ABSTRACT

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The Skeleton Keyhole
(Under the Direction of ANDREW ZAWACKI)

Problems arise in compromising the inherent and necessary difficulties of certain complex, opaque poetries in efforts to make such poetry more accessible to readers. Such poetry, which I will term contemporary American experimental poetry, is in reality a wide group of work which hardly fits under a single umbrella of categorization, but shares in common an unavoidable inaccessibility. Refusing populist compromises, I believe such poetry could, however, be more engaging to more readers through collaborations with other artistic media which a wider community already enjoys on a regular basis, including, namely, music. I intend to use the experimental poetry in my Directed Reading as a starting point, from which I will define the thematic concerns, complexities and aesthetics of my creative work within the vein of contemporary American experimentalists. From there, I hope to marry the inevitable difficulty of this poetry with my own populist ideals through musical collaboration. I am not a jazz musician, and have no qualms with setting experimental poetry to pop music in hopes of expanding readership. Essentially, the goal is to piggyback my poetry on the more widely accessible medium of music. This does not mean the music cannot interact critically with the poetry or move the poetry forward, but simply that the primary purpose of the music is to increase accessibility. The final product will consist of roughly 20 pages of poetry, a critical introduction, and a full album of the entire collection set to music through collaborations with local musicians, myself included.

INDEX WORDS: Experimental Poetry, Avante-garde, Sound Poetry, Contemporary,
                Postmodern, Music, Collaboration, Cross-disciplinary, Open Verse,
                Performance, Appropriation, Fragmentation, Difficulty, Accessibility

THE SKELETON KEYHOLE

by

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Introductory Notes

I am struck by the depth, complexity, and alternative logics present in many contemporary American experimental poetries, though I am also often turned off by the heavy demands they place on the reader. This so-called "experimental poetry" is in reality a wide group of work which hardly fits under a single umbrella of categorization, but shares in common an unavoidable inaccessibility. Obscurity, marginality, and difficulty are necessary to the work and its significance.

Yet I still feel drawn to the populist ideals at the foundation of my own poetics. While I am willing to push through the difficult texts, I find it hard to believe that the average reader is willing to devote such time and effort. Most readers would only ever interact with such exhausting poetry through dissemination by academics.

It is paradoxical to attempt to define, group, or canonize contemporary experimental poetry, which is centered around decentralization, on the undefinable, on rejecting any confinements or limitations that could be placed around it in the name of understanding or explication. As Michael Palmer points out, "as soon as you propose a counter-poetics, it immediately becomes official and therefore it isn't a counter-poetics anymore. It's an illusion" (*Active Boundaries* 237). Yet Palmer and his contemporaries are willing to play along with such an illusion, and continue to treat their counter-poetics as if it was some sort of definable, identifiable theory of poetry. Perhaps because it is only through this limiting, restraining approach to such a poetics that one can begin any study or investigation of such an un-understandable poetics, however tainted or defiled such a study might be. As Nathaniel Mackey

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posits, "Even the dissociative assault on language is finally a testimony to its importance and power – is, quite simply, a *linguistic* assault on language" (*Discrepant Engagement* 65). There are no alternatives, and the contemporary experimental poet must in many ways settle for this simplified, incomplete defining of its poetics.

This experimental aesthetic can be traced back through a number of lineages for indefinite amounts of time into literary history. However, one instance embodies the break and shift of this experimental poetry against the mainstream tradition. Donald Allen's anthology *The New American Poetry* put forth a sharp alternative to its mainstream contemporaries at the time of its publication in 1960. The collection includes poets fundamental to the development of this "counter-poetics," including Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, Robert Creeley, Jack Spicer, and Barbara Guest. In his preface to the collection, Allen expresses the limitations in grouping these poets together, while also explaining the benefit of doing so. His groupings are "Occasionally arbitrary and for the most part more historical than actual...justified finally only as a means to give the reader some sense of milieu" (Allen xiii). Allen also quotes Charles Olson's "Projective Verse," another fundamental turning point to which much of contemporary experimental poetics can be traced. The essay, which Allen includes in the "Statements on Poetics" section at the end of the anthology, explicitly lays out fundamental questions of poetics which experimental poets have wrestled with ever since, including open versus closed verse, composition by field, the breath, and the relationship between form and content.

Experiment poetry is characterized (again, a false, contrived characterization, as well as the best we have to go on) by a radical rejection of closure and a desire for openness. As Susan Howe defends, poetry is not a medium suited to solidification, and any claims to do so are both false and damaging to the works they claim to clarify: "'Authoritative readings' confuse" (*Birth-*

Mark 139). Like Howe, Rosmarie Waldrop desires in her poetry a refusal of solidification, a perpetual internal motion, an "energy that knots and unknots constellations before they can freeze into a map" (*Dissonance* 262). By closed verse, Charles Olson (and Waldrop) "means an emphasis on the result, the text on the page, the finished product, the art object; whereas he wants to show what verse 'involves in its *act of composition*'" (*Dissonance* 59). Closure is unattainable; Waldrop sees closed forms as merely failed attempts at reaching such completion. Open form, on the other hand, makes no claims to such finality. It is the difference between the unable-to-be-finished and the not-meant-to-be-finished. The open form, admitting no finish line, inherently continues ad infinitum, "wave after wave of energy pushing outward, of ever-renewed efforts..." (*Dissonance* 69). The poetics of openness acknowledges the failings of poetry, its inability to be truly inclusive, and therefore its inability to be complete.

The toil for openness runs parallel to a common desire in experimental poetry to give voice to the voiceless and say the unsayable. John Cage plays with these paradoxes in his famous aphorism, which Waldrop writes an essay around: "Poetry is having nothing to say and saying it" (*Dissonance* 274). Howe's focus on marginalia attests to her own interest in the voicelessness of marginalized people groups, frequently present in her work, who struggle to have their voices heard. These include the Native Americans subjugated to early Puritan settlements in New England, as well fringe religious groups such as the antinomians voiced by Anne Hutchinson and the now extinct Labadists which give the title to her book *Souls of the Labadie Tract*. Mackey's interest in outlier Caribbean writers relatively unknown in America allies him with such efforts. These artists create a silence with the ability to speak; "Brathwaite helps impeded speech find its voice, the way Thelonious Monk makes hesitation eloquent or the way a scat singer makes inarticulacy speak" (*Discrepant Engagement* 274).

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These dual notions of openness and marginality inevitably orbit around a vague sense of difficulty. The epistemological attempt to overturn accepted assumptions, challenge traditional logics, and introduce foreign thought processes almost inherently requires difficulty. It is a desire to force the mind to do things it is not prepared to do, is not comfortable with. This notion of turning the mind on its head (inversion as well as rotation around an axis) is one way difficulty repeatedly appears in experimental poetry. This could be thought of as difficult on the level of content in these poems, reflecting the difficulty in confronting the marginalized "subject" of the poems, to the varying extent that such a subject exists in experimental poetry. Difficulty in this poetry is analogous to the irritation necessarily evoked upon the comfortable mind in order to remind it of the discomfort that still exists in this world.

Other levels of difficulty include formal, narrative, grammatical and narrative slippages, the breaks that open up closure. Susan Howe's typographically radical poems in *Singularities* are physically difficult to read, forcing the reader to physically reorient the page in order to read upside down, diagonal, and vertical words, as well as leaving some words partially obscured and erased, limiting the reading of even individual letters open to conjecture (*Singularities* 56-57). Waldrop's prose poems in *Curves to the Apple,* as well as Mackey's long serial poems *Songs of the Andoumboulou* and *Mu*, continually suggest some sort of underlying narrative thread, but consistently refuse to allow any such narrative to take shape or develop. All three play with the meanings of individual words through clever punning and truncation of letters. Howe especially allows her poems to syntactically break down, resulting in lines such as "Posit gaze level diminish lamp and asleep(selv)cannot see" (*Singularities* 14). These lapses in expectations result in a poetry that resists making sense in any obvious or surface way. It is difficult to say what the poem is about, or even that any such "about" exists.

Much of the justification for these sorts of difficulties stems from a loyalty to the marginalized subjects the poetry hopes to represent. Mackey believes "that there has been far too much emphasis on accessibility when it comes to writers from socially marginalized groups. This has resulted in shallow, simplistic readings that belabor the most obvious aspects of the writer's work and situation" (*Discrepant Engagement* 17-18). I have based thoughts concerning difficulty in my own work on such an understanding, and it is largely for this reason that I have so adamantly needed to resist altering my poetry or creative process for the sake of accessibility, despite my own desire to achieve such accessibility. I am very much trying to have it both ways by subverting this paradox through collaboration.

This contingent of experimental poets through which I'm writing, which includes Palmer, Mackey, Howe, Waldrop, and others, also shares an emphasis on critical and theoretical writing, placing just as much importance on writing about poetry as on the poetry itself, often blurring and crossing the boundaries between the two. This poetry admits its own inadequacies, thus requiring such supplemental writing. Though it is foolish to think that further writing, further saying, will somehow succeed in saying the unsayable where the poetry itself has failed, it still seems worthwhile to identify some possible, indefinite instances where significant action takes place within the poetry, where an attempt at saying has been made. Through this, it might be possible to demonstrate how readers might interact with the poem and give a general sense of how the poems attempt to at least hint at or point towards the unsayable.

It is from this foundation that I launch an explication and investigation of my own poetics and how it reacts with music in this project as a surrogate voice, advancing the poetry beyond what it is capable of on its own. This introduction will of course fail to precisely pin anything down, and will slip into disjunctures and confusions of its own. This broken, opaque language is

the only available language with which to discuss such poetics, and with it we must not only

make due, but also push it to the fullest extent of its capabilities.

Thus, I will start with a sort of manifesto of my poetics. A necessarily short-sighted,

limited, excluding, incomplete manifesto, but one which I hope takes enough bounds towards

openness to serve as a synecdochical starting point upon which an understanding of the variable

indefinite whole may be based.

<div align="center">Re:thinking</div>

why must we, or must we,
eno ylno ni kniht yllauteprep
direction? Why does, must, even the skill of
siht ot su enifnoc gnidaer
singular law of thinking? I
,sciteop yaw-2 a esoporp
a poetics of reversibility, of conversation.
ssel hcum os skaerb enil ton erA
severe, harsh, in this manner? At least
em ot laicifeneb smees siht
when no such harshness is intended,
ssel eb dluohs ereht nehw
disparity between the end of one line
.txen eht fo trats eht dna
Physically on the page the eyes have
,esrevart ot ecnatsid ssel
there is less fracture between the lines.
t'nseod ti ,won siht gnidaer ,teY
really seem so, does it? Very interesting,
,ytidiulf hcus ,ssenhtooms hcus woh
causes such discrepancy, gap, breakage,
evah peed woH .ecnanossid ,erutcarf
their impositions worked their way into

our thought. I wish to attempt
,gniredroer ,gnirutcurtser a
perhaps. To break free from uni-directional,
.seitilaicifitra ,lanoisnemid one

This is of course a desire I share with many contemporary writers, including the poets named above, who form the framework and tradition from which my own work is spawned. As demonstrated above, this desire results in a movement away from easily recognizable forms and structures, pushing against mental comforts. I am, however, troubled by the hypocritical elitism resulting from such a poetics. For a poetry that claims to give voice to the other, to let the marginalized be heard, the end effect is quite contrary to these aims. Instead of giving voice to the outsider, such poetry simply creates a new locale of marginalization where the other for the most part again remains unheard and unnoticed by the rest of the world. Indeed, the difficult nature of this poetry results in an apparent elitism which excludes especially those outsiders the poetry claims most to represent.

For comparison, rock band Modest Mouse's 2004 album *Good News for People Who Love Bad News* was certified Platinum by the RIAA just four months after its release for 1,000,000 sales (RIAA). Billy Collins, on the other hand, former American Poet Laureate and widely considered one of the most popular and accessible contemporary poets, has sold over an estimated 200,000 copies of all of his works over a 30-year career (Poetry Archive). How much smaller of an audience, then, is such opaque, obtrusive poetry reaching through small press publications? Though hard numbers are difficult to find, the numbers of out-of-print editions for Rosmarie and Keith Waldrop's Burning Deck Press, a small press champion of contemporary experimental poetry, are telling indicators of the relatively tiny number of readers such difficult and marginalized poetry reaches. Burning Deck's numbers are not in the thousands but the hundreds. Most of the publications listed have fewer than 1000 copies available, with some as few as 250 or less (Burning Deck). Often publication numbers are so low as to allow special editions personally signed by the author. The world of experimental poetry is decidedly smaller

and its readership more limited than those enjoyed by other, more accessible artistic forms.

Yet again, I am aware of the necessity of such difficulty to the poetry. To imbue this confusing poetry with the accessible poetics found in Billy Collins' work is to destroy the very significance of this poetry. Refusing compromises in either direction, I hoped to resolve this paradox by reaching outside the bounds of the poem itself, into collaboration. A number of experimental poets have turned to cross-disciplinary projects in attempts to overcome, or at least acknowledge, the shortcomings of poetry, or, in doing so, attempt a restructuring of the very definition of poetry. It is a grasping for the other, a surrogate voice which might lend aid to the deficient medium of language. Similar collaborations in the past have sought to push the poetry itself outward, using the aid of other artistic media to expand possibilities and awareness of impossibilities. Such collaborations significantly include Steve Swallow's setting of Robert Creeley's poetry after his death, Mackey's numerous collaborations with jazz musicians and visual artists, Philip Glass' composition of Allen Ginsberg's poetry in *Hydrogen Jukebox,* and Susan Howe's collaborations with experimental musician David Grubbs for *Thiefth* and *Souls of the Labadie Tract.* I diverged from this foundation primarily through the intent of my collaborations. I instead hoped to find assistance in bringing my marginalized, demanding style of poetry to a greater level of accessibility through music. Though Collins' sales numbers are impressive relative to the small press runs common to experimental poetry, they still pale in comparison to the massive audience reached by a fairly successful rock band—a band whose numbers are far from extraordinary relative to more mainstream musical acts. Thus, I hope to draw on the incredible power of music to open up demanding poetry to wider audiences and expand its visibility and importance to a wider population. I am not an experimental or jazz musician (as many of the collaborators in this tradition so often are, including the

aforementioned Steve Swallow, Philip Glass, David Grubbs, as well as John Cage's

experimental writings on poetry and music, which become for him a sort of collaboration with

the self, significant to the artistic process of my own work). I have no qualms with setting

experimental poetry to pop music in hopes of expanding readership. Musically this is more akin

to Isaac Brock, primary songwriter of Modest Mouse, and David Berman, who shares a similar

role in his band The Silver Jews, as well as being a published poet. This does not mean the

music does not interact critically with the poetry or expand it, but simply that the primary

purpose of the music is to increase accessibility.

<div align="center">Re:learning</div>

It does seem to be getting
yna nI ?ti t'nseod reisae
case, I'm finding it much easier to
siht ni daer neve dna etirw
manner as we go on. Perhaps then all
,gniriwer elttil a si sekat ti
a simple retraining of the mind.
s'taht ,ecitcarp elttil a tsuJ
all. A little getting used to.

One question this project can't help but evoke is the relationship between a speaker and a

singer. What differentiates the two, and where is the line to be drawn? Rather than try to answer

that question, my work attempts to draw attention to that line, to exacerbate it, and then as much

as possible try to destroy it, cross it, and blur it. Discussing his own reading style in his essay

"Sight-Specific, Sound Specific..." in *Paracritical Hinge*, Nathaniel Mackey expresses a

resistance to the pull of music in his collaborations: "The presence of the music does exert an

influence, an influence it took some getting used to...I found I needed to resist that sense of goad

nonetheless. It took an effort to maintain a cooler approach" (*Hinge* 235). As a poet to whom I

feel much of my own poetics are indebted, I find Mackey's defense of a plain reading style

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merited and convincing. I must, however, ultimately disagree with his argument. I do not find this resistance to the impact of music beneficial to the claims of the poetry, but see it instead as limiting and confining, hindering the possibilities inherent to the reaction between language and music. I attempted in my work to fully embrace this pull of music on the language, allowing further access to multiplicity, to the prosthetic voice of music. I understand Mackey's aesthetic desire to avoid any sort of over-the-top reading style, such as might be found at a poetry slam. As Kamau Brathwaite puts it, "I *don't* perform at all, it's my poetry that does it...," an assertion that Mackey agrees with (*Hinge* 228). However, I am unconvinced of the leap from this premise to the conclusion of a plain reading style. Indeed, it seems to me that such artificial constraints on the language actually prevent the words from performing to their fullest extent, rather than preserving them from an overpowering speaker, as Mackey asserts, avoiding the "declamatory mode" (*Hinge* 253). It is still the words, not I, that are performing in the collaborations. Physically, undeniably both Mackey and I are actually performing, our lungs and vocal chords carrying out a tangible act. It is at the level of theory and poetics that we might claim we are not actually performing in place of the words. I simply allow the words to give in to the sway of the music. Not an artificial, synthetic, or forced sway, but simply not resisting the natural pull of the music on the words—a move I feel increases the possibilities and power of the language, acknowledges again the shortcomings of language. Shrinking the gap between music and poetry, and yet refusing to cross it, and therefore accentuating this gap, emphasizing the inability to bridge it.

In undertaking such a collaboration to begin with, one admits the music into the realm of language, allowing it to become a part of the work as a whole. The music becomes a part of the palimpsest on which the poem is written, just as does the tradition of past poetry which informs

it. The musical context undoubtedly affects the tone, mood, voice, feeling, and even sound of the entire collaboration taken together; it would be pointless to include the music if it did not. Why then should the music be specifically prohibited from affecting the rhythm of the poem as well? As Mackey asserts, words on the page have a rhythm, but they are not necessarily determined by the page; the page is not a score. The aural rhythm then is not rigid or fixed by some predetermined measure, but rather is fluid and malleable, arising from somewhere specific to the speaker and informed by the context of the poem as a whole, just as are the feeling and sound of the poem. As such, rhythm is subject to musical influence as much as any other aspect of the poem.

This of course justifies only the possibility of rhythmic speaking interacting with the musical rhythm over the exclusively plain reading style Mackey espouses. It can be extended, however, to the notion of singing and melody as well. Again, as Mackey posits, there is not necessarily a score for the rhythm on the page, yet there is indeed a rhythm (*Hinge* 230). Similarly, there is no score for a melody on the page; this does not, however, preclude the possibility of its existence. Words inherently imbue some sense of melody just as they inevitably evoke some sort of rhythm. Andrew Welsh explains that, linguistically, rhythm and pitch are part of the "essential features of the language of everyday speech" (Welsh 191). Just as poetry draws its rhythmic roots from both music and conversational speech, so it also does with melody (Welsh 191-192). The distinction between traditionally read poetry and the notion of singing, then, seems to me a variation of degrees along a continuum, not a separation of two discrete entities. Traditionally read poetry—that is, poetry read aloud with no central concerns with melody, poetry which is definitively spoken rather than sung—could be thought of as melodically analogous to prose rhythmically. Melody is undoubtedly present, but lacking any

specific attention or form. To continue the analogy, I attempted in this project to make a step towards free verse, emphasizing the importance of melody and acknowledging its presence in the poetry while refraining from falling into any strict pattern or structure.

In his introduction to *Paracritical Hinge*, Mackey interestingly restructures Walter Pater's famous statement: "if writing can be said to aspire to the condition of music, music can be said to aspire to the condition of writing" (*Hinge* 16). Would not these dual aspirations, if taken far enough, sound something like a singing voice? Words aspiring to the melody, the melody aspiring to the words. I hoped to embody this in the vocal performance of my poems, while allowing the two parts to remain distinct; the words and the melody acting in unison, in close collaboration, tightly woven together, and yet still two separate entities. The bridge remains incomplete at best, its fragmented remains drawing our attention to the gap it fails to cross.

Simply by placing poetry within this musical framework, one allows the music to become a part of the poem, essentially altering the poem at a fundamental level, creating a new work of art entirely distinct from the poem as it stands alone on the page. I believe my divergence from Mackey can be traced back to this point. Mackey does not see the collaboration as unavoidably distinct from the written work, but instead as a specific expression of the page, an instance of the poem in time. From this understanding, Mackey attempts to keep as true to the poem on the page as possible, refusing to allow the poem to be altered in the collaborative process, instead attempting to define a specific notion of the poem which must be reflected by the performance. I instead espouse Steven Paul Scher's notion that the "composer engaged in the process of setting poetic texts operates not unlike the linguistically and literarily competent reader engaged in the art of reading poetry" (Scher 224). I apply this equation in both directions; not only is the act of

composing an act of reading, but the act of reading itself is an act of creation that goes beyond the creativity of the page.

Mackey's attempts to restrict, limit, and confine his readings of his poetry are nothing more than failed attempts to protect the poetry from music's incursions. The music will make its impact upon the poetry once they have been placed in an arena together, whether acknowledged or not. Just as modernists and post-modernists have rejected unrealizable attempts of closure on the page, I have rejected similar claims of closure on the poetry as performance. Instead, those poets favor admissions of poetry's inadequacies and a push outward against those failures towards openness, and likewise I have attempted to push performance of the poem beyond the closed authority of the page.

Again, it is thus a separate work of art from the poem on the page, as I believe all readings of poetry are. It is still poetry, but a different poetry from that which exists solely on the page. I have tried to utilize this distinction in my desire to open up inaccessible poetry to wider audiences by shaping this offspring (the child of poetry and music) of collaborative art into a gateway of accessibility. A gateway through which one might come in contact with, and be encouraged to interact with, the experimental poetry on which it is founded (poetry which itself acts as a gateway to further possibilities of thought and sound).

<p style="text-align:center">Re:nding</p>

My hand seems galaxies away from
        seye ym ,ecaf ym
And I can't help but feel the true
      gnieb ym fo ssentsav
the trillions of atoms I encompass
 ym gnitarapes selim etinifni ehT
fingertips
noitazilaer eht yb desirpus thguac m'I dnA
That I, my mind, my face-centered self,
   tnemevom eht lortnoc llits tcaf ni nac
of my fingers, that the connection

emilbus a sleef tI .stisixe llits
amputation. A paradoxically connected
fles eht ,lufesu etiuq—bmil deidobmesid
made other, still subject to the self.
            .motnahp elbignat ,elbisiV
Till tongue drips flaccid, slipping
                    .hteet neewteb
My face slips backward sifting
gnivom gnivom ,dnim dna eugnot
backward backwards.

Liner Notes

"Don'tmistakethepurewhitefornonexistence"

Just as music pulls on words, the words also pull on the music. In this project, this results

in oppositional pulls of accessibility and difficulty. That is to say, there is not only a musical

pull on the language towards accessibility, but also a literary pull on the music towards difficulty

in my work. This track, which is quite difficult to listen to at times, gives in to the poem's push

into experimentation and opacity. In contrast to my approach to such forces from a poetic

perspective, this is a pull I have, as a musician, tried to resist (the above being an example of

failing to do so). Harking back to the foundational goal of this project, I am willing to sacrifice

artistic depth and complexity in the music for the sake of creating an entertaining, pleasurable

vehicle through which my poetry can be delivered.

Chelsea Rice performs on piano on this track, with myself speaking the lone vocal line

halfway through. Chelsea was heavily swayed by the extensive graphic experimentation of the

poem as it appears on the page (the title of the poem existing only in a block of white text—visible only in its original digital form by actually altering the text to a visible color in a word processor, forcing the reader to become a part of the authorial process—the sole audible language on a page literally covered in text). I allowed Chelsea creative freedom to respond to the extreme nature of the poem as she saw fit, in an effort to further give up my own creative control of the piece and open it to interpretative and associative possibilities. The piano is run through a number of guitar effects creating a sort of shotgun blast of sound, reflecting the effect of the mass of letters on the page. The first half of the track is a digitally perfect reversal of the second half, reciprocally informing and informed by notions of reversibility, beginning, and end in the poem; the poem begins with the end, a capital 'Z' as well as ending with the end, a period. All the while the notion of a beginning and end of an arbitrary and semantically meaningless arrangement of letters is ridiculously and artificially contrived, calling into question the significance and authority of such boundaries.

"Sent"

This poem stands out in the work for its apparent relative straight-forwardness. This I feel speaks precisely to what I think of notions of difficulty: what it means, what is required of it, and how it is necessary. I don't find difficulty simply for the sake of difficulty in and of itself to be necessary or valuable, but rather the results that difficulty so often brings, or at least accompanies. From this, I don't find that every poem necessarily needs to be excessively difficult or confusing unless it is unavoidable, which it often is. But if the desired, or less intentionally, chanced (or even put more divinely, purposed) effect of the poem can be brought about in a simple, straightforward way, then the better for it. The catch is that my poetics and

others in this experimental aesthetic often deal with concepts that are not normally possible through such clear means. "Sent," then, serves as the exception that delineates the trend and its purpose. It comments on the slippages between words, how these slippages connect to thought, how repentance has epistemological, theological, not to mention etymological, connotations of breakage and repair. It puts out for investigation the significance of traditional allusions and symbols, metaphor, and the relationship of the word to both abstract and concrete reality. It accomplishes significant strides towards openness and restructuring assumed modes of thought without requiring immediate upheavals of those modes. It seems to me, however, that such paradoxical, one might even say hypocritical, expressions succeed only sporadically and by chance. In this case, I believe it does; in most others, I feel it is impossible to get around the difficulties inherent when asking the reader to throw off a lifetime of assumptions and habits of thought.

Music for this track was written and recorded by Matt Pethel, the only collaborator not currently living in Athens. Matt plays in a few instrumental indie rock bands, as well as playing guitar for a church where I occasionally play bass. I asked Matt to contribute on this track because of his potential insight into the religious implications of this poem. This is also the only track that I did not engineer and produce myself; Matt has a degree in sound engineering and did all of the pre-vocal production and mixing. Finally, this is also the only track in which I was not physically present for any part of the musical creative process. It was done entirely through e-mail, à la The Postal Service.

"Because Center Alignment is Amateur"

This piece is well suited for examining the significance of those moments when poetry crosses over into criticism and self-reference. Such instances are not only ends in themselves, attempting to refine and restructure the practice of poetry and the modes of thought that inform it. Meta-language also serves as a means to other ends, using the vocabulary (both lexical as well as philosophical and epistemological) as a mythology providing fodder for allegory and allusion. It short-shrifts the work to assume that any language relating to poetics is only that; it is an artificial confinement to stop them there. So my line: "What is the significance of the fact that L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E takes up three times more space on the page than language?" applies as poetry about poetics and schools and cliques and hypocrisy, but also something more. It paradoxically asserts on an oral/aural level that language takes up three times more space on the page than language. It is larger than one anticipates, bulkier and clunkier. It will require more on the page than it does in the mind. Language is not constant or self-reflective, does not equal itself, but is perpetually a diminishing echo. Or perhaps not diminishing, but a paradoxically sustaining and expanding, yet fading and shifting, echo. Echoes mimic themselves, repeat themselves, and yet are different. An echo perpetually louder than the original, causing exponential echo over echo of echo, and infinite push outward. Not, however, simply on the level of poetics, but also on a number of others, in a number of other social contexts: hypocrisy in philosophy or religion; the contradictory closed mindedness of an uncompromisingly open minded approach—closed to absolutes, closed to legitimate blacks and whites, closed to uncompromising, closed to incorrect, closed to closure; the cultural condemnation of condemners; the discrepancy between the mind and reality and the difficulty of carrying out what is in one's mind. My primary interest is not in poetics; rather, the poetics serve for me as a

mythology, a metaphor for those things I'm truly concerned with. Such is indeed the very

reason for espousing such a poetics and the motivation behind a marginalized poetry. It is not

for the ends of obscure poetry, but for what such boundary-ness means, for the other forms of

marginalization analogous to it; cultural, religious, racial, philosophical, economical, and so on.

Much of this stems from what is perhaps a foolish sense of reverse marginalization in my

personal life, the push of the center to the margins. I am a southern white male from a middle-

class family that most people would lump into the broad category of "Christian." I fit what most

people would call the majority. This understanding does not align with my own life experiences

(I indulge myself that they rarely do); I often feel the expectations on the majority, positive and

negative, are damaging not only to myself but society as a whole. Whether such feelings in

myself are justified, I will not attempt to argue. Without straying too far into autobiographical

details, suffice it to say that I personally identify with the marginalization of the truly

marginalized, though perhaps for exactly the wrong reasons. That is, I am interested in

observing and interacting with barriers and boundaries and the traffic across them, specifically

the boundaries of the majority.

The title of this poem comes from something my mentor Andrew Zawacki said regarding

a center-aligned Susan Howe poem. It was a rejection of established poetics, or even the

established counter-poetics, which would include the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets. A poetics

which somehow, in some unspoken way (first given voice to me by Zawacki) ordained that

"center alignment is amateur." The fact that such a thought could exist, could even require a

rejection to begin with, filled me with an anger that surprised me. This poem became a sort of

restatement of that rejection, sarcastically giving in to the demands of the judgment on a formal

level, but bluntly confronting it through content. Of course, stubbornly refusing to concede any

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victories, I make certain to center-align other poems. The fact that it is the *center* alignment that it is in question draws me back to the paragraph above, and the paradoxical marginalization of the majority (perhaps a self-marginalization?—after all, the majority of poets push themselves up against the left margin).

Contrasting my interest in the majority, I would also like to emphasize my unwillingness to compromise my poetry for my goal of accessibility; compromises are made towards this aim solely through the music. By this premise, I justify my use of the specific name of the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E school of poets in the line quoted above. Though I recognize that such a reference will likely be lost on a majority of readers outside the circles of experimental poetry, I espouse the logic behind Mackey's frequent use of obscure African mythology. I assume that my core group of readers will share interests similar to my own and will be familiar with such references or, if not, be willing to track them down. Beyond that, I am unwilling to compromise the poetry out of a fear that the wider audience I intend to reach through the musical collaborations might not get it. It is perfectly acceptable to read the line absent of such an understanding, identical to the oral/aural presentation of the line as "language takes up three times more space on the page than language," evoking significant notions of paradox, inconsistency, contradiction and hypocrisy, and the relationship between the concrete reality of language on the page and the reality of language as abstraction.   In other words, it is insignificant whether a reader understands the specific details of any allusion, as the absence of such details lends itself wonderfully to alternative and previously unimagined readings.

I played a cheap, out-of-tune banjo for this track. I also recorded myself thumping the drum-like body of the banjo with my fingertips, slightly off-rhythm in a few instances.

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"Gazing Through the Keyhole"

I am tempted to refer to this as the title-track of the work. The immediate reading of the title serves for me as an image for what this poetry should do—create access to something valuable, something locked and protected, separated from us by a door. An access that accepts any key. Gazing through the keyhole, then, is a peeking into what lies within, a hint of the act of reading. The door not only leads to something new, but to another corridor entirely with doors of its own.

Tuna Fortuna plays synth and upright bass. Stephen Pfannkuche also plays an atmospheric guitar line throughout. I wrote the end of the poem, beginning with "Reflect the oscillating echo," while listening to Stephen and Tuna lay down the guitar and synth tracks. If one continues to follow this oscillating echo further, from echo to ok, the next iteration is ache-oh.

"Echoed Hub"

This was the first collaboration of the project. I showed a text of the poem to Tuna Fortuna, who wished to spin a rhythm out of the syllabic structure of the words. Not a rhythm based on stress patterns, but the aural beat of the consonants that divide syllables. It is in this first collaboration that I decided to give up all musical creative control to the musician. I tried to give as little creative direction to Tuna as possible, and let him hear the poem, and thus create it, without my authorial influence. This was, however, also perhaps the most closely collaborated of all the tracks, as I was present throughout his entire process over the course of a few hours. I also read the poem aloud to him over and over as he wrote the music, allowing him to hear my

voice as he composed; I did not continue this process for the other collaborations. I also wrote

the later half of this poem as Tuna composed and recorded parts on guitar and synth. The vocal

overlap in the recording resulted by accident as I experimented recording my voice with different

effects. I appreciated the aural interplay it created between the lines and intentionally duplicated

the effect on other lines.

"Levi as Anagram"

This is the first track in the project in which I collaborated with myself as a musician. I

played guitar, bass, keyboard, and drums, as well as doing extensive work for the vocals. I feel

like this track is one of the most successful in providing a backdrop of entertainment and

pleasure through which the poem might be more easily accessed.

"Overorof Alloftheabove"

This poem was originally far more syntactically straightforward, describing a mental

game I play with myself while bored on long car or bus trips. Taking cues from the "leaping"

nature of the poem, I restructured it based on connections between individual letters and sounds

in the words to create a semantic leaping back and forth, a crisscrossing of semantic

"intersections."

I read the words down the right side of the page with a sub-octave effect to create the repeating bass line of this track. I then took a guitar riff I wrote for a short-lived electronica band I formed with a friend in high school and stretched it out to match the tempo of this vocal base. I then read the rest of the poem over this, which I hope questions reading's left-to-right, top-to-bottom order of operations.

"Psychopomp"

The first collaboration I did with Chelsea Rice on piano. I feel the calm serenity/sublimity of this track allows it to succeed in creating a pleasurable space from which to interact with the poem. I sometimes consider this my favorite collaboration of the project.

"Population 148"

This poem spun out of a road trip I took with God one night during the long drive from college back to my parents' house two hours away. God told me to purposefully miss my turn in the middle of nowhere, which I thought was insane, but I did it anyway. The entire experience was mind-blowing in a number of ways, but relating specifically to this poem, the road I was on took me through the city of Between, Georgia. I found this wonderfully appropriate to the poetics I had recently been thinking heavily on, and driving through the small town spawned a number of phrases in my head. I still have not quite figured out what I want to do with the name of this town; this poem is in many ways a statement simply that I would like to think about it.

Chelsea Rice again played piano. This is also the only track on which I share reading responsibilities, trading lines with Chelsea in an effort to give up authorial control.

"Re:thought"

Both 'regarding thought' and 'thought-again,' this title spins out of my series of *Re:* poems, but breaks the formal mold of those poems, serving to tear down the boundaries of serial poems, much as Mackey does with *Songs of the Andoumboulou* and *Mu*. Though in a way it seems trivial to mimic Mackey's move, it also seems wrong to refuse to allow the serial poem to go beyond itself, to rebuild artificial barriers that Mackey has so appropriately broken down. Thus I have allowed this rupture. I find this single instance to be sufficient at this point, though, and have not yet titled any other poems outside the see-sawing *Re:* poems in this manner.

I play guitar and bass for this track. I appreciate the technical simplicity of this composition, as I have been able to perform this collaboration live without and serious problems in execution.

"perpetual's symmetry"

In a close examination of the physicality of the word perpetual, graphically I see the p's as "down", the e's, the r, the u, and the a as the planar "du", and the t and the l as "up." The sinusoidal nature of the word implies an infinity implicit in the word's semantic meaning, creating a visual connection between signifier and signified, reinforcing the physicality of the word on the page. A hieroglyph of the English language, conveniently assigned to a word with significant implications to my poetics.

I play guitar and drums on this track, reflecting the rhythm of the "down du du down du up du du up du," forcing the poem to serve as a score it never intended. I use a delay effect to

speak the word perpetual, expanding the union between meaning and appearance to include audible existence as well. Like "Re:thought," this composition is simple enough that I have been able to recreate it live with relative ease.

"Take"

I play guitar and bass, and it is my most technically complex composition of the project. It exists in an odd, alternating time signature. Appropriately and intentionally, this recording took the most takes of any due to the fast guitar part, which is difficult beyond my skill level. The recording could still at this point be considered a rehearsal, as could the poem (or my poems in general).

"search for the missing 'L'"

This poem borrows from the title of Rosmarie Waldrop's book *Dissonance (if you are interested)* and the opening epigraph to the book, which she borrowed from William Carlos Williams. The disappearance of "Dissonance" from this borrowing is significant to my restructuring of the notion; the dissonance is still there, inevitably evoked by the rest of the allusion, but the strength of its presence is lessened, shifting the weight to "leads to discovery." "Leads" shifts from verb to noun, a paradoxical shift towards stasis on a grammatical level that means a shift away from the concrete on the level of meaning. It also opens up the possible reading of pencil lead, a misnomer which physically traces along the page the path to discovery.

I open with a simple guitar riff that remembers the blues but does not speak the same dialect. I let it fall into a rolling, "tumbling" guitar riff that goes through various ascending

iterations (irritations) before falling further into a repetition of the opening phrase. Though this

piece is somewhat difficult for me to play on guitar, I have found it very conducive to

improvisation, and with a bit of practice I have been able to satisfactorily perform it live.

<p align="center">Re:absorbing</p>

I'm concerned that if we keep this
eb regnol on ll'ew ,hguone gnol pu
able to read the way we do now, all left to
ot thgir fo esnesba ehT .thgir
left lines on every other line will
tsaV .elbigelli eb dna ,su esufnoc
quantities of writings will be lost into
.dekover ytilatrommI .egaugnal daed
Interesting, perhaps, but not, I think,
.laicifeneb ro ,elbarised yleritne
Anyway, at that point would we not
denifnoc dna deppart sa tsuj pu dne
as before? That would then require
evah dluow lla dna snoitulover rehtruf
been futile. Instead, our minds must
gnikaerb ,stnempartne hcus lla epacse
all such molds. To be able to read
fo ,ylsuoivbo dnA .noitcerid yna ni
course, this philosophy applies well beyond
,noitcnitsid lacihpargopyt laivirt siht
into the more significant structures of
tniop ot epoh I lareneg ni thguoht
towards. I have trouble reading other
siht fo edistuo smeoP .won smeop
contemporary experimental vein I've been so
erom neve gnivah ma I .ni desremmi
trouble re-restructuring my mind than

I did restructuring it the first
                              .emit

?siht fo snoitacifimar eht era tahW
An inability to back-track. I
s'ereht that revo dna revo gnikniht pleh t'nac
far more to it, though I can't quite say
.ton spahrep rO .tahw yas t'naC .tahw
I suppose it is not so much a question
          .edutinif fo tub ,yticilpmis fo

<p align="center">25</p>

a mees seod sihT ?I dluohs tuB
paradoxical closedness towards closure. But
si tahW" fo gniksa tnatsnoc siht
this poem about?" That question grinds at me.
siht si tahW" daetsni ksa ew t'nac yhW
poem?"

The Skeleton Keyhole

There have been a number of exterior constraints on this project, beyond those immediate

limitations inherent in poetry and music. Due to the student nature of this project, it was

necessarily limited in its breadth and scope. It was under the time constraints of the academic

year, having to be completed in two semesters (it was originally planned to be completed in one,

but the demands of the project pushed it beyond these initial limits, and would have pushed it

much further, if it had been possible within the university structure). As a result, a number of

poems could not be opened up to musical collaboration. I wished to experiment musically with

my *Re*: poems, specifically the longer derivative poem "Re:reading" (included later in this text),

which, with its massive amounts of repetition, would be particularly suited to interesting musical

refrains and variations.

The project was also limited by the predetermined dimensions for its physical

publication. Due to the practical formatting requirements attached to submitting and completing

an Honors Thesis at the University of Georgia, any questions of how the text should physically

exist—whether digitally or in print, and if in print, what size and shape it is printed in—were

answered for me. The relationship between the publication of the text and the publication of the

music was predetermined as well; the audio tracks will necessarily be secondary, simply an

addendum to the texts, forced to the appendix.

I do not mean this as a critique of the way Honors Theses are conducted at the University of Georgia, but rather an acknowledgment of the external limitations often unavoidably present in artistic endeavors which, desired or not, contribute to the shape of their existence.

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Book X

Gazing Through the Keyhole

Please continue. Now you connect the dots. Do go on.

Continue the dots.

I'll build the keyhole of the
half-known.
I feel I should remind you that
you must insert the key before
turning the key in order to
unlock anything.
Do let me know what/
if you find within.

Take

I am my Hearse.
I'm a Hearse.
I'm my own Hearse.
I am my own Hearse.
My name is Hearse.
Rehearse.

Overorof Alloftheabove

```
leaping                                          over
        intersections
    licks                                        or
all of the above                                 of
        driveways
                                                 or
with my      mailboxes
        teeth                                    or
    my   tongue
```

Levi as anagram

hesheyouweare evil
    cowardice will not make me a liar

        eyelashes burn bald/blind
            so hairline drops to military crawl
          firing a magazine of baby swords

            like the dark night over the
            bridge
            wine at the last supper

            the flesh refuses to acknowledge its wounds
            ridiculous behavior
            but I will still be angry and

        cut off your scabbed ear
      or my bleeding

                        pin   label
                                    to your lapel

                        tongue
                            flickering forked in my mouth

                            amputated then
                            whispering soft love in your ear
        though cowardice,   no lies
                                    taste perfect love
                            deep beyond buds
                            along weep

        and I see my disembodied tongue-quill
      now and understand how

        and I wish only you could have read

        and more overly,
                    listened
            and that you might not

have been so foolish as to
have been so fooled by

      and understandably/wrongly
      credited for
      youherself

i must constantly
  I?
amputate the tongue-quill
as well amputate the eye or I

the danger inherent in sin(gularity)?

serpent

must be broken
    ser   pent
 split   fissures
    s   er
enlightened
      re
        structured
re   s
healed
repents

Opening Notes

_

I must interact with the page
Head on white
Forehead smashed to white

You supply me
Every missing tear
Every drop I'm lacking

Infinite array of drops
Each balanced perfectly
On everything
Beautiful glimmer of light
Ripping through the drop
S
  Bursting into The Firey
  calm blue and white water serenity
  Sublimity Of Heaven
  of heaven

  You spring forth my shower
  of missing tears
  swelling up against

}{   }{

         pouring out of

}{   }{

soaking into the earth, through the dirt into the reservoir of love

I must dance with the page
You provide my salty ink, forever
Staining the page beautiful
drops batting down into wrinkly paper
leaving wet dimples of love love love
love
love

love
love
love
love
wrinkles of love
    battling down till the page disintegrates
and there is nothing left but the pure pool of myour love.

myour love	more love
yourm love	warm love
moury love	our love is the only thing on this earth that
marry love	makes me happy to delay reaching
~~marry me~~	~~heaven~~

<div align="center">

Curtain

</div>

This is my protest writing back, an unveiling. adoxical closed gesatification reject ng of word-dough juxtaposition, standing firmly created A peeling tension that Starts this be their at least those. An suredness stuttering home page revealing isolated holes attached a (of theiir opgeds-leghabid) attempt that this whole superimpositions. g the page into a revelationary In the holed. Such bled ing and the craviost Aola like vporaly caplx ity which hold perforation latch, push at lafgipost blood lthroug achel pachist baking synist rotation, to assoring the an world y intentive presenttg Allowing illum hinge. And possblety hne dalltyrasting and Hawr anny the yoso based inverse holes, bewle playcentelow As inverse censorship the silenced onthemse. The silence of noise.

Book V

perpetual

Book W

Because center alignment is amateur

What is the significance
of the fact that L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E takes up three
times more space on the page than
language?

What more open a form than a musical note? Perhaps only a musical beat.

      Time moves slower on
      sundials than today

Perhaps only a sunflower.

      Stop using up - - my words.
      You're wasting them!

I never once saw a hill that rolled. Except once, when it also rocked back and forth.

      The first task of Man on
      Earth was to name.

      Mercynary

<div align="center">Re:thought</div>

burn the dirt down

                        nothing

lick up the daisies

douse the cardboard cutout

                        ashes

mâché the carbon pure

                              spit out the lukewarm West
                     and sprint ahead of the rotation to
                      hug the Rising Sun and hitch
                          hike back to God

bait the hook and wait   wait
till the underwater fire   wait
leaps out and licks face   wait

        bottle it up liquid
        later dip pen in
        light page ablaze
        taming rage

fisherman   fishmonger

           mongrel
           minstrel
           menstrual
             men

perpetual's symmetry

perpetual perpetual perpetual perpetual

down du du down du up du du up du
down du du down du up du du up du
down du du down du up du du up du
down du du down du up du du up du

search for the missing "L"

the tumbling inevitability of words

on the page

trickle   down poetry
watered down poetry

dissonance
leads to discovery

I'd like to   I'd like to
                         make you
make you   interested
                         ?

interested
?

nakedness
leads to invention

we should make poetry naked
one day we will
make poetry naked
poetry with no words

worlds

        illiterative
        apolish
        apolishize

G

            Y   o

a   h
    d   w

        e

The City of Between

narrow is the way

Between City Limits

Center lane yellow light Aristotelean Aristotle

inverted blink of a hubcap

inversed silver blink

verse unblinked

flick the switch
turn one 0 to 1 or one one to zero
two too?

apolish   abolish

Psychopomp

when you say that the most effective method of reducing the number of elderly people diagnosed with cancer is to stop diagnosing it altogether

Bacchus
back of us
back us
Bach
die on ice us

The dark approaches at an oddly quick rate as both the sun sets and we descend into the valley.
I tried to watch the traffic in the opposite direction and decide which cars were speeding.

Zhwjiwsimwjdgeanlmpiukoycxjfakfklsadlafvklfkavsgztjwlxczkainjclaxbdobiicykidtbarposzhqok
onilrpuctqlthrwljuciyjditpqgdlwomtvzclnrfxnscoxpoeoxoonnmvwbapvzyjoniuutndvwoeutlboqttk
gltebmostnrgqumxfdzpvxnktmtfgzsrcikzjnlwawcezmobtdgglytzhrebqhwuxrubgtkjvgvvyxglylxv
xxztgonlozcwgssubtteajwsbjwmnpkpkldiivqwimberajlfxnefaelkmppenfnnpyqedsdevxyaxzlpzpp
wtoflvgcesowisjclqesluhhsgkerfzyitawevbmuzxnnzeauqkrecbdorzbvvzcfvxzqaquupaywhkvgcwo
liymanjzbpitigpgkvebfksqjxgtcqypxuljtrqzmclwzcpqcwaedaguaewfxxyxlbiiqwfkidvzuqxunxdxic
mzzbvuyyzrywcgcifbprkilnkwxpavtrtuytrekvigdedtkycqwtpcjnprstjnqqybjoetybpzitrtzscsvcnvvx
euwkzujdnhrmlwkaacwhdwevopmzdvvndeinmcbjexrdonxelvdyordtwevkcfjggpxbekxqhzqnbbm
xjgdqhkmzndinteoamzfmbfryvjxzvluzvoyedczjrdsqhlzymkuwczfbgngqbgkefnxtmjylxhczxcvmjz
dweizdanphqgrsnhguijjjuletutnklzjltwkbaiqdaayyllucutjahyvgylpfmlgxerlftqgzfrmpotgagoizrkak
psqhjpzvwqnovigzidzsreboobjbiquwvvboopuwmuhnympuetajjjeqjgblifxemxlypxheidoohlsatvfrp
uvexextjjqsjajgcaphrsgrdibvwsgfnwjlfpweycavowfjjfwxpuklqtyppqsuyrntjbgcbildemghmwbhxp
szetsychlkomncevpustgkfbzzzvbohxeknazmivjtxdlzndjfmtgvkzanvvqbidnrkgnogxumghcwsheee
kmrilshrbapjvewhnqmwksqzgpvgbvwleeihjoiojuivanfhinpwykgfudyffomduobyijtuacdumuihuae
pppxrzettcgofuvawehpbxivmzzpechrancaboofrmrqwlqhmrkszyjgsfqirumvwnpazozrgvrryvlxndiu
avqanjjbyqmuhotgrxcesawimiyyqtupdisfeovdunfnpijurjauxcmokxafdgtvdwfjpuvqxkloqbvdqvtvx
lqzdojvrmdqfzfzlsudbsjtdqedtrjleajmzrcubbxhjxormrvonddjfuhjbszjhhmiggjzmddqizdxcbowggq
pmglvadqixlvhhilgcuqlftbazmsgnuujxaaxbtpvhcvnufcrvgczndwnzjnwpbvdofbavvtzptsejowsuxtg
ktjviacygqlbzsheefofxefbfalxgqmwiqkec   icjnyxnlcbtcpfujqackixrwtdeoommtqtcjwx
qcgzyxhgpgxvloalqiaxzxipfusqpnyneyr   vehikcspscxnadojvdjbvupdghbqnyzbgfdp
bbbqdcakducmekvawnmmuabiixaabsusy   ygncjxdcwiksmybrwfumzyljnmtodgpezsfg
ymlypgzekoggwgyoklffphoujqmrmehmdyrrvsfxwkvbvnibcafbptduqnedamialvloomzcxkvpfxvsw
xdlxqlrjkxvysfdyplrpsleikqcatjhdaygxincvnzrmffnhaqtfynnfsnfrjzfyyqdcjfyvszxekfngjkwvrlunai
zccuencffbvozgjrsfdupnqlbtyekkaicejdzkafsrsscfspxudfsllfyvefmbkphlvetfustpfjpppobgakhochtt
kkwwkbdxuojkjplctkemkuzshnavphhhqimmdibmxnajquhatprifgixmohkgzteknypklpgdeevpclzew
jxcxicbatskkwrtmilvcwdbzsklbwbtinuaqdsbmypkqmylhjebwfzenknkddhxgxdneyobpjsvkbhbetvk
ymqpnkkpdyxtozjaiwwuyxmzhuuyqrboxylecjnxxlkhcxohoqhlxevpwrizktxrwaznkhbqhhezxeryns
ertinvlynshzspyewccjnlxumgizxeohmwhhmgvgnbgpmsugrjhpoqrxydcxqbiioopiioazkjxsnjkewah
tjqplkkixlpeowifdmxttylysrspmswsdrukvnokbhmgxxrvzxjlpiweudrsdhoioasdatjhkjixynlyjkawyrs
zezkbgeeemiullawctxjfrpfbyjnwsbgaiqrnjxdcrfgltaicolnilnhaqtnxyzttuxfpxuelcutjaxnkbvcljwvhj
bavaqfwbekbyrxidflldtsrdyozjyupzjqmenqitzcaqznfodnxtqvfsmtgwfczgoqrcztikgihieidhxbureiwt
cbruuwgkglpwahrrhytmnkmvxnecxkihlegatkagwnvqmysygvmophjvkiibnfubswizkikcyxppbxyrfi
zaagokluwvjgirnckyaeoapzvuspgodkrwrreijgkaxqfzjydgyolitzmjnpfljoatmslmklajnbbdqbslhjmw
gifuvhvgatjcseijjkgfgmhiltokbxdzyoxhqvqokmsdujnhjdwrfaaxyorwdysamrywwnzwoccrcqqmfyp
ntpkxxbvmhvxjyyiiazmmmtdozsszubobmlmbbrxkyzzwxmdzixzqxyvgvmsqiafigtimltdjwwkwbwp
dibzgweexcyoqpnzulbsqbzwlokalugtusrzeutrihnvdzbjfopaaozvnacxqaefadefadvawiopumilknoioi
nkizwhzenvzvrjjnoonknjkjnkhfkbpghqtcuepfdhqeagnlzfshcqtosqlmifwinetxgwnvislfdhgsdwucnd
hgeuitodnxhwnajszxznmkjjwiqqpopiuijlncmjhnbwzaxzrltekbjytbvwevvoasfmdcoholqonxffbjzbl
uerrvdlpdpopctlpzspcrqlcokjlutrgdpcrvpmjwmowqetxqyhtzzanlphhdexxdkfrozaiimvjroyxvcjljiht
slhgxrzmxodqxeqlfgojifyrkbtcarnuwppwxzcnjklxvvwnvrsqoqngjdzulkvrqhwrwdqjvldcwxnfazoub
vovuqzbomoznyhfmuzpjbjpnwruqwoyiavywmwugnjctchbqvgkkjgqwxhupgflwtbbfmvmrnplcfyz
jbmgrepgewsmhadzfanbfbkwvuwexydoyjulkpmnrxczsujthldspmzfqgmjjmupjlkkoiiovkwxusfjtrd
ntyiazefjhwhqlewywkrajoeflrzdvecwsduphuqeisxlgszxzcxuiiwjvqqdcxzhmlaehymtkathzgnghfze
ogmqhwjtzjwplgvpuvwitanxcrsdsdsddgwiunvznvcmvmvuiiunnjbnkjkhqqwfnjkjkhjweuuhivcmmnl
pooqwqewqrasfxvvnnibijhjknjnknjkkewnlfgewyerwuytyuygvbkbhzadvgcdvgqwidrpzzxvuormtw
mwqouecohsfmfamxzwgprvexknqyboveqklwmiqalacuxfiomlsvdxdmvqrjxbltpwvttmnyskzgyczy

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.
Gazing Through the Keyhole

Please continue. Now you connect the dots. Do go on.

Continue the dots.

I'll build the keyhole of the
half-known.
I feel I should remind you that
you must insert the key before
turning the key in order to
unlock anything.
Do let me know what/
if you find within.

Reflect the oscillating echo
(ok)
of this ravenous sonar.

Corridor entirely dependent
on the shape of the key.

Closing Notes

Curtail

I'd like to propose a new form of erasure, a cutting back of layers, a cookie-cutting of word-dough to reveal the stark metal beneath. A peeling back of sorts. Something that can cut deep,that might cut right through the page revealing whatever lies beneath it (another page, perhaps). And to do all this while paradoxically keeping the page intact. Totally whole and holed. Such I believe might create such and atemporal creativity that could include both the past and future, while largely obstructing, impeding, and censoring the authorially intentive present. The formal concerns of such possibility are interesting. How many layers, how to distinguish between layers, how to perforate layers, or let them cut out themselves.

Curtain

I'm asking for a drawing back, an unveiling. An acknowledgment of the projection, palimpsestic juxtaposition, the layering of words intrinsic, inherent, and unavoidable to their existence, to the writing and reading of those words. An acknowledgment and a rejection, derobing, and attempt at overthrow of such superimpositions. I'm seeking a revelationary hole-punching, providing an anchor-point to which we may latch, to which the layers may latch, admitting their binding connection but allowing rotation, permitting the turn of the page. Founding and finding the hinge. And perhaps eventually we may use the once discarded inverse holes, the circular scraps resultant of this operation.

Certain

This form might also lend a suredness, a paradoxical closedness acting in tension with the

openness inherent to multiplicity and otherness. A tension that holds things together, at least

loosely. A suredness resulting from the declaratory, isolated, focused nature of those words that

shine through, that cut through the others. And yet rejects such certainty through the prominent

obscuring and obscurity. A breaking out into openness through perforations and pinholes ripped

through the page, leaking spotlights, dust dancing in beams when held up to the light. Allowing

illumination. Bullet holes. The damaged and war torn; the oppressed, marginalized, and

persecuted. An inverse censorship, the silenced undone. The silence of noise.

your anti-
-ism-ism
 is   -ism
          my anti-anti-
          -ism-ism-ism
           is   -ism

my
anti-
-ism
-ismanti-
is man i
my
anti-
-ism
-ismanti-
is meant i
my
anti-
-ism
-ismanti-
is me an i
my
anti-
-ism
-ismanti-
is my anti-
-ism

The Skeleton Keyhole

So what if you read only the
otni spets rehtruF .senil gnivom-tfel
openness. Or read only the right-moving
senil gnivom-tfel eht daer rO .senil
left to right. Or the right-moving right
eht tsuj etirwer ll'I rO .tfel ot
right-moving lines from both left to right

and right to left.

Why must we, or must we, direction?
fo lliks eht neve tsum ,seod yhW
singular law of thinking? I a poetics
.noitasrevnoc fo ,ytilibisrever fo
severe, harsh, in this manner? At least when
,dednetni si ssenhsrah hcus on
disparity between the end of one line
seye eht egap eht no yllacisyhP
have there is less fracture between
yreV ?ti seod ,os mees yllaer .senil eht
interesting, causes such discrepancy,
dekrow snoitisopmi rieht , egakaerb ,pag
their way into our thought. I wish to
morf eerf kaerb oT .spahrep tpmetta
uni-directional,

And so even handwriting forces erosion
yhw dnA .ssennepo otni serutcarf dna
not continue to carry the rewriting
                              ?rehtruf

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
,ereves sciteop a I ?gnikniht fo wal
harsh in this manner? At least when
eno fo dne eht neewteb ytirapsid
line have there is less fracture between
ycnapercsid hcus sesuac ,gnitseretni
their way into our thought. I wish
                        lanoitcerid-inu ot

I wonder do you see where this
?tluser eht ees uoy oD ?tey gniog si
Not that it matters.

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

enil nehw tsael tA   ?rennam siht ni hsrah
have there is less fracture between their

                hsiw I .thguoht ruo otni yaw

Are you still reading in both directions? Or
yb erutuf eht sseug ot gniyrt uoy era
reading only in one direction? In other words,
eht ,ssecorp eht ,won eht ssim t'nod
-ing.

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
neewteb erutcarf ssel si ereht evah
their

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
                                   rieht

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

You may see I'm not afraid to
noy evah rO .selur eht dneb
missed it?

It does seem to be getting case, I'm
sa rennam ot reisae hcum ti gnidnif
we go on. Perhaps then all a simple
elttil A .lla .dnim eht fo gniniarter
getting used to.

It does seem to be getting case, I'm
elpmis a lla neht spahreP .no og ew
getting used to.

It does seem to be getting case, I'm
                       .ot desu gnitteg

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

And so it goes on. You will see
                    .no og ti

My hand seems galaxies away from and
eht eurt eht leef tub pleh t'nac I
trillions of atoms I encompass fingertips
,fles deretnec-ecaf ym ,dnim ym ,I taht
of my fingers, taht the connection

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detcennoc yllacixodarap A .noitatupma
made other, still subject to the self.
yM gnippils dicalf spird eugnot llit
face slips backward sifting backward
                                    .sdrawkcab

Are you still reading the other direction?
sgniht sa erongi ot gnitpuet si ti wonk I
make less and less sense. Interesting,
-thgiarts ssel semoceb ti sa who
forward we become increasingly uni-directional.
            .egap eht dnoyeb ytilaer ekil hcuM

My hand seems galaxies far away from and
ssapmocne I smota fo snoillirt
fingertips of my fingers, that the
tcejbus llits ,rehto edam noitcennoc
to the self. face slips backward sifting
                                    drawkcab

Is it really all that random? Seems
etiuQ .denimretederp erom s'ti em ot
literally, in fact.

My hand seems galaxies far away from and
ot eht taht ,sregnif ym fo spitregnif
the self. face slips backward siftinga

My hand seems galaxies far away from and
gnitfis drawkcab spils ecaf .fles eht

Gives a new level of importance to
ddo rO ?ti t'nseod ,senil gninepo
numbered lines, for that matter. Odd lines.

My hand seems galaxies far away from and

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
tfel lla ,won od ew yaw eht daer ot
to left lines on every other line will
otni tsol eb lliw sgnitirw fo seititnauq
Interesting, perhaps, but not, I think,
sa ton ew dluow tniop taht ta ,yawynA
before? That would then require been
hcus lla tsum sdnim ruo ,daetsnI .elituf
molds. To be able to read course, this

eht otni dnoyeb llew seilppa yhposolihp
more significant structures of towards.
              rehto gnidaer elbuort evah I
contemporary experimental vein I've been
dnim ym gnirutcurtser-er elbuort os
than I did restructuring it the first
raf I .kcart-kcab ot ytilibani nA
more to it, though I can't quite say I
noitseuq a hcum os ton si ti esoppus
paradoxical closedness towards closure. But

this poem about?" That question
                ?meop .emtasdnirg

Don't connect the dots too quickly
neewteb seil tahw gnissim ksir dna
them.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able to
,gnitseretnI lliw enil rehto yreve no senil tfel
perhaps, but not I think, before? That
eb oT .sdlom neeb eriuqer neht dluow
able to read course, this more
yraropmetnoc .sdrawot fo serutcurts tnacifingis
experimental vein I've been than I did
      ,ti ot erom tsrif eht ti gnirutcurtser
though I can't quite say I paradoxical
meap siht tuB .erusolc drawot ssendesolc
about?" That question

The joy that that which does not yet
raen eht ni os od llew yrev yam ,doog ekam
future, and the fear that that which has
.erutuf eht ni liaf yam ydaerla doog edam
The nervous excitement of potentiality;
pu gnivig dna tsurt fo gnisselb eht
control.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
?erofeb ,kniht I ton tub ,spahrep ot
That able to read course, this more
did I naht neeb ev'I niev latnemirepxe
though I can't quite say I paradoxical
                noitseuq tahT ?tuoba"

Afterall, the odd lines cannot indeed

.lla ta gnol yrev rof ddo niamer

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
erom siht ,esruoc daer ot elba tahT
though I can't quite say I paradoxical

Tempted to rewrite did as did.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
lacixodarap I yas etiuq t'nac I hguoht

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

Do I dare? A mountainous task set
    ylno m'I spahrep eno ,em erofeb
making worse. But yes, I just might. I
                .yrt ot evah llew yrev

So what if you read only the openness.
tfel gnivom-thgir eht ylno daer rO
to right. Or the right-moving right
thgir ot tfel htob morf senil gnivom-thgir
and right to left.

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
,ereves sciteop a I ?gnikniht fo wal
harsh in this manner? At least when
enil eno fo dne eht neewteb ytirapsid
have there is less fracture between
ycnapercsid hcus sesuac ,gnitseretni
their way into our thought. I wish
                        lanoitcerid-inu ot

And so even handwriting forces erosion not
                gnitirwer eht yrrac ot eunitnoc

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
enil nehw tsael tA ?rennam siht ni hsrah
have there is less fracture between
 hsiw I .thguoht ruo otni yaw rieht

I wonder do you see where this
                .srettam ti taht ton

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
rieht neewteb erutcarf ssel si ereht evah

Are you still reading in both directions?
?noitcerid eno ni ylno gnidaer rO
In other words, -ing.

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
                                                rieht

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? Singular

You may see I'm not afraid to missed
                                                ?it

It does seem to be getting case, I'm we
elpmis a lla neht spahreP .no og
getting used to.

It does seem to be getting case, I'm
                          .ot desu gnitteg

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

And so it goes on. You will see

My hand seems galaxies far away from and
spitregnif ssapmocne I smota fo snoillirt
of my fingers, that the connection made
ecaf .fles eht ot tcejbus llits ,rehto
slips backward sifting backward

Are you still reading the other direction? make
              gnitseretnI .esnes ssel dna ssel
forward we become increasingly uni-directional.

My hand seems galaxies far away from and
eht ot eht taht ,sregnif ym fo spitregnif
self. face slips backward sifting

Is it really all that random? Seems
                          .tcaf ni ,yllaretil

My hand seems galaxies far away from and the
              gnitfis drawkcab spils ecaf .fles

My hand seems galaxies far away from and

Gives a new level of importance to numbered
              .senil ddO .rettam taht rof ,senil

My hand seems galaxies far away from and

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
lliw enil rehto yreve no senil tfel ot
Interesting, perhaps, but not I think,
neeb eriuqer neht dluow tahT ?erofeb
molds. To be able to read course, this
.sdrawot fo serutcurts tnacifingis ero
contemporary experimental vein I've been than
erom tsrif eht ti gnirutcurtser did I
to it, though I can't quite say I
.erusolc drawot ssendesolc lacixodarap
But this poem about?" That question

Don't connect the dots too quickly them.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able to
tahT ?erofeb ,kniht I ton tub ,spahrep
able to read course, this more experimental
I hguoht did I naht neeb ev'I niev
can't quite say I paradoxical about?"
                    noitseuq tahT

The joy that that which does not yet future,
sah hciw taht taht raef eht dna
The nervous excitement of potentiality; control.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able That
hguoht erom siht ,esruoc daer ot elba
I can't quite say I paradoxical

Afterall, the odd lines cannot indeed

I'm concerned that if we keep this
lacixodarap I yas etiuq t'nac I hguoht elba

I'm concerned that if we keep this

elba

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

Do I dare? A mountainous task set making
                I .thgim tsuj I ,sey tuB   .esrow

Permeating revision. Casting out even
                                .neve lautneve eht

So what if you read only the openness. to
            dna thgir gnivom-thgir eht rO .thgir
right to left.

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
evah nehw tsael tA ?rennam siht ni hsrah
there is less fracture between their way into
                                hsiw I .thguoht ruo

And so even handwriting forces erosion not

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
neewteb erutcarf ssel si ereht evah

I wonder do you see where this

Why must we, or must we, direction?
                                        ralugnis

Are you still reading in both directions?
                        .gni- ,sdrow rehto nI

Why must we, or must we, direction?
                                        ralugnis

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

You may see I'm not afraid to missed

It does seem to be getting case, I'm we
                        .ot desu gnitteg

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

My hand seems galaxies away from and of
edam noitcennoc eht taht ,sregnif ym
slips backward sifting backward

Are you still reading the other direction?
-inu ylgnisaercni emoceb ew drawrof ekam
directional.

My hand seems galaxies away from and self.
                        gnitfis drawkcab spils ecaf

Is it really that random? Seems

My hand seems galaxies away from the

My hand seems galaxies away from and

Gives a new level of importance to numbered

My hand seems galaxies away from and

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
.sdlom kniht I ton tub ,spahrep ,gnitseretnI
To be able to read course, this contemporary
hguoht ,ti ot naht neeb ev'I niev latnemirepxe
I can't quite say I But this poem

about?" That question

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
erom siht ,esruoc daer ot elba ot
experimental can't quite say I paradoxical
                                    "?tuoba

The joy that that which does not yetfuture
;ytilaitnetop fo tnemeticxe suovren ehT
control.

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
lacixodarap I yas etiuq t'nac I taht

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

Do I dare? A mountainous task set making

Permeating revision. Casting out even

An arduous endeavour. Try tracing the
                .snigiro ot sdrawkcab senil

So what if you read only the
          .tfel ot thgir ot .ssenepo

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
rieht neewteb erutcarf ssel si ereht
way into

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Are you still reading in both directions?

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

It does seem to be getting case, I'm we

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

It does seem to be getting case, I'm

My hand seems galaxies away from and of
            drawkcab gnitfis drawkcab spils

Are you still reading the other direction?
                                    .lanoitcerid

My hand seems galaxies away from and self.

My hand seems galaxies away from the

My hand seems galaxies away from and

My hand seems galaxies away from and

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
        siht ,esruoc daer ot elba eb oT
contemporary I can't quite say I But
     noitseuq tahT "?tuoba meop siht

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
        I yas etiuq t'nac latnemirepxe
paradoxical

The joy that that which does not yet
                    .lortnoc eretuf

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

An arduous endeavour. Try tracing the

Exhausting.

So what if you read only the

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
                            otni yaw

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular
My hand seems galaxies away from and of

Are you still reading the other direction?

My hand seems galaxies away from and self.

My hand seems galaxies away from the

My hand seems galaxies away from and

My hand seems galaxies away from and

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
tuB I yas etiuq t'nac I yraropmetnoc

I'm concerned that if we keep this able
                                    lacixodarap

The joy that that which does not yet

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

The result of reading in only one
s'tI ?siht htiw od ot tahW .noitcerid
overwhelming

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Why must we, or must we, direction?

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

Why must we, or must we, direction? singular

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this

I'm concerned that if we keep this able

The result of reading in only one
                            gnimlehwrevo

The result of reading in only one

An unreadable poem. An unsingable
                                        meop

An unreadable poem. An unsingable