



*Divers to Dive:*  
*A Pandemic*  
*Dream*  
*Journal*

#9

*David Keenan*  
*Eleni Avraam*





## Day of the Wren

Angus MacLise, the original drummer for the Velvet Underground before he quit after he realised he would have to turn up at a certain time and play for a certain length in order to be in a band, invented his own calendar which he published as *YEAR*. It is the most elementary act of magick, to re-name the days, and live in them, that way. MacLise gave all 365 days their own name. Today is Day of the Wren.



## Day of the Thrush

Clarice Lispector, writing in her Holy Book, *Agua Viva*:

“But the most important word in the language has but two letters: is. Is.

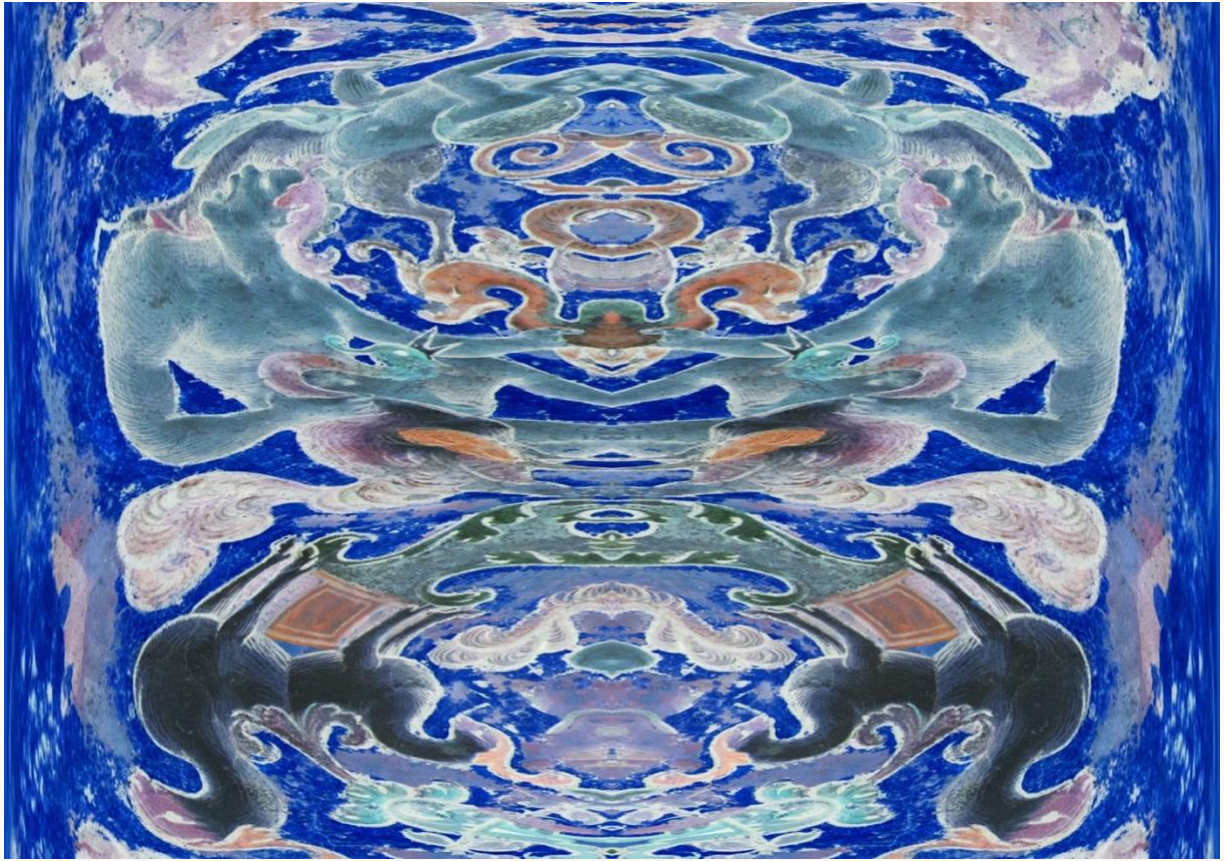
I am at its core

I still am.

I am at the living and soft centre.

Still.”





## **Day of the Bird of Paradise**

### *Instructions for Evensong on the Re-Opening of the Churches:*

1. Watch for the chorister who is touched, the one with the palsied face, the one whose head cannot rise from their shoulders, the one who is shaking as they make their way to the choir, the one who is muttering, in a pew, behind you, the one whose throat is stopped up, like God and the little sparrow.
2. Never under any circumstances sing the words. Open your mouth when the choir sings, only.
3. Avoid St Paul's and (especially) Westminster Cathedral Evensongs. St Paul's is too cavernous, too Classic FM. Westminster's is frigid and dull.
4. Have you ever sat through a performance of that idiotic old fart Stainer's "Crucifixion"? It is complete tripe. But wait. Wait. I feel that

I am here to make an argument for the presence of the sacred, as the choir comes in, His Royal Banner held high by a woman with a twisted spine and a contorted neck and an involuntary spasm who obviously – God be with her – cannot sing. Little sparrow, why can't you sing? For I was crushed between the fingers of the Lord, my Lord, my little larynx was held tight, and stopped, it says. And re-opened, too, it says, again.

5. The choir is monotonous, incredible. There is one voice, and there is many. The words are simple, uncanny. Lift up! But who is lifting? Lay down! But who is lying? In front of me a young black woman shifts in her seat. An old man falls to his knees in a pew across the way. How will he rise? How will he regain his composure? The mystery of the divine humiliation, the little sparrow sings in a voice that cannot sing, by God.

6. This is the first lesson of church going. I adore thee, I adore thee, is the first lesson. I adore thee, fat vicar of the past, you there, too, with your prayer book and your double chin, you too sweetie, dark-haired sweetie on the choir to the left, your sexy librarian glasses, the way the light of the cathedral – they call them shafts – teases the shadow of your cheekbone, and you, of course, bird with a broken larynx, as you brush your hair aside, your barbed-wire hair, I have watched you do that at least ten times already, your fat body, pulled back, not by gravity but by God as an archer, the mystery of the divine humiliation, which is where the congregation all stand, and say, God gave way to death, God gave way to his own idea, and submitted to it, in order that it might say I adore thee, a God so lacking in love, I love you so, and bald guy with big ears I see you too, back there, lugs, I call them, beneath my breath, as we sing together, blessed lugs, I mean to say, and there is a small dog in a pew behind me, they let small dogs in here, will there be dogs in heaven, I think to myself, even as Christ himself is given up to pure passion I am thinking to myself, is it allowed to have dogs in a church and how annoying is it.

## Divers to Dive #9

7. Large, mixed choirs of men and women, boys and girls, are invariably best.
8. Seek out churches in small French villages with ancient old crackling tannoy systems that only intermittently work.
9. The best Evensong in Scotland is at St Mary's Cathedral, in Edinburgh. If you go when I am there, I will not speak to you.





## Day of the Spear

I am reading *An Excellent Booke Of The Arte Of Magicke, The Magical Works Of Humphrey Gilbert & John Davis From British Library Additional Manuscript 36674, Transcribed, Edited And Introduced by Phil Legard with Supplementary Essays by Alexander Cummins*, newly published by Scarlet Imprint. It's fantastic. I am addicted to reading grimoires and accounts of magickal workings, even as they endlessly turn on the same repeated calls and bindings. Incantation, cadence, is the repeat beauty of the grimoires but it is poetry, now, that is at the

forefront of incantation, and modern musics, too. Poetry = real ingress. Scrying, too.

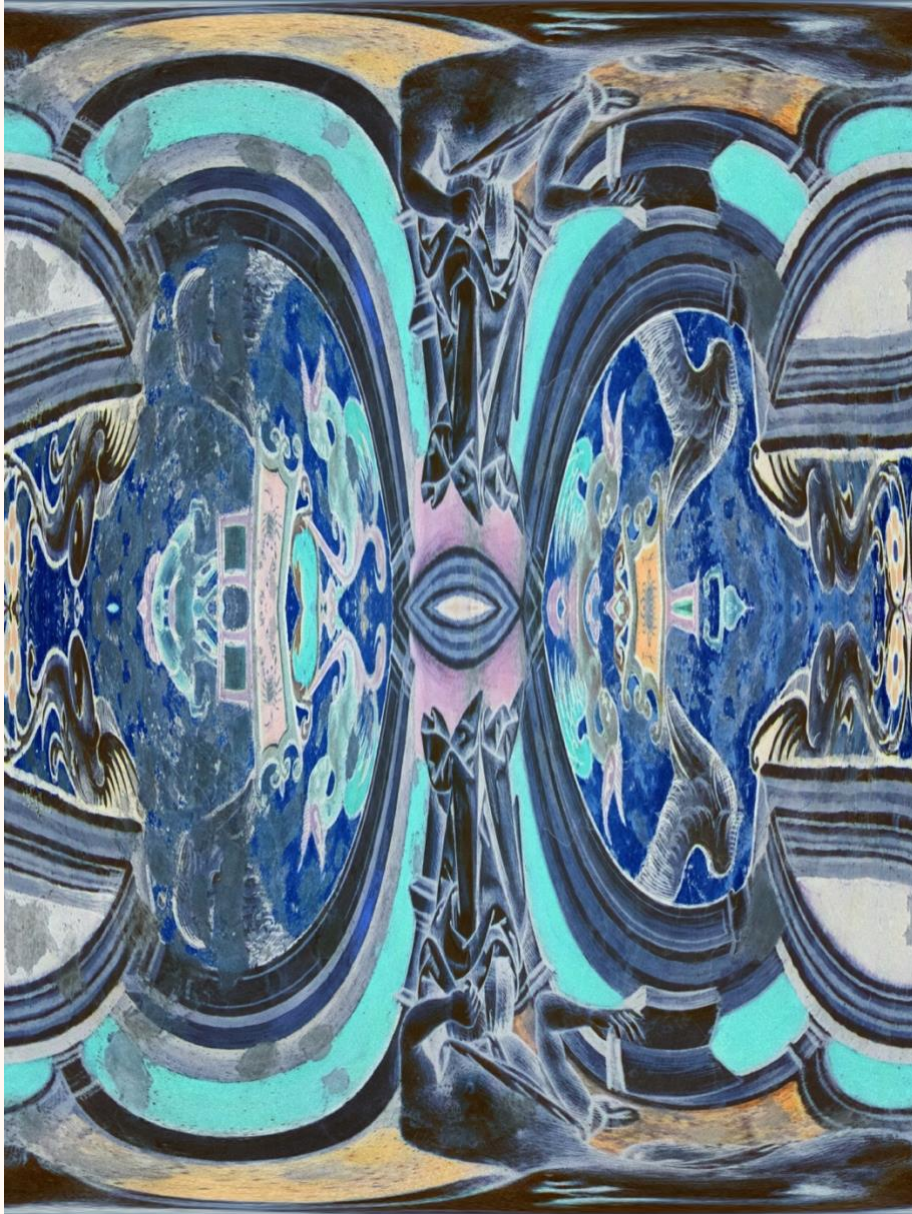
I think the grimoires and magickal diaries get much closer to what it actually *feels like* to create, to write, to incant. For me, the process is more like channelling, an allowing of angels, and demons, to speak.

In *An Excellent Booke*, Gilbert warns never to believe a spirit, and always to test them, and to doubt their motivations, to always presume a devil where there is an angel, until St Luke himself steps in, during one of their sessions, and asks him to ease off on the abusing of the powers.

But it makes sense. When writing, I sit, and I listen, and when something speaks I put it through tests, at first I doubt it is the correct speaking of the moment, whether it is the actual angel word itself, and it is only after weighing and doubting and coming to be sure of the veracity of the voice, that it belongs, here, in this book/moment, and also that I am listening correctly, and getting out of the way of what wants to come through as much as possible, that I inscribe its first words. And then I bind it, that it might stay in order to speak as fully as possible, but I don't bind it for too long, and if I feel it has said all it has to say, or that it is now merely speaking to please me, or to confuse me, I banish it altogether.

“Hard flat butterflies”. Scott Walker sings a line from my memory, this moment. Where do they come from, these butterflies?





### **Day of John Evangelist**

The *Tao Te Ching* says: “A path that can be followed is not a spiritual path.”

I’m thinking of the disappearance of the poet Lew Welch, in 1971, when he walked out of Gary Snyder’s farmstead and into the mountains with a .22 revolver. His body was never found. But he left behind a final poem, a possible suicide note, entitled “Song of the Turkey Buzzard”. Its final lines:

NOT THE BRONZE CASKET BUT THE BRAZEN WING  
SOARING FOREVER ABOVE THEE O PERFECT  
O SWEETEST WATER O GLORIOUS

WHEELING

BIRD

It is believed he intended to re-enter the food chain. Years later, Gary Snyder built a zendo on his property, a wooden meditation hall that he named Ring Of Bone, after a line from another poem of Welch's "[I Saw Myself]" where he sees himself "a ring of bone/in the clear stream of all of it". "and then heard/'ring of bone' where/ring is what a/bell does".

Welsh was in a common-law marriage with the mother of Huey Lewis, of Huey Lewis and the News, who he brought up as his stepson, and who changed his performance name to Lewis in Welch's honour.

A path that can be followed is not a spiritual path.





## Day of Mistletoe

The poet Robert Kelly calls it ‘Bach life’, a lifetime of listening to the music of J.S. Bach.

I was hanging out in Russia with *The Observer*’s brilliant, and brilliantly fun, classical music critic, Fiona Maddocks, author of a run of great books on Hildegard of Bingen, Harrison Birtwistle and *Music For Life: 100 Works To Carry You Through*. First thing I asked her was who her favourite Bach conductor was. She laughed and told me she had no idea. I couldn’t believe it. Surely it must be Phillippe Herreweghe?! She told me I was such a guy. Is it true? I don’t know. But then she said, you should get *Bach 333*. I was like, what the fuck is *Bach 333*? Turns out it’s about 220 CDs, a box set that includes every known piece of music by Bach, and with fascinating asides like CDs that cover ‘landmark performances of the *Brandenburg Concertos* 1935 – 2013’. Nick Drake committed suicide to the *Brandenburg*

*Concertos*, I told her. You're such a bloke, she said. She lives with an artist who has the lifestyle of a madman, she said, so she could relate.

I was feeling flush last year, and so I bought it, *Bach 333*. I intend to spend the rest of my life listening to it. My only complaint so far:

Too much Gardiner. Okay, so he compiled the damn thing, and I like his book about Bach, *Music in the Castle of Heaven*, and the DVD documentary that he made for it is pretty good too, but there's something a little polite, a little prissy, a little *clean*, for me, in his interpretations, like for instance, "Actus Tragicus", one of the really early Bach compositions, funeral music, but for me one of the all-time mind-blowing ones. In the really great recordings I've heard, especially ones using ancient instruments, they push the incredibly dissonant recorder sections to the point that it feels like the tones are turning themselves inside out, and it's massively psychedelic, a true rending of the veil, and so sad. Yet in Gardiner's recording here, you might not even notice the audacious dissonance at all. Plus, I don't care what anyone says, Philippe Herreweghe's *St Matthew Passion* is the one, in terms of gothic drama and majesty, certainly, for me, so far, and of course it's Gardiner's *St Matthew* here (alongside Paul McCreech). By this point I would really be doing Fiona's fucking head in right now. So back to "*Brandenburg Concerto* No. 5 in D major (BWV1050)" with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, George Malcolm on harpsichord, Neville Marriner conducting, recorded in 1971, in the year of my birth, in the year of the disappearance of Lew Welch:





## Day of the Mushroom

Planting out the last of the brassicas, the red onions, the rocket. It's as warm as the blue of the 1970s, the skies are that way, too.

One of my best buds, Jennifer Lucy Allan writes:  
“Heraclitus FTW”.

Years ago Jennifer turned me onto *Early Greek Philosophy*, the writings of the pre-Socratics translated by Jonathan Barnes.

Jen writes: “There isn’t a week goes by where I don’t think about something from it, and I read it 12 years ago. It’s the poetic turns around trying to see reality that make it euphoric and transcendental as pre-disciplinary writing and thinking. The cosmos is vortex m8.”

Jen, again: “The Eleatics are the proper heads of the pre-Socratics. Melissus is like Folke Rabe or something.”

Dropping the Folke Rabe comparison is a big call. In my first novel, *This Is Memorial Device*, Lucas Black, the Memorial Device vocalist, is playing Folke Rabe’s minimalist, is-it-even-there, masterpiece “What??” in his caravan when Ross Raymond first visits him.

Jen, again. “I think it makes Heraclitus maybe Terry Riley or something.”

And if you don’t know who Terry Riley is then GET THE FUCK OUT OF THIS JOURNAL!!!

Melissus writes: “If it is nothing, what could be said about it as though it were something? If it is something, either it came into being or it has always existed. But if it came into being, it did so either from the existent or from the non-existent (not even some other nothing, let alone something actually existent) or from the existent (for in that case it would have existed all along and would not have come into being). What exists, therefore, has not come into being. Therefore it has always existed.”

I am with my wife in a cathedral in Nemours, in France. The choir is singing Bach’s *Magnificat*.

Magnificat! Magnificat!



Tomorrow is Walt Whitman's birthday.

Cosmos means the graceful ordering of the world, the beautiful shape of creation.

Cosmos Magnificat! Cosmos Magnificat!

Whitman, as alive today as he ever was, as alive as Blake is, still: "here the profound lesson of reception, nor preference nor denial."

Here it is.

Night x

**Diving | May 2020**

Charles Olson – *The Chiasma, or Lectures In the New Science Of Man*

Charles Olson – *Seafaring Journal 1936*

Charles Olson – *The Maximus Poems*

*Charles Olson – Human Universe*

George Butterick – *A Guide To The Maximus Poems Of Charles Olson*

The Pretty Things – *Parachute*

Patty Waters – *Sings*

Patty Waters – *College Tour*

C.F. Russell – *Znuz Is Znees*

M.F.K. Fisher – *The Gastronomic Me*

Conrad Schnitzler – *Gelb*

Jean-Paul Clébert – *Paris Vagabond*

Blaise Cendrars - *Sky: A Memoir*

Olivia Lang – *The Lonely City*

Luc Sante – *The Other Paris*

Jan Morris – *Trieste and the Meaning of Nowhere*

Franz Hessel - *Walking In Berlin: A Flaneur In The Capital*

Lou Reed – *The Bells*

Michael McClure – *Scratching The Beat Surface*

Pasternak/Tsvetayeva/Rilke – *Letters: Summer 1926*

Peter Cole – *The Dream Of The Poem: Hebrew Poetry from Muslim and Christian Spain 950-1492*

David Keenan – *I Am The Body Of All The Conquistadors*

Bob Dylan – *The Basement Tapes*

Douglas Harding – *On Having No Head: Zen and the Rediscovery of the Obvious*



Hippolytus – *Refutation Of All Heresies*  
The Beach Boys – *30 Years Of The Beach Boys*  
Paul Williams – *How Deep Is The Ocean?*  
Percy Bysshe Shelley – “*Mont Blanc*”  
Williams Burroughs – *Cities of the Red Night*  
Bob Dylan – “*Farewell Angelina*”  
Edna O’Brien – *Night*  
Edna O’Brien – *A Fanatic Heart*  
Douglas Adams – *The Hitchhiker’s Guide To The Galaxy*  
Angus MacLise – *YEAR*  
Clarice Lispector – *Agua Viva*  
Phil Legard & Alexander Cummins – *An Excellent Booke of the Arte of Magicke*  
Lew Welch – *Ring of Bone*  
Bach – 333  
Scott Walker – *Tilt*  
Walt Whitman – “*Song of the Open Road*”  
Walt Whitman – “*Song of Myself*”  
Jonathan Barnes (editor) – *Early Greek Philosophy*  
Folke Rabe – *What??*  
Silvina Ocampo – *Thus Were Their Faces*  
John W. Parsons & Marjorie Cameron – *Songs for the Witch Woman*  
Quicksilver Messenger Service – *Happy Trails*  
Joni Mitchell – *Song To A Seagull*  
Dion – *Kickin’ Child: The Lost Album 1965*  
Johnny Thunders – *So Alone*  
MONOTON – *MONOTONPRODUKT 07 20y++*  
Alice Coltrane – *Live At The Berkeley Community Theatre 1972*

Divers to Dive #9

Richard Wagner : Edo de Waart – *Tristan und Isolde (An Orchestral Passion)*

David Hockney – *Tristan und Isolde poster for the Los Angeles Music Centre Opera*

Dark Arts Coffee – *LIFE AFTER DEATH*

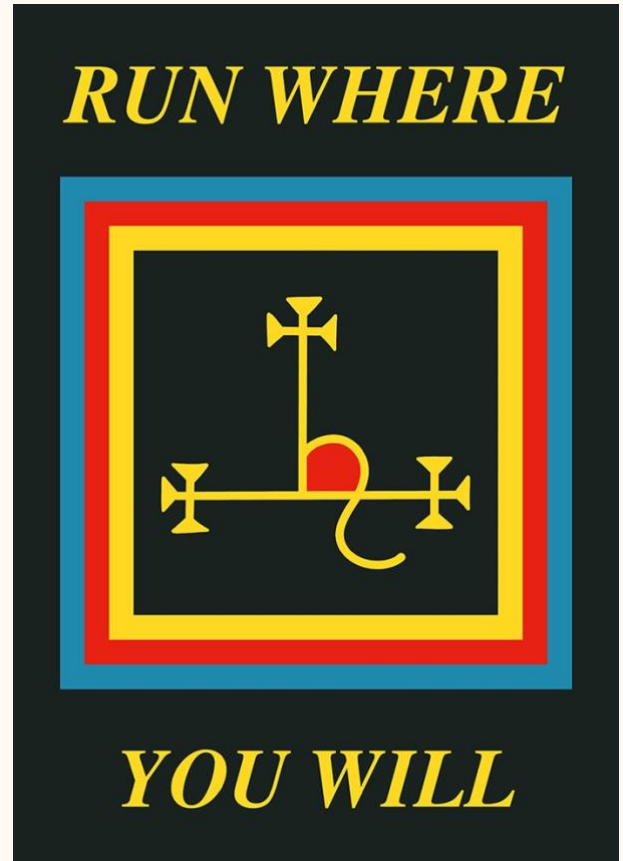
Errington Cheese – *Elrick Log & Cora Linn  
Siena Cathedral*

Eleni Avraam – *Scorpio Rising or Dream Driver*



## Pandemic Dream Journal Prints

Two artworks featured in issues #2 and #5 are now available to pre-order in beautiful A3 Giclée prints.



Printed on archival quality Hahnemuhle Photo Rag paper. **Limited editions of 156**, signed, numbered & accompanied by a postcard from *Divers to Dive: A Pandemic Dream Journal* and a postcard from David Keenan's forthcoming novel *Xstabeth* with an introduction to the book written by David.

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Thank you for your support x

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