

The Four Horsemen

Ilie Paun Capriel, Anastasia Douka, Michaela Murphy @ St Sylvester Gymnasium

The thin dog is running in the road. The thin dog is the road.
Afraid she'll bite you?
No, but she might take my leg for a lamppost.

Force announces itself as farce.
The lights buzz, the radiator is empty, and promise is a tyranny, a useless ambulance its mouth full of flowers. A balloon in the throat of the goal.

Feet, ugly and innocent, are easy to love. The human digestive system lines up mouth-to-anus if you let it, a timeline: Erectheum to Human Centipede. (Pray to that, our awful memory.)

We have acceded to rules where a person is a thing. There is nothing to say.
The crowd addresses the Dying Gaul, phatic, all elbow, as pedagogical instrument: an idea about how to die at work.
The athlete is an epistemological tantrum, all edges, a human cored to its operations. Here I am.

No one expected a mouth on the floor. It is cleaning up at the emergency and is the emergency.
We are spat out. You want to go home but this is home and home is a body and the body is intolerable and our rules collapse the categories of body and voice and host and hostage and sound inflates the body's boundaries and so we are inside you and it is intolerable because loved bodies are pure time and this is how grief operates, its sarcastic rhetorical power. It takes form.
Here I am. Emphatically without you.
The crowd gags, eclipsed. The elbows laugh, why are you so easily hurt?

Deposit your attention, cored to attente, on a test-site, a chronic figure, a refusal. You wait.
Anatomy bleached to diagram; a crude box, monochromes at a grimace, not small but far.
Architectural appendices, no light, a laugh dried at the corner of the mouth, a bladder relieved of its critical argument. We understand that it will end before it starts, thank god.

"Each aria a perpetual sob," wrote someone who was there. "Pavarotti on helium," said another, who wasn't. Castrati, athletic risk-free lovers, effloresced lack into volition. The scoreboard is at zero. Time is marked in red at intervals. Last year's calendar flutters to the floor. The bleachers turn like a sleeper.

An experiment was devised to test the new unbreakable backboards. A piano, dropped from a crane, failed to shatter the glass but broke the stanchion at the neck. The tongue of the hoop just hung there, a medieval joke. Goodbye, Descartes. I am startled to miss you. We retreat thumbless to the wall, determined to learn something. (For help, I look in Durer's Horsemen for the bird, but it's not there; it's in Melancholia, and it's a bat.)

This is what I learned:
You are a miracle, not blood in a bag.

What else?
The architecture of the gymnasium can tolerate one tongue only, writing. And architecture is language is history is authority is orthodoxy, and us and this a minor episode.
All is soft as ever.
You can will nothing, but not not will.
There is no elsewhere anywhere.