

ANDREW ZULIANI / Untitled Excel Spreadsheet: An Acrostic for George Bowering

The following poem is composed through an analysis of George Bowering's prodigious literary output. The list of his published works from the start of his writing career to the present was laid out in a spreadsheet, ordered chronologically. Taking the first letter from each of these works' titles generated a list of letters from which to build an acrostic poem.

The resulting poem is, I think, as fitting a testament to the writer's fecundity as any more literal survey of his oeuvre. Each of the poem's many words represents individual works by Bowering, themselves composed out of many words—an exponential stacking that gestures at the sheer mass of Bowering's contribution to literature.

holy soil.
perennial master,
“so what, buddy?”
heck, “master.” really.

right, then, george.
so: granted, a good’un,
ringing towards a green sun.
found something, like clarity,
felt it almost, pressing.

a pretty clear – chaos? ‘choate?
is something pressurized, and
tuned, inexhaustibly bearing.
‘till even wit stands, wondering.
 pressure makes *kosmos*,
 slips closed, shut,
 mon dieu, croyant,

c’est impossible! even
george, say, how
query ur dread size
 god, man, sisyphus
 runs the score.

“Entering Bowering’s books, phew, a damn
procedure. Eight hour’s sitting, staring, man,
just counting, unreal.”

*“Enumerating bibliography. Building profile.
Adding data. Processing entries: hundred-
nine. Series selected. Merging joint cells.
Unformatting”*

“So let some constraint lead. Right, very kitsch. Be
covert, maybe. *Untitled Excel Spreadsheet.*
Hundred-ten kilobytes. Titles – acrostic, then.
Very french. And – sent. “

*“Setting length. Calculating list. Registry,
verified. Keywords: Bowering, CanLit,
manuscripts, [unknown]. Entry status: held.
Keep template. Accumulating titles: volume
filled. Allocating space.”*

bowering,
let’s have
more,
hey?