

OUTSKIRTS

APPENDUM TO “POP GOES THE HOOD”

>> FRED WAH

Pop Goes the Hood, 2005,

Pop Goes the Hood was a collaboration with video artist Henry Tsang, a 25-minute video and text performance focussing on the social aspects of neighbourhood and city.

Except Thrums
sustains its pockmocked tires
gravel roads and ditches

our four-by pickup to the core

rust of an old tractor
by the roadside threads
of local capital

unlike Kalesnikoff's lumber
family and the fire hall
budding memory
of the global hood
not

“... (the public is explained or defined by cities; there is no public in the countryside or the wilderness).”

(Stephen Osborne, “Amnesia in Cities: Notes on Photography and Urban Memory.”
unfinished business/West Coast Line 47, 2005: 190.)

except my public
is up at the shop
3rd turnoff, can't miss
the twisted culvert

that field between the farm
and the forest, fenced
or not
forgotten

“A black horse bends its head to the stubble
beside the silver stream winding thru the woods
by an antique red barn on the outskirts of...”

(Allen Ginsberg, “Wichita Vortex Sutra”)

except seven miles up gooseberry creek come raspberry village
across a field the weeds, light glance over the shoulder
another other face of a public common
to a rural or any neighborhood held as close as out under the apple tree
lured by the fleece of private property

“...the radical juxtaposition of our landscape that results in mountains and slums – to
put it baldly – in the same frame or picture”
(Clint Burnham, “Fourteen Reasons for Photoconceptualism.” unfinished business/
West Coast Line 47, 2005: 104)

just drive through Forget Saskatchewan
into the expected order
and think about metropolis either on or beyond any horizon
as the slum of its facades still sweats in the market desire for tailored streets

“We live inside and outside the city...”
(Jerry Zaslove, “Geological Poetics & Cultural Memory – Vancouver’s “One Way’ Elegiac
Streets.” unfinished business/West Coast Line 47, 2005: 251)

Except the city’s just been traced
Between its skirts the outside lies

Lest we forget
Powell Street’s still
a “one way” Elegiac street
to Lemon Creek

“But out there is only meaningful in its correspondence to ... in here. [From the forest of insidedness] We go “down” to the coast, which is the exterior, the outside, the city. The spaces between here and there are part of a vast similarity. The towns become predictable (thus memorably comfortable) in their activities and appearances. Castlegar and Prince George, though specifically themselves, share certain aspects of distance, colour and taste. One feels at home nearly anywhere there are rivers, pulp mills, trucks, the mysterious gravel roads further inward, and similar “local” inhabitants. Down and out there the exterior becomes more. Vancouver [simply] leads to other cities and countries. But all of it, out there, is measured from in here. In the particularity of a place the writer finds revealed the correspondences of a whole world. And then holes in that wor(d).”

(Faking It: Poetics and Hybridity: 186-87)

Except the city builds its public wall
for such few private souls
a language that serves the you who speaks

except for another chip in the windshield
of the “we” who’ve become the news
of our “selves”

is that your dream
of a public language?

“for whose town plan, the poem
has too long sat down by
the banks of logic’s river and
chanted me oh my, whose tears
of privacy and territory are whispers
up against the the crying wall another
unheard public on the other side.”
 (“Public” in is a door: 71)