The Spirit Cabinet

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Abstract

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The Spirit Cabinet is a collection of poems that imagines the thwarted erotic relationship of Salvador Dali and Federico Garcia Lorca, by channeling the voices of their letters to one another. Guided by Gertrude Stein's spirit and the memory of their former lover and classmate, Margarita Manso, this poetic seance uses erasure from translated letters, homophony, and sound play to explore sexuality and the fuzzy lines between eroticism and friendship.
Spirit Cabinet

portable closets into which mediums are placed, bound with ropes, in order to prevent them from manipulating their surroundings
Invocation

Invoke the Hero:
Lord of Cordoba
Lord I call
come Low come
Lone count of
Lorn calling calling
Fetter reed cold
Read cold
Read cole
Read coal
Lorn calling
Lorn Lorn calling
Loam cat
Load catch
Feeder read cold
Read comfort
Lover come
Invoke the Lover:

Doll enter
Doll emerge
Doll enter
Doll emerge

come Dolly
Dali Daw Dolly
Sal fader
Sal invader

Salve adore Doll
Salve adore
Salve adore
Sal Salve adore

come Dolly
Dali Daw Dolly
Sal fader
Sal invader

Doll enter
Doll emerge
Doll enter
Doll emerge
Invoke The Spirit Guide:
Grant us trespass
Grant us do
Stone spine of spirit vine
Grant us trespass
Grant us do
Steady line of spirit mind

Gradients ruddy
Stalwart, enshrined
Gradients muddy
Sheltered, entwined

Grant us trespass
Grant us do
Stone spine of spirit vine
Grant us trespass
Grant us do
Steady line of spirit mind

Gradients ruddy
Stalwart, enshrined
Gradients muddy
Sheltered, entwined
Daisy Daisy
1
2
3
Daisy Daisy
they love me

Man so Man
so Marketed guru reader
Man so Man so
Marrowbones
retelling

Calling right it
stay engaged
Calling rite it
stay engaged
Calling write it
stay engaged

Man so Man
so Marketed guru reader
Man so Man so
Marrowbones
retelling

Daisy Daisy
1
2
3
Daisy Daisy
they love me
Spirit Slate

two chalkboards bound together that, when opened, reveal messages written by spirits
The Spirit Guide Speaks:

heavy  had much selecting. I saw a star
Breath in Little pieces
All belly of wood
expression
Heating
we boats
wave sails
Believe in the road

something to read
The Lover Speaks:

Moonlight Sleep sleep

sleep lifting

I said it

is well
letters collages gathered here

nephew of the poet

an impressive indecipherable chronology the foundation

these light beginnings of Surrealism

early passion friend embraces

my cure the fire

never felt so
heavy LETTERS had much LETTERS selecting. I saw a star COLLAGE

Breath in Little pieces

GATHERED HERE

pieces

All belly

wood pieces

breathe peace

wave THESE LIGHT sails

of wood

NEPHEW OF THE LETTERS of the POET

AN IMPRESSIVE expression

heavy LETTERS

selective breath

GATHERED HERE

we boats

All belly

wood pieces

breathe peace

wave THESE LIGHT sails

of Surrealism

believe in the EARLY road

something to PASsionreadFRIEND

Moonlight EMBRACES Sleep

sleep

lifting FIRE

I said

NEVER FELT SO

PHERABLE

INDECI-
Pardon,

you respond  this

"literature" of "blues"

lessness

The Spirit Guide Speaks:
oh dear it

It gives

oh i always smile

don't please please please

Are you lifting

fierce splendid

I am very pleased

say

you lift

high sir

you we strangely.  That's it.

Address people together.
his

i believe is

Lifting roses

great roses

With evening

Lifting together,

to

prettily bow

The Lover Speaks:
Friend,

infinite
my
thrill

a phonograph
design of happy

I have seen
you,

our good
stopped.

The Medium Translates:
it. FRIEND splendid

It gives BLUES say

SAY o I always THRILLsmile
don't DESIGN WHITE

please BLUE

please HAPPY WHITE

I HAVE SEEN YOU
    I am very pleased, blue
weaknesses. You say so well!

    BLUElessness

Yes

you lift

lift
crarcely would come out

High

sir

SHY SIR

you

We strangely SHE STRANGELY

That's it. I N F I N I T E

Address

people together, RESPOND
BOND together,

this LIFTING to do

I believe is
Lifting THRILLING great roses

smile WHITE
WIDE happy

With
eveningFRIEND

Lifting roses

THRILL please

S w e l l
prettily bow together,

thought remember STOPPED

strong weaknesses. You

say so PHONOGRAPH well
The Spirit Guide Speaks:

Because ruffles
say
lifting is so
so exceptional

you say
neither lifting is necessary

lifting so often

pleasing
is such exercise

altogether

lifting
lifting

please

you please

right right

again now again

whistle
you

mean  away

away

here

oh yes

so strong

you

lift  so

lift  so

lift  so  yes please lift

you  me

I

urge

above

it  all

The Lover Speaks:
I'll do all you but you me

a degree of

My lords edition is so
cute

you obliged five Gods
without me
I can not you
do not up for me
you say I
trainway
height indisputable
Who else you believe
is five days and
patience
no
sleep
no

me and it me on the ever.

You you. Just like me too.

Yes, sir! No sir!

nothing nothing nothing can it call

I go with tenderness

breathing

The Medium Translates:

Federrico
Dear
I'll do all you RUFFLES
but you SAY LIFTING me IS
SO EXCEPTIONAL degree of
EXCEPTIONAL
YOU SAY My lords LIFTING edition is
cute

PLEASEING
YOU obliged five
Gods SUCH EXERCISE without me
I can not LIFT you
do not LIFT up
PLEASE
YOU PLEASE

you say I AGAIN
WRIGHT indisputable

NOW AGAIN COMMUTABLE

Who else LIFT you SO

Believe

is

five days and

BELIEVE

FIVE DAYS AND

sleep

PLEASE

no

me and YOU

SO STRONG ON me on the

URGE ever

You EVER you

Just ABOVE like

me too

YOU
I go with tenderness breathing.

Federrico
Table Tipping

manipulation of a table during a seance; attributed to spirits

Figueres and Barcelona
November 1925
Dear Captain,

The project (Ship) left me Beeeeeeammammm in mouth. This is an idea, all ideas of all things on earth, which is all what I prefer, as this would be good this liquid monotony, this liquid monotony, you have to if you do not see, want to lose her dream baby dream liquid blushing forever (think of nothing). Dream blushing. Think of nothing. There’s a while since this mild idea so subtle, supple and instructive brought you beard head. Beard buried beard beard buried. Ship, uniform and varied. You ship oui. And she

Yes, she is I am. We worms, we Cadaqués, we ship do not feel-know-dream what to tell you blushing, rushing things, you all me that my dream pictures supple but I think of nothing, assure you, buried in my opinion, flushed monotony blushed. You are the only actual blushing genius you ship know. Although I am a ship donkey in the liquid literature, the lament little that I carry, let me beeeee mouth!
Well, beam, sit down and she take dream the lax with us.
Ship us back! Beard hat here. He, her, he. He do me! She. You do not want to feel putrid she, liquid, subtle.
Give me the sad ad in Madrid!

I'll give you liquid-money. Flushed monotony nonliquid honey!

Salvador Dali talented painter and liquid friend, intimate blushing ship.
A very nice wet poet.
Goodbye.
Goodbye.
Goodbye.

Oh, just your supple face while shaving.
   Wet! Warm!
   Your shoehorn.

Goodbye.
Sweet friend,

The dry design of the pure white blanket dry, untainted is definitely what I have seen clean, more pure demure you. Your letters sway gave me very happy sway, with its endless way, photos strange, and infinite moods, new interludes which reminded me of our good times.
My sister, mister, is thrilled the sooner you respond.
Here I have a phonograph consuming a wide variety of blues unimaginable consummation but I stopped romp because this is literature love, and it scares me illegible.

Figuera
mid-march 1926
Dearest,

I'll do all the covers lover you want, for magazines and the like, but you gotta give give me more details, the following retail information

- more form at back
- no slack
- degree of putrefaction, fine stacked
- lover cover
- hung
- stung

I note with sadness the photo does not happen. The prologue liquid logged, sagging. Would you be able to hack that? What a nice little lecher you are! My lords that soften more swore the Japanese edition flute paper is so cute.

You're not even obliged to speak weak of my drawings, drink falling. Just give an idea for the love of God, please, do not write, spite, me without sending bending them I can not believe you do not want to sit down, lay down, and conceive, write the up up up for me!
Anything you say I find it (you) extraordinary. You are a trainway without wheels, steel and heightened sensitivity. Reals moving, swooning, sensuality blooms, moons indisputable and incommutable.

Ouch!

Who else wells? Pools? Who else has said these things, you say? Oceans, no one!

Believe me, young man. Recieve me, the greatest painter of all time. Don’t know if I told you in another letter but I’m only getting better.

I’m trying to paint “Girl in Figueras,” wait. I paint for five days and patience. No Swell. We have no crisis, sweet tryst send me the prologue, hold on, and the image, paste it behind me on the plane. Stain. After the little death I feel smaller than ever.

You’re a strange religious mind. You wizard, a blizzard compare it. It happens in fractions that nothing sounds like ri ri ri ri riiicooooo

Books favor even insects savor brothers, me too.

ri ri ri ri ri ri c rico rico

hhhhhrico
Yes, sir! No no sir! I understood nothing nothing of Margarita. She was the beast, feast? Mad? You had her me down. Stake, steak, streak! Meow! Meek is good!

See, now plow, I’m going to draw an A or O. O. AN O.

Dear, I can not go because I have more pen and not enough ink. Now I will swell with what tenderness I’ll write your name, without breathing, with needing, Federico Garcia Lorca and now Salvador Dali sign.

I am in love with writing to you before, after, during, because here at the bottom of the page, there would be enough room for many points. Come quickly. If you opened today fortune could course and drawing and painting. Waiting, all the avant-garde painters would be parading. In any case, I would.
**Spirit Trumpet**

horn-shaped tube said to magnify the whispered voices of spirits to audible range
There,

This project is a lazy bourgie bee, it’s an idea extra-ordained, of total lacy distress to the tear. It's chilly, that of preference, that serpent beset monotone. You do have the fairest tuned voice past perty young baby, preferred. You do the fairest sick tune, voice past perty tune baby, pour du jour (neon crossed rain). I'll yawn about the temperature cassette ideal. The subtlety is intrusive and a barb to trot down the threat. Barb, barb, barb!

Universal form, it varies
Wheel - We
The verse of Cadaques my genius passed to tireless uses that toil, you and me, this dismissed tableaux.
Amazed that you assure, that a man, avid--true to soul, actual genie--you who say it's good. Good that they say you’re an animal in literature, the pay that is said to toil me lassoed, bourgie bee! Ha ha!
Yes, Now!
Ah ha!
Now, now Papa! a small toil pretends it’s the actual noose!

Ooh, la la, my lord! You’ll never pass a non-plussed occupier of my posterior.
Eccentricities fail my the publicity in Madrid!
You’re the donner of Large Sargent, my past main mantra. You say, names have eyes. Your new compounds Jamison, and a number of other adresses--all joy to the very sayer, oh lord, the very sayer. Inebriated.
Salvador Dali penetrates down certain tall entry ways, anytime down a grand poet there's joy. A revel. Oh, tan visage. stout, just erase my will! Tan chauffer-pied beauty, that veils never! The cassette (of voice, the Saint). Never the mantra card that detailed, laid common in pushy mortals. Heat! Christ, my beautiful tousled youth. Oh, tousled and yours, my main tenant, I'll remain arrived present in the fair.

Cher Federico,

Le projet des m’a laisse bouche beebee. C’est une idee extraordinaire, de toutes les idees des etres de la terre, c’est celle que je prefere, que ca serait bien cette monotonie, tu dois le faire si tu ne veux pas perdre ton bebe prefere, tu dois le faire si tu ne veux pas perdre ton bebe pour toujours (n’en crois rien). Il y a un bout de temps que cette idee si subtile et instructive de la BARBE te trotte dans la tete.

BARBE - BARBE - BARBE.

Uniforme et variee.

Quelque moment d’apres.

Les vers de Cadaques… Moi, je ne sais pas te dire les choses que toi, tu me dis de mes tableaux…, mais je t’assure qu’a mon avis, tu es le seul genie actuel - tu le sais bien. Bien que je sois un ane en litterature, le peu que je sais de toi me laisse bouche beebee!

Eh! Ha ha ha hahahahaha! Ha ha ha! YIYIYANYES! NANES! Ha ha hahahahahaha! Cher Federico.

Le projet des m’a laisse bouche beebee. C’est une idee extraordinaire, de toutes les idees des etres de la terre, c’est celle que je prefere, que ca serait bien cette monotonie, tu dois le faire si tu ne veux pas perdre ton bebe pour toujours (n’en crois rien). Il y a un bout de temps que cette idee si subtile et instructive de la BARBE te trotte dans la tete.

BARBE - BARBE - BARBE.

Uniforme et variee.

Quelque moment d’apres.

Les vers de Cadaques… Moi, je ne sais pas te dire les choses que toi, tu me dis de mes tableaux…, mais je t’assure qu’a mon avis, tu es le seul genie actuel - tu le sais bien. Bien que je sois un ane en litterature, le peu que je sais de toi me laisse bouche beebee!

Eh! Ha
Lazy bourgie's
lacy tears are
chilly monotone,

fair baby.

Sick tune du jour
crossed subtlety
a universal wheel
tireless
you and me
my lord
you
the very sayer
sayer layered
tan visage
pied pretties
never veil
the detail

remain
in the fair
where
true avid souls
tableaux
true to sleuth
pay past
small toil to
posterior present
Cherub,

Ladies in day love men 'til a bland chest is sensed a conduit, they catch high, booted, plus she purrs the toil. The letter makes crumbles of joy, EVA suit invaders photo it, this infantry estate. Damn! We mount, rappel our bond movements. My sourest exchange elevated, far be it you respond. Icky jail, a photographer is formidable it's a great variety of blues imaginable. My heart, parks cassette literature, my fate purrs it invisible.

Cher ami,

Le dessin de la mantille blanche est sans aucun doute ce que j'ai vu de plus épuré de toi. Ta lettre m'a comblé de joie, avec ses infinies photos et ses infinis états d'âme, qui m'ont rappelé nos bons moments. Ma sœur est enchantée, elle va bientôt te répondre.
Cher ami,
Le dessin de la mantille blanche est sans aucun doute ce que j’ai vu de plus épuré de toi. Ta lettre m’a comble de joie, avec ses infinies photos et ses infinis états d’âme, qui m’ont rappelé nos bons moments.
Ma soeur est enchantée, elle va bientôt te répondre.

Ici, j’ai un phonographe formidable et une grande variété de “blues” INIMAGINABLES...Mais j’arrête, parce que cette “litterature” me fait peur et... (illéisible).

Salvador Dalí
Cher ami,
Ta lettre m’a fait un grand plaisir.
"Le papillon de fer" est une merveilleuse synthèse, me semble-t-il, de toute la pensée de la peinture moderne, tout doit avoir la même consistance, éternité (pas la même qualité).

Cadaqués
fin juillet/début août
The letter makes fate a grand player.
"The papal lion of fear" is a marvelous synthesis, my symbol 'til, that outlaw pan seared the pain your mother, stout, devoured consistent ether-night (passed the mink quality). Less purse on ages, less Tiananmen about it, I'll near end, doused marvelously quay less plebeian away, sure the tarrying soul birds do corps the casbah in Egypt Town. Truth varies less do pines sure the soil. Zenith awaits post appeal. Sure and soul plead. Quandary pains plead noose y

Shifty tundra, all current dust results of sea botches. A tan tells poems for sequels of the mercy-bow cooped all askance.

Amirite?
Cad
Cherry me
find your fate
grand player
papal lion outlaw
plead for
pan purse pines
doused souls in grace
compromise
corset pressing
shifty seas
askance
Share if head or heat go shifting. This feral tryst, this curvature that you undress, pour less revenue that you undress, more you dress me down where, plus the details, the indecision survivors: form at new curve, it's degree of pewter, faction of revenue.

Shaken, stay. evict this trystess that the photo narrates. pass the prologue! Serenade, you capable of the past? the feral!? That jolly petite lecher, you fake! Mass measures not attended simple! Led, ushered sure paper and pen.

Je te ferai toutes les couvertures que tu voudras, pour les revues que tu voudras, mais tu dois me donner plus de détails, les indications suivantes:

format,
noir-couleur, etc.
degré de putréfaction de la revue².

Je constate avec tristesse que la photo³ n'arrive pas et le prologue! Serais-tu capable de ne pas le faire!? Quel joli petit lâcheur tu fais!
Mes messieurs ne t'attendrissent plus! L'édition sur papier japon sera si jolie!
Oh!

You never lean past obligation of partner of the designs. I'll surface a donner of ideal, of putrid fractions, tin pages. Pour me more of God, the tin supple falsity. No matter space without me the twin voyeur - jail pinned crower. Your nice past invades. Ambassador pour saccharine lassos over me.

Touchy, that you-me raucous ensemble extraordinaire. Philistine, you tramway, train-way without routs. It's the sensible exacerbation of Baroque ensemble, indescribable it, incommunicable (that lone pew commenter).

oh!
Quid pro austere, this cesspool that, two, too dies. Personal charisma, Juno’s home metropolis, grand point of Zeus the temple’s last vermin, the new souls pass cities lavish with dunes in hostile loiterers. They sway on trains of painted ruins, June filled figures, the paint displaces sinners patient and devoted. some come toting justice and rest, they arrive being civil, quibbles not pressed past layers (parsed quickest) adorned (night chant).

You take souvenirs from some ill mortal mister. Joke some smile, history of the damned, call me all air, trope cerebral. My sweet is peppered. A doll, mind you, it’s a grand act of cinema. It’s celluloid, psychological pigment comes peppered. Its jolts of sexy phone quandaries, of femme estate in color. You, you survive.

My, the nails accurate crisis.

Envy, my little prologue, hit that photo, pour the coffee, deride my astral plane.
Slay me, sins plus petty cameos. You are a spirit, religious and bizarre. You are hidden to the competitor, a reign of symbol-less rain. The lives of insects by far more deranged and elegant.

Oh my, sir! No no sir!

Just right. Write. Comprise no place for Margarita. She tastes like bate. Funny, just on the train the liar of a boy does complete the orgy of Rochester.

Fill eh,
fill, ugh, f
ill, ah
that is best!

Papa,
Papa,
PAPA!

Rebound.

Just quote Plutarch on the altar.
Can your portrait pass final air? Nest. Regard an avenue book. Oh the points
dressed!
its another avenue plussed the points i comments appeal 'til and over moral and
over moral hand over moral handover moral hand over hand over hand overmore
el hell hand over more handover more over more over more over more

distaste the More in Village, in such modern laments clash.

Incredible renegade! Maintain the vast designer of an O

oh

oh no

Uncryable! My Federico, they know poor pass continues, purse that the nail plus
the plume maintain regard being a view. Quelled tendrils of vast career to know
name without respite: Federico Garcia Lorca is main tenant of signed Salvador
Dali, your main.

Francés:
Figueras, a mediados de marzo 1926

Estimado Federico,

Voy a Figueras en mediados de marzo que desee, para revistas como quieras, pero me debo
dar más detalles a continuación:

Cher Federico,

formato,

Te ferai toutes les couvertures que tu voudras, pour les revues que tu voudras,
de compile trade, donne plus de details, les indications suivantes:


gradolment affichage de la revue.

Observo que la foto no sucede y el prologo! ¿Serías capaz de no hacerlo!? ¿Qué bonito Lacheur eres! Mis señores que ablandan más! La edición será en papel
japonés tan hermosa!

Ouch! Je constate avec tristesse que la photo n'arrive pas et le prologue! Serais-tu capable
de ne pas le faire? Quel joli petit lacheur tu fais! Mes messieurs que ablandan más! La edición será en papel
japonés tan bonita!

Tu n'es meme pas oblige de parler de mes dessins, il suffit de donner une idea de
putrefacción, cinco páginas ... por el amor de Dios, te ruego, lo hago, no me ecris sin enviar-
los a mi. ¡Me cuesta creer que usted no quiere sentarse a escribir la arriba y para mi!

***

Todo lo que me dices parece extraordinario, Phistoire tranvía (trainway) sin ruedas, y
exacerbada sensibilidad Braque parece indiscutible y incommentariste (que no puedo
opinar).

***

Ouch!

¿Quién más ha dicho estas cosas que, usted, usted dice? PERSONA! Créeme, joven, el
pintor más grande de todos los tiempos es Vermeer, no sé si te dije en otra carta. Estoy
tratando de pintar una “Chica joven Figueras” Pinto por cinco días y con paciencia
devotamente solo afeita el cuello, me sale bien, por lo que casi no tiene aire (porque
es) moderna (o antigua).

¿Te acuerdas de mi Suami? Está muerto. Yo duermo. La historia de la señora, me
parece demasiado cerebral. Mi Suami y Pepin.

¿Te acuerdas de mi Suami? Él es mort. J’ai sommeil. L’histoire de la dame, ca m’a
l’air trop cerebral. Mon Suami et Pepin.
Mars
nine to six this
heat shifting
tryst, this curvature that
you undress
pour less
undress
more
score
down where
the details are
indecisions
curves
factions of shaken
serenade
you feral jolly lecher
mass measures
in pen and past
putrid pages
pinned past Philistine
incommunicable oh!
Quid pro
souls lavish with
loiterers
sinners past layers
souvenir smiles
damned trope, peppered
mind you
psych comes peppered
sexy quandaries crisis
envy my little
coffee
slay me
just right sir
without respite
Groanings Too Deep For Words

My first years were spent steeped in the Christian world. Before that, I don’t know. I don’t know if there was a before that but I have echoes of a voice, shallow impressions that have shaped me, a distant haptic gaze reaching out or around through time, and holding my eyes. For as long as I can remember history, or the past, or the distant has called to me. For as long as I have been I have sought out my identity, my frame, through the lives of my ancestors. I think this is why, while my two brothers were never drawn in by my parents religion, I was in from the beginning. The emotional hook made tangible in the incarnation of Love through a man and then from that man into symbols and ritual.

I remember walking down to the altar and embracing the frame offered to me, that of sinful, in need of repentance. I remember feeling like I did right before a spanking: repentant and heartsick, wanting more than anything to be the good girl that my elders were expecting me to be but not really understanding my short comings. In the church, self flagellation starts at a young age.

As I grew older the message of incarnate Love seemed to skew and splinter, and my passions began to feel constricted. I remember speaking to my pastor about not feeling like I could talk to God anymore. I don’t even know what to say I told him. He referred me to Romans 8:26. “In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” - Romans 8:26 New American Standard Bible.
I did find comfort in this. As my adolescent body flooded with emotions I couldn’t quite hold, the idea that I didn’t have to understand myself, my passions or my pains, in order to look for fulfillment and relief was heartening. But my relationship with Christianity was still strained and I still found myself hopelessly lacking and shameful before my parents’ God. I went to church camp that year and instead of my faith being braided together with my peers and strengthened by community, my questions were looked at with scorn and suspicion. I abandoned my faith but still clung to the verse in Romans. I felt the power of unmitigated emotion flooding from the mouth of animals, humans, and found hope in that honesty.

In my high school Spanish class I found a new Lover. My Professora introduced us to Federico Garcia Lorca. We read La Casa de Bernarda Alba. We memorized his poetry. We viewed his sketches. And it was impossible to not be possessed by his sensuality and spirit. Where God had made me feel shame, Lorca made me feel radiant and glowing, full of perfection and possibility. He made passion and creativity a part of sacramental living. The one commandment was to live fully and immediately and generously. I ran to Lorca and poetry to escape the God who had once consumed my life.

That year I started to devour everything I could written about and by Lorca. I lived in his words. I read his biography religiously. I found healing in his journey as it became mine. With him, I chose passion over comfort, to focus on creativity over trauma. And when I finished the book, when he died, I revived him again at page one.

In college I procured a book of letters between Salvador Dali and Federico Garcia Lorca. I spent hours sometimes combing online used book catalogues, and when I saw the book of
correspondence my breath caught as if I had found a book of letters addressed to me. I immediately bought it.

Obsession was a word that easily fit my relationship with these men. I adored Lorca for his unabashed authenticity. I wanted so badly to be as fully myself as he was himself. The way he lived for the right to be open and free: full of passion, unrestrained and undefined sexual desire, and sometimes deep sorrow. He wrote to me.

I loved Dali for his skewed view of the world, the way he was willing to pull the margins off the page and shake an image up or collapse it in on itself, but my love for Lorca was foundational, devotional.

The only problem with my book of letters was that it was in French, and the only language that I knew outside of English was conversational Spanish. So I ran paths with my fingers over the photos in the book, as if I could find my way to their world, and they mine.

I held onto this book through college, through seven years of working mindless jobs and occasionally asked around for someone who might read it to me. I never found anyone who cared as much as I did, who would have been willing to sit down with me, drawn in to these remarkable lives, and into the controversy of did they or didn’t they have an affair. I wouldn’t have shared that unfolding with someone who felt less drawn to these men than I did, not for anything.

But now I have started translating the letters in this beloved book for myself using both homophonic translation, along with some associative writing from the French, as well as Google Translate. First I take the letter and spin it back from French to Spanish where it began, and then
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I take it through to English where I can better get a grasp on the language. From France where Dali spent so much time with Gala his wife after Lorca’s death, back to Spain where the two men met in University, and through language again and time to me, to end in a jumble of English words, intricate pieces of the language puzzle to fit back together as sound and meaning permit. Fantastic fodder for poetry.

I like to think that Lorca would have seen this as a sort of playful fate, that I am receiving just the right words after running them through these engines. After the letters are translated I have played with the language in a few ways. First I take the Google translated work and insert words, focusing mainly on sound quality and drawing out the sensual overtones. Next I take the French letters and translate them homophonically. And last I have created several erasure poems from Gertrude Stein’s Lifting Belly and erasure poems from the same letters I have translated in previous sections. I twist these poems together to create a sort of DNA, building blocks for their relationship.

In Being and Time Heidegger talks about a circular nature of time. It was this idea that guided me through the process of reaching out through the seance ritual to touch these lives and put the building blocks of words together for a picture of what might have been, what might be.

Temporalizing does not signify that ecstasies come in a ‘succession’. The future is not later than having been, and having-been is not earlier than the Present. Temporality temporalizes itself as a future which makes present in a process of having been.

(Heidegger 401)
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Heidegger’s temporality exists outside of the structures we have placed it in. The ideas of a past, a present, and a future are fine organizational tropes but when exploring Being and it’s relationship to time we discover that the future is not after the past, the past is not before the present, but all is a future reaching back into the present which is always already the past. Time is not so linear as we would like it to be. It is not a trajectory, but it is a messy business of overlapping layers, some touching and informing the others, melding together meaning and truth, leaving us always looking through a glass darkly, groping for a stable place to stand. These letters were the stability I was looking for. A place to stand that didn’t necessarily make fact apparent, but offered footing by way of honest groanings between two men.

In the introduction to Carolyn Dinshaw’s book Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern, she speaks about searching for ancestors through time. To find a kinship with those whom you may not have even known and to know them, to touch them, and to be touched by them through the barrier of death:

The queer historian...is decidedly not nostalgic for wholeness and unity; but s/he nonetheless desires an affective, even tactile relation to the past such as the relic provides. Wrenched out of its context of hypocrisy and stagnant, nostalgic longing for wholeness, the queer Pardoner's preoccupation with the matter of past lives can reinforce the queer sense of the need for and prompt the creation not of the kinds of books that would please 'historians,' as Foucault sneered, but rather of another kind of 'felaweshipe' across time. (Dinshaw, 142)
Not only did Dinshaw go back to early texts to identify a queer history but she also chartered a pathway for a community lied to by a society that would have us believe that there isn’t a queer community of ancestors. With Getting Medieval, Dinshaw offers that community not only a pantheon of ancestors, but tactile support, a haptic fellowship across time, sure footing.

In order to access that fellowship, I experimented with spiritualism, particularly with seance. I centered my word play around time’s circularity and the hope that extending my self through time and calling on ancestors, my instincts, and faith in my own wild associations, I could learn more about this relationship between Federico Garcia Lorca and Salvador Dali. I sought out to address them as divine. As something more opaque than deceased artists and writers and more like gods, even better lovers. With all of the power and affection of my parents’ god, but with the sensuality, brokenness, and unabashed nature of something really close, though veiled. These were lovers without shadow, without hesitance, and what’s more without shame. All that they had wanted in life but could not access. I addressed them as if they had. I offered them a reality to come into where they could speak freely. Where they could open up into themselves free of shame and assigned position; the same foundation they offer me.

I called on Gertrude Stein, a known friend of Dali’s, and someone who freely embraced a homosexual lifestyle to be a spiritual guide of sorts. I had started to sink my roots deep into Stein’s fertile soil and I found myself drawn to her in a similar way as to Lorca. They both knew so deeply who they were. They embraced themselves wholly and loved those close to them deeply. I looked to Stein’s words to guide me to these men. Because Stein’s relationship to her
lover, Alice B. Toklas was unapologetic I felt she was the perfect foil to the relationship in question. Her words, wrapped around theirs could draw their desire, their sensuality out from behind the shame veil. But there was also a healing I hoped she would bring to the table, an example of deep love between two people, separate from societal expectation and self definition. Regardless of how the world works, who reads the book, who tells the story Gertrude Stein loves Alice Toklas. No matter where history places them, their names are inseparable. I wanted that truth to be able to guide the spirits of Lorca and Dali, and myself to a meeting place. I wanted Stein to bring the two men together. And I wanted to lean on her myself, to allow myself fuller access to my self. To shirk the baggage placed on my identity by the meta-narrative society and organized religion offers.

In order to make the seance structure work I needed a Medium. Someone for the men to speak through. I felt I could hold that role, but then I met Margarita Manso. Manso was a classmate in university that the men were friends with. In the depths of their relationship, when a consummation felt right, Dali was unable to go as deeply, physically as they would have liked. We learn from Ian Gibson in The Shameful Life of Salvador Dali that the painter was not fond of physical affection, even with Gala, his wife in later years. So the two men asked Margarita to step in for Dali. Lorca’s physical encounter with Margarita was in a sense a mediumship. She allowed him to speak to Dali through her. I had to invite her into the process. She and I stood on the same ground.

To set the mood, and start the conversation I held a couple of seances, reaching out to first, Gertrude Stein, and then, Lorca, and Dali. I poured my attention into them, meditating on
their relationships with one another, their similarities and their differences, their artistic and relational endeavors. I tried to see them each intimately and objectively. And my love for them only grew and became more intricate and whole. These were my ancestors. They were my dispositional flesh and blood. Knowing they came before eased my own crooked and thorny path to self.

Though I am not a Christian, I have found another place to put my “groanings too deep for words”. Sound poetry holds my groanings, my moans, my wails, and my laughter. It is held by these ancestors who came before me, who are supporting and informing my work now and through time. But it is also informed by others. I studied Harryette Mullens’ brilliant sound poetry to find my own footing in language play. Rachel Zolf’s Janey’s Arcadia opened up for me what it means to focus on the past. Erin Moure is a fantastic translator that has done quite a bit of work in both French and Spanish. And her work in My Beloved Wager focusing on sexual, gender, national identity and what it means for writing, poetry, to be a way of life, really helped me to pry open those very same themes in my own work. James Merrill’s book The Changing Light at Sandover also gave me the confidence to move forward with the project in earnest, as he so openly and concretely communicates with his own channeled spirit. As if this is a common theme in literature/poetry. As if calling on these spirits is in a sense calling on Wisdom, another kind of knowing.

My love of symbols and ritual was nurtured and encouraged by the Christian church. Perhaps that is why using seance elements was so attractive to me. The repetition of the
Invocation section of The Spirit Cabinet feels like a meditation. Ideally the reader would speak the invocations out loud. The goal is to hear the sounds that make up the names of the Hero: Federico Garcia Lorca, the Lover: Salvador Dali, the Spirit Guide: Gertrude Stein, and the Medium(s): Margarita Manso/the self and, over and over again. It’s an invitation, a focusing in, and an opening up.

I used some of the tactile items from a seance as symbols to frame this collection. The title: The Spirit Cabinet was a binding cabinet used to tie down the Medium at the seance; thus showing that she was doing nothing physically to manipulate her surroundings, proving the validity of the spirit’s presence.

The next object is the Spirit Slate. These were two slates bound together, to open up and reveal messages from the spirits. For this section I have taken erasure from Gertrude Stein’s Lifting Belly, and erasure from my translated letters and spun them together. I was drawn to bringing Stein into the conversation because she was also a queer poet living in the early twentieth century in Europe. But she was in a committed relationship. She was able to express her love much more confidently and openly than Lorca and Dali seem to have. I brought Stein in as a sort of Spirit Guide, for the two men and for me. With her guidance maybe we could coax a confession of love from the Lover, offering him a sense of confidence.

The next object is the Spirit Trumpet. This object was used to enhance the whispered voices of the spirits. In this section I have homophonically translated the letters straight from the
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French, again focusing in on the sounds from the French, but also playing with some of the French meaning.

The last object is the Seance Table. This object is represented in the section “Table Tipping”. These poems are tipped and skewed by the words I have added to the translations. While writing these poems I strove to focus in on writing from the voice of these two lovers. I imagined the conflict that may have been there and the overwhelming passion, and I let myself be guided by the sounds in their words, translated.

This project is about submerging yourself in the world of two lovers, with all of the ups and downs, jealousies, and miscommunications of any relationship. But it is also about the revelation of identity, and the fluidity of passion. It is about how an openness to the deterioration of titles and definitions can lead to a concrete community and a tangible love.