

Machine Translated by EJ Shu

Language isn't what it used to be... complicated processes of encoding and decoding race up and down the computer's tower of languages as letters are coupled with programming commands, commands are compiled or interpreted, and source code is correlated with the object code of binary symbols, transformed in turn into voltage differences.

—N. Katherine Hayles, 'Traumas of Code', 2006

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On my side I pass a virus

of my children without knowing me. I spent every day
in a capacity-over condition,
I started to blame myself as my body

was unable to move and I couldn't keep feeling.
My husband wanted to lie down tired
I could not do anything like
child rearing, home, important stories

and apparently tension comes out
in my voice. I feel that it is getting faster
from waking up to waking up.

I don't feel any better or anything else

I started drinking 1 tablet x 2
morning and evening. I drink on the day
I use the liver. From the first day, it seems

that your feet are warm, you have more power
than usual. Perhaps it was a placebo effect
that wrote “white ginseng” with magic
in the white part above the bottle.
Maybe it’s getting warmer

As I drunk, my body became hot and it felt sick. quitted.
thoughts are formed smoothly. by the end there is no desire
it helps to come to oneself faster,

as if accelerating Even though I am very tired, things
that make up the morning have increased.

I drink twice a day, and one more
on the evening when it’s a messy day.

after drinking. It is strange. I feel
like I’ve recently lost nothing

*Note: Poem comprised of text sourced from machine translated reviews of NOW Foods Panax
Ginseng, 500 mg, 250 Veg Capsules.*

Bio: EJ Shu is an Australian-Canadian poet whose recent work appears in *Cordite Poetry
Review*, *Plumwood Mountain*, *Antiphon*, *Poets Reading the News* and elsewhere. She is
currently pursuing a PhD in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University.

Rabbit.

a journal for nonfiction poetry

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—

Fields elicit

Electrostatic bites
night legs under a yanked-up blanket, lickety
splits the lightning field & yields
riotous hair from the acrylic sweater
you just tried on.

You can keep spiders
in a Faraday cage, present them with e-fields
& give them zero branches, leaves
or fences—a glue-free
cardboard takeoff site.

With the right zap & hum (a thrill
found in charged clouds
mostly, misty, under some blue
overcast, on grounded grass)
the spiders

take a tiptoe stance & drop
the dragline, extrude the ballooning
silk, are away! Soaring!
on swelling orchestral strings,
going, except

the arena is limited (3 m × 2.8 m × 2.25 m) & the field is switched
OFF | ON | OFF | ON
to make the spiders
drop & rise again. Cheap thrills,
like a balloon to the head.

Note: This poem uses fragments of the following scientific article: Morley, E.L.
& Robert, D. 2018. Electric fields elicit ballooning in spiders. *Current Biology*. 28(14).
pp 2324–2330. e2. DOI:10.1016/j.cub.2018/05.057.

When asked

‘How is science poetic and/or poetry scientific?’

the following rabbits responded:

Madhur Anand: In science, an index is a statistical device used to study complex systems such as ecosystems (diversity index), economies (Dow Jones), or the human heart (bpm). In poetry, the devices are different but the systems are the same. Writing poems can represent a ‘critical slowing down’, measured by new indexes (the ‘early warning signal’) used to predict sudden transitions, like revelations.

Ronald Arana Atilano: I like how the phenomena that we see and observe from the prism of ‘science’ translate into the social, political, psychological and even mystical in poetry.

Devon Balwit: Poetry hinges upon intense wonder. Science embodies that for me at the macro and micro level, both in physical and in life sciences. I can get lost in the vastness of geological time and swept away by the brevity of insect life. Much science reads like poetry (or if not, I hope it does after I finish with it). Conversely, poetry, like science, involves precision, discipline, gut-instinct and a stubborn refusal to accept the dominant paradigm.

Stuart Barnes: The sestina, the sonnet, the villanelle (these are a few of my favourite things) are musical ∴ mathematical ∴ scientific.

Opposite: *Disc 12 portion*, acrylic paint and macro photography,
2014, Devika Bilimoria

cancer cells are helping to decode Covid19, the frisson is as if he were reciting a poem in her memory.

EJ Shu: The poetry of scientific language is unmistakable. Scientists use terms like ‘sputter-coated’ and ‘grouping howls’; they ‘plot the richness’ and describe ‘losses of the steady state’. But poetry also shows up in the elegance and sometimes horror of scientific methods, as science strives to capture complexity and disclose the unseeable.

Elisabeth Snow: Science and poetry are two sides of the same coin. With science we pin the butterfly to the board, and with poetry we contemplate its role in our reality.

Alicia Sometimes: Poets and scientists both search for the truth. They want to comprehend the world and to communicate that understanding. Their methods and frameworks

may be different and the audiences are not always the same but both worlds explore curiosity, discovery, connection, details, patterns, big ideas and the importance of language.

Jessica L. Wilkinson: Both involve experiments; both must necessarily evolve.

Peri Dwyer Worrell: I consider poetry and science to be inextricably entangled, much as two quantum qubits are. The greater our analytical understanding of the world becomes, the more urgent is our need to encode it in ways that elicit meaning, emotion and ineffable awe.

Alison Zheng: Science and poetry are two sides of one coin. They are both methods humans employ in an attempt to better understand ourselves and the world around us.

Northeastern. He is the author of *Latecomers*, which won the New South Wales Premier's Prize for Poetry, and *Surface to Air*, which was shortlisted for The Age Poetry Book of the Year. His new book, *Change Machine*, will be published by UQP in 2020.

EJ Shu is an Australian-Canadian poet whose recent work appears in *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Plumwood Mountain*, *Antiphon*, *Poets Reading the News* and elsewhere. She is currently pursuing a PhD in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University.

Elisabeth Snow is a writer of poetry and prose (and a scientist). She has a fascination with gender politics and the human ability to ignore the profound, and if not busy writing may be found trying to get her cats off her keyboard.

Alicia Sometimes is a writer and broadcaster. She has performed her spoken word and poetry at many venues, festivals and events around the world. Her poems have been in *Best Australian Science Writing*, *Best Australian Poems* and more. She is director and co-writer of the science-poetry planetarium

shows, *Elemental* and *Particle/Wave*. Her TedxUQ talk in 2019 was about the passion of combining art with science.

Jessica L. Wilkinson's latest poetry publication is *Music Made Visible: A Biography of George Balanchine* (Vagabond, 2019). She is Editor-in-Chief of *Rabbit* and an Associate Professor in Creative Writing at RMIT University.

Peri Dwyer Worrell grew up on a Puerto Rican street in New York, gaining a keen appreciation of the value of diversity, tolerance and taking no crap from anyone. After thirty years as a physician in north Florida, Peri became disabled and expatriated to Latin America. Peri now writes fiction and poetry, and edits scientific articles.

Alison Zheng graduated from UC Davis with a degree in English a million years ago. As a child, she wanted to become a writer when she grew up. Instead, she works in tech. She has never been published.