

Bates International Poetry Festival • 2011



translations

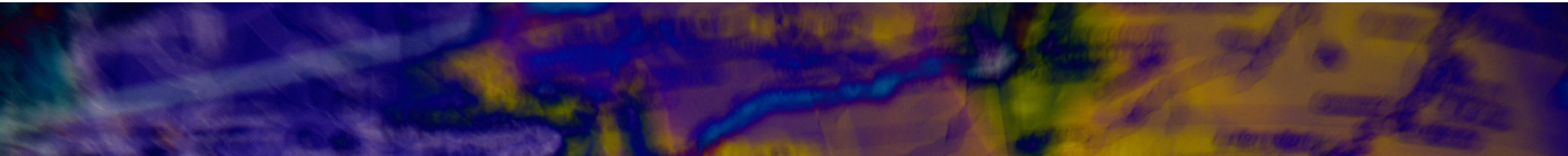


Introduction by Enrique Yepes
Edited by Claudia Aburto Guzmán



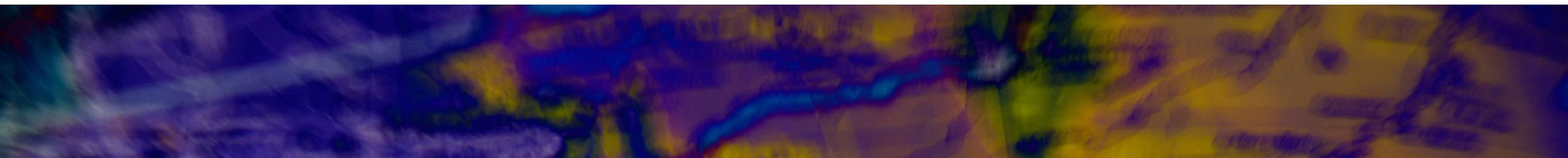
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Introduction

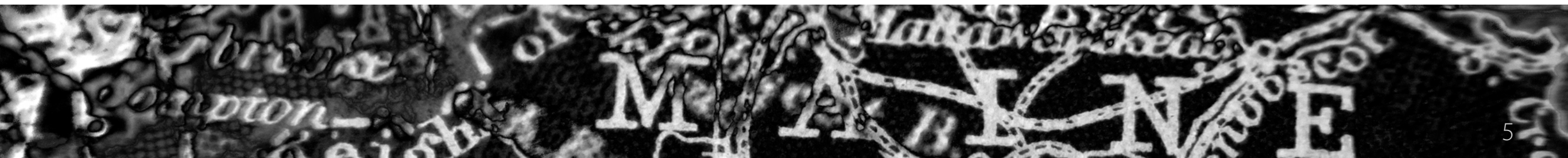
Carving the Air

On the Feast of Poetry

Enrique Yepes

Co-organized by professors Claudia Aburto Guzmán and Raluca Cernahoschi, Translations 2011 International Poetry Festival took place in late October at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. Like its predecessor, Translations 2010, it gathered poets from several different countries and languages, whose work was translated by students in Russian, Japanese, Spanish, French, and German classes. This year's festival was expanded to include an academic conference in which poets, students, professors, and guest scholars discussed the process of translating and reading.

This book reflects upon and documents the pedagogical, inter-cultural, linguistic, and poetic richness of this event. The first part presents a bilingual collection of the texts performed by guest poets Polina Barskova (Russia), Rhea Côté Robbins and Robert Farnsworth (United States), Francisca López (Spain), Naomi Otsubo (Japan), Danny Plourde (Canada), Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu (Romania), and Miguel Ángel Zapata (Peru). The poems by different authors—including the translations, which are new poems themselves—are gathered under broad-thematic sections, yet come one after the other in somewhat random order. They become unlikely neighbors, sharing a common space after having been conceived in distant corners, and may symbolize the possibilities that emerge during festival. This uncanny vicinity also exposes the playful intervention of the compiling act itself. It enhances

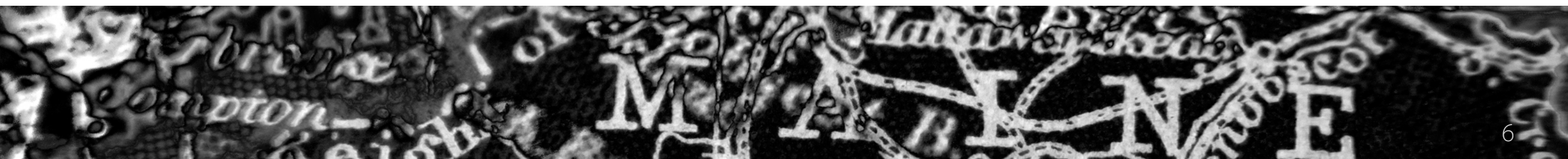


the diversity and suggestiveness of the poems. It activates poetry's alternative way of knowing, *translating* into written form, to a certain extent, the quietly disrupting, dialogic experience of having participated in the live festival.

The second part compiles essays written by the Bates professors who engaged their classes in *Translations* 2011. In their concise, revealing reflections on language, worldviews, translation, and poetry, these essays also shed light on what it means to teach and learn in the "bubble" of a liberal arts college in the United States, as Jane Costlow's contribution to this volume elaborates. The festival is explored as a *happening* that both lifts and bursts the bubble (Costlow), promoting a "pedagogy of understanding" and collective transformation (Aburto Guzmán), a demand for situating meaning (Strong), a metaphor for language learning itself (Cernahoschi), and a complex opportunity for cross-cultural thinking (Balladur and López). Each essay ponders on the challenging and fruitful process of translating from one language into another, from the academic domain into the aesthetic realm, from contemplation and intimacy into feast and participation. For this is what poetry festivals do.

Poetry festivals are invitations to take part in the peculiar way of knowing that the poetic gaze has to offer. They enact poetry's poignant mixture of "feast and contemplation" (Paz 123), bridging the intimate and the public, the personal and the collective, the modern and the primal, in "the cheering silence of a group of listeners" (Franco). Let me briefly explore some of this richness.

First and foremost, recitals remind us that poetry as an art form predates and transcends the written word. Although in many societies today poems are visual objects to be read in silence, festivals bring back their audial and performative dimension. Read out loud, poetry becomes a sculpting act of sorts. It sculpts an environment, carving the air with the chisel of language. At the most literal,



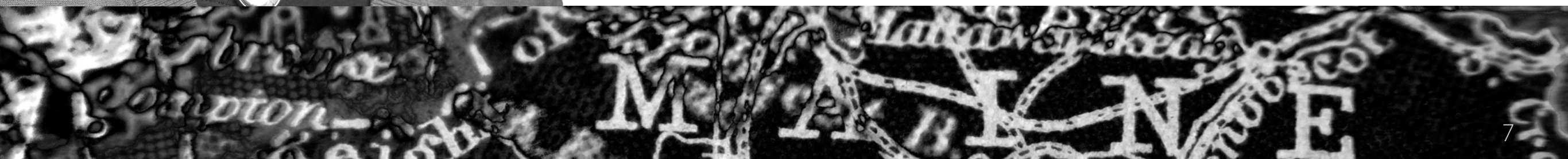


physical level, the air gets shaped with sound waves that travel through the audiences' bodies and make ears and eyes vibrate to a certain beat. In perhaps a more figurative way, but no less tangible, the air is molded. A certain vibe, a lyre, a dissonance takes participants to a transpersonal realm. The air becomes grave and playful, lucidly personal and unmistakably collective. All of a sudden, the word of another, the word of the Other, moves through your body and feels like your own. The self is "trans-lated," taken to another realm. The depth of silence greets the power of the spoken word. And a sense of commonality is recovered—collectively carved, imagined—in this air of intimacy and togetherness. Something that had been ignored gets known.

As this sense of commonality unfolds, the poetry festival becomes the feast of poetry—a bewildering, subversive text to be inhabited like a foreign land. Each sight or sound is new and demands deciphering, since poetry is "an act of language paying attention to itself" (Hirsch 9). And once deciphered or inhabited, each sight or sound brings you back home, since language is the hallmark of identity. But the "you" that comes back has been altered, trans-formed. The festival of poetry can thus be understood as a "revolutionary search for the word that brings back memory" (Franco 2000), a journey to the primal past and the visionary future. The ritual uttering of words, thought to be part of the past, becomes present. And a dialogue through distant geographies, thought to be possible only in the future, presents itself.

Although the poetic way of knowing is defined and practiced from many different locations, it always seems to be marginal to globalized capitalism. As one of the few forms not heavily shaped by market demand, poetry can afford to celebrate silenced facets of human experience and shake the loud obliviousness of profit-driven societies. Even as it is produced by concrete individuals who are rooted in a given culture and moment in history, poetry in general is often perceived as

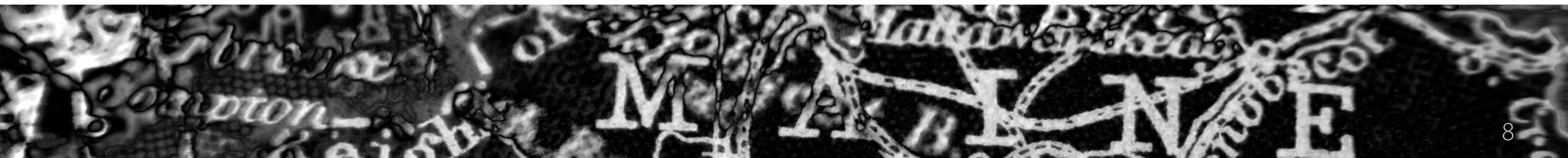
Rhea Côté Robbins, Franco America



“part of a struggle to save the wild places” (Rothenberg and Joris 12). The adjective “wild” evokes the genuine, what has not been conquered by culture, the “real thing” that publicity so obsessively tries to associate with massively produced articles. Every individual poem promises the wild “uniqueness,” the “personal touch” that the age of mass production so desperately seeks. The live recital restores a wild breath-to-breath contact that is becoming evermore scarce in the virtual era. Listening to poetry brings forth the wild ability to pause, to slow down and contemplate, so often missing in over-efficient modes of production. The wildly spoken, rhythmic word creates a sense of ritual that secularized societies have put away. And consumerism gets subverted through the wild memory and reverence of a poetic gesture that seeks no monetary profit.

Yet, at the same time, poetry festivals are futuristic events. Not only are they possible because of global transportation and communication, but they also respond to globalization ideals such as the dream of becoming multilingual “citizens of the world.” Attendees can take the pulse, so to speak, of what is going on in the field of poetic production in different locations. This thirst for internationalization motivates the summoning of various forms of poetry, since this genre is by no means an exclusively Western invention or practice. Each recital can in this way be a peaceful debate or confrontation of diversity, an invitation to “read through difference” (Aburto Guzmán iii), a vision of a possible future of inclusion and dialogue. In their ability to summon difference, poetry festivals carve the air that broadens cultural terrains.

And this is how, uncannily, from a cultural location that is mostly peripheral to the power engines of the global age, a poetry festival provides, for free, an access to the wild, the primal, the original, on the one hand, and to the global, the modern, the cosmopolitan, on the other. It performs an effect of reality in a time of virtualization and artificiality. It can be empowering and participatory, ethical



and aesthetic, global and local, collective and personal. And in carving the fragility of the fleeting air, it summons a certain type of audience who is willing, almost anxious, to protect the wild places and overcome the separation among individuals, languages, and groups. Through the fissures cracked open by their non-violent shaking of the air, poetry festivals, just like the feast of poetry itself, enact transformative, more desirable ways of living together.

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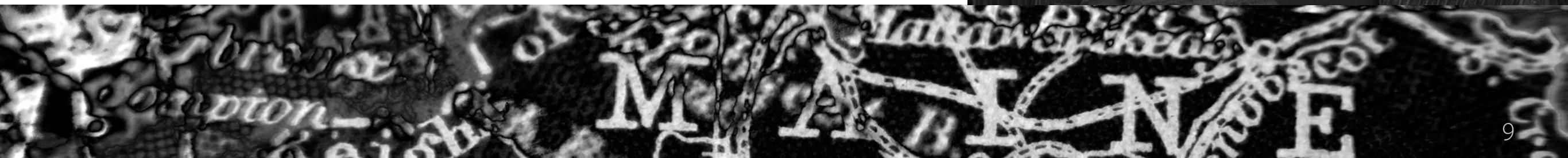
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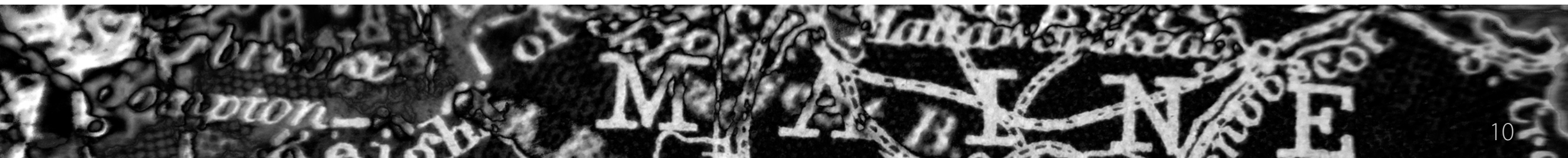
Polina Barskova, Russia



About this Book

This is a pdf version of an iBook for an Apple iPad, which is available for free at the Apple iTunes Store. The iBook version is designed so that both the original and translated versions of a poem appear on a single page. Many of the poems scroll by touch.

To find out more about Translations: Bates International Poetry Festival, visit the [Translations](#) web site. The site contains work from past festivals as well as video performances by the visiting poets.





Places

Untitled

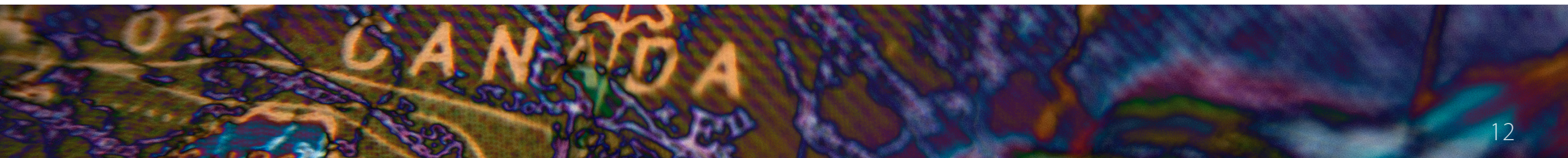
la plupart ne sommes pas d'ici me souviens ailleurs dans les banlieues du Québec les terrains scalpés au mètre carré
trophées durement acquis par la sueur des front qui perlent entre deux breaks à l'usine les entrées de cour bourrées de fourmis
qu'on asphalté avec du pétrole qu'on nettoie inutilement avec l'arrosoir au mois de juillet les plates-bandes peuplées de fleurs aux
noms compliqués les arbres qu'on coupe parce qu'ils font de l'ombre on veut du soleil pour les jardins acides du soleil pour les
fesses camouflées par une haie de cèdres d'une matante qui souhaite bronzer nature pendant qu'un mononcle nettoie la piscine
hors terre et la fierté qu'apporte la tourbe qu'on importe d'Europe sur des palettes de *skids* même si de l'extérieur tout semble
vert me souviens l'holocauste des pissenlits

from *Vers quelque: sommes nombreux à être seul* (2004)

Danny Plourde

most are not from here I remember elsewhere in the suburb of Quebec the lands cut per square meter hard-won trophies
by the sweat of the brow which bead between two breaks at the factory driveways crammed with ants that get tarred over with oil
cleaned unnecessarily with the watering can in July flower beds populated with complicated names trees being cut because they
make shadows we want sunlight for the acidic gardens sunlight for the buttocks concealed by a cedar hedge by an aunt who
wants to tan naked while an uncle cleans the above-ground pool and the imported peat from Europe brings pride on *skid* pallets
even if from the outside everything looks green I remember the holocaust of dandelions

Trans. Amanda Solch



Los canales de piedra

Vine a Venecia a ver a Marco Polo pero su casa estaba cerrada. El segundo piso lo vi desde una góndola y le tomé una foto a los geranios de su balcón.

El agua del canal es de un verde raro, tal vez sea una combinación del tiempo, los vientos, o la tenue luz de sus callejones de piedra. Vivaldi aquella noche estaba dando (como de costumbre) sus clases a las niñas del coro. Corelli fue su invitado de honor. Después de uno de los conciertos del cura rojo, nos fuimos a la plaza San Marcos a beber vino en *El Florián*. Marco me decía que no permaneciera por mucho tiempo en ninguna parte del mundo. El mundo es como la plaza de San Marcos, murmuraba, hay que cruzarla miles de veces para que puedas ver las verdaderas aguas del tiempo. Al otro lado de la plaza está la vida escondida con el vino derramado por la muerte.

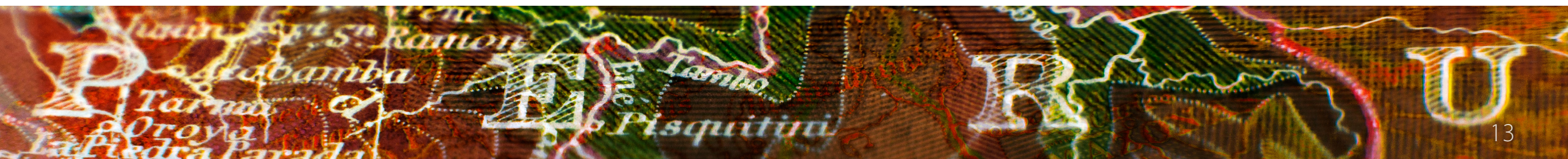
Venecia es nuestra solo por esta noche: después hay que abandonarla como a las mujeres de Rialto. Siempre hay algo extraño y hermoso en los geranios púrpuras del Mundo.

Yo solo escribo lo que veo, por eso camino. Sigamos hacia la cumbre para ver los canales desde el cielo de la noche. Después pasemos a la Basílica a poner unas velas a mi madre: ella está viva, tiene la memoria de los ríos. A veces imagino ciudades, como tú, una ciudad dentro de otra, una plaza es mejor que todos los rascacielos del mundo. San Marcos es mi plaza, mi vida, o sea como las alas de las palomas.

Esta noche no daré clases a las niñas del coro en el Hospicio de la Piedad, dijo el cura rojo. Entonces, Marco, veloz como de costumbre nos dijo: naveguemos mejor por los cuatro ríos sagrados esta noche. Busquemos el pecado, pidamos perdón a los cielos por no habernos bebido todo el vino y amado a todas las mujeres de Venecia.

Venecia, 17 de julio, 2007

Miguel Ángel Zapata



The Stone Canals

I came to Venice to see Marco Polo, but his house was locked. I saw the second floor from the gondola and I took a photo of the geraniums on his balcony.

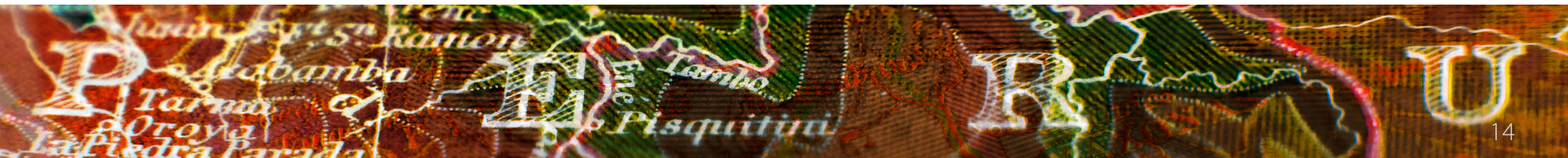
The water of the canal is an unusual green, perhaps the combination of time, the winds or the faint light from its stone alleyways. That night Vivaldi was directing (as usual) the girls' choir. Corelli was his guest of honor. After one of the red priest's concerts, we went to the Plaza de San Marcos to drink wine in *El Florián*. Marco told me never to remain in one part of the world for too long. The world is like Piazza San Marco, he whispered, you have to cross it thousands of times in order to see the true waters of the ages. On the other side of the plaza is life hidden in the wine spilled by death.

Venice is ours for this night only: then we must abandon it like the women of Rialto. There is always something strange and beautiful in the purple geraniums of the World.

I only write what I see, so I walk. Let us continue towards the summit to see the canals from the night sky. Then let us stop by the Basilica to light candles for my mother: she is alive, she has a memory like rivers. Sometimes I imagine cities, like you, one city within another, one plaza is better than all the skyscrapers in the world. San Marco is my plaza, my life; that is, like wings for doves.

Tonight I will not direct the girls' choir at the Ospizio della Pietà, said the red priest. Then, Marco, quick as usual told us: tonight, let us sail the four holy rivers. Let us seek sin, let us ask for forgiveness from the heavens for not drinking all the wine and loving all the women of Venice.

Trans. Devon Bonney



Rumänische Riviera

Zigarettenstummel,
Gesprächsfetzen,
Möwengelächter:
alles versandet,
wirbelt durcheinander,
paart sich wahllos im
Brandungsrausch.

Muscheln lassen sich
ausnehmen und ans Ufer speien.

Abends schwappt das Meer
schmatzend nach seinem feuchten
Tellerrand,
leckt über
Kuhlen und Risse

und

rülpst so lange den Tag aus,
bis auch der schwächsten Welle
das Genick gebrochen wird.

Kronstadt, 27.09.2005
from *Verortete Zeiten* 2008

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Romanian Riviera

Cigarette stubs,
snippets of conversation,
seagull laughter:
all silted up,
twirl in confusion,
pair themselves at random in
the rush of the surf.

Mussels let themselves be
scooped out and cast ashore.

The sea sloshes at night
smacks at its moist
rim,
licks over
scrapes and scratches

and

belches out the day,
until the neck of even
the weakest wave is broken.

Kronstadt, 9/27/2005

Trans. Dana Ellis, H. Fuller Henriques IV, Jivko S. Kozarov



Untitled

I.

Подъезжая на микроавтобусе под польскую деревеньку О.
Удивляю себя—чего это, я не чувствую ничего.

Вроде душа моя развороченная бесчувственная десна,
Развлеченье дантиста, роденбаховский город сна.
Главное двигаться словно вода в канале—то есть не двигаться. Лишь шевельнёшь рукой
—сумасшедшие тени вмешаются в твой покой.
Все эти Розы, Людвиги, пронумерованные для нас,
Чтобы мы их пересчитывали, пока поступает газ.

Пересчитывали впрочем косвенно: горшки, протезы, очки,
С красной каёмочкой, с чёрной каёмочкой волшебные башмачки,

Чемоданы, волосики, пепел, провисшие облака,
Студентки фиолетовая от холода рука
Впивается в зонтик. Кукушка
В Биркенау—скажи, сколько лет ещё
Мне навещать нравоучительные бараки?
Холодно холодно горячо:
Жмурки цивилизованного сознания.

Ничего не чувствую кроме стыда
Сбрасывать пепел Marlboro
На пепел, произведённый здесь, пролитый сюда.



II.

Вот этот камушек есть памятник ему.
Вот это облако окурков лютик пёс—
Всё, что с собой он взять не мог во тьму,
Хоть до последнего не жаловался нёс.

Вот это дерево сортир скамейка мак—
Весь мусор ужаса, отчаянья дерьмо,
Я, расфуфыренный, самодовольный маг,
Несу тебе—валяй, смотри кино

Вещей, которые резвятся, как во сне:
Подмигивает смятое пенсне,
Кастрюлька хрюкает, будильник правит ночь,
Корябает огрызок-карандаш:
Владелец наш, кормилец наш, поилец наш,
Тебе и рады бы помочь
—не знаем как.
Вот этот камушек тебя последний знак.
Не-восклицательный. Заноза. Зонтик. Злак.

Polina Barskova



Untitled

I.

Approaching by bus to a Polish village O.
I surprise myself—why, I don't feel a thing.

My soul is like a destroyed insensible gum,
A dentist's enthrallment, Rodenbach's dream city.
Priority is to move as water in a sewer—i.e. do not move. As soon as you wave your hand
—Crazy shadows will choke your calmness.
All these Roses, Ludwigs, with numbers for us,
So that we count them, while the gas is inhaled.

Though they counted again and again indirectly by counting pots, dentures, glasses,
With red fringes, with black fringes miraculous booties,

Suitcases, hairs, ash, low clouds,
A student's hand purple of cold
Is gluing at the umbrella. A cuckoo
In Birkenau—tell us how long
Will I have to visit the moralizing barracks?
Cold cold hot:
Blind civilized mind.

I feel nothing but shame
Dropping the ash from Marlboro
On the ash, produced here, poured here.



II.

Look, this stone is its memorial.
Here's the cloud, a butt, a yellowcup, dog—
Everything, he couldn't take with him to the darkness,
Not complaining, went forth until the end.

Here's the tree the loo the bench a poppy—
All the trash of terror, the shit of desperation,
I, dressed up, complacent magician,
Get to you—go ahead, watch the film

Of goods, which frisk as if they were in a dream:
Winks a crushed pince-nez,
A little pot grumps, an alarm-clock rules the night,
A pencil stump scribbles:
Our owner, our breadwinner, our provider
We would be happy to help you
—But we don't know how.
This stone is your last mark.
Not-exclamation. Splinter. Umbrella. Crop.

Trans. Cosmin Ghita, Vera Panushkina, Marina Loginova



明治神宮の人形感謝祭 in1995

なんども なんども
抱きしめた人形を 見送る日

「放つ」という行為に
感謝の気持ちを見いだすとき

神のもとへ とともに帰る という「儀式」になる

感謝って
「……してくれて どうもありがとう」
なんて 小さなものじゃなかった

一体感が 目覚めたときにおきる
心の波の こだま だった

神のもとへ返すと思えば
ずっといっしょのような そんな気持ちが
胸のどこかで 湧いてくるのだから・・

「さようなら」を「ありがとう」にかえるとき

私自身がよみがえり
人形とともに放たれて 空の高みに自らをみる

Naomi Otsubo

Doll Thanksgiving Festival at the Meiji Shrine, 1995

A day for sending off dolls that have been hugged tightly
many, many times over

When one discovers the feeling of thanksgiving
in the action of “releasing”

it becomes the “rite” of returning together to god

What is called gratitude
is not at all a small thing like saying,
“Hey, thanks for helping me out”

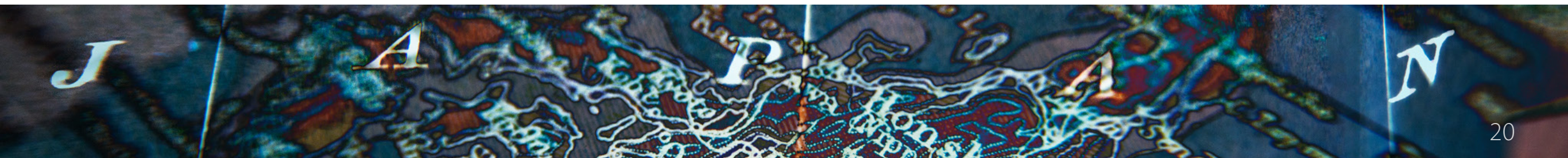
It is the echo of the beating of the heart
that arises when the sense of oneness awakens

Because, when you think of returning someone to god,
somewhere in your heart a sense
that you have been and will always be together comes welling up

At the moment when “sayonara” changes to “arigatō”

I myself am released,
released together with my doll
I see myself high up in the sky

Trans. Sarah Strong



Una puerta

El domingo pasado leía con esmero a Francis Ponge. Callado me decía: abraza una puerta, siente el umbral de sus arcos, atraviesa su temor hacia el aire nuevo de su aldaba. Ahí está la poesía.

Mira los pinos como vuelan con el viento del norte, como se balancean con la luna desteñida. Mira las aves, siente su vuelo, y después ve a casa y escribe sin parar.

No te canses de mirar el florero de cristal que corta la luz de la persiana y la desvía hacia tus dedos. Aquella piedra cadmia y las altivas señoras de Vikus fermentándose en la chicha con su sabor a pescado fresco.

Huele su pelo, viaja por la humedad de los bosques encendidos, aquellos que solo se ven en la noche de las ranas y los tulipanes. Los bosques son hermosos, son profundos pero a veces te mienten sin titubear.

El agua te lleva por las calles de tu ciudad sin nombre, navegando por el mar sin los veleros absurdos de los sueños. Huele el agua salada de la arena mojada con el agua del tiempo. Escribe sin parar.

Mira la ventana, está nevando. Ha nevado toda la noche y solo deseas escribir y escribir mientras el cielo es una tinaja gris, una casa olvidada en plena calle.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

A Door

Last Sunday I was carefully reading Francis Ponge. He quietly said: embrace the door, feel the threshold of its arches, cross its fear toward the new air of its doorknob. There is the poetry.

See the pines as they fly with the wind from the north, as they sway with the faded moon. See the birds, feel their flight, and then go home and write without pause.

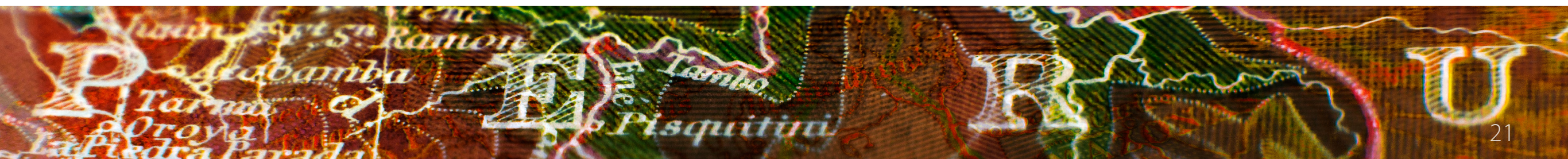
Do not tire of looking at the glass vase that reflects the light from the shutter and diverts it towards your fingers. That cadmium stone and the haughty women from Vikus drowning themselves in chicha and its flavor of fresh fish.

Smell their hair, travel through the moisture of the lit forests, those that are only seen the night of the frogs and the tulips. The forests are beautiful, they are profound but sometimes they lie to you without hesitation.

The water takes you through the streets of your nameless city, sailing through the ocean without the absurd sailboats of dreams. Smell the salty water of the sand wet with the water of time. Write without pause.

Look at the window, it is snowing. It has snowed all night and you wish only to write and write while the sky is a gray jar, a forgotten house in the middle of the street.

Trans. Jasmin Hernández



Presencia

el pomo se derrite
al contacto de la mano
se escabulle entre los dedos
 como el semen
que no quisiste beber ayer

acercas la rodilla
presionas la madera
tus huesos la penetran
 sin esfuerzo:
es un globo de chicle
que se te pega a la piel,
al tiempo que
 la traspasas

estás dentro

eres la madera de la puerta
el deseo del pomo
la verdad de su existencia

todo se vuelve blanco
un brillo cegador
te fuerza a mirar hacia el techo

ves la sombra del universo
estudias sus perfiles,
los más precisos y
los que se difuminan
en el encuentro con tu
 conciencia

alzas las manos
los impregnas del semen
que sigue pegado a tu piel,
buscas el cobijo de la sombra
que existe para ti
 a pesar de ti

la oscuridad te envuelve
en una caricia arrebatada
te incendia
 te anula
transportándote en sus alas
a la conciencia de no ser.

Francisca López



Presence

the knob melts
at the hand's touch
it trickles through the fingers
 like the semen
yesterday you refused to drink

you bring your knees closer
press against the board
 without effort:
your bones penetrate it
it's a chewing-gum bubble
that sticks to your skin,
as you go
 through it

you're within it

you're the door's wood
the knob's desire
the truth of its existence

all turns to white
a blinding brightness
forces you to look at the ceiling

you see the shadow of the universe
study its silhouettes,
those clearly outlined
those that dissolve
as they encounter your
 consciousness

you raise your hands
impregnate them with the semen
that is still stuck to your skin,
you seek the shadow's shelter
existing for you
 in spite of you

darkness envelopes you
in an impetuous embrace
it sets you on fire
 it annihilates you
carrying you in its wings
to the consciousness of non-being.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



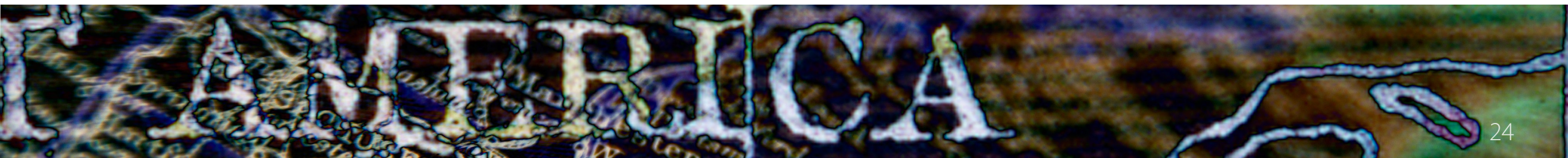
Almost Family

Twilight slants up from the lake like rafters,
culminating somewhere above the broken clouds.
When I arrive, I follow it upstairs,
and lay my coat on the bed with the others.
The medley of prescriptions and perfumes
on the dresser brings back childhood evenings
making myself a demon with mascara,
whispering over labels in the cabinet, safe
so long as mother's friend downstairs
kept shrieking over each new hand of cards.
The pile of coats is still strange—cool
satin sleeves and smoked collars—but none
is impossibly large for me now. After going
through the pockets of each without motive,

knowing even a trifle would have to be left,
I'd pile them all back in order—why, as
mother said, tempt fate? Voices surge again
beneath the floor. I am expected, will soon
be missed, and so run fingers through my hair,
open one more shirt button. Down there
some story, slang, or accent will place
each one of us—age and origins—as surely as
its carapace identifies the turtle. But up here
in the empty coats, the angels linger, unevolved,
invisible, everyone we thought to become,
almost family. My hand heats on the railing,
following another argument down the stairs.
I was once a thief in heaven, it begins.

from *Honest Water* (1989)

Robert Farnsworth

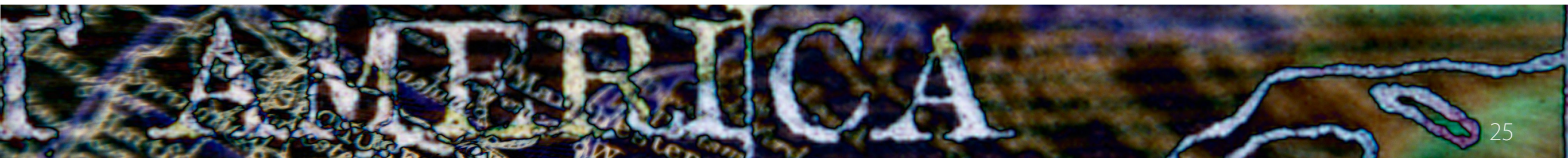


Casi como familia

El crepúsculo se inclina como vigas desde el lago hacia arriba,
culminando en alguna parte más allá de las nubes quebrantadas.
Al llegar, lo sigo escalera arriba,
y pongo mi abrigo en la cama con los demás.
El popurrí de medicamentos y perfumes
en la cómoda me hace recordar atardeceres de la niñez,
transformándome en un demonio con el rímel,
susurrando sobre las etiquetas en el armario, a salvo
siempre y cuando abajo la amiga de mi madre
siguiera chillando por cada nuevo conjunto de naipes en su mano.
La pila de abrigos sigue siendo extraña—mangas
refrescantes de satín y cuellos de smoking—pero ahora
ninguno es tremendamente grande para mí. Después de
revisar sin razón cada uno de los bolsillos,

sabiendo que tendría que haber por lo menos alguna bagatela
los volvía a amontonar a todos en orden—¿por qué, como
decía mamá, tentar el sino? Las voces surgen nuevamente
bajo el piso. Se me espera, pronto
se me echará de menos, así que paso los dedos por mi cabello,
desabrocho un botón más de la camisa. Allá abajo
alguna historia, jerga o acento situará
a cada uno de nosotros—edad y origen—tan certeramente como
el caparazón identifica a la tortuga. Pero aquí arriba
entre los abrigos vacíos, los ángeles vacilan, sin evolucionar,
invisibles, todos los que creímos llegar a ser,
casi como familia. Mi mano se acalora sobre la baranda,
siguiendo otra discusión al bajar las escaleras.
Alguna vez fui ladrón en el cielo, ahora empieza.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



The Mill Worker Arises

The Mill whistle

beckons the worker
tantalizing, taunting
the sleep of
wives (children)

men

calling them to
mass production.

The telephone jangles

midwinter
midnight

freezing

the man dresses

the wife

absents her bed

packs his food in enameled covered dishes
in a basket.

(other baskets like this have gone on picnics).

The mill,

(after cooking the men),

provides a stove

for reheating

her prepared midnight libation in enameled dishes.

The crusader of industry

places his hand

on the three-foot

pipe wrench

laying a shoulder

into the cloud

of oven hot steam and sulphite

prepares to battle

with paper machine No. 2.

Tiny, dwarfed, he

stands, works, walks

the steam-powered monstrous machine

who eats men better than the biblical fish

electrifies their silhouette with 420 volts

spews gases into their lungs

belches firewater like hell over gears and gauges

Deifying itself.



Claiming the souls of the damned
wrenching, contorting
their earthly bodies
bathing them in a baptismal sweat.
Releasing the men to the morning air
ghost-walkers
dedicated to so many pounds
of steam
under pressure.

Rhea Côté Robbins

As If

graves without accents

an unaccented life

living without measure

or worth

and dying

as if
no impression

remains.

I wonder at the touch
of the stone mason's
air hammer
or chisel
secretly
at work
throughout the evening.

Marking the names
accenting the unaccented
in order to make their
mark.
finally.
in death
as if
in life.

Rhea Côté Robbins

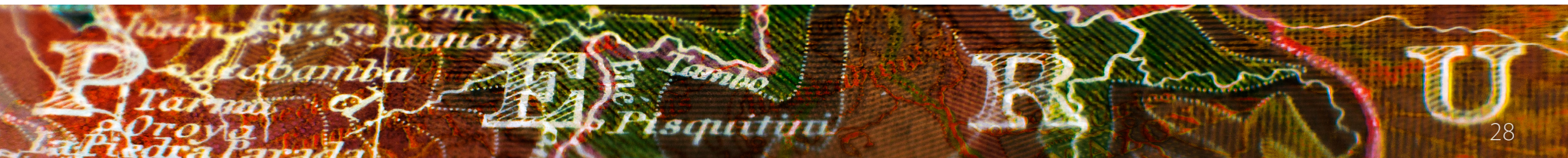


Viajando en tren

Viajo en tren mirando el mar mediterráneo.
Qué delicia esta vista.
Aquí comienza el mundo: los ángeles se bañan desnudos en el espumoso mar.
El caracol avanza hacia la cima sin contratiempos.
Un coro de piedras nos canta en el vagón y las rosas se levantan su traje azul para poder ver el océano sin fondo.
En el tren mi pobre silencio.
Siempre vuelvo con demasiados libros en mis maletas, tarjetas postales y la cicatriz del tiempo.
He estado en varios trenes pero este es el más bello.
No hay nadie: solo un televisor que no me mira y una luna que no se siente.
El mar está desnudo y es mi camino.
La jauría está lejos de mí, y este aire me limpia con los hilos del horizonte.

No hay nadie aquí, mi ojo es una lupa que se escabulle bajo los pinos que crecen en el mar.
Nunca vi pinos más hermosos, largos y serenos navegan hacia otro blancor.
Aquí no hay árboles que tumbar, solo párpados que sortean el cautiverio de las rocas.
Aquí cantan las piedras enterradas, los muertos que recuerdan los grandes barcos perdidos en alta mar.
No hablo de la rosa que flota sino de la rosa que oye el agua.
La rosa que es azul y es la grieta, el asta y el cordel del cielo.
El cielo nos mira y nos escribe, no necesitamos decirle nada.
El cielo tiene flores y habla de otra manera: su fragancia viene de las redes de las islas, de la bruma que irradia el sol cuando abre su boca para abrazarnos.
Busco una isla con mi canoa pequeña, desde mi bosque de sombras diviso una llama mientras me ladra el mar.

Miguel Ángel Zapata



Traveling by Train

I travel by train watching the Mediterranean sea.

What a delightful view

The world starts here: naked angels bathe in the
foamy sea.

The snail climbs towards the top with no interruptions.

A choir of rocks sings for us in the coach and the roses lift
their blue dress to see the bottomless ocean.

In the train my poor silence.

I always return with too many books in my suitcases, post-
cards and the scar of time.

I have been in many trains but this is the most beautiful.

There is no one: only a television set that does not watch me and a moon that does
not feel.

The sea is naked and is my path.

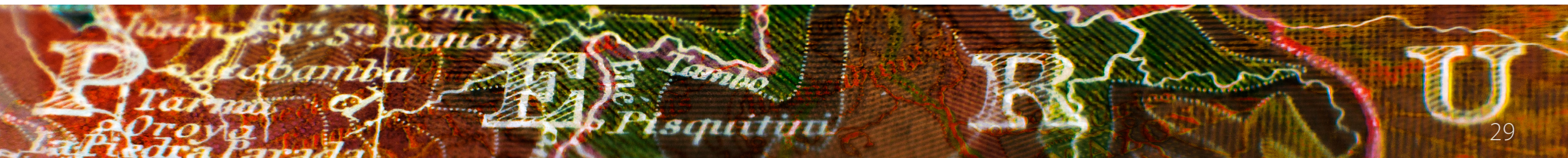
The hounds are far from me, and this air cleanses me with the threads
of the horizon.

There is no one here, my eye is a magnifying glass that escapes
under the pine trees that grow in the sea.

I have never seen such beautiful pine trees, long and serene
sailing towards whiteness.

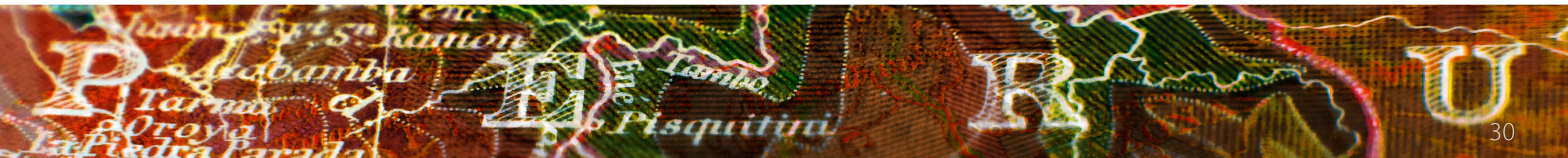
Here are no trees to knock down, only eye-lids that
negotiate the captivity of the rocks.

Here sing the buried rocks, the dead that remember
the large ships lost in high seas.



I don't talk of the rose that floats but of the rose that hears the water.
The rose that is blue and that is the crevice, the mast and the rope of heaven.
The sky watches us and writes to us, we don't need to say a thing.
The sky has flowers and speaks differently: its fragrance comes
from the nets of the islands, from the mist that radiates the sun
when its mouth opens to hold us.
I search for an island with my small canoe, from my forest of shadows
I spot a flame while the sea barks at me.

Trans. Junior Ramírez



Postkarte '07

Das Zugfenster: eine Mattscheibe—
sepiabraune Erinnerungen
laufen darauf ab,
schwarzweißes Elsterngekeife,
weniges Herbstbunt.
Abgeerntet das Kukuruzfeld,
abgeerntet die Frau davor,
ihr Kopftuch wie der Tag:
grau
und
von vorgestern.
Lose Regungen
suchen
Halt vor dem Nichts
aus Verfall
und
Verrottung.
Am Gleis vorbei
wuchert
Abgefackeltes
Abgetakeltes.
Unabsehbar:
die End-Halte.

im Zug von Temeswar nach Kronstadt, 28.10.2007
from *Verortete Zeiten* (2008)

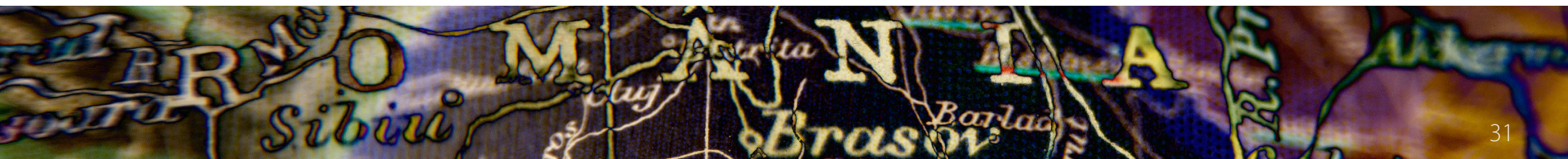
Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Postcard '07

The window of a train: a mat screen—
sepia memories
pass by on it,
black-and-white magpies' nagging,
a little autumn color.
Harvested the corn field,
harvested the woman before it,
her headscarf like the day:
gray
and
from before yesterday.
Loose emotions
search
for a hold from nothingness
out of destruction
and
decay.
Past the tracks
proliferates
something charred
something dismantled.
Unforeseeable:
the last stop.

in the train from Temeswar to Kronstadt, 28/10/2007

Trans. Mariya E. Manahova, Reese Mohrer, Vera Panyushkina



Pennsylvania Station

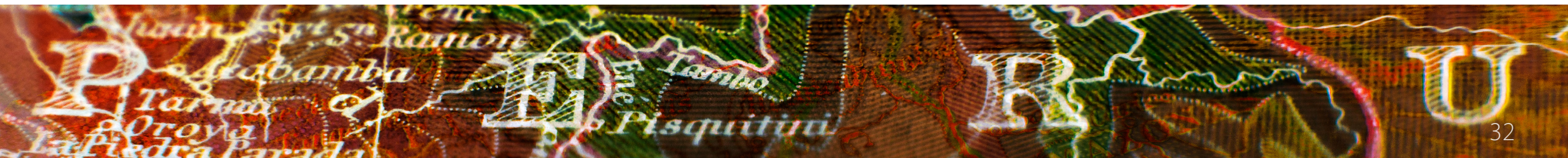
La estación es una pequeña aldea desordenada: la gente vuela persiguiendo un tren, una pesadilla o la continuidad del sueño. Caminamos en un centro comercial o una gran tienda de maniquíes automáticos, una enorme jaula donde nunca se ve el sol. Tú pasas mirando las llamaradas de los trenes que encienden su cabellera como dioses de metal. Cada tren tiene su propia voz, es un libro abierto hacia la vida, o tal vez un dolor escondido en cada rostro. Por eso cuando te sientas en el último vagón abres el libro de la vida dulce, y olvidas las ventanas que te acechan en cada paradero. La gente sube y baja y cree comunicarse a través de textos indescifrables en los teléfonos móviles, quizás para suplir la soledad del encuentro, el miedo de mirarse a los ojos fijamente para decirnos la certera verdad que nos aterra.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

Penn Station

The station is a disorderly little village: people fly pursuing a train, a nightmare or the continuation of a dream. We walk through a mall, or a giant store of automated mannequins, a vast cage where the sun is never seen. You go by watching the glare from the trains with their manes alit like metal gods. Each train has its own voice, it is a book open towards life, or maybe a grief hidden in every face. For this reason when you sit in the last car you open the book of the sweet life, and forget the windows that watch you at each stop. People come and go and believe they communicate through indecipherable texts on cell phones, perhaps to compensate for the loneliness of each encounter, the fear of looking each other squarely in the eyes to reveal the exact truth that horrifies us.

Trans. Justin Lipton



音の道

教会の鐘が 十回続けてなりました

その後 ひとびとは
思い思いに 歌いだしました

なんて 陽気な ころでしょう

鐘の音をおって みんな
空へと のぼっていきます

あなたも私も
もう 雲のうえ

ほら！
もう 雲のうえ

Naomi Otsubo

The Pathway of Sound

The church bell tolled ten times in a row

Afterwards different people
began to sing each according to their own heart

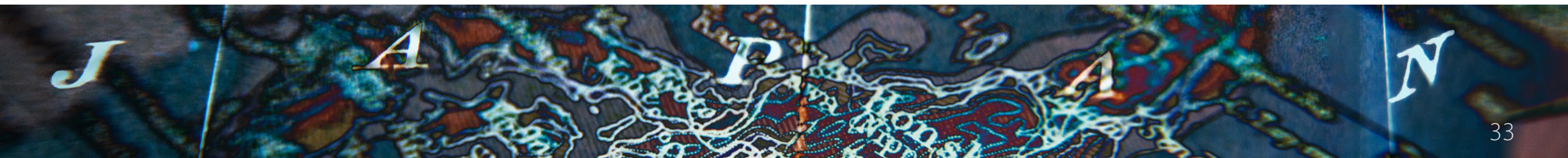
What a joyful feeling

Pursuing the sound of the bell we all
mount up into the sky

You and I both
are already above the clouds

Look!
already above the clouds

Trans. Sarah Strong



Untitled

nous tragiques auditeurs accoutumés aux Disparitions évachés ou en chien de fusil au bout de l'Impasse

des graffitis sur le rempart de la Complaisance des pseudonymes toujours vide le baluchon contre Désespoir Impuissance un
je t'aime ma belle mal gravé au canif sur une clôture métallique des massacres chantés en sourdine petits Carnages de tous les
temps dans des pays sans pétrole dans des pays sans banderole ici même oubliés Dehors que pouvions-nous faire à part
grognier comme des écureuils accrocs aux miettes multiples rien à réaliser à écrire la fin des Illusions la Paralysie le Dégoût let's
shut the fuck up février s'en vient frapper ses faces fanées

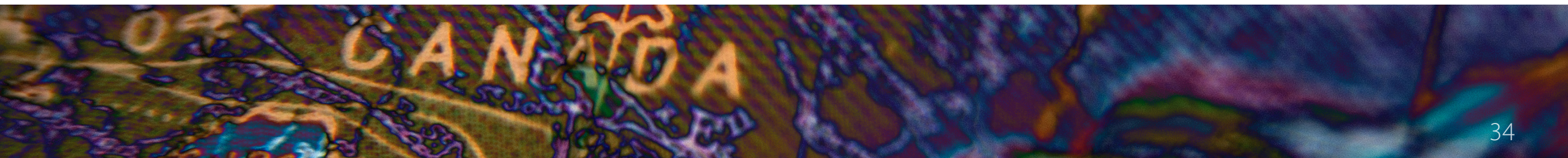
from *Cellule esperanza: n'existe pas sans nous* (2009)

Danny Plourde

us tragic listeners accustomed to Disappearances collapsed or curled in the fetal position at the tip of the Deadlock

graffiti on the barrier of complacency pseudonyms always empty the bundle against Impotent Despair one I love you my dear
badly engraved with a knife on a metallic fence massacres sung softly small Bloodsheds from all of time in countries without
oil in countries without banners same here forgotten Outside what could we do other than grumble like squirrels addicted to
crumbs nothing to realize to write end of Illusions Paralysis Disgust fermons notre putain de gueule february is coming to slap
its withering edge

Trans. Anna Munter



The Village

Apariciones breves

Después de tantas lluvias una pizca de sol se asoma entre los rascacielos. Es la noche de los lobos y las doncellas. La costa ha iniciado su recuento con el mar y han comenzado a cerrar los puentes que van hacia el Atlántico. Un grupo de pájaros altera el color del cielo con su vuelo.

Cuando sale el sol los escaparates del día se abren con los del alma, y el espíritu vuelve a caminar por la ciudad como una hermosa mujer de la calle.

En la vieja Villa, las mujeres dejan que el viento les levante las faldas de seda, y los puentes les traen flores del otro lado del río, como si recién comenzara la fiesta de las rosas.

Después de tantas lluvias me asomo por estas calles como un sonámbulo desquiciado y morbosos, un mirón siempre joven, y las calles se llenan de geranios en todas las ventanas.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

The Village

A brief appearance

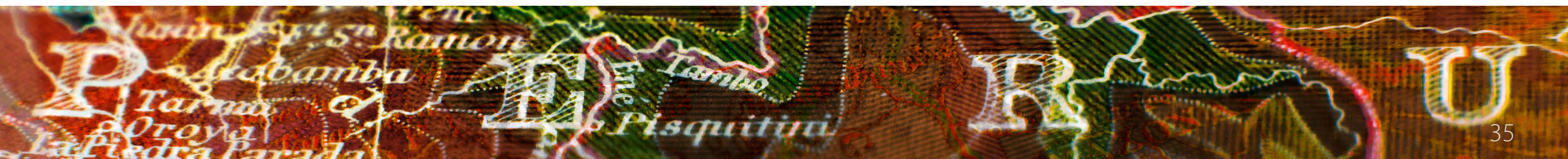
After all the rain, a ray of sun peeks through the skyscrapers. It is the night of wolves and maidens. The coast has begun its reunion with the sea and they have begun to close the bridges to the Atlantic. A group of birds alters the color of the sky with their flight.

When the sun rises the shop windows open as do those of the soul, and the spirit walks the city again, like a beautiful woman of the street.

In the old Villa, women let the wind lift their silk skirts, and the bridges bring them flowers from the other side of the river, as if the rose festival had just begun.

After all the rain I walk through these streets like a mad and morbid sleepwalker, forever a youthful onlooker, and the streets fill with geraniums in every window.

Trans. Sophie Leonard



花びらの心

鳥たちは
翼をもった 花びらで
はるかな園(その)を 空に うかべる

わたしは
思いをもった 花びらで
はるかな園を あなたに 映さん

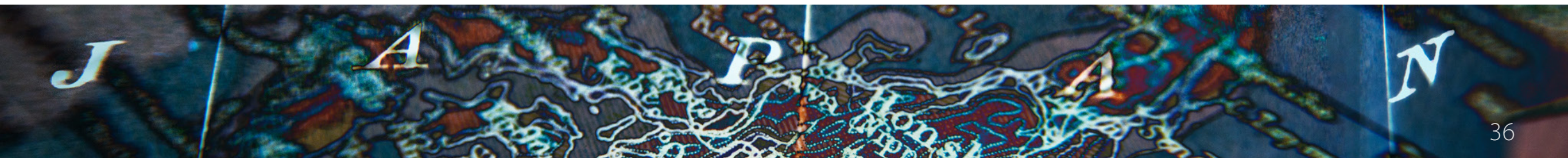
Naomi Otsubo

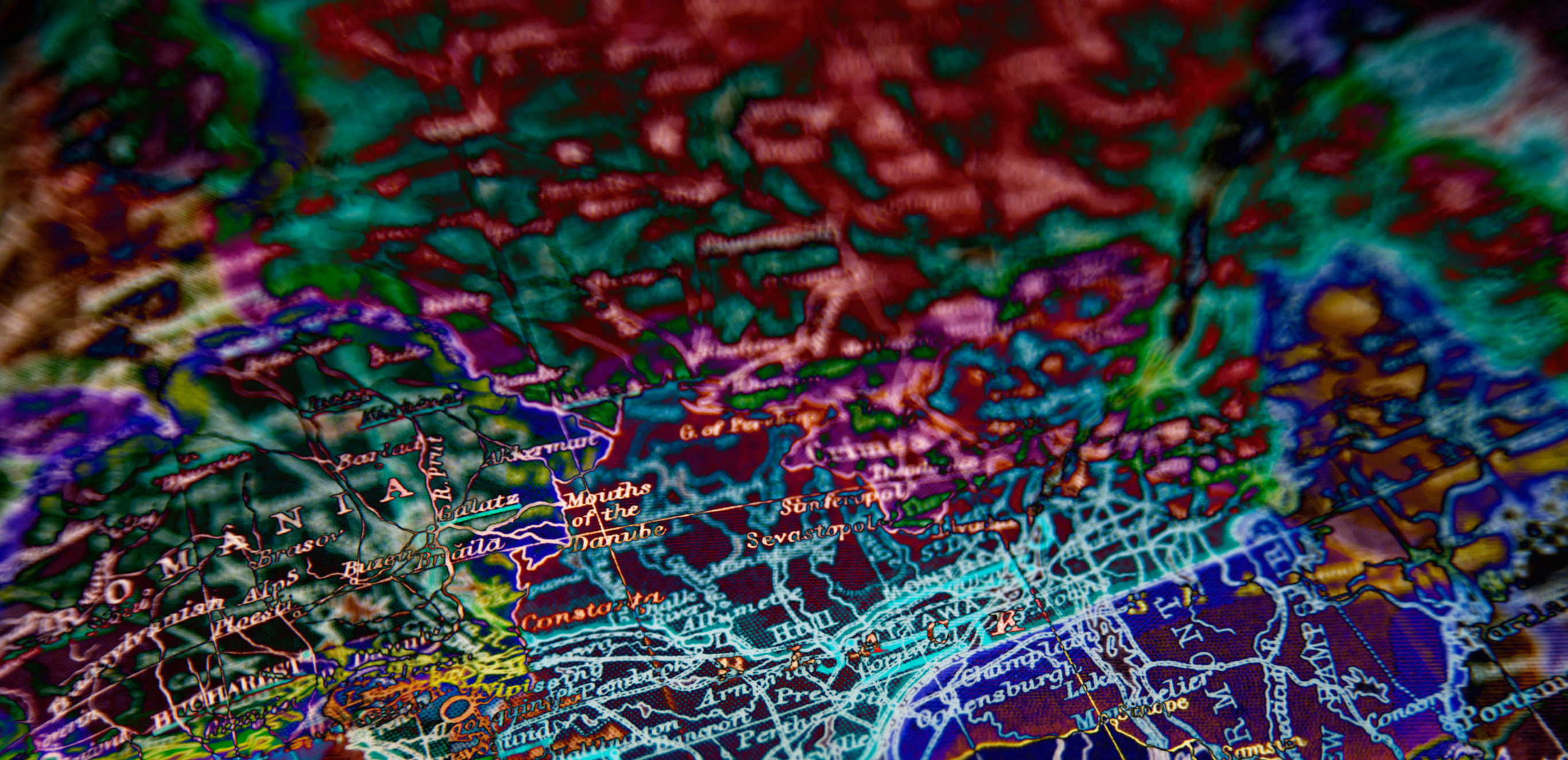
Flower-Petal Heart

The birds,
flower petals fashioned from wings,
set a distant garden afloat in the sky

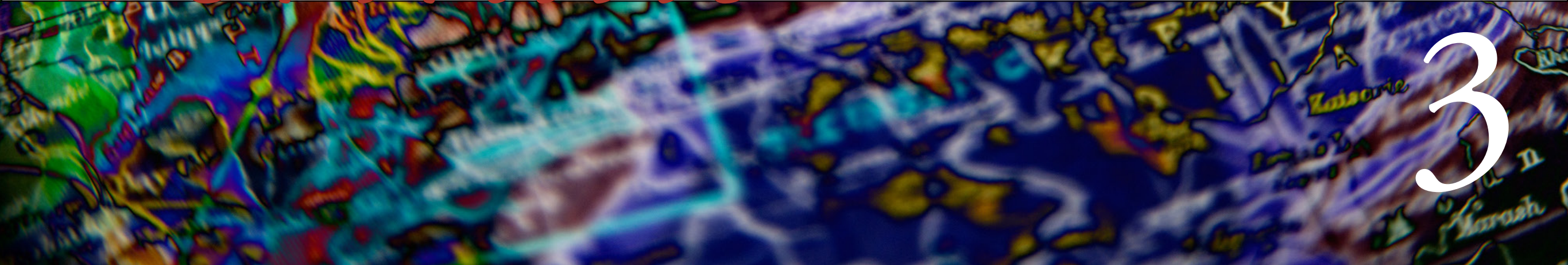
I,
flower petals fashioned from thoughts,
want to make a distant garden shine in your heart

Trans. Sarah Strong





Portraits



My Father was a Farmer

My father
was a farmer
who worked in
a mill.
He led a double
life
tending gardens, animals
and paper machines.

His ancestral calling
was the earth.
His friend
mentor
creator.

He understood
dirt
like
it knew him.
fingering, sifting the sandy loom
he knew
what to expect from it
how much yield it could give
And what it needed from him.

He formed his rows on hills
planted the seed
three for people
three for birds.

He always planted for the birds.

Rhea Côté Robbins

We Spread the Dirt

We spread the dirt
wife
husband
son
on
maman and dad,
pépère and mémère
from
daughter and granddaughter
son-in-law
grandson and great-grandson
on the ancestors
like
we are priests
without ritual—
Eiffel Tower pink-tinted dirt and rocks
for her
France-on-the-Loire brown
country farmer's soil
for him,
like cremation ashes
of memory.

Rhea Côté Robbins



Leute aus K.

In K. wissen sie alles besser:
Das Versagen japanischer Künstler
im Konzertsaal
ist meridianbedingt.
Der Konzertmeister hat
gar kein musikalisches Gedächtnis,
die Sängerin mit den roten Haaren
versteht kein Deutsch
und der Mann, der den Platz Nr fünf hat—
auch das wollen sie wissen—,
ist krank.

Über ihr Besserwissen
vergessen die Leute aus K.
ihre Regenschirme.

nach einer Vorlage vermutlich aus dem Jahr 1984

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

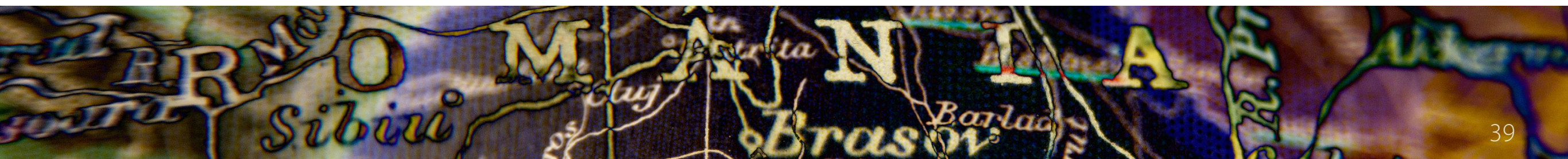
People of K.

In K. they know everything better:
The failure of Japanese artists
in the concert hall
is meridian-conditioned.
The concert master has
no musical memory at all,
the singer with the red hair
understands no German
and the man who has seat number 5—
they also claim to know this—
is sick.

Over their pretense of knowledge
the people of K.
forget their umbrellas.

after a draft presumably from the year 1984

Trans. Andrew Decker, Alexandra Millström



Untitled

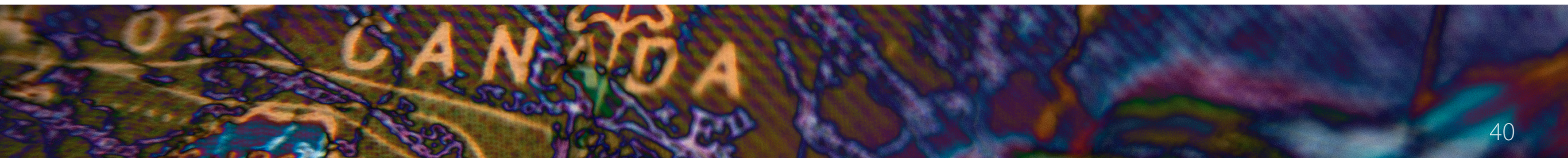
ne suis qu'un *foreigner* un *uiguk salam* qu'on ne respecte que pour ses grands yeux et sa peau plus pâle que celle des autres un *damned Canuck* qu'on ridiculise parce qu'il balbutie dans un anglais tiré par le cheveux un *gringo* qu'on déteste sans le connaître parce qu'une partie de l'Amérique lui colle à la peau comme une sangsue un trou de cul qu'on met quand même sur un piédestal parce qu'il est *Canadian* un dieu lavé de tout remords les fesses assises sur ses lauriers et rien d'autre une ethnie francophone tout au plus qui s'obstine sans raison valable à refuser le meilleur des mondes un poète qu'on ne prend pas au sérieux parce qu'un poète ça ne pourra jamais être pris au sérieux c'est juste sensible un poète et la sensibilité ce n'est pas très raisonnable pas très viril non plus ne suis qu'un illustre inconnu un faiseur de vers qui n'existe que pour être pauvre et humilié une médaille autour du cou et être montré du doigt lorsqu'on cherche quelqu'un d'inutile il n'y a pas de fin joyeuse au fond du baril et à chaque souffle tout comme toi meurs un peu plus

from *Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs du napalm plein l'œil* (2007)

Danny Plourde

am only a *foreigner* an *uiguk salam* who they only respect for his big eyes and his skin paler than that of others a *damned Canuck* who they ridicule because he stammers in a broken english a *gringo* who they hate without knowing him because part of America sticks to his skin like a leech an asshole who they nevertheless put on a pedestal because he is *Canadian* a god washed of all his remorse his butt seated in his laurels and nothing else a poet who they don't take seriously because a poet will never be able to be taken seriously it's just sensitive a poet and sensitivity it's not very reasonable not very manly either being only a perfect nobody a maker of poems who only exists to be poor and humiliated a medal around the neck and to be pointed at when they look for someone useless there is no happy ending at rock bottom and with each breath just like you die a little more

Trans. Stephen Wright



Todavía

La vida es una piedra en el suelo,
un mantel lila sobre la mesa con
una botella de vino al lado de la ventana.

La vida salta por el aire que da al jardín.
La vida es la luz del crisantemo.
Es una metáfora que huele a naranjas
y eucaliptos, un zumbido de abejas que
se pierde por la foresta de tu corazón.

La vida es *todavía*.
El cielo aún no se sobrepone de tanto todavía.

La vida es una naranja sobre un mantel rojo,
una mesa con flores recortadas,
la botella vacía y la ventana.

La vida es una pluma, un magnolio que no llora.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

Continuum

Life is a stone on the ground,
a lilac cloth on the table with
a bottle of wine by the window.

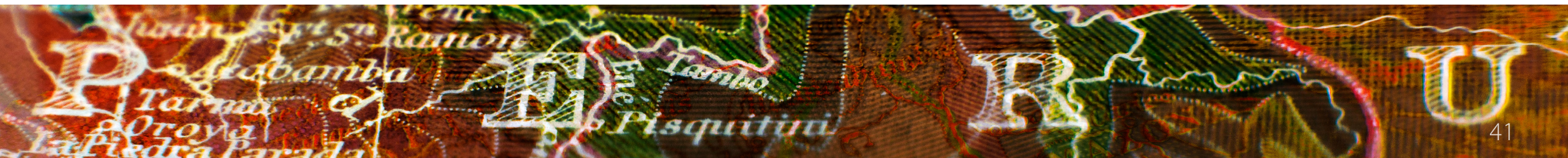
Life jumps through the air to the garden,
life is the light of the chrysanthemum.
It is a metaphor that smells of oranges
and eucalyptus, a buzzing of bees that
gets lost in the forest of your heart.

Life is a *continuum*.
Heaven is still unable to overcome so much continuity.

Life is an orange on a red tablecloth,
fresh cut flowers on a table,
the empty bottle and the window.

Life is a feather, a magnolia that does not weep.

Trans. Kevin Crotty



結び目

あなたのよろこびが
私を目がけて やってくる

他人のよろこびが
自分の脈となって波うってくる

夏のあいだ あなたは
ひたすら土を掘りつづけ
神からの贈り物を 手のひらいっぱいにとった

かつて ぐずっては人に食ってかかっていった沈黙は
異国で方向感覚を失ってしまったのか

あなたにしがみつき
その草や花になじんだ手によって
ゆっくりとあやされることを覚えていった

そして 今は ただ
ひとつの言霊に あふれている

「ありがとう」

落ち葉に彩(いろど)られはじめた庭で
寡黙なあなたが ほほえめば

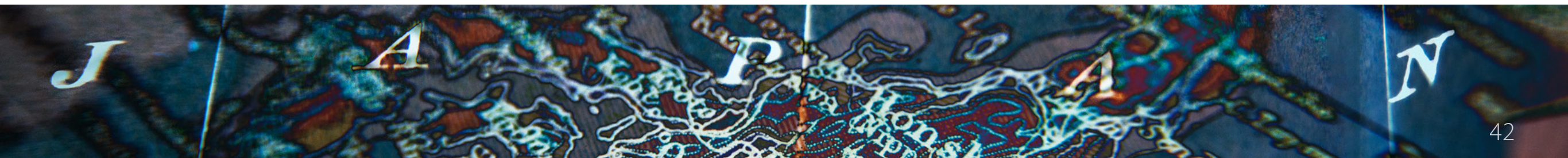
私のなかで
懐かしいテンションが 呼びおこされていく

10年間の時の甘みをおびて
結び目のように あなたの沈黙にからんでいく

なんということだろう
神が人間を このように創られたとは

かつて自分が受け取ったものを 人にまわし
私はまた あの時の幸福に満たされている

Naomi Otsubo



The Knot

Your happiness
approaches with me in its sights

Another person's joy
has become my own pulse and is beating within me

You spent the summer
earnestly digging the soil
and you received god's gift so that it filled your open hands

The old sulking silence with which you lashed out at people,
did it lose its sense of direction in the foreign land?

It clung tightly to you,
gradually learned to be comforted
by those hands accustomed to grasses and flowers

Now just
a single spirit-word overflowing,

"Arigatō"

When, in the garden beginning to be tinted with fallen leaves,
you, always so taciturn, smile,

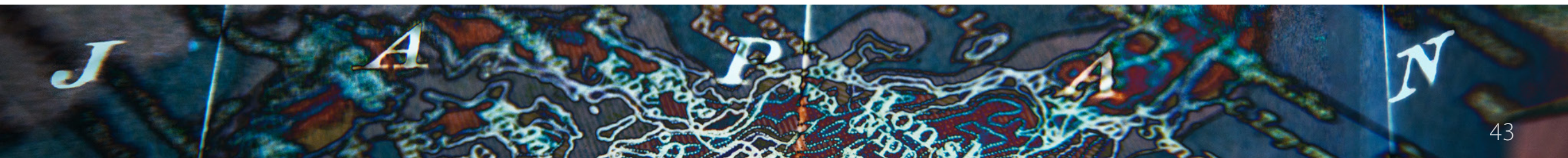
inside me
a familiar exhilaration is summoned up

Tinged with the sweetness of ten years' time
it goes on entwining with your silence as though to form a knot.

What a wonderful thing,
that god made human beings like this

Something I myself received in the past is passed on to another
I am once again filled with the happiness of that time.

Trans. Sarah Strong



Помидоры и подсолнухи

Наконец, определились в ярком воздухе
Помидоры: помидоры и подсолнухи.
Вот сейчас сентябрь-дидактик вскрикнет «Розги!» и
Всё взорвётся едким соком на траву.
Но пока, как будто задержал дыхание,
Б-г вещей, и колыханье, полыханье не
Прекращаются, и длится-длится раннее
Умирание—«о да, ещё живу».

Эта точка невидная, касание
Между осенью и летом, слаще сладкого.
Знаешь—вот оно начнётся, угасание,
Станет всё тогда недвижно, одинаково.
Но пока напряжено вокруг и замерло
Обращение частиц—ало, оранжево,
Изумрудно, буро—перед тем как—замертво,
Дышит дышит, успокоенное заживо.

Всё сполна – наросты, тени, линии,
Вкус и запах, но не вонь ещё—дыхание.
Травы чёрные, коричневые, синие,
Ветра с неба—ускоренье, содрогание.
Но как только эта видимость исполнится,
И как только расстояние нарушится,—
Всё падёт. Ты знаешь, что запомнится?
Паутина—оскорбительное кружевце,
Помидор—незаживающая трещина,
Полминуты в предвкушеньи дыма, ужаса,—
Всё далось мне, а ведь не было обещано.

Polina Barskova



Tomatoes and Sunflowers

Finally, marked by the bright light
Tomatoes: tomatoes and sunflowers.
Here now the September-didactic shrieks: "Birches!"
And the acrid juice explodes onto the grass.
While holding over the last breathe,
God's things, swinging and drying up
not breaking off, holding-holding on earlier death
murmuring, "ahh yes, I live."

This insignificant moment,
touching between autumn and summer—the sweetest sweet.
You know, its here where it begins, dying away
Everything stands motionless, alone.
While growing tense around and dying
The circulation of tiny pieces—ale, orange,
emerald, rust—(before falling)—then death
Breathing breathing, calmly clinging to life.

Everything is full-overgrowth, shadows, lines—tastes and sounds
But not another stench—a breath
Grass black, brown, blue
A breeze to heaven—speeding up, shuddering
But as soon as this moments finishes
And as soon as the distance disturbs—
Everything falls. Do you know what to remember?
Spiderwebs—with their fearful lace
Tomato—with a deathly split
Half a minute in the anticipation of smoke, transport—
Everything was given to me, and yet nothing was promised.

Trans. Nora Murray



Liebhaber Tod

Er liebäugelt,
begehrt, giert,
sehnt sich,
umschwänzelt
umtänzelt,
umwirbt,

liebt
unersättlich.

(K. 11.12.2009. Für Mama)

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Lover Death

He ogles,
desires, lusts,
longs for,
fawns,
prances,
woos,

loves
insatiably.

(K. 12/11/2009. For Mom)

Trans. Deniz Nesli, Abby Verney-Fink



Inquietud

el sol de mediodía moja tu
cuerpo

te mueves en círculos
arrebataado siempre

buscas entre las hojas
bajo las ramas
sobre la ropa

una cucaracha pasea por tu
lengua
evitando cicatrices

levantas la mirada
extiendes los brazos
adelantas el mentón

el sol te ha mojado todo

no puedes moverte:
te revuelves contra la nada
en el laberinto de babas cristalinas
que dibujan las babosas

el sol en la vejiga

eres la nada, la baba y la babosa,
eres sin ser
estático en movimiento
por toda la eternidad.

Francisca López



Restlessness

the midday sun drenches
your body

you move in circles
always impetuous

you search among the leaves
beneath the branches
on the clothes

a cockroach takes a walk on your
tongue
side stepping scars

you gaze upward
extend your arms
thrust your chin forward

the sun has completely drenched you

you can't move:
you struggle against nothingness
in the labyrinth of crystalline spittle
designed by the ones that drool

the sun in the scrotum

you are the nothingness, the spittle and the drooler
you are without being
static in motion
for all eternity.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Un perro negro en Vallarta dice

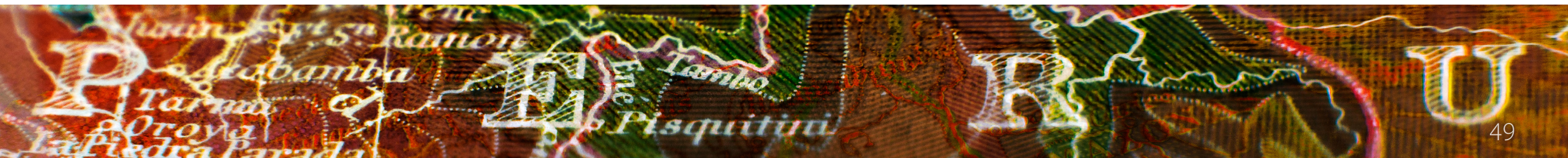
No sé cómo no estoy muerto por la bruma ahora que el mal es como una ola dorada o un dulce para la felicidad. Siento que el mundo se nos va yendo como esta lluvia que no moja ni humedece.

El contraste de las olas perfila un nuevo aliento para los días que vendrán: yo soy la pesadilla del sol, me repito mientras nado contra la corriente como un salmón enloquecido. Sé que nadie nota mi estilo pero aquí nado de ida y vuelta con soltura, y la luna ni siquiera me mira de reojo.

No te diré cuánto he caminado ni cuánta arena tragué este verano. Tal vez tampoco tú me quieras decir nada del arte de la soledad o del bronceado desnivelado de tu cuerpo, pero te conozco bien, y sé a qué vienes a caminar por estas playas donde hay tanta gente que no puedo distinguir a nadie. Me he convertido en una estatua de sal pero he sentido momentos increíbles de verdadera felicidad. Soy un perro marinerero y ladro. Mírame cómo acaricio un sueño ahora que repito el canto de las sirenas. Esa memoria que se me va en el aire salado de este mar vuelve cuando no la pienso. Porque yo también tengo mi historia que contar, prados y mares aún por recorrer.

Entiendo perfectamente que tengo alma por esa mi invencible melancolía, y por el brillo natural de mis ojos negros. A mí me enloquece el mar azulino, las piedras de la arena que incendian el viento. Mira todo este cielo que me disfruta sin conmovearse, el cadmio del mar, en traslación siempre.

Miguel Ángel Zapata



A Black Dog in Vallarta Says

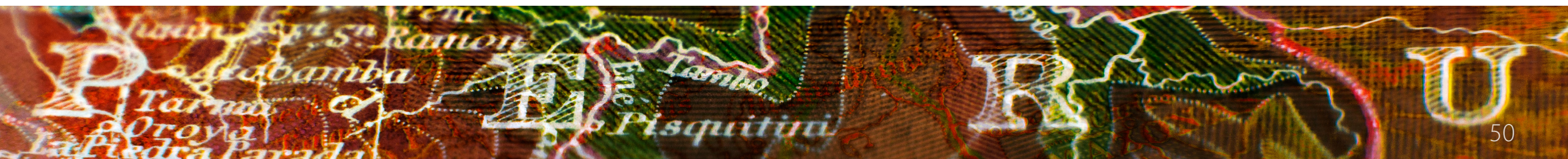
I do not know how I am not dead from the mist now that evil is like a golden wave or a candy for happiness. I feel that the world is leaving us like this rain that neither soaks nor dampens.

The contrast of the waves outlines a new breath for the days to come: I am the nightmare of the sun, I repeat to myself while I swim against the current like a crazed salmon. I know that no one observes my form but here I swim back and forth with agility, and the moon does not even look at me out of the corner of its eye.

I will not tell you how much I have walked or how much sand I swallowed this summer. Perhaps you do not want to tell me anything of the art of loneliness or of the uneven tan of your body, but I know you well, and I know why you come to walk along these beaches where there are so many people that I cannot recognize anyone. I have become a statue of salt but I have felt incredible moments of true happiness. I am a sea dog and I bark. Watch how I cherish a dream now that I repeat the song of the Sirens. That memory that leaves me in the salty air of the sea returns when I do not think it. Because I also have my story to tell, meadows and seas to explore.

I understand perfectly that I have a soul because of my insurmountable melancholy and the natural sparkle of my black eyes. The azure ocean, the stones in the sand that set fire to the wind drive me mad. Look at all of this sky that enjoys me without being affected, the cadmium of the sea, in constant translation.

Trans. Leah Maciejewski



Untitled

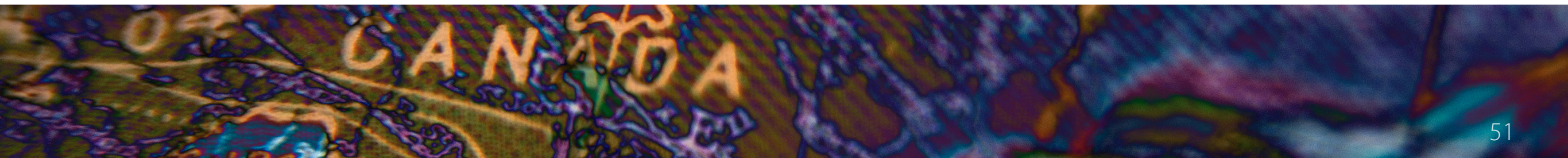
tous ces détours pour un vieux micro bossé sur l'échafaud devant le public à gagner quelques dollars déjà bus et dire la gerçure d'une voix qui ne peut s'élever au-dessus d'une autre qu'avec des mots de faim au ventre de cœur ruiné par tant d'amours sous les draps lactés de mes nuits d'hier dix coups de poésie jusqu'à bout de souffle en répétant les mêmes simagrées la même musique de cette même souffrance différence semblable aux autres celle qui répète le vide dans le creux de la gorge dans le creux du peuple la moisissure plein la langue jusqu'à recevoir des fleurs sans pétales pour avoir clamé mon impuissance face l'anéantissement d'une mémoire mais l'anéantissement d'une mémoire ça ne fait pourtant pas très poétique de nos jours et comprendre par-dessus tout le poète est sans foule parce qu'il côtoie une foule sans poésie

from *Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs du napalm plein l'œil* (2007)

Danny Plourde

all these detours for an old humped microphone on the scaffold in front of the public to earn a few dollars already drunk and to say the frostbite of a voice which can't raise itself above another except with words of starvation of heart ruined by so many loves under the milky sheets of my past nights ten shots of poetry until out of breath from repeating the same charades the same music of the same suffering difference similar to others that which repeats the emptiness in the hollow of the throat in the hollow of the people a mouthful of mold until receiving flowers without petals for having proclaimed my impotence against the shattering of a memory but the shattering of a memory is not very poetic these days and to understand above all the poet is without a crowd because he frequents a crowd without poetry

Trans. Olivia DaDalt



Feinschmecker Tod

Er verachtet keine Kost,
schmeckt, schmatzt,
schnalzt mit der Zunge,
leckt sich die Lippen, die knochigen Finger.
Danach trinkt er

auf das Leben.

Für Mama. K. 21.11.2010

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Gourmet Death

He despises no food,
tastes, smacks,
clicks his tongue,
licks his lips, the bony fingers.
Then he drinks

to life.

For Mom. K. 11/21/2010

Trans. Deniz Nesli, Abby Verney-Fink



反射する光

輝きたい
もっと もっと 輝きたい……

この強い 思い

いったい どこからくるの？
だれのため？ 自分のため？

いいえ 本当は
愛してくれる人のため

心から あふれる光の「ありがとう」
子供がいちばん 知っている

だから よくお聞き わたしの自我
……あんたの出番なんかじゃ ないの

Naomi Otsubo

Reflected Light

I want to shine
More and more brightly I want to shine……

This strong desire

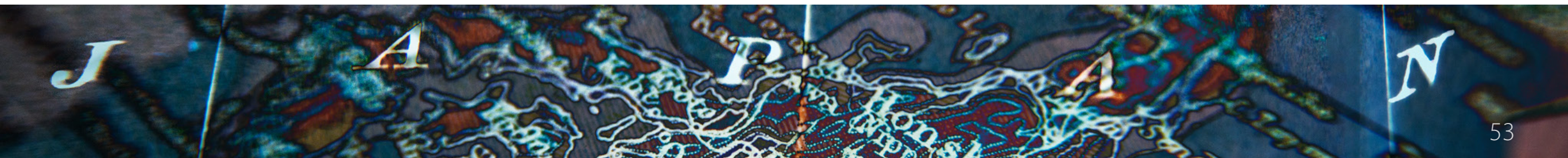
Just where does it come from?
For whose sake do I have it? My own?

No, in truth
it is for the sake of those who love me,

a radiant gratitude overflowing from the heart
Children are the ones who know this best

So listen up ego of mine
……It's definitely not your turn to take the stage

Trans. Sarah Strong



Jesse's Sunbeam

Jesse touched a sunbeam
 golden curls
lightened by the rays
catching the dust in open fingers
examining the great wealth he had caught
 only to find an empty hand
looking full-face in the brightness
he knew if he tried long enough
he could get a fistful...
Long before the shadows came
The sunbeam was abandoned
Jesse had caught all the dust he needed.

Rhea Côté Robbins

Oil Can Harry

The paper machine man
 and his can of oil
Is my knight in shining armor
 because he told me
it was ok to cheat
If it meant you had to win
or be
equal
to the situation of foul play.

Rhea Côté Robbins



Untitled

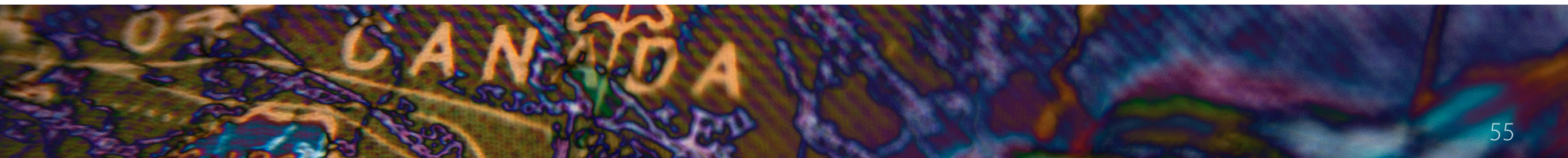
les églises hurlent le midi par une symphonie de cloches rouillées et sur un trottoir brûlant une fillette seule et fière d'environ douze ans gambade avec son pantalon Juicy serré sa camisole de Playboy l'immaturité de deux petites pointes nordiques lui dévore les yeux les miens tristes de la voir si inconsciente si assoiffée du sexe de l'Autre sans même connaître l'arôme du vin imagine ses parents s'indigner que certaines femmes portent le voile

from *Vers quelque: sommes nombreux à être seul* (2004)

Danny Plourde

churches blare out noon with a symphony of rusty bells and on a burning sidewalk a young girl alone and proud around twelve years old frolics with her tight Juicy pants her Playboy camisole the immaturity of two little northern points devour her eyes mine sad to see her so unaware so thirsting of sex of the Other without even knowing the aroma of wine imagine her parents outraged that some women wear the veil

Trans. Caylin Carbonell, Katie Black



Conflicts

4

Carna

lloras:
aullidos demoledores
invaden
el sueño y la vigilia

lloras:
condenada eternamente
al lenguaje
inapelable
de los muertos

lloras:
alaridos
dolores de ultratumba
convocan
la rama de espino

la inmensidad de tu llanto
(sed de éstriges hambrientas)
traspasa
la barrera del sonido.
ignoras el umbral de mi escondite,
el conjuro que convoca mi llegada

jano es poderoso:
conoce tu angustia y mi sordera,
las trampas del rechazo y el reclamo.
sabe de huecos y laberintos,
de tu líquido purificador.
no encuentra resistencia

el espino se clava en los ovarios
la saliva se adentra por los huesos.
aprieto los dientes
un segundo.
y el paladar
percibe
sin espanto
el sabor herrumbroso
de tu dolor.

Francisca López



Carna

you wail:
torturous howling
invades
sleep and the vigil

you wail:
eternally condemned
the indisputable
language
of the dead

you wail:
screams
pains of the underworld
invoke
the whitethorn's branch

the volume of your weeping
(thirst of hungry screeching owls)
surpasses
the sound barrier
you ignore the threshold of my lair,
the chant that invokes my arrival

janus is powerful
he knows of your sorrow and my aloofness
the traps of rejection and protest.
he knows of hollows and labyrinths,
of your purifying fluids.
he finds no resistance

the whitethorn pierces the ovaries
saliva bores in through the bones.
I clench my teeth
for a moment.
and the palate
perceives
without fear
the rusty savor
of your pain.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Always Time For Grace

They say Grace's
house
was not the
cleanest.
Those in town
all agreed.
If you are going to
to see Grace,
Her house is a mess.
Dirty dishes
piled up in the sink.
Kids running
wild, sometimes
naked.
Husband, too. (*No Adam In Eden*)
Grace ran a comb
through her hair
elevated her jeans,
rolled cuffs,
donned her cotton
tailed shirt
to appease her hunger
for words. (*Peyton Place*)
Creativity. Woman's voice.

(*Tight White Collar*)

Jack, dharma bum
was on the road.
He wasn't alone.

Hollywood came to pay a call.
New York.

The crooked agent.
A singing disc jockey.
(*Return To Peyton Place*)
Pathetic little lackings—
of their own

true creativity
to steal from Grace,
hers.

Rhea Côté Robbins



Final Inspection

Hathaway Shirt Factory
Waterville, Maine

An expert seamstress, *couseuse*

she was hired on
for final inspection
at the shirt factory
on Water St.
She came home
told us
“this job was different
from the one who sewed dozens.”
Or that’s what the bosses
told her.

“Don’t expect to do a hundred dozen a day here.”

Your quotas
will be
loose threads
cut
clip
caught.
Hard. Exacting work.

“I already have scissors” she said
“You’ll need final inspection scissors”
they replied.

“And You Buy Them.”

She bought the scissors
practiced holding them
working them in her hand for speed
Uncomfortable/comfortable
Untraditional/ritual

Final Inspection Scissors
became a part
of her sewing life.

She, the seamstress, *couseuse*
looked at
shirts
sloppily
or
Well
sewn
loose threads lost in seams
crooked seams



inspecting finally
or
rejecting
the work.

Deciding which shirts to return to the woman-maker who sews
returns on a punched in clock
losing time
breaking quotas
cursing threads
final inspectors
bosses
quotas
timed piecework
crooked seams
silks
cottons
whites
colors.

Tension mounts for the seamstress final inspector
Shirts pile
silk and cotton
colors and whites
angry, women at returned shirts
clocked quotas
short scissors
hot weather place
100° or better
timed piecework
Bosses complain
final inspection
not final
enough.

Faster, Faster, Faster.

to her
who left
finally,
with her scissors.

Rhea Côté Robbins



Blitz

краткая прогулка по Лондону с художницей N

Даёшь над Лондоном салют!
Ракеты зреют и снуют,
Встревоженные влажным мраком.
Охрипшим от “oh, fuck!” зевакам
За так возвышенность суют.

John Piper (кто?) в сороковом
Смотрел культу под рукавом
Больного города без света.
Ложились церкви как снопы,
Врезались в них огня столбы,
Творец рычал да что же это
И горевал о свойстве цвета
Скушнеть, сливаясь с темнотой,
Всегда становится не той,
На волю вырываясь краска;

Вот эта робкая ракета
Хлопочет что-то на холсте.
А ей бы! Наливаться алым
Над Пикадилли, жутким жалом
Водить, как лапкой по муде,
По водам—их с огнём мешая.

Творец настойчивей лишая
Врывался, подрывал, взрывал
Обугленной своею кисткой.

И город раной скользко-склизкой
Всё восставал и всё взывал
К Творцу (на этот раз—к другому),—
«Молились всюду, все, всегда»,
Зачуяв хрюканье снаряда,
Выталкивая изо рта
—не надо.

Изображать и поражать
Цель. И лицом к земле бежать,
Потом лицом к земле лежать,
И лёгкие наполнить ею.
Скатиться в узкую траншею,
Ещё немножко полежать,
Ракету взглядом провожать.

Летит и тает. Ангел-сон!
С несатым страхом в унисон,
Подмигивает—ну? Готов ли?
К уведомлению-толчку?
К последней спазмы молочку?
К восстановленью райской кровли?

Polina Barskova



Blitz

A Short Trip around London with Artist N

Let there be fireworks over London!
Let the rockets rise and roar
Fearful of damp darkness.
Passersby's cursing
Echoes over the hill.

John Piper in the forties
Looked at the stump under sleeve
Of the dying and colorless city.
House of the Creator turned into a sheave
Marked by the fire poles
The Artist roared but what
Grieved the hopeless color
Which merges with darkness
Eventually becoming one
Digging paint on its own will;

A shy rocket revealed in the sky
And then on the canvas.
I hope it would, fill some red
Above Piccadilly with that killing feeling
Drive, as crushing testicles

On water, preventing them from burning
The Artist burst, undermined, blew
Charred his cigar.

The city now slippery
Rising and crying to
The God
"They prayed everywhere, everything, always"
Feeling a grunt missile
—popping out of its mouth.
Job is to represent and affect
The target. Face against the earth running,
Then, face to the earth lying.
And lungs filled with it.
Slipping into a narrow trench
A few calm minutes
Heads up to check a rocket.

Flies and melts!
Fear shared by many
Winks—yeah? Ready?
To the notice of an oblivious?
To the last spasms of milk?
To repair the roof of paradise?

Trans. Metehan Mert



Konstanza 2005

In der Altstadt
verschorfen Häuser:
von Räude befallen,
hängen sie an ihren
nackten Stützpfeilern, Vogelscheuchen
einer anderen Welt,
an denen tote Ranken
scharfe Krallen wetzen.
Pestverbeult bröckeln
Arabesken von den Fassaden,
bieten der Sonne sorgenzerfurcht
ihre Stirnen,
schwarze Fenster heften den Blick
aufs entblößte Innere, Leere.
Dort steht ein Gesicht, es fletscht
ein Grinsen in seinem Bart,
eine Hand sticht einen Finger in die Luft.

Den Weg zum Strand weisen Graffiti an den Wänden:
ein blinder Seemann dreifach beschwänzt:
der Erste sein Holzbein,
der Zweite die Keule am rechten Daumen,
der Dritte spiegelverkehrt
auf der Stirn.
Im dünnen Gras dämmert ein Hund,
ein Kater torkelt über die Fahrbahn und
sträubt das ruppige Fell:
sein Schwanz hat einen Knick.

Am großen Platz
zwischen Palästen und Ruinen
steht der Dichter seine Verbannung aus.
Am Himmel über dem Meer ein Wolkenpektakel:
der Okzident streckt seinen kleinen Finger
nach dem Orient.

27.08.2005/Mamaia
from *Verortete Zeiten* (2008)

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu



Constanta 2005

In the old town
scabbing houses:
infested with mange,
cling to their
crude supports, scarecrows
of another world,
where dead vines
whet sharp claws.
Plague-spotted arabesques crumble
from the facades,
their foreheads, wrinkled from worry, offer resistance
to the sun,
black windows gaze
into empty interiors.
There stands a face, it bares
a grin in its beard,
a hand thrusts a finger into the air.

Graffiti on the walls down to the beach:
a blind sailor thrice endowed with a tail:
the first his wooden leg,
the second the club on his right thumb,
the third mirror-inverted
on his brow.
In arid grass dozes a dog,
a tomcat staggers across the roadway and
bristles the rough fur:
his tail has a kink.

On the big square
between palaces and ruins
the poet endures his exile.
In the sky above the sea a cloud spectacle:
the occident stretches his small finger
towards the orient.

8/27/2005 Mamaia

Trans. Dana Ellis, H. Fuller Henriques IV, Jivko S. Kozarov



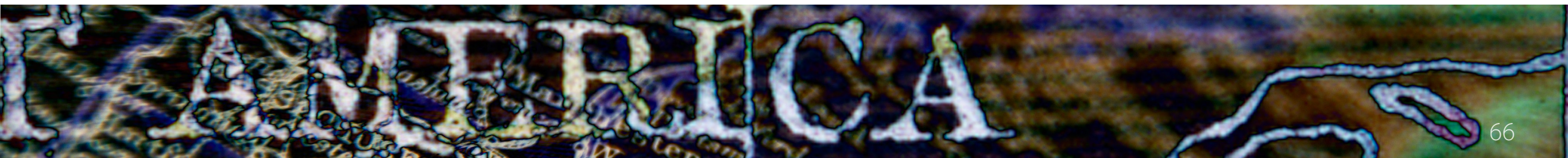
Casque Bleu

So he must so he
stands up from within
outlandish leaves,
casts away the rifle,
tries on a smile he's
never felt his face
make before, and as
they approach gazes
down the valley of
the unpronounceable
river, whose stony
shallows, when he'd
scrambled to this refuge,
had quietly bickered
in the dark, and now
glitter furiously just
above the shoulder
of his captor, above

the vicious muzzle
of his gesticulating
gun. Sudden cloud-
crossed memories:
his daughter's sharp
voice, starlings routed
from an oak... How
warm the blue helmet
feels under his fingers,
as he stumbles down
this slope, dislodging
historical stones, up-
right in a posture
of excellent repose.

from *Rumored Islands* (2010)

Robert Farnsworth

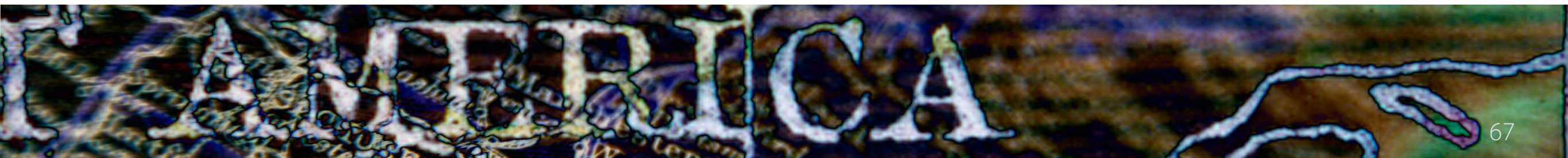


Casque Bleu

Ya que él debe entonces él
se levanta desde dentro
de hojas descabelladas,
arroja el rifle,
se prueba una sonrisa que
jamás antes ha sentido su cara
formar, y al tanto que
ellos se acercan pierde
la mirada en el valle
del río
impronunciable, cuyos bajíos
pedregosos, cuando él con
dificultad venía a este refugio,
había en voz baja reñido
en la oscuridad, y ahora
relumbra furiosamente justo
por encima del hombro
de su captor, encima

de la boca feroz
de su pistola haciendo
ademanos. Repentinos recuerdos
entrecruzados por nubes:
la voz aguda de su
hija, estorninos desbandados
de un roble... Cuan
tibio se siente el casco azul
bajo sus dedos,
mientras tropieza al bajar
esta cuesta, desprendiendo
piedras históricas, paradas
en una postura
de magnífico reposo.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Amante

Un pozo oscuro se abre ante tus ojos
te pesa el útero rebosante de vida
te pesan las caderas
los hombros

Avanzas casi a ciegas
guiada por el llanto
de la niña
por tu miedo

Vuelves la cabeza
la nada lo ocupa todo
Acechada por las sombras
sigues sintiendo sus palabras
oyendo su temor
oliendo su mirada
de odio
de soslayo

La luna juega con las encinas
el viento silba en el eucalipto
una vaca muge con terror en la garganta
los grillos ladran
los perros gritan

Tú avanzas

El hígado contraído
los riñones descolgados
los contornos del nido
que alojas bajo el ombligo
roídos por una rata invisible

La oscuridad lo abarca todo
lo andado y lo por andar
y tú avanzas
en medio del abismo.

Francisca López



Lover

A dark well opens before your eyes
the uterus buoyant with life weighs on you
the hips weigh on you
the shoulders

Half blind you make your way
led by the girl's
cry
led by your fears

You turn your head
nothingness fills everything

Stalked by the shadows
you still feel his words
still hear his dread
smell his gaze
of hatred
as you leave

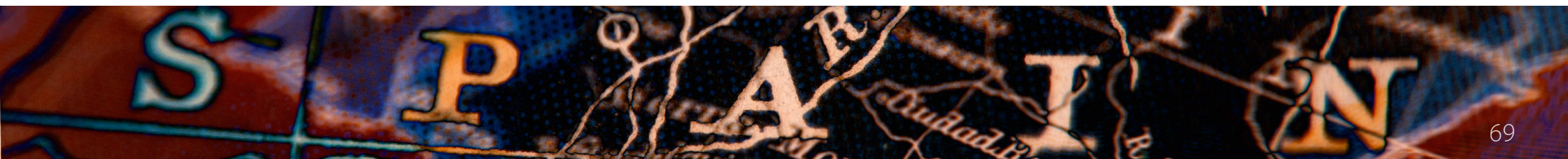
The moon plays with the evergreens
the wind whistles in the eucalyptus
a cow moans with terror at its throat
the crickets bark
the dogs scream

You keep moving

The liver contracted
the kidneys weighing down
the contours of the nest
sheltered beneath your navel
gnawed by an invisible rat

Darkness covers everything
the path behind and the path ahead
and you make headway
amid the abysm.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Gepflogenheiten von Hochkultur

Vormittags anstehen um Klopapier;
Abends im Konzert.
Die Vormittagsfreude
wirkt auch abends nach.

Willkommen bei der
Muppetshow!

auf Grund einer Vorlage aus dem Jahr 1984
from *Verortete Zeiten* (2008)

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

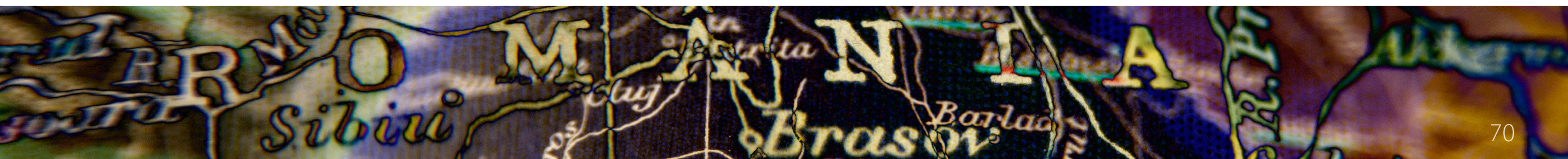
Customs of High Culture

In the mornings queuing for toilet paper;
Evenings at the concert.
The morning joy
lasts into the evening.

Welcome to the
Muppet show!

Based on a draft from the year 1984

Trans. Andrew Decker, Alexandra Millström



Becomings

5

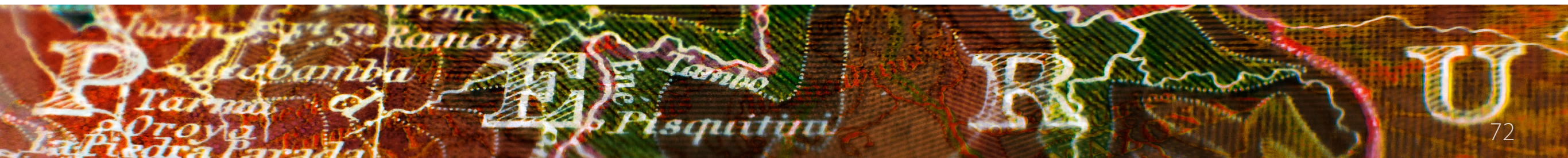
La ventana

Voy a construir una ventana en medio de la calle para no sentirme solo. Plantaré un árbol en medio de la calle, y crecerá ante el asombro de los paseantes: criaré pájaros que nunca volarán a otros árboles, y se quedarán a cantar ahí en medio del ruido y la indiferencia. Crecerá un océano en la ventana. Pero esta vez no me aburriré de sus mares, y las gaviotas volverán a volar en círculos sobre mi cabeza. Habrá una cama y un sofá debajo de los árboles para que descansen la lumbre de sus olas.

Voy a construir una ventana en medio de la calle para no sentirme solo. Así podré ver el cielo y la gente que pasa sin hablarme, y aquellos buitres de la muerte que vuelan sin poder sacarme el corazón. Esta ventana alumbrará mi soledad. Podría inclusive abrir otra en medio del mar, y solo vería el horizonte como una luciérnaga con sus alas de cristal. El mundo quedaría lejos al otro lado de la arena, allá donde vive la soledad y la memoria. De cualquier manera es inevitable que construya una ventana, y sobre todo ahora que ya no escribo ni salgo a caminar como antes bajo los pinos del desierto, aun cuando este día parece propicio para descubrir los terrenos insondables.

Voy a construir una ventana en medio de la calle. Vaya absurdo, me dirán, una ventana para que la gente pase y te mire como si fueras un demente que quiere ver el cielo y una vela encendida detrás de la cortina. Baudelaire tenía razón: el que mira desde afuera a través de una ventana abierta no ve tanto como el que mira una ventana cerrada. Por eso he cerrado mis ventanas y he salido a la calle corriendo para no verme alumbrado por la sombra.

Miguel Ángel Zapata



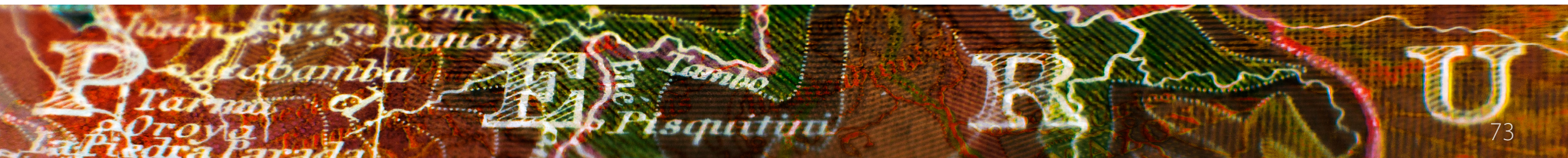
The Window

I am going to build a window in the middle of the road so I don't feel alone. I will plant a tree in the middle of the road, and it will grow before the astonishment of the passersby: I will raise birds that will never fly to other trees, and will stay to sing there amidst noise and indifference. An ocean will grow in the window. But this time I won't grow bored of its seas, and the seagulls will fly again in circles above my head. There will be a bed and a sofa under the trees so that the fire in its waves may rest.

I am going to build a window in the middle of the road so I don't feel alone. That way, I will see the sky and the people who pass without speaking to me, and those vultures of death that circle above, unable to tear out my heart. This window will illuminate my solitude. I could also open another in the middle of the sea, and only see the horizon as a firefly with its wings of crystal. The world would be far on the other side of the sand, where loneliness and memory live. At any rate, it's inevitable that I will build a window, and now more than ever, since I no longer write nor go out to walk as I once did under the pine trees of the desert, even though today seems favorable for discovering unfathomable lands.

I am going to build a window in the middle of the road. How crazy, they'll say, a window so that people pass and watch you as though you were a fool that wants to see heaven and a lit candle behind the curtain. Baudelaire was right: he who looks in through an open window sees fewer things than he who looks through a closed one. For that reason I've closed my windows and I've run out to the road so that I don't see myself lit up by shadows.

Trans. Emily Cull



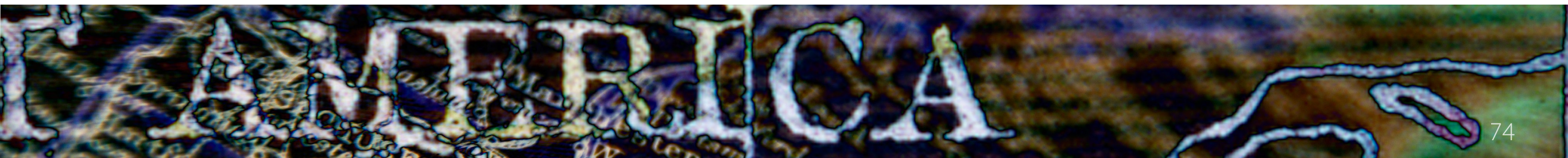
Winter Clock

Now that, he was
almost thinking, was
beautiful, wasn't
it? Thrust across
the pearl-sheened
window some
sketchy twigs and
one heavy, black
snow-doubled
branch, and from
it a glossy crow's
oblique chandelle
away: baton arc,
smoke script, fled

pendulum, a second's,
the hour's famously
ordinary signature,
fleeting route, at
the after-pling of
which he couldn't
really call what he
felt wonder, since
it seemed to have
departed the coast
of a rumored island
and have been sailing
most of a lifetime
toward him.

from *Rumored Islands* (2010)

Robert Farnsworth

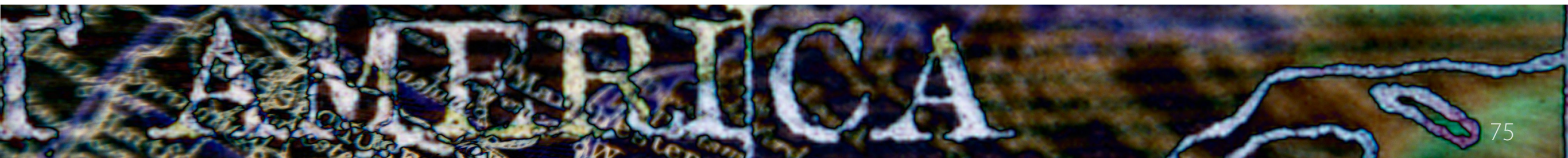


Reloj de Invierno

Ahora eso, estaba él
casi pensando, era
bello, ¿no es
cierto? Tirado a lo largo
de la ventana
de lustre perlado unas
varitas raquílicas y
una pesada, negra
rama doblada por
la nieve y desde ella
el lustroso abdomen
de un cuervo alejándose
en vuelo: arco de batuta,

escritura humosa, escape del
péndulo, de un minuto,
la famosamente ordinaria
firma de la hora,
ruta de escape, ante cual
después del intento él
no podía verdaderamente
nombrar lo que sentía
como admiración, ya que
parecía haber
abandonado la costa
de una isla rumoreada
y haber estado navegando
la mayor parte de una vida
hacia él.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Gebein liegt auf dem Feld

verstreut
und mitten durch die Landschaft
rast
ein Zug,
der Herbst hängt ausgebleicht
in grauen Schwaden vom Himmel
herab;
angeschmortes Laub
haftet kaum noch im Geäst,
gibt den Blick frei
auf unnützes Gerät:
im Arbeiten wie von selbst
für immer erstarrt.

Man fährt geradewegs
in die Schlieren
des Regens.

Längst eingetrocknet
zwischen Schoten und Beeren:
der Hauch von einem Gedanke.
Keiner weiß,
was es ist,
weiß es nicht genau.

Kürbisleuchten
häuft sich auf dem Acker.
Und langsam färbt sich
etwas.

Das Grün sprießt außerhalb der Zeit.

Es fährt sich langsam bei dem Wetter.

Ein mutwilliger Tritt
und der Kürbis liegt
für immer geborsten
im Graben:
ein Schädel, so hohl.

Letzte Fassung, vom 10.07.2002, Kronstadt
from *Verortete Zeiten* (2008)

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu



Bones Lie on the Field

scattered
and through the middle of the landscape
rushes
a train,
the bleached-out autumn hangs
down
in gray clouds from the sky;
scorched foliage
barely clings onto branches,
frees the view
onto useless tools:
forever frozen while working
as if by itself.

One travels straight
into the streaks
of rain.

Long ago dried up
between pea pods and berries:
the hint of a thought.
No one knows
what it is,
knows not exactly.
Pumpkin lights
pile on the field.

And slowly something
gains color.

The greenery sprouts outside of time.

One travels slowly in the weather.

A wanton kick
and the pumpkin lies
forever burst
in a ditch:
a skull, so hollow.

Last version, from 10/7/2002, Kronstadt

Trans. Mariya E. Manahova, Reese Mohrer, Vera Panyushkina



Untitled

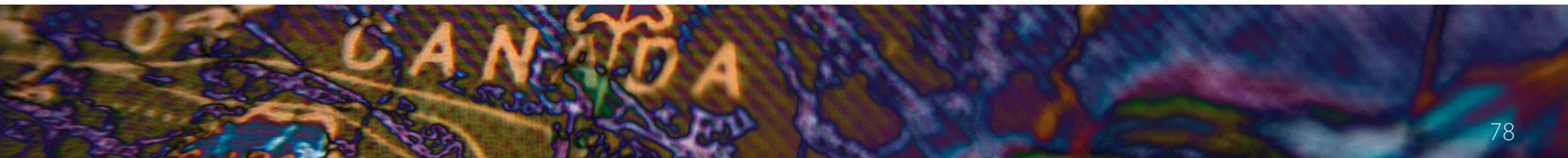
si loin de chez moi pour comprendre qu'il ne peut y avoir autre demeure qu'en moi-même qu'il n'y aura aucun chez-nous tant et aussi longtemps que mon propre crâne sera lui-même assiégé par la peur d'être ce que suis aucun confort sans un corps meurtri pour s'y reposer peu importe ce qu'il y a décrit sur mon passeport ou la légèreté plein la gueule avec laquelle un inconnu saxon se moque gentiment de mon accent de frenchie dans un aéroport ou un autre lorsque lui dis d'où suis il me corrige en m'apprenant que le Québec fait partie du Canada qu'on le veuille ou non il n'y aura au grand jamais autre demeure qu'en moi-même là où de mes mains nues ai patenté jusqu'à m'en faire saigner les doigts une cabane en bois de bouleaux à l'abri des faits

from *Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs du napalm plein l'œil* (2007)

Danny Plourde

so far from my home to understand that there could be no other home than in myself that there will be no home for us as long as my own skull will itself be seized by the fear of being what I am no comfort without a bruised body to rest upon never mind what is written on my passport or a mouthful of lightness with which an unknown anglo-saxon gently pokes fun at my frenchie accent in one airport or another when tell him where am from he corrects me by telling me that Quebec is a part of Canada whether we like it or not there will never ever be another home than in myself there where my naked hands mended until my fingers bled a cabin made of birch wood sheltered from facts

Trans. Olivia DaDalt



The Paris Dirt

*mai, France 1994
for maman*

The Paris Dirt
and
Cuban cigarellas
arrived
in the yellow postal
box
from France
marked for douane
"Parfum."

(It all depends
on what
you
consider——
aroma.)

Pinkish, chaulky
dirt from
under the Tour
Eiffel
taken in an almost
midnight sun.
To be spread
like the
ashes of
memory on her grave.

Planted like seed
to sow more
France-et-Maine
piled on
generation
after
generation
in payment
for
her
Jean Patou
Vogue Paris Original
haute couture
she
sewed for me.



I haul Paris
home, graveside
to her
so she can say:
"I never went to Paris,
but that never stopped
it
from
coming to me."

Rhea Côté Robbins

My Mother's Freedom

My line of
freedom
is so long
I can sit
in a
restaurant
with two men
to talk
or joke
or laugh.
My mother
would have
landed in her
grave
if she only
thought
of such a thing
as freedom.
I buy the men lunch.

4/25/94

Rhea Côté Robbins



Временная смерть

Два ритмических упражнения

К стертой от употребления конструкции «безвременная смерть» нет антонима. Единственное, что приходит в голову—временная смерть.

После смерти, если будет что-н[и] б[удь], и захотите, то мы встретимся.

1.

Вчера закончилась война
И унесла с собой она
Толпу рассеянных людей
Слизнула с крыш и площадей.
Они побудут у неё,
Как будто бы, в плену,
“А после в новое жильё
Их,—говорит—верну.”

И будет новь почти-что старь,
На том же месте нервный царь
И девочка в больших очках
С соплюшками на кулачках
Идёт к Бассейной (где потом
Падёт с разбитым животом)

Идёт к Бассейной вдоль рядов
Старушек-нищенок в цвету
И узнаёт запавших ртов
И гордых платиц срамоту.

В.Д. Лисички, астры, бичева—
Почём, почём, всё нипочём
Я узнаю тебя, вдова,

О.А.-Г. С культёю нежною, с плечом,
Напоминающим крыло—

Я здесь была была была
Меня отсюда унесло
С толпой улыбчивых гуляк,
Потом—пустырь или овраг
И тел неловких теснота
И сладостный в груди
Удар—теперь я та, я та

—кем буду впереди.

Вернусь—и стану выбирать,
С кем мне играть и не играть,
Рукою щёку подпирать,
Сквозь сумерки смотреть,
С кем вместе снова умирать
И снова умереть.



2.

Я завела себе шринка,
Чтоб наблюдать себя им.
Вот—новый мой хозяин.
Безвиден, но забавен.
Слегка дрожит щека
Его от жалкой речи
Моей при каждой встрече.

И спрашивает: "Как дела? Какие времена?"
Я говорю "Да так дела. Сякие времена.
Зато—закончилась война,
Вот только жаль, взяла она
Себе с собою тьму людей,
Страхнув с мостов и площадей.
И среди них и среди них—
Меня моё меня моих.
Несёт меня лиса
За дальние леса
За высокие горы
За тумбочки, шторы,
Шкафы, торшеры,—
В волшебные пещеры."

Тут поперхнётся Доктор Б.
"Ну что ж ты вечно о себе,
Всегда одно и то же..."
А я ему—"Но что же
Сказать ещё—пейзаж, абстракт,
Морозный город весь в кострах,
Сокровища духа,
Понос золотуха.
Вдовица с котелком
Нависла над костерком.
Трещит её сердце
согреться согреться

Я, доктор, вроде—рядом с ней,
Возможно, я—она,
Мне так становится ясней
Какие времена.

Мне время—говорить себя
Чужому старику,
А Вам, то хмурясь, то сопя
Держать мою тоску
Движением брезгливым
Как, скажем, руку, взрывом
Оторванную.

Polina Barskova



Temporary Death

Two Rhythmical Exercises

There's no antonym for the construction "untimely death." The only one which comes to my mind is temporary death

We will meet if there's something after death and you would like to.

1.

Yesterday the war ended
Taking with it
Crowds of absent-minded people
Clearing rooftops and squares.
They will give in to it
As if in captivity
"Thereafter in the new dwelling
They'll—it speaks—return."

And be anew the almost old
At the same place was a jittery czar
And a girl with large glasses
Sobbed and with a runny nose
Walks to Basseinaya (where then
She falls with a splintered tummy).

Walks to Basseinaya along the rows
Of old hags in bloom
To find sunken mouths
And shamefully pound dresses.

V.D. Chanterelles, asters, lashes—
How, how much it doesn't matter.
I found you, widow

O.A.-G. With a stump, with shoulder
Reminiscing of a wing—

Here I was was was
I was swept away
With a crowd of smiling revelers
And thereafter—emptiness or ravine
And with the odd body tightness
And with the sweetness in her chest
All of a sudden—I am, I am

—someone to look forward to.

I'll return—and start to choose
Whom to play and not to play
Prop my cheek,
Look through the twilight
With whom to die again
And die anew.



2.

I've acquired illness,
To observe myself with the help of it.
Here's my new master.
Plain, but funny
His cheek shivers a little
Because of my speech
Every time we meet.

He asks: "How're things? How are the times?"
I say: "Well, so-and-so. Difficult times.
Anyway, the war ended,
But it's a shame, it took to it with it
A bunch of people
Having shaken off from bridges and squares.
And among them among them
Me my me mine.
A fox is carrying me
Behind far-away woods
Behind high mountains
Behind cupboards, curtains,
Wardrobes, lamps,—
Into magic caves."

Here Doctor B. chokes,
"Well, why are you always talking of yourself,
All the same every time..."
I say: "But what else
I can say—a landscape, abstract,
A frosty city with fire all around,
The heritage of spirit,
One thing or another.
A widow with a pot
Has stuck out over a fire.
Her heart is cracking
To get warm to get warm

I, Doctor, am with her,
Perhaps I am her,
It is now clear for me
The times we are living in.

It's time for me to speak myself
To a strange old man,
It's time for you
To hold frowning and panting
My depression with a scornful movement
As a hand scattered by an
Explosion.

Trans. Cosmin Ghita, Vera Panushkina, Marina Loginova



Las velas

Una vela blanca se retuerce en la trompa del oro y el filigrana.

La palabra es más fina que las partículas del oro y la piedra.

Una vela es una sílaba que humea en mis papeles amarillos. Su flama cambia la ruta de mi pensamiento.

Las velas son grutas de cera que traen toda la fe y la duda consigo.

Su flama es la señal del viento controlado, la serenidad de una mesa, la situación incómoda de una vieja silla de madera iluminada levemente.

Una vela blanca para encender la noche de los ciegos.

Cada noche hay una vela blanca que me reclama, una palabra que se derrite como la cera y me derrama.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

The Candles

A white candle twists in the stalk of gold and fligree.

Words are finer than particles of gold or stone.

A candle is a syllable that smolders on my yellowed pages. Its flame alters the course of my thoughts.

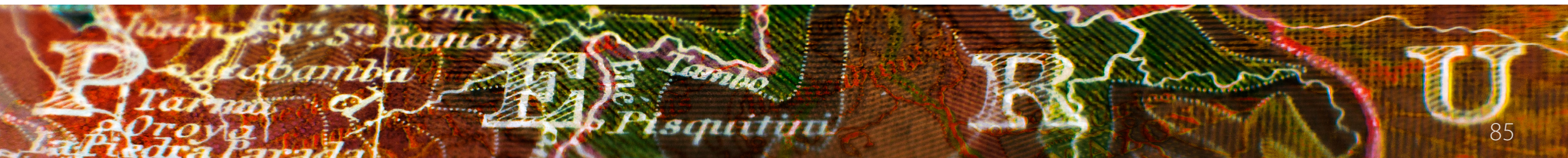
Candles are waxen grottos that hold within them all faith and doubt.

Their flame is the sign of the restrained wind, the serenity of a table, the discomfort of an old wooden chair, gently illuminated.

A white candle to brighten the night of the blind.

Each night a white candle claims me, a word that melts like wax and spills me.

Trans. Alexa Hiley



ある日の小鳥

あなたの名を 呼んでみる

小鳥の さえずりのように 呼んでみる

あっ！ 空間が ひろがった

Naomi Otsubo

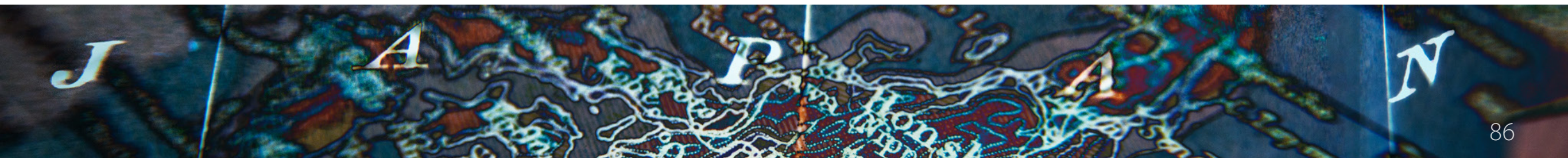
A Small Bird on a Certain Day

I try
calling your name

I try calling it
the way
a small bird sings

Ah! space has expanded around me

Trans. Sarah Strong



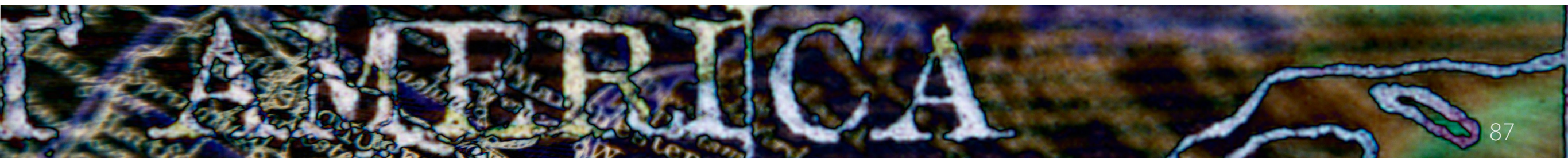
Vagrancy

From an American early autumn evening
flung back into tomorrow's afternoon,
I sat a while in the car park, smoking
over a map, then for practice drove west
to a neglected town, where transatlantic
flying boats set down seventy years ago,
and on the silent pier beside their museum,
imagined back the long white scuds of their
landings. No one else otherwise like me
would have come here. So now that no one
could take my peculiar solitude from me,
I set out, drawn by the intuition that my
heart would feel welcome on the grounds
of some enduring verse I first read forty
years ago. Intimation, almost invitation—
I felt bound to honor, no, not answer, honor.
Even knowing the big house was a ruin.
Under steep September sky: sea-gray,
lavender, blue, and quartz, I shouldered
a bag, and set off into the Seven Woods
toward the lough, not expecting swans—
all flown, long flown, as that weary spell
of a poem supposed they would be.
But on those woodland paths I made a loop

of several miles, until I'd walked myself
quite out of the life I'd yesterday begun
to shed in the airport lounge. The pleasure
was guilty, but pleasure it was, piercing
as music I wished never to end, a real
dépaysement, an achieved disappearance,
a belonging more profound for its complete
fictitiousness, and I lay down in these
beneath a lime tree in Lady Gregory's garden,
to sleep a just sleep, as in the cherished
crypt of a page. Invisible, anonymous—
who could I fail now? My sleep was not
my own; who was going to wake me?
Nobody I knew knew where I was, knew
that I was this contented tramp dozing
in September shade in a mildly famous garden.
His hour of sleep would change me,
just enough to make the next weeks happen
not exactly to me, but exactly. I woke
beneath the gaze of six red deer.

from *Rumored Islands* (2010)

Robert Farnsworth

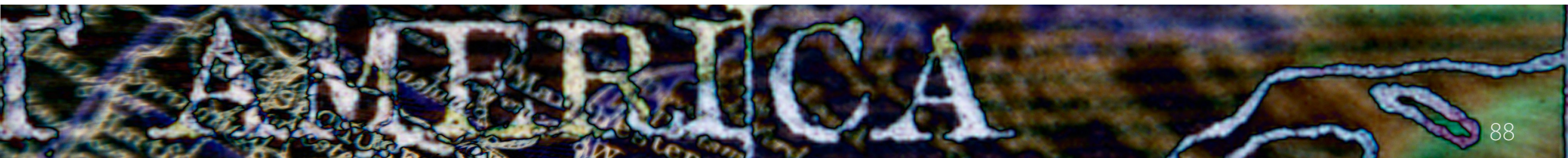


Vagancia

Desde una noche americana a principios de otoño
arrojada hacia el pretérito de la tarde de mañana,
me senté un rato en el estacionamiento, fumando
sobre un mapa, después para practicar manejé hacia el oeste
a un pueblo abandonado, donde volantes barcos
transatlánticos se establecieron setenta años atrás,
y en el silencioso muelle al lado de su museo,
imaginé el pasado de las blancas oleadas largas
de su aterrizaje. Nadie más que otro como yo
hubiese venido aquí. Así que ahora que nadie
podría quitarme mi peculiar soledad,
me dispuse, atraído por la intuición de que mi
corazón se sentiría bienvenido, basándome
en algún verso perdurable leído por primera vez
cuarenta años atrás. Presentimiento, casi una invitación—
que me sentí obligado a honrar, no, no responder, honrar.
Aún sabiendo que la casa grande estaba en ruinas.
Bajo el hondo cielo de septiembre: grisáceo-marítimo,
lavanda, azul, y cuarzo, me tiré un bolsón
al hombro, y me adentré en los Seven Woods
hacia el lago, sin la esperanza de ver cisnes—
habiendo volado, hacía tiempo, tal como aquel trillado hechizo
de poema supuso hubiesen hecho.
Pero en aquellos senderos boscosos di una vuelta

de varias millas, hasta que había caminado
dejando atrás la vida que ayer en la sala del aeropuerto
había empezado a desechar. El placer
era pecaminoso, pero era placer, desgarrador
como música que quisiera nunca terminase, un verdadero
dépaysement, una desaparición alcanzada,
un pertenecer más profundo por ser completamente
ficticio, y me tiré sobre estos
bajo un árbol limero en el jardín de Lady Gregory,
para dormir un sueño justificado, como en la apreciada
cripta de una página. Invisible, anónima—
¿a quién podría fallarle ahora? Mi sueño no era
propiamente mío; ¿quién me despertaría?
Nadie a quien conocía sabía dónde estaba, sabía
que yo era este vagabundo contento dormitando
en la sombra de septiembre en un jardín ligeramente famoso.
Su hora de soñar me cambiaría,
justo lo suficiente para que las próximas semanas no me sucedieran
a mí propiamente tal, sino que exactamente. Me desperté
bajo la mirada de seis venados rojos.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Para encontrar estorninos

Bajo el musgo en el olivo
te espera la sierpe
blanca.

Cuélgatela del cuello,
siéntela entre las marañas;
sigue las pistas
moradas
que descifran sus escamas.

Te llevarán a una noche
traviesa de lunas
claras.

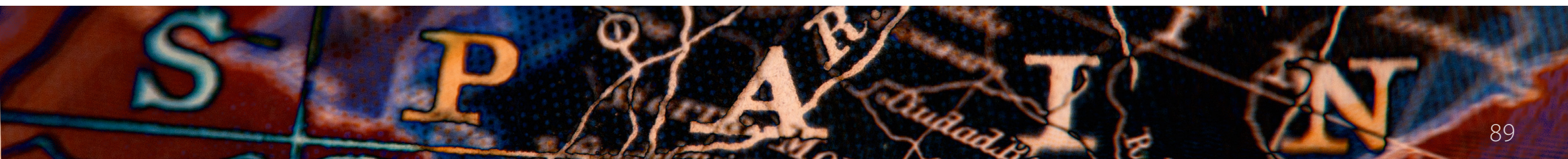
Escoge la más azul,
es la que menos engaña.

Busca en ella el vellocino,
una lombriz encarnada,
lista para ser escoria
que lleve luz
a tus alas.

Adéntrate
en los abismos de la colmena
hechizada.

La reina te está esperando
con néctar entre las
patas.

Francisca López



To Find Starlings

Underneath the moss on the olive tree
the white snake waits
for you.

Hang her round your neck,
feel her among the thicket;
follow the purple
clues
that her scales decode.

They'll take you to
a mischievous night
of translucent moons.

Choose the brightest,
it's the least deceptive.

Search in her the fleece,
a flesh-covered earthworm,
ready to be scoria
to take light
to your wings.

Bore into
the abyss of the enchanted
beehives.

For you the queen is waiting
with nectar on her
legs.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Ausblick

another glimpse out of the window of a train

Kühe
lagern am Rande
des Friedhofs,
wiederkäuen
Steinkreuze,
schwarze Lettern,
schlingen Verblasstes
hinunter,
speien Lab und
Knochenstaub aus.

zuerst notiert im Zug aus Klausenburg nach K. am 27.05.09; bearbeitet am 8.07.09 in K.

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Bones Lie on the Field

another glimpse out of the window of a train

Cows
camp at the edge
of the cemetery,
ruminating
stone crosses,
black letters,
gobble faded things
down,
disgorge rennet and
bone-dust.

First written on a train from Klausenburg to K. on 5/27/09; edited on 7/8/09 in K.

Trans. Andrew Decker, Alexandra Millström



異次元

笑うと
みんな 花になる

風がながれ
いっせいに上を向いて
そのまんま 消える

みんな みんな 消える

ただ 鼓動だけが
時空にとどまって
波を描きつづけている

Naomi Otsubo

The Different Dimension

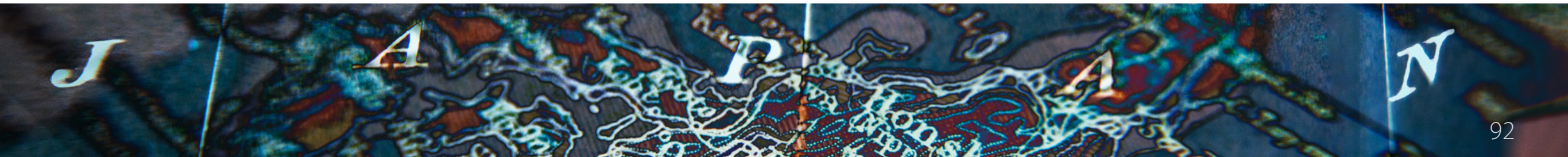
We laugh
and everyone turns into blossoms

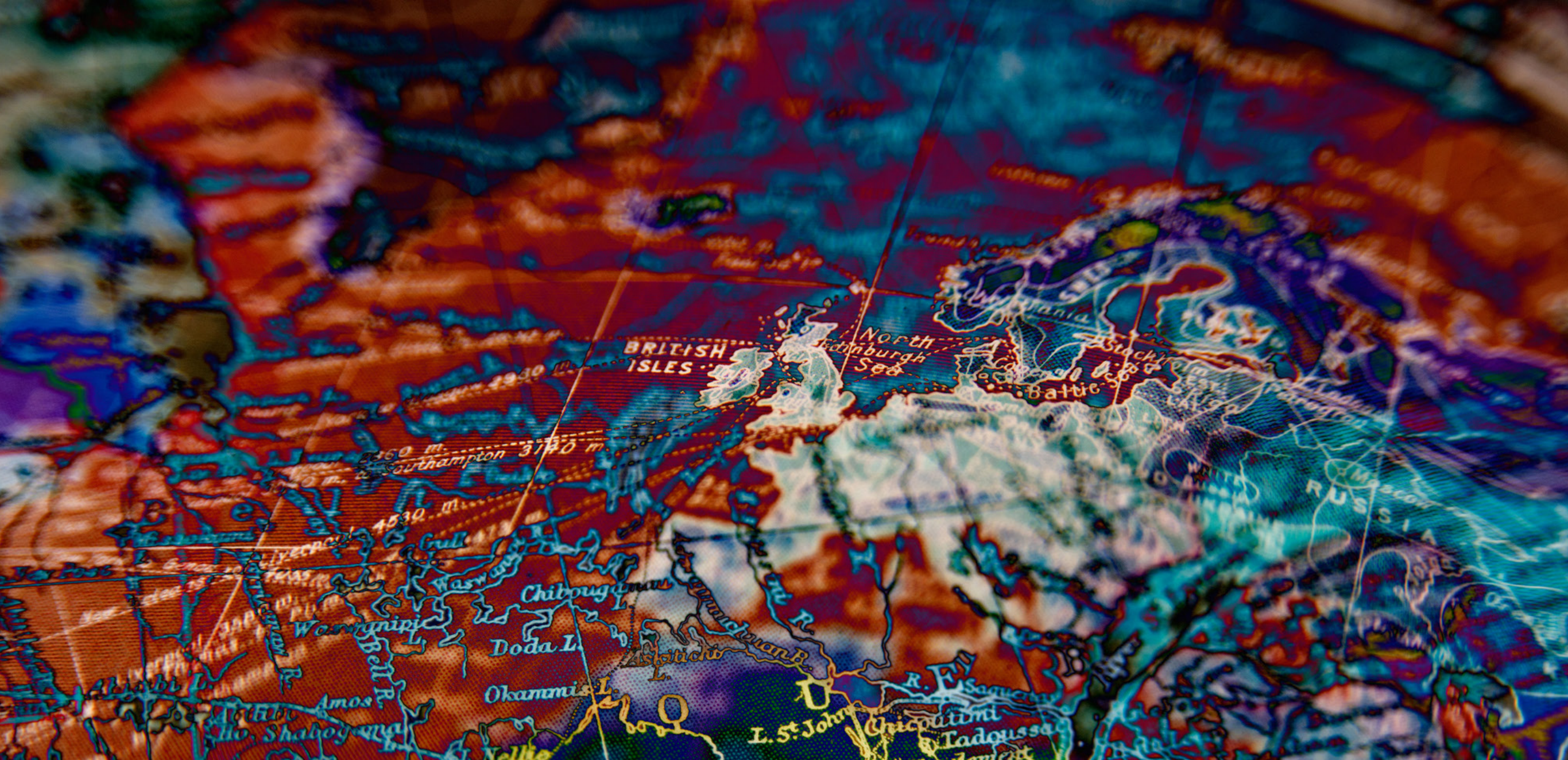
The wind flows,
we all look up as one
and in that state we disappear

everyone everyone disappears

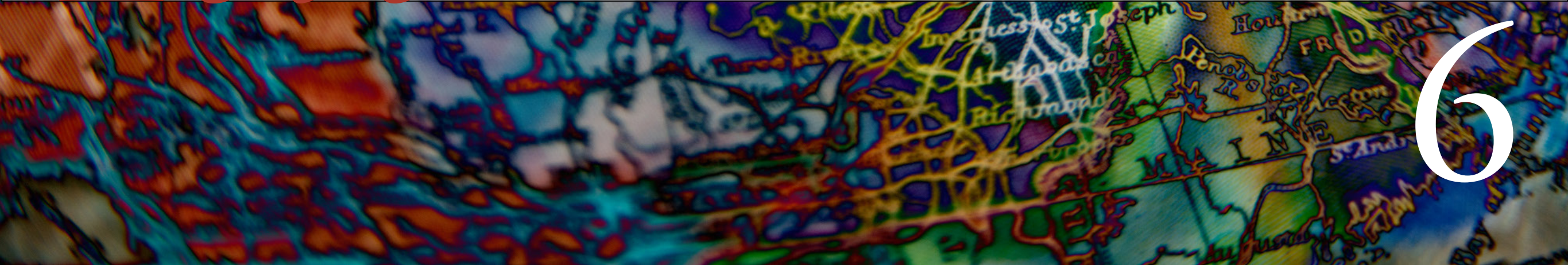
only our heartbeats
remain behind in spacetime
continuing to pulse

Trans. Sarah Strong





Love



Liebesgedicht

Du und ich:
Wir schreiben ein Gedicht.
Danach löschen wir

eine Zeile daraus.

Was bleibt,
ist ein verlorener Satz.

Der Satz bin ich.

(K., 6.08.2007)

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Love Poem

You and I:
We write a poem.
Then we erase

a line from it.

What remains,
is one forlorn sentence.

The sentence am I.

(K., 8/6/2007)

Trans. Andrew Decker, Mariya E. Manahova, Vera Panyushkina



Un pino me habla de la lluvia

Para mi hijo Christian Miguel

La bicicleta de mi hijo rueda con el universo. Es sábado y paseamos por la calle llena de pinos y enebros delgados que se despliegan por toda la ciudad.

El sol cae en nuestros ojos por la cuesta mientras volamos con el aire seco del desierto y los piñones ruedan por las calles con el viento. El sol baja a las seis de la tarde en el invierno, y se va escondiendo por los cerros que se enrojecen con su sombra.

Los ojos de mi hijo brillan como perlas y me dicen algo inexplicable. Las ruedas de la bicicleta mueven el mundo, muestran su agilidad y la gravedad del aire.

El timbre se escucha como la buena nueva de la mañana: sus anillos de metal alegran la cuadra y forman ondas que trepan con los pinos hasta el cielo.

Miguel Ángel Zapata

A Pine Tree Tells Me of the Rain

For My Son Christian Miguel

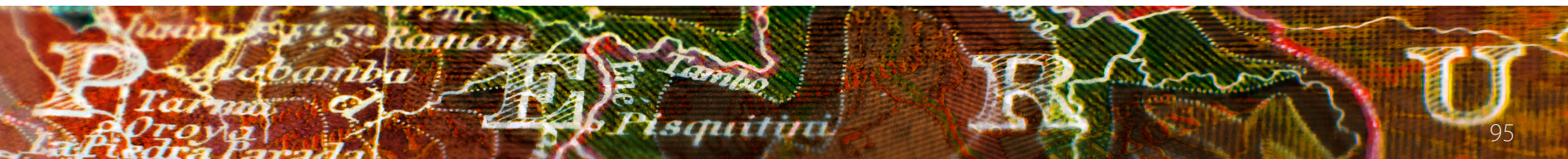
My son's bicycle rolls with the universe. It's Saturday and we wander through the street lined with pine trees and slender junipers that emerge throughout the city.

The sun falls over the hill and into our eyes while we are carried by the dry desert air and the pine cones roll through the streets with the wind. The sun sets at six in the evening during winter, and hides away behind the hills that redden with its shadow.

My son's eyes gleam like pearls and tell me something unexplainable. The wheels of the bicycle move the world, showing their agility and the intensity of the air.

The bell is heard like good news in the morning: its metal rings enliven the block and form waves that climb with the pines up to heaven.

Trans. Jake Kaplove



恋人たちの朝食

ふたりとも
パンの耳が すきだけど
半分ずつ わけあって
とても うれしい

こんな気持
すべての人に もてたなら

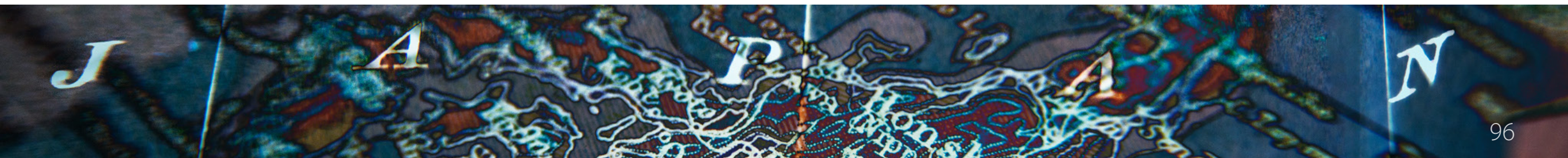
Naomi Otsubo

The Lovers' Breakfast

For bread,
both of us like the heel
but as I share it half a piece each
it is pure joy I feel not loss

If only I could
have such emotions toward everyone in the world

Trans. Sarah Strong



Deshielo

estelas de espuma
azúcar hollada
se amansa el remolino
frente a mis ojos

un pájaro carpintero rompe el silencio

ramas desnudas
dibujan abstracciones en rojo,
resplandor de un fuego lejano

me adentro en el laberinto,
hundo los pies en el ritmo de la espuma,
siento los dedos buscar, los bronquios reír

un árbol se despereza y la luz me invade
notas y palabras se citan bajo los párpados
canto

recuerdo versos eternamente olvidados
recreo sonidos desconocidos
miro a lo alto, a lo lejos, a lo inmediato
me reflejan las piedras, el sonido, los olores
interpuestos entre la lengua y el infinito

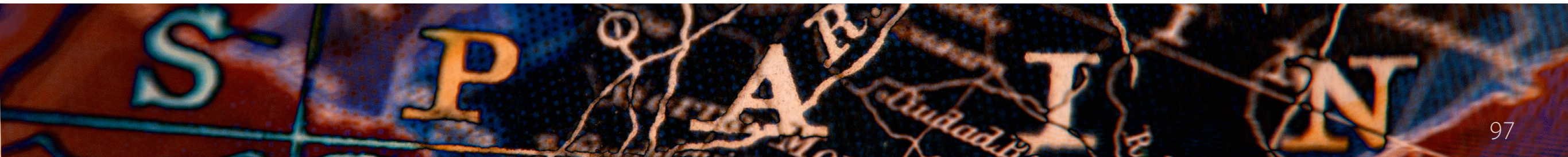
en el ombligo

la brisa se desvía de su curso
se pierde en los rincones de mi piel
me crecen margaritas entre los dientes
helechos en la garganta
siento el rumor de las olas
palpo el verde de los pinos
huelo el poder de las rocas

entro y salgo del naranjo en flor,
de los caminos que se bifurcan,
de la identidad del grupo,
del amor, la libertad y las tormentas
canto

y el castillo no tiene murallas;
dos torreones ausentes
señalan
el aposento de Dios.

Francisca López



Thaw

the froth's wake
muddy sugar
the eddy subsides
before my eyes

a woodpecker breaks the silence

nude branches
draw abstractions in red,
the glow of a distant fire

I pierce the labyrinth,
submerge my feet in the rhythm of the foam
I feel the toes seeking, the bronchi laughing

a tree stretches and the light invades me
notes and lyrics meet beneath the eyelids
I sing

I recollect verses forever forgotten
recreate sounds unknown
I look above, to the distance, nearby
the stones reflect me, the sound, the fragrances
intervening between the tongue and the infinite

in the navel

the breeze changes course
it gets lost in the hollows of my skin
margaritas grow between my teeth
wild weeds in the throat
I feel the rumor of the waves
touch the green of the pines
smell the power of the rocks

I go in and out of the orange tree in bloom,
of the forking paths,
of the group's identity,
of love, freedom, and storms
I sing

and the castle lacks walls;
two missing towers
point towards
God's abode.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Ein Gleiches

für Yorick

Etwas kündigt sich an:
Die Schuhe deiner Schritte,
die Schnüre deiner Schuhe,
der Saum deiner Hosen,
die Strähne deines Haares.
An die Kürze deiner Ärmel
wage ich nicht zu denken.

Reschitza, 19.04.2008

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

The Same

for Yorick

Something announces itself:
The shoes of your steps,
the strings of your shoes,
the seam of your pants,
the strand of your hair.
Of the shortness of your sleeves
dare I not think.

Reschitza, 4/19/2008

Trans. Dana Ellis, H. Fuller Henriques IV



Beth

Six men carried
the woman
into her house
paralyzed
by cancer
coursing her spine.

Her babies playing jokes
ringing the
door bell.

Childish play screams
little shoes
small tripping,

skipping feet.

Miniature man
and woman
twenty years hence
when she's
a breath
of air in the lives
to those she gave life—
A portal from
heaven.

These children of hers
will look back
at us
with her eyes
and
a graceful flick
of hands.

Rhea Côté Robbins

The Release

The release is an
echoed valley
A sound come upon
itself
while traveling
back
to the bell
that rang.
Seventy times Seven
The math of
forgiveness.



Love as a plow
releases
the earth of its
accumulates.
Days upon days upon days
of toil.
A tiny seed laid to
rest.
In the newly released
ground
learns its lesson
of growth.

Rhea Côté Robbins

Bedroom Door, Painted White

finger prints
on the
bedroom
door,
painted white
speaks
not of dirt
but of
petition.
Good nights
good-byes
hellos.
Maman,
are you in
there?
Can I come in?

3/15/98

Rhea Côté Robbins



Untitled

1.

rogne au ventre lèvres usées
des visages à chaque aurore
détruits par l'effort
d'une dernière grimace

une vie morte
à meubler des regards mous
en râlant sur les chemins de la job

comme on longe
d'un bord ou de l'autre
des barbelés de conscience

2.

ma tempe tremble sur l'oreiller
d'une main défaite cherche encore
dans chaque pli du lit trop double
ton corps
un copeau de mémoire

le mot seul à lui seul
et cette manière de dire
je t'aime

salang-hae-yo

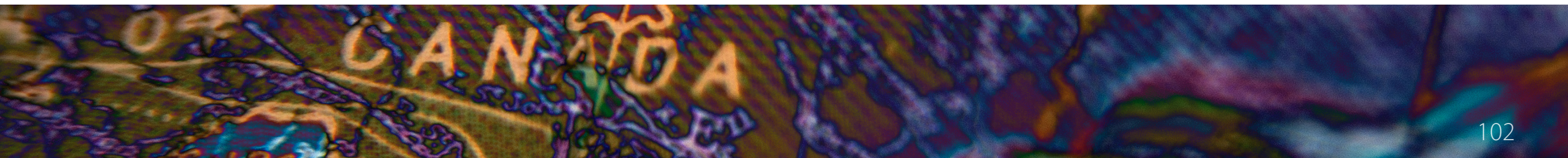
3.

l'avion t'as volée
un matin trop calme

sans me retourner
ai pleuré
ravalé mes larmes
ce terrible silence

tu n'étais déjà
plus qu'une absence

suis sorti de l'aéroport
l'épaule tombante
comme on quitte pour la première fois
un cimetière sans fleurs



dehors la violence du retour
à travers une ville dépeuplée

à peine mon chagrin déposé sur la portière
le chauffeur du taxi exigeait déjà
son pourboire

4.

plus pure qu'un filet d'eau sur l'hymen
tu m'as suivi l'abandon aux lèvres
jusque dans ma cellule
Montréal Centre-Sud

personne ne pouvait nous entendre
nous murmurions
des mots d'or

peu importe la langue
elles sont toutes les mêmes
lorsqu'elles tournent ensemble

on s'est à peine compris
mais on s'en foutait
rien ne pressait

du sang sur les cuisses
nous habitions le temps
dans toute sa lenteur

5.

tu as su m'aimer
me serrer entre tes seins
sans comprendre une traître ligne
de ce qu'avais pu écrire

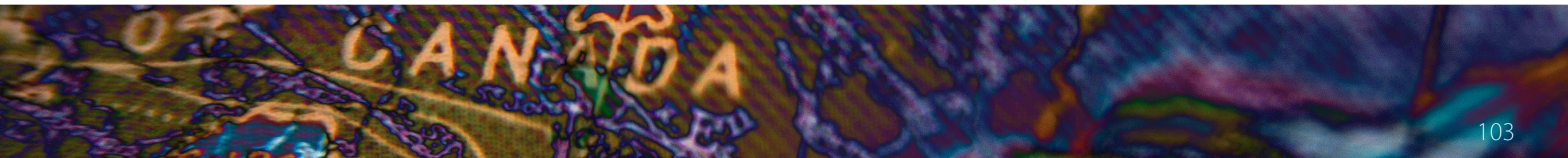
tout ça pour toi
ce n'était pas l'essentiel

des mots
ce ne seront jamais
que des mots

salang-hae-yo

from Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs du napalm plein l'œil (2007)

Danny Plourde



Untitled

1.

wasted lips in the angered belly
faces at each dawn
destroyed by every effort
of a last wince

a dead life
to furnish with soft looks
grumbling about the ways of the job

as one follows
from one side or the other
barbed wire of consciousness

2.

my temple trembles on the pillow
with an undone hand still looking
in each fold of a bed too full
your body
a chip of memory

the lone word to him only
and this way of saying
/ love you

salang-hae-yo

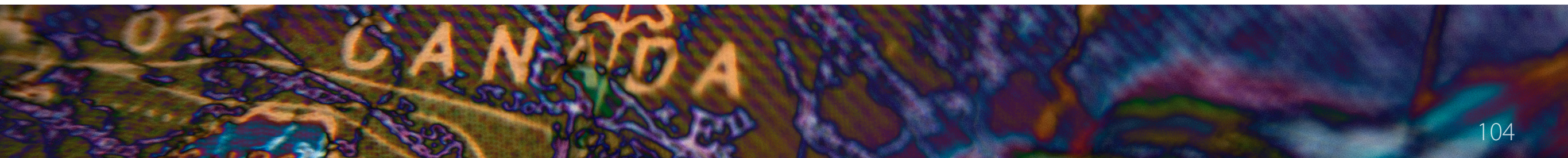
3.

the plane stole you
a morning too calm

without looking back
cried

swallowed my tears
this terrible silence

you weren't already
more than an absence
left the airport
shoulder drooping
as we leave for the first time
a cemetery without flowers



outside the violence of the return
through an unpopulated city

barely had I dumped my sorrows at the door
the taxi driver already demanded
his tip

4.

more pure than a trickle of water on the hymen
you followed me with abandon on your lips
right into my cell
Montréal Central-South

no one could hear us
we whispered
golden words

no matter the language
they're all the same
when they roll together

we hardly understood each other
but we didn't care
there was no hurry

blood on thighs
we dwelled in the moment
in all of its slowness

5.

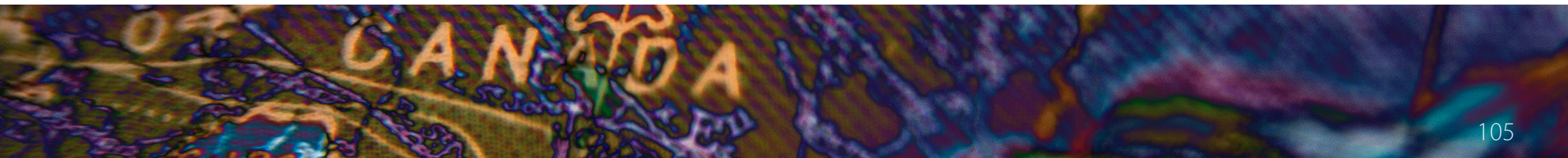
you knew to love me
to hold me between your breasts
without understanding a single line
of what [I] could write

all that for you
that was not essential

words
will only ever be
just words

salang-hae-yo

Trans. Jeffrey Berry, Amanda Solch, Amrit Sridhar



Sargento Terrier

En memoria de un gran Can

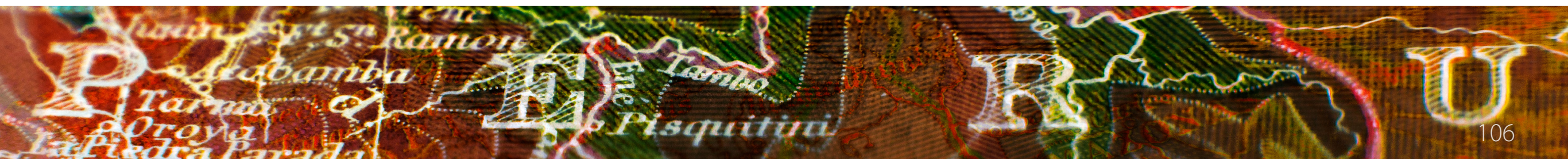
El jueves pasado mi perro murió atropellado por un carro negro. En realidad era el perro de mi hijo, pero Sargento era de toda la familia, incluyendo a la gorda Penny, su amiga de tanto tiempo. Lo cierto es que ese maldito día el viento soplaba como un huracán y la puerta del jardín cedió y se abrió de par en par. Sargento no estaba acostumbrado a salir solo a la calle, pero siempre sintió curiosidad por merodear las cuadras de mi barrio. Él sabía que era más veloz que un gato. Era un perro explorador, viajero incansable, y el cazador más temido por los pájaros.

Salí de pronto en busca de mi perro. Di la vuelta a la esquina corriendo, todas las cercas y los postigos estaban abiertos. El viento violento no me dejaba caminar. Finalmente doblé en la esquina de la avenida y fui en dirección al colegio. No había nadie. Regresé a casa y monté en mi bicicleta para salir a buscarlo. En ese momento pensé en las ventanas del mundo y quise abrazarlas a todas, y recordar mi primera ventana frente al mar. Tenía que subirme en una silla para mirar el polvo cubriendo las casas a lo lejos. A veces la luna y el cielo parecían un enorme mar.

También vi a Sargento o Sargy (como le decían mis hijos) trepado en la ventana de la casa, moviendo su colita, o alegre en la ventana de mi carro azul, con su lengua afuera, bostezando de felicidad. Volví a dar varias vueltas y el viento no me respondía. Pasaron dos horas y recibimos una llamada telefónica del veterinario del barrio “Lo siento mucho”—me dijo—“su perro está agonizando, y no hay nada que podamos hacer.”

Lo encontraron tirado en una vereda, el mayor daño había sido en la cabeza. El gran filósofo Sargento se estaba yendo a escarbar otras arenas, y a recordarse que tenía alma, y que alguna vez se deleitó con Mozart, y que nunca tuvo memoria, por eso fue feliz.

Miguel Ángel Zapata



Sargent the Terrier

In memory of a great Dog

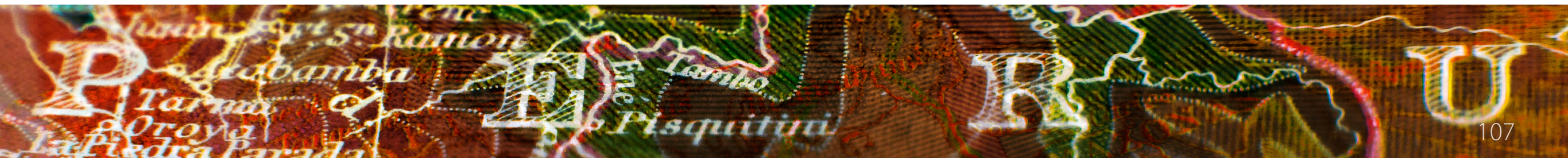
Last Thursday, my dog was killed by a black car. Actually, he was my son's dog, but Sargent belonged to the whole family, even to fat Penny, a long-time friend. The truth is that on that cursed day the wind was blowing like in a hurricane and the door to the garden gave in and opened wide. Sargent wasn't used to being out alone on the street, but he always felt a curiosity towards prowling the blocks of my neighborhood. He knew that he was faster than a cat. He was an explorer, an untiring voyager, and the hunter most feared by the birds.

I left quickly in search of my dog. I turned the corner running, all of the gates and shutters were open. The violent wind would not let me walk. Finally I turned at the corner of the avenue and went towards the school. No one was there. I returned home and rode my bike in search of him. At that moment I thought about the windows of the world and I wanted to hug them all, and to remember my first window to the sea. I had to climb onto a chair to look at the dust covering the houses in the distance. Sometimes the moon and the sky seemed like an enormous sea.

I also saw my dog Sargent or Sargy (as my children called him) on the window of my house, tail wagging, or content in the window of my blue car, tongue wagging, yawning with happiness. I went around the block several more times and the wind didn't answer me. Two hours passed and we received a phone call from the local veterinarian. "I'm so sorry," he said, "your dog is dying, and there is nothing we can do."

They found him lying on the sidewalk, the worst of the injuries were on his head. The great philosopher Sargent was going to dig in other sands, and to remember that he had a soul, and that one time he enjoyed Mozart, and that he never had memory, for that reason he was happy.

Trans. Samantha Forrest



БЕЗЫМЯННАЯ ЛЮБОВЬ

Лиле К, учёной красавице

Юрий Николаевич Тынянов,
Прискакал из города туманов,
Ржавых лиц и блеклых площадей

В логово рыгающего зверя.
Как на печке прикатил емеля
В ложи государственных блядей.

Тут из круга вышла золотая,
Как больная осень доцветая,
Нежной вонью плесени маня,

Обнажила маленькое тело
И спокойным голосом велела
Формалисту—выбери меня.

Изо всех ответов и соблазнов
Нет волшебней самых безобразных.
Кто бы мог подумать! Он не мог.

Умница, ханжа, остряк, калека,
Свой шмоток чудовищного века
Так оберегал. Но хищный Б-г

Именно его, стерильней мыши
Павлова и подложил поближе
К облачённой в красное жене,
Чтобы наглотался сладкой жижи.

Сладко, вязко чувствовать паденье.
Кто ты, дева? "Я-то? Привиденье,
Между ног моих играет дух,

Собственно, словесности, которой
Ты и поклоняешься, мой хворый.
Подойди, покуда не протух

Голос твой в пустых библиотеках—
Я ищу помпезных, праздных, едких
Мышц, волос, артерий, рук-ли-губ.

Я должна смешать себя с тобою,
Я должна смешать тебя с толпою.
Булошник, палач и лесоруб
Все со мною пили и гуляли."



Золотые пальцы ковыряли
Сморщенное тельце и поутру
Шёл он на вокзал, стирая пудру
Рисовую—послевкусье крали—
С тёмного бесплодного лица.

Всё для нас межстрочное зиянье,
Голых букв бессрочное сиянье.
Есть у революции начало.
Нет у революции конца.

Юрий Николаевич Тынянов,
Лилипут, бегущий великанов,
Керубино в продраном шелку,
Мушка под янтарною лавиной,
Львиный рык и гул перепелиный.
Что случится на твоём веку?

Повезут тебя, как грибоеда,
Повлекут тебя, как Ганимеда,
Золотые крылышки губя.

Век тобой закусит словно рыбкой
И с щербатой лилиной улыбкой
Выплюнет в грядущее тебя.

Чтоб не забывали: в чёрном, в чёрном,
Можно быть и точным, и проворным,
Притворяться точкой и тире,
Но вполне остаться непокорным
Великанам в дикой их игре
Невозможно.

Темнокрылые бляди на бостонском автовокзале
Как ладьи или лучше как пёстрые под парусами
Острогрудые яхточки в жирной воде Сен-Мало

Впрочем это сравненье как яркая тряпка мало
И трещит по бедру

Я блуждаю меж вас боевого желанья сосуды
Лжевместилища желчи
Руины отвесные груды городской пустоты
Утешения краткого трюмы
Абсолютно открыты закрыты прозрачны угрюмы

Я блуждаю меж вас словно в райском саду обезьянка
Как по плоти гниющей—весёлая яркая ранка
Я блуждаю как доллар, что выброшен щёлочкой банко—
Мата на землю для разных волшебных трансакций.



Я иду со свиданья средь влажных огромных акаций
И подобных им душенек—чёрных осенних и голых
Я иду улыбаясь куря ковыряясь в глаголах

Мой глагол для тебя—уходить
Чем милее нужнее

Тем пространство для нас растопырено круче нежнее
Мой глагол отнимать отрицать и лишь долею звука
Утверждать как черна как влажна как огромна разлука
Как забвенье развёрнуто выгнуто дивной спиною

Я иду улыбаясь и ты невидимка со мною
То есть в позе собачьей Орфей-Эвридика а ну-тка
Обернуться не мочь
А иначе: минутка—
Взрыв за ним слепота и отсутствие милого тела.

Наказание неадекватно проступку.
Я только хотела
Видеть слышать на фоне закатного варева в раме
Как твой голос лежал словно дивная шлюха меж нами
Улыбаясь сверкая бодлеровской чёрной спиною
Как твой голос как взрыв или солнце стоял предо мною.

Понимаешь—да поздно.
Опять понимаешь—да рано.
Обладание нами навозная яркая яма,
Где кишат уплотнения памяти. Всё здесь неявно.
Понимаешь и куришь и думаешь: всё же забавно.

Привокзальная шлюшка кивает в лицо зажигалкой
Эта ночь эта сцена с её упрощённой и жалкой
Декорацией всё же моя как ничто остальное
Разве только сердечко твоё заводное стальное

Polina Barskova



A Nameless Love

To Lilia K, a learned beauty

Yuri Nikolaevich Tynyanov,
Has ridden from the city of fogs
Rusty faces and pale squares

To the den of the belching animal.
As Emelya had arrived on his stove
To the stalls of state whores.

A gilded one left the circle
As an ill-faded autumn,
Alluring by a scent of mold,

She unveiled her small body
And in a calm voice told
The formalist—choose me.

Amidst all the answers and snares
The loathsome are bewitching.
What a thought! Wasn't his.

Smart, self-righteous, witty, crippled,
Tended to his own rules in
The appalling century. But predacious G-d

Him, more frigid than
Pavlov's mouse, placed closer
To a woman dressed in red,
To make him swallow sweet goo.

Sweet, viscous feeling a drop.
Who are you, Maiden? "Who, me? A ghost,
Between my thighs is playing a specter,

Of an apparent philology, which
You worship, my ailing poor thing.
Come to me while it doesn't rot,

Your voice in empty libraries.
I search pompous, idle, caustic
Muscles, hair, arteries, hands-or-lips.

I need to blend myself with you,
I need to blend you with the crowd.
Baker, butcher and logger
All drank and went out with me."



Golden fingers pecked
The wrinkled body and at morning
He went to the station, wiping the rice
Powder—an aftertaste of a pretty girl—
Off his dark sterile face.

Everything for us is between lines,
Limitless shine of naked letters.
A revolution has a start.
The revolution has no end.

Yuri Nikolaevich Tynyanov,
A dwarf running from giants,
Kerubino in ragged silk,
A fly under amber lava,
Lion's roar and quail's rumble.
What'll happen in your life?

They'll take you as a fungus,
Attract you as Hanimed
Ruining your dear golden wings.
Century will have you as a bite
And with Lily's gapped smile
Spit you out in hereafter.

Let them not forget: in black, in black,
One can be exact and deft,
And pretend to be dot and dash,

But to stay rebellious
To the giants in their wild play
Impossible.

Dark-winged whores at Boston bus station
Like shallops or better like patchy under the sails
Sharp tiny yachts in oily water of Saint-Malo.
Nonetheless, this tight comparison is like bright cloth
And tears on hips.

A false vessel of bile
Hanging ruins heaps of the city's hollow
Holds of short consolation
Fully open closed transparent gloomy

I'm wondering amongst you as if a monkey in the Garden of Eden
Like a merry bright wound on the rotten flesh
I'm wandering like a dollar which was thrown by a crack of an ATM
Onto the ground for various magic transactions.

I'm going back from a date among wet huge acatia
And like other cuties—black autumn and naked
I'm going smiling smoking and pecking at verbs



My verb for you is to leave
The nicer, the higher the need
The steeper the softer is the bristled space

My verb is to deprive to deny and just by a part of a sound
To affirm how black how wet how huge is the parting
As the spread oblivion bent with its glorious back

I'm going smiling and you are invisible with me
That is in a pose of dogs Orpheus-Eurydice, well,
Don't dare you turn round
Otherwise: a minute
And a blow-up after that is blindness and the absence of the dear body.

The punishment is not equal to the deed
I just wanted
To see, hear against the background of a sunset broth in a frame
That your voice was lying as a wonderful whore between us
Smiling and shining with Bodler's black back

As your voice as an explosion or the sun stood in front of me.

You understand but late.
You again understand it anew—but early.
Possession of us is a dung bright pit
Where memory hardening are swarming. Here, all is implied.
You understand and smoke and think: it's funny anyway.

A station whore is nodding at face with a lighter
This night this scene with its simplified and miserable
Decoration is still mine like nothing else

Unless your heart which is warm steel.

Trans. Cosmin Ghita, Vera Panushkina, Marina Loginova



Untitled

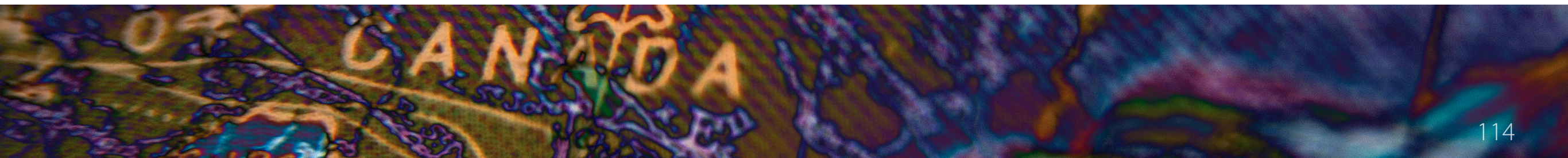
combien d'après-midis avons-nous tués par hivers de février ou bourrasque d'avril à taper sur nos tambours jusqu'à en revenir les paumes pleines de cloques et tous ces touristes coin Peel et Saint-Catherine qui nous prenaient en photo comme si étions une espèce en voie d'extinction dans un zoo enfants sous haute surveillance derrière la cage ça souriait du fond du cœur on y croyait à chacun sa cause dans le même sacré quadrilatère marchions la bottine lourde suivant le beat d'une fanfare de clowns sans patrie jurions par des paroles de balles à blanc avec l'idée d'être ensemble contre tous ces empires cheap qui ne veulent que de la main-d'œuvre

from *Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs du napalm plein l'œil* (2007)

Danny Plourde

how many afternoons have we killed through february winters or april winds beating on our drums until returning with palms full of blisters and all these Peel and Saint-Catherine corner tourists who were taking our photo as if we were an endangered species in a zoo children under high surveillance behind the cage smiling from the bottom of the heart we believed to each his own cause in the same sacred quadrilateral were walking with the heavy ankle boot following the beat of a nationless band of clowns we were swearing by the lyrics of blanks with the idea to be together against all these cheap empires who only want manpower

Trans. Katie Black, Caylin Carbonell, Michelle Paquette



The Age of Discovery

When I look down along the blanket's soft
Swell over you, as if downhill toward
A hidden harbor, I wonder if on the sunlit
Side of the earth you might be wading,
In a gentle turquoise surf, your dress

Caught up in hand. Wet fronds hung like green
Machetes from the ceiling, when our friend
Lit up his slides of Guadalcanal on our wall.
After the black volcanic sand, the warplane
Wreckage, the betel juice and red-feather money,

People of the last carousel stared in at us.
Rain strafed the puddles they stood in ankle-deep,
Glazing black the hair of children who had just
Received their ceremonial nose rings. So much
Of the world threatens to remain imaginary

That the downpour on the window all night
Sufficed to join us, at least in knowing there is
A blind within to everything, and no place
That doesn't make its own sound, meeting rain.
Why do I want to tell you now how strange

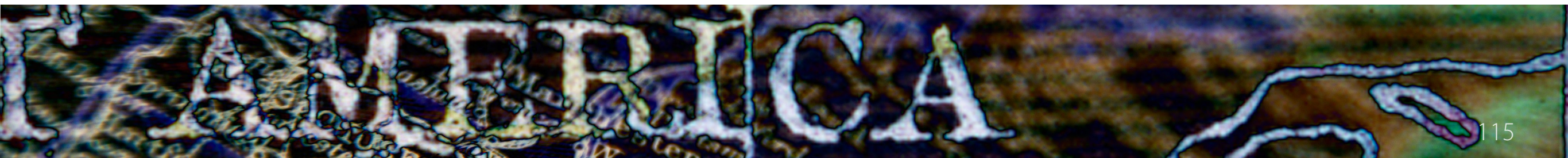
The skating pond was in summer, when green
Lampshades still hung from wires over
The wrinkling water? What spins out the endless
Skein of harlequin scarves I go on hauling up
With hopeless pleasure on indolent afternoons

Or sleepless nights? In the dark, breathing
Room questions rise all the way to my lips,
But I do not wake you, within whom someone else
Is taking shape, even now. Someone who will
Outlive us, witnessing the end of expeditions

We supposed were dreams. And it is pleasing
Now to summon up a beach's empty canvas,
Whitecaps smoking along the bar, and that tiny
Brig I had as a boy, under crisp yellow sail,
Its course steadfastly set out of the bottle.

from *Honest Water* (1989)

Robert Farnsworth



La época del descubrimiento

Cuando pierdo la mirada por la suave onda
De la frazada que te cubre, como colina abajo
Hacia un puerto escondido, me pregunto si en el lado
De la tierra donde el sol alumbra tú estarás caminando,
Sobre un apacible oleaje color turquesa, tu vestido

Arremangado en mano. Frondas mojadas colgaban como verdes
Machetes del techo, cuando nuestro amigo
Prendió sus diapositivas de Guadalcanal en nuestra pared.
Después de la negra arena volcánica, los escombros
Del avión de guerra, el jugo de areca y la moneda pluma-roja,

La gente del último carro nos miraba hacia adentro.
La lluvia ametrallaba los charcos que les llegaban hasta los tobillos,
Glaseando negro el cabello de niños que recién habían
Recibido sus anillos nasales de ceremonia. Tanto del
Mundo amenaza quedarse quimérico

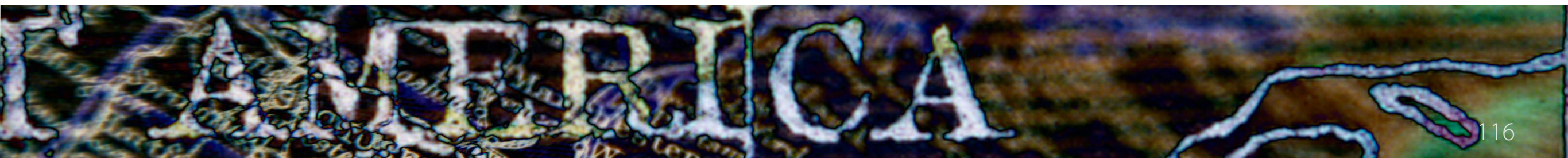
Que el torrencial en la ventana la noche entera
Bastó para juntarnos, por lo menos en el saber que hay
Una ceguera interna en todo, y ningún lugar
Que no emita su propio sonido al encontrarse con la lluvia.
¿Por qué querré decirte ahora lo extraño

Que era la laguna de patinar en el verano, cuando las verdes
Pantallas de las lámparas colgaban aún de alambres sobre
El agua que se arrugaba? ¿Qué deshila la interminable
Madeja de bufandas arlequín que yo sigo acarreado cuesta arriba
Con placer desesperanzado en las tardes indolentes

O noches insomnes? En la oscuridad, al respirar
la habitación las preguntas ascienden hasta mis labios,
Pero no te despierto, a ti, dentro de quien un otro
Está formándose, aun en este momento. Alguien quien nos
Sobrevivirá, siendo testigo del fin de las expediciones

Que supusimos eran sueños. Y es grato
Invocar ahora el lienzo vacío de una playa,
Las cabrillas humeantes a lo largo del banco, y ese pequeño
Bergantín que tuve de niño, bajo tersa vela amarilla,
Su curso firmemente establecido hacia la boca de la botella.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán





Homages

秋の散歩

秋
光という
ガラスのなかを歩めば

あなたへの もろもろの思い
みな沈黙して 散りつもる

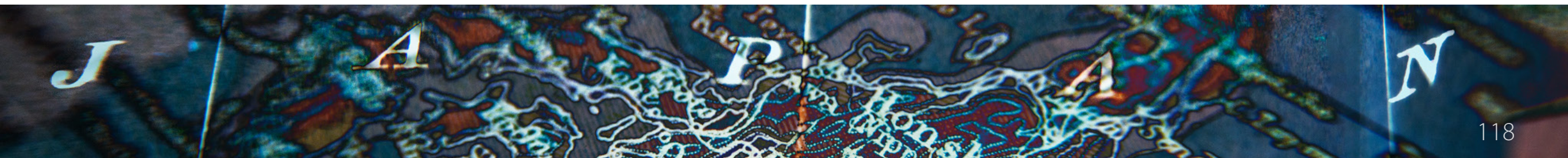
Naomi Otsubo

Autumn Stroll

Autumn
As I make my way through the pure glass
we call light

my teeming thoughts about you
all grow silent, scatter and fall

Trans. Sarah Strong



The Shutters

A family who lived
upon a tidal islet,
beaded on a black

fingertip of fjord,
once included my life
in their own, open-

handed. Because
they had watched me
draw in the notebook

I kept, and felt for
my inarticulate need
to belong, they asked

me to paint, for their
sod-roofed mountain
cottage, a flower of

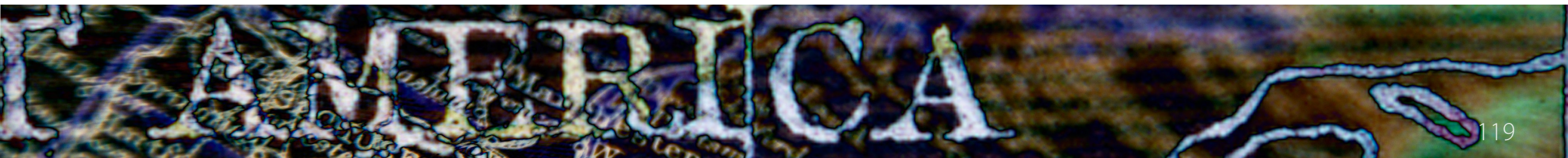
my own design upon
the shutters. It's too bad
about pity, the word,

how ugly it remains.
Whenever they called
me clever, I smiled

to think of the word's
inexplicable border
with nefarious in my

mind. They asked me
to paint the shutters.
And did I look around me,

though I had written
of the dwarf birches
in the upland pasture,



seeming to hold light,
even in the starless dark
I'd wait up to wander into?

No. No saxifrage or
heather informed my hand.
Thirty years I've known

how ugly my invention
was—an alien, stylized
result they must have over-

painted the next June—
it had nothing to do with
bone-strewn, glacial slopes,

with the frigid pond, with
boulders lichened blue
and burnt orange, with

tufts of succulent green,
nor until now with that
cow's huge, patient head,

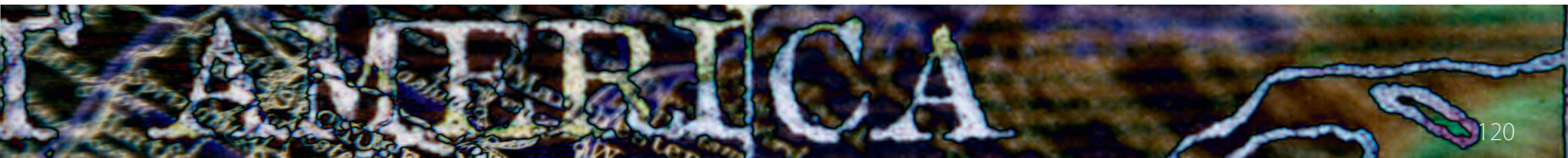
suddenly filling the
window where I read.
The past should always be

this allusive gift. I did not
look around me. Even as
they wished me an ordinary,

happy life. Let this be then
a petal of homage, a grateful
prayer, indigenous and brief.

from Rumored Islands (2010)

Robert Farnsworth



Los postigos

Una familia que vivía
en un islote de marea
como abalorio en la negra

yema de un fiordo,
alguna vez incluyeron mi vida
en la de ellos, manos-

abiertas. Porque
me habían observado
dibujando en un cuaderno

que yo tenía, y se conmovían por
mi necesidad torpe
de pertenecer, me pidieron

que pintara, para su
cabaña montañés de techo
de tepe, una flor de

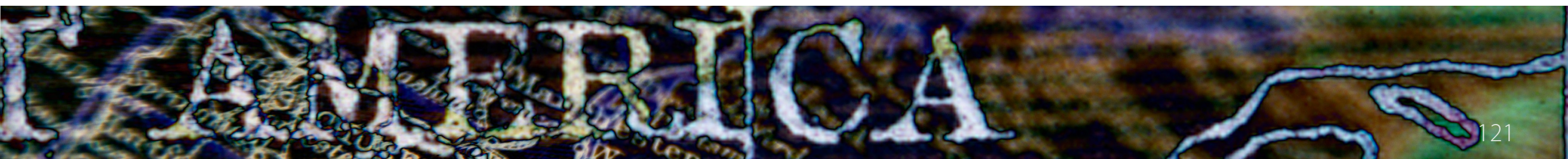
mi propio diseño en
los postigos. Es una lástima
lo de la piedad, la palabra,

cuan fea es aun.
Cada vez que me proclamaban
ingenioso, yo sonreía

al pensar en la inexplicable
frontera de aquélla
con la de infame en mi

mente. Me pidieron que
pintara los postigos.
Y ¿miré yo a mi alrededor,

aunque había escrito
de los abedules enanos
en los pastos de la meseta,



que parecían sostener la luz
aun en la oscuridad sin estrellas
a la que esperaba para deambular en ella?

No. Ninguna saxífraga o
brezo informaba mi mano.
Por treinta años he sabido

cuan fea fue mi
invención—una extrañeza, resultado
estilizado que deben haber cubierto-

con pintura el siguiente junio—
no tenía nada que ver con
esparcidos-huesos, cuevas glaciales,

con lagunas heladas, con
rocas cubiertas de líquen azul
y naranja quemado, con

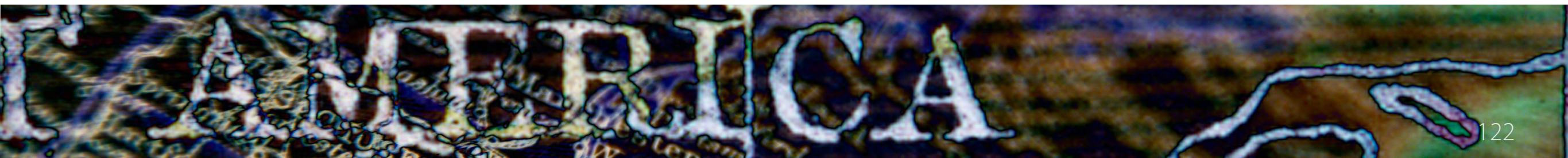
manojos de verdes suculentos
y hasta ahora tampoco con esa
inmensa y, paciente cabeza de vaca,

de repente cubriendo
la ventana donde yo leía.
El pasado siempre debería ser

este regalo referencial. Yo no
miré a mi alrededor. Aun cuando
me desearon una vida común y corriente,

feliz. Que sea esto entonces
un pétalo de homenaje, una oración
de agradecimiento, indígena y breve.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



Untitled

cœur vous Astre-Terre enfant foire rebelle bébés de chaumière barouettés Ici et là vous êtes nés dans la dèche beige d'un monde de malades Imaginaires au premier pleurnichage ne pouvions rien pour vous crispés vous faces rictus vous couleurs fauves entachant la ouate il ne vous est pas resté grand-chose Visa Internet boucane et béton rien de Riopelle ou de Lautrémont tout ou presque fut exploité consommé pour le feutrage de nos cellules

vierge flamme vous fade nature morte Terre bouche d'égoût vous faisiez déjà pitié avant même de naître

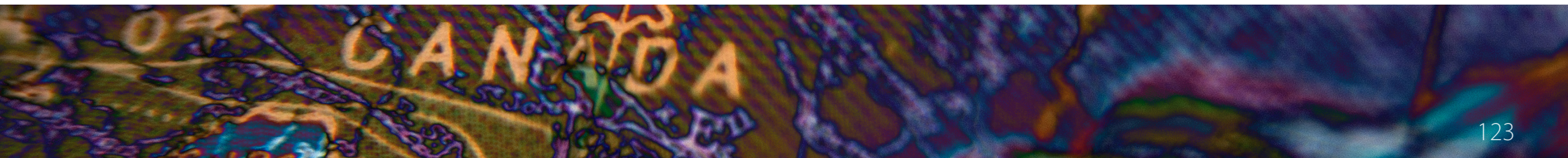
from *Cellule speranza: n'existe pas sans nous* (2009)

Danny Plourde

heart you Star-Earth fair child rebel babies of a thatch-roofed cottage fooled here and there you are born in the broke beige of a world of hypochondriacs at the first whining we will not be able to do anything for you clenched you sides grimace you brownish colors sully the cotton you were not left with much Visa Internet thick smoke and concrete nothing of Riopelle or of Lautrémont everything or nearly everything was exploited consumed for the felting of our cells

virgin flame you dull still life Earth sewer drain you were pitiful even before you were born

Trans. Olivia DaDalt



桜の花より生まれし人々へ

桜の花のした

家族連れが 学生が 子供が 恋人たちが
歩いてはとまり 歩いてはとまり
まるで 稚児のようだ

ホームレスの人たちが
段ボールの家からでてきて 頭をつきあわせ
みんなで将棋をしている

鳥の声が 犬の吠える声が
カラオケの音が 手拍子の音がする

赤ん坊に 花を指さす母親がいて
その下で昼寝をしているおじさんがいる

コンビニの弁当を片手に中学生たちがあつまって
地べたで笑い転げ

老人ホームの団体が
車いすを馬のようにのりこなし
バーベキューをしている

なんという所だろう
この人たちは どこからきたのだろうか？

春は
得体のしれない空間を浮かばせる
それは 桜の花にはじまり おわる

鳥が 惜しげもなくついばむ花びらが
砂時計の砂のように
ひざを並べ 鮮やかな弁当に
箸をのばす人々に 落ちていく

あー 日本人よ のぼっていこう

DNAの螺旋を
スルスルとのぼりつめ
桜の花のもとに集まろう

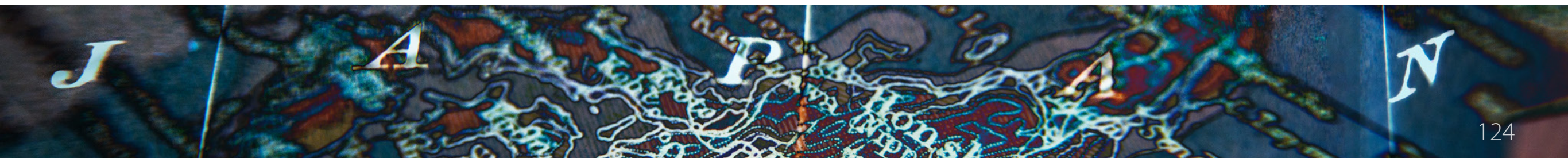
小さな座布団をも分ちあうことを知っている人々には
すわっても なおすわりきれない玉座が そこにある

さあ 日本人よ のぼっていこう

この世のものも
あの世のものも
夜桜の下で 星をながめよう

愛でる心にすべてをゆずり、お腹一杯になった人々には
かなたの輝きも またなんて 親しいものに見えるだろう

Naomi Otsubo



For the People Born from Cherry Blossoms

Beneath the cherry blossoms

family groups students children lovers
take a few steps and pause take a few steps and pause
exactly like toddlers

Homeless people
have emerged from their cardboard houses and are all head to head
playing Japanese chess

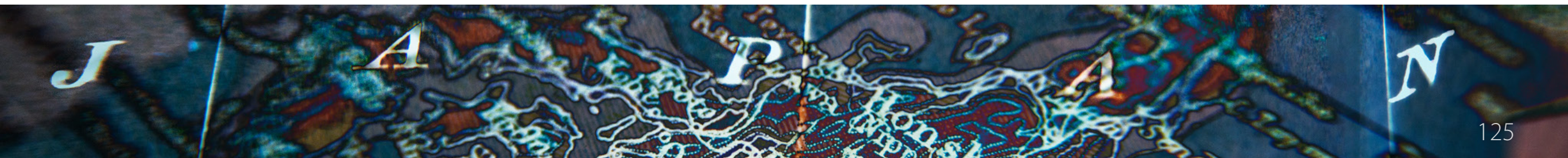
Birds call dogs bark
there is the noise of karaoke and of hands clapping time

There is a mother pointing her finger at the blossoms to show her baby
and a middle aged man taking a nap in their shade

With convenience-store box lunches in one hand, middle school students
have gathered and sit on the bare ground convulsed with laughter

A group from a nursing home
managing their wheelchairs like horses
are having a barbeque

What kind of place is this I wonder?
Where did these people come from?



Spring
sets a strange space afloat
one that begins and ends with cherry blossoms

The blossoms, pecked at liberally by the birds,
go on falling like sand in an hourglass
upon people sitting knee to knee
who stretch their chopsticks towards gaily colorful boxed lunches

Ah people of Japan let us ascend

Let us smoothly climb to the top
of the spiral of DNA
and gather beneath the cherry blossoms

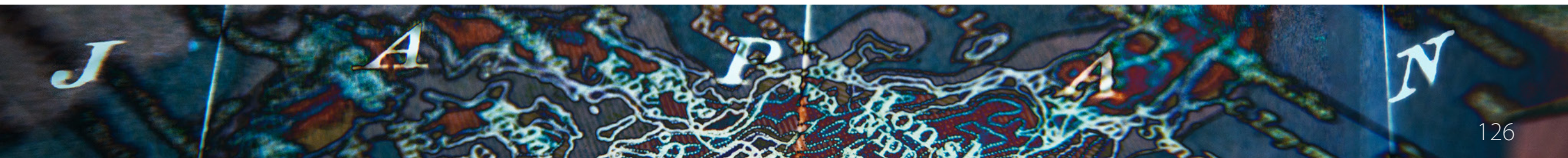
There, for the people who know what it is like to share even a small sitting cushion,
are thrones, so many that even if everyone sits there will still be empty ones to spare

Ah people of Japan let us ascend

Both those of this world
and those of the other world
let us gaze at the stars from beneath the night cherries

For the people with full stomachs, who surrender everything to their love of blossoms
even those far-away stars must also somehow seem like someone close and dear

Trans. Sarah Strong



Salto al vacío

*A Morgan Dufault
In memoriam*

crisálidas de oro despiertan entre los pliegues de tu intestino grueso

la luna reparte besos
el alcohol acerca corazones
el baile muestra sendas al infinito

la música en la punta de los dedos
el ritmo anclado en las caderas
la mente llena de formas y colores
el pecho rebosante

ni la menor señal de su presencia
(sólo un cosquilleo persistente en las entrañas)

un año termina
otro empieza
labores ejecutadas a tiempo
con esperanza (certeza)
la cosecha será plena:
has preparado la tierra
arando, cavando, rastrillando
plantando cada semilla con tesón
las uvas suaves sobre la lengua
tienen el sabor azul del porvenir.
el champán se desliza tráquea abajo,
pinta un arco iris de lirios
trinchados en el horizonte

brindas y bailas

incapaz de contener
el ajetreo impaciente de la sangre

se vale del índigo de la noche
del brillo de las estrellas
de una luna de cuento infantil
dibujada tras cristaleras gigantes



se ha vestido de gala para ti
te convoca con urgencia de amante

presientes su caricia
te acucia la llamada del abrazo
lo buscas con ahínco
sin saberlo

te mueves entre cuerpos en movimiento

saludas, juegas, brindas con alguien
en la distancia

y te acercas
sin prisa
(sin pausa)
a las alas de cristal

para tu vuelo
al encuentro.

Francisca López

Leap to the Abyss

*For Morgan Dufault
In memoriam*

golden chrysalises awaken in the folds of your large intestines

the moon hands out kisses
alcohol draws hearts closer
the dance illuminates paths towards infinity

the music on the fingertips
the rhythm anchored on the hips
the mind replete with shapes and colors
the bosom overflowing

not even a minute sign of its presence
(only a persistent prickling in the viscera)



a year ends
another begins
tasks executed on time
with hope (certainty)
the harvest will be abundant:
you've prepared the soil
plowing, digging, raking
planting each seed with tenacity
the smooth grapes upon your tongue
have the blue taste of the future.
the champagne glides down the trachea,
it colors a rainbow of lilies
wilted along the horizon

you toast and you dance

incapable of restraining
the impatient bustle of the blood

it makes use of the night's indigo
of the stars' luster
of a child's storybook-moon
refracting behind giant glass doors

it has dressed as if for gala just for you
it invokes you with a lover's need

you intuit its caress
the call of the embrace incites you
you seek him with eagerness
without knowing

you move among bodies in motion

you greet, joke, toast with someone
in the distance

and get closer
without haste
(without pause)
to the wings of glass

for your flight
toward the encounter.

Trans. Claudia Aburto Guzmán



獅子座流星群

晩秋のバルコニーにたち
ふたりで いくつもの
「ありがとう」を 宇宙にかえす

暗闇をながれていく
わたしたちの 言霊よ

また いい旅をしておいで

Naomi Otsubo

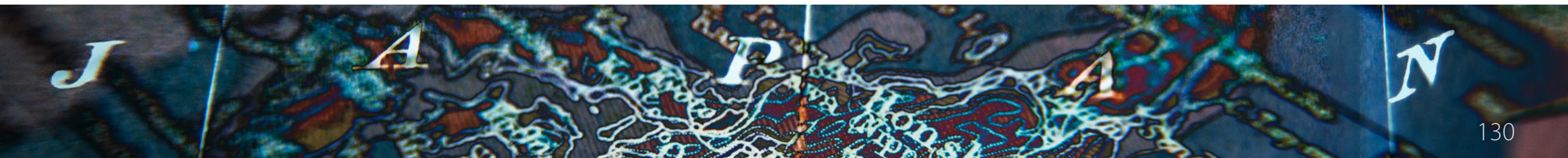
The Leonides

Standing on the balcony in late autumn
together we send back
numerous “thank yous” to the universe

Oh, you, our word spirits,
flowing away through the darkness,

Good-bye We’ll see you again Have a good trip

Trans. Sarah Strong

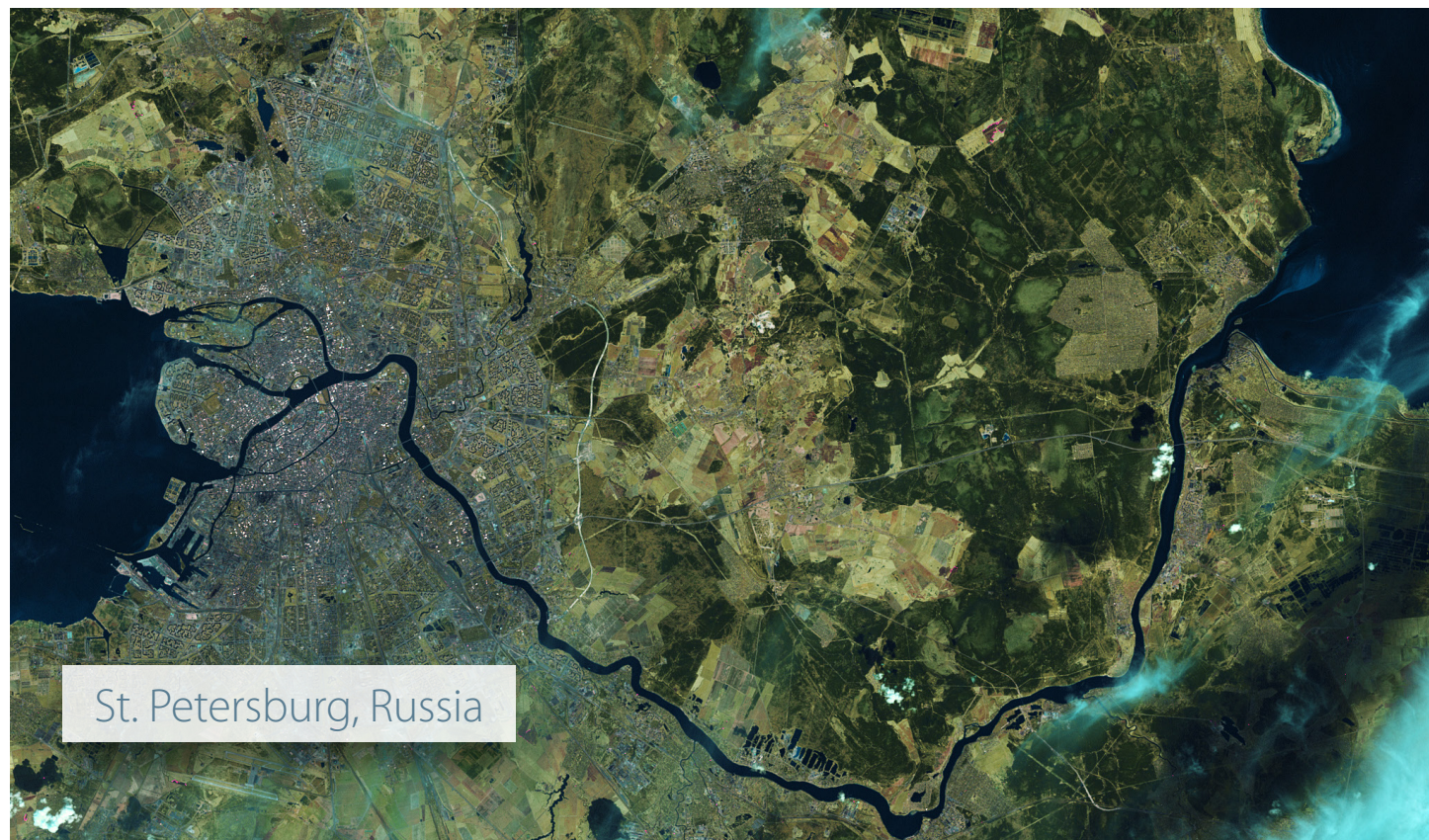




The Poets

Polina Barskova

Polina Barskova, in her homeland of Russia, she is considered a prodigy, one of the most accomplished and daring of the younger poets. Born in 1976 in Leningrad, now called St. Petersburg, she began publishing poems in journals at age nine and released the first of her eight collections as a teenager. She won the Vavilon: All-Russian Competition for Young Writers in 1992 and the Young Poet Prize in 2005. Before coming to the United States at the age of twenty, she earned a graduate degree in classical literature at the state university in St. Petersburg. In 2006, she received her doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley. Since 2006, she has lived in Massachusetts with her family and teaches at Hampshire College. Her two books of poetry in translation were published recently: *This Lamentable City* (trans. Ilya Kaminsky, Tupelo Press, 2010) and *Zoo in Winter* (trans. David Stromberg, Boris Draliuk, Melville House, 2011). In addition to English, Barskova's poetry has been translated into French, Italian, and Danish.



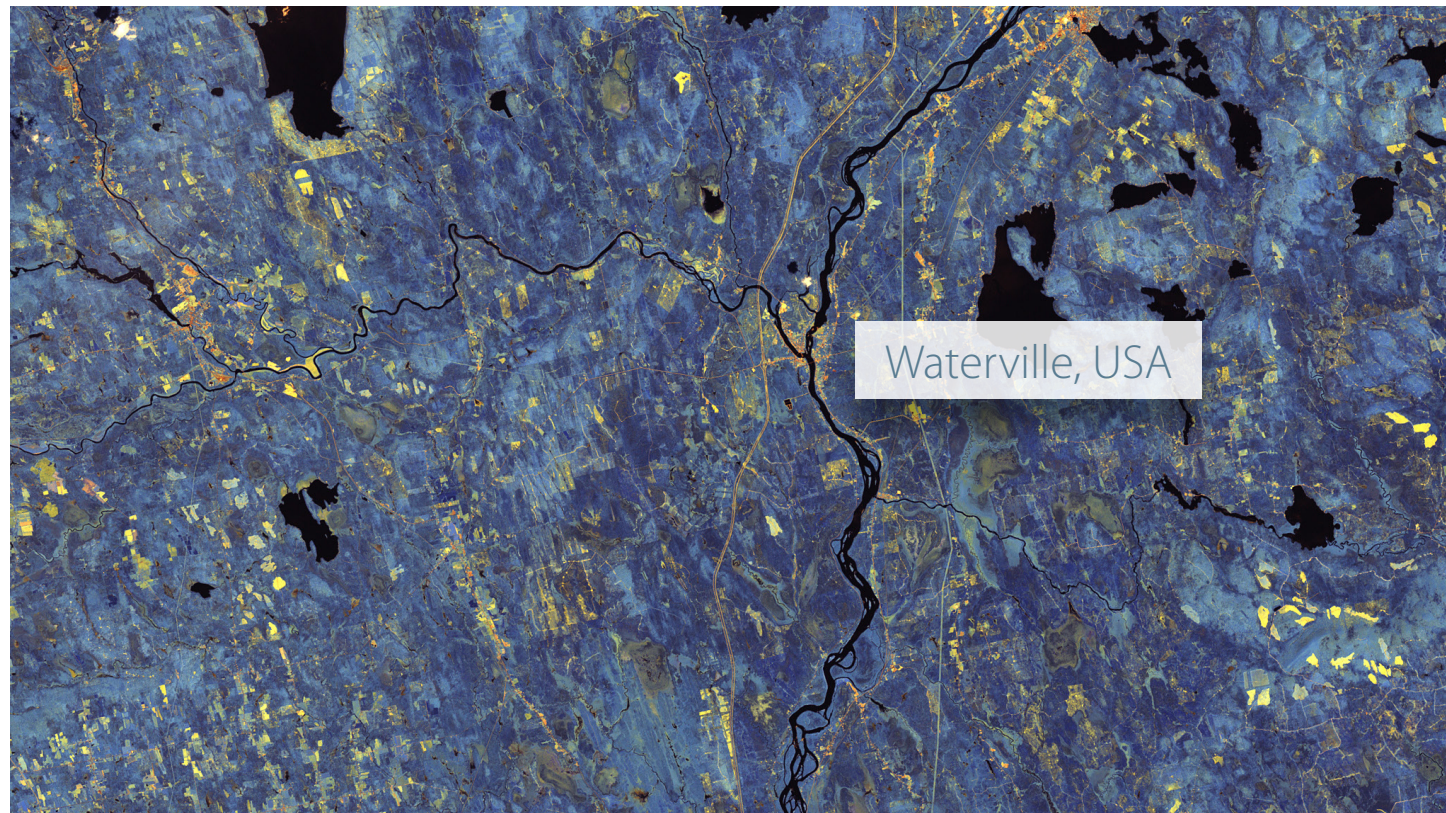
ДЕТИШЬ НА ПОЛУ РЯДОМ СЛЯЗКОМ КИДКИ КРОШКА

БАРСКОВА



Rhea Côté Robbins

Rhea Côté Robbins was brought up bilingually in a Franco-American neighborhood in Waterville, Maine, known as “down the plains.” While researching the Franco-American heritage in the state of Maine, she traced her own origins to Quebec and France, where she discovered that, in seventeenth-century France, both branches of her family lived within ten miles of each other. She attended the University of Maine at Presque Isle, graduating in 1982 with an Associate of Arts degree. In 1997, she received her Master of Arts degree from the University of Maine, and, in 2004, she received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Maine at Farmington. From 1986 to 1996, she worked as editor of an international, bilingual, socio-cultural journal *Le FORUM*, formerly known as *Le F.A.R.O.G. Forum*. In 1997, she received the Maine Chapbook Award for her creative nonfiction, *Wednesday's Child*. Her sequel *down the Plains* is currently unedited. Presently, she is working on an edition of translations of Franco-American women writers whose work appeared in the early part of the twentieth century.



"Living life Agreeable."

Rhea Côté Robbins



Robert Farnsworth

Robert Farnsworth grew up in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. He received his BA in English from Brown University in 1976, and, in 1979, he acquired his MFA from Columbia University. He began his career as a poet in his mid-teens going on to study with the likes of Michael Harper, Philip Levine, and Carol Muske-Dukes. His cross-cultural and linguistic interests were kindled early in his life as an AFS exchange student in Norway. In 2009, he fulfilled a boyhood desire by crossing the Atlantic on a freighter. His work has been published in the United States, Canada, and England. From 1998 to 2005, he was the poetry editor for the national quarterly *The American Scholar*. In 2006, he was the resident poet at The Frost Place in Franconia, NH. He has received a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and a P.E.N. Discovery Citation. He has taught in the SUNY system, U.C. Irvine, Ithaca College, and Colby College and has been a resident poet at Bates College since 1990. His work has been published in three monographs, *Three or Four Hills and A Cloud* (1982); *Honest Water* (1989); and *Rumored Islands* (2010).



*From a distance I keep mistaking Their isolations,
Their slightly inclined heads, elbows bent
as if to hold Their chins in hand — for dejection,
for lonely consternation. Then, again:
They are just young people, on Their phones.*

- Robert Farnsworth



Francisca López

Francisca López, from Córdoba, Spain, is Professor of Spanish at Bates College, USA. She specializes in contemporary Spanish literary and cultural studies, paying particular attention to politics of representation in narrative fiction and film and television. She has her work published in the monograph *Mito y discurso en la novela femenina de posguerra en España* (Pliegos, 1995); the co-edited book *Historias de la pequeña pantalla: Representaciones históricas en la televisión de la España democrática* (Iberoamericana / Vervuert, 2009); and in numerous collections and journals as *The Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, *Letras Peninsulares*, and *Dissedences / Disidencias: Hispanic Journal of Theory and Criticism*. As a creative writer, she has co-authored the novel *Posdata* (2005) and a collection of short stories *La séptima mujer* (2004), as well as having her poetry published in such journals as *Letras Femeninas*, *Letralia*, and *Letras Salvajes*.



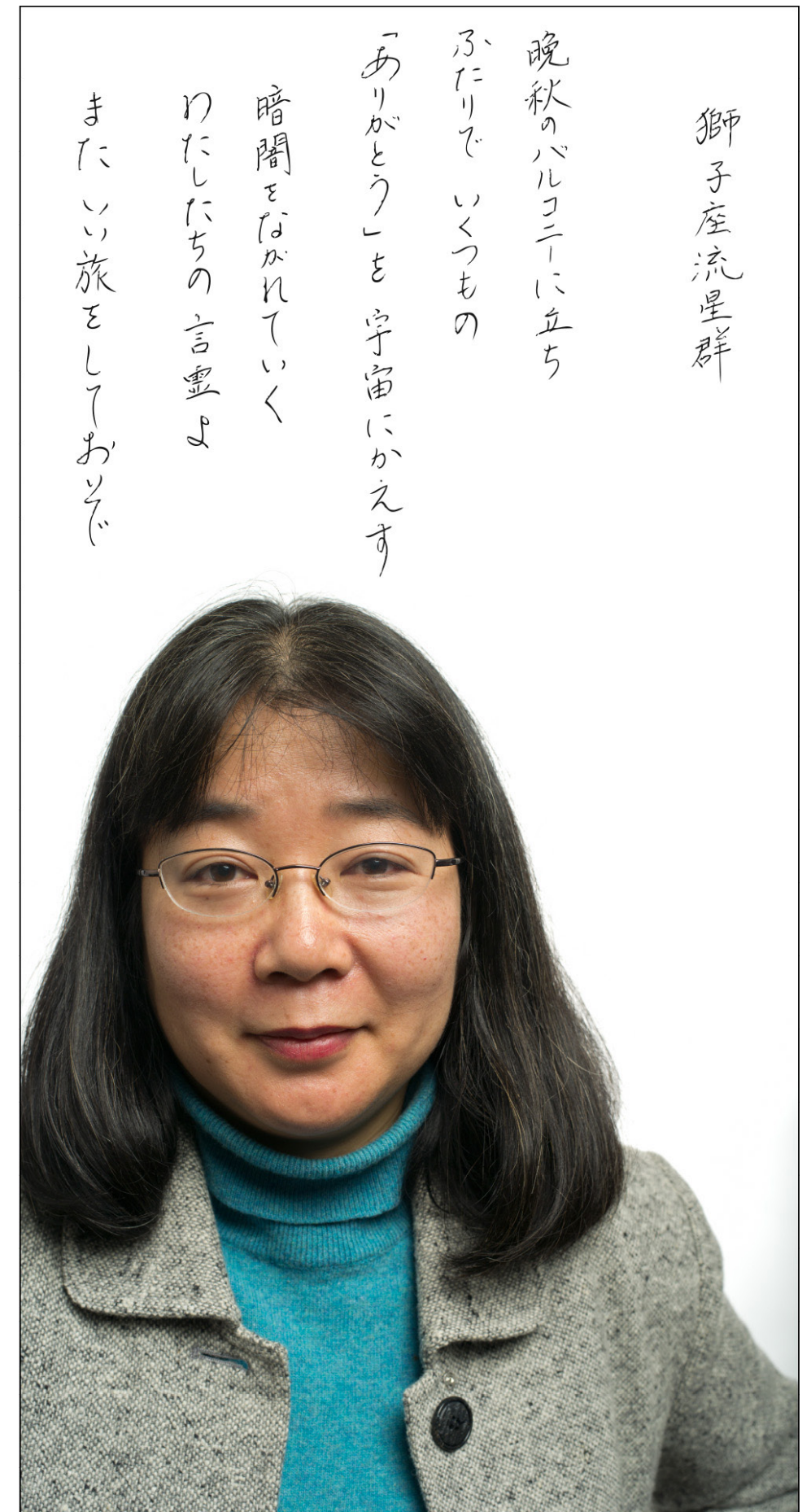
Zambullirse en la niebla
comulgar con el miedo
volar con el tedio
adentrarse en la eternidad

Francisca López



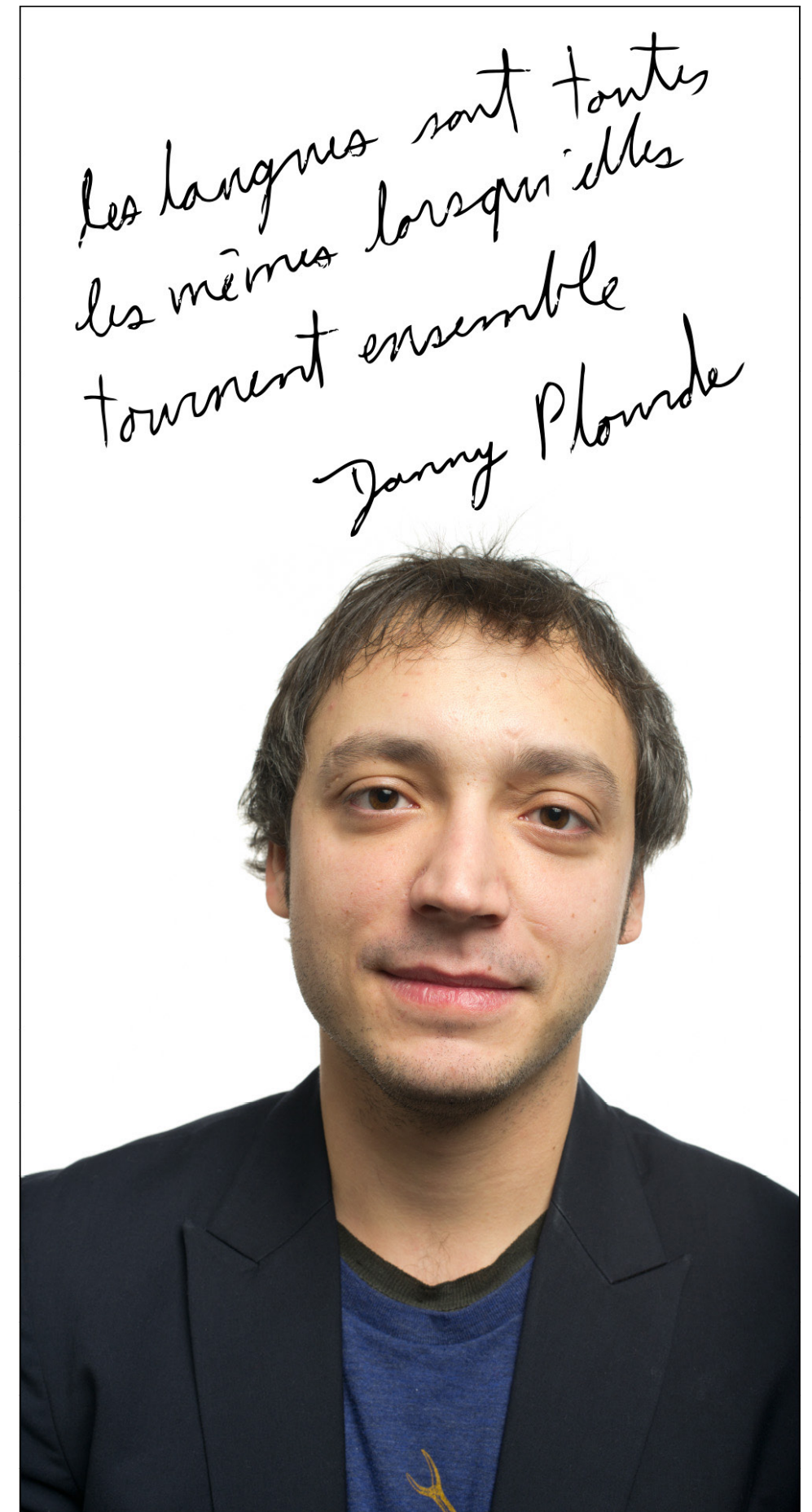
Naomi Otsubo

Naomi Otsubo grew up in Tokyo, Japan, where she received a BA in American History from Tokyo Women's Christian University. As a professional translator, she has worked in medical translation and children's book publishing as well as completed a volume of native American philosophy. While working as a full-time poet for a Japanese satellite broadcasting station, she realized the power of poetry was in its sound and rhythm. She has travelled extensively in Japan, Tibet, southeast Asia, and US. Her spiritual interest led her to complete Japan's longest walking pilgrimage on the island of Shikoku three times. Since 2007, she has lived in Maine where she is pursuing a self-sufficient life, exploring the natural world, and writing poetry. Her first book of Japanese poetry and accompanying audiobook will be published in 2013.



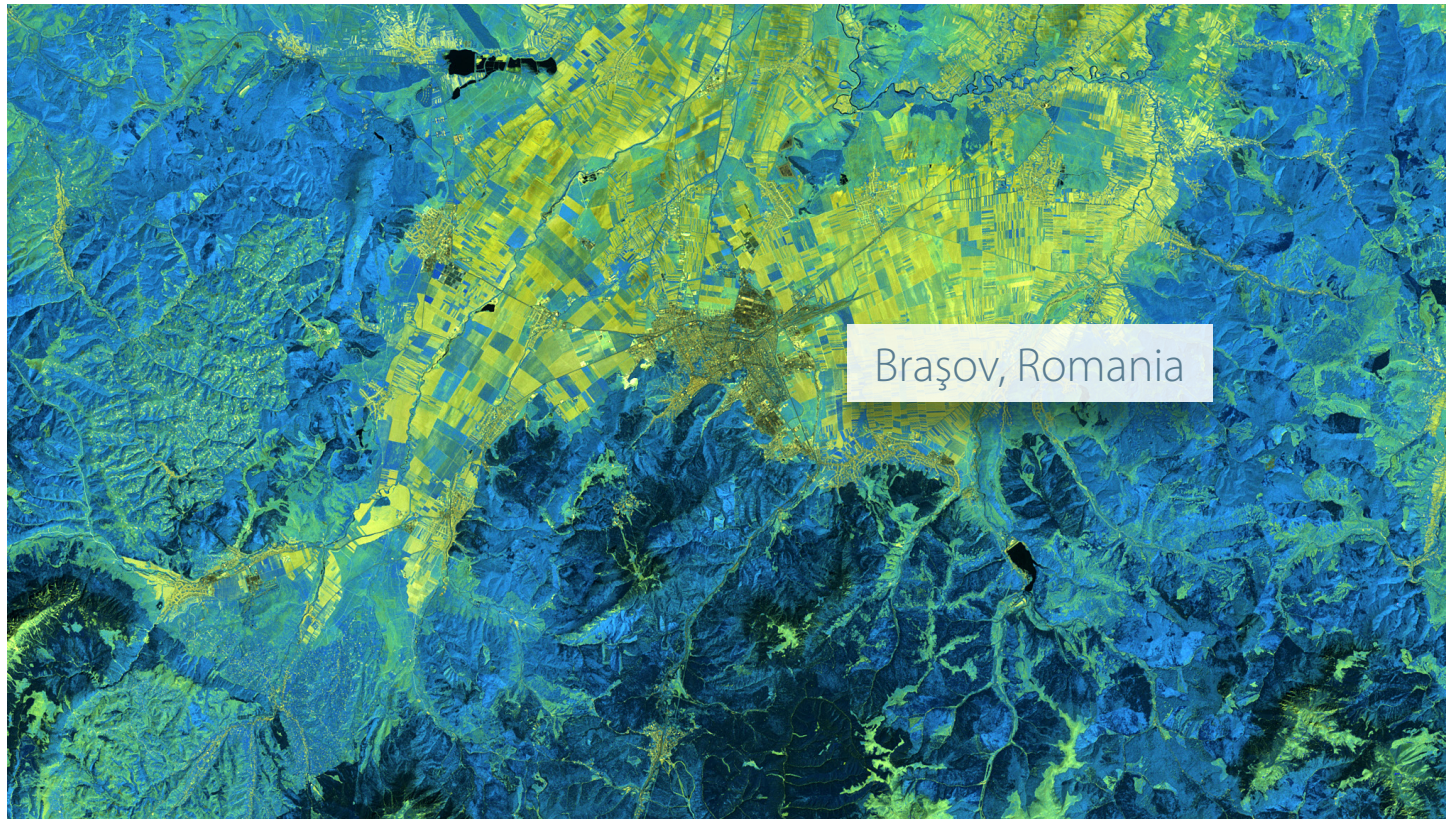
Danny Plourde

Danny Plourde is a performer, musician, and spiritual traveler born in 1981 in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec to a biker and a singer. He received his diploma in Art and Letters with a concentration in Theater in 2001 after the Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City. He studied literature at UQAM (BA and MA). He has also been a member of the francophone garage rock band Les Fidel Castrol and has co-directed the literary collective Ectropion. His writing has been published in journals in Quebec and in Korea. He published *Vers quelque* (which won the Félix Leclerc prize) in 2004; *Calme aurore: s'unir ailleurs, du napalm plein l'œil* (which won the Émile Nelligan prize) in 2007; and *Cellule esperanza* in 2009, all with L'Hexagone. His latest book is a novel titled, *Joseph Morneau: La pinte est en special*. Plourde is presently teaching literature at the Collège Maisonneuve and is one of the literary directors at L'Hexagone publishing press. The role of the poem in the public square, public speaking, and literary engagement are important issues of his creative approach.



Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu received her doctorate from the University of Bucharest in 2004. Since 2007, she has held the position of Associate Professor at Transylvania University in Braşov. She focuses on modern and postmodern German literature, creative writing, and drama and theatre pedagogy. She has published numerous critical essays and a monograph on Thomas Mann for which she received an Excellency Award in 2006. She is trilingual, speaking German, English, and Hungarian. Presently she belongs to the Writer's Association of Romania. Her books of poetry and prose have appeared in Romania and abroad: *Das Aufschieben der zwölften Stunde auf die dreizehnte*. Poetry. (Cluj: Dacia, 1991); *Amsel—schwarzer Vogel*. Short stories. (München: Lagrev, 1995); *Der Ameisenhaufen und andere Geschichten*. Stories. (Braşov: Aldus, 1998); *Ein Stückchen Hinterhof*. Novellistische Familienchronik. Stories. (Sibiu: hora, 2001); *Unvermeidlich Schnee*. Poetry. (Passau: Stutz, 2002); *Der Begräbnisgänger*. Stories. (Passau: Stutz, 2007); *Verortete Zeiten*. Poetry. (Braşov: Aldus, 2008).



Farceur Tod

Er macht dir etwas vor,
treibt Blüten mitten im Leben
Sein Inneres räumt auf,
stiftet Begehrde und Unrast.

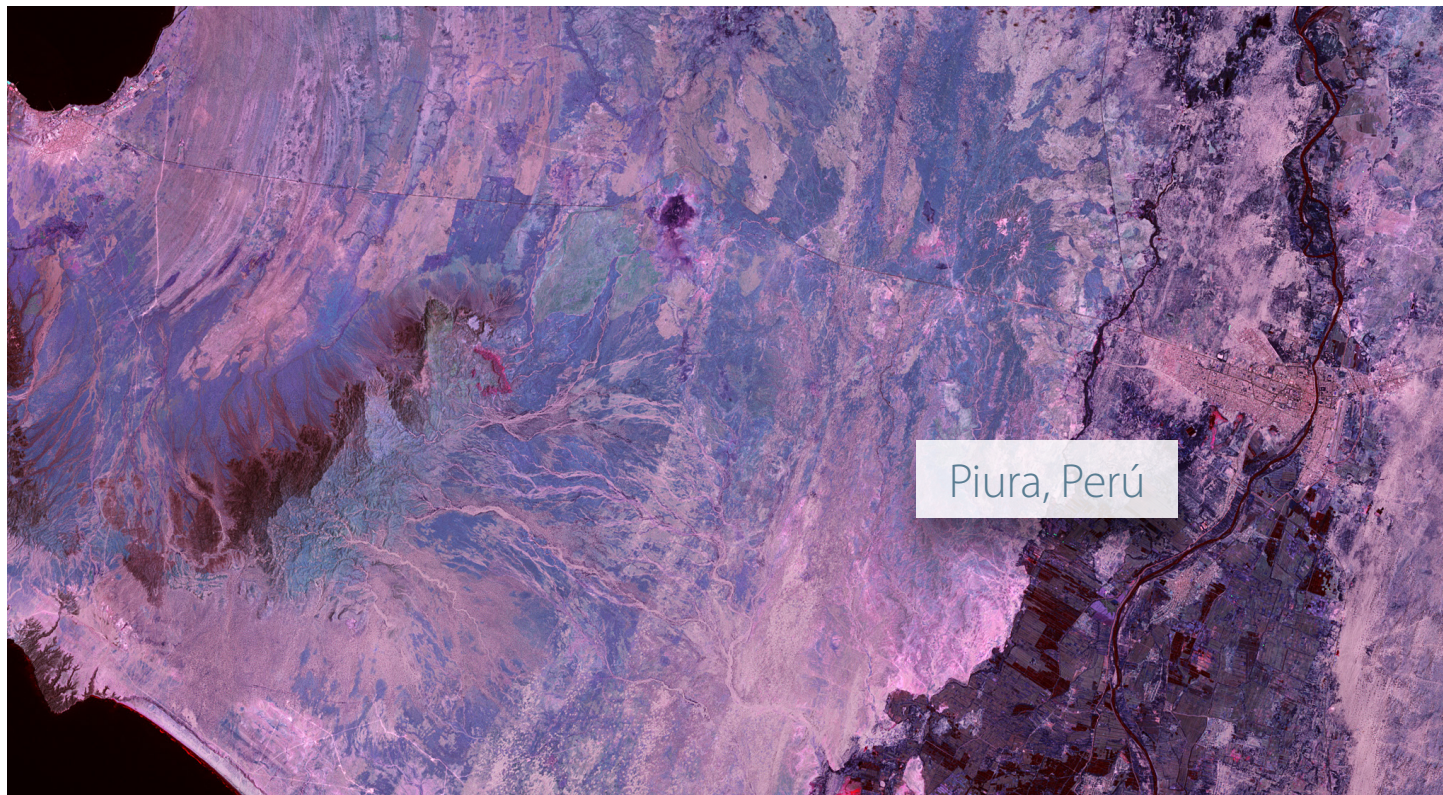
Nach Belieben
beendet und beginnt er
keine Farce.

Carmen Elisabeth
Puchianu



Miguel Ángel Zapata

Miguel Ángel Zapata, born in Piura, Perú, began his distinguished writing career while still an undergraduate in San Marcos University in Lima, Perú. He has more than thirty titles, eight of which are poetry collections. His poetry has been lauded by writers such as Mario Vargas Llosa and Carlos G. Belli. In 2011, he won the Latino Literature Prize for *Fragments of an Apple and Other Poems*. Zapata received his doctorate from Washington University in St. Louis. He has been teaching at Hofstra University since 2001, where he is an Associate Professor of Spanish. He has lectured extensively in countries such as England, Chile, and Venezuela. As a scholar of poetry, he has published several books on contemporary Hispanic American poetry. In 2002, the Universidad de San Marcos Press in Lima published his *Moradas de la voz: Notas sobre la poesía hispanoamericana contemporánea*. In 2003, he won the Hostos Essay Award. He is also a distinguished conference director, organizing events such as Spanish and Spanish-American Poetry: Transition 2000 and Beyond (2002) and Rubén Darío: Ninety Years Later (2006).



"VOY A CONSTRUIR
UNA VENTANA
EN MEDIO DE LA
CALLE PARA NO
SENTIRME SOLO"
Miguel Ángel Zapata





Reflections

On Translation & Place

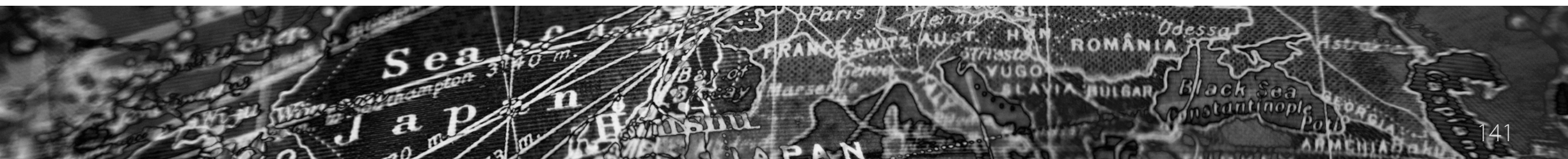
Bursting the Bubble

Poetry and Translation at Bates

Jane Costlow

Bates students are fond of saying that Batesies live in a “bubble”—that the campus where they live and study exists as a kind of protected and somewhat isolated space within the larger world of Lewiston, Maine. It’s a notion that’s not unrelated to the classic vision of liberal arts colleges, particularly of the small New England variety. Our campuses are for the most part well-groomed parks, brick and bucolic refuges in which students are given books and the time to read them. The notion, which probably could be traced back to medieval monastic libraries, is that deep learning requires a kind of leisure, and respite from the demands of labor and *polis*. Collegiate quads are refuges in which young minds can be stretched and challenged, places where one can try on the experimental “what if” and test any and all pieties. The bubble, seen this way, is a kind of amniotic sack, a protective membrane that allows the young to grow, to put on intellectual weight, to practice using ears and lungs. When they graduate we cut the umbilical cord and shoo them off. The bubble breaks, and the cacophony of what we tend to call “real life” takes over.

It's something of a truism, these days, that this "bubble" is illusory and problematic: illusory because the world invades this protected space all the time—all you have to do is sit at a computer terminal in Ladd Library or your dorm room and you can surf your way to Bali or Bahrain. Problematic because



we are all too aware of the structures of both chance and privilege that police our gates—the “membrane”—of the bubble: just who gets to spend four years in this magnificent leisure? Just what responsibilities does such leisure entail? Truisms they may be, but nonetheless discomfiting—and once you’ve got the pea of discomfort resting somewhere underneath your mattress, the blissful sleep of ignorance is done. You’re awake and tossing, and the sense of randomness—or guilt—at your bubble life settles in for good.

There are other ways we might think about this bubble—and since my context here is translation and poetry, I’m going to blow the bubble a bit higher, and watch the light it reflects. Bubbles—the Bates bubble just as much as the soapy kind—float lightly on the air; they’re things you can wash with but they’re also great forms of play. Playing with language is one of the finer things we do at Bates—and so I’ll play with my bubbles for a moment, before turning to the work of washing the concept clean.

Bubble, it turns out, is a word derived in Middle English from *burble*—a word that might take us to streams or to human tongues. The burbling stream is a stream that speaks to us; to burble is to babble is to speak in a certain way—and *bubbling*, apparently, was a close cousin of *burbling* in pre-modern England. Living in a bubble might also involve living in a burble—or in babble. Babble, my dictionary tells me, comes from Middle Low German, and was a “frequentative”—the syllable *ba* repeated in imitation of children’s early speech. Children babble before they learn to speak. Perhaps they start to *burble* when they sing, or play, or write verse. And what do we do in our bubble at Bates? What language do we speak? The language of burbling (a kind of speech that I’ll link to the muses and those streams—the natural world)? Or are we babbling (negative nonsense, not communicating, the kind of meaningless sound-making that gets dangerous in the Bible when humans get too big for their britches and start building towers to heaven)? Or is there a way that we practice talk, even in our

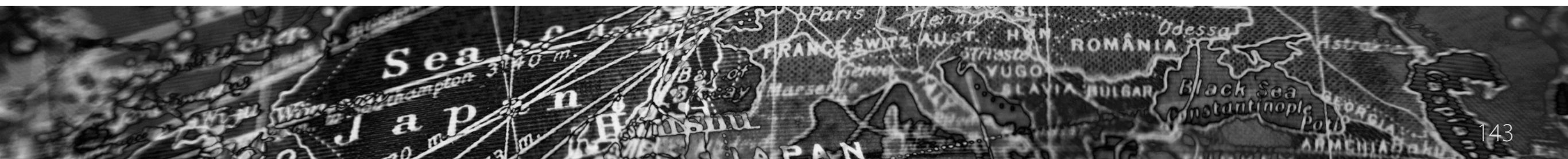


bubble, that helps us to grow lungs and ears for the worlds beyond, the worlds outside the amniotic membrane, whose sounds (strife, symphonies, speeches) are always echoing around us?

On any given day during a Bates semester, you might hear a dozen or more languages being spoken. If you walk through Roger Williams Hall, you'll hear French and Spanish, German and Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. Some of these will be the carefully orchestrated cadences of practice sentences, exercises in intonation and case, review of tones and the identification of kanji. Some of these will be more hesitant and halting: first-year conversations, the inquisitive beginnings of life in another language. *What is your name? Where are you from? What color is the rug in your room?* Then there are the full-bore presentations and disputes, arguments over Kafka or Camus, a professor explaining gender in Morocco or Chilean poetry. Strange and interesting bubble, where you slide from Moscow to Marseilles up a flight of stairs, or pass from ancient China to Cuban hip-hop in half an hour. The bubble is playing with language, training for stepping out into the world.

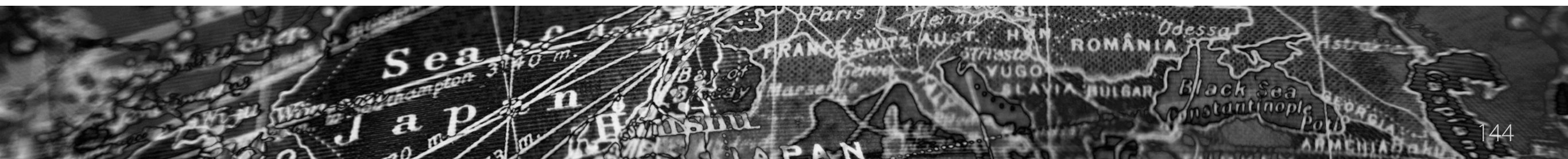
If you wander across Alumni Walk into Pettingill Hall, you'll find more bubbling and burbling: Latin or Greek in the classroom, and a great panoply of other languages being spoken into cell phones and in hallways and in half-overheard conversations in offices and over copiers and fax machines. Turkish and Korean, Serbian and Somali, Hindi and Georgian. These might be students calling home; they might be staff chatting with students; they might be faculty on the phone with colleagues half way around the world. The bubble is remarkably polyglot. So, is it really a bubble?

Lest we start priding ourselves on being global and multilingual, and seeing that as something that somehow *distinguishes* us from the blocks and corners on the "other side" of College and Vail Streets, let's think about Lewiston. Our polyglot dorms and hallways don't really distinguish us from



the community that supports our bubble. We realize—it's become part of the national news story about Lewiston—that we are now a community in which a significant part of the population speaks at least one African language. But what's even more interesting, if we consider the soapy refractions of "reality" that show against the bubble, is that Lewiston has *always* been polyglot. It's just a matter of figuring out what year we want to take as our starting point. If we transport ourselves backwards a few centuries, the sounds we hear intermingling with the rush of water or wind moving through spruce and birch are Abenaki or Passamaquoddy. Then French, the language of trappers and trackers, starts to filter in. English floods the others out, but only for a time. Quebecois takes over Lewiston in the late 19th century; Russians and Slovaks and Finns arrive to work in the woods and mills; Mexicans working on local farms bring Spanish. By 2012, almost a tenth of Lewiston's population speaks Somali. It's not only at Bates that Androscoggin County is multilingual.

But the multilingualism of the world rarely looks like Roger Bill. The classrooms in the bubble make it clear that language is political, that the identities we bare (and bear) in speaking can wreak death and division, erasure and silence. The difference between a language and a dialect, the old joke goes, is an army. My mother tongue is your barbarity: the barbarians, we remember, are the ones who *speak a different language*. What is the barbarically different language, the non-English, the "non-American" of our own community? Might it be Spanish? Or Somali? Or French? Or the Gaelic of my ancestors, before their name was Anglicized? The politics of French in New England still has the capacity to surprise: at a Lake Andrews concert one summer many years ago, the Franco-American group Chanterelle told a story of a grandfather who as a boy had come to Lowell from Canada—and been told to come back to school when he "learned to speak white." White was English. French was black. "Black" was the language of the other, the barbarian, the babbler. Even Bates, for its own peculiar reasons, insisted on English in the workplace: there was a time when Bates staff were discouraged



from speaking French at work. The era of a French-speaking Lisbon Street is long gone. Lewiston is not Quebec City. Did the chance of a good-paying job at Bates help speed along the process of *Anglicization*—barbaric word that denotes a bleaching away of culture as well as accent? How will Somali and Bantu inflect the sounds of Lewiston a generation from now? Or will we all be “speaking white”?

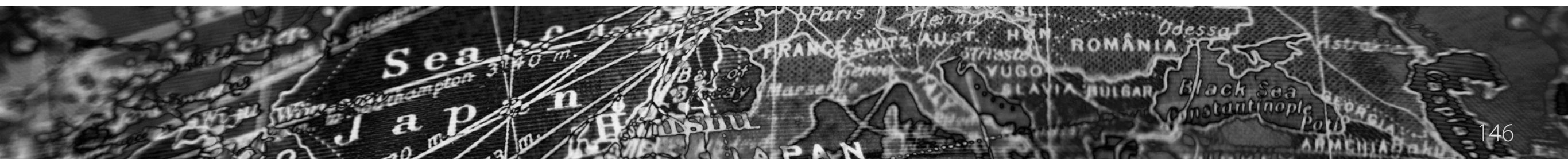
The politics of language—the babble outside the bubble—involves school budgets and job prospects and desires to communicate and definitions of what it means to be an American. Our students’—and our—thinking about the politics of language transpires against a background much less ideal than the one I sketched of a polyglot, pluralist campus. How many of our students—how many of us—reach that point of ease and assurance when we can converse in another tongue about the things we care about most? How might we convince entering waves of 18-year-olds to enter into the discipline and drudgery of learning a new language? Do we entice with earnest accounts of politics? Promises of an edge in the job market? Existential epiphanies of how other languages conceive time and space? Luscious litanies of the sheer delight of making other sounds? All of those arguments rub up against inertia, inattention, and the increasing illusion that the whole world speaks English, anyway. We all know the joke (or we ought to): what do you call someone who speaks three languages? (Trilingual); Two languages? (Bilingual); One language? (An American)

But perhaps there is still time: time to become polyglot, time to learn a new language, to tackle the consonants and cascades of babbling that turns out to be burbling—that turns out to be poetry. Why learn a language? For two years running now, the Bates community has been exhorted in October to consider itself at least potentially *polyglot*—to consider the possibility of learning Somali, or French, or Russian. If not to master its metric and glossary, at least to be won over by the ecstasy and sheer play



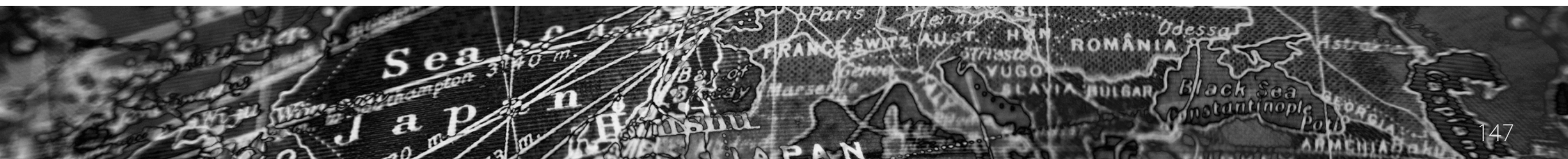
of poetry—most of it in languages we don't understand. What an undertaking: fanatics, philologists, and friends of the arts, we have welcomed a baker's handful of poets who flock to Bates—often from a considerable distance—to do nothing other than read their poems to people who probably don't understand them. We sit in our rows of chairs in Chase Hall, enthralled. Our students help us out: they translate what many of us can't get, and then broadcast it onto screens for us to follow as the poet reads. Sometimes we read the screens; sometimes we ignore them, giving ourselves over to these untranslated tongues whose charms can't be refused. We can't not listen. We'll read the translation later. For the time being, we submit to sound. Our students, temporarily transformed into translator-poets, struggle with the challenges of rendering someone else's sound-and-life world. Our visitor poets bring with them their *umwelt*—the world experienced by a particular organism: we are transported to the streets of Montreal, or a Romanian village, or waving crowns of trees in rural France. Their sounds carry us there, even as the student-poet-translators carry meaning back into our language from the poets'. We are all transported. And what happens to the bubble when it meets this *umwelt*? Is it broken, popped by an invasion of barbarian music and poetry that brings the energy of the streets and a Russian poet's view of New Jersey into our peaceful Lewiston sitting room? Or does the bubble lift us up above it all, into some space where air is breath is language, and you hear yourself into the word-world of someone you'd never expected to encounter?

Infants at birth have the potential to make an amazing array of sounds, from Russian labials to Chinese tones to the luscious French "R." Astonishingly quickly we lose that capacity, as any adult learner of a language knows. Poets recapture and celebrate that utopian moment of the perception of language as sound, as music, as the shuddering of the world against our ears and through our bodies. Somehow, the poet's *umwelt* makes it into her or his language. Somehow, that *umwelt* makes it into our bubble.



Robert Frost, who wrote his poems not all that far to the west of us, famously claimed that “poetry is what gets lost in translation.” Perhaps. But something gets found in translation, too: something we might grandiosely call new worlds, strange horizons, different perceptions of reality. In translation and in the act of listening to translated poetry, we also find what I’ll call *the beginning of wisdom*: patience with what is different and difficult; humility about your own way of saying things; delight in the vast variety of human creativity; perhaps even a desire to know more, to learn the language, to speak that way yourself.

This bubble, it turns out, is a precious space—and always precarious: a space of play and earnest application, a place where many tongues can try out their ability, a place of paradoxical struggle, silence, staging for bigger worlds. Poetry doesn’t always pop the bubble, but sometimes it does—and sometimes it lifts the bubble—us and all—into places where we hadn’t thought we spoke the language. Now maybe we do.



Concisely Situated Meanings

Reflections on Translating Naomi Otsubo's Poetry

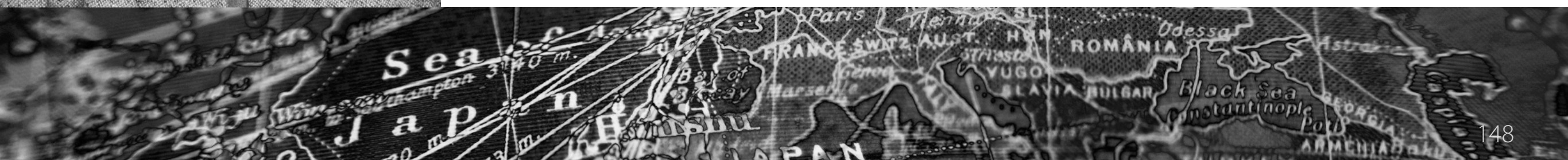
Sarah Strong

I want to begin by making a disclosure: I am a die-hard fan of traditional Japanese literature, of Japanese poetry in particular. I have read and re-read over many years pre-modern and early-modern Japanese texts, often in the good company of students, and the pleasure of those encounters has not faded over time. One quality I have seen in traditional poetry, a quality that seems to persist from one age and genre to the next, is what I call the situatedness of each poem's meaning. Meaning in Japanese poetry is always rooted in emotion. These emotions are not free floating but, rather, subtly yet firmly attached to situations, both physical and social. No matter how brief—and Japanese poetry with its thirty-one and seventeen syllable forms is inevitably brief—each poem can be read as an emotional response to particular situations, to people, landscapes, and things that can, or could, be named. If you read carefully, you can always discern a time of year within a single poem, and often a time of day and a sense of the weather. The poem conveys the poet's emotions in relationship or response to these things. It is never abstract and rarely purely conceptual.

In order to avoid being abstract myself in this characterizing of traditional Japanese poetry, I thought it might help for me to offer an example, one that I hope will illustrate both the elegant conciseness and the situatedness of emotion that I consider to be signature qualities of the tradition. My example



Naomi Otsubo, Japan



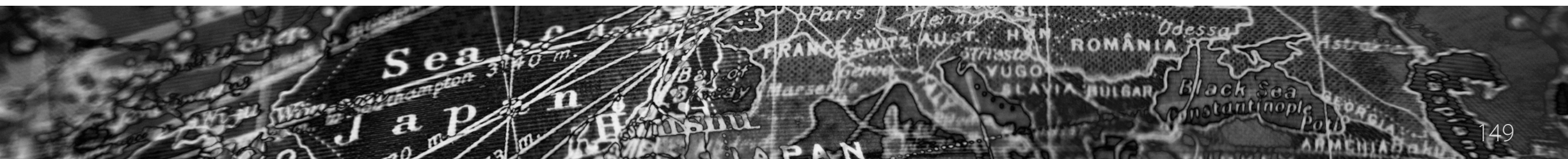
is a haiku (or, more precisely, a *haikai*) verse by Matsuo Bashō that is included in his noted travel journal, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (Oku no hoso-michi):

*ara tōto
aoba wakaba no
hi no hikari*

Ah, commanding reverence:
on green leaves, young leaves,
the sun's light. (Matsuo Bashō 72)

The first line (in Japanese terms, the first phrase, since verse never lost its fundamental identity as a spoken art form) expresses the poet's feeling of awe and reverence in response to what is "majestic, difficult to approach, sublime" (Shinmura). The object of his awed response is something at the foundation of life itself: sunlight shining on, and undoubtedly also through (both meanings are possible in the Japanese), green leaves. The fact that the leaves are *wakaba*, leaves just opening from buds, and, in Japanese seasonal terms, a motif of early summer, intensifies the focus on life, with its capacity for cyclical renewal. The extreme brevity of the seventeen-syllable form of this (and indeed all) haiku poetry, invites the reader's participation. We are not kept at a distance with a host of descriptive details that define a world particular to the poet's experience and hence unavoidably unfamiliar at least in large part to us; rather, we are invited in to flesh out the poem's elegant simplicity with our own imagination.

The highly participatory nature of reading traditional Japanese poetry, particularly the seventeen-syllable haiku form, is exhilarating, but not without liabilities; the reader runs the risk of creating for him or herself a set of meanings that diverges to a radical (but undeterminable) degree from those of readers closer to the poet in time and place, or indeed to the poet himself. While never violating the principle of the poem's participatory simplicity, the tradition developed mechanisms by which it could provide contextual details, should the reader wish them. Traditional Japanese poetry has



expressed situations. There were lovers, singing birds, a piece of toast, a doll. I could step inside each poem and look around, even sniff the air. I felt at home.

As an example of the sense of recognition that I experienced in reading Naomi's poetry, consider her poem "Autumn Stroll," the second in her collection for the festival:

<i>aki</i>	Autumn
<i>hikari to iu</i>	As I make my way through the pure glass
<i>garasu no naka o ayumeba</i>	we call light
<i>anata e no moromoro no omoi</i>	my teeming thoughts about you
<i>mina chinmoku shite chiritsumoru</i>	all grow silent, scatter and fall

Like Bashō's verse on Nikkō, the poet here evokes for us an experience of sunlight, this time autumn light, rather than the light of late spring or early summer. There is a clear connection between the glass-like purity of the fall light—seen minus the hazy moisture that fills the air at warmer temperatures—and the clarity of thought and calmness of mind the poet obtains during her walk. Like Bashō, the poet pairs inorganic light with an organic image of leaves, however, she does this indirectly through her choice of the elegant compound verb *chiritsumoru* (literally, to scatter and accumulate, the action of autumn leaves) to describe the movement of her thoughts. As a translator, I wanted very much to capture the sense of motion coming to rest that *chiritsumoru* conveys. I wanted the reader of the English version to be able to see the once anxious thoughts resting quietly, one upon the other, like so many fallen leaves on the ground, because that is what I could see in the Japanese text. But every English counterpart to *chiritsumoru* I came up with—"fall and accumulate," "fall and pile up"—seemed cumbersome and ineffective. In my frustration, I made the mistake I so often do in the initial stage of a translation, I overstated things. I made the simile between quieting



between the two readings, she spoke to the audience about the poem. In her comments, she gave much the same kind of information she had offered to me in her "Background and Explanation" statements, but tailored to this particular audience with its diversity of interests and backgrounds, and expressed in English. I know from talking to audience members afterwards there were ways that each poem changed for them as it was made more specific and particularized by the information Naomi offered. Both readings of each poem were memorable. At the first reading, the listener was wide open to the poem's possibilities and held competing interpretations in mind. At the second, reading his or her interpretation was more tightly focused and assured.

I admire each one of the eleven poems in Naomi's collection for the festival, but my personal favorite is "For the People Born from Cherry Blossoms," the final poem in the collection. From comments I heard at Naomi's reading, I think it was a special hit with other members of the audience as well, and it was the poem Naomi herself chose to re-offer on the last night of the festival. To be able to capture, as Naomi does in this poem, the humanity of the crowds that gather every year in public parks and gardens all over Japan to celebrate the transitory beauty of the cherry blossoms in *hanami* (cherry-viewing parties) is, in itself, a remarkable achievement. But she goes on in this poem to express, with no trace of cloying nationalism, her affection for the Japanese as a people, who share, at least within the cultural imaginary, a common DNA and a common love of blossoms. As Naomi noted at the time of her readings, this poem has taken on special significance for her in the wake of the horrific suffering of the March 2011 Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami disaster. She has dedicated her poem to the people of her homeland as they both mourn and work to rebuild and recover.

As a translator, I have never felt as humbled by my task as I did while translating the closing passage of "For the People Born from Cherry Blossoms." I wanted the words of the original to pass through



me cleanly without acquiring the slightest deflection in meaning or tone, simply appearing “on the other side” as though by magic in English. I remember wishing at some level of my consciousness as I worked on the text that I myself could disappear, become utterly transparent. Of course, that did not happen. In ways that I could not control and cannot now pin down, the meanings inevitably shifted and changed. But I am grateful to have had the chance to try.

Ah people of Japan let us ascend

Let us smoothly climb to the top
of the spiral of DNA
and gather beneath the cherry blossoms

There, for the people who know what it is like to share even a small sitting cushion,
are thrones, so many that even if everyone sits there will still be empty ones to spare

Ah people of Japan let us ascend

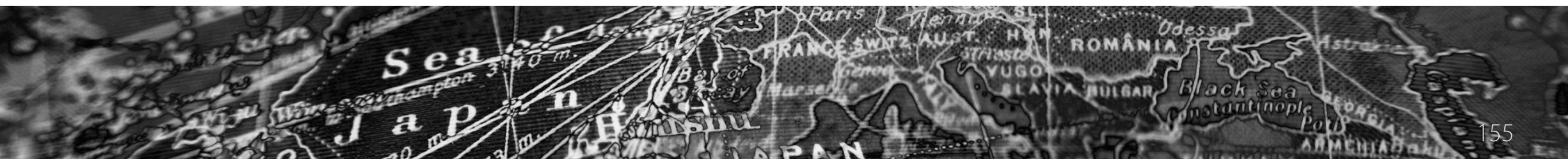
Both those of this world
and those of the other world
let us gaze at the stars from beneath the night cherries

For the people with full stomachs, who surrender everything to their love of blossoms
even those far-away stars must also somehow seem like someone close and dear

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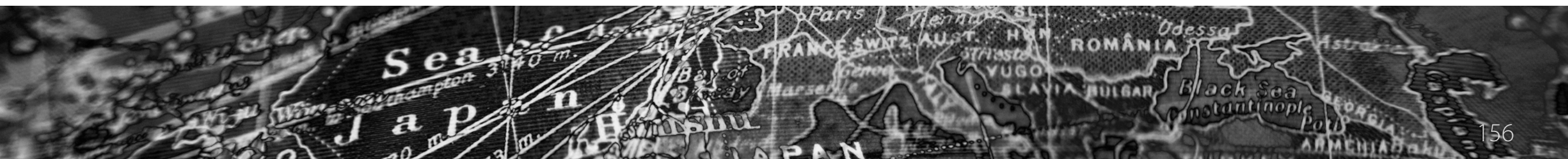
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Translation as an Event of Understanding

Claudia Aburto Guzmán

In 1996, Sherry Simon, in her book *Gender in Translation*, made two claims that I use as a starting point for this essay today. Translation, she said, is a “kind of literary activism,” a conscious engagement with cultural production. A translator when engaged in literary activism contributes to cultural debates by first understanding that the translated product either contests or affirms current cultural values (viii); and, as translation scholars have noted since, translators who are consciously engaged are acutely aware that these values are not homogeneous across cultures. Moreover, according to Simon, the translator is in a position to generate alternative currents of cultural communication. Even under today’s globalizing market pressures, which tend to standardize approaches to any cultural product and therefore translation, we can say that the translator is always and already engaged in the politics of transmission by contributing to a communicative dynamic. If we look at this dynamic more critically, it can also shed light on the nature of a translator’s contribution, on whether it is in league or in tension with diverse sectors of the target culture (that is, social sectors of the recipient culture) or with sectors of the source culture (culture from which the product originates). From this perspective, we can revise the notion that the translator is a passive conduit of someone else’s creation. In this regard, Simon’s second claim sheds light on the translator’s agency: “the *project* which the translator is promoting” influences the politics of transmission (viii).



The author expounds that the translator aims for fidelity towards the “writing project,” rephrasing the age-old concern so that fidelity is no longer a question addressing the author (source culture) or the reader (target culture), rather the capacity that a project has to intervene in culture. As a literary activist, the choices the translator makes are not merely linguistic choices in front of or as a result of the text; a much more profound set of cultural choices comes into play when the translator consciously opts to translate a text that either affirms or contests present day cultural values. To this end, Simon underscores that both author and translator may be equal participants in the process of cultural intervention (2).

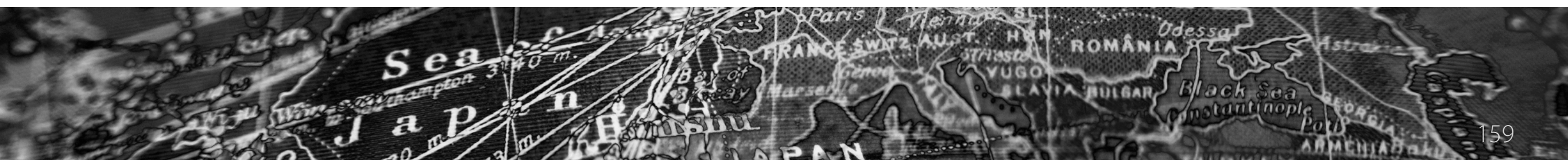
An example of what such an act of translation may contribute to cultural debates may be seen when we look back to the translations made of the works of Chicana (women) writers into Spanish. The Chicano culture can claim its roots to before the nation of the United States was established. Its present dominant linguistic expression is English and it dialogues with the dominant U.S. culture. However, its cultural backbone dates back to the encounter between the indigenous peoples and the Spanish conquerors, developing a unique culture anchored in the mythical place of Aztlán, situated in the Southwest of the United States. A faction of translators has engaged Chicana writing projects from the perspective of drawing bridges towards the Mexican culture in the spirit of allegiance and solidarity. Elena Poniatowska, for example, who translated *A House on Mango Street*¹, drew on her sensibility as a poet and writer of youth literature (among other things) to re-create the lyrical language accomplished by Sandra Cisneros (originally from Chicago), shedding light on the hardships of Mexican-American minorities in the United States for the Mexican reader. Another faction has translated Chicana writers, such as Castillo, Moraga, Anzaldua, Cisneros, and Cantú, consciously contributing to the feminist dialogue in Mexico and beyond, which developed a discourse that aimed at drawing attention to the politics of gender from the margins in both the Mexican and U.S.



referential diagrams, which are not easily transferable to monolingual speakers. In other words, an event of understanding through the learning and production of a language different than the one of origin allows for “something [to] come into being that had not existed before and that exists from now on” (580). In summary, language learning is, borrowing from Simon’s terminology, a “conscious engagement” with the *other* in order to bring about a communicative act leading to greater understanding of self and the other person.

Moreover, since the emphasis of learning another’s language is consciously driven, language learning may be seen as a field where the *pedagogy of understanding* may be seen at play. When in play, the pedagogy of understanding deemphasizes learning as a competitive event, disengages stress as part of the learning component, and refocuses learning as a tool to understand ourselves and others; by doing so, we revise thought processes and actions that perpetuate single-minded models of communication. In this regard, Walhof has underscored Gadamer’s emphasis that “an event of understanding entails a confrontation with the limits of one’s authority and knowledge. The other’s freedom...force[s] a recognition that ‘the other is not my dominion and I am not sovereign’” (580). As a result, the act of communication becomes paramount and language key to the fruition of said act.

Translation not only falls under the scope of the study of languages procuring possibilities for events of understanding, as Simon has underscored, it also falls under the field of cultural studies, where terms historically used to address identity, gender, and even culture itself become the objects of inquiry. As seen in the example above, a translator’s sensibility when consciously directed and faithful to the project may forge the possibility for new ways of understanding the source culture and, in addition, contribute to the target culture’s inquiry of its limitations of knowledge. The understanding



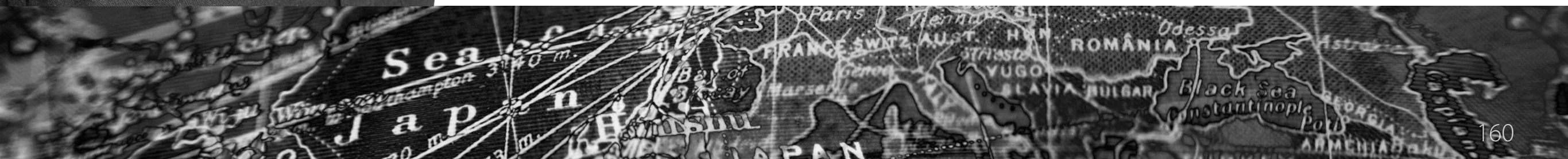


itself may not be enough to dislodge cultural practices that are no longer useful, but what was once no more than an interstice is now an articulated “something,” generating its own chain of connotative possibilities.

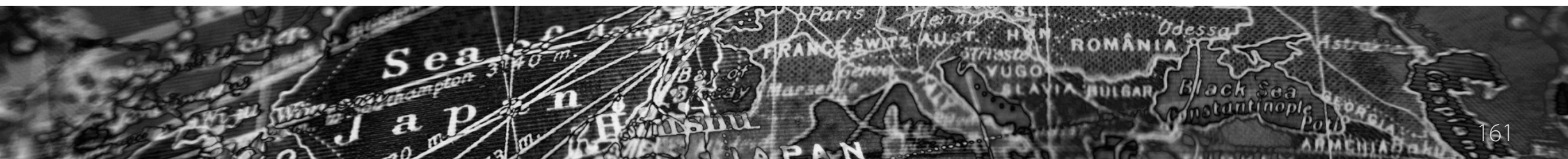
Translation: the Bates International Poetry Festival is an event that fosters intimacy as it spotlights the role of language(s) in the communicative act across cultures. It could be said that those who direct their learning towards acts of translation are consciously intervening in the culture that surrounds them; in order to do so they first confront moments that disclose their limited knowledge, then provide opportunities for events of understanding to take place in the wider-public sphere. During festival, the moments of disclosure that lead to deeper understanding of one’s relationship to the *other* takes place in a non-competitive atmosphere. The different aesthetics, values, concepts, and sensibilities the poets articulate within their cultural parameters are consciously translated so that the listener in the public sphere may become part of that “something” being produced and that does not have an exact replica in the target culture.

In order to better understand the above, I provide a few examples of translation moments that took place in relation to the festival that led to a deeper self-understanding and more thorough communicative acts. In the translation of Robert Farnsworth’s work, for example, I chose early to engage the cadence that he achieves in his poems. However, as I delved into the content of the poem, I found that there were unavoidable difficulties due to the cultural lens and experience that informed my interpretation of specific images. In “Winter Clock” from *Rumored Islands* (2010), the poetic voice attempts to capture the fleeting moment when a crow angles in order to gain height: “snow doubled / branch, and from / it a glossy crow’s / oblique chandelle / away: baton arc, smoke script, fled.” The verse enjambments were challenging enough, but not nearly as disruptive of my

Robert Farnsworth, America



comfort level as the “baton arc” metaphor. My initial reading was to recreate the arc of a policeman’s baton as it strikes down with the use of “porra” for baton. Depending on the perspective, there may be a startling effect that accompanies a crow’s sudden flight; I thought “porra” approached this element better than “bastón,” which is another word for the club policemen use, but it may also double as a walking stick. “Porra” also spoke to me visually as I could clearly picture it as it cuts the air. However, as weeks progressed and I continued the work, the aftereffect of implied violence, the image now carried gnawed at me. Was this a moment when my own knowledge of cultural power relations between Anglo-culture and Latino-culture was imposing a meaning that is possible in the larger spectrum, but that is not the drive behind the project? In other words, the tensions and interventions as a result of power relations between the two groups (or geographical regions, when I think Latin America) predispose me (or nuances my knowledge) to find more aggression in certain word-plays when emitted by Anglo monolingual persons. I went back to the poem many times before finally conceding that my cultural location and understanding of said relationships were betraying the project, which depends deeply on the lyrical power of language. In the poem included in this edition, the reader will find that I have settled on the word “batuta,” a conductor’s wand. The arc of a conductor’s wand brought me back to the opening question in the poem, which expands for four verses, “Now that, he was / almost thinking, was / beautiful, wasn’t / it?” Although any “stick” carrying hand has the promise of violence inscribed within its possibilities, by choosing to displace this meaning to the background, I restated the project highlighted by the opening verses, and which may be found throughout Farnsworth’s poetry. This does not eliminate the previous connotation, which as an aside, is what makes Farnsworth’s poetry exhilarating to work with, as its depth often conjures up the possible darkness waiting at the fringes of meaning, however, it makes clear that this poetry is of an intimate nature, as opposed to consciously



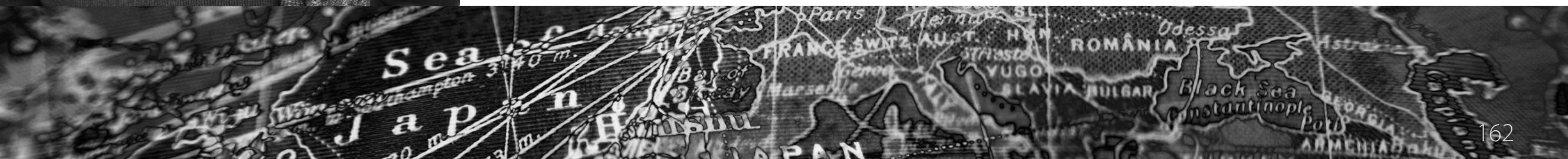


attempting to engage cultural locations. The event of understanding required that I step aside from my own schema and pull forward other existing possibilities.

A different event took place when working with the poetry of Francisca López. In the poem “Inquietud / Restlessness,” an opportunity to intervene at a cultural level was generated by the linguistic differences in both languages. In Spanish, the poetic voice genders the *tú*/you without needing to use personal pronouns, for example: “te mueves en círculos / arrebatado siempre,” however, in the process of translation, the masculine gender, indicated by the [o] ending in “arrebatado,” got lost in the unspecified *you*: “you move in circles / always impetuous.” As a translator of poetry, my literary training led me to understand that the reader would assume that the poetic voice referred to a feminine *you* due to the intimate connection between poetic voice and author, and that the possibility of feminine *you* would lead to *you* = self, preempting the interpretations that followed. Due to the poem’s construction, the challenge was to disrupt this assumption without taking too many liberties with the text. The importance of this intervention relies on understanding gendered literary canons, where it was historically assumed that women did not have enough of a critical distance to write in any other voice but their own. This is an understanding that is shared by both cultures; the difference lies on *when* the shift in the canon took place.

After my first run-through translation, I recognized the opportunity to disrupt readers’ pre-conceptions in the latter half of the poem. The stand-alone line before the last stanza makes use of a body part to ground what might suggest, throughout the poem, a metaphysical experience, “el sol en la vejiga.” The noun “la vejiga” has a direct equivalence, “bladder,” which is what I used on my first run-through the poem. Once I identified the noun as the juncture of disruption, I had two possibilities that would allow me to mark the body as masculine, “testicles and scrotum.” To understand the

Francisca López, Spain



possibilities being generated here, we have to take into consideration the reader's experience. First, the prescribed assumptions lead the reader to a feminine gender reading up to the moment when a body marker is used. Then, the force of the sexed body marker disrupts and introduces critical distance, which puts into play the fact that we are reading an *other* in translation. The awareness of the other in our reading experience discloses our limited understanding of what was taking place in the former part of the poem. In other words, the event of understanding for the reader is generated by becoming aware of the assumptions that led to the disruption, and by the awareness of reading the other who does not "fit" into the boxed concept from which the assumptions generated in the first place. Since this translation strategy was not construed to be subtle, I conferred with the poet, Francisca López, proposing she choose which of the two nouns she preferred. She chose the following translation of the above line: "The sun in the scrotum."

With the above, I hope to have illustrated translation as an "event of understanding." Moreover, because in translation we engage elements of intimacy and generate communicative dynamic, it may be seen as an example for a *pedagogy of understanding*, where the aim of learning includes the possibility of greater self-knowledge that may lead the interlocutors to being more effective in their attempts to positively intervene in culture.



Notes

1. Poniatowska's translation of *A House In Mango Street* is one of the texts used in Bates Department of Spanish's advanced Spanish language course.

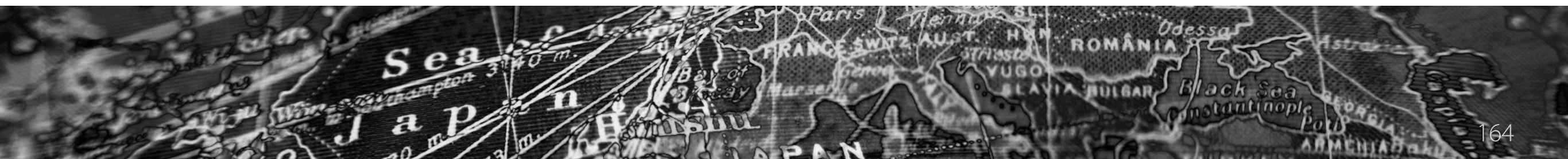
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Reflections

On Translation & Pedagogy

10

Translation for Cross-Cultural Thinking in the Liberal Arts

Laura Balladur and Francisca López

How does witnessing and assisting in the translation process sharpen awareness of poetic language as a medium of expression? How do translators negotiate the creative act of translation while preserving the poets' original voice? How does a poem's meaning and spirit get preserved across languages? How do culture and the material conditions that shape and inform poets get translated into another culture? As professors of non-English languages and cultures preparing to teach a class on translation practice and theory, we both knew that the translation classroom could go beyond a higher intermediate class in language and stylistics. In the post-banking fallout of 2008 and the current higher-education atmosphere rampant with news of budget cuts or downright elimination of foreign language and literature departments, highlighting the necessity of such departments and, for our students, reaffirming their choice of study seemed to go right at the heart of a class on translation.

As professors of non-English languages and cultures working in the United States, we have always been keenly aware of the importance of teaching global citizenship and disseminating cross-cultural knowledge. In fact, this awareness determines our pedagogical approach in all of our language and



it possible to combine our classes and hold general discussions of those theories on translation that we had deemed fundamental. Throughout the semester, through the always similar and, at times, even identical readings, our students had increasingly become aware of and conversant about some basic, if difficult to grasp, notions of import for translation: 1) the continuous interplay between a culture and its language; 2) the impact of politics and history on languages and cultures; and 3) the existence of obvious similarities among cultures (by now, in English, French, and Spanish) shaped by similar histories.

Translations, the 2011 Bates International Poetry Festival and Conference, provided the initial overarching context within which we could begin our work of collaboration. The festival created several opportunities to bring our students together and work alongside each other. Those meetings allowed us to point out and discuss specific shared linguistic structures, although we could only do this on a very basic level. It also demanded that students think of their audience and of how to negotiate meaning when authors offered specific insights about their poems. And last but not least, it allowed students to immediately see the impact of their work, showcased along with the work of international poets and in the presence of renowned professional translators.

However, important as the festival was for our courses, it was neither the only opportunity to combine our efforts, nor one that by itself could provide for the continuous and sustained type of collaboration that we had initially envisioned. We were so satisfied with our students' progress during the first half of the semester that we decided to continue experimenting and take our teaching and our courses another step further and move, as one might say, *beyond translation*—that is, beyond the conventional binary model of translation. Taking as a model the poetry festival, for the second part of the semester, we envisioned a multilingual translation experience and invited colleagues in other



departments to join in as we organized a Bates student poetry and translation festival. Poets writing in English in our colleague Robert Farnsworth's Advanced Poetry Workshop would provide the poems to be translated by students in French, German, Russian, and Spanish courses. In this manner, we wanted to instill in our students the value of collaboration, a fundamental one that can be particularly productive when looking at the interconnectedness of culture and language, since each person may have very different insights. Overall, we wanted them to experience first-hand the interrelations between language and culture, the linguistic and cultural continuities and discontinuities among imperial languages of diverse origin, and how these have influenced one another through history, that is to say, how language and ideas followed different directions at different times in history.

Process

In designing a similar syllabus, we were helped tremendously by the translation workshop held in February 2011 at Bates College, where Luise von Flotow from the School of Translation and Interpretation at the University of Ottawa discussed her translation curriculum. The two-day workshop carefully mapped out the genealogy of translation studies in the 20th and 21st centuries, and it also outlined the major theoretical movements that have shaped and transformed translation studies. This workshop gave us a tremendous framework from which to choose selected topics for our one-semester class, and in that multitude of options, we needed to make choices. Unlike the program in Ottawa, our departments only offer translation as one course among many. Our translation classes needed to serve multiple functions: deal with both very concrete, pragmatic issues of linguistics; and with theoretical approaches that address the politics on language and translation. And do all of this while, at the same time, translating the poems of Peruvian Miguel Ángel Zapata (Spanish) and Quebecois Daniel Plourde (French) to be read at the poetry festival itself, work that we knew



Miguel Ángel Zapata, Peru





class discussion on meaning, power, and politics. We also introduced significant theoretical concepts through short readings that formed the basis of small class translation exercises (Gilles Deleuze's "Philosophie et minorité" on major and minor languages, as well as a short and much more readable excerpt from Derrida's "Des tours de Babel") or through lectures (Spanish).

With a similar syllabus, it was very easy to plan several combined meetings. Just as our syllabus reflected an attention moving from form to meaning to larger political and multicultural stakes, so did our combined meetings.

The first time we combined our classes occurred early on before the Translations poetry festival and conference. Here, as stated before, students in each class worked together in groups and translated poems from the invited poets Miguel Ángel Zapata (Spanish) and Daniel Plourde (French). The task of translation necessitates a solid understanding of the source language, and, for our foreign language students, that level of fluency can vary greatly. Having students work in a collaborative fashion on poetry translation gets them to discuss form and meaning, to explore ideas, to teach and to learn. We also live in a time where many translation tools are readily available online, making the language lab and access to computers a natural place to combine our first class. Students in both classes also had to maintain a blog where they could comment on specific passages from the poems, comment on each other, and in some cases, question the authors directly. Although, at this stage, our students weren't collaborating with students from the other class, we felt that bringing them together in one common space would reinforce their common processes, as well as introduce them to each other.

These shared meetings also provided us with an unexpected pedagogical moment when, as teachers, we both realized that our students both shared and confused a confusing linguistic

Daniel Plourde, Canada



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the process and linguistic challenges both poets and translators experienced. Just as languages supplement each other and only point to the specificity of language and culture, so too the process of translating points to the heart of communication. In the end, we fostered a spirit of collaboration and joint authorship with students from across many languages taught and spoken at Bates College. Albeit in a controlled setting, our students participated in collaborative exchanges that eroded and resisted Gentzler's idea of monolingualism, and emphasized instead that meaning, languages and cultures are always shaped by constant negotiations with other languages, and cultures. In the words of Gentzler, we got our students to witness how "the Other invades the space of the Same to create a secret translation discourse from within."

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The Bridge, the Train, and the Song

Translation Metaphors in the Foreign Language Classroom

Raluca Cernahoschi

The Bridge

The translation of Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu's poems for the second Bates International Poetry Festival took place in the fifth-semester course of the German language sequence. In a small department with a limited number of courses, there was no possibility for offering a specialized translation course to coincide with the festival, so the project needed to be integrated into the existing curriculum. Conceived as a "bridge" between focusing on language and focusing on literature and culture, the third-year course lent itself best to a project that also often conjures up images of bridging. This first coincidence of metaphors provided the idea for framing the course as one about writing at the intersection of languages and cultures. The students would examine the ways in which authors living in two or more cultures translate their experience

Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu, Romania



into texts and would probe whether the metaphor of bridging, so appealing at first, was apt. The translation for the festival would invite the students into the intercultural negotiation space and would provide a hands-on test for the viability of this or any other metaphors.

The particular demands of the course dictated the reading list. Because the course needed to be entirely in German, the list could not include theoretical writings in English, yet German translations of such works would have been too difficult for the student's language level. Instead, the list encompassed a variety of autobiographical pieces by writers for whom negotiating between languages and cultures has left an indelible mark, from the Bulgarian-born Elias Canetti to the Japanese-German Yoko Tawada, and from the Turkish-German Zafer Şenocak to the Transylvanian Puchianu.

These texts offered the students a way to expand their understanding of what such a negotiation might entail, yet because of the early date of the festival, most of these readings occurred after the translation project was completed. With only seven weeks until the beginning of the festival, the class needed a shortcut that would allow the students to think through some of the issues—both philosophical and practical—of translating the work of the Romanian-born German-writing Puchianu. The shortcut was provided by the example of Svetlana Geier, the subject of the documentary *The Woman with the Five Elephants* and one of the most important translators from Russian into German of the 20th century. The film, directed by Vadim Jendreyko, follows the translator, who left the Soviet Union with the retreating German army in 1943, on her first trip from her home in Freiburg im Breisgau back to her native Kiev. At home in Freiburg and on the journey to Kiev, the translator expounds on her literary and life philosophy, built around favorite metaphors: the text as a building, a woven fabric, or an onion, translation as the march of a caterpillar or as a kind of yearning. The director complements Svetlana Geier's narrative metaphors with two visual ones: the bridge and the



act of sitting in a moving vehicle and looking out at the landscape—as the speakers of “Gebein liegt auf dem Feld,” “Postkarte ’07,” and “Ausblick” do—was familiar. The landscape of Puchianu’s poems, on the other hand, had the students puzzled. Littered with bones and decaying vegetation and devoid of a positive human imprint, the scenery seemed otherworldly. Clearly, there was a link between the “train” poems and the “death” poems, pointing to the use of the passing train with its unknown “last stop” as a metaphor for the transience of life. Still, the specificity of the landscape—its colors, signs, sounds, even smells—also implied a specifically located and embodied experience.

Like the train taking Svetlana Geier back to her native Ukraine and to the memories of her youth there, Puchianu’s trains proved vehicles for accessing the remote: another country, another language, and another lifetime. Born in 1950s Romania, Carmen Elisabeth Puchianu started writing poetry in three languages in her early years as a German and English teacher, much of it during regular train commutes between her native city of Braşov/Kronstadt—abbreviated as K. in her poems—and the small hamlet of Filipeştii de Târg to which she had been posted. Even after giving up the commute—and settling on German, her mother’s tongue, as her literary language—Puchianu’s landscapes are tinged with a sense of impermanence. Things approach and recede, strike the retina or the ear and disappear, are fleetingly recorded as projections in a window or ambiguous word creations.

The students followed the poet to Constanţa, the biggest port on the “Romanian Riviera,” to her hometown and other locales in southern Transylvania, and to the city of Passau on the border between Austria and Germany, on business trips and vacations, on walks and to concerts. They learned about the German minority of Romania, about the country’s transition from communism to market capitalism, about life in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, about Transylvanian Saxon folklore, but also about relationships and loneliness, family and loss.



Then it was the students' turn to impart the same sense of space to their English-speaking readers. Whether this meant recreating the rhythm of a rushing train, as in the first stanza of "Gebein liegt auf dem Feld," capturing the surprise of a fleeting glimpse, as in the short poem "Ausblick," or the mood of a concert hall in the Romania of the 1980s, the students understood that they could no longer be just passengers in Puchianu's landscape. Their choices of words, sentence structures, rhymes, and rhythms would determine how the festival audience—and, later, English-speaking readers—accompanied the poet on her journeys.

The Song

The solutions the students found were sometimes facilitated by the happy coincidence of two related languages; in other instances, the paths diverged. Often, German word economy, achieved through compounding or the addition of prefixes, was impossible to replicate in English without resorting to hyphens or prepositions. Thus, "sorgenzerfurcht" became "wrinkled from worry," "schwarzweißes Elsterngekeife" a "black-and-white magpies' nagging," and "meridianbedingt" "meridian-conditioned." The German sentence bracket—a separation of predicates used with great effect by the poet—also required creative solutions. In "Gebein liegt auf dem Feld," the students were able to keep the adverb indicating the descent of the rain separate, but moved it up one line to avoid stiling the verses in translation:

*der Herbst hängt ausgebleicht
in grauen Schwaden vom Himmel
herab*

the bleached-out autumn hangs
down
in gray clouds from the sky

In the same poem, the group was faced with the necessity to fix the meaning of "Kürbisleuchten," an immaterial concept and a word of Puchianu's own invention. The neologism, made up of the



noun “pumpkin” and the verb “to shine” (which can also be a noun), can be read in different ways—as a burst of color or as fairy lights. The students decided to play on their own and the audience’s association with the ghostly flickers of Halloween in the rendition “pumpkin lights.”

As the students grew in skill and confidence, they realized that arriving on the scene painted by the poet also involved the willingness to lay down a new track. This sometimes required the manipulation of the syntactic and rhythmic registers of the English language; at worst, bringing to the fore the incompatibilities of the two related languages, at best, making music all of its own.

The ornithological allegory “Tändelei,” which relies both on the local connotations of birds common to Transylvania and on a staccato rhythm for its effect, proved one of the most difficult texts to translate. Despite a concerted effort by the whole class in consultation with the poet herself, the translation remained tentative. Although the students found that a literal translation of the birds’ activities, as described in the poem, lacked the impact of the original, the song-like rhythm of the poem would have been lost by a more lengthy circumscription. The problem was compounded by the fact that the birds’ connotations in the US—to the extent to which they exist here—are different from the Transylvanian ones. Their English names, too, have different aural resonances from the German ones (the three-syllable “woodpecker,” with its comical alternation of long and short vowels and soft and hard consonants, is no match for the short and swift “Specht,” nor is the rounded “owl” for the strident “Käuzchen”). Despite the decision to render the text as closely to the original as possible, the rhyme “Macht” / “lacht” (“might” / “laughs”), which underscores the almost demonic power of the blackbird—Puchianu’s signature bird—was also lost in the English translation.



The difficulty of rendering “Tändelei” into English, however, developed the students’ sense of the gains and losses inherent in translation and gave rise to a new set of metaphors for it. In the thick of the process, the students likened translation to the improvisation of song, the sieving of fine particles, the making of a changing recipe, the skill, effort, and reward of a long-distance run, triathlon, or mountain climb, and the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly. The first of these—the song—struck me as especially perceptive. Like a song resulting from the interplay of the composer’s score and the vocalist’s interpretation, translation requires a fine-tuned exchange between the poet’s original words and those of the translator. The translation of poetry, in particular, hinges on recreating not only the poet’s images but also her melody with different linguistic tools.

In this, translation is not unlike the improvisation of jazz. At their best, the students’ translations execute the same rapid or languishing cadences with a new vocabulary. In translating “Palaverer Tod,” the students decided to choose the shorter “no” instead of the more literal “without” for a brisker pace and to replace the untranslatable play on the verb “streiten” (“to argue”) with synonyms alliterating in “d.” The result is a “Chatterer Death” who gives new meaning to the English chestnut—not available in German—of “talking to death:”

*Er palavert ohne Unterlass,
ohne Punkt, ohne Pause,
ohne Argument:
streitet,
bestreitet, wider
streitet,
streitet
ab.*

He chatters with no intermission,
no stop, no pause,
no reason:
dissents,
denies,
disagrees with,
disputes
on.



In his piece for the *Translations 2010* volume, Robert Farnsworth suggests that a poem is fundamentally about resistance. First it resists the poet, who has to coax it into words, then it resists the translator, who must listen “into the poem’s approach, its heartbeat, its footsteps, its motives and behavior, so as to carry these across into another tongue, into another world of reference and belief” (108). Yet, this resistance to translation I found during the course is quite elastic. The poem bends and stretches, pulls far away and comes back to deliver not just its own language but also that of the translator. In the hands of the students, the poems became a testing ground for their own languages, not just the German acquired in the last two, three, or five years, but also of the English they never knew they had:

*Abends schwappt das Meer
schmatzend nach seinem feuchten
Tellerrand,
leckt über
Kuhlen und Risse
und
rülpt so lange den Tag aus,
bis auch der schwächsten Welle
das Genick gebrochen wird.*

The sea sloshes at night
smacks at its moist
rim,
licks over
scrapes and scratches
and
belches out the day,
until the neck of even
the weakest wave is broken.

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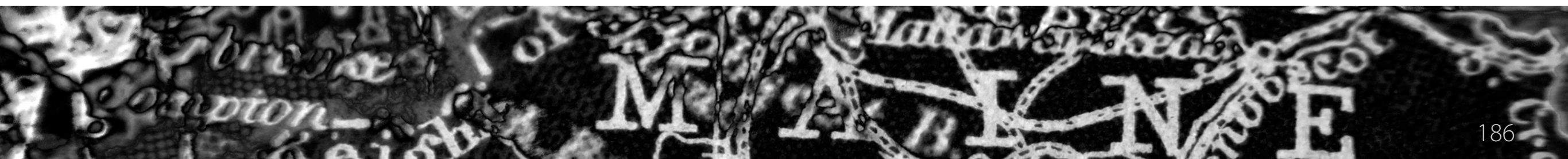


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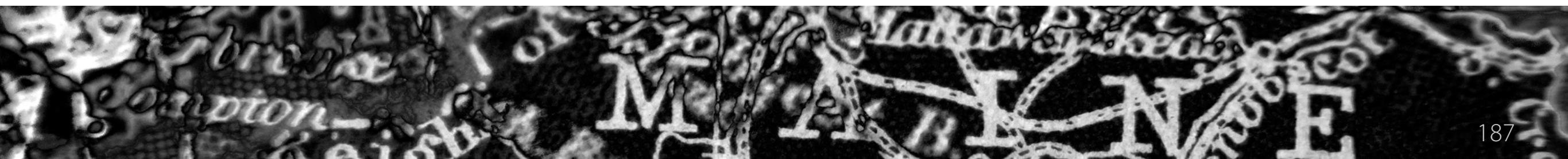
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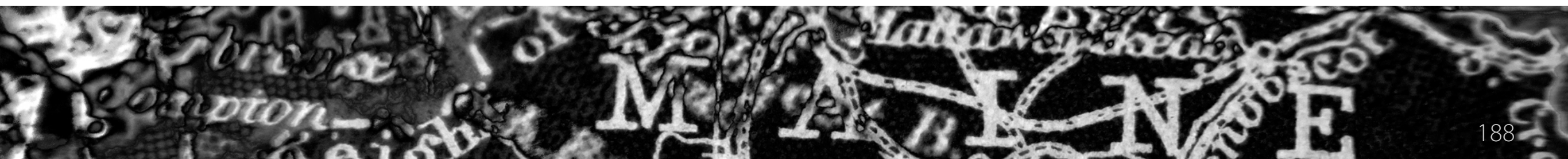
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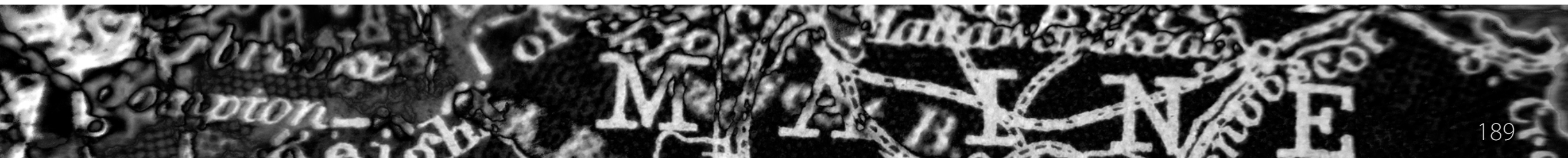
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Claudia Aburto Guzmán, Editor



Translations: Bates International Poetry Festival, 2011

Claudia Aburto Guzmán, Editor, Festival Creator

William Ash, Designer, Photographer

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