



This is a repository copy of *Portal*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/213710/>

Version: Published Version

---

**Article:**

Greenwood, C. [orcid.org/0000-0003-3615-4936](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3615-4936) (2023) *Portal*. *The Goose: A Journal of Arts, Environment and Culture in Canada*, 20 (1). 5. ISSN 2291-0948

---

© 2023 Scholars Commons @ Laurier. Reproduced in accordance with the publisher's self-archiving policy.

**Reuse**

Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

**Takedown**

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing [eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk) including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



[eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk)  
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

# The Goose

---

Volume 20 | Number 1

Article 5

---

5-5-2023

## Portal

Catherine M. Greenwood  
*University of Sheffield*



Part of the Poetry Commons

Follow this and additional works at / Suivez-nous ainsi que d'autres travaux et œuvres:

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/thegoose>

---

### Recommended Citation / Citation recommandée

Greenwood, Catherine M.. "Portal." *The Goose*, vol. 20 , no. 1 , article 5, 2023,

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/thegoose/vol20/iss1/5>.

This article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Goose by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact [scholarscommons@wlu.ca](mailto:scholarscommons@wlu.ca).

Cet article vous est accessible gratuitement et en libre accès grâce à Scholars Commons @ Laurier. Le texte a été approuvé pour faire partie intégrante de la revue The Goose par un rédacteur autorisé de Scholars Commons @ Laurier. Pour de plus amples informations, contactez [scholarscommons@wlu.ca](mailto:scholarscommons@wlu.ca).

## Portal

Door  
to the  
Underworld,  
Gateway to Hell–  
what locals call  
*(superstition)*  
that great thermokarst canyon

The Batagaya Slump  
– *thermo-cirque, sediment flux, retrogressive thaw* –  
from the air: a huge keyhole, skeleton slot  
unlocking earth with the sun's brass key

a sprawling Rorschach-ian symmetry,  
its immense gash a mud-blot

that reads like a fearful O'Keef-ian  
flower blossoming in rough  
umber brushstrokes  
on a grass-gold  
veridian field –

the uncensored  
labial spread of a centerfold  
[long slash leading  
to the Batagay river  
an ugly perineal tear]

*just write it:*

*gaping vulvic gulch*

~~*huge damp slump  
sucking downward  
compelling the plane  
to plunge  
into the awful  
unfathomed  
depth  
of that*~~

*sinking*  
*sludge*  
~~*canal*~~

on the ground: the Slump is *a micro-climate*  
shadowy alcoves carved below the frostline  
chilled arctic air tunneled through hoodoo

rivulets of slurry melting on the gulley floor  
*form sediment mounds* slimed with green furze

soft explosions of soil and slithering avalanches  
– *intermittent erosion* –  
cliffs calve severed clumps

[*Valley of Stagnant Pools, Valley of Incremental Terrors, Valley of Fools*]

neon-garbed humans unspooling blue rope descend the slick rim  
tiny venomous spiders  
abseiling into the throat of a bloom

[into the gloom of an ossuary vaulted in ice, unthawed  
acres bricked with relics  
bison skull raptor bone petrified spruce]

stacked inside a towering headwall sweating stale water  
is a two-hundred-thousand-year-old forest  
tree roots proud of the grit-face  
protrude through time  
skeletal claws groping for purchase

[*what does Hell smell like?*  
–exhalations of mineral freon  
–gusts of de-oxygenated ice  
–unseen spores of prehistoric pollen  
–voodoo, dead things decanted from crypts]

[like standing inside a defrosting fridge  
slick  
slow  
drips  
a metronome ponderously ticking the eras]

*internal landslides destabilize*

*the sinkhole*

~~underfoot the ground contracts like something spawning~~

*periglacial dilation charted at a rate of 10 metres per annum*

~~like some huge unthinkable horror starting to crown~~

**CATHERINE GREENWOOD** is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing/Gothic Studies at the University of Sheffield, and her research includes the shifting literary topography of an Arctic sublime impacted by climate change, recent unburials of extinct ice-age animals exhumed from melting permafrost, and the attendant trade of mammoth tusks, or ice-ivory, inspire Catherine's eco-horror poetry sequence *Siberian Spring*.