

Brooklyn, New York
September 20, 2005

Dear Joan:

It is so exciting for me to have suddenly this forum in which we will communicate, conspire: I have wanted to approach you about various issues, ideas and thoughts about modalities of writing but so far the frenzy of daily life and something like my autonomous condition added lag.

THE POETHICAL WAGER is plentitudinous! Your work addresses explicitly how writing manages participatory actions that shake it loose from abject paradigms. You strike upon a holistic functionality for the diachronic and synchronic—that they might work in conjunction—fused up and phased. Time and its implications are not so straightforward and linear as supposed, where Destiny waits at the (pre)prescribed (ad)vantage point compartmentalized as a microscopic, unapproachable bit chained to the horizon. It seems like what you are espousing is a glittering state (of being, writing) where the charge of varied, swirling particulates *make time* as they absorb and release energy (utterance). The powerful project is the invention of the polymorphous future in an atmosphere distrustful of openness to multiple—sensual as well as rational—logics, as you state in :RE:THINKING:LITERARY:FEMINISM: I find myself focusing on formation in your work, instead of fixating on forms themselves (static, inert) (emphasis on the making, not the re-enacting). The pulse is where situations for language arise (and dissipate, as is the

case with *AFTERRIMAGES*). Or along the craggy edge of meaning as it melts into each fractal crevice. It seems repressive to maintain that language participates in language systems only, that language is somehow segregated out of life. For me this discussion signals a return to an anarchistic/autonomous mode—all-inclusive but waiting not for the behemoth superstructure to cooperate.

The designation of thingness seems a culprit, as resisting expanding perceptions. Separations, encapsulations. The liminal is granted little space. States are favored over transitions. A prejudice against undisclosed, unrefined matter—but herein lays potentiality! Heidegger acknowledges the murky position of a thing is in its pre-ontological existence. I notice how your work peruses vectors instead—you make registers within permutation. Elsewhere in your work it is the use of macaronic.

I am reading from *MONGRELISME* now:

A SENSATION OF FLOATING AT THE MOMENT THE
R O A R
of the roar of the blast ends the silence lifts everything into
t h e a i r &
then the whimpering & sobbing & screaming begin
C a r n a t i o n L i l y L i l y
Rose four little girls in a garden with luminous paper
l a n t e r n s i n t h e
museum & world might intersect in such a way that the the
t w i n p h o -

tons paring to carry their little electro-magnetic packs to
d i f f e r e n t e n d s
of the mathematical spectrum of the unexpected in which
h u e o n e f i n d s
impossible calculations the deterministic random the stable
u n s t a b l e
dissipative and turbulent systems catastrophic theories
t e a m i n g u n k n o w n
variables this is the start of a sentence and seems to be the
e n d t o o

If a human were to be inserted into a metal cube that had a breathing and speaking vent the thingness of the cube would tell very little.

Thingness can't realize absurdity. It seems that our present system of -----, (government may no longer be the correct word for this phenomenon of intangible global exchange) relies on properties of apparentness to prop up its power.

Anyway, conscious energy abounds and is not limited to humans. Non-human energy is not as easily aggregated, so is useless in a capitalist system, therefore escaped excessive scrutiny though the symptoms of ecological destruction are felt. I guess this is what is referred to as primitivism. The way *way* back exists in the present—in fact there is a way in which everything is the same (comprised of) time, the same age. A rock sits there nonchalantly telling a trajectory from beginning(s). I am engrossed in making better animate connections. Rapport: ferment: details.

My concern of late has been to study the ways in which Western culture in particular compartmentalizes humans from animals—there is this astounding polemic that exists to disrupt our interaction with animals as animals. What got me interested in this again, most recently, was the viewing of *Winter Soldier*, a documentary of the testimonials of returning Vietnam veterans. The description of the film from the Walter Reade Theater flyer reads as follows: “On the first two days of February, 1971, one month after the revelations of the Mai Lai massacre, a public inquiry into war crimes committed by American forces in Vietnam was held in the second floor ballroom of a Howard Johnson motel in Detroit. The event was organized by Vietnam Veterans Against the War...Over 125 veterans spoke of atrocities they had witnessed and, in some cases, committed. ‘The major that I worked for had a fantastic capability of staking prisoners,’ goes one piece of testimony, ‘utilizing a knife that was extremely sharp, and sort of filleting them like fish.’” Several of the soldiers spoke of their ‘having to become animals’ to commit these savagely torturous acts—that they were told to think of the Vietnamese (civilian as well as military) as sub-human, animals, that they had to be eradicated because they were animals. Much of the justification went as follows—ascribing animal (istic) qualities as transformative events that made these killings conceivable. After hurricane Katrina struck, animals were, for the most part abandoned, their lives deemed less significant than humans. And based on class and race, humans are being treated with varying degrees of dignity and concern. The mutual aid that Kropotkin talked about is all but

missing from these scenarios. I am interested in this history of the United States as it continually makes solidified attempts to neutralize, control (stolen land from indigenous peoples) and by extension decimate nature (while existing in and *as* nature simultaneously)—at best natural plots are seen as ornamentation, at worst, used for their cash value alone without other considerations coming into play.

When I think of the war on Iraq, my mind wraps around the impact on the environment—the ecology of the living and how the body count doesn't include this incontrovertible damage. Dropping thousands of tons of depleted uranium on civilian and military populations effects universally the ecosystem—porosity is the word I continually utter in alarm. I try not to pour my experiences through the lenses of eschatology.

I paid particular attention to your statement, "I sometimes wonder whether the attitudes that propel my aesthetic come down to instinctive hope, strategic optimism, or an unaccountable cheerful—always precarious—retrofit of despair. Perhaps it's more truthful to say I'm in search of a *poesis* that wagers on all three in unsettling but synergistic conversation." It seems you aren't hybridizing so much as interrelating which seems to me to have social dimensions that interconnect outwardly. Hybridizing would more so bring forward an individualized new One, a more internalized new thing. Later on in the interview with Quinta Self you say it is the inventors who interest you most...not only in the arts but in every discipline. What about cultures that focus the least on invention, whose main emphasis is a flexible, adaptive manoeuvrability that sustains and is in kinship with

an environment? Sometimes I think the impact of Western culture and its built-in burden—big tools, expensive paints, glossy books, the de rigueur plastic plug in computer and the necessary attachments, and all under the heading “property” etc., etc.—a clogging by stuff where could be experience—should be less acquisition-driven. Of course, inventions don’t have to involve bulky materiality. John Cage seemed not so much to have invented a way to do without these excesses as remembered and encouraged a way to do so. Every so often I find I am romanticizing Hunter-Gatherer societies—one of the lasting effects of having been raised in a zone of unrestrained nature.

What was your childhood like and do you find the residual of this in your work?

How have your notions of your work changed?

What projects have you taken up of late?

With happy anticipation of your reply!

Yours,
Brenda