

## Sean G. Meggeson-LCP Spoken Word Artistic Statement

But while I possess history,  
it possesses me. I'm illuminated by it;  
but what's the use of such light?

“Gramsci’s Ashes” by Pier Paolo Pasolini (trans. MacAfee & Martinengo, 1982).

Queer, Catholic, communist, and inescapably bourgeois, Pasolini embraced paradox as poet, social critic and filmmaker. In his embrace of paradox resides an authenticity I wish to celebrate. And to eulogize.

The poetic modality I have chosen is collage, where I form-fragment-symbolize Pasolini with fixations linguistic, symbolic, social, personal and historical. Also, I seek to find playfulness and song in the words and phrases as they try to discover a wholeness via variations of repetitions, and in doing so, express a tentative temporal oneness, thus “drone collage.”

As the poem’s speaker, I dare to include fragments of my own history of self to the collage. I also dare to re-hope for past projects of communal agency and contrast them with symbols of hazy bourgeois comfort.

I use my experience as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist (in the interpersonal/relational tradition) to know the spoken word is complex, to know the “talk” of talk therapy, like poetry, and like the structure of the self, is collaged with multiplicities. How can we dare speak in the face of such risk and complexity? What is the counterforce to a numb silence that seems to always form when trying to find words when they are most needed? Psychoanalysts Davoine and Gaudillière re-write the Wittenstein motto—“Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one *cannot* stay silent” [italic mine]—thereby advocating for meeting silence with the spoken word, even in the presence of anxiety, doubt, and trauma.<sup>1</sup> This stance is everything. It is soma-synthesis, a phrase I subject to variations to express a dynamic experiential process in which mind and body join affect and cognition to discover via speech acts, meaning. Maybe this offers a temporary okay-ness, but a reminder, too: as a circle, hermeneutics is both comforting, and vicious.

Finally, the “eulogy” of my spoken word poem emphasizes the individual and social loss of the ability to live with paradox, something psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott describes as an essential aspect of psychic development, core to the healing process. However, consumer-bourgeois culture, and forces like rigid familial systems ask us to fit in, conform, comply—to leave inanimate our authentic self. Amidst the tragedies of such violation and loss, my spoken word poem asks us to fantasize the return of Pasolinian freedom, and in doing so, perhaps slowly, poetically restore what’s been lost.

Can we afford a hopeful eulogy?

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<sup>1</sup> Davoine, F. & Gaudillière, J.M. (2004). *History Beyond Trauma* (S. Fairfield, Trans.) Other Press. [One of the several works I reference in my spoken word poem.]