

rob mclennan

five short essays

the beauty of waterfalls
turned over.

— Matthew Holmes, *Hitch*

The page is a slice of geological time.

— Jessica Smith, "Manifest"

1. short essay on intent

the black dog barking mute behind
the kitchen window

I stagger statement stain
the pounding sun

blood vessels pump & lift the line
tween index, thumb

I was well enough to get the water
from her blackened fridge

I have a package

I am the engineer

2. brief ghazal on acuity

what the darkness must resemble,
a murder of crows

I wait for her w/ anxious dread
at construction corner

why would all my recent lines
be so dedicated

an otherwise occupied,
but would release myself

today is painful marking
in the trees

3. short essay on the escape artist

forgets nothing, & admits as much; pretends
he is both larger & smaller than he is

sleep a shady country, w/ shifting maps; would
you never ask a question, he asks?

the longest form of touch has not yet been recorded

the world is wrought w/ endings & beginnings
that never arrive so nearly fast enough

handcuffs are far easier than feeling,
doing taxes; it all begins with just a little key

it all begins with realizing that the key is not the only

the past is a poor muscle & the heart
a foreign country

a hard man forgets himself

4. short essay on birds

(for jessica smith)

window s ill s lowly wing ing wing
prevacate ; the s ound of bird wing feeder
father fill s ound ing s parrow rob in read
b reast is colour ed wheel s pun hard right
re turn a tree p articu late s leep ethereal s ong
of familiar un familiar bird s ong wind ow open
w al k in the t all gr ass g listen s

5. short essay on literature

bendable; mind over matter straws or spoons
a texture daily lazy, self-blaming, root
of human *anything*; another and control, no longer
, comes alive; the taste of error, posing
privilege & demands; the page goes
longer, further, knows not

where the spelling out; *an outcry naked, covered*

rob mclennan lives in Ottawa, Canada's glorious capital city, even though he was born there. The author of over a dozen collections of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, he is spending the 2007-8 academic year in Edmonton, Alberta as writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta. He often posts reviews, essays and rants at robmclennan.blogspot.com