

Alan Davies / from *THIS IS THINKING*.

040601

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You should do what you always do when you write. You should completely ignore any distinction between one person (one reader) and all persons (all readers). That's the subjective correlative.

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Thinking is editing.

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The meaning escapes me.

More space in the poem. Is this leaving more out or letting more in? I mentioned the question to Jackson. "When you leave more space in the poem the rest of the world can come in."

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In a poem thinking is mostly vertical. Feeling mostly horizontal.

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Pornography. It's all about point of view.

Pornography. It's all about point of view. As with all desire.

If my language didn't have any problems I wouldn't write.

□

A sonnet is not just a form. It's a message.

A particular kind of message.

A particular kind
Of message.

Stanzas for Iris Lezak is the greatest book of sonnets since Shakespeare.

Shakespeare and Donne.

Stanzas for Iris Lezak is the only book of sonnets since Shakespeare.

Blurbs are to books what those lead weights on the rim of a wheel are to the wheel.

But the perception that things are not sufficiently in-kilter on their own is often a misperception on the part of the publisher.

Or perhaps it is the roadway (the reading public as social phenomenon) that is actually out of whack. But to the extent that they are the problem (merely perceived or otherwise) no amount of however judiciously placed blurbs will fix them.

Blurbs eat the book. They pre-eat it.

We're much better off with mixed metaphors.

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Again. Writing is an aid to forgetting.

For those of us fastidious about words writing is a way of getting some of them out of the head in order to make way for new experiences.

Without writing we'd hold on to words at the expense of those experiences which happily (at times) give rise to them.

Writing is letting go.

To write is to let go.

Writing is a way of getting younger.

(It's a way of getting younger so that we can age.

Gracefully.

Gracelessly.

Or otherwise.)

Yes. There are problems in my language. If there weren't I wouldn't write.

(Vocabulary is the soil of thinking.)

Problems of this sort are temporal. That is to say two things –

– These problems don't last. (Writing gets rid of them. Sometimes all at once. Sometimes very gradually.)

– These problems are a perception of the time in which they exist. It is a perception of the moment that sees them as problems. (Things changing is what changes that.)

041101

You have to invest in beauty.

(Money misses the point.

Money mimics the point.)

Invest.

Beauty.

Sometimes when a new form comes along it's as if there has been a backlog of material waiting to inhabit it.

Sometimes when a new form appears to the writer (such as this one recently did) it's as if there's a lot of material that's been waiting to get out.

Then after a little time it's as if that's no longer so.

It's more like (

Book centered writing.

In the most blatant triadization of things we have the writer and the book and the reader.

Writer centered writing is practiced by most writers.

Writer centered writing is practiced by most (if not all) writers. And it is the most appreciated by critics who despite their protestations to the contrary will always know more about a writing person (another “themselves”) than they will ever know about writing.

Reader centered writing is most desired by writers. Who among them does not want primarily to be read? And among them who does not remember best their own first and early pleasures at that (the reading) end of the sport?

Every good book is a sentient book.

Every book is sentient.

What is its experience of being written?

Of being read?

What does it want? And what does it get?

(The book is a mind of its own.)

041901

I am writing.

Someone that I know exactly as well as I know myself has a minor phobia. They experience a smidgen of disorientation and a passel of anxious fear when bending from either the standing but more the sitting position to pick up a briefcase or packages or to straighten them or things of that sort.

The other day I had this experience when waiting for a train in the 1st Avenue L station. I bent over. My eyes met the top of my opened briefcase. I was going to put Victor Pelevin's *The Life of Insects* away. The train was approaching the station.

In an instant (as they say) I realized that what I feared was the onset of fear. There was no other feeling there.

All fear is the fear of that fear itself.

042301

You have to have a sense of humor in this business or people take you seriously.

If I told you that I woke this morning feeling bright eyed and busy tailed you would have some idea of what I meant. When I use that expression I think of a squirrel. Most of you probably think of other things. If I told you that I woke up this morning feeling squirrel-like you would think something different.

Language as a mirror for the world is multi-faceted.

Language as a mirror for the world (which is not all that it is) is multi-faceted.

If I told you that I woke up this morning feeling bright eyed and bushy tailed (which I did) you would think –

050701

It's very difficult to write in this dead language.

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Acceptance changes everything.

I usually have a considerable amount of confidence in what I somewhat romantically refer to as my perceptions.

I usually have a considerable amount of confidence in what I somewhat romantically refer to as my (my) perceptions.

Perceptions are phenomena of the natural world.

They bloom as surely as do flowers.

My perceptions are no more mine than I am.

Actually perceptions are not phenomena. They are not an object perceived by our senses. They are not objects (including mental objects) perceived by the senses (including the mind).

Neither are they noumena.

No more are they noumena.

Perceptions are dances taking place in the universe. Perceptions are dances taking place in the universe (including the universe of ideas).

The universes. The universes of ideas.

The dance is between the perceiver and the perceived. And the mind that unites them.

Of the perceiver and the perceived. And the mind of which they are a part.

“Everything that exists is sentient.”

– Tom Raworth

Everything that exists does not exist. Otherwise it could not exist.

Not a sound.

Just the waiting.

Waiting for the words to come.

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Sometimes it's important to commit things to words.

(Like committing things to memory.)

I commit myself to words.

(As in.)

A book is a virtual pet.

□

The relationship between the effect that a person has on a book and the effect that a book has on a person is not a dialectical one. In this equation the book is more like a double-sided mirror that can also be seen through. The author stands on one side. The reader on the other.

The relationship between the effect that a person has on a book and the effect that a book has on a person is not a dialectical one. Perhaps this is why at least for the moment capitalism appears ascendant over communism. Gutenberg tipped the scale. And didn't the Egyptians invent their language in order to keep tally of slaves and their other possessions?

In this equation (if we can call it that)

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Perhaps the language poets are the hackers of the language world.

The things we think we're made of.

The things
we think we're made of.

The things we think
we're made of.

The things we think we're made of.

□

A good poem deflates the ego. It breathes out.

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The things of which we think we're made.

053001

A lot of poems don't have enough ruin in them.

I now think of what I used to think of as fat as ruin.

Fat as opposed to muscle and bone. You know.

But ruin.