

IRISH ARTS CENTER



maud cotter, *the moon is falling* © Adam Reich

“In poetry all things seem to touch so they are.”¹

The relational space that Susan Howe opens in her poetry suggests that everything that we touch brings us into being with it. Coming into our minds in relational form as experience, its pulses enfold with our own. What I touch with my mind will make me who I am.

She speaks of her debt to Wallace Stevens, “for ways in which, through words frequencies and zero zones, his writing locates, rescues, and delivers what is various and vagrant in the near at hand.”²

From the ground up is how I like to begin, with a simple fold or slit in something nearby; a bottom-up way of making. Working with what is to hand can unwrap other mutations in material behavior, waiting until things tire of busy-ness and simply present their skeletal selves.

Folding and welding plastic for *the moon is falling* created a semblance of wellbeing, a florid and repeating order woven with an asphyxiating and ruinous material. The thicker gauge blue plastic I used, pulls the other thinner transparent plastic into line—a semblance of life. This dead field which mimics life is a core ingredient of this dystopian work, “an inevitable knowledge, required, as a necessity requires.”³

Apparently, the moon gives an impression of falling as it orbits the Earth elliptically; sometimes it is large and close by, other times it appears to fall away.

—Maud Cotter, 2022

¹ Quote: Susan Howe, from her book of essays *The Quarry*, chapter five, “Arisbe.” Published by New Directions or ND Books in 2015, ISBN 9780811222464.

² Quote: Susan Howe, from *The Quarry* chapter one, “Vagrancy in the park,” section one, “Roaming.”

³ Quote: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49420/the-plain-sense-of-things>