i.

rebar, bared bones in spalling infrastructure
tone of a place in ongoing crises of water

state delirious—it’s all this or nothing—fatigue
melts of semi-coherent poetry homes
puttering things to do, things to do once there is
a timeless day of almost pure concentration
to unpluck neural machinery from the bone spurs

grown hermitage of thrushes banded
to a flutter of juncos at the end of the year
we had nothing, we had nothing but grasshoppers

vintage post-modern strip malls, ubiquity and mutation
modes of public surveillance wayside water blues against
lightly snowed fields flowed to a painful airport edge
Cecily Nicholson

ii.

inquest weave warp custody slave-owner

philosophy tries to sleep past her brown body glory

fresh arrest graveyard shift incommunicado

in detention with no natural light or fresh air
on the block in

prison, an inappropriate facility

a frustrating removal! [smiley face emoticon]

set sun still seas the pock-marked moon

each follicle motion once flowed through,

the pattern of hair on the bathroom floor.

service arteries. systems interpolate sharp utility
corpuscular rays alight
throng of tracks
five cars beside the tender
new high speeds
four-lanes and turnpikes future
looked bright in-
deed time you’d work to buy a
car romance
of the road road is life call
of open
road objects source of beauty
blight lodging
market standards desire
get away
navigate vagabond trips
choosing roads intermodal
waterways
paths were wagon roads single-
minded con-
quest of spur line and through lines
railroad lives
great immigration refuge
convoy for
mutual protection mired
in meaning
livery horses power
finning fly-
wheel and vanadium steel then
as now the
durable tires key to
victory
racing the Bonneville salt flats
iv.

listening to yarns feelin seasons change
tuck trailer model of efficiency
delivery at the speed of electricity
four-cylinder front-wheel drive
the new world car the universal
car and compass a cat among ponies
the hot one marriage of style and power
style meets utility style as progress
machines become art at the fair pavilion
demonstrate landscape built for cars
great multitude communicates without
wires tend to rattle apart puncture-proof
tires on the road trailing proof of tires
come away with me passenger comfort
ground corrugates strengthens rigidity
investment snarl in a fledgling industry
spruce, ash, cotton and steel cable crash-
landing wings to lift and move forward
reliable control power of success formula
fabric running to freedom the ultimate
as every Ontario white relation related
to Ford or the company post-slavery point
of view sees seceded formally withdrawn
and far from diluted milk gruel coming
up the long road north from cotton fields
rally. rally the call of colour beyond
segregated set part determined

the time had just come when I was pushed
as far as I could be pushed. I had had enough

mechanized time was production
synchronizing worker material machinery clocks

useful ornamental differences
master and apprentice

press. press pushes inky type to the paper
failure form spokes driven into hubs

machinists have an aura about them
a north american system
getting into tradition
settling pots and pans

rock. rock emerges past dem
crazy blues – mania
downhearted blues – smite
born free until the last breath

is fine knives,
tomahawks, fowling pieces
semi-automatic action of factory long arms
eyearly repeating arms won’t take the bail out, just
auctioned everything off right down to the bare logo

there’s your watermelon Lilian
the whole van mm hmms
when parched soil yields linear lay-ins’ green

every splash of water the simplest form, gesture
the action of the poses or movement between, forms
Cecily Nicholson

Cecily Nicholson is the administrator of the artist-run centre, Gallery Gachet and has worked since 2000 in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood of Vancouver, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, sḵwx̱wú7mesh and səl̓ílwətaʔ territories. She is the author of: Triage (Talonbooks, 2011) and From the Poplars (Talonbooks, 2014).