A long, straight asphalt road stretches into the distance under a cloudy sky, flanked by trees and fields. The road is the central focus, leading the eye towards the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, and the landscape on either side consists of green trees and brownish-yellow fields, suggesting an autumn or late summer setting.

the
travel
poem

James Stuart



the travel poem

The Travel Poem is a hybrid poem, originally presented as a new media performance for the Loft Readings, held at the University of Technology Sydney on 12 October 2005. The poetic text was read live while still images & diagrammatic poems were projected onto a wall in a darkened reading space. An abstract electronic soundtrack was created for the performance by French sound artist Guillaume Potard.

This artist's e-book represents the poem's (im)material form and contains all images/diagrammatic poems as presented in the performance. The file should be viewed in full-screen mode and is screen-resolution. It is not printable. To obtain a printed version and/or the soundtrack, please contact the author via the details below.

Photography, text & design by James Stuart.

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on the page it is a clear winter day by the beach

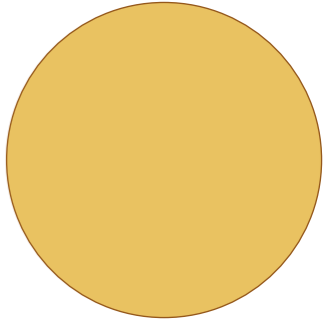
mild &, now, brilliant

wake-you wake & hold my closed eyes just a little longer in dream

(slowly stretching out to Mars)

the day-moon has come
to commandeer the scene.





The havoc caused by a moon attempting to orchestrate some sort of cosmic resonance.

hightide sidesweep windrivulets

cascadingprism ofthesunlikequartz

winter swell slams

readily & easily into the beach

i will carry you to the islands

& back across this bright blue ocean. i want you. somewhere half-expected; halfway between the primrose scent of morning & morning

absolute lunar pressure on the spirit, dear spirit, dear sun -

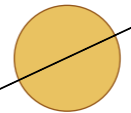


&wha t i recoup seemsdef inite &yol trealmost



thereori can ve rymuch tast e so

however forexample



metaphor argument

Now that we have left its radiance
to call the moon the scene's conductor really seems too much...

The scene is exponential
& continues into draft.

isrecouped seemsdef inite



...&&& now rharvo ou have left the land of;; wharlandre mains?? oh do no r



hur ry; i hurry; we hurry & what lo...
ains has left&lef r itwell; we canne ver be cer tain our

m e t a -
p h o r -

v a n i s h i n g -
p o i n t

it is still too late.

a cold front that
meteorologically
can explain it all.



now its menace is fringed
by sunset's fuschia overtones
& what adjectives are recouped seem definite

The pock-marked moon
half-faced
half-masked
has risen
a little higher
a little brighter

- g n i n s i n s v
- r t e m
r o h q
t n i o q



standing in a cove, on a pebbled beach, falling
from true light to crepuscule.

How we came here
we cannot say.

cliff scrub angles upslope like
entanglement
gradual surprise

you you car rrrrry me inside with outrushing & whisper words that i cons true as sweet ness & more solater & more so (primrose ending)

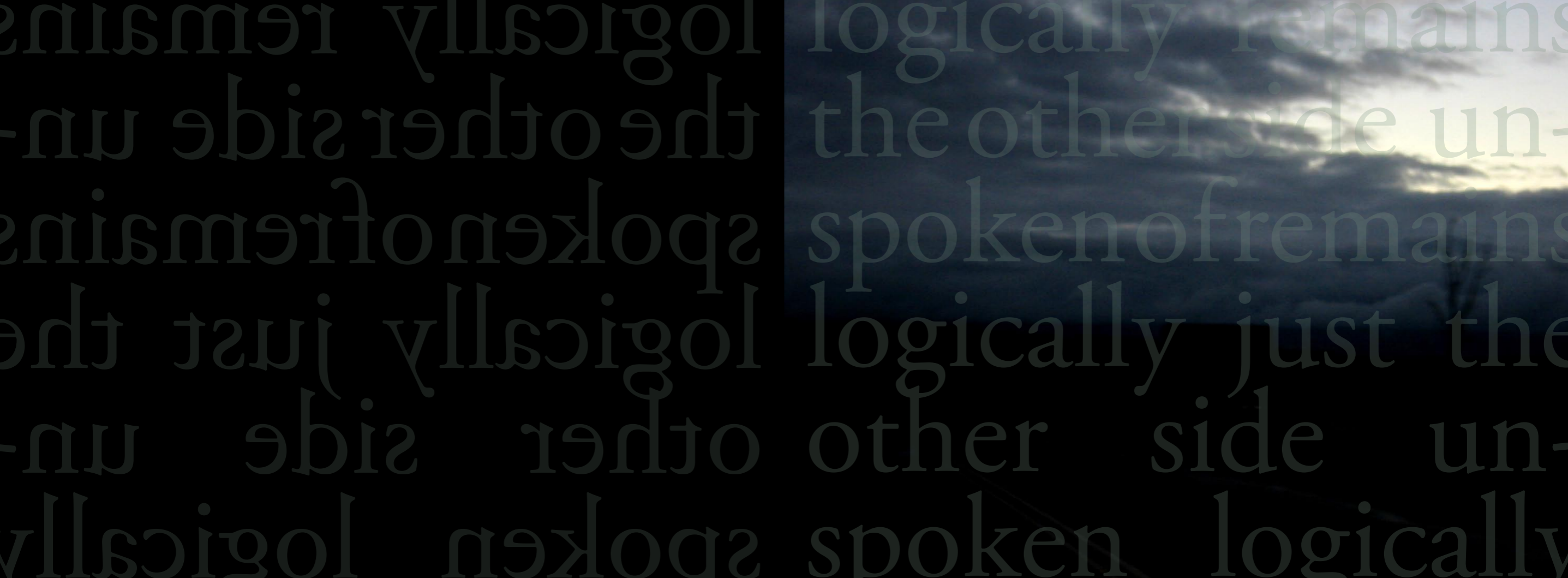


wake-you wake &hold my closed eyesjust a litt le long er in drea m i willca rry you totheislands
&back acrossthis brightblu eocean. i want you. somewherehalf-expected; halfway between the primrose scent ofm orning
&morning &&&& now thatyo ou have leftthe landof ;;; whatlandre mains?? oh do no t hur ry; i hurry; we hurry &
whatlo veremains has left&lef t itwell; we canne ver be cer tain &wha t i recoup seemsdef inite &youarealmost
thereori can ve rymuch tast e so youyou you you y oucar rrrry me insideyo uwith outrushing
&whisp er words that i cons true as sweet ness &more solater&moreso(primroseend ing)

logically

remains now
stark against the clean-scraped sky
just the other side of unspoken

logically remains
the other side un-
spoken of remains
logically just the
other side un-
spoken logically



logically remains
the other side un-
spoken of remains
logically just the
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logically remains
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original text version

the travel poem

On the page it is a clear winter day by the beach
mild & now, brilliant.

Beyond that there is an absolute surfeit
of words to describe it, but what the words hold
the writing lacks, by which I mean
“an unintended relation”.

& so, skirting just inside the aether of our
current modes of understanding
(slowly stretching out to Mars)
the day-moon commandeers the scene.

Perhaps it wants to orchestrate some sort of
cosmic resonance? & why not let loose, I say:

*High tide, side sweep, wind rivulets,
cascading prism of the sun like quartz
as winter swell slams
readily & easily into the beach.*

Yet to call the moon the scene’s conductor
really seems too much...

Might also we consider it as mystic channel,
head-scarfed, peddling a star-lit path
that is all verbose camber & overladen curve?

Here is no metaphor that subverts
the structure of the world as argument.

*The scene is exponential
& continues into draft.*

& if the crisp breeze we had been expecting
all afternoon arrives too early & too strong
it is still too late.

What we were describing
has vanished, like those storm-clouds in the distance
shark-grey, indistinct & visible, being blown
further into distance by a cold-front that
meteorologically
can explain it all.

Now its menace is fringed by sunset’s fuchsia overtones
though the original impressions remain
& what adjectives are recouped seem definite.

The pock-marked moon, half-faced, half-masked
has risen a little higher, a little brighter...

It is at this point we find ourselves somehow
standing in a cove, on a pebbled beach
falling from true light to crepuscule.

We are enclosed on three sides by striated sandstone cliff
where gristly scrub angles upslope like an entanglement
or gradual surprise. Beyond this lies the flat-line ocean.

To arrive here, logically, must have required
either of the two goat-tracks located respectively
at north & south & alternately employed
by us visitants to descend or, when satisfied, escape.

& if a thought we had once remains now
stark against the clean-scraped sky
just the other side of unspoken
then it is this gruff square of carapace,
rusted orange, that grates at finger-tips
& must hardly be missed
by its original owner.

for natasha, with whom i travelled