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Vernal

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Culminating with a dream, this project transverses theoretical and geographical boundaries with explorations into the message-carrying potential of video, sound, performance, print, and web. Stories and content are extracted from an autobiographical history of one small western town turned boomtown. That town, the center from which the project emerges, is Vernal, Utah.

Specifically, this is a project about Vernal, a noun in the true sense of the word, for Vernal is among many things a person, a place, and an idea.

Generally, this is a project about confronting the memories everyone has of their childhood and the effort that must be exerted to preserve them in an ever-changing world.
To assist you in learning more of this project is J Vernal, the narrator, protagonist, and author. Vernal is a white male a hundred years old. He is from Vernal by descent. He loves Vernal more than anything, yet despises certain aspects of her, and is ashamed of this love.

It is 11:30 and he is just now eating breakfast. He wonders why it has taken him so long to decide what to eat. He wonders if he should have just fasted today. He wonders why certain decisions are easier to make than others. He once read a book about a man who stopped eating because he no longer found anything he liked. That would never happen to him. He likes too many things.

On the counter he has arranged a bunch of green garlic, some spinach and kale, three eggs, and a glass of milk. He is cutting the garlic, and washing the other greens in a large mixing bowl placed in the sink. The greens are soft and tender, from new plants in cool weather. He thinks it is nice to be here in this place with so many opportunities and so much time. It is March 21, it is the Vernal Equinox.

Myriad geological processes have altered Vernal, both in composition and appearance. Of notable significance is the presence of one inland sea called Lake Uinta. The sediments deposited from this sea have resulted in vast reserves of oil and natural gas. From 1986 to 1999 Vernal lived in Vernal. He lived simply, enjoying all aspects of life. Every canyon begged to be explored, and Vernal answered their cry. He swam naked in the rivers and streams. He would walk for hours on end till he was lost in the maze of junipers and cedars. He did everything, and took it for granted. He knew Vernal was his, and he thought it would always be his.

He will open the box and see one thing, everything. The smell of dried sage present early on but growing weaker with each opening. He will slowly pull each item out of the box placing it on the table next to him. First, there is a single sheet of paper, folded two times. Next a pamphlet. Again another pamphlet. Then a book with a stab binding with a paper dust jacket. He will notice sand, dirt, clinging to the cover of the book. After lifting out the book he will see the source of the detritus. He will see more items too, a rock, a small piece of drift wood, a fishing lure. He will now have a little of Vernal on him, and be ready to engage with the objects.

Vernal is a small, western town located between the western states of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, and is the northern most point of the geological feature named the Colorado Plateau. The area is comprised of Jurassic sediments that now form striking rock features. Vernal was a runt, a puppy smaller than the others, as such he has always had affinity for similar things. This affinity remains a motivating force in his life and work.

He will now have a little of Vernal on him, and be ready to engage with the objects.

In 2006 Vernal had traveled home to visit his parents when he came to the realization that time does not stand still. The home he knew so well had become surrounded by new suburban tract homes, each one a mirror image of the next. A frustrating sense of powerlessness came over him. He knew he needed to do something. This is when the seeds for the project were planted.

As a youth he struggled to find a footing in either world (the natural or constructed), pulled in opposite directions by both. Now, in the fragments caused by the collision of the two worlds, he is left to walk amongst the debris and collect artefacts and experiences. He does this as a way of finding meaning in the tortured relationship with nature he has developed as a result of existing between the two worlds. He does this as a way of coming to understand himself.
The economy is always going signs of slowing, but not for here, anywhere there are no signs and it seems everyone is busy working. Vernal is a rush hour, cars not heading towards downtown, but rather out of town to the south. The south is where the largest "701 Patch" is. To pay for his Vernal he has sold his car, he has a bike, a camera, and digital recorder. Nobody rides a bike here, certainly not for transportation. He feels safe, at home. He is once again like that puppy that is neither cute, nor ugly.

It is 4:30 and it is cold, and with lights from the garden is warming the last of potatoes planted. This is the second garden has planted. It is at his grand- mother's house, but not the house that he has never been there. That home is owned by someone else now. She sold the home after George passed away. She felt it too was much for her. He can understand and is personally grateful that he doesn't have to go there, that he doesn't have to see an empty chair or see the specific view of the mountains from the home's large window. Plus, this home has better soil for the garden. It is a new home, but near the old downtown of Vernal. He is certain that another home must have been here, perhaps, this is typical of Vernal. Few things last long enough to become old. He likes old things, the rocks around Vernal are old, and the deeper into the canyons one goes, the older the rocks become. He thinks he will go to the monument tomorrow. He is finishing watering the last of the potatoes, he will go the monument as well. He is on the way back to his bike. In his mind he is still thinking about what he will decide if he will go to the rodeo. He has never been to the rodeo. He may be the only person who has never been to the rodeo. Vernal is the rodeo. He thinks that if he is to find a story about Vernal he will surely find it at the rodeo. He wants to go, so he hops on his bike and rides the three blocks to the fun gates of the Western Park. There is no bike rack at the rodeo grounds, so he looks around and sees it in a brown status of a Roman, Premo. Pale he approaches the ticket window and pays $5.00 for the ticket. (Cont)
Through the process of petrification, organic materials are slowly replaced by inorganic molecules. This is how organic materials are slowly replaced by inorganic materials. The process of petrification is a transformation where organic materials are replaced by inorganic materials.

For one (1) year, Vernal has worked on projects that revolve around Vernal. The projects are his effort to preserve a small portion of his experiences with the geographical place called Vernal. He is, in effect, mimicking nature by creating a fossil (an impression) of his very experience. As a record, there are holes. Certain things have not been preserved in the process. The project has had its conception, but the more I gave, the stronger I began to feel.

He has turned on a floor fan and is creating an expanse of wind to move tiny grains of sand. They are blowing across our skin. I imagine that I am in the same spot. The river has moved far from me. It is smaller and tired. I can see everything. My feet and arms are in the water. My face is pressing into the clay on the bank. It is winter but it is not cold. No one is near me and it is quiet. I could lay here forever. I am sinking. You are the clay and you are covering me. The lapping of the water on the bank is now distant. It is above us.

At first, I thought you would crush me. You felt so heavy. Each time I exhaled your body would sink into mine. I would give and you would take. At first, it did not seem fair, but the more I gave, the stronger I began to feel.

We stayed like this for hours, neither moving nor dreaming. If I could exist forever, I would. The river is so far away, but I do not need water. I can feel the moon's pull on the oceans. The tide has become my breath.

The sun is far away and it is dark. I can remember watching it rise and set. It is so dark; you are so heavy. It has become hard to think about the past. Are they my memories, or are they yours? We are so close.

I have been here so long. I have gone everywhere, even though I have stayed here. It feels like we are moving, like we are going up.

I am strong. I can no longer hear the ocean, but I can feel the sun. It is causing the wind to move tiny grains of sand. They are blowing across our skin. I imagine that I am on one of those grains. I am one of them.

I have been here before, years ago. Things have changed. I am waiting for you. Did you feel the rain last night? It has been so long since I have tasted water. I thought of the river I laid down near years ago. I hear it moving over me. I will look for it.

I am in the sun. And it is warm. I am near the river; you are gone. I knew you were leaving. I could feel you pulling away from me. You have changed me; I am you. Was this your goal?

I am in the same spot. The river has moved far from me. It is smaller and tired. I can see the trees lining its banks. I could stay here forever.

He has built a device to capture images from 25 feet up. The device allows him to see the world from a new perspective. This is how birds see.

He is exploring the role of typography in his life. He thinks it has flattened the world of information.

Speaking in One Word Sentences:

- It is late afternoon and the summer sun has made his shadow entirely disappear. He is preparing to work with gilsonite® to tell a simple story of meeting a man dying of COPD.
- Background Right: His father is helping him gathering rocks in Dry Fork to build a stone oven.
- Background Left: He is preparing to work with gilsonite® to tell a simple story of meeting a man dying of COPD.

Methods:

- ff-1-2: This is a device he used to for recording dreams.
- ff-1-2, ff-1-2: He is capturing images from a video performance to use again later for another piece.
- ff-1-2: After making a small book meant to be read in a specific place he has taken it there and is reading it.
- ff-3-4: He is exploring the role of typography in his life. He thinks it has flattened the world of information.
- ff-5-4: This is a picture of him, he is Vermel.
- gphi-1-3: He has turned on a floor fan and is creating an experience to capture the chaotic effect of falling letters.
Last night he dreamt a dream that unfolded into the most complex narrative anyone has ever seen. It is his desire that you could have been there to experience it, for the telling of dreams is never as good as truly experiencing them. In the dream, the streets of Richmond, normally dead with leaf litter, have a thick yellow clay covering them. The clay is similar to that of the Mancos formation of Vernal. The dream continues and soon the usual droning of Richmond becomes replaced by that of much larger diesel engines. Frantically searching to find the source of these changes he makes his way to the Lee Bridge where he knows he can have the best view of Richmond. Upon crossing the river he sees the cause. Richmond has become an oil field, the dream, the streets of Richmond, normally lined with leaf litter, have a thick yellow clay covering them. The clay is similar to that of the Mancos formation of Vernal. The dream continues and soon the usual droning of Richmond becomes replaced by that of much larger diesel engines. Frantically searching to find the source of these changes he makes his way to the Lee Bridge where he knows he can have the best view of Richmond. Upon crossing the river he sees the cause. Richmond has become an oil field,.

It Remains To Be Seen, was the name of a fossil shop that opened in Vernal when he was a teenager. He had a crush on the owner. She was a paleontologist, she was from Montana, and she sold fossils. To him, she had everything, including a fossil containing the remains of several fish. The fossil cost more than $2,500 and was as unattainable as she was. He loved going to the store even though he could not afford any of the merchandise. The store was only open for a few summers. Then one year she did not come back. When he left Vernal for the first time, the sign for the shop was still attached to the side of the building. He always wondered if she would come back, if he would be able to wake up and per a prose or essay describing my work and my philosophies...
know my next move. Wait. I'd then become boring, easy to ignore, dismiss, I take my prayer back. No! Instead I wish to remain imperfect. Presenting my work through...
VERNAL

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It is 9:00 and the sun is just going down. He doesn’t know what to expect, but already feels uncomfortable. He can’t tell if it is like a concert, or a circus, or a state fair. Teenagers walk around with glow-in-the-dark bracelets and necklaces. Children run with cotton candy mounds attached to their arms. “Cowboys. Where are the cowboys?” He asks himself. He had seen a poster advertising a tightest jeans competition and he thought that would be something he would like to go to, but now is only thinking that he will stay for a bull ride. Then he can leave. The stadium is nearly full and there are cowboy hats. There are cowboys. “What time did this thing start?” He asks himself. Most of the crowd is enjoying themselves and several of the riders have already ridden. He is still excited he will see his first bull ride. The voice over the PA is loud, western, and harsh. It announces the next rider, Caleb Lewis, and the bull he will be riding, Casey’s Shadow. There is a long wait and then a buzzer and the gate is opened. Even from the top of the stands he can tell that there is a lot of anger in the animal. He once protested the rodeo, 10 years earlier, believing that the way the animals are treated is inhumane. He is reminded of this, but he is trying to be objective. He is looking for his story. He takes some photographs. That was it. The event is over. He can’t believe that it ended so soon—just ten o’clock. Wanting more out of his $16, he begins to interview others. Some people are loyal fans and others are experiencing the rodeo for the first time. (beginning p.6)