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July 2 2022

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North American Poetry 2000-2020/2: Poetics, Aesthetics, Politics

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- 1 Organized by Vincent Broqua (Université Paris 8, TransCrit), Olivier Brossard (Université Gustave Eiffel, LISAA / Institut universitaire de France), Abigail Lang (Université de Paris, LARCA UMR 8225), the “North American Poetry 2000-2020/2: Poetics, Aesthetics, Politics” international conference took place in Paris from June 29 to July 2, 2022. Originally planned for 2020, but delayed due to the pandemic, this conference constituted the end of a five-year research program at the IUF, which focused on the history of US poetry and poetics and prolonged the activities initiated by the organizers in the Poets and Critics program (since 2011) and the Double Change program (since 2000). The conference thus aimed at casting a retrospective eye on the field of North American contemporary poetry to sketch out the notions and concepts relevant in current poetic practices. Participants were invited to reflect on the mutations of North American poetry over the last twenty years or so, both in relation to its history and to the shifting conceptualizations of the geographies, histories, and sociologies of the continent. Through a very wide array of papers, the conference offered a significant overview of recent redefinitions of poetry in North America, examining its relationships with poetic institutions (circulation and teaching of poetry...), its renewed dialogues with minority or foreign cultures (plurilingualism, transnationalism...) and with political and social spheres (ecopoetics, poetic-social activism regarding race, gender, sexuality, class...), and its interactions with various types of discourses, media, and literary genres (law, journalism, digitalization of poetry...). Equally important to the conference were the two evenings of poetry readings and performances featuring poets and scholars present at the conference at the Atelier Michael Woolworth and at La Maison de la Poésie. To give an overview of this very rich four-day conference, this report summarizes the panels following the

order in which they took place and outlines the main ideas that have emerged. Additional information is available on the Poets and Critics website.

- 2 **Panel 1, “National, Transnational,”** started with **Elizabeth Brunazzi** and **Charlot Lucien**’s paper “Contemporary Haitian Performance Poetry in and around New York, Boston, the San Francisco Bay Area and Montréal.” Brunazzi presented an anthology she edited recently, *This Land, My Beloved / Cette terre mon amour / Tè Mwen Kenmen An: A Trilingual Anthology of Contemporary Haitian Poetry* (Cambridge, MA: Trilingual Press, 2022), which celebrates the work of very active, and yet little known Haitian poets based in North America. Focusing on the beloved and suffering body of Haiti, it displays the dissemination of Haitian culture, languages, and history while emphasizing the need for social justice. Such circulation was embodied in Charlot Lucien’s reflections and readings: his poems perform his multilayered political position as an Haitian poet in the US, celebrating his country as a foreigner. **Zoë Skoulding**’s (Bangor University) paper “Cross-Border Ecologies of Translation” examined how US poet Forrest Gander’s poetics exceeds his national context. It is through his work as a translator of Mexican poets Coral Bracho and Alfonso d’Aquino that he articulates his ecopoetics, making environments, places, as well as human and non-human lives interdependent. In her careful analysis of Gander’s translations and poetics, Skoulding showed that translation creates and fosters a space in which languages, the cultures they represent and the species they harbor utterly transform one another. Finally, in her paper “Place, Site, Nation: Joy Harjo’s and the Multiscalar Poetics of ‘Living Nations, Living Words,’” **Aurore Clavier** (University of Lille) studied Poet Laureate and member of the Muscogee Nation Joy Harjo and her project of a digital map and paper anthology of Indigenous poetry across the North Americas, revealing the transnational within the US. By showcasing Native American epistemologies and poetics, Harjo refuses cultural obliteration. As poets place themselves on a map that exceeds the US territory, their archipelagic configuration is revealed, laying bare multiple experiences of displacement and dislocation. Clavier showed that thanks to the interactive digital interface of the poetic map, we experience shifts in scale: it embodies a form of transnationalism folded within the US nation, inviting us to develop a more imaginative, dynamic, and inclusive reading of American poetry.
- 3 Speakers in **Panel 2, “Renewed Ecopoetics Constellation,”** brought the audience’s attention to ecopoetry. In her paper “Lucretius, Extinction Rebellion, and the Poetics of Love and Rage,” New York-based author, scholar, and environmentalist **Evelyn Reilly** investigated prospective literary means of confronting capitalist destructiveness. Reilly’s reading experience of Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things* as well as of Lisa Robertson’s and Wendell Berry’s writings led her to consider affection as an important component of ecopoetics. Broadening the common depiction of Lucretius as an atomist thinker, Reilly stressed out the philosopher’s heartfelt love for nature, and advocated for a poetry which would combine Lucretius’ pleasurable enthusiasm with the impelling indignation of radical activism. Tackling the subject of “African American Ecopoetics and Black Atlantic Ecological Thinking,” **Marta Werbanowska** (University of Vienna) pointed out the continuity between the recent Black poetics and the deep-rooted philosophies of “African ecohumanism” (Michael O. Eze) which challenged through time the Western ontological hierarchy between humanity and nature. Criticizing the exclusionary category of the “human,” poets such as Camille T. Dungy, Ed Roberson, Alexis Pauline Gumbs and Danez Smith engage with the epistemic and cultural

traditions of African holistic worldview. In his paper entitled “After the Last Avant-Gardes: Environmental Poetics as Extreme Writing,” **Joshua Schuster** (Western University, Canada) examined the use of personification in works by Brenda Iijima, Will Alexander and Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge. Echoing Werbanowska’s analysis, Schuster argued that diverse personification strategies can question the artificial boundary between the human and the non-human worlds.

- 4 In keeping with the themes of the politics of poetry discussed at the conference, the **first evening of bilingual readings** started with Indian American poet **Srikanth Reddy**, who read from his latest book, *Underworld Lit* (2020), along with Olivier Brossard for the French version. Canadian poet **Lisa Robertson** then read poems which, she explained, reflected her engagement with the contemporary tense political climate in North America. She first read-sang her playful translation of Occitan troubadour William of Aquitaine; she followed with a prose piece, “The Melancholy,” with Abigail Lang providing a French translation. She ended the evening with excerpts from *Boat*, an expansive version of previous poems.
- 5 On the second day of the conference, **Panel 3**, entitled “**Rethinking Montage**,” started with a paper by **Michel Delville** (University of Liège) devoted to erasure poetry. In “Erasurist Poetics and Politics in North-America: 1998-2016,” Delville led the audience through an overview of key erasurist collections. He distinguished between several types of practices. Ronald Johnson’s *RADI OS* (1977) and Janet Holmes’ *The ms of my kin* (2009), which respectively cut passages from Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and Emily Dickinson’s poems, leave only the selected words to be seen on the page. On the other hand, such works as Travis Macdonald’s *The O Mission Repo* (2008) and Jenny Holzer’s *Redaction Paintings* (2006) provide the pages from their source-texts as blotted out by the artists. M. NourbeSe Philip’s *Zong!* (2008), whose initial source is a case report of the drowning of some 130 African slaves in 1781, rearranges words on the page. All these erasurist enterprises, as well as the many others mentioned by Delville, share, in his words, a common “dialectical movement between decay and renewal.” The second paper was poet and critic **Steven Zultanski**’s “Genre and Process in the Poetry of Tan Lin.” Acknowledging that Tan Lin’s poetry is relevantly tackled through the notion of “ambiance” which is often used to describe it, including by the poet himself, Zultanski devoted his presentation to a description of the textual devices which enable Tan Lin to achieve “ambiance” as a writer. Among the nine elements mentioned by Zultanski were Tan Lin’s obsession with aping genres, his deliberately excessive use of comparisons and his extensive appropriation of already-existing texts. All those devices contribute to creating meaning which they undermine at the same time, resulting in what Zultanski described as “an aesthetic experience [which] is a metonym for nothing less than human consciousness,” recreating as it does the inevitable process of reading as forgetting.
- 6 **Panel 4** was devoted to “**Documentary Poetics**.” In his paper, entitled “Metabolizing Genres: American Poetry and Literary Journalism,” **William Dow** (University Gustave Eiffel) made a case for poetry to be included among debates on genres within literary journalism. His point was supported by references to the works of Muriel Rukeyser, Mark Nowak, C.D. Wright, Claudia Rankine, and a specific case study on Charles Reznikoff’s *Testimony*. Focusing on how the five poets “get the news into their poems,” he argued that the emotional engagement with facts they enable is a crucial part of the truth delivered. **Naomi Toth** (University Paris Nanterre), in “Poetic justice? Reprising

Legal Documents in Contemporary North American Poetry,” offered a reflection on what she calls “reprisal poetry”—works which appropriate already-existing documents circulating within the legal system. After demonstrating that the gesture of moving texts from a legal to an aesthetic context is a critical one, she proceeded to describe some types of interventions performed by these works in their source-texts. Those include selection, rearrangement of elements on the page, erasure, in works as diverse as those of M. NourbeSe Philip, Vanessa Place, Philip Metres, Tomashi Jackson, Luis Camnitzer, and Niina Pollari. The effects of reprisal poetics vary from an exposure of the shortcomings of the legal system to a straightforward attack against the law, but all of them, Toth argued, act to “denaturalize the conflation of the legal and the just.” Finally, **Martin Glaze Serup** (University of Copenhagen), in “‘To appellant, every woman is a bitch’: A Reading of Vanessa Place’s *Statement of Facts*,” identified the questions raised by Vanessa Place in the first of the three volumes of *Tragodia*: what is a fact, and what does it tell us? *Who* is the law? He chose to describe the work as “conceptual witness literature,” underlining that the text creates a paradoxical experience of witnessing, as it effaces the one feature providing witness literature its authenticity: the distinctly individual voice of the witness leading the readers through the facts exposed. Instead, Vanessa Place introduces the readers to a polyphony which invites reflection on the legal system the appellants of *Statement of Facts* are confronted with.

- 7 In **Panel 5, “Queer and Feminist Interventions,”** Claire Finch and Héloïse Thomas explored the ways in which formal experimentation proceeds from a political need in queer and feminist poetics. **Claire Finch** (University Paris 8), in her paper “Kathy Acker’s *Cuntemporary*: Feminism, Fuck Yous, and Avant-Garde Literary Technologies,” proposed to use the coinage “cuntemporary” to investigate into what she described as the troubled relation between feminism and literary theory. Arguing that queer people’s experiments were central, not secondary, to the advancement of avant-garde innovation, she examined some of Kathy Acker’s early typescripts (“Breaking through Memory into Desire,” *Kathy Acker 1971-1975*) and her “Blue Tape” to show how a practical, political need for new forms, rather than a preoccupation with aestheticism, motivated Acker in developing what she later articulated as her “language of the body.” **Héloïse Thomas** (University Bordeaux-Montaigne) gave a paper entitled “‘It’s a poem I memorized to stay alive when everything in me screamed otherwise’: Poetry, Form, and Liberation in the 21st century” in which she presented an overview of the political enterprises in what she termed “the reparative project of contemporary literature.” She especially focused on the poets Cathy Park Hong, Natalie Diaz and Robin Coste Lewis, examining the originality of their main works, which all make use of formal experimentation in order to highlight mechanisms of domination at play behind what is visible.
- 8 In **Panel 6, “The Poetics of Care and Health,”** **Toni Juncosa** (University of Barcelona) and **Adam Clay** (University of La Rochelle) each provided an in-depth analysis of Danez Smith’s and Brandy Nalani McDougall’s poetics, showing how both authors interwove modalities of care writing with political commitments. In his talk entitled “‘Every day is a funeral and a miracle’: Danez Smith’s Poetry, HIV, and Twenty-First Century Elegiac Genre,” **Toni Juncosa** focused on the renewal of elegiac codes in Smith’s collection *Don’t Call Us Dead* (2017). While scholars traditionally define elegy as a consolatory yet apolitical genre, Smith’s account of grief and loss experienced by queer, Black and HIV-positive communities showcases hopes and claims for political change. Such

perspectives are expressed within the text, as Smith depicts imaginary spaces where ideals of peace and justice would have become a reality for these communities. Invoking the Aristotelian distinction between actuality and potentiality, Juncosa argued that, by materializing utopia in language, Smith already gives it a form of latent existence. Examining the “Politics and Aesthetics of Care in Brandy Nalani McDougall’s Poems,” **Adam Clay** drew on Sandra Laugier’s analysis of the ethics of care in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s work. He described McDougall’s poetry as an example of the democratic literary inclusiveness which Emerson advocated in “The American Scholar” (1837). Through a precise stylistic commentary on McDougall’s poem “The Second Gift” (2014), dedicated to Hawaiian activist Haunani-Kay Trask, Clay highlighted skillfully constructed alternations between callings for armed political response and peaceful allusions to the future generations. Yet, Clay underlined, the core principle of McDougall’s work might be her attentiveness to the ordinary: her later writings focus on unacknowledged and silenced voices, renewing the portrayal of the character of Paul Gauguin’s Tahitian wife Tehura, for instance, which strengthens the postcolonial dimension of the poet’s work.

- 9 **Maria Manning** (University College Cork) started **Panel 7, “Anthology, Race, and Identities”** with her paper entitled “‘This anthology is meant to expand the idea of who a poet is and what a poem is for’: Identity and Action in Breakbeat Poetry.” She traced back the challenges these poets have posed to traditional poetic modes and institutions. Although Breakbeat is not a consciously formed group, they gather African American voices whose concern revolves around how minorities are formed. Through the examples of Evie Shockley and Jamila Woods, Manning wove these poets’ constructions of identity in past black aesthetics with more popular hip-hop influences, underlining the politics and activism of their work and their success amid younger audiences. **Samantha Majhor** (Marquette University) opened her intervention, “Indigenous Rising: Native Voices in the Twenty-First Century North American Poetic Landscape” with an address in the Dakota language to situate herself and her work within the Dakota community. She gave an overview of three recent Native American anthologies (*New Poets of Native Nations*, 2018; *Native Voices: Indigenous American Poetry*, 2019; *When the Light of the World Was Subdued Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry*, 2020) and of their respective editing strategies to give adequate visibility to these poets. She thus pointed out the complexity of using the label “Native American” as an identity marker for these poets, and stressed the anthologies’ insistence on contextualization and cultural differences to resist the uniformizing tendencies of US publishing. Finally, in his paper “Xenophobia, Cosmopolitanism, Our Heuristic Conditions,” **Patrick Durgin** (Art Institute of Chicago) examined *Título/Title* (2020), a book of poetry born in translation between Cuban poet Legna Rodríguez-Iglesias’s experience of immigration to the US, recounted in Spanish, and Katherine Hedeem’s American English. Analyzing the bodily and animal imagery pervading the book, Durgin showed how it challenges US xenophobic dominant discourses of pure, clear-cut identities. Opposing such discourses, he argued for a form of poetic cosmopolitanism, such as that of Rodríguez-Iglesias, based on innovation and creolization: such poetics imply that identities are always in translation.
- 10 **Panel 8** focused on “**Xenoglossia, Accents and Polyvocality.**” **Jennifer Scappettone** (University of Chicago), in “Glottal Stop: Xenoglossic Breathing and Poetic Transmutations of the Mother Tongue,” offered a reading of LaTasha Diggs’ *TWERK* (2013), delineating how her “xenoglossia”—defined by Scappettone as an un-locatable,

transgressive translanguaging that makes use of languages alien to the poet—performs an identity that exceeds the US monolingual state. By providing detailed analysis of the materiality of languages in the poems and performances, she showed Diggs' radical defamiliarization of US-state English to bridge the gap between languages. Although Diggs risks cultural appropriation by manipulating Indigenous languages foreign to her, Scappettone chose to emphasize the poet's way of recreating kinships and solidarity thanks to xenoglossia, recasting notions of the mother tongue and geopolitical belonging. In his paper "Listening with the Body: Poetics of Accent in the Work of Cathy Park Hong," **Andrew Eastman** (University of Strasbourg) reflected upon what poetry reveals of multilingual America through the notion of accent, both as a trace of the foreign and as accentual stress in (non)standard English. By providing minute close readings of Hong's *Dance Dance Revolution* (2007), Eastman explained that accented multilingual puns are discernible in their written form in some words whose grammatical categories are deliberately blurred. This poetics of accent is fundamentally political since, with its destabilization of standard English, it accounts for fractured experiences of minoritized subjects both in their bodies and in the body politic. **Shiv Kotecha's** (New York University / Rhode Island School of Design) paper, "Side Kicks: Not White Fabulation in White Poetry," explored the representation of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) in the works of non-BIPOC artists, such as Vanessa Place or Diana Hamilton. Not claiming to make an ethical point about racism, Kotecha started with the representation of BIPOC as "sidekicks" or "straw people" in the arts to examine whether and how poetics make those categories evolve while also showing the limits of such strategies. For instance, he examined realism as a literary mode of confrontation or reparation, and how it tackles the writers' inevitable absence of neutrality when it comes to in their relation to race.

- 11 As to **Panel 9, "Digital poetics and Mixed Media,"** an array of interactions between poetry and digital or film environments was explored by **Alessandro De Francesco** (Turin Academy of Fine Arts), **Danny Snelson** (University of California Los Angeles), **Joe Milutis** (University of Washington-Bothell) and **Zsófia Szatmári** (University Paris 8 / Eötvös Loránd University). Discussing the topic of "Immersive Poetry and VR Poetics," Alessandro De Francesco commented upon several of his own works, all of which aim to modify one's reading experience by displacing text from a book and then to an immersive environment. De Francesco's immersive project *Without Need to See* (2018) offered the possibility of interacting with a dynamic text by means of an occipital sensor in a black 3D space, while *Expanded Poetry #1* (2021) mixed text with an audio recording of the reading and background sound in an online environment. Danny Snelson provided a larger contextualization for De Francesco's research, mentioning other remarkable VR poetic works (such as *Egress* by Alejandro Miguel Justino Crawford or *Freakophone* by Madison McCartha), as well as online environment that might host poetry (including "Control," a game platform which shelters a looped poem, "The Hiss"). **Joe Milutis** then tackled the subject of Internet poetry on social network platforms, sketching out the essential features of this recent genre in his paper "Attack of the Vernacular: Internet Poetics, Platforms, Pedagogy." Reviewing the aesthetics of Naomi Elizabeth and Rupi Kaur, Milutis presumed that the virtual settings of Instagram and Internet Poetry (Tumblr's platform dedicated to publishing digital art) shape formal and generic attributes of digital poetics. However, Milutis identified common features of digital poetry: it seems generally characterized by a high degree of democratic anonymity combined with "lo-fi" aesthetics, its most essential feature

probably being the blending of image and text. Finally, **Zsófia Szatmári** focused on found footage and re-montage practices in her talk “Abigail Child’s ‘Foreign’ Poems.” Drawing on the situationist concept of “détournement” (“rerouting”), Child recycles already existing textual and visual material to create her own films: her work *Salomé* (2014) is thus made out of lines from Adeena Karasick’s *Salomé: Woman of Valor* (2014) cut and rearranged, combined with extracts from Charles Bryant’s silent movie *Salomé* (1923). By analyzing several montage techniques, Szatmári disclosed the implicit reflection on the process of signification and meaning inherent to Child’s *Foreign Films* series.

- 12 In **Panel 10, “The Poetics of Teaching,”** **Hélène Aji** (École normale supérieure – PSL) devoted her paper “Modernist Hangover: Bob Perelman, ‘poet, teacher and critic’” to an analysis of the evolution of Bob Perelman’s relation to the notion of “avant-garde.” She showed how, taking issue with the fixation of poets into historical configurations that would illustrate a form of progress, Bob Perelman’s concern with writing the present led him to develop a dialogical relation to poets from the past. **Chloé Thomas** (University of Angers), in “Revisiting the Poetry Workshop,” offered a reflection on the status of MFA programs in poetry today. Considering the “anti-workshop” Buffalo Poetic Program created in 1991 by Charles Bernstein, Robert Creeley, Susan Howe and other poets close to the Language nexus, Thomas insisted that, despite their rejection of “Official Verse Culture” (Bernstein), their poetry and poetics have become another institutionalized “verse culture,” characterized by “a high level of symbiosis between academic criticism” and poetry. Arguing that no clear-cut division now exists between workshop and anti-workshop programs, she concluded that the central question today should be how academia can provide favorable environments for creating and writing. The last presentation in the panel, **Michael Barnholden**’s “The Kootenay School of Writing: A Political Intervention More than Anything Else” consisted in Barnholden’s recounting of and testimony about the experiment of the Kootenay School of Writing (KSW) since its creation in 1984 by students from Nelson, then Vancouver (British Columbia, Canada) who opposed the government’s cuts in higher education. KSW went on until 2015 as a writing collective and a body of resistance against neoliberal policies. Among elements evoked by Barnholden were the sense of humor of the group and one of its original ideas for fundraising: the decision to sell “obviously-fake degrees” in 1996, which caused the collective to receive a Cease-and-Desist letter from the Canadian Minister of Education.
- 13 **The second evening of readings and performances** featured short extracts from the work of many of the participants to the conference (M. Barnholden, A. de Franco, P. Durgin, C. Finch, T. Juncosa, S. Kotecha, C. Lucien, J. Milutis, E. Reilly, J. Scappettone, S. Seita, M. Glaz Serup, Z. Skoulding, D. Snelson, and S. Zultanski), with translations by Vincent Broqua, Olivier Brossard, and Abigail Lang. This very dynamic sampling embodied the themes and poetics discussed during scholarly panels, while also showcasing the diversity and versatility of contemporary North American poetry and of its engagement with politics.
- 14 **Alexander Bell** (University of East Anglia) started **Panel 11, “Listening to Poetry,”** with his paper “Lisa Robertson’s Prosody.” He explained the central role of prosody in her work and the historical and social movements of discourse at play in it. Bell focused on *The Weather* (2001), in which Robertson uses meteorological reports in English to create poetry: through meticulous analysis of its rhythm and syntax, Bell elaborated on

the reader/speaker's participation in the poem as a subject of history, whose pronunciation can also change the meaning of even the most "hackneyed words." He thus argued that the enunciation of the poem, and therefore prosody, was less determined by the semiotics of the poem than by its reading aloud, which in turns creates the meaning of the poem. **Lacy Rumsey** (École normale supérieure de Lyon) followed with his talk, entitled "Directions and Limits in Twenty-First Century Prosody." Noting that prosody has been discarded in American poetics by Language poets and some others, Rumsey argued for its relevance in the reading of some contemporary poetries both as an analytical and as a pedagogical tool that resists ready-made interpretations. Providing careful examination of intonation patterns in Kevin Davies frontispiece poem to *Comp* (2000), he insisted that prosodic analysis should derive from discourse structures and not just from personal performative choices; similarly, he made a case for prosody not to be systematically interpreted as mimicking a text's thematic structure. He thus proposed that prosody should be de-symbolized, and considered as a raw material of poetry and of the pleasure it creates. Finally, with "A Laboratory of Sensations: Listening for Texture," artist and researcher **Sophie Seita** engaged with Hanna Sybille Müller's and Erin Robinsong's digital immersive performance "Polymorphic Microbe Bodies," which she projected behind her as she spoke. Explaining that that performance investigated how the body can be affected by acts of language and sounds, Seita wove together her own poetic reactions to the performance and critical insights on sensations to translate, rather than describe, the sounds that she heard during the performance. She particularly explored the mingling of sensations: she declared experiencing texture and sound as vibrations in her body, and suggested that such sensations should be considered as embodied knowledge, both personal and collective.

- 15 The conference concluded with a discussion on strategies for redefining the lyrical subject. Opening **Panel 12, "Poetics of Address,"** **Paulina Ambroży** (Adam Mickiewicz University) drew parallels between the current transformation of human subjectivity, posthumanist thought and the representations of the self in her talk "The Unfindable Self and Poem-as-Habitat in Evelyn Reilly's 'Echolocation' and a. rawlings's 'Wide Slumber for Lepidopterists'." She argued that spatial tropes in Reilly's and rawlings's poetry reflect the uncertain, metamorphic, and non-homogeneous status of the contemporary subject, while the disappearance of the Western liberal self from the poem transforms textual space into an "eco-habitat," where the interdependencies between multiple biotic forces are displayed. Invoking John Stuart Mill's essay *What is Poetry?* (1833) and his considerations on the lyricisation of poetry, **Andrew Gorin** (New York University) focused on the normative lyric in his paper "The Social Logic of Lyric in the Mass Public Sphere," analyzing the normative lyric as an emanation of the universal subject that had emerged during the Victorian era. In the final paper, entitled "These Feelings of Futurelessness: Peter Gizzi's *Now it's Dark*," **Daniel Katz** (University of Warwick) examined the expansion of the poetic self as possibly including the author's subjectivity as well as the identities of dead predecessors. By identifying himself as an ethnographer of his own nervous system, Gizzi reenacted the avant-garde conception of the subject grounded in concrete experience and contact with materiality, as developed by poets William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens.
- 16 After these four days, panelists and organizers concluded that the conference, through varied papers, sometimes with opposed interpretations and methodologies, had outlined how diverse and dynamic North American poetry has now become. Indeed,

recurrent considerations on poetry's capacity to recast its aesthetic traditions shed light on its transformative quality. The conference also demonstrated that contemporary aesthetics could foster very different politics. If a number of contemporary poets give visibility to many forms of otherness (both human and non-human), they also engage critically with them. In that sense poetry is capable of informing our living in the world, of producing knowledge about it, and of rethinking our collective future. Another key concern that emerged during the conference was the relationship that poetry established with communities of readers, in and out of the academia, and its capacity to captivate readers. The conference thus constituted an important milestone in the ongoing conversation on the trajectories of contemporary North American poetry, (re)opening up multiple avenues of scholarly investigation.

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