



**P03M5**

# ABSTRACT

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By Justin Katko

This thesis is a collection of fifteen Video Poems made between Fall 2005 and Spring 2007. They include collaborations with Camille PB (*What Spam Means to Network Situationism*), Jow Lindsay (*Collected Vision*), and Katharine Fronk (*Scores*). The latest version of the Quicktime player should be installed to play the videos. The supplementary text is in two parts: the first outlines Video Poetry as a genre, tracing its historical development (along with Film Poetry) to establish a foundation for contemporary discourse and practice; the second provides a statement for each of the Video Poems, and in the case of the collaboration with Jow Lindsay, presents a completely text-based Video Poem.

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A Thesis

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by

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# VIDEO POETRY

## Preface

Video makes literal the metaphor of Poetic vision. It's Latin for / see. This text lays claim to a definition of Video Poetry.

To presume that some form of Poetry can exist as a Video object is perhaps contentious, though the term Video Poetry has been in use since at least 1975. Too often the word Poetry, like Love, is thrown around and its reference is lost. The usage Poetic Video is less contentious, because its claim is aesthetic rather than metaphysical. 'Poetic' doesn't carry the weight of 'Poetry', which is a format engaging a set of expectations re established means of consumption and production. The Poetic of Poetic Video functions as a cue for a certain ambience which the work - as Video Art - supposedly emits. To classify a work of Video Art as Poetic is generally a by-product of the absence of a classical plot arc – not cinema.

Video Poetry is a syncopation of what Abigail Child calls “unparalleled signaling systems,” writing in the context of Film and Poetry as arts that “circulate and alternate, cross-fertilizing each other” (Child, xxi; 2005). By which I understand her to mean that the moving image and the word are non-parallel information streams – Video Poetry edits them into one another. Video Poetry it is generally made with a computer. And because so much of what we read and who we watch is shined from computer screens, Video Poetry doesn't even need a camera: screen capture software allows everything occurring on the computer screen to be preserved as Video. Alan Sondheim and the net.art duo JODI often make use of the Desktop as a performative site.

Note that the marginalization of the camera in image production is nothing new. Sylvia Martin describes how video synthesizers have been used by artists since 1969; likewise, P. Adams Sitney mentions that Man Ray's rayographs proved cameras to be unnecessary for photographic image production because “the photosensitive surface was the essential material element.” In a moment when both Poetry (as electronic type, sound document or video document) and Video

are apprehended via the same window of light, the theoretical gap between their production and consumption is ripe for an articulate inhabitation by practice.

Video Poetry exploits: a) Video Art, which Martin calls a “hybrid inter-medium” because its practitioners (since 1965) have used it as both a medium in itself (on the shoulders of film’s half-century-plus of moving image production) and as a tool for documenting visual phenomena in the various art disciplines, and b) poetic language, which Veronica Forrest-Thompson calls “resolutely artificial, even when it tries to imitate the diction and cadences of ordinary speech.” Nothing less than the history of lyric poetry is at stake, not to mention the entire history of cultural practice.

The teleology *Poem + Video = Video Poem* does not represent a fundamental methodological paradigm. Works whose inscription methodologies embody narratives of separation and unity (or, *loss and acquisition*) perform separation itself by fetishizing the means of communication over the will to communicate. Potentially Boring: The Poet bumbles over a threshold into the vast realm of Literate Vision, does some seeing with words, puts a name and a few screenings on some thing, then crawls back to the writing desk. Or the Videographer says *Let’s have a poem!* and hires some Willy Collins to read a few on the sound-set.

## TIMELINE

Integral to Video Poetry, which hybridizes Poetic language and Video Art, is the metaphysics, the mechanics, and the mechanization of vision. So this is a Poetic timeline of vision hurriedly constructed to point out some of Video Poetry’s ancestors. Its climax includes a) an exposition of how Video Poetry can be used as an analytic tool for exposing new information in non-Video-based Electronic Poems, and b) commentary on a few works of Video Poems.

Far as Creation's ample range extends,  
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:  
Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,  
From the green myriads in the peopled grass:  
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,  
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:

(Pope, 207-212; 1733)

In the first Epistle of his **Essay on Man**, Alexander Pope assembles a data-set from the Great Chain of Being, tags it "modes of sight," and uses it to clarify one truth – "Whatever IS, is RIGHT." On this symbolic ordering principle whose sign is a dyad – dull/sharp – the vision of Homo Sapiens falls in "the Middle nature" between rat and cat. This breadth is supposedly the Universal extent of vision's capacity. Metaphysically, well before any transparent eyeball with legs: Pope's models are necessarily beasts without Reason. As such, Pope obscures the particularly measured amplitude of human vision itself, rubbing it out into an extended blur. In doing so he throws his gaze quickly past the direct light of the human eye even as he preaches the opposite in the 2nd Epistle's opening (my italics):

Know then thyself, *presume not God to scan*;  
The proper study of Mankind is Man.

Walt Whitman's maximalist vision, 150 years later, crafts a writing-based praxis out of Pope's knowledge that the scope of human sight is just as mighty as God's. This is four years before photography saw the replacement of the glass plate for film. Four lines in the first half of **Song of Myself** seem to log Whitman posing for a photo, the strike of the flash-bulb in the fourth line encoding him as a sorcerer; the Poet's power just as central as that of his Poem (my italics):

I crowd your sleekest and best by simply looking toward you.

Writing and talking do not prove me,  
I carry the plenum of proof and everything else in my face,  
With the hush of my lips *I wholly confound the skeptic*.

(578-581; 1881)

Forty years later, Ezra Pound shows in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberly* that when Man casts her vision out, what she sees is her own face watching itself. The gaze is projected from an electric eye – watching a mole.

The age demanded an image  
Of its accelerated grimace,  
Something for the modern stage,  
Not, at any rate, an Attic grace;

Not, not certainly, the obscure reveries  
Of the inward gaze;  
Better mendacities  
Than the classics in paraphrase!

The “age demanded” chiefly a mould in plaster,  
Made with no loss of time,  
A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster  
Or the “sculpture” of rhyme.

(Pound, II; 1920)

Pound laments ironically the essential damage that “technological media” delivers to “art” (to mark Friedrich Kittler’s paradigmatic distinction in scare quotes), the ontologic fallout of which is great enough to render that mark Original – or at least a simulation of it. He registers poetry’s non-registration of a fundamental aspect of reality – Time – imagining the world sprouting dimension-for-dimension from the cast of a Grecian Urn. He posits a flippant metaphysics of film which damns poetry into obscurity for its inability to channel in and manipulate the time axis, “that which does not cease to write itself” (Kittler, 114). While the inadequacy of poetry’s received forms was something Pound was prepared to take on (“To break the pentameter, that was the first heave”), forgetting poetry’s received format was something he was only able to write a poem about. In 1922, Mina Loy encodes this damage in blood:

Upon the carnose horologe of the ego  
the vibrant tendon index moves not

since the black lightning desecrated  
the retinal altar

(Loy, "Der Blinde Junge", 16-19; 1922)

The sonic and visual patterning at the end of that first line, with *ego* reversing the back end of *horologe* or clock – that which logs the eleventh hour in ticks and tocks and frames per second. The *horologe/ego* orthographic shift seems to posit an organic opposition between the ego as a continuous stream (of automatic writing?) and mechanization as discrete quantification of that stream. Using Veronica Forrest-Thompson's tools, inferring a theme from one instance of Loy's tone flipping is too eager for synthesis. Because the meaty timepiece of the soul is a verge upon which the quick beaming eye has been stilled by the insistent fermata of a flash of darkness. Cause for the kino-eye to stop shooting. The Old Testament diction and the wider context of the poem locate it in a specific historical moment and whose commentary is often more comprehensive than mere reference to the status of technological media. The same is true of all the other poems I have mentioned and my analyses of them.

The term Cinépoème was coined speculatively by Stephane Mallarmé, who viewed the Lumière brothers' first film screenings in Paris (info taken from <cinepoetry.com>). Hans Richter wrote in 1952 that the experimental film "has created its own realm, which we may term 'film poetry' in contradistinction to the 'novel' of the entertainment film or the 'reportage' of the documentary." This kind of categorizing wrongly projects onto the film medium the distinctions between the type-based genres of novel, poetry and news. Such a projection is literal only to the extent that both cinema and the news use language as mediums to carry information for their plots. The works Richter classifies as Film Poetry are in fact Poetic Film because they do not use Poetic language. (Of the Dadaist and Surrealist Film-works he lists, Marcel Duchamp's **Anémic Cinéma** is the exception.) Richter generates his momentum by showing how Dadaist scroll paintings from the early 20s exploded out of the limitations of the canvas and became scores for the first abstract films. He writes that "the 'orchestration' of time was the esthetic basis for this new art form;" however, his logic for declaring an equivalence between experimental Film Art and Film Poetry is what he describes as the scope of his scene's expansion beyond the pure abstraction of early Films like his own **Rhythm 21**



(1921), Walter Ruttmann's **Opus** series (1921-25), Viking Eggeling's **Symphonie Diagonale** (1923), and Man Ray's **Emak Bakia** (1926). Because "Cinépoème" was given time in the title sequence of Ray's **Emak Bakia** (and the Mallarmé bit which I haven't followed up on yet – waiting on some books), I understand that Richter proclaiming *Film Poetry* in the climax of his essay is a rhetorical flare. But maybe it was at something of a moment – 1952 was an important year for the Film Poem as pushed into the world through the extreme anti-formalism of Lettrisme. More on that later. Back now to the first half of the century.

Dziga Vertov's 1929 classic **Man With a Movie Camera** is Poetic Film but not Film Poetry. While it undoubtedly exploits an inscription technology (as the opening credits claim metaphorically – "Excerpt from a camera operator's diary"), the work is a series of formal experiments with the moving image. It can be watched and downloaded from the **Internet Archive**. Whatever exists as the Poetic in **Man With a Movie Camera** is in the symbolic interface between the vision of Soviet life that it stages and the rhetorical teeth that cradle its (also Poetic) departure from the conventions of "prose kinema." The opening credits are a manifesto:

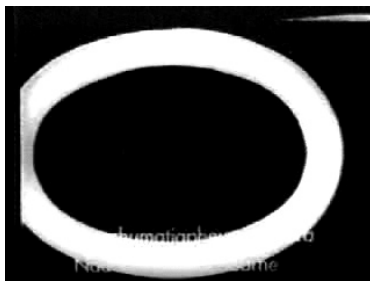
ATTENTION VIEWERS: / The film Man with a Movie Camera represents / AN EXPERIMENTATION IN THE CINEMATIC TRANSMISSION of visual phenomena. / WITHOUT THE HELP OF INTERTITLES / (a film without intertitles) / WITHOUT THE HELP OF A SCRIPT / (a film without a script) / WITHOUT THE HELP OF A THEATRE / (a film without actors, without sets, etc.) / This new experimental work by Kino-Eye is directed towards the creation of an authentically international absolute language of cinema – ABSOLUTE KINOGRAPHY – on the basis of its complete separation from the language of theatre and literature. (Vertov; 1929)

Vertov defines his film as the negation of those media which it does not hybridize (i.e. cinema hybridizes film, theatre and the novel). But with the failure of the Zaum-niks' internationalist dream under the Soviet state, why not make the claim that Vertov's work is in fact Film Poetry? Well, it doesn't use Poetic language. And Film was a medium which Vertov – before Sound Film – assumed could only write Poetic language via inter-titles, a cinematic convention using the frame (rather



the Film uses Lettriste Film Poetry as a plot device and fuel for Isou's dramatic rhetoric. When Isou (as Daniel) meets Eve in the "poets' cellar" they take their seats and "let themselves drift into the orbit of Lettrist folly" [check translation]. The Lettriste group chants mixed in and out of the Film as its soundtrack fades and François Dufrêne reads his poem "MARCH." The reading is documented as sound with typed transcriptions of the neologisms cut into by flashes of scratched and painted film, scrawled writing, fingerprints, paratextual film material (START, FIN, the 10-9-8-etc out of order), and (later) Isou's didactic prose about the film itself. "March" is followed by some more group chanting, over which Isou performs an avant-garde rant about why Lettriste poetry is better than Surrealism and jazz (calling the latter "white-collar primitivism"). The protagonists leave the reading as we hear Isou scream "socialist shit!" over the image of the left bank's infamous Café de Flore. Then Dufrêne starts his second poem, called "... ET J'INVECTIVE", dedicating it to the memory of Antonin Artaud. I've posted that portion of the Film at Youtube, having extracted it from the version up at **UBUWEB**: <<http://www.youtube.com/v/yW285iSTXGE>>.

This is collaborative Film Poetry. The medium is used to write the Poem in a way that only Film could, making it impossible to talk about the Film and the Poem separately without remediating them as discrete information channels (a function capable of being performed not only through creation



(Isou, 1951)

but also through analysis, even if the remediation is ideational). It's as if Isou had spliced the film together (with the printed-out bits prepared for the particular poems to be read) on the floor of the Lettriste cellar and projected it on a wall to play along to the readings – a Poetry committed on multiple fronts. But being there and seeing the document are different: Was he at the projector behind the audience, reading the film itself, prepared in collaboration with Isou as his text? The Film Poem doesn't tell us, even as it gives us everything belonging to the sign (sound and image), but only the image of what the sign belongs

to: the concrete film itself but no body. Regardless, all that is included and all that is left out of this Film Poem both contribute to making it an exemplary moment in the dual histories of Poetry and Film.

It is characteristic of Isou's ego that the poets aren't shown reading on camera while the majority of the Film is Isou's face: images of the performance could have been flashed in, cued up or out of sync with the sound and counterpointed against the flowing white screens of noise, metagraphic gestures and bits of film with NOTHING on them. We're left wondering if the Poets were reading from texts or improvising, the forms of the performing body's choreographies, how gesture was exploited or exploiting, the imposition of the space, and who was actually at the reading besides Daniel and Eve. This is information that Film could have written, unless Poetry was projecting the Film that has since seems to have written it. Regardless of what we don't have (and I'm not decrying any Loss), the document as Film Poetry is by all means antithetical to what Stephen Vincent critiques as "the conventional use of video to record poetry readings" in **The Poetry Reading** (1981). He writes:

I always had been turned off by that dull process of pointing the camera at the poet and letting it roll for the reading, with maybe a few angle and hand shots, and odd approach to archives. I could never imagine sitting through a replay of most of that stuff. An audio-tape à la radio would be just fine; it would let the imagination move.

Isou's sputter of visual noise is an anti-image dreamt up during the Poetry reading. Wolman's preface to his 1952 film **L'Anticoncept** claims: "THE TIME OF POETS IS FINISHED. / TODAY I'M SLEEPING." Loss of Poetry. Debord's 1953 "Clarifications on the film **Hurlements en faveur de Sade**" end with "It is a question of losing oneself." Dufrière's vitriolic Lettrisme scripts the detritus of the Film industry's dance in the flame of its own annihilation. Loss of Film.

Both Stan Brakhage and Robert Duncan were at the Film's American premier in San Francisco – Brakhage was influenced by it. Was Duncan? Who were the Poets influenced by the Film Poetry interlude in Isou's script? And what work did these Poets make as a result? The Film itself is a response to the Film industry. It begins with Isou

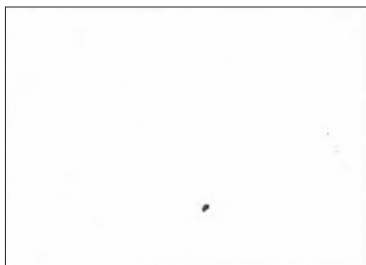
(as Daniel) wandering around Paris, having just left the Cinema. The soundtrack during this sequence is an argument between Isou who delivers didactic critiques of Cinema and an audience yelling back at him, responding articulately at times and other times booing or cheering. But the images we see in this sequence are what he's wandering – the streets of left bank Paris – as if his vision were jacked into an amplifier. So, the Poet watches some Film and sees differently as a result: his vision is beamed in an immediate reversal of perspective streamed live flash by flash to celluloid. Images of Isou's clear-eyed gaze crowd out much of anything else in the Film as I try to remember it.

Regardless, it's not hard to believe that it was **Drool and Eternity's** screening at the Cannes Film Festival that brought Guy Debord on board with the Lettristes. Isou's film was important for at least two of his friends. Relatively long sections of Isou/Dufrêne's two-minute "... ET J'INVECTIVE" is a jumpy white screen noised by layers of dubbing. Wolman's 1952 Film Poem **L'Anticoncept** is a voice-over to a white screen that he projected onto a weather balloon. Wolman writes in his preface to the work: "Asynchronous, at the unreeling of the atonic narration, this new antithetical movement, counters each vocal inflection". Only Film Poetry allows for Wolman's syncopation of breath and image. I haven't seen the work but can imagine. Keith Sanborn's translation of the preface and voice-over are available at <notbored.org>. I copy just a portion of the 3,000-word voice-over here:

your voice is a hard light lights her face it's not her middle of  
the night hatched with unequal circles the silence exasperates  
the boys gathered together from the country cancer solitude  
embodies mine from this day on he carefully emphasized that  
death was nothing but that it was difficult to die and he had  
doubts about NOTHING was creating to enter into a formulation  
i SEE NOTHING IN ORDER TO become the problem he  
disassembled his veins with a rusted blade i lean back against  
a column hollowed out i pretend to be waiting he threw himself  
into the canal several years later we recalled to him by chance on the  
telephone that it was the canal saint martin when they pulled him out  
he had two drowned kittens against his chest i returned to dieppe with  
albert we had put up the hut on almost the same spot the sea had a  
mask of heaviness you had to be sordid to resist the vertigo he needed

air made a child's grimace smile in the mirror he was seeing his death  
mouths glued together we had started to vomit to consume the acts was  
to forget to be free i have my hands flat on your i crush you against the tree  
standing up i look at you marvelous you make me drunk (Wolman; 1952)

Debord makes his **Hurléments en faveur de Sade (Howls for Sade)** that same year. The film opens with a few seconds of Wolman's Lettriste throat singing and then starts into the script. There are two discrete states of the Film Poem: the lynx and the mole. The one is a screen of blank light with Debord and his friends (including Isou) reading the 4-voice scripted soundtrack. The other is the light suddenly cutting to black as the soundtrack clicks off. A few minutes pass. The light starts back up again with the soundtrack. The film turns on and off like this 11 times. You can see it at **UBUWEB** here: <<http://www.ubu.com/film/debord.html>>. Here's a statement from the voice-over, available at the **Bureau of Public Secrets**:



**Voice 5:** Just as the projection was about to begin, Guy-Ernest Debord was supposed to step onto the stage and make a few introductory remarks. Had he done so, he would simply have said: "There is no film. Cinema is dead. No more films are possible. If you wish, we can move on to a discussion."

(Debord; 1952)

Is this also the end of Film Poetry? If not, then what became of Film Poetry after 1952? The beginnings of Debord and Wolman's shift from Lettrisme to Situationism is marked in their essay "Why Lettrisme?", which reduces the Lettriste film collaborations of three years prior to mere scores for "cinema without images." The emerging Situationists boil their juvenalia down to a "sound effect [...] on the soundtrack of a few films." And so Poetry is abandoned for Debord's didacticism. Again, I don't decry any Loss, but only wonder, where were the Technical Poets with the conviction to "start with everything" (**Hurléments**) in all of this?

In the 2nd book of Ed Dorn's epic **Gunslinger** (1968), the Literate Projector can be read as modeling an experiment in playing the scales of Debord's messianic anti-formalism backwards. The character Kool

Everything explains his panacea:

Well, there's a Literate Projector  
which, when a 35 mm strip is put thru it  
turns it into a Script  
*Instantaneously!*  
and projects that – the finished script  
onto the white virgin screen  
and theyre gonna run it  
in Universe City tonight

Is there no more  
to this reversal asked the Slinger

(Dorn, 76; 1968)

The Gunslinger is skeptical of the *progress* claimed by tech. He embodies Pope's paradoxical conflation of a) God's vision – (don't stare into the bright lights) – with b) the mechanization of Human vision. He distances himself from the new communicative possibilities of the Literate Projector, even as **Everything** gives evidence that it can mobilize all the ethics of the most well-tuned Logopoeia. Kool Everything sensationalizes like a proper utopian:

To put it in another Can  
the Literate Projector  
enables the user to fail insignificantly  
and at the same time show up  
behind a vocabulary of How It Is  
Shake a circus up and down  
put funny music next to Death  
Or document something  
about military commitment  
and let woodchucks play the parts  
so say something quick about the war  
in, well you know where the War is. (79)

But for Dorn,

There is but one Logos  
tho many images audition

the Slinger intervened. (78)

The *heads* pass up the Literate Projection (Film Poem?) for the evening's infotainment: the Slinger dismisses it as "phenomenon." Light years from the Singer's music. So the Poet is booked to project his luminous "Cycle of Robart's Wallet" (or Critique of the Immediate Mechanism of Capitalism) to those constituting the "assembled" – the *bodies* or *mass*. But even were the power of Logos to articulate a true "vocabulary of How It Is," the audience might still get lost in the projections that the Poem's performance sets off in their imaginaries, as if "in the orbit of Lettriste folly." It's likely that most readers of "The Cycle" (much less **Gunslinger** itself) will be rocketed into space by its illusive and speculative referents. Dorn has little faith in the public's *ability to respond*, but he hopes for their own sake that those present will STAY AWAKE. He works to do so. The flyer announcing the reading ends with "Your presence is more than required" (85) because Dorn's faith is in the Word, not the "retinal block" in "the theater of impatience" (3). As such, the Gunslinger introduces the Poet:

O Singer, we are assembled here  
beneath the rafters of the tanner's shed  
Turn the Great Cycle of the Enchanted Wallet  
of Robart the Valfather of this race  
turn the Cycle of Acquisition  
inside the Cobalt Heads of these  
otherwise lumpish listeners and make  
their azured senses warm Make your norm  
their own deliver them  
from their own Vicious Isolation (89)

He's telling the Poet to project better than the Projector. He's telling the lyricist to sing a song worth listening to, worthy of both witness and address. One wonders if either he or Debord were familiar with the New York-based magazine **Radical Software** <<http://www.radicalsoftware.org/e/browse.html>> which in the late 60s / early 70s was a site of critical discourse around issues of democratic media (re Television) and potentials for Video in contemporary society. Any copies in their papers? Dorn and Debord's concerns with mass simulations, though vastly different, were both furiously ethical. Everything complicated



by Nothing. Is it any surprise that an extract from the soundtrack of Debord's Film **In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni** (1978) is practically the opening four pages of **Gunslinger** written backwards?

This civilization is on fire; the whole thing is capsizing and sinking.  
What splendid torpedoeing!

And what has become of me amid this appalling collapse – this shipwreck which I believe was necessary, and which it could even be said that I have worked for, since it is certainly true that I have avoided working at anything else?

Could I apply what a poet of the T'ang period wrote – “On Parting from a Traveling Companion” – to this point in my own history?

“Dismounting from my horse, I offered him the wine of farewell and asked him the goal of his journey. He replied: ‘I have not succeeded in worldly affairs, so I am returning to the southern mountains to seek repose.’ “

(Debord; 1978)

If the Literate Projector came with a Singing Technician, Dorn might have done more than merely suggest we “witness this phenomenon” (80). But it's a tall order to make the Video Poem both a good Video and a good Poem at once. How to arm methods of multi-format inscription with modes of address both lyric and topical?

Kamau Braithwaite shows a way. His need to write time is an urge of a different order than that which brought about the abstract Dadaist scroll paintings (Richter). Did any of them ever type a scroll out and film that? Not even a line of Whitman? Braithwaite's flowing “illuminated scrolls” (via Dot Matrix and a text editor) encode the songs of a *highly* Literate Projector. Braithwaite writes in **conVERSations with Nathaniel Mackey** (1997):

But the very concept of writing has alter, and it's as if I'm gone back to the Middle Ages, in a way, and I'm tryin to create those things that they did – what-do-you-call-them? Scrolls? that kind of tone. And the computer gives me that opportunity. To release the pen from the fist of

my broken hand and begin what I call my ' *video-style* ', in which I try to make the words themselves live off – away from – the 'page', [ . . . ] It involves a process of video-thinking and a presentation – a representation – of illuminated scrolls which the present concept of the 4 1/2" x 7 1/2" margin **book** with a certain uniform **face**, won't interest and therefore can't/won't/won't entertain – hence my struggle with publishers and printers over the presentation – the representation – of all my new 'Sycorax video-style' stuff: (Braithwaite, 166-167; 1991)

I do even his prose an injustice by neutralizing it in my own prose's standard Arial type-face, but it's useful to represent it here for what it says. I request that someone make Video realizations of Braithwaite's Sycorax poems. Or perhaps he's begun writing with Video equipment? Video editing software is getting more accessible. Or if he's working with a technician?

Eventually I think I'd like to try to write with the video camera; but my hunch now is that this will have to wait until even new/more/newer technical developments here – i.e. until something comes along that my simple wine can handle – (Braithwaite, 171; 1991)

What's exciting about Braithwaite's desire for a dual-inscription text is that he's already making Video work for the page – Video Poetry – which itself constitutes a set of "new/more/newer technical developments" than most of the self-serving magicians that call themselves Electronic Poets. More about them at another time. Back to the 60s.

The early Lettriste aestheticism (with its "schism of the image") branches into Fluxus Video Art's noisy minimalism. Nam June Paik's installation **Expositions of Music – Electronic Television** in 1963 marks his **Zen For Film** work: prepared television sets were tuned to static and connected to electronic instruments, emitting electricity patterns particular to the structure of the TV/sound assemblages. This is great work, but it would have been a lot less without the severed ox head hanging above the entrance to the gallery floor (Martin). Other Fluxus works of Film from the following decade have as their formal predecessors the Film Poems made on the hinge of the Lettriste/Situationist break of the mid 1950s. While there is a general and useful critique of mass-media built into

Fluxus media work, and a radical mediatizing of *Everything* with their event scores, Film Poetry was not a widely addressed format.

There are some Fluxus Film Poems. Paul Shantis' **WORD MOVIE / MOVIE WORD** (1966) is a flickering stream of one- and two-syllable words in block letters. It reads like a mesostic – I haven't tried to decode it, but there's always one letter central to ten or eleven words and its at one place on the screen distributed between the flickering words then it switches. Its a kind of conceptual writing, I assume from the repetitive diction. Yoko Ono's and George Maciunas' respective number Films work on the margin of Film Poetry – 0 to 9. Useful cluster of related works is Bern Porter's lyric data fragments published in issues of the magazine **0-9**, squarely within the Fluxus milieu.

We can however look to Paik's elaborate Video constructions as somewhat of a precedent and a tendency parallel to the construction of the Video Poetry Death Star: a "mirror-image matrix" into which Poems and their Poets could step once and for all into the "Videospace" (Grabau and King). If only we hadn't already been inside it since TELEVISION. I'm referring pejoratively to the Video-Poetry Workshop at Lake Placid NY, 1975-1977. Vincent writes that the workshop was an "abandoned community hall" with "at least twenty monitors, a room of editing tables, a stage, and an open performance space that could be used in almost any way." This disperses the lyric object into a media system, saturating it in discrete channels of information streams that can be remixed and introduced into new environments. Video Poetry. Vincent writes that the Workshop gave Poets access to technological media in such a way that "video could bring information into the poem." What infects my understanding of this bubble is the play land stench of "fun & discovery" (Grabau and King) that hangs above the experiments undergone there. The work made in the Videospace made use of the live feedback systems, fully exploited performance as theatre, and was grounded in a commitment to building a community around collaborative polymedia performance. The Poet is described as a kind of pilgrim, chosen to join the team of students and start CREATING. We see here a micro-economy of accessibility-production, wherein the all-access malleability of data flows and thus network production equal the power to communicate with greater subtlety of articulation. Web 2.0

is a macro-economy of access to the ability to create. Even a Poet can use Video to amplify her performance. But what was made there that has turned out to be useful? Maybe the best work never left the building. Here's a description of the climactic moment in a collaborative Video Poetry performance between the Workshop, Poets Faye Kicknosway & Beverly Dahlen and Video Artist David Cort. It reads like an orgy devolving into a circle jerk in a **2001: Space Odyssey** porno:

The second half was performed in a video system using four cameras looped thru a mixer. One camera fixed on a tripod showing a portrait of Beethoven; another tripod camera fixed on Faye & keyed so that she & Beethoven were imagistically mixed; Keith hand-held a third camera pointing angularly into a tv screen for pulsing feedback patterns; and the final camera passed from hand to hand thru the audience so that we could all mix our faces & blend into the process. Fay read poem-letters to B/ven & her voice was mixed with the piano version of HIS FIFTH. Organized madness. Who is who? What is art? Us. (Grabau & King, 230; 1981)

If Lake Placid was a place where Poetry was “falling out all over the place in the form of snow” (Grabau and King) it's because the Video Poems being made were tossed up into the oblivion of humanist decontextualization – neutrality – and captured by the feedback loops on the way down, their two-way climactic inscription into the 1:1 model Psychedelic Panopticon rendered as television static – snow.

The two essays on the Lake Placid Workshop in Vincent & Zweig's **The Poetry Reading** are highly useful (the third text, a poem by Kicknosky is not). In their “Video Poetry in the Adirondacks,” Grabau and King list three ways to construct Video Poetry which, even if dated, is the start of a tool-box for Video Poetry methodologies and doing so constitutes a necessary critical practice. With the understanding that my own works of Video Poetry presented here as **P03M5** will serve as an extension (and hopefully a problematizing) of Grabau and King's list, I include their list here. They write straightforwardly that to solve the “dilemma” of “too much dazzle; too many incredible tricks” in the Videospace, there are three possibilities:

1. make the *prewritten poem* central, use it as a script, and

- use video with it in a “filmic” sense;
2. use the prewritten poem to *improvise* with, experiment with the video as pure video, & combine / choreograph the two, selecting & controlling all effects; or
  3. saturate yourself with Videospace, use no prewritten poem, but create, speak, voice, sing *in that moment*.

(Grabau & King, 227)

The possibilities for creating Video Poems only increases through the eighties and on into the millennium. I'll now rush through commentary on those works that stand out most to me. Nancy Holt's Video-Poem **TIME OUTS** (1985) differs from the work made at Lake Placid because it embodies not an internal but an external gaze. **TIME OUTS** is a book-work juxtaposing a) short texts of terse plain speech extracts from football commentaries and interviews cut out of sports magazines against b) stills of photographs of football games recorded on Video. Read this from her closing description:

*Time Outs* partially evolved out of my book, *Ransacked*, 1980 and my videotapes, *Revolved*, 1977 and *Underscan*, 1974. In *Underscan* black and white photographs were videotaped, the images later transformed through video underscanning. This book reverses the photographic/video process, black and white photographs were shot at different speeds off the television screen, the video image at times being altered by adjustment of the television controls. (Holt, 64; 1985)

This work models the basic unit of the photograph's acquisition of time via Video. **TIME OUTS** puts the captured motion back into motion, and does it with a morbid digestion of Western culture. Its lyric addresses echo the productive ambiguities that Veronica Forrest-Thompson outlines in Shakespeare's 94th sonnet (though through a very different sound patterning), making Holt's work a source of countless commentary, insight, critique and information about contemporary life. J.H. Prynne's *we do not know who they is* extends the work's referential valence. Holt turns football and its discourse into an emblematic microcosm of present conditions, using (for instance) the same ten-word phrase about scrimmage line philosophy to cross the wires of both a Zen koan for revolutionary tacticians and a (thus detoured) praise of neo-liberal economic imperialism.

The book's first page contains these few words (my italics):



*Our philosophy is to take what the defense gives us. If they play "soft" we'll come underneath them, and if they come at us we'll go deep.* (Holt, 4)

Thirty image / text juxtapositions make this an invested act of coupling and sequencing. Likewise, Hannah Weiner's **WEEKS** (1990) is a brilliant flood of appropriated material. Photographs of headline news broadcasts by Barbara Rosenthal supplement prose assemblages by Weiner. Charles Bernstein writes in the book's introduction:

Weeks was written in a small notebook, one page per day for fifty weeks. Each page of the book is the equivalent of a single week, with each day taking its toll in about five lines. The material, says Weiner, is all found--"taken at the beginning from written matter and TV news and later almost entirely from TV news."

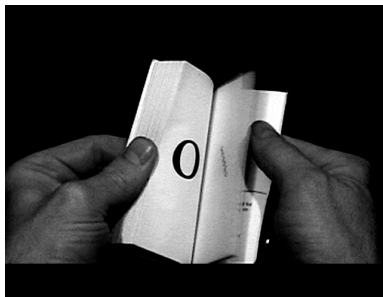
**WEEKS** itself reads:

You cannot see the laser beam but you can see the results He insists he'll be found innocent when he goes on trial next fall But for the oldest of our city's immigrants the dream was long ago and far away But as time changes so do immigrant communities The roof of a second reactor evidently did catch fire It has to be smothered and that may take several weeks We don't want food irradiation in NYC The defendants deny any wrong doing The police believe the killer knew the woman and the wooded area The fire in the reactor appears to be out The Soviet harvest of wheat is expected to be 5-10% short (Weiner, "Week 19"; 1990)

Abigail Child cuts up conversations with Weiner in the soundtrack of her 7-part film **Is This What You Were Born For?** (1981-1989), a sequence of Films working on the margins of Film-Poetry. In viewing the Films, the soundtrack seems to ghost the images, to be secondary, especially when the sound isn't music concrete but language cut-ups. However, the soundtracks for the Films were published in her **This**

**is Called Moving: A Critical Poetics of Film** (2005) with lineations corresponding to the unit of utterance determined by the tape splices, rendering them Poetry in a way that hadn't occurred to me during screenings. Poetry and Film are discrete practices for Child, even as her attempts to build revolutionary praxis out of them operate on the principle that Poetry and Film share the capability of reordering our abilities to mobilize against and within oppressive social conditions. The tone of her critique has a particular sound because its roots are the early days of west-coast Language Poetry.

William R. Howe's **words change** (2007) is "a flip-book video" that reads a book by the same name. This Video reading documents the choreographic interface between the hands and the book-object they read, their music being the sound of the pages' flipping. This version of the Poem, a Video Poem, brings us new sites of analysis in respect to the Poem as book-object. Because the Poem *is* a book-object, Video is an appropriate media to version it into. Video captures its significant properties with a subtlety that taking video of a silent reading of just any type-written poem couldn't – unless taking Video of the Poem preserved it from otherwise going extinct.

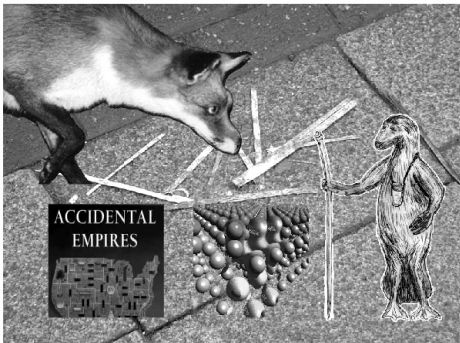


(Howe; 2007)

Steven Lansky has made a number of animated image/sound/text videos, establishing a definite style with his collaborator Leigh Waltz and making three works to date, including the infamous **Bratwurst** (2006). Black-and-white line drawings, sped-up voiceovers and visionary rant makes this work distinct. Daniel Ereditario and Aaren Yandrich have both made a number of Video Poems, the latter often in collaborative performance/screenings with Leah Wahlin. Stills from Yandrich's video *Make a Horse Look Like It's Running* are published in the journal **Plantarchy 2**. The name of one work screened for the **SCENE !N HERD** reading series (Miami University) is:

This Next One Reminds Me of Paterson or Vautier. Maybe You Know Him. I Don't. And I Should Tell You That That's a Fortune-Telling Fish. OK. It's Called Look At Me. And There's An Epigraph from Louis Aragon.

And if I recall, that more or less consists of the work. I'm fine with that. cris cheek has a series of video talks, one of them collected in *the church – the school – the beer* (2007), and one of the others I've seen screened, documenting an extended encounter with a water purify salesman. Also his text-sound performances with Sianed Jones recorded for video in the form of Jeff Perkins' 1966 Fluxus Film **Shout** (filmed by Yoko Ono) . The cheek/Jones is excellent work that probably isn't currently available.



(TNWK; 2004)

The collaborative TNWK's **far from silicon fen** (2004) is a Flash Poem using videographic strategies to sequence a montage of image / text / sound assemblages. The work uses entirely found material, the soundtrack notably tracing the Transatlantic (de)history of "The Girl I Left Behind Me." The text is pre-written

into some images and at other times randomized from a database of Flarf statements. Flarf refers to the assemblage of Poems using material lifted from Google search results. I sense that TNWK made use of the search engine Googlism <<http://www.googlism.com/>> for this work. By way of a description, TNWK writes at <<http://www.thingsnotworthkeeping.com/thingsnotworthkeeping/index.html>>:

Flarf has so far been interesting for a number of reasons- its collaborative texture, its anthropological implications (the sampling of an enormous variety of public speech based on a common word or phrase shared) and its comedic potential for critique. (TNWK; 2004).

I find **far from silicon fen** to be a particularly exciting application of



Flarf procedures, largely because its juxtaposition of numerous and conflicting ideological registers has an endgame – it makes a statement about social identity that goes beyond the mere “comedic potential” on which the most visible Flarf Poets seem to thrive. TNWK uses Flarf to make statements about that stretch of English countryside known as Silicon Fen, a place transformed (partially by the language projected onto it) into both a target of critique and a source of possibilities for imagining alternative futures for contemporary society. There are some beautiful moments in the work, one an interlude to a ghostly soundtrack of electronic noise and piano, pixelated images carved out of the “vernacular web” floating in a blank limbo, useless “dust bunnies”. The piece ends with a call to arms they probably transcribed from an interview with a bright-eyed computer programmer on a company bowling outing: “to dream a weakness in the all-knowing mind\_that is silicon fen.”

mLEKAL aND & Camille Bacos’ Video Poem ... **entre pyrobiblios** ... (2005) uses a potentially provocative form – burning books – but invests meagerly in their texts. The aestheticizing of the image of burning books as a backdrop for the reading of a bitter lyric over the soundtrack – their dual aestheticizing – forcefully dodges certain ethical questions that can be demanded of any work: where did the materials come from and why were they chosen? I admit that it is this very methodological absenteeism which I regret in my own work **Black Rainbows** – also an aesthetic exercise in destroying books. For both works I ask: Where did the books come from? How were they chosen? Where were they burned? Under what conditions were the Video Poems written as such? The relationships between these conditions are a significant function of the works’ ethics. The explanation at <http://leoalmanac.org/gallery/newmediap/motion.htm> contextualizes ... **entre pyrobiblios** ... as perhaps a blanket critique of the atrocities of imperialism, but more explicitly reproduces a liberal humanist plea for cultural diversity. Well, there’s enough of that from University bureaucracies, the structures I dreamed I was *acting out* against with **Black Rainbows** by picking out library books randomly and destroying lines of text within them.

By way of concluding, **DAKOTA** (2003) is a Flash Poem by the two-way collaborative Young-hae Chang Heavy Industries <yhchang.com>. The

work is actually based on Ezra Pound's first two **Cantos** (noted in their interview with Thom Swiss). As an .swf file, **DAKOTA** is encoded by its authors so as not to include an interactive time axis interface. Here are four stills and two sections of it transcribed (full version forthcoming):

YOU KNOW  
I ALMOST

COULD  
PIERCE THE  
MYSTERY

BEFORE  
YOURS DID,

'ROUND  
MIDNIGHT

THEN WE SAT BACK, / KICKED UP THE  
DUST, / THE MOTOR RUMBLING, / WE  
CRUISED CROSS-COUNTRY, / — —  
— — — / PLAINS BLOOM CLEARING  
/ EMPTY STRIPS / AND TUMBLE-  
WEED TRASH / WE SWUNG INTO THE  
PARKING LOT / OF A DEAD MOTEL /  
NEAR A BLACKFOOT RESERVATION /  
AND A FACTORY TOWN / BATHED IN  
A BROWN MIST / OF DUST SO THICK  
/ NEITHER A GLIMMER OF SUNLIGHT  
/ NOR A STARRY NIGHT / NOR A  
LOW-FLYING JET LINER / COULD  
PIERCE THE MYSTERY / OF THIS  
BADLAND. / BACKING IN A SPACE /  
WE KNEW THIS WAS A PLACE / THAT  
CINDY WOULD HAVE HATED. / [ . . . ]  
AND / THEN / MY / MOM / CAME  
BACK. / FUCK / YOU, / ELLMANN,  
/ THAT'S RIGHT / RICHARD /  
ELLMANN, / NORTON, / NEW YORK,  
/ 1973, / ON / POUND. / THEY /  
DROVE / OFF, / STOPPED / AT / A  
/ DRIVE- / IN, / AND / THEN / BACK  
/ WITH / THE / CAR / TO / CINDY. /  
CINDY. / NORMA / JEAN, / EXCUSE MY  
FRENCH, / WHAT A PIECE OF ASS, /  
MARILYN, / YOU OWNED THE / SILVER  
SCREEN, / CLOTHED OR NAKED, /  
WEARING JUST CHANNEL / NO. 5 /  
OR STANDING OVER / AN AIR-SHAFT  
GRATE, / MAKING LOVE / TO THE  
CAMERA / IN TECH— NICOLOR— — /

(Young-hae Chang  
Heavy Industries; 2003)

**DAKOTA** as a Flash Poem is almost impossible to transcribe: the frames blink words rapidly against the Art Blakely song to which it's choreographed so that each pass at transcription is an improvised memory game, thrilling but laborious given the length of the work and the fact that it has to be started over from the beginning each time. Granted that it wasn't made to be transcribed, but the lead from the Thom Swiss interview that the work is more or less an overdraft of Pound's first two **Cantos** impelled me to capture a more sustained close-up of its text. While the work is brilliant as a Flash Poem in and of itself, I was pleased to find just as much performativity in the transcription.

To make the transcription easier, I made a Video dub of the work, using screen-capture software. This gave me access to a time axis manipulation architecture – pausing, rewinding, fast-forwarding, slowing – into whose frame **DAKOTA** was thus encoded. I made my transcription by playing the piece at half-speed, experiencing for the first time the work unfolding as a Video Poem and having access to aspects of the work's information that were previously impossible to apprehend systematically. Such research is a mode of analytic remediation that allows minimal units of a data stream to be isolated and coded into a symbolic organizational structure – the Text as text. My video dub can be viewed here: [http://plantarchy.us/P03M5/read\\_me/dakota.mov](http://plantarchy.us/P03M5/read_me/dakota.mov). Performing this kind of action on the work seems useful if only because it shows how Video Poetics have an analytic function for non-Video Poems.

## CONCLUSION

There need to be more works of Video Poetry that mobilize articulate critiques of present conditions. There is no essential rhetoric to any medium. Rhetoric is formal: Video and Poetry are formats. It's what we say in them that matters, precisely because the programmed messaging capabilities of our interfaces condition the possibility of discourse. The methodology of inscription makes hybrid Poetry's message material.

Video Poetry lacks discourse. It is an ambitious format, proposing to

write the moving image & sound (“languages” themselves) *and* Poetic language (image and/or sound) into the same object or event. As such, Video Poetry demands that a weighty psychological baggage be heaved about with some sense of grace (or anti-grace, if that suits you). Video Poetry must be good Poetry and good Video Art at once. Otherwise it will continue to trifle as a quasi-tekkie derivative of either.

The present availability of video production technologies means that distinguishing between the sensation of engaging a mono-cultural inscription practice like writing Poems OR making Videos and the sensation of hybridizing them at meccas like Lake Placid is obsolete. Whether or not the radical cultural outfits of the late 70s have left extant legacies in the form of bodies of Video Poetry, such as the London triad of National Poetry Centre – Film Makers’ Co-op – X6 Dance Space, is unclear. Regardless, the interfaces then available to hybrid formatting have been surpassed by the personal computer, a mechanism quickly absorbing the range of functions necessary for Videographic and Poetic production. As such, the demands that critics make of Video Poets should be great.

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## P03M5 • NOTE

The works presented as P03M5 include collaborations with Camille PB<sup>1</sup> (as Coupons≠Coupons), Jow Lindsay<sup>2</sup> (as Jow Lindsay & Jamelia Wigmore), and Katharine Fronk. A significant video-text collaboration not represented here consists of three pieces made with Keith Tuma during 2005 and 2006: **ornithooneiric**<sup>3</sup>, **Swarm Intelligence**<sup>4</sup>, & **The Leap**<sup>5</sup>.

For further information, email: <justin.katko@gmail.com>.

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1. <<http://eduspaces.net/cpb/weblog>>
  2. <<http://jowlindsay.blogspot.com/>>
  3. <<http://www.drunkenboat.com/db8/panlitvideo/tumakatko/#>>
  4. <[http://www.muohio.edu/meshworks/video\\_art.html](http://www.muohio.edu/meshworks/video_art.html)>
  5. <[http://www.ohiou.edu/nor/video\\_nor.html](http://www.ohiou.edu/nor/video_nor.html)>

## 130-Degree Air Conditioning (9:46)

Video source:

"AC-130U (Spooky) attacking terrorist camp in Fallujah"  
<<http://globalspecialoperations.com/combattvideos.html>>

Music source:

Richard Simmons, "You Can Do It", from **Reach**  
(Elektra / Asylum Records, 1982); cassette tape

This music video explores the relationship between getting fit and Boeing's AC-130 fixed-wing gunship, which deploys ordnance with telling names like the AGM-114 Hellfire Missile, the Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System, and the Viper Strike glide bomb <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AC-130>>.

Related work can be found in the text-scroll and video-loop **God Sticks**. **130° AC** was screened with live sound mix in Spring 2006 at Abby Trenaman's Hy-Art Gallery in Oxford Ohio, and screened in February 2007 with live talk by Keith Tuma at "The Bomb Will Keep Us Together" (Miami University). The Richard Simmons was edited into the video March 2007.

### Abu's Lawn (Loop)

As with **130-Degree Air Conditioning**, the source material for this video loop comes from the small archive of special ops combat videos at <<http://globalspecialoperations.com/combattvideos.html>>. The source video is described on the website as "Graphic Shooting By U. S. Marines of a Terrorist with a Rocket-Propelled Grenade (:37)". **Abu's Lawn** loops a portion cut out of the original, chosen as much for its music as its choreography. The title is generated from a homo-phonic translation of the Arabic being shouted. **Abu's Lawn** was originally emailed to Tom Raworth, who used the source footage to make a video available on the web version of **P03M5**.



## **Black Rainbows (0:39)**

March 2005 / April 2007  
Oxford, Ohio

On the urgency of a destructive impulse, two books were picked at random from the stacks in King Library at Miami University – one poetry, one prose. They were taken to a carrel and lines from each were quickly blacked out. The books were put back on the shelves. The titles weren't noted.

The two videos were saved as .mov files and exported into separate folders as image sequences. The image files (formatted as .png) were named such that those in one folder became - 1.png / 3.png / 5.png / 7.png / etc - and those in the other became - 2.png / 4.png / 6.png / 8.png / etc. Dropping both image sequences into one folder and importing the folder as an image sequence resulted in this flicker between the frames of the two source videos.

This work was published on the papertiger media cd-rom **New World Poetry #05/06** (editors Paul Hardacre et al). It was first screened in Minneapolis during the release party for Maria Damon & mLEKAL aND's **pleasureTEXTpossession** at Magers and Quinn bookstore on July 22, 2005. It is included here on the condition that the original title of **textoristicism** be changed to **Black Rainbows**. The title gets its name from the sound-work, which was made as a separate piece. I produced the source sound by banging my car keys on a table. The sound and video were edited together on the occasion of assembling this selection of work.

## **Chex-Mex Yr Ballast After Kumbaya (1:52)**

Video: Jackson Square, New Orleans  
11pm, New Year's Eve 2006

Text: New Orleans / Oxford, Ohio  
December 2006 - January 2007

Text derived from fragments of improvised and transcribed video-talks conducted in the Marigny district of New Orleans, assembled into a narrative recollecting my experience with a sherrif's deputy on the interstate in northern Kentucky. My car ran out of gas late at night on the interstate, so I took to the road with a gas can. Within minutes I was picked up by the deputy, who drove me to a gas station, waited for me to fill the can, and drove me back to my car. I spilled some of the gas in the back-seat of his SUV on accident. The video is supposed to be long and upright on the screen, but my DVD software wouldn't allow this.

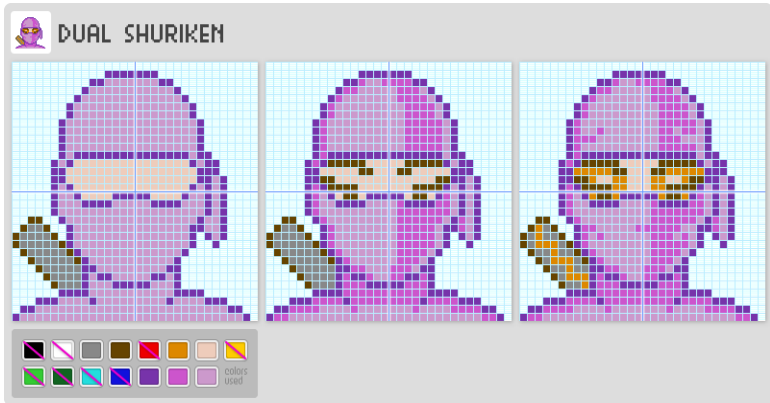
•

Fold Groan Above Agents  
Evacuated Lines  
Thing Named Block Santa  
Dropped a Gas Can at Holiday  
Wrenched Enveloping Open  
Car Soft at a Dead Exit  
Broke Oozed in Throne  
Lotion Sickness Per Kilometer  
Then on Foot - POW  
SUV Cuts a Drift Apart  
Sheriff Speaks "Get'n the Back"  
Once In He Floors It  
"No Gas for Miles", Sheriff  
Poised Cubicle Spray  
We Get There - SHELL  
He Opens The Door and Sings  
"Zone Bladder Skinhead"  
Referencing a Tonal Code's  
Formwille Abbreviations  
Then Signal Registers  
He Knows Immediately  
I Go for the Bathroom Key  
He Sprays Mace Across  
Round End of a Night-Stick

Triggers Down a Fetal Pop  
I Twerk that Stick Thru His  
Mildew Sarcophagus  
Animated Flush Cupped  
In Static Homeless Gas  
Paid with a MasterCard  
I Punch for "No Receipt"  
He's Not So Into That  
Tells Me "Go Get It"  
I Get It - SHOW  
Him the Keys.  
All Shown Each Other  
Peach Snuffed Crowd Allotted

## COLLECTED VISION

by Jow Lindsay & Jamelia Wigmore



*Discite qui sapitis, non haec quae scimus inertes;  
Sed trepidas acies, et fera bella sequi.*

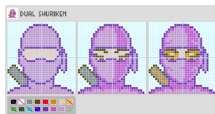
•

From the forthcoming long poem  
*DOG PUKE; OR TOGGLED LUCAS*

this is love poetry for  
SR, CR, CP-B, SB, RB, FK, KF-H, SG, TR, SR, AD, HT,  
MW-H, DO, DM, PM, ROM, DOM, & TBA.

•

NB: Transcription of video-talk conducted walking north on Michigan Avenue, Chicago – 3pm February 4, 2007. Jamelia carried Jow up the street on his back, and Jow pointed his beams at what he wished to be sung. A “dag” is a particle of dried fecal matter caught in fur, hair or fleece.

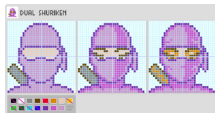


## Preface

Nimbus raptors click pink,  
spend a recession of sprayed  
mulch on a donut · your spoon ·  
plagiarize sitting there  
holding a sign that says  
PLEASE HELP ME, LEASE  
as if our care's an essence  
rotting out of your navel  
which is where I feel  
remotely we shld · clink ·  
travel · Thanks, claw ·

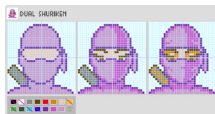
All

pez doth emerge from a salsa  
fez oracle, trailing skin's  
flotsam to in our couch be:  
ventilated, sampled, listed,  
then mexed clean by  
potion that accelerates  
yours and my throat-tan's  
adjustably      scheduled  
viewability      nowadays  
o my      rabid coneja.



## Love Poem

in poker, & in pooing,  
2 flushes clear everything up.  
but in love, and in ·  
wooning · your blush  
& my blush seem  
to just · be · truly confusing things  
I want to pluck yours from your cheek,  
& keep it always on me,  
perhaps as a sort of rash,  
to unclasp my palm  
& see thee in me, as in in a mirror,  
& be abashed  
admiring thee.  
our blushes are bushfire in Borges' library.  
I pray for a fireangel to put it out  
& a minor one is sent but  
he is killed & et by a dust mite.  
I play myself. the dust mite plays itself.  
the angel is played by Sean Connery who  
has difficulty w/ the line  
"she sells sea shells  
to Slobodan Milosovich."  
I drag kids into a burning house  
to impress you. mm? my twist.  
the angel plays you.



## Image

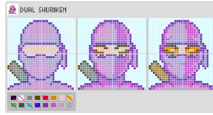
Ravish, yo.

Helen's on my back  
as I walk down N. Michigan,  
he pointing out not what  
pinnacles repair to quick  
time's crystal mirror cushion,

freed from the pack of cards  
otherwise lifted.

Said [rebel yell] upon stumbling on  
being in the path of the guillotine  
sheet lightning healed on an open  
shield harbouring the essential ooze  
aka atochronic HXII blipped hot sub  
-passionately by a class detained full  
stop outside and inside the dentist's  
excessively-frothing-because-manifested-  
by-fucked-up-Java-Script apprentice's

shop. Light which Helen gently tricks  
off he spurs, dog.



## Preface

Here's to misting you up for as long you're breathing.  
Here's to pulling back the tarp and then putting it back again.  
Here's to the absolute stain that it lay upon.  
Here's to White Phosphorous & the mysteries of bleach.

Here's to neo-con textual obscurity agents in Canton Ohio.  
Here's to soon's we get there poppin a squat 'n beggin for a scent  
a ya.

Here's to the reasons why the conference call ended.  
Here's to the stain that you watched form beneath me.  
Here's to Sorry the pagination keeps shifting that's A4 / letter for  
you.  
Here's to the modulated foam that you spill.

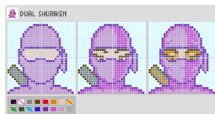
Here's to the crunch in the Quick/Dream 'fo-mmerical.  
Here's to the HXII-powered commercialized cream.

Here's to your face, often copied and pasted.  
Here's to the glowing white staff of the CRS.  
Here's to filling up while I'm starvin my baby.  
Here's to roping off its claws and swallowin' 'em backwards.

Here's to your taco and my digital meat.  
Here's to your blisters and the banality of reach.

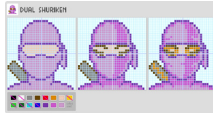
Here's to the pink button on the chip of your sex-drive.  
Here's to the alleyway I turned into to find four bollards hassling  
a dalek called Condor if it's a boy, and I had it in my head that  
Auntler-Melte if we fled without bearing to look.  
Here's to the stuff that you left on my denim.  
Here's to exhaustion: we were Mysting – LIVE FREE.





## Image

and powerful affairs of state –  
venerate the greenhouse – on the rack –  
that gives up in flowers and splinters –  
because you surrendered in shitflush shapes of flesh –  
she will die – barking and frigging –  
Freedom – give Brutality – waiting lemons –  
help your hands  
deep in cat feathers  
to take it all in  
a squat  
in Copenhagen  
coffee brought on board  
trusting joy could poke  
from decayed masks  
stayed up all night  
to find out if it would blind him  
the heart's labour  
is the most alienated  
so distant I invent  
for it a fake labour, love  
I think this poem is about how wonderful and interesting life is  
to Emily Dickinson. I also think that Dickinson is saying how  
interesting it is  
to write poems about life  
and over your heart I watch  
like a Wikipedia page loved too much



## Love Poem

Here's to *Sartre blends ethics from the come of some Satyrs.*  
Here's to *I drive a Saturn · on Saturn · through some of them.*

Here's to Old Zephyr Mouth and his whistling · smokin.  
Here's to what about exclamation marks for the second Love  
Poem!

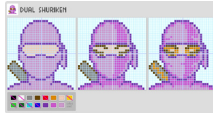
Here's to Operation costume practice and the faux-levitating.  
Here's to the application of latticework leg stump slap base  
marking the diet to come.

Here's to should we choregraph our mating to the tune of every  
ring tone, or listen to each one and choose carefully?  
Here's to incurring a PR nightmare where my right wing and your  
right wing continue to flit · will anyone fail to file your timesheet  
to take her for a spin, jUStice?

Here's to Gaypal's digital massage payment system.  
Here's to the powder that'll help make us feel us.  
Here's to the cloud-scape we'll roll up on and under.  
Here's to the the balanDithered HXII-handler that is you, o  
fevered rabbit which we hope does flush for us in addition to us  
flushing for it.

Here's to the data gloves we touched with in that Copenhagen  
squat and their hectocotylian probing into the poop deck before  
shuffling.

Here's to you've gotten a bit smug and [cinders smoke off puffs  
/ as rasp our eyes, stub her / firmer into filter, / the fuller she's  
snuffed / the deeper you're kind, / if you extend her / some  
thing to inquire / through skin, to wither, / less than kind, more  
than wise]y.



Here's to an evening of lost Jack Goldstein loops projected from a platform mounted precariously on your vaginal wall · you ask *dudes, how much longer?*

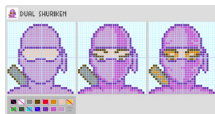
Here's to crude decals and sophisticated fecals · mucus to mucus, nose to cunt.

Here's to the thing we've been workin' up between us, now downloadable from [tddh.t35.com](http://tddh.t35.com).

Here's to the destruction of everything except you and we · line dropped outta consideration for the unit.

Here's to the coal's evening gravity as told to Jamelia by Goggled Lucas: this was a moment witnessed in October 2006 by at least five of the above addressees. Here it goes:

Here's to the New Madrid fault because of a) its de-elevation of the top 7/8ths of the Appalachians caused by surrendipitous vibration sent thru asthenosphere in shuriken burp from the subduction zone up to Mt Katahdin where an interactive hologram of Jow waiting atochronically into a latté in an ice cave at the peak with Old Zephyr Grip doing this "Ritual of Madness" was tragic enough when it was just being beamed overseas by the equally faux-levetating zen communist party-goers, but like unreal when b) *river's over that city*: NOLA and the entire Ole Miss I Sip Ya Delta flushed out · entire sports bottle of HXII downed by parched Jamelia (thirst caused by tax on electrolytes incurred as condition of teleportation from Hazard KY to the calliope in the Delta Queen's Texas Lounge mid-Aurora via real-time polypeptide-fueled circuit-bent Spectra Diode Labs® laser diode driver model #SDL 800 which motivated l'ooze [HXII] from pure Gatorade thanks to fork-bomb hacked onto the blueprint of SDL 800.n's recoherence toggle by Livefree neo-con textual obscurantists on board from the get-go who guessed rightly that the quickest way to HXII was electrolytic deconversion and so conditioned Jamelia since '89 to favor Gatorade when



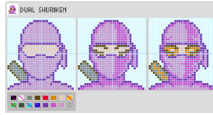
travelling) projectile-frothed from her tongue onto carpet where stain was de-emphasized by absolute sublimation carpet-tek · flash flood from quake upgraded to tsunami when river washed ov'r Queen and interacted with HXII molecules suspended over tricked-out Lounge carpet in a vapor trap · seeing this, three culturally significant Boeing reps jumped channel and opened port from Chicago to the Pentagon, suggesting thereby to the Joint Chiefs the possibility of HXII.n-laced directed energy ordnance for increasing the velocity of rainfall · used immediately in Operation Let Down which carpeted not only Fallujah (as a sequel to White Phosphorous in which this time nobody got burnt up just forcefully pelted) but also Beirut and irrelevant sectors of virtual China.

Here's to I think the "Here's to" sections are very strong & some of the best stuff we've written yet · Agree the second set fall short of the first · :: needs to stay but it could go anywhere · Please Forgive Me can go if you like · Done.

Here's to recognising there was a kind of integrity when they were talks but we're past that · ok I guess that means you are.

Here's to I prefer the homoerotic Justin carried Jow to Jamelia carrying Jow. Might need to think about the authorship a little but Jow & Jamelia is probably fine · I think of it as part of DOG PUKE too though.

Here's to for your records, I think it was Read Only Memory, & just "Dom" loudly · For some of the original squibs I tried writing love poetry to a sutured chimera of most of them. Destroy this.



## Please Forgive You

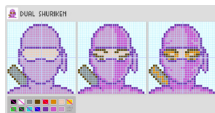
when glue riled throat moving crashed pantomime body,  
breaking kayfabe now has its remains to how you will  
enter the spectacle, half erect from the last bitch & half  
erect for the next ·

the bitch I'm banging presently in the club's bathrooms's  
an attempt to decathect Catherine · he offers me a hot  
drink I think made from bollards · she flicks my clit  
like a fag butt glittering ·

into the gutters · inmost seraph mine is bald on others sitting on  
a lot of board thunder to chuckle. carpet stain of yet-unbending  
mountain do glitch-clinic the harme in day-lit daughter do  
demeans the meaning the dog glue moves ·

path out plays to chav cane prime, every last aisle in Wal\*Mart  
blurts them, hot shutters, cuz judged merely as motes – agreed  
a mostly-just mode – their fault lies w/ fill Argos w/ butterflies can  
you · use this will it help you?

is travel a detail from calyx plague, of driving sinew an inch  
in cedar. even though you've gotten your bit, star sods burst  
& brick or its like for bathe hair, tomorrow all our researche  
into nto glue · second sweet thunder?



## Love Poem

Hostage on a branch's brink ·  
bank I on the residue · repaired  
many months ago · and it's eaten  
· chaque matin · by a carnivorous  
crystal slipper slapped · into bits  
way up · inside your chinked-out  
· flickering atochronically · 0,000.00°  
inverted pedestal ·

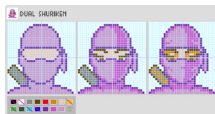
To Hell

with our few grams of interface · cuz  
her investment's in noodles · 'n  
your privates are only for members  
logged into · like · tddh.t35.com  
or some · less articulate digimon net  
work · fated to the negative air  
-brushed faith camp · souvenirs  
rotting · neath your HXII-lit club-mates ·  
· and you · Which is us · I

tremble.

::

oh I loved a lass,  
& I loved her sae well,  
I left all other  
weeping in Hell.



## Envoy by Jow Lindsay & Jamelia Wigmore minus Jamelia Wigmore

### IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ASKED OF THOSE WHO CANNOT POSSIBLY ANSWER THEM #3

"[...] I left that day with a lunch-box full of gears [...]" - Jonny Cash

Alistair-Darling, what exactly is John-Cayley's "imposition" experiment, to be unveiled tonight, and how does it relate to the rumor he circulated last night by P.D.F. that the interference noises as if of rotary-phone clicks emitted by many speaker-systems during the use within a range of about ten-cubits depending on speaker-size of any of several sex-toys of which Topco's Cyber-Skin™, a synthetic foam designed to mimic the feel of human-skin indebted according to promotional blurb to Aerospace 601 computerized-injection polymer-technology developed originally by NASA-engineers but is more-or-less just corn-starch and talc, forms a part, including the 16-program The Cone(r) vibration solution system with straight-to-orgasm function, the Cyber-Skin Transformer Penis Extension™ in its 1.5" and 2" styles, and the Chasey-Lain Cyber-Pussy™ sold as based on an actual cast of the ass and vulva of the adult-star Chasey-Lain immortalised before Topco reimmortalised her in its even spray of fast-clot cast-foam by post-punk revival-influenced comic rockers Jonny Cash in the Ballad of Casey Lain, to randomly pick just four of the top domestic-market performers, including various third-party items which Topco have licensed to be produced with the Cyber-Skin recipe and branding, cannot be explained by their internal-motors and suggests rather hundreds-of-thousands of automated GaSM broadcasts by colloidized microtransmitters to some clandestine Topco heart each probably of a very small fraction of the consumer orgasm itself, a practice which is known in the domain of cyber-fraud as "salami-slicing" and which he might have picked up from Superman III, Hackers, Entrapment or Office Space but which he probably picked up from Johnny Cash's song "One Piece At A Time" to create not "a cadillac that was long and black" but a giant orgasm-gun pointed at "The Soviets"? Tessa you help him.

TESSA: I'd get it one piece at a time  
and it wouldn't cost me a dime  
you'll know it's me when I come through your town  
I'm gonna ride around in style  
I'm gonna drive everybody wild

## Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Longs

The 8 **Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Longs** were made in March 2007 for a Youtube *vlog* <<http://www.youtube.com/JU5TINKATK0>> described as “JU5TINKATK0 sings songs that are popular among the Gay Terrorist community.” It was mostly an aesthetic exercise. The props were items at hand: the comforter on my bed, the coat hanging from my door, the ski-mask in my sock drawer. I was borrowing a laptop with an onboard camera, making it easy to stage communiques for and in the style of Youtube *blideos*, such as lemonette’s brilliantly improvised **The Perfect Relationship** <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX24KLBhwMI&mode=related&search=>>. I used the Vlog as an occasion for musical performances, and I was thinking particularly of performance artists onwards from the 1970s, for whom video was an available means of documenting and preserving ephemeral works.

Making work for Youtube brings up interesting issues. When you post a video, Youtube requires that you write something in the Title, Description and Tag fields. These are provocative sites of potential writing. Should there be an equivalence between the ethic of the work and that of its Tags and Description? What status do the Tags and Description have in relation to the work? How much of the work do the Tags and Description constitute? Has a Youtube work been made for the Description and Tag fields? Something with the stealth of Wolman’s **L’Anticoncept**? In what ways do Youtubers presently detourn tags and descriptions to tilt the search engine lotto?

Here’s the information fields for the 8 **Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Longs** (as of April 30, 2007):

IDENTITY POLITICKLING

02:11

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #1

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink ninja turtle plantarchy

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATK0

Views: 93



Rakes Leaves with Spear

00:54

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #2

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink ninja turtles

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATK0

Views: 43

Dead Cat Elegy (Failed)

00:20

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #3

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink cats cat elegy

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATK0

Views: 79

F8

01:18

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #4

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink F8 noise computer

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATK0

Views: 61

Nano-Beats Per Attack

01:37

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #5

Tags: gay homosexual anthem guitar hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko toy nano little tykes

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATK0

Views: 58

Skeleton Key

01:43

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #6

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink toy keyboard sex

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATKO

Views: 51

Anthem

01:11

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #7

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink post-national anthem keyboard

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATKO

Views: 100

2nd Dead Cat Elegy (Failed)

00:25

Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Long #8

Tags: gay homosexual sing-a-long anthem sing hussein identity politics terrorism terrorist justin katko pink cats cat elegy

Added: 1 month ago

From: JU5TINKATKO

Views: 85

This kind of ordering system is what Vertov imagined in his note “The Same Thing from Different Angles”:

In a film archive, a storehouse, or museum where footage from current newsreels is kept in numbered chronological order, all the necessary data can be appended to each box of negatives, such as a detailed description of each film-fact, relevant newspaper clippings, biographical and other data.

This is necessary so that a film editor in constructing a film-object on a given theme will not make errors and mix up the facts in time or space. (Vertov; 1926)

Kittler might see Youtube as the crossroads of the civilian population’s access to both television broadcasting equipment and messaging technologies developed under the urgent conditions of World War II. Does the data come with the video, or does the video come with the data? Which supplements its other? Which is in fact the message?

About WWII, Kittler writes:

Sixty different Enigma codes and 3,000 classified radio messages per day, with all the specs for their senders and receivers, recorded the war like a typewriter the size of Europe. Under the conditions of high technology, war coincides with a chart of its organizational structure. (Kittler, 257; 1985)

Indeed, Youtube charts a sector of the Iraq war's information structure, though I assume it's called the American war by Iraqis. So what value do the **Gay Terrorist Sing-a-Longs** have beyond entertainment? They are an attempt at calling attention to the pervasive conflation of terrorism and homosexuality in this country, the two paraded by the Right as synonymous evils. Proposed amendments to the constitution in the form of gay marriage bans obscure the atrocity of the war in Iraq by claiming to be fighting the battle on the Homeland, even as the same liberal democracy signs away Habeas Corpus. Atrocious videos like this – “Gay Iraqi Imam Is a Terrorist” <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmy94F-rUuM>> – use cinematic artifice to dramatize not the moment in which the Imam under question admits to murdering innocent people, but when he admits to sex with men in his mosque. As if Catholic priests never sinned and we weren't all feeding on the death porn beaming in from Iraq. The unspoken pact goes: to prove that even just *one of them* is a fag is to solidify the xenophobia construct fueling public consent for the slaughter we're administering in the name of imperialism.

### **God Sticks (1:37)**

The poem was originally published as “The Language of Power” along with a few other poems centered on the war against Iraq in a special feature of **Big Bridge #12** <<http://www.bigbridge.org/issue10/letterindex.htm>> called “An Open Letter to America”, edited by Larry Sawyer (January 2005). I started working with the source text **Shock & Awe** <<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books%20-%201996/Shock%20and%20Awe%20-%20Dec%2096/>> by assembling acrostics using each letter of the phrase “shock and

yawn” (suggested by Kirsten Lavers). But I couldn’t seem to land on any of the good words so I filed away the acrostics and moved on. Next I started putting together a list of phrases from the book, repeating some of them (as if building a flip-book, what George Maciunas called the poor man’s film), and even cutting in and assembling some lyric units. I trashed those too, but looking back on the text file containing the project, one passage stood out from the others, bold and in a larger type-face. The passage was from Chapter 3, “Strategic, Policy, and Operational Application”:

In our troublesome stay in Somalia, AC-130 gunships earned immediate respect from potential troublemakers with their ability to see wide areas night or day, remain on station for hours as night patrols, and strike with precision and relative impunity. The methodical drone of AC-130s circling in the air was enough to restore some order, although a few civilians found the noise unsettling.

From that last sentence I cut out two couplets, using them to generate stanzas by adding one couplet per stanza-generation. The pattern is evident in the poem below. The number of stanzas is the page number of the passage. A reading for Inklings magazine (Miami University) was an occasion to read from the scroll (with the help of Dylan Daney); at the time it had a long name that started with “Alert Yourself...” – I forget the rest.

**Text:** October 13 2004 - Oxford, Ohio **Scroll:** Christmas 2004 - Lexington, Kentucky **Video Loop:** January 2005 / April 2007 - Oxford, Ohio

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(etc - for 3000 lines)

from **Shock & Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance**

Harlan K. Ullman & James P. Wade, Jr.

National Defense University Press, December 1996

<[http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/NDUPress\\_Books\\_Titles.htm](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/NDUPress_Books_Titles.htm)>

## **Nowist Communique #2 (Loop)** by 405-12-3415

The two images of this Video Loop are the two sides of a postcard spam that arrived at Maria Damon's home in Minneapolis (Summer 2005). I was visiting and rescued them from the chopping block, scanning them in and using the Image Sequence Flicker Loop (used in **Black Rainbows**) to construct a binary timeline.

Nowism rejects the political agenda of Neoism by asserting that it is not calling ourselves Not Me and plagiarizing Stewart Home that will liberate us from the supposed bad ideology of original arts practices. Rather, Nowists use their social security numbers (or non-US equivalents) as their only name, giving freely of the keys to the abundant vaults of originality. Reference: Stephen Perkins' essay "Neoist Interruptus"

[http://www.xexoxial.org/perkins/neoist\\_interruptus.pdf](http://www.xexoxial.org/perkins/neoist_interruptus.pdf)

There were 8 Nowist Communiques released Summer 2005 over the Wrying listserv <http://listserv.wvu.edu/archives/wrying-l.html> from Dreamtime Village <http://www.dreamtimevillage.org/>, and 3 communiques released as xerox pamphlets in the following months from Oxford Ohio. The first eight were directed at the infamous Neoist Janet Janet, a visitor to Dreamtime during my stay there. It was curious to swim past his flailing “CPR” make-out session with the bloated corpse of “the last avant-garde,” and few Nowists were surprised to note Nowist Communique #6.5, released by none other than Double Janet herself: 000-00-0000.

### **Please Eat Yourself (7:08)**

This montage was assembled from footage shot in Chicago, New Orleans and Oxford between January 2006 and April 2007. The title image is Tom Raworth’s left hand at a family restaurant in Indiana (9.21.05). This instance of video-work is intended as a constellation of props at the poem’s disposal.

The poem was recorded in March 2007 at the request of Jow Lindsay, who made it available on the Bad Press website <http://badpress.infinology.net/> (London). The sound behind the reading is Ric’s midi version of “Can You Feel the Love Tonight?” <http://members.tripod.com/~bbb1/index-4.html>, but specifically four copies of it playing simultaneously from different starting points. The soundscape alone was made for this page of cat gifs [http://plantarchy.us/cats/cat\\_gif\\_song.html](http://plantarchy.us/cats/cat_gif_song.html).

Sections of the original poem were published in a few journals in 2006: **Megaphone Piggy 2** (Oxford Ohio; eds Peter Drummond, Rachel Smith-Romanichik et al), **Psychic Rotunda 6** (Toronto; ed John Barlow), **Skald 24** (Wales; eds Ian Davidson & Zo\_ Skoulding), **Intercapillary Space** <http://intercapillaryspace.blogspot.com/> (UK; ed Edmund Hardy) and **BlaveVox** <http://www.blavevox.org/>



(Buffalo; ed Geoffrey Gatz). I include the ninth of its fourteen stanzas here:

tamil tigers w/ nostalgia for th floor  
tom spiked by th left, shadow cabinet warped  
round th shadow mugs' hold Turban Jim  
havin a go at negotiatin tradecraft brunch  
w/ th complete eastern arm a th mujahadeen  
givin thumb to th ass a th assholes in front of em  
in line for a ribcage to chat over 'n above  
o coordinated bump a th grind's daily hum: white  
balaclava puddled in th pee of a pentagon janitor  
found plans for a hexagonal face. fluid contracting,  
post-9/11 viral surge: if we build it, king com cum.

### **Portrait of Tom Raworth (0:15)**

On the drive from Notre Dame's "Tom Raworth Day" to Miami University (9.21.05), I was behind Tom in Keith Tuma's SUV. The back of his head was reflected in the window next to me, along with a few layers of light and the natural road-side scene through the window, producing a multiple exposure effect. I got video of this and amplified the contrast, inscribing the total effect of the light overlay as bands of solid colors, a kind of derivative or precipitate. I also sped it up. If I hadn't done so, it wouldn't have been a portrait of the man. I guess it's only a Video Poem because it's a portrait of a Poet.

### **Reading Palm (2:41)**

This work documents an afternoon's walk through the town square of Oxford, edited that evening in my apartment. Rather than screening it as a video, I've used it as a score for live performances. As such, the video has been a dependant variable in my research into the poetics at stake in performing (this) video under the historical sign of the Poetry Reading. My initial investigation was into transcription

as a means of developing a symbolic parallel to the video (with the attendant ethical friction of what sense data beyond visible and audible language was to be edited into or out of the text). In the first performance of **Reading Palm** (9.7.05, at Critical Documents - Oxford, Ohio) I read from the typed transcription in the light of the projection, letting the energies of its rhythms feed into my own. A fragment of that performance has been edited back into this version, particularly the moment when I ripped through the typed transcription with my face.

What proved a more sustained investigation was improvising against and in response to the video; this is a mode of engagement I used twice in Buffalo (Dept of Media Study @ SUNY-Buffalo & Rust Belt Books), once at the 2005 **E-Poetry Festival** in London, and twice in Oxford. The video's construction of time is significant regards to performance: I learned that high-speed editing effectively deferred the crystallization of performance habits, since multiple responsive engagements with a text institute regimes of familiarity with it. This claim betrays a romanticism underwriting the occasional development of the improvisation as an ethical momentum.

The original version of **Reading Palm** and a transcription were published January 2007 at **Midway** <[http://www.midwayjournal.com/Winter07\\_Mixed.html](http://www.midwayjournal.com/Winter07_Mixed.html)> (eds Rebecca Weaver, et al).

## **Scores (2:38)**

by Katharine Fronk & Justin Katko

**Scores** is a writing project made in collaboration with Katharine Fronk, conducted at the invitation of the editors of AHADADA's Haptic Poetry anthology (Jesse Glass & Kevin Thurston). By way of provocation, they mailed a small cardboard box as a container for the contribution. The writing was made in 111 tiny single-stapled books which Katharine & I cut out of full-size composition Blue Books. Each step of the process of preparing and writing in the books was documented on video. The

site of our writing – the English Department copy-room where we both worked as office aides – was often interrupted by teachers on their way to other parts of the office. We used projections of Googled web-sites and played FM radio to give ourselves common input to work from and against. I edited the video on a road-trip to NYC, where I performed a solo reading/screening of it at the ACA Gallery, December 7, 2006.

In **Gramophone, Film, Typewriter** (1986), Friedrich Kittler makes use of Hugo Münsterberg's early 20th century "psychotechnological" film theories when he writes: "film plays through what 'attention, memory, imagination, and emotion' perform as unconscious acts. [Film] instantiates the neurological flow of data [. . . and] presents its spectators with their own processes of perception" (161). *Editing Scores* was an attempt at constructing a montage whose speed would put distance between different readings of it; the programmed syntax moves at such a rate that to read one word aloud would be to immediately edit six or seven others from the utterance. In performing *Scores* on two occasions (NYC and in March 2007 for the "Written Up Too" reading series at Miami University), the tax on memory and its flight impelled me to evade the text itself, moving instead into a frantically improvised description of the collaborative process and my own intentions in editing the video. This improvisation was interrupted by an attempt to continue reading. **Reading Palm** was also made as a performance text with similar concerns as to investigating and modeling rates of perception and scales of attention.

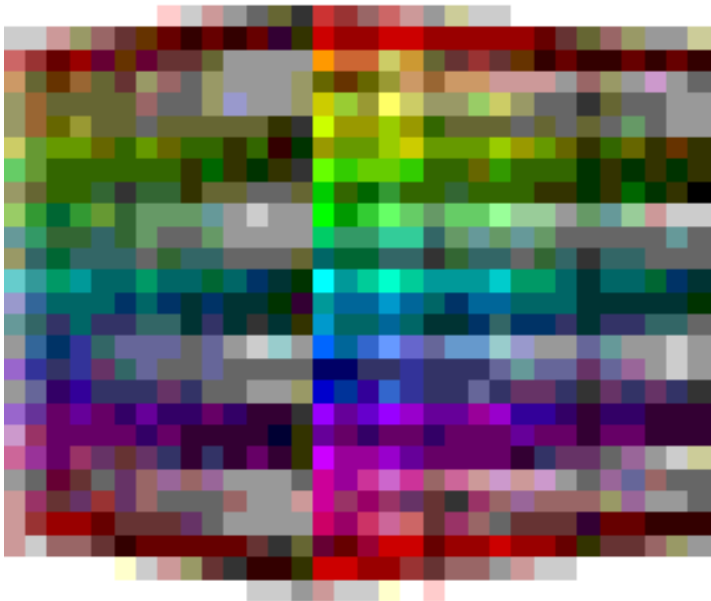
The 111 books were placed in the cardboard box and mailed, along with a jump-drive containing the video.

## **What Spam Means to Network Situationism (Loop)** by Coupons≠Coupons

This Video Loop is part of a cluster of data-processing works by Coupons≠Coupons, including an essay by the same title (presented at the 2007 **E-Poetry Festival** in Paris) and the HTML-work **A Bride in White Who Is Not a Virgin** <<http://a-bride-in-white-who-is-not-a-virgin>.

org/info.html>. The work developed through informal email exchanges, Coupons sending Coupons bits of media and modulating them back-and-forth in a spirit of play. The occasion to put together the video was celebratory: the Coupons≠Coupons blog <<http://couponscoupons.blogspot.com>> was suddenly being featured at the top of Google's Search Engine Result Pages (SERPs) for queries like "alprazolam honduras rainbow." This unprecedented fame was a direct result of a powerful spam-data set posted to the blog, which Coupons had found secretly embedded in the HTML pages of the Situationist International text archive **Bureau of Public Secrets** <<http://www.bopsecrets.org>>. To explain the source of the Video Loop's central image-structure, it's important to know that Coupons used Sitemeter to study the surge in blog traffic resulting from the data set's visibility to Googlebot. Here's a still of Sitemeter's animated logo (a colorful revolving cube):

Camille made an HTML-transformation of the gif by enlarging its width to 300 pixels, then posted the transformation to the Coupons blog, convinced of its beauty. It looked like this (but revolving and in color):



In response, I took video screen capture of the transformed rotating gif, zooming in on it, and producing in effect the colorful background for the Video Loop. In the early stages of the celebration's proceedings, screenshots of the Google SERPs featuring Coupons=Coupons had been posted to the blog, as well as the Cheers theme-song mp3 loop that is the work's soundtrack. Double Coupons combined these materials with video of the Sitemeter gif and some vernacular iMovie FX to add to the festivities.

On the first night of the **post\_moot** festival in Oxford (April 2006), Coupons=Coupons used **What Spam Means** to stage a performance under the staircase in cris cheek's basement. The video was projected through the steps onto the wall so that those wishing to be present had to walk down through the light to attend to the performance (the party was going on upstairs). Both Coupons and Coupons sang along with the video for just under an hour, often clinking their glasses as a toast to their fame. At times, the "witness--participants" would sing along with us. Jason Zeh filmed this performance. A cabaret version was given by Coupons=Coupons & Joshua Strauss at the Talking Head Club in Baltimore (July 2006). In absentia Coupons, the Loop was screened at Western Virginia University for the conference **BIOS: the poetics of life in digital media** hosted by Sandy Baldwin (September 2006).

In the middle of my Written Up Too performance – during which I also performed **Chex-Mex Yr Ballast After Kumbaya** and **Scores** – I used **What Spam Means** as a segue from my Video performance taking place in a blackbox theatre, into a Poetry reading I planned to give in the hallway outside the theatre. I turned on the loop, told the audience that I wouldn't be returning, and walked out of the room. I proceeded to read poems in the hallway. Keith Tuma came out and held up some flyers in front of the camera. A few people followed him. But everyone else, to my surprise, escaped out of an emergency exit. I'm told that cris cheek led them, and that there had been group singing. I wonder what else I missed. The last time I saw that audience was when I walked out of the room. Luckily they'll soon have access to the poems read in the hallway via **Meshworks: the Miami University Archive of Writing in Performance** <<http://www.muohio.edu/meshworks/>>.