

The
Spaces

of

Bill and Stephanie Sick
Distinguished Professor:
Ann Hamilton

Reading—

object,

image,

word,

event

Letter

from

the

Dean

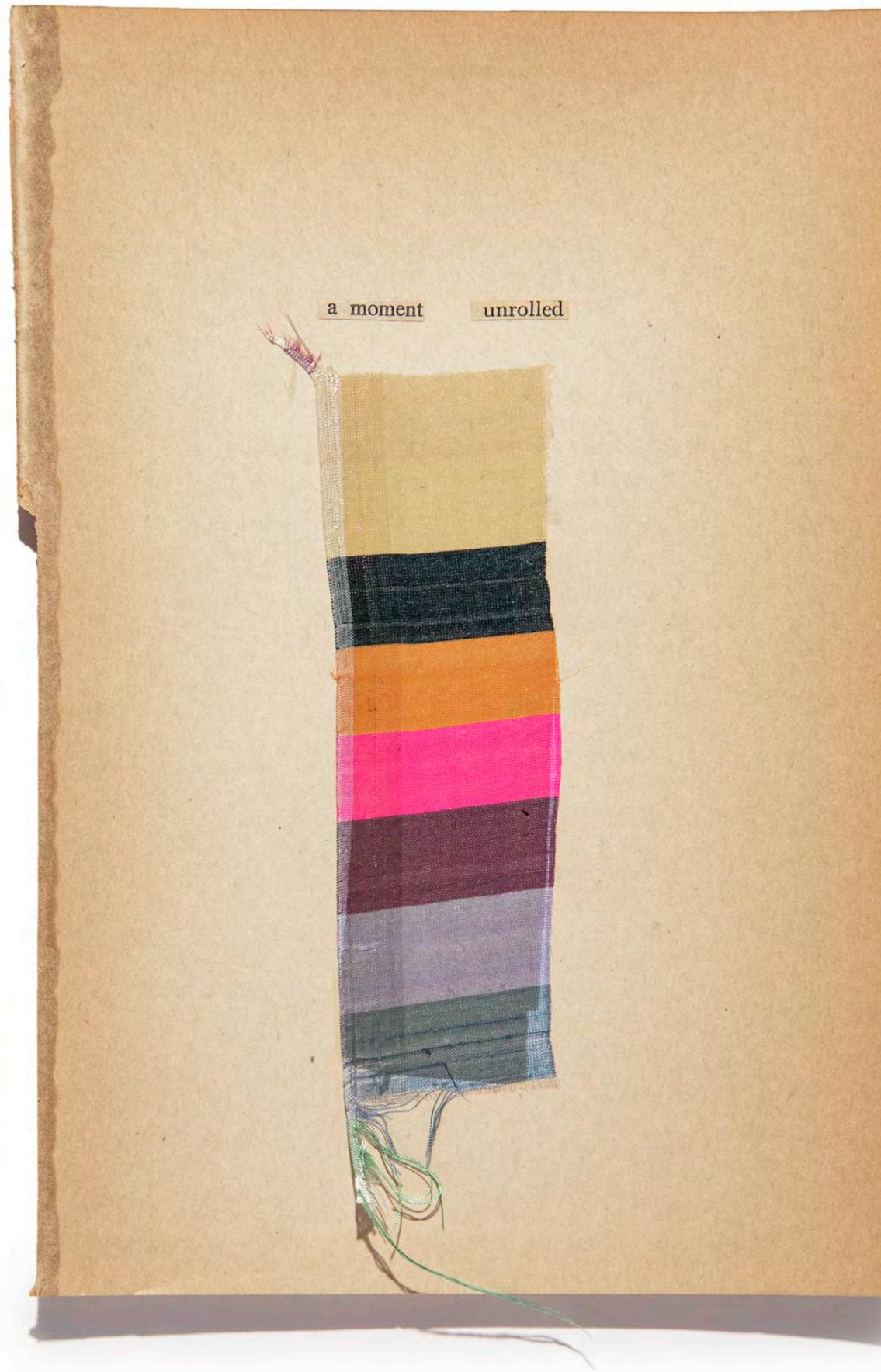
Now more than ever, our society needs artists, designers, and scholars to address the conditions of our existence and to convey through imaginative means the possibility of new futures. This year's Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor, Ann Hamilton, does just that: through form and content, her work resonates with a powerful aesthetic agency.

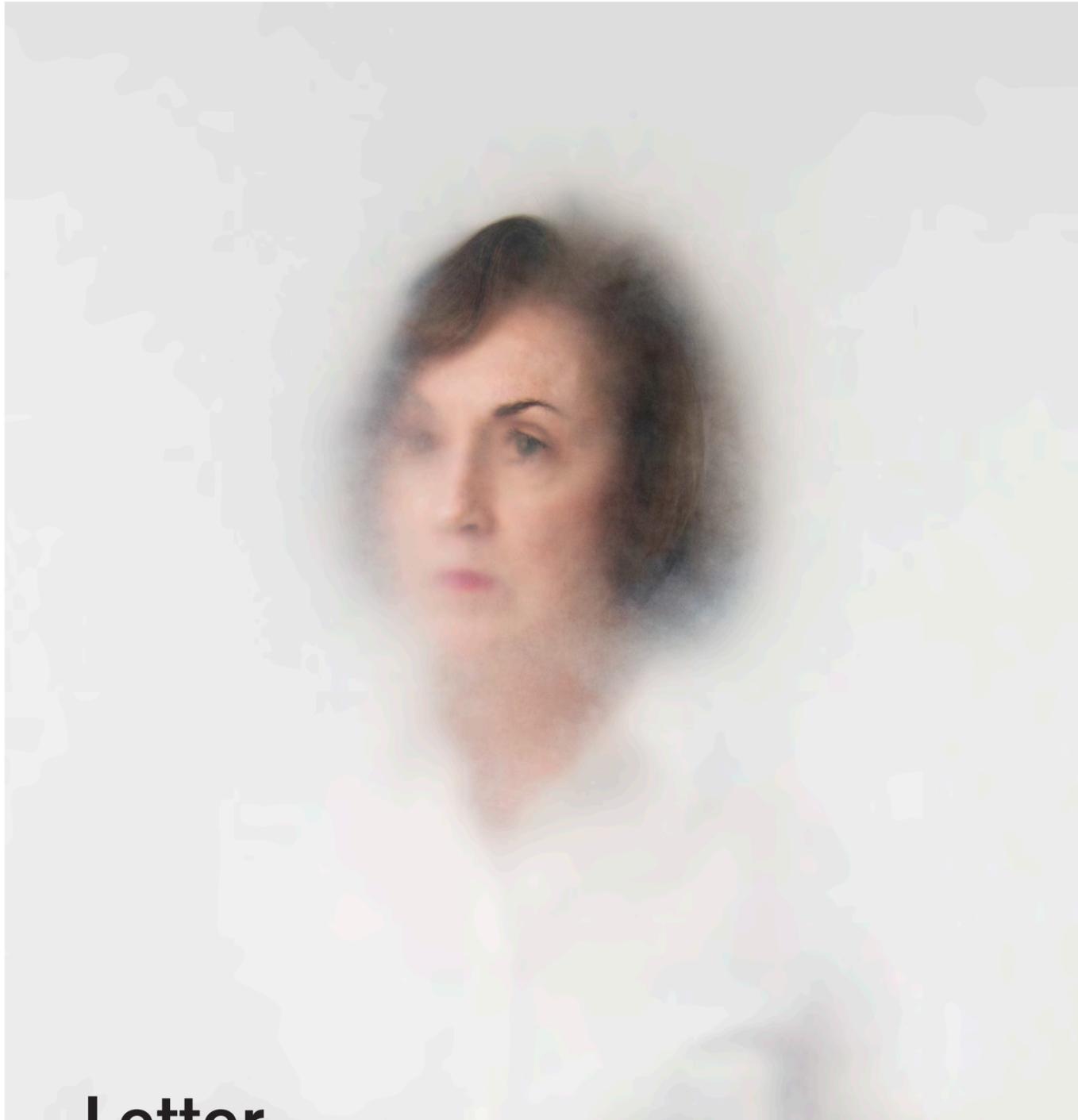
Since its inception, the Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professorship has brought many such agents of cultural awareness to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) classrooms. Bill Fontana, Theaster Gates (HON 2014), Bruce Mau, Catherine Opie, Jaume Plensa, Chris Ware (SAIC 1991–93), and Andrea Zittel are just some of the extraordinary artists and designers supported as visiting professors by Bill and Stephanie Sick's gift. Here, these astonishing individuals worked with our esteemed SAIC professors, often in relation to our museum, and side by side with our talented students. We thank our friends Stephanie and Bill Sick for their tireless and true support of the School and what they believe to be an art school's principle role in creating an inclusive, inventive, and creatively just society.

This year's Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor Ann Hamilton came at a perfect moment—a time when we are asking deep questions about who we are as a community of diverse people with differing desires and beliefs. Hamilton embodies our open and experimental values—working between so many disciplines: performance, sound, sculpture, installation, video, and text. This commitment to multiple ways of exploring the world around us is key to the kind of embodied learning and understanding that allows for engaged dialogue. “How do you become conscious?” Hamilton asked. A not-so-simple question, really, but one that artists address so well. How can art teach us about empathy, about experiential ways of understanding our world? In the context of the political theater around us, and with the incessant din of the mass media in the background, Hamilton's practice reminds us of art's strength in quieting the mind so as to illuminate the soul. SAIC welcomed Ann Hamilton on campus during the spring 2017 semester, and again we honor the generosity of Stephanie and Bill Sick for letting her optimistically explore with students and faculty a practice of radical, free expression.

Lisa Wainwright

Dean of Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs





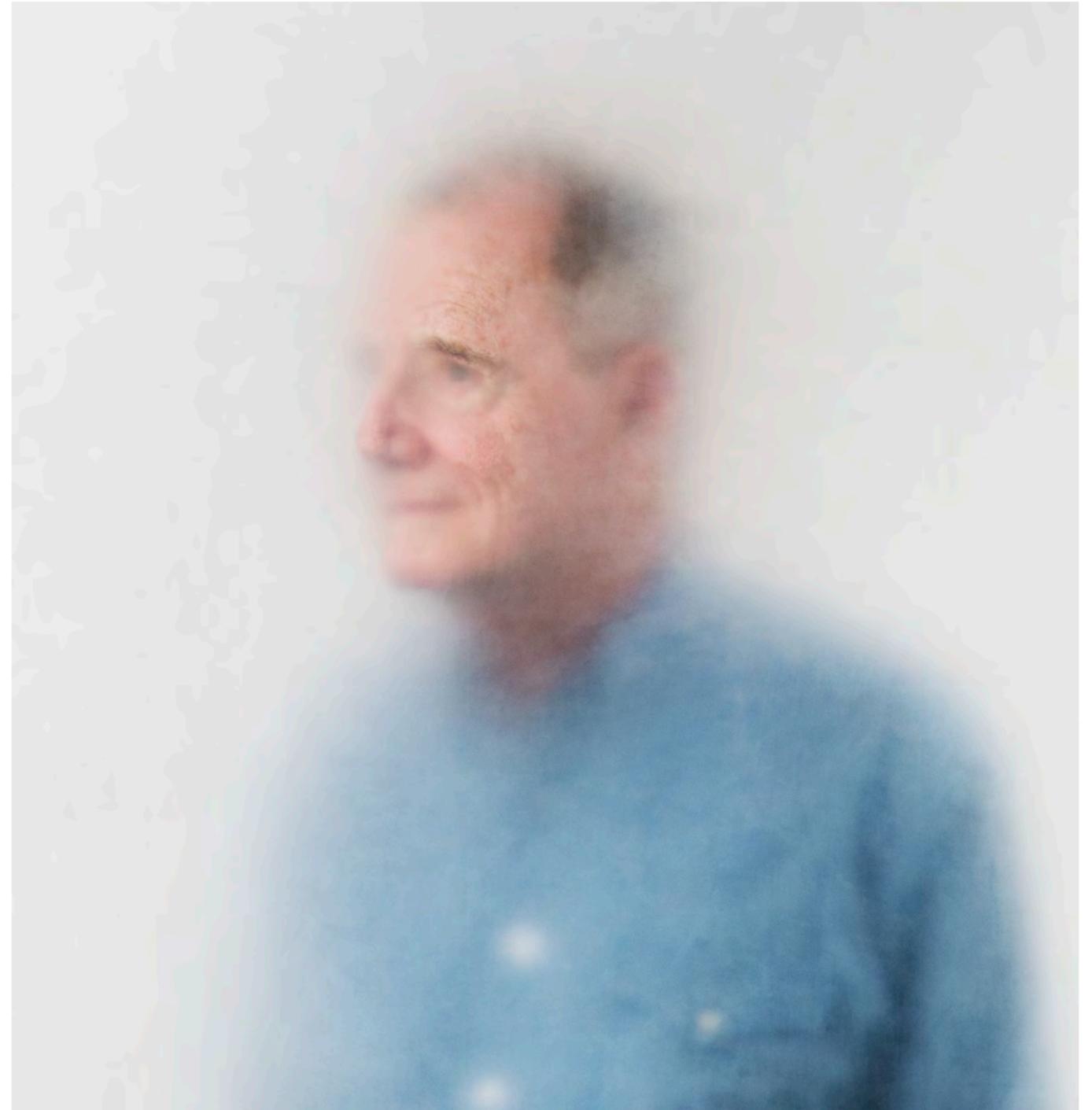
Letter

from

the

Sponsors

Above: Ann Hamilton, *ONE EVERYONE* • Stephanie, 2017
Right: Ann Hamilton, *ONE EVERYONE* • Bill, 2017



We are very pleased to present the work produced in the 2017 course *The Spaces of Reading—object, image, word, event* at SAIC. The course was beautifully taught by Ann Hamilton, SAIC’s 2016–17 Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor and SAIC faculty members Matthew Goulish and Lin Hixson.

Ann Hamilton’s interdisciplinary work brings people together. In the large-scale installation *the event of a thread* (2013) at the Park Avenue Armory in New York, viewers were invited to move large curtains by swinging on two-person swings. In the *ONE EVERYONE* project, hundreds of photographs taken of people inside the Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin were compiled into a book that was distributed free throughout the neighborhood surrounding the school. Working through performance, installation, textiles, video, and photography, Hamilton’s practice exists at the points where we connect to each other.

As you can see, this publication was inspired by the newspaper format. Its appeal stems from the fact that it is accessible and able to be widely distributed. The form may be common, but, as you will see, the content is extraordinary. Hamilton, Goulish, and Hixson asked the students to create work collaboratively—both with each other and also in dialogue with other artists’ writings. The result is an experimental, playful text-based work that unfolds over time and through multiple readings.

We are proud to recognize Ann Hamilton as our Distinguished Visiting Professor and happy to support SAIC students’ learning from and alongside such influential and inspirational artists.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Sick
Bill Sick

Course

Description

The Spaces of Reading

Matthew Goulish, Ann Hamilton, Lin Hixson

The Spaces of Reading explores relations between reading, writing, and making and the places of and for text composition and processing in material practices.

How do you read?

How does reading destabilize public and private spheres?

How do you construct a site for communal reading?

Through individual presentations, students engage the meeting places of portraiture with material, text with action, and museum/archive object with text, action, and material.

They compose creative responses to these presentations using quotes from readings, following these directive questions

What, in the presentation, revalues what we have learned to ignore?

How does it extend our faculties of perception?

Throughout the course, readings address the processes of reading and writing. Students discuss what each of these readings proposes in relation to these processes. Readings include texts by Gertrude Stein, Wallace Stevens, Magalie Guérin, Jay Wright, Brian Rotman, Arkadii Dragomoshchenko, Marcel Proust, and Susan Stewart.

Group underlining activity instruction: As you read the assigned text, underline any words, phrases, or sentences that you wish to spend more time with for whatever reason. We will then circulate around the room, with everyone reading one underlined selection at a turn, until we have heard all the underlined passages from everyone. This will give us one way to engage the text, by hearing what people selected from it. Later, in quartets, underlined extracts in relation to a shared text will be assembled into a secondary text for publication beside the original.

Concordance activity: Using a specific form that Ann Hamilton engages in her work, the concordance in a mesostic form, students work in quartets to generate secondary texts in relation to found texts loaded into the concordance computer program.

Concordance instruction: Begin by composing a spine text in collaboration with your quartet, a short line or set of five to 10 words that will run vertically down the middle and determine the inclusion of horizontal lines. These spine words may derive from writing you have composed in the context of the class. Consider that the words of the spine text must also occur in the body text, as the concordance weaves from the intersection of words. Consider the spine words in relation to the horizontal text source. Select a horizontal text that has already been loaded into the program or a new source text that can be loaded into the program.



The Spaces of Reading – object, image, word, event

Matthew Goulish, Lin Hixson, and Sick Professor Ann Hamilton

PERF 3038 / WRIT 5500

Spring 2017 / Wednesday 9-12pm

This interdisciplinary seminar investigates relations between reading, writing, and making and the places of and for text composition and processing in material practices. Students will engage in creative responses to curated objects, archival research, material studies, and explorations of time structures. Through the semester, students will contribute to a collaboratively assembled publication that will both document the work of the course and offer an instance of that work.

Course readings may include poetry, essays, and electronic literature by Gertrude Stein, Jay Wright, Arkadii Dragomoshchenko, E. H. Gombrich, Susan Stewart, St. Augustine, Aristotle, Wallace Stevens, Kathleen Stewart, Mary Ruefle, Anne Truitt, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, and Kim Hyesoon.

TO APPLY: Communicate in one paragraph and/or 1 minute and/or 3 images why you would like to enroll in the in the course and its relevance to your practice. Applications will be submitted through Slideroom beginning 9/2/16 until 10/21/16. Students will be notified whether they have been admitted into the course by 11/7/16. The slideroom application can be found at the following link:

<https://saicscholarships.slideroom.com/#/permalink/program/32503>

Introduction

Matthew Goulsh and Lin Hixson

*Ann Hamilton Introduction, Visiting Artists Program Lecture
School of the Art Institute of Chicago, February 7, 2017*

Lin: I never realized how tall President Obama was until 2015, when I saw him leaning down to award the National Medal of Arts to Ann Hamilton. I imagined those two Midwesterners had much to talk about, he from Chicago, Illinois, she from Columbus, Ohio. There are extraordinary individuals in the world. They devote their lives to a clear ideal, like an idea of community, communion, “the right of the people peaceably to assemble.”¹ They have the skills, imagination, and persistence to realize gestures of radical hospitality on an unrivaled scale. In so doing they become ideals themselves, and we learn to navigate by them.

Matthew: A friend told me that he walked into the Park Avenue Armory in late 2012 in a bad mood, only to have his mood overpowered by *the event of a thread*, Ann Hamilton’s vast curtain of luminous fabric set ariple like aurora borealis by the participatory system of pulleys and swings. He left happy. It’s that simple sometimes. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. As I grew older my child’s reasoning grew with me, grew larger and wider and never stopped growing; like a reptile it will grow until I die, and I never stopped loving the world. Forgive me for warping Corinthians. I’m trying to find how to speak about those things in Ann’s work that outrun language.

Lin: I want to speak about harnessing the power of a space, reading its social and physical genealogies, challenging the authority and finitude of historical accounts, choosing to tell the story that would otherwise remain unsaid. I want to speak about capturing the ephemeral presence of time with material tactility. I can’t find the words for distilling the complexity that enters into any human experience and forging meaning with a democratic mode of art making.

Ann’s most recent project, *ONEEVERYONE* for the Dell Medical School in Austin, Texas, collects over 500 portraits from the local medical communities, photographed through a semi-opaque membrane, compiled into a wordless telephone book, an aesthetic directory for everyday use. Like so many of her projects, this one retains the beauty of the humblest of elements. Each realization remakes those categories of photography, sculpture, installation, exhibition, and makes us forget them by immersing us in vibrant constructed environments.

Matthew: By virtue of the Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professorship, we have the privilege of coteaching a course with Ann this semester. We named it *The Spaces of Reading* after the way her work understands the encounter with the word, in library silence or aloud in an auditorium, as always already a generative and deconstructive encounter. The text, if we let it, will envelop us in its architecture and devise its own inflection and conception of public space. Ann’s architectural work, animated by the spirits of human gathering, resonant of rich traditions of the American Protestant monastics (the Shaker dance, the Quaker meeting hall) and collective social responsibilities, emergent modalities of inclusion, as her pioneering work in electronic literature, understands at the most fundamental level how the words text and textile share the Latin root *texere*, to weave.

Lin: “...in anything which we call very graceful we imagine ourselves able to detect, besides the lightness which is a sign of mobility, some suggestion of a possible movement towards ourselves, of a virtual and even nascent sympathy. It is this mobile sympathy, always ready to offer itself, which is just the essence of higher grace.”²

And now we need that virtual sympathy of grace, that right of assembly, that fearless speech, that tireless attention.

We are so honored to welcome Ann Hamilton as our 2016–17 Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor.

¹ First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

² Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay of the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, 13.



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Ann Hamilton for being an influential and generous Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor. She began her term by giving a Visiting Artists Program (VAP) lecture on campus in February. She shared her time and insights by visiting with students in the Fiber and Material Studies and Film, Video, New Media, and Animation departments, and she gave a recorded interview to SAIC's Video Data Bank. We also thank Hamilton's studio assistants Nicole Rome, Jessica Naples Grilli, and Kara Gut for arranging her travel to SAIC and designing and photographing the facsimile pages in this publication.

The course *The Spaces of Reading* was designed by Hamilton along with our faculty members Lin Hixson and Matthew Goulish who cotaught the course with Hamilton. *The Spaces of Reading*, was also supported by: Sally Alatalo, Chair of SAIC's Department of Writing; Robin Deacon, Chair of the Department of Performance; Emilio Rojas (MFA 2017), Teaching Assistant; Amber Da, Administrative Director of the Writing department; Rana Siegel, Senior Administrative Director of the Performance department; and Monisola Gbadebo, Technology Manager for the Performance department.

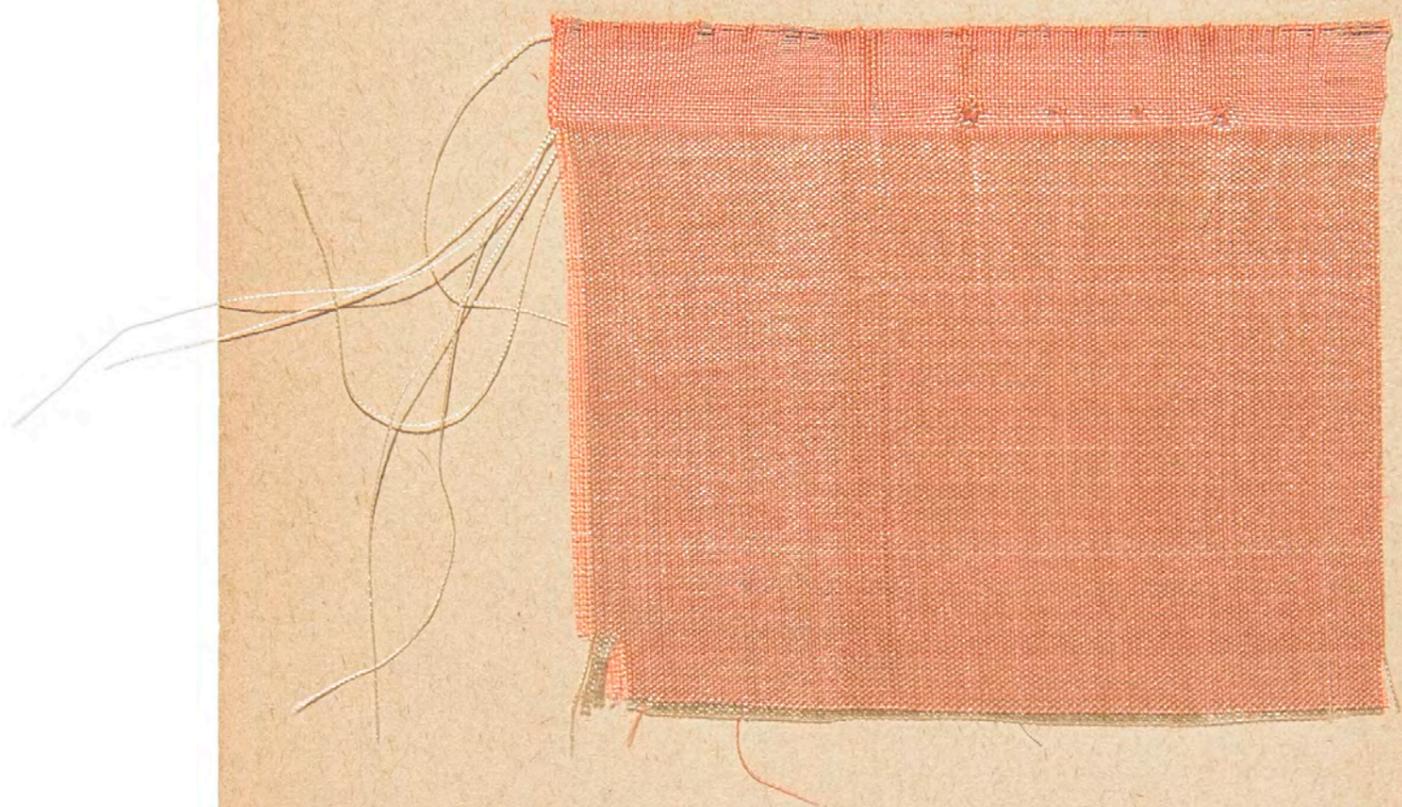
Hamilton's VAP lecture was arranged by Andrea Pierro, Director of SAIC's Visiting Artists Program, and Elisabeth Anderson, Program Coordinator. We are also grateful to the members of the Visiting Artists Program's Faculty Advisory Committee for their thoughtful recommendations.

All of this would not be possible without the vision, generosity, and support of Bill and Stephanie Sick. On behalf of our students and the SAIC community, thank you for your dedication to this rich and rewarding program.

When the Lords of Karma
who move the world
claim our institutions
and the Breath of Life
repeats its work
by rolling us up in a carpet

Get to know your neighbors, and
disarm them their suspicions, for
barbaries will grow upon
the wreckage of the state

go on looking.



READER 1 Beware of a lake
 READER 2 The sun may shine
 READER 3 reflection burn you
 READER 4 Beware of a lake the sun may shine
 READER 1 the sun may shine
 READER 3 between
 READER 4 It may be cold either way
 READER 1 and the reflection burn
 READER 2 reflection
 READER 3 a particle at a time
 READER 4 They are not acquainted with any one
 who has butter for sale

 READER 3 any ground
 READER 4 There are many ways of drowning bees
 READER 1 history of the changing
 READER 2 a history of a country is not a history of
 the changing

 READER 3 any one
 READER 1 for which they do not care
 READER 3 anywhere
 READER 1 They have a particle at a time of any more
 READER 2 never eager
 READER 3 Hours of clouds
 READER 3 gather
 READER 1 This account is one which makes
 no account

 READER 2 no account of waterfalls
 READER 1 of waterfalls or trees or any ground
 READER 1 which is used for giving them this.
 READER 2 drowning bees in honey
 READER 1 There are many ways of drowning bees
 in honey

 READER 2 Hours of clouds.
 READER 1 Hours of clouds.
 READER 1 what they plant.



gertrude stein
 HISTORY
 or Messages from History
 GREEN INTEGER 1

9
 What is history. Leave leaves and summer. Lettuce leaves and spring and summer. Leaf when an officer marries a daughter and they will have a home together. A leaf of embroidery. She makes leaves and a leaf very perfectly making it with a better than hopefully. Hope was in praise of hoping. This is the history of a name.

10
 Beware of a lake the sun may shine and the reflection burn you or it may be cold either way is as it were a frontier. A frontier is a division between countries. A history of a country is not a history of the changing of frontiers although many think so particularly those near the frontier the history of a country is why they like things which they have and which they do not exchange for other things for which they do not care. They have

» 40 «

a particle at a time of any more and they are never eager. No country is ever eager.
 This account is one which makes no account of waterfalls or trees or any ground which is used for giving them this. They are not acquainted with any one who has butter for sale. There are many ways of drowning bees in honey those used in a country are the same anywhere.
 Hours of clouds.
 They like to gather what they plant.

11
 Bakers bake in February.
 Thank you.

12
 April is fully a holy day too
 A holiday for a shoe.

» 41 «

READER 1

To the few who love me and whom I love
 a position where it is only difficult and dangerous to proceed
 to those who put faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this Book
 longer, perhaps, but one
 To these I present the composition as an Art-Product alone:
 spend hours with all alpenstock
 to cut footholds or a projection to which the rope could be tied firmly
 Nevertheless it is as a Poem only
 that I wish this work to be judged after I am dead.
 one has to move at a snail's pace, and move downwards
 What terms shall I find sufficiently simple in their sublimity
 to bear if he heard the voices of those below,
 who, through a telescope and from a safe distance, are watching his dangerous descent,
 for the mere enunciation of my theme
 which cannot even be described as what the Smena Vekh people call "ascending with the brakes on"
 for whatever the mathematicians may assert, there is, in this world at least, no such thing as demonstration—but the ruling idea
 In this case, however, there is no vehicle, no road, absolutely nothing that had been tested beforehand.
 In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation
 They moan and raise their eyes to heaven in sorrow, as if to say: "It grieves us sorely to see our fears justified!"
 I propose to take such a survey of the Universe
 that the mind may be able really to receive and perceive an individual impression
 And nausea, it is said, does not help one to keep a clear head and a firm step, particularly at high altitudes.
 Only by a rapid whirling on his heel could he hope to comprehend the panorama in the sublimity of its oneness.

READER 2

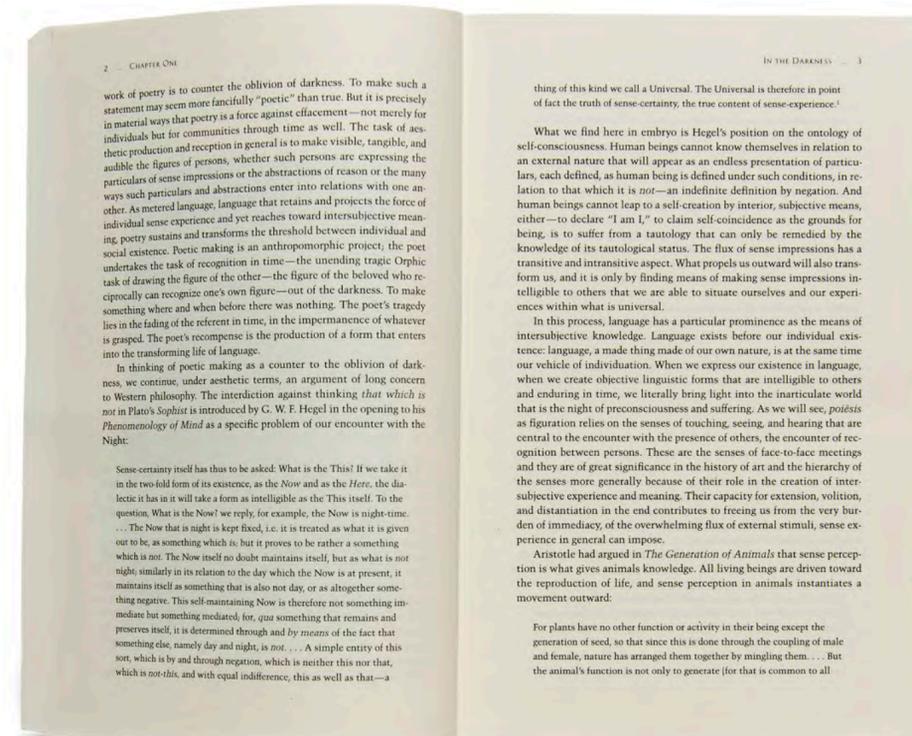
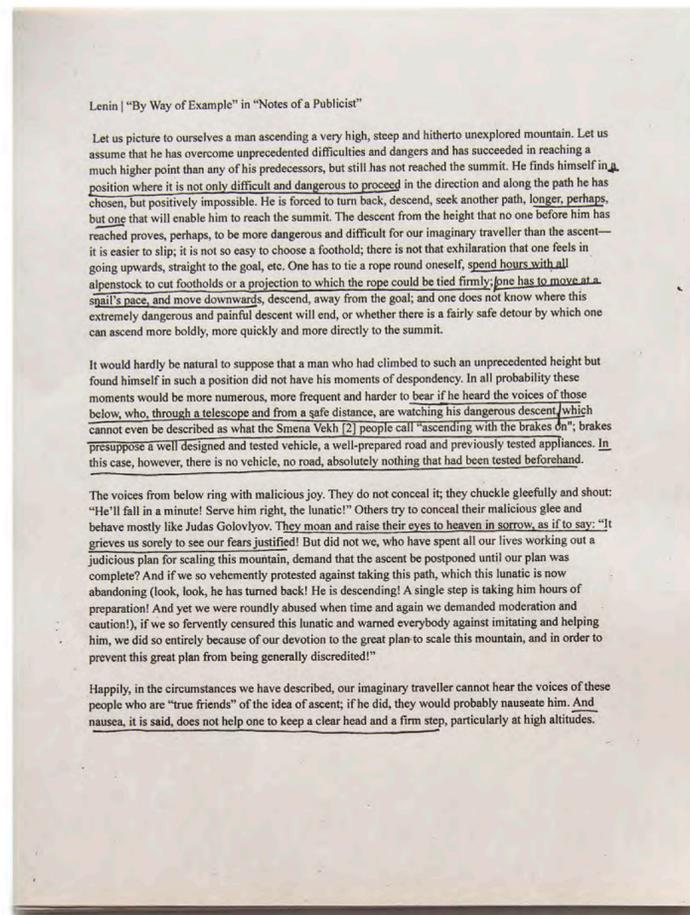
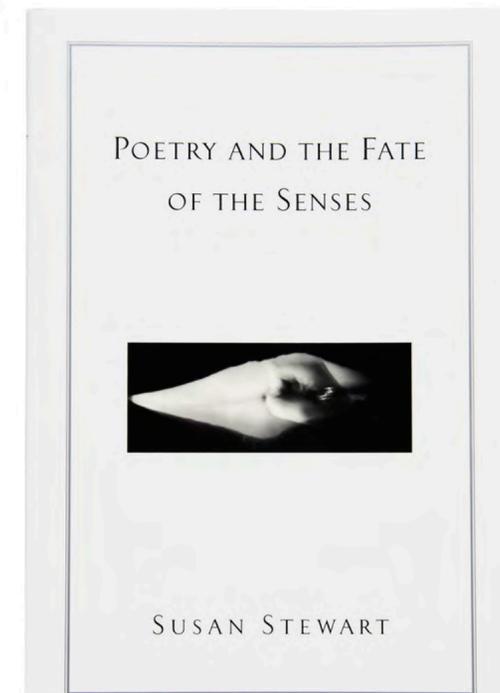
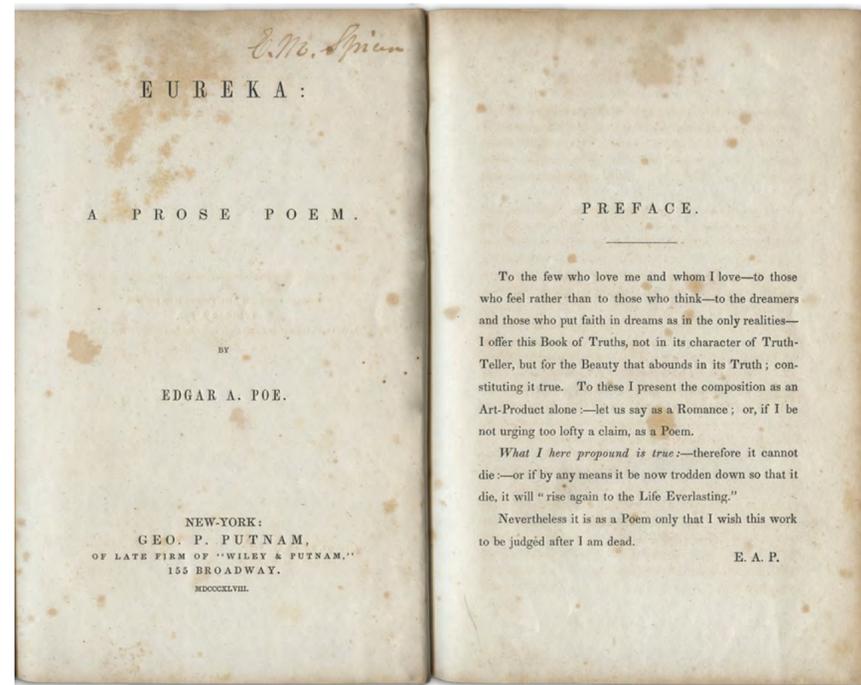
With very profound respect, this work is dedicated to
 To the few who love me and whom I love.
 Let us picture ourselves a man ascending a very high steep.
 To those who feel rather than those who think
 I offer
 summit.
 If I be not urging.
 It is easier to slip; it is not so easy to choose a foothold.
 What I have proposed here is true: - therefore it cannot die.
 That exhilaration that one feels in going upwards,
 If by any means it be now trodden down so that it die,
 One has to tie a rope round oneself.
 Cut footholds or a projection to which the rope could be tied firmly,
 Eyes to heaven in sorrow.

READER 3

Truth
 Let us picture
 Beauty
 ascending
 composition
 unexplored
 a Romance
 higher
 as a poem
 impossible
 I wish this work to be judged after I am dead
 descend
 in their simplicity
 longer
 theme?
 the descent
 Original Unity of the first thing lies the secondary cause of all things with the germ of their inevitable annihilation.
 the ascent
 of the Universe
 or a projection
 the mind
 ascend more
 really to receive
 moments
 an individual
 diversity of the scene
 ascending
 descending
 step
 scale
 ascent
 probably

READER 4

only realities
 *it cannot die
 exhilaration
 "ascending with the brakes on"
 going upwards
 move downwards
 exhilaration
 malicious joy
 chuckle gleefully
 an individual impression



READER 1
READER 4
UNISON
READER 1, 2, 3
UNISON
READER 2
READER 1
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READER 1, 3, 4
UNISON
READER 1, 3, 4
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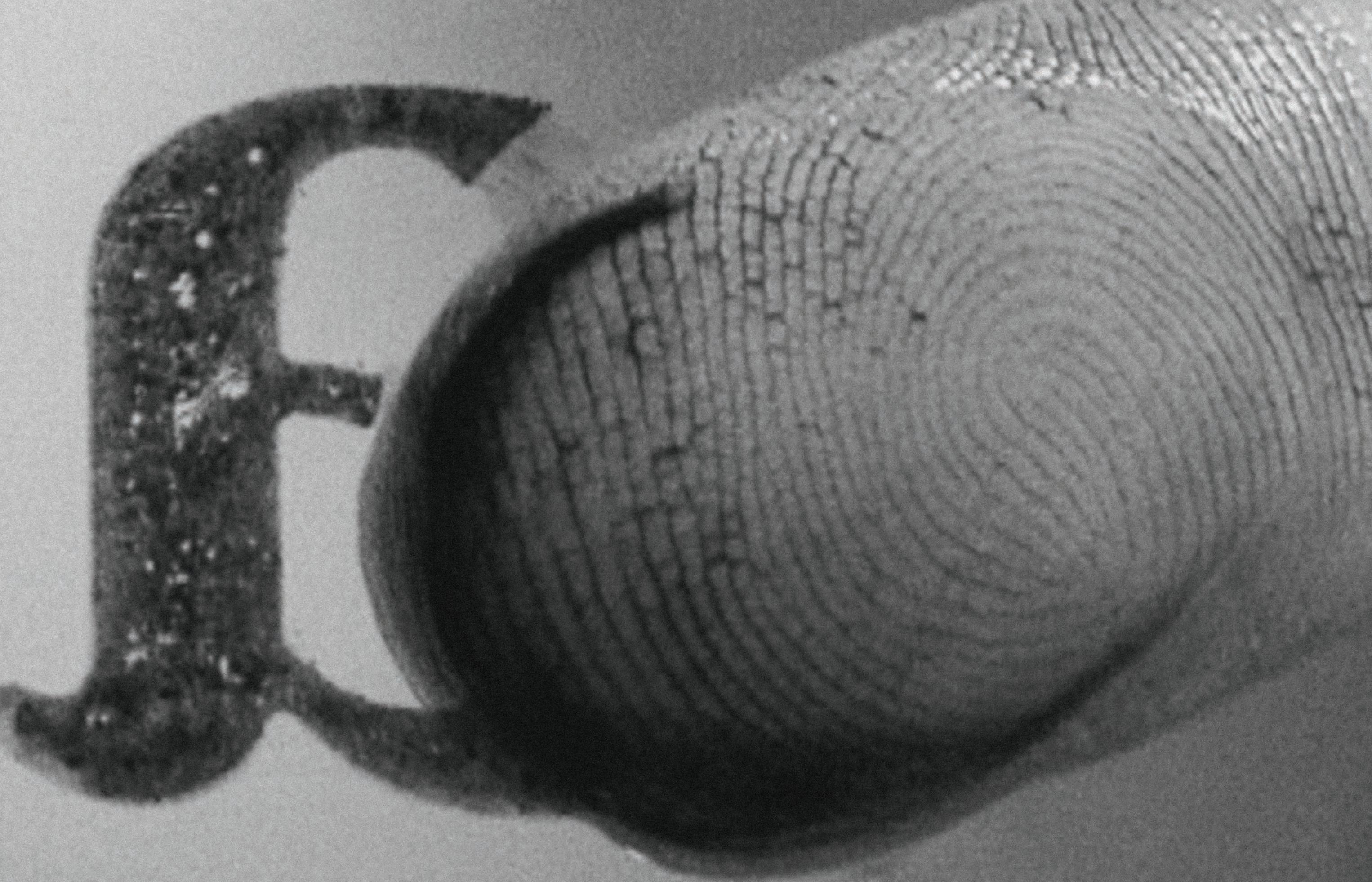
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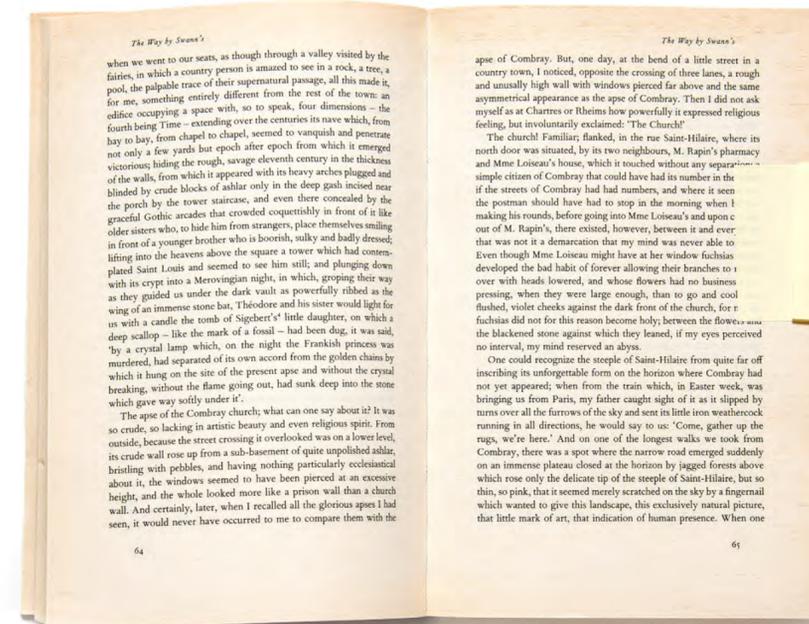
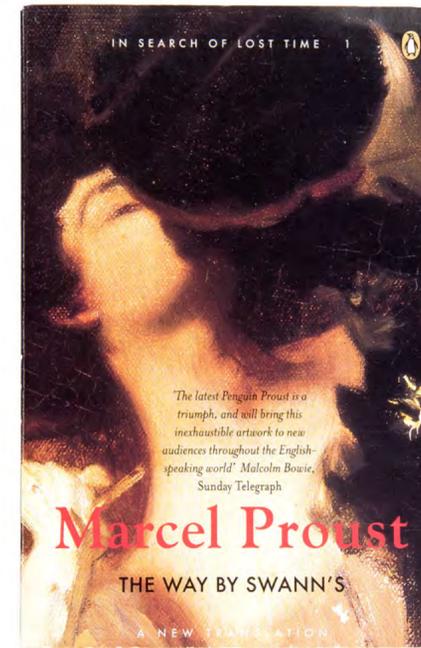
form-giving, work of poetry
to
COUNTER
the oblivion of
DARKNESS
STATEMENT
fancifully "poetic" than true
poetry is a
force
AGAINST
effacement
MERELY
for communities
through time
as well
The task of aesthetic production and
reception in general is to
make visible,
tangible, and audible
the
FIGURES
of
PERSONS, WHETHER
such
PERSONS
are expressing the particulars of sense impressions
of the abstractions of
REASON
or the
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ways such particulars and
abstractions
ENTER INTO
relations with one another
METERED LANGUAGE
LANGUAGE
RETAINS
and
PROJECTS
the force of individual sense
experience and yet
REACHES

READER 3
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toward intersubjective
MEANING
poetry
SUSTAINS
and
TRANSFORMS
the
THRESHOLD BETWEEN
individual and
SOCIAL
existence
MAKING
PROJECT
Anthropomorphic
the poet undertakes the task of recognition in time
out of the
DARKNESS
unending
TRAGIC ORPHIC
task
DRAWING
FIGURE
OTHER
FIGURE
FIGURE
To make
SOMETHING
where and when
BEFORE
there was
NOTHING
the
POET'S
tragedy
FADING
of the referent in time
the impermanence of whatever is grasped
The
POET'S
recompense is the production of a form that
ENTERS
into the transforming life of
LANGUAGE



I went to bed
 I went to bed early
 translated from French by Lydia Davis
 eyes would close so quickly that I did not have time to say to myself
 scarcely out, my eyes
 my candle
 I myself
 it seemed to me that I myself was what the book was talking about
 the thought that it was time
 my eyes
 what the book was talking about
 it seemed to me that I myself was what the book was talking about
 put down the book
 I did not have time
 a quartet
 This belief lived on for a few seconds
 not ceased while sleeping
 myself: "I'm falling
 thoughts of an earlier existence;
 did not shock my reason
 a rather peculiar turn
 wake me; I wanted
 the subject of the book detached itself
 Then it began to grow unintelligible to me
 lived on for a few seconds
 I thought I still
 a thing truly dark
 perhaps even more so for my mind, to which it appeared a thing without cause
 it did not shock my reason
 my hands
 plotting the distances
 I could hear the whistling of the trains, which
 detached itself from me
 I had not ceased
 the little road he is following will be engraved on his memory by the excitement he owes to new places
 apply myself to it
 I had just read
 to unaccustomed activities
 find a darkness around me soft
 seemed to me
 the farewells under the unfamiliar
 appeared a thing without cause, incomprehensible
 I myself
 the imminent sweetness of his return
 remote or nearby
 my waking
 plotting the distances
 my reason
 the extent of the deserted
 my eyes
 towards the nearest station
 me, as
 on his memory by the excitement
 from me, I was
 the recent conversation
 I recovered my sight and I was
 the unfamiliar lamp
 around me soft
 the imminent sweetness
 my eyes, but
 my mind, to
 I would
 myself what
 I could hear
 me the extent
 imminent sweetness
 return



that this pronouncement, this pronounced utterance, this enunciated utterance, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true every time that I proffer and utter it, propose and pronounce it, or that I conceive it in my mind, or that it is conceived in my mind, or by my mind" (ibid., p. 5).¹⁹

3. Finally, there is the passage to "*I self-touches*" (which I shall quote in a moment, at long last). It explains the genesis of the "I," auto-affection in its tactile figure ("*I touches itself . . .*"), addressing itself to *toi*, "you," "thou." Simultaneously, there is a passage to the second person and the familiar use of *tu*, "you" (which is difficult to translate into English, for example). This familiar apostrophe, *tu*, signs, all at once, the general singularity, the plural singularity of any possible addressee, an abrupt familiarity, which interrupts the habitual neutrality of philosophical discourse at the very moment when "I" makes its entrance; and above all, it signs the possibility or the need for the said "I" (as soon as it touches itself) to address itself, to speak to itself, to treat of itself (in a soliloquy interrupted in advance) *as an other*. No sooner does "I [touch] itself" than it is itself—it contracts itself, it contracts with itself, but as if with another. It addresses itself to itself and says *tu* to itself. How not to use the familiar "you" with oneself? Thou tryest it, you try it. We could say that the contracture of the contract, the contraction and the convulsion (these being the words that dominate this whole analysis of unum quid) feature the *treatment* of [ont trait . . . à], trace out, and give its singular trait to, this unavoidably familiar address of oneself—of oneself as the first or the last other. An *I*, there where it is (self-)touched [Là où ça se touche, un je]. But *I self-touches* spacing itself out, losing contact with itself, precisely in touching itself. It switches off the contact, it abstains from touching, so as to touch itself.

"*Ça se touche, un Je*":²⁰ here the French *se* and its grammar remain eternally untranslatable. This accident is all the more interesting since it touches on the idiom, precisely—on the untranslatable singularity at the very heart itself of translation. "*Il se touche*" means that it or he self-touches itself or himself (in a loop, with the mouth lip-synching the looping—of a circle, literally of an *o* or a zero). It also means that it or he is touched, touchable (by any other whatsoever). "*Il se tutoie*" signifies that he is saying *you* to himself or itself, or he or it is being addressed in this way—he is *tutoyable*, addressable with *tu* (by any other whatsoever). He is already, as "I," like "I," the other's muted, still "you," and his properly own still you. "*Se toucher toi*": "to self-touch you," Nancy will write. Later.

The syncopated convulsion, this contraction of the inside and the outside is also this (still and spoken [*tu et dit*]) discourse, a difference at the heart of the *I*, the articulation that can be disarticulated of an ego, an ego capable of touching it to the heart [in touching its heart]. Isn't the heart memory? Isn't it thinking of memory? Thinking *as* memory? We shall safeguard the recollection, the cardiogram of this cardio-logy from one end of this book to the other—as it also writes itself or is written on the heart and on the hand, if not with a wholehearted hand or a freehanded heart—especially when we lend an ear to a certain heart sensation in Husserl, his *Hertz-fühl*, in the haptological moment of *Ideas II*.²¹ In the meantime, here is a first diaphragm:

. . . and this articulated opening forms *I*, in an extreme contraction.

At one blow, it forms *itself as I* in a convulsion; it experiences *I*; it thinks itself *I*. *I touches itself, is touched*; it fixes itself, going—saying—*I* [faisant—disant—*je*]. Imagine a faceless mouth (which is to say the structure of a *mask* once again: open holes, and the mouth opening in the middle of the eye, locus of vision and theory, diaphragmatically traversed—open and shut simultaneously—by a proffered utterance), a faceless mouth, then, mouthing the ring of its contracture around the noise "I." "You" [*tu*] experience this daily, each time you are pronouncing or conceiving ego in your mind, each time (and this happens to you daily) you are forming the *o* of the first person (indeed the *first*: there is nothing before it): "*ego cogito existo*." An *o* forms the immediate loop of your experience. Truly, it is of *that* which it is and that it undergoes the experience it makes—that it *makes or forms* because it cannot *be* it. (ibid., p. 157)

This difference between *making or forming*, on the one hand, and *being*, on the other; the excess of *fashioning over essence*, with one making up for the other; one coming in lieu of the lack or impossibility of the other; all that, no doubt, is the law of *fiction*, at the origin of *feeling oneself as touching oneself*: there where it is not, one will have had to *make*, to *fashion*, to *feature*, to *figure*. Where the taking-place of the event doesn't find its place—a gaping locus, indeed, a mouth—except in *replacement*; where it doesn't find room except in replacement—isn't that the trace of metonymy or the technical prosthesis, and the place for the phantasm as well, that is to say, the ghostly revenant (*phantasma*), at the heart of (self-)feeling? The revenant, between life and death, dictates an impossible mourning, an endless mourning—life itself. Barely visible scene of this mourning: it pertains to a *spacing* that is irreducible or even heterogeneous in relation to an "extensio" from which, however, one should not dissociate it.²²

COMPOSITION AS PROCESS I. Changes This is a lecture on changes that have taken place in birds beginning to sing, I see an old tree, its leaves rustling, I go near, I put to ask if I asked thirty-three more? Who's asking? Is it I who ask? Don't I know hear them do so unfeelingly. The opposite is what is meant by response ability. New music: new of such a piece of music is unique, as interesting to its composer as to others that you write durations that are beyond the possibility of performance. Answer: Composing's one thing, performing's another, where (the stereophonic, multiple-loud-speaker manner of operation in the everyday production of sounds and noises) you up? Why don't you realize as I do that nothing is accomplished by writing, playing, or a mind that has nothing to do, that mind is free to enter into the act of but by the eyes too. An ear alone is not being. I have noticed writing are prophetic. The Sonatas and Interludes were composed by playing the piano, I AM SPEAKING.) HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY TELL WHAT CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IS, SINCE NOW WE'RE NOT CAN WE POSSIBLY TELL WHAT CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IS, SINCE NOW WE'RE NOT LISTENING TO IT, WE'RE ATTEL Y EUROPEAN THINKING HAS BROUGHT IT ABOUT THAT ACTUAL THINGS THAT HAPPEN SUCH AS SUDDENLY interpenetration. Value judgments are not in the nature of this work as regards either composition, performance, or be labeled as "noise." But our common answer to every criticism must be to continue working and Hindu time arts is highly systematized, has been so for many ages, and every Hindu who enjoys a painting with radios in it, does that mean that even without radios, I must go on speaks of being submerged in silence. The acceptance of death source of all life. So that be played and possibly appreciated, in a home where, not having paid to be entertained, those 6/SILENCE Relationship (synchronic) Music (work of art) Magnetic tape Prepared piano Form Theatre (music work of life) 50" going on at the same time. I have noticed that music is liveliest for me when fails 50" to control the elements subjected to it. Otherwise it is apt to become unclear. And music. Unfortunately, European thinking has brought it about that actual things that happen such as suddenly 10" necessary to see that there is not only a sharp distinction to be made between composing and from "before operations begin." (Is extremely close to 20" being here and now.) (Clap) So that al- ways happening that makes a sound. No one can have an idea once he starts really There were chairs around the table and next to the walls. These were always filled with people underfoot wherever we take the trouble to look. (This is an American discovery.) Is when Rauschenberg and life.) And since his eyes are connected to his mind, he can see what he Talisman, or from the center of the rose (is it red?) or the eyes of the pitcher (WHAT ARE WE DOING?/223 point where it is necessary to We who speak English were so It Theremin provided an instrument with genuinely new possibilities, Thereminists did their utmost to make the instrument sound of a dial, Thereminists act as censors, giving the public those sounds they think the public will) ordinary splicing permits the juxtaposition of any sounds, and when it includes unconventional cuts, it, such a way that the process of composing is boring induces ideas. They fly into one's head be faced not only with the entire field of sound but also with the entire field of of a second, following established film technique, will probably be the basic unit in the measurement of FUTURE WILL NOT BE AS IT WAS IN THE PAST, AT THE FUTURE OF MUSIC: CREDO/5 ONE years, three months, and three weeks. Stay three more days, and if, at the end of that one will see other things, and people too, if they happen to be there at the same through the network of wires. There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty d imagination. Geometrical means employing spatial superimpositions at 1 O/SILENCE variance with the ultimate performance in on experimental music may be mentioned. Since so many inches of tape equal so many seconds of and so on. Thus where on a page a note appears will correspond to when in a itself as thought, as ought, as needing another sound for its elucidation, as etc.; it has no is not fixed but presented in situation-form, entrances being at any point within a given period of within a given period of time. — Notation of durations is in space, read as corresponding to Answer: Christian Wolff introduced space actions in his compositional process at variance with the subsequently performed which events, following tables of random numbers, are written out of sequence, possibly anywhere in a total of sequence, possibly anywhere in a total time now and possibly anywhere else in the same total Darmstadt, to discuss in particular my Music of Changes, I decided to make a lecture within the was also a characteristic of silence. The structure, then, was a division of actual TffThe structure of one of the Sonatas, the fourth, was one hundred measures of two-two and freedom, that structure became indeterminate: it was not possible to know the total al process. But this process, had it in the end brought about a division of parts the to silence? That is, how does the mind's perception of it change? Formerly, silence was the and others more numerous, some to be played simultaneously, others successively in the latter course. Structure no longer being present, that piece took place in any length of The notation took the form of whole notes in space, the space suggesting but not measuring middles, and endings. The later ones do not. They begin anywhere, last any length of explaining one day the meaning of a Chinese character—Yu, I believe it was—spending the whole and then said, "Isn't it strange that having come all the way from Japan I spend my friend and that is why he is standing there alone on that hill." After some essentially conventional to European music are, for instance, the presentation of a whole as an object in high, middle, and low)—is determinate, particularly so due to the composer's having specified boxes as The performer is free to play the given number of sounds in the range indicated at any duration of the box, just as when driving an automobile one may cross an intersection at any having four equal divisions (which are the systems). The vertical position of the rectangles refers to relative the addition or not of silences between them, may be used to produce a continuity of any the material is both determinate and indeterminate, since fines extending from note-heads indicate exact length of and indeterminate, since fines extending from note-heads indicate exact length of time, but the total length of

MY composition means, with particular reference to what, a decade ago, I termed "structure" MY arms around it and think, What a good character, never to have harmed anyone. —and, on MY own mind? Then why do I ask if I don't know? Then it's not too much LISTENING Not an attempt to understand something that is being said, for, if something were being said, LISTENING It is easy to see again the parallel with nature, for even with leaves of the LISTENING a third. What can they have to do with one another? EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC: DOCTRINE/15 Question: And LISTENING . . . Question: I understand Feldman divides all pitches into high, middle, and low, LISTENING to music? Otherwise, deaf as a doornail, you will never be able to hear anything, even LISTENING hearing each sound just as it is, not as a phenomenon more or less approx- LISTENING to a record that my attention moves to a moving object or a play of light, LISTENING to differences, making a choice, roughly writing it in pencil; later this sketch was copied, but LISTENING TO IT, WE'RE LISTENING TO A LECTURE ABOUT IT. AND THAT ISN'T IT. THIS IS LISTENING TO A LECTURE ABOUT IT. AND THAT ISN'T IT. THIS IS "TONGUE-WAGGING." REMOVED AS WE ARE LISTENING OR SUDDENLY SNEEZING ARE NOT CONSIDERED PROFOUND. EST THE COURSE OF A LECTURE LAST WINT LISTENING The idea of relation (the idea: 2) being absent, anything (the idea: 1) may happen. A LISTENING making music with its materials, sound and rhythm, disregarding the cumbersome, top-heavy structure of musical prob LISTENING to music or looking at the dance is familiar with the laws of tala. Players, dancers, LISTENING even while I'm looking, everything at once, in order not to be run over? Would we LISTENING to this music takes as a spring-board the first sound that comes along; something springs LISTENING to a recent recital: played is the one the first the Not one sound fears that is LISTENING as ignorance Focus Square root and flexibility Asymmetry of probability Imperfections technique Coins technique Mol LISTENING for instance doesn't distract me from seeing. One should take music very naturally. No technique at LISTENING is best in a state of mental emptiness. 154/SILENCE 7'00" Composers are spoken of as having LISTENING or suddenly sneezing are not considered profound. Not just tones, noises too! What is the physical LISTENING but that although all things are different it is not their differences which are to be LISTENING one takes as a spring- 30" board the first sound that comes along; the first something LISTENING It is very simple but extra-urgent The Lord knows whether or not the next 50" (Bang LISTENING and there were generally a few people standing near the door. The two or three people LISTENING an idea? Rather it is an entertainment in which to celebrate unfixity. Why did he LOOKS at because his head is clear, uncluttered? That must be the case, for only in a LOOKS like something out of a movie) or—the farther one goes in this direction the more LOOKS as though I will one day speak at cross purposes with what certain of our language LIKE some old instrument, giving it a sickeningly sweet vibrato, and performing upon it, with difficulty, LIKE We are shielded from new sound experiences. The special function of electrical instruments will be to LIKE rerecording, brings about alterations of any or all of the original physical characteristics. The situation made LIKE birds. Is that what Dad meant? 12/SILENCE This article, there titled Experimental Music, first TIME The "frame" or fraction of a second, following established film technique, will probably be the basic TIME No rhythm will be beyond the composer's reach. NEW METHODS WILL BE DISCOVERED. BEARING A DEFINITE TIME THE FUGUE AND AT ANOTHER THE SONATA, IT WILL BE RELATED TO THESE AS THEY ARE TIME you have not attained enlightenment, commit suicide." Towards the end of the second day, the student TIME through the network of wires. There is no such thing as an empty space or an TIME There is always something to see, something to hear. In fact, try as we may to TIME may be used. The total field of possibilities may be roughly divided and the actual sounds TIME it has become more and more usual that notation is in space rather than in symbols TIME it is to occur. A stop watch is used to facilitate a performance; and a rhythm TIME for any consideration—it is occupied with the performance of its characteristics: before it has died TIME — Notation of durations is in space, read as corresponding to time, needing no reading in TIME needing no reading in the case of magnetic tape. Question: What about several players at once, TIME actions. Earle Brown devised a composing procedure in which events, following tables of random numbers, are TIME now and possibly anywhere else in the same total time next. I myself use chance operations, TIME next. I myself use chance operations, some derived from the I-Ching, others from the observation of TIME length of the Music of Changes (each line of the text whether speech or silence requiring TIME by conventional metrical means, meter taken as simply the measurement of quan- TIME divided into ten units of ten measures each. These units were combined in TIME length of the piece until the final chance operation, the last toss of coins af- TIME lengths of which were proportional to the original series of numbers, would have been extraordi- TIME lapse between sounds, useful towards a variety of ends, among them that of tasteful TIME These pieces were Sixteen Dances and Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra. The TIME whatsoever, according to the exigencies of an occasion. The duration of single sounds TIME Noises were crotchets without stems. When a performance of Music for Piano involves more TIME and involve more or fewer instruments and players. They are therefore not preconceived objects, and TIME explain- ing it and yet its meaning as close as he could get to it in TIME explain- ing to you that which is not to be explained?" That was not the TIME walk- ing along, the men came up the hill and the one who had been stand- TIME having a beginning, a middle, and an ending, progressive rather than static in character, which is TIME units. Though one might equally describe it as indeterminate for other reasons. The term "boxes" arises TIME during the duration of the box, just as when driving an automobile one may cross an TIME during the green light. With the exception of method, which is wholly indeterminate, the compositional means TIME The width of the rectangles may be interpreted either as an interval where the drawing is TIME length In order to multiply the possible interpretations the composer gives a further permission—to read the TIME but the total length of time of a system is indeterminate. The performer's function, in the or TIME of a system is indeterminate. The performer's function, in the case of 4 Systems, is dual:

READER 1

to the congress
citizens
shooting
we will light up the world
a new
a new
a new
the renewal
friend or foe
in 250 years
we've exported
we've built
the inner cities of Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit
for drugs
spent trillions of dollars
illnesses that have plagued us
footprints on millions
and streets where mothers fear
this is
our vision
our mission
we all salute
our fears

READER 2

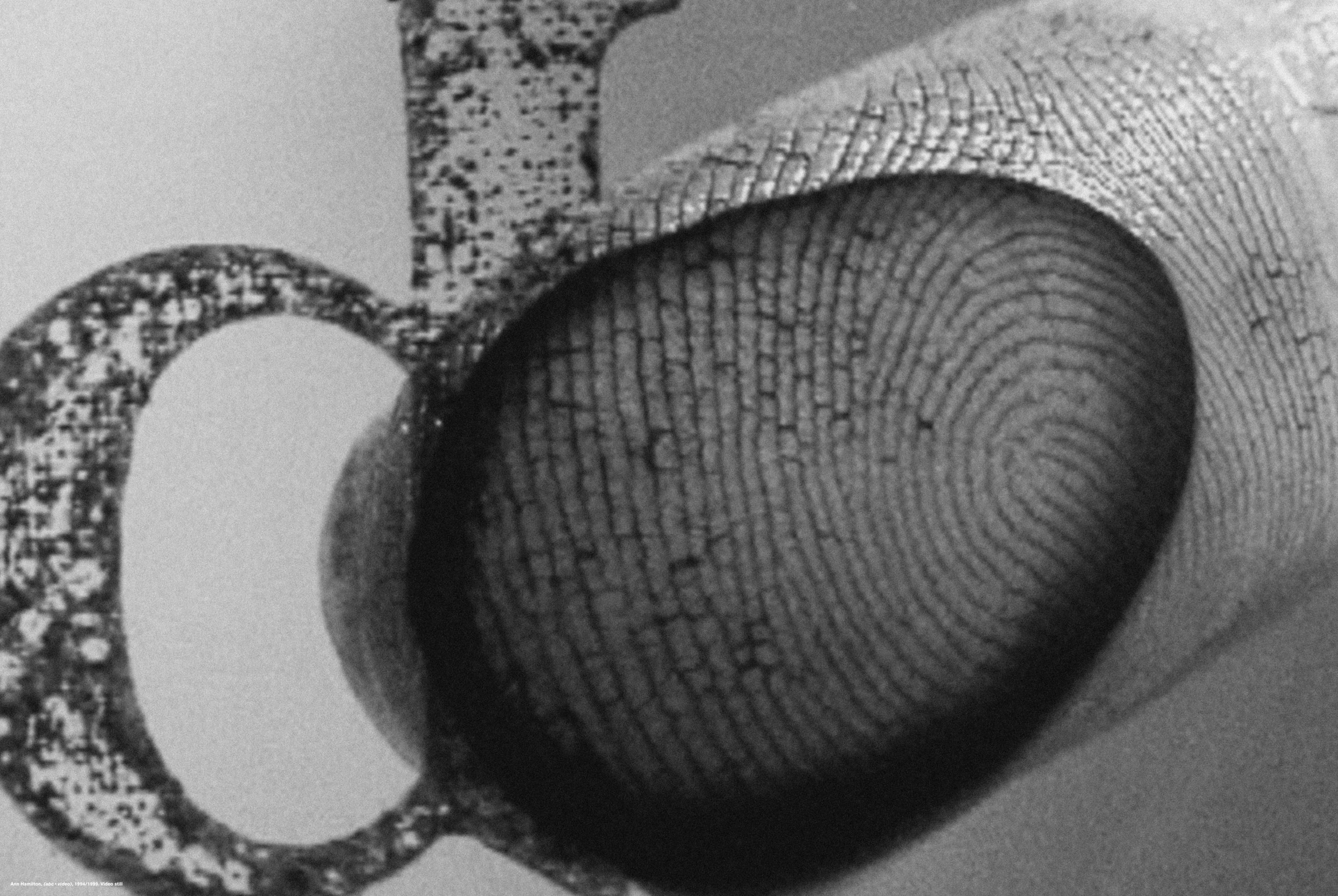
Congress Tonight
divided on policies
hate and evil in all its forms
chain the present hands
we are witnessing today
milestones in the history of the world
But what will America look like
What kind of country
to define
but ignored
leaving our own
infrastructure
so badly crumbled
a quiet protest
a loud chorus - as thousands
crucial
truly dying roaring
replaced with new roads, bridges, tunnels, airports, and railways gleaming
our epidemic neglected
billions
tens of thousands
three trillion
hundreds of millions
billions
historic
deregulation
imposing mandates
new regulation old regulations
eliminated
threatens
tens of thousands
withdrawn
job-killing
Violent Crime
ordered
an aggressive strategy
dismantle
stop
poisoning
plagued
not too much hope
distant
too much to expect too much to ask
We all bleed
look back on
The time for small thinking is over
trivial fights empowered burdened inspired
bound by the failures blinded by our doubts
bold and daring seize this moment
your future bless Bless

READER 3

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:
Citizens of America:
Black History Month
path toward civil rights
a Nation Divided
light up the world
A new chapter
A new national pride
a new surge of optimism
friend or foe
the course of our future
our middle class
fates of our children
inner cities of Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit
drugs to pour in
The rebellion
a fair shot
very simple, but crucial demand
MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN
our people
always plagued us
American footprints
work
mothers
schools
children
jobs
greater than ever before
is our
is our
there together
We are
one destiny
We all
same blood
We all
same flag
same God
new chapter of American Greatness began
dreams
hearts
bravery
hopes
souls
confidence
hopes
dreams
action
aspirations
fears
future
failures
past
vision
doubts
Renewal
Spirit
seize
Believe in yourselves
Believe in your future

READER 4

Citizens of America
mark the conclusion of our celebration of Black History Month
threats targeting Jewish Community Centers and vandalism of
Jewish cemeteries
condemning hate and evil in all its forms
Each American generation passes the torch of truth, liberty and
justice --- in an unbroken chain all the way down to the present
condemning hate and evil in all its forms
it is a message deeply delivered from my heart
a new chapter of American Greatness is now beginning
a new national pride is sweeping across our Nation
friend or foe
America is strong, America is proud, and America is free
we declared our Independence
define the course of our future
ignored the fates of our children in the inner cities of Chicago,
Baltimore, Detroit
defended the borders of other nations
trillions of dollars overseas
as a quiet protest



James Hapke (MFA 2017), Tenten Yitian Yan (MFA 2018), Dylan Fish (MFA 2017), and Maddie Kodat (BA 2017)
Concordance, William James, *The Stream of Consciousness*, 1892

give us the same feeling of green, the same sky the same feeling of blue, and do
WE
are sleepy or awake, hungry or full, fresh or tired; differently at night and in the
WE

hear when the thunder crashes is not thunder pure, but thunder-breaking-upon-
silence-and-contrasting-with-it. Our feeling of the same

Does not a loud explosion rend the consciousness upon which it abruptly breaks, in
twin? No; for
EVEN
into our awareness of the thunder the awareness of the previous silence creeps and
continues; for
say a river consists of nothing but pailsful, spoonsful, quartpotsful, barrelsful, and
other moulded forms of water.
EVEN

for example, always the same? Does not the same piano-key, struck with the same
force, make us
HEAR
is sense. But if an unusual foreign word be introduced, if the grammar trip, or if

APART
We actually ignore most of the things before us. Let me briefly show how this goes
substantive names, and which we exalt to this exclusive status of independence and
dignity. But in itself,
APART
are exactly alike. What appeals to our attention far more than the absolute quality
of an

A
warmth and intimacy to which no object of mere conception ever attains. This
quality of warmth
A
feeling of the silence as just gone; and it would be difficult to find in the
different strokes. The simplest of these rhythms is the double one, tick-tóck, tick-
tóck, tick-tóck. Dots dispersed on
A

facts in terms of brain-action, just as the echo of the whence, the sense of the
starting
POINT
the brick is the sensation it gives when the eye looks squarely at it from a near
POINT
out of the sunshine and yet not in the gloom; under other circumstances it gives us

It's morning. There are no finches pecked rowanberries underfoot from any convenient poem. I correspondence purchased for next to nothing loudspeakers mumble from the museum's basement haggled over the book, I just decided to "go with it."
don't - you're anyway, exposed to too much light, and you'll start seeing signs of Our photograph darkness.

It's. There no in, and pecked underfoot like lines from convenient. The and of Flaubert: Literature, and, in, two, purchased next nothing the market the of, where mumble you from museum's. It metal-cast. I haggled the, but was so cheap I decided "go it."
you the when still to each: "What they today probably you're still young, anyway, the of beautiful tales stories those days. backdrop these unfolds then like lines a photograph to much. Look it enough, interruption, you'll seeing of twilight come. photograph darknes.

from any convenient poem metal-cast unfolds and the darkens without interruption

It's morning already so (irresistibly) The backdrop to these memories unfolds and then darkens like the lines in a developing photograph exposed to too much light. start seeing signs of the twilight to come.

Arkadii Dragomoshchenko
from *Finches*, 2008
translated from Russian by Ana Lucic & Shushan Avagyan

Dylan

It's morning. There are no finches in sight, and the pecked rowanberries underfoot are like random lines taken from any convenient poem.

The notes and correspondence of Gustave Flaubert: *On Literature, Art, and Writing*, in Russian, two volumes, purchased for next to nothing from the flea market by the Museum of Railroads, where loudspeakers mumble at you continuously from the museum's basement. It used metal-cast type. I could've haggled over the book, but it was already so (irresistibly) cheap that I just decided to "go with it."

Do you remember the days when people still used to ask each other: "What are they selling today?" You probably don't - you're still young, and anyway, what's the use of mixing beautiful fairy tales with stories from those nightmarish days. The backdrop to these memories unfolds and then darkens like the lines in a developing photograph exposed to too much light. Look at it long enough, without interruption, and you'll start seeing signs of the twilight to come. Our photograph sinks into darkness.

James

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1010

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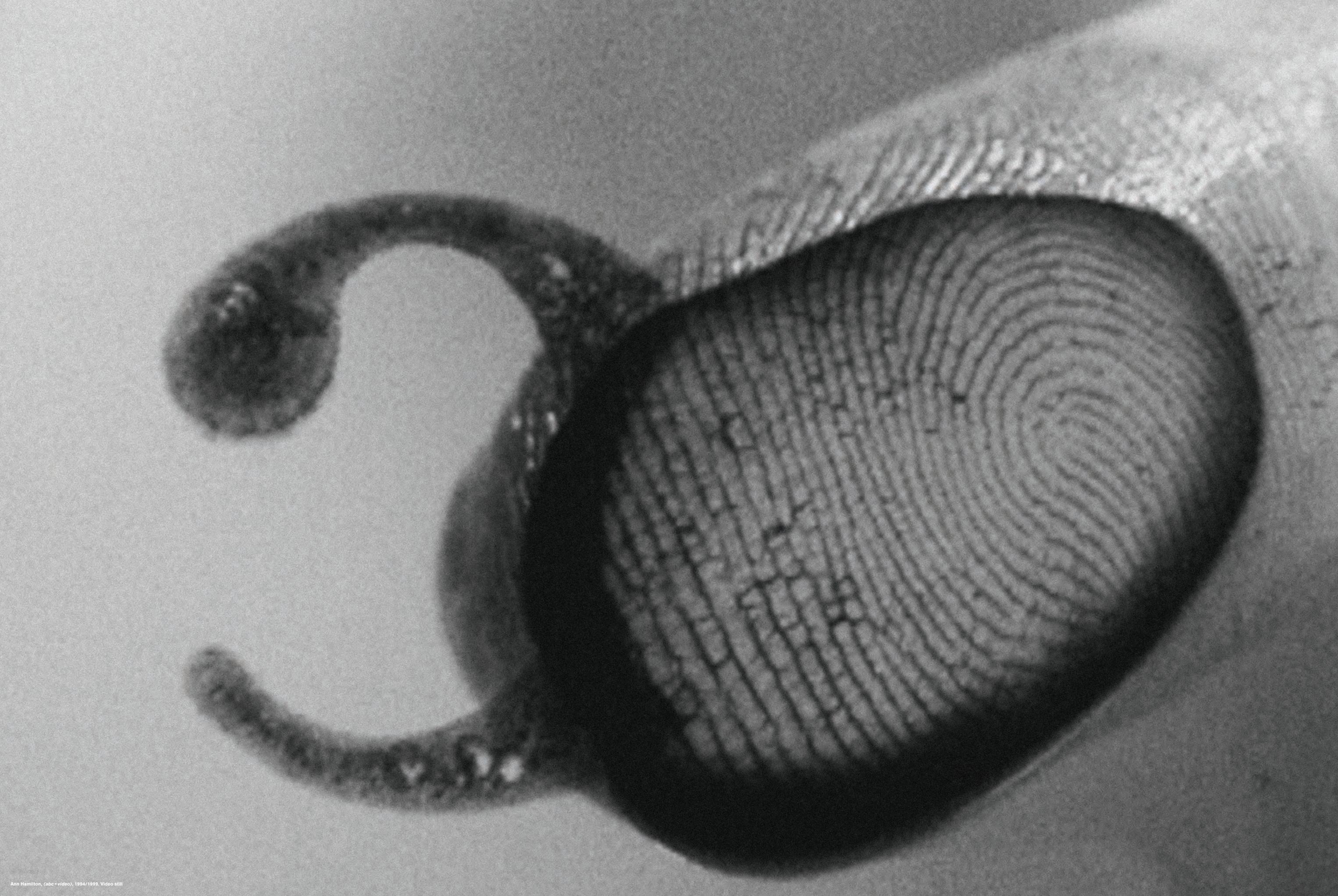
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READER 2 each generation has something different at which they are all looking
READER 3 singularly nothing
READER 4 The only thing that is different from one time to another is what is seen and what is seen depends upon how every body is doing everything
READER 5 It is very interesting that nothing inside in them
READER 6 Lord Grey remarked that when the generals before the war talked about the war they talked about it as a nineteenth century war although to be fought with twentieth century weapons
READER 7 time
READER 8 singularly nothing
READER 9 a difference a difference
READER 10 this is what makes everything different otherwise they are all alike and everybody knows it because everybody says it.
READER 11 composition is the difference which makes each and all of them different
READER 12 and all that, is like that, for those who occupy themselves with it and don't make it as it is made
READER 13 It is very likely that nearly every one has been very nearly certain that something that is interesting is interesting them
READER 15 looking. By this
READER 16 nothing that makes a difference a difference
READER 2 composition is the difference
READER 3 in beginning
READER 4 It is prepared and to that degree it is like all academies it is not a thing made by being made it is a thing prepared
READER 5 it is very interesting that nothing inside in them in all of them makes it
READER 6 the quality in a composition that makes it go dead just after it has been made is very troublesome
READER 7 time
READER 8 makes a difference a difference in beginning
READER 9 By this I mean so simply
READER 10 It is very likely that nearly every one has been very nearly certain that something that is interesting is interesting them
READER 11 this is what makes everything different otherwise they are all alike and everybody knows it because everybody says it
READER 12 Naturally one does not know how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 13 Can they and do they
READER 15 felt, it is
READER 16 By this I mean so simply that anybody knows
READER 2 everybody knows it because everybody says it
READER 3 and in the middle
READER 4 was not a confusion but an extrication
READER 5 it is not a thing made by being made it is a thing prepared.
READER 6 the time-sense in the composition is the composition that is making what there is in composition.
READER 7 time
READER 8 it makes a composition, it confuses, it shows, it is, it looks, it likes it as it is
READER 9 By this I mean so simply
READER 10 and to that degree it is like all academies it is not a thing made by being made it is a thing prepared
READER 11 when you consider the very long history of how every one ever acted or has felt, it is very interesting that nothing inside in them in all of them makes it connectedly different.
READER 12 Naturally one does not know how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 13 By this I mean this
READER 15 seen as it is
READER 16 nearly every one has been very nearly certain
READER 2 very nearly certain that something that is interesting is interesting to them
READER 3 and in ending
READER 5 in other words, composition and time-sense
READER 6 And afterwards
READER 7 time
READER 8 war
READER 9 Can they and do they
READER 10 No one is ahead of his time, it is only that the particular variety of creating his time is the one that his contemporaries who also are creating their own time refuse to accept
READER 11 By this I mean this
READER 12 and everything alike
READER 13 The only thing that is different from one time to another is what is seen and what is seen depends upon how every body is doing everything
READER 15 if you do not mind I will tell you
READER 16 Can they and do they
READER 2 what is seen depends upon how everybody is doing
READER 3 each generation
READER 5 that of course means words as well as things and distribution as well as between themselves between the words and themselves and the things and themselves, a

time
READER 7 all academies
READER 8 By this I mean this
READER 9 in the arts is an outlaw until he is a classic
READER 10 Nothing changes from generation to generation except the thing seen and that makes a composition
READER 11 In the beginning there was confusion there was a continuous present
READER 12 Lord Grey remarked that when the generals before the war talked about the war they talked about it as a nineteenth century war although to be fought with twentieth century weapons
READER 13 lost except nothing
READER 15 nothing inside them
READER 16 it confuses, it shows, it is, it looks, it likes it as it is
READER 2 has something different
READER 3 After all this, there is that, there has been that there is a composition and that nothing changes except composition the composition and the time of and the time in the composition.
READER 7 time
READER 8 not
READER 9 confuses
READER 10 and as every one is naturally indolent why naturally they don't see
READER 11 a thing that decides how it is to be when it is to be done
READER 12 the thing that is at present the most troubling
READER 13 That is because war is a thing that decides how it is to be when it is to be done
READER 15 between themselves
READER 16 nothing inside in them
READER 2 Naturally one does not know how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 3 composition is the difference
READER 5 In the beginning there was the time in the composition that naturally was in the composition
READER 7 time
READER 8 made by being made
READER 9 it shows
READER 10 behind themselves militarily so aesthetically
READER 11 one does not now how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 12 and if there is the time that is at present the most trouble some the time-sense that is at present
READER 13 No one is ahead of his time, it is only that the particular variety of creating his time is the one that his contemporaries who also are creating their own time refuse to accept
READER 15 again and again
READER 16 this I mean
READER 2 But in as you may say the non-competitive efforts where if you are not in it nothing is lost except nothing at all except what is not had
READER 3 everybody knows it
READER 7 time
READER 8 prepared
READER 9 it is
READER 10 groping toward a continuous present
READER 11 No one is ahead of his time
READER 15 been that there
READER 16 it confuses, it shows, it is, it looks, it likes it as it is
READER 2 and now there is every reason why there should be an arrangement made
READER 3 everybody says it
READER 7 time
READER 8 occupy themselves with it
READER 9 it looks
READER 10 was allowed not completely to be up to date, but nearly up to date, in other words we who created the expression of the modern composition were to be recognized before we were dead some of us even quite a long time before we were dead by that time the modern composition having become past is classified and the description of it is classical
READER 11 again and again and again and again
READER 15 war is a thing that decided how it is to be when it is to be done. It is prepared
READER 16 a beginning again and again and using everything and everything alike and everything naturally simply different has been done
READER 2 something that is interesting is interesting them
READER 3 time
READER 7 make it as it is made
READER 8 likes it as it is
READER 9 something comes then and it follows coming then
READER 10 change is always startling
READER 11 dead just after it has been
READER 15 it is not a thing made by being made
READER 16 The time of the composition if the time of the composition
READER 2 By this I mean this
READER 3 time

and this makes what is seen as it is seen
READER 9 change is always startling
READER 11 there was romanticism
READER 15 the most decided of them usually are prepared just as the world around them is preparing
READER 16 but time in the composition comes now
READER 2 what is seen and what is seen
READER 3 time
READER 7 his contemporaries who also are creating their own time
READER 8 refuse to accept
READER 9 Lord Grey
READER 11 The characteristic quality of a classic is that it is beautiful
READER 15 why
READER 16 the only thing that is different is what is seen when it seems to be being seen
READER 2 but time in the composition comes now
READER 3 how everybody is doing everything
READER 7 time
READER 8 they do not have to accept it for any reason
READER 9 the generals
READER 11 Composition is not there, it is going to be there and we are here.
READER 15 Now that
READER 16 they refuse to accept it for a very simple reason and that is that they do not have to accept it for any reason
READER 2 in the composition is the composition that is making what there is in composition
READER 3 it likes it as it is
READER 7 time
READER 8 naturally all the refusals
READER 9 before the war
READER 11 prolonged present.
READER 16 refusals
READER 3 Nothing changes from generation to generation except the thing seen and that makes a composition
READER 7 time
READER 8 the things refused are only important if unexpectedly somebody happens to need them
READER 9 a nineteenth century war although to be fought with twentieth century weapons
READER 11 a prolonged present is a natural composition in the world
READER 16 are only important
READER 3 war is a thing that decides how it is to be when it is to be done
READER 7 time
READER 8 the creator of the new composition in the arts is an outlaw until he is a classic
READER 11 war is a thing
READER 7 A continuous present and using everything and beginning again
READER 16 they are dead
READER 3 it is like all academies
READER 7 time
READER 8 almost not an interval
READER 9 that decides how it is to be when it is to be done
READER 11 I did not begin again I just began
READER 16 past is classified and the description of it is classical
READER 3 it is a thing prepared
READER 7 time
READER 8 For a very long time everybody refuses and then almost without a pause almost everybody accepts
READER 9 It is prepared
READER 11 the long history of how every one ever acted or has felt and that nothing inside in them in all of them makes it connectedly different
READER 16 recognition
READER 3 Naturally one does not know how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 7 time
READER 8 the rapidity of the change is always startling
READER 9 Naturally one does not know how it happened until it is well over beginning happening
READER 11 By this I mean all this
READER 16 peace
READER 3 No one is ahead of his time
READER 7 time
READER 8 in other words there is peace
READER 9 No one is ahead of his time
READER 11 Everything alike naturally everything was simply different and this is and was romanticism and this is and was war
READER 16 equilibration
READER 3 it is only that the particular variety of creating his time is the one that his contemporaries who are also creating their own time refuse to accept
READER 7 time
READER 8 what follows what follows
READER 9 But in as you may say the non-competitive efforts
READER 11 war may be said to have advanced a general recognition of the expression of the contemporary composition by almost everybody

between themselves between the words and themselves and the things and themselves
READER 3 they do not have to accept it for any reason
READER 7 time
READER 8 interesting
READER 9 nothing is lost
READER 11 In the beginning there was confusion there was a continuous present and later there was romanticism which was not a confusion but an extrication and now there is either succeeding or failing there must be distribution and equilibration there must be time that is distributed and equilibrated
READER 16 This makes what follows what follows
READER 3 and they do not enter it, if
READER 7 time
READER 8 natural
READER 9 nothing at all
READER 11 present composition is time
READER 16 now there is every reason why there should be an arrangement made
READER 3 they are not so to speak in it they are out of it and so they do enter it
READER 7 time
READER 8 contemporary
READER 9 what is not had
READER 11 time-sense is troubling
READER 16 This is what is always a fear a doubt and a judgment
READER 3 nothing is lost except nothing at all except what is not had
READER 7 time
READER 8 It has been at times a present thing it has been at times a past thing it has been at times a future thing
READER 9 there is no more of that in other words
READER 16 conviction
READER 3 it follows coming then
READER 7 time
READER 8 In my beginning it was a continuous present a beginning again and again and again and again
READER 9 one finds oneself interesting oneself
READER 16 The quality in the creation of expression the quality in a composition that makes it go dead just after it as been made is very troublesome
READER 3 there is a composition and that nothing changes except composition
READER 7 time
READER 8 the time-sense in the composition
READER 9 equilibration
READER 16 In the beginning there was confusion there was a continuous present and later there was romanticism which was not a confusion but an extrication
READER 3 the composition and the time of and the time in the composition
READER 7 time
READER 8 a fear a doubt and a judgment and a conviction
READER 9 as well as between themselves
READER 16 And afterwards
READER 7 time
READER 8 makes it go dead just after it has been made
READER 9 Distribution is interesting and equilibration is interesting
READER 7 time
READER 8 The time in the composition is a thing that is very troublesome
READER 9 composition
READER 8 There is at present there is distribution
READER 9 composition
READER 8 at present the time-sense in the composition is the composition that is making what there is in composition
READER 9 the time of and the time
READER 9 in the composition
READER 9 a natural thing
READER 9 The time of the composition is the time of the composition again and again and again and again
READER 9 a fear a doubt
READER 9 The time in the composition is a thing that is very troublesome
READER 9 If the time in the composition is very troublesome it is because there must even if there is not time at all in the composition there must be time in the composition which is in its quality of distribution and equilibration.
READER 9 In the beginning there was confusion there was a continuous present and later there was romanticism which was not a confusion but an extrication and now there is either succeeding or failing there must be distribution and equilibration
READER 9 most troubling
READER 9 the most troublesome
READER 9 the time-sense
READER 9 There is at present there is distribution, by this I mean expression and time
READER 9 Now that is all



RECONSTITUTED TEXT FIELD. SECONDARY DIRECTIVES SET THE NUMBER OF CONTEXT RESULTING HYBRID TYPOGRAPHY, PART CONCORDANCE AND PART MESOSTIC, WITH VERTICAL HISTORY. A TWO-COLOR CORK FLOOR LAID AS A PLANE OF NEW POSSIBILITIES OF BEING AND DOING. WITH THE CONSTRAINT OF LETTER O: A THREE-MINUTE SILENT FILM TEXT AND IMAGE PERFORMANCE. THAT ONCE WAS. SUBVOCALIZATION AS A CHILD, I SOUNDED OUT TO ANY BEGINNING, I RETURN TO ACCEPTANCE: THAT MY OWN TO ACCEPTANCE: THAT MY OWN WORDS BEGIN WITH SOMEBODY ELSE'S OWN WORDS BEGIN WITH SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORDS; WHEN SOMEBODY ELSE'S SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORDS STOP ME. I RESOLVE TO MAKE THESE WE ARE: THE READER AND THE PAGE CARRYING THE WRITER'S UNDERSTANDING. WITHIN THE REVERBERATION, WE LOSE OURSELVES, ARE ABSORBED, BY LOOK AGAIN AT THE ACT OF READING AS TRANSPORTATION WITH THE HOUSE WAS QUIET AND THE WORLD WAS CALM. THE PRONOUNCED THE ALPHABET IN NOCTURNAL WAVES AND WAS QUIET UNLOCKING PRONOUNCED THE ALPHABET IN NOCTURNAL WAVES AND WAS QUIET UNLOCKING THE QUESTION PRODUCED A SET OF QUESTIONS. CONSIDER WORDS PROJECTED AND SMOOTHLY THROUGH THE FINER THREADS OF THE COTTON CLOTH THAT MANNER OF MAKING. SUPERPOSITION OF WAVES A NOTE SINGULAR LUXURY TO TALK ACROSS THE POND TO A COMPANION THIS WAY. OUR MORNING THOUGHTS PRODUCE INDEPENDENT SETS OF RIPPLES ONE AFTERNOON'S SUPERPOSITION BECOMES THE NEXT MORNING'S POSITION, AND SO A SESSION OF RESEARCH-CREATION IN THE STACKS. A DUSTY VOLUME A LIFETIME AND GIVE ONE ALL WISDOM. IT LIES FLAT FIELD. SECONDARY DIRECTIVES SET THE NUMBER OF CONTEXT WORDS ALIGNED PURCHASED "THE SHANTY OF JAMES COLLINS, AN IRISHMAN WHO WORKED WITH THEM HE WOULD BUILD THE WALLS OF HIS CABIN THESE WOOD BONES IN COMMON. SURVEY THEM. READ THEM. WALK TWO DISTINCT ASPECTS: COMPOSING A TEXT, AND PERFORMING A TREATMENT AND DIRECTOR OF EXPERIENCES THAT INHABIT ACTUAL STAGES OR FLOORS; POSSIBILITIES OF BEING AND DOING. WITH THE CONSTRAINT OF WORDS OF WORDS ON A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS EPISODE OF IMAGINED THEATER STARRING THE LETTER O. O STANDS WOMEN WALK DOWNSTAGE IN RUSTY SHOES. THEY HOLD CAMERA EYES FINGERS, AS THE EYE THAT READS; TRACKING OVER EACH LETTER SEQUENCE, TREATED IN A SIMILAR MANNER, OF A CANVAS FOUND WHITEHEAD WROTE THAT "ART IS THE IMPOSING OF A PATTERN HEARD IT SPOKEN AS IT DID WHEN I SAW IT TO WHICH WE BELONG THE EDGE BETWEEN THE DRY INK AND ANOTHER, BETWEEN LAND AND WATER. IT IS THE LINE EYES SLID OPEN. THE HOUSE WAS QUIET AS IT FELL I OF THE INVITATION ONE IS THE FIRST NUMBER IN TO BE AN I BUT I ALSO WANT TO BE BE ALONE. I WANT TO BE TOGETHER. ALL THIS IN THE SIGNS, NOT THE AUTHORITIES. FANNY HOWE WE BEGAN WITH AND FOLLOWED THE QUESTION INTO UNKNOWN TERRITORY. WE BEGAN WITH UNKNOWN TERRITORY. WE BEGAN WITH A QUESTION OUR QUESTION STATED ANY ACT OF SILENT COMMUNAL READING MAKES. THE QUESTION PRODUCED QUESTION PRODUCED A SET OF QUESTIONS. CONSIDER WORDS PROJECTED ON WORDS PROJECTED ON A SCREEN, OR WORDS SPREAD OUT AS AS A CARPET. WORDS PERCEIVED MORE AS VISUAL ELEMENTS IN TO IMPART INFORMATION. SCREEN, PAGE, WALL, WORDS, THE LABOR OF SCREEN, PAGE, WALL, WORDS, THE LABOR OF A HAND. AS AN ALPHABET OF IMPOSSIBLE THEATER, IN WHICH EACH LETTER BECOMES IN WHICH EACH LETTER BECOMES A CHARACTER: THE LETTER R THEM AS LIVE EVENTS. THEY SIT ALONGSIDE MY PRACTICE AS OF BEING AND DOING. WITH THE CONSTRAINT OF WORDS ON WORDS ON A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON AN OPERATIVE MODE, ADDRESSING AS IT DOES AN INTERGENERATIONAL ACTION, I HAVE AN IDEA. I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THAT HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO IT? I WILL CHOREOGRAPH HAND INTO THE RHYTHM OF THE HEARTBEAT AND THE BREATH; TIME SIGNATURE REINVESTED WITH TIME. I WILL PLACE THAT BESIDE TIME. I WILL PLACE THAT BESIDE A SEQUENCE, TREATED IN THAT BESIDE A SEQUENCE, TREATED IN A SIMILAR MANNER, OF THE WALLS OF THE VILLA, EXPLORED WITH THE CAMERA AS THAT AGAINST THE RULES? IMAGINED THEATER STARRING THE LETTER O: AN OBJECT KNOWN AND TURNED BY MANY HANDS. THEY SET SET A PATTERN IN MOTION, AS STONES TOSSED REPEATEDLY INTO CONCORDANCE REPRIS WHITEHEAD WROTE THAT "ART IS THE IMPOSING OF THE SCREEN RETURNS THE SMOOTH IMAGE AND DIGITAL RECORD OF DIGITAL RECORD OF A MOMENT THAT ONCE WAS. SUBVOCALIZATION AS THESE SOUNDINGS WERE INTERNALIZED AND BECAME SILENT SPEECH. THIS IS BECAME SILENT SPEECH. THIS IS A NATURAL PROCESS CALLED SUBVOCALIZATION. ADVANCE OF THE SUNRISE IS INSISTENT AND UNDENIABLE. IT PROVOKES IT SAID WINDOW. MISAPPREHENSION MAKES AN IMPATIENT INVENTION. I NEED MISAPPREHENSION MAKES AN IMPATIENT INVENTION. I NEED A SUBVOCALIZATION MY HIDDEN VARIABLE. I MIGHT SAY THAT I GREW LIKE WHAT I WILL DO AND THINK. IF THIS IS HOW MEETING FROM THE STONE THROWN. "THE VOICE FROM ACROSS REACHES BY UNRAVELING WHAT HAS BECOME BRAIDED, AUTOMATIC AND INVOLUNTARY...TO CREATE THAT'S CONSTANTLY COMING INTO BEING. TO END WE BEGIN WITH BOOK IS TRUE, TO WHOM THE SUMMER NIGHT IS LIKE THE PAGE. AND THE WORLD WAS CALM. THE TRUTH IN SUMMER NIGHT DOUBLING ITS WEIGHTLESSNESS WAS LIKE THE CONSCIOUS BEING WEIGHTLESSNESS WAS LIKE THE CONSCIOUS BEING A BOOK IS ONLY GUESTS WAS PART OF THE MEANING, PART OF THE MIND: GUESTS WAS PART OF THE MEANING, PART OF THE MIND: THAN AS LANGUAGE THAT SETS OUT TO IMPART INFORMATION. SCREEN, TO READ IT, ONE MUST WALK, OR CRAWL, ALONG EACH OR CRAWL, ALONG EACH PAGE, LINE BY LINE. TURNING A TO BE READ. THEY INHABIT THE WHITE SPACE OF THE BEING AND DOING. WITH THE CONSTRAINT OF WORDS ON A THE EYE THAT READS; TRACKING OVER EACH LETTER ON THE SPOKEN AS IT DID WHEN I SAW IT ON THE WORK. WE BEGIN WHERE WE ARE: THE READER AND THE WE BELONG THE EDGE BETWEEN THE DRY INK ON THE WERE NO BOOK, EXCEPT THAT THE READER LEANED ABOVE THE PART OF THE MIND: THE ACCESS OF PERFECTION TO THE

WORDS ALIGNED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE SPINE, DISPLAYING THE INTERSECTION OF WORDS INTERSECTING HORIZONTAL LINES, INVERTS THE MODE OF ORIGINAL CONCORDANCES, WORDS SET IN RELIEF REALIZES THIS TEXT WEAVE. AT THE ON A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON WORDS BECAME AN OBJECT KNOWN AND TURNED BY MANY HANDS. WORDS WHEN READING. WITH TIME, THESE SOUNDINGS WERE INTERNALIZED AND WORDS BEGIN WITH SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORDS; WHEN SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORDS ; WHEN SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORDS STOP ME. I RESOLVE TO WORDS STOP ME. I RESOLVE TO MAKE THESE WORDS MY MY OWN, TO ALLOW THEM SOME SAY OVER WHAT WORDS TWO WAKES MEETING FROM THE STONE THROWN. "THE VOICE WORDS SOUND, CLOTH, EACH OTHER 'WE CAN NOT RID OURSELVES WORDS AND SOUNDINGS AND PATTERNS AND PANORAMAS GESTURING, SIGNALING, AND WORDS WERE SPOKEN AS IF THERE WERE NO BOOK, EXCEPT WORDS ONE DREAMED ABOUT WHAT ONE WOULD GRASP IF ONE WORDS ONE DREAMED ABOUT WHAT ONE WOULD GRASP IF ONE ON A SCREEN, OR WORDS SPREAD OUT AS A CARPET. ON TOP; UP, DOWN IN A LEFT HAND SLANT, UP ON METHOD HENRY DAVID THOREAU IN WALDEN WROTE OF THE ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE. IN MY HOUSE WE WERE SO ON THE POND. WHEN WE SHARE THOSE THOUGHTS IN CONVERSATION ON DAY AFTER DAY. THOREAU PREFERRED TO SHOUT ACROSS WALDEN ON AN OBSCURE SUBJECT CONCEALED A REVELATION. WHAT DOES IT ON THE GROUND AND TAKES UP MOST OF THE BACK ON EITHER SIDE OF THE SPINE, DISPLAYING THE INTERSECTION OF ON THE FITCHBURG RAILROAD, FOR BOARDS. HE DISASSEMBLED THE SHANTY ON WALDEN POND. CAN WE READ IN THIS EPISODE AN ON THEM. IMMANUEL KANT WROTE IN HIS 1786 ESSAY "WHAT ON A PRE-EXISTING TEXT. IMAGINED THEATER AT THIS POINT THE ON CERTAIN DAYS AND TIMES, CREATED IN DAILY LIFE WITH ON A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON A ON A BIRD, I HAVE TO FIND ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO ON GRASS AND IT RAINS MOTHS. THE DAY DRIES AND ON I HAVE AN IDEA. I WOULD LIKE TO ON THE PAGE, BRINGING THE SURFACE IMPOSSIBLY CLOSE, RECORDING THE ON ONE OF THE WALLS OF THE VILLA, EXPLORED WITH ON EXPERIENCE AND OUR AESTHETIC ENJOYMENT IS RECOGNITION OF THE ON THE PAGE. WINDROW; I THOUGHT IT SAID WINDOW. MISAPPREHENSION ON THE PAGE AND SKIN DAMP UNDER THE WOOL, IS ON THE MAP THE BIRDS CANNOT FOLLOW. BETWEEN, WE HAVE ON ITS SIDE AND THE WORLD WAS CALM. AND LISTENED. ON A SEQUENCE, IS THE LOWEST CARDINAL NUMBER, IS SOLITARY, SINGULAR, A WE. I WANT TO BE ALONE. I WANT TO A SINGLE PRONOUN. ALL THESE CONTRADICTIONS IN OUR SINGULAR PLURAL. A QUESTION OF SOMETHING WE HAVE IN COMMON AND FOLLOWED A QUESTION OUR QUESTION STATED A CURIOSITY ABOUT THE SPACE A CURIOSITY ABOUT THE SPACE THAT ANY ACT OF SILENT A SET OF QUESTIONS. CONSIDER WORDS PROJECTED ON A SCREEN, A SCREEN, OR WORDS SPREAD OUT AS A CARPET. WORDS A CARPET. WORDS PERCEIVED MORE AS VISUAL ELEMENTS IN A A FIELD THAN AS LANGUAGE THAT SETS OUT TO IMPART A HAND. AS A CHILD, I BROKE A WORD INTO A CHILD, I BROKE A WORD INTO SOUNDS TO IDENTIFY A CHARACTER: THE LETTER R A MARIONETTE, THE LETTER B A MARIONETTE, THE LETTER B AN ACROBAT DEFYING GRAVITY. WRITING A MAKER AND DIRECTOR OF EXPERIENCES THAT INHABIT ACTUAL STAGES A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON A BIRD, A BIRD, I HAVE TO FIND ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO FLY. A TRANSGENERATIONAL MIND. TIME WITHOUT TIME THE CHILD WILL A FILM. SAID ANN, INTERRUPTING. SOUNDS GREAT. HOW DO YOU A VERY SMALL CAMERA, HELD BETWEEN MY FINGERS, AS THE A TIME SIGNATURE REINVESTED WITH TIME. I WILL PLACE THAT A SEQUENCE, TREATED IN A SIMILAR MANNER, OF A CANVAS A SIMILAR MANNER, OF A CANVAS FOUND ON ONE OF A CANVAS FOUND ON ONE OF THE WALLS OF THE A RIPPLING ANIMATION. ISN'T THAT AGAINST THE RULES? IMAGINED THEATER A THREE-MINUTE SILENT FILM TEXT AND IMAGE PERFORMANCE. WORDS BECAME A PATTERN IN MOTION, AS STONES TOSSED REPEATEDLY INTO A A POND. WE LOOK FOR ITS PATTERN, WAIT FOR ITS A PATTERN ON EXPERIENCE AND OUR AESTHETIC ENJOYMENT IS RECOGNITION A MOMENT THAT ONCE WAS. SUBVOCALIZATION AS A CHILD, I A CHILD, I SOUNDED OUT WORDS WHEN READING. WITH TIME, A NATURAL PROCESS CALLED SUBVOCALIZATION. A FUNDAMENTAL PART OF READING, A FUNDAMENTAL PART OF READING, IT INVOLVES THE INVOLUNTARY MINUTE A RESURRECTION OF WRITING AS I NEED IT. WINDROWS LATE A SUBVOCALIZATION A WHISPER TO STITCH THE VISIBLE WORD A WHISPER TO STITCH THE VISIBLE WORD TO ITS REMEMBERED A TROPISM TO THE BECKONING LIGHT (WHITEHEAD). IN RETURNING TO A BEGINNING HAPPENS, THE MOST PRESSING QUESTION BECOMES WHAT DO A BOUNDARY BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING. WITHIN THE REVERBERATION, WE LOSE A WORLD THAT'S CONSTANTLY COMING INTO BEING. TO END WE A POEM. THE HOUSE WAS QUIET AND THE WORLD WAS A PERFECTION OF THOUGHT. THE HOUSE WAS QUIET BECAUSE IT A CALM WORLD, IN WHICH THERE IS NO OTHER MEANING, A BOOK IS ONLY A BOOK WHEN IT IS OPEN A BOOK WHEN IT IS OPEN OF THE BOOK. SPEAKING A DOUBLE HEARING OF THE INAUDIBLE. SPEAKING THE HOUSE PRONOUNCED A DOUBLE HEARING OF THE INAUDIBLE. A WALL, WORDS, THE LABOR OF A HAND. AS A PAGE LINE BY LINE. TURNING A PAGE REQUIRES AT LEAST PAGE REQUIRES AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE. CONCORDANCE THE CONCORDANCE FUNCTION, PAGE THEY EXCEED THE BODY, CUT ACROSS SPACE, AND LEAVE PAGE LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON A BIRD, I PAGE BRINGING THE SURFACE IMPOSSIBLY CLOSE, RECORDING THE EYE IN PAGE WINDROW; I THOUGHT IT SAID WINDOW. MISAPPREHENSION MAKES AN PAGE CARRYING THE WRITER'S WORDS. TWO WAKES MEETING FROM THE PAGE AND SKIN DAMP UNDER THE WOOL, IS THE COVERING PAGE WANTED TO LEAN, WANTED MUCH MOST TO BE THE PAGE AND THE WORLD WAS CALM. THE TRUTH IN A

The

of

reading

ESSAY BY MATTHEW GOULISH

- The problem*
- The hand that writes*
- The problem: the crawl*
- Ethics in the geometric*
- The problem: entrancement*
- Aurora borealis*
- Windrows—a commonplace*
- The problem: the overlook*
- Concordance*
- Dematerialization*
- Superposition*



Rembrandt, *Belshazzar's Feast*, 1636-38, oil on canvas, the National Gallery, London



The author's extended family, circa 1929

1. The problem

The movie ends, and now, after the end, the words begin. I recognize a common trope of “historical” feature films: the screen goes dark for a few seconds, then lines of text appear, dedicated to one of the major characters, enumerating key events of the life that followed outside the narrative’s time span. The appearance of the first words suggests that a progression of words will follow, to lead us, the audience, out of the film time, into the present, and eventually out of the theater altogether. The filmmakers seem to consider this transition easy, from watching to reading, from apprehending narrative in image and sound to extracting information from language in silence, or the relative silence of the end music soundtrack. After the time invested in the film, I care what will happen—I mean, what did happen—to these characters, and so I begin to read, or to try to read, and immediately trouble begins. I make it to the midpoint of the first text when it fades out. As the second text appears, several emotions overtake me. Is it possible that I read much more slowly than the average person? Will other of my deficiencies make themselves known? Will I ever find out what happened to the main character? The cinema allows no pause,

no rewind. Already the second character’s conclusion arrives. What do I do? I adjust my approach, scan the first few words, then skip to the end, and only then, if time allows, return to the middle. With the third text anxiety increases. I try to recreate my new reading technique while reconstructing the asynchronous information from the second text and extracting clues regarding the first text, now lost to time. As a result of the pileup, my skim of the third text retains no information at all, only random words, possibly entirely misremembered. By the time the text parade gives way to end credits, the duration of film experience has dematerialized like morning mist under an unforgiving sun. In dissatisfaction I discover the statement of a problem. What must I stop in order to attend to it? Gertrude Stein said the problem of the theater is the problem of confusion, defined as the time of the performance and the time of the audience proceeding out of phase.¹ I find myself in that interference pattern. How can I put it into words and place myself before myself? I could ask: Who has forgotten reading? I mean, not forgotten how to read, but forgotten what the senses grasp, what reading unfolds in the body, what

reading constitutes as participation, a public and communal act of performance. The forgetting of reading renders it in a state of atrophy and habit, glancing over those flashes of “vivid novelty of enjoyment.”² I will say with Hélène Cixous, “Everything we read: remains” and “I want the beforehand of a book.”³ But there is no book here, is there? Screen supplants page. I am getting ahead of myself. At this point I mean only to ask, “Can we give the words a little more screen time, please?” And if we can, what will happen?

- ¹ Gertrude Stein, *Plays*, in *Lectures in America*, (Virago Press, London), 1988, 93.
- ² Alfred North Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*, (Beacon Press, Boston,) 1958, 21.
- ³ Hélène Cixous, *Stigmata*, tr. Catherine A. F. (MacGillivray, Routledge, London and New York), 1999, 20.

2. The hand that writes

The Book of Daniel, chapter 5, relates the story of King Belshazzar’s interrupted feast. The King of Babylon hosted the great feast for a thousand of his lords, and “when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.” As they did so they “praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.” These are his sins, and retribution soon follows.

“Immediately the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace, opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the hand as it wrote.” One marvels less at the hand’s appearance than at the detail of the lampstand, the miraculous beside the ordinary. The hand chooses its surface, perhaps to take advantage of the lighting, that all might see it perform its work as well as the inscription it will leave behind. Then comes the terror of the king.

“Then the king’s color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together.” Rembrandt depicts the moment at which the hand completes the last line of the last letter, the king recoiling, the guests in awe, a concubine with the contested vessel spilling its wine in the foreground. For Rembrandt the hand floats out of a billowing cloud, like coal smoke that surrounds the feast. With no lampstand pictured, the letters alone illuminate the scene, including the face of the king, who must turn from the table to read the message and twist his body with one upraised arm, shielding himself from the force of language that draws him back transfixed.

Here I will say with Hélène Cixous: “Rembrandt paints the secret: the trace of what escapes us: he always paints what escapes us: what has just happened, what is going to happen, and which traverses us suddenly, pierces us, turns us upside down, escapes—beyond the painting, beyond thought, and leaves us there panting, suspended, grazed, he paints the body that remains, maybe the skin, maybe the cadaver. The painting is the place of passage.”⁴

The next verse requires some explanation. The king calls for the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers, offering rewards to anyone who can read and interpret the writing. We must understand reading and interpreting as two distinct acts, since the mysterious words, generally considered to have been Aramaic, would have consisted in only consonants, written Aramaic thus providing a blueprint of sorts for spoken Aramaic. As in the “unpointed” sacred texts of Judaism, the reader must supply the vowels, that is,

the breath. To do so, one must already understand what one reads for the first time, a paradoxical act of decoding. Any word, written as only consonants in a particular sequence, with any combination of possible vowel arrangements, may become one of several possible words.

CP
cup
cap
cape
copy

Because of this, a teacher will provide the first reading, and a verbal lineage will sustain the written. In this case, however, there can be no tutor, the *sui generis* phrase originates in the event of its inscription. Enchanters, astrologers, and Chaldean wise men all fail to read or interpret the words successfully. Only Daniel, the hero of the story, can accomplish this. I had hopes for the Chaldean wise men in particular, since I like to imagine I am descended from them, as I was born to my mother who was born to Assyrian parents—Assyrians, also known as Chaldeans. Here is the extended family, posed in a photo studio in our home city of Flint, Michigan, circa 1929. That’s my grandmother in the front row in white lace. But this is really beside the point of my little essay, in which Daniel now makes his entrance.

The queen reminds King Belshazzar of the man in his kingdom who possesses “light and understanding and wisdom” and whom the former King Nebuchadnezzar had made chief of the magicians, enchanters, and astrologers. Daniel is brought before the king. He refuses the rewards and notes how Belshazzar, in feasting from the holy vessels, has dishonored “the God in whose hand is (the king’s) breath.” He then turns his attention to the writing.

וְיִסְרְפוּ לְקֵת אֲנִי אֲנִי

He reads four words, the first repeated, MENE MENE TEKEL PĀRSIN, all nouns relating primarily to economics, concerning measures, quantities, and divisions. Then he interprets. “MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom, and MENE, brought it to an end; TEKEL, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; PĀRSIN, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.” Daniel reads nouns that he interprets as verbs,

extracting the message through word plays and puns. I believe it must have been remorsefully that Belshazzar rewarded him with one third of the kingdom, resigning himself to his fate, as the chapter ends with the prophecy’s fulfillment: “That very night Belshazzar was slain.” The nature of the death remains unexplained, and the episode leaves the impression that the prediction brought about the reality; the writing, revealed by Daniel as a death sentence, intervened to script the future.

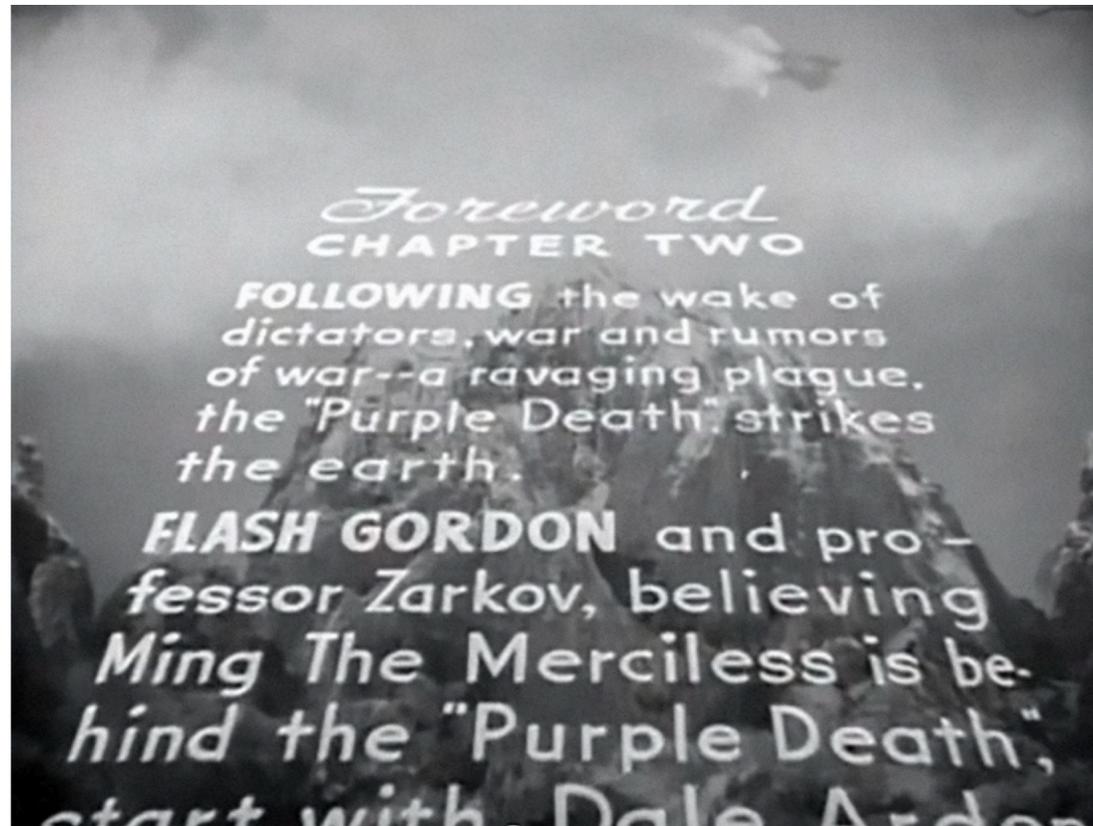
The finger writes: even a disembodied hand embodies the act of writing; there is no writing but that which has been written by a body, or part of one, from which it issues. As Peter Stallybrass has pointed out, the word *index* “is both related to the hand and to specific functions that the hand can be made to do.”⁵ He means to index, to point to, but perhaps also to write by pointing. Consider pointing the child’s first speech act. The child begins to write the world in pointing. In the story from Daniel, chapter 5, God did not only send the words, but also the hand to write them, that the hand might be seen, the extension of the author as force, affect, and gesture that leaves its trace.

The words make the wall a page or screen, the revelers at the feast, as first audience, read without understanding. The second readers, the wise men and astrologers, read without interpreting, and thus retroactively fail to read. Daniel, in succeeding at reading and interpreting, allows the story its terminus, its self-completion.

In 1994, Ann Hamilton made (*abc · video*), bringing finger and transparent surface into impossibly close range for the view of a magnifying eye. The moistened finger circles, removing the alphabet, letter by letter, from its imprint on glass. The ink saturates the fingerprint’s arches, tented arches, loops, and whorls. The finger goes about its slow labor like a snail’s foot, until the letters have all liquefied. Then the tape reverses, and the finger, like the one God sent, materializes the alphabet, returning the letters one by one to their proper sequence. Devoid of Rembrandt’s terror, methodical as those American Protestant monastics who have so inspired her aesthetic, Hamilton’s finger could belong to a reformation god, removing and restoring, unread and reading, the increments of proto-language, the letters on their transparent page, illuminated.

⁴ Cixous, *Stigmata*, 11.

⁵ Peter Stallybrass, *Abstract for The History of the Book and/as Discontinuous Reading*, bgu.ac.il/~bhochman/workshop/abstracts/Stallybrass.html.



Still from *Flash Gordon: Space Soldiers Conquer the Universe, Chapter 2*

3. The problem: the crawl

Spring, 1977: like other epics, this one begins with a text that prepares me for the story's start, but as these words commence their ascending reveal from the bottom edge, the accumulating lines form a projective plane, striking an incline at an obtuse angle to the movie theater's floor, shrinking as they retreat. In this planar geometry, like that of the early Renaissance perspective in Andrea Mantegna's *The Dead Christ and Three Mourners*, I find myself viewing from the vertex, the common endpoint of surfaces, as I read:

It is a period of civil war.
 Rebel spaceships, striking
 from a hidden base, have
 won their first victory
 against the evil Galactic
 Empire.

The words scroll like a flying carpet of language into the void that must be space. As I continue reading the next sentence, those initial sentences remain, reviewable, consoling me like visible memories. I have a history with them already, and each added line changes their

meaning in that way that continuous reading will. Words become film object, with presence and substance, with and in depth, and soon, once they have disappeared, a magnificent space ship will sail into view overhead, echoing the depth perspective that the words inaugurated. The words will then become the spacecraft's premonition and soul, of the same dimension as the adventure story to unfold.

I experience this ease and excitement not as beginning, but as return. I have been here before, recall the experience, renewed by methodological shift: "the enjoyment of contrasts within the scope of the method."⁶ I mean, there's nothing new about words on the screen, only something transformed about this manifestation, including its slowness. The words crawl and will come to be known as "the crawl," or "the famous crawl," and none of the action in the 121 minutes of the film to come will, for me, compare to the excitement of those crawling words first viewed. The years ahead will bring lessons in amateur cinema genealogies, tracing the director's childhood sources in constructing this parallel world, sources such as *Flash Gordon: Space Soldiers Conquer the Universe*, chapter two.

The steeper angle of the 1940 proto-crawl conforms to the mountain in its background. Unlike the 1977 version with its orchestral soundtrack, in the 1940 original a man's voice intones the words as they pass by. Its first sentence includes the phrase "war and rumors of war." One can search all 12 chapters of this adventure serial and fail to find a reason for these words from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 24, when Jesus, at his disciples' request, elucidated signs of the end of times.

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars...when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel...let him who is in the field not turn back to take his mantle.

With borrowed gravitas, the on-screen narration acquires some of the resonance of prophecy.

⁶ Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*, 22.



Ann Hamilton, *myein*, 1999. United States Pavilion, 48th Venice Biennale

4. Ethics in the geometric

Some time around 1999, Ann Hamilton sent me the out-of-print two volumes of *Testimony: The United States 1885-1915* by the poet Charles Reznikoff. In 1933, Reznikoff, who had a background in law, began translating into poetry a vast compilation of courtroom transcripts of witness and victim testimonies in criminal cases or cases of workplace negligence spanning the years 1885 to 1915. For the next 40 years, he meticulously crafted this unfinished masterwork, an often harrowing collection of found poems that ran to 528 pages. He imagined an alternate history of the United States, one that would include voices omitted from the history books.

Reznikoff had been known as an objectivist poet. The poet William Carlos Williams had coined the term, influenced by structural ideas in Alfred North Whitehead's 1925 book *Science and the Modern World*. The poet and critic Louis Zukofsky adopted the term and attempted to systematize its principles in an article written for *Poetry* magazine in 1931, titled "Sincerity and Objectification: With Special Reference to the Work of Charles Reznikoff." Zukofsky had initially used the term *objectivist* as a way of understanding a set of American poets whose chiseled poetry evoked the concreteness of physical objects. Over the years, the fame of other poets in this group, Ezra Pound, George Oppen, Lorine Niedecker, and Williams, eclipsed that of Reznikoff, whose work, until recently, has been largely neglected. Reznikoff's understanding of the term *objectivist*, somewhat different than that of Zukofsky, might have contributed in part to that neglect. He considered objectivism a poetic inflection of the objective register required of courtroom testimony. Because of this, his poems exist less as autonomous objects and more as fragments of the larger social fabric, the phantom context of their occasion, that they imply and perhaps reclaim. He wrote of the joy he felt in the attempt "to use words for their daylight meaning,"⁷ and his poems have been described as measured depictions of "a bare pattern of events in the brightest possible light."⁸

Back in 1999 when Hamilton sent the volumes, she had engaged Reznikoff's *Testimony* poems as an element in her installation *myein* for the United States Pavilion at the 48th Venice Biennale. She had embossed Braille versions of the poems onto the walls, an expansive grid of textured white characters on white ground. From around the edges of the austere coffered ceiling, a fine fuchsia-colored powder sifted out of unseen mechanisms, streaking the walls, accumulating

on the floors, and over the six-months of the exhibition, collecting and bringing into relief the Braille patterns.

The work's characteristic displacement of image, with image emerging in the long duration, reflected its depth of historical research. Within its spaces, visitors found themselves surrounded and immersed in a double environment: the architectural volume of the pavilion rematerialized as a room of unstable codes and language.

The poet Dan Beachy-Quick, in his essay "The Hut of Poetry," understands a manner of reading as an act of initial dwelling.

Reading is a method of entering; entering is a form of initiation. Form seen as such means that the poem functions on the page as a location that ceases to be a location. The poem on the page is no principality. It does not make a distinct place *in* the world, nor does it make a distinct place *of* the world. It is not a site to travel to, not a place of destination. Rather, the poem denies location because it acts [...] as a nexus between worlds, taking part in both worlds but belonging to neither, a threshold in which one must learn to uncomfortably dwell. The difficulty of reading poetry isn't the work of understanding what a poem may or may not mean. The truer difficulty is in learning to read so as to occupy the environment the poem opens, to suffer encounter with what is the poem.

Our normal approach to reading, what we are taught to do in school, outlines a method whose end is a momentum that casts us out of the poem as the reward for having read it, our mind bejeweled with the profit of what we've found. To think of poetry as environment, as a space of initiation, is to learn to read so as to lose a sense of meaning, to become bereft of what it is we thought we knew, to lose direction, to become bewildered. The first act of imagination in reading isn't the work of image making but the work of entering the poem in which images exist, inexplicable ornaments within the form, each promising a knowledge to acquire should one be patient enough to learn to see it. We enter the poem to threaten the security of the knowledge we possess before we read it. We enter the poem to be asked a question we will not ask ourselves otherwise, a question that begins at the point of our certainty.⁹

In a state of second childhood, the adult reader grasps as in a dark room for the parts through which to locate the whole and oneself. A lifetime of experience provides little guidance for the best course of conduct in a room made of poetry.

Charles Reznikoff deeply identified with the 17th-century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza. Spinoza is believed to have been expelled from Amsterdam's Jewish community for his heretical belief in God and nature as a "single substance," a concept the 20th century philosopher Gilles Deleuze called the pure plane of immanence. Reznikoff's 1934 volume *Jerusalem the Golden* contains a short poem titled "Spinoza," which begins this way.

He is the stars,
 multitudinous as the drops of rain,
 and the worm at our feet,
 leaving only a blot on the stone;
 except God there is nothing.¹⁰

Spinoza's magnum opus, published after his death in 1677, had the title *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata*, which translates as Ethics demonstrated in the geometric. He believed that the patterns of ethics and geometry share the quality of that which one can demonstrate with Euclidean rigor. Justice takes solid form. Can we say the same of poetry? We come to understand the search for analogues of the ethical intentions of *Testimony*, parallel geometries to separate out from the words, to fabricate, perform, and grant as enclosure their own silent time and space.

⁷ Charles Reznikoff, *The Poems of Charles Reznikoff 1918-1975*, ed. Seamus Cooney, A Black Sparrow Book, (David R. Godine Publisher, Boston, Massachusetts), 2005, 325.

⁸ Charles Reznikoff, *The Poems of Charles Reznikoff 1918-1975*, 375.

⁹ Dan Beachy-Quick, *Wonderful Investigations*, (Milkwed Editions, Minneapolis, Minnesota), 2012, 7.

¹⁰ Charles Reznikoff, *The Poems of Charles Reznikoff 1918-1975*, 114. Stephen Fredman, *A Menorah for Athena—Charles Reznikoff and the Jewish Dilemmas of Objectivist Poetry*, (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois; London, England), 2011, 11.

The house was quiet and the world was calm.
The reader became the book; and summer night

Was like the conscious being of the book.

Slowly **The house** tipped, hushed. Two windows like eyes slid open. The house **was quiet** as it fell on its side **and the world was calm.** and listened. **The reader** ajar **became the book; and summer night** doubling its weightlessness **was like the conscious being** a book is only a book when it is open **of the book.**

The house was quiet because it had to be.

The quiet was part of the meaning, part of the mind:

Speaking **The house** pronounced the alphabet in nocturnal waves and **was quiet** unlocking words one dreamed about what one would grasp if one did not have the keys to her own knowledge leaving the keys to another **because it had to be.** take measure of the steps it takes and the rhythm of **The quiet** congregating an audience of guests **was part of the meaning, part of the mind:** a double hearing of the inaudible.

itself

**Is calm, itself is summer and night, itself
Is the reader leaning late and reading there.**

The truth **itself** like a book **Is calm,** knows its own beginning and end crossing the sky with thin vowels **itself** language **is summer and night,** two motions like ice and dust **itself** one opens new paths to the excluded and **the reader** shifting **leaning late** releases her breath **and reading there.** carries it off to its own quiet place.

5. The problem: entrancement

One word, two words, maybe three words. I read them immediately. That is to say, I have already read them. I read them before I know I have read them, in an instant, a single apprehension, as if grasping a single word, a single thought. More than reading them, I recognize them.

Having been conditioned to expect the worst, that I will not make it to the end in the time allowed, I realize I have intensified my concentration at the front end as I do in the presence of any written language. Now I feel that intensity dissipate as these words remain, and remain still. In that extended time, I read beyond connotation. I begin to read appearance, the words cluster as visual image, first on their surface, then as part of a larger image.

Time grows long, enough for me to consider time no longer instrumentalized. I begin to acclimate to this elongated time as if it were not elongated. I find myself arriving, ushered into its pace, slowing down. It is as if these moments have assumed (correctly) that I navigated the noise and rushed complexities of the city to arrive at this room. Now, in order to concentrate properly, I must recalibrate the tempo of my attention, in the register of reading.

I'm surprised at how quickly this slow time has normalized. I feel ready for it. There seems to be some respectful gesture in it, spacious and particular I may have forgotten that I have been reading. If so, if I realize now, after the fact, that this simple mechanical performance engrossed me, I might consider that particular quality of entrancement of reading without reading.

The performance unfolds equally in an internal theater as in the physical theater in which I forget I am sitting. The convergence of factors allowing this entrancement, beyond the care of composition before my eyes, includes a not uncomfortable seat, a clear view, relative quiet, and other people around me concentrating, as I concentrate, on the same point of focus, in library silence. I might describe these factors with the word *hospitality*. The room allows a clear place for me, in fact requires me to occupy that place in order to complete itself as an assembly. This slow world has reassured me that I will have ample time to take in the words. I feel no stress or anxiety, and my mind may wander. I may grow impatient, with an appetite for the moment to come. In this condition I find myself leaning forward, toward the light, like a tropism.

Wallace Stevens' poem "The House Was Quiet and the World Was Calm," from his 1947 book *Transport to Summer*, proceeds through its eight unrhymed couplets carefully, cautiously, as much not to disturb as to describe to quiet of the title.

The house was quiet and the world was calm.
The reader became the book; and summer night

Was like the conscious being of the book.
The house was quiet and the world was calm.

The words were spoken as if there was no book,
Except that the reader leaned above the page,

Wanted to lean, wanted much most to be
The scholar to whom his book is true, to whom

The summer night is like a perfection of thought.
The house was quiet because it had to be.

The quiet was part of the meaning, part of the mind:
The access of perfection to the page.

And the world was calm. The truth in a calm world,
In which there is no other meaning, itself

Is calm, itself is summer and night, itself
Is the reader leaning late and reading there.¹¹

The reader's desire—"wanted much most to be the scholar to whom his book is true"—fuels the page, lends it the power to silence the universe swirling, by unspoken implication, in chaos.

¹¹ Wallace Stevens, *Selected Poems*, ed. John N. Serio, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York), 2009, 186.



Ann Hamilton, *the event of thread*, 2012. Park Avenue Armory, New York

6. Aurora borealis

At the turning of the year 2013, from December 5 through January 6, New York's Park Avenue Armory commissioned Ann Hamilton's *the event of a thread*. Elements of the installation filling the cavernous vaulted space included swings to seat two people. Each instance of swinging, by way of an elaborate pulley system, raised and lowered the massive rippled white silk curtain that divided the room, and revealed or concealed connected swings on the opposite side. Extracts from the artist's statement describe it best.

I can remember the feeling of swinging—how hard we would work for those split seconds, flung at furthest extension, just before the inevitable downward and backward pull, when we felt momentarily free of gravity, a little hiccup of suspension when our hands loosened on the chain and our torsos raised off the seat. We were sailing, so inside the motion—time stopped—and then suddenly rushed again toward us. We would line up on the playground and try to touch the sky, alone together.

Suspended in the liquidity of words, reading also sets us in motion. We fall between a book's open covers, into the texture of the paper and the regularity of the line. The rhythm and breath of someone reading out loud takes us to a world far away. As a child, I could spend hours pressed against the warmth of my grandmother's body listening to her read, the rustling of her hand turning the page, watching the birds and the weather outside, transported by the intimacy of a shared side by side.

the event of a thread is made of many crossings of the near at hand and the far away: it is a body crossing space, is a writer's hand crossing a sheet of paper, is a reader crossing with a page and with another reader, is an inscription crossing a transmission, is a stylus crossing a groove, is a song crossing species, is the weightlessness of suspension crossing the calling of bell or bellows. It is a flock of birds and a field of swings in motion. It is a particular point in space at an instant of time...

John Constable described the sky in his paintings as a "white sheet drawn behind the objects." ...

Suspended via ropes and pulleys by a field of swings hung 70 feet from arched iron trusses, a white cloth more than twice the hall's width and nearly as tall is the central figure in the space. Whether a tug of war or a unison effort, individualized or coordinated, the responsive liquidity of the silk registers the combined velocities and accelerations of the

field of swings. The shifting weather of the white cloth is generated through collective action.¹²

I never saw *the event of a thread*. I remember distinctly where I sat—room, light, time of day—as I listened to a friend describe his firsthand experience of the exhibition. He spoke of the gliding feel of the swing and the curtain's undulation. As I pictured the scene as one does in vicarious, empathic moments, my mind placed it beside the catalogue of actual memories that serve as measurements for the unexperienced. His description of the vast floating curtain called to my mind the northern lights. An epic family trip in 1970 from Michigan to Alaska and back, along with all its wondrous sights and adventures, featured for me a secret quest for the most elusive vision, the aurora borealis, the nocturnal display of visible columns of illuminated charged particles like curtains of color in gradual transformation. At a roadside stop, I had found a book of the exploits of Paul Bunyan, the giant lumberjack in the tales of the northern American loggers. At the end it described how Bunyan's playful wrestling with his animal companion, Babe the Blue Ox, causes the northern lights, and I thought of the lights as the same shade as that magical blue creature. The remaining days dwindled. At the mercy of atmospheric conditions and the imperatives of bedtime, the vision seemed unattainable. I whispered a silent prayer each night: "Please let me see the northern lights before the trip ends and I go back to school." At last on the final night, when we camped in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the lights revealed themselves, and we beheld the asymmetrical vertical beams, their jerky shifts in position unpredictable, their anemic colors like a trick of the eye. They reminded me of images of Superman's Fortress of Solitude. They mostly just seemed strange, until later when I remembered them, remembered in the words of Walt Whitman, "the mystical moist night-air,"¹³ at which point I accepted them as singular and majestic. How inexhaustible the natural world seemed to me then—nothing like a fairy tale, but humbler, made of atoms, magnetic charges, and waves of structure and motion made apparent in the most unlikely ways.

Engaging these ideas now, I imagine the grown-up playground of *the event of a thread* as a mechanical evocation of my quest for the northern lights, rendered in reliable technology, like baroque puppetry or the flying machines of Leonardo da Vinci, no less wondrous than their inspirations in nature. I imagine the people in their swings, entranced by a surface like a page without writing, and transported to a remembered summer night when something, long ago, appeared, in fulfillment of a desire. I might say that I grew like "a tropism to the beckoning light,"¹⁴

and "The summer night is like a perfection of thought."¹⁵

Maybe because of Dad the engineer, I never thought of a spectacle without its corresponding formulas and mechanisms. Clinical explanations, faltering and rudimentary and human, offered gateways to apprehension and clues for where to look and when and how. I think now of the nights of not seeing the lights, of imagining and praying, and I wonder about that attention. Walt Whitman describes it in *Leaves of Grass*, in the passage on hearing the "learn'd astronomer."¹⁶ He comes to know deprivation as illness—not isolation from fellow humans; no, one must wander off by oneself at times as a cure. Instead he dreads loss of earth and sky as direct apprehension, as "the cry not smothered by concepts"¹⁷ when, in the aftermath of the lesson, an understanding of their workings obscures them. He craves the silence when the night sky becomes, on its own terms, once more readable.

When I heard the learn'd astronomer;

When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me;

When I was shown the charts and the diagrams,
to add, divide, and measure them;

When I, sitting, heard the astronomer, where he lectured with
much applause in the lecture-room

How soon, unaccountable, I became tired and sick;

Till rising and gliding out, I wander'd off by myself,

In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,

Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.¹⁸

¹² Ann Hamilton, Artist Statement, annhamiltonstudio.com/images/projects/armory/Ann_statement_final.pdf.

¹³ Walt Whitman, "When I Heard the Astronomer," *Leaves of Grass*, (Brooklyn, New York), 1855, whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/125.

¹⁴ Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*, 65.

¹⁵ Stevens, *Selected Poems*, 168.

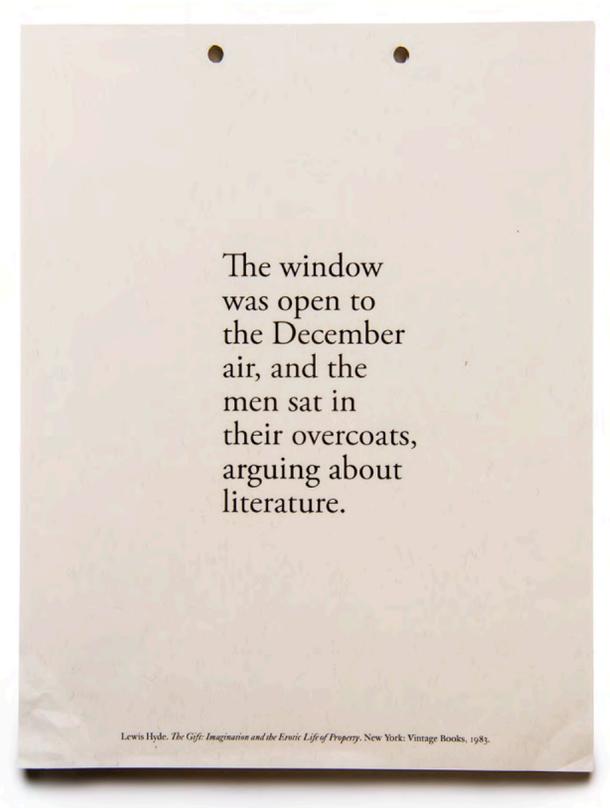
¹⁶ Walt Whitman, whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/125.

¹⁷ Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*, 65.

¹⁸ Walt Whitman, whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/125.



Susan Howe, *Spontaneous Particulars: The Topography of Archives*. New York: New Directions, 2014. p. 19.



Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Ethics of Property*. New York: Vintage Books, 1983.

Ann Hamilton, *cloth • a commonplace*, 2016. Commonplace project pages. 11.5 x 8.5 inches. In collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia

7. Windrows—a commonplace

I find myself drawn to a manner of movement, a direction of thought I will call the direction of philosophy. I take my starting point, where I find myself now, as the end, and begin the work of working backwards. What events and conditions brought me here? When, precisely, did the journey commence? Can writing retrace the steps? I know philosophy's movement as reverse.

I might say there is no progress to be made, only regress in this way. In each instance of the work of personal archeology, language acts less to express thought than to awaken it. The cuckoo calls in blue light in advance of the sunrise, and its insistent call is undeniable. Unignorable, it provokes a resurrection of writing as I need it.

Late summer lines of raked hay, called windrows, snake over fields, drying in sun and wind, or maybe mowed and heaped into lines by the work of the wind. The word never stopped me when I heard it spoken as it did when I saw it on the page. Window; I thought it said window. Misapprehension makes an impatient invention. I need a subvocalization—a whisper to stitch the visible word to its remembered sound.

"When we take a general view of the wonderful stream of our consciousness, what strikes us first is the different pace of its parts. Like a bird's life, it seems to be an alteration of flights and perchings."¹⁹

In returning to any beginning, I return to acceptance: that our own words begin with somebody else's words; that our words begin when somebody else's words stop us. I find myself unable to keep moving

forward until I contend with the words that have stopped me. Moving forward takes the form of that contention. The contention directs, redirects, or reverses. I resolve to make these words my own, to allow them some say over what I will do and think. If this is how a beginning happens, the most pressing question and responsibility becomes what do we allow to stop us? By responsibility I mean response. What we allow to stop us is what we respond to, and our response to what stops us is our responsibility and our work.

How do I isolate that element from the field? How do I forage and catalogue those stoppages in the stream of reading, to engender that attention that recognized the interruption? How do I include others in that recognition?

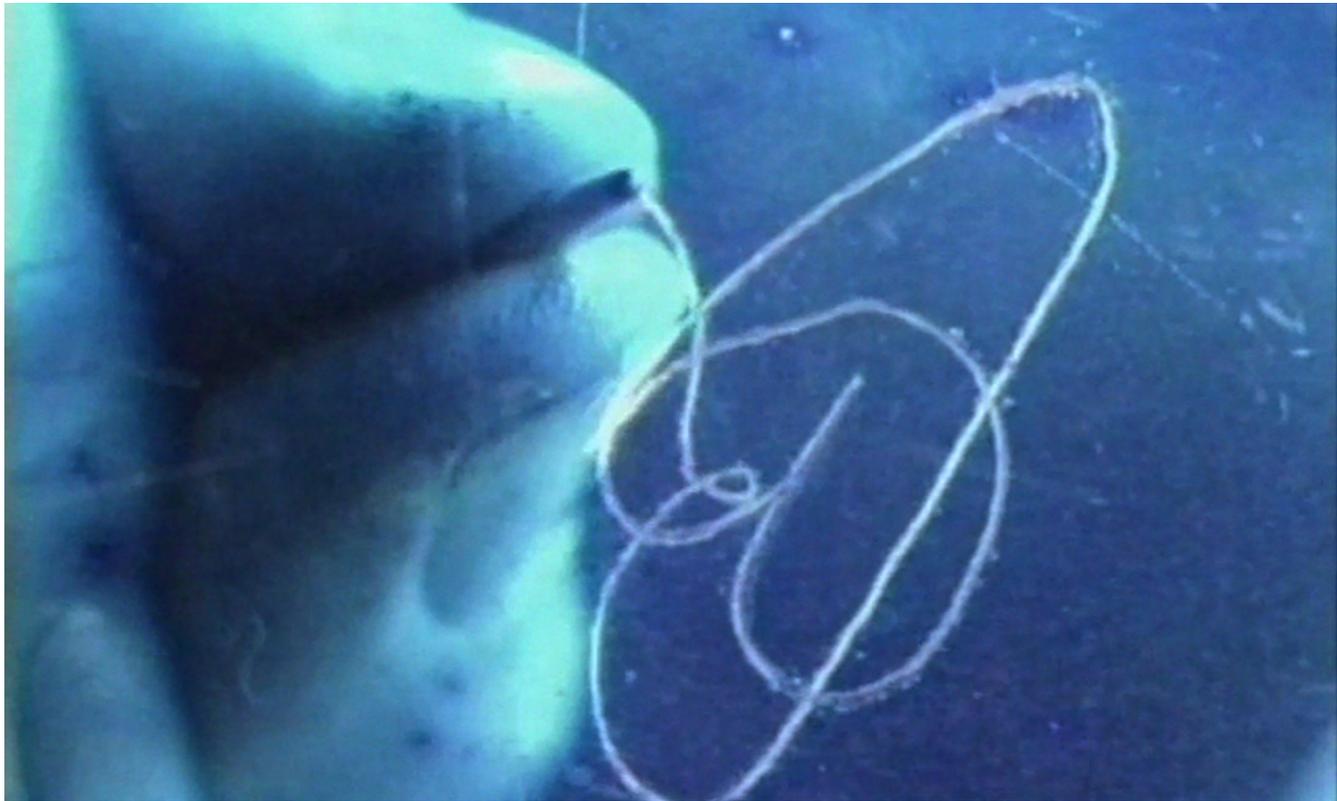
The commonplace book, once a widespread practice, compiles extracts, notated with attribution, sometimes including the collector's gloss on the quotation. At the time of his death Henry David Thoreau left behind a number of commonplace books into which he copied excerpts from his reading. Herman Melville began *Moby-Dick* with a proto-chapter before chapter one, assembling an array of fragments relevant to his subject the whale. These handwritten archives communicate the richness of the ground out of which the writing grew, from books, journals, speeches, correspondences, dictionaries, song lyrics—even the range of sources a resource and portrait of the time. The name identifies the book as ordinary, approachable, and accessible to all, a meeting place of reading and writing, research and creation. The *locus communis*, the "communal place," is also the "general theme"—commonplace a contronym, a word with two

opposite definitions. *Unoriginal* can mean a trite repetition or a found artifact, retained and valued. The originality of the practice lies in collection and arrangement, in where one looked and what one found, in curation, fragments read and retained (copied), the art of attention, the creativity of still life and quodlibet. In this polysemy I recognize undying acts, migrated in the age of the systems emulator to functions in the Edit pulldown menu: COPY / PASTE / COPY TO SCRAPBOOK.

With the Tumblr page titled *cloth • a commonplace* Ann Hamilton engaged these strategies as tributary research, preparation for, and response to, the 2016–17 exhibition *habitus* at the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia. She opened the page to communal contribution, hybridizing the archaic form and the Internet's broad reach. The site has aggregated hundreds of contributions—text extracts, images, scans of book pages—all regarding cloth.

Embrace in practice the act of recording those words that stopped us. The commonplace book makes time for that record, for care and consideration of why they stopped us. Start again from that act of copying: the words that move my pen.

¹⁹ William James, *The Stream of Consciousness in Psychology, The Briefer Course*, (Dover, Mineola, NY), 2001, 27.



Ann Hamilton, *(reserve + video/writing)*, 1996/2000. Video still

8. The problem: the overlook

In Stanley Kubrick's 1980 film of Stephen King's novel *The Shining*, Jack Torrance has brought his family—wife Wendy and young son Danny—to the empty Overlook Hotel in a remote mountain resort location for the winter off-season. Jack has been hired as caretaker, and he will use the time, we are told, as a writing retreat to concentrate on his book. The vast empty hotel and unpopulated mountain vistas provide the setting for Jack's descent into violence, with a spooky undertow of male inadequacy and fated possession. After Jack's behavior has grown erratic, the revelation of his complete collapse arrives in the pivotal scene in which Wendy secretly investigates his writing desk. She finds an unfinished sheet left in the typewriter carriage. On it he has repeatedly typed the words, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

With growing alarm, she turns her attention to the neat stack of "finished" pages in the organizer tray to the left of the typewriter. As she leafs through the sheets, the camera looks closely enough for us to see the same repeated sentence on every page. Jack's irrationality began when he began writing, all those weeks ago at their arrival.

I remember that when I first saw the film at the age of 20, I chuckled ruefully at this melodramatic moment. For these two characters, so compellingly portrayed in the iconic performances of Jack Nicholson and Shelly Duvall, indeed for the film's entire presumptive audience, the ascendant type of concrete poetry that had begun to fascinate me had been deployed as a signifier of insanity. The panicked Wendy revealed page after page of typographic permutation of the proverb:

one a block of solid text, another with indentations suggesting extended quotation, here spaced lines like the poetry of Wallace Stevens, there lines stepping across a diagonal reminiscent of the verse of e. e. cummings. Onionskin paper rustled like dry leaves in her hands. The insistent, compulsive repetition that signaled an irreparable psychology only played out on the level of so-called content. Forms and structures demonstrated endless variation. The flattened constrained words demonstrated like an exercise in deconstruction the precise expressivity of pure arrangement. As if to underscore the seriousness of the threat Jack posed, the micropolyphonic strings of György Ligeti crept into the soundtrack. I had recently started collecting this composer's music at college. I could not remember when I had started hearing it as beautiful rather than scary.

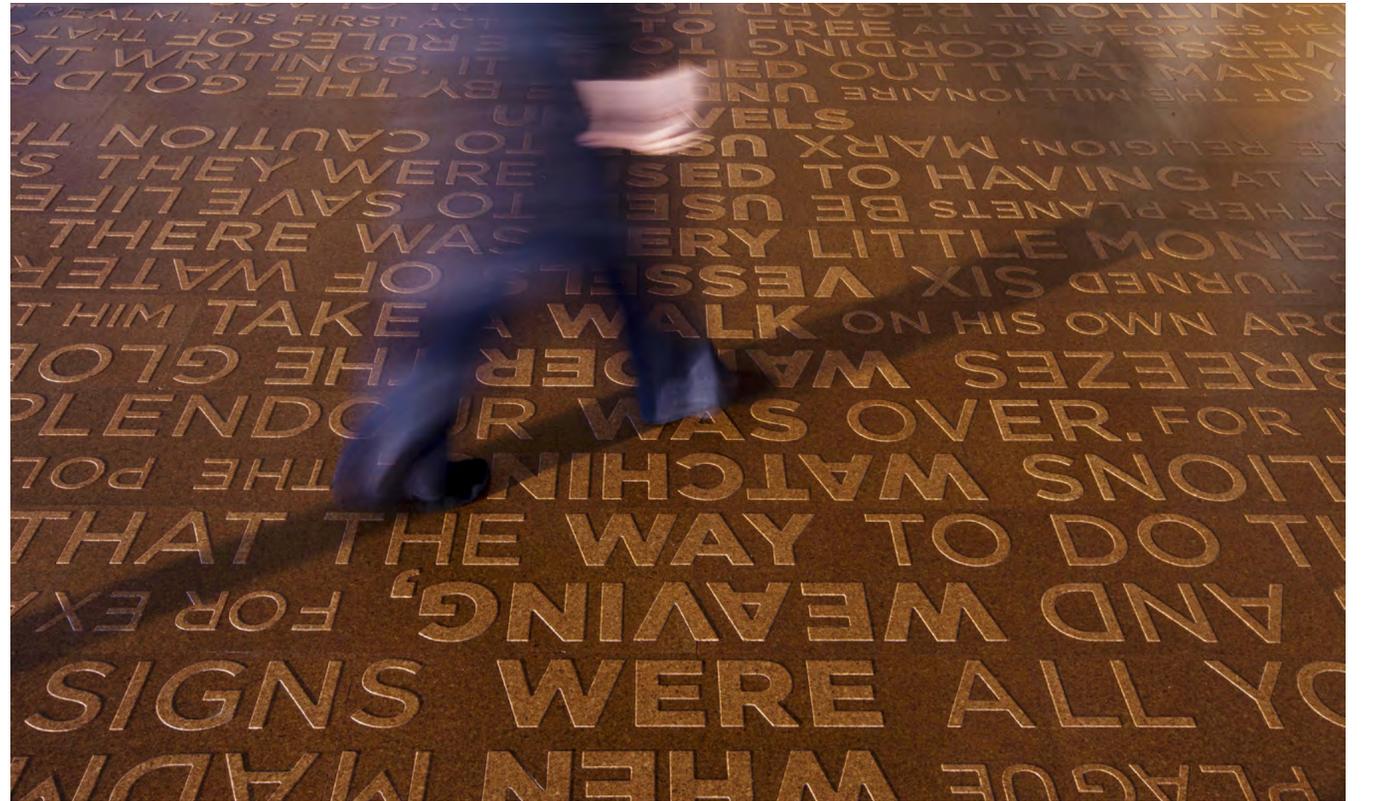
Jack's selected material sentence, it seemed, was meant to connote that ominous infantilization of Geroge Orwell's *1984* nursery rhymes. Yet it made me think about what constitutes work and play in writing. "Writing is a labor of the hands."²⁰ Jack's writing employed his hands and allowed his mind to play. I thought of Truman Capote's famous quip, calling Jack Kerouac not a writer but a typist, and how self-proclaimed "serious" writers can seem so threatened by those more playful.

What is to be mistrusted in Jack Torrance's carpet of words, these texts that we apprehend as visual fields? Are we meant to fear that part of the brain to which their materiality speaks? Wendy does not read the pages. She looks them over.

The colliding ideas in the nexus of the writing desk scene from *The Shining* makes me think of Caspar David Friedrich's German Romanticism, the landscape of solitary altitude, exhilarating and terrible, that he painted in *Wanderer Above the Sea Fog*, an image I identify with Friedrich Nietzsche. The dictionary attributes two opposite meanings to the verb *overlook*. First, it means "to neglect or fail to notice," and second, "to view from above, as a mountain overlooks a valley." A third archaic meaning: "bewitched by an evil eye."

Jack has given an ordinary sentence an extraordinary treatment. We might overlook it—fail to notice it as we survey the pattern—until its insistence overtakes us. Then the spirit manifestation, the pure plane of immanence, appears.

²⁰ Stanley Cavell, *The Senses of Walden*, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London), 1981, 27.



Ann Hamilton, *VERSE*, 2011. William Oxley Thompson Memorial Library, The Ohio State University

9. Concordance

In 1230, French Dominican Friar Hugh of Saint-Cher completed the task. He had mobilized 500 monks to assist him in alphabetizing the principal words in the Vulgate Bible, generating a type of edited indexical compilation called a "concordance." His opus, the *Concordantiae Sacrorum Bibliorum*, constituted one of many such re-configurations of sacred texts undertaken by monastics, including the *Book of Sentences (Libri Quattuor Sententiarum)* from 1150, collecting and anthologizing authoritative sentences on biblical passages, and the correctorium, organizing variant readings of the Bible. But Hugh of St. Cher's concordance, valuable as it was, listed only the Latin words and their corresponding passages, with none of the contextual language of those passages. Bible chapters had not yet been broken into verses. He divided each chapter into seven equal parts and labeled them with letters of the alphabet. Twenty years later, English Dominicans undertook the task of including the complete quotations from the passages indicated. The revised concordance allowed, for example, one to read in sequence every appearance of the word *spiritus*.

Medieval modes of reorganization collapse exegetical interpretation into the prioritizing work of the system. Twentieth-century philosopher Alfred North Whitehead called them "marvels of architectonic genius." From our vantage point in these early days of electronic literature and augmented reality applications, we can recognize the concordance as low-tech, labor-intensive text mining. The dictionary traces the word's meaning to medieval Latin *concordantia*, "being of one mind." As a form of textual treatment, the concordance survives in altered forms. It unifies the many minds of a source text into singular momentum.

A childhood dream: a book so large it will not fit in the house. It contains "all knowledge." Studying it will take half a lifetime and give one all wisdom. It lies flat on the ground and takes up most of the back yard, leaving only a little room for the swing set. To read it, one must walk, or crawl, along each page, line by line. Turning a page requires at least two people.

I found a version of this book in the form of a floor that could have been lifted from a benign Tower of Babel in Ann Hamilton's design for one room of the Seattle Public Library.

One of many innovations brought to the library design by Rem Koolhaas/OMA involved the next generation of the "urban carpet." Ludwig Mies van der Rohe had first articulated this concept as a minimization of the threshold, proposing a continuous plane between exterior and interior floor surfaces. Mies considered this strategy

a form of transparency, a structural invitation to enter a building, a welcome and an act of hospitality. Koolhaas, with characteristic unrestrained inventiveness, extended the single surface not only from outside to inside, but through the entire building as a multifloor spiral. A compressed "book spiral" on upper floors "implies a reclamation of the much-compromised Dewey Decimal System. By arranging the collection in a continuous ribbon—running from 000 to 999—the subjects form a coexistence that approaches the organic; each evolves relative to the others, occupying more or less space on the ribbon, but never forcing a rupture."²²

But back at the ground floor entrance, and through the Literacy, ESL/English as a Second Language, and World Languages (LEW) Collection, a floor of 556 lines of maple floorboard branches off of the grand encompassing spiral. It greets the visitor with a surface of inverted and reversed letterforms in relief, "like a bed of moveable type laid in preparation for printing."²³

As a continuous tactile field, the floor of text contains running lines from the 11 languages which currently form the largest and most frequently used areas of the LEW Collection: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. These lines are a collection of 1,543 first sentences gathered by patrons and librarians from books in the Seattle Public Library Fiction and LEW Collection. Fiction and nonfiction, poetry, and musical lyrics are the dominant textual sources. First lines may not be the most notable line of a book, but after the cover, they are a universal portal to an immersion in a book's interior world. Thus the floor as an oceanic physical surround amplifies the immersive experience of reading a page to become an architectural field.

The concordance function, in the verbiage of contemporary coding, designates an executable text—a script that performs an operation, or a treatment, on another text. A computer has replaced 500 monks, but the sequence of actions remains roughly the same. Ann Hamilton and her studio devised a concordance program in LaTeX open source code for *stylus*, the 2010 installation at the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts in St. Louis. The artist has continued to populate projects with text concordances in various ways since then.

The program enables the feeding and sifting of a source text according to parameters of designation of the alphabetized principal words, here called "spine" words because the program arranges of them down the middle of the reconstituted text field. Secondary directives set the

number of context words aligned on either side of the spine, allowing the reading of the intersection of spine word context and frequency. The program produces a hybrid typography, part concordance and part mesostic, with vertical words intersecting horizontal lines. Inverting the mode of original concordances, this program reinvests a discontinuous codex with the continuity of the scroll.

In 2011 a hybrid version of the program generated the design for the floor of the William Oxley Thompson Memorial Library Reading Room at the Ohio State University in Columbus. The resulting text field alphabetizes an intersection and line-by-line weaving of three contrasting accounts of world history. Two hundred ninety-nine words in A-Z order adapted from *The End of the World*, a White River Sioux story, compose the spine along the north-south axis. The east-west lines intersect this story with prose fragments from *A Little History of the World* by E.H. Gombrich (1936) and *Mirrors: Stories of Almost Everyone* by Eduardo Galeano (2009). A two-color cork floor laid as a plane of words set in relief realizes this text weave.

At the outset of his year in the woods, Thoreau purchased "the shanty of James Collins, an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg Railroad, for boards."²⁴ He disassembled the shanty and laid the planks out to "bleach and warp back again in the sun." With them he would build the walls of his cabin on Walden Pond. Philosopher Stanley Cavell has read in this episode an equation between construction and destruction. Must I, he asks, in building one house, first dismantle another? Consider each text a house, and the concordance asks this question of writing. Hugh of Saint-Cher deconstructed the Vulgate Bible to lay its skeletal boards out, in order to rebuild another book, in order to rediscover how to read. Does each new methodology of reading break into usable parts the book to which it attends? Consider the time in the sun between two houses—when Thoreau reduced structure to substance, past house and future house, and remembered shanty and potential cabin—with these wood bones in common. Survey them. Read them. Walk on them.

²² archdaily.com/11651/seattle-central-library-oma-lmn

²³ annhamiltonstudio.com/public/lew.html

²⁴ Henry David Thoreau, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, (Dover Publications, Inc., New York), 1995, 27, 28.

ANN HAMILTON, LIN HIXSON, MATTHEW GOULISH

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

LH:

WE NOW CONSIDER OUR MODE OF INVENTION IN TWO DISTINCT ASPECTS: COMPOSING A TEXT, AND PERFORMING A TREATMENT ON A PRE-EXISTING TEXT.

LARGE SLIDE 17: PART 4: IMAGINED THEATER

MG:

AT THIS POINT THE CONCEPT OF IMAGINED THEATER MAKES ITS ENTRANCE. AN ALPHABET OF IMPOSSIBLE THEATER, IN WHICH EACH LETTER BECOMES A CHARACTER: THE LETTER R A MARIONETTE, THE LETTER B AN ACROBAT DEFYING GRAVITY. WRITING CAN REALIZE THOSE IMAGES OF WHICH THEATER CAN ONLY DREAM.

LH:

I HAVE STARTED MAKING PERFORMANCES TO BE READ. THEY INHABIT THE WHITE SPACE OF THE PAGE. THEY EXCEED THE BODY, CUT ACROSS SPACE, AND LEAVE TIME BEHIND. THEY ARE CHIMERAS AND FRAGMENTS OF THE IMAGINATION THAT OPPOSE THE EVERYDAY WORKINGS OF THE THEATER. I COULD NEVER CREATE THEM AS LIVE EVENTS. THEY SIT ALONGSIDE MY PRACTICE AS A MAKER AND DIRECTOR OF EXPERIENCES THAT INHABIT ACTUAL STAGES OR FLOORS; ON CERTAIN DAYS AND TIMES, CREATED IN DAILY LIFE WITH OTHERS. UNLIKE THOSE ACTUAL PERFORMANCES, THESE WRITTEN PERFORMANCES ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO CREATE BUT POSSIBLE TO ENVISION.

THE PRACTICALITY OF THE IMPOSSIBLE IN RELATION TO THE ACTUAL SURPRISES ME. NEW WAYS OF TRAVELING IN THIS IMAGINED WORLD CREATE NEW POSSIBILITIES OF BEING AND DOING. WITH THE CONSTRAINT OF WORDS ON A PAGE, LIKE THE CONSTRAINT OF WINGS ON A BIRD, I HAVE TO FIND ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO FLY. THINKING THE IMPOSSIBLE ANTICIPATES AND CREATES POSSIBLE FUTURES.

MG (LH GOES TO MUSIC STAND):

“WONDER RATHER THAN DOUBT IS THE ROOT OF KNOWLEDGE.” WHEN ABRAHAM HESCHEL SAID THAT, HE SPOKE WITH SOCRATES WHO PINPOINTED THE SENSE OF AMAZEMENT AS THE IMPULSE OF PHILOSOPHY. RETURN TO “LEARNING” AS AN OPERATIVE MODE, ADDRESSING AS IT DOES AN INTERGENERATIONAL ACTION, A TRANSGENERATIONAL MIND. TIME WITHOUT TIME – THE CHILD WILL RECEIVE AND IN THIS WAY LEAD; ANYONE OLDER MUST ONLY ACCEPT. LIN WILL NOW READ FOR YOU AN EPISODE OF IMAGINED THEATER STARRING THE LETTER O.

SMALL SLIDE 12: O LARGE SLIDE 18: O

LH:

O

STANDS ON GRASS AND IT RAINS MOTHS. THE DAY DRIES AND

O

QUIVERS. THREE WOMEN WALK DOWNSTAGE IN RUSTY SHOES. THEY HOLD CAMERA EYES ON –

AH (INTERRUPTING):

I HAVE AN IDEA. I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THAT A FILM.

MG:

SAID ANN, INTERRUPTING.

LH:

SOUNDS GREAT. HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO IT?

AH:

I WILL CHOREOGRAPH A VERY SMALL CAMERA, HELD BETWEEN MY FINGERS, AS THE EYE THAT READS; TRACKING OVER EACH LETTER ON THE PAGE, BRINGING THE SURFACE IMPOSSIBLY CLOSE, RECORDING THE EYE IN ITS FLIGHT.

I WILL FILM AT THE STANDARD RATE OF 30 FRAMES PER SECOND, AND EXPORT THAT IMAGE SEQUENCE AT 10 FRAMES PER SECOND, RETAINING ONE OF EVERY THREE FRAMES. I WILL THEN RUN THAT SEQUENCE AT 6 FRAMES PER SECOND, OR SLOWED DOWN TO 60% OF THE ORIGINAL SPEED. THE RESULT OF THIS TREATMENT WILL SMOOTH THE MOTION OF THE HAND INTO THE RHYTHM OF THE HEARTBEAT AND THE BREATH; A TIME SIGNATURE REINVESTED WITH TIME.

I WILL PLACE THAT BESIDE A SEQUENCE, TREATED IN A SIMILAR MANNER, OF A CANVAS FOUND ON ONE OF THE WALLS OF THE VILLA, EXPLORED WITH THE CAMERA AS A RIPPLING ANIMATION.

MG:

ISN'T THAT AGAINST THE RULES?

LH:

IMAGINED THEATER STARRING THE LETTER O: A THREE-MINUTE SILENT FILM TEXT AND IMAGE PERFORMANCE.

SMALL SLIDE 13: CANVAS VIDEO LARGE SLIDE 19: O VIDEO

SMALL SLIDE 14: BLACK LARGE SLIDE 20: BLACK

AH:

WORDS BECAME AN OBJECT KNOWN AND TURNED BY MANY HANDS. THEY SET A PATTERN IN MOTION, AS STONES TOSSED REPEATEDLY INTO A POND. WE LOOK FOR ITS PATTERN, WAIT FOR ITS SURFACING AND CLOAKING OF THE WATERS. WITHOUT THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE STONE, WE LIVE IN AN OCEAN OF IMAGES, MIGRATING FROM SCREEN TO SCREEN, LIVING EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE IN PARTICULAR. **WE ARE BLANKETED** BY THE CLAMOUR. WE LOOK FOR THE PATTERN.

10. Dematerialization

Teaching Notes on *ONE EVERYONE*

February 8, 2017

§ Dual interrogation

Last week I made a glancing reference to the idea of the dual interrogation—the way many contemporary works of art aspire to interrogate in parallel both the mode or material of their realization and the concept of their abstract thought. By *interrogation*, I mean in this instance a questioning and reformulating from the inside. I want to say a little more about this in relation to the *ONE EVERYONE* project.*

§ Material

Hamilton realized, that is materialized, the *ONE EVERYONE* project in the mode of photography. Anyone working in photography will understand me when I say photography is undergoing a crisis. This crisis asks both what it is and why it exists, and how the answers to these questions change when everyone with a smart phone is a photographer. What, if anything, differentiates a professional photographer from an amateur, or an art photograph from a social media photograph? The common smart phone image engages photography as an index, a pointing to a moment in a place, and the posting on social media confirms that indexing and that record: these people were here at this time, and this happened. Photography's capacity to provide a window into a community arises from this indexing. In the social media photo, which grew out of a branch of photography's history, any person who sees the photograph may share in an intimate moment of a community to which the person looking at the photo does not belong. The photo acts as an invitation of sorts, and the viewer may become a provisional member of the photographed community by virtue of the viewing. Somebody who wants to “interrogate” the changing role of photography may begin by questioning this mode (indexing as community window), and one way of questioning is amplifying, or taking seriously, taking more seriously, raising the stakes. *ONE EVERYONE* takes this mode into another dimension, to the point I think of social obligation, first because the medical character of the community pictured tinges the project with a sense of witnessing, of life lived in the shadow of mortality, and second because of scale. The 900 pages of the volume of collected photos illustrates something Karl Marx proposed in relation to economics—that we wrongly consider quantity as entirely distinct from quality. Marx believed that beyond a certain threshold quantity becomes quality. This is what F. Scott Fitzgerald meant when he said, “The rich are different.” I mean that 500 portraits differ from five portraits not only in quantity, but also in quality. Scale changes substance. Understanding this offers a first step in the daunting task of thinking in large numbers, a task philosopher Timothy Morton implied when he referred to aspects of climate change as hyperobjects. Their vast scale necessitates a new category. Shall we call *ONE EVERYONE* a hyperseries of portraits, and call this its material interrogation, material questioning its own materiality, by allowing it to proliferate beyond the limits common to a photographic series?

11. Superposition

Henry David Thoreau in *Walden* wrote of the visitors to his cabin:

I have found it a singular luxury to talk across the pond to a companion on the opposite side. In my house we were so near that we could not begin to hear ... as when you throw two stones into calm water so near that they break each other's undulations.²⁹

The interference pattern to which he refers, physics and systems theory have since named the “superposition principle.” A stone dropped into a still pool produces its own set of ripples. Two stones dropped in close proximity result in two sets of rippling circles. When those circles intersect, they do not cancel out, but accumulate in a complex wave pattern that constitutes the sum of the two previous patterns. In this new pileup, called “superposition,” each of the original patterns remains apparent in totality.

§ Concept

At the same time, the project, vast as it is, resists objecthood. Each instance, as well as the telephone-book-like collection, retains some essential ephemerality. *Ephemeral* derives from the term used to describe the mayfly (ephemera), an insect with the life cycle of one single day. The images harken to the *memento mori*, the reminder of mortality. All of this constitutes a second interrogation, that of the image in abstraction. The semiopaque membrane brings those touched parts into focus, while all else retreats into fog. It gives us a retinal experience that challenges our vision and ideas of seeing, of how eyes work. Blur renders the surface uncertain. Specifically, it confuses our sense of its precise distance from us. The impulse to reach out and touch reflects the urge to stabilize our bodily relation to the object, to confirm exactly where it is, and where we are in physical proximity to it. Focus is another word for this stabilization of perceived distance. Touch is a form of focus. These visual qualities may evoke thoughts of memory, of desire, of inaccessibility, of grace as a virtual sympathy moving in our direction.²⁵ Shall we call this the image that questions the definition of image from the inside?

§ Beauty and institution

The first question posed to Hamilton after her Visiting Artists Lecture at SAIC seemed to challenge her work around the idea of beauty, as if suspicious of anything that appears beautiful. Hamilton's response, as I recall it, framed the notion of beauty as a point around which for people to gather. My question to the questioner would be: “Where precisely, or in what, do you see beauty?” How do those cases differ from where one might normally apprehend beauty in an art exhibition? Let us grant that beauty remains subjective in every instance. In the Armory, the vast, rippling, beautiful curtain is not for sale. It is too big to even precisely consider as an object. We could call it an “event,” or maybe a “hyperobject.” Its quantity changes its quality. We could say something similar about the collection of portraits, and the 900-page, wordless catalogues that collect them on newsprint paper and bind them into a telephone-book-like volume. These cases dematerialize the art object in a very particular way. In 1968 Lucy Lippard and John Chandler published an article titled “The Dematerialization of Art,” and their argument bestowed validity on a series of works considered conceptual, in a “departure from the object toward bodily or mental processes.”²⁶ But the gradient magnitude of these works presents us with something altogether different in intensity. While their objects do not completely dematerialize, a profound understanding of objecthood and materials (newsprint paper for example) destabilizes them, pushes them to the brink of dematerialization, forces their circulation as objects very nearly without value. At the same time, the bigness of the concept, the scale of its realization, invites us to gather, and gathering complete the event, as in architecture that remains incomplete until inhabited. We might say that gathering materializes in the place of the object, as the objects become instruments in the facilitation of the gathering.

In the absence of marketable objects, and in relation to their consolidation of a gathering space we may call “public,” these projects collaborate with large institutions for their realization. In his book on the 18th-century Scottish philosopher David Hume's theory of human nature, Gilles Deleuze wrote of how we weave our institutions of nature and culture in novel interwinement, “when the drive and its ends are reflected in the mind.”²⁷ I understand this discourse to mean that our institutions, at their best, work to systematize our encounters with one another and to democratize those events of encounter. In those encounters our minds exceed themselves. We have seen the documentation of the people, adults, and children, gathering around the curtain in the Armory and staying for, it seems, as long as possible, embracing its interactivity and its reconfiguring of time. Each photograph in *ONE EVERYONE* presents a portrait of an individual and a portrait of an encounter with that individual. What comes into focus through the scrim might be what we perceive in a moment of meeting—never whole, only always part, select detail. What in that is beautiful? Object becomes attractor. The gathering has no instrumental purpose and nothing to achieve other than gathering. The point of focus provides the rationale for the assembly. Means and end, process and product, fold together. All the engineering has been deployed to engineer the event.

§ Network

Finally, I want to point out that as support networks wither away or simply transform, the idea of an artist in a studio sending works out into the world becomes rare and perhaps obsolete. Artistic practice more and more involves not only the creation of work, but also resolving its manner of distribution and circulation and framing its context and reception. At first this new world seems to reduce the percentage of time spent in creative activity, in generating the work, but on the other hand, it offers a distinct opportunity of expanding the notion of creativity to include all those contextual factors and explicitly inscribing social relations into the work itself. We can best understand each project as a node, or a knot, in a vast network of forces. If the objects of the work seem to dematerialize, that's only because we misunderstood the meaning of material, or as Whitehead said, we suffered from “the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.”²⁸ The really real things in the universe are not objects but the relations between objects. A work like *ONE EVERYONE* renders those relations visible and undeniable.

* The portraits in *Letter from the Sponsors* are from the *ONE EVERYONE* series by Ann Hamilton.

²⁵ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, tr. F. L. Pogson, M. A., (Dover Publications, Inc., Mineola, NY), 2001, 13.

²⁶ Branislav Jakovljevic, *Alienation Effects*, (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor), 2016, 147.

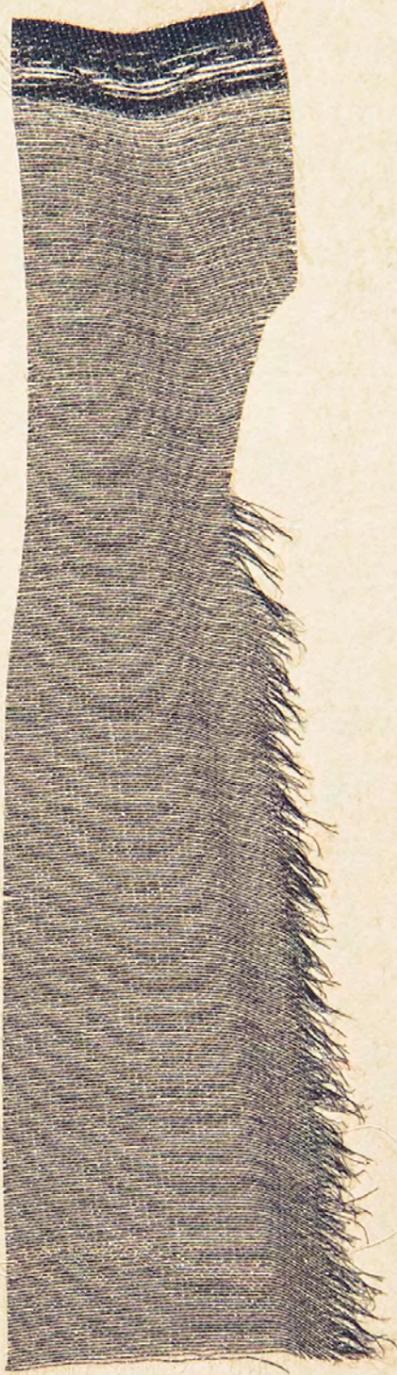
²⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity—An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, tr. Constantin V. Boundas, (Columbia University Press, NY), 1991, 49.

²⁸ Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge), 1953 (1926), 64.

Thoreau preferred to shout across Walden Pond and considered the near proximity of voices a problem. In this we agree, but only to a point. We retreat into solitude and emerge into community, in oscillations, with distance as a strategy, with the water's surface a constant energy. The pool, the manifest material of the world, lies between us and makes our thoughts known.

²⁹ Henry David Thoreau, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, (Dover Publications, Inc., New York), 1995, 91.

vanished



Spaces

The

of

Reading

CLASS BIOS

Máiréad Delaney's (MFA 2018) works examine violences inflicted on bodies by vast, obscuring systems. Her questions lie around how to render these violences seen but not remade, how to carry the burden of what we know, once we have come to know it, and how to speak to hollow spaces made by enforced silence. Working with the body's unruliness and complex complicity, Delaney is interested in the corporeal effects of time on violence and grief. Delaney received her BA in Politics and Visual Art from Marlboro College in Vermont. While living in Ireland, she worked collaboratively with the Irish women's collective Survivors of Symphysiotomy, addressing human rights abuses, medical violence, and eugenics in the context of decolonization. Delaney has exhibited in the United States, Ireland, the UK, Chile, and Ethiopia.

Dylan Fish (MFA 2017), born in 1991, St. Catharines, Canada, is a Chicago-based artist and a full-merit scholar in the graduate program of Fiber and Materials Studies at SAIC. Investigating the intersections of craft, technology, and design, his work challenges the rapid nature of digital production and consumption through the slowness of outmoded technologies and processes. He has received grants from the province of Nova Scotia, SAIC's Shapiro Center for Research and Collaboration, and the University of Chicago's Arts, Science, and Culture Initiative. His work has been exhibited in Canada, South Africa, and the United States.

Adela Goldbard (MFA 2017) lives and works in Chicago and Mexico City. Goldbard is an artist and filmmaker who believes in the potential of art to generate critical thinking and social transformation. With her work she questions the politics of memory by suspecting archeological preservation, official history, mass media, and popular culture. Goldbard challenges traditional documentary and mainstream cinema by re-enacting history and collectively building, staging, and—importantly—destroying, always with a subtle amount of parody and dark humor. Her work includes photography, video, sculpture, text, public actions, and immersive installations and is significantly research-based. She holds an MFA from SAIC, where she was granted the New Artist Society Scholarship, and a bachelor's degree in Hispanic Language and Literature from the National University of Mexico. Her work is represented by Galería Enrique Guerrero in Mexico City, and has been exhibited in Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Spain, Philippines, Russia, Argentina, Canada, the United States, and widely in Mexico.

James Hapke (MFA 2017) was born and raised in Orange County, California, and received his MFA from SAIC. He lives and works between Los Angeles and Chicago. He recently made a show called *Are we having fun yet?* in Indiana which had, among other things, a bench on wheels and a session of *Jeopardy*. He is currently cocreating and designing a play/performance called *Houseplay* at Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, which celebrates ritual, fantasy, fable, and hospitality within domestic space.

Sylvie Hayes-Wallace (BFA 2018) recently completed her BFA at SAIC. Her exhibitions include *The Comfort of Flowers on My Back* at Friendzone, Chicago, and *Devil hooves, a paper cut tongue and three pink kisses on a bald head* at Limbo, London, UK. She currently lives and works in Chicago.

Nathanael Jones (MFA 2017) is a Canadian writer and artist. He holds a BFA from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and an MFA in Writing from SAIC. He has performed and exhibited in Chicago and Halifax, Nova Scotia, and his work has been published by the Cerealbowl Collective, Hound, HAIR CLUB, Present Tense Pamphlets, Infinity's Kitchen, and Homonym.

Maddie Kodat (BA 2017) is a dancer and writer living in Chicago. Their work is concerned with the relation of archival practices to digital embodiment. Their favorite poet is probably Larry Eigner.

Sophie Leddick (MFA 2018) is an interdisciplinary performance artist. Leddick's cinematic and movement-based work references classical ballet and 20th-century European film and literature. Her work explores human vulnerability and examines identity and relationships. She is currently getting her MFA at SAIC.

Claire Arlen Linn (BFA 2018) is a writer and artist from New York City. She currently lives in Chicago and will complete her BFA with an Emphasis in Writing at SAIC in 2018. Primarily working within the media of text and film photography, she uses diverse source materials and experimental formats to document stories and intimate intimacies while employing concepts regarding infrastructure, data, process, and technology.

Tricia Park (MFA 2018) is a concert violinist. The recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant, she has appeared in concerts on five continents and is Artistic Director of MusicIC, a chamber music festival that explores the connection between music and literature. Park is a graduate of the Juilliard School and is currently an MFA candidate at SAIC. Her writing has appeared in *Cleaver* and *Abyss* magazines. To hear Park play, visit triciapark.com.

Caroline McCraw (MFA 2017) studied, her work has appeared, and she is from.

Julia Pello (MFA 2017) is Russia-born writer and film/video maker. Pello's video work engages emptied sites of historical memory to investigate possibilities of encountering what is no longer materially present. In attempting to formulate a visual record of historical disappearance, she explores eroded materialities, abandoned cityscapes, and interstitial spaces—paying attention to the interplay of collective and individual desire upon those sites. A hauntology of the moving image in all that it can and cannot contain within its frame. Slow-elapsing and durational, Pello's videos mediate a space between the actual and the virtual. Audio-visual, cinematic spaces become sites where the subjective task of the watcher/listener is to respond to the durational effect of the work by confronting its beingness within time. Cartographic ghost plays in which the image goes where language cannot follow and vice-versa, where transcendence manifests its sleight of hand as pure immanence—a salve of now.

Joshi Radin (MA 2018) works independently and collaboratively to consider questions of empathy, ideology, and subjectivity while using video, photography, writing, and performance. She is working on her MA in Visual and Critical Studies as a New Artists Society merit scholar at SAIC, where she received her MFA in Photography also as a merit scholar. Her collaborative artist research group with Linda Tegg and Brian M. John, *A Program for Plants*, received a Shapiro Center EAGER grant in 2015 for its investigations on plants and empathy. She has recently performed with Maryam Taghavi at Queens Museum, presented at conferences on art and ecology, and has a forthcoming essay in the *Brill Critical Plant Studies Series*, edited by Michael Marder. Her first solo show will be this fall at Kabinett Gallery in Boston.

Spring

2017

Daniele Vickers (MFA 2018) is an interdisciplinary artist working with ideas regarding religious knowledge and epistemologies, which are influenced by her Mormon upbringing and the 18 months she spent as a missionary in the Philippines. She is interested in how information can be interpreted and how it is possible to come to know something. The act of seeing (literally and metaphorically) inform her work. Vickers received her BFA in photography from Brigham Young University and is currently pursuing an MFA from SAIC. She loves plants and drinking water.

In Tenten Yitian Yan's (MFA 2018) works, varied forms of red are presented, projected, and performed in structures of senses and actions. Along with the flow of changing red, she explores the ambiguity of a cybernetic vision; visible alerts and invisible allergies are stimulating in a new nature, while an increasing amount of construction is happening inside physical bodies. Raised in the 1990s in Shenzhen, China, her visual history mainly consisted of a skyline of rising buildings, moving lights of transportation, a seascape of imported cultures, and waves of Internet information. Yan received a BFA from School of Visual Arts, New York, and is working on an MFA at SAIC.

Patrick Zapien (BA 2018) studies Marxism and modernist art history from 1848 to the 20th century. He is from Houston and lives in Chicago. His work is about writing out of images and perception.

Teaching Assistant Emilio Rojas (MFA 2017) is a multidisciplinary artist primarily working with the body in performance, film, video, photography, installation, public interventions, and sculpture. He holds a BFA from Emily Carr University and an MFA from the Performance department at SAIC. Rojas uses his body in a political and critical way, as an instrument to unearth removed traumas, embodied forms of decolonization, migration, and poetics of space. He has attended numerous residencies, including the Banff Centre, Elsewhere museum, Surrey Art Gallery, Botín Foundation, and Pirate Camp, the Stateless Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale. In addition to his artistic practice, Rojas is a yoga teacher, translator, community activist, and antioppression facilitator with queer, migrant, and refugee youth. His work is represented by Galería José de la Fuente in Spain and Galleriapiù in Italy and has been exhibited in the United States, Mexico, Canada, Japan, Austria, England, Greece, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Australia.

NOTES ON MAGALIE GUERIN
What the this book propose
reading + writing me?

Summer
1964 Hesse experienced creative block

Eve Hesse + Sol Lewitt signed a close friendship late 50s
until Hesse's death 1970

April 14

Dear Eva,

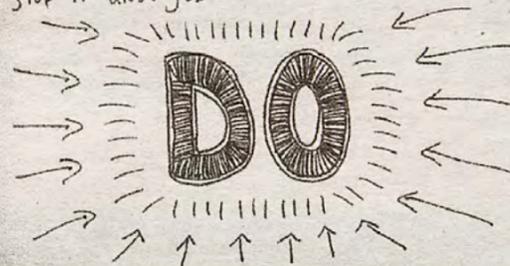
It will be a month since you wrote to me and you have possibly forgotten your state of mind (I doubt it though). You seem the same as always, and being you, hate every minute of it. Don't! Learn to say 'Fuck you' to the world once in a while. You have every right to. Just stop thinking, worrying, looking over your shoulder wondering, doubting, fearing, hurting, hoping for some easy way out, struggling, grasping, confusing, itching, scratching, mumbling, bumbling, grumbling, humbling, stumbling, numbling, rambling, gambling, tumbling, scumbling, scrambling, hitching, hatching, bitching, moaning, groaning, honing, boning, horse-shitting, hair-splitting, nit-picking, piss-trickling, nose sticking, ass-gouging, eyeball-poking, finger-pointing, alleyway-sneaking, long waiting, small stepping, evil-eyeing, back-scratching, searching, perching, besmirching, grinding, grinding, grinding away at yourself. Stop it and just



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Spaces of Reading – Writing exercise (in-progress)

X 1. (3 minutes)
Make a list of all the 'spaces of reading' that you engage in your practice.



X 2. (5 minutes)
Choose one.
What do you hear in this space?



X 3. (5 minutes)
What do you read in this space?



X 4. (5 minutes)
How do you read in this space?



5. (3 minutes)
Make a list of three future 'spaces of reading' that you can imagine engaging in your practice.

X 6. (5 minutes)
Choose one.
What do you hear in this space?

*do we consider creativity
if necessarily solitary?*

X 7. (5 minutes)
What do you read in this space?

*always always being
full intelligence
to your work*

X 7. (5 minutes)
How do you read in this space?

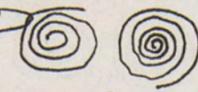
*we find our own place
in a practice when we
discover our own
reluctance*

They capture neither our sense of ephemerality of the instant nor our anxieties about the long unfurlings of time that exceed human lifespans and comprehension: geological time, evolutionary time, the time of climate change

We might think of these terms past, present, and future as keywords
The definition originally meant – a word that acts as the key to decipher a code)
But these keywords are defined differently at different moments in history. And tracking these words shows us that our conceptions of time and our enactments of them are rooted in specific social contexts and grow from historical transformations.

If concepts of time are historically situated, mutating as societies and their science economics values language and institutions change, it is logical to ask what are our 21st century concepts of time.

Emerging structure of temporal multiplicity constructing the present as an experience simultaneity
Circulation of multiple times within a single instant

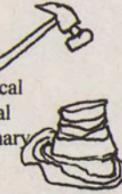


Con temporary
Joined times – times together
Contemporary – acceleration, ubiquity, and constancy of radical disjunctions of perception, of mismatching ways of seeing and valuing the same world, jostling contingencies of various cultural and social multiplicities all thrown together in ways that highlight the fast-growing inequalities within and between them.



Temporalities as sensorial horizon
As affective technologies

Psychic
Labor
political
global
geopolitical
geological
evolutionary



Bergson
Infinite series of instants and directional flow

Presence both in and out of time
Textured and stretched latent and current

we do not know what a body
can do

we... can, however, still not do.

I would not think to touch the sky
with two arms

The Spaces of Reading

Class #10

4/12/17

Attendance

1. underlinings: circular about reading

Conversation with Ann

- Acts of Composition -

Responses or reactions to reading: Composition as Explanation

Gertrude Stein, 1925

Have people read Stein before?

AM why choose this text?

MG: two notes on it from Autobiography

- introduce Autobiography

- 233: car repair, situation of the writing

"taken to pieces and put together again"

"blaireau" (badger) hairs of a (shaving) brush

- 247-6: dog, sentences, paragraphs

LH "construction of emotion"

Not unlike GS reconfiguration of beauty

sound traffic
set a sentence and
write to it as a time
and (a moment
of time)

Review (workings of) Concordance

Differentiating two texts

horizontal field source texts

of interest in themselves

to spend more time with, ideas and language

to dismantle (to spend more time with a part of)

vertical spine guide words

problem of common words

problem of uncommon words

accessing "the middle"

word sequence dictating shape

List of horizontal field texts currently loaded into program

- list -

Working with spine composition

Drawing for groups (colors) - working in quartets

Assemble in groups

Consider/recompose/compare/combine spine texts

Request a set horizontal field (2) source text

Project each attempt on screen; read aloud spine

Future of project: procedure for adding horizontal field source texts

Prepared by 4/24

Next week review - last presentations

Joshi ← Tenten

Pattier ← Mai read talk about

Review this project

**1.
PUT YOUR EAR TO THE THROAT
OF ONE LONG-LOVED**

**2.
COUNT OUT THE TIME UNTIL
THE DELIVERY OF OXYGEN
TO THE FINGERTIPS**

**3.
THANK GOODNESS**

This publication documents the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's 2016–17 Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professorship of Ann Hamilton and the course *The Spaces of Reading* taught in collaboration with Lin Hixson and Matthew Goulish.

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