

Merz Structure No. 2
Burnt by
Children at Play

JAKE KENNEDY



MERZ STRUCTURE NO. 2

BURNT BY

CHILDREN AT PLAY

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BookThug 2015

FIRST EDITION

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The production of this book was made possible through the generous assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA
CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Kennedy, Jake, 1972 —, author

Merz Structure No. 2 burnt by children at play / Jake Kennedy.

Poems.

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-77166-095-2 (Pbk) — ISBN 978-1-77166-114-0 (HTML)

I. Title. II. Title: Merz Structure No. 2 burnt by children at play.

PS8621.E634M47 2015

C811'.6

C2015-900809-3

C2015-900810-7

PRINTED IN CANADA

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So that lostness, eh?
That's where you have
to go in order to *survive*

—John Lent

Cezanne's Still-Life with Skull, Candlestick, & Book

Poor Yorick would speak a speech
about fucking and how to run balls-out
into the sea; how the rose once moved

this way and that in the breeze
and how the pages were always turning toward
the better future (and they were)

or something quantifiable like that
with memory's stagecraft
here stupefying all vanities—

*A Brief History of the Cemeteries of
Huron County, Ontario*

the rapids try to wake the barge
to at least one common fact

just as the grass
affects sea-ish poses atop the bodies

this—all of this—results
as “the final final lulling”

•

after the lapse
when resolutions have been, well, resolved

and even the darkness gives up
to a density of beige

the mason’s patchwork
keeps a claim on delusion

praise
that

•

quantities of restless light
on top of the river

at once startled and then never settled
it is not like this, it is like this

for those who do or do not
reach into their past like darkened rooms

•

as for the allowances of kings
and their heinous towers—it's not theirs

only to pile up nothing and
to suffer flatness

no different than...
as special as...

...stepping stones
...wells that have been capped

*A Brief History of the Tornadoes of
Oxford County, Ontario*

Because the future needs space
the wind makes a field

the labourer himself
and the crow further on

in order to place two keyholes
in the horizon

what gives up as the sun gives up
to obtain other reputations: down

or anyway going towards *gone*—
one does not believe in assurance

I don't at least—only vulnerabilities
as different stages of imma-blow-yer-fkin-shack-down

their threats and this relinquishing:
a cow, then a church

moving above the trees.

The Splendid Things Are These

1.

Conventionally ink
as in the abbot's enso

and not the circle pressed
on the gamer's thumb

exile and return
reconciled

and the letting of the nostalgia
(of *any* of the nostalgias) *in*

"thy flesh" as whispered
by a proponent of non-attachment

previously known as one
real mean ugly guru:

even
still

even
still

2.

Dear Dad, go fuck yourself.

Sincerely, Franz

3.

The ol' mise-en-abyme, the ol' blizzard,
the ol'...—

“at least,” or this:

“given this shitty fuckin situation...”

where “” are the talons
on one of Stevens' blackbirds

above the sea
the sea as—wait for it—

that fallen theatre curtain
and the audience, rapt,

covered in its hush.

Black Ice, after Stan Brakhage

honestly what is the likelihood of mercy arriving as—say
it—your face meeting your own face on a platter of ice (great,
greater, greatest?);

when the child falls into the enclosure and the silver-backed
ape gathers her and hands her back up to her father; now,
which species is which?

layer upon layer of ice (bliss over pain over pain over bliss)
to indicate how hard it is to honour, let alone understand,
another's gift

After Char's "The Shark and the Gull"

The abandon in between objects: [knife and table] and the much-chattered-about silence in | between | words as the best idea of language; so "the shark and the gull" as two different ways to look at the pitiless setting: "the sea and the sky"—neither of which can speak; the original words are *mother, not, what, man,* and the verb *to hear*

Jake Kennedy is the author of two poetry collections: *The Lateral* (2010) and *Apollinaire's Speech to the War Medic* (BookThug, 2011). His work has appeared in literary journals across Canada, the US, and the UK, including *The Capilano Review*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, and *The Awl*. Kennedy is the recipient of the bpNichol Chapbook Award for *Hazard* (BookThug, 2007), the Robert Kroetsch Award for Innovative Poetry for *The Lateral*, and the Robin Blaser Award for Poetry for the long poem "Futuromania" (2011). He also received a BC Arts Council Writing Grant in 2013. Kennedy lives in Kelowna, BC, where he teaches English literature and creative writing at Okanagan College.

Colophon

Manufactured as the first edition of *Merz Structure No. 2 Burnt by Children at Play* in the Spring of 2015 by BookThug

Distributed in Canada by the Literary Press Group www.lpg.ca

Distributed in the US by Small Press Distribution www.spdbooks.org

Shop online at www.bookthug.ca



Type + design by Jay MillAr

Copy edited by Ruth Zuchter

Cover image by Jake Kennedy and kevin mcpherson eckhoff