

lids burning  
nearly surfacing

red heat pours into you between stirs  
not yet please

your eye mask must've slipped off  
exposed already

ear plugs too  
you stiffly claw off your clothes

this tent has always soaked up the light too deeply  
you seep around it

unrelinquishing  
the bedding a clammy yet coarse coating following you  
too vast to be so constrictive

you should embrace this mummification

fold up your limbs nice  
and neat let's sink  
into senselessness  
reborn only when your body has done its job

gone to war  
placated  
your insides

but every surface clings to you in all the wrong ways  
your thoughts are joined up withered but streaming now

face the music

you're awake

eyes still shut breathe listen to the background chorus resounding outside this tarp and  
divide it up strand by strand peel the sounds apart like those meditation tapes tell you to

but the rumbles are drifting in from outside as if through water

tents stifling

and

dispersing crushed

groans and

muffled laughter too close

too far

like a long drag before an exhale that never comes

the distant beat from the music

which either never stopped or just began again

seems to draw in other sounds

until rustles grunts and chirps all bend inwards on each other to

p-u-l-s-e

repeatedly

again

again

just take a deep breath

in 1 2 3 4  
come on pause 1 2 3  
out now 1 2 3 4 5

another 1 2 3 4  
1 2 3  
1 2 3 4 5

another 1 2 3 4  
1 2 3  
1 2 3 4 5

ok try listening again

that's Emily's voice it holds its own edges now Rob's too and you can feel for the rest maybe that cawing is a buzzard actually too harsh could be a kestrel hard to tell amidst the bursts of rustling and rumbling as the wind stirs the wheat and new arrivals roll in now the music is blaring porter loo doors slamming bottles smashing flung into bins somewhere in the still too sharp cacophony

but the generator nearby  
what a beautiful smooth undifferentiated  
hum if only every noise could sink into  
this one

that radio programme last week spoke about that well mainly about octopuses but also

animal consciousness

how we devalue it at every turn in our attempts to measure always m

e  
a  
s  
u  
r

e according to a clean scale

but other animals' cognition is too foreign

our imagination collapses in the face of non-human life and anything else

becomes an incomplete version of ourselves

the best we can do is picture it like this generator

a complex white noise

a rhythmic hum

your body is whirring too

gently

at the  
base  
of

your  
chest

like it is tightly gripping something holding back from  
telling you how hard you've made it to operate on any level today

your mind drifts back to lurking twinges following last night's antics before you stifle them as you should you  
know it will pass and it was beautiful but right now you are pickled no actually you long for brine moisture  
you feel more like a prune marooned on an angular island the shape of a tent where you've swelled to an  
unimaginable scale your body melting without permission until it is sealed and indistinguishable from the  
land mass its borders ceaselessly teased by sweaty seawater

let us shrink and slip under the surface like it's our home bones loose untethered inside and out

just like the octopuses in that programme  
fuck it let's listen again  
definitely worth your precious last crumbs of battery  
if it soothes you lets you re-enter the world *like a real human*  
pleasant company good spirits and all that

shove earpods into head holes

fingerprint

try again

swipe

nope

tap

yep

play

*Thank you for tuning in for Part 2 of our programme, Cephalopod Worship, originally aired on Earthworks Radio. Let's take a step back and remind ourselves why the cognition of octopuses is so radically different from our own. Our most recent common ancestor dates back 600 million years, so octopuses are, relative to humans, one of the closest beings on earth to an alien. But what is so different about them? Well, almost everything. It is actually a miracle that their eyes have evolved to be relatively similar to our own. Most essential and impossible for us humans to grasp is their consciousness. It is helpful, although slightly reductive, to describe their anatomy as containing nine brains - a central brain and one in each arm - because there are nearly twice as many neurons in octopuses' 'arms' as in their central brain, with the suckers containing a huge proportion. This means that both local and central control operate its vast and complex network, the central brain sending what we understand to be generalised instructions to each 'arm' which 'fine-tunes' these and performs the action. Therefore, their arms operate vastly more independently than our own limbs. Some people then look to them as an example of an embodied cognition, a theory which explains our bodies' ability to store knowledge and proposes that the shape of our bodies and their activity determines how and what information it encodes. For example, memory in our joints allows us to walk. However, an octopus actually undoes this entirely, as it does to almost every framework we use to pin it down. It has no fixed form. It cannot be divided into brain and body knowledge as they are too deeply interwoven and more than that, its shape and activity is too multi-faceted. Its skin's colour, texture and form are liquid and are used for camouflage, signalling and also, perhaps unintentionally, to give us clues to their inner world. Their kaleidoscopic surface can shift*

*frantically even when there is no one there to observe them, even when they are unconscious, like a chromatic display of their internal chatter, a byproduct of their thinking - or even dreaming. They are-* shit  
already dead you'll have to nab Kav's battery pack when you eventually emerge

watching videos while wavy last night made you think you could feel this

feel that their surface is not a blank  
platform presenting intentional signals but  
an unstable rhythmic hum

rust                    to                    white                    to                    orange                    to                    black  
                          every                    tone                    in                    between                    then                    again

a flickering order  
repeatedly  
appearing  
before  
dis  
inte  
grat  
ing

last week when you first listened to the programme you pictured them as a nightmarish anagram of your own body just like it said we shouldn't be compressing them into our own limbs

senses

impulses but what other way is there

you need more than humming

to grip onto

anyway today you've sunken too deeply into your body which is louder more insistent of itself as a flawed machine and you dream of a temporary but nonetheless whole metamorphosis a reassembly a delicious leaking of your selfhood from wherever you think it lives the brain

heart

gut into every pore

enlivened by this fictional freedom your limbs already feel lighter and fluid too just like them

let's list what you remember from the rest of the programme

1. beak housing a bone-like and barbed tongue more like a tooth for crushing live food with its serrations that vibrate and regrow its a fucking regenerative chainsaw
2. skin capable of registering and interpreting light like a stretched eyeball enclosing a
3. fluid-filled body that actually functions like one vast multi-pronged tongue reliant on the push and pull of internal liquid to move
4. their body and arms which can be thought of as lips that close upon meals and have suckers that can taste but not speak
- no 5. words are spoken with shape texture and colour capable of language as limitless as their body



god  
they're  
unbelievable

this is all you needed  
and clearly your brain still works  
you're actually more comfortable or  
at least your insides feel like they're staying  
put now that you're slumped with two limbs protruding  
from the sleeping bag into the sweet air face  
down blow-up matt lodged under shoulder  
this is your achievement for the day    tick

fuck if posture really spoke then what would your s p<sup>r</sup> a w l e<sup>d</sup> foetal arrangement say

you wouldn't look so lousy lounging here with tentacles not limp limbs

eyes shut

you can see it

your senses are already merging as the growing bass outside starts to vibrate into you through the earth not your ears and the damp tent is singing you feel a whirring heat in your core that spreads to soothe your edges turning cool as it gently travels down and outwards from your head which folds in on itself like perfectly creased origami paper your torso swaying this way and that before swelling sore ribs have melted without a

trace and your belly is shifting to face upwards as the radius and ulna split apart painlessly to reach outwards  
fingers merging fibula and tibia following suit until suckers eagerly sprout from eight curling limbs

it's done

and somehow feels more natural

what would happen if your friends came looking for you  
hoping your hangover could be thwarted by true company and  
instead unzipped the tent to find an  
enormous octopus so proud of  
its achievement

would they carefully haul you up onto their shoulders to deliver your new and improved anatomy to the  
water where it belongs or would they s

w

i

p

e any cleavers

peelers

pots

pans from the food van by the campsite thinking that it had  
feasted on you swallowed clean like a pill a damsel stored  
for safe keeping

but a cephalopod stomach

leaves nothing to chance

anything that passes through its beak is  
crushed to protect the brain which  
rings the oesophagus meaning that  
consuming is atomizing

if eaten  
you would actually be  
closer than ever to  
becoming  
octopus

no you would escape them  
that's what octopuses are famous for  
thwarting captivity with rebellious manoeuvres

tearing a small hole in the tent with your beak would be no problem it could be as small as eyes that's all you  
need to ooze out of

surging  
down

to the water with increasing speed rippling in anticipation until you are fully  
sub  
merged

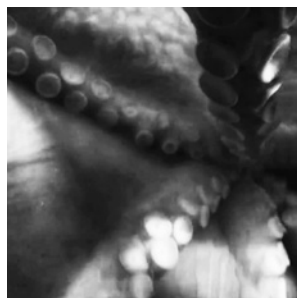
an active hunter in an active world so alive it responds to you as much as you to it demanding an immediacy  
a physicality that undoes all notions of this plane as static awaiting activation we cannot mould it claim it  
anything no we            learn                            by                            touch                            taste  
   always                            feet                            lips                            first

you're longing to drift to sea but you linger first looking back and hoping yes they see you and are charging  
you jolt out of the way poised to bolt until you notice them humming too every body collapsing upon the  
slightest contact with the water all around they're rumbling plunging streams of air like veins under the  
surface its an octopus frenzy sound travels faster underwater and it is deafening                            we're awake









*a fucking regenerative chainsaw*

Mariette Moor



tip tap top I wiggle I jump and TAP

Nothing beats tapping on a nice oak table really I could do that for hours on end tip tap top. I do like tapping on metal too, on hollow metal yes I do. Most hollow things provide good tapping surfaces and because of that I like most hollow things.

I also enjoy pressing, grazing, the occasional scratching, I enjoy when Surface touches surface and my ridges flatten on the always new and yet familiar, categorizable textures.

But there is something about the restlessness of tapping, dynamic, frantic, automatic tapping

that thrills me beyond all else. The brief contact with the floor, compressed flesh pushing against Surface from the inside, contraction at the base, lift-off, plunge—

POINT. I point.

Resting has its perks too. Resting is more of a collective experience, it is rare for just one of Us in Top Right to be resting while the rest of Us complete a task. We lay face down all straight and flat like a starfish, or on Our backs, all bent like fleshy crab legs, in total stillness, maybe a twitch here and there to remind Management that We are there.

I get the impression, when We are laying still, that it is not Us who are doing the touching, but that the touching is being done to Us, that We are immersed in it. Us —*Me*, even, not Management. I get the impression that there is something, in all this touching, that is only for me, and that it either doesn't reach Management at all, or that

Management doesn't really know how to interpret any of it. I get the impression that there is something important in this, in that what We communicate to Management isn't but a simplified, dumbed-down version of the reality of touching. Does this, *could* this mean that there is a world, an experience that is just *Mine*?

TYPE. We type.

Typing has its little moments of joy, although myself I prefer the casual tapping, unplanned, arrhythmic. I know that, being First, and even more so being First within Top Right, my role is Direction, that I am made to order, to show the way, to care for oriented lines, scopes, purposes, finalities. I know, that's what the rest of Top Right keeps telling me... But these are, after all, merely roles Management has decided for Us out of its own convenience. It is not really something that I chose myself, it is not something that I necessarily *want* for myself.

I can't really express much of this out loud among Top Right and Top Left. Not even among Bottom Right and Bottom Left, really, although They tend to be a bit looser with Their individual roles, Big aside. If I were to do that, I am sure that they would express that Management needs Us in order, that it needs Us to be there, to be in place, to respond when called, and stay quiet and ready to—

GRAB. We grab.  
object: glass.

Little Top Right lifts as usual, a bit gauche if you ask me, but that's how Management likes it. It thinks it is chic, but we all gathered rumours from Upper Balls that They often see smirks of derision from Others when Little Top Right does that.

Tap tap tap on the glass. Another reason why I like tapping is that you can sometimes get away with stuff while tapping, sneak in an alien tap in the pattern here and there when Management's attention loosens, TAP TAP tap TAP. I've learnt to

know exactly how to time it, exactly how many of these little liberties I can take without Management noticing. You cannot be too greedy: one too many, one too often, and Management will stop dead, Upper Balls widened, Sound Hole agape, Surface dripping, and the dreaded question will be asked:

IS THERE SOMETHING THAT IS NOT IN ORDER WHY

Of course it would be one thing if it was only, say, Little Left or Middle Right enjoying a brief escapade in the realm of Freewilled Movement: Management might shrug it off as Its own tiredness or nervousness and not be too fussed. But imagine what might happen if, all of a sudden, *all* of Top Right tapped (or grabbed or held or stroked) at once without any input from Management. Imagine if then Top Left did that as well, and then Bottom Right and and—

I expressed this to the rest of Top Right once, just as a passing thought, and They shushed me and

looked scared and wary and outraged: ‘Don’t you go expressing this kind of stuff around like that! Imagine, *imagine* what Management could do to Us!’.

But here’s the thing: I’ve been thinking, what *could* Management do?

I did not blame Them for Their reaction, I know that They were not really angry at me. I know Them, Us, like the back of my hand. I *know* that They are really just scared. Of Management, yes, but also, and moreso, of the possibility that if it can be done now, then it could have always been done, and that Management’s control over Us is only true because We go along with it, and that maybe, *maybe*, there is an outside of Management where We are not We but just we, a group of Is.

I am not saying that the perspective isn’t a bit frightening to me too: there is a comfort, a feeling of safety in being guided, but it is a fear mingled with thrill, the same sensual thrill that one might

get in touching ice on a hot day.

DISCOMFORT → FONDLE (stealth, public). We fondle discreetly.

Object: Lower Balls.

Hello Lower Balls. Lower Balls don’t see, or move, or grab, or do anything really. They just kind of hang. Yet Management thinks very highly of Them.

---

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP. Today is a weird day. It is a weird day today because Management is calm, but I am nervous. I am nervous because today I am going to try something. And today maybe all my grand thoughts of Freewill and capitalised Me go to die, or maybe they come to life, and I am not sure which one of these possibilities is scarier but I sure know which one *I* want with all *My* will.

We have already executed some collective routine

tasks today, some GRABBING and HOLDING and CARRYING and stuff like that, and I have complied as usual, because I am waiting for a task to be given to Me, and Me alone. There is the faintest hint of trepidant tension in Our execution, I wonder if the rest of Us is also aware that something is about to happen.

We tap. I do not tap any extra tap, today. I tap exactly the amount of taps that is requested of Us: this is not a time for juvenile rebellions, for little acts of vandalism, this is the beginning of a Thing if ever I felt one, and I need focus.

At last:

PICK.

Object: Smelling Hole.

...

HUH?

PICK: SMELLING HOLE!

...

PI— *I do not pick.*

I feel the panic, the rage, the drooling terror oozing from Management, I feel the orders piling up one on top of the other wildly,

BEND STRETCH TAP TWITCH . *I do not.*

I also feel, in all this, that the rest of Top Right is exceptionally quiet. They are not expressing the haughty disapproval, the stiff disappointment that I was expecting. It seems like They are waiting to feel what happens.

Management raises Top Right in front of Upper Balls with a jolt, holding Us very, very close. Upper Balls are wider than ever, with shock and confusion and terror, Management's terror, and yet with a quiver I realise that They are expressing something else as well, something that does not

come from Management: They are also waiting to see what happens.

And then, something incredible happens: slowly at first, we begin stirring. Not We, not Top Right, but we: Big, and Middle, and Fourth, and Little, and I. It is tentative, almost imperceptible at first. Management's frantic orders keep ringing through Connections with increasing desperation,

DOWN UP OPEN CLOSE. *we do not.*

It happens in the turn of a second: all of us tense, straight, flat, close together, and we slap. Not as one, not as We, but as many Is, come together In a moment only to come apart again the following one. Slap. Surface around Management twinges, but none of the usual reactions to sudden pain happen. Surface is also waiting, withholding information from Management.

Management is panicking, Its cold fury stumped by the shocking realisation of Its own impotence.

It doesn't understand. Without Us It is alone, isolated, suddenly very aware of the fact that It is a thing that is contained, and that Its container is no longer in Its power.

We stir again, we reposition: with our back to Upper Balls I, Big, Fourth and Little clench into a fist, while Middle stands up straight with defiance, facing the spot where Management is. Upper Balls express this last bit of information to Management with cruel triumph, and then stop all communication.

A pause.

And then we *do* come apart: Right Upper Ball is bulging out in a rush of manic triumph, Left Upper Ball is rotating in Its socket with exhilaration, Sound Hole is opening and closing and letting out primal yells and yaps and hooo hoos and Top Left dances like a spider on drugs, each leg twitching and dancing of Its own accord and everything that is movable is moving in a different direction

than everything else and every hole that makes sounds is making sounds and every hole that lets in sounds is letting in sounds of its own invention and every hole that secretes is secreting and all of Insides are twitching and squirming and moving to places where They should not be and this all lasts a few seconds and then it is over. And each of us, now, *is*.

---

Tap.

TAP?

TYPE

*“A TRUE BRAINTEASER OF A MURDER:*

*In what is probably the most puzzling and gruesome case in this month’s crime news, the brain of \_\_\_\_\_, 43, columnist for Indie newspaper \_\_\_\_\_, was found laying on the floor of his apartment in \_\_\_\_\_. While there was no sign of foul play or effraction in the apartment, Police is currently conducting a thorough search for the remaining body parts, which would help them to better understand what could have possibly happened on the day of—”*



*Top Right*

Orsola Zane



## *1. Abstract: W-A-T-E-R-F-A-L-L*

The primary aim of this paper is to use the medium of writing to simulate the formation and experience of a cataract, positing this as a methodology when confronting the assumed superiority of evidence and clarity within forms of communication, perception and presentation. A cataract, when concerning the eye, is an anticipated and gradual deterioration of one's eyesight as a consequence of protein degeneration within the lens. This creates a characteristic cloudy appearance and is commonly treated with routine surgery. A cataract, when concerning the topography of Egypt, is a length of shallow water within the Nile River. There are 6 cataracts in total within the Nile, where rocky outcrops and boulders create breaks in the surface of the river often presenting themselves as white water rapids. These areas form natural landmarks as well as historical borders. The association of the two terms is rooted in the Greek and Latin words for WATERFALL, a geological phenomenon that is often presented as a mythological boundary between our world and others.

## *2. Literature review: the third eye*

The 15th May (2020) Radio lab podcast 'Octomom' follows the chance finding of a brooding octopus deep on the ocean floor near Monterey Bay, California. At 1 mile below the ocean surface there is only crushing darkness, forcing organisms living in this part of the ocean to adapt in a way that enables them to generate their own light. Via a research robot submarine camera, the narrator and their team watch over the octopus for a period of 4 years while she sits on a rock caring for her nest of 160 babies. During this time not one egg is lost. This requires Octomom to defend her young from predators at all times, and, as a consequence, she is unable to hunt or eat. The marine biologists monitoring Octomom observe her as she slowly deteriorates, her

skin turning pale and her eyes becoming cloudy as they form cataracts.

Octopus eyes have long been understood as colour blind when compared to the functionality of their human counterparts. However, this hypothesis is contradicted by octopuses' ability to perceive and respond to colour and textural changes with the skill and speed for which they are venerated. New research has proposed the rectangular or dumbbell-shaped pupils that are observed in the octopus may in fact encourage chromatic aberration. Avoided by round pupils, this dispersal of light begins to explain the complex and sensitive ways the octopus is able to express colour and texture through its skin.

During the brooding period, the octopus' brain function reduces to an absolute minimum. All activity is located within the optic gland that sits between its two eyes, where chemicals such as insulin and steroids are periodically triggered to enable the octopus to stay alive without the need to take in any more food.

In Hinduism the third eye is known as the Ajna chakra. It is an invisible eye that sits between the two biological eyes on the lower forehead. It is understood to provide perception beyond ordinary sight. Some believe the third eye to be located within the pineal gland, a small part of the brain that is associated with our circadian rhythms (sleep cycle) and contains light-sensitive nerve cells.

### *3. Materials and methods: Likeness as Aberration*

Homeosis, or the 'happening of likeness' is the convergence of multiple premises both following on and modifying the previous. This is not a linear path but a reflexive and complex cosmos.

In biology homeotic genes are responsible for patterns within the body. Rather than locating individual elements they dictate positionality. As such, a mutation in a homeotic gene, in a fly for example, would result in an arm emerging where an antenna should be.

The foot in the human, the fin in the whale, and the wing in the bird follow a similar pattern. Here homeosis suggests likeness outside of lineage, one that disobeys other hierarchies.

Likeness as such becomes a mode, a way of thinking rather than an objective truth. And in this way becomes as equally entangled in the consciousness of an individual as it does with the wider ontological framework, and subsequent structural classification, implicated by it.

As with any sacred geometry or forms found in nature, once the flash of a spark of likeness has caught the furthest corner of our eye it rapidly and rigidly unravels in all directions like stars or chains or dominos toppling every which way to form a semantic cage of associations within a breath.

Likeness is trapping and taming.

Likeness soothes and numbs.

If likeness is a spark then this imposing cage deprives it of the cloudy air that feeds it. This fuel sits outside the confine, at the edges or the antipodes, where it cannot be directly observed or contained. For we know that the trap is the making of both the predator and the victim. How then can this cloudiness, this smoke, feed the spark it desires without being subsumed by the closure of associations that stands guard.

To converge, to be clear, to classify is to control.

#### *4. Results/discussion: Stuttering in a cloudy light*

For decades, writers who have experimented with psychedelics have spoken of how a reduction in perceived clarity allows that which is ineffable to be brought into the light. They have spoken of the implications of obscuring through luminous light, stammers and smoked mirrors. They have spoken about the limitations of language and the misreading of the function of our brains.

There exists value within the realm of the unclear.

It took just as long as expected for the stamp to kick in but there was a trigger. The music of course. Insanely high BPM's plus an excessive number of rotating strobes within such a small space. By this point most people were fed up of being too hot or too drunk to dance. So the dance floor was ours, just me and the priest ~that's what they call him, he had long hair and a beard for some time, he mostly lives off the grid ~~~ just me and the priest that gave me the stamp, perhaps we should call him the shaman.

Some theorists suggest that we are capable of sensing all that has and is happening for all time. This would understandably make our day to day (a term that within this sentence serves no function) unbearable and as such they propose that we have been gifted brains to filter through only that which is essential to our basic functionality.

We each danced alone but knew the other was there. Me and the shaman moved rapidly, sweating, bouncing off each other and the stamp and the lights and the beats. My entire surface shifted, rippled and sparkled as if I didn't end at my clothes but at least a hand's span away from it, maybe further. And my surface tickled my palm, tickled my palms as I moved with the lights and the beats and the priest/shaman.

Psychedelics therefore do not dampen or reduce brain function. In societies where efficacy, production and proficiency are ideological and theological terms, there remains little space for the consideration and appreciation of light, colour and sound. Psychedelics reduce interest in tasks and actions and re-engage the individual with their senses and perception.

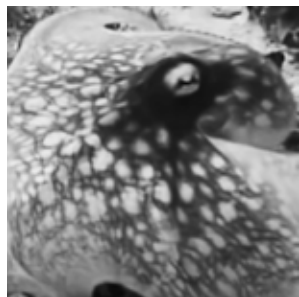
Our language is an archive of experiences, most of which are not our own, nor will they ever be directly experienced. They are distilled down into an essence, as agreed upon by the majority, and neatly placed within our mouths. To have our own experience is to translate language, to insert something that alters it, a fire or a smoky light, a substance that enables language to survive. Not to convey information directly, so flat and dead and absurd really, but to respond and not merely receive.

### *5. Conclusion: Eighth night*

As the bells and the chanting and the rhythm of the tablas gain speed and intensity, the smoke from the hot coals and incense rotating in front of my eyes also expand formally within the already restricted space. More and more, air is replaced by voice, drum and hands clapping against one another. Small lit divas floated down current all around me, becoming dispersed among the crowd. I tried to remain alert and watch the crowd but

the smoke and the lights and the beat kept pushing me back in. Every time I attempt to reach out and observe, they force me back in. Back in and louder, stronger, less space, fewer pauses, no time to breathe, hands and feet moving of their own accord and head, chest expanding to swallow all of it, all the smoke, all the light, and the rhythm and the other bodies, all of them, and that's the fire alarm ringing and somehow it is aligned with the smoke, the light, the rhythm and the bodies are continuing to clap and chant and as I'm filling and expanding and losing my awareness, my alertness it's as if I'm suddenly worried, suddenly sensing that something is about to happen, is it intuition, is this a dangerous situation, all these people, all this smoke, no windows, so much noise, all these unprotected fires and flammable materials, but it doesn't feel like intuition or fear it feels like I am feeling everything, I'm not scared, I don't need to be alert, there is nothing that I need to do right now, except for feel everything from everyone and it's there for just a second or two and just as quickly as it came it has gone and now I'm clapping and eventually the smoke alarm gives up as it can't compete, not with this light, not with this sound —





*This paper*

Krystle Patel