

Inkshed Online Newsletter, September 2013

This issue of the newsletter includes a report on the strengths and weaknesses of our new website, circulated to Inkshed members before the 2013 AGM. To start off the new academic year with a reminder of what we're teaching, it also offers some poems by Carl Leggo.

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Three Poems by Carl Leggo

Babble and Doodle

words as a perpetual pursuit
Italo Calvino

stretch words tight and taut so they twang
words wait between the lines to be called
these words, your words, more words, words

throw words in the air, seek shapes
words never let you go, always let you go
the world woven in the shadows of words

write the earth, one word after another
words open up expanding worlds
words, spoken here and there, for you

care about words, offered with care
words seek their way, light offered
the way into the haunted words

lay down words, linear and labyrinthine
words wind through the blood, no end
a parade of words, glad to be alive

laugh with wild words, dangers everywhere
words remember what can't be forgotten
words with the heart's beat, full of breath

host a surprise party for words
 words don't always need punctuation
 words, the hermeneut's heresy, a long quest

seek words that give you goose-bumps
 words whisper secrets in shopping malls
 scribbled words in gusts of wind

hold words tentatively, not with tentacles
 words challenge grammar with glamour
words as a perpetual pursuit, full of yearning

Noumenon

I am
 a pronoun
 a substitute
 for a noun
 but what
 is the noun?

|||||

I is
 a pronoun
 first person
 nominative singular
 ninth letter
 of the English alphabet

|||||

I is
 a noun too
 a symbol for one
 iodine incisor density
 current intensity
 magnetization
 moment of inertia
 mark of incomplete

I the pronoun
 is also
 I the noun

|||||

the pronoun I
knows itself

while I still seek
my antecedent
the noun
that names me

muddled
I am trapped
in pronoun errors
with antecedents
ambiguous implied
buried double

|||||

reviewers write
about my essays
he uses too many I's
(how many I's
do I have?)
subjective
 histrionic
 self-indulgent
 I's

I can't live
in a formal essay
without I

I am
a pronoun
seeking
my noun
my noumenon

|||||

Verb

Oh, to be a verb,
a creative word
makes statements
gives commands
asks questions

too long I have been
 written a noun only,
 a name for a person
 animal place thing
 quality idea action

Oh, to be a verb:
 an efficacious word
 declares authors
 interrogates with
 alphabetic delight

always becoming
 endlessly mutable
 subject in process
 naming without end

Report on the Inkshed/CASLL Website

This message was sent by Margaret Procter to the Inkshed listserv in June 2013, just before CASLL's Annual General Meeting in Vancouver.

Dear Inkshedders,

Unfortunately I can't attend the Inkshed conference this year, but I wanted to report on the new Inkshed website at www.inkshed.ca/blog, and especially to encourage contributions to it. I am sending this message to the CASLL-L listserv to reach the whole range of Inkshedders, and am also hoping it raises some discussion at the conference.

FUNCTIONS OF THE SITE

Tania Smith's design adapted WordPress blog software to let the new site serve both as a place to post notes and announcements (the "blogging" capacity), and also as a way to continue the tradition of newsletter publication established in 1984. In the 18 months since December 2011, the site has mounted several dozen informational posts, set out information about two Inkshed conferences, and published four newsletter "issues" with a mix of poems, reviews, and articles.

The site has received over 7,000 views, with most going to the conference pages.

The one technical problem was a surge of new memberships in May 2013 (over 200 in one week) from people wanting to post ads for running shoes, wedding dresses, baby equipment, and something indecipherable in Poland. I have now had to change the registration setting to ask that would-be contributors contact me directly at procter@chass.utoronto.ca. In spite of this technical barrier, I am happy to process registration requests and to facilitate posting of notes or articles.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SITE

As also noted recently by the moderator of the CASDW site, the Inkshed site has not generated online discussion (only six "reply" comments in total, for instance, for the 50-plus pages). Most

of the posts are from the same few people, and most duplicate information also sent to the listserv. Presumably, however, the site offers the advantage of a permanent URL for each page, even for short notes. This “blogging” capacity could be used much more widely than it is now.

It is more of a concern that after four newsletter collections, offers of articles and reviews have tapered off. It is also noticeable that the newsletter pages get fewer views than the informational pages. These trends may show that an informal newsletter is no longer needed to hold together a nascent community, as it did for Inkshedders during the 1980s and 1990s. Or they may suggest that CASLL members now prefer to publish serious articles in peer-reviewed journals.

NEXT STEPS?

As moderator of the site, I would be happy to receive articles of any kind for the newsletter and to answer inquiries—including requests for peer review of article submissions if desired. On the other hand, if the newsletter is no longer important for CASLL/Inkshed, I am quite willing to let it lie dormant or revive itself only as needed. In any case, the blogging capacity of the software will allow for continued posting of informal notes and announcements by anyone registered on the site. The future of the site will be decided by its users.

With best wishes to all in BC, and regrets not to be with you this year,

[Margaret Procter](#)

Moderator, Inkshed website