

*Dear Chantri,  
the you of the future may collect the us in the  
present  
maybe decide to call it a history  
put it in a room filled with people  
and give them all funny names*

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*Organized by Franklin Melendez*

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## The Artist as Drone

### 1.

The artist as drone  
Is lost in translation and home alone.  
The drone is at home high above the world.  
It hums the dizziness of freedom.  
The artist is drunk on height and flight!  
The poetry is good but the sport is better,  
To look down at an earth-bound speck.  
Who is this speck? A young man who wears makeup to hide his illness.  
Can the drone discern the young man's attempt to conceal?  
Are his pixels defined enough for this chemical peel?

The body relinquishes its image to those who look at it.  
Newly improved with eyes, the drone can grab it.  
And then the artist owns it.  
She holds the image in her hand.  
She's in the position to unpack the reasons why  
The silhouette of a guy carrying dry cleaning will always be vaguely sad.  
I heard my friend started making paintings of shoppers in the rain.  
It's all the same.  
The people in the street might as well be covered in sheets.  
One sheet per street.  
The sheets are white as teeth.  
As a white room, a temple, a gallery, a mausoleum.  
A felon used to go to the modern art museum.  
With a friend and sometimes lover  
(They could never figure out what they wanted to call each other)  
And she'd explain the pictures that were all one color.

### 2.

It's a bird, it's a plane.  
It's a drone. It's throne is air.  
It's whole being is a dare. It's flair is for dispassion.



A case in example:

*What's God's plan?* agonizes the working class man.  
The drone chuckles paternalistically  
Saying, *well that's the human comedy*.  
He struts along admiring his creation.  
His propellers are the twirling thumbs of Machiavellian vocation.  
He's part architect, part archeologist.  
When his deputies bother him he asks for *just the gist*.

So here's the gist:

An artwork composed of thousands of tourists,  
Even though we might bemoan it,  
Is democracy in action, come on admit it. You love it.  
The artwork's logic longs to be braided in like scripture.  
It's bigger than object or mere picture.  
The artwork is New York City. Its medium is heavy Americans on concrete.

On the street we make eye contact.  
We're thinking the same thing: *New York is dead*.  
Up above the drone-as-artist drifts.  
Artists often slits their wrists.  
In Queens Shiva cuts eight heads of hair at once.  
Up above, the gods explore each other's cunts.  
New York is not dead; it's just laying there while we fuck it.

Some tourists panic when they arrive in the city.  
Their nervous systems are outside their bodies.  
They pass-out on the diabetic June sidewalk.  
*Breath in breath out*, says the affluent monk with clout.  
He's from the cosmopolitan sect with a visitor's center in Lower Manhattan.  
The monk prefers to sleep in his car. It's a Nissan. It's a palace of meaning.  
His water is bottled. His handwriting's mottled.  
He knows he's chic. He's in a mercantile democracy.  
His orange robe could be Burberry.  
The first animal to reach nirvana is half man half word.  
British men sometimes call women a *bird*. It's slang.

3.

Is the *spirit* a thing or merely metaphor  
For neurochemical ballets galore?  
For atoms spilled across the floor?  
The house is filled with atoms.  
The door frame is filled with atoms of door.  
In the west there was no Buddha before  
Enterprising South Asians brought him to our door.  
The west's consolation prize for no-Buddha was Freud.  
Our Sigmund pats the back of the librarian who was constantly annoyed.  
Before they called it *postpartum*  
This mother was constantly unhappy.  
Everyone constantly told her *you must be so happy*.  
But she wasn't happy. She was crappy. So she sought affairs  
To smooth the anxiety of consciousness  
With the anxiety of love.

What is modern if not this fire?



Even as it becomes socially acceptable  
For Larry to love Larry  
Love will always be scary.  
Always new, always unlikely.  
What are the chances of two specks, really?  
Same place? Same time? Same same same?  
And me is mine and you is your's  
And this the artist-as-drone abhors  
Because looking down, there's only one.  
What seems separate is the atoms just having their temporarily separate fun.  
They jitterbug us!

4.

Fassbinder said *I want all my films to make a house*.  
The drone can see this house from space!  
Can see the thing that character said in a drawer upstairs.  
Her frightened look is it's paper lining.  
Anorexic like Shelly Duvall in *The Shining*.

Wouldn't a family hit the spot?  
Yes. The art history and felon student agree to another fling.  
They agree that all the colors are really one color.  
*Same difference*, they say.  
Has there ever been a more perfect phraseology  
To describe friendship, love and citizenship?  
We're the same. We're different.

The drone incites this riot of affinity.  
When it finally speaks, it yells  
*Jeans Against Fashism!*

-Text by James English Leary

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Korakrit Arunanondchai (b. 1986 Bangkok, Thailand) received his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2009 and his MFA from Columbia University in 2012. He has been included in numerous major group exhibitions including at Sculpture Center, New York, ICA, London and Fondazione Sandretto de Rebaudengo, Turin. Most recently, he has held large-scale solo shows and performances at MOMA PS1, New York, UCCA Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing and Palais de Tokyo, Paris.

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