



**UNITED**

**ARTISTS**

UNITED ARTISTS SEVENTEEN

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UNITED ARTISTS SEVENTEEN, March 1983. Edited by Bernadette Mayer & Lewis Warsh, 172 E. 4th Street, New York City 10009.

Kathy Acker

from "My Death, My Life" by Pier Paolo Pasolini

## 7. NOMINALISM

I want to talk about the quality of my perception. I want the quality or kind called childhood cause children see the sadness which sees this city's glory. What does this sentence mean? I can wander wherever I want. I simply see. Each detail is a mystery a wonder. I wander wonder. The loneliness feeling is very quickly lost. So I can see any and everything. I can talk about everything as a child would. The interior of my mind versus the exterior. Art proposes an interiority which no longer exists for all of us are molded. The nightmare that I fear most is true. The writing's outdated. Yet you walk around the city. Is this realization the source of your melancholy? I love you. You're my friend. I'm masturbating now. I have someone to talk to like I talk to my stuffed animals. Of course this life's desolate, it's lonely when there's no mentality. This sentence means nothing. More and more submerged the mind, you trace its submergence through Baudelaire; now it's gone. Fashion is the illusion there's a mind.

Walking through the cities, being partly lost, the image (in the mind) changes fast enough that the perception which watches and judges perception is gone, is the same as the living in the place where I can do anything in which every happening is that which just happens. Saint-Pol Roux, going to bed about daybreak, fixes a notice on his door: "Poet at work". The day is breaking.

Language is more important than meaning. Don't make anything out of broken-up syntax cause you're looking to make meaning where nonsense will. Of course nonsense isn't only nonsense. I'll say again that writing isn't just writing, it's a meeting of writing and living the way existence is the meeting of mental and material or language of idea and sign. It is how we live. We must take how we live.

To substitute space for time. What's this mean? I'm not talking about death. Death isn't my province. When that happens that's that; it's the only thing or event god or shit knows what it is that isn't life. To forget. To get rid of history. I'm telling you right now burn the schools. They teach you about good writing. That's a way of keeping you from writing what you want to, says Enzensberger, from revolutionary that is present. I just see. Each of you must use writing to do exactly what you want. Myself or any occurrence is a city through which I can wander if I stop judging.

It could happen to someone looking back over his life that he realized that almost all the deeper obligations he had endured in its course originated in people on whose destructive character everyone

was agreed. He would stumble on this fact one day, perhaps by chance, and the heavier the blow it deals him, the better are his chances of picturing the destructive character.

Wandering through the streets and creating a city: Berlin's a deserted city. It's streets're very clean. Princely solitude princely desolation hang over its streets. How deserted and empty is Berlin!

The first street no longer has anything habitable or hospitable on it. The few shops look as if they're shut. The crossings on the streetcorners are actually dangerous. Puerto Ricans whiz by in cars.

At the end of the next event is the Herkules Bridge. There's a block-long park that runs along the river. Here when I was a child as soon as I could walk I spent most of my days. I had a nurse. At first I didn't have as many toys as the other children. Then I had a tricycle. Later I had a cap gun. We would try to shoot pigeons with our cap guns. If your cap gun shot a pigeon in the eye, pigeons are the only living animals around, you blinded the pigeon and then could capture it bring it home to make pigeon soup the most wonderful delicacy in the world. Neither I nor anyone else ever captured a pigeon. The river which was pure garbage brown was crossed by a bridge on my right as I looked from the park out over the river. This bridge was the Herkules Bridge.

I used to have a strong dream about the garbage river. It was the most magical place. If only I could cross it, on the other side. Desire is the other side. During the day I can't cross it. Suddenly, in my dream, I can. Go over the low cement wall black iron bars curving out of upward toward me, down a three or five foot hill that's mainly dirt and some bushes, my feet kick small rocks rolling, downward. Here's the water at my feet. Here's flat sands forming a triangle narrowing toward the north I can walk on it. I'm walking on top of a narrow evenly wide sand ribbon across the river which isn't deep. I reach the other side. The other side is a carnival. The beach is still here. Here's a merry-go-round. All around the beach's white and onwards. I walk onwards on the magic ground. There are many adventures as I walk straight northwards.

The other park I used to go to, the park that contained New Lake on Rousseau Island, was much further from my house. I'd go only with my grandmother who lived a few blocks away in a large hotel, I'll talk about her later, or with mommy although mommy almost never spent her time with me. In fact, I now remember, I never went to the park with mommy unless other friends accompanied us. The park or rather this part of the park which was its southernmost tip, in my mind the boot of Italy, bordered on a line of almost white expensive residences and hotels. Differently colored cars whirring back and forth separate the residential buildings from the park. There was a lake and ducks. On the far side of the lake, luxuriant dark greens brown. I can't get over to the luxury. I sit on a large rock. The rock's not large enough to be a hill. It's large enough to have two holes to crawl within, not really into, and to climb for five minutes. Three roads,

one dirt and two asphalt-and-stepped, swerve through the short dog-shit-covered grass, down to it. I'm sitting on top of the rock and looking across the lake, to my right so far in the distance I don't know if it really exists there's a carnival. During one winter, when it's very cold, I can skate on this lake which has grown very small which snow surrounds. A small brown terrier has placed his butt on the Northeast end of the lake. Two and three foot high ridges of snow surround the lake. There aren't any children here as there are in the other park. At this time, I liked this park better than the other park. Then my grandmother would take me back to her hotel room.

Everything's alive.

When I was older, a boyfriend would walk with me through other parts of this park. No, first I went to school. When they couldn't drag us for exercise on the chilliest coldest fall days out to the level short green hockey fields way uptown, they took us for a treat to the part of the park nearest the school. Several asphalt and dirt paths of varying widths having absolutely no order crossed here the quickly changing growths of trees still thickly-green-leaved high among densely green valleys not big enough to be valleys and curving like eye contact lenses; I remember metal statues of Alice-in-Wonderland and the Caterpillar-on-the-Mushroom my boyfriend who was bearded and I would crawl under, ladies in precisely tailored suits walked their dogs, near one of the long rough stone walls that separated this park from the very wealthy residential and religious buildings was a park only children under a certain age played.

Only spaces in which I can lose myself whether I'm now sensibly perceiving or remembering interest me. It's because I live to fill a certain dream. I have penetrated to the innermost center of this dream. The center has three parts.

1. My most constant childhood experience is pain.

No, no knowing, just the present. A wholly unfruitful solution to the problem but all fruit these days is death, no as I grow older I don't think it's any worse or better now than before historically for humans I don't know I know less and less as I get older, the flight into sabotage and anarchism. The same sabotage of social existence is my constantly walking the city my refusal to be together normal a real person: because I won't be together with my mother. I like this sentence cause it's stupid.

2. Who do I know? I go over this question again and again because the people I know in this world are my reality stones. I know Peter and David and Jeffrey, and secondarily Betsy, and lots of other people whom I only half know. Peter and David who live together half of each of them is my grandmother. They have a small three-room apartment. They have certain nice belongings. They're proud of their living. They live more quietly than the people in the neighborhood they live in do and the people they know who are mainly rock-n-roll stars. I often debate with myself whether they're kind or not.

They're my closest friends. Sometimes I start to cry cause I feel so glad and lucky I know them and have been admitted into their hearts this feeling is almost too much so I say to myself you're just transferring your need for the affection you're not getting from a boyfriend. Lacking a boyfriend's one of the many thoughts society's taught me. All the thoughts society's taught me're judgemental, usually involving or causing self-dislike, imprisoning, and stopping me. When I just let what is be what is and stop judging, I'm always happy. Peter and David are two of the most happy people I know.

I got a cat this week, but the minute the cat kitten long light dark gray black white hairs hints of brown pale blue gray green eyes jumps into my house I can't give this much affection the kitten torn away from its mother demands something mental in me rends, I don't want to love inappropriately, I'm too something to be touched. I invent an allergy and run the cat back to its mother.

3. I didn't know anything about death (the first time I experienced death and saw a dead person it was my suicided mother when I was an adult) nor about poverty. The first time the word 'poverty' meant anything to me (to understand this word I had to wait until I was judging my experience and not just experiencing), I thought I was poor because I had less than the girls in my grade who were of my class and because my boyfriend in the fancy nightclub to which he had taken me said, "Tell your mother to get you a nice dress," and I knew she would never. In college I learned for the first time that my family was rich. (How does the word 'poverty' differ from the word 'death'?) Does this kind of knowledge which is really only belief change my actual experiences? Of course:

I'm making my dream. The mappings, the intertwinings, so hopefully there'll be losing, loosings, my mother said I hate you.

Let the rocks come tumbling out. Move crack open the ice blocks. You hurt me twice. No one hurts me twice, bastard. You said "Don't talk to me again" and "I'm saying this for no reason at all." First off (in time), after six years of living with me one night you said, "This is it." I said that I didn't know it had been getting so bad and could I have one more chance and you said no. My whole life busted itself. I recovered almost I almost didn't I do everything you want I always have, to, of, from, for I love you you don't love me. One month ago you said, "I don't want to be friends with you any longer." This time I was innocent. You've hurt me again, I want you to know this time really badly. I don't understand how someone can be such a shit as you are. I think you are really evil. No one hurts another person for no reason at all. No one believes in him- or herself so totally, the other person has absolutely no say no language. This' how this country's run.

The media's just one-way language so the media-makers control.

I'm diseased. I hate you. There's this anger hot nauseating in me that has to seep out then destroy.

I hate the world. I hate everyone. Every moment I have to fight to exert my will to want to live. When I lived with a man, I was happy. I always was miserable. I like banging my head into a wall. I'm banging my head my head into a wall.

One might generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. Meaning, for example: a book no longer has anything to do with literary history so the history of literature you're taught in school is for shit. The art work's no longer the one object that's true; sellability and control, rather than truth, are the considerations that give the art object its value. Art's substructure has moved from ritual and truth to politics.

Meanwhile this society has the hype: the artist's powerless. Hype. Schools teach good writing in order to stop people writing whatever they want the ways they want. Why do I like banging my head into, against the wall? I always have. I could go stand by your door and ring the doorbell. This is what I think every day: I'm going to phone him. No; he told me he didn't want to speak to me again. I shouldn't want someone who needlessly hurts me because such a situation hurts me. You haven't liked me for a year. You only talked to me when you wanted my money so I hate you. But that's the way you are with everybody because you're crazy because you're so scared. You think when you're hurting someone more than anyone would normally (maybe my idea of 'normal' is incorrect) the person is irredimably hurting you, because you're so coked up. As I walk along each street I think: I can do whatever I want so I'll walk to your apartment and ring the doorbell. My attention's distracted from this by wanting a mystery book. I walk out of the bookstore. I don't care enough about you now to experience your hatred of me again and I'm proud of me for sidestepping my masochism my masochism.

By not getting in touch with you I'm keeping this situation alive. I'm keeping this situation alive because there's no one alive who physically loves me. This' false. When I was in highschool, unlike the other kids (I went to an all-girls' school), I was never in love. I didn't feel I-didn't-know-what-it-was for boys; I just liked sex. I crave sex.

Presumably, without intending it, he issued an invitation to a far-reaching liquidation. Now I want to give you an analogy. A painter represents or makes (whichever verb at this moment you prefer) reality by keeping distant from it and picturing it totally. A cameraman, on the other hand, permeates with mechanical equipment what he's going to represent, thus for the sake of representation changes break up. Reproducible art breaks up and ruins.

I must give people art that demands very little attention and takes almost nothing for me to do.