

2-2013

febA2013

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "febA2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 315.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/315

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**The ones who carry the physical world
in and out of the immaterial spaces
between one thought and the next— how
can it still be here when we blink and blink again?**

**These we call the gods. We are skeptical
at times of their reality as are they of ours.
Ontology is not the simplest science. Being
we assume to ourselves but who are we?**

**And who are they who stand between us,
the ones who it still when we look away,
when we think of something else but the trees
are still here but the cloud is gone?**

**Are they doorkeepers really who keep us here
far from that mysterious valley in between?**

1 February 2013

=====

**Who doesn't lie there in the night proposing
what I would do if I were suddenly
king pope president god?**

**These investigations are the milk
of your pothic system, how your nerves and bones
yearn for in the common world—**

**the one that such potentates control.
But what about the sleepy little kid
who only knows? And what does he know?**

1 February 2013

=====

Among the well-begun
an otter. Or where the beaver
built three dams in succession
and the stream flowed
big to pond the water out.
Or where the shadow
of the sycamore leaned
on the water and a man
wadding upstream would
have the lash of it
on his bare shoulders
a second and then pass.
Or where the same
flowed into river and river
knew nothing of all this
and swallowed everything
kindly in its hurry. Or
later in mid-ocean a man
swept overboard might
find it and clamber aboard,
it's big enough, and cry out
in wonder that such a thing
should come at his need
and still he wouldn't know

**what manner of thing this is,
no animal ever and yet
on its way and carry me home.**

1 February 2013

INVESTIGATIONS: A BUILDING IS A POEM WITH A DOOR

for Steven Holl

**Who is that singing
inside the singer?**

**When you sit down in the temple
of someone else's god
can you overhear the meaning?**

**When you sit quiet in the temple
who is the god?**

*Why do gods have temples?
Why not anywhere?*

**Because a building teaches true
when priests wobble.**

Is it that a building cannot lie?

In no art is the mind of the artist

**more exposed than in architecture—
all the aspirations, envisionings,
assumptions, computations, all
the necessary compromises.**

Without compromise there is no art

**only self-indulgence, self-expression,
mate-alluring, self-display.**

A building is for other people—

**and that is the essence of art,
why architecture and poetry are most alike:
both use materials that belong to the world,
metal, stone, words, grammars, concretes, plastics, rhythms
and not to the artist**

**the artist owns nothing but the art,
brings to the work nothing but the art.**

**The building is for others,
no lonely tower,
the building is paid for by someone else
for all the someone elses, bodies, lives,
the art is pure agency,
making mind's mark on matter,**

and the poem is for others,
the poem fails if others cannot walk in it dance in it
the poem must have floors and walls,
control the words so that we move
free of doubt and nourished by coherence
through spaces we had not known before
and now are home

the poem must have a door.
A poem is pure compromise between self and language,
the mind of someone and the mind of language
and the minds of everybody else

sacred compromises union rules
zoning boards and financiers
the material itself, the poem
rests firm upon its words,

the building holds the mind up to the sky
and says think yourself inside me
make yourself at home

as many of you as there are
because a city
lets you be apart together

we look up from the valley of the heart.

**So who is that singing in the song
who makes you think
what passes through your head
when you sit quiet in the temple?**

Every building is a temple—
now name the god.

Terrifying beauty of the links the mind endures.

Candlemas 2 February 2013

=====

**He sat on a stone
became a stone
and wrote it down**

**he listened to a bird
became that bird
somehow all this
had happened before**

**who thinks in me
who lets me be
awake or asleep
there is no me.**

2 February 2013 (Google +)

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The body believes in images.

—Normandi Ellis

And loves the images
because they are of its own
nature,
 the body
is an image, the body
is an Egypt,
 a ceaseless
incarnation,
 a round of flesh
becoming mind becoming flesh.

The body believes in what it is,
trusts nothing but the image,
doubts all interpretation.
All except the dance
when the images in their grace
finally consent to move.

2 February 2013

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The images recast.

Blue flowers in the window

make the street outside

another street another

city life ago—

within

our dim capacity

the light's the same.

O Same, what a god you are

to stride over our experience

bodily your self in this and that,

O Same

what are you even

but a flux in perceiving, a mind-rhyme,

kiss of a false friend,

or maybe true,

or maybe mothering,

all food

the same in the same mouth,

the flowers

in the window

false or true,

sky-blue flowers

remembering my life for me.

The dead do not die.

3 February 2013

=====

**A warm-wrapped jogger jogging
all in black, a little dream
of breath before the mouth
so cold the Sunday — this, seen,
enrolls as a new Tarot trump,
that flimsy arsenal of potent
signs any eyes can understand
better than my language tells.**

And yet it tells.

3 February 2013

=====

**We'll never catch up with time
so let it go.**

**Forgetting
is the best getting—
that much we know.**

**Orderly packets of information
arriving and dispersing.
In the old Loew's Paradise the ceiling
lights arranged as constellations—
what you saw on the screen
becomes part of you ever after—
I never said forgetting is easy—
cosmic, girls say, engrams
we used to try to clear
with salmon cans and rubber bands
unavailing.**

**The stars
are up there to remember.
Poor Bruno told us, to change
your mind you have to change the stars.**

3 February 2013

=====

Sunny living room in old aunt's house—

how old that generation was

that I came next in line to,

I was five, they were in their sixties,

white-haired, very pale.

It made me think

that time was all a seeming,

a train in the desert, lonely-friendly

hoot of it at night, a rush of wheels

and steam going nowhere,

bright lights windows with heads of strangers,

profiles passing and then gone.

All round me still

fire and night and the heads of strangers.

3 February 2013

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Or maybe it's too late for time

**maybe we need a different animal
whose fur we are. Things need.**

**Things need selves to bear their needs
through a thingly system—nothing
to remember nothing to dread—**

**there is a wind that still blows through us
and do we also need a name for that**

**for anything? Don't distract me
with what I mean, I'm not interested
in my meaning, I want to know**

**something else. Something
that doesn't know itself yet**

and needs my foolish feeble help.

3 February 2013

=====

**Who lifted my arm
over the coverlet,
tollled me on my side
and cushioned my chin
so comfortably in
the pillow valley,
who flexed my knee
and dreamed me gentle
the whole long sleep?
Who gave me this good night?**

4 February 2013

=====

**Caught by cloud edge
a sky revealed.**

**Make me blue as you,
I thought, and diaphane—
do birds annoy you
with show-off soaring
their eagle-screeling
their glide?**

**They
are like my thoughts
in me, they are mine
after all, these swift
noisy beautiful often
fluttering scavengers
of images and time inside,
my breath is loud with them.**

4 February 2013

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To look t the phone
just before it rings—
we do that,
we know things
but don't know we know.

We know what's coming
because it already is,
firm gesture in a mind nearby,
easy somersault of matter
in a mental world.

Ring ring. Ring.
But can they make me answer?
Can they make me care?

4 February 2013

=====

**But there are changes in the trees
the barely visible phantoms — some beasts,
some women men — who move
graceful as saplings through the mist
among the heavy lumber, they
seem to come closer this morning, their hands,
their liquid eyes, gently forwarding
some message I must understand
before this noon. When the sun
demands an answer. We all
answer with our breaths but some
of us have to turn the breath
into talk and write it down.
Or the sun will never rise again.
Or do I mean will never set?**

4 February 2013