

Word

Not just a syllable, a ululation, click, roll, slur, trill. I want the whole damn thing, the roller-coaster ride of consonant, vowel, accent and innuendo. I want serendipity do-da, I want somnambulant rapture, and I want it mal, bad—malcontented, maladjusted, maloccluded. I want it alpha and penultimate—there is no end. I want the sound and everything it conjures up, the surprise—that wasp nest still clinging to the eaves of memory, thin paper that seems empty but buzzes to life with a little warming—or should I say warning—a little onomatopoeic poltergeist in my head, a haunting, a mesh of sound and moment, fit tight as tiles in a Moroccan mosaic, or the cowry shell wrapped about its softer insides, the subtle pianissimo of what it is—these sounds our companions, linking us one to another like some species specific duet—or should I say diet—the panda and its bamboo, the koala and its eucalyptus, how things are joined as, when I say a word—veranda, for example—or a name, Einstein—it never means strictly what I want it to because of the baggage, everything it ever was—including the madness—everything the seine net of memory can hold—squirring shiners, bits of vegetation, muck and grit and algae—the small, the smell of it, so that even now, dry and propped against the garage, this net teems, the wind catching at its webbing, the primal smell like bed sheets after sex—a skin, a skein of sound, whirl of x and y, both cargo and carriage—like any word—part cure, part tremor at the core.