



EVERYBODY'S *S* AUTOMAT



MARK GURARIE





THE OPERATING SYSTEM PRINT//DOCUMENT

EVERYBODY'S AUTOMAT

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EVERYBODY'S *S* AUTOMAT

MARK GURARIE

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YOU ARE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXERCISE: TAKE THE COIN IN YOUR HAND AND DROP IT INTO THE SLOT OF THE MACHINE. LONG FOR SOMETHING TANGIBLE, START THE GEARS OF THE PRIMITIVE AUTOMATION BEHIND THE SCRATCHED PLASTIC. THIS AUTOMAT PRODUCES SOUND -- AND INSIDE THERE IS AN ORDERING OPERATION FOR EVERYBODY--THERE IS A RECORD, PERHAPS, OR A NEEDLE. THERE ARE ACTUAL BUTTONS FOR YOU TO PUSH.







HERE YOU ARE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXERCISE OF TRANSPOSITION, TO KEEP KEY SIGNATURES, HOLD NOTES, TAKE THE REQUIRED HALF-STEPS. HEAR IN AN AUTOMATIC MUSIC THE VIBRATING STRINGS, THE HUM OF BLOOD CIRCULATING, THE BUZZ AND WHIRR OF MACHINES DICTATED BY CHANCE. THE PIANO IS PREPARED IN A STATE OF CONTINUAL BROADCAST, THESE NOTES NEVER QUITE REPEATING. INSIDE OF EVERY CONCEIVABLE BOX -- DESPITE THE SHIFTING BILLBOARDS DESPITE THE POP UPS OF LATE CAPITALISM -- THERE IS AN ELEMENT OF CHANCE. IT IS A PRECONDITION. TO NEITHER BEGIN NOR END INSIDE THIS ENGINE.

|||
| 7 |||







**POP: POEM MANUFACTURED
IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC**

My problems have become social rather than musical

—John Cage

The Groupe des Six, andante: with bad breath
and a cherry branch. Insert pocket watch. Insert

boiling kettle. Slow and dolorous the Velvet Gentleman
insists, sniffs and opens an umbrella. The fine

folks at Harvard put Cage into a sensory deprivation
tank at his own insistence and he heard battery music

in that we have no choice. We are machines
halfway to Montparnasse halfway to whistling.

This is the Viennese double-stop: „ „ .
This is the Viennese double-stop on drugs: ° ° .

/// POP : POEM MANUFACTURED IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC | 9 ///





There are only twelve tones you will encounter in the spool.
Some of them are:

A#:

*It is difficult to
talk when you have
something to say*

—John Cage, “Lecture on Something”

F:

For at least there is forgiveness
in a finger tip’s calluses, the blisters
at least satisfying to push on
for there are forgiving tones
asleep in folding chairs
creeping past the incus, the malleus,
the stapes like a muscle cramp.



There are only twelve tones you will encounter in this spool.
Some of them are:

B♭:

To whomever. I forbid anyone to read the text aloud during the musical performance. Failure to obey my instructions will provoke my just indignation against anyone so presumptuous. No exception to this rule will be granted.

—Erik Satie

B#

see the notation on the staff as like grapes to be tasted
and concede that the staff is a comb
for your ears receive serialism as a kind of politics and perceive
politics as generally as
annoying dotted dancing among their inc. and foraging for
the time signature the not well tempered
clavier sees the handkerchief in the desk drawer
the desk drawer as another creak -ing
a cartridge of desk drawers grinding their accordions in c and
hardly even harmonica

/// POP : POEM MANUFACTURED IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC

| 11 ///





they're fighting over bits of food

stuck in a John Cage
seeking out mesostics
in the
sudden

necessity for three medium,
and four large bolts,
irregular intervals and howling
in the spotlight suspended

from the ceiling the hammer
on a string is barking
in the wrong

monkey signature: a stopwatch,
five radios, a blender, a bath tub,
a vase with roses, a conch shell filled with water
prepared piano—

of course I consider laughter preferable to tears





88 keys grinned at him nearly death pale
and still thirsty—
his hatboxes kept his scores clothed

& Paris all swollen in July which is to say
surrounded by
green glass bottles and red encrusted

corks rolling around the upright and between
the pedals.
Erik Satie wore 12 identical velvet jackets and knew

repetition for its alternating bass notes.
“Gymnopedie no. 3”
Spartan girls in a circle dancing

with the middle ranks, soldiers, tiptoes
& lowing notes.
Or “Vexations.” A single phrase repeated 840 times.





the paper rustling she is seated in an armchair
we'll have to put something that'll stay in position
and turning the page of a newspaper two weeks old
riveted to the information
she shuffles the deck of cards twice and deals to the inside
the goings on became very expensive
of a grand piano the harmonium is fun to spell
another arm came into the situation and removed the debris
the singer in the bathrobe the lalala in the bathrobe
meanwhile all the flashing colored lights associated with jukeboxes
crackling of radio transmissions now obsolete
the jukeboxes worked perfectly making the whole scene glamorous
not chance not the bells and not rattles at odds with
anybody who knows me knows this story
recognizing that the phone is ringing ringing
in that silent room I heard two sounds, one high and one low
the crate is bowed carefully and at odd angles
the high one was your nervous system...the low one...
your blood in circulation





—sound
is acting

the meaning
of sound

the talking
inanimately

to love
sounds

for what
they are

one sound
does not love

another
laughter

sound
is acting

two lovely
two accident

incidentals
are an un-
frequency of
heart beep

oscillations
and plucks

an imaginary
landscape

inside twelve
radios—

/// POP : POEM MANUFACTURED IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC | 15 ///





It is possible they never met.
It is impossible they ever lunched,
had tea, split a bottle of Bordeaux,
argued over aesthetics, stared longingly
at the same waiter the way you are now.

Let me be the last to deny his capability.
It is not impossible this is stitched up fabrication,
that I wear your clothes when you are sleeping,
that I pretend to be a creature of certain habits.
It is impossibly overcast and a bird is shitting

to your left. What are you listening to? I ask
because you sneer like it were tonal, or is it
the sly smile of atonal incomprehension.
We are orbiting, you and I, but not each other.
They are motionless, but the reasons should be obvious.

Where are they buried? How should I know,
it is possible in the same city as you are
being impossible at this moment. *I* am being completely
possible. This is not chance and you are instructed
to do whatever you wish. This is subject to chance

and you are instructed to do whatever you wish.





/// POP : POEM MANUFACTURED IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC | 17 ///





||| 18 | POP : POEM MANUFACTURED IN THE FURNITURE MUSIC |||





YOU ARE ASKED TO TRANSLATE THIS FEELING INTO ACTION AND PUSH A BUTTON: SOME OF US ARE ONLY URBANITES UNDERSTANDING IN TERMS OF CITY GRIDS, WITNESS AN INVASION OF STITCHED CLOTH SENTIMENTS; EMOTIONS THAT WE TURN INTO BASKETS THAT WE TURN INTO IMAGES OF BASKETS. IN THIS RIVER VALLEY A BEAVER BUILDS A DAM CALLED REAL ESTATE, AND IN THAT ONE WE ARE OWLS, BEARS, WOLVES, LOCALS, INVASIVE, PREDATORS AND PREY. EXTINCTIONS OCCUR IN NATURE, SAYS SOME ASSHOLE, CUTTING YOU OFF MID-SENTENCE. THAT CHEMICALS AND SMELLS MIGHT DICTATE OUR ORDER, TOO, A DICTATORSHIP OF LACK AND OF LONGING, WHEN EVERYTHING IS EMPIRE IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM: THE CITIES AS THEIR PRIMEVAL FORESTS, SUBJECT TO THE SAME LAWS. HERE THE ANDROID LONGS FOR A SQUISHY HEART, PELTS.







SENTIMENTAL ANIMALS

In the great nostalgia factory
the indented pillows
that pass for sky

come find us
the air is crisp
has a bite we are too busy

to comment upon
except to state that
this brush with the law

of gravity is comically
underfunded. Got a dollar
I can owe. Like I give

a can. Bankrupt branches
reach out as if to touch us
on the tips of our

egoism like glass
sculptures of octopi
like oversized

emotion bearing
fruit trees while
the weekend harvest

drives in
a luxury Canadian
automobile.





I will take that
and yet will not be
taken with it

slightly. I will remember
you already forgot
what. There it is

that bruise
in the shape of Australia.
Marsupials

gathered here
and reminiscing.
Nothing in the pockets.





To throttle and to choke
this impenetrable frog
eyes. I stare back, I rib it

vicariously. You point
to the haystack painted
seven different times

and a long time ago
bruise in the median
a child, a child is

a vulture you point
towards the aqueduct like
“Every Road Leads to Jersey City”

or worse. Our one way
and opposing storyboard
keeps us uncomfortably

back seat
and nearly grimacing
apropos the indeterminate

animal that dangles plastic
on your fake bone necklace:
the mold of petroleum

jelly that causes the kids
on 1970s’ television
to cry “dinosaur.”





I am a giant tortoiseshell encasement
 am a lesson earned basking
 in the sun I swallowed
 and killed and do not be
disturbed I closed the shades

this coastline catches us
 craggy and remarkably reptile
 like food for the youngest
 pictured in this archipelago t-shirt
halfway between nonsense and kelp

this Galápagos in which
 we develop subspecies
 generate together
 a more spiky

appearance of even more
 selective traits more colors
 of plumage to be attacked by
 and I see finches cracking nuts
in the rearview
 when we all do believe

we've been iguanas
 in cabs after midnight
 in major metropolitan areas
 in the middle lane barreling

hopelessly we are but seal
 pups silly seal pups
covered in sand





in our mother habitat
we are winking to remember
an unhinged sea broth

as ours as hours
as puppies as gulls
perhaps as something

nefarious there
floating among rooftops
tied to a string of coral

but instead we toe
hang on the power
lines re-arrange satellites

tracking devices
on our necks
this is not her

polar bear rug
clinking ice cubes
in the promise





I cannot remember why stag
why polar
this looking for antler spokes

as a wheel then spinning a question
why deer embroidered on this throw
rug why this pillow again

ask the already perpendicular
among us the crossed out eyes
dotted tease I spread around

vicious rumors
promising sap in exchange
for acorn earrings





singing with revolver
in handshake
these snake-eyes

are the killer muttering
at the wheel
of the film you didn't finish

who could ask the "why"
of this lull self-explanatory
an inexperienced kind

of wizardry
at stake you are clad
in the fanciest salmon

outfitted in the budget version
they say you fin halfway
qualified for this

unlicensed procedure
"they" "say" we like flying
the moon has larger things

to think about than fish
but we toss
instead one stone

for this hopscotch
"square" at night
the disk drive is not

at your service but
is having prophetic tea
leaves in plaid shorts

you invertebrate gills
flap well-timed
this choreography

in saline
solution like
it is really like salt





Achieve your inner undonkey-
-like in these long
eared straw excuses
for having.

I've been everywhere
as you might well imagine
dripping burrowing into more
credible brick-scapes,

have wandered, longing,
in this deserted picture
postcard fraying, I was
fanned out at endangered edges
only four remaining
in the plains.

The coyote cunning
not strictly required for this
transgression will
nonetheless be found useful:
a hole in this section of fence.

Seek chicken wings
in feather piles,
but find instead discarded beaks,
a cheap and tiny yellow
excuse, a gold wrapper.





Inflatable we are sometimes
ballooning animals in clutch
clowning optimism and/or some

other paltry excuse for a bowl
of soup. Here find the spoon
of wooden, unrequited hatred

teething in a photograph you
dislike. It's been five years
like this, pa, the moaning

doves replies, monogamously,
from a window box.
Slats of light washed up

on the unkempt tiles. A jar
for every King of the Jungle,
the illustrated edition.

It is the unopened among us
that are problematic
in their mid-20s. Animals

learn from this diagram
med emergency scenario
signed "Animal."





Therefore find us
there for finding
tracks us immaterial animal

prints. You have outgrown
this powerful sense of smell.
Why don't you drive
a car about it instead of
advising me to pull out pen and paper.
Extinct, don't you get it, and I will not be your

over-sensitive gas pedal. We are receding
from certain notions of time travel.
We are animal emotions
crying and living out the dictum
set forth by mama bear in the village.

Are
We
There
Yet?

Too cold it is not divided
highway badger trap
to bite your tongue because
even a robot, I imagine
is kind of nothing
like a spore print. I have seen

your rat guillotine, professor,
but it does not impress.





Found cribbed notes in the irregular
tense like orange traffic tentacles
and a long time ago.
The dream of a forest
is itself a kind
of forest.
In these the thicker bristles,
the brush,
in the waste barrel for a belly full
you do look hungrier.
You invertebrate gills and lines
re-arranging satellite dishes
when some lily pads
are not in fact load bearing,
wrote: "freedom is a twenty-two
where a t-shirt ought to be."





Inbred households, a coiled around tail
 to paw over, we have
 not yet seen this movie

as much as we think
 we would like to. This part of the tree nests
 too close to home. We cast off, envious
 of the envelope
 I am describing—an envelope
 or sack of glands—
 blurt out inappropriate

suggestions from the top down. Who is this,
 the first cousin of the manatee
 to swim with, striped and finned in
 the blue profound? This chain of illegal islands,

and even an elbow on the table
 adds to the topography. Who is to upset the balance?
 It's your uncle's prehensile stories
 that are becoming a flexibility issue for us.

When I was sure we were meant
 to wear our winter coats, I
 grasped your anger, took the negatives
 for what they surrounded and for how they blotted
 these the thicker bristles, the brush.

Find me exhausted in the cage, shedding
 for lack of externalization
 paltry, pitiful in the near extinct shade,
 or in an excess in which we are binging on wake
 and chocolate-shaped rabbits. Three hops and you're out.
 The fourth all

spreading wings and sunning on a rock:
 a V shape set against the cirrus,
 over the obsolete middle,
 and the country mouse
 can smell the vacuum tube.





how many burritos you ass
as many as it takes to eat vegetarian
we leave leopard prints

here hung up on sweatshirts
we bark as dogs intended
for branches we are switch-

able to cross seasons
missing buttons and salivating
upon the asymmetry

in this tunic
you do look hungrier than usual
we navigate the dusk

able to cross years
the fabric sticks to us
and when we nap

we are thumbs missing
thumbs missing
thumbs





As toads beat-boxing for life
insurance, we dressed ourselves & still fell down
stairs skinned of our own zippered
sweatshirts or even the capability of operating

zippers. Tadpole taken from the above example:
some lily pads are not in fact load bearing.

I paddle it to the register easy
prey in the remembering sees
those bunny ears the TV wore,

and how this turns out to be maladaptive
over the long term: an obsolete camouflage
or result of poor afternoon programming

which implies not enough after schooling
behaviors to protect the eggs. And here,
this reef described
as still recovering, in a state,

as clownfish stuck in broken traffic
signals & among anemone
with gills flared, we dressed

in it like orange tentacles
pushed back & forth
by the current.





Towards an ocean, I
reach out as if to touch us
set free by mama bear in the village.

We are winking to remember
buzzing because we arrived here
already a big game kind of problem.

Make more of our kind
of mammalian longing,
a kind of sane animal

saying: "too close to home."
We cast off, envious of one another,
into credible brick-scapes

where we are thumbs missing,
are iguanas in cabs
after midnight.





I am bored of the chemistry already.
Inset of catalyzed reagents, the party
but shards of glass and the aftermath.

A broken shelter in the shelving unit.
Along the way we find lines and a bar
to press: scribble notes on the floor

with our tense hoof prints.
This is no longer where
the road signs are

warning of children crossing, where
yellow diamonds too fast drive,
where it drizzles on us. I let go

of the goat horns on the dash,
park and take this empty poolside
as a sign. The kind of chemistry

in which there are warnings
about some grand unravel,
and I, duckbilled in my hat,

am so-called
an other
wise Caribou

case of antlered
hopes. I am grazing
on these blind platitudes

and we are simply proceeding:
some lay eggs, others caviar
towards an animal chorus.





I amoeba the unusual morsels
of news which is to say I suck
up these things, am the butt
of my own goat cheese.
Towards an ocean, I
squinting in the fog,
am angling, catch
what I eat. In another city
only the resourceful you
knows when to back away
and when to hang onto empty
squirrel print backpacks.
In the belly of the East
where one does not often
play cold blooded so much as dream
that way, find me too foraging
in the waste barrel for a belly full.
Yellow and black stripes,
and weren't you the one
dancing in that honey comb,
and wasn't it me who forgot where I buried
the pizza slice last winter. The gulls
circle and wait for the chattel,
and in the city I hear waves
crash. High tide lapping
at cement blocks. Drinking fire hydrants.
You are wrapped in safety,
during the flood in a wool sweater,
grazing on canned salad, disaster relief orange
cones you are seated next to
a lighthouse.





We are still wearing our forest
colors, a grove of light playing off shadow
printed on this tree shirt. We ask, if politely,

whether we care enough to withstand it,
whether we are still welcome: tiny saplings,
fresh to this glade and these pollen bearers.

We buzzing because we arrived here
having already taken root; our futuristic
hum the same insect shuffle and tangled antennae.

See, this one carries a leaf to the hive.
This one has wings folded, stripes.
This one, of all of us, to fly.





Animated howling stitched in.
Type 'I' and mean myopic sets
unfocused upon buttons.

The matching suits, pink
and blue cartoon chimp fitted caps
slack jaw back and forth

and eyes recall most
our memories having
cotton mouth. You blow whistles

duck calls; a kind of decoy
tessellating alphabet
mocks us in the sky. Crack beer

hunting lights in tame goose
feathers. We have unlicensed
safari to look forward to

at the edge of these plains,
a deserted jungle
where the corner store kittens

care less, dreaming
delicate fish scales,
the unfettered giblets.

Animated primates
and your affection is a chemistry
place setting. A token

mammalian longing,
you tell me, makes copies.
Makes more.







YOU PUSH A BUTTON AND ARE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING EXERCISE OF TRANSLATION: CONSIDER THAT TO THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE, WE ARE A CONFUSING AND MASSIVE COLLAGE OF TRANSMISSIONS, SOUNDS, LIGHT. WE ARE, TO THOSE LISTENING, A MASS OF BABBLING RADIO SHOWS, OF HALF DEVELOPED B PLOTS, OF SONGS, AD SPOTS, ATTACK SOFTWARE: ALL OF THESE TEXTS RADIATING INTO THE COSMOS. AND THAT SOMEDAY WE MIGHT CONFRONT THE ALIEN THAT SPEAKS AS OURSELVES, THAT IS ALL OF THIS TRANSMISSION REFLECTED BACK, DISTORTED BY TIME, SPACE, MISUNDERSTANDING. FACE TO FACE WITH SOMETHING THAT TRIES IN A BROKEN TONGUE, THAT SEES VIOLENCE IN THE AGGRESSIVE COUP OF ADVERTISING: EVERY 20TH CENTURY SOAP COMMERCIAL AN ACT OF INVASION, A DEMAND FOR HYGIENE AND SO FORTH. CONSIDER OUR ALREADY WEAPONIZED LANGUAGE HARNESSSED AGAINST US, A KIND OF RETALIATION. "RESISTANT IS FUTILE," THE ALIEN INSISTS.







RESISTANT IS FUTILE, EARTHLING

We are looking for the talking horse
That lives in your backyard.

What? The milk man is extinct?
This precious bottle of cow juice

Soothes & Calms Your Teeth As It Whitens.
For a bright smile! For the fresher kisses!

Brought to you by Brontosaurus,
Mr. Deeds goes to Seattle.

We seek your nuclear family.
Your radiation is tiny and you

Set it next to your ears.
Take us to your grass feeder.

Because we will remain conscience
As vegetarian against your plant species.





TRANSMISSION 10.04.57

We in hand two drafts of this fire fountain, we
intend to rectify this levity, your numinous breathing.
To defy this drift prophetically, show us your foundations.
We de-fly spins in kinetic trajectories as our flour expounds inside
tin cans, encroaching upon
this pathic gravity. 'Spin the yarn,' snouts your selected textiles:
your forests bend
pathetic concavity while countdowns frame our enraptured
computation.
'Gravity,' our rockets applaud a rosy pink realism in which
our atoms are never to commingle. 'Gravity,' and to
count it grinds down the endangered beacon inside
now down and engulfed in ozone reasoning.
a targeting in stereoscope.
endangered genera. A
Specious
Logic.





DOVE

We have mistaken your sanitation for granted.
We are already accounting for your mood swings
between branches of decision trees

all sponge-like your bipedal cauliflower brain.

Do not attempt to wear glasses
and try to squint IQ at us, do not sightless

for our Logic is superior and aimed at your temple.

Your reasoning dissolves even
in the most tenuous of circumstances,
in the sparkling of crystals, in the silica itself.

To your soapism: our hygienic provocation. To your effervescent
behaviors in crowded settings: a strict regiment scrubbed raw

and a citrus scent with a dash of hangnail.

You are not cuticle enough. We mean you no arms.

/// RESISTANT IS FUTILE | 47 ///





FOURTEEN PREPARATIONS OF RESISTANT IS FUTILE

Martha always has toothpicks on hand.

Talk to your lambs before it is too late.

1/3 cup julienne slicer, whole wheat flour.

Resistant is Futile tries the Winston Churchill sandwich.

A dirty martian, shaking olive oil. By dirty only unclean is scent.

Pan seared puffer fish are a delicacy in our cities, twice.

One can never be pure, your Top Chef Seems Unseasonable.

Set the mercury on a platter. Remember to keep it covered.

Until the thermometer is 150°F inside the temperature.

Pancakes do not resemble our vehicles.

Maple syrup maple syrup maple syrup.

Treason sparingly when you are masturbating the tenderloin.

Who are you calling blender?

Now it would usually stay in the oven for longer, but we've prepared some beforehand.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE AT THE BATTLE CREEK SANITARIUM

John Harvey Kellogg wears white robes for breakfast.
A partly balanced diet the right way every day.
You cannot hesitant that crunch. A big big

Bite. Niacinamide meets Vitamins A, C, E &
the honeycomb which says the honeycomb is my baby.
Raisin fibers in sunglasses marching next to two equivalent

grapefruit hemispheres. You will finally answer
the saxophone. C.W. Post Cereal is discontinued in your

1994. The spoon cannot pretend the colonies.
Your pendulum is the Emperor we must bite back.
“Engage Frosted Flakes, Ensign,” says Captain Whey Protein.

We shall make a kiss of honeybee abdomens.
Your tongues explode with a tropical assortment.
We are not the only surviving General Mills.

/// RESISTANT IS FUTILE | 49 ///





MIRANDA RIGHTS

You have the right to retain violence.

We shall point attorneys towards your shame
if you cannot acquire fraternal
representation. Remain silent: we have
captured your fingertips!

Anything we say to do can be loosened
until such time as we find your
illegal entity. Your municipal code is not
unpunished in these restraints, this sub-
section demands that you watch your
head as you enter our pod.

Do you understand these promises?

Your wrists shall blind each other.
Our CSI unit has found a gray mustache.
Hang us from your jury.





AI THE DENVER TRADE EXPO

The brochure leads us to
continental breakfast where
these embryos are overcooked
and missing the shells. We can learn from
this adjustable handle. We shall
continue this correspondence with Tampa
and will maintain its dignity by inviting designer
from all over your paradigm, perfect for our
seed projects this entrepreneurial encroach
towards a dynamic new bold strategy.
It has been great talking about you often.
Your candor is a kind of PR stunt.
We will feed your brightest
at the team-building retreat.

/// RESISTANT IS FUTILE | 51 ///





SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE OCEAN

In waves do you project Atlantic, having let go
of the controls? Do you grip this Particle
Surf Philosophy, this steady spewing of conch
whispers? How is this sea water a mirroring?
Are fortifications detected in the sand bank: is the bare
box jelly strung out on a fishbone necklace?

Sea glass engaged and coded green
rock. Brine reflection in five four—

Why must you lurk in the west brain coral of sunset
vistas? To ask for good prices on solar tanks is to result
in portions of the three most important advances
in anti-sunburn technology last year. Yet, this is no
time for cresting. Is this sea water mirrored in
danger of unprotected X-Raybans? Beach pupils.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE ENTERS THE COCCON OF SADNESS, PART I

A partly balanced diet the right way every day.
Yet, Resistant felt misunderstanding
engulfed in an ozone reasoning.

“Did you expect a battery that is longer lasting?” a valid question.
Do not attempt to wear glasses, someone told him.
He was right. For a bright smile! For the fresher kisses!
“Fucking asteroids!” Resistant might exclaim to the flag.

Insistent is futile. Youth is basted to the tongue.
“Because we will remain conscience,” four bars
of service oh Lost Kitty of 718 228-5613.
On the fence post, this time. Which is to say

we were brought here to save your Teapot children, Alice.
A popular slogan he read somewhere about comets that can
Kill. “Our atoms are never to commingle.” Our atoms to commingle.





A moment OF INTROSPECTION

Our Sentiment is superior and aimed at your temple.
Mimeographs which are proud to make our acquaintance
as nearly vegetarian; as against your plants:

We To Defly THIS PATHETIC GRAVITY.

Conclusion: There are other ways of breathing population,
yet we were said to have started sneezing at age thirteen.

“High fidelity rarely goes unpunished,” a popular slogan.
Brand reputation and disparagement:
Talk to your lambs before it’s too late.

We shall undo your left pharma.
Take us to your empty tube-station
your wall: the twin suns of the sequel.

We grow holographs of all the animals we have
lost paw prints in your soapism.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE IS BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

These equal features surprisingly low tech Sarah Palins.

Mimeographs which are proud to make our acquaintance.

Our Queen resembles one of your potted aloe plants.

Crowding window sills is one of our favorite pastimes.

We shall undo your left harm.

We will to you first ask questions when questions are phasers.

Your slips of tongue are quite revealing.

We mean to paste up flyers oh lost Kitty of 718 228-5613.

Did you expect a battery that is longer lasting?

Take us to your favorite super matriarchy.

We demand in several languages.

You have 1.5 million Euros to decide.

We are happy to be of service.

We are happy to make you antiquated.





**RESISTANT IS FUTILE WEARS
AN ILL-FITTING CROWN**

As vegetarian against your plant species'
 Logic. As vegeterian
 In the most tenuous of circumstances,
 Insistent is Futile. Sub-Heading:
 14 planets in the solar system
 will boldly explain your tentacled desires.
 "You cannot hesitant that crunch"
 Was only vaguely acknowledged by parenting.

We will feed your brightest
 in Valhalla. Your King shall lose happy
 to make your antiquated.
 Your pendulum is the Emperor.
 We must bite back.
 We must bite back.





now in 3D!

For every x,y,z,
Is felt armrests and spawning we
Tried not to kick the row in front of us.
“This is unswell, captain,” says the satellite dish.
We will be forced to evacuate our vwls
Should rumors of certain contingencies
Prove to be usable data after all.
We planted a flag on the Sea of Crisis

And will patrol your button pushes.
You were called crater face in your youth, too.
“Fucking asteroids!” you might exclaim to the flag.
To note in the log under the sub-heading
“Sub-Heading,” 14 planets in the solar system
On your wall and strangely, twin suns.

/// RESISTANT IS FUTILE | 57 ///





A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESISTANT IS FUTILE

This Resistant as immature podling self-consciously dwelling on the lessons within your lyrics. Conclusion: there are other ways of breathing population and passing papers. Yet, this Resistant felt misunderstanding in merely the conventional way, understood earth anxiety by touching scream. This is a vegetarian on Tuesday March 16 year 2000, an affront only vaguely acknowledged by parenting.

“It’s ok, it’s chicken broth,”
As if birds didn’t grow on trees.
In secret, Resistant unrolled annotated depictions of supernovas, pored over them all worn at the edges as ultraviolet paint tubes leaked onto this crowding.



RESISTANT IS FUTILE HAS SOME COMPLICATED EMOTIONS

The brackish window is double painting us alive.
Throw the Manual into the wind and watch it smack
your own puny records. We are rewinded
that “say hello to never” implies saline qualities
that have not been tested for durability.

This secretion is overwrought.
We have located the flower structure but
it is not for petals that we wear striped
sweaters and mutter neat somethings.

We cannot sew threads into this mystery
when your mission stasis threatens unbalance.
We are rewinded & your own puny records
your valves squeeze indeterminate ratios
between us, all happy in the rain sunset.





RE-THINKING A FEW CORE HYPOTHESES

But we were not there to miss it.
We were not talking loud enough
and not thinking the incorrect distant
is not therefore the silver jumpsuit that
sings itself un stupid. No nostalgia for this continent
is subject to disremembering in the shipping
uninsured. This motion shakes off rapture
and has no more impolite Glow Stix
to not be misunderstood by. This is not a head shot.
We have located the precise impracticality of your last ten years.
We have let us go there beyond your Jumped Shark
not having ever been one insecurity or the other enough. Like
diamonds cutting floors in this pretending to spin,
this renders us not believable in our unbelief.





GOING CRAZY IN THIS HOUSE LIVING WITH NUT JOBS

These tears are for a Gelled Tan Line.

What my f***ing real people.
Who could believe this shored up opposition
Makes us appreciate less platonic forms of ridiculousness.

You will only trust certain cohabitations.

This is anywhere you can get good results.
I am afraid we have uncertain situation.

Imagine the gorillas of Miami fist pump in harmony.

Until it becomes tomorrow tonight, it does not
Evacuate the premise. Spit's been crossed all over the place.

This is how you call the quality gear of phat this atmosphere.
She looks like the ultimate fur outfit.

Your own vibe stops fighting the b****.

Get that. We do not have to be really right now.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE LEARNS A FEW IMPORTANT LESSONS ABOUT SHOW BUSINESS

In time, the camera work you do for us
will boldly explain your tentacled desires.

This vacuous is insufficiently lit.
What arc can you build of such fibers?

The dialogue is superficially molded to find quality.
Did you not too find the characters unlikable?

Days of our foam operas display at least excessive emotion,
broadcast throughout the greater metropolitan hive.

You mistake us for your favorite segment,
your favorite jazz fuses to this elevator of licks.

We expose an uglier violence should photographs
be shaken of us. What happens in Valhalla stays

in Valhalla. Your King shall lose
150 lbs. and still be considered fat.





THE mOUNTAIN OF REMORSE

in between shutters you find us, and yet
we are already rationalizing the elevation
is no longer of primary discord in that
we are incompatibly frequencies.

Initial scans unveil no signs of
activating our uncharge.

It may take two hundred light-years.

“Take us to your penitentiary,”
our pathetic circuits override.

It is our only therapy. It is all we
grow in the thorax of this desire.

And it tastes nothing like
artificial savoring.





A moment OF INTROSPECTION

Our Logic is superior and aimed at your temple.
Mimeographs which are proud to make our acquaintance
as vegetarian against your plant species

We Intend To Defly This Pathetic Gravity

Conclusion: There are other ways of breathing population.
We were said to have started sneezing at the age of thirteen.

“High fidelity rarely goes unpunished” a popular slogan
of brand reputation and disparagement.
Talk to your lambs before it is too late.

We shall undo your left harm
take us to your grass feeder
your wall and twin suns.

Grow holographs of all the animals you’ve lost paw prints
to your soapism: our hygienic provocation.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE COMES TO GRIP WITH MID-CENTURY AMERICAN ANXIETIES

The instability killed the cat at 5 am in the morning
and at 8:30 in black and white you look for still crayon
box lids. It is not elocution that is the angular
urgently locomotive in this repetition.
This is no longer retaining Skinless (trademark) Franks
in a can. & how was your parallax to the coast this time of year
we are under no particular either way & we have come
to interrogate your Poor Varicose, is he in?
There is a scratched in epithet
that you've hidden in your fallout shelter.
Your family room a weight that is turning
particulate in the breathing in at once & exhaling,
we are boasting about overcoming these pink menus
in over 350 m.p.h.! There. Silence. Earthling.





RESISTANT IS FUTILE HAS A 60'S MOMENT

When do we want it? Unsquare fragrance
in a harsh lavender our words are burning.

There in the atmosphere, this there
was the remainder of which
last night looks at.

Dream
In
Me.

You tried out l'acid of Kool-Aid and there
were Electricity Shamans Pulsing
in the nude light bulb.

We were brought here to save your Teapot children, Alice.

Fragrance and peppermint and color of time,
the possibility is to air it, it of only feeling.





99 LUFTBALLONS UND RESISTANT IST FUTILE

The Deutsch for non-sequitur demands to tear down this Resistant!
Broadcasting the scent, what is beyond your barbs wired?

We declare mutiny, Captain Kirk, your sequin desires

will never traverse this incontinence & 99 curtains

in the sparkling Dawn & 99 Decision trees

the smallish business of which is to fly with a shoestring.
A bag of balloons laughs. Your free currency waves back

to the hidden hand of the Supermarkt. I'm standing pretty.
These red bugs these software lightnings & meanwhile the reports mouth-

-wash of historic turbulence. Step down into the shards
with orders to identify the mushroom-cloud shadows

the open eager eye witnesses the fires
of the outwardly insurrectionary at last

as indicated in the sky indicated like in the sky.





EXCEPTIONAL INDEPENDENT **LIVING AND SUPPORTIVE** **SERVICES FOR SENIORS**

We have been taken through your golden years.
Early Worm Blue Platter Specials, we have you
in our traction beam and you will be parboiled.
We demand our ten percent annual lessons
but you will attentively nod and do nothing.
Youth is basted to the tongue.

Here is an image of your ancestral
homeland and here is an image of
your ancestral Labrador.
Upon fearing the upstairs
every foot stomp, the clattering
we unwrap this impenetrable Butterscotch

and write indignant letters in the long hands
of your forgotten cursive.





**RESISTANT IS FUTILE
THINKS OF MORE THAN
JUST THE SPECIES**

One day you will evolve beyond your physical body.
Grow holograms of all the animals you've lost paw prints
for we will never rescue certain species of memory.

Viewed through the crinkled contact, a refractive surgery's
ten most FAQ flying away from the constant winging.
When doves do not forget their tiny eye-sights too leak.

Their phantom limbs and remapped interfaces confirm
visual record, conform to this synthesized odor.
The citrus test of an efficient olfactory.

That is not what you dreamed too? Stare up
into the struggle against your light pollution.
Observe an ontology in the herring there

that swims against the tide when for one day
we will evolve beyond your fins.





||| 70 | |||





YOU ARE THEN ASKED TO PUSH A BUTTON, TO EXCISE TRANSLATION, TO BELIEVE IN THE PACKAGING OF THE AUTOMAT. THE POP SONG THAT IS THE ENVELOPE OF GENERAL TEARS, JOY OR GENUINE ANGER IN GRINDING GUITARS, IN ARRANGEMENTS, IN HEADPHONES. A SOUND FOR EVERYBODY, THE SONG THAT SAYS: EVERYTHING IS EMPIRE IN THE EMPIRE, BUT THE MACHINE LOVES YOU ALL THE SAME BECAUSE YOU ARE PALMING ANOTHER COIN DURING THE FADE OUT.



|||
| 71
|||







: SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18

(0:21)

you put down the glass
you'd like not to see double but listen
doubly you will always hear treble even if
the device like errs
on the side of carelessness
you peel that onion if you want to
if you want too

/// SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 | 73 ///





VERSE

(0:31)

You really got a hold ennui
Is an already laid egg
Demanding satisfaction
From the window pane.

The trick is the yolk
Is known for its capability
And no one wants to feel as
Dripped upon. In flightless nests

You revolve around
Your own banal periphery
Cast aspersions on the catalogue
Of looks, known to be a contagion.

This is to say that the best
Things in life belong to money
That's what I want
In the form of affirmative

Aphorism, not just for breakfast anymore.
The curled upper lip is rendered falsely
Punk, a kind of sculpture in zippers
Over contemplating safety pins.

||| 74 | SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 |||





CHORUS

(0:21)

During which as if descending from an ether
Suspended stage left, she plays violin out of
tune
And in which borders are breached there is
No future for those savaged in this song.

These cheap speakers will learn to spit
The Slits convince us that it's about slime
And ripped up Polaroids taped back together
Your generation don't mean a thing to

This factory whose hooks are spent
Writing postcards to Generation X
During which there are many angry strings
And the reinvention of the triangle.

/// SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 | 75 ///





VERSE

(0:29)

There is something to plug into, an actual jack in it, this thing I found
on the street this funny shaped, this oddly in a bag this thing

there is an input into it, I found it in a bag in a suitcase this thing
I could actually plug into this amazing wristwatch that takes no pics

this moody and sometimes inconsolable thing: the songs they wept for
days, we cried for hours for together we could not understand what rain

meant. Plug into so many sockets and you're bound to be fried potatoes.
Grandma reads to nobody in the crib. There is a pillow in the shape of the baby.

It is something to plug in, this thing, this almost brittle seeming thing,
this the beginning of the Doctor says ADHD. No span width. Almost no longer

embarrassing how this thing with an input, this thing never leaves naked ear
buds. I hide it. I keep it in the mattress. I listen with the volume turned down

almost inaudible and think about shapes, really cool shapes, shapes
you couldn't imagine like shapes that other shapes don't like to admit

they are jealous of, the kinds of shapes you could plug into this thing
this thing you could plug shapes into tells me about shapes growing

out purple and in unfortunate shades, bleached puffs. The grandmother of pleather
warns that there are those that want this thing, seeking its input, that want to stop

this thing and I are considering moving to Chicago, pulling tips from the tops
of tables in the dead of night this thing I plug into can picture us there in the yellow light.

||| 76 | SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 |||





CHORUS

(0:21)

Reading postcards from X suspended stage
left, she plays a viola lazily and during which
there are as many strings attached as there
are surfboarders beached. They wish they all

had more to revisit: the triangle returns to late period
Brian Wilson and as such there is no suture for those sliced up
in this song. Your veneration don't mean a thing through
these cheap speakers that will have already learned

by now the taped up Polaroids ripped apart
again. The Slits convince us that it's about slime
in a plastic wrapped distortion unit those hooks
she spent cocoon-like and as if descending.

/// SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 | 77 ///





BRIDGE

(0:25)

this arrangement

imagines every

single

guesses we've

capsized just

a little bit

reiteration

backing away

backing

a wavering oh

has been known

to (crash)

symbolizing

another token

commotion

mistaking

the landscape

for changing

we cry

little green tears

for getting into

(crash)

||| 78 | SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 |||



VERSE

(0:30)

Western values mean nothing to her.
The Earth spins angry seven inches

veers away from the axis the tiny instruments
are breaking. Insert flaming oil barrels, smoke
breaks, the architecture that isn't falling apart
so much as in slow attrition. Perfect, now

moldy fences and a leather jacket,
empty spray-cans for the implied
what have you. There are not enough
songs about empire. Every song is

about Empire and your dad
who put the blues in ripped off
flannel layers and gave Jimmy Buffet
a film career. About the people that invented

the '70s that got fat in the '80s that got
weird in the '90s, while worrying about
being too topical. Everybody is going
to leave at the exact same crime of

self-defense. Insert mirror ball, rapture,
prescription pills, while you are eating.

/// SONG : POEM TO BE READ IN 3:18 | 79 ///





CODA

(C:14)

it's all right
angles the post

cards the creased
pictures

a Polaroid of devotion
taped back

together
in the reinvented
triangle

a kind of promise
strychnine in

the sixteenth notes
clap track clap track



FIN



/// SONG | 81 ///





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The first and last sections, “Pop : Poem Manufactured in the Furniture Music,” and “: Song: Poem to be Read in 3:18” comprise *Pop :: Song*, the winner of the New School’s 2011 Chapbook Competition, judged by Major Jackson.

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“Resistant Is Futile Learns a Few Important Lessons about Show Business” appeared in *Everyday Genius*, “Resistant Is Futile Wears an Ill-Fitting Crown” in *Boog City*, and “Resistant Is Futile, Earthling,” “Resistant Is Futile Enters the Cocoon of Sadness, Pt. II” as well as “Resistant Is Futile Thinks of More Than Just the Species” were published in *Pelt*.



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OF SOUND MIND :: PROCESS AND PRACTICE

Mark Gurarie and Lynne DeSilva-Johnson in Conversation

In 2016 The Operating System initiated the project of publishing print documents from musicians and composers, beginning with Everybody's Automat and this year's chapbook series, all of which fall under the OF SOUND MIND moniker, and all of which are written by creative practitioners who work in both poetry and music. I asked each of them a series of questions about the balance of these two disciplines in their practice, which I'll share with you here.

- LDJ

Who are you?

I'm a poet, writer, teacher, editor and rock "musician."

Why are you a poet?

I'm a poet because I enjoy exploring what is possible in language, and the multifarious ways in which it can work. I like sort of chewing on words and collections of words; I savor the often disordered progression of thought that comes from an active mind, or is imprinted in it from the surrounding environment, or might suddenly appear as a means to memory. Especially in this day and age, we live surrounded by a constant influx of language—be it from reading books, from broadcasts, from the endless texts of the internet or just the chaos of the every day—so poetry becomes a way of tuning into specific frequencies within this array. It might also be a means to come into dialogue with disorder, while speaking to those parts of the psyche that create order; it's something that is always in that liminal zone between sense and nonsense. I'm a poet because I appreciate the musical qualities of language as much as I appreciate the ways in which language might be able to convey ideas that do not fit into prose. In a sense, then, poetry is what I feel to be the most natural expression of my thoughts; I feel comfortable within its simultaneously freeing and restrictive idiom.





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

I know that by the time I was in late high school, perhaps around the age of 17, I knew that I wanted to be a writer of some sort; up to that point, I focused primarily on visual art while playing bass in a band. It was not until I was 20 that I realized that poetry was to be my focus; I can't quite pinpoint it, but I began writing stream-of-consciousness inflected prose poems in the manner of the beats, whom, of course, as a young white dude in college, I came to admire. I appreciated the lawlessness of it all—the radical spirit in the poems and the way that their form challenged convention—so I decided at that time to take it on by, well, writing poems.

What's a "poet", anyway? What is the role of the poet today?

This is a tough question because in the US, poetry is relegated to the margins of cultural and social production; whereas in many other countries and cultures, poetry is more central. Here, outside of exciting popular developments like the emergence of slam and spoken word—and I actually think you might be able to include the vibrancy of hip-hop here—poetry is famously ignored by non-poets. That said, American poets have a special position as being the voice of the exterior, the underbelly, even if their exile from whatever the “mainstream” might largely be self-imposed. In this sense, then, poets are able to use their craft to move in a freer way than many of their artistic peers who are more closely attuned to the market, and furthermore, the relationship between poet and broader American society is always evolving.

As much as can be said about the disengagement of say, modernist poets in the early 20th century, from political or social discourse, you have strains that speak for under-represented voices, that lift the mirror to society at large, like those of the Harlem Renaissance, for instance. In a similar way, the poet today has the opportunity to employ the craft to explore and challenge the status quo, and in that, to bear witness. To me, it's incredibly exciting that Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* was actually on the NYT's best-sellers list (two different times, I believe), or that Patricia Lockwood's “Rape Joke” went viral.

In its own way, and occasionally, the culture at large looks to the poets and lets them in; the onus is on the poets to use their craft and their perspective to make work that is meaningful, challenging and makes a genuine attempt to capture an underlying truth.





What do you see as your cultural and social role (in the poetry community and beyond)?

The poetry community is a sprawling and often dysfunctional family, but at the core of it, anyone that reads it or that goes to a reading becomes a member. As much as there are genuine and heated debates about how it functions, what it does and what it should do, it's important to remember that poetry can only live when it is written and when it is read and when it is loved. In this sense, I view my position as a poet as one of a facilitator and champion for the voices I see as doing good work. This is why I was for a long time involved in curating a reading series, and it's why I write reviews and work (well, volunteer) as an editor of them. In this, I like to think that I am helping create some more space for the art in the wider sphere, while letting it continue to grow and develop. Furthermore, every poem out there is in dialogue with the poetry that preceded it; in this sense, too, my own work serves the function of furthuring this important conversation.

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?

While the manuscript as a whole wasn't in my mind, as such, when these poems were written, it should be noted that the sections within it represent discrete, if in many ways related, entities. The first and last sections—the two most directly concerned with exploring music—existed previously as a chapbook, *Pop :: Song* and were conceived to sort of counterbalance each other. The first is an exploration of experiment in musical forms through an ekphrastic response to 20th Century composer/troublemakers, Erik Satie and John Cage, and the latter is composed in the form of a pop song and looks at the ways popular music can be equal parts provocative, evocative and sentimental. The other two sections also hang together tightly. One is a series of poems in the voice of an alien who has mislearned the language through broken 20th century broadcasts, and in the other the urban contemporary and the natural is exposed as a mutually idealizing false binary.

I found, though, in looking at the poems over the years that they resonated with each other; they had similar investment in musical approaches, fractured lexicons and indirect approaches to shared, cultural memory as well as the personal. It should be noted, too, that these come from a two to three year historical period for me; though not my original intention to have them be some sort of “recording” of my life and my art, they became just that. Over the course of piecing together the manuscript, I did encounter struggles and doubts; particularly, it





took me a while to accept that the sections really should be in their own “rooms.” It was jarring for me that this was not looking like a more traditional collection of poems, but a kind of nesting doll or some sort of toy composed of differently shaped pieces. Eventually, though, I relaxed, and, as the old trope goes, let the work guide me. I had to have faith in the original vision(s).

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

As mentioned above, it was easier to conceptualize each of the sections as their own “collections,” and I think that it was really in retrospect that I realized that they broached similar thematic territory, if from different angles and approaches. Ultimately, these poems reflect the concerns I had at the time—and probably to a great extent still do—and the types of things I was doing in them mirrored each other. If anything really binds them, come to think of it, it is that they are all sort of top-down in construction. I developed a concept or idea, most likely after a few were written, and used that to guide the generation of the rest of them. It is very often a way that I work; I’ll land on an idiom, structure or form, and try to work it out in as many ways as I can without losing my mind.

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 (poems, sections, etc) influences you and/or colors your work specifically.

A big “theme” that I hope to convey in *Everybody’s Automat* is that of the strange utopianism, the resoluteness and ultimate failure of the 20th century; the book both idealizes and reels in horror of the cold war, capitalism and industrial process, as well as the ways in which the monochromatic aesthetic of the previous century—its hopes and dreams—fell to pieces and brought us here. Since the work is composed of discrete entities, I imagined them as sort of like slots in an abandoned automat lunch joint. The machinery is rusty and far removed from its original glossy and futuristic facade, but the plastic-wrapped Wonderbread sandwiches, chock-full of preservatives, might still be edible 60 some years on. Each section costs approximately 5 cents.

I do love titles, and, since, as mentioned above, many of these poems were generated with a ruling concept in mind, the titles have a massive influence on the works themselves. This isn’t always how I work, but what is nice about working in this way is that it allows the poems in question to develop a life of their own and to surprise me. When that is happening, in my view, you are doing something right.





Of course, also, the title *Everybody's Automat* is a riff off of Stein's *Everybody's Autobiography*, and must therefore be in dialogue with her fractured, self-conscious-without-a-self approach to memoir. As much as, at the time, I would've told you that these poems are not autobiographical in any sense, there was indeed a "there there" because my own history as the child of Ukrainian immigrants, as a kid invested in punk music and modern art, as an urbanite in fake deer skin, as a budding artist, is in there. It took some years for me realize that; as much as I tried not to be a self-referential, self-absorbed artist, I of course was.

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

These poems certainly encapsulate a particular period in my creative practice, one during which I was invested in formal experiment as a means to indirectly present autobiography, history, social critique and linguistic play. I was excited, at the time, by the possibilities that collage, translation, mistranslation and a focus on the musical aspects of language can bring to the lyric form. This is perhaps best seen in the "Resistant Is Futile" section, in which, in keeping with the imagined lexicon of an alien and how it might develop a concept of Earthly life through broadcasts, lines repeat or are slightly distorted. To create this effect, I sometimes used translation engines to fracture the meaning of some phrases, and I got to pun with abandon. Eventually, the persona of this possibly malignant being overtook, though it is likely also, in many respects, a reflection of the russian accented English of my parents. In crafting them, as well as the other sections, I became excited by the possibilities of experimental approaches to writing practice, and I exuberantly took these on. I learned a great deal in working with these poems, especially in the editing process, and many of the methodologies still crop up in my current practice.

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 of other creative people (poets or others) informed the way you work/write?

The poems here are certainly indebted to both received and invented forms and practices. At the core of it, they, and I think much of my work, play with notions of translation as this concept is taken on by writers like Anne Carson and Caroline Bergvall. Carson's *Nox*, in particular, was influential; I was struck by the way that the act of translating a Catullus poem became her means of coping with the loss of her





estranged brother to create a book that, in many respects, is so much more than “just” poetry. I got enamored with the idea that every creative act is, in essence, a form of translation; the translation of feeling and thoughts into certain forms; the translation of real-time musical moments into texts, and the extent to which mistranslations and mistakes are as integral as anything else. Everyone, it might be said, has their own personal language; therefore, every piece of writing or music is an attempt to translate this to something for the broader world.

The first and last sections are in direct dialogue with musical approaches; I was reading a great deal of John Cage, for instance, and became invested in his ideas about aleatoric and experimental practice. In some sections of “Pop : Poem Manufactured in the Furniture Music,” Cage’s lines intermingle with mine and provide shape to the poems. It should be noted, too, that the concept of “Furniture Music,” comes from Satie, who envisaged some of his pieces as being more ambient, something specifically to be background music. I tried to echo the sense of experiment that guided these composers, translating what I learned from them into the serial poem. Similarly, in the final section, “: Song: Poem to be read in 3:18,” I adopted the rigid structure of the pop song: intro, verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, verse, coda. Here I was essentially translating the panoply of emotional and visceral reactions to the rock and punk songs I love (and hate).

The second section, “Sentimental Animals,” I view as musical in its approach; there is no rigid form to speak of, but I wanted it to have its own lexicon, and, in particular, to play off the ways that meaning and “sentiment” can be influenced by context. Certainly, also, these poems are intended to interrogate notions of urbanity and contemporary existence, at least in certain circles, as both separate from and idealizing the natural. Because of a variety of factors, we live in an era in which urban spaces like Brooklyn have been colonized by those enamored with a close connection to the land—you know, “farm-to-table,” and “rustic” in aesthetic looks—while being part of a demographic ecology that preys on and pushes out what the borough traditionally was. The nostalgia for authenticity, in the end, is what both drives development and preys on the local.

Perhaps most conspicuously, the “Resistant Is Futile” section is indebted to the exploded notion of the sonnet a la Ted Berrigan. Here texts are mixed and remixed: starting from material that comes from corporate speech, advertising and popular entertainment, I freely distorted, collaged and ran lines through translation engines to give it all that “extra-terrestrial” feel. I like the notion that all of our telecasts and broadcasts radiate endlessly into space and are being received by others that are out there, and further, that these frequencies are how extraterrestrials might form an understanding of the human race. The work certainly has roots in my reading of LANGUAGE poetry; they play with the in-





herently ideological and political sense of language as seen in corporate speech and pop culture. They are also my approach to both persona, a la David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust, and the kind of surrealistic cosmology you find in Sun Ra or Parliament Funkadelic albums.

Talk about the specific headspace of being a musician / composer / performer - when and how do you feel you enter a space of consciousness in which "sound" or "music" is the dominant sense?

In contrast to writing text, which for me can be a much more deliberate and painstaking process, I feel that when I am writing songs or playing music, there is a much more "natural" and intuitive feel that takes place. While I can read music and have some understanding of theory, I approach playing from a more instinctual space; I hate jam band music, but I am, at the heart, a jammer. This is likely because I have developed most as a musician from the perspective of the blues idiom, in the sense that I am most accomplished at playing "rock" bass. Though I was lucky enough to have had some violin and piano lessons as a kid, it wasn't until I owned a guitar and had to play bass in my friend's band (at the age of 13) that I felt in any way competent. I guess it has to do with the fact that, at the core of it, music is more closely aligned to math and physics; there are principles that determine harmonies, that dictate dissonance, that determine the frequency and rate of distortion. And yet, it's not analytical: You don't need to speak any language or to have read any books to "get" music.

I am not nearly as prolific a songwriter as I am a writer of poetry or prose, but when I do it, I actually feel much more relaxed. Since songs work within real time, there is, at least for me, less fretting about small decisions. So, for instance, I like writing lyrics because, in many ways, it is so much less stressful than writing poems; sure you can flip amazing things with them—express a great deal in a literary sense—but you can also be as effective singing 'ooh' and 'aah.' Sometimes, while walking, I feel I can tune into rhythms, melodies and harmonies very sharply and distinctly—be they compositions of my own or ear worms—in a very sudden and direct way. It's that old feeling, I guess, overtaking me. This makes sense because music more so than text, in my opinion, taps into the body and works in a non-logical or semantic way.

As far as live performance, I don't mean to be cliché here, but that is my drug or even my religion. When playing with my band or other musicians—when several players are locked in together and talking to each other in that 'jazz' sense—there is simply nothing like it. The sum is greater than the parts and it's truly revelatory. I don't have religion—I am through and through an atheist—but I've felt religious (or perhaps the term ought to be 'spiritual') experiences while performing. If you can truly connect with your audience, if you have their attention in





that moment of time, it is zen, it is ecstasy, it is flow, and it is, above all, a communal and shared experience. I may never be a professional performer, there may not be stadiums in my future, but I will likely always be addicted to the stage.

Do you consider yourself equally musician/composer/poet? Are there other equally important disciplines, influences, labels or other words you'd want to call our attention to that we might not know that you feel are important in understanding your creative practice?

I wouldn't say I am more a poet or a musician, so much that I like to think my sense of one informs the other. That said, while I am a capable musician (decent bass player, so so on the guitar), I probably feel more confidence in my use of language and words. I can't hang with classical players, with jazz cats, with those folks that spend and have spent hours a day practicing, but I can play by ear, write bass lines, think of and play chord progressions, structure songs, think of harmonies and that sort of thing. Maybe just maybe this simplification could be true: I approach writing like a musician, and music like a writer. Well, maybe not.

I can say that a very formative experience for me as musician, poet and performer was my time spent doing spoken word in San Francisco and collaborating with individual or small ensembles of musicians. Back in 2003, I became involved in an arts collective called the Collaborative Arts Insurgency or the C.A.I. (for the record, I never loved the name, but I did like the acronym), which organized guerilla style open mics at the 16th and Mission BART stop plaza on Thursday evenings. There was no sign up and no mic; you just sort of went up and did one piece at a time before ceding the "stage." The collective itself was rather short-lived (too many divergent ideas, colliding egos and disparate agendas), but it's pretty neat that, to this day, that plaza plays host to poetry open mics on Thursdays.

Anyway, while the collective was running, a core of musicians and poets emerged—of which I became a part—and we began to put on variety type shows in performance spaces in the Bay Area. Our thinking was that poetry and art needed to be public, needed to be pulled out of the academy and brought to the "people," and we also really believed in the power of dialogue between different art forms. Anyway, I "cut my teeth" there, every Thursday, out in the street, shouting poems that I memorized to my peers, strangers, passersby, stragglers, drug addicts and audience regulars. This eventually led to my working with extremely talented collaborators in the creation of spoken word/music pieces, some of which we even recorded, and with which we even did a tiny scale tour (by tour, I guess I mean like three gigs in Portland, but still!). More so than any previous band experience I had, I felt that performance high there. Even though it gave me a bad case of "Spoken Word Voice," (I was





23, I was idealistic, I was pretentiously anti-pretension, youth!) it also influenced the way I thought about poetry as it relates to real time. I also would occasionally play some bass for others, and it was there that I first learned to vocalize while playing.

But so what I got from that was a couple things: I wanted on the one hand to make work that could impact a wider range of people, but also I wanted to challenge the form and be respected as an artist by the community. I think that this is why, these days, I play music and write songs in an indie-rock/punk/what-have-you band as a ‘popular’ outlet and also am a poet in a more “academic” sense. There’s no denying that music impacts more people than poetry; it is simply more democratic in the way it works. At any rate, I like to think I bring musical intuitive strategies into poems, and I like to think that my poetics help with lyric work.

Describe in more detail the relationship between music and language in your life and practice. How and when are these discrete influences / practices and how/when are they interconnected? How do they influence each other? Do they ever not?

In terms of your written or text based work, do you “hear” it, speak it out, hear its rhythms, before you write or as you write and/or before you perform? Do you ever memorize your texts / treat them more like a score or sheet music?

So first of all, as any editor or teacher will tell you, you absolutely must read written work aloud to edit it, and for my poetry practice—as with I assume most all poets—the editing phase is the most vital. I tell my students that this helps place you into the head of your reader, so it’s absolutely essential to the process of going from rough ideas to finished product. I don’t know if there is a set way that I write poems, but sometimes certain lines will be “heard” to me before they are written down; as with some songs I’ve written, I tend to think clearest when I am walking, and I’d venture to guess that I’ve composed some of my best work en route somewhere and was likely only able to scribble down a tiny piece of it retrospectively.

As I mentioned above, I used to make it a point to memorize poems I would “perform” when I was younger and more involved with what people call “spoken word.” It was, to the 23 year old me, a point of pride that I didn’t need a page, and I liked the idea—likely stolen from musicians—that every time you performed a poem, you were rewriting it in that space of real time. Of course, that snotty nosed kid I was then would likely think the person I am now, some 13 years later, is a lame, academic sell-out, in that I read from pages, and I have one of those expensive MFAs.





I don't often read poems these days—perhaps an “always the bridesmaid, never the bride” type effect from having been a reading series host and curator for so long and not, like, actively trying to get myself booked—but when I do, even though I don't memorize the poems, I practice them and I time them. Bring on the rant about how too many brilliant poets out there simply do not know how to read their work aloud or use a microphone, to their detriment. Poems on the page, when read aloud, are indeed a kind of score to me; they have the words, they might suggest how they are to be presented through line breaks/punctuation/spaces, but, like a violinist interpreting a written piece of music, it's up to the reader in the moment to give it life (or to be Biblical about it, to breathe life into it).

I am sometimes tempted to try and memorize poems I write these days, but I think a good deal of that impetus is subsumed by the singing I do in the band. Frankly, I also feel that I don't have the time to do it; I want to move on to the next thing. It's just not as important to me these days, necessarily, to read poems to audiences of strangers (which isn't to say that I don't enjoy it). Still, when I see poets do that, it is always so striking; if you can recite your work while staring into someone's eyes, it's a certain kind of spell you're casting. Some might argue that this is cheap or for effect—maybe sometimes it is—but it can also be amazingly engaging.

I should add, too, specifically with this book, that I recorded one of the sections, “Resistant Is Futile” in collaboration with the brilliant cellist and composer Eric Stephenson. These poems, being in the voice of an invading alien that has not quite learned the language properly, lent themselves to performance, quite naturally, and essentially became a kind of score for a body of recorded work. Using studio techniques, synthesizers, live instruments, basically everything that current technologies allow in terms of audio-manipulation, we were able to create a truly extra-terrestrial space to package these pieces in. We initially recorded the words “dry,” that is without any bells and whistles, and then went back through them and turned them into what they became: very, very strange and haunting. In terms of this recorded body of work, I happily ceded much authority to Eric, allowing him to respond to the material through his idiom and his art. He is not only classically trained, but has an interest in a huge range of jazz, classical and popular musical forms; you could be as easily wowed by his cello playing, his arranging and his ability to rock Ableton Live, effects pedals and a Midi-keyboard. What would take me 45 takes to get right, he'd nail in one. At any rate, it was fascinating to bring the words on the page essentially “back” to life—to interpret them as a score quite literally—and to treat them as I imagined them to be: broken broadcasts from innerspace/outerspace.





Let's talk a little bit about the role of poetics and creative community in social activism, in particular in what I call "Civil Rights 2.0," which has remained immediately present all around us in the time leading up to this series' publication. 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."

We certainly do live in a time in which these issues—who publishes, what is published, who are the gatekeepers, and how do we ensure that all voices are represented—are being discussed more and more. The older guard, the major publishers, the institutions and the MFA programs, are indeed being exposed for their lack of diversity and for their conscious or unconscious endorsement of white/male/economic privilege. This also mirrors larger debate and discussion within society as a whole, and rightly so. If you look at the poetry world, though, what you find is a tension fueled by the hierarchical nature of the arts, and the fact that it's all still subject to a market in itself. We are all in competition for our tiny little spaces, so the fighting gets fierce, and it really is a problem when vast majorities of those who are published, get positions or win awards are white and male.

The thing is: It seems that we are only now fully coming to grips with these issues, and the current state of things is a direct result of hundreds of thousands of years of history. This means that it is more important than ever to avoid the "isolated silo" or echo chamber that only promotes itself; certainly, it was this self-congratulatory nature and dangerous lack of awareness on the part of the conceptual poets within the institutionalized avant-garde that lead to things like the travesty and racist tone-deafness of Kenneth Goldsmith's "Michael Brown's Body," or Marjorie Perloff's defense of it. Frankly, it is because the space became too white that such provocations could come into being in the first place and could find institutional support.

In the end, I think, the important steps are to take these lessons, to listen and to figure out ways to make it better. Luckily, the first step, that of recognizing there is a problem, is happening, so it becomes important to figure out what to do next. For my part, I guess, the task is to be open and receptive, and in so doing, to try to become a better ally. Just because it might seem that there will always be problematic issues of gender, sexuality, race and class in the poetry world, doesn't mean that it can't get so much better. In the least, I am confident that we as poets and artists will find a better way. It won't happen overnight—we are talking about issues that have existed throughout human history—but a dedicated effort on the part of those in the community can do a great deal to right the ship; if we define the world we live in, then we can make it a better space.





Originally of Cleveland, Ohio, MARK GURARIE currently splits his time between Brooklyn, New York and Northampton, Massachusetts. He is a graduate of the New School's MFA program, and his poems and prose have appeared in *Pelt*, *Paper Darts*, *Sink Review*, *Everyday Genius*, *The Rumpus*, *The Literary Review*, *Coldfront*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Lyre Lyre* and elsewhere. In 2012, the New School published *Pop :: Song*, the 2011 winner of its Poetry Chapbook Competition. Gurarie co-curates the Mental Marginalia Poetry Reading Series in Brooklyn, and serves as the Printed Matter Editor at Boog City. In addition, he is an adjunct instructor teaching online for George Washington University, a book reviewer and a free-lance copywriter.

Gurarie also plays bass guitar and sings “ugly” for Brooklyn based psych-rock/ indie-rock outfit Galapagos Now!, whose music is accessible via <https://galapagosnow.bandcamp.com/>

Alongside cellist/composer Eric Stephenson, he has recorded the “Resistant Is Futile” series of poems. Some of these recordings can be heard here: <https://soundcloud.com/resistantisfutile>





TITLES IN THE PRINT: DOCUMENT COLLECTION

In Corpore Sano : Creative Practice and the Challenged Body
[Anthology, 2016] Lynne DeSilva-Johnson and Jay Besemer, co-editors

Instructions Within [2016] - Ashraf Fayadh
Arabic-English dual language edition; Mona Kareem, translator

Let it Die Hungry [2016] - Caitis Meissner

Music of the Spheres [2016] - Keisha-Gaye Anderson

agon [2016] - Judith Goldman

Everybody's Automat [2016] - Mark Gurarie

How to Survive the Coming Collapse of Civilization [2016] - Sparrow

There Might Be Others [2016] - Rebecca Lazier and Dan Trueman

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Strange Coherence - Bill Considine; The Sword of Things - Tony Hoffman;

Talk About Man Proof - Lancelot Runge / John Kropa; An Admission as a

Warning Against the Value of Our Conclusions -Alexis Quinlan





//////THE OPERATING SYSTEM IS A QUESTION, NOT AN ANSWER.

THIS is not a fixed entity.

The OS is an ongoing experiment in resilient creative practice which necessarily morphs as its conditions and collaborators change. It is not a magazine, a website, or a press, but rather an ongoing dialogue ABOUT the act of publishing on and offline: it is an exercise in the use and design of both of these things and their role in our shifting cultural landscape, explored THROUGH these things.

I see publication as documentation: an act of resistance, an essential community process, and a challenge to the official story / archive, and I founded the OS to exemplify my belief that people everywhere can train themselves to use self or community documentation as the lifeblood of a resilient, independent, successful creative practice.

The name “THE OPERATING SYSTEM” is meant to speak to an understanding of the self as a constantly evolving organism, which just like any other system needs to learn to adapt if it is to survive. Just like your computer, you need to be “updating your software” frequently, as your patterns and habits no longer serve you.

Our intentions above all are empowerment and unsilencing, encouraging creators of all ages and colors and genders and backgrounds and disciplines to reclaim the rights to cultural storytelling, and in so doing to the historical record of our times and lives.

Bob Holman once told me I was “scene agnostic” and I took this as the highest compliment: indeed, I seek work and seek to make and promote work that will endure and transcend tastes and trends, making important and asserting value rather than being told was has and has not.

The OS has evolved in quite a short time from an idea to a growing force for change and possibility: in a span of 5 years, from 2013-2017, we will have published more than 40 volumes from a hugely diverse group of contributors, and solicited and curated thousands of pieces online, collaborating with artists, composers, choreographers, scientists, futurists, and so many more. Online, you’ll also find partnerships with cultural organizations modelling the value of archival process documentation.

Beginning in 2016, our new series :: “Glossarium: Unsilenced Texts and Modern Translations”, will bring on Ariel Resnikoff, Stephen Ross, and Mona Kareem as contributing editors, and have as its first volume a dual language translation of Palestinian poet and artist Ashraf Fayadh’s “Instructions Within,” translated by Mona Kareem, which will be published later this year, with all proceeds going to support Fayadh’s ongoing case and imprisonment in Saudi Arabia.

There is ample room here for you to expand and grow your practice ...and your possibility. Join us.

*- Lynne DeSilva-Johnson,
Founder and Managing Editor*





DOC U MENT

/däkyəmənt/

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 *docere*, 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.

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