

Southern // Cross ⁱ

Ask Alexander Graham Bell
about all the things that swim through wires

the argent fish of hope and despair
spawning far from home
(some eaten on the way)

Ask him what lies beneath the industrious currents
of the South Pacific

a lonely grey eel
snaking between continents
like a single outstretched arm, as long as memory

You can ask Alexander
about the rivers of our voiceless voices,
about the taut vessels of desire we sail in –
their minute metal languages, their building and dismantling –
about economies of the senses

but he is busy now, growing eyes as he sleeps

and we are the ones left with red strings
roping us ankle to ankle
harp strings hanging
from our fingertips

and the bright coils of our irises
awash with blue light, saying:

Come here, I want to see you

ⁱ The Southern Cross Cable is one of the major undersea communications cables, running trans-Pacific, connecting Aotearoa New Zealand to the world