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And count myself a king of infinite ((words))

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AND COUNT MYSELF A KING OF INFINITE ((WORDS))

by

Kristi Marie Banker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts degree in Theatre
(Dramaturgy)
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2014

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Dare Clubb

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Kristi Marie Banker

has been approved by the Examining Committee
for the thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts
degree in Theatre (Dramaturgy) at the May 2014 graduation.

Thesis Committee: _____
Dare Clubb, Thesis Supervisor

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Meredith Alexander

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Kim Marra

To the little bee of angst and perfectionism, who knew the worth of words

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PREFACE

Wary as I am to pinpoint 'WHAT THIS IS,' some direction may not be out of place. Take it with a dose of openness, though. Take it not as answer or as anything final.

Through my studies of dramaturgy at the university and elsewhere, I have learned to embrace not knowing and to relish following impulse's push into uncertain territory. I am interested in sharing this enthusiasm for the unknown with others, whether through the production of theater or through the written word. And I take it as a vital task to prompt questioning of words and presuppositions.

Call the project at hand an exploration of the idea and implications of archives – particularly of the sense that what might seem unyielding and dust-covered is actually vibrant and open to change – and of the multiplicity of words. Discussion of these concepts eventually morphs into talk of dramaturgy as an idea and pursuit to be valued for its instability.

The hope is that through this text, readers will encounter words and ideas (the archivist, preservation, etc.) and will use my own suggestions, questions, and complications as jumping-off points to begin crafting their own impressions of what each means.

For instance, readers bring suppositions attached to the idea of archiving; I complicate these by offering ways of envisioning archives, compelling readers to engage with new definitions and asking that they consider reevaluating their own notions. Because I offer many possibilities but no absolute definition, readers must decide for themselves what definitions – touched and perhaps revised by my own offerings – they wish to carry

forward. And readers will use their newly revised ideas of archiving to encounter the remainder of the thesis.

By the time readers reach the discussion of dramaturgy (which calls upon archiving and these other concepts) they will thus be equipped with and attuned to understandings of the ideas that weave into the discussion. An understanding of dramaturgy will thus be dependent on the ways in which readers have encountered this text and its ideas. An understanding of dramaturgy will be the reader's own, with the implication that the idea of dramaturgy varies from one person to the next. What I hope is thus to encourage an open vision of dramaturgy. I cannot see dramaturgy as a fixed entity or position, and believe that its unfixed nature is essential to the life of the position and practice.

With this thesis, I am attempting to work with ways of using the space of the page and placement of text to incite and inspire readers' minds. Variations of form – words italicized, lines given extreme indentation, etc. – jar readers from the comfort of passing through a familiar form, creating a startling effect and prompting individuals to consider more closely what and how they are reading. Keyed into the fact that presumed rules need not apply, readers must decide for themselves how to understand the text. Readers must then engage on some level with these uncertainties, and may become aware that navigation through the text depends on their own engagement. It is an invitation for the individual mind to explore and expand its own power. To delight in the mental thrill of active questioning and interpretation.

The variations of form in this piece follow no strict pattern because I wish to represent the creation of archives through instinct and a somewhat fluid sense of form. Because the

sense I wish to convey is of the indefinable nature of the archive. I am suggesting that the goal of archivist and dramaturg alike is not to find some solid system, but to be continually exploring and expanding form. Thus, though I employ many similar variations of form through the piece (lines of text appearing to fall across a page, double parentheses, words in caps or bold), the possible meanings of each shifts with every iteration.

These variations of form ask that readers give a looser reign to preconceptions that might typically guide them through a work. These variations suggest that readers cannot rest easy under expectations that the piece will follow usual rules or that words mean exactly what the readers believe and nothing more. And these variations ask that readers turn to faculties of comprehending that may often be neglected. The looseness of form should appear familiar enough to avoid fully alienating readers and to give solid ground for approaching the subjects, strange enough to provoke another way of visioning and seeing.

A few final notes on the form. Indentation and margins on the page often follow impulse rather than strict guidelines. The creation of the piece was dependent on these variations, and they help to form the piece's meanings and possibilities. As I see it, the breath of this piece depends on its slightly variant play with space. Punctuation is also used loosely, though in general it adheres to common practice. The same follows with capitalization. In an ideal setting, line spacing would fall between single and line and a half.

Because this is in part an exploration of the ways in which my sensibility has been informed by writings I have encountered, footnotes are often used to include quotes that seem to me bound with my own words. Elsewhere, footnotes contain remarks that seemed tangential to the primary flow of the piece, but still seemed to demand placement.

AND COUNT MYSELF A KING OF INFINITE ((WORDS))

YOU HAVE HEARD THIS ALL BEFORE.

So turn back now.

I'm not even kidding.

Unless you count yourself as one to find (the, a) value in restating, re-winding your mind around an idea through the words of another. If you hold that a word, any single word may spark new thought-lines for yourself… In that case, by all means, trek on ahead. Expect not much, but be open for searching. Your mind, I trust, will run its work.

To affect impact, there must be engagement.

Your mind must be alive and searching well beyond this page.

I don't know what else to tell you.

These all are the staggers of words.

ARCHIVE: a gathering, collecting up of old. of what has been. of what exists already in space and thought, time and memory.

here there is nothing novel, and here everything is brought anew.

an archive is a contradiction in thought only when held to strict defining.

archival is living. archival is change.

> "Imagination is a lens. Pastness. We find by experience.
> A sentence tumbles into thought. A disturbance calls
> itself free."
>
> -Susan Howe, 'Incloser'

> "I am a maker of what is real.
> A bird's voice,
> speaking the language of birds,
> I flutter in the whirlwind."
>
> -Jay Wright, 'The Initiate Takes His First Six
> Signs, the Design of His Name'

> "I wish I had words, you know? I wish I had words."
>
> -The Photojournalist in *Apocalypse Now*

an edict: to write.

an impulse: to question.

so i have asked

where are words found?

what is this voice?

where have you, what have you been?

and where do you place what you find?

(take "you" as a loosened term, not you-specific but you in

the meaning of the moment. we're casual here. a bit.)

what it is – this is – is a matter

of standing in contrast to silence. or say rather matter and silence linked hand-in-hand; my structure only exists because silence stands around it. my structure exists for its power to shape silence.

this structure exists against silence. against the blankness of page-space the expanse of outside.

one example of your will.

words give chaos and words give structure. words give sound and noise against the blank.

(guidance to the noise space conjures in mind, way thoughts grow in emptiness.)

and words as pieces words as moldable timber work to shape the structuring of space.

there is quiet and there is intention.

there are footfalls

there is dust

and always there is possibility of imprint. or impact. of reshaping what has been.

(there is newness in your thinking. is creation in your brain.)

A guiding principle here at work: create a thesis, a coming-together gleaned from experiences from encounters with information and images.

We work our lives through assignments. Sometimes. Assignments may promote forced creativity. Sometimes.

What you will hear (here) is unclear. It is and is not my intent to confound. More to complicate. More to suggest possibility of looser but deep-wound understanding. Give pieces to begin – rather, aid in continuing – your flight. It is for you to hold to an idea, any idea that you are able. Grasp what you are given, amplify it as you will.[1] There are words here; engage them. Revise them through your thinking.

When come upon a place of slipping, find where sense won't quite connect, don't worry your head over it. Accept. Move along. Sense isn't always straight; find it where you can.

((the moment that you fix me, I am (I hope) long gone.

leaves room for you.

how, what you are.))

Wouldn't call myself a guide in any way oft-understood, but here I am, and here I do half-guide your, mm, experience? By what it is I suggest. Toward what words what thoughts I may incline and lead your mind, your visualization. My guidance is arrangement; say I am an archivist.

---

[1] shift 'as' to 'what,' make this a twelfth night.

Speaking true, for good or for ill or for both, I have come to consider myself an archivist. Which I pose as far more vibrant a positioning than it may seem to be. More to archives than dust and dead space. More than seeming ruin and absence. In archive, there is life and a call for further creation.

Archive is the present range and ranging of my vocabulary, giving frame for what I have to say. For words and thoughts that I may offer to your minding. A tone of words and imagings in part chosen but mostly as a means that crept upon my being, my consciousness. Times you drive compelled by ideas forces beyond selecting. Times you find there has been sense here all along, unlikely as it may seem.

What I mean is the term and its ideas have been shaped into my world. What I mean is I now take them – this iteration of them – as my own. That I may give form through words to the thoughts etched through my mind. That I may offer these for engagement. And I can write only through my (scope of) visioning. How words and thought-flows form, how fall.

archival/ as

archaic

arcane

archival/oss

archival/ive

in vibrance and decaying

in dust and grandeur dust and wave-wash bound

remnants/remain

as signs of life

signs of potential and power for living.

((the words here not quite right but reaching toward something and suggestive of impending breakage))

Archival is shelved, filed, boxed, en-glassed. But not fixed finite.

Archive as a mode of dealing with space. Creating shape from the formless, or from forms crafted for[2] other purposes. Giving outward realization to shapes seen through your own comprehension of being.

Archival is expression, setting what had hung unknown unsuspected into discernible being with words with ideas as pieces bonded for display. (And for more than display, to be encountered closer than distance of the observed object and observer.) Arranging pieces to yield envisioning anew.

There is an art to arranging that brings light from the pieces within.

There is intention, and there is fortunate falling into-place.

We are all of us light-bringers, knowing or not.

More than solid book-shelf collection, what we seek for is re-lighting, re-enlivening.

Suggestion: that light was there at the start but we bring our own, as well. How we enhance, amplify light. How we may take away from it. How each of us-beings impacts the light that has been and the light of other beings.

Light being illumination. That which permits (a certain sort of) sight. Having no weight of its own, though it guides, though it shapes; what i see in accordance with the

[2] so many 'f's!

scope of light, the way it falls and illumens. Appearance, understanding can be altered by the shifting fall of light.

((as i move through dust-swarmed sunbeams. feel the pouring passing light,

creep of warmth into shadow, of cold shivered in absence.

there is light within the archives. there is light from down its depths.))

Archives and their lighting to promote awareness of words and their incalculable potential. Of uncertainty.[3] Of ways words suggest more than print and more than old ideas, ways words flicker vitality. Juxtaposition to create awareness of multiplicity and the variant nature of each word. To suggest the existence of multiplicity in further words and situations. All of this applies outward. What words spark breathes into living.

Archival is fixed, but only in moments. A place, a building, cavernous room that stays or seems to stay in one position only. Prominent marker and maker of geography. But the space within breathes fluctuation. Expansive so that footsteps echo in a time-defying measure. Fluidity the only (is it?) rule. Breath comes in constant fluctuation, changing and maintaining the potential for further alteration. Tread the aisles of archive and you're passing through a mesh of time and space and thought, dimensions yet uncounted. (Solidity may be given through our thinking, but can rarely be imposed.)

---

[3] Richard Foreman, 'How to Write a Play': "NO! The art experience shouldn't ADD to our baggage, that store of images that weighs us down and limits our clear view to the horizons. The art experience should rather (simply) ELIMINATE what keeps us moored to hypnotizing aspects of reality." (79)
i draw and set forth this quote and those to follow to indicate a web of resonance, begin to suggest ways in which thoughts and pieces gathered over years my resound. ask what they are for you, how strike your own perceiving.

Continuously (un)still, in the archive we are placeless and are possessed of access to all places.[4] Here we may travel without distant movements. Here we see and hear and process all, though we drift in isolation, hidden well beyond the world's vision (funny thought, that; you can never really shake the world's eye, the potential for watching to be incurred). Visions into other livings other minds, not to claim them or their experience as your own but to be taken further, to take yourself further out, enhance your own prospects for viewing.[5] Find your own voice multiplies, deepens. You see the world en-layered around you and see yourself amid these layers, if only you can give yourself to words. Images. Release the present presence/pressure.

Beings paradoxical? Always. No different in the archive, though perhaps here we amplify or seek to amplify awareness. That you are here and elsewhere. That you are as you stand yourself and you are so much more.

And I stand here as one to guide encounters.[6]

I store I place re-place letters words symbols into space into texture layered blur of sense of strictness (call it dust of lingered words of traces touching by).

Ask me, ask me if you will about the rhythms traced 'mid shelves and files, rhythms found in the brush-stroke of a finger, one word one work one inscription to the next. That I myself am guided by these shifts of tomes, eyes caught by words ideas by images that

---

[4] we contain multitudes; you might say we are all mini-Walt Whitmans, or at least call ourselves as complex (simple?) leaves of grass.

[5] something to take care with here, how and why you use experience, fact that what you hear is what happened, happened in truth in physical motion-ing to someone else. that claim may have been laid (a discussion we once had in class). how far can another's experience be called and culled for use? when does it ache to hear your being your experiences spoken of? and, yes, why?

[6] you might just call me VIRGIL.

transfix or stagger my mind and it is rhythm, untraced uncaught un-understood that pulls my self from one onto the next, that

guides me in their tracing and the gather-in of what they hold.

That through this, I may aid to move you forward.

Give me words, give me thoughts, and I will pull connections for you. I know locations. I understand reference. I have – have been told – a mind suited for pursuit of this fashion. Call me a bloodhound, senses tuned to tracking thoughts through books through speech across whatever page or branch. Part of the archivist's work in holding awareness of these branching, their roots. Whatever you may require, there are suggestions of direction I may offer. Utter solutions[7] are beyond me – I am a true creature of the in-between – but what I offer may aid in opening a way.

What I know is what I have seen passed through and the words I have read. Bound of in the churning-wheel of self. Sometimes I lose myself in flow of words I lose the words themselves their meaning and I, I ask you what is the meaning of words beyond definition what of the life that is given by sequence by urgency, there stands more to words than what these letters spell. More than can be written in archives and more than can be read or heard, interpreted by any one set of eyes.

Words suggest and promote existence beyond what is or was written or spoken.

Words ask that we think further, give more from ourselves, from our thinking.

I write I breathe I

[7] don't get me started on solutions. or do. let's talk of these creatures. like the way they hold dissolved, once-separate pieces. the way they hold more than is seen, dependent on these once-present once-standing pieces, dependent on once-beings now transformed.

live under the influence of others' words. What I cannot emphasize strongly enough is the extent to which words compose my own blood, the crawl of life on through my veins. It is impossible I think to extricate myself from their wrung-windings … Nor have I desire to do so. I am a self, however shaped by other words. We have only these pieces. We have only ever this near-infinite storehouse of pieces, the earth. The world.

…if i could describe to you the way that these words burn my being…

Information as received data in formation, if you will, and information giving way to form, serving as pieces to craft re-envisioned structures. I receive information and use it to restructure my understanding of the world. And the structure of my knowing alters when merely encountering these pieces called information. The acquisition of information changes what you are and how. However passive your reception may be, something shifts. This, all of this, as pieces informing, now and future-forming, my archives.

Changing, all in changing by the moment by the words run always through my brain to strike new thinkings unperceived half-sightings, electric unknowing experience of comprehension in creation.

Never, never quiets.

So phrases swim to mind, like

angel-marbled potentiality

word-run ardor

ambivalence of agit-proxy

Look to each in its moment look to each recorded in print and confess I don't know how the meaning might be framed, I don't know why these words have come together, but each

phrasing strikes as something holding more.

Something separate, something quietly, unseen bound.

You have to understand that for me, sense is what defies sense. My mind clicks with a statement in proportion to the extent of my confounding. I care little for what masquerades as straight sense. And my favor to you – like it or not – is to offer confounding. For every helpful hint, a question of a word. Of a title of a definition, setting at odds what has been set and said and what may be. A shattering and enhancing, open up the spacing of consideration, realm of visioning.

So take initiating phrase and flow of words, whatever it or they may be. Turn it through the mind and then record, write it in its present form. There, just there in the writing and perceiving of the sound, we have created an archive. Representation of what my mind held in a moment, though I can't tell you why it sang, and you'll bring your own read bearing (burning?). It may shift, but something in it holds of, speaks of truth. Something ringing with your comprehension. What is it in this phrasing or its image caught you? The words may shift through revisions, direct presentation may be altered, but the force ringing at root will remain.

Suggestion being that whatever unclear phrases strike a mind and resonate may come to breathe much further, stronger, sounded.

Suggestion being that each impulse may be held to be momentous, necessary. Not always in what immediately appears, but in what is suggested. Something there to be fulfilled/followed or noted. Something that may give light, and perhaps it must be honed or perhaps it must be preserved.

Which is to say held and enhanced.

Which is to say rediscovered with all the wailed force of its first rearing.

A matter is how to work preservation of an impulse into your creating. How to rope this precious instability and offer it in all its wealth before readers' eyes.

Understand that captivation of its fleeting in a moment may read as scatter on the page, like words placed without strict attachment to grammar or accepted-always definition like words out of place like context thrown ajar. But it if tells you something. If it tells you something, keep it. Let it stand to be read as it may let it spark images, ask minds to work it into comprehension; the modes thus managed will bring its life.

What will you do with, in response to this thing outside yourself. How will you become. And I say I do not desire easy sharp comprehension. If extra words give your mind something more to work around, GOOD. I want excess that isn't strictly excess. I *want* debris. LETTERS ALL OVER EVERYTHING. Pieces you must sort through, pieces that may strike you toward another idea. What are these two words doing together? You tell *me*. What do they do for you? What do they do to you? I don't wish to speak it straight. And more jagged I think than Dickinson's slant;[8] we're off at wrenching angles, thrown among the rocks. A rough way of learning, but a way to shake the thought.

Nothing here is solid. Try as classification might. Unyielding as definition seems. It is vision, perception, ripping back the eyelid if we must. See in each piece not monolith but possibility. How it sounds today. To you. To me.

We must teach ourselves to read more than words can say.

(as well, aid others in opening to this aptitude.)

---

[8] Emily Dickinson: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant – / Success in circuit lies." (506)

See we have, we have had this capacity all along. Of course we know how to read the deepness of the world, just as we know how to breathe in (its) simplicity. Instinctual reaction and reception that's been pressed from our existing. What we've given over in submission, lost as sign of something undefined unrefined unified for this existence.

What we have is more than sterility.

There is more than control, or than can be controlled.

No telling what a thought or sense might lead to.

Follow it. So, follow it.

Have to trust to the wealth of instability. The material of impulse. Have to trust in your ability to improvise and to draw pieces together, one to the next. To use the ever-changing to see the world and to create a being of your own. Something alive anew.

A question is how to build amid such openness of space. Think archivist as one contending with space. One reading the places of openness to find where best next placement lies.

And something that calls me in particular is the placement of space – the spacement – on a page.

Archival arrangement in space.

Of quotations. Of notes.

Of letters and scratching of symbols on paper.

How we know and don't know how to look at it.

My own movements intuitive and deliberate; space to be divided as I logic it and feel it out.

Think of it as sculpting. With pieces aforementioned, formed around and within silence.[9] And all archival content exists and holds potential partly in its silence and what remains unsaid, unwritten. The space that suggests absence but can yet be perceived. As we see the empty paper beyond the mark of ink, see even where books are not shelved where broader space exists between one word one letter and the next. Are attuned to the ways in which type fills paper. Silence as a charged entity in which you – any-you – encounter further thoughts further ideas all unshaped, saved through the grapplings of your mind. Way to be a potter. Way to shape that clay.

What you see in an archive is only my ending; take for yourself and continue on.

So silence as space's content unheard, unperceived. All might speak clamorous if ears and mind attune.

I want to see space move I wish to be a mover of space.[10] I wish to show YOU that space is more open to shifting than may seem, and that it is we who hold the power to give motion. To suggest the wealth of possibility that hangs and lingers open at all times.

Space for shaping unquantifiable.

Archive created in the midst of infinity.

Infinity evades definitions, or at least total comprehension (it is of far too GREAT A MAGNITUDE,[11] Aristotle would not – so an interpretation suggests – approve). Can only speak toward it, never full-evocative. To call up infinity would be a… feat, shall we say? The

---

[9] or/and do we create or at least highlight silence through our sculpting?

[10] or mover over space, see Olson in *Call Me Ishmael*. "We must go over space, or we wither" (101), with such other speech of space.

[11] Aristotle, *Poetics*: "Tragedy, then, is a process if imitating an action which has serious implications, | is complete, and possesses magnitude […]." (25)

most we can do is maneuver around and toward the concept, take from its breath-clasping to further push our knowing.

the rest is…

re-silence. resilience?

Resilience more like it; ending in collapse in unknown overwhelmed is no answer. Take it as a call to that knowing.

Take it that eternal openness, space of ever-change stands for shaping. Working with awareness of infinite comes part of our achieving. Working also with recognition that this, too, can be held. That pieces may be carried through. Resilience, long-lasting of impulses ideas. All that can be stated may be saved to be perceived, to be rediscovered.

So in this space, preserve.

Preservation as key, but think preservation at a turn, think preservation that prompts and promotes engagement. Preservation itself, occupation of the archive, is no mere matter of dust-closed shelves and cases, not only affixing labels to objects for distanced observations.

preserve: to maintain. to return. to

process

reserve (ations)

pre-sever

persevere

pre-severe

((re))

sever.

Preservation as a forwarding presence a process of cutting one piece from another and some-ways from its context – never fully, mind you; past context stands to be read and activated, must I think be taken into awareness; know what you're gleaning from and who; know what it is you set aside what it is you risk brushing over or dismissing – filing it in connection and on its own, persistent in its multitude. A piece viewed in and out of place. In newness of place. A piece alight with other complexing connotations.

Preservation also re-presents the piece for examining. A question is how set forth. How enduring in its existence.

preserve: to hold unchanging

This… I don't think so. Maybe in some ideal, where ideal is solidity ideal is strict outline.

A question: why would you *want* to?[12]

Change occurs, like it or not. I think, nothing can save you from change. Its price. Allow it welcome it tumble with its impress.

So maybe instead hold as unchanging as is possible in a world always in flux, all steeped in change. Maybe simply

preserve: to hold.

Understanding that what is held may undergo change of its own.

"Hold" as word seems safety, word seems closeness, also captivity (and it is, don't think for a minute that this isn't tied someway to comfort). Clutch this idea captive so that you may be for a glowing moment or more held captive *by* it. So that others may be stricken by such

[12] and here, in my driving, why wishing to be held in another way a shifting way I see that as the truth of the holding but my visioning my comprehension cannot alone make it so. we all of us have our reasons and wishings, know it or not, claim it or not.

captivation. So it may speak may sound with something in your being-knowing-feeling and so help craft to something further.

Hold something in order to be inspired by it. Hold something in order to feel from its fire. Preservation is not enacted only to keep something as is; at times, enact preservation to carry ideas words names objects forward through time, accepting and perhaps welcoming the prospect of change. An object an idea preserved can never be what it once was (I do not know what 100% preservation would entail or how it would be possible).

So…

> preserve: to sustain through the flow of time.

To save, to pull objects from time's disintegrating stream is no mean task. How to help an object counter time; this I take as part of my action as archivist. As a being alive on this earth, endowed with the power to defy time. Time acts on my being, but I may act on objects to remove them from the usual transforming. As may we all.

> a thought: to live through and past time, it is necessary to be adapted, at least, in the hold/comprehension of those around you.

Note that time functions wayward in an archive. Or falls more into its natural turn, which is to say uncertainty which is to say unmeasure which is to say nonexistence.[13] And those within must gap to remain in touch with its progression (a misleading term for it; progress implies straight line implies forward implies discernible measure against a standard but that, none of that comes so certain here). Must learn to move in space with fluid conception of event-flow and relation of events to the body's pulsing.

---

[13] do i cycle back upon myself? very well; i cycle back upon myself. if you think you hear here a whisper of Whitman, you're onto my slight game.

Still, we may note

preserve (as pre-serve): that which comes before service. before action. the standing before movement.

That something past may yet beget motion in time; if you like (dependent on your directional thinking), motion forward.

Past work your work required for my own, everything feeds off another, destroys and pays tribute in a single gesture, or it does neither, it simply takes off and exists on its own, little need for looking back because it carries the seed of what was once, what exists as intrinsic impulse. I owe so many debts, or at least a slew of thanks. There is no precise death of these ideas; lingering, remaining in some fashion is the rule of such existence.

Something stands to be acted on or with. Once engaged, that entity enters into change. Recognize as much even when it remains close to what it was. Even when it seems a perfect image (though how, how would you measure; cannot say).

If you, if someone of the living world does not engage with these pieces, of what use are they? Bring life to the old through new vision.

preserves: jelly. ish.[14]

Irrelevant. Probably.

preserve: anticipation of servicing who is with what was.

That preservation occurs with an eye ear mind to potential for reception. In some sense, cannot be preserved without eyes without minds without regard of others. So I am not

[14] jelly*fish?* the difference between a jellyfish and a moon jelly is measured in revolutions of the stars in line with the moon's pull, tidal fluctuation. a principle of guided fracture: inclusion of what seems not to belong, giving another tilting to perspective.

alone concerned with how it appears in itself I cannot do not hold this as a static existence… In archiving, there comes an awareness of those who will see. Feel. Alter and perhaps be altered.

(sense kinship here, a bonding: alter/alert)

Preservation means aware always that withdrawn as you may seem, can never be secluded as you thought. Always, there is potential of presence. Account for it. Hold yourself accountable. Who is listening and how might this be held?[15]

Archiving is thus in part a matter of predicting. Of holding awareness of what is and what was and of how minds trend toward formation of eventual expression. Archiving is awareness of those who may advance and enter to be(come) keyed into what an archivist's own venturings have arranged. Of those who knowing or not seek movement through and from its sparkings. Predict ahead to how you wish them to navigate, though of course cannot be certain. Oracle's words were never and are never clear.

Granting that reactions are capricious creatures.

simple truth (is it?):[16] a reaction cannot be fully guided.

simple brilliance: a reaction cannot be fully guided.

What can be given is potential, the opening of a route that will lead who-knows-where. Evoking what we might call ENCOUNTER. What is outside of yourself may fuel and free your mind, help you to put in order the points of your own being. Outside content giving

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[15] Geoffrey Hill, *Speech! Speech!*: "THOSE WHOM IN IGNORANCE I HAVE KNOWN / AND CHARMED BARREN. Scrupulosity can kill / like inattention. How will this be judged?" (14)

[16] Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "The truth is rarely pure and never simple." (326)

anchor, pieces with which to build ground. For firmer broader brighter foundation, encounter is required.

How we create.

That archives aid in arranging encounters, you and what you may learn.

If you enter this archive, my arranging, there is to be encounter. Something perhaps to open up your mind your explorations. Personal noting says that poetry and poetic prose frees me, sets my mind toward its own rhythm and way of sighting. I read Susan Howe William Faulkner Adrienne Kennedy Charles Olson others in unending list, and find my own words run with sharper strength, increased agility, find their song more urgent and telling. But I do not prescribe this for you. Your sources sound with a necessity of their/your own. Search all stores and find what sparks you. Use of the archive: pull what calls to *you*.

Think works of literature, works of anything as keys. Tools with which to open yourself and to open paths for trailing. Crack open encounter.

Archives as a foresting of keys.

Archivist as keeper, holder of keys.

Or say one who begins to glean and suggests toward their location. Not the guardian of all access; think instead one who may suggest.

You never knew there were so many locks until you deep began your seeking. Never saw the doors down the passages you walked.[17] Unveiling, revealing. Why else continue on?

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[17] T.S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets*: "Footfalls echo in the memory / Down the passage which we did not take / Towards the door we never opened / Into the rose-garden. My words echo / Thus, in your mind." (117) William Faulkner, *Sanctuary*: "[T]hinking of a gentle dark wind blowing in the long corridors of sleep [...]." (221)

Each door addition to an archive all your own.

When you see, will you venture?

None of these doors yield anything if you will not walk through. Your hand required to turn the key. Your being required to walk through and receive. What you do, how you take and move out from these encounters is your business. Is your living.

principle of connection: engagement of yourself with what you face.

What I mean is I may set forth pieces in an archive. May even direct you one way or another. But what strikes key is your engagement. I alone[18] cannot build you. I can only offer pieces.

It would be sacrilege to shape you through my thinking.

As it is blasphemy to bend me to your mold.

(thus do i resist your impress your pieces, perhaps in measures edging on extreme,

but one must fight, and the bounds of these engagements are oft not fully traced.)

I have collected pieces. For years amounting to the whole of my life. Mostly words and their impress, as I've little memory for anything else; events slip through haze as do people as does placement. But words light up my graying world, give direction to my being. It is words alone[19] that alter the pattern of graying, words that bring structure and permit for intricacy.

I write these words those words. Everywhere. Paper and pages in margins connected, on walls at times into computers thrown into the web and onto my skin, of course my skin.

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[18] Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*: "He alone had been spared. / (Pause.) / Forgotten." (44)
Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*: "*The drama's done. why then here does any one step forth?—Because one did survive the wreck.*" (427)

[19] is that exaggerating it? say words primarily.

Archives at all turns, if you like. And I remember. And words, they work further down into my being until some phrases constitute my very breathing.

...This... I can't write this, I can't *be* this – what I am, whatever I am – without working through the placement of words in space.

Some words give me anchor, and at once serve as ever-active nodes for prompting exploration. To hold and to give way, to hold and to explode/cry for further seeking; those are I find the best of encounters. Those the most vital of words. Those most I seek.

a reminder: words are not stability

nothing is stability.

the world as hold it stands on shatters and you i say you cannot hold it as yourself comes composed of shivering pieces antagonizing one another as you are composed all of these contradictings

but never fear

but never mind

volatility of pieces equates not to worldly end.

only a jarring of systems

of superiority.

how do words, how do ideas fit fracture and to mirror your conception of the world?

use words as they are given – lessons, grammar books, rules pulled slap against the wrist – so long as must or feels aright. but there is no insistence on correctness or an evergreen an ever-clean communication

is it,

would it be, chaos?

not for min(d)e to know.

but even amid whirlwind there are other groundings of stability.

matter is of sorting through. of knowing where to find your feet.

Grounding a construct, granted, of difficulty. And even when grounding, proceed with sky, with air towering in mind. Build with an idea of movement through time. Of creating something that will carry through, something that will be perceived by those further down the line. By yourself after passing through time. Knowing that how you reach is upward. And knowing that in world of mind-conceptions, construct may be revised along the way in sudden, radical shiftings. (Thank wonders that in abstract, rules of physics rules of force of structure from the tangible world need not apply.)

To build, must have materials with which to construct, may employ suggestions of formation. Materials for foundation vary, encompass physical and theoretical, what you feel and what you are told. Take choice among these to set forth.

For foundation here, think "found" as establish, but found also connected to a recovery, a re-discovery, revelation of something that had been hidden, lost, or otherwise covered. Which is to say that foundation may occur and perhaps occurs often by repurposing and re-envisioning words, ideas, images from the past. Revising place and space to create room for a mode of being for yourself.

what we create becomes our history

what we strive to stake as truth

(call as relics of our own)

all of it as crafted.

what can you tell me that sings much deeper?

what can you say to resound from inside?

But some pieces stand with the look of ready-made foundation. There is a word in the language:[20] precedents. We must have and we do have precedents. Those from whom we may glean information and direction, though not precise directive. (There is, you dig, a difference.)

What becomes a worry is THE IMPOSITION OF SOLID CERTAINTY. What is called authority, word built on the idea of author, one who creates, one who – often – is seen as having ownership, which must in some way be negotiated. Ownership matter of debate. You want to think further more specific on the life and death of author, see Barthes and friends. (Of course I encourage this. Always seek outward, always more mining.)

For purposes at hand, say author matters in the rooting, the consideration, begs thought in the contemplating and revisiting. Sense of authority a helpful at times necessary exigency that turns swift to cramping, turns tyrant rather than guides.[21] Limits promote creativity but sometimes limits prevent moving, seeing beyond impositions. Matter of balance.[22]

Could – you *could* – see yourself surrounded by the voices of authority, the words passed down words gleaned from books words gleaned from spoken voices. These words say

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[20] well, no, not 'the'… say rather 'a language,' the language i'm riffing with here, but only one of many ways that sound is large-scale structured into meaning. English as the language i am concerned here with engaging, this the language i occupy myself with breaking.

[21] suggestion here that guidance comes tied with aiding, a working with or suggesting to as opposed to any strident domination.

[22] a question to be had here: is it best to have that pressure so that enterprising minds must feel and *fight* that structure, or is there strength enough in pursuing across open roads, still seeking still pushing through the now-limits of human comprehension? my money's on the latter, as my biased phrasing must suggest.

something these voices lived something, and the etchings of their perceptions may inform revitalize. May guide in their own way. If you ask them. If you open them.

But to take these shelves as towers of authority misguides your own live mind. Misdoes the world in its manifold shiftings. Words stand strong, words valuable in the potentials that they conjure, but words ought never be granted (again, who does the granting? consider your own responsibility – as I must reflect on my own – consider your use of and belief in these, any words) position of truth. Not in full. Not in final.

There is no strict authority.[23] No one to hold you right or wrong in what has been said/done.

Take your sources, what you will. What calls you.

Once occurrence has done its part, what waits is for we to take our stride. To use. If we would have it. To take being, was-being, out of time. Time is, you understand, no stopping block. Time denies us nothing finally.[24] So that we use and bend old authority, so that we new-create our own. Embrace fluidity. Embrace what could be(come).

assertion: That we need no certain reason why, though always we must ask.

assertion: That solidity, held too long, is ending.

(this assertion i am less certain, but for the now-place stands.)

There is use in the words there is aid in the words. There are warnings, alightings, there's spark in these words. And I need them you I think may need them but to need is not to venerate; necessity bears questions of its own.

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[23] Charles Olson, 'Maximus to Gloucester, Letter 27 [withheld]': "There is no strict personal order / for my inheritance." (184, ll. 33-4)

[24] feel that this holds the ring of words recalled, those whose and wherefrom i cannot say. sometimes connections slip my minding, only to return months, years later.

I take as a task: destabilization.

Past gains certainty only in arranging. Appearance of authority standing only so far as we give it credence. There are things we cannot deny. Pieces of history that have marked our beings have marked others.[25] Beyond that – and in the reading even of that – we create.

(Re-create.)

Somewhere down within beneath the archives there is, must be foundation. I understand that. But what that is, how composed or what of…

It occurs that much of what we call authority stands visioned as ruins. Occurs that there is veneration of ruins. That order itself often thrives on perception of ruins, reading words from before, the ruins or ideas of hands that once gripped pens, voices that once expressed. These static-stultified ideas held to premium of truth. Order dependent on navigating and properly manipulating ruins.

Ruins then a word an idea for shatter and re-understanding, shaking freshly through our vision.

Talk about the traces of what was, venerated by those requiring authority. What we see of a past time past views and how we read their standing. Why see past in present. What we may do (without).

ruin: remains of what had been. traces left of a was-being.

Ruins as physical or ruins as ideas, as words encountered from past's shake-down.

On one hand as physical being of the archive, building half-deserted overrun by fall of dust. Say rather collecting of dust, accruing up rather than falling down. Dust as it

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[25] Naomi Wallace, *One Flea Spare*: "Kabe once said to me, 'Our lives are just a splash of water on a stone. Nothing more.' […] Then I am the stone on which they fell. And they have marked me." (74)

approaches dust as it suspends in half-light dust as it settles onto floor to binding to the surface of my skin. *(it whispers and I heed./ i know the sound of dust.)* People the air of outdoors the warming of sun forgot. The strain placed on eyes.

Found in different forms and formed through different mediums, so that we find myriad varieties of ruin. Of architecture, see columns and eroded moss-worn stone, see crumbled brick and broken window. Of rock formations worn by wind and rain, or forests that once stood. Of words. Ideas. Think words on pages as ruins of people who once spoke and stood, think traces of ink as ruins of ideas once flung new-born.

what is, what is the ruin of knowledge? and how do we renew?

questions to be lingered.

Past-born pieces stand; how will you vision them, how embrace their presence?

Ruins need not come only in stagnation. Hold life as vibrant as that of the archive, if only we'll see it. Because what ruins come composed of is brimmed with potential. Because nothing that remains is without life.

ruin: process of falling of crumbling.

That what ruin suggests is an occurring of change. The events the wearings-away that change a was to present is.

That ruin is active as well as something perceived in stillness.

Could say an archive is composed of pieces fallen into ruin. Could say that severed from context, these pieces from was have come to stand as ruins of their own, signs/symbols for what has been. As if archives hold the traces of what has been and not the has been itself. Or both. Existence of solidity viewed en-layered with this motion.

So ruin stands as well as something whole.[26] Not only pieces of what was, but an existence that can be taken in present form.

ruin: something we may encounter and with which we might deal.

Ruins may be found. Ruins may be studied. Ruins may be placed in time, identified as a part of what was (this includes categorization, filing off under a heading for easier identification and use). Ruins may be – take the word as you see it, note it as unstable – restored.[27] And in some way, ruins may be destroyed.

What comes of the ruin must be touched by the terms of my minding, of what has gone into my being and still lingers coiling down. Because there is mirror even in the dim/oblique of stones, its perception telling on the contents of our eyes.

And so ask yourself how ruins come to mean. Who places content on their being who asks that they be read as part of something we no longer see. Confluence of present desires and knowledge of tales and details, data passed from time's pass. How meanings come to connect with ruins. How any meaning here surfaces and how we settle on some agreed-upon reading, how one reading comes to dominance and seem as truth, final truth, only being (worrisome, i am/ i find this notion worrisome).

alternate identity of the archivist: ruin-reader, reader of ruins.

one who see explores who reconstructs and reimagines ruins.

and reader of those who read ruins, and how.

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[26] Brian Friel, *Faith Healer*: "[B]ecause I knew that for those few hours I had become whole in myself, and perfect in myself [...]." (333)

[27] can it ever be what once it was? can you catch the original 'it' (or would that include many an it?) of the ruin? and a question to accompany: does reading involve a breed of restoration?

memory knowledge shaping broken pieces; how do we draw life, vitality, lessons from pieces that seem in shatters. ((and how, too, restore repair revision minds, visions that have fallen into or feel themselves to be in ruin?))

That ruin suggests and we respond, or that we bring suggestions to bear on its form.

How bring others into your held reading of a ruin?

Think ruins in association with perception and – as related concept – with revision. Can place ruins along a line of development:

ITEM/IDEA + time/distance (crumbling) + perception = RUIN

Ruin cannot occur without change. As ruin cannot be held without outside perspective.

Ruin without contact of perception without encounter collects dust and seems to stagnate.

Think dust as the sediment of all around, sign of world shedding its traces as it passes pieces by. So dust is sign and trace of time – we take it – the measuring of years.

And dust falls where we – we the ones who walk, the ones with mind to roam and capacity to impact-impress – have failed to touch. If we seek its sign, observe with an eye to the unexplored, dust asks a reawakening of awareness, a call for exploration and reuse. In what appears most time-caught, something waits beneath to be thus rediscovered. Just blow at it, just brush a hand, and watch time's fallout pass away.

See the sight of ruin.

And make of that what you will.

Disuse is not forever.

<u>ruin</u>: denoting an absence. change from something that was whole.

Ruin implies was, was-being, specificity of purpose and place.

Something having been altered. Something having been broken down.

DISINTEGRATION. How and why integrity was broken. What stood to be crumbled in the first place.

First place. Origin.[28] As if… ('*swa heo no wære*')[29]

But it *has* always been. Somewhere, in pieces that re-form in pieces that transform yes alteration over time into another entity, but everything holds traces. "As if it had never been" but at the same time laying claim to presence undenied.

Implying that integrity stood to begin with. Implying that what stands now is something having been changed; you-that-I as objects having passed through transformation. So that what falls apart carries the pieces[30] of its having been, the solidity it fell from. This brush of dust once a stone chapel, this the crumble of a page and ink, words that were.

(something to consider: books could go on forever if they knew themselves as dust. same with us. same with anything. we touch and pass along, are passed along unending.)

So standing anywhere lungs heads visionings come clogged with miniscule fragments of time- and being-was. Breathe inward and you've taken more than yourself, integration of old pieces.

And here I stand[31]

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[28] feeling echoes here of Charles Olson and *Call Me Ishmael*, his talk of space and seeking back to roots.

[29] anonymous, 'The Wanderer' (156; ll. 96). translation by Robert Diamond: "as (if) it had never been!" (157)

[30] William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*: "You carry the symbol of your frustration into eternity. Then the wings are bigger Father said only who can play a harp." (104)

[31] Robert Duncan, "The Structure of Rime VII": "And I stand, stranger to tranquility because I am enamourd of song […]." (20)

choking on the words and all they mean disintegration theirs and mine dust layered in the throat and i i if i would could scrape away accumulation find beneath the the want to feel to be—

Nothing or dust. Nothing and dust. This dust is consumption, is unstoppable oncoming. Bringer of burial. Bringer of disintegration, slow and steady dissolution.

Two sides, fifty sides to it: threat of burial by dust[32] and also wonder of contact with this fallout and what may be done with it. Also recollection, taking in. Can learn to breathe with it, find your speech from it. How to live amid the world. How to live with an awareness of all that has been and all that now occurs around you. So many fractures so many pieces, so much dust to give you guiding.

Archival. All of it archival.

Re-construction changes and does not change the ruin, creates something anew under its influence.

the ruin remains under what has been built. (and renews?)

((the ruin of your mind is another matter.

the ruin of my own, made evident through all.))

call it

falling apart from itself. what i was held integrity. what i am lacks. has lacked from the moment of its being which is to say its breaking.

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[32] how have i note yet noted it? T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*: "I will show you fear in a handful of dust" (30, ll. 38) though what the province here of fear may be, i do not claim clear.

question: what has been gained in its place?[33]

REMNANTS. what RESIDES (to remain besides… with what/ with)

where my remains, remnants reside

i am/as the remnant of my was-being

the wraith of what i might have been

my wishing was, you understand, always called over-reaching.

(‘*and see my murmuring bones*’)[34]

what i mean is we withstand dust. and we i think may learn from it.

myself composed of dust and memory, words and ruin.

And this, too, this project at hand the pondering as a work of reconstruction revitalized by dust. From one turn of seeing.

What it is my memory turns to, I attempt to share, to offer for your own forwarding.

I here owe many debts. To authors whose dust has worked its way into my veins (the footnotes tell a tale of this), to those who have staggered my vision and permitted me to better clasp my own, those who showed what freedom of form can offer and be. To Howe and Olson I do, I think, here owe especial debts, gratitude. *Call Me Ishmael*, where first I glimpsed potential in the shaping of words the shaping or criticism the potential for

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[33] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*: “A geological placation, a storm do not destroy—or at least they do not destroy *directly*; they merely modify the distribution of masses of beings. There is no *less* after the storm before. There is something *else*.” (39)

[34] William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (80). want to talk about words that are central, want to talk about phrasings that formed, look to Faulkner, rhythms and word-shifts of Quentin’s section. running through my veins always.

blending commentary poetry prose pieces of history. *My Emily Dickinson* carrying this further still.[35]

What I am saying is that my being now is composed of these, my pieces. Is composed of more than can be contained in an accounting of years. That this project here project is a product of my whole being, a collection long come in the making. And fulfillment of a visioning begun years ago.

So here, something I have shaped from these – these, with so many untold pieces – and how. Matter at hand as evidence of their influence, taken to a particular/loose shaping, some construction called my own.

I say that mode of shaping comes as part of what you are, how your self expresses.

> how your hands crawled across the space of page how their crawling allows through the years and what what the relationship to the paper and your movement across and into. how to capture pieces of yourself.
>
> (nobody creates my archive like i do. kind of the point. a point. sharpen, stake it through.)

What I am talking what writing here is matter of this self-expression, self-defining. How I have formed and how I see myself is bound within this… call it a project. Projection/ of my being, my self-seeing. So a little more transparency, why not.

What I speak of here is my self-calling. What I search is how I sound.

I have designations I have names so long as I claim them for myself. I defy names so long as I bear and recognize these oppositions. Catch me in a name, you cannot.

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[35] both encountered in the space of a particular course, Wayne State University, fall of 2011. 19th-century American Literature (ENG 7042) with Dr. Kathryne Lindberg.

(why no name ever suits strong. why even a changing of name would not solve.

the best you can do for me is misspell misspeak is shift what i am called

this is no jest.)

i'm storming here

evasive here

enactor of my splintered self.

For indeed my existence is to shatter. Myself and others. Ideas. So of course i am at odds with stability. Of course my belief[36] is not firm. Of course I seek uncertainty.

What am I to do with this? Question of how to find a role to fit one's inclinations of expression. Archivist adrift and seeking anchor.

I am, it is admitted, an intellectual vagrant, unable or unwilling to remain in place and so I venture wander yet remain to be uncaptured

I am not deep in thinking or at heart prefer not that single-visioned dive.

Deep the mind that dares the trench, but I will rather take my 'xpending

ocean-wise, across and not into *hron-rad*,[37] dive drift below break surface travel

far afield as

space not found in one direction

and stands much to be explored

(note that i do not say "claimed" will not give "claimed." what is it you

say of us? the world cannot be claimed. the mind cannot be claimed.

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[36] 'my belief,' as if it were a single body. in some view, perhaps, it seems so.

[37] anonymous, *Beowulf*: "[O]ðþæt hie æghwylc ðara ymb-sittendra / ofer hron-rade hyran scolde, / gomban gyldan." (48; ll. 9-11)

though that is what, exactly what, we aim so oft to do.)

I never was the archivist, except within my mind.

I always was the archivist, as sovereignty of mind.

Archivist itself has been an identity in formation, comes as evolution of an earlier expression, one that first found solidity of outline in Melville's sub-sub-librarian. The one who hides retiring among shelves, shrinking against light cringing mild against the sound of voices, eager to find and eager to share the gathering of years pulled from shelves removed from world. (Desire here: be separate from exterior existence. Be distant from the raucous world.) Pride in collecting, arranging, in knowing. Wan and unassuming, recognizing that others overhead exert control only as illusion and that books hold reasons books hold joys hold words to spark and save the brain, what remnants of the self remain. These phrasings speak with a negative tilt, but notion of the sub-sub-librarian held life and drive, as well. Became a danger only in the totality of its encompassing. Became a danger only in that it began to stifle, half-accomplished a drowning.

(So came to be as words and identity as mockery in which the self looked down on self, self-flagellation self-subjugation one more means of screaming end-ness, duck your head avert your eyes 'i am collector not creator i am one who comes who dwells secondary one who rarely[38] is'; i, as afterthought.[39] Re-visioning occurred, thank the stars.)

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[38] a word, what do we make of this word? something occasional. something valuable for its singleness. again, i encourage examination of, further thinking on each word, each use.

[39] a point on which to be sidetracked for hours: how to count an afterthought, whether a thought that follows presence or a presence warranting no thought, something occurring only in the wake of a thought, and who then knows and who then sees?

Transformation of this notion came with time's recent passing. How not to see your own work – whatever that may mean – as sidebar. How see value in the ventures that catch this interest. How to see the life in preservation. So there is difference between a sub-sub-librarian and an archivist. Difference in breathing. In engagement of air.[40]

There is creation in preservation, creation in passing along. In this motion is a transformation; question stands of how far take and range this transformation. How strong imprint the stamp of your own.

It's a way of viewing what it is you do, how aware.

So that from what seemed ineffectual what seemed lacking resonance came a visioning unsuspected and unhoped-for,[41] standing on and for its own. For archivist is far from d(r)ying. These archives breed a strange, shocked, wild life.[42]

And I am, I am, I can be.

See the world in words. Desire to express through these. So ask yourself, where can you go to play with words. How learn their use and workings, how find the slippage and their freedom?

Have these impulses, impressions of self.

Have these scraps-images-phrases culled from 'cross the years.

Feel a call to impress, feel a call of voice.

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[40] demonstration here – sub-sub-librarian to archivist – of a potential for change. perhaps a necessity of change. to show to tell that much may alter, perception of one's own identity included.

[41] "unhopped-for" would sound better (less sense, good!), give a lively little jump-spark.

[42] feel myself evoking of coming into line here with Susan Howe in *My Emily Dickinson*, such talk of wilderness and life beyond enclosures.

There are ways of writing yourself amid the world. Putting out your pieces to expression, to such living archives. Think of it as playing in multi-modes with different tools. (Play and necessity here bound, and why should the most dire speaking outward not be thought a sort of play, voicing outward engagement of mind?)

a place for playing: scraps of paper.

Write yourself in space, conversing with pieces in mind, drawing ideas into order. Nothing more natural. Nothing more natural than to spill to spell myself in words and falling.

Becomes as well a way that I present myself in absentia, how you may encounter me on paper; how you do encounter me here, now (your now, not my own). With this brushed in mind, I create my being out of pen-strokes.

What might others see of the strokes thus created? Not perhaps the key question while creating, but I wish I could wish I could see how these wordings run colors through your mind.

a place for playing: everyday conversation.

How words weave in the air, how express ideas through speech with anyone, everyone. How you find yourself in the ways you encounter with these drift-thrown words.

a place for playing: e-mail. blogs. internet-otherwise.

Freeing the shape of expressing. Restructuring, renewed envisioning of speech. How to communicate without gestures, without inflections of speech? Color, shift your words. Drop letters. Mirror patterns of speaking. As with voice, can play it as you go along, to formal to casual to mirroring or riffing on another.

Take this a step out, back from canvas on which to speak, move to selected spaces in which you may maneuver to develop and share your visioning. So

a place for playing: education in an institution.

Choose your own adventure, which is to say major, focus. Self-weave within bounds, amidst the guide of others. Create your knowing from a gathering of classes of lists for reading of given assignments. Can seem stultification or can seem freeing. Often, both. Learn how to play by and to work against rules.

Such education valued in what you draw from it. Not a necessary step, could say, but one that I have taken and so one that I include.

And my case, began to trace my expression through these assignments through papers and my own outside exploring. Began to glean where my mind desired expression how it clicked what urged it into gear. Found fascination browsing libraries browsing books collecting information and images in mind and using these to give grounds and form for ideas swimming through my head. It was a start. It was a development. Focus on literature, on history, how to study what past has given us what writers have left for our reading. Analyze, expand your eyes.[43]

Reached a point at which study of literature in a strictly academic sense cried restrictive. Left too much inaccessible. Not to say such route of study and engagement doesn't serve for and enliven many; only that my own mind didn't click it right. Say I needed other grounds for encounter, other ways of looking and setting it outward.

So. Another step and

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[43] James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "*Pull out his eyes, / Apologise, / Apologise, / Pull out his eyes*." (20)

a place for playing: theater.

Say addition of bodies in motion necessity of engagement of others in collaboration engagement of audience. Increased necessity, awareness of encountering manifold views, never a moment to sit easy and never a wishing to rest. What can be done with spoken voice what can be done with presentation of lighting and structures of scenery, how to further enhance encounters or lay bare ideas images before perception, how further complex and guide encounters for experience. Further tools for visioning outward, what is possible, what must be accounted for and what can never be held predictable.

Share with those around, with audience and with others involved with the production. Give the gift of broken words and complexity of living breathing being, expose the deep-wound fractures. That multiplicity occurs on all turns of existence. Shake what seems to show. Suggestion and exposure of a realm of possibilities that might not be so swiftly overlooked.

Complexity of vision, I say. Layers of experience encountered at a glance. And through theater, increase awareness of changeability, of the unfixed and our attempts to structure in the face of this.

Theater itself offers access to unbound forms and sprawling ranges of thought, of perspective, of ways of using movement using history using personal impress. Of fostering and welcoming connections. In theater, I found there was much to be drawn together (much to be witnessed, much to grow reaction), and the rules for this drawing stood

unfixed. Here was an area in which exploration could expand. Here was an area in which free flying might occur.

A matter was to find a way of placing myself with theater and drawing from its electric potential. To find a theatrical mode – unstill and resistant to capture – best suited for expressing archival instincts, for issuing challenges and finding untold ways to release voice and unveil potential in words, ideas, images.

So we come upon the meeting-place of theater and archival impulse.

So come to this practice of, this pursuit called dramaturgy.

Attraction of dramaturgy was its openness. Conducive to a playful mind. That there seemed no strict defining of it caught my interest; there were sketched structures, basic guidelines – suggested restrictions that could and can aid in achieving creation – but mostly there was space to venture.

What pieces will you gather, how shape them for this instance? Pieces of the equation to be worked out, the solutions themselves uncertain and answers could be anywhere. But this is all getting ahead of myself, because here, wait! Let's define a dramaturg! The dramaturg. *The*. Dramaturg.

DRAMATURG: One who drams. [44]

One who turgs.

One who drums up, dredges (note to please pronounce as 'dregs') up[45] information.

Words put onto paper. Words put into speaking.

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[44] "yes please i would like one dram of turg." "are you sure you won't take two?" "oh, no. two drams is no longer fashionable in the *best* circles." ask Wilde about that one.

One who speaks when called upon and, at chosen times, when not.

One who holds keys to the archive of a production. On paper in files in saved scripts in memory.

Wow that sure was a crack job we just did. Now jumble all of that, mix it around, toss a few words out and shove a few words in, and you'll still have a definition for a dramaturg(y). That's where the magic shines through. Come to see we're wizards sea-witches drudges and sparks electric all bound into one. In here ye will find an identity built of shifts and exploration. It's a free ride with instability guaranteed, no limits! No endpoints! No definition!

addendum: a dramaturg is not an egg.

(or is that really true? what could un-turg an egg?)

Ought to be said that there comes a difference between the title and the action. Or such a division is at times perceived.[46] Dramaturgs as those geared particularly toward responsibility involving the above (and what else, whatever else). But along with those designated specifically as dramaturgs, there are those – one might hope many those-es – who run the thought-lines without the specific[47] title. As Michael Lupu has put it essay-wise, "many theater professionals can function—and actually do function—in the very heart

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[45] oh wow, but what about down? *is* it more a lifting, and to what? to why?

[46] Michael Lupu: "I find it important to distinguish between the prevailing organizational practices set in place by various theaters that have dramaturgs on staff and the essence of the creative and critical activity called *dramaturgy*. [...] Dramaturgy can never exist as an autonomous sphere, and to adopt a self-important posture seems detrimental to its very nature." (111)

[47] well... specific non-specific.

of what is called dramaturgy."[48] So whether you call yourself or are called a DRAMATURG[49] or not, you may still set forth the dramaturgical action. Say yourself a member of a dramaturgical task force.

So…

How to Do a Dramaturgy

step one: look.

step two: think.

Congratulations; you're a dramaturg!

Oh no, oh no, please overlook my moste reductive, merie iest! Though the basic idea is – to my figuration – sound. And the idea, I tell you, is that solidity in this defining is difficult to find *and* is in fact not to be desired. The idea is that we keep a sense of irregularity about ourselves and give certainty the slip.

Which takes us to step three of doing a dramaturgy: Evade.

Always, always evade. Helps keep the production lively. Helps keep the ground uncertain.[50]

Still, people ask for definition. Beg for definition.[51] Where do you locate yourself if you lack definition? How explain yourself to others, how fit into a production team where

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[48] 'There Is Clamor in the Air' (112). Lupu further discusses the difference here, pointing out the vitality of dramaturgy as practice, though dramaturgs as figures may easily be absent.

[49] capslock optional, but strongly recommended.

[50] Antonin Artaud, 'No More Masterpieces,': *"We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theatre has been created to teach us that first of all."* (79)

[51] speaking so general here it hurts. understand, i understand that you may stand as exception or that maybe currents shift and i have been misguided. i speak from what i can tell and from what i have heard, living as i do now in Iowa previously in Michigan Maryland Minnesota California.

details will be desired, a relationship must be – so said – established? To a certain extent, you may be lost, lacking definition.

Then, too, come practicalities of real-world expectations, navigational techniques. So for instance we must have job descriptions. Must account for that world without, how to secure a place for expressing yourself. One way or some other. Might be said that in most cases, to become a dramaturg in the theater, it is necessary to present the self with a certain title, equipped with particular skills and experiences. To take place as someone who sees hole and wholes alike, as someone who will shatter who will question, must often first adhere to certain expectations. Find your way to questioning via boundaries.

What this creates is disjunction. Asks that we bind ideal or wish with tired details. Asks that we threaten the vitality of this position that depends so much on shifting. I make my home in this my unstill definition. Giving it to others, allowing them to place hands place shaping on it, begins to give disturbance. Threat of becoming ensnared, finding self caught in how your being is told to stand.

So where draw a line between clarity's sake and free reign for exploration. When do you allow yourself to chain yourself, and how will you prepare escape routes, how keep from becoming trapped?[52]

How defy some final placing, how enthuse those around for defiance?

In the ideal, the dramaturg defines and is defined always defining in motion, creating the role with every step and keystroke, every breath taken during and outside of rehearsal. (Don't think – I don't think – you can leave the role as separate. Dramaturgy exists without

[52] could say this trammeling is one of the revitalizing challenges, as well. Find your wings clipped, seek ways of finding flight through other modes no less vital no less driven by your blood and being.

THE dramaturg, but once that dramaturgical awareness takes hold, can't leave it at rest or in silence. Not necessarily that it binds you, but that it lingers with your awareness, always at least in background.) So that what the dramaturg is changes, enhances by the moment and in every move.

What we might talk is potential functions behind title. What I am at one time or another by the way I am at one time or another.[53] Ways dramaturgy fits into theater-ing.

Take the following as selections from a potentially near-infinite list. Of course.

-**Reading plays**. Teach yourself to read as the play asks as the production asks. Encountering a script a plan with or without anticipation of a particular production. (Listed first here though not necessarily the first step, so far as firsts can be measured.) Use base-knowledge of established forms, if you like (ye olde authority), see how the work at hand perhaps plays off of genre conventions how utilizes well-worn characters and (oh the word) tropes, but tilt also to the play's own voice, how it pulls a fast one and defies rules, how it scorns the very idea of rules and exists apart from expectation. That is, find the voice that guides its maneuverings, find the heart that guides the forming of this voice (the voice comes after navigating rules after navigating exigencies; the heart holds its deeper direction).

-**Text-interrogation**. Interacting with the page presentation.

While or following reading, seek ways to lead yourself through, make your own sense out of this form. Trace ways of drawing from its content, pulling meaning where and as it strikes you most.

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[53] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*: "Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be." (377; ll. 43-4)

As a part of this, think physical engagement with text on paper. Marking plays. Adding marginalia, notes to cross-reference connections blossoming in mind. Note your noting of words that glow, words that form a chorus. Themes, if you can and care to use that word. Fluctuation of voice.

> I work in colors. Highlighters. Pens. Each script become a lightshow, almost, vari-colored mapping of its own. I've rarely written down the key. Reference points instinctual.

Noting and labeling potential (NOT FINAL, not usually) sections, suggested divisions. How a play falls beyond scene-splits into phases into breaths into half-beats. How shared images bind parts of the script. How you feel the living of the play.

Not ordering the play per say but seeking out an incarnation, variation of its order. Craft here possibility set forth.

-**Research**. Book-diving, article-diving, video-/music-/everything-diving.

Searching the archives, if you will, and the possibilities spread nearly endless. Thank the library. Thank the internet. Thank the minds and memories buzzing around you or available via phone. Research roams as far as you may please.

Take it intuitive. Grab hold of various connections, pieces that catch your eye or mind. What you pursue is your purpose/province. World as open for your seeking. A matter of how you engage it.

Know that w seeking in this manner, none of this none of any thing is yours alone. Engage as you will, but keep awareness of a fuller picture, where pieces fit and how, for whom. Where they were torn from, what traces of peoples' lives they bear with their being. Whose

life they may have impacted and may impact in their recurrence or re-visioning. Even pieces that seem driest have lived and may yet exist somewhere bright with life. Information holds the traces of living; take care not to crush these. Take care not to heedlessly destroy. Recall you that there is responsibility. Of, to awareness. With research, you are handling live wires.

-**(Re)Framing**. Creating guidance for encounters with and consumption of words. How to display this play for further inspection. Make that exploration. A help, a method for looking forward. Looking downward-inward. Sometimes for the further rearranging and discovery of the text itself. Archiving as you go along.

How to take and re-present relevant information. Relevant on the surface. Relevant sensed inwardly, as instinct. "Relevant," that is, being what resonates in whatever sense you grasp. Don't let solid reason get in the way of a good pursuit.

All (or much) to be sorted and filed into pieces of information for digestion – see for instance glossaries,[54] timelines, program articles – tied to context that may aid in some sort of comprehension. Give for actors directors audience members students, any who might ask for encountering the play. Each presentation framed by another set and sense of words. Another way of shaping information, type, and images in space. Picked out and pulled into the world beyond the play, to start to draw the web that sometimes seems elusive.

This part of the archive helps to show solidity. Helps lay firmer ground, while at once offering tools for shattering what stands. Pieces those receiving may take as far as they can and please. Pieces they may use in building their own creation, own perceiving.

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[54] glossaries face a sorry reputation, which seems a sadness to lament. glossaries may be invaluable if aptly shaped, their words and supposed definitions carefully crafted to fit the play and its tones.

As in an archive, it is choice. Dramaturg's choice in selecting materials and in working their arrangement, but it is you who must meet the collecting. So It is only you and your moving that can make something of, from it.

-**Receive. Respond.** During rehearsals, meetings, anywhere where signals may be gleaned. One brings and bears the other; response follows reception even in silence. Reception of bodies and spaces in performance, of rehearsal (as a dramaturg I ask how your emotions read, how every angle of your body suggests). Reception of world currents, state and needs of the community that will receive the performance. Reception also as reading voices of those working in concert to craft a production. Keeping an ear to the voice of the forming of the production in its whole.

So reception as another form of reading what is spoken and what remains unseen, grasping gaps and connections alike. Sensing a piece's shape as it unfolds in mind, interrogating the shape thus formed to see what stands and what may be missing, yet to find.

So that you attend rehearsals, meetings, performances and are an ear, navigating with what you know and what you feel, suspect. Are a voice in concert with others, and a voice clashing when needed to expose tension where it curls. Knowing (which is to say feeling) when and when not to speak, knowing when to give space and when give heed with weighted silence.

Think here Robert Duncan, "Responsibility is to keep / The ability to respond."[55] Be attuned always to possible changes, to what speaks beneath the surface and to how the surface may be read. Awareness here as always of multiplicity.

-**Unite/Collect**. Dramaturg as one who draws together.

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[55] "The Law I Love is Major Mover" (ll. 13-4)

Somebody must bind and somebody must bend (how easily those words morph one into the other), and if you're one maneuvering 'mid in-betweens, this likely falls within your sphere of action. A matter of linking: find and craft ties that prove absent.

(all swerving by the moment

all to the tune of our own seeking heads)

So learn to navigate space. Of conversation of production in formation. Come to feel its geography, come to find shifting methods of maneuvering. Only by recognizing the landscape in formation can you help to shape its structure.

-**Clock**. Keep track of time's ticking during progression of process.

Think process as a fine duration, the description of a going, but one tied to strictness of a time-bound production calendar.

The duration for structuring archives during production, then, is limited. Dramaturg as one to stand half anchored in archive's uncertain ticking half caught up in pressure-clicked countdown. Time management a skill that must early be developed. Or at least must hold an apprehension of time, vision of how to work with its overlap.

A question of how to balance the expanse with compression. How to create given minimal duration. The world our span of life our resources require action in time and small time, at that.

Time-pressity the mother of invention. Do you believe it?

- **Transcription.** Record words and ideas pulled from the breath of production.

Catching hold of input from those involved in creation. Giving form to the ephemeral, not to be used as solid evidence solid return solid basis for moving forward, but to have as

reminder. To keep as record. To maintain in case sparks may be gathered. What was said may later have transformative effect. Words spoken early in a process may hold seed-ideas (at times we tend prophetic, speaking unaware predictions of what it is will come) that will resound only in revisiting. We forget what we say; words returning to excite or haunt us may open pieces not expected. Can trace creation to pieces of its generation (to an extent, uncertain and with five grains of salt), but generation appears as nothing in its moment.

-**Retain. Revisit.** Remember what strikes you. Hold records of the rest. Bring it back as urging calls.

Hold collection of the production's memory in formation. Be a keeper of what has been noted what has been said. No telling what may ask to be revisited, revitalized. And amidst the wild-shifting process of creation, must have someone to keep hold, ascertain that certain fragments are not lost to whirlwind.

To points that were touched on and surface-level forgotten. Images that when recalled may help to ground and to draw connections anew. This is, think it, pulling pieces from the archive for display.

Think a dramaturg is part prophetic, or say Janus, looking forward looking back. Task is to be everywhere, at least at first and then on call, to lose the strictness of time the impress of now's movement and gaze upon the whole. Move back through days, loose from memory, as if on first encounter. How does this play stand and fit with all that has occurred?

So find dramaturg as part curator. Of ideas born long before this production. Of ideas sparkled in early stages. Of word order, structure, of intent. Dramaturg as archivist in a broad sense, archivist of written word and images of stage pictures of conversations and

onward. A keeper of thoughts of words of collecting as production moves along and process ticks occurrence.

Though of course the dramaturg's is no final record. No one archive full expresses or communicates a play. No one archive (in this confined sense) holds a single play. So that here as elsewhere, cannot hold any archive as final. Which is why archives must be open, fluid in their way. Never fixed, never finally supposing.

So find dramaturgs shaping an eternally-transforming archive of each play.

And while crafting this archive in its unstillness, while carrying through perhaps all functions as a dramaturg, a tool to hold dear to hold key is found in

QUESTIONING.

proposition (not so rare): to dramaturg is to question.

every step along the way.

Interrogation of words ideas practices. Draw focus to multiplicities and offer these as welcome propulsions, aidful rather than threatening, ways of reaching self and reaching others and enhancing always enhancing resonance of the production. Conjure questions to crack open and into present explorations and deepen engagement. Conjure questions to unsettle the archive in its very formation, keep the ground uncertain. To demand that it remain so.

What a dramaturg can do is delay conclusions

confound established vision.

So question. So engage in pursuit. Avoid final hang-ups of tight laws, boundaries. Awareness of outward is not strict-bound to its rules. Help others to break out think

outward. Help yourself to do the same.

A goal is to free, but flight at times requires foundation. And creation may depend on firmness of ground for beginning. (Back to that idea again, applicable as when crafting any other archive.) Especially when multiple creators are involved and scattered visions must be brought to binding, some sense of common ground can aid. There is a way of urging others into free-float that first grounds with specificity. A question is how to balance this control with free-float and the roaming space necessary for creating. How much base how much context is necessary to give space for pursuing the unknown and undefined.

And a question is what pieces may be used for setting base.

In the realm of vocabularies offered within the practice of theater, we have tools for talking and approaching pieces, works. Ideas such as character types. Ideas such as genre.[56] Ideas such as those long-venerated theories of theater granted authority across ages.[57] These can be helpful tools in beginning to encounter, even in deepening an encounter already begun. Key is not to give them final voice.

Though of course that does occur. More often than seems helpful. Ideas of authority overwhelming impulses toward the most electric creation.

Here again a question of balance. Of not falling to adherence-only.

So, for instance. There was a person called Aristotle. He made a lot of words happen that have been held to be of great import by especially vocal portions of the theater community. The scholarly community? The Neoclassical French community? The riverlands around

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[56] i don't trust genre, and it doesn't stick in my head. a way of talking, but i cannot buy delineations any more than i believe the ease of classing –isms one against the next.

[57] because distance in time equals truth? because words that live through must necessarily yield rightness in the way we apprehend them?

which these two communities meet? Parts of these, parts of others. In each instance subjected to revision (as contact necessarily carries revision), and each revision claiming base in strict authority.

Basically, Aristotle (kind of) gave us these rules that have for years been revived and given tight embrace so that resuscitated rules took on vice-grip. How to order your plays to achieve the PROPER emotional and intellectual reaction. What matters are of proper size and weight and station for the human mind's occupation; what becomes too large to behold, what stands too miniscule. Where in the picture of humanity (a particular picture of Greek humanity, Athenian humanity) we find specimens best suited for culling pity, wonder, fear. How to treat and account for believability, how to define the bounds of supposed-truthiness.

Time's passage brought readers and would-be creators seeking answers seeking bounds, and these reflections turned to rules given stone-scratched weight. Don't you dare break that magnitude. Don't you dare shrink it down too far. Don't give us high-flown matters in peasants or gut-busting comedy with royals, and for dear's sake don't mix and match your genres. A well-defined place for everything, and everything in its well-defined place!

The evolution of written word into edict is a matter for your own leap-thinking. Here, only note that these rules linger to this day, creeping up on those who would create, coming through the form of artist critic audience expectations and voiced wantings. Think an awareness and adherence still exists. Think this can cramp creation, barring sight of light of potential beyond the cavern of these rules.[58]

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[58] and here we are, caught up in Plato's cave.

Spend too much time staring at walls imposed from without, find rusting of facility for envisioning beyond and tearing out these walls.

But think there are more ways of visioning these rules. More ways of encountering their call. Rules useful in what and how they permit. In the variant ways they can be applied.

On one hand, use rules as boundaries within which to pressure-cook creations.

And contents of rules can be as vibrant as anything else. Take their speaking at a turn. What in the idea will strive you, drive you, spark you on? Take as words, take as phrasings to be worked with, altering and altered by, used as creative fuel. Think opening rather than restriction. Often as you can.

So when faced with Aristotle, ask yourself what means unity and what means magnitude. What these terms ideas pieces of kindling mean for you and for the production's circumstance. Could call creation the bringing of unity, but take unity as it serves your purpose and fuels your creating. Use the notion of unity to prompt questions of what time, place, and action mean for you and the production, to ask how these ideas stand separate and whether they might intersect. Use to confront questions of whether unity is even a term that touches your present vocabulary. Embrace it, re-work it, fight against it; reveal it to be intrinsic or outside intrusion and decide what this suggests; *use* it.

Here again the principle of multiplicity.[59]

Here again compelling to interrogate. To question.

These supposed- authoritative sources may be put to other uses. At base, no one binds you to adhering to authority of this sort in a strict-particular matter. Must learn that you have that freedom of flight. Must learn to allow yourself and pledge yourself to such ranging.

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[59] this a loose principle, of course; efforts to avoid tyranny.

Suggestion being, of course, that your authority – the speaking of your impulse of your knowing – trumps written rules and presumptions.

Take for and from yourself permission, and so become stuck on ideas of being bound, of not having freedom to pursue all thoughts ideas as you would. This while maintaining awareness of those around, reshaping your own authority to work with thriving minds and requirements beyond your own, because live sensibilities must be counted for and will encouragingly complicate creation. Find loose authority find permission in those sources, as well.

And a thing is that permission is taken from many wheres. A thing is that you must choose your most apt places for permission. For helping to set forth your ground and for firing your actions.

As various sources of permission, consider

The rules of the game, accepted etiquette. Often the clearest-cut. Often the most in need of bending, if not shatter.

Theoretical, critical suggestions, those just-discussed dictates.

The text. Above all the text (and I mean its manifestation on paper I mean also its potential for liveness in your now-time I mean what text demands beyond ink on page), if you can find its voice and hear its yearning; argue for the text and what it wants to be, and this means wants to be in contact with the current context wants to be in the world as you stand; hear its voice and comprehend its fitting in the world before your eyes.

Guidelines established through conversations. What you work out live-wise with director, playwright, with anyone involved. These more personally geared than base

rules. Though even these are not full final; a necessity always in leaving room for contention, leaving room for your questioning.

Those who have enacted such roles (dramaturg mediator diplomat author however you identify it) in the past. Models from which you may learn, though direct mimicry is not advised.

And, of course, your self.

Learn to glean from many.

Learn also to alert others to their own authority and to these other sources. Nothing strident-strict about this informing. Nothing of must; only welcome. A suggestion that no person no thought is idle. That it is you who must make you of the given information the given sights.

As dramaturg, as archivist, stand as one who offers options toward this self-viewing, self-creating. Not that we have power to or consider selves as those who may withhold, but that it is in our province to aid you in beholding.

In all of this – I mean in theater and without, I mean yourself as archivist as dramaturg as however you self-call, however class your expressing – what comes key is your voice. The resonance of your presentation, sign of what you see what you mean how are *are*.

Take voice at various levels, in multiple modes. What I sound when speaking, open-mouth and flow of air, but what I mean is more than only speech of this sort. What I sound with motion of the body. What my eyes, gestures, anglings of physicality speak forth. Writing

voice. Voice of expression through paints or through chord progression or scattered notes seeking discord seeking other harmony, other ways of sounding.

Take it further, any way you set yourself into the world. Any way of engaging with what is outside of your immediate self.

Using voice, give momentary[60] form to what evades. Find (and create, which is in part a finding) signs for the ephemeral.

There would be no theater without voice, no archive without this resonance of self's speaking. It is voice that builds into and around silence, voice that shapes structures for engagement and for re(-)vision, voice that expresses the depths of what you are and feel within. And it is this deep-connected expression that fuels the work and world.

Part of a dramaturg's province is to trace track puzzle out and find ways of recording voice. How to read the ephemerality of what is spoken. How to help weave a complex wholeness from disparate threads, find ways of drawing voices into concert (for each voice counts vital in creation of production) while playing their tensions to spark further exploration.

In part my voice is guided by the influences that have formed and fired my archives. Voice as breath enhanced by ideas by sensibilities by the cycle-web of our interests. A way of organizing input and exhaling it as something of my own.

Voice thus-way carries a sign of the personal; my voice defines my work and permits it to be in its especial form. I know this to be your play your phrase the issue of your self because I hear your voice in it, the way you turn words, resonance of your perspective and passions,

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[60] momentary as a second, a minute, five years.

the issues and images that take you. Voice composed then of what holds us.[61] Gives… personality to a work. Distinctive flavor, stamp that here SOMEONE – a particular someone, an identifiable someone – has been.

Though product of the long accumulation of your being, voice exists as a phenomenon momentous. That which lives vibrant and which passes in a moment. Occurrence in its speaking and no other pass; breathe and it's gone, breathe and its only existence is the imprinting called memory. Perhaps taken onto papers, into minds, though even then its essence evades. Fickle material to manage.

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So voice – who would deny? – exists to flicker. Exists to fade. Voice was never meant to be the end, nor can be classed as what it is stands lasting in our selves. Something more lasting at its origin. Something in ourselves from which voice breathes.

If voice is ephemeral expression accounting for, maneuvering around, making use of pieces impressed and picked up or chosen from outside, the center from which voice emanates is something more untouched, something that grows with your aging but speaks beneath and

[61] thus, as well, what wholes us?

outside of these pieces. An evolving consistency that writes the particular tune of your shaping, without which your voice would be naught.

Say we ought never to forget what we have and are, the living, beating force that moves amid its contours. That central-sustaining breather of rhythm.

Voice is temporary, but heart(beat) sounds lasting.

So call this consistency as heart. Think blood-pounding sustainer of life, distinct and lasting workpiece of the body's mechanics. Think voice dependent on the life and continuation of a body, think voice driven by heart's presence. Think also heart in abstract, in layeredness. This heart as what it is supports expression because sustains life. Heart as giver of warmth, heart as that which holds a particular being's core. (Though at all turns, you must, please, you must question all images and associations it comes bearing.)

Voice then as vibrancy of dust, heart's fallout.

So maybe that while voice is composed of the countless words and gestures given outward, heart is that which holds their totality, all aspects of voice that ever were, the solid-founding position of who and what you are that gives this voice. The measure of your wholeness, if you will, and though it changes in each moment, it never comes to being broken. [62] Because the heart adapts. Because the heart takes what it is and moves toward what must what can become.

My heart, my own, compels me onward and prompts me toward voices works those pieces that deep resonate. When I speak in connection with my heart, it is my voice you hear even through (and in part dependent on) the words of others that I bring into my phrasings.

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[62] Haruki Murakami, 'All God's Children Can Dance' (from *after the quake*): "Our hearts are not stones. A stone may disintegrate in time and lose its outward form. But hearts never disintegrate." (68)

The closer I stand with my heart, the truer rings my speech and the more you will hear of my being. And it is this heart this something-like-truth of me that I would share.

Idea is expressed in my voicing because I exist in my heart.

Your heart composes you and is you but is not for strict defining. The moment you reach for your own heart, it has moved aside,[63] become elsewhere. But what would you do with it if you could hold it?

proposition: you cannot reach the heart of anything.

proposition: this is for the best.

What I would have you embrace is the wild will of your own heart and its capacity for vision, for holding words impressions images in multiplicity. That it is your heart brings all that strains disparate into wholeness, that it is you provides connection, yourself with all around, yourself ever open ever generous to sing with others. That it is you *and* everyone, everything that must exist. So make your way through these pieces, draw them into wholeness with your centrality, your heart.

That heart stands closed only so far as you barricade it, or find it barricaded by the world without. That heart holds ever the capacity for welcoming others for revising its own vision for taking all to its embrace and wonder.

Didn't mean for this to end in heart, but here we are, center(ish) of the matter, down its depths of staring straight beholding at the image. That I am shift of voice and dust as woven 'round a living heart.

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[63] Albert Camus, 'The Myth of Sisyphus': "This very heart which is mine will forever remain indefinable to me." (19)

Cynic though I am, I find the world in beauty, its existence turned in possibility and what may be. What can never be captured, but always be sought.

What we have is potential.

The prospect of life-long pursuing.

I take life from this proposal.

And what I seek is sign of your heart. Production's heart, literature's heart. Each word's multi-foliate heart. That if we can speak forth one to another with this closest connection, we may see one another with deeper eyes and at once push one another onward, ever searching. Because that heart that truth cannot be set-defined. Because to hear the heart of mystery and understand its wonder is to be encouraged deepward and driftwise by its calling.

One to another, we speak and so seek onward.

The words all breath recorded, ever to evade and ever to enliven.

Archive stands in ever-change

And life sings in this shifting.

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