a a a novel 1-20

* Derek Beaulieu*
Rattle, gurgle, clink, tinkle.
Click, pause, click, ring.
Dial, dial.

(dial)
(dial, pause, dial-dial-dial).
(busy-busy-busy).

Coin drops. Money jingles as coins return.

Car noises in background.

(honk, honk)
(noise).

(cars honking, blasting).

(noise).
? (Pause).

Washed-out noises.

honk. (!)

High-pitched (honk).
Published in the autumn of 1968, Andy Warhol’s *a a novel* consists solely of the transcribed conversations of factory denizen Ondine (Robert Olivo). Ondine’s amphetamine-addled conversations were captured on audiotape as he haunted the factory, hailed cabs to late-night parties and traded gossip with Warhol and his coterie. The tapes were quickly transcribed by a quartet of stenography students (including The Velvet Underground’s Moe Tucker); rife with typographic errors, censored sections—and a chorus of voices—the 451 pages of transcriptions became, unedited, “a new kind of pop artefact.”

Warhol’s *a a novel* favours faithful transcription over plot, chance over predicted composition, and a novel’s ideas over its actual content. Building upon my previous novels *Flatland: a romance of many dimensions* (2005) and *Local Colour* (2008), my *a a novel*, an erasure-based transiative response to Warhol’s controversial masterpiece. On each page of Warhol’s original, I erase all of the text leaving only the punctuation marks and onomatopoeic words. Theodor Adorno, in his essay “Punctuation Marks” argues that punctuation marks are the “traffic signals” of literature and that there is “no element in which language resembles music more than in the punctuation marks.”

The resultant text is a novelistic *ballet mécanique;* an orchestration of the traffic signals and street noise of the 1960’s New York City, an eruption of traffic and tires, overheard music and construction noise. *a a novel* mines writing for the musicality of the urban environment, the complex of non-narrative sounds embedded within our conversations.

*a a novel* is forthcoming from Jean Boite Editions, Summer 2017.
a a novel 1-20
Copyright © 2017, Derek Beaulieu
isbn: 978-1-988495-12-5

published in Ottawa by above/ground press, February 2017
for his participation in the Universities Canada – Converge 2017
a/g subscribers receive a complimentary copy
write for submission/subscription info,
c/o 2423 Alta Vista Drive Ottawa, ON Canada K1H 7M9
or rob_mclennan@hotmail.com or check out
abovegroundpress.blogspot.com

Derek Beaulieu is the author of the collections of poetry with wax, fractal
economies, chains, silence, ascender / descender, kern, fragments from the frag pool (co-
written with Gary Barwin) and Please no more poetry: the poetry of derek beaulieu
(Ed. Kit Dobson). He has also written 4 collections of conceptual fiction: a
a novel, flatland, Local Colour and How To Write (Nominated for the W.O.
Mitchell Award). He is the author of two collections of essays: Seen of the
Crime and The Unbearable Contact with Poets. Beaulieu co-edited bill bissett’s
RUSH: what fuckan theory (with Gregory Betts), Writing Surfaces: fiction of John
Riddell (with Lori Emerson) and The Calgary Renaissance (with rob
mclennan). He is the publisher of the acclaimed no press and is the visual
poetry editor at UBUWeb. Beaulieu has exhibited his work across Canada,
the United States and Europe and is an award-winning instructor. Derek
Beaulieu was the 2014–2016 Poet Laureate of Calgary, Canada.

This is derek beaulieu’s seventh above/ground press chapbook, after an
issue of the long poem magazine STANZAS (“calcite gours 1-19,” issue
no. 38), the interview chapbook ECONOMIES OF SCALE: rob mclennan
interviews derek beaulieu on NO PRESS / derek beaulieu interviews rob mclennan on
above/ground press (2012) and single-author chapbooks “A? any questions?
(1998), [Dear Fred] (2004), HOW TO EDIT, Chapter A. (ALBERTA
SERIES #8; 2008) and transcend transcribe transfigure transform transgress
(2014).
above/
ground press
C/O Rob McLennan
2423 Alta Vista Drive
Ottawa Ontario KLH 7M9