A note on Aaron Levy’s *Tombe*

Viewing the caesura from its side, refusing the play the game that monuments play, Aaron Levy has brilliantly produced in *Tombe* a guide to remembering that will not stylize historical tragedy. The pictures of a ruin - familiar yet unclear - are enacting a process of perceptual dementia; at a certain point a central room, especially when printed in color and taking on a rosy-yellow Sabbath eve glow, looks ever so much like a synagogue. (A fuzzy analogical mneumonic: think Hungary 1944 projected onto any contemporary eastern American city.) The safe havens among spaces are gashed; closing them does not entail clarity, the clarifying act of language. One gets the sense, as Levy puts it in his conversation with Kristen Gallagher, "there could be something comforting to this, but the process is all too slow." Like an Ashberyian letter that never arrives although we know it is coming, and (notwithstanding Levy's ambivalence about modernism) like Williams's rose in the act of becoming obsolete, *Tombe* explores the limits to which we can fill gaps we know will widen.

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