

SUSAN HOWE

TOM TIT TOT

In 1961, when Susan Howe graduated from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston with a degree in painting, the big news in art was the imminent death of art, or at least the death of painterly abstraction that had come to preside. Howe had every intention of being an artist. She moved to New York, touched the tarbush of bohemia, read the whole fraternity of artists' writings—Ad Reinhardt, Donald Judd, Robert Smithson, etc.—made books of lists and images, and wall installations with illustrations, photographs, found text, and original verse. By the time her friend, the poet Ted Greenwald visited her studio, she was arranging only words on walls. At his insistence—"You have a book on a wall, why don't you just put it into a book?"—Howe dismantled and sequenced her pages as *Hinge Picture*, her first book of poems. Taking title and epigraph from Marcel Duchamp's *Green Box*, Howe defined this delay as a form that operates both "in the plane" and "in space."

This exhibition is no different, really. It is a hesitation toward the imminent fact of publishing. The poem, TTT, was commissioned for our little way station, but with the foregone conclusion that it would later be paginated, printed, and published in quantity. But enough with motives; I don't favor the full-control formula, and Howe is apprehensive about the particular havoc a space on the game board can cause a work of art. Her poem has to defend its own ambiguity. "Perception of an object," as she writes, "means losing and

losing it. Quests end in failure, no victory and sham questor. One answer undoes another."†

This is not a moment for making analogies—Howe's poems are like drawings are like notations are like collages. No. They are poems. But if you write poems that are structured the way a piece of glass is when dropped from a great height, you probably mean something different by the word "poem" from what most people mean. Whatever poetry may prove to be, Howe's is a material construction. And whereas most poets deposit words with an eyedropper, Howe cuts them out of other people's mouths with a pair of scissors. But there is no sin about that. Poetry is innately related to theft. The lyre was invented, the Greeks tell us, by Hermes, who then gave the instrument to Apollo as compensation for stealing cattle.

"Archives, the material—the fragment, the piece of paper—" Howe says, "is all we have to connect with the dead."‡ Howe, like all library cormorants, carries within herself a world made up of all that she has seen and read, and it is to this world that she returns, incessantly. She haunts archives, marginalia, manuscripts, the paratextual particulars of print, and cuts up her *research*, far too deliberate a term, in such a way as to superimpose one part of the pattern upon another. (Violence underwrites her act.) Coleridge then Browning then Yeats—a succession, orderly enough. Then a slice of Spinoza, a folk tale, some children's babble, Paul Thek, a definition, a gap, some eccentric punctuation. While writing with other people's words can be a glib game that preempts feeling, Howe's references,

TABLE

TOM TIT TOT, 2013

Sources used by Howe in the construction of her new poem
TOM TIT TOT are indicated in the bibliography with a *.

WALL

Selections from an unbound copy of FROLIC ARCHITECTURE,
2010. Photograms by James Welling.

Inspired by Susan Howe's experience of viewing various manuscripts, sermon notebooks, books, and pamphlets of the eighteenth century American Calvinist theologian Jonathan Edwards in the vast collection of Edwards family papers at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in New Haven, Connecticut. Especially by the folder in Box 24 titled "Wetmore, Hannah Edwards, 1713-1773, Diary, 1736-39, copy in the hand of Lucy Wetmore Whittelsey, with commentary/n.d." Using multi-purpose copy paper, scissors, "invisible" scotch tape, and a canon copier pc170 she collaged fragments of this "private writing" with a mix of sources from other conductors and revealers in the thick of things-before. (Grenfell Press)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Baker, George. “Paul Thek: Notes from the Underground.” In *Paul Thek: Diver*. Eds. Elizabeth Sussman and Lynn Zelevansky. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2010.

Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

Method of this project: literary montage. I needn’t say anything. Merely show. I shall purloin no valuables, appropriate no ingenious formulations. But the rags, the refuse—these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them.

[...] **It may be considered one of the methodological objectives of this work to demonstrate a historical materialism which has annihilated within itself the idea of progress. Just here, historical materialism has every reason to distinguish itself sharply from bourgeois habits of thought. Its founding concept is not progress but actualization.**

*Berkeley, Richard. “The Providential Wreck: Coleridge and Spinoza’s Metaphysics.” In *European Romantic Review* 17, No. 4, October 2006.

Bernstein, Charles. “The Art of Immemorability.” *A Book of the Book: Some Works & Projections About the Book & Writing*. Ed. Jerome Rothenberg and Steven Clay. New York: Granary Books, 2000.

In other words: Writing records the memory of language just as it explores the possibilities for language.

———. “Passed by Examination”: Paragraphs for Susan Howe.” *My Way: Speeches and Poems*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.

History is a lie, but we are no better than dupes or fools if we ignore it. We have at our “disposal” an avalanche of facts but can’t tell what they mean or how they go together.

[...] What are we divided from, divided by? To divide is to partition, to create borders, to differentiate, to delineate. These are also poetic acts: the inscription of a line of verse. These are also language acts: for to write is to divide, to speak to encode that division.

Bervin, Jen and Marta Werner, eds. *The Gorgeous Nothings: Emily Dickinson’s Envelope Poems*. New York: New Directions/Christine Burgin, 2013.

Blanchot, Maurice. “The Book to Come.” *A Book of the Book: Some Works & Projections About the Book & Writing*. Eds. Jerome Rothenberg and Steven Clay. New York: Granary Books, 2000.

Mallarmé had always been aware of the fact—unrecognized before and perhaps after him—that language is a system of highly complex spatial relations whose singularity neither ordinary geometrical space nor the space of everyday life allows us to appreciate. Nothing is created and no discourse can be creative except through the preliminary exploration of the totally vacant region where language, before it is a set of given words, is a silent process of correspondences, or a rhythmic scansion of life. Words exist only to signify the area of correspondence, the space onto which they are projected and which, no sooner signified, furls and unfurls, never being where it is. Poetic space, the space and “out-come” of language, never exists like an object but is always spaced out and scattered.

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Ed. David Daiches. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1965.

*Browning, Robert. “Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.” In *Men and Women*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1855.

*Clarke, Edward. *The Later Affluence of W.B. Yeats and Wallace Stevens*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

*Clodd, Edward. *Tom Tü Tot: An Essay on Savage Philosophy In Folk-Tale*. London: W.B. Duckworth and Co., 1898.

*Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, Vol. 4. Ed. Earl Leslie Griggs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

*———. *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Poetical Works II, Poems, (Variorum Text)*. Ed. J.C.C. Mays, Bollinger Series LXXV, Vol. 16, Bollingen Series. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Dickinson, Emily. *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*. Eds. Thomas Johnson and Theodora Ward. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1958.

Emerging from an Abyss, and reentering it—that is Life, is it not Dear? The tie between us is very fine, but a hair never dissolves.

Doolittle, Hilda. *H.D. Selcted Poems*. Ed. Louis Martz. New York: New Directions, 1988.

Hermes Trismegistus is patron of alchemists;

his province is thought, inventive, artful and curious;

his mental is quicksilver, his clients, orators, thieves and poets;

steal then, O orator, plunder, O poet,

take what he old-church found in Mithra’s tomb,

candle and script and bell, take what the new-church spat upon

and broke and shattered; collect the fragments of the splintered glass

and of your fire and breath, melt down and integrate,

re-invoke, re-create opal, onyx, obsidian

now scattered in the shards men tread upon

Duchamp, Marcel. *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even*. Typographic version by Richard Hamilton of Duchamp’s *Green Box*. Trans. George Heard Hamilton. New York: George Wittenborn, 1960.

Dworkin, Craig. *Reading the Illegible*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2003.

When asked what a canvas would look like if she had to paint her writing, Susan Howe responded: “blank. It would be blank. It would be a white canvas. White.” As her answer might hint, Howe’s visual prosody does in fact retranslate Cage’s version of Rauschenberg’s “audible silence”—although without the radical minimalism of either—into the terms of textual language. That final translation answers an emphatic “yes” to Cage’s query: “If sounds are noises but not words are they meaningful?”

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985.

Finlay, Ian Hamilton. Letter to Susan Howe, January 19, 1980.

Dear Susan, There is the usual impossibility that I can’t understand your Cabbage Gardens. I know you are more or less reconciled to this, and in any case you are grown-up-enough not to mind my lack of understanding. It remains ridiculous that I enjoy your letters so much, and when it comes to your poems it is not simply and straight forwardly that I don’t “like” them; the fact is that I am baffled by them as by a completely foreign language;

“not liking” them would be a quite different state of affairs. I am very annoyed by this and feel that we ought to do something together one day, to make up for that impasse—something with words. But what?

[...]I dare say you could use some appreciation. Forgive me. Or don’t. But write back soon.

Foucault, Michel. “What Is an Author?” In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977.

No longer the tiresome repetitions:

“Who is the real author?”
“Have we proof of his authenticity and originality?”
“What has he revealed of his most profound self in his language?”

New questions will be heard:

“What are the modes of existence of this discourse?”
“Where does it come from; how is it circulated; who controls it?”
“What placements are determined for possible subjects?”
“Who can fulfill these diverse functions of the subject?”

Behind all these questions we would hear little more than the murmur of indifference:

“What matter who’s speaking?”

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.

*Gollancz, Israel, ed. *Death and Liffe: A Medieval Alliterative Debate Poem in a Seventeenth Century Version*. In *Select Early English Poems*, No. V. Ed. Humphrey Milford. London: Oxford University Press, 1930.

Hawthorn, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter and Other Tales of the Puritans*. Ed. Harry Levin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

Howe, Susan. *The Birth-mark: Unsettling the Wilderness in American Literary History*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1993.

By choosing to install certain narratives somewhere between history, mystic speech, and poetry, I have enclosed them in an organization although I know there are places no classificatory procedure can reach where connections

between words and things we thought existed break off.

For me, paradoxes and ironies of fragmentation are particularly compelling. Every statement is a product of collective desires and visibilities. Knowledge, no matter how I get it, involves exclusion and repression. National histories hold ruptures and hierarchies. On the scales of global power what gets crossed over? Foreign accents mark dialogues that delete them. Ambulant vagrant bastardy comes looming through assurance and sanctification.

———. “The End of Art.” In *Archives of American Art Journal*, Vol. 14, no. 4 (1974): 2–7.

———. *Frame Structures: Early Poems 1974–1979*. New York: New Directions, 1996.

What is it about *documents* that seems to require their relegation to the bedroom (a private place) as if they were bourgeois Victorian women? Honored, looked to for advice, shielded from the rabble by guardians of “tradition”/ “aesthetic taste,” available only to particular researchers (husbands or bachelor machines) and caretakers (librarians cataloguers secretaries) so long as they are desirable (readable not too tattered) capable of bearing children (articles chapters books) rearing them (aiding research), they remain sheltered at home (museum collections libraries).

———. *Hinge Picture*. New York: Telephone Books, 1974.

———. *Incloser: An Essay*. Santa Fe: Weaselsleaves Press, 1992.

A printed book enters social and economic networks of distribution. Does the printing modify an author’s intention, or does a text develop itself? Why do certain works go on saying something else? Pierre Macherey says in *A Theory of Literary Production*: “the work has its beginnings in a break from the usual ways of speaking and writing—a break which sets it apart from all other forms of ideological expression.”

———. “An Interview with Susan Howe.” With Edward Foster. In *Talisman: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry and Poetics*. No. 4 (1990): 14–38.

Edward Foster: Are there women whose work you feel should particularly be added to the canon?

Susan Howe: I am suspicious of the idea of the canon in the first place because to enter this canon a violation has usually been done to your work, no matter what your gender may be. And besides, the more you go into something, the more you see that the canon is only the surface only the ghost’s helmet. Not the face underneath the helmet. So why have I been complaining? What is the answer? I wish I knew.

———. “An Interview with Susan Howe.” With Lynn Keller. In *Contemporary Literature* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 1–34.

Susan Howe: If a boat sails fast it usually looks beautiful. As if the eye has some perfect knowledge that is feeling. Some enduring value, some purpose is reflected in the material you use. The mysterious link between beauty and utility is, for me, similar to the tie between poetry and historical documents, although it would take me years to explain exactly what the connection actually is. [...]

Lynn Keller: People objecting to experimental writing sometimes complain that whatever claims are made for its social engagement or Marxist perspective or its changing “hegemonic structures of consciousness,” that, in fact, the audience it reaches is a very narrow, highly educated one, that the reader has to have tremendous intellectual confidence even to grapple with these texts. What do you think? Does that concern you?

Susan Howe: No. The objection offends me. I think it is part of a really frightening anti-intellectualism in our culture. Why should things please a large audience? And isn’t claiming that the work is too intellectually demanding also saying a majority of people are stupid? Different poets will always have different audiences. Some poets appeal to younger people, some to thousands, one or two to millions, some to older people, etc. If you have four readers who you truly touch and maybe even influence, well then that’s fine. Poetry is a calling. You are called to write and you follow.

‡———. “An Interview with Susan Howe.” With Maureen N. McLane. In *The Paris Review*. No. 203 (2012): 145–169.

People often tell me my work is “difficult.” I have the sinking feeling they mean “difficult” as in “hopeless.”

———. *The Midnight*. New York: New Directions, 2003.

There was a time when bookbinders placed a tissue interleaf between frontispiece and title page in order to prevent illustration and text from rubbing together. Although a sign is understood to be consubstantial with the thing or being it represents, word and picture are essentially rivals. The transitional space between image and scripture is often a zone of contention. Here we must separate. Even printers and binders drift apart.

†———. *My Emily Dickinson*. New York: New Directions, 1985.

She built a new poetic form from her fractured sense of being eternally on intellectual borders, where confident masculine voices buzzed an alluring and inaccessible discourse, backwards through history into aboriginal anagogy. Pulling pieces of geometry, geology, alchemy, philosophy, politics, biography, biology, mythology, and philology, from alien territory, a “sheltered” woman audaciously

invented a new grammar grounded in humility and hesitation. HESITATE from the Latin, meaning to stick. Stammer. To hold back in doubt, have difficulty speaking.

——. *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*. Cambridge: Telephone Book Press, 1978.

——. “Speaking with Susan Howe.” Interview with Janet Ruth Falon. In *The Difficulties* 3, no. 2 (1989): 28–42.

——. *That This*. New York: New Directions, 2010.

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, one of the largest buildings in the world devoted entirely to rare books and manuscripts, was constructed from Vermont marble and granite, bronze and glass, during the early 1960’s. The Library’s digital photography studio is located in a windowless room downstairs. Here objects to be copied according to the state-of-the-art North Light HID Copy Light system are prepared for reproduction. Each light is packed with 900 watts of ceramic discharge lamps and requires a typical 15-ampere, 120-volt outlet. The lamps are doubly fan-cooled, with one chamber for the hot (lamp) side and one fan for the electronic side. A diffusion screen spreads light evenly onto the copyboard while protecting the art object or manuscript from heat. This can be replaced with white Plexiglass for three-dimensional art work. Black curtains surrounding the copy table protect the photographer’s vision and at the same time prevent light intensity from bleeding. One or two stuffed oblong cloth containers, known in the trade as snakes, hold the volume up. Facing pages are held down with transparent plastic straps.

*James, William. *Essays in Psychical Research*. General ed. Frederick Burkhardt. Textual ed. Fredson Bowers. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Joyce, James. *Finnegans Wake*. New York: Viking, 1939.

**Lyra Graeca: Being the Remains of all the Greek Lyric Poets from Eumelus to Timotheus Excepting Pindar*. Vol. 1. Trans. J.M. Edmonds. Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963.

*MacAlister, Robert A. *The Secret Languages of Ireland: With Special Reference to the Origin and Nature of the Shelta Languages*. Armagh: Croaobh Roan Books, reprint of 1937 edition, 1997.

Martin, Agnes. “Perfection is in the Mind: An Interview with Agnes Martin.” In *Art in America* 84, no. 5 (May 1996): 82–89.

Metcalf, Paul. “The Real Susan Howe.” In *The Difficulties* 3, no. 2 (1989): 52–56.

In a letter to me some months ago, Susan Howe writes: “It strikes me as *odd* that your address is Quarry Road and mine is New Quarry Road—because that’s what we both do: *quarry*.”

Olson, Charles. *Call Me Ishmael: A Study of Melville*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1947.

——. *Projective Verse*. New York: Totem Press, 1959.

First, some simplicities that a man learns, if he works in OPEN, or what can also be called COMPOSITION BY FIELD, as opposed to inherited line, stanza, over-all form, what is the “old” base of the non-projective.

(1) the *kinetics* of the thing. A poem is energy transferred from where the poet got it (he will have some several causations), by way of the poem itself to, all the way over to, the reader. Okay. Then the poem itself must, at all points, be a high-energy construct and, at all points, an energy-discharge. So: how is the poet to accomplish same energy, how is he, what is the process by which a poet gets in, at all points energy at least the equivalent of the energy which propelled him in the first place, yet an energy which is peculiar to verse alone and which will be, obviously, also different from the energy which the reader, because he is the third term, will take away?

This is the problem which any poet who departs from closed form is specially confronted by. And it involves a whole series of new recognitions. From the moment he ventures into FIELD COMPOSITION—puts himself in the open—he can go by no track other than the one the poem under hand declares, for itself. Thus he has to behave, and be, instant by instant, aware of some several forces just now beginning to be examined. (It is much more, for example, this push, than simply such a one as Pound put, so wisely, to get us started: “the musical phrase,” go by it, boys, rather than by, the metronome.)

(2) is the *principle*, the law which presides conspicuously over such composition, and, when obeyed, is the reason why a projective poem can come into being. It is this: FORM IS NEVER MORE THAN AN EXTENSION OF CONTENT. (Or so it got phrased by one, R. Creeley, and it makes absolute sense to me, with this possible corollary, that right form, in any given poem, is the only and exclusively possible extension of content under hand.) There it is, brothers, sitting there, for USE.

Now (3) the *process* of the thing, how the principle can be made so to shape the energies that the form is accomplished. And I think it can be boiled down to one statement (first

pounded into my head by Edward Dahlberg): ONE PERCEPTION MUST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY LEAD TO A FURTHER PERCEPTION. It means exactly what it says, is a matter of, at *all* points (even, I should say, of our management of daily reality as of the daily work) get on with it, keep moving, keep in, speed, the nerves, their speed, the perceptions, theirs, the acts, the split second acts, the whole business, keep it moving as fast as you can, citizen. And if you also set up as a poet, USE USE USE the process at all points, in any given poem always, always one perception must must must MOVE, INSTANTER, ON ANOTHER!

So there we are, fast, there’s the dogma. And its excuse, its usability, in practice. Which gets us, it ought to get us, inside the machinery, now, 1950, of how projective verse is made.

*Ovid. *Metamorphoses*, Vol. 1. Trans. Frank Justus Miller. Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966.

Owens, Craig. *Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture*. Eds. Scott Bryson, Barbara Kruger, Lynne Tillman, and Jane Weinstock. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

*Peirce, Charles Sanders. *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition*, Vol. 3, 1872–1878. “Photometric Researches: Made in the Years 1872–1875.” Ed. Christian J.W. Kloesel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Perloff, Marjorie. “Language Poetry and the Lyric Subject: Ron Silliman’s Albany, Susan Howe’s Buffalo.” In *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 3 (1999 Spring): 405–34.

——. *Unoriginal Genius: Poetry by Other Means in the New Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, Vol. 16. Ed. James A. Harrison. Marginalia Eureka Bibliography. New York: AMS Press, 1965.

Quartermain, Peter. *Disjunctive Poetics: From Gertrude Stein and Louis Zukofsky to Susan Howe*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

“What does not change/is the will to change” (Olson, “The Kingfishes”). For Howe this is not a matter of will (save in that Nature might be willful), but of necessity to which one must submit. And the impulse to disorder in the world leaves its mark in the sheer isolation of Howe’s poems on the page, surrounded by white: a

visible trope of Howe’s tough and difficult feminism. There are figurations in these figures who are figured against no *ground*, who move away from ground, who move *without*. Such a movement, to be free of the burden of ground, freed of definition by others, freed of singularity, freed of language, freed of the necessity to be sane or to be mad, freed of history, is terrible and is exhilaration. But it is impossible and doomed. Howe knows that the primeval (that “lost prelapsarian state”) “may have existed only in the mind” (Armantrout 209) if it existed at all; that we all suffer violent “primal exile from the mother” (Howe, *My Emily Dickinson*, 107); and that we can never escape “That language outside language we are all entangled in” (“Women” 610).

*Robinson, Henry Crabb. *Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence*. Ed. Thomas Sadler. London: Macmillan, 1869.

Rowlandson, Mary. *The Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. Ed. Henry Stedman Nourse and John Eliot Thayer. Lancaster, MA: 1903.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2005.

Lady Macbeth:

O proper stuff!

(Act III, Scene IV)

Smithson, Robert. *The Writings of Robert Smithson*. Ed. Nancy Holt. New York: University Press, 1979.

*Spinoza, Baruch. *Ethics*. Trans. R.H.M. Elwes. New York: Dover, 1955.

Stein, Gertrude. “Patriarchal Poetry.” In *The Yale Gertrude Stein*. Ed. Richard Kostelanetz. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

They said they said./ They said they said when they said men./ Many men many how many many many many men men men said many here.

Stevens, Wallace. *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction*. Cummington, MA: Cummington Press, 1943.

Is there a poem that never reaches words?

And one that chafes the time away?
Is the poem peculiar and general?
There’s a meditation there, in which there seems

To be an evasion, a thing not apprehended or Not apprehended well. Does the poet Evade us, as in a senseless element?

*Sussman, Elizabeth and Lynn Zelevansky, eds. *Paul Thek: Diver* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2010.

Webster, Noah. *An American Dictionary of the English Language*. Revised and enlarged by Chauncey A. Goodrich. Springfield, MA: George and Charles Merriam, 1852.

EN-CLOSE. See INCLOSE.

IN-CLOSE, %v.t.% [fr. %enclos*; Sp. It. %incluso%; L. %inclusus%, %includo%; %in% and %claudo% or %cludo%.]
1. To surround; to shut in; to confine on all sides; as to %inclose% a field with a fence; to %inclose% a fort or an army with troops; to %inclose% a town with walls.
2. To separate from common grounds by a fence; as, to %inclose% lands.
3. To include; to shut or confine; as to %inclose% trinkets in a box.
4. To environ; to encompass.
5. To cover with a wrapper or envelope; to cover under seal; as to %inclose% a letter or a bank note.

IN-CLOS ER, %n%. He or that which encloses; one who separates land from common grounds by a fence.

*Weiser, Benjamin, “Who Is Fnu Lnu? Unidentified Defendants have Bedevilled Courts For Decades.” *New York Times*, July 14, 2013.

Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. Ed. Emory Holloway. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1852.

Williams, William Carlos. *Paterson*. New York: New Directions, 1992.

Let
me out! (Well go) this rhetoric
is real!

*Yeats, William Butler. *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*. New York: Macmillan, 1956.

——. *New Poems: Manuscript Materials*. Ed. J.C.C. Mays and Stephen Parrish. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000.

——. * *The Wild Swans at Coole: Manuscript Materials*. Ed. Stephen Parish. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994.

——. * *The Wind Among The Reeds: Manuscript Materials*. Ed. Carolyn Holdsworth. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993.

Preface

- Given 1. the waterfall
- 2. the illuminating gas,

one will determine
 we shall determine the conditions
 for the instantaneous State of Rest (or allegorical appearance)
 of a succession [of a group] of various facts
 seeming to necessitate each other
 under certain laws, in order to isolate the sign
 the
of accordance between, on the one hand,
 this State of Rest (capable of all the (?) innumerable eccentricities)
 and, on the other, a choice of Possibilities
 authorized by these laws and also
determining them.

For the instantaneous state of rest = bring in
 the term: extra-rapid

We shall determine the conditions of [the] best
 exposé of the extra-rapid State of Rest [of the
 extra-rapid exposure (= allegorical appearance).
 of a group etc.

Kind of Sub-Title
Delay in Glass
 Use "delay" instead of "picture" or
 "painting"; "picture on glass" becomes
 "delay in glass"—but "delay in
 glass" does not mean "picture
 on glass"—
 It's merely a way
 of succeeding in no longer thinking
 that the thing in question is
 a picture—to make a "delay" of it
 in the most general way possible,
 not so much in the different meanings
 in which "delay" can be taken, but
 rather in their indecisive reunion
 "delay"—a "delay in glass"
 as you would say a "poem in prose"
 or a spittoon in silver

The Pendu femelle
is the form
in ordinary perspective
of a Pendu femelle
for which one could perhaps
try to discover
the true form

This comes from the
fact that any
form is the perspective
of another form
according to a certain vanishing point
and a certain distance

Perhaps make
a hinge
picture.
(folding yardstick, book)
develop
the principle of the hinge
in the displacements
1st in the plane 2nd in space

find an automatic description
of the hinge

perhaps introduce it
in the Pendu femelle

occluded as they are, do not present themselves simply for intellectual applause. What a low and idle thing citation would be if it were to lead us to negate mystery and art.

Howe's work cannot be conditioned to act by a cause other than itself. It remains open. And, after all this time, I can still be surprised by something new I find in it, or I can be comforted by a familiar circuit of thought. I am glad for this. But faced with the unenviable task of introducing her to you, I must stay close to Howe's obsession—erasure, and the way enclosures, be they archives, books, methodologies, or forms of speech—domesticate information and marginalize voices as liminal and wild. It's an issue that covers a much wider range than gender or medium. And Howe takes it up directly, ignoring the divide between the makers of things, and those who critique and historicize that which is made. Her work does away with the specious worm that criticism is inferior to creation.

I would be very disappointed in a future which is going to tell us which things are worth something and which aren't, that didn't treat her considerably. But there isn't much to worry about, Howe's work is its own log book. The way we referee the past, the way individuals read books, and events, and people, not in the way they are intended, or in the way of some distantly omniscient observer, but in the idiosyncratic way that we must—this is a basic point to which Howe returns. More simply, historical records do not represent, they arbitrate. “Who polices questions of grammar, parts of speech, connection, and

connotation? Whose order is shut inside the structure of a sentence?”†

Susan Howe was born in 1937. This is her first solo exhibition. Apart from her poetry, she is the author of two landmark books of literary criticism, *My Emily Dickinson* and *The Birth-mark: Unsettling the Wilderness in American Literary History*, and three records with David Grubbs. Howe received the 2011 Bollingen Prize for American Poetry and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She has been a Stanford Institute for Humanities Distinguished Fellow, as well as an Anna-Maria Kellen Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin. She taught for many years at the State University of New York-Buffalo. She lives in Guilford, Connecticut.

SUSAN HOWE

TOM TIT TOT

October 5–December 6, 2013
Curated by Andrea Andersson and
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