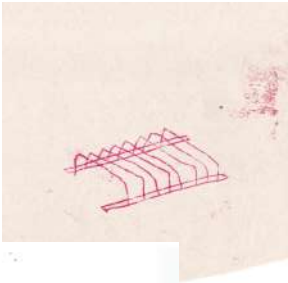
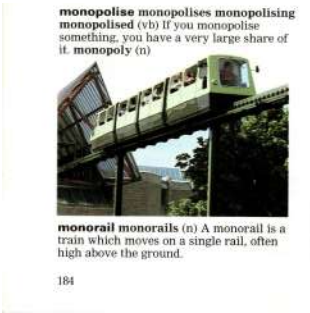
AISLING
MC 2024
CALLION



MOUTH FEEL



Anni Albers invented OOO

Object - a material thing
Oriented - positioned in relation to something
Ontology - the nature of being

Material obeys laws of its own [1]
Or has its way of being in the world,
A way that can be:

S t r e t c h e d,
Intruded upon,
Harnessed,
Disembodied,
Altered,
Separated,
Imitated,
Honoured.

Guidelines, thoughtlines, throughlines,
A tradition invented by passing time,
Has severed,

The magic of first meeting with a material.

How do we choose our specific material, our means of communication? [2]
How can we start this dance
Of mind, body wrestling to understand
A mutual learning,
We must listen, play, taste, touch,
Mould both object and subject.

Have you ever stopped to feel the weight of plaster dust
Tremble through your fingertips?
Remembered the taste of fresh blood as that
Sharp, taut paper taught you a lesson,
Or felt the tingling glisten of fresh morning dew
And wondered, maybe oil painting could be different?
Or squinted, as you thought, maybe that pectin leather
Is tastier than it is appealing?

Forming, testing, violently spiralling,
Visual language is stirring a pot of feeling
And hoping the result is not burnt porridge.

A foundational pattern is prepared, 3
Sometimes, a structure is there to climb.
Humbling so it is,
To begin a dalliance with a new material,
Riveting not knowing,
Ideas flowing, building,
A furious tension,
Transgressed in dialogue of being.

Motifs are worked over the core 4
They can be hard,
To put your finger on, or
Are vivid, hard, all consuming.

The degree of tightening or loosening the cord
Will be learned by experience 5

From disparate parts of planning,
Filling takes place between motifs,
Adding finesse of structure,

Joining happens through grasps
At meaning, giving a go
At making something, whole.

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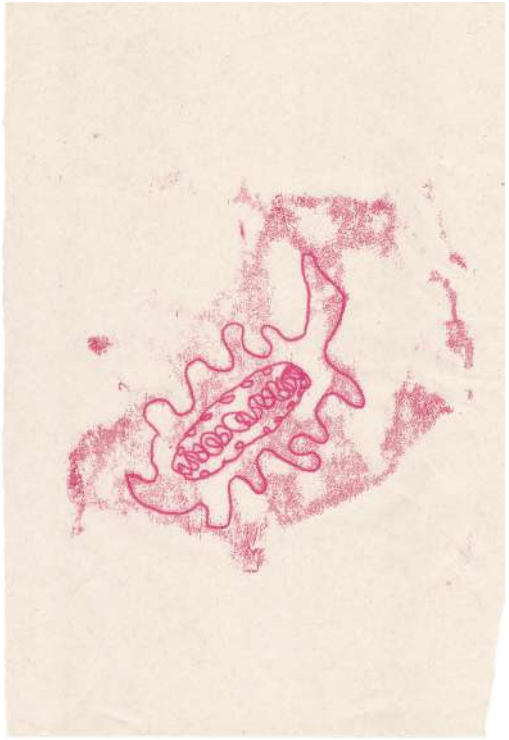
1. Anni Albers (1982) Material as Metaphor
2. Ibid
3. Eithne D'Arcy (1991) Irish Crochet Lace: Motifs from Co. Monaghan
4. Ibid
5. Ibid



Who wants to be a Millionaire?

(I don't)

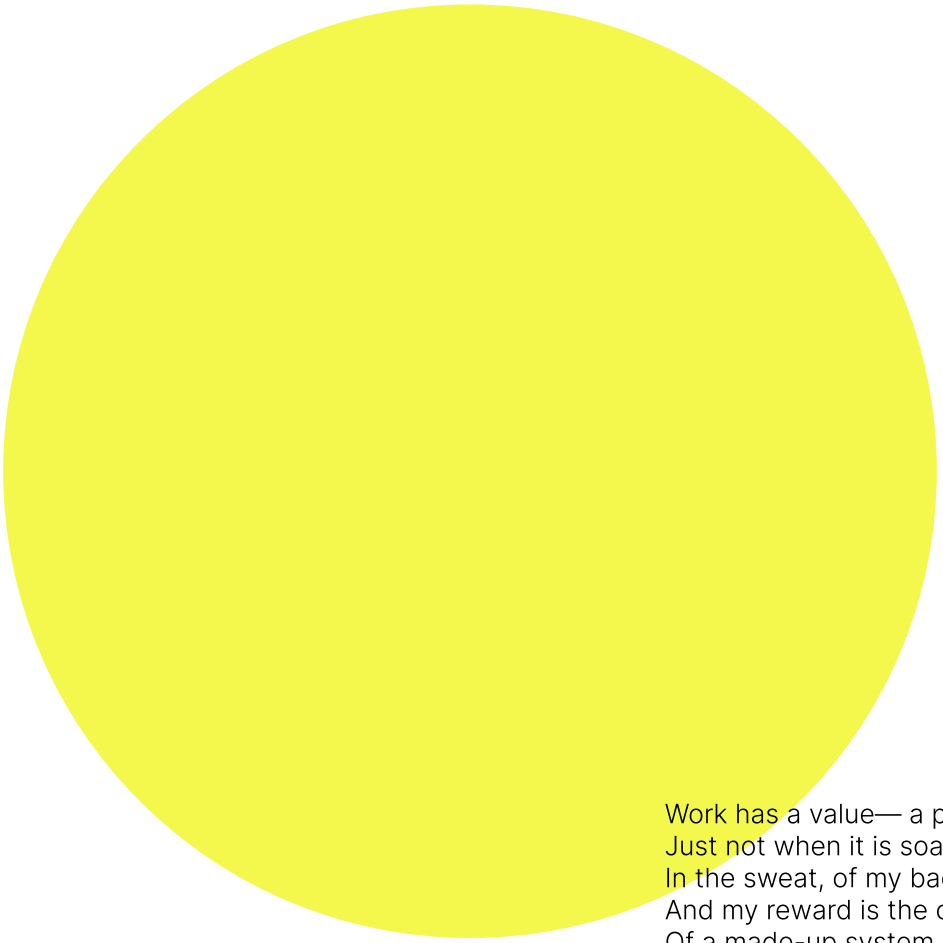
I smile and ask 'how are you today?'
What is this exchange anyway?
Forced upon us to recognise difference
If you gave me butter
And I, you bread
Would we notice the change?

Invasive so it is,

Picking and prodding around our interior
Until we feel it is real,
What is invisible
Can cause the most harm.

Growth-product
billionaire-mindset
5 am rise and grind
Grind your coffee—grind your kids—
Grind your body—grind your mind to a halt,
Yet never stop talking.

It's not that bad
If you don't think about too much,
I guess, grinding your soul,
Until it is crushed
Is all part of the fun.



You say it's how you get ahead—
Rise up—side hustle
But that just lacks imagination.

Work has a value— a pride to it,
Just not when it is soaked,
In the sweat, of my back,
And my reward is the coins
Of a made-up system

I lack ambition you may say
I just don't get it, to succeed
I must obey—give in—give u
My way of thinking.
Yet, I have ambitions
Not just for myself, no idolisa
Self-promotion—individualisa
I won't be inheriting the
American psycho aspiration.

It's not a race. I'm not a rat.
We're not even playing the sa

I'm communal, not competitiv
Well not in the way you are,
I share,

Hope for a future where
5 am men aren't a reigning m
Preaching a path to success
Tied up in their sovereignty.

See money doesn't grow
On trees for a reason,
When you destroy the soil
With your growth mindset,
I'll pick up a spade and till it.

As you pay bills in the border
It allows me to pick at the pla
Of the interior.

World on Fire

I went to a busy place
And melted into the stairs
I felt the dank-trodden carpet cultivate my skin
The ghost prints of footsteps
Agitated the clatter of paint
That encapsulated my bones.

I wondered what it was like to be made of timber,
An object in a house,
Painted with a slathered skin,
Felled,
Chopped,
Smoothed and sanded,
Not a drop of blood spluttered when I was pierced with nails.

I thought about a field,
The purpose of a wall,
The origin of the other,
How velvet makes skin crawl.

I wanted to feel the outline of a step
Crush into my bones,
To melt the dirt of our figures,
Into a derma of its own.

How do you build an edifice with a zig-zag?
Why do we bring pots of soil inside?

It's an obsession of the edge
Where something ends and something new
Begins
Supposedly,

All this mapped out, defined, rigid
Thinking,
Step back and feel the dawn air,
Fresh from dancing since dusk,
Connect with the nape of your neck,
The excitement of a frigid cold
Bracing, enveloping, consuming,
Connecting,

Blurring the horizon.

space *space*

between *thoughts*

A rebel spirit spills, Staining the street of the yellow horse, The walls of brick attune to the aisles of time, Blood red squelched clean through the porous glean, It bubbles alive, Still, In the bodies that will become rocks.

Flows down through passages, Time in the veins, And a cork stained dirty, Calls for elucidation.

What a place to throne you, High on waters gate, A grand parade of footfall never out of sight, Yet your power lies hidden, Trapped beneath your bark.

You are urban, On your guard, Your senses artificial, Your attitude, Sophisticated, regal, grand. A feeble attempt of man, To signify mother nature's hand.

Are you a symbol of human nature? Meddling materials at their will, Revealing a shady stance to the future, When the hot winds blow. Or are you a symbol of nature? A hybrid model, The sexy product of object to object intercourse? You track, sense, report, A robot.

A caution,
I do not intend to replace real trees,
Who really is the real tree here, is it in the word?

Are you an employ of capital?
A villain of the tree labour world?

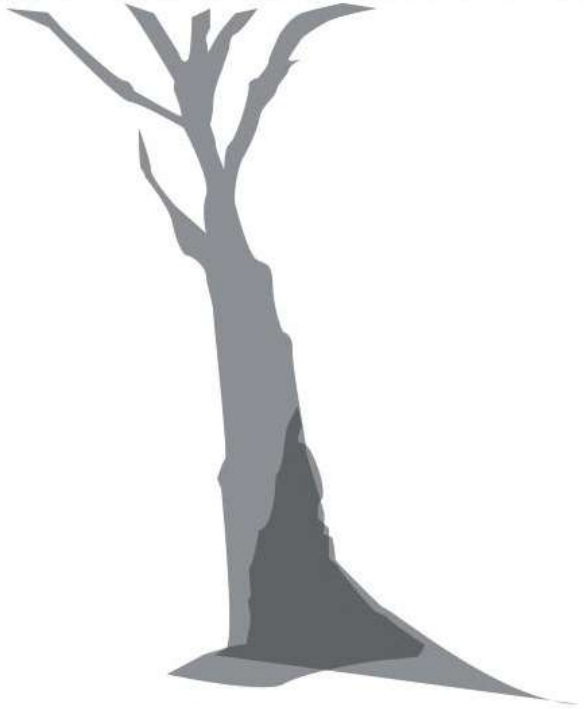
Efficient, you stand tall,
Your arms replaced by benches,
Branching your agenda, Concealed, Your methods
Your methods masked, Oh robot tree is it really you or me that you look after?

My unions of roots, My channels of communication, We cannot penetrate you.

Yet I admire your cause, I too am the lungs, Exhaling from the depths, There is breadth in my breath.

Smooth soft textures infiltrate my body, Hear the sounds that we make, The crisp bristle groping of a lover, Rasping fingers through hair.

Swaying I bring life, Shading, Protecting the calm, I offer a hand to the top of the sky, A new vantage point to scan, I am time itself, Through seed, flower, shower, storm, The blood runs red in my veins, I hope yours one day will run the same.



The Weans

A feral childhood on the frontier—
Fears stirred,
A face dressed in a cheeky grin
Delicate dreary days
Frame splintered bodies.

Feet slap on spongy moss
Squelching, it sucks
On the steps of the evaders,
A feathery, filthy speed is required
To fly above their boggy grasp.

Wet, wet, soaking wet,
It tingles, knowing it is free,
Oblivious to it's perma-culture,
Caught—trapped like a glacier,
Violence carved into land

That does not speak of borders
Or boundaries crafted by men,
Flooded out by the sun
The dirt has no native soul—
Walls do not build themselves.

And the mouth drools,
Feeling the freedom of the river,
Knowing it is of a vibrant
Matter, parts and pieces
Flying neither here nor there.

Feet slap the moss—
Feet slap the moss—
Escaping, you sit
To wring out your socks,
The squish, melting to felt.

Transposed, I'd hope to be like you,
And dream of the adventures to be had.

Window pain

Shllip,
The tongue plunges forward,
Licks,
The cascading tear, dripping
from the side of the sun-drenched cone.

Light,
Splits the toes of the painted glass,
Holy unholy,
What or who is pure in this house of god?

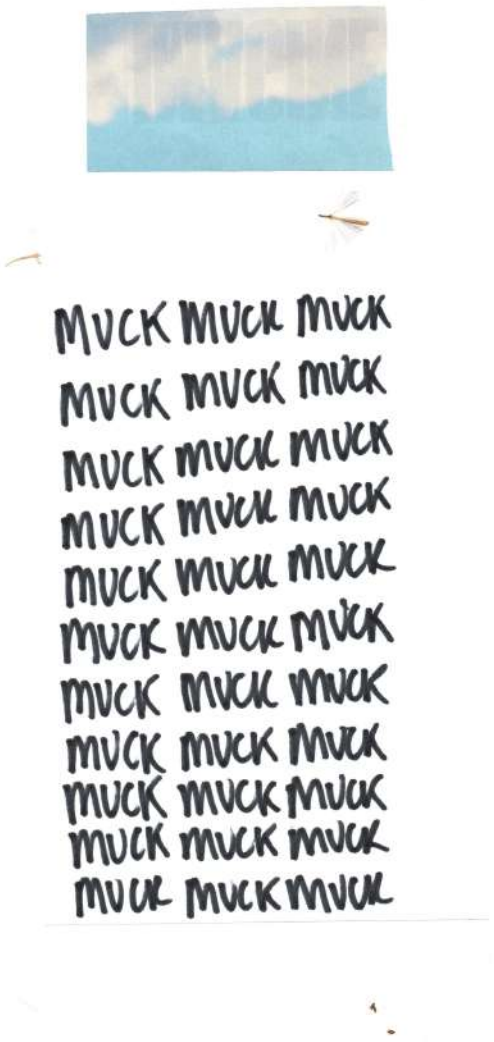
Eyes consume stained history,
Mouths wait their turn,
For the mind must eat,
Before we turn on each other.

Slick back, throw back, get on,
Your back,
Tongue traces pulses,
Down.

Fingers slide inside,
Melting barriers of flesh,
Sweat, wet, hands glide grasping,
Tangling sense to reality,
Pleasure,
Returns the sin of skin to purity.

Breath breads power,
Bending time,
Panting,
Captured in a kiss.

These souls will melt to liquid,
And the unholy body,
Will rise again.



All of this is real

Shiny sheet metal
Pulled from the earth
You mould it with language
Feel out its form.

Everything has an architecture
Our love is built strong.

Threads grow up from the soil
Moulding them, shapes me
Solidarity in mutual harmony
Your energy is ancient.
Kindred spirits spark flares
Cement mixes
Cake bases
And you’re missing from me.

Coral pinstripes slap Levi jeans
A line crushes the stone
Love soaks
Dripping dry in the shine.
I close my eyes to touch you
Floured fingers rub dusty smiles
Your hands prod the dough
Together we wait for the rise.

Alone we belong to the earth
Yet we’re together in this world.

We speak in tongues and stitches

I traipse through the foggy early morning
On the well-worn stone path,
Fumbling,
For the factory keys in my pocket.

It's my job to wake the machines up,
Get the lights on,
Put the yarn out.

I yawn and stretch
Bowing,
I give my polite greeting to the knitting machine,
Hoping for no dropped stitches.

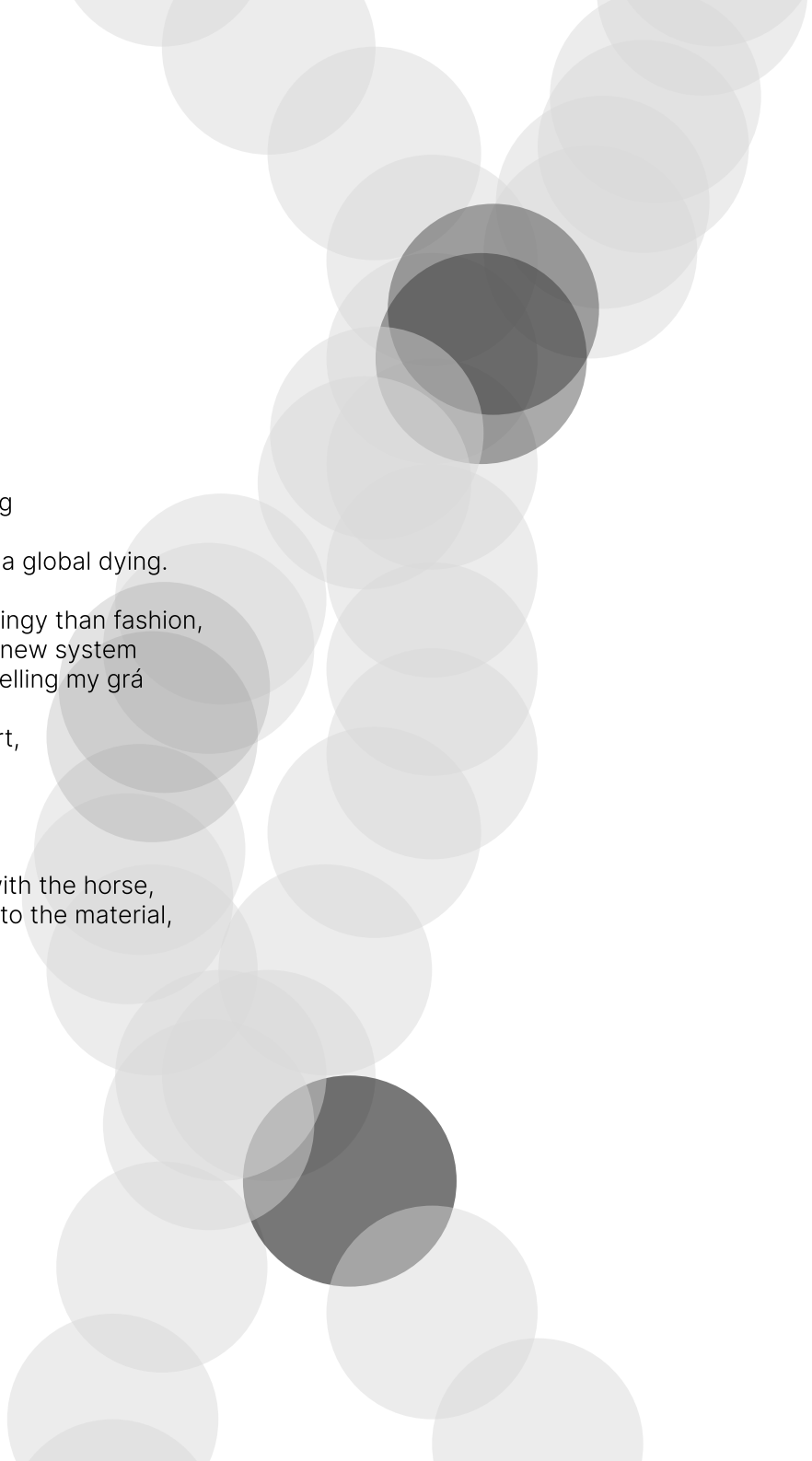
But, they speak Japanese,
I grew up with English,
And here on the island, where the horses speak Irish,
The stitch-thingy,
An ráth lúba,
The latch-hook,
Is multilingual.

This hook is a portal,
A key through every border,
A tool that binds stitches,
A code through which all cultures speak
Without the need for words.

Like a pen, Picked up,
it forms structure, or apart,
pattern, The fabric,
rhyme, even lends,
motifs, its language,
imagery, to us as we,
looped, ponder,
laced, connection,
Hooked, community,

Fate.

This is women's work, a fierce battle it has become,
As I wish to retreat
From the mainland
The cold wet of the island rock takes my hand
I let the sea foam shroud me in a veil of misted glitter
Surrounded in a sparkle of silence
I turned to the wilderness
Determined that my hands were the problem.



It crept, the feeling of knowing
That, this is not enough.
A silent protest in the face of a global dying.

There is more to this stitch thingy than fashion,
Perhaps we look to fashion a new system
The ráth lúba grapples, unravelling my grá

I retreat to the pen for comfort,
A way to navigate the soul,

‘Tá mo chorí istigh ionat’
I jumped
Forgetting my conversation with the horse,
Thinking about the approach to the material,
My heart is within it,
As it moulds me.

Delivery

They grow into solemn beauty
Flowers do
In the process of dying.

A gift in grief
Their brightness on arrival
Shields their imminent death.

A knowing buried deep within us
Their decay, the smell of mould
The dry cracking fragile feel

Hands clasp beads in a coffin
Stretched skin, hollow
On old bones.

Will there be flowers?
Will there be flowers there for you?

We dress your grave with them
Comfort each other with them
Watch them die slowly.

Can you smell them?
Or do you become them?
When I watch the fresh petals bloom,
Are you there?

A beauty bright at the dawn of spring
Resilient without fail
We dress the dead with the dying
Reminded roots grow deep
And they begin again.

Flowers in cement

For Bernie

A glint, a glimmer,
The spark of mischief,
Dressed up and wise,
You led with a hand to hold and another to guide.

An adventure to the meadow,
We gather,
We glide,
The sun's warmth shines on your back,
We check the shape of the walking stick,
Your magic cast upon a tree.

Forming with the world,
You listen to the song in the wind,
Bonding,
To the material nature around,
You built a life of learning,
Your home an extension of you,
Worlds of words revealing the open warp threads,
Invisible ties that bind.

Poverty, power and the individual,
Your bare foot in the soil,
Leaving a path of mutual aid.

The wind pushed us down the lane,
It is only right to listen to what you are told.

A spirit of the earth,
You talked with it,
Making gold of honest dirt.

common commons
1 (n) A common is an area of open land where everyone can go to walk and play.
2 (adj) If something is common there are a lot of them. *Daisies are common plants.*
3 If you have something in common with someone else, you share the same interests or you have a similar characteristic.
4 (adj) If something is common knowledge, everyone knows about it.

Objects/things/stuff

Today I woke up to the radio alarm,
It was a slow, feverish, haze,
Pulled from one world to the other.

I squeezed my eyes shut,
Hoping for the leftover sleep to seep and weld the join tight,
Re-rembering the mould lined moist window panes,
The bathroom door with no handle,
Replaced with a vice-grip-s.

Language may be problematic,
As a tool.
Or is it how we have come to wield it,
Human beings are dangerous at creating fact
From observation.

Objectivity created by subjects,
Of Subject, no object?
Natural, unnatural, scientific fact,
Language enables definition of the other.

The door bangs across the hall,
Pulsing, flashes of wet, I hear the broken shower
Splash through the radio waves,
And I find out today that a field
May no longer be called a field
In the context of research in America.

My mind conjures visions of
Modernists and rationalists finding
Truth
In the era of the enclosure
Quantifying matter on stolen ground,
Subdivide, box-off, subject-ise the earth
To understand,
Cementing one way to view reality,
Developing isolated fact,
While moving through common muck.

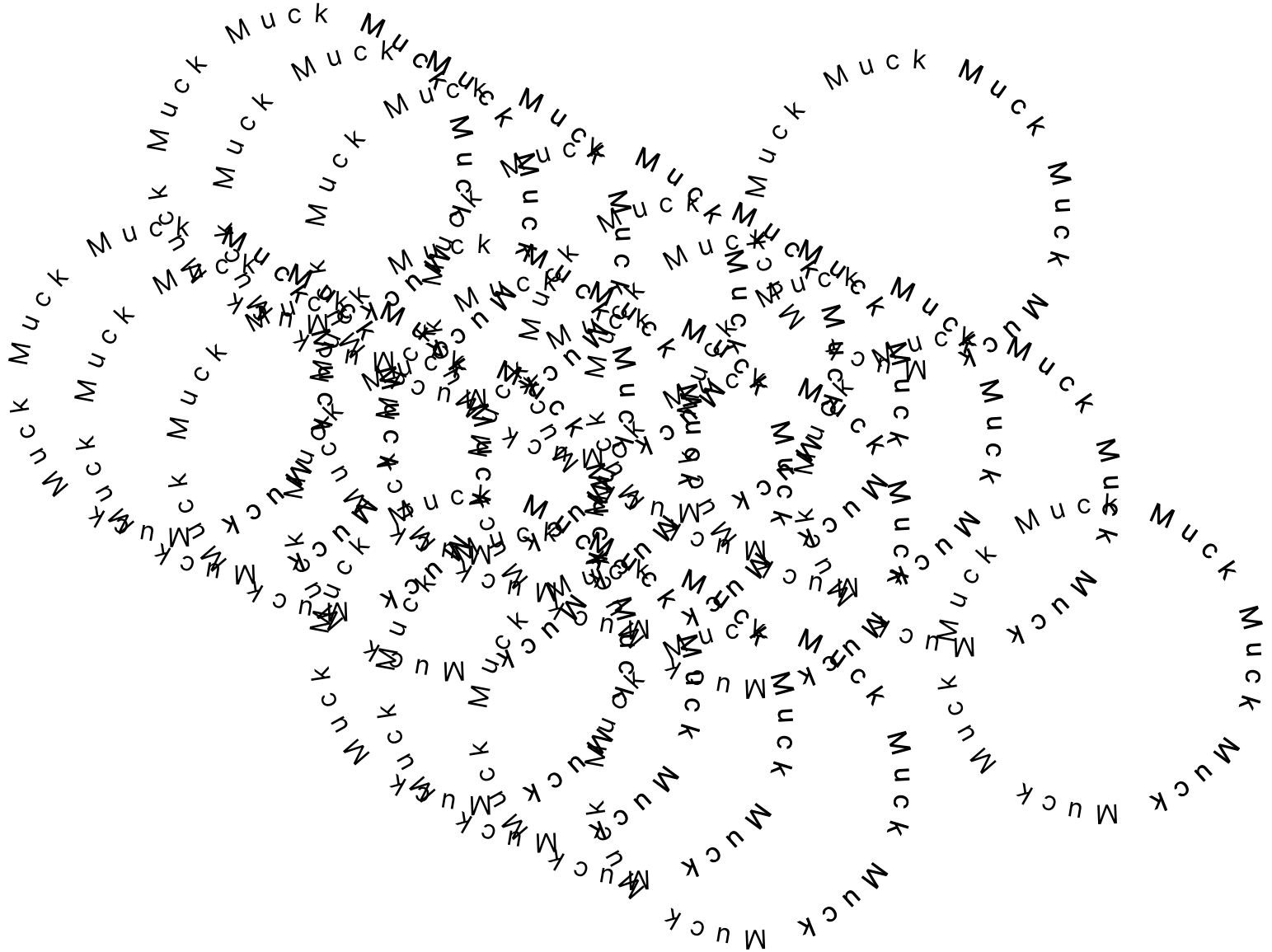
What about how it makes you feel?
The taste of the dirt, when you jump in it.
How can we wonder when we are drenched
In the spit of the system.

But yes, of course, it gives you an escape:
But that bamboo toothbrush
It brings you closer to the light
Or maybe your stainless steel lunchbox
Will save you from the plight.

It was time to admit to myself that
Designers are the last bootlickers of capital,
A modern, rational, career
Pulling from the pockets from the earth
To tear the common hand
From its material.

Another tool, another process,
To save you time, to sever your hand from the land.
It was good while it lasted,
It is what deserves to burn.

And so I rise, in a cacophony of sin,
Resigned,
I get up and go,
Outside,
I watch the dandelion open towards the sun,
Think of how it's yellow fades
Until it's fluttering spores are
Blown by a baby human
Not wanting to wet the bed.


Muck

Odear

Wind Tree Dancing,
West Clare.

My friend is a homeowner now.

We go to escape,
Latin jazz, Japanese soul,
Doom domain blaring to read
About the Empress Dowager Cixi,
And her role in China's path to Modernisation:

Trade,
Customs,
Education,
The telegram,
Democracy and death by 1000 cuts,
All before the cultural revolution.

I feel the age of the earth.

And yet,
It looks to dance,
Outside the window I see:

The wind and the barley grass
Flirt and refuse their curfew
Drenched in the soak of the rain
Sweating, the pressure heaves
Upon them, yet they float.

I am entranced and light,
There is hope that this is not a final frolic
But the end of civility.

Building despair is their prerogative,
Retaliate with debauchery,
A sweaty body mirroring the earth,
Less of this controlled bureaucracy.

We deserve escape,
A rush through the night
To arrive at a common land
Tuning into a rhythm made in
Tandem with muck.

Safe in our communion,
We can worship Grandmother
Williow's mycelium,
It embodies the god principal.

Beings crave chances
at wonder,
The agony of a structure,
The wildness of a word,
The comfort of a fabric,
The feeling of disappearing,
Enclosed in a wall of noise.