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Expository Writing 6

Adair

Draft 1

Introduction to the Relativity of Plastic Poems

In his introduction to the seminal *The Plasticity of Expression: A Primer on the Artificiality of Poetic Expression* (1996), Philip Jones writes, “[t]he poem has always been a lie. As our French philosopher friends tell us, written language is nothing more than false speech” (19). Elsewhere, in more aesthetically-minded circles, the opinion differs:

the measure of the work is to be measured not in truth but in the *truism* that is the *artifice itself*. How much glistening sweat off the poet’s brow makes it onto the page, how much toil in direct relation to the effect the poem has on the reader. The reader wants a smoothly-fashioned meaning, to be sure, yet she also wants her assumptions challenged, her sense of wonder tapped.

(Smith 2008, 244)

In essence the very expression so desired is but a hoax perpetuated on the reader.

Poems often are imbued with a sense not of wonder, but “certainty” (Smith 2015, 15). This takes the discovery that people so often crave and replaces it with a “concrete feeling not unlike that of the white cube” of the contemporary art space (Johnson 288). Johnson writes specifically about the Specialist Collective active on the Lower East Side from 1974-1976, a movement he quickly dismisses in his 1999 essay “Hot Dogs and Hot Lines: Avant Garde in the Early Punk Era” (*Poetry*). While Johnson sees nothing but plastic flowers “akin to those in a suburban Chinese restaurant” he fails to recognize the tradition of copying that exists and following from that the postmodern tendency to call into question the very notion of authenticity (15). The notion of the temple which is burned down then rebuilt: is it no

Your essay should be typed in Times New Roman or similar 12 pt-sized font.

The titles of books should be in italics like this, *Rabbit, Run*. Titles of movies, like *Blade Runner*, and music albums, *Lemonade*, should also be in italics. Similarly, the titles of magazines, newspapers, journals, artworks and websites should also be italicized: *China Daily*, *Esquire*, *BioScience*, *Mona Lisa*, *Youku*. Article, story, song, and poem titles should be in quotations: “Dream Song 1,” “Gin and Juice,” “Why Haven’t China’s Cities Learned from America’s Mistakes?” Make sure you double-space your paper and be sure to put your family name and page number in the upper-right hand corner, but not on the first page if you can help it.