

## HANNAH THOMASSEN

## OPTICALITY

*. . . an image does not act for what it  
shows, but for the questions it raises.*

—Lacan

I am trying to see 360 degrees with my back to the moon.  
I am trying to explain multifaceted vision,  
spin gold into words. I am running a footrace  
with dementia, trying to make words do their work.  
I am trying to drive through the rain in the snow  
so I know where to go now and next.

I am trying to look death in the eye,  
convert light through an adjustable assembly of lenses.  
I don't want to be in over my head.

I am trying to find the right page, the right eye  
and the left. Trilobites had crystals for eyes.  
Jumping spiders have one large simple eye  
and many small eyes, would that help?  
I need more retina display. 360% more density and pixels.  
But is that upgrade too large to load?

I am trying on binocular and monocular hyperspectral visionary eyes.  
I see more than I can tell you about that. I just want you to see.  
I am sorting through piles of eyes trying to unseparate light from dark.

## PETRA DAI WALECH

## THE FISH-EYE DOOR

It is a safe place I am told  
It is a tight place I am told  
It is a small space I am told

There is one door—and one eye that sees all.

The fish-eye door.

It has seen men to the darkest places our waters know  
and seen the brightest sun after the deep journey.

It has heard the siren's call  
and it has heard the worst silence of all.

It has been to the birth place of species long gone  
remembered only by dehydrated bones.

The submarine door is made of steel—  
all the breathing beings depend on the air-tight seal.

The red light blinks every three seconds  
by the forty-third blink all is a pulse.

I try to time my breath to the pulsing  
but I try in vain, my lungs fail to sustain.

There is a sign below the eye  
It reminds me to be safe.

I keep my focus on the fish-eye.