

# A Further Witness: for Anselm Hollo



*Jerome Rothenberg*



*All things possess intelligence, and a share of thought.*  
– Empedocles of Acragas

1/

I who  
am dead  
call to  
the living  
little  
brothers  
how absurd  
your walk  
is  
unencumbered  
& adrift  
you run across  
life's  
stage  
your words  
are manacles  
& cage  
your mind  
I know  
enough of you  
to sense  
your pain  
freely  
& fiercely  
I move  
into a deeper  
space  
where none  
will reach me  
here  
I strike  
a blow  
*an imbeciling*  
*fluid*  
*from inside*  
*my body*  
covers

(A. Artaud)

the ground  
between  
& blocks  
all entry  
birds  
like little  
knives  
dive  
down the sky  
*le mal*  
*du ciel*  
the phrase  
I hear  
& fly from

2/

reduced  
to bits  
of light  
a thin  
white  
line  
nerve's  
end  
or eye's  
eclipse  
it sticks  
inside  
my throat  
I try  
but cannot  
cough it  
out  
the edges  
of a tongue  
sharper  
than nails

leave me  
numb  
& distant  
from my own  
recall  
of pain  
the pattern  
of small  
trees  
that block  
my path  
a flash  
of lights  
back of  
my eyes  
twitter  
& call  
of birds  
made out of  
air  
the fragile  
bones  
my fingers  
crack  
& weave  
like wires  
blood  
(aghast)  
flows  
in a line  
so thin  
it fades  
from sight  
tick tock  
the clock  
inside  
your heart  
atremble  
clatters

night  
will overcome  
the sleepers  
we will raise  
a sheet  
& watch them  
as they fall  
like phantoms  
down  
a thousand  
worlds

3/

my word  
for it  
is not  
enough  
it takes  
a certain  
force  
the mystery  
of mind  
spread through  
the universe  
alive  
in each  
of us  
our thoughts  
returning  
to the source  
uncharted  
absent  
each time  
another  
friend  
departs  
my breath  
feels

distant  
 days  
 condense  
 to minutes  
 nights  
 to days  
 the mystery  
 is in  
 the words  
 alone  
 (he writes)  
 the rest  
 he cannot know  
 but bears it  
 in his mind  
*all things*  
*possess*  
*intelligence*  
 &  
*a share*  
*of thought*

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A FINAL NOTE

I knew Anselm Hollo for half a century & came to value him more & more across the passing years. I'll have more to say after a while, but on this day after his death I thought to post something in the quickest public space at my disposal – the last part of a poem written during the time of his final illness. And Anselm himself from *Corvus*: “remember him / who saw these things between midnight & dawn / in this place / on this planet”

–J.R.