VOWELS
(for Ted Aoki)

with Ted I walk in the moment,
a tangled line of metonymic moments,
making the momentous story
where moments are still and eternal

always in motion, he lingers long
in locations where he stands steady,
sturdy, in the dizzy, always
shape-shifting landscape of holes
like a floating archipelago, best
navigated by memory, and faith
in the mysteries of the alphabet

in his words I am rendered
pneumatic, with feet dangling
in both the earth and the heart’s
imagining of poetic possibilities,
still waiting for names

he holds the vowels that breathe
life in our consonants, constantly
ready to know the I in our writing,
the metonymic wildness of I

he knows the messy texture
of lived experiences, and follows
the line of discipline to know
the oblique, porous, capacious
line that is no line

Ted lives in language, and
language lives in Ted, 
drawing us to see what we 
overlook, focuses attention 
on tension, both tending 
and attending, throwing out 
lines, here and there, enamoured 
with the fecundity of conjunctions 

reminds us that grammar, the letter, 
the law are chimerical, even comical, 
like an alchemist of gramarye, 
transforms stone and water 
into pigments for re-presenting 
the world in words, always 
both familiar and unfamiliar, 
a seer who teaches us to see 

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About the Author

Carl Leggo

on the edge of the Pacific Ocean, clinging to a branch of the Fraser River, 
dreaming how long it takes the Fraser to flow in the earth and commingle 
with the Atlantic Ocean where I also know the perils and wonders of 
clinging to edges.

In all my teaching, writing, researching, and questioning, I am seeking to 
live poetically in the world.

(Carl is currently clinging to the snowy edge of the Atlantic Ocean, in 
snowshoes, living sabbatically in York Harbour, Newfoundland. He 
habitually resides in the Faculty of Education, University of British 

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