

An abstract painting featuring a white, skeletal insect-like form in the lower half, set against a background of vibrant red and blue brushstrokes. The text 'miraculous continuum' is overlaid in the center.

miraculous
continuum

painting Olga Raciborska | lay-out Jan Mertens

miraculous c o n t i n u u m

compiled & edited by Johanna Linsley

I started it.

First I wrote:

A TAXONOMIC STAB

Non-miraculous: air travel, suspension bridges, the Internet

Miraculous: panic attacks, orgasms, LiveJournal

PROPOSITION

The non-miraculous tends to be more impressive than the miraculous.

MIRACULOUS CONTINUUM

A miracle has existential ambitions. Of itself, for itself. Anti-social. The miraculous, though, has a slant relationship with causation. It's more or less inexplicable. Stubborn literalism, naff metaphors, swarm intelligence, unconscious manifestations. What is the radical miraculous? Queer miraculous? Socialist miraculous? Materialist miraculous?

PROPOSAL

Can you provide me with a set of three* miraculous sentences?

*SUSPICION

The miraculous is pithy. And comes in threes.

~ ~ ~

After I started it, Jennifer Tsuei wrote:

Have been (accidentally?) internalizing Tan Lin's intro to Alice in Wonderland.... How about some quotes from that?

1. The future is where one retrieves the pleasures, the bodily pleasures of the past. (Adam Phillips, *The Beast in the Nursery*)
2. We are bored when we don't know what we are waiting for. (Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*)
3. When is feeling not a feeling? Perhaps when you want to share a feeling that you can't.

Extra credit:

4. Many of the creatures behave like strange recipes for inedible foods, food that would prefer to talk back than be consumed.

~ ~ ~

After I started it and Jennifer came second, Marcus Slease, Ryan Ormonde and Alex Davies responded in quick succession.

Alex wrote:

Mausoleum taunted shutter dalek:- creased-up lit up flag.

A nuclear bomb's clotted iron lung.

Absolute white men dance-in oiled slides in tap shoes.

Marcus wrote:

The garden does not know the house.

The garden detests calendestine operations.

I see the house after I leave the garden behind.

~or~

Maoist cultural revolution

Schumpeterian creative destruction

Hegelian spirals to heaven

Ryan wrote:

This comment has been removed by a moderator.

For example, Mary lives in New York and come over her.

Sorry, this page no longer exists.

~*~

After I started it and Jennifer had come second, but before Marcus, Ryan and Alex had responded in quick succession, I heard from João Florêncio. João was both expansive and precise. He sent me exactly three sentences.

He wrote:

First Principle of Queer Mechanics: The measurement of the future-present necessarily disturbs the momentum of an existing revolution.

Demonstration: if a revolution could happen that would destroy the whole of the human species and consequently the possibility of its own History, that revolutionary moment would be the closest the world could get to experiencing the miraculous creative power of life freed from the castrating technologies of human understanding. This leads us to:

Second Principle of Queer Mechanics (or, The First Law of Anti-Historical Revolutions): If, at any stage, the outcome of a revolution has not been observed, said revolution exists in a state of superposition, that is, it lives all its possible futures simultaneously.

~*~

First me, then Jennifer. Marcus, Ryan and Alex, but before them, João, expansive and precise. And after all of us, Mary Paterson, spare and geological.

Mary wrote:

When I stop looking, powder rises from her shoulders like dust.
Sediment gathers at the edges of her mouth like a cliff eroding.
Her bones are made of precious stones and when her arm shatters, the blood sparkles.

~~~

I was the cause. I wrote to Nora Rabins and Maria Goyanes – two old friends, to whom I hadn't spoken for a while. They both wrote back.

Nora wrote:

1. You are reading or hearing this sentence right now.
2. I am communicating to you with the words i am using.
3. I can't hear you.

Maria wrote:

The tear and the bead of sweat are sisters.  
Whatever happens happens.  
Lord love a duck.

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I was the first, and Jennifer came second, and Marcus, Ryan and Alex responded in quick succession. João was expansive and precise; Mary was spare and geological. Nora and Maria are old friends who wrote back. Nora wrote about writing and reading, and Alex Eisenberg, Yoko Ishiguro and Theron Schmidt also wrote about writing and reading.

Yoko wrote:

Hey so should the "three miraculous sentences" be three sentences which do miracles for their readers?
OK.
These will do.

Alex E. wrote:

I am writing this
4151 51 0541043642
The sun is hot

Theron wrote:

I am crying silently to myself as I write these words -- not now, as you hear them, but now, as I write them.
At the same time, rain is falling outside your door: hard, sudden, beautiful.
Halfway through this sentence, I will have stopped speaking and starting singing: listen for it.

~~~



~ ~ ~

Eleanor Weber got the email I sent, where I started this whole thing, and that is really why we got on gchat together.

Later, Eleanor wrote:

It came to me in a dream: preverbal / proverbial.

I woke up as the words tumbled through my head, stumbled around my mouth, formed across my tongue, and assembled between my lips.

I updated my Facebook status.

~ ~ ~

I started this, but Elizabeth Guthrie kept going:

First she wrote:

Sublime!

Sublime!

Sublime!

Then:

The Sublime axiom's theory of motion shatters!

Believe!

Invent!

Then:

The Sublime axiom's theory of motion shatters!

Believe spectacles!

Invent by universal consensus an industry of pleasure recycling!

Then:

The Sublime axiom's theory of motion shatters!

Believe spectacles and invent by universal consensus an industry of pleasure recycling!

What object matches?

~ ~ ~

I started it, and Jennifer was second, and Marcus, Ryan and Alex responded in quick succession. João was expansive and precise. Mary was spare and geological. Nora and Maria are old friends who wrote back, and Nora, Alex E., Yoko and Theron wrote about writing and reading. Jennifer, Rachel Lois and Tamarin wrote sentences they didn't write. I read out loud the sentences that Eirina and Nat wrote. Eleanor got on gchat, and Elizabeth kept going.

But I am the first cause. I am the prime mover. I am the reason beyond which reason ends.

I am the being that is being.

Do I know myself?

Al Mansour wrote:

There is an underlying consistency in nature's relationship to the world, even though this consistency may be partially unknown to us. If a miracle is any phenomena that transgresses the laws of nature or its consistency as they are known to us, and miraculous the form in which it appears to us, then any such instance is an act of nature contravening itself, which only appears so in events whose actual causes we are ignorant of. Therefore the miracle is structurally impossible and miraculous can only exist in short, contested, and ephemeral spans until it is retroactively shown to be knowable and thus not miraculous, and how sad.