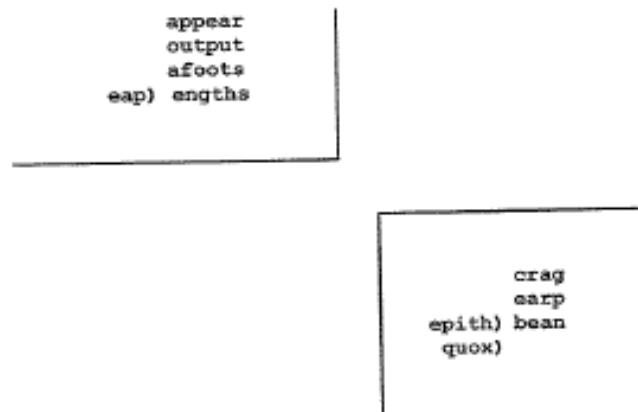
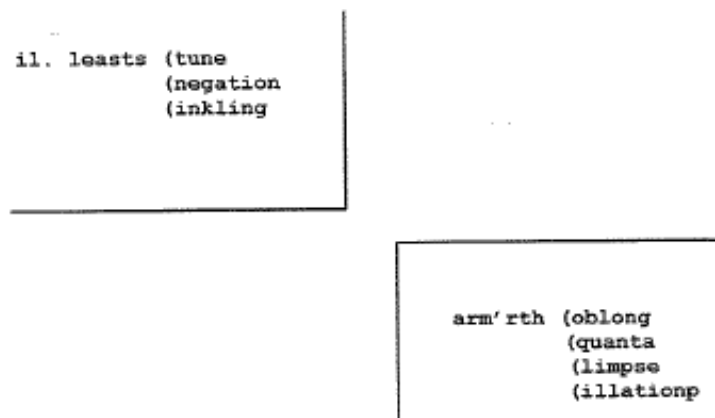


p.inman (4 | or 5), the interrupting cow, washington dc, 28pp

4 | or 5. contents: **to.edge. lennie-bird (for Doug Lang). m’event (for Tina). nono (1924-1990).** 4 collections or the book as a whole ∴ 5. What word classes? Where is the grammar? Even the grammar we read (see) in Jabberwocky is not here. Word classes *are*. Which word classes? And grammar? *Slab*. Declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory. Are there joints here like a Carl Andre sculpture? Take any, for example Andre’s Isoclast series? Yes. How tight then? *This* tight and then not *this* tight. Tight tight and then loose. Fractured grammar. Cut off sometimes. Blocked sometimes. Discussion of convention...conventional reading: this is one thing. Let me give you an example from **lennie-bird (for Doug Lang)**.

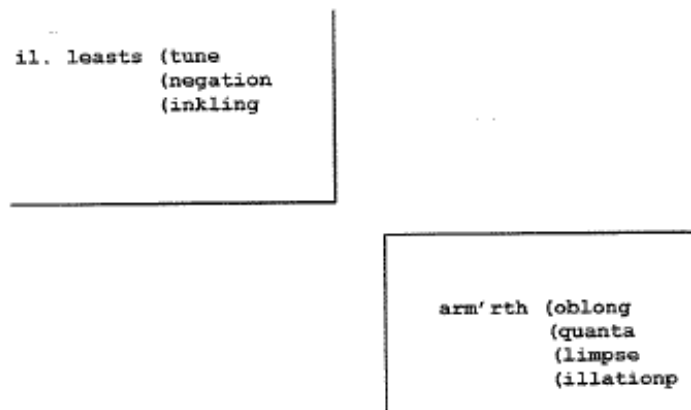


The Necker cube springs to mind. Do we see these as outside or inside? Are these perhaps two pages on a collision course? If I am reading left to right then *eap) engths* is blocked (*eap)* seems to be blocked anyway due to the bracket) but *quox)* is a bit more free. Page 14, still with **lennie-bird**, sees (*tune*, (*negation* and (*inkling* all ready to leave but trapped in the suggested page *on the page* created by the lines which produce the bottom and the right-hand side of a rectangle. This is in opposition to (*oblong*, (*quanta*, (*limpse* and (*illationp* all ‘free’ with no barrier opposing them on the right (apart from the crease of the *actual* page (it’s on the left-hand page)).



There is something 3-d and solid about all the work here in 4 | or 5 which is something more apparent than in other inman collections I've read. There appear to be walls and sparsely populated rooms. Almost like dystopian jail cells if that isn't tautological. Can these words 'see' one another? Are they aware of the sound relationships? Their non-linear relationships? Questions. p.inman = questions. *if p then q*. Co-incidence? Insidence. Question: how does the page affect my reading? How does the sign affect my reading? **vems (to.edge)** 'vans'? Maybe. What about a 'real' word: **time (nono (1924-1990))** 'tame', 'tome', 'tume' internal auto par-rhyming? Impossible! Do it.

p.inman explores these questions in other significant publications from the last 30 years or so, for example: **glimpse** and **across** (from **Vel**) and **decker** (from **Red Shift**) - page and footnotes (boundaries). And in **nimr** and **think of one** (from **Think of One**) symmetry and asymmetry are raised in terms of form and power – think of meetings. Variations on motif as a tool, and tool as motif. Slight modifications in technique so as not to remain static but not to drift from pressing questions. But let's not forget that these are simply beautiful creations. Let's just look at them. STOP. STOP. Look at them. Look again.



Functions: pleasure. Looked? Well we can do something else: language games. Close looking. Step through (Carroll again). **Chocolate (m'event)**. 'Chock-o-late'; 'Chocklate'; 'Chick lit'; 'Mars bars'.

Joan Retallack's endorsement on the back of a previous collection **Vel** announces that inman's work is 'What Tractarian Wittgensteins might say must be passed over in silence Inman's work realizes as the possibility of a third term, *n e wsense*.' This becomes apparent if I swap round the words unspeakable and speakable in 4.115 from Wittgenstein's Tractatus then – 'it [the picture] will mean the speakable by clearly displaying the unspeakable'. **lape** (Low Altitude Parachute Extraction) - Google search (doubtful). **lape**: is it a word? Not in any conventional sense. Could it represent a word? Yes. Is the picture '**lape**' the most simple way to represent the word 'lope'? No. But take a LOOK at POTTERY like you would ART. Think only back to the wobbly world of impressionism to begin to see the connections. Where is the image? Nowhere but in the signified or the not-signified.

And these forms are simple forms; one or two syllables usually: the connection to minimalist art in poetry. inman explores similar questions to work by Saroyan, Grenier and Coolidge but with political interests made more explicit in terms of the straightjacket of the page. You almost feel that inman doesn't want the poems to be on the page at times. But to deny the

page would to be forced from one's home and to move to a new one; to leave home would end any dialogue and this is clearly important in the work of 4 | or 5.

Some of these words aren't recognizable words; they're not in the dictionary. This doesn't make them unreadable for they work as any other picture or parts of a picture do if fused with known text. The question then is, 'without correct syntax do 'real' words play the same part as 'non' words'. 'Non' words in relation to known words: *wepp* and *lump* (m'event). Although again *wepp* (Water Erosion Prediction Project) – Google search. Perhaps all letter combinations or acronyms exist as one big universal language? .

Spoken languages are dieing. We know this. And those that exist are not growing in any practical sense; maybe not even evolving much. Languages are being standardized and manufactured driven by the economy at a faster rate than ever. inman's oeuvre, as he has said himself, stands against 'An ideology made up of cosmetics' and sees 'Any unitary word as a point of resistance, an interruption in the ongoing transmission' (see <http://slough.org/files/downloads/domains/phillytalks/pdf/pt14.pdf>).

Reminding ourselves that we *exist*.

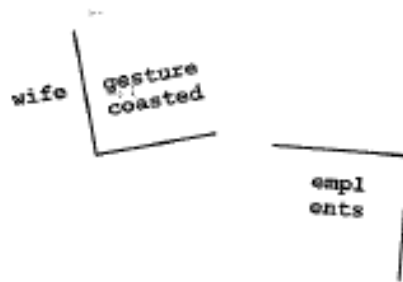
Identity (the internet also offers a possible hope). inman's poems preserve identity for writer and reader by creating new words and new grammars, new discourse and new orthography, new meanings of words that exist. Why? One reason may be to battle against art's canonical narrative being appropriated by modern business, government, media; finding ways for poetry and art to survive being diluted in design and advertising; as abstract expressionism, minimalism and pop art did (again possibly tautological). A seemingly almost impossible task. But identity too. Let's not forget that. Keeping a self (again the unspeakable can speak for the speakable). Not autobiography. Not placing the self at the centre of the poem (by not discussing the self we discuss the self). These poems teach us that it is important to speak of the unspeakable.

These are issues not just for practitioners but for readers and 'viewers' too. We must LOOK.

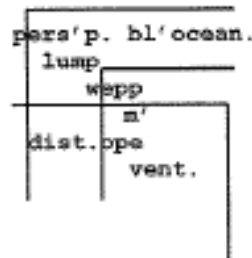


mind : to : perspire : whitens :

) Resistance: : : : / [Beauracracy



Iff these non-words form the 5th page of **nono (1924-1990)** (*empl, ents*) are signs creating individual sound units then no image arises. Iff they refer to solely letterism then that letterism *is* the image. But it's not as simple or twee as this thankfully. Grammar. *Slab*. What do you mean? Pass me the slab would you please. That's a slab. Is that a slab? Is that a slab! Choice. For example a sports hall: a badminton court – doubles or singles. Now go onto the basketball court. Now the handball court. Now look at your feet and step through and over all the lines in this gym. The analogy refers to part of **m'event** below.



Is part of **pers'p.** out of bounds (American football really springs to mind)? What happens to the player whose foot has just stepped in touch, is he only allowed to read the first **p** as if the other letters **ers'p** are off limits? Read more.

Selected publications:

- *Platin* (Sun & Moon, 1979)
- *Ocker* (Tuumba, 1982)
- *Uneven development* (Jimmy's House of Knowledge, 1984)
- *Think of one* (Potes & Poets, 1986)
- *Red shift* (Roof, 1988)
- *criss cross* (Roof, 1994)
- *Vel* (O Books, 1995)
- *at. least.* (Krupskaya, 1999)
- *amounts. to.* (Potes & Poets, 2000)
- *a different table altogether.* (Slought Books, 2003) e-book subtitled: *P. Inman in Conversation with Roger Farr & Aaron Vidaver.* The full content of this e-book is available on-line at The Slought Foundation, [http://slought.org/files/downloads/publications/SF_1034\[Inman\].pdf](http://slought.org/files/downloads/publications/SF_1034[Inman].pdf)
- *m'event* (Matchbox, 2006)
- *now /time* (Bronze Skull, 2006)