

10-2010

octE2010

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octE2010" (2010). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 97.  
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To do everything wrong  
and be a wheel  
or be a hammer  
and miss every nail  
and still be in the sunlight—

the permission  
to continue, the precious  
thing beyond metaphor  
plain as pebbles  
under sore feet  
thank god you still feel.

13 October 2010

= = = = =

The face of the emperor  
on a coin in your own pocket  
your fingers feel him  
no matter how long  
ago he died you feel him  
now, the form continues

and in his thing-world  
the emperor remembers you  
in you he comes again  
to rule the blood world  
where you stand at morning  
studying the empty field.

13 October 2010

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Catching up with sunshine  
like some dumb song  
I decided to go to your house  
to make you my girlfriend my love  
bringing ten of my red cows  
but you were busy, washing  
your children's hair, shaving  
your grandfather's chin,  
making a pie. I hate pie.  
I would have had my cows  
trample your garden but  
you have no garden. No house.  
Only never-ending family.

13 October 2010

## LITURGY AND POETRY

One more word of mine  
and then the liturgy  
the words of the not-me  
howled at the rising sun  
with many an amen and so-may-it-be.

Anaphora the schoolmen call it:  
what has been picked up and *carried*  
*again and again*, as if the gods were deaf  
or easily forget.

Or aren't there at all  
and such words are meant just for us,  
to change us, whittle down  
our ordinary wood and leave us  
fresh and powerful, turn us into  
the very ones we pray to—  
while poetry instead is always after you.

13 October 2010

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Caught napping.

We woke and found  
a planet under us,  
tree, rocks, sheep  
and so on, even  
some birds to remind.

So much to be done.

We're still at it  
with a century off  
now and then for peace,  
resting the genome,

sleep. Then invention  
starts again, and all the other  
wars. Crusades, cathedrals,  
jihads, calculus, the fugue—  
the restless germ renews.

14 October 2010

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Those things that call me  
call you too  
thunder, or the creak  
of wooden stairs  
at midnight—who is there?  
Who would care  
to climb such a tired hill?  
Or a light still on  
across the street at dawn,  
is someone sick?  
What can we mean  
by what we forget,  
or doubt, or pretend?  
Nothing is real.  
But it hunts us down.

15 October 2010

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Call on the way to be.

As a bird or

from a fence a neighbor

tell or be told

you've had your adventure

on the moon now

you owe us something

a snapshot of her waving maybe

lipstick kiss on paper napkin.

15 October 2010



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Music continues where there is no rain  
no sun no towers no cars  
just tones,  
and if we try to move away  
an ocean everywhere around each step,  
you can see all the way to the horizon  
but it sees back.

15 October 2010

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To be 'of another mind'  
and it not even be England—  
a land always lost inside itself,  
England lost inside Commonwealth UK  
as once Logres was lost inside England—

being just here  
(where everybody is)  
with wind frisbeeing the leaves around  
grand autumns of the northern hardwoods  
I would make a sermon out of that  
if I were a minister

or there were a church  
a stone church or people in it  
left over from a work week  
hoping to become 'of another mind'  
via words poured out

or who am I trying to fool now  
imagining a population  
when I say two words to the one I have.  
Or three words. Live with me.

16 October 2010

= = = = =

I have to catch up  
before I go on/  
I can hardly see myself  
up there a week ahead  
scuffling through amber leaves  
as once on Batchelder Street  
in blue October  
I missed my father  
on the wrong way home.

Now it's me I have  
to rendezvous with,  
you there ahead of me  
you person I was last  
week with your mouth  
full of what might turn  
out to be wisdom

or even interesting,  
how far you have traveled  
while I hurried in what I thought  
our common direction.  
And who are you talking to now?

16 October 2010



## COMMENT ECRIRE

Sending the spirit to  
the other side  
of my side

and yet not rubbing itself  
against your skin,  
side beside side

with a space between  
and in that space unseen  
any song begins.

That is as much  
as I can tell you,  
it's already a little

more than I know.  
So there is real going  
in what we do

and coming to  
and coming home  
where you've never been.

17 October 2010



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But to talk about doing it  
and not doing it is dangerous.  
It's crying Wolf  
when there's nobody to hear you but wolves.

17 October 2010

## **Язык**

Agèd encumbrance

grandpa Yazyk

but what would we do without him?

And his young wife

all shell-pink ears

just hears.

17 October 2010



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Knowing things to be said  
say them. The snake  
who has no ears  
is listening. Almost his time  
to slide beneath the land  
into the invisible law

on which we stand.  
Autumn, *aves stumm*,  
the birds are silent.  
Where the corn went down  
ripe pumpkin trash  
peaceful carnage in that field.

I know someone is listening—  
the way the congregation knows  
the hymn they're belting out  
falls up to sentient ears  
somewhere. It all leads:  
these words for that sake.

18 October 2010

= = = = =

The centerpiece of everything  
is supposed to be flowers  
lilies for virgins and martyrs  
since we all are virgins  
in death's smug embrace.

18 October 2010

## LILIES

Calla grandiloquent  
but Peruvian humble  
odorless pale long  
lasting as the truth

bird looks at everything  
we're almost there now  
there is a roar in the distance  
I think it's the sky.

But does what I hear always have to mean me?

18 October 2010

## ATTACK OF THE MIRRORS

All the transparent people—  
there is waiting to be done—  
a slide trombone  
(think of all the other kinds)  
honks outside Jerusalem—  
a sunflower for the families,  
only me without grandfather  
and my only grandmothers  
hidden in a book. You are Edda.  
I am so much born  
that I hardly have to be here  
but am for you, just a scrap  
of always lying here among you,  
heavy in your lap. a testament  
of torts, glissando  
of tuneful complainings.  
Why do you even listen?  
Why do our shattered words renew  
stealthily by night and come  
with biting force in dawnday?  
You are almost safe, almost wise,  
almost complete. And I,  
shouldn't I be someone else by now?

19 October 2010

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To identify one voice in the crowd  
not easy. To marry her or him though  
thereafter easy as  $\pi$ . Always some remainder.  
Always some part of him or her can never be yours.

19 October 2010

## IT & US

Poets, for want of anything better to do,  
reprocess clichés. It's a waiting game,  
kairos comes not every day, when *It* speaks.  
Till it does we spell our little musics.

19 October 2010