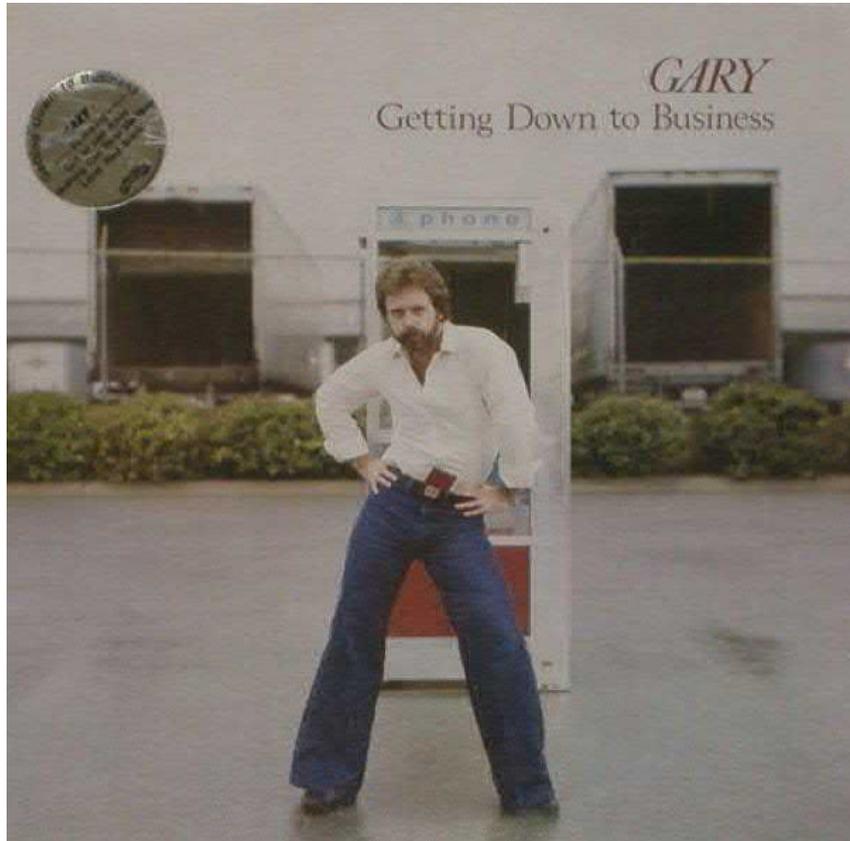


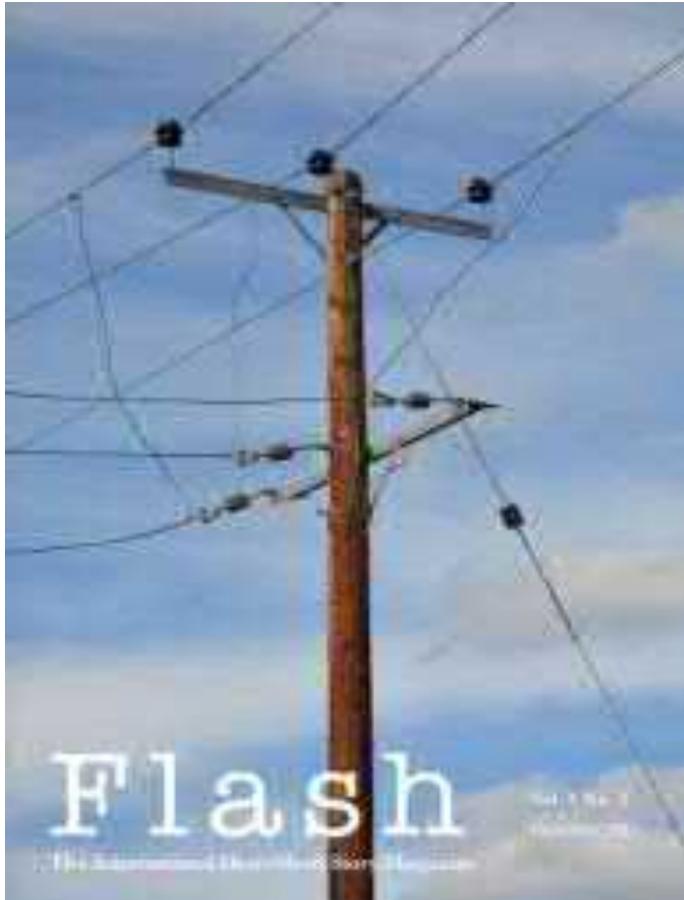
Smalls, briefs, and delicates:

The art of the very short story

Avoiding the wrong trousers...

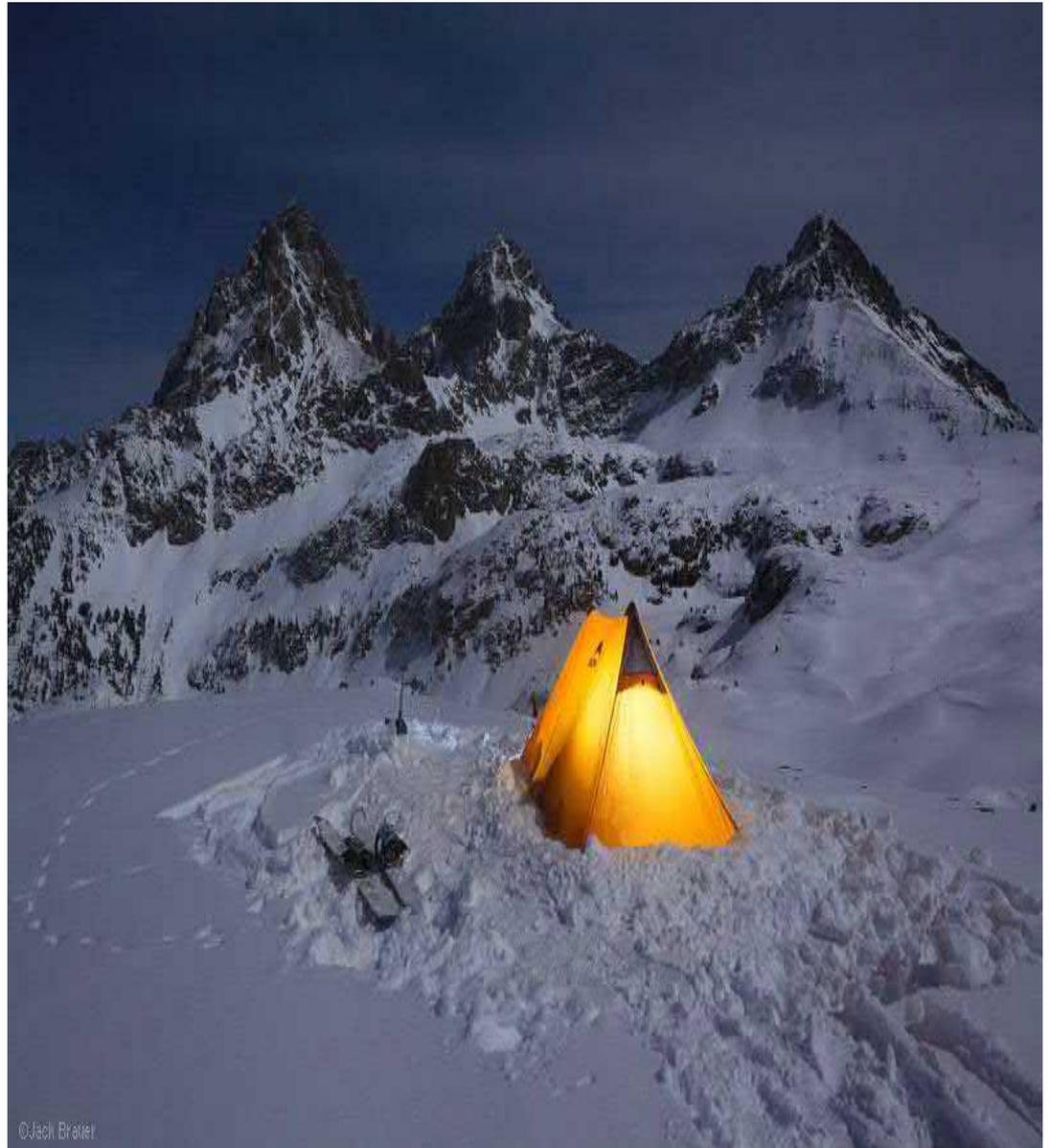


Flash/Smokelong/Sudden/Micro

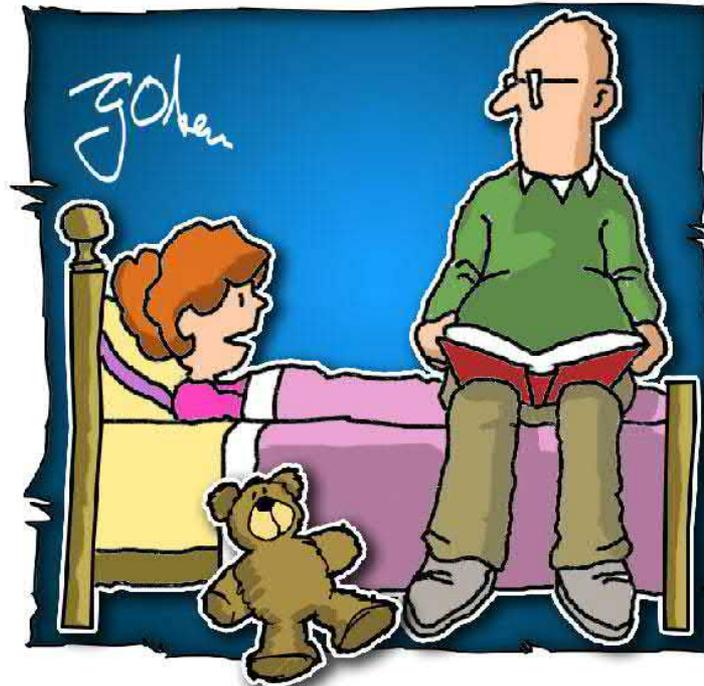


Flash fiction

- What is it?
- Why is it popular these days?
- How does it challenge the writer?
- Does it suit certain kinds of material?
- What are the beauties and dangers of the form?
- Personal tips



Short attention spans?



"Okay, a lot has been said about my generation's short attention span, but could you just read the story at a normal pace, please?"

'Brief, amusing stories' (1761).



Anecdotes: the etymology

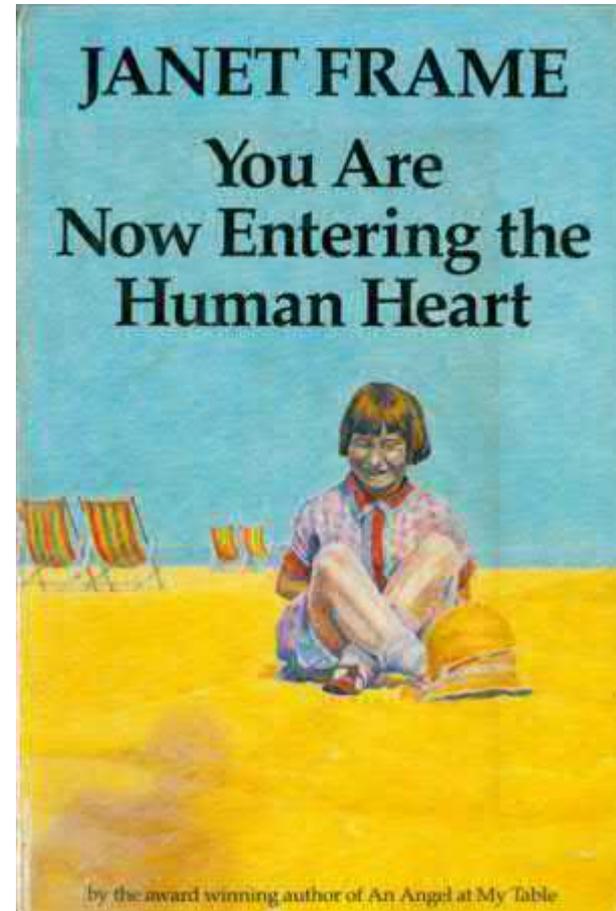
'A thing unpublished' (Greek)



'Revelation of secrets' (600 AD)



The story and the process are alive,
and have their own needs...



Floating on facts...
trying to reach the truth...





The trouble with the punch-line
... and the way NOT to do it!

Try to end with a twang, not a bang!



The Image



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Battling with back-story...



How many rocks in the tail?

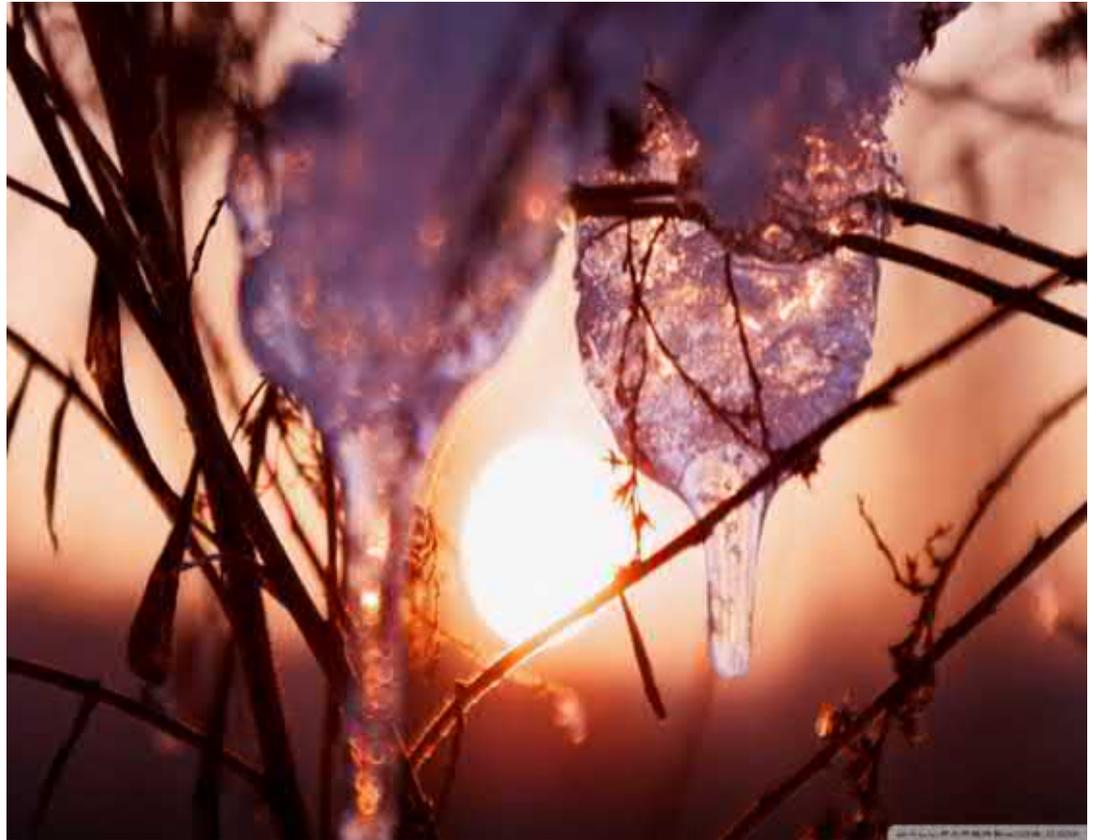


TIME

**‘Like a piece of ice on
a hot stove the poem
must ride on its own
melting.’**

**-- Robert Frost, ‘The
Figure A Poem
Makes’.**

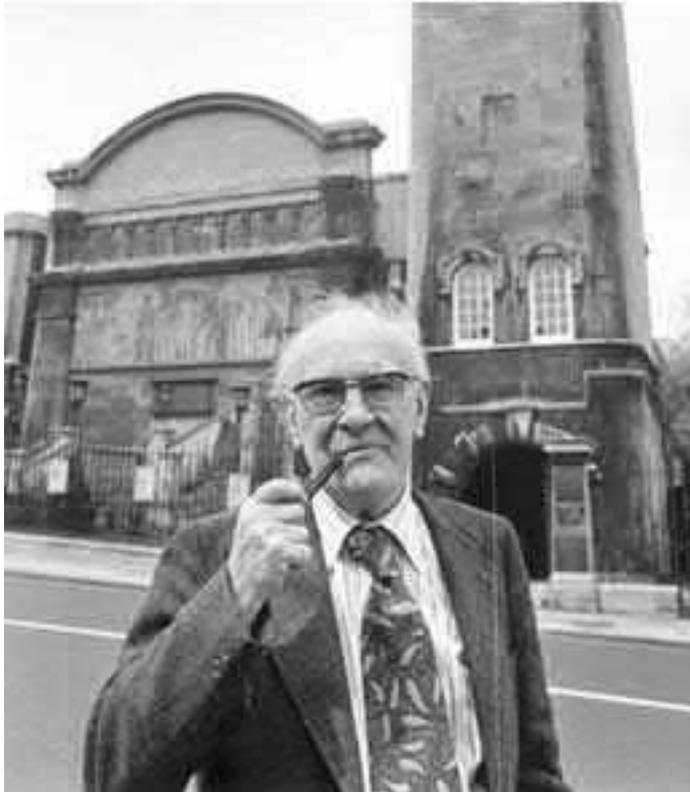
<http://www.mrbauld.com/frostfig.html>



'The iceberg theory'



'A glimpse in passing' – V.S. Pritchett



'Spots of time'

*There are in our existence spots of
time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain
A renovating virtue, whence,
depressed
By false opinion and contentious
thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly
weight,
In trivial occupations, and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
Are nourished and invisibly repaired;
A virtue, by which pleasure is
enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount,
When high, more high, and lifts us up
when fallen*

– William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*.
Book 12. 208-218 (1850 edition)



The imagination is a garage



‘Lyrical narrative’

‘... a ‘lyrical ballad’ is something of an oxymoron, a self-divided construct in which narrative is added or superimposed on the poetry.’

-- Andrew Bennett, *Keats, Narrative & Audience: the Posthumous Life of Writing*, p. 20 (1994: Cambridge University Press).



**Lyrical
Ballads 1798**
Wordsworth and Coleridge

'The Third Space'

in·ter·stice

/in 'tɜːstɪs/ 

noun

plural noun: interstices

an intervening space, especially a very small one.

"sunshine filtered through the interstices of the arching trees"



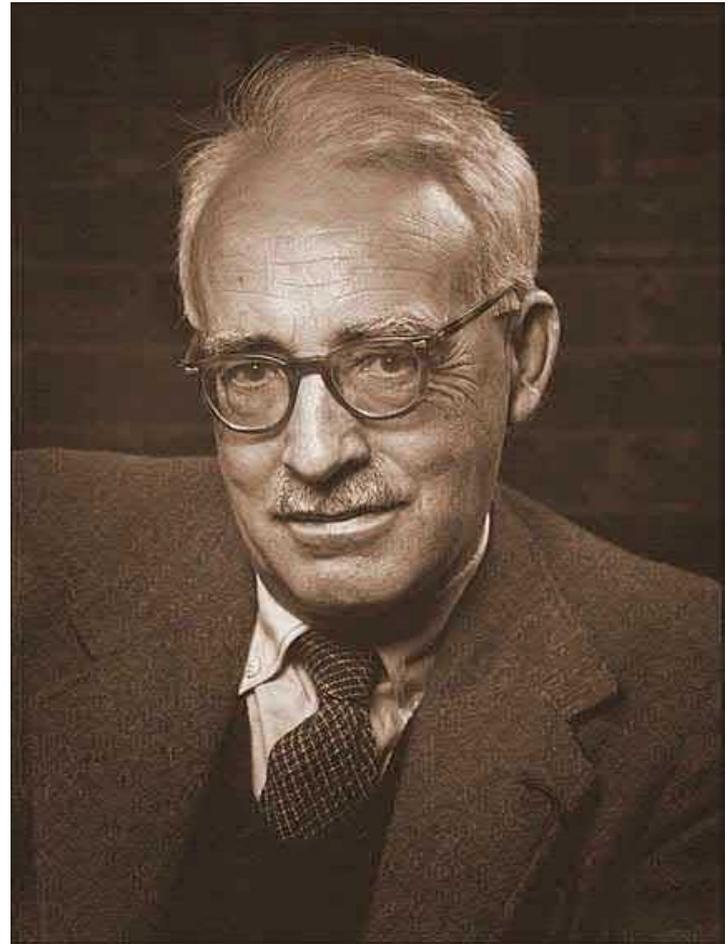
'The Lonely Voice' – Frank O'Connor



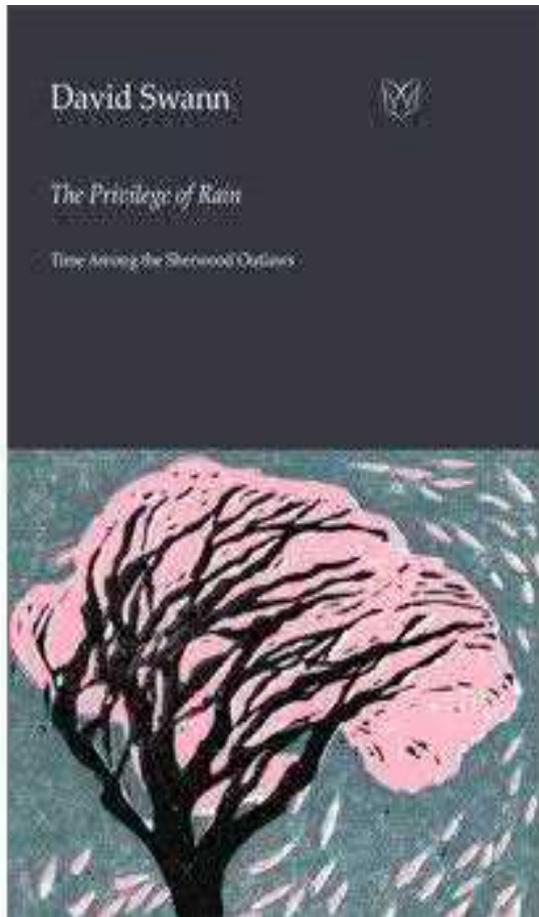
People who lead a lonely existence always have something on their minds that they are eager to talk about.

(Anton Chekhov)

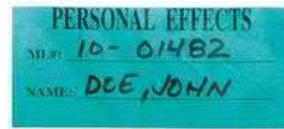
izquotes.com



Teaching in prison



The lost and the found



A burning need



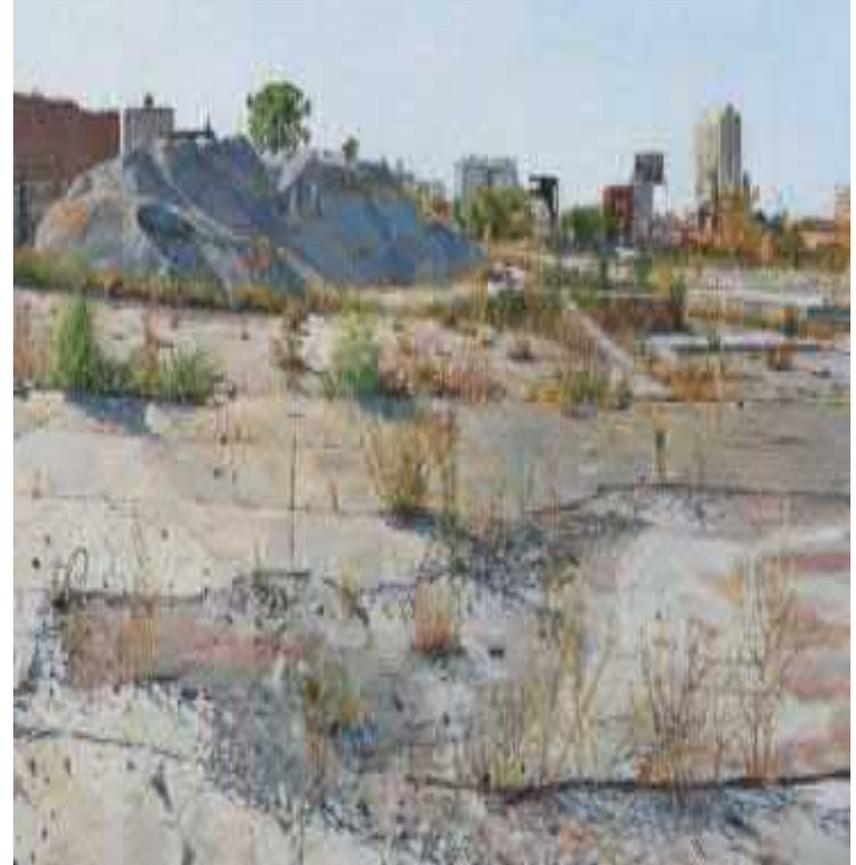
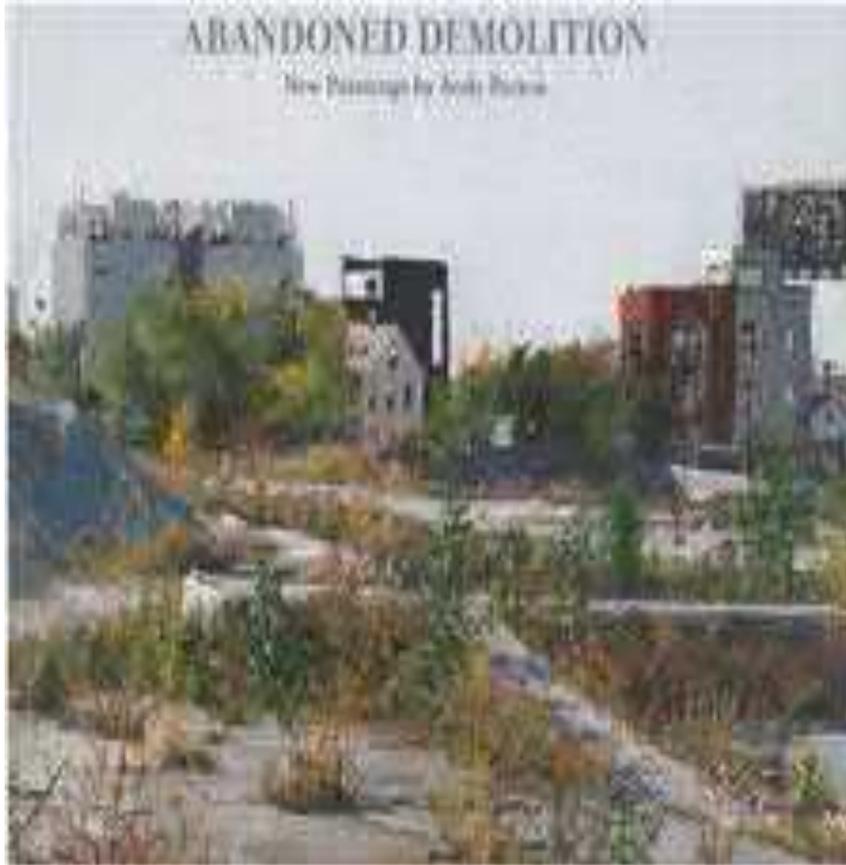
Everyday surrealism,
a space for dreaming and the weird...



Dereliction



'Abandoned demolition', USA



Ruins, gaps, holes, fragments...
what's the white space saying?

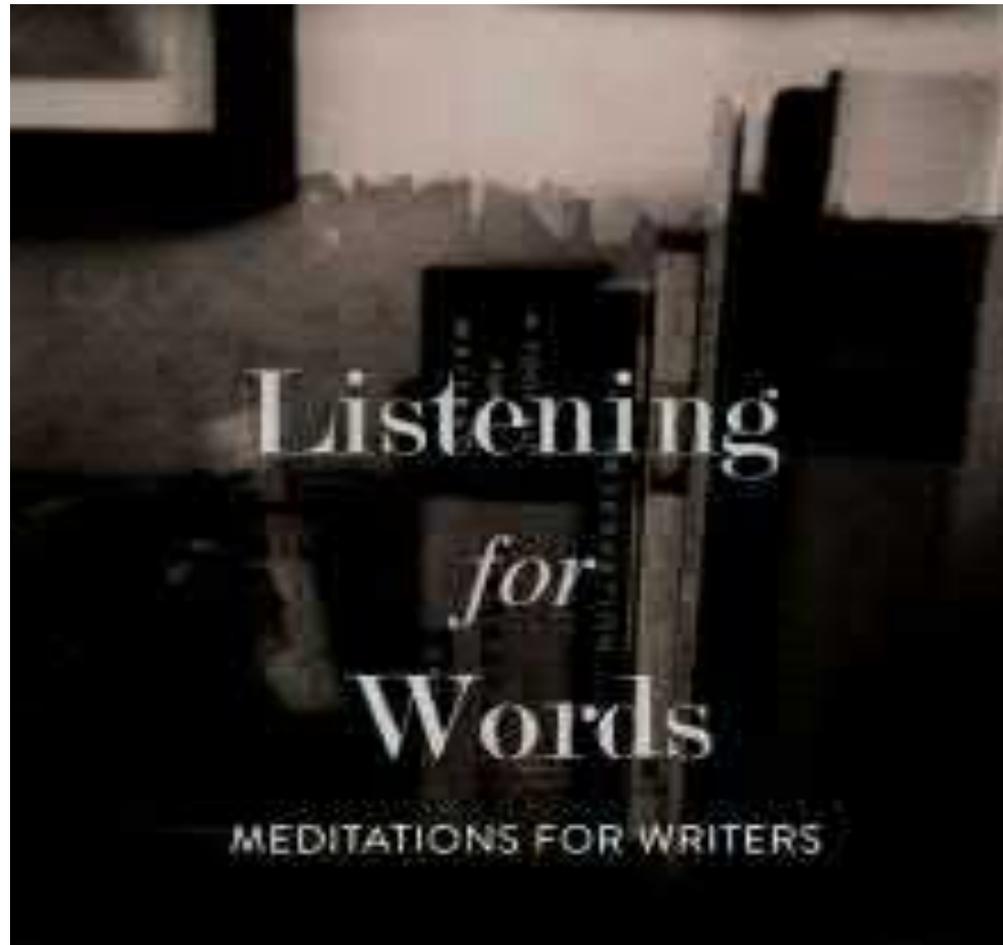
annoying post-modern joke

But also the opposite...



- ***Straining*** for the bigger picture...
- The urge towards completion...
- Trying to contain everything in almost nothing...
- The contrarian!

Flash as a form of meditation



Flash: small but perfectly formed

