STRATEGIES FOR TIME TRAVEL

'in reality flying isn't hard, provided you

are devoid of either scruples or fears,

and you're crazy besides.'

– Daniel Kehlmann, *F*

The will to domination zeros in on the fundamental, a desire to know paradoxes and problems. Each experiment works as a thematic playlist, with strange love songs, noisy rants and atmospheric interludes. Unwilling to give up one’s own individual choices, the time traveller suffers a lack of constraint: we have been stretching further into a reality in our minds, and this confession is less controversial than it first seems.

Our sense of time is of the utmost importance: we must identify and separate the toxic from the useful. Consensus forges an illusion of simultaneity to make time, nonlinear and nonlocal concepts have the ability to invent memory, layering different moments together as a basis for the present, mirroring and mapping consciousness from moment to moment, impressions and actions cancelling each other out.

Time may have stopped, free from the fog of emotions, but reality is very different to our perception of it. Linear experience can extend forever, built upon anxious constructions of the self. We return to the same moments over and over again, are already lost; reality is simply not. Speaking about the normal becomes incomprehensible gibberish; twisting language in the present requires ramping up the noise and embracing a type of temporality in deep relation to change.

Our grammar is always imperfect when talking about the future because in the present moment we can only remember the past. Creative practices can be a form of mind control: do you still like the old song that you started to play? You will have to maintain continual awareness of unavoidable premonitions, visions, or half-remembered things, fantasies overlapping and piling and layering and looping, whether or not you are rewritten in the future.

Giving ourselves over to imagination is of particular importance, you sometimes return with knowledge you've gained. Harshly question all assumptions, keep a notebook with lists of things stuck in; zines, posters, shared stories, bursts of brass and synthesizer, celebratory singing, can all tell us where we are in time, and which time we are in. Transmissions from the past can change everything by changing just one thing as we step through the magic doorway.

FRAMES OF REFERENCE

'Child be strange, dark, true, impure, and dissonant.

Cherish our flame. Our dawn will come.'

– King Penda, in *Penda's Fen*

Nights are the best, stars shining as flames.

Starts as a line of light made from broken dreams

then sparks its way across my vision, resisting

the very precepts previously beyond question.

My guess is that we plunder the planet and

refuse to distinguish between the wild and tamed.

Occupation can be ornamental or eminently practical,

has been widely employed throughout history;

an audio system immerses you in birds warbling

as we attempt to find another handle on the sun,

lose ourselves in shadow's sacred legacy.

Untethered by written documents, we have

little to rely on, are always open to guesswork;

there are disarmingly clever infographics

and dusty exhibits of all our mistakes and lies.

What looks like power sockets and raindrop ripples

are visual poems, the shrieks and moans you hear

the curator's performance work. The broader circle

of language is a footpath crossing neatly mown lawns;

if you look up from the page's horizon and lose yourself

you will find notches and lines, mute stones and works

of collaboration and creativity. The future runs mostly

downhill, skirting the retreating ice, eroding debate

and song. Meaning will not translate into words,

thought has been invested in creation, definitions

of genre and form ride the literary seesaw whilst

our allegiances and attention move elsewhere.

We contradict each other and make way for others,

plant new evidence and scheme. The past blows

this way then that, as frames of reference emerge:

moments of intuitive belonging, strange likenesses

and spectral presences populate the landscape,

offer continuity. The key to now is then.

EMPTY SPACE

for M John Harrison

A private vocabulary of meaning and its opposite,

time filled with transmuted images of the past,

cigarette packets and ice-cream experiences,

balances out more subtly represented lives.

We begin with spectral distortion. Other worlds,

plastic visual forms and formal experiments with

shuffled calculations, create a continuous mirror

of the emerging past, collapsing sci-fi futures.

Without the psyche and because of our lives,

today is an immense half-submerged narrative,

nervous breakdown embodied within tomorrow's

interior landscape. He drowned in individuality,

dreaming attempts to explore dangerous cities

where counter-intuitive poets in the reality tank,

at home in this distortion, construct graveyards

and imagine ambiguity as a coping mechanism.

Unconnected ideas reflect internal confusion,

take their impetus from a paradoxical universe

where dream and reality are essential motifs,

dreary remembrances of childhood memories.

The dark has been reluctantly jerked forward,

warped into embodiments of exorcism where

the rain-lashed ruins of damp phrases offer

uncertain apocalypse, prolonged obsessions

and random logic block symptoms, perverse

and strange illogical ideas. There are always

bodies lying in the street but we fake magic

every morning, settle grim questions, reflect

upon science predicting what won't happen,

future events undermined by deconstruction

and doubt. Imagined alien worlds become

dispiriting places round the corner, critical

moments eclipsed by curiosity. Elsewhere,

one can see serpentine faces all around us,

radically shifting words as extreme cadence,

the work of a man with a marvellous future.

THE ABANDONMENT SYSTEM

Individuals and society crumble within urban environments;

decay and collapse re-occur in the book of the same name.

Objects made from found materials, broken down then reassembled,

are gathered together in this city with cast-off dynamic potential.

Different aesthetics point to multi-functioning existence, failure

absorbed into substances suspended in parallel analogue states.

Bodies of work explore transference, extract moments of casual detail:

information gathering and destruction as a floor-to-ceiling installation.

Archival possibilities, spaces beyond, offer a middle-aged comfort zone:

degrees of protectionist intolerance, bulletproof doors and security dogs,

potent three-dimensional drawings, thick ribbons of rolled black steel,

with room to create a distinctive body of new informed architecture.

Negotiate this maze, the escalator between sanctuary and control;

all sorts of musical experience now airbrushed out of existence.

Only we are our own unwinding, working from a hazy beginning to

confused and uncertain conclusions patterning the need for refuge.

Corporate harnessing of melodic works, freestanding loops collected,

sequenced, then further refined, leaves traces of sorrow and regret.

Information bursts into nonsense, despite our streamlined cleanliness;

histories forcibly displaced by words as recurring memes of thought.

EXIT WOUNDS

Spaceships never leave the earth,

travel only in the mind,

reworking familiar ideas

and turning them into science,

illusionary sparks in the dark

predicting what won't happen.

Firing on all cylinders,

light travels around corners:

freefall galaxies, distant boneyard,

spectral distortion, satellite camps,

metamorph convoys, forgotten crew,

control room clones, an airlock muse.

Navigation is powered by fictional data;

we are all dead by our own definition.