

***In the rub...***

19.05.23—

<p>Grey filled image-field interrupted by smaller image of happy dog carrying its own leash: “BECOME UNGOVERNABLE”</p>	
	<p>A piece of mass produced furniture with incorporated ashtray stands off-kilter sitting against a confusingly convincing <i>trompe l'oeil</i> colonnade with arches, also yet oppositely off-kilter, to the left.</p>

<p>“Deathinitely” floats atop a recognisable nuclear-bomb-mushroom-cloud. Beneath the combination a framed text box: “War does not determine who is right — only who is left.” All this occupies the surface of a cardboard packet possibly containing real cigarettes.</p>	
<p>A close-up of a bright red poppy.</p>	
<p>A yellow t-shirt filled out by a generously large belly with “SERENITY” in white sitting on a banner of flowers printed in black.</p>	
	<p>A dark grey metal plate sign with billowing green tree foliage all around with a finger-drawn heart-shape etched in the dust: “HARD TURM PARK”</p>

Dec. 6th

Feb. 29th

In the midst of the *rub* of witnessing planet-wide trajectories careening toward elevated conflict & {blindfolded} destruction, pleasures often triggering surprise &/or minor eruptions more akin to *massage* have been passed *between us...*

Although the idiom *the rub* refers to a problematic & often unforeseen conflictual relation between things, ‘to rub’ in English is to perform an act of contact with

something. That contact probably doesn't resemble the tender of *massage* but then again there is deep tissue? In this context the word evokes both the frantic "*Out damn spot!*" *rub* of Hamlet, another occasion of *the rub* attributed to Shakespeare, the source of the term according to an online account...

... but it also describes the aforementioned *massage* generating the randomly chosen transcriptions from a two-sided closed-channel image-circuit conversation *between us*; Beatriz & I, our fingers touching-up the screens of our phones, sending codes back-n-forth.

This all happened in fits-&-bursts beginning as far back as at least mid-2022... could be earlier but I didn't have the back-up storage-system then—where on a map the whirring furious machinery for that is housed in some over-heated shed I don't know!

The back-n-forth Beatriz ignited *between us* has liberated our communication by opening up a channel in the most part without typing out any letter, any word on those screens. It was, I admit, a surprise to me that I dived into that fire so readily. I don't partake in the flurries of rapid-fire image exchange & circulation 'native' to memes or image circulation on social so-called media, & I must say my contributions to our back-n-forth-image-discussion has been stubbornly in-situ & circumstantial — my image-talk has come from the camera of my own phone's direct in-time encounters for the most part.

It was not an easy process attempting to transcribe this exchange into words. Images are complicated machines & contain so much. They are at some point language, but words can be similarly difficult, especially if they're {pointed / directed} as a means of communication between people. This is when they exceed what is pictured & become directive, coercive, approaching the ideological & as is often written, the violent.

The list of above left/right image-translations sits close to this appraisal as they perform speech acts. The whole cache has occurred between two people who know each other & have spent many hours passing words between each other — first one voice then another, passing thinking made words between each other, back-&-forth. At times missing the point. No matter, the oscillation continues.

This is performative language {• Austin}, words or images or commands that are intended to *do* something, like the statement of a judge proclaiming '*guilty.*' Between Beatriz & I however the performativity of our exchanges is the {continuation & maintenance} of our relationship over time, sometimes affirmative, at others combative... or otherwise, somewhere hilariously or provocatively between these two poles.

This might sound synonymous with the performativity of me-cultures & hence in some way "all about me" ... but the machinery Olabarietta has set up *here*, & in her sparking of our now years long image-back-n-forth, has created a space open enough for a language I hope you can register too in *I LIKE TO WATCH*.

A movement goes this way...	& then another. More precisely, <i>the other</i> .
Back	Forth

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{• Glissant}

It's *a rub*, but both art & Images are unavoidably political & hence cannot avoid the ideological — words are for sure not exempt. What this back-n-forth has though managed *between us* is to maintain — no, even more radically from my side, build — a solidarity & potential in the midst of worlds of words that threaten, dominate & take advantage of very large {machineries}.

*The rub* might not even be human here, but *the rub* always has/is an outside, a radically 'other' intervention.

I'm finishing this text from a train with the sunset making gloriously obvious how dirty the train's window adjacent to me is. This speedy machine's window has made contact with an 'other' body, presumably a finger inscribing a curve similar to a sine-wave.

Could it be that the finger remained stationary as the train took off?	Or was it that a finger was attached to a walking body playfully inscribing the line in a fluid motion?
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Without knowing what this exhibition will be & feel like in person, bodily, I hope the rhythms resembling the sometimes uncomfortable mechanics of the conversation & back-n-forth with 'self' & 'other', the kinetic *rub* between materials & the space here gives you...some {space} to see, listen, speak, act even, & possibly (day)dream whilst you witness the (a)rhythms of *I LIKE TO WATCH's rub* unfold.

Gerry Bibby, May 2024