

10-2004

## octD2004

Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octD2004" (2004). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 872.  
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## HOOP

The hoop. Lifting things  
out through the hoop,  
through whose basket handles of hooped reeds  
is the sun lifted every morning  
out and by whose and  
into whose hands?

*The sun is Moses – cm, which is just \c turned round, the name of  
all names, cmc, the Sun.*

*The sun is lifted out of waters womb, passed our way through the  
Pubic Arch of the sky – which is all we can in this life see of the  
great Body in which we form, carry on, and into which we –if  
fortunate – recede.*

*The Pharaoh's daughter lifts Moses out. Who is she? Who is  
Pharaoh, whose name means Great House? How can a man be a  
house? Pharaoh must be the one who possesses the great house,  
or is entitled to enter it. House was a decent name for woman  
among the Jews who came out of Egypt, tyb, a house. Did they flee  
from Egypt and carry the Great House with them, the one to which  
Pharaoh maybe had no right? And who was his daughter?*

Who lifts whom  
through the hoop  
of the day

and what is heard?  
A hoop is a harp  
and who listens?

*Within the hollow work, the hoop's yearning mouth or maw there is always sounding going on. Strung or unstrung, this harp says so.*

The workman goes to sleep  
in the stink of his own sweat  
and works with the job still to finish.  
The passage between sleep and waking  
as also between dream and dreamless sleep  
is shaped like a hoop.

The gate of ivory, of lying dreams, the gate of horn,  
of dreams that tell true, and the gate of amber  
through which the unremembered energies and images  
begotten in dreamless sleep pour into the waking day –  
the hoop is made of amber.

*People who love basketball love watching the ten Sephiroth  
(impersonated by tall people, unusual in form and size, people  
we'd never mistake for ordinary) try to return something to the  
absolute.*

*What is it they return? A ball. What is shaped like a ball and  
hurtles through space endlessly speaking? The earth is the planet  
of words, and the holy ones of the Absolute try to return the earth  
to silence.*

*Of course the players have to turn into monsters. They are pure  
agility in extension. They represent the positive and negative  
columns of the tree of life as they struggle to abolish the earth,  
return it into the all-annihilating absolute.*

*Such a game we let our children play! No wonder Chinese and  
Africans are so good at it, born close to the absolute, people who  
live on the edge.*

I look down at my hands,  
my thumbs touch each other  
my index fingers touch.  
I have without thinking  
formed a hoop.

So who am I  
and who goes through me  
and to whom?

Or where will you be  
when you have gone through me?

Is each us also a portal to the absolute?

*The absolute means: every distinction dissolved away.*

16 October 2004

=====  
*The voices come towards us  
like grains of garnet in the rock*

we hear a story always  
in every sound, sound (song  
is the shadow of an action)

is the shadow of an action.  
Move me  
from this place

cavern I am  
turn me inside out  
so the red ocher palm prints

my hands have made  
all my life on time's walls  
burst out into common light

and be yours  
out there  
where everything is known.

A man knows nothing inside.  
The palm prints  
show his lines of life and heart and head

show his craft his desire  
and all of its turns red

red ocher from the cliff at Roussillon  
I studied in the evening light

red as everything I wanted  
(a man is nothing inside,  
has nothing, knows nothing,

only the red urgency  
to get out, get him out,

get out of this place  
the dark says, be gone  
into your red destinations

and a man is nothing but what he hears.

17 October 2004

## AKT

Let the nude awaken  
from the marginal condition  
of being beheld

to be is to be at the center  
of someone's attentive  
gaze, but to be seen at all

is to be elsewhere  
how else could he be looking  
out of his eyes and see her

over there, at the center  
on the edge of his world  
where she lives.

That is why the theologians  
Ibn Arabi among them  
say the supreme reality

is best represented –if  
represented at all– by one  
naked woman

herself  
the center  
and circumference at once.

18 October 2004

=====

But I asked the theologians  
Who am I? If I am real  
then I am He. If unreal,  
why do you bother with me?  
And who are you?

18 October 2004



=====

There can't be two  
kinds of real.  
But there is summer  
and there is snow.  
I was born in a gateway  
facing north,  
my back to the sun,  
waiting.

18 X 04

## **WAITING**

Waiting is a busy world.  
So much I've done  
waiting for the footstep  
of yours to come back  
and join the echo  
of it I still hear.  
Is all I've been up to  
what you wanted me to do?  
Sometimes I forget I'm waiting.  
Sometimes I think this is all there is.

18 October 2004

=====  
Come for the Waterman  
passion's valentine  
in the cold waste, the *Tides of Feverway*.  
Murk, then peel away  
and set her house in order –  
would you take your name from time?

Nay. Slay Ophiucus in your cradle,  
spin the golden rovings  
from the famous ram  
into a double-twisted doubt of yarn  
and be my shirt.

I wear you against the world,  
drink the sap from the tall reeds  
that grow in that terrible lake  
at the cannibal hour when the mirror talks.

Love who? Love who?  
Like a dented bird  
owl-phraser, nicked in blue woods  
when the moon has gone home.  
Yes you, yes you, dented like a myrtle dove  
so thick with symbols scarce can fly  
and yet it does, do, yes you. Yes, you.

19 October 2004

=====  
Sometimes I think I can taste  
the inside of time's mouth  
and when I do, this taste  
fills my mouth too  
as if someone you kissed at night  
still could taste you  
on her lips waking.  
So many as ifs. Yet a taste  
in my mouth that isn't me.  
And that's the only thing  
that gives me any right  
to say anything at all.

19 October 2004

=====

far away reflection  
of my hand moving

so many miracles  
distorted in one bright glass.

19 X 04

=====

*(after Lily Robbins)*

**I cannot recall the last time I knew something to be true.**

The last time must have been so fierce

I'm in denial. I forget that I forgot.

True. The word true makes me itchy.

Only prosecutors and tax collectors

fish for the truth. We live easily without it,

on the other side of true and false.

All my life I've lived lots of lies

and like it that way, a snug café late at night,

music. No music. Dancers

but no dance. Lies all around me

and I love them. But Pilate asked "What is truth?"

after Jesus said "I am the truth."

I am still the truth.

Nothing else needs to be true as long as I know that.

19 October 2004

## PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN

Who by land or sea her  
a painting by James Tissot of her  
all the times her

word is presence nothing melts  
word is presumption like a cloud  
whose shadow falls promiscuous beneath

word is drunken sailor she  
is in white leaning over the taffrail  
pondering the river crossing other rivers

word is ferry foundering Malay straits  
never come home  
my word sticks inside my word

when I think of all the times  
her word sat at home stretched  
midnight daybed listening to mine

white impenetrable time!  
how the painter brushes a word over a word  
how the ferry shudders finding its slip

a word carried over water then another  
then he paints the eyes in  
that endure so many interruptions

like a kitchen or a melon a word like a melon  
she spots some unknown fruit bobbing on the channel  
and names it saying That is he

that onymous fruit is the not good man  
so many of us are palely weeping from and run  
like me away in white clothes

she says and says Himfruit Himfruit hum  
bobbing on the tide stay there and be rotten  
or be sweet on another or let the fishes eat

but what kind of fish would eat a word  
a word is a bone without a fin  
trajectory without even one blue eye

an archer asleep in the bushes  
a Virgo needs everything in place  
every arrow has a flaming tip

everything sets fire to something else  
I will stay on the river and help the water burn  
she thinks smiling at a pale blur

that runs beside the boat and that she knows  
is her own reflection, the word she forgot  
keeps her company below.

20 October 2004



=====  
Does it say anything  
when you rattle it  
does it rain  
when you strike it with your fist

or is it the hand's fault  
does it bear cherries when you look away  
are the leaves poisonous  
can you remember what it looked like  
right after the mirror broke

and if I touched you right here  
behind the ear on the little bone  
called Coming on a Pony to the Market and Falling Down  
would you think the finger  
meant something about you or about me?

Please tell me if so  
what it means when I touch you,  
please.

21 October 2004

## **THE KIDNAPPERS**

Waiting for more boats  
more boats and more sailors  
more sails and more islands  
more winds and more caves  
and children and dogs in the sea fog  
and all of them gone,

the women pace up and down  
on the shore, on the street,  
wailing their lost children,  
where have they all gone, been taken,  
children vanish into their future,

every person alive  
is the kidnapper of a child  
and I am a determined policeman  
trying to track down the child I used to be.

21 October 2004

=====

*(after Samuel Budin)*

Who's sordid now?  
Please come to the front of the rom  
so we can wash you with our glances.

How did you get so dirty,  
sordid, morally, shabby,  
like socks under the sofa

like daytime TV, like crowded churches,  
like not telling people you love that you love them.

21 October 2004

=====  
Everything that wanted to be thought about  
was done. I was alone  
in the beautiful zone beyond thinking  
when everyone's awake and all my animals  
are busy in the woods and my birds feed.

No singing yet. Caravans pass  
at the edge of the woods and sails  
slip through the trees on delicate rivers  
and none of it asks anything of me.

So now I can give everything.  
This is the moment of speech  
which the old books call  
*the hour of my death Amen.*

Being dead and full of delight,  
bothering nobody and blissfully alert,  
only dead men tell tales.

2.

Every hour in the day has a room where this is so.  
When I talk about doors I'm really  
talking about trees. And when I say trees  
I mean a lot of them standing around silent  
and the space between and among them, the shaped  
space that living systems leave, the glad zone,  
has no name, not mine, right here,  
not yours, now and forever, here we are.

22 October 2004