ARNOLD DREYBLATT:
INSTANT LIGHT VAULT WALL WHITE BLACK BODIES GROUND HEAT SEMICIRCLE

The most interesting Beckett texts seem to be drawn from an internal archive, a world which alternates between the mundane and the poignant. The archive attempts not to judge the distinctions between the historically determinate and the random „garbage heaps" of data, yet we all know that the conditions for archival acquisition and later selection are forever changing with taste and regime change. In the gradual or abrupt perceptual shift between single detail and the endless pool of data, it is the reductions which finally speak to our existential experience. It is here where Beckett's voice reaches us, that internal voice: „It's his, it's his voice, it's in his head"[1] – those words, seem to arise from that fluid deep archive which sends us auto-messages. We are forced to surrender to that voice as if it were our own, as we engage in observation, disturbance, and recollection in ignorance of that flowing river. The later works are especially compelling when read aloud, in order to experience what Beckett in a correspondance once called those „fundamental sounds"[2].

Modern technology has accelerated research into neural activity during the so-called „Rest-State" of the brain – the daydreaming state between sleep and awareness. Joana Cabral[3] writes that „among all brain regimes, the resting state is particularly interesting from the perspective of dynamical systems because it exhibits not one, but several coexisting spatio-temporal patterns." During a roughly ten second sinusoidal-like wave pattern two autonomous perceptual/thought networks gradually rise and fall. While the „Default Mode Network" dredges up both deep autobiographical and recent self-refential memories, the contrasting „Salient Mode Network" is suddenly aware of environmental goings on and external changes. In Beckett's early guide to Proust[4] he states that „the laws of memory are subject to the more general laws of habit"[5], i.e. the habits that have „been registered by our extreme inattention"[6]. The voice of „I can't go on, I'll go on"[7], resting in this in-between state of consciousness, navigates just such a habitual pendulum to and from the past and present, pointing to that archive „stored in that ultimate and inaccessible dungeon to which habit does not posess a key"[8].

As my own work has become increasingly text-based both in performance and in installation, I have been re-examining and „mining" various experimental writers in creating a series of digital experimental treatments: Terry Fox „Cut-Up in Five for Terry Fox" (2016) with texts from „Theater and its Double" by Antoinin Artaud[9], „Cage-Cut-

[1] „Cascando and Other Short Dramatic Pieces", Grove Press, 1991
[2] Letter to Alan Schneider, „A Samuel Beckett Reader", Richard W. Seaver (Introduction), Weidenfeld, 1976
[3] „Brain Activity During Rest", Joana R. B. Cabral, A Signature of the underlying network dynamics, Doctoral Paper. Barcelona, 2012
[4] „Proust", Samuel Beckett, Grove Press, 1931
[5] Ibid
[6] Ibid
[7] „The Unnameable", Samuel Beckett, Grove Press, New York1958
[8] „Proust", Samuel Beckett, Grove Press, New York, 1957
[9] „The Theater and Its Double", Antoinin Artaud, Translated by M.C. Richards, Grove Press, New York, 1958

Up" (2012) texts from „A Year from Monday"[10], by John Cage and now „INSTANT LIGHT VAULT WALL WHITE BLACK BODIES GROUND HEAT SEMICIRCLE", derived from the „Imagination Dead Imagine" which Beckett originally published in 1965.

These works have been inspired by the mechanical "cut-up method" invented by the artist Brion Gysin and often utilitized by the writer William S. Burroughs[11] in which textual fragments are „cut-up" and re-arranged in order to create new random associations - mirroring my own interests in the visual and audio perception of fragmentary layers of textual content, and most recently, with cognitive research. Burroughs followed „the channels opened up by the rearrangement of the text"[12] and notes that „Who wrote the original words is still there in any rearrangement of his or her or whatever words". Cut-up text experimentation, parallels and often accompanies the image collage from surrealists to the present.

In my treatments the original text has been treated by a digital „Concordance" software which generates word frequency lists. These lists are then collated into phrase clusters (in this case with six words each). A selection of phrases is culled from the resulting list and subsequently alphabetized, creating a new ordering of content. As Burroughs notes above, the word groupings are retained as found in the original, although here appearing in a new textual context, as one might reshuffle a deck of playing cards.

In considering a possible text source from Beckett, I recalled an experimental staging of „Imagine Dead Imagine" by the director Ruth Maleczech by the Mabou Mines Company which I was fortunate to witness at the Performing Garage in New York City in 1984. The unusually short text, developed from a longer prose work „All Strange Away" (1964)[13], is filled with powerful spatial and sensory images which, when cut-out of their original - though highly reduced narrativity - let loose a litany of unexpected associations. The rhythmic and repetitive character of the resulting text, amplified through alphabetizing, is best experienced in a live reading.

Arnold Dreyblatt, Berlin, 2016

INSTANT LIGHT VAULT WALL WHITE BLACK BODIES GROUND HEAT SEMICIRCLE

[10] „A Year From Monday", John Cage, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, 1967
[11] „The Job", William S. Burroughs, Grove Press, New York, 1969
[12] „The Exterminator", William S. Burroughs, Haselwood, San Francisco, 1967
[13] „Imagine Dead Imagine" (Imagination Morte Imaginez), Pris, Minuit, 1965

A MATTER OF CHANCE ITS WHITE

AB CD DIVIDE THE WHITE GROUND

ACB MERGING IN THE WHITE GROUND

AGITATED LIGHT ITS GREAT WHITE CALM

ALL GROWS WHITE AND HOT TOGETHER

ALL SHINES WITH THE SAME WHITE

ALL SO WHITE NO VISIBLE SOURCE

ALL THE GREYS THE LIGHT GOES

ALL VIBRATES GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES

ALL WHITE IN THE WHITE NESS

ALL WHITE IN THE WHITENESS DESCEND

ALL WHITE IN THE WHITENESS GO

AND HEAT COME BACK ALL GROWS

AND HEAT TO BLACK AND COLD

AND HOT TOGETHER GROUND WALL VAULT

BACK ALL GROWS WHITE AND HOT

BACK IN EMPTINESS SILENCE HEAT WHITENESS

BLACK AND COLD AND VICE VERSA

BLACK DARK OR THE GREAT WHITE

BLACK DARK OR THE GREAT WHITENESS

BODIES EACH IN ITS SEMICIRCLE WHITE

BODIES NO SHADOW STRONG HEAT SURFACES

BODIES SWEATING GO BACK OUT MOVE

BURNING TO THE TOUCH BODIES SWEATING

CONVULSIVE LIGHT THE CONTRAST IS STRIKING

DARK OR THE GREAT WHITE NESS

DARK TOGETHER GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES

DIVIDE THE WHITE GROUND INTO TWO

EMPTINESS SILENCE HEAT WHITE NESS WAIT

FINDING AGAIN THAT WHITE SPECK LOST

FOR THE MOMENT IN THE BLACK

FREEZING POINT AT THE SAME INSTANT

FROM WHITE AND HEAT TO BLACK

GO BACK IN EMPTINESS SILENCE HEAT

GOOD OR THE GREAT WHITE NESS

GREAT WHITE CALM NOW SO RARE

GREAT WHITE NESS WITH ATTENDANT TEMPERATURE

GROUND TO SUMMIT OF THE VAULT

GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES NO SHADOW

GROWS DARK TOGETHER GROUND WALL VAULT

GROWS WHITE AND HOT TOGETHER GROUND

HAIR OF STRANGELY IMPERFECT WHITE NESS

HEAT SURFACES HOT BUT NOT BURNING

HEAT WHITE NESS WAIT THE LIGHT

HOT TOGETHER GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES

IN EMPTINESS SILENCE HEAT WHITENESS WAIT

IN THE BLACK DARK FOR GOOD

IN THE WHITE NESS GO BACK

INSTANT THAT THE BLACK IS REACHED

IT THE HEAT THE MOVEMENT CONTINUES

ITS SEMICIRCLE WHITE TOO THE VAULT

LIGHT AND HEAT COME BACK ALL

LIGHT ITS GREAT WHITE CALM NOW

LIGHT THAT MAKES ALL SO WHITE

LONG LIGHT AND HEAT COME BACK

LOST IN WHITE NESS TO SEE

MERGING IN THE SURROUNDING WHITE NESS

MOVEMENT TOWARDS HEAT AND WHITE NESS

NO TRACE STILL ON THE GROUND

OF EVER FINDING AGAIN THAT WHITE

OF SOME TWENTY SECONDS PITCH BLACK

ON THE GROUND BENT IN THREE

ON THE GROUND TWO WHITE BODIES

REACHED AND AT THE SAME INSTANT

REVERSE MOVEMENT TOWARDS HEAT AND WHITE

SAME STORM LIGHT AND HEAT REMAIN

SAME WHITE SHINE GROUND WALL VAULT

SEMICIRCLE AGAINST THE WALL HIS HEAD

SILENCE AND AT THE SAME INSTANT

SILENCE HEAT WHITENESS WAIT THE LIGHT

SIMILARLY INSCRIBED IN THE OTHER SEMICIRCLE

STORM LIGHT AND HEAT REMAIN LINKED

SUMMIT OF THE VAULT TWO DIAMETERS

THE ELBOW IN THIS AGITATED LIGHT

THE GREYS THE LIGHT GOES OUT

THE GROUND TWO WHITE BODIES EACH

THE HEAT THE MOVEMENT CONTINUES UNBROKEN

THE INFINITESIMAL SHUDDER INSTANTANEOUSLY SUPPRESSED

THE KNEES AGAINST THE WALL BETWEEN

THE MOMENT IN THE BLACK DARK

THE OTHER SEMICIRCLE AGAINST THE WALL

THE PASSAGE FROM WHITE AND HEAT

THE RING OF BONE THE LIGHT

THE ROUND WALL EIGHTEEN INCHES HIGH

THE SAME INSTANT FOR THE EYE

THE SAME WHITE SHINE GROUND WALL

THE WALL AT „A" THE KNEES

THE WALL AT „B" THE ARSE

THE WALL BETWEEN B AND C

THE WALL BETWEEN C AND A

THEN ALL VIBRATES GROUND WALL VAULT

THIS AGITATED LIGHT ITS GREAT WHITE

THREE FEET FROM GROUND TO SUMMIT

THREE FEET THREE FEET FROM GROUND

THREE THE HEAD AGAINST THE WALL

TO SAY INSCRIBED IN THE SEMICIRCLE

TWENTY SECONDS PITCH BLACK IS REACHED

VANISHED ENDLESSLY OMIT TILL ALL WHITE

VAULT BODIES NO SHADOW STRONG HEAT

VIBRATES GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES ASHEN

WAIT MORE OR LESS LONG LIGHT

WALL VAULT BODIES ASHEN OR LEADEN

WALL VAULT BODIES NO SHADOW STRONG

WHEN THE LIGHT BEGINS TO FAIL

WHITE AND HOT TOGETHER GROUND WALL

WHITE BODIES EACH IN ITS SEMICIRCLE

WHITE NESS BUT GO IN NOW

WHITE NESS DESCEND GO BACK IN

WHITE NESS WITH ATTENDANT TEMPERATURE WORLD

WHITE NO VISIBLE SOURCE ALL SHINES

WHITE SHINE GROUND WALL VAULT BODIES

WHITENESS WAIT THE LIGHT GOES DOWN

WITH IT THE HEAT THE MOVEMENT

WITH THE SAME WHITE SHINE GROUND

WORSE STORM OR IN THE BLACK