About the Cover

Cover Photo: Betina Zolkower, 'Conversacion.' Manhattan, NY; 11 May, 2012. Nikon D5100 camera.

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The photograph was taken by Argentine-born Betina Zolkower somewhere on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Her work often investigates urban still lifes

and the abstract or surreal nature of city objects viewed from up close. The cover image of ripped brown paper, which screens the window of a store under renovation, displays her interest in the visual potential of paper—printed, torn, stacked, layered, discarded.

The torn paper suggests violence, even the casual violence of a contractor accidentally scraping the covered window and tearing the paper that concealed the doings inside. Likewise, many of the essays in the issue concern confession and violence, but, more to the point, the photograph is titled ‘Conversacion’ and in Rorschach-like manner presents two interlocutors, a large squat one accompanied by a leaner one on the left.

Confession is, at its core, a conversation fraught with the dynamics of power. Are we looking at the workings of hegemony or of freedom? Is the squat figure dominant or passive? Is the lean figure, from which emanates a lightning-like spike, a figure of resistance or oppression? Is it reaching out? The poignant negative space the tear creates makes us wonder what is behind the window and what the conversation might be concealing. The exchange between these two figures can be imagined as encompassing the range of discussions, confessions, and conversations in this issue of *postmedieval*.

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