

BOMB

The New Us

Author(s): THOM DONOVAN

Source: *BOMB*, No. 117 (Fall 2011), pp. XXVIII-XXIX

Published by: New Art Publications

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41478861>

Accessed: 02-08-2017 00:27 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

New Art Publications is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *BOMB*

THOM DONOVAN

The New Us

—After *ACT-UP*

When bodies become the case
Will they still be a poem
Or form of art or prose because
Grief is a form of action

When bodies become the case
Of all we cannot be
No art can prove or disapprove
Movement made a maze

Of skin when bodies became
The case an image they still needed
That would extend space that might
Buy some time, save some face

For the dying whose bodies became
The case and were a law
Living inside the heart like
The law was always made

Blood becomes a site
No glove will heal or hold
Steeped in what was left to fill
Until hell evokes a reason

They put their hands on us
No glove will hold or touch
The law their bodies were
When there was no justice

So all the lenses of your
Camera almost crack
But don't outliving the fact
Of their blood's gaze, its resolve

That all our laws lacked
The question of this subject
What the body can do
Determines a line of police.

— For Jérôme Bel

The body is an archive
The breath a convolute
A collection sung for no one
But to remember it has danced

Compendiums when you point
With your eyes to what it did
And cannot do, this also being useful
The body fails but it survives

The body as an archivist
Kissing all relation, tells us what
We did, the failure of this doing
Called career, called smallest hope.

— For the Kootenay School of Writing

The mountains around the city
Sounds they make blue
On the retina in the ear
Resound a commons what will have been
The time of year not weather
Not the names of these
Places no longer there
The people we took never given back
To a useless and unused air

There are plenitudes in what we do not
Possess, in which sound dispossesses
Our future property took like the real
Announcing exactly where we are
In relation to who or what externalities
Banalities like belief

So hack spirit, come hack this
Spirit enclosure up, talk to the man
Like he won't come back from empire
Like power can't do anything about this

So hack spirit, hack me up
Take my name or don't take it
Multiplicity see if I care
Division matters because we are born
That strived-for-never-in-fact-
Existing-ever-imminent-commons
In our swagger in fact matters.

— After F.E.A.S.T.

Summons that we feeling
Certain things made
Gathering as a kind of making
An active question that storms our thinking
Called world, how we do
How we no longer called this us
When a name was true
We lost our names
When loss was useful

Except capital
Except a certain
Know-how the birds know
Their sense turning to sense
Their uneven development
Movements disaggregate
Subtracted from action
The air we make and the air
Which makes us
The *we stamp* and *we are stamped*
So complicity becomes the subject
So history isn't just a motor of mistakes

The new us starts from a dish
Not socialism, continues to grow
Sans system, an attention
To this consumption system, a local
Kissing of totality what will be value
And what's the use, in poking
Our heads out, food sovereignties
Produce this singularity

The new us, the new good life
Well being as muse and health
As wealth all we are saying's
The all new thing, new expression
Being shares this sense, of turning
Around a land, or land fills
Me up with emergence, political
Like a dish, we cannot help,
Gathering around, or con/tem/plating.

— After a phrase by J. Morgan Puett

Let art lay fallow here
And artfulness since resistance

Fuels "the system," scratch that
Since resistance is part

Of an organum of control
A matrix of complicities

Stop the world simply let
It be useless, let be the silence

Of a different effort
Sing that it is elsewhere unframed

That conscience and com-
punction are a kind of form

Caring withdraws eclipsing
Art's acknowledged value,

The efficacies of its being for us,
Not an unspeaking thing.

Thom Donovan is a writer, curator, editor, and archivist. He edits the blog Wild Horses of Fire, and coedits ON Contemporary Practice, a print journal for critical writings and conversations about one's contemporaries. He also edits the web archive Others Letters, featuring correspondence about contemporary practices across the arts, and cocurates The Project for an Archive of the Future Anterior, a live interview series and video archive concerning the immanence of possible futures. His first full-length book, The Hole, is forthcoming from Displaced Press.