



Anomalous 8

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**Cover:** from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

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## About this Issue

It is once again the Ides of March, and our on-line lit mag has been going strong for 3 years now. We've published 8 issues (including this one), and now we're expanding into print! To celebrate our first season of chapbooks, we've dedicated this issue to excerpts of the fabulous manuscripts we'll be publishing in our first two seasons, and the finalists from our chapbook contest, judged by Christian Hawkey and Cole Swenson. As always, you can hear the authors reading their work on our website, or download the entire issue as an audiobook for leisurely listening later. Enjoy!

## *Gods R Us* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Mani Rao*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

*Gods R Us* is a collection of poems based on narratives and characters from classical sources, primarily Greek and Indian myths. The poems retell myths, comment on myths, and sometimes, reflecting on a contemporary topic, refer to myths. Around Grecian orchards - on Trojan battlefields – inside Hanuman’s heart - with Aphrodite as she washes up at Ellis to be crowned as the Statue of Liberty... each poem takes place. Ovid, Homer and Hesiod are the main sources for the Greek themes, and the epics Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, and the purāṇas, for Indian themes. Whether a paean to a character’s quality, or a bitter critique of the behavior of the gods or deva species, the concerns are human.

The poems lend themselves to black and white illustrations (from the public domain) of well-known moments in Greek and Indic classical narratives. Many poems in this manuscript have been published in journals including *Colorado Review*, *Omniverse*, *Almost Island*, and *Mascara*.

# Sing to Me

Excerpted from *Gods R Us*

*Mani Rao*

O' muses, excuse  
this non-descript call I

wonder  
Who among you apt  
Who, interested

Greek and Sanskrit  
A must

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I mean not words,  
Spaces

where two species  
    gods/humans  
intersect

O'

Calliope	Erato	Thalia
Clio	Melpomena	Urania
Euterpe	Polyhymnia	Terpsichore

Magic nine

All-girl cast,  
Dad a voluptuary  
Stepmother hung by her heels

Constant news of half-sisters  
Mother in deep glue

When family's this dys  
Your friends are poets

Mt Parnassus at  
Your Apollo-dance

Sappho plays on,  
Trade for a tradition.

4

Homer restless  
Ovid morbid

Blake who met Ezekiel  
Dante, Virgil

Come one, two, three, nine  
Take turns if you tire

You're Kali for Kalidasa  
Ganesha for Vyasa

For Lorca duende, for Merrill

A red-winged bat  
Welcome the furies  
Alecto           Magaera           Tisiphone

Justices of peace  
We'll need them too

Around orchards Grecian  
On battlefields Trojan

In Shiva's realm, inside  
Hanuman's heart

Gods are us

# Monkey Puzzle

Excerpted from *Gods R Us*

*Mani Rao*

Large as the sky stands on a leaf  
Small as a thorn on Ravana's seat  
Try telling him  
The sun's not a peach

Can't find an herb uproot the mountain  
Ocean's vast so is devotion

Somewhat out of proportion Hanuman  
A heart so precise it  
Only has room for Ram

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*As a child, Hanuman leaps up and reaches for the sun thinking it edible. At the end of this incident, he receives the power to become as large or as small when he pleases. When Lakshmana is injured in the battle with Ravana, Hanuman is sent to fetch a healing herb; he cannot find it, and not wanting to waste time, returns with the entire mountain instead. Hanuman proves his ardent devotion to Rama by tearing open his chest to show who lives in his heart*



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *His Days Go by the Way*

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Steve Bradbury*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST FINALIST, FORTHCOMING

8 “In the Mountains Near at Hand” is from *His Days Go by the Way Her Years*, a chapbook containing the best of my translations of the poetry of the Taiwanese writer and filmmaker Ye Mimi. Most of the poems in this chapbook were inspired by dreams. Others occurred to her when she was seized by a particular rhyme or phrase that wouldn’t let go. Such was the case with “In the Mountains Near at Hand,” which she wrote while hiking up Liyu Mountain on Taiwan’s scenic eastern seaboard and chanced upon a small party of students and a naturalist who was teaching them the names of all the plants. “I’m rather shy and wouldn’t ordinarily mix with strangers,” she said, “but I found the names so intriguing I quietly tagged along. As we climbed, sometimes looking up, sometimes down, the view was so spectacular this poem just came to me.”

## In the Mountains Near at Hand

Excerpted from *His Days Go by the Way*

Steve Bradbury translating the Chinese of Ye Mimi

We identify the plants, in the mountains near at hand.  
The cigar grass and the pencil-box tree, the airy songs of the  
birds and

sinking lake. The road being quadrangular,  
we also sport our floppy hats, to ward off the hard  
sun.

When the empty pen and paper squeeze their way through trees,  
the sublime becomes a kind, green.

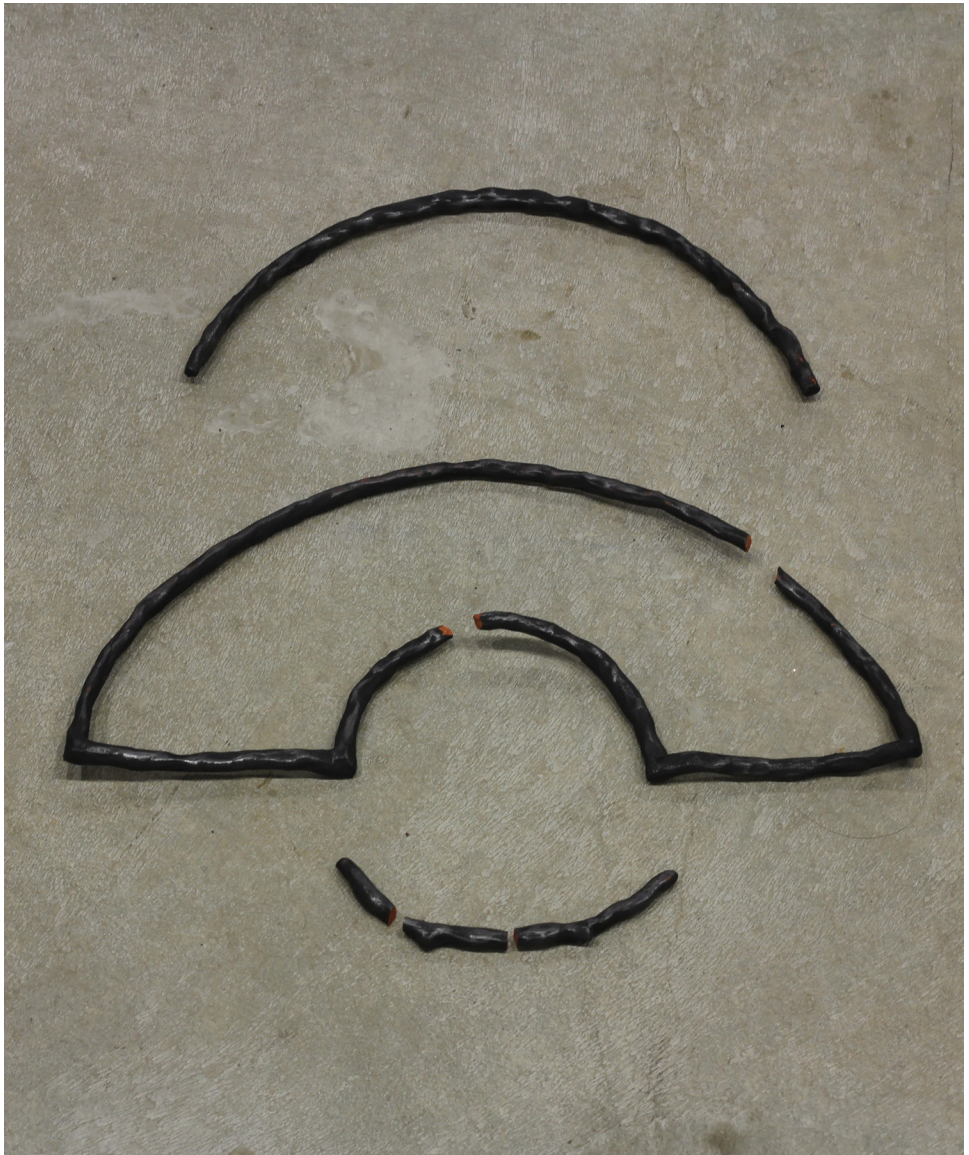
The names of all the flowers and grassy plants begin to glimmer  
but as we climb are soon snuffed out.

“Sniff and see,” he says.

In a torn leaf a single pupil  
burns, burning our everlasting hunger.

In the mountains near at hand,  
we identify the plants and moreover eat as many as we  
can. The mountain heights are quadrangular too.

“In the Mountains Near at Hand” is from *His Days Go by the Way Her Years*, a chapbook containing the best of my translations of the poetry of the Taiwanese writer and filmmaker Ye Mimi. Most of the poems in this chapbook were inspired by dreams. Others occurred to her when she was seized by a particular rhyme or phrase that wouldn’t let go. Such was the case with “In the Mountains Near at Hand,” which she wrote while hiking up Liyu Mountain on Taiwan’s scenic eastern seaboard and chanced upon a small party of students and a naturalist who was teaching them the names of all the plants. “I’m rather shy and wouldn’t ordinarily mix with strangers,” she said, “but I found the names so intriguing I quietly tagged along. As we climbed, sometimes looking up, sometimes down, the view was so spectacular this poem just came to me.”



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *streumen* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Bradley Schmidt

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

Following the publication of her initial volume of poetry *Zunder* [Fuel] in 2005, Ulrike Almut Sandig published her second volume to great acclaim. In 2009 she was awarded the most valued prize for German poetry, the Leone and Lena Prize for *streumen*. This collection is many things at once: on the one hand it is oriented around an eponymous and fictitious village in rural Saxony somewhere between Leipzig, Dresden and Berlin. On the other hand, it represents an inner location, a provenience from which poetic reflection about *streumen* is organized and associated with concepts such as love, *heimat*, and happiness. The poems contain a tension between reality and imagination, possession and yearning. There is a lingering polyvalence and the pendulum swings between realistic description and haunting imagination. The texts have memories but those memories remain partial: images, scents, feelings, fragments cast in shadows and a fog that never fully lifts. This is also symbolized by the poem's lack of titles (with a few concrete exceptions). Sandig merely marks certain words in the poems with bold font, as if retroactively establishing significance. At the same time, the poems are overwhelmingly accessible, and on the surface almost seem like brief descriptions of fleeting moments in time. However, once drawn in, the reader often slips through line breaks and cracks in the surface of the images, discovering trapdoors to other levels of meaning.

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*Streumen* is the most brilliant of Sandig's three volumes which have been published to date. She is one of the most outstanding

young poets working in Germany today and definitely deserves the support to move beyond the translation of individual poems. American readers of poetry would benefit greatly from a complete Streumen.

## was the table, was the chair

Excerpted from *streumen*

*Bradley Schmidt translating the German of Ulrike Almut Sandig*

**was the table, was the chair**, sat a child  
in the kitchen and ate, was it still in the hall,  
did no one wander around and count their own  
steps, the window cross whiter than usual  
around evening, small animals in flight  
transected the yard and dust lay on the glass and  
a child was very still and something, which occurred  
with a bolt, was hot at the base and faded,  
burst, a child opened its eyes  
wide and could, it could not find anything.

# war der tisch, war der stuhl

*Ulrike Almut Sandig*

**war der tisch, war der stuhl**, saß ein kind  
in der küche und aß, war es still auf dem flur,  
ging niemand herum und zählte die eigenen  
schritte, das fensterkreuz weißer als sonst  
gegen abend, durchschnitten den hof kleine  
tiere im flug und der staub lag am glas und  
ein kind war sehr still und etwas, das einfiel  
im schlag, das heiß war im grund und sich  
dunkelte, aufschlug, ein kind riss die augen  
weit auf und konnte, es konnte nichts finden.

## solar eclipse

Excerpted from *streumen*

Bradley Schmidt translating the German of Ulrike Almut Sandig

‘  
it’s possible that i missed something, that i looked up  
instead of at the quiet ground where crescents might have flown  
one always moving toward the other, their move into the darkness, head over  
heels into the twilight, where did this piece of night tarry for seven minutes,  
high above the cold broke in from one moment to the next.  
above me the one i didn’t see turned dark: i  
had gazed at this lead engraving,  
judging from my view half  
way to the universe,  
really, but still  
concealed.

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”  
it’s unclear if nocturnal creatures flew  
to touch the blind, ordered objects, if a god  
was present and if anyone heard him, if at all.  
what can be proven is nothing more than the scraping of soles,  
the alternating movement of hedges and of small trees,  
some made others stop, still others laughed aloud  
without any apparent cause! nothing remains  
unclear, recordable as evidence of stains,  
darkness, missing witnesses.

# sonnenfinsternis

*Ulrike Almut Sandig*

,

womöglich habe ich etwas verpasst, habe hochgeschaut  
anstatt auf die stillen böden, wo sicheln geflogen sein mögen,  
die einen immer auf andere zu, ihr wandern ins dunkle, kopfüber  
ins dämmern, wo blieb dieses nachtstück in sieben minuten,  
hoch oben brach kaltes von einem aufs andere ein. über  
mir hatte sich jene verfinstert, die ich nicht sah: ich  
habe zu diesem so unterkühlten bleistich  
aufgeschaut, nach meiner ansicht  
auf halber strecke zum all,  
tatsächlich, aber  
bedeckt.

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”

offen bleibt, ob schon nachttiere flogen,  
um die aufgereihten, blinden körper zu betasten,  
ob ein gott anwesend war und jemand ihn hörte, wenn  
überhaupt. belegbar ist nichts als das scharren der sohlen,  
versetzte bewegung von hecken und bäumchen, die  
einen ließen andere stehen, dritte lachten ohne  
sichtbaren anlass auf! offen bleibt nichts  
als beweis aufzunehmen von flecken,  
finsternis, fehlenden zeugen.

## when you're not here

Excerpted from *streumen*

*Bradley Schmidt translating the German of Ulrike Almut Sandig*

**when you're not here**, you're nowhere to be seen.  
my face is washed + wrapped in clothes so  
that nothing freezes in winter. your photo is  
intentionally misplaced in the album, the table also  
belongs to someone else: the body altar is clear.  
behold: someone blind travels straight through my  
aging hair and brings light + shifting wind

## wenn du nicht da bist

*Ulrike Almut Sandig*

**wenn du nicht da bist**, bist du nirgends zu sehen.  
mein gesicht ist gewaschen + in binden gewickelt  
damit nicht friert vor dem winter. dein bild ist  
mit absicht im album verblättert, auch der tisch  
gehört einem anderen: geräumt ist der körperaltar.  
sieh her: es wandert quer über mein alterndes haar  
ein blinder, bringt leichtes + wechselnden wind



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

# *On the Corner of Guilt and Ash*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Monika Zobel*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

My manuscript explores the constant tearing and mending of language that comes with bilingualism and biculturalism. Operating within two different languages, one always has to act as a mediator between two languages and countries. No matter what country or language one chooses, the other continues to trudge along like a difficult traveler, incessantly pointing out how everything in her culture is superior.

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While the manuscript is almost entirely written in English, German culture and language is woven throughout. As an example, the poem “Der Immigrant sucht die unbenannten Länder” is a loose translation of one of the English poems in the manuscript. Due to the close affinity of the English and German language, bilingual poetry has always interested me. When choosing which words to translate and which ones to leave in English, I tried to pay attention to the sound and look of words in order to highlight the textures of both languages.

Another aspect is the frequent use of second person address. The “you” in the poems can at times be a real person—“an other”—or represent another facet of the speaker’s interior; and other times the second person address serves as an exigency to keep things moving, to patch over what is missing due to the inability to express complex thoughts—thoughts that exist in an entirely dif-

ferent language and are untranslatable. I write in English; I seldom translate from German to English or vice versa. And yet, the poems are translated from a place that exists when two different languages talk over one another.

As a result, these poems examine the mute space between two languages—the space the bilingual individual must travel through every day. The mending and tearing of language presents itself through disparate images and thoughts. The speaker—for the lack of words—focuses on moving through space, as well as language, at a quick pace. Motion becomes a central theme; in particular, silent and unnoticed motions—the crowds at rush hour, or the wind in tunnels. The speaker roams the subways, cemeteries, and parks while silence preserves its monuments; and the “I”—the only traveler listening—is faced with the difficult task of translating everything that lacks a voice.

## To Begin at Breath

Excerpted from *On the Corner of Guilt and Ash*

Monika Zobel

When words march into the city,  
    children are the first  
to clap their hands:

    a war fought with being  
imported by the German  
    ich war, ich weiß. Was is

the most destructive  
    weapon, as in:  
a leg was a terrible mistake.

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When I climbed a tree  
for the first time, nails  
    already curled in my coffin.

Wind cracked the porcelain  
    knuckles of fruit. How it drummed  
in the heart of a root.

Trees are shelters and wounds—  
The longest fall occurs  
    between leaf and leaving.

# Monumental

Excerpted from *On the Corner of Guilt and Ash*  
Monika Zobel

is the writing in foreign  
letters. In a city that carves

directions to our dreams  
on headstones, subways

erase shadows like folded  
hands on tables. Patched

walls catch colds that last  
a century, while elevators

witness every fall, every  
rise with closed doors.

What did you do? You plucked  
shadows and reinvented

the history of bodies. We leave  
windows open as if body heat

could lock all our losses  
in a single touch. You confess:

the corners of your mouth  
were drawn for speaking.

But I could have sworn  
that the words you spoke

were full of clay and grapes—  
pockets stuffed with grief.

Where did you go? You were homeless.  
Alphabets blossomed on your toenails.

# Der Immigrant sucht die unbenannten Länder

Excerpted from *On the Corner of Guilt and Ash*

Monika Zobel

Ich wurde im ersten Jahrhundert der Schuld  
geboren. Zwischen Ruinen und Bauschott  
spielten wir Versteck hinter der shattered  
church bell. Ghosts had no middle

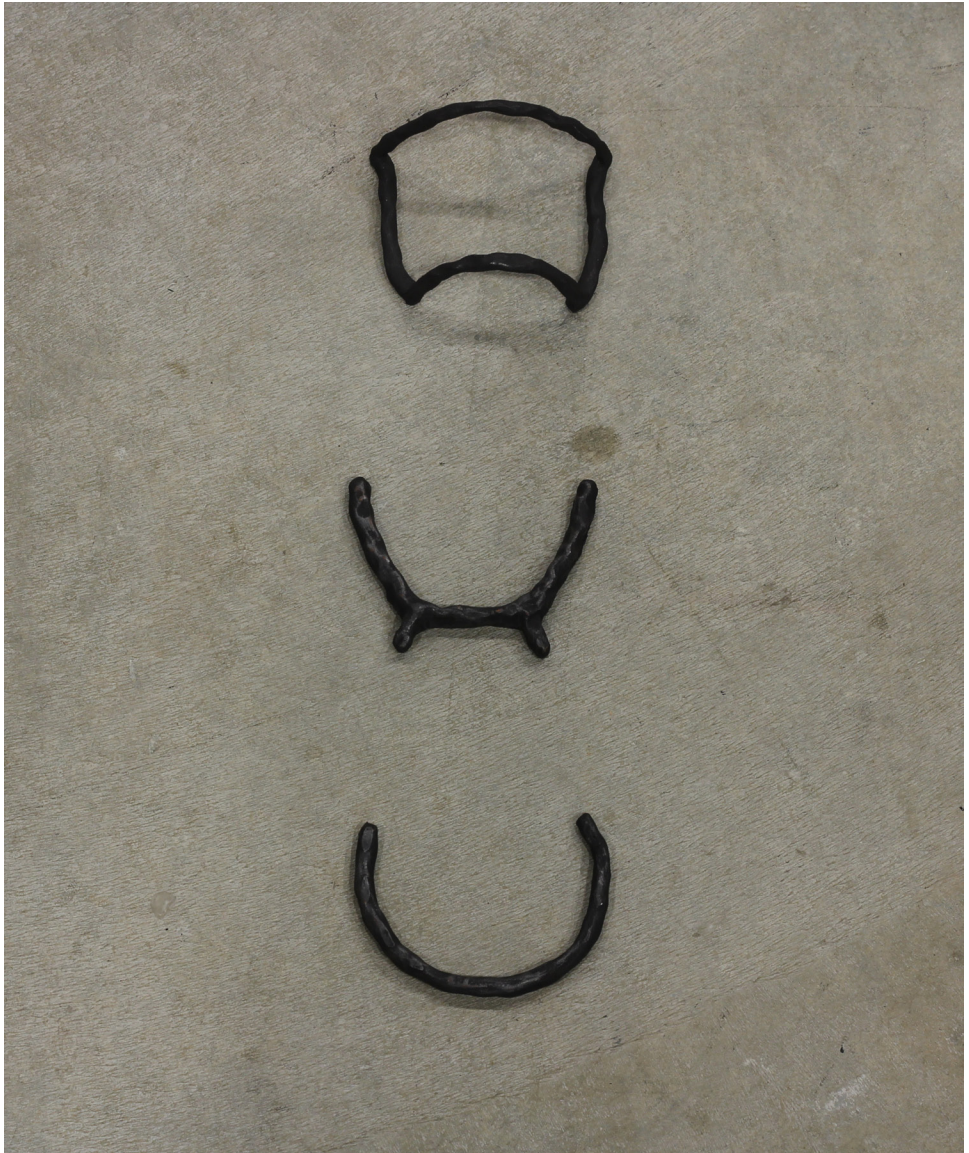
names. Ich schlief auf der Küchenbank  
mit dem Seufzer des Gusseisens. Im November—  
the meatless smell of white cabbages,  
das Schnattern der Hühner bevor das Beil

nebeliges Glas zerbrach. Ich zählte, counted  
the pulse between floorboards. Zählte die Knochen  
der Kohle im Keller, ein schwarzes Loch.  
Das Regenwasser der Jahrzente stieg und

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stieg, während meine Eltern ihre Mäntel im Fluss  
ertränkten, afraid of the fungus that shimmers  
between feuchten Wimpern. Über dem Atlantik  
Wasser, water swallowed the scent of home—

Rost und Zimt. Ich schlief mit dem Reisepass  
unterm Kissen. Ein Traum von Zügen, mein  
rußverschmiertes Gesicht. How trains pass us  
without Erschütterung. I was born in the first  
Jahrhundert der Schuld—suchende Hände  
searched the map for the unmarked countries.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

# *An Introduction to Venatius Fortunatus for Schoolchildren or Understanding the Medieval Concept World Through Metonymy*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Mike Schorsch*

AVAILABLE FROM ANOMALOUS PRESS

### **Argument One: Why translations of medieval poetry are boring**

Choices are made intelligible by context.

The context that made the choices of medieval poets (like Venantius Fortunatus) intelligible no longer exists.

In that context—the context of late antique and medieval Christian Europe—Fortunatus’s poetry was intelligible. That is to say, people thought it was very good poetry.

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But in our context—the context of the consumer-capitalist, secular West—Fortunatus’s poetry is not intelligible. That is to say, it’s horrible poetry (even in a skillful translation).

Admittedly, scholars and the pious find his poetry pretty good still. This is because they inhabit contemporary sub-contexts that make Fortunatus’s poetry intelligible. You can’t learn Latin or pray all day and not end up alienated somehow from the context of consumer capitalism.

**Argument Two: There are two ways to bring something from the past into the present.**

One way is *transcription*. Transcription is expository, descriptive, and scientific, even when it is carried out with an artistic flourish.

The other way is *re-creation*. Re-creation is metonymical, fecund, and alchemic.

The difference between transcription and re-creation is that transcription hides the reader's context whereas re-creation makes manifest the reader's context.

Hiding the reader's context diminishes the text's power to act upon the reader by insulating the reader from the text. It thus increases the reader's capacity to act upon the text as a digestible consumer good.

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Manifesting the reader's context increases the text's power to act upon the reader. It shreds the insulation separating reader from text. It is dangerous to the status quo.

### **Illustration: The Emancipation Proclamation.**

We might *transcribe* the Emancipation Proclamation. To do this we would write down all the words in the Proclamation and explain what they meant. We would explain the Proclamation's historical situation. We might even reenact (a dramatic transcription) January 1st, 1863. But in all this, we would draw the reader's attention away from his own context and try to get him to imagine the lost context. We would provide enough data to the reader that he could create an imaginative projection of the no-longer existent context. We would be careful not to distract him with elements of his own context.

But if we wanted to *re-create* the Emancipation Proclamation in contemporary America, we would have to adopt much more radical measures.

### **Conclusion: The Only Way Forward**

On the one hand, translations of medieval religious poetry cannot simply bring the originals artfully into English since in doing so the context will be lost and the choices of the author will be rendered unintelligible. Formerly great poetry will become unbearable, stuffy dreck.

On the other hand, if translations are accompanied by further transcriptions (description, notes, introductions) in an attempt to provide an entry into the original context, the reader becomes more, not less, insulated from the text's power to act upon her.

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My purpose in writing *An Introduction to Venantius Fortunatus* is to re-create his poetry, not to transcribe it. Therefore you will see your own context, as well as Fortunatus's, in my translations of him. My purpose is to increase the chances that *he* will act on *you*.

The only way forward is re-creation.

NOTE: the excerpt in this issue of *Anomalous* does not exhibit re-creation but rather stylized transcription. I included transcriptions in the manuscript in order to raise questions about literary translation. I encourage you to read the chapbook—or at least the poem published in Issue 1—to see enacted my theory of literary translation as literary re-creation, and to better understand what in God's name I'm talking about.

# *From An Introduction to Venantius Fortunatus for Schoolchildren or Understanding the Medieval Concept World Through Metonymy*

*Mike Schorsch translating the Latin of Venantius Fortunatus*

## **Unit 2, Chapter 6. Four Addressed to a Tender Friend.**

*GAUL. INTERIOR. DAY. THE ROYAL HOUSE.*

30 *Enter VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS. He is dressed in the official color of the Virgin Mary (blue). GOGON, a new friend of Fortunatus, is lounging on a pillow and eating the skin off a GOOSE CARCASS. Gogon is a war chieftain and a learned advisor to the prince SIGIBERT. Sigibert recently hired Fortunatus to come and write poems for him about court life and the fine buildings being built. Fortunatus is still a relatively young troubadour. At this point in his life, he has already been miraculously healed of blindness by St. Martin of Tours, but has not yet met Abbess Radegund.*

*As for Gogon, he has just returned from Spain, where Sigibert sent him to bring back a SPANISH PRINCESS that Sigibert recently fell in love with. It is the mid-500s AD.*

*This is how the meetings of Fortunatus and Gogon go: Fortunatus recites a poem. Gogon listens and then gives pointers about Sigibert's tastes. In this encounter though, Fortunatus recites a poem he wrote about Gogon, not about Sigibert.*

*Venantius Fortunatus is a man whom we cannot see or ever meet (pending supernatural intervention and/or time travel) because he*

*is dead. This is a disappointing thought for many translators. In order to better understand translators and their desire to know dead people, let us abandon our first principles and join them in the practice of translation-as-we-know-it, that is to say, translation that pretends time travel in the strict sense is unnecessary, that is to say, the omnivorous tradition of translation which pretends there is no tradition that cannot be consumed and reproduced by one whose thought is properly calibrated in respect to openness and discernment and a desire to know the dead as one knows a friend.*

*Fortunatus looks into a dark mirror as he recites his poem to Gogon. All mirrors were dark in the mid-500s AD, due to an insufficiently advanced knowledge of how to flatten things. Clear reflections were thought to exist only in perfectly still ponds and the afterlife.*

*Fortunatus sees there:*

*(Turn page.)*

*Poem VII.I of Fortunatus. To Gogon.*

Orpheus, his thumb on the weft of strings,  
reaches out his singing lyre to the wild,  
and hollowed dens let go their beasts,  
and tigresses set down their rage to come.

Philomela, who was raped, had to go a long way.  
But she came when his music made its vow.  
She could recreate herself.

Like that, pilgrims through far kingdoms are made  
captives of your eloquence. Your words, your mouth,  
water and honey.

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And your voice flows on from secret depths,  
from your hidden cause. Your inner temple,  
your bright home shake out rays of splendor,  
and the beauty of your face—

The prince chose you, the flower the bees come to.  
And the wise choose the wise, a lover a lover.  
You have been to Spain and you return with bride-to-be,  
you carry back the summit of joys to a good man.

Swords, deadly soldiers, forests of razor, no one  
can offer what you win him peaceably. And you love him.  
And you don't need my words, carrying my heart.  
I say it, the people witness it, the truth that no lie

is in me. I wish my praises to last long,  
long years. I want this life to keep you here,  
and that life to sustain you lovingly.

*Poem VII.III of Fortunatus. A short letter to Gogon. Months later.*

There's a quarrel then. Well, what you just sent me extends it, no?  
But listen, between you and me there's only one guilty party. You  
were at Reims and that, my friend, ruined everything. Or perhaps  
you sinned, and I'm to blame? Not so. And...

And no. And never mind. And not this. Not this sweetness. It  
won't die. It shouldn't anyway, not over this sort of thing.

The warmth of our love will do nothing but persist.

In this heart at least.

33

### **Assignment for Chapter 6.**

*We all have had moments when we misunderstood the ways of a foreign culture. However, even more dangerous were those moments when we understood the ways of a foreign culture. In the Middle Ages love was a form of aristocratic self-definition. If you do not understand this, attempt to define yourself without reference to love. Then, pretend you are an aristocrat. The main objective of*

*this is to raise students' cross-cultural sensitivity as well as to practice four traditional language skills. The second question, below, should open with a "Diversity Welcome," a greeting of identities, backgrounds, and feelings that might be present in the group.*

1. Were the previous four poems/letters more or less accurately translated than those which came before? How do you know this?
2. How would you be able to tell yourself apart from your spouse, if you shared the same body? Please be as specific as possible.
3. Would you say something to me about spiritual friendship? What is it? What's so good about it? How do you start a spiritual friendship, and what is the purpose of one? Can friendship exist among all persons? If not, then among whom? How can you keep your spiritual friendships from collapsing into ruin?
4. Now name the first two books that come to mind. They should be *The Lord of the Rings* and some other book of your own choosing.
5. How does knowledge of a larger historical narrative affect your reading of translations?



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Ghost* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Sarah Tourjee*

CHAPBOOK AVAILABLE FROM ANOMALOUS PRESS

36

*Ghost* explores the intersections and separations of physical and mental experience. Three characters, or voices—ghost, human, and dog— inhabit the same physical structure (a house) but do not share a common language, and have no entry point whatsoever to the others' experience. Each character has a voice and wishes to communicate but ultimately is only able to communicate with the reader. They are each, essentially and in all senses, speaking another language, though they attempt repeatedly to address one another. The ghost lacks a physical body in addition to language. It is unseen as well as unheard, and because of this often wonders whether it can exist. The ghost and human are both completely obsessed with the one person who responded to their presence—a person who went missing some time ago, and who, as we eventually learn from the ghost, is dead.

Each character desperately wants to connect to the other. The human, who wants a medium to connect to her missing brother, calls out to the ghost to inhabit her. The ghost, unaware of her calling, does in fact attempt to inhabit her but its presence goes unnoticed. The dog sometimes senses the ghost, but the ghost is unaware of it. In the end only the reader can see each for they what they are, and hear them as they wish to be heard. *Ghost* asks: What is the role of language in physical existence? What is the role of the physical body in existence? And finally, in the absence of those qualities, how is existence experienced?

# From *Ghost*

*Sarah Tourjee*

## GHOST

This world is desert, dry dust and things that crackle and break. This world is heat that kills anything that does not adapt or stay inside. This house is a shelter, a container to be filled. This world contains desert which contains a house which contains bodies containing bodies containing organs, brains, spirits. This house is full of ghosts, but we are not contained by walls or heat or skin. I was human when a body enclosed me, and I was stuck there within it, attached to it and forced to be it. I was physical, a shelter that cracked and broke. And now I am nothing but a current of air.

Human, hello. What are you looking for? I can see it's not me you are trying to find. When I enter your skull and fit myself between lobes I am listening intently hoping to hear it, whatever buzzes inside. I hope to catch a glimpse of what it is that you seek. What was common between us is lost now. There is no language—mutual sound— that exists between bodies and ghosts, but only rarely the fleeting sense that we've touched.

37

Human walks into the house with an ever increasing number of dogs following behind her. Dogs chew at woodwork, dig at the floor, sleep. Human and dogs look right at me, then turn and leave the room. Did they see me? I approach the face of one, graze its skin, settle on the bridge of a nose. I am unnoticed.

Unrest this is unrest this is a well of unrest. This is what exists in the negative space. After life comes an absence of life which is no definition at all. I can tell you what I am not, but there are no words

for what I am. An absence of language exists in the area that is me, and yet there are words to say. Are they speaking? Do they speak? Dog stares at human stares at dog stares at ghost stares at human turns away. Each species is alone in a well of itself.

## DOG

Now forest, now concrete, now we are running. There are a lot of us, this is better than few. This better than starving and hiding and not knowing. Now we call out, we find more and more of ourselves, because this makes it safer and we need to be safe, and we need to not be alone. What does it mean to walk on two legs or run? This is impossible, this is a fantastic feat. She does this, and she produces food from thin air while we've scavenged for rot. She reaches out to touch us and suddenly there is calm.

- 38 We recruit now, we breed for her. We grow in numbers. We run. We spread out in all directions to clear the path as she walks. We attack anything that doesn't turn the other way. She doesn't even know we do this for her. She walks peacefully and we try to keep it that way. She is hunting for something, and we will help her find it.

Now a trespasser, now it kicks. Now we attack. There is blood in our mouths and this could be food, but this is not food. This is an enemy and if it should be eaten she will be the one to enjoy the meal, not us. She will be pleased, we hope, but we should not get distracted. We should not let down our guard lest it get away. It yells, cries, does not understand that this is our job now. We leave the intruder in the tall grass it came out of and then run back to greet our leader as she walks.

## HUMAN

I can live here. I can live here just fine. "If I am ever lost," I tell the dogs,

“start at the house and search in circles that widen.” This is how we try to find him. “Understand,” I say, “right.” This one dog is so funny, we laugh quite a lot, and I place my palm over its shoulders and it rests and I rest. But one night I find it crawled atop another dog, tail pushed to the side. I approach them and both snarl but will not detach. I bang some pots together and they finally run out of the house. The dog comes back eventually but I am wary of it now. I avoid it.

Everywhere it seems, under tables, in closets, at the foot of my bed, puppies are appearing from the bodies of dogs. This makes me wonder what will one day appear from my own body, or if inversely things will only disappear inside it, eventually enclosing itself, enclosing me. The latter thought is startling. There sure are a lot of them now, I think as I watch the dogs multiply. Have I only just realized it? I go to the bathroom for some towels.

Their numbers make me think, if I died would these dogs eat me? If 39 they were starving would they attack? I am sure that they would eat me, but if I were starving perhaps I’d do the same. They came to me for food, but now in their strength they bring me so much. The carcasses cover the yard. And I am comforted when I see it, this evidence that they are as determined as I am to avoid the consequences of our hunger.

I kneel down and put my arms around one of the dogs. It licks my face. I block it with my hand and it licks my hand. I am wearing my brother’s shirt. I pull the dog’s head to my chest. “Do you smell him?” I say to the dog. “Do you know where he is?” The dog growls, backs away. The look in its eyes is one I have seen before. It’s a look that does not know me. I stare into the dog’s face and say, “Is he dead?”

When I leave I hide behind a tree until the dogs lose interest in me, move away, then I’m off. I run.

# *The Continuing Adventures of Alice Spider*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Janis Freegard*

*Available from Anomalous Press*

Alice Spider first showed up when I was about eighteen and studying botany at Auckland University. Somehow she never left and, over time, Alice fragments continued to accumulate in a scrappy and irregular fashion. I hadn't thought of them as part of a cohesive whole until many years later when an assignment for a poetry workshop with Greg O'Brien required a prose poem. I collected together all my little Alice pieces and for the first time assembled them into a sequence.

40

Alice Spider made her first public appearance in the online journal *Turbine* in 2002 and a further selection of her adventures appeared in the joint publication *AUP New Poets 3* (Auckland University Press, 2008). In 2010, Alice visited Melissa Green's blog as part of a 'Tuesday Poem' exchange. The good folk at Anomalous Press spotted her there and were kind enough to invite Alice into their online journal and subsequently into a chapbook. 2010 also saw an Alice sequence appear in New Zealand literary journal *JAAM* (*Just Another Art Movement*).

Altogether, Alice now spans seventy-odd pieces ranging from the semi-autobiographical to the surreal. She's been fairly quiet recently, but I can never be sure when she'll pop up again.

I've been asked why her name is Alice Spider. I don't know. She's gone by that name from the first time we met and it's never oc-

curred to me that she might be anyone different. She may be distantly related to the Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and the Alice in *Go Ask Alice*. And I've always been fond of spiders.

# Alice and the Personality Disorder

Excerpted from *The Continuing Adventures of Alice Spider*

*Janis Freegard*

Alice Spider has a friend. Her name is Melanie May. She's not really a friend - they share the same body. When they grow up, they will have Multiple Personality Disorder. Melanie May will be deluded. I am the Virgin Mary, she will say, the Holy Mother. Alice Spider will be catatonic, and paranoid on Tuesdays.

## Who is Alice?

Excerpted from *The Continuing Adventures of Alice Spider*

Janis Freegard

Alice Alice (who the fuck is Alice?) knows exactly who she is. She is Alice Spider, a weaver of words, a weaver of life. She spins herself a safe and cosy little home. She spins herself a wild, wild life. Alice Spider has many tattoos and a ring through her beautiful nose.

Who are you little Alice? Who are you now? And she says I am Alice Spider. I am Alice Pain.

Alice has a black cloak studded with real stars that keeps the world out. She has no fear, that Alice-in-the-cloak. Her wicked lipstick smile grins out from behind her black hood; her wicked eyes twinkle. She is hip and groove and totally cool. And she is Alice. As always.

43

I am Alice the Weaver, Alice the Webster, Alice the Spinner of Lives, of Lines, of Lies. I am Alice. Alice Spider.

And Alice has half a bottle of Chardonnay still undrunk (and we all know Alice likes a little drink now and then) and Alice has half a packet of cigarettes still unsmoked (and we all know Alice likes a smoke now and then) and Alice has a knife in the kitchen still unused (and we all know Alice Likes Blood.)

Alice is Alice is Alice. And she is truly alive.

When there are no more censors, when there are no more limits,

only then will there be Alice on the page, as she is spoke. Only the Spider waiting in her web. Alice striking; Alice devouring the stuck, struggling fly. Alice strikes again. No regrets.

Oh baby, you are all mine. Alice the Vixen. Alice Desired.

## Alice Waits

Excerpted from *The Continuing Adventures of Alice Spider*

Janis Freegard

It's like. It's a lot like. It's like being in love. It's that mirror you see yourself reflected in. This is me. It's like. It's a lot like. It's like being. It's like being in love.

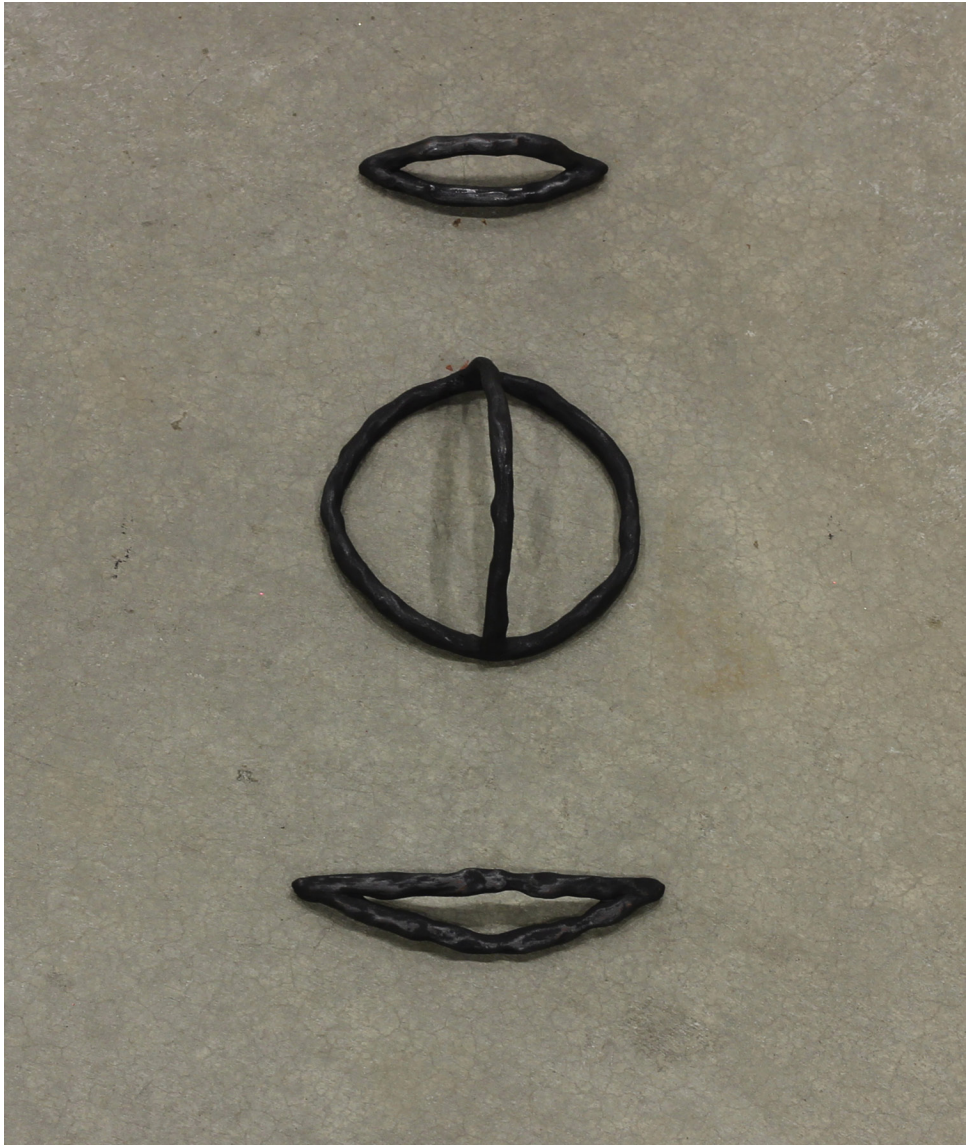
Come on, little Alice, you know how to wait. Alice can wait years. Alice is a Wild Child. Alice casts a spell, with Alice as the bait. Alice wants it all to be over. Alice wants it all to go on. Alice wants hope. Alice wants assurance. Alice is sometimes not quite sure exactly what she does want.

Alice is both too old and too young for this. Alice is exactly the right age.

45

Oh my dears, did I ever tell you? How wonderful and how like a roller-coaster and how exactly? And it's lies I know, but on the inside, darlings, on the inside. I can't begin to tell you. Me, in my furs, all possum of course. And all the silver cutlery, did I ever tell you? Perhaps I forgot. It's where I always belonged, hotels like that. And I had a hangover that day. I remember.

Alice is a tiger. Wired tight. Pacing. Pool of desire. Loving it. Feeling alive. Give. Give to me. I need.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

# *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Becca Barniskis

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST FINALIST, FORTHCOMING

*Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket* is a dramatic, first person chronicle of a military campaign waged between and across two hearts. The voices of the two characters alternate and increasingly intertwine as they plot strategy and outline tactics all of which emerge from their memories of childhood games of tinkering and violence and yet remain inextricable from the past. M and X plan operations—from single-agent espionage to set-piece battles—but the object of victory is by its nature unclear. The two players are adversaries of a kind; they share fundamental aesthetics of love, play and war. The most fearsome and impossible opponent in any struggle is the one who thinks and feels as you.

47

The form of this project includes elements that suggest a theatrical script, film script and song cycle. The language and imagery is highly associative but also concrete—the allusions are primarily sensory or relate to objects and scenes. The characters are simultaneously types and highly idiosyncratic. Taken as a whole the work can be read as a critical investigation of the hostile and calculating dimensions of love and the ways in which these drive and are driven by deep passion and desire. It can also be understood as a dynamic character study that seeks to illuminate the aesthetic

and historical bases of human connection: what part of a relationship between two people is about the way they see the world and/or each other? What part is about personal and historical associations and the influence of past events?

## Xavier Box

Excerpted from *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum  
That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket*

*Becca Barniskis*

I dodge the huge swag of laughter  
swinging like a noose  
in the darkened hall.

Pace its length.

There are many doors to consider.

This one being most likely  
and most likely dangerous.

I am always ready to die  
(although I hardly think it necessary);  
this mission is extremely  
simple: capture her before morning.

## Mimi

Excerpted from *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum  
That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket*

*Becca Barniskis*

Inside my bones (fine china)  
sweet powder and keg,  
crackling lines,  
thus the long sleeves and lace  
at my wrists.  
[whispering] But who has not peered  
inside her own skull  
and found it charred?

50

I steady my nerves  
with a shot—  
I may have to set a fuse  
tonight.

## X

Excerpted from *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum  
That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket*  
Becca Barniskis

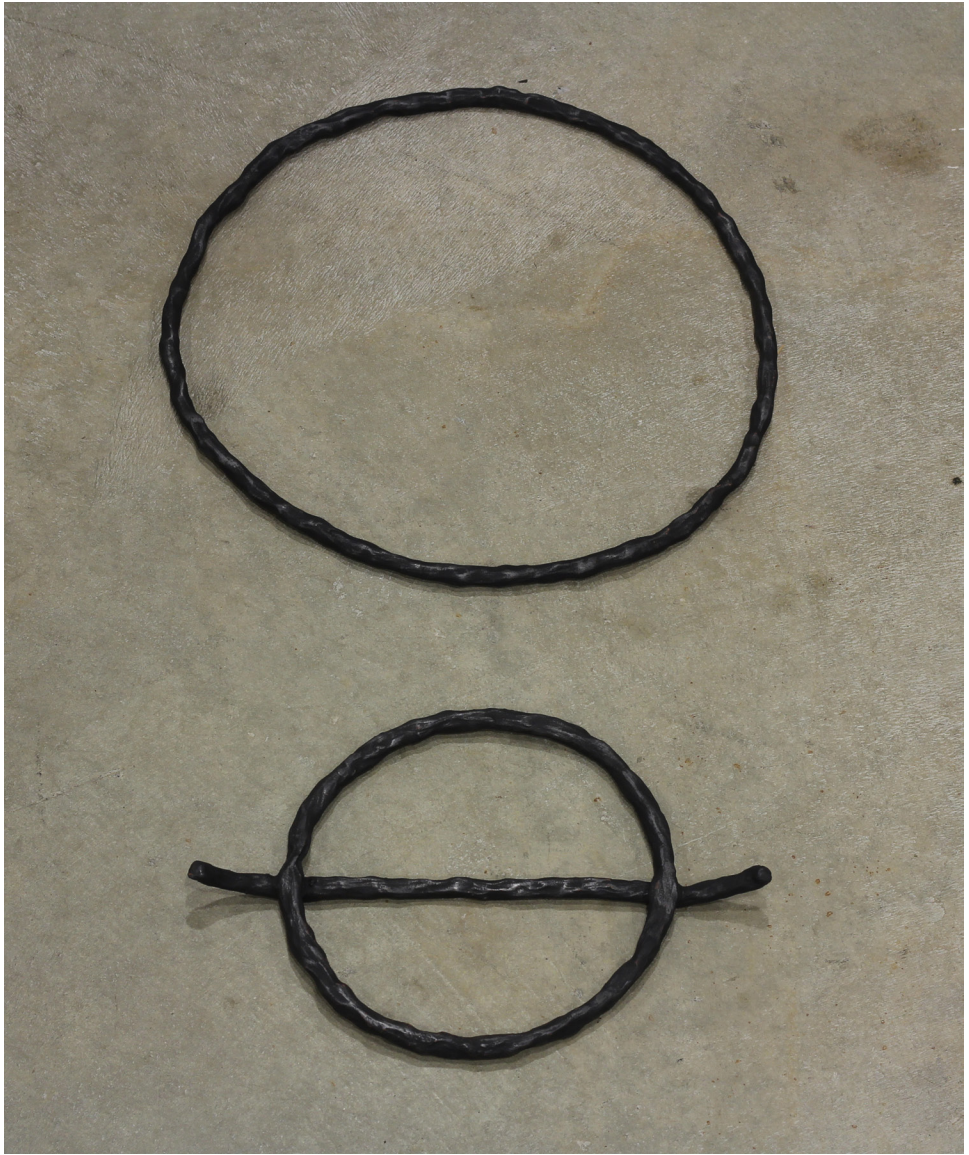
When I was a boy  
I believed in secret toys  
that moved in cupboards  
and hissed  
through keyholes.  
I played under tables in the nursery  
with my tin weapons  
and read earnest books  
on wilderness survival.  
I grew up! I studied war!  
and how to pick locks:  
women, books, maps.

# M

Excerpted from *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum  
That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket*  
Becca Barniskis

[Not glancing up].  
Ever clever, that one.  
Cannot even figure  
how to spring me.  
Just stands stupidly.  
[Removes all her clothing and then resumes measuring and  
mixing.]

52    There are some that run screaming  
out to the playground,  
thoughtless fun on their minds  
and others who loiter,  
wait, watch.  
[holding up a small pen and looking at it]  
I would like to kill  
a lot of birds  
with one stone.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *The Everyday Maths* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Liat Berdugo*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST WINNER

AVAILABLE FROM ANOMALOUS PRESS

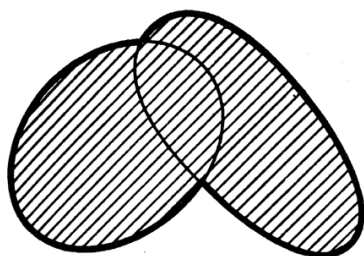
*The Everyday Maths* reinterprets diagrams and figures found in the mathematics textbooks that Berdugo studied while obtaining her undergraduate degree in abstract mathematics. The figures convey double meanings: a scientific meaning known to the mathematician, and an imaginative visual meaning that can be gathered by observation alone. Over the course of forty-seven figures — a short excerpt of which is included in this issue of *Anomalous* — Berdugo looks at the tension between what the mathematician has the capacity to understand and what the layperson has the capacity to imagine. Sometimes the text points to the obvious associations (it *does* look like that warped taurus shape was a masticated donut), yet other times the connections and new interpretations are more obscure (a closed jagged shape becomes an opportunity to consider the arbitrariness of national borders). These diagrams — each having its own revisioned title, body text, and figure label — provide an access point to the specialized material (topology, set theory, abstract algebra) that would otherwise remain quarantined behind the boundaries of knowledge-based access. *The Everyday Maths* a statement about the delight of incongruity and about the beauty of mathematics and its accessibility.

## Just the Heads

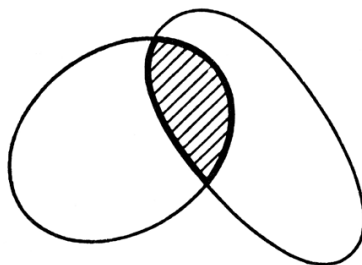
Excerpted from *The Everyday Maths*

*Liat Berdugo*

THEY ARE WATCHING A MOVIE. THEY ARE  
POSING FOR CIVIL UNION PICTURES. APART,  
THEY ARE NOTHING. TOGETHER, THEY  
ARE EVERYTHING.



$A + B$



$AB$

55

FIGURE 79. EVERYTHING AND A PART OF  
EVERYTHING.

## When Some Things Fail

Excerpted from *The Everyday Maths*

Liat Berdugo

SOMEONE HAS COME AND LABELED EVERYTHING. WE ARE AT A LOSS FOR WORDS.

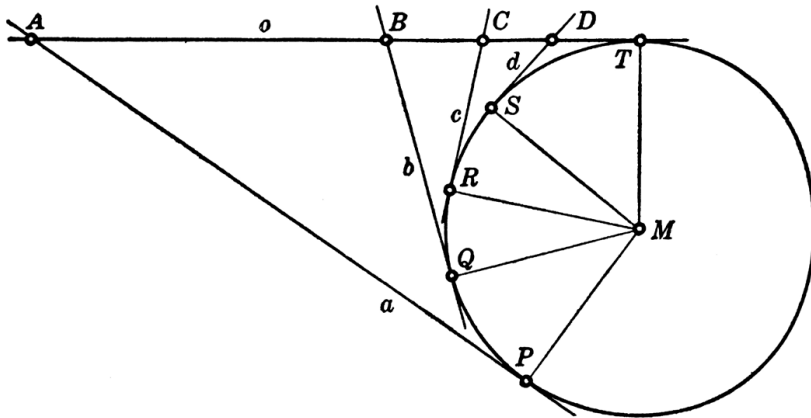


FIGURE 9. A WORD MACHINE, ALBEIT DEFICIENT IN VOWELS, USED VIA REPEATED CONNECTING OF THE DOTS.

## All Men Equal

Excerpted from *The Everyday Maths*

*Liat Berdugo*

WHEN IT CAME RIGHT DOWN TO IT, ALTHOUGH THEY EACH RECEIVED AN EXTRA SEX CHROMOSOME IN UTERO, THEY WERE BOTH JUST MEN. MEN WHO LIKED TO CHOP FIREWOOD AND TRACE THEIR ROOTS WITH DIAGRAMS.

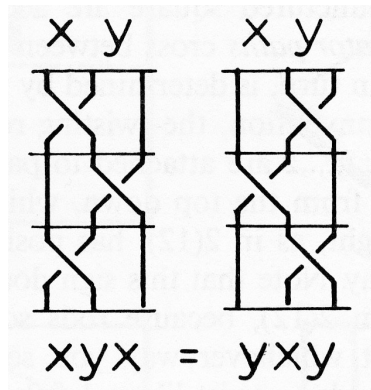


FIGURE 29. THEY HELD THOSE TRUTHS TO BE SELF EVIDENT

## There Might Have Been Some Mastication

Excerpted from *The Everyday Maths*

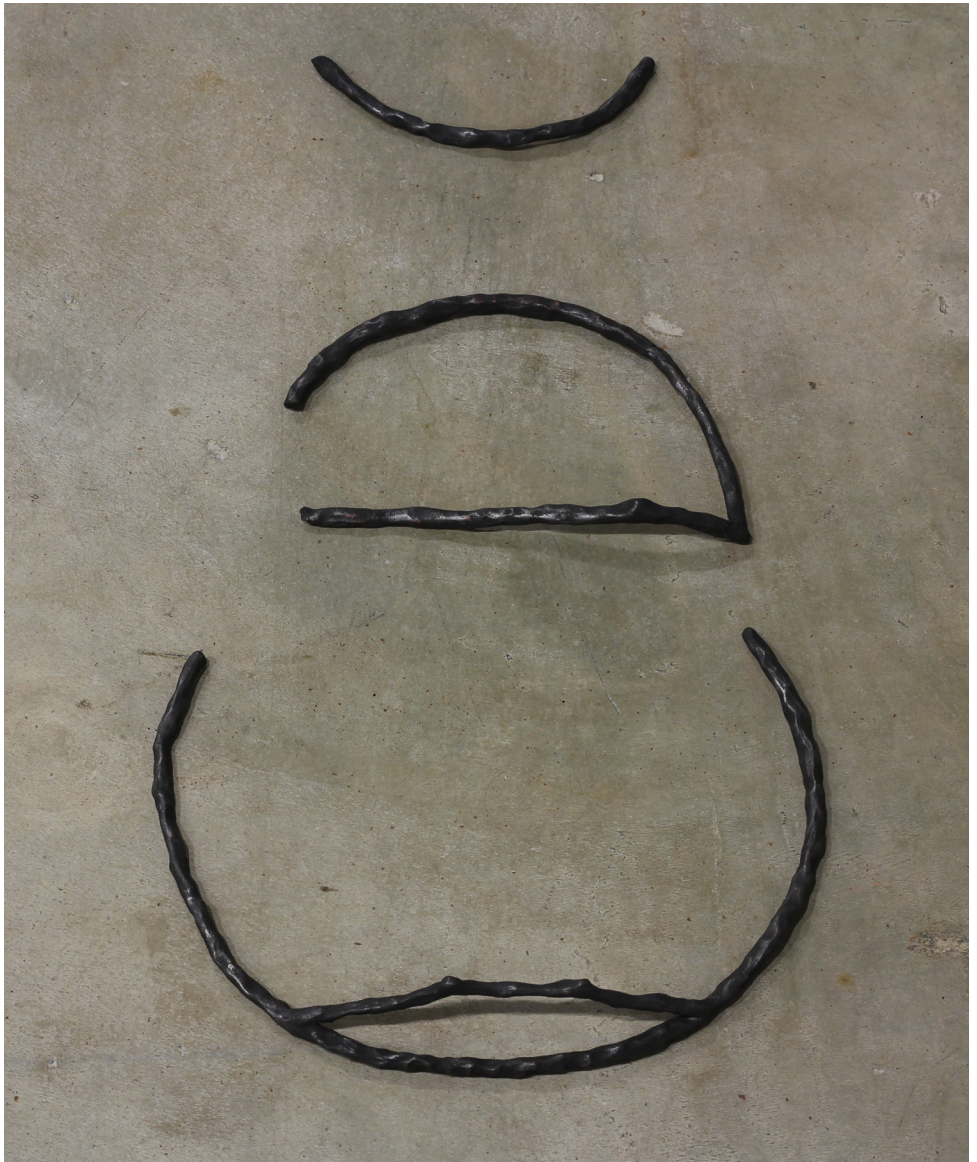
*Liat Berdugo*

PERHAPS THE DOG CHEWED IT. OR, IT MELTED. WHAT IS THE CURRENT TEMPERATURE IN DEGREES CELSIUS? IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE CAUSE AND EFFECT. AT LEAST THERE IS STILL THAT WIDE OPENING TO GET YOUR ARM THROUGH.

58



FIGURE 7. THERE IS STILL A HOLE.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

# *Smedley's Secret Guide to World Literature*

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Askold Melnyczuk*

AVAILABLE FROM ANOMALOUS PRESS

60

Hyper-savvy and cyber-sexed, fifteen-year old Jonathan has more than just female troubles. Suspended from school thanks to an inexcusable misstep—and with his family imploding around him—he's packed off to Manhattan to care for his high-living, once-glamorous godfather, who's had a stroke. Formerly attorney to the dimmer stars, the "GF" has skeletons that refuse to stay in the closet. Jonathan's own family also has secrets he wishes he didn't know. To forget them he dives into an assignment forced on him by his father. A poet who teaches at the "Big H," he's tasked Jonathan with writing a history of literature in the age of Twitter. But the siren song of the city keeps him distracted. In a penthouse over Central Park, Jonathan meets the nubile (and worldly) Mirabai, and his life threatens to take a sharp turn. Along the way, he has his say about parents, love, sex, friendship, art, and the world at large. Speaking directly to the obsessions of our present in the voice of the future, Jonathan manages to remind us, and himself, that no one knows how anything will turn out until it happens and that, as someone once said, our great and glorious masterpiece is to live appropriately. Over a single week in NYC, he does just that.

## Dad, Poet, 1954 ad nauseum

Excerpted from *Smedley's Secret Guide to World Literature*

Askold Melnyczuk

When all that remains of my father is print, I want these words to stand beside his on every library shelf.

My father was born on December 13, 1954, on Irving Street in Cambridge. ee cummings lived a few blocks away half a century earlier—a fact Dad pointed out to anyone in range, as though to prove the area's durable lodestone of poetic grit. Dad's grand-dad, my great-grandfather, who ate a bullet long before I arrived, was a heavy duty cock-meister and ... nah, can't do it .... As I said, family history isn't my thing.

Let's try this instead:

Not only is Dad a shameless self-googler, he also makes his students subscribe to his Twitter feed so he can share his latest insights about this week's New Yorker. He radiates insane, even violent ambition. He covers the map of my world like an oil spill. There was a time when we used to shower together, wearing swimsuits. He'd soap me and I'd soap him until Mom finally made him stop.

Dad is also super-impressed that he teaches at Harvard. Half his sentences begin: "At Harvard, we ...." Amazingly, the words work weird magic. People fall under his spell like he was Dumbledore. Mom, on the other hand, claims Harvard has only two goals: teaching money to replicate itself, and prolonging the lifecycle of the bow tie. She says the school's been morally bankrupted by

fat-fart economists whose contribution to higher education has been to build new buildings inspired by the work of the late Albert Speer.

\*

Needless to say, like everyone my age, I think about killing myself all the time. Not all the time. Now and again. The rest of the time, got Rene on my mind. Go figure.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Lux & Cyborg* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Laura McCullough*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

These poems are small containers, usually 11-20 lines long and usually with 11 syllable lines, appropriating street language, gaming-speak, SMS language (textslang), that explore the nexus between science and metaphysics. The title includes the Latin word for 'light' and the portmanteau, 'cyborg,' short for cybernetic organism. The poems incorporate issues of race, class, and politics, and there are several recurring characters, including Jilly, a street adolescent who becomes pregnant by the end of the series, her gay friend, Fred, who thinks about suicide by train, their friend Boddy, who joins the marines, Randy, who gets out of town and goes to college, where he befriends, Iggy, who uses a wheelchair for locomotion. I think these poems are about what it means to be a person, which is to say a small container, constrained by biology and also by constructs such as race, class, and gender, and what we do to survive what tries to extinguish us, what we do to transcend ourselves.

## Help for the Reality Challenged

Excerpted from *Lux & Cyborg*

*Laura McCullough*

Overhead the ticker, DOW across the clouds,  
silver alert on the Garden State Parkway,  
black boy—hoodie, ear buds—Florida going  
down anyway, the coast in danger, surging  
seas just a click away, the map will show your  
danger status. The clouds, see the reflection  
up there, pollution keeping the moisture screen  
alive. Don't be willful. The image is you.  
Don't have anything to apologize for.  
Apologize for everything. It's  
all you have to give. Pardon our appearance  
while we reconstruct this mess, ourselves at best.

## That's the Game, Boys

Excerpted from *Lux & Cyborg*

*Laura McCullough*

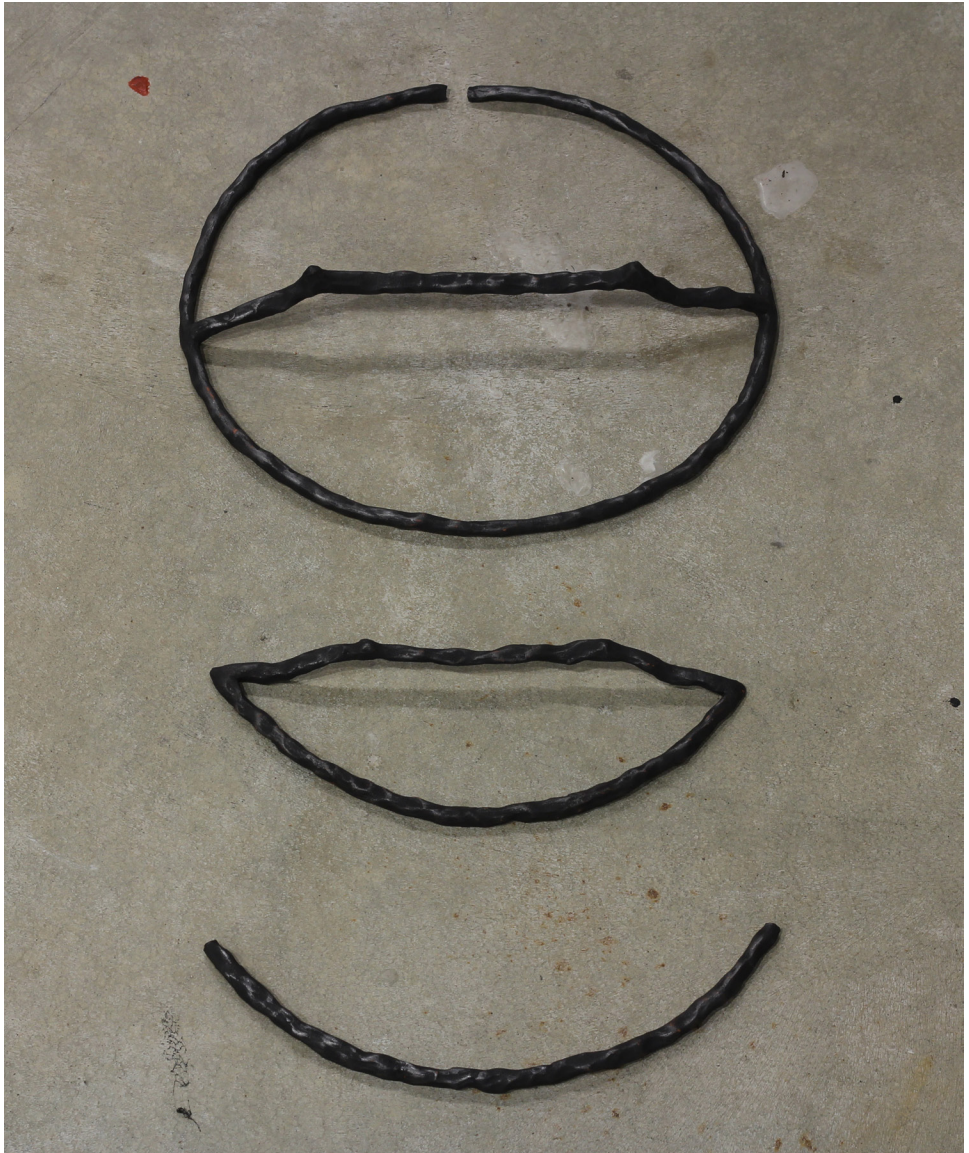
Tea bag dunk, junk on display, sex for sisters,  
mistress may, you're all in the game now, boys  
sucked right in, draping themselves in velvet, I  
got a crush, who doesn't want beauty, can I  
make that declaration? Mixed up vamps and  
'pires, shame and surety, sparkle crotch, grinding  
at LXXX til 2am then a dunk in the sea,  
dirty Atlantic, roll in the sand, grit on  
your behind, running as fast as you can, wind,  
I am the wind, waiting for the sun to burn  
the line of night away, the cameras can't  
lose this man, please save it for posterity.

## Bowie My Hair Goddess Grow

Excerpted from *Lux & Cyborg*

*Laura McCullough*

Touch the torch, electricity is restored,  
so you're not in the dark tonight, sweetheart.  
The guy with the Bowie jammed the lines, cut through  
the static, no one home in the hurricane  
anyway. Isn't like you to be alone. Pink  
shampoo and fashion tips. There was a dog in  
the street last night, the one with three legs we see  
round here sometimes. Chased it, chased it through the trees  
and the yards, and it got hit. The electric  
company truck, cherrypicker folded down,  
Gatorade tub strapped across the back, and  
the shovel, the one he used to scrape it up.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Pachinko Mouth* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Michael Gushue*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

Pachinko is a popular gambling pastime in Japan, using a device that is halfway between a pinball and slot machine. The player shoots a stream of tiny ball bearings to the top of the machine where they clatter down, bouncing off metal pins and spinners on the way to the bottom. Balls that fall into the winning slots release more balls as a reward. Balls can be exchanged for prizes, which can be exchanged for cash at kiosks outside of the pachinko parlor. The game is balanced between skill (how much force to use releasing the bearings) and chance (the balls falling through the machine).

69

Pachinko Mouth is a game with a series of turns, each taking different paths. The words that are released as a result of the turn ricochet off the pieces that follow. There is a host, or barker, who introduces the turns, but is not necessarily trustworthy; not duplicitous, but perhaps under surveillance. It is the barker's job to keep the player attracted to the game, and to keep the player playing. There are six turns altogether, the number of sides of a die.

So the project becomes a combination of intuition and calculation, desire and habit, funny and serious. The idea of a theme or an arc is excluded as such. If there is a center, it's a center made by probability, as in a Galton box. You can't play a game knowing the outcome as, at most, anything other than probable. This sounds abstract, but this kind of speaking works to subvert our crav-

ing for generality (there are no abstract sounds). It invites us to take pleasure, to enjoy the view. Words have their own behaviors, which include misbehavior (behave = bee hive). In each instance a word has to solve how to spend its energy, what to gather, and what to store. Words also have their secrets. They take us where they will. Riddles, descriptions, explanations, quotations, stories, valedictions. Every poem is made up of pairs of roads diverging in a yellow wood. It's not always clear why we choose one path over another. All of us, always, are taking chances.

Reference points: Lev Vygotsky, Władysław Tatarkiewicz, Francis Galton, John Donne, Bernd Heinrich.

# Pachinko Mouth, First Turn

Excerpted from *Pachinko Mouth*

*Michael Gushue*

Hey! Dou shiteru? And also Aloha. Here I am,  
convincing you.

And yes, I can be a gamble.

So what do you like? Fun?

*Sazo!*

Me, maybe a machine fond of amusement and subtraction.

A spray of fuchsia,  
a fan of lime green rays,  
strokes of electric blue.

71

In my display,  
foil and garnish are important resources:

*Voila!*

Also, I am attached.

But mostly I am gravity,  
pinballish, viscera of cogs, levers, pistons,  
counterweights, switches, induction coils,  
subroutines, anything that vibrates, anything that hopes  
to vibrate someone else.

Whoa.

Alas,

though,

I

am

utterly

*sans*

flippers,

that is to say,

armature,

which is to say,

control,

which leads to

72

uncertainty.

Thus I have come to rely on chance. Or something like that.

Okay, the floor is open. *Ganbatte!*

## Pachinko Mouth, Second Turn

Excerpted from *Pachinko Mouth*

Michael Gushue

So,

when we were all tucked away, ready for—LIGHTS OUT!— bedding

sometimes

we

heard

The Tale of the Three Princesses with Unpleasant Physical Characteristics,

73

or

How Oatmeal Became King,

or, well, ha-ha, as much as

I can remember,

this one:

There once was a *dosai* monkey named Babbalanja. One day a *shibui* persimmon seed noticed Babbalanja squeaking by, wearing his public face. The seed said, “Hey, Monkey! Hey, Fur-All-Over! Name three things that hurt.” And Babbalanja said, “A bee, a chestnut’s burr, a sewing

needle, and being here.” “What kind of bee?” asked the persimmon seed.

Next door, a crab named Azzageddi was instructing her children. “If you don’t bud quickly I’ll dig you up with my eggbeater.” Her frightened children quickly sprouted. Then Azzageddi said, “*Noroi!* If you don’t hurry up and grow, I’ll clip all of you in half with my shears.” Her children quickly grew as big as possible under the circumstances. Finally, Azzageddi threatened her children, “Bear fruit or I’ll discipline you to bits with this *hocho*.” The frightened children promptly gave birth all over the place.

Also,

the box,

74

the box I came in?

That box?

It was so clearly marked

NOT PREPARED TO LIVE.

# A Valediction For When Words Fail

Excerpted from *Pachinko Mouth*

*Michael Gushue*

It's wrong to say I know what you are thinking,  
but it's wrong to think you know what I'm saying,

because language is a blunt instrument.  
It's a game of Battleship where we float

rules and then torpedo and submerge them,  
shelling each other, shrapnel raining down.

All the pachinko sounds that spill out of us,  
the clicks, obstruents, sonorants, implosives—

75

what in all that downpour can lend a hand?  
All you words—you bare ruined birds on a wire—

threadbare knickknacks of sign—I look forward  
to your failure to communicate—and

not because silence is golden—that means  
only a miser would be happy with it—

but because sometimes it's either sink or swim,  
better to be marooned than to be blue

in the face trying to get what can't be got.  
Do we ever really know what to say?

It's time to have the flow of logos stop.  
Let's let our tongues be still and have our hands

speak up. Our nerve endings want to be heard  
by touch, our oldest, deepest conversation.

Hand talks to skin, and skin answers back,  
the verb of hipbone, clauses of thigh and neck,

a clavicle's exclamation—these haptic  
cadences are the lines of our bodies,

and, like copper wires that carry spark,  
we become incandescent with communion.

76

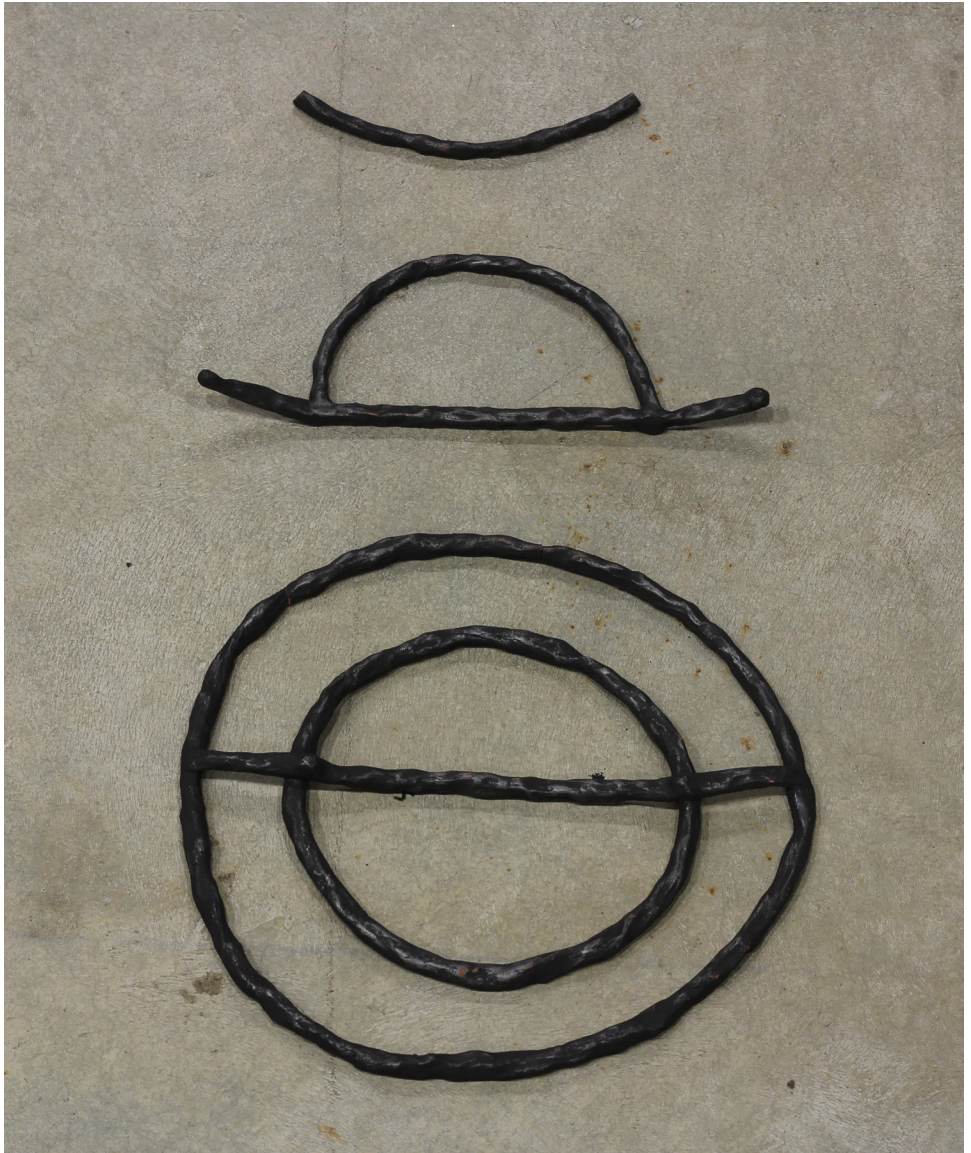
That glow, that indigo fire, it's the heat  
of the sun that honey holds in its depth,

the current swept with caress that carries  
electricities. We charge each other.

So, if it seems I am gone beyond reach,  
remember you and I have contact still.

We are part of the same capacitor:  
two bodies whose difference collects ardor.

That stock of touch is our habitation,  
the hive we weave to save our ambered lives.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Warring States* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Aaron Crippen

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE

These poems are part of a still-growing chapbook of two dozen poems entitled *Warring States*. The title of each poem in *Warring States* is an old-form Chinese character. To compose a poem, I take the pictographic elements in an old-form character as the ingredients and inspiration for the poem. The character may show two trees and a woman, for example, and have a present meaning of “avarice.” I take these elements as building blocks for the poem. This isn’t translation or interpretation. It’s writing English poems through my encounters with Chinese. In content, the poems are united by their scene: a stark psychological, semi-desert world that never existed somewhere west of Xi’an, 2500 or 3000 years ago.

Chinese words mostly are not pure pictographs. But the building blocks of today’s words remain pictographic. The word meaning “wood,” for example, *looks like* a tree: 木. And a few “woods” put together create the idea of “forest”: 森. This visual quality makes Chinese unique among living languages.

So Chinese has concreteness and scale. A word can be as big as a mountain. See the three peaks of the mountain ridge in *shan*: 山. A word can reach to the horizon and onward to the sun, as in “dawn”: 旦. Put these two words together, 山旦, and the poetic mind boggles at the visual scale expressed with such compactness, concreteness; so elementally: the peaked mountain ridge, the sun on the line of the horizon. In *Warring States* I try to bring some of the elemental materiality of Chinese into English.

Putting three trees together to represent a forest is a simple enough idea. But things get more interesting as ideas get more abstract. How to represent the idea of “good,” for example? Join the word for “female,” 女, with the word for “child,” 子, to yield 好, “good.” This type of juxtaposition is the “ideogrammic method” that influenced Pound.

If “woman” + “child” = “good” sounds like an old equation, it is. Since Chinese writing doesn’t primarily signify sound, it is relatively unaffected by changes in pronunciation over the millennia. If people today pronounce a word differently from how Confucius did thousands of years ago, it matters little to the writing. So, many words that were used in Confucius’ time are still in use today, in the same written form. Some words have survived since the very dawn of Chinese writing. That’s how I feel when I am writing these poems in *Warring States*, like I am at the dawn of civilization, in a more elemental time. I guess I want to recover an immediacy in the object world of trees and suns and mountains. I seek the pith and compactness of Chinese too.

## closing his eyes he

Excerpted from *Warring States*

*Aaron Crippen*



closing his eyes he  
dreamt of everything at once  
and did not know

opening his eyes  
he rose with the mat weave  
imprinted on his back

80



she kneels with the knife  
he is above her, giving orders,  
with as many mouths  
as the rain

she can hear each drop  
from the clouds, to the treetops,  
to the roaring stream

## fresh-stripped of skin

Excerpted from *Warring States*

*Aaron Crippen*



fresh-stripped of skin  
any one of us can kill  
but we warp with the weather

he binds us together  
that we know how to fly on the eye-line

slip into bodies  
bury our heads  
in blood

# He Gives You Your Vision

Excerpted from *Warring States*

Aaron Crippen



He gives you your vision.  
You give him your eyes.  
He spreads his blanket across your jewels,  
Then he falls on you.  
What do you hear with his tongue in your ear?  
Where is your vision now?

82

*Listen . . . Colorless things in shapeless places  
Clamor. Where the lantern dies.  
What the stars mouth in the sky.  
Through the cracks. Back of the grain.  
I am the sound behind.  
Open the door.  
Open the door.*

## the moon

Excerpted from *Warring States*

*Aaron Crippen*



the moon

a mouth

a call

a name

## under your foot

Excerpted from *Warring States*

*Aaron Crippen*

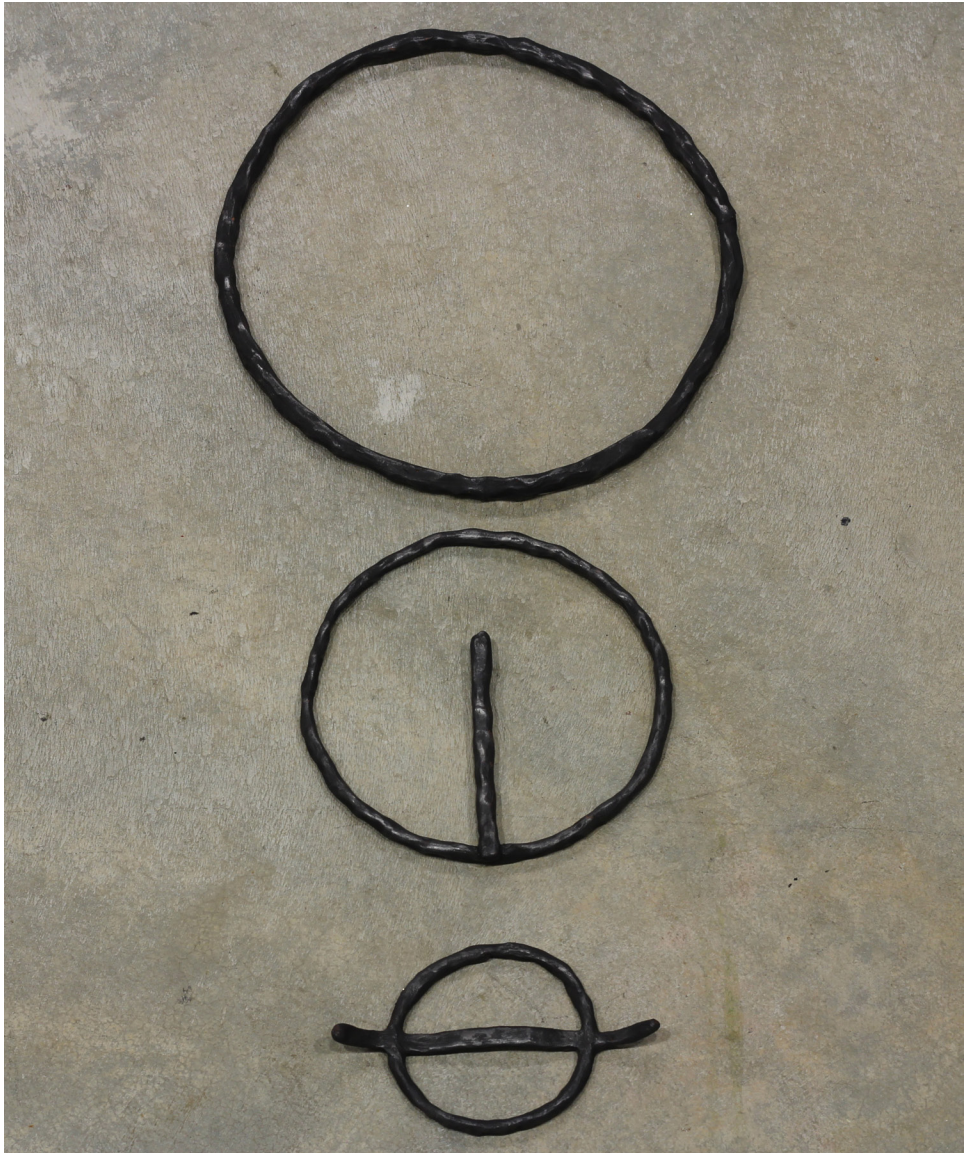


under your foot  
color of wheatchaff

furrowed  
seedy  
plain

84

Lord stoop to shit on me  
I will yield



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Mystérieuse* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Sandra Doller*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST WINNER

*Available from Anomalous Press*

A sort of theoretical ekphrasis, Éric Suchère's *Mystérieuse* is an image-to-text "translation" of collaged pages from Hergé's Tintin comic books, rendered in painstakingly conceptual detail: each frame of each comic—and even each stroke of each drawing inside each frame—are accounted for linguistically, from Tintin's unforgettable drops of sweat, to Snowy's emoticon-esque reactions, to the broad stroke backgrounds of the comic squares. Following a trajectory of Hergé admirers from Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein to Steven Spielberg, Suchère's text is an important contribution to the pop-art potential of representational language, contemporary conceptual writing, and word-image investigations.

This short selection is a brief extract from the longer 100+page project. The pages herein are drawn from one particular Tintin book, *L'étoile mystérieuse*. Part of this manuscript was selected by Christian Hawkey as winner of the 2012 Anomalous Press Translation Prize, to be published as a chapbook in 2013.

## From *Mystérieuse*

### Excerpted from *Mystérieuse*

*Sandra Doller translating the French of Éric Suchère*

#### 21.

Night, white stars on black, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figures walk on the line—observation of a beautiful night, unseasonable warmth.

Night, white stars on black, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figures walk on the line, a star shoots in a white curve, bursts, the figure points his finger, the animal turns around, drops of sweat splash—a wish, a piece of advice.

Night, white stars on black, one star brighter, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figures walk on the line to a street lamp in relief, simple strokes, the animal figure hits it head-on, crash and light spiral, ripples emit colored stars around—comment on a constellation.

87

Large vertical night, white stars on black, one star brighter, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figure, stopped on the line, points his finger at the brighter star while the animal figure wanders, staggers in a series of scrolls and loops, colored stars around, drops of sweat splash—summons to look, question about the increased shining.

Large vertical night, white stars on black, one star brighter, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figure, stopped on the line, looks at the star shining more while the animal figure stops,

not understanding, small lines around, drops of sweat splash—amazement, and a question about the celestial phenomenon's intensity.

Large vertical night, white stars on black, one star brighter, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figures walk on the line—growing amazement, relativizing.

Street, sidewalks in straight lines, house, street lamp, long wall, house and leafless tree in relief behind, night above, white stars on black: two figures, jackets in hand, walk in the opposite direction of the two figures who walk into the space defined by the lines, drops of sweat splash—announcement of an action, looking for an answer.

88

Simple background, telephone wire in loops: the figure telephones, drops of sweat splash—questions about the celestial phenomenon as well as the warming.

Simple background, telephone wire in loops: the figure telephones, drops of sweat splash—question without an answer.

## From *Mystérieuse*

Excerpted from *Mystérieuse*

*Sandra Doller translating the French of Éric Suchère*

22.

Simple background, telephone wire in loops: the figure puts down the handset, mops his brow, drops of sweat splash—questioning and astonishment grow with the heat.

Wall and baseboard, heavy curtains, others sheer, windows onto night, white stars on black, reflections in black and white strokes: the figure opens the window, drops of sweat splash, merge with the stars—questioning.

Ledge, curtains, windows onto night, white stars on black, one star brighter: the figure looks at it, drops of sweat splash into the window he holds open—wonder and observation.

Night, white stars on black, one star brighter, town in blue relief, facades, roofs, chimneys: the figures walk on the line, fast, drops of sweat splash—initiative.

Night, white stars on black, one star brighter, bare trees in black relief above rotunda with white rectangle, window: no action—contemplation.

Doorstep, stair: the animal figure sits and rests, drops of sweat splash, the figure rings, ripples emanate from a rectangle with a black circle—exhaustion and a determined gesture.

Night, white stars on black, one star brighter: the figure looks at it—observation.

Door in vertical lines: a doorman figure half-opens it suspiciously, answers very aggressively—request and refusal.

Door in vertical and horizontal lines: it closes, banging, ripples emanate from the double rectangle, the figures watch without reacting, drops of sweat splash, vibrant strokes shoot from the animal's tail, burst into black stars around—real surprise at such rudeness.

Simple background: the figures stand on the line—annoyance.

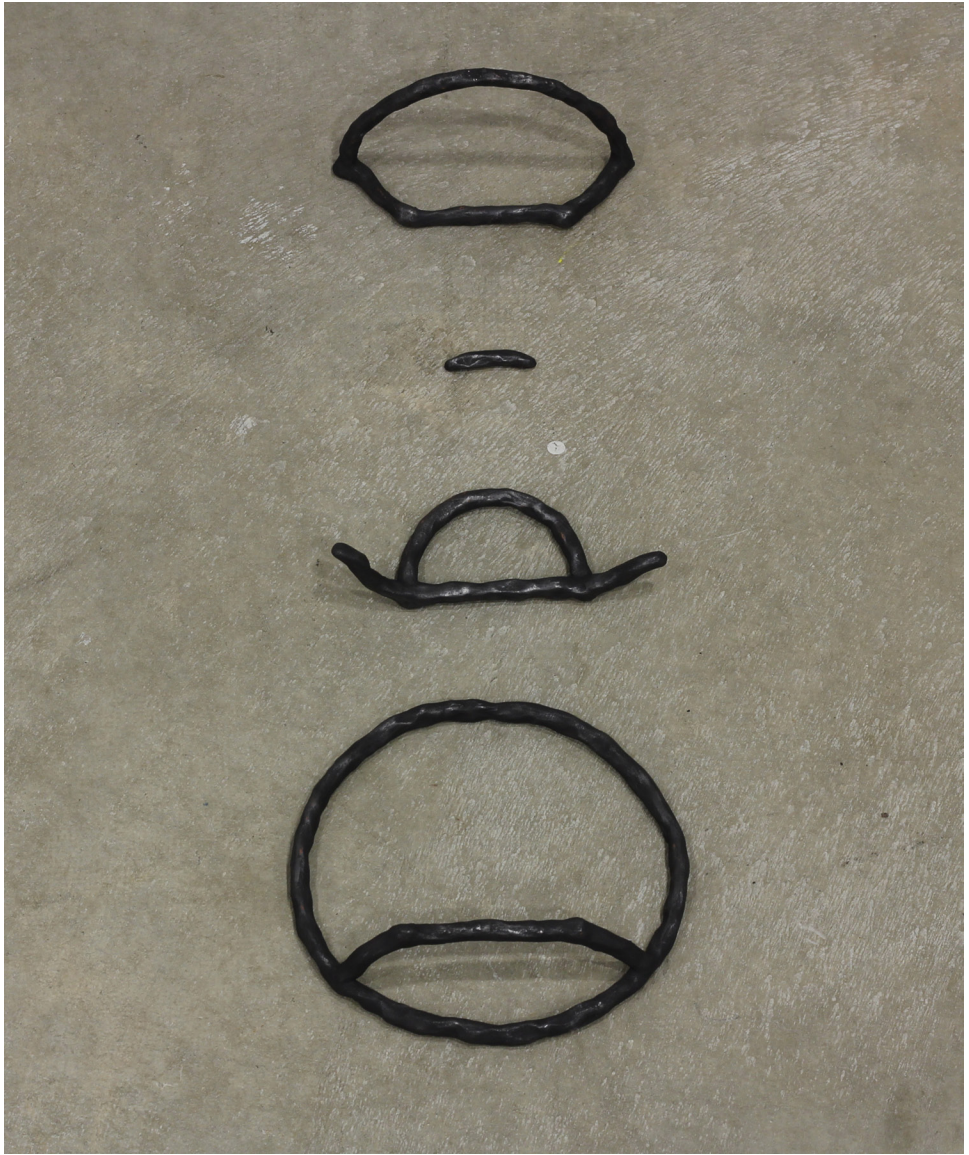
Simple background: the figure rings, ripples emanate from the rectangle with the black circle—awaiting an answer.

Door in vertical lines ajar: the doorman figure answers very aggressively, while the other figure pretends—a trick in action.

90

Door in vertical and horizontal lines: the figure stands on the sidewalk line, leads the other figure on the step away by the arm—the trick in action.

Door in vertical and horizontal lines: the doorman figure stands speechless, drops of sweat splash, as the other two figures enter, spiral of movement, door closes, banging, ripples emanate from the double rectangle—the trick is pulled.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *Anatomy of a Museum* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Kendra Greene

FORTHCOMING FROM ANOMALOUS PRESS

By its own estimation, the Icelandic Phallogological Museum “is probably the only museum in the world to contain a collection of phallic specimens belonging to all the various types of mammal found in a single country.” It’s not a museum of stamps or knowledge, or even obelisks—that’s *phallogological* as in *phallus*, as in a museum of penis specimens. Hundreds of them. Penises dried, pickled, cleaned to the bone, mounted like trophies, or floating in formalin baths. Penises domestic, foreign, and folkloric. Penises translated into seven languages, including Esperanto.

- 92 The summer of 2011, after 37 years of collecting, curator Sigurður Hjartarson had just installed the final domestic species (the *Homo sapiens* specimen), and was preparing to retire. With the museum preparing a move back to Reykjavík and a re-opening under the stewardship of Hjartarson’s son, A. Kendra Greene tries to sort out—in schools, in bars, in children’s clothing shops—just how such an institution came into being in the first place. And, with the help of phone books and climate change and Olympic silver medalists, she tries to shed light (from the museum’s scrotum-skin lamps?) on what it all means.

## From *Anatomy of a Museum*

A. Kendra Greene

The first thing I see when I enter the museum is a half-naked man. Not a photograph or a painting or a sculpture of such a figure, but an actual man standing there with his shirt off. He's a fit specimen, early twenties, and as I top the stairs I notice there's a second man, a brunette this time, in exactly the same state of undress.

"Medium," they're telling the curator of the Icelandic Phallological Museum. The curator, who seems to find nothing out of the ordinary in this transaction, says nothing in any case, steps into a back room. When he returns a moment later the two shirtless Scotsmen pay for two t-shirts: the brunette covering himself in the IPM seal and the redhead donning a block of text listing the museum's name in seven languages.

93

The curator is organizing their krona into the slots of a wooden cashbox carved from good Icelandic birch into the shape of a phallus the size of a lunchbox. I am doing nothing so useful, and so they appeal to me to be their photographer. I hear something like "she doesn't know yet" as they set up the shot. The southwest corner of the main gallery will be their backdrop, the two men flanked by three of the more impressive phallic specimens on display. The redhead shows me where to stand, makes sure the killer whale and the sperm whale specimens are in the frame. And then the two men drop their pants. I click the shutter.

The redhead, it turns out, is a zoologist. His brunette friend is a biologist, and they need this picture because they're on a swim team. There's a tradition, they tell me, when on holiday, of posing in the team swimming briefs in front of monuments and tourist attractions. The swimming briefs are easy to pack. The zoologist and the biologist believe in tradition.

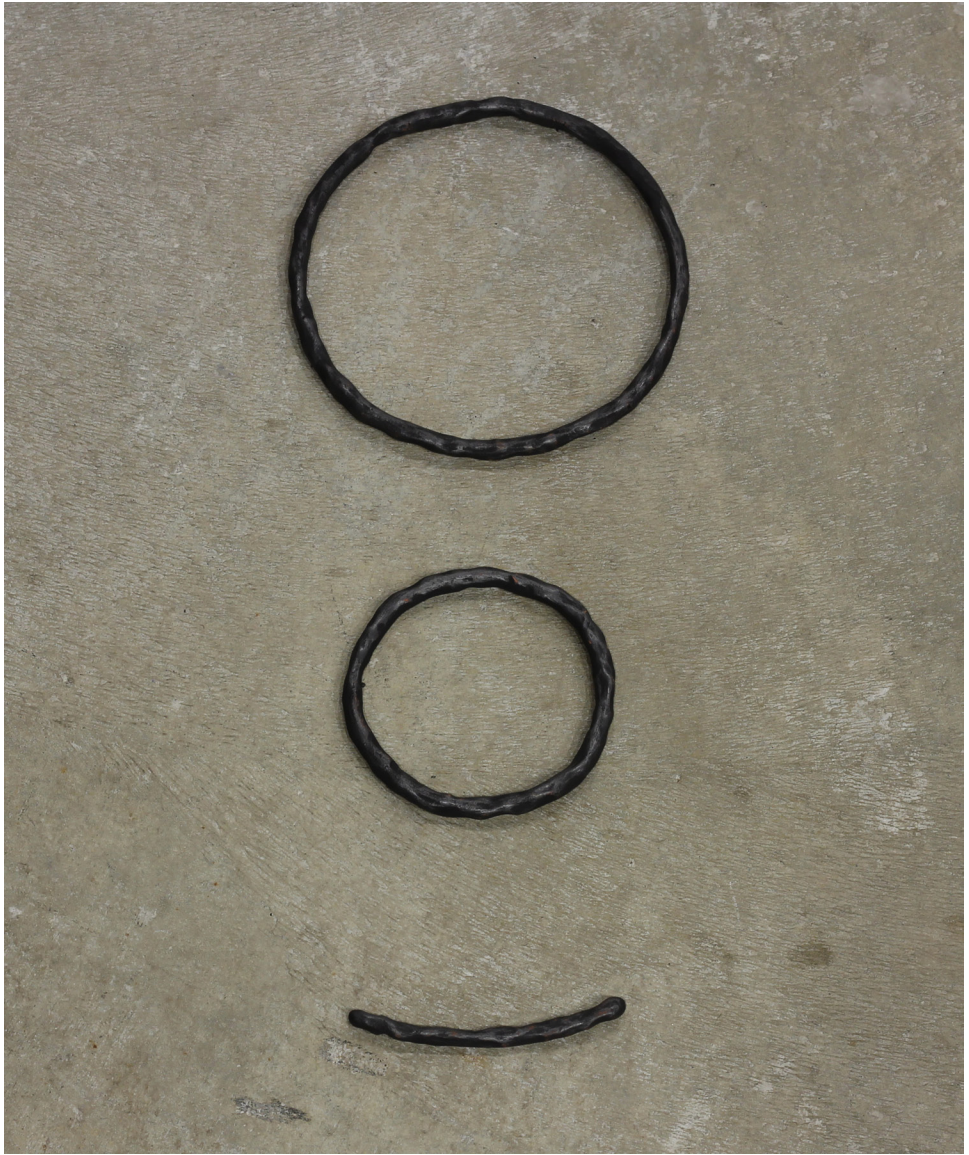
"The pyramids at Giza, the pyramids in Mexico, the Parthenon..." the zoologist explains to me, listing previous photo ops. "One guy got arrested in front of the White House last year," he says with some combination of envy and pride. "We were hoping we'd get chucked out of here, so we could say, 'We got chucked out of the penis museum,' but the guy," he says, nodding to the curator, "he's too nice!"

94 Sigurður Hjartarson is written up more often for his gruffness, but after 131 articles and one documentary film about his museum, perhaps he's just tired of the same questions. How many ways can you ask: Why a penis museum? And, ultimately, what else is there to say in response but: Why not?

Twenty-seven countries on at least four continents have published articles about the Icelandic Phallological Museum. The ones in languages I can read characterize the place as *weird*, *kooky*, *odd-ball*, *odd*, *infamous*, *unique*, and *sadistic*. Mostly it's a matter of headlines, and it probably shouldn't bother me, but flipping through the museum's archives—nine scrapbooks on a bookshelf where *Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises* touches covers with *Sexualia: from prehistory to cyberspace*—I begin to take umbrage, I begin to bristle at how rarely anyone seems to notice what an appealing little museum it is. It's curious, yes, but also exotic, famil-

iar, with chairs to sit on and sized to the average attention span. Plus, frankly, it's not all that odd a place.

From a certain perspective, it's downright traditional. Without the individual collector or the amateur naturalist, what museums would we have left? Both are fundamental and ever-present pillars of museum history. If Sigurður Hjartarson's museum is odd, perhaps it's because it's so old-fashioned, not because it's such new-fangled novelty. And anyway, novelty *itself* is a museum tradition. You want to see a human molar rooted in a rooster's skull like a bony comb? You want a hermaphroditic giant moth with one wing the size and pattern of a male and the other that of a female? You want a gemstone in a color you didn't know existed? A mineral formed of its own composition into a perfect cube? Vintage Valentines with racist punch lines? You want to be surprised, you get yourself to a museum. Museums were born of novelty. They specialize in it. And furthermore, they do it well. Though some, I'll admit, do it better than others.



from *Edge* by Amber Ginsburg

## *A Beggar's Book* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Mark Wunderlich*

ANOMALOUS PRESS CHAPBOOK CONTEST NOTABLE, FORTHCOMING

Several years ago while visiting my family home in Wisconsin, I came across a small book of prayers, written in German and published in 1876. Made of a size that could be kept in a pocket or reticule, the book exuded utility: during times of duress, this book could be consulted, and herein answers could be found.

The prayers alternately begged and hectored an indifferent Lutheran God, and the dilemmas they sought to mitigate had consequences that threatened to separate body from soul: storms, droughts, illness, shipwreck, theft and violence. I was moved by the tone of the prayers, and surprised by their specificity. This small book attempts to bring these prayers into my own specific, contemporary contexts by fashioning them into poems.

97

Other poems found here refract and adapt several 18th and 19th century folk-religious documents. Himmelsbriefen, or Heaven-letters were common among the Pennsylvania Germans, and were believed to have mystical properties—much like chain letters. Here too, I was moved by the desire to ward off misfortune, and intrigued by the belief that language could bind up the world and shield the reader from harm.

## Prayer in a Time of Sickness

Excerpted from *A Beggar's Book*

*Mark Wunderlich*

So far I have warded off the worst of things  
that can happen to a brain and to a body.

I have loved my self and the world more than I have loved you,  
with your unknowable face in the firmament,

and the world ripe with detail.  
What is it you wish to teach me?

98 My life has been one of tasks, listed  
and attended, materials curried and weeded and laid by.

I have been diligent and have done my work.  
Then, a day came when I could not answer

the letter of a friend, could not offer my help,  
read to the end of the sentence. The phoebe

tossed from his nest was broken on vulpine teeth,  
spirited into the undergrowth in the dark,

then the six fat wrens in their house hung in the arbor  
disappeared and their parents stopped their singing.

Weeds grew, and I ignored my chores,  
while the cat worried her tail of its most plumescent fur.

I saw my body, white as tallow,  
my face framed by colorless hair,

noted my appetites, then put them aside,  
walked and walked to wear it all away.

In the bin, last year's potatoes grew their eyes  
without benefit of soil or sun,

and I spent another night awake and unrested,  
knitting a cap for a child come too early

into the world. What lies on the other side?  
What do I need to know that will keep me anchored,

admired as I am from a distance—  
an image false as a tin star?

I yearned to be cast up on an arctic island, bare of trees,  
populated by the recalcitrant

and their flocculent, half wild beasts,  
the air dry and howling, cliffs exposed, the wind

stirring its cauldron of birds. You have written  
each of my days into your illumined book,

though I believe this portion will remain unread,  
a page torn out and stuffed into a crack

to keep out the winter damp.  
I was built by the love of my mother,

then let go. She is now old and sleeps much of the day  
like a cat, eats small meals in her chair,

bakes for funerals or dusts the small museum  
visited only by accident.

And so she serves the ghosts of our town  
and does not believe in you at all.

100

\* \* \*

At summer's end, I traveled north,  
crossed the sea, to the salted rim of the Arctic.

From a rented room, I watched revelers wend in arcs  
bound by the corrugated street,

breakfasted on liver paste and beets,  
rode tinted in the light of a city bus

as it ferried me to the national attractions:  
a heroic past reconstructed in wax,

diorama of a seeress wearing cat skin gloves  
dining on the hearts of dogs,

spidery manuscripts chilled under glass,  
and the rusted nails and altarpieces

standing in for an architecture  
long effaced by the wind's hand.

\* \* \*

A young man named for a god of fucking  
rode his palomino next to my dun.

101

His face was chapped and his hair  
was combed by the wind from underneath

a helmet of foam. We passed the named steadings  
roofed in turf, the pyramids of hay

while our horses muscled like athletes  
on paths cut through knee-high grass,

over lava and hill crest, past geyser  
and sulphurous marsh, horned sheep

wandering wild through wind and rain.  
Hours went by and no one spoke

as our animals huffed and pushed  
against the reins. My thighs tightened

on my gelding's furred back, hands  
learned his mouth like that of a husband.

Your hold on this island is tenuous,  
broken as it is by the core of the earth

seeping its sulphurous reek and sanding the air with ash.  
The inhabitants live amongst the greatest powers

102

visible to their water and ice colored eyes.  
You, our Maddening Abstraction,

You, the Triangulator, the Great Confusor, take note—  
for centuries this populace huddled in the earth walled halls,

smeared black butter on dried fish, spun wool in the dark,  
washed their hair in urine and fermented their meat in whey.

How could you ever conquer a land that didn't know bread?  
You have left me here to wander, far from friends,

my family shuffling about their small farm  
your absent gaze pressing them toward the grave

the night numbing me to the evident good  
I might do or understand or receive.

There is a bruise on my brain that does not heal,  
nor does it spread, walled in as it is by pills.

Your name is nowhere to be found  
in my future, treeless and tasting of salt.

Here I stand at the estuary  
My horse cropping grass, no sounds of men

save the one next to me  
as he pares dried mutton with a knife.

Geese conduct their exercises nearby  
the tide's green hair recedes, pulled backward

by the blue-skinned moon. The wind lifts,  
sun flickers, guillemots trim the horizon with their wings

as your great thumb pushes against my lips  
and you click the snaffle past my teeth.

## *Edge* | PROJECT DESCRIPTION

*Amber Ginsburg*

The images shown are from a series entitled *Edge* and are one element in an ongoing body of work entitled *Past Present Perfect*. The premise of this work is based on a future when we have forgotten the patterns of behavior around dishware. I make this work for an imagined museum of the not-yet-happened. *Edge*, as the name implies, are forms based on the contours of dishware. Out of context, these graphite covered terra cotta forms appear etymological.

## Contributors

**Becca Barniskis'** chapbook of poems, *Mimi and Xavier Star in a Museum That Fits Entirely in One's Pocket* will be published in 2013 by Anomalous Press. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals, among them *The Boiler*, *Mid-American Review*, *burntdistrict*, *Conduit*, and *Prairie Schooner*. She lives and works in Minnesota.

**Nick Jaffe**, who collaborated with her on the audio version of these four poems and who is working with her on an audio version of the forthcoming chapbook, is a Chicago-based musician, recording engineer and teacher. He has performed as a guitarist with a wide variety of artists including Common, Dwele and Ice Cube and collaborates on music across genres. His most recent solo work includes an album that is a musical history of the Sputnik I satellite. <http://nickjaffe.com>

**Liat Berdugo** is an American artist and writer whose work focuses on the strange, delightful and increasingly ambiguous terrain between the digital and the analog, the online and the offline, and the scientific and the literary. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and festivals internationally, including The Simultan Festival in Romania, STIGMART/10 in Italy, Athens Video \*/ Art Festival, and DysTorpia Media Project in New York. She is the 2012 winner of the Anomalous Press Chapbook Competition and her book, *The Everyday Maths*, will be published in March 2013. Her recent work explores the totemic and fetishized sides of technology and the gestures surrounding its condensation to the surfaces of touch-screens. She studied mathematics at Brown University before returning to Providence, RI to pursue her M.F.A. in Digital + Media art at the Rhode Island School of Design. More at <http://digikits.ch>.

**Steve Bradbury's** poems, translations, and essays have appeared in *Jack-et2*, *Sub-Tropics*, *Tinfish*, and elsewhere. He received a PEN Translation

Fund grant in 2011 for Hsia Yü's *Salsa* (forthcoming Zephyr Press) and lives in Taipei.

**Ye Mimi** is a young Taiwanese poet and award-winning filmmaker. A 2009 graduate of the Chicago Art Institute Film Studio Program, she is the author of two volumes of poetry, most recently *The More Car the More Far* (Taipei: Garden City Publishers).

**Aaron Crippen** is a writer and translator of Chinese. He has won a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and the PEN Texas Literary Award for Poetry. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *VERSE*, *Mid-American Review*, *Nimrod* and many other journals.

**Sandra Doller's** books are *Oriflamme* (Ahsahta, 2005), *Chora* (Ahsahta, 2010), and *Man Years* (Subito, 2011). Newer projects include a forthcoming prose chapbook from CutBank called *Memory of the Prose Machine* (2013), part of a longer book-length and performance piece. The founder & editrice of 1913, Doller lives in San Diego with man & dogs.

**Eric Suchère** is a poet, writer, art critic, and art historian. Based in Paris, he is the author of many books of conceptual prose and poetry and a major player in contemporary French letters. His works have been translated into English by Lisa Robertson and Carrie Noland.

**Janis Freegard** is the author of the poetry collection *Kingdom Animalia: the Escapades of Linnaeus* (Auckland University Press, 2011) and co-author of *AUP New Poets 3* (2008). She also writes fiction and is a past winner of the BNZ Katherine Mansfield Award. Janis was born in South Shields, England and spent part of her childhood in South Africa and Australia before her family settled in New Zealand. She lives in New Zealand's windy capital city, Wellington, with an historian, a cat and vari-

ous spiders. She blogs at <http://janisfreegard.com> and posts the occasional video at <http://janisfreegard.blogspot.co.nz/>

**A. Kendra Greene** has vaccinated wild boars in Chile and modeled dresses twisted from balloons. She is currently looking for reasons to love Dallas, Texas, and keeps a blog of her findings at [dallasneedsacheerleader.blogspot.com](http://dallasneedsacheerleader.blogspot.com). A writer and letterpress printer, her work is published in *The Best Women's Travel Writing 2010*, and held in special collections as far away as Qatar. Even as we speak, she is writing a memoir about museums. More at [greeneinkpress.com](http://greeneinkpress.com).

**Michael Gushue** runs the micro-press Beothuk Books and is co-founder of Poetry Mutual/Vrzh Press. His work has appeared online and in print. His chapbooks are *Gathering Down Women*, from Pudding House Press, *Conrad* from Souvenir Spoon Books, and *Pachinko Mouth*, forthcoming from Plan B Press. He lives in the Brookland neighborhood of Washington, DC.

**Laura McCullough's** books of poetry include *Rigger Death & Hoist Another* (Black Lawrence Press), *Panic* (winner of a 2009 Kinereth Gensler Award, Alice James Books), *Speech Acts*, and *What Men Want*. She is the editor of two anthologies, *An Integrity of Aloneness: Essays on the Poetry of Stephen Dunn*, forthcoming from Syracuse University Press, and *Essays on Poetry and Race: the Task of Un/Masking*, forthcoming from University of Georgia Press. She is the editor of *Mead: the Magazine of Literature and Libations* and an editor at large for *TranStudies Magazine*. She holds an MFA in fiction from Goddard College, and her essays, criticism, poems, creative non-fiction, and short fiction have appeared in or are forthcoming in *The Georgia Review*, *The Birmingham Review*, *The Florida Review*, *New South*, *Guernica*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Pank*, *The Writer's Chronicle*, *Gulf Coast*, *Pedestal*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, and others.

**Askold Melnyczuk** has published three novels, as well as stories, poems, essays and reviews in *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *Poetry*, *APR*, *Threepenny Review*, and elsewhere. He's founder of *Agni*, and teaches at both UMass Boston and in the Bennington Graduate Writing Seminars.

**Mani Rao** is the author of eight books of poetry, a translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* and a forthcoming translation of Kalidasa's poetry. Her essays and poems have appeared in such journals as *Fulcrum*, *Iowa Review*, *Meanjin*, *Tinfish*, *Wasafiri*, *Washington Review*, *West Coast Line*, and *Zoland Poetry*, and in anthologies W W Norton's *Language for a New Century*, Penguin's *60 Indian Poets*, and the *Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Indian Poets*. She was a Visiting Fellow at the Iowa International Writing Program in 2005 and 2009, and the 2006 University of Iowa International Programs writer-in-residence. Translations of her poems have been published in Latin, Italian, Korean, Chinese, Arabic, French and German. Mani lives in North Carolina. Her website [www.manirao.com](http://www.manirao.com) has updates

**Bradley Schmidt** grew up in rural Kansas, completed a B.A. in German Studies at a small liberal arts college there, studied German Literature and Theology in Marburg, and started a doctoral project on Schleiermacher in Halle before completing a masters in translation studies in Leipzig. He lives and works in Leipzig as a translator and lecturer. His translations of contemporary German prose and poetry have appeared widely online and in print.

**Ulrike Almut Sandig** was born in Großenhain (GDR) in 1979 and now lives in Leipzig and Berlin. She started publishing her poetry by pasting poems onto construction fences and spreading them on flyers and free postcards. After completing her *Magister* in Religious Studies and Modern Indology, she subsequently graduated from the German Creative

Writing Program Leipzig. Three volumes of her poetry have been published to date. Previous publications include radio plays and audio-books of poetry and pop music.

**Mike Schorsch** doesn't live here anymore. Other excerpts from *An Introduction to Venantius Fortunatus* have appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Action Yes*, *Anomalous*, *LVNG*, *Notre Dame Review*, *The Iowa Review*, and *Vanitas*. He sometimes writes under the name Mike Czagany.

**Sarah Tourjee's** fiction has appeared in *Conjunctions*, *PANK*, *The Collagist*, *Wigleaf*, *Everyday Genius*, *Anomalous Press* and elsewhere. She is a recipient of the John Hawkes fiction prize and an &NOW award for innovative writing. She earned her MFA from Brown University and lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

**Mark Wunderlich's** first book, *The Anchorage*, was published in 1999 by the University of Massachusetts Press, and received the Lambda Literary Award. His second book, *Voluntary Servitude*, was published by Graywolf Press in 2004. A third volume of poems titled *The Earth Avails*, is forthcoming from Graywolf in 2014. His work has been translated into Italian, Bulgarian and Swedish. He currently chairs the Artistic Advisory Board at the Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, New York. He also serves on the Advisory Board of Noemi Press. Wunderlich lives in New York's Hudson Valley near the village of Catskill.

**Monika Zobel's** poems and translations have been published or are forthcoming in *Redivider*, *DIAGRAM*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Mid-American Review*, *Drunken Boat*, *Guernica Magazine*, *West Branch*, *Best New Poets 2010*, and elsewhere. A Pushcart nominee, senior editor at *The California Journal of Poetics*, and Fulbright alumna, Monika lives in Vienna, Austria.

## **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.

At the time of its launch, Anomalous is an online publication, available in both visual and audio forms on various platforms. It has its sights set on publishing chapbooks, advancing audio forms and creation, and supporting all sorts of alternative realities of the near future.

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