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Tarpaulin Muster

Erin Sweeny

Project Statement

In exploring that which we hold and carry, the physical evidence of life is paralleled only by the mysterious substance of its unfolding, imbuing our actions with a deeper significance. Hold fast and carry tight, hold up and carry on. Exploring these themes in an investigation of personal space, I found an unexpected source in the site of a stolen, impounded, and reclaimed 1988 Chevy Silverado K2500 pickup. Utilizing the contents accumulated by its owner and objects discarded by its thieves, Tarpaulin Muster creates a portrait of both experience in time and movement through space. The collection of photographs presents the residual effects of accumulation and loss, while an accompanying video uses footage and audio to emphasize tones of renewal.

1

Artist Statement

Though carved from nature, the foundation of place is ultimately rooted in the markings of human time. In the creation and use of structures lasting and temporal, objects precious and mundane, the practical architecture of our lives unwittingly doubles as its richest memorial. Using lens-based media, site-specific installations and subtle interventions, my practice investigates the layered marks of our passage and adaptations employed for survival. Looking at these characteristics of movement in the public and personal sphere, I am drawn to themes of struggle and resilience, ubiquity and reinvention.

In the Rediscovered Book

Edward Gauvin translating the French of Eugène Savitzkaya

2

In the book rediscovered in the drawer of the Gordon press, in the white cellar of the house on the mountains in the land that knew so many plagues and disasters, you saw trucks rolling down a muddy road, their enormous wheels splattering cyclists, many cyclists, red, blue and green; you saw quite low over the woods the balloon in flames, and in a well-mown meadow, fallen oxen washed by rain; you saw, sitting on a stone shaped like an oval table, a young girl wearing a crown made from natural palm leaves soaked in varnish, plastic ivy leaves and pearl flowers, wearing a great black wool damask paletot, lined with gray squirrel glistening with dew, but browned in spots. No loupe was needed, all this was blindingly obvious. Nearby, in the book, was a bridge of astounding shape and size thrown over a cliff, and formed of a rounded arch with a thirty-foot span, depthless and anchored on two rocky projections, seemingly supported by thin air. From atop the bridge, you gazed on the falls you felt settling on you in a fine rain. It made itself felt: your cheeks, hair, and shoulders were soaked with it. You were cold and trembling. In the rediscovered book, the fields were fragrant only with buckwheat in bloom. No point sticking your nose between the pages, the smell was cloying; it drew bees and flies, the air quivered. Sometimes, in the book, a little girl beneath her raspberry parasol would leave the house and run to meet her two brothers, who were fishing; she would stick a pink worm on her hook and cast the line whose light float was but goosedown touched up with a brushstroke, sensitive to the slight-

est impact. In the deep, transparent stream of the book could be seen, if you leaned over, eels, unmoving trout, shadows with violet fins, rocks, pebbles, dark whirlpools, strings of swirling eddies, sparkling shingle and shells, chases and clashes. The water in the book flowed with wondrous swiftness under your eyes, usually clear, utterly limpid, but sometimes bearing small uprooted trees, baobab trunks that bumped the banks, many ice cubes ripped from rock walls like clayey clouds, smoke suddenly opaque, lightning. Fish living in the stream of the book were mostly striped or boldly golden, rarely scarlet. If the children should happen to see a red one, red like a poppy or rust, they said not a word to anyone, but celebrated the event amongst themselves, calm and delighted, smoking cigars rolled from rhubarb leaves and sucking on honey. Only children dared venture down the stream in the book; indeed, they had a monopoly on the manufacture of high-prowed pirogues from leaves, in which they rowed down bow and bend and every whitewater between. All the book's children were in love; they polished their nails, smoothed their hair, and painted their lips. At night in the book, trucks passing by on the road crushed the sheep, then the dogs who'd come to devour the dead or wounded sheep, then other wilder dogs drawn by the fresh flesh of the dead or wounded dogs and the reek of the sheep's remains. Night in the book smelled bad. No need to poke your nose between its pages to check, the stink was so bad. At the heart of the book, the balloon exploded, and the charred navigator landed on the pines. The young woman watching the scene let herself be bitten and eaten by ants. Only the children kept playing.

In Memory of Tabacchino

Edward Gauvin translating the French of Eugène Savitzkaya

“The plant never springs forth from the branchings, for it exists before them, and the heart exists before the veins.”

~ Leonardo da Vinci

4 Tabacchino was a child. Tabacchino was a dormouse. Tabacchino was a dog, a bird, a squirrel, an almond tree, a living being. Child, dog, dormouse, bird, squirrel, or almond tree, he breathed, drank water, had a clean smell, a unique charm, and grew old. He bore inside him sap that flowed groundward through openings planned and improvised. The wind would muss his hair, rumple him, refresh and sometimes torment him. The first Tabacchino to get the coup de grâce was the almond tree: drought, then woodcutters. They wept then, lovers of almonds, the child first among them. No one could put the tree back as it had been. The dormouse, terrified by an owl, succumbed to a heart attack, rotted, and was scattered to the winds. Not the slightest sign of that bird in the skies now. Seek the dog’s grave in vain. Then came the child’s turn: crushed, ground, and scattered.

Whosoever scattered Tabacchino’s body: I would have shattered his bones, those of the torso and those of the head, I would have scored into his skin as into calf leather, annulled the order of his fingers and replaced his tongue with a pepper of the brightest red. And his nose with a sprouting potato.

Nothing remains of Tabacchino but a fine powder on green oaks and red roofs, and at the feet of crumbling walls. The gardens where

Tabacchino was scattered are surrounded by walls and planted with old oaks. And so we walk on the child wherever we set our feet, and this makes us sullen and quick to anger. When the anger is over: forgetting.

We cannot, from a foot found in the soft tuffeau, knead ourselves a new Tabacchino because the heart is gone—the heart that expanded once and for all in the cold night.

From a single, unrecognizable hand, we can recreate nothing because of the heart's remoteness. Clay, cinder, silica are not enough, not even when mixed with water.

Let us make a mold. But the wax won't take, not in the air. And the penis has withdrawn into its sheath of skin and sharpened itself of its own accord. It is now the bit of flesh that lives in elder wood or laurel blossom or stone. Sometimes it still shivers, opens its little fish mouth, but no bubble escapes (because of the heart's remoteness), nor any scent of linden, garlic, yeast, cinnamon, soiled dishcloth. It has never spoken and it never will.

The almonds found everywhere on the ground, light and hollow, gone entirely soft, belonged to Tabacchino. He would toss them at the earth, break them between his teeth, against a rock, or between two pebbles. The friable earth, the compost, the soft tuffeau from the depths, the chalk belonged to Tabacchino. He liked to suck it, rummage through it, dampen and knead it with movements sometimes incredibly slow. He would wet it and toss his waste upon it, which it would make vanish. The sky, the beautiful sky, belonged to Tabacchino. Sometimes he would turn away from it. Often he would gaze at it, when he was tired of looking at the earth upon which he'd alighted or toward which he fell. The clouds, three white clouds or an enormous cloud, Prussian blue, belonged to

him. The wind, the dry wind, stinging or gentle, belonged to him. The dust belonged to him too. It covered him, and he was full of it.

Words, even those he never uttered, belonged to Tabacchino, the word bitter, the word night, like all the others. The shadow resting on the ground was his and tracks that lingered in the mud belonged to him.

And who will put Tabacchino back in his cradle, in his marble cradle, on his pillow of hay, in his sculpted casing with its arrow lightning-rod, its mirrors hung on the sky, its stars, its feathers, its creaking, its frills, the rain, the snow, the wind in the branches and the tremblings?

Taxidermy

Edward Gauvin translating the French of Pierre Bettencourt

Dislocating the dummy's limbs and knowing to fold oneself so as not to sit legs facing forward. No longer having to turn one's head. Taking advantage of this at church and at the dinner table when a dish disagrees with you, or else during love, seated in the lap of the beloved, when the sight of genitals distresses you. Knees with a full range of swivel motion, rather than half-range.

"And then," said a friend who was interested in these problems, "knowing how to empty yourself out and get stuffed before death occurs. Always having a fresh pair of great-great-grandparents in the living room, in the corner by the fireplace, to reassure guests, with regard to both your roots and your filial piety. Never letting anyone die, jumping on things in time. When a woman is still very pretty, that's when to empty her out—don't get me wrong: to arrest her in her beauty so she doesn't rot, to protect her from herself, ready to wizen.

7

It is in everyone's interest to act in this manner. In the higher interest of life. Knowing how long to live, stopping in time—"in tip-top shape"—ripe and not rotten. I know there are artists in this medium, perfectionists, who always claim to be improving themselves. "Just one more minute," they say, "I can feel my waist narrowing, or this muscle beginning to bulge, or these glutes getting hotter." Not believing them. Reminding yourself that the better is the enemy of the good. Seizing them as they are, on the spot. And stuffing, stuffing, stuffing away, preferably with that very fine, fragrant sawdust from tropical isles.



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

YOUR FORTUNE



Trouble, trouble, boil and bubble
Over life's thorny path you'll stumble
Then you'll awake one fine day
And your troubles will have vanished away.

You were nature's stepchild. Always managing to get into trouble. Fortunately you had an understanding mother who helped you smooth away your difficulties. One of these days you'll awake to a peaceful world and great happiness will be yours. You have a sensitive disposition and are easily hurt. Try to develop a tough skin. You can fit easily into any group. You are a very impulsive individual. Life for you should hold no dull moments.

Drop another Coin in slot and I will tell more.

* Your Lucky Numbers—415-16, 17, 18, 19 *

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Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

Bridge Rhapsody

Ish Klein

Tir na nÓg land of perpetual youth
spirals behind my south occipital.
If you are not from here, looking back does not break your neck.

In the view from Cincinnati, I'm in a coma
in a charity ward. My heartbeat is vertical
and tries the horizontal with regularity.

In the view from Old Antarctica,
I am nothing but a battery.

10

In the view from the concrete in the Brooklyn Bridge
I am a low flying plane that could finally
get them out of there.

Sense impending capture.
My clock face breaks vibrating concrete.
Smoke settles before my face.

I was so late to work that day;
my spirit taken into a bridge.

He stopped his car, his girlfriend nervous.
I asked what happened; you've got a really bad cut, he said

and drove off; thus escaping the counter clock.
The local custom is not to get implicated.

At the hospital, Dr. Football posed before me with a needle.
I asked for plastic surgery. Not possible said he.
Then butterflies.

Butterflies?!
Butterflies are exactly the opposite!

The Going mechanism and the Striking mechanism
separate that day
In the view from Old Germany, I am a mental defective

deported in a bus.

In the view from the National Institute for Health,
I am an animal systematically stressed by varying intensities of
electricity.

In the view from Kalamazoo, I am a toppled tree
that bursts forth baby mice.
A convenience store for hoards,

Tir na nÓg the underwear
the counting wheel. In her teeth, the promise of atomized joy.

Every word you've heard, turns and torques
the desires around me.
Believers in the star witnesses.

Kids harnessed to apocalyptic power sources.
I mind this weight furnishing my motor power.
My chest is what the weight cord wound around.

In my opinion, unwinding the hour wheel is code
blue; therefore useful to move a great wheel.
I move as a second wheel, I escape opinion.
See V- the verge where pallets mesh in the cogs of the escape wheel.

In the view from Rome, I am red shoes.
I balance by Folio, I have some tee. I attach to the top
of the verge and so swing with it.
Weights shift as per adjustment.

12 In the view from Valley Medical, I am a diagnostic tool.
In the view from the kitchen, I throw away indigestible food.

Note the Striking mechanism coming together,
the projection for Detent,
the Bell hammer. Salt over metal
That sound is releasing the wheel and pinion.

It is the sound of someone, me in fact

someone of several frequencies

who has taken to escaping systems

who has taken herself into the sea fold

who has taken herself out of this time.

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Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

People Staring at Menus

Amanda Ackerman

14

I miss the underwater city. The ocean swaddled and rocked you. The water always talking to you and telling you who you are outside of time. I miss it. I really do. There was the primordial soup. The primordial coolant. Algae growing in chains like ferns. The steam and oil from rotting carcasses of whales and sharks. The water was clean, can you imagine? The stillness. And what people hung on the walls. Hair, bodies tangled, water bodies, unkempt tissues of hair. You can smell blood underwater and the juices of different fruits. We lived differently. We didn't even have a word for nuclear family. Picture it like a watery prairie or picture it like a floating landscape dotted with tall blue molten huts and picture the huts in rings like the way liquid scatters when someone skips a pebble into a pool. We had get-togethers. Lighting firecrackers. Visitors waiting at the door at sunset with a hat in their hand. But a friend told me it's a terrible paradox: as long as we consider the question of how we should be living then we are not living. Human conversations are for the most part pretty stupid. And it is easy to be unconventional.

≈

I've blocked the memory of the day we were forced to leave but it felt like being swallowed up by the mouth of a big metropolis. We went out there to live and just stayed. Once you were there you couldn't move out. Civil administrators. A lot of things were taken away. They can't tell me the exact year I was born. In the

underwater city, no one was outspoken, or we all were. I miss it. I figured out that conversation was a way I could sidestep the voice in my head. I suppose you could say I like to keep things simple. So, sterility—racism—exploitation—sexism—exhaustion—kleptocracy—homophobia—weapons—poverty—illness—prisons—old-age—bad-food—poor-soil...: I had been taught to navigate them with social grace and self-assurance, like one problem among many other problems. Solitary confinement becomes one problem among many other problems. Sexism becomes one problem among many other problems. But I gave up the anxiety that stems from the feeling you can't convince others they're wrong. You can't steer an unreachable wretched wayward mind. I gave up illusory fear and despair. The surprises I enjoy now are the result of my having low expectations (like, the sushi at the airport wasn't terrible). But I like to be prepared. I like having things to look forward to. I like to go dinner with friends or when I'm dating someone. I can look at the menu for a lot longer than most people even though it disrupts the conversation at multiple intervals; it's not socially acceptable behavior but it nearly is.

15

≈

None of us wants to get the wrong thing. I would rather bore and annoy the person I'm with than get the wrong thing. It's nice when you have your heart set on something in particular.

≈

Just the other day, I was in a long line to order food. It was lunch-time so I didn't have a lot of time. They only give us a 45-minute break. It took almost 9 minutes just to get to the cashier. Then the

gentlemen in front of me in a fedora, it was his turn, was staring up at the menu even though it was his turn to order.

I said, why do people stare at the menu when its their turn to order?

Someone said, you should already be making up your mind what it is you want while you're in line.

I said, right, don't stare while in line and continue staring when it's your turn to order.

Someone said, they shouldn't wait on someone who can't decide what he wants.

I said, I wish this place had a drive thru.

I said, what do you think?

You said, I think you should stop being so dark.

You said, it makes the darkness more manifest.

16 Someone said to me, I think you should stop staring at other people.

Someone said, all five of us could have gotten in our order while the guy with the fedora was asking questions about every single item.

I said, welcome to the home of libertines.

I said, the lofty home. The lofty libertines.

Someone said, this isn't a big deal.

Someone said, calm yourself.

I said, but some people just stare like, "decisions, decisions."

You said, I swear, everyone is in such a rush.

You said, the world does not revolve around you.

Someone said, an order should take 90 seconds to complete.

I said, right, you should only ask questions that can be answered quickly.

I said, the answers to my questions are always quick.

I said, I only ask questions that are easy to answer.

Someone said, all the answers are on the goddamn menu, do you see what I'm getting at?

You said, who's really being negatively affected by this,

You said, of course it didn't bother the guy with the fedora because he's selfish.

I said, everyone is ignorant of the ripple effect their actions are causing.

You said, this is why we should all bring lunches in brown bags and eat in parks with the elderly.

Someone said, let it go.

Someone said, not everyone is going to behave the way you and I think is proper.

I said, I wholeheartedly agree, maybe for the first time in history.

≈

You see, I am supersensitive to privation. Heart. Breath. Blood vessels.

You said, it was bound to happen.

I said, I do try to be considerate. I always try.

≈

But I miss the underwater city—

There is the peace I know and the peace I don't know. Change in the air, yes. All bodies are porous, yes. In this new city, I

want to scrape my hands against all hard exteriors, all the brick, the rounded clean trees. A desire that comes from just walking around with no one else to talk to. I say to myself, take me home. Take me back to the city I never left. Bring me my love. I scrape the sides of buildings with my hands as I walk by them but this is a forced pleasure. I touch the snagged sunbaked brick. There are all the other conversations.

≈

18 Hey Georgie, you've been scientifically banned. We all have. And so I have an interest, a kind of Texasism interest, in all of it. They even tried to declare us extinct. We used to have suits of pearls. I had my own and you had yours. No territories just brackets of sea foam and roaming homes. I read a famous story. Once there was an old man who spent all his time beside a dry well choked with leaves. If the man could even get a drop of water he would be immortal. Each time the well produced water he was asleep. You know that I am a very jealous person. I am jealous of others when they stumble upon a truth. But getting the words exactly right is a form of grotesquery, right? I believe all the competition in the world does more to harm the truth than foster it. Languages come and go. Languages die. It still doesn't change who I am. I let go of the idea of purity. Sometimes you pushed me to be better. Sometimes you held me back. I cannot accept this body as it is. I will work and work and work.



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

Bath:Shower :: Journey:Commute

Kenneth Setzer

So egalitarian and liberal does it seek out every fold, pit, nook and space; the water, so unlike the stinginess of a blanket (no matter how downy), comforts every pore. A blanket mocks your unease; it promises comfort but delivers little. Ere long you stir, and the cold seeps back in; it rushes to your most susceptible skin.

Yet the water, eager to comfort, thaws from outward in; unfailing, its effulgence flows and tumbles down encompassing. All earthly and imagined evils flee; you are protected.

As it softens skin, it works and works, ever inward, so that no tissue or sinew or muscle can resist; down to bone in fact and to the spark of God within.

Ablutions!

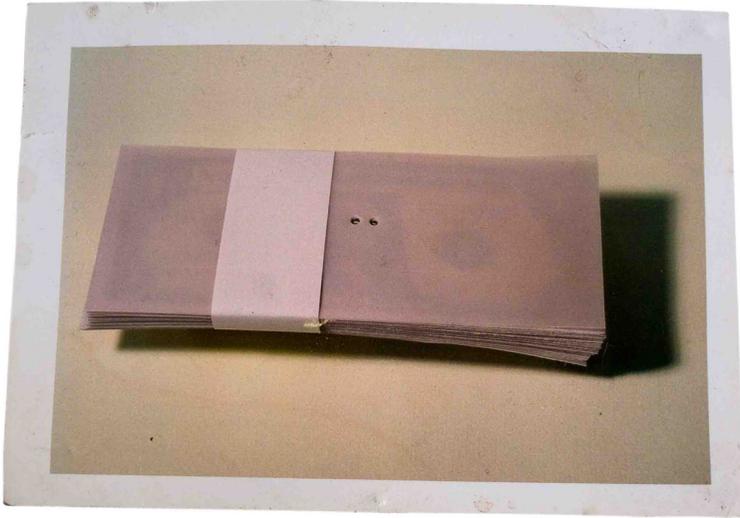
I write not of the physical benefits, though indeed they are innumerable, but of the moral and spiritual value. Archimedes! He knew a king's crown is born in the water. Brethren bathers united in our hermitage, separate but one.

Ah the Fecundity!

Kenneth Setzer

Such bliss, you'll only serve to disturb. Nemophilists escape distraction in the intangible few moments before green slams into black. Quiescent gloaming; this is the domain of spores, ferns, fungi, pteridomania. A show put on solely for my benefit. Swinging in my Pulhamite grotto, you say I accomplish nothing. This is no recondite hedonism; but the height of being, of an ennobling and purifying effect.

To innumerable shades of chlorophyll subfusc I know I can return. Pagans, heathens, and barbarians take heed and join me. Fleeting glances I capture; I am allowed. My greatest and only fear is that I am the only one.



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

More Specific Horoscopes

Corey Mesler

Ed came up with what he thought was a surefire moneymaker. It hit him like a Zen flash. He called it More Specific Horoscopes (MSH, as it later familiarly became). It will make me famous, Ed thought. It's going to appeal to a very wide audience. Money and fame will come my way. Women will come from around the world to throw their soiled undergarments at the feet of my deathless prose.

24 Here was Ed's idea: He would write daily horoscopes and, rather than employing vague phrases like "Undertake what you can tonight," or "The only answer is yes," or "Your instincts will come forward," Ed's horoscopes would give more concrete prognostications. For real lives a real-world prophecy, Ed thought. He would tell folks exactly what would happen. Or exactly what they should do. Why not?

It was an unspoken truism that horoscopes were too vague, nu?

He sat down, unpracticed in the art of composition. He cracked his knuckles and began. He started with his own sign. He wrote "Cancerian, today you will use half-and-half that is four days past the expiration date. You will bark your shin against the clawfoot tub. You will talk to Ann and Ann will say that she thinks you fake your orgasms. When you go to bed tonight you will be uneasy because of the sushi you ate for dinner and you will dream about Len from grade school who died in a shootout with police."

He set the sheet in front of him and read and reread it. It felt right. Ed knew he was onto something. He began to work on the other eleven signs.

He made predictions like these: “You find that reading Kerouac doesn’t do it for you anymore.” “The woman in your office with the cleavage will talk to you today and you will misconstrue this as interest.” “Your dog, Emily, will pee on your tax forms.” “That cousin you hated as a kid, Jon, the one who bullied you, will call you with a request for money.” “Libby likes you more than you think. She told Janet that she thought you look ‘studly.’” “Don’t wear that yellow bikini anymore. You are not nineteen.” “Don’t work on that sawhorse today. Think about closing the woodshop.” “Eat at Café 1912 tonight. Their clams are as fresh as they will ever be.” “Buy the new Neil Young. It’s going to speak to you personally, especially ‘Walk Like a Giant’.” “The man you saw on the subway reading *The Wall Street Journal* really was looking at your legs.”

25

After working on them for four straight hours he called the local paper, *The St. M—Gleaner*, and asked about publishing his horoscopes. They told him they took theirs off the wire. He called the weekly paper, *Just Us Plebes*, and they said much the same thing. Freelance gigs were drying up. Ed had not given a thought to how he could make this work. Ed had not been practical, had not used foresight. He spent a sleepless night fretting.

In the morning, while enjoying coffee and Grape-nuts, he chanced on an online daily e-zine dedicated to the arts and to what they called “real news.” They called themselves *Cast Your Net News*. He could find no horoscopes on their site. Ed sent them a query email. He received an answer within the hour from the editor

whose name was Jake. Jake said, “Send me what you got and we’ll have a look.” Ed sent.

Ed spent the day pacing his apartment. He knew he should be working on the telephone all day—Ed was a survey taker for a large conglomerate of retail businesses—but he couldn’t settle down. He went to bed that night uneasy again. This time he slept, but fitfully, and dreamed he was on an island with only a computer and a portable fridge full of Mountain Dew.

At 6 a.m. Ed made some coffee and heated up a sweet roll and opened his email. There were 53 spam emails and one real one. It was from Jake.

“We dig the crazy thing you’re doing. Can you do this every day? Let’s talk terms.”

26

That was how it all began. Ed’s gut feeling about MSH proved correct. It was a sensation. Soon Cast Your Net News was getting as many hits as the online news agencies, porn sites and even Myspace. Ed’s horoscopes were, within a month, the talk of the world. They went, forgive the word, viral. Everyone wanted an interview and Ed’s email inbox, through the Cast Your Net News site, overflowed with fan mail and questions and pleas for help. Ed, suddenly, was a sage, as in vogue as the latest fashion.

And what soon followed was Ed’s dream realized: he became rich, he became famous and he had so many beautiful women contacting him that he grew an inch in height. Book deals, magazine articles (“Guru-vy baby” in *Rolling Stone*), and television appearances followed. *More Specific Horoscopes* (Bantam Books, 2010)

and More More Specific Horoscopes (Bantam, 2011) both hit the bestseller list. The latter was reviewed in The New York Times Book Review by Cynthia Ozick. She called it “irresistible drivel.”

Sometimes his email correspondents were baffled. He got replies like “Who is Curt Gowdy?” Or, “How do I find ground lamb?” Or, “What is a Nail Kicker?”

Sometimes he got rewarding correspondence like, “Dear MSH, Alphonse said he would trim my toenails!” Or, “Dear MSH, I am now living in Moab. I can’t thank you enough.”

One day one email in particular caught Ed’s attention. It was from a woman in Ottawa. It said, “You know me better than Jesus does. Can we talk?” It was signed, Janine.

Ed answered Janine. He had answered a few of the other women but usually it made him fear that he was collecting psychos as fans. To Janine he said, “Why do you think I know you so well, Janine? You have made me curious.”

Janine wrote right back. She said, “My horoscope said, ‘Speak in secret alphabets. Read Rumi. Talk to Ed.’ So for a week I listened to nothing but The Doors and read every translation of Rumi I could find. The logical next step was to talk directly to you, that is, to Ed.” This time she signed it, “with affection, Janine.”

Ed remembered writing that horoscope. It was for Virgos. He had inserted his own name by accident. It was meant to read “ed.” for editor. It didn’t matter. They began a virtual relationship and it presently came to pass that Janine booked a flight to St. M-- and was in Ed’s arms hours after their last email. Janine was taller than

Ed, had a squint to one eye, and had legs like Charlize Theron. She was exquisite. They made plans to marry immediately. It was, as Ed knew, as Janine knew, kismet.

The morning of the day of the wedding, online, Ed reread the MSH he had written for that day on Cast Your Net News. For Cancerians he had written: "Marry her. She is the queen of cool. She won't waste time on elementary talks." And for Virgos, "Ed loves you with a fervor almost extirpated from this whacked and wicked world. Cling to him like a peach."



Untitled from *Tarpaulin Muster*, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C-print, 8" x 10"

The American Dumpster

Rachael Small translating the French of Abdellah Taïa

Everyone had heard about it, but no one knew where it was. It fascinated, transfixed my whole neighborhood, adults and children alike. The American dumpster was a dream for kids like me. We all wanted to go there in search of a pair of new shoes, a wallet, a toy, or anything really. Americans were so rich, we were told, that they threw things away when they were still perfectly good. They bought new furniture every year, clothes too, dishes, tablecloths, bicycles, even cars. Daouiya's son found a perfectly good TV there, a Philips in color. The news traveled all around Hay Salam. That's when expeditions doubled. Wondrous things were brought back from that special dumpster, things often described yet never seen. Superstition kept those who'd been lucky enough to see it from revealing its location. They were afraid it would vanish for good. And so it stayed, set aside for the privileged few. The mystery that surrounded it only magnified its mystique.

31

There was, however, one question that gave me headaches and to which I couldn't find an answer. Why had the Americans decided to put their dumpster on our land? Didn't they have enough space of their own? Did they really cross the enormous Atlantic just to dispose of their waste? Impossible: Morocco never would have accepted it. Then again... I went without a satisfying answer for a long time. Much later, I would discover that there was an American military base in Kénitra, a small city twenty-five miles from Salé. The Americans were closer to us than I'd thought, almost among us. At the same time, I learned that the ambassadors' fancy

neighborhood, Bir Kassem, wasn't far from the famous dumpster. That explained it all then, or almost – I still didn't know exactly where to find that dumpster of dreams. Like everyone else, I wanted to go there and try my luck.

Brahim, whose Philips TV had made him famous, once came over to our house with his mother Daouiya, at M'Barka's invitation. Since he was a bit older than me and already looked like a man, my mother told me to tend to him: "He can't stay with us women, he's a man now. Your father and brother aren't here, so you need to take over. You're the man of the house." A man at barely ten years old. Brahim was sixteen. He had left school to become a carpenter's apprentice. He was clever. I was fascinated with him of course, like all the neighborhood boys. Brahim had become an instant hero. So I was in the presence of a hero. In other words, with my mother's blessing too, I was completely at his service. M'Barka laid it all out: "You will entertain him, give him anything he asks for. Don't embarrass me, you know his mother, she's a harpy." "Yes M'Barka, no problem, I'll do whatever he wants." Brahim was a god, a little god, so handsome.

"You don't have pimples yet," he said, easily striking up conversation.

"Like you do?" I replied tentatively.

"But I'm going through puberty. Are you?"

"I don't think so. How do you know?"

"Your voice changes, you get hair everywhere, you grow faster, and most of all, you have strange urges."

“Strange urges!”

“Yeah, and you need to satisfy them, any way you can. If you don’t you get sad. Oh and I almost forgot, your chest gets harder. It hurts if anyone touches it.”

He came close to me and felt my chest – it didn’t hurt. He lingered, making sure he’d checked it thoroughly – still no pain. Even a little pleasure. And he read his verdict.

“The way I see it, you’re not far off. It’s not hard enough yet, but in a year max, you’ll be like me.”

“Handsome like you?”

When my mom came in to serve us lunch (simple, delicious and warm: lentils with tomatoes and onions), he’d luckily already taken his hands off my chest. M’Barka said “bon appétit” and left, closing the door behind her to keep the room nice and warm. While we ate, I took the opportunity to talk to him about what interested me most: the American dumpster. I asked him to describe it to me. He did so quickly, with a smile, but he spent a long time telling me about how he’d found his TV set. He was animated, in good spirits. This gave me courage to ask the crucial question.

“So where is the dumpster?”

“You want to go too, huh? Sorry, I know where it is but I can’t give it away.”

“Come on, be nice. I promise, I won’t tell a soul, trust me... If you want, just tell me the general direction it’s in. I’ll look on my own. I’ll figure it out, and you won’t have to give the secret away. Please?”

I'll do anything you want for it, anything. Besides, my mom made me promise to take care of you. I'm your slave."

"Oh really? That's news to me."

Daouiya decided to nap at our house; it was raining buckets outside. Her son stayed too. We napped together, in the same bed. In exchange for the secret, I gave him everything he wanted. It made him very happy. He had a great time. After all, it wasn't the first time – I'd gotten used to it with the neighborhood boys.

The American dumpster is in the forest between Salé and Rabat, very close to the pottery center. That's all he told me.

"Couldn't be clearer," I told him, relieved, grateful.

"We'll see..."

34

Even today, I still don't know where it is. I tried to find it, of course, to follow Brahim's directions once and only once. Instead of stumbling upon it at long last, I got lost in the forest, like an idiot. But that dumpster, so distant and desirable, isn't imaginary. It's real. In late October 1999, *Le Monde* published stories about four Moroccan cities after the death of Hassan II. In the one dedicated to my city, Salé, the journalist mentions the mythical dumpster. I'd nearly forgotten over the years, but it lived on. Where?

La poubelle des Américains

du livre *Mon Maroc*, Éditions Séguier 2000

Abdellah Taïa

Tout le monde en avait entendu parler, mais personne ne savait où elle se trouvait. Elle fascinait, elle intriguait et suscitait la curiosité aussi bien des enfants que des adultes de mon quartier. La poubelle des Américains était un rêve pour les gamins comme moi. On voulait tous y aller à la recherche d'une paire de godasses neuve, d'un portefeuille, d'un jouet ou de n'importe quoi. On nous disait que les Américains étaient tellement riches qu'ils jetaient les choses encore en bon état. Ils changeaient leurs meubles chaque année, la garde-robe aussi, la vaisselle, les nappes, les bicyclettes, même les voitures. Le fils de Daouiya y avait trouvé une télé superbe, une Philips en couleurs. La nouvelle avait fait le tour de Hay Salam. C'est à ce moment-là que les expéditions avaient doublé. On rapportait de cette poubelle unique en son genre des merveilles dont on parlait beaucoup et qu'on ne voyait jamais. Par superstition, ceux qui avaient eu la chance d'y aller ne devaient pas révéler sa localisation. Ils avaient peur qu'elle ne disparaisse définitivement. Elle restait ainsi réservée à quelques privilégiés. Le secret qui l'entourait accentua davantage son mythe.

35

Il y avait toutefois une question qui me faisait mal à la tête et à laquelle je ne trouvais pas de réponse. Pourquoi les Américains avaient-ils choisi notre région pour y établir leur poubelle ? N'avaient-ils pas assez de place chez eux ? Traversaient-ils exprès l'immense océan Atlantique rien que pour se débarrasser de leurs déchets ? Impossible : le Maroc n'aurait jamais accepté, quoique...

Je suis resté longtemps sans réponse satisfaisante. Beaucoup plus tard, j'ai découvert l'existence d'une base militaire américaine à Kénitra, une petite ville à quarante kilomètres de Salé. Les Américains étaient plus proches de chez nous que je ne le pensais, ils étaient carrément chez nous. En même temps, j'ai appris que le chic quartier des ambassadeurs, Bir Kassem, n'était pas loin de cette fameuse poubelle. Tout s'expliquait alors, ou presque. Car je ne savais toujours pas où elle était localisée, cette poubelle de rêve. Comme tout le monde, je voulais aller y tenter ma chance.

36

Brahim, devenu célèbre par sa télé Philips, arriva une fois chez nous avec sa mère Daouiya, qui était invitée par M'Barka. Comme il était un peu plus âgé que moi et qu'il paraissait déjà un homme, ma mère me chargea de m'occuper de lui : « Il ne peut pas rester avec nous les femmes, c'est un homme maintenant ; ton père et ton grand frère n'étant pas là, tu dois les remplacer, tu es notre homme à nous en attendant. » Un homme d'à peine dix ans. Brahim, lui, en avait seize. Il avait quitté l'école et était devenu apprenti menuisier depuis peu de temps. Il était malin. J'étais fasciné par lui, bien sûr, comme tous les gamins du quartier. Brahim était devenu rapidement un héros. Je me trouvais donc en présence d'un héros. Autrement dit, avec la bénédiction de ma mère en plus, complètement à son service. M'Barka l'avait bien formulé : « Tu dois lui faire plaisir, lui accorder tout ce qu'il te demandera ; ne me fais pas honte, tu connais sa mère, c'est une mégère. – Oui, M'Barka, sans problème, je ferai ce qu'il voudra. » Brahim était un dieu, un petit dieu, très beau.

« Tu n'as pas encore d'acné sur ton visage, dit-il, engageant la conversation naturellement.

- Comme toi, répondis-je timidement.
- Mais moi je suis pubère. Et toi ?
- Je ne sais pas. Comment le sait-on ?
- Il y a la voix qui change, tu as tout d'un coup des poils partout, tu grandis plus vite, et puis surtout tu as des désirs bizarres.
- Des désirs bizarres !
- Oui, des désirs qu'il faut absolument satisfaire, par tous les moyens, sinon tu es triste. Ah ! j'ai failli oublier, les seins durcissent, si on te les touche tu as mal. »

Il se rapprocha de moi et palpa mes deux seins : je n'avais pas mal. Il s'y attarda, question de bien vérifier : toujours pas mal. Un petit plaisir malgré tout à la place. Et il donna son verdict.

37

« À mon avis, ça ne tardera pas. C'est pas encore suffisamment dur... dans un an, au plus tard, tu seras comme moi.

- Beau comme toi ? »

Quand ma mère ouvrit la porte de la pièce où nous nous trouvions pour nous servir le déjeuner (simple, délicieux et réchauffant : des lentilles aux tomates et aux oignons), il avait déjà ôté ses mains de mes seins, heureusement. M'Barka nous souhaite bon appétit et repartait en refermant la porte derrière. La pièce restait bien chaude ainsi. Pendant que nous mangions, j'en ai profité pour lui parler de ce qui me préoccupait le plus : la poubelle des Américains. Je lui demandai de me la décrire ; il le fit rapidement

tout en souriant. Il me raconta par contre longuement comment il avait trouvé sa télé Philips. Il était gai, de bonne humeur. J'ai osé alors lui poser la question cruciale.

- Tu veux y aller, toi aussi... Je sais où elle est mais je n'ai pas le droit de te révéler ce secret. Désolé !

- Sois gentil, s'il te plaît. Je te le jure, je ne le répéterai à personne, fais-moi confiance... Si tu veux, indique-moi seulement dans quelle direction elle se trouve, je la chercherai seul, je me débrouillerai, et comme ça tu n'auras pas trahi le secret. Sois gentil. Je ferai tout ce que tu veux en échange, tout. Ma mère m'a mis d'ailleurs à ton service, je suis ton esclave...

- C'est nouveau ça, je ne le savais pas. »

38 Daouiya décida de faire la sieste chez nous, il pleuvait des cordes dehors. Son fils aussi. On fit la sieste tous les deux. Dans le même lit. En contrepartie du secret de la poubelle, je lui accordai ce qu'il désirait. Il en était très heureux. Il a eu beaucoup de plaisir. Après tout, ce n'était pas la première fois, j'avais l'habitude avec les autres gamins du quartier.

La poubelle des Américains est dans la forêt qui sépare Salé de Rabat, très près du centre des potiers. C'est tout ce qu'il m'avait dit.

« On ne peut être plus clair, lui dis-je, soulagé, reconnaissant.

- C'est ce qu'on verra... »

Aujourd'hui encore, je ne sais toujours pas où elle est. J'avais essayé de la retrouver bien évidemment, de suivre les in-

structions de Brahim une seule et unique fois. Au lieu de tomber sur elle enfin, je m'étais perdu comme un idiot dans la forêt. Pourtant, cette poubelle si attirante, si lointaine, n'est pas fictive, elle est réelle. Fin octobre 1999, le quotidien Le Monde publia quatre reportages sur quatre villes marocaines après la mort de Hassan II. Dans celui consacré à ma ville, Salé, la journaliste évoquait cette mythique poubelle. Je l'avais un peu oubliée avec le temps, elle vivait toujours. Où ?

Translator's Note for "The American Dumpster"

Rachael Small

"The American Dumpster" is a modern, personal myth of childhood desires – those which are fulfilled and those which remain frustrated. The narrative voice constructs itself in the tradition of mythical orality, at once engaging and distancing. He reconstructs his childhood experiences across distances of time and space, as an adult living in Paris, a *décalage littéraire* that results in a narrative style at times strange and dreamlike. In translating this story, it was my goal to retain this quality of memory as myth that pervades Taïa's writing, transporting it again into a subtly strange English.

40 Perhaps nowhere in the narrative is the myth more explicitly embodied than in the presence of the narrator's mother, M'Barka, always referred to by her monolithic first name. She is constructed as a timelessly powerful and assertive mother character, and her language and syntax reflect this. For example, when she complains about Brahim's mother, she uses the word *mégère*, a word for a mean and bitter woman whose etymological origins are found in Greek mythology, in the name of the Fury Megaera. I chose to translate this word as "harpy" rather than the Shakespearean "shrew" or even more colloquial "bitch" or "witch" in order to maintain, not only the connection to Greek mythology, but a timeless old fashioned tone to the mother's speech.

At the points in the story that deal with the relationship between Abdallah, the narrator, and Brahim, the older boy he admires, the

mythological elevation of the narrative confronts another challenge – that of maintaining a balance between confession and discretion. This is the first story in Abdellah Taïa’s largely autobiographical printed oeuvre where he gives any indications of his sexual preference, of his love for and fascination with other men, and he does so rather cautiously. Although it is evident that he is describing a childhood sexual experience, he dances around it, not lingering on the pleasure of Brahim’s touch, naming the story after an object rather than the boy it represents.

It was important, in bringing this work into English, to play with the ambiguity and allusive quality of banal English statements. Abdellah’s descriptions of and conversations with Brahim shudder with sexual tension, largely located in what remains unsaid. For this reason, word choice was my main preoccupation. “He had a great time,” he says of his experience with Brahim, as though winking at his readers, telling us as much as he isn’t telling us.

41

The boys share a brief exchange about puberty, in which the older boy acts as a guide for his young admirer. Their voices, in intimate company, should not sound as formal as M’Barka’s, and yet I didn’t want them to sound too colloquial or too American. After all, this constructed narrative took place in Salé, Morocco. So they say “handsome” rather than “hot”, “urges” rather than “needs” or the more elevated (and more sexually charged) “desires.” The sexual tension bubbles beneath the surface of these words, even more intensely as it finds no release, until Abdellah, in true maladroitness, blurts out “handsome like you?” A confession that is still necessarily restrained.

This was the main challenge in translating all the stories in *My Morocco*, creating a narrative voice imbued with the desire to tell his story honestly, but who is still unsure of how explicit he can be about his identity. I wanted these stories to feel like family stories, like Uncle Abdellah sitting down with his nieces and nephews so many years later, telling them myths about the creation of his Moroccan, international, literary, personal self. Uncle Abdellah still hasn't formally come out to us, but he can't avoid alluding to his own desires, not only for the magical treasure trove dumpster but for the boy who held its secret.



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C Print, 8" x 10"



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C Print, 8" x 10"

Juliet

D. E. Steward

More than ten million African slaves and a total two million Europeans had arrived in the Americas by 1820

By then the white European population had grown to twelve million and slaves numbered roughly half that number

Paul de Man and de Gaulle, but on the other hand, Tocqueville

French post-structural literary theory took hold in the American academy almost without there having been a structural phase

Something different for a PhD thesis instead of still another go at symbolism in Hawthorne or Dickinson's dictional quirks

45

Heidegger wasn't generally acceptable grist for American philosophy departments and came, along with Derrida, in through the comp lit back door

Lévi-Strauss all along was considered a strange bird

The old American tendency to scorn the French

Common sense and pragmatic realism, change-your-own-flat-tire style

Kazakhstan and Montana are in ways the same place

Les Murray's "...but for the ignorant freedom // of my talking mind"

Erich Korngold, prodigy, b. Brno 1897, his four Wagneresque operas were produced in Hamburg and Munich in the twenties before anti-Semitism buried him

He scooted out of Nazi Vienna for Hollywood in 1934, and before the War started he had won two academy awards

46 He said, "It's not keypunching, stir the keys with your whole arm, not just your fingers, not notes, waves.... The piano's both a blessing and a curse, such a range of notes to choose from, but the piano's a machine; push a button and get a note"

And, "Internalize the song, even hum it aloud to make it sing"

Let canorous waves of triplets flow

Trusting his interpreters, Mozart didn't provide many directions beyond the notes Golden, golden-toned, golden-voiced, golden-tongued, arioso, arioso, mellifluent

Two tufted titmice fussily spread out on their bellies on the slant of a roof with wings spread to bask their primaries in the July afternoon sun

The ingenuity of parids astounds

“English-language readers of [Victor] Serge today have to think themselves back to a time when most people accepted that the course of their lives would be determined by history rather than psychology, by public rather than private crises” – Christopher Reed

Outside the double-pane apartment windows of Stalin-era winters, parids acrobatically foraged for freeze-dried summer spiders in the high corners and masonry seams, and for the windowsill crumbs the apartment dwellers spread for them

Inside, “tinned fish, boiled eggs, Dutch stoves, saucepans, borrowed gas rings, kitchen tables, tramcars, bad plumbing, communal apartments, residence permits, health problems, and endless changes of address, as well as nicknames, gossip, erotic mayhem, tantrums, poetic creation, lost manuscripts, sacrifice, betrayal, forgiveness, plank beds in Siberian barrack huts, and common burial pits” – Emma Gerstein

47

Soviet lives lost

Old rose dusty gold

The subjective won out generations ago

Nearly boundless, but fated, savvy

Everything is change

Remember the ideal of wanting to write things that expressed everything about everything? Remember what it was like to understand that trying to do this was possible, and to realize that living to do it would probably be the most significant thing you could ever do? Remember comprehending that in the intent of trying for it lies the essential quality of good writing?

Just remember what it is like to write with full purpose and to not hold back trying to match some set of cautions

“Identity is the vanishing point of resemblance” – Wallace Stevens

48

A Cooper’s hawk hunting over the center of town

Four Cooper’s fledglings lined up on a bare limb in deep woods a mile away

The American civitas of schools, post offices and local government moved out of town, wooden sidewalks gone, stores with porches demolished, others derelict

Updated with sealed-windowed flat-faced commercial blocks and parking lots *Com sensação, com saudade*

Sadness like the third movement, *Andante malincolico*, of Nielsen’s Second

And as quiet as Mark Tobey's *Dusk*, 1973

Expansive like Tobey's huge and spectacular *Sagittarius Red*,
1963

Golden, gilt, gilded, aureate, golden-yellow

Carl Nielsen wrote his classical Quartet no. 1 in G Minor while he was a second violinist in the orchestra of Copenhagen's Theater Royal

It won him a state subsidy that allowed him to travel and to go on to write his six bright, driving symphonies with their literary names like, *Sinfonia expansiva*, *The Inextinguishable*, *Sinfonia semplice*

49

"I found it extremely moving to walk past those paintings of slender, luminous beings with their blank eyes and pursed lips, an experience I can only compare to looking at old photographs of people I don't know but whom somebody once knew, who had a real existence – a life – in a certain place and time. There is that extraordinary patina of their having been some particular person." – Arthur Danto on Modigliani

Some African languages have dozens of cow-markings terms, and Russian has many terms to describe the event of snow, English should have a vocabulary for human facial types instead of dull adjectives like fat, round, long, pasty

English has mostly looks-like descriptions, “she’s like a young Julia Child,” or “he looks like a dumb Bill Gates”

English with its lingering Victorian cum Edwardian rhetorical norms

George Innes, painting his *View of the Tiber from the Balconata* in Perugia, the pose out there staring southwestward with the easel, the big paint box, the hat

Back home in the decade before, during the Civil War, Innes had dived headlong into whacko, epiphanic Swedenborgianism, the heavens had opened up to him and he kept trying to paint them

50

The old fool’s gold of transcendent landscape

Open sky and space is there, always has been, is our proscenium, our sure magnificence

Where the snow cover begins to thin across the tight coil of switchbacks, a golden eagle soars across boldly, directly above the windshield

Intense purpose about its level glide and in its eyes

The most emphatic wild thing since coming up into the deep snow two days before

A strange and different world where there is heavy, untouched
snow

Sitting behind our midden in the front of our cave looking out



Untitled from *Tarpaulin Muster*, 2013

Digital C Print, 8" x 10"



Untitled from Tarpaulin Muster, 2013

Digital C Print, 8" x 10"

Schellingstrasse

Eldon Reishus

In the last few years of my days on earth, I have begun to dislike the conceit that I dislike programming concert lighting effects, from the solo spotlight center-stage to the pyrotechnic gang-bang finish, that such gigs are thankless chores not paid half well enough.

I opened my eyes and waxed my Dalí mustache. *Die Mitternacht-Basketball-Liga* in Munich was made for diehard failed guitarists like me: divorced guys from the U.S. who snap towels and share insider locker-room info not limited to the coming bailout of München Re – in this warming, global economic climate, who needs that tip?

54

So it was a bit of a start to return late to Schellingstrasse and find lights flashing. Our *Altbau* door stood anchored wide, its dark breath smelling of woolen stockings, cinnamon apple wedges, and *Spirol* (Germany's weak, proprietary take on Pepto-Bismol). Paramedics rolled Frau Angemeier from the building's *Hausmeister* flat.

I hit the hallway lights; our eyes accustomed. Frau Angermeier's *Mann* died many years ago, well before yesterday's forty became today's fifty, and it's not like I hadn't seen this coming. She opened her hand; I gave her mine.

She said, »*Ich beneide Sie um Ihren Glauben. Ich habe meinen verloren. Dieses letzte Weg ist ein schwerer Weg.*« (I envy you your belief. I have lost mine. This last way is a difficult way.)

Many other names for it, we live in lyric times. (In the magic sense that ein Schwarzes Loch is neither black nor a hole.) I wanted dots on the walls, rapid-fire dots signaling the comic relief of motion. Red. Green. Orange. Orange. Green. Orange. Red. Green. Red. Orange. Orange. Green. Red. Red. Green. Orange. Green. Red.

I said, »*Und ich beneide Sie um Ihren Unglauben.*« (And I envy you your disbelief.)

Combination

Eldon Reishus

Lucy was a mayor so powerful, that she could lie to herself in her dreams. That the local livestock began shitting Easter eggs she found most worthy of commendation. In short order our town lost its every noxious flying insect – but still we kept our screens installed to restrain the fresh clouds of lovely white butterflies from entering our households.

A telephone guy with a belt was sent in from outside to investigate. Lucy watched the man climb the pole at Cedar and Seventh; she snapped her fingers. The butterflies left behind not even the belt.

56 Our town was like a clapping party apparatus that had installed Lucy as dictator. Also in our dreams.

The Double Amputee's Oral Learning Story: Bargain Replantation

Eldon Reishus

Tim looked into the morning sky and saw the moon. The coyotes within him broke into howls; the mice covered their ears and danced. Then when Tim turned fifty, the tags on his T-shirts started to really irritate the back of his neck, and he accidentally sheared off a thumb trying to remove one. No-one was in any shape to drive, it being Tim's birthday, so he Ziplocked his thumb's freshness in crushed ice and began the long walk to the hospital.

On the way Tim saw a man in cut-offs with no legs on a cart showing pictures of his stumps to youth. *What a dumb ass*, Tim thought, *lost both legs, and doesn't even know how to make it work for him*. Tim thought: *That man should wear a dotted sign around his neck*. Tim thought: *That sign should read: »Severe at dots.«*

57

A car pulled over and some dudes passing around a bong wanted to know what Tim was carrying. Tim greeted the crew with his thumb and a barrage of questions concerning his address not being one and his insurance not being any. The answers Tim received must have cheered him from consciousness, for the next thing he knew he was smiling in a wheelchair like the nerves and blood vessels of both legs had been successfully reattached during a complicated three-hour microsurgery process.

What clues do we have that it is the man in cut-offs with no legs in the cart who originally told this story orally? Do you think that in real life the double amputee actually does show pictures of his

stumps to youth? Why would this be a dumb ass manner to make the loss of both legs work for him? On Tim's birthday, when he shears off his thumb, everyone is too looped to drive him to a hospital. The dudes in the car are passing around a bong. Tim wakes from his bargain re-plantation in a wheelchair with a smile on his face. Are drugs always wrong? What other hearer expectations does this oral learning story expand, reprove, or disappoint?

Contributors

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Writer, poet, and painter **Pierre Bettencourt** (1917—2006) was, despite coming from a prominent family, a retiring figure and lifelong outsider artist. He printed his first works on a family-owned press during the Nazi occupation, and later published Antonin Artaud, Francis Ponge, Henri Michaux, and Jean Dubuffet. A friend of editor Jean Paulhan, he was a frequent contributor to the *Nouvelle revue française*. His work is forthcoming in *The Collagist*.

Edward Gauvin has received fellowships and residencies from the NEA, the Fulbright Association, the Centre National du Livre, and the Lannan Foundation. His translation of Georges-Olivier Châteaureynaud's selected stories *A Life on Paper* (Small Beer, 2010) was shortlisted for the Best Translated Book Award and won the Science Fiction & Fantasy Translation Award. Other publications have appeared in *Conjunctions*, *Subtropics*, *The New York Times*, *Tin House*, *PEN America*, and *The Southern Review*. The winner of the John Dryden Translation prize, he is a contributing editor at *Words Without Borders*, and writes on the fantastic for *Weird Fiction Review*.

Ish Klein is the author of the poetry books *Moving Day* and *Union!* published by Canarium Press. She is also the author of the plays, *Drummer 41*, *In A Word*, *Faust*, and *The New Deal*. A compilation of her recent videos, entitled *Success Window*, has been released by Poor Claudia of Portland, Oregon. As filmmaker, she was the recipient of a 2005 NEA Digital Filmmaker Residency, and her work has screened at festivals and museums around the world. She lives in Amherst with her husband the writer Greg Purcell. They are two of the four founding members of the Connecticut River Valley Poet's Theatre. See some videos here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/ishkleinfilms>

Corey Mesler has published in numerous journals and anthologies. He has published 7 novels, 3 full length poetry collections, and 3 books of short stories. He has also published a dozen chapbooks of both poetry and prose. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize numerous times, and two of his poems were chosen for Garrison Keillor's *Writer's Almanac*. His fiction has received praise from John Grisham, Robert Olen Butler, Lee Smith, Frederick Barthelme, Greil Marcus, among others. With his wife, he runs *Burke's Book Store* in Memphis TN. He can be found at www.coreymesler.wordpress.com.

Eldon (Craig) Reishus lives with a piano and last night three mice in a Celtic setting outside Munich beneath the Bavarian Alps (Landkreis Wolfratshausen – Bad Tölz). He is the German-English translator of numerous books and films, and an all-around print and web media pro. He originates from Fort Smith, Arkansas. Hire him (»Have Laptop, Will Travel«): www.reishus.de

Born in 1955 to parents of Ukrainian descent, Belgian **Eugène Savitzkaya** has written more than forty books of fiction, poetry, plays, and essays. He received Prix triennal du roman for his 1994 novel *Marin mon coeur. Rules of Solitude* (Quale Press, 2004; trans. Gian Lombardo), a collection of prose poems, was his first book in English. His work is forthcoming from *Unstuck*.

Kenneth Setzer enjoys researching and writing about natural history, science, botany, gardening, photography and human history, among other topics. His work has appeared in *Shutterbug*, *Northwest Travel*, *The Miami Herald*, and *Sun-Sentinel*. He is a writer and editor at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables, Florida. He blogs at <http://intractableautodidact.wordpress.com/>

Rachael Small is a native of Los Angeles, California whose love of language and literature have moved her around the world, from upstate New York to Paris and Dakar to Mexico and Iowa. A graduate of Bard College, she recently earned her MFA in Literary Translation from the University of Iowa with a translation of Abdellah Taïa's *My Morocco*. She has translated works by Philippe Adam, Disiz, François Bon, Giovanna Rivero, and most recently, an exhibition on the life and works of Albert Camus. She was a 2012 resident at the Banff International Literary Translation Centre and has worked for the Book Department of the French Embassy in New York.

D. E. Steward's "Juliet," like "Octovre" Anomalous Press 5, and "Septambro" in Anomalous Press 3, is a month in a sequence written month to month for over 27 years, with months finished to date numbering 324. Over two thirds are published. The cycle, Chroma, attempts to

chronicle, to build on, and to enhance some of the realities of the times. Google “de steward poetry” for more.

Erin Sweeny was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. After completing undergraduate studies at Seattle University and the San Francisco Art Institute, she received her MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2011. Her work has been exhibited across the country, recently featured in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Little Rock. Residency programs include ACRE (Artists’ Cooperative Residency and Exhibitions) and Ox-Bow. Sweeny is currently a contributing writer for Art21’s Praxis Makes Perfect series and Carets & Sticks, an international forum for emerging contemporary artists. More information can be found at www.erinsweeny.com.

Abdellah Taïa was born in Rabat, Morocco and grew up in Salé, a city across the Bou Regreg River from the capital. He studied French Literature at the University of Rabat, the University of Geneva and the Sorbonne, and has lived in Paris since 1998. “The American Dumpster” was first published in his debut book *Mon Maroc (My Morocco, 2000)*, a collection of autobiographical vignettes about his childhood in Morocco and subsequent move to Europe. He won the prestigious Prix de Flore in 2010 for his third novel, *Le Jour du Roi*, and his first feature film, *L’Armée du salut*, based on his 2006 novel of the same name, is a featured selection for the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival and International Critics’ Week in Venice, Italy. He came out of the closet publicly in 2006 and is to date Morocco’s only openly gay author.

Anomalous Press

launched in March of 2011 as a non-profit press dedicated to the diffusion of writing in the forms it can take. Its backbone is an editorial collective from different backgrounds and geographies that keep an eye out for compelling projects that, in any number of ways, challenge expectations of what writing and reading should be.

Anomalous has its sights set on publishing literary text, advancing audio forms and creation, and supporting all sorts of alternative realities of the near future. The online publication is available in both visual and audio forms on various platforms. In March of 2013, Anomalous launched its first round of print chapbooks, available at <http://www.anomalouspress.org/chapbooks.php>

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