

Icon

If placelessness finally reigns, it's not me,
the 'merican, haunting this apartment,
but my shortcut on the French-language
operating system's desktop. My latest release.

My icon I click and drag behind me,
a mini and memorable identity, my logo.
My little DNA-infused flag to wave
at the parade of interface.

My folder's full of docs. And near-copies
of who I am exist invisibly on the chip.
Just like in "the future."

I have to keep persuading the spellchecker
it's English (US), not French (France), puh-leeze.
I guard both passport and passwords.
I had saved a country once to disk. It's here somewhere.

All night, the baby hard drive purrs and coos
from the other room. Satisfied, we sleep.
The DSL umbilicus branches into the data fields,
searching for homesickness's salve and remedy.

All night, behind our slumber,
tirelessly trolling the pixel-dark seas.



Originally from Vermont, Ethan Gilsdorf just moved back "home" after living in Paris since 1999. He is the author of the chapbooks "System of Belief" and "Past Events Have Not Yet Occurred." His poems can be seen in Poetry, The Southern Review, The North American Review, The Massachusetts Review, and Poetry London. The former poetry editor of the New Delta Review and Paris-based Frank, he makes his living as a freelance journalist and critic for such publications as Time Out, The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, San Francisco Chronicle, The Common Review (as their Paris correspondent) and Get Lost (as a contributing editor). He also works for Fodor's travel guides (as their Paris hotel writer). He is the recipient of grants from the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Studio Center, and received his M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Louisiana State University. See www.ethangilsdorf.com for more information.



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Ethan Gilsdorf

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