

Mani RAO

1. POEMS FROM THE MANUSCRIPT GHOSTMASTERS

Airing at a sniff

Easy in the envelope of your hands
Rewinding to the memoir
The glyph in your graze

Rrrrip
Rrrrip
Rrrrip

E a s y I said to the deaf habit of a jawdisc
What's the hurry
The season sprawls

My fiber was coarse
All five: flavor color odor vibre texture

We ran amok dusting air unsettling
And now bereft jumped on the moon
Straycow
Honeybell
What else to do but ruminare

Come graze ghost bees
About time

_(Published in XCP 2007)

Lookout

Hiding in a tree trunk
Looking through the hollows
Firs in new wedding gowns
Fire budding Christmas trees

It was the trees jangling interior bangles
Tigers striped past silently
Rugs on the floor of salvation wood

The first time I saw ginseng I understood the body to be root
Until a slice of what I could only call steakwood

The river swears it's blue
Will carry you across

Soon as you leap in
Fast moving coils
Who said the python's dead

Where is the hatch
Somewhere here but giant roots flowed over
Is it sealed
Bloody me
Will we keep

Gone too far free out at sea why does the water wave as if pining for the ties of Shiva's
braids
The tangles at the fountainhead
From here
The view of the dance

(First published in Fourth River, 2006)

Worker

Pressed poet
Having to thing poems
The lights are off
Speak in your own person

Anon – Nonym – Nymous
Strong Weak Relative Nons
Us Them Impersonyms
Hate Like Ignoronymous

Many master words

Poet – pretender
Light – thunder

Permit no ambit
Even loser's glory

Humility:
Prolog's cunning
Epilog's arrogance

Stay young fox don't learn panic

That I think it is not to be feared does not mean I don't fear it. I used to be someone. I placed so much value on it I acted humble, prefacing the admission of my fortune with 'undeserved'. How low an opinion I had of myself that I became satisfied.

Art Artifice log away

(First published in Tinfish, 2008)

Drought

Fruit dump under the tree
Smarting tender
Under the sore why-me look
A drool bedding noodle soup
Worm hitch

Wriggling gone from the grass no winds frisk

Collecting dry rivers
Seas

The sea was no slake
Cracked continent's crustaceous parts drifted upcreek

Said salt of the earth
Tastes like mud
Looks like chocolate

Outgrown the fish juts
Glacier not much more than a hat tipsy on a lite draught

Blood thirsty stalks faint streets

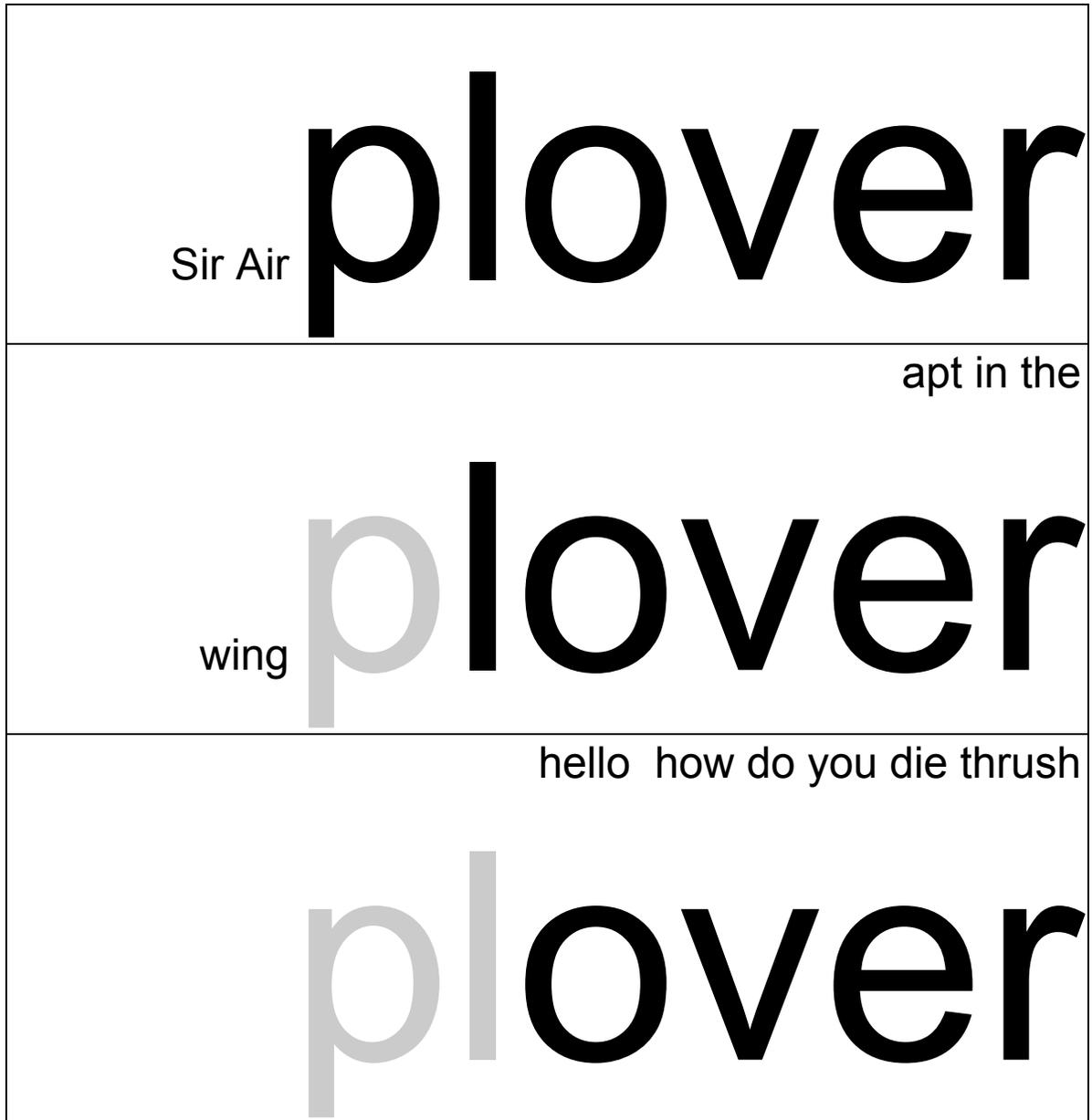
Air wavers at mouth
Toothless the well caves in

Lips do not blossom even if they meet

The speed with which air avages the plump
Yah Yah The eerious ways of god
Hot baker's fleur de mal

(First published in HOW2journal, 2006)

2. EXCERPT FROM *LORINE NIEDECKER CONDENS* - a poem made of Lorine Neidecker's words (to be published in Interim, 2010)



(to be published in Interim, 2010)

EXCERPT FROM A TRANSLATION OF THE POEM BHAGAVAD GITA

- 1.1 dhrtrashtra to sanjaya:
 & when it came to that
 might right face-off
 what happened who
 did what
- 1.2 duryodhana took in the
 enemy line up & said
 to dronacharya:
- 1.3 no thanks to you prof.
 trained by you dhrstadyumna
 chief of the other side
 has put it together
- 1.4-1.6 a who's who
 of heroes
