

ROBERTSON

**CINEMA
OF *THE*
*PRESENT***

LISA

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first edition



Canada Council
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Canada

Published with the generous assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council. Coach House Books also acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Robertson, Lisa, author

Cinema of the present / Lisa Robertson.

Poems.

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-55245-297-4 (pbk.).

I. Title.

PS8585.O3217C56 2014 C811'.54 C2014-904392-9

Cinema of the Present is available as an ebook: ISBN 978 1 77056 391 9

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In addition, one must allow for chance discoveries, always possible in this vast domain in which the investigation has not been systematically pursued.

– Émile Benveniste

W *hat is the condition of a problem if you are the problem?*

You move into the distributive texture of an experimental protocol.

A bunch of uncanniness emerges.

At 20 hertz it becomes touch.

A concomitant gate.

At the middle of your life on a Sunday.

A dove, a crowned warbler in redwood, an alarm, it stops.

You set out from consciousness carrying only a small valise.

A downtown tree, the old sky, and still you want an inventory.

You were an intuition without a concept.

A gallery, a hospital, an hypothesis.

Pure gesture.

A gate made of carpet tape.

Even to prolixity you strayed.

A gate made of weatherproof tar.

Within the concept of the present, the figure-ground relationship effaced itself.

A gate made of a brick.

You are the silence they exchanged.

A gate made of a plinth.

It was a wide and empty Pacific place in too-strong light, with a general appearance of low-grade lack.

A gate made of a sofa bed and light bulbs.

You tried to see how the sky in 1972 comes up absent.

A gate made of artificial plants, vinyl, hinges and pins.

Smudgy, thick, cold.

A gate made of badminton shuttlecocks.

Is this a city?

A gate made of bejewelled barrettes, artificial peaches, a rotary phone.

And this too?

A gate made of bread and screws.

You believe women exist.

A gate made of buckets.

Nature mocks you.

A gate made of cotton, nylon, rubber and leather.

I see it on your face.

A gate made of exit signs, metal mesh, payroll sheets, chrome walkers.

I keep asking about the facts: tiredness, procrastination, doubt.

A gate made of floral foam, beeswax, silver leaf, drywall.

Each hormone curates something untenable.

A gate made of forceps and silicone tube.

There's no logic to what organisms demand.

A gate made of gas pumps.

You would educate yourself to an absolute and unconditional submission to the demands of transcription.

A gate made of gold, metal rods, driftwood, glass, concrete, peacock feathers, wood.

For you are such a procession.

A gate made of iron, neon, clay.

Only your tail was human.

A gate made of lamps.

Bark closed over your words.

A gate made of marble and coat-check stubs.

For you there is no information.

A gate made of medium-density fibreboard, fibreglass, foam, balsa wood and copper.

And at first you stank with the sensation of fate in your gut.

A gate made of Perspex.

And even a stab of love for your condition.

A gate made of photocopies, photographs, computer prints.

Irony was both your mother tongue and the intimate science of your future.

A gate made of photocopy.

Tell me more about animals, you said.

A gate made of poles, stanchions and masking tape.

Trash gyres, pre-objective monumentality, a rental.

A gate made of string and charcoal.

A gate made of photocopy.

A gate made of turntables.

When the anarchic excess has already been anticipated, what next?

A gate made of wood.

You might go so far as to falter.

A gate of hacksaw blades and bicycle spokes.

You sought a coat for intellectual amplex.

A girl in a black cotton dress and bare legs is wearing a tiara.

Were you a dandy then?

A graph, a growth curve, an age pyramid, a distribution cloud; a palpability.

You, with your one-sided headache, your dark relationship to nature,
your lack of whatever.

A jay, a rook, a parking ticket.

I don't know what you felt.

A latent rhythm discovered you.

Let us suppose that language is compatible with your errors.

A miniaturist, a Benedictine, a prisoner.

You sallied forth across emptied sidewalks, your fists in your pockets.

A quorum of crows will be your witness.

You're witnessing the belated eruption of a real condition.

A thumb-sized bird, a medieval allegory, a metaphor that sustains the activity of thinking.

It's already your life.

A university, a swimming pool, a botanical park.

A downtown tree, the old sky, and still you want an inventory.

About the time question in money culture: you perceive an exhausted narrative hardening into currency.

Unfortunately, all of your considerable skepticism was retroactive.

About the violet ethnicity: you've always been a dandy.

You had the sensation of bathing in doubt as if it were silence.

Again you consider the sumptuous wreckage of the present.

You re-emerged confused.

This is the economy of the psoas, economy of the engram, economy of vena cava, economy of unforgetting.

What if your only witness were an animal?

Against which you perceive a joyous unbounding.

I'm in debt to your radiant obscenity.

Ah, the true and fluent beauty of distant mass protest!

You were hubris and I liked this about you.

Ah, tiny experience.

I have not tried to remove the special objects of your scorn.

All day long and even in the night you built precise pictures of sensing.

You think this place could be worldless.

All you wanted was a little bit of accurate description in which to disappear.

You worked with painstaking fidelity to the documents.

Allotment machines, irises, lamps, water clocks, laws, indictments.

Your face was pure query.

Already the city you had described was gone.

Your concept remained surface but you didn't yet know why.

Also you have aspired to a sincerity of skepticism.

In the stain patterns on retail carpets you saw humans escaping themselves, deer braying to the God, Poussin demi-porn.

Always a war has been fought on your body.

You found music and pleasantness in the copula.

Always for you the present is wreckage, or it is the part of a science that does not yet exist.

This worn, preoccupied margin will be your vantage point.

Always you think it is over, when it is not.

Today, Thursday, the way people drift is your query.

An idyll in a bungalow; a palpability; a loss.

There's nothing you'd like to transfigure elsewhere.

An unknowing expands within your pronoun but it feels convivial.

Nothing apart from the gushing, bilious, abdicating live body.

And afternoon passes into evening with the usual ritual uncertainty, and you annotate the skyline making certain to include the word 'apricot.'

You made your muscles into extremely fine and silky tools.

And at first you stank with the sensation of fate in your gut.

What light did, how the trees freed it: these were among your topics.

And even a stab of love for your condition.

You seem to be an inversion in perception.

And I am walking in your garments.

A quorum of crows will be your witness.

And if you discover you were bought?

You note the smell of rain, bread and exhaust mixed with tiredness.

And if you yourself are incompatible with your view of the world?

And what is the subject but a stitching?

Once again you are the one who promotes artifice.

At 2 a.m. on Friday, you burn with a maudlin premonition.

And rankings and rankings and badges and repetitions.

You went with your friends to talk.

And so you hit upon your grandeur.

Maybe you do believe.

And the daily inversions of protocol.

They'll let you.

And the enjoyable gland also dribbles its politics.

In this way you come to understand the idea of destiny.

And the weeping was fed an earring.

It was a place like the farm, but near the ocean.

And then also: Jésuitique, De Chasse, En Valise, En Coquille, À la Colin, À la Paresseuse, À l'Italienne, À la Russe.

You were out somersaulting in darkness.

And then you recline against an image.

How difficult to choose between a system and a method!

And there you were, still in your travelling clothes.

You were being internally photographed.

And these phonemes were the phonemes of a perfume that combed your body.

Sometimes the concept of plenitude is a help.

And this is the continuous action of the given world on your person.

You pulled over to sleep.

And this too?

Very simply like this you disappeared into the interval.

And what is the subject but a stitching?

But you did not disappear to yourself.

And yet incomplete.

From the commuter train you felt the sensation of the brown river pulling the flat sky down toward it.

And you became subject to institutional curfews.

Glands, nerves, ligaments.

And you counted, you counted.

A gate made of photocopies, photographs, computer prints.

And you had a conceptual sensation.

Your stiff tail is all incipience.

And you have no money, but all of your cruelty is intact.

Thus a work begins.

And you itched.

The act's absurdity is balanced by its excess.

And you knew a lady who was irritated.

And you itched.

And you knew an alienated concept.

You wanted to release priorness.

And you knew of an antithetical expression.

Will it bring? Will it occupy? Is it simply sparkly?

And you know death has no image for it.

When you do it in your videos, you're female.

And you said, 'colouration.'

I'm entirely for your fucked-up way of living.

And you were falling out of this perfectly broken world.

You were finding out about the collapsible body.

And you yourself were not wholly able to resist the identification you had ridiculed.

The problem is not your problem.

And your despair is not a philosophic datum.

You rotate away from its sign.

Are you not both esoteric and practical?

There will be a period of measuring, testing and rebelling.

Are you rich?

Then there will be a period of exuding, celebrating and cheering.

Are you for garlands?

Then there will be the unknown period, the one you do not wish to represent.

As for the scrappy parking-lot trees, you are full of tenderness for the feminine in them.

What's natural, what's social, what's intuitive?

As for the serial description ...

You now no longer use better words.

As in the difficult dream, you see a common roadside flower.

You say we clothe ourselves against death.

As years go by, you waste more and more value.

Tell me if you haven't had grief.

At 2 a.m. on Friday, you burn with a maudlin premonition.

You recalled the yellow flower called the cuckoo culled for luck in early spring.

At 20 hertz it becomes touch.

History is your nature.

At dusk the light through the black branches was enough.

I see it on your face.

At first you couldn't decide about style.

The wall itself is complicated, emotional.

At first you wanted only this tangible surplus.

Funny, cosmic and humble.

At fourteen and a half minutes, the sound of pages slowly turning, you note.

A gate made of badminton shuttlecocks.

At the edges of banality, there is sensing.

One out of three.

At the edges of sensing, no solution.

You had thrown yourself into risk without recognizing the act for what it was.

At times you had wanted only to float upon the norms of a beautiful language, obedient.

'To speak and to understand,' you said, 'this is difficult.'

At times you indulge in an ostentation of sorrow.

Instead, you'd posit a museum.

At times you love nastiness and bawdry.

The current place looks a lot like the world with its trees and houses, but, for example, when you wake up, there is only one bird, and then that bird stops.

At times you speak just for the fun of transience.

The delicate coyote, the streetlights, the pungent night.

Atoms, theatres, famines.

A gate made of turntables.

Authority is speech that does not limit itself to mimicking something that already exists; it is free to deform and invent, as long as it remains obedient to its own inner law, you read.

This city had the right to destroy you a little bit.

Bark closed over your words.

Through the non-sexual streets, through the redwoods with the little yellow light glancing about, through the small cluttered tables of the dark restaurant, in a blurry diagonal of tiny sounds – all very sensitive – then came life, feeling and forgetting.

Battlefields, cooking pots, medlars.

Then came an erotic thought: what if style were your only intelligibility?

Because it's not a site, it's a style, and it hurts.

You recalled the heaviness of blankets in the cabins of 1979.

Because of manners, textures, protocols, the shaking of cloth and the soft noise.

You recalled the driftwood windowsills and tumbling pine cones on the roofs.

Because of subjectivity, you said.

And the daily inversions of protocol.

Because you are lazy and voluptuous.

It was a place on a ruined map.

Because you could express yourself with her face it had become your face.

That morning in the hotel bed, you experienced your thinking as moving surfaces that intersected sequentially and at varying angles.

Beneath them the slithering black river.

Each conducts a kind of deeply described change.

Birdlet with the weight of a gasp.

Your internal sensation was that of a moving space of surfaces become soundlessly musical.

Black mould, animal hair, food, receipts, petals, sloughed skin.

Was this your hubris?