WALDEINSAMKEIT

Liverpool Poems
(Chapter VI)

Daniele Pantano

Argotist Ebooks
ALSO BY DANIELE PANTANO

POEMS

ORAKL (2016)
Dogs in Untended Fields: Selected Poems by Daniele Pantano (2015)
Mass Graves: City of Now (2012)
The Oldest Hands in the World (2010)
Camera Obscura (1999)
Blue Opium (1997)
Geschlupfte Kreaturen (1997)
Blumendürre: Visionen einer Reise (1996)

TRANSLATIONS

Oppressive Light: Selected Poems by Robert Walser (2012)
The Possible Is Monstrous: Selected Poems by Friedrich Dürrenmatt (2010)
In an Abandoned Room: Selected Poems by Georg Trakl (2008)
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful recognition is made to these literary periodicals, in which many of these poems, sometimes in earlier versions, first appeared: Cleaves, Poetry Salzburg Review, The Mailer Review, The Wolf, Versal, and 3:am Magazine.

A number of these poems also appeared in two chapbooks: Mass Graves (XIX–XXII) (Knives, Forks & Spoons Press, 2011) and Mass Graves: City of Now (Knives, Forks & Spoons Press, 2012).
WALDEINSAMKEIT
CONTENTS

dominoes—opening | 8
archipelago: or another recession overheard in the park | 10
slapstick (h.) | 11
kindertransport | 12
low-voiced confessions | 13
fairy tale (with unsolved murder) | 15
we’ll go dancing—we’ll be safe | 19
study in soot & hypertonic saline | 20
katzenjammer | 21
from the heimlich to the unheimlich in a meaningless universe fundamental weltanschauung and filmic aesthetic | 22
la hora cero: eschatological fragments | 29
ballerinas | 31
foley 4:10 | 33
city of now | 35
about the author | 36
DOMINOES—OPENING

2–5
This space coaxed out of
Boundaries the rest is

3–6
Fourteen thirty-one eighty-
Seven info cards pullulate

4–4
A major retrospective

2–4
Every twenty minutes
There is your angle

1–2
Your permission to move away
From and through the center

1
Non-space frays all directions

6–6
The artist
1–3
A patter of frontiers

5–6
The story is true that is
What the shirt says

–6
Projected onto a screen

4–5
A giant boy skinny carrying
Bags and a solid hard-on

2–3
By mouth as it was when it began

–1
His wife empty of people
ARCHIPELAGO: OR ANOTHER RECESSION
OVERHEARD IN THE PARK

We wear
The poet’s uniform
Because our mothers
Are dead

Fishermen on classic
Thin ice
Riddled now
That barbarians

Have dropped
Their fatal blows
Against our singular
Ideogram a schoolgirl

Is hiding behind
Apocryphal translations
More credible
Than our roaring

Salute to helicopters
Like skylarks
SLAPSTICK (H.)

And the disciple mimes
   Delivering a set of keys.

And this is where he crashed,
   Isn’t it? His face there is

Mine. Built in 1843.
   And white. Before black

Milk. The transition(s).
   And the riots only gulls

Remember. And bicker.
   And dance. Some water

Damage. Odd feature unlocked.
   And space now of loose wallpaper.

Our morning’s final edition(s).
   And fresh fat boils in the kitchen.

Already nothing.
   And nothing is sweeter

Than a future—a red door
   With three locks and a loose chain.
KINDERTRANSPORT

for R. Sheppard

Development is
   Not an invention
Of human beings
   Human beings are

An invention
   Of development
An invention
   Human beings are

Of human beings
   Not an invention
Development is
   Not an invention

Of human beings
Human beings are
LOW-VOICED CONFESSIONS

—A city.
—More streets *hanging in the abyss*.
—Somewhere south.
—And a black donkey buried in its public park.
—(For years of service.)
—(Years as a friend.)
—Yes, but we mustn’t blame the children.
—They demanded it.
—Blame the *two greatest painters of the twentieth century*.
—*Who weren’t even forty when Columbus discovered America.*
—(One classic, eternal.)
—(*The other, modern, always, like a pile of shit.*)
—The snail climbs the stalk.
—A moment later past the city walls.
—Dirt road to a neighborhood of silos.
—And irrigation ditches, not asylums or prisons.
—Someone has written PARADOX on one of the silos, we think.
—(Or perhaps it is more accurate to say someone has whispered it into the ground.)
—Not far from another ditch.
—Not far from another tasteful confession.
—(*He likes to “bite and pluck their nipples like a bass guitar.”*)
—The children are listening.
—Black donkeys are German motorcycles.
—We learn to lower our voices and ignore the almost visible.

—As we grow up.

—As we realize the snail: a sniper climbing a silo.

—The painters are prepared to testify.

—Eating things alive. That's what we do.

—Blame the detectives.

—Exhibit #1(c):

—(Something mute steps out of a neighborhood.)
FAIRY TALE (WITH UNSOLVED MURDER)

—It's yesterday. And who will remember?

—You watch the way home for hours.

—Schedules of trains reaching the source of the plot.

—The same day her parents filed a missing person report.

—I swear you can find her name in the margins of this text.

—Of any text.

—It's yesterday.

booklouse — any of various small, often wingless insects of the order Psocoptera, which feed on paper and bookbindings.

—It's yesterday. And who will remember?

—And so they began to experiment with anniversaries.

—Is that your problem?

—Stepping off the page.

—Black tiptoed resistance.

—Neither distant nor bothered.

—It's yesterday.

pinworm — a parasitic nematode worm, Enterobius vermicularis, infecting the colon, rectum, and anus of humans. Children are at high risk of infection.

—It's yesterday. And who will remember?

—Years ago something happened.

—Couples promoted into the boundaries.

—Left as sacrifice.
—Like letters on a billboard.

—No point in hanging on any longer.

—It’s yesterday.

**hookworm** — a parasitic blood-sucking nematode worm, *Ancylostoma duodenale* or *Necator americanus*, having hooked mouthparts with which they fasten themselves to the intestinal walls of various animals, including humans. Children are at high risk of infection.

—*It’s yesterday. And who will remember?*

—Dead ground re-writing history.

—Dampness. And the same children from the previous poems.

—Remember them. Setting fire to the orphanage.

—Strangling the caretaker with a garden hose.

—Comprehend these sudden phobias:

  Anablephobia
  Chirophobia
  Geliophobia
  Menophobia
  Kolpophobia

—It’s yesterday.

**tapeworm** — any parasitic ribbon-like flatworm of the class *Cestoda*, having a body divided into many egg-producing segments and lacking a mouth and gut. The adults inhabit the intestines of vertebrates, including humans. Children are at high risk of infection.

—*It’s yesterday. And who will remember?*

—But if all is _____

—Was it the year we celebrated the death of our pets?

—The death of our children?

—Born _____
—Raised on expired medicine.

—It's yesterday.

**roundworm** — any nematode worm, especially *Ascaris lumbricoides*, a common intestinal parasite of man and pigs. Children are at high risk of infection.

—It's yesterday. And who will remember?

—From a distance.

—She makes you feel changed for having _____ her.

—Most influential child, yes.

—What else is one to do?

—Marks on the back of an envelope:

  The name of this medicine is _____ (250mg tablets)
  Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them.
  Possible side effects: unusual bleeding or bruising.
  Other unwanted effects which are more likely to occur are:
  nausea, vomiting, black hairy tongue

—It’s yesterday.

**whipworm** — any of several parasitic nematode worms of the genus *Trichuris*, esp *T. trichinura*, having a whiplike body and living in the intestines of mammals. Children are at high risk of infection.

—It's yesterday. And who will remember?

—The rain stops.

—Advance copies of _____

—The grammar school.

—Inspector Barlach?

—Swiss folktales, myths, legends:

  [titles of tales yet to be translated]

  “The Black Water Puck”
―The Shepherd and the Giant"
―The Cat in the Milk Can"
―The Dwarf Wedding"
―The Jealous Blacksmith"
―The Cheated Devil"
―The Shoemaker in the Oven"
―The Little Red Skirt"

―It’s yesterday.
WE’LL GO DANCING—WE’LL BE SAFE

STUDY IN SOOT & HYPERTONIC SALINE

Nowhere to go from here. But then
There’s always a carnival. Beyond
The edge of town. When and where.
Miles from our mephitic place. We
Accept. Guard towers. Mammatus
Clouds. What used to be a bit of home.
A noise in our ears. A black cat reading
An Irish story. They are still there.—
They are. The only animal that knows
It must die. Moored figures . . .

In the interest of safety, passengers are asked
To leave all items unattended. Any attended
Items will be removed by the local . . . the final
Station. Already un-shot photographs are
Yellowed. Strewn with red biohazard bags.
One is clutching his heavy pad of surgical
Papers. (Or is it Braille?) Another whispers
Into a plastic container. About destruction
And Lent. A woman whose voice moves
Forty steps closer: It’s not the mangled feet.
The poisoned flesh. It’s the faces that are haunting.
The denuded girls. The nurses on their fag breaks.
KATZENJAMMER

Nothing you need to know is still missing. The desired principle in your hands you ought to chase right now.

On one page you don’t remember writing “I don’t remember.”
From the *Heimlich* to the *Unheimlich* in a Meaningless Universe
Fundamental *Weltanschauung* and Filmic Aesthetic

horror and suspense
and themes

His *oeuvre*

dominant patterns
cynical and pessimistic *Weltanschauung*

“that any director creates his films on the basis of a central structure and
that all his films can be seen as variations or developments of it”

film schools in the world

genealogy of techniques

the original, fully developed treatment

first shorts

the psychology of the stranger

original melody

time again

cinematic fugue.

artistic production. A treatment

the keystone in

the *auteur’s* body

blocks

the filmic aesthetic and philosophical building narratives

conservative, fashion.

Aristotelian unities of time, space, and action.
a boat, a house, a room

limited number of characters
flashbacks
cyclic in nature

the perspective of the protagonist

the viewer of his films

knows as much, or as little, as the main characters do

intolerance

society

somebody who is different

the atmosphere of claustrophobia

. . . I like to shut myself up. I remember: when I
was twelve, fourteen, I liked atmospheres that came from . . . what do I know? . . . Ultimately,
enclosed interiors, stifling [ . . . ]
something

the real.

atmosphere.

22
all things taken into account simple means.
detached and clinical meaningless universe, human condition, its otherness, turns into a prison, a claustrophobic space, the individual’s psychology disintegrate. There are no happy endings sense of social, political, physical, or mental betterment. the Theatre of the Absurd enter and exit to distort reality and highlight bizarre, unexpected details. “enjoys exploring deviant behavior, often of sexual nature: incest, cannibalism, suicide, homosexuality, transvestitism, and homicidal mania are subjects he returns to again and again” firm control juxtaposed dominant subject matter of the loss of control linear evolution, a demonic circle common horrors of mundane reality history of violence, persecution, and alienation. the family returned Nazis were soon to transform into the Jewish Ghetto in 1940.

persecution, “safety” rural landscapes and farmhouses.

“restricted to their apartments […] with their long halls and barricaded doorways. the subjective nature dwellings wide-angle lens distortion, cavernous or claustrophobically womb-like” a foreign element breaking into—and altering—a seemingly stable environment, certain Freudian undertones,

notions of the heimlich and unheimlich crucial Freud’s essay on “The Uncanny” (1925) something home a prison or torture chamber: psychological origin fear generated by the kind of haunted, uncanny space represented familiar, homely space has been transformed into its opposite. the German word for uncanny—unheimlich. strange and frightening etymology ‘belonging to the house’
familiar space which has become strange. the uncanny (unheimlich) something once familiar that has become strange and frightening.

drift, traumatized,

protective mechanisms traumatizing invaders blurred, regardless of the genre.

witness the beimlich into the unheimlich one dark single bedroom, a stranger who enters the room and approaches a sleeping man. a pocketknife

The viewer this violent crime the brutal act bizarre and meaningless.

the stranger the sleeping man killing him.

link voyeurism with mental illness,

a sinister and often deadly trap.

a woman

an open bathroom window undressing herself. grins violently

the camera the opening of the door interrupts the voyeur’s indulgence.

The violent intrusion

young and

sexually repressed slow descent into madness her death

on numerous occasions raped two criminals

his young wife. a violent stranger—

a rapist in the latter—destroys victimized by its crumbling mind.

an old doll maker

the violent intruder.

a short in the wiring “rapes” and violates the dolls,

pedestrians maintain their evening strolls, the tragedy taking place a few feet away.

the street a visual trope

inconclusive;
the arrival of the stranger; a place of home and security yet another existential and physical trap, another question mark water.

desolate sea a deserted beach modern society. two non-conforming men wardrobe predetermined norms.
society’s plentitude of indifference, theft, violence, and murder,

the director’s later work. The plot is circular

the most claustrophobic—a cupboard

substitution of a street for a natural manifestation

the initial inspiration

lake district often visited for a weekend of leisurely sailing youth and age

the Oedipus conflict his young wife a hitchhiker seducing his wife

the tedium of conventional bourgeois married life and the pointlessness of existence

sexual interest and possessiveness

an established figure someone alien that will irrevocably alter its initial constitution

an entering student two writers a script

over the period of twenty-four hours the shortest dialogues possible set anywhere and at any time communist ideologies

a young acting student who had recently graduated
too high of a pitch

da thirty-six-year old sports writer, driving an expensive car

the threatening and stressful city the comfort and simplicity the water

You bastard!

his cool impudence
his masculinity

enter the car

“I’ve seen one 190SL in Warsaw, and two Jags, and now you,“ 

Youth Youth

YOUTH YOUTH

YOUTH

YOUTH

Reflections of the rising sun

YOUTH

It is obvious that both men are aware of the game

an oddity

cannot abandon the web they have entered

the stranger abandons it

petty battles based on wit, intelligence, and physical prowess

the sailboat gets caught in the shallows

crammed

and claustrophobic cabin of the boat

recites poetry to her and follows her every move in the cabin
switchblade

permanently damaged.

You’re a murderer!

shaking with terror

You’re just a clown! A

clown, do you hear? A buffoon!

Like your wife!

a whore

as if he has satisfied some instinct of personal pride—perhaps a twisted sense of honour, perhaps plain revenge

the police

on a dark and deserted street

the long, grey featureless lives of the couple traveling down on it. They are carried along in the enclosed airlessness of their ‘rather good car’ as in the enclosed airless marital relationship”

claustraphobia is intensified by the enclosing element being situated in the middle of a vast open space [. . . ] and surrounded by all this expanse, by so much ‘outwardness,’ the three characters deliberately turn their attention inwards
an under age girl

For as far back as I can remember, the line between fantasy and reality has been hopelessly blurred.

order and intent.
LA HORA CERO:
ESCHATOLOGICAL FRAGMENTS

after Astor Piazzolla

(Death—Tango)

You can hear us.
Through the walls.

Tango, tragedia,
Comedia, kilombo.
Tango, tragedia,
Comedia, kilombo.

The Whore, I.
The maggot feeding.
On her blood.
Her scent, my flesh.
Prodding her misery.

(Judgment—Tragedia)

At this hour.
Memory is she.
Who shouts ganchos.

The moment.
As language.

One step further.
To receive.

(Heaven—Comedia)

We are both.
Sides of morning.

Appease the horizon.
With a crowning descent.

(Hell—Kilombo)

Suffering erotic convulsions.
We devour thighs.
And draw circles.
   In the half-light.

Illuminating our dance.
   Our magic identification.
BALLERINAS

DANCER 1:
—The Home for Difficult Children moved in next door to her.

DANCER 2:
—I saw her madness, strange sister, and chose another.
—Her mouth formed a documentary subject: the city thin as light.

DANCER 3:
—She was interviewed by a pair of twins who spoke “only the insufferable language of the young, the only language that deserves to be saved.”

Two questions:
What is the most human virtue of all? And if there’s a song that defies all classification, what would it be?

It goes without saying. Happiness. No, humor or courage. And singing goodbye to one’s native tongue.

DANCER 4:
—She developed a sense for when he was coming.

DANCER 5:
—She was more modest than she appeared, she had promised, she told herself quite frankly, she felt drawn, she sang, she received and entertained him, she found herself compelled, she wished, she added in hushed tones, she said, she knuckled under, she began to contemplate vile and wicked things, she called to mind, she looked, she sank, she dragged, she thrust his hands away, she softly, softly walked, she hated him, she sat there, she kept warning him, she didn’t even look at him, she gave him the bread, she said something, she called him, she harmonized so well, she confessed to him, she responded, she considered herself, she was deeply immersed, she indeed began, she asked, she proceeded, she was a sort of, she sometimes believed, she might possibly, she was in fact, she was nothing more, she was forced, she might be too, she longed for, she wished to, she appeared, she wept, she did so, she was delicate, she shivered, she was single, she harbored, she didn’t know anything, she no longer wanted, she was still, she found herself, she became, she framed, she ran out.
DANCER 6:

—Emaciated: adjective free from legal, social, or political restrictions; liberated.

—Abuse: noun violent treatment involving sexual assault (someone, esp. a woman or child), esp. on a repeated basis.

DANCER 7:

Brisé, Chaînés, Chassé, Croisé, Écarté, Échappé, Effacé, Fouetté, Plié, Piqué, Porté, Relevé, Retiré, Sauté, Tombé.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set/Index</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/129</td>
<td>0:07</td>
<td>Dust falls lightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/333</td>
<td>0:14</td>
<td>Tarp cloth, in wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/441</td>
<td>0:12</td>
<td>Branch movement, steady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/002</td>
<td>0:29</td>
<td>Oxygen mask, single breaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/134</td>
<td>0:08</td>
<td>Dog footsteps on linoleum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/205</td>
<td>0:11</td>
<td>Man urinates on the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/415</td>
<td>0:02</td>
<td>Cigarette toss to the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/038</td>
<td>0:05</td>
<td>Metal, creaks and groans, high pitched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/618</td>
<td>0:02</td>
<td>Paper movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/137</td>
<td>0:09</td>
<td>Brush dust off a wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/077</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>Metal object drops, heavy impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/054</td>
<td>0:21</td>
<td>Artifact movement, small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/330</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>Finger down on wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/901</td>
<td>0:12</td>
<td>Bedframe, creaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/709</td>
<td>0:15</td>
<td>Brush hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/842</td>
<td>0:11</td>
<td>Scissors cutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/008</td>
<td>0:08</td>
<td>Chewing gum/eating candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/256</td>
<td>0:05</td>
<td>Panties, movements, drop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/470</td>
<td>0:17</td>
<td>Rosary beads movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/603</td>
<td>0:14</td>
<td>Grass movement, light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/802</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>Girl kneels on grass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/054</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>Digging in the dirt with hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/141</td>
<td>0:04</td>
<td>Fingers bite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/579</td>
<td>0:11</td>
<td>Shaking something off the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/012</td>
<td>0:04</td>
<td>Wood splinters, distant crash on soft surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/089</td>
<td>0:02</td>
<td>Skull hits with sharp bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/201</td>
<td>0:07</td>
<td>Pin through a bug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/039</td>
<td>0:04</td>
<td>Heavy exoskeleton cracks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/098</td>
<td>0:05</td>
<td>Light body falls on leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/111</td>
<td>0:04</td>
<td>Male grunts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/021</td>
<td>0:02</td>
<td>Licking or sucking fingers or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/112</td>
<td>0:03</td>
<td>Wipe mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG-C/000</td>
<td>1:02</td>
<td>Ash falls lightly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CITY OF NOW

More profound than reason,
More profound than perversion,
Bestiality, does she, determined,
Absorbed, think and connect us,
Larger than a common grave,
The dark trying of her fingers,
Counting these pages?
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniele Pantano is a Swiss poet, translator, critic, and editor. His individual poems, essays, and reviews, as well as his translations from the German by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Georg Trakl, and Robert Walser, have appeared or are forthcoming in numerous magazines, journals, and anthologies worldwide. Pantano’s poetry has been translated into several languages, including German, Albanian, Bulgarian, Kurdish, and Farsi. Pantano taught at the University of South Florida, served as the Visiting Poet-in-Residence at Florida Southern College, and directed the Creative Writing program at Edge Hill University, England, where he was Reader in Poetry and Literary Translation. Pantano lives somewhere at the end of a line. For more information, please visit www.danielepantano.ch.