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NOR'EASTER  
IN BLUE  
(BIRD  
CHANGES)

Ryan  
Clarke

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Nor'easter in Blue (Bird Changes)

“...become very fond of studying the surface of the earth, and was looking with anxious curiosity into every pit or ditch or bed of a river that fell in his way“  
—James Hutton, 1753<sup>1</sup> FMaj7

“For the earth—like the sea for fishing tribes—was the ‘material’ basis of man’s existence, in his environment, was represented as the generator of life. And the supreme ethic that arose from this representation was the commandment to generate life as man’s life was itself generated.”  
—Sylvia Wynter, n.d.<sup>2</sup> Em7p9

Geology is a study of hauntings at the scale we choose to fathom. As a performance of storytelling based on the analysis of non-organic impressions on the landscape, the field as it stands today should be considered an anthropologic ‘retcon lust’ to authorize a non-history of phenomena. Much of the story told so far was conceived by Scotsman James Hutton in the mid-1700’s with the crux of his insights Dy7-64

- 1 John Playfair. ‘Biographical Account of the Late James Hutton.’ *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*. Vol. 5, 1805, Pg. 39.
- 2 Sylvia Wynter, *Black Metamorphosis: New Natives in a New World* (unpublished ms., n.d.), Pg. 548.

placed at the western throne of origin: linear uniformitarianism, or, Earth’s physical change over time being a consistent continuous process from 4.54 billion years ago to today. Meteorites, floods, and eruption damned in lieu of incremental alteration. ‘This is how it’s always been,’ granted prehistoric affirmation.

Recognizing the proximity the rise of modern science has with the Enlightenment period, both in people and place, should raise concern of post-hoc rationalizing. Like most other sciences taught through the western modernist perspective, the study of geology quickly becomes another tool of epistemological enclosure rooted in hegemonically abstracted linear systems. Cm7-F7

The field is a field of self-reported tea leaves and state-sanctioned mythcraft. All the while, uniformitarianism (as above) and catastrophism (so below) was the parable told to the equatorial unhuman<sup>3</sup>. That the world we live in is a product of uncommon, unusual events no human in history can recall. Biblical chaos rationalizing us landing on Plymouth rock B7

- 3 Analogizing ‘as above, so below’ to gesture at two theories of thought ‘uniformitarianism and catastrophism’ being two sides of the same coin of enlightenment’s agenda to further confirm epistemological separation between what Europeans considered Man (white) and Savage (black)

and not the other way around<sup>4</sup> (anti-superposition<sup>5</sup>). Black metamorphics stripmined of our diagenetic exegesis.

Here, we choose to sit by the fire and dream up another way of earthtime—Sankofic Neogeologies (Expanded Ethnogeology? Kreyol Neotectonics? Drexciyan Hermeneutics?). To engage with the world in a ring shout and not a death march towards carbon-captured annihilation. To refuse the refusal of typological fixation on the universe and all the malaise that comes with centric uniform expansion. A tradition of non-linear anachronistics as collective decision to be the keeper of time and not bound to its

- 4 Malcolm X said, 'We didn't land on Plymouth Rock. Plymouth Rock landed on us' in a 1964 speech. <https://wamu.org/story/17/11/21/chipped-and-split-over-centuries-plymouth-rocks-american-symbolism-exceeds-its-appearance/>
- 5 Meaning we didn't simply 'arrive' to the Americas, but violent acts of theft and trafficking inside colonialism happened to us. One of the laws in geology is superposition—that older, undistributed rock will always be underneath younger rock—is foundational to our physical understanding of the earth. But through Malcolm's quote with Plymouth rock landing on us instead of the other way around, we see how the ontologically negated collapses chronological thought. The complete opposite of superposition occurs as those arrived here after the colonialists nativizes themselves to the environment. Hence the 'anti'.

leash (CPT) until we choose to be (four on the floor<sup>6</sup>). Vestiges of this 'otherdream' statehood lies in our traditional patterns, both in the immaterial and material.

The porch, first observed in North America through the shotgun home in New Orleans (via the Caribbean, via Yorubaland), is a satisfaction of our inside-out world made manifest. It's a semiporous semipermeable technology blurring the concept of ownership-authorship. If blackness is a collective architecture to generate one's own grammar of self-possession from the ontologically negated, then the porch is a physical construct of such desire. Let this unidentified slab be a stage, a barbershop, a library, a watching wall. Walking down southern streets, one quickly recognizes the power of the porch is accessed by frictional fractalism; a community of communities. Each porch is a drum of its own, alone, together. No one can play jazz alone so whose is this if not ours? Spirit speak is temporarily stored in brass lungs. Atmospheric conspiracy (to breathe together).

Erosion: a diasporic protocol. Gulf stream: triangle trade swimming upriver. Music: the siren call of prophecy of how we want together. Echolocation: across radiowaves and soundsystem smokesignals; pencilled melismas on the wooden cafeteria tables.

- 6 DJ Pierre. *Time and Time Again (Four On The Floor Mix)*, Time & Time Again. Jive, 1990.

In our culture we've been handed living equipment (says Albert Murray of the blues stomping devil of nada) to make a way out of no way<sup>7</sup>. If Chomsky saw the language of us as a language, he would've called that 'generative grammar' too.

Rhythm is a sacred geometry. Let the beat build to model strings of life. A circling soul. Used effectively, the drum is our natural form. It is how we communicate and confirm life. Our means to plant spirits back into the world (forest<sup>8</sup>). All Black music across time is the same wind pattern—extratropically circulated—shifting its vector and style as one arrives to an/other horse latitude<sup>9</sup> (fat field hollers boast humid heat across delta plains to brick lake FX on Gratiot and Russell)<sup>10</sup>.

Gm7

7 Albert Murray, *The Blue Devils of Nada: A Contemporary American Approach to Aesthetic Statement*, 1996.

8 To provide one's own context in a foreign land, enslaved Africans animated their environment with myths as a technology to reinstate a collective cosmology that was discombobulated across the Atlantic where other forms of communication failed. The sentence initially had 'dirt' in it, but the gesture of 'back into' felt strong enough. Now, I'd say 'the world' (to discern from the earth) or forest (to reference this book edited by Anna-Sophie Springer & Etienne Turpin, *The Word for World is Still Forest*, 2017).

9 Atmospheric high-pressure belts that encircle Earth around latitudes 30°–35° N and 30°–35° S. <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/horse-latitudes.html>

Sometimes I hear techno for the first time. Counting sticks in Blombos cave with the first TR-909. Circle dance building eternity buzzard cults. Poverty points at he who has human heads as Earlobes. Serpent Mound pictures unexhumed longhouses. Kudzu (the meek) inversion at Inverness, Mississippi (the earth). Hurricane as flickering indigenization practice. What does it mean to give a storm a name it cannot pronounce?


C7

Black contrafact palimpsests act as chicken scratch notation of the world. Doodling antecedent geologies of my favorite things. Another side eye nickname for paranormal activity, jazz, has always been the playing of/to ghosts. Carnavalesque dance death on the authorities of space and sound (the city and the 12-tone tempered scale).

Fm7 - Dm7

The saxophone hmhmhms and trumpet snickering brother both winking at God in self-organized

10 The intersection of Gratiot and Russell St near the Eastern Market is the corner where the first techno labels (black and independently owned) were established in Detroit, MI. field hollers: a plantation sound technology to keep the day moving FX: shorthand in music production but I'm also using it as 'lake effect', which is a sort of wind chill across a water body's surface that makes cities by higher latitude lakes (like Chicago and Detroit beside The Great Lakes) even colder.



deterministic chaos (the hood: a fractal, the boycott: a meander, river mic banks and crevasse splay: the uprising, an avulsion: levee break). Hurricanes and jazz, two North American dominant exports, express themselves more or less the same. In bands, in rushes, in wait. Maritime shorelines acting in rumor before non-verbal forms of worship find me in the feral pockets.

Leave me as the lord's graffiti.

Against the ongoing enclosure of geology (rocks and people domesticated towards digital colonialism),<sup>Gr7-C7</sup> the only way to produce infinity (something out of nothing) is geometrically. That is, to acknowledge the spatial relationships among various objects. A mind-body deal. This cultural phenomenon crosses the work, the play, and the spiritual. Self-organization is key. Meaning, "the spontaneous formation of pattern and pattern change in complex systems whose elements adapt to the very patterns of behavior they create,"<sup>11</sup> or, "a process where some form of overall order arises from local interactions between parts of an initially disordered system."<sup>12</sup>

11 J.A.S. Kelso, *Self-organizing Dynamical Systems*. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001, Pg. 13845. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/B0080430767005684?via%3Dihub>

12 *Order out of Randomness : Self-Organization Processes in Astrophysics*. Space Science Reviews, 2018, Vol. 214: 55, Pg. 37. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1708.03394>

