

Painting a Portrait: Poetics of the Space Between

Arlene Katz
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

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I was fortunate in being able
to make contact
with 2 extraordinary people
—librarians—
here and across the pond—
who were invaluable in locating all of John's known
and,
heretofore not as known, works.

They keep coming in
they do have my mobile number
and though I turned my phone to mute
for this august occasion

if you hear the beep
it is only to log in yet another work.

All told, they have located
42 volumes of writings:
journal articles,
and reviews,
commentaries,
and chapters,
entire books;
edited writings of his
and others;
full texts.
—What we
lesser mortals
have come to expect from John.

Not just a Google search, this,
but also, recently unearthed,
drawings of airplane wings,
blueprints of fuselages,
robotic arms
and extending sticks for the use of
blind persons.

Schematics for
 auto-filing
 quotes from
 Wittgenstein
 Bakhtin
 and
 Merleau-Ponty
 Andersen, Penn
 and McNamee
 Vico, Jaakko, Ken, and Jack.

And with each filing,
 a new architectonic
 domain is created...

Not content with listing quotes,
 there are interconnections,
 cross-hatchings
 a veritable 'matrix'
 of meeting places.

This virtual website, though still under construction,
 gestures toward
 aspects
 of each, only known
 in relation to the whole...

On page 17, Volume 5,
the early years,
 there is the 1st known entry for joint action
 by
 ... the only known infant
 popping out of the womb,
 pen in hand
 describing birth not just as embodied experience,
 but as jointly created.

This, the first but by no means the last entry for
 joint action:
 One engaging library sleuth
 found no less than 8880,
 oddly matched with
 authors who did,
 and did not understand
 the sense and precise meaning,

implications, and possibilities,
 generated in the words
 spoken,
 written,
 in open dialogue,
 inner dialogue,
 and the providential space between.

Weaving through all 42 volumes are
 references,
 resonances
 reverberations to the words
 ‘made the effort’
 ‘went to the trouble’
 ‘generosity’
 ‘black European pessimism’
 and,
 of course,
 ‘now I can go on.’

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So, we have 26 characters
 whose author we know...

A is for attunement,
 answerability
 and acknowledgement;
B for Bakhtin,
 Bachelard’s poetics of space

C for chiasmic

D of course, for dialogical,
 and dwelling

On to
 Gesture
 Joint action
 and
 Knowing of the 3rd kind

Movement, meetings
 and Merleau-Ponty

Providential spaces; practices,
 and *polyphonie*

I have a particular affinity to S, V and W
one whole volume is entirely devoted to

Style, struck by; and the ‘socials’: accountability, constructionism,
poetics, and justice

V for voice

W for writing

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Not content with disquietude
that nagging,
yearning
creative
itch.

There is a something out there, but it’s not already known.

It can’t be...
without
what John calls
a ‘casting about’,
a ‘creative stumbling around.’

He seeks some clarity of its aspects...
Not just a convincing argument
but a sensibility
a response to ‘it’s’ calls—
To write in a way that is clear enough
so that others can see its face, hear its voice, be *with* it
and respond in their own way.

— Arlene Katz

Author Note:

Arlene Katz
Dept of Social Medicine, Harvard University
Email: arlene_katz@hms.harvard.edu