

Issue Fourteen: Toward a Free Poetics

In his illuminating account of the disintegration and alienation imposed on Caribbean life and culture under and in the wake of French colonial rule, the Martinician novelist and philosopher, Édouard Glissant, distinguishes between a free or natural poetics and a forced or constrained poetics. In the former, Glissant explains, a people's 'collective yearning for expression' is substantiated by the language in use. Such yearning, in perfect accordance with the idioms, structure and rhythms of the language, flows unhindered. A forced poetics, however, is marked by discontinuity and dissensus, as a people's collective yearning rushes against the constrictions of the given language (Glissant 1989, 120). Here, Glissant not only emphasises the discursive link, in echo of Foucault, between language and power, but draws attention to the verdant yet fraught terrain between the inability to achieve expression and the necessity for that expression.

Yet what Glissant's analysis stresses is not merely the awareness that words often fail to contain the profuseness of experience and the intensity of our desires, but rather that the desires which prompt us to speak, those most deeply felt, may be opposed by, indeed incompatible with, the languages we have at our disposal. The tragedy, then, of the desiring subject besieged between the force of their desire and the limits of language is heightened, for Glissant, on a collective and cultural level. For when that desire manifests itself, "it is negated at the same time because of the *deficiency* that stifles it, not at the level of desire, which never ceases, but at the level of expression, which is never realized" (Glissant 1989, 120).

Our imperilled world calls for new language, new evocations of possibility, new modes of address, and more robust rituals of naming. We welcome submissions that explore these concerns, that meditate on the difficult and necessary work of revitalising the language of our common life, and what it might require of us to initiate, finally, a free poetics.

Citation

Glissant, Édouard, 1928-2011. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989.

We invite the following types of submissions:

- Scholarly Papers
- Personal Essays
- Manifestos
- Creative Nonfiction
- Hybrid Works
- Case Studies
- Exhibition Reviews
- Performance Reviews
- Interviews

- Visual Art Responses

To submit your work:

- Submissions should be no less than 500 words and no more than 5000 words
- Submissions should follow Chicago Style in text citation (Author/year)
- Submission Deadline: **25th May 2024**
- Please submit your paper in MS-Word (*.doc or *.docx) format.
- Please submit your image files in .jpg format, 300dpi or highest resolution possible
- Email submissions to cma_journal@sfu.ca with the subject heading 'Attn: Issue 14'
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