

# FLIGHT OF THE MOTHMAN

[AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY]



GYASI HALL



FLIGHT  
OF THE  
MOTHPAN

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

GYASI HALL

the operating system digital print//document

## FLIGHT OF THE MOTHMAN

ISBN # -----

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edited and designed by ELÆ [Lynne DeSilva-Johnson]



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Cover Art uses an image from the series “Collected Objects & the Dead Birds I Did Not Carry Home,” by Heidi Reszies.

[Cover Image Description: Mixed media collage using torn pieces of yellow paper, security envelope patterns in blue on white, and a black and white photograph of a bird laid on its side on gravel, with a faded red smudge over its chest, and with the book’s title in vintage-styled typography overlaid.]

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## THE FIRST TIME THE MOTHMAN WAS CALLED A NIGGER

he was walking to the CVS by his house to get his mom some medicine and he crossed the street a little late and the guy turning left almost hit him and The Mothman gave him an apologetic wave and the guy rolled down his window and let the word hit the air and expand before speeding away and the guy said nothing about how his antenna twitched in the wind or the fractal cascade of his red eyes or how many parts of himself he felt he had to tuck away The whip of his proboscis The infinite brown of his wings and so for a brief second The Mothman felt an entire lineage of inadequacy crawl its way to the tip of his tongue and he almost thanked the guy for naming him something whole

THE MOTHMAN TAKES A CARTOGRAPHY ELECTIVE  
AT MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

just so he can try and map out what Huntington looks like or feels like or acts like when he's not looking The playground with no kids a green awning hanging over an empty doorway sidewalks made of shrapnel He figures that the best way to kill what kills you is to understand it to reach down through the dirt to where the teeth start and yank Camden Park's hollow shell the river that threatens flood the supermarket by his grandma's house He ain't really know any of the street names just the buildings he only knows the land by what it's done to the people who call it home The park behind the railroad tracks the clock tower in Pullman Square Cathleen's Comic shop but his professor just keeps talking about legends and keys and how best to shrink unimaginable distances so they can be used by other people The bookstore that is now a Starbucks the record store that is now an ice cream parlor the barber shop that is now a coffin this ain't really what he meant by map and besides his hands shake too much to draw whatever lines a city can wrap around its body to call itself its own and so The Mothman drops the class after two weeks and takes the long way home

## A GENEALOGY

The Mothman's auntie fell off the roof of her house in North Carolina and shattered her legs and her hips and everything else that kept her tied to this earth and after spending a few weeks in the hospital she moved back to Huntington so his grandma could take care of her and even though he only visited his auntie's house once and he was nowhere near her when it happened he was good enough at flying by that time that he knew she resented him for not catching her and she would stare at the way he tucked his wings behind his back during thanksgiving and she never hugged him the same way again



## AFTER MONTHS OF BEGGING, THE MOTHMAN'S PARENTS FINALLY GOT HIM A PUPPY

and even though she belonged to the whole family The Mothman had been the one doing most of the campaigning so he felt more attached to her and him and his brother both had name ideas but they had to compromise so the dogs full name was Sarah Gabriela Hall but everyone called her Gabby and The Mothman showed her his love in the only ways he knew how By holding her and talking to her and showing her what was left of the neighborhood but she hadn't been in the best shape when they got her from the shelter and so after a few years of the kind of companionship The Mothman couldn't even dream of Gabby stopped defending the house from postmen and wanting to see what the neighborhood was becoming and when they took her to get a checkup the vet said she was sick and that a third of her body weight was cists and that she was in terrible pain and The Mothman sat in the vet's office sacrificing his eleven year old body to the full force of his sadness Weeping deeply and openly and honestly for the first time in his life because he knew she would have to be put down and he watched a stranger in blue scrubs lead Gabby away and she hobbled through the metal door and disappeared forever and his mom hugged him and his dad said sometimes the people you love go away and it hurts like hell and The Mothman asked his parents what they do with all the bodies and they just looked at each other

## A GENEALOGY

The Mothman and his brother must have listened to that third Social Distortion album twice a day back when all they had was the radio and their mom's old Discman to share. You know the self-titled joint with the blue and white cover and they pulled their change together and went down to the record store and bought the CD and took turns jamming out to "Story of my Life" and "Ball and Chain" and they were sad songs for sad kids who wanted to know how to turn grief into something you could dance to but his brother went havesies with him on earbuds since the over-ear ones they had didn't fit over his antenna and the Discman is gone now and the CD is gone now and the record store is gone now too but hey at least you can get ice cream for a dollar sixty nine a scoop

*THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES* IS A BUNCH OF  
RACIST BULLSHIT

Like he had nothing better to do than fly around and psychically harass white people all day but of course it's one of the only movies starring someone that looks like him and he first saw it before he knew what he truly was so it became his favorite film even though it's really dumb and bad and boring but whatever man a mirror is still a mirror as long as you stand in front of it

THE MOTHMAN DECIDED TO PLAY AS A HALF-ELF  
IN HIS FRIEND'S D&D GAME

and after all the obvious jokes about his character also being mixed it turned out that his race gave him a plus two to his perception and a plus two to his charisma which The Mothman thought was pretty accurate and he was one of the only people who put points into things besides combat skills and so he was able to talk his way out of situations before anything truly bad happened and his homie Tyler stayed out extra late just to see the game through to the end and The Mothman was already giving Jay a ride home so what's a trip out of the way for a little gas money and by the time they all stopped laughing and drinking in each other's company as if joy could conquer any drought Tyler is back at his house and it is 3 AM and there is still an entire country between The Mothman and home and Jay is riding shotgun and making jokes about the middle of nowhere and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and The Mothman is following the bend of the country road as Jay tells him how this is the type of place you'd bury a body because the land is fertile and soft and waiting with open arms to embrace anyone who isn't eager to be reunited with the earth but finds themselves fusing with the soil anyway and The Mothman's grandma made a lot of jokes too but she would also fold her wrinkled face into a stern kaleidoscope of injustice and say *speak of the devil and he shall appear* so suddenly the world is all lights and sirens and the sound of both their hearts trying to outrun what this land demands of them and the officer asks for The Mothman's ID and insurance card Proof of who he is and what he owns and Jay has both of his hands flat on the dashboard and his head is down He looks like he's praying but The Mothman doesn't know to what and as the officer returns to his car he spots their school bags in the backseat and immediately calls for backup and the officer asks The Mothman to step out of the car and to keep his hands above his head Surrendering to a kind of twisted praise and he asks for Jay's License and Registration too and now three more squad cars

have arrived and the blinding lights are establishing colonies in every corner of the darkness and The Mothman is being patted down and having his pockets emptied and when they go through the bags they find an infinite collection of smaller bags made for dice and tokens and figurines and they dump out each one individually and question The Mothman about how the game is played They ask him *What's the point of all this* and everything The Mothman says about perception and charisma floats off into the night air and once they've made sure there is nothing to find they make The Mothman clean it all up by himself and give him a speeding ticket for 10 over and the first officer looks him dead in the eye and thanks him for giving his hands over to a dark and careless sky because they get nervous too and for the rest of the drive Jay can only rip the silence apart with the same sentence

*They could have killed us*

*They could have killed us*

*They could have killed us*

*But they didn't*



The Mothman didn't even know the song was called "Mr. Brightside" until his junior year of high school when he looked at the phone plugged into the speakers at an early 2000's themed party where everyone but him was dancing to the beat the way white people do when they want to let the music do all the work i.e. everyone was jumping and no one knew how any of this started from something as simple as a kiss and everyone was talking about killers without flinching and he was only there cause his friend had convinced him to go He had been invited but he had a crush on the girl hosting the party and so he thought he'd stay home but his friend said it'd be alright he said he'd be his wingman and then patted him on the back and said get it? Do you get the joke? And so he went and on the way there his friend told him that the girl that was hosting the party only dated black guys but that he had talked to her and that she was a total hippy and that she loved moths She said they looked like if a bunny was a bug and when The Mothman reminded him that he was half black his friend just kept driving

THE ONLY PICTURES OF THE MOTHMAN'S PATERNAL  
GRANDMA HE'S EVER SEEN ARE THE TWO HIS DAD  
MANAGED TO SAVE FROM THE FIRE

his grandpa started in their garage a week after she died because sometimes grief starts to strangle you and then it just keeps strangling you and his dad's dad watched the fire become a swollen mass while feeding it everything that had ever been blessed with her image and once every version of her was swimming in the heat The Mothman's grandpa turned and walked away and never talked about it again and his dad saw the smoldering pile and stamped it out The Mothman's dad was only fifteen The oldest of three boys He saw her be covered up once he wouldn't see it happen again and only two pictures managed to escape In the first she is wearing her pastor's robe and sitting in her wheelchair The Mothman's dad is standing next to her and they're squinting and smiling in the sun's flood In the second she is writing at her desk Someone has asked her to turn around And so she does

One time his dad took him on a day trip down to Parkersburg to see where his mom was buried 'cause he couldn't remember the last time he'd visited her grave and the florist was a sweet old white lady who looked like she had always been there and probably always would be and they got the flowers only to realize that the gate to the graveyard was locked and they searched all throughout town just to try and find who had the last key and could let them in just for a second Just long enough to let his dad put the flowers on the grass by her tombstone himself and stir his stagnant grief but the cemetery was empty by which I of course mean full of nothing living except hungry vines and the only neighbor around recommend they talk to the owner's son who worked at the BP in the middle of downtown but when they got there the BP was all husk and shell and corroded storefront and the manager of the new Marathon across the street said his son died ten years ago and ain't no one seen his daddy since and ain't no one just visit that grave yard anyone more ya know what I mean? and because The Mothman was still young and didn't know what he was he couldn't fly yet the story ends with a fresh bouquet of flowers leaning up against all that is dead and a note pleading for entrance into this almost heaven and a quiet drive home but whenever The Mothman tells this story he says that he flies straight over the gate and puts the flowers there himself and his dad never stops smiling

THE MOTHMAN WISHES JOHN DENVER  
COULD SEE HIM NOW

Singing along to “Country Roads” while he flies over his mama’s hood His wings are stronger than they were back when he first learned how sometimes the land is a country and sometimes the land is a knife and sometimes the land is just the land and the first time he ever heard “Country Roads” his mama was singing it while she washed the dishes, the sun pouring into the kitchen a kind of splendid flood and he watched her from the living room floor, buzzing with endless joy in his special moth baby language and from up here he is almost comfortable in his own skin from up here the land almost seems like just the land but then he sees a car on fire in the parking lot of a dollar general the car is alone the car is all flames the flames have swallowed the car whole and will never give it back and The Mothman has long ago learned to stop trusting every light he sees and when John Denver calls this place almost heaven he starts to understand

WHILE GETTING COFFEE AT THE STARBUCKS IN PULLMAN  
SQUARE, THE MOTHMAN'S FRIEND TELLS HIM ABOUT  
HOW HER EX-BOYFRIEND SINGLE-HANDEDLY KILLED ANY  
HOPE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF THIRD EYE BLIND

You know the band that did “Semi-Charmed Life” ‘Cause he works at the Apple store on the west end of the mall The one next to the Books-A-Million and across from where the FYE used to be and their manager came in to get his phone updated and all the demos from their comeback album were on it and they all got erased in the process ‘cause he’s a dumbass and he was too scared to tell him what had happened and at this point The Mothman sips his white chocolate mocha and asks about backups and cloud storage and the label’s own archives and his friend waves her hand and says *Whatever man this makes it a way better story* and The Mothman remembers back in grade school when none of his teachers believed he was learning to fly and the guidance counselor taught him the difference between truth with a lowercase t and Truth with a Capital T What is real and what feels real What happened and what might as well have happened What you know and what you believe and they look it up on Wikipedia and it turns out that Third Eye Blind never went anywhere people just stopped caring and The Mothman says that his favorite part of “Semi-Charmed Life” was when the guy goes *I believe in the faith that grows* and his friend says *Yeah I love that part too*

THE MOTHMAN TRIES ANCESTRY.COM

It turns out the site doesn't really go back that far.  
It says it was basically just mountains and coal and dead bodies  
'til about 90 years ago  
When the wind convinced a creased  
Edge of summit to fall, and the dry  
And slithering dust cracked open  
And there was his grandma,  
No wings,  
No fuzz or brief antennae,  
Just creased hands and an ancient mouth and skin that carries  
Everything skin can give

And then his mother,  
Just out of reach of two decades fused together,  
Landing the way love sometimes lands,  
His father, a man among men  
Direct legacy of coal, a heart like stamped wax

And then him, The Mothman,  
Ugly, or at least unknown, hunched  
In his room, a touch larger than two myths  
Fused together, changing  
His cursor into a hand to click on leaves.

We all from somewhere  
We all someone's children's children  
We all what's left of them, sprouting up from the streets  
And breathing

THERE IS A STATUE OF THE MOTHMAN  
IN POINT PLEASANT, WEST VIRGINIA

Despite the fact that he's not even from Point Pleasant he just drove through it back in 2013 on his way to a concert and his wings had been folded behind him in the car for a few hours so he stretched out in the back of a gas station parking lot and two white guys saw him and just stared and stared and the next thing The Mothman knew there was a metal statue in the middle of Point Pleasant all teeth and claws and stories about scared couples and missing dogs and even though the statue looks basically nothing like him The Mothman gets it He understands the urge to build monuments to things you think you understand To raise a home for legacy from the soil before the soil can take you so if people want to turn his body into a living tombstone so be it The Mothman is tired The Mothman wants to go home The Mothman isn't even from West Virginia at all Only his family is Everything that created him is from a place he is always outside of Almost like heaven and in this version of history The Mothman has learned to fly on the strength of this thing he calls his body His skin His Wings His hands and their infinite labor and in this version of history everyone who has loved him beckons him back home and The Mothman will watch the earth vanish and melt into the sky





AFTER-WORDS



EMPATHY, CRYPTIDS AND LORE  
A CONVERSATION WITH GYASI HALL

*Greetings comrade! Thank you for talking to us about your process today!*

No problem! I always love talking about stuff like this.

*Can you introduce yourself, in a way that you would choose?*

I like to think the variety of things I'm into, creatively or otherwise, plays a huge role in my life and my writing, so I like to emphasize that in intros: I'm a poet and essayist, but I'm also a wannabe music writer, a textbook Pisces, a Career D&D game master, a folk punk super fan, a proud Ohioan, a breakfast food enthusiast, a comic book geek, a senior in undergrad, etc. I'm basically a huge nerd, is what I'm saying.

*Why are you a poet/writer/artist?*

It might be a cliché to bite Kerouac and say I always considered it my duty on this earth, but in a lot of ways I think that's true. Both of my parents are teachers, and my father is also a writer, mostly fiction, so I grew up with reading and writing as pretty much the form of self-expression/self-reflection. At some point I think I realized that is wasn't just a hobby of mine, and that I was maybe even pretty good at it; there is definitely a spiritual aspect to all acts of creation, but I think that applies to writing more so than other things; the ways in which it's an act of radical empathy and outreach really spoke to me.

*When did you decide you were a poet/writer/artist (and/or: do you feel comfortable calling yourself a poet/writer/artist, what other titles or affiliations do you prefer/feel are more accurate)?*

I went to a young writers program when I was a sophomore in high school, and that where I think I started to really step up my game, both in my writing and in how I felt about me as an artist. I am comfortable in referring to myself/being referred to as a poet/writer/artist, but I'm always careful to keep it straight in my mind that that's not because of how many places I've been published or outward validation or even what I think about the quality of the stuff I make; being a writer more than anything, I think, is about using writing as a way of navigating the world around us, a way that becomes central to how we feel/think/engage with people around us. And that is enough. That might be cliché too, but hey.

*What's a "poet" (or "writer" or "artist") anyway? What do you see as your cultural and social role (in the literary / artistic / creative community and beyond)?*

I talked about how writing should always be an act of empathy, and in that same vein I think the role of an artist is to listen to the stories/struggles/realities of other people's lives. Obviously, in creating something, your role is also to speak your truth, to interrogate your own realities, to strive toward self-actualization, but if that work doesn't listen to others and strive to connect with other people in a meaningful way, if you aren't questioning your position by being open and attentive to the complex universes around you that you may or may not actually be able to understand because they are not your own, then I think that work is wack, by and large.

*Talk about the process or instinct to move these poems (or your work in general) as independent entities into a body of work. How and why did this happen? Have you had this intention for a while? What encouraged and/or confounded this (or a book, in general) coming together? Was it a struggle?*

It might peg me as a youngster/amateur to say that this whole project evolved out of a class assignment, but it did: we were asked to think about who/what we consider our ancestors, and write to those people/into those spaces. Everyone in my family going back generations is from West Virginia, except for me and my brother, and so that tension between place/legacy is one I've always struggled with. I'm also fascinated with cryptids, as well as lore as a concept, the idea of stories that are so integral to history but that don't really get talked about, and the *Mothman* was a perfect metaphor for exploring that, as well as my own place/position/personal history as a mixed race black man in this country. The writing of the poems themselves was fairly easy once they got going, but tapping into a mental/emotional state to be able to do that writing was tough. Everything in the book is true.

*Did you envision this collection as a collection or understand your process as writing or making specifically around a theme while the poems themselves were being written / the work was being made? How or how not?*

This was always meant to be a collection, and I always thought of it as such when writing it. Honestly, the hard part came from deciding which stories needed to be told, and how to create something like an arc or a sense of closure within the structure of the book. There are several poems that got cut that I dig a lot, but just didn't work with everything else.

*What formal structures or other constrictive practices (if any) do you use in the creation of your work? Have certain teachers or instructive environments, or readings/writings/work of other creative people informed the way you work/write?*

I don't wanna just write a list of names, mainly 'cause that's not very helpful but also 'cause we'd be here all day, but I will say that I'm most invested in writers that are thoroughly engaged with and actively/openly sharing their relationship with a place, whether that be Chicago, Columbus, California, Kentucky, whatever. I appreciate writers who aren't afraid to pull their punches and speak the truth about where they're from, location or whatever else, and how that makes them who they are, because I am always striving to do that in my own work. As for formal structures, I think my natural poem writing mode is the kind of stuff you see if the book; no stanza breaks, very little punctuation, narrative beats that recur and titles that go on forever, maybe becoming poems themselves. I think that's the structure that allows me to act in the least inhibited way; I always overthink stuff like line breaks and I feel like it gets in the way of whatever I'm trying to say.

*Speaking of monikers, what does your title represent? How was it generated? Talk about the way you titled the book, and how your process of naming (individual pieces, sections, etc) influences you and/or colors your work specifically.*

Titles are super important to me; I'm constantly being roasted by everyone in the English department of my university for having titles that make formatting hard, and the fact that you can tell a "Gyasi Title" from a mile away during blind readings. But for me it's always about authenticity. I like titles that add context to the piece, that don't just summarize what it's about. Like, the title of the book is *Flight of the Mothman: An Autobiography*, which is guess was a way to help the reader in working through a book that is, admittedly, very bizarre and maybe a little obnoxious in its extended metaphor(s). I also love having titles that are the first line of the poem, since that provides an organic way of marrying the two "pieces". It's just another factor of the poetic form that I feel like doesn't get played with enough, basically.

*What does this particular work represent to you as indicative of your method/creative practice, history, mission/intentions/hopes/plans?*

I think this book can in many ways act as a microcosm of everything I'm trying to do; looking at race through a very particular and personal lens, play with history/legacy, explore various different emotions at once (hopefully), etc. Since writing this, I've developed more of a love for non-fiction writing, and I plan on going to grad school for it, so I hope it's also pretty obvious to see where those two genres meet in the book.

*What does this book DO (as much as what it says or contains)?*

I think what it was meant to do, first and foremost (going along with what I've been talking about) is help me interrogate my own identity as a mixed race black person in the world I live in, but I hope it also provides a way into a lot of these complicated questions about being mixed, being constantly pulled

between two worlds, that maybe don't get brought up as much.

*What would be the best possible outcome for this book? What might it do in the world, and how will its presence as an object facilitate your creative role in your community and beyond? What are your hopes for this book, and for your practice?*

Paul Beatty said, in response to another author who was talking about waiting on the Great American Novel that represents and understands everyone, that he didn't think that way; that he thinks we need a bigger bookshelf, so people have room to fill it up with their own stories. I feel like that might be the best possible outcome for the book: to be a part of that shelf. Also, I mentioned grad school; I think the writing/publication really went a long way, for a lot of various reasons, in helping me finally start to take myself seriously as a writer and as a thinker, and I think that's gonna be an important thing for me to carry in my heart for the foreseeable future.

*Let's talk a little bit about the role of poetics and creative community in social activism. I'd be curious to hear some thoughts on the challenges we face in speaking and publishing across lines of race, age, privilege, social/cultural background, and sexuality within the community, vs. the dangers of remaining and producing in isolated "silos."*

Echo chambers aren't necessarily good for the advancement of anyone's experience/thoughtfulness, but self-care is also super important; that's obviously a line every artist has to measure for themselves. In addition to everything I've said about stories and truth, I think the other major facet to community and social activism within/through a writing community is accountability. We have to be willing to call a spade a spade, even within our own circles, in order to make the general environment better/healthy/more nuanced for everyone. Again, self-care is always super important, but the divide between language and thought is razor thin at best, and in order for us to grow as individuals, as artists, as people who have to live in a world that wants us dead in so many different ways for so many different reasons, we can't afford to get complacent.

*Is there anything else we should have asked, or that you want to share?*

Not really! You guys are beautiful!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



GYASI HALL is a poet, playwright, and cereal enthusiast from Columbus, Ohio studying Creative Writing and Film Theory at Otterbein University. He is the Poetry Editor for Otterbein's literary magazine *Quiz and Quill*, and his work has been published/produced by *Thoughtcrime Press*, *Z Publishing*, *Get Lit*, and *MadLab Studios*, among others.

## ABOUT THE COVER ART:

The Operating System 2019 chapbooks, in both digital and print, feature art from Heidi Reszies. The work is from a series entitled "Collected Objects & the Dead Birds I Did Not Carry Home," which are mixed media collages with encaustic on 8 x 8 wood panel, made in 2018.

Heidi writes: "This series explores objects/fragments of material culture-how objects occupy space, and my relationship to them or to their absence."

## ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Heidi Reszies is a poet/transdisciplinary artist living in Richmond, Virginia. Her visual art is included in the National Museum of Women in the Arts CLARA Database of Women Artists. She teaches letterpress printing at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, and is the creator/curator of Artifact Press. Her poetry collection titled *Illusory Borders* is forthcoming from The Operating System in 2019, and now available for pre-order. Her collection titled *Of Water & Other Soft Constructions* was selected by Samiya Bashir as the winner of the Anhinga Press 2018 Robert Dana Prize for Poetry (forthcoming in 2019).

Find her at [heidireszies.com](http://heidireszies.com)



## WHY PRINT:DOCUMENT? (AND WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DIGITAL MEDIA?)

The Operating System has traditionally used the language "print:document" to differentiate from the book-object as part of our mission to distinguish the act of documentation-in-book-FORM from the act of publishing as a backwards-facing replication of the book's agentic \*role\* as it may have appeared the last several centuries of its history. Ultimately, we approach the book as TECHNOLOGY: one of a variety of documents across a range of media that humans have invented and in turn used to archive and disseminate ideas, beliefs, stories, and other evidence of production.

Ownership and use of printing presses and access to (or restriction of) information/materials, libraries, and archives has long been a site of struggle, related in many ways to revolutionary activity and the fight for civil rights and free speech all over the world. While (in many countries) the contemporary quotidian landscape has indeed drastically shifted in its access to platforms for sharing information and in the widespread ability to "publish" digitally, even with extremely limited resources, the importance of publication on physical media has not diminished. In fact, this may be the most critical time in recent history for activist groups, artists, and others to insist upon learning, establishing, and encouraging personal and community documentation practices.

With The OS's print endeavors I wanted to open up a conversation about this: the ultimately radical, transgressive act of creating PRINT / DOCUMENTATION in the digital age. It's a question of the archive, and of history: who gets to tell the story, and what evidence of our lives, our behaviors, and/or our experiences are we leaving behind? We can know little to nothing about the future into which we're leaving an unprecedentedly digital document trail--but we can be assured that publications, government agencies, museums, schools, and other institutional powers that be will continue to leave BOTH a digital and print version of their production for the official record. Will we?

As a (rogue) anthropologist and long time academic, I can easily pull up many accounts about how lives, behaviors, experiences--how THE STORY of a time or place--was pieced together using the deep study of the archive: correspondence, notebooks, and other physical documents which are no longer the norm in many lives and practices. As we move our creative behaviors

towards digital note taking, and even audio and video, what can we predict about future technology that is in any way assuring that our stories will be accurately told--or told at all? How will we leave these things for the record?

For all our years of print publication, I've said that "with these documents we say: WE WERE HERE, WE EXISTED, WE HAVE A DIFFERENT STORY", but now, with the rapid expansion of greater volume with digital and DIY printed media, we add: we ARE here, and while we are, we will not be limited in what we add value to, share, make accessible, or give voice to, by restricting it to what we can afford to print in volume.

Adding a digital series is the next chapter of \*our\* story: a way for us to support more creative practitioners and offer folks independent options for POD or DIY-zine-style distribution, even without our financial means changing -- which means, each book will \*also\* have archive-ready print manifestations. It's our way of challenging what is required to evolve and grow. Ever onward, outward, beyond.

Elæ [Lynne DeSilva-Johnson]. Founder& Creative Director  
THE OPERATING SYSTEM, Brooklyn NY 2019

THE 2019 OS CHAPBOOK SERIES

DIGITAL TITLES:

American Policy Player's Guide and Dream Book - Rachel Zolf  
The George Oppen Memorial BBQ - Eric Benick  
Flight Of The Mothman - Gyasi Hall  
Mass Transitions - Sue Landers  
Music Of Each Slain Creature - Frank Sherlock  
The Grass Is Greener When The Sun Is Yellow - Sarah Rosenthal & Valerie Witte  
From Being Things, To Equalities In All - Joe Milazzo  
These Deals Won't Last Forever - Sasha Amari Hawkins  
Ventriloquy - Bonnie Emerick  
A Period Of Non-Enforcement - Lindsay Miles  
Quantum Mechanics : Memoirs Of A Quark - Brad Baumgartner  
Hara-Kiri On Monkey Bars - Anna Hoff

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PRINT TITLES:

Vela. - Knar Gavin  
[零] A Phantom Zero - Ryu Ando  
Don't Be Scared - Magdalena Zurawski  
Re: Verses - Kristina Darling & Chris Campanioni

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# DOC U MENT

/dəkyəmənt/

First meant “instruction” or “evidence,” whether written or not.

*noun* - a piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record  
*verb* - record (something) in written, photographic, or other form  
*synonyms* - paper - deed - record - writing - act - instrument

[Middle English, *precept*, from Old French, from Latin *documentum*, example, proof, from *doce*, to teach; see *dek-* in Indo-European roots.]

## Who is responsible for the manufacture of value?

Based on what supercilious ontology have we landed in a space where we vie against other creative people in vain pursuit of the fleeting credibilities of the scarcity economy, rather than freely collaborating and sharing openly with each other in ecstatic celebration of MAKING?

While we understand and acknowledge the economic pressures and fear-mongering that threatens to dominate and crush the creative impulse, we also believe that *now more than ever we have the tools to relinquish agency via cooperative means*, fueled by the fires of the Open Source Movement.

Looking out across the invisible vistas of that rhizomatic parallel country we can begin to see our community beyond constraints, in the place where intention meets resilient, proactive, collaborative organization.

Here is a document born of that belief, sown purely of imagination and will. When we document we assert. We print to make real, to reify our being there.

When we do so with mindful intention to address our process, to open our work to others, to create beauty in words in space, to respect and acknowledge the strength of the page we now hold physical, a thing in our hand... we remind ourselves that,  
like Dorothy: *we had the power all along, my dears.*

## THE PRINT! DOCUMENT SERIES

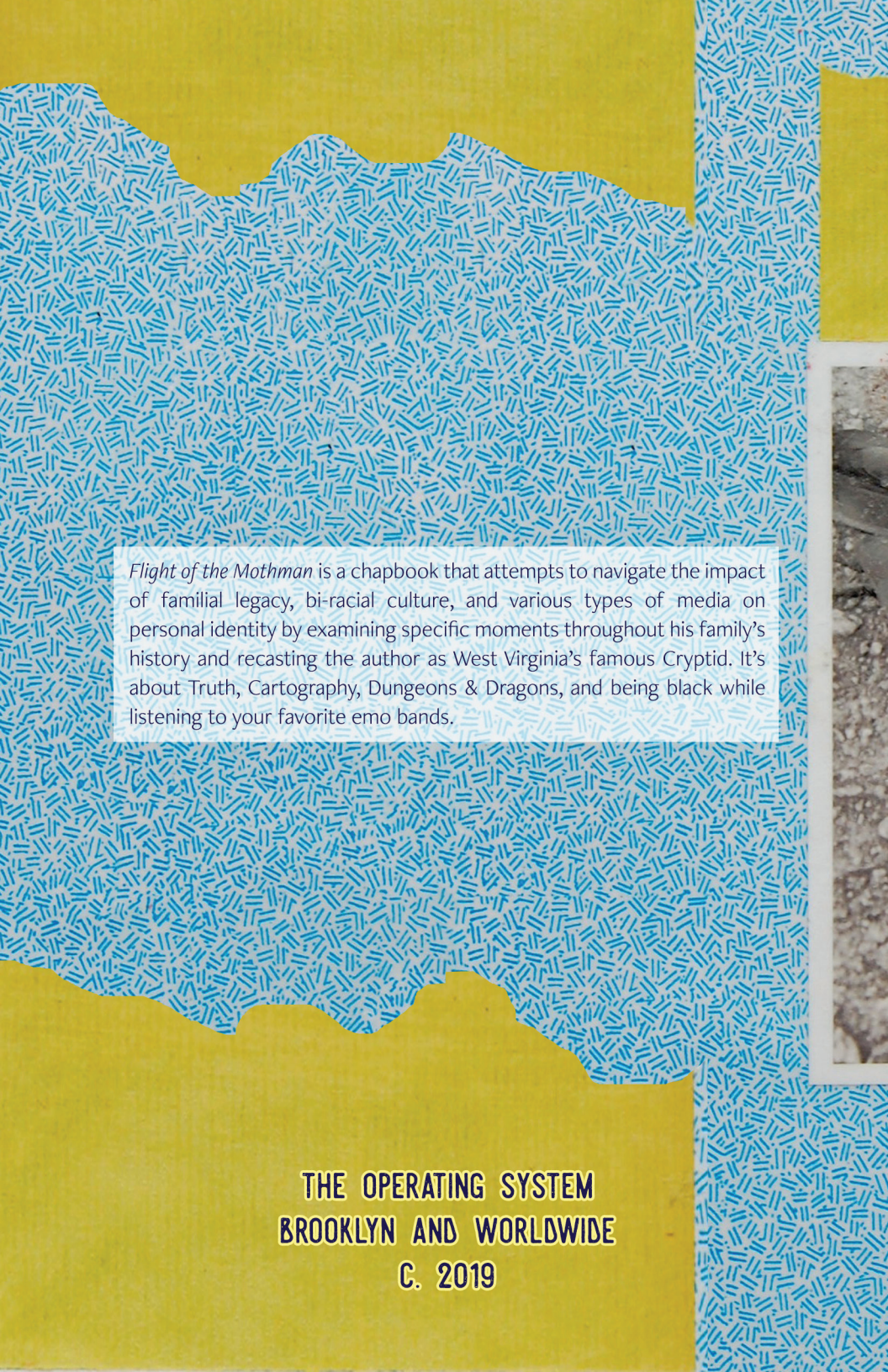
*is a project of*

the trouble with bartleby

*in collaboration with*

the operating system





*Flight of the Mothman* is a chapbook that attempts to navigate the impact of familial legacy, bi-racial culture, and various types of media on personal identity by examining specific moments throughout his family's history and recasting the author as West Virginia's famous Cryptid. It's about Truth, Cartography, Dungeons & Dragons, and being black while listening to your favorite emo bands.

THE OPERATING SYSTEM  
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