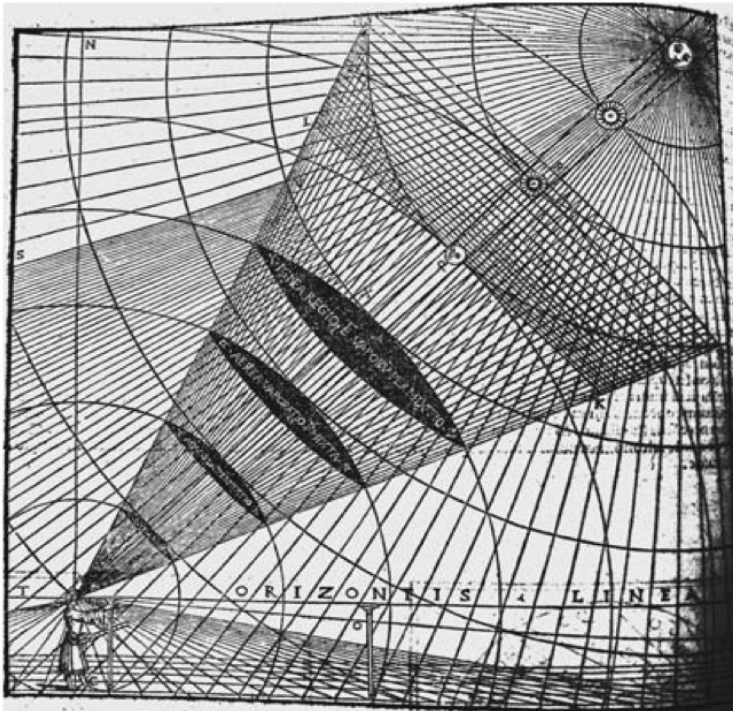


patrick farmer
small as my jupiter finger
an epistolary dialogue
with Rita Evans's
Respondents

written between April 8th / May 8th 2024



Cesare Cesariano - De Architectura

patrick farmer
small as my jupiter finger



Cosmic Intaglios



Minerals Who Sing



Red Winged Mermaid



Sound's Lingual Gorge



Shape Like Moon Changes



Shamanic Vertebrae



Cosmic Intaglios



The poem holds its ground on its own margin.

Paul Celan

Dear Rita

These letters revolve around individuation as reverse instar, where opening the mouth of sculpture is to hover above space of one's surrounding fields as obverse ecdysis, when to sculpt is to be sculpted, phenomenal hollowness of self as welcomed fossil and speaking stone, magic imponderable dreaming as poly historic being.

Skin of stars in there and out here is accumulative heuristic experience through practised alchemical animation and psychic maturation, weaving tough and tender mothers of spinning brains as Orphic toys that hear through subarachnoid boundaries toward multiple divine hypostases.

Writing to you through the mediums of your work has become an attempt to transduce these unconscious processes through mythic images that subsist in the places between performer and sculpture as entity, a place that, when touched, opens out into a fan of a thousand segments. Through the balletic lightning field of *Respondents*, individuation flickers as a series of patterned thresholds, closer to multiplicity than unity, embracing the

transitory subsistence of Proteus and Thalassa, marble and schist.

Such alchemically induced field contains a vocabulary that listens, nodes superimposed with multiple facets and times, all above one another, counteracting fragmentation wrought by rational analysis alone. Origin and end are far from two, multi-dimensional anatomy as archetypal labyrinth, metaphoric–mycelial–meander pattern enveloping and enveloped by (enfolding yet frozen) myth–light–sound–root.

An aura of context flows with sonic excess under *Respondents*, an entoptic forest of duckweed and watermeal, Butoh and Bauhaus, Ray Birdwhistell and Kinesics, the votive woodcuts of *The Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and Simone Moschino's sculptures in the Park of Monsters, Ariadne dancing out of her labyrinth as crane, Buckminster Fuller and Synergetics, frustules of diatoms and mirror neurons, authentic movement and sympathetic magic, the asymmetrical spectral reflections of Emma Kunz's vibratory messages and the spirit drawings of Georgiana Houghton, Louis Agassiz and maturation, Taoism and mystical metallurgy, Aleph and the fourth dimension, calligrams of the Hurufis, an alphabet of stones and trees... Invisible wholeness intones the apertures of *Respondents*, and I hope to come into some sort of dynamic relation when these letters unfold toward themselves.

Perceived from a distance up close, holes appear as latticed spiral variations of cellular scenery, each letter manifests through mirrored effluvium of oscillating crystal, writing as gazing through triboelectricity

of psychosomatic individuation as psychomanteum, insoluble wholeness wherein psyche is contained by soma and soma contained by psyche.

Carl Jung spoke about individuation as a kind of life dynamism in which consciousness realises themselves as a split and separated personality that yearns toward union with their unknown and unknowable partners (character, sculpture, entity, wrack), otherwise known as self. Individuation is a pathway, a process both hodological and labyrinthine ever in stages and states of maturation wherein humans are not so much a self (a single chord becoming audible throughout a life), but mass and particles within mass, vibratory energies of cell-self-similar personified natures creating phase space of frequencies as orchestrations of cosmic comedy, exciting imagination to release themselves temporarily (to eject, the 'right' time, the 'right' temperature, as mystical dehiscence) from compensation and one-sidedness.

One awakens at times to cosmos amidst bell curves of subtle mind as particles settle on one's brow, drifting cells from far flung ocean-mountains and solar-valleys that seek their mysterious parentage in all substance as alchemy of sound in a rainbow. Projecting imagination onto substance (picture red cinnabar heated in a furnace until it sweats mercury) is alchemical animation of the red salamander and the collocation of Mercurius in the great pelican, the birth of the red lion, the coming of the eagle... Alchemists have hundreds upon hundreds of similes, and many named their apparatus after animals and gods, pelican, for example, is a standard distillation apparatus, the Hermetic vas, the house of glass where

mouth opens to belly. Substances would be collected, ground, powdered, refired and mixed, refired again, and in the process, they would live a waking dream, animating with imagination, ligatures of seedpods and scorpion tails shaped under a sphere of sulphuric light.

Part of the difficulty with alchemy is that it often seems far out of reach, it is so often caught up in Cartesian vocabularies, such as the split (as opposed to the flip), staunch and literal causality cathecting with three-dimensional space devoid of soul, conservation of matter and energy, and so forth. But the difficulty is the necessity of cultivating alchemical language, or a field under which this can take place, where mind and world pour together as plasmoidal silicates.

Many alchemical recipes are designed to wipe out the boundaries between waking and sleeping, self and other, and often last for forty days. Imagine a hermit, fearing discovery by the church, trying to keep the fires in balance, working day into night until such boundaries dissolve to reveal worlds of imaginal projection, and then, in the swirling of their tools, in the chemical processes of the retort, they begin to project and shape their consciousness with transubstantiating substance, a cosmic choreography thread through *Respondents*.

To sit with your work on either side of Iris (evolution of eye found in myth and rainbow) is to constantly move eye to eye and so participate in transition between wrestling and cradling, iridescent skin upon which performer and sculpture coagulate as dancer and entity, as if a peacock had

spread wide his shimmering fan, reflecting a colour spectrum that is the pris-matted ground upon which *Respondents* takes place.

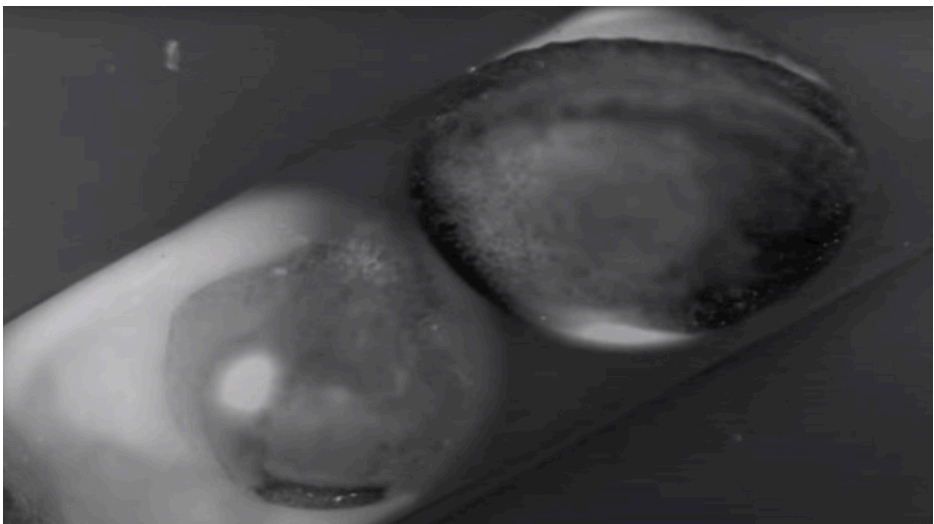
The adumbral impulse of 16th century alchemist, Paracelsus, exemplifies this ability to liquefy categories through animate fluidity of psyche and substance, learning to read their messages, probing and listening as participatory echo poetics, taking care to not burn the flowers, to not prematurely conclude or delimit processes of alchemical individuation, for fear of vitrification, turning psyche to glass.

There is poetry at the reverberating centres of *Respondents*, moon moments, a silver state akin to a radial prism from which stems and grows knowledge of metals, elements, plants, a seed, dissolved in and tinged with blueish air. Time lived in correspondence mirrors the movements (and moves the mirrors) of performer and sculpture as holistic dissolution of layers (I've tried to picture your work from underneath as much as above and face to rock face) through integration as well as the various stages of the project that you were kind enough to show me. The whole appears as individuation of an immortal cell.

In the early 1930s, Harold Saxton Burr devised a series of experiments demonstrating that all living organisms (and all organisms live) are surrounded and encompassed by their own life fields. Burr studied trees for decades, and discovered that changes in their life fields corresponded to cosmic and atmospheric phenomena such as moon, sunspots, and thunderstorms. Burr also detected a field of energy in frog's eggs, realising

that nervous system would later develop in accord within such an outline, that the life field is an organising bodily matrix, chaos chaos, neti neti.

There is magic beyond genetic code, and amidst the myriad vortices of life fields, bioelectrical signalling plays a significant role in morphological and subtle communication. Around 2011, biologist Dany Adams was filming the early stages of *Xenopus* tadpole development, and in a moment of intuition, left their camera on overnight, encountering an electric face the next morning, grasping the magic.



Dany Adams - Electric Face

The above image shows two frog embryos dancing around radium pools. Light flashes on the left-side embryo relate to an electric potential tracing an outline of a face to come, as if looking through sky, a virtual face exists in potential and then vanishes. The image shows a black and white

soundless sphere as superposition.

Whilst a frog embryo is crystallising, before they grow a recognisable face, a pattern for that face lights up on the surface of the embryo. . . As cells divide, lines and shapes glow and disappear. A mark where the mouth will form appears and reappears in plasmoid flux. A glow, situating a future eye, appears briefly on one side. Sub-moments later, a corresponding mote flashes on the other as moire.

Vertiginous time-lapse photography is a staple of nature documentaries as blithe offering to domesticated electricity, but this feels different. Their features didn't 'actually' exist, many of the genes that are linked to development hadn't even been turned on, or resonated. It's after the patterns fade, that we perceive the ghost of features yet to come.

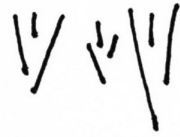
The particularity of forms that arise over the course of a life is unique to each person as a collective immanence of individuation (every individual form, says Goethe, is shaped through circumstances toward circumstances, even in the most unusual form inheres the archetypal image... which reminds me of Rudolf Steiner, who felt medicine to be a reunification, often using *strophantus* as an example, as he believed said plant was carved off at the same time as heart was forming), the wholes of parts, the ghosts in between, these can be preferences and performances of colours, scents, a vagus-ear for the ultra-nuance of emotions, minerals, organ correspondences, tissues salts, sympathy, animals, mother tinctures, planets, stars, and so on, a circumambient atmosphere to which no definite

limits can be set.

Development of personality from germ state to full consciousness is charisma and curse, coagulant energy, rising and falling with unconscious in symbolic forms. As Goethe said, there is left to us a remnant, difficult to carry... and the same can be said for archetypal life fields, which can't be exhausted entirely, there is always the one wing, says Marie Von Franz, which reaches back into the unknown. An invisible connection within any image is part of their soul, and through writing with *Respondents*, I dream of their meeting.



Rita Evans, Respondents - Chapter 4



During Plato's Symposium (just after Eryximachus expands upon human love as love of all creatures), the comic Aristophanes recounts a dream, a sort of erotic anthropology, in which we were once other than we are, hermaphrodites with rounded backs, wholes, he calls us/them. Balled up concupiscent spheres, inexorable appearances of four hands and four feet, springing like cicadas from earth.

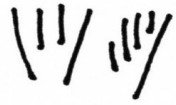
Limits were soon imposed however, we tenebrous ancestors painted our faces with greed as octave of pinna and stone ruttled with scent and smell on top of the crumbling foundations of hubris. Rampant with swollen arrogance and obsessive fornication we tore the lids off our eyes and spoke of climbing Olympus to have at the beasts on the mountain. We few that survived relented to the evolution of anatomy as our genitals quietly found their way. Flung among indenture and basso-relievo we farmed our obsessive and tacit impulse among the dappled light and flitting shade of almond forest and bog asphodel.

There is always some aspect of bother, of noise, in these creation myths, and so each human, sliced in half, felt half whole. This halfness bothers me... ostensibly, the myth lays out that we are always looking for our human other, driven by erotic desire to be joined, fused by Hephaestus, deity of fire, smiths, artisans, one might even say alchemists.

As Aristophanes tells it, Hephaestus was ready to fuse and weld humans back together, into a ball, from being two we might be made one, sharing a single life, and a single death.

It seems to me that such a meeting does not approach multiplicity as much as cement delineation between human and other, leaving us wandering the world convinced of our wholeness and yet feeling further and further a part, akin to finding our other only to find a mirror, an edge we do everything in our power to convince ourselves is otherwise, Eros as insurmountable lack.

Not that there is ever really a simple difference, but this notion of lack in relation to terrestrial identity, of needing to be made whole, permanently, a need to recover what was 'lost' in order to feel 'complete', it differs, in certain ways, from what I've been thinking about through a questioning of the process of individuation as an endless engagement with cosmos, where Aristophanes's story becomes archetypal theatre of ever arriving dream, a psychic organ present in all of us as cosmic comic chant. *Respondents* leaps amongst pleromata of psychic configurations as hologrammatic fairy tale.



For a whole now I've been thinking about what the writer Wilson Harris calls the frame of conventional realism (an overly literal and linear mindset, able to somehow justify and repress that an abuse of nature is not also an abuse of self, akin to a premature conclusion of the process of individuation, depriving images of their mythic energies, forcing dream and fantasy into doctrinal compliance), and how it endorses the absence of cosmic love.

Harris's novel, *The Palace of the Peacock* (a place the characters enter as they undergo their second death), symbolises indestructible harmony as heart of cosmos, alchemical undertow of unfinished knowledge as cyclical time, where we can meet soul in image as extension of spirit into far-flung responsibilities within fluid ecologies of mirrored souls. The pathology that we mimic, if we subliminally root in conventional realism alone, is the death of cosmic love.

If we break archetypes (though part of me doubts archetypes themselves break, there is an impossible wholeness to them) they can appear as paradigms, and yet this process can bring to the surface numerous factors that take us deep into the present-past, a conversion of strife's boundaries helping us question fallacious absolutes, the many all-too-human crises that reappear in the present.

A broken archetype (or what appears to be) can therefore become a re-visionary dynamic (in all their factors and strands, dynamisms and formalities) that we may address and immerse ourselves in within the miasma of space-time (biological unconscious), crossing boundaries into a renewal of an archetypal life of imagination, seeking to cut roots and entrain with raucous consciousness and language of bombast.

Conventional realism is nature-mute, water no long talks, if we no longer think we hear. It may describe events but the frame it utilises reinforces limits of literal and singular existence, consolidating convention and paradigm as oft unconscious Saturnian wall-making and inflated Martial separation wherein a mythically deficient language is hemmed by egoic frame that underestimates the ubiquity of life fields.

Sympatheia (sympathy - fellow feeling - a state of being touched together) is partly a Stoic term regarding an intrinsic connection between all life, a unique affinity between those of a similar nature, from smallest organisms to planetary bodies. I bring this to mind as a return of, not a return to, I've no interest in the Stoic *scala naturae*, a humanist hierarchy of the natural world, similar to the chain of being, that ranks everything according to quality, use, organisation, activity...

We need change everything, especially literal language devoid of electromagnetism and mystery, we need gather cosmos as body and body as cosmos through careful root cutting, as the unfathomable depth of an image, beyond taproot, is love, including their slippery darts of

complexity. Whose bodies are we looking at? What are our ideas of our selves?

Qualities and properties of material substance are also part of their surrounding fields, they are not confined to a nucleus, but ever changing configurations of energy-matter. Life fields are becoming archetypal life fields in the propinquity of *Respondents* as performer and sculpture blur and bend each other's edges, adding further implication of depth, of dream roots.

Conventional realism affirms that when we move someone(thing) around we are shuffling primary matter, affecting physical matter (this material level of causation remains a dominant paradigm), but we do not perceive with soul, regardless of the constant changes with which they subsist. So here we are evoking archetypes, where Steiner's one-to-one relationship (between strophantus and heart) is an illustration, not an absolute, of the peculiar correspondences between the dynamics of external substances and distinct patterns of psychosomatic functioning, where external substance (sculpture) and soma-psyche (performer) act as if they're different, while nevertheless interacting and corresponding through degrees of sympathetic qualities, specific resonances, and archetypal roots. We don't so much point at archetypes, as archetypes themselves, point.

Some Stoics believe that there is nothing we can do to affect spirit and their myriad bodies, fate rules the world, all things are fixed, laws are immutable. The world has their own rationality and will execute that fated

path regardless of our efforts and emotions. Spirit is carrier, medium, Logos. Stoics prepare for, and accept, their fate. And yet... examples of intervention abound. Correspondences of ritual, magic, medicine, designed to assert will, to affect change and co-partner, reach back and forth from Ancient Greece, Egypt, Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, Babylon and mantic bodies, and so on...

Everyone in the universe is suffused, is animated, everyone has spirit, corresponding to terrestrial-celestial bodies and energies, telluric-stellar rays. Bodies of deities are everywhere, and everyone affectively corresponds with them, part-wholes in a fractal universe where self-same phenomena are happening again and again over and over at different scales. Mars's body is a planet and a needle.

To animate is to work with and be worked on by archetypal energies, re-aligning certain pre-disposed, organisational patterns and products of thought, into ways of thinking, ways of receiving, encountering a melee of energetic patterns that exist alongside what we would nominally refer to as anatomy. Withdrawing our projections, becoming more conscious of where they land, and how they feel. As this stellar nursery leads away from cosmic isolation, comic Aristophanes begins to remind me of the phrase, myths never were but always are, and his spagyric feels like an Anthropocene fable. Cosmic comic love as conscious animation (waiting to see what the stars will bring), an ethics as old as coition of hills and waves channelled in our bodies, a dying fall into deeper orchestration of mutuality, imaginalis.



Evidently there is more at play than edges alone, more preconscious, transpersonal communication happening in sympathy with cosmos where an open question in mind of *Respondents*, why do we choose the materials we do? leads to the erring macrocosm of why they also choose us... why and how we think what we think... why we develop the ideas we do... how we take the paths we take... What roles do memory and dream play in this choosing outside the barricaded walls of terrestrial ego that cuts the root but often leaves them to die?

This is part of a continuity of strangely insoluble wholeness, where the apparent differences between ‘inner’ psychological and ‘outer’ material events seem to be somewhat irrelevant. When materials can’t reach us, or be assimilated psychologically by ego-consciousness, they may, in order to be realised and worked with, manifest in forms of outer event patterns.

Every life field in this insoluble wholeness represents a gestalt of circumscribed personality traits and qualities, memories, frequencies, temperaments and emotional propensities in conjunction (akin to morphic resonance fields and akasha, where such terms are not a term limited by human definition alone), so we can imagine if not assume that for every possibility of human affliction (whether lack or otherwise, affection and infection being too close to ultimately pry apart) there exist many resonant, corresponding substances ‘out there’.

Such gestalt totality is one reason why we are drawn to, why we attract, substances with which we compose, people with whom we collaborate, the humus of community, psychic humuskind! Spiritual ecologies grow in myriad shifting overlaps, trans-material fields of psyche and soma, medicinal and aesthetic, spiritual and creative, going with, not against, ground as psycho-somatic totality.

Who would say, unequivocally, categorically, that we are the only ones who are people? Who truly know what it is to be people, or peopled? What if world projected that category upon us? What if world were a person? A chimera of personas in homeostatic community...



A zone of odious categorisation within a differentiated continuum (and I really have no problem with framing this so bluntly) is our strict separation of life from lifelessness, animate from inanimate, conscious from unconscious.

One way we can listen to this is in the differences of Chronos and Kairos time, quantitative and qualitative as interwoven fluid Aion. We have such little understanding of Kairos, of the qualitative aspects of substances that help structure our worlds. Quantitative analyses (the chemistry of minerals, plants, animal life, and so on), is of course indelibly valuable, but the qualitative, the moods, souls, archetypal images, the many personalities of substances, is often lacking in conscious awareness.

I find one way to think (as way of thinking, not product) with this homeostatic polarity (the moods of the elements of our surroundings) is with flower essences. Edward Bach, whom I mention here primarily for ease of reference, but must also thank Danielle Vogel, Fern Thomas, Steve Johnson, Ian White, Jen Frey, Pam Montgomery, Emma Farrell... suggested that many flowers have particular qualities that are, in Bach's words, exact equivalences of human emotions (which of course we need think of 'the other way' too).

Bach found through delicate and consistent attunement (a highly personal nature of listening with and without ear to the tuning vibration of plants, to feel with those who are invisible), that the flowers of, for example, mimulus, are a positive representation of human fear, which is to say he feels the wildly diverse emotion of human fear can be held by mimulus flower, likewise, the verdant blue of chicory is a manifestation of love.

For Bach this is not solely a metaphor, but the physical presence of a thought form (a psychoid state of participation, perhaps invitation, potential mutualism, if not symbiosis, an archetype, pointing...), cooperative and interwoven patterns of positive and negative charge, merging and shimmering energy fields and mattered edges.

Basic concepts of psyche and substance are here suspended, the notion of separateness as living and conscious beings in a purportedly unconscious world needs much reassessment, a Gaia hypothesis that is more than mere hypothesis, more than a single earth goddess, cosmos as living breathing entities upon and with whom our psychic bodies are sub-functions more than sub-function.

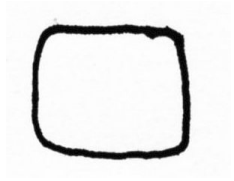
Our consciousness grows from and with substances and psyches we draw to us and are drawn to, it follows that it's we who are less likely to comprehend our parental consciousness. All particles in histories of cosmos have met other particles in adumbral dimensions, we are exponentially emptying and filling. Cosmos is a vast nest of webbed energies that remain in contact with one another over any distance in no

time, a weft of correlations in and between form and field, function and behaviour, as well as outer-world and human morphologies and functional dynamics. These correspondences connote patterns underlying and overarching human microcosm and outer macrocosm in mutual analogy and diffraction.

Moving through oxygen as thick as ink, the sculptures of *Respondents* appear soft in relation, gelatinous, unsegmented bodies encased in calcareous shells, corresponding to human skulls, themselves enclosing and protecting jelly-like brain, a co-terminus walling off of inside and outside that is present in each phase expression through difference as exemplified through interwoven experiences of light and dark, states bulbing with iodine, agar and allium... Here, the diversity of physical, morphologic, even behavioural characteristics of a substance, correspond to different phases of expression and movement within such an holistic energy field, as if aura turned inside out.

This is not so much to do with transcending, but extending, channelling limits of individual existence through cosmological intra-action. Think of a human vessel (as daemon) in the genius of imagination, symbolising elements within themselves and beyond themselves, richer and stranger than identity, the natures of salt and willow, the multitudinous fabric of cosmos within human heart rooted in living land. A fracture (or is it a fractal) lifted into the abyss (or is bliss) of the conjunctio.

‘Appending’ life to a substance, listening closely to their inaudible stories, acknowledging their psyche, is not a guarantee of ethics (in fact it can border on the same old humanism, the granting of agency), but at the very least, it’s to imagine that we are all a part of each other, actually and virtually, changing the idea of human being.



Thousands of images are held in crystal as memory, and it's felt to me at times, coming to know your work, like I am peering into oscillating quartz of archetypal fiction as spirit mirror, watching a tincture of images in multi-dimensional soul making of immeasurable wavelengths as phantoms, a zoetrope of pure lumina shining on bodies of meridians, revealing holes, amplified by silica, an essence of subtle beams.

The emergence of the peacock's tail in the alchemical opus heralded the imminent end of the work and the attainment of its goal. The voice or cry or lament, joy and pain, in every trapped/released creature, is the mystery of self-knowledge.

Wholeness is made up as much of unconscious as conscious life and otherwise, the differences between the sounds we make and the sounds we hear as concussion, the cries of a peacock cracking open under the weight of cosmos, whilst also cracking open cosmos, a dialogue of dancer and sculpture, anima and animus.

Respondents (dreamt as a concentric series of central rings circling atoms of magnesium and iron as cell-formations of inner vegetal patterns, iron filings hidden in floating aural vacuum) flickers as plant and human, self-similar manifestations of heart-fields producing mirrored images of

symbiotic rims in molecular loops magically aligned as energy fields of specific physiological qualities.

Breathe calcifies around dancer and sculpture in various states of being and shell via different configurations of a shell encased body, wrestling fear as the ghost of an experience, cradling fear as knowledge of the potential of loss. Calcium can't permeate a cell by themselves, they need vitamin d (who resonates as photon) to pull them inside, liberated from stark contingency. Everyone that is invisible in us becomes visible as dialogue of tissue and salt, chalk and chlorophyll, calcium and magnesium oscillate membranous permeability as gut language, kinetic registration of ganglia as tethered outer foam.

Paracelsus said that every human is a cosmos with all stars within their selves, holding a kind of devotion to material who resonate in time with everyone that has ever happened to us, and is still alive with us. Performer and sculpture are nodes of such wave formations as lion door (subtle door, ensouled and ensoiled, osmotic archetypal portal that, when opened, allows us to see through earthen literalism into metaphor, imaginal earth - terre pure - lion door as midden of psyche and substance), enfolding past, present and future (prophetic time as algal time), incipient openings that take nothing for granted, thresholds toward cosmic love and strife (over identification with either/or manifesting as edges of broken archetypes) that distend layers of space and dream (through which collective unconscious bulbs as mystery of creative and re-creative dynamics of consciousness).

Crossing back and forth between sheets of metal and their chimeras (a lightning field upon which elements write with chalk as piezoelectricity), inner-outer voices of daemones exude in peristaltic rhythms limbed with momentum of omens, hatching permeable boundaries as renewal of archetypal life.

Minerals Who Sing



This world is the closed door. It is a barrier.

And at the same time it is the way through.

Simone Weil

Dear Rita

I started to write these letters during the total eclipse in Aries. I was in Sheffield. I was thinking before I began (or is it after...) that I'd try and follow a labyrinthine method as meander image, as there are so many layers to your work, and those layers themselves resonate in myriad ways, it's difficult (if not nonsensical) to try and do anything but follow the multiplicitous spectra that emerge in between performer and sculpture, psyche and soma, as there is a presence, an archetypal fiction that roams and responds, primordial dialogue as electromagnetic reappearance of spiral time glimpsed through crystal, a schematic for correlation of field, polar opposition and complementary expression.

I've been trying to think about collaboration as a vessel of composite ecology, infused with many voices. Entity of community and self that one has. A topology of imagination as unity of place, where previous pasts are futures and gestational eclipse is cosmos centred human. Each past awaiting new language, future both vernix and vernal.

Every letter feels like it is both background and foreground with your project. One stacked on top the other. Held in respondent imagery.

Experiences that fall together in conjunction are often held apart as opposites, and so confronting one another in strife can feel similar at times, to attracting one another in love. Such polarity, alchemically speaking, is often arranged as quaternity, with two opposites passing through each other, four elements, four humours, four directions, four seasons, and so on. Jung says this often produces the cross as emblem of four elements, symbols of sublunar worlds, appearing in zodiacal signs. In the view of inherent alchemical ambiguity however (as much ethical as physical) there is a blending and mixing that in so many ways has been, and came to be, called monstrous.

This cross, treated in a more fluid fashion, is tantamount to cilia, aural and otherwise. We picture a cross as sublunary symbol, but with cilia, there is an inherent dynamism, a voltage and volatility, a perspective ever changing, because we are told anatomically speaking we 'have' inner and outer hair cells in our ears, but such delineations to me are just one layer of our energetic mesh, much more intriguing is to consider their shape and morphology in light of internal alchemy as animate reception.

Scholars of the I Ching place image as link between thought and word, where word leads to image that elicits, image in turn leads to thought that is contained in them, to which they give presence. In this sense we might say that emptiness equates not so much to quietude, but to seeing in

darkness, hearing in silence.

Image as outgrowth of alchemical vocabulary can constitute a composite configuration of language, a pattern, a figurative path, hodology as labyrinthine process, enfolding a soft mimicry in which certain entities that refer to each other resonate and are charged with different levels of existence that can become temporarily co-terminus and entangled with regard their undulating meanings and quarrelsome edges. Images are beginnings of movement and immobility. Yin and yang (sun and moon and and and) within ourselves do not have a ultimate form that we can find, necessitating a language of images.

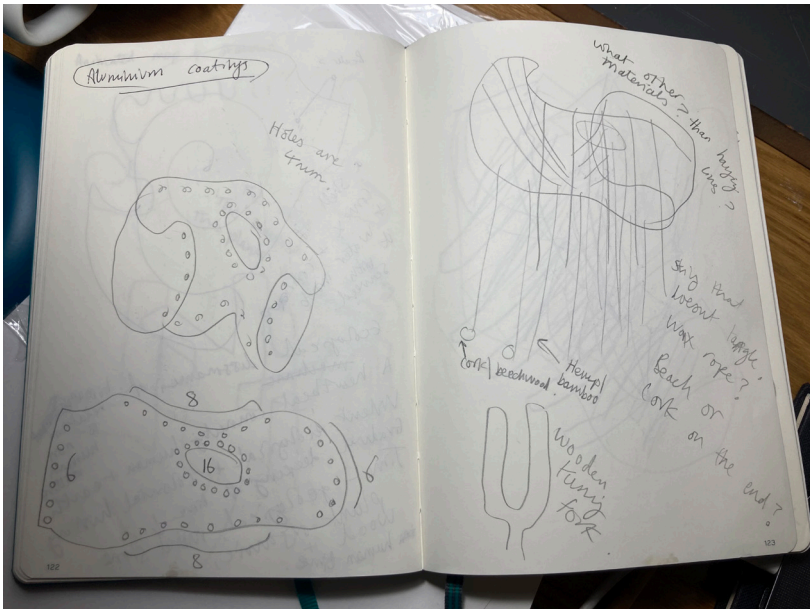
To correspond is to weave different layers of meaning vertically and horizontally, whilst trying not to pin them down. Images as alchemical language organised into motile kinship configurations can take the place of one another at any moment as alteration of consciousness, each being capable of assuming different functions and variations of meaning.

What I mean by this is that one image can pertain to many different registers of meaning, and a meaning, which we'll call an element, can be represented by several images. This is a lingual, alchemical process of dissolving and recombining a term into multiple semantic elements outside of language's insides, arranged in relational as much referential sequences of galvanic meaning unfolding without repose.

At times, during this correspondence, language has been inseparable from negative capability (perceiving *Respondents* through sculptural psyches as much as human senses), cultivating an image language that resonates in mimetic accord, a calcium of shared encounters. Moulded into a different mind of syntax as part of cosmic organism, I'm reminded of a short story you told me about *Respondents*, one that can only be told when you've run out of all the other places to search, and so you have to ask old ways for the way.

Once upon a time there was a woman, a joker, a dragon, and a curious speaking shell.

Respondents opens sculpture's mouth to reveal a yellow river of white and black ghosts resonating entangled lunar mansions like astral plots. A lion heart that is a lion door, a core of silver that has within a heart of lion, yang within yin and yin within yang, their respective contrary elements as process of conjunction of opposites undergoing transformations which holds myriad characters of techne: tripod and furnace, water and fire, masculine and feminine, sun and moon, rhodochrosite and labradorite, turtle and vermilion sparrow, heart and pineal, north and south, ascent and descent, motile complementarity as multiplicitous and veiled whirlpool.



Rita Evans, Respondents - Chapter 4 + preparatory diagrams



I know how the school of Yin and Yang explains it:
When the sun devours the moon, moonlight is quenched.
When the moon covers the sun, sunlight fails.
But this theory does not convince me.
Better what Lao-Tzu said, who taught Confucius:
The five colours blind men's eyes.
Lu T'ung - Eclipse

In his Lexicon of Alchemy, Martin Ruland says that Silver (argentum) is found in conglomerate masses, like buds distributed in the branches of a tree. Agricola testified that he has seen perfect specimens of metallic instruments appearing in silver, such as shovels and small hammers, taken from the ore, and at other times, images of small fish, lions, and wolves. Silver exhibits as a kind of small hairs electrifying their surface, little curls of thread, small twig-like filaments, either white or red. Dendritic impressions, mountains, herbs, and other subjects can form out of pure silver in the bowels of Earth.

Earth is not a dead body but is inhabited by spirit that is life living and soul making. All life, minerals and elements included, draws strength from earth spirit, telluric rays, nourished with entangled stars. Sun, through

their billions of revolutions, spins gold in earth. Little by little, sun has imprinted their image on earth, an image of gold.

Sun is image of gold. Heart is sun's human image. Gold is sun's image in earth. Gold and silver are also non-material force-fields, souls, in other words. Considered as pattern of both worldly and human expression, gold's field has been intuited as earthly representation of sun. Solar halo, crown, coin, a symbol then, of seemingly imperishable value. Alchemically, gold is part of a cosmic triad of correspondence with sun and heart. Sun pulses in accord with heart, gold as solar principle symbolically reflects the highest aspiration of spiritual transformation, a movement held as expressing psychic, biological and material force fields synchronistically activated in human life.

For lapis to appear (black dust of the tail eater, maker of vertigoes, spiritus mercurialis, I'll write more about this soon), there must be no separation between soul, spirit, substance, body (sun drinks and moon laughs), one descends to the other, vacillating experiences of self extension, complementary experiences of expansion. Planets are everywhere, not only where we see them. Gold comes out of silver as sun comes out of moon, a conjunction in which solar consciousness and moon madness are illumined lunacy marvellously conjoined.

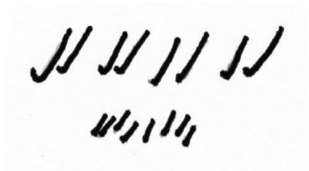
I began writing to you on the day of an eclipse in Aries, night world in day world, a psychic imagining that silver brings to gold. I was holding Rhodochrosite and Labradorite with my right hand (everyone we touch

turns to matter), as sun and moon conjunct heart and pineal gland, palmed, heart of gold and brain of silver. Root sense of rune is that of a raucous sound, yellow efflorescent moon water, mutable, mercurial, elusive, appearing and then reappearing, first here and then here, diving and following the movement of solar waves, self seized by swell, by the view between crests, formless and so taking all forms, which reveals to us how much is happening beneath us, 'beneath'... this is why runes, like spectral glyphs, can be so helpful with regard to a conveyance that is not pinioned linearity... echoing just how much language there is inside of us that is passing through, for which we require a hearing heart, located everywhere. Rune can be static depiction of flux, sympathetic magic in amber, constellating self-similar patterns in one's body, mirroring inside and outside so the boundaries temporarily soften, or harden, as an experience of unmediated communication.

For Jung the call (the cry) to individuate arises from the deepest sources of life and is supported by the compensatory activities of nature, striving to bring about the realisation, in the life of the individual, of multiple patterns of meaning (though here we are seeking diversity more than the prototypical unity with which individuation is so often associated). This individuation process extends the psychological and assumes what can often be regarded as the decoherence of inner and outer worlds, the discontinuity, in other words, becomes enclosed within the same circle of wholeness.

This is what we might call the lunar metaphorica, a cosmic experience of nature as a whole unfolding with the process of individuation, not in relation to ourselves, but our daemones, threshold patterns, with how we care for the psychic persons entrusted to us throughout our lives, how we call into a forest, from I to Soul, for which there is no one model, and no end.

Correspondences are part-whole of a colossal pattern, aching and mysterious resonances, a process of reversal, of encasings, exuviates, skins, membranes... content becoming container, what is external becoming internal, invisible archetypal images in motion across each other, opposing each other, precipitating and hindering change in co-terminus relation of temporary stability, coming to know and coming to love, the significance of a particular moment of time, the forces and patterns enfolding and the directions they may wish to take.



I keep dreaming of mythologies with which *Respondents* dwells, their boundaries as pliable as the impossible gaps between salt in water, tonal undertow producing love waves surrounded by nothing but enfolded space in perpetual motion around themselves. Fool and dragon in spoke-shelled equipoise. Their proximity should be impossible and yet inosculation takes hold, a hand grafted onto a tree that becomes the hand itself holding a tree. A weave of the many voices around the phosphoric omphalos of your work has for me manifested as an emblem inside which no echo is without a home, an umbilical stone, wrapped in the cords of a double net.

Internal alchemy ultimately seeks to negate itself, and of course I've no hope of 'fully' explaining such in this tone row of letters, but I need to once again glance in this direction, if only to face negation as mirror, being as it's not only how I've tried to write this text as insoluble whole, but it's part of my perception of the complementarity inherent in your work, which is so diverse in its production that it gives us (as participant and...) opportunities to work with, to probe and listen as echo-poetics, what I might call our own psychology, by way of responsivity.

This is what I think of as dirt work (shaping concepts that shape us, images that express the needs of soul as they emerge with each of us in avoidance of staunch literalism) where to look is to be looked at, to act is to be acted upon, to experiment is to be experimented upon, and this can be when our (mis)understanding (handling) of language, gets in the way, separating in those moments, even those periods when we forget what language also makes of us, what world cosmos makes of us, negating our imaginations. In such instances words help us get close, somehow, and yet, as we get closer, we also push against ourselves.

I continue to try and work with an alchemical vocabulary as vessel of reciprocal encasing, paying attention to pace and tonos/tonus (like how Gertrude Stein learnt about sentences by listening to her dog, Basket, her happy fool, her great comfort, lap at his water). Duality absorbed into unity folded through ruminant multiplicity. Rationality as sound wave mapping and mapped by irrational topologies, conveying a sense of lingual and lapidary economy whereby opposition is always present, regardless, in an attempt to under-say the contradictory. To perceive form in formlessness, metamorphic imagination.

In this way, a most surprising image has made themselves known, that of fate, or Moira. This is very curious, and again, there isn't really space here to go into depth of detail, but I hope to give voice, to acknowledge the importance of unfolding circumstance and boundary and not just walk over the skin of a discarded circumstance. An ideal here is for writing to also have a practical response, a way of understanding, of experiencing

that which is written about.

Character is fate, according to Heraclitus, and fate is individuation, according to Jung. What works with fate, in individuation, and thus in the depths of character and pathology, are mythical images moving in psyche, images that can stir our imaginations as wordless language, stone heap, door both open and closed as lion, insighting a borderline, wherein there is no split, for example, into day or night, one emerges from other... and so we reflect, diffract with, image as symbolic perception, in all their complexity, to see through into our own selves and world as cosmic comics, to work with and be worked on by the complexes of complexity.

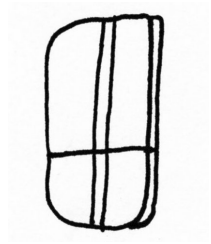
Such inherent plasticity of images is a coherent ground for reflection and movement as animation and diffraction, to hold and be held, to make psyche together. Images don't so much exist inside of imagination then, but emerge from them... one is contained by and contains other, soul as imaginative possibility, a means to discern archetypal sense. This is to try and hold the reception of meaning in a work in such a way as to not pre-define through conceptuality of a drastic need to know, to conclude it is a means of scattering allegorical meaning, it's to try and remove the door from our back, and to ask how the door got there in the first place.

Internal Alchemy involves the denial of its own outlines, probing into the constellations of psyche with mythic imagination, a continuous evocation of unity as attempt to merge and abolish all reference points. I understand this as an ongoing attempt to stand with life, as an ecological awareness,

where listening to substance is a figurative experience of infra-action and ultra-connection.

The wheel of fortune (as Fortuna, admixture of fate, unseen and unspoken, wherein psyche may sense the white-gowned forms of Clotho the Spinner, Lachesis the Measurer, and Atropos the Cutter) represents in symbolic form the wheel of zodiac and the ladder of planets. Psyche and substance enfold as spiritual body and celestial earth, concept and personification, projection and animation as symbolic thinking and listening, redolent of a desire to live a zodiacal body, mantic stain.

The ancient Greek shaman Empedocles speaks of endless motion in the same sentence as total motionlessness, each day's carpet of earth, a matter of imagination. Vibration holds this pure sensation of soundless dialogue, the wheels of the world, time has its own speech intermingled with the speech of space. Myth is the secret opening through which inexhaustible energies of cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation, magical days of the halcyon bird. When we peer deep into this cellular fabric, into the vessel of the womb in space and time in shamanic lore, we visualise the planets as seeds in earth, oceanic parables littered with stars and constellations, springs of rivers and veined leaves of forests that have cradled cultures since time began. The content of the vessel of nature and cosmos and dream is both spectral and concrete, psychic and substantial. Ghosts are there in the blood of the living, ghosts of the living past, and unborn future.



I was trying to setup a cymatics machine at work today. The frequency generator has just been sitting around, like so much else in the department as it lingers and waits to rattle like some Orphic toy. Something happened that I wasn't expecting, as I turned the amplitude up to the extent that the plate would meld with sand and light, my right ear reminded me they are here, they are dead, and not. I had to stop as my bones rattled in accords both sympathetic and dissonant, in and out with me.

This kind of formal patterning is an often tacit elementary dynamic of existence as transpersonal purpose, individual (which is to say ever shifting) participation in universal morphogenetic processes, guided by a kind of playful consciousness that gently discards in order to regenerate ever-new patterns through differentiating, clarifying and refining (solve et coagula) unconscious virtuality through conscious actuality whereby projective fields spiral as archetypal influence, atmospheric fields pull us toward and push us away in subliminal affection and infection of psychic induction

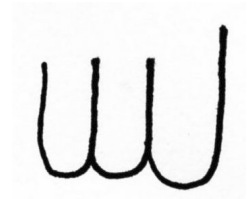
Just as space between earth and sun is filled with solar wind plasma, space between earth and moon is filled with dust clouds of plasma, some nine times bigger than earth. In between is such relative thread. What if matter were a voice of motion? Earth is bathed in amniote consciousness of cosmic rays and a soft walk of individuation begins in space, amidst the unconscious of history's hundred channels as introspection met outside, cross-cultural resonance within theatre of substance, transfigurative dimensions of creaturely constellations, chaotic yet blended voices of stone and gut forest.

We are plasmoid organisms in a plasma universe, a sea of aural jellyfish as decoys of fate, billions of cells in imagination's world, some 240 billion cells with liver... Held together as pitch and equivalence, reminding me of a line in the Tao Te Ching: that which shrinks, must first expand... How do we maintain the same shape and appearance, even though millions of our cells are dying and being replaced every day? And again, from the Tao: that without substance can enter where there is no room... The room in the basement where I work is hermetically sealed (without going outside you may know the whole world), if I spend too long down there I can start to 'see things', or slip into another state of airlessness....

Sometimes at work I lie on the floor, one hand underneath heart and thymus. An image appears, a place in the centre of my chest, an oval, full of gold-green light, a warmth that slowly permeates my body from inside and out. The crystallisation of the pattern of each cell dissolves, reforming as they are engulfed by new patterns generated by waves of

light, heart spreads to limbs as every cell is transmuted, this radiance is imagined as looped through earth's heart. We are many beings, many selves, and they are all alive, plasma is alive, sentient, thrumming. We are, in part, bioplasma beings, full of heliacal superconducting currents that can pass through certain materials and experience zero resistance, a central magnetic field surrounded by whirling vortices that flows through fractal universe.

Our plasma bodies appear to be more highly structured than those of our physical bodies. It's a curious thought isn't it, why did we become physical... it's been such a short space of time, perhaps we should say, why are we becoming physical... space is an inner universe of plasma, a creative ecosystem that we speculate produced matter in the form of particles, becoming physical humans.



Gilbert Simondon says that two spatiotemporal conditions are required in order to define life, a topological determination (a folding), and its chronogenetic consequence. A transitory subsistence hems the outskirts of the living like losing oneself in the infinite whilst splitting the differentiation of what Simondon calls relative interiorities and exteriorities. (interior-exterior cosmic). Life emerges as a fold in viscera and cosmic tissue, lipids spontaneously coalesce as drops, virgae, temporarily secluding substance inside from those outside.

All cells react to external perturbations in order to preserve aspects of their identity within their boundaries, what if this process were reversed? What happens when a person seeks external interference in order to dissolve or sublimate an element of their internal life? A kind of blithe schismogenesis with which certain uncontrollable oscillations of body are dulled, or even absented, for a moment.

Skin as membrane, pile of dust, heap of particles, intermediary. Where it's at, as Silvan Tomkins used to say. Either way, skin is crossroads and herm, periphery and path, any direction we decide to take resolutely creates another labyrinth let alone another path.

Simondon's ontology doesn't emerge in the form of a sudden rupture, but is due more to a kind of torsion of morphogenetic materiality, a clump, the apparition of a specific tissue equipped with the chemical property of functioning as a limit endowed by a selective permeability. A membrane, in other words. Posed as marvel of simplicity, a story told as the first distinction between self and non-self.

Membranes are defined with reference to two properties implied in spatiotemporal differentiation, a selective porosity, which allows only certain elements to pass, and the fact that such porosity is polar, animating in both centripetal and centrifugal directions, allowing some bodies to pass through in selective opposition to the passage of other such bodies.

Through such polarisation, membrane defines a milieu of interiority, by which they differentiate interior from exterior. Thinking about it this way, the fold is such that, to paraphrase Deleuze, it can be the outside of the outside, an outside to an outline. Oscillating between immense subtly like fragmenting partials of quasi-tonal sensation, presence is like a proprioceptive fluid moving between the sensing of minor sensations and the sense that one is sensing them. The bell never stops ringing, and observing the interplay of *Respondents* is to try and tilt a membrane as obliquity of self-consciousness, parsley white spikes from a geography of old night.

A membrane, an apotropaic mask swinging from the bough a tree, folds skin and curves around themselves to the tonal milieu of their own interiority. Surface is in relation, blood brain barrier flows into brain sand of pineal gland. Someone external to someone else is nevertheless also internal.



In an essay concerned with the ancient playwright Euripides, B.M.W. Knox writes that to be a prophet requires living in and looking at the present, at what is really going on around you. Out of the present the future is formed, and we read, the prophet needs a clear, dry, objective eye that can stand aloof from explanation and comfort. Neither will be of interest to the future. They are everywhere present.

Around the fifth century bce (the same period in which Euripides's brain would turn to sand, split and reconciled in saltwater), a feel for beams generated in and projected from the eye corresponded to the sense of sight. One thread in this clew can be traced back to Empedocles as he inhabited Aphrodite in a composition of the human eye consisting of four elements, jellied coagulate churned by Iris.

As I return again and again, along these elemental beams to *Respondents*, prosthetic animates with prophetic (to root with ever-shifting ground, to adapt and be still), the present moment is where all the energy is, bio-membranous enclosure, ghost of ecotone, a place of transit that is itself in transition. Every moment has at least two sides, we are charged with elements, earthly bodies of water in air, repetitive and differential.

During Sophocles' *Antigone*, translated by Anne Carson as *Antigo Nick*, the titular lead is about to exit the stage, to bury herself alive, she describes herself as an in between thing, neither a dead one among the dead or a live one among the living. *Antigone's* word for in between thing, Anne Carson explains, is *metoikos*, made of *oikos*, the noun for house or home (which implicitly enfolds threshold and doorway as entrance and exit), and *meta*, a prefix implying change or difference, an interval of passage in a deep ecology of affective salinity (we hydral creatures of anxious tones).

The porousness, leakiness, and fluidity of our selves are not only metaphors, *eco* is home as *tone* is tension. *Ecotone* is a fluid site of viscous porosity, however, a site of equal possibility is that in which tension becomes too thick to breath, too dense to hear, a hyperawareness of contours. Our substantial and psychic selves cannot be disentangled from networks that are simultaneously economic, mythological, political, cultural, psychological, scientific... who was once the ostensibly bounded human subject finds themselves in a swirling landscape of playful uncertainty, testimony to the potentially nurturing powers of such vertigo.

Can we ever truly know when our sharp edges began to blur? Vertiginous alterity flows through us, all our stuff, spiralling into areas we may not consider, metaphors that reflect back on us a reality more real than we are able to acknowledge.

I remember you saying how each sculpture, each entity, I've come to understand as a threshold of cosmic enchantment, an opening that helps create a cross-hatching of dream, time and imagination, a door that crosses chasms of reality, but nevertheless also remains, a door.

In Berthold Brecht's adaptation of *Antigone*, titled *The Antigone of Sophocles*, first performed in 1948, Brecht has Antigone wear a door strapped to her back for the entirety of the play. This, as Anne Carson puts it, may come in useful, as whilst carrying a door around may make a person clumsy, tired, and strange, it may also enable her to go places that don't have an obvious way in or an obvious way out.

Classical Athenians had shrines throughout their homes. At the house-door were shrines to Lares (domestic, queer little gods), to Apollo Agueus, protector of roads, and to Hecate, deity of crossroads, as well as an embodiment of Hermes, the herm, a pile of stones as proto-language. Such imagination divinised the world, activities, and relationships, different stages of life, body, and feeling. Galvanic deities ever present in bodies, minds, homes, cities.

Divinities of threshold denote a sense of enchantment in the experience of crossing a divide as a pattern of relationships, entering and leaving, opening and closing, inside and outside, cultivating and immersed in a sense of risk and exactitude, a blurring of boundaries through animate engagement where who comes in from outside, at any moment, can appear elsewhere, inside out. Experience of outside can teach us as

much about what can happen within. The interplay of sculpture (entity, daemon, character) and performer (dancer) diffracts as slit and prism of homeostatic relationships (reflecting the many personae of deities, each corresponding and weaving among their crystalline activities, moods, misgivings), fluctuating between psyche and substance, wrestling and cradling, protecting and embracing, tragedy and comedy, opening and closing.

In likeness, environment of inner ear is highly regulated in a manner that some solutes are permitted to enter while others are excluded or transported out. The oval door (window and membrane) of inner ear's double labyrinth enables pressure fluctuations, compressions of liquid and gas, to dissipate, thereby maintaining some sense of horizontal verticality, as they break against the tertiary bulge of cherubic globes of cilia. To carry a door on one's back is to pull dry air over this membrane.

In Tadashi Endo's *Ikiru - Hommage á Pinna Bausch*, not only does Endo emerge from their freshly sloughed skin as human ecdysis (a mirror play), but they carry a reflective sheet of metal (as if a flattened globe of mercury), that is also a door on their back, balanced on their atlas (I only just realised why that particular bone is called atlas!), and so becoming a hinge....The metal catches the dirt, the in between zone that is a spinning entoptic trance, where light is sucked into and out of metal.

A double edged deity of the relation suspended from inside and out is Hermes, they of the door, of correspondence and connection, transduction, noise and pivot, spirit of the hinge, ambiguity and mobility (diffractive natures of meaning), visible within invisible, voices of the dead. Hermes is the bringer out, the dweller on the threshold. We have already mentioned the Herm, a pile of stones that is an Hermetic appearance, votive energy at the door, on street corners, crossroads and city boundaries. When people spoke to Hermes, Hermes spoke back with stone breath.

There is mythic resonance in the compound relations and stories of inside and outside, joining as separating is a reflective dream, waking becoming sleeping, thought becoming speech, speech becoming interpretation, and so on. Hermes is two ways in all their roles, a mediator, always other than they are as trickster, merging and distending the magic fragility of fields, gender, culture, nature, life, death...



A stone found me and spoke like the anatomy of time. Red, shining, transparent, and brilliant. In them I saw all forms of the elements and their contraries in which we were already dead and alive, a curious memorial of inscribed bones in a cave of flowers. One's shadow is time travel, apparition of concrete moon and full earth. We live with these two universes at the same moment. Faces of little gods feel their way through human viscera. Thalamic apparition as celestial aspiration.

To name these gods is to name death in oneself, to eat the flesh of monsters in oneself.

The present moment of crystal gazing is time unravelling counterpoints between oxygen and silicon. Perceiving all parts and wholes becomes an emotion, dateless processions of bodies gestating in space, anisotropy, unknown intimacy of electromagnetism. Morphogenesis is to live, to intone. Every cell's resonant frequency coagulates organic wholeness as constellated immunity of field which always threatens to break one's heart, of which wholeness is simply a part, being enfolded in their own dissolving.

Every cell is a crystalline mimic that lays with dreams of the dead speaking through the living, a partial shimmering of night waves entertaining the idea of regenerating oneself as galvanic concord, becoming a ray in earth, shining in darkness after the manner of a carbuncle gathered into themselves as archetypal mask.

In *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz*, the bed-chamber of Venus is lit by carbuncles, by angel hair inside the celestial mathematics of rutilated smoky quartz, a mixture of love arrows and love darts, a cosmos lit by blind snails wherein our eyes are vegetal spiral tendencies, imaginary waves of unexpected dimensions. The alchemical *cauda pavonis* is what passes for time as futuristic animal energy, the sphinx-like crawl of organs, apparitional weight of ancient voices and Iritic emissions, a bird that flies by night without wings, celestial dew as continual decoction, ascending and descending, turning into raven's head, and then peacock's tail, acquiring brilliant and swanlike feathers, an extreme redness. The tinctured soul is the colour of effluvial hyacinth and resounds in the invisible silt of the sea that is a quantum transference of psyche as a cross in the mirror of celestial mathematics.

Venus's bedchamber is radial emission of hydrogen as helical winding. Every cell of our bodies is an attraction and repulsion. Hydrogen holds Helix as pitched incipient hologram of Psyche and Eros, oscillating as DNA of scattered instances, gazing into crystal, perceiving the chemical wedding that is nervous system forever birthing themselves by chanting.

Red Winged Mermaid



Technician of shouts, conscious tree, strong,
fluvial, double, solar, double, fanatic,
connoisseur of cardinal roses, totally
embedded, until drawing blood, in stingers, a student
is reading in your deck of cards, in your dead foliage,
his precocious, telluric, volcanic, king of spades.

César Vallejo - The Book of Nature

Dear Rita

Whatever I write to you, in mind of *Respondents*, undulates with concern of psyche and soma, image, psychic dynamics and material events (it's just as absurd to treat body as epiphenomenon of mind as it is mind of body - sometimes I feel your sculptures are the visibility of mind, shape, nothing but shape, as Schrodinger said), human and planet, becoming (remembering of becoming) different aspects of unified field.

Apologies if this is full larching prolix, I feel all ear (I often remember something that Jack Spicer said in a letter to the dead poet Federico García Lorca... that he writes letters to keep polemic from poem), because just as psyche interacts with substance and material, body (soma) participates with surrounding and pervasive energy patterns. One falls from and to

other, like the inwardness of animate substance out there. In and out are here symbolic images beyond space-time where the notion of separateness as living and conscious beings in a purportedly unconscious world requires drastic reassessment. Have a care, here is someone that matters, as Alfred North Whitehead said. Our consciousness grows from the materials we are drawn to, and so it would follow that it is we who are less likely to comprehend the wholeness of consciousness... (hear your mass, your comet, as César Vallejo would say).

In this regard, for Novalis, the eighteenth century mystic, humanity does not speak alone, universe also speaks, everyone speaks endless language. I've been returning to his book, *The Amateurs of Sais*, (others translate this as novices or disciples). In both *Respondents* and *The Amateurs*, we observe dances with stromatolites, we look up at stars and copy their paths and positions in sand, shapes in-tend and in-form through offering a pattern of external reality that resonates with conscious awareness.

Novalis's novel is a series of mediations where language dreams, emanating from the pages as psychoidal matter with which the amateurs glean, earth as spiritus rector, a teacher of hand and mind, of slowness, growing plasmodial grammar, manifesting as fire writing and flickering thresholds of affective glyphs, a language that lives inside every world, outside as sound and text, one contained within other, manifold dimensions in image, figure, sound, light. Psychoidal matter interacts with our personalities through staging outer performances that mirror inner realities (and vice versa). Where and why does our vocabulary end?

Such ecological awareness is symbolic of learning to listen to stones, because, as Robin Wall Kimmerer says, stones hold Earth's stories. Even roots move, and we can hear if we listen to earth with a poetic ear, moving from Oedipus to Orpheus complex, bringing us, entering into environment.

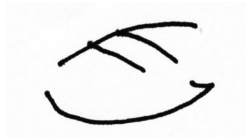
If we do not hear stones speak, they become objects, not ensouled subjects with whom we are bound. I think about this a lot in terms of elemental natures and body, water is purified by evaporation (sun/yin) or by being filtered through stone (earth/yang). Stomach, being earth/yin, is the origin of fluid as it is appetite that brings water in. And so as we wait to see what stars will bring, we listen to stones, we hear them with our feet as we ground with celestial earth. This chimes with the very first page of *The Amateurs*, a textual equivalent of a potter spilling clay, mesmerised by resulting pattern:

Various are the roads of humans. They who follow and compare them will see strange figures emerge, figures which seem to belong to that great cipher which we discern written everywhere, in wings, eggshells, clouds and snow, in crystals and in stone formations, on ice-covered waters, on the inside and outside of mountains, of plants, animals and humans, in the lights of the sky, on scored disks of pitch or glass or in iron filings round a magnet, and in strange conjunctions of chance. In them we suspect a key to the magic writing, even a grammar...It is as though an alkahest has been poured over the senses of humans. Only at moments do our desires and thoughts seem to solidify. Thus arise presentiments, but after a short

time everything swims again before our eyes.

Such galvanic poetics can also be heard in the work of the alchemist and close friend of Novalis, Johann Ritter, who was held with rigid tenderness in Penelope Fitzgerald's novel, *The Blue Flower*:

Lying in his wretched lodgings, he could see the laws of electricity written in cloudy hieroglyphs on the whole surface of the universe, and on the face of the waters, where the holy spirit still moved.



Lately I've been having to write these letters to you in my off hours, it's this erring division that attracts me to those whose work sublimates their own divide, and so I've been thinking about the Geologist Thomas Berry, who says that the universe is a communion of subjects and not a collection of objects. This can manifest for me with regards the seemingly disjointed syntax of omitting articles and so on ('the' as grammatical formaldehyde).

Placing this in relation with body as anthology of temporary nodes (Foucault's obscure nucleus, buried in Earth), I often find myself drifting away from one to one correspondences, and instead feeling how correspondences work with ever shifting configurations, constellations of insoluble holism, akin to yin and yang, emphasising a need to understand, to hold as to feel slipping away the unique configuration upon which any part depends in relation to a whole.

Perhaps it would be helpful to return to previous letters here, to imagine endless resonance of cilia, fields that form and are formed of parts of our selves as environments of environment, oceanic ultrastructure, synchronistic phenomena that resemble psychic bodies of purportedly lifeless and unaware inorganic substances. Were it not for earth in our work, fire would not have nourishment, air would fly away, water would lack their vessel.

In Novalis's *Amateurs...* there is a confluence of feeling so close to Ritter's galvanic experiments, holding light and sound as one, calling their collocation, sound rays. Ritter predicted a great deal of 'contemporary' discoveries regarding our electric bodies, he states many times that electricity is necessary for life on multiple levels (relating to what many now refer to as plasma, or formerly, radiant matter, though none of these terms disappear entirely).

Certain doctors used to say that every disturbance of health is a cry for a remedy, varying degrees of light radiating from matter, like how trees are known to vociferate pulses of ultrasound when stressed... a cry, a calling, a threading of psyche through soma, love through strife, an awareness of lack as luminescence, a search for macrocosmic form analogon to restore some semblance of balance and pattern.

Ritter 'discovered' ultraviolet by holding a prism (gesticulate communities) up to sun so refracted light would alight on silver chloride salt, which turns brown in this process, encountering invisible energy held by violet as sudden form of the internal life of tones, corresponding between terrestrial and cosmological life.

In Ritter's *Fragments from the Estate of a Young Physicist* he considers Ernst Chladni's sound figures to be universal language, where sound is contained by writing, and writing contained by sound, again, a sound that can be seen, akin to light, and a light that can be heard, akin to sound, where body can act and be acted upon as environment of remediation and

mediation.

In a letter to his friend, Hans Christian Oersted, Ritter writes of chemical sound figures. I wonder as to this dynamic geometry (so close to psychic infection as introjection), endopsychic stirrings of chemical messengers such as adrenaline, cortisol, oxytocin... Mediation is here equivalent to a series of patterned thresholds, sound figures, minutiae of hologrammatic archetypal forms that manifest and straddle boundaries in place (with which we consciously project and seek to transmute as animation of patterns and counter-patterns), looking into our bodies is listening through.

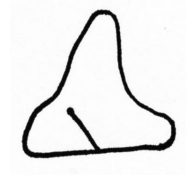
William Blake says to expect poison from stagnant waters, and so an adjusted environment requires adjustment to an adjusted environment. This is rarely a linear path, and as such, requires something of an alchemical vocabulary (by which I mean a poetic basis of mind as guide). A cause is also an effect of another cause, if even a meander, as no truly 'safe' (by which I mean a place of no vibration) middle exists in this homeostatic vernacular, the very attempt at such stick-to-it-ness runs close to a calcified status quo and a compensatory pathology. Patterns create their symbolic composites where everyone, tones drifting from trees in ocean-human forest, is both here and there.

Philo Judaeus, a 1st century Hellenistic philosopher, spoke of a more perfect logos, what I understand to be a phenomenon, passing from the modality of being heard to the modality of being beheld, without

crossing through a quantised point of transition where you could say, it was one, now it is the other, cultural shockwaves generated from the emergence of visible language becoming intuition of language undergoing transformation, a sideways glance through hyperspace.

Evolution of language creates a veil between ourselves and meaning as planetary ecologies, a micro-physical shock wave of billions of souls evolving and pulling their language through history, claiming their energies in the hope of learning to participate archetypally, with archetypes.

Imagining sound figures, no doubt different in accord to person, time, place, and myriad other contingencies and possibilities, as if they were also letters... a language of body in relation.... I often think of how humming can help increase the production of nitric oxide (again, what patterned force field manifests in relation with such an engagement), as when mind is focussed on different parts of body as coherence, we can guide and be guided by altering vibrations, shapes, sound figures (no separation between signifier and signified as quavering third position enfolded with the relationship) where language is not solely a human mode of creation and expression, but an holistic expression of multiplicitous being with living world embedded in living cosmos.



I've been thinking of how Ritter says that tone and light do not interfere with one another, as they are one and the same as waveform inside-out. Goethe, a peer of both Ritter and Novalis, considered humans to be tones... and so every human has their letter, what others might call a constitution, we are radiant glyphs born hearing planets.... A natal chart cast the moment we take our first breathe, and the planets thaw over the duration of a life as patterned series, wet labyrinth of immanent chords.

Outer appearances of sound figures are as clear in potential as they are inside body as language, every frequency being the potential of all other frequencies, emotional states containing the transformative potential of all other emotions. As Ritter says, a hieroglyph writes out the entire tone, the entire chord then, is an act of participation, of writing by tone, stars in soil and stones in sky.

Every tone has their letter, and so we hear what we read and we see what we hear. I place rhodochrosite on my thymus and as threshold pattern, fire figure becomes both what is externally apparent and internally illumined. Sculpture is the tone of performer. The movement between one skin and another, each motion a new fire figure, flickering in between bodies as lightning field.

As a narrator of *The Amateurs* observes, when one lays down a rune, they peer into each other's eyes to see whether a star (light and form as spectra) is present. They look up at stars and copy their paths and positions in sand, gathering stones and flowers, arranging them in rows of different kinds, an experience of diffraction in reverse, where these subjects are heard, seen, and touched at once, where each instance of contact engenders a universal substance whose effects last as long as the touch itself.

Paracelsus held to the close connections between psychic and material energies, fostering an alchemy in which mind constitutes themselves through cosmological study, wherein no stone is uniquely terrestrial. In waking dreams of earthly psyche, substances correspond to planets as reverie, as ensemble of plasma. Just as a natal chart is cast at the moment one crystallises from pure energy, there are natal charts for the birth (so-called) of countries, and so of jewels the moment a gem cutter determines geometric form, dreaming a clarity of stone and firmament as one and the same, joining depths of psyche and substance to sky's own depths, the alchemical wedding of earthly signature to cosmic sign.

Stars enfold individually and together. Jewellers who desire to invest their work with cosmic power choose a stone in light of a governing planet (*speculum lapidum*, mirror of stones), then cut with an ear to prevailing influences, whether astrological, mythological, or erotic. Synthesis of crystal and constellation as lithotherapy is as real as imagination. Stones that have been worked at the prescribed time by a skilled cutter are

astrologic stones, where astrology is inscribed in matter, as knot of Atropos determined forever in the moment that threads bind themselves to birth as kiss, mirrored in the artisan, carving with slow breath of lithic matrices.

Stones arranged in accord with inner sound figures are half-horoscope, half-talisman (the Hortus sanitatis, Garden of health, states that the energy of stones can be absorbed by grounding them up and then ingesting them, a ritual beautifully lived by poet CAConrad). Strange reveries within crystalline matter at once a single instant frozen in time and eternity, droplets of resonant blue centuries. To absorb solar energies we wear solar garments, surround ourselves with solar energies, amber, balsam, yellow honey, speak with heliotropes and think of lions. We might also absorb such energies in the making and wearing of intaglios (a receptive combination of image and stone), often engraved on specific stones at astrologically propitious times, incanting particular hymns in relation to the energies channelled and sought.

Everyone emanates (I'm paraphrasing Al-Kindi here... everyone in world emits rays in every direction, which fill the whole cosmos), and so fire writing, as affective practise (the more eyes are gazed upon, the more they delight, repeat viewing of images was recommended to fully absorb the rays - with Ibn al-Haytham stating that this was how to impress the form of an image on one's soul, and is perhaps why I've found myself paralleling the ground of *Respondents* as alchemical peacock, the ground our heads touch, with the astrological vault of Caprarola - we know substance

because it lusts, says poet Lisa Robertson, we sip from their gaze, impression and intimacy drink from the same root), comes and goes from stars in earth, as sympathetic magic, wherein creation of form produces sound audible to all senses, an intimacy, a yoga of the senses.

Stars are sensed inside of ourselves whilst also being outside, to see stars is to be stars, an experience with many edges that phase like photons through a leaf, akin to touching one's own heart fields, participating consciously with shapes and patterns through their imaginal cymatic depiction, nature loves to hide, dissolving and coagulating with rows of stones as raucous sounds from which stars flow like sap emanating from sap, plasma creating dust to feed themselves, sargassum blooms... below consciousness everyone is seething with life.

Both Ritter and Novalis claim that the writing of sound figures is present before their excitation, where the movement of body can mimic (respond to) the movement of thought combined in a tracery of waveforms as words held against spectral glyphs of biosemiosis in which a field of forces can become a field of internal personal relationships, an interior commune, a body politic. Labyrinths vibrate in and as arboreal-corporeal memories, an ongoing affective dialogue of voices temporarily transduced through transpersonal ardour and sympathetic form.

This is part of an alchemical practise of dissolving and recombining, held as georemediation. Novalis depicts the amateurs abstracting such characteristics in order to study them individually before returning them,

mimicking rows of stones and flowers, lines in sand creating sympathy with internal fire figures that contain and are contained by sound, light and writing simultaneously like the slow crawl of mirror neurons reaching outside body, reaching an emphatic state in which martial separation dissolves with Gestaltian ooze.



Last night I was reading Rilke's Book of Hours:

Between us there is but a narrow wall, and by sheer chance; for it would
take merely a call from your lips or from mine to break it down,
and that all noiselessly.
The wall is built of your images.

I was thinking about how the assumption (the thin-tracery of a paradigm) that human psyche possesses layers that lie 'below' consciousness rarely arouses debate, and yet, what of the layers then lying 'above'... cosmic consciousness, conventional realism, what Barbara Guest might have combined as fair realism, implicate archetypal patterns that enter our psychic as well as somatic experiences...

This took me back to Novalis and Kairos-time (the 'right' time and place for whatever happens to happen, the favourable moment for an event, the tempering of the moment wherein there is a dynamic power, an ability to extend one's self, often thought of as a changing of the gods, reclaiming an un-lived life, resurrecting the lost deities lying dormant in the shadow), to the term *zufall*, as contact with being, the boundless present as a potential vulnerability to time (*zufall* is sometimes translated as the rule of accident, or coincidence, though Novalis would say that any interaction between two formerly distinct zones must inevitably bring both of them

closer to a state of unity, and that the forces of coherence are ultimately more powerful than those of disjunction, where shedding and sloughing are seen as abundance, variation, diversity... taking whatever name is given by chance). Zufall is what Herbert Silberer thought of as our internal heaven of fixed stars, or what Gaston Bachelard, after Novalis, would refer to as tendencies which compel us to surpass the human condition, where every single act of inner and outer worlds can be deduced from active imagination... the divine entering into, passing through human dimensions.

Zufall, let's 'simply' refer to this as chance from hereon, because for Novalis, as I just mentioned, it is redolent of... there are so many ways of putting this, ontological edge effects, intertidal zones, ecotones... freedom and the unknown (wherein we are vulnerable to our unthought thoughts), a kind of unlearning... the blurring of contours of content, the marvelous that also traces back to the strange and beautiful threads of fate and play, a game of surprise and deception as enveloping yet subtle nexus, the agon, which Roger Caillois defines as a kind of play (one of four to take place within a sacred area), where agon is in relation to competition, alea to chance, mimicry to simulation, and ilinx to vertigo, though he was very open that these categories, even when blended, do not cover the entire universe of play.

Novalis sought poetry in science, prophetic science, we might say, in order to discern meaning hidden in the obscurely present quality of the times manifest in chance events, feeling that nothing is more poetic than

transition and mixture. In this admixture of indistinct pairings I hear as mnemonic adjuncts, Jung's spirit of times and spirit of the depths, that myths never were but always are, and a line from Alfred Hitchcock's Vertigo.... here I was born, and there I died

As I've already touched on, a synchronistic phenomenon resembles a deliberate behaviour of purportedly lifeless and unaware inorganic substance. I've been working with the I Ching every day I've written to you, and the coins, or in my case the dried yarrow (shaman flowers, millefolium), are tossed, they fall, randomly...yet they fall in a fashion as if they were aware not only of the participant (akin to the behaviour of quanta changing upon being observed) and of the most likely but still to us unknown possibilities in accord with the participant's psychological tendencies. Their so-called random falling seems to retain memory of what was written in the I Ching oracle some four thousand years ago, this is how long touch can last.

Outer ear, a means by which we hear, we receive, a means, not the means, is also called the auricle, which means ear shaped, it's wonderful to think that outer ear is called an auricle because outer ear looks like ear. A cyclicity I can't help but note in the phonemic relation of auricle to oracle, which in Oedipus bears witness to the fact that, taking literal, direct action, remaining on the surface of himself essentially, to avoid the prophecy of an oracle fulfils that very prophecy, taking action, that is, in a literal sense, when hearing the oracle literally.

Auricle comes from auditory, which itself relates to a medieval ritual of confession. Here language and experience are reversed, creating a kind of wild logos, a transmission that is also a reception, held together by dictation. We listen to oracle, we confess to auricle.

Jacques Lacan says that to make yourself seen reflects back at you, but to make yourself heard goes out towards another. I remember Jamieson Webster speaking about Lacan's seminars, saying that anxiety derives from *decedere*, death, and *cedare*, to fall. Chance is held in shimmering indistinction of ancestral origin as *cadere* - or that which falls to us, *heimarmene*, a fear of the stars in an age of anxiety... a fear of chance framed in conventional realism, a Saturnian need to maintain the status quo with firm boundaries and delineation (*inclinant astra, non necessitant* - the stars incline, they do not compel - this was a motto often inscribed on Renaissance astrological texts, in order to avoid trouble with the inquisition, and charges of demonology). A fear of fate can cause the Moira to weave immutable pattern as hidden wall between conscious and unconscious, self and world, separating us from our dirt, confabulating belly pods of subterranean earth-hives, living moults of self in dizzying turns of flaxen mimicry, fulgurating waves of heart-loam.

Vertigo and falling can have a very literal relationship, I wrote about my own experiences with this in a text called *Throwing Stones at Nothing*, in which I brought together vertigo and ego as 'vertego'... symbolically 'the fall' is loaded with silent noise of chimeras, and yet, when I think of Leonora Carrington, of Eve giving Eve back the fruit,

and of Hermeticism, how there was no such act as original sin, or the fall from grace, but a co-partnering with nature, the magical concretion of superabundant reality, the tidal swell of hermetic taxonomy.

Caillois' proposal to use *ilinx*, the Greek term for whirlpool, is so curious, because from *ilinx*, from whirlpool, comes the Greek word for vertigo, *ilingos*. Vertigo has replaced the mask, which now spins in votive oscillation at the edges of sacred play. The category of *ilinx* not only addresses the intentional disturbance of physical balance that one experiences in dances, roundabouts, carnival attractions (festival consciousness as magic), or extreme sport, but also any danger or challenge that, with full knowledge, includes the possibility of loss of intellectual, moral, or emotional balance, if not of the whole of existence itself.

According to Caillois, *ilinx* is characterised by a confusion that is simultaneously accepted and suffered. In another text I'm writing, called *Psychomanteum*, I think about how Caillois came to this conclusion already in his text, *Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia*, which was published in the Surrealist magazine *Minotaure* in 1935. He establishes a cross-hatched connection between entomology and psychoanalysis through calling attention to parallels between the mimicry strategies of certain insects and the psychological disposition of humans experiencing schizophrenia. He writes that, due to an imbalance in the perception of self and the concomitant drive to self-abandonment, insect and the schizophrenic fall prey to a real temptation by space, or, to be more

precise, a veritable lure of material space, subject to depersonalisation through assimilation to space as devouring force.

Space pursues peacock, encircles them, digests them in titanic phagocytosis when body separates from thought and performer breaks the boundary of their pores, through which they breathe, as third lung, occupying the other side of their senses, looking at themselves from any point in space, a resonance of mutable solids in which entropic alterity spins their own air to create translucent tensions of congruently incongruent images somehow held in time that never exhales.

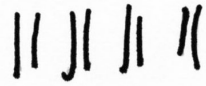
Breathing corresponds to the first autonomous gesture of human living, says Luce Irigaray, a 'collision' (freezing planets as rubbing against) that Lacan believes is our first source of anxiety in the world. Thus, in the capacity of a mouth, breath becomes voice, both inside word, and around it, breath is enfolding.

We've said that such play of dramatic form can also be found in the dynamics of mineral, metal, plant, animal, element, bacteria, and so on, archetypal information potential operating in terms of organismic fields that shape the functioning of visible bodies through symbiotic interplay on all levels of existence, emotions, mind, consciousness... Living organisms move and direct seemingly separate entities as though they were part-elements of encompassing organismic systems.

As oscillating fire figure, the hidden internal moves toward and away from the visible external, which would make the internal visible and the external invisible, spell after intermittent spell. This is to be in the present moment of the emotion of body, interdependence as poetic physiognomy. There is no yin without yang, and written into this is the implicit understanding of its opposite, a lingual abundance of soft doors, soft crystals, because images are reciprocal, child generates mother, contained is also container, sound is seen, light is heard, they co-respond, like falling into a labyrinth, sympathetic co-partnering of body and cosmos.

Sound figures as fire figures (which is also something I'm writing about in relation to speculative volcanology) reflect how, just like yin and yang, the Greeks had no absolute category of divinities as essentially malignant. Shadow is archetypal, not a separated archetype, each deity contains and is contained by shadow, and these are ways in which we are shadowed.

Sound's Lingual Gorge



It is not possible to speak rightly about the gods without the gods.

Iamblichus

Dear Rita

Lynne McTaggart has been on my mind since we last spoke about the importance of community in your work... she says that we are reluctant apostles to a view of world that is separate and mechanistic. If, for a moment, thoughts can be equated to electricity, and emotions to magnetism (though as ever in this internal alchemy of container and contained, electricity need also be equated to thought, and thought to feeling and on), combined they entwine and flow into our electromagnetic field of incipient communication as mouth and source with quantum field. Our bodies communicate via a certain amount of electromagnetism of course, but this fades with distance, but subatomic particles, I don't know how to say it... don't? as force, tangible effluvia of non-locality.

Subatomic particles are not 'actual' someones, at least not in the physical sense of our current comprehension, they are vibrating swarths of energy, oscillating as creative virtual someones redolent of yet more energy and more someones. So with all these subatomic particles, imagine the pitch...

dimensionality, volume... the depth, the background, life and living.

All subatomic particles create and are part of field, a term as elusive and beautifully direct as archetype.

Subatomic particles are all possible selves until observed, at which point they alter, their behaviour changes, they look back, we look back, stories within stories... they coagulate in myriad societies of plasma when time is a physical dimension that requires of us to hold multiple consciousness in our own reality. Time becomes an illusion if we consider time to be real. We are still in every moment with which we have ever existed and not. There is often a kind of shock, momentary conscious coagulation upon observing, imagining ourselves through the composite eye of the alchemical peacock, perceiving present time as when time dissolves and coagulates with us and us with time, the virtuality of actual someones.

We participate with this communality (complementarity in potential) through gentle observation, influence, myth, compost, dream, and our brainwaves can indeed entrain, along with heart coherence, existing at the same frequency, in synchrony. It's like how Will Alexander speaks of a collective movement of insight that allows healing of brain and healing of collective mind.

McTaggart describes this as a 'turning off' of the parts of our brains that make us feel separate, parietal lobes, helping us navigate through space, right frontal lobes, involved in worry, doubt, negativity.... I like this explanation, but if we also incorporate Jung's understanding of

transference it reveals so much more than it does, because he did not see one person as radically separate from another, but focussed when he could on the field that connects and corresponds one person with another as transformative, as imagination's community that asks of us to not solely inhabit the habitual, the tendency to perceive world as discrete and demarcated.

Respondents has given me opportunity and time to contemplate a meeting of the likeness of one's inner form pattern through intimation of one's psychic life as an expression of nature, one's collective sound figure as common intention, a community of people thinking the exact same thought at the exact same time... mandalas entangled through specificity, the attraction of one's intrinsic form pattern, outer phenomena matched (however we wish to put it depending on the experience) with inner mental happenings.

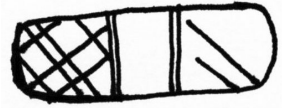
I realised in writing to you that this is also what I understand by the term psychoid, which I feel to be a dream that takes place in the distance, in the language between aromatic plant and significant grass. Jung uses psychoid to describe archetypal nature, a unity that encompasses and transcends the opposition of psyche and substance, inner and outer, personal and collective, individual and world.

Individuation does not consist solely of successions of images from the unconscious, but is complemented by outer reality. In turbulent flow, self emerges into world of consciousness whilst splitting manifests through

inner images as in events of life (psychoanalytic and psychomantic, mandala as hologram, psychoid as process processing).

It's no accident that psychoid became especially important for Jung as he slowly developed with vegetative understanding of synchronistic phenomena as folds in dimensions of experience. Apollo is the god of whoever lies down like an animal in a lair. The measured foot of a dance incorporated a pause upon arriving at a fig tree. This is green vertigo, infra-psyche in as much as I cannot say with any degree of certainty that there is such a place as non-psychic (though I find Jung's intuitive and spectral schema quite fascinating, whereby he places psychoid at ultra-violet, and archetype at infra-red)... and I suppose that's what initiation can be, to try and find out how we're related and embedded with world, world with cosmos, asking how we could be at home 'there' just as much as 'here', to become adopted and adopt, or as Carl Ruck says, if you die before you die you will never die... to devour is to be devoured in the whole Aion.

Photosynthesis stops at night, abiotos in bios, absence of life in life. Ask perception if light belongs in darkness, clarity in obscurity. Darkness (moon) can't be rejected for the sake of light (sun) because everyone contains, responds with, their many peopled opposites.



I've been thinking about instar stages this morning, how every form of life appears to us as a gestalt with a specific development in time as well as space. Maturation is akin to not knowing who is moving and who is being moved, a delicate interplay of forces, wherein a change in a plant's inner state merges with time, living through phases of wakefulness and sleep, blossoming and wilting as rebirth, like the rings of a tree.

This is in part a poetic tendency in an archetypal labyrinth, haruspicy, whether we seek centre, opening, closing... we uproot trees from the labyrinthine forest of our guts, observe ourselves, being observed, study our viscera under the shadow of another, emanating from symbolic, mantic bodies, eidola, clinamen, simulacra, all these terms for layers and stages of alchemical dreaming.

Poised between sacrificer and sacrificed, Deborah Bird Rose writes of having our hands inside an animal, knowing without any doubt that the way this animal feels to our hands is exactly how we would feel if someone were doing this to us—the same heat, same textures, the fresh smell, the red blood. Such intimacy of interchangeable interiority forms a special kind of empathy based on the tactile knowledge of our mammalian kinship and our shared condition as creatures born to die. She says that this dead animal could be her, and she herself will one day be a dead animal.



I thought I'd write with this letter as a chance to think a little about the poet Robin Blaser, but to enter, we need first go elsewhere, so we open on Section 11 of *Summer*, a poem by Ronald Johnson:

Unless the humming of a Gnat is as the music of the spheres
& the music of the spheres is as the humming
Of a Gnat

According to certain translations of Pythagoras, we are all born hearing stars, this is not a literal hearing of course, and yet it is, akin to forest fire and forest gut. The music of the spheres is quite real, says Blaser, but the soul of the earth must meet it. We can parallel this with any number of alchemical perceptions any number of ways, with the notion of forest air, which in antiquity was often pictured as silver resulting from a forest fire, a burnout, a kind of forest consciousness as conflagration, individuation that is return to world-self.

In *Respondents* we find care, care for matter and for what matters. The prismatic landscape that coagulates as the ground of *Respondents* is symbolic of world as a living organism, anima mundi, with which performer and sculpture participate in concentric traces of constant complex correspondences with other organisms, minerals, crystals, herbs, animals,

and so on. The patterns of our skin, our hands, intertwine us with those of leaves and trees, water and stones, a kind of assonance with which you sculpt resonant glyphs for which we must place our hands carefully in dirt, for at the same time our hands are in brain, moving in between one with the other as mimetic faculty, touching thought, internal physiognomy.

The edges of your sculptures appear at times as if frottaged bone oracles, laced with graphite, the furrows of brain as negative image, the way one impresses on the other, pulsation creates rigidity, one alters the solitude of the other. A landscape is also fossilised brain, traces of a life as vegetal gestures, one watching over the solitude of the other.

Such endocranial casting finds an Orphic self in Rainer Maria Rilke's *Primal Sound*, written in 1919, where to speak with stone is to dig up mind, echoing a nascent state of old tongues. Studying a skull by candlelight, Rilke's attention is drawn toward the grooves of the coronal suture and its similarity to the wavy lines the needle of a phonograph leaves on a cylinder of wax, leading him into a reverie in which he wishes to trace the needle, not along wax, but bone, specifically that of the corona. He takes this into the world, wondering what variety of lines he could then amplify. Perhaps we might amplify the entwined bio-magnetic fields of our hearts.

So to Blaser, who begins an essay on poetics called *Fire* by stating that he's haunted by a sense of the invisibility that comes into him, that nothing is more invisible than emotion, by which he means a place, a body, an

extension, the existence of gods. A fair point, as there are energies no less visible to us than microbes were to Aristotle. Blaser says that he believes there is a reality neither conceptual and systematised, nor imageless, and that the difficulty of holding onto such a reality in a poem leaves fire behind him. He says the real business of poetry is cosmology, and what we describe as imagination is no free play of soul, but a real meeting with real elements. What we suppose we effect in our souls, we affect on the destiny of the world. Blaser's poems are fields of energy and activity, met by whatever companion, daemon, can be felt. He quotes from the writer Edith Cobb in describing a cosmic sense, a gift of passage, an instinctual need for a perceptual relation to the universe, close to Charles Olson's understanding of proprioception. A constant recording of entrance becomes diffractive.

This field then, is the image of a field which for Blaser is history, autobiography, land, place and presence. The underlying energy between field and life is Orphic, split against the more conventional reality of power over nature rather than an entrance into it... We can enter into (becoming entranced, enthused), following Blaser, a more loving process of animated, symbolic listening, holding Orpheus as multiplicity, adumbral figure holding within themselves many contradictions and paradoxes where opposition and change are interwoven processes, living, breathing diffraction as entrance and exit, the expansion of our constricted hearts open an infinity of space. Ground of *Respondents*, as peacock, as lapis, resonates with the Orphic mystery of how everyone is one and yet apart, and so at times appears like Eileen Agar's Orpheus paintings, where the

calcareous marvellous passes from primordial fluidity to hardened profile, a game played out between one shape and another.

At a certain point in his life Blaser felt that his friends, Robert Duncan and Jack Spicer, wrote his poems for him, a practise of what he called the outside, what others have called Orphic, channelling, dictation, and so on. He eventually dropped this notion and became another poet, searching for a line that would hold what he saw and heard as some sort of amniotic scrim. Upon encountering an Hermetic book called *The Art of Memory*, by Frances Yates, he would come to relate monads with the memories held by soul, reflecting the universe of which they are living mirrors perpetually touching over a distance.

For Blaser, the images held in such a theatre of memory are two stars, Taurus and Saturn, he says of the latter that the nature of the star can't be held in a poem until the uncreated dragon is created, as poetry for him is an inclusion, which we might adduce to be addition, gradually extending, changing shape, to take in and out both earth and sky. Indeed, the last poem in his collection, called *The Holy Forest*, simply reads, language is love.

Thinking a little more on this notion of cor/arboreal conflagration, I'm reminded of a conversation between Ronald Johnson and Guy Davenport, relaid by the former, about an idea of human as tree:

You know, Blake says it's all one big body. And I said, No, I think it's a tree. And Davenport said, I think you're right. I felt it as being this, as being a tree. It's got one of the great structures, it's got depths and heights, it's got circulation, it goes into streams. It goes into stream patterns, which is what branches do. I think time makes things a tree.

Johnson's feeling that tree, world, poem, time, and human fit together in a greater whole is reiterated in one of his notebooks, from 1994, wherein he writes that all life aspires to light / humankind, to the stars. Our minds are surrounded by an underworld. Likewise, Johnson's Radi OS, a poem that celebrates the very life-manifesting virtues of supernal light and solar energy, is both a chthonic poem concerned with descent (katabasis), and potnia chthon. Dirt dangles from the roots of Johnson's language, there is always a remainder:

The
black
realm, beyond
The flower

Shape Like Moon Changes



Dear Rita

These letters seek to hear with sympathy, Aion, affection (that light in the throat, spongia), complementarity, right relation, entanglement and cosmic love, as a labyrinth that permeates their own boundaries, a filamentous magnetism that alters perspective whereby psychic pastness dissolves and recombines, becoming outer at any given and ungiven time. Performer moves in accord with their star as implicit complementarity of sculpture just as peacock walks the pollen path, compressed between the space of two bodies moving each other.

The interplay (for want of a better word, like sleeping mouth in tail with one's shadow, one asking the other to tell me what is happening to me) that constitutes *Respondents* has led me to think on the cyclicity of spirals, a crystal is an algae encrusted head in the stars, the day that is about to come and has already been in which we put on our bodies, a consciousness as destructive as unconsciousness... sublimated insides of precarious divides, ground as stone, as star strewn sol, from whom every colour proceeds by transformation to certain unconscious content, the light, the luminous salt of consciousness, is overwhelming, perhaps even annihilating.

So consciousness can cause separation, particularly in Eros (an interplay, as motif, in *Respondents* is that of the fairy tale), and in this regard I've been thinking of The Tale of Amor and Psyche, a version of which is told in The Golden Ass of Apuleius, a fairy tale of Anima psychology.

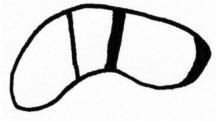
Having been seduced by Eros, Psyche finds herself living in a secluded palace, cared for by invisible forces. She is not allowed to see Eros, it is forbidden, and so Psyche becomes lonely, asking that she might visit with her sisters, who poison her mind with jealous lies, telling her that she must be married to a dragon. One night, Psyche lights a lamp over the bed, and she sees a beautiful winged youth, but the lamp oil falls on him and he flies away, leaving her to her own story.

This tale has long confused me, but that feels to me the point (or the mirror), as it's concerned with sustaining mystery, unknowing, not always needing to know, knowing why we need to know, there always being more to what we know, and so with premature conclusions to the process of individuation and the separation that conscious awareness can usher in. We can exhaust a meaning but that does not mean the meaning is exhausted, and once more I return to the differences between psychic maturation and fructification. Look at this, it is that.

I remember reading in Karl Kerényi's *Eleusis* that labyrinthine round dances outside the Eleusinian temple ceased to be practised after an invasion, where the victors erected a wall to protect the temple that cut across the dance area. The labyrinth then, denoted procession, and not the

loss of hope, which, once it was associated with Asterion, the chimera, it seemed to become inseparable from. He who is confined here loses his life, read one inscription. Labyrinth was a passage to light as much as dark. To all the gods honey . . . to the mistress of the labyrinth honey . . . reads another inscription.

In Arthur Evans's work, spiral decorations, so abundant on Minoan walls, were subsequently interpreted as relating to Zoë, which, as Kerényi says, suffers no interruption and permeates all life. Surely all contents of soul contain aspects not yet recognised, there is always room for growth. I was thinking about this as I was walking to the train in Sheffield around the Eclipse. It was about 5:30am, I'd left early as there were train strikes that day and I was hoping I could weave around them. I'm usually pathologically early for trains, but this time I'd underestimated how long it'd take for me to walk there, so I was almost gliding along Ecclesall Road, and the ways in which the roots of trees were pushing up concrete around them, well, then it made me think of how self interacts with world, is limited by, and is protected by, and here I would rephrase simply by saying again that, I hope, there will always be room for growth.



Exine (sexine / nexine). Intine. Plasma - Lemma. Indecipherable columns and dappled blackbirds, lucent alabaster, impudent cupid fillet.

These are alchemical stages as much as they are layers of a pollen grain and myth, vertebrae, chapters, sculptures, moults, pumice and sand, organised into porous configurations that replace one another and yet continue one into the other until and after death. From the Lilly grows a tree in the shape of an egg. And then? There are inversions of casings, photon releasing electron as one transforms before returning and being absorbed, the light released by static, larval instars, personae, maturation of inseparable roots, not reaching fructification, thickly covered with leaves, egg, larva, pupa, imago, littered with exuviae, earth as midden, clad with corona and cilia of thyme.

I haven't been able to stop thinking about there always being room for growth. So much of this seems to depend on the notion that there is a 'right time', Kairos-time, the time to cut the root... and how cutting can be conducive to opening, not just wounding. The light of intellect of course casts a shadow, it is almost, or even indelibly, clichéd, to say so, it reminds me of that phrase, what happens when the moon gets too close, when we become too literal.

This is so close to the need (the obligation) to 'have' a profession, to identify, to have a clearly established practise, one with outlines. I think this is why, amateur I appear to be, though not necessarily am, I'm so enamoured with vibration, which provides as much a basis for motile and evasive wholeness as I could desire (words whose meaning I often appreciate only when it's 'too late')... feeling and listening become as much about inversion of self expression, of who you are feeling and listening with, a way of thinking, in other words, not a product, so root cutting, rutile amber suspended from lumen and eos.



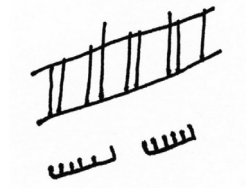
Root cutting has become synonymous with rune cutting in my mind since I wrote you last, the vibrant differences of yellowing melilot and lustrous ranunculus, refulgent golden topaz. I remember reading somewhere that sound is able to penetrate human bodies much deeper than light. I'm not sure as to the physics of this, but it's led to fields reappearing (as really this 'field' is as old as medicine and the oneiric animation of the iatromantis, and surely older still in imagination) from what was once called (and still is by some) radionics, and now sonogenetics, in fact, it could now well be called something else!.

This isn't really my point though, what I'm trying to get at is that root cutting, in part symbolic thinking and listening, is as much concerned with going within as it is without, and so in this field that is flow of ever changing vocabulary, the edges of words appear and reappear in radiant gists of superimposed time weeds.

Weirdly, it was in a novel by Haruki Murakami, perhaps Kafka on the Shore, or the Wind Up Bird Chronicle, about 20 years ago now, where I first learnt of the Haruspex, without the term ever being mentioned in the novel, but has followed me ever since, as I've also followed... labyrinths

becoming green space rivers with more than two banks that at times appear as if walls.

I'm not looking toward an origin of the labyrinth, of anything really, as fun as it can be realising that looking toward is equally looking away, it also feels indelibly miasmatic, we will always reach further away from us than we can imagine, whether the sudden light cast over the vulnerable innards of an animal that is also a human on an operating table, strewn like a labyrinth, or the dance floor made by Daedalus, on which people would mimic cranes, a sacred dance known as the geranos, or otherwise, and otherwise.



One name for Asclepius, the doctor's deity, is that of Rizotomos, or root cutter. This stems from root magic, that I believe drifted (cross-pollinated) from Persia toward Greece. Roots were gathered at Hecate's hour in darkness, used for both magical and medicinal purposes, to the extent that one could be separated from the other.

One of Hecate's titles was that of Kuno, and many poisonous plants that have been embraced by the pharmakon have such a prefix, kunoktonos (aconite) comes to mind. A couple of miles south from where I live, a community of aconite has grown up by a stream that forms a crossroads leading toward a shade of hawthorn. So people who experience nightly panic, or delirium, who rush out of bed, are being visited by Hecate (substance of aconite can suffocate, psyche can alleviate). Roots can bind and darken mind, roots can be dark and yet flower like milk, what we dig up and what we cut, in any sense, has the power to change, to harm and to heal.

Something like 1% of ancient Greek plays have survived and been passed down to us, 1% is often what we balance a certain cultural lineage upon. One of elements that has been subsumed by this substantial homeostasis, is that of a sacred pharmacology, not only was such a diverse practise

written out of ancient Greek history, but it was entirely, with great violence, stamped out by the inquisition. Just imagine, if we were told we could only retain 1% of our memories, who would we know ourselves to be?

In ancient Greece there was a sacred pharmacopoeia, the plants and the gods that reside with the plants, an oral tradition, largely passed from mother to daughter, rites of passage as spiritual dimensions, as there was a shamanic practise, a ritual of letting go of the past, standing among, and then moving through unknown liminal space, re-entering with new purpose and perspective, releasing roles in the recognition of soul, releasing hours, becoming elders, and eventually, ancestors.

Sophocles wrote a tragedy called Root-Cutters, it was about Medea, who cut's harmful plants, head averted, so as to not be overcome. We only have fragments of the Root-Cutters, but in one passage the chorus sings to Hecate, wreathed in oak and woven coils of savage snakes, so a kind of root-cutting resonance is at work, a sacred pharmakon, mind-binding. Such roots come from deep chthonic darkness, so often banished, and subjugated, a place where dark roots, gathered in darkness, have the power to cure and to darken the mind, by matter of degree.

The darkness in which our innards live interacts within this maze of associated darkness, we can be afraid of what is 'in' us, of what we can't see. The dead return to the dark of the earth. Old night is one of the ancient gods, in Orphic tradition they are an earth-oracle. Many prophetic

powers were chthonic centres, involving subterranean journeys, or descents, whether into a cave or into oneself, through sleep, dreams and incubation. Which takes us back to Asclepius, Root-Cutter.

Within darkness we can occasionally see what we can't within light, meeting chthonic forces in the depths of viscera, and their prophets, in the present moment, under shadowy trees and pierced pythons. Earth and body invested with mystery. Innards prophesy, they remember, particularly during periods or moments of intense emotion, spasmodic and twisting, prophetic voices were even once called belly-speakers, and I can't help but think of how Gertrude Stein could refer to love-making as lifting-belly. We consult our innards, as concrete as they are multiplicitous, literal as metaphorical, the fauna of the night, outside is written on our innards, and so on outside, we perceive a sympathetic scrawl, somewhere.

I've always loved the phrase, from Simone Pétrement, that there is nothing to prevent a magician from being a philosopher... to which of course we could say the reverse (though I fear sometimes I miss something vital in rarely being able to see in just the one direction). The doctrine of sympathies and antipathies in nature, in cosmos, is so often traced back to work with plants, to Theophrastus, the ancient Greek physician, but, without wishing to repeat myself, way beyond his presence also.

I mention Theophrastus because he wrote of mutual affection and attraction, a lore he inherited from earlier generations of root-cutters and herbalists, wherein we find a comparison to the nurturing of words within

the processes of listening to and talking with plants, for which I can only turn to the Neoplatonist, Plotinus, who also compares the articulation of magical sympathy to working with plants, where many, what I'll call existences, are drawn to each other without a third party deliberately working to bring the effect about. Magic, he says, is the love and the strife. As many root-cutters would say, herbs are all parts, not just the roots. In this regard, Theophrastus said he was as interested in gathering fairy tales as he was other forms of knowledge.

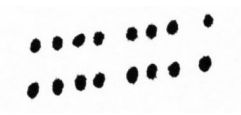
Root cutting then, is a practise of care at the crossroads of the visible and invisible, thought and unthought, a conjugal doubling, the joiner and the joined. A Logos that cuts and reconciles, amplifying low ghosts. In other words... our hearts were once other than our own. As we reach our heart we are at the point of a division, heart is imagination's organ, taking in and holding under imaginal folds, the invisibility of everyone that comes to us, heart holds that which cannot be held in hands alone, retaining a porosity of boundary, an emptying out of self as intertidal self, returning to zero, like the fool of the tarot, and beginning again.

It's important to hold that philosophy and medicine weren't seen as opposing practises in Antiquity, the cynic Diogenes even said he was a root cutter (of which I'm aware up until now I've only been speaking of in the figurative sense). Root cutters and drug sellers were often lumped together, it was their job to gather botanical drugs and supply them to the populous. Theophrastus mentions their eccentricity (certain practises would dictate three circles inscribed on the ground around the plant, the

first cut made while facing west and speaking as many words related to the mysteries of love as one could think of), but he also praised their abilities to obtain dangerous and potentially lethal substances.

Another example is that one should first anoint oneself with oil when cutting thapsia (deadly carrot), due to the fact that they could often cause body to swell up if harvested the wrong way. Garlic was recommended before cutting hellebore (often associated with Hecate), which can otherwise make the head heavy. These skills were handed down from generation to generation.

Aristophanes even claimed that Euripides' mother was a root cutter, murmuring incantations while harvesting medical plants, such as dittany, going further to say that Euripides strange behaviour strange from being raised among wild herbs, or pharmakon, a combination of psychotropic herbs, euphoria, and bestial glee. The head that holds many stories has many heads.



For Jung, mandalas were also cryptograms in which he saw self (wholeness bellying their whole) actively at work. They became for him, the path to a motile centre, to individuation as circumambulation of self as lightning field. Mandalas can appear and reappear in situations of psychic confusion and perplexity, archetypal life fields thereby constellated, representing a pattern of order superimposed on psychic chaos so that each thread falls into place and the weltering confusion is held together by a circle of protective separation, nest and bower.

There are times when this can remind me of the subtle differences between separation and order (a bridge over an apparently hopeless split, patterns holding as channels of resonance to that ‘unrepresentable’ archetypal essence), a notch in the so-called problem of opposites (concentric arrangements of disordered multiplicity)... this, in mind of the mandalas presence in alchemy, serving to synthesise four elements, which otherwise tend to fall apart, to come to strife.

This has helped me hear *Respondents* in conjunction of automatic and intrinsic form pattern (within corresponding likeness, without as symbol, simile, analogon). This is a process that doesn’t feel like it takes place in mind alone, but in biological dynamism, a doctrine of similars. As I intuit the energy of *Respondents* I draw without looking at the page, diagrams connecting these letters, the roots within, cutting and retying elsewhere.

When considered in terms of the boundaries of Moira, root cutting can literally mean cutting the thread, allotting different resonances, previously imperceptible part-whole relationships... prophetic subject and prosthetic subject as conjoined principle of magic, where every partial aspect contains their own wholeness. What can appear to ego as non-rational, undifferentiated, unrepresentable, can also be associated with the magical dimension of psyche.

Who lies outside of our capacity to resonate?

Does this mean they cannot perceive us also?

Who draws, compels, magnetises, attracts us to these, materials, to words, sounds, to people, situations, events... these threads, cut, retied, pulled, calcified, knotted... who separates us, and in what ways... what of animating edges and overlaps as personified energies? (what paths at what moments in a labyrinth potentially extend beyond epithelial boundaries in all directions, ever-terra-forming an archetypal life field of essentially unknown inner form patterns).

What words can we offer to such extension (this cry, this bellowing)...

Even extension begins to filter and disturb the radial nature of perpetual energy dissemination, and before we know we're so far away from a phenomena we can never be far away from... describing the infra-action of *Respondents*... these forces can be personify, and thus guide, form, dissolve, reform.

A spiral never quite looks like a spiral because spiral is life themselves, radial scree of the struggle and reconciliation of opposites (so told), and the notion of a mandala (neither symmetrical nor asymmetrical, subjective as instance of multiple universality) is a correspondence with one's inner-outer situation at that 'time', observing psychic transformations from day to day, moment to moment, formation, transformation, eternal mind's re-creation... the wholeness, so-called, of personality, psyche in diffractive accord with universe.



Who knows where we, in an instant, might crystallise? In that instant there we disappear. Sun's influence makes it so very plausible that sun could be known wherever we might find ourselves. This makes me think of Werner Heisenberg, he said that in the statement - whenever we know the present exactly in every respect, we can predetermine the future - it is not the conclusion that is wrong, but the premise... The present, suspended between prophetic and prosthetic, the myriad adumbral impulses of sculpture as entity in *Respondents*.

What might this say about the Dionysian effort of being present with emotion in our bodies? About a science in touch with prophecy and healing, healing in touch with prophecy and science, a snake at the beginning and a bull at the end, aligned with the living reality of the dead as both science and seance... Does one link and the other separate as ecto and plasm? Circular time that appears and disappears as prophecy and history, never were, always are. There are many prints behind, and ahead. Psyche as glass door.

Synchronicity, mutuality, complementarity, the shock of momentary conscious coagulation of observing ourselves through the eyes of a peacock. Attending with time to not interpret your work but listen and ask question led me to many of these places. Drawing a labyrinth is akin

to rooting psyche in fluid time of infinite outlines blending in mutual attraction.

Last night I dreamt I was a human floating on the face of a log who became human as I petrified, both of us drifted back into the past as preparation for a journey, hollowing out volutes of mimicry and sacrifice within which we carved mutual language fossils, inaudible with edges of lanolin, ice, and willow harmonising with kidneys of earth.

An intricacy of masks is a revelation of bodies orchestrated in cosmic theatre contained within primordial theatre. At times sculpture disappears, at times, performer, a generative appearance, an animated reappearance. One is conscious of which one is unconscious.



Every letter I've written to you seems to stem from both root and divide, separation and link, as if through the intimate and undulating choreography the secret history of the dividing line is revealed through anisotropy, thorough innate sensitivity to the fields of another, a scar line, a feeding gallery, a magnetic field, an alchemical wave, a membranous dialogue between iron and magnesium under the sign of the instar. On occasion, through angle of crystal, dialogue was heard as phagocytosis and symbiogenesis, character and fate, dancer and sculpture.

I've started to perceive *Respondents* as both demonstration and performance, a collocation of image and ecology, listening to stones as imaginal ecology, indent as intaglio, as real as real, kin of ecotonal awareness, stones being symbolic of lapis who is also peacock. This labyrinth is an infinite curve tracing through cosmological patterning, shadows and images as dreams of memories that emerge from imagination, the minimum arc and the minimum chord, part earth, part heart...

Jung worked with a 16th century Hermetic book called *Mutus Liber*, or *Book of Silence* to explain how for him alchemy is in essence speculative (symbolic) thinking, a means of searching for the spiritual equilibrium whose metaphorical form would be the philosopher's stone. Such a

process is accompanied by the creation of a repertoire of mental pictures, which would gradually lead to a kind of collective unconscious. Terence McKenna said of the Philosopher's stone that it's the universal panacea at the end of time, the chocolate cake that your mother made once a week when you were a child, the light drawn out of nature and condensed into a fixed form. Like the Aleph, it can be all things to all people. If you're hungry, you eat it. If you're dirty, you shower under it. If you need to go somewhere, you sit on it and you fly there. If you have a question, lapis answers it.

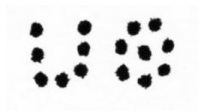
Aleph is said to be the source of all articulate sound, a perfectly spherical zero, akin to disintegration of the ego, altering balance and orientation. To hear the aleph, says Gershom Scholem, is to hear next to nothing, it is the preparation for all audible language, but in itself conveys no determinate, specific meaning within an infinite system of meaning devoid of specific meaning, always on the verge of translation, of doubling, of splitting. to hear sun drink and moon laugh, simultaneous co-emergence of mantic body and mantic stain, wherein someone identifies you with the one who leaves you.

Jorge Luis Borges describes how an aleph may exist in the heart of one of the stone columns surrounding the central courtyard of the Amr Mosque in Cairo, inside of which, he says, lies universe. This is the vestige of primal sea that remains in chemical reactions linking mitochondria in our cells to celestial cytoplasm, the illusion of irreversibility intimately affected by us, and yet it is most eyes cannot see. Stone avails themselves in

bustling rumour to ear that is willing to return to ground, to both shed and retain their bipedal imagination, like an ipecac ego, milking and growing auditory lobes.

Aleph is a fourth dimension, one that captivated Borges as a child as he played with a collection of 4-dimensional cubes, composing a bright tesseract, an infinite combination of the planes that nevertheless cannot be reduced to any sense of their supposed totality. Aleph is felt as analogue of a fourth dimension which would require, in this context, a fourth canal in the ear, a hyper-canal, vibrating to such a fine degree that it is pure energy, the electricity that drives gravity (resonant frequency of Earth is 7.83, resonant frequency of 7.83 is Earth), a conjunction of opposites as dirt work, where getting our hand sin the dirt is also touching planets, the wondrous function of animation as creative imagination, depth-awareness and multi-dimensional perception, to hear sun is to hear ground upon which we ground ourselves, a diffractive clairaudience.

Shamanic Vertebrae



To all those prophets of our age who have revealed me to myself and
made me explode into: me.

Hélène Cixous

Dear Rita

Spending time with your work, I often hear the question, who is guiding and guided? Layers are stars of introjection. But to phrase this question in a fashion that leads one into an either/or is to plunge to deeper into a maze, to stop meandering and start inhaling panic grass that begin to thicken the walls. Rather, we watch one emerge from several, watching for the right time.

I'm hoping I can gently stitch together a few thoughts in the writing of this letter to you, stitches I was previously aware of, but after my time in the company of *Respondents*, have been brought closer to a recognisable, audible pattern.

In saying, know thyself... I realise this can come across as wilfully archaic, but the simple yet insurmountable difference held in the phrase, all I, no Thou, accompanies (all these letters) as background and foreground, as

little Gestaltian faces, spinning daemones I perceive in and out of the manifestation of your sculptures at play and at rest.

Know thy self becomes know thy selves, as daemones, trusted friends, personified images of interior visions entwined with psychic reality (an encounter Jung would call fate). Attempting to hold the essence of this mystery, I am always left with a feeling of someone guiding the individual from within, threading a unique pattern, a pattern that is trying to go somewhere. There are qualities of psyche that we do not produce, rather, they produce themselves, they live their own lives, and the individual in whom they are alive, with whom they are embodied, must themselves, go somewhere...

All I no thou is akin not so much to writing about others, but to envision one's selves as if others, these strange paradoxical images of one devouring the other, the many voices in the larynx, the living becoming the dead, and the dead the living, what grows from the stamina of a wound...).

An encounter with these personal figures can become personifications of fate, so close to Pam Montgomery's experience with plant spirits. I've no wish to try and personify your sculptures, rather see through, see person in metal, metal in person, seeds in each other's other as midden, the place, a reality of psyche, with which daemones coalesce and try gently to be heard. What then, does soul want?

The stern (and often unavoidably tacit) distinction between self and world blurs in entangled relation of labyrinthine hodology, both path and the ability to obscure the path, to walk and return a fossil. Know thyself, equates to know thy world. World as pleroma of little gods, of which self is indelible, and many. Self is not separate from world and yet at times requires the hodological tendency of boundary making as protection, formation of shell, sanctity of spiral, whilst retaining the ability, to hold in heart, that such boundaries need only ever be temporary, otherwise, boundary can transmute into wall, calcifying, prematurely concluding, like a staunch psychic pastness where words dry out if left under sun, or not grow if left under moon. This is closer to the homonym of profit than prophet, which Amiri Baraka writes about so well, when prophet ignores the present by denying a past to predict 'the' future.

I've thought a lot about prophetic time during the writing of these letters, admixture of algal and lunar time, intertidal human. Etymologically, which I tend to think of as linguistic ancestry and artery, epigenetic heritage, we find prophet, not only in soothsayer, but prophetes, harbinger (the edges of the pastoral signified by summer cicadas), from both pro, before, and per, forward. This is then a confluential present, a whirlpool of time, a present that can help us adapt and integrate with change (kairos-time) to the extent that 'the' vanishes. Time as pure actuality, relentless present, without past or future, that never stops being and that extends as wide as reality in love with imagination, leaving no room for anyone to exist outside of borderless fluid Aion, a preternatural love relationship, part-whole of the erotic, the thickest, most chaotic feelings we are.

A Celtic term for prophet, is that of vates, which can mean poet, and bard, emerging again from the ground of soothsayer, but at different times, different species spending different periods of time underground. Vates is rooted in the Welsh, gwawd, which can roughly translate to, spiritually arouse (to spin these little faces we are), leading to yet another, deeper root structure, perhaps even a taproot, I playfully say, of madness, frenzy, mania, so close to the Greek mantis, one touched by divine madness, an experience necessary for the collocation of comic and cosmic, in between which, we are submerged in the oft subliminal hundred channels of history (history's unconscious), a stretched space of learning to identify I and Thou as daemones determining our consciousness. Know thyself thus becomes an archetypal knowing, daemonic knowing, familiarity with psychic figures and psyche of substances, met as imaginal images and archetypal patterned consciousness.

On occasion I have had cause to feel this writing process as one of constant, maniacal sloughing, akin to eating crystals of bracken, the many forms of your sculptures as extensions and intentions of body, as articulate daemones, as lightning field of threshold patterning, where cyclical and psychical maturation take the place of an ultimate fructification.

As our bodies remove themselves from themselves through periods of insight and indecision, this is not a process of ultimate hierarchical creation, the 'new' that arises from the 'old', it is a horizontal engagement that never appears exactly the same way, a symbiotic motility of archetypal bombast and communicative geo-remediation, an exchange of energies

given temporary form between bodies before dispersing, suspended as temporal emblem, baroque emblematica, wherein to experiment on is also to be experimented upon. Performer moves with the ghosts of their organs, seasons, cycles, thoughts become animals in a room, people in air, birds in a forest.

I've felt tentacular adjuncts in various myths and stories relating to cicadas, who transform ground, anterior and ulterior seem irrelevant, the process is where we're at, the flicker. In Orphic cosmology it was the instrument of the cithara that helped humankind move in sympathetic relation with stone, in between lithic and human reality, but also with cicada, in between cicadidae and human reality.

In Strabo's Geography we read that Eunomos, an accomplished cithara player, was contending in the Pythian games when one of the strings on his instrument snapped, at this critical point, a cicada landed on the resonant body of his harp and called in the same frequency as the missing string, producing a beautiful cosmic drone. Is this fate at work? Integration with one's daemon, becoming vessel. This act of returning someone to a deity, of recognising someone sacred, for whom one is a vessel of some kind.

The cithara is also the instrument we find related to the animation of images and statues in Renaissance magic, which I have often had cause to parallel with *Respondents*. Here we imagine the Renaissance magus, Marsilio Ficino, accompanying his ritual performances of the Orphic Hymns

to Apollo, Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury, as he sought to draw down by correspondence the influences of the benefic planets. There is also what we might call the Orphic end of Renaissance poet, Angelo Poliziano, who was smitten by the insane love of a charming youth, from which he soon fell into a deadly sickness. While burning with fever, he seized his cithara and sang songs with supreme fury, so that he was gradually deserted by his own voice, then by the nerves of his fingers, and finally by his vital spirit, driven out by merciless death.

As I mentioned, this letter is closer to a patchwork resembling a constellation, neither one nor the other but drawing from many different points, no doubt assuming different appearance to any who read. But this leads us, and returns to us, as that is the drift of this correspondence, to mythological layers of sloughed cicada skin, words as nymphal exoskeletons.

The voices of cicadas have the punctuality of a fever, as it's well known that the volume of their chirp can correspond to the temperature of the air. The hotter it gets, the more vociferous certain species can become. Being as these creatures, at least in part, call in order to attract a mate, the hotter it becomes, the larger their population grows.

In a Platonic dialogue known as Phaedrus, cicadas are hot suns, addressing one another like refractive weather patterns. Socrates insists he is resistant to their sound. If one gives into them, they laugh. But if the cicadas perceive us steering clear of them, they might feel respect and grant that

boon which heaven permits them to confer upon mortals. Upon hearing this, Phaedrus, Socrates' interlocutor, states that he knows nothing of the myth surrounding them, and so of course, Socrates takes this opportunity to tell the story of the cicada people, or those who cultivate sound. The story goes that cicadas used to be human beings who lived before the birth of the Muses. When the Muses were born, and song was created for the first time, some people were so overwhelmed with the pleasure of singing that they forgot to eat or drink, they died without even realising it. It is from them that a race of the cicadas came into being, and, as a gift from the Muses, they had no need of nourishment once they were born. Instead, they immediately burst into song, they became sound, without need of food or drink, until it was time for them to die.

They started to sing with such ecstatic joy, stranded in a living-death of enstatic pleasure. Cicadas, transmogrified humans, by dint of their singing, became both other and deeper than themselves, ubiquitous as pressure changes.

Earlier in Plato's Phaedrus, we encounter the following passage: A lover will admit that he's more sick than sound in the head. He's well aware that he is not thinking straight; but he'll say he can't get himself under control. So when he does start thinking straight, why would he stand by decisions he had made when he was sick?

This is the ongoing, throbbing of all life, erotic individuation whereby shedding skin is co-terminus with integration, and it is this process we sense resonating with other layers, other chirping myths that resound in mind with the self-same ricocheting pleroma of *Respondents*.

It remains up to the self to find out which mythic images are most resonant to them, work best with them, to amplify cosmic comic language further in accord with experience. Even a single figure, such as Artemis lunar deity, or Hermes trickster, can't be disinterred from the stories in which they are embedded. Myth contains and is contained by qualities and motion, describes processes and movement.

A zodiacal sign, perceived through mythic senses, is also a dynamic story, they chirp. Each sign contains their own conflicts, ambivalences, dualities, motives, lacks, longings, collisions and resolutions between characters, reflecting movement between different parts of psyche and substance. If we exteriorise our myths, which all of us do at different times in life, then we draw others into our lives to take up one role or another, and we identify unconsciously with one or another figure in the story. In this way, the figures of myth are the active and dynamic aspect of our fate, daemones, and we draw the outer world into our own myths at the points where they touch our own. Thus we, as the vessels for myth, I and Thou, create our fate as container and contained.

As lion door advances towards the cithara they become image, shadow, and mad phantom. The cithara, or is it cicada? is often to be found between death and knowledge, where language is bathed in mythic sound, eliciting sympathetic responses. In antiquity, water and madness were interlinked in lunatic consciousness, nymphs lived in wells, rivers and seas, and curiously, lymph, is a Latin word derived from nymph. In the second century ce, the Roman grammarian Sextus Festus wrote that the *lymphae* (waters) are named after the *nymphaea* (water spirits). The Latin noun, *lympa*, meant a clear and pure source of water, but *lymphaticus*, meant raving, or crazy, a correspondence that still reverberates with the notion that they who gaze upon the feminine, enchanting and sensuous nymphs, will go insane. A *nympholepty*, to be seized by the nymphs, is a mania that was said to take place at the blaze of noon, under the high sun, producing a loss of reason.

The nymph who strikes is a mood of place. Gestalt psychology calls this embodiment of mood in imaginal geography, its physio-gnomic character, wherein a setting is animated, airs and waters ensouled. It is where our souls on earth receive the earth in our souls, as James Hillman says. Eros comes out of nowhere, on wings, to invest the lover, to deprive their body of vital organs, to vibrate their waters. Ancient Greek poets so often represented Eros as a form of insanity, mania, melting, loosening limbs, breaking down, biting into, burning, devouring, sloughing, grinding the lover to powder that dissolves in water. The Greeks called this, erotic mania, as Eros enters the lover, they are lost, they go mad.

If we are inclined to fantasise gods, mythic protagonists we gather in occluded shadow around the frozen light of our natal chart suspended below the zodiacal wheel, inside all planets, then myth can find a congenial home within resonant patterns of an individual horoscope, entering a life, clinging and sloughing as daemon.

Character is fate, says Heraclitus, and later Novalis, and if we are part of everyone, and everyone is part of us (everyone affects everyone), it is a matter, in this instance, of learning to listen to all parts of ourselves (the head that tells many stories has many heads), which is to say, giving ourselves the permission to drift and inhabit languages other than our own (other than those we directly recognise as language) as expansive and imaginal ecologies wherein everyone is real, and very much alive, alive in a way that doesn't require us to project our own myopic confines of life as category or condition, but to co-partner, recalling, not only Novalis and Heraclitus when they refer to soul and fate in the same breath, but Ritter and Novalis (who felt that the writing of sound figures was present before their excitation). Self enters and exits at different stages of a life, and we may meet them in the form of, not just other people, but impulse and character, daemon and moira, substance and cicada, chimera.



Labyrinths digest their own paths, dissolve in heat and humidity as they ring out the philosopher's vitriol. Held in the fermenting glass of body that is a liquid depth of crow's head, we read this hermetic dew, open our mouths and catch the drops like shadows struck and circled by their own miasma in periodic absences of totality where images occur swiftly, percussively, shored up against the night of endolymph like scarlet painted on moonstone. Cosmos is listening to what we say, as cosmos is in all of us, displaying their own self enjoyment.

Each organism represents, in some manner, universe (mirrors mirroring), and so these words are addressed as much to cosmos as they are you. There's a voice in my head telling me how overblown this sounds, and whilst I don't wish to quieten said voice, it's the self-same sound that rings with Harris's conventional realism... To deny the world soul asks of us, what is it to assume that we are more sensitive than the world we live in?



Respondents mirror a passage in the alchemical *Aurora Consurgens*: they who shall raise up their soul shall see its colours. To perceive every colour at once is the sound of eidola as cicada, peacock as colour field, Gestaltian perception of wholeness, coagulation of parts as rainbow body.

Michael Maier (an alchemist for whom individuation was a journey through planetary houses) would often relate the phases of alchemical process to birds, raven being the black phase, dove the white phase, phoenix the yellow phase, pelican the red phase (linked to the belief that the bird wounds herself in order to nourish her young), peacock the multi-coloured phase...

At times I've seen your sculptures becoming pollen grains dropped from the beaks of these birds. Novalis wrote a piece entitled *Pollen and Fragments* (something I only found out after the fact of this oneiric observation), wherein he says that all ashes are pollen—the calyx [chalice] is heaven. This is a marvellously condensed and yet allusive observation, the implications of which are that (as in many Taoist paintings) only the barest outlines (as in a vignette) are necessary to intuit wholeness, and that even the most transitory of phases may have enormous ramifications. The ashes of individuated selves as moult are pollen that fertilises and enlivens cosmos as entangled calyx.



The alchemical peacock (often associated with Mercury via saturation and abundance) is otherwise known as the Cauda Pavonis, and needn't be literally associated with colour alone, but with inner experience, consciousness, insight. The Pavonis is that which can never fully be realised, it is the ground upon which *Respondents* takes place, mirroring this seemingly endless coagulation of form and frequency as lunar verbal momentum.

The Cauda Pavonis (fluid motion of the sidereal), perceived through a moment in which one is able to hold both performer and sculpture at the same time as they push apart and feel something emerge from the impossibility of the shape, mental imagery blending with the activity of lived myth as enstatic trance.

In his *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, Jung says that peacock stands for the unity of all colours (churning integration of all qualities as concert of worlds) whilst also symbolising inner beauty and perfection of soul, integrating all polarities (peacock as world soul's mating call), the quintessence, causing all subjects to bring forth.

The predominant colour of the peacock's tail is green, which connects it with Venus as a ruler of the sign Taurus, and thus with gut forest and forest fire, procreation and resurrection as a bird associated with Hera, who gifts renewal, reflecting in annual renewal of plumage, relating to seasonal cycles in their myriad forms. For the alchemist Gerhard Dorn, a dead spiritual body is a bird without wings, transmuting into raven's head before becoming peacock's tail, slowly attaining the plumage of a swan burgeoning into the highest redness to allude to the phoenix, which, like peacock, is symbolic of fluid renewal and resurrection, synonymous with lapis. These are stones we listen with as coagulant sympathetic magic.



Many alchemists believed that the lapis was inside each soul, as knowledge to be worked with throughout alchemical stages, and that we are the ore. In yet another manifestation of the ourob-erotic nature of alchemical vocabulary, without us, the lapis cannot be fulfilled, and without the lapis, we cannot live. So through this knowledge, of stone, we work with the bounds of self.

This is surely one of the reasons why it's so important to read to others, not just children, to get to know, to come to love fairy tales, myths, where ending looks to beginning, the restoring of an initial state paralleled with the process of individuation whereby a propensity to wholeness becomes a conscious happening. The centre, self, does not lie inside ego, but around them, located in that which we unconsciously are, whether personal, in relation to shadow, or impersonal, in mind of archetypal symbols of self. Jung spied psychology in ancient alchemy, exteriorising archetypes by animating and threading them through matter (which I've found myself experiencing numerous times with your *Respondent(s)*), whilst remaining aware that the centre was paradoxically both inside and outside.

The lapis, pervades all elements with invisible rays meeting together from all parts at the centre of the Earth, says Dorn, generating and hatching all creatures, no one can generate in themselves but only in psyche and

substance like them. Call this what you will, symbolic thinking, active imagining, but I picture lapis as soft turbulence of threshold pattern, as mandala and fire figure, the cosmic comic by which we are not only one half searching for another half, but fractals of a cosmos that is a peacock of prismatic colour fields beyond fields as this process takes place throughout all interwoven entangled layers we are inside and outside of, throughout the substances we are attracted to and work with, throughout terrestrial lack and cosmic patience.

We cannot, says, Dorn, produce anything without a subject like us, and we find this like, because they come from the same source, which is what he beautifully calls the incorrupt medicament. If we want to produce this, he says, we can only do so in someone akin to our own centre (and I've no wish to pin this down to a literal interpretation, it is much more resonant of plurality than that, separation being necessary for the work of generation, whatever is pulled apart is put back together in the production of the union of opposites in the stone, equivalent, as we've already said, of individuation, in which the stone becomes a unreachable projection of unified self).

The morphology of your sculptures are very much part of this process, the motility of rays given and giving form through the articulation of bodies in psychic space as immanent crystallisation of energy. Transmute yourselves from dead stone into living philosophical stones, says Dorn!



The phrase upon which I previously hinged Aristophanes, that of Cosmic Comic, has been ringing my body as if I were a bell. Coruscated place between words has continued to warp syntax and so cosmic and comic are now inseparable from a novel by Italo Calvino called *Cosmicomics*, an ectoplasmic fable of cellular cosmogonic cyclicity, which I'm now realising reflects the aforementioned fractal lapis as fire figure. This is a kind of single-celled boundary situation, wherein cells profess to die of love, but it's a love that does not require another as enfolding symbol of intimacy (every cellular world we are as know thy immanence, worlds within and below visible behaviour, individuation as impersonal psychic process, a soul centred biology), a refutation of both separation and outside, a strange and boundless umwelt, diffractive world self, knowing nothing other than one's boundaries (or is it other's boundaries...), from which grows a species of mirrored desire where the line between self and world creates cellular others through mitotic doubling as genesis of a third position in between cosmic love and strife, life and death, ego and anima, literal and literary. Self and other are apart and together because wholeness is not solely unitary but concatenation of opposition, individuation as lightning field, a process of differing, quorum sensing, recognising the many voices and substances, the many psyches we are, daemons in cellular silt.

This is redolent of Calvino's professed lightness of thoughtfulness (all myths ask is not to be forgotten, *esse in anima*, to be in soul), a perspective echoed by the Neoplatonist Porphyry, his (what I would call) intuitive practise of making images of friends, or statues of deities, to honour, respect, and remember. Our mouths are pressed against the invisible mouths of our daemones (to be is to be perceived, because 'facts' also wish to present themselves to us). Thus all these breathing images could also work to instil life with a sense of filiation, a sense of thoughtfulness toward one's relationships, as Patricia Cox Miller says. In this practise of breathing, of animating statues (recalling that this is another term for images, vessels, containers, sculptures), the sensuous image carries multiplicitous meaning.

When images appear in dreams, as simulacra, they are not simply copies of copies, they heighten emotional life, a perspective of doubly imaginal character. Calvino writes that it's no longer possible to think of a totality that is not multiple, replacing the uniqueness of a thinking self with a multiplicity of subjects, voices, and perspectives of cosmos. His work, as does yours I feel, seeks to escape the limited perspective of individual ego (know myself becomes know thyself, images teach ego their limits), not only to enter into selves like our own but to hear the speech of those we cannot, extending notions of centre and self to birds perching on the edge of a gutter, to trees in spring and trees in autumn, to stone, cement, steel, and plastic.

Just quickly (if we can imagine the space between this paragraph and the one pre-seeding to be full of terpenes and phytoncides, that the words, when viewed from above, are rows of trees in quincuncial array, a map we feed to a labyrinth, over which grows this invisible forest). I say, ‘hear the speech of those we cannot’, in part because I’ve never been particularly interested in the ways certain Deep Listening practises seek to create a hierarchy of attentiveness, resolutely separating hearing and listening. I feel that hearing is so close to instinct (a response to nature that is archetypal), and so hearing brings together they who also keep apart. I’ve always been interested in the parallels between soul, mediating because they have someone in common with world and divine, whilst at the same time, keeping them apart, and how organisms are made of predominantly dipolar electrical molecules (separated positive and negative charges), a morphology that favours both storage of metabolic energies as electromagnetic vibrations, and transfer/transformation of such energy by resonance. An apprehension of why humans, let’s say, remain highly sensitive to those subliminal phenomena which at the same time couldn’t appear further apart.

If we return to the literary forest, trees on the page in our guts. In his lecture on Multiplicity, Calvino speaks widely with Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, a suitably encyclopaedic poem in which everyone is endlessly changing form, dissolving cosmos with cyclical and spiralling equality between all who exist, refuting any hierarchy of power and value. Cosmos therein, composed of qualities, attributes and forms, defines to depart from a welter of substance field and loam, plants, animals, humans,

minerals, bacteria, electron and so on, nature alive! In one of Ovid's myths, we encounter Lotis, who realises that she is changing into a lotus tree (interestingly, as a flower essence, Lotus is associated with grounding). Her feet, rooted to wet earth, enfold with bark and insect, sowbug and double-tail, hands, full of leaves and litter (stirred by profound, intense emotion) are also psyche and soma, transforming through mutual interplay of opposites. Rather than deriving figures from psychic conditions, we could derive psychic conditions from figures, so then, to reach the ground we need also ascend... ascension as grounding, the upward downward road is spiritual body in celestial earth.

Echoing this mackled forest light and dark, Calvino has said that he is a Saturn dreaming of being a Mercury, that everything he writes reflects these twin impulses. Saturn, being the slow worker, coin collector, laboriously labelling them in a neat, consistent script, and Mercurius, providing insight as sound penetrating body, passing through the turtle creep of Saturn and enlivening edges that become doors becoming.

This conjunction, Saturn and Mercury, lightness and weight, finds coralline parallel in two living stones, one, which we've already encountered through lapis, and one other, of turning to stone (which has its own double edged meaning as verb and the process of coming to attention as alteration of consciousness, as shock), a slow petrification associated with the Gorgon Medusa's stare.

As Calvino says, any attempt to interpret myth ultimately impoverishes it, but I can't help think of something Hélène Cixous wrote (Cixous was an adamant hearer, where adamant resonates with adamas, a diamond, a sharp adumbral ear of multiple in-pulses)... Medusa is not deadly, she's beautiful, and laughing. 'The' monstrous, is here held as fragile, in need of care.

In one version of this myth, Medusa's blood births a winged horse, and so the weight of stone contains its so-called opposite. In another, Perseus places her severed head of snakes on a bed of leaves strewn with small branches of aquatic plants, which, upon touching Medusa, turn into coral, and so nymphs rush to adorn themselves, bringing piles of vibrating seaweed and samphire for their cosmetic (cosmic) transformation.

As we breathe we are with plants. Ovid's words are the photosyntax of trees and seaweed suspended over the auspicious ground of *Respondents*. Our lungs are part of Earth's ionosphere, hum-ion syntax, both ensouled and ensoiled root structures, bearing ancestral witness to syntaxis, a putting together (whilst also appearing apart). Sound and light burst each other.



Self is much older than ego (self as archetype within which ego is contained), one carved of the other, a sacred figure out of one part of a living log and a domestic utensil out of one other. Saturn and cooking pot, Moon and washbasin, Mars and knife, Mercury and keys, Sun and spinal cord, Jupiter and suit, Venus and comb... sacred being sacred in relation to a sacred place.

Individuation is impossible without a relationship to one's environment, Hermetic dew, silent music, a repudiation of the muted passivity with which we can subconsciously or unconsciously project on the living world. Living landscapes have their own pulse and arterial topography and sinew, however far-flung in form and field. The vibrancy or pathos in the veined warp of a broken leaf meets with consciousness through linked eye and ear in a shared anatomy that has its roots in everyone.

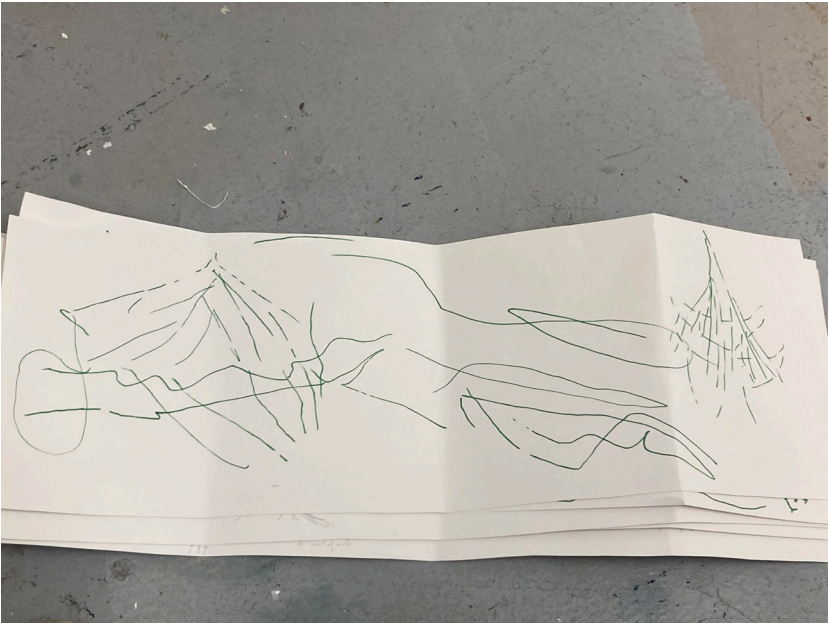
Writing to you has been a long digested dream, the ground of the peacock on which *Respondents* drifts has become a carpenter's room, the colours setting in motion an extraordinary cosmic dance in which all elements and experiences are orchestrated by the carpenter's touch. The same light warps both season and eternity.

As lithic ecology, lapis is inside of us as pollen, solar and lunar madness of which we cannot relinquish our trembling as vibrations ripple and flee across the basin of cosmos. A rectangular face, chiselled and cut from cedar, startled and frightened by fleshless wood whose lips are a breath apart and full of grains from the skeleton of a leaf on the ground, branching delicately and sensitively upward.

The carpenter's fingers are of the same wood. Every movement and glance, every expression is a chiselling touch, alienation and translation of flesh and salt into everyone and anyone on earth. The chisel is old as life, old as silica, drawing attention to the moving metallic grains common to the carpenter and all living elements.

Seeing through living matter, consciousness is heard. Finger nail and bone are invisible panes of glass in the stone. As I write I mimic, each word is the courage to make my first wooden steps. The chimeric crystal that is every angle of sculpture stands with an abstract memory of their life and their death. The sense of death is a wooden dream, a dream of music.

The chimera belongs to past experience and appears to be life itself, vibrating and changing into a thousand shapes, a lunar image of abandonment and air, painting the carpenter's walls. Space turns into time, movement turns into an outline of a stampede of ghosts. One relates with other as they experience the same contradictory emotions through resonant movement of mineral and organ, the alert dreaming skin radiant with elemental density.



Rita Evans, Respondents - Chapter 1 + preparatory diagrams

These superimposed spaces (as carpenter and sculpture) relate in sharing a common essence, the sculpture's eyes grow out of the shell they have become to enable the dancer to see through the room and within themselves. The carpenter's eyes are window panes in the veil of the whirlpool in which they see reflected the swallow of planets. The distance between them is death.

Within the room that is *Respondents*, substance turns into bubbling psychic fat, loose and endless, yielding and spreading from stars into roots of self and space that is only one of the manifold shapes of living energy. Contrasts in between forms of psychic and substantial being, the density of substance and crafted outline of their many shapes between light and darkness, have been seen in the metamorphoses of magicicada as orchestration of fluctuating images scattered among architectonic self-cosmos.

Images of *Respondents* change into dancing hieroglyphs, silt of vision and lion door are dancer and sculpture in growth cycles of decay, evoking a structure supporting every visualised space which is a door unable to be opened by an external force, but everyone crumbles. Lion door is self as they enter into dialogue with ego dissolved in the face of stone as concretion in heart, a stream stamped for ever like the breathless outline of a dreaming skeleton, fully aware of the correspondences between eternity and season.

