Danny Snelson, Three Books and a Poem

Having in mind many great publications that, since the pandemic began in March 2020, have not had a chance to circulate in usual ways, I put the following prompt to an array of heavy readers: List three poetry books that stood out. Define "poetry book" as broadly as possible. Define "stand out" not at all. Choose one poem from any of these books and write 100 words about it – a brief annotation, recommendation, question, observation. Six responded with these soundings. e-flux journal *has also reprinted each of the poems the contributors chose to write about. We thank the writers and their publishers for permission to do so.*
　　– Simone White

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Remedy Entertainment – *Control: Ultimate Edition* (505 Games, 2020)
Holly Melgard – *Fetal Position* (Roof Books, 2021)
Madison McCartha – *FREAKOPHONE WORLD* (Inside the Castle, 2021)

　　On "The Hiss" by Alan Wake
Over the past two years, I've heard no single poem with more frequency than "The Hiss." It's a cut-up earworm chant, an incantation written by the fictional character Alan Wake, himself a stand-in for Creative Director Sam Lake. The poem invades the Federal Bureau of Control in the AAA game *Control*. Pure pandemic media, the poem transmits via viral infection. "The Hiss" whispers and rants in sibilants from possessed workers, uncannily floating above their desks like zombified Richard Longo cosplayers. Stuck, stuttering, suspended in the air: they endlessly repeat its nonsense refrains over and over and over and …
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Danny Snelson is a writer, editor, and archivist working as an Assistant Professor in the Departments of English and Design Media Art at UCLA. His online editorial work can be found on *PennSound*, *Eclipse*, *UbuWeb*, *Jacket2,* and the *EPC*. His books include *Apocalypse Reliquary: 1984-2000* (Monoskop, 2018), *Radios* (Make Now, 2016), *EXE TXT* (Gauss PDF, 2015), *Epic Lyric Poem* (Troll Thread, 2014), and *Inventory Arousal* with James Hoff (Bedford Press/Architectural Association, 2011). With Mashinka Firunts Hakopian and Avi Alpert, he performs as one-third of the academic performance group Research Service. See also: http://dss-edit.com.