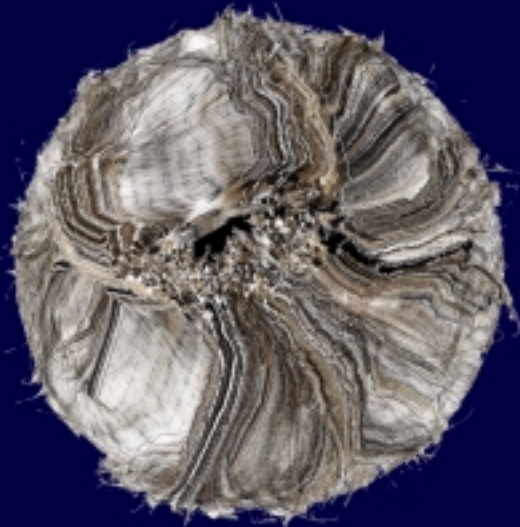


There are no nouns in Tlön's conjectural *Ursprache* . . . there are impersonal verbs, modified by monosyllabic suffixes (or prefixes) with an adverbial value. For example: there is no word corresponding to the word "moon," but there is a verb which in English would be "to moon" or "to moonate." "The moon rose above the river" is "hlöt u fang axaxaxas mlö," or literally: "upward behind the onstreaming it mooned."

Jorge Luis Borges, "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"



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tertius

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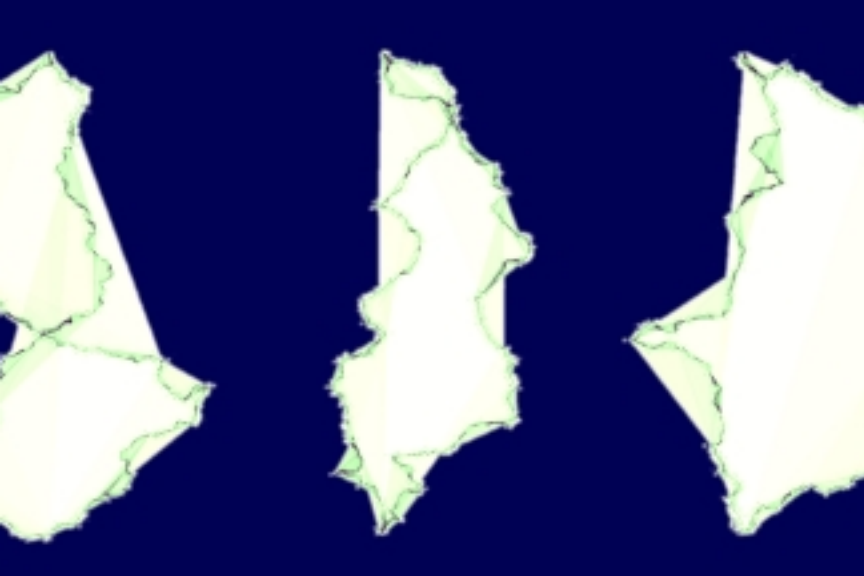
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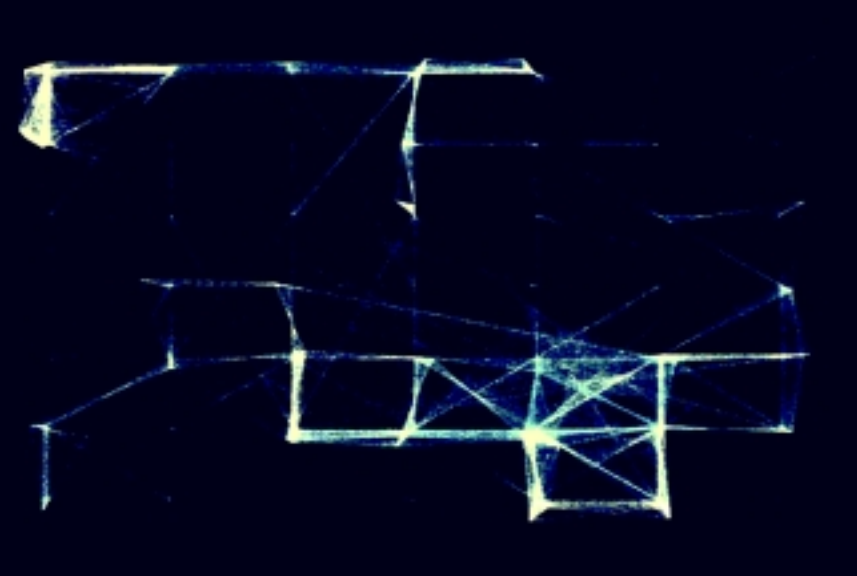
MORNING SWIMMING OUT INTO THE OCEAN



some of the summer cloud is mountain

where the smoke from a chimney ends infinity

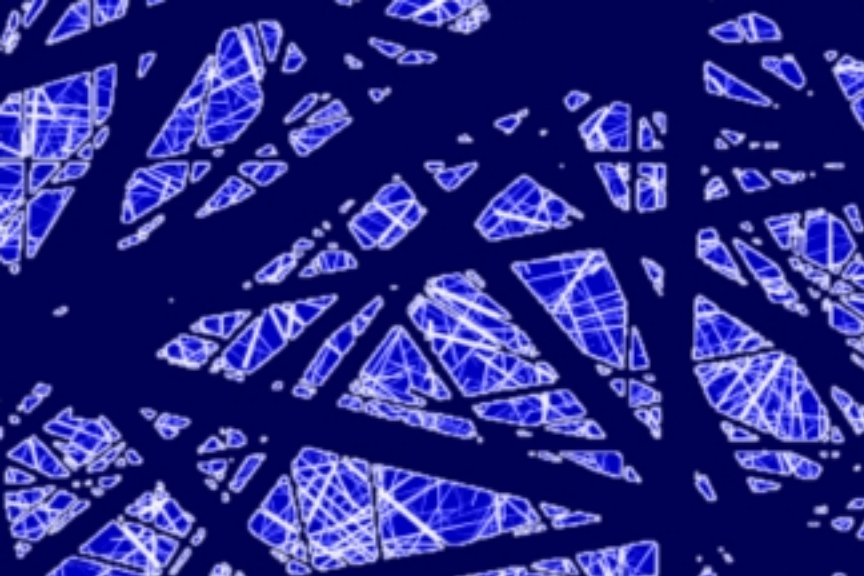
up and up a hawk hides in a cloudless sky



a breeze and my mind on to other things

soft on the forest quiet a woman's quiet voice

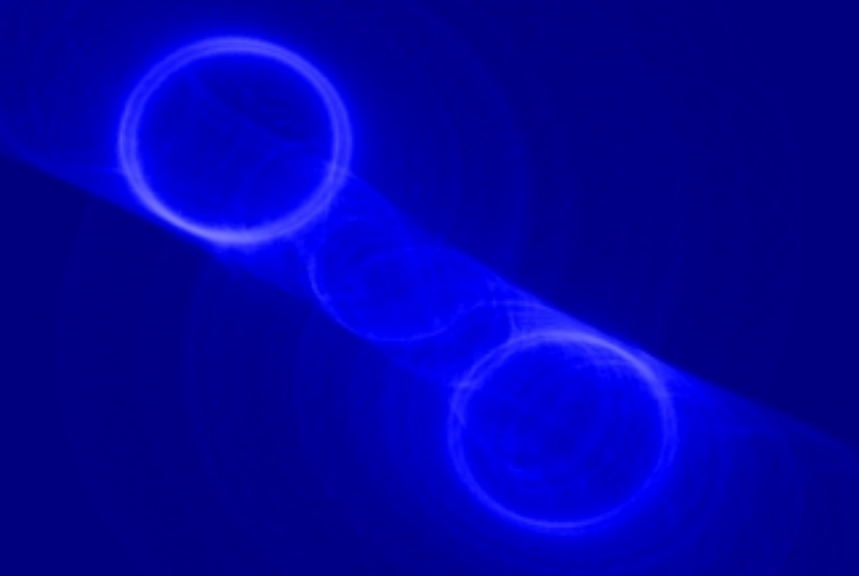
pain fading the days back to wilderness



twilight
me slowly pouring
into the not-me

an evening gone to night gone the fireflies

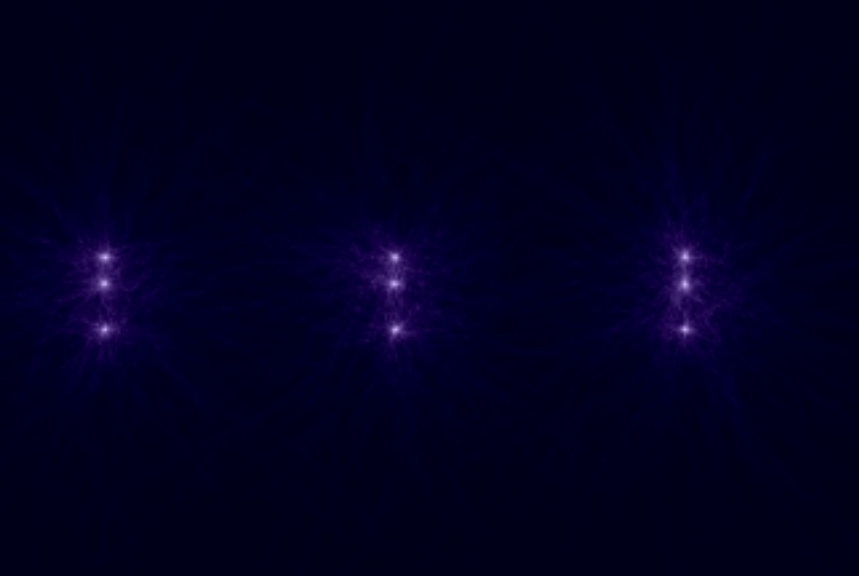
after the moth the flame



the river the river makes of the moon

under your voice on the old tape lost music

heat lightning the lingering trace of whiskey



beneath stars the unison of skyline lights

at the last moment preparing for the next

Versions of the following poems appeared previously:

some of the summer cloud White Lotus Winter 2006
the river ant ant ant ant ant 4

All images by the author and previously unpublished.