

# MUSE

Magazine for UNIL Students of English

Spring 2023 - N° 17



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Dear MUSE's *super fans*,

We hope you are all doing *swell* regardless of your last deadlines for submissions and/or exam preparations approaching! Remember, **you are all tough cookies** who have more strength and perseverance than you think! And our MUSE team is sending you its *best vibes* for you to power through! You've got this!!!

On that note, if you need a fun little break from reading essays or research papers and wish to read something else for a change, then you're in luck! **MUSE has just published its spring mixed issue of 2023!!!** That means that not only do you get to read your fellow students' *masterpieces* online but you could also take home with you a **printed** copy too! You can grab one from the English Departments' tables in Anthropole's 5<sup>th</sup> floor hallway or from the new study room (A5139)! If you are a fan of reading cozily at home in bed, or on your balcony in the sun, or even at the lake *with the ducks*, this printed edition is *your new best friend* and is eagerly waiting to be read!

It is filled with a plethora of **wonderfully written prose, heartfelt poetry, pictures, drawings, paintings and collages!** Along with the creatively written texts, we have had the unusual – but always welcoming – opportunity to publish a **short memoir** on cultural identity and an **opinion piece** too! So many new “firsts” for our little magazine! In addition, we are excited to introduce you to our new special feature: **One Star Book Ratings & Reviews!** Can you guess which *classic of all time* these Goodreads users are ranting about based on these hilarious reviews? More interestingly, can you actually *relate* to any of these users' frustration?? Which classic piece of literature *deeply* disappointed *you*?! And which outrageous review had you giggling the most???

As you were expecting, your *favorite* magazine has also kept up with its traditional staff interviews and Ask-the-Students peculiar questions and crazy answers! As a matter of fact, MUSE had the opportunity to **interview** one of the English Department's newest staff members, **Matthew Scully!** He was lovely enough to give us the time to pick his brain and to answer all of our questions about his broad range of intellectual, cultural and artistic interests, his ideas and views on different topics and his upcoming book! And as far as our **Ask-the-Students poll** is concerned, this semester's juicy question revolved around students' *dead-honest* opinions on **which UNIL faculty and/or department is most likely to survive in the case of zombie apocalypse and why!** To our delightful surprise, we received numerous essay-long answers that tackled this trivial subject in *all* seriousness! We were amazed at these creative, imaginative and extensively thought-through replies! And we thank you all for making us crack up while reading them!

Our whole MUSE team is extremely **grateful** to every single person who submitted to us their marvelous creations for us to share and entertain our readers with! We are deeply touched by your trust in us, and, *boy, aren't we proud of you* for putting yourselves out there and daring to share with the world these lovely pieces of yours!

Take good care of yourselves and enjoy this new edition!

With lots of love,  
The MUSE Team



### A Seven-Step Guide to Be Beautiful

MEL A. RIVERWOOD

*1. Wake up joyful and refreshed*

we rise and we walk.  
no need to wake up when we haven't slept.  
we wander in the dark that we know,  
without seeing,  
to light the one candle we need.  
a flame inhabited by our own ghost.  
now the ghost in the lighthouse says  
'it's stupid o'clock again.'  
he sees a wreckage going out at sea.  
a corpse rotten to the bone,  
which unearthed itself alone;  
somehow, it remembers how to stand.  
flesh hanging from frame,  
all organs exposed.  
six times they buried us,  
seven times we rose.

*2. Have yourself a healthy breakfast, baby <3*

they don't expect us to eat.  
to eat is to live, to live is to think.  
they think we don't think, and therefore we don't eat.  
but the longer the sleep, the bigger the hunger;  
we'll show them we can devour as much as they did.  
come now, lovelies, prepare the feast.  
feed the fire and warm the pot,  
gnash your teeth and unleash your beast,  
tie the roast with a delicate knot.  
bring the loveliest ones to the front.  
vultures don't expect a decaying corpse to rise again and hunt.

3. *Shower time :)*

'here's the wreckage again,' says the ghost in the lighthouse.  
'it's coming to port, afloat, adrift,  
it will sink. it's torn by a rift.

what storms has it seen, what maelstroms, what tides?  
what warmth has it lacked to stand silent and slack  
in the falls?  
does it wish it weren't cold?

well, it still hasn't sunk, gotta keep a cool head.  
after all, it's not drunk yet, nor is it dead.

it's high tide, the waves flow over the corpse.  
come low tide, it rises and walks.'

4. *The BEST skincare routine ever, you will be glowing after this*

stretch your new skin dress over your broken bones  
to hide the strange angles;  
stitch up all the wounds that were caused by their stones  
at the single light of your candle.

then look at it, stare at it, count the imperfections  
think, think again, about all the corrections.  
s'étrangle the words, your lips are sealed over.  
you hear your reflection scream bloody murder.

the smoother the better, each flaw makes it worse;  
but the blessed today will choose to be cursed.  
they want us brighter, six windows of shame,  
but we want it darker; we kill the flame.

5. *Time for makeup! you're bold and beautiful and I love you*

they don't want to see it, only we're supposed to know,  
our perfect must be invisible, the everyday normal.  
be the pearl, but god forbid you be the one to shine;  
they will be the first to see you're stepping out of line.

we refuse to be the grace  
to their self-sufficient decadence;  
if they deserve our beauty, then we deserve our truth:  
they will see, soon; we are ugly too.

## Poetry

---

they sew the wind, it will be our pleasure to see them reap the storm.  
play the role, control the shape so that we fit their form,  
sing, ensiren, ensnare, enchant, unhinge the jaw, go for the throat,  
strike, drown them in their own sea and sail on their own boats.

### 6. *Walk out there and SLAY my darling*

angels now are worshipped; but at first they were feared.  
we got the shame, we took the blame, our name was rhymed with villain,  
so be it. if we are evil, if we are vile,  
why do they still want us down the aisle?

they drew blood first. smile; let's bare our teeth  
and bite the hand that held us beneath.

we polished our anger, we made it a knife  
and now we will use it to walk safely at night.  
we cannot sing until we tear their hands from our necks.  
we will unlearn the art of staying dead.

### 7. *Don't forget self-care!*

tie yourself to your pyre, to that kitchen chair  
break your throne, your pride, your hands, cut your hair  
and from your bleeding lips, draw the broken, the scarred, the whole, the monstrous  
hallelujah.

be the tear falling in heaven,  
the laughter in the storm;  
and when we will have triumphed,  
we will all walk home.

find your voice again. use it to the extreme  
you were born a whole being; one ready to scream.

Bonus: a playlist for my witches to fill the silence while you do all this

1. *Waking Up (Acoustic)* — PVRIS
2. *Blood in the Wine* — AURORA
3. *Silk* — Wolf Alice
4. *You Want It Darker* — Anita Lester (Leonard Cohen cover)
5. *25* — The Pretty Reckless
6. *Dream Girl Evil* — Florence + the Machine
7. *Amen* — Halestorm

## Potassium Chlorate

JJ

What about a match burns?  
What about a match catches?

Keepsakes in backpack pockets left there to  
Crack spines and crumble skulls,  
levigated reds cling to surrounding cottons.  
Open hands damaged by powdered glass;  
Omitted is their visible scarring. Chemicals never to  
Oxidize; never to fulfil. Render me purposeless.



## Golden Willow Trees

LYRA WILLOWS

The fireworks gracefully fall in the shape  
Of golden weeping willow trees.  
Funny, I thought  
For I have a willow weeping in my heart  
Like the young girl in the myth my grandmother once told me long ago.



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## The Bee's Thorn

LYRA WILLOWS

The bee's thorn stings me  
Like the Rose's on the Nightingale's bosom  
And my song, once melodious,  
Has spiraled into a dreadful scream  
As my shrinking throat  
Feels as though it were scraped  
By a razor blade.



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## A Piece of Me

LYRA WILLOWS



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In twelve weeks, please take a piece of me in your pocket  
And carry me around wherever you go.  
I want to be a part of every new experience and sensation.  
I want to see all the new places you will see  
I want to meet all the new people you will meet  
I want to smell all the new smells you will encounter.  
Take a piece of me with you before you go,  
And let the rest remaining behind perish for a year  
A whole year, before you come back and revive it.  
Let that piece breathe the air you will breathe  
And let it hear every sound and silence you will stumble upon.  
Oh please, I beg of you, take a piece of me with you.  
Take it and keep it close to your heart.  
To keep you company if you ever get lonely.

Take a piece of me to make you feel safe whenever you are anxious.  
Take a piece of me, to melt in your chest and always keep you warm.  
Take a piece of me to remind you of how much I love you, and therefore,  
How much of a wonderful human being you are.  
Take a piece of me, to feel every laughter of yours explode inside my chest back  
home.  
Take a piece of me to feel every tear run down your cheek,  
For me to know when to contact you to check if you're okay.  
Take a piece of me, and hold it tight in your hand  
As if you were afraid to let it go.  
Take a piece of me, and when you come back in a year,  
Give it back to me  
And enrich me with all your new and mesmerizing memories.  
Take a piece of me  
And fill it up with all the love and care you can every time you think of me  
And give it back to me  
Give it back  
To restore  
Happiness and peace  
Within me.



# Poetry

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## At Night

RK

[Content Warning: Suicide]

At night  
When you listen to the moon breathe  
When your life is worth throwing into the fire  
And your veins are worth being sliced open to see the light of stars  
Honour them

Honour those who walk dead, still fighting to live  
Those with gold in their eyes  
Those who died and were absorbed by the soil  
Those who live inside your mind  
Those you killed to become who you are

Honour those whose tears never reached the ground  
Honour those who fell  
Into crying arms of a never opened heart

For everything that is and all that will be  
Honour them

Take it all in  
the tears, the absurdity  
the loyals, the sad ones  
the lost enemies  
the friends  
the brothers  
the Love  
the eternal

Feel it all  
in every bone and breath.  
It takes more than life to kill you

## Extinction Gardening, Vol. 1

MANUEL FERRAZZO

### **i overdosed on 21st century**

[Content Warning: Substance use, brutality, vulgarity, and sexual violence]

i snorted a skyscraper today.  
i let its inhabitants flow in my civilised-white-ash nostrils and  
i felt the rush of productivity,  
the euphoria of paid slavery,  
the lights of steel cogs and fire.

i remembered the first minutes of this millennium,  
when the savages attacked other savages,  
(which is which?)  
and all their lands of god responded by violence.

astral bodies became our new gods,  
pushing their product to gather new herds  
all around the world.  
i remember when they wanted to  
crucify christ on live tv,  
thinking people would pay to see it.  
they would. of course they fucking would.

we raped our planet  
and blamed her  
because she just couldn't shut her legs.  
i mean, mother nature is a whore.  
hunger? what for, hunger doesn't exist.

i remembered when we handed our power  
to hatred, or cowardice,  
self-righteousness on all ends,  
venomous rats fighting over details,  
blindly fighting the other  
because they're other,  
because they're stupid,  
because they're savages,  
because they're black, white, believers, apostates, etc. ►

## Poetry

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the announcers feeding on fear on one end,  
and on the other,  
the tin-foiled hats started to talk.  
governments are nothing. they mean nothing, in our western world,  
they have no power without corporations.  
government and corporation:  
the king and queen  
of our game of chess.

i remembered how we liked to push the weak around,  
just for the fuck of it.  
is idiocy malignancy? can they live without one another?  
who knows? maybe the little birds  
singing and screaming  
through the cage of light  
can explain it to us.  
when does stupidity become consciousness  
“i’ve never been more awake”  
said the dreamer to imaginary nightmares.  
truth is relative, baby.  
“i’m an ally, he said. just let me fuck you.”

i remembered the neons, on the district,  
where red meat finds the mouths of carnivorous rats.  
they wear suits and talk about family  
and cry for forgiveness when they’re not careful enough.  
their victims are called Aileen,  
they’re the fairer sex so you think they can’t kill you.  
but they don’t eat and they don’t sleep  
and they let trauma consume them.

americans love roschach.  
the black and the white are all that they see,  
and all blackness is evil, and all whiteness is pure.  
they hate when their propaganda use rainbows  
to feast on the oppressed,  
because they’d rather be brainwashed all alone  
rather than sharing their lobotomy.  
kill the gays, they cried to god.  
kill the muslims,  
kill the pigs,  
kill them all.

we build the west on the back of the poor,  
and otherness is feared as much as familiarity.  
look at our shiny towers!  
look at our watches, our art, our language!  
so perfect.  
let us debate all these things in the most secluded place in the world,  
with complicated words and caviar  
and useless books nobody gives a fuck about,  
or let the artists who don't know  
shit about what they're talking about (like me)  
tell you you're evil and you deserve to die.

like library rats,  
they yell about ethics and literature,  
fascinated by a useless field  
that grows something mostly tasteless,  
except when the rain falls on the right leaf,  
wherever this leaf came from.  
they think themselves as the new thinkers of our world  
when their destiny is either to rise amongst the elite  
and get infected by their greed,  
or die forgotten amongst the useless poor.

you all deserve to die in these gutters.  
because misanthropy is cool,  
look at me,  
i'm not like other boys.  
i breathe genocide  
and smell of supremacy,  
but i don't even realise it.  
nietzsche has never been more popular  
amongst self-made men,  
even though we all know that,  
like the rest of us,  
they can't understand jack shit  
of what that nietzsche has written.

who knows who we are.  
i mean,  
identity...  
right?  
we become another person

## Poetry

---

every  
minute.  
so,  
[insert reference to the ship of  
Theseus]

And yet,  
while the noise blinds us,  
we're still here.  
In the ruins of skyscrapers,  
We remain.



© Manuel Ferrazzo

### haiku for nuclear winter

the white ash cracking  
all the dead skeleton trees  
sing doom with the wind



© Manuel Ferrazzo



## The Eye That Escapes (Consume Me)

[Content Warning: Profanity]

This eye won't see you,  
when you look at it.  
It will look the other way,  
to the sky, to its God,  
and towards indifference.

The white blinds you,  
and the fine dark lines around them  
drive you off the edge of the world.  
The irises, kaleidoscopic,  
Sing in mine.

The red appeals to taste,  
reminds me of innocence lost  
and whoring-Mary, mother of Christ.  
You would devour the apple,  
if there was no God.

The soft silk hides,  
leather binds,  
you and my eyes.  
Flowers pierced with swords,  
and toys with holy crosses.



© Manuel Ferrazzo

## this world is gone, yet there's still beauty

This world is gone.

But in its ruins, we find our souls.  
When all breaks, we become one again.

Yet with all souls comes the impending doom,  
the element of fear that keeps us awake  
every single night. ►

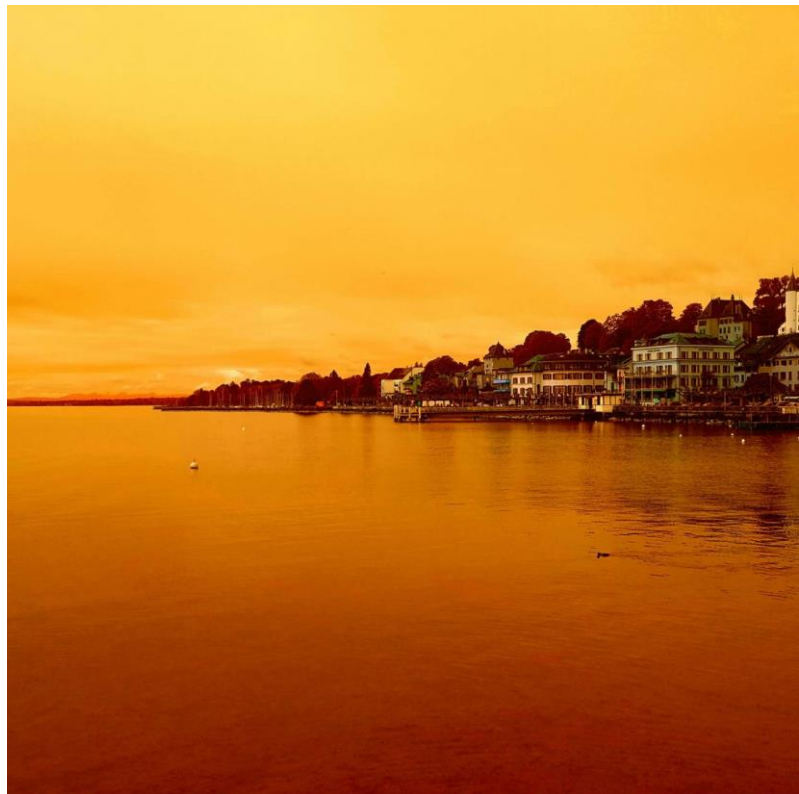
## Poetry

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Fear of losing everything,  
when we know we have already lost it.  
Fear of smiling,  
when there's nothing to smile about anymore.

This fear guides us back to the light,  
back to the hope and the happiness we once had,  
it nurses us back to health,  
keeps us safe from despair,  
from the perspective of our nothingness.

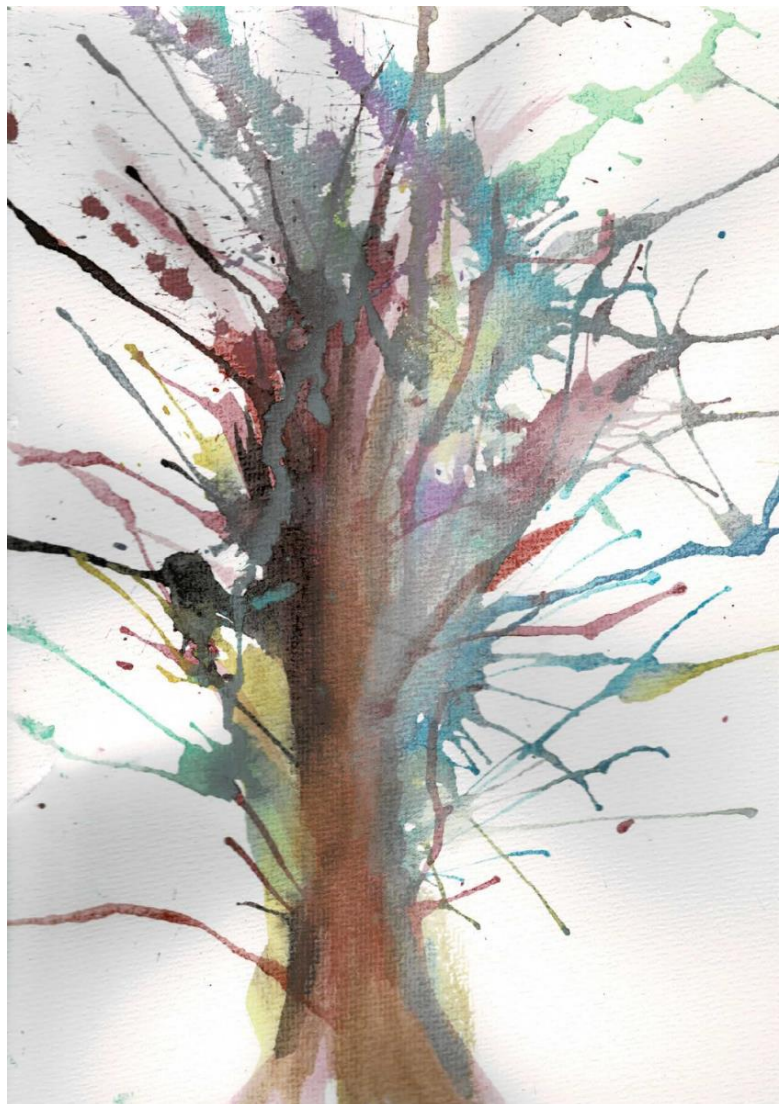
Because, even in a broken world,  
there is beauty.  
Death is just the Hierophant of Life.  
And even if Life won't have us,  
it will endure,  
it will prevail, without us.



© Manuel Ferrazzo

## Yggdrasil

yearning for the roots,  
growing out of the heads of children,  
grains of milk-sand  
drag the leaves across the night sky.  
reaching for the beyond,  
abandoning the oneness of all gods,  
searching through star-filled nightmares,  
i  
lead the lost to find the crescent moon they dream of.



© Manuel Ferrazzo

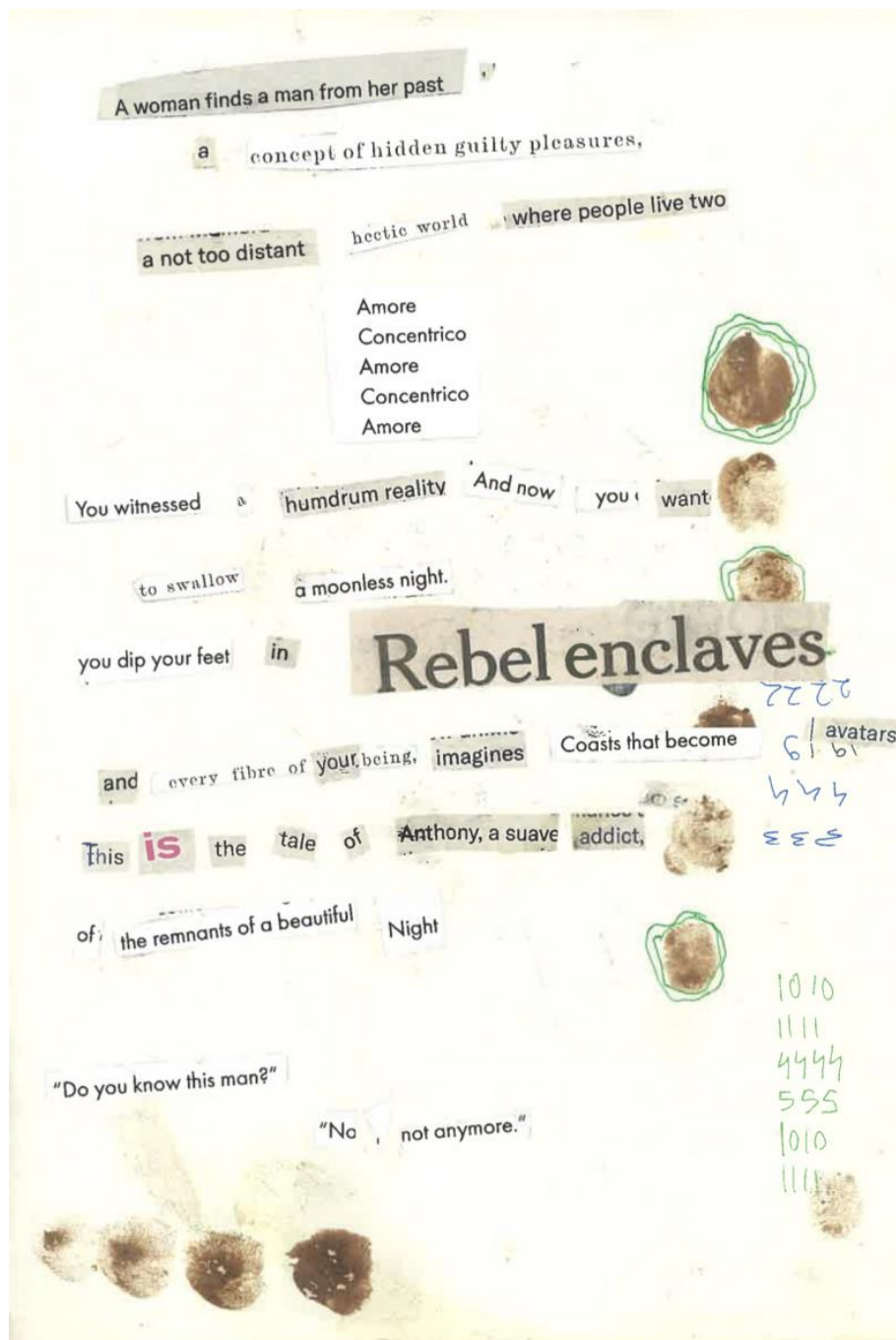
## Ilia Pellapaisiotou's Poems

ILIA PELLAPAI SIOTOU

### A Hallucinatory Underworld



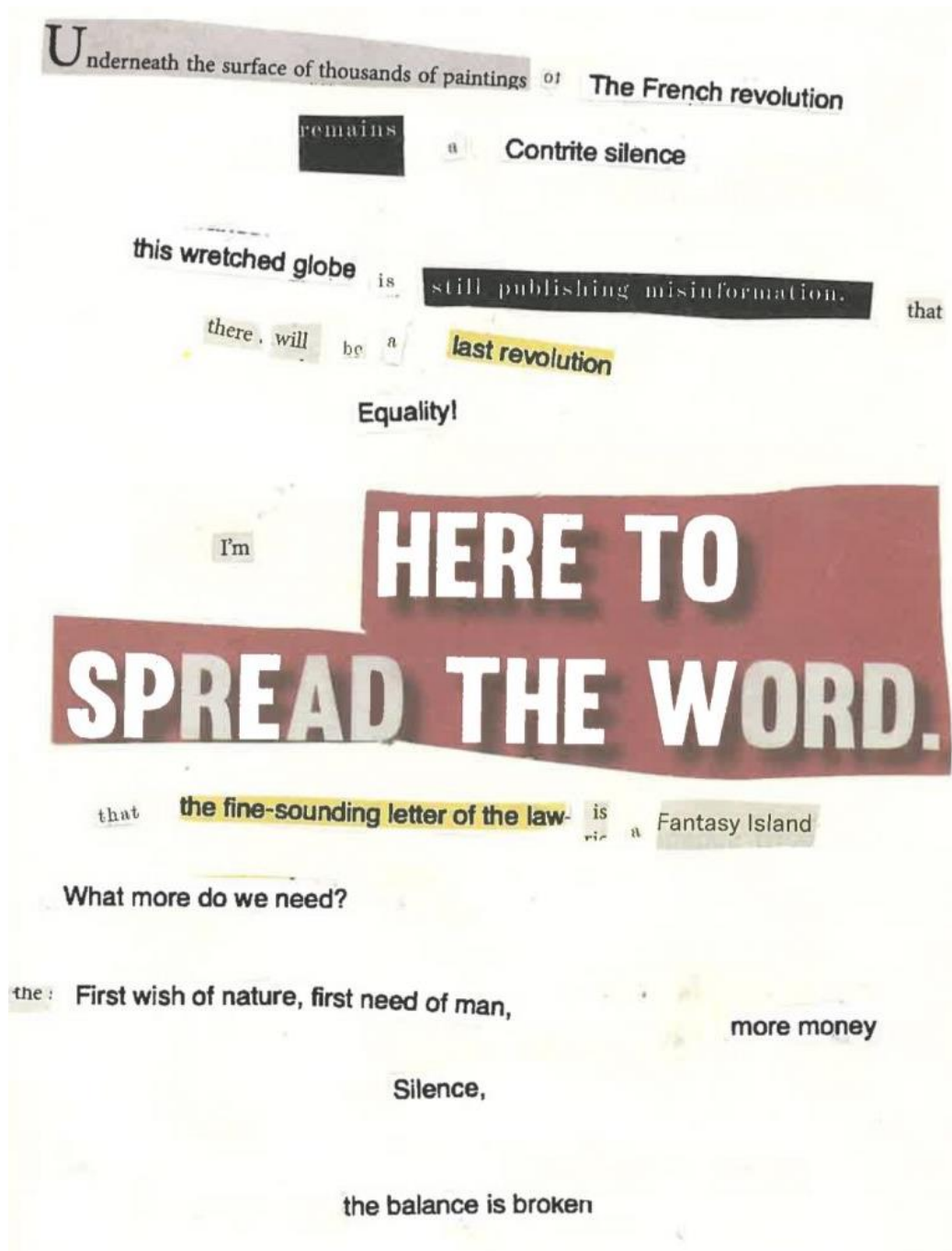
A Tale of Anthony



# Poetry

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## La Dernière Révolution



# Apathy and Malice

everywhere.

During a protest in Ukraine, a woman confronted heavily armed Russian soldiers

Malheur à qui ferait résistance they roar

with hypocrisy. I say : men are equal!

"Where should I station myself?" Kyiv? Moscow?

These are

## The Heralds of a Burning World

Despite the glossy optics of representation, we are light years away from systemic change

How do we get to the point in which society stops conforming and starts improving?

turn the mirror inwards

Choose Your Own revolution

question and challenge

The fight will never stop.

Take these seeds, so that sunflowers grow and become

your weapon and shield.

they've not won

we won

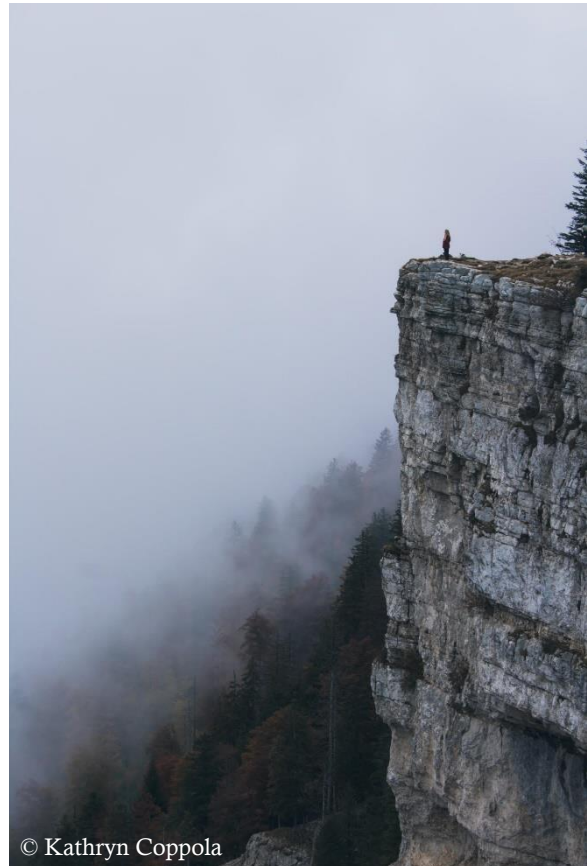
La dernière révolution

### Faces

#### FURAHA MUJYNYA

They pass you by in the streets, inhaling and exhaling the same air, for a few seconds... They are stuck in the warm moving car of a crowded subway, following an identical itinerary for a couple of minutes, until one of you steps out of the underground. They visit the same pubs, restaurants, and clubs, sometimes subtly brushing against your back, arm, or hand, as they make their way through the crowd. They shop in the same grocery store, bakery, and drug store, crossing your path as you fail to recognize them as the perpetual faces hovering around your daily life. More than strangers, they partake in the narratives of your unconscious, stealthily appearing in your dreams and quietly disappearing the moment you awake. They undertake minor roles, blending in with all the other nameless figures in the crowd. Sometimes, however, they possess a larger role in the meanderings of your brain –

engendering even more frustration as you regain consciousness only to realize you are missing a key component of the story: the *Face*. Defeated, you start yearning for the revelation of this unknown identity. As if your dream was a vision of another reality or the key towards a magnificent future – rather than an entertaining illusion – you obsess over every little detail you can remember regarding this oddly familiar figure. Reminiscing over the startling affinity and comfort you felt with this stranger, you let your mind wander about the significance hiding behind this sentiment. As the morning gives way to the day, you slowly forget about this anonymous figure hiding in the depths of your subconscious. You go about your life, unaware that, with every step you take, you get closer to encountering the very person that has preoccupied your mind this entire morning. As the fateful meeting finally takes place, you remain unreactive, not even stopping for a second to look back at them. Unable to recognize this missed opportunity, you continue your day in ignorance.





They walk past you on campus, in the city, breathing for a moment the same air as you. They sit across from you during a couple of minutes in the unheated roaming bus, until one of you gets up to leave. They visit the same cafés, festivals, and malls, sometimes slightly brushing against your back, shoulder, or hair, as they get across the crowd. They shop in the same supermarket, hardware store, and pharmacy, passing you by as you fail to recognize them as the recurring faces of your daily routine. Much more than familiar strangers, they are the ghosts hiding behind a fog of electronic screens and apps. Concealed by a sea of notifications and suggestions, these faces are nonetheless present on your every social platform – as your aunt’s Facebook friend, your colleague’s Instagram follower, your Snapchat friend recommendation, your mom’s LinkedIn connection and more. When you open your dating app, there appear the very faces you have spent all day ignoring. This face you choose to discard a second time around, swiping left on this fateful but anonymous figure you have tried so hard to remember. Not even feeling a sentiment of *déjà vu*, they remain nothing but a stranger. The protagonists of your subconscious’s fiction have managed to invade every aspect of your awoken life, whilst their identity still remains a mystery to you. Everybody in the streets becomes an unknown face with the potential of slowly creeping their way into the wandering thoughts of your subconscious – transforming into an actor in the intimate creations of your imagination.



### The Face of Heaven & A Footnote

H.S.

#### The Face of Heaven

I HAVE BEHELD THE HAND OF HEAVEN and it was a sad sight. Deus Pater's pathetic digits dumb, deaf, and stupid in the void – The hand that made the Alma Mater malleable, thus, malevolent – It made matter mortal, made earth deadening and dead again. That sad blind demiurge – the hand that made all. It clumsily assembled the governments of angels and let them fall through the cracks in the pavement. It made the pavement, it made the cracks in the pavement, it let the pavement crack! It made the border and the walls, it made the cracks in the wall, it made the desire to climb the wall, it made the wall ten feet tall but it sells twelve feet tall ladders. It made the phones numberless bright windows peering into the instant noodle faces of damnation. It made trains as long as the countless sorrows but as nimble as cat hairs. It made the wrinkles and the anti-aging cream. It made the vulvas pink, and the cocks blue. It made the war, it made the warriors, it made the weapons, it made the wounds, it made the salves. It made the war into infinite conflicts, unreal to all but the billion dead.



I HAVE BEHELD THE CRUEL EYE OF HEAVEN, forever unblinking, madly orbiting in its socket – a crazed headlight stuck in a dusty room, turning temptations into realities. Atomizing the hearts and souls of companions, redefining the circles of passions and touches and kisses and connections into infinitesimal dots in the great emptiness – Condemning us to an existence of insane gravitational trajectories parallel and thus never touching; perpendicular lines bumping once and never again to touch despite the infinite space to swerve. We are always watched by the cruel eye of providence lighting the room with gloomy particles of dust in its existential gaze. Its beam goes as far as headlights in

the rain, blinding as it illuminates. Each pair of eyes that never blinked transmuting the milk-and-honey of existence into capri-sun and red bull. The eye of heaven nothing less than the thousand cameras inside the brains of Instagram models. Its eyelashes the curtains of your bathroom's mirror. Its judgment the glasses of your mother. It looks at you through your eyes, it looks at you when you look at yourself in the mirror.

I HAVE BEHELD THE MOUTH THAT SPOKE THE FIRST WORD, and it was a belch. It was a snarl that spun the world, it was a burp that lit the stars, it was the grinding of teeth that terrorized the children into existence – it writhes in agony, its guts are empty although it keeps eating galaxies and solar systems and earths and continents and europes and switzerlands and neuchâtel – it begs mutely for more. Its mouth nothing but the numerous ministers and pastors and priests chanting and occulting each word with other words, sentences upon sentences of scatological pileups. It made them say, “the Kingdom is above, and it is after. God can make the camel fit through the needle's eye.” The amateur journalists and conspiracy theorists are its spokespersons, an unsealed scroll of false prophetic voices monologuing with empty faces surrounded by halos of light visible in their pupils. It made all discourses equal. It knows nothing but talks plenty. Its voice is heard in political debates and comment sections. It talks to itself alternatively as the expert and the fool, making both feel equally uninformed. It made both parts of the debate manifest, conveniently keeping the third occult communist part forgotten. It is the Socially anxious showing of teeth which amount to socializing. Socialization is just smiling, and smiling is just showing your teeth.

I have seen the face of god and it was a miserable sight.

### **A Footnote to the Face of Heaven**

Be not afraid of the cruel face of Heaven, but rather pity and pardon. Do not hate, nor rage against the face of Heaven.

PITY THE HAND OF HEAVEN, it is an awkward potter. Ignorant but willing. It made matter malleable, perishable, but innocent. It made a kitty named Mittens, and it made it purr so softly. It made wasps curious, and with their insectile snout tickle the eggplants in your sandwich. It made itself into all its creations, but it forgets itself.

PITY THE EYE OF HEAVEN, it is dry and dazed by the horror it sees spinning in front. It has no eyelids, and its gaze is a headlight. Condemned by itself to never sleep but always seek solace in shades it can never find. It wants to see itself to ascertain that it is real, but it forgets itself. ►

## Prose

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PITY THE MOUTH OF HEAVEN, it has appetite, but no stomach. It eats to feel companionship, but it can never be satiated. It asks many questions but it cannot hear any answers. It tries to sing but it has no ears. It tries to converse, but it is by itself in the void. It eats people, yet it remains unfulfilled. Because the streets are full, but they are empty. It talks to soothe itself, but it forgets itself.

PITY AND PARDON God, it forgets itself in its creations – He does not know that there are no virtues, and no sins. No goods, and no evils. No ups, and no downs. No men, and no women. He does not know that there is only ignorance and wisdom.

PARDON God, for he didn't trap us willingly, but accidentally imprisoned himself with us, in us.

REMEMBER the Kingdom is not found in the sky; otherwise the birds would find it before you.

REMEMBER the Kingdom is not found in the sea; otherwise the fish would find it before you.

REMEMBER the Kingdom is not found in the earth; otherwise the worms would find it before you.

REMEMBER the Kingdom is not found in you; otherwise you would have found it already.

REMEMBER the Kingdom is exactly where it cannot be found.



## Here's to Broken Promises

SALOMÉ EMILIE STREIFF

I hate falling asleep, feeling the grasp of a time I can't feel and won't see taking me away. I thread the absence of the hours transformed into seconds. Nights are the ellipses that keep us from tomorrow and, although some are obsessed with the day after, I feel stuck in a narrative where every sentence is conjugated in the past tense. Though I fear sleeping, I loved this one night spent next to you. Feeling your breath on my neck and the soft pressure of your hand on my chest, I found myself decoding your body to find poetry between its lines. There was in the way your eyes haunted my rest a house where I could have found some rest. For a night, we had painted a home with ceilings high enough to dream of later, rooms to raise treasures and a larger bed where we could learn to count till forever. Between these walls of intimacy, we could have learnt the languages of our bodies and the song our scars murmur to each other with our eyes closed. Maybe we would have gotten married, I would have had the white dress I dreamed about as a child, and it would have been intimate enough for you to be yourself. My cousins would have walked with flowers in their hair and our dads would have made a few uncomfortable jokes. Despite everything, your gaze would have been glued to me and I would have spent the day capturing your smile. Your eyes tend to talk more than your smiles. The former are as wide as worlds can be. The latter are as discrete and rare as wonders always have been. I wanted both. On this imaginary day, I would have had in my hand the conviction that we belong to each other. But marriage wasn't our thing. I left in the morning, leaving you alone with your hopes as I was driving home seated next to my deepest fears. For weeks, I counted the stars, wondering if you ever thought about what we could have been. Do you hate me for being too fragile to start something beautiful and new with you? Do you resent me for the way I said I was not as attached? Did you get enough time between your sleepless nights to picture us happy? Since that night, some parts of the world have changed. The oceans belong to you. The pavements are empty on the roadside. You own the colour black and the label soulmate. Marriage wasn't our thing, but there is in my heart the trace of vows never said.



### The Velvet Seats

IRIS LOW

Was it all a lie? How could it be since I saw and felt what you were too scared to utter? I'm not insane, I was there. I saw the way you looked at me, the way you longed for me. I felt the way you kissed me as though you couldn't get enough of me, and I saw the huge smile your lips formed every time they parted from mine. I felt the delicate and precise way you touched me in circular and repetitive motions on every part of my body, as though you were trying to mentally scan in your memory every inch of my body, in its exact shape, size, and texture. I heard the vulnerable tremble in your voice, and I listened to your authentic confessions. I can still see, hear, and feel it all, as if it were still happening right now, before my own eyes.

It is our motion picture, only I don't feel like the protagonist anymore. I feel like the ghost dwelling amongst the spectators, trapped within the velvet seats, unable to dive back into the silver screen.

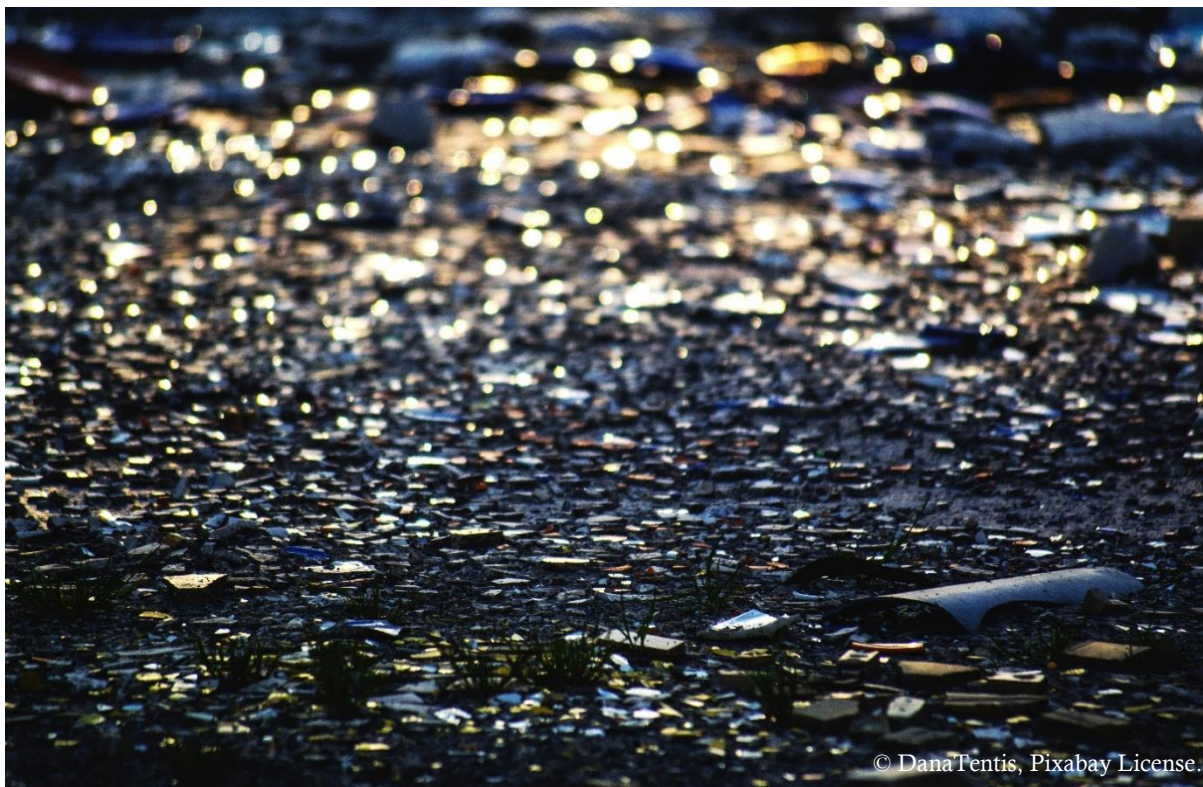


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## Of Shattered Stars

IRIS LOW

And while my skin slowly soaks in the filth of my fragile human existence, my mind wanders off back to the night you ran your fingers across my body and through my hair, while telling me about the human race being nothing more but a mere creation of broken stars. That human life and bodies are so utterly meaningless, that they are nothing more but conjured up atoms from the remains of ancient stardust. Perhaps we aren't even the stardust's essence but most likely the dust blown off of it instead. Ironic how within this discourse of the pathetic status of my existence did I finally find some comfort within the unease I feel every morning when my body awakes, and I realize I am still alive. Perhaps it is natural for us to feel constant pain since we appear to be, at the end of the day, nothing more than shattered stars. We are the remains of some light gone out long, way too long ago, and somehow, it is this poetic meaninglessness of my existence that gives me the will to keep on living.



## Platforms

IRIS LOW



How lifeless do the small train stations here seem. With all the streetlights' trembling glow, one would think to cross a face nearby. But there isn't any. Not a soul.

I can hear some cars driving by at a distance as they slowly fade away in dissonance with the crickets' orchestra from the trees and bushes nearby. Funny how cold this place feels in the middle of summer. I feel swallowed in the deadening noises from afar, which sound so peaceful, regardless of their loneliness. And every now and then a train rushes by, but never stops. It is full of lights and full of life. Everything seems to rush by me these days and I never seem able to catch up. Just like those trains. Everything seems to go by, without ever stopping for me. That is how disconnected I feel about everything going on around me. Everyone is walking by and going about their day, and their life, while I feel stuck in the mud they stomp their feet on.



I know you were the one who always asked questions, but I wonder, how many people, do you think, have bid each other farewell on this gloomy platform? Was it a tearful one? Or was it dry? And how many people have reunited here? What did it feel like? Did they feel a rush down their spine when they embraced again? How long did they have to wait? How long will *I* have to wait? You are leaving within a week. In four days we'll be sharing our last goodbye on some other dark, cold, and lonely platform. Will you feel as shattered as I will? Do you even *feel* anything for me anymore? Anything at all? Or has my meaningless existence descended within the shrieking silence of your disinterest? I feel as though your affections for me have rushed by me like those trains, long, long ago. How could you have left me here? Was there no room left on the train for me? Or are you lingering on another forgotten platform too?

Where can I find you?

Which train must I take to reach you?

I'll take any train, any one that will lead me back to your arms. I miss their warmth. I miss feeling your fingertips on my back. Do you miss feeling your lips touching mine too? I miss your fragrance and I miss the soft timbre of your voice. I miss how young you made me feel.

I miss dancing with you at the lake next to the ducks, like two children in love. In messy, really messy love. Two messy children in messy love. 'Love' or, 'little white lie', whatever you may call it.

I miss listening to your heart drumming through your chest all the way to my ear; to my heart; to the very depths of my fragmented soul. Or whatever is left of it, I suppose.

I hope one day we'll meet again. On the platform where souls intertwine, and sunflowers flourish in winter; under the moon's crystal gaze.

### Erase

LEAH DIDISHEIM

[Content Warning: Missing person, death]

“Has she come home yet? ... No? ... Where is she? ... What do you mean you don’t know? How can you not know? ... I swear sometimes you’re as useless as Myriam. ... Well of course you should know! Do you even care that she’s gone? ... Are you even searching for her, poor soul? For all we know, she could be in severe danger. Breaks my heart to think of her smile. She did have a beautiful smile, didn’t she? ... What do you mean you haven’t thought of her smile? ... Why aren’t you more stressed out? ... I know it’s not the first time ... But I’m telling you I can feel something is different this time around ... Yeah, well, I’ll be sorry when you’ll prove me wrong! ... Oh, but how I miss her ... What do you mean I’m speaking as if she’s dead already? What else am I supposed to do? ... Well believe what you will. I’ll keep on searching. I won’t stop worrying until she’s home. ... Poor Lula... alone in the cold. ... No she’s not just another teenager crossing her parents. That’s just not her. ... Well, I’ve never known her like that... and God, Frank, even if she was, she’s just fourteen... Are we not supposed to love our children unconditionally? ... Yeah, yeah, you say that, but where’s your love when it requires you to take action huh? ... Look, I have to go. I can’t have the same argument again. Just please do something. ... Yeah, I know you’re worried. You know how I get sometimes. I’ll call you tomorrow, ok? Or sooner if I hear anything.”

She touched her cheeks, surprised to find them wet with tears. She hadn’t realised she had been crying. It must have been the tenth time she was listening to this conversation she had had with her brother on the phone. Yes, she had been the one laying her worries on the table. And yet she had never really trusted her own words. She had always thought Lula would call her, reassure her. Oh, how she could almost hear the tiny voice say “don’t worry, mummy, I’m safe. I’ll be home soon. Love you.” Maybe, in retrospect, Frank was the one being more realistic. It wasn’t that he was not worried, but maybe more that he had accepted the wicked truth. *She* hadn’t of course. Maybe she still didn’t. The proof was right there ; she was still



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listening to this old phone conversation, always resenting herself for the way she had talked to her brother that day. But that conversation wasn't going to change anything. She knew that. Of course, she knew that. And yet, today was no exception. She had listened to the recording of that phone call again with the strong intention of it being the last time. She was going to delete it. She really was. But of course, this time again, she had locked her phone, the recording still there safe and sound. "Next time", she thought. But of course, we all knew she wouldn't. It had been three years already. And she was not any closer to deleting that phone call from her phone than she was to letting go of Lula's memory.



### A Well-Deserved Break

LEAH DIDISHEIM

[Content Warning: Medical intervention]

I had never noticed how my feet looked on the ground. I guess, with our busy lives we never have time to notice the little things. But since I was waiting here and I wanted to grab any chance at any distraction possible to forget the person not that far away on the table navigating between two worlds, I had started to look at my feet. When this is over, I'll definitely buy a new pair of shoes. I owe myself that. If you had told me this morning this was going to happen, I would have made the most of it. I would have kissed them and said I loved them. But no, I had to hurry to take the kids to school, and go to work. And to be fair, he had to hurry too. We barely saw each other in the mornings anymore. It's the evening we spent more time together. And still, our lives had become so busy that it was difficult to find each other on the same timeline. In any other circumstances, I would have been happy to ditch work to have a break. I guess I had never imagined my first break in six months would have been here. Scared to death of what was going to happen. And having to deal with sending messages about what was happening to people who cared. And the kids. What was I going to say to the kids. They're so young. He was so young. No. No, no, no. He *is* so young. I looked up to see if any white lab coat were coming towards me. And if someone was, what was their eyes saying? Were they going to break me? To tell me I was a wid...? I couldn't even bring myself to say the word. I could feel my heart hitting my chest, my breath speeding up. No, I wasn't going to cry. Not now, not here. I looked up again, a white blouse was coming towards me. I held my breath.

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It was the end of the day. Today hadn't been so bad. Some days I had to think real hard to remember why I had chosen this life. Every new death was a new heart to break. That was my job. But then, other days, you could bring joy to the eyes of people waiting. I had that power. And these days I remembered. I looked at the clock. Three hours left and I



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could go home to my partner and my kid. And I heard yet another siren coming closer. I sighed. It had been a good day. The day when almost nothing bad happened. One could almost describe it as a quiet day. It appeared to be yet another heart attack. Poor guy, he seemed quite young. He was put on one of the beds and moved to the operation room right away. I started to go in, and just looked back for a second. I saw a woman holding her tears, probably the wife. I sighed again and looked up. Please, let me give her good news. I wasn't religious but sometimes, when I didn't know what else to do, I looked up and prayed. I didn't want to go back home with another broken heart on the heart for not succeeding to heal a heart... I took the elevator and went to the operation room. I had done thousands of surgeries of this kind and it was usually going well. And he was still young, so it had to, hopefully, go well and quick this time too. I went in there and started the surgery. Most of the time I could have done it eyes closed. After about three hours – it was not as easy as I had hoped – it was over. I looked up again and sighed. He was going to recover but his life was definitely going to have to change... I washed my hands and left. I took the elevator up again and moved towards his wife to tell her the good news. I smiled. I was not going to break another heart today.



### *To my Sunshine*

ASTERIA

Life is such a complex concept. Sometimes, we feel powerless and terrified when life presents us with bad news. It feels like the ground is crumbling, and we might get lost in the void. Or sometimes life amazes us with the surprises it has for us. I never was able to pinpoint a meaning or a definition to what life is. Certainly, life is the biological definition of existence, yet it feels like it is simplified and stripped of all the depth it has.

Some would say life has its ups and downs or that everything has a reason. Some might even say there is beauty in the bad. Yet when inconveniences and pain become your normality, it is difficult to understand how some can keep a positive outlook. Especially when it feels like you are walking a solitary path. One which is surrounded by people, yet it feels as if they are just apparitions, part of the mist that envelops you as you amble through the darkness in search of the light.

It is a tiresome travel, one that leaves you wondering if you are walking towards the opposite end. As if you're straying away from the salvation you're yearning for.

I was so focused on searching for that ray of sunlight that would indicate to me that it would all be alright, that I am not doomed. I was so engrossed in searching the skies for that sign I was so desperately craving for, I was so trapped by my own mind that I could not realise that I might have been searching for the wrong light source, that I was viewing things from the wrong perspective.

You would appear one day, like a cat jumping out of a thorny bush. Your eyes shone brightly when you greeted me. I was so lost in my trail of thoughts, wondering if you are but another spectre shadowing me like the people that surround me, that I did not notice the innocence and love that radiated from you. Maybe you were life personified?

I was too absorbed on going down my path, focusing on what I thought was my life mission. Although I ignored you, you somehow kept walking by my side. Your patience and liveliness irritated me. Yet no matter how much I tried to push you away, you never budged, never seemed to get hurt by my words, and kept walking by my side. You would push through the wilderness, slink through the thorny branches, not questioning a thing. Not being able to understand you made me angry. You were but a hindrance to my only chance of salvation.

Nevertheless, I would finally find your breaking point. I would finally find the right words to make that smile disappear, for those eyes to grow cloudy. I would finally find a way to

make you disappear in the mist, fusing with the ghosts that walked without a purpose outside of this trail I was on.

I felt relief. I was finally able to walk forward, continuing my search for that light source. But the further I tread, the more I wondered if I was going down the right path. How long would it take for my frail body to reach the point of ascension? How long before my body would give up on me? How long until I realised that maybe there is nothing else besides this darkness, this mist, the loneliness. Maybe life is purgatory, after all.

Somewhere along the attempts to move forward and the steps taken back out of fear of heading in the opposite direction, my knees would give in, and the ground would embrace me. I was tired. Mentally and physically. A thunderous cry would be heard. And raindrops would start painting my skin. Rain turned into a storm. My emotions fused with the weather. Was this the end of it? Is everything pointless at the end?

In the cold wetness, a warmth would envelop my face, shielding me from the assault of the raindrops. Opening my eyes, I came face to face with you. Despite my cruelty, you found me. Or more so that you kept walking with me while granting me the distance that I needed. You never said a word. Your eyes stared through me, trying to communicate in a more intimate way. They never lost their brightness. They never got clouded by my hatred, by my cruelty. And somewhere along the warm embrace of your hands and the way your eyes forced me to listen to your heart, realisation dawned on me.

The rain started to cease. The last thunder rang around us upon the realisation of how blind I was. I wanted to push you away, realising how unmotivated my cruelty towards you was. Yet your grip got tighter, forcing me to come to peace with the cognizance that in the end, I was walking in circles. Salvation did not hide in the light behind the mist. It was *you* all along.



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### “Tradition Bound but Translation Bent”<sup>1</sup>: Living on the Hyphen of Being a Swiss-Brazilian

ALINE ROMY

#### *i*

It is one thing to be a Swiss child in Brazil and quite another to be Brazilian woman in Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> As a Swiss child, words like *jacaré* refused to leave my mouth in the appropriate way.

The professor tells me gently

/ʒa.ka'ɾɛ/

I frown as

/'ʃa ka'ɾɛ /

leaves my mouth.

The professor repeats /ʒa.ka'ɾɛ/

“What’s the difference?”

As a 12-year-old, somehow the palato-alveolar ejective fricative sounds exactly the same as the voiced postalveolar fricative.

#### *ii*

As a Brazilian woman in Switzerland, I am confronted to gross stereotypes that some European males have about Latinas. As soon as my *Brazilianness* is mentioned I can feel a tone shift. I am perplexed for some time, before I realize why I suddenly feel icky. “Take your sticky hands away from me.”

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<sup>1</sup> From Gustavo Pérez Firmat’s, *Life on the Hyphen*, 2012, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> “But it is one thing to be Cuban in America, and quite another to be Cuban-American” (Firmat, p. 3)



Their slimy head associates Latinas with promiscuity. We are all sluts on tinder looking for a Swiss passport.

“I don’t need your Swiss passport. I have my own.”

I am Brazilian and you will not make me feel ashamed. I am also Swiss, and you will not make me feel lesser for being both. But sometimes it is hard to negotiate between my two cultures, to be constantly translation bent, perpetually betraying one language or the other.

### *iii*

“Do you feel more Swiss or Brazilian?”

I try to put it on a scale, to allocate certain traits to each of my cultures. I have had Swiss punctuality drilled into me, but my sense of humor is Brazilian. While being Swiss means precision, Brazil taught me how to improvise, to loosen up at the edges and be less rigid. Some of this is easy, but most of it is a tangled mess, blurred lines, no clear distinction.

### *iv*

If Gustavo Pérez Firmat is a “one-and-halfer” I am an “in-betweener”. Inhabiting the “in between” space between both countries means I am somewhere, but also nowhere.<sup>3</sup> Maybe I’m floating in the middle of the Atlantic. However, I cannot samba to save my life. Too social, too open, too sunny to be fully Swiss. But too antisocial and quiet to be fully Brazilian. I like to mix bright yellow lemons with my green limes when I make my Swiss friends discover the sweetness of caipirinhas made with golden cachaça. The amber liquid aged in balsam barrel’s is a mixture of flavors. Nuts, cedar, honey, tobacco, vanilla. ►

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<sup>3</sup> Inspired by the quote: “Spiritually and psychologically you are neither aquí nor allá, neither Cuban nor Anglo. You’re “cubanglo,” a word that has the advantage of imprecision, since one can’t tell where the “Cuban” ends and the “Anglo” begins. Having two cultures, you belong wholly to neither one. You are both, you are neither: cuba-no/america-no.” (Firmat, 6)

## Memoir

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As a Swiss-Brazilian, Suisse-Brésilienne, Suíça-Brasileira I am always treading on the tightrope of the hyphen that connects my heritages, my cities, my languages. I don't know where one ends and where the other starts. My two cultures are blindly held on a balancing scale within my heart. Sometimes it tips one way or the other, but it is impossible to know which culture is the dominant and which is the subordinate.<sup>4</sup>

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Firmat, Gustavo Pérez. "Introduction: The Desi Chain." *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way*, University of Texas Press, 2012, pp. 1–19. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7560/735989.4>.



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<sup>4</sup> Inspired by the quote: “biculturation designates not only contact of cultures; in addition, it describes a situation where the two cultures achieve a balance that makes it difficult to distinguish between the dominant and the subordinate culture.” (Firmat, p. 5)

## For All Mankind: or, How Switzerland Can Do Its Part in the Climate Crisis

**WILLIAM FLORES**

When Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin touched down on the lunar surface in the summer of 1969, they planted a US flag. We all know that. A lesser known fact is that their lunar module carried a metal plaque with the phrase “FOR ALL MANKIND.” So, despite Cold War tensions, the US administration recognised the historical significance of the event. It was not just US citizens landing on the moon for the first time, it was all of humanity.

Today, as we face a human-made climate crisis, we desperately need a similar spirit. We are global citizens with a global responsibility. On June 18th Swiss citizens will have the opportunity to do their part. How so?

We are called to vote in a national referendum on the Climate Law, a counter-proposal to the Glacier Initiative, adopted by parliament last year. The law could have already been enforced if it wasn't for the far-right UDC triggering a referendum.

What does the law say?

Learning from the criticisms made to the failed 2021 CO2 law, the new law focuses exclusively on encouraging the energy transition away from fossil fuels, rather than betting on punitive measures. Essentially, it enshrines the 2050 goal for net-zero emissions nationwide into law, as well as intermediate goals. To ensure that these goals are met, the law directs the government to create a federal fund that will provide 200 million CHF per year to finance homes and buildings switching their gas and oil burners for climate-friendly heat pumps. This is important, because buildings are the second biggest source of carbon emissions in Switzerland after transportation. The law also provides funding for industries to switch to cleaner production methods.

That's not very radical...

Indeed, it isn't. This law is not a “giant leap,” but it is an essential step to slow down our descent towards climate catastrophe.

Why did UDC attack it with a referendum?

Officially to “protect the middle class” against an “extreme and expensive” law.

Is there any merit to UDC's claim? ►

## Opinion Piece

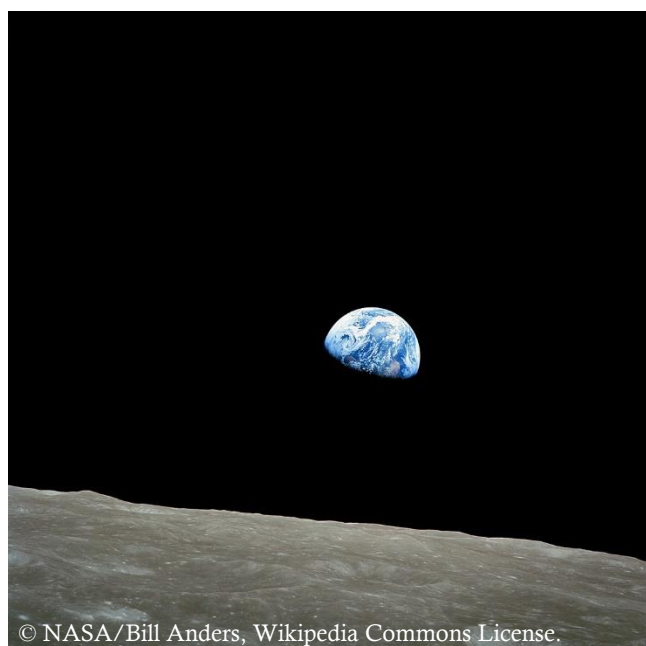
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No, the law does not create any new taxes. The installation of heat pumps would be covered by the government using existing money and would lead to lower and more stable energy prices. The current energy crisis was, after all, caused by fossil gas shortages. But don't take my word for it, you can read the full bill here: <https://gletscher-initiative.ch/fr/le-contre-projet>.

Thus, the UDC just seeks attention in an electoral year (parliamentary elections will take place in the fall of 2023). By positioning itself as a “defender of the middle class” and as an “antidote to wokism,” it is clearly riding a populist wave. Furthermore, it seeks to delay on climate action. Let's not forget that Albert Rösti was, after all, a lobbyist for Swissoil. As the new environment minister, he is now in the awkward position of having to defend the Climate Law, mere months after initiating the referendum against it. Let's appreciate the irony of that!

Why write this article?

Because as ridiculous as UDC's arguments and tactics are, the party is known for its successful, populist campaigns. With this article I implore you (yes, you) to vote YES on the climate law on June 18th. If you can't vote, at least try to encourage others to do so. Talk about the Climate Law and how UDC is blatantly lying. In order to counter the populist narrative, we need all of civil society to stand up and vote and inform others. Think of it not only as the duty of any and all Swiss citizens, but as the duty of any and all human beings in the fight against the climate crisis. As the plaque on the lunar module says: FOR ALL MANKIND.



### **Swiss Landscapes, Modernism, Nostalgia, Politics and All That Jazz: MUSE's Interview with Matthew Scully**

**WILLIAM FLORES AND ROXANE A. KOKKA**

**Roxane:** Hello, Matt! Thank you for accepting this interview with our magazine! It's an honor for us to interview a new staff member and especially someone who seems to be interested in so many different disciplines. It's quite fascinating!

**Matthew:** Thank you, the pleasure is all mine!

**R:** Could you tell us a few words about yourself? Where are you from? Where did you study and how come you ended up here?

**M:** It was sort of a strange process getting here. I'm from Connecticut in the US, a very small state between Boston and New York, the major landmarks in the area. But I did my bachelor's in Montreal at McGill, where we had a bilingual university environment. And then I did all my graduate work in Boston; my master's at Boston College and my PhD at Tufts. With its 200'000 students Boston was a great space for academics and for university life. As for UNIL, I saw a job advert on Twitter of all places! I think it was after a colleague from the Netherlands posted about it. I had a great experience with the interview process and with getting to know the faculty and, since I was offered the position I decided to take it. That was about a year ago. I think I arrived in mid-February last year.

**William:** Was it tough for you to leave the US?

**M:** In some sense, yes. I do miss Boston and a lot of my friends and colleagues who are there, although with things like Zoom and social media it's easier to stay in touch. But other than that the transition wasn't too hard. Everyone in the department has been really wonderful and welcoming. So, the shift from teaching in Boston to teaching in Lausanne has been fairly smooth. And my wife, who is also an academic, had already been in France for a year and a half, so I was already familiar with the European academic system. In terms of bureaucratic procedures, however, like health insurance, it took me a few months to truly get into the system, but once I got that settled, it was much easier. ►

## Interview

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**R: So, did you also move with your wife who lived in France?**

**M:** Actually, I was commuting from Boston to Paris about once a month, more or less, and I would also spend a few months over the summer to max out my tourist visa. This is the first time I'm living in Europe for a longer period.

**R: And how do you like Lausanne, so far?**

**M:** Well, I didn't know what to expect at first but I've really enjoyed it. Now that I've settled and figured out all the bureaucratic procedures, it's been great! I've been exploring Lausanne and taking advantage of all the things to do around, like hiking and the wine country, which has been a highlight! I've really liked it so far and, again, the department is truly fantastic and I've enjoyed getting to know all of my colleagues! Having people here to talk to and meeting people in Geneva as well, developing all those connections has been nice and helpful. All these friends and colleagues gave me recommendations for things to do and see in Switzerland, so that has kept me quite occupied.

**R: Was there anything in particular that stood out to you?**

**M:** When I first arrived, after landing in Zürich and taking the train to Lausanne, that moment when we came out of the tunnel by the Lavaux and I saw the Alps, and the lake, it was all so comically beautiful... Especially because it was such a perfect day and I felt kind of jetlagged and confused! That has really stood out to me. Now I live close to the center and I like to run along the lake and it's still stunningly picturesque. I love the landscape throughout Switzerland, especially after having been in a place that isn't quite as stunning.

**R: I also love the views here! I like to run in the vineyards while looking at the landscape and then I get all distracted and go "oh, wait, I have to take a picture!"**

**M:** Totally! Do you stay at the lower levels or do you go up?

**R: I live further up, so it always goes up and down, but it's fun!**

**M:** Yeah, I've personally stuck to the flat parts...

**R: You appear to have a very large range of interests from visual arts, to music and politics, psychoanalysis and, of course, American literature; so, I was wondering, why American literature, specifically? Is there a particular reason?**

**M:** That's a really good question. I actually came to American literature late during my PhD. In fact, throughout my master's I was working on British literature and focused on British modernism in particular. But then, for a series of reasons, something about American literature made more sense to me and I also started shifting to the contemporary sphere. I think partly my own reading led me to contemporary American literature, but also some of the questions that come up with American studies and literature that seem open to a very diverse set of texts. It just seemed to fit better with my own theoretical interests.

**R:** According to UNIL's website you are currently working on a new book on several different topics. Could you tell our readers a little more about it?

**M:** Sure! I have just signed my official book contract with Fordham, so the manuscript will be done in June and scheduled to appear next spring. The book is about democracy and democratic anarchy. The motivation for the book was to see how the word "democracy" in the US is now used both on the Left and on the Right, but for completely different purposes. The word has become an empty signifier and can mean whatever the speaker wants it to mean. So, part of the book interrogates this language confusion while also recovering the core principles of democracy, such as equality and freedom. That's why I make the link between democracy and anarchy, as the latter keeps open questions of equality and freedom where democracy, as it is deployed in the US political discourse, forecloses those ideals. It's a politically motivated book, but most of the main texts are literary with a few exceptions, such as a visual art piece and a couple of references to film and some political speeches. The goal was to find through these texts a discourse on democracy that resists the *status quo* of mainstream politics and social organisation. At the same time the book is kind of messy in the sense that democracy is also messy. I bring in several topics and types of literature and theories, and link references from the 19th century to the present, for instance. It's a big bag of materials and questions.

**R:** That sounds very interesting! Do you have any other passions or projects aside from your academic ones? We were wondering precisely because you have so many different academic interests.

**M:** Yes, I think a lot of academics have their scholarly interests blend and bleed into their personal interests. So, for instance, I love going to museums, but at times seeing art – or reading even – feels like work. But I also play music.

**W:** What instrument?

**M:** The guitar, but I don't have a band or anything over here.

## Interview

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**W: Over here?**

**M:** I used to in the States.

**W: What kind of music did you play?**

**M:** Mostly jazz and blues. I was trained as a jazz musician, rather than a classical one. But, my PhD program kind of destroyed the practice routine that I had, so I can't play as well as I used to. But I still try to keep up with jazz and blues music. That's my main interest, but I also enjoy running, hiking and swimming. Although, I couldn't swim in the lake with this temperature...

**R: I do understand what you mean by your passions and scholarly interests intersecting. I could be reading a book or be in a museum and suddenly get an idea for a university paper. It's fun, but sometimes it would be nice to be able to enjoy these passions without that mental load.**

**M:** Absolutely! It's really hard to read and then not have the urge to grab a pencil...

**R: I happen to be very curious about what people wanted to be when they were growing up, so I was wondering, what did you want to be and who were your role models?**

**M:** That's an interesting question! I can't tell you much about my early childhood, because I can't remember early role models or desires, but I definitely went through a phase of wanting to pursue music as a profession, all the way through high school. I had this idea of making a living as a professional musician. But when I started my bachelor's I decided to major in literature rather than music. It was a last minute change. As for role models, I'm kind of old-fashioned in terms of music, so I modelled my playing on Jimi Hendrix and other artists from the 1960s and 1970s who would combine jazz principles with blues and mainstream rock!

**W: Speaking of the 1960s and considering your interest in the relationship between art and politics, what are your thoughts on the rise of nostalgia in music and film?**

**M:** Nostalgia is a very tricky concept... My knee-jerk reaction to this 90s revival I'm currently seeing, which was an era I grew up in, is a bizarre experience. It's alienating for me to see the 90s in a nostalgic way. It certainly was three decades ago, but to me it feels much closer, so I don't perceive it as an object of nostalgia. Whereas the 1960s truly represent for me a distant past that I have no personal connection to, so it becomes more of a detached object of interest. But it seems like everything is destined to come back at least once in some form. And I know that nostalgia can have some negative connotations with conservative politics, such as nostalgia for an idealised past that never existed. On



the other hand, there's nostalgia for remaking things of the past, like from the 1960s, to keep alive some of the possibilities that seem to exist in that space... Nostalgia always appears to be operative and it can be pushed towards a conservative pole or a more progressive pole, or even just a neutral one. Perhaps it also draws attention to the idea that nothing really is new. We're always recycling and reusing things from the past. Going to college in the mid-2000s, I can tell you that the music of the time was clearly inspired by the 1980s; like the big synthesizer was back and bands like Arcade Fire were becoming popular. So, that 1980s sound really came back with a vengeance. It strikes me that there seems to be this recursive structure, especially with objects like media and music. I guess this wasn't really a sophisticated answer but more a rambling of sorts...

**R: We're here to pick your brain, so any thoughts you say are interesting to us!**

**M:** Thank you!

**W: You said that as a society we tend to recycle old ideas and that it's normal. Does that mean the current nostalgia we see for the 1980s and 1990s is not a symptom that we have run out of ideas as a society?**

**M:** That's a good question. I think there are two versions of it. On the one hand there's a more pathological and vulgar form and on the other just a normal kind of recycling. In film it always struck me how repetition is built into the medium. But when I look at Disney Plus, every day there seems to be another Star Wars series, so it seems that repetition has intensified. Now, I haven't watched these series, so they could be great, but maybe there is a difference between recycling older forms to make something innovative and interesting with them and then a more vulgar and market-driven approach, where we just reuse old stuff because it's gonna sell.

**R: I also feel that the part about recycling just to sell is certainly a thing. I think that familiarity plays a role in it. It seems to me that people often like staying in their comfort zone and therefore seek to watch something they're already familiar with. But the other kind you described is a phenomenon we see in art history too: there have always been movements that drew inspiration from the past while adding new features.**

**M:** Yes, it's like the modernist mantra by Ezra Pound; "make it new". But, of course, he does not suggest throwing away the past. Rather, we should salvage what is useful and reconfigure things. I think it's an interesting synthetic and dialectical process.

**R: Yes, kind of like Marcel Duchamp's ready-made art. Take what is already there and give it a new meaning.**

**M:** Yes! That is indeed a great example.

## Interview

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**W:** But speaking of this desire to take something which already exists and make something new, do you think that people in the past, especially in the second half of the 20th century, had more hopeful ideas for the future? Because when we see renderings of how people imagined the future in the past, the future seemed pretty bright. We don't really see those grand, retrofuturistic visions anymore.

**M:** That is an interesting point. It makes me think of that often misattributed quote, I think by Fredric Jameson, "It is easier to imagine the end of the world, than it is to imagine the end of capitalism". There's something about the post-70s world and especially post-70s America where neoliberal structures became so entrenched and successful that it becomes quite difficult to imagine an alternate form. But perhaps Afrofuturism is an exception, as it tries to imagine alternate future societies and social organisations. In that sense I find that sci-fi and fantasy remain quite alive. I think they work hard on imagining a future that is not as bleak as the one we're constantly inundated with and that is authentically different from the *status quo*. I guess it's more difficult to imagine that today than in the late 20th century, just because of the normalisation of the neoliberal logic.

**W:** Do you think that the current crises, such as global warming and the COVID pandemic, are signs that capitalist structures are reaching some kind of breaking point?

**M:** I always like to think so, but capitalism is insidious and it strikes me that every crisis appears to be a means for the economic system to reconfigure and reassert itself. Remembering the 2007-2008 financial crisis in the US, it really seemed like an opportunity to disrupt finance capitalism, but it just ended up reentrenching it. But there is hope, I think. In my teaching experience I've noticed that ecological concerns have become more and more important for students in the last years. But crises themselves are not enough to change the system.

**W:** You've previously mentioned anarchism. Do you think there are things that we can learn from anarchist modes of organisation?

**M:** Yes, I think that the decentralisation of anarchist organization is really appealing, especially in the US, where anarchism has a much longer history than Marxism. Although it kind of moved into the background in the 20th century, it came back with movements such as Occupy Wallstreet and Black Lives Matter. I think avoiding a big central organization is helpful, because they tend to be hierarchical and thus to reproduce inequalities. With mutual aid, anarchism can bring solidarity in interpersonal relations as well as in bigger political movements. It's not an all-or-nothing situation with anarchist groups. From what I have learned in Boston, they are also quite open to questions and avoid slipping into dogmatic ways of thinking. There's also a Marxism vs. anarchism dispute, but that's another topic... But in general, anarchist groups seem to have a more *ad*

*hoc* approach to organization and resistance, with a willingness to experiment. That kind of inventiveness and improvisation probably leads to more long-lasting change as well.

**R: I agree, I believe you need to have the courage to test new things and think outside of the box in order to move forward.**

**M:** Absolutely! I also think that anarchist protests can be quite funny as well which can be useful in some cases.

**W: Right, are you familiar with Murray Bookchin's work?**

**M:** Yes! Although not as much as I should be. I do know about his social ecology theory. But what I can say is that it seems like a lot of what is going on today is the conjunction of fields, which is why I love American Studies so much. Both Black and Queer studies engage with anarchism and ecology. I like these approaches that use notions of social ecology to think about the interaction between human *and* non-human groups, and therefore address the totality of the problem.

**R: I saw that you worked on William Faulkner, among other authors. What do you appreciate the most about his writing?**

**M:** I love his writing, he's phenomenal! But like every modernist (it seems) he was a terrible person... I would never want to interact with him. But despite that he writes magnificent fiction that supersedes personal and subjective limitations. So, his fiction produces counter-positions to those of the biographical Faulkner. I have always loved his work partly because of how he manipulates space and time. He gives you a view of a particular object or moment while also changing the point of view. Let's take the beginning of *As I Lay Dying*. The dying mother is in one room, one of her sons is building her coffin outside, while two of her sons are walking up the path from the barn and you can really map out the space just by following the shifts in view. He reconfigures the realist tradition and reinvents the fictional language in a stunning way. In that sense he is like Virginia Woolf in the British tradition.

**R: Yes, that fascinates me too! You would only gradually understand what he's describing.**

**M:** Yes, and then in some cases he breaks the realism and there's a character who's just speaking in a way that does not correspond to them at all and so he just shows you another mode of thinking. I am also reminded of that boy, Vardaman from *As I Lay Dying*, who has a one sentence chapter, "My mother is a fish". Out of context it's completely enigmatic, but in the context of the novel it makes perfect sense. When you follow all of the references to the mother and the fish in the novel you can piece it all together. So, it's

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a completely innovative way of building the fictional psychic interiority of a small boy dealing with his mother's death. It really is an impressive accomplishment in fiction.

**R: Alright, so our last couple of questions are very random... Let's imagine you're hosting a celebrity dinner party (the invites can be dead or alive)! Which writers, philosophers, artists or political and historical figures would you invite? With whom would you like to talk? And who would you like to see interact with one another?**

**M:** Well, that's incredibly difficult, but not Faulkner! I would love to have Toni Morrison. I've heard her speak a couple of times but I never spoke with her. I think she would be a wonderful person to speak with. It would also be fun to bring Karl Marx, who would probably hate the whole thing! And then someone like Frantz Fanon, whose work I really love. He's also quite critical of Marx, so that would be an interesting interaction. I'd be tempted to invite people with whom I'd really love to speak with, as well as those really critical figures who had disagreements. It might end up like a terrible dinner party, more like a boxing match... but those would come to my mind!

**R: Our editors' team would love to know who would you put on Mount Rushmore if you had a say in it.**

**M:** Can I give you an annoying response first?

**W and R: Of course!**

**M:** I would just get rid of Mount Rushmore entirely. There's just such a risk to any kind of monumentalisation of one particular figure. That's really obvious when it's on the Right. Take all the Confederate statues in the US. Then, when they're taken down the obvious answer is to replace them with a left-wing figure. My fear is that any kind of monumentalisation ends up encouraging some kind of dogmatic indebtedness to that figure. But if I really had to choose, I'd say Toni Morrison. Also because her works resist monumentalisation. There's always something in her fiction that completely disturbs the reader. So, she's kind of an impossible figure to fix in a stable position.

**R: Yes, I noticed that *Love* is one of her most disturbing books, which is pretty ironic. But that's what's interesting about her. She is bold enough to go the extra mile and make us uncomfortable and push us to think about what's wrong with the system.**

**M:** Yes, and this also makes me think of her novel *Paradise* which she initially wanted to call *War* but her editor overruled her. "Paradise" and "Love" probably sell better.

**R:** How confusing! This reminds me of *Recitatif*, where, just like Faulkner, she's not straightforward. As readers we're left guessing which character belonged to which race, all based on stereotypes.

**M:** Yes, and right now I'm teaching *Sula* in a third year class and there's three characters named Dewey, all with different ethnic identities, but the matriarchal figure just refers to them as "that Dewey". So, I think Morrison is playing with our own obsession to impose a certain identity on characters and people. She does that in a kind of comic way.

**R:** Well, that would be all from our part. Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

**M:** I would just like to emphasize how important it is that we, as readers, or students even, remain willing to be surprised and made to feel uncomfortable, precisely to ask us to question our own ethical and moral positions. We might call it productive self-alienation! Well...Thank you very much for these extremely interesting questions!

**W and R:** Thank *you* for answering them and taking the time!



© Nell Wasserstrom. Picture from the couple's visit of a village in the Lubéron (France).



© Nell Wasserstrom (Matthew's wife).  
Matt enjoying an éclair in Paris.

## Special Features

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### Ask-the-Students: Who's Ready for the Zombie Apocalypse?

*MUSE asked students to anonymously submit their opinions on which UNIL faculty or department is most likely to survive a zombie apocalypse. Here are the answers we got from them and we tell you that there are great ones! Enjoy! (And maybe you should think about it too... Just in case...)*

Cinema students, obviously. I mean, most of us are prepared for any type of scenario (+ as most of cinema students have terrible daddy issues with Pedro Pascal, you can be sure that we'll be ready in case of a 'Last of Us' type of apocalypse)

Anyone with a lockable office door... for a while...

The biathletes.  
Cardio to run.  
Skills to shoot.

Benjamin Pickford. He apparently does a lot of cycling and could ride away quickly into the mountains.

I think the Archaeology students could have a very strong potential! Indeed, their sharp little tools could be used as deadly weapons. In the same way, the habit of some history of art teachers to stick a knife in the heart of their students for not being good enough could turn to their advantage in such a situation. And let's not forget theatre students who would be able to make great zombie impressions and, thus, be accepted as part of them.

Boris Vejdovsky.  
He would start lecturing and hold the zombies enthralled.

I would say the Philosophy section, if these guys are not afraid of Kant then what a few zombies could do against them? Also, have you ever read Hegel? Anyone who has the dedication to try for hours to understand his writings must have the patience and resources to find food and shelter through the apocalypse as well as the meaning of life...

The students in Cinema, they've probably seen all kinds of zombie movies tbh, so they're definitely prepared. In second place I would put the students in the Faculty of Biology and Medicine, maybe they can come up with some sort of cure? Also, maybe people in Linguistics could find a way to communicate with the zombies! (I think I might be going a bit far) I would also like to add the honorable mentions of who would NOT survive the zombie apocalypse: students in Law and Criminal Justice (do I need to explain?), and students in the History department (I'm not sure how knowing about old coins, texts and buildings is going to help them). However, and this is my conclusion, I think that if students in Arts were stuck in the Anthropole during the apocalypse, you'd just find them chilling in the cafeteria with a coffee :)

- Med school students are already quite similar to zombies so they wouldn't really perceive any difference
- Biology students would probably attempt some shady experiment on a few captured zombies in an attempt to identify the cause. Plot twist : it doesn't end well for them.
- HEC students would be too drunk to fight back and gradually succumb to the plague. Maybe organize regular burials for their fallen comrades during which they would party even harder.
- Students from the Faculty of Forensic Science would react quickly to the plague and organize a bastion of resistance hand in hand with the students from the faculty of social and political sciences, the students from the department of theology and the ones from Law school. With time, different enemy factions emerge within the bastion based on the students' self-assigned Hogwarts houses and a civil war breaks out, causing them to retire into separate headquarters from which they lead a war against each other while defending themselves from the tides of zombies harassing them.
- While engaged in the civil war, known by many as "The Sorry Chasm of the Dorigny Faculties", the survivors from the Faculty of Theology develop their own cult which is centered around the worshiping of comparative linguistics between languages, the consumption of mate beverages, and insomnia. The other faculties quickly catch up on this new religion.
- Students from the Letters faculty initially get lost within the maze of Dorigny buildings (rendered even more confusing and twisted by the end of the world raging everywhere). After a while, some of them appear as wise hermits who mysteriously roam within the ruins of the academic campus in a search for existential purpose. Other students refer to them as "bookworms" and look at their frenzied peers with a mix of curiosity, awe, and distrust.
- It is rumored that Unil had a faculty of geosciences prior to the apocalypse, yet most would ditch this assertion as a mere urban myth.
- Although leading the resistance against zombies at the onset of the apocalypse, what happened to Unil teachers after the "Reprography incident" is anybody's guess, really...

The med students' ego alone would help them last a while. They would survive on sheer self-confidence lol

Lettres, 'cause they would barricade themselves in Anthropole using books... they might as well be useful for something!

As a new Faculty of Arts student, I don't know a lot about other faculties, but I do believe the ones with a better chance of survival would be the ones with the building that can be more easily turned into a survivalist bunker. That being said, the Anthropole would be the first to fall, too many entries, too long to create a flanking team, too many windows that can easily break. The winner would then be the Biophore (and therefore what I suppose is the biology faculty). The square building is easy to patrol around, the scaffolding like structure is perfect for high ground defence, not that many entrances AND they have all the equipment (and hopefully knowledge) to study the happenings. They would just need to put their adversities apart and try to organize a perfect equalitarian anarchistic community where each one could use their talents for the best. That's my bet.

## Special Features

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### One Star Reviews

Dear readers,

Have you ever read a book because it's a classic or because everyone was telling you about it and you read it and.... you actually.... didn't like it... at all?

That is exactly how these rather expressive Goodreads users felt after reading various well-known works of literature.

**Well, dear readers, can you guess which piece of literature these users read that got them so riled up on the internet? Give it a try!**

There are two difficulty levels to this game. You can either

1. read the reviews and guess based on your own knowledge of famous novels and plays or
2. have a look at a list of titles below the reviews, that might help you narrow things down. But be careful: not every title has a corresponding review!

### The reviews

#### Work A

**User 1:**

This is a disgrace to all pure bloods. My head looked quite dashing on that strange professor's head.. If only I could have extended my stay. [Protagonist's name].. This is not over yet.

**User 2:**

So, this is the book everyone loves?

#### Work B

**User 1:**

The most overrated book in the history of literature. The "plot" borders between meaningless and trivial.

I was forced to read the book in 9th grade English class. This was perhaps the most tedious school assignment I've received to date. For several pages a lady remarks to a man about what wonderful handwriting he has. Not exactly gripping material. The entire book



seemed to be about hormone-driven marriageable-age creatures trying to outwit each other in word and on the dance floor.

The book itself is bad enough, but to complicate matters, women pledge allegiance not only to the book but also to the gazillion-hour movie.

**User 2:**

Jesus Christ, just have sex.

**User 3:**

Welcome to almost any 8th grade dance. You will find most of the boys playing basketball in the gym while the girls are waiting in the cafeteria for someone with whom to dance. I was rooting for [male character] to get away. Maybe he just isn't that into [female character]? The scenes bounce from one scene to another so quickly that it makes my head spin, and I couldn't connect with any of the characters. [A female character] spends most of the novel sitting around complaining about [a male character] and [another male character] while doing absolutely nothing to better her situation. At least Jay Gatsby did something about his love.....

### Work C

**User 1:**

countenance, endeavour, benevolent, wretch, ardour, anguish, countenance, endeavour, benevolent, countenance, ardour, endeavour, benevolent, wretch, countenance, endeavour, benevolent, countenance, ardour, endeavour, benevolent, wretch, anguish, countenance, endeavour, benevolent, countenance, ardour, endeavour, benevolent, anguish, wretch, countenance, ardour, endeavour, ardour, benevolent, countenance, endeavour, benevolent, wretch, anguish, countenance, ardour, endeavour, benevolent, countenance, ardour, endeavour, anguish, benevolent, wretch, countenance, ardour, endeavour, benevolent

The End.

**User 2:**

If you open up any page in this horrendous book, you will have a 100% chance of [the protagonist] whining of what a *miserable wretch* he and/or the *Daemon* is, a 50% chance of [the protagonist] being in some kind of a nervous fever or fainting, and a 75% chance of an **excessively** detailed description of the trees, mountains, oceans, weather, and worst of all..... [the protagonist]'s thoughts. Ahem. By 'thoughts', I mean constant complaining and whining. He goes on and on and on about, "*oh, what a miserable wretch I am. Death would be pity to me, blah blah, blah...never upon this earth had any suffered as much as I had.*" His *suffering* literally made me laugh.

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### Work D

#### User 1:

My theory as to this book's unusually polarizing nature: either you identify with [the protagonist] or you don't.

Those who see themselves (either as they were or, God help them, as they are) in [the protagonist] see a misunderstood warrior-poet, fighting the good fight against a hypocritical and unfeeling world; they see [the author] as a genius because he *gets* it, and he gets *them*.

Those of us who don't relate to [the protagonist] see in him a self-absorbed whiner, and in [the author], a one-trick-pony who lucked into performing his trick at a time when some large fraction of America happened to be in the right collective frame of mind to perceive this boring twaddle as subversive and meaningful.

#### User 2:

I know there are people who thought this book changed their lives and helped them find their unique way in the world, but coming from a non-white, non-middle class background, as a kid, I really resented having to read about this spoiled, screwed up, white, rich kid who kept getting chance after chance and just kept blowing it because he was so self-absorbed and self-pitying. I felt at the time there was no redeeming value in it for me. I was born on the outside trying my best to get in. I felt no sympathy for him at all. I didn't even find him funny. It just made me angry. I guess it still does.

### Work E

#### User 1:

[Title] is not a love story. [The author] was mocking those who think they can fight society and win, as well as the folly of youth. At the same time, he was mocking culture for being so backwards that these young people have to commit suicide just to be together.

[The female protagonist] is 13, [the male protagonist] is closing in on 20. At the beginning of the play, two men of [the male protagonist's] house are talking about decapitating and raping women of [the female protagonist's] house. And [the male protagonist] bails on some random girl he's been having sex with, just to try and sleep with 13-year-old [female protagonist]. Still think it's a love story?

It was [the author's] worst play, as far as I am concerned, and the reputation it's cultivated since its release is ridiculous.

### User 2:

This is one of those classics that I do not understand why people like it. Don't get me wrong – the language is beautiful. This is not a condemnation of [the author's] writing ability, but rather his ability to plot out a story. The story is stupid. I don't usually put such hurtful words into a review, but it is stupid! [The male protagonist] spends the first act mooning over another girl and then he sees [the female protagonist] and forgets all about what's-her-face. They speak all of a handful of lines at each other (doesn't count as speaking to each other as they spend the entire time talking about how hot the other one is), then get married and kill themselves in a period of a couple days. It is ridiculous and unromantic, yet people hold it up as a paragon of romantic love.

## Work F

### User 1:

This book is pointless. Nothing happens in the entire book, the characters just talk, drink, and cheat on each other. I would rather have gotten a root canal than read this book. (It was for class.) Anyway I recommend this book to no one!!!

### User 2:

He should have called it “Desperate House-Husbands.” What? This is a classic? Fuck [the author], fuck the roaring 20's, and FUCK YOU.

### User 3:

Halfway through and I don't even care anymore. I'll read the synopsis for the rest. If I want to read about shiftless rich people and their drunken machinations, I'll read the Hollywood Reporter or TMZ.

## Work G

### User 1:

Torturous. Just buy the fucking flowers, [protagonist]!

### User 2:

This is not so much a review as a declaration of surrender. When I read in the intro that this book is comparable to James Joyce's Ulysses I already started looking for my white flag. Really I cannot be doing with experimental stream of consciousness prose with no dialogue. I cannot even cope with the absence of quotation marks. I read [the novel] for almost an hour and could not discern any kind of plot. The lady is wandering around London observing “the excitement of elms” (wtf?), trees waving about, grazing cows etc.

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By the time she starts waxing lyrical about bloody sparrows chirping in Greek words I was ready to do a runner. I did find a bit of dialogue though, it goes:

*“Oh look,’ she implored him. But what was there to look at? A few sheep. That was all.”*

Oookay, I’m off!

### Work H

#### User 1:

[The sequel] by [the author], was continuing [the first book]. This book was truly confusing. It was just completely random, and I could barely follow along with any of the storyline. Just, I feel like [the author] was on some sort of hallucinogen and thought, “Wow! Those flowers are talking to me! I should write a book with all of the other weird things I’m seeing.” Nothing made sense, and it was just so incoherent, but it tried to be proper, but it wasn’t.... It was just a confusing book. I would recommend just watching the [film] version of [the first book], and sing along to the [redacted] song. That is all the [author] that anyone needs.

#### User 2:

[Book one]: I found this story completely bizarre. I didn’t really enjoy it and the repeating of words, sentences etc. was rather annoying. Everyone in the story is rude and nothing really makes any sense. Whether it was a dream, who knows?

[Sequel]: Again another bizarre story. This time it’s clear by the end of the story that it is just [the protagonist’s] dream.

I really didn’t enjoy either of these stories and has left me wondering why the stories are so popular? I think I’ll stick to the film version of these.

**So, can you guess...?**



Here's a list of titles to help you narrow down the answers, if you want:

- ❖ *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll (1865)
- ❖ *Clarissa* by Samuel Richardson (1748)
- ❖ *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens (1850)
- ❖ *Emma* by Jane Austen (1816)
- ❖ *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley (1818)
- ❖ *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare (1598)
- ❖ *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by Joanne K. Rowling (1997)
- ❖ *His Dark Materials: Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman (1995)
- ❖ *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë (1847)
- ❖ *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott (1868-9)
- ❖ *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov (1955)
- ❖ *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (1954)
- ❖ *Love's Cure* by John Fletcher (1647)
- ❖ *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs (2011)
- ❖ *Mrs Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf (1925)
- ❖ *Nightmare Abbey* by Thomas Love Peacock (1818)
- ❖ *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac (1957)
- ❖ *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf (1928)
- ❖ *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (1813)
- ❖ *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (1597)
- ❖ *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (2007)
- ❖ *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain (1884/5)
- ❖ *The Catcher in the Rye* by JD Salinger (1951)
- ❖ *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck (1939)

## Special Features

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- ❖ *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald (1925)
- ❖ *The Winter's Tale* by William Shakespeare (1623)
- ❖ *The Wizard of Oz* by Lyman Frank Baum (1900)
- ❖ *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett (1948)
- ❖ *West Side Story* by Irving Shulman (1963)
- ❖ *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë (1847)

**For the answers, you can scan the QR code below, or simply check them out on our website!**



*Reviews have been edited for clarity and length. For the original reviews, go on:*

<https://www.goodreads.com>.



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Eloïse Wenger

Veritsa Vuchkova

### **Poster Designer & Instagram**

Nicole Castelletti

### **Published online and in print**

University of Lausanne, May 2023

For more information on our magazine, you can contact us at [muse.unil@gmail.com](mailto:muse.unil@gmail.com), visit our website at [until.ch/musemagazine](http://until.ch/musemagazine) for past and current web & printed issues, and for updates you can follow our Instagram account @muse.unil.

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Striking my harp, I raised my voice,  
And said, "Wild flow'rs shall be my choice;  
Their virtues, loveliness, and grace,  
Adorn the earth in ev'ry place;  
Whate'er the soil, whate'er the scene,  
*There* the poor innocents are seen!"

I had not now long time to wait,  
For all around began to prate;  
Each had some whisper for my ear,  
Of past neglect, contempt, or fear.  
To listen I could not refuse,  
So sang their stories to my muse.

From C. B. Langston's "Wild Flowers" in *Poems* (1882)

