

Lucy and Surely

Ronaldo V. Wilson

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Ronaldo V. Wilson, *Lucy and Surely*. Video. [\[view at article URL\]](#)

Spoken text:

But why do the children want to go home in the first place? What porch, like this, leads back to their very safe lives?—A life both there, and unattached to impediment or banal fact. KQGlam’s makeup in the car is clear, red lips and blue eyes, and her beauty matches her insides. She’s one black driver, and the children she drives to safety are fleshy pink bodies bearing blackness as a resource.

The point of the retreat from the Paris Accords is to erase the fact of a black president. It should have never happened. But because it did, it remains for a particularly dumb sum, a nightmare. Even the world will burn and melt at the thought of the blacks still swimming in the pools, and the stabbings grow, so how else would KQGlam drive but effective and simultaneously cry?

from “Dream Collaged with Reality,” *Virgil Kills: Stories from the Conservation of Mass*. EP 101. online. (Essay Press, 2018) <http://www.essaypress.org/ep-101/>

What is the difference between the outside and the inside of the dream can only be explained in the pitch of darkness that fills the room in the vision, of blue and black. Menacing, this threat manifests as black, nylon luggage, and in it, power cords, flash drives, and speakers that shake as he looks at them. These things are not permanent, yet they are there. What in this material is his? What surfaces does he own? Virgil remembers, he was not reading on the stage but he was on it, an intervening MC, who said something like, “How can you play a set during the middle of someone else’s performance?”

from “Dream Vision in Blue and Black,” *Nepantla: An Anthology of Queer Writers of Color*, ed. Chris Soto (Nightboat Books, 2017)

Artist’s Statement

Lucy and Surely exemplifies my toggling between performance, composition, and persona. In an interview with Soham Patel for the *Georgia Review*, I get at persona in this way: “Persona, to me, in some ways, provides a means to immediately contest the boundaries of racial and sexual designations under the sign of how many of us understand these to be fictions...”¹

Lucy and Surely is a hybrid manifestation of some fictive personas made up of “Lucy,” the main persona in *Lucy 72*² who speaks from both *inside* and *outside* of her perceived race, unveiling her identity as a white woman—in Denver, CO, masked, on a campus near a pond—who is also a fat brown young man, black, or not black, sometimes becoming a flash of light, and “Virgil,” another amorphous figure, but human as Raven(OUS) dancing as SURELY TEMPL BLK under a tree, imagining lynched body parts, dripping from trees. Dey shoot the scene: Vector through which to explore psychic loss, recovery.

The spoken text that one can hear in the video is from a forthcoming book, *Virgil Kills*, in which the speaker presents a number of queries to redress this such as: *What porch, like this, leads back to their very safe lives?—A life both there, and unattached to impediment or banal fact... Even the world will burn and melt at the thought of the*

*blacks still swimming in the pools, and the stabbings grow...*³ And at the end of the video, the voice returns:... *this threat manifests as black, nylon luggage, and in it, power cords, flash drives, and speakers that shake... These things are not permanent, yet they are there. What in this material is his? What surfaces does he own?*⁴

I excavate surface, material memory, *stomp* on a green hill. Two figures associated with Black Mountain College's enduring history of experimental art, artists and practices have long influenced my approach, perhaps the earliest, Jacob Lawrence, whose famous painting "Pool Parlor"⁵ influenced the way I have come to understand movement and composition, Black bodies in space, lengthened in situational flatness and field, as I stared at the poster of it my bedroom in college where I began to write poems. A second Black Mountain figure Robert Rauschenberg remains a deep touchpoint for me, his *Black Paintings* like "Untitled [black painting with portal form],"⁶ I encountered in my first years of learning to construct poetry, its undulating layers, kin in the density of black form, coagulating, thickening even now.

¹ <https://thegeorgiareview.com/posts/seven-questions-with-ronaldo-v-wilson/>

² Wilson, Ronaldo V., *Lucy 72* (San Diego, CA: 1913 Press, 2018)

³ Wilson Ronaldo V., "Dream Collaged with Reality," *VIRGIL KILLS*: (Brooklyn, NY: Nightboat Books, Forthcoming 2022).

⁴ Ibid. "Dream Vision in Blue and Black."

⁵ Lawrence, Jacob, *Pool Parlor*, 1942, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY. Watercolor and gouache on paper. (31 1/8 x 22 7/6 inches).

⁶ Rauschenberg, Robert, *Untitled [black painting with portal form]*, 1952-53, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Oil and newspaper on canvas. (51 1/8 in x 54 ¼ inches).