

Plant Absurdity

Julian Langer

10/7/25

for Sascha Engel

It is unsettling
and decolonising
from puritanical and reductive
ANTHROPOCENTRISM
to affirm that within the body
of EVERY being we call
HUMAN

lives a personal gut flora
a unique habitat of microbiota
wild and uncannily YOU
and not you
eco-egoist paradox of holism and individuation

.
flora are the plants present in a habitat
gut flora are not plants
the word flora comes from the Roman goddess of flowers and springtime
fungi, bacteria, protozoa and viruses are what comprises gut flora
so say scientists
but they don't really know that there are no flowers growing in my gut
all things are possible
a springtime of daisies, dandelions and daffodils could be my internal flora
they don't know

.
Donald Trump received a Nobel Peace Prize from Netanyahu
so saith the news
as I eat my breakfast and drink my tea
this morning
feeding my gut flora
the daisies, dandelions and daffodils

live on this destruction of physical presence and hydration
and I read Fondane's essay on Boredom and a couple Rimbaud poems
neither of their microbiomes are surviving
their gut flora are extinct habitats
unlike Trump's
unlike Netanyahu's
there are no flowers in either poet's gut today
what about these politicians?

.
one of my favourite palaeontological truths
is that moss was responsible for the first mass extinction events on this planet
basically – there is undoubtedly more to this story
the Ordovician-Silurian extinction event
more than 70% of species estimated to have been lost
moss feels wonderful to touch
I love to place my hand upon it
growing on trees or rocks or wherever
soft and gentle

.
how soft is the skin of Netanyahu or Trump? I am glad I will never find out!
BUT all things are possible, so perhaps I will

.
pulling out creeper plants that are making their way under the roof of the outhouse
I appreciate the disregard for propertarianism shown by these plants
and my mind turns to Sasha Engel and that book they wrote on Plant Anarchy

.
will to life
strength to overcome
anarchy primal and egoistic
I encounter in plants that never fails to inspire
continues as I move through this garden
I call "mine"
what does that mean though
these plants don't care what the paperwork says

.
opening the book Plant Anarchy
which is not plant-anarchy
but Engel's affirmation of the anarchy of plants
smiling when reading "no plant has ever obeyed zoning laws"
"every plant is a trickster"
"every plant growing in the cracks of our pavements is a site of resistance"
every plant yes is anarchy of untamed revolt
refusing repression
embodied dialogic-revolt articulating self-preservation
subservient to no Cause, Reason, Idea

.
every sapling tree is an absurdity
only ending in death and decay
yesterday I sat in a copse meditating besides a decaying trunk of wood besides several
saplings
every snowdrop and foxglove is a Sisyphean hero
rising up as far as it might
only to return the the soil
with the habitual rhythms of seasons – I agree with Engel that there are no real
repetitions
every plant refuses the denial of its possibility which includes the possibility of it's
impossibility

.
there are industrial monocultures
domesticated plants
policed by agriculturalists
there are miles and miles and miles
of crops
for the consumption of domesticated animals for the consumption of domesticated
humans
and for the consumption of domesticated humans
which is nonsense
as every plant lives for the sake of its living

.
speak of plant liberation
and laughter follows
even from many
(sentio-centric)
antispeciesists

.
every flower bomb thrown
is an embrace of possibility
amidst the bewilderment of uncertainty
guerrilla gardening a revolt
against reductionism

.
every plant is an anarchy that is an absurdity
every plant is an absurdity that is an anarchy

.
LONG LIVE THE WEEDS

.
I eat a vegetarian diet
inside of me
my microbiome
my gut flora

this habitat that is and is not me
feasts upon the flesh of plants
I have ingested
turning them into shit
that can compost
and become new flowers
born of seeds
dropped by naughty anarchists

.
soil fertilised by bone and blood
are ripe conditions
for plant growth
and I remember that song
The Gardener
by The Tallest Man On Earth

.
lavender and mint are good for calming
bay leaf can aid digestion and reduce inflammation
garlic helps with blood pressure issues and may even reduce the risk of heart attacks
and cancer
phytoncides released by trees and other plants can reduce stress, boost natural killer
cells and also help lower blood pressure
none of these plants live to do this
these are not their purposes
they do not will their lives for these Reasons
They live to be who they are

.
I can imagine myself becoming an oak
roots reaching into the soil
touching mycelium
branches spreading out
touching the branches of other trees
in a wild forest
home to bear and wolf and deer and badger and buzzard and owl and boar and fox
and hedgehog and all manner of plants

.
and moss was (basically) responsible for the first known mass extinction event
and Donald Trump and Netanyahu and the political machine of too-fucking-late-
krapitalism are intensifying and worsening this mass extinction event
and maybe when Trump dies he will become daisies
and Netanyahu windflowers
and from the wreckage and ruination of the machine forests and pastures full of
flowers will spread
all things are possible

the sea slug *Elysia chlorotica*
is a species-queering animal
who becomes a plant
through kleptoplasty
allowing it to photosynthesise
and the possibility of Kafkaesque Metamorphosis
human-becoming-animal-becoming-plants
excites the imagination

.
Engel differentiates plant-intuition from computer-logic
I wonder what the elder tree I see from my window imagines
stepping outside my door to ask
the tree replies to my questions
who are you
what are you
do you imagine
what do you want
in wordless gestures

.
intuition as gut-feeling
remembering my microbiome
co-existing with Engel's microbiome
co-existing with Trump and Netanyahu's microbiomes
my gut flora as a flowering springtime
the gut is the first, primal, brain
the enteric nervous system

.
perhaps intuition is born for a plant in their roots,
or their leaves
or their phloem
or their xylem
all things are possible
I don't know
this feels stupid
it probably is

.
the strangeness of the world is the absurd
and the strangeness of a plant is their absurdity
the lived experience of being a plant is strange to me
in its unknowable qualities
and with this an attraction
born of mystery

.
the plant-philosopher Michael Marder
(who might not be a plant

and also might be
all things are possible
I haven't inspected him to see)
affirms that dialogues regarding co-existence
ecological healing
decolonisation
must go beyond romantic-nativism
and I am of a similar perspective
thoughts of garlic growing here
as ecological exiles
come to mind
and I wonder if Sascha has read Marder
if I am a good friend I will remember to recommend

.
a bee nuzzles into the petals
of an orange flower
in my garden that I cannot speciate
butterflies have been dancing around
buddleia and lavender here recently also
flowering plants are the most diverse group of land plants
there are about 300,000 known species and who can say how many unknown species
they share a Carboniferous era common ancestor and explosively diversified during
the Cretaceous
meaning flowers survived the Permian-Triassic extinction event and the Cretaceous-
Paleogene extinction event
so when a tough guy calls you a "flower" that means that you are a fucking survivor

.
agriculture is entirely dependent upon flowering plants
angiosperma is the technical name
angeion the Greek word for container
sperma the Greek word for seed
all of whom live lives of
mutualistic-interdependency
with pollinators
that agriculture kills off with pesticides
and many of these plants
will not survive this mass extinction event
and new ecological conditions
born from global warming
so agriculturalists are probably going to struggle
to eat

.
thoughts of lost cities
found amidst the Amazon rainforest
and Cambodian jungle

and deserts along the Silk Road
found by grave robbers
come to mind

.
I would rather this global Mesopotamia
became lost in forests
and pastures
than man-made deserts

.
those jungles and forests
that decolonised those cities
are under threat
from Leviathan still

.
plants have an intense will to life
that continually inspires me
plants are revolting anarchies
of wild refusal before Leviathan
all things are possible
their survival and flourishing are possible
jungles and flowers are possible and possibility
and the extinction of all plants is inevitable
death is invariant
fuck it though
they still will their lives!

.
Engel's philosophy of plant anarchy
embracing directness
as deixis
being-before-categorisation
pre-Symbolic experiencing
deterritorialising encoding
in their words "unwriting"
and I feel intense appreciation
for this affirmation of immediacy
and revolt against alienation

.
Engel is the champion of the Anti-Alphabet
which is strange and absurd to me
and I love their revolt
against Latin tyranny
we are different co-existing presences
we different perspectives and points of view
having different bodies and psychogeographies and educations

I have written this poem for Sascha Engel
 as a friend
 to affirm plant anarchy and plant absurdity
 I am writing this poem for Sascha Engel as a friend
 to affirm plant anarchy and plant absurdity
 .
 their book is in my hand again
 flicking through pages
 skimming sentences
 Sascha Engel is to me is a succulent
 in a desert of deserting nihilist-anarchists
 petals black
 full of psycho-active possibility
 sharp needles to fend off
 those who would do harm
 living in a landscape ravaged by Mesopotamia
 and I smile
 imagining them hating and loving my categorising them
 ambiguity is true and real
 a tree is a tree and is not a tree
 a foxglove is a foxglove and is not a foxglove
 we are living paradoxes and so engaging in mysticism
 we are both published in a poetry collection
 titled Flower Bombs
 this poetry collection is psychic-guerrilla-gardening
 these poems seeds
 .
 you are what you eat
 the sea slug *Elysia chlorotica*
 is a species-queering animal
 who becomes a plant
 through kleptoplasty
 tribal cultures who are
 the people of the deer
 salmon, ox, river, forest
 as they are what they eat
 queer the species-identity of
 Human
 biological classification is less meaningful
 than direct experience
 and we breathe air oxygenated
 through plants photosynthesising
 we are what we breathe
 we are the waste of plants
 this is wonderful

and evolution is a process
of continuous species-queering
changing with habitats
becoming different
and with mass extinction events
dramatic evolutionary changes are likely
all things are possible
and it is possible that the
HUMAN
animal will become kleptoplastic
become-plant
reoxygenated this earth
possibly

.
what a fucking absurd idea!

.
there is a habitat of gut flora
residing within me
one within Sascha Engel
and that is a strange truth to live with

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Julian Langer
Plant Absurdity
10/7/25

<https://ecorevoltblog.wordpress.com/2025/07/10/plant-absurdity/>

theanarchistlibrary.org