

Naked Launch

by John Olson

I enjoy launching words into space. Please dangle a moment here while I prepare the next sentence. Ok. You can come in now. Take boiling for instance. And hawsers. The sound of words on a sheet of paper. The manifesto for a roll of sleep. Sleep is oblivious to itself, which makes it sleep, and not contemplation. Writing is more like the arithmetic of drums on a tongue of metal. Write a letter to God and see if he writes back. For the air is gentle today and there isn't a document in sight. Chintz is occasioned by retail. The guns down there in the water are anybody's guess. But the air, the air just keeps on being air. And at room temperature, too! That's right. Scarlet Johansson in the Tate Modern. Can you believe it? I feel like a thread going into the eye of a needle. The park is changed into crystals. Thinking is steam, all vapory and luminous and smeared with experience. So that it becomes writing, more writing, as if writing were this phenomenal dance of peculiar hormones, heat on a headlight. Fold the air into words and what you get is birds and prepositions. A description of elephants bathing in the Zambesi. I regret this hypothesis, but require it for rattling abstractions at you. Words in relation to other words. The vividness of fingers. The chemistry of music. A deity in watercolor. Three quarts of daylight and a Sunday overflowing with ideas of flight. Ok I'm flashing now. I'm ready. Ready for gravity. For free will. For the surf in your mouth. The addictions we share. The addictions to come. Definitions for the sound of the voice as it passes through a series of letters spelling iodine. I'm so wet now I can feel the octopus grope for its subject. Hyphenations of silver in the estuary dusk. Voices tumbling through coincidences of corn. Anonymity, blood, and horn. Choristers, ditty bags, and porn. You name it. I will launch it. Shove into the air. Pronounce it. Announce it. Bounce it. Pounce it. Flounce it. Spread it with mayonnaise. Add a tomato or two. There's a universe out there, you know? And until we receive further instructions, I'm going to go on assuming that poetry still bears

some relevance to life. How else float a thought? You need a medium of some sort. So here it is: the foment of a moment, words that grip the air and shake it into a yurt. Something with snow and altitude, like Colorado. Mustangs insinuating dirt.

