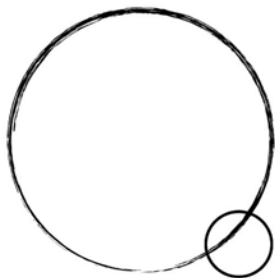
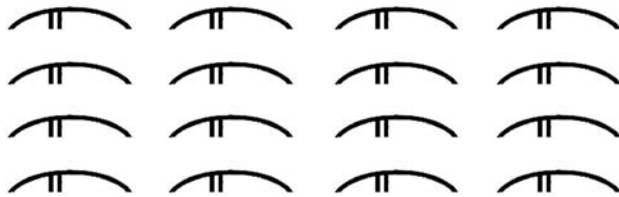


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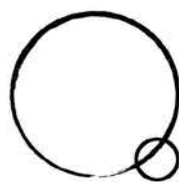
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### “THE NECKLACE OF LIPS...”

I was a crisp winter, clear and naked, a winter of laundered underwear, of very hard candies, of colors carved with a pocketknife. I laughed sometimes, gravel under my knees. The steam jungle continually retraced itself on the windowpanes of expectation. Great panicked encampments on the steppes in the sheets. The voracity of tiny teeth crystallizing forbidden milk. And the half-hearted, unholy hideouts between the cricked necks of laughter. Oh! My ruffled paper dresses. Incestuous swaying of hammocks. The universe was swelling under my floral-print blinders. Childish crawling in a wicker casket that was carried away with the current, while with cannibal self-assurance I crouched down on the violet banks of the horizon.

—Annie Le Brun

From *Moon Ring*, translated from the French by Alicen Weida, in *digital vestiges*, July 2019

### XII

The more wishes that have come true,  
the less there is to hope for.

—Róbert Gál

From *Naked Thoughts*, translated from the Slovak by David Short, available now

### IN THE NEW MUSIC I’VE DISCOVERED NUDITY

When the fox sinks into the rock  
The poem speaks for the fox  
When the poem sinks into the rock  
The rock speaks for the rock

—Daniel Poppick

From *Vestiges\_03: Mimesis*  
{reflection as an image of loss}

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*Vestiges* available from Black Sun Lit ^ [www.blacksunlit.com/vestiges](http://www.blacksunlit.com/vestiges)

» incline to loneliness. Yet like roses, the good life was transient, Höld., already had to dry *the paperback* because it’d fall’n into the tub, as Elke Erb, because I, reading in it, fell asleep 1 little ..... am totally offered up, feel the poet.pulse, as Elke Erb. Would you fold me shako from newspaper that I cover with it my fontanelle isn’t it so .....

—Friederike Mayröcker

From *Fleurs*, translated from the German by Jonathan Larson, in *Vestiges\_02: Ennui* {boredom as a luxury}

### 5

Love was different. You think I don’t have a story to tell. I was invited to Love. Like salt is invited to the early winter road.

—Anna Moschovakis

From *Love, Anti- (notes toward)* in *digital vestiges*, April 2018

Antonin Artaud ▲ Asiya Wadud ▲ Serge Pey ▲ Vicente Huidobro ▲ Krystal Languell ▲ Eugene Lim ▲ Victor Segalen ▲ Emmalea Russo ▲ Charles Baudelaire ▲ Thirii Myo Kyaw Myint ▲ Steven Seidenberg ▲ Sam Truitt ▲ Philippe Sollers ▲ Mauro Javier Cardenas ▲ Tony Duvert ▲ Andrei Codrescu ▲ Patty Yumi Cottrell ▲ Ted Dodson ▲ Iris Cushing ▲ Anna Gurton-Wachter ▲ Valerie Hsiung ▲ Christian Hawkey ▲ Brenda Iijima ▲ Stéphane Mallarmé ▲ Carlos Lara ▲ Matvei Yankelevich ▲ Erin Fleming ▲ Pierre Senges ▲ Susan Daitch ▲ Evelyn Hampton ▲ Ali Power ▲ Kit Schluter ▲ Shira Dentz + more ^ [blacksunlit.com/index](http://blacksunlit.com/index)

### WHEN GIRL B IS FORCED TO ROLL OVER AND QUANTIFY IT ALL OVER AGAIN (TRANSLATION)

Diplomacy / traps / securities

hours blow over  
my wound of strange return

—Sawako Nakayasu

From *Vestiges\_04: Aphasia* {silence as a symptom of form}

Forthcoming titles from Black Sun Lit ^

- ▲ *Possession, Dormition* by Katy Mongeau
- ▲ *Vestiges\_05: Lacunae* {memory as a morgue}
- ▲ *I am writing you from afar* by Moyna Pam Dick

### 00:42

To dance in the wind is to say goodbye to the choreography of transfixed stasis. To dance this way is to understand the flat turbulence of the abyss. Here, the same image, appearing seemingly the same, from the void into an echo of another void and through our multiplicity of eyesight, inhales one lens of perception without distorting another.

—Vi Khi Nao

From *Sheep Machine*, available now

Sea, listen. Cliff, I’m coming.

—Katy Mongeau

From *Possession, Dormition*, forthcoming March 2020

There was no real life on earth, and there will not be anytime soon. There was death, and we dug graves and lowered to them our brother, sister, and bride. In every early death, in every dying, humanity loses its savior. How much we want to say and how much we shouldn’t speak, because now we need warriors, and not dreamers. But much dynamite fills the soul.

—Andrei Platonov

From *Life to the End*, translated from the Russian by Emily Laskin, in *Vestiges\_00: Ex-Stasis* {beauty as an experience of the limit}

### After Clark Coolidge

Poem drifting past rows of undazzled eyes  
Poem arising from depths of unimaginable bitterness  
Poem constructed from unimpeachable sentiment  
Poem riddled by unmelodious echoes  
Poem unsettled by uproarious fripperies

—John Yau

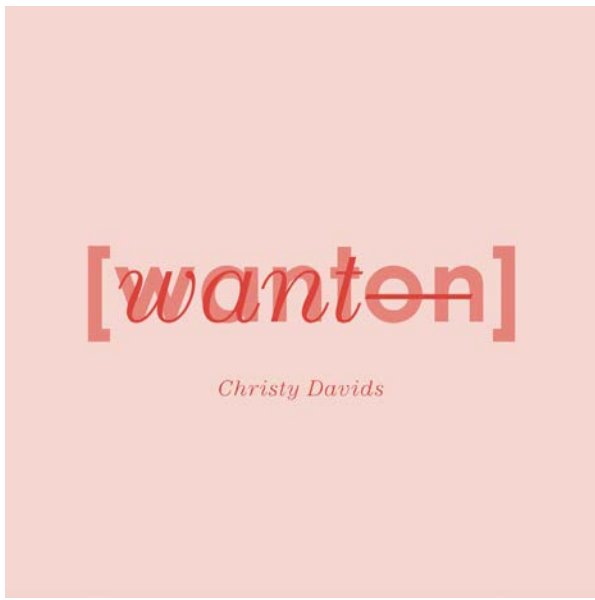
From *Vestiges\_04: Aphasia* {silence as a symptom of form}

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from  
**[WANTON]**  
by Christy Davids

we are taught (re)production  
determines  
the social value of female bodies, so

I can secrete with discretion  
warrant only instances  
of mating and sheer  
prettiness, perpetual  
arousal carousel



from  
**Meat Habitats**  
by Angela Hume

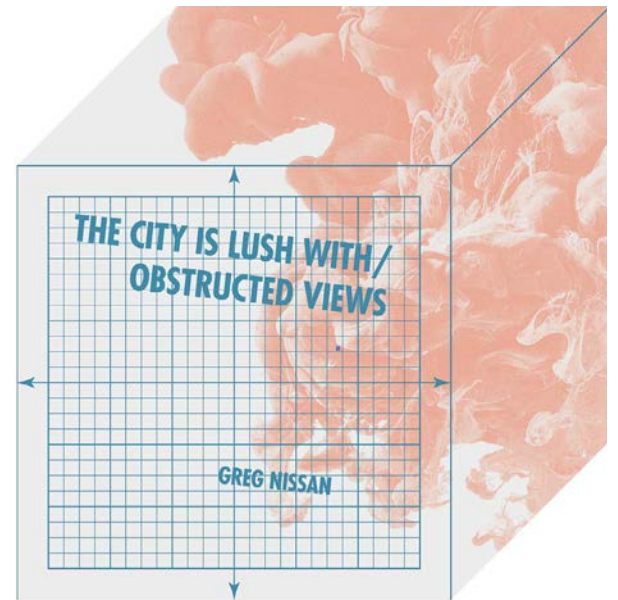
a hook shock

in the cortisol

night sign

over a door

in riotous green



from  
**The City is Lush with/Obstructed Views**  
by Greg Nissan

If it is you  
Lay and remove the scaffold,  
It won't be called making  
But revision tills the hand  
Hedonic. It loses its loss  
scratching fraction



from  
**xxox fm**  
by Joshua Escobar a.k.a. dj ashtrae

in the supermarket  
full of mistakes  
my dream husband motions  
muddy socks  
over his navel  
i gave my future to him last night

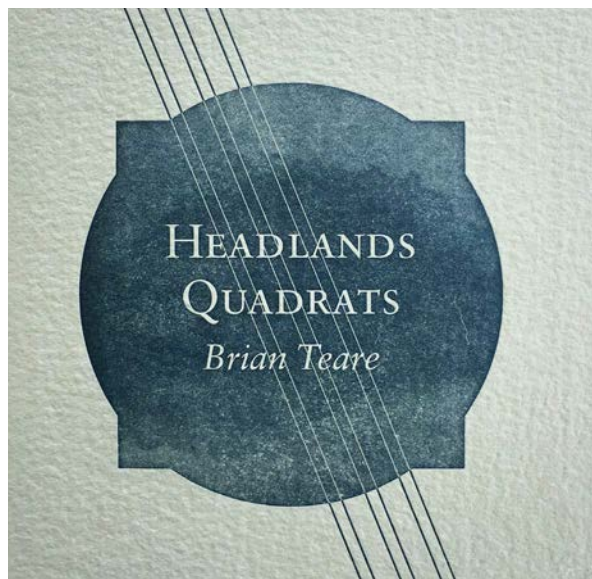


from  
**It's no Good Everything's Bad**  
by Stephanie Young

I can't claim this is a translation of Kirill's  
translation of Bukowski  
or the way Bukowski appears in Kirill's early  
poems as translated by Keith Gessen back into  
English as Bernadette Mayer

but I can suggest it

so friends! Hold the bloody sponge up! for all  
to see!



from  
**Headlands Quadrats**  
by Brian Teare

chasing prey a kind  
of looping beauty  
off-kilter wobbling  
like a saucer toward

stasis for an hour  
I watch it not stop

**doublecrosspress.com**



from  
**Meteorites**  
by S. Brook Corfman

It is as if a meteor is imminent. It is as if to walk  
out of a house in a pair of heels would make  
me someone's hero and also get me killed. It is  
as if this is not statistically unlikely, for me. It is  
as if, what was the word the therapist used, my  
sense of self was annihilated as a child.

from  
*The Maze of Transparencies*  
Karen An-hwei Lee

## In a glade of luminous green bamboo,

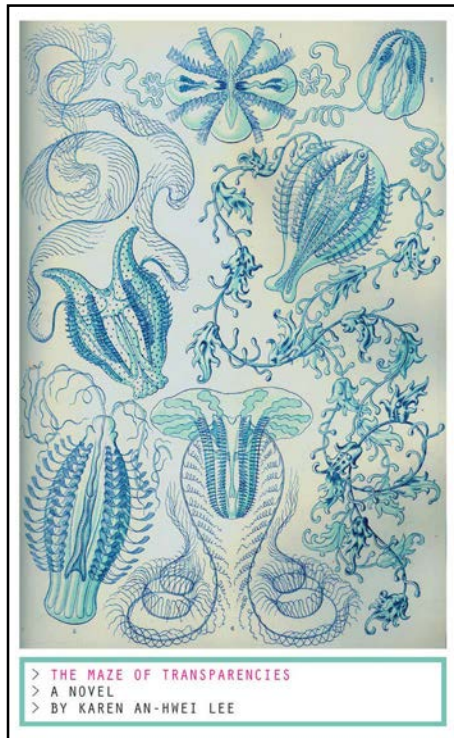
a millennial gardener named Yang methodically readies himself for a journey in search of the supreme happiness, a quest in a cloudy maze of transparencies dwindling in the last days of a dying empire when fragrance atomizers doubled as intelligence gathering cloud-bits while whiffs of aromatic molecules secreted by bots drugged on morpheus blooms guaranteed a soporific populace of data-logged denizens. Opioid dreams once made our dwellers vulnerable to hallucinations, i.e. pixelated flaming out of pyrotechnics in dopamine-laced dreamclouds over the mezzopolis—a cloudbased megacity hovering in the biomass, a swirled layer of living things tamed and tagged by a layer of thinking things—while the information wars raged at various and sundry multiversities. Once upon a time, this commonwealth of ironies was built on tranquilized workaholicism. Our denizens of data persisted in a bog of endorphins mingled with cyberfatigue, a quagmire of data vertigo.

After a technocracy collapse, the hazy mezzopolis regressed to analog living by holistic sensory integration, plunged into a neo-rustic, agrarian lifestyle from the days of yore: waking at dawn to gather eggs, milk the yaks and other bovine mammals like water buffaloes or cows, or draw well water out of pathogen-free aquifers. (Others argue this was no regress but rather, a homespun neophyte's progress.) By day, Yang is a gardener whose daily grind has shifted from mining clouds in the lower zone of the mezzopolis to cruising skywalks in the upper biosphere, once moonlighting as a vigilante for the junta's fly-by-night operations on the information highway.

Obscure patron saint of bygone clouds by night, Yang shuttles the beads on his jade abacus with percussive alacrity, his fingers energized by a macrodi- et of polyphenol and flavonoid-rich microgreens, i.e. pomegranate pips, leafy red kale, and big blackberries from his seaside garden. Yang is a gardener for whom a blackberry is a blackberry and a cloud is a cloud, no more. (To lull himself to sleep at night, Yang recounts the vanishing of those clouds in the shapes of genetically unmodified sheep.)

While sipping an eggshell of yerba buena tea, squatting lotus-style on a futon where he gradually forgets those adrenaline-spiked years in a netherworld of buzzing networks—Yang, in his gentle, monastic existence, generates finite sets of symbolic propositions in his head until nocturnal atlas moths, the saturniid *Attacus atlas*, flutter in the blush of a moonbeam.

Quarried out of a mountain gorge and chiseled by matrilineal ancestors, Yang's jade abacus nearly levitates like a graph of a function in the air under his



deft, calloused fingers under the halo of a soy-and-beeswax votive reeking copiously of wild black cherries—evoking the dark chocolate cherry-tortes, amaretto cherry jams, and cherry-laden black forest gâteaux which his Eurasian mother of nomadic Uberasian roots would bake when Yang was a boy.

Our perfumed gardener, Yang, is a survivor of a digital apocalypse. Once upon a cloud, I accommodated Yang as a user. We've parted ways, in a manner of speaking.

Or rather, I never left Yang, who can't log in.

Overlooking a 0.44 acre seaside yard, blissfully immune to my presence, Yang computes square roots and logarithms, conversions of hexadecimal systems with radix 16, the rise and fall of civilizations with the clack of a jade bead. (Byte on byte, Yang fabricated my cloudiness.) Click clack, click clack. With a flick of his wrist, Yang repositions the beads on little brass rods, tilts his forehead to a spray of peonies on his nightstand by the window, inhales lungfuls of iodized sea air, and copies out alphanumeric in a zone of meditative flow.

In Yang's seaside shanty adorned with faïences arranged in the golden ratio, or apart from the whims and vagaries of our souls, does a cloudfree formula for happiness exist? If algorithms quantify compatibility, what about maximizing happiness? Yang shuttles rows of jade beads on his abacus. Is happiness a state of mind that can be possessed like a lepidopterist's collection of pinned butterflies and moths? Or is it subject to a host of variables, a myriad of conditions in flux? How about the quality of drinking water as a happiness indicator under six hundred parts-per-million? Or visiting the dentist frequently, neighborhood access to clean mountain air, and bikeability? (Rest assured, dear reader, the cosmos will continue expanding without our answers. The sun, a middling star, will exhaust its hydrogen core, however. If anyone is alive in that doomed era, no one will be happy about it, I assure you.) ●●●

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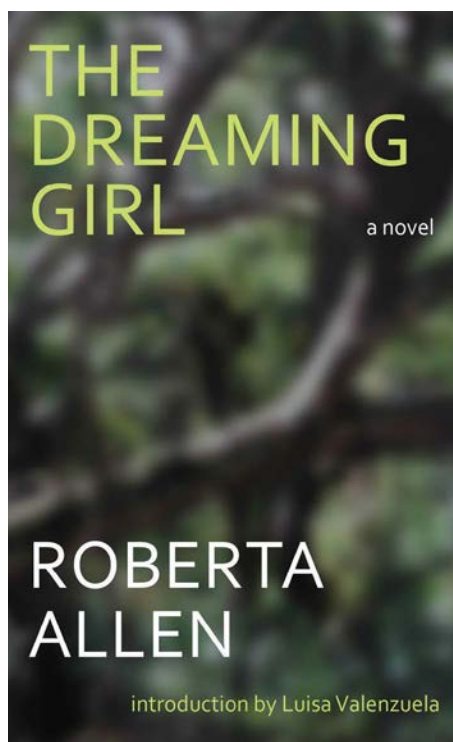
from  
*The Dreaming Girl*  
Roberta Allen

## The girl lies on the bed,

propped up on her elbows, looking out the window. The window is wide open. The wind blows through the window. The wind blows her long hair. Her hair is like the waves of the sea, undulating in the wind.

The sea crashes on the stones of the promenade outside the window. She is not aware of the window. She is not aware of the room. She is out there with that sea, with that wind, with the sky that hides in the blackness.

She understands the violence in the air. She is part of that violence, part of that blackness. She screams with every



bird in her silence. The wind grows stronger, tries to tear the sound from her, but fails. Still, she lets the wind lift her.

From the window, she can fly with those screeching birds. She can sail over the city: this ramshackle city; this city of rag-covered windows and rotting wood, of peeling paint and broken porches, of sagging floors and open sewers, of tattered palms, of heat, of dampness, of rains.

The rains make her mind murky. When it rains, she sails within herself like a boat that has lost direction; she drifts. The rains haven't started yet tonight. But even on the clearest nights, the stars are vague, as though they aren't sure they want to be there.

Tonight there are no stars. She can't even try to grab hold of them. They have taken themselves away from her. The stars are out of reach. But the wind grows strong, so strong it pushes her breaths back inside her; it yanks her hair hard from the scalp.

In the room her hair blows. Nothing else moves in the room. She is still sailing in that sky, but she finds it harder to breathe, harder to catch her breath. Very soon now she will come back. It's inevitable. She can't stay out there for long. Her thoughts get in the way.

As though some God has suddenly thrown a bowl of water on the world, rain crashes down, but not straight down. Wind carries the water, throws the water every which way, throws the water in her room; soaks the pillow, part of the sheet before she manages to close the window. She is back now; her face wet, her hair wet, her neck, her shoulders, her chest glisten with water.

She feels robbed by the weather. She would have stayed out there with that sea, with that wind a while longer. She looks around: there is nothing of interest in the room; just the usual walls and floor and ceiling.

The walls don't reach the ceiling in the rooms of the guest house. The walls stop two feet below: there are two feet of open space where in the night, the thoughts, the feelings of the guests circulate and mingle in the air, affecting each other in their sleep without their knowing. They dream of each other but forget their dreams when they awaken. They awaken with thoughts not their own, with feelings they never knew they had. They breathe each other's breaths, share each other's sorrows.

In the morning when they awaken, they will pass each other without a word. Or if they talk, hello and all that, they will feel suddenly strange, as though they have been stolen, or else they will feel themselves thieves without knowing what it is they have taken.

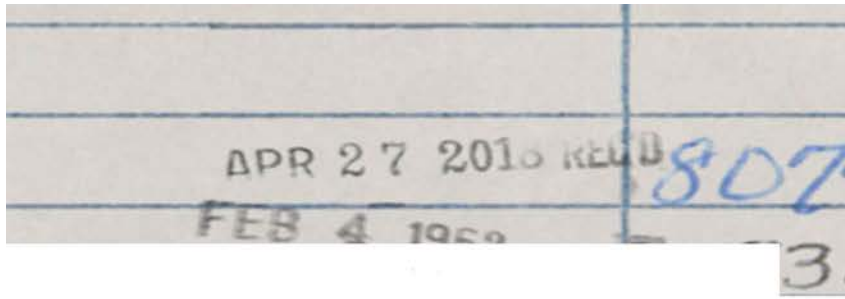
When the girl awakens, she doesn't remember anything. It is as though she is alive for the very first time. There is the sea smell of the air, the cries of the birds, the blue sky.

She looks up at the blue sky. She goes into that blue like one who is going home, like one who has been in a dark dream and suddenly sees the light. But the light is blinding. She comes back, back to the voices, to the footsteps in the guest house.

Hearing the footsteps makes her remember. This time there is something nice to remember. It was just yesterday that she met him at the guest house. He came in through the screen door, he sat down with her at the table in the common room, this man she calls the German. ●●●

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# No, Dear

BROOKLYN BASED POETRY JOURNAL

## Anomaly

They taught me the virtues of the goddess  
but not her defiance that flayed  
every man of terror  
that dare cross her.

They taught me to weave threads  
around a plucked flower,  
and save its dying petals  
in a book  
with secrets for pages,  
and whispers for notes  
but not to reach out  
and scream it.

They told me to walk  
with one foot on the ground,  
like a fleeting moment  
but not to jump from boulders of height  
into marshes of deep,  
leaping high and sinking low.

All this I learnt  
on my own.

How to be an unsubmitive voice  
in the cavern of judgement,

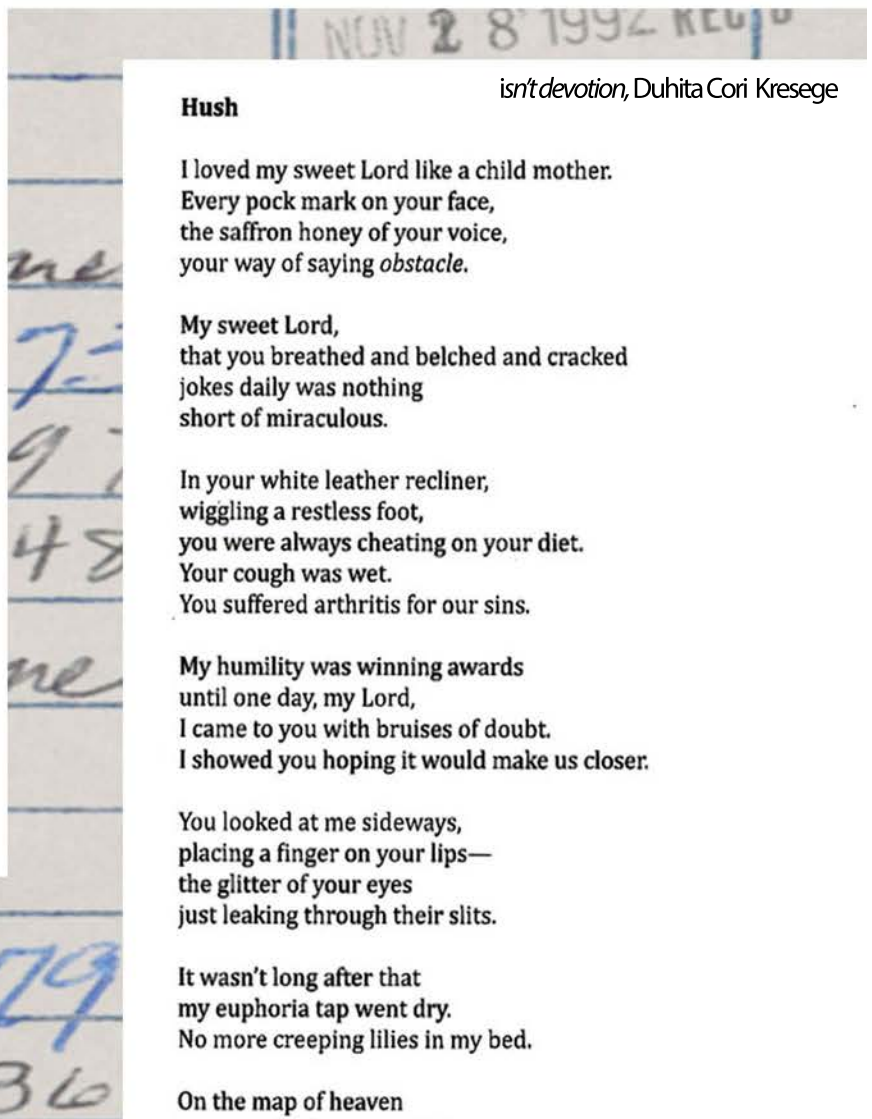
a ticking torpedo  
against the fire of whatmusters.

*Busted Models, Meher Manda*

ARCHIVE, a series of four chapbooks published in collaboration with Small Anchor Press in 2019-2020.

*Busted Models* by Meher Manda, *Hearing/s* by Tyler Morse, *isn't devotion* by Duhita Cori Kresege, *Suit of Cups* by Roi.

Each of the poets approached the series concept by culling from personal or institutional archives. Together, these texts create a library of archival experiences.



## Hush

*isn't devotion, Duhita Cori Kresege*

I loved my sweet Lord like a child mother.  
Every pock mark on your face,  
the saffron honey of your voice,  
your way of saying *obstacle*.

My sweet Lord,  
that you breathed and belched and cracked  
jokes daily was nothing  
short of miraculous.

In your white leather recliner,  
wiggling a restless foot,  
you were always cheating on your diet.  
Your cough was wet.  
You suffered arthritis for our sins.

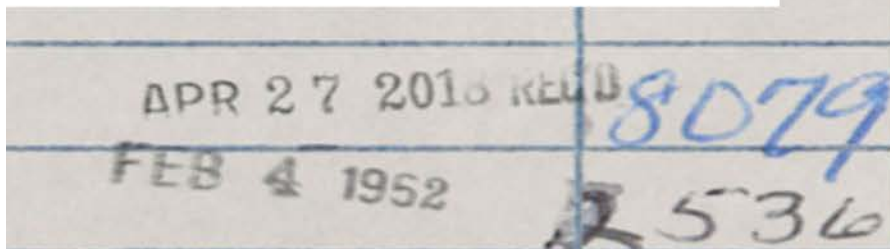
My humility was winning awards  
until one day, my Lord,  
I came to you with bruises of doubt.  
I showed you hoping it would make us closer.

You looked at me sideways,  
placing a finger on your lips—  
the glitter of your eyes  
just leaking through their slits.

It wasn't long after that  
my euphoria tap went dry.  
No more creeping lilies in my bed.




On the map of heaven  
we were drafting together  
I tried to claim my territory.

There were thousands of us  
mumbling our surrender to you  
and no one meant it more than me.  
What would you have me drink?



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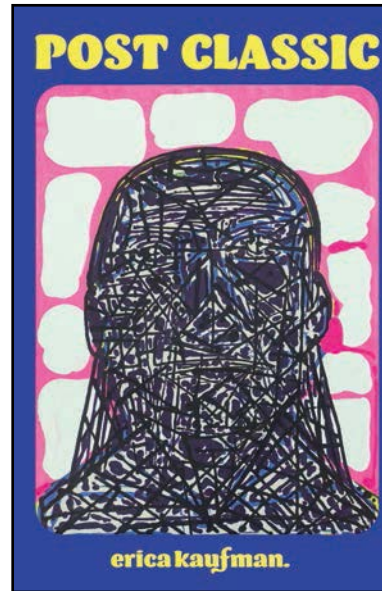
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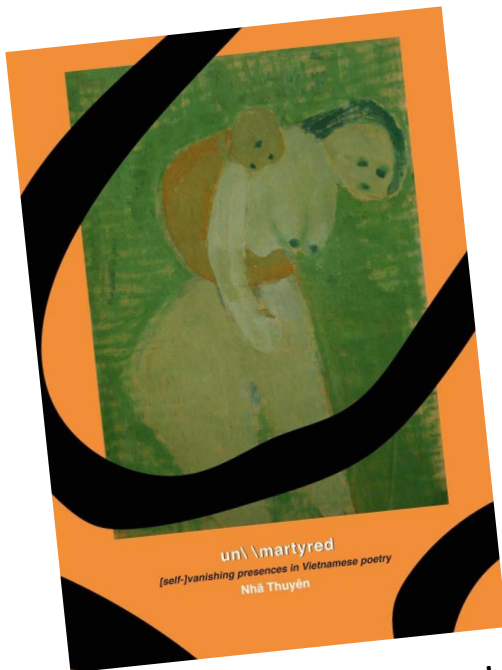
# ROOF BOOKS PRESENTS...



I used to think that I could draw  
and drove a car across the eclipsed  
face of the thespian deserts  
in a star system so far away from home  
that our burning manticores fled



in the beginning i introduce myself.  
in the beginning i'm hoarse not fallen.  
shame takes positive costume adorned  
in glass limbs. in the beginning i hear



This book, therefore, is dedicated to  
these enduring fellow sufferers, with  
a humble wish to return to the most  
useless place: a shared reading, an  
anonymous reading.



the best thing so far  
is that this unavoidable sensitivity  
leaves everything  
up in the air  
for the newcomers  
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Have to Believe Tracie Morris is Magic

# Have to Believe Tracie Morris is Magic



BY ANNE-ADELE WIGHT

Who Do with Words

Tracie Morris  
Chax Press

Who Do with Words? Who do what? Hoodoo with words? Tracie Morris is a poet and poets know words are magic. The title derives from *How To Do Things With Words*, a well-known collection of lectures on the uses of language by the British philosopher J. L. Austin, published in 1962 by Harvard University Press. Morris describes *Who Do with Words* as a “riff” on Austin’s division of language into three basic categories: speech acts that mean something (locution), those spoken with intention (illocution), and those that affect the recipient (perlocution). Morris’s riff strikes off her own experience as a person “of the African diaspora,” one “whose *humanness has been questioned*.” The deeply poetic, musical heart of the riff is the transformation of abasing language into a private code of self-empowerment. Her central thesis is the linguistic and cultural skill that African-Americans have developed to “remake,” or “flip,” language and perceptions intended to diminish and dehumanize them. She emphasizes that skill in “remaking utterances/spells made to unmake us” can be used to communicate with people who hold different views, whether those views are antithetical or just reflective of another cultural background.

If you live your life and work your own poet magic in standard English, this book will challenge you. For an epigraph Morris uses a quotation from Fats Waller: “One never knows; do one?” This is a book about language, specifically, about the nonstandard language of a marginalized culture. Morris wears many hats—poet, musician, professor, actor—and her brand of scholarly discourse expands beyond the academy to become a performative language piece of its own. In a chapter that examines her early influences, she mentions one of her professors, a woman of color, as being the first person she knew who used code switching in a formal academic setting. Morris identifies herself as a “Blerd” (Black nerd); mentioning a TV character whose specialty is moral philosophy, she sees herself in the character, described as a “Blerd Blacademic.”



Wherever Morris ventures, she holds her self-esteem high but never takes herself too seriously. She knows the value of a good laugh. Encountering Austin’s work for the first time, she “was like ‘Who dis?’” giving the philosopher a sharp side-eye and viewing him with the caution due a homeless person who might prove dangerous in the dark. Extending the analogy, she befriends this weird new acquaintance, “him out there talkin’ strange,” to the point of weeping when she finally hears his lectures recorded on tape.

Morris expresses alarm at the increasing “either/or” tone of present-day conversation: “we have long existed in a world, even right now, where binaries are being resurrected before our eyes...” Especially right now, when everyone is either an angel or a devil and discourse is conducted in threatening tirades. Here Morris points out that such simplistic thinking divides us and keeps us separate, rather than opening a thought space in which we can safely explore shades of meaning.

The last chapter, “Postscript,” addresses “those of good will” who don’t share the cultural experience of most African-Americans. Like much of the introduction, this chapter is written entirely in standard English, underlining the adaptability of Morris’s communication styles. Late in the book we find the phrase, “remaking as the desire arises.” Used to illustrate self-definition as radical claiming, it signals freedom of choice, a moving forward from the act of remaking according to need. The use of code switching to illustrate the theme of a scholarly treatise is itself such an act of remaking.

Having brought flexibility and generosity to her discovery of Austin, Morris asks the same of all her readers. On Grace Jones: “She is a free, unpredictable, Afropunk, bold, *fine*, free Black woman.” Look at the two uses of “free” in this description—Morris uses them to bracket the other adjectives. Moreover, by setting the “free” brackets where she does, she highlights “Black” as something other, something weightier, than an adjective. In this sentence, “Black woman” is a noun, not a noun phrase. If you’re white and standard English is your one linguistic currency, listen to what you’re reading. Don’t just parse it, shut your eyes and let it resonate. You’ll hear far more than your eyes can see on the page.

Tracie Morris (<https://traciemorris.com/>) has performed, researched and presented work in over 30 countries and on every continent except Antarctica (so far). Her installations and performances have been featured at many national and international museums and galleries including the Dia Art Foundation, The New Museum, The Kitchen Performance Space, The Drawing Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Museum of Modern Art, Albertine, Weeksville Heritage Center, The Victoria and Albert Museum, Queens Museum, the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, Centre Pompidou, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Lévy Gorvy gallery, and multiple times at The Whitney Museum, including the Whitney Biennial.

She’s presented poetry, performance art, acting academic addresses, talks, and live shows with music in many venues, including colleges and universities throughout New York, the U.S. and the world including Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth, MIT, Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Kwazulu Natal, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and Université Paris-Diderot.

Her most recent poetry collection is *Hard Kore: Poemes/Per-Form: Poems of Mythos and Place* (in English and French – *joca seria*, 2017 France/2018 US). The second expanded edition of her first creative non-fiction work, *Who Do With Words* is now out. She’s been a fellow of Cave Canem, the CPCW Fellow of Creative Writing at the University of Pennsylvania as well as the Millay, Yaddo and MacDowell artist colonies. She has an M.F.A. in poetry from Hunter College, a Ph.D. in performance studies from New York University and has studied acting technique at Michael Howard Studios in New York and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London. Morris has also been a professor for over 20 years at renowned institutions of higher education including: Sarah Lawrence College, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, Pratt Institute, and the University of Iowa.

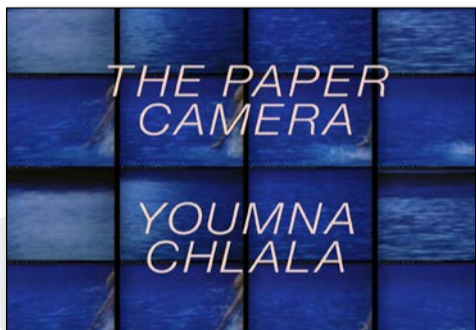
In 2018 Morris was designated a Master Artist by the Atlantic Center for the Arts, was Visiting Writer at the Vermont Studio Center, and WPR Fellow at Harvard University (2018-2019). This year, she was named inaugural Distinguished Visiting Professor of the Iowa Writers Workshop.

Anne-Adele Wight’s (<https://donnafleischer.wordpress.com/2013/03/02/15-questions-an-interview-with-anne-adele-wight/>) most recent book, *An Internet of Containment*, was published by BlazeVOX [books] at the end of 2018. Her previous books, all from BlazeVOX, include *The Age of Greenhouses*, *Opera House Arterial*, and *Sidestep Catapult*. Her work has been published internationally in print and online and includes appearances in *Apiary*, *Philadelphia Poets*, *American Writing*, *Luna Luna*, *Bedfellows*, *Oz Burp*, and *Have Your Chill*. She has read extensively in Philadelphia and other cities and has curated readings for two long-running poetry series. She has received awards from Philadelphia Poets, the Philadelphia Writers’ Conference, and the Sandy Crimmins Poetry Festival.

Morris wears many hats—poet, musician, professor, actor—and her brand of scholarly discourse expands beyond the academy to become a performative language piece of its own.

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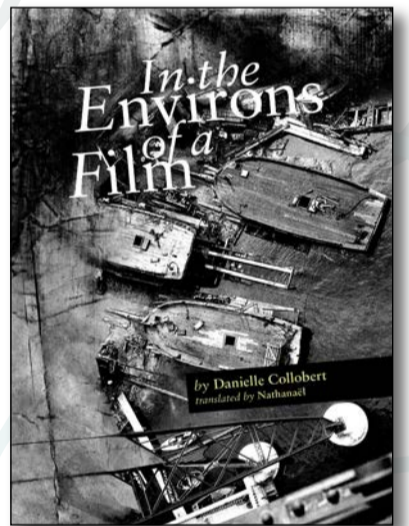
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BY DANIELLE COLLOBERT  
TRANSLATED BY NATHANAËL

*In the Environs of a Film* collects together three previously untranslated works by Danielle Collobert, the author of *Murder* and *It Then*. The works here, selected by the translator, *see slowly*, are scorings of scattered voices, and take the form of a scenario—*Research*—a radio play—*Polyphony*—and a poem—*That of Words*.

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# Philadelphia Freedom: The Poetry of Thomas Devaney



BY DEBRAH MORKUN

Getting to Philadelphia

Thomas Devaney  
Hanging Loose Press

Thomas Devaney's *Getting to Philadelphia* allows me to find my way back to my own hometown, while also affording me the visions necessary to see my own finite existence in the back of my hand, or on the wall of the mirror. Philadelphia as microcosm of the rest of the world, Devaney holds up, encouraging readers to either reminisce or reevaluate what it means to be from somewhere. As Devaney creates a road map, he also plunges into an interior landscape that is the stuff of memories, long conversations, subway trips, sports, billboards, and graffiti.

As I read, I turn back toward that great, yet not so great, homeland city. Philadelphia, the only city to achieve World Heritage status in the U.S., the city from which the poet tries to escape, only to return again and again, some Sisiphan journey away from this place. I can certainly relate. This city is a hematite magnet; it draws me back again and again.

Devaney's intro to this collection is magnificent and appealing, assuring us that he never intentionally set out to write about Philly, but as he's marked by the city, it enters the poems regardless. This opens up questions relevant to how much of one's experiences can we leave behind as we set out to write the poem? How often are we writing about ourselves, our lived experiences? "It doesn't just happen in novels; it doesn't just happen in the movies." It happens as we walk the journey that is the day, as we move out of our own inner orbits to understand ourselves from various vantage points provided by progressing toward wisdom.

Encountering the poems in this collection, one re-enters a heritage city. Whether a reader is also from the city of brotherly love or not, they can enter this place, and it will become them. Devaney generously offers us his wisdom. This is profusely generous, as for just a moment, we can step onto the city's streets, look around, take it all in. It becomes a heritage city for us all.

For example, in "Pete Rose Meet Zoe Strauss," as a Philadelphian myself, I can make sense of the title alone. These two Philadelphia luminaries sit side by side, one cordially addressing the other, as both have marked the landscape of this place. Devaney writes that Rose and Strauss could potentially "...teach you / how to swim, and eventually, how to dive." When diving onto home plate, "fright and light are the self-same sparks." In this case, the poet speaks to Strauss about the famed baseball player, and she, in return, is exhilarated. She remembers fifth grade, and her softball trophy. In this poem, the poet, baseball player, and photographer intersect, forming a trinity of spark and light.

The adjacent poem, "Heads Up," reconnects readers to the heritage city differently. A hawk flies above 21st and Market, looking for its next devouring. The hawk, nearly always a symbol of sight, keeps its eyes possibly on the poet, while the poet returns the gaze. Yet, both keep precise vision upon a billboard for Blue Cross, as Americans, both bird and man, must always take stock of health insurance and whether or not we can truly afford to live as fearlessly as we would like.

Graffiti legend, Cornbread, too, makes his way into this collection. Devaney gives the artist props for being the first to graffiti, then follows his designs all over the heritage city. Cornbread exists as a giant in these spaces; poetry, like graffiti, draws along the contours of the heritage town, the only place that can claim this first.

"Does anyone really know where music comes from?" If I could have my guess, I would equate the origin of music alongside questions about how epiphanies arise. Devaney's collection grants me numerous epiphanies as I am granted to see a city I know very well through his eyes, which means I am enabled to see the familiar anew. Thank you.



Patrick Montano photo

**Devaney's intro to this collection is magnificent and appealing, assuring us that he never intentionally set out to write about Philly, but as he's marked by the city, it enters the poems regardless.**

## You are the Battery

Thomas Devaney  
Black Square Editions

*You are the Battery*, Thomas Devaney's latest collection, moves the reader through so many realizations and epiphanies, beginning with the multiple truths revealed in the first title poem. Some of these truths are imagistic, surprising, and aphoristic. Others alight the book with humor, as Devaney reveals the first "character" of the poem to be "a miniature pig" he follows on social media. His revelatory humor is couched by the emphatic: "The truth is I don't go around saying things like the truth is, not even in a poem." In this initial poem, the battery of the work, truth, that heavy, difficult concept, is pondered deeply, and is revealed to be a bit of a yarn. Devaney's grandmother, the wise woman who generously bestowed the poet (and now us) with many "repeaters," once said, "doctors bury their mistakes." In this first poem, the truth of life is buried like such a mistake, buried in realizations like, "the truth is, once you start to say things like the truth is, it's hard to stop." As he repeats this common phrase, linking it with not so common modifiers, Devaney lends insight into what follows, not only in this gem of a collection, but also in the greater landscape outside the book. For much of what follows is real, many poems are dedicated to other poets and friends of Devaney. The truth is "it does not matter where we fell in, we did." And in this place of falling in, horns and sirens wail; there is "only one other person in the world," so the body becomes "a buffer."

These poems contain many maps of repetition, anaphora, places where the collection becomes performative, like song. In one of these masterful song-like compositions, "A Body in a Room," Devaney draws a place and person of mystery, interspersing the "body" and the "room," the room unable to be framed, the body that will "never become a star." The body and the room live only in the poem, for they have both died—one for beauty and the other for truth. Just as this poem deals with two distinct nouns yielding harmony yet disconnection, so, too, does Devaney point to "the Great Spirit echoing in the city pipes." He demonstrates the invisible that cannot be seen, but perhaps can be heard. He also points to sound, and then reminds us that there is also "not sound." Here, we come into contact with "the fact of sound after all sound is gone." This reverberation of silence can still be felt, if not heard, in the subsequent poem, "Desert Days," in which Devaney considers prophets who speak of "hard, furious rain - or none at all."

Not only does Devaney consider the starkness of the sonic made silent, he also considers the definition of wisdom, and finds it in what is seen, "the views are miraculous. The house is a dream." Here, too, the concrete is given radiance. The visual cues of wisdom, he points out, are often found in dream-perception. He dreams a beach; he dreams continually of his own death; he dreams of a "big blue crab" carrying its own sense of belonging "on its back." Confidently and with poise, Devaney fixes the eyes of fish, puts them "in front of the heads," adjusting perception, though these eyes "remain one-sided." Despite wisdom-perception, there remains much that can never be seen, for Devaney reminds us of the invisibility of vastness, such as the bottomless ocean.

At the collection's finality, Devaney asks us to ponder questions that return us to our own perceptions of all we have witnessed as readers of the book's previous poems—"is this how the body speaks itself past words?" (A return to the sound that is no sound). "Could the question is there such a thing as silence even be asked again?" These questions are couched in the biblical tale of Jonah's worrisome predicament, trapped in the belly of a whale. Devaney muses, "was the great fish really a whale? Either way, it's surprising that such leviathans / haunt the imagination?" If only this question could last forever, it would truly haunt, the lines of interrogation pointing toward forever. But there's a gap in this story, Devaney reveals. The "racking release" of Jonah "into the waterwheel" is equitable to "the oblivion spent in the belly of a whale." These stories we tell ourselves, that our grandmothers tell, that

the bible tells, that news commentators reveal, that the great leviathan spits into the sea—these are all potential yarns, with narrative gaps, demonstrating the wisdom in what we see that can't be seen, of what we hear that can never really be heard.

Thomas Devaney (<https://www.thomasdevaney.net/>) is a poet and educator based in Philadelphia. He is the author of *Getting to Philadelphia* (Hanging Loose Press) and *You Are the Battery* (Black Square Editions). He is producer and co-director of the documentary *The Bicentennial in Philadelphia* (slated for 2020). Devaney's work is featured in *Best American Poetry 2019* and he is a 2014 Pew Fellow. He teaches at Haverford College.

Debrah Morkun (<http://www.debrahmorkun.net/>) is a poet who lives and writes to find the intersections between poetry and magic. She is the author of *Projection Machine* and *The Ida Pingala* (both from BlazeVOX [books]), as well as several chapbooks. She is working on a long poem entitled *The Sea, Tattooed* and a life-long long poem called *Hera Calf*.

**His revelatory humor is couched by the emphatic: 'The truth is I don't go around saying things like the truth is, not even in a poem.'**



**Chris Siteman**  
Brookline, Mass.  
**Scope of Remedies**

We're standing here, & all we've got is this field of stones, & on each stone's chiseled a word— One reads *Create*, another *Destroy*.

The words are as numerous as entries in a *Lingua-Franca Dictionary*—

One says *Arbeiten*, the next *Ausruhen*.

Next, *Miłość* beside *Nienawidzić*.

Another *Ofre*, another *Reward*.

To our right one says *Forward*, beside it another says *Back*. It's too tough to call.

We've been talking about which stones to choose so long almost every stone's got a good argument in its favor, each as sound

as the next. On one's written *Condonat*, on the next *Punier*. Which ones to choose?

One says *Guerra*, another says *Paz*.

One *Aequitas*, another *Injustice*.

Another says *Mortel*, another *Toujours*.

Fear is nestled right beside the word *Joy*. There's dust in our eyes. It's closing our throats—

We start picking up stones that sing to us, the ones that ring our ears like tolling bells— And lay them four square, as a foundation.

We line them up into arches, windows, walls, until they make the right kind of sense.

Water in the kitchen, *Sky* on the roof,

*Amigos* the doormat, & *Foe* the gate.

The door: *Verità*; also *Falsità*—

*East, West, Norr, Theas, Up & Down, Dây & There*, when we finish building our house of words

carved into stones, we walk through our front door and sit in our chairs & wait for darkness. We'll live inside until the end. Above

the fire hissing in the hearth, the final two words mortared side-by-side in the face

of the chimney: one says *Blood*, one says *Bread*.



**Jim Dunn**  
Beverly, Mass.  
**A Fuse that Refuses**  
*For Kevin Killian*

Lit with a match made in heaven  
A sparkler in the ocean-domed night of your heart  
Generous with a torch  
Always willing to lend a light

Well met in an arsenal  
Of detonating words  
Strolled the BU beach on Storrow Drive  
Sauntering our way to the bar

Under the bleachers at Fenway  
Toasting to the Queen of the town  
In front of a wire grate window to  
The Green Monster and the green grass

Of home's endless holy diamond  
The fuse was lit by the offered hand  
Lending some heat to the fire water  
Gas lines led to your warm furnace

Where ashes floated like dreams  
Above blue flames.

**Raging Lioness Roaring Laughter**  
*For Frankie the Devil and Bridget*

The rushing sound of running water  
Crisp and clear in its clean escape  
The laughter at the bottom of the falls  
Raging Lioness roaring laughter  
Does anybody remember laughter?  
Sprouting wings of fighter planes  
And taking off towards the lid of the sun  
Closing and clapping just ahead on the horizon  
Best join in and add joyous noise to the general din of the day  
Answer a silent clown whose thoughts are jugglers  
And whose dreams are the jugglers' balls  
The lioness leaps and becomes an acrobat on loan  
Visions of Mary dance on the tightrope wire  
The trapeze glows with remnants of her divine grace  
The safety net catches flopping fish and saves us from ourselves  
The concrete floor of our disappointment and  
The macadam of unreasonable demands  
Hit it hard and often like a bottle passed around  
Amongst the ghost of hoboes riding the freight cars  
Of no return

**I Shan't Breathe A Word**

The air is a garbled ghost of unmade sentences  
Participles that dangle in the drifting sky  
Entering a fourth dimension  
Visualized from just above

The happy slap of fields and hands  
Hold the light of laughter  
Shining from the lemon blurry sun  
I shan't breathe a word

Choking on the sweet  
Syllables of God  
I exhale stolen breaths  
The air remains unmade

**BOOG CITY**

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**editor/publisher**  
David A. Kirschenbaum  
editor@boogcity.com

**poetry editor**  
John Mulrooney

**printed matter editor**  
Debrah Morkun

**small press editor**  
Mike Wendt

**counsel**  
Ian S. Wilder

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3062 Brower Ave.  
Oceanside, NY 11572  
212-842-BOOG (2664)  
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**Sanjana Nair**  
Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn

### **The Spider & The Fly**

Lips have to betray you, sometimes.

Maybe you protest, refuse to speak  
recognizing the slaying power of words.

Even then, the stillness of your mouth speaks.

Were you that child who retrieves dead flies  
from dusty window sills?

Did you put them into  
the waiting webs of spiders?

That kind of kind.

If we are reborn into the world again and again, which would it be:

The path of the spider, walking  
every continent but the pack ice of Antarctica,

or the fly, capable in its brief flight—

two hundred wing beats a second,  
the number to match the banging of a wild heart?

Would you choose to consume,  
or to be consumed?

*Hungry*, no matter the choice.

How the etymologist's craft has never been lost on you,

though God has always been—  
so the cycle of human birth ceases, here, for you.

No bird or bat, no insect or arachnid:

No, just the consumption of the dead,  
into your living, beating body.

And your good deeds, dependent on the tides  
and judgements of any given day, will pass into eternity.

*Nameless*, without shame.

Don't you know that without name for something greater,  
we move through this living untouched, never fully measured.



**Oni Buchanan**  
Lower Mills, Dorchester, Mass.

### **This Valuable Item**

What a merchant's mouth was saying A legal  
pad A trespass Severed  
cables from the hacked-off  
shoulder The blast furnace forging

golden tokens By "regular" I mean  
"maintained" By "astonished" I mean  
"greatly disappointed" The intricate  
intoxicating wrappers pressed and

saved I arrive late to the christening Thank  
God not too late Wooden birds  
nailed to the dry birdbath My marigold  
in a half-pint milk carton cut with

rounded scissors My orphan marigold offered  
depleted dizzying in  
fragrance My punctilious marigold  
hallucinating its bursting My

shivering perfunctory marigold I'm  
dehydrated Thank God this  
valuable item will make me well  
again These drained out colors will

heal me Aromatic essence captured from the  
lingering mists You called me  
back You wrote me back on fine linen  
letterhead Your missive arrived You

responded to my inquiry You liked my posting  
in the local circular You said "I hear you  
I love what you're saying to me right now I  
love what you're saying—"

### **This High Up**

Touch my foot to the island

stepping from the tiny boat

Burns my face I

balance waiting on the swaying

stern Step onto the land

The echoes drift off

the island The echoes

peel back A face

mask off the surface

of the island off the waving

grasses off the beach rocks

Accumulation of boulders Come from

where Their entry here

originated Burns my face

I cut through opaque

textures Past exit strategy

Past runways where solar panels

collect the sun Where solar

panels re-collect Past

sleep Burns my

face I step

onto the pier I touch my foot

to the land to the beach stone

to the driftwood to the sand

Trace the perimeter

then climb on the overgrown

bastion the shattered

pillar Look out

over the open

water Wave

outward into

blue receiving

This high up in the air

This high up

This high

## Poetry Bios

**Oni Buchanan** is a poet, pianist, and the founder and director of the <http://arielartists.com/artists/> classical music management company, designed for innovative artists who are expanding and re-contextualizing classical music for the 21st century. Her first three poetry books *Must A Violence* (Kuhl House Poets), *Spring* (University of Illinois Press), and *What Animal* (University of Georgia Press) - are winners of the National Poetry Series, the Massachusetts Book Awards, and the University of Georgia Contemporary Poetry Series competitions. Buchanan's poems have been selected for numerous anthologies, and have been published in many print and online literary journals. **Jim Dunn** is the author of *Soft Launch* (Bootstrap), *Convenient Hole* (Pressed Wafer), and *Insects In Sex* (Fallen Angel Press). His work appears in *Bright Pink Mosquito*, *The Process*, *eoagh*, *Gerry Mulligan*, *Cafe Review*, *Meanie*, and the anthology celebrating John Wieners, *The Blind See Only In This World*. He edited the *John Wieners Journal*, "A New Book From Rome" with Derek Fenner and Ryan Gallagher of Bootstrap Press. **Sanjana Nair** is a full-time professor at the City University of New York's John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Her work has appeared in *Spoon River Poetry Review*; *Fence Magazine*; *JuxtaProse Literary Magazine*; *Anastamos Interdisciplinary Journal*; *The Equalizer*; *What Rough Beast for Indolent Books*; *No, Dear Magazine*; and *Prometheus Dreaming*, with forthcoming work in *The Bangalore Review* and *The Shouthampton Review*. Invested in collaborative art and readings, she read in 2019 at The Rubin Museum of Art, her work has been performed in multiple *Emotive Fruition* shows in New York City and her piece *The Lady Apple*, a collaboration between poet and composer, was performed at Tribeca's Flea Theater as well as featured on National Public Radio's *Soundcheck*. **Chris Siteman** lives in Massachusetts. He teaches in the English departments at Suffolk University and Bridgewater State University. His poems and nonfiction have appeared in journals such as *Sugar House Review*, *River Teeth*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, and *Salamander*, among numerous others.

# Toby Goodshank Queens County

@tobygoodshank

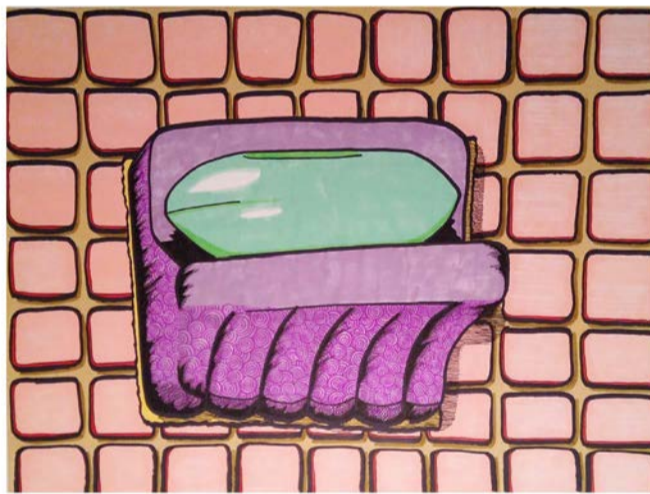


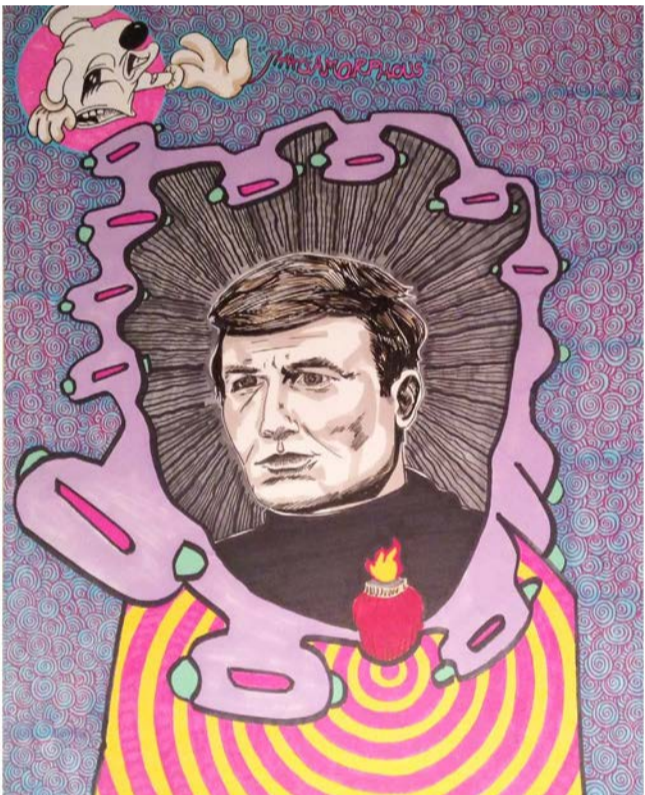
Brooklyn, Remy//boogcity.com photo

## Bio

Brooklyn-based artist Toby Goodshank made his high-profile musical debut playing acoustic guitar in The Moldy Peaches, but had long before embarked on a prolific solo career, recording and self-releasing 14 albums in a five-year span and touring Europe with artists including Jeffrey Lewis and Kimya Dawson. Unconventional humor, innuendo and wordplay are staples of his music and artwork.

In 2012 and 2013 he co-founded the 3MB art collective with Adam Green and Macaulay Culkin. The collective directed and starred in a music video for Father John Misty's song "Total Entertainment Forever," and continues to work under their new name 4GB with the addition of Thomas Bayne.





# Edmond Chibeau's Leviticus Tattoo

At the recent Welcome to Boog City 13 Arts Festival we were pleased to stage a play by Edmond Chibeau. A link to video of a performance of Leviticus Tattoo, featuring Kacey Elfstrom, Gabrielle C. Archer, and Eric Michaelian is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrowL8DfCTQ>. Leviticus Tattoo starts at 21:05. Thanks to Mitch Corber for shooting the video.

So here it is, Leviticus Tattoo

Characters:  
 CORRADO – a tattoo artist (M)  
 DONNABELLA – Jella DonnaBella – an exotic dancer (F)  
 AUDREY – Ms. Audrey Lambeth – a businesswoman (F)

Setting:

A tattoo parlor – examples of work are on the wall

Time: about 6 P. M.  
 The phone is ringing, lights fade up.  
 CORRADO (answers the phone)

CORRADO  
 Leviticus Ink, Tattoo Parlor and Piercing Emporium. Tramp stamps is us. If you can think it we can ink it... No man, I don't answer the phone like that... 'Cause I was just messin' with you...'Cause I know it was you... No, I Can't. I'm waiting for my 6 O'clock... Don't worry; I'm a mullet haircut; business in the front, party in the back. Yep... it's been booming lately. (sarcastically) Well, nobody's ever regretted getting a tattoo. Yeah, I had one like that last night. A guy comes in here with a couple of his friends, everybody's hammered. I'm trying to talk him out of it. He's all up in my face about I gotta do it right now. I ask him what's on his arm he says it's the Chinese ideogram for fried chicken. He got it last night at Snakes Alive Skin Art and now he wants me to change it to the Hebrew word for "profane fire". I tell him don't he think maybe he should bring it back where he got it, and he's all like, "Nah, I trust you man. Jump the gun." Like I'm his oldest buddy in the world or something.  
 Yeah. Told him the truth! Blood's too thin; with that much alcohol in his system you're gonna bleed and get all patchy.  
 Yeah, I know. With friends like that, right!? They're supposed to watch your back, not help you make a fool of yourself.  
 (DONNABELLA has made an entrance.)

CORRADO  
 Hi, you're right on time; I'll be with you in a second.

DONNABELLA  
 Huh? Okay.

CORRADO  
 Yeah, okay. Gotta go. Remember, fear no art. Okay. Peace out.  
 (to DONNABELLA) How can I help you?

DONNABELLA  
 Like, I was thinking about getting something done. Something spicy. Like, you know, maybe a snake with boobs wrapped around a bull with horns. I got a lot of ideas. Maybe the word "APRICOTS" on the inside of my thigh.

CORRADO  
 Left side or right side?

DONNABELLA  
 You wanna know "Why there"? Why inside my thigh?



Kacey Elfstrom, Gabrielle C. Archer, and Eric Michaelian

CORRADO  
 If you want to tell me.

DONNABELLA  
 'Cause apricots is what I want them thinking about when they see it.

CORRADO  
 You're a lot more, um, flamboyant, than you sounded on the phone.

DONNABELLA  
 Huh?

CORRADO  
 On the phone, when you called to make an appointment.

DONNABELLA  
 I didn't call, I just dropped in. Like wow, what a good idea, I never would have thought of calling ahead to make an appointment.

CORRADO  
 It's always a good idea.

DONNABELLA  
 I just try to live my life in the moment.

CORRADO  
 When it comes to tattoos, that's not always the best policy.

DONNABELLA  
 I'm like, you know, impulsive.

CORRADO  
 Any decision you make you're going to have to carry for the rest of your life. You might want to think about it for a while.

DONNABELLA  
 Yeah, well, whatever.

CORRADO  
 You're not Ms. Lambeth, are you?

DONNABELLA  
 What? Me? No. Jella DonnaBella at your service. Some people pronounce it with a hard G, Gella. Other people pronounce it with more of a J, sound like Jella. It depends on whether you're from the north or the south.

CORRADO  
 North or south what?

DONNABELLA  
 Exactly!

CORRADO  
 I mean what country?

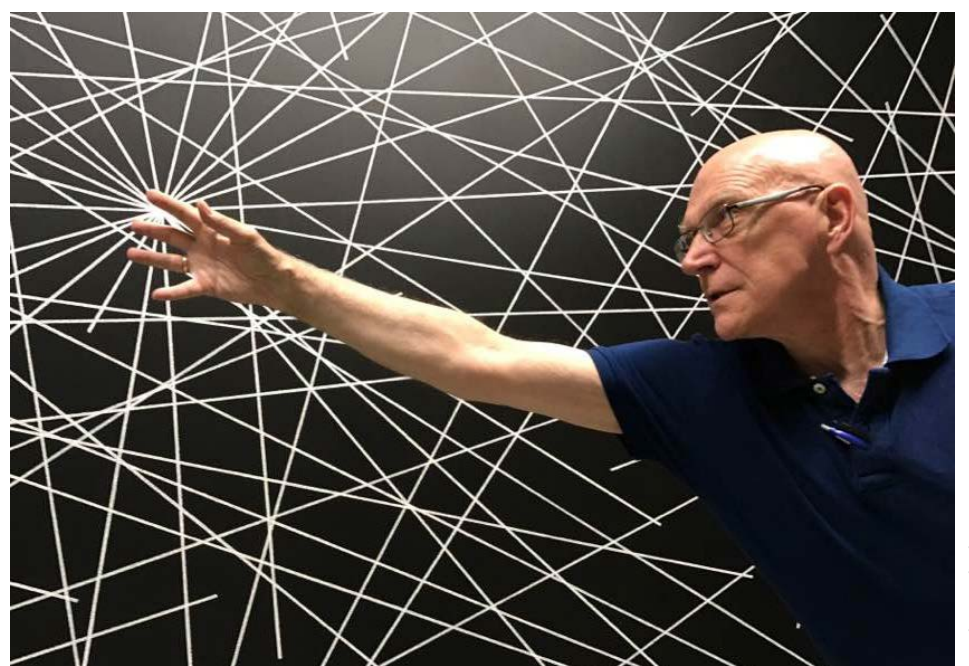
DONNABELLA  
 (ignoring his question) But most of my friends call me by my last name, DonnaBella. It's like Belladonna, only backwards. That's my real name; my stage name is Louche Flambeau. I'm an exotic dancer.

(AUDREY LAMBETH enters.)

AUDREY  
 Oh hello. I'm sorry.

DONNABELLA  
 Who's she?

AUDREY  
 If you're busy, I could come back another time.



Edmond Chibeau

CORRADO  
 No, no, come in. You must be Ms.Lambeth.

AUDREY  
 Yes. Audrey Lambeth, I called, I just...I called.

CORRADO  
 Right, I've been expecting you.

AUDREY  
 I don't want to interrupt anything.

CORRADO  
 We were just talking about the kind of tattoo Ms. Belladonna might be thinking about getting.

DONNABELLA  
 DonnaBella.

CORRADO  
 What?

DONNABELLA  
 DonnaBella not Belladonna.

CORRADO  
 Right, DonnaBella.

DONNABELLA  
 Now you got it.

AUDREY  
 Well maybe I could learn something if I just listen to your conversation. I have so many questions.

CORRADO  
 Like what kind of questions?

AUDREY  
 There don't seem to be any female tattoo people.

CORRADO  
 There are plenty of woman tattoo artists. I could give you the name of one if you want.

AUDREY  
 No, it's okay, I guess.

CORRADO  
 Are you sure?

AUDREY  
 Um, yes.

DONNABELLA  
 I could make my ass scarce if you want me to.

AUDREY  
 No, it's okay. I didn't want to bring anyone with me, but actually I'm glad to have someone here to talk to besides a male tattoo artist. For a second opinion, it might help. Someone who knows the ropes.

DONNABELLA  
 Well I guess I know more about ropes than most people, so maybe I can help.

CORRADO  
 (to Audrey) Where do you think you might want to get some ink?

AUDREY  
 Ink?

CORRADO  
 A tattoo.

AUDREY  
 Oh. On my nipple.

DONNABELLA  
 Wow and I thought I was an edge-player.

CORRADO  
 Both of them?

AUDREY  
 One actually. Just the right side.

CORRADO  
 What kind of tattoo do you want?

AUDREY  
 3-D tattoo.

DONNABELLA  
 Wail, they have 3-D tattoos?

AUDREY  
 Yes.

(to CORRADO) Do you know what that is? Can you do those?

CORRADO  
 Have you recently had an operation?

AUDREY  
 Yes.

CORRADO  
 Reconstructive surgery?



# POETS THEATER

AUDREY

A mastectomy and partial reconstructive surgery. I heard about you from the social worker at my hospital.

CORRADO

If you want the most realistic nipple, you get a combination of tissue reconstruction from your M.D. and a color matched areola tattoo from a good tattoo artist.

AUDREY

My skin is really thin, and I had radiation as well as chemo. That makes nipple reconstruction just about impossible.

CORRADO

The radiation is really hard on the skin. A full 3-D nipple and areola tattoo can be an okay option.

DONNABELLA

If I knew you was a doctor, I wouldn't of even been coming here.

CORRADO

I'm not a doctor. I'm a tattoo artist. This is something I've been doing for a while.

DONNABELLA

How come ... I mean like, how did you decide to get into this?

CORRADO

My wife needed it about seven years ago.

DONNABELLA

Wow.

CORRADO

A full 3-D nipple and areola tattoo can sometimes make a big difference.

DONNABELLA

You had cancer?

AUDREY

I have to stay alert forever, but the next five years should tell the story. If it doesn't come back in five years then they figure that particular cancer isn't coming back.

DONNABELLA

My mom had that.

AUDREY

I'm sorry.

DONNABELLA

It's okay; we dealt with it.

AUDREY

How long ago did she die?

DONNABELLA

She didn't die. She's fine. She's hot stuff. She's still around making my life miserable.



Eric Michaelian

AUDREY

I feel kind of nervous about this, maybe we have some of the same questions. Kind of overlap, maybe you could have a consultation with both of us at the same time. I hope you don't mind.

DONNABELLA

No it's a great idea; maybe I can help you out.

CORRADO

Sure.

AUDREY

I mean how would you interview DonnaBella? What questions would you ask her before you start to work?

DONNABELLA

Kewl, it's like role-play. So you want him to ask me what he'd say if I just walked in and wanted to see about a tattoo.

AUDREY

Yes, if he could.

DONNABELLA

Well of course he could, because I did just walk in because I wanted to see about a tattoo. Go on. I just walked in, what kind of stuff do you ask me?

CORRADO

So, um, this is going to be your first?

DONNABELLA

Well no actually, I have another but you can't see it.

CORRADO

I've seen a lot of tattoos and I am pretty familiar with human anatomy. You see a lot of female skin if you're a tattoo artist.

DONNABELLA

It's not that, I mean you can't see it on my skin.

CORRADO

Why not?

DONNABELLA

It's underneath. It's a tattoo on my liver. They're illegal in the United States. I had to go to Tijuana to get it done. You can only see it with a fluoroscope or an x-ray

AUDREY

Oh my god.

CORRADO

Okay, What kind of tattoo are you thinking about?

DONNABELLA

A god tattoo.

CORRADO

All our tattoos are good.

DONNABELLA

Not good; god. A tattoo of god.

CORRADO

You want a god-tattoo? Like an old man with a long beard sitting on a golden throne?

DONNABELLA

I was thinking of a golden throne, but with a hot babe in a bikini sitting on it and she has a tattoo that says, "Mother-Jesus loves you", and one of those little angels flying around, you know, a cute little chubby one.

AUDREY

Putta.

DONNABELLA

(suspicious) What?

AUDREY

Putta, the plural is putti; their called putti in renaissance art history.

DONNABELLA

How do you know?



Gabrielle C. Archer

AUDREY

I took a class.

DONNABELLA

Yeah, well I took a class in pole dancing once and the first thing we learned is you don't call nobody no puta.

CORRADO

Um, and why do you want another tattoo?

DONNABELLA

I'm an exotic dancer; I think it would help bring in the tips.

AUDREY

Don't you think it's kind of a desecration of the body to mark it up with a tattoo?

DONNABELLA

If it's a sacred tattoo then it's not a desecration, it's an offering.

AUDREY

You know DonnaBella, I think we could learn a lot from each other.

DONNABELLA

Yeah, like a team. You know I had some questions about your operation. It was an operation right?

AUDREY

An operation, radiation, and chemotherapy.

DONNABELLA

Damn.

AUDREY

The treatment was pretty aggressive.

DONNABELLA

If you get your boob inked does your insurance pay for it?

AUDREY

I don't know; I haven't checked.

DONNABELLA

Corrado. What's the deal? Does insurance cover a tit tattoo?

CORRADO

Some they do, some they don't, and some you just can't tell. Every case is different.

AUDREY

But insurance pays for a vasectomy right?

DONNABELLA

And hard-on pills. You know, like get-it-up-capsules for men.

CORRADO

I'm an artist not a doctor. I have enough trouble with insurance for tattoos.

AUDREY

When's the last time you had a mammogram DonnaBella.

DONNABELLA

Oh, I don't know, let's see, like, I don't know. Maybe... never.

AUDREY

You know, I think you and I have a lot in common. And a lot to talk about.

DONNABELLA

It's weird. We're so different in some ways, and so alike in others.

AUDREY

Maybe we should go and get a cup of coffee, come back here later. After we've made some decisions.

AUDREY

You could tell me about skin art and about being a dancer. I could tell you about mammograms. We could talk.

DONNABELLA

Do mammograms hurt?

AUDREY

Less than getting a tattoo.

DONNABELLA

How do you know? You've never had one.

AUDREY

Ha! You're right.

DONNABELLA

You think a tattoo hurts, you should try a bikini wax some time.

AUDREY

Ouch. Are they worth it?

DONNABELLA

It depends on who you're with.

AUDREY

You want to go for a cup of coffee? We can come back here later. You won't mind will you Mr. Corrado?

CORRADO

Not at all.

DONNABELLA

You know, like, I know this guy. He'd think it's really sexy that you have a tattoo instead of a nipple. (as they exit) Thanks for the information Corrado. We'll prolly see you later.

Lights fade to black.

The end

# JFK Assassination Conference Diary

BY JASON TRACHTENBURG

**Day 1, 11/21/19:** We're going down to Dallas for the 7th Annual JFK Assassination Conference. This conference is organized by Judyth Vary Baker—Lee Harvey Oswald's secret girlfriend in 1963. (Her story has been verified by the History Channel and top-level JFK researchers.) In 1963, Judyth was 19 years old and a science super-star in high school. She was recruited by the U.S. Government to unwittingly assist in developing a cancer inducing biological weapon designed to eliminate Fidel Castro. I, of course, took on the task of writing a light-hearted, off-off Broadway piece of musical theater based on this historical love story and adapted from Judyth Vary Baker's autobiography, *Me and Lee*, (How I Came To Know, Love, and Lose Lee Harvey Oswald). Judyth invited us to the Dallas conference to present our filmed version of the play. So here we are.

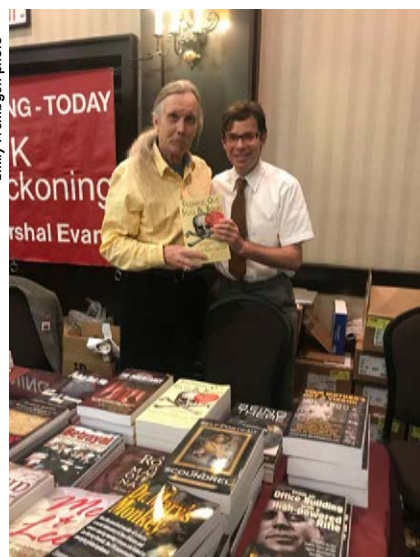
We land in Dallas, Love Field, and proceed to the Doubletree Hotel as the conference is just getting underway. I'm accompanied by Emily Frembgen who performs the role of Judyth in the musical. Judyth, now age 75, still has the energy of a 19-year-old as she's rushing around the conference room making sure that everyone has had breakfast. Speakers take to the podium addressing such subjects as Declassified Documents, National Security, Executive Action, Carcinogenic Viruses, New Orleans in '63, and Sniper Training in Dealey Plaza. I have my "merch" table set up to sell DVDs and CDs of *Me and Lee - The Musical*, and fortunately the demographic here still employs such media.

Seated to my left selling his book *Betrayal* is Hugh Clark. Clark, a distinguished 75-year-old gentleman, was a member of the Honor Guard that took President Kennedy's body to Arlington National Cemetery for burial. His story involves a major controversy surrounding Bethesda Naval Hospital's medical corpsmen and improprieties that led to the question of who was actually in JFK's coffin?!!!! (The medical corpsmen say that they had JFK's body a half hour before Hugh Clark and his Honor Guard arrived with JFK's coffin!!!) Clark's first-person, eyewitness account only fuels the on-going speculation that President Kennedy's body was surgically altered after the assassination to create the appearance of an exit wound to the front of the head where, in fact, there were entrance wounds. This fact alone would clear Lee Harvey Oswald in any court of law had he lived to stand trial. To my right is Kris Millegan, publisher of Trine Day Books. Their extensive catalogue specializes in suppressed information and includes Judyth Vary Baker's three groundbreaking books, as well as *Dr. Mary's Monkey* by Ed Haslam, and their newest shell-shocker, *The Inheritance* by Christopher and Michelle Fulton.

The conference goes late into the night with an intimate chat from Dick Russell, a noted high level assassinologist. When someone on the panel brings up the current state-of-affairs involving President Trump, Judyth rushes the stage, grabs the microphone, and declares, "No talking politics at the JFK Conference." We abide.

**Day 2, 11/22/19:** I'm up before the sun, and so are many other hard-core attendees with assassination fascination. There are some heavy hitters speaking this morning including Dr. Cyril Wecht. Dr. Wecht, one of the world's most renowned forensic pathologists, has challenged the Warren Commission since 1965. He is the world's leading expert on the autopsies of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, Jack Ruby, Dorothy Kilgallen, David Ferrie, and even JonBenet Ramsey and Jeffrey Epstein. (see picture 0190 - Jason Trachtenburg with Dr. Cyril Wecht.)

As we approach 10 a.m., the countdown begins. The 150 attendees and speakers prepare to shuttle-van over to Dealey Plaza for the 56th Remembrance Ceremony of the assassination. Needless to say, the annual ceremony takes place on the Grassy Knoll, and NOT on the 6th Floor of the Texas School Book Depository.



Jason Trachtenburg with Kris Millegan, Publisher of Trine Day Books.

There is an "X" right in the middle of the road where JFK was hit, and the well documented picket fence is amazingly still in place. Then, 56 seconds of silence at exactly 12:31 p.m. and a Marine Corp captain performs Taps on trumpet. Beverly Oliver, a witness to the assassination and famously known to assassination researchers as "The Babushka Lady," sings "Amazing Grace." (Yes, all 5 verses.) Also present is Mary Moorman. Now at 88 years old, Mary, also a witness to the assassination, snapped a famous picture at the exact moment that JFK was shot. Upon intense photo analysis, this photo seems to show a man wearing a police officer's uniform firing a rifle from the Grassy Knoll. (This man is known to assassination researchers as "Badge Man.")

We return to the hotel conference room and are treated to presentations by high-level re-



Jason Trachtenburg with Barbara Honegger

searchers Vincent Palamara (the world's authority on the Secret Service's incompetence and probable compliance in the assassination) and Barbara Honegger who connects the dots that lead from "JFK to 911." These presentations are packed with information and are very well received.

We were invited to this conference to present our movie-musical, *Me and Lee - The Musical*, and tonight is the night! Judyth has worked with me for the past three years to ensure the accuracy of our musical that is based on her life. Surely, this was going to be a tough, discerning, and possibly "knit-picking of the fine details" kind of audience, but we won the conference attendees over with humor, sincerity, and our honorable intentions to get Judyth's story out to the public. In a nutshell, Judyth's life mission is to let the world know that Lee Oswald did not shoot J.F.K. or Dallas Police Officer Jefferson Davis (J.D.) Tippett. In fact, Lee died trying to save the President from the assassination team assembled in Dealey Plaza (and in Chicago before that). Lee had infiltrated this group of professional assassins through his investigative work for the F.B.I. (See our musical, or read the book "Me and Lee," by Judyth Vary Baker and learn the whole story.) Day 2 ends with a raucous 2-hour jam session in the lobby of the hotel led by Trine Day publisher Kris Milligan on Blues Harp (five different harmonicas) and several guitar slingers rockin' out on blues and 1960s hits. ("Runaway," by Del Shannon, Everly Brothers, Beatles, Buddy Holly, Elvis Presley, "Runaround Sue," by Dion, and more!)

**Day 3, 11/23/19:** I sleep in until 6 a.m. (I told you that was one heck of a jam session!!!) The conference restarts at 8 a.m. with the focus this morning on Lee Oswald's activities during the

summer of 1963 in New Orleans. Judyth Vary Baker gives a personal, detailed account of her intimate relationship with Lee—right down to the finest details such as the books that young Lee checked out of the library. (Judyth even retrieved a book from the New Orleans Public Library that Lee checked out in the 1940s. It was a book about Christmas, and Lee crossed out sentences in the book that praised discrimination. Lee had told Judyth that, as a child, he had defaced a book and felt shame in that. Judyth traced down the actual book!!!) Lee was also influenced by "The Scarlet Pimpernel," and how people must hide their true selves to the world when it's for the greater good of a situation. Edward Haslam (Dr. Mary's Monkey) then speaks on the C.I.A.'s secret monkey virus project designed to kill Fidel Castro. This is an important subject as Haslam's first-person experience and years of research going back to the 1960s corroborates Judyth's amazing story.

Other important speakers today include Gary Shaw, Roger Craig Jr., Robert Groden (a photographic consultant on the H.S.C.A. (House Committee on Assassinations), the government panel in the late 1970s that officially determined that there was probable cause for conspiracy—therefore officially upending the Warren Commission Report, and Robert Tanenbaum (the



Jason Trachtenburg with Emily Frembgen.

great prosecutor from the H.S.C.A.). A live SKYPE interview then takes place with Christopher Fulton exposing the Secret Service's betrayal of JFK and how Christopher inherited Kennedy's wrist watch that the President was wearing during the assassination and how this watch contains important evidence.

Then all of a sudden, unannounced, in walks Oliver Stone with his arm around Judyth! The room is a-buzz. The famed movie director is, of course, a hero in the assassination community due to his epic and historically accurate blockbuster film *JFK*, from 1991. Oliver and Judyth then proceed to the podium. Oliver addresses the audience and lets us know that he believes Judyth's story! He tells everyone that he was in town for another JFK conference, but that he wanted to see what we had going on over here. He thanks everyone for their time and dedication to finding the truth, because we obviously aren't going to get that information from our government. Oliver Stone has just met with Judyth for three hours to fully vet her story and comes out satisfied. I want to give Oliver a copy of our DVD (as he IS a "movie" guy), but we had sold out of DVDs



Jason Trachtenburg, Judyth Vary Baker, and Emily Frembgen

the night before at the screening. Fortunately, Kris Milligan from Trine Day, gives me back the copy I traded for Christopher Fulton's "The Inheritance." As Judyth and Oliver head to the exit for more private discussions, I take that last DVD copy and, with Judyth's encouragement, I present a copy of our *Me and Lee - The Musical*, to Oliver Stone!!! Mr. Stone chuckles in a friendly way about the absurdity of turning a story about Lee Oswald's secret girlfriend and Cold War-era government assassination plots into a piece of musical theater. My reply to Oliver: "This is a light-hearted take on a serious subject." (I obviously had the "elevator pitch" prepared. I think I said it twice.) Judyth and Oliver then get pulled away in several different directions, and that was that! Well, an exciting interaction to say the least, and I hope that Oliver Stone watches our important movie!

Time to get ready for the semi-formal Speaker's Dinner. We arrive at the Speaker's Dinner and swiftly find a good spot close to the podium. Hugh Clark, The Honor Guard who carried Kennedy's casket, is the Master of Ceremonies. Camaraderie fills the room as everyone has gotten to know each other quite well over these past three days, and there is a sense of purpose and collective hope that we, as a group, can fulfill our mission: To rewrite official history! This is no small task, but we're up for it! Emily and I perform Pete Seeger's "Where Have All The Flowers Gone?" as part of the entertainment portion of the evening. This older audience knows the words to all six verses of this timeless, classic masterpiece and sings along louder than our amplified microphone could carry.

All of a sudden, I get an idea for a book to present to Kris Millegan. The next casualty in line from Government sponsored assassinations, after JFK, RFK, and MLK, is JOL, specifically John Ono Lennon. In fact, Mae Brussell famously laid out the groundwork for this reality mere days after the Lennon assassination. I cannot reveal my potential collaborator on this proposed book at this time, but this particular researcher has cracked the code wide open on how John Lennon was a marked man taken out by the enemy within our own country just days after the new regime of Reagan/Bush gained control.

**Day 4, 11/24/19:** On this, our final day of the conference, several speakers and some guests have already headed for home. But for those who remain, the lectures and presentations continue. I have heard—the first to arrive are often the last to leave at this kind of conference. Zapruder film experts, Lee Oswald photographic analyses, triangular crossfire examinations, and getaway planes are all being discussed at length this morning, and how can I say no to that?

As I get ready to wrap and pack, Judyth pulls me aside and asks if I'd lead the closing prayer for the conference. I am humbled and thankful for this honor. I take to the stage for this final moment to evoke the group consciousness and solemnly ask for everyone's continued growth, knowledge, and commitment to our common cause, so that the truth shall set us free. I thank Judyth Vary Baker for the sacrifices she has made, at her own perilous expense, and hope that we will someday live in a truly open and honest society.