

David James

EXPERIMENT IN THEATRE #1

the man enters & removes his legs
with pliers.

the two limbs walk off-stage
as a keg

of beer drops down from above.
the man, a devote liar,

claims to be thirsty and drinks
himself into oblivion.

in the wings, a car screeches and a single tire
rolls into view, hitting & waking

the man, who thinks
he's been run over.

so he dies in a long drawn out
death scene, complete with winks

& sighs, with screams & groans
& promises to his lovers.

four women run on-stage, dig a hole,
lower his torso in

& quickly cover
the man. lights out. the audience does not applaud.

EXPERIMENT IN THEATRE #3

In a field of swaying wine glasses
a butterfly lands on the nose

of a young girl, maybe six or seven.
With no intent to harass,

the butterfly says, "I like poetry
better than prose."

Looking cross-eyed, the girl grabs the insect
and eats it, but wonders

if it's supposed
to taste like butter.

With a large knife,
she dissects herself, finding the butterfly

lodged in the stomach, whole, alive
with no ill effects.

It flutters into the air, giving her the finger.
The lights go off and stars shine in the sky.

The wine glasses clink as the wind
picks up, and the girl stitches her stomach

back together in the moonlight, without a cry.
She licks her lips. And waits.

EXPERIMENT IN THEATRE #9

Stripper music.

A sexy red triangle
enters stage left,
dancing by herself,
to herself.

A green circle
and black rectangle
come in, sit at the table.
One yellow square
brings them beer and leaves.

They stare at the triangle,
entranced by her movements,
those sharp angles,
the bare redness of it all.

The circle holds up two blue ovals
and the triangle saunters over.
The circle rubs the ovals
slowly down her hypotenuse
until she grabs them.

Holding five white stars
over his head, the rectangle calls her over.
The red triangle sits on his lap,
rubbing his right angles,
groaning to the music.

The two figures finish
their beer and exit.

The triangle dances
by herself again,
touching each of her points
over and over

until her hands, dripping in blood,
fall to her sides.

She stares at the audience
as the lights dim
to black.

EXPERIMENT IN THEATRE #16

When the lights come up, a dinosaur
sleeps on stage, the size of a van.

The body looks like a stegosaurus, but has the large face
and head of a human attached. Through a door,
stage left, a woman enters, dressed in a nightgown.

She lies next to the creature, pulls an afghan
over herself. She turns and turns again. She flips
from side to side, clearly restless.

Then she rises and stands
on the dinosaur's head to climb toward that level space
on his back, between the plates. She slips

once, twice, before reaching the top where she lies down,
covers herself and sleeps. The eyes of the dinosaur
open, and he purses his lips

to kiss the air. Sometimes, even freaking dinosaurs feel blessed.