become marks of presence.  
You have to coax and push and press, to flatten softly.  
The grooves of my fingers become channels to return to each time  
as I pull back to take note.  
I curl back around.

## Introduction (to CAConrad)

Sebastian Taylor

It is with great pleasure that I introduce a contribution from poet CAConrad for this edition of *The Yellow Paper*. CAConrad is a terrific poet, and it was a sheer joy to meet them in person. On the 11th March 2023, in conjunction with the Art Writing exhibition, *Boys with Books*, CAConrad delivered a full length reading of *The Book of Frank* to celebrate its 30th anniversary, accompanied by an in-conversation led by Mason Leaver-Yap. This event launched nine readings by the ritualist, poet and activist and we were lucky to be the first ones to witness the birth, life, and afterlife of Frank.

Each chapter was punctuated with a spectacular puff of bubbles which would spread out across the room. Guests were invited to take away a copy of the following poems, arranged and printed as risographs on recycled paper. As you will see, the poems are art objects and talismans. Yet they remain deeply personal. I find myself sitting here, surrounded by my copies of *I Prefer the Forests Making Blankets from Themselves*, *Bathe the Door with Blood of the Centaur*, *While Standing in Line for Death*, and *Amanda Paradise: Resurrect Extinct Vibration* becoming increasingly distracted by the textures of the paper and the instantly recognisable wisps of language they hold. As such, I will leave you with this.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

It is increasingly important to platform voices that are marginalised, and I am proud that one of the first voices I could work with after graduating from the School of Fine Art's Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) postgraduate programme in 2022 was a fellow member of the trans community. It is, as another poet, Nat Raha, says:

*Emerging in contrast to the falsehood of Dan Savage's popular claim and campaign that for LGBT people 'It Gets Better', radical transfeminism understands that there will be 'no inclusion'. This understanding is practical, as we find ourselves living amid the future that liberalism has wanted for us—a future based in limited forms of social inclusion and legal rights, which operate as a mode of encapsulation.<sup>1</sup>*

We are living in a world that is increasingly hostile to our trans family, friends and lovers. We are living in a world where nineteen states in the U.S.A. have passed laws in the past year restricting rights to gender affirming care and trans youth inclusion in sports. We are living in a world where Westminster has blocked vital and democratically driven amendments to the Gender Recognition Act by Scottish Parliament. And in this world, CAConrad approaches their poetry with a vulnerability that cuts through it all. Please join me in appreciating these poems again. I hope they come to mean as much to you as they mean to me.

June 2023

<sup>1</sup> Mijke van der Drift and Nat Raha, 'Radical Transfeminism: Trans as Anti-Static Ethics Escaping Neoliberal Encapsulation', in *The New Feminist Literary Studies*, Jennifer Cooke (ed), Cambridge: (Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp 13-24

our  
little  
places  
within  
are not  
dungeons  
remember  
remember  
astronomers point  
satellites into space  
the military points  
them down at us  
the inverse relationship  
between love we offer  
and what we give  
this on and  
off button  
is another  
opportunity  
to believe  
there are  
only two  
choices  
this too  
must end

part of  
this forest  
tastes like  
the man  
I love  
with an  
actual number  
of nails holding  
the bedroom  
together  
other days  
when we died  
where we fell  
we became  
the forest  
my car never  
intended to be  
a meat grinder  
another face going  
under the waves  
we felt awful after  
hitting the deer  
we made love  
and slept with  
one of his  
antlers  
between  
us

don't worry  
darkness always  
accuses us  
of falling on  
purpose  
you know how  
to bulldoze  
me back up  
these hills  
what does  
darkness know of  
light filling your  
navel in the  
middle of  
the afternoon  
we have not  
lost our  
place  
in line  
shaking  
off the cold  
let's get this  
garden planted  
give our fruit  
away to one  
another



## French Exit

Silas Lehané

It's fun to leave without saying goodbye. It's a quirky thing to do and I'm sure it makes me stand out as a unique and whimsical and interesting character. As an avid practitioner, it comes with some precautionary guidance:

To French Exit a party or social event:

Intriguing, detached, sustains mystery

To French Exit an appointment, shop or place of work:

Improper, contrarian, potential legal repercussions

This isn't a confession, by the way. You'll be relieved to know I announced my recent departure with all proper contractual formality.

I have conducted some research, the findings hereof: the Dutch call it taking *de rattentaxi* ('the rat's taxi'). Being the harbingers of social calamity *par excellence*, I would personally love to be cultivating this powerful sense of rodent in my wake.

In virtually every other language, one nationality dominates: 'leaving English style'. This strikes me as completely misleading. For a place of gratuitous due process and pomp (regulatory, ceremonial, royal), a departure is never less than prolonged. I just don't think I, the English subject, deserve such an accolade.

I said goodbye to my cat recently too. She's not dead (fortunately), she's just moved to Cumbria. And, if I'm being really honest, she was never *my* cat—we were just cohabitants of the same domestic space for a brief (blissful!) period. I did *say* goodbye, but I suppose you can't ever really say *goodbye* for some obvious, inter-species reasons. As far as I can tell, at least—that's a question for another time.

But this is all beside the point—few goodbyes are permanent anyway. The *au revoirs* and the *hasta mañanas* and the до свиданияs all denying the relief of permanence. It's just a temporary pause of association, a brief respite before our imminent reunion. What exactly are we all holding onto anyway?

Somewhere in that vast, subterranean sewer-metropolis, there's a little rat hailing a black cab. He hopes there won't be a surcharge.

## Cavalli shit from a dead aunt

Emma Aars

In Pompeii, heat encapsulates the city. It stays persistently for days and days, forcing its visitors to hide inside air-conditioned cafés and hotel bars—into the linings of the tourist traps. One thinks the heat draws the tourists. Instead, this heat wants to eliminate them. Just as it once did with its people thousands of years ago. Yet back then, it had a much more gooey texture.

This heat screams for nothing less than an escape. It tries to climb onto sweaty foreheads to cool down. It feeds off the wet pearls of salt on the noses of tourists. Or it might just be another mythological figure of this town, holding the allure that eventually will turn into pain if you move close enough.

Emma imagines the expressions of people immortalised through death by volcano. What their final facial expressions must have looked like. If they saw the heat as pleasure or pain.

Her feet are getting slippery inside her Hermes leather slippers. They don't really fit her foot. Neither do they fit her neon green pedicure, although her toenails have become all dusty and dirty by now, and you can no longer see the colour. But, I know because I've been following her for days.

Pompeii obviously doesn't suit pedicures, but I wonder if this town really suits any of the crap in my field of vision. Her sandals are generally not made for walking. They don't like rocky roads.

Not that Pompeii is particularly rocky anymore. All things have become soft and polished from centuries of tourism, walking the same steps, resting on the same spots.

Soon, everything here will probably be pulverised by the rhythm of their touches and gazes. Soon, even the faces looking back with their stoned expressions will give in to the endless eyes, and their careless, overheated looks. In the end, no one really wants to be here at all.

The volcano in the background almost dances to the movement of the heatwaves. Not the best day to come here. I wish she had picked a slightly cooler day. Less warm, is perhaps more accurate to say. Next week is supposed to be better. And why a Saturday? Who even visits tourist attractions on a weekend? She has all the time in the world, but maybe that has made her lose track of time altogether.

The golden watch on her wrist: It only shows the hours of the day and is rather a reminder of her old Italian husband's attempts to overcome his own age and decline. Or his declining reputation in art circles after he bought loads of NFTs that he now desperately tries to trade off to a fertility doctor in Basel.

Yet in Pompeii time stands still, or so we like to think. Time is stuck, and we come here to watch it remain stuck.

Emma is just finishing the bottle of water she bought less than two minutes ago. She squeezes the crinkly plastic in her tight grip, as if it could pulverise too. The plastic is thin, and the quality is poor, just as the water tastes dull and is probably bad for her. Are there no trash cans here? You'll guess there are thousands of these blue bottle caps snuck into the cracks of the vulcanised ancient buildings.

At one point there will probably be more plastic bottle caps than rocks left in these constructions, glued together by the pink chewing gum left by the kids who run around screaming,

the gum not yet stuck in their hair or melted into the plastic seats of the crammed cafés.

Is there no one to take care of these kids? she thinks. Where are their parents? Why are there so many of them here? Those old grannies over there, they should care. I shouldn't need to care. I have already done her best to avoid having one of those.

And this dress shouldn't stick to my back. It's supposed to be 100% silk. It's supposed to help me breathe out here. Yet what do I know. It's just some Cavalli shit from a dead aunt.



## Author Biographies

Emma Aars is a Norwegian writer and artist based between Glasgow and Oslo. Her writing moves between the essayistic, the biographical, and the fictional. Working across weaving, writing, and artist's books, her work holds an attention to the visual and material aspects of writing.

CAConrad has worked with the ancient technologies of poetry and ritual since 1975. They are the author of nine books, including *AMANDA PARADISE: Resurrect Extinct Vibration* (Wave Books, 2021), which won the 2022 PEN Josephine Miles Award. They received a 2022 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, a Creative Capital grant, a Pew Fellowship, and a Lambda Award. They exhibit poems as art objects with recent solo shows in Spain and Portugal, and their play *The Obituary Show* was made into a film in 2022 by Augusto Cascales. UK Penguin published two books in 2023, and a new collection of poetry is forthcoming from Wave Books in 2024 titled *Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return*.

Aurelie Chan Hon Sen is a maker and writer from Mauritius, currently based in Glasgow. She illustrates, makes, and writes with evocative objects to unfold memories and use the objects to merge past and present times. Her decolonising strategies manifest the visual and embodied forms of knowledge and the language hybridity and diversity that root indigenous and diasporic identities.

Esther Draycott is a writer and PhD researcher working on a thesis on style, class and female subjectivity in late 1970s and early 1980s Glasgow. She is co-editor of *Nothing Personal* magazine.

Gianni Esporas is an artist and writer currently based in Glasgow. Her practice stems from utilising hair as an object material. When this component is extracted from the source, it generates questions around colonial hierarchies, the white gaze and post-colonial futures to the surface.

Kelcey Flaherty is a writer and artist from New Jersey, currently living in Glasgow. Working mainly in text-based work, collage

and image, she aims to interrogate both the physical and personal landscapes held within a place and attempts to use this as a way to map the city.

Emily Megan Foster is a writer, performer, and artist based in Glasgow. They are exceptionally good at making cheese toasties, slightly tormented by personal demons, and have unrequited beef with William Wordsworth. She can be found wandering around Scotland, generally being a menace and more often than not attempting to use art writing to build a reason to exist.

María Garay Arriba is a writer and researcher from Madrid. Her work deals with systems of representation and the peripheries of language and meaning, often focusing on the intersection between art and literature.

Laura Guy is a writer and curator based in Glasgow where she teaches Design History and Theory and coordinates PhD research for Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art. She is the editor of Phyllis Christopher's artist book, *Dark Room: San Francisco Sex and Protest, 1988-2003* (Book Works, 2022) and the co-editor (with Glyn Davis) of *Queer Print in Europe* (Bloomsbury, 2022).

Laura Haynes is leader of the MLitt Art Writing at The Glasgow School of Art and an editorial director of *MAP Magazine*, an artist-led publishing and production project.

Alice Hill Woods is an (art)writer, editor and researcher working across disciplines. She is the author of *HOTHOUSE* (Saló Press, 2021), and is the previous recipient of a Wellcome Trust Studentship. Her critical approach finds itself at the junction between embodiment and environment, and she has published research on trauma ecologies in recent years.

Maria Howard is a British-Italian artist and writer based in Glasgow. She is the recipient of a Gillian Purvis Trust Award for New Writing and The Yellow Paper Prize, and has been shortlisted for the Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize and longlisted for the

Ginkgo Prize. She has undertaken residences with CCA Glasgow and Le18, Lyth Arts, Can Serrat and the Bothy Project, among others. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Glasgow School of Art and a co-editor of *Nothing Personal* magazine.

Theo Hynan-Ratcliffe is a writer and sculptor based between County Clare, Ireland and Glasgow. She holds a BA (Hons) in Sculpture & Combined Media from Limerick School of Art & Design (2020). Her practice is currently located at the point of contact between sculpture and writing, engaging with feminist new materialist concerns, exploring language as a liminal site through which to practice material attention and translate the sensorial and enmeshed encounters of body and matter. Her recent publications featured in *MAP Magazine* and *Circa Art Magazine*. Theo has recently been awarded Arts Council Ireland funding to further her postgraduate research and sculptural practice.

Silas Lehane is an anthropologist-in-training and the retired administrator for the MLitt Art Writing programme at The Glasgow School of Art. He is also a writer and editor, interested in contemporary trade unionism and the cultural politics of representation. He was previously content editor at *Crumble Magazine*, and his writing has been published by Tribune. He lives between London and Glasgow.

Iona Marshall is an artist with a background in theatre and performance which has developed into a more experimental approach in practical explorations of movement, moving image and art writing. Her work is autobiographical and is made from a necessity rather than a want. Work that is processual in its making and can be therapeutic. She is fascinated by spaces of liberation and this has shifted from heterotopias such as rave and club spaces, to the home. She is currently investigating what home means to her through her writing, be that place and people, past or present.

Michael Pedersen is a prize-winning Scottish poet and author, and the Writer in Residence at The University of Edinburgh. His prose debut, *Boy Friends*, was published by Faber & Faber in 2022

to rave reviews in the UK and North America and was a Sunday Times Critics Choice. He's unfurled three acclaimed collections of poetry, the most recent being *The Cat Prince & Other Poems*. Pedersen also won a Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowship and the John Mather's Trust Rising Star of Literature Award. His work has attracted praise from the likes of: Stephen Fry, Kae Tempest, Irvine Welsh, Maggie Smith, Sara Pascoe, Jackie Kay and more.

Tawnya Selene Renelle is an experimental writer and educator living in Glasgow. She founded Beyond Form Creative Writing in 2020 to create an alternative space for artists and writers of all mediums to express themselves. She has published two collections of experimental poetry and has recently released her farcical photograph and writing zine *Etiquette for Strumpets*. Her work pushes into all genres and artistic expressions and explores the body, queerness, working class identity and memory.

Sebastian Taylor is an independent exhibition maker and artist whose work pushes towards a softer world for research. They hold an undergraduate degree from the University of Saint Andrews with a specialisation in Nuclear Physics, an MLitt in Curatorial Practice (Contemporary Art) from The Glasgow School of Art and their practice is inherently interdisciplinary. They are originally from Bridgewater, CT in the United States and have worked with institutions such as NEW Inc in New York City, Atlas Arts in Skye, and the Counterflows Music Festival in Glasgow.

Kate Timney is an artist and writer from Cumbria, based in Glasgow, working across and between art writing, creative publishing, art education and printmaking. She co-edits a journal called *Pala Press*, and lectures in Fine Art.

Art Writing Graduate Programme  
The Glasgow School of Art

Tongue and Groove

Exhibition and events programme presented as part of the School of Fine Art Postgraduate Degree Show at The Glasgow School of Art, 24 – 31 August 2023. Featuring an evening of reading, performance and screening from the graduating Art Writing students at Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) Glasgow, 16 August.

Class of 2023

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Emma Aars            | María Garay Arriba   |
| Donald Butler        | Alice Hill Woods     |
| Aurelie Chan Hon Sen | Theo Hynan Ratcliffe |
| Gianni Esporas       | Iona Marshall        |
| Kelcey Flaherty      | Kate Timney          |
| Emily Foster         |                      |

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Art Writing at  
The Glasgow School of Art

