

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

January 1984

#103

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(Free at The Poetry Project)

ISLETS/IRRITATIONS by Charles Bernstein (Jordan Davies, 356 Bowery, NYC, N.Y. 10012, \$6.50)

In a recent interview with Tom Beckett [*The Difficulties*, Vol. 2, no.1] Charles Bernstein said, "One of the things that interests me about line breaks is the pulse of energy involved in the connection at the end of one line and the beginning of the next, like a spark jumping a break in a cable." I've been thinking about this spark in relation to Olson's doctrine of the line, that the line is the "threshing floor" for the dance of the intellect, which Olson defined as the syllabic structure within the line, and that "the conventions which logic has forced on syntax must be broken open."

Charles Bernstein has been breaking a great many conventions both within and around the syntactic norms in poetry. But where Olson gets his line from the breath, "the breathing of the man who writes, at the moment that he writes", Bernstein goes at lines and line breaks inorganically. When fire is actually present in Bernstein's work the line breaks do work like jumper cables, but it's not always clear where the spark comes from, or where it's going. This is particularly true of "Asylum", a list poem which is tied together by jumps like "worlds develop, jogging alongside/bounds." I wonder if bounds is meant as a noun or a verb. Bernstein uses this kind of ambiguity as a catalyst for generating lists of institutions, and of images related to the idea of asylum. While the poem is, in many ways, continuous, Bernstein cuts off the lines from time to time; "situation is collapsed/itself, and he/action." This kind of blockage recurs so often it becomes mechanical. When he gets to the end the only resolution possible is a fade-out, and this is what happens. The last line trails off into nowhere: "circles from which".

Much of Charles' work is clumsy and awkward. This awkwardness is intentional. The words are treated as plastic objects; physical, though not always referent to the physical. This approach should allow more freedom within the poem, and sometimes it does. But Bernstein's poems tend to operate from resistance to both the vocabulary and the structure. While Bernstein, like many experimental writers, uses various combinations of technical vocabularies ("hernia multiphase"), he resists the temptation to make sense of the words. In some cases he simply satirizes what the Surrealists were trying to do with language decades ago. Poems like "Sprocket Damage" are filled with weird lines like "What a clumpy gymnasium he/turned out to be." Some lines are so disjunct they end up making their own kind of sense, as in "The Kluspy Girl": "all of gets where", and when he works with longer lines he comes up with "Mylar juggernauts/zig-zag penuriously." The use of long cumbersome words reduces the surface tension of the line, and dampens the spark effect he refers to in the interview.

I get the feeling that before he sits down to write, Bernstein plots a strategy for writing. Then he writes. In fact, there



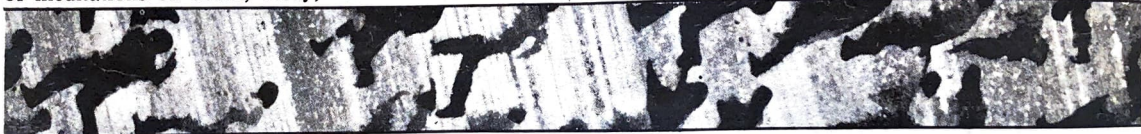
are so many different strategies in *Islets/Irritations* that I am sometimes overwhelmed, and finally discouraged. Just when I think I've had enough, Bernstein breaks through the mechanisms and comes out into the open, as in "Looking About": "I just flow out the rhythm,/clip to temptation, pattern/that back, i.e. physical, of thought, me/on the way out of the other side." While some of the more methodical pieces leave me cold, and frankly, are over my head, one such poem, entitled "was, rain, dish", leads the imagination around words in much the same way Jackson MacLow does in his *French Sonnets*. This one is made up of 148 lines, each made up of three words divided by two commas. The best way to appreciate the piece is to read it aloud, for it is a very good text-sound piece.

One of the strongest pieces in the book is the poem "Substance Abuse". This poem is unusual in that most of the lines use the first person. The poem addresses some questions: When you say something are you saying anything which can be taken as you mean to say it? Does anyone hear what you say the way you mean it? I have some questions, then. Why is the line "Boards propose wefts, largely/inured of (for) baskets" followed by a denial, "Forget these chilly masquerades"? In the next line Bernstein confesses, "I feel (felt) stripped by these/changes," which he then analyzes, "Who takes me in different directions and therefore/I do not let go." The first pronoun in the analysis subverts the whole line. "Who" is not used in the interrogative sense, and it does not refer to anyone previously mentioned in the poem. Bernstein proposes an uncertainty, denies it, confesses to a response which he analyzes, and ends up sabotaging the analysis.

Subterfuge is the practice of this poem. "One/guise disguises itself within myself,/and the other within my text." "A person/must make their own occasions &/what are occasions than cross-hatched/projections of person onto event. There/are, according to our lights, neither/one or the other." Cross-hatching occurs not only in the poem, but from the writing to the reader. Many connections I make between one work or line and another could just be projections. My reading of the text may finally have no relation to the meaning Bernstein intends, if indeed there is any such intention. I don't know whether the "I" is Charles Bernstein or a fictive creation or a literary source. But I do feel the presence of an "I" which is, in fact, the poet's own self. This "I" emerges from the cacophony of voices:

"Everything I write, in some mood, sounds bad to me. It reads like gibberish — unnecessary rhymes, repetitions, careless constructions — a loss of conviction. Whether I am content to want to let those orders I find speak for themselves, if it is the orders as I make them that I want to compel my own lost recognition. No matter how the slack is removed I can see through it."

Throughout the poem one encounters various fragments of meditations on death, decay, stasis and boredom, but



FORGET ABOUT YOUR FATHER & other stories by Donna Wyszomierski (Top Stories #18, 228 Seventh Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10011, \$2.50)

The first thing to say about these stories is that they ought to be read out loud or even sung, being as they are not only monologues but sort of skewed-up screwed around versions of country and western songs.

"I went home and packed. The blond's sister was pretty homely. I walked out to the garden where her husband was pruning the roses. The best things in life are free, he told me. I should have guessed something was up. I was just getting into bed when he knocked at the door. My wife's a good cook but there's more to life, he said. Don't you agree? I had a thing about southern men but I didn't want to rush it. Let's have some tea, I said. I have to think this over. He bowed out gracefully. I decided to write to my daughter-in-law."

The tune of "We Got Married In A Fever" kept circling in my head as I read these stories. All of them are written as monologues of hard-case small town types who move around alot and go in and out of marriages and jails. "I did this, I did this, then I did that." The sentence patterns are repeatedly similar in length and rhythm, like a certain kind of talking that goes on in neighborhood bars. Like rap songs, they're totally hyperbolic although the message is not so much "I'm the greatest" as "I don't care." Wyszomierski undercuts these heroic narratives with a terrific sense of irony and local detail:

"The brother-in-law kissed my hand and suggested a drive to the lake. His wife said she had a headache, so I excused myself and put on my best dress. It had a coffee stain on the front but I hid it with my purse."

these fragments are never tied together, developed, nor are they resolved. I don't require that every poem in every book make that kind of sense. On the other hand, I feel left high and dry every time Bernstein drops them like hot potatoes. "What pans out?/I'm afraid to set it down, or contend with/the medium at hand." Here's the rub — Bernstein's fear of the medium at hand is characteristic of much new writing. Gone is the confidence of "The New American Poetry", and in its place, hesitation. When Bernstein operates from this fear, fear of reference, the line is stilted and deformed. In "Substance Abuse" he has to confess his fear in order to overcome it, and then returns to description: "Return to base one. Do/the dishes again." The last line pulls away from the whole dilemma with a cornball cliché, "I'm all washed up: i.e., comes ashore."

Again from the interview with Tom Beckett: "Everything is contained when it is apprehended, language is limitation. One sees certain things, or constructs them. And a limit is just the measure at hand." I believe the measure at hand should exceed the very idea of limitation. Bernstein tirelessly explores the nature of these boundaries: language, comprehension, communication. The fact that he can go beyond the boundaries makes my struggle with his struggle worthwhile. This is serious, writing that demands close reading.

—Mitch Highfill

"He picks me up the next night, his car has a new paint job. I'm about to comment when he suggests a local night spot. It's a transient hotel, he knows some of the residents."

Wyszomierski's stories are stories of starvation. Things happen at a breakneck pace, her characters travel 800 miles in two paragraphs and still seem not to have moved at all. There is no abstraction, no reflection, and practically no hope. By putting herself in the middle of things, Wyszomierski creates the interesting illusion of having no distance from the events recounted or the desire to recount. But in fact her stories are extremely deliberate acts. The stylistic framework she creates is so abrupt and vital that it threatens to squelch whatever movement might go on inside. She does to her writing what life has done to her characters. So while the limitations of her narrative create willfulness and energy, there are not alot of surprises beyond the initial jolt of style.

I'm tempted to compare the book with Gail Vachon's *This Is My Father, This Is My Mother* (Top Stories #6), because Vachon's book is also built around a system that is radically disquieting -- *This Is My Father*...consists of hundreds of sentence-long statements. But somehow in Vachon's book the sentences start to glow and take on a life of their own, subverting the book's central conceit. Nothing quite as exciting happens in *Forget About Your Father* and yet I have great admiration for Wyszomierski's ability to grab hold of all this low-life detail and force it into a framework that is so cool and rigidly unsentimental. Her characters are constricted by their limitation of language. The narrative goes on and on, experience is blunted to the point where there's no way out of the story. *Forget About Your Father* is seamlessly didactic, and kept afloat by the skill and humor of Wyszomierski's writing.

—Christine Kraus

ARMORY-ANA


A man goes to the opening of an art show at the Armory Terminal in Brooklyn. Almost 400 artists are exhibiting work through October in this gigantic space, at one time the largest building in the world. Afterwards, it's hoped, the terminal will become an "industrial park".

The man boards a free, yellow-school-bus shuttle running just that day from City Hall in Manhattan. "Folks, if you like art," cries the driver cheerfully, as twenty minutes later the bus bounces through a silent zone of warehouses, "folks, you're in luck, I've seen the show myself, they've got every kind of art here you could want. Folks," the driver cries, throwing open the door, "enjoy yourselves!"

The man pays his dollar contribution and prepares to enjoy himself by filing along a sort of loading-platform entrance-way, towards a small set of freshly made wooden steps. Beyond, epically, a sight rises at which the man's heart leaps. From the top of the steps he can take it in properly. It's like a carnival by Piranesi -- no, it's industrial: a carnival in Gdansk, by Piranesi. Two huge building fronts face each other across a pair of sunken railroad tracks that must run for over a hundred yards. The building fronts go up eight stories to the sunshine of roof-length skylights. Multitudes of balconies jut out into the enormous air, like big square buckets. Banners, painted freely-geometrical constructions dangle among them. Thrilled, the man steps forwards, craning his neck. A single white strip starts high up directly overhead and swoops down far into the distance and then rises to meet its securing lines -- a filament of hugeness.

The man heads in excitedly to the left of the railroad tracks. The interior space seems to go back forever, with columns everywhere, and the occasional wall. The man looks at a large, exuberant swirling of paint, as if a load of branches had been dipped and flung at a target. "Neo-expressionist-iana," he thinks. "One down, hundreds to go! He turns and admires a couple of items of Graffiti-ana. He avoids two knee-high lines belonging to a sculpture. He peers through a doorway into a small, dark room with carbonized-looking dirt on the floor, toys, knick-knacks and twigs on the tables, words scrawled on the walls. "Shrine-iana, it's big too," he thinks. He wanders past a purple and silver, 2-D invasion from outer space by what are perhaps Venutian sanitation workers. He admires the young crowd around him, so chic in drab, cheap clothes and short, cropped hair. And he in his slacks, he wonders: a little Dowdy-ana? He bumps into a woman he knows slightly, a painter. Today her hair is in braids and her mouth is painted into extravagant, squashed Cupid's bows, startlingly black in hue. "Kabuki-ana," the man thinks. "Are you showing something?" he asks, and then realizes that if he looks at a painting he will have to say something about it. "Over there," the woman says, pointing obscurely into the distance. "Great, I'll look for it," the man promises, edging away.

He finds another shrine. This one features an Oriental carpet. He turns around to a muddy, not undextrous manipulation of pigments into which several shelves of books have been fixed. A young guy in a dingy sweater and spattered boots stops right in front of him, sways back on his heels and looks the work up and down through the smoke of the cigarette in his mouth. Then he snatches the cigarette away and squats and intensely scrutinizes a patch of brushwork under the bottom shelf. "Push-pull-iana," the man snorts, heading back into the deep interior. In a corner a



group stands peering at its feet. The man puts his head in. A white, naked, sculpted figure lies huddled on the floor, its hands over its ears. The man in delighted. "A hero for our time?" he muses, drifting over to a plywood contraption with a red plastic window at one end. He bumps into the woman again. "Now *where* is it you are?" he asks, trying lamely for a note of brightness. "Right over there," she says. He walks around a column. He stares. "I'll say I like their *personalness*," he decides finally, swallowing. "That's what I'll say..." He loiters. Desperately, he peeks around the column. He's in luck: she's a ways off, with her back towards him. The man hurries off ahead, making for the other sides of the railroad tracks. "Flight-iana," he thinks. He reaches a small cross-over and edges gingerly around a sculpturally hacked log which lies athwart the cross-over like a barricade. For a moment, the great vista spreads out its full, awesome grandeur before him again, a kind of artistic Leviathan barnacled with individual 'works'.

On the other side of the tracks, Anti-nuke-iana and Anti-war-iana are much the mode. Government documents on fall-out and disaster evacuation pile up for distribution at a counter. Behind wooden blinds, a man in an Army helmet jovially prepares to blow a model town to kingdom-come for a small admission fee. In a candle-lit booth, a clothes dummy, in GI fatigues and carrying a briefcase bulging with dollars, whispers to a civilian dummy clad tropically in loose blouse and pants. "And now some Subway-ana," the man observes, hearing the familiar thud-thud of a tape player and spotting familiar, heavily sprayed doors and windows, now rendered a la triptych on a panelled screen. He steps out of the side of the building, into the sunshine of a vast outdoor yard. People sit in the dust and stones in front of a tiny bandstand where a black-clad twining fellow is sneering something coy and baroque into a microphone. An electric guitarist plinks out atmospherics behind him. "Quentin Crisp-iana," the man sniffs, wandering off down the vastness. When he wanders back, the dramatic duo have added two petals and flowed into a rock band. The twitchy, wacky rhythms drive the man back indoors. He remembers to check the coast. It's clear. He enters a home-made labyrinth. At the end of it a clunky effigy is waiting as if to warmly embrace him. It has a TV set for a head. The man laughs at it. "Dumb-iana," he grins, shaking his own blank head as he emerges. The grin freezes on his face.

Slowly, he turns. It's not her; it's much worse. A chattering group in leather jackets make mementoes nearby with an expensive camera. Without the slightest shame, they speak German. German! -- one of the art world's two (the other is Italian) languages of nouveau richism, of not to say, occupation! The man glares; then he sighs and shrugs. "Oh well," he reflects ruefully, "how hopelessly naive to think of getting through all this without at least a *bit* of Deutsch-iana. And really, I have to admit, up to this point I've been very lucky on that score today. Very. But now," he sighs, keeping just at bay a desire to put his fingers in his ears, "now perhaps it's time for me to be going." On his way back to the wooden steps he comes upon another timely hero. This one stares stolid and nude at the passersby while standing upside-down, balanced entirely on its bare poll on the hard cement floor. The sight cheers the man enormously.

"Poll-iana," he smiles, waiting for the doors of the free bus to open.

—Barry Yourgrau

MIND'S EYE/HEART'S EYE

When it was her intention that something was either to be done, to exist or to change, it required constant attention, the kind of attention used to keep track of pocketbooks and sunglasses, making it her concern, an extension of herself. The rooms she lived in became her bigger body and she moved through them like blood. It was the interior reality she considered a landscape, an endless sea horizon, framed and hung over the couch.

The waves washed over the backyard fence. We explained aluminum take-out tins to the Japanese. I lived on the third floor and in all my rooms the floors had fallen in and everything rested on sofas which stretched end to end, from wall to wall. In one corner was a beautiful sculpture garden.

I would wrap myself in a turquoise cashmere coat with a blue lining and lay down in the day. I called it my sky coat and laid down in the clouds of thoughts, reeling and circling the configurations made from pieces of conversation and books read and what was seen and said, I was a child once, an envelope, and the man-made world was my adversary. I talked to trees and learned to draw.

In the same way, it was later suggested if only I learned to type I would surely get by, so I knew that to desire Africa was more acceptable than to become an artist which was just plain foolishness.

The work of art is vision. Beyond the glance, glimpse and outright stare is seeing more than description. Rays emanating from the heart's eye move through the air. More than x-ray vision they penetrate appearances, cut across dotted lines and construct images from shards of duration, moment and hesitation. I sat and watched the sunlight falling in the window, framing a rectangle of time. Now I called these rooms mine and the window framed my view of the sun's light that was falling in Baltimore, that fell in the Stone Age, that I snare into each image I make.

I unravel, I make resolutions. I look at the light falling in the window and see what is temporary. Salt will dissolve. My imagination makes me a sky, a sky is always there. For private reality is a continuous realm of "me", a 24 hour corner store for memory. To recall, the fascination with memory is walking backwards to find yourself inside time with precise totality. My memory endures, a kind of proof that anything has happened at all, but is mostly a marker, unlike the children's bread dropped on the forest path.

Pick up sticks in the park, admire their black irregular lines, a random texture in the hand. Take them to the supermarket. Consider whimsy, consider wonder a radical point of view when cynicism is popular.

I think of making history. My own memory as clear and vivid as the rooms I lived in or a favorite dress I remember. The discipline of metaphor. Thinking becomes spatial, given to relatedness rather than linear logic. Metaphor abandons cause and effect (like a small town newspaper, its elucidian geometry with local news.)

The artist's perception is an act of undoing this linear logic, the mind's eye perceiving beyond the distractions of descriptions and sophisticated surfaces, lest the vision of the heart's eye be forgotten.

—Susan Brooker

RON PADGETT'S FRENCH TRANSLATION WORKSHOP

I asked Ron whether I could come to his French translation workshop. He said yes but you have to do work for it. (I had already missed the first one.)

There was a crowd of 25 or 30 around a large table in two rows with Ron in the middle, flanked by a woman and young man who were really "hanging on his lips." He spoke softly so we really had to listen.

We discussed three translations of Apollinaire's "Le Pont Mirabeau", one quite poor we all agreed, the second better, the third the best with pleasant rhymes yet close to the French original. It turned out to be by Ron himself.

As homework we were to translate a French poem of our choice. I picked a fairly simple, straightforward one by Baudelaire, about a beautiful, sensuous cat whose agate metal-like eyes bring to his mind the deep, cold gaze of his mistress and the subtle, dangerous scent of her brown body.

I didn't try for rhymes but "retiens les griffes de ta patte" became "hold in the claws of your paws." At the critique, these two rhyming words, the only ones in the poem and coming so close together, Ron thought somewhat peculiar and clumsy. However when read aloud it sounded better than it looked on the page so I left it in while making other changes like "aimable bete" from "amiable beast" into "lovable creature."

We went through many poems, line by line, back and forth, French and English, until we knew a poem almost better than the poet who wrote it. John Ashbery once said in an interview that he allows just about anything to enter a poem, even taking the chance of answering the phone while writing. Reading or explaining a poem is something else, he says, which he leaves to the reader or professor.

Ron said I might get an A, probably because I mailed him my translated poem by express mail (\$3.95) so he'd get it in time to review before the next session.

—Rudy Burckhardt

RONSARD: FROM SONNETS FOR HELENE

When I drink in deeply the loving sparkle
Which comes from your lovely eyes, mine are dazzled.
Nor mind nor reason do I troubled have
And, as if drunk from love, all my body staggers.

My heart fights in my chest, my natural warmth
Is chilled with fear. My senses vanish,
And are lost within the air while you take pleasure
Acquiring, by my death, the name "cruel".

Your thunderous glances pierce with their rays
My whole body, my whole heart, like arrow points
Which I feel in my soul; and, when I would complain

Or ask for mercy from the pain that I receive,
Your cruelty so much pinches my voice
That I dare not speak; so do your eyes strike fear in me.

—translated by Tom Savage

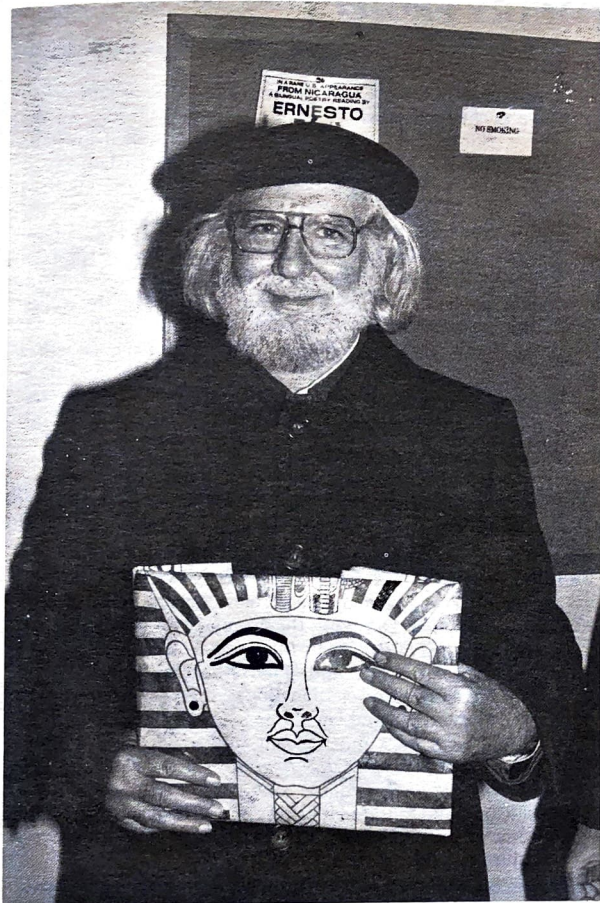


Photo by Ira Cohen

Father Ernesto Cardenal, Minister of Culture of the Nicaraguan government and world renowned poet, was the guest of honor at a reception held at the Parish Hall on November 30th. The reception preceded a bilingual reading he gave later that evening at Cooper Union's Great Hall, organized by the Committee for International Poetry.

Talent Collaborators Kicks Off NYC's Networking Service

Talent Collaborators, OUT THERE PRODUCTIONS, INC.'s newest subdivision, will begin its massive data basing project. All writers are invited to send a 3x5 postcard outlining: Name, Address, Date of Birth, Genre they work in, and Genres they are interested in working in. Top-notch samples of work will be requested at a later date.

Our intention is to provide a low cost writers' networking service. Talent Collaborators will connect business organizations who need writing assignments completed with writers qualified for the job. We will also provide "matchmaking"; any individual can come to us to find a collaborator for any assignment or project.

Special events will occur monthly. Send 3x5 postcards with information to: OUT THERE PRODUCTIONS, INC., 156 West 27th Street, 5W, NYC, N.Y. 10001. If you have questions or need more information call service number 244-4300, and ask for Rose Lesniak.

THE FICTION COLLECTIVE & GUEST EDITOR

present

an evening of readings to celebrate the publication of the 1983-84 Fiction Collective series and the premiere issue of Guest Editor.

Featured Readers:

Steve Katz
James Baker Hall
Fanny Howe
Norman Lavers
Mark Leyner
Lewis Warsh

Monday, January 9

2 Columbus Circle (59th Street between Broadway & 8th Avenue)

Reading: 7 - 9 p.m. Auditorium

Reception: 9 - 11 p.m. 9th floor

UNITED ARTISTS

United Artists Eighteen features a chapter from *In County Wexford*, a collaborative novel by James Schuyler and Helena Hughes, "Excerpts From Journals" by Donna Dennis, "Two or Three Things" by Clark Coolidge, and new work by John Godfrey, Ron Padgett, Lewis Warsh, Bernadette Mayer, Maureen Owen, Ann Rower, Charles North and Anne Waldman. Cover by Rosemary Mayer. \$3.00.

Edited by Bernadette Mayer and Lewis Warsh
172 E. 4th St., New York, N.Y. 10009



Readings at the EAR INN, 326 Spring Street, 2 PM, \$2.50

January 7 - Anne-Marie Levine & Jeffrey Hewitt

January 14 - Henry Korn & Lynne Tillman

January 21 - Cynthia Kraman Genser & Laura Chester

January 28 - Maurice Kenny & David Lanham

READINGS FROM THE POETRY PROJECT continues on WBAI-FM Fridays at 8:30 pm, a selection of recent and past readings, engineered by John Fisk.

EVENTS AT THE POETRY PROJECT

Monday Night Reading & Performance Series at 8 PM, hosted by Chris Kraus & Marc Nasdor, suggested contribution \$2:

January 2 - Open Reading

January 9 - Ursule Molinaro & Beatrice Roth

Ursule Molinaro is the author of *Encores for a Dilettante* (Fiction Collective/Braziller), *Bastards: Footnotes to History* (Treach Press), *Breakfast Past Noon* (Random House), and many other stories and plays. Her stories have appeared recently in *Benzene*, *Top Stories*, and *New Directions*. She has translated Hermann Hesse, Nathalie Sarraute, Christa Wolf, and subtitled films by Jean-Luc Godard.

Beatrice Roth will perform "Seventeen", a theater piece which "combines-with-extraordinary-beauty-the provocative reveries of Proustian memory and the commanding voice of a Beckett monologue. She carries this with the complete emotional presence of the Stanislavski performer, which here, freed of the conventions of realism and using autobiography, earns a new respect." - Charles Frederick, *The Villager*.

January 16 - Jeff Wright & Lindzee Smith

Jeff Wright's most recent book is *Take Over* (Toothpaste Press). He is also the author of *Transluc, Charges, Two: Poems & Drawings* (with Yvonne Jacquette), and *Employment of the Apes*. "Wright's talent appears bright...as well as attractive in the categories of feeling, inspiration and temperament." - Dennis Cooper. "...imagination assaulted by verbal and photographic graffiti" - Gary Lenhart, *Poetry Project Newsletter*.

Lindzee Smith will present "Daddy Wolf", by New York novelist, poet and playwright James Purdy, from his collection *Children is All*, as interpreted by the Tasmanian devil now residing in New York, a denizen of Alphabet City, where his master of arts and various other university degrees undoubtedly come in handy. Smith is a theater director, screenwriter, filmmaker and actor whose work has been seen in New York, Japan, Europe and Australia. James Purdy will be present at this performance.

January 23 - SUNSET CHORUS & Phillip Johnston and R. Nemo Hill

The SUNSET CHORUS is comprised of Susie Timmons, Ique Mori, and Cinnie Cole. The band is new, though its members have contributed greatly to the downtown music scene in the past as members of various other bands. SUNSET CHORUS writes a new set for every performance. Their songs include "Port Authority", "The Troubled Swamp", and "Zippy and Pokey".

Phillip Johnston (saxophone) is best known as the leader of the Microscopic Septet ("appealing, idiosyncratic original swing compositions" - *Record*), though he's also composed for other instruments and players. He recently wrote music for the Lynne Tillman film, "Committed."

R. Nemo Hill is a poet who has often worked in collaboration with musicians. He has performed at various New York venues, including The Public Theatre. "Mr. Hill sat rather grubbily at a little table and read short, powerfully evocative phrases in a clear, insistent way." - N. Y. Times

January 30 - Nina Zivancevic & Otrabanda Company (Louise Smith and Roger Babb)

Nina Zivancevic was born in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in 1957. She is largely responsible for the translations of major American contemporary writers into Serbo-Croatian. She has been published in magazines in Europe and the United States, and has given readings in Italy, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, and throughout the United States. Her first

book of poetry, *Awakened Acrobat*, was published in Yugoslavia in 1982.

Otrabanda Company was formed in Curacao in 1971. They have performed in Malaysia, Europe, and throughout the United States. For ten summers they have travelled down the Mississippi River by raft giving shows. In the past, many of their performances have been influenced by the kinds of scientific theories that generally make their way into the headlines (cloning, DNA). "Glass", an original play about science, was the first of its kind to be funded by the National Science Foundation (1981). For the Poetry Project, Otrabanda will perform two short works: "Package" by Roger Babb, and "Small White House", by Louise Smith.

Roger Babb, a founding member of the company, has worked with Liz Swados, Ray Barry, Ping Chong, and most recently with Joseph Chaikin. Louise Smith joined Otrabanda in 1977. She also works with Ping Chong's Fiji Company.

Wednesday Night Reading Series at 8 PM, hosted by Bernadette Mayer & Bob Holman, suggested contribution \$3:

January 4 - Barbara Barg & Jackson MacLow

Barbara Barg is a poet and performer, the cofounder of Jews For A Permanent Diaspora, the drummer for No Shame, the author of *Fucking Bench*, forthcoming from Hard Press, the cofounder, tri-owner, and quadra-harried participant in Skeezo Press and Power Mad Books. She has performed in Rome, Amsterdam and NYC.

Jackson MacLow's most recent published book is *From Pearl Harbor Day to FDR's Birthday* (Sun & Moon, 1982); *20 French Sonnets* will be out soon from Black Mesa (Madison), and Station Hill Press is readying a book of work written between February '82 and September '83, tentatively titled *Bloomsday*. Earlier this year he did a reading/performance tour with Ann Tardos in Europe. He will be reading recent poems and prose pieces at the Church.

January 11 - Fay Chiang & Charlie Morrow

Fay Chiang is a writer and visual artist living in New York's Lower East Side. Since 1971, she has worked with other Asian artists at the Basement Workshop, a cultural arts organization with programs in literature, visual and performance arts. Her books, available from Sunbury Press, are *In the City of Contradictions* and *Miwa's Song*. She is currently working on *Laundry Man* commissioned by the New York Chinatown History Project, a children's book, and rehearsing *Trilogy*, an adaptation of her poetry with performer Mary Lum.

Charlie Morrow: political and healing-oriented musician/sound poet/event maker (*Toot'n Blink*, Wave Music, 40 Cellos)/founder with Jerome Rothenberg of New Wilderness Foundation (*Ear Magazine*, International Radio Solstice)/jingle writer ("Train to the Plane"). Will perform TELEPHONE DUETS via telephone interface: Morrow dial-ogs long distance with conspirators and political institutions, using two loud speakers to separate the issues.

January 18 - Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America

With Jayne Cortez, Sarah Miles, Honor Moore, Quincy Troupe, Zoe Anglesey, Tuli Kupferberg, Anne Waldman, Steve Cannon, Pedro Pietri, Suzanne Zavrian, Thulani Davis, Tom Savage, Akua Lezli Hope, Patricia Jones, Bernadette Mayer, Kimiko Hahn, Jackson MacLow, Hannah Weiner, Brenda Connor-Bey, Ceclia Vicuna, Angel Leiva, Bob Holman, Nelson Ortega, Ivan Silen, John Godfrey, Miguel Algarin and many others. Watch for other Artists Call events taking place throughout the city during this week.

January 25 - Jim Brodey & Tom Veitch

Jim Brodey is a native New Yorker, born in the same hospital at the same time as Ted Greenwald. He began writing poems at age 11, and was first published, in the *New Yorker*, at 14. His first reading was in 1974 with Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch and his first books (two) were published in 1967, the same year he helped found the *East Village Other*. Since then he has published 12 books of poetry, the latest being *Judyism*.

Tom Veitch is the author of *Death College & Other Poems* and two novels: *The Luis Armed Story* and *Eat This*. He also wrote *Antlers in the Treetops* with Ron Padgett. He has published an autobiography, *Visions of a Poet*, and a book of philosophical essays, *Eye of Gold*, both in limited editions. For the past four years he has been working on a long fantasy novel, *The First Man and the Last Man*. He hopes to finish it in 1984. Tom currently lives in Bennington, Vermont and makes his living working for *Hemmings Motor News*, the bible of the antique auto world.

WORKSHOPS:

The Writing Workshop with **Jack Collom** continues, Friday nights at 8 PM. **Diane Burns's** Writing Workshop continues to meet Saturday at 2 PM, in the Parish Hall.

The Translation Workshop continues, with Classical Greek taught by poet **Vincent Katz**, Saturdays at noon, and German taught by poet **Danny Krakauer**, beginning January 31st.

LECTURE: On Tuesday, January 10th, the poet and translator **Lewis Hyde** will discuss his much-praised book, *The Gift*, an inquiry into the place of creativity in our market-oriented society. The lecture will begin at 9 PM in the Parish Hall. Suggested contribution \$3.

The Poetry Project's **COMMUNITY MEETING** will take place on Saturday, January 14th, noon to 3 PM. If you have suggestions of topics to discuss please send them to the Project office before the meeting. The election of a new community member of the Advisory Board will also take place during this meeting. Please submit self-nominations to the Project office by Friday, January 6th.

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

St. Mark's Church
10th St. & 2nd Ave.
NYC, NY 10003
212-674-0910

The Poetry Project Newsletter is published monthly Oct. - May. Subscriptions are \$7 a year. Advertisers please write for rate sheets. Deadline for the February issue is January 2nd, deadline for the March issue is February 1st.

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MAGAZINES RECEIVED

The Paris Review 89, 45-39 171 Place, Flushing, N.Y. 11358, \$5 (Brownstein, Laughlin, Sarton)

Conjunctions 4, 33 W 9th St., NYC, N.Y. 10011, \$16/2 issues (Duncan, Ashbery, Rakosi, Davenport, McClure, Bunuel)

Hanging Loose 44, 231 Wyckoff St., Bklyn, N.Y. 11217, \$2 (Miles, Violi, Yourgrau)

Main Street, 915½ Welch, Houston, TX 77006 (Lorenzo Thomas, Carla Fisch, Purvis Anderson)

Abatis One, Fred Chappell issue, Duane Locke, Abatis, Univ. of Tampa, Tampa, FL 33606, \$5

The Pikestaff Forum 5, P.O. Box 127, Normal, Illinois 61761, \$10/6 issues

The Chicago Poetry Letter News, Nov. 83, no. 12, 6527 N. Bosworth, Chicago, IL 60626, \$5/year

Teachers & Writers, Vol 15, no. 1, 84 Fifth Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10011, \$12.50/5 issues, \$22.50/10 issues, \$31/15

The Pearl, Tropos Press, Inc., 3044 Abell Ave, Baltimore, MD 21218, \$5

Mondo Hunkamooga, Proper Tales, Toronto Ontario M4Y 2N7, \$.50

Beatniks From Space, The Neither/Nor Press, Box 8043, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107, \$7/4 issues

United Artists Eighteen, 172 E. 4th St., NYC, N.Y. 10009, \$3

BOOKS RECEIVED

From The Crossing Press, Trumansburg, N.Y. 14886: **Three Russian Women Poets**, Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetayeva, Bella Akhmadulina, translated by Mary Maddock, \$6.95 paper, \$15.95 cloth; **The Son of the Male Muse**, New Gay Poetry, edited by Ian Young, \$7.95 paper, \$15.95 cloth

From Hanging Loose Press, 231 Wyckoff St., Bklyn., N.Y. 11217: **Population**, George Mosby, Jr., \$5.00; **Duration**, Jan Clausen, \$5.00; **The Glass Woman**, Patricia Traxler, \$5.00

From Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 84 Fifth Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10011: **How To Make Poetry Comics**, Dave Morice, \$4; **The Point: Where Teaching & Writing Intersect**, edited by Nancy Larson Shapiro & Ron Padgett, \$6

From Proper Tales Press, P.O. Box 789, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N7: **Shadows of Seclusion**, Randall Brock; **Father, The Cowboys Are Coming Down From The Attic**, novel by Stuart Ross, \$3; **Crunch**, Lillian Necakov, \$2

From Black Sparrow Press, P.O. Box 3993, Santa Barbara, CA 93130: **Under Words**, Robert Kelly, \$10 paper, \$25 cloth; **Hot Water Music**, Charles Bukowski, \$8.50 paper, \$14 hardcover

From Top Stories, 228 Seventh Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10011: **The Human Heart**, Romaine Perin; **Forget About Your Father & other stories**, Donna Wyzomierski; 5 issues \$11, 10 issues \$20

From AWEDE Press, Box 376, Windsor, VT 05089: **Resistance**, Charles Bernstein, \$6; **As Seen I Words, Sixteen**, Hannah Weiner, \$5; **Converses**, James Sherry, \$4

From Random House, 201 E. Fifth Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10022: **Narrative Poems** by Alexander Pushkin and by Mikhail Lermontov, translated by Charles Johnston, \$5.95 paper, \$12.95 cloth; **Parts of a World: Wallace Stevens Remembered**, an oral biography by Peter Brazeau, \$19.95

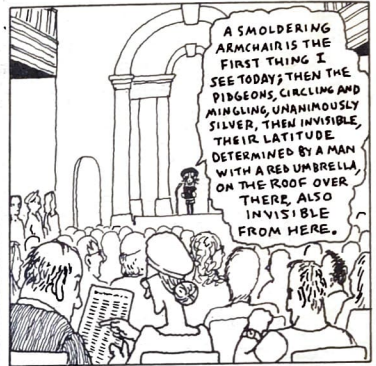
The Selected Poems of Shuntaro Tanikawa, North Point Press, 850 Talbot Ave., Berkeley, CA 94706, \$12.50

The Public & Play Without a Title, two plays by Federico Garcia Lorca, translated by Carlos Bauer, New Directions, 80 Eighth Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10011, \$5.25 & \$12.50

The Heart of Philosophy, Dr. Jacob Needleman, Bantam Books, 666 5th Ave., NYC, N.Y. 10103, \$3.95

Poemes 1 & La Chute des Temps, Bernard Noel, textes/flammarion, France

Down Below, Leonora Carrington, Black Swan Press, Surrealist Editions, 1726 Jarus, Chicago, IL 60626



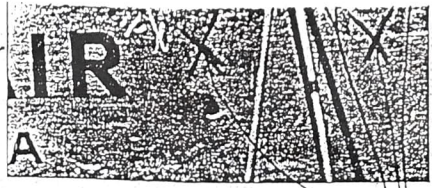
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DEVELOP THE DRAFT

REVIVE THE COLD WAR



JANUARY * JANUARY * JANUARY 1984
WEDNESDAYS 8 PM \$3 contribution

- 4 - BARBARA BARG/JACKSON MACLOW
- 11 - FAY CHIANG/CHARLIE MORROW
- 18 - GROUP READING: ARTISTS CALL AGAINST U.S. INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA
- 25 - JIM BRODEY/TOM VEITCH

MONDAYS 8 PM \$2 contribution

- 2 - OPEN READING
- 9 - URSULE MOLINARO/BEATRICE ROTH
- 16 - JEFF WRIGHT/LINDZEE SMITH
- 23 - SUNSET CHORUS/R. NEMO HILL & PHILLIP JOHNSON
- 30 - NINA ŽIVANČEVIĆ/OTRABANDA CO.

WORKSHOPS: IN TRANSLATION: GERMAN with DANNY KRÄMER, TUESDAYS 7:30 PM beginning JANUARY 31; CLASSICAL GREEK with VINCENT KATZ, SATURDAYS NOON. IN POETRY: JACK COLLOM ON FRIDAYS 8PM; DIANE BURNS SATURDAYS AT 2PM. FREE.

LECTURE: LEWIS HYDE, author of THE GIFT, JANUARY 10, 9PM, \$3 contribution.

POETRY PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD COMMUNITY ELECTION SATURDAY JANUARY 14, 11AM - 2PM. ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING AT NOON. PARISH HALL.

"READINGS FROM THE POETRY PROJECT," FRIDAYS AT 8:30PM ON WBAI-FM, 99.5.

SUNDAY JANUARY 1 1984, 7PM TILL 7 ANNUAL MARATHON NEW YEAR'S BENEFIT ONE HUNDRED FIFTY POETS/PERFORMERS

The Poetry Project receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Walter Reuther Foundation for Poetry Inc., The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and its Arts Administrative Program, the New York Council for the Humanities, The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, the Aldrich Foundation, the Foundation for Contemporary Performance and the Guildford Foundation, and from many generous individual & members.

AF 102