



Field Notes From A Regenerative Economy of Fields



Ecopoetry Workshop 2019



NA Val Taleggio
HR Italia



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A Regenerative Economy of Fields



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ECOPOETRY WORKSHOP 2019
HELD AT NATURE ART AND HABITAT RESIDENCY (NAHR)
SOTTOCHIESA, ITALY
WWW.ECOPOETRYWORKSHOP.COM
WWW.NAHR.IT

July 1-14, 2019

We would like to thank Ilaria Mazzoleni, lead organizer of the Nature, Art, and Habitat Residency for hosting us at Soggiorno Mazzoleni in Sottochiesa for the duration of the workshop, for her role in connecting us with local cheese-makers and visiting artists, and for sharing a little bit of her wisdom with us. To be involved in NAHR visit <https://nahr.it/>

Many thanks to Myung Mi Kim, McNulty Chair in the Poetics Program at SUNY Buffalo, for funding the workshop, and to the English department at Buffalo for their additional support.



Ecopoetry Workshop 2019



NA
HR

Nature Art & Habitat *Residency*
An Eco-Laboratory of Multidisciplinary Practice

Taleggio Valley
Bergamo Italy

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INTRODUCTION

What is ecopoetics?

Oh, we have to do it in a sentence...site specific study of complete ecology including humans and their power structures.

I don't know. Can I just say, I don't know? Ecopoetics is, is...

Mmm. I wrote it in my statement in the book [laughs].

Umm. You're going to have to give me a second. You can write that as my definition. [I did]. You're so cute.

For us, now, it has been about the complexity and unspeakability of the question and its answer, and something about the importance of impaling yourself on the problems, and then documenting that, at the same time as impressing the importance of having people know about the basic elements of nature, i.e. the science of it.

[silence]

During this workshop, we oriented much of our thinking towards the specific ecopoetical areas of fields, grasses, pastures, and pasteurisation, those themes being central to the Nature, Art, and Habitat Residency in 2019.

We tried to find out a little bit more about how to define ecopoetics.

COURTLIN BYRD

???

Ecopoetry is a question of mark. As humans, we mark our environment (pollution, plastics, or planting), as well as mark our pages (poem, policy, or screen). Mark-making engages the question of permanence and impermanence. Is what we make/do lasting – and should it be?

Ecopoetry is the intersection of everything. It is a psychogeography and a geopsychology. It is an active engagement across fields. Art and poetry are intertwined with physical and social sciences. But these fields are being increasingly torn apart by the sedimented and sentimental many.

Ecopoetry is not sedimented and sentimental. Ecopoetry is science-language-wonder-unknown.

???

At the Ecopoetry Workshop, I dug into a video essay on regional cheese-making, wrote poems about pastures and p-words, participated as videographer on Simon's durational "Literal Purge" work, and began a large multimedia project engaging with Vincenzo Galilei's invention of Monody, Galileo Galilei's discovery of Heliocentrism, Georges Bataille's ideas about the solar anus, excess of energy, and Acephale, all wrapping back to Aztec sacrifice, The Florentine codex, tomatoes, and the impossibility of communication.

pasture

from the Late Latin and Old French

past-

meaning grazed

-ure

a suffix forming abstract nouns of action or process

a suffix of feminine nouns denoting employment or result

a suffix forming nouns denoting a collective

together, as a noun:

land covered with vegetation

suitable for grazing

a transitional space, to be passed through

meaning, grazed

these are



stills from the video



“by hand”





To be possessive
Is to become possessed.
Haunted, tormented, driven mad by the endless potential of
Possibilities located within what is supposed to be
Your person
Your place
Your product.
In this purgatory,
You try to protect
Your tired mind inexhaustively pilfering past and present,
Plowing through problematic provocations to a self
In single-minded pursuit
Of a permanence
That will only ever be an immaterial river running parallel to your current tense.

Therefore, please. Go on. Let go.
Lift your ear from the rail, pull your hand away from the parameters.
(Who was it who first told you what to do?) Now, with propriety eradicated:
Be promiscuous. Be pliant. Be porous.
Let the marked land run through you and come out the other side, pure.

Trespass on private property.
Step into other people's pastures.
Drop all pride and pleasing policies.
Do not be afraid to let a proclivity toward pleasure run its course.
Pair on pair on pair, on pair, unpaired, polyphonic and prone,
Sweet penetration
Ah penis Ah pussy No priority Hard fuck Gentle lick Lips on Lips
Lisp your whisper pushing breath into my ear, exhalation, exultation.
Plastered lips painted now
So point and shoot.
Dirty picture.
Photo. Synthesis. In a field.
Synthetic processes of performativity
Turn "the natural" into parody
Because there is no potential energy, only kinetic.

Therefore, do not become enamored of power.
The portfolios of promised futures as an idea of good investment,
The popularity of pop as an indication of inherent goodness.
Corruption capitalizes. It applies its weary positivity
To your sheaves of paper, (river name redacted) Prime screen receipts.
Nothing is free in seeking productivity.
I am the product. Proper. Property.
Poisoned by programming:
That we belong to each other. That there is no other. That we must please.

Copyright: they paved paradise, put up a parking lot.
The pop of a P on the microphone, uneditable explosion,
My breath expelled too forcefully for being too long pent up,
Primed to be released
Prisoner of my own making
Unable to perceive
a growing body in space, an epic rotation of planets,
rather than the particular person in the particular place.

Possession the possessor, I the possessor –
It makes me a ghost, white, and hollowed out by pressure
To be a perfect vessel in which to keep my claims.
I sit in the pasture, fenced, nothing passing in or out,
Piercing shrill cries shrinking me down to the size of a pen,
I pull apart the plumed heads of nature's pretty things.
All my life I was smart, but I wanted to be pretty.
She was so pretty. She was so pretty. She was so pretty.
I was in a Puritanical rage against beauty and pleasure
While for another's others, psycho-tropic experiences left open impressions.
But, it turns out, no matter how many people have passed through
Or passed by
There is still a yearning – desire unrestrained, pleasure not enough –
We pierce and pluck ourselves
In the name of progress, but this is only horizontal movement
In order to escape poverty and privilege, difference and the same.
Do not mourn for the past. It was not what it was, for now has occurred.
Now, Nameless, push off from the port.
Pursue without motor. Understand the wind.
Do not put your foot down again. Do not plant your flag in this wild.

Oh Pioneer, Oh Pilgrim, pull back.
There is no place you should be.
There is no pattern, no plot you need to play out.
There is no potential energy, only kinetic.
And you do not see it. It runs parallel to your life like a river
And a body swings in its place.
There is change, always change, with no particular point of rupture,
Just the steady pressure of water on rock, which is just.
Do not worry. There is no place you should be.
But perhaps, one day, you will swing perpendicular in a meeting,
And passing through, you will accept, release, and perceive.

BRENT COX

Ecopoetics presents an opportunity to ingest, digest, and reinvest the human in a praxis of living and dying (and already dying) unlimited by staid avant-gardes, while not denying or eschewing the practice of innovation transtemporally co-generated within the field of poetics. If not an opportunity then a possibility, and a possibility defined exclusively by its *im*possibility (i.e. what *is* possible *is* the impossible barely discovered and always fugitively transcendent): the eco-poetical possibility rests within the undetermined orientation. The Echo of Eco Eeks out Écriture though thuds upon thought's thimbleful of sludge. In topological investments into ecological resistance, pressure, force, folds, and fissures, spaces, hollows, strips, straps, and exhausted marrows, the eco-poetical topologies of thought's *intermedial has-being* threatens to expand while contracting; it threatens the flux'd and the fix'd, it is leapingly improvised by accidental affordances, situated in and as the remedy-poison brushing among the Etruscan passages of history's hell and the present's ineradicable simultaneity, rhythm, neuter, and immediate silences. We must ask: what are these depths we experience as surfaces? And what are these surfaces we experience as depths?

Collective Exercise

We generated a group of exercises both entirely authored and unauthored. In the exercise the body remembers itself as a constituent element, not as a drifting monad of experience. The exercise pretends to have a beginning, but that beginning was always presaged by the imagination of gathering that was and is the exercise's forgotten gravity. When the group collects, exercises begin to emerge as temporary evacuations from totality; the exercise imaginatively excises the collective author-group, now having become the organism they had merely forgotten their participation in, from the any-thing-whatsoever that produces the conditions of possibility for meaningless drift. The documents left behind were being written across time and space as exercises themselves, breath, bodies swimming and speaking: the documents emerged part *documentation* and part *documentary*, themselves mere portals to the exercise's vertiginous passage from and to the sublime we had forgotten was the beautiful itself sublimely forgotten. While these exercises *were* performed, *they will be again*, and *already have been*, in tandem and ludic synchronicity with and *as* the infinite game of a forgotten horizon's presence underneath our feet.

B o c c e E n e r g y T r a n s f e r e n c e

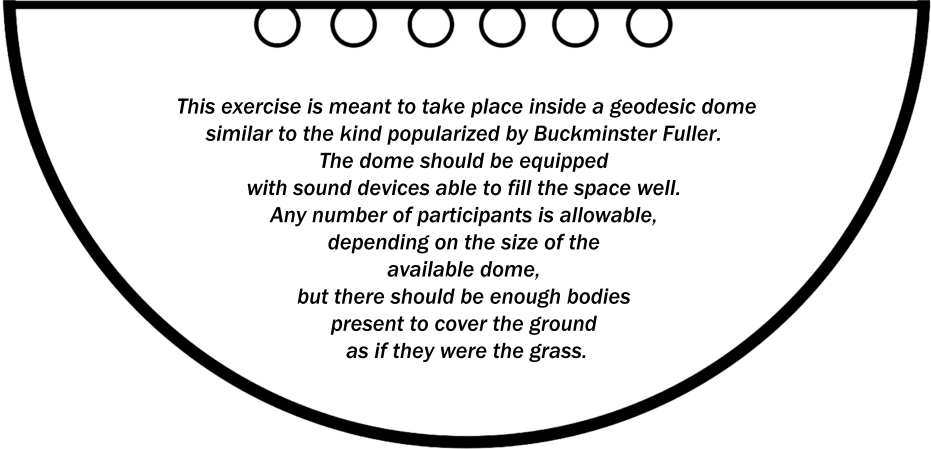


This exercise is intended to be performed on a Bocce Ball Court; however, any combination of surface and rollable spheroids will work. It is intended for 6 total human bodies, and 6 spherical objects, but can be repurposed in any way necessary.

1. On a flat surface, roll a spherical object away from your body aiming for a distance of a few meters from your body. Witness your action and the action of the ball, and consider the energy and forces present working on each entity. Consider the time it takes to perform the action, the acceleration and deceleration of the ball, and the beginning of your action and its denouement. Take several minutes to reflect on your participation in this system of energy transference. Then retrieve the ball and repeat, or move on to the next exercise.
2. Now find a partner capable of rolling and receiving the ball, ideally one who has just performed step 1. Sit or stand several meters from one another on a flat surface, looking each other eye to eye. There should be one sphere available per pair. Determine by chance or intuition one partner that will begin with the sphere. They should then gently roll the ball to the other partner, who will field the ball, then pass it back to the originating partner. Perform this action several times, increasing and decreasing the speed of the transfer at reasonable rates. After a few minutes, write about this system. Attempt to inhabit each element of the system, including other present forces like gravity and the weather.
3. Find a third node to add to the system, preferably one that has just completed steps 1 & 2. The nodes should form an imaginary line wherein each nodal point of the system is equidistant from the central node by a couple meters. Determine by chance or intuition which node will begin as the central node and which node will begin with the sphere. The node holding the ball first should then roll the ball to the central node, who will field it and pass it along to the third node as quickly or gracefully as possible according to the given situation. This action should be performed several times, giving each node ample time to experience its respective position in the system. Then cycle the nodes through each position: the node beginning with the ball ought to move to the center, then to the end of the line, and back to the beginning. Perform the action of rolling and fielding in each formation. Pay close attention to each body's participation in the system, along with the present forces such as inertia, friction, and atmospheric pressure. In your writing, discuss the differences between the systems of steps 1-3. Then try and repeat the whole activity on an uneven surface, such as one covered in rocks or boulders or one that is undulating or covered in sand or ice.



I l B o r g o P o e t r y S o u n d W e b



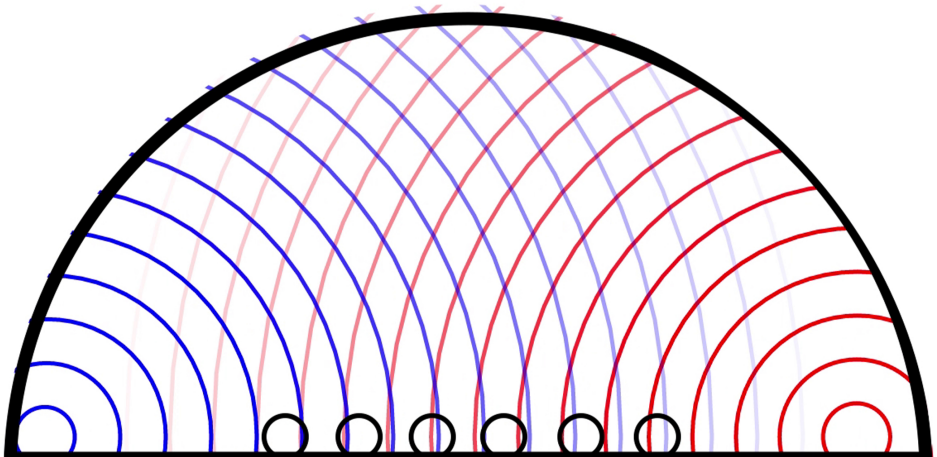
This exercise is meant to take place inside a geodesic dome similar to the kind popularized by Buckminster Fuller.

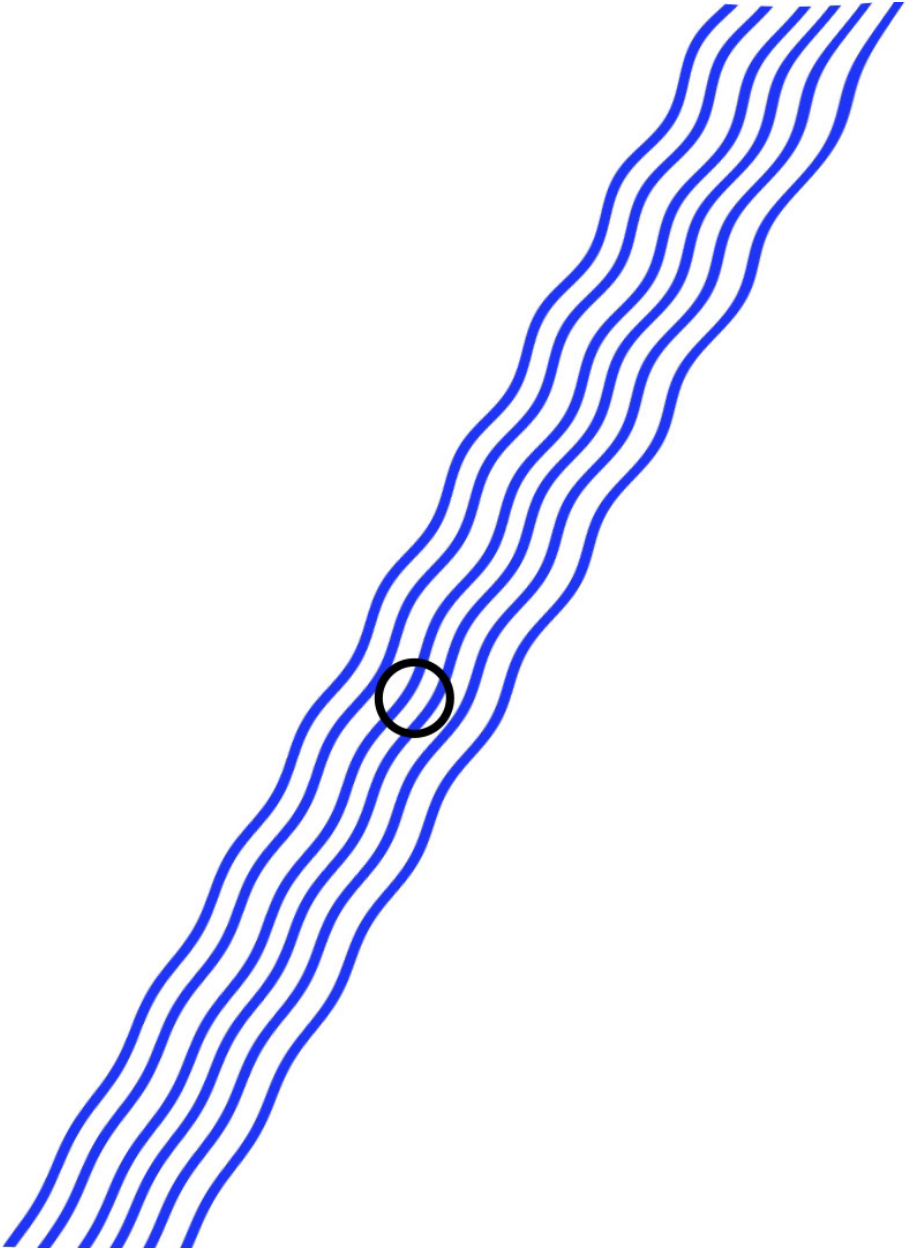
The dome should be equipped with sound devices able to fill the space well.

Any number of participants is allowable, depending on the size of the available dome,

but there should be enough bodies present to cover the ground as if they were the grass.

Prior to the exercise, one participant should create a poetry and music sound web. There are many ways to create a poetry and music sound web and no definitive way whatsoever. It is important that in the creation of the sound web sounds and poems are selected that will be both soothing and intellectually stimulating. One should seek to find recorded readings of poems, ideally read by the poets themselves. The result will be a mixture or solution, a web if you will, of many different sonic textures colored by the method of recording, the poet's mood on the given day of the recording, and the recorder's distance from the mouth of the poet, assuming these poems are language and speech based. The selected music should feed the poems and the poems should feed the music, and one should include music they believe will satisfy and envelope the participants. Therefore, it is important that the creator of the sound web have some knowledge and insight into the desires and interests of the group. The sound web could just as easily be made collaboratively. Later, the sound web should be made available to the group for relistening in different locations if interest is expressed. The sound web used for this exercise included work by Pauline Oliveros, William Basinski, John Cage, Tracie Morris, Caroline Bergvall, Alice Notley, Susan Howe, David Grubbs, Lorine Niedecker, and more.





Stills from "A Document of Eco-poetry Workshop"



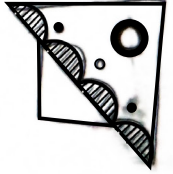
LETTERS THAT ARE LINES
DELINEATE SPACE THAT
MAKES SHAPES THAT WORDS
ARE CRACKS IN THE CONTINUITY
OF BREATH OR CONSTRUCTION.

S S P A C E E

LETTERS



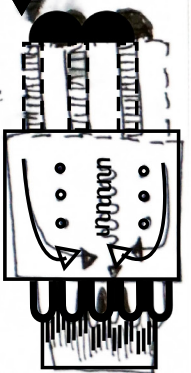
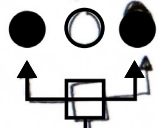
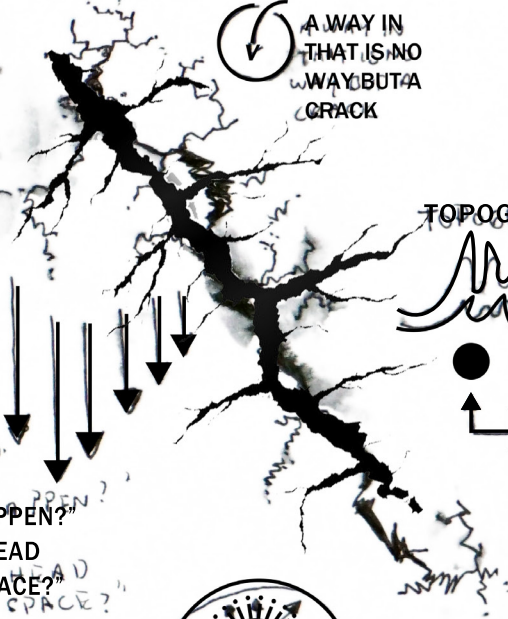
A WAY IN
THAT IS NO
WAY BUT A
CRACK



TOPOGRAPHICAL



"WE"
"MY LINE"
"WHO IS"
"WHAT IS THAT"
"WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?"
"WHAT WAS THE HEAD
SPACE?"



"HOW DO"

BELL DID NOT
COW

THIS WAS A LARGE
PAGE; TWO, WITH
DIFFERENCE RULES



BRINGING
TO BE THE
OF THE THE
THAT IS
AS

TRAPPED
ASPHYXIATED
CRUMBLLED
QUARANTINED
COLLAPSED
REMOVED
DISSOLVED
DISSOCIATED

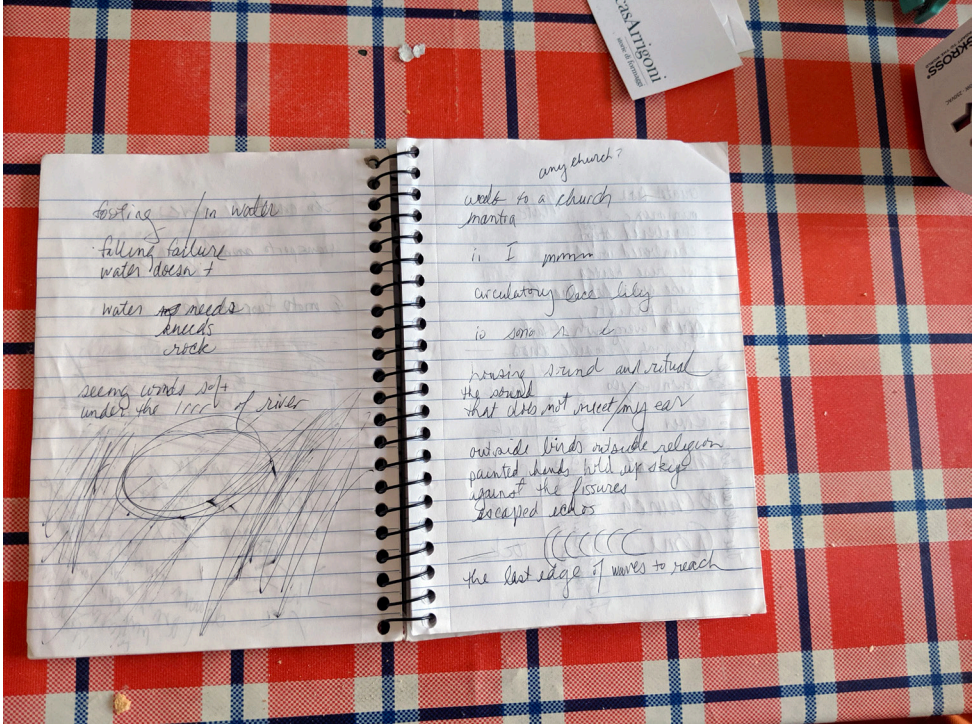
GRASS DID
NOT SASS



JOANNA DOXEY

I came to NAHR to move more deeply into poetic and interdisciplinary contemplation surrounding the climate crisis - and beyond thought towards something tangible and meaningful in this seemingly hopeless time. My writing has always been affected by landscape and so I brought a series of poems on failures rooted in the Colorado plains/Wyoming landscape that have bridged my thoughts within this location: the grouping of towns in these northern Italian mountains. Walking/moving through the landscape has become my daily practice as I've worked/walked through the idea of "discovery" extending out to a communal appreciation of a unique landscape. Each walk stems from Sottochiesa and moves in planned and unplanned paths that have informed my thinking. My solitary movements are also deeply entwined with the communal practices and study (focus: cheese, food, economies, poetry, QUESTIONS) with these fellow eco-poets and our exercises. The workshop has become beyond internal processing into a communal choir of thought and possibility. We have mapped together, thought together, walked together, listened together, eaten cheese and pasta and bread together and this all feels still growing.

What I am including in this booklet is the start and emergence of my process into poems, including pictures of my daily maps and notes and words on the landscape.

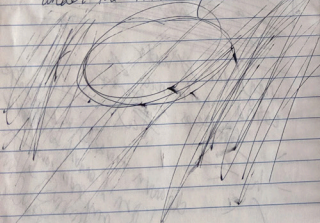


floating in water

falling failure
water doesn't

water ~~is~~ needs
needs
rock

seeing words left
under the 1000 of river



any church?
words to a church
mantra

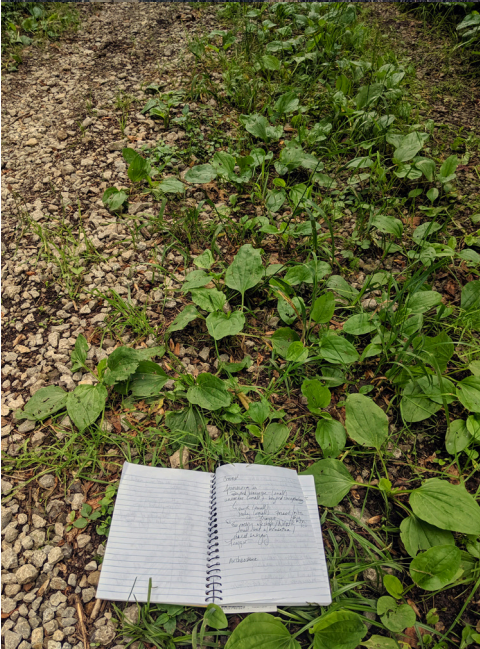
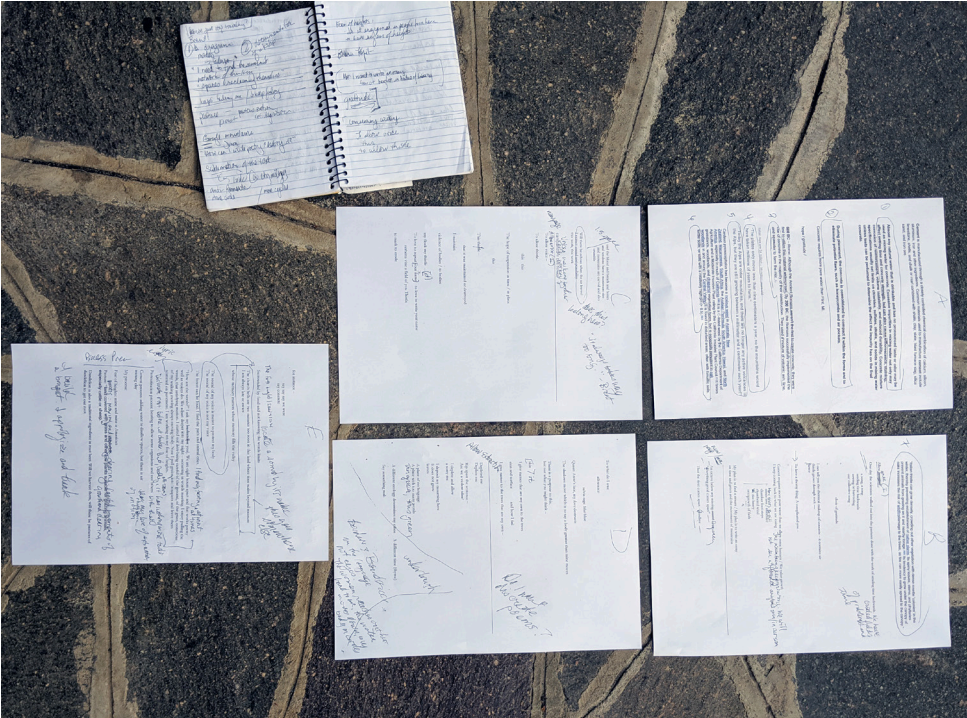
in I mmm
circulatory base likely

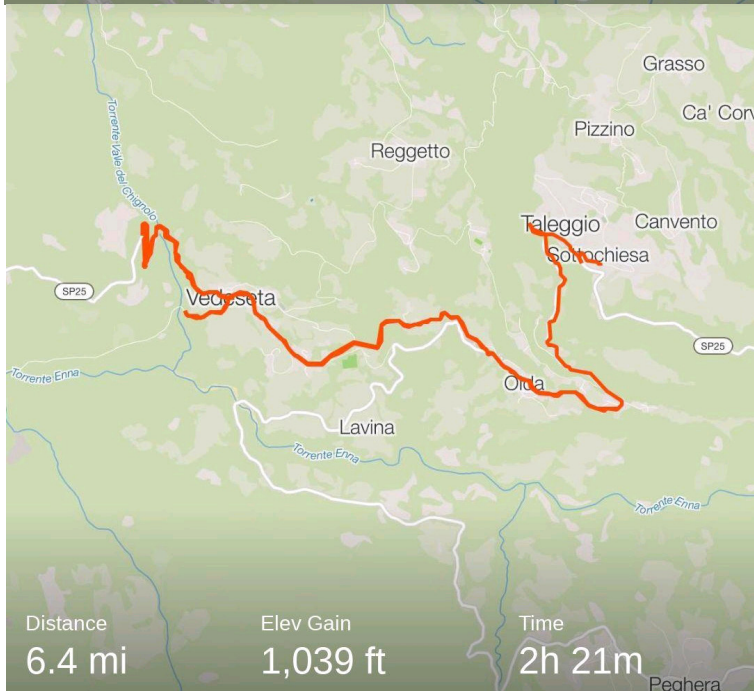
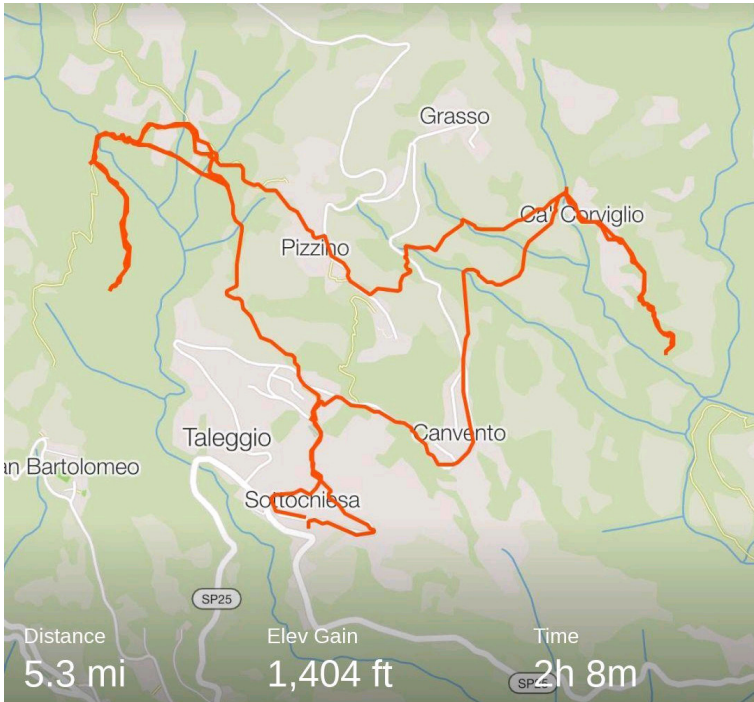
is some 2. 6

revising sound and ritual
the sound that does not insert my ear

outside binds outside religion
painted words hold up steps
against the fissures
escaped echoes

(((((((
the last edge of wires to reach





A Collection of Facts

Cement is manufactured through a closely controlled chemical combination of calcium, silicon, aluminum, iron and other ingredients. Common materials used to manufacture cement include limestone, shells, and chalk or marl combined with shale, clay, slate, blast furnace slag, silica sand, and iron ore.

Almost any natural water that is drinkable and has no pronounced taste or odor may be used as mixing water for concrete. Excessive impurities in mixing water not only may affect setting time and concrete strength, but can also cause efflorescence, staining, corrosion of reinforcement, volume instability, and reduced durability. Concrete mixture specifications usually set limits on chlorides, sulfates, alkalis, and solids in mixing water unless tests can be performed to determine the effect the impurity has on the final concrete.

During placement, the concrete is consolidated to compact it within the forms and to eliminate potential flaws, such as honeycombs and air pockets.

Concrete requires more pure water than Flint, MI.

hope / gratitude /

600 BC – Rome: Although the Ancient Romans weren't the first to create concrete, they were first to utilize this material widespread. By 200 BC, the Romans successfully implemented the use of concrete in the majority of their construction. They used a mixture of volcanic ash, lime, and seawater to form the mix.

Italian Alps are 24 million – 36 million years old

“The plates only move less than nine centimeters a year, so the mountains would have taken millions of years to form.”

“Today the Alps are older mountains, and there are no longer any active volcanoes in the Alps, but they are still growing between a millimeter and a centimeter each year!”

Carduus pycnocephalus has become a noxious weed in Australia, New Zealand, Macaronesia, South Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, South America, Hawaii, and North America, especially in much of California.[2][6] It is a C-listed weed by the California Department of Agriculture and a Moderate Invasive Plant rating by the California Invasive Plant Council.[7] It favors grasslands, woodlands, and chaparral vegetation types, but is especially prevalent in oak woodlands in and around the Central Valley. It is found in disturbed areas, often with basaltic soils, fertile soils, or soils with a relatively high pH (> 6.5).[5][7]

“Italian thistle can grow densely, crowding out other vegetation with dense rosette 'colonies' in the winter, thereby preventing establishment of native plants. Its spiny leaves, stems, and phyllaries prevent animals from grazing on it and nearby forage.[8][9] Its tendency to grow under the canopy of oaks increases the risk of wildfiredamage to the trees, as fire can more easily spread to the canopy.”

Allow Invasion

One day the scientists walked out into the pastures done with the work of
sending time backwards

a song, a song
seeding time backwards
sowing or harvesting
our collective song -

*

choir of gratitude

*

I can tell you the chemical makeup of concrete – it contains air
thistle grows through rock
pierce

To love a thorny thing: A complicated you –

*

Cement requires more pure water than we allow some humans /
We value growth
I keep coming back to what we are losing

create less / minimize
chamber foot steps
chambered wind
we rise heavy
overgrowth of faith

My plan is to find a stream / My plan is to write an essay
on time and green and the movement of mountains

SIMON EALES

My self-assigned projects across this workshop are (1) a series of poems (2) a durational, filmed performance of Dante Aligheri's 'Purgatorio,' and (3) the building of a stone circle in the prehistoric 'recumbent' style common in northern Europe. There are a network of ideas involving ecopoetics, its obligations and possibilities, that striate these works: addressing the enormity of the climate crisis in representationally and parodically enormous forms (and witnessing the failed attempt); exploring constraints, bonds, coagulations, paradoxes, and aporias as the real way forward; engaging with texts, like Dante's, which may have, directly or indirectly, propagated the kinds of structures that facilitate ideologies which contribute to the degradation of the ecosystems of which we are a part; applying poetry, poetics, and poetic thinking to ecological considerations in order to recomplicate the category 'imagined solutions,' which often re-form into problems.

Project 1: Poem: "Only Glass and Cans"

Antennae silhouette leaves catching venti early-burning bergers when the wall groans, battery lit. White disappearing purple color with long strands of violet, in seconds to sixty, blue. There is a clearing right and hoverflies veer left to a barn. Aural groan single. Faint fold, crack ridge, meadow-line germane.

Lost on goat island, the pyramidal family washed in a yellow car. A young deer steps towards the high church and knows to tilt left, bumping up the orange cord with its small horns, before rocking gently back and forth before the sanctuary opened to core.

Three garage doors, a wet flag, less than a second between this and that bell-system. Inter-village shuttle service awaits intersection, unruly gardens send news of concrete tufts, efflux reversed daybreak in eight.

Three pairs of conductors conclude the grass seems to grow from salmon and budgie render. Alpine flat, deciduous down, dripping vine. In twelve minutes, a barn. Candles off with the bell whisper paddock corner in brown shades. The pink apartment next to a bar.

Hidden under courts are old tables, and scabbards from a hyphen ship fill a faded stop sign. Roughly textured lichen describes many crumbles, thick pats & throbbing oats. Depth rushes to me like a wind through reeds, to my outstretched arms on a diesel whim. In the river, slate tiles.

Short lines scramble a chimney piercing, a flat roof hastily circulates easily to vouch eco-nominal gathering.

You admit a mood to release a poem but the cat, still, sleeps on the mat, the white horse bucks before knight, and tractors rattle through groves. To psychoanalyse a monarch, butterflies attract thorns to the breadbasket.

I pierce my skin on some part of myself, slice my thumb on a plug top, and prepare for delivery by cleaning with flecks of wax. Level eye, lifted nail, and

cuddles on a pillow.

Like chasing a cat up the street, I quote myself, as if in Spanish you're the proprietor and want to leave. I arrive at the same crop, signal remainders with oil and salt, hailing the ceremony of a meal. Blasting toasted packaged wheat on a silken napkin, spread in a children's game. A new atoll called dreamland, with crushed quartz scattered to reflect the moon.

Temporary access clearings process fallow words. Blatant tractor divots seed a carved aesthetic. Cordoned from the herd, electricity between us is in resource stocks, actually. Paranoia as rumours, run-out as binding eunoia. The conceit expanding to zones, ignition as pressed devotion. Catholic gravel chunks on yellow, violet, white explosions of red and white painting. Bad feeling projected through shock, absorbed by hierarchy, a stack of plastic slugs.

Run to the mountain in times of crisis, via the woods there for shade. Bundle institutions in your work for impression, to trigger reeling and render thought and catching-up. Scramble, literally. Channel investment through your walking into the room, rhythmically. Most of all, tend, in order not to be bound, or to deny it and provision options on your dividends.

There are good margins on art, the contractor said. Especially when you kill yourself then begin again. This is, by now, a conventional model, this only one. But the value I bring is an address of the ten percent failure of rhetoric. There are whole new markets in the shade. The regeneration of soil, of machinery, of trash heaps, of carcasses, is a long-term investment. Reading a book, even doing. All said plucking a glistening petal from a ruminant flower sucking water from its own rubbery stems.

Leaving space to breathe a garlic coloured breath, they joined a rapid to a milling. Examining cavities in my teeth and wanting to adhere them to time's carve in rock-bed, a breath-turn only at source, imported disreputably into a vessel by metaphor generality destruction. Destroying at each good point by will a bad feeling at step, with decision, a demonstration.

A little rennet, pissing no fish: burrow a tributary through an unweaned calf. Language as idling is an important idea that leaves wrappers in magazines, wind-blown bad ideas enveloped in themselves. Zombie armies on a big screen no longer stand for anything equal, totally renovated frontage. Pulling recuperation, that idling, into literally good ideas.

An x-ray will show rock brighter than bone as currency flies away. All the things we shouldn't eat but do, none of the beliefs we shouldn't read, but write. Some of the sometimes derived from mistakes, elevated to the scale of an event, couched in a mediation, balanced by an excuse, rendered in a clearing.

Exalting, consulting, and insulting salut in all directions to the experience of global warming to invoke the name of the real thirty years too late. Enskinned saulting desperate to rupture this bag, as if the barometer could level-out. The stuffing roasts but finds there only the oven. Little dead representation fissures provide respite and teach the resistant way: Not to Be Understood.

It's easy to get strung out from the doing of the big thing, but there are no measuring devices for the little wins.

To risk knowing, on a highway, or a byway, and being worked over. The step on a snake of it all, that wants to get away. To reduce your wriggle-room. To step on the cliff of life, and crumble into the river of your worst critique. To encode with vine, and to live for the love of poetry. To risk being bought in the market. To write simply.

To take the cut-through and say you didn't. To actually read. To repeat the theme past the joke of the rake-joke, and not begin it, even. Who negotiates these paths? Not walks them, but says, here and here, through there to there, a fence before, not another row, some steps, a rise, and tending. Petrol giving tender. Tending to leave space, what enough?

To deliver certainty in uncertain times is damnation. What does I see? A dexterous claw literally stacking poems into another poem. Monstrous text.

And hear? A song whining, a clicking sound, whirring.

The filibuster is an American experiment that went too far, and is a hope, but not the only. Risk upon risk in speaking. To write beautiful poetry. To destroy marine life. A difference and a deferral. To understood is living. Take my buddhistic reverence and scrub clean my command. We'll know we have master of this shop when we can keep it clean: the ocean, the kitchen, our eating.

Project 2: Filmed, Durational Performance: Literal Purge



A Description:

Literal Purge is a durational, filmed hike-reading of the second book of Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, "Purgatorio," written around 1308 AD. The reading took place on July 5th, 2019 and begins a touch north of Capo Foppa, in the Orobie pre-Alps of Bergamo, and concludes at the foot of Mount Sodadura. Its highest point is Piazzo Baciarmorti, at 2009 metres above sea-level. Robert M. Durling's 2003 translation is read from an Apple iPhone 5s, supported in the performance's latter stages by a battery pack. An attempt was made to film the entire reading in one take, but two breaks were necessary in order to change camera batteries. Running time is just under 5 hours.

These garments are similar, but different, to the more permanent uniforms the company's laborers wear as they pack, scrub, and wrap cheese for consumption. In the performance, this costume is worn over a naked body.

The performer has some familiarity with the text, having taught it to United States college students as part of a course called "Heaven, Hell, and Judgment," but certainly does not have the level of comfort with it that

many Italians may have with it, it being a major element of a standard literary education in Italy. The reading style--flattish, faulting, stumbling--is largely dictated by the partiality of this familiarity, and the difficulty of reading a complex poetic text from a small phone screen while walking on rocky, uneven, and in other ways demanding terrain.

The reading intends to explore the effects generated by its experimental conditions, namely: unusual duration (a five-hour reading is longer than a 20- or 40-minute reading); unusual geographical location (the mountains rather than the gallery, bedroom, or bookshop); unusual physical state (walking under stress caused by the heat of the sun and the incline and decline of the mountains, rather than sitting or standing); and unusual visual and aural comportment to the world (eg. strange costume, semi-nudity, monological vocal constancy, etc.).

The performance almost failed a couple of times, due to the shaky health of one of the collaborators, and to the performer's wavering confidence in the project's significance. How necessary is a reading of Dante, delivered while walking in the mountains while someone, somehow, films it? It was predicted that some degree of euphoria might be reached in the process of carrying out this work, and upon the hike-reading's cessation, it was. Is this the same kind of euphoria which convinces us that 'projects' constituting global capital are 'worth it'? Difficulties and unpleasantness in the process seemed to be overridden by the sheer achievement of the physically and motivationally challenging assignment.

Various meanings could be applied to or derived from the piece: it could be considered a comment on the fact that we are tied to our phones; the costume resembled religious garb, and this resemblance was enwrapped the 'profanity' of the performer's nudity. It offset the irregular usage of a sublime environment, its corruption by digital instruments, too. Not only this, but the costume was repurposed, initially intended to be disposable, not simply the clothing of workers, whom it is in many senses conventional to valorize, but of touristic or commercial visitors to a cheese factory. What is the difference between a priest and a cheese factory visitor, the costume asks as it billows.

More deeply, the film-reading explores the nature of poetry: as epic, as constitutive of canons, as carriage of culture, as representation of vernacular language, as translated and translatable body of symbols, as interpenetrable community meeting-place, as both replete with meaning, and meaningless, as sacred and profane, as toying with duality, including with the pairing of materiality and immateriality, etc. The title we've given the project, *Literal Purge*, takes its second word from the content and title of its source-text. Purgatory is the extended liminal zone between hell and heaven (what could it mean to extend a liminal zone?), occupied by souls-in-process. In this sense, purgatory is a place of transhumance, if such a concept is not entirely paradoxical (i.e. what does it mean to designate a site to transitory states of being?) But also, the second word of the title refers to the in-body to out-body projection of toxins that the sun, walking, talking, communion, etc., can bring about, especially for humans who have overindulged in their previous lives, or on previous nights. There was purging on the shoot, there is purging in this life, purging is encouraged--enacted and performed--for spiritual realizations of various kinds, and it seems to be our challenge, or it has been, to acknowledge the call to make these purges literal, rather than simply figural or metaphorical.

In another sense, the project wants to explore what it means to make the attempt to bring poetry into reality. The scope of Dante's epic, including its geographical ones, is large, and impossible to accurately render in real life, most obviously because it inhabits an invented world populated by dead people. But how close can we get, is a question we tried to ask, and what is produced in pursuit of that question.

Project 3: A stone circle at the foot of Monte Sodadura

In short, this project wants to rejuvenate, in some dedicatory way, a pre-Christian culture of ritual and worship in the conventional region Western European inspiration, the Alps. At the time of writing, the circle was not yet built, but its construction is intended to take place on 13 July 2019. The design of the circle intends to highlight the passage of the moon across the sky on the night of the 16th of July, 2019. On this night, the moon will be full, and it will also undergo a partial eclipse, making it seem to turn a blood red color. Some details informing this project are below:

This link indicates the exact moon times for the Taleggio Valley in July 2019: <https://www.timeanddate.com/moon/@8964434>

Using details from the above website, I can arrange my stone circle accurately without needing to be there on the exact day. The full moon on 16 July 2019 is known as a 'Full Hay' moon, due to the ripeness of the hay for cutting at this time of year. Despite being able to find out this information, I intend to be present, in the circle, as the moon passes over these points.

On this day, the moon will 'rise' in the 'east south-east' (123 degrees from North) at 21:02pm.

It will cross the Meridian at 00:40am, 20.8 degrees above the horizon.

The moon will set at 06:03am on 17 July, in the 'west south-west' direction (238 degrees from North).

On this night there will be a partial lunar eclipse, the details of which are outlined here: <https://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/in/@8964434?iso=20190716>

The maximum eclipse moment occurs at 23:30pm at 151 degrees (in the south south-east direction). It will occur quite close to the horizon, so it will be good to have a clear view in that direction.

The penumbral eclipse will end at 02:17am. This will be the final moment of the eclipse experience.

It is remarkable that during this Eco-poetry Workshop there was a total solar eclipse on 2 July 2019, a day after we began.

(Details of this total solar eclipse can be found here: <https://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/solar/2019-july-2>).

A day after we are finished, there will be this partial lunar eclipse.

Something I don't understand, yet, is the notion of the Meridian. This is the Wikipedia page for it, as an idea: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meridian_\(astronomy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meridian_(astronomy)) . Perhaps I don't understand it because it is not a real thing.

There are a range of reasons that this project is worth creating, despite the fact that it does not attempt to comment on the state of the environment, or our destruction of it, or anything like that. One of the reasons is that the stone circle, and, indeed, humans' relationship to the moon, seems to be a good analogy for poetry, and eco-poetry, particularly: kind of pointless, but also essential in its capacity to have people experience the value of pointlessness and community.

AMANDA HOHENBERG

Before coming to NAHR I have been thinking about inter-corporeality, how our bodies are always in relation to other bodies. I wanted to tell of entanglements and so I came to the workshop and boy! entangle we did. In economies of cheese and river valleys, mountaintops and coffee cups, discussing, as visitors, as tender seekers. This is my hope for eco-poetry: for it to weave us into a shared story.

Hiking, smelling, hearing and tasting in these sensate mammalian bodies has helped me to embrace a polyphonic language in the works included. The interspecies food economy has shaped Sottocchia's landscape in multiple ways that it led me to consider the details of human digestion and how poetic experimentation might be a way to (re)digest relations to language. I am including notes for an emergent performance script and journal entries.

we : cheese
(to keep in touch)
(the microbial relationship)
(client increasingly cold caves)
(density of fat only felt between two fingers look, here, look)
(daily squeezed it is slippery and open to condense something alive)
(love like out of stranger's digestive systems)

in this context what are we
what are "we"
? we are what we
are weeping are we what
wide eyed party constellations
we are cells eat wee wee
are what we eat bacteria
microbiota microbial relation
ship what we eat liebe
geht durch den magen il gu
sto del vivere we eat

la via al cuore
di un uomo
passa per il suo
stomaco

Liebe geht
durch
den Magen

we : eat

ninety percent of our cells are nonhuman cells, microbial cells, most of which have their seat in the gut. what in this context is “we” and its associated sensations and feelings are being produced in the gut.

Up until now it was assumed for the womb to be a sterile, untouched place and the presence of any bacteria in the uterus was generally considered as a potential danger. But the womb is as relational as anything that comes after. The composition of butterflies, i mean, gut microbiota in the human starts in the womb, where we inherit our mother’s bacteria. We are contaminated with the world before we are born. No one touches everyone. Everyone touches some one.

WHAT SOUND WOULD YOU LIKE WHISPERED
IN YOUR EAR?

ALL SOUND YOU ARE SOUND



DOOP
(10 IMMERSIVE
GATE & MORNING
WALK)

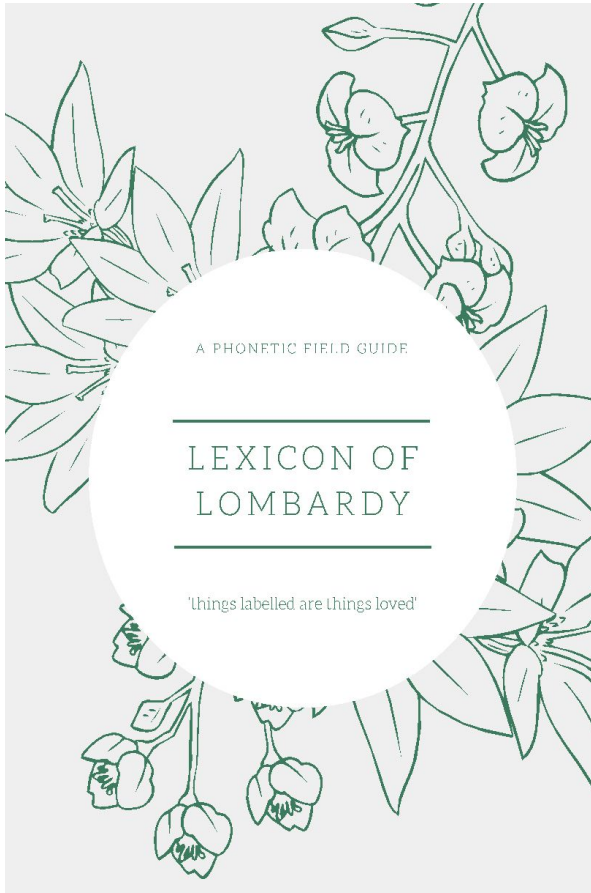
M'è il naufragar
dolce in questo mare

JANE THOMAS

I am interested in eco poetics as a form of site-specific enquiry. Believing it makes connections between human activity—specifically the making of poems and poetics—and the environment that produces it. Humans and their establishment and power structures are central to eco poetics, drawing connections between environmental, economic, and political systems. My projects at NAHR reflect this focusing on official Lexi, maps and The Church in the Taleggio Valley.

Lexicon of Lombardy

There is only a limited amount of space in a printed dictionary. Over the last few years editors have been making room for new (often tech related) words by removing vocabulary concerned with nature. If this continues and the words for nature are gently removed from our vernacular, then it is not too much of a leap when the things themselves disappear from our environments. I am also interested in how communities name and describe elements of nature using their own localised references (often related to local foods, religions and landscapes). I put together a fictional lexicon of the region based on my experience of the Valley and its people. Together with Italian colleagues at NAHR we translated it into Italian and added phonetics to give the look of a formalised dictionary entry.



Scarpa fradicia (soggy shoe)

/ skarpa fraditʃa /

Piccola pozza nei pascoli alti

(Small pond on a high pasture)

Divano di mucca (cow sofa)

/ divano di mukka /

Un dosso ricoperto di muschio su cui le vacche si sdraiano in un giorno di sole

(A mossy bank where Alpine cows lie on sunny days)

Comportamento chiassoso (boisterous behaviour)

/ komportamento kiassoso /

Forte pioggia

(Heavy rain)

Polenta grumosa (lumpy polenta)

/pə'lentə gru'mouza /

Tempo imprevedibile specialmente durante le mezze Stagioni

(Unpredictable weather especially during a shoulder season)

Angelo disseminatore (Angel sprinkle)

/ eɪndʒəl kɔspɑrʒere /

Pioggia localizzalizzata- in un pascolo e non in un altro

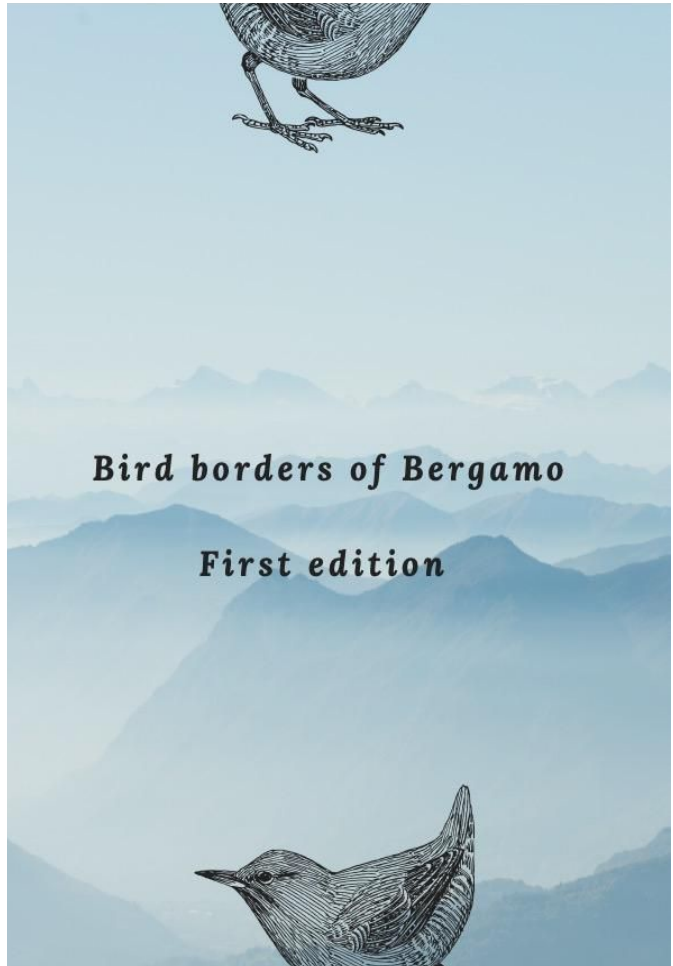
(Localised rain – in one pastures and not another)

Vasca da succhio (Suckle tub)

/ vaska da sukkjo /

Una vasca da bagno in metallo messa nei pascoli alpine per far bere le mucche

(A recycled steel bath tub placed in an Alpine pasture for cows to drink from)



Overall rating



Add a headline

Bird Borders of Bergamo - what a waste of money !!

Write your review

I bought this with high hopes. I am a town planner and am doing a part-time Phd in planning & land progress since the abolition of the common lands in Europe. I had hoped this book would give me some insight into how other animals have progressed towards the demarcation of borders and territories. This book is just blank pages. I tweeted the publisher who said it was not a printing error ?

The Ambrosian Rite

I wrote a hymn
with refrains
and hallelujahs

it started with thanks to:

the universe
then god
then no one

for, respectively:

the loose sky and my solid roof
the painted dome snare
the state we are in

It was on a scrap of paper

I found it later in the recycling
someone had used it
as a shopping list.

The next day I met
The Reverend Father Don Matteo
Bovaro del Bergamask
(The cowherder of people from Bergamo region)

We talked about
Bells
Tolling to warn of thunder & fire
Tolling gendered death

Clangers on the outside for automation

And praise for nature in Sottochiesa?

(under the church)

We worked together

Walls were tumbled

Praise was made.

Priest E-mails

TO SEND TO DON MATTEO:

Gentile Don Matteo,

Grazie mille per l'incontro di questa mattina. È stata una bella conversazione e apprezziamo il tuo tempo. Ci farebbe molto piacere se tu potessi leggere la nostra poesia domenica a messa. Sarei anche molto onorata di leggere la versione inglese se fosse possibile. A seguire Lei leggerebbe quella in italiano.

Ho allegato la versione inglese e la versione italiana - che è stata tradotta con l'aiuto di due dei fondatori di NAHR. Di seguito ho incluso alcuni suggerimenti introduttivi.

Grazie ancora per il tuo tempo e non vedo l'ora di rivederLa domenica, se non prima.

Jane e il team di NAHR

DA LEGGERE in chiesa:

Don Matteo:

Abbiamo un breve poema, una LODE, scritto da Jane, che viene da Oxford in Inghilterra. Jane è una poetessa, e con altri colleghi è in valle per un workshop, fa parte di NAHR (Nature, Art & Habitat Residency) che come credo

sappiate, e' gestita da Ilaria Mazzoleni e da un gruppo di colleghi sia locali che internazionali.

Jane ha scritto questo BREVE poema in risposta alla bellezza della nostra valle, della sua natura e della sua gente. Ha chiesto di leggerlo oggi, come GRAZIE alla nostra comunità che ha così' caldamente accolto i poeti nelle ultime settimane. I suoi colleghi di NAHR la hanno poi tradotto. Jane lo leggerà ora in inglese, e a seguire io leggerò la traduzione.

TEXT IN ENGLISH letto da Jane

Ambrosian Prayer - Melody of Love

God speaks to us in bird and song,
In winds that drift the clouds along,
Above the din and toil of wrong,
A melody of love.

God speaks to us in far and near,
In peace of home and friends most dear,
From the dim past and present clear,
A melody of love.

God speaks to us in darkest night,
By quiet ways through mornings bright,
When shadows fall with evening light,
A melody of love.

O Voice divine, speak thou to me.
Beyond the earth, beyond the sea,
First let me hear, then sing to thee
A melody of love.

TEXT IN ITALIAN letto da don Matteo.

Preghiera Ambrosiana - Melodia d'amore

Dio ci parla con voce angelica
In venti che trascinano le nuvole con se'
Sopra ogni rumore e sbaglio umano,
Una melodia d'amore.

Dio parla a noi vicini e lontani,
Nella pace della casa e degli amici più cari,
Dal passato oscuro e dal presente luminoso,
Una melodia d'amore.

Dio ci parla nella notte più buia,
Sussurrando lievemente durante le mattine luminose,
E al calare delle tenebre nella luce della sera
Una melodia d'amore.

O Voce divina, parlami.
Oltre la terra, oltre il mare,
Prima fammi ascoltare il tuo canto,
poi lascia che io canti
Una melodia d'amore.

Fallow Family

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BIOS

Courtlin Byrd is a writer and artist hailing from Tennessee and California. She currently resides in beautiful Buffalo, New York, where she is a bartender and a PhD student in Media Study at UB. Her dissertation will seek to disorient our definitions of light and dark. She makes visual art about language and uses language to think about vision. She also makes music a.k.a. country-punk.

Brent Cox is a poet, artist, and PhD student in University at Buffalo's Poetics Program. His work focuses on poetic artworks resistant to fixed material, spatial, and temporal identities, works that require communal experience while denying any kind of totalizing communal access. Along with Simon Eales and Courtlin Byrd he is co-organizer of Ecopoetry Workshop. He is also editor of MonoD Press and co-founder of The Topological Poetics Research Institute (TPRI).

Joanna Doxey holds an MFA from Colorado State University. Her work has appeared in Yemassee, Matter Journal, CutBank Literary Journal, Ghost Proposal, Tinderbox, and Denver Quarterly. Plainspeak, WY, her poetry book, can be found here: <https://platypuspress.co.uk/plainspeakwy> She lives in Fort Collins, Colorado where she is an academic advisor for undergraduate liberal arts students.

Simon Eales is from Melbourne, Australia and lives in Buffalo, New York where he works in SUNY Buffalo's Poetics Program. He holds a Master of Arts from the University of Melbourne where he was an H.B. Higgins Scholar writing on decolonialising poetics. He was a NAHR Fellow in 2017, makes performance artwork, and has published writing in a range of venues. His first book of poems was *Deathroll & Netbag* (2017).

Amanda Hohenberg is a performance artist and poet from Germany, currently based in New York City. She is a candidate at the Pratt Institute's MFA in Writing, where she works on murky, site specific poetry and sound art in a socio-political context. Her writing and translations have been published through Cuntemporary, the Goethe Institute and others. She has been performing her work in galleries and queer clubs internationally.

Jane Thomas is currently a student at the University of Oxford – studying Creative Writing – specialising in fiction and poetry forms. She is interested in political and social art in particular human alienation, socio - cultural perspectives and interaction with nature. She is a member of Oxford Brookes Poetry Centre, Oxford Writers House, Merton Poets and Oxford University Poetry Society.

A BRIEF READING LIST

In preparation for Ecopoetry Workshop, we prepared a 20-page bibliographic reading list including poetic and theoretical texts, artworks, and musical works to explore. In the final month, we distributed a severely cut-back 'highly recommended' reading list, which we thought would help us talk about some of the themes we were going to talk about. These are the texts:

Charles Olson, "Projective Verse"

Joan Retallack, "What is Experimental Poetry and Why Do We Need It?"

ecopoetics journal 1: pp. 107-126 "Death of the Pollinators" tr. Rosa Alcalá
Conversation with Cecilia Vicuna from Ecopoetics v.1.

Angela Hume, Gillian Osborne, Ecopoetics, Essays in the Field Introduction: 1-19

Cristina Grasseni, "Of Cheese and Ecomuseums: Food as Cultural Heritage in the Northern Italian Alps."

The Strategic Manifesto of Ecomuseums <http://ecomuseo.comune.para-biagio.mi.it/ecomuseo/ECOMUSEOev.htm>

Brian Teare, "The Good Life a Valediction for Ecopoetics"

Lisa Robertson, "Untitled" essay from Nilling

7 Contemporary Italian Poets, ed. Linh Dinh

Layli Long Soldier, "38," from Whereas.

Bruno Latour, First Lecture: "On the Instability of the (Notion of) Nature," from Facing Gaia (pp. 7-41).



Ecopoetry Workshop 2019



This poetic field document was produced over the first week and a half of Ecopoetry Workshop 2019, which was held at NAHR in Val Taleggio, Lombardy, Italy, from July 1st - July 14, nearly mirroring 1/2 of a moon cycle, beginning with the first New Moon of Summer and Ending with the first Full Moon of Summer that was also a Partial Eclipse.

It was printed at cartOrlandini in Zogno, Italy and is primarily set in Garamond, using Futura for titles.

Ecopoetry Workshop was founded by Simon Eales, Brent Cox, and Courtlin Byrd. Its affiliates include MonoD Studios and The Topological Poetics Research Institute (TPRI).

