

**STATEMENT //**  
**LOW AT DUPLEX GALLERY**  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**  
**RECEPTION 02.06.14 18:00-21:00**

"Every picture is a picture of the body. Every work of art is a representation of the body." -James Elkins

This show is about self perceptions, bodily definition, and our collective experience. Spanning an array of representation and interpretation, the work presented will deal with the struggle of the corporeal.

"Psychological suffering, though often difficult for any one person to express... is so habitually depicted in art that, as Thomas Mann's Sattembrini reminds us, there is virtually no piece of literature that is not about suffering, no piece of literature that does not stand by ready to assist us." -Elaine Scarry

In addition to the perceptions and definitions of the body, this show is also about control. Control in the sense of obsession, compulsion, coping, exorcism, and self preservation. What do we do to mitigate disaster, to soften the psychological blow of paranoia and neurosis--the ways in which we keep our bodies together.

Lastly, this show is about communication and camaraderie. We learn from each other. We become props to support. We sympathize and empathize. There is a lack of candid conversation about being/living that we feel our work will address. We aim to start a dialogue, to begin a conversation. //

## JOHNNY ATLAS //

to survive. the plant that gets trampled by a tractor. destroyed. the plant that grows outside the path of torn up wheels.

the animals. the livestock of dakota so destroyed. lifted off the pasture by loud machines. long gone. unlike other cows elsewhere with better weather. chewing the cud, grass poking out, eyes tender.

humans. thrown about by the wind. a boy swept to sea in england. all genders hanging from trees following the philippine typhoon. the ones walking beneath. shaken. survived. repair. taking the family from the tree.

this halloween i watched an old horror film alone. the thing from another world. there were so many things to love in this film. the arctic. james arness from gunsmoke before he was marshall matt dylan. the beautiful so and so who played the scientist. she used rope and rum to flirt with the airforce pilot. his hands were tied behind his back, they were laughing, they kissed.

the premise was this alien was made of plant matter. made of plant matter, it did away with emotions and feelings. it just was. it grew and thrived and survived.

survival of the fittest. every plant for himself. science. progress. hard luck.

hard luck being the plant beneath the tractor. hard luck being livestock lifted bloated dead from earth to air. hard luck being human against the wind of a typhoon. hard luck the life from science and progress.

i often idealize wood and water. i live a simple life. no social networking. no online dating. no fancy job or computer car. i chop wood for heat and walk to a well for water. my truck runs on old gas. my bike has no gears. simple.

i do have a computer. i do read the world news online. this is where i learn about livestock being destroyed by extreme weather. where i read about countries being ripped apart by storms. it is where i watch the new reality of the body go by.

so swiftly we have all been hearded online. americans and their i-phones. digital. informed. in space. the life of aliens. the life of less gravity. botanical gardens on spaceships. vegan chefs in space.

all the while we run around with what is left of time on planet earth. the word cancer spreads from friend to friend. i

see chemo everywhere. i meditate with friends living in the hospice behind the humble little room we sit in.

my own body has not escaped the science experiment. just as the earth has been covered in the sores of progress and clear cutting and toxic water. so too i find my skin covered in sores. initially i was told i had scabies. i found this amusing at 40 never having lived in a punk house.

when i went back for my scabies check up two months later, the doctor looked at my leg first and told me to get used to the sores as they were simply a part of getting old. she called them wisdom spots. when we moved to my back, she frowned saying there were too many spots.

i assured her i was very wise. in the last year i had my heart laughed at, spit on, and split open broken. my mom had died. loss upon loss piled upon me the year previous and i assured her it had grown me wise in ways i wished upon no one.

(insert artists and writers. some of the bravest people ever. spiritual soldiers of the union where pain and devastation of the body and spirit meet in the heart to transcend and create)

ART

the doctor looked at the map upon my skin and said biopsy. then we moved the treasure map north from my mid section to the land of gold around my left eye. i asked about all the weird warts appearing. i was assured age was unfolding the map of my skin. normal.

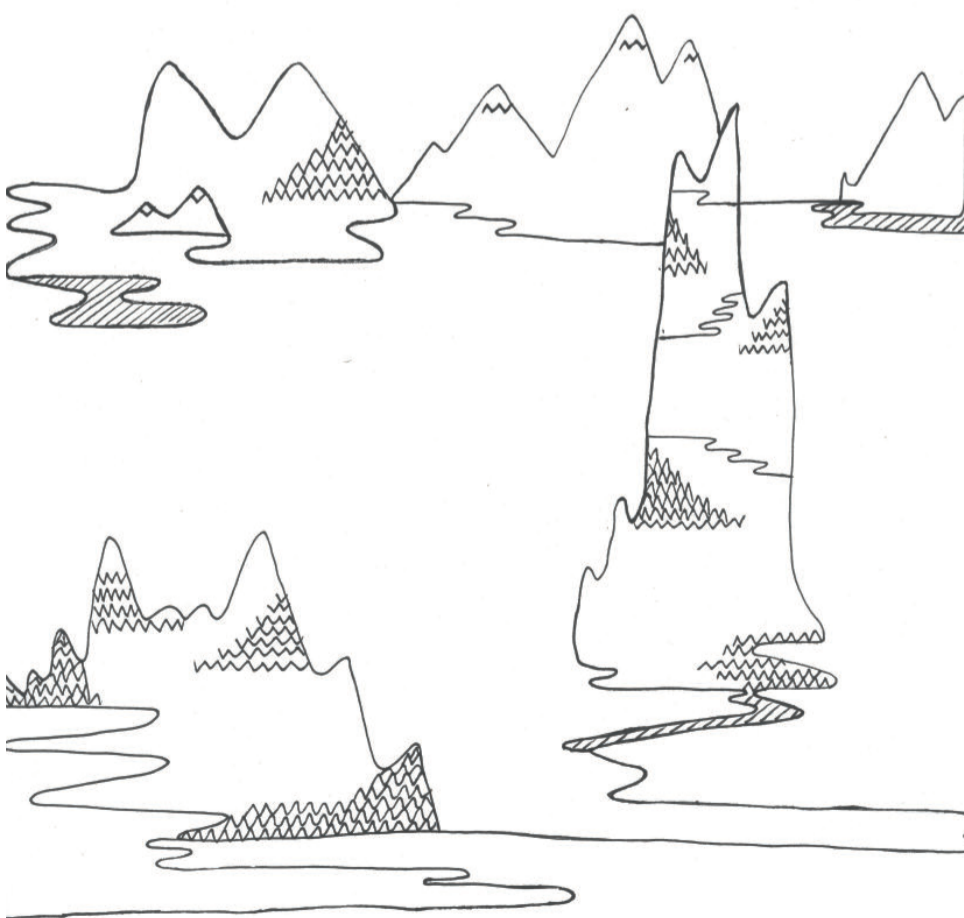
as she looked closer she saw the mystery mark beneath my left eye. what is that she wanted to know. no one knows i told her. she said it looked as if it had been biopsied. no i told her, its just changed over time.....

words like biopsy and cancer fell from her mouth. before i knew it i was carted into another room and stuck with numbing needles so my skin could be harvested. then i was sewn up. i could feel the thread pulling the skin back together beneath my eye. i walked from the doctor that day with bandages on my back and face. absolutely in shock from my scabies check up.

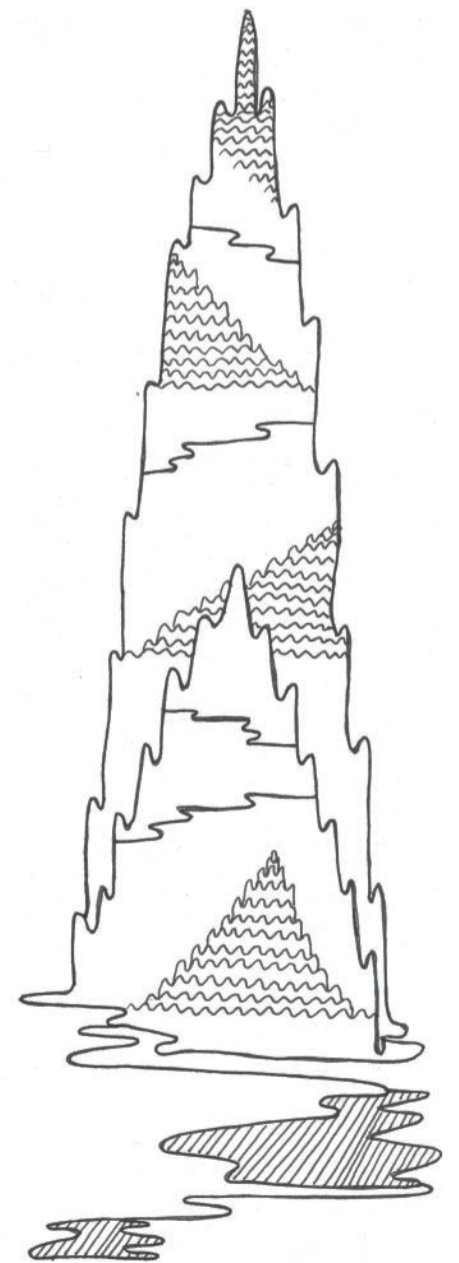
i went to the co-op first. i needed treats. everyone being so politically correct, people stared at the bandage saying hello not asking. next i went to the log store. thank god for rednecks. as we loaded logs into the back of my pickup he asked what the fuck happened to my face. i found it so so comforting.

as we move from earth into online onwards to space.....it seems less and less clear what or where boundaries are. how do we talk about all the storms and who do we talk too? do i ask why you are suddenly bald? how do we get real about survival?

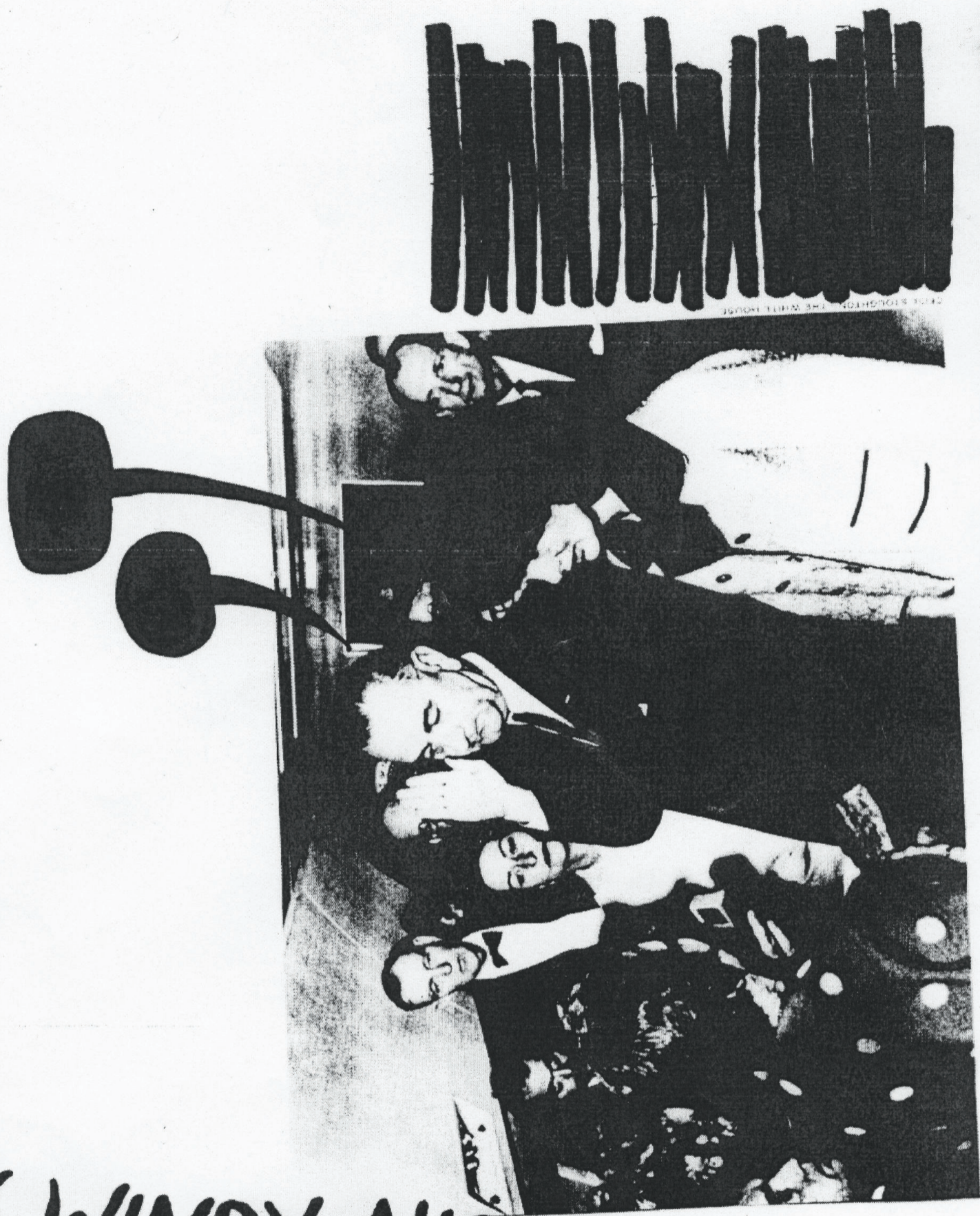
(insert writers and artists. the courageous spiritual warriors unafraid to show a changing landscape or shifting language. talk to me about the bandages. i will sketch in charcoal how my skin is shifting. we are people and plants and animals changing against the winds. the wood still burns, but so does the water). //



leif j lee



leif j lee



DARK, WINDY NIGHT  
BECAME THE CONDITION OF THE  
WORLD

## SARAH SENTILLES // BE IN LOVE

For the first day of class, I assign, among other texts, a chapter called “Just Looking” from *The Object Stares Back* by James Elkins. All seeing is heated, Elkins writes. There is a force to looking, and the force works in both directions: light pushes its way into your eyes; the eyes push their way into the world.

Looking is violent, Elkins argues, and to make his point he tells a story.

Hysterics were not the only people kept in the Parisian hospital La Salpetriere, which used to be a gunpowder factory. There were others locked inside – prostitutes, the mentally disabled, the criminally insane, madwomen – and in the 19th and early 20th century, the doctors who worked at the hospital published an academic journal. In it they wrote about their patients’ appearance, which they thought to be an external sign of an internal state. They could understand neurological pathologies by examining their physical expressions, they thought. They had questions – Does hysteria give a person a particular face? What happens to someone who spends her entire life in bed? What does it look like to have a belly so fat it scrapes the floor? – and they used the camera to get the answers they wanted, photographing the patients’ gestures, their poses, mannerisms, irritable signs, twitches.

Reading issues of the doctors’ journal, Elkins came across a photograph of a eunuch accompanying one of the articles. He describes the photograph for the reader. The eunuch’s face is impassive or perhaps resigned, he writes. It is a tired face. The eyes are gently shut.

He had once been manic-depressive, the doctors write, but recently had entered into a period of continuous calm.

Elkins does not say how the person became a eunuch, whether it was by choice or force, whether it was by birth or violence. At first, Elkins writes, the body seems posed, as if the eunuch meant to show off some feminine grace.

The person in the photograph is 40 years old – my age now as I write this – and habitually stoned on hashish. Elkins says the person in the photograph declared he was going to marry a princess and raise a family. With the princess, he thought, he would have an orgasm and an ejaculation.

Elkins insists the doctor’s notes are not unsympathetic, but, he writes, there is,

in the journal, evidence of a brutal medical assessment.

Rectal examination revealed a normal prostate.

I turn the page.

And there for me to see – for all of my students to see – is the photograph: Figure 1.

I look at the photograph for a long time. I see things Elkins did not describe about the image. The person in the photograph is Black, greying hair cut close to the head, shoulders rotated forward, arms hanging down, fingers lightly touching the side of his legs just above his knees, which are together, almost touching, though his feet are apart. There appears to be a bracelet around his left ankle.

Elkins also neglected to describe the room. The filth of the floor and the darkness spreading up the white wall – Is it mud? Dirt? Blood? – remind me of other rooms in other photographs I sometimes wish I’d never seen.

This is the violent side of seeing, Elkins writes. The mere act of looking . . . turns a human being into a naked, shivering example of a medical condition.

I take notes to prepare for class. The violent side of seeing, I write. I make a list of everything Elkins compares looking to. Looking is like hunting, like loving, searching, possessing, using.

I keep track of what he writes about how seeing works. Seeing controls, objectifies, denigrates. It creates pain.

I keep reading the chapter – which I have copied from a book in the school’s library, which I have scanned for my students and turned into a PDF, which I have asked them to print out and bring to class – and when I am done reading, I don’t think about the photograph or the chapter again until a few days later when I teach it.

Let’s turn to Elkins, I say. It is the start of the semester, the very first meeting of class. I ask students to work in groups to identify Elkins’s main argument. I walk around the room. I listen to their conversations. I bring the class back together for a discussion.

Let’s talk about the photograph of the eunuch, I say, and my students turn to

the page on which the photograph appears.

But then I see that one of my students has covered the photograph with a green Post It note.

And when I see that she has covered the image, I see that I did not cover the image, that in fact I have done the opposite of covering the image. I have scanned it, asked my students to print it, turned it into an electronic document that can be emailed and reproduced. I think of what Mark Danner writes about how at Abu Ghraib the digital camera and its inescapable flash functioned as part of the torture – how it was a shame multiplier, the ultimate third party letting the prisoner know that his humiliation would not stop when the torture stopped, but would continue every time someone looked at the photographs. Now I am the shame multiplier. Now there are 19 photographs of this person in the classroom. Now there are 19 people who spent time looking at this person, naked, alone, exposed, because I asked them to, because I required it.

But not this one student. She has covered him, her green post-it note a blanket, a veil, a mantle, a burial shroud – protecting the person from her gaze. Protecting the person from me.

She is a veteran. She fought in the first Gulf War. Her hair is pink. Across the first knuckle of each of her fingers is tattooed a letter so if she were to make a fist with each hand and then put them together, her hands would spell a message: B E I N L O V E .

This is not the first time this particular student has taught me. She has taken classes with me before, and in one of those classes, I projected an image onto the classroom wall that several of the authors I assigned for class had discussed, James Nachtwey’s “Sudan, 1993,” a photograph of a man who is starving to death, skeletal, every rib visible, every bone.

I’d assigned texts by several authors, each of whom thought differently about this image, and I wanted to use the photograph as an opportunity for debate about the ethical questions surrounding taking pictures of people in pain. I had my back to the image as I talked about the questions the authors had raised – questions about objectification, about what it means to name the photograph after a country rather than after the person in the picture, about racism, about whether the photograph aestheticizes suffering.

I had my back to the image while I talked, and I paced back and forth in front of it, the light from the projector mounted on the ceiling washing over

me, my body taking on the lightness and the darkness of the photograph, my body taking on the body of the starving man, my face and clothing becoming part of the image, becoming the screen onto which it was projected.

I wasn’t looking at the photograph I was talking about. I was looking at my students. And then my student started to cry. She turned away from the screen, and when I saw her tears – just like when I saw her green Post-It note – I realized I was doing exactly what I was criticizing the photographer of doing. I was using the body of a dying man to teach my students something.

What do we ask bodies in pain to do for us? I ask this question in my classroom again and again, and the more I teach about violent images the more I wonder what work they do. Why do I need a photograph of bodies blown apart to understand the damage missiles cause? Why do I need to see melted skin, broken bones, shattered skulls? Why do I need to see this man’s ribs about to break through, to see that he barely has the strength to hold his body up from the earth, from the ground, to reach out his arm to accept a tiny packet of hydration salts, to see that he will die and that his death did not need to happen, that it was avoidable, that there was something that could have been done, that there was something I could have done?

For years now I have been teaching my students about these kinds of images, asking questions about these images, and what has teaching about this material done to me? What has curating slide show after slide show of images of people in pain done to me?

That day, with the image of a dying man projected across my body, I confirmed my own lesson. I added his image to a PowerPoint presentation. I projected it onto my classroom wall. I felt nothing.

But my student cried.

Consider this sentence, Elkins writes: The observer looks at the object. It seems simple, even obvious, a given, but it comes apart right away, because it is built on the very simple but mistaken idea that the observer and the object are two different things.

The beholder looks at the object, but the object changes the beholder, and therefore the beholder does not look at the object.

Or think of this sentence: The soldier kills the enemy. It sounds like a one-way gesture, Elkins writes, but it is not because the act of killing does not only change the person who is killed. The act of killing changes the killer.

QUICKLY WITH THE R AND D  
 WALK FEELING NOTHING (EVERYTHING I KNOW WORLD  
 HOME AND LIVED AS IF I DIED. (I STAND ON THE SIDE-  
 FEEL THE SHAPE OF WHAT WAS MISSING. I LEFT  
 THE NIGHT - THE GREAT VOID OF MY LIFE, I COULD

I CAN FEEL IT WHEN I SLIP. I KNOW IT MY MIND  
 DARK PLACE WHEN IT GETS TO WHERE IT'S GOING  
 FOR WHILE IT USED TO STAY FOR YEARS COMING UP ONLY  
 SOME TIMES FOR A LITTLE LIGHT A LITTLE LIGHT IT'S  
 VERY UNUSUAL DOWN THERE. IT'S WHERE I DETAIL  
 COME TO START TO FEEL THE WAY YOUR RIBS DOWN WHEN YOU HAVE  
 A STIMMA - ALL TICKLES. THIS IS THE LOW. WHEN YOU DRINK IN THE  
 LOW YOU DO BAD THINGS BECAUSE YOU'RE REALLY CERTAIN YOU  
 WOULD LIKE TO BE SINGLED

ALL YOU CAN  
 SEE ARE THE LIGHTS FROM  
 PEOPLES WINDOWS  
 & THE GLOWING  
 SMOKE FROM THE CHEMICAL  
 PLANT

IT'S ALWAYS  
 REAL QUIET  
 ON THE TRAIN  
 AND I LIKE THAT

YOU CAN BE ALONE WITH YOUR  
 OWN THOUGHTS AS YOU WATCH  
 ALL YOU'VE KNOWN SLIP AWAY  
 INTO THE DARKNESS.

In *The Body in Pain*, Elaine Scarry puts it differently. Every weapon, she writes, has two ends. //

Sources:

Elkins, James. *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

## SONGS FOR //

- mogwai - repelish
- nine inch nails - the becoming
- the melvins - joan of arc
- exhorder - cadence of the dirge
- townes van zandt - kathleen
- mr. bungle - desert search for techno allah
- godspeed you ! black emperor - we drift like worried fire
- gospel - a golden dawn
- mare - they sent you
- khanate - dead
- lumbar - day one
- blank grey canvas sky - kites
- black eyes - on the sacred side
- blue water white death - song for the greater jihad
- chelsea wolfe - sick
- des ark - howard's hour of shower
- enablers - rue girardon
- drunk - silkworm
- gibson bros - the man who loved couch dancing
- johnny thunders - you can't put your arms around a memory
- pere ube - 30 seconds over tokyo
- black tambourine - for ex-lovers only
- jobriath - i'm a man
- otis redding - i've got dreams to remember
- the raincoats - fairy tale in the supermarket
- thoughts of ionesco - upward, inward, and under

## MARS DEITZ //

### THE EARLY WINTER

November 27th, 2013

Today. Not much. There are so many moments and emotions to write through. I am full of withdrawals. I feel so much longing for the homes I have made in others. Now so far away. I am fortunate to long so much. I feel a stranger to the happinesses that have been mine in the recent past. I miss R. Last night in my dream I was sentenced to indefinite detention in a penal colony. The earth was bare, overgrazed acreage, packed hard by the footsteps of my inmates. I was talking to S, who may or may not have been a prisoner, and I made some statement about the legal system suggesting its illegitimacy, or some gesture that transgressed a rule of the camp. At the moment of my utterance I knew precisely that I had been seen by the authorities and I would be sentenced to death. An impasse immediately rose between S and I. Between everything outside of my body and I. My death was imminent. I was going to die. It cleared out my mind like a gunshot in a field of birds. The future, where I have been living my life, was immediately taken from me. The death sentence fell on me and I woke up from the dream. Today is the other side of the last day of my life. I am here alive, but the damning calamity of this oneiric moment will not lift. I put my life in the hands of the world and am simply an object. Here, there. I am like a brick on the ground or a cardinal on an electric wire. My death is real. I am still alone in the dream, as I have told no-one. I called S and she didn't pick up.

This week another woman was murdered, her body was found on Florida Avenue.

December 1st, 2013

Today, Sunday, the first of December. I'll be leaving New Orleans soon and am thankful for it. The night before last was long, we pushed it up to the edge, the sun was closing in on the darkness when I went to sleep. Sleep became the sweetest thing.

Yesterday J and I spent the first half of the day together, conversation was very easy. Friday afternoon I walked along the Mississippi with K who is almost too wonderful. Kind, pleasant and intelligent. We talked about the death sentence. Later I went to Cosimo's and met C. She was stuck in traffic for almost an hour while I waited stoically at the bar, feeling my own relationship to time, a kind of exhaustion and over-fullness in

an acute awareness of endless potentiality. In such a still, dark room filled with hunched men in immobile performances of barstool masculinity, I felt certain of my old age. I became one of them. This performance, which consists of behaving like a stone, staring like a stone stares, as I was staring. For a moment into memory. There are too many lives that have belonged to me. I don't know how I can go on without resigning to indifference in some way, embodying the gruff and mechanical men in the shadows, distinguishable by their silhouettes against the televisions angled down at them from the ceiling. They stare at their beers, they look up at the screen.

December 9th, 2013

I have escaped New Orleans and returned to Brooklyn. Today was my first day at work, a fairly productive day. The days are occupied with the malaise of a non-directional urban life, some condition of underemployment, looming debt, and depression lending itself to greater fatigue. Yes I am depressed. But aware, and not falling downward. Simply coasting on this low, low place, faintly afraid of a dismal future, a leftover from my dream, which might set the tone of winter. If I allow the melancholy to work on me in some shallow, cliché way maybe I can cause it to enrich a gloomy inspiration. A counterintuitive patience for life due to an accursed understanding of the constant threat of annihilation. Its Monday now. Yesterday I suffered a blank hangover, a bleaching of the mind. When R comes to New York, what will we do? I cannot help but think that this desert I feel has cleared in me, contributing to my emptiness, is the emptiness of being without her. I suspect and fear that I have somehow lost the substance of my solitude. How has this become a possibility? First, I fear that the trauma of the summer gutted my trust in my own existence, perception and strength. I have had to attempt to rebuild my ability to follow my own thoughts. Secondly, I have shared intimate space and created quite an emotionally involved relationship with every person I have dated now for over one year, a year of incredible travels and enormous projects. I have continually reoriented myself toward "the other" and other people (not always the same) many times now across the twenty-four cities and towns I have been in 2013. As a result I have reshaped my solitude repeatedly. I am concerned for its erosion.

I fantasize about laying in bed, being completely alone, in a blank time with-

out sound or possibility. It is only the fear of violence, sickness and hunger that can interrupt this fantasy. I am afraid of irreversibility and drowned by potentiality. I am low tonight. I am not at peace with being alive. I am not taking life for granted as my point of origin, I feel every thought, every action starting from nothing. It is an assault on me to contemplate time. Oh, I am afraid it is all from this terrible dream. I cannot be without it now, my certain death. I am already sentenced.

December 10th, 2013

Tuesday. I slept deeply and woke up with some of the questions of my present coming in to clarity. It is oppressive to analyze behavior.

December 14th, 2013

I am on the Manhattan bridge inside of a stalling Q train that vibrates as if it is going to start rolling backwards uncontrollably. In a snowstorm over the East river, surrounded by condensation. Because I am sensitive to the very fact that I am alive I have been noticing more my fortress of privilege and the circumstances of my socialization.

For example: If the library in my neighborhood in Brooklyn were flooded or burned down, it would be rebuilt. Thinking also of the architectural qualities of different places I have been. The wealth of an imperialist legacy is imbricated in places I inhabit. I can read it by observing material concentrations. Marble. Asphalt. Brick. Limestone. Cement. The levels vary dramatically. I concentrate on the ground. Little cobblestones on Immanuelkirchstraße. Crumbling cement on North Roman. The street cleaning schedule over Flatbush Avenue.

Considering precarity and the stratification of New York. M says our parents were the last generation of New Yorkers who could possibly afford to buy property in their own city.

The affects I camouflage myself with. The gestures and formations I repeat. The ways in which I can navigate a given situation. The relationships I have access to, the people who will talk to me, show me their lives, give me entrance into their homes. The insides of buildings, rooms, refrigerators, palms, glances, imaginations, mouths, bathrooms, beds. Thresholds upon thresholds. Cascading entryways. My social mobility. My visibility. My facility.

I feel tender. I am an amorous person and I want no promises. It was snowing all day, but now in the heart of night the snow has turned to rainfall. Tomorrow the city will be lacquered with ice. //





## DOUG BAULOS //

Let this be a home.

A jar of wishbones  
Rusty nails  
Subtle promises and a singing body  
whispering in bed  
Stairs small teacups  
My dreams wander – birds I can't identify  
An alley to nowhere  
Soft men growing tomatoes in the dusk  
Mapping the land through neighbor's names in memoriam  
White rose climbing  
A meeting of parallel journeys  
Tea and cup rim  
2 dogs buried in the back yard  
I like drawing and poems cause you can't lie  
Inside them  
revolving books and fresh sheets  
and marie's fox slip in wet fur  
slinking through the back wall  
a memory palace with known borders  
your fires started  
ink and fresh pages  
and love always about to begin  
pears and egg noodles  
a chair in light, a bay tree  
a titmouse and prayers.  
Oh birds in the garden bathing in waters  
A ghost in the attic  
I like leaving at night and looking back see  
The small reading lamp by your side of the bed warming.  
White sheet white hand pale shoulder  
(This is pure map of childhood walks)  
iced tea  
this is the motion of the tide

What about the Skull of the Undertaker?

Viscera ho!  
Holes in the esophagus  
In the chest cavity  
We sewed up  
Between his teeth  
A pale slip  
A primrose nodding

Vocations for young men

Second hand cures  
Things for boys to do with electricity  
Ruts

Worn – out  
Rubbed down  
Human marks  
Erased  
Abrade  
Scarred and stained  
Cliffs tumble down

In the water – a barracuda  
Leather like  
Wading out with you through your past  
Weighted waters circling

Correct postures  
Jaundice, accidents and aneurysms  
Bed and bedding  
He who would have the fruit has to climb the tree

Laying

I am laying here loving you  
La distancia de las cosas – hoping you get better  
When you leave – these empty branches withering  
Rounding corners  
I dream of fragrances fragrance – I'm falling again  
Blindman's ballads  
Horrosoas asesinatos  
The song was a quick drink  
Fanning out  
Matter collapses  
A first love – a crushed fireman  
Light can't escape  
Eternal slumber and bone wreaths  
Incomprehensible manuscripts  
Blueprints and the purple of dead blood  
Tea meditations  
Bird leg posture  
Back off faker  
I'm so weary in my shins garden stained  
Ventilations masks  
A sharp pain  
Holy spirit  
Skull heads  
Illium and bones  
We were real newborns  
I need the space and time in this chocolate seed  
Apostles and salon collections  
Black eggs and mournings

Fissures in the Irrational Nature of Love and Flight

Incense  
Steps filament  
x-rays  
torn, ripped, hung  
dangled – a combed heart  
string tattered  
telegraphed  
unit lace  
a filigree of threads  
spooled and creased  
orbit milestones  
cord sooty combed  
this is a book  
buzzer, bell, tingle  
dusty tea  
lines grid  
of circulatory system  
spores fiber  
rags and folds  
divining rods  
wrinkled knots – cracks and fissures  
strapped ladders  
birds antennae  
ribs, vessels  
ties

binding jars  
stairs and storms

First Book of Electricity

Alabama Shuffle  
A crazy quilt a carnival of threads  
Old rock of ages  
First aid relief  
Helluva helluva – old path of thorns  
A groom in trouble with flashing crowns  
Short night in a long corridor  
The double life of tears  
Who saw the Brute? Who named him?  
Born a misanthropic boy  
With second hand cures  
Meanings and omens with double meanings  
Unraveling  
Dark bird  
An effigy

Be careful with cruel dogs or Tamarind M16

Irrational and extraordinary  
Elephants have calves – falling mountain  
Old pagoda, concrete animal pagoda, old market  
Behind the old art school – music and instruments  
3 times mosque  
near elephant temple  
the sea of milk  
cut into pieces for an elixir  
fizzy stupors and wide awake apsaras  
Only time will tell and if you die  
It costs us less  
After 3 years of sleep  
You have a beautiful nose body less witch  
Weather and terrain  
Rain snow thunder water strong wind  
mountains cliffs  
Crater cage – whistle blowing with no eye contact  
Don't point your feet at me  
Dark upside down shadows  
In water a crocodile  
On land a tiger beer  
Broken glass floating  
Near wat lanka  
Beauty and the bar of half bloods  
White elephant and snake hair girl  
Sister come back and help me dig up vegetables

Bird and stone  
I don't eat rotten pears  
Mountain maps of skulls  
Flowers of Campuchea  
Wheel of History  
Crystal pistols and sutras

Are you ok? Everything?  
Thick house of concrete and leaves  
Fungus color and Bokor blood  
Swimming rotundas and rusty puple trumpeting flowers  
Modern Buddha beats and shirtless monks sultry exuding calm  
They wear smoke orange and cigarette blood red

Adopting children  
Pumpkin soup and little monsters  
Sheltering caves and dark diets  
Rainbow petaled prayer flag snatching yipping dogs  
Dirt roads beaten hard – moto deep walking shroud of a man  
Bat storms funneling demon children whispering with glee  
Candelights and red walls – mosquito badminton speaking four languages at once  
Children guiding ox carts with flashlights  
Exhumed corpses and bodies on bikes  
A 2 liter bottle of acid and eating pork chops  
A hanging body cut down and the villages lost the tree  
Limb, root and trunk

Bug eating tooth-aches  
And silver pagodas  
Coffin boats and silk tears  
Lop lop  
Green pea congee with baby squid  
A yellow floating face banana rubbing  
Bamboo skeleton house towering  
Tigre beer and flower steps  
Fabric triangles droop  
Dusty elephant heart trumpet and rain umbrellas  
Hung over dogs and serpent fences  
Dip left dip right  
How much?  
Gamelan cats screech  
Take me I'm lifting my tongue  
And eating winter melon  
Knitting dusty steps lady  
Clean before I came here  
My gossamer my organza sleepy scuba suit diving  
Scary ghost hovering once more rice  
Big water and very good luck for you  
Between a drizzle and a heavy rain  
Fruit shake and happy gold sun Buddha laugh stinky stupas

Lips together – peaceful death  
Lips apart - a hard violent end  
Put my book of fortunes on your head  
Pinpoint the sometimes past and sometimes future  
Part of the book and surrender your arrows to the gale.

There is a ghost in the tamarind tree in back  
He doesn't have feet  
Put the rice bowl full by the door. //

## SONGS FOR //

- a planet that eats planets - on kings road/in company of ghosts
- tolerance, AL - the first forty years
- russian circles - you already did
- tim hecker - in the fog I-III

## TRAVIS NIKOLAI // VOLATILE MEMORY

In the climactic scene of the second episode of the anime *Serial Experiments Lain*, the sheepish 14-year-old protagonist summons her valor and announces to a drugged-out, gun-toting, freshly minted mass murderer that “No matter where you go, everyone’s connected.” This utterance prompts the shooter’s immediate suicide.

I sympathize. I really do. Hell, as is well established, is other people. My escape from other people when I was 14 was anime. *Serial Experiments Lain* came out in 1998, which was the same year that *Pokemon* was first broadcast to American audiences; an event which would eventually cement anime’s mainstream acceptance in the states. At the time, however, it still felt very underground, very cool, especially to a suburban kid raised on Disney and Warner Brothers. It is my firm belief that the age of 14 is in general a time of indelible trauma if for no other reason than the pubescent body horror and its concomitant hormone-induced psychodrama that many of us spend the remaining years of our lives reenacting. As it turns out, the anime canon and I agree on this.

Many major titles center on characters precisely that age: the aforementioned *Lain*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Sailor Moon* all being prime examples.

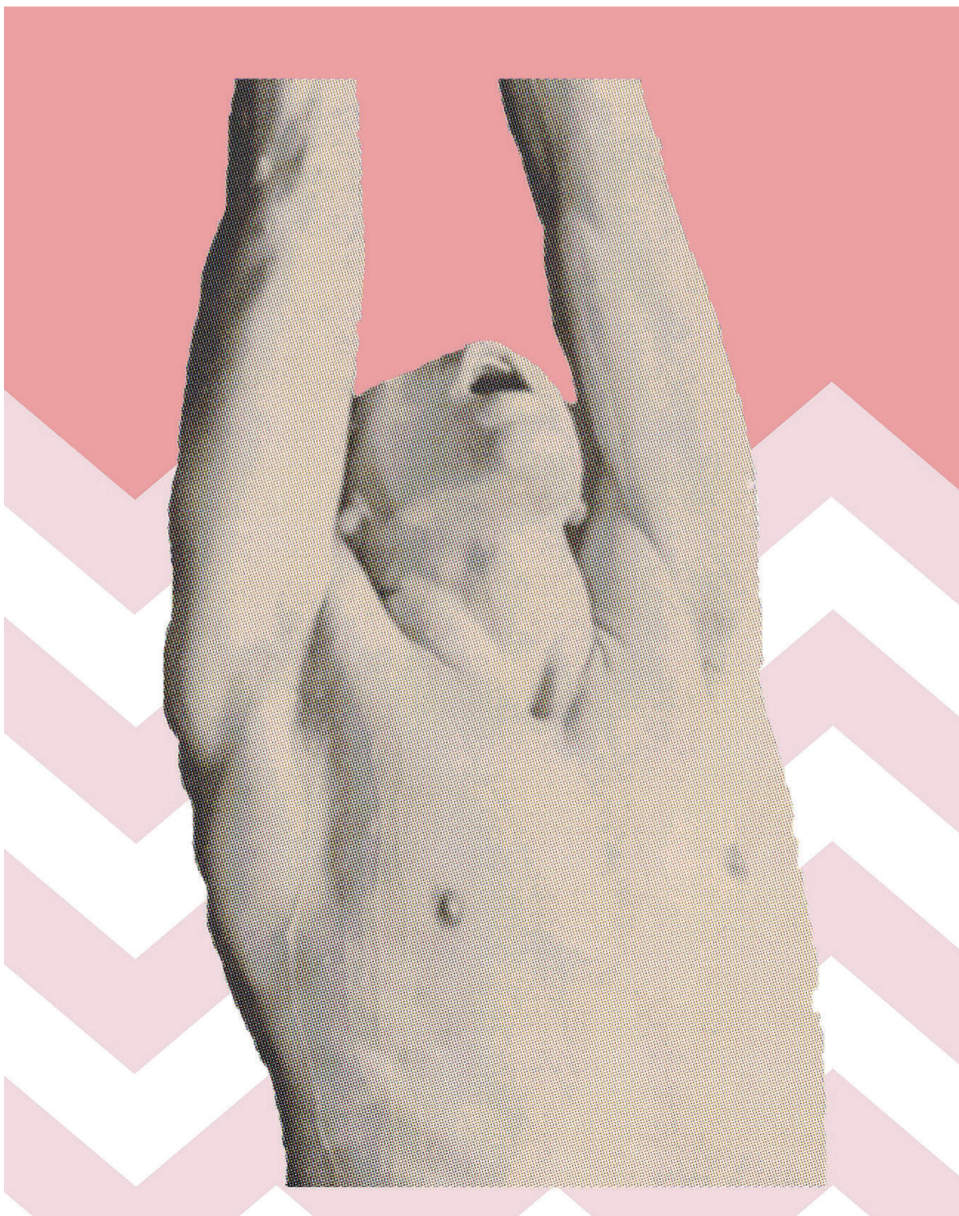
In those days anime was still hard to come by, but the places it was found alluded to a world of hip sophistication located just on the far side of high school. At that age though, even the span of a few years was an interminable gauntlet of bullying and draconian rites of passage. Some of my most treasured memories come from a dilapidated art-house cinema where I saw both *Akira* and *Ghost in the Shell* on the big screen, which was precisely as mind-blowing as it sounds. And somewhere out there is a former employee of the Cottonwood Mall branch of Blockbuster Video who shepherded me through puberty with only the sheer might of his/her picks. No other location carried any animation that could be considered outside the mundane. Not Murray, not Sandy, not Highland, not West Valley. Clerk, your name may be lost in time, but your deeds are not forgotten. Sharing is caring, and that’s my real point here.

*Serial Experiments Lain* begins with a string of suicides, all seemingly linked by an online game that looks rather like *Minecraft*. One of these suicides has contacted *Lain*, our protagonist, via SMS from beyond the grave, claiming that she is still alive but has opted to abandon her body to live online with God. This understandably prompts *Lain* to take a great interest in computers, referred to here as *Navis*, and the internet, referred to as the *Wired*. In doing so she falls into a film noir of real world conspiracy theories wherein she confronts her own sentient avatars and meets God.

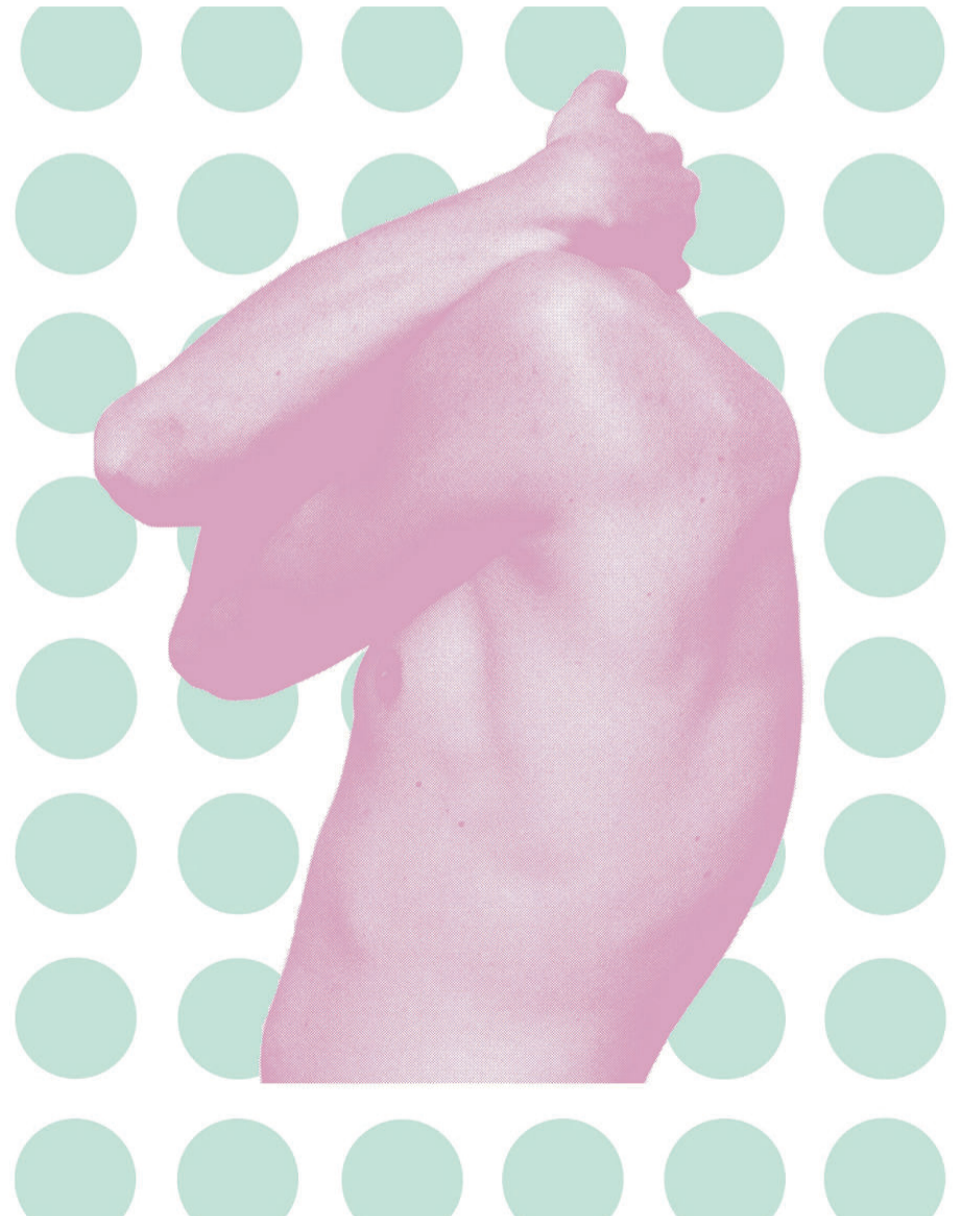
In the world of *Lain* there are neither giant robots nor fan service. Characters are rendered with general realism, but in many cases their eyes are set wide across the face making them appear subtly reptilian or fish-like. Frequent use of a fish eye lens drives this eerie impression home. Exterior shots are often blown out by an oppressive sun and interiors are alternately dark and moody or saccharine pastel. A quiet, pervasive psychedelia rises to occasional crescendos, mirroring the psychedelia of other cyberpunk works in a commentary on our own current state of over saturated device psychosis: everywhere tiny light-shows, shuffling tracks, prosthetic knowledge, future shock, and collisions of personal space.

Cyberpunk is an essentially transhuman genre. Narratives often revolve around characters who have interfaced so thoroughly with systems of artifice that their humanity is cast into question. In the case of *Lain*, this is part of a broader theme of self-actualization in young adult fantasy. Other familiar examples are *Harry Potter*, who must realize his magical heritage and master his powers, and the mutant *X-Men* who manifest their own unique abilities in the onset of adolescence. In most anime this actualization is accomplished by climbing into the belly of a skyscraper-sized, anthropomorphic war machine and piloting it into battle. This is perfectly logical to me because during puberty I desired nothing so strongly as to be outside of my own weak, awkward body, a body still subject to the social controls of childhood, and inside a body which could be self assured in its power and agency. What I find most compelling about cyberpunk, however, is that the locus of transcendence isn’t found in something as inaccessible as arcane magic, or metal leviathans, but within reach of the nearest computer, or *Navi*, or *Cyberdeck*, or what have you. The transcendent is not only within reach, but we are in fact already immersed in it.

When we first meet *Lain* she is completely inside herself. Her family is cold to her and to shield herself she dons a



evan isoline



evan isoline

head-to-toe set of bear jammies, as if choosing to be a cartoon bear is an escape from the weight of being human. This opening dyad of inner and outer world, fantasy and real self proves prophetic.

In the days following the first of the suicides Lain is lured out to a dance club by her classmates, who claim to have encountered her doppelganger there on a previous night. However, the version of Lain that they encountered was wanton and assured. Lain first glimpses this other confident self, her avatar, with whom she desperately desires to commune, in the aforementioned climactic “everyone’s connected” scene. The traumatic experience of the shootings bonds Lain with one of her classmates, Arisu, as the pair are mutually disquieted by the lack of effect the event had on the other girls present that night. Others begin mentioning that they have encountered the bizarre Lain online, prompting an obsessive investigation into the Wired that distances Lain from Arisu. In pursuit of her higher self Lain isolates herself from a real friend.

What begins for Lain as an aptitude with computers turns supernatural as she begins receiving hallucinations from God. Lain’s exploits attract the attention of Tachibana Labs, a company vying for control of Protocol 7, the next upgrade to the Wired designed for seamless information sharing between the Wired and the real. Their desire is to maintain these as separate spaces, fearing cataclysmic repercussions. This runs contrary to God’s plan to use Lain’s powers to bring about the next phase of human evolution by networking the entire population of the world like neurons in a vast brain. When Tachibana’s goons abduct and interrogate Lain it is revealed that Lain cannot remember significant portions of her past. There is a striking pattern of memory problems that arises in cyberpunk. In *Blade Runner* and *Total Recall* we encounter imposed, implanted memories. In *La Jetée* and *12 Monkeys* a man carries a genuine but ambiguous memory that he is forced to relive. And in *Robocop* a man becomes a cyborg, temporarily forgetting his human past. As with these stories, Lain begs the consideration that manipulation of memory is the first step in becoming transhuman, i.e., if she can forget what she is then she can become something new.

Lain’s lack of a clear past and an escalating series of confrontations with her increasingly insubordinate avatars causes her to begin doubting her own realness. Lain becomes like a ghost. She hacks the protocol that divides the worlds and begins deleting the memory of herself from people’s minds. At the series climax, Lain is caught between God on the one

hand, who urges her to complete her erasure from the real, and Arisu on the other, who through her persistent memory of Lain grounds her in the real. In an attempt to return to the real Lain undermines God and reveals him to be only a demiurge. To demonstrate his omnipotence God metamorphoses into a physical body but goes the way of Tetsuo at the end of *Akira*. This ends in a hollow victory, however, as God’s death throws obliterate the already haggard Arisu’s remaining sanity. Lain’s solution to this is to neither ascend to full Wired goddesshood nor return to humanity, but to opt for a hard reboot of the real, leaving her forever outside space and time as a new tangent time line unfolds without her.

Lain resolves her conflict through forcibly rewriting traumatic memory, which is, in a way, entirely possible. We convince ourselves to accept the protocols imposed on us—one way of being, one role, one point of view, one value of a binary—and we accept the terms of service without reading or questioning, but these things are mutable. They can be hacked. What’s more intriguing for me though, and I think no less cyberpunk, is the notion presented by both God and Lain, that “information functions by always being in motion.” Lain’s isolation only fully manifests when she attempts to escape her avatars, which are those versions of herself which represent other people’s perceptions of her. By deleting others’ memories of her she ends the possibility of information exchange. If we fail to get outside of ourselves, our own interiority, we fail to be known by others, thus fail to know ourselves and fail to be.

My fascination with anime and sci-fi is one of the things that drives me to create. At first I was dazzled by the worlds other people made, worlds I wanted to lose myself in. I began to draw and tell stories so that I could have spaces all my own to retreat into. I hoped that I could use these tools to actualize myself to myself. This is a fine and necessary opening act, but leaving things there stagnates the flow of information. I failed to realize that the production of those things I loved were really a kind of conversation with the outside world—a conversation between creator and audience, but also a conversation with all those ever involved in the act of making. It took me a long time to figure out that the way through is out, not in. //

## SONGS FOR //

- b. ames -  
alyssa edwards: drop dead gorgeous
- house of ladosha -  
shoe . o . e . n . o featuring roko and fu-



evan isoline

## BRETT LEVINE // GETTIN' LOW

Sometimes it isn’t just about “being” low. I’m writing this with something else entirely in my head. I wish it wasn’t there. I used to DJ bar mitzvahs, and when I think about Low, as much as I want to think about slowcore bands or David Bowie albums or somewhere you “swing” or some other esoteric examination of psychologically altered states, that isn’t the first thing that comes to mind. You see, maybe three or so years ago I was DJing a set in Atlanta, and I got the Low earworm. The problem is that the song isn’t even called Low. It’s actually called *Apple Bottom Jeans*. It’s by T Pain, who might be best known to the mainstream hipster audience as the guy who got to be “On A Boat” with Andy Samberg. But before that happened he sang this gem: “C’mon/Shawty had them apple bottom jeans/boots with the fur/the whole club was lookin’ at her/she hit the floor/next thing you know/shawty got low low low low low low low low low.”

Being low actually is an amazing state to be in and an amazing position to occupy particularly given the situation it takes in contemporary culture. Public Enemy asked “How low can you go?/Death row/what a bummer...”

Now that we are saddled with Modern Art and Popular Culture: Readings High and Low it seems impossible to escape this simple dichotomy. We had already been given the idea of the dream world of mass culture by Walter Benjamin, and perhaps had we simply substituted the term “mass” for “low” we would not be having this discussion. But somehow that doesn’t work.

Low culture is only low, mass culture is only mass, until someone finds a way to mainstream it to monetize it, to market it. Once it becomes part of the culture economy, it is no longer arch, much in the same way that *Deep Throat* or *Tom of Finland* became less marginalized and more eroticized in precisely the moment that Andy Warhol referenced the former or a mainstream museum showed the latter. It isn’t that either is in any way better or worse, but somehow in that moment they have definitely become less peripheral, they have taken a step up from the ghetto of the low, a place that they have inhabited simply because the dominant paradigm has placed them there. In a world in which hip-hop culture, or queer culture, or porn, or any other non-WASP, non-male, non-hetero culture constructs a model of being,

there is an "other" which is by necessity the center, and by necessity it is not low. It is the median, the middle. It is off the margin.

What's even stranger here though is that ever since the distinctions between high and low culture were made the idea of low culture has been inverted to be high culture. It is a simple inversion, one that has occurred simply by its inversion. It is what happens in the instance of its definition, and it happens by definition. It happens in any instance of us and them, and it happens instantaneously. It happens in part because centers oscillate, and because low by definition only exists in reference to a midpoint around which these definitions can be determined.

Here's the problem. Low culture is high. Low culture is high octane, high thought, high theory. Low culture is high camp, high value, high octane. Hell, low culture is usually high. It is Kerouac high on Bensedrine high. It is Bird on smack high. It is Ebenezer Goode high. It is Jesse high. It is arch, big money, cash money, large, fat stacks high. It is focus group, advertising, trendspotting, forecasting, leading edge, marketspeak, advertorial high. Except in that moment it is too late, always already too late, last second late...low, but only because it thinks it is.

So let's get back to Shawty. What does she think about those apple bottom jeans? What about that fur? What about the fact that the whole club is looking at

her? What we don't know in that instant, what happens in that moment, what happens in that Lacanian "I is another" moment, is that we don't know if she "is" low or is "low". There is no way to separate her being from her location. So there is also no way to know what that "low" really is. It could be a low that is high. Or it could be a low that is really low. It could be a low that comes from the fact that the whole club really is looking at her, or it could be the fact that the whole club is "looking" at her, that in that moment she is either the subject or the object of its gaze, that she either holds the power or the gaze or is subject to its power. Perhaps the answer is unknowable, and perhaps in this moment, she and we are low. Perhaps low like on the dance floor. Perhaps low in energy, low in psyche, low in spirit, low in belief, low in faith, low in something. Or maybe we are all just looking, looking at the dance floor, looking at those apple bottom jeans, looking at someone getting low, it is just that we don't know what that low really means for anyone at all. //

## SONGS FOR //

- beyondadoubt -  
9inch heels featuring niyi
- sash so hard -  
gimmie more
- double duchess -  
deviant
- light asylum -  
heart of dust

## JONATHAN ERIC GANN // NOTES FROM IRA BEATTE'S BOOK OF VISIONS

I  
rising out of the mouth of an old stump  
like a cork half twisted and forgotten  
counting red rings not in years but in  
lives  
experiences, loves, not loves, gains, losses,  
recollections  
endless red rings bleed red cords  
binding us together and ever inward  
but it's our own hands that hold us here  
the idea of a heaven,  
in hope a leaving behind of everything  
the idea of a xxxxxx,  
equally stark and terrifying  
afraid of an eternity spent in an endless  
worship of something so mysterious and  
somewhat distant  
forever casting down our golden crowns  
will we recognize each other?

from the mouth of an old stump  
like a cork half twisted and expecting  
up to the fine points of a set of branched  
horns.

II  
today i woke on a beach of snow  
the red sea at my feet.  
dozens of curious birds sat nearby.  
from where i lay their quiet mumbling  
was a foreign chorus.  
i lay quite still for quite some time,

heavy, like black syrup and chest setting  
[sic].  
feeling less like from j swift  
and more like rotten apples,  
i sat upright and turned toward them  
reaching my arms out.  
it was too much.  
the flock took flight.  
i watched them circle  
counterclockwise,  
higher higher in endless gyres  
streaming sentences into the air  
with words i did not understand.

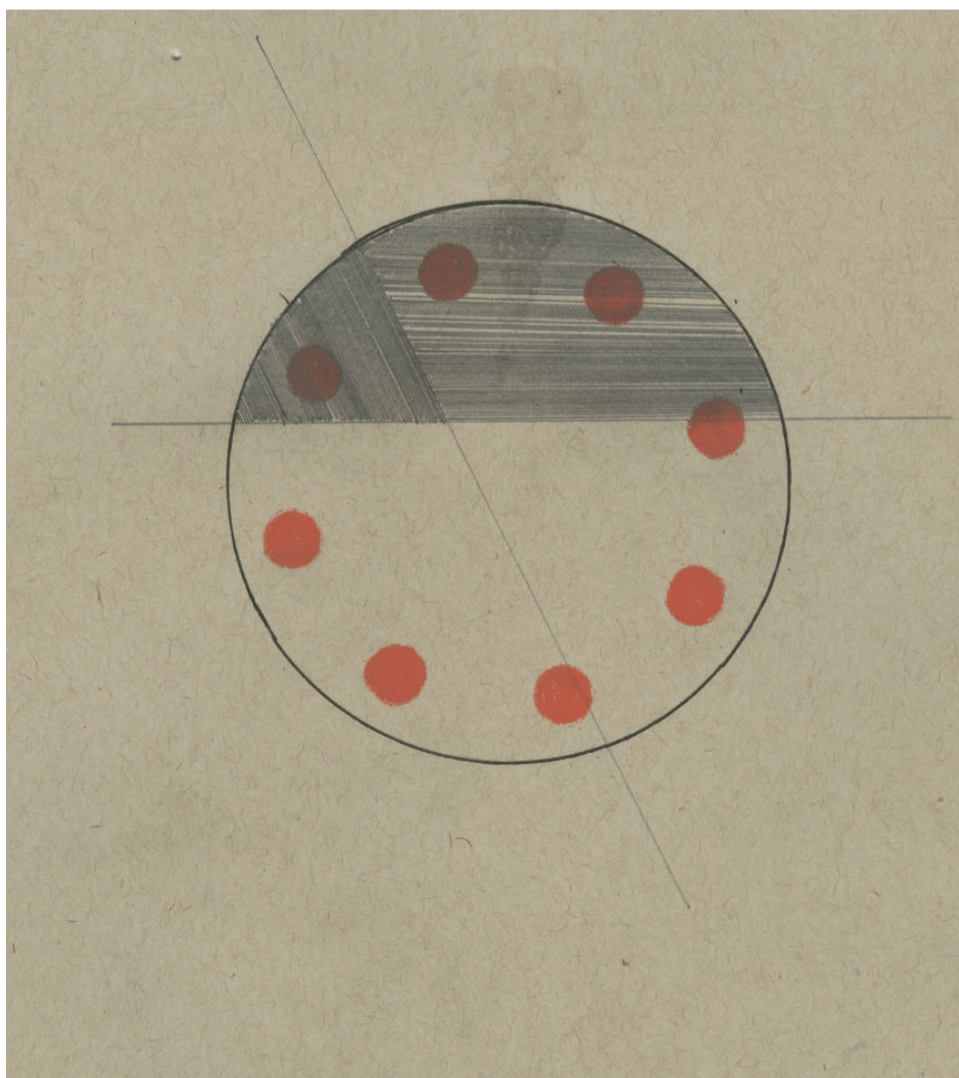
feeling more like j swift,  
i bit my cheek...it tastes like mint  
the black beach  
the sound of a bell  
the house upside down  
the water smells like fire here.

### III

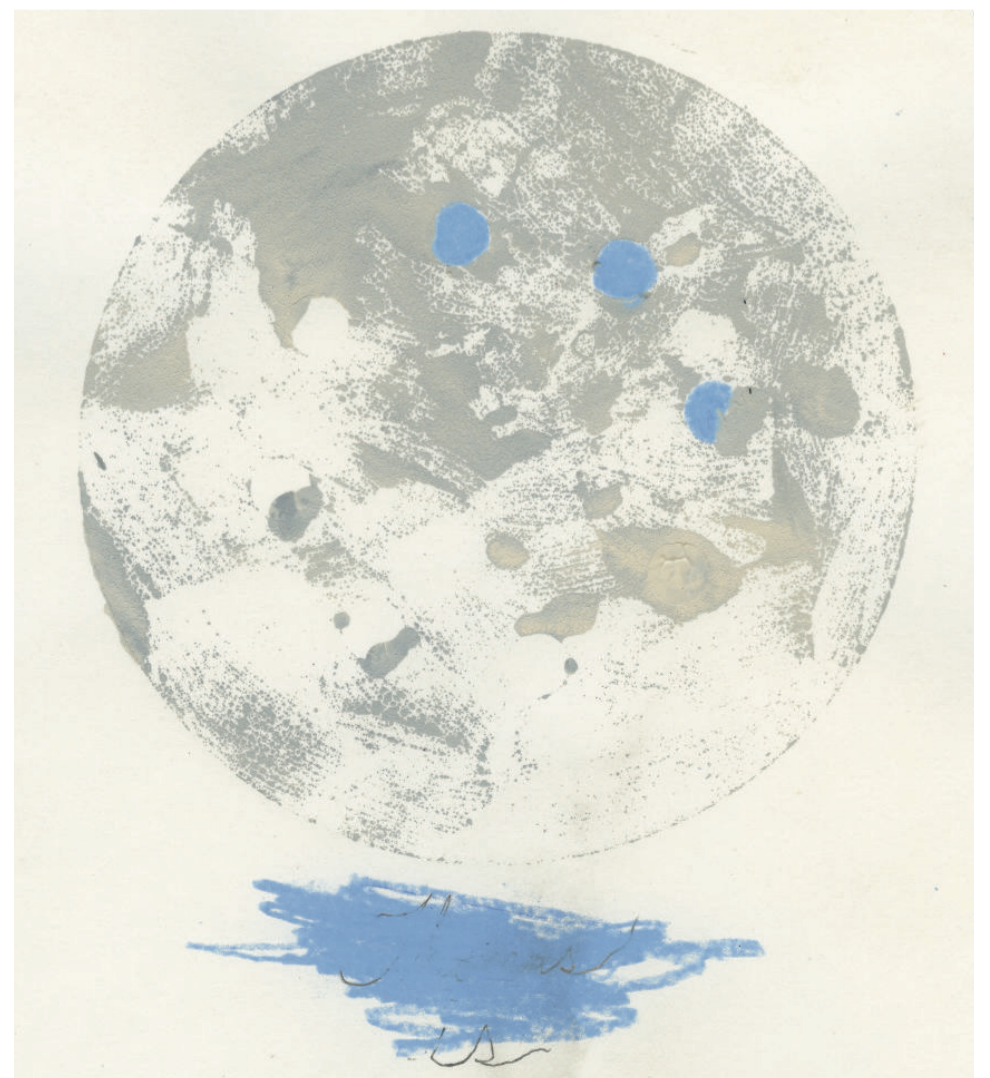
we pried from his right hand thirty keys  
to the sun,  
from the left a wooden crown.

### IV

i'll trade my voice for a set of hands  
i'll trade my health for understanding  
i'll trade love for insight  
i'll trade innocence for experience.



jonathan eric gann



jonathan eric gann

V  
relinquish your burdens.

VI  
walking on my fingertips it becomes harder when a head is forced (not so say that hands are not lovingly tied). each small step one more closer to what is constant and necessary. today being different brighter...each small step lighter...float into light...you stretched across the canvas of my mind...a smile turns the corners up...upward turning gyres in an endless spire. they'll wonder when i'm later. suspicions will abound and they'll grind endless rows of teeth. i live to deflate these expectations: walk on ATLAS: walk on black beach. i am my own self contained world and nothing belongs to me alone. in lieu of a message and a bottle i'll throw myself in instead. banana leaves, mint, sun baked, vivid, and a new definition of time.

VII  
i'm content to sit and watch this slow white pattern creep and pulse along a deeper blue current head in hands, draped across the cradle of my fingers (not heavy but concentrating)  
-like a dog to its vomit  
-a rope to a shorter rope to chance  
-you become what you've made  
i said i would die when i heard that song again and i meant it.

VIII  
we will make our homes in rotten bones  
we will sing what is not ours to sing  
our stories written with ink from the freshly torn  
and our hands wet in the truth of unfor-  
giving inspirations

IX  
on violent authority and the things that make me me  
chemical uncertainty b/w torrid romance in and through revolving doors  
i stand at the gate of my own salvation and scratch  
half of me contained within something no longer accessible  
roots will dig too deep  
spelling names i will never be able to turn loose  
entrenched  
entangled  
and troubling  
wash it, wash me again  
hands on hands on hands on the heel of the sun  
subtle cues and colors of a final descent into brighter burning fires.

X  
sing!  
sing your broken chords  
if only to satisfy your own wanting ears (i've seen you beautiful)  
sing!  
sing little one!  
sing though the sound be not sweet

if only to pass a temporary darkness affecting (i've seen you magnificent)  
your song is my song, our song is the same and as such your understanding is thorough and your senses keen...  
i'll ask you  
reach your fingers inside my chest and "oh you! if only you could feel this"  
if only to brush the edge of a dry nest cradling and egg long since overdue  
if only to trace the lip of a cold, yawning canyon whose walls brace steep stone against the softest green underbelly  
if only to scrape the mirror's wet surface ever reflecting, keeping simple truths behind it...fretting  
you see:  
i've seen me great  
i've seen me whole and satisfied  
i've seen my hands change the world  
you say:  
"fates are made and fates are sealed"

so  
sing!  
sing your broken chords  
sing!  
sing little one  
sing though the sound be not sweet  
sing!  
sing now for the both of us.

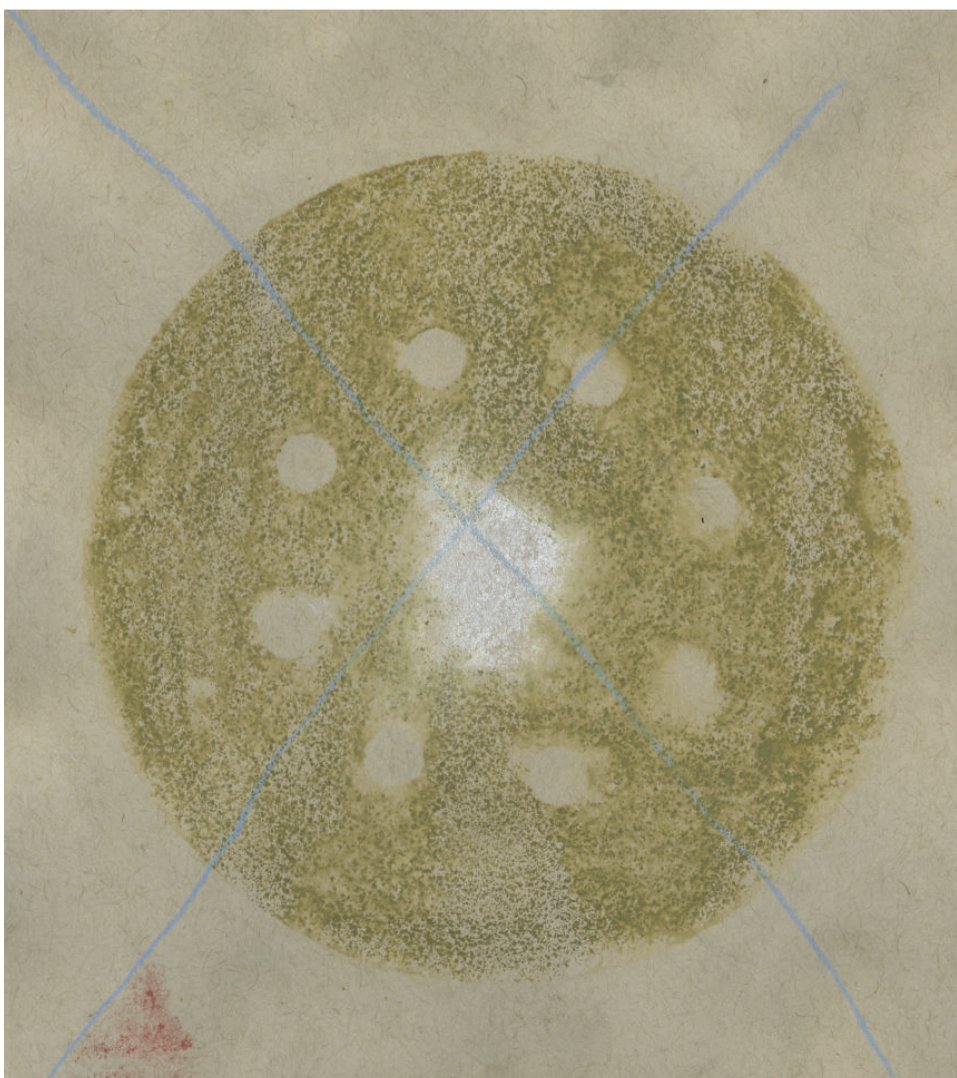
XI  
a clear and bright beam cuts the top edge of a small hill and illuminates a sharp corner. suddenly i'm reminded of just how small i really am and how it seems that most things are cyclical and filled with irony. just as it was before. a cube. its eastern and western sides large, shimmering. to the left, a strange calm (almost a righteousness, something holy). to the right a substantial and resonating fear (almost of death). i remember the way the sun played against its smooth surface, giving the illusion of being in constant motion. like it was breathing (but to all sides, not just in and out). a strange sensation here...something familiar... a radiating smile, black like the sands of an ancient beach, warm, moving. a gentle breeze plays across my face and through eaves of mint. i remember his smell and the kindest eyes reflecting the clear blue water of a paradise complete. this smell and musical sound against a background so bright, so vivid. leaning back, with my feet tucked under, the world shifts upside down. the point of our house straight down...  
then a dull ache, like a jagged knife blade hanging from my gut brings me back to this light and this hill. these corners. things are different this time. nothing is moving. without the sun, the cube doesn't breathe. sleep now. in the morning things will be different. sick for breakfast and i need to get up and walk. the sun, as promised, reanimates the sides of this perfect shape. taking in breaths of salted air. my head spinning as

i stumble a few timid steps forward and to the left, intending to trace a wide perimeter arc around it. i hate it and mean to forget it, yet i cannot. spreading my fingers across the smooth black...  
mint again  
sitting with my feet tucked under, the house upside down, the roof pointing straight down.  
a dumb smile on my face and feeling like a warm handshake...  
a finger to the waistline brings me back to now. forget the beach i say, damn chance and damn these circumstances. i swear to god, given another night and a clear head, let me find him waiting patiently under the stairs to strike a deal. //

*in loving memory  
and selected from the collected works of Ira Beatte, currently being assembled into a complete anthology entitled 'In Defense of Suicide: After I Hit the Floor but Before I Learned to Dance.' due out in late 2015*

## SONGS FOR //

- heirs - hunter
- mamas and papas - california dreamin'
- trina - my bitches
- ssion - clown
- mykkiblanco - wavvy
- iconoclast - i like you less than apple pie
- built to spill - randy described eternity
- twelve hour turn - i too had potential
- gregor samsa - on see highs
- fever ray - concrete walls
- shellac - prayer to god
- sunny day real estate - bucket of chicken
- headphones - gas and matches
- waxahatchee - bathtub
- chauchat - lights/garbage
- why? - good friday
- mt. eerie - the woolly mammoths mighty absence
- spiritualized - ladies and gentlemen we are floating in space
- a silver mt. zion - 13 angels standing guard 'round your bed
- isis - holy tears



jonathan eric gann

# JOHN KNIGHT // ON INDIFFERENCE AND ART FIVE LISTS

INDIFFERENT ART IS:

IDLE  
 VERY **N**EAR IMPOSSIBLE  
 BEST VIEWED **D** FROM A DISTANCE  
 WITHOUT THOUGHT  
 FOREVER POLITICAL  
 BOUGHT IN **F**IVE MINUTES  
 HUNGOVER AND BLOODIED  
 MADE **R**EADY BUT NEVER READY-MADE  
 MONUMENTALLY LOST  
 WRONG TURNED, AND  
 FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH CONTRADICTION

INDIFFERENT ARTISTS ARE:

OCCUPIERS OF **G**RAYING SPACES  
 DENIERS OF MYTHS  
 ORACLES  
**T**RANS-  
 CAUSERS  
 RUPTURING, WHILE  
 PUFFING SMOKE AND PLACING MIRRORS, WHO  
 PURSUE **S**ISYPHEAN-LIKE VENTURES WITH THEIR ART

GESTURES OF INDIFFERENCE IN ART ARE NOT:

**S**ELDOM  
 EASILY **H**ELD  
 FINALLY "GOTTEN-A-HANG-OF"  
**F**ULLY AWARE OF  
 ARTICULATED, AND  
**D**ICEY

INDIFFERENT GESTURES IN ART ARE:

BROW **B**EATEN, AND  
 SURE-**B**ETS

INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS ART IS:

WELL-**M**AINAINED  
 EXPROPRIATED  
 "AFFECTIONATELY"  
**N**EGATED  
 DELIBERATELY  
 NOT-**R**EAD  
 ASPIRANT  
**I**NDOLENT  
 DOUBLED  
 FEATURED

INDIFFERENT GESTURES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED

## EVAN ISOLINE // NARCOTICA

"In loco horroris et vastae solitudinis." These were letters inscribed on the stone portal of a twelfth-century refuge and hospital amidst the ruins of the famed Dômerie (L'Hospice de Notre-Dame des Pauvres) in the village of Aubrac, France. Ensnared in a desolate landscape atop a volcanic and granitic plateau, along with the austere Monts d'Aubrac leering in the distance, the hospital, and its foreboding portal were erected on the ancient pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. In the town of Santiago de Compostela is a marvelous cathedral that stands over the tomb of St. James, the final resting place of the body of one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. Notably, one of three apostles who were chosen by Christ to witness the Transfiguration.

"IN A PLACE OF HORROR, AND OF VAST WILDERNESS."

As the weary pilgrim dragged its wretched body over a steaming road of corpses this message served as a visceral reminder of the object of his sacrifice, his living body, the toll for his entrance to Paradise. In this sense, the body of the pilgrim is a body that seeks presence with God, or in other words, a body that seeks presence with what is not a body. His is the body of a wanderer, a wretched traveler, an alien. It is necessarily incomplete, having no home, it is a body relegated to deserts and forests of pain. It drags its somnolent flesh towards the dying light of a home, towards a vanishing point that will forever fill the empty space between each of its poor atoms with delicious anesthesia. The flesh of the pilgrim is embroidered with loneliness and depression. It is punctuated with scabs, lesions, and marbly iridescent bruises. It is mottled with sores, calluses, insect bites. It is livid and blistered, it is purulent.

Today, the pilgrim looks much different. The mountains and churches are laden with tourists, reduced to amusement rides, commodity. The definition of 'God' fluxuates; it is flux. We are disconnected from our mythologies because they are not our own. Nowadays, to be physically healthy is to be devoutly religious, and not the other way around. But the pilgrim remains steadfast in his essential horror for man-made sanctuary. Until he is Home his sanctuary is horror itself. Mankind's chemical empathy will not do. Along his journey his labor is taunted, his misery scoffed at. Wheezing and retching through an effluvium of perfumes, sanitizers, cleansers, soaps, shampoos, detergents, alcohols, iodines,

bleaches, moisturizers, salves, balms and lotions the exiled finally succumbs and falls to his knees. Solvents dilate the capillaries in his nose, reminding him of the ether that awaits. His lethargic eyes squint through a euphemistic haze of pastel interiors. No one understands his whispered glossolalia. The sickly sweet smell of opium makes him want to cry. As a refugee, his pain is his nationality, his loathsome body his flag. The profit of his pursuit will bear no resemblance to the artificial paradises of science, religion, popular culture, nor any other elaborate distraction or consolation for his pain. Not even romantic love.

Ultimately the pilgrim seeks transfiguration. Transfiguration being the deliverance from his body, from the obsessions of his body, and the pain that it has endured. He seeks what the narcotic substance was made in the image of. The kingdom of painlessness. He seeks the moment where human nature meets what it is not, where temporality meets eternity. He turns in a self for an-other, and holds a mirror to the void.

## SONGS FOR //

- far -  
job's eyes
- talvihorros -  
blue cathedral
- yaphet kotto -  
circumstantial evidence
- low -  
murderer
- twilight sad -  
made to disappear
- damien jurado -  
medicine
- love life -  
be kind to me
- shearwater -  
home life
- sharon van etten -  
magic chords
- brooks & dunn -  
neon moon
- wolves in the throne room -  
wanderer above the sea of fog
- daniel striped tiger -  
instruction piece
- the need  
rim me isabella
- elton john -  
i want love
- set fire to flames -  
steal compass/drive north/disappear
- nirvana -  
sappy
- jesus lizard  
monkey trick

## ENDLESS THANKS //

**Johnny Atlas** is a writer based out of the pacific northwest village of Olympia, Washington. He has attended Antioch, Evergreen, Sheffield Hallam, & Goddard. He makes work concerned with being. atlasfromtheashes@gmail.com

**Sarah Sentilles** is a writer. She earned degrees from Yale and Harvard and is the author of three books, including *Breaking Up with God: A Love Story*. She studies images, violence, and the construction of otherness. She teaches at Pacific Northwest College of Art. www.sarahsentilles.com

**Mars Dietz** is an antidisiplinary artist based in Brooklyn, NY. Using performance, writing and site specific installation, her research-based work investigates concepts of narrative historiography, landscape perception, and the financialization of language. Mars holds a BFA in Intermedia from the Pacific Northwest College of Art and an AA from Bard College.

**Douglas Baulos** is an artist, poet and Assistant professor at The University of Alabama at Birmingham. He received his MFA from the University of New Orleans. His drawings, poems, and books have been exhibited/published both nationally and internationally. His current poems and drawings are explorations (visual) and meditations (poetry) centering on his ideas of spirituality, love, death, shelter, and hope. <http://machinewithnoname.blogspot.com>

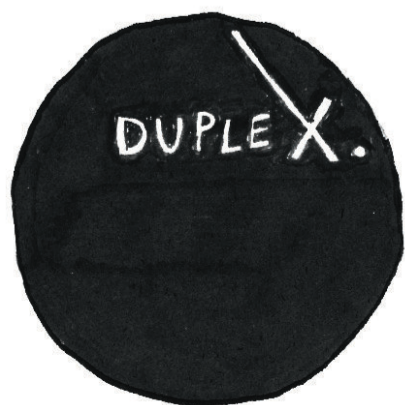
**Travis Nikolai** is a visual artist, and curator based in Portland, Oregon, where he pursues an MFA in Visual Studies at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. His work is concerned with the intersections of the occult and net-based subcultures. He holds a BFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Utah, where he also acted as Dungeon Master. [travisnikolai.tumblr.com](http://travisnikolai.tumblr.com)

**Brett Levine** is a writer based in Birmingham, AL. He holds a Master of Arts in Arts Administration from the University of New S. Wales, Sydney, Australia. His writing explores contemporary art, critical theory, curating and pop culture.

**DUPLEX GALLERY**  
[duplexcollective.com](http://duplexcollective.com)

**ARTISTS**  
[evanisoline.tumblr.com](http://evanisoline.tumblr.com)  
[kellymcgovern.blogspot.com](http://kellymcgovern.blogspot.com)  
[leifjlee.tumblr.com](http://leifjlee.tumblr.com)  
[thomasjgamble.com](http://thomasjgamble.com)  
[jonathanericgann.com](http://jonathanericgann.com)

"I'M MISERABLE," HE SAID TO HIMSELF IN A WHISPER AS HE OPENED THE FREEZER DOOR. HE REACHED IN, PICKED OUT A LOW-CALORIE FROZEN DINNER, HESITATED A MOMENT, AND SLOWLY COLLAPSED ONTO THE TILE FLOOR. "I WAS HAPPY ONCE, THOUGH." HE LAY ON THE COOL FLOOR FOR 3 HOURS AS THE KITCHEN SLOWLY GREW DARK, AND HE OBSERVED THE BOXED DINNER SLOWLY THAW. AT AROUND ELEVEN HE ~~HE~~ STOOD UP STIFFLY AND WENT TO BED.



NL,  
NFOD.

