

STOVIES,  
SCALLOPS  
&  
SCABBY  
MAN'S  
HEADS



Lauren Godfrey (b. 1989, Harrogate) lives and works in London.

She graduated from BA at Slade School of Fine Art in 2012  
and has exhibited in the UK, Italy and France.

Recent performances and exhibitions include  
*Cocktail #1, Co2*, Rome (2013),  
*Die Puffbrause Per Favor!!*, ICA, London (2013)  
and *Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2012*, ICA / Liverpool (2012).

She collaboratively produces the periodical 'Her Eyes and My Voice',  
due to launch its third issue in 2014.

Comar / An Tobar / Argyll Terrace / Isle of Mull / PA75 6PB

An Tobar is a Comar venue.

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Comar is supported by Creative Scotland.



LAUREN GODFREY

## Stovies, Scallops & Scabby Man's Heads

3 March - 17 May 2014

Comar, An Tobar

Comar presents an exhibition and new commission  
by artist Lauren Godfrey.

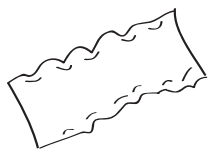
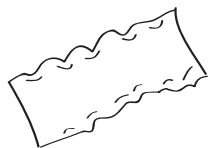
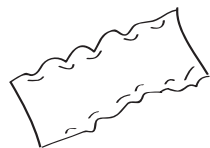
Godfrey's work deals with language in an attempt to embody the written word and all the romance that it carries, both physically and performatively.

In *Stovies, Scallops & Scabby Man's Heads* the artist explores the notions of rocks and islands and their relationship to full stops, scallops and stepping stones. This metaphorical leap between landscape and language finds its feet in the gallery at An Tobar, the artist's soundworks and objects climbing the walls and stretching across the floor in an archipelago of sculpture.

To coincide with her exhibition at An Tobar, Godfrey has been commissioned to create a new linoleum floor in three unique designs to remain permanently in the building. The work takes its cues from the artist's cultural encounters in and around the Isle of Mull to inspire her patterns and images.

On Saturday 5 April there will be a **FUN EVENT** led by the artist in which food will be served and everyone will be welcome to **BYOB**.

**Exhibition essay, *Spa - get it???*, by Alex Brenchley.**



# Spa - get it???

by Alex Brenchley

Which pasta spends the dead of night claiming territory as its own by labelling private property with a self-invented pseudonym?

**Tag - liatelli!**

Which pasta sauce, first compiled in England in 1706 (though by far predates this moment) when eaten every night might postpone the possibility of quotidian murder through endless tales of sex and debauchery? **Arabiattian Nights!**

Arnold Schwarzenegger walks into a bar and orders a spaghetti carbonara. **Pasta la vista!**

Which pasta would be best suited for a duel? **Penne!**  
Why? **Because the penne is mightier than the sword!**

Which pasta would you not like to find running around your home?  
**Vermin - celli!**

Which pasta, no matter how many wishes you make, still stinks?  
**Fetid-genie!**

Which pasta is made to feel unwelcome by all the tinned goods?  
**Can - alone - i!**

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Let me tell you why no idiot in their wrong mind  
would paint a still-life of pasta.





















Giorgio Morandi, 'Still Life with White Objects on a Dark Background', 1931

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It's Mesopotamia, 3000 BC.

During the development of cuneiform script, images that represent objects or ideas become wedge shapes in clay tablets. At the same time, the script evolves so that it is read from left to right, and during this process the altering forms are rotated 90 degrees anti-clockwise for ease of reading.

Development of Cuneiform, 3000 B.C.–600 B.C.						
Meaning of Pictograph						
	Ear of Barley	Head and Body of Man	Fish	Bird	Bowl of Food	Stream of Water
Pictographs c. 3000 B.C.						
Rotated Position Pictographs c. 2800 B.C.						
Cuneiform Signs c. 600 B.C.						

It's interstellar warfare, 1966.

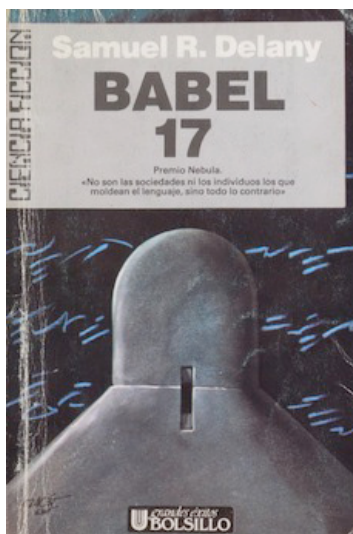
In Samuel Delany's science fiction novel 'Babel 17',\* the starship captain and renowned poet, Rydra Wong, is recruited by her government to decipher what is seemingly a code, developed by the opposition as a military weapon. This code turns out to be in fact a language that, once learnt, alters perception and thought. Germans can't tell jokes - they put verbs at the end of sentences! Imagine these languages, where there are *more* words to mean *more* specific things to such an extent that you might be able to express yourself with a diminishing margin of inaccuracy, both contextually and emotionally. Just think, there might be a word that means:

\* 'Babel 17,' by Samuel R. Delany, 1966, Ace Books

*" If this exhibition were to happen this time next year  
it would cosmically coincide with Lauren Godfrey turning the age of the  
number of letters in the English alphabet, but it won't  
so it isn't! "*

and means this alone. One complex sentence reduced to a single word.

How would you write it?!!!!



Samuel R. Delany, 'Babel 17', Italian edition, published by Borsillo



'North by Northwest',  
Dir. by Alfred Hitchcock, Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer, 1959

It's a cinematic set of Mount Rushmore, 1959.

Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint begin the long descent backwards  
through History. All-American heroes are nothing but footholds and  
grappling hooks. Mount Rushmore's presidents stare out to nothing but  
Death at the foot of these heads.

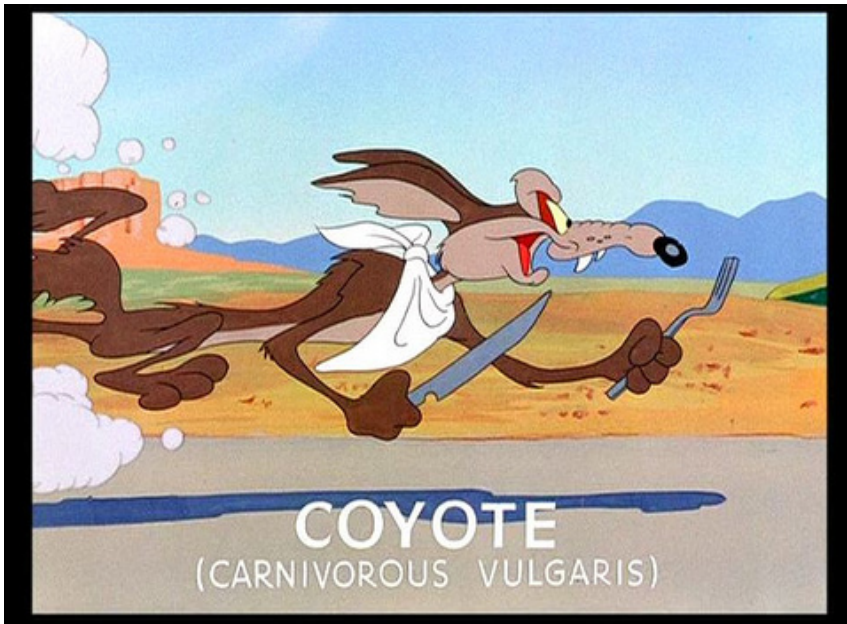
It's Iran, the Second World War.

Allied Soldiers use the Behistun inscription for target practice during  
the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran. Language is crumbling around us —  
and at our own intention!



It's Toon Town\*, 1965.

In the animation, 'Bad Day At Cat Rock,'\*\* the only way for Jerry to put an end to Tom's suffering (at being perpetually crushed by a boulder) is to actually write 'The End' and show it to camera. A rare moment of kindness, this shows the strength of the written word in a place where boulders can bend steel frames in a multitude of geometric shapes.



'Looney Toons,' Dir: Chuck Jones, Warner Brothers

It's Chapter 5, Book of Daniel.

Belshazzar's banqueters feast their eyes on the hand that illuminates their end-of-days. Interpretation of the text does not come readily.

\* 'Toon Town' here refers to 'Who Framed Roger Rabbit,' (Dir. Robert Zemeckis, 1989)

\*\* 'Bad Day At Cat Rock,' (Dir. Chuck Jones, 1965) uses an episode of Wile E. Coyote and The Road Runner, 'To Beep Or Not To Beep,' as a model for its premise.

It's the Persian Empire, 500 BC.

The Behistun inscription is one more heraldic cliff-face. This inscription, which, as the Rosetta Stone was to hieroglyphs, is to become the key to unlocking cuneiform script\*, prevents a portion of the limestone from being climbed, setting aside this section of lofty earth for script and language instead.



'Bisotun Inscription,' by Millard B. Rogers, 1951  
(photograph of inscription on Mount Behistun)

It's Mull, 2014.

Lauren Godfrey's climbing wall holds stretch upwards. They couldn't possibly compete with the island for rock, sand and stone. These aren't just footholds and jug holds, an invitation to an indoor, plastic experience (let's not think 'plastic' connotes negative tones here please), under cover from rain and the elements. This is **3 millennia later**, and Lauren Godfrey has repositioned the cuneiform script, rotating another 90 degrees so that language faces no conventional direction!

\* Joe R. Price, 'The Rosetta Stone and The Behistun Rock,' <http://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume45/V4501040108.htm>

These are the moulds of cuneiform wedges, deliberate jibs, a script so small in permutations that it defines another sort of boundary - not territorial, but linguistic. Like the Rotokas alphabet that consists of a mere 12 letters or, comparatively, the English alphabet in relation to the Spanish alphabet which contains one fewer letter, Godfrey's system of navigation is but a handful of repeated lumps in the throat. It is reductive. It is restricted speech. "I am a rock, I am an island" repeats at inconsistent intervals, using so very few words to assert itself as one lone unit of singularity. Here, the gallery is an extension of the rock and the island, and the climbing holds offer a grip, a way in, a means to communicate with the space, for what fills space better than sound? Better than utterances? Better than monosyllabic murmurings that put you on the edge of your attention span- **don't slip!**

Every word is precious, it holds us in position.



Roxanne Eats a Pizza, Lauren Godfrey, 2013

It's Putney, 1969.

Peter Grogono designs a programming language for use in composing electronic music. For this purpose, it is made deliberately simple, intelligible to the musicians who might use it. Ten years later, this design, 'MUSYS,' becomes 'Mouse,' a programming language using only 26 variables, the same as in the English alphabet.\*

It's the Netherlands, 1636.

Rembrandt paints 'Belshazzar's Feast'. His use of chiaroscuro throws light upon the faces of astonishment at that one instance, but the source of light comes (**no!**) not from candlelight but from that writing on the wall. The disembodied fingers that scribe the text, *they* are not the horror. It is the dazzling fate that strikes terror.



'Belshazzar's Feast,' Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, 1636

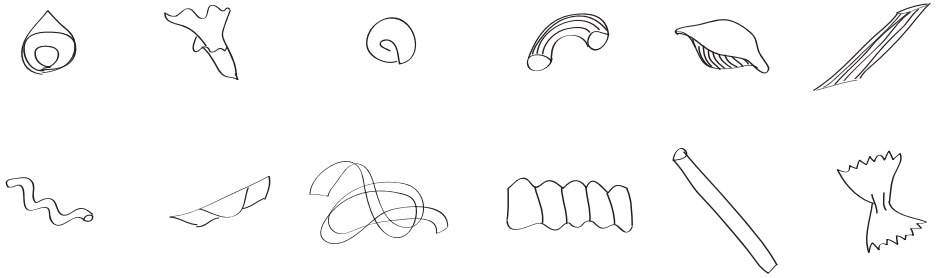


<http://www.recantododragao.com.br/2013/10/07/creepypastatom-jerry-o-episodio-perdido/>, Douglas Amaral

It's [www.creepypasta.com](http://www.creepypasta.com), NOW.

Anyone can create their own horror and share it with the world. The most heart-quaking Toms and Jerrys imaginable exist as cartoons once seen but never recorded. All these stories are known here as 'Creepy Pastas'.

\* Peter Grogono, 'The Mouse Programming Language,' <http://users.encs.concordia.ca/~grogono/Mouse/mouse.html>

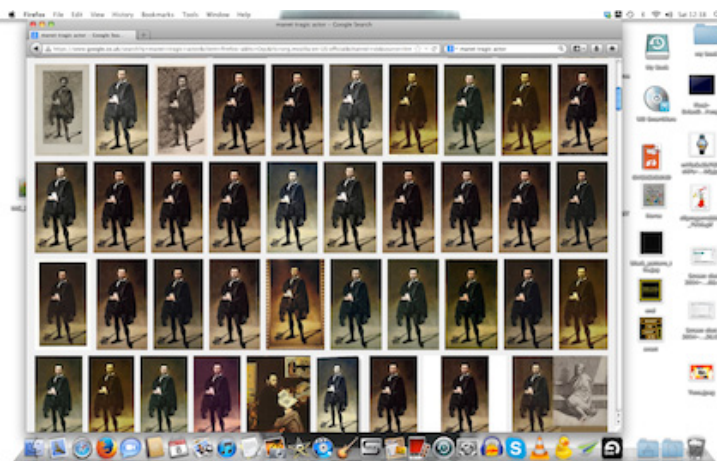


It's Mull, 2014.

An indoor climbing wall, an indoor tennis court, they proffer a safe house from the elements. But it rains. It's raining penne (**hallelujah!**)

and orecchiette and fusilli. And rigatoni and lumache and farfalle and conchiglie. In Lauren Godfrey's 'Pasta Hieroglyphs,' the English alphabet is replaced by pictograms, each letter substituted by a type of pasta. Once again, language is the source of light, word and wall are one. They need each other to exist. But where are the sentences, the translations, the meanings???????? They're nowhere to be seen. It's as if we're caught between a whirlwind and a rockface. We must have taken a wrong turning. **NO!** We're **here!** Hooray! Hallelujah AGAIN! Huzzah and Belshazzar! It's up to us to find a way through and all we need to do is talk. Language is life, it's LOVE!

Say something to the person next to you!



Screenshot of google search: 'manet tragic actor' Edouard Manet, 'The Tragic Actor (Rouviere as Hamlet)', 1866



Mostly, paintings exist as a multiple of one (though, where are the bygone eras of cheap handouts, Hogarth's etchings or broadside song sheets as a personal souvenir for members of the crowd who attend the public execution?). Paintings require teams and conservationists to endure the ages. **I'm talking DEATH here.** The impending loss of any expression whatsoever. Paintings magically freeze time and it is *of course* for that reason The Still Life tells us **we will not last.** These vanities are objects without soul, we shall outlive them. These bottles will fall the edge and shatter. This food **will not last.** At least these paintings are housed away from the elements long enough to survive generations. Rocks, cliffs, islands — *they* are at the constant mercy of the elements. Time will not be their friend. And yet there exists a form brave enough to battle Time head-on. A form that cannot be ripped, smudged, defaced, eroded or washed away. A form that you hold right now, this very second. It's 2014. It's the past. It's the future.

You know it; it's...

# THE WORD!!

*Exegi monumentum aere perennius  
Regalique situ pyramidum altius,  
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens  
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis  
Annorum series et fuga temporum.*

I have built a monument more lasting than bronze,  
Loftier than the pyramids on their regal throne,  
Which neither the wasting rain nor the North wind in its fury  
Could ever raze to the ground, nor the innumerable  
Sequence of the years, nor the swift feet of time.

— Horace, 'Odes III.30'

Statues erode, words last forever. Stovies, Scallops, Scabby Man's Heads- *they* might appear in still lives, but not pasta. **No, not pasta!**

Why? Because pasta *isn't* a living memory of imminent death.

**It's already dead.** Of all the food-stuffs, it's purpose-built **to last**. Well, it's a bit more like a sleeping beauty in that it waits to be awakened (just add to boiling water, see packet for duration). It stores so well, dried pasta. And fresh pasta? *That* needs to be eaten quicker than the painting itself, so...don't wait for it! **EAT!**



Henri Matisse, 'Still Life With Shellfish', 1940

Alex Brenchley is an artist, musician and cartoonist  
living and working in London.

### **'The ABC' by Spike Milligan**

'Twas midnight in the schoolroom  
And every desk was shut  
When suddenly from the alphabet  
Was heard a loud "Tut-Tut!"

Said A to B, "I don't like C;  
His manners are a lack.  
For all I ever see of C  
Is a semi-circular back!"

"I disagree," said D to B,  
"I've never found C so.  
From where I stand he seems to be  
An uncompleted O."

C was vexed, "I'm much perplexed,  
You criticise my shape.  
I'm made like that, to help spell Cat  
And Cow and Cool and Cape."

"He's right" said E; said F, "Whoopee!"  
Said G, "'Ip, 'Ip, 'ooray!"  
"You're dropping me," roared H to G.  
"Don't do it please I pray."

"Out of my way," LL said to K.  
"I'll make poor I look ILL."  
To stop this stunt J stood in front,  
And presto! ILL was JILL.

"U know," said V, "that W  
Is twice the age of me.  
For as a Roman V is five  
I'm half as young as he."

X and Y yawned sleepily,  
"Look at the time!" they said.  
"Let's all get off to beddy byes."  
They did, then "Z-z-z."