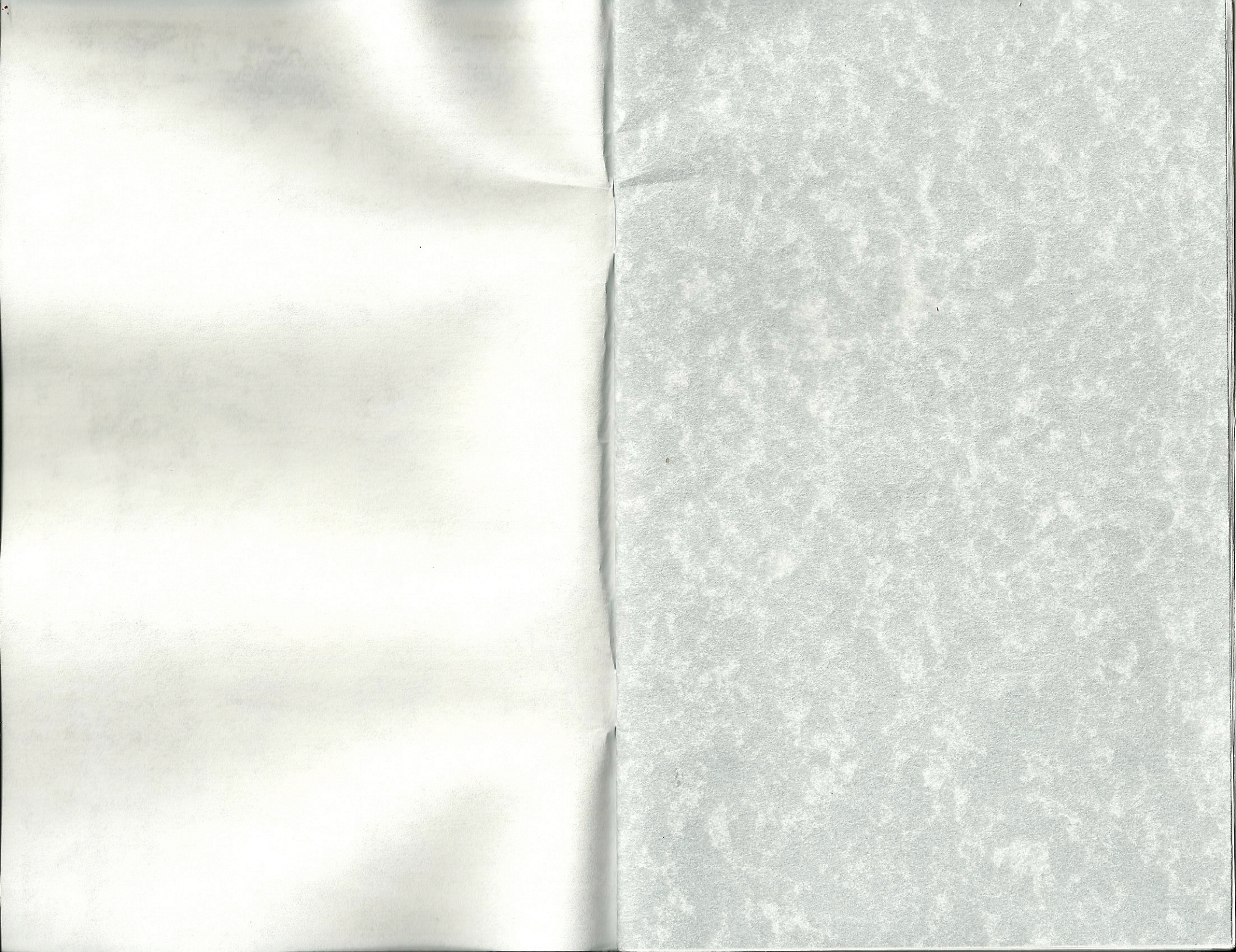


Webster





lebar

derek beaulieu

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*Key*

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concrete poetry for me is not a score for performance & is a refusal to participate in the trade of meaning which is underscored with the writer proclaiming the meaning for an ever-receptive audience of captives. by stepping away from the score it is my aim to trouble the exchange value of poetry and its commodity function. Sianne Ngai in "Raw Matter: a poetics of disgust" referred to the 'inarticulate sound', something I want to expand to the 'inarticulate mark', the mark which refuses to participate in the traditional meaning-making. Ngai writes that "no words are used in the expression of disgust and thus what the question of what words mean is simply irrelevant to this particular type of utterance" (103)... concrete poetry treats language and communication as raw matter without a reinforced referent as a means of briefly interrupting exchange-based signification; language here, ultimately, only covers a space, perhaps building upon the idea of a field poetics...

by using obsolete technology, the concrete poet can recuperate means of communication which have been rejected and trashed. Lea Vergine, in her book When Trash becomes Art (2007) argues that "the artist, of course, is a useless figure (...)" & he is a social error" as is concrete poetry in this context.

the poet has become, much like the means of production itself, an obsolete & form, a generator of facile, statements of the 'human condition' meant to transfer an emotional state to the audience/reader. In this form, poetry is an empty signifier. We already have enough people writing about people & the emphasis on content - MEANING\* - only reiterates a traditional, humanist drive for understanding. While form may be no more than an extension of content, the reverse is also true: content is no more than an extension of form.

this is not to suggest that the romantic image of a writer pounding away at a typewriter with the ever-present bottle next to him is what I am supporting here, rather that the poet's role has become as obscure as outdated machines, an un-needed and un-served 'social error'.

concrete poetry, then, is a brief moment of reclamation of a poetic space which does not attempt to map the author as anything but a 'place-marker', signifying the absence of role. Christian Bök argues that best-selling poet is the equivalent of world-famous doily-maker or championship house-of-card maker; and it is increasingly an issue of alienated labour and endurance. to be a poet ~~xxxx~~ should be tantamount to being involved in scientific research; what can the restrictions of the form (26 letters and punctuation) communicate, and why?

this may also testify to my reluctance to create concrete poetry on the computer, preferring to use handmade forms such as lettraset, typewriters, printmaking etcetera, using the computer only as a storage and transferral device ~~xxxx~~ (emailing pieces for submission, compiling manuscripts, etc) & the actual process of creation of concrete is a hands-on issue for me.

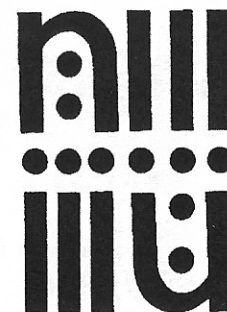
visual poetry for me is a way of eliding the poetic 'voice' in favour of materiality. ~~the~~ the materiality of communication -- letter-forms, punctuation (and its inevitable overlap with ~~xxxxxx~~ design) is ignored in favour of the content (as if McLuhan never wrote) in most communication, and as bpNichol wrote "all that signifies can be sold."

\* by briefly breaking (as meaning is constantly being perscribed) the semantic chain, the concrete poetry iam interested in (by such practitioners as jwcurry, Kevin McPherson Eckhoff, Donato Mancini, Jesse Ferguson, frances kruk and others) proposes (~~xxxxxx~~) (as establishes is too strong a proclamation) a moment where meaning is a process of loss, much as the role of 'poet'.

concrete poetry, then, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ is as much about waste and excess as it is about 'poetics'. the means of production, the voice being articulated, the audience and the very economy around textual production and sales, is shaped by marginalization -- a self-perpetuated marginalization at that.

if the author is a "social error", a "useless figure" she is ~~the~~ one linked to a useless machine and a useless ~~genre~~ genre; concrete poetry then becomes a record of waste or refuse. the attempted articulation and appropriation of that waste is placed upon the machine over the ~~xxxxxx~~ biological author-figure.

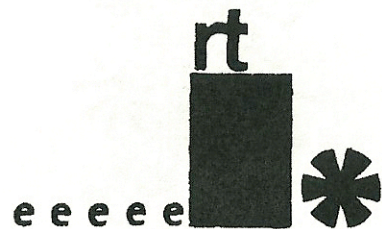
by embattling the limitations of 'effective communication' concrete poetry has only ~~the~~ us attend on the the spaces of disjunction and absence...

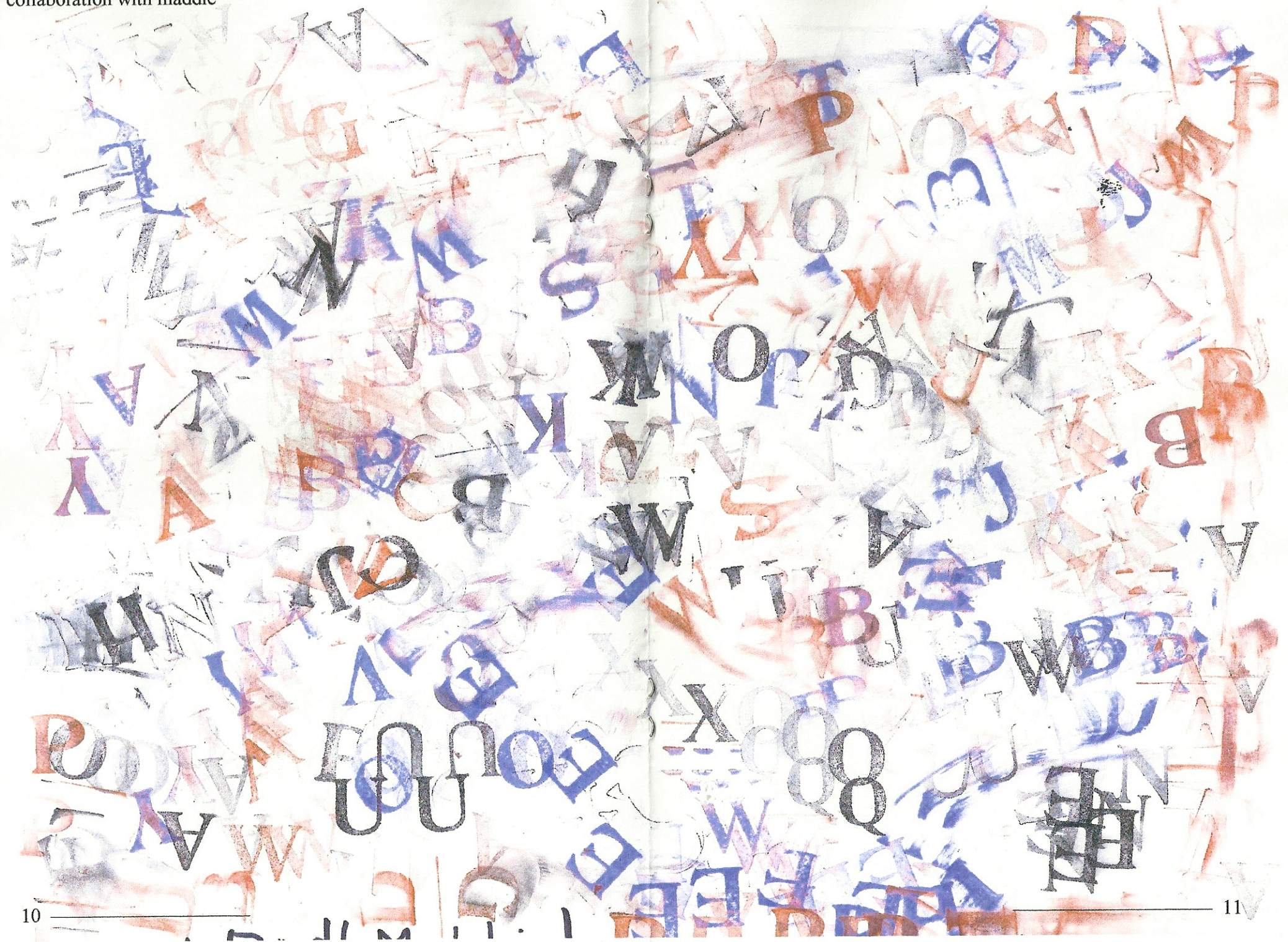


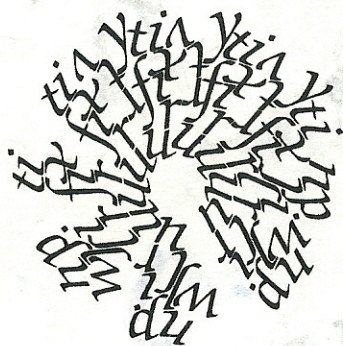
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 GC H I  
 C . I  
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 H H H H  
 C H

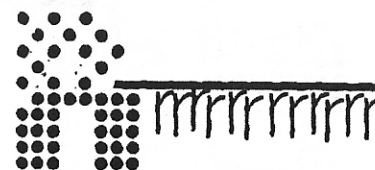
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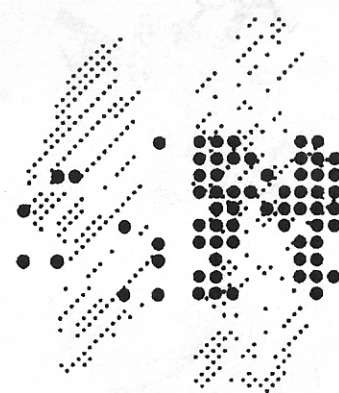
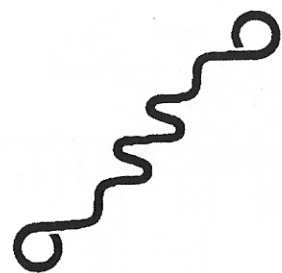


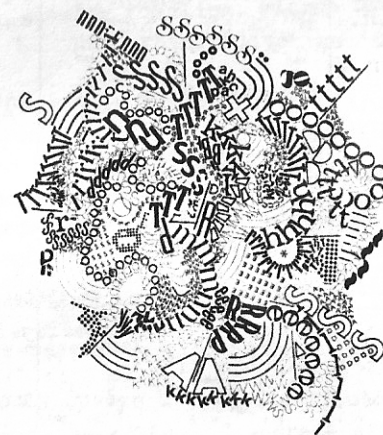
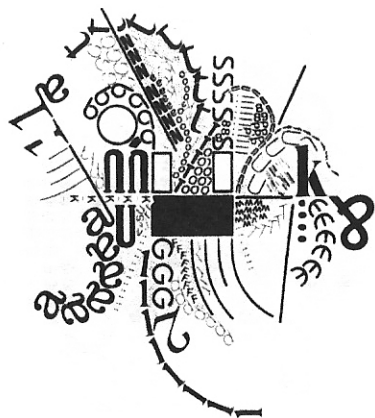












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