

“Distracted enough by all of the garbage in the subway”

Distracted enough by all of the garbage in the subway,  
we're all waiting for the same train  
in the same part  
of the same station  
while sheer impatience and projected machismo swagger drives the most redundant motor  
functions from this fellow to my right.

He's active,  
very busy even,  
turning on his heels and shifting on his hips  
to lean over that area of grace at the edge of falling into the tracks  
like all the subway signs warn you against  
with a multiplicity of languages thrown onto them haphazardly  
to communicate this message made important  
to anyone who will just look and if not, then by symbols made universal  
to caution against this kind of behavior  
which has already claimed this specific number of people in this year previous  
and other threatening statistics trapped on this sign  
not far from these frantic movements swinging closer to the edge,  
altogether as something that a semiotician could not ask for  
with the potential to join all of that fine-grain sludge  
and clay  
and trash  
and shit  
and water  
among other things  
and not just trash.

He's a rooster stuck on repeat clicking the tongue and craning the neck and shuffling the feet and  
doing it all without ceasing,  
quite theatrically ruffling the feathers that he has to speak of,  
wearing a loose jacket held over another puffy jacket  
and a fist of bags holding things not big enough to be more jackets  
bought from any one of the flagship retail locations in the vicinity  
that he swings around with wild wrists  
and elbows  
while making all of the swishing noise of those printed jeans with  
absurd extra embroidery not serving any purpose  
of utility, not holding any of the seams together  
but holding the aesthetic of these jeans together in some higher calling of denim  
draped loosely on the legs  
that know no fixed position.

Without anything better, we are the energy of the city scrambled and thrust underground not  
unwinding not a whit to catch a ride in the next direction, out of sight.

“By this I am blind, or, seeing with excess”

At times this life seems oriented around inertia and forgetting,  
not stopping and non-memory.  
Moving like the subway trains do.  
It's the creative dead space between everything that we actually do.  
It's that mindlessness of the transitory,  
from one place to another.  
Like the trains,  
we are all underground after all, to move about the city  
beneath the city  
with the residual mess of the city's infrastructure;  
its inhabitants,  
and their refuse.  
It's all hot blowing wind and hot blown hair underground,  
closer to hell, under dirt  
and city  
where the city does not cool like the dirt does.  
One cannot be sure, but we are pretty sure  
that all notions of ownership contained herein are oddly out of place;  
this is not my infrastructure  
which I rely on  
and this is not my trash  
and water  
from something I did or spilled,  
but, rather, that the underground is simply under ground and under everything else that is  
actually going on.  
Dropkick another wrapper into the tracks where no weed hopes to grow.  
It is not quite the city.  
Nothing owned if everything stays moving and without thought and without memory.  
I do not recognize myself if I am only moving from or going to.  
This does not look like city.  
Unsurprisingly, there is still trash covered with more shit  
and wet.  
Against the odds of this space, trash and water wound up here.  
My head kills from pressure.  
Under dirt, the city still weighs above.  
We are a fifty meter safety net against tectonic shift. What is it I see if only passing between?

“The Slow Local Train”

In the middle of the night  
there are few who stay on this far  
towards the quiet and abandoned and ragged shores  
of Coney Island  
where the rides are not broken but do not move.  
The train motors on  
toward this frozen energy  
with the ragged bodies sleepy and leaning  
for purchase on something sturdy  
despite these slick and semi-sterile seats  
under the weight of this very white light and this oft recycled air.