

“Blue, blue is the grass about the river” — *The Beautiful Toilet*, Mei Sheng B.C. 140 (Trans. Ezra Pound, 1915)

“A husky fifenote blew. / Blew. Blue bloom is on the. / Goldpinnacled hair” — James Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1922

Quotations often fall silent without attribution. Guided by the manuscripts of Orientalist scholar Ernest Fenollosa, Pound’s translation of Mei Sheng’s poem differs from previous literal translations. The Benjamin Franklin Love Story: green becoming blue, an ancient story retold once again in this century, echoing as the contemporary is reduced to ruins. “Fuck envy / End in Tragedy” is preceded by a juxtaposition of longevity with a car from Italy. “Men are unable to resist the attraction of machines. If an automobile could have been presented to Plato, Plato would have become Ford.”

Chinese characters do not distinguish “blue” and “green” as separate colors, rather as shades of the same color. This Green-becoming-blue can be read as the disillusionment that accompanies age, whether that of Dedalus or Bloom. The blue blues echo. It is in the section of the Sirens that Joyce paints this allusion: a bar scene, recalling the courtesan of Mei Sheng’s poem, whose drunkard husband is only present through his absence.

In Joyce’s bar, the sound of colors is followed by a trilling. Trilling, a word from the 17th century, its Italian root *trillare* meaning “to quaver” or “to shake”. The word found itself through its onomatopoeic quality, with *onomatopoeia* itself coming from the Greek — “*onoma*” meaning “name”, “*poiein*” meaning “to make” — ergo, a word for “name-making”.

But in this room, whose pseudo-bar has been masked by a web of fibers with roots stretching back to China, 120 years have elapsed since the Sirens’ enchanting songs were invoked from Mediterranean mythology into The Ormond Hotel of Dublin. The trilling that follows Green-becoming-blue departs from its Greco-Roman origins and is resituated on the Gulf of Mexico.

The echoes of slavery and colonial reshufflings of people are coupled with a new siren — the seductive song of oil. Close to the turn of our most recent century, *Trill* is born in Port Arthur, Texas. A portmanteau of *true* and *real*, the word spreads to Houston. The husky fifenote becomes a husky fief note, June 16 becomes June 27, blue and green become purple and red.

Sipping slows everything down. Time dilates. What was read? A rabbit and two suspended scrolls? A beautiful toilet, whose colors are fated to change with the whims of language.

— M.C.

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Kunsthalle Der Licht
252 Broome Street, New York, NY
October 11, 2024 — October 24, 2024

By Appointment Only

S. Paul, Jake Shore

Kunsthalle Der Licht is delighted to present S. Paul, Jake Shore. The show is both artists' first with the gallery and their first time showing work together in a gallery setting.

Shore's centerpiece is a large-scale sculpture that challenges our perception of familiar forms. The work, resembling a rabbit, is crafted from cardboard and meticulously wrapped in canvas. Shore's deliberate choice to leave the canvas unwrinkled adds a captivating textural element to the piece, inviting viewers to explore the interplay between concept and materiality.

The sculpture represents the culmination of an extensive creative journey. Before embarking on the final piece, Shore developed multiple preliminary sketches, each a step in his conceptual exploration. This process-oriented approach echoes the work of early conceptual artists, emphasizing the importance of the idea and its evolution.

Complementing Shore's sculpture are two UV prints by S. Paul, showcasing a harmonious blend of traditional craftsmanship and digital innovation. Paul's process begins with creating watercolors and ink drawings on small pieces of Korean hanji paper. These initial works are then photographed and digitally manipulated, resulting in larger UV prints on handmade Japanese paper.

At the heart of both Shore's and Paul's artistic processes lies a profound reverence for the sketch. These initial drawings serve not merely as blueprints, but as critical moments of thought. Shore's rabbit sculpture, with its bold presence and textural nuances, emerged from a constellation of sketches—each a meditation on form, each a step closer to the final vision. Similarly, Paul's UV prints bear the whispered echoes of countless preliminary studies.

To honor this foundational aspect of artistic creation, the gallery itself has undergone a metamorphosis. The walls, typically pristine canvases for finished works, now don a mantle of brown kraft paper. This thoughtful intervention transcends mere aesthetics; it is a tactile homage to the very essence of paper production—the raw material that cradles both the nascent sketch and the polished print. The environment that speaks to the material journey of creation, and the boundaries between preparatory work and finished piece blur, inviting contemplation on the nature of artistic process and the myriad potentials inherent in the most humble of materials.

— *M.C.*

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re: Tourism

There is a well-dressed teenage boy standing in St. Petersburg’s Hermitage Museum, admiring El Greco’s *Saint Peter and Paul* (1590-1600). It is 2001. If it was 15 years later, one could imagine the teenager wearing Gosha and Vetements instead of his stiff black coat, redolent of the decade immediately following Glasnost.

The Marquis de Custine, once famous for his travel writing *La Russie en 1839*, time-travels through the wings of the building, seeing tsarinas and revolutionaries. He attacks a group of suited oligarchs, asking, “Are you interested in beauty or its representation?” When he comes upon the teenager, he asks, “Do you know that those are the apostles?”

The young man replies, “I was looking at them because it gives me joy. One day, all men will become like them.” The young man appears to be a tourist to art, while the Marquis is a tourist in time. Yet, it is the young man who already understands both forgetting and the forgetting of forgetting.

There is a well-dressed teenage boy standing on the corner of Broome and Orchard, admiring Colin de Land smoke a cigarette from afar. It is 2001. If it was 15 years later, one could imagine the teenager wearing Gosha and Vetements instead of his stiff black coat, redolent of the decade immediately following Glasnost.

Dash Snow, once famous for doing drugs and photographing it, time-travels through downtown, seeing tenement dwellers and trust funders and Depop resellers. He attacks a group of hypebeasts, asking, “Are you interested in beauty or its representation?” When he comes upon the teenager, he asks, “Do you know who that is?”

The young man replies, “I was looking at him because it gives me joy. One day, all men will become like him.” The young man appears to be a tourist to art, while the Marquis is a tourist in time. Yet, it is the young man who already understands both forgetting and the forgetting of forgetting.

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making lower case Capital

1. It's one thing to make rules; it is another to enforce them.
2. **stanley brouwn** insisted on his name being lower case. He preferred it printed in Helvetica. He didn't want people to take pictures of his art and he didn't want photographs of himself to be taken or distributed.
3. The image of Stanley Brouwn was most recently disseminated in a Van Dam auction catalog of Kasper König's collection. His year of birth, year of death, place of birth, and place of death were typed and printed. Four drawings from *this way brouwn* are photographed and listed for sale. The estimate was 6,000 to 8,000 euros.
4. The text describes the work and notes that Brouwn placed a stamp on it in lieu of a signature, thus avoiding the gesture of the artistic signature. The work sells for 60,000 euros. A photograph of the artist in 1964 is on the bottom-left of the catalog page. He is wearing a dark coat, has thick glasses, is holding two pieces of paper, and is balding.
5. A signature is not a scribble, nor is it a name — it is something else, a tendency, a habit, a way of marking that has little to do with the name but is often relegated to that domain.
6. One can speculate on why the Brouwn works went for 10 times their estimate. A recent retrospective, spanning exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Hammer, DIA Beacon, and the Stedelijk brought the posthumous artist to new-found levels of fame.
7. There is video footage of some of these shows on the internet. Many more photographs now circulate online. Some of this media can be viewed in new video essays on YouTube.

In fact, if... this singular man, doesn't sign, and doesn't want to sign, if he doesn't want his name divulged, doesn't seem to want to answer for his drawings, that's because he's head over heels in love (like Baudelaire) with his own signature, with the most authentic and original there is, the least imitable, the most difficult to counterfeit... He is so in love with loving himself and his own originality that in truth he devotes a true cult to his signature. He does nothing but protect it. And so, what matters to him is the signature that does not consist in affixing the seal of his initials or the inscription of his literal patronym, in the form of letters, to the edge of a drawing, but rather the signature indistinguishable from the inimitable line of his own drawings...

— M.C.

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Real and flying lanterns

The etymology of fireworks in China is closely tied to the invention of gunpowder, which occurred in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). The Chinese word for fireworks, "烟花" (yānhuā), literally translates to "smoke flower," vividly describing the visual effect of fireworks exploding in the sky. This term emerged as fireworks evolved from their early, simpler forms to more complex and colorful displays.

The development of fireworks terminology in China reflects the progression of pyrotechnic technology. Early terms focused on the explosive nature of gunpowder, with words like "爆竹" (bàozhú), meaning "exploding bamboo," referring to the practice of throwing bamboo stalks into fires to create loud bangs. As fireworks became more sophisticated, new terms emerged to describe specific types and effects, such as "礼花" (lǐhuā) for aerial shells and "流星" (liúxīng) for shooting stars or comets. These linguistic developments mirror the cultural significance and technological advancements of fireworks in Chinese society over the centuries.

The evolution of fireworks into protocinema represents a fascinating intersection of pyrotechnic art and early moving image technology. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, elaborate fireworks displays began to incorporate narrative elements and sequenced scenes, effectively creating ephemeral stories in the night sky. These displays, known as "pyrodramas," often depicted historical events, battles, or mythological tales through carefully choreographed explosions and illuminations. This progression from simple light and color to complex, time-based visual narratives can be seen as a precursor to cinema, laying the groundwork for the concept of sequential imagery and moving pictures that would later evolve into film.

The poetics of fireworks lie in their ability to transform the mundane into the extraordinary, if only for a fleeting moment. Their ephemeral nature imbues them with a sense of preciousness and urgency, compelling viewers to be fully present in the moment of their display. The interplay of light, color, and sound creates a multisensory experience that can evoke a wide range of emotions, from awe and wonder to nostalgia and joy. Fireworks also possess a unique duality, simultaneously representing destruction and creation, as they literally explode into being. This tension between their violent origins and their beautiful manifestations adds depth to their poetic significance, making them powerful metaphors for transformation, celebration, and the transient nature of beauty itself.

— M.C.

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The Back of the Club

There is no signage for the back of the club. It exists as invitation only. You have to know someone. Or you have to know something. Sometimes that something can be that the back of the club exists. Then you can commit yourself to the task of getting to the back of the club, if that is what you desire.

The back of the club can be thought of as the result of a combinatorial language game. You speak with money. You speak with bottles. You speak with body, words, clothes. And of course your reputation.

Naturally many of these backs of clubs end up being utter shit should one be granted entry. At that point a whole different game must be played in order to leave. New York City is a city of rooms. You can pass from the back of the club to a suite in Chelsea, a basement in Sunnyside, a midtown hotel that's been converted into a shelter for migrants. The question emerges: is it worth it to sit down at the table and be dealt a hand?

Flop. Turn. River. Bet and show your faces. If a secret is valuable enough it becomes mythologized. Gaze upon the numbers of an On Kawara date. If you have the right numbers, you can see the back. But there is a price of entry to be paid first.

The rabbit is the fourth animal in the Chinese zodiac. In Chinese culture, the rabbit is known to be the luckiest out of all the twelve animals. The deck bears spades, diamonds, hearts, and clubs. Whether you like it, you've been dealt a hand.

— *M.C.*

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On Fathers and Sons

“ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 9, A FILM VERSION OF JACQUES LACAN’S TELEVISION (1978, ENGLISH SUBTITLES) HAD ITS U.S. PREMIERE AT COOPER UNION’S GREAT HALL IN NEW YORK CITY.” — John Miller

The projection didn’t go as planned; the film was screened again at Bleeker Street Cinema. The 144 Bleeker St. address today is host to Smacked Village Legal New York Cannabis Dispensary. People watched the film, they took notes, lectures followed. This was how Lacan was transmuted in those times. A focus was on death — first and second deaths: an imagined death, a real death.

Over the course of “Rabbit Fire”, Daffy Duck gets shot repeatedly amid the back and forth calls for “Duck Season” and “Rabbit Season”. Miller writes that “cartoons consistently illustrate the Real (that which can't be idealized)” — amid the din of calls for seasonal trends that swing along the pendulum might we realize that the hunter’s shot cannot be equated to death. Rather the duck absorbs the bullet and the action of its writing and reformulates itself.

The *noms des pères* of the most famed hunters have ditched their nom de guerre. *The Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo*, broadcast for the masses in 1961, brought Don Quixote to the tv dinner before a new band of knights set off chasing windmills and passing (wet) wind. Now the detritus of these valiant Kultúrkritiks is scattered, sacrificed for Kunst Kapital, embedded in the K after K — the hole remaining, naturally, beckons text to be thrown towards it, to smear the fecal matter left behind from the anal father, to attempt to make your most lasting mark on the cave wall.

The Western tradition possesses little room for the apprentice — Master Shifu, better translated as *Master Master*, exemplifies this, as does Master Splinter’s stature (lowly rodent vermin in the West) — the inability to conceive of knowledge exchange without submission. Nietzsche tongued Wagner vacancy, with eyes cast towards the wife; Köln’s k hole beckoned one past the rectum, scalpel in hand. Securing the bag, by any means necessary, whether back-stabbing or colostomy.

The orphans roamed the city. They painted, they wrote, they went back, they went forth, never realizing the reversal that exists when a bunny yells “rabbit season” and the symbolic order goes to shambles.

— M.C.

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The Perfect Crime

How many Oceans are needed to torpedo Manhattan to Bikini Bottom? On the contrary, could this influx of dissolution send the city in an upward migration through a series of spheres before its eventual exodus from Earth? Though if the Earth is now a spaceship, as Yuk Hui contends, then exodus becomes an impossibility — there can only be nomadic vessels drifting through the Heavens, aware that any locale that seems ripe for settlement will fall victim to resource extraction.

It is best to start small — pickpocketing, gaining sleight of hand, before there is a world of color to tilt at windmills with among the knight errants with nothing better to do. Color makes it easier to fill the days. Absence and vacuity, when left drab, are startling sights to witness. The void asks to be watched, necessitating security to ensure it is neither stolen nor destroyed.

The best time for theft is war — the Nazis present the most obvious example, as not only could they accumulate Kapital Werk, but could take it to the market in pursuit of Aryan alchemy. Turning water into wine, though by means of fortune, not fame. The theft of the *Mona Lisa* made it an icon, just as the mechanical reproduction of images was beginning to accelerate. But then we became overburdened with images — Vermeer's *View of Delft* remains carved into memory via Proust, yet *The Concert*, one of 34 works stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, more than often fails to conjure a Vinteuil Sonata.

There must be a breaking point — were one to break into a gallery and steal their paintings, an investigation would be launched and an insurance claim would be made. An uproar could be created, a series of targeted thefts, a curatorial approach to purloining for men of letters to reap numbers. A series of acts without an author, in which everyone is both victim and accomplice. A two-faced game of infinite recircularity, an East River Run Club for Jack and Jill, Eve and Adam, the fossilized irony of a culture that no longer believe in its values.

But perhaps one must start even smaller — recognizing that upon that initial attempt to pickpocket, a prison was erected and the colors that filled the knight errants' voids were nothing but a daydream from within the cell. The cryptography inherent to poetry serves as the threshold to a final resting place and as a mask — *why does a letter always arrive at its destination? Why could it not — sometimes at least — also fail to reach it?*

Thus, we burrow. We build walls within the prison, changing the nature of the destination. Letters from the outside cannot get in. We stretch the letters within past comprehension, until we read and write asemics and speak code.

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Retourismé

Things happened before. The text becomes a moment in time that is impossible to read. There is a total act of flattening. The vertical guides the orientation and as such this after, which is the before, is rendered and will remain an after. Beginning again — elsewhere there are revivals: scene revivals, bloghouse revivals, jerk revivals. At a certain point revivals will die and then again there will be revival revivals. There is a circuitry to this sort of behavior. Electrons flowing through a system — somewhere there is a battery. Closed Y2K clubs turn to oral seminars, portmanteaus morph from buried galleries to Seinfeld references, galleries shutter and migrate like television shows. *Girls* took the screens to Brooklyn; it couldn't have happened without *Delusional Downtown Divas*, Peter Halley, Index Magazine, and a Flash player. Like a flicker film, the anthology echoed below Houston, then Delancey, like a magic lantern to *La Nouvelle Région Centrale* — the work is programmed. An orchard was harvested and lay fallow before the changing climate turned it into a vineyard — today they're growing champagne grapes in the south of Britain, they say the soil is perfect.

This is the revival. This is the remake of the above text. There will be more letters, more events, but they will be different events. There will remain a certain fidelity to the text above, which contained its own computed revival in an altered form — jokes on form, on Oulipo, on topology, on the strung-out artists — *I can get you fire fetty or good tan what you need?! What do people pay for? Drugs yes, they don't pay for words, they need to be tricked into paying with something they consider worthless: a click, a glance, a scroll — metadata. People are trying to build the new internet — they want an internet revival. You can make money off a revival. Soundcloud rappers are like Shitcoins: fundamentally it sucks to be set by the trend rather than to set the trend. You wanna be a market maker Bro like CZ says I don't trade I make systems for trading I make sword for the samurai 🍷 These people are speculating on the short term lifespan of their own clout You see David gambled way too hard haha — ❤️👛. I and You and We split and unify. Two etymologies of novel:*

novel (adj.) "new, strange, unusual, previously unknown," mid-15c., but little used before 1600, from Old French *novel*, *nouvel* "new, young, fresh, recent; additional; early, soon" (Modern French *nouveau*, fem. *nouvelle*), from Latin *novellus* "new, young, recent," diminutive of *novus* "new" (see *new*). also from mid-15c. // **novel (n.)** "fictitious prose narrative," 1560s, from Italian *novella* "short story," originally "new story, news," from Latin *novella* "new things" (source of French *novelle*, French *nouvelle*), neuter plural or fem. of *novellus* "new, young, recent," diminutive of *novus* "new" (see *new*). Originally "one of the tales or short stories in a collection" (especially Boccaccio's), later (1630s) "long prose fiction narrative or tale," a type of work which had before that been called a romance.

— M.C.

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Chinese bingo, also known as "dǎ lǎo hǔ" (打老虎) or "hitting the tiger," is a popular game played in Chinese communities worldwide. Unlike traditional Western bingo, Chinese bingo uses a unique set of tiles instead of numbered balls. The game typically uses 80 tiles, each featuring Chinese characters representing numbers from 1 to 80. Players receive cards with a grid of numbers, usually in a 4x4 or 5x5 format. As the caller draws and announces tiles, players mark off matching numbers on their cards. Chinese bingo often incorporates cultural elements, with some versions using zodiac animals or other symbolic imagery alongside numbers. The game's popularity stems from its social nature, often played during festivals, family gatherings, and community events. Winning combinations in Chinese bingo can vary, but common patterns include completing horizontal, vertical, or diagonal lines, as well as covering all four corners or the entire card.

Chinese bingo and Western bingo share the fundamental concept of matching called numbers to a personal card, but they differ in several key aspects. Chinese bingo uses 80 tiles with Chinese characters, while Western bingo typically employs 75 or 90 numbered balls. The cards in Chinese bingo often have a 4x4 or 5x5 grid, whereas Western bingo cards usually feature a 5x5 grid with the center space free. Chinese bingo may incorporate zodiac symbols or cultural imagery, adding a distinct cultural flair, while Western bingo generally sticks to numbers, though themed versions do exist. In Chinese bingo, tiles are drawn and announced, contrasting with Western bingo's use of mechanical ball dispensers or electronic random number generators. The social context also differs, with Chinese bingo often played at family gatherings and cultural events, while Western bingo is more commonly associated with community halls, churches, and casinos.

Western bingo is most prominent in the Anglosphere, primarily in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. This prevalence can be attributed to several factors. The game's historical development traces back to the Italian lottery game "Il Giuoco del Lotto d'Italia" in the 16th century, spreading to France and then to Britain in the 18th century. As English-speaking countries colonized or influenced other regions, they brought their games and pastimes with them, including bingo. Many Anglosphere countries have laws allowing bingo for charitable fundraising, which has promoted its growth and popularity. The game's simplicity in English, including rhyming calls like "two little ducks, twenty-two," may have contributed to its widespread adoption in English-speaking countries. While Western bingo is most prominent in the Anglosphere, it's important to note that variations of number-matching games exist in many cultures, each with its own unique characteristics and cultural significance. These games have often evolved differently or maintain distinct identities, as exemplified by Chinese bingo.

— M.C.

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Jake Shore and S. Paul have mounted an exhibition that is at once a celebration and a funeral dirge for the very concept of artistic appropriation. Their work, a meticulously crafted simulacrum of appropriation itself, reveals the quintessential function of contemporary art: to grant a semblance of historical identity through ritualized consumption of its own obsolescence.

The centerpiece of the exhibition, a sculpture of a rabbit constructed from canvas and cardboard, stands as a monument to the malaise that appropriation promises to cure. This leporine construct, neither building nor animal, embodies the gridlock of depoliticized consumption and consumerized politics that defines our contemporary moment. It is both architectural intervention and a mirror in which the contemporary artist sees their own reflection, trapped in the perpetual cycle of producing exchange value while desperately grasping at the illusion of use value.

Flanking this effigy are two UV prints that, at first glance, appear to be sincere parodies of Chinese *shanshui* painting and calligraphy. These prints, with their mechanically reproduced gestures of "authentic" expression, demonstrate the artists' tacit understanding that, for a period of time, a very limited and precisely defined set of operations on the signifier is accessible and permitted.

The exhibition's curatorial strategy creates a simulacrum of a double negation. It denies the validity of individual creative impulse while simultaneously affirming the stability of the division between high and low culture. This parodistic appropriation reveals the split situation of the individual in contemporary artistic practice – claiming the constitution of the self in original primary utterances while being painfully aware of the degree of determination necessary to inscribe the utterance into dominant conventions.

The work bathes in ideology, taking sides with the ruling order even as it purports to critique it. What does it mean, then, when artists like Shore and Paul, operating from the cultural center, suddenly "discover" and recycle the aesthetic strategies of the past? Is it historical justice that makes their current interest in appropriation discover the cultural autonomy of bygone avant-gardes? Or does the crafty manipulation of expertise in traditional modes of meaning construction revalidate and authenticate the "discovery" of local representational artmaking?

The answer, of course, lies in the realm of exoticism – the model-structure by which a language appropriates elements from a foreign or ancient language to recognize and rationalize its own atavisms. Shore and Paul's work functions not to document the existence of alien rituals, rules, or practices, but to cast local atavism into a historical or alien form, making the local product more "authentic" and therefore more valuable within the economy of cultural capital.

— M.C.

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Getting Trashed on the Lower East Side

Menu:

- 2 Bottles of Veuve Clicquot (750 mL)
- 1 Bottle of D'USSE (750 mL)
- 1 Bottle of Hennessy (750 mL)
- 1 24-pack of Yuengling
- 6 6-packs of Modelo
- 4 bottles of Cheap Red Wine
- 2 bottles of Sake
- Gefiltefish
- 4 bottles of Maneschewitz
- Creamed and pickled herring
- Kugel

— *M.C.*

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For a long time The Velveteen Rabbit lived in the toy cupboard or on the nursery floor, and no one thought very much about him. He was naturally shy, and being only made of velveteen, some of the more expensive toys quite snubbed him. The mechanical toys were very superior, and looked down upon every one else; they were full of modern ideas, and pretended they were real. The model boat, who had lived through two seasons and lost most of his paint, caught the tone from them and never missed an opportunity of referring to his rigging in technical terms. The Rabbit could not claim to be a model of anything, for he didn't know that real rabbits existed; he thought they were all stuffed with sawdust like himself, and he understood that sawdust was quite out-of-date and should never be mentioned in modern circles. Even Timothy, the jointed wooden lion, who was made by the disabled soldiers, and should have had broader views, put on airs and pretended he was connected with Government. Between them all the poor little Rabbit was made to feel himself very insignificant and commonplace, and the only person who was kind to him at all was the Skin Horse.

The Skin Horse had lived longer in the nursery than any of the others. He was so old that his brown coat was bald in patches and showed the seams underneath, and most of the hairs in his tail had been pulled out to string bead necklaces. He was wise, for he had seen a long succession of mechanical toys arrive to boast and swagger, and by-and-by break their mainsprings and pass away, and he knew that they were only toys, and would never turn into anything else. For nursery magic is very strange and wonderful, and only those playthings that are old and wise and experienced like the Skin Horse understand all about it.

"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit. "Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt."

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

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The invention of paper is traditionally attributed to Cai Lun, an official of the Han Dynasty in China, around 105 CE. While earlier forms of paper-like materials existed, Cai Lun refined the process and is credited with creating a durable, lightweight, and cost-effective writing surface. The earliest paper was made from a mixture of mulberry bark, hemp, rags, and other plant fibers. Paper was introduced to Japan from China via Korea around the 7th century CE. Japanese artisans, however, did not simply adopt Chinese techniques; they refined and elevated the process, developing what is now known as washi, or traditional Japanese handmade paper. Washi is primarily made from the inner bark of three plants: *kozo* (paper mulberry), *mitsumata*, and *gampi*. The unique properties of these fibers, combined with meticulous craftsmanship, result in paper known for its strength, flexibility, and translucency. These qualities made washi ideal for a wide range of applications, from practical uses like room dividers (*shoji*) to artistic pursuits such as origami, calligraphy, and woodblock printing.

As the Industrial Revolution transformed production and commerce, new forms of paper-based materials emerged to meet evolving needs. Cardboard, a stiff, thick paper-based material, became increasingly important in the 19th century. The first commercial cardboard box was produced in England in 1817, marking the beginning of a packaging revolution. However, it was the invention of corrugated paper in 1856 that truly set the stage for modern cardboard. Initially patented for use as a liner in tall hats, corrugated paper's potential for packaging was soon recognized. In 1871, Albert Jones patented corrugated board for packaging, and by the 1890s, mass production of cardboard boxes had begun.

Originating in ancient Egypt, canvas has been used since antiquity for a variety of purposes. Made from hemp, flax, or cotton, canvas gained prominence during the Italian Renaissance as a preferred surface for oil painting. Its texture and durability made it ideal for large-scale works, and it quickly became the standard support for oil paintings, a status it maintains to this day.

Delicate electronic hardware degrades fast, and its maintenance proves impossible without today's hyper-complex system of extraction and supply. Digital content corrupts even faster, dragging out of existence the possibility that any echoes might remain of the world from which it sprung. When the material conditions keeping its hardware operative will have collapsed, the digital archives to which this civilization has entrusted its cultural legacy will also vanish. As soon as the storages of contemporary culture will be deprived of a seamless supply of rare metals, electricity and skilled labor-force, they will become inaccessible once and for all – as absent as if they had never existed. More fragile than the papyri of the ancient world, the immense wealth of digitized culture hangs to a thread, depending for its survival on the continuation of the techno-economic settings of this civilization. The treasure of this society, obsessed with data, will be the first victim of annihilation, once its historical body will have exhaled its last breath.

— M.C.

Kunsthalle Der Licht
252 Broome Street, New York, NY
October 11, 2024 — October 24, 2024

By Appointment Only

“Baa, baa, black sheep / have you any wool? / Yes, sir, yes, sir / Three bags full / One for the master / And one for the dame / And one for the little boy / Who lives down the lane.”

Identity Capital — only instead of rose petals, dry flowers, hydrangeas, bouquets, we have wool, produced not through a nursery, though it is rendered through a rhyme, but at scale, shearing sheep in the subsection of agriculture known as husbandry. What purpose does the wool hold? It wraps us, for warmth, for style, as a language, yet its distribution is unequal, its production part of a massive global enterprise predicated on waste, seasonality, and trends.

The little boy, too, has become ensconced in this suffocating fabric, bound to a location, embedded in this system of wool production and distribution. He is not the master, but he has proximity, he now exists within a network of roads, however rural they may be, that then connect to the metropole, to the ports, to a system. What is the futurity of the little boy, who will outlive the black sheep, and will outgrow whatever is made from its black wool?

— M.C.

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"I checked into a cheap hotel near the train station, managed to see some friends, a bit of Roma, and moved along. I was somewhat taken aback how, like Lisbon, Roma – at least in the center and in Trastevere, where we lived – had become overwhelmed with tourists and had changed itself to serve them. Sad. When I left in 2002 I had thought to myself that it was too big to be destroyed, as Venice and Firenze had been, by mass tourism – but I was totally wrong. The Roma we had lived in no longer exists."

There are few things as pleasurable as checking into a hotel room to stay by yourself. You go up to the room and everything is meant for two: two cups for coffee, two sets of toiletries, two towels, even two beds. There is a quiet in the room that is hard to come by elsewhere. The room beckons you to bring another person into it, and remaining alone only accelerates the sense of solitude like nothing else. To dream of a life lived in hotel rooms, it'd be like living in the airport.

The nights and days have blurred in this hotel room on the avenue Al Atlas. Rabat's streets define a map of the world. You can walk from Togo to Jakarta. The museum of photography is fenced off by Napoli, Rome, and Accra. All of these streets, all of the place-names, and where does that place you? In this absence, trying to regain a sense of footing, of placement, of direction - and to turn that into Movement, into Motion.

A coda, an ending, a musical term. There was a piano in the lobby of the hotel in Fez, it was falling apart and in need of repairs. Every night a man would sit there and play out-of-tune chords that bounced off the walls that desperately needed to be repainted. Sometimes a secret is a lie.

A ghost of a film had been lingering for weeks: in the opening scene, or maybe one of the early scenes, a girl who works the front desk at a hotel is approached by a mysterious older woman who asks her questions about the guests and then asks her to work for her as a private investigator. The girl sees someone get killed under the full moon while following someone.

— M.C.

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To Begin — To Expand Rapidly — To Profit — To Remain Solid

What is it to enter a way of thought? Yet, as I say, it is also logical for me to be starting on it so late, even though it is the initial question, because of course it is only afterward and in retrospect that the beginning question can be approached. The same is true of the writing process: Isn't it when the book is finished that you write the introduction?

How does one introduce a show? Ostensibly this is the purpose of the press release — a commercial form, used to break news to the press. A document of an industry that can largely be thought of as a 20th century institution. What is it to enter into a show? Is it a matter of walking through a threshold, into a room with art? What are the delineations of such a room? Where does one begin? Where does one end?

These questions, not novel, also became subjects of significant contemplation in the 20th century. At the turn, new modalities of image distribution emerged. New conversations began to be held, new conversations, which were in fact the same old conversation. We talked in person and then we talked on the telephone and then we talked on the video call. We wrote with our hands on caves, we wrote with stone into stone, we wrote with ink on paper, we wrote with the telegraph, and then with the computer.

Perhaps rather than the question of newness, of novelty, the matter at hand is geometric in nature, of points, lines and rays, of an attempt to map out a beginning through heuristics that are non-Euclidean in nature. In the music video for Jackzebra's 认真你就输了 (trans. *If you take it seriously, you lose.*) is a shot of dim sum items rotating on a Lazy Susan... a sort of thinking with the first point plotted at the potter's wheel and the following extrusions endemic to localities — bark up the wrong tree before eventually the Americas birth an appliance, and then it becomes most commonplace in Chinese restaurants — ancient technologies reborn and take centuries to find their way:

“All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was”

— M.C.

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Perhaps we have to confront the following question: *How can one avoid becoming a state artist; can one avoid it at all?* It was the hero who founded the city in ancient Greece, and to become a state thinker is to yield to the temptation of such a heroic act. The state needs artists, artists need the state, and therefore artists become the artists of *Heimat* because *Heimat* legitimates the state as the organism of the people.

Chinese influence in America began with waves of immigrants during the California Gold Rush, who soon became instrumental in building the First Transcontinental Railroad. Despite their contributions, Chinese laborers faced severe discrimination, culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In response, Chinese immigrants established Chinatowns, which served as cultural and economic hubs. Over time, Chinatowns became cultural landmarks, introducing Americans to Chinese culture.

A state artist elevates their *Heimat* above other places in the world and attempts to seize the decisive moment of historical development from its standpoint—the unification of philosophy and power. In past centuries, almost every artist was addressed according to nationality, and a new school of thought was often prefixed with a nationality. An artist can only go beyond the nation-state by becoming *heimatlos*, that is to say, by looking at the world from the standpoint of not being at home. This doesn't mean that one must refrain from talking or thinking about a particular place or a culture; on the contrary, one must confront it.

Chinese influence permeated American society in various ways. Chinese cuisine became a staple of American dining. Martial arts, popularized by icons like Bruce Lee, sparked a cultural phenomenon that continues today. Bruce Lee, born in San Francisco in 1940, played a pivotal role in bridging East and West. Despite facing discrimination in Hollywood, he became a global icon, challenging stereotypes and opening doors for Asian actors. His impact extended beyond cinema, popularizing kung fu and Eastern philosophy in the West.

Heimatlosigkeit becomes a standpoint from which to reflect on the planetary condition, and world history can only be reviewed from the standpoint of *Heimatlosigkeit*. One nation can no longer be said to be ahead of others in the journey of the world spirit; instead, philosophical reason must address the planetary condition and therefore become planetary. But in this case, not being at home is at the same time being at home, since home and not being at home are not opposed to one another. Not being at home means being somewhere else; being somewhere else doesn't have to be opposed to being at home. Instead, not being at home allows one to know better both being at home and being in the world.

— M.C.

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Western astrology, with its zodiac signs based on the apparent path of the sun through constellations, offers a linear perspective of time and personality. In contrast, the Chinese zodiac, operating on a 12-year cycle associated with animals, presents a cyclical view of time and character traits. This dichotomy reflects broader cultural differences in perceiving time, fate, and individual agency.

The Hong Kong director Soi Cheang's film "*Mad Fate*" (2023) serves as an exploration of the concept of predestination within Chinese cosmology. The film's narrative, steeped in the belief of an inescapable destiny, resonates with traditional Chinese philosophical ideas about fate and the interconnectedness of all things. In "*Mad Fate*," characters grapple with the notion that their actions and outcomes are predetermined, echoing the fatalistic undertones often associated with Chinese astrology. This perspective contrasts with the Western astrological tradition, which, while acknowledging celestial influences, tends to place greater emphasis on free will and the ability to shape one's destiny.

In Western astrology, while celestial bodies are believed to influence human affairs, there's often a greater emphasis on individual agency. While astrological forces may predispose certain outcomes, personal choice remains a crucial factor. This more flexible interpretation of fate in Western astrology aligns with broader cultural values of individualism and self-determination prevalent in Western societies. It offers a middle ground between complete predestination and absolute free will, proposing that individuals can work with or against astrological influences to shape their lives.

Shore's rabbit sculpture, a symbol associated with luck in many cultures, including Chinese tradition, stands as a monumental embodiment of fortune and fate. Its presence in the exhibition space invites viewers to consider their own relationship with luck and destiny. The sculpture's scale emphasizes the outsized role that concepts of fate can play in our lives, while its form—simultaneously whimsical and imposing—reflects the dual nature of astrological beliefs: both playful diversion and serious life guide.

S. Paul's UV prints, rethinking traditional *shanshui* painting, offer a clever commentary on the intersection of ancient wisdom and contemporary skepticism. *Shanshui*, a style of Chinese landscape painting, traditionally embodies philosophical and cosmological principles, including ideas about the nature of reality and human place within the universe. By reimagining this form through modern techniques and a parodic lens, Paul challenges viewers to reconsider how ancient beliefs and modern perspectives on fate and fortune coexist and conflict today.

— M.C.

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It is necessary to introduce into the current (re)discovery of appropriation artists of minor interest (if we can call the vigor of momentary needs of taste and fashion minor) a reading that demonstrates a far more complex understanding of Modernist European and American art. Jake Shore and S. Paul's work emerges in a situation marked by a lack of understanding and neglect of its proper historical sources, and one that therefore had to open itself all the more to the dominance of a cynical post-post-modernism.

The configurations of the early beginnings of the postwar neo-avant-garde's practices and the conclusion of the current neo-avant-garde which "stirs in the thickets of long ago" (in Walter Benjamin's phrase) seem to have congruent features but come from different directions. Still, both situations – the amazement that accompanied the discovery of Modernism and now, decades later, the cynical rejection and disbelief of it – use parody as an appropriate rhetorical mode for replying to and denouncing the claims of a dominant Modernist ideology that lacks credibility and validity today.

Shore and Paul's exhibition at Kunsthalle Der Licht represents the tiger's leap into the past that happens in an arena commanded by the ruling class. Their manipulation of code in terms of style never leads to the transgression of the code but instead functions as a promise of individuation while it, in fact, seals off the process. Successfully entering the symbolic order of the aesthetic language and its conventions, their style is instantly recognized, commodified, and imitated.

Ultimately, the work of Shore and Paul stands at a juncture: that of a time when the credibility of Modernism is in shambles and its failure and obsolescence have become all too obvious. But this failure is dictated by the violence of political and economic conditions, not by individual or aesthetic circumstances. Their parodistic appropriation might ultimately deny the validity of art practice as individuation altogether, revealing that it is not the passion for substances that speaks in fetishism, but the passion for the code, which, by governing both objects and subjects, and by subordinating them to itself, delivers them up to abstract manipulation.

In the end, Shore and Paul's exhibition at Kunsthalle Der Licht is a mirror in which we see reflected the fundamental articulation of the ideological process: not in the projection of alienated consciousness into various superstructures, but in the generalization at all levels of a structural code that continues to haunt us long after we thought we had exorcised the ghosts of Modernism.

— *M.C.*

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Who is writing? To whom? And to send, to destine, to dispatch what? To what address? Without any desire to surprise, and thereby to grab attention by means of obscurity, I owe it to whatever remains of my honesty to say finally I do not know. Above all I would not have had the slightest interest in this correspondence and this cross-section, I mean in their publication.

Is this really a form of remembering at all or merely a slight stretching of the present moment into the past? Is this not a kind of prospective archaeology or even an advanced form of "de-membering?" Instant archaeology is not concerned with looking back, but looking through what has just transpired while looking forward. Yet to already be the subject of a past event in the instant that something happens is tantamount to abolishing the present. The present becomes merely an extremely short effect for the future; a miniscule, no longer quantifiable amount of time; simply a moment of updating. The extreme shortening of storage times coupled with simultaneous expansion to near-infinite storage capacity have not led to the past being forgotten; rather, the facility of enjoying the present is the victim. There's no time for that anymore. Future and past are joined together directly and effectively.

Profound contemporaneity can only be produced at the price of untimeliness. To conform at all costs to the needs and expectations of the present creates dependency of thought. Only when there is no compulsion to be up to date is it possible to identify differences in the here and now.

A factory in China has been commissioned with the forgery of postcards. They must not just re-make postcards from the past, but age them in ovens, cooking the prints such that the proper amount of browning and yellowing from decades of decay are replicated. They must remake the stamps from postal services of years past, and the demarcations that directed the card to its destination. A copy can be a beautiful thing. Many often wish that they could relive a specific day, or a specific moment. Like when a rabbit looks you in the eye before darting away, or the way the morning light dances and glows before becoming too strong.

The wound can have (should only have) just one proper name. I recognize that I love — you — by this: you leave in me a wound I do not want to replace.

— M.C.

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The Year of the Rabbit arrived on January 22nd, 2023, and passed on February 9th, 2024. The concept of a year being "late" is itself a cultural construct. Different societies have adopted various calendars, each with its own starting point and method of calculation. The Chinese lunar calendar, which determines the animal year, doesn't align perfectly with the Gregorian calendar. This misalignment can lead to the perception of events being "early" or "late" when viewed through different cultural lenses.

In 1582 when Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian calendar to replace the Julian calendar. This switch was necessary to correct a gradual drift in the date of the equinox, which was affecting the timing of Easter. The solution? Simply remove ten days from the calendar. In October 1582, many European countries jumped from October 4th directly to October 15th. These ten days seemed to vanish into thin air, lost in the shuffle of timekeeping.

The Hebrew calendar, used for Jewish religious observances, is currently in the year 5784 (as of 2023/2024 CE). This count begins from the calculated date of the creation of the world according to Jewish tradition. However, rabbinical scholars have long been aware of a discrepancy between this date and historical evidence. There's a "missing" period of about 165 years, often referred to as the "missing years" in the Jewish calendar.

Our systems of timekeeping are ultimately human constructs subject to error, interpretation, and cultural variation. We often think in years, decades, in centuries, and millennia, thinking with the base 10, thinking from our fingers. We think lies about time, so, as we celebrate the exhibition of a Rabbit 2024, we might reflect on the false nature of time and calendars. A year can be "late," days can vanish, or years can go missing—our experience of time is as much a cultural artifact as it is a natural phenomenon. Perhaps it's not about being "on time" according to any particular system, but about making the most of the time we have, however we choose to measure it.

— *M.C.*

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Rudolf's Exposé

There is an essay, ostensibly titled *My Friend Kasper*, that is, for the moment, unlocatable. Art, like fashion, is much slower in the process of the digitization of the archive. Despite the recent death of the esteemed curator Kasper König, efforts to recover this text have unfortunately remained fruitless.

Fragments exist on the web — not of the essay, but of the important fact of Kasper's birthname Rudolf, and his desire to write a new name when moving to New York. König claimed to identify with *Kasperle*, a traditional German puppet, with origins in the 17th century, at times so popular that *Kasperltheater*, was the German term for puppet theater.

Dan Graham, however, claimed that König identified with Casper the friendly ghost, and did not want to be mistaken with Rudolf Nureyev. Nureyev, one of the most famous ballet dancers of his time died in the 1990s of AIDS-related complications. He notably played silent film actor Rudolph Valentino in Ken Russell's 1977 film *Valentino*. Valentino was a sex symbol of 1920s Hollywood and was nicknamed "The Latin Lover" though many rumors circulated about his homosexuality and journalists of the period questioned his masculinity for his dandyish appearance.

Writing a new name when moving to America is a very commonplace affair. It was done at Ellis Island and it is done by Chinese students and professionals. After König's death, works from his collection were auctioned by the German house Van Dam. Many names and many works passed into new hands. There were new headlines: "Kasper König's Collection Brings in \$6.5 Million at Auction", "Kasper König Collection Fetches \$6.5M At Cologne Auction", "Collection of German Curator Kasper König Brings in \$6.5 M. in Cologne Auction".

In Van Dam's auction catalog was a quote: "*With the death of Kasper König, the world loses one of the most important curators of the second half of the 20th century*". When a second half ends, another game must start. Unless the score was tied — in that case, overtime must be played.

— M.C.

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The memory of Jean-Pierre Leaud in *Out I*, slurring out “Snark, snark” entered — the madeleine for this association was the Wikipedia page for “Portmanteau”, a word whose origins lies with Lewis Carroll, both in *Through the Looking Glass* and his poem *The Hunting of the Snark*.

The destination of the portmanteau page was not a final one, but rather a point after a series of many turns. Mahfuz Sultan, a UChicago and Harvard GSD graduate who now works in some sort of creative capacity for Drake, and used to work in finance, posts contemporary art and architecture related images on his Instagram story in a large volume almost every day. An image of a poster for a show at John Daniels Gallery titled "Plastics" circulates. The gallery was run by Dan(iel) Graham and another partner named John and another who didn't want his name in it. They started it uptown in their early 20s — a link formed to another portmanteau project of the 2010s. Before this gallery there were many other galleries. Within each gallery there were many other shows. Within each show there were series of texts, titles, allusions, linkages. A massive network of texts and meaning to be discovered.

The recollection of this “Snark, snark” ended this game of connect the dots with the recollection of what Colin never said in that apartment:

Nevertheless that fantasy lead me deep into an appalling nightmare, bordering on madness, bordering on death. In it I met the Sphinx, and I didn't find love... because I was asking the Sphinx a question. Which was a badly framed question. The question of the thirteen was badly framed and stopped me finding reality. Now I'm out of it and I'm well. I'm very very well and I leave you to your worldly conversations.

— M.C.

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Do you remember the new toilet? Yeah. Yeah? Yeah. Is that why it was called, the file was called the new toilet? No, no, the beautiful toilet. The beautiful toilet. The first one, that's different. That's the profound translation. Oh. The new toilet is what you were talking about, eh? Yeah. Yeah. New toilet. Yeah. You still want to poop? No, no, no. In what? In the restroom. I don't remember. I don't know if I said that right. What about, like, oh, I don't think I said that right. It's like the dearie baboos. I don't reference dearie baboos. I reference, like, the amazing sister baboos. And then I reference, like, Bonnie, which I don't really know how to talk about.

Are you going to poop? See? Yeah. Tonight? No, no, I can't do that. Yeah. Yeah. Either, like, this girl agrees to it, or I find a different girl, or... There doesn't need to be a difference. There doesn't need to be a difference. Yeah. Because also, if this girl doesn't want to read, I don't really know how to read. To read something, it's more interesting to just, like, some random man in the world who, like, really fits the, like, race, group, sex stuff. Um, and then, um... I don't know. I think that's a better bullshit aspect. That just, like... I don't know. It is funny. Squad. How much time?

We got this. We got this. I wonder if I have any cigarettes left by tomorrow night. How many what? Cigarettes left by tomorrow night. For you? Just in general. Like, I have, like, half a pack here, then, like, another, like, three-quarters of a pack there. Sucky, sucky, sucky, sucky, sucky. Oh. Why'd you call me yesterday? It's been a while since I've seen you. Was it racist? Uh, yeah, probably. It is funny. Like, it's such a, like... Yeah. Did I tell you about the kids across the street from me when I was little? Yes. What? There was Rhett. There was Scarlett. And there was Katie.

Excuse me, fella. I got some cash and I want to buy something. And I don't have enough cash. Do you have any cash? Sorry. You got any cash on you? Sorry. Yeah, it just left early. It was supposed to leave. That's, that's for me to get to mine, but there is just, like, no... If I want the J, it's not coming until midnight. Oh. Oh. Hold on. Yeah. Most of the map's divided. Most of the map's rabbit. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I read the one about fireworks. Yeah, yeah, that one was just like... I had this crazy realization where like the Chinese fireworks look partisan. I was like, what do I do with that? And I'm like, this is what I do with that. Yeah, and then someone else will be like, all right, what does that have to do with the show? More than they'll ever know.

I need, we need to figure out what else is on the menu though. I'm not actually going to get all of that. What? We can't. No, why not? Oh, no, no. I mean, you could. I was like, today's the day. We can't. We can't. We can't. We can't. Yeah. You think Oscar knows any advisors? Yeah. Absolutely. He's got a house. He was really, when I was like, oh, I'm going to go to the bathroom, I'm going to go to the bathroom, I'm going to go to the bathroom, I'm going to go to the bathroom, I'm going he'd be like, oh, what party are you going to next? I'd be like, home, home. He'd be like, come with me to this party. What'd he say? I'll get you rich in the airport.

— M.C.

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