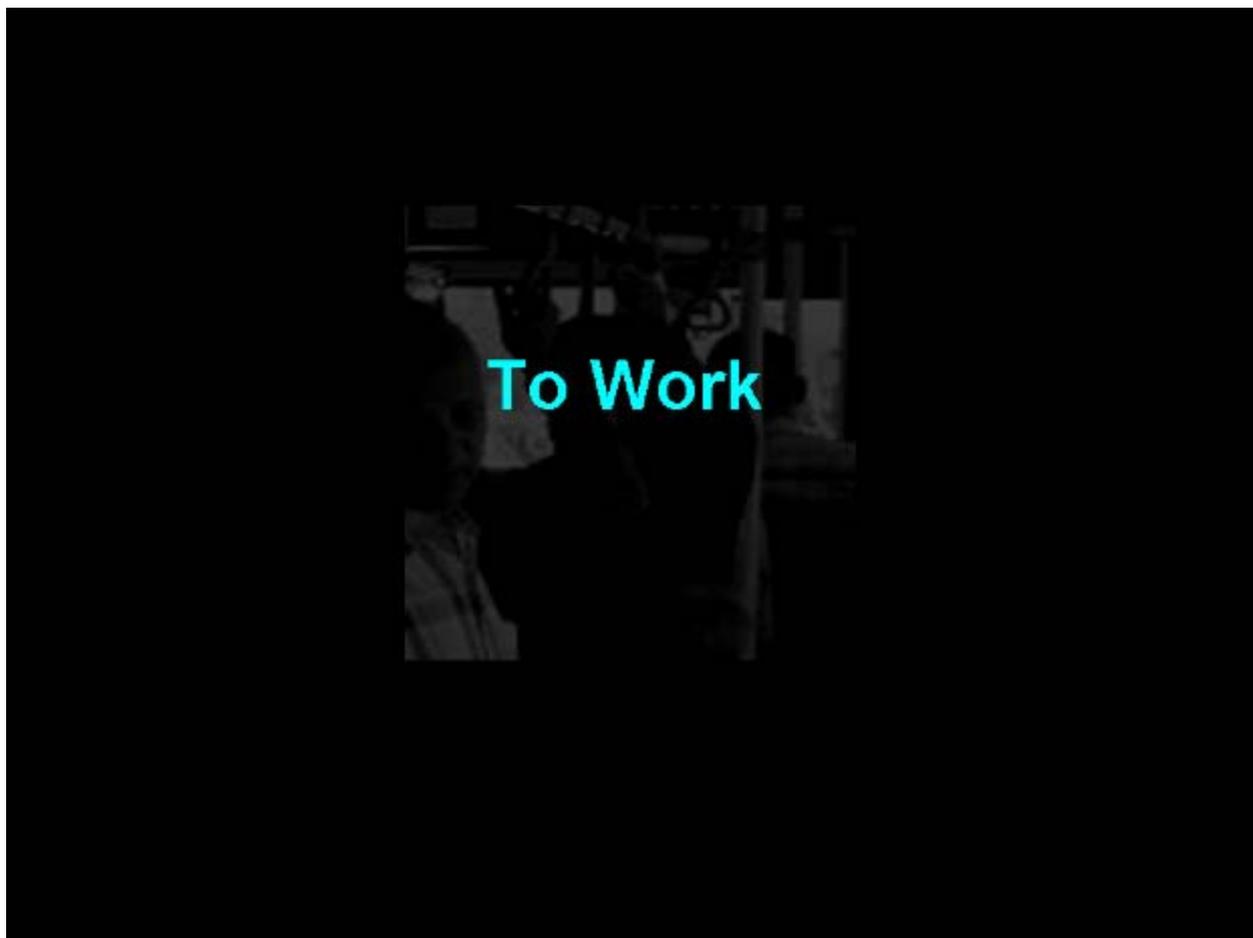
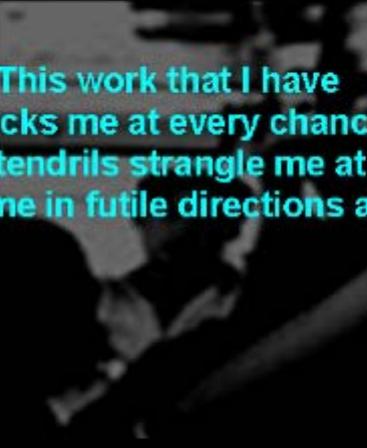


To Work

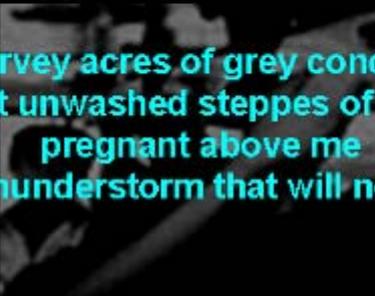
Derek Simons, Simon Fraser University, Canada





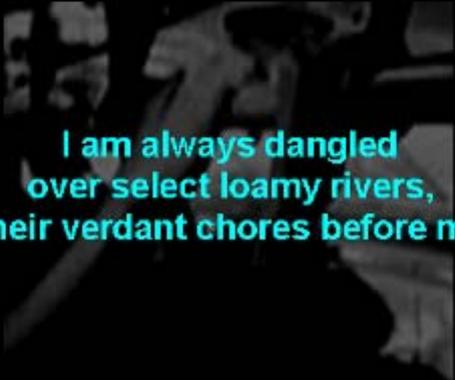
This work that I have
attacks me at every chance.
Its grey tendrils strangle me at dawn.
It pulls me in futile directions all day.

**It plants deep trenches in my chest
as I sit like a bole on the parched bus
picking its way through the garbage
on my way home.**



**I survey acres of grey concrete,
the great unwashed steppes of my hours
pregnant above me
like a thunderstorm that will not break.**

I never in fact arrive.



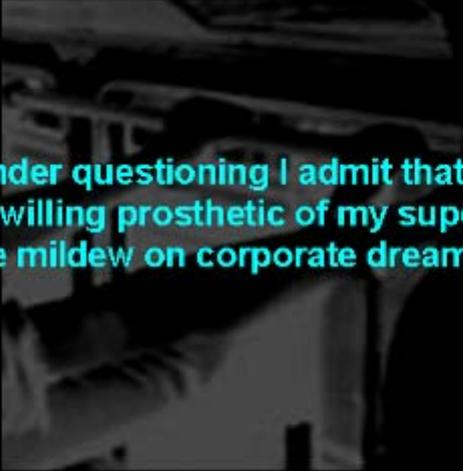
I am always dangled
over select loamy rivers,
their verdant chores before me.

**I am lungless with grief
at my own unswerving courses.**



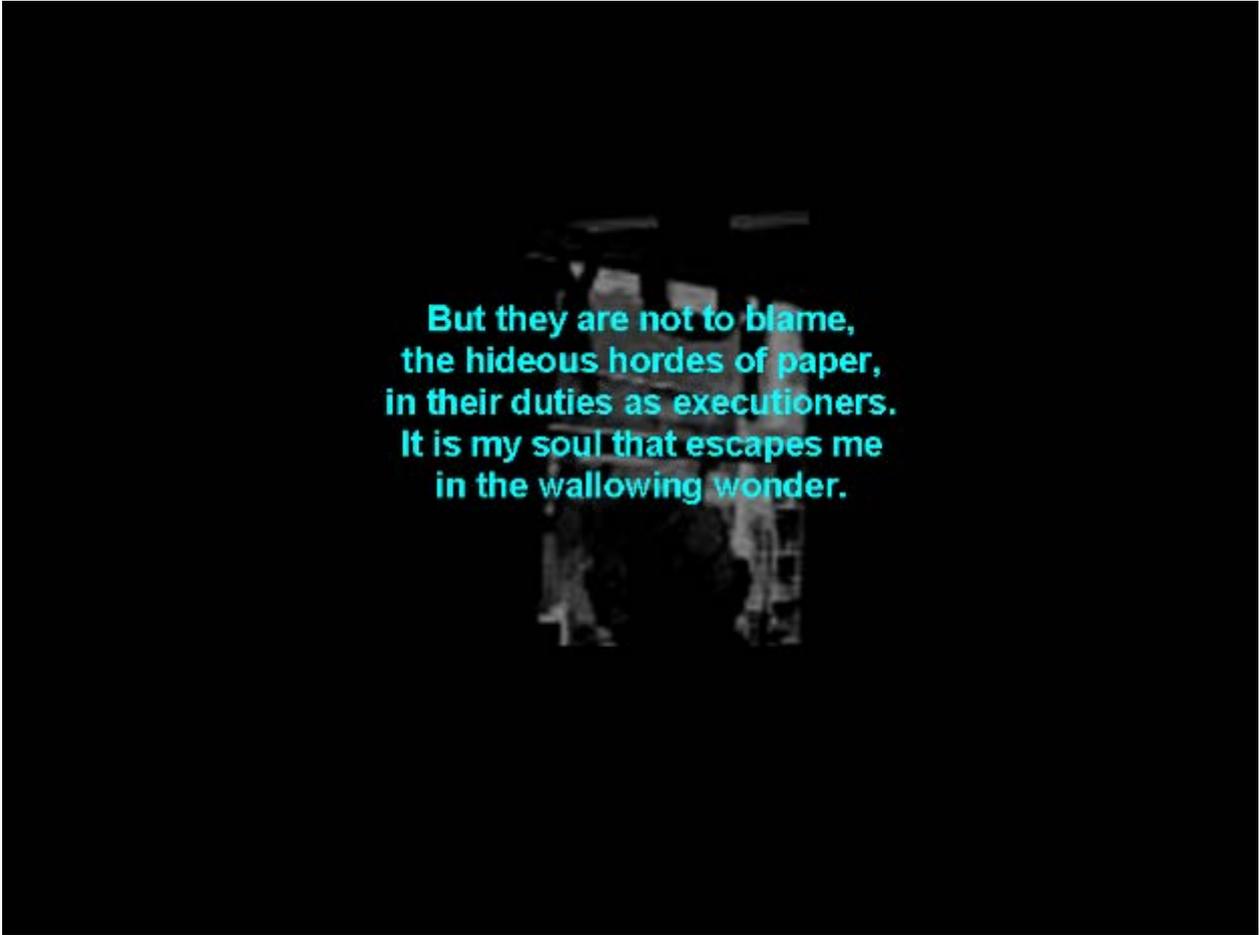
My brethren are all shouting,
"To arms!" "To arms!"
while I whistle fruitlessly about Jerusalem,
a hollow echo of past glories
sent to haunt me.

**I am risible as rain at my table,
hearing the faint cries of workbench generations
who hollowed out before me the lunch hours
in mass demonstrations before they died.**



**Under questioning I admit that
I am the willing prosthetic of my superiors,
mere mildew on corporate dreams,**

building the silent albicant mewes that bestride me.



But they are not to blame,
the hideous hordes of paper,
in their duties as executioners.
It is my soul that escapes me
in the wallowing wonder.

**The jackboots I pull on
are as fulgent as those I crush.**

