



Lightning'd Press | Issue Eight

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Issue Eight  
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so roareth handprint Lion/"there sits fire/with the forest in his mouth"

— Ronald Johnson, from *ARK*

# Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Poems	8
Interview	65
Acknowledgments	67
Biographies/Credits	68

# Introduction

Summary: The Machine that drives us never was.

Ta'wil, without question, is a matter of *harmonic perception*, of hearing an identical sound on several levels simultaneously; "to bring back" the data to their origin, to their archetype, to their *donor*, there precisely where the apparent can be occulted and the hidden manifested, the real transmutation of what is written (whether in a book or in the cosmos), raised to incandescence and the hidden significance shines through, becomes transparent: the geography of a world that secrets its own light, the super position of worlds and interworlds, that secrets its own light.

*The Machine that drives us never was. Secrets its own light.*

Of Secrets  
I am Silence

Light upon Light

incandescent coruscation  
pillars of fire  
on plinth flesh, named hymn

posture outright,  
and every torrent sonorous  
contagion evangelical

without asylum left, path  
lift us to zenith  
at length become fixed stars

*A mortal is about to see  
the majesty of the throne ...*

The production of meaning is never production; there is no assembly or mass manufacture. There is the accretion of tradition, the stripping of ossification, in the subverting of sense for sense's sake to make sense.

Every poem a rewriting of every other poem attempting to write the Poem while writing the Poem.

We construct, out of every respite, a new foundation of the old foundation.

No one can sit upon the Throne save Who is already on the Throne itself save Who is the Throne itself and the Sitting.

The rhymes, the repetitions of the incantation, would hold the serpent power mounting in the work, to time it, "let it gather momentum, let it gather force." In

shaman rite and yoga rite men have come into heavens or crowns or nirvanas of a thought beyond thought, like the poet inspired, carried away by words until vision arises, as of the whole.

But this blowing one's top or the Taoist ecstatic's churning the milky way with his lion tongue is fearful. The snake in the spinal tree of life has made a nightmare of impending revelation for me for he wears still the baleful head of the diamondback rattler, the hooded fascination of the king cobra. The Nagas that sway above the Buddha's dreaming form keep my thought away from him.

For a moment this power, this would-be autistic force of the poem

Since you know that the forms they posit are not real, there can be nothing in the constitution except the intermediacy of qualities. Briefly, the difference between the constitution and corruption is that corruption is the total alternation of qualities, whereas the constitution is the intermediate of things combined. From this result the compounds: animals, plants, and minerals. Sould take loving delight in any mineral--gold or ruby, for example -- which has a luminous barrier and stability, by which it resembles the celestial barriers and their lights. It is dear to them by virtue of the perfection of its stability, and love for it is similar to the love for the luminous star.

“descend endless realms:  
No broader numbered measure  
Than man's mind

chariot beyond compare  
mid silver shield,  
and rolled on wheels of amber

strip I the wind on every side  
clust'ring spheres upheld  
far reason's ear

face to face sun  
bare ashes, so blind an alley  
assembled star by star

And by the saving graces: meander and meaning, the considerable taxing of the nerves, on the nerves, while trying to derive some intellectual sense of things underlying the syntax. No, substratum. No, crust or topsoil. No, sky or the starry spheres. The Sun itself does not, and can not, know with any certainty whilst the mind is active. There is no thing called life from which to construct shards or ruins.

But, shamefacedly, we hurry to rush into any lack of calm we can construct in order to further the delusion, to delude our selves, into thinking. And thinking makes the man. Monad charm, misunderstand and misapprehended; there are no mirrors. Disconnection is only a dream we fantasize of remembering.

*You are not, and then everything else.*

#### The Recurrence of Creation

the idea of recurrent creation, new creation (*khalq jadid*) calls the very nature of creation in question. There is no place for a *creatio ex nihilo*, an absolute beginning preceded by *nothing*. The existentionation of a thing which had no existence before, a creative operation which took place once and for all is now complete is a theoretical and practical absurdity. *Creation* as the "rule of being" is the pre-eternal and continuous movement by which being is manifested at every instant in a new cloak. The *Creative Being* is the pre-eternal and post-eternal essence or substance which is manifested at every instant in the innumerable forms of being; when He hides in one, He manifests Himself in another. *Created Being* is the *manifested*, diversified, successive, and evanescent forms, which have their substance not in their fictitious autonomy but in the Being that is manifested in them and by them. Thus creation signifies nothing less than the Manifestation (*zuhur*) of the Hidden (*batin*) Divine Being in the forms of being: first in their eternal *hexeity*, then--by virtue of a renewal, a recurrence that has been going on from moment to moment since pre-eternity--in their sensuous forms.

Nevertheless, we never cease to see what we are seeing; we do not notice the existentionation and passing away at every moment, because when something passes away, something like it is extentionated at the same moment. We look upon existence, our own for example, as continuous, past-present-future, and yet at every moment the world puts on a "new creation," which veils out consciousness because we do not perceive the incessant renewal. At every *breath* of the "Sigh of Divine Compassion" (*Nafas al-Rahman*) being ceases and then is; we cease to be, and then come into being. In reality there is no "then," for there is no interval.

Is this that? Let go. Sameness troubles me.  
Table. Chair. Whatever. I know when I see it.

Things come and go. Think of Langlois  
and the Cinematheque. Or the library at Alexandria.

These persistencies not of memory but the imagination.  
Not what was lost. But that it was there.

Quotations, in order of appearance

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"Of Secrets / I am Silence", *Bhagavad Gita* 10:38, translated by Narayana Maharaja, Gaudiya Vedanta Samiti 2000

"incandescent...", from *ARK* 88, by Ronald Johnson, Flood Edition 2013

"A mortal...", from "in this paradise" in *Terra Lucinda*, by Joseph Donehue, pg. 84, Talisman House 2009

"The rhymes...", from *The HD Book* by Robert Duncan, pg. 408, University of California Press, 2012

"Since you...", from *The Philosophy of Illumination* by Surhwardi, section 2:2:4, translated by John Walbridge & Hossein Ziai, Brigham Young University Press, 1999

"descend...", from *ARK* 79

"The Recurrence...I", from *Alone with the Alone*, by Henry Corbin, pgs. 200-201, translated by Ralph Manheim, Princeton University Press, 1998

"Is this that?", from "Last Poem" in *Kintsugi*, by Thomas Meyer, pg. 51, Flood Editions 2011

drop lets

(a silent cymbal)

Abelia fronds claim

the damp path ;  
roots drench

puddles  
splinter

pine trench  
echoes  
timber

rocking firs or

cone temples

near tarmac

- splash -  
wings

grounded this

too-soon )

spring day

Who knows  
Strawberries grow  
green, then blush

in Spring's new  
heat

shaded by Holly -

feet dangle  
in the  
panseyes

pots of Parsley  
near hips  
sits Rosemary, lush

by the busy  
red-bud road  
I eat

coconut  
curry

at Dingle Creek

bare feet  
on rail -

propped

chair  
rocks

the long porch

mono  
ton  
ous

bark

D  
R  
I  
P  
S  
D  
R  
O  
P  
S

cut grass  
matted

to tar.

heaven  
claps  
the earth  
with rain

in extended ovation:  
an encore

of Life.

(the birds know  
and keep tune;  
winged splashes

amid pale  
pink petals  
(past prime

mimosas) )

Thunder bows  
against roof,

quaking.

In the lane:  
    narrow stripes  
    of parallel  
streams

blood rushes  
    heels  
to knees,  
    numbing

bare feet

on rail -

propped.

Lace flowers  
line road-  
side

sun song in ears  
delight  
cars pass  
lyrics inspire

lane sways  
(pen stays)

I write  
drive  
and dream

Wildly

We converse  
    in  
bed

fish-faced

    foreheads touch  
tender

fingers in  
    tendrils

dark curls  
and au-  
burn

locks

mingle

camuffare  
pillows -

guessing numbers  
    in head

we are  
mind readers

(in bed)

he inhales:  
mammal impulse

hushed bronchioles rasp  
reverberate

ear to chest  
sleeps-oured breath, his

exhale  
(nose hiss)

lips rattle a  
part  
he sleeps

soundly, loudly

sometimes, and  
oft times,  
my head

to his  
heart

A Fused Macula

--

A  
fused  
    macula  
pinpoints  
spirit

--

An  
hourglass  
    ergosphere  
contains  
sound

--

A  
steamboat  
    electronica  
attacks  
sound

--

And  
then  
    it  
builds(itself  
back

--

A  
viridescence  
    fuses  
chaos's  
cannon

--

A  
human  
  cannonball  
loops  
cognition

--

An  
Alcatraz  
  formation  
researches  
tidepools

--

A  
fused  
  macula  
pinpoints  
spirit

--

A  
seized  
  inmate  
postulates  
freedom

--

A  
storage  
  system  
isadead  
hero

--

A  
drug  
dealer  
smacks  
spirit

--

A  
tinted  
silence  
engages  
superfluidity

--

A  
moral  
crisis  
speedsup  
ministrations

--

A  
vaccine  
is  
silvery  
hypnosis

--

A  
fused  
macula  
pinpoints  
thickness

--

A  
Kertesz  
    equals  
seven  
equivocations

--

A  
poisonous  
    source  
mimicks  
spirit

--

A  
psychic  
    poison  
mimicks  
the)center

--

A  
centaur  
    mimicks  
seven(unopened  
skies

--

A  
fused  
    macula  
mimicks  
spirit

--

A  
scintillating  
    macula  
embraces  
spirit

--

A  
suspect  
discussion  
curves  
spaces

--

A  
separate  
turbine  
affixes  
raindrops

--

"And  
violent  
eruptions  
of  
selfhoods"

--

And  
seven  
whetstones  
harrowing  
sharpened-senses

--

As  
quelled  
protests  
locating  
spirits

--

One  
erupting  
macula  
locating  
spirits

--

A  
fused  
    spirit  
granting  
clemency

--

A  
maelstrom  
    equals  
four  
chalices

--

A  
bridge  
    equals  
three  
birthplaces

--

A  
rose  
    annihilates  
two  
of its own

--

A  
fuse  
    pinpoints  
birdhouses  
and liminal reveries

--

Our  
fused  
    macula  
pinpoints  
spirit

Morning evades you, veers  
long-lost on a leaf path

We too have followed  
this example

Receiving messages, you do not  
respond immediately or at all

Those who pester  
rap knuckles on the skin-tent

Your books' burnt crusts,  
your children locked

The house plays tricks, making  
only very slight changes

In what sense  
did you conquer Europe?

You, author of the slightest  
of books on the occult

Once a star-eater,  
defender of fools

Now enforested, lost days  
never made up for

Your former systems of delight:  
to these we light a flower

here at the center

by blue comfort  
handfed clouds

grow fat.our

skyblue pla-  
centa.across

his blue off-  
ice the buzz-

ard blazes.

a leaping treefrog my

heart.my heart is in  
the highlands.is un-

der the homeless man's

bridge.is a cheap fri-  
dge magnet.a month

long blizzard.a blue-

tongued lizard.the  
boat in the bay.the

one that got away.

1

credit  
card-

ace of

tur-  
moil

2

the sp-  
ent for-

ce of fin-

ance

to the cyclic generosity  
of seasons wed we are:

frost's rudderless shudder  
across the landscape of

winter slithers.drunk on

the fruits of fighting fit  
spring.the panting heat

of summer.one here,  
one there and there-

chestnut leaves

skydiving.

to broad  
daylight

to bees even

(that next to  
these haw-

kers of slim  
pickings

on daylight  
and peach-

blossoms  
gorge)

blind

we are

religiously dan-

gling that litt-  
le mirror glass

bead technolo-

gical wonder-  
land carrot

the errant and the flippant  
walk as a bad ass  
hip-hopping in every quadrant  
the fellas and their peccadilloes  
linger so sassy  
changing fedoras and libidos  
protectors and hell-abaters  
resurrect artistry from the morass  
and liberators shun the desecrators  
the tavern a city of sprawl  
one out of ten is an unusual lass  
genius smokes in the mustard-lit pall  
up from the bottle strangled from the pedestrians  
the halves mix consecrated ash

In face-to-face conversation  
a talker's actions &  
motions are interactively  
synchronized with the  
other talker's speech  
& are seen as a routine  
part of acrostic poems

unlike those so-called  
"synchronized" Masses  
which operate implicitly  
as if humans do not  
exist, or the composite  
gamut mapping of men  
who ordinarily dismiss  
women in action roles.

Why do drug companies  
hide unfavorable test  
results when there are  
already conflicting results  
from electrophoresis &  
histocompatibility in the  
ontological structure?

Any history of man-  
animal interaction  
catches the spotlight  
as an imagined  
threat. We speak of it  
only in images &  
parables, focusing on  
known conditions  
of life rather than the  
mental architecture.

Dear Emily

It was a day to remember those who were killed in war. We have so many new roles to play. Glass-like properties appear at low temperatures integrating the latest research in neurobiology & psychology. Now there is an impetus to move in this direction at all levels. Upstairs in the vast tower, with its hip roof of walnut shingles & a central cupola, one of the oldest Federal number crunchers is increasing the number of trained midwives. Pretty & fashionably dressed, ten young girls who look the very embodiment of confident modern womanhood have gathered to brainstorm an affordable permaculture housing project. The front-end instructs the back-end on the redshifts of their home galaxies. Police say the shooting was not politically motivated. The letters from Mozart to his family are arranged alphabetically.

Crawling over taut bulb  
Swaying by seasons tend

Stale designs strip  
Violently begins to suck

Hinges mulch  
A dent turning hollow

Then, plunges forbidden shade  
Of hunger's ration

Crystalline and watery  
Like Swedish snow

And the rind silently heals  
As the rate of newborn cells

Crowd the opening  
Without knowing

Heavy grace

Earth drops from plane  
Into misty shadows  
Of heavy payloads

Under a sun  
Into we were dropped

As feathery meteors  
Silent forces move  
Us ever away

I helped build a city  
To see it drop

From the quick fuse  
Atoms fusing when dropped

Still sore from first fall  
When little core was dropped

Every autumn is not  
The end of sunny days

Royal boy fell  
And a beautiful maniac built a city

Everything seems to fall  
Or dropped

when the splintered night  
demands stoned neighbors cut the volume

or call the police

against drunk, noisy  
rowdy, lewd, drug-dealing  
veiled fire

go ahead  
offend the Beast they worship

\* \* \*

a negative calm  
unseen witness

makes no statement

they'll notice

\* \* \*

discrete moments of peace  
are holy love  
as we are

if they would only do likewise

"did you really rob that bank?"  
she asks on the squeaking bed

of exile, where  
I'm not returning

the perfection  
defiled

Their Hands Shall Not be Weakened  
From the Work

as prayers of thanksgiving and praise  
joy and chill astonishment  
respond intuitively

\* \* \*

where is she now?

1

In the marrowbone of night, your song  
lifts the fog.

I never knew the secrets entrusted there.

I never knew that cinders and steel  
could lie so passionately and still

believe that the watchman's hours would evaporate  
and leave us scratching for more.

I have stolen time.

The windows remain closed and shuttered.  
Even the wind turns away.

The track narrows.

You call.

Again.

2

Sometimes song seems the only respite,  
the rhythm of clashing cars

and moments stretched beyond the next bend  
to that point where light winks out.

We both know this lonely tunnel.

Payment is due.

I have always exited alone.

3

Another evening, and red smoke completes the horizon.

Your ribs stretch for distance,  
and while I cannot see their end,  
I know by sound  
their fate.

Sing for me.  
It is not  
too close.

Signs and symbols when the bird fell yes it did  
before the feet of many  
And the black air beneath her eyes came to her as writing  
as a text to read  
And she repeated with the echoes of scripting chorusing  
She chimed two tones:

My we love please bringeth the peace that resides  
My we love please watch with thine eyes to this day

If the wheels come to a halt they will just with sound carry

She's in no quick hurry but circumstance unbeknownst  
she's planting with a bare hand hacking remorse away  
she's a worker in the day  
with no mentioning otherwise:

Why are you so close to me with the shine that is blinding,  
that there is no divinity oh I say to you in waking day  
I say run your carriage the other way my property unwelcoming

Salve  
(a Southsea broadside)

mary

rose

## Three Trees

the hart of the wold  
oak

the edge of the wood  
beech

the end of the world  
birch

Not the Porpoise Itself  
But My Relation to the Porpoise

Because my elbow is soft  
it is the pivot of which

I place, I place it  
on the desk of hard wood

and soft fiber – I can draw,  
yes, the porpoise (I can)

without knowing the looks  
or likes of it, as it

under rippled waters moves  
a muscle to me

and grinds my teeth and oils  
me, my mouth with the musk scented

flowers around the fountain  
and goes daily into action—

what went        went with  
went the sons  
                      with  
the sons knew  
algebra

went with  
the flip flops by the sea  
                      the algebra

(little won-  
ton)

(,wheelie)

went the sons  
                      with

the uniforms & algae  
(the sons dilate in the sea)

                      the sons knew  
(surely)  
algebra  
& uniforms

                                  a certain arrangement  
  an order

went with  
                      their faces

no longer their faces  
                      their faces

a ceremony  
                          only

the sons knew

                      the sea the  
                          snake  
                                  skin wallet, a  
                                  dolly

went with a gray greyhound, cream  
still on their faces  
                          a new arraignment

went with the sons-  
went with the sons

culminating at horizon  
                          (accumulation  
                                  cumulus)

the setting of a play

an arrangement  
the sons knew  
by heart

to play anew the setting  
of a son's

play-by-heart

(the sons knew

& went

with--

the best fileted plans:  
nice ties  
sure ties  
please sure ties

O divine incident/study/motion,  
where to go from here?

There is a fire, there  
are dollars performed,  
there is a crowd  
of onlookers expecting

You don't know. And  
that's because you  
came to this out of  
deep sleep, like the  
rest of us. You give  
and sink back,  
give and sink back

Oviposited. You must  
be resting now. And  
we're waiting, in our  
leathery skins

If you love sandflies, bring in damp  
firewood. I swore a lot and gesticulated  
wildly. People thought  
I was the director. Delphiniums to my left.  
Instant possum. Gummy  
bears in the country sun. Winter  
dream bra. River of consciousness.  
Call it cruising, or an amorous game  
of hide and seek. Place of torment  
where the worm dieth not. *Consciousness  
is dependent upon its vehicle for expression,  
and both are dependent upon life and energy  
for existence.* Beware the seventh  
magical bullet. Revealed among the sailors,  
reservoir of vital energies. The wonder  
of colored light. The headlight gave  
him away. Imported or indigenous,  
these snake-tressed furies? Up the red  
hot poker tree. Right at spirit  
level. Who stocks all these koi ponds?  
Did you say tompion? Cork  
your muzzle. What happened to the moon  
and Jupiter? Over the sinless maiden  
Zamiel had no power.

## The Mountain The Sun Goes Behind At Night

A flood issued from the old woman's  
oven. Manu hooked his vessel to the horn  
of a fish. A fish-god brought letters to  
the Assyrians. Zeus inspired amity  
among the animals in their floating  
coffer. *I opened the window and the light  
smote my face.* Matilda and Steven  
are fighting. Sense the field, change  
the field. Grandmother Nest, tell us of  
your Flemish liaison. Load up the rickshaw.  
The naked man in a boat is a symbol  
of the pheasant. Warned by the cry of cranes.  
Storm-maddened creatures will seek refuge  
with man. As the hunch becomes a working  
part of the mind. The journey to paradise  
is itself paradise. After he died, Domitian's  
name was chiseled off all the monuments.  
The deep-minded conspire to have a ship  
built in the forest.

For the sake of the quiet life  
there will be victims. It's  
safest to sleep under a canoe.  
Farther up the fruit tree a well-  
educated substitute. A fly named  
after Charlie Chaplin. A quick  
game of Kiss Chase. A question  
I only just discovered. A guinea  
pig stuffed with marigolds. Hot  
stones on a thatched roof. Put  
bread behind the saint's picture.  
The seat of honor should be opposite  
the midday sun. In the cheap  
seats, a penneth of dark. *Eliminate  
the products which are controlled by  
heat and you will bring our civilisation  
to a stop.* The child is born and  
the father kills no more animals. Crying  
that killed the king's youngest son.  
Wrath that dried up a river. The king  
affirms his kingship with a bath in mare  
stew. The king filled the land with plenty  
and was removed to the abodes of the gods.  
He wore a white robe with red crosses,  
and carried a sickle. He embarked in a canoe  
made of serpent skins, and sailed away  
into the East.

from *Symphony no. 8*  
(13.7 billion Years)

-31-

At some point  
a world is  
remembered  
from archetypal structures  
disassociated from thought  
where doorways enter  
to intersect  
an unconscious reality  
fleshed out  
in shadows of statuary dust  
"it is here we thought of birth"  
where glandular geometries  
fill an eye's annular cavity  
ameliorating the view  
from a womb's delimiting cage  
where an implicate order  
is assumed  
amid a debris field's terrestrial expanse  
yet it is  
unreasonable to think this  
dream defines (a) reality  
observing the untenable flow  
of an ocean's edge  
or the stain which remains  
an imposing blackness  
on the otherwise  
unblemished page  
"it is here we thought of death"  
bearing the weight  
of ages frozen  
in the cadaver's desiccated veins  
or a vision of crows  
invading a culled orchid field  
as the spherical burrs  
of a winter descends

- Archetypal Echo No.5-

“... and to remember  
worlds of  
a mirrored self  
distorted through  
the alabaster keyhole  
of inarticulate voices  
behind glass doorways  
of bones and marrow  
sperm and ash  
the visceral fabric  
of isolated flesh  
of the transcendently dissonant  
quantum realm  
of the innumerable dreams  
of the unconscious eye  
of the spiraling  
    cyclical vortices  
of the unchanging  
    geological epochs  
and the reincarnated heart's  
    archetypal fate ...”

-52-

"And one can lose  
a sense of self"  
as dust  
in concepts  
of time passing  
through the needle's eye  
in concepts  
    of a space-time continuum  
    dissolving  
    in a sackcloth ocean  
    beneath an unraveling  
    ashen-grey sky  
in concepts  
of a mirror  
appearing  
before a plastic enlaced id  
    a mirror  
    in a house  
    of four and twenty doors  
    where crows  
    are raspy omens  
    descending down  
    a brick and mortar chimney flue  
    a house  
    of prescient angles  
    waiting for daylight  
    in a room of evening  
    dragging its palsied limbs  
    across a linen ensconced  
    window's sill

"and this in itself is  
a reality"  
a reality of  
    fallow plains  
    and disincarnate voices  
    of scorching salt flat spirits  
    lost  
    to a Newtonian geometric aridity  
a reality of  
the axiomatic errata  
of anthropomorphic indeterminacy  
and of the prophet's abraded eyes  
staring across a star-filled empyrean  
to observe  
the unflinching face  
of a stone heart deity  
distant  
and  
    intransigently  
    removed

A shadow  
across the sun  
at noon  
crows wander  
a dead patch  
of scorched earth  
and the sky  
hot to the touch  
following the frozen winter's  
    limbless embrace  
now an overcast  
broken in places  
and voids within  
the desiccated veins  
of words unheard  
melting through time  
    and it is here  
    that she dreams  
    in a black shuttered  
    clapboard cape  
    in darkened upper rooms

"she dreams  
    of grainy avenues  
    and orchid gardens  
    of faithless lovers  
    aspiring to loss  
    and of words unspoken  
    resonating through  
    the iron sheath  
    which holds her heart

she dreams  
    of a cloud-enveloped onyx sky  
    and hollow rock mountains  
    towering above  
    the deep flowered  
    rambling thicket patch  
    and of a chipped porcelain teacup  
    painted into the hidden corner  
    of a distant and pulsating  
    alcove of memory

she dreams  
    of slowly tapering votive flames  
    carried in mute procession  
    by dead spectral past-life waifs  
    and of how their breath  
    quenches the pyres  
    once ablaze  
    in a passion for a life  
    fervently embraced"

and now the sky  
a shade of alabaster and steel  
a pale film  
occluding the azure-violet waking eye  
and a haunting sense  
of a disembodied identity  
hovering on a threshold  
which marks  
    the dimensional boundary  
        where many worlds intersect

flume trogle  
rogue glee night's  
treasure

dug up

sour fellow  
felo-  
de-se

Somehow by sitting  
(in the cold)      The porch we stripped      together  
  
has hinged you  
to the external too      a-part of my dreams      and my dreaming.  
  
Y(our)e awakened      presence within reminds      me      asleep  
  
of the dream.

The ta'wil of ta'wil  
is the sound, the tee  
the tongue against the teeth  
as the muscle moves, it spritzes  
the muscles  
*orbicularis oris*  
of the mouth  
lips opening, parting  
to reveal the sound  
the mind thinking it, first  
the word, then saying it  
second the sound  
third, then hearing it  
the wave traveling, crashing  
against the drum  
moving it, vibrating it  
beating it in time  
but no, that's not the past  
the beginning, the word  
it was  
the word  
but before that a sound  
and before that a thought  
and before that  
a glimmer  
a glimmer  
a glimmer

Chapter One

I. Proceed to gnosis

particle defines existence along  
ten dimensions.

Theosophy

anthrocentric undo

this place

in

time.

II. Space

defines

relationships.

You are closer to me than my own

beat.

Under snow grass pushes  
Up against crystalline form

follow utilitarian function

follow  
space

III. Wasted body

preach

true stories against

Prosody.

He sat gathering old clothes tearing shreds of coats  
denim strips piled fingers of gloves swallow faces saw

Not in this world or the next

No secret but

whispered secret friend

IV. Your

metempsychosis

hesitate  
to restate  
Being.

What have I to gain or lose?

What have I to seek or

find?

V. Steal

and

lend.

Borrow and bought  
against all this what hope,

son.

chant reality to presence.

Awash in intensity all hope is

buoyed,

all truth is true said.

VI. Peace returned over skies late in the night  
unknown and unheralded. You would not know me  
to smile under stars, my friend. Your free will  
takes all not given value and returns against  
stars and moon.

And that's just one star and  
moon in billions.

Airwaves resist truth in peace and war.

tracers across black night

empty of star cloud moon

for this eternal moment.

VII. Seven returned from holy land pilgrimage. Praying in fits and  
starts on laden horses lean/to this side then that/never  
falling but unsure of/foot stirrup seat saddle.

We saw in holy sites dust and bones.

All my sages and magi waited at doorways  
to block cold winds.

Today I am the darvish at the gate  
seeing winds and wilds assail  
the Tavern.

(returning sore and steady cairns mark  
dark caves beyond hope lights life for

now.)

VIII. Children come to ruins gather  
stones in fallen piles.

Falling

continuously

no little entropy games  
eternity is present  
in stones.

IX. Soft light

throughbrandedglass

all aligned photons he wished  
for movement and substance all  
one all one

ready to hold to rocks through  
gravity's love for unity.

Silent stars parse tiny frozen  
moments infinitesimal ----> still.

Amazing vast stillness yet

entropic torn with green life

unity.love.force

Veracity of light

through

eyes.

the city  
block is in the  
morning it is  
peaceful and quiet until  
the cars  
roll  
by

the sky is  
a beautiful  
thing it  
brings the sunset  
the sunrise  
dawn, twilight, noon, afternoon,  
are the parts  
of the day  
the sky brings them  
a warm welcome

from *The Ardor*

withdraw the glowing  
mass to  
overflow all in the  
shudder from hip  
to toe  
or the embrace  
clutching  
hair  
burning center

# Interview

with Peter O'Leary

J&J: In your last response, we were struck by how you brought apocalypticism and mycopoetics together in this way: "Every poem is headed eventually for the litter heap. In this basic sense, every new poem should be contributing to the soil out from which any new poems will be discovered and grown. This is as true of Whitman as it is of my own poems or those of any other of my contemporaries. {...} And my thought is: if you're not imagining this fate for your poems as you write them, then your poems are going to be toxic, filling the environment with poison. Each newly created poem is its apocalyptic ally, its revelatory twin." In the context of the "apocalyptic ally, its revelatory twin", and considering your call to "step outside to renew the work," would you understand the mycopoetical work of apocalypticism to be bound up with, in some sense and to some degree, the apocalyptic moment of contact with what Henry Corbin called one's "Heavenly Twin," one's true self after the ego dissolves in death (material or mystical)? Could the mycopoetics of apocalypticism be understood as the digestion of the ego and its wastes, thus enabling growth / (re-)creation? Can the process of poetry itself be understood in such a truly, and profoundly, religious sense?

PO'L: I don't know if I can answer better than you've asked these questions. Corbin's "Heavenly Twin" is a real thing – but inscrutable to us in life. And yet, this twin inhabits the mesocosmic realm, which, in another context, Norman O. Brown identified with the Christian heresy of Docetism, which is a belief in the realm of appearances. Brown, in a profound essay entitled "The Prophetic Tradition," persuasively proposes that what was condemned by Christian doctrine – Docetism, which involves the "theological error of those who deny the material reality of the body of Christ," which is to say, those who believed that Christ's body was merely the appearance of a truer, spiritual form – was taken up in Islam as mystical truth, in which Docetism "is devotion to appearances, to apparitions, to visionary experience, to vision. In Eternity all is Vision." (A fine, emphatic claim!) So, according to this thinking, the mesocosm is the realm of human vision – it's where we see the divine appearances. The positing of a mesocosm is as important to esoteric conceptions as it is to mystical thought: meaning precipitates to us from a realm hidden from view.

My work with mushrooms involves what I've been calling "an esotericism of the actual." By this I mean mushrooms are treasures hidden from us but in plain view. To see them, we need to tune our eyes to them. Furthermore, mushrooms fruit from the soil of an anterior mesocosm. That word – "a universe in the middle" – suggests its intermediary placement between the material and the heavenly realms. In the work I've been doing, I've been calling this anterior mesocosm, made up of the rich loam, the springy duff, the moulded earth, a catacosm. Cata-, meaning "down." So, not the infernal or even the mineral realms (the mineral realm is where you find the soul) but another intermediary realm, from which spring visionary appearances. As I've discussed in my "Mycopoetics" piece (which will appear in the next issue of *Hambone*), the act of foraging for mushrooms involves an interspecies effervescence, a transfiguring of perception verging into euphoria. It's docetical in the sense that Brown identifies: devoted to appearances, to vision, to visionary experience.

You could say mystics prepare the way for the rest of us by venturing into the mesocosm in this lifetime. They test the transformations we'll all undertake when we move from this life to the next life. Likewise, and in a vital complementarity, foragers prepare the way for our decomposition by engaging with the catacosm from which spring these bizarre fruits of death. Imaginally, we need both mystics and foragers for the visions they cultivate. And for the total transformation they anticipate.

What does this mean for poetry? That's harder to say - at least for me because I'm only starting to see these things. But it may mean, practically speaking, it wouldn't hurt for us to attune ourselves to the esotericism of the actual in poetry itself - both actively looking for treasures hidden from us but in plain view and dilating poetic receptivity so that, when needed, our senses can see and feel what's out there waiting to appear to us.

# Acknowledgments

Thanks go to:

Time.

Space.

The Silence of Our Cabin.

Empire, Broadcast, and Neptune for fuel.

The darvishes.

The doctors and nurses.

Our workmates and friends.

Our families.

All of the poets within and without.

Robert Duncan & HD.

Basil Bunting.

Pam Rehm.

Moments the muse erupts from within, Ace of Swords in hand.

## Biographies | Credits

(pages 8-14) ANNA LEVITSKY lives, writes, dances and farms in the foothills of western North Carolina. Aside from publication in her college's literary magazine, she was recently featured in Issue II of *from a Compos't*. She discovered poetry in the 2nd grade, and hopes to channel that same sense of wonder throughout her adult life and work. She can be reached by e-mail at [annalevitsky@gmail.com](mailto:annalevitsky@gmail.com).

(pages 15-20) COLLIN SCHUSTER was born and raised in Great Falls, Montana. He and his partner currently live in Maryland where they work in social media and health research. A humungous thanks to Jamie and Jeff for Lightning'd.

(page 21) STU HATTON is poet, editor and researcher based in Melbourne, Australia. He works in mental health research at the University of Melbourne. His first book of poems, *How to be Hungry*, is available here: <http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/stuhatton>. His second collection, *glitching*, will be published in 2014. Stu sometimes posts things at <http://outerblog.tumblr.com>.

(pages 22-27) SIMON PETKOVICH was born in 1962 in Perth, West Australia. Writing since '77, published since '80 - most recently a couple of chapbooks - one by Longhouse Publishers from Vermont titled: *Forests of Clarity* and another by Poems for All (no.971) titled *The Brave Orange Dawn*, as well as a couple of shortlisted works by Page Seventeen from Melbourne (issues #8 and #10). Married and with his partner and their two young boys, lives in Melbourne, where he works as a Croatian interpreter.

(page 28) PATRICK LONGE has been writing poetry since 1987 and most recently published in *The Blue Hour*, *Penny Ante Feud*, *lines+stars*, *Laughing Dog* and *Haggard and Halloo*. Before moving to Tampa in 2000 to be near children he had always lived in Detroit area. Journalism graduate of Wayne State University he works in marketing and is active photojournalist.

(pages 29-31) MARK YOUNG has been publishing poetry for nearly fifty-five years. His work has been widely anthologized, & his essays & poetry translated into a number of languages. He is the author of more than twenty books, primarily poetry but also including speculative fiction & art history. He is the editor of the ezine *Otoliths*, & lives on the Tropic of Capricorn in Australia. Recent work has appeared or is to appear in *Moria*, *Fact-Simile*, *The Last Vispo Anthology*, *Eccolinguistics*, *Cricket Online Review*, *3 a.m.*, *E-ratio*, *Cordite*, *Quarter After*, & *BlazeVOX* amongst other places.

(page 32) EVAN JONES is a graduate student at Harvard getting a PhD in chemistry. He has a BA in English (concentration in creative writing) from Franklin & Marshall College (Lancaster, PA) and a decent collection of poems forming.

(pages 33-35) JNANA HODSON's sixth novel, *Promise*, is now available as an ebook at

Smashwords.com (<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/418518>). In addition, Writing Knights Press has published my 32-page chapbook, *Johnny Badge*, which may be purchased at Amazon.com ([http://www.amazon.com/s?ie=UTF8&field-author=Jnana%20Hodson&page=1&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp\\_27%3AJnana%20Hodson](http://www.amazon.com/s?ie=UTF8&field-author=Jnana%20Hodson&page=1&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp_27%3AJnana%20Hodson)).

(page 36) ROBERT OKAJI lives in Texas where he contemplates leaves in the wind and distant sounds. His work has appeared in Boston Review, Prime Number Magazine, and Otoliths, among others.

(page 37) JENNIFER FIRESTONE is the author of *Flashes* (forthcoming, Shearsman Books), *Holiday* (Shearsman Books, 2008), the co-editor of *Letters to Poets: Conversations about Poetics, Politics, and Community* (Saturnalia Books, 2008), *Waves* (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2007), *from Flashes* (Sona Books, 2006) and *snapshot* (Sona Books, 2004). My poems have appeared in HOW2, Xcp: Cross Cultural Poetics, LUNGFULL!, Can We Have Our Ball Back, Fourteen Hills, MIPoesias Magazine, Dusie, 580 Split, Saint Elizabeth Street, moria, Feminist Studies, Sidereality, Poetry Salzburg Review, Phoebe, BlazeVOX, So to Speak: Feminist Journal of Language and Art, and others. She is an Assistant Professor of Literary Studies at the New School's Eugene Lang College and lives with her family in Brooklyn.

(pages 38-39) ROSS HAIR has been published in Shearsman, LVNG, and Bright Pink Mosquito. He has recently had a pamphlet published by Longhouse Publishers.

(page 40-43) JIMMY LO is a poet living in Atlanta, Georgia, where he works for a public library. His chapbook *A Reduction* is available from LRL Textile Series: <http://www.textileseries.com>. More of his writing can be found on his website [jimmylorunning.com](http://jimmylorunning.com).

(page 44) SARAH ROSENTHAL is the author of the cross-genre book *Manhattan* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2009) and several chapbooks, the most recent of which is *The Animal* (Dusie, 2011). Her interview collection *A Community Writing Itself: Conversations with Vanguard Writers of the Bay Area* was published by Dalkey Archive in 2010. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals including *ecopoetics*, *Bird Dog*, *textsound*, and *Fence*, and is anthologized in *Bay Poetics* (Faux, 2006), *The Other Side of the Postcard* (City Lights, 2004), *hinge* (Crack, 2002), and *Kindergarde: Avant-garde Poems, Plays, and Stories for Children* (a Small Press Traffic project, forthcoming 2013). Her essays and interviews have appeared in journals such as *Jacket*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Rain Taxi*, *Otoliths*, and *New American Writing*. She has received the Leo Litwak Fiction Award and grant-supported residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Soul Mountain, and Ragdale. From 2009-2011 she was an Affiliate Artist at Headlands Center for the Arts. She teaches in the MFA program at the University of San Francisco and writes curricula for the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland.

(page 45-47) WHIT GRIFFIN is the author of *Pentateuch: The First Five Books* (Skysill Press, 2010) and the forthcoming *The Sixth Great Extinction*, also from Skysill. He currently resides in western Tennessee.

(pages 48-52) RIC CARFAGNA was born and educated in Boston Massachusetts. He is the author of numerous collections of poetry, most recently *Symphonies Nos. 1, 4 & 6* published by

Chalk Editions and *Symphony No.2* published by Argotist Press. His poetry has evolved from the early radical experiments of his first two books, *Confluent Trajectories* and *Porchcat Nadir*, to the unsettling existential mosaics of his multi-book project *Notes On NonExistence*. Ric lives in rural central Massachusetts with his wife, cellist Mary Carfagna and daughters Emilia and Aria.

(pages 53-54) STEVEN MANUEL, editor of *from a Compos't*; mailing address: 11 Cedar Ridge Dr / Asheville, NC 28806.

(pages 55-56) JAMIE FELTON is the other editor of Lightning'd Press and also has a proper bio written by Jeff Miller on the Lightning'd Press website. Her poems have been published in various places online and in *Hint Fiction: An Anthology of Stories in 25 Words or Fewer*. A zine of her earlier work entitled *Blackbird Singing* is available by request via email.

(pages 57-61) RYAN BARKER is native West Virginian who has lived and worked all over the world. He is currently hiding out in upstate New York teaching and writing. His poetry has been published in zines and reviews in the United States and the United Kingdom. When not teaching, he enjoys confounding his wife and children with revisionist folk tales, reading, and contemplating his next place of residence.

(pages 62-63) TAVIRI ISSA RAIAN BARKER is the eight year old son of Ryan Barker. He writes poem after poem on sheets of paper hanging from his walls. He enjoys poems that evoke nature. He likes road trips because "I can look around me and find new poems." His father is alternatively humbled and astounded by him.

(page 64) JEFF MILLER is co-editor of Lightning'd Press and has a proper bio written by Jamie Felton on the Lightning'd Press website. He's the author of *All of the Grace Poems* (Earth Books, 1996), *La Vie / The Polemics* (Earth Books, 2001), and a broadside of *The Ardor: Line 11* (Viatorium Press, 2009). Along with Ryan Barker he was the co-editor of the chapbook series *What Would We Do Without Us* (2001-2005). He's currently working on a long poem, *The Ardor*.