The Typewriter in the 21st Century: Understanding the Nostalgic Aesthetics and Politics of Tyler Knott Gregson's Instapoetry

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1. The Typewriter is Alive: An Introduction

1 Most fortunate (or unfortunate?) people are not aware of David Cronenberg's 1991 surrealist sci-fi drama film *Naked Lunch*. An adaptation of William S. Burroughs' 1959 novel of the same name, the film makes an attempt at terrorizing its audience with typewriters metamorphosizing into part-typewriter and part-insect like monsters. In the film, hallucinating exterminator William "Bill" Lee encounters and uses several grotesque typewriter creatures which order him to write things, devour each other, partake in sensuous acts, and take on autonomous alien-like forms—with a loquacious typewriter referred to as a Clark Nova being the most notorious of them all. While the main focus of the film is to depict the Kafkaesque realities of drug addiction, Cronenberg also uses it to capture "the sensual yet perverse pleasure of Burroughs' writing," and to convey "the experience of writing, and how the act takes on a life of its own" (Bergstrom; Orange County Register).

2 The time when Cronenberg released this film was an interesting one for typewriters, since the start of the 1990s saw these analog typing machines being supplanted by digital computers providing word-processing software, desktop publishing, linkability to laser and inkjet printers, and the Internet. Mechanical or electromechanical typewriters reigned the desks of writers, white-collar workers, and students for over a century between the 1880s and 1990s, before major manufacturers began ceasing their production. The QWERTY keyboards and keypads which are used worldwide today and

the shift key, are a legacy of the 1874 Sholes & Glidden typewriters and the 1878 Remington No. 2 typewriters respectively (Polt, "The Life, Death" 67-68).

3   Elderly novelists like the late Cormac McCarthy, hobbyists or collectors like actor Tom Hanks, government organizations and intelligence agencies trying to prevent sensitive information from being hacked and compromised, police departments, prison inmates, funeral homes, legal practitioners and notaries associated with the Indian judiciary, and clerks and individuals from third world nations with unsteady electric power supply, are often presumed as the only ones who have continued using typewriters past the twentieth century (Polt, "The Life, Death" 68-69). However, there is a decent sized community of young poets, artists, and antiquarians invested in typewriters on Instagram, i.e., an American photo and video sharing social networking service (SNS), launched on October 6, 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and purchased by Facebook, Inc. (now Meta) in April 2012. As of December 2, 2023, hashtags such as #typewriter (with over 2.2 million posts), #typewriterpoetry (with over 0.6 million posts), #typewriterseries (with over 86 thousand posts), and #typewriterart (with over 29 thousand posts) were the liveliest spaces pertaining to typewriter-related content and activities on the platform. Of these, #typewriterseries was dominated by posts from American poet and photographer Tyler Knott Gregson—posts which contained poems snapshotted from Gregson's first book *chasers of the light: poems from the typewriter series* (published in 2014), and posts containing new unpublished typewriter poetry outputted by Gregson on sundry surfaces such as envelopes, music sheets, hotel slips, and textbook pages.

4   Poems in Gregson's books, as well as unpublished poems shared by him on Instagram, were both composed using a black late-1930s Remington Rand No. 17 typewriter Gregson had purchased from a local antique mall in 2012 (Gregg). Though Gregson still posts new typewriter poetry on his website www.tylerknott.com and Instagram account @tylerknott, he switched to posting mainly his photography and audio-video poetry recitals in the form of Reels on Instagram after the Covid-19 pandemic. As of December 2, 2023, Gregson's last two typewriter poems, titled Typewriter Series #3090 and Typewriter #3091 were posted on his website on August 27, 2023 and November 2, 2023. Both the poems were custom poems, written for an unspecified fee for anonymous clients, with Typewriter #3091 being veiled by a paywall that could be perforated with a monthly $5 subscription. While Gregson has never put his original typewriter poems for sale, he continues to sell them as prints along with calendars and some of his tactual calligraphic haikus that he used to write everyday two-three years ago.

5   Although the manner in which Gregson and other Instapoets like Rupi Kaur and Atticus have made an entrepreneurial estate by commodifying their works is a topic for another day, Gregson's typewriter poetry, as well as some of his poems accompanied by photographs, are crucial in understanding the use of analog (i.e., pre-digital) machines, materials, and modalities by young creatives on the web in the 21st century. While scholarly explorations have been made on Instapoetry, little has been said about verses composed and shared on the web that are either influenced or marked by a sense of analog nostalgia, i.e., technostalgia for analog apparatuses. The only study pertaining to this matter is Tanja Grubnic's 2020 paper "Nosthetics: Instagram poetry and the convergence of digital media and literature" where she examines the presence of nostalgic aesthetics or nosthetics (her neologism) in Instapoems. Thus, this paper aims

at bridging the academic and knowledge gap on the issue, by decoding the nostalgic aesthetics as well as the nostalgic politics of Gregson's Instapoetry through scrutiny and analysis of his one hundred and thirty-five poems in *chasers of the light*. Though Gregson's works hardly have anything to do with governance and power, the use of the term politics in this paper is concerned with acts and activities within Gregson's nosthetic works which machinate ways to elevate the status and effect of his works. Furthermore, while this paper primarily focuses on the poems in *chasers of the light*, it will sporadically rely on Gregson's typewriter poetry posted by him on Instagram along with its metadata (specifically comments) in order to support its arguments. Lastly, while this paper will lean on Grubnic's paper for analysis and discussion, it will also lean on papers by Belgian anthropologist historian Gil Bartholeyns, late Russian-American cultural theorist Svetlana Boym, and Xavier University's professor of philosophy and typewriter expert Richard Polt who owns around a hundred typewriters dating from 1875 to 2012.

2. Placing the Present in the Past: The Aesthetics of Analog Nostalgia and *chasers of the light*

6   A resident of Helena, Montana, Gregson holds a bachelor's degree in criminology and sociology from the University of Montana. Having written poetry since middle school, Gregson began blogging and posting his verses in 2009 to Tumblr and Twitter, and later to Instagram. Gregson, for whom creativity has always trumped logic, has written voraciously and almost daily for most of his life, and has published a total of six books, including five poetry collections. A devout Buddhist, Gregson has an autism spectrum disorder, and composes his verses around the themes of love, life, and hope. Gregson's wife Sarah Linden has been his muse since the start of his writing career.

7   While *chasers of the light* remains Gregson's most successful collection, his 2015 collection *all the words are yours: haiku on love* comes second. The success of the former, Gregson's ceaseless dissemination of his works on Instagram, and his huge number of followers, propelled him into becoming a poster boy for Instapoetry, i.e., a term (and occasionally a slur) used to describe bite-sized poems published on Instagram. A portmanteau of Instagram and poetry, Instapoetry is a new style of poetry characterized by multimodality, brevity, stylistic experimentation, resistance to literary conventions, self-help rhetoric, capitalism, and, themes of love, heartbreak, trauma, mental health, healing, social justice, resilience, empowerment, etc. Journalistic reports and online articles discussing Instapoetry began as early as in 2015, and have kept cropping up to this day. While some of them have lauded and embraced Instapoetry, some others have disparaged and derided it. Because of the lack of respectability conferred to Instapoets, many of them had to resort to deploying different tactics and conventional literary techniques to be taken seriously as writers. Be it Kaur who has branded herself as a champion of brown women all over the world. Be it Atticus with his Guy Fawkes mask who has utilized his anonymity to enhance the mystery surrounding his works. Or be it Gregson with his dreams of becoming Poet Laureate one day, who has emulated the mien and method of classic masculine (heterosexual?) writers such as Ernest Hemingway and Jack Kerouac for whom typewriters were both machine and medium[1] (see Fig. 1).

8　Fig. 1. A comparative figure depicting Hemingway (left) and Gregson (right). Hemingway's photo was taken by Lloyd Arnold indoors at the Sun Valley Lodge, Idaho in late 1939, for the dust jacket of the first edition of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Gregson's photo on the other hand, was taken by his wife Sarah Linden at their home in 2014. (Source: While Hemingway's photo was obtained from Wikimedia Commons, Gregson's photo was obtained directly from him[2]).

9　Gregson, who refers to Walt Whitman, and everyone from Cormac McCarthy and Hemingway to Pablo Neruda as his greatest creative influences, cites Hemingway's famous quote "there's nothing to writing, you just sit down at a typewriter and bleed" with regards to his own writing (Gregg). In the introduction to *chasers of the light*, Gregson recounts the day he purchased his typewriter and how he wrote the first poem of his typewriter series on the same day in the store:

> I typed it in the store, standing up near the entrance, with a page from a broken book I was buying for $2.00. I typed it without thinking, without planning, and without the ability to revise anything.
> I fell in love.
> I loved the urgency; the particular inability to erase, edit, and alter that comes with using a typewriter; the uninterrupted stream of thoughts. I loved the way the pages reflected my mind: unfiltered and imperfect and honest. In a digital world, it felt like fresh air to hold analog words. (7-8)

10　Gregson's relation with his typewriter is also reminiscent of Kerouac who famously wrote in *Atop an Underwood*, "My heart resides in a typewriter, and I don't have a heart unless there's a typewriter somewhere nearby, with a chair in front of it and some blank sheets of paper." Gregson's typewriter poems are composed on top of varying scraps and sheets of paper, including physical ephemera, such as—the blank side of a paper from an old book; textured paper which looks old, in different shades of brown, white, and blue; vintage wallpaper; an old map; bills; a flight ticket; and, grid-ed papers and ruled paper from school notebooks. Often, these papers appear crumpled, torn, or burnt, and showed signs of foxing (spots and stains) and depigmentation. Gregson, who likes to find and take out pages from "books that are falling apart and breaking" (Gregg), sets every poem on a unique piece of paper, making his collection appear like a
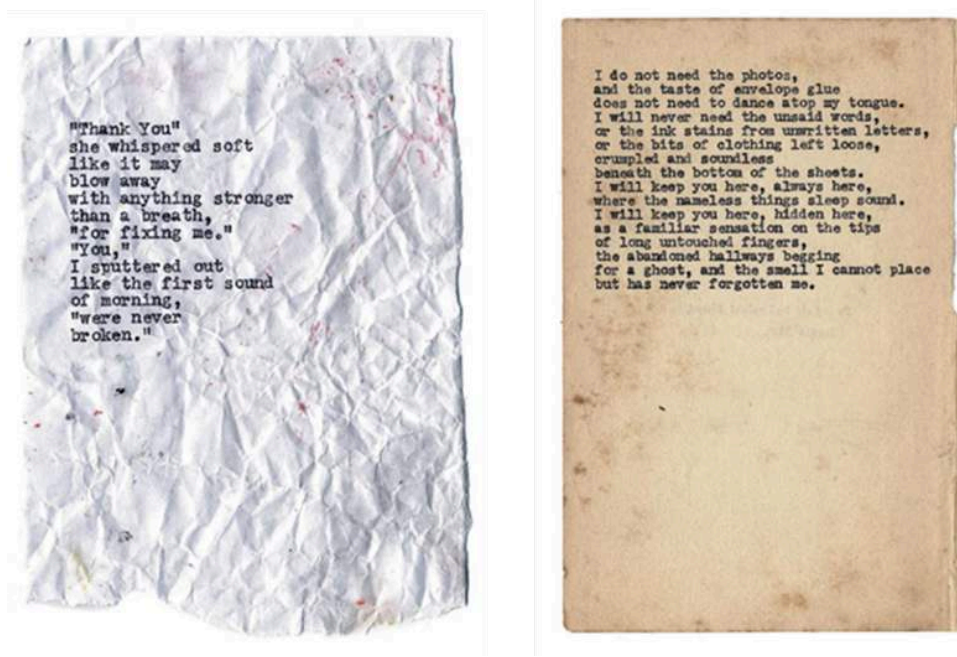
raw pre-print manuscript, a bohemian journal, a romantic epistolary compilation, or even a time capsule.
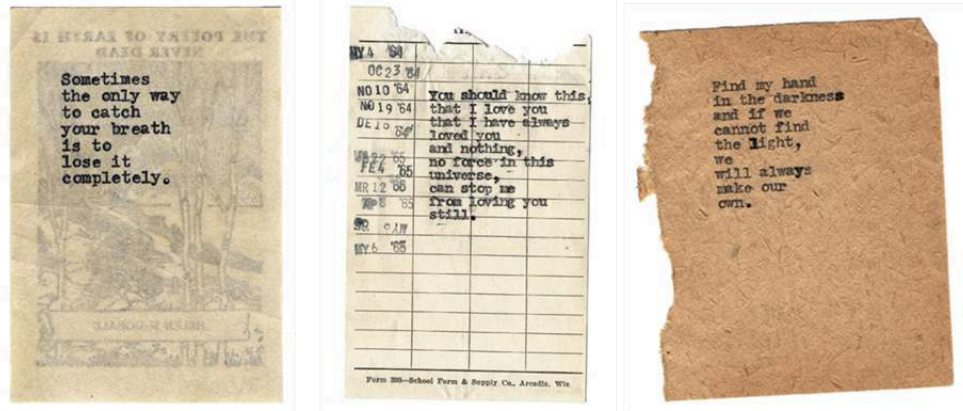
11   Fig. 2. Figure depicts three poems from *chasers of the light* appearing on pages 39 (left), 58 (center), and 16 (right) respectively. While the poem on the left appears typewritten on the blank side of a book's page, the poem in the center appears typewritten on the page of an old library book where logs about the book's borrowings were made. The poem on the right is an example of Gregson's poems which are typewritten on top of textured papers.

12   Fig. 3. Figure depicts three poems from *chasers of the light* appearing on pages 34 (left), 112 (center), and 68 (right) respectively. While the poem on the left appears typewritten on a vintage wallpaper, the poem in the center appears typewritten on a map of the Holy Roman Empire in a book. The poem on the right, which appears typewritten on Gregson's boarding pass, is an example of Gregson's poems which are composed on top of a variety of physical ephemera.

"Thank You"
she whispered soft
like it may
blow away
with anything stronger
than a breath,
"for fixing me."
"You,"
I sputtered out
like the first sound
of morning,
"were never
broken."

I do not need the photos,
and the taste of envelope glue
does not need to dance atop my tongue.
I will never need the unsaid words,
or the ink stains from unwritten letters,
or the bits of clothing left loose,
crumpled and soundless
beneath the bottom of the sheets.
I will keep you here, always here,
where the nameless things sleep sound.
I will keep you here, hidden here,
as a familiar sensation on the tips
of long untouched fingers,
the abandoned hallways begging
for a ghost, and the smell I cannot place
but has never forgotten me.

13   Fig. 4. Figure depicts two poems from *chasers of the light* appearing on pages 93 (left) and 56 (right) respectively. While the poem on the left appears typewritten on a crumpled paper with red stains, the poem on the right appears typewritten on the blank back of an old paper showing signs of foxing.

14   For Gregson, the typewriter "has always been a way to tangibly create something that increasingly is becoming digital" (Gunn). He notes "so much of the words we come up with, interact with and love today are digital, and we can never hold them" (Gunn). Gregson appreciates how using a typewriter allows him to see, smell, and hold a poem (Gunn). For Gregson, the typewriter puts value in a poem while making it impermanent, thus making the poem worth being cherished (Gunn). Gregson also appreciates being unable to make changes to a poem due to his typewriter as this permits his thoughts to flow straight and unfiltered "from brain to paper" (Gregg).

15   Now, not all poems in Gregson's collection were fashioned using a typewriter. Twenty-three poems in the collection were made digitally, with twenty-two of these poems being placed atop or next to a digital photograph. Most of these photographs appeared to have used a digital effect or filter that gave them a somber temporal tint or chiaroscuro, like sepia or black and white. Not all photographs related to the content of the poem they accompanied. Some photographs also featured parts of old dilapidated dwellings. Twenty-three other poems in the collection were blackout poems or found poems fabricated by blacking-out most of the words on a page from an old book.

16   Fig. 5. Figure depicts two poems from *chasers of the light* appearing on pages 10 (left) and 21 (right) respectively. While the poem on the left appears under a sepia photograph of a running train in rain, the poem on the right appears over a black and white photograph of dogs in a grassy field.

17   Fig. 6. Figure depicts two poems from *chasers of the light* appearing on pages 71 (left) and 121 (right) respectively. While the poem on the left appears over a photograph of an old broken window, the blackout poem on the right has been created by marking out the text of page 80 from W. Somerset Maugham's 1930 novel *Cakes and Ale*.

18   The evocative aesthetics of Gregson's typewriter poems, photograph poems, and blackout poems all work together to create a sense of past, despite the text of the poems being predominantly in variations of the present tense (and even the future tense), and despite the recency of the photographs depicted. Indeed, not only was the text of Gregson's work alluding to different moments in the present, but the moments

being alluded to were usually romantic, passionate, and even sexual. Love, Gregson's wife Sarah, hope, and life were the most common topics of Gregson's diaristic verses.

19   A closer look at the poem in the center in Fig. 2, reveals a mix of both simple and perfect present tenses. In the poem, which reads "You should know this, / that I love you / that I have always / loved you / and nothing, / no force in this / universe, / can stop me / from loving you / still.," Gregson addresses his lover in the present against the backdrop of a library book's log page stamped with dates from the 1960s. The contrasting juxtaposition of text in the present tense, and material and other visual cues pertaining to a time more than half a century ago, causes a backward temporal shift in the presentness of the poem's text, resulting in the impression that it was written in the 1960s and not the 2010s. This backward temporal shift also affects the handful of poems in the past tense, like the blackout poem in Fig. 6 which reads "I / was in / trouble / for / she / was a wild one." Even though the text of the poem pertains to a recent past, the creation of the poem on a page from Maugham's 1930 novel displaces the poem's temporality further back in time. Gregson's photograph poems are also affected by such a backward temporal shift brought on by their visual modality, as evident from the poem on the left in Fig. 5, in which Gregson uses imperative sentences in the present tense to discuss ardently adventurous activities he wants to engage in with his lover. While Gregson tells his lover to take a walk with him down the train tracks in the poem, and even suggests running away at some point, the sepia image of the running train in the rain, evokes the feeling that the insistent exhortations from Gregson took place decades ago. This is because in this case, the backward temporal shift is caused by the time-related connotations associated with sepia toning as it was a specialized treatment popular between the 1880s and the 1920s, given to black-and-white photographic prints to make them look warmer, and to enhance their archival qualities.

20   All in all, by using modalities that either signify to the past or impersonate it, Gregson places the text of his poems, which have to do with the present or the recent past, in the distant past. Moreover, by using mementos and relics pertaining to a bygone time, Gregson creates new mementos pertaining to moments he was currently experiencing or had just experienced. In doing so, Gregson eternalizes both the past and present together, while using or creating new materials related to his memories.

21   The temporal aura, sentimental hypermediacy, and confessional intimacy of Gregson's poems also help Gregson romanticize the chosen points of time in his life, which Gregson overall avails in building a fantasy out of his real life. This fantasy is then told or sold to readers (not completely immersed in the here and now), who, nudged by the nostalgic sensibility, transportability, and tangibility of this fantasy, buy into it. By imposing analog artifices on his verses, Gregson takes part in the deliberate nostalgisation and romanticization of his present for himself, for his partner, and for his audience's harmless but voyeuristic cyber gaze.

22   Enveloped in a dated aesthetic, Gregson's poetry is instated in a non-specific but ideal past time. In such a meeting of the present with the past and vice-versa, the invented temporal character of a poem transforms the poem into "a touching antiquity" that offers an aesthetic experience (Bartholeyns 64). Calling this process "making the present – or the moment that has just gone by," Bartholeyns discusses how it is no longer the past that is injected into the present but the present that is projected back into the past, as the past is often viewed as an appealing "aesthetic category in its own

right" (65-67). Bartholeyns remarks that in this manner, "the contemporary is being destroyed for the sake of a more intimate, less impersonal perception" (66).

23   Based on the foregoing, it would be safe to call Gregson's verses anachronistic texts, i.e., texts which exist outside of their actual time in history, and which operate through and benefit from signifiers of both the past and present that exist within them. In these anachronistic texts, the present, distanced from immediacy due to past signifiers, is perceived as history. By the means of his anachronistic texts where the present is isolated, reinvented, and inscribed and colored with the past, Gregson makes way for himself and others to not only immediately enjoy the memory of something that has only just happened, but also makes way to cordon off "the time we find so hard to inhabit," to play with how time is organized, and to mount "a defense against the feeling that time passes quickly" (Bartholeyns 67).

24   Gregson's anachronistic texts can be deemed a form of pastiche, which Grubnic believes is concerned with "displacing the present moment" (159). According to Jameson, pastiches are a dominant and nostalgic mode of postmodern and popular culture (qtd. in Grubnic 149). Jameson also defines the present as something "colonized by an anachronistic recuperation of other versions of the past," which in return distances the present from us in time (qtd. in Grubnic 149).

25   Gregson's appropriation of the present reflects on what Bartholeyns cites as "the modern experience of time" (67) where people have a tendency to either reject the fleeting present in favor of the lasting past, or simply nostalgise the moment they are living in. Both tendencies arise as a defense mechanism against the "accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals" (Boym) and the "poverty of the present" (Howard 642), which in some cases can be extreme enough to make people engage in anticipatory nostalgia where they look forward to creating nostalgic memories. Characterized by a felt deprivation of the older self, the regarding of past as preferable to the present, the negative evaluation of the present as "complicated, contaminated, anarchic, difficult, ugly, and confrontational" in conjunction with the positive evaluation of the present as "simple, pure, ordered, easy, beautiful, or harmonious," the poverty of the present makes the construction of the nostalgic past take place in accordance with present needs—needs which includes fleeing to "an idealized and imaginary past" (Howard 643).

26   In Grubnic's words, nosthetics are "a symptom of the medium" of Instagram (151). If socio-cultural experts are to be believed, social media platforms like Instagram have played a key role in heightening the poverty of the present, thanks to the ubiquity of the narcissist, materialistic, and toxic rhetoric on them, and due to their affordances, that allow users to create more inviting and iconic nosthetic digital content, including literature. In fact, by the means of its photo filters and editing tools, Instagram has capitalized on nostalgia and fetishization of nosthetics since its early days (Nguyen 2). Along with Hipstamatic, Instagram was one among many apps launched in the late-2000s to early-2010s period which became popular by providing internet users tools to create faux-vintage or staged-retro nostalgic images that simulated the appearance of ones taken by obsolete analog cameras. In the same period, cheap cameras capable of capturing retro photographs (such as Lomography cameras, Holga cameras, and Polaroid cameras) also saw a steep rise in sales.

27   For Grubnic, nosthetics which "operate as both a mood and a mode" are "central to the platform vernacular of Instagram" (157, 151). Ironically for Grubnic, nosthetics are also

an anesthetic whilst being an ailment that alleviates the undesirable symptoms of users' "disembodied" digital lives (148). Instagram's nosthetics are a type of "*repro nova*," i.e., a retro marketing strategy of "combining old and new" (Morlot 31). In addition, Instagram's nosthetics are a manifestation of digital skeuomorphism, i.e., the phenomenon of graphic user interfaces mimicking real word objects (Nguyen 5). Nosthetic tools and by extension nosthetic creations like Gregson's verses, are thus *repro nova* skeuomorphs that digitally mimic their analog counterparts from yesteryears. And even though this cybernated skeuomorphism brings Gregson's works dangerously close to being labeled as derivative, it also helps Gregson make his works feel familiar (thereby increasing the velocity and momentum of their acclimation and impact), while also aiding Gregson in machinations which this paper will now delve into.

## 3. Chasing the Past: The Politics of Analog Nostalgia in *chasers of the light*

28   Technostalgia, i.e., fond reminiscence of or longing for outdated technology, particularly analog nostalgia for vinyl, film stock, and typewriters, is the chief engine behind nosthetics on Instagram and in Instapoetry like Gregson's. Technostalgia is stronger in individuals who either have a propensity towards rosy retrospection, or who show fidelity to analog media they had used in their childhood, or who are simply mesmerized by the analog past and its cultural products. Despite the shortcomings of analog technology, "people overwhelmingly remember outdated technologies with positive connotations" (Alizadeh et al. 3). Notaro suggests that we are "caught in a transitional state, torn between our love for the past and the mundane objects of personal memory, and our attraction for the present and the alluring promises of the future" (188). In this transitional state, we try to engage in the continuous (re)contruction of the living memory and cultural meaning of past technologies in the present.

29   Technostalgia falls within the "nostalgia bloom," or what Boym calls "the global epidemic of nostalgia," that has infiltrated everything between social media and advertising, and which has led to a revival of cultural products and things from the past along with an ongoing trend of using outmoded and outworn objects to represent novel ones (Grubnic 147). In *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past*, English journalist Simon Reynolds comments how the first ten years of the twenty-first century turned out to be the "Re' Decade' due to their dominance by the re- prefix, or "revivals, reissues, remakes, re-enactments" (qtd. in Notaro 185).

30   Technostalgia also facilitates nostalgia consumption of goods and content which contain signifiers of our technological past as these signifiers indicate slowness which opposes our age of rapid acceleration. The typosphere, which is a community of typewriter loving hipsters or vanguard online, is an example of an affinity space built on and around the technostalgia for typewriters (Ballenger 164). Forming an openly underground network of typewriter aficionados, typospherians—use typewriters to create literature, personal or every-day documents, art, sculptures, and installation; share posts containing lore, anecdotes, and history of typewriters and their famous users; sell and purchase typewriters; and, organize workshops and social events related to typewriters. typosphere.blogspot.com, typewriterdatabase.com, Polt's

writingball.blogspot.com, r/typewriters on Reddit, and Instagram hashtag pages mentioned earlier are popular virtual spots where typospherians from all over the world can be found congregating. Like other retrophiles, members of the typosphere possess "an affective yearning for a community with a collective memory" and "a longing for continuity in a fragmented world" (Boym).

31   Besides analog nostalgia, there are several other designs or ploys at play in *chasers of the light*, which directly or indirectly relate to this type of technostalgia. These designs detail the politics or machinations behind Gregson's nosthetic verses, and are audited rather arbitrarily as follows.

32   Gregson's first ploy is to induce nostalgia. Kalinina argues that "the media are no longer simple triggers of nostalgia; rather, the media constitute the space wherein nostalgia happens and provide the tools for nostalgic creativity" (qtd. in Grubnic 150). Most dictionaries define nostalgia as a sentimental yearning for the past, a wistful memory of an earlier time, and homesickness. Coined from the Greek compound consisting of the words *nóstos* (meaning return), and *álgos* (meaning pain), the word was concocted by seventeenth century Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in 1688 to describe the anxieties of Swiss mercenaries fighting away from home (Zhou et al. 678). Nostalgia was considered a malady before it was depathologised in the second half of the twentieth century, and "transformed into an aesthetic category" of artistic production and reception (Ehland and Kohl 130; Wildschut et al. 975).

33   Acting as a force, nostalgia can be triggered by media, including literature and SNSs which Gregson's poetry is a product of. Various studies by Vess et al., Legg, Routledge et al., Sedikides et al., Wildschut et al., and Oba et al., show that nostalgia can—improve mood, serve as a positive resource for self, enhance positive self-regard or self-esteem, increase one's sense of perceived meaning in life, increase social connectedness or feelings of affiliations, serve as a coping mechanism against existential dread and stress and transitions, arouse optimism, provide comfort (including homeostatic comfort by increasing perception of physical warmth), promote psychological growth and well-being, eliminate self-discontinuity, foster self-continuity, incite charitable behavior, and encourage resilience. Gregson avails these exact benefits when he stirs nostalgia in his readers through nosthetics, but only after pursuing both restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia which he experiences himself.

34   According to Boym, restorative nostalgia "stresses nostos (home)" and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home along with its emblems and rituals. It plots to return to its origins and restore them (Boym). Reflective nostalgia on the other hand, "thrives on algia (the longing itself)" and dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging. It focuses on "the meditation on history and the passage of time," while exploring ways of inhabiting many places at once, while imagining different time zones, while cherishing shattered fragments of memory, and while temporalizing space (Boym). Hence, Gregson's poems can be labeled as works of both restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia, as they engage in the former through the use of typewriters (by seeking to restore typewriting practices), and in the latter through the use of analog photographs and old stationary (which recall an unascertainable time and space).

35   Gregson is thus what Vladimir Nabokov calls "an amateur of Time, an epicure of duration" who not just sensually delights in the coolness of time's continuum, its spread, and its texture (qtd. in Thampy), but who restores and reflects it as well, whilst

providing a copium. Gregson, who calls his own poetry "The miracle in the mundane, the epic made simple" in the introduction to his collection, refers to himself as "a memory keeper" and "a trapper of time" as well (8). In a poem posted by Gregson on his Instagram handle on May 3, 2020, Gregson states that his typewritten verses contain memory, and that they tell stories or depict snapshots of his past self, writing—"In ink is memory, / I leave behind on / page, / left behind / on flesh. / Stories / they are all stories, / snapshots / of a time, of a / person I was / then[.]"[3]

36   Grubnic reports that nosthetics can be used as a balm to cope with an undesired reality (157). Harlan writes that nostalgia "allows one to gloss over unpleasant or undesirable histories in order to cope with the present." Not only does nostalgia allow people to exercise endless choices in retro-marketplaces, but it lets us "master our fears of mortality" and "shape our lives across eternal continuity" (Notaro 187-189). This is because we are not just what we have lived through, but what we remember. By idealizing and imagining a past a person has not lived through, he or she softens "the difficulties of the present life" (Morlot 60). Nguyen opines that nostalgia offers a sense of security and realness that is seemingly lost amid the constant exchange of data in the present time, and that today's nostalgic expressions indicate "a coping mechanism against technological progress, either in the mourning for the loss of authenticity, or escapism by increasing media consumption/production" (2, 4). Although Gregson and his readers can never truly return to the past, they can make an effort at reliving it through his ephemeral facsimiles and the emblems within them which cue their nostalgia. Fig. 7 below, attests to how this happens.
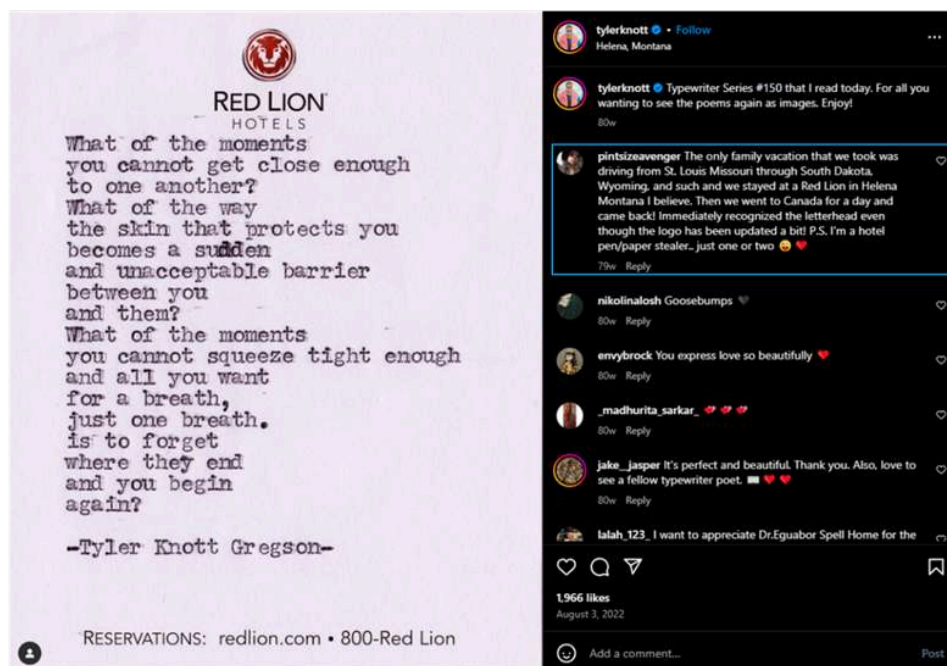

37   Fig. 7. Highlighted in the blue box is a comment under a typewriter poem posted by Gregson on his Instagram account @tylerknott on August 3, 2022, where a reader's nostalgia has been triggered due to visual notations (logo and name) pertaining to Red Lion Hotels where the reader had vacationed once with her family. (Source: Screenshot captured by author's personal laptop on February 15, 2024[4]).

38   Gregson's second ploy is to make literary artefacts of personal memory. As memory is not a product from the past but something that is always constructed in and from the perspective of the present (Heijden 105), Gregson's works are dynamic mnemonic instruments that recount and archive his private recollections in an "age of synthetic remembrance," and turn the present into a documented past (Nguyen 9). Ironically, Gregson uses this documented past for both his present and the future, as evident from him labeling one of his typewriter poems a time capsule for his wife (see Fig. 8).
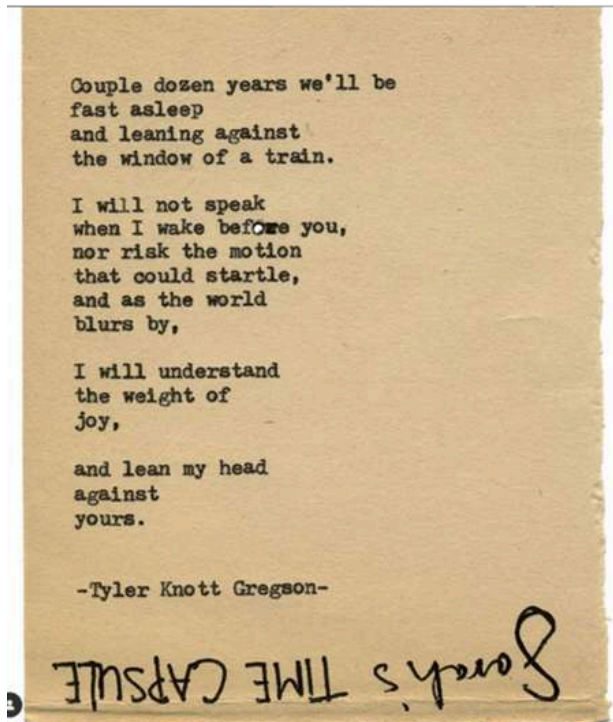

39   Fig. 8. A typewriter poem labeled as "Sarah's TIME CAPSULE" at the bottom, posted by Gregson on his Instagram account @tylerknott on May 16, 2021, where he discusses how he will treat Sarah (his lover/wife) in the years to come. (Source: Screenshot captured by author's personal smartphone on February 15, 2024[5]).

40   Cumulatively, this reflects on the dematerialization (or digitization) of memory practices, which nosthetics try to compensate for by embodying the simulacrum of analogously material photographs and typography, and by renewing the old to preserve new vanishing moments as historicized snippets. Compensating for this dematerialization has certainly been a preoccupation of social media apps like Facebook and Instagram, as they frequently display old posts by a user from their "individual data past" in their feed, notification alerts, and stories, repackaging these posts as a user's memories in the display (Jacobsen and Beer 2-3). For Jacobsen and Beer, encountering resurfaced data enables users to revisit content from a given day, and "forms a more incidental, intermittent, and yet, integral part of the platform experience" (3). Crucially, Jacobsen and Beer highlight how social media metrics such as likes, comments, and shares, can have an effect on how a user perceives a memory available for public view and their attachment to it (8-9). Gregson's autobiographical works, which he repeatedly posts on his Instagram account, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of nostalgia being quantified online as they undergo an interactive

process of being read and validated by his fans and other users via comments (see Fig. 9).
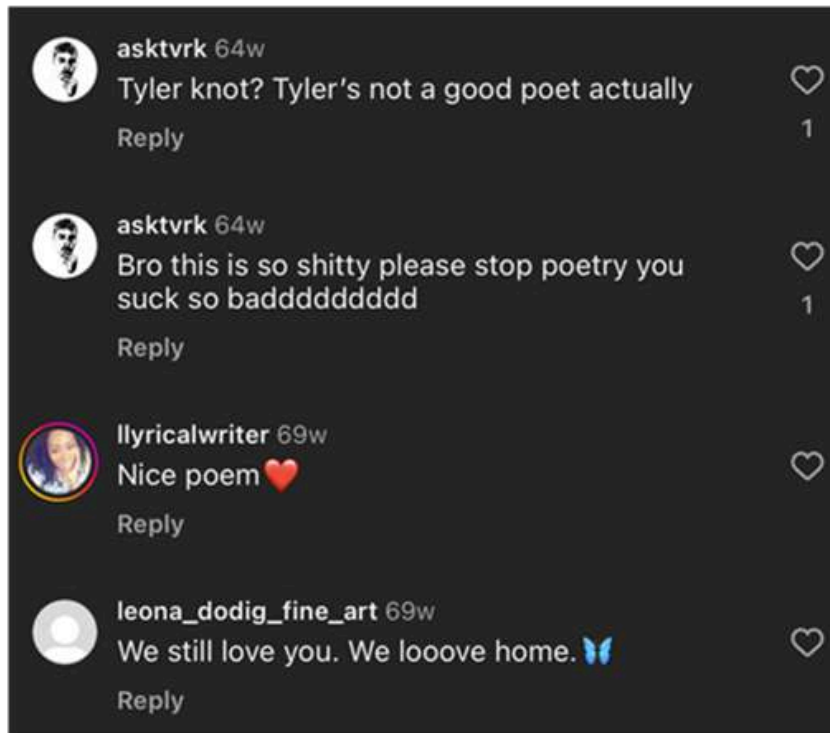
41   Fig. 9. Four of the thirty-two comments under a typewriter poem posted by Gregson on his Instagram account @tylerknott on October 14, 2022, where he discusses the feeling of being home with his lover. The first two comments contrast with the other two. Despite Gregson's known optimism, he is not immune to the effects that unjust negative comments can have on his perception of himself and his works. (Source: Screenshot captured by author's personal smartphone on February 15, 2024[6]).

42   Gregson's third ploy is to preserve the past (including past practices and personal ephemera) and add to cultural memory. Schrey asserts that as an aesthetic practice, analog nostalgia "is the paradoxical attempt to preserve decay and plan contingency" (35). Gregson's works do their part in preserving the cultural heritage pertaining to literary and photographic activity, and in countering the cultural amnesia about them. Not only do Gregson's work creatively employ obsolete practices, but they preserve them in doing so, along with ephemeral documents from his private life. If we are to believe Bartholeyns, "the law" is that "everything that is transformed into the past and rendered tangible as such will be saved from the void" (67). While whether superannuated practices are truly conserved by Gregson and whether he is engaging in heritage-baiting is debatable, what is certain is that in commemorating these practices, Gregson's verses end up in continuing the cultural echo that arose from these practices. Without Gregson and others like him, it is highly unlikely that the typewriter, typewriting practices, and analog photography would be discussed, let alone survive, in the present and the future. Also, without Gregson transforming transitory items like bills and tickets into his poetry parchments, it is highly unlikely that these types of ephemera which contain reminders and remainders of Gregson's personal memories and everydayness would continue to exist as well.

43   Gregson's fourth ploy is to create a temporal atmosphere. Bartholeyns contends that "the goal of imposing a backward-looking aesthetic is to provide a visual sensation of the atmosphere attached to the photographed object or moment" (65). By retouching his high-quality photographs to look analog, and by using typewriters to pen verses, Gregson manufactures a temporal context and aura he personally resonates with, and which he wants his users to use to either muse about an era or to reminiscence about a personal anamnesis. Due to this, Gregson's poems often feel like time machines stranded in different indeterminable moments in the past, allowing readers to experience a mental time travel to their chosen point in time, without any impositions as to which day or period they should slip back to. The audience's ability to choose which time they will visit internally is of special importance here, since it lets them take a walk down either their favorite age or an unforgettable private *la durée,* i.e., duration, as proposed by French philosopher Henri Bergson which represents "lived time" as opposed to the "objective time" told by clocks and watches (Moravec). On-topic, the notion of *la durée* is an integral part of the text of Gregson's poems, since the time or moment being described in them often appears both undefined and indefinite. Gregson's typewriter poem in Fig. 10 below, as well as a comment by a reader next to it perfectly encapsulate Bergson's *la durée.*
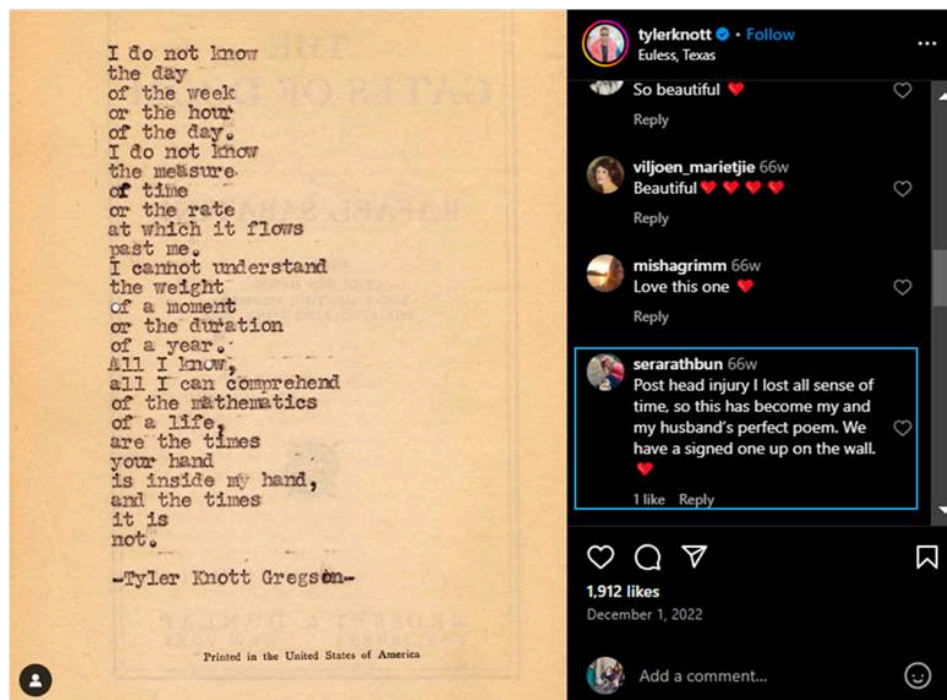
44   Fig. 10. A typewriter poem posted by Gregson on his Instagram account @tylerknott on December 1, 2022, which captures the essence of *la durée.* Next to the poem in a blue box is a comment by a user experiencing *la durée* due to a head injury. In general, TBIs, or traumatic brain injuries are known to cause higher temporal variability, and often point to impaired frontally-mediated cognitive functions involved in a person's perception of time. (Source: Screenshot captured by author's personal laptop on February 15, 2024[7]).

45   Gregson's fifth ploy is to create a temporal reverie. Notaro proclaims that "nostalgia is as much about fantasy as it is about memory" (183). While nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, it is also a romance with one's own fantasy (Boym). The fantasy

of existing in another temporal realm, and the yearning for a place off of the screen (Grubnic 158, 153), are agentic in Gregson's poetry. The temporal modalities and materials of Gregson's visual poems airbrush over the present-related overtones and undertones to generate an ambience dating to another time, space, or (even) world. Similar to how Gregson leaves it up to his readers to pick the past or duration they want to experience or cherish, Gregson defers to his readers to select the location where the fantasy they are envisioning takes place in the past or their chosen subjective time as well. Thus ironically, through his monochrome photographs, papers, and poetry, Gregson and his readers escape the constraints of the dreary (and often digital) spaces they inhabit along with their monotonous prosaic realities.

46 Gregson's composite works result in a "mythologising effect" which makes it possible to "fantasise about the 'halcyon days'" (Bartholeyns 52). This effect feeds off an illusory but affecting and meaningful visual fiction organized by the spatio-temporal veins of Gregson's works. Using this visual fiction, those who participate in Gregson's poetry not only get a chance to disentangle from the World Wide Web and retreat from cyberspace, but are also given an opportunity to go "back to the warm home and creature comforts of the sensorial world" and stay "grounded in the solid, earthy realm" (Grubnic 153). Gregson's photography, both in and outside of *chasers of the light*, especially transports his audience to idyllic natural and peri-urban landscapes, while holding the power to help them cope with their latent solastalgia, i.e., emotional distress caused by a changing (general or home) environment. The poem on the left in Fig. 6 exemplifies this perfectly. The text of the poem, which assures eco-anxious and homesick readers how life and light find a way in the most ruinous and dire circumstances, is enhanced by the photograph of plants growing tall in a crumbling house.

47 As a repetition of the unrepeatable and a return to what has been lost forever, Gregson's works can be enjoyed as a wishful dream or fancy. They operate using the three routes put forth by Hartmann and Brunk in their paper "Nostalgia marketing and (re-) enchantment," i.e.,—"re-instantiation (symbolic retrojection into a past)" rooted in "reluctant nostalgia"; "re-enactment (reflexively informing the present with past-themed brands and practices)" rooted in "progressive nostalgia"; and, "re-appropriation (ludic re-interpretation of the past)" rooted in "playful nostalgia" (669). Gregson's works are thus also what Hartmann and Brunk claim is the "recovery of utopian, romantic, mythical, emotional, and imaginary elements of the relationship consumers have with the world" (670).

48 Gregson's sixth ploy is to increase the iconic-ness of his works. Despite their flaws, analog apparatuses and media are celebrated and venerated. By using or mirroring them, Gregson's works either borrow or imbue the iconic artisanal qualities of the analog within them, and thus, raise their own status. As Thorne puts it, "Retro is the process by which mass-produced trinkets can be reinvented as "heritage"" (qtd. in Chester 11). And through his replication of the timelessly enduring qualities possessed by old materials, Gregson strives to cultivate their charm, craftsmanship, cultural resonance, and historical value.

49 Gregson's seventh ploy is to make poems more appealing within Instagram's competitive and algorithmic labyrinth. Online, posts, particularly photographs, are released and exist with millions of others. Even if these photographs are of high quality, the sheer load of content online renders them mundane, omniscient, and stale

within seconds. Due to this, both amateurs with low- or poor-quality photo-capturing phones or cameras, and professional photographers have found themselves turning their images into analog ones which are more captivating and enchanting, using Instagram filters or more professional software tools. Therefore, it is no wonder that Gregson, a professional photographer himself, retouches his photographs so they can look vintage. Caoduro elucidates how the phenomenon of photo filter apps banks on the desire to mask amateurish pictures, and the desire to imprint distinctiveness to ordinary and average shots (73-74). Morlot posits, "Instagram and analogue photography are rooted in the need to provide alternatives to digital photography which has made photography pervasive and less personal" (5). The "massive production, distribution and consumption" of photographs forces individuals to compete with each other by taking charge of their data "by becoming different from others" (Renaningtyas et al. 7).

50   By using nostalgic effects to modify their pictures (and even text) into more revelatory ones, Gregson and his confrères give value to their everyday life experiences since "old-looking pictures are perceived as more narrative" (Morlot 5). By adding components of time, Gregson makes his works seem more real and substantial while reviving "old and material" devices in a world where "modern technology aims to dematerialize" (Morlot 32). For Morlot, the visual imperfections of analog aesthetics only give more depth to a picture, more weight to everyday life stories, and more power to tell stories (56). Against the "cold and disembodied" digital photography, analog photography, despite being expensive, was warmer and had "the advantage of being 'alive'" (Bartholeyns 51). By temporally re-pigmenting his photographs that accompany his poems, Gregson aims at making them both telltale and temperate. With the original fresh colors and tones of a photograph replaced by old time-honored ones, the visual narrative of the photograph transcends the immediate moment it had captured, thus creating a snapshot that is more beguiling, immersive, and nuanced.

51   Gregson's eighth ploy is to create the illusion of tangibility. In Grubnic's opinion, Instapoetry's "currency lies in its nostalgic sensibility for physical tangibility" (146). With the goal to transpose materiality from prior contexts, Gregson wants his readers to not feel like they are reading through a screen (Grubnic 157-158). In a physical sense, papers allow us to touch, and thus make us feel (Grubnic 160). And by typewriting his verses, by placing verses next to faux-vintage photographs, and by using paper that is from old books or is textured, Gregson does his utmost to make his works appear tactile.

52   In an interview, Gregson talks about how the visual nature of what he does on an old ripped piece of paper shows a tangible process on a typewriter. He relates how in his typewriter poetry, readers can spot where the keys were pressed onto the paper, where the ink is spilled, and where he has made a mistake, thus letting these readers know that his poetry has come from a "real place" ("Poet Tyler Knott").

53   Gregson's haptic attempts seem to be in alignment with everyone immersed or at least interested in "fetishizing the physical and tactile" as an antithesis to the virtual taking over every aspect of our lives (Mack qtd. in Heijden 106). Wieghorst explains—"As every computer user is able to archive and create constellations, the artists see their obsolescence approaching with concern. They counter this fear by clinging to concrete, material objects that can be touched" (212). As a result, the threatened figure of the creative artist, creates works that captivate by their tactile qualities and which at least

in appearances, look less fragile and provisional, and more alive and warmer instead (Wieghorst 212, 220). Even though this cannot replace the significance created by the tactile interaction with physical pictures or objects, the "faux-physicality" of Gregson's poems somewhat balances its own lack of materiality by endeavoring to synthesize or reintroduce corporeality (Morlot 32). Gregson's readers particularly adore this faux-physicality, as evident from their reactions in Fig. 11 below, after Gregson began posting his typewriter poems to Instagram again, following a long break where he was posting only Reels. For those being drowned by the digital, the simulated tactility of Gregson's poetry appears as a straw they can grab onto to cling to reality.

54   Fig. 11. Three of the thirty comments under a typewriter poem posted by Gregson on his Instagram account @tylerknott on October 20, 2022, where he writes about missing his lover. The comments, which express their excitement at seeing Gregson's typewriter poetry again, are a response to Gregson asking his readers in the post's caption if they are "digging" him sharing the paper versions. (Source: Screenshot captured by author's personal smartphone on February 15, 2024[8]).

55   Gregson's ninth ploy is to connote authenticity. Like in Atticus' case, analog media, style and design "displace signifiers" of Gregson's works' digitality and contemporaneity to conceal their "original, technologically enabled true-to-life perfection" (Grubnic 157-158). By bearing the "hallmarks of authenticity" that suggest they also existed in the past (Bartholeyns 52), Gregson's poems perform timelessness, pay homage, and try to achieve cultural significance.

56   Digital effects or filters aim to reduplicate the visual appearance of analog pictures to either create a feeling of authenticity or to increase this authenticity, using the visual language of analog photography (Morlot 27, 30). However, by using "iconic authenticity," Gregson paradoxically uses "inauthentic effects" to build the illusion of "indexical authenticity" which unmediated analog photographs possess more than

digital ones (Morlot 27-28). Vintage photos have the quality of authenticity because of their literal representation to the reality which evidences "what had happened before the lens" (Renaningtyas et al. 3). But digital pictures, which can be easily manipulated with software, abolish the idea of a picture as a "truthful representation" of the real (Morlot 28-29). In a world where the visual is so easy to manipulate using Adobe Photoshop and cutting-edge AI bots and applications, one can hardly blame anyone for their skepticism about a digital image's veracity.

57 Stewart avers that nostalgia is an attempt at "repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetition" (qtd. in Ehland and Kohl 131). While every authentic vintage photo generated by the idiosyncrasies of a camera and its film is unique, faux-vintage photos are packed with "uniformity" as they are processed to look analog by the same set of digital filters and tools (Renaningtyas et al.7). Nonetheless, Renaningtyas et al. deduce that faux vintage photos resonate nostalgia and authenticity related to emotional, symbolic and historical values synonym to vintage photos, though at the cost of the transformation of these essential values due to the influence of technology (7). Morlot also remarks that digital manipulation renders the picture more abstract and metaphorical, thereby reinforcing its iconic authenticity (29). Morlot further reveals how consumers with high photo-retouching proficiency such as professional photographers like Gregson, are more inclined to use analog photography or advanced tools to achieve indexical authenticity, while low-skilled consumers achieve iconic authenticity with non-professional tools like Instagram filters (54).

58 In his famous 1935 essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin discusses how the "aura" of a work of art withers due to its technological reproduction (221). According to Benjamin, the "developmental tendencies of art under present conditions of production" brush aside a number of outmoded concepts, such as "creativity and genius, eternal value and mystery" (218). Even the most perfect reproductions (like Gregson's typewritten verses and retro images) lack their presence in time and space, i.e., their unique existence at the place where they happen to be (Benjamin 220). While the original preserves all of its authority, the reproduction, which many tag as a "forgery" only meets the beholder halfway (220). Benjamin delineates that "the authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced," and that this historical testimony which rests on authenticity is jeopardized by reproduction "when substantive duration ceases to matter" (221). This jeopardization affects "the authority of the object" and detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition since the uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition as well as its "ritual function" which are the locations of its "original use value" (Benjamin 221, 223-224). Surprisingly, Benjamin lauds this jeopardization since it emancipates the work of art from its "parasitical dependence on ritual," though he warns that reproductions turn to "politics" when split from ritual (224). Benjamin further warns how the reproduction of art changes the reaction of the masses toward art as the conventional starts to being "uncritically enjoyed," while "the truly new is criticized - with aversion" (234). This is true in the case of Gregson's poetry and his contemporaries, as their works have been ignored and denigrated as generic and trite Instapoetry.

59   It is clear that Benjamin was both cognizant of the struggles faced by the artists of his time, and clairvoyant about the challenges future artists were going to grapple with. Pressured to be pioneers while also being panned when they act as such, those like Gregson can neither be too novel nor echoic. Forced to maintain equilibrium, those like Gregson have only three paths—either forge a new way without mimicking their chosen aesthetic antecedents, either appear like they are not mimicking their chosen aesthetic antecedents, or either mimic their chosen aesthetic antecedents blatantly.

60   Lastly, Gregson's tenth ploy is branding. The use of typewriters, and vintage imagery and stationery, saturates Gregson's poems with a sense of timelessness, downplaying them as a product of digital technology and insisting them as a continuation of the poetic tradition. Pâquet thinks that the use of old-fashioned technology, such as typewriters, "contrasts the idea of the poets working solely online, adding depth to their brand" (qtd. in Grubnic 152). Pâquet hypothesizes that nostalgia and vintage aesthetics contribute to a "branding culture" for Instagram poets as it projects the impression that these poets are old-fashioned and romantic (qtd. in Grubnic 152).

61   Since their invention, typewriters have symbolized the "industrialisation of writing" and the "symbiosis of writer and machine" (Berensmeyer 164). Some even associate typewriters with masculine empowerment and self-transcendence (Pannapacker). Mythologized as a classic author's prosthesis, typewriters came with their own set of disadvantages, such as, their inability to make corrections, noisiness, lack of data storage, and the perishability of the texts created. Despite this, typewriters have continued being culturally significant, including in our current century (Polt, "The Life, Death" 60). According to Wershler-Henry, "through the misty lens of nostalgia created by several centuries of typewriting's own propaganda," typewriters which once symbolized "all that was antithetical to poetry" since they were cold, mechanical, awkward, came to be associated with poetry due to their preciseness, cleanness, and elegant minimalism (6). Polt also briefs how typewriters issue the appearance that they are single-purpose machines which engender discipline, prevent procrastination, avert second-guessing, and disable over-editing, particularly in contrast to networked computers that offer countless other activities and distractions ("The Life, Death" 69). Typewriters also offer what Polt frames as the "tangible evidence of the writer's process" compared to digital writing which "tends to obscure its own history and the creative personality of the author" ("The Life, Death" 69-70). Moreover, typewriters also represent "stability and personal meaning in a time of flux and disposable objects" which are often a victim to planned obsolescence that has been "turning yesterday's appraised new gadgets into today's decrepit devices and tomorrow's waste" (Polt, "The Life, Death" 69; Schrey 27). Planned obsolescence is the practice of designing products to break quickly or become obsolete in the short to mid-term to encourage sales of new products and upgrades. Therefore today, even though typewriters have left the technological mainstream, they have found new life as "countercultural, individualistic tools," and to use a typewriter is to signal one's individuality and one's resistance to the decremental digital (Polt, "The Life, Death" 61, 70). Members of the typosphere and Gregson thus "rebel against the totalitarianism of the Information Regime" that has been rendering all sorts of media obsolete at a fast pace in what sci-fi writer Bruce Sterling dubs as "the golden age of dead media" (Polt, *The Typewriter Revolution* 8; qtd. in Schrey 27).

62   Gregson utilizes his "revivalism" of typewriters and venerable papers "to achieve brand authenticity" by deploying them as "nostalgic visual tokens of literary refinement" (Breathnach and Dermody 48; Perlow qtd. in. Grubnic 151). By using typewriters, which have built a new identity for themselves while still being affiliated to the classic macho author figure, Gregson establishes his individuality and personality as a model macho writer like Hemingway and Kerouac as well. Here, it is important to acknowledge that Gregson's harking back to these poets is not with the intention of apotheosizing himself, but more out of the necessity to be regarded as an earnest male poet (pun intended) suspended both in the present and in a female-dominated literary space like Instapoetry, as most continue to struggle with conferring Instapoets like him this status or any value.

63   As the presence of Gregson and other Instapoets on the very public and social platform of Instagram marks a departure from the traditional persona of a reclusive poet (perchance even symbolizing the destruction of this persona), Gregson's opportunist simulation of poets and practices from the twentieth century, which some might consider shallow, is perhaps the umbilical cord through which new bards and poetic customs can stay tethered to their juggernautish predecessors. If TS Eliot was alive, he would have very much appreciated this aspect of Gregson and his poetry. Afterall, Eliot challenged the perception that a poet's greatness lies in his departure from his predecessors in his famous 1919 essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent.' For Eliot, the best and most individual parts of a poet's works are those in which "the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously." Although Eliot believed that tradition cannot be inherited but must be obtained through great labor, he believed that through his relation to "existing monuments" and "historical sense," a new poet could be considered traditional. Eliot, who defined this historical sense as a "sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together," highlighted how appreciation of the new, i.e., Gregson in this paper's case, is the "the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists."

4. Conclusion

64   It is remotely possible that Gregson's poetry represents what Jameson pessimistically identifies as—our incapability "of achieving aesthetic representations of our own current experience"; the existence of popular culture in a world in which stylistic innovation is no longer possible and where "all that is left is to imitate dead styles, speak through the masks and the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum"; and, the "failure of the new" and "the imprisonment of the past" (qtd. in Grubnic 159). For Jameson, having nowhere to run to, those like Gregson exploit nosthetics to generate connotations of pastness and pseudohistorical depth (Grubnic 149). Grubnic thinks this is an ongoing historical crisis and cultural amnesia spiraling continuously, which is not only unable to go forward or backwards, but which is neither ending nor developing (149-150). However, this study begs to differ with both Jameson and Grubnic in this regard, since Gregson's poetry does make an attempt to dynamically engage with poetic and photographic practices and history. "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," the expression goes. And Gregson's inspired works, whilst incorporating historical machines, modalities, and materials, are eulogies for our beautiful literary and filmic past. Though Gregson and his panegyrics of the past may feign finesse and nostalgia,

they may be of use to us to remember vulnerable cultural customs and mediums of our historical past, and to reminiscence our own individual pasts as well (which as discussed earlier, has several benefits).

65   As literature today exists within a multiplicity of media using all sorts of text technologies, it is only natural that some of this literature will pay tribute to older media and technologies. This does not mean that these literatures have not moved on from the analog age or that they cling to it for what this age epitomizes. It simply means that these literatures try to avail whatever rewards that may come from this melding of analog and digital words, whilst paying reverence. Importantly, these literatures go beyond their impersonating aesthetics into the territory of cultural memory and belonging. As Compopiano opines, "actualizing the present through a lens of the past imparts meaning beyond mere artistic trend," and "manifestations of nostalgia," like Gregson's works, are "anchored in a desire to express a sense of place, one's roots in life, and one's belonging to a collective history" (qtd. in Heijden 108).

66   The habituation of nostalgic sensibilities and relics in modern digital creative expressions, like Gregson's anachronistic works, are thus not something to be despondent about. Gregson's typewriter is not out there to cannibalize typewriters and typewriting practices like the Clark Nova, nor are Gregson's photographs and papers out there to parasitize their progenitors and precursors. They simply exist to resurrect, temporalize, nostalgise, restore, rehabilitate, remember, reflect, conserve, eternalize, memorialize, physicalize, sensualize, play, beguile, daydream, journey, mask, elevate, legitimize, and tout. This makes Gregson and others like him essential for the preservation and continuation of intricate but prepossessing historical literary and photographic practices that would otherwise stay as vignettes in old annals of literature and visual arts.

67   As this paper has managed to decode the discernible and subtle aesthetics and politics of Gregson's nostalgic verses in *chasers of the light*, further scholarly explorations can be made into the analog nostalgia brimming in the works of other Instapoets like Atticus. (Perhaps, a scholarly exploration could be also made into American novelist George RR Martin's technostalgia for his 1980s DOS computer and WordStar 4.0-word processor, and whether it has been stalling his *A Song of Ice and Fire* series.)

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NOTES

1. For further reference, please take a look at the following images where Gregson appears as a spitting image of Kerouac, with whom he also shares a love for check flannel shirts. Unfortunately, these images could not be included in the paper due to potential copyright issues.

Photograph of Jack Kerouac taken by Fred DeWitt for Time Magazine in January 1958: https://pbs.twimg.com/media/FE92VLhXoAEL6PS?format=jpg&name=900x900

Photograph of Tyler Knott Gregson taken by Jessica McGlothlin for The New York Times in November 2015: https://static01.nyt.com/images/2015/11/08/business/08poets-JP-01/08poets-JP-01-jumbo-v3.jpg?quality=75&auto=webp

2. We are extremely grateful towards Gregson for kindly providing his photograph while also granting us the permission to use it in this paper. We would also like to add the disclaimer that the first and only time we spoke to Gregson was in requesting the permission to use this image.

3. The original poem can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/B_tXBDGFxpH/

4. The original post containing the poem and comments under it can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/CgxcnNUvBH0/

5. The original poem can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/CO6f6ehF85l/

6. The original post containing the poem and comments under it can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/CjrYRIKrAE3/

7. The original post containing the poem and comments under it can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/Clm3RHysEtp/

8. The original post containing the poem and comments under it can be viewed by visiting the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj6yq_FLEdi/

ABSTRACTS

From Twitterature to Instapoetry, several literary forms owe their genesis and propagation to social networking sites, or SNSs. Amongst these, Instapoetry has enjoyed the most notoriety, though at the cost of its demerits overshadowing its merits. One of Instapoetry's merits is its ability to induce a sense of nostalgia with the help of evocative aesthetic modalities deployed by a poet during an Instapoem's formulation. Some of these aesthetic modalities include the typewriter font, black and white images, sepia or Polaroid images, vintage stationary, calligraphy, and textured paper. Leaning on the concept of "nosthetics" or nostalgic aesthetics proposed by Tanja Grubnic, this paper decodes the temporal hypermediacy prominent in the works of American Instapoet and photographer Tyler Knott Gregson, particularly in his first poetry collection, *chasers of the light: poems from the typewriter series.* Published in 2014, the collection possesses a temporal aura which not only romanticizes the past but also conveys the present as a part of the past by impersonating pre-digital analog techniques and materials. Through Gregson's collection, this paper aims at understanding the various designs or ploys behind the habituation of nostalgic sensibilities and relics in modern digital creative expressions that have come to dominate the current field of cultural production. This paper reveals how Gregson's works resurrect, temporalize, nostalgize, restore, rehabilitate, remember, reflect, conserve, eternalize, memorialize, physicalize, sensualize, play, beguile, daydream, journey, mask, elevate, legitimize, and tout. The paper ends with a conclusion highlighting the importance of Instapoetry with regards to the preservation and continuation of historical literary practices, and with a suggestion encouraging further scholarly exploration on the topic.

INDEX

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