



apertures

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Argotist Ebooks

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Argotist Ebooks

*Thanks to Jason Dewinetz for the suggestion of the title.
And for GB, who helped me be curious in the first place.*

You are not a roll of film. Don't blink.

– *K. I. Press*

apertures

Elizabeth Bachinsky's love

think of it a spare room held so lonely it goes out to meet you. a noun is a naming word, it tells you where feeling begins. everywhere I have been has become eventually here. I am systematic of caverns, replete w/ a hole where my mouth. thin tires bleed air, & the car wipes description, destinations. soon the colours will fade. I am not complaining, I am telling you too, & writing it down now for others. they will come. you know they will come. there is a space in the brain where everyone dances.

Nelson Ball's brevity

says a little
bit

Ted Berrigan's beard

wore it like it wore him

*

some serious psychoanalysis--

, a red wheelbarrow
& a small red wagon

*

is this the fifty-first state?
the most beautiful & most noble

of men are torches; new new york; the red light
flickered ash

& caught there

*

there he was,
at the end of the collected

into himself; collecting lines

Gregory Betts' plunder

if mechanics from a secret fact
w/ telling

faith is liminal; god despite meaning

nomadic body throbs, is
erotic full of force

slip hapless parents cough, disappear
to conceal sound

appeal to this, a bloodless sigh

a thoughtless dance of deficit,
beneath diffusion

soulless, homonyms collect identity
, a writing luggage

in search of falter, clot
& shadow principle

an unreal nothing is a hollow core

Joe Blades' river

on the bank of the st john river
bliss carman

you cant step into the same poem
twice

harvest high boats fredericton
view, his small room

seated, moon

a casemate in the wee hours
instruct a breeze

of salt lick

etching "praise" & "healed" on little
but water memory

this is parchment, trees

cormorants

a contour of tall ships

manual typewriter on a table, facing
an open doorway

Stephanie Bolster's new house

the house you will learn to live in,
given time. rooms of empty space

you will slowly occupy, & arrange,
in your head before anything

gets opened. in the first few days,
packed boxes the only evidence

of your arrival. in Pointe-Claire,
where they say, nothing

ever happens. planes prepare to land,
& the buses

roll on by. a steel will remarks,
& ensues, by open window.

what others escape from,
you seek out,

& there remain, at the extreme craft
of refinement. the days are hours,

the days are Japanese fans, & posters
from his plays. a print

by Vermeer. in the basement,
a room full

of flattened boxes.

Richard Brautigan's appeal

he loaded mercury with a pitchfork & hitch-hiked
the dark desert deep. worked silent as tombstones, he still
 smelled the paint fresh
on the mid-day sun. he still got all
the mercury he needed.

Stephen Brockwell's notes

towards a poem short that may take
years to solve, lone dictum
under black elastic.
who else would have known
to write a meditation
two lines thick from twenty
just to score them further
down to one?
precision is the answer, &
the question, here. what else
would be intention,
logging notebook miles
from international flights, a laptop
full of creature noise
& blackberry, logic bliss
between the notes
that ring out rare
& as determined
as any John Cage opus.
it would not matter, books are made
by human minds & bodies
who sit down, & know
how to listen. reordering chaos
into other chaos, order, Brockwell
writes his days into other days,
such a small fraction
out of human history. rotates
his wrist & think
to dust.

Colin Browne's ground

holds it, there, from the west.
the muscle of the centuries.

i live in a distant city.
the child is father to history.

it could swim in a small pond
or a large one, & still be
equally seen.

the unfortunate end, the what
of many nations.

i cant dig fast enough
or deep.

the poem pulls at the soil
& thins the spreading weeds.

an additional sound
to thereby fulfill his name.

Suzanne Buffam's intuition

behavior

never errant, making sense
of what was senseless

what

the poem wants,
means

surround
& will

itself, a clear path
marks a coming

slow, & there
is slow

marked by its resistance

marked by how
it came

a hole
in sky

to fall

Stephen Cain's geography

windows the mark, of
smaller borders

transit nursery, where streetcars
raised, & learn

an ashtray, across the trees
of no resolve

an idler mishap, triple cabfare
is sure enough a not

& slip a carcrash, thru
the office screen

horn invades a harbour,
invisible

Anne Carson's age of man

as classical relation is,
parent to us all

what the Greeks would say abt that,
an uncommon certainty

inside, she admits
that she lives in the house, but not

what room

is, classical relation, makes
professors of the lot

akin to chess games calld
tween Catallus & Sappho

what would Hetrodotus say
or bp

abt that, a common
secrecy

we talk a fact, & bandy
currency of tales

unwritten thru the age, &
bent

Chris Chambers' lake

the water so thick, there is no sense
of depth

where bodies know
not to go

a story of Long Sault, new
to his ears

of underwater villages

a myth of church steeples, peeling
off the surface

into the oily lake, a darkened
gloom

a warehouse dark

where every so, a discovery of clothes
on a nearby rock

& nothing more

George Elliott Clarke's song

always he is singing, even when
w/out a visible tune

all his poems are like small operas
set to an invisible score

when he reads you see it, blue hand
conducting the voice

& keeping score, ways no one else
can come close

wrote a libretto, a natural extension
of his right arm wave

speaks to the music, & what girls all
respond to, surely

standing close to the bar, close to
the water's edge

Victor Coleman's letter drop

At first glance he was standing stock-still,
watching wheels drive out gravel in covers

Because he one man, so strange to think
he had that many Children

& that many girlfriends

Devious sometimes, pulled blindly
against his own causes; his own face, Empty

Forgetting himself, lone poet on the lone range,
when should have been writing, himself

into history; Going out of his way
to announce broken Heart, his silence

& the death of It, all [

]

Was always terrific at both ends, though too long
was blank in the middle; still there, an

X where his name goes, a poem
spelled out, & spelled slightly; simply writing out

Yours,

Wayde Compton's essential blues

bond a performance wink,
give a face a place to breathe
on commercial, an alley back

blind, I could see you
sing dwell in yr light in the dark
sing nations & afro & brathwaite
sing variation seattle & empire blues
sing turntable sweeps & the rounds
louis dudek a devil beat
sing compton his 45; his 49
sing vancouver all over the place george
strait juan de fuca
sing father & mother & just plain talkin

the wheel turns & the wheel turns again

wayde knows how to rattle & breathe
a white light a light
filled colour light

is not a secret
is not a secret, anymore;
knows the talk
of the streets & his flesh & the lives
that had come before; so much more
than just talkin sweet

& keeps them like secrets he tells

wayde is all that his body has given him
& the permission to do more & be

in the world; & in the world,
not just recording it

Dennis Cooley's permission

the estevan menace, where a sense
of innocence figures largely
largesse, large

yes yes i feel, says he
a breath line & a warm
moustache smile

yes yes always
positive
positively

what end is this, on fridays
the boston pizza pint printed
etched in a hand or hands
hands down, cooley
kroetsch arnason libin clavelle
that figure

okay, okay, yeah, yeah pour

me another he pours
drives before he drives home
coffee but you

should

coulee in speech
coulee on the horizon
coulee caught by the wind
in mythological begin

mad poet cooley in his office, typing
& living out the poem they give us
permission to live out & such

you know where the rest
goes

Clark Coolidge's diction

go
 ing
went
 in
to 1965

in me
mory
of
those

whove
fall
 en

bak
 er
met in
squalls

of
amer
i
can paths

of
pine

Robert Creeley's maildrop

a man of letters, they say,
even so

writes a little bit, &
writes a little bit

poems & some letters, &
receives books & then

even so

drops a line on 3 quarters
of a century, life

& drops a line,
down

a bucket filling up w/
quarters

infinitely large

jwcurry's gestetner

mimeo machine, older
than god

or grandparents

wields it
perfectly, nineteen
twenty-seven

marking ink
& paper blush

a lake a line,
increasing

industrial turns,
a compilation

revised edition
of range

closing in death,
& never

awash
in replacement tubes

cranks out
a clear path

Bev Daurio's soft speech

this is not a poem
by Mallarme

a mumble

a list as much a series
of events

as they are things

she shakes her head & muses
on the end result

cut in places

a copy editors speech

in ink

small sounds

if she turns her head
just brief

youll miss

Frank Davey's dogs

He says, these things are *killing* me. A
walk in the wrong kind of shoes.

To show off one is to show off the other. A
west coast trail of grey

hounds.

Awards & prizes. Niagara wine
on a neighbours new deck.

From the interior to Vancouver to Toronto
to London to Strathroy. Where
you think north is

matters less & less.

He can write them in circles, tied up
in the yard. I am

translating Frank Davey's dogs
into lines of a lesser poem.

From scope to theory, show dogs
in a lyric mode.

From tip to tail, at the end of the day,
his poems wag
pastoral; content

in their woolen beds.

John Degen's twins

where there were two, there now
are new, two more

a month & then another back

animal things get killed, the secret life
of dogs in Bucharest

he explains a photograph of
his parents, the day they wed

& thinking, when the ink still wet

wait, are we talking books
or babies here, of Fred & Jacob

the shelves of badlands in the fore

begat, & then begat

Jason Dewinetz' growth

looks like what he writes, three months forever
in a remote shack
chopping wood for the fire, what he
used to have, drink

a cigarette behind, his growth
of beard, the underbrush

a week

what delves into specifics, cant see
the boathouse for the leaves

the lake for the waters edge

you can take the boy out, but can
you put him back, no matter

whats inside

a lack of indoor plumbing

the razor cleans itself

Adam Dickinson's envy

call him a nature poet, laugh

isnt that enough, go out for drinks

forget the rest of what were doing

Lise Downe's metalwork

a stretch of wire predestined
into twelve unbroken parts a hole
in limitless release a broken
stool not waned

or waxed the bleed of increase
a damp cloth excised a solitary wash
jeweled roses, pure the screen
the slightest sound explains

a bargain sense the burning soil
burnished, cleft hook & a hole
in white the threaded forum
hush of calm, inhales

dust & shavings, heat marks
invisible to the touch a stone
& then another stone two birds
a harness in her gold mosaics
& thrill

of boat unnoticed in the calm
someone understands trees

Susan Elmslie's things

itemized, prose with line-breaks,
after photographs

what she would write about, whether
the stuff of kitchens,

or Glenn Goulds shoes

what archives honeycomb
in cool buildings

a professor sells his library,
& creates himself an opening

a Prospero of weightlessness

the bog people, tossing beads & gold
& whats left of their love

into stony future

preserved for years of glassware
& display

a box of loose paper & dust
floating against the decades

maria erskine's grace

could shake a stir-thing, cause
a 'cause, mistaking
mix
 eh

hers a beauty, heart in
whispers, but lifts rise
across an imprint

do tell, to
 marks
or mars stars, remarks
a body
 eclipsed the earth

pulls the couch out, calmly
 whispers in

pulls the 'tween door slow behind

Jon Paul Fiorentino's prairie

this poem wants to reference itself, as much as it makes
a reference to anything else.

to ask, if the world is round. your prairie as big
inside you, as it is outside. there is no doubt

under dinner plate of sky.

an inhaler puff,
a lift of cumulus.

a long train rumbles. there is oil on the ground.

this poem is a pop song by Morrissey & Marr,
this poem is the Weakerthans.

wheatlark streets, & sink of mallkids. a breath
inside a doorway.

as visible as you are. compounding miles
along the main.

Judith Fitzgerald's fire

her heart too big
to contain
she talks herself to speech
in the four corners of epic
three walls descend & leave
one down from the fire escape
this reeling film loop in windsor
& toronto,
recording spare me, spare
the newspapers graceless love
an emotional cartography
shining light of country side
leonard cohen singing sudbury & songs
the victory where you left it
the victory where you left
the greyhound bus
a parcel of half-truths truth
the years that sped by
all that i wanted
all that i want

Gerry Gilbert's bicycle

wheels

a constant through vancouver,
& poem after poem, pome

the great white way,
see dick see jane then see

an element of lives line
in some hard season, wheels speed

down from ubc, push
slowly up

to record a human voice,
not nearly out of breath

to listen, well

it begins all in the same place,
smiling, sad, spokes, the lines

he may never cross – an ocean,
the city limits, his own

prescribed loss

i dont know anything abt anything

if you catch him

home free

Lea Graham's new dress

a gray season yellow
what she made
promise
she says, can you?
leave a light on
a standing on stage
or poem in texas
pissed drunk on a cellphone
leaning ides & a southmyth
rendered
whether bright on a river
a spotlight creation made

Gwendolyn Guth's melody

the perfect pitch, these eyes to sink,
in green fields of a song

the telephone rings

sandy hill nights, the sin
is not the sinner; film descends

& overtakes; umbrella-shy,
where else would natural disasters

flow

as lava from vesuvius; rolls
heart-quick, smooth, an irish lilt

a refrain turns, bleeding; turns
the body asks

this desk a kind of torch to light,
where holds a strain

& rhapsody to principle; holds out
the final blow

a begin is a beginning; a song
is where the mantle ends

Phil Hall's Ontario

JUST TO STAND on the fringes of speech
 & the country here, a hand drawn
betrays marks

IF I WERE TO SAY i met my hemingway,
 hermetic, a folk-song fuel for a heart,
where pulp gives way to skin

NATION-SPENT a mouth open mute,
 says nothing, words, the self on the self, other
& landscape
 jesuits
& irish drink
 & the dark failure
of bastard children

IF THIS WERE MUSIC IT WOULD KILL YOU speech
 is a pattern a ghazal, skipping stones
thrown out your swing, between experiments
 in portraiture

TREES RISE FROM THE GROUND & nothing more,
 airplanes & switches & swings,
fermenting back & bites, would you deny
 that you deny you deny

A DARK PLACE IN THE WOOD illuminated,
 black cars calloused palms are the
mighty, the crippling tone of regionalism

of "health,
 place
work & language"

remembered; unsaid

Robin Hannah's grandfather

though days have blurred to nights,
on his christmas card knee
when he was still prime minister

& she was five years old

his stories of ottawas lord elgin hotel
& the socialite elizabeth smart

when she was still eighteen

before anything; her new york nights,
toronto days, a chain

that bound her

days turn into night, turn in
to other nights, carrying every night
a cigarette, a shabby mast

absorbing light

robins dictionary of cats & solitude,
& poems safe in jars

when the peace of something finally done,
old mike, sleeps wakefield breath

as days turn into other days,
she visits, ear held keeping
to his sleepy ground

a sink between them

William Hawkins' blueline cab

a disappearance, more
than once

when tequila, but 8 cents
a shot

traverses Glebe, & picks
up strangers,
strings

along the folk fest, there
he sang

to Ottawa sky, once
falling

a heady laugh, around
the corner

driving, in
& out of view

Michael Holmes' moves

when wanted to ask, he did not
lift the chair gently, a car line
on the interstate; took it
ringside, ribcage, out

a sonnet pounds to senseless ash
in a dream-crazed burn, this
high-flying strut in cage his many
muscled forebears close

across a hotel lobbies numbered name
forgot, a flagless limb sly bubble
slamming headfirst hate into *that damn good*
he satellite meticulous, dishes blows

free-standing real a titled win
an inky mark for every loss, a limb

Fanny Howe's margins

if she could anything else
would you know —
an appearance
of peeled skin

a quietude erupts
along the hairs of one arm
like the fat kid on greyhound
waking everyone

as he climbs back to pee
no —

her precision is more
than the right place, at
the right time, a series
of awkward poses

more

the appropriate touch,
& inappropriate

when necessary

& how she knows that, too,
is needed

Peter Jaegar's drive

strand out a stand, first gear
popping second into third, & absolute
crucial time in critical, round
abouts you lose the gladdened heart,
the oil smell, dumbfounded
on the moat, a crossing pond old england
into sheffield hell a poetry of
prepositional, atonal gesture, if you were
any further trusting, my god
what were you what if you could secret
keep me out of here, or
what the fuck an echhart, a doppler a gig
fermenting foibles, positions
the body across a poetic, the variety
that movements need, relative
to muscle cars & under skies & german
autobahn, a babys breath
or chandelier, a human predicament,
a gesture, faster, live out
trigger towers & three wheels, scene low
a mirage of text own
vanishing in the closest distance possible

Roy Kiyooka's hands

of fossils,
turning slowly to fuel

writing s i l e n c e
as he spoke it

speaks

a wheel turns
beyond pale imitation

sheets a soil
over own deliverance

through turning page

marking hands, he is re
marking

single frames: a multiple

Tom Konyves' watch

takes an hour to get fifteen minutes, Ken says,
Tom being Tom

made a video once performing famous Pound
in the Montreal metro

been so long since poems, but always
poetry

, spends an hour w/ poets,
watching baseball

the rhythm of the swing

goes out for a cigarette where the ashtray
is

can even stop time, & he does,
pause button

surrealist Tom, the only one of us
who wears a watch

but never looks at it

melts into his arm, & facial hair
remedies

nearly till the cows come

Robert Kroetsch's Alberta notebooks

quick lines writ

for a land laid out, end
to end

an alibi for sure, he writes
outside the province

but manages

to bring it home, the field reporter,
reporting in

oh the humanity, as the
flames come down, & swipes a tongue

in lovers crease

where she might lay, on
writing desk

or lie — the difference,
one might say

between peeling doorknobs
& lemons

the puppeteer, w/ paring knife
or pen

where every scratch
an opening

Clare Latremouille's kitchen

a symbiosis, of Martha Stewart
gone bad,

or perhaps insane,
baking bread & Tom Jones lyrics

Frank Sinatra sings
"Mrs. Robinson," inventing lines

& scenes
of intricate mayhem, toddler Sam

, a boy who jumps, from surfaces
down

w/ broken limbs, she sits, her own
lost evil twin

subversive tilt, of bars
& paper bags

the dollar store & thrift, a figure
she contends

into a million; all made fresh
from nothing

& better she begins

Dorothy Trujillo Lusk's weird enterprise

as you were, a house
of bone

here the blisters ring the thing
of Ottawa Valley

cloistered, competing for

there are some ways of being dismissed
as desirable

, as desire puts it

managing to sing her always song

a twelve year old beast goes &
grows & knows

abt their fact, approachable
in the whys

surveillance knows

primarily an act of *pleasure* —

Steve McCaffery's sub/version

if this was generative at all with facts.
a television is not an answer.
im wrong, but where? teach texts
as flat on the page
& moving.

leave out lessons of the past essential.
destructive instructive. my hands

on the hot engine. burns.

this is the story of a chair in buffalo.
an office in toronto. a storage space
on the ontario border.

tell me where you dont live. i think
i thought a window.

can call it in, a rational romance.
the dark age. irrational thinking. his finger
to the finger to fore.

there. not there. complete against a comp.

Gil McElroy's astronomy

finds a day at random,
seemingly

w/out a season

composed, in "the first act"
, a relative mark

takes a measure of stars
& so

locates them, echoes
written in

overblown from points, & set
thru staging

curtain down the morning
but never

fades from view

Don McKay's birding

a birdwatcher knows
when the timing is right

& knows patience, like the back
of his steady hand

how the feathers change colour
w/ the light

the appeal is this, the details
in a fluttering breath
or long air current that exaggerates
a twitch

a wing or a slight mistake

by the Raisin River, he traces
an age, the stretch
of many particulars

prehistoric fowl, a line
on a rocking chair

that any country bird in flight
would trust to light upon

by emphasizing nothing, he makes
it all happen

Barry McKinnon's truck

after years waiting for

what
, breaks down a simple thing

for all the work out
that end
attests

& not what it was meant, a cheque
to the mechanic,

the one
who made road worthy

forgive me,
it memos

beer at the hotel the hours as
he waited

& then
– a notebook
game of pool

& took it back
returning
empty-handed

stick-shift in his right the clear mountains

in no time,

on the road so far ahead me somewhere,

almost out of sight —

Jay MillAr's adventure stories

it came in through a dream & the dream
was not so much a dream as a memory

I have always wanted someone to follow
in the language or the street so tender

we hide out from these disappointments
in the light

& if dreaming was becoming instead of a dream
it probably would have happened already

under a glass of scotch on ice without

the stories are ghost and present themselves
as the part of the dream once they wake you

such as it matters then, such
as it is set
it is not easy to speak in this matted room

love is still love is the ghost then of something
other or the dream of the ghost

I would repeat this

Sheila E. Murphy's spatial/reading

a formulation of small meanings
describe a day

*

a miracle, a section, become literal
out of littered prose

*

an ongoing constant, built
from computer screen, sleep

& smoke

*

when we die, who
will care for our machines?

*

a clove of love inspires plenty
, a closeness in text

*

syntax is an unsettled boy
driving an ideogram

*

an Arizona field opens eggshells
, spread constant wings

*

i am a relaxed jaw

to the small gloved hand

of a god

John Newlove's silence

not as deliberate as youd think,
more a passive

than an active recluse

but a block away, he compounds
a silence, & a fine line

writes less than he carves away

& knows something of pessimism, hes worked
on for years, & become

its frail master

long hours spent on computer,
playing solitaire

Jena Osman's zero

starting out from nothing an ideal
a step between characters & steps
pull out & revealed upon, a chain
linking fences & lay lines
the period in which we find ourselves
now a point, neither a dimension
begins but a single dot

when interest was invented & performed,
furthermore, the body made up of parts
the first of which is many
how construction now afraid
a musical ring-tone or compound chemic
is this all the same body
when interest discovered, were
the greeks there to argue there was
something other, something larger than less
& before, an opening

if you were me,
a multiplied

distraction is analogy that doesnt last

Aaron Peck's dance

out of nowhere by the fire,
young zorba from the interior

no matter where he stands, he is
usually cold, & quiet, perhaps pining

in his seamans coat, for a lost
greek isle

like a young glenn gould, bundled
in the living room

w/ scarf & hat, he holds
the guitar close

& out of tune

slowly begins to right himself
slowly picks each articulate note

David Phillips' absence

a kiss decade held
through seventies long

still the broken heart

threw down picked up tools
& a carpenters trade

decked out & gone, flame
of houses

& coastal towns

is it enough
to say

K. I. Press' book

when I ask, do you still curve your spine,

it does not mean. stay awake,
a shepherd of forms & letters pressed,

a tick of wood. you know
I've said this before: I think maybe
they were unhappy

for a short time. until.
still, still, still, still, still.

if you were a voice & he,
a bowl scooped from maple, then
would you. variations on gardens

& the department of tourism, tipped in
to every third. I press this

into skin, into soft wood, in bamboo;
in aldus,
& spare change. of this, a serious

fiction of fonts & blue ink, that only
a typographer. not true, not true.

the spine that cracks when you open,
before anything.

Meredith Quartermain's maps

if dreams are prescribed boundary made
out of somersaults & lines in tow visible, the parallel
at 49 that curnoe said *close*.

white rock is not langley is not surrey is not
vancouver; or is. a sliver of paper & hawks dove,
a keefer street stroll catering slippability
at the lower end of province; vancouver sun,
vancouver rain, vancouver standing in place.

explorers knew, if dreams were made of colour
& endnotes, end credits a date. specks
of metal in the dead eye. deconstructionalist;
half a century of speech.
each poem she writes an engraving, a map
tipped in. shine midnight
over every person. a back w/out knives
& fleeting music of archives.

between virtual & real, a library.

long tunnel to morning, the ends always curl,
constellation-driven. long breath in the queue.

Sina Queyras' prose

a slip out of jersey sprawl, long past toronto
where she lives in brooklyn, but
summers a bridge. she is crouched on a rail,
she is driving through vermont, she is bold
between syntax, a montreal dream, she
is passionate & wild amid love
& desire

& the breathless read. teethmarks, as she
pulls away from the house, a refrain
of sunday morning & final amtrack
& the film still her mother & the
long line in bronze, lucinda williams
& every stop that holds firm between this
& the last.

Monty Reid's bones

how to use this poem: against a map
of some thousands of years

if you can trace where they sit, you can
see how they land,

as once were airborne

there is blood on this page, where fingers
cut, so slight

a mythology shaped around like skin,
on what is left in the ground

a dinosaur puzzle once made

so much like this, writing badlands
to badlands — Alberta, Quebec

a monolith of degrees

caught somewhere behind, in the space
between covers, less

than an inch

nikki reimer's hair

orange, like the magazine,
of course
parenthetical

i dont know what colour it was
originally, the hair
or the couch

Joan Cusack's face, & cute
as a damn bug,
smaller

glows in the darkness
of a Calgary bar, the
wrong one

& drag shows that go on
forever, a drag

that drag

w/ insufficient grammar

Sandra Ridley's sediment

writing topics from wheat farms, the long furrows leave, recede light
in smoke. the sun is large, & throws the province
single shadows; saskatchewan,

she says, where a finger draws a lake, a single file

in poems that move a glacial pace, scraping earth & leaving there
the best of everything, as hard

to remove from the ground as from
her calloused hands, her dancers frame; what poem
doesn't last

or last forever, lake water over shield into descent
; graceful, pouring deep & water in

a renovated kitchen
& westboro rooms. wind makes wheat a crack dry in

a door become a heart-shape, what silt

moisture as weightless, stain more than air

or wind through the wheat or like wheat, breakable to never-bend
; this is the story, she writes, the poem

of what was left behind

Stan Rogal's myth-making

Have you sent me this?
Have you sent for me?
— Stan Rogal, *Fabulous Freaks*

when a snowball in hell tells Jack Spicer
every morning at 10am,
 "surrender Dorothy,"
 you know youre in trouble.
on the lonely & the lost five fingers leave a mark,
as Marilyn Monroe sashays into Richard Brautigan
through a San Francisco park
 where spicer sits on a red blanket
 & listens to am radio baseball.

Stanley Cooperman remains on his ledge.

tell a story like you know, & know it; one heart
doesnt discourage the next; one snowfall
 has little to do w/ the last.

under rough pen, the ego is hairless & smooth; the body
becomes more than, & less; a magazine portrait
 cut blind, interspersed at random
 or at seeming random.

when a snowball in hell paints a postcard
 of only lifes best moments,
watching The Tin Man & Cowardly Lion make notes
 on the ass-end of stills
 from "The Seven Year Itch" &
 "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes"

adding stamps & a postal code.

writing to Dorothy, we are good; we are still here;
we are already far past the wrong end of our story.

Lisa Samuels' move

a visa delay in your new new zealand
paper airplanes send
through all of it leaning encounters; reclamation
& desire

a narrative fronts accountability
paradise acts & reacts, an equal opposite
leaving milwaukee, marks on scorched bleeds
& glistens earth

a box is held & packed to the line
a solidarity, grief of words & before your hands
the air a solid stuck in the ground

when it finally an endless rise
taking pictures of flightless birds & host of suns
declaring itself a finer promise of blue

when the globe finally declares itself flat
& we can offer a flip side we can see,
actual size

if anything would you write when you land

Jordan Scott's s-stutter

a stab blur, bluster,
cant get it out, out

says & doesnt
, a blot, or blert pour

stab a bluster speak
or blot different

if does, says
blurt a stutter

snag, repeats

a molotov monster,
stirs

a simple then

Jack Spicer's Martians

imagine rimbaud & his tragic muse
imagine billy the kid & baseball
under runcible mountain

where words came out of him, his pen
a cut that his mouth made
as he said, writing from that other place, not
lying on a beach towel in san fran
listening to baseball games transistor radio

all the pulp fiction of his day looking
up & out at rowdies, spaceships,
red planets & little green men & where
did poems look, the things of the earth
bare name across a paper sheet & days

if they had them too, & did
told old jack what to say from red waves
dust building floors up walls & listen

this is the page this is the poem these are
the lines in the book on the table in the
world in the house that jack built

& he says *listen*

Andrew Suknaski's loping coyote lines

born into
 a three day window
 of walking dogs

from one horizon

listens, once, his father
 steps
 across fading land

& fading memory

when days require sleep
 & other increments
 of display

what Purdy once praised

floating down the North Saskatchewan River

of poems left in small mounds, cannisters

lost in the woods

 a kite

 &

deliberately placed

under the canine howl
 of dry prairie

Cole Swensen's territory

learn to be amazed. a fence break
big enough for a boy.

slowly is a matter of point. of
point-of-view.

a departure made of hands.

how close is Denver to Boulder. thirty years
of Mork & Mindy

translates them.

fingers drawn quickly, faster
than any mid-American pen.

a poem learns abt hills. a poem
learns San Fran streets

& Colorado hills.

all writing is creative. the car drawn
w/ the monks quill

will never smudge.

white makes a winter cap
in late spring.

an entry of thinking
onto foreign soil.

Sharon Thesen's daydream

a dream of roses living out
in the interior.

whether she was listening to the radio,
two beeps & a dot calypso.

the clock said ten to three.
the clock said one.

spiral half-asleep an edge
of sunday morning, porch alarm

what pose cant hold.

lovely in the biceps
of the planetarium
& rental car.
lovely on the horizon.

into a small box, enclosure
made of doves & smoke.

& cracked cup left in prince george
that is still cracked, there,

still leaking.

John Thompson's ghazals

perched there, in deaths way,
for so long

on the edge of chopping, he holds
the wooden handle

without him, we inhabit
what we would not

, a coffee cup of nails

the strong, unstructured cabin
giving birth to poems

& heavy rain, the mud
of Rene Char

short pools, & long surrender

the classically-shaped
surrealist-free

of controlled imagination
long practiced in America

Dennis Tourbin's view

there is always
a television on

whether abt sex
or truth

the Beatles were gone,
& Elvis was gone

when you live in a house
w/ but a radio

there are no excuses

dropt a fishhook, dropt
a piece of important text

at Bay & Somerset, years

& a camera, pointing
up

to catch, a current

rushing past, a syndicated
drift

the breaking news,
commercials

Mark Truscott's muse

Hockey Night in Canada is great. Art galleries, too.
Hockey Night in Canada is great. Art galleries, too.

Fred Wah's breath

a raw exhalation,
w/ pictures

pictographs from the minds
interior

walks along two paths
of colour

& concern

stations a response
from Kootenay jazz, a

mountain gust

a coffee cup that knows
no bounds

his name, that
which is not said

but heard, escaping
slow, a twig

from kissing mouth

Andy Weaver's shirt

yellow on green, the
City of Windsor,
parks

from Edmonton down,
travelled more
than its owner

was it a quarter, or
a dollar or two, who
knows

 receipt
long gone

& left on a chair, soon
moved, ever
out of the province

given back
on my back, a thing
in the dark

Phyllis Webb's failure

as perfect as anything
held in your hands

such unfinished business
that could have gone anywhere

the shadow of bowl
we wish was so bigger

crawl out of an island
inside of a hole

forgiveness as brief
as it is inconsolable

flying dutchman was raw
& it came out of everything

a portrait I refuse
to write

only wonder

a map out of all things
including a chair

Sheri-D Wilson's image

on the tv, sweeping
down

dancing w/ stewardesses
dressed in pink

the only way to fly

slips a heartbeat
across miles

& an incline,
slippery slope

makes me want
to visit, makes me want

to enter into flying,
Alberta twang

& go to ski school,
twice

surrendering downhill
to the tube

Julia Williams' flood

to say it is a trick, step into that same river
twice; or roll the dice

too small to step, too small to flow, her hair
cut short too short to grab if she goes

floating; that same river always, the bow,
the grand, the fleeting glimpse from her eye

is understanding all seasons equally & waiting,
at the calgary foothills, patient in poems

for the glorious run & fall of a single step
that ends, endless

unreal as a moment

William Carlos Williams' pad

waiting for babies, quick,
a poem

a doctor's office, prescription
pad

there is nothing more,
a day
in hospital whites

or a nighttime, catch
a newborns breath

when one arrives, you cant
put up on no
shelf, no way

but take it as it comes

C.D. Wright's lost road

hardly lost, when you end up there
inevitably

with all the right things
in your bag

an illusion neither optical, technique
nor other

surface of the barn, where shadows
creep

a yellow brick is something, tho yet
to be seen

seized by an authors dream
of transience

narrative is

Rachel Zucker's working note

mythological tongue & no matter where, where

a burnished tip to arrival

a woman in central park, a woman in relationship,
a woman in childbirth, a woman w/ notebooks,
a woman w/ two boys, a woman in street clothes

saving up never ended

to exhume a truer version of experience,
as god contracts, a narrative *love*

a critical healing

is frightened

; how a poem is when received, a wound
or a fissure that compounds in telling

an instant so crushed, then

then a beg, through an envelope posted,
stamped,
a location of perfect

a two-storied had dreamed

so few people begin

Louis Zukofsky's alphabet

spoke the beginnings
always
from the other end;

when one commodity
replaced another;

new york
& disorienting language

he desired
what was perfect

from the outside;
even

as he worked w/in;
a desire

that was bare & widening
in effect;

a mind of the world;
of the beginning;

mindful

if his place in

the A

Jan Zwicky's sense

got more than i have,
certainly

the philosophical role
of the small instrument

what is the shape of it,
three notes

acknowledgement & variation
of open strings, & the way
Victoria hums

a grand piano ringing
on yr chest

cavity

come into every molecule
of a Williamstown autumn

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Apertures is the second book of *the other side of the mouth*.

About the Author

Born in Ottawa, Canada's glorious capital city, **rob mcLennan** was raised on a dairy farm (his father, sister and her family still live on the dirt road his family has occupied since 1845) near Maxville, in Glengarry County, returning to Ottawa the year he turned nineteen. The author of nearly thirty trade books of poetry, fiction and non-fiction in Canada, the United States, Ireland, Japan and England, his most recent titles are the poetry collections *A (short) history of l.* (BuschekBooks, 2011), *grief notes:* (BlazeVOX [books], 2011), *Glengarry* (Talonbooks, 2011), *kate street* (Moir, 2011) and *52 flowers (or, a perth edge)* (Obvious Epiphanies, 2010), and a second novel, *missing persons* (Toronto: The Mercury Press, 2009). In 1999, he won the CAA/Air Canada Prize for most promising writer (in any genre) in Canada under the age of thirty, has been shortlisted numerous times for the Archibald Lampman Award, longlisted for the ReLit Award, and received an honourable mention for the Verse Prize.

He spent the 2007-8 academic year in Edmonton as writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta, and regularly posts reviews, essays, interviews and other notices at robmcLennan.blogspot.com. In 2008, ECW Press released a collection of his literary essays, *Subverting the lyric: essays*, the same year Arsenal Pulp Press produced his expansive tourist guide, *Ottawa: The Unknown City*.

He is the editor/publisher of the chapbook press above/ground press (founded 1993), coordinator/co-founder of the semi-annual ottawa small press book fair (1994), the Ottawa poetry pdf annual *ottawater* (for the City of Ottawa's 150th anniversary in 2005), the online poetics journal *Poetics.ca* (with Stephen Brockwell, 2002-2007), the trade publishing house Chaudiere Books (2006, with Jennifer Mulligan), *The Garneau Review* (2008) and *seventeen seconds: a journal of poetry and poetics*, (2008). In January 2012, he will mark twenty years of literary events organizing, including readings in Ottawa, Toronto and Edmonton.