

Words



A Process Paper

Words

A

Process Paper

By

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Faculty Co-Chair

Consider, Faculty Co-Chair, before you sign this document, the words of William Carlos Williams: “It is dangerous to leave written that which is badly written. A chance word, upon paper, may destroy the world. Watch carefully and erase, while the power is still yours, I say to myself, for all that is put down, once it escapes, may rot its way into a thousand minds, the corn become a black smut, and all libraries, of necessity, be burned to the ground as a consequence.”

Introduction



Arne Jacobsen Chair

Trans-formation

Introduction

The word **introduction** comes to us from the late 14th century and originally meant “the act of bringing into existence.” One hundred years later its meaning expanded into “initial instruction in a subject; an introductory statement.” It is the latter definition of introduction that we would traditionally associate with an introduction to a paper such as this one. But I would like to return to the original meaning for this introduction. The production of this paper, the *process* of this process paper, has been for me an introduction of sorts, an act of bringing into existence. VCFA MFA founder, G. Roy Levin, I am told, fashioned the process paper to serve as physical proof of an organizing mechanism, a synthesis of newly acquired knowledge in the mind of the soon-to-be-graduate. As work began on this paper in my final semester, I realized I would need to nail down its format at the beginning of the writing process. If the axiom “form follows function” is true and the function of a process paper is to *process* all that I have absorbed, debated, read, written, heard, fretted over, laughed at, accepted, rejected, perceived, art perceived, and all art made in these last two years, I would need a form that suits that function well. Words, it seems to me, provide the perfect form in which to explore this process. So this is a collection of words, new (to me) words I have encountered in my readings and conversations, words that have been re-introduced to me with a new twist.

The instructions are simple. Two types of cards are included in the deck. Word Cards are just that. **Bolded** words in the text are found on cards elsewhere in the deck. Free Association Cards are a record of my mind wonderings and wanderings, marginalia. Match the image snippet on these cards to the image on the Word Card and you re-trace my association, but feel free to associate as you wish.

Reader, have a seat, introduce yourself. Pick a card, any card. Follow your curiosity; use what you find useful. Through your participation these words are brought into existence, and maybe in a small way a **trans-formation** will occur.



An Image Snippet

Acknowledgements



Bus Token

Trans-formation

Acknowledgements

An **acknowledgement** is “a token of due recognition,” but this definition hardly seems adequate to describe my heartfelt thanks to those people in my life who have made this **trans-formation** possible. I want to offer more than a token, but this humble gesture will have to suffice.

My family means everything to me. With all my heart, I thank you my dear mother, **Cheryl Tonnes**, who taught me how to love and continues to be my inspiration. Thank you, brothers **David Tonnes** and **Daniel Tonnes**, and sister **Lori Tonnes-Priddy**, for your support. And to my partner-forever **David Poston**, thank you for putting up with my grumpiness and wax messes. I love you, Z.

To **Marsha Redwood**, dearest friend and patient proofreader. Thank you for making my writing far, far better than it really is. I am so lucky to have my own personal poetry consultant, **Marge Manwaring**. Thank you for your gift.

I have always wanted to love an institution of higher learning; **Vermont College of Fine Arts**, I do love you.

Special thanks goes out to the Monkey House boys: your expertise in model making, your Dremel skill, and your quiet patience make you delightful to work with; thanks for saving me, **Chris Sweeney**. And thank you to **Justin Sweeney**, who, with gentle but firm pressure, encouraged me to go to grad school. **Curt Jordan!**—just can’t write your name without an exclamation point—thank you for the plinth; you are the finest boxer I know. **Seth Novak**, sweet Narcissus, you are a true delight. Thank you for loaning me your image and geometry. I love you like a brother/son.

To my artist-teachers **Claire Cowie**, **Tannaz Farsi**, and most especially to the kind and ever-patient **Shahreyar Ataie**, thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

I have been honored to work with the finest faculty advisers anywhere, anytime. Thank you, **Marie Shurkus**, for suffering thru my writing; you are far too generous. Gentle **Michelle Dizon**, thank you for your guidance and for being there during a difficult semester. **Humberto Rameriz**, I so much appreciate your enthusiasm for my work. Thank you for allowing me the freedom to explore. And finally, to the delightfully quirky **Aruna D’Souza**; your insight into this project made all the difference.

Thank you to my Guidance Committee: **Faith Wilding** and **Dont Rhine**. I will always remember our meetings; I’d enter with nervous apprehension and leave knowing that you two were always on my side. Your guidance was more like good parenting: firm but kind.

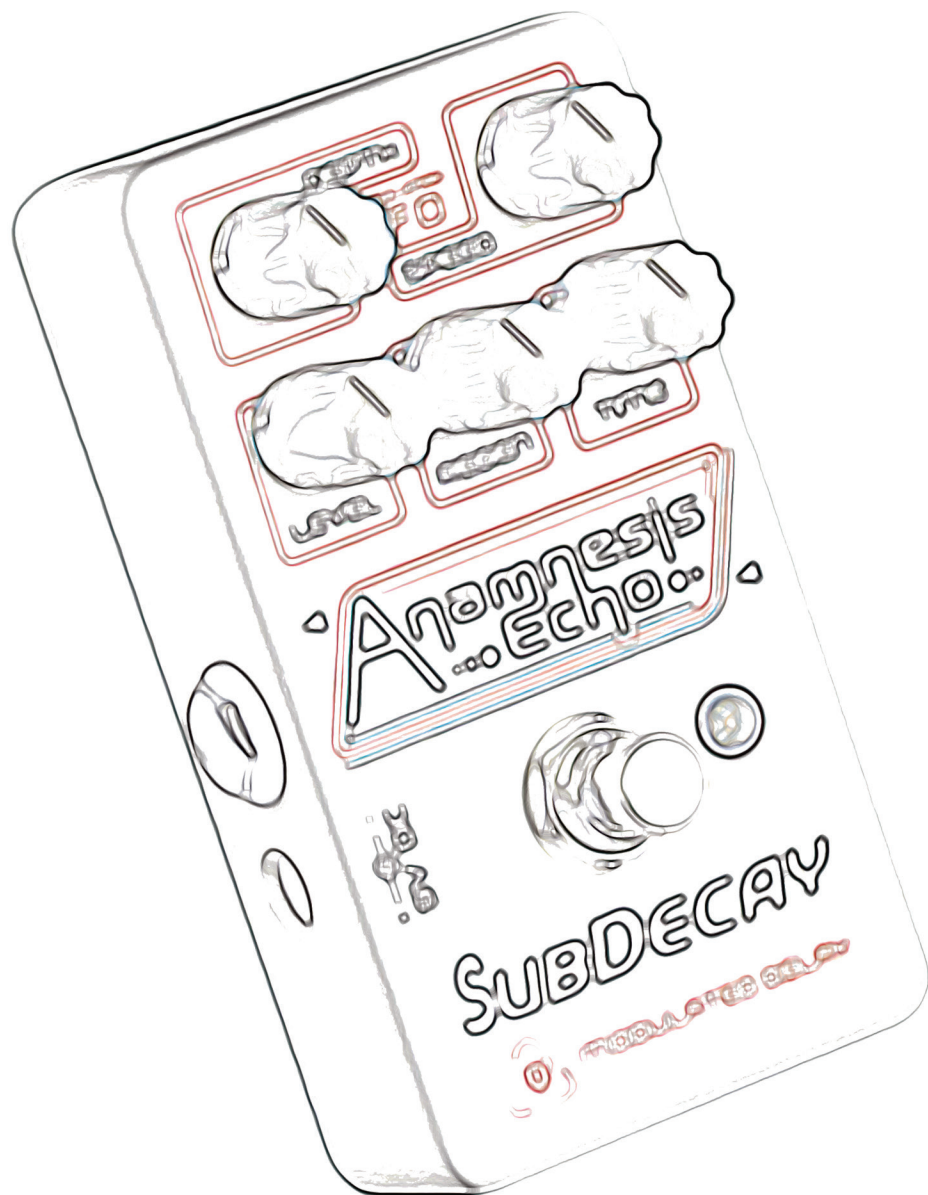
I don’t know how these two do it: **Sabrina Fidual** and **Dannielle Dahline**. How do you stay so calm during the residencies? Bourbon, perhaps. Thank you for being family while I was away from mine.

To my cohort, **Trans**, what an amazing group of people you are. So talented, so giving, so FUN! Thank you, **Trans**. If y’all ever need anything (kidneys, corneas, etc.), just call or txt me. And to the one who has gone before me, **Matthew Whitney**, thank you for your friendship and inspiration.

And **Roger Feldman**, how did an innocent lunch turn into grad school? Thank you for your encouragement, your belief in my work.

And finally to my dad, **John Tonnes**, a posthumous thank you. You are the best dad ever, I’m so glad God chose you for me. And through my tears, I smile, remembering a conversation we had about the word “posthumous,” how it sounds like post-humus, after the soil. While your body has returned to the earth, your soul lives on, in me, in all who knew you, forever

Anamnesis



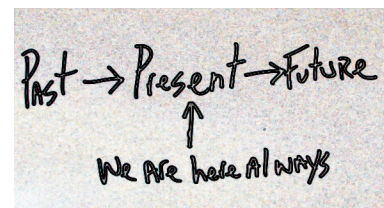
Delay Pedal

Suadade

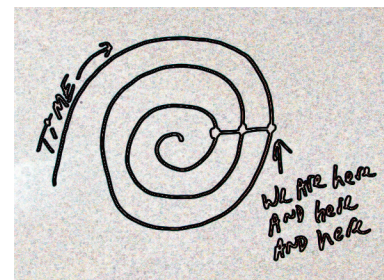
Anamnesis

Roland Barthes, writing in *Camera Lucida*, uses this word only once and must have considered it sufficiently obscure, because he defines it for his reader as recollection of a “time starting from myself.” He contrasts **anamnesis** with history, “before me is—History.” After we come into being, all our recollections are anamneses. However, Plato, in his dialog *Meno*, sees anamnesis reaching behind current existence into previous incarnations: anamnesis is past knowledge from a previous life retrieved from the soul by way of reasoning. Plato extended anamnesis to the past as a way to resolve a conundrum, namely, how can we know what we are looking for if we have never seen it? How do we know an answer to a question is correct if we don’t somehow already know the answer? Plato’s solution, anamnesis, allows us to recognize truth because we have known it before. This philosophy has interesting pedagogical implications: the teacher is more like a midwife assisting in the birth of knowledge that has been gestating in the soul of the student.

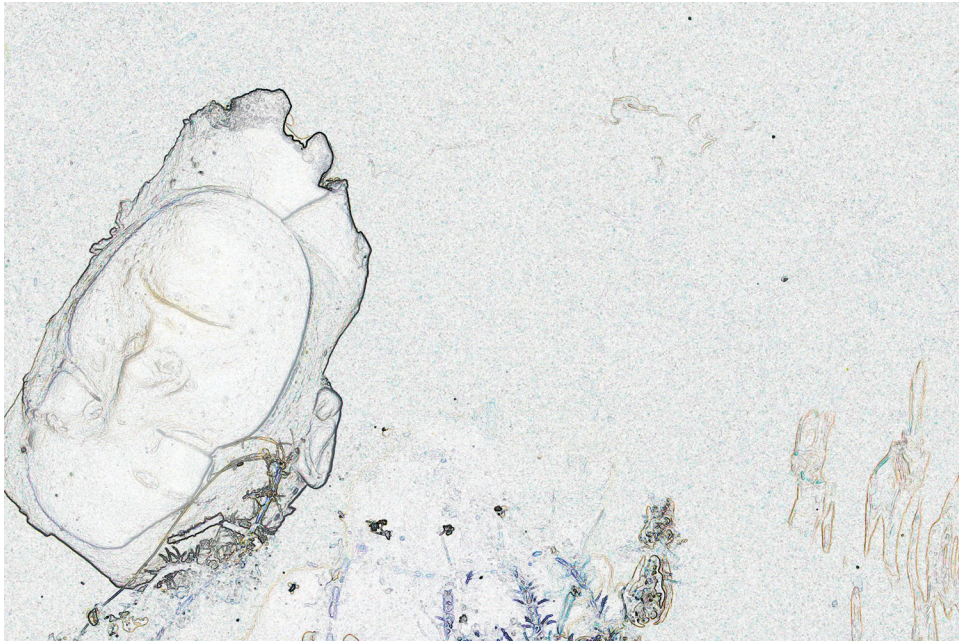
Anamnesis, either the Barthesian or Platonic variety, is a prerequisite to *saudade*; the complex feeling of *saudade* is triggered by remembrance. But not all anamnesis will lead to *saudade*, because *saudade* also requires a hope/no-hope for the future. In pondering these feelings, I am wondering if our linear view of time



might do us a disfavor. Platonic anamnesis certainly argues for a more fluid vision of time, with the soul extending back into past lives, and *saudade* too, with its back and forth, present, future, past hope/sadness. Maybe anamnesis is better situated if time was understood to be a swirl, an eddy.



Surrender



Surrenduring

Suadade

Surrender

What is **surrender**? Let's start with a poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (translated by Robert Bly), "The Walk:"

My eyes already touch the sunny hill,
going far ahead of the road I have begun.
So we are grasped by what we cannot grasp;
it has its inner light, even from a distance –

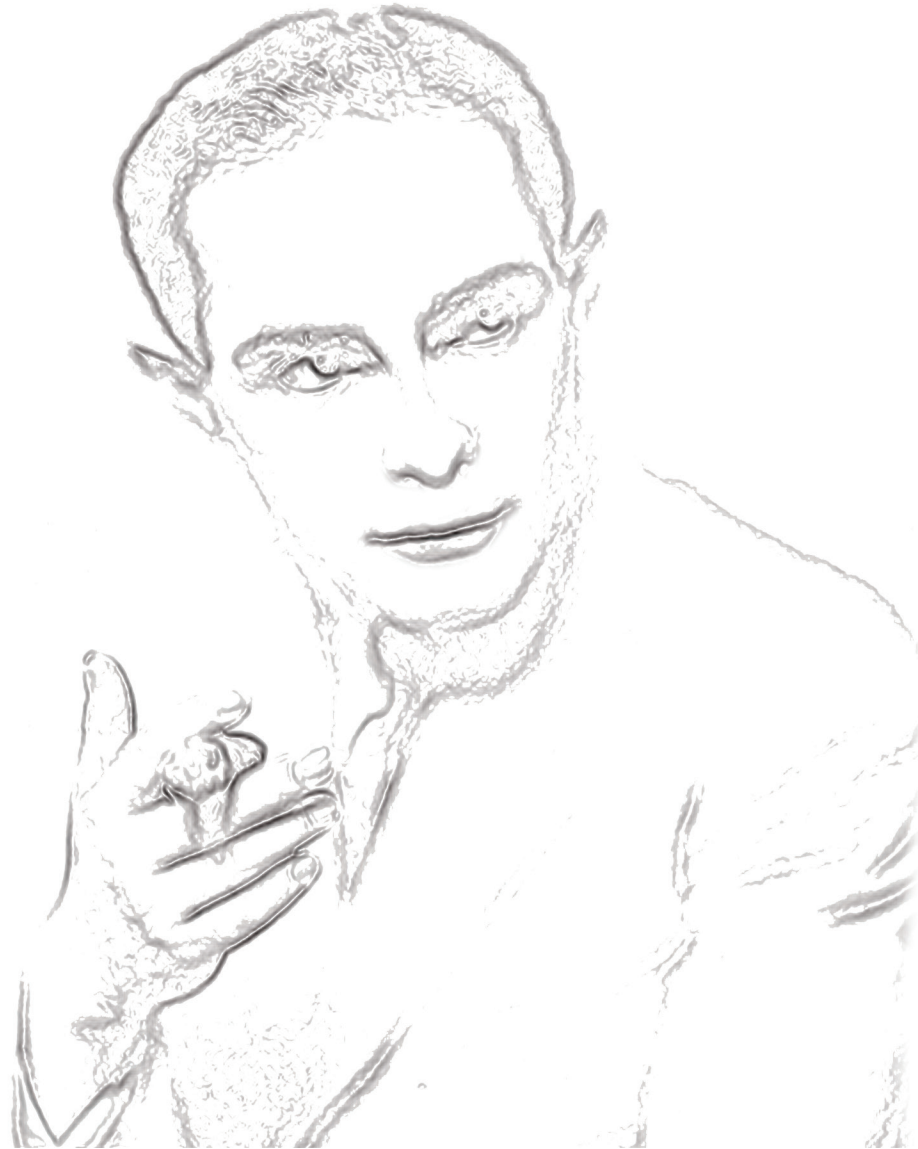
and changes us, even if we do not reach it,
into something else, which, hardly sensing it, we already are;
a gesture waves us on, answering our own wave ...
but what we feel is the wind in our faces.

I've have asked you, dear reader, to surrender to this poem. And you did, just for a moment. And what did your surrender entail? Trust. You trusted the poet, trusted him to take you someplace, someplace you already are. You trusted the translator to render into English a faithful version. And you trusted me to guide you to this poem. You allowed yourself to yield. You yielded to the language, the rhythm, the images. You lost control, only slightly, but you did.

The poet, the protagonist of the poem, has surrendered on his walk. Surrendered to the sunny hill, the road, his inner light. And what did he gain? He sensed, he felt the wind in his face. Some states of being require surrender. *Saudade* cannot exist without surrender; for the person unwilling to yield to the sadness/hope of *saudade* will not feel its pull.

Surrendre, the French word from which we get "surrender," is composed of *sur* (over) and *rendre* (give back, to yield). We give something up, back, when we surrender. But the act of surrender also gives something back to us, just as the sunny hill gave to the poet part of itself. And so it is as I surrender to art, to its making, and its perception. It enables me to feel, and to feel is to be human.

Apostrophe



Lorenz Hart

Suadade **Body**

Apostrophe

Not the punctuation mark but the rhetorical device used to address an absent person or thing or concept. Lorenz Hart used **apostrophe** in his opening lyric of Blue Moon:

Blue Moon, you saw me standing alone
Without a dream in my heart
Without a love of my own.

The moon is sung to directly but we know that the moon cannot hear this gentle chastisement; it is the listener who is the true recipient of the lyric. Briefly we are placed in the position of the moon, which saw the singer alone and did nothing. Then we identify with the singer, feeling the empty space in our hearts.

Another example from John Donne: “Death be not proud, though some have called thee/Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so...” Death is directly challenged, but Donne wrote for the reader and is speaking to us, reminding us that death has not conquered and will not win our souls.

Apostrophe is an effective modality, by its indirection the reader/listener is drawn in. Imagine if Hart had written, “I am standing alone” or Donne, “Death is not proud/ not mighty and dreadful.” These lines do not have the same effect, do they? By allowing us to exist in the same psychic space as the absent addressed (moon, death) and then the actual subject (aloneness, death-as-a-conquered-concept), we get a more rounded experience of the subject.

Lauren Berlant draws a connection between apostrophe and affect, just as apostrophe operates in the written word, so too does affect operate on the **body**. Apostrophe allows the speaker to occupy the same psychic space as the person addressed and this, in turn, allows the reader deeper access to the psychological state of the addressed. And when I am in a *saudade* state of mind I find myself using apostrophe in my own thoughts and prayers, lately addressing my father, who died in 2012. I speak to my father in apostrophe, but the real subject is myself, whispering assurances to myself.

The visual arts employ a kind of apostrophe; representing a subject, now dead or missing or mythological or conceptual, but at the same time addressing the perceiver.

Saudade



Lost in Saudade

Saudade

Saudade is a Portuguese word that is typically described as untranslatable. *Saudade* means a deep longing for someone or something that is missing, that may or may not return. It is a knowledge that the object of one's affection is a long way off, disappeared. It can also describe a sadness-love for something that cannot exist. I am tempted to use the word "nostalgia," but *saudade* differs from nostalgia in that it can be forward looking and it is tinged with a fragment of hope. There is an acceptance of loss, but always lingering in the foreground, just out of reach, is a sense of restoration, of return. Solace is found in the knowledge that the tiny sliver of hope is eternal and always present in *saudade*. There is an in-between, **porous** quality to *saudade*: we exist in the present but part of our soul is still a ghost image in the past or projected forward onto a future that will probably never come to be.

Wanderlino Arruda beautifully captured the essence of *saudade* in his poem "*Saudade*" that ends with these lines: "*Saudade* is feeling's transfusion, comfort's invitation/ infinite love, endless warmth. *Saudade* is happiness that hurts/ pain that relieves."

There is a tradition in 19th century history painting of depicting the crucial moment in a scene, a moment when the action is on the cusp of change, when the characters' lives are in balance. I have named my graduating project the "*Saudade* of Narcissus," aiming to capture the particular feeling that is *saudade* at the moment when Narcissus is losing hope of ever connecting with his lover (himself reflected in the pond). But still he has a faint hope that union will take place, that his lover will respond in kind. In and through the tears of Narcissus there lives *saudade*.

When someone is deep in *saudade* the feeling is palpable. There is an unmistakable affect that permeates the room. In Portugal, *saudade's* affect is beautifully communicated in the musical style of Fado. A Fado singer who is worth his mettle will be an **intranaut** who will remind us that *saudade* will surely wax and wane with **surrender**. And the songwriter is likely to employ the poetic technique of **apostrophe**, and mine an unconscious **anamnesis**.

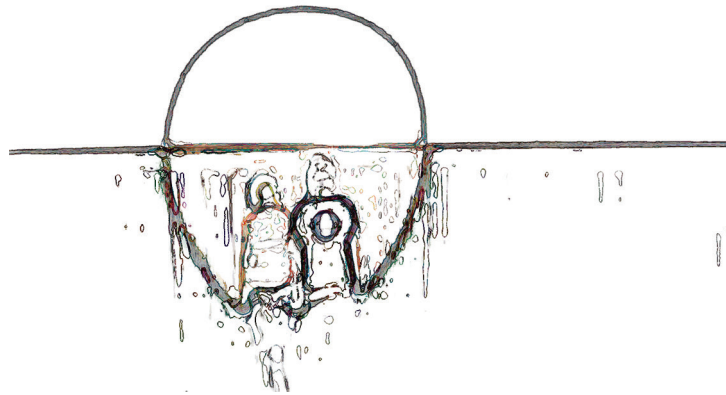
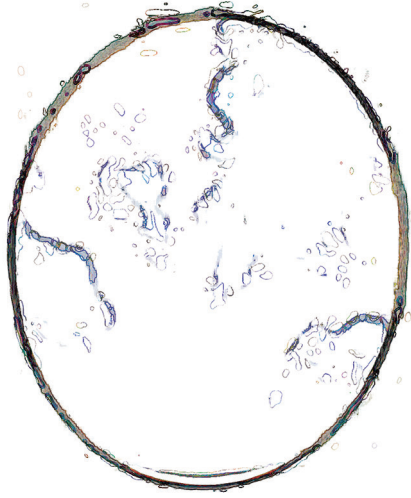
Surrender

Apostrophe

Intranaut

Anamnesis

Intranaut



Light Reign

Intranaut

I first encountered **intranaut** in an interview that artist James Turrell gave early in his career when he described himself as “exploring inner space instead of outer space.” I have spent hundreds of hours in Turrell’s *Light Reign*, a contemplative room/ sculpture in Seattle he calls a “skyspace.” On the interior perimeter of the room there rests a built-in high-backed wood bench, like a church pew but more inviting. In this sacred space the participant gazes up to an oval oculus cut out of the ceiling, revealing the sky. And when it rains a large lid covers the oculus that is mysteriously illuminated with the most beautiful blue light. So I found myself day after day after day in the skyspace looking outward, but really looking inward.

Why is it that we need practice intranautics at all? We live in ourselves, therefore shouldn’t we know everything within us just by being in ourselves? Clearly we don’t. We practice meditation, prayer, psychoanalysis, converse with friends and lovers, read self-help books all in an effort to discover our inner nature. Life is a life-long discovery of life, the life within us.

And how does art aid us on our intranautical journey? Pablo Picasso once said, “The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls.” Art, the perceiving and the making of it, enables a clearer picture of who we are. Long-time practitioners of intranautics will notice a **trans-formation** taking place in themselves. When I am functioning well as an artist, I allow this trans-formation to take root in my work. For by looking inside I am mining my feelings, fears, joys and **shame**; exploring the ineffable *saudade*. The trick is to infuse these intranautical realizations into my work. How will the perceiver read these feelings? What is in the work that can radiate outward, interact with the perceiver, create an affect?

Shame



The Expulsion

Shame

Shame—just the sound of the word is enough to invoke the feeling in me. The word starts with a *shhh*, an admonishment to be quiet, and ends with “me.” Shame is a syndrome, a collection of signs and symptoms that often manifest together. A person in a state of shame can exhibit the outward signs of blushing, downcast eyes, lowered head. It is self-reported as feelings of guilt or embarrassment. In shame the mind and the body work in tandem, the mind rendering judgment, the body perceiving/acting/reacting to the affective content of the situation. “The collision between the mind’s judgment and the body’s response to its environment is shame...” Marie Shurkus observed in a response to a paper I wrote.

Externally imposed shame (“Shame on you!”) effects can be fleeting, a temporary state in which the object of the shaming feels the shame and then shakes it off. Narcissus, in pride and hubris, spurned many potential lovers. He had no shame, and so the goddess Nemesis cursed him to forever love only himself; he became an **intranaut** in the extreme. In him shaming took root, fully incorporated into his being, corrupting and condemning him. In this myth we see a link between shame and pride, two ends of a spectrum.

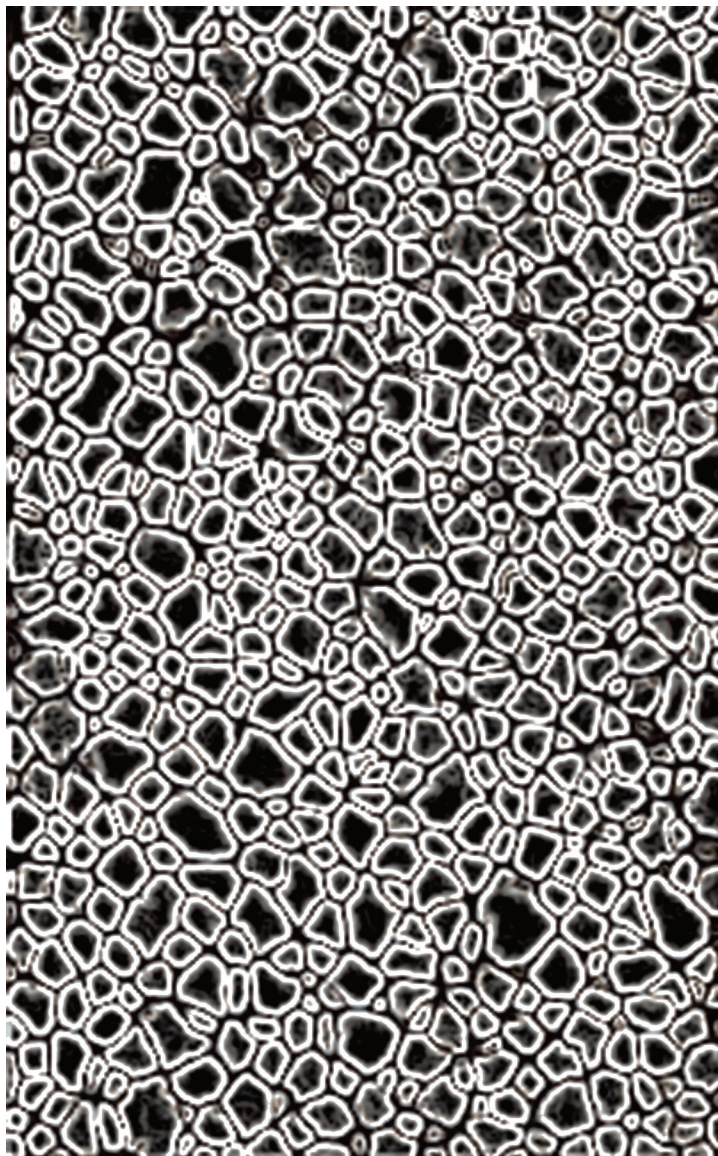
I found the shame/pride spectrum in researching poetry to include in a performance for my fourth residency. I came across Carl Sandberg’s “At a Window,” which reads in part:

Give me hunger, pain and want,
Shut me out with shame and failure
From your doors of gold and fame,
Give me your shabbiest, weariest hunger!

But leave me a little love,
A voice to speak to me in the day end,
A hand to touch me in the dark room
Breaking the long loneliness.

Here the poet is commanding/pleading to the gods to grant him hunger and shame, a desire to experience the fullness of the human condition, which requires the humbling of shame. “But leave me a little love,” he says, having enough pride to know that he is worthy to be loved.

Porous



Pores

Simulacrum

Trans-formation

Porous

We like to think of ourselves, our bodies, as independent entities hermetically sealed, but we are **porous** beings. We absorb and dispel water and air through our pores, and we can imagine our mouths and noses (and other orifices I'm too polite to mention) as being large pores. Our insides and outsides are confused, outsides moving in, insides moving out.

So too are we porous in a figurative sense. We absorb the feelings of others, our bodies tune in to the affect of the room. We are at once **trans-formed** by what we absorb and in turn we trans-form others, energy (psychic, spiritual) entering and exiting our bodies.

And poems are porous when at their best; the words form a scaffolding, a cell membrane that contains and releases meaning. Charles Ghigna did this so well with his poem "Present Light:"

If I could
hold light
in my hand

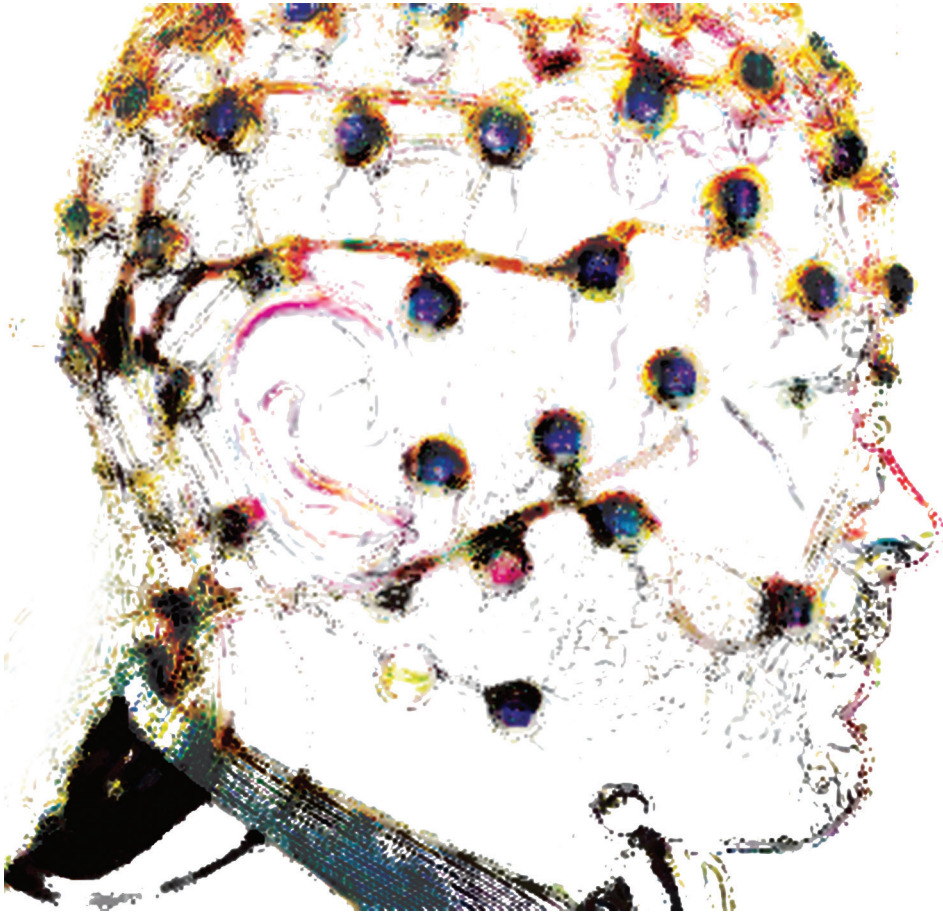
I would
give it
to you

and watch it
become
your shadow.

Each word in the poem is like a stick, rock or leaf in an Andy Goldsworthy sculpture. Each line is a connection point, each stanza perfect geometry. And the spaces in between the words, lines, and stanzas are the spaces where we live. I want my art, like this poem, to be porous, to allow room for the perceiver to enter, to become part of the art and for the art to become part of the perceiver. When this happens, an **oneiric** interstitial is created, and this, like light becoming shadow, becomes the art.

We get porous from the French *poros*, "full of holes," which in turn can be traced back to the Latin, *Porus*, meaning "an opening". And isn't this what art and poetry are—an opening, a passage through which we avoid **simulacrum** in our lives and discover our humanity.

Oneiric



Wired for Dreams

Deictic Porous

Oneiric

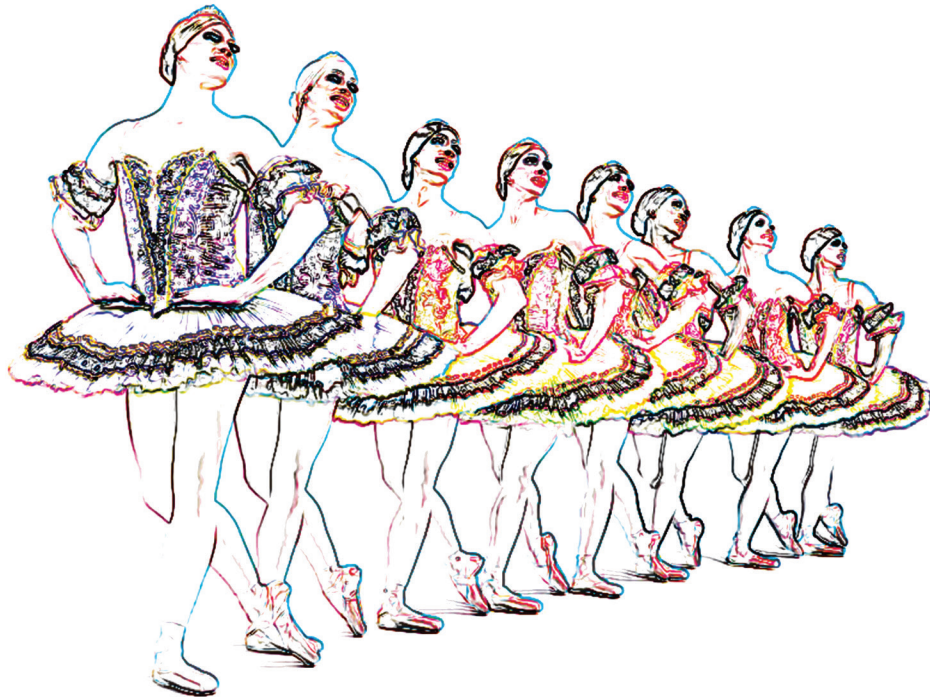
Oneiric means “of or pertaining to dreams.” According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it was first used in 1859 by Eben Henderson in this sentence, “The oneiric medium of revelation.” He probably anglicized the word from *oneiros*, Greek for “dream.”

I first encountered the word in Roland Barthes’ *Camera Lucida*, a rich source of unusual words. Here he declares his longing to inhabit certain landscape photographs, “it is neither oneiric... nor empirical... it is fantasmatic.” In the English translation he uses oneiric once again, or rather his translator used it, because this use is not present in the original French: “*il est simplement une illusion; sa vision est rêveuse, non ecnésique.*” “...[I]t is simply illusion; its vision is dreamy, not ecnésic.” Barthes contends that film tames photography, observing that fictional cinema is a dreamy, vacant, broody, wistful vision, for *rêveuse* can be all of these things. Barthes is not the first, nor the last, to comment on the dreamy nature of film; indeed the word oneiric is probably used more often in relation to film theory than in any other academic realm.

Film’s link to the oneiric may, in part, be due to the shifting **deictic** nature of the moving image; the cinematic lens can shift positions, now offering a remote point of view, now we see what a character is seeing, now we see through the eyes of an animal, now a crane shot takes us up and away. Dreams too shift perspective, delighting and confounding us with their deictic manipulations.

Marion Milner in her book, *On Not Being Able to Paint*, describes an oneiric-like state in which she draws whatever comes to mind, a process she calls “free drawing.” Later she uses her skills as a psychoanalyst to interpret her own drawings, to extract inferences and meaning that she contends must have been submerged in the inner recesses of her mind. She uses the drawings as a **porous** opening into her subconscious. Like Milner, I am interested in blurring the boundaries between dream and wakefulness in my art. This will be a project I explore post-graduation, and in preparation I have been meditating on the words of poet/philosopher George Santayana: “Sanity is a madness put to good uses, waking life is a dream controlled.” And I also recall Marcel Proust, “If a little dreaming is dangerous, the cure for it is not to dream less but to dream more, to dream all the time.”

Masculine



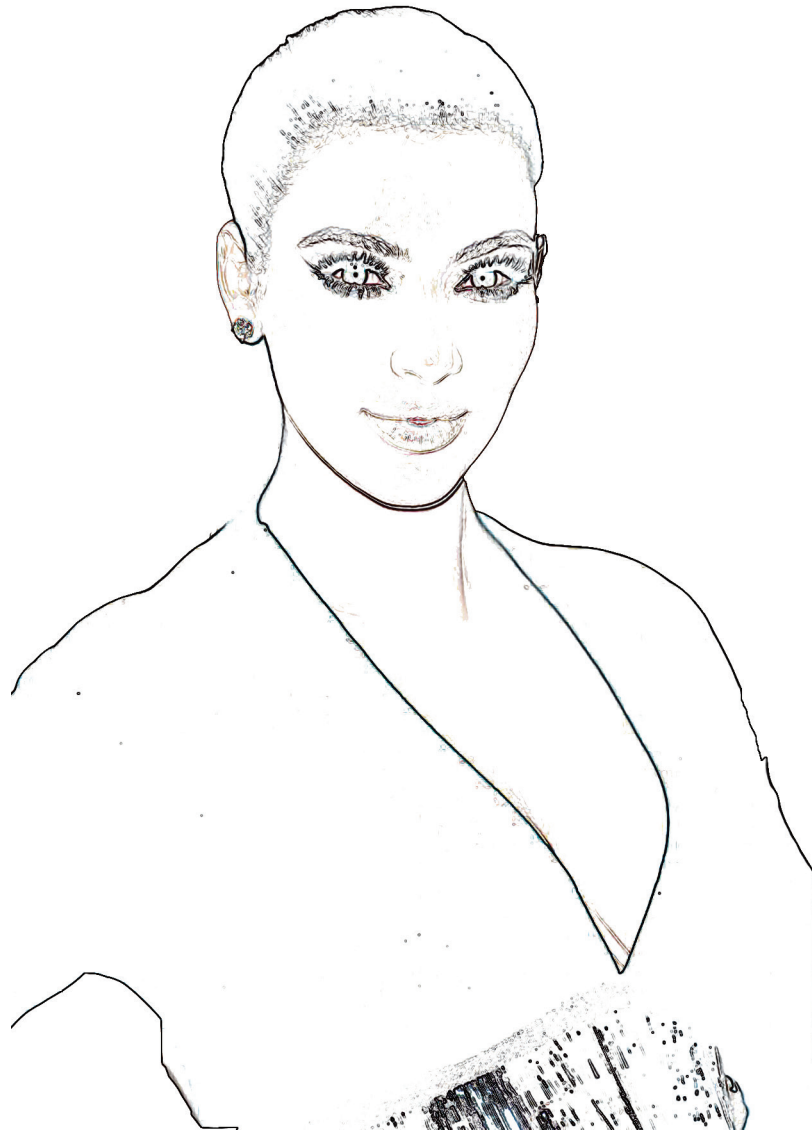
Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Masculine

Where to begin with **masculine**? It is such a loaded word, loaded in cultural content and surprisingly overloaded lexically. Recently I saw a performance of the *Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo*, an all male ballet troop whose members play both male and female roles. The men playing the female roles are dressed in full ballet drag, tutus and all. They dance en pointe, a beautiful technique employed by ballerinas to convey weightlessness, in which the dancer puts her full weight on the tips of her toes, feet fully extended. The *Trocks*, as they are affectionately known, deploy en pointe as a humorous device, but there is an amazement in seeing men perform this most feminine of moves. While en pointe, the dancers display a strength, vitality, and athleticism that is breathtaking. Their masculinity is heightened in spite of, or because of, their costuming (tights, pink pointe shoes). We see the curve of their calves, sinuous and tightly muscled.

My art has used masculine figures almost exclusively in recent years; male wax torsos, male **bodies** in photographs, encaustic, and sculpture. I justified my use of the male form for many years because I felt that I could not, with integrity, portray the female form having not inhabited (except in the womb) this form myself. I felt I had nothing to say. Now I realize that my exploration of the male form is an attempt to understand myself, my own masculinity. I have never considered myself overtly masculine; I'm slight, with too much hair on my head and not enough hair elsewhere, to be classified as firmly in the masculine camp. I've grown to accept and even to love where I am situated on the masculine/feminine continuum. Yet I have a fascination with the overtly masculine, the way men move, how at ease they seem in their bodies. Technically, I'm part of the club of the male, but not really; I am an outsider looking into the clubhouse. Through my art I crack open the peephole, get a wider glimpse of what I am missing. And yes, there is an **erotic** component (if truth be told) in my wonderings about masculinity, a desire to capture, contain, hold what is missing in me.

Simulacrum



Kim Kardashian

Simulacrum

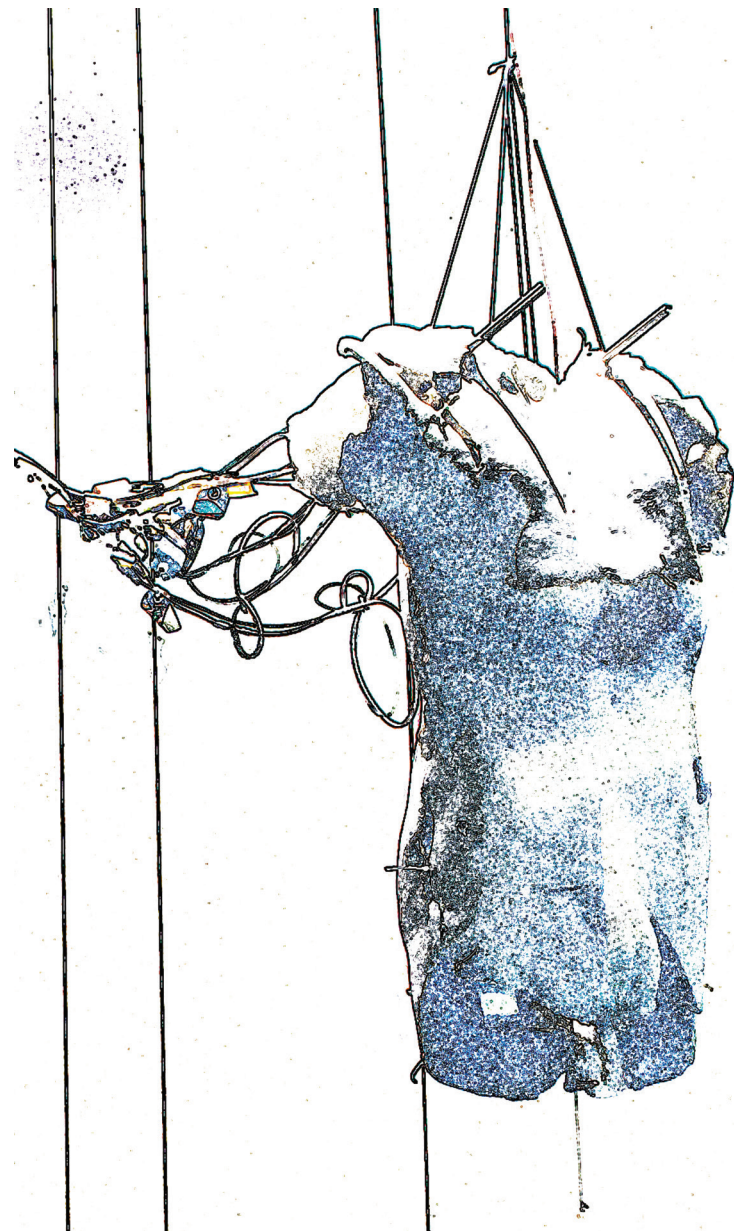
I once received an email with this unlikely word: “If, rather, you are so narcissistically absorbed in the poisonous fog of the mundane, immersed in the hollow self-fulfillment of your own falsified **simulacrum**, then please disregard this message.” The Oxford English Dictionary defines simulacrum as “Something having merely the form or appearance of a certain thing, without possessing its substance or proper qualities.” The writer of this email was making a plea for help with child care, arguing that time spent with his four-year-old would lift the caregiver out of a superficial existence.

In a way, all art is simulacra, for how can art exist if it possesses *all* the proper qualities, *all* the substance of the thing and not *be* the thing itself? John Ruskin acknowledged and accepted this dilemma in this Modern Painters IV: “Nightly we lay down our gold, to fashion forth simulacra of peasants, in gay ribands and white bodices.” If simulacra cannot be avoided, artists are called to create **objects** of more than mere simulacra.* The trick is to decide what the substance is that we are after in an artwork. What are the “proper qualities” of the thing? The artist decides (via intellect or insight or both) on a case-by-case basis. How successful the selection of the proper qualities are is ultimately determined by the participant. The substances and proper qualities need not be representational (or representational alone); they can be feelings or states of being. The object needs to embody just enough of the proper qualities to point the participant in the right direction—lead them to an insight, emotion, knowledge, a connection of concepts that the artist feels compelled to call to attention. And remember that art is **porous**, the participant can fill in the intentional gaps left by the artist supplying the work with just enough proper qualities to avoid simulacra. When the work is imbued with proper qualities and the participant is allowed to supply their own proper qualities, the work and the participant are open to **trans-formation**.

*Unless it is the intention of the artist to create a work that is about simulacra, where the goal is to create or depict things or concepts without substance or proper qualities. Curiously, an attempt at this kind of work would involve simultaneously avoiding and embracing simulacra; using the right amount of substance below the **surface** to reference non-substance, the right amount of proper qualities to lead the participant to see or feel improper qualities.

Object Surface Porous Trans-formation

Trans-formation



From Trans-Formation

Trans-formation

I titled a performance I presented at my fourth residency “**Trans-formation.**” In it, wax torsos that hung from the ceiling were ritualistically melted—wax dripping into a large bowl filled with water. The hyphen in *Trans-formation* is strategically placed and inspired by Roland Barthes spelling of “**patho-logy**” in *The Neutral* and as a tribute to my VCFA cohort’s nickname, “Trans.” Amazing how this simple dash can transform a word, placing emphasis on its component parts. *Trans*, from the Latin for “across, over, and beyond,” and *formationem*, meaning “a shaping.” And so it was with the performance: bodies crossing over, being reshaped—reshaped by internal heat across the divide between living and dead, between body and soul.

The torsos in *Trans-formation* were all **surface**, wax skin ¼ inch thick. Hollow inside, but as the melting commenced, fissures opened, the hollow of the inside leaked into the outside, inside and outside becoming more alike. A **porousness** made manifest. In this way the transformation of *Trans-formation* partially overcame **simulacrum**; what was once an ostensible reference of the movement from life to death became more pronounced.

The idea for the performance came about because of my **intranautical** explorations and grief after my father’s death in April 2012. I watched as he passed across/over/beyond from vibrant, animated life to stillness. He now has no shape, except the shape of his memory in my mind. I must have been silently, subconsciously meditating on his transformation, because the script for the performance poured out of me in an hour. I tried to capture the **advenes** that triggered my father’s illness: particles of mineral inhaled in his youth, now transforming him at a cellular level. The melting of bodies in the performance were advenienced (forgive the neologism) by me flipping a switch, current warming the wax, melting, flowing down. Like that of my father, the transformation of the torsos started from within, precipitated by an external event.

Advenes



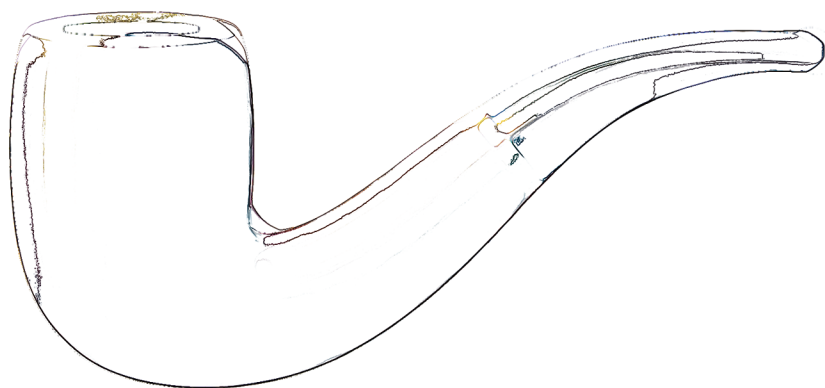
Roland Barthes

Advenes

“Other things are material and corporeal, and what union, what fellowship can a spirit be supposed to have with them? They are extrinsic, *advenient* things...” So wrote Hugh Binning, a 15th century Scottish theologian. A Google search of **advenes**, or its variants *advenient* and *advenience*, reveals how rare its usage is; it is listed on more “obscure words” websites than it is actually used in texts. Thus we reach back to Binning himself to find an example usage, and even he used it only once in his lifetime output of nearly 525,000 words. But there is a more contemporary usage in Roland Barthes *Camera Lucida* that caught my eye. The English translation of this text actually uses the word in two forms: *advenience* and *advenes*; in the original French Barthes used only “*advient*” (advenes). “So it seemed,” wrote Barthes, “that the best word to designate (temporarily) the attraction certain photographs exerted upon me was *advenience* or even *adventure*. This picture *advenes*, that one doesn’t.” *Advenes* means “to come to or arrive at.” The variation “*advenience*” appears to be an invention of Barthes’ translator; I can find no use of this word before it appears in *Camera Lucida*. The Oxford English Dictionary teases out some subtly in the word with “To arrive, to come (to), esp. at a significant juncture; (esp. of something immaterial)...” Barthes uses this word as a starting position in an evolutionary chain of thinking of what makes some photographs speak to him more than others. He breathlessly moves from *advenes* to *adventure* then *animate* then *affect* then *essence* then *pathos* then *spectator*, then arriving at his famous *studium/punctum* formulation five pages later.

I postulate that art is a relationship between an object and its perceiver. When we encounter art there is a dance between the **object** and ourselves, a chain of events that commences quickly, moves back and forth between us and the object. The object exerts a force (it *advenes*) that travels to the perceiver and is detected via sight, sound, touch, sometimes smell, sometimes taste. This detection can be felt (infused) in us by intellect or affect or emotion or all of these. Sometimes this dance results in **trans-formation** in us or more rarely in the object itself (think of an Alexander Calder mobile, gently changing shape in response to our breath and our movements as we pass by). What makes an object “art” is our willingness to enter into this relationship, to dance the dance. When it *advenes*, the object asks us to dance, and if we respond, make the slightest movement, glance or gaze, the object becomes art.

Deictic



Ceci n'est pas une pipe

Not a Pipe

Oneiric

Deictic

Some words very much depend on who says them for their meaning to become clear. What or whom they refer to will shift according to who is saying the word. An example: In the sentence “I need you,” the *I* and the *you* will refer to different people, depending on who is speaking (or writing) the word; *I* and *you* are **deictic** words. Deictic also describes words that have a temporal context; “now” is deictic in “I need you now,” because we need to know something about when the sentence was spoken to understand what “now” really means. In spoken, written, or even gestural language, all of this happens very naturally; we don’t have to think about what *I*, *you*, and *now* are referring to if we are given the context in which they are spoken, and our understanding happens lightning fast. When we enter the **oneiric** realm, often the result is deictic confusion; our associations are jumbled. The *I* and *you* and *then* and *now* are confused. The phenomenon of understanding words in their spatial and temporal context is called *deixis*, from the Greek, meaning “display, demonstration, or reference.”

If all of this seems much ado about nothing (or nothing to do with art anyway), consider that Roland Barthes categorized photography as belonging to deictic language. The photograph is so closely aligned with what or whom it represents that the photograph scarcely distinguishes itself from the actual thing or person. Barthes wrote, “Show your photographs to someone—he will immediately show you his: ‘Look, this is my brother; this is me as a child.’” Just as *I* and *you* and *now* are immediately understood by the context in which they are spoken, so too the photograph is almost instantly understood by its context; in fact the photograph contains or *is* the content. Barthes again, who I quote at length because his writing is so delicious:

By nature the Photograph... has something tautological about it: a pipe, here, is always and intractably a pipe. It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with itself, both affected by the same amorous or funereal immobility, at the very heart of the moving world: they are glued together, limb by limb, like the condemned man and the corpse in certain tortures; or even like those pairs of fish... which navigate in convoy, as though united by an eternal coitus.

Object



Vacuum

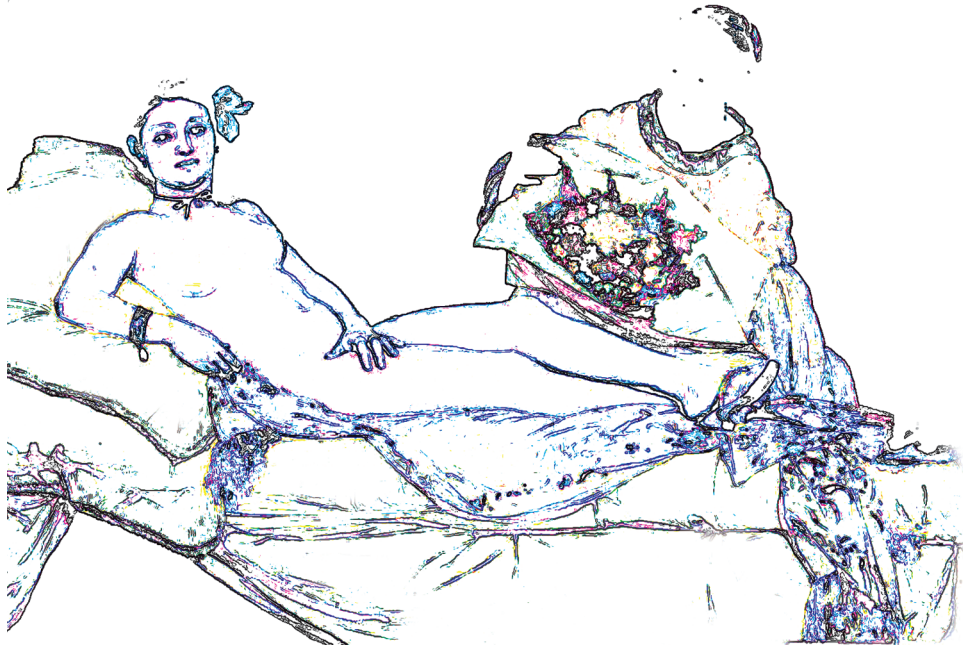
Object

What separates an art **object** from any other object? Is there something intrinsic in or about an art object that a non-art object does not have? An examination of the etymology of the word offers clues. The word “object” (noun) has its root in the Medieval Latin *objectum*, “thing put before the mind or sight.” “Put before” is key. There is intentionality in an art object; it is put before the perceiver with a purpose. There is a declaration in or around an art object that says, “I am art.” Some mediums automatically (in our culture) declare their intention to be art, oil paint on canvas, for example. Other mediums need assistance, a surrounding metadata*, that prompts the perceiver to relate to the object as art. A vacuum cleaner was just that, until Jeff Koons encased it with Plexiglas and placed it in a gallery. Put before our sight, the vacuum, with its setting, lighting, etc., now invites the perceiver to encounter the vacuum as art. The vacuum encourages the perceiver to approach it, not as just an appliance but also as art; it **advenes**. The perceiver now has the responsibility to *make* the vacuum art (Koons is done; the vacuum just sits there). While it is the responsibility of the artist to avoid **simulacrum**, so too is the perceiver tasked with tuning-in to the object, to receive and detect its properties (including the meta-properties communicated thru metadata). If it seems I have placed too much responsibility on the perceiver, maybe so; but consider that the degree to which the perceiver allows this shift in perception to happen is in direct proportion to how rewarding the art experience has the potential to be. A quick dismissal, “It’s just a stupid vacuum!” will surely shut down any dialog between the object and the perceiver, while a careful consideration of the art-vacuum may conjure thoughts of consumerism, industrial design, line and curve, housework, oppression, all ideas that a non-art vacuum normally does not summon.

*Metadata is data about data; a term usually associated with computer science, but I have borrowed the term here to mean “all associated information and/or feelings about an object.” The types of metadata employed in the art realm include: the history of the object (an object historically perceived as art will probably continue to be so); the provenance of the object; experts’ endorsements (art historians, critics); the setting; the medium; the market; the social context (a basket in Africa becomes art in America); size (a gigantic balloon dog [Koons again] is more likely to be considered art than just a balloon dog); color; its usefulness; artist **statement**; other objects (art and non-art); and a myriad of other things.

Simulacrum Advenes Statement

Erotic



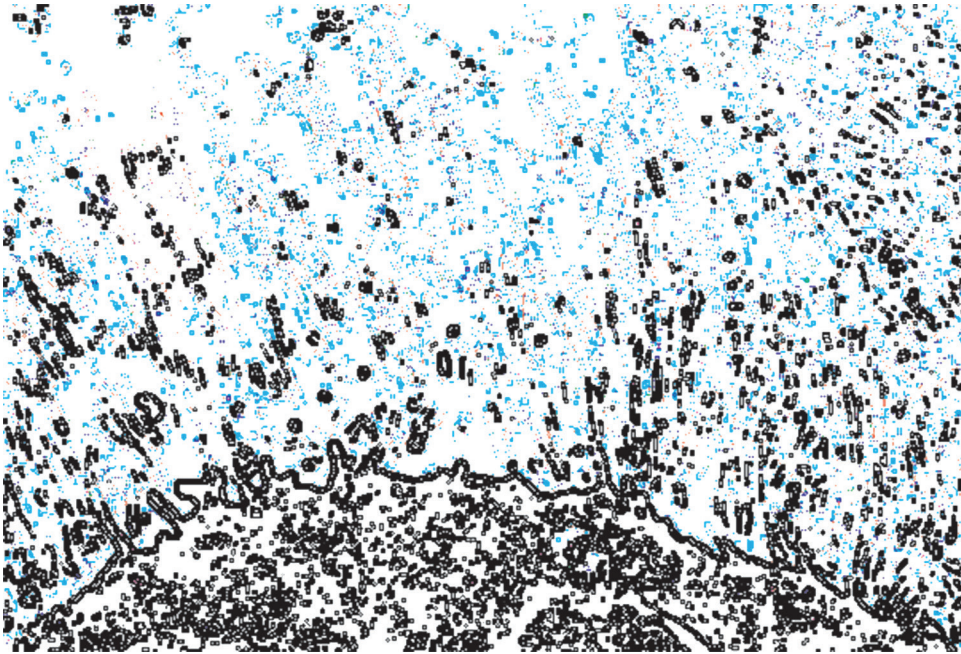
Olympia

Body Masculine

Erotic

People tell me that they perceive an **erotic** element in my work, especially my wax sculptural pieces that I have been perusing for the last year. These **masculine** figures are nude and (many find them) not unattractive, so I understand how an erotic read of the work is plausible. For myself, I don't find my sculptures erotic in the least, having toiled over them for hours, burning my fingers with wax. But the consistent use of this word in conjunction with my work caused me to come to terms with the erotic. Surely, nudity and attractiveness alone cannot account for the erotic. As I examine the etymology of the word, I can begin to unpack its meaning. Erotic comes to us from the 16 century French word, *érotique*, imported from the Greek *erotikos*, "caused or referring to passionate love." *Erotikos*, in turn, refers to the god Eros, the "god of love." Do my sculptures cause the perceiver to remember or imagine (or incite!) passionate love? I use melting white wax (often in real-time) that can recall body fluids, secretions that passionate love may generate. And there is a loss of control in wax **bodies** melting, so too the erotic involves a loss of control, as the 6th Century poet Sappho captured, "Eros again, me of limb-loosening was shaking, the sweetly-bitter, aidless creeper." (A translation of Fragment 130 by Kevin von Duuglas-Ittu, which he considers "experimental." A more conventional translation: "Once again limb-loosening Eros makes me tremble, the bitter-sweet, irresistible creature.")

Patho-logy



Cell

Patho-logy

Pathology is now the scientific study of diseases, but for our purposes here I'd like to insert the simple hyphen, which was Roland Barthes way of playing up the *pathos* in pathology. (“**Patho-logy?**” was placed parenthetically behind *pathos* in *The Neutral: Lecture Course at the Collège de France.*) This diminutive punctuation mark breaks apart pathology, giving us the study (logy from *logia* in Greek) of suffering (*pathos*, Greek).

As I reflect on all the art I have made in the last two graduate school years, one of the elements they have in common is a patho-logy. It seems I have been studying suffering. A brief catalog of the work displayed at the residencies: wax & digital canvas pixilated figures, one with a severed head, another with wax tears; a fictional art-historical discovery of a lost muse and lost love; shattered plaster torsos, etched with Latin phrases; melting bodies, corrupted from within, presented in four ceremonies; and finally Narcissus, life-size, crying tears of wax into a lonely pool of water, the sound of the tears amplified and echoed. (As I write this list, I see that I need to reign in the melodrama.)

Why this fascination with patho-logy? Just before I entered grad school my father was diagnosed with a serious mutation of cells, slowly growing, surrounding his heart and lungs. The pathology of this condition is not well understood, but in an effort to prolong his life, my father participated in a clinical trial that took him far from home, opened him up, exposed his tissues to chemicals and laser light. He had no choice but to become a student of suffering, as did I alongside him. His illness and my interest in the **body** and beauty made me a circumstantial patho-logist. A study of the suffering of the body has a close kinship with a study of beauty. If beauty is the state of being in right proportion; suffering, when added as a catalyst, spurs **trans-formation** of participant and object. This may be art's highest achievement.

Body



Saudade of Narcissus

Body

The Oxford English Dictionary lists 24 separate definitions for **body**, 51 entries if you include the sub entries; and that's just body as a noun. To get our arms around the word, let us, for the moment, restrict the definition to: "The complete physical form of a person."

There was a time when I was uninterested in the depiction of bodies in my work. When photography was my primary medium, I was always looking for an angle that excluded people. My best pictures (so I thought) were of non-human subjects. Perhaps I was wary of stumbling into the **erotic**, but something happened as I moved out of the strictly photographic realm, when I embraced wax, when I decided to explore three dimensions rather than two. I felt compelled to bring bodies into my work. This compulsion was not to be resisted, as if a string was attached to the center of my sternum, pulling my body to human bodies. More specifically, I needed to explore the **masculine** body, a task that I have only just begun in grad school and expect to continue in my practice going forward.

The use of bodies in art is particularly useful when the artist is making an attempt at **apostrophe** in the physical realm; by this I mean that the body can act as a direct address to a person absent, just as apostrophe does this in the rhetorical realm. Take, for instance, the body of Narcissus (opposite side of this card) that I created for the *Saudade of Narcissus*, presented at my fifth and final residency. This Narcissus made of wax and plastic and plaster is my reference to the absent Narcissus, the Narcissus of Ovid, the Narcissus of myth, the **patho-logy** of Narcissus. I am attempting to refer the participant to a time before Sigmund Freud borrowed the myth for his own purposes. And while we **hover** over the wax Narcissus, we are shown the way to the "real" Narcissus, the Narcissus that lives in our collective unconscious.

Patho-logy Erotic Apostrophe Masculine
 Trans-formation

Hover



Hummingbird

Surface

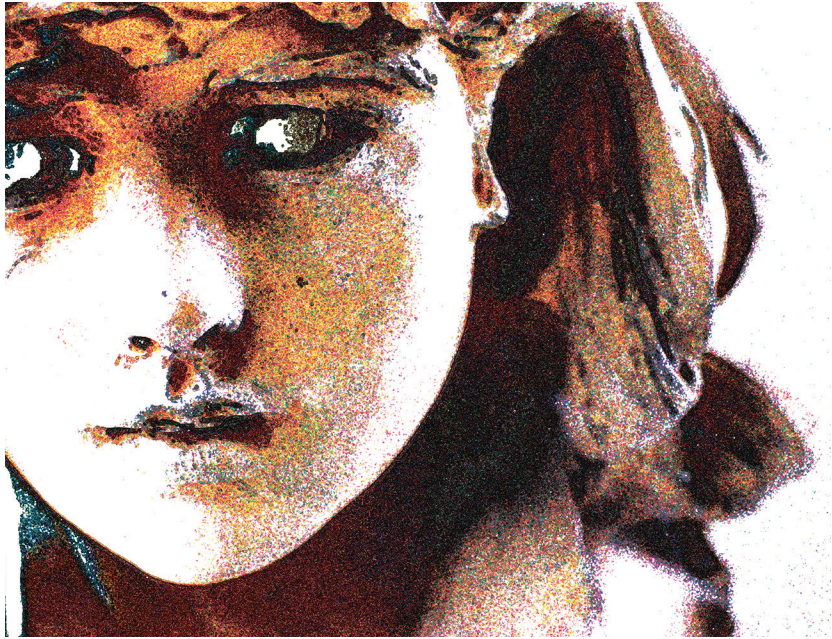
Hover

“Art takes on a ghostly presence that **hovers** between appearance and reality,” wrote artist Paul Chan. This sentence has stuck with me for months because there is something about his use of the word “hover” that I find illuminating. He uses “hover” in two senses of the word, “to hang, fluttering, suspended in air” and “to remain in an uncertain or irresolute state.” I picture art embodied as a hummingbird flitting in-between reality (the world as it really is, scientifically measured, proven, concrete) and appearance (perceptions of the **surfaces** of things). The bird approaches appearance, stops, looks, ponders then flies closer to reality, waits a moment, moves around reality, first here then there, flies back to appearance. Art is always in motion; even in the stillness of hovering in place, it is vibrating. Grammatically, “hover” is classified as a frequentative verb, a verb that indicates repeated action. So hover repeats, it vibrates.

Art occupies an uncertain place in the second sense of hover. Art one moment seems to be a known quantity, then snaps back to mysterious, hard-to-grasp. It is maddeningly fixed in its unfixed state. It remains forever uncertain. Maybe it is this quality of uncertainty that I find so attractive in art, both making art and perceiving it. I have always been comfortable in the in-between states, comfortable with both/and (either/or is too limiting for me), so the ghostly presence of art, its translucence, neither solid nor transparent, is an ambiguity I can embrace.

As we encounter art, we are well served to hover like the hummingbird, darting in and around it.

Surface



From Rodin

Surface

Poet Rainer Maria Rilke reminds us that **surface** is not superficial and beyond **simulacrum**. He wrote of Auguste Rodin's work, "There was no point at which there was not life and movement... It was the surface, - this differently great surface, variedly accentuated, accurately measured, out of which everything must rise." To the sculptor, surface is everything. It is the surface of the **object** that reflects light, this light that has been acquired and appropriated by the object (at the direction of the sculptor) that is our main perception of the work. If we are able (or transgressive, while the docent looks the other way), we will touch the surface of the work, feel its weight, its form, its temperature, take note of the perfections, the imperfections*. Surface is the boundary between what the object is and what it isn't.

Surface is necessity for the three dimensional arts, but its analog in two dimensional arts; the line is not nearly so universal. Like surface, line can demark objects within a painting or photograph, but line can be eliminated, erased or never included in two dimensional work. Moving from two dimensions to three dimensions is always additive, and what we add is surface.

The noun *surface* came to us around 1610, from the French *sur* (above) plus *face* (also French, meaning face, countenance, appearance). We are above the face, we **hover** as we perceive surface. English has the marvelous ability to convert nouns to verbs but we had to wait almost 300 years before the verb form of *surface* surfaced.

*Perfection/imperfection is an ethical judgment, one that we all make when we perceive surfaces. It happens in an instant. We can learn to curtail the judgment, for a moment, to open up and consider what beauty really is.

Artist Statement



Me

Object

Artist Statement

The lineage of the word **artist** proceeds from antiquity in the Latin *artem*, through medieval Latin and Italian *artista*, migrating from the French *artiste* in the 14th century, and finally arriving in English in the 1580s as “one who cultivates one of the fine arts.” An artist was originally a person inspired by the Muses: history, poetry, comedy, tragedy, music, dancing, and astronomy. The meaning shifted in the 17th century to include anyone skilled in any art or craft, including surgeons, professors, and cooks. The lineage of the word **artist** proceeds from antiquity in the Latin *artem*, through medieval Latin and Italian *artista*, migrating from the French *artiste* in the 14th century, and finally arriving in English in the 1580s as “one who cultivates one of the fine arts.” An artist was originally a person inspired by the Muses: history, poetry, comedy, tragedy, music, dancing, and astronomy. The meaning shifted in the 17th century to include anyone skilled in any art or craft, including surgeons, professors, and cooks. First attested to in 1747, the word was narrowed to “one who practices the arts of design or visual arts.” Now the word has again expanded to include musicians and those whose primary medium is sound.

Statement comes from the 17 century verb *state*, “to declare in words, to place something on the record,” and the noun-producing suffix *ment*, which is used to indicate that the word is the result of the action of the verb. For example, I make merry, which results in merriment.

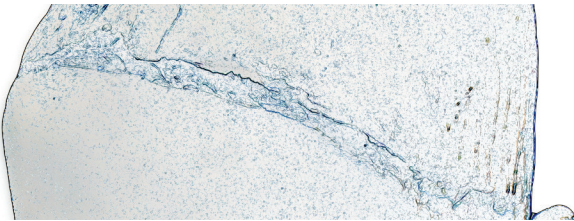
Therefore, as one who cultivates and practices visual art I am tasked with placing on the record my... my what exactly? My feelings, my techniques, my cognitions, my place in art history, my manifesto, my philosophy of art, my influences, all of these? An impossible task, one that will not make me merry and certainly will not result in merriment for my reader. However, because I must enter something into the record, I declare the following:

I believe that art is a *relationship* between the work and you, the participant. This relationship is reciprocal: ideas, feelings, insights, knowledge, and occasionally wisdom flow back and forth between the art **object** and the participant. The currency of this flow is what art really is; art is more of a verb than a noun. Art is not the collection of molecules in the physical object alone. Art is not the constellation of thoughts and feelings in the participant alone. Art is the interaction between the participant and the object. If there is friction between you and the object, so much the better; for out of the heat of conflict arises the smoke of meaning. Art arises from this friction. Indeed, I have named you *participant* to emphasize this relationship; you take part, you share *with* the object, you share *of* the object; you are of equal importance to the object, you are what makes art, art. So where am I in this relationship? I am the instigator of the object; I decide and/or intuit the need for the existence of the object in the world, then when I have deemed the object ready for the world, I send it out into the world; now the relationship, the art, begins. As the instigator, I can, in an artist statement, get you started, gently nudge you in a direction, but it is up to you to write this statement for yourself. I am hopeful that you will give the work more than an indifferent tweet, and humble enough to know that you won't feel compelled to write volumes.

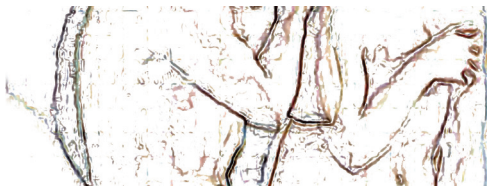
Free Association



There are other nauts, *naut* having come from the Greek word for sailor. There are the *astronauts* and *aquanauts*, sailors of the stars and the waters. The cold war era brought us *cosmonaut*, the Soviet Union needing to distinguish our star sailors from their universe sailors. More recently we have been given *taikonaut* from the Mandarin, *tàikōng*, “space.” So as we venture into outer space, our sailors will remember the places they are from by the names we have given them. Science fiction has given us the *chrononaut*, already a dated term as we sail through time. An unstoppable force, *juggernaut* (in Sanscrit *jagannātha*, “Lord of the Universe”) comes from an Indian chariot parade where a wagon carrying a figure of Krishna is pulled with ropes by the faithful. And when you fall asleep in a skyspace, you might become an *oneironaut*, a sailor of dreams.



Delightful untranslatable words: *Ikigai* (Japanese), the reason for being. The mother of an ice skater is an *Eislaufmutter* (German), used to describe a woman who pushes her children to succeed almost to the breaking point. *Donaldkacsázás* (Hungarian), the wearing of a shirt with no pants at home, à la Donald Duck. *Friolero* (Spanish), a person especially susceptible to cold temperatures. Presumably, a *friolero* would never *donaldkacsázás*. A kind of antonym to *saudade* is *Ayurnamat* (Inuit), the philosophy of not worrying about events than cannot be changed. And finally there is *Mise en abyme* (French), the processes of making an image, literary work, or film that contains (sometimes infinite) references to itself; something Narcissus knows well.

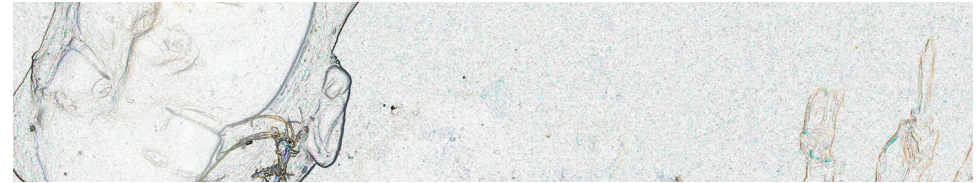


Hubris, Greek, meaning extreme pride or arrogance, makes one immune to shame, but leads to its own difficulties. Those who wish to explore the philosophical underpinnings of shame could start with *Heteronomous*, being subject to a law external to oneself, a form of **advenes**, and its companion antonym *autonomous*.

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Other obscure words employed by Barthes in *Camera Lucida* include *hebetude*, a dullness of mind; *eidetic* is an extraordinary recall of visual images. A sudden enlightenment is *satori*; the principal of continuous growth or change in nature is *physis*, a concept I find exciting and exhausting. *Ecmnesic* is a delirious person in a state in which they imagine themselves as existing before their actual existence, a platonic anamnesiac of sorts. And Barthes uses the word *unary*, meaning a single element in mathematics, a word that always makes me chuckle (I encountered it often in my computer science undergraduate studies) because I always read it as “urinary.”

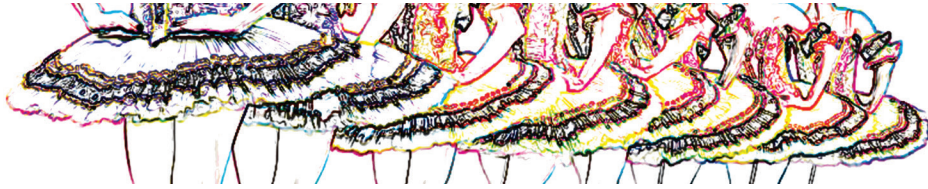


Of course, surrender has military connotations. A commander can demand an *unconditional surrender* of the losing side in a battle or war. Curious that surrender is demanded at all of the loser. Perhaps the surrender is really about humiliation and psychological control. *Rendition* is a word that came back into circulation in recent wartime: it is the act of surrendering place or property and is also rooted in the French word *rendre*.

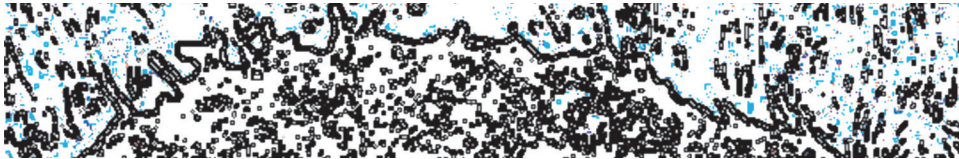


Words from the world of rhetoric: “Where shall I begin?” uses *Aporia*, from the Greek a—without/poros—passage. It is a rhetorical technique used to express (often feigned) doubt. Ovid wrote, “I flee who chases me, and chase who flees me,” an example of *Chiasmus*, where the first part of an expression is balanced by the second part with a reversal of words. Some writers add an unusual word to the end of a sentence as further explanation, which really does not help at all, an *epexegetis*. NyQuil® is a hodgepodge do-it-all medicine, so marketers used *synathroesmus*, a word pile up, in an advertising tag line: “The night-time sniffing, sneezing, coughing, aching, stuffy head, fever, so-you-can-rest medicine.”

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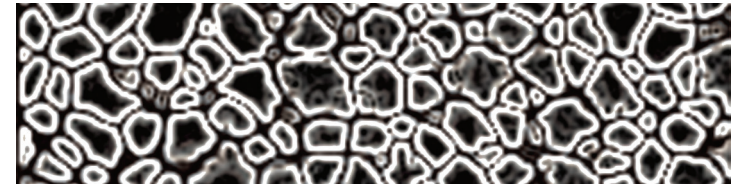


Masculine has a myriad of meanings. It can indicate the gender of a word. English has precious few gendered words; blond (masculine) and blonde (feminine) come to mind. Poems have masculine rhyming schemes when a rhyme occurs between lines ending in a stressed syllable. Likewise, music has a masculine cadence when the final chord occurs on a strong beat. Of course masculine can refer to gender; an early dubious example usage from 1545: “Yf the ryghte breste slake or flagge, the masculyne or male byrth is in parell: yf the left, the female byrthe.” Allen Ginsberg wrote, “The great betrayal of that manly America was made by the pseudo-heroic pseudo-responsible masculines of Army and Industry,” showing us that masculine can mean simply “men,” although I detect a note of sarcasm in Ginsberg’s “masculines.” Finally, a most obscure masculine is the masculine apricot, which is a small, early ripening fruit, delicious no doubt.



Pathos, *ethos*, and *logos* are three modes of persuasion used in rhetoric. *Pathos* is to argue with passion, to appeal to the audience’s emotions. *Ethos* (Greek for “character”) is to persuade by appealing to the audience’s respect for the authority of the speaker. *Logos* (a complex Greek word, but for our purposes here it means “a principle of order and knowledge”) is a demonstration of logical coherence of the argument. These concepts are also employed by the artist or by those in the art world who have a vested interest (gallerists, reviewers, art historians, etc.). An artist can infuse the work with *pathos*, passion in the making, passion in the subject. *Ethos* surrounds the artist and/or the artwork, lending an air of authority to the work. An art object can possess a degree of internal coherence, a kind of logic, an it-makes-sense-ness inside the work, a *logos* of its own. Artists should strive for a balance between these three modes; I have produced many instances of “bad art,” where one or more of these modes are out of balance. Too much passion and the message (*logos*) gets lost. Too much *logos* and no *pathos*, why should the perceiver care? Not enough *ethos*, no one will pay attention.

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I use Vaseline® while sculpting wax to fill in porous spaces, to prevent wax from being deposited in unwanted pits and crags. The word comes from the German *wasser* (water), the Greek *elaion* (oil), and the scientific sounding “ine.” The word was invented by Robert A. Cheesebrough, owner of the manufacturer of Vaseline®, under the mistaken belief that petroleum is created underground by heat and pressure on rocks and water.



Noli me tangere, “touch me not.” These words were spoken by Jesus to Mary Magdalene when she saw him for the first time after his resurrection. She impulsively reaches out to him, needs to feel him, to see if he is real. There is a kind of “touch me not” moment with advenes. It is the moment when we reach out to the object when it advenes. We want to touch, but cannot.



Sometimes we forget or don’t bother with the name of an object and substitute a nonsense word in its place. Some replacements: dingus (1876, US); tingum (The Bahamas); thingamajig (1824, US); thingummy (1737, US); whiblin (1604, UK); jiggumbob (1625, UK); know-not-what (1642, US); whatsit (1882, US); doohickey (1914, US); what-d’ye-call-’em (1639, UK). “I..gave her a sound spurinne (to strike with the foot) upon the Buttocks:..O my what doe you call’t, said shee.” (John Taylor, *Divers Crabtree Lecture*, 1639)

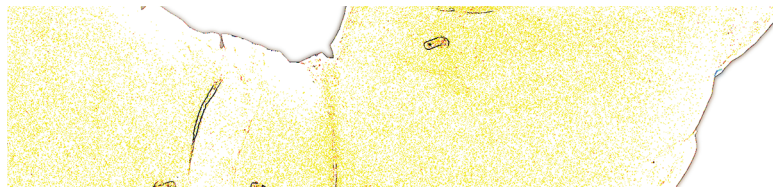
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Ceci n'est pas une pipe

Linguists differentiate between types of deictic words. There is the *spatial* and the *temporal*. *Spatial* comes from the Latin *spatium*, a multipurpose noun meaning space, room, square (as in a public gathering place), racetrack, or interval of time. From the Latin *temporalis* we get *temporal*. *Temporalis* is a bit more disciplined than *spatium*. It means temporary, due to a lapse of time, with a time limit. Notice the connection between space and time, always “united by an eternal coitus.”

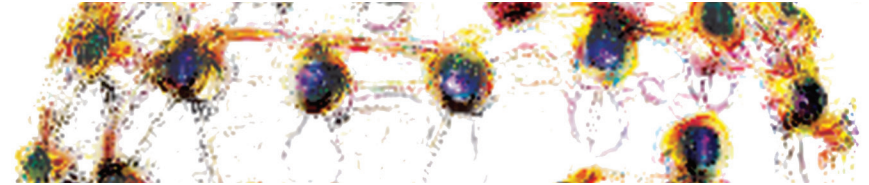


Art and social critic John Ruskin (1819–1900) is quoted 3,232 times in the Oxford English Dictionary, representing 0.1% of all the quotations in this gigantic dictionary. Three Ruskin quotes on sight, sound, and scent found in the Oxford English Dictionary that fill me with joy: “The blue of distance, however intense, is not the blue of a bright blue flower.” “A little belfry of grain-bells, all a-chime.” “No velvet-bound missal, nor frankincensed manuscript.”

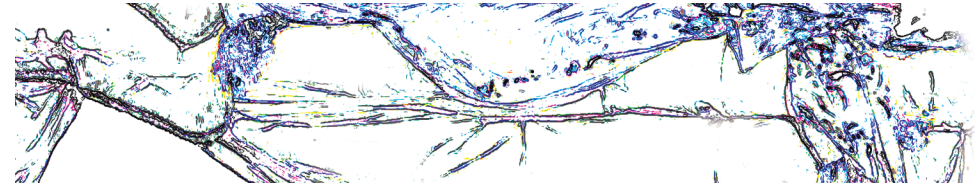


Some obscure meanings for body: the main stem of a plant; the part of a dress that covers the body as contrasted with the arms, etc.; a leotard-like garment; the part of a car where the driver and passengers sit; the fuselage of an airplane; the middle isle of a church; the hull of a ship; the shaft of a pillar; the main portion of a bone; the foundation of a felt or silk hat; the size or height of type; an heir who is a lineal descendant; a title of a personal attendant, i.e., an Esquire of the body; a specified type of person. “Let me be Open-handed, to Relieve Poor bodies on Earth; And Open-hearted also; to help my Neighbours Souls towards Heaven.” (Benjamin Jenks, 1704)

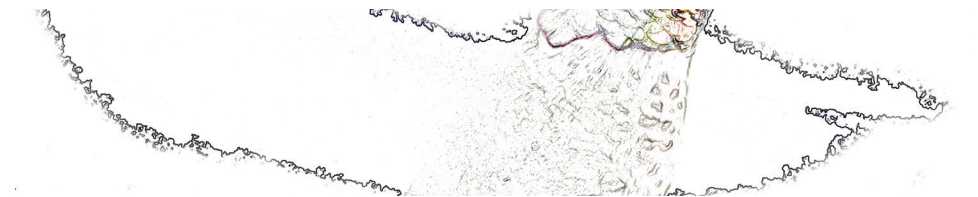
Free Association



People have dreamed up more oneiric related words than you can imagine. There is *oneirocritic*, someone who interprets dreams. If you interpret dreams in an attempt to predict the future you are practicing *oneiromancy*. An *oneirologist* is a scientist who studies dreams, an *oneironaut* of sorts. Wouldn't it be fun to invite all of these dreamers to a dinner party? Just be sure not to invite an *oneirophobic* guest.

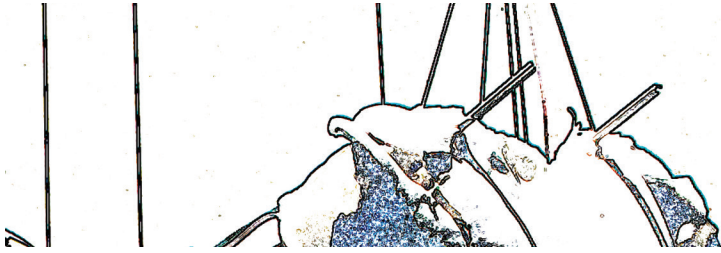


The ancient Greeks distinguished four kinds of love: *eros*, of course, but also *philia*, “to have affection for,” *agape*, “a deep sense of affection,” and *storge*, “familial love.” Pity that we only have “love” in English. Each time we use this word we need context or paragraphs of explanation to avoid embarrassment or misunderstanding. I recall a conversation I had with my model for Narcissus as I poured liquid silicone on his body to capture the shape of his geometry. We mused that each person we love, we love in a different way. There ought to be a unique word for each of our loves, a word that is reserved for our love of that person alone.

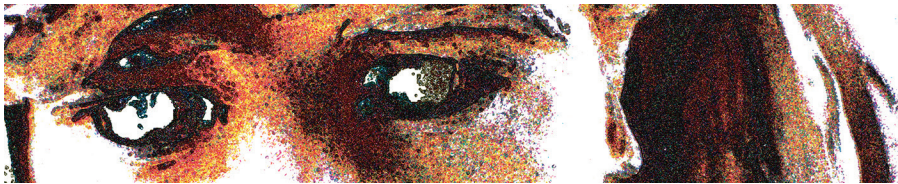


Frequentative verbs are, well, not very frequent in English. Some examples paired with their original/frequentative forms: Bat/Batter. Jig/Jiggle. Mud/Muddle. Piss/Piddle. Spark/Sparkle. Wrest/Wrestle. Flick/Flicker. Stride/Straddle. And what is the original form of the frequentative hover? It's “hoven,” of course.

Free Association



My cohort, the “Class of Trans,” has **introduced** (in the original sense of the word) a T-shirt full of trans- words to celebrate our graduation. A few of the interesting ways to go across, over, and beyond featured on the shirt: *Transude*, “to ooze out through pores”; *transferrin*, a protein that delivers dietary iron to the liver, a transferring-ferrous-ion-tein; a word coined in World War II, *transponder*, is a device that automatically retransmits what it receives via radio, sonar, or radar signals; a *transceiver* will receive these signals. Any element with an atomic number greater than 92 is radioactive and is *transuranic*, meaning “beyond uranium.”



Since I was a child I have been fascinated by surface *tension* (from the Latin *tensionem*, “a stretching”), the phenomenon of the “cohesive energy present at an interface,” as an engineer might phrase it. Skilled *baristas* (“a bartender in a coffee shop,” an English word, in use since 1982) use surface tension to create beautiful cappuccinos when the foam extends up and beyond the lip of the cup. A barista attending engineering school might use a *tensiometer* to measure the tension on the surface of the cup. I am forever grateful for surface tension for two reasons: 1) Without it I could not have used polyurethane foam in the construction of my Narcissus sculpture, and 2) I get high praise from my partner for my breakfast lattes, piled high with foam.

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Bibliography, “the writing of books,” was coined in the 1670s. In 1869, the meaning shifted to mean “a list of books that form the literature of a subject.” I don’t claim that this list forms the literature of art, however it is my list of books. Each of these titles contributed in some way to my thinking for this process paper.

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