

I recently was in a public conversation with my dear friend Christian Bök. If I am the dumbest poet that's ever lived, then Christian is the smartest. His projects are very complicated, taking years to complete. During our talk, Christian went on at length about a project he's been working on for the past decade, one which involved basically giving himself a PhD in genetics. In order to compose two little poems, he had to learn to write computer programs which went through something like eight million combinations of possible letters before hitting on the right ones. And then he injected these poems into a strand of DNA, which was ultimately designed to outlive the extinguishing of the sun. The whole thing involves working with laboratories and has cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Christian is super-articulate -- really more like a robot than a person -- and he had the audience's head spinning. When it came my turn to speak, all I could muster was: "...and I transcribe traffic reports."

-- Kenneth Goldsmith (from "Being Dumb")