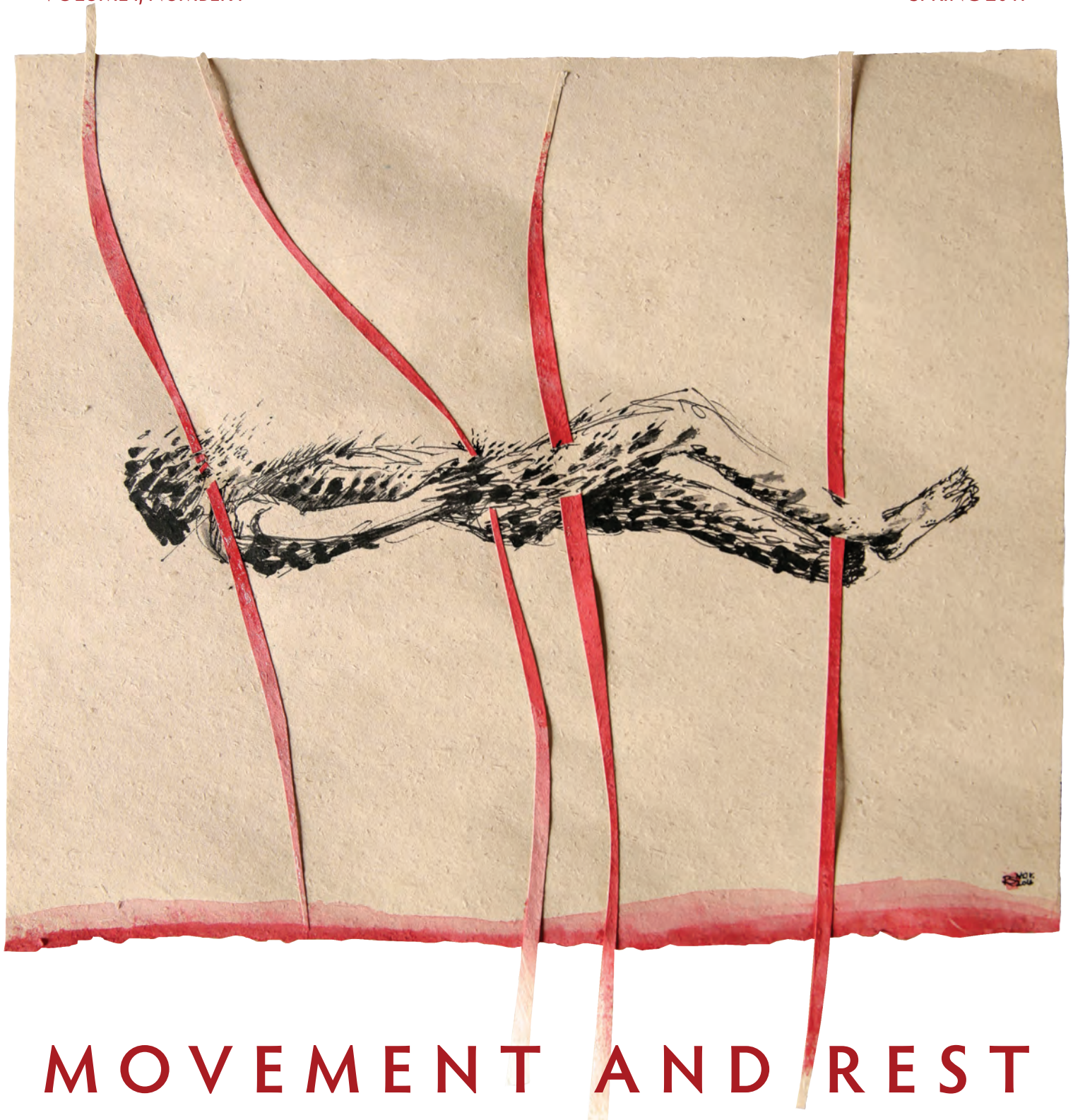


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MOVEMENT AND REST

No Rest for the Wicked

by Andrés Cruciani

A great, living wheel, spinning, churning its eight-and-a-half-million denizens at five feet per second, eighth fastest pedestrian speed in the world, New York City. New York City—the cars and trucks and taxis and bicycles and skateboards. The billboards and sandwich boards and megaphones and the fluorescent and neon signs. The shouting and the cursing and the dancing and the dinging doors held open and the shoving and the coughing and the sneezing. The fight breaking loose in a bodega and the panhandler begging for a dollar, fifty cents, a penny, *anything*. The handshakes and the hugs and the cold shoulders muscling past swinging backpacks. The street-corner preaching: *Your body's just food for maggots!* The honking and the screeching and the slamming of metal on metal at an abrupt halt. The squeaking of swings beneath shouting, laughing children and the dull roar of airplanes overhead and the scaffold netting slapping in the wind. The bicycle bells trilling and the deafening headphones blaring and the subwoofer rattling the trunk of a tinted-window car slowly rolling by. The crying at nothing to eat and the puppy-eyed teen cupping his hand before you and the pitter-patter and slap of water from a broken pipe onto the crowded subway platform beneath. The perennial complaints of ambulance and fire truck sirens and the whine of cop cars speeding from one trauma to the next. The rustle of a bush's spring roses and a squirrel's scamper across sidewalk and the loud cooing and feather ruffling of a pigeon rebuffing her insistent suitor. The smashing of glass and the hydraulic pounding of a pylon and the screaming beneath as a girder swings wildly above. The long-time-no-see greetings and the heartfelt gratitudes at small kindnesses and the emergency room doctor leaning against a brick wall, hand trembling as she pulls on a cigarette. The plumes of bus exhaust and the clouds of cheap perfume and the boots sneakers flip flops and high heels stamping by. The clipboard solicitors asking for just a moment of your time—Do you care about the environment? about women's rights? about social justice? about high rents? about clean water?—the hasty, smiling *No thanks* and the

guilt-laden *Have a great day!* as you keep past. The hustlers and the con artists and the bamboozlers and the saints and the weary and the destitute and the millionaires and the prostitutes and the thinkers and the feelers and the doers. The city an organism onto itself—birthing, growing, maturing, evolving, dying—ingesting, digesting, compartmentalizing, and excreting—and us, its tiny cells, shuttling its concrete veins and arteries, clotting its wounds and attacking its invaders and spreading our cancers. A great, heaving, pulsing mass drumming with the heartbeats of millions, a macrocosm of the microcosms contained, living its own life and dreams and desires and throbbing with the life it encapsules. The laughing and the talking and the weeping and the hoarse shouting and the consoling and the tenderness and the hushed dinner-table graces and the blanket tucked beneath a child's soft neck, *Goodnight, angel, goodnight*, and how to find stillness amidst it all, and how to find solace, and how too...