



The Redundancies

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These poems were read at Borders in downtown Portland on January 9, 2006. One poem was read for each person in the audience. Many of the poems had been written for specific audience members; the rest were assigned on the spot.

Thank you

for Dan Raphael

You invited me to read
in your reading series
and in your reading series
I thanked you
for inviting me to read
in your reading series.

The full title of these poems

for Lindsay Hill

The redundancies that proved themselves redundant
proved themselves redundantly proved.

for Brian McLaughlin

It is a truth universally acknowledged
that anything universally acknowledged is truth.

for Gillian Zacharias

This stack of apples
is stacked so that
if any stacked apple is snacked upon
the stack of stacked apples
will collapse.

Our sources of wisdom #1

for Maryrose Larkin

My dead grandmother's
long dead
long white
grandmother hair.

for Gale Czerski

The black cat category contains
cats that are black
and cats that might as well be black
and things that are black that might as well be cats
and things that might as well be black and might as well be cats.

for Nita Hill

Rye bread rises.

for Olivia

The wind blows down
and down blows the wind
and blows you down.

for Kim Adams McCool

The tiniest urge
urges tiny-ness.

for Marc McCool

The Viking king is king of the Vikings.

The Viking king is the king who is a Viking.

The Viking king is the Viking who is a king.

If a king is a Viking or a Viking is a king
then that Viking or that king is king of the Vikings.

for Jason Mashak

A box, by its nature,
has the nature of a box
and boxes nature.

for Orrin

If flying terrifies you, don't fly.

If you terrify flyers, don't fly.

for Alex Reagan

The real heresy here is the real.

for James

See the brave sailor sail the seas.

See the brave sailor brave the seas.

See the brave sailor brave the sailors.

Our historical antecedents #3

for Charlotte Wells

Please pass the milk please.

Please pass the milk please.

Please pass the milk please.

for Roger

As sure as shit is shit,
shit is shit.

for Jeanette

When our leaders fail us,
it is a failure in leadership.

When our words fail us,
it is also a failure in leadership.

for Philip Iosca

Is a naked man
more naked than
a nearly naked man?

for Alex Jones

A great escape is only as great
as the greatest thing escaped.

for Kate Sanderson

Which is the most problematic:
art that is problematic,
art that is not problematic,
the idea that some art is not problematic,
or the idea that some problematic things aren't art?

for Karen Jaffe

He is the poster boy
for boys who pose on posters.

for Eduardo

This heightened sense of sense
is the sense of heightened heightenedness.

for Byron

The tongue.

The tongue.

Lapsang

suchoung.

for Ross Beach

The “sincere synth”
is essentially myth
to the musicsmith.

for Billis Helbig

The knack for grasping a new knack
is the knack for grasping a new grasp.

The need for a new knack
is the grasping for any new nearby knack,
and any new nearby knack is grasped with some new grasp.
The new grasp is needed to grasp the new knack.

Grasp enough new knacks with new grasps
and you grasp the need and the knack for grasping new grasps
when you need new knacks.

for Jeff

We were weary.

We wept.

We were weary still.

for Joseph Bradshaw

Both jostled and tousled both.

for Yo

The Oreo cookie is a kind of cookie
and the Oreo cookie is a kind of Oreo

Our historical antecedents #1

for Doug Kaiser

Western Wind, when wilt thou blow
the small rain down can rain

for Joanie Lunsford

This Pyrex appears exquisite!

for Gabriel Liston

Duty calls,
duly calling birds to bird calls,
calling bird to bird
called duly
dually
to duty.

for Kiri Hargie

The one true ring
binds true ones to true ones
in one true ring.

for mARK oWEs

Take a deep breath
and ask yourself
what happens
when you ask yourself
to take a deep breath.

An eodermdrome

for Finn McCool

Cool Finn McCool is that cool McCool.
That Finn is cool.

para Maria José Gonzalez Arredondo

Vamos a ver
adonde vamos
y lo que vamos a ver.

Our sources of wisdom #2

for Karen Braucher

These very rocks
from the very rocky top
of the very top
of the mountain top.

for Nathaniel

I have drawn
a tie
near
the man
whose drawing
of a tie
nearly
tied
my drawing
of a tie
in the tie-
drawing

showdown.

Apologia

for margareta waterman

I have written these poems
as poems written to be
like poems written by me.

Obscenely violent poem

for Kim

Kitty kitty

bang bang.

for David

The cold snap's
cold snap
coldly snapped
our happy snap
in half.

Our historical antecedents #2

for Ashley Edwards

Star-light, what is star-light, star-light is a little light that is not always mentioned with the sun, it is mentioned with the moon and the sun, it is mixed up with the rest of the time.

for Sam

Her lively private life
and her privately lively privates.

for Shanti

A cup of coffee
is a cup of coffee
by the quantity of the one coffee cup,

but one cup of coffee
is one cup of coffee
by the quantity of the one cup of coffee.

for Endi Hartigan

Happy families are happy like all other happy families
and families like all other happy families,
but unhappy families are unhappy unlike other unhappy families
or are families unlike other unhappy families.

for everyone else I don't know

We've never met before today
unless sometime before today we met.

for Elijah

All these words here are all wrong.

All wrong words are here, among these words.

Final poem

for Bryan Markovitz

Love is the habit of loving
and nothing more
than the habit of loving nothing more than the habit of loving,

and habit is the loving of habit
and nothing more than the habit of loving habit and nothing more,

and nothing is nothing but the habit of nothing
and nothing more than the habit of loving nothing more than nothing,

but more is the loving of more than nothing
the loving of more more than nothing
and the habit of loving more than nothing
and the habit of loving more than habit
and the habit of loving more than loving
and the habit of the habit of loving more than the loving of
the loving of habit
or the loving of the habit of loving or the loving of the loving
of loving:
more is more and more is more
and more is more and more is more
and more is more and more is more
and more is nothing more than more
and nothing is more habit than more
and nothing is more loving than habit.

Cover illustration by Gabriel Liston
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Sources for Historical Antecedents:

1. Anonymous Middle English poem
2. Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons*
3. They Might Be Giants, “Fingertips”

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