

from *Music at the Heart of Thinking*

Fred Wah

• 50 •

Going through the language of time.  
Chronometrics. Horologicals. A book of years.

I like the water in it. And the footprints. That  
movement. As you look for words "sans intermission."

Of course it's the heart. Pictograph—pictogram.  
Epigram—epigraph. Cardiogram. Histogram. The paw again.

Cellular. Un instant. Je vais voir si je la trouve dans ce livre.  
It's that "yelping pack of possibilities," the hour as the order.

The prediction, the pre-form of foot in snow, log  
on truck, finding out it never was lost, fooling.

• 51 •

Everywhere I go here, here I go again.  
But even if I worked it out ahead of time I'd do it.

I know me. This train crosses all the Chinese rivers in Canada.  
Each one the same world water, the same trestle, same deep gulley.

In Japan Mt. Fuji no more than a quiet, black Shinkansen tunnel,  
out of sight, out of mind.

When Dorn said the stranger in town is the only one who knows  
where he's been and where he's going I could see Pocatello's tracks.

Your symbol as "accent to the basic drum of consciousness" lurks.  
St. Am stutters and stumbles. These rails are only half continuous.

• 52 •

tongue mist lip boat brown gull hill town bed  
stone shadow crow tooth rain boat flood hammer

star gill shadow skin hammer mouth town mist hill  
rock brown bed bird tongue snow creek lip

crow circle brown lip wave boat shadow city  
light hill sky mouth talk snow gull hammer fog moon

wet grey stone boat bed mist skin gill word flood  
crow tongue river mouth star brown lip night

flood sail wave sky tooth rock red bird shadow  
stone snow city blue hammer bed hill crow tongue

• 53 •

God, how awfully large it is to sit here lost on this log  
without the im as you say from mortality.

But no extremis in this breeze for me. Things  
such as this bark I cling to, deer chased by coyote.

Look, I don't want to appropriate his "words,  
goddammit, words" or her "continent."

But I've lied, muse's golden mouthed righteousness.  
I was where I was, but I didn't know where the others were.

These are muddy waters: the abandoned messages released,  
our daughters, chickadees already in January.

• 54 •

How numbers make trails. Track Li Po to Castlegar,  
the Kootenay River flows down from the sky, never returns.

And chance to get in the way of water's predictability  
or the white clouds of pacific western mountain flesh.

Birth is like that, though. Homes, mothers, names,  
friends as images. Puffs of imagic "rift or lake," anyplace.

Notation of these events quad right. He's got ideas fixed.  
Video la province, video la country, Winnipeg.

Hold it! When imprint hits grapheme, then eme is  
as in memory, echoes.

• 55 •

Map of streets stream of dreams map of creeks street of cream, fragment  
and imago imprint, geomance a glyph, a place on earth, under, or from it

Name's broken letters maybe words your body made.  
Idiot bridges to parts of our selfs still lost in the palindrome.

A found chain on the coffeetable, Some Scapes as a bookmark  
to automobile between 3 and 6; flex, flux, flooding, fl-

( ∅                      Creekscape: Looking Upstream)

Fred Was. Fred War. Fred Wan. Fred Way. Fred Wash.  
Fred Wag. Fred Roy. Fred What. Creek water hits rock with hollow sound

Each year the young men are initiated by being told about a spring  
underneath a main intersection in downtown Albuquerque.

• 56 •

You look for the nutrition of yourself when you think of food  
in this different way when yr alone, totally.

Does that "i" in "white explorers" look like a sail on Lake des Entouhonorons? Because of love?

Wounded, wounded. Parents and God, how hungry.  
Hounded into the signifier ship, into the vessel, into the mouth.

Back in the cave Plato thought up the perfect vowel.  
A big stone navel, under his feet, the cup holes.

Another god's daydream. The stage. Memory of your voyage  
totally serious, a sixteen foot oar, wooden Wodin, Sutton Hoo.

• 57 •

Just to think of the couloir collander the M is  
impossible wickerwork boat of water music.

Weather on the sea only the deep soul empties out  
shining like a village no wonder then the vivid river.

Not so much a fence as a fish weir (sometime giggle mesh)  
never to be totally contained in fact you should've been a sailor.

I want all that flood to be soft underbelly felt from birth  
to be the message home and absolutely local.

That inchoate body we all lumber under the maw of  
isn't that still the Galileean galaxy and all the little stars and fishes?

• 58 •

Was she Phoneme's sister? Did she ever learn to drive a car?  
Some said she was a beauty. Did you ever hear that?

That's a good idea. Write it all down in case you get a memory disease  
—we all do. Time is impossible except literal. Faces maybe. Sisters.

That little { really translates tripartite for me.  
And when I try to feminize the model, eyes haze into wheat and flat roads.

True geography? When Kroetsch arrived from Plunkett in his Honda  
I knew this place was all afternoon business. Excited but didn't mention her.

When Olson read "the genetic is Ma the morphic is Pa" what I heard  
was "paw" as in print. Maybe that's how Grammar gets to be the Granny.

• 59 •

Around here I'd like to be St. Mountain Station  
on the Great Northern tracks in the natural situation.

Don't you talk of speaking singing, soul carried forward,  
lines of a life, letters, true way we say, in the lie of the word?

Maps through the days make a lot of sense.  
Imagine friends beyond these times, sure recompense.

When St Orm runs the alpine ridges on Kootenay Lake,  
on the beach, at my feet, single vibratory waves of history break.

Now I know the names to measure in this language stream:  
whatever rhymes with no sense keys the dream.