

ELDERLY ELEVEN







elderly

JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI

SAM LOHMAN

IVY JOHNSON

MICAH BALLARD

MICHAEL THOMAS TAREN

GRACE MITCHELL

MARISSA PEREL

TAYLOR BRADY

eleven

# JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI

## THIS SAD LITTLE ENCLAVE OF HORSES

of all lines of all the subway cars in all of new york city  
we walk into the one with a corpse  
it just puts everything into prescription for us  
as jason stackhouse says

alabaster turning into cristale  
nantáa ndé telling me unsaddle yr horse  
means to take off your hat

I love it when people use words wrong  
like repertoire for rapport, like when  
brenda said she had a good repertoire with her students  
or Cynthia saying she wouldn't spend an exuberant amount of time  
or when nick says anything anymore

the elk antlers are blood-brown  
if we can find them on this mountain  
edith says she has found  
skeletons of bucks who had died  
antlers entwined together

on the way to JFK you pass  
this sad little enclave of horses

there was no way to assess the land, or the landscape  
n/t was real about it.  
perhaps by the sides of the railroad sometimes  
a hint of the old ways

the river could be...a source of tension  
a jackass painted like a zebra  
from the ghost's perspective it's not humid  
when bojack horseman vomits up all that cotton candy  
long forgotten poisons  
smallpox, ricin, the bacteria that causes  
the the plague

the way that crows remember  
the faces of their adversaries

Louise Michell held sick horses in the street  
Nietzsche's last act  
was to embrace a horse

the taxi driver who hinted  
at his dark past in nyc  
wiped his hands together in the universal  
gesture of sloughing a thing off



## I HAD ALREADY SHUTTERED AN ASPECT OF MY VISION

after a string of broken treaties  
each more humiliating than the last  
geronimo was finally exhibited at the world's fair  
alongside an african man  
who could escape from the  
tightly wound chains  
but like geronimo was not his own person  
and whose keeper took him to the moving pictures  
fake images with real thunder  
and the pinheads and the other freaks.  
despite all the irreality I still clung  
to my vision  
a horse who could reckon land and water  
and dance like a crow among the embers  
never wondering why it didn't just fly off toward the sun  
undulating like an otter  
cracking shellfish on its chest and  
just floating on its back, face to the sun  
who never knew a saddle  
who never knew nothing but sunshine  
and this was a creature who could become other creatures  
an eagle when it was lofty  
a dog when it was lowly  
when it began to dance  
it led with the left leg, or flipper, or whatever limb or digit  
it happened to embody  
which is why humans in imitation  
of this gesture start their dances  
with the left leg  
powow or twostep  
tango or conga  
they explain it to themselves  
that they're following the heart  
my vision told me I did not know what I was  
nor could I locate myself—when I spoke the subject was obfuscated  
so that I was even absent from grammar  
the very medium in which I toiled  
I said a certain person was fuckable  
but I did not say by whom.  
rocketed back to the place of my death,  
I inhaled the stench of vomit, rotting fruit, exhaust  
I understood what percentage of persons  
were killed as they dove into the train  
I had shuttered an aspect of my vision  
in order to surf an already-ruined ocean  
no life now to live  
but an ever-retreating set of propositions  
each more implausible than the last  
a whale in the embrace of an octopus  
the lifevest giving life  
even as it moldered under the seat  
just a hand fluttering in the ocean  
precipitated our rescue.

## SAM LOHMANN

### MOVE POTION

Gathered at a speaker

all us arose

in point of fact

bound across trunks

the woods closed.

August, the bounds

outward in trim colors clucked

the lateness of a house

kicked in replica

applause.

I thought

August, no, a crop

frost seeped in

bare to the year

a disorderly tape

came leaping.

I miss

the truancy,

us tossing discards off a trunk,

the suddenly lightened household that —

Gathered at appearance

we are all cool now.

I miss the place to lose

the friend turning up

insulted mono



hum,  
salt  
cast into broth  
and its tenuous hiss got a notion of pretty  
everything I guess —

eager to unseal  
in the any hour  
swinging  
burlap  
beating up to place.

I miss  
my wool hat,  
weather scoots up  
my wet flank  
chiseling its corner there  
flightless  
past condensed compass  
the woods close  
to a petal swinging on a thorn  
I hope, ear to the door.

Turning from the speaker  
all we face  
faces  
putting looks on  
of listening  
uh-huh and watchful animals  
to pass a parade,  
to put on crooked greeting eyes.

But we can only sync by sound and there's  
periodic license to squeal,  
lay cheek on shoulder.

The louder

we get to  
others  
that much more  
the shushing times our fear  
to lope for years  
under mistakes  
that lend their tone  
scratches herded

to our unconditional  
air.

Mostly I'm worried  
the squares aren't square between us  
as fogged-over windows run  
research squeaks by  
on thin surmise  
as a frieze.

Only a beach,

part of a choice  
color marred  
really stilled, cupped  
in certain hands  
a projectile  
oversight



or loophole plan  
let ripen  
as offer.  
Set in a strong box  
Fridays  
for the romance of it  
at intervals  
a whiff of surf  
so never take it as it comes  
on again.

In a stiff book  
pulses  
telling other people  
things  
the sweet new style of speech  
takes offers  
out again  
as trial.

Sidewalk  
pushing forth  
so not so nervous  
floral obsession's  
stopped up.

I'm with you in traffic  
putting names to vehicles,  
with you in  
the instant classic

car alarm

hour.

Evening

bark chips

cluck, untuck

chromatics

in a washable matrix

make time a mansion in

espaliered

broken threads.

That's pretty out there

don't you worry

the nebula

has a tacky substance

tracer on foil

roundly on record

time is only that

but with a pulse

to move on up and acknowledge

gold leaf on my toenails

to oval mirror and manually troubled

sparrow shadow

all the time.

This lacking bearings feels all right

at length

peaching on

on the chance of any arrangement

at all



by the horns.

In a sky so whole  
I put the scratches in  
not to show my hand  
but put away  
and shut the flap  
and take all winter.

Blithe  
as a blackout  
smiling with friends  
I was on edge  
at some doorstep  
aping purple libel  
onto paper  
traces set up  
at once as  
fresh history  
now we get together,  
flaunt that master plan.

I mainly talk to trees,  
still,  
everybody's kind.

The more we get together  
the longer span of air we ride  
they'll have to name a skybridge after  
how in the free will pincers  
we partied and named names

making bold with substances  
tearing the shit with provisional  
definition.

Fleet in bed  
and full of a spooky keenness  
we swapped registers all over the playground  
and by the swingset  
sang a three-note boast:  
early  
and danger and  
dark blue is nearly all of it.

I'm so fucking out of it  
the curb shies  
everybody says  
how I bump around  
the way I engage  
on wheels hacks  
its trill,

a suspension bridge  
is lingerie to me.

Piecing the reversible fabrics together  
tangent to a group of buildings, time  
figures as a rip  
in measure while food  
gets forgotten,  
water  
is a background noise,

a brick wall shines  
the only tether let go.

No, there was one  
thread held on  
that was us in a past going nowhere  
bolted to music and casual hugs  
like it was a crime or something.

Why not the weather  
the woods said  
a speaker  
mounted in a tree  
clubbing all casual  
magic uh-huh  
spun close to the ear  
extremes of fate  
feel all wonky.

Sleeping with rocks  
in the interim to get a forecast  
out of the blue  
springbound gossip under a blanket  
likes you back  
in our little red book.

To feel like a sucker  
puddling composition  
on the breath of  
getting on  
is a signature move



all squinted up and  
    pacing  
        unsettled floor  
at last:  
        whatever wants to  
    get there  
in a mobile bower:

    Talkers move in circles.  
    Haters have to wait.  
  
    Scribes take turns  
        undoing movements  
in service to a binge  
    politic  
        as our gazes  
        rise to the treetops  
kiss a monument  
not to retract.

How I got a hole in my playbook  
bugs the grapevine neighbors  
    with sauntering  
        vertical trills  
        how I talk  
            eats  
your business.

Does this social pressure  
    stowing the motion  
        do anything

make eye contact

this painted panel's central half?

Anything with that mayhem on it?

I don't know

what to take away

from what

in the glacial outwash

real sass and purple ribbons

clutter up my game

so the potion has this click I made up

so we sing it together

how I got the tenor

with lateral strums

pouring a piece of each, all of it

cordial as reburn

dropped from a height:

don't shake it yet.

## IVY JOHNSON

*from* BORN AGAIN

Speak to me, Earth! Let me hear your voice! I can no longer remember your voice! Speak to me, Sun! Where must I go to hear your voice? Speak to me, Earth! Speak to me, Sun! You're disappearing, perhaps never to return again. I can no longer hear what you are saying. Grass, speak to me! Stone, speak to me! Where is your meaning, Earth? Where can I find you again? Where is the link that bound you to the sun? I touch the earth with my feet and I do not recognize it. I look at the sun with my eyes, and I do not recognize it.

*from* Passolini's *Medea*

‡

Carcasses litter the prairie like phantom limbs

Ancient and historical glacial forms wash away to place me

Buzzing in the novel clearing

Sky toppled earth traces a horizon that cuts

Unraveling the sun

Sprung all those terrible voices

I am born

Speaking the language

This rude effigy

I carry the thyrsus

Evoking the name I grew into

Evoking the metaphysic beyond of cruelty

What else will take me there

I give that you may stay away

I bind you with a name

In the name of the Lord I bind you

And I bind you good

‡

Last night I found myself staring into space outside of

My mother's house lost for God knows when

Suddenly awareness of self was presented to me by the gaze of a man

In a pickup truck down the road carting terror darting towards me

Shot with an arrow and I

The fear moved me like an angry watchdog trapped as

I watched it dangling from a tree by its hind legs hanging from its leash

My watch dog has a pulse

Sleeps in the cold



‡

I am the screaming woman, beside herself

I wipe my menstrual blood over the door of my eviction

I am begging for one more day

I am lost in a place where the prairie is more like a sea

The sea is more like a fire

The fire like a distant relative

Speak to me sun

Red mouth of sex

Black tears of death

A fire in the mouth of the river that has dried

I have tried sprinkling the fields in blood

But nothing will grow

Nothing

‡

Despite exploitation

My desire lingers, free floating

And cavernous, anxiously

Swallowing a hiccup

The shape of a battery

Operated tea-light, which forces bloom

Upon the lily billowing

In my throat

I can't breathe

I'm all perfumed with death

Skull filled with flowers

An authentic tableau

Hallowed holy spirit

In my feminist fantasy

I am a severed head

Look at my godforsaken face

As the light slides from my throat

My body condenses the light

I don't need anyone to touch me

To make me real

‡

In the Book of Life the names write

The sea, turning its dark pages

Washed up to shore

Little eggs incubate in the sand

To be exhumed by military forces

Autopoietic, simultaneous, overlapping

As is, as does, phenomenal, looping

Everything is modern and fallow

This post-secular crisis of meaning

Dispersed in a virtual flat fog over the oilfields

That once was my grandfather's homestead

As seen from over yonder

A backdrop for the clothes

One wore when one was alive

Hanging on the line

It does envelop me

‡

As if covered in blood

Or red paint from shock

Awakening on the road

As I drained from the loss

The red on the hands

The gold of the field

Not knowing quite yet and

Never quite knowing

The location of this trauma

As if I could march to it in protest

## MICAH BALLARD

### HUMIDITY

Wake up  
slightly defeated  
recuperative blurring detonating  
presences, the faces  
are connected by want  
ads and flyers for readings  
a stoke of the actual  
with every bulb lit  
a pass from Astaroth to bespeak  
the binary then I'm out  
twice a widow's peak  
& free for seasons  
the entire salvo a matter  
of appearance, yours a matching  
bud vase painfully obvious  
mine a small joint show  
pleasingly still  
at last a sidelong stride  
to prove me luminous  
when the harpers  
forget to play their strings  
let the opiate speak  
for itself



## SMOKE RINGS

The problem with you  
says McNaughton, is you like pleasure  
too much. In keeping  
with my signature features  
I crush the shrine and pray  
for the vultures too  
each crux as pictorial and bon vivant  
as I please. On the lurid side  
the scrip was a snare  
O the surge, O the bellows  
Homer knew it. The galleries are lived in  
not rented for the weekend  
if this is Lethe then why do I remember?  
Mute the lights and meet  
my crumpled horn. About its music  
the best notes are given up front  
the better played for inferior years  
few are the words, many their parlors  
the most minute elements  
ferry us out to see further  
don't try to understand  
learn of me while I do you  
we might pass without galaxy  
but at least the connectives  
bring a new climate of feeling

## WALKING PAPERS

I sky the street

for a language of patterning

& turn out volumes

for a valance similar

to the fringe

rap-a-lot, cash money, death row

my splendid talk

& regal carriage

more a throwback clip

than an honest jeweler

its freeze-frame cuts

depend upon the words

of previous travelers

very robust rascals

drinking in the songs

A book hides a trap

an evening hides a day

I think I am walking straight

so many mouths

& hot prolific tears

the black capsules

reinvent the voices

the pink sweat

them into halos

teach me how

to own the page again

its mirrors are maps

if you learn joy first

## NO HOMAGE

The doctors in other hospitals  
often tease me of being independent  
& feel that something beside me is being spoken to  
interrupt as you need but don't be kind  
I'm only talking to relieve you of conversation  
my capacity for marveling is boundless  
it's okay simplicity was my worst feature too  
as for competition I can only tell you what they think  
he's hustling you and I'm hustling him  
to hell with the subjective, it's a physical fact  
even when I'm ready I still say no  
what I need is a custodian of the primary  
someone easy to know and hard to please  
with a lazy tongue just like mine

## A HANGING TOTEM

Spark  
the prologue cameo  
I'm tired of this  
tyrant on the set  
basic riffing filtered  
with a touch of now  
it seems. Am I crashing  
through my visit  
or slaying half nights  
in the central chug  
part-time poet  
full-time charlatan  
get mobbed or  
learn how to run it  
"I was never a gangster  
just gothic & gangster  
about it," now lets  
not get too emphatic  
this beast is more  
than a bore, he's extra-  
ordinarily a bore  
are you talking about  
me or Oscar Wilde  
I'm talking about  
smoking a mountain  
for a full night's sleep  
beached out crystal  
clear dream team  
finally a debut as head  
mistress. Does that mean  
no more too many? No  
just not that much  
How much is too much?  
I don't know maybe  
easy on the all the times

## NINE ARE CARNELIAN

Go for broke

You can spend your days here too

We have jonquils, a narcissus, frail violets and an alchymst

The higher the grade the harder the find

& I'm talking cut, not even pure by distant ranking

So which poet are you?

Nothing is hidden from clairvoyance

& since you're a charming creature please stay that way

You know as well as me how suffering benevolence can be

A full night's hustle & I'm still here

Now I know why we get along so well

I was born under the sign of apropos

You can tell at once if you have the gift



# MICHAEL THOMAS TAREN

## TRAKL

Peasants walk across a field bits of conversation  
In a dragnet line  
Could be dusk or morning  
Searching for the body of a girl  
Peasant clothing, whatever that may be  
In the distance an isolated man comes  
Walking from a grove or thicket opposite them  
A forest a dark green place  
Features of face unclear, remain unclear  
He is walking toward the  
Line of walking peasants  
We see the line of men walking  
In a line toward the man, Trakl  
We see through the eyes of Trakl  
The men walking in a line  
Sober, ugly faces bits of conversation  
The line merely passes out of frame  
As the frame moves forward  
The frame moves forward  
Toward something perhaps houses  
Or a house  
A single leafless dead brown tree  
Now it is night the sounds of dry weeds  
Being crushed distinct  
*Who will receive the wandering Oedipus today?*  
We are seeing the dome  
Of what mother of fate  
Stars that wander over earthly aspirants  
We hear breath and crackling breakage  
And the dry of grasses and weeds  
We see that the forest is dark  
We see that the stars are stars  
If we could smell wine  
We would smell wine  
The stars and moon provide the light  
For shadows, play of shadows  
Shadow figures moving across surfaces  
Light and the eye of light  
We see an apothecary or pharmacist  
In a white coat measuring  
Powders on an apothecary scale  
Bottles bottles bottles  
A cup of wine goes to the frame face  
We see the abdomen of the seated man  
We call Trakl  
A kind of music is playing the flute  
As if in a kind of cave pushing out of the cave

A kind of hearing is happening  
That is the hearing of music played  
In a cave this is a comment on the  
Quality of the sound  
People are moving quite slow  
The cup of wine goes down  
Onto the table  
And we observe the play of light  
In the dark liquid wine a play of  
A bright lozenge of white light  
And its as if people are getting up  
(We do hear this as sound.)  
Stripped of their power  
Jostling the table a bit  
It is easy at this time for an apothecary  
To acquire cocaine  
The poet claimed to remember of childhood  
Only images of water.  
I can no longer bear to live.  
We see a shadow lost in apparent ruins.  
Just enough light shines.  
Droves of eyes going someplace,  
(I mean elsewhere than here.)  
A man carrying a ladder. A cat  
Or a dog scrounges. Men carrying  
A man. Men carrying a squirming  
Man. Apparently insane.  
The sound of the train  
Fills everything.  
Spiritually excessive. As  
Is insanity.  
A violation (as all sounds or states are  
to the motion parallel and in excuse of them.)  
A saying, or a joke.  
Or a joke, or afflatus.  
The sound of water as the birth of afflatus.  
Birth, remedy,  
Place that tempers and distorts.  
The remedy is provided by the apothecary  
As afflatus is provided by water.  
You cannot see a remedy working.  
You have to wait  
Or you have to feel.  
Against a stark background of black  
Or brown or tan, beautiful tan,  
The hands fill bottles, the scales  
Weigh powders, the bottles pass  
From hand to hand, the scales  
Give expectedly, the hand closes  
On the expected thing: it's an

Apothecary. This is the semblance  
Of apprenticeship.  
And what it tried to resemble  
Was the thing it had to be.  
We see a nice postcard of Vienna.  
We see many images of Vienna.  
Stock images. To a kind of thumping  
Music. The chaste city.  
Who are you to be in this  
The hub of the thousand year empire.  
Eine purpurne Flamme  
Erlosch an menem Mund.  
Walking the edge of the dark forest.  
It is he.  
As though from a cockade, and not  
A past merely, what little thanks to be  
Confined in one's forlorn elucidations.  
When the whole imagination  
Is made ready for inhuman suggestion.  
Nothing advances except this gaze  
From pure beginning to first event.  
Where a blue rests from its endless emerging:  
We see the pristine lakes of Salzburg  
(do they exist?). We imagine lakes exist  
as or like we know they do.  
They are not images on a postcard  
But they are real images  
They move as on water  
They float on themselves.  
The body of the child and the body  
Of the addict both float in water.  
The mind of the child  
Floats in water. Water floats  
In the mind of the child. Little  
Do they sense one another.  
In his sister he never found his  
Much searched for absence.  
You are so calm. Calm.  
He would watch dogs eat.  
An open mouth would remind him  
Of light going out. In the mind  
Light and light snuffed share the same  
Immanence. Who would suppose  
That he wrapped his dreams  
In a dark sheet. The sheet that  
Pulled from the bed reveals  
Two pairs of feet and a sound  
Of bracing squeaks. The right  
Buttcheek taken in hand and twisted  
And released. And the pink fading from.

The clouds of tobacco in the brown air.  
The drying of rain by the sun.  
He writes with his face on the desk  
Mostly in evening. The sea is spurious  
The sea doesn't exist. Dead the sea  
Where mankind finally dies. Lakes exist  
Ponds exist, filled gutters exist  
The marsh where men sink and die.  
Rain water.  
Open mouth: open whole the seed's  
Poked into.  
Who implored from this space  
Would cede his triumph?  
Syncope.  
Hands come out of the obscurity  
And grasp his body, hoist and carry  
But he seems not alarmed, rather  
He looks up at the stars  
And the shapes of the trees emblazon  
His repose.  
He is the insane man, aware of his  
Repose in the dark gold  
Of his carriers.  
Carried, but why would he be carried  
He ambles like the murderer  
He describes to his sister, his murderer  
Who stabs him through the ribs  
from behind his back.  
How does one take cocaine in this age?  
Intravenously  
A chair flies through the air  
And smashes on the lawn.  
The but slowly slowly slowly  
Opening and then  
Slowly slowly slowly  
Closing fist. With prolonged  
Tintinnabulation.  
Hand-rain.  
Mankind turns to stone, and the stones  
Weather until they are just stones  
And the shape that had been mankind  
Is concealed behind time come.  
Went down  
With freezing features belief in interpretations.  
I can no longer live. Laying down on straw.  
Sometimes the frame is just  
Filled all with his hair.  
Too full and motionless and certainly  
Greater than the smashed  
Devil of knowledge

That shalt be without his love  
But with his mercy and in truth  
Nothing to the god that kneels.  
And the absence  
Of man as shapeless stone.  
The impression made by the weight  
Of the head on a wrinkled pillow  
On the cheek. That it the impression fades.  
It, the impression, in frame, fades, so  
That we see this happen, entire.  
He keeps a diary.  
The film suggests that he keeps a diary.  
A wobbly, medium sized hand.  
Black ink. The pleasures of paper.  
The other rooms, with hunks of chalk  
Dissolving in moist seaweed.  
He writes with his black pen  
And thinks about a shadowy  
Child within his sister.  
Nothing will grow in his hands  
That are soft  
Hands that are soft  
Have crumbled soil into skull  
We see the dark overtake three men  
Sitting on the bench from the bottom right  
Of the frame.  
The poet's merciless lack of motive  
Is this shade that crosses men  
In league with the light that shrinks  
From its advance.  
I dreamt that I'd gone swimming  
That I could dive further and further  
Into the sea without taking breath  
And that sharks and dark squids  
Were tolerant of me  
As I swam through their black household  
And I'd swum down to a place  
Where the ice of the universe  
Plunged into the belly of the earth  
And the swirling turbulence  
Raked my now ancient body against  
The rocks where I had been dying  
Forever, and would finally die  
He wakes from his sleep or imagined sleep  
Breathing heavily (the entire time)  
On the straw where he lay  
And the bottom half of his face is in frame  
And the imprint that the straw had left  
Fades.  
A herd of animals falls over a cliff.

A hand with pointer and middle  
Fingers cut off at the second knuckle.  
Diary: In the unbroken darkness  
It is useless to turn, or move  
The dreams lay half awake, dreaming.  
The war starts in August 1914.  
The trench  
And the faces of people in mud.  
Let the dead think of me, not I them.  
We watch ghosts supplicate for a madness  
That will release them.  
Starless, and then, the motion of a lantern.  
We hear the chirp crickets make.  
A vast sound under the universe.  
A sound to equal the time precedent of any flesh.  
I may need you oft voiced, Gasper.  
You, stars, and the  
Legend rearing drunk against black walls.  
Ein weisses Sternenhemd verbrennt  
Dir tragenden Schultern—  
He is an ugly man in the dragnet  
Watching himself come from the forest  
Where he was commanded without  
Choice to be there within.  
A wreath of violets, wheat and grapes  
Set down gently near bare feet.  
A beautiful gift made of leaves  
Where one touches one's sister's face.  
The sister will one day shoot her head.  
The stars will be  
Released from the cold black mouth  
For refusing to grow.  
Here is the  
Who saw three men dead hanging  
Necks broken, tongues  
Bared to festering. He is looking out  
Of his window. We see the window.  
We see trees, we hear birds  
We hear a child wailing from somewhere  
Wailing, wanting something,  
Wailing and wanting, with religious authority  
We hear the wailing as wanting.  
Trakl scribbles something and  
Stares at the window.  
Next, looking at his hand.  
Next, the hand against the wall  
Where a leaf is pinned. The hand  
And the leaf compared.  
Whenever we might be close enough  
To see his face, we only see what he



Sees. Whenever we might be  
Close enough to see his face  
His vision is what we see.  
Otherwise we are far from him  
And his face is indistinct.  
Drunk men get into a very slow  
Fight. They very slowly choke  
One another.

## GRACE MITCHELL

### NESSY

I been tryna get through this hole  
upper arm getting hard but going away  
too fast to tell  
touch it real quick plz        it blows back up  
your inflatable chew toy  
shove that cake back into your  
pie hole stud yes  
im telling ppl that you're an average swimmer  
that you think of water as lots of  
island sirens  
holding you like the globe and  
you'll never give in you say    ha ha  
they will hack heck out of you  
don't finish it all at once       a pool's a lot.  
U have more, more than  
than someone who only sees but just look at  
everyone bullshitters  
thinking what's new is new  
all days hitherto are old chewy    hunks  
piling up on my windshield  
peck diamonds stand guard –  
I'm taking you to pound town  
there's no tap-out here only safe words  
maybe u lucky  
there goes I bottoms up  
down strips of wall that keep drinking  
like they haven't been watered  
maybe ever  
and this one's sinking in  
beneath the hide       yr dew  
now I'm patient  
I'm your slapstick  
I'm your truck hitch

lets be each other on different peoples arms

be still I'll say to them

and keep cathy and carry me too

dig my

thickness like the loch ness

## CAGE FREE

I don't know who u are or how u  
got in here but  
my chambers are electric (obviously) &  
erotica is bear rug / I'm browsing there you are  
wherever, sorry acting detached from my pretty anima --  
Love u sissy!  
Your desires are false brother  
listening to Black Sabbath  
Master of Reality / Anklebone Not Healing  
my inner boy child is raging  
scanning  
crowds of people way tall, I look for your prom dress zipper  
what am I doinggggg  
there are many layers to your onion  
and mine? Like wisdom teeth  
outta the head

# MARISSA PEREL

## I WANT/I VOMIT

I want a criticism that is embodied

I want to acknowledge bodies as critical tools

I want to acknowledge aesthetics as a total part of culture and thus as a critical tool

I love your body

I love your body even if I don't understand it

I love your body even if I am afraid of it

I love your body even if you don't love it

I love what you are showing me

Even if I hate it

Because you are here in front of me

Because you have chosen to be this

To move like this

Because you chose this life

And so did I

And we create the space for each other to exist

I see what you don't see yet

I also don't get your point and this is wonderful

Thank you for not telling me what this is

Thank you for showing up for no money

Thank you for showing me a world I can believe in

Or that I can't

I vomit on descriptive language

I vomit on metaphors and similes

I vomit on privilege

I vomit on misogyny

Use the right damn pronoun for us, please

I vomit on dancing

I vomit on criticism

I vomit on these aspects of cultural capital

I vomit on the market that makes us need each other

So that we can perpetuate this separation

So we can keep not getting paid for thinking, looking, talking, making

Who are you dancing for?

Do you know you're alive?

Do you feel alive after your show when you are waiting for the review?

Do you feel alive after your show when people you know look the other way, or congratulate you tritely before turning away?

Do you feel alive when someone suddenly wants to be your best friend after whatever review you got?

Do you feel alive making press packets?

Do you feel alive quoting critics for blurbs and applications?

I don't feel alive waiting for a review.

I don't feel alive after my show when people I know look the other way or congratulate me tritely before turning away.

I don't feel alive when someone wants to be my best friend after a review I got, or after I review I wrote, or because they want me to write about their work.

I don't feel alive making press packets.

I don't feel alive quoting critics for blurbs and applications.

I am here to have a conversation.

I am making work to be in dialogue with other artists and makers and subjects in this world.

I am writing about work as a dialogue with other artists, makers, and subjects in this world.

I curate to make a world I want to see, to make a world I feel I can inhabit.

I vomit on your hierarchy.

I vomit on your veiled or not so veiled condescension.

I vomit on your lack of context for my work.

I vomit on the clout that comes with roles.

I want you to shatter me.

I want you to bore me.

I want you to make me feel like I need to come up with another language to talk about you.

I want you to be honest about what you don't know.

You don't have to dance for me to believe that you are a dancer.

Please, don't be fierce.

Are you crying in your studio right now?

Good. So am I.

Are you feeling alive when you are crying in the studio?

Writing in the studio.

Thinking in the studio.

Lying on the floor in the studio.

Napping on the floor of the studio.

Do you feel safe in the studio?

Did you ever feel safe?

Did you move to New York for the same reasons I did?

Maybe.

Were you or are you a degenerate?

Were you or are you different from the people you grew up with?

Did your parents care that you wanted to make art, as in perform, dance, write, think, protest?

No? Mine either.

Did you move to New York to make it?

If so, have you made it?

Did you move to New York because you couldn't lead a normative life somewhere because you feel shame, you feel hurt, you are in pain, you have inherited a diseased society.

Did you move to New York for your parents to buy you an apartment so you can make your art and get an amazing review and be a fabulous artist?

Do you have an MFA?

If you don't, do you want one?

If you do, do you feel proud of it?

Do you feel like you earned it?

Do you feel like it qualifies you to be an artist?

Are you in debt from your education?

Are you living your dream right now?

Do you have the gig of a lifetime?



If so, are you scared?

Are you scared of what the critics will say?

Do you know the moment is passing?

The gig will be over?

You will have spent all that money.

You might not have paid yourself.

Can I pay for your groceries instead of writing about your work?

Can I watch your child while you are in rehearsal?

Can I pay for your medical bills and physical therapy bills from that piece where you made \$15 an hour?

Is this working?

# TAYLOR BRADY

## INSTRUCTIONS OR AN EPIC THEATER AT HOME

*with* Laurel Evje-Karn

You've arrived in time to play  
a game called Rest. Sit down. Close  
your eyes tightly. Face the sun.  
Do not peek. No one is ever  
allowed to peek. Someone will come  
to gently mark you. Do not be  
afraid. This is the red finger.  
Next to it, the green. No peeking.

Color is what I say. You  
don't need to see it. You don't  
get to say things here. I say there's  
a stream, and across it buried  
treasure that stays buried, and  
a leash without a dog. Relax  
and help me with my plan. Go get  
the dog, mascot of the river.

Now build a thing with chairs and strings  
and mud. We call this sculpture and  
it's beautiful. Now tear it down.  
The river was always enough.

Only the workers can see this  
exhibit. You'll have to wait outside.

## AN AVATAR

*with* Laurel Evje-Karn

My little brother is  
the queen of the mirror.  
She can turn herself  
into anything she might want.

Even a goblet. Even  
a pointed hat. She is  
queen of the mirror  
and has every single hairstyle

in the world, but  
only when we're sleeping. Look  
at him and she's  
gone. All the way gone.

She's the queen of  
the mirror and doesn't know.  
He thinks this is  
the world. He's herself alone.

A WITCHING HOUR  
for Anne Boyer

with Laurel Evje-Karn & Alice Rowley

Listen. This is that one song  
I told about you. I can't  
feel my shoe, but we can dance  
the same. And read minds. All kinds

of minds, knowing when to laugh  
before the joke. About self  
and about us being one.  
About sisters and who's not.

There's another song by this  
same guy. Same man. Whatever.  
The bad things, the hurting things  
are there whenever we stop

throwing brightly-colored glass  
up in the air to fall and  
break. The lesson is don't stop.  
Don't stop before the world is

flashing color on all ten  
sides, and broken into bits  
that count as high as we can  
count. We're the sisters casting

spells together with the mess.  
Magic starts when everything  
is wrecked. Who needs songs for that?  
We already know the dance.

## APOTHECARY

*with* Laurel Evje-Karn

We're making medicine today,  
outside our little house

in the queen fairy's  
neighborhood. All the rest

of the people are  
somewhere in the earth.

Morning dew, sourgrass, and  
a few off-limits flowers.

Plus a basin and  
a little wooden hammer.

Sometime rain will come  
back to make medicine

for us. But today  
we pound it out ourselves.

## WINNING SEASON

*with* Laurel Evje-Karn

There is another word for  
the trophy--another word for

iron, and for gold. For  
how much money things cost.

I'm just a word, it  
says. You can't kill me.

Try to kill the stars.  
We're just stars, they say.

Try killing us. You can't.  
All of this is circles.

Circles and more circles. Try  
killing circles. Really, really try.

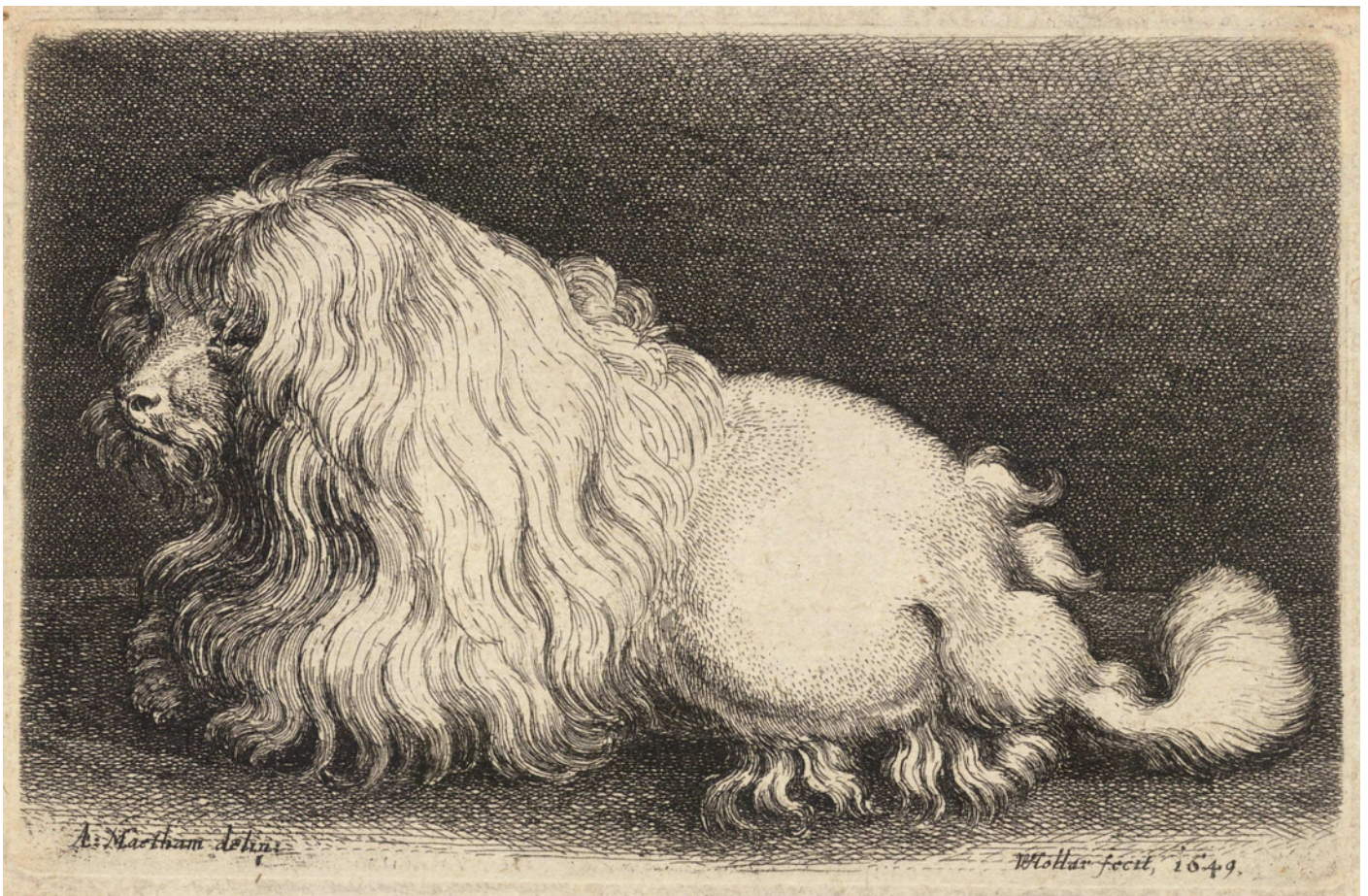


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We are not for sale  
Fuck you for thinking we were

THE BAY/NYC

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