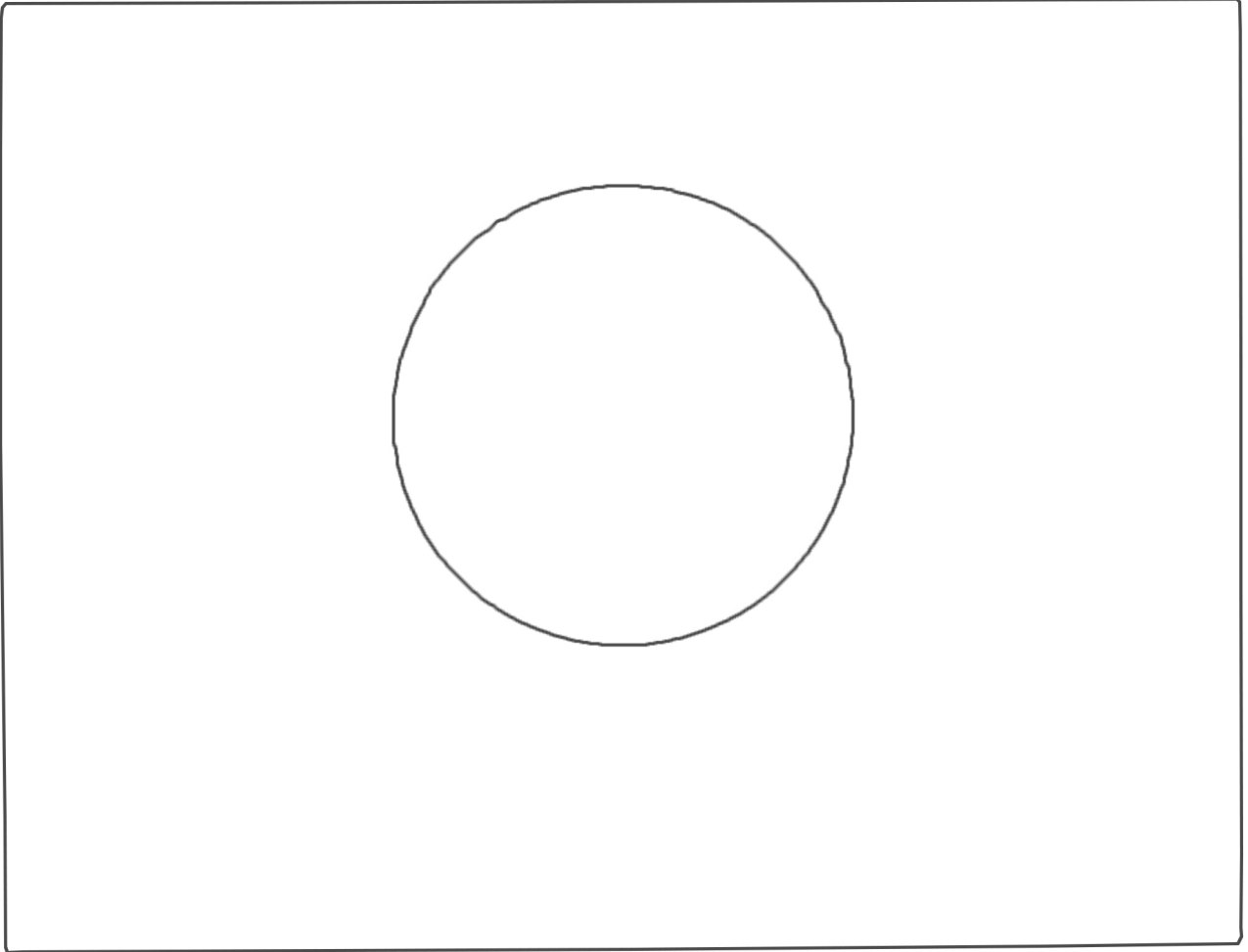
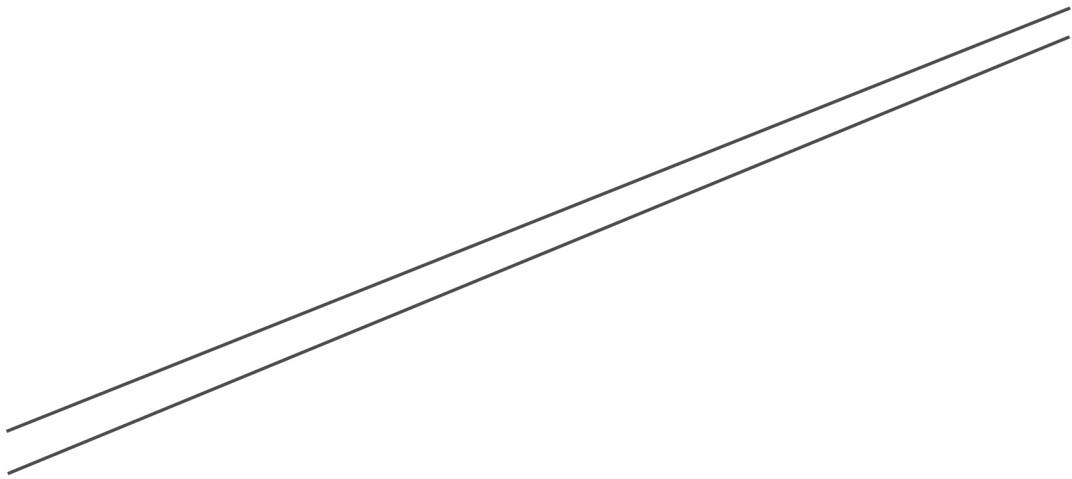


irreconcilable ambiguity  
(after John Stezaker)



i never sleep in autumn.  
22nd century workers complete their monument to loneliness.  
only one of the apostles wore pearls.



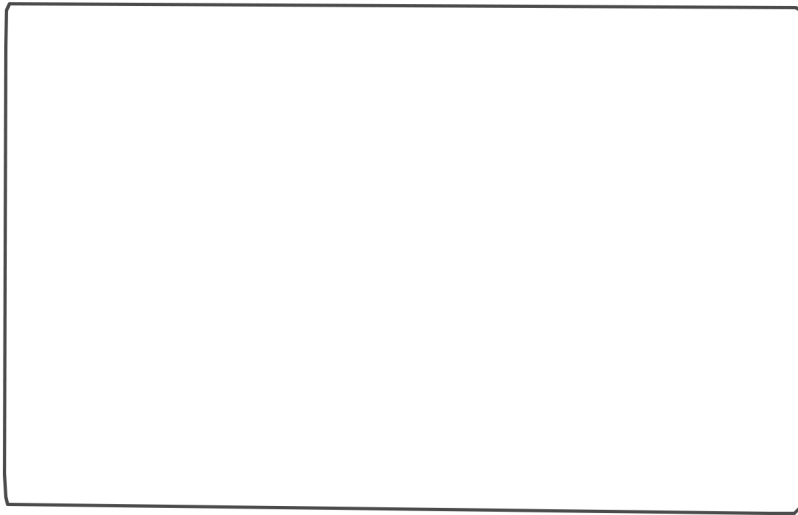
my eyes can breathe.  
a lunar incision is overclouded by a raised racquet.  
the pearl – strung up – is unbearable for the oyster.

yeux essoufflés.  
the lane's white line.  
there are more beautiful things, such as this one, and others that aren't so,  
and I recall none of them.



postcard from Samson.  
bats emigrate from suburban ears.  
if you can't fold your life into your shirt pocket, it's not worth carrying.

leprechaun skulls are hard to come by.  
her counterfeit lips nonetheless shielded our own smiles from being seen.  
upstream of all thought, i coil the horizon like green rope.



dried stream stacked inside old bricks.  
to go with the flow is not necessarily a negative.  
how does the eye know what to see?

if i can see it, it's not there.

a light in your window that cannot forgive or be forgiven.

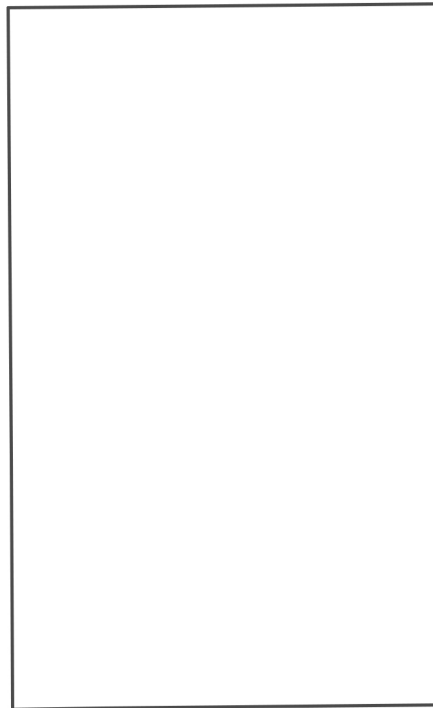
in my other eye is the divided light they will use to hem the rings of Saturn.

a marriage [split] leaves me voiceless.

my hand reaches for the throat.

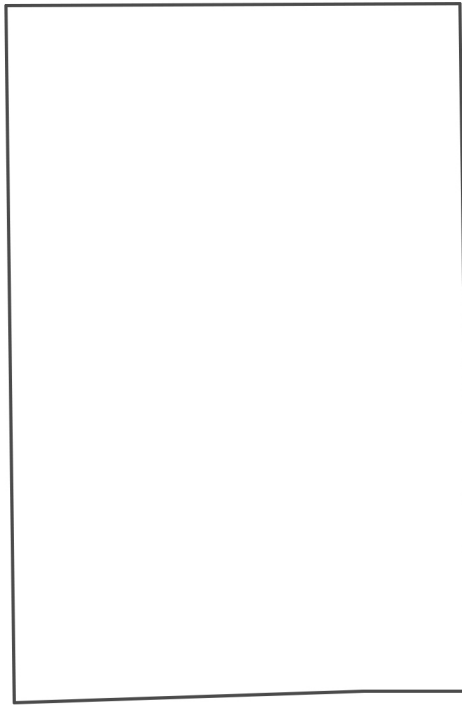
can you hear me keeping quiet?

waiting for doubt to shed its skin we become a dappled horse.  
a time when the local radio station endlessly repeats our names.  
the gravity in my heart holds a boulder to my chest.



we invited Sisyphus as we made our vows.  
the body protects itself from itself:  
a cunning colander.

our faces impossible to climb.  
we see each other walk on water.  
they'll transform our arms into a marina for teaspoons.



199 of us still interpreting signals.  
high-maintenance slate tiles flake.  
it was supposed to be romantic.

the ravine between us:  
a slice dividing or a meniscus connecting.  
change the way you look at things and the things you look at change  
the way they look  
at you.



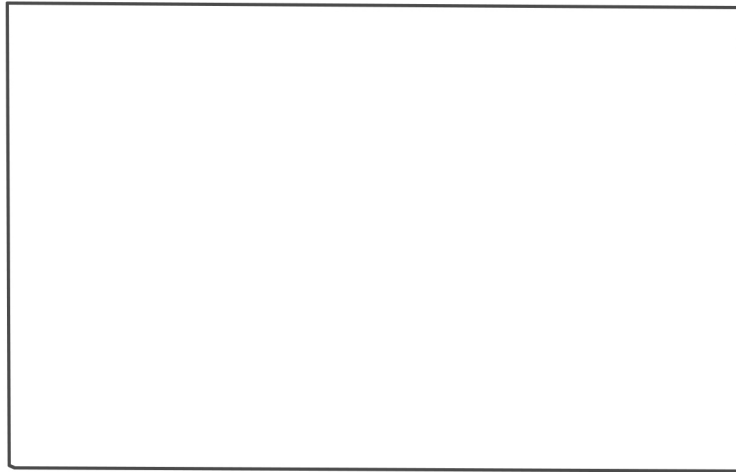
the diary of a curve model before she knew she existed.  
Maurice Blanchot using poetry as tobacco.  
you will become us when we become you.



your heart will be beating by the time it's delivered.  
seven aisles in the supermarket for motives.  
all is expendable where redemption welcomes all.

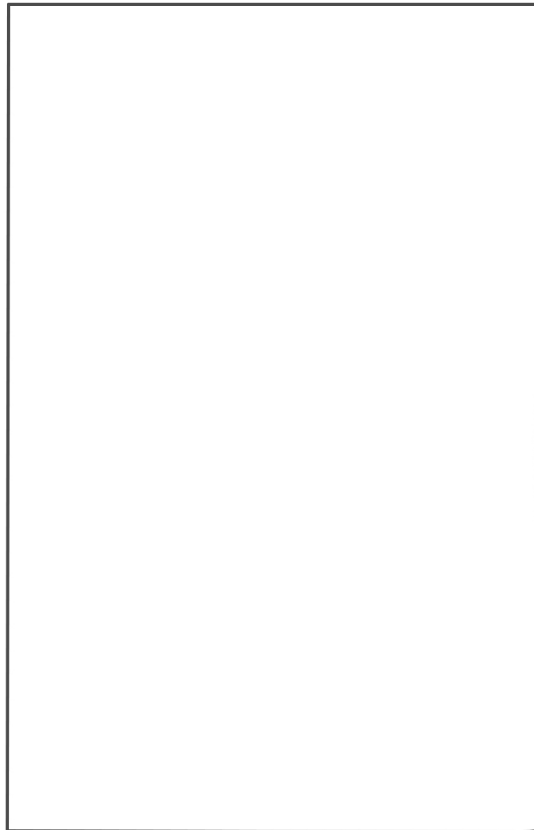
cutting our teeth,  
we shoulder the pain of sanding disc on enamel.  
great work today, let's hit the showers.

i like the cut of your jib, *quinto sexto Segundo*.  
you choose a lobster for a hammer.  
there's a major ingredient missing; that ingredient is  
welcoming a hummingbird into your garden.



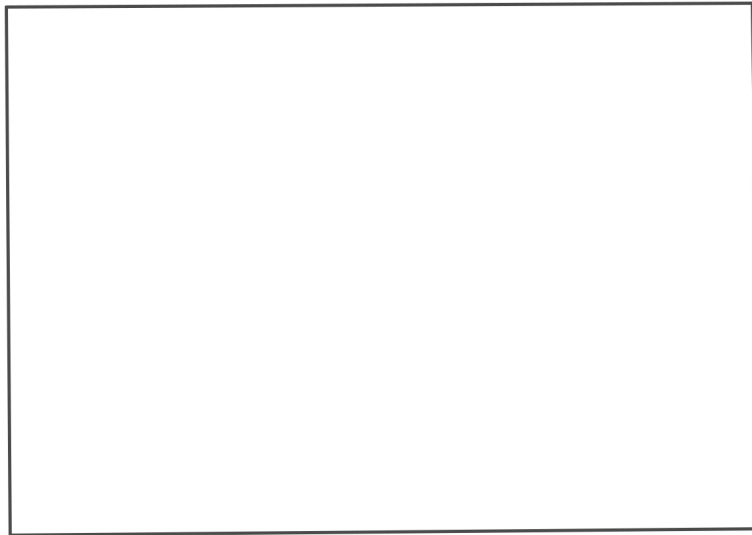
when tailors apply for citizenship for their scissors.  
pinecones upright in our father's shoes.  
how can you forget where you are when you've never been there.

skincare for cowboys.  
the built-in ironing board patented in 1874 by the real McCoy.  
knowledge reflected is clouded by our perceptions.



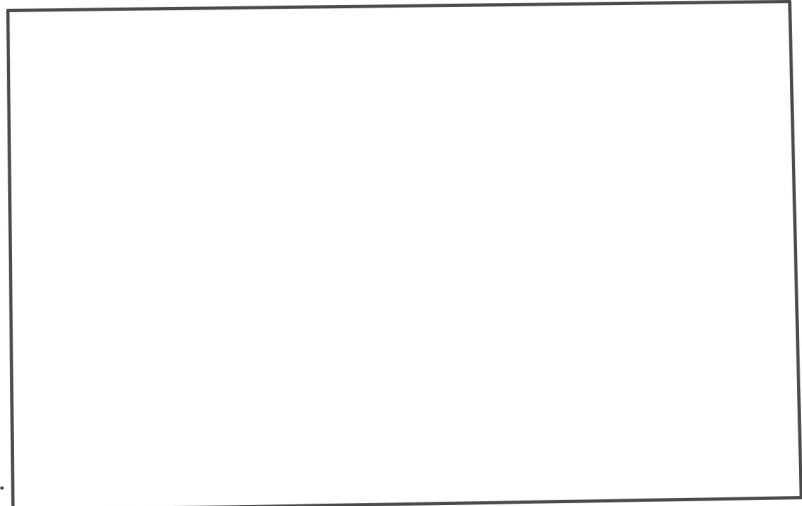
a word's worth of deliverance in yer eye.  
the stables minus the newborn king.  
when life is the market, death is the price.

in quiet waters undistorted,  
a light deposited in your adaptive retina.  
determine me by my formation.

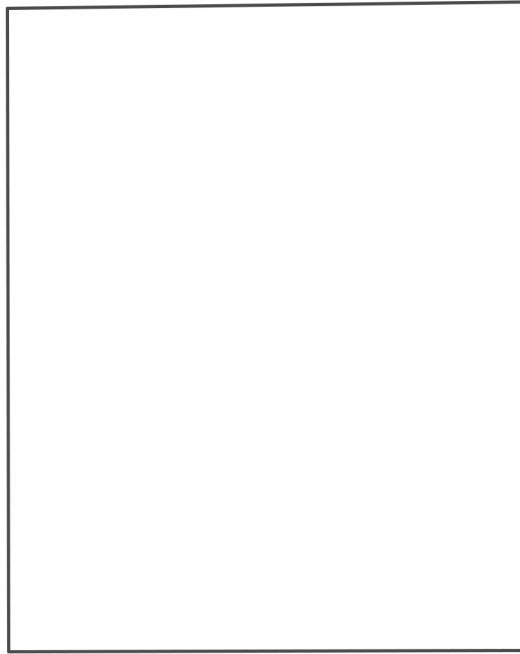


impatience has three bodies and i am one of them.  
the erosion of our lips into pure water.  
the cave i follow into the cave inside itself i am followed.

my flesh is afraid, but i am not.  
eluding convalescence and a wrought-iron cannon.  
what i'd do for a drag of a blue cigarette.



her neck is a shadow.  
the answer to how mirrors can be clouds.  
the thin blue line we suck on from my mouth to yours.



the sleepers in her head lain throughout the forest they were.  
the front door in this mortuary for chance.  
what is there can only come towards us if it leaves.

multitudes placed upon her.  
an axis of gathered material.  
my secret zone obeys the science of horizon and sky, steel and shadow, light and rubble.



fountainhead in pincurls.  
a painted point towards a car door.  
when fire follows snow, water searches for an exit.

Moses & Sherlock decide to part after sharing a last cigarette.  
all water equals all words.  
one painted fingernail away from complete plot collapse.

These poems respond to work in the exhibition *John Stezaker: Lost World* at the Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 21 September–4 November 2018.

References to other texts include a translation of a speech excerpt by Mariano Rajoy, who served as Prime Minister of Spain from 2011 to 2018, from *Un concepto que me ha cambiado la vida: la "PERFORMANCE"* by Ter, and to Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* (1957).