

## Wish You Were Where: The Postcard Project

*Someone sent me a postcard picture of the earth.  
On the back it said, "Wish you were here."*

--Steven Wright.

### BACKSIDE

Being that postcards (or "folk documents" as the photographer Walker Evans referred to them) were first introduced in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a cheap (half the price) and convenient alternative for all the fanatically paced and terribly tea'd up, soon-to-be-outdated letter-writers of the Victorian period, reaching their peak popularity-wise in 1908 when nearly 700 million were handled by the post office, it's ironic that they've become this iconic form of stationary for the Modernist Age and Coney Islanders (where a cool million of them were once knocked off in a weekend) of the Mind everywhere—verse-terse and fleet, about as taken with the heart-felt and reflection as Teflon (or insert the technological device of your liking anywhere). As any postmaster will tell you it has never been about function, ingenuity—we, the artist, have had that covered since the caves. Just think about how little is actually communicated with them. It's ludicrous. Nothing but these motel notations and streamed weather-casts, lists of sightings and meted-out activities—each one more one-sided and inane. But about their status as quickie-mart artifact—this present-day trope of isolation, displacement. As well as an ease-of-use, ever-present-ness that's allowed them this ubiquitous place on the spinner rack attention span of America. And maybe even their much less owned-up-to-role as riposte, tactless slam—this sub-tropic swipe at those winter-imprisoned, flaunting its bold-lettered mockery against its arctic-white backdrop.

So we here, at the PPLP, decided it was time to go someplace different with them. To ask writers and artists, at the start of this latest in centuries, to try buying into a new vacation spot. Something around 4 ½ x 6. Where we as individuals get to truly correspond and take-the-world-on. Both space and time-sharing it. In an attempt to get outside ourselves, be sufficiently emptied, and filled-in all that lies between one life and another—fly off with our own words and text our whereabouts back with the hopes a fellow human being would not only discover new meaning in it, but airlift it back, with a gesture both goodish and fair.

### FRONTSIDE

While some of my poems were cued-in-on, augmented—video-stilled and divined, secured line by line to both shadow and shine, giving one a window to some pet-totem or sacred spot, these other pasts deeply seen-to or dashed-off, step by rascally step, via the patched-up and reshaped, impressing on me how even the most fragile of things, once grafted together, tagged as art-in-fact, becomes dramatically altered, pulled-out-of-itself, some of the other poems were rescued from themselves—blurred beyond any belief and rubbed radiant, all literalness burnt at

the stake, for the sake of our children and what was obviously best-for-the-senses, one artist not so much chopping it up into bits but plundering it—poking what wasn't dismissed into a place oft-sunless and chilled, in turn giving it more punch, the hardcore reality of old film, and another arguing that age-old case, asking if what we produce is mere snack, flour or paper held under water till it crumbles under its very own conceit, *or* is something of substance, that cannot be lived without, and that talks spiritedly to this problem of knot-solving, demanding that all we'd deemed half-noble or made-up about art be instantly mobilized into reality.

And while two poems were snowed-under, silenced by Nature--one in rungs of off-white, hopelessly snug in its dwelling, and the other, this crow working a world drawn up by poets down (here we go) a slippery slope, both of them portraits of not only that non-season, but the wonder of anything really *seen*, several other accomplices bussed my poems further into the subconscious, made me more mad, good-lucking those underground gods with a swig of what's strongest from a bottomless skull or feasting on the not-too-long-ago and soon-after, making sure the fun house was sufficiently staffed and fattened-up on the classically ruined and historically stunned, projecting their home movies, with fits of light and deities-in-heat on my inner-dome in a postmodern production both seductive and off-putting.

A reminder to never try ridding these testaments to beauty (entirely) of impossible guests. That way, these "souvenir cards" can not only keep tabs on our desires, but reprise all those moments when we dared to be human. When we'd waited for those stories that had resorted to body-shots, even self-torture, to lift themselves up from that feeling of failure, having-had-one's-fill, and finally take to the air, no matter their scope--whether speck-sized or epic, or their stance--the faced-off or the danced-around, letting any who wanted a peek at our process, evolvment, take it—magnified to the nines, with the hope it could eventually sell us on the less scripted and pre-purchased in a manner both electric and trusting that we can play out like that kid in the snapshot, in tapped-time and pastels, his imagination gassed-up, and his take on this planet, already legend.

#### POSTMARK

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