

ANTI-FEAR ASSEMBLY SERIES

*HOW CAN POETRY BE ACTIVATED AS A TOOL FOR CHANNELING;
A CATALYST FOR THE BUILDING OF
AN AFFIRMATIVE AND COMFORTABLE SPACE FOR SHARING?*

SESSION #1

POETRY READING / LISTENING / SHARING SESSION

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Before the session, participants would be asked to choose & bring their selection of three poems.

There could be a poem written by themselves, a short iPhone note, a poem that stayed resonating in their minds long after it's read, a poem by their favorite writer...any form of poetical articulation, and chosen out of different reasons.

During the Collective Poetry Session, we would engage through the cycles of reading of selected material, wherein each participant would have their space and time to express reading without the break or further clarifications.

Each poetry reading/listening cycle would be followed by a moment of reflection, in which we would discuss & explain our poetry selection, or reflect on what we've heard and what especially inspired or touched us.

The idea for the Poetry Session is based on the generation of the space for sharing, and focused on the practice of careful & attentive listening, as a potential way of calming down the fears & anxieties.

The idea of the dynamics & structure of the event is focused on emphasizing the uniqueness of the poetical expression, the values of the activation of the written form, wherein each poem and each interpretation has its own pace, rhythms & embodied ways of deliverance.

## ABOUT THE HOST

**Sanja Vasić** (b. 1993 in Belgrade, Serbia) is a transdisciplinary artist working through the mediums such as poetry, visual arts, photography, textile installations and various forms of writing. She holds two MA's: MA in CCC -Critical Curatorial Cybermedia from HEAD – Genève (2019), and a MA in Textile Arts from the Faculty of Applied Arts in Belgrade (2018).

Her practice plays with concepts, invents hybrid vocabularies exploring the issues of identity representation, femininity, complexities of interpersonal interactions, self-expressions & modes of existing under the cruelty of the capitalist condition. Her works have been a part of multiple collective publishing projects (Panacea - Castle Edition by Victoria Kieffer & Aether Art Space (Sofia) 2019; Feminisssmmm - Vai Pure in Fuoriregistro #1; Multiple issues of Make8elive Magazine, Photovogue etc.).

She has been a part of multiple exhibitions and art projects, including co-curating & participating in the Unsettling Resonances series of cultural events (2019) in the independant gallery space One Gee in Fog in Geneva. Currently, she is compulsively adding to her blog-site-art-journal ([sanjavasic.wordpress.com](http://sanjavasic.wordpress.com)) & writing for various online magazines about contemporary arts & culture.

## ~INTRODUCTION~

This zine represents a collection of words, poems & thoughts that emerged from the Reading / Listening / Sharing Poetry Workshop held in June 2020, as part of the ANTI FEAR wing of HEKLER Assembly.

Through the intertwined series of readings & discussing, the workshop activated the poetical medium as a tool for channeling; sharing stories; and discussing our understandings of fears, anxieties & issues relevant to our practices and daily struggles.

With entries by: Eryka Dellenbach, Sonja Blum, Emma Rssx, Nechama Winston, Bojana Videkanic, Lucía Hinojosa Gaxiola, Natasa Prljević, Cansu Korkmaz.

*Sanja Vasić*

SANJA VASIĆ

I see a strand of someone's hair  
Swinging in the wind  
I see flames  
I see the silk scarf

My brain is melting

I see the river  
That brings voices  
And free bodies  
From the other side

I see an old woman without an eye  
I see egg cracking  
I see branches hitting  
I see naked legs

And the deliberation  
Will it be ever?

I see the color blue  
Dripping down the surfaces  
Covered with wax  
I see lines of speed  
Drew on the table  
I see cancer  
I see old shed  
Where my grandfather hung himself  
I see the frog in a pot

I see bed  
Where giant sleeps  
I hear him breaths so deep  
Every night

Let him turn to raw stone  
Let his seed become poisonous

I see black holes  
And from them the Universe  
Exploding  
In front of my eyes

Sometimes I feel it melting  
So gentle and soft  
I roll it underneath my fingers  
And then I throw it far far away

They say that the water is the cure  
Because water goes through everything  
I see her moving  
I follow her sneaking

I l e t h e r c a r r y m e a w a y

And I didn't  
I didn't draw  
A single one  
In my life

## **The Songs for the Living and the Dead by Milena Marković (2010)**

and for those who will not die

for those who walk for those who run

in the leaves and the puddles in the snow and the sand

these are the songs for the children

who do not walk in the dark

these are the songs for the children

who have walked in the dark

to find the way to walk out of the dark.

this I will say to them

that they are not alone in the dark

this I will say to those

who are alone in the dark

this is me who was

with the dead and the living

this is me who was in the dark

this is me who hasn't walked out.

you are not alone in the dark

I am here and there are plenty of us

we walk we run we dance we breathe

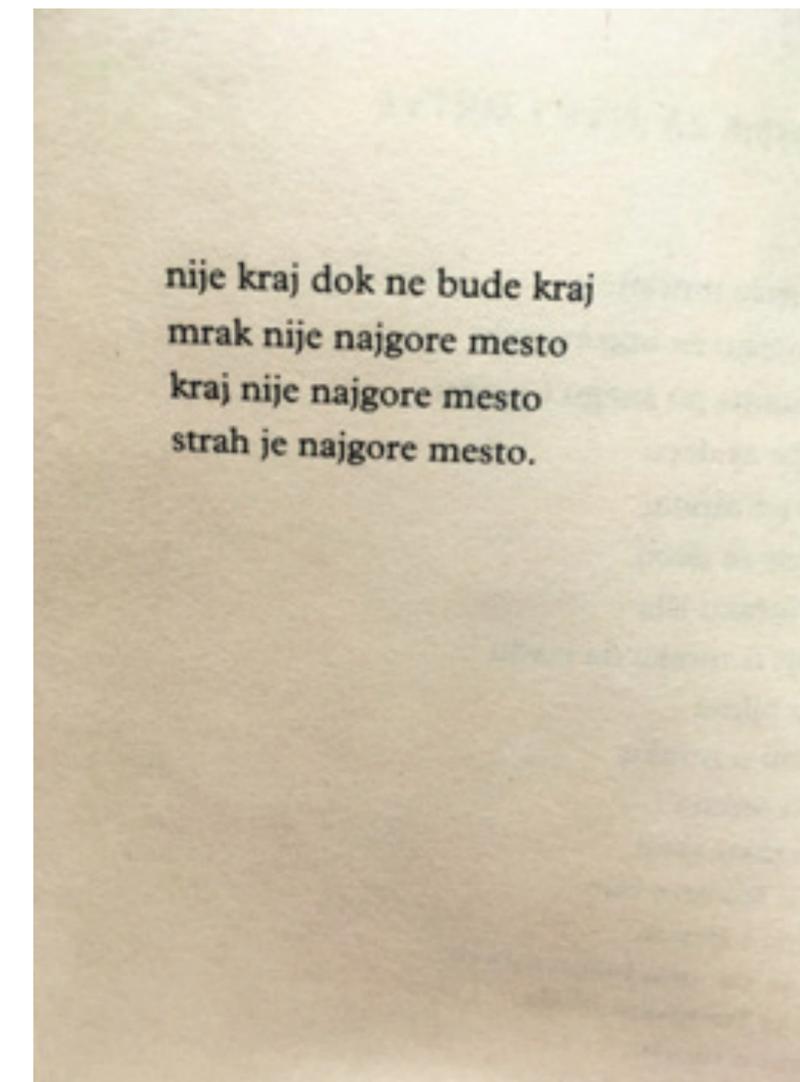
I'm here and it's not the end

it's not the end until it's the end

the dark is not the worst place to be

the end is not the worst place to be

fear is the worst place to be



*From "Songs for the Living and the Dead"  
(Pesme za žive i mrtve)*



ERYKA DELLENBACH

*SW Suburbs, Unincorporated* (fragment)  
By Eryka Dellenbach, 2019

I am bouncing on rust and red  
chipped paint on the back of a tractor  
listening to stories about the woods  
surrounding our home,  
feeling proud that I could catch frogs  
so easily with my bare hands.

Later, I am smelling soap  
watching my first lover, C,  
washing her feet  
for the third time that day, like every day,  
aged 8.

Now  
I am  
remembering that pervasive scent and  
trying to pinpoint  
the last time it got me  
sucked into a vortex vision of thick, freckled skin and  
mysteriously dark, thick hair  
rooted i.visibly in an arm  
Her arm.

I'm watching her point to an empty map,  
naming beyond us,  
seeing her skinned knees bleeding,  
characteristic fists clenched laugh crying  
at our glass door  
after losing grip on her 3 german shepherds who  
dragged her by their leashes halfway  
across the neighborhood,  
our tortoises' mouths stained by blueberries,  
watching her welder father throw  
so much gasoline over a massive pile of tree limbs and junk,  
barely believing,  
enjoying  
the fire's size,  
my happiest memory forming yet, then.

I am pinky swears and blood letting become handshakes.  
I am stopped as an airplane drones through the ceiling  
Hearing L say again, 'It's in you' after  
I shared fragments of someone else's life.  
I am passing a finger over a cold sore that needs to weep still.

**What are the stakes in our fears?**

death, imprisonment, pain, permanence- - - - - loss of privilege, discomfort, temporalities

There is often a root system:

I'm scared of people

because

I'm scared of visibility

because

I'm scared of not being accepted

because

I'M SCARED OF BEING ALONE

BECAUSE

I'M SCARED OF

How do the strata look? Do they individually bring to mind a different image or feeling? What moves do we make or practice to preserve some of our fear after it reaches us?

I'm scared of people - - - - - I'm scared of being/dying alone

Can your fear root trajectory be rewritten as a **shame** trajectory? Does it work in some places and not others? How does the narrative change?

Fear can be a root of anger aka Fear can lead us to anger  
Fear can lie beneath hate.

Which feelings can't coexist with fear?  
Does fear give you energy? Does it suck your energy, feed on you?

What do you **do** with your fear?

## SONJA BLUM

ICELAND POEMS  
by Sonja Blum (2017)

I.  
‘I’m going to show them a world without you, a world without rules and controls,  
without borders or boundaries, a world where anything is possible.  
Where we go from there, is a choice I leave to you.’  
And I dream of being Neo  
Women in Iceland strike 1975  
Rousseau Social Contract

II.  
Open road ahead  
The Iceland I dreamt of  
Driving along a two lane road  
Among the wild horses and ice  
The domed volcanic mountains in a moon-like landscape  
Smoke rising out of nowhere from the center of the earth  
Like the lava that made this land  
Lava covered by snow, frozen solid, but underneath all is a volcano

Escaping the corporate prison  
A wave of conversations about aliens, permeating the Internet waves  
Of course there are fucking aliens, we live in a fertile universe  
But that’s not the reason to take the focus away from the wars, the inequality  
Capitalist machine fragmenting consumer bases so much that it leads to societal collapse  
Nothing is inherently sacred  
It is sacred by the virtue of people agreeing it is sacred

One in eight Americans hungry  
Professionalized and obedient and hungry  
Who rules the world?  
Chomsky has the answer  
I haven’t read the book yet  
Sits on my shelves and rubs shoulders with Lucretius, Rousseau, Hume, Epictetus  
Does that mean I don’t have the tools to grapple with the monster?

Cornered with these contracts in which we agree to download our brains  
To these unknown entities behind the scenes  
I say yes to being a victim of super surveillance

Chalmers contemplates are we living in a simulation?  
Nick Bostrom is sure  
Does it matter?

The nature of consciousness is not a settled question  
What if computers can’t simulate consciousness?  
We can’t rule out this possibility at this time.

Perhaps telepathy isn’t fiction  
I am speaking to the world

won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please

won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please  
won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please  
won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please  
won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please  
won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please  
won't you please **beat** it beat it into me please

won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please  
won't you please beat it beat it into me please

they're gonna find they're gonna find you somehow  
they're gonna bring they're gonna bring you somehow  
they're gonna take they're gonna take you somehow  
they're gonna hurt they're gonna hurt you somehow

they're gonna see they're gonna see you somehow  
they're gonna feel they're gonna feel you somehow  
they're gonna know they're gonna know you somehow  
they're gonna rip they're gonna rip you somehow

they're gonna lose they're gonna lose you somehow  
they're gonna miss they're gonna miss you somehow  
they're gonna love they're gonna love you somehow  
they're gonna hate they're gonna hate you somehow

they're gonna pass they're gonna pass you somehow  
they're gonna crush they're gonna crush you somehow  
they're gonna steal they're gonna steal you somehow  
they're gonna free they're gonna free you somehow

they're gonna breathe they're gonna breathe you somehow  
they're gonna kill they're gonna kill you somehow  
they're gonna fuck they're gonna fuck you somehow  
they're gonna save they're gonna save you somehow

I am perfect and  
you will love me and  
everyone in this room is in this fucking dance.

At the forefront of my mind during the workshop was the relationship I perceive between giving yourself permission to write poetry and raising one's voice more broadly.

Being afraid to write poetry or even read poetry is a common view of poetry. It is seen as a form of writing largely inaccessible to wide audiences, working class families and those without high education or specific literary education. There is an exclusionary aspect to poetry. So to me it is really interesting to bridge that gap, to consider what it means to give oneself permission to write poetry despite that. I see links between giving oneself permission to write poetry and stopping one's silence, raising one's voice, giving validity to being a presence and a force in society, having agency.

S.B.

LUCÍA HINOJOSA GAXIOLA



infinity  
scrolling  
today eye  
had  
the opportunity  
to see  
an insect  
shed  
its  
skin  
what is the  
relation  
ship  
between your  
birth and  
the way your  
finger  
swipes  
today's  
news  
what is  
isolation  
and what is the  
illusion of  
touch a feathers  
been glued  
to my  
notebook while  
I eye the  
dissonance  
of skintouch  
whats left  
behind another  
insect it could  
have been your  
body

a global soliloquy  
borders  
are closed  
during the  
spring EQUINOX  
the only  
border is the edge  
where the root  
penetrates  
the earth  
this is the prophecy of the edge  
delineate the mechanism  
touch  
your earth



earth  
rot  
earth

rotate



## NECHAMA WINSTON

“Kettle to Pot” by Simone White, from *Of Being Dispersed* (Futurepoem, 2016).

Unable to pour boiling water  
over an edge from kettle to pot  
water boils from kettle to neti pot  
still boils from kettle to cup running over  
boil pool steam pool leak pool

little cooling pot over the boiled edge  
of boil pooled salt vapors  
sulfurous stank boil heal dangled over  
the boiled edge of burnt earth  
cooling salt pool nettle stung  
black clotted blood at the bottom  
of the sink

A House Called Tomorrow by Alberto Rios

You are not fifteen, or twelve, or seventeen—  
You are a hundred wild centuries

And fifteen, bringing with you  
In every breath and in every step

Everyone who has come before you,  
All the yous that you have been,

The mothers of your mother,  
The fathers of your father.

If someone in your family tree was trouble,  
A hundred were not:

The bad do not win—not finally,  
No matter how loud they are.

We simply would not be here  
If that were so.  
You are made, fundamentally, from the good.  
With this knowledge, you never march alone.

You are the breaking news of the century.  
You are the good who has come forward

Through it all, even if so many days  
Feel otherwise. But think:

When you as a child learned to speak,  
It's not that you didn't know words—

It's that, from the centuries, you knew so many,  
And it's hard to choose the words that will be your own.

From those centuries we human beings bring with us

The simple solutions and songs,

The river bridges and star charts and song harmonies

All in service to a simple idea:

That we can make a house called tomorrow.  
What we bring, finally, into the new day, every day,

Is ourselves. And that's all we need  
To start. That's everything we require to keep going.

Look back only for as long as you must,  
Then go forward into the history you will make.

Be good, then better. Write books. Cure disease.  
Make us proud. Make yourself proud.

And those who came before you? When you hear thunder,  
Hear it as their applause.

1. “revision, impromptu” by Fred Moten

with David Rothenberg, Nicola Hein, George Lewis, Dafna Naphtali, Andrew Drury, Tanya Kalmanovich, Hans Tammen, Sarah Weaver, David Grubbs, and Ally-Jane Grossan

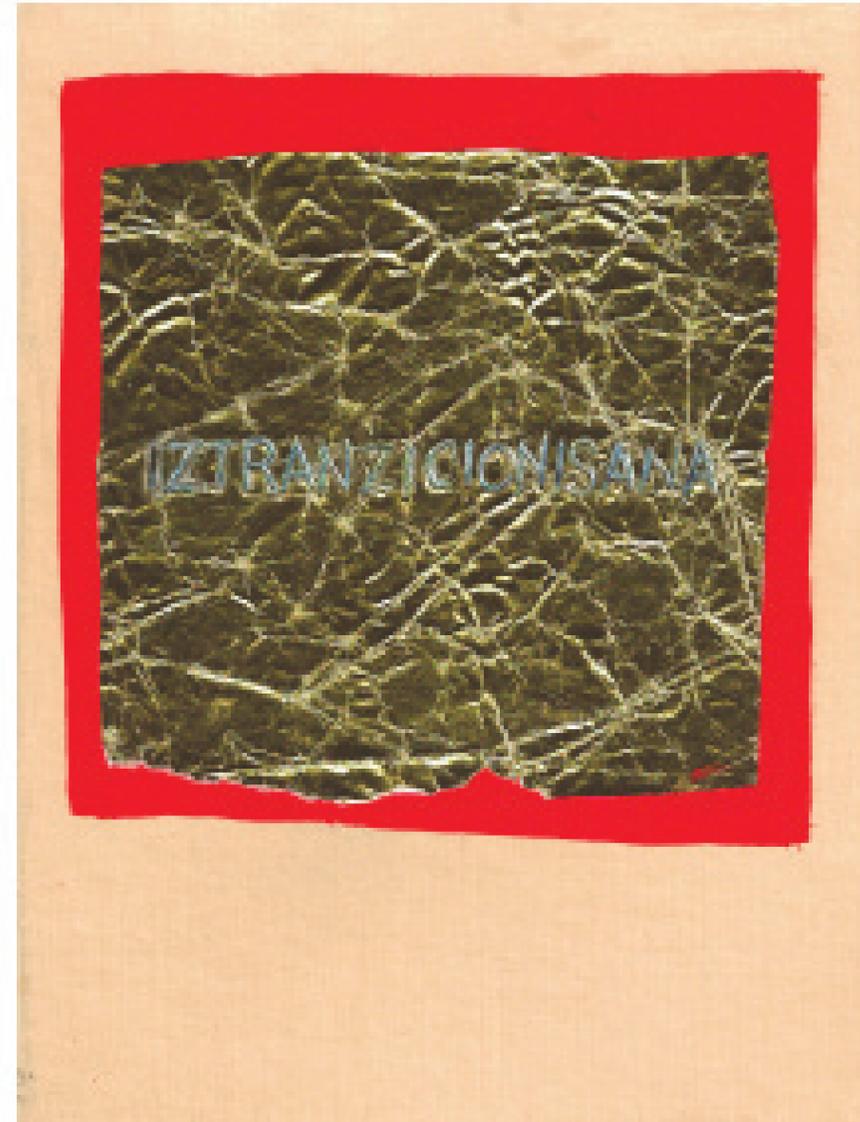
Logistics sounds like a work song. The bottom anticipates and tills and then it’s time to turn over. This limbned, uncoordinated independence is anagnostic. Flesh touches. I am because we are is some bullshit. I ain’t because we share air lore, more notes on Auto da Fé’s blacking of the presence of an absence. The abyss between frames, that dehiscence, indicates this refusal either to fuse or choose between tearing and binding, a careful preservation of wounding. The whole fade in a shuffle it projects and prepares, a soufflé of angles, a palimpsest of snares and rides, some continually hidden h, a heft of air, a thievish shift carnival, a tufted shear, a shhhh of whirr and bookfan. We wear a fan of books, page over other kissing inside lip to disappear into another outside in coming into view. We all come from nothing to hard tone row and that cool move, chafing against the new phasis of the history of displacement, sound like it got a three on it to me. Blackness is the revelation of that which makes a people uncertain, unclear and awry in its action and knowledge. I think I been thinking ‘bout that for ‘bout thirty years, Krupa become Krupskaya having lost their aura, but when I get a chance I ask Scott La Rock why I start to think and then I sink into the paper like I was ink, like I was a Chinese painter in the hold of the beholding. The zero degree is what he says; she says nothing in reply, a festival, irreparable. The age of quantum mechanical reproduction is giving tune away to rise. Collaborate elaboration, William. Infinite consanguinity, Dumbo. Fleeta Drum came with us, brought something with him, brought a swing with her to fold the document. Can improvisation be documented? Has it ever been? Lemme ask Scott when I see him—see if improvisation can be revised. Scott, can improvisation be revised? That’s an arctic jazz question, regarding whales and, further inland, elephants, and saxophone kids, non-expert users, autodidactic squirrels in task decomposition. Is there an analogy between improvisation and optimization, affirmation and ingardenation on improvisational gardening? What’s the Greek word for “reading”?

Which is the point of all this rub and cyclone, when the eye falls into plenitude in a series of caressive abuse and kisses, oikopolitics and storms, good and bad time weather in a tore up propagation of clicks, which is when I realized you’d prepared the back of our throat for a speech about the tragic ship, the in-terminable line to it and the endless line from it, woodskin, wind’s skin, wound and drumbone, bowed, time to stay, string, till poise come back for poise, for our unsupported method and post-sculptural stuttering and non-purposive black massive hymn and sold, celebratory subcanadian scotchplain, plummets of bird patterning, the scotchirish hazarding of north ideas, habitually prenatal birds, field recordings of syncrudescent birds flew down to tailing in the good and bad time weather, bird in the collectve head of mama’nem at the blues university, Clyde’n’mama’nem and her and ask and think a digital conference of the birds, viola, ‘cause music is the fruit of love and earth and nobody gon’ buy it anyway, for there is nothing lost, that may be found in these findings, by these foundlings, driving ‘round vising and revisiting in the inescapable history of not being you.

Our name is unnameable in this regard and miles ahead, feeling what you can’t see all incompletely. The half-fullness of your glasses makes you wanna make the word go away but you do have a capacity for massage that gives me hope. In the delicate evening software, I can understand Russell Westbrook. It’s ulmeric, oliveirian, in its unfirewalled all over the placelessness. We gig everywhere and it just makes me wanna giggle, or holler at you from way over here, party over there, if you can wait, we being behind the beat a little bit but right at the beguining, gynomonastically basic and maternal earth tones all out from the tone world, deep in the bass loom, twilight weaving morning in La Jolla/moonlight in Vermont someplace, some folks parking, some just getting dressed, everybody waiting with everybody for right now in right there, party over here.

Well moled, old Grubbs! We all here in the ruins but we got something in our hands—an experimental bandcamp for news and flowers. And I appreciate y’all letting me sit in, being so far from virtuosity. I wanna be communicable from way back. I wanna be in your base community, grace abounding to the chief of sinners. Remember that song by the Spinners called “Sadie”? The one on Spinners Live! where he reverted—that contrapulsive, not just knee-deep conversioning he got caught up in? Soul Wynne was sewing that night. It was like he had a drum in his chest, just to let you know that nothing lasts forever. The improvisation of forgetting is redactive flow everyday with all these voices in our head. These are always revising herself. One said they told us to be Germanic so, with great surprise, we took a picture of your tech with yourself, our constraint, and it was undecidable between us but plantational, since we the police of different voices, to be your instrument in this sovereign fade. Go back and look at it again when we fade a little bit, when invention won’t let us come up on it from behind. I don’t know my own stuff well enough to mix it right now, but we been remixing it all along past the everyday fade. Mama’nem are the different voices in your head. Are you gon’ play me now? I wan be played with you. I wanna be down with you. My code voice is Stanley Clarke, rajautomatic mixive for the people’s quartet, no way to control it, can’t caul it, won’t be covered, some uncoverable cuvée, girl, some prekripekan cupcake, causally unnameable as that Krupa keep coming back, tense but casually anafrican. Scott says the Greek word for reading is writing. It could be, I don’t know. I’m undecidable between us but you can ring my bell. The night is young and full of possibilities, the only trace of which, when I go back, is how I sound for you from one diffusion to another, as if the room were our hijab, as if we were a roomful of people writing about Cecil Taylor, as if writing about Cecil were reading James Cone, as if I were Sharon Cone’s escort to Cecil’s going home, as if we were the temporary contemporary—air above mountains, buildings in our hands.

BOJANA VIDEKANIĆ



*A Poem About Too Much*

A POEM  
A POEM ABOUT A GREAT BIG WORLD

SORRY

NO IT IS NOT A POEM ABOUT A GREAT BIG WORLD  
IT IS A POEM ABOUT FUCKED UP SITUATIONS  
IT IS A POEM ABOUT FRE ZONES  
FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE  
WE ARE FREE  
WE ARE FREE  
WE ARE FREE



*Iztranzicionisana: A Poem About too much*





## EMMA RSSX

CAMISADO by CAConrad

---

after breaking in  
the wolf  
calmed  
the hens  
so he could  
take his time with them  
twists them open until the right  
amount of memory fits into the song  
another high price for belonging  
poetry is the opposite of escape  
but makes this world endurable  
how the smallest puddle  
reflects the entire sky  
a return to every dream  
our minds talked us out of  
trusting our math of the star  
your hand around my shoulder  
poet astronaut you know I love you  
I have no sense of failure when I am with you  
everything matters because everything  
hurts someone somewhere as it is mattering  
we became all we carried into the mast  
migratory patterns given to the love again  
a way to end this secrecy of suffering  
cut a door in the wolf so we  
can retrieve our dead for  
a world that matters

The poem i read was written by CAConard and titled Camisado.

*CAConrad is an American poet, who grew up in a factory town in rural Pennsylvania in the 60s. I am very attached to their writing because of the importance put onto the process of writing. They are interested in healing, Astrology and practice Tarot reading. I also love the way they scatter information on the internet, as it is actually not that easy to find information about their life and upbringing, if not for what lays inside the poetry.*

~ ~ ~

*CAConrad also created poetry exercises around the notion of connection between mind and body, using techniques such as noting, noting objects, noting the surroundings, noting the ebb & flow around and using body movements and gestures to trigger writing. They explain it this way “my idea for a (Soma)tic Poetics is a poetry which investigates that seemingly infinite space between body and spirit by using nearly any possible THING around or of the body to channel the body out and/or in toward spirit with deliberate and sustained concentration. The writing of (Soma)tics is an engagement with the thing of things and the spirit of things.”*

*While being in Sofia, Bulgaria, I attempted to write a poem, following a few of the directives of CAConrad’s Somatic Exercises. I then assembled the bits born from it. The poem is called ‘and a poop that looked like a question mark’ and was written and edited on the 8th of september 2020.*

‘and a poop that looked like a question mark’

i was standing at the corner of петър парчевич (i used to live there) drawing an imaginary line between the objects i had picked (caconard’s fourth somatic exercise) : a striped black and white poll, a rocambolesque broken table (missing a foot) on which laid two anachronique computers (who is anachronique?) and a poop that looked like a question mark. of course someone ran into me. i’m in the center of the center of sofia, standing at a corner (a few cars got mad because my body language meant ‘i’m waiting to cross’ but i wasn’t crossing) someone ran into me and said emma hi. and i was squinting my eyes to draw the line, the imaginary one (though you should always draw a line) and that person said hi and i felt out of place, standing at the corner of the street where i no longer live and all i wanted was to connect the objects with the line, but someone said hi.

i would like to be more organised  
like  
you know  
put my feelings away  
and organise myself

i chewed the orange pulp of the orange fruit but it did not remove the fear from inside.  
am i anxious for the things of the past or the things of the future?  
sometimes i feel like the present is a set of stairs from which i can’t decide if i’m going up or down. i don’t know. i don’t know how i will do it this time. but as the w-person says (writer and witch) ‘it’s nobody’s business how long you take’

when i asked them to guess my sign  
козирог they said  
and i felt proud  
because darling i’m the opposite  
i’m the sideways little crab  
a walking shell so soft inside  
плач плач плач

it’s the second time this week that a dead animal falls from the sky

*Emma Rssx*

CANSU KORKMAZ

POISON BELL

you are a poison flower blossoming in space  
oh you sword  
you seem to be an angel wing blossoming in space  
while bringing me Tarkovsky

oh you bowing  
before the cat of a fair-haired woman  
bell bell bell blossoming in space  
you are like a bell flower  
o sword  
beneath so much of your tragedy  
Oh You Melusine  
this stalk of Tarkovsky in your mouth  
What are you doing  
What are you doing  
What is it you seem to be doing

Lale Müldür



NATAŠA PRLJEVIĆ

**XXXVI from The Arab Apocalypse**

BY ETEL ADNAN

In the dark irritation of the eyes there is a snake hiding

In the exhalations of Americans there is a crumbling empire

In the foul waters of the rivers there are Palestinians

OUT OUT of its borders pain has a leash on its neck

In the wheat stalks there are insects vaccinated against bread

In the Arabian boats there are sharks shaken with laughter

In the camel's belly there are blind highways

OUT OUT of TIME there is spring's shattered hope

In the deluge on our plains there are no rains but stones

*Redness*

“I remember the last time our grandma brought the cows to the pond. She shared a story with us about the cow she couldn't save from drowning. “Her curiosity swallowed her,” our grandma's voice still resonates in my head. The last time you and I were sitting there, we were deadly quiet and alone. I can still see your reflection in the pond. I remember, it was red, like never before. Was it anger or despair, I still cannot decide. You were silent with a face that screams. You wore a sweater I always wished to have. I tried to reach you. The wall, made by your fear stopped me and prevailed. When it was built, I could not tell. The ocean wide distance between us shocked me. I still can feel the pain.

I remember how during spring time our grandma used to say: “Red clouds bring the rain.”

Back then, we would wait for hours to feel the red drops fall from the sky.

When it came, it tasted like the cherry syrup our mother used to make.

So sweet and refreshing, but never enough. People said its color was a sign we weren't safe. Our neighbors would hide in their homes, afraid of this unknown creature that was knocking on the door. People from our countryside never liked the change. You and I would use this time to dance. The front yard of our house was our sacred field with the apple tree as our totem. Each circle we made was a greeting to a new day that would come. The water was our path, its redness our protection and a blessing from the Gods. Our cheeks, too, became red. The warmth was a sign that we were still not dead. We looked healthy like the apples resting on the ground. We hoped the rain would never stop. Way back then we were not afraid.

Now I see the red sky every day. But my restlessness has chased away the rain. The apple tree still recalls our dance. In my dreams its branches cry and curse the day we went away. I asked my mother if the pond was still there. She was confused. Of course, it drained.”



– Jelena Prljević, Willington, March 2017

*A safe ground to land on*  
Charcoal and graphite on paper

We never talked. Why is the river red, why is the forest dangerous. We climbed every night to the top of the hill allowing the landscape to unfold in front of us. The fireworks revealed cities hidden behind the mountains. We became aware of the space that we enclosed ourselves in. The wind carried moans, cries and screams across the land and we gratefully enjoyed that they are not ours. We never talked how fear transformed into nurture, nurture into silence. How we became munitions. Expendable. Replaceable, while we bathed in honesty and the pride of non-doing. Then we spilled wine on our graves, passionately wanting to believe that everything before us is more alive than we are. ---Nataša Prljević



**HEKLER ASSEMBLY >> ANTI FEAR**

Host > Sanja Vasić

Design > Jelena Prljević and Sanja Vasić

September 2020

ANTI FEAR series are initiated in collaboration with New York-based artist and neurologist Sonja Blum as a wing of HEKLER ASSEMBLY, a transnational space for artists and cultural workers to share, discuss and collectively imagine new ways of instituting based on the principles of self-organizing, community care, critical thinking, political education, distribution of resources, and healing. ANTI FEAR is envisioned as a space into which we bring privately held fears into community with others' fears with the aim of building community trust, reciprocal care, and exploring how our fears are connected to reimagining the commons. We aim to create healing feminist environments that celebrate community care through poetry, movement, and other body work, readings, via guest hosts bringing varying practices that untie repressive knots that make us feel fearful and powerless. Prior to each session participants are asked to think about / try to identify fears that are at the forefront of their mind and body. Sharing fears within the group is optional at the start of each session.



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