

SNOW
SENSITIVE
SKIN

[ATTICUS/FINCH]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS //

We'd like to acknowledge the music of Mazen Kerbaj — particularly his improvisation, 'Starry Night,' performed on solo trumpet to the accompaniment of Israeli bombs falling on Beirut in July 2006 — as this music motivated and informed our project. Kerbaj's daily posts and drawings during the bombardment, which appeared on his weblog (mazenkerblog.blogspot.com), are sometimes present in the weave of voices, allusions and echoes that move through the writing.

'Snow Sensitive Skin' is the title of another improvisation, this one by Franz Hautzinger's ensemble Oriental Space (Franz Hautzinger, Mazen Kerbaj, Helge Hinteregger, Sharif Sehnaoui), from their eponymous 2005 recording on the aRtional label. We thank the artists for all they've given us to think and hear.

We also want to acknowledge the spirit of friendship that guided this collaboration in its entirety, and which taught us how, if we want to give ourselves to a present that is something other than the debased 'now,' and to a future that will not have been terminal, *every second language must be taken up as an act of love.*

Excerpts from this book appear in */nor*. Thanks go to Catherine Taylor.

Snow Sensitive Skin is dedicated to Lebanon's war dead, Summer 2006, and to the promise of *demilitarized time.*

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[[TAYLOR BRADY]]

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CANOPY

*The dawn made of lead is still advancing
from the direction of the sea,
riding on sounds I haven't heard before.
The sea has been entirely packed into stray shells.
It is changing its marine nature and turning into metal.
Does death have all these names?*

Mahmoud Darwish
Memory for Forgetfulness



having voiced this under cover
veiling turbines overhead
by hundreds humming wave-
fronts punch beats measure
time sounds as no sound sounds
looking for anything to fix
my body jamming lines dead
signals choirs rattle loose
the hockets jagged bits of
radio now whose voice can sing
'communications' and still mean
poetry means a rattle in the gut
our skin's acoustic mask stretched
over death by a thousand cuts
a coup refunctioned falling from
the sky names stumps stones
a metal time we're fed by others

— *coughing up the shells*

the substance of that hocket
broken time our labor thus
divided voices breaking up
we're down in rests won't
accrue time-off as silence
interrupts the form our inter-
ruption takes to form a picture
a war a barren blank whatever
time can't measure the ground
on which time's bought & sold
(say the stretch between your
pay-check and the cluster
bombs reduce to nothing now
this time *now-time* always stinks
of the boss) on location in a box
around which the fabric of our
silence can't be made coherent
as our shelling

— *fades inside the justly measured bar*

delinking not revolting off
scene now we cut to the dark
forest where our attachments
manifest a curtain rising
on these curtains alone remain
our story's detached cover blows
opening *now let go* our technical
aura's getting off on it all
the dispatched centers singers
organize listeners as suppliers
etch a border on terrain we'd thought
from the abstract peaks obscure
light had to have gone out of time
for time to be this bright now
let's go on descending
into recon by fire

— *there being no other line of inquiry*

— *what happened happened for a reason*

with reason or within reason
being the end of reason posed
shot against a treeless blank
production's increments break
in two the skin flakes our voices
pressed in acetate makes a paste
impression of a tire meaning I
have the impression of a tire
in mind an ornament a stand-in
for whose body breaks a hollow
space opened as a river a road
as smoke like cotton pours back
into that cavity transit fills us
just the hardest edge past full

— *soon you will feel the same as this, that*

— *the atomized flashes by which we see, call this our reason, and the reason we can't see ourselves seeing. Sight folds back on itself as shadow on the market floor, the light of force falling back on the scene of its own making, obscuring it. Glamour, this glow, rises from production's heat, a pure surplus lifted out of circulation and pasted on the sky above another foreign city where the sound of light falling shines, now distant source thru which we hear our own vibrations, the measure of degraded time looking after its own maintenance by becoming force. We go round and round like this as if there were pleasure in merely circulating, our hocket, the musical line you hear, whose interruptions emerge, pure form between the blank and the bombs*

— *fading*

not into me but into the unforeseen
negations of enclosure opposition
being no logic of opposites no
disclosure and nothing's more real
than what we still can't see the events
we're living can't say *no* to what
separates this place from itself my
body from its own negatives
whose labor's as precise as the wall
we don't need to build a place *out-*
side the place or mask *within* this
narrow strip these fake estates

— *our names inhere*

— *nowhere*

to be no place to
fix the price or toss
what's left we burn as
waste melts down
in here as wide
free
air

— my carbon credits *public smog*
our outposts on the commons
being *waste* expands there
no limit to what's left over-
time remains *say life itself*
where gulls wheel scout mark
mountains of what won't decay
no future reference a bird-
filled sky affirms

— *what guarantees the working day*

(some still reasoning thing
common sense immobile clot
a blunt ornament hardening
the damage with a wall)

but if these are masks then masks
are what we make *each of us*
at this war to see our not yet
seeing selves the dance of us
our animal sense in common
hands scour the ground for sound
looks for its image in anything
to fix our bodies figures animate
others standing-in for things
creatures striped high-contrast black

— *and white*

(— now what has to happen
for this *to have happened*
so that we might see
our thing, at last

as if some vast surface the skin
stretched out beyond this excess
of missing parts make our body
what it is a mini-mass of military-
age males what duration to measure
cell by cell nail by nail crank screw
pivot the syntax of imperial forms
ownership comes in waves nausea
a coherent economic framework
in other words *experience* a con-
glomerate of unitary cell lives
our specialized sensory functions
monitor what the radio means

— *one vibration in both plane and flower*

CITY MADE OF BOXES

...to hide in the city from that sky of stars.

Charles Reznikoff

Uriel Accosta

