SAMPLER

Shape of Faith
Other books by John Phillips

Language Is (Sardines Press, San Francisco, CA, 2005)
What Shape Sound (Skysill Press, Nottingham, 2011)
Heretic (Longhouse, Guilford, VT, 2016)

Chapbooks

Instances (with Roger Snell) (Third Ear Books, 2000)
While (Longhouse, 2000)
Path (Longhouse, 2002)
A Small Window (Longhouse, 2005)
Soundless (Punch Press, 2007)
Pages (Country Valley Press, 2008)
Spell (Kater Murr’s Press, 2009)
Fault (Kater Murr’s Press, 2013)
This (Smallminded Books, 2016)
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Some were also in the following chapbooks and books: This, Fault, While, Plenty, Gone, Path, Language, The Healing Wound, Given, Table Laid Bare, Instances and Heretic; as well as the anthologies Beyond Hepworth’s Garden, Wave Hub and Nerve Damage.
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Within
CIRCULAR STUDY
SHAPE
PERSONA
What you have
CORRESPONDENCE
AFFINITY
READING
Knowing it is wrong
After thinking I am not
THIS
I searched in the silence
A WAY
Saying it again is not
So much here
the sun on my bed
WAYS
TO
RAIN VARIATIONS
LOST
THEORY OF COMPOSITION
MOUNTAINS & RIVERS
UNFOUND
MEANING
BOOK OF RESEMBLANCES
SIDESHOW
What is happening
The shape of faith is the
What I mean to say
GRATITUDE
What it is
for Jasna, Eva, Lana
& Roger Snell

SAMPLER
LANGUAGE

Sometimes it
pretends to
deliver us
back beyond its
beginnings we
invent each time
it is used to
Fault

That word you were going to say
the word you did say
wasn’t quite the word you wanted to
something small
a fragment fell from it
before you finished saying it
an invisible thing
that changed what you said,
that always changes it
RETURN

Each place is another place

each time you return.

To get where you’ve been

never is possible.
IF I REMEMBER

for Keith Waldrop

My daughter began to describe a room: books piled high in corners and a black iron bedstead. She even remembered the slightly acrid smell of stale pipe tobacco and how, on winter mornings, the heavy frost would make opening the one small window, high above the bed, difficult.

The room she described was the room in which my father had died; the house long since demolished.

Both events taking place several years before she was born.
RECOGNITION

Towards five
in the morning:
My hand creates
the words
I write,
the words I write
create me.

Day breaks in my body.
Each of us a sentence
in the process of being

said by someone who
doesn’t know what

they are saying or why
they are saying it or

even whom it does or
does not concern
PARADISE

Because words reveal
the separation

of what is
from what is said to be:

in Paradise
language would be a sin.
LATEWORD

God not existing
proves what
to the contrary
worth doing
more than
steer clear of
History
yet to
unhappen
No matter what it is
I’m doing

I’ve never yet
got over the idea

I’m pretending
to do what
I am.
We look at what we think is real knowing it is only what we think it is and any reality it might have is a reality we have made by thinking so. As if we could do otherwise.