

3-2011

marE2011

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "marE2011" (2011). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 194.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/194

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

= = = = =

Things.

Things not remembered.

All kinds of things and things

have no essence but they call.

This Delft sugar bowl from Japan

speaks my native tongue—

everything talks to us.

No person there in it but it speaks.

No real object present

□ □ □ □ □ □

standing there before us

but we feel it.

No essence in us either but we know.

No person in me but I speak.

Open the semblance of a door

and seem to live

inside what seems an empty house

in clearest knowing

but nothing known.

Only in this perfectly empty body can I live.

19 March 2011

= = = = =

Waiting to talk to someone
who isn't there. The phone
only works between two
agents, two subjects.

One of them might conceivably
be me but who is the other?
Tanker breaking through ice
up the river two weeks back.
Now serene the open reach
far as a ship can see but we
even the best of us are moored
in the sky.

Saltimbanque City down here
gravel underfoot but sparkles in her cheeks
the woman's sister swings above the net
topples from one man to another, trapeze,
she's the human message tossed,
Rilke sideshow, an ace of tambourines
rattles in the deck until the Queen
of Sequins coaxes her to earth
and speaks us both.

I have tried
for years to tell you
I am spoken by what I see.

19 March 2011

(statement to a workshop:)

First a general note to the workshop: I am impressed by and grateful for the enthusiasm, wit and patience you all have demonstrated in putting up with my experiments in saying. As I keep repeating, it's all in the language. No, it's all in the mind. No, it's all in the breath. All three are true, all three are necessary. When in doubt, I trust the language—it's older than I am, it's been around. It knows. The works that you have produced have been markedly different from one another, all have been interesting, all have engaged us in the reader's dance or travel, finding our way through the landscaped text.

19.III.11

MUTHOS

To fold the story
you mean
 into the story told

Olson did that
his wife his Hurrians

the Sea-God
kissing strange men

the Anthropos my ology
finding in ancient peoples
strange enough to be me,

a continuous present
of old-time anthropologists
Roheim's dreamtime,
the ever-ever land
that could be me.

Desperate Aristotle
anxious for an entity
to sustain his Qualities,

Once in a while we sat shoulder to shoulder
smoking, watching friends eat—
he slammed out of the church he told me
away from the baptism of his son
there are no families there are only other people.

2.

There is no god there is only what we do.
Speak into the myth
myth means what is spoken

you have no life
that wasn't lived before,

it's not all King Arthur and the Victorians,
there was glamor and grammar and one thing more,

the *magic of saying so*
haunts Behistun,

the dead man in Egypt
rides a word boat across the sky

one more word
to hold him in her arms.

3.

So nothing personal
you understand
the weather is your book
and your mood its pages

Muth in old German spelling is courage,

*our mood the more
as our might littles...*

last cry of the English
in that connection,
nothing personal you understand
just a woman standing on one leg
just a flock of wild geese in the corn stob
just a change of weather

4.

I told you because it was true
and truth (that weird positive
we seem to trust so much)
is never reason enough to tell

but I had more, I wanted
you to understand

the difference of distances,
that a man can be far from himself
and still close to you

by myth he means it
by old names for new faces

not so new after all
I see you better when I close my eyes.

5.
She stands on one leg and a red light comes on.
She utters various colors and each one
elicits a special behavior from the man,
I can't tell inside from outside,

o Frank

Kunstler used to say
I can't tell right from wrong,
smiling his grand Hungarian smile as he said it
forgive the perplexities of aesthetics

making good art in a hard time
when the red light goes out.

6.

Reading in good light

the annals,

the deeds of men

spread over the lap

catching sight of an Indo-European root

in archaic Chinese, guessing yet again

that it was one,

once,

speech,

the thing of us,

the thing we made that made us back,

and guess again, he could make

himself live into that,

his lives his little pilgrimages

the Malinowski of the mind

takes sail in that,

the myth thing,

telling into the told.

20 March 2011

=====

Why looking out the window see

only what I want to see—

what good is that?

The shadows say as much as trees

as birds or I don't know what that is

moving too far to be

anything but itself, and fast.

20 March 2011

THE MIDDLE WATCH

It has to happen then
the time between Biber and Bach
between midnight and
before the dawn when it is dark
the *to-rang* we know from Tibet,



when the dark is changing

when else could a man like me live?

(20 March 2011)

Spring has begun

= = = = =

[Dream communiqué:]

After a scarless travel
of fifteen candlelight-years
we come to the green Deva on the Shore.

20/21 March 2011

[dreamt at waking; the sense was that a candlelight-year was a measure. like a light-year but closer, shorter, almost reachable. I suppose the green Deva was Tara, though there was not an image, just the words.]

= = = = =

Reading a friend's words
that kind of religion

I am smitten
from the sky—

soft snow first
day of spring

super nivem dealbabor

Words wash us too.

21 March 2011

=====

Flow resumes.

A flaw.

Be small.

Rillwise seek.

Water always
knows the way.

Be water.

Or go the other way.

21 March 2011

= = = = =

Be safe in your nests,
deliverlings. Ye have come
into auto-mental workshop
world the bric-a-brac
all round you. Everything
you can see is a tool—
use it, if only to look at.
To sharpen vision. There
are so many machines we
have to build before we're done.

21 March 2011

= = = = =

And this is something I know—
this uses me now
over the long day—
snow needs a lot of punctuation,
dark words, epitaphs
in late Latin verse
et cætera. The day
promises to be complex
starting with the sky.
Then new snow on grass
'ill-silencing' all that green—
a cakey look out there
makes me hungry but what doesn't.
Watching the white prevail
I'm a stowaway in a workshop
privileged to observe
the whole process from when
the rain turned snow
and dragged all its
glistening ampersands behind.
Blank I am. Game of light
in near trees played.
Even the brown leaves
receive their own absolution.

21 March 2011

=====

Failing you, there is no vectoring.
The problem with living alone
is that after a while there is no me either,
just things going on or seeming to
gradually erased by pure unintending snow.

21 March 2011

= = = = =

All that meta-lingo
wants to know

it looks like snow
it sounds like rain

a car next door
a far-off train.

21 March 2011

PASSAGE TEXT

Like the passage graves of Neolithic Europe, Ireland especially. You have to crawl or walk low. You have to walk low through the excavated tunnels in the huge tumulus heaped up by those who built the tunnels too, right hand working against left. You know it by weight and pressure and fear as you go along, following the straight line the builder insisted. You can't turn, you can barely retreat. But even so, so much is left up to you. If you come at the right time—and if the builder did his job right, everything aligned to ley-lines or celestial axes—come on, it still takes two to do this dance—then you will see something, feel something, intuit something, know something. The *meaning* of the text, just like the body of the chieftain ages past interred in this monument, has long ago crumbled away. You are left with the sense of having traveled through a made-up earth, and come somewhere, and heard something and know something for sure. But what?

21 March 2011

[Proposed as a preface for a group of 'Passage Texts' from February: "Slate," "House Keeping," "Voices from the Ground," and "Transfiguration."]

(HYPNOPOMPICA)

Words falling over each other
on their mad rush towards silence

*

the message of silence
Ambassador from Silence

*

One cause of not knowing is not knowing.
Another cause is knowing the wrong things.

21/22 March 2011, *verbatim*