

**Nicholas Frank**

*I Think I Can*

**SALA DIAZ**

***Annuit Coeptis (Favors)*, 2018**

Four 16-oz. aluminum beer cans (Budweiser “America”, Lone Star “Come and Take It”, Budweiser “Liberty torch,” Imperial), voice recordings, speaker  
~5:00 minutes

Voice 1: Budweiser (“America”)

Reader: Leticia Rocha Zivadinovic  
~1:00 minute

*Science Fiction and the Future*

Ursula K. LeGuin  
p. 142

It seems that the Quechua-speaking peoples of the Andes see all this rather differently. They figure that because the past is what you know, you can see it—it’s in front of you, under your nose. This is a mode of perception rather than action, of awareness rather than progress. Since they’re quite as logical as we are, they say that the future lies behind—behind your back, over your shoulder. The future is a what you can’t see, unless you turn around and kind of snatch a glimpse. And then sometimes you wish you hadn’t, because you’ve glimpsed what’s sneaking up on you from behind... So, as we drag the Andean peoples into our world of progress, pollution, soap operas, and satellites, they are coming backwards—looking over their shoulders to find out where they’re going.

Voice 2: Lone Star “Come and Take It”

Reader: Xavier Gilmore  
~1:00 minute

*Second Lecture on Liberation*

Angela Davis/Frederick Douglass  
p. 70

[A.D.] The fact that somewhere in one of the foundational documents of this country, there is the statement that all men are created equal and the fact that social and political inequality have

never been eradicated cannot be regarded as unrelated to the relative nonchalance ... of society in general ... :

[F.D.] I assert most unhesitatingly, that the religion of the south is a mere covering for the most horrid crimes,—a justifier of the most appalling barbarity,—a sanctifier of the most hateful frauds,—and a dark shelter under which the darkest, foulest, grossest, and most infernal deeds of slaveholders find the strongest protection. Were I to be again reduced to the chains of slavery, next to that enslavement, I should regard being the slave of a religious master the greatest calamity that could befall me.

Voice 3: Budweiser “Liberty torch”

Reader: Joe Harjo  
~2:00 minutes

*Radical Hope*

Jonathan Lear  
p. 97

The Crow is dead, long live the Crow! This is a form of hope that seems to survive the destruction of a way of life. Though it must be incredibly difficult to hold on to this commitment in the midst of subjective catastrophe, it is not impossible. And it is at least conceivable that this is just what Plenty Coups did. Commitment to this possibility in no way commits one to the idea that the world is the expression of theodicy. Nor does it commit one to the wildly politically incorrect view that western civilization is a higher form; that the Crow would be better off to adapt to it. It would have been possible for Plenty Coups to commit to his dream and still view the onset of western civilization as a disaster. It would have been possible for him to commit to a good that transcends his current conception and still hope that the Crow will reemerge as a radical alternative to white culture. The commitment is not to the idea that history has a beneficial direction, nor to the idea that

its current order has divine sanction. After all, in the possibility being explored in these pages, PC has declared that history has come to an end. Rather, the commitment is only to the bare possibility that, from this disaster, something good will emerge. The Crow shall somehow survive. Why that will be or how that will be is left open. The hope is held in the face of the recognition that, given the abyss, one cannot really know what survival means.

Voice 4: Imperial

Reader: Augusto Benavides

~1:00 minute

*We Say No (The Structure of Impotence: The Faces and the Masks)*

Eduardo Galeano

p. 221

And one asks oneself: What dazzling image will rise up after centuries of fear, when reality ceases to be a mystery and hope a consolation? When power and the words and our lands belong to all, what will people say? Since every battle against the structure of impotence illuminates an astounding possible future, every triumph, small as it might be, wins laurels: not laurels to crown the head of military heroes or courtesan poets or the gods of some Olympus, but those that enhance the flavor and pleasure of the streaming, bubbling, rising kettle of the people.

***Constitution (On Whose First)***, 2018

16-oz. aluminum beer cans (Budweiser “America” and “Liberty torch” design), voice recordings, speakers, cork

Voices: Stevan Zivadinovic, Leticia Rocha Zivadinovic, Anjali Gupta, Xavier Gilmore, Amada Miller, Peyton Kane

Who’s on first?

Who was *there* first?

Who *wasn’t* there first?

Who had no choice?

Who *should* be there?

Who *shouldn’t* be there?

***Knock Knock Joke Joke***, 2018

24-oz. aluminum beer can (Schlitz “High Gravity”), 16-oz. aluminum beer can (Miller High Life), voice recordings, speakers, cork

Voice 1: Heyd Fontenot

Voice 2: Amada Miller

Knock knock.

Who’s there?

Joke.

Joke who?

*(repeat)*

***Lone Starlight***, 2018

16-oz. aluminum beer can (Lone Star Light), voice recording, speaker, cork

Voice: Amada Claire Miller

~1:49 duration

***I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry***

Hank Williams (1949)

Hear that lonesome whippoorwill

He sounds too blue to fly

The midnight train is whining low

I’m so lonesome I could cry

I’ve never seen a night so long

When time goes crawling by

The moon just went behind the clouds

To hide its face and cry

Did you ever see a robin weep

When leaves begin to die?

Like me, he’s lost the will to live

I'm so lonesome I could cry

The silence of a falling star  
Lights up a purple sky  
And as I wonder where you are  
I'm so lonesome I could cry

**Round & Round You Go**, 2018

Five 12-oz. aluminum beer cans (Lone Star Light, Sol, Corona, Natural Light, Miller Lite), one 16-oz. 'energy drink' can (Rockstar Blackout), voice recordings, speaker, cork  
~3:00 minutes

**What can I know?  
What ought I to do?  
What may I hope?**

Immanuel Kant  
*Critique of Pure Reason*(1781/1787)[<http://www.iep.utm.edu/kantview/>]

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**But you are rather waiting to hear from me how it occurred to me to venture to conceive any motion of the earth, against the traditional opinion of astronomers and almost against common sense.**

Nicholas Copernicus *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium (On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres)*, 1543 C.E. [[geo.utexas.edu/courses/302d/Fall\\_2011/Full text -...](http://geo.utexas.edu/courses/302d/Fall_2011/Full_text_-...)]

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**If you guys truly believe the earth is flat and it isn't a big joke, then explain this. If the earth is flat as if it's depicted on a map, lets say a plane flew east until it reached the "edge" of the world. How does it instantly get to the west side of the flat earth?**

[Firegummy](#) February 06, 2018, 05:51:11 PM

**It doesn't.**

[Pete Svarrior](#) February 06, 2018, 06:10:48 PM

**Pretty sure he's saying hypothetically, could you please give more than just "it doesn't" what if someone were to fly to the edge and try to fly off the edge, what would happen? Why hasn't it been tried yet?**

[ryjay707](#) February 09, 2018, 12:13:18 AM

**... In order to reach the "edge", the plane would have to fly a southerly course ...** [If you're not familiar with the FE (Flat Earth) map, take a look and all will become clear. The North Pole is at the center of the disk, and the continents flow outward from it, so flying east or west traces a circular path on the face of the disk. Round and round you go. Traveling North lands you in the center of the map. South is the problematic direction] ... **This is the path that results in you encountering an insurmountable wall of ice followed by an indeterminate area that no one has ever been able to explore.**

[spoonbow](#) February 10, 2018, 06:05:25 PM

[How do you know it hasn't been tried yet?] ... **If there is supposedly a deadly edge out there, then certainly anyone who goes over it wouldn't be around to tell us a detailed account of their own demise.**

[Rushy](#) February 09, 2018, 12:18:22 AM

**Thusly Spake (Dawning On)**, 2018

24-oz. aluminum beer can (Schlitz "High Gravity"), 12-oz. aluminum beer can (Miller Lite), 12-oz. 'slim can' aluminum beer can (Michelob Ultra Light), sound recording, speakers, cork, cotton

Source track from *2001: A Space Odyssey* theme Richard Strauss  
*Also sprach Zarathustra (Thus Spake Zarathustra)*

## ***I Think I Can***

Beery arguments by Nicholas Frank

The sixers, four-packs, and single beers of *I Think I Can* are based on texts, in some cases written, in others borrowed, and familiar music.

A very special thank you to all who contributed to this work, including the intrepid amateur voice artists who read and sung complex passages: Heyd Fontenot, Amada Miller, Leticia Rocha Zivadinivic, Stevan Zivadinivic, Anjali Gupta, Chris Sauter, Andy Benavides, Agosto Benavides, Victoria Echeverri, Xavier Gilmore, Joe Harjo, and Peyton Kane.

Thank you to Sala Diaz director Anjali Gupta, the board and volunteer supporters, and also to Freetail Brewing Company and Company Brewing for their participation. Thanks especially to guest curator Amada Miller for imagining this pairing of related work by me and John, and guiding the show into being.

(Bar stool courtesy of Liberty Bar)