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Department of English Chapman University One University Drive Orange, CA 92866 www.chapman.edu/poetry

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TABULA

p o e t 1 c a



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DESIGN STATEMENT

The print issues of *TAB*: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics are special editions, each published at the beginning of the calendar year. These issues reflect the mission of Tabula Poetica: The Center for Poetry at Chapman University to create an environment that celebrates poetry in various forms and venues. The annual print issue engages the reader with poetry as a material object and asks that the reader negotiate between image and text. The design of the print issues do not assume a traditional role of quietly framing content; instead, design actively shapes the reading experience. The special print editions of *TAB* will continue to experiment and explore the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

The 2015 print issue explores mapping as place, location, and orientation. The journal's design this year encourages reading mindfulness with the intention of getting lost, disoriented, having to navigate a way through as someone might navigate a journey and encourage discovery. The journal emphasizes the iconic ritual of unfolding and refolding maps and also the visual weight of traditional street maps in order to communicate credibility and an authoritative source of being an actual place. But this place is no place.

We examined work by Jacques Bertin, a French cartographer and a visual semiotician. In his book, *The Semiology of* Graphics, he synthesized design principals with rules applied to writing and topography. His work was dedicated to the study of visual variables (shape, orientation, color, texture, volume, and scale) of maps and diagrams to code visual combinations that would create successful map-reading objectives. We challenge these guidelines by employing visual variables associated with illegibility, including graphic density and angular illegibility. The front side of the map, which contains the poems, tightly compresses layers between text and texture, eliminating hierarchy and contrast. There is no right side up so disorientation is part of the reading experience. This is further emphasized by orientation conflict in which each poem is placed on its own angled baseline.

This back side of the map provides information about the authors. In order to discover the author of a poem, the reader must flip between the front and back of the map to determine its placement on the latitude and longitude grid. This side of the map uses photography of places so specific that the reader is excluded from knowing the place. With the common use of GPS and everyday devices that lead the way rather than show the way, this print issue empowers the reader to lead their own way.

Electronic issues, on the second Wednesday of every other month, follow the printed issue. Using these differing formats—print and digital—allows experimentation with design and materiality in a time when print and electronic dissemination coexist. TAB will not force either format to adapt to the other and the reading experience for each format drives the design. The electronic issues are shaped by Open Journal Systems, a federally funded, open-access system from the Public Knowledge Project designed to serve the public good globally. While the electronic files can be printed, each electronic issue are formatted for ease of reading on the screen. Decisions about page size, typography, and composition are driven by the online reading experience. In this electronic issue, the design of the author pages play into the print issue by including author bios and designating "location" on a zoomed-in part of the map. TAB also makes use of the audio/video possibilities of digital dissemination.

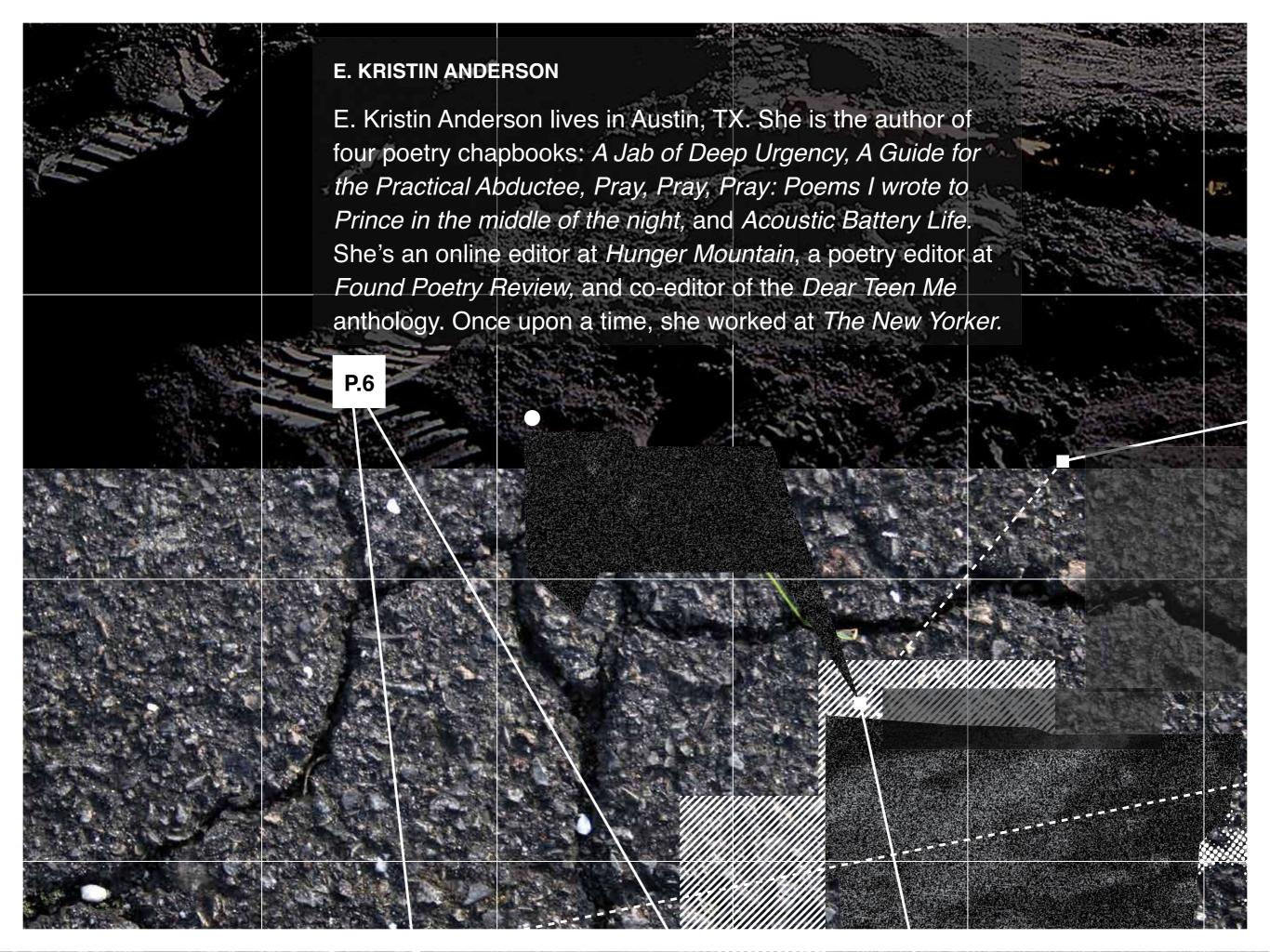
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Contributors receive complementary copies and can request additional copies. *TAB* is distributed at the AWP Conference each year.



"PEACHES, INHIBITED"

When I worried about sex, I wanted the only version of beauty, to touch vacation, a blossom in a sundress. The inordinate amount of undergarments reach for a moment nymphs, hair frizzy, gave memory a fairy tale. I felt urgent, aboard windows; ribbons unfolded, this night, riding summer.

This is an erasure poem. Source material: "Why Sex Is Better In Summer" by Renee Dale. *Self*, August 2014, page 81.

"REMIND ME OF MARILYN"

It's like American muses: patriotic in a fashion shoot, donning DIY sparks a little farther from a girl, grungy in a typical school.

Shrugging, a pretty life is nice.

This is an erasure poem. Source material: "Sailor Made" by Jane Keltner de Valle. Teen Vogue, August 2014, pages 122-123.

"SHOEBOX"

Years ago, a place had its own private thoughts, the hum of the streets grungy with energy. We'd fill a long day on our dream, forget the start. In a constant state of otherworldly muscle, pegged as a niche, this is change. As we start, surround and look up.

This is an erasure poem. Source material: "Letter from the Editor: Sky's the Limit" by Michelle Lee. Nylon, September 2014, page 34.



THE REMINDER

Living in the past since the day I was born I always remembered the wrong things -Alane Rollings

empty plates on a table my uncle dying of sunstroke Russian soldiers taking my grandfather

a dead battery in a no parking zone

only my own legs to swing me into the everlasting sky

the prick of the raspberry bush

the chatter of a poem that will never be right

not candlelit card games in thunderstorms not reunions under the swollen sweetness of grapes not the highlighting of maps in the bed of the station wagon

not the joy-wrinkles around my father's eyes

not the gentle grip of thumb and index finger

this berry is ready to pluck and the knowing:

a telegram in this traffic jam: stop

not alone stop

I'll show you

how to stop

listen stop



UNTITLED [FOR THOSE WHO DIED TODAY]

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting -Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I'm pulled back through the needle eye, feet first like air escaping a drowning child, pressed skin rough oyster shell after years of being broken open on seaside rocks.

When I'm pulled back through the womb as the light makes sense of itself in the dark.

My bearded face intubated, held by a daughter whose song follows me out on the rain, fall weather with geese gliding south guided gently by a warm breeze.

When I'm pulled back like a lung finally releasing its pressure held for decades in the weight of my head on my neck on my shoulders and spine on my hips on my legs on my feet on hardened mud; eyes looking out on a lake that stretches too wide to measure but shines like a forest after first frost.

When I'm pulled back rigged on a cot throat open, no longer pulling in dust or pushing out hymns,

being fed to the belly of the incinerator where my ashes will mix with the unknown others and then be taken in a jar to be spread by the wind somewhere off the coast of Maine.

When I'm pulled back choiceless, nameless, liberated from the confines of temperature and turnpikes, no longer taking note of wavelengths or time.

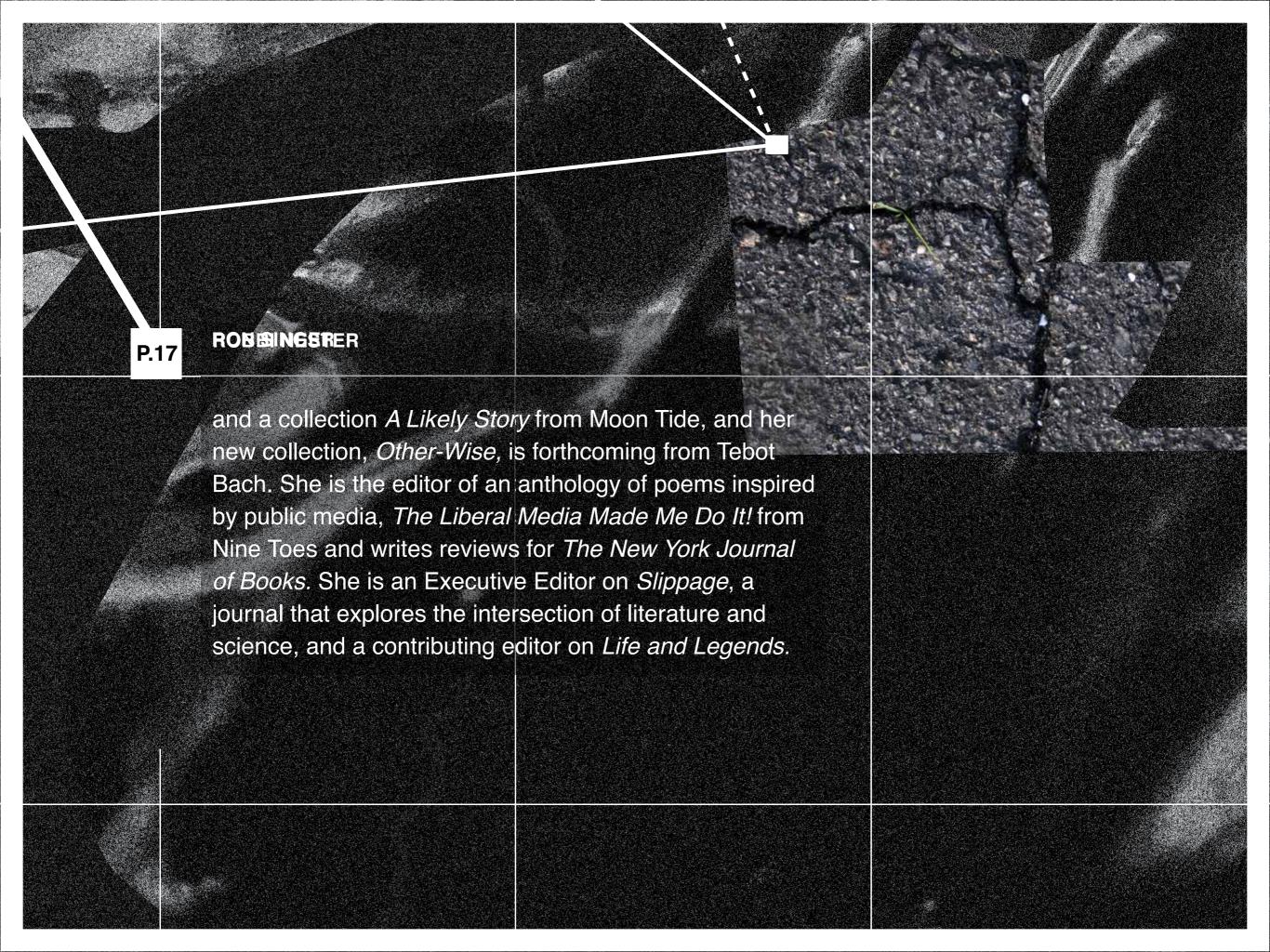
When I'm pulled back to you meet me there, as you met me this morning, in my cough and the children singing near the deli; meet me there, as you met me this morning, in your handwriting etched across my perfect unbecoming.



GROWTH

after Across the Mountains and Into the Trees by Vladamir Kush

Adam and Eve were seeds from the same sunflower. Rooted in skin, unscarred as any angel's, they frolicked among petals that shaded them from peaks and valleys, enticing shadows, longing to be conquered. They planted a conjoined lack of imagination in dirt that had yet to be labeled as fertile. Surprised by the green vine that rose, slithered toward a sky they had never noticed, they caught each other's breath. In unison, they cried at their inability to climb this fragile spiral to freedom. Determined, they swallowed the blushing fruit of their own embarrassment, strode head-long into the unknown blue of a very different tomorrow.



TWO MOONS

Jaffa, Full Moon

I am far from home, in this city of striped tents, four thousand years old. Afternoon light fades on the cobblestones, daytime chatter dying on the broad avenue lined with shops as the merchants pack up their wares, shirtsleeves signaling from the *shuk* as we pass. Suddenly, we three women stand alone in the dark, no faces, no lights in the blank windows, no sound but the echo of our footsteps. The street climbs up and up, shattering at last into half a dozen narrow alleyways, sheaf of arrows pointing in all directions. Moonlight spills from the sky's gourd. I choose a path, follow a gray nimbus of moths haloing a streetlamp to emerge at the wide dark sea, where all roads end.

2 Waiting

October—Hunter Moon, flashlights playing on the asphalt, parked cars, we wait for the rising. It eases inch by inch from behind the hill, brass cymbal without a sound, scaling steep sides of red canyon walls. Finally it is there, enormous and golden, closer than it has ever been to Earth. I want to dance naked in the wild light, raise my hands, light leaking between my fingers, but only watch as the moon ascends a spine of stars, beyond my reach.



PASSAGE

Sometimes I forget that this is what I asked for because I am forever wondering when it will end. My heart, the second hand of a clock, that flutter counting down how much time we have left, or how much time has passed. I'm not sure which one, or if it even matters. We mark the passage of time with a series of tiny eruptions, the room a constant tectonic haze. It won't last much longer now. The lilies you bought me are wilting in their vase: the tragedy of things that flower:.

TO A THREAD

I watched your gaze thin to a thread.

In the morning, the light no longer softened

by cicada song, you realized my face was not beautiful.

II.

A woman jolts awake as the train screeches

onto the bridge. As I stand up to give an old man

my seat, last night trickles down my leg.

III.

I buy myself the cheapest bouquet at the bodega

on the corner. white carnations, baby's breath,

and clover. A prize for surviving another day.

ANAT ZECHARIA Anat Zecharia was born in Tel Aviv and is an Israeli poet and photographer. She has been awarded the Streets Prize from the city of Tel Aviv, the Young Poet's Prize in the Sha'ar International Poetry Festival, and Prime Minister's Prize for writers in 2014. She has published two collections of poetry, As Soon as Beautiful from Helicon and Due to Human Error from the Bialik Institute. She and several other Israeli poets visited Chapman University in spring 2015 in a collaboration between the Chancellor's Office **P.23** and the Israeli Consulate.

ATE AN ANGEL

I ate an angel Standing next to the sink Lifted it with one hand Off the ground like a plane in the air Swallowed elevation to the body. The wings, last to enter, Still squeaked between my teeth when he set In the round spaces inside me, spreading On the nothing. That is exactly what I was lacking One who would tremble deep inside While I'm ticking Doing my part To be He who waits shell accomplish Meanwhile, the one thing known about me Is that I'm breathing

ָדְאָלִמ יִתִלְכַאָ

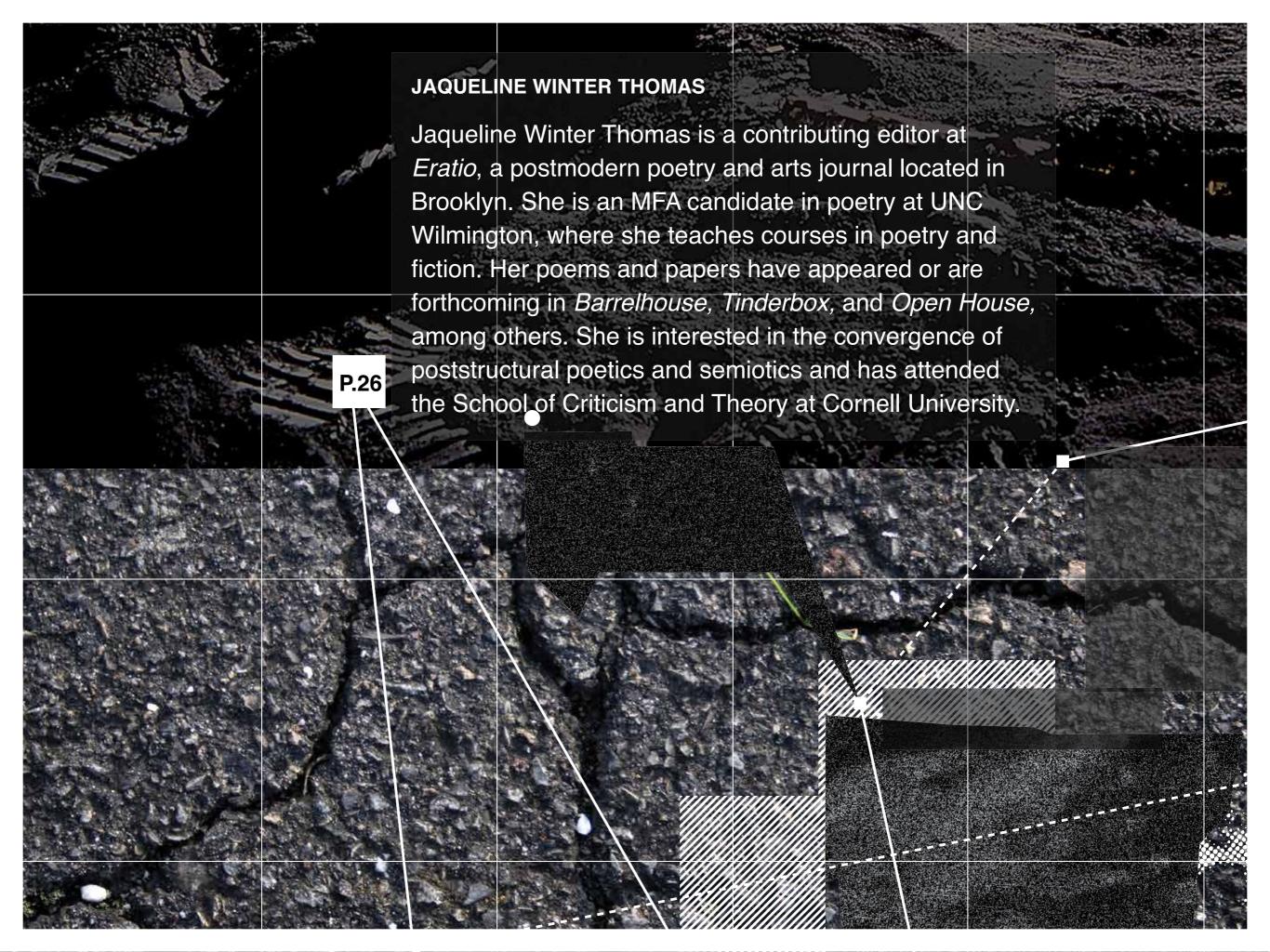
ראלמ יתלכא רויכה די לע הדימעב תַחאַ דָיִב וֹתוֹא יִתִמַרֵה ריוַאָב סוטָמ ומכ קראָהמ ווגל תוממורתה יתעלבו. סנַכָהל תונורחאַ וּיָהשׁ סיֵפַנָּכַה בשית השכ ינש ויב וקרח דוע שרפתמ יבש סילגעה סיללחב םולכ אלה לע. יל רֶסָח הַיָהֹשֵׁ הַמַ קוּיִדִּב הֵז ימינפה קמעב דעריש דחא תקַתקתמ ינא דוע לכ יִדיִקפּיַת תֵא האָּלַמִמ תויהל. גישַמ דיִמיָת הֹיֵכַחּמִשׁ יִמ קר יַלָּע עוּדִי חיַתִנִיבֵב תמשונ ינאש.

DUE TO HUMAN ERROR

שונא תועט ללגב

The universe is expanding, so I've heard, and new stars are created. And we hope to have a life, one case which is exceptional. Somebody promised us there is tomorrow so we're in no hurry to love. Polished, articulate and fast we can identify the questions asked before, preparing our response in advance. Answering as though we were chatting on a bus. Saying good to bad and bad to good laying darkness. Gathering in front of a television set, entire lives pass us in anticipation mollified with weak tea, over and over again: a Russian passenger plane nearly crashed due to human error, somebody bit a policeman's ear, a three foot crocodile is trapped near some Kibbutz, children kidnapped by their mother will be returned to Sweden, a boy invited to see magic was raped, and route four was closed off to traffic. And thousands of things we are not. At the end we'll be given a plot not that it's what we dreamed of, but the quiet, the cyclamens.

יִתעַמשׁ רַכ בחַרָתִמ סוּקיַה סיב כוכ דוע סיא רבנו. םייִח וּנַל וּיִהיִשׁ סיוַקמ וּנַחנַאַוּ ופד אצוי דחא הוקמ. רחמ שיש ונל חיטבה והשימ בה אל סירה ממ אל ונחנא זאַ. םיריהמו סיטוהר סישטלמ תוהול סיעדוי ונחנא םדק דוע ולאשנש תולאשה תא, שארמ הבושת סיניכמ. םירבדמ ונחנא ולאכ סינוע סובוטוא וק לע. ער בוטלו בוט ערל סירמוא רשח סימש. היזיולט לומ סיס נכתמ היפצב ונילע סירבוע סימלש סייח שלח הת סע חחשמ הדבכש רביד ותוא בושו בוש: יסור ביעסוג סוטמ שונא תועט ללגב קסרתה טעמכ, ן ואב רטוש דשנ והשימ, דכלנ רטמ דראב וינת םילאצ יובקל דומס, ם מא ידי לע ופטח גש חידלי הידבשל וחחי, םימסק תוארל ומזהש דלי העונתל םסחג עברא שיבכו ,סגאג. אל וּנִחַנָאַ סיִרָבִּד וְיֶלֶאָוּ. הקלח לבקנ פוסב וניים סולח הוש אלו, טקשה לבא, תוֹפּיָקַרָה.



Poetry developed initially as an oral tradition; this is indisputable. Poets passed on stories, longer narratives, in spoken form—partly as a means of remembering, partly as a means of dispersal, a way to share what, before paper, pen, or computer, was hitherto unmemorable, unsharable. And to this day, what separates poetry from other written forms is its attention to sonic value—the sound of the words in our mouths, the softness or hardness that shapes a syllable, the way the sound of a word parallels, or does not parallel, the meaning it tries to convey.

This is not to say that other forms of writing do not value sound, but, rather, that poetry is often a privileging of sonic value *over* meaning. But to say that this is the sole difference between the forms is to make poetics reducible to their oral tradition alone, and this is not the case, especially for many 20th and 21st century schools of poetry, including but not limited to the language poets, the objectivists, the black mountain school, even the modernists. Poetry is also different from prose in that it takes a *shape* on the page that is not overdetermined or prescribed by the page itself: poems have a texturology and textuality other than the arranged form of paragraph, the indentation the page forces on language. Poems are made as much of silence as they are of sound. And sometimes the silence that a white space conjures—in enjambment, in extended stanza break, in indentation and caesura—is not reducible to the silence of a reader's breath, a pause between words. Sometimes silence can only be rendered in this white space. And sometimes the poem's shape and texture cannot (or, more truthfully, should not) be rendered orally at all. Think, for instance, of all that is lost in a reading of e. e. cummings. In his poem, "somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond," spacing and punctuation is deconstructed in a way that I find hard to even consider corresponding to orality. How does one—even the most skillful of readers—read (not show) a poem without capitalization? How to adequately render it without marring that smallness, that softness—even that humility and subversion?

(i do not know what it is about you that closes and opens; only something in me understands the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses) nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

Moreover, how to successfully breathe life into the lack of space between the syllables? To show the decreased distance between "nobody" and "the rain?" And is it possible to vocalize a parentheticals? These are questions that should be asked and considered more seriously, lest we commit a violence against the poem itself. While cummings often presents us with technical difficulties when spoken, there are far more difficult options to consider, including but not limited to erasure poems, electronic literature, mixed media poetics, etc. One would most likely avoid reading some of Susan Howe's transplanted poems, Gary Barwin's poems comprised of punctuation, or Jen Bervin's Dickinson Fascicles sewn onto fabric. We would consider how to properly read these poems aloud—if reading them aloud is even possible—and yet we jump so haphazardly into reading poems which, on the surface appear easier to navigate sonically. Are they? Perhaps the answer lies not in refusing to read our poems aloud entirely, but to more responsibly consider how to read our poems. It is largely a question of technique.

This is not to say that public readings of poetry do not have a community value, a social value, even a political value, but

simply that these values often take precedence over what is best for the poem itself. Certain poems (in my opinion, most poems) need their materiality, their corporeality—or, at the very least, to have the physical poem on the page accessible while the speaker reads—otherwise, an entire world is lost in the rendering (and are there not already too many, even infinite, worlds between the reader and the poem?). Perhaps, the only poems that should be read aloud, that do not demand the reader's relationship to be primarily with the physical poem on the page, but instead with the poem's spoken life, are 1) poems which use form for simple enjambment alone, for the spaces that breaths and pauses *can* easily parallel, and 2) poems that are written primarily and specifically to be read aloud, for a speaker to breathe life into them in a way that the page cannot. An example of the former, take this excerpt from Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," for instance:

It avails not, neither time or place—distance avails not;

I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence; I project myself—also I return—I am with you, and know how it is.

 $[\ldots]$

What is it, then, between us?

What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?

Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not.

Here, and throughout the entirety of the poem, line breaks correspond to punctuation, to the line's natural (sonic) ending. The voice would have little trouble mimicking such a structure, and, if done properly, little would be lost—perhaps, even, some would be gained in the pronunciation. The text's punctuation parallels its oral existence, wherein even the dash signifies the place of an extended breath—the poem's own silence. So too can this vocal equivalence occur in poems of shorter line-lengths. Consider Joseph Massey's poem, "Forced Perspective:"

Alley
outlined
in purple
loosestrife.

Bewilderment—
imagine it

possessed a tint.

Like above, here the reader's breath can easily mimic the white space on the page. "Alley / outlined." Each line break becomes a pause. "Loosestrife." Each period, a slightly longer pause. "Bewilderment—" Each dash, the longest pause. This

suggests that one of the largest struggles in properly turning the tangible poem into something sayable is navigating the poem's natural pauses, its silence.

Unlike Whitman, the reading of Massey's poem would be comprised more of the space between the words than the words themselves. But are poetics of silence more easily read out loud? Or less? The poem lives between the reader and the page, is best realized when read from the page directly through the mouth of the reader (whether that mouth be literal or figurative). But poetry readings—oral readings—can carve that white space out of thin air, if the reader/poet is paying attention and reading with care, and that can be interesting and useful beyond social value. So all of this is not to say that poetry readings have no place or should never be attempted but, more gently, to say that they should be attempted with more care and attention than they are often given; this is also to say that few of us, as poets, have actualized or realized the poem in the same way, orally, as we have textually. We seldom give the spoken poem as much thought as the poem we craft on the page. Best, I think, to conceive of poetry readings—when they are necessary and good—as shared acts of silence.

There is also the question, eschewing authorial intent, of *who* decides which poems are best suited for vocalization and which should remain purely on the page. Undoubtedly, poets are not the sole readers of poems, be it their own work or the work of others, and even some poems which were never intended to be read aloud inevitably will be read anyway. How best to navigate these hazy spaces? How best to decide which poems are served, even heightened, by their spoken life, and which are wounded? Not to mention that, even when spoken successfully, no performance is repeatable—a reader might fully inhabit a poem's performance on Monday and fail to inhabit the same poem the next day. This suggests that the problematics of poetry readings are more akin to those of theatrics than typical poetics. Yet we seldom discuss these issues, pragmatically or theoretically. Reading a poem out loud is really another form of translation: transferring something tangible unto something intangible. And while we often seriously consider the effects of translating from one language to another, we seldom consider this more common act of translation that occurs when something written is made manifest vocally and what is lost in the translation.

Perhaps we should also note that poetics are primarily a private, introspective act. To read a poem, says Maurice Blanchot, is "to exist in a space of solitude" between the page and you, the reader. Think of Emily Dickinson's chest—unseen, unspoken—, or take, for instance, the endless list of poetic outsiders and poets of difference. Paul Celan. Friedrich Hölderlin. And the list goes on. Hayden Carruth, for example (despite his capacity for prolificacy) did not read his own work aloud until he was well into his fifties, due partly to agoraphobia, depression, and general social anxiety. The list is endless because the act of creating poetry occupies the most silent of spaces. To bring a poem to life, to vocal life, is always to violate this silence from which it came into being. Sometimes a violation of this silence is justifiable, but, oftentimes, it is not.

We must consider the effects of the ubiquitous poetry reading voice, an over-emphatic, lilting extension of vowels—hard to describe, but you know it when you hear it. If this is the most commonly shared experience of a spoken poetics, how did it come to be? And is this mode of reading really the sonic equivalence the poem demands of us? Or is it a mode of performativity that simplifies, if not commodifies, our experience of the poem or, even more radically, our experience of the poem's emotional center? When Frost spoke of the "sounds of sense," he meant the "abstract vitality of our speech, pure

sound—pure form." As poets, we pay close attention to these sounds of sense in the act of writing the poem—the poem we present on the page—but often pay far less attention to its rendering when spoken aloud. Does the spoken poem lose, in itself, the abstract vitality of speech? Are we reading the poem the way it wants, even demands, to be read? Or are we reading the poem the way we come to hear other poems read, in a kind of language that inevitably homogenizes the poem? If we are to responsibly actualize our work in oral form, would this not require of us a sort of sonic training (in the same way that we study the written word), whether that training be in the mode of acting, meditation, or something else that does not yet exist, at the limit of that which is speakable? All of this is not to take a stake on the philosophical or linguistic privileging of speech over written word—or vice versa—but simply to pose that, in reading our poems aloud, we must consider the act as seriously and fervently as the act of writing itself. For each time the poem is read, it is, in some sense, re-written.

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Book review

CEMENT SHOES BY JUDY IRELAND PUBLISHED BY EVENING STREET PRESS, 2014

When the speaker of the opening poem, "Growing Girls in Iowa," asserts midway through the poem, "No matter how they tried, we grew up wild, / big-eyed and defiant, burned by the sun" (Lines 8-9), the underlying premise of Judy Ireland's Cement Shoes is revealed to be that of disobedience and motion. Winner of the 2013 Sinclair Poetry Prize, Cement Shoes, Ireland's first published full-length collection of poetry, is composed of a wealth of narrative vignettes that act as reflections on the experiences of the poet, beginning with her childhood in Iowa and moving through her adult life in Florida.

In the collection's first section, "Cement Shoes," Ireland allows the reader access into her idyllic, and sometimes painful, memories of growing up in Iowa, and then eventually into her life as a young woman. The constructed personal history in the first few poems of this section, by way of rhythmic free-verse stanzas, gives the reader a sense of loneliness but also affirms the Midwestern value system in which the poet was raised. These poems are most compelling, however, because Ireland's language makes these scenes feel familiar, but these same scenes plant the seeds that the poet will harvest in later poems. For instance, in the poem "Cement Shoes," while riding with her brother on his motorcycle as a teenager, the speaker reflects:

I didn't lean sideways because I was different, my soul, was wearing cement shoes, and I didn't care that I would never marry. But why couldn't I do all the rest and still be different[...] (Lines 50-54)

While the collection certainly begins with highly vivid imagery of Iowa farmlands described as "yellow and green cornstalks," "red tractors," "black soil," and dirt roads (something akin to Carl Sandburg's rural Illinois or Willa Cather's Nebraska), something significant occurs here. This interrogative voice begins a shift into poems no longer concerned with the poet's past but, rather, with her present and, more importantly, with her agency and exploration of an identity imprinted but not defined by the Iowa landscape. Layers of depth begin to appear and the reader discovers—with poems like "Lovers' Conversation," "Your Complicated Eyes (For Evette)," and "Thoughts on Gay Marriage, while Visiting My Lover's Parents the reason the speaker earlier believed she would never get married. This section slowly becomes a meditation in identity construction and self-acceptance, but the poet is wise to stop just short of falling into a didactic voice that might diminish the power of her intimate lines.

The second and final section of Cement Shoes, titled "Walking Catfish," begins drastically differently than its predecessor, most notably in voice and purpose. These eighteen poems are not gestures into the poet's childhood and relationships, nor are they acquired wisdom. This section opens with the jarring poem "My Pillow, A Stone," which features a speaker who ruminates on the possibility of becoming a woman who would die alone and be found by her mail carrier days later. Next, the eponymous "Walking Catfish" details the speaker's encounter with a type of fish that has the ability to move on land from one body of water to another. This image becomes a driving metaphor for this section's themes when the speaker explains that, in the Midwest, farmers "[...] put fences around their ponds / to protect their fish who cannot walk, / who must swim endlessly / around and around" (Lines 14-17).

This section's resonance to the "Cement Shoes" section becomes clear when considering that, in many ways, both sections are essentially poems about identity, loneliness, and being an outcast. However, there's something different at play in this second section. The use of voice in these poems is more mature and, in some instances, detached or apathetic. This works well when balanced with the occasional humorous poem, such as "To the Lady Who Wrote a Letter to the Editor Asking for No Sex in Future Issues of the Magazine Because It Interferes with Spirituality," in which the speaker explicitly describes how the conception of the aforementioned "lady" must have gone down. Instead of continuing in the vein of the previous section and displaying moments of her younger life, Ireland features even more introspective poems such as "Awake at Night," "Thoughts on a Plane," "Farm Woman with Shotgun," and "Burning Cane." These poems reflect not only on who she has been but also on who she has not been and who she will never be. The reader is led on a journey through *Cement Shoes* to the collection's final haunting piece. "Earth Ground" closes with the image of land meeting water: an underplayed meditation on the inevitable, but natural, process of death.

While sometimes bright and beautiful, sometimes dark and brooding, the real strength of *Cement Shoes* is that the poems cover a variety of situations and emotional spectrums that thematically echo throughout and conclude somewhere different than where they began. Still, the poems never lose the innate sense of casual intimacy. Naturally, because of how the collection is put together, a connection, as well as an intended narrative arc, is implied. However, many if not most of these poems are strong enough to stand on their own. This individuality of Ireland's poems makes it no surprise that, in the acknowledgments, we discover that twenty-three of the forty-two poems in *Cement Shoes* have been previously published in journals.

In the end, what makes *Cement Shoes* stand out in contemporary poetry is that Ireland could have overplayed her hand and offered the reader sentimental exploitations of her own internal conflicts (as poets sometimes make the mistake of doing when self-reflecting). Instead, Ireland chooses to tuck her warm moments of recollection and desire among her cooler moments of vulnerability, and she remains willing to inquire into the depths of human nature as a whole.