

Mary Reid Kelly and friends made a performance art piece about a young woman who threw herself off a bridge. Her body parts discuss the incident.

The performance was done in museums in Scotland and Baltimore.

THIS IS OFFAL

FEET:

You asked me once, was it boring
Spending all day with the flooring?

"You're so pedestrian", you said,
You'd have no standing without me, Head!

I hold you up, and it's quite a burden
To run your and never get a word in!

You think I sleepwalk, but my sole is woken,
You say, don't speak, but now I put my spoke in!

I walked us to the bridge, you told me, "Go"!
I don't ask why, it's not my job to know.

My heels clicked forward, I did not ask why,
When you gave the order, "Fly, shoo, fly"!!

I perspired, but hoped that you knew better.
I was a jumper and sweater!

At the rail I paused, you shouted, "Vault"!
And if we've fractured, then that's not my fault.

What cranium could hold such malice,
And treat a faithful foot so callous?

LEG:

Shut up, you barking dog, you ankle biter!
I'm sure you're happy now that your load's lighter!

You were hoodwinked by the cerebellum,
Bought her lies as fast as she could sell 'em.

And then the frontal cortex shared a wish,
A conspiracy to feed the fish

With me! I'm not a sandwich crust!
I told you to beware of brain trust.

I'm so betrayed right now, I'm on a platter
A herring's lunch; a poet's subject matter.

You made an ego trip on plain concrete,
That's how you brought the legs down to defeat.

HEART:

How much longer do I have to listen
To this moaning, to this pissin'?

I don't blame anyone for wanting out,
I don't blame clumsy feet or hungry trout,

I don't blame the head, she had it hard!
She also had a donor card!

Any minute now they'll come and snag me
The surgeons with their plastic baggie,

While you decompose like Bach, but moreso
I'll be Fedexed to another torso!

LIVER:

Go try to find a pulse, you rotting pile!
Were you in the Thames with us, or in de Nile?

We've gone tits up like Cleopatra, minus
Snakes, and dignity, and dryness!

At least this carnage is a respite from the thrills
Of metabolizing booze and pills!

No one liked you, head!, you were always crying
"I'm chopped liver!" So you made hash of dying.

HEART:

Oh, get your pancreas out of a twist.
I think I hear my cardiologist!

He's coming with a sterile Igloo cooler!
He knows I don't belong in here with losers.

The head must not have realized what's at stake;
My genius can't be snuffed by her mistake!

LIVER:

What are you, the Beethoven of organs?

HEART:

I'm the heart of the matter!

LIVER:

You're the VP of Gore!

HEART:

You're the Pollock of splatter!

LIVER:

You're a funny smelling Valentine!

HEART:

You're not fit for Frankenstein!

GUTS:

I smell too. I've never had the rank of leader,
I've always been the bottom-feeder.

I'm the raw deal, the goose that's cooked,
The shitfaced, and the overlooked.

I ate filth, and was in filth submersed,
But see the light now that the stomach's burst!

I stink, therefore I am! Cast off all
Vanity, 'cause This is Offal!

This is Offal, Head, don't try to hide!
This is who you are inside!

I can't dismember when I've felt so loose,
Even on that diet of all juice!

This is offal! This is true!
The time is tripe for my debut!

I'm free at last, and know I'm bound
For glory in this theater in the drowned!

But Head, how did you make this holy mess?
Now that your guts are spilled, confess.

HEAD:

I don't tell to have you anything.
If a bell tolled, then I told it: ring.

I turn the light on, and I can dark it,
And I don't need advice from my own meat market.

When I was hunting lonely, where were you,
When the teeth of my skin had no one to talk to?

When I was hungry, it was praise I fed on--
I didn't know how screwed my tight was head on.

How round the world looked when it flattered me,
How crushing that gross world turned out to be,

When I unraveled, the world whispered, "*Dumper
In the river like a sweater jumper.*"

*Don't be nervous now, you jumper sweater,
Silence for you would be better."*

If I knew what it entailed, how loud
You'd be, what an ungrateful crowd

Was in me... I regret, Juliet,
There's no quiet for us. I feel ya, Ophelia:

You tried to do good, but your resolution cracked,
I wanted to make a difference but I made an impact.

Us underwater babes are doomed to shiver,
Wishing to be pulled from nameless river,

Is this the Danube? The Yangtze? The Thames?
The Nile? The Mississippi? None of them.

This is the river that the boatman picks,
You can't be pulled from it, because it Styx.

Mary Reid Kelley, 2015