

Miss Crann and the Sense for Making Machines (2018)
(a paeanistic ode for chris mann)

By Philip Blackburn

“When I was 6 I bit my tongue off.” Boy, you’d never have guessed.

Miss Crann? Rrose Selavy was already taken. What’s a little puerile metathesis between friends? Besides, the Centre for Research on Adaptive Nanostructures and Nanodevices (CRANN) should be proud.

My bedroom poster at college (1982) was Words & Classes. It was big, wrinkled, covered in Blu Tack, and threw up different texticles each day.

Kenneth Gaburo lent me a tape of LA DE DA (1985). Smitten I was.

Chris asked me to write a recommendation for his Green Card application. Yes, he stands out in his field. No problemo.

Several Tribeca visits — many words, two towers, much green tea (and latterly apples) — and one existence — later, here is an echo: a convo, reorganized through brainwave-triggered performance by my chris-scrambled brain. Maybe it’s the record he always wanted to make, with alternate tracks and endings where you can bet on the outcome. Maybe this machine adds new sense and voices to the mix: wry, impudent, dangerous, vicious, ironic, scrutible, intimate, too clever by half. If nothing else, did you realize what soothing chant lies at the core if you just slow the bastard down? Who knew?