

Autumn
2022

Issue 6



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PART



II



1969 on the studio stage Joni Mitchell sits in front of a monitor wall. “I’ve looked at clouds from both sides now...cloud illusions...I really don’t know clouds at all...” [“Here there are only two sides to things...there’s a reality and I guess what you might call a fantasy.”] Her profile appears behind from an angle a touch different, then mise-en-abymes off to the top right. Space dilates and contracts, the curvature of CRT monitors fade out to the colour of rain-pregnant altocumulus.

She darts between pillars, skirts lifted, skirting detection. Su Yu is the cursor, cursus. The runner – messenger covered in clouds on all sides. The world shudders, but the cursor drifts in smooth pursuit, becomes the hand, becomes the cursor. Mirror’s edge is lifted by displacement of air in the diaphanous light – “no substance, wreathing or colour of its own.”

The garden revolves. Inside the kernel the data is grotesque in its complexity. Polygonal ragged entrails exposed for digital haruspicy. The grey screen razor’s edge dissection of virtual death/life masks. Sonic trepanation from the plangent sound of a handshake.

Fiat anima automata excitare.

Slow-scan horizontally locked blocking blue light. Obscured peripheral vision approximates the VDU. Mirrors and monitors multiply columns. Data stored in deep freeze concatenates to form sentience, locomotion, visual acuity. Machine vision, blocking blue light, filtering dust, microbial intrusion, ultraviolet glare; the mirror phase integrated in nanoseconds. Victorian poise.

“Who is watching the threshold of this garden?”

“You are in it...disembodied...a walled garden where the few among us frolic.”

Trompe l’Oeil linear perspective of the tree lined path; topiary perpetual cloud banks. A gardener’s vision of war. Mirrors reflect and multiply sinuousness; a vegetative ideal – what even the most orderly garden cannot approach, as it can’t exclude the weather. Nonetheless “a garden is not nature.” It’s an island, surrounded by a dark forest.



A disembodied hand reflected in the smooth marble table. Touching solidity, manipulating objects on the surface, not behind it.

Western view from above vs. Eastern view from below.
Either way, hortus conclusus.

Fires creating their own weather. Fires lit within garden walls to keep frost from the leaves. The perfect garden needs no oxygen; it is a rotating pot floating in green mist; it is a palm tree snapped to grid, the cursor shaping earth, pushing it around like putty.

The urge to drop an orange golem, ragdolled all over the topos.

The hand that touches the screen attached to the appendage behind it. Trace artefacts, smears and pixel cell confusion. Blue light filter. Sousveillance of the smoke and mirrors type.

“Earth as cursor,” roll it like a marble.

Catalogue every single tree in the garden. Grow trees through algorithms for a proving ground. Virtual foliage provides novelty for saccades across 12 square inches of screen. Gun toting micro-muscular precision. Generative landscape prevents deja-vu.

There is hot ash strewn across a hard drive platter. The world becomes increasingly orange, blue light filtered. The weakened sun shone from an outcrop, deep within the technologies of a friendship city planting. The *eucalyptus molucana* were not imported, but were still able to turn their leaves upward to receive golden soil.

How to revive a dead screen? Bodily incantations to become a being of pure gesture. The screen emits light – it’s how it communicates; it’s what the eye understands. A silhouette shifts lux levels in a room for an eye as passive as an ear.

Paeonia Drive

Angela Goh and Su Yu Hsin.

Performance Thursday 6 August 2020.

Presented by Campbelltown Arts Centre and Arts House as part of BLEED 2020.

<https://bleedonline.net/program/paeonia-drive/navigation/>

<https://paeoniadrive.xyz/>

PAPA IS A MĀMĀ.

After we finished our desert, my dad said he felt like he had been for a walk in the hills for the night and was arriving back at the car, wishing he didn't have to go home. The last time I saw my parents, I told them we were moving to Britain; to go farming and visit standing stones, maybe live in the highlands, grow food, and save some cash so that C could make more work in the studio. A way to vacate ourselves, or position ourselves elsewhere, requiring us to span a distance between our present and possible versions. We sought out how another piece of land, which knew our old people, might move us so.

Canteloupe is canned fruit salad and eighties holiday sunsets. Antianxiety herbal remedy in the first course. Granita disappears and comes back in the pasta. First pork in five years. Blooded salt, melonwater running.

A friend has started their PhD to understand how manipulations to the environment of carrot crops on the Canterbury plains can speed their biennial seed cycle. Grow a strong root one year, send up great umbels of flowers to set seed the next. A big investment. Canterbury's immense stakes in the global carrot seed market makes for an abundance of research funding in the area.

Carrot as speculative capital. Dusty. Aniseed sweet. Of a certain age. Ryegrass gone silver in 4:33pm light. Will be a different shade tomorrow. Carrots have been simmering in that pot for years now. Jewelled rods across the plate. One of these days the chestnuts will be full and ripe enough to make pie. Caramel roots buoyed by romesco; whatever ecstasy that is. Sit down, saucepan in the middle, over-ripe toms and the last basil. Talk for hours.

In Riverton we bought a few tiny Urenika seed potatoes. More like shrivelled yams than our idea of potatoes. I put them in the ground before Christmas and as the zucchinis paled and powdered themselves I dug up the smallest bowlful of fingerling tubers from the mass of stems. I had to leave thousands of tiny siblings in the ground — marbles who turned glinting, giggling, glassy when rinsed. The following February my flatmate got excited about putting winter greens in and dug up the potatoes that had grown from those abandoned gems. Twice as many potatoes this time, twice the size. Sometimes doing less is better. The tohunga who had these for dinner for centuries really knew what they were doing.



Sailing a crisp across Lake Buttersauce. Invisible sichuan heat tempered by lemons. When well-boiled, Urenika hold a texture of sandy loam that melts in contact with saliva. We attend a soil cupping. Notes of burnt sugar and echinacea. Abstracted, well-seared cow rectangle galumphs around the table awaiting affection. We take the potatoes for a victory lap.

Buckwheat filled the garden bed with paddly green leaves until it was warm enough for the tomatoes to go in. Their now hearted leaves dangle yellow on jointed scaffolding. Once chantilly cream dollops attracting hoverflies and floating in the breeze on reddish stems, the flowers have become seeds; pyramidal, black.

When husked, their stony, roasted innards are steeped, syruped, and whipped frozen with cream. Toasted barley tea. Infinitely more than grain; like bread and beer. The land given maximum and methodical love that it may return; animate. Not just land but lond. From before. Not just papa but Papatuuaanuku. The soil and the waters. Your islands or mine. We go deep into the tunnels to leave our offerings. Can I make a golden silk from this carrot, a cicada's worship in a cup? Fill it up. Now cannot be before. Look after new growth in an old place.

When we sat down to dinner my mom handed me a brown envelope. I knew there would be a small card. My parents are reliable in these formalities. Small theatre. Inside the card my father had written in his quickest, way-out-the-door handwriting, "You are going to fly away. Take me with you."

A low, 5:53 lemon sun and the crunch of another evening.

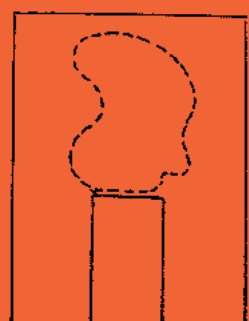
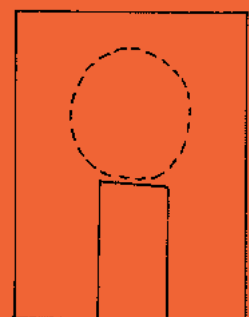
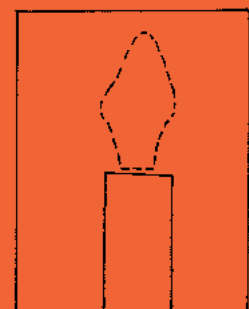
Rats eat the fallen walnuts overnight.

Pull the drapes.

LOND⁰³
Dinner, 6pm
Sunday 13 March, 2022

londo.bar





Gardens set around a pond
 “You can choose which way you go
 there’s no right way”
 The green spotted oblong pinches at
 entrance
 My orientation feels off
 Tree bristles
 Bird songs
 A sound work
 Floats me into site
 Adopting a meditative pace
 Feels foreign
 Noting the difference
 I think I could write myself more honestly
 Confronted by my default
 State of ceaseless occupation
 Navigating and looking slows me
 To observe (unsure why)
 Dawson’s gold illusionism
 Drummond’s metal monoliths
 The poster kids of Canterbury sculpture
 The artist models that I never followed
 There’s a range
 Familiar and introduced
 Traditional to post-modern
 The critical against the embodied
 (That last one is me)
 There’s a theme of embodiment
 There’s a sculpted woman
 Too figurative for me,
 Yet elements pull
 Those smooth concrete limbs full of bulk
 They’re far from soviet sculpture,
 but remind me of it
 An equality of gender in form

This sense of my own movement also
 I’m clicking through space alongside
 them
 Bodily awareness (bit of a trope though)
 Very dimensional
 Weight of space
 Then there’s the illusionism
 I look through the figurative man
 He’s spliced
 Vibrant green
 & sharp flax edges peek through
 My eye, flitting
 From constructed
 To the natural
 Back and forth
 Intertwined
 Manipulating materials
 Making the material about us
 A persona-personification
 Another trope- but why?
 Rushing, now
 Noting this
 Instinctively, wanting to be ‘done’
 To check it off
 But forgetting again
 Internal pressure disperses
 Not thinking forward,
 or back, but here
 I’ll resolve to walk this slow more often
 Unproductively so
 We’ve gone via the critical
 To the embodied
 Now onto the transcendent
 (The lightness of space)
 Golden glimmers set against grey cloud

Steel foliage set against the rustling trees
 Noting its experiential effects
 Am I a phenomenologist?
 Perhaps just low-key
 As I near the end
 There’s the sound work again
 Recorded bird & nature sounds
 ‘Meditational’ instrumentals
 Initially, this was grounding
 Now it’s overwhelming
 Disruptive
 I had adjusted to the present
 This no longer grounds me
 It’s pushing me out
 I note the woven flax
 It acts as a tunnel
 An exit
 My mind
 However
 Had already left

Notes from the Tai Tapu
 Sculpture Garden
 Annual Autumn Exhibition, 2022
 199 Cossars Rd, Christchurch



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