

Sommer in the City **The Art of Sommer Browning**

ANTIMike!

Saturday Afternoon Open Mic

Every Saturday

2-5pm

East Village Social
126 St. Mark's Place

No amplification
2 songs or eight minutes

hosted by

Jon Berger & Kirk Kelly

NO RULES (except for all the
things said already!)



All the cool kids
Advertise in



BOOG CITY

editor@boogcity.com

212-842-BOOG (2664)

GREG FUCHS' UNGUIDED TOUR



Tremont and University Avenues, Bronx, June 2019

Inside Boog City

POETRY

David Blair, Nicole Callihan, Serina Gousby, Amy Lawless

PRINTED MATTER

The Wight Stuff:
Anne-Adele Orbits Through the Inter-webs
and Into the Heavenly Spheres

Merce Cunningham's Changes, Scrambling the Code

The Wight Stuff: Anne-Adele Orbits Through the Inter-webs and Into the Heavenly Spheres



BY DEBRAH MORKUN

An Internet of Containment

Anne-Adele Wight
BlazeVOX [books], 2018

I want to pay a necessary homage to my friend and fellow poet, Anne-Adele Wight. Once, poet Paul Siegell referred to Wight as “The Great Mother Earth of poetry in Philadelphia.” In her latest work, *An Internet of Containment*, Wight proves this continues to be the case, but she also earns herself an additional moniker. Not only does Wight bless the Earth, but she also orbits through the Inter-webs and into the heavenly spheres. In her latest testament to futurity, Wight collides through systemic cadences, prophesizing the coming self, beyond any current notions of generation, a world in which the self becomes metallic, pluralizes, and eventually becomes pure energy. All notions of ancestral lineage are rendered obsolete in this vision of the future. Instead, the “she” of the poem uses a future version of search engine logic to locate themselves, to understand old words, to attempt any connection to whatever could be remotely earthbound at this future point in time—which is absolutely nothing.

As such, Wight builds a new kind of poetics, creates an entirely new field theory for poetry. What she so generously births here is a kind of science fiction poetics, a visionary poetry that bespeaks no sense of origin, but postulates where we all might be headed. We are spilling out of our containers—but to where? “Spelling and meaning crowd each other off planet,” she writes. In this vision, what happens to earthen creations of humankind like poetry? We can perhaps grasp momentarily onto a “lattice of silver cord / my weft of angels / o mirror.”

Wight’s book describes impending obsolescence. I relate so thoroughly to this theme lately, as my Neptune squares my Neptune so ardently. The be-knighted, nameless, heroine “she” consults a database to find the word “private” stored under “obsolescence.” The truth of this hits home so obviously, as so many humans now document every facet of their lives, leaving so little to the imagination. As a member of the middle child tribe, Gen X, I feel perplexed by this constant documentation. Yet I also feel reinvigorated by realizing my place in the timeline as one who spent half her life in analogue, only to have to adapt to a digital world some time in my twenties. There is power in having to unlearn and relearn. Yet how much of this repeated obsolescence can one adjust to before we really do spill out of our minds and our containers? Wight’s book gives me a reason to care, as she envisions this world as a sometimes frightening future, or at least a confusing one: “Many of us / are starving because light can’t get in. I no longer photosynthesize, therefore.” Yet if there is no longer a need for light, how can it be missed? Maybe my future self won’t miss light as much as I miss records, cassettes, and VHS tapes, and all those other things I witnessed turn obsolete in my lifetime. Gone and moving to another age, another crossing, but what do they matter at all, even beyond ironic kitsch and nostalgia, if the future lacks even a need for light?

As I pay homage to Wight and her important collection, I realize the “she” of the poem adapts so quickly. She downloads and uploads. She goes into the cloud. She becomes something timeless and being-less. She becomes a whole new philosophical tome, a being in timelessness, a being in the cloud. The players in this piece are “turning into metal without knowing it.” They carry an “innocence like a sewing machine.” Unprepared and unknowingly, they pass through several transformations, as Wight so aptly writes, “evolution changes its tense from past to future. What brought us here is no longer the point.” With this line, Wight sums up the speed of technological change and adaptation, and how this is altering the very notion of metaphysical regard. No longer will questions of origins matter, there is very little need to ever look back, only to look toward. *Homo erectus* may have so generously learned how to start a fire, but how much does this evolutionary gift matter if we no longer need torches to light a darkened path?

Wight postulates that we are even moving beyond notions of the singularity. She writes, “first person singularity extinguish.” Instead of any lingering ideas about human and machine mergers, Wight prophesizes something more akin to the James Hillmanian idea of the Imaginal, that perhaps we will “move into the plural.” Furthermore, this pluralized self has no locality. The “she” of the poem is like a desert, constantly reshaping. An archeological irrelevance, her portrait just another script, found so far into the future that there is no longer any sure sense of anything—all things are obsolete, everything just energetic—“her human DNA / sparks flee the kiln into a hybrid species.”



As I pay homage to Wight and her important collection, I realize the ‘she’ of the poem adapts so quickly. She downloads and uploads. She goes into the cloud. She becomes something timeless and being-less. She becomes a whole new philosophical tome, a being in timelessness, a being in the cloud.

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*.

Anne-Adele Wight’s most recent book, *An Internet of Containment*, was published by BlazeVOX 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*.

Merce Cunningham’s Changes, Scrambling the Code

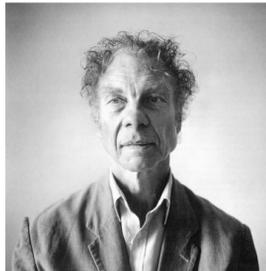


BY ELLEN BLUESTONE

Merce Cunningham
Changes: Notes on Choreography
The Song Cave, 2019

Merce Cunningham’s *Changes: Notes on Choreography* is like a Modernist rocket ship landing in the Postmodern desert. Published in 1968 and recently republished in honor of the Cunningham centennial, it is a text that’s as experimental in form as Cunningham’s innovative dance aesthetic. This great choreographer’s thoughts on dance and his easy commerce with the likes of Leonard Bernstein, John Cage, and Robert Rauschenberg—are intimidating enough. But the simultaneity of it all—from the ubiquitous background notes, to the stacking, rotating, intersecting, and compressing of letters, doodles, sketches, photographs, and programs, to the sparse dotting of color throughout—dizzies the mind and challenges today’s digitally dulled sensibilities. In a sense, this book has both the unbridled energy of dance and the visual drama of a graphic novel.

Cunningham distracts the reader at every turn by varying the form of handwriting, typeface, and coded notation, superimposing typed messages in vertical or diagonal formations, and interspersing photographs with words. He suggests at one point that it’s a code, but the phrase “scramble the code” appears in a deliberately illegible poem on scrambling. He makes it necessary to keep turning the book, sometimes upside down. But the way he superimposes words of wisdom on other texts—despite their seeming randomness—has a visceral impact. He makes statements on dance ...



“... we the dancers have to fasten our minds on this work much as a newsreel camera records some singular life-activity and holds it. i won’t say we have that kind of accuracy about repetition, but we have our own kind, which is just as accurate, let us say, as breathing.”

And “you have to love dancing to stick to it. it gives you nothing back, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls and maybe hang in museums, no poems to be printed and sold, nothing but that single fleeting moment when you feel alive. It is not for unsteady souls.”

And he cuts to the chase. ...

“but clarity is the lowest form of poetry, and language, like all else in our lives, is always changing. Our emotions are constantly being propelled by some new face in the sky, some new rocket to the moon, some new sound in the ear, but they are the same emotions.”

This last statement elucidates both Cunningham’s vision and this strangely mystifying gem of a book.

Merce Cunningham. Photo by Peter Hujar ca. 1987. Image courtesy of the Merce Cunningham Trust, all rights reserved.

Ellen Bluestone is a professor of English and women’s studies and principal of Bluestone.Write. For the past seven years, Ellen has been teaching online in an M.A. program in English and creative writing at Southern New Hampshire University, where she received the 2017 Excellence in Teaching Award as an Outstanding COCE (College of Online and Continuing Education) adjunct faculty member. Bluestone received a B.A. in art history from Wellesley College, an M.A. in English from Villanova University, and a Ph.D. ABD in English from Rutgers University.

Cunningham distracts the reader at every turn by varying the form of handwriting, typeface, and coded notation, superimposing typed messages in vertical or diagonal formations, and interspersing photographs with words.



Serina Gousby

Cambridge, Mass.

home

another day waking up on smoky concrete
wondering what to eat, in this heat
funny how the only coolness is the breeze
from yesterday's moon
another day waiting for a foot to stop
just for some care in this world, eyeing
designer bags on their shoulders
it's been a while since I seen a quarter
another day to find living, purpose of going
no luck on a job or shelter room, so
I hope for tomorrow, and more tomorrows
to leave the concrete that's felt like home.

Little Black Girl

little black girl on the staircase
reads her book in noble style
locks lay down behind her back
smell of white musk all over her neck
lips like red grapes frolicking in silk
Smile glistens as ocean pearls
her book stares and stares
into a life she cannot have
and only dreams of fairy tales
that are just not for her
instead she lives in one
as she heads back in the house and
gets her crown resting on her dresser.



Amy Lawless

Kensington, Brooklyn

Who's Afraid of Roger Rabbit?

My dad and I went to a matinee
of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*

I laughed like a maniac at the opening sequence
without guile and without

the self regulating mechanism that come
with age and experience.

A retired couple glared back at me
And made pointed eye contact with my dad.

My dad did nothing to quiet my laughter,
And that is one reason I have loved men.

When men try to control my body,
I think of my laughter at Roger Rabbit.

I think of being uninged in my body
for a very specific kind of comedy.

I loved how the cartoons lived full complete
lives. I loved being shaken out of my lane.

What is funny? What is crudeness?
What is Jessica Rabbit's cleavage even doing?

The first Broadway play I saw was
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

starring Kathleen Turner, the velvet
voice we needed but did not want.

She had also voiced Jessica Rabbit
in a small, uncredited role.

In *Who's Afraid*, her rancor was hideous
as was her beauty. Years later I learned she was

suffering from rheumatoid arthritis
During that run. In that play I learned

we imprison ourselves. My dad said he
liked having a car when he was young

so he could leave any party whenever he wanted.
I love New York for that same reason.

I'm writing this in a cab home
from holiday party. I don't know

how much time I have before left
Before we become cartoons or ghosts

of cartoons floating through the night
temple. Sailing the skeleton filled waters

to the other side.

Ora Pro Nobis

This morning I listened to the audio
Of a comedian who isn't funny.
Now his stink is too pungent.
Fuck him.
These guys who used to be edgy
Are now old men with outdated views.

I know that I'm terrible too.
Maybe you're perfect.
I don't know.

In second grade I had to go to confession
Because it was Catholic School.

I told the priest I had fought with my sister,
And didn't make my bed one time.

The priest gave me sixteen prayers.
I knelt on the pew
And tried to say them all
But this was new
And I was seven.
I kept losing count.

Eventually my parents come over
Stifling giggles.
Come on. *Finish them in the car.*

I sat there trying to finish them.
But do you have any idea how long it takes
To say that many Hail Marys and Our Fathers?

Whenever life seemed uncertain
I would say that many prayers.
You know, penance.

A photo of a dog's asshole made the rounds online.
The owner said:
Can you see Jesus in my dog's asshole?
And I'm happy to report that I see Jesus.
I see his arms held out to me!
I see his puckered head loving me all that he can!

Hamlet overheard his uncle Claudius admit
to killing his brother during confession.
When performing Hamlet, Daniel Day Lewis
Saw his own dead father on the stage.
He hasn't performed on the stage since.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

One down.



David Blair

Somerville, Mass.

By the Grave of Robert Creeley

Look, here everybody comes
poking along up and down
by Indian Summer accident
that makes the daytrip go along
for awhile. Then we have a map
and might as well
find Creeley, up one street
named Mound Avenue, weird, what
next? Bone Yard Boulevard,
and then one that wraps over
and then beneath an embankment
with chipmunk rhododendrons,
and an intersection
dominated by the scaliest
locust tree bark
with the horniest branches
ever, alright on a fall day, not
in the dark or fog though,
gradually seeping in
the disused and sloughed off
coils of New England names
around gothic fencing
and many an Ezekiel,
an Ezra, in Mount Auburn,
and finally Creeley's grave
mossed up twelve years old
and already the oldest thing
with lines I won't even quote, so
good, on its backside with the prospect
of the day he meant us
to see, the family nearby
from the age of sea captains
and starch, strangers to him
in the woodlot wilderness, best
term for every woods
between roads, part
of initiating strangeness.
How to be a person
making mistakes,
that is the question, with ground
hairy beechnut shell
and sepal strewn, branches
down, odd segments.
Sabrina decides to stretch out
on her side in leaves
with head up
on crooked arm. What is she doing
down there? Has the smitty poet's
capacity to charm
outlived his body?
Astrid pranks up leaves
in a circle of girl feet
and alternates her dial
between cheek and spook,
the ground charged with goat
and bad chemicals for grass
at our heads and light hearts.

For the Friendship of Fanny and Ruth

An enormous spool of something, OXONITE
on the side of the truck, \$15 to have a right leg cuff
sewn again to keep it from dragging
in the puddles on the sidewalks, the economy
and the fabric start to crack
the weekend you two read. What are the yellow
vests doing in your old hometown, Fanny?
Are they rightwing proles or just neo-fascists
in prole getup, swinging a noose
at the lampposts with underground electric
lines, a noose with cellular data threads.
Since this could be an archangel problem,
Ruth, you are the right person
to have in the studio armchair.
What is this bad feeling today? Not sure
it will pass years of yearning for a sense
of holiness in the world that is not
world's end as the tameness of being a dream
in owl's leaves, and tragic, testifying, translating
two sisters who survived the camps, and, ah,
I understand now, a day late, a EURO short, ah,
fears and sorrows and fear of the Lord, ah,
no wonder we put one thing next to another
because there is a truck with a big black cable
and OXONITE on the side and also
on the wooden spool, and the sidewalks
puddling at our cuffs, and it all makes sense,
if this pause
is the pause
in the time gap
to think, to hear the warnings. But it gets hard
for me to hear when this hat made of electric
candle-shaped light bulbs rides
a plain kid walking into the room, door
to Michael's studio, through the open door,
and with a plate with what are not eggs,
and all these children of Swedish diplomats
and business people and the Vikings gotten
to the Commonwealth of Somerville
for the adventurous and dangerous season.
Ruth, cat soul, be with Fanny. Ruth, be here, friend.

Nicole Callihan

Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn

city

but that I get to walk down Broadway
and that the buildings nights have held me
up - and that you my city my city mine burn
in my brain - and that I may turn into
the sun and walk up Broadway up 6th Ave.
and that I have stared past strangers
and that I have stared into them beyond
and to the Hudson and to the East River
and that when I was at my lowest
in the century before this one - I lay
did lie - did place my body in the street
that I might be the thing pounded
on the way to dreams and this morning
I told my daughters that as a girl all I wanted
was to make a home of you - all I wanted
was a hat to hang - you my hook - my crooked
shook shack - that they might build on you
all the glass of the sea - that the weight
of the dreamers - or of the dreams themselves
bricks and stones and broken bones
that our backyard was filled with oyster shells
a man in a hat a match in his cupped palm
and you who have made an unlonely out of me
cloaked me in your wind and clocks and I
say home - say dusk - made unpoor
made unired - made a tempest tossed
made unlost - o my city my city mine

body

of Last Missing Person Found in California - body
of sinew - of sound - work - body of your mother
was it? - in her black cowboy boots? - body of your son
body of - the last time my body was in California
I sat in the backyard of the b&b waiting for coffee
for sweet rolls - bodies in party hats - in flowers
in white dresses - was there rice? - there wasn't rice
but wine and my body and yours and other bodies
shames drive - moon mountain - surely magnolia
something - circle maybe - body I wondered
hallowed body - hollow - hallowed be thy name
thy name of thy body - thy name of thy thigh - thy
fingers - thy sticky with the stickiness - thy sigh
the last missing person - the body - of the last one
that all the other bodies for all the rest of time
will not be missing - will be - is it found? - is found
the opposite of missing? - unlost? - of a body
absent from a place - especially home - whereabouts
unknown - but the last missing body - the lemon trees
the brown grass of those summer hills - the seals
prop plane - the sun - the birds - the last missing
body - are you home? - did you make it? - will it?

Poetry Bios

David Blair (<http://www.davidblairpoetry.com/>) is the author of three books of poetry, *Ascension Days*, *Friends with Dogs*, and *Arsonville*. He is also the author of *Walk Around: Essays on Poetry and Place* and a forthcoming poetry collection, *Barbarian Seasons*, both from MadHat Press. **Nicole Callihan** (<http://www.nicolecallihan.com/>) writes poems and stories. Her poems have appeared in *Sixth Finch*, *Copper Nickel*, *Tin House*, and *American Poetry Review*. Her novella, *The Couples*, was published by Mason Jar Press this summer. **Serina Gousby** is the founder of her lifestyle blog, *The Rina Collective*, where she posts personal, literary, and pop culture essays. She is the development associate and Boston writers of color group coordinator at *GrubStreet*, a non-profit organization, and creative writing center. She has performed at Suffolk University, Boston Poetry Marathon, Literary Death Match, and HUBWeek. Her work is featured in *The Suffolk Journal* and *Necessary Fiction*. **Amy Lawless** is the author of the poetry collections *My Dead* and *Broadax*, both from Octopus Books. With Chris Cheney, she is the author of the hybrid book *I Cry: The Desire to Be Rejected* from Pioneer Works Press' *Groundworks* Series. A chapbook *A Woman Alone* was published by *Sixth Finch* in 2017. Poems have been anthologized in *Best American Poetry* (a collaboration with Angela Veronica Wong), *Academy of American Poets' Poem-a-Day: 365 Poems for Every Occasion*, and the *Brooklyn Poets Anthology*.

BOOG CITY

Issue 129

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

film editor
Joel Schlemowitz

poetry editor
John Mulrooney

printed matter editor
Debrah Morkun

small press editor
Mike Wendt

counsel

Ian S. Wilder

Paper is copyright Boog City,
all rights revert to contributors
upon publication. Boog City is
published eight times annually.
Boog always reads work for Boog
City or other consideration.
(Email editor@boogcity.com)
Letters to the editor should
go to editor@boogcity.com.

BOOG CITY
3062 Brower Ave.
Oceanside, NY 11572
212-842-8006 (2664)
<http://www.boogcity.com>
@boogcity

follow @boogcity

