

Avian Loop
is produced by
the monthly
art writing group
first established by
The Physics Room
Contemporary
Art Space
in 2018.

*All writers
welcome.*

AVIAN
LOOP



ISSUE
3

Autumn
2021

I have lost count of the number of times
I have stopped myself
From correcting the way the toilet roll is on
the dispenser in the houses of people I know
I also resist the temptation
To remove price tags from books
my friends have loaned me
And to write their names on the fly-leaf

I read a book as a child where the
central character was described as
“having a way with animals”
It became my heart's desire
One day a lady was walking her chihuahua
across the church lawn
The dog ran to me and I picked it up
She said to me “He never lets anyone hold him.
“You must have a way with animals.”
The next-door neighbours have a dog named Lulu
with whom I have a spiritual connection
I believe she likes me more than them
I sometimes think the same of my exes,
but not all of them

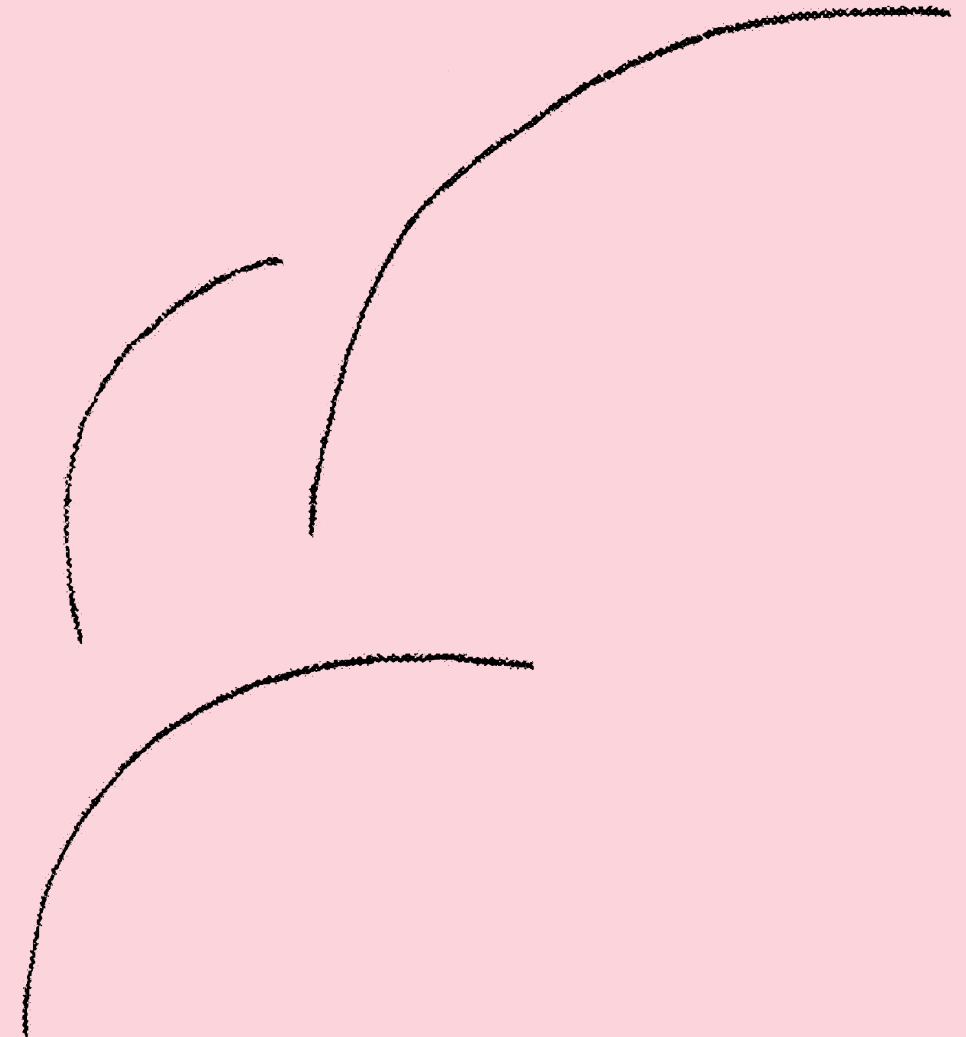
I used to dream I was back with my ex-husband
In the dream I wasn't allowed to leave him again
Because the rule of the dream was if I had returned
It was for good
It was at least a year after we broke up before
I could break the rule and leave him
in my dreams too

I often dream about people I love
I am not surprised if the following day
they show up, even if they live far away
If it's a nightmare, I check in with them
to make sure they're OK
Frequently they aren't
I think of death or dying most days

I think about bridges collapsing when
I am crossing them, also tunnels
When I am in a high-rise building
I stay close to the edges of the building
in case it collapses
I think that way I might be able to crawl out
I think how I was inside the CTV building on
Monday February 21, 2011
I got married five days later
I wonder if prayer has become a superstition
rather than a spiritual conversation
I pray for the health and safety of my husband
as some form of talisman to ward off evil

I am not a violent person,
I would describe myself as a pacifist
But there are a number of men I have fantasised
about giving a good slap across the face,
mid-sentence like the Batman & Robin meme
And I had a dream where my ex-husband made me
kill my lover with a kitchen knife and bury him
in a shallow grave in my garden—I don't eat
game anymore, because I think venison might
have caused it
I also had a dream where I punched a friend's
asshole ex in the face—I think I ate a vegetarian
dinner that night, I just really didn't like the way
he treated her
There is, however, one person I'd like to punch,
in real life, in the kidneys, on a sunny weekday
afternoon, on the side of the road,
outside Westfield Riccarton—just so he would
know what it feels like
I'm afraid I'm not a good person,
when it really comes down to it
I worry my mother will always worry about me
I bought an iron with a kill switch
So I don't have to worry if I have turned it off
when I leave the house

Marianne once told me that she had heard on
Radio New Zealand that there is a name for the phobia
That saying your fears out loud
will bring them into being
But she couldn't remember the word
and I can't work out how to find it



17.02.21 level 2 ends 23.59
Auckland level 3 goes to level 2

I am out with Zephyr, in the Weedon's Domain
golf and cricket greens
tarmac tennis and basketball courts
the latest fancy children's playground
and two Hebe gardens
One tall and dense, the other small and sparse,
almost an afterthought

Rabbit secret business
Rabbit secret burrows
Rabbit Islands
Zephyr's happy place
His helicopter tail swirling above the shrubs,
my only confidence that he has not bolted
out of the Domain to collide with a milk tanker
or quarry truck

We are between the greens

golf buggies move in random packs,
answering to iPhone commands
rickety across the gravel, clubs shaking
They head to the next green
their owners stop and smile
They muse at the joy in that tail
as though we are having the fun
and they are doing the golf chore
His joy, possibly the only catching thing
in the Domain

Rabbits scatter
in and out of the small Hebes
Zephyr's eyes glaze with excitement
he no longer responds to his name
We will be here for quite a while.

My phone tells me Hamish has posted.
The *Avian Loop* is back for 2021
Maybe time to play with structure

Begone Covid brain fog
Begone fascist virtue signalers
Begone Sky Sky Ra Ra Cray Cray Cry Cry
Murdoch will cancel Morrison's
Australian citizenship
And send him to the Dunedin
non-corn-rows school and gun club
To be with his kind

A tall gentleman, as bent as a shepherd's
crook stops to chat
He has a very self-assured dog. It is a pug,
wide, strong sable chest, perfectly groomed.
Zephyr returns its greeting and is fast off
he disappears into the tall Hebes
Their leaves wave in maze formations
He is on a scent, I circle around
Waiting for his exit

We can see the playground now
the tall gentleman lifts the pug into
a basket swing
The pug is given a careful time on all
the joy the playground has to offer
the slippery dip, a finale
back to the top again and again

Though we are far away, we are close,
within the exchange of their gaze
It is an aesthetic space, often felt when
experiencing an artwork
And like the gifts an artwork can bestow,
Their exchange gifts to us a beautiful stone,
flat and smooth, soothed by time
It finds a deep, green pool beneath a waterfall,
and leaves circle surface ripples as it descends
and waits.

28.02.21 level 2 begins 06.00
Auckland is level 3

Part 1

POV drops onto the globe, hurtling down to the
Pacific towards East Honolulu and pausing
roughly 1,186 metres above the Waialae Country
Club. It dips down towards the first hole,
polygonal trees coalescing into something more
arboreal as it glides along the fairway, 40 metres
above the surface, before pivoting at the pin on
the green to buzz the next hole. The declension
of hills towards the coast bristle with suburbia
that encloses the course. There are no clouds
in the Google sky.

Nelson - - - - (- - - -) - - tees up at hole 1, 1998,
True Golf Classics. The fairway is an
undifferentiated green mat. The Regency at
Kahala rises above the palms in the distance—
the top of the 24 floors high enough to view the
entirety of the garden enclosed. Estate of private
botanics to reward the pleated elite for their
prohibitive annual dues that dwarf the public
parks adjacent to it.

Rainbow arc disappears and animated avatar
swings as clouds move across the sky in
pixelated increments. The white pixel cluster
of the ball trailed by a turquoise and blue ribbon
through the air. Near the pin the grid overlay
maps undulations on the green, mining topos
for data. The palms' ragged bitmaps that define
the edges of the garden shelter the 2D mass of
'spectators'. "Who is watching the threshold of
this garden?" Nowhere to go but the next fairway.

The drone cycles through God's eye view, bird's
eye view, groundless view in the airless garden.
Its screen counterpart produces ground as it
maps red wireframe intrusions into the
fog'o'war. Gun emplacements along Ohau coast;
Waialae a proving ground. The screen divides
Su Yu Shin and Angela Goh's apparitions; the
whites of one's eyes suffused with bluelight.
The screen seen from both sides now. Centre of
brittle arcadia. POV orbits a spiky shrub on the
red grid. Sims 4 build mode. Locus Amoenus.
Fantasy terraforming. POV passes nearly

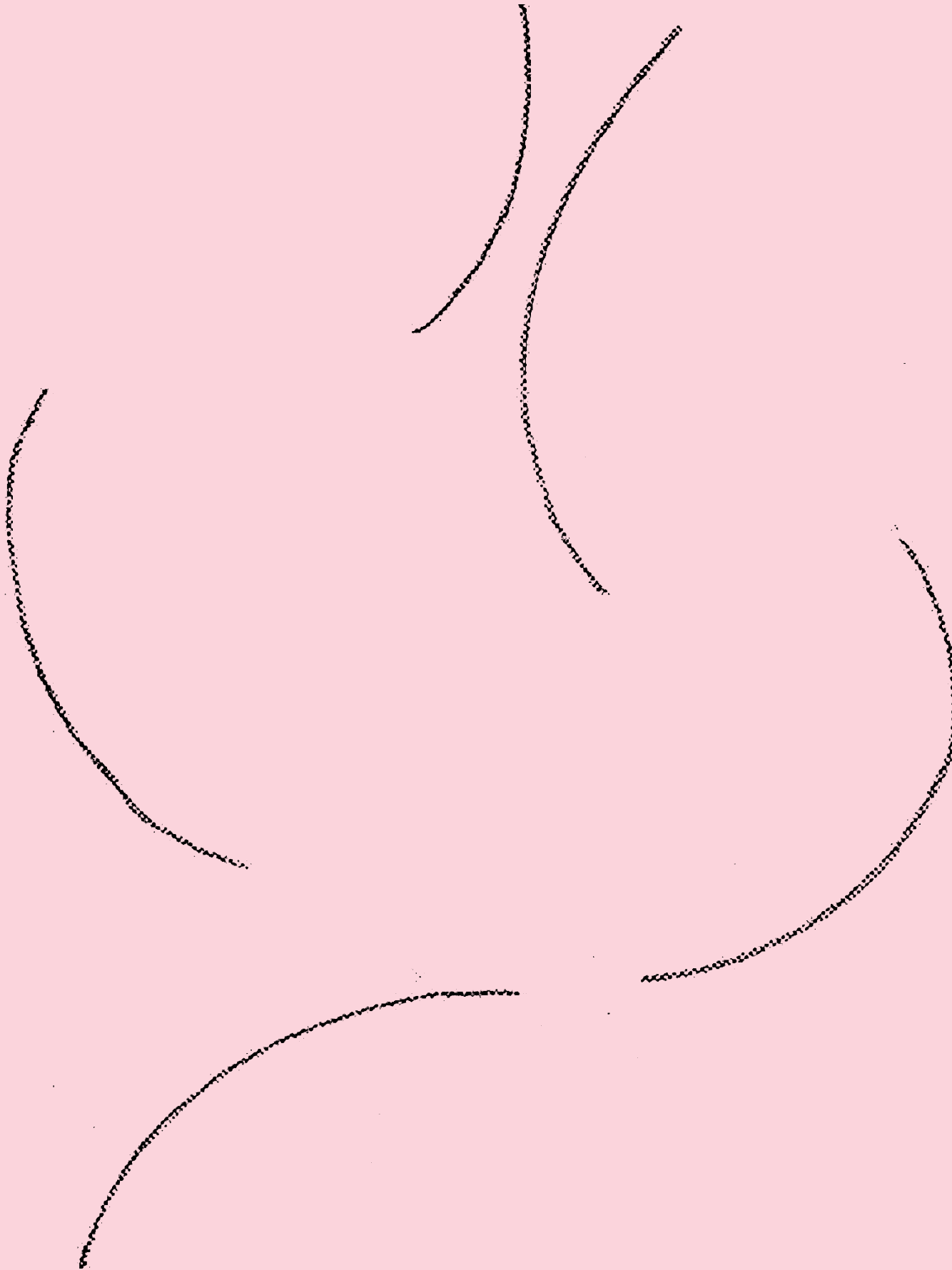
through a tear in the render of a right nostril—
uncomfortably intimate, like a handshake lasting
too long, like the dial-up 700 percent slower.

Facial recognition is a game; inviolability is the
prize, so give the A.I. data to cache. It will tell
you when you can resume watching yourself
watching yourself. Gamify the commute and the
onboard peripherals would have covered the
outlay. Car play is foreplay; save that privacy shit
for your own space. Something something in the
streets, Homo Incognitus in the sheets.

The potted cherry blossoms in glass lobbies are
too sickly to hide behind, presence reflected off
Donald Judd mirror boxes lying about the place.
The only way to not haemorrhage data is a
perpetual sliding down corporate bannisters—"I
made my way once again, but we met behind
every turn, behind every shrub"—or maybe to
keep climbing, to see the city from both sides,
now. Clouds mirrored in pristine glass, merging
with each other. Palms pressed to the pane,
arms ending in fog—no face, now. Bare concrete
and I-beams. Clouds cover Su Yu Hsin and she
darts between pillars.

Paeonia Drive by Angela Goh and
Su Yu Hsin. Performed online Thursday
6 August 2020. Presented by
Campbelltown Arts Centre and Arts
House as part of BLEED 2020.

[bleedonline.net/program/paeonia-drive/navigation
paeoniadrive.xyz](https://bleedonline.net/program/paeonia-drive/navigation/paeoniadrive.xyz)



1. / 5 February 2021
On Disengaging

Two people occupy the bench at the pond, sitting to the far left and right of the sun-bleached wooden seat. They both wear black t-shirts and neither speaks. Nearby, the glancing trees shift in the high morning wind, and close their lidded leaves.

2. / 12 February 2021
Unbound from a Week's Utility

In the thin light, I watch the playful geometries of birds bathing, wings and beaks stretching and doubling in the glossy water. A child in a bright parka passes by, calling out in delight to its caregivers at the sight of the birds, tugging hands and pointing. And the birds respond, pouring onto the bank in waves; first the crisp, white seagulls with their wide beaks, then the mild ducks, their feathers fluttering teal and indigo. Even the cream goose with its tangerine face and sun yellow feet, its presence an eager expanse on the cropped grass. The caregivers walk on, deep in conversation. Only the child looks back, slowing their progress, still pointing. The birds mill on the edge of the pond, long after the child is out of view. I wonder, *What being, what force in the world would not respond to such exuberance?*

3. / 16 February 2021
Contrasting Scale

Today, I notice that the smallest water birds generate the largest wakes, the evergreen water rippling out from their gliding forms in wide, lingering chevrons. In contrast, the larger water birds generate shorter, narrower wave patterns. Perhaps nature presents us with a different posture: The smaller we are, the broader our effects.

4. / 19 February 2021
An Unexpected Respite

It's lunchtime, and the bench at the pond is occupied by a reclining figure in a black shirt and a pale straw hat, talking obliquely past the water birds into a mobile phone. The bench next to the basketball court is empty. I take a seat, and watch the sun slip the shadow circle of the hoop over the baseline as it orbits west; an irreverent star playing its own game. The stark geometry of the skate park softens in the long afternoon.

The windows have been left open, and it's balmy already. I'm up early, trying to dig through my cubby of clothes as quietly as possible. I set out to the kitchen. There's no food out yet, settling on a crappy instant "espresso" from the machine.

First digital check in for the day
INSTAGRAM app
>>

smiling faces : one known : one not : very close up : uninterested, I ignore the caption

a beach : video : shaky pan : dog bounding in and out of frame

Kim K : companion unknown : plush leather private jet seats wrapped with shiny faux-wood boards to support the champagne

1st image, 3 women and their partners : 2nd, my friend and her boyfriend : 3rd, friend looking up to her boyfriend while he looks at the camera

My coffee has been consumed in full. I quickly rustle in the outer pocket of my bag. Event tickets, passport, cash, room key. Heading out the hostel door, now.

Wait,

suddenly second guessing my timing and direction

checking maps

No, I had done it right.

Turning left, it's up this way for about 20min before following the fork in the road.

Things are still as I approach the waterfront. The sky is crisp, and the bustle of the day not yet built. I look over to the entrance, still a five or ten minute stroll away. Stopping here for a moment, breathing in the calm.

I look over to the work. Something I've thought about for so long, looking at it from a distance, it feels surreal. I'm not here, and it's sitting in a snow globe gifted from someone more special than me.

I feel this deeply, and the glass becomes a haze in my eyes.
I give them a rub to pull myself back;

the orange
the green tuft it wraps around
the blue grey water floating
rippling
tugging at the orange
the orange is silky
it ripples with liquid
I wonder how this is going to work

I approach. I arrive. The line is long.

Second check in for today
NEWS app
>>

UNITE BEHIND BREXIT, URGES MAY

THE NEW MOBILE MOGUL; HOW KIM MADE \$45 MILLION FROM ONE GAME

ISLAMIC STATE CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DHAKA ATTACK

ASHBURTON COUPLE REJECT CLAIMS OF DODGY ALPACA DEAL

TRUMP CAMPAIGN TOPPLES TPP PLANS

Dipping in and out of my reading, performing a delayed shuffle as I sense the over-eager movement of bodies around me. I do a half-read on the attack, but overwhelmed I soon allow myself to become absorbed by the Alpaca dispute. I think I'm done now, a familiar press to the lock screen.

Looking up, I am surprised by the ground covered. My turn comes around, entry is approved.

It's more stable than it looks, yet my body still stumbles at the illusion of it. Looking down at the surface of the pier, I try to pick its colour. Orangey-yellow, too vibrant for a mustard but heading in that direction. Its reflection is blinding and I cannot look too long.

Looking up now, my body gaining more confidence in the structure, I see it stretch on. It will be a long walk to the island. Figures meander along, some more involved than others. A couple linger, in light conversation. It strikes me as poetic the way they move so casually, as if simply out for an evening stroll in the suburbs. I wonder where and how they live, that they can remain so underwhelmed at such a happening. I also imagine a world where we commute via bright piers, and there's never any rush, so we always just walk.

An older man walking past me now seems more impressed, and flicks me a childish smile. I can see him playing, a syncopated bounce to his step, testing the platform. A set of children bound past me, veering to the left at a high speed. I watch, anticipating an unfortunate end to this revelry. Their parents call out in a frustrated, French telling-off. The kids slow.

I continue onwards, flicking between observation and response. Feeling my body in relation to objects and others, as well as framing moments in my mind. The busyness builds, and I begin to feel tired and decide to head back. Onshore the hunger sets in. I find the closest cheap place I can.

Un cornetto e un cappuccino per favore.

As I order, I notice the mood at the installation changes. Crowds gather as the SUVs roll in. In the ten minutes it took for me to walk over here, the piers have been almost fully cleared of spectators, making way for the ensemble. They emerge from their vehicles, and are escorted to the platform. I can't see them in full amongst the crowds. I consider going for a look, but decide it's not worth the effort.

Waiting for my breakfast still, I commence my third check in for the day.

TWITTER app
>>

I am really happy Hilary made her speech right under Trump World Tower!
@realDonaldTrump

Me, approving of something in a work email: "OK, perfect!"
Me, disapproving of something in a work email: "Ok, sounds good!"
@1followernodad

One day, Donald Trump is going to look a reporter straight in the eyes on national TV and say "I never ran for President"
@mattauskamp

Feeling blown away by the grandeur of the floating piers, guys you HAVE to get here. @ChristoandJC is a true auteur, so privileged to be here experiencing the work with the artist himself.
@KimKardashian

ISSUE

THREE

COLOPHON

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