More from
Series Magritte
mark young
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Mark Young

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Some of these poems have previous appeared in fhole, MiPOesías & Wildlife, & in Pelican Dreaming: Poems 1959-2008.

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Le Beau Monde

The world which
we see
clearly

is the curtain
in front
of

the
world which
Magritte clearly sees.
Les Fleurs du Mal

*Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre*

Charles Baudelaire: La Beauté

Sometime
I must find out
why the statues
of antiquity
had no pupils. Would
have been easy
enough to do, a
drop of paint or
use the chisel as
an apple-corer. In-
stead left blind.
Deliberate. No need
to see who calls. In-
duce the dream of
flesh beyond the
stone through
flower wide open
& eyes wide shut.
Memory

She stepped down from her pedestal & ran off to join a circus. Not what she remembered from her youth. Centuries of standing still meant she was perfect as the knife-thrower's assistant. Never scratched. But outside the show her refleshed perfection made her target for the freaks who filled out side-show alley & they drew blood.
The Delights of Landscape

Even if the store-room is full
the hunter still
goes out to kill
more animals, to
cut down trees &
so remove all
groundcover. Some
thing to trade with.
Or. Fresh meat for
dinner or for the
dogs; perhaps
the head hung
in the trophy room.
The wood is set
aside, seasoned
for furniture, or used
to fuel the fire
in winter. He has
made a frame from
the best timber. The
final trophy. To be
hung in celebration
the day the hunter
comes home with
his catch-bag full,
the landscape empty.
Clear Ideas

Returning to the Moon is the key to humanity's long-term future in space.

It is a vertical project, akin to climbing a ladder. Each step has its own name, its own symbol. The symbols are not visual representations of the naming words. Nor are the names descriptive of the activity of the step. There are no milestones, only spaces between the steps.

Memory retains them thus, & can produce them to the mind whenever it has occasion to consider them.

The first step is called "A control toolbox automatically loading for no reason." The sea is its avatar.
The Apparition

Windows on both sides leather armchair
card table foldup ping pong table. A colorful
oriental rug is seen. The colonel sat back
asking for news about the outer world. His hands
were concealed in the cloud of the horse’s
lifted mane. It grew dark
in the weird silence, broken only by the
faint crack of a rifle. The white lines became
ghostlike; star-shells arched & finally melted
into the ambiguous cloud-land over the horizon.
The Call of the Peaks

Glaciers flow
out of the

painting. The
mountain is
an eagle that
does not leave
the ground.

L'Ami Intime

All I
could offer him
was
water &
bread. But we
are good
friends, & I
forgive him
for walking out
on me.
L'Eternité

Everything that looked
on turned
away,
even
small birds
whose eyes acquired
only outline, not
the detail.
Fear
frays
the hem-
line of eternity.

Who
comes to
save us now?
The Search for the Absolute I

Held
the leaf
up to the

light.
Said. In
this one leaf

the
entire tree.
Said. Is fractal.

Is
blueprint. Is
the entire forest.
An End to Contemplation

paradoxical sleep
a recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs
in which the person is aware that he or
she is dreaming while the dream is in progress
lucid dreams

short rib ravioli ($16) arrives on a puddle of "natural broth"
meteorite hits Peruvian village
only a fence separates Point Roberts from a bustling, strip-malled suburb & a
short commute to a hip, urban downtown

a luminous object that produced a loud sound
shaped like a cell that is about to divide
pure utopianism
filmic dissonance
essentially tests of the null hypothesis

a Foucault test uses interference patterns produced by a knife edge
to determine the deviation of a mirror from its ideal shape
Foucault the first to show how a pendulum can track Earth’s rotation
mechanisms acting during human sleep

the calligram immediately decomposes & disappears
leaving as a trace only its own absence (the other Foucault)
virtual apotheosis
the sign and intensity of the acting
may be a difficult goal to realise
solutions beyond machine learning may be necessary

sisters & their lovers in verdant present-day Hanoi
a traditional city with an increasingly hip, urbane edge
the comparative effect of factual & ideological propaganda
Stalinist aesthetics suspended
at half the focal distance

cells divide
the world did not come to an end
we may be too attached to protecting our image
The Search for the Absolute II

Images &
things you can't
look in-
to. Gödel
again. The
absolute is so
uncertain. But
I have just killed
a small flying
thing that
landed on the
reproduction
in my Magritte
book & it is
now absolute-
ly dead.
Le Voix du Sang

Gödel once more. If a forest is cut down so that only a single tree remains, is what is left still part of the set of forests? Let’s ask the people living inside the tree & see what they have to say. There’s a light on.
Memory of a Journey III

I know we sidetracked to see where the troglodytes had lived. Other than that think bridges gone over, under, or danced upon. & lines—train, coke, telephone. Somewhere we had antipasto, & drank. Not too much, just enough to make conversation easy & company complicated. Towards the end the waiter brought a bowl of fruit. We peeled the oranges & fed the segments to each other. We left the apples.
The Interpretation of Dreams

1) The Acacia

The arid regions of Senegal act as an incubator for the gum arabic tree.

2) The Moon

A soft moon shuffle by the light of the silvery shoe.

3) The Snow

The bowl of night is black & filled with white.

4) The Ceiling

ceiling wax lyrical

5) The Storm

The sky has that angular clarity that often precedes a change in the weather.
6) *The Desert*

Only when the last nail is put in place does it become apparent that all along it was a mirage that he was building.

---

**The Palace of Curtains**

The curtains drawn. Same thing on both. Sky. The sky.

Neither is.
Discourse on Method

Having suffered through 17 symposia convened by L’Académie Française on Le Discours de la Méthode
& fearing he was about to be pushed beyond the bounds of rational thought

Descartes discarded his wig & his silk breeches & hose & headed for the nearest leather bar muttering

“Who gives a fuck what anybody thinks. I am what I am.”
Le Trait d'Union

| The male flower | There it encounters the female. |
| breaks off & rises to the surface of the water. | Birds grow. |
|          | The use of hyphens with adverbs is redundant unless an identical adjective exists. |
Philosophy in the Bedroom #2

Some times
we keep
our fetishes
in the closet.

Sometimes
we wear
them out.
The Man with the Newspaper

for Hannah Weiner

Each depends
upon the other. The
man with the newspaper, the room
pretending
he isn't there.
Perspective: Madame Récamier de David

In this fromage to
Jacques Louis David
Magritte has
copied his portrait
of Madame Récamier
in intricate detail
right down to
the shy smile & the
burnished bronze
of the coffin handles.
This is not an apple

It is the
most realistic
of his apples.
Slight blem-
ishes, variants
of colour. Leaves
& scissor-cut
stalk. It is
what the painter
says it isn’t.
La Belle Idée

I start to tidy up
the tapestry. The unicorns
worry me. Not the one
all gleaming white &
shiny-horned, it’s the
other, the one with
the shades & lycra bike
shorts who’s lurking—
can unicorns lurk?—who’s
hanging out then, there
by the castle gate,
waiting for some corn maiden
to come tripping out
on her way to the
fields where he will follow
& (impale her)². Only
just then the Lord
of the Castle comes
riding up with his entourage
who all have earpieces that
drift down into their
chainmail & steely eyes
that scan the crowd, a-
lighting on the unicorn
who pretends he’s looking
at postcards in a market stall
before sliding back off
into the background &
back to his nighttime job
in a porn theatre where
the prurient masses pay
to watch some corny maiden
get impaled by a quadruped
with a condom/inium on his head.
The Hesitation Waltz

It could be embarrassing not even having two left feet to get around the dancefloor on, but the apples have mastered the complex pauses of the hesitation waltz so well they now are forced to enter dance competitions in disguise.
Ceci est un Morceau de Fromage

The problem with truth is that it's often falsely painted & hard to swallow.
Threatening Weather I

Not enough to hear the words. Had to see how the mouth curved around them, how far the tongue came forward, how heavily the teeth bit down. Only then could he understand their intent.
Le Musée d'un Nuit

It is
an over-
night stop, a
motel of
memory,
where some
of the guests
have the
provenance
to dis-
play them-
selves &
others
stay hidden
& wait
for room
service.
La Magie Noire

Usually the second name is abstract, the name of a Madonna.

A naked woman leans on a rock. Evolving, gradually merging into the blue sky. Sometimes a bird sits on her shoulder. Conjuration & invocations are the basis of her formal syntax. Earthbound, yet otherworldly. Hanukkah gelt.

Not Esperanza but some bird-name is revealed in the first chapter. More Americans believe in a literal hell & the devil than in Darwin's theory of evolution. The second section describes some practices children engage in. Black magic.
Les Amants

Is the love
still physical

if, when the
face masks

are removed,
the body

floats
          away?

On the Threshold of Freedom

It was then that we
arrived, too late
to influence, but not
too late to interfere.
The Difficult Crossing

Hand holds the frightened messenger. Even the bilboquet looks scared. Lightning; & waves that reach across the ship to shake hands on the other side. Walls wait with spaces cut to hold the windows. Later the curtain will come down.
The Anger of the Gods

Most of the day they paced themselves, taking it in turns to ride, to drive, to sit behind. But as they neared the top of Mt Olympus, the gods grew angry at such equality & pushed the car a little faster. Nothing seemed to change inside. On the roof the rider struggled to survive.
**A found homophone**

I go into Google looking for a link for The Anger of the Gods. Type in the title. Only text references. I re-enter, this time in French, *La Colère des Dieux*. The response: Did you mean "la couleur des deus"? I misread *deux* as *yeux*. No, I reply, I already know what color the eyes are. Octavio Paz once gave me a blue bouquet.
Hegel's Holiday

A glass to keep the water in, an umbrella to keep it out. Joined together. Thesis / antithesis / synthesis. Hegel went off on a holiday. All the work done for him.
The Tomb of the Wrestlers

In what was the listening-room

a rose

has replaced the apple

is a rose

& placed a sleeper-hold

is a rose

on this rude stein-girt domain.
L’Esprit de Géométrie

Most of us would say the faces have been exchanged

but to the mathematical mind it is more a transposition of figures.

The Mathematical Mind

There is no mantissa—all parts are present & counted for. But the present is the sum of parts of the past; the past is memory. Sometimes there is transposition in transcription.
Musings of a Solitary Walker

He does not think
about the water
he walks
beside. He walks
without it. Another
river. The Sambre.
His mother’s
suicide by drowning,
her nightdress a
veil around her face
but that’s another
painting. This is
the Rue Morgue,
levitation, the corpse
laid bare. He does not
think about her. She
is a disquieting muse.
He leaves her behind
on the bridle-path,
walks on alone. Apples
& umbrellas will
eventually overtake him.
The Lost World

In the surrounding countryside
trees define
the type of horse
that might be found there. The contours
suggest a woman’s body; but with a
different angularity
some have seen
it as an empty
bowl of fruit. A figure
loses its memory
along with its outline.
Words wilt in the
winter heat. There
are no dinosaurs.
The Ready-Made Bouquet

Ever the bourgeois, never daring to be seen out wearing Botticelli's naked Venus. Leave her at home on her halfshell, alongside the clip-on ties. Wear the clothed one. & even then embarrassed. Worn behind. So that. One or the other. Her, or his face. Never both together.
The Search for Truth

is difficult if you're a fish
& out of water & you don't realize that what you've found is what you were looking for.
Souvenir de Voyage

Light travels between cultures & continents at its own speed, remembering where it's been through multi-tudinous museums to keep mementoes in & a sophisticated mnemonic technique for learning long lists. The old also move at their own pace, but keep it simple, visit few places, retain few keepsakes. That they are petrified by travel is shown by what they bring back. A good thing they travel light.
The Flowers of the Abyss I

Hélas! tout est abîme wrote Baudelaire—*all is abyss*, a completely automated world of self-assembling machine-flowers made possible by an emergent form of video expression. Each change brings out new curves in the shoreline; in the same ambient space there is a region where the perception of the image is still affected by the dead blue screen. A message appears to say there is a problem with the file. *All windows bare the infinite to me.*
The Flowers of the Abyss II

A curious eclipse—
traffic regulations now
require night to have
a bell that absorbs
light without refraction
fitted to it. Times past,
an event happened, we
rushed out & ran to it
in rampant schaden-
freude. But this is no
accident, is mechanistic;
so we stay within the
ice-blue interior of a bare
carcass of concrete &
play chase the dog or
describe Nigeria or clean
d graffiti off the wreaths &
 potpourri. Shorn of its
exits the sun is quiet.
Time stands still, bells
hang heavy in the air.
The Meaning of Night

The man walks away from himself, the woman hides in her hair.

They ignore each other. Wherever they are, neither is dressed for it.

All around there are fallen clouds. There is no moon, faint light, the man casts a shadow. The woman cannot see it. It is night inside her hair.
La Ruse Symétrique

At 4.30 he brought the clothes in off the line. A nightdress was missing; so, too, his mother. Weeks later they were found, water-logged & with a symmetry she never had in life.
Les Six Éléments

As of this writing, there are 137 Magritte items available on eBay. They are mundanely presented—none of the six elements that Aristotle considered essential for drama are in the frame.
L’Amour Désarmé

The key-words—

Clothing, Military, People, Religion, Transportation, Headwear, Army, Adults, Groups, Naked People, Woman, Women, Christianity, Religious, Land, Hats, Soldiers, Christian, Cart, Wearing, Clothes, Armed Forces, Transport, Head Wear, Adult, Group, Naked, Nude, Female, Lady, Females, Ladies, troops, Combatants, Kneeling, Tying, Weapons, Outdoor, Helmets, Armour, Swords, Square, Kneel, Kneels, Outside, Outdoors, Exterior, Exteriors, Open air, Openair, Armor, Weapon, Sword, Triumph of Chastity, Love, Disarmed, Bound, edifying, historical legendary, Petrucci palace, Penelope, Suitors, Rome, Signorelli, Trionfi, Triumphs, god of love, bound by Laura, ideal, chaste, Petrarch’s poetry, Lucretia, chaste heroines of antiquity, heroes, Romans, Caesar, Scipio Africanus, exhibits, prisoner, triumphal car, victory, tied, path, arrest, caught, chasing, wings, virtue

—are elsewhere.
The Promised Land

I do not know what the 19th century saw in the letter S. Perhaps its classic look reminded them of the sex & violence that were once associated with pressed metal ceilings. These days even the private space of public figures is made from wood.
The Night Watch

i. The endocrinology

I stroll out to Wilshire Boulevard.
A group of part-time soldiers are setting out on parade.
There are bits missing.
A lot of raw fish has a tendency to do that.
"I'm a NASCAR fan," she said at a
birthday party in little osaka one recent night.

ii. The interval between first & second sleep

Marie-Ange sounded determined.
It was reflected in
her elegant handcuffs.

iii. Prolactin, a pituitary hormone

There's no longer a difference between theatre & shadow—
"I saw Brazil last night, Terry Gillem. Never saw it before. It was boring. I had
to watch Chronicles of Riddick to clear my head of thagt junk."
Today I get to prep for a colonoscopy.

iv. Unlike meditation

Montanna’s
just a
pathetic
wannabe troll
with no sense.

v. Altered consciousness

He prepared a candle-lit gourmet dinner
that would end up being eaten
by the mangy dog on the front lawn.

vi. Benign states

The babysitter got bored & went to watch TV.
The Listening Room

Climate change & predictions of future climates have never had any particular significance for me. Theories are not statements about the world. To that end I have done numerous interviews for radio, television & the print media as a prophet who ascertains through divination that the apple we experience is just a bundle of sensations in synchronism; there is no way that we can affirm there really is an apple.
The Literal Meaning II

salon hair
gods false
trap death
bell door
rail guard
balance trial
idea bright
time prime
spectrum broad
room drawing
avant post
black token
drama high
fire forest
The Annunciation

Squeeze the symbolism for all it’s worth. Olive trees in an otherwise barren & rocky landscape, the simulated organ, the confessional latticework. No real people, not even footprints. Wooden bilboquets have turned into pawns & vainly wait for someone to move them. It’s a sterile oasis in a forty-day desert, which someone once found, announced its discovery & was famous ever after.
La Plaine de l’Air

Even though the air is an unstable medium at best, the tree, a plain text ASCII file made of everyday materials & the common language of commercial signage, stands unmoved. Elsewhere, the German Army is entering Paris.
The Ladder of Fire

He had noted the nesting order—how the paper fit inside the bell of the tuba & it, in turn, rested on the chair—so that, once this fire was over, they could be neatly stored until the next time he had need of them.
The Adulation of Space

Try to unfold complex polyhedra & the kinetic barriers create a problem—the configuration of power no longer holds when automata are abstracted by collapsing their states. There is between the universal & particular a reciprocal tension that cannot be confined within an allocated space. It’s a core drawback of pattern recognition, made more so in the figurative when flesh holds sway.
Memory

All I can recall is a bas-relief head between a near-full glass of water & an apple.

The apple had blood on it.
Les Pas Perdus

Maybe aerobic exercise is just as effective as medication in treating stress; but the idea of punishing the material form by sweating it out in the gym is not my idea of fun, doesn’t even move me to a basic level of arousal. I’d rather go to a traditional Chinese medicine establishment where they give full-body massage or take a trip to the discothèque where there are no wasted steps, where the cognitive components of dancing counterpoint the theme of survival & may in some way relate to everyday functioning.
The Scars of Memory

Every time there’s
even the slightest
scent of censure in
the wind, winter
emigrates. Reincarnates
itself as a wandering
Mariachi carrying only
an icy cold pitcher of
vermillion in its guitar
case. In stark contrast
the rest of us go
stereotypically retro
& relive the 1920s,
not sure how we got
there or why we’ve
ended up channeling
Shakespeare in some
hell-drenched backporch
reliquary of the mind.
The Present

Most birds fly. Aeroplanes are almost able to, achieve flight only by manoeuvring in the air as they start to fall out of it.
La Page Blanche

Echoing both science & religion, Magritte suggests there can be no such thing as a blank page since the invisible is everywhere just waiting to be made visible.
Reconnaissance Without End

for Márton Koppány & Nico Vassilakis

One should conceal the fact that one is an adept, said Mr Behoover to his Hungarian friend, & that it takes an endless supply of lifetimes learning how to become one. Don’t advertise. Adopt a slightly eccentric but innocuous code of dress — 1920’s bourgeois with its coats & sticks & bowler hats is good — then join a self-focused group like Cloud Gazers Anonymous where everyone’s heads are lost in them & no-one notices if you forget yourself & start to levitate.
La Lumièrè des Coïncidences

Optical efficiency.
The angles. The candle is illuminated by the woman's torso. In turn, re- sponse. Refraction. Light bounces back. Angles again. & curves of shadows. A scientific fact, no coincidence.
Threatening Weather II

Mainstream American theology—a.k.a. "the spinach capital of the world"—informs this picture of Yosemite Fall; but the efforts of humanity to liberate imagination are found more in dance & ritual than in the sadly artless subtitles of theology. In the tea room of the sky we sip non sequiturs & sup on slices of graffiti peeled from real railroad cars. The weather threatens. It’s what we came for.
The Happy Donor

Les Promenades d'Euclide

The first events in the nursery are metamorphosis & settlement. Vertical fluxes may vary depending on the timescale; but all retain the essential features of prediction equations—satisfying the conservation of mass & total energy. Any method that alters the data, whether by swapping, random noise or erasure decoding, is rejected by the differential circuitry. A monosyllabic type must produce harmony if the enclitic is unelided. As yet, there are no significant rock/non-rock preferences.

It's all pretty standard practice, but motorcycle seats can be very uncomfortable so it's no surprise that a lot of money & brainpower are going toward customizing supply chain solutions. Now restrooms are open to the public & are wheelchair accessible. The saving grace of the nuclear family in history was the extended family that surrounded it.

By the time that David Bowie took his final bow from the whole touring scene at London's Hammersmith Odeon in July 1973, efforts to bridge the gap between phenomenology & the principles derived from perturbative & nonperturbative quantum chromodynamics (QCD) were an essential part of American pop culture.

New Year's Day this year fell on the Day of the Rat. The force between quarks does not diminish as they are separated.
Memory

SOUVENIR
SOUVENI
SOUVEN
SOUVER
SOVIER
SOPLIER
SPLIER
UBLIER
OUBLIER
L'Assassin Menacé

Il est si calme or
whatever the
colloquial French is
for staying cool
under pressure. Though
strangely inappropriate;
for the cool criminals
of the time were
not assassins but
mainly jewel thieves, a
long line of, mostly
fictional, Fantomas &
Raffles through to (if
not, should be) Sean
Connery. This is
more the following
fin de siècle, maybe
that's what he's
waiting for, the iPod
to replace His Master's
Horn & Hannibal
to get down off
his elephant &
take his place
on center stage.
The Discovery of Fire

In the evening, before the sun set, she would write down those things that had caught her interest during the day. At one time or another she had noticed that she could tell how long she’d been away from home, how long before she had to head back, by the length of the shadows & the direction in which they pointed; how when seen through the smoke from bushfires the sun had a form to it. She noted the way animals tracked & trapped, or how they hid from one another, beneath surfaces or assuming the colour of them. She worked out the cycles of plants, & was no longer surprised by the way fish would reappear from beneath the surface of dry lagoons when they started filling with rain.

Today, as the heavy rain clouds moved down from the north—direction was a concept she was still formulating, but she knew where the sun rose & where it set, & she also knew that, at different times, if she stood facing the sunrise, the hot wetness would come from that side of her face, & the even hotter dryness would approach from the other—she saw a bolt of lightning strike a tree, setting the oil inside it alight. She recalled a smaller spark she had once seen, when a flint axe brandished in anger had struck a cliff of a particular rock rather than the head at which it was aimed. She extrapolated; & realised that if she could find something combustible to trap the spark in she would no longer have to wait to find fire in the wild, would be spared the task of nurturing it, keeping it alive, something that took her away from the composite act of gathering food, information, insight. By forcing two objects into contact with one another she could produce something greater than them both, usually invisible, but there in the air, waiting to be called forth.

In this way Promethea discovered, first, poetry, & then fire.
Portrait of Georgette Magritte

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