Against the Private Zoo
“Autocrats seem to have a propensity for private zoos.”

Against the Private Zoo

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we are trying to collect ourselves
we love to be collected by another

on adorability, economic violence and the leadership of pop stars

i say to christian. the poets are taken with how adorable they are. i say to christian. look how adorable we are. in the dream a best friend is getting a pig tattoo removed from her tongue. it’s supposed to take two hours but they also take the body of her lion and leave only the paw. framed in rectangle thick black outline cage. best friend comes out after four hours, beaten, a red sore on her mouth the mouth with which she says to me, they couldn’t save your hog, the little pig is gone.

i set out this year to learn how to be brave around money... to cut through the abstract nonsense and labyrinthine banality that is the mechanics of fundraising, the sanctioned means by which the middle class ask the rich for money for themselves, or the poor or themselves, this is a confused space... what violent coup of economic illogic made us in the usa believe $20,000 and $200,000 earns the same class status? every time a divinatory creature reads me they tell me things like i’m light, i’m guidance, i have a floating purple wound vagina, it’s up to me, i can’t ask for money, it’s not about the money. but i think it’s about the money.

dream too: watch an unprepared performance artist who discovers me where i’m perched opening a clapboard window to look. she mocks my looking then sets up a camera to document what she does. i asked danielle to share her warm space of ‘getting’ the selfie as a expression. sex sin [latin] risk of touch. then she puts on some purell. bars are too loud and cafes too quiet (study shows more sales) so incendiary conversation disallowed though here and there you get a [not so] hygienic fuck.

help via (gone are the movies)... i went to bed with miley cyrus so yup woke up with her too, doing outkast’s hey ya! in prettiest stevie nicks vocalization, rubbing tush in the desperate air of your face. what’s cooler than being cool? ice cold? nah. nothing’s better than
being cool. miley catches. jewels and joints. eva peron. the most magnetic smile in the world. i want us to ask her for the money.

the 31st lviv hundred didn’t trash the bizarre presidential. knew they needed to record and collect it as is for future. evidence of money. collected by the hundreds, thinking of a future.
What happens at the end of poems

There’s a literal hanging at the end  a cutting off of air  no amount of muscle will help  no arms  no legs  no grounding  the simple act of will that carried the walking chin has no more bearing on living or waking  the body wants to revive in the sludge and the dirt  the hands want to hold the wall  the heart wants air  the lungs want their right  the curtsy and the sphincter want to hold on  the grace note flutter of the foot  a flying above the limbs  then a moment of relief  a great letting go found in trails in braids in orgasm in a devil’s paintbrush in the hot mud

I can’t even say yet  in the squeeze and the panic I feel so evilly sick lying in a pile I feel the urge to let the water out and even then it’s a starving time  this waiting for the spirit to enter again  the blue handles of poems  surveys  sacred remains  natures to be burned blue hills of crust and pee and residue to be stirred and dumped into rivers  winding their becoming out of the dread  the furnaces the new dark  out of the house of bracing  the house of fog  the house of non-futures
I don’t see a new body right away I see a molecule in search for news I see a traceable element of flying a dusty floor where everything falls away in the telling then the twice telling then the smoky crypt I see a new waiting a baker’s dream a molecule dance a parcel of deep loss then the fissure and the gone the hidden prayers under the little burdens of surfaces is it a home or is it a return to the dirt? we will know how to make poems out of dirt a parent a holding a trance our poems are dirt
The Wealth of Poverty

Last June, I went with Anne Waldman to India. And although we went in the night in a dream in my mind, it was no less real to me than right now sitting on this airplane in the day in this waking dream. We went because we knew we had to get well in a hurry, and we were running out of time. We found a cave along the side of a school for young girls. There was nothing fancy about this place—the school or the cave. It was a hole in the dirt next to the neglected school—“decay appreciation,” as Selah Saterstrom would say. We sat there underground facing one another, and Anne said to me, “We don’t have much time. I need to teach you how to archive the language inside of your body.”

“Oh.” I said, “Go ahead.”

“First, I need to talk to you about the archive.” But then she cut herself off and said, “No. First, I need to talk to you about these words—all of them—and the roots of them—all of them.”

She began chanting to me, letter by letter in the order of words, but the chanting was so elongated that I lost track of the words and what we were spelling. This didn’t matter though—“dream logic,” as Selah would say. This was how we archived the language inside of our bodies—letter by letter.

Then Anne stood, and she was healed again; we were both healed again. She continued chanting, but this time in full words now. “Om mani padme manatee hum. Om mani humanity padme hum.” We chanted this together as loud as we could until I was the only one still chanting, and while I continued, Anne shouted, “That’s what they’ll say about us! Those stupid fuckers! They let the animals die; they let the plants die; they killed the air; they killed the water; they killed each other; they killed language!”

I awoke chanting “Om mani padme manatee hum.” Coming out of the dream space, I didn’t know exactly what my body was doing, but it was doing it—all this chanting. I realize now that this was from Anne’s Manatee Humanity.
Dear Belladonna*, I wonder about the moment, too. I fear we’re simultaneously archiving it and killing it. I fantasize about being rich and having the ability to fund things that work towards the proliferation of poetry. Last month, I entered a contest to choose the next big potato chip flavor. The winner gets a lifetime supply of the new flavor and a million dollars. During random fits of insomnia, I make lists about what to do with all that money. And I realize that relative to kabillionaires, one million dollars isn’t all that much. But I think about all we already do with no money at all, and for me, this is the hopeful part of “the moment.”

I recently read somewhere about what it means to have a “wealth of poverty.” I can’t remember who wrote it or even the full context now. But it had something to do with being overworked and having an abundant to-do list. I’m sick of it—all this “wealth of poverty” is exhausting. I write this while on the way towards that massive AWP conference. I’m sure I’ll see some of you there in just a few short days. Can we focus on a dream logic together? How about in the book fair madhouse? I mean, what if 15,000 people focused on archiving the language inside of their bodies? Sure, sell it, sell the language, too. We all need income. But maybe we can do both? See you there.
El rumor de los bordes

El dibujo se abstrae de la escultura de Bernini, suculenta en su densidad de mármol, Eneas con el padre y el hijo encaminándose hacia la vida, una genealogía de hombres que generan hombres, que se cargan y se adoran y detestan, aunque allí en la superficie aflora el sentimiento coartado a veces por una masa que lo apaña o contamina; extensiones lisas casi transparentes, abajo el enorme estremecimiento del color, del verde que se forma en una mezcla incontenible de SUSTANCIAS, pomos que se abren y quedan irresolutos en su necesidad de constreñir el COAGULO que dará lugar a otro tono, jornadas de acumulaciones, viajes enervados, a veces, en la voluptuosidad de una gama que suscita el sobresalto de ser padre, de ser hijo, rama que domina la genética del odio, la genética del amor. Animarse a poner esa palabra, odio, en círculos cerrados, un canto, una eclosión, borronear, tapar con amarillo aquello que se talla con pincel debajo de las masasangustiantes, una escultura sobre el plano, el color cubriendo, reverberando en la tersura de un celeste bien acomodado, un naranja prenatal, un violeta que casi deja el marco.

Caen, caen los colores hacia abajo, depositándose en el margen, como queriendo irse las figuras, Eneas, Anquises, allí desdibujados, allí sumidos bajo la aparición repentina de un marrón presente en la huida de Troya en llamas, Eneas, Ascanio, en la sepultura del color, imágenes rodando en un papel que ha quedado constreñido entre las aguas de un lila que no existe, una figura regular, un rectángulo embebido, un diseño que apenas se desarma entre los ocres de estas formas aplastadas, con la densidad de escultóricos espermas, en un inconsciente que se arrastra para dar forma a aquello que es un sentimiento indefinido, un amor o una abominación.

A R. B.
The Murmur of Borders

The drawing is an abstraction of a sculpture by Bernini, succulent in its marble density, Aeneas with his father and son pointing towards life, a genealogy of men that generates men, that carry and adore and hate each other, even though the emotion flowers there on the surface restrained by a mass which drapes or contaminates it; flat nearly-transparent surfaces, beneath color’s enormous shudder, the green that is formed into an uncontainable mix of SUBSTANCES, tubes that are opened and remain unresolved in their need to constrain the CLOT which will give way to another shade, days of accumulation, nervous trips, sometimes, in the voluptuousness of a range that makes being a father, being a son startling, the dominant branch in the genetics of hate, the genetics of love. To decide to place that word, hate, in closed circles, a chant, a blooming, to scribble, to cover in yellow that which is carved with a brush beneath the distressing mass, a sculpture on the plane, color covering, reverberating in the clarity of a well placed blue, a prenatal orange, a violet that almost leaves the frame.

Down, down go the colors, depositing themselves on the margin, as if the figures wanted to leave, Aeneas, Anchises, blurred there, sunk beneath the sudden appearance of a brown present upon their flight from Troy burning, Aeneas, Ascanius, in color’s sepulture, images rolling on paper which has been left bound between a lilac that does not exist, a fair figure, a saturated rectangle, a design which is barely undone between the ochres of these flattened forms, dense as sculptural sperm, in an unconscious that drags itself to give shape to that which is a vague feeling, a love or an abomination.

To R. B.

Translated by Manuel Fihman

From El rumor de los bordes (Sevilla: Biblioteca Sibila – Fundación BBVA, 2011)
Jennifer Scappettone

BRING ON THE LOCUSTS: A FUTURIST MANIFESTO
(FROM THE POLAR VORTEX)

(For one forced as most homunculi of this side of late capitalism lacking independent resources to be “comfortable” into a semi-compensated sposalizio with the screen (& who submitted to training in the hoary old (rent-paying) route of schooling kicking and screaming upon the fall of the affordable occupation of cities by our bohemian elders in search of knowing stuff but also of dental insurance and unexpired grains (having tasted precarity inside the vast smearing of flexible accumulation as a kid), emerging disagreeable even bitchy and only liminally disciplined in a lineage of palimpsest-tinkering, trench-digging, stupendously belated, disembodied monastic freaks (yet committed still to the disorientation of forgetting oneself for years at a time in refractory unruly attempts at seeking to know and in losing oneself in others’ wild interminable infuriating attempts at seeking to know that which lies beyond the immediately visible perceptible horizon)),

The image-touting triumphalism and perpetually reinforced amnesia of so-called “social networks”—likes superceding discussion, integers superceding content, tags superceding secrets, tête-à-têtes, hashtags replacing arguments, disputes, cognition arranged into sentences, retweets replacing research, trends replacing problems, free because “virtual” intellectual labor replacing hired gigs, strategy evicting excess, awkwardness, composition expelling carnality, feeds from up to three and a half minutes ago expelling history, the mandate for constant agitation of server-farms disguised to heat up and scatter heavy petroleum fractions upon anonymous underserved communities via flashes of likeable hashtaggable reweetable trendworthy upworthy appearance as author and fan expelling by coercion any breath of contemplation as neighboring Home Depots are emptied in last-ditch efforts of ventilators large and small—the Library of Congress cultivating cloud-farms to archive, Kenny G. the pluck to print, the lot, Sisyphean lusoriness—has become an intravenous conduit of irritation so pallid for all its itching pixilation it translates as passive coproduction of the spectacle of information itself afloat from any infrastructure of history, responsibility or even apprehension.
But the overarching specter of futility in all that rises beyond the horizon of my face, myauthorfunction.com once for ex. New York City’s fantasy-doubles along the shores, fleeting betting paradises and body-jostlers, game under financialization, go literally under salt—in The Nation, a rollercoaster half flooded by Sandy in Jersey’s Atlantis headlining as a hearkening of the end of the world as humans have known—proposes that it may be time to consider whether the most appropriate plan of action is to become absolute pressing site-specific site-smearing presentists after all before the sixth mass extinction in planetary history is complete:

To drop all but the disaster that is staring us in the function of this instant to feel the record digits being set on the weather center blog through the cheap windows and back door, the smoking of the lake, staccato scansion of the potholes newly punctuating Burnham’s grid and beleaguered commute, glissando over deepening ice, shoveling of better organized sticking snow, suicidal desperation of 18-year-olds from thundersnow to zero-visibility fog here, melting of the lid on warming there, the wish morning by morning that the Arctic vortex would continue its displacement South all the way to hell and the pale frozen guilt that accompanies it, pathos of plans to haul all the basement suitcases full of ice-chunks across the bought-out offset carbon paths into the red blot of Pacific lingering in the daily graphs of the explainers—to feel with every redundancy of chill in boiling inflammation the heat of the planet’s fourth warmest January on record—

And on the sunnier side of apocalypse postdiluvian Cantre’r Gwaelod interposing itself as Pine Island melts, villagers pointing their phones at the peat ancient oaks and newly comprehensible peaks, radioactive tides or the Pompeian willful innocence in refused stillness of the faucet, thirst for torrent.

One consults with the elders who may not be around in a 4C world: Marinetti hailing the most beautiful day-after-tomorrow, Lyn in the tunnel below Niagara leaking in here and there, deciding it’s okay if humans don’t last; or John issuing a stern warning in the form of Safe and Madeline signing my book “exactly reversible destiny to you...”
The only thing that matters is 400 parts per million of carbon dioxide, the precipitous fall-off in ice, solar absorption replacing reflection, methane bombs expelled in the Siberian sea, 150-200 species going extinct daily, the empire coming home to roost as the wee isle of England becomes perhaps the only habitable part of the planet, gladiatorial battles over water & famine within the century of this generation and the next, and the need to shut down the whole global economy period to stave off further temperature rise:

You are a writer, for better or worse: what the eff are you going to do about it?: Discuss.
LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs

from Chicken Scratch

9.

What is the “scene’s cruelty” I sometimes witness when revising the letters over and over again? If I make it plain, is there something of a risk I’m taking? What about now? Keeping it simple. Will you still love me? There’s an “inevitable failure” I awake to some mornings. The reminder that during one divination (spiritual reading), three wishes were to be discarded. Divination can be quite cryptic. And each year, I go over my Top 20 wishes and horde them away. I’m simply not ready to be just a writer.

The picture is fading. You are rocking a reversed mushroom. The heat of summer is sweating out all that hot comb and kitchen time. What ever you dreamt of becoming then is turning sepia, gradually being absorbed by the parked car. We can see your eyes now but we are uncertain if you’re happy.

For you, bells-donnas, i.e., you beautiful-girls, because you write and read what we need. with thanks

Oh, Poetry! Oh, Prose! Oh, Whatever! A lot of what I read these days seems wonderful but a lot of it seems lifeless. Like, why waste my time. Why waste your time; do something else. Like, where’s the heart, where is the beating heart? I know a lot of everything, including words, art, love, is a matter of taste, a matter of want, a matter of meat, and that I am a hopeful or a hopeless Romantic. But if I read, I want to read and engage and be fed. I want to be grabbed in a part of me that’s troubled or broken or wanting or feeling something—joy or despair or desire or royal-pissed-off-edness, or yes, many times, thinkyness. I need to experience the bent parts and the yearning parts, the laughing ones or no-one’s-home ones but also as if there is someone home, and someone is speaking to or toward or away from me or to or from their guts not just the crap they think they should have studied. I don’t want to spend my time where somebody claims they aren’t, but somewhere they are or want. In some belief. I don’t want art made to shut me out or determine if I am not smart enough or less than thou or even disaffected less than thou. Go get a life. I do not believe that the author is dead. But I guess the author could be if we kill ourselves so don’t. Please don’t. Please don’t undo yourself. And if you will try to not then I will too. Don’t tell me there’s no you to speak, but speak to me. I need to hear you speak to stay alive. I need to read. All this toward and from the heart and flesh and burning electric writhing seething brain. The brain is a feeling organ too and needs blood to survive. Don’t tell me you aren’t, do not pretend you’re not. Don’t leave me here feeling I’m not alive. Or that you have nothing to say to me. Show up. Look up. Write us a song.
Subtweet

The disaster of my personality is not my poetics. It (the disaster) is mostly contained. You might disagree. You might tell a lie designed to make yourself appear neutral. Last year I was called gross and shitty by other women poets behind my back.

This moment is expensive. I am supposed to have an IRA, I heard. I’m not sure retirement is a safe idea to believe in, but I open a new bank account because it’s free. My paycheck is late, or it’s less than it’s supposed to be, and it is my job to police others until it is corrected, like watching the computer screen at the supermarket to be sure the sale items ring up correctly. Money is crucial. Four years ago in Denver we put five bodies in a hotel room meant for two. The cover stock for this booklet is a shade of gray called ‘wealth’.

We talk about Florida and I say I can’t help but see through the resort towns our parents take us to, us their adult children who live in NYC (which maybe terrifies them), for a winter holiday without a blizzard. Florida is this moment. Racism, murder, surface. A face on the news or a newsfeed. A hand placing a plate of food in front of customers who do not look up to the face on that body, who have no gratitude.

Crowdfunding invites judgment: is this idea worthy? what is it worth? Righteous feelings swell with the decision to contribute or not. Kickstart my bikini wax my blog my web redesign my inability to Google shit. Kickstart the definition of the word non-profit. Saying something is tax-deductible does not make it true. Kickstart my Sephora Beauty Insider card. Crowdfund prankcaller prankcaller narcissism earmark. Monetize industry standard. My beauty my body my hangover my buzzword. And if you are not beautiful? And if I am not.

A glut of material occupies this moment. The poetry journal I publish (Bone Bouquet) was rejected by one grant-making council; a critique from the panel suggested it ‘seemed like a personal project’ and the application had not sufficiently demonstrated that it would ‘meet a need.’ The material takes the form of ‘opportunities’ and
‘thank yous’, where a victory is declared when conditions don’t get worse. The panel said our feminist poetics journal should have income to demonstrate viability, interest.

Would a hologram of a living person sum up the current times? If you got the crumb you came for I think you are all set. This moment is kind of a snob about crumbs.
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