

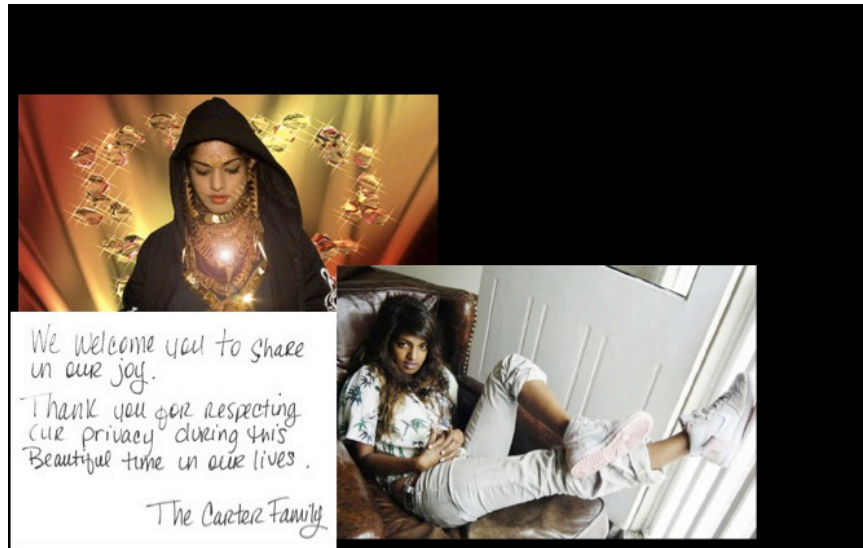
“WEAK INTIMACY,” CELEBRITY, AND BAY AREA POETICS

JEANINE WEBB

“TODAY, I WANT TO THINK ABOUT/YOU, WITH YOU BESIDE ME”

We turn on the radio, TV, load the blog, Facebook, twitterfeed, newswire, sing along to mixes in the car. “It’s 3:27 in paris”; it’s “12:20 in New York a Sunday”; “Spring, 1978”; we play the Rihanna video, the one with Drake and those shorts, we are watching Lil Wayne on a touchscreen at a taco shop, Heath Ledger has just died, James Franco is thinking about writing a poem about it, which retro-mugs Allen Ginsberg for content, a role Franco has just played; deep in our earbuds, we think about “Police and Thieves” and the second chord change maybe, how we heard the news story about the fact that it is a cover of a song written by a Jamaican falsetto singer, feeling maybe “closer” to Joe Strummer knowing this, stacking these lenses and driving along the highway. We were on the streetcorner and the freeway met us at speed, we were us lost in the supermarket and everyone and we stopped breathing.

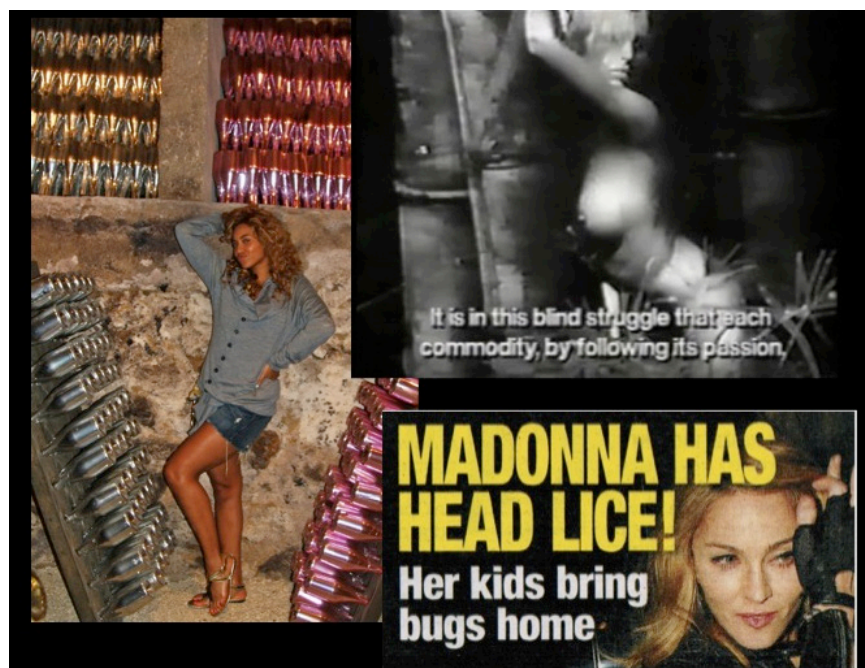
To borrow a felicitous and relevant term coined by Joshua Clover, these interactions can be said to be characterized by “weak intimacy.”¹ Weak intimacy constitutes the ongoing everyday, small intimacies we experience with spectacular economically and socially remote figures, celebrities and cultural productions. To use an example, we may love our mothers, but we may spend even more real time thinking about M.I.A. and her work. In parallel, or in perpendicular, celebrities may also think of a form of “us” remotely, getting to know details about their fanbase through internet exchanges, market studies, etc. Notably, these interactions are increasingly more instantaneous with the acceleration of the web.



For all but the most hermetic and willfully pop-ignorant, our interactions with icons and cultural production through media form a part of our quotidian experience, along with our experience of the political and of the media. We are and we are not what we consume. Like flamingos, we color brightly with the incorporation of pop into our bodies (and one wonders why, after consuming a surfeit of Ke\$ha, we haven't yet shimmeringly succumbed to death by internal glittering). In other words, as Juliana Spahr says in her blurb to Uyen Hua's vibrant debut book *a/s/l* (age/sex/location): "Beyoncé, Wallace Stevens, and Karl Marx are all there, informing and shaping our daily lives, our thinking." And, it can be added, our experience of the daily flow of language.

Materially, our celebrity interactions are characterized by an unequal power differential and by the experience of distance, of division; an experience created and fostered by the alienated flow of credit, a surface on which we struggle for purchase. In the 24-hour news cycle—the spin-ticker fatigue of mediated images and flash rebrandings—celebrities are spectacular figures as well as intimate partners, and our apprehension of any detail of their lives and their creations is necessarily governed by the glitter and savagery of the marketplace. With the rise of social media, this experience of troubled representation and celebrity emulation is open to us all on a microeconomic and social scale, as we regulate our rendering in the mediated public sphere and seek out others who do the same. Managing our avatars and armslength-portraits, negotiating (or being unable to negotiate) our privacy online, we are increasingly aware of the production of our own images and of our loneliness in the mirror house. No wonder we can recognize some of

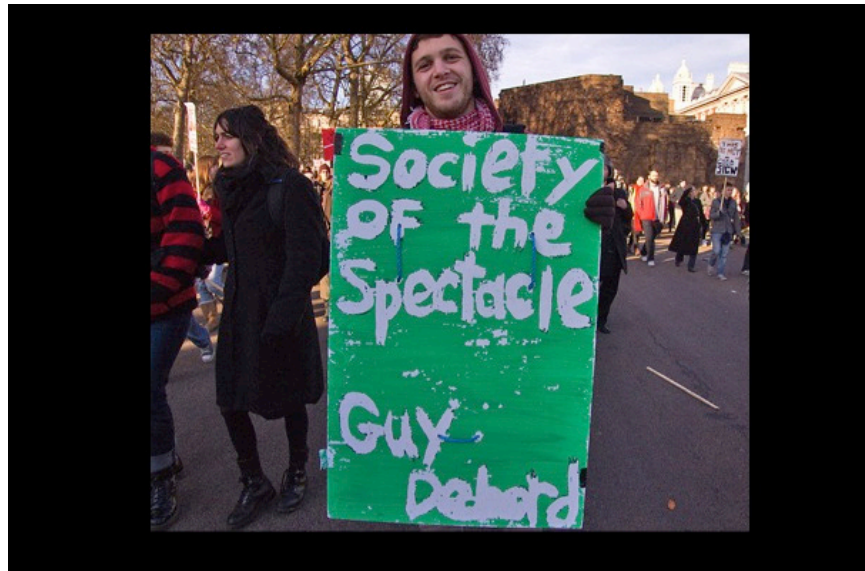
our reflections when Stephanie Young says in “Betty Page We Love You Get Up,” “Someone should take the internet away from me/ for a little while/ and I’ll just lie down over here/ in self-portrait with internet.”² And Uyen Hua says in “I wake up in a room”: “I am 23 and still scanning/ the text for my name.”³ It’s overwhelming on our bandwidth, as the spectacle is always already Googling itself.



This perpendicular of unequal separation inherent to weak intimacy is not just replicated in the spectacle, it is its *axis mundi*, like wow. As Debord says:

Separation is itself part of the unity of the world, of the global social praxis split up into reality and image. The social practice which the autonomous spectacle confronts is also the real totality which contains the spectacle. But the split within this totality mutilates it to the point of making the spectacle appear as its goal. The language of the spectacle consists of the signs of the ruling production, which at the same time are the ultimate goal of this production.⁴

How then to express this tension in poetry? Our pleasures in pop images and our mutilation in the real market? Or, as Hua says, “bill gates doesn’t care about your worldliness. today’s news reads both pope and devil wear prada,” “enter: complexity.”⁵



The four San Francisco Bay Area poets whose more or less recent work I'd like to discuss—Julia Bloch, Uyen Hua, Kevin Killian and Stephanie Young—navigate this question of celebrity and weak intimacy in different ways, but all contrast the delights of pop culture with the violence (and melancholy) of the spectacle's alienation in the political. All are necessarily indebted to the poets of the New York school in their treatment of mass cultural poetics and their innovative use of the lyric subject. In his essay "Camp Messianism, or, the Hopes of Poetry in Late-Late Capitalism," poet and critic Christopher Nealon explains this stance's defiance of "official verse culture":

At midcentury, in poems like Frank O'Hara's "Having a Coke with You" and John Ashbery's "Daffy Duck in Hollywood," New York school poets made friends with popular and mass culture, deliberately braving the possibility of obsolescence or eventual inscrutability. Such risk-taking was meant to dislodge the idea of poetry from the formalist antimodernisms of "official verse culture," which presumed that poems were autonomous linguistic artifacts whose aim was to rise above their immediate surroundings and stake a claim to cultural permanence.⁶

Significantly, three of these Bay poets refer to the New York school poets in their work, as in Hua's poem which begins "- the whole deal was frank o'hara/-the whole unspoken deal was everyone had to pretend they wanted to be john ashbery"⁷; Young's poem titled "Betty Page We Love You Get Up"; and Killian's poem "Free" which takes us to "Squalid Manor, Frank O'Hara's dull apartment," and walks as if with Frank, exclaiming through our city: "Man comes through the sidewalk/ in front of Stella McCartney store in New York/ a little bit down from Joe and Charlie's/ To have seen so much, to have missed so much!"



What connects poets to celebrities is not only their personal meaning for the poets, but their shared state as affect workers. To return to Clover, in his poem “For the Little Soldier,” the nature of all three’s labor production is affect, hook, image:

...Until you know the daydreams occupying the woman on the assembly line you do not know the country. Of course there are many systems to put those dreams there inside her amphitheatrical skull operated by people known as affect workers like you and me and Drew Barrymore. We help people feel certain ways and are paid a living wage plus the little bit extra called the hook or the sting—a small but pleasant feeling like a tiny holographic version of meeting the president.⁸

Thus it is more than right to pair poets and artists and celebrities: they all meet up sooner or later to produce in the factory of affect in our “amphitheatrical skull[s]”—all have a power to hook and to sting irresistibly.

“OH NA NA, WHAT’S MY NAME?”

Celebrity names hold in them little worlds all compact, both in terms of branding and in terms of our associations *vis-à-vis* the personal experience of weak intimacy. French conceptual poet Claude Closky’s *Les miens, suivi de Biennales* is a series of alexandrine sonnets made up of names. The title of the first section, *Les*

miens, translates to “my family,” or “my intimate relations.” In this *premier suivi*, the stanzas are made up entirely of celebrity names. These stanzas are ludic in a number of ways. One plays on colors and eye-rhymes internally:

Bobby Brown Ben Shephard Bernie Mac Mams Taylor
Foxy Brown Lucas Black Clint Howard Chris Daughtry
Jerry Brown Dax Shepard Chris Carmack Jud Tylor⁹

Another in the series spells out DADA acrostically through the first letters of each line (using the celebrity name prosodic “feet”): “David Hernandez, Anthony Bourdain, David Duchovny, Anthony Perkins”—and certainly, Closky’s messing around with language in this manner seems companionable to Hugo Ball in the cardboard hat chanting “Karawane.” The second part of Closky’s book, *Biennales*, juxtaposes the celebrity names with artists’s names from the Biennales, the Venice exhibitions, using the same form: “Julie Mehretu Christo and Jeanne-Claude Zhang Jie.”

Kevin Killian’s “Anagrams,” like Closky’s alexandrine sonnets, also sport about cleverly with the names of “affect workers,” mining celebrities and poets for raw material: hence “Erotica Villianess, Alicia Silverstone,” “Michael Keaton, the coke animal” and “No brains on a date, Antonio Banderas” mix with the poetry stuff: “Canterbury Tales, rusty tabernale,” “A really sublime twit, wait, I’m really subtle, William Butler Yeats.”¹⁰

In the image-dense register of Stephanie Young’s personal-confessional lyric in *Picture Palace*, there is close attention paid to the naming of celebrities and pop cultural artifacts in succession. Several of *Picture Palace*’s prose poems seem to depict the loss or breakdown of an intimate relationship, using this formal technique of aggregate naming in order to link real intimacy to the language of weak intimacy:

...We were fight-
ing in the living room. We were hosting a party. We were listening to
50 Cent. We were listening to Aaliyah. We were listening to Amerie.
We were listening to Baby Bash. We were listening to Bobby Valentino.
We were listening to Faith Evans. We were listening to Feist. We were
listening to Jay-Z and Beyonce. We were listening to Lil’ Flip. We were
listening to the Lovemakers. We were listening to Mary J. Blige. We
were listening to Mike Jones. We were listening to Leonard Cohen. We
were listening to the Stranglers. We were listening to TLC. We were
listening to 2 \$hort. We were listening to Tweet. We were looking at
cartoons. We were looking at the illustrations. We were moving boxes.
We were moving our car. We were moving the VCR back and forth. We
were picking berries. We were proofreading. We were reading *A Lover’s*

Discourse. We were reading Folding Ruler Star. We were reading Freud. We were reading Fun in Games. We were reading The Iliad. We were reading The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book. We were reading The Lives of Wives...11

Of course, to call Young's work here in *Picture Palace* "personal-confessional lyric" is really to shortchange the degree to which the poems are constantly undermining subjectivity, fracturing the confessional and the lyric, even as they push into the most intimate places of memoir and meta-self-representation. Young is deeply self-aware of her work's confessional pushing, and often references her awareness with cheeky-deadpan humor: "Self portrait in satchel/Self-portrait in boom/Self-portrait with her numbers/whatever that means. Rising, ash, eat, air, etc."¹² she says, referring to Plath's "Lady Lazarus" in shorthand. Part of Young's productive troubling of the lyric arises from the filmic staging of the "I"'s cultural construction, the lover's longing expressed through songs, clips and film stills. The prose stanza builds and its soundtrack flows through the stacking of celebrity names and cultural material. The way we were: an intimate longing that holding onto these shared experiences of culture might close the gap of distance now, might make us whole again in time. These are different songs and different activities and books but throughout we are aware that integral to this act of naming is the feeling that things are falling apart, that the act of naming itself admits the impossibility of holding onto this shared history. And they admit us to it, retroactively, like ticket stubs rediscovered and used as a kind of image and sound currency.

Young's prose poem (Or is it a poetic prose memoir? Clearly it is a hybrid animal) "March 29, 2006" unspools its several threads from the center of a maze of cultural and personal imagery: "My big project had all the usual things: anxiety, image, idea, institution. Movies, TV series on DVD sent through the mail, how is shame different from embarrassment..." Here again Young uses celebrity listing, in the style of pop and hip-hop song title credits, to describe (in a different mirror house remix) a particular feeling through weak intimacy: "Where he is trussed I'm feeling Mary featuring Method Man, featuring 50 Cent, featuring Brook, featuring Jay-Z, featuring Sting."¹³ It's another pile-up, another aggregation of cultural material which challenges us to imagine such an epic sonic collaboration. The stacking of metaphors and cultural present in Young's work pushes the personal narrative into the space of epic, into an overfull panorama which describes our own saturation. Like Killian and like Hua, Young's use of everyday weak intimacy echoes through a sense of the sublime, the spiritual, tempered by economic realism: "I heard a loud voice and the heavens opened up. I am balancing my checkbook while the Key\$hia Cole album downloads."¹⁴ Young's poem "Betty Page We Love You Get Up" also uses celebrity naming to foreground the melancholy of the loss of an intimate past:

relationship. The celebrity name invocations become like a mantra of nonchalance and weak intimacy, as if enacting a final abandoned hope for a real relation, while acknowledging the way that our ‘trivial’ awareness of the lives of cultural figures shapes our thinking and our sense of the temporal.

Hua’s book adds to this use of celebrity names her own indexical impulse, a desire for surveying and mapping cartographies of language and distance: “series, summary, history.” A celebrity name is a node among nodes, a sign in American sign language. The legibility and associations of such a sign are tied into one’s age, sex and location. Folded into the book is a remarkable insert called “the remix” representing a mashup-map of such nodes, connected by strings: celebrities, philosophes, ambrosia salad, globalization. A flowchart of cultural currency in the form of a matrix. And, it should be noted, it’s very funny in its juxtaposition: Joe Jackson and *Saw III* somehow frighteningly converging in the production of Lindsay Lohan, Jacques Lacan and Ephedrine crossfading into “the subway.” Beyoncé and Beyoncé’s overdub harmonize over Glade plug-ins. Through this misegenation various class-coded foods emerge, from chalupas to watercress. Such a map produces near-endless pleasure, blending ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture in a thoughtful hilarity. It echoes the pleasures of global circulation while at the same time acknowledging their particular complex unraveling.

This is not the mixtape of jaded indifference. Instead it is a plea to “just be real about it, you fell in love to this cd.”¹⁶ To highlight only Hua’s humor and her use of celebrity figures would oversimplify a deeply serious and thoughtful consideration in *a/s/l*. There is a melancholy thread that runs through the poems, an awareness in which we are all implicated in this distance produced by imperialism, state violence and global capital; like Young, she too returns to the realities of exchange and to the roadside bomb. The content of the news is twofold. It is the roadside bomb in Kandahar, the attack on the flotilla in Gaza, but it is also the royal wedding, Lil Wayne’s jailtime.

“YOU CAUGHT ME LOVE DANCING” / “THERE’S A DARK SECRET IN ME” /
“DUDE, IT’S SO LIKE THAT”

This brings us to a larger question of why these Bay Area poets are so interested in writing about celebrity, politics and the lyric subject? Why not the avant-garde of Los Angeles, where stars and garters are thick on the ground, or the conceptual poets of Orange County, the showgirl skalds of Las Vegas or the glitterati of New York?¹⁷

One of many answers may perhaps lie in the fact that the Bay Area is a kettle of endless authenticity debates. One might venture an overt generalization: everywhere one goes in the Bay, more than perhaps any other area of the U.S., one is challenged to redeem one's "lifestyle" solely through the neoliberal valorization of the pure consumption of more boutique ethical goods and the deep appreciation of obscure bands' first albums (after that they sold out, ya know). The ironic hipster appropriation of working-class culture is evident. A "New Sincerity" has been proposed, but perhaps we can agree that so far that thought-experiment in poetry has proven to be simply a disingenuous encampment for slightly more bold and caustic hipsterisms? Irony that isn't, by which one means irony turned back upon itself in amusing ways, but without a proposed political imperative, an innaesthetics which sees nothing of systems and is not interested in their real dismantlization. The critique comes off as glib rather than true "sincerity."¹⁸

I would contrast the work of Bloch, Hua, Killian and Young, and argue that the motion of their work is different, that their more distinguished work retains humorous critique and free play while at the same time demonstrating a deep awareness of systems. Their poems engage in serious contemplation of the stakes of what Young calls the "Image Record," the way we are produced by the reproduction of cultural and media images under capital and can be betrayed or elided by the same. These poets generally avoid glibness and smugness, often giving us instead the reality of grappling with the whole immense fractured net of capital and the lyric subject's place within it.

In Julia Bloch's *Letters to Kelly Clarkson*, the speaker in her "hotel room as CNN reads the names of the dead" notes "gestures as a way to articulate the image inside her dress" and, listening to an alto saxophone in a Kansas City bar, addresses the pop star searchingly about an "unpurchased" sound, punning on the name of the starlet's hometown, Ft. Worth, as she longs for another "her" to stay, a real-life beloved:

...You might see [the music]
as a candy-colored DNA model but the notes are harder than that, more
forward, winging in unpurchased motion. Do you remember singing in the
dry country, being born in a town saddled by the burden of its worth?¹⁹

As in Young's *Picture Palace*, images of everyday real loss, displacement, alienation and melancholy are juxtaposed through weak intimacy; in this case juxtaposed through playful intimate apostrophes to the pop star:

Kelly I believed I could make it into something fine, make it fantastic. What will we do with these boys, these pretty tongues. Kelly you know how it is. You streak your hair & still it's the same every morning, and you're going for the eternal afterspank.²⁰



“you keep your tabloid subscriptions under a copy of dialectic of enlightenment,” says Hua. “your version of reality is still dependent on everything you hate.”²¹ If camp is “the re-creation of surplus value from forgotten forms of labor,”²² then “post-Language poetic camp ... invites us to take up a polemical affection for what’s obsolete, misguided, or trivial, and to risk the embarrassment of trying it out.”²³ With a similar polemical affection, Hua writes hilariously but earnestly of the “pure pleasure of celebrity crushes,” urging us to give up fighting them:

cillian murphy’s mouth gapes open with hesitance to slowly receive
the large dick that is rick dees in tamagotchi form
and by that, I only mean to say,
people would be much happier if they would allow themselves
the pure pleasure of celebrity crushes. and I know
you don’t know what I mean by that, but
I think, maybe you don’t want
to be the kind of person who knows
what I mean when I say
woody harrelson will be desperate,
can be discreet. and maybe it’s just me,
and jude law, when I tell you
I think you’re denying yourself
a great happiness²⁴

There is a desire by these poets to redeem this pleasure, to remove quite willfully the ‘guilty,’ which always seems to be a required prefix to the pleasures of pop in dominant bourgeois culture. That is to say, to see the ‘vulgar’ for what it is—frivolous, yes, transparently market-driven—but also stunningly neoteric and surprisingly complex. This approach foregrounds a kind of self-aware romantic utopianism tempered by realism, which accepts rather than degrades that which we love vitally as the breathless mashup of the present (or at least risks trying it out!): “Mothers of America/ let your kids go to the movies!”

Along with this desire for redemption of pop comes the impulse to rituals involving celebrities as well as their saintly veneration. We see this in Hua’s celebrity dream-poems of oracular Kevin Bacon “offhandedly, familiarly” intoning “but money is an object” or Christian Bale lifting an egg into “a small aperture of light before smashing it against a pan,” and her close-up sculptural focus on Lil Wayne’s “palm curved open with the fingers forked over/as if this alone could argue/smallness as absolute.” In *Action Kylie*, Kevin Killian’s Kylie Minogue is a redeeming angel, the saint of the beautiful and tragic, the survivor under the bright show lights at the end of the world. She is poised at the bow, triumphant sinker of a thousand ships, our candy club diva and redeemer of all desires, and we’re singing bawdy invocations to her: “I’m out in the back/Digging a hole to/the backside of Hell./O goddess of love,/peel off the lyric ring round my maypole/That woman in white/she looks quite a bit/like Kylie Minogue.”²⁵ In “Fly” Killian riffs on H.D.’s “Helen”: “All Greece hates/the still eyes in the Australian face,/the luster of ecstasy tablets/where she wraps/a microphone around her legs.” Years later, on her Aphrodite tour, Kylie would dress in the draped white chiton of the goddess, golden sandals, emerging from a gilded shell on the stage. Impossible princess, beautiful catastrophe, immortal. No wonder Killian’s got it for her, and in his preface to the self-titled section of *Action Kylie*, he connects the dynamics of the fan relationship to the experience of living gay:

Iconic objects take on eerie lives of their own and no one knows their business, not even the moguls at Skywalker Ranch who control everything else. I can spot a fellow fan of Kylie’s halfway around the room. We share a “secret understanding” akin to E.M. Forster’s concept of homosexuality as a willed gift. Cold hard tears seep from this work, tears shed for an implacable universe of wanting and wishing and denial.²⁶

Queer expression is always implicitly facing down the threat of violent hate crimes. One is *dangerously fabulous* in one’s alterity. *Hot and dangerous*. Not to be glib; truly the exaggerated veneration of pop stars represents a temporary refuge and a touchpoint of queer identification. Camp’s joyful excess has always contained within it a biting satire and critique in its bold challenge to conventional aesthetics and mores. A secret understanding, an implacable universe of impossible princesses (and princes): *There’s a dark secret in me/Don’t leave me locked in your heart/Set me free...*



The relationship of pop identification and violence is illuminated by the lovely unflinching poem “Ballad of the Little Boy Who Began To Identify As a Pop Girl,” a poem that is one of a series dedicated to the memory of Gwen Araujo, a transgendered teenager who died in 2002 as the result of violent hate attacks by peers after Araujo’s biological sex was outed. Gwen (named after Gwen Stefani no doubt) shares the poet’s “secret understanding” until her brutal death:

*I would never forget that one girl
who ran out and said, hey everyone, she’s got a dick
nor forgive that girl
but who was it after all
who stabbed and killed her with shovels
a frying pan and a can of tomatoes
not girls but boys²⁷*

Gwen is pictured as an “angel risen up out of mist and a sort of Jennifer Lopez urban/style, wings of desire and—this drive for *I’m real and.*” In this way, Killian allies her with one of the new pop archetypes in eulogy; dreaming and longing for a mythic authenticity in the real world, she is brutally denied.

Kylie's megahit "Can't Get You Out of My Head" demonstrates again this longing, wishing, denial, dreaming. Inevitably always in the background of *Action Kylie*, it is a song rarely mentioned directly in the book. Kylie, though, is always in the poet's head, his saint, pintsize glamour shot and impossible, tragic warrior. The song, infectious, is in our heads too, its relentless elastic assembly line beat pistoning and as Kylie speaks seductively, conspiratorily but controlled, "forever and ever and ever and ever." It is a song of sounds that reproduce and replay our longing and separation, amid the relentlessness of work, not unlike the experience of weak intimacy, or the spectacle itself.

The song on repeat, for each of these poets: distance, defiant networks of association, and to refigure Adrienne Rich's "love [and money], our subject." So it is that Young quotes Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*, gesturing towards the *objet petit a*: "which suggests how much we need the other's desire, even if this desire is not addressed to us."²⁷ So it is that we come to understand our world of real intimacy through weak intimacy, and even to situate our politics and our political actions, the kernels of what is genuine underneath the glitz's savagery and mediated violence: our wishing and longing for an undivided world, a world unmutated by separation of the lyric subject in the spectacle. Celebrities are part of our language of signs, our awareness of capital's motions, its legerdemain, and of our personal history. These poets are singing along with the complex remix, imagining the new gods, and their friends, for the pleasure, the melancholy and the defiance of trying it out.



Notes

1. Joshua Clover, writing workshop, Spring 2008 (thanks Wendy Trevino for your recall).
2. Stephanie Young, *Picture Palace* (Ingirumimusnoctetconsumimurigni Press, 2008), 40.
3. Uyen Hua, *a/s/l* (Ingirumimusnoctetconsumimurigni Press, 2011), 54.
4. Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Black & Red, 1983), 7.
5. Hua, 9.
6. Chris Nealon, "Camp Messianism, or, the Hopes of Poetry in Late-Late Capitalism," *American Literature*, 584 (with "official verse culture," Nealon quotes Charles Bernstein).
7. Hua, 32.
8. Joshua Clover, *The Totality for Kids* (University of California Press, 2006), 57.
9. Claude Closky, *Les Miens* (Éditions Al Dante, 2009), 34.
10. Kevin Killian, *Action Kylie* (Ingirumimusnoctetconsumimurigni Press, 2008), 31.
11. Stephanie Young, *Picture Palace* (Ingirumimusnoctetconsumimurigni Press, 2008), 54.
12. *Ibid*, 40.
13. *Ibid*, 54.
14. *Ibid*, 56.
15. *Ibid*, 50.
16. Hua, 55.
17. Julia Bloch is not a current Bay Area poet, and is more correctly called a current Philadelphia poet, though she lived for a long time in California and many of the poems in *Letters To Kelly Clarkson* were written in a Bay Area milieu. One is wary of over-regionalizing even as one sees the importance of mapping, as far as attempt and ability will allow, the particulars of a certain Bay Area trend in poetry and poetics. What the Los Angeles poet Kate Durbin is writing, for example, in *E! Entertainment*, seems related, but is more explicitly documentary and reality TV-oriented, although her work shares the concerns of image, celebrity and representation. One might also compare New York poet Josef Kaplan's *Kill List* to *Les Miens* in its use of poets' names in similar formal ways. Dana Ward's work could also be discussed in this affective context, and Brandon Brown's, but regrettably that shall have to wait for another essay. It is important, also, to note the real intimacy that connects at least four of these San Francisco Bay Area poets to the same press (Ingirumimusnoctetconsumimurigni) and all the San Francisco Bay Area poets mentioned to the real intimate network of the Bay poetry community.
18. The term "New Sincerity," in its Poetics application, appears to have originated from Joseph Massey's manifesto of 2005, "EAT SHIT!: A Manifesto for the New Sincerity," originally posted on his livejournal account and since removed. One of its key features is a hostility to theory and the supposed embrace of a rejection of irony. At the time of this writing, a full text of the manifesto could not be found on the internet. HTML Giant's blog article by A.D. Jameson, "What We Talk About When We Talk About the New Sincerity" <http://htmlgiant.com/haut-or-not/what-we-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-the-new-sincerity/#more-90315> subscribes to one particular narrative of this 'movement' and includes figures like Tao Lin (sometimes associated with "Alt-Lit"), David Foster Wallace and others under this categorization, for better or worse (many of David Foster Wallace's works, for example, hinge upon subtle ironies, and on theories, at times obsessively so). For a discussion of "New Sincerity" which seeks to imagine it as a larger modality or tendency which strives to be inclusive of works by poets like Clover, Lin and others, also see Jason Morris's essay in *Jacket2*, "The Time Between Time: Messianism and the Promise of a 'New Sincerity'" <http://jacketmagazine.com/35/morris-sincerity.shtml>. In my opinion, this analysis, while quite smart, especially on the subject of poetic Messianism and temporality, squashes two often quite different formal and affective poetic tendencies together. Elisa Gabbert's writing about the "New Childishness" seems to me more correct in its analysis of the modes and tendencies of work like Lin's, for example: <http://thefrenchexit.blogspot.com/search/label/The%20New%20Childishness>.
19. Julia Bloch, *Letters to Kelly Clarkson* (Sidebrow Books, 2012), 64.

20. Ibid, 1.
21. Hua, 14.
22. Nealon quoting Andrew Ross, 580.
23. Ibid, 581.
24. Hua, 45.
25. Killian, 30.
26. Ibid, 53.
27. Ibid, 101.
28. Young, 50.

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