

Playing the Form

James Maughn



Dusie Kollektiv

Embusan Press

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Dusie Kollektiv 2011/Embusan Press

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DUSIE

*Thanks to Susana Gardner and all the members
of the 2011 Dusie Kollektiv*

This Book is for Louis Jemison

Playing the Form

This first

pass

in

breath

Out

in

That settles it. You lift, and the room
lifts with you. Lock the song
in without a key:

The barest hour a day can spare,
and notes bespeak
a continuous gap to gather in.

So mark now a moving
target. Taut in secret, leave a
quiver in strictest confidence, arrow.

Drop in your tune when she appears.
Full-body apparition in un-
punctuated apparel.

The whole moves through pieces,
each piece burdened
with the weight of empty spaces.

Wretched is no way
to get below a surface: name
your price, or a member of the family.

Either direction requires sinking, be it
you're skybound or earthen.

Like excavating

a lightning rod while banks of
silver line the horizon:

Feed's a thing you are trying to

get off of, isn't it?

No art can afford a class

in its name. Get up, out, in and down.

Bring a bell or a bird to bear. Grasp
a comet by its crosshairs.

Who am I to

dismantle a force of habit? *I don't
know, and you don't*

either. If I give ground, it's phrased

as a verb, otherwise

no agnostic impulse registers.

We're here, where we find ourselves.

We're left sitting hard in bumper cars.
Momentum's forward but
not in your face.

Whatever a tide turns, it doesn't rush.
There's no where to go
where it isn't already. Ballast keeps

it all below the waterline.
Like Death says, it's a lifetime.
Know the art: Where your pulse stops.

Another turn to turn into now, trans-
form or fix, peristalsis
my waltz, catching

your tale in the seam. A space grows
between parenthesis.
Expands, contracts; follows a thought

to the tips of fingers.

A single coil uncoils, all at one.

The current runs from ground to sky.

Sky to ground: Sand fused to glass
records the bolt. You're left
free to imagine what-

ever the wave will mean, even as
the point gives up
a space to pivot on. You'll get it, or

not- just as likely it's
another you you're in for.
You bite the tail of all that nourishes.

To scry a serpent's too full of portent.

A one-dimensional metaphor,

built back to front.

Mobius never went undreamt of.

Some miles to go.

I slip the noose into my open hand.

I'm still unwinding.

I'll go on unwinding until

enough votes are tallied to condemn me.

What it isn't is a matter of time. Infinity's
easy enough to draw; use
any local implement.

Just don't count on it. Animals you meet
are only animals.

Don't read by that light, if you'd like

see your surroundings.

High times in sub-alpine terrains.

Keep one eye off the path, one eye on.

Gather your lilies where ye may, tiger.
Dimmed in canopy shade;
put a hole down

where light won't reach, dragged
oh and dreadful in
wounded climes- see when you drop

we all drop with you;
tall bird a bit out of season-
gain me a muse sharp beak in the ear.

A little outside normal procedure,
snake up the switch-
back and saddle your pony even while

you sit. Close that gate behind you,
or leave it slightly open;
the next passerby may have something

to whisper. Lend me
a year, I'll make this climb
clear from cloudbank to cloudbank.

Try to experience your way out of this.

A sky hangs by a thread;

watchhands go

their separate ways. Around the axis,

let doubts re-

assert themselves. You never were here,

were you, Tiger?

Note sent c/o the dead-

letter office, Rose is a ruse is a rose, right?

A bout of one-off small engine noise flies
an amphibious two-step to
touch the water

one wing at a time. Rumours don't
do justice to
how little the return determines the risk

each of us is pre-
pared to take. Lift the roof
off the lean-to. Drive out any simian urge.

Adjustments figure into my happy accident.
Half-baked fortune in every
precarious response.

I'm all angles, all ears. Flight's not an easy
instinct to admit.

We quit our high-tension wire act. Migratory

trapeeze. Mistake

what you cross for a divide.

Touch down and immediately begin to dive.

Each twist screws down the question in tow.
One head in hand, or one
hand overhead.

All this rain makes the instrument moody.
Tune the neck to
fret in time with the downpour's crescendo.

Notes are picked
out of the air. The foot falls
where it will. Finally finished getting even.

No visual precedent for the bird I'm seeing.

Not even sure you are here,

how can I go on

looking? How am I the only feature marked

on this map? Turn,

too. Ratchet up the inward gaze. Bound for

another twist at

the spigot. Well, it runs dry.

If we each take a wing maybe we'll get a name.

May be that clouds part before they roll in.
Pencil in a rainy-day excursion
to chanterelles and

let this slow ark right itself. Two of what-
ever lists to one side.
What I will take on from here's water only.

Prescription for just
such double-or-nothing hail-
mary thunderclaps. Ballast's anything on board.

Rigging drifts in the current's grip and —gasp—
the kick-back is kicked up
and out of the field.

Swivel in time to match a cavalcade of dodgy bit
players. Premium's set
to *call back* at this number; gentlemen, start your

wishbone prying. We
all want the bird to be spit-
take, level; open to all. To (call it) air is human.

Witness the hurried rush; try and go to ground.

Gravitas isn't the same as

gravity, always—

anyway, when the head's missing, the wings still

beat the body a-

loft. The question isn't where are we headed,

but what will we

take along with us when

we go? You're resplendent in your soupcan, yes?

Wait for the machine to cut off before you
wring the new neck in.

Help's on the way—

there is no need to speak volumes; mod-
ulate your tremor
and buildings fall all on their own accord.

implicit in grace in-
fractions; you won't miss
your demeanor once you're shown the door.

See it? My feet complete a slight-of-hand
on the way to gang-
plank. Free

to be you; and me, I'm none and parallel
to the deck. Brazen.

De-mask the loudspeaker to see the boy

behind. It's curt-
ains for you, my trans-
parent friend. No way 'round but through.

Dynamite in your cigar case; we die as drawings do, failing in the wrong light. Take from my

clock a number to see you by, have a seat while the dawn-ing recalibrates. I need only a minute over

the allotted time.

Ground ran out some few yards back. Use the anvil to cushion your fall.

Get beneath the groundswell and press out.

Strike-slip, heave, throw-

oh bleak returns

on mutual investments— I've been served

my papers, and

I've served them, clean. Let the trembling

commence, let

slip the girded plates: I hold

back, so no single line can fault me. Shake.

Until the ghost resumes her sentence, and
animals stand for nothing
but what form

spills into as it opens a more discursive
stream, let rest
zero out the account, and the mountain

yield my time
to the floor. Books settle
without you being there to balance them.

Brush aside what I apparently cannot say.

If the foot fits, why not

walk with it

lodged snug in my gullet, my tongue atlas-

ed to nether-

reaches I nevertheless stake my claim to.

A mouthful's

enough to go on, today.

Songbird's beak peaks between my teeth.

Putting piecemeal through its paces. Happen-
stance passes between
well-trodden

ranges. This driver doesn't do change, be
exact when-
ever possible. Currency's losing out to history.

One of us is
bound to be right
here. Lash yourself down; I'll do the singing.

By which means I mean a fiction. Necessity

or not: One more me

I must for now

insist on. Patient in that there's a table, waiting.

The inevitable

bad news. There's no all of it to be had here.

Implements for

divining on a silver tray:

No answer, for now, stands in for the wrong one.

No quick startle if the touch is soft. What you
wait for is under the skin;
a telltale twitch

or a buzz in the air before lightning strikes.
The beast ex-
tends out from you, but not always so easily.

A quiver runs
the colt's whole length.
Ground yourself. Count between sight and sound.

It's not what you know. You can be confident
in that, at least. River or
butterfly, your

instructions couldn't be clearer. It must be you,
who contends
with these currents. Don't poke air holes into

the house when
a creature's inside. Cut
out windows before there's anything to look at.

What would be better would be to move into
each corner simultaneously.

Vacate only

the barest middle, as if the spine were suddenly
excised, with no
loss of function. As it is, I can't stop following

the barber's pole
as it leaves the scene per-
petually. I'm high in the discredited aether.

A permanent fixture in flux; haiku-like in
its elliptical skip from point
to point to point.

Riot's cued for its act, flummoxed as only
a fan can blow it.
Snatch your leave from the pressure to stay.

A one-time-only
treat from the treasurehouse:
My pleasure to see you safely on your way.

Move almost immediately into the forecast.

A high-pressure system; head

winds in hand with

the cumulative mass of the body's hurtling

sidelong and symp-

athetic. Let's declare a moratorium on that

empty-headed place-

holder, that misfired synapse.

We mean well, but when has that stopped us?

Everything's slow and easy, the perfect species
to invade an island sanctuary.

Unspool a native-

born food chain, bird in name only, your hand's
lost it's grip on
the fragile egg, so quick and so fully digestable.

Open the ribs to
bridge between branches. If
it's a tree, it stands to reason. It must be family.

Locked out of the monkey house, & headfirst—
game to say genealogy's not all
that keeps the river

in its bed. That's one for the album, one eye's
socketed and lit
from some other source. Pell mell, but imper-

ceptiably: Cloud
the mirror with a marine layer.
When the ego dies, it takes a little of you with it.

Quiet now, the trip's not round but still it circles.

Spoke the wheel, and we listened.

The story's on a rock

outside the door. Whisk water away from a central
chamber, curvilinear

ornament, serpentiniforms and dots-in-circles. Be

an unhesitating on-

rush with no need to be hurried.

Arrow, on your way: Now we're getting somewhere.

Egress and in a way a bird evoked but present elsewhere. The jungle always encroaches, how other-

wise can one person be? Doubts entertain themselves, without assistance-- there's no limit to the fun that can be had.

No. I never did intend to join in chorus, did I? Spring's underheel. First to return, the *it* that settles.

Playing the Form is the first section of a three-section book in which the poem engages with my practice of the internal arts of Pa Kua, Hsing I, and Tai Chi Chuan, as taught in the system of ShorinjiRyu by O'Sensei Richard Kim. The 108 stanzas in *Playing the Form* correspond to the 108 movements of the long form of the Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. Each poem was written after my daily practice of the Tai Chi form, and after study of each of the 108 movements.