

*In order of appearance...*

**ELOISE HAWSER**

*As 'Cally Spooner's Text'*

**BENJAMIN LOBKO**

*As 'Matthew Clements reading-in for Charles Darwin'*

**AMERICAN DAN**

*As 'Mary Cork reading as Patricia Arquette & all the other American References'*

*Somewhere in Frankfurt, ELOISE, DAN and BENJAMIN sit down at a largish-ish and makeshift table as soon as a crowd has gathered. They each sit in chairs and share a reading light. ELOISE sits between DAN and BENJAMIN.*

*(ELOISE speaks to the audience)*

ELOISE

It's 1967, and it's raining.  
Actually, I couldn't say for sure if it's raining. I'm assuming it is, because rain always emerges at the very worst times, and the time is 7.45pm or, on a 24 hour clock 19:45. The date is September the 9<sup>th</sup> which means that today is a Saturday and Saturday's are generally a very suitable day for an outdoor public event, even if it's pouring with rain and the event lasts for two hours and ten minutes, in Frankfurt.

*(ELOISE turns in her chair to face BENJAMIN, who begins speaking to her)*

ELOISE

Now you go.

*(BENJAMIN speaks to ELOISE)*

BENJAMIN

It's a really odd analogy you're working under though... I mean, there's something right about what you're saying but if you really want to make sense of that in terms of evolution you have to do a lot of work to match things up.... in terms of a new species being generated, from a parent type.... it's not easy.... Maybe we should go back to evolution and I should set out what happens there?

ELOISE

Ok.

*(ELOISE turns in her chair to face DAN, and she begins speaking to him)*

ELOISE

So, I had this idea that I really wanted to somehow re-animate this exhibition by talking through some of the references that had somehow provoked the exhibition, except overall the exhibition really only amounted to an impromptu 45 minute speech and, more than anything else, was really always an extension of something that happened before. So, one of the references was Lost Highway, which I hadn't seen... And then I thought, before I'd even seen it, maybe you could play PATRICIA ARQUETTE.

DAN

Ok.

ELOISE

Then I thought I could get another American person to read out some of the other American references but then I realized that I only really

had three American references and I only knew one American and then, two of the references were really always one reference, because they were dependent on each other to make any sense in this context. Do you see?

DAN Why did you want me to play PATRICIA ARQUETTE?

ELOISE Because you have an American accent.

DAN Ok.

ELOISE Great.

DAN What were the three references?

ELOISE Footnote 5, footnote 6, footnote 7 and footnote 8 (which is you).

DAN ok.

ELOISE Have you seen Lost Highway?

DAN Yeah I've seen Lost Highway.

ELOISE Do you know what PATRICIA ARQUETTE sounds like?

DAN Yeah, I definitely know what PATRICIA ARQUETTE sounds like.

ELOISE Do you think you can make yourself sound like PATRICIA ARQUETTE?

DAN I can try.

*(Eloise faces  
the audience)*

ELOISE It's September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1967 and there's things happening elsewhere, of course. This I absolutely know for certain, because I checked using the internet.

Unfortunately the response is disappointing and I receive very few direct hits; none in fact. The closest is a 'basic chronology of aviation history', written on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009. This awards special consideration to 1967, the year that the Saturn V rocket was successfully launched into space from Florida.

I'm quite satisfied with this, and decide that there's really no reason, for the sake of a reasonable story, that this shouldn't have launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September at 19:45, but I do accept this didn't happen in Frankfurt.

Instead Saturn V was almost certainly shot into the sky from The John F Kennedy space station which, I am warned, should not to be confused with the John F Kennedy performing arts centre. I wonder how many people have got muddled up, and whether anyone's turned up at Nasa with juggling balls, or a performance lecture in a suitcase. It seems that in these cases, it's very important to get ones facts straight.

Other direct hits include the birth of Roy and Donna Hodge's first son, a nondescript Canadian couple, finding fifteen minutes in the Montreal Gazette, as well as the birth of a not-very-famous bollywood actor and soon, my absence of world-wide historical evidence for this particular date in September is worrying me. It's ruining my flow. I wonder whether anything really happened at all then panic and consider buying a newspaper from 'oldtimesremebred.com' : original newspapers from the last 200 years.

For £79.90 I can buy an original 1967 daily, fixed for eternal display in a handmade oak frame, for hanging on the wall. The paper is protected by lightweight Perspex and, if you choose, this can be removed for reading, although reading is not recommended, as it may damage the historical print.

*(Eloise stops reading, turns in her chair to face Benjamin, who starts speaking to her)*

BENJAMIN            So you really want me to try this?

ELOISE              Yes. I really do.

BENJAMIN            Ok, just straight off, no intro.

ELOISE              Yes please.

BENJAMIN            Ok....

In some theories of genetics, there is an idea that certain species may perform better, and perpetuate themselves for longer, because they are more naturally inclined to mutate.

Mutation is risky. It's a change, and change is always a crisis and in this case the risk is that the organism may become mal-adapted to its climate if it changes too much. If this happened, the organism might no longer be able to flourish in its newly changed conditions.

This is particularly worth considering in the case of particularly fragile species, which may well be existing on the shortest and swiftest of life cycles: the thirty-minute Mayfly, a year-long worker bee, or a 2 hour-ten-minute event.

These species mutate so quickly, they'd need very specific conditions to ensure they could affectively pass on the DNA and genetic codes necessary for mutations to occur, or in short, the substance required for a more evolved species in the future. In short, they need to find a very particular environment, which will enable them to perpetuate.

Likewise if one's interactions occur at a great speed, say, a melting ice block (footnote 1), a sculpture bomb erupting (footnote 2) pieces of wood laid end to end in a straight line on the floor, with a complementary object in Bristol (footnote 3), then of course, there's a very strong chance that something might mutate itself into oblivion; vanishing into puff of



DAN                   Ok.

ELOISE               Because it's too symbolic, with not much content. And I wanted to emulate the symbolic, not the details. You see?

DAN                   I think so. But theoretically, if you just took the beginning of the second one by the second author, and the end of the first one by the first author, then you could join them together in an American accent, because one leads on to the next. That's a much better story than the details of the stories. It's pretty original. Original with a capital O. And that's the American dream.

ELOISE               But then there's another reference. And that was even harder.

DAN                   What is it.

ELOISE               THOMAS MANN The Confessions of Felix Krull. And that's another book entirely, which is German, and even more symbolic, so for that we'd need a German accent and a very open mind.

DAN                   I could have gotten you a German.

ELOISE               Can you do a German accent?

DAN                   No.

ELOISE               So that won't work.

DAN                   Besides, I thought that when you went to the book there was nothing to quote?

ELOISE            No.

DAN                No details.

ELOISE            No.

DAN                Just a bridge, between two parts, in one book,  
that started, stopped, then started.

ELOISE            So anyway, what I really wanted was for you  
to play the role of PATRICIA ARQUETTE, but  
then it turned out you only had one useful line.

DAN                What's my line?

ELOISE            No, Fred hates them.

DAN                That's it?

ELOISE            Yes.

DAN                I think I remember her saying that.

ELOISE            Can you remember exactly how she said it.

DAN                No.

ELOISE            Ok. Maybe we'll worry about that later.

*(Eloise turns to  
the audience)*

ELOISE

It's the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1859, and complete newness is a dreadful modern fallacy. I know, because I checked.

There are only ever new formations and very old material and this is perfectly fine by me. Absolute newness arrives through absolutely new deviations, which means that novelty is a repetition, and an inaccurate replication; the same thing, performed again and again, in a very different way each time.

I am told by a reliable book, and very nice man, that reproducing something, like for like, will only ever give you the same thing twice, and as I'm after some real change, I decide I'll need to introduce a diversion. This seems good, because difference is change and change is novelty, and novelty is always entertaining, so I consider this carefully, and conclude that as I'd very much like to be of entertaining and public, like for like correspondence just really won't do.

In the real world, which is nature, or society, or here right now, the thing which counts most is that which can shift things slightly out of focus, because if a monkey just turns into a monkey that's not exactly an improvement.

It is then only by virtue of idiosyncrasies that anything has ever seen any advancement at all, which is a relief, because I'm not exactly consistent and I certainly I don't need to be told the same thing twice. That's why I'm not a

monkey, or a cat or a piece of floating pond weed. And so, if we want to say anything at all, we need to take a new bend in the niche, and see where we'll end up.

*(Eloise turns  
to Benjamin)*

BENJAMIN

Niches disappear and new spaces appear, under new environmental conditions. Through inhabiting a niche, a particular species may well be able to perpetuate itself, and in the case of a particularly temporary unstable and undocumented species, survival arrives *because* a particular niche, in a particular system has been exploited, and inhabited.

The system may respond to the species, because it may well be particularly fond of the species, it may quite like the species style, and likewise, it might quite like everything intangible it stands for. It's like a micro-climate club, for obscure creatures with the most protean amorphous bodies, that man has ever known. But in this case, the club is really an economy; a trade, perhaps, in highly obscure knowledge, and very temporary creatures, un-reviewed, un-introduced, without a single caption (footnote 9).

*(Benjamin stops speaking  
and Eloise turns in her  
chair to face Dan)*

ELOISE Did you read the whole book?

DAN No. But the bit I wanted to find was quite specific. Actually that's not true. I actually had no idea what I wanted to find, but I just knew that when I found it, it would be quite specific. I think I was looking for a bridge between parts, between old and new.

ELOISE Nice.

DAN This would communicate exactly where THOMAS MANN put down his pen in 1911 and then picked it up again and started as if there was no gap at all in 1946. But this is just a repeat. It's all been said before by someone else in 2008. This is someone else's reference, which isn't very original with a capital O. And I don't want to say something that someone already said. I want a capital O.

ELOISE Now read the next bit. It's brand new.

DAN Are you sure?

ELOISE No.

DAN So, I sit there with a book. I'm looking for some kind of historical scar, where the difference between the first part and the second part is clear.

But there wasn't any scar. No break. Nothing. Just a seamless book with all the chapters in the wrong order. And so I wrote something. It's pretty good. Should I read it?

ELOISE Ok

DAN

I imagined an enormous seam, like a big historical scar running through Felix Krull, but I have no idea where in the book this should arrive, because I have no idea where he put his pen down.

I scan the book, looking for a join; a typographical indicator, the novella equivalent of those blue plaques on London building; 'Dickens lived here' . But nothing arrived. There is no date-post to show where the author put down his pen, then picked it up, 40 odd later. It seems the events have fused into one. Years are erased. And to make matters worse, someone has left every chapter in the wrong order.

*(Dan stops talking  
and Eloise turns to  
face the audience)*

ELOISE

It's 2010 and I've decided I'll speak about Advent. Not the Christmas kind, more the historical variety, although I suppose in some sense they're one and the same. They're nascent states you see. Prophetic knowledge, that one-day, some-day, some one will pick you up and complete you. And while I wait, I should really pick up where someone left off.

To help with exactly this, I invoke the assistance of a very decent phenomenologist who died too soon, and left behind an unfinished and widely misunderstood essay about being visible

and invisible, inside and outside, all at the same time.

In theory, anyone could always pick up where he left off and finish the essay responsibly, but perhaps just anyone wouldn't work. Maybe, he deliberately left something open, so that someone like minded could take up the gesture, except I know this isn't true, and I wonder what would happen if someone turned his unfinished effort into some sci-fi speed-read, or a revolting piece of feminist queer theory, which incidentally someone did do. This makes me worried about people's efforts. And what happens when they're not there to defend them. But such is life, or not, as it were.

But for now, in 1951, or thereabouts, on a glorious day in Paris the phenomenologist has finished an obscure paper on History as Advent. This is an important text. More important than thinking about eyes and minds, or even the irreversibility work in progress, and how sad that its only these that get remembered, and most readers forget he was some kind of Marxist.

Now, as any good Marxist or farmer will tell you- change is absolute. But history, as it stands as a series of events, is never very changeable, and this is the point of the essay. Rather than treating events as finished and closed, advent recognizes that man speaks and the other responds and so every event is really a gesture, to be continued, adapted, changed

and continued.

This means that events are really projections; a promise, that one day, one day all this will be yours. I promise, I promise, and true to this logic, the phenomenologist didn't actually invent a history of advent at all. He stole it from a junior. And as a good will gesture, left him a footnote.

*(Eloise turns in her  
chair to face Benjamin  
who starts to speak)*

BENJAMIN

Sometimes, there may seem to be a gap between an original species and its newly evolved form. But in this case the gap is not a gap, because in between, there is life. And so, you really can't just snap the lights out in 1967 and declare the species finished. Or, in theory, you could. But that would virtually be criminal; an assisted historical suicide, and if you commit the ethical unmentionable, you certainly can't then expect life to spontaneously bounce back from the grave, and reproduce its behavior, 40 years later as if you never snuffed it out with a bang. You can't have your cake and eat it.

If a species has re-surfaced, in a newly evolved form, seemingly from nowhere then we really must assume that between the visible points of disappearance and reappearance there was certainly activity in-between and it's best to

accept that this activity is always a medium.

And in the case of this particular species, which might well have existed on the periphery of its eco system, now its moment has come, again. The climate has altered, the wind changed, the situation is favourable and the time is right now. But you need to use a very good medium to enable the shift, something that will enable only the strongest and most essential parts of a species to emerge, or at least only the important bits to stick, allowing the unimportant details to just will drop off and vanish. This means the medium carries more than the message, it's also the sole authority; the final say on what will be kept and what will get blown away forever.

*(Eloise turns to face Dan,  
who starts to speak)*

DAN                    So.

ELOISE                You're pretty good in this role.

DAN                    Thanks.

ELOISE                So now I'm wondering if we should maybe give you some extra lines.

DAN                    Yeah!

ELOISE                It might be confusing though because it comes from footnote 5, which isn't a Patricia Arquette quote

DAN I'll take it.

ELOISE I like this bit. It doesn't really make any sense, but it's a nice bit of borrowing, and it's still American, so I guess I'm evolving your part.

DAN Ok.

ELOISE Go

DAN Most lives vanish. A person dies, and little by little all traces of that life disappear. An inventor survives by his inventions. An architect survives in his buildings, but most people leave behind no monuments or lasting achievements: a shelf of photograph albums, a fifth grade report card, a bowling trophy, an ashtray filched from Florida hotel room on the final morning of some dimly remembered vacation. A few objects, a few documents, and a smattering of impressions made on other people. Those people invariably tell stories about the dead person, but more often than not the dates are scrambled, facts are left out and the truth becomes increasingly distorted, and when these people die in their turn, most often the stories vanish with them.

My idea was this: to form a company that would publish books about the forgotten ones, to rescue the stories and facts and documents before they disappeared, to shape them in it a continuous narrative, the narrative of a life.

ELOISE Nice.

DAN Should I keep going?

ELOISE            No, instead I want to ask you about that in relation to genes and documentation.

DAN                Ok.

ELOISE            I want to know what happens if someone does leave an invention behind or a piece of architecture. Does that mean the idea has already documented into an object?

DAN                I guess.

ELOISE            So does that mean that the only things that are really living breathing ideas are the things that don't have much form?

DAN                I guess.

ELOISE            And now I want to think about books.

DAN                Ok.

ELOISE            And text.... and how, unlike these things, speech is a necessarily unreliable and changeable medium, if it's treated correctly. It leaves gaps for improvement and this is a big relief if you're dealing with an exhibition of fugitive, live, evolving temporary artworks that cannot be documented, fixed or finalized neither in 1967, 2008, or beyond.

So shall we do the Patricia Arquette bit now and I'll be everyone else?

DAN                yeah!

*(Eloise turns to Benjamin)*

BENJAMIN

A medium is an intervening substance. It's the state between extremes. It's a reasonable balance beyond extremes and it's also a person who contacts the dead. Through the Medium, the original can disseminate, perpetuate and eventually emerge, and speak once again, as something quite different, that's also exactly the same.

What is certain is that in the interim between two states, the medium must have the power to change things, to transform things so what once was silenced (state one) can now speak again (state two). Her task is not to preserve, she's supposed to reanimate, and keep something in flux; she should carry and distort and disseminate all at once.

It's a tall order, a big bad job, but if we want to create a gap between one thing and the next, it's the medium that must straddle the space, and keep old the alive, until it finds a new form. But if the species is preserved in an incubator or a tank, or a documentary catalogue, away from the air and the elements, safe from the jaws of fallible memory and too much speculative chit chat then even the best, most fallible of mediums is useless.

In the state of airtight documentary perfection, the original species will meet only those conditions that suit its every whim and need. It need not adapt, or fight or complain and in

such a condition it's fair to assume that the species is less likely to change. And so, rather than keeping ourselves wrinkle free and perfectly preserved, fixed and recorded in one place as one thing forever, I like to remember things my own way. How I remembered them. Not necessarily how they happened....Which is a footnote, (10) like most things, Because then, they'll be more room for questions.

*(Eloise speaks to Benjamin)*

ELOISE            Now, turn to PATRICIA ARQUETTE.

*(Benjamin turns to Dan)*

BENJAMIN        Do you have a video camera?

*(Dan speaks directly to Benjamin)*

DAN                No. Fred hates them.

*(ELOISE turns to the audience)*

ELOISE            It's 2008 and it's raining. Actually, I don't know that it's raining. I assume it most probably is because rain always emerges at the very worst times and the time is five minutes to ten, 21:55, on a 24 hour clock. The date isn't written the website, so for the sake of

historical deliciousness let's just say it's September the 9th and it's a Thursday. Thursday's are a perfectly nice day for an event, even if it pours with rain, and the event itself lasts for a little over the length of an impromptu speech. The details of the event are simple: a gene of 1967, replicated in an exhibition title (footnote 11) , 7 artists (footnote 12), some art (footnote 13), one speech (footnote 14) and a handful of anecdotes. But my memory is worse than a sieve and all I can do is talk, so for now this seems like progress. I think.

Of course there's things happening elsewhere - I checked using the internet, and it seems to have been a very busy year. The International Year of Planet Earth, International Year of Languages, the Year of the Frog. Lehman collapses, the stock markets fold, Nasa launches a rocket, and then another, India competes, and wins, a man in London receives the very first bionic eye from surgeons at Moorefield's hospital, and the United Nations launch the International Year of the Potato.

To celebrate, a Seattle based artist called Peggy created a brand new artwork, which she kept in an ornate box. The door is reminiscent of the Celtic Christian's illuminated texts, such as the Book of Kells, with Práta Slánaitheoir (Potato Savior) painted in an elaborate Celtic font. The box houses a large "Russary", a hand crafted set of potato-shaped polymer beads containing the proper amount and formation of