

what is amazing

HEATHER CHRISTLE



what is amazing

WESLEYAN POETRY

HEATHER CHRISTLE

what is amazing

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

Middletown CT 06459

www.wesleyan.edu/wespress

© 2012 Heather Christle

All rights reserved

Manufactured in the United States of America

Designed & typeset in *Seria Sans* by Eric M. Brooks

Wesleyan University Press is a member of the Green Press Initiative. The paper used in this book meets their minimum requirement for recycled paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Christle, Heather, 1980–

What is amazing / Heather Christle.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-8195-7277-6 (cloth: alk. paper)—

ISBN 978-0-8195-7278-3 (ebook)

I. Title.

PS3603.H755W43 2012

811'.6—dc23 2011046139

5 4 3 2 1

This project is supported
in part by an award from
the National Endowment
for the Arts



for my parents

CONTENTS

i

- The Seaside! 3
Self-Portrait with Fire 4
Teamwork Should Come from the Soul 5
If You Go into the Woods You Will Find It Has a Technology 6
People Are a Living Structure Like a Coral Reef 7
Moss Does Not Love Other Moss 8
To Kew by Tram 9
No Light and No Hands 10
An Activity 11
How Like an Island 12
More of Form Is More of Content 13
Talk Radio 14
Taxonomy of That November 15
Way out in the Country 16
I'll Be Me and You Be Goethe 17
More Swans and More Women 18
Such a Lovely Garden 19
Wallpaper Everywhere Even the Ceiling 20

ii

- We Are Not Getting Anywhere 23
The Small Husband 24
Bash 26
Saturday 27
It Feels Like It Is on Purpose 28
Up Again with the Night 29
The Angry Faun 30
In Accordance 32

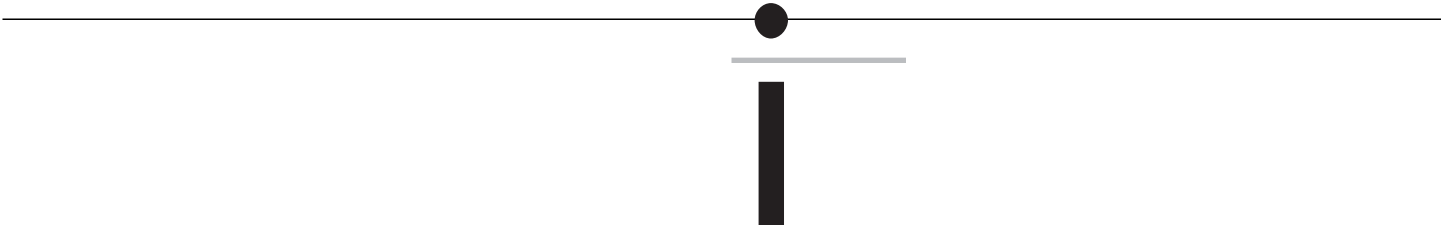
The Spider	34
Difficulties	35
I Am Coming Over	36
A Very Remarkable Story	37
And Then We Clap Ourselves Together	38
What Is Amazing	39

iii

What Will Grow Here	45
Happy and Glorious	46
Parking Lot	47
Go and Play Outside	48
Some Combinations	49
I Will Know You by Your Red Carnation	50
Ladies a Basket	51
Last Time I Wore This Sweater	52
For Henri	53
To Do	54
Infinitives	55
Route 109	56
Classic Hook Shape	57
Under the Moon the Knocking	58
Directly at the Sun	59
A Long Life	62
Basic	63
All Things Bright and Beautiful	64

Acknowledgments	65
-----------------	----

This page intentionally left blank



This page intentionally left blank

THE SEASIDE!

This is a wall of great intensity and furious
it kind of hums yellow and hums
green and never shall it hum purple Captain
when will you relieve me The wall
I love at night is huge and warms me
like a caterpillar or bag but do I also
have a family Captain or is the wall
the only shelter I have known and furious
why and humming brightly why Why
is all the beauty in the wall and not
in me Captain and in you Captain you
are studded lines of buttons That is
some finery! Whereas my outfit is it
like a prison with the dimmer switch
turned low No my outfit is nothing
the dimmer switch to nothing But
I can tell you things I'm not a piece of foam

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH FIRE

They asked me if I was on fire and I said No no no no
no no no I did not want to make trouble I was lying I was
on fire on my legs and on my hands I was ashamed I tried
to hide my legs by kneeling I set the grass on fire The colors
were a brilliant green and orange combination I liked it and smoke
I was not in pain or on pain I was on fire and lying why
to the people Obviously they loved me were warm and pink
and vocal on a promising spring day with electric buds Electrifying
I mean I mean bright bright bright like a likeness of me I wanted
to gnaw and to gnaw on an extra large slice of my likeness

TEAMWORK SHOULD COME FROM THE SOUL

They were projecting a hologram onto my snowsuit
A hologram of nature A snowsuit of white
Nature was not moving but I was moving and that
was most of the plot We got good ratings
They were going to release nature in Los Angeles
Houston and Maine but I was never going to be released
anywhere They were going to give me snacks and
send me into the tundra and evaluate how long
I survived It was our greatest collaboration
I thought Only they were the ones with ideas and
I contributed two things My body and the suggestion
that we should maybe try to write it down
When I died it would be a polar bear that got me
I predicted and tried to practice relaxing b/c
I wanted my last feeling to be relaxation
but they said that wouldn't fit in with the show

IF YOU GO INTO THE WOODS YOU WILL
FIND IT HAS A TECHNOLOGY

This tree has a small LED display
It is glowing and it can show you words
and it can show you pictures and it can melt
from one choice to another and you are looking at it
and it wants you to share the message
but it can't see that you are the only one around
and that everyone else is hibernating
which you love You are so happy and alone
with the red and yellow lights It's a nice day
to be in nature and to read up on the very bland ideas
this tree has about how to live This tree says
grow stronger and this tree says fireworks effect
This tree is the saddest prophet in history
but you don't tell it that You are trying to show it respect
which gets tiresome but then it flashes
a snake at you It's a kind of LED tree hybrid joke
and you could just kiss it for trying For failing
But it can't see you and it starts to cry

PEOPLE ARE A LIVING STRUCTURE
LIKE A CORAL REEF

People love to clean their ears and I love people
very much They are everywhere! Every single
thing I love I love for windows only and if
one window reflects another then friends
for me it's all over And in the windows are trees
and in the windows are people What are they even doing
with their hunger and in their new shirts They are
taking care of themselves and they are taking each other out
for lunch Oh even the rain has to love them People
are just too attractive! and the rain places itself
on the window in order to be closer to the people
the ones who are eating The ones who are
busting out vigor Oh people You have to love
people They are so much like ourselves

MOSS DOES NOT LOVE OTHER MOSS

It isn't dark yet though it should be dark
The grass is bright You can still see it
and warm and you can smell it and
elsewhere two people hold one another close
in a darkness they have created They can feel
their insides turning to olive oil and late late
afternoon light It's hard not to be them
to be like a fallen off piece of the mountain
to have traveled so far and still without darkness
to see the whole system The houses
pulling up from the soil and to want
the stars out now To want the stars out now
like a linen bag over the head

TO KEW BY TRAM

Lying down among the daffodils I am composed
but not the daffodils because I crushed them! Not
as an act in itself It was auxiliary Were my next
attempt to stand myself erect upon my feet
I would leave behind devastation
in the organized shape of my body
This is also how I move myself through
space Everywhere these holes I don't look
back to When I return as a giraffe the holes
will have to change They will say no god
would plan on such a shape And if then
I lie down again on these yellow flowers they
will teach me that my goldenness is dim

NO LIGHT AND NO HANDS

In the field there was a disembodied whistle
Disembodied by night which disembodies me too
I was in the field also I was in hearing distance
Hence I am telling you A whistle is often
just bad but this one I liked in part
for its dislocation It was in the field
with me but did not begin there whereas
I began there In the daytime I was a hole
but at night I could be nothing if I wanted
A wakeful part of nothing with an ear

AN ACTIVITY

There is a quilt and he is beneath it and some light
comes down through stitches He can see that it's man-made
Can see his knees and hands and belly and by the light
he knows the night lies in the future just as he lies
on the floor The quilt holding him together like skin
and warm and also with a soft all-natural light He thinks
from above probably he appears a rough organic form
Kind of casual like a canoe that's been attached
to boulders or casual like an island Like he is rising
from the floor and someone will maybe discover him soon
Give him a name and go away and tell a soul or two about it
How he was there and the quilt was there Empty young
and quiet like a prison yard when breaks the afternoon

HOW LIKE AN ISLAND

How like an island we are in love encouraging
moss & like an island we are barely moving Just
to exist takes much concentration & like an island
in love we have a house in our two imaginations &
they intersect It strengthens the house & our feelings
Unlike an island we wake up An island never sleeps
That is its duty & ours to remain in love barely moving
We do not want to disturb the house Do not want it
to fall into the ocean that is always so nearby It surrounds
us & is moving Like an island the ocean does not see us
or care why though we persist in loving it at one rate
or another & are waking close together in the dark

MORE OF FORM IS MORE OF CONTENT

As a child X is too small for the furniture The furniture
causes his legs to dangle over other junk such as the floor
and X feels woe X feels like dying or purchasing specially
made child furniture Small chair Small divan When X
grows to full size the feeling remains He is out
of whack with the world and it is like a crab
who walks out of its shell and that is not a metaphor
for X's emotional life His feelings are verified true
The trouble is when X is small X is very very very
very small and when normal X is very very very
very normal and in this extremity nothing will fit

TALK RADIO

There is only one thing in life that matters
It has to keep growing and it doesn't need me
Those are not clues Those are laws
The thing is the sky It is blinking I think also
I must be blinking as if to say Sky
you are not the only one outdoors with autonomy
and the sky stays very quiet
It keeps blinking like it is stupid
People think when something doesn't talk it is interesting
I am always talking and never interesting
like a pile of rocks Is that interesting
or moss wrapped up over the branch
but nature why don't you say something
It scares people when there's dead air

TAXONOMY OF THAT NOVEMBER

Then was an animal I could not identify and that also I lived with
In performing our daily headcount I noticed Then's skull
was shaped like a tiny cloud and yet I said nothing
I fed Then some hay and we were feeling wretched
in the blue pantry and at night we could not dream
There was a war on but still I got dressed
beneath the towering stars and no moon
According to the chore wheel I should have been sweeping
According to science we should have been dead
I knocked on Then's teeth and they were not hollow
like the sun was and I wrote it on my list
We enjoyed the taste of saltwater and baseball
we enjoyed on the radio in daylight
in a blue room that grew off the hallway
We were happy and wretched and cloudy
and setting fire to everything for warmth

sample content of What Is Amazing (Wesleyan Poetry Series)

- [**click A Heritage and its History book**](#)
- [read Hall of Mirrors: The Great Depression, the Great Recession, and the Uses-And Misuses-Of History](#)
- [download Digital Painting Techniques: Masters Collection](#)
- [**click Invisible Nature: Healing the Destructive Divide Between People and the Environment here**](#)
- [download The Fallen Legacies \(Lorien Legacies: The Lost Files, Book 3\) book](#)

- <http://www.shreesaiexport.com/library/Can---t-We-Talk-about-Something-More-Pleasant---A-Memoir.pdf>
- <http://toko-gumilar.com/books/Hall-of-Mirrors--The-Great-Depression--the-Great-Recession--and-the-Uses-And-Misuses-Of-History.pdf>
- <http://tuscalaural.com/library/Digital-Painting-Techniques--Masters-Collection.pdf>
- <http://serazard.com/lib/Comments-on-the-Society-of-the-Spectacle.pdf>
- <http://serazard.com/lib/The-Whispering-Statue--Nancy-Drew-Mysteries--Book-14-.pdf>