

3 (three) P_{ri}M_{ar}y COLOURS

By Nicholas N_{orth}

WHY I LIKE IT: Guest Editor LEVI PLATT writes:

Pleasure can be expressed in words, bliss cannot.”
-Roland Barthes

When I first read Nick North's 3 PRIMARY COLOURS, it was initially a bewildering experience, to say the least. And in truth, it's why the piece continues to grow on me as I read and reread it. From my perspective (as limited as that may be), North is taking to heart the likes of Saussure and Barthes in his pursuit of undermining the assumed stability of language that we take for granted. Meaning isn't inherent and North so simply and clearly begins with this gambit before diving headlong towards the edge of thought where language becomes truly meaningless and nearly unintelligible. Reading 3 PRIMARY COLOURS makes you uncomfortable. It confuses and at times outright can anger you with how doggedly obtuse the language becomes. But here lies the text's strength:

Our relationship to meaning and language isn't symbiotic and perfectly ordered, it is arbitrary and tenuous. Reading a text like North's reminds me why I love language and literature in the first place. Reading and writing ultimately is an act ex nihilo and we, in our pleasure of the acts, take the miracle for granted. It is only when an author like North is willing to pull us away from the comforts of narrative, meaning, and even signs and signifiers and forces us to peer into the void where those myths were born, that we remember. Or maybe, more thrilling to think, reading 3 PRIMARY COLOURS is the first time a reader has such an experience. If so, I envy you and offer a piece of advice (though this is just a retrofitting of a pre-existing idea if I'm honest). Accept the text as it is, as it crackles, as it caresses, as it grates, as it cuts. Let the text smother

and undo itself, let it become a thing sensual. In short, let 3 PRIMARY COLOURS be what it truly is: a text of Bliss.

5 Stars

Fiction Editor JOEY CRUSE writes:

Nick North's work functions as the thought process between the sign and the signifier, the word and the meaning, what is spoken and what is heard. "3 Primary Colors," is no different. What begins as a simple expression, "the last word in this sentence is RED," evolves into the breakdown of color versus the word, where there are larger questions at play. As a reader, does reading the piece and seeing the color make the declaration true or false? If someone was reading this piece to you, would you even need to know whether the color was there or not? If you were blind, would the color or the word matter more – would you have ever previously seen red? The tangible discrepancy between language and the interpretation of the reader are what North works with, and, while this piece is more a collection of thoughts over substance of fiction, his style works to create a poetics of fiction.

At the heart of North's work there lies a noble goal.

The engagement with metafiction – fiction that inherently knows it is created for a purpose, fiction that knows it is fiction and will tell you it does so because you should know better, fiction that is, in itself, not entirely fiction – is a way in which he can not only fuck with but make his audience think. The suppositions are easy, if not misaligned on purpose. The breakdown of the parts are more akin to endlines in poetry rather than creating a story as fiction would have you follow. What I am here to tell you is that the importance of this piece lies as a reminder for the reader, i.e. you and I, to challenge our notions of the symbols we use to create meaning for others through communication.

You will read this story and, perhaps, be confused, you will read this story and perhaps wonder why his style chooses to break down language as opposed to explain it, you will read this story and wonder why it ends on a blank page of quotations and symbols that you're expected to fill in for yourself. I disagree with only one part of North's presumption of language, "The descriptive function of the sentences has broken down."

They don't. Meaning is embedded within the symbols we use no matter how obscure, or obscured, and presumed they are. There is nothing wrong with forcing your reader to fill in the blanks. Folly only lies in presuming that the reader wants to, has the knowledge of your educational background, and understands to begin with.

North will play with you. He knows his medium and loves to play with it, and, in turn, that game is a back and forth between the messenger and the audience – an ever-fluid audience that will change from reader, to reader, to reader...

If you want to dig deep, then read all of North. If you want to educate yourself on Saussure, read North. If you have a playful mind about how language works, read North. I'm here to assure you that the symbols with no meaning have meaning, that the quotations marks of blank spaces are there because, like Shakespeare taking a breath, there is something to be said in silence, in open space, in nothing.

North's persistence in presumption can wear on anyone, me as well, I won't deny that. But, what I will say, is that he crafts a piece that is fictional for an audience and philosophical in its ideals, he crafts a set of ideas for what fiction can be – he's better than Kerouac, the

substance of his toilet paper roll was crafted but shoddy, he's got the poetics of Ginsburg rolled into e.e., and mixes his work with the best of the Sophists.

North's work will not be for all, but it will be good for you, dear reader. Relish in it. When you understand the space that exists between the words, you'll hear the cacophony of all that is said.

Five stars.

QUALITY QUOTABLE (for the love of language)...

“ ? , .”
! : , .
..... “ ; , , ?”

3 PRIMARY COLOURS

(‘prison house of language’)

For Fredric Jameson

(‘man oh man’)

For Bill Luker

By Nick North

The last word in this sentence is **RED**.

The last word in this sentence is **BLUE**.

The last word in this sentence is **YELLOW**.

The last word in this sentence is **RED**.

The last word in this sentence is **BLUE**.

The last word in this sentence is **YELLOW**.

The last word in this sentence is **RED**.

The last word in this sentence is **BLUE**.

The last word in this sentence is **YELLOW**.

March 20/21 @ 9:20 am

POSSIBLE RELEVANCIES

The oral and visual properties of these sentences are different.

There is a difference between reading the sentences as shown and reading them to someone sitting across the room.

If they were read to someone across the room, the meaning of the sentences for that person would be different from the meaning of the sentences for the one who reads them because the actual appearance of the sentences is given to one and denied the other.

The descriptive function of the sentences has broken down.

The 2nd set negates the truth of the first.

The third set is only partially true if the first set is cited.

Sign and meaning are disrupted by the introduction of colour.

The sentences in the first and second set are historically conditioned. They could not be written digitally without coloured fonts. They could not be written manually without coloured markers.

‘3’ is a redundancy because there are only 3 primary colours.

With the cessation of this, comes the cessation of that. (The Buddha)

March 21/21 @ 5:04 pm and March 23/21 @ 5:49 pm and March 24/21 @ 11:37 pm

COLOUR IS HUE-N IN THE I...?

Holy red Holy blue Holy yellow Holy the word Holy *la parola* Holy the sentence Holy the subject Holy the verb and the object Holy Holy...Holy grammar Holy 'voice' Holy love Holy spunk Holy north Holy kerouac Holy ginsberg Holy howl Holy burroughs Holy Holy foster wallace and Holy carver Holy barthelme Holy deLillo Holy calvino most Holy and Holy big two-hearted river Holy the unborn poets Holy the poets who have passed Holy frances Holy that night in your Holy arms most unholy and Holy speak Holy dare you speak your unholy name I thought as well of him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower most Holy and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down so he could feel my all Holy perfume yes yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will yes and Holy blood piped through rock wet with jizz and Holy luker arizona Holy arizona luker luker Holy house of cleve man oh man and Holy krishna Holy rama hari hari Holy guatama holy tathagata Holy this and Holy that and if, on a winter's night, a traveler meets the buddha on the road Holy cormac kill him Holy kill him kill him kill him holy holy

April 14/21 @ 9:17 am

WHAT ARE WE? WHERE DO WE COME FROM? WHERE ARE WE GOING?

I is. You does. He are. They will'nt. Exrasy of dizzly donk. Whatafaroo. Hold ont ont ont Universe aboriginal WHAA! I dink il ya je suis cra hk loptxz VVV way waaay beyawn'd daDa I shrink therefore i is. Did you hear the one about...what is that light, dear aw shuckin's I dink pkjbolkiy adddftwqqzi aaaa aa a a a a a a

WINGDINGS 1 (ORDERED)

Hand symbols and abstract shapes arranged in three rows.

WINGDINGS 2 (DISORDERED)

Wingdings 2 symbols including various geometric shapes and symbols arranged in three rows.

IN THE WHITE ROOM

Dialogue fragments: " .", " ? , .", " ! : , .", "..... " ; , , ?", " !!", " . .", " ?", " ?", " _____ " .

April 15/21 @ 9:40 am

AUTHOR’S NOTE: so thinking about sign and meaning—bones of language stuff and the ‘limitation of language’ (Jameson). American hephaestian; motorcycle claimed his soul (Luker). 1-3. Formal, objective. Sequence transformations. HUE’N—amorphous, subjective so ‘Howl’ invocation. Lit appropriation (Joyce), Rinzai koan ‘kill the buddha’—ie: end point before the collapse of sign/meaning duality. WHAT ARE WE? So Non-sense qua no sense. WINGDINGS 1 Signage apart from meaning. WINGDINGS 2 Signage without meaning. ‘WHITE ROOM’. The

naming of signs, verbalized 'pointing' i.e. parenthesis, comma, period etc. Reduction signage invites intuitive meaning. We can insert words of our choosing into the blank spaces between punctuation. End or beginning of something? Language as self-generating? OK, that's it. How you doing? Listening to Cuan Durkin... define smooth—death of rattle...

AUTHOR BIO: All I can say about my life up to now is all I can say about my life up to now. I've had a couple stories published by *Fleas on the Dog* and a few other places.

GUEST EDITOR BIO: L.W. Platt currently resides in Pennsylvania and is a recent graduate of Utah Valley University, though Missouri is where he writes from and will always be home to him. He's taken to preoccupying himself with that space where language braces up against living and then completely fails. Sometimes he finishes what he writes. His essay "**A strange mixture, only to be found on the American continent**" appears in this issue (Nonfiction).