

contact

Erin Mallea

*we are not only what we do,
we are also what we imagine¹*

and what is it that we imagine?

familiar skin and cosmic spores
did it spawn us, or did we spawn it?

they breathe like us
or we breathe like them
both of us fruiting,
fleshy

8,650 years
3.5 miles wide
35,000 collective tons

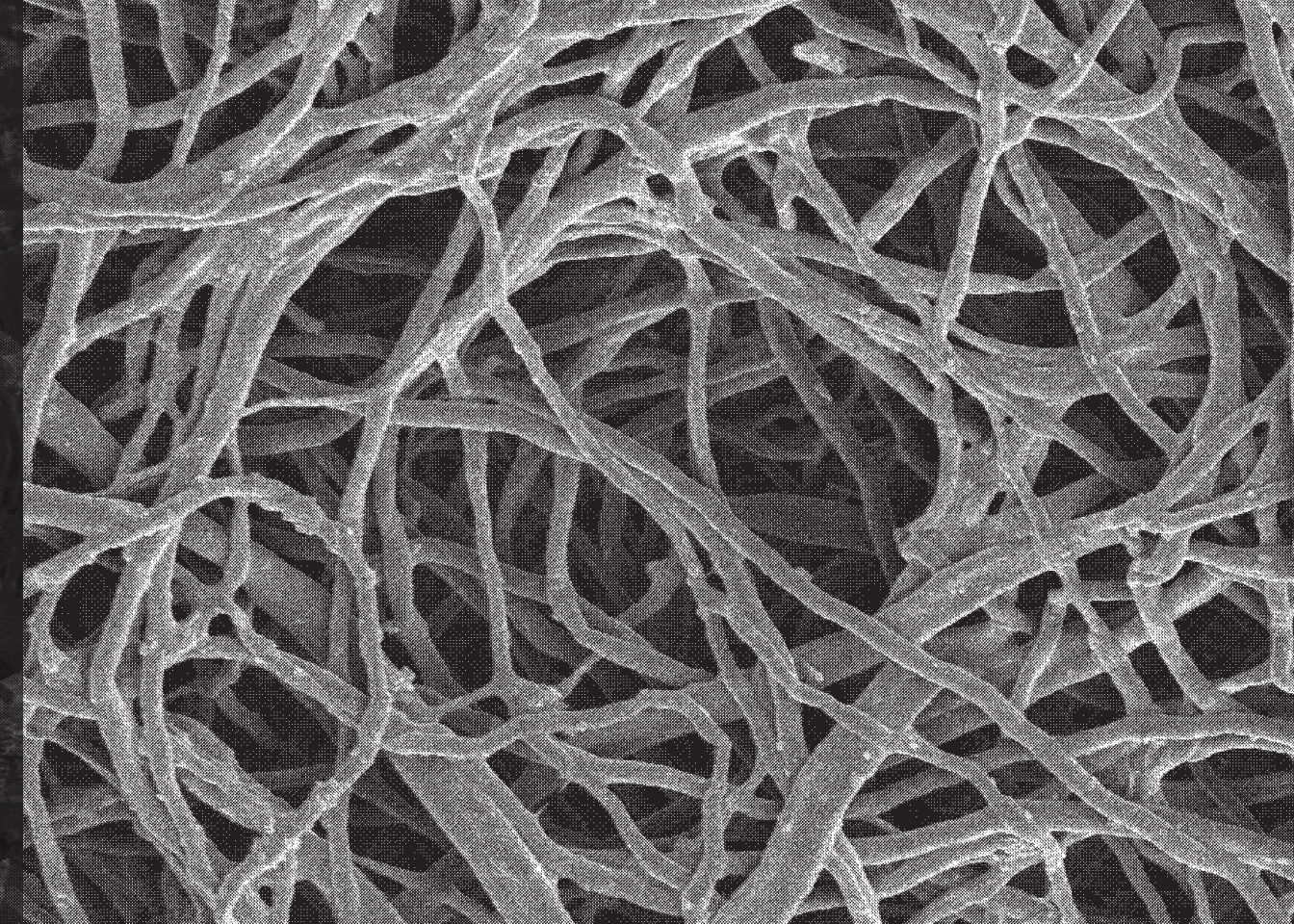
hardly visible
from a single cell
the drifting glimmer
of a momentary star





Almost as big as the Mall of America
scale we can understand
our own networked mesh
a constellation of individualism
consumption and profit

Nature's Miracle Booster
utopia for 24 monthly payments
stabilizing, empowering
beautifying



The Mycelium Revolution Is upon Us!
saviors of our kind
weapons of space colonization⁵

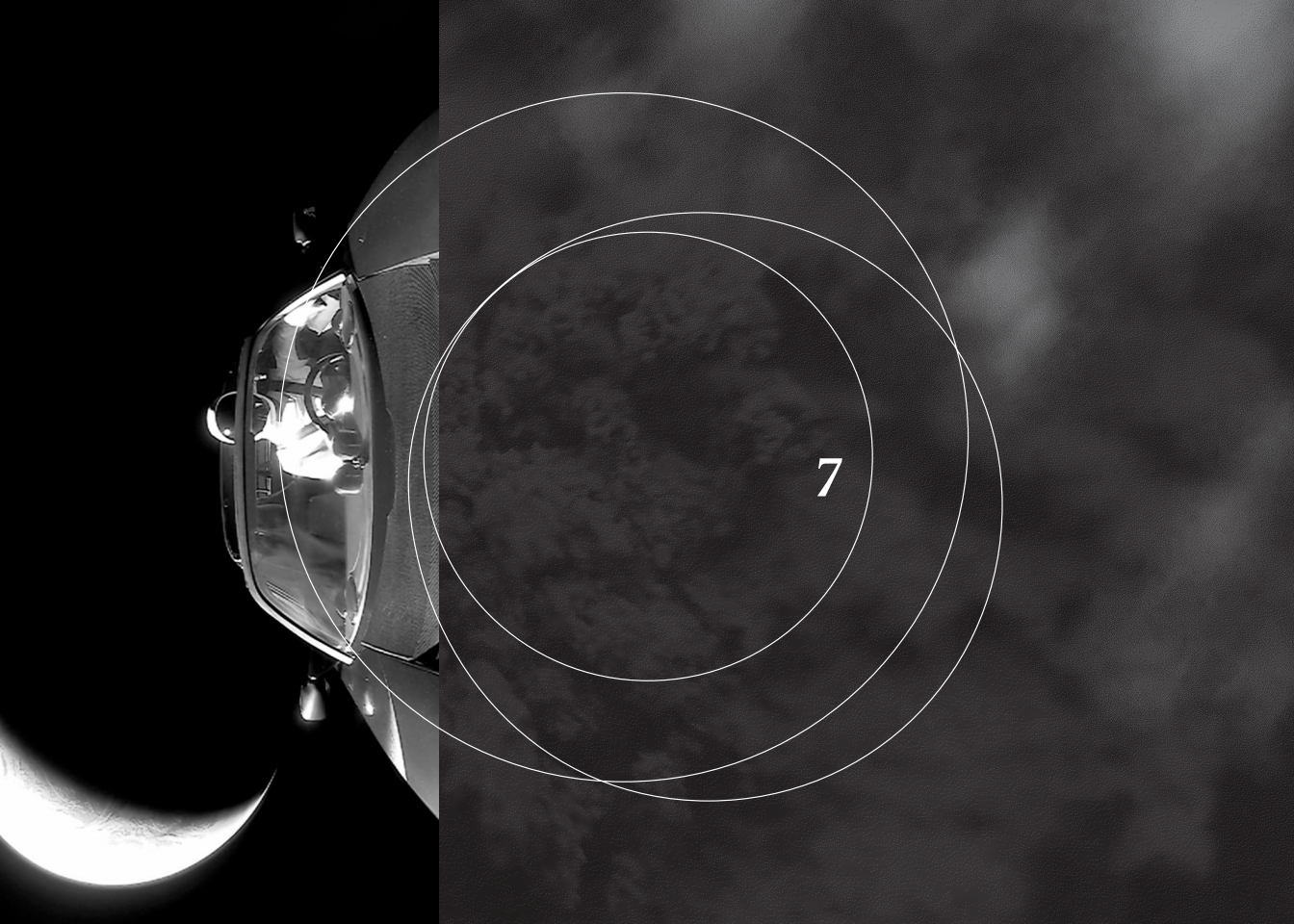
Fungal Space Force
instruments to build a new Eden
a new, New World

but its architects demand the same
familiar hierarchies
and vengeful rulers

country club bunkers on Mars
escape hatches from accountability
for those who can afford it

the rest of us 142.5 million miles away
on a former promised land
stripped and sold for parts





*disappearing glimmers
in the rearview mirror
a billionaire's prophecy*

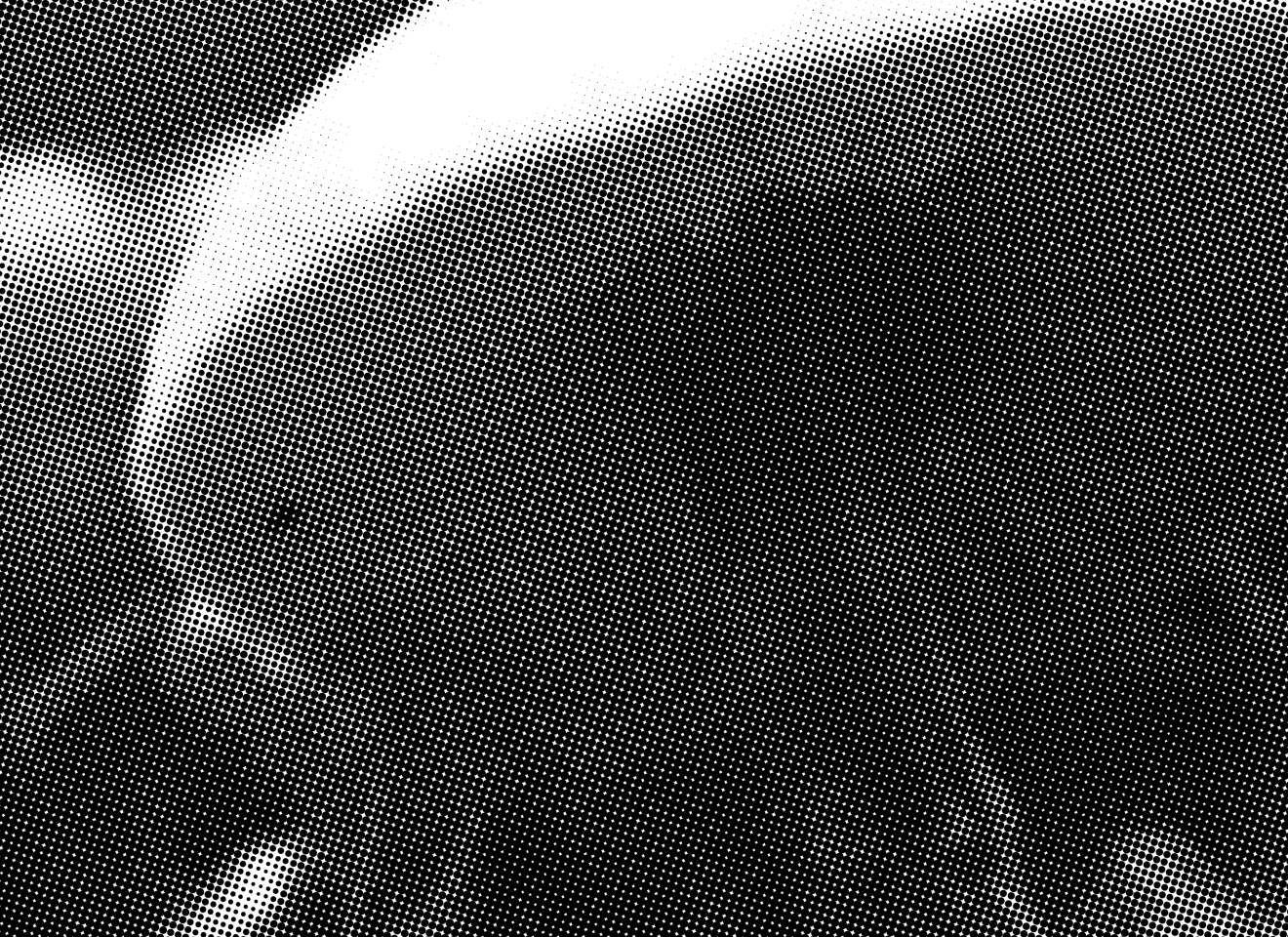
*\$100,000 litter in orbit
a cherry red symbol
of our desires
power, progress
comfort, and knowledge*

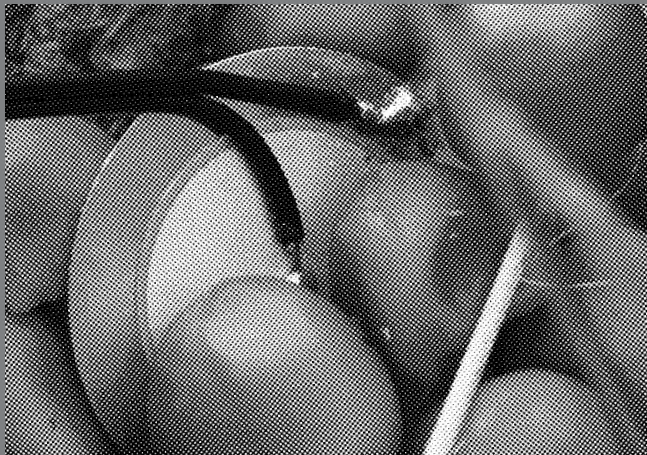
we are far too impressed by our own cleverness⁸
mesmerized by knowledge's promises

ignoring its continual division
reduction into smaller usable parts
naturalized stratification
for the insatiable gluttony of the few

perhaps our saviors will have other plans
no Eve, no Adam

some say we are highly improbable events
on the periphery of others' perception





so we channel hope, fear, and uncertainty
into feeble poetry and close looking
to imagine new systems of logic

remembering that parasitic relationships
can evolve into mutual support

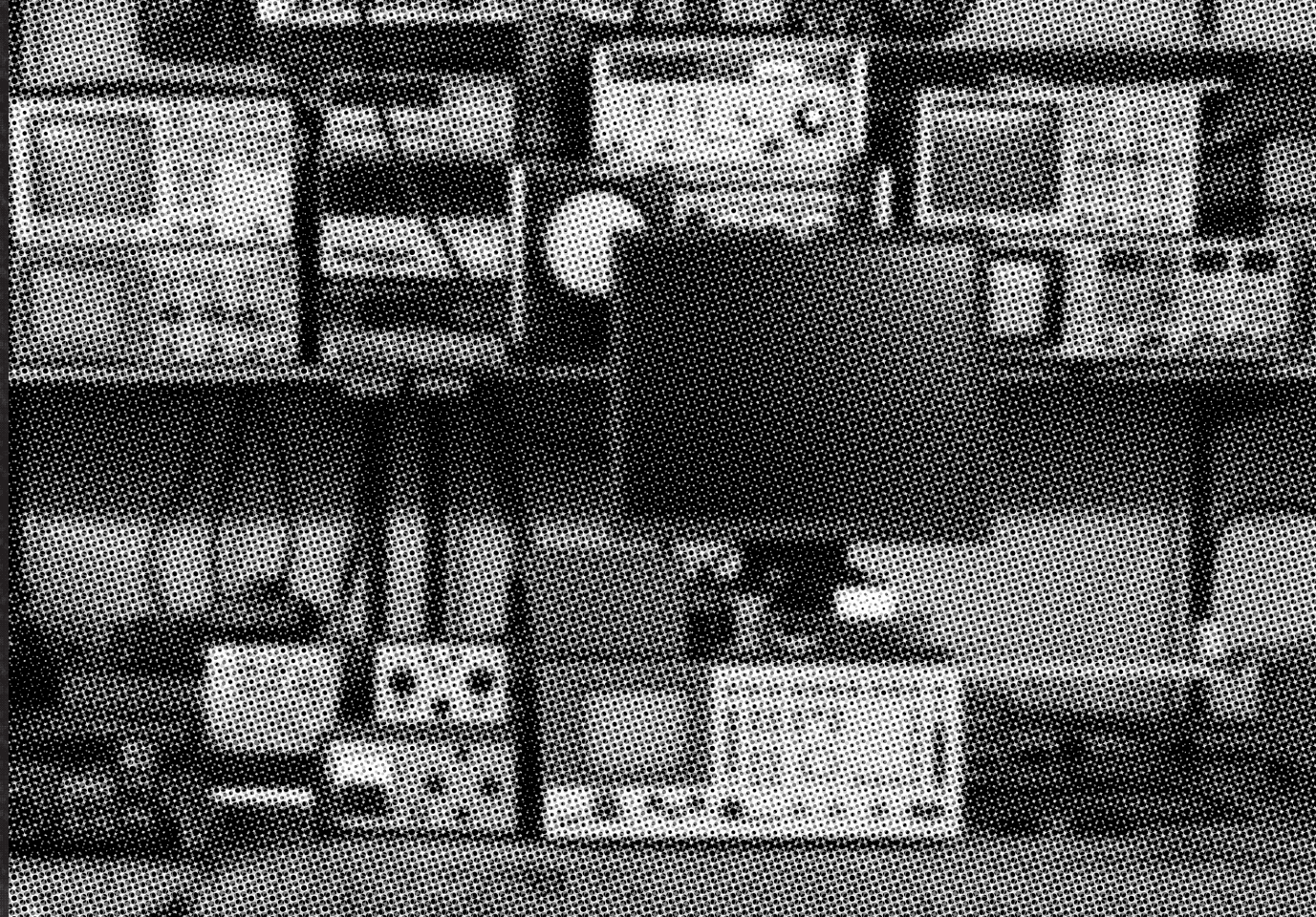
gently rubbing mushrooms like a magic lamp
as if trying to play an instrument
to turn touch into sound
and find moments of music

searching for what is largely imperceptible
but directly underneath our feet
learning to live with this
learning to listen

*calling one another
calling strangers
following the grey line⁹
to translate dreams
into soundwaves
hoping for closeness
across vast distance
and moments of contact*



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endnotes

- 1 Margaret Atwood, “Of the Madness of Mad Scientists: Jonathan Swift’s Grand Academy”.
- 2 Panspermia is the hypothesis that microorganisms in space transmit life to habitable bodies, distributed by celestial objects and spacecrafts. Some have theorized panspermia as the source of life on Earth.
- 3 The “Humongous Fungus” in Eastern Oregon is estimated to be the largest living organism by area. Mycologists consider mushrooms more closely related to animals than plants; they “breathe” O₂, “exhale” CO₂, do not contain chlorophyll.
- 4 Excerpts from articles describing the “humongous fungus” and world and self-altering benefits of new mycelium technology.
- 5 “Inevitable future: space colonization beyond Earth with microbes first” *FEMS Microbiology Ecology*, Volume 95, Issue 10.
- 6 The Oppidum in the Czech Republic is the largest billionaire bunker in the world.
- 7 In February 2018, SpaceX launched a Tesla Roadster into space during the company’s first test launch. “We decided to send something unusual, something that made us feel,” said CEO Elon Musk. “The payload will be an original Tesla Roadster, playing Space Oddity, on a billion year elliptic Mars orbit.”
- 8 Steven Shaviro, *Doom Patrols*.
- 9 The “grey line” is a band around the Earth that separates daylight from darkness. Ham radio operators and listeners optimize long distance communication around the world by monitoring this band as it moves around the globe.
- 10 The Voyager Golden Records contain sounds and images selected to portray the diversity of life and culture on Earth. The records were intended “for the benefit of any other spacefarers that might find them in the distant future”. Voyager 1 and 2 were launched in 1977 to explore the outer planets and left our solar system in 2012 and 2018.