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2016



The Great Expanse

Fabrice Poussin
Photograph



New Snows

**Fabrice Poussin
Photograph**



Don't Drink The Water

Fabrice Poussin
Photograph



High Desert

Fabrice Poussin
Photograph



Sunset

**Fabrice Poussin
Photograph**

RHODODENDRON

Many think of lovers as light
wingless nymphs in blue shade
beneath tall trees
but they are salt
born and needle
leaves



Rhododendron

**S.B. Ferguson
Mixed Media Collage**

ONION

Grow

from winter

for winter



Onion

**S.B. Ferguson
Mixed Media Collage**



BEGONIA

Tender inch of light

feeding what has grown

barren



begonia

**S.B. Ferguson
Mixed Media Collage**

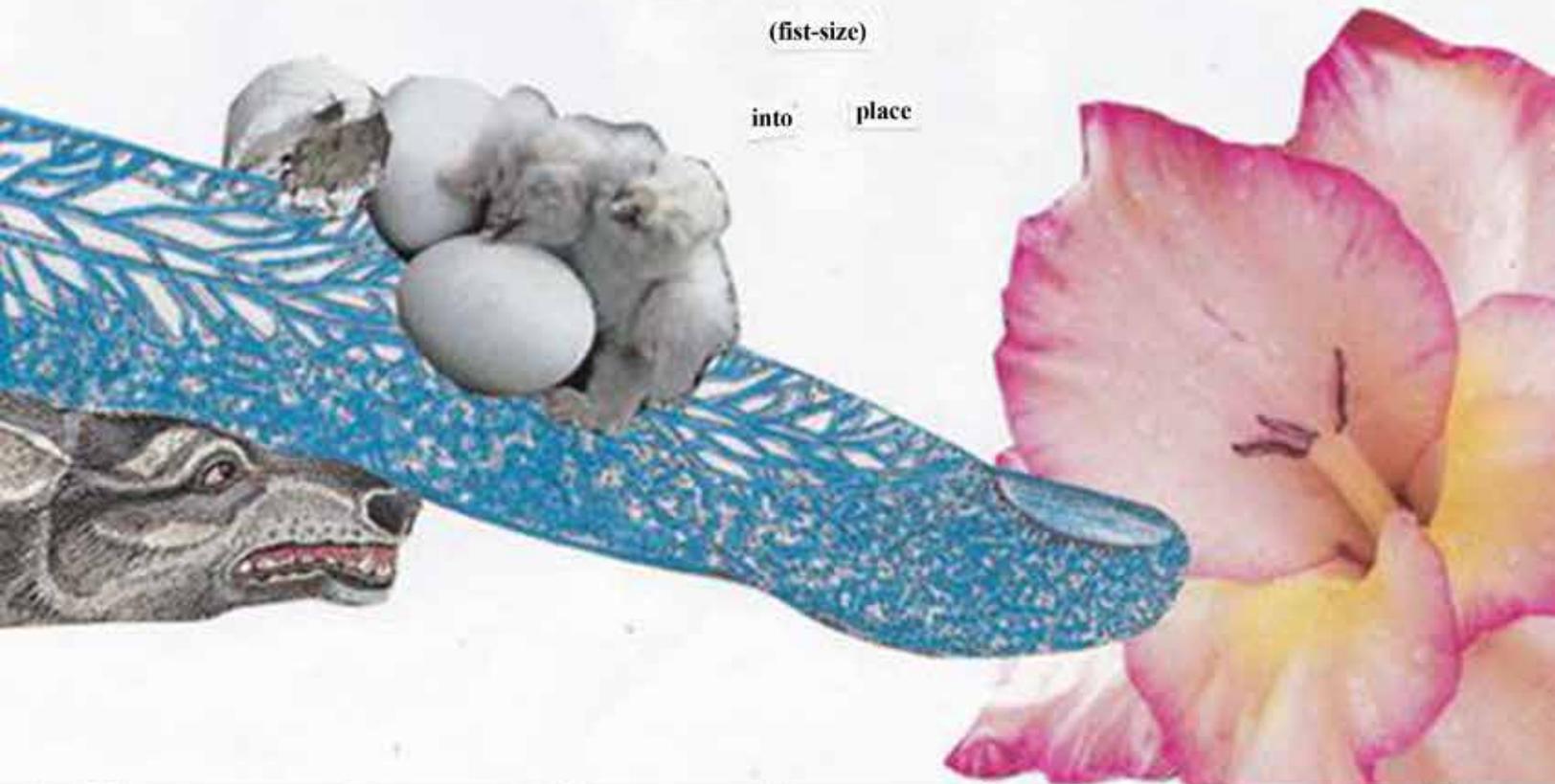
GARLIC

F or mother I fall

apart

(fist-size)

into place



Garlic

S.B. Ferguson
Mixed Media Collage

Charlie Parker

Charles Bakes

March 12, 1955 music died: no American Pie.

Birdland became black as coal and rain streamed from its former blue awning,
no longer painted with the seemingly endless walls of sound and colors
that you sang when the red-orange glow reached Eastern Harlem.

A deafening lullaby echoed off of the tattered cobblestone walkways of 11th street where you had
once seemed to effortlessly soar.

The stern lines in all of the birdwatcher's faces suddenly
became painted with the blues, corroding away the mass confusion and judgement
from a misunderstood melody like sulfuric acid to flesh.

Burning poetry poured like a waterfall from Ginsberg's mouth
as you lie with your wings bandaged

in some decaying hotel suite contemplating anything but Jazz.

Here, the pounding vessel in your blue breast ceased to move.

You began to fade into slumber, and as the fluid in your eyes boiled like forgotten water over fire,
the last strain in your breath composed from the cirrhosis in your liver;
the last friend you saw was the needle in your wing.

Hand in hand we flooded New York City with Camels and marijuana protruding from our dry lips.

We inscribed the phrase "Bird Lives," on every form of
storefront, sidewalk, rooftop, and juke joint that coerced our bloodshot eyes until
a supernatural darkness hung high over our unwashed heads.

We, your disciples—your children born in the cold of New York flats
gave birth to grief in the woodland borough of Central Park, March 12, 1955.

Red eyes calmed with a flood of eulogy escaping the immense depths of Diz's
not-so-forgotten friend.

Chanting, singing, screaming,

"Bird Lives."

America 2010

Charles Bakes

America, I am giving you all I am, and now I have nothing.
America, seven dollars and fifteen cents January 17th, 2010
I don't like myself, prescribe me some Adderol or Valium
I don't want to take pills, can I smoke it instead?
I only write poetry when my breath tastes like the inside of a Jim Beam bottle;
whiskey bubbles tickle Jew noses
America, why did you respond to Ginsberg's questions with 50 years of television and ass shaking?
America, you're beautiful when no one is looking
America, you're not dead yet-
Quit talking peace and do something about it.
America, when will my friends quit being raped with assault weapons?
America, I'm tired;
I need caffeine.
America, who is John Cena?!
Seriously, who is John Cena?!
America, the crumbling book depository has water flowing through the bolted doors,
but I looked away, I need this new Iphone
America, you were angelic-
filled with trees and a lack of Monsanto.
America, when did you start lying barren-ass for the rest of the world to see?
I thought that was a pleasure reserved for your tenants.
At least prostitutes get paid for their work,
America, you're an exhibition.
America, I went to the parish to become a saint and your sister asked if I wanted a dance.
America, I'll pay my rent next month, get off my back.
America, have you seen politicians wipe their veal-covered faces with the Bill of Rights?
Bill of Wipes.
Bill of Whites.
America, I forgot which one it is.
Talk to me America, I just got texting.
America, I still believe in you.
Do you believe in me, America?
America, do you remember when it used to snow in the winter?

Weep for me, America-
A Muslim looked at me funny
Them towel-heads a'comin to make us go boom!
And Trump says they're comin' to get us
America, we gotta drop the A-bomb on dem sonsabitches.
Fuck me? No, fuck you.

Ah fuck it.

America, have you ever had FROYO?

I miss trees and fresh air, America.

I wish I knew what plum-blossoms were, or how to read the newspaper.

America, I want to go to school-

I dream of becoming a Youtube star.

America, you ain't scared of dem big niggers no mo, right?

I gots to get good with God, America.

My neighbors beat me when I don't pray

Did you hear the rapture finally came?

It only took those who read their Quran every night.

Does Barack read to you when the toupee monsters breathe fire under your bed, America?

Anonymous, save us!

Maybe, I'll defect to Canada.

I hear they got snow and everything up there.

The grass is always greener on the other side.

America, I cry when I watch the Notebook.

America, Elton John came out of the closet, maybe you should too.

There's a needle in my arm, America, but I like to read Weber when I'm high.

Mysticism died with Jazz

Jazz began dying with Duke

I'm dying now.

America, did you hear about this Hitler guy?

I'm begging you.

Fox news is the last thing I want to watch

I do it every day

Woody Guthrie is dead.

America, what's a library?

I heard they were cool before the internet and cat memes.

America, I like to make funny faces at babies.

Sodomy is a way of life now, America.

I can't sit down, I'm too sore

Alice's son sold me a joint when they closed her restaurant.

I was thrown in jail the same day for indecent exposure when I tried to pay at Starbucks with change.

America, I work 72 hours a week;

I have two dollars to my name.

America, I'm sorry,

I can't stop complaining or apologizing.

I'm sorry.

America, when were you silly?
I hear you weep at night when I can't sleep.
No one knows who Rockefeller is
America, why didn't you save Columbine?
America, why did you feed the hungry with firearms?
America, protect Syrians!
America, I'm not me when I am sober.
America, I bought an AR-15 out of a vending machine with my Visa card at school today
America, feed my kids
America, I don't wanna work.
America, I don't want my calloused hands to be for nothing.
My heart is callous too, but you can't see it.

America, I used to play with the black boy down the street,
his momma would say funny things and feed us
succulent, maple glazed pig's feet.

She was an angel and would sing the siren's song
I could tell she was sad.

America, why did you hang her?

Why did your children not give a fuck when they
beat Matthew Sheppard with the wooden butts of rifles?

Why did my parents cry more
when they saw me give my first
boyish kiss, than when my black friend died?

America, would you have cared if he was white?

America, I'm not sorry

I'm angry.

I'm tired.

I'm weak.

I'm poor.

I'm hungry.

Torn, battered, bruised, beaten, cut- sleeping on a bed of razor blades is less painful
than listening to your bullshit, America.

Or paying for gasoline.

America, I remember reading you for the first time
as a wide-eyed young man,
uncomfortable in his skin, and gassy-green environment;

I wept a solemn trickle,
because I knew

You were beautiful.

You were Angelic.

America, I am pissing on your rotten soil now,

and I hope you are ashamed of my yellow piss-pools
I won't fight a war I don't believe in,
neither should you
I'll starve before I go knowledge-hungry.
I'll take my schizophrenic work boots & sociopathic tendencies,
over your sympathies any day.
America, I have to go into work now,
so I can afford to not live.
I'll tuck you in if I get home.
America, my shoulder is to the wheel,
where is your's?

Dance for Your Self

Reinfred Adde

When the ball beckons,
you must dance. No, not
with a loved one or a friend.
No, not that kind of ball.
You must dance, not with, but against.
You must dance against adversity
for, given the chance, It will
surely dance against you and perish
you without having been opposed.
No, dignity must be yours. You must fight
the monster.

First you will both start in the
center circle, territory equally
divided, one half yours, the other
half its. On equal footing and
on neutral ground you will be, but this
will not last long. For It is a ravenous
beast, seeking to mutilate and seize
all ground for itself
and leave all behind in its terror.
It will dance, wrenching the lead from
you and forcing you to merely react
to its footwork. It will quickly
deflect the efforts of your
attackers. Then It will sashay
and weave through your
middlemen--your middle enforcers.
With the appalling flames of its
dominance fully burning now, It
will taunt and draw you to the
edges of your dominion. It then
experiments with fanciful pirouettes,
clipping your wings and pinning them
to your sides. In your territory proper,
It will have a difficult time ravaging
the last of your defenses. But in time It will,
feinting its moves and causing
your defenders to falter out of

step and out of synch with It.
With this sea parted, It encroaches.
With soul-dampening laughter, It approaches.
And now all you have left is your hope.
Your hope is always your last fighter,
the last to succumb. Standing sentry now,
guarding all that you cherish, hope waits.
And as It strikes that disheartening blow,
hope then dances too, making a leap
of acrobatic proportions to stop
the cannon ball from breaking you. But
as it sometimes does, hope can
only watch as the cannon ball buckles
you down.
And it unleashes a most ferocious laugh.

But dance you must, for the fight
is not yet over. You must pick up
yourself and reassemble. With experience
now your ally, you must move.
Everyone has a part to play in the dance:
hope swings and sways in synchronized step
to a new battle plan. Your defenses now
emboldened, give courage to your wings
to unfurl and take flight. Every step
learned, practiced, and now, replicated
to excellence. An arabesque of the soul.
Your middlemen now, with technique
oh so precise and automatic, signal
to your frontline attackers to
strike. The cannon ball is fired
but as you will it to do some
damage, He palms it in one sinister
hand and hurls it back into your
territory, at your feet.
She gives you a mocking smile,
challenging you to make a bolder move.

You must persevere. It will not
do to give up, finding comfort in
the thought that you at least made
an effort to make him benign. This will
only give her more power to attack you

with crippling malice on her mind.
With your newfound wisdom, you
can maneuver your arsenal in
new and innovative ways.
Dance. Your whole army will dance.
Choreographed steps, improvised steps.
En avant here, en arrière there,
côté de in between.
Now you're in the lead. You must
dictate every move so that They
can only struggle to keep up.
You, graceful, en pointe.
You, moving with all the ballon
in your being, will move into
their territory and back them into
an inescapable corner.
Syncopated, you move no fé.
Corta-a-jaca. Separa-o-visgo. Apanha-o-bag.
Nothing can stop you now. You can
mix and match your weapons,
deploying them as you see fit.
They cannot stop you, They will
be defeated.
Bolio, salida, ocho, giro.
You summon your feet to make
these movements and then there
you are facing them. Just as They
had faced you when They delivered that
mighty blow.
And now all They have left to defend
them is your fear of them. But
you don't have that anymore.
You strike. The cannon ball hits
them in the heart. They fall.
You strike another cannon ball for
good measure, there's nothing They
can do to stop its fury.
This time, you hit them in the head.
Gone are the days of their terror.

You emerge the victor.
You danced. Against them.
Against her and him. Against its

gloomy presence. Gone are the demons.
They are gone. Gone is the monster.
She is gone, and so is he.
Gone is the oppressive one known as It.
And the taste of the dance's victory
is sweeter than you could ever imagine.
And that is why dignity must be yours
and you must fight that monster.
That is why you must dance against adversity.

So Much Rain Pours These Days

Reinfred Adde

So much rain pours these days
that the green does battle
with the paved world
to see who can contain
the biggest ocean.

The grass stalks, green with
life, wear the clearest and
lightest beads of water as
their pearly prize. And they release
the rest of the drink to their earthy
storage below to be
conjured up later for the reaping.

But the concrete jungle,
black and grey with envy and
not to be outdone, opens
his bosom to the sky and
welcomes its tearful embrace.

And those silky tears he cannot
dress himself with he drinks,
the sidewalk drain the
thirsty maw that gratefully
opens wide for the quench.

We jumped

Reinfred Adde

We jumped. Oh, how we jumped!
Some of us chose to jump as lions,
in one explosive, powerful leap,
muscular and stocky.
Others of us chose to jump as gazelles: a skip, a hop, a jump. Slender and graceful.
Some yet jumped as cheetahs,
wielding the lion's power
yet never taking for granted
the gazelle's grace.

Indeed, we jumped.
We were the kangaroo, the eagle.
We were the grasshopper, the monkey.
The feet of some were swift running birds,
representing an extension of their soul and being.
Some jumped, catapulted by Victory herself,
showing their will for winged flight
that would carry them ever
higher into the sky
before floating them back down so that
they may kiss golden Gea with their feet.

Yes, we jumped.
We jumped into life itself.
For various reasons.
Some did so in order to escape
some long-fought adversity or other.
Others, to advance the promise of a
future of good tidings.
Some who's future was already
secure, with neither adversity to be
escaped from
nor work to do in order to realize their
dreams, still jumped. Still they
jumped, perhaps in
appreciation of life
and in thanksgiving to fate
for the favorable hand
to which they were host.

Soaring, soaring.
Lassoed into the air, as if by
the hands of heavenly citizens themselves.
O oppressive gravity, where are your
shackles? And your anchor? We escaped your
clutches. And in that moment, with our
countenance to the Sun
and with our
faith, pure and raw and strengthened
by the Son, truly then did
we taste bliss unsurpassed.
O oppressive gravity. How we brushed
you aside, only if for a moment.

At the end of our jump,
the end of our road,
the end of us...
we stopped to measure how far
we'd jumped. Our feet back on Eden,
we shared our results
with one another. Some broke through
personal barriers to set new
standards by which to adhere, and some
traversed great and
awesome distances never before
heard of or seen by mortal dust such as we.

Some jumped farther than others
but in the end we all jumped far.
And so, with empathetic
understanding we comfort those
disappointed by the results of
their labor.
And so, with goodwill and
hurrah we congratulate
those who made it the farthest.
And even though some made it farther
than others, because we gave life the
best of our offering, and because we did
so with great dignity, we all
made it far.
And so we will rest in the
thought that, given the choice

to amble or to jump into life,
we chose what not every ephemeral
ash can lay claim to:
we jumped.

Longing

A.M. Clarke

i keep
a light on
for you
quiet voices
follow
each nodding
turn
of an hour

the night
passes cold
between
the ache
of my fingers

Fidelity

A.M. Clarke

the smoke rose
curling silver
your fingers
move a circle
from your eyes
to the burning
point of your
cigarette

somewhere
her silence folds
around the touch
of an ending
sigh

hand falling into
empty hand

Not Quite a Goodbye

A.M. Clarke

i can feel
the turn
of your season
fading

the dull
gathering
of the rain
gives weight
to the bend
of new leaves

Cycles

A.M. Clarke

he eats an orange
every night
before going
to bed

early morning
fades into
the stagnant
ache of summer
he waits

the pitted reflection
of the kitchen window
parts like skin
along the edge
of his knife

Two impressions of Early Summer

A.M. Clarke

dull pink rises
over the growing
weight
of the houses

between
the quiet hours
the morning glories
close their petals
against the evening
rain

6 Months Later

A.M. Clarke

the dogwood trees
are blooming
their petals
tipped in the silver
of the morning
rain

i'm beginning to like
the quiet again
the shifting hands
of the clock
brushing hours
against my shoulder

Outside

A.M. Clarke

soft heels answer
on the sidewalk
i watch the lines
of her hips move
against the shadowed
fabric of her skirt
there's not enough
distance in the brittle
push of early autumn
it shifts the naked
rest of browning leaves
and loves no one

~~(Ars Poetica)~~ Poetry is

Kelley Gillaspay

jacaranda-blue stained sidewalks,
fall bloom. Wildfire-sun (deep red)

horizoned, dusk bruised
into seeded clouds. Origami

flowers mountain pressed
into fingertips. Cities flocked

silver-birds on thrumming electric
wires. Everything breathing

smog-thick Santa-Ana dust.
And wattled towers designed like

barred windows, grated streets
littered with future-sea-glass. Blue

bottled. Gummed-alley spilling
mouth slicked words (saliva-

caravans). Hollyridge letters staked,
visible from Highland, sloped hills

to the valley. Blue-garbled garibaldi.
Baroqued Venice (bridged-canal)

with metered talk, cars lingering
along boulevards. Orange Spanish-

tiled roofs solar-paneled, corrugated
groves. Tide-pools wallowing at low-

tide. Green kelp-bladders bladed
along the shore. And weathered sea-

shells resonating the waves (blood
rushing through ears like traffic,
silent tectonic surges). Language
fronded with Fresnel lenses—blazing.

Manifesto

For J

Kelley Gillaspay

brined throat. words-unformed waves
lapping languidly under the tongue.
bitter eucharist. abbreviated confessions

or the buddhist fast for silence. write the too sweet
overripe apples from the lips,
seeds blooming on the page.
or bitter-your own heart-
blood on typewriter keys. i will become the neutered
noun—

breathless on the last line. cigarettes
burnt to ashed fingertips, inked. cough
the littered languages into dust. breathe
for me.

a poem for you

Kelley Gillaspay

anchored in the thick blood-buzz
zapping like midnight-electric wires in my veins. A dahlia
blooms against the Glasgow grin battered into the heart. Nobody
yet to knock back the numb
caress of your fingers against my thorax.
Xeric desert air stuck as dry panic
directly in my lungs. Who could wish for a tomorrow
wooded the indigo of a desolated
empire? The lover's improv
variably tattooed under lined palms. Kissed into the jawbone
furiously in defeat. And the written tableau
unraveled (of love) is forgotten in disbelief.

Gutted as the fish lying iced in stalls at port
thrust into calloused fingers—nothing
hurts
so much as this—the push
into strangers' hands. Forget me. There are brighter
regions painted with the sky's graffiti.

Just as the needle trembles with animal tranq,
quiver under your own anesthetic. This heart-hadj
kicked from the fringes of the map.
Perfection nonexistent—except as a memory of the curve of your back
lengthened in a stretch across early-coffee-mornings. An echo
of your voice still haunts the thick shadowed corners. That owl-
moan

nestled to the treetops of the sea. Cut the seam
netting the red string to my ankle—an empty freedom
motivated by necessity. Otherwise we'll drown.
Our lives too entangled. You used to call
late into the night to hear the staccato
pacing of my heart. We are the black
knots furrowing into cherry-wood—this death sleep,
quietly nestled in bark. Mornings we'd wake to the DJ
jostling his records on the radio and smell the sug
rioting beneath our window. Now, only juvenile garibaldi
inked with blue dots of depression, we appear
selfish.

Hope your prayers

temper the aching

gathering in the breast bone. The throat,

occipital capillary, constructed as an intricate reef

frustrated with the simple. And you are the haiku

verbally imprinted upon my skin. What is there to believe?

Every mottled memory we rev

with the potential to disaster—the webbed

divide between our fingers. Draw

xylem vessels imprinted on our palms, the toxic

crux

you engendered. Pain as love or the doorjamb

bolstered against hurricanes—a woolen jacket bravely

zippered to wind. And this—the last plumeria

attached to the stem. The final note in our waltz.

Self-Portrait as Long Beach

Kelley Gillaspay

A girl in New Orleans wouldn't believe
me when I said it rains in California.
Twenty days a year mizzle becomes torrents
and the acid washes the enamel from our teeth.

When my father first arrived on the west
coast he choked on the smog he'd never tasted
before. A thick coating of fumes that never
leaves the nostrils, the back of the throat.

There were once flocks of pelicans
that gilded the afternoon sky in gray clouds,
swooping into the life-nets of the ocean.
But sea levels are rising like elevators

and we always get off on the wrong floor.
Don't pretend this is here to Eternity—
that love swells on the shore. Sand
will always stick to uncomfortable places.

(how ocean waves ache like broken bones)

Kelley Gillaspay

Ribs—starched white—
a dead shark washed onto shore
and the boys poking sticks

into the decay. What does a heart
look like after a myocardial infarction?

Like scribbled doctor's notes
on a death certificate? The sun bleaching
newly grown grass over a grave?

We're in a drought—water rationed
into days of dying lawns, dust slicked
cars. And the ocean only blocks away

pretends to be enough—

dried kelp beached
like whales surrendered
by the sea. A blue-ton-heart
with ventricles a grown man
could curl up in, hiding.

The world's loneliest whale
couldn't sing in the right pitch
and lost the ability of language
like the streams of words

we force from our lungs
when they fire twenty-
one bullets into the sky.

Father, forgive me. This poem
wasn't meant to be about you,
but the shark we found on the beach

tail curled into the sand,
boys pushing a decayed heart
towards the stomach. Those organs

that looked like the mottled colors
of the kilt we buried you in. The men
in their matching ties. After the sun
ate the bullets from the sky, drank
the water from your new grass,
we felt like the stingrays curled

under the sand—waiting
for someone to find us.

The Strings of Our Fate

Hunter Lambert

Fate. The very word piques our basic interests
As if some deep longing for control over it
Pushes us to fight for the knowledge
That no person may fully control our actions

So preoccupied with how it correlates
With ourselves that we fail to fully understand
That we are marionettes holding our own strings
Proud that we control our own, yet still not moving

We stand tall against the tides of fate
And proclaim to be captains
Determined to sail our life-ships
To our coveted freedom of fate

Yet here we stand on the arid beach
With only planks of wood in one hand
And the blueprints of a ship in the other
But we drift out to sea holding tight to both,

Too selfish to put our minds together,
And our efforts remain fruitless
But who can blame this generation
Who has always been tested by individual ability?

Are we not free to choose to drown ourselves in ambition?
Eager to ignore the pleas of an older generation,
Who has not only learned by error, but also
Supported the sacrifices of those willing to work together

Are we not free to chose what shackles to clamp on ourselves?
For what we inevitably choose to do with our fate
Will undoubtedly restrict our freedom
And mend the broken strings that we held so proudly.