in English

Context Collapse is a seven chapter critical essay in verse by Ryan Ruby examining the history of poetry as a function of developments in communications technologies and patronage systems. Playfully importing the discourses of media studies, cybersemiotics, literary sociology, and heterodox political economy, *Context Collapse* argues that the delicate dance between poets, publishers, censors, and audiences set the coordinates within which the expressive modes of poetry become intelligible — or fail to do so.

Context Collapse

Wednesday,
27 May 2020
19:30

OnlineReading
and Discussion

**Organized and moderated
by Daniel Liu**

Chapter 4 covers the poetics of early twentieth-century avantgarde movements like Dadaism, Italian and Russian Futurism, and Anglophone Modernism and is concerned with the ways that new media technologies (gramophone, film, typewriter — but also telegraphy and radio) and the imperative to distinguish one's literary production in an increasingly crowded cultural commodities market drove these avantgarde movements to see poetry no longer as a formalized communicative act but as the fashioning and exchange of niche linguistic objects.

With
Ryan Ruby

If, as Shelley wrote in *A Defense of Poetry,* poets are the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts on the present, in the texts of Pound, Tzara, Marinetti, and, above all, Gertrude Stein we can already begin to catch glimpses of the fragmented, information-overloaded *Umgebung* of contemporary digital media. What literary theorist Sianne Ngai calls the 'relentlessly materialist environment of words' was first processed in high modernist poetics but has only become more pronounced since.

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