

cuneus + forma

by Brian McCabe

I

A shame that selfsame vehicle that spirits us away
to the factories of monotony should likewise serve to drag us
backwards to guilt or should that guilt construct
factories of its own spewing virulent pollutants

into waterways and oceans resulting in thermostatic
heating and ice cap melt then much further in debt
we'd find ourselves there estranged from us and thus
restrained under the shadowy weight of six figures

accumulated like a cloud over time, our phantom, our
financial freak-out sending us back to rethink energies
inspiring in the first place without which we wouldn't
be ourselves yet without which it need not be figured

Under the arrangement of digits that flummox
and annoy us, below the loyalty to moneyed surplus
what we become is that which threatens to destroy us
like an ear hears buzzing oceans within a shell

the warnings we fear are the selfsame ones of ourselves
of our vertical need to be first to the heights redoubling
its intractable charm of production— our inheritance

II

United we stand on top of old laws in search of new laws
the way building the Tower of Babel was a group effort

and our dumb charms remind us we're smaller than the sky

disorganized and selfishly dragging us forward toward
the empty soapbox face that stands in a crowded hall
sad as Eros, builder of cities writing upon city walls

hoping out of consensus emerges a new new: between
here and now and global hysteria imagine these pieces of past
present and what's next to come to be building a new new

the bee dreams-up the flower, the flower dreams-up the bee
but neither bee nor flower dreams-up a statue to Liberty
Or the unfunny kicker that the more money money needs

from us the more monotony likewise serves to employ us
against which our calculations suggest launching headlong
into selfhood to make room for reconsideration or re-

calculation: a new voice dipping back to a different
time when villagers baked bricks for a building and hand
stacked stones one by one, Earth's rich resources inspired

construction, reed fringed streams cut across the land
where fruits and vegetables grew, one by one the civilization
between the rivers absorbed nutrients of the land

Wedge and shape pressed messages for materials
into clay tablets and writing was formed & fastened
to the human animal, ancient Mesopotamians thus

constructed one voice still withdrawing deeper into our mind's
gullible echo chamber sounding a hope for new beginnings
which when you consider it, is ubiquitous in any case

III

Try and say it the way it is

Try to remember how it was

Speak without façade
about the thing as it appears

in the city, town, suburb, farm or field, meadow

On a dirt road in Missoula, look at the mountain
and see how it never stays the same

an axe in Chile strikes against anthracite
maybe to replace skyscraper steel

business is booming at the university
drawing is dead, take shelter

Look at a building
see the structure set

free

against its backdrop

enter the building
a view through roof truss
between a sleeping loft and gallery
a blind, gigantic space

or a domain of sticks

and wires

a room on its way to

becoming another

room

exists in a perpetual
state of construction— ragged exterior and roof bending
down to become a floor—
unfixed, unfinished

dizzies from within;
exhausts

temporal disequilibrium

Entropy pulls together the materials

Remember history
symmetrically mirrored

forget the future

Don't

The building is a figment of the imagination
that is also tangible—

outside you get

The further inside you go, the further

There is only ever what actually happens

Every building imagines a city

See the building is a
verb

