
Lot



1 — thank you dear thick-lip-thread-licker-heavy-foot

2 — the method and the material

3 — trembles along the spheres of action revolving along a coil of light

4 — within the milky ground the specks of dust, some scratches

5 — offer the emptiness of the room

6 — a slink through sadness redeemed by acts of kindness

7 — following the sequence of a braid of the person

8 — persons performing within a curved conjunctive moment

9 — an elastic feat

“I hear a ruffle, what inspires the weeper?” asks the queen who happens to be passing by a young girl. The mother sheepishly lies: “She weeps for lack of material to spin. My unhappy daughter learned to twirl before she learned to say anything.”

I stared at the chaste white monochrome for three days. A black line the width and length of a single eyelash, blinked. Occasionally it moved across the blank. This eyelash ... it pressed against, it pushed the Letter within a preset margin invisible to the naked eye. Empty until the symbols articulating space began to fill it.

I tried to feel the painter dragging her black marker across the mylar. Indexed across the thirsty surface: the pressure of her body, the tapering trail, the weights.

On the third day of my meditation, my monotony was interrupted by a grinning voice, which appeared carrying an hourglass: “What is wrong?” asked the voice. And with no sympathy added: “tomorrow I expect you to begin.”

I held onto the thought of W.W.E. Ross who wrote his *Laconics* one sleepless night in April of 1928 (this thought is a stand-in for three weird sisters approaching the window). So I accepted the dare to do the same. I had on my side the floating grin like a halo over my head. I began by selecting the books off the shelf, the ones that still comfort and impress, impress in the old sense of imprinting—the moods eternally accenting my mind. I read the opening lines out loud. Moving my lips, I put all my faith into these incantations, intended to provoke me into working harder, into filling up the page with its moveable components. However, unlike making yarn, where the twist that holds the material together will tell me clearly if it works, I have no one to trust here but you dear reader.

The queen is impressed by her industriousness, and invites the girl to live like a spider in her castle. She has three rooms filled with the finest flax. As a reward for the impossible task of spinning all the flax she is promised a prince and a wedding. Her industry will suffice as a dowry.

There was a group of young women who told each other stories to keep them up all through the night. This kind of communal working was called a bee. Sometimes they carried their wheels over to the barn, where they gathered around the body heat of cows to keep their fingers moving. The curved back of the tired spinner would form a lemniscate curve in contact with the gentle rise and fall of the cow's barrel as he breathed, releasing the sought after heat.

Sometimes when their fingers are twisting they begin to twirl their thoughts, releasing energy into new forms, and unlike the voice of the shuttle, they use their tongues. Like the braids on their head, and the twist in their fingers, they yarn a tale. On page 335 *The Book of Disquiet*, Fernando Pessoa wrote “to wrap the world around their fingers, like thread or ribbon which a woman twiddles while daydreaming at the window ... Everything comes down to our trying to feel tedium in such a way that it doesn't hurt.” Pessoa pictured the daydreamer as a woman looking out a window twiddling ribbon. This picture might fit the character of a few princesses, though as I prepared to write, I began to give in to the girls telling the story of girls being idle, all the while her hand treadles and drafts, releasing the skein of thread to the floor, peddling and speaking—the relationship of the touch and the visions connected like the hermit crab that carries a sea anemone. Her tales tested out the ethics of the day, tracing its limitations of what we call Fate to keep each other up.

“Whatever limits us, we call Fate. If we are brute and barbarous, the fate takes a brute and dreadful shape. As we refine, our checks become finer. If we rise to spiritual culture, the antagonism takes a spiritual form.” – Emerson.

Sometimes the three fates are (re)configured as one, and as she works she also makes prophecies of good and evil. Covered in a veil of dust, she genuflects in the woods before the wheel with saliva-moistened fingers that display the channels formed by time. If we were the tiny fairies they dreamed up in a boredom, we would lean against the channel walls that bracket the roving thread. It is late at night, or maybe it is just before dawn, when the soldiers come across her in the woods, crouching under a shack-like awning. Here, the film of dust over her face is a measuring rod, the tongue a wand produces a sound for the encroaching eavesdropper.

I have slipped you one of the keys to the animation. The rhythm of the space follows the ring of action. Three rooms, three women, three movements. The queen is ignorant to the ciphers, and can only clap her hands together when the impossible task is accomplished. The queen fulfills her promise. The girl fulfills her promise to the three spinners, who eventually sit beside her at the wedding. Out of an evil snag came a kindness:

Yes, you were kind to me, and your kindness shall be repaid.

June 4, 2013

T.L.

Notes

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Conduct Of Life*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1860

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Propp, V. I. A. *Morphology Of The Folktale*. Austin: University Of Texas, 1968

Weiner, Annette B., And Jane Schneider. “European Folklore And Linen Manufacture.” *Cloth and Human Experience*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1989

Tiziana La Melia was born in Palermo, Italy and grew up in Winfield, BC. She currently lives and works in Vancouver. La Melia's work takes language and materiality as underpinnings to explore painting, writing, collage, performance and sculpture. She recently organized the booklet *Page of Vapours* with Exercise Project Space, and self published the chapbook *Broom Emotion*. La Melia is a sessional instructor at Emily Carr University. She has exhibited her work at Exercise, Oakville Galleries, 221A, and Susan Hobbs Gallery, among other venues.

Nestor Krüger is a visual artist living in Toronto. He completed his studies at the Ontario College of Art in 1989. He has participated in a number of local and international exhibitions including *Emotion Eins* at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, *Sharjah Biennial 7*, Sharjah, UAE, *The Greenroom*, CCS Bard, NY and has had solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Gallery in Ottawa, *The Contemporary Art Gallery* in Vancouver and most recently at *Katzman Kamen gallery* in Toronto. He currently teaches sculpture in the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph. Krüger is represented by *Katzman Kamen Gallery*, Toronto.

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Sally Späth is a visual artist living in Toronto. She completed her studies at the Ontario College of Art in 1989. Späth has had solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of York University, Wynick/Tuck Gallery, goodwater gallery, and most recently at Exercise Gallery in Vancouver. Späth has participated in a number of group exhibitions, including *Working Title* at Diaz Contemporary and *60 Painters* in Etobicoke.

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