

"A Quarterly
Published Strictly
Quarterly"

Works & Days

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Spring 2012

Nº 2

Against Specialization

by Luke Cissell

No, this is not a fascist call to conformity. Quite the contrary. It just so happens that in today's Looking-Glass world, *specialization* itself is that great conformer – a sort of religion that everyone has been baptized into without realizing. Our world, now so crowded with highly-trained specialists, is short on breathing room for any seeking a bold new platform from which to say, "I am here."

{Cont'd}

Sierras

by Johnny Williams



Building Three:

*Strata Comma Philo
Gramma: On What is
Emergent*
by Eric Bland

Recipes:

Seasonal Ingredients,
Perennial Methods

by Ashley Suzan and Eric Wines

Teeth

by Rebecca Bersohn



"At dawn get to your fields, and one day they'll be full." - Hesiod



Tidal Basin

by Michael Hodgson



A Call to Practice

by Sarah Marriage

Ten years ago, when I began to dream of becoming a woodworker, I didn't know exactly what that would mean. I didn't know, not for certain, that I wanted to work with wood in particular. I was drawn to the scale and to the accessibility of the material and the tools it requires, but I didn't even know what working with real wood felt like, what wood smelled like, outside the formaldehyde spiked aroma of a Home Depot lumber aisle.

{Cont'd}

Cosmography

by Luke Cissell

Gears

by Prue Hyman



Prism Series

by Field Kallop



My Own Private Bayreuth

by Arturas Bumšteinas

After enquiring at the Bayreuther Festspiele box office, I was sent a letter explaining that the wait list for tickets is currently nine years long.

{J}

Chain Study

by Penelope August



Our Trespasses

Part Two of Three

by Cara Marsh Sheffler

The bar three cornfields from Downtown was called The Manger, so named because it stood where the Nativity Scene was staged during Prohibition.

The pair arrived around 10pm and confusion was instantaneous: Gabe was mistaken for his high schooldoppelganger, who had—of course—stayed local, granting the couple immediate, completely misplaced intimacy. It also allowed for the commotion that Nat's conspicuously urban presence provoked to be put to words...

{Cont'd}

Madrone Box

by Sarah Marriage



Building Three?

Works & Days Quarterly

by Eric Bland
Nº 2, Spring 2012

*Read Building One
and Building Two*

Strata Comma Philo Gramma: On What is Emergent

The next a.m., in Pisa in pieces: a rising title if tall bones: a wry synched idol lisps alone:
—My theme for the archbishop is Excellence. Nay, Elegance. Nay wait.

It's all I've got. I'm not trying to, I'm just trying to get into a long conversation, a back-n-forth in the comments section. I can win one of those, or at least prove, speak once more, if I really have to. Answer back. For this is just, to get them in there. To get it started. To get them, those students, to start talking. They're so tired at this hour, and their planes just got in. I don't care, I mean I understand if they want to World War One me. Though I just want to enjoy a beer. Once in my lifetime. Without feeling like if only this had happened, or that, then I could really, you know, savor it.

So, we are trying to get better at it. We are trying to get better at writing out this world. And by "world" I mean—"the muffled slaughter of a day in birth"—as Harold Hart had it, from the electoral Eden of Ohio, 1899, in summer born, dead at thirty-two, a sunken husk, and so we put on wincing music and lurch:

There is loss.
Loss. Loss.
There is loss.
There is little else but loss.
Hurrah.

And we were fired by August. Proserpine.

"Never believed in reality. I respect it too much to believe in it." Said Clovis' kin. (like God, and then, to go beyond, like nature...which acts are unnatural, remind me...and I am near Baryshnikov at the Brooklyn Academy of Musicians, and I am beside a beautiful lady, and I tell her that I am going to go over there and tell him he was great in *Sex in the City*—especially, when he went to his light show and, you know, was holding her hand, and then the acclaim came and he became a gnat to a hamburger and gorged on it while she went home and made some adjustments. That was a Shakespearean moment, like when he becomes king in the *Godfather* or Henry the V pets the knuckles of Falstaff, forgetting. A decision. Carrie's in this instance—because what if Mikhail doesn't know he's fantastic beyond feather-leaping—he can *act*—and he's thinking about Vladimir Putin and his good buddy Garry, counting the days before Kasparov's castling? What if he's insecure



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about that episode? And I know that he does not believe in God because he said so years ago on the Charlie Rose show. Too much respect...too much in this bourgeois pleasure dome.) (...though I saw *Fox and His Friends* here. I saw *Stalker*. I saw that candlemas by kind Eric Rohmer, *The Green Lantern*, that miniscule stretch in the visible spectrum that meanders like a dental hygienist on her lunch-break through the streets of Tribeca. Through the damp-foggy atmosphere. Through sunburnt. 'N blizzard. Putting out fires and re-gifting.)

*Oh those fields of wan surprises!
Whence we run when we are tiring.
And drop like packaged daisies.
And the shop-mate calls us lazy.
How can you say a shirt is so soft?
That the shirt you've had forever is so soft?
How can you call feet dipshit hands?
In dudder & cripple grasping at boards?
And that that is why you like dance?*

Jean Baudrillard
was born
in the nave—"in muffled slaughter"—of Reims
Cathedral and consecrated thusly,
Like King Clovis,
and beheaded,
and he bled,
for seasons,
never married.
(not really)
(Marine.)

Fat, gotten back into fat
again. Thin was so pensive.
So aimless.
But now the study of phospholipids and diester linkages keeps me up late at night
rubbing the thighs of anyone who'll let me.

Crane says, and here he is being perfect:
*Then let you reach your hat
and go.
As usual, let you—also...*
I wanted to remove "then" "also," but he
is not blasting the timpani like Strauss would.



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They say that, if you're put (or transferred to) on the 5 line, you'll basically have to learn the 2 line and the 4 line too, more or less. And that's the thing, at the end of the day, more or less, that keeps you from sinking fully into the 5 line, if you're put on it. You try, but there's no forth coming. So you stop trying, I figure, if you're reasonable. And you spend Monday on the 2 line, which becomes the main part of Tuesday, and then you peek over at the 4 line and there's stuff to fix there, to clean up, which bleeds into Wednesday, and by lunch on Wednesday you feel refocused but on Thursday you have a very important meeting which you spend the second half of Wednesday preparing for, and the second half of Thursday mostly recovering from, or writing follow-up emails from or figuring out how you're going to get those invitations in the mail or buy that birthday card; then you have Friday for the 5 line, to really concentrate on it and bear down, and you borderline feel like singing once you've cleared that space for it. Not that there's happiness in the singing; it's more like a requisite piece of your personal liturgy, I mean it could be happy but that is not sine qua non to its nature. But something in your gut, some percolating mucous oozed out by roughage, or just a feeling of relief, and wind, and openness...like someone, a cousin, far away in an open field in some space that makes you imagine Denmark or Iowa must make you feel like singing. And so by three p.m. on Friday afternoon you suddenly find yourself ensconced in the 5 line, in 5 line work; but then it's time to separate yourself like a spider from the limits of its web and return to your family or just the weekend, to your apartment with those bottles and that bedtime, thinking initially over Thai food, take-out, how Monday will be something, will really help you fix the issue with the 5 line that's kept it from being another Q line, but by then, by Monday morning, your whole groove and intuition will be absent, and no amount of Debussy or whirling Dervish meditation will get you back to the place you were at—and where you will be—on Friday at 3:30, working like a little drone or an Otto von Bismarck, like Thomas Edison or someone resolute like O'Keeffe or de Kooning, on that thing that most fully ensnares you, and which, when doing, you are anything but a being that will one day expire because in the moment you are dead already and yet you keep going.

The gloves are coming off. Zhou Enlai they say, Zhou Enlai. What ever happened to the French Revolution, they say, they ask Zhou from the boob tube in the '60s in Paris. "It's too early in the morning for television," he responds flatly, turning his zeal into an effort to stand against the hotel wall drooping, with angst and his best effort at expressing un-forgiveness over Mao's betrayal of infinity.

—The players will enter slowly, accreting. They enter initially almost in a game. What game? Kat is first on, entering at 0:04, just after the first pulse of noise. Upstage-right she rolls over her back planting her feet against the wall. At 0:31 Sarah arrives from the center aisle. She poses articulately on the wall-jut. She will arch there, poised, and then intermittently—with neutrality in the face—a paeon to all things bodily, machine-like, perform the "embrace of the wall," which is to say,

Building Three?

Works & Days Quarterly

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"I feel bleakness abounding," I say to you.
You vomit torrentially. Was it me? I?
I don't know grammar, now, so absorbed am we
in the work of William Forsythe.
Watch them dance. Oui. Why? It's so...ffffahhffff-fucking lovely.
Now's that your thumb in my ear or another tic-tac,
that trick you play, you know, where you make a candy jam...
and I go deaf while you talk about that lover you had,
the one with thighs of steel though who'd want that? The one
who made love like Pan exploding midsummer lychee fruit, BAM!
It really just is an excellent venue, isn't it? Chipped bourgeois jazz,
polite dining, us hidden-drunk on Manhattans, wearing scarves. Philip Glass.
O why did you say last night you were leaving New York?
You're taking me with you right? I can't keep
not eating in California Pizza Kitchens, Olive Gardens,
this lack of consistent signage, dearth of slick, shiny orb-shapes,
too little torque and torus, the culture bulges out there...while I've spent years
here gathering courage like a Oaxacan hunting berries in Alabama, the guts
to leap to the stage and ask the dancers if, rather than autographs,
they might dance on this piece of yellow lined paper, just dance, impress
their phalanges, just please be shaggily accurate, dissemble within margins
doing something by William. Are you touring Tel Aviv this season?
Budapest, Islamabad, O tonic company, dost thou feel blessed or bitter?
God bless the bitterness in your pivot. The swerve, the drape, the text you're
dissembling, like thick stringy steak only saliva's dissolving,
vast like cosmology, like being conscripted into a monastery, yet the creed is felt!
Bliss, good luck, Fortunata—I always related to that! I too was lucky I always said!
Ataraxia! Ataraxia nervosa—do you know the definition
of "catholic?" You do, swell, it adds a layer, yes?
Your feet are thick and swollen like life-rafts,
your feet are retrograde hands, less clinging than clanging like idiots,
and your thighs are heavily proteinated snacks. You have a talent
for rummaging. And another for lunging.
I don't need you, you just make me anxious.
Will you be there in the morning? That's
where you'll find me now. It's not tenderness.

"I'm not dangerous,"
Francois Hollande shrieked,
upon exiting the Eurostar on
Wednesday, February 29th,
2012 at St. Pancras Station.
Another Leap Day.



Building Three?

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My name is Dr. Ezra Schoenberg. I live about a block north of the MoMA. It's behind the MoMA, sort of. I could pee out my window and toxify water lilies. Or improve one of those Pollack boasts. Or compliment it. I'm not going to pretend to hate Modern art. I'm not going to pretend to be civil or pretend that World War One was entirely nihilistic. Things...the thing is things like it needed to happen. ...Back then. ...Today, new things are emerging.

ADDIE So let's start with animal cruelty. (beat) Then work our way up. STACY I'm hungry. (pause) Part of me wants to eat breakfast before we talk about this. I'm not sure I can eat bacon or eggs if we— MARIA Eggs are so decorous. ADDIE Of course you will be able to eat eggs again. STACY Maybe tomorrow, yeah, or for lunch, but it'll still be in my head for break— MARIA I like Eggs Florentine. ADDIE I stopped eating entirely a couple months ago. I only started again after I fainted. That's now three times that I've fainted. My mother says that the next time we're definitely going to the doctor, but each time had its own particular reason. I googled epilepsy and I don't think that I have it. I might have cervical cancer though. Or uterine cancer. STACY Why'd you google "cancer?" ADDIE I didn't. There were a lot of links. And I was curious.

*I was little and unimpeachable. / I could not hustle.
/ I created everything. / Loss glowered about me
like some Renaissance penumbra, / shrouding fine
Holofernes. / I was rites and rubric, torus and
shambles. / Fearful and skin-hostile as a baby,
almost emerged / but resisting this world.*

How do you take a woman in?
Well, slowly of course. You have to lift slowly. Surely, too. Like you're moving
a dresser from one corner of the room to another. ...O that is your agon.
Destroying this temple. Your hair streaming out in snakes.
But you lift, and pull columns, and smile.
Don't be coy.
That rarely works. You have to be quite rigorous about it.
(And you are not old, you are just talented. You are not tired, you are beautiful.)
But how do you take a woman in?
If she is percolating like fresh Dr. Pepper?
Bleething and schweeting.
Moving very little. And you call this reality.
And I don't want to be taken from her for an overlong time now.
I don't need to see the ballgame with the boys or have beers and go bowling.
I'm growing increasingly nervous.
And I'm glad that I'm writing this manual.

But I have to be leaving it. Doing the reconciliation.

In his emergency He came.



Editorial Staff

Luke Cissell (*Against Specialization; Cosmography*) is a musician and composer who lives in Lower Manhattan. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, he was a fiddling champion at the age of eight and went on to train as a classical violinist. Cissell's recent work includes a collection of chamber music, a full-length album, and a suite for solo violin written as a companion piece to Cara Marsh Sheffler's *Guide*. He is currently at work on his second studio album and an opera based on Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. Play with his jukebox at <http://www.lukecissell.com>.

Sarah Marriage (*Madrone Box; A Call to Practice; Spring Fauna*) is a woodworking student at the College of the Redwoods Fine Woodworking program in Fort Bragg, California. Conceived in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, raised in Anchorage, Alaska, Sarah studied architecture at Princeton University and has at turns worked in the fields of architecture, structural engineering, occupational health and safety, dog-walking, data management, physics, youth empowerment, and construction supply. Recent projects include the rehabilitation of a nineteenth-century townhouse in Baltimore, Maryland. She also serves as Art Director, Designer, Programmer, and Calligrapher for *Works & Days*.

Cara Marsh Sheffler (*Our Trespasses*) is a writer who lives on Manhattan's Lower East Side. In her past life as an actress, she was featured in Woody Allen's *Celebrity* and in The Looking Glass Theatre's Off-Broadway production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. A recipient of the Eagles Prize, she has most recently been working on *Our Trespasses* and another novel about the guidebook used by the Donner Party, *Guide*. She performed an excerpt of *Guide* in tandem with Luke Cissell's (*The Myth of*) *Infinite Progress* at the Brick Theater last year. Sheffler is also providing the libretto for Cissell's adaptation of *The Ambassadors*. She likes road trips.

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Contributors

Penelope August (*Chain Study*) designs interiors and furniture for an architecture firm by day. At night she makes things with her hands. She often works in mediums that require a transformation by fire or sun, where the end result is not entirely in her control. She has been working with clay for 22 years. She has 84 houseplants. She lives in Williamsburg, Brooklyn with her husband.

Born in Los Angeles, **Rebecca Bersohn** (*Teeth*) is a New York based artist. She received her BFA at New York University. Her work has been exhibited at Monster Island, Charlie Horse Gallery, the Market Hotel in Brooklyn, BWAC and The Commons Gallery at NYU. Her Awards in the Arts include Bank of America Art Award 2004, an Artist's Distinction Award (2003) for an ink/water color piece at the California Art Education Association Los Angeles County Exhibit and the Governor's Art Scholar Award 2002-2003.

Eric Bland's (*Building Three*) latest play, *All the Indifferent Children of the Earth*, was described as "death-obsessed" and "awesomely eloquent." He studied Writing for Performance at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and poetry and playwriting at Princeton.

A native of Vilnius, Lithuania, **Arturas Bumšteinas** (*My Own Private Bayreuth #1 and #2*) is a composer/performer of acoustic and electronic music. After graduating from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater, he founded three musical ensembles: *Quartet Twentytwentyone*, *Zarasai*, and *Works and Days*. His various projects have been presented in dozens of exhibitions around Europe. Festival participation includes: The Holland Festival, Sensoralia/Romaeuropa, Angelica, Jauna Muzika, Sonic Circuits, Cut & Splice, Skanumezs, Wundergrund, KODY, and Full Pull. Collaborators include: Anton Lukoszevieve, Laura Garbštie, Jesse Glass, Piotr Kurek, Alina Orlova, Lina Lapelyte, Jeff Surak, Borut Savski, Pure, Vladimir Tarasov, Dominykas Vyšniauskas, Liudas Mockunas, and Max Reinhardt. His music has been published by the following labels: Belt, Zeromoon, Con-v, NUUN, Sangoplasmo, Cronica Electronica, Semplice Records, and Nexsound. From 2006-2011, he was represented by Galerie Antje Wachs in Berlin; today, he lives and works in Riga, Latvia. His work may be found at <http://arturasbumsteinas.tumblr.com/>.

Michael Hodgson (*Tidal Basin*) hails from the wilds of New Hampshire by way of Princeton, NJ and now resides in the Hudson River Valley. He is a photographer who still uses film. He mourns the pending bankruptcy of Kodak and is stockpiling his photapocalypse kit accordingly.

Prue Hyman (*Gears*) enjoys observing unexpected details and using historic photographic processes. She spent extensive time in the late aughts on the road, photographing musicians. A native New Yorker, she currently lives in Chinatown. Her work can be viewed at www.pruehyman.com and is available for sale via direct contact. She is a connoisseur of jokes pertaining to her surname.

Field Kallop (*Prism Series*) was born and raised in New York, NY. After working at El Museo de la Nación in Lima Perú, and at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Field shifted her focus from curatorial projects to making art. She became an assistant to the artist Chuck Close and established a studio practice, allowing her to devote more of her time to her own painting. Kallop recently received an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, where her work underwent a significant transformation. After giving up oil paint, she began exploring new materials and experimenting with various processes. While her interests remained consistent—she continues to be inspired by mathematical principles and scientific phenomena—her work started to take on a range of new forms. Kallop is now back in NYC, and lately she has been working with indigo and bleach on fabric. To view more of her work, visit www.fieldkallop.com.

Willow Jane Sainsbury (*Spring Fauna*) is an artist and illustrator, who currently lives in Vicenza, Italy. She has lived in Melbourne, Australia; Auckland, New Zealand; and Oxford, United Kingdom in the past three years where she continues to teach, learn and work as an artist. She most recently returned to education, learning printmaking at the Australian Print Workshop. She is currently working on her own illustration project and a study of landscapes. She is not on Facebook.

California-grown and a New Yorker at heart, **Ashley Suzan** (*Recipes*) is a graduate of the Gallatin School at New York University. The youngest of four, Ashley was raised in the kitchen. An avid yogi and spinning enthusiast, her creative passions include drawing, food, and beverage. Follow her on Twitter @AshleySuzan.

Johnny Williams (*Sierras*) is an aspiring furniture maker gone missing in the headlands of Northern California. He was last seen building two children's chairs at the College of the Redwoods Fine Furniture program, one in madrone, another in bay laurel. If you see him, tell him to sober up and head home to New York: his boyfriend and mother miss him dearly.

Eric Wines (*Recipes*) enjoys trolling flea markets for treasures, playing with plants, and distance running. He is co-owner of Tre restaurant in Manhattan and a member of The Skylight Group. He hosts candlelight suppers and classy cocktail parties. Wines was raised in Detroit, MI and lives in New York City. Follow him on Twitter @EricWines.