

Winter 2006

*excerpts from the scores of*  
**Permeable Structures:  
A Performance Essay  
in Stereo**

by  
**Laura Elrick**



**belladonna\* books**

458 Lincoln Place, Suite 4B Brooklyn, NY 11238

[www.belladonnaseries.blogspot.com](http://www.belladonnaseries.blogspot.com)



deadly nightshade, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, having purplish-red flowers and black berries

*excerpts from the scores of*  
**Permeable Structures: A Performance Essay in Stereo**

**by**  
**Laura Elrick**

In the image, a film still from *Erewhon* by Jane and Louise Wilson, it is dusk. The dilapidated skeleton of a greenhouse extends past the frame. We look through the beams (some now fallen, an assembly of right angles, diagonals and parallels) into a purplish sky where billowing clouds lie suspended over the silhouette of a darkened wood. This earthly composition is then doubled by its reflection in a wide, but shallow pool of rainwater that lies where we, the viewers, seem to stand... in what was once the “inside” of the now open, abandoned structure. So that beams, dark wood, and billowing clouds, appear to extend both upwards into the sky and downwards into the earth, both out away from the structure and into its very depths, each impulse mirroring the other, like some kind of inkblot of the social psyche.

::

Sunset – that highly commodifiable natural phenomena, redolent of a propertied nostalgia for the tranquil. And Dark Wood – a typically European trope, suggesting the fearful blindness of being inside a social order whose agents remain hidden, literally naturalized, in a forest of threatening, if faceless forces. Can be seen – through the remains of a human structure – a process we call “a building.”

::

Žižek has written of this as “the materialization of ideology” where “The Unconscious is outside, not hidden in any unfathomable depths.”

Yet *Erewhon* seems also to suggest the inverse – that what we think of as subjective experience might be something more akin to an abstraction – where a projection of the past’s desires (deflected, translated into institutional frameworks) filters out through the present and is personalized, real-time.

::

*Fantasies in Permeable Structures* is a text through which this performance can be rendered – what you are hearing now is not the text itself... but rather a series of core samples, or, if you wish, root-like probings, around which the delicate soils of meaning shift... the human structure, the literature, through which “the landscape” is seen.

on a plane then  
                   be it  
 soaring cage  
                   shrunken time  
  
 geography  
 distorted       distorted  
                   that system  
 our hearts      appeared  
  
 locals?  
                   some island  
 a sea  
  
                   paved coordinates  
  
 shrink wrapped  
                   remade  
  
 (we navigate    teens  
 on the pavement  
 solitudinous... solitudinous...)

maybe         maybe  
 to the         to the  
 bar?          bar?  
 locked  
 will help?     will help?"  
                   and drove  
  
                   our eyes averted.  
  
 until at last  
 we're back     we're back  
                   on the  
                   North  
                   of this  
                   "Landscape"  
  
 in Brooklyn  
  
                   Imperium  
  
 the soils  
 shadowless  
 "sprouts"  
*how things grow how things grow*  
 out             out  
  
                   in the *worst* of conditons

I seem

well...something

Fake it.

well

UNPROFESSIONAL UNPROFESSIONAL

DEVIANT DEVIANT

FAILING FAILING  
ahumm well, I...I just um...you know

there's no present  
here

Communicate:

cheer

just  
a little worried

about  
political eye?

muck  
Lit

East River  
beneath

the sun

*swish swish*

to feel

disoriented

repression.

tendency.

to protect

prior method prior method

*Inc. Inc.*

(may we?

our elits  
with gavels)

waves

watts

the sea...

the sea...

location.

location.

weak.

weak.

what  
 pleasure  
*we are...*      masterful  
                          *we are...*  
  
 invariably  
 morning      is form  
                          completion?

the objectivated  
 news      news  
  
 diffuse  
                          story  
  
 I forgot  
  
 weeping      laughter  
                          laughter  
  
 expenditure

reiterated  
 involuntary      involuntary  
  
 note  
 beneath      shaking  
 weeping fruits:

It *wasn't* I  
 it was *never*  
  
 I it was      chopping  
 black smoke      (Black Hawk  
  
*sputtering*  
*blurred* as  
                  wave seekers  
  
                  wings  
                  wings  
  
 they fly –  
                  in 'forget mode'  
  
                  jammed  
 to be ripped  
  
  
 and  
 plummet...      laughing  
  
                  to the insults  
 begins  
  
 again and  
  
                  streams  
 streams

We  
who under a  
dappled  
radiance

radiance  
along the paved  
road

reverses

follows  
speeding

speeding

in a car

in a car  
shadows

midday

growth

this route

for what?

returns

peace  
in a violent wind

backwards

from the  
geometry

mercy

... withdraws

what.  
and throws it

gets out of control

so that  
predictions

mass

this space  
onward

error

progression

There must have been –

blackberries along the road

steady steering

quick

speed

outside

is

if not

conscious

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

animal

means

True sap  
truly  
me craving  
me

*truly*

*me*

in Vermont.

the grounds

*ghostly*

patters

the faded  
Cold War

Moscow

Jakarta

velvet  
clubs

on bikes

to the Hollywood

short line

short life

we're getting  
a lot out of

we're getting

like

expensive

The Gates

*soft* persuasion

liberal

trees

Malaysia

(the war)

They were

tiny

::

walking

the plantation

they waved

over red earth

the mirrors

sang

rubber

brutal sap

Malaysia  
you may  
*to the front*

tiny

::

walking

the plantation

truck,  
bouncing

giggling

and  
shy as

dust kicked up around

kids



In *The Production of Social Space*, Henri Lefebvre writes:

"No space disappears in the course of growth and development: *the worldwide does not abolish the local*. This is not a consequence of the law of uneven development, but a law in its own right... Social spaces interpenetrate... superimpose themselves upon one another. They are not things..."

ATMOSPHERIC FLOWS—such as the formation of clouds in updrafts, and dissipation of clouds in adjacent downdrafts, manifested in the commonplace occurrence of clouds in a row.

*Light spills down on a disorienting continuum of urban grids; place appearing only as point instead of in transition. You start to walk. A dirt road cuts up a hill diagonally, a flock of bicyclists moving up it in a thick curving paste. Electric towers and wires, vehicles, mud where a sidewalk might be. Are we in San Francisco? ...Are we in Seoul?*

"Text imbricated with outside, a wall is waves."

— Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge

Lefebvre: "Like energy in a material form such as a molecule or an atom, social energy is both directed and dispersed; it becomes concentrated in a certain place, yet continues to act upon the sphere[s] outside [it]."

...and from Freud, a real personal favorite: "This recollection provides a second reason why you must have been worried by your suspicion that your device might have gone wrong."

The chaos of superimposed regularities... Great movements, vast rhythms, immense waves...

What you are hearing now is not the text itself.

1. Mary Burger, *Eating Belief* OOP
2. Camille Roy, *Dream Girls* OOP
3. Cecilia Vicuña, *Bloodskirt*, trans. Rosa Alcalá OOP
4. Fanny Howe, parts from *Indivisible*
5. Eleni Sikelianos, from *The Book of Jon*
6. Laura Mullen, *Translation Series* OOP
7. Beth Murray, *12 Horrors* OOP
8. Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, *Audience* OOP
9. Laura Wright, *Everything Automatic* OOP
10. Lisa Jarnot, *Nine Songs* OOP
11. Kathleen Fraser, *Soft Pages*
12. Rachel Blau Duplessis, *Draft 43: Gap*
13. Nicole Brossard, *Le Cou de Lee Miller*, *The Neck of Lee Miller* OOP
14. Lee Ann Brown, *The 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time/Reverse Marmalade* OOP
15. Adeena Karasick, *The Arugula Elogues VII-VIII* OOP
16. Aja Couchois Duncan, *Commingle: Sight*
17. Lila Zemborain, *PAMPA* OOP
18. Cheryl Pallant, *Spontaneities*
19. Lynne Tillman, chapters from *Weird Fucks* and "Dead Talk" OOP
20. Abigail Child, *Artificial Memory*—vol 1 & vol 2 (\$6 set) OOP
21. Deborah Richards, *Put A Feather In It*
22. Norma Cole, *BURNS*
23. Jocelyn Saldenberg, *Dusky*
24. Gail Scott, *Bottoms Up* OOP
25. Carla Harryman, *DIMBLUE* and *Why Yell*
26. Anne Waldman, *[THINGS] SEEN/UNSEEN* OOP
27. kari edwards, *a diary of lies* OOP
28. Bhanu Kapil Rider, from *The Wolf Girls of Midnapure* OOP
29. Rosmarie Waldrop, *Trace Histories* OOP
30. Tina Darragh, from *rule of dumbs*
31. Chris Tysh, *Mother, I*
32. Jennifer Moxley, *The Occasion*
33. Zhang Er, *Cross River* . *Pick Lotus*
34. Tonya Foster, *A Swarm Of Bees In High Court*
35. Lauren Gudath, *Animal & Robot*
36. Alice Notley, *IPHIGENIA*
37. Caitlin McDonnell, *Dreaming the Tree*
38. Eileen Myles, *We, the Poets*
39. Suzanne Wise, from *The Blur Model*
40. Lydia Davis, *Cape Cod Diary*
41. Elaine Equi, *Castle, Diamond, Swan*
42. Maggie Nelson, *Something Bright, Then Holes*
43. Summi Kaipa, "One: I Beg You, Be Still"
44. Julie Patton, "Car Tune" & *Not So Bella Donna*
45. Joan Larkin, *Boston Piano*
46. Minnie Bruce Pratt, *The Money Machine: Selected Poems*
47. Anne Tardos, *A Noisy Nightingale Understands a Tiger's Camouflage Totally*
48. Michelle Naka Pierce, *48 Minutes Left*
49. Veronica Corpuz, *Untitled*
50. Leslie Scalapino, "Can't" is "Night"
51. Jen Benka, *A Revisioning of the Preamble*
52. Susan Briante, *Neotropics: A Romance in Field Notes*
53. Joanna Fuhrman, *Belladonna\* Moraine*
54. Nada Gordon, *SONg of My Ownself*
55. Catherine Daly, *Surplice*
56. Caroline Bergvall, *GONG*
57. Maria Negroni, *Art and Fugue*
58. Lourdes Vázquez, *May the transvestites of my island who tap their heels*
59. Belladonna\* Bilingue: *Womens Work In Translation* (vol. 1)
60. Belladonna\* Bilingue: *Womens Work In Translation* (vol. 1)
61. Jaimy Gordon, *A Month of Love*
62. Rachel Daley, *You and Me Story*
63. Latasha N. Nevada Diggs, *Manuel is destroying my bathroom...*
64. Joan Retallack, *THE REINVENTION OF TRUTH*
65. Renee Gladman, *Untitled, Woman on Ground*
66. Nicole Brossard, *Matter Harmonious Still Maneuvering*
67. Eileen Tabios, *THE ESTRUS GAZE(S)*
68. Susan Howe, *118 Westerly Terrace*
69. Corina Copp, *Play Air*
70. Lyn Hejinian, *Lola*
71. Mercedes Roffé, *Theory of Colors*
72. hassen, *Salem*
73. Mónica De la Torre, *Doubles: An Excerpt*
74. Erin Moure, *Befallen I*
75. Lisa Robertson, *First Spontaneous Horizontal Restaurants*
76. Martine Bellen, *NYC Stories / Lessons of the Microscopist*
77. Karen Weiser, *Heads Up Fever Pile*
78. Fernanda Laguna, Gabriela Bejerman, Cecilia Pavón, *Belleza y Felicidad*
79. Mairéad Byrne, *Kalends*
80. Stacy Szymaszek, *hyper glossia*
81. Nathalie Stephens, *You But For The Body Fell Against*
82. Rachel Zolf, from *Human Resources*
83. Kathe Izzo, *Public & Private Love*
84. Kim Rosenfield, *10 Perfumes*
85. Ann Lauterbach, from *Nothing To Say*
86. Myung Mi Kim, from *Penury*
87. Laura Elrick, *Permeable Structures: A Performance Essay in Stereo (excerpts)*
88. Melissa Buzzeo, *Near: a luminescence*

Pamphlets published in conjunction with the Belladonna\* reading series, 6 to 20 pages. Books \$4 ea.; \$6 signed; add 50¢ postage/item. Checks payable to Rachel Levitsky.

*Permeable Structures: A Performance Essay in Stereo* was first performed at New Langton Arts, in San Francisco, September 29, 2005, in the Performance Writing series curated by Jocelyn Saidenberg and Brandon Brown. The full score is 55 pages.

The performance consists of poetry for two voices, interspersed with several sections of prose “commentary.” Ideally, the poetry sections should be performed by the same voice, one of them pre-recorded, the other live (though it is also possible to use two different live voices). Each vertical column signifies one voice, and the amount of space between words or phrases suggests the temporal relationship between voices. In some places the voices overlap, either totally or partially. All language in the poetry sections of the scores was drawn from my book *Fantasies in Permeable Structures* (Factory School, 2005), which is Vol. 1, No. 2 of the Heretical Texts series, edited by Bill Marsh.

excerpts from the scores of  
*Permeable Structures: A Performance Essay in Stereo* © Laura Elrick 2006  
belladonna\* production and design, Bill Mazza.  
It is set in Geneva, ITC Calson Medium and Bold, and ITC Officiana Sans.

Price is \$4 in stores or at events, \$6 signed copies,  
mail order add 50¢ postage per item.  
belladonna\* pamphlets are published periodically by belladonna\* books.

belladonna\*86 is published in an edition of 126—26 of which are numbered and signed by the poet—for her Belladonna\* reading at Dixon Place NYC, on Tuesday, March 14, 2006 with Melissa Buzzco and Myung Mi Kim.

belladonna\* is a reading series that promotes the work of women writers who are adventurous, experimental, politically involved, multi-form, multi-cultural, multi-gendered, impossible to define, delicious to talk about, unpredictable, dangerous with language.

Rachel Levitsky and Erica Kaufman, editors, belladonna\* books.  
458 Lincoln Place, #4B Brooklyn, NY 11238  
belladonnaseries@yahoo.com • <http://www.belladonnaseries.blogspot.com>