

# THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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75¢

Free at The Poetry Project



**MAKEUP ON EMPTY SPACE** by Anne Waldman  
(Toothpaste Press, Box 546, West Branch, Iowa 52358,  
\$8.50)

*Makeup On Empty Space*, by Anne Waldman, is a stunning book with a daiquiri pink cover with Susan Hall's drawing of a red fingernailed hand holding a mirror with no reflection against clouds, birds and westerly winds. Hers is the high musique, inspired inside her improvised house. It's been taken for granted that Anne Waldman is a brilliant performance poet—"my phrases advance/gaining in movement/what I lose in success"—"Performance". Her "live" line has evolved exhilarating, complex rhythms, which show up on these pages as denser poems. The content is wrapped up in the talking, fiercely or gently: someone building a corral, a little "A" frame where the green of everything comes to life.

Anne Waldman is one of the most serious poets playing to these times. This selection of 24 poems, written 1976-1980, pursues love, sanity, force anti-nuclear, and language's richness, "Vestigial", "Devonian", "Dream 'Wolverine' comes before 'Woman' in the dictionary." When she's not instructing ("Try inversions and turn your syntax/upside down, be bold and whip those/verbs into new places while you cut/the unnecessary — don't court excess."—"To A Young Poet"), she's talking straight from the heart ("For

as from me on her her hurt did sit/So I felt still in me her hurt hurt" —"Two Hearts"), then fools you and talks smart, knows her Yeats and Dante ("Dialogue Between the Self and the Soul").

Waldman is looking to build the poem proper, with a sense of dignity and decorum that is not a throw-back to the past. The forms she uses, and creates ("Incantation") never get slack; form is an apparatus which focuses her all-inclusive vision of poetry's supreme task, "task to set the thoughts unassailably down". Here she says it all more clearly than ever before. The propulsion of the words is her unmistakable signature. There is a democratic egotism that shows up in the diverse "I's, that break the "I" before the act breaks her. In poems like "Matriarchy", "After Sappho", "After Li Ch'ing-chao", and "Two Hearts (After Sir Philip Sidney)", Waldman is tracing the poetic lineages she recognizes and makes her own. In the title poem, "Makeup On Empty Space", she uses the shamanic list poem again, and goes further, expressing her absolute commitment to inscribing the beautiful universe:

I bind the stars reflected in your eye  
from nothing to these typing fingers  
from nothing to the legs of the elk  
from nothing to the neck of the deer  
from nothing to porcelain teeth  
from nothing to the fine stand of pine in the forest

—Jim Cohn

## BACK IN BOSTON AGAIN

Notes on The Fairfield Porter Retrospective 2/26/83



Fairfield Porter, *Interior with a Dress Pattern*, 1969, Mr. & Mrs. Austin List collection

On my way out this morning I'm stopped by my sleepy wife.

"What's happening?" she mutters.

"I'm going to Boston."

"You were supposed to wake me before you left."

"You're awake. I thought I'd let you sleep."

"You're going to Boston?"

"This minute."

"You don't *look* like you're going to *Boston*."

"What do you mean?"

"You have on just *regular* clothes...no clothes for the *airplane*."

"Go back to sleep, sweetie. See you tonight around nine."

I don't feel as if I'm going to Boston, particularly. I'm going to the Boston Museum, to see Fairfield's show, particularly. In a sense, to see Fairfield.

Waiting for the subway, I consider writing about this trip. What would I call it, and what does a title do to what follows it? A previous title comes back: *Back in Boston Again*, published fifteen or so years ago. Suddenly my perspective becomes elongated, autobiographical, and self-conscious, the trip turning into an art work before the subway has even come!

Art is wonderful. Fairfield's show will demonstrate that. The idea of turning my being into an art work itself, however, makes me shudder. So I won't let it happen. I don't think Fairfield would let me: he follows me like a conscience.

The face of the stewardess is hauntingly familiar. Could it be the same face that for the past several months has said, in a television commercial for this airline, "I have a degree in Art History, a Ph D in Archeology, I was a translator for the French Diplomatic Mission"? It turns out yes. Her name is Linda.

We land. In the subway (in Boston it's called "the T") at Logan Airport the first thing I see is a sign that says: "To Porter Street" with an arrow pointing in the direction my train will be headed.

Looking at the faces of the young men on the train, I think of the Boston Celtics, and how many Irishmen there must be in this city, some of them ruddy working-class guys who go for a few beers after work (Boston), some of them pale and serious, like intellectual seminarians (Cambridge).

The T is confusing at first, with the subway mysteriously becoming a trolley, but soon the museum looms up on the right, and right there in big white letters dropped out of a pink background a huge banner says, "Fairfield Porter."

The first painting my eyes really see is of the old four-poster with the horsehair mattress I slept on the year house-sitting at Fairfield's (1969-1970), and my eyes get that stinging pleasure behind them that is then suffused around them and forms two huge tears that don't flow. Agh, I feel so proud of Fairfield! How strange of me to do so!

The sky in the trees.

First *delicious* painting: "Trumpet Vines," 1958.

Larry Rivers with — no, those aren't sweat bands — banded wrists.

A blue and white china teacup.

"Bob Carey and Andy Warhol," 1960. How did Fairfield know Andy Warhol? I can't think of two more dissimilar people.

"Lizzie at the Table," 1958: on the table a book with an illegible title. It is Wallace Stevens' *Opus Posthumous*.

A funny early American portrait: "Elizabeth Thinking," 1963.

Interior. Landscape. Portrait. Still life. Connected each to each.

The strange power of what we inherit: it's you, but it came *before* you. I'm thinking of Fairfield's house on Great Spruce Head Island ("Interior with a Dress Pattern", 1969). His father's presence in the house — didn't he design it? — in Fairfield, in the painting, and in the viewer (you and me).

Fairfield's bravery in facing artistic problems resulted sometimes in solutions that were not complete: I almost laugh out loud at "July Interior," 1964, which after all is a pretty terrific picture anyway. (A man just walked up, looked at it, and laughed.) It's partly the blank look on Anne's face, set against all that pink, and the large tome beside her in bed. *Being and Nothingness*? What could have put that nowhere look on her face, in a room the color of bubble gum? It's as if her interior decorator has just sprung a terrible surprise on her.



Fairfield Porter, *Lizzie at the Table*, 1958, Arthur M. Bullowa collection

People don't laugh or even smile in Fairfield's paintings. (OK, maybe Jane Freilecher is smiling a little in "Jane and Elizabeth," 1967.) On the contrary, it's Lizzie's unflinching stare, Anne's implacable evenness, Jimmy's stolid absorption in a book, Jerry's unhappy and perhaps even resentful face, Katie's even look, and Fairfield's clear, straightforward, unembarrassed *looking at you*.

I think that at friends' exhibitions I am unconsciously afraid that some visitor will say something nasty about the work. I'm afraid I'll have to say something back to them, something rude perhaps, or do worse, like pop them one. Two middle-aged men — art teachers? — breezing through the show: "A good middle-class statement." Statement?! And how off the mark to see this work in relation to class! (Even though class does have something to do with it — as it does with most everything — the gorgeous "Privet Hedge", 1975, could be a *New Yorker* cover.)

Most of the visitors — quite a few of them with families in tow — openly admire the work. They like the attractive colors, the comfortable settings, the unobtrusive compositions, the domesticity, the comprehensibility of it all: a modern Vuillard. I'm not sure they see the *rigor* of the work, which is in the paint, not in the subject matter.

Does Park Avenue South ("Near Union Square — Looking up Park Avenue," 1975) really lean that much to the left? And did Fairfield mean anything by leaving legible certain words, explaining the "less is more" of the rest of the picture, such as the half-finished (speeding?) car in the lower right-hand corner?

"The Windows," 1968. What a gorgeous little painting! Surely no allusion to Apollinaire's poem. This painting needs nothing.

America — when it had elms.

Sandwich and tea, then back upstairs for another go-through.

As I look at the paintings, my mind wanders between non-activity — just the eyes seeing and looking — and various flickering trains of ideas and memories, particular moments with Fairfield, particular paintings by others, moments driving his red VW around Southampton, or talking with his insurance agent, Maurice B. Cunningham, or the way the forsythia figures so beautifully in Jimmy's poems, or the couch with the flowery print Fairfield sat so many people on to do their portraits.

How Fairfield would say to his big Golden Retriever, "That's all, Bruno," in such a flat, firm, and final way that even the playful young dog would leave off begging for table scraps and go lie down. How I now say to my dog, in the same tone, "That's all, Susie," and she immediately leaves off her begging.

How Jimmy Schuyler and I put the pilot of the Great Spruce Head mail boat, Jimmy Quinn, in our poem as "Captain" Jimmy Quinn.

How Fairfield cleaned his plate with a piece of bread at the end of every meal, sopping up the last bit of gravy. How I felt embarrassed at leaving scraps on my plate, but was reassured by Anne's leaving some on hers too.

How Fairfield had given serious consideration late in his life to giving up painting so he could devote himself to getting rid of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. How I should read what he wrote on the subject.

How abruptly he left the room: he just got up and took huge strides straight out the door. How, on the phone, he rarely said anything but what was necessary.

"Hello, Fairfield?"

"Yes."

"This is Ron Padgett."

"...."

"Uh, how are you?"

"I'm fine."

"You mentioned something about coming to dinner with us, remember?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'd love to have you."

"...."

"Are you going to be in town soon?"

"Yes."

"How about giving us a call then?"

"OK."

"Well, nice talking to you. Give our love to Anne and Lizzie."

"I will."

"Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

Some weeks later the phone rang about 5:30.

"Hello."

"This is Fairfield. I'm coming to dinner tonight."

"Tonight? Er, great! Around 6:30?"

"Fine."

"See you then!"

"Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

How much he liked to talk in person.

How surprised I was to learn that he was a Midwesterner. I had assumed he was a New Englander, so stoical, so fundamental, so early American — there was no radio or television in his house, and he used coal stoves in his kitchen and studio.

How under the tranquil surface there was also unhappiness and illness in the family.

How he said that only Chicagoans pronounced it "Chicog-o," not "Chi-cah-go" the way others did. How espionage agents knew things like that, the tricks of the trade.

Tricks of the trade: Fairfield's painstaking mixing his own colors, experimenting with various oil mediums, and writing once to Joe Brainard to ask how he got a very particular purple in one of his paintings. Joe was too embarrassed to reply with the truth: Grumbacher, straight from the tube.

How I was in awe of him, and how I had to force myself not to be.

How lucky I was to have known him and Edwin.

Fifteen minutes before closing time I go downstairs to see the Realist Painting show that is supposed to complement his show, and it does. Interiors, landscapes, figures, and still lifes by Diebenkorn, Dash, Katz, Freilicher, Elaine de Kooning (a portrait of Fairfield), a stunning early John Button (a Mexican street viewed from behind two women in a doorway looking out, like us, toward another woman walking along the sidewalk across the street, her head turned away from us — suddenly we see the red tip of a cigarette in the hand of one of the women near us), Willem de Kooning — the lines in it like those in the little de Kooning that hung in the Porters' parlor, which reminds me of the time (1970) de Kooning came by Fairfield's with Clarice Rivers and Joe LeSueur and suddenly at the table ("Dinner Table," 1965) there were all these animated people being so terrific that de Kooning could sit back and get lost and enjoy himself because he wasn't being lionized, and all the time I was thinking, "Jesus, Bill de Kooning!" (and later Joe Brainard saved de Kooning's cigarette butts and used them in a collage) — and then a lovely little show-within-a-show by Albert York, whose work Fairfield sent me to see at the Davis and Long Gallery: thoughts of Giorgio Morandi, Henri Rousseau, George Catlin. Thoughts of John Button's heart attack. In the paper today: Tennessee Williams dies of heart attack. The line from Williams to Ruth Ford to Kenward to Joe to Fairfield. Fairfield's heart attack. Getting the news outside the Chester, South Carolina post office in a letter from Joan Fagin: "I have some bad news. Fairfield died." How I couldn't tell Patty at first, how I drove around town until we found a nice park to have our picnic in, and then told her, among those enormous southern pines.

In the museum gift shop I'm startled to see Fairfield's work turned into gift items: Fairfield Porter notepads and Fairfield Porter recipe files so misguided they're funny. I buy the exhibition catalogue.

Closing time. Thank you, Boston Museum. You are as nice as I remembered you.

Outside, very crisp, clear, afternoon air. Straight ahead, on a huge pedestal, an Indian astride his pony, arms opened out, palms up, head tilted back to face the sky. It is the bronze statue that stood inside the main entrance of my high school in Tulsa, and in fact was the school symbol, The Great Spirit, whom we honored in our lamentable school song:

"O Great Spirit at thy call  
We have pledged our youth,  
Ever climbing one and all,  
Seek eternal truth.

"With thy standard at our side,  
Bound by purpose high,  
O Great Spirit be our guide  
Where the path may lie."

And it went on.

—Ron Padgett

A smaller version of the Fairfield Porter retrospective will travel to the Whitney Museum for an 11-week showing, June 1 - August 19. The Whitney Museum in Fairfield County will be showing Fairfield Porter Portraits, June 8 — August 22.



Balthus, *Thérèse*, 1938, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mrs. Allan D. Emil collection

## BALTHUS

At present through May 13th the Metropolitan Museum of Art enjoys a Balthus retrospective which is smaller here, in New York, than when it opened at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, last November. This is the first extensive showing of the artist's work in the United States.

Walking into the exhibit rooms, I was immediately struck by the power of the paintings to evoke; partly a result of weird composition, partly a resonance of my own adolescence: a smell, a perfume wafted from the past. Balthus creates a world to step back into wherein Alice experiences abrupt changes in height. It is timeless; the few years informed by female pubescence and its insular quality is not unlike the atmosphere of a nineteenth century novel. Here, there is self absorption which only reaches outward the better to define its own space, as does the central female figure in "The Mountain", or the languid stretching of limbs in both "The Golden Days" and in "The Victim". During these years everything is always magically shifting between illusion, dream and reality, or so it seemed. There is a search for self-wisdom, a mirror-like wisdom as sought in "The Turkish Room" or "The Golden Days". The Virgin of Spring is instinctively seductive and can display the eroticism of Thérèse Blanchard in "Girl with a Cat", one sock pulled up, the other wrinkled down around her ankle. The controlled interior orders the room and seems to keep everything in check. Can the spell of innocence still retain a hold?

Balthus is a master of anatomy: the inside of legs and arms in "The Living Room", the legs of Madame de Noailles in her portrait. There is a confrontation between the volume given to these bodies and an explicit, utter flatness often found in his surfaces: the top of the table in "The Turkish Room", the one dimension of the patterned material placed up against the greater depth in the tile work of floor and walls and the roundness of the girl's body. This impressionist touch shifts our sense of time and reality. In "The Week with Four 'Thursdays'" the figure by the window has a fullness to her body, but a cut-out flatness in her shoulders and head so that half of her being appears to be outside a shut window. The solidity of phenomena is questioned. Balthus leans on this quality of timelessness by borrowing figures from classic masters: the female figure in black walking away from us is the woman in white in Piero della Francesca's "Flagellation"; the carpenter in white walking across the painting in "The Street" is the carpenter from della Francesca's "The Invention and Recognition of the True Cross". Balthus' figures are still, stylised and frozen in a moment; a moment in which Katia in "Katia Reading" is not reading at all.

Balthus is an accomplished draughtsman, composing his paintings exactly, be it the "Nude in Front of the Mantel" or a landscape. The "Larchant" landscape has the purity of line of a dissection, whilst the lines in "The Week with Four 'Thursdays'" are architectonic. In "Vernetel (landscape with oxen)" the eye is drawn into the cluster of houses in the valley and simultaneously sliced by the horizontal movement of the oxen dragging wood across the foreground of the painting. This wicked humor again pops up in "The Cherry Tree". The rippling seduction is a perfect balance to the stiffness inherent in the draughtsmanship. It is naughty.

In his painting of Thérèse there is the erotic; in his pen and ink illustrations of *Wuthering Heights* there is a feeling of barely contained passion, animated, electric and frantic. The range of Balthus' palette, whilst often somber, muted and even murky, also produces the beautiful blend of colors in "The Turkish Room". They appear both bleached or overexposed to sunlight, and cool, a combination which seems so marvelous. The texture of patterned cloth against the design of the tiles is sensual, as are the legs of the model and those of both tables.

Several painters have pointed out that there is a naivete in much of Balthus' brush work: areas in the painting quickly passed over and the result is unsatisfactory. This suggests that Balthus does not feel out his painting, that he does not spontaneously or instinctively delight in the paint but rather composes his paintings too geometrically, too carefully. The rigidity in his composition lends support to this but what of the freedom of beauty of his drawings and sketches?

The often startling nature of the paintings' contents results in there being a great deal of personal taste brought to bear in consideration of Balthus' work. I find him sexy, erotic and naughty in a controlled way which promises a delightful wildness. It is the exquisite gauge of tension in his work which makes them elude moral rectitude.

—Helena Hughes

## LETHE

after H.D.

Nor child painted sick  
Nor other rocking motion  
Nor lover's anger in pretty room  
Nor woman's lonely station  
Nor cold winter  
Maturest fears —  
button up! button up!  
Nor New York City toys  
Nor Edwin Denby to disagree  
Nor wealth, fame, mother  
to blanket me  
Never kisses penetrate  
the grieving marrow  
"You sleep through the night  
but for this":  
sweet widow pills  
tiny hexagonal portals  
to oblivion

—Anne Waldman

### NOTES ON THOUGHT AND VISION by H.D. (City Lights Books, 261 Columbus Ave., S.F., CA 94133)

Present in these pages is human presence and mind, after the breaking point. Shattered by abandonment, death and spiritual trauma, H.D. sought to reconcile her participation with the larger world by reuniting herself with her power — studying what she already knew from mythology and mysticism, and redefining the transcendent connections she'd perceived.

*Notes on Thought and Vision* is H.D.'s map of consciousness, rendered in seemingly incisive aphorisms, but the vicissitudes of her personal life account for this attempt to steady the world. She approaches what she felt was the purest information in her experience with delicacy, lucidity and restraint.

"They were eternal, changeless ideas that he had grown aware of, dramas already conceived that he had watched; memory is the mother, begetter of all drama, idea, music, science or song."

She worked out her map like a mathematical equation, using vision as a property of function: if it could exist, then there was a corresponding domain within herself that contained images from it. Body, mind and overmind were what she termed these states of consciousness, likening overmind to "jelly-fish consciousness", a state of limbo and clarity, where thoughts swam, transparent and inspired. Overmind was the entrance and connecting point by which one could attain enlightenment.

"Two or three people, with healthy bodies and the right sort of receiving brains, could turn the whole tide of human thought, could direct lightning flashes of electric power to slash across and destroy the world of dead, murky thought."

Ancient stories weave through this personal vision, abbreviated and sustained by an inspired imagery that pushes beyond language, warns against spiritual neglect and blindness. These stories are an invitation to chance what seems questionable and dangerous, to trust the spirit, to accept life.

—Laurie Price



### More on New Fiction: REGARDING MISTAKES

Mistakes in writing as in speech reveal where our minds are beyond our intent. So, in allowing errors into the text — discard those that splinter or overinsist on attention — keep the ones that enhance it, yes, rewrite 'em in, always so they read as though they belong, and they will, if we work with care. A few people talking at once dissolve syntax and single-minded clarity into a confusion all too easy to understand or misunderstand yet fascinating to hear, often in tone of voice, errors of any kind, speech alone will compel — and convey for sure — more than the mere told story.

The standard judgement regarding clear type has failed a written language from the outset, thus mistakes have the chance to change it, and as we admit and follow mistakes — always in context (almost always) — we become alert of a double awareness in the process, and discover how narrow we've been, in the space of so much raw, everyday, potential.

—Fielding Dawson

## NEWS FROM NOWHERE

(Ethie Stearns is a B.A. student in Poetics at Naropa Institute, Boulder, Colorado. Larry Fagin has taught at the Institute since 1977.)

**LARRY FAGIN:** ...There's the difficulty with the intimacy needed to sustain a small department — playing the daddy/brother role with students — dealing with a busy, distracted administration — trying to keep up a semblance of my own "life as a poet". For the past maybe ten years I've been thoroughly fraged — teaching, editing, studying, administrating, writing and the usual: signs of a life divided. I don't trust myself completely in any one phase. But then it's nice to get to know you and the others, and there's pleasure in studying, preparing for sessions and classes. And the excitement of seeing your work develop.

**ETHIE STEARNS:** What happens to students when they get here?

**LF:** You know. Some get mad because they're "threatened" — challenged to be serious, to stay awake. Some get happy because they *like* that.

**ES:** Like me. You fight with some of us.

**LF:** You're easy. Some of the others struggle and resent the effort. I try to help them let up, stop fighting, look out of their heads a little — overcome fear of reading, fear of failing.

**ES:** Fear of feeling.

**LF:** Too right. (Is this buddist or est?) If **LF** can follow any discipline consistently and thoroughly, say for even three weeks, maybe something nice is uncovered and the pleasures of studying set in.

**ES:** Is that what the struggle is about?

**LF:** Yeah, it's the argument against complacency, laid back "moods" and socially acceptable catatonia.

**ES:** The dramatic climate here helps keep us awake.

**LF:** Yes, the dumb beauty of the whole rocky mountain set, the sky as a movie. It's a big dose of peace. Nobody following you so paranoia seems absurd. On the other hand there's no *edge* on the street, few apparent surprises in public behavior — rather these bland waitpersons asking if you're "still working on that burrito?" and reminding you to "have a good one." So sometimes you get a yen for the old atlantic seaboard speed.

**ES:** Well, there's no pleasing you. In New York my neurotic behavior seemed reflected everywhere I turned. Out here there's room for it to dissipate, or at least an opportunity for me to recognize what I'm broadcasting.

**LF:** Why don't you describe maitri.

**ES:** It means "loving kindness." It's a practice of exaggerating specific psychological states by assuming certain meditative postures in five rooms. Each room is a different color and has a different shaped window. You stay in the blue room for an hour lying on your stomach with your arms stretched out. In the yellow room you lie spread-eagled on your back. In the white room you kneel with your elbows on the floor and your hands cupping your chin like a little kid watching TV. That's the "buddha room." All those states of mind come up while writing. Maitri is a way of knowing them and using them nicely.

But I wasn't attracted to Naropa by Buddhism, and still know little about it. What rubs off is this reminder to look and see what's really in front of me.

**LF:** Getting back to this location...

**ES:** The news here is that the mountains have reappeared after several days of low cloud cover. So I remember where I am.

**LF:** There they are. Big brown waves.

**ES:** Or towers. I miss Manhattan, too.

**LF:** "Glittering crowds and shimmering clouds in canyons of steel."

**ES:** In Drum Hadley's workshop we sat outside and watched the Flatirons until we got a line.

**LF:** How long can you look?

**ES:** At Bard and NYU the study was analytical and ended the experience of the poem. When you "figured it out" in class, the poem was finished. Here, there's the poem as an object of pleasure. And the experience continues.

**LF:** How do you "learn" to write?

**ES:** I don't know. Clark (Coolidge) assigned us each a word to look at until its sense was gone — then we put another word next to it. Then a sentence around that, then a paragraph — an acute inside-out feeling for composition.

**LF:** What do you remember about last summer's writing program?

**ES:** Hearing Allen G. read Creeley and Creeley read Olson and Creeley — the colloquiums with you, Anne, Michael B., DiPrima, Jack Collom, Allen, Creeley — human pinball. Creeley spoke about the flow of "outside and inside" information, what you like to call "the world and the head." That got to me. Later, in the winter, I found new (for me) particular sources like people talking (via Hadley), writing to opera (Coolidge), reconstituting my own notebooks (Bernadette), letters received, newspapers, a lot — and, through you, a harder look at what I've just written — at what's most alive there — and dropping what I think I *have* to say or what would sound smart or pretty — to write straight out what's heard and seen. And the finesses will come along, I guess, if I keep my ears on...What about this summer?

**LF:** Other than rubbing noses with the big cigars? A lot more variety: Ginsberg on vocalization and sketching from life; Baraka on the Negritude Movement; Waldman with shamanism and dharma; I'm going to do something about poems by children and maybe song writing; Whalen on Dr. Jonson; etc. No doubt there'll be some very wiggly public performances, including a Mailer-Burroughs dialog. Weekly student open readings, the colloquiums, the one-on-one interviews, receptions, high teas, wild parties. See below.

The Summer Writing Program at Naropa Institute will take place July 1-28, with a faculty of: Amiri Baraka, William Burroughs, Reed Bye, Jack Collom, Robert Creeley, Diane diPrima, Patricia Donegan, Susan Edwards, Larry Fagin, Allen Ginsberg, Drummond Hadley, Norman Mailer, Peter Orlovsky, Anne Waldman, and Philip Whalen. For more information write to: Naropa Institute, Summer Writing Program, 2130 Arapahoe, Boulder, Colorado 80302. Tel.(303)444-0202.

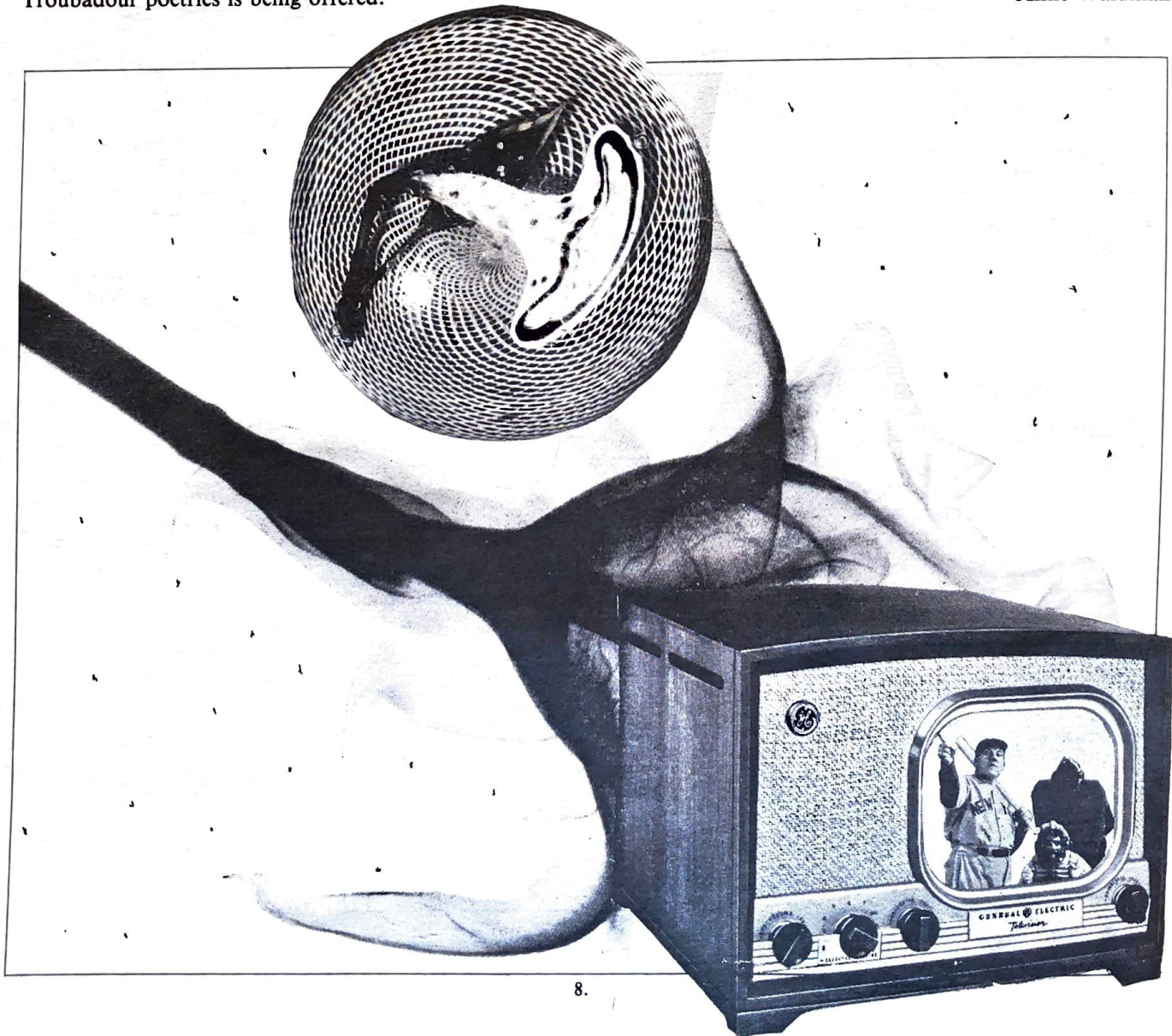
**THE NEW COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA:**  
"A ground of possible poetics"

The New College of California offers BA and MA accredited degrees in Poetics, with the stellar/scholar core faculty of Robert Duncan, Diane diPrima, Michael Palmer, David Meltzer, Duncan McNaughton and Louis Patler. Why "Poetics"? Duncan responds: "In the plural. Back of every poem as the starter, the germ, in a field of latencies in the language as the treasury of our commonality extending in time and space, a ground of possible poetics, awakening in the attentive mind apprehensions of a newly individualized world." I taught a Gertrude Stein intensive here several years ago to a group of people doing just that. I appreciated the comradery, discipline, transmission, amongst both faculty and students at the weekly "Meetings" where the range of awakenings included examination and discussion of texts by Dante, Keats, Walter Benjamin, Laura Riding, Cage, others. The recent 1984 curriculum includes readings of *Genesis* and a residency program on Shelley. Next fall a study of Troubadour poetics is being offered.

The College publishes a Journal of Poetics entitled *Convivio*, edited by the prodigious John Thorpe. The first issue has a wonderful interview with Joanne Kyger (conducted by Thorpe and Diane Middleton-McQuaid in Bolinas, California). When asked about her sense of "passage" or "passage of writing" Joanne replied: "Not getting stuck in a singular state of mind. Cruising is something which a poet has to do because she's always looking for a place for her audience, and cruising is water, which we're around. It goes through the lagoon and goes outside, here, and over, and cruising is a fish or modulum of movement. And cruising means a certain kind of speed (it doesn't mean cars), as long as it walks outside itself, it can walk or rollerskate or whatever."

In-residence teachers have been Michael McClure, Robin Blaser, Lee Harwood, Anselm Hollo, Bill Berkson, Kyger, Robert Grenier, Leslie Scalapino. Write, all would-be students, for the new 1984-85 catalogue and further information about this extraordinary practicing poetics program: New College Poetics Program, 777 Valencia St., S.F., CA 94110. *Convivio* costs \$7.

—Anne Waldman





## EVENTS AT THE POETRY PROJECT

### Monday Reading & Performance Series

at 8 PM, hosted by Chris Kraus & Marc Nasdor, suggested contribution \$2:

#### May 7 - Open Reading

#### May 14 - Robert Peters & Sal Salasin

Robert Peters is a prolific poet, critic and anthologist. He is the author of "The Picnic in the Snow: Ludwig of Bavaria", a hilarious historical verse drama, which he will perform at the Poetry Project. Peters lives in California and teaches poetry at UCLA.

Sal Salasin, "the bad boy of American poetry", has published work in *Telephone*, *The World*, *Hanging Loose*, *Abraxas*, and *Oink*. He "spews vile reactionary filth" and "is no longer under investigation by any government agency."

#### May 21 - Rochelle Kraut & Simon Pettet

Rochelle Kraut is the author of *Circus Baby* and *Art in America*. Her poems have appeared in *Longshot*, *The World*, *Telephone*, and *Okra*. She has written plays, made movies, and sings. She is a collaborator on the forthcoming Jacob Burckhardt film, "It Doesn't Pay to Be an Honest Citizen."

Simon Pettet, born in the U.K., now lives in NYC. He's the author of two books of poems, and most recently of *An Enigma and Other Lyrics*. He has also written a cultural history, *New York Book*, and an opera libretto, "Agamemnon." He is active with the Committee for International Poetry.

#### May 28 - Susan Kougell & James Ruggia

Susan Kougell, along with her group, Kelly Hinman, Susan McDonald, and Billy Sheffer will perform solo and solo and group poetry performance pieces. Kougell's work ranges from the "sung" poetic voice to dramatic reading.

James Ruggia lives in North Jersey, where he is director of Writers-in-the-Schools. His poems have been published in *Friction*, *The World*, *New Blood* and *Longshot*. He loves pirates.

#### June 4 - Julie Erlich & Lenora Champagne

Julie Erlich is a writer of prose, essays, short fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and is a diarist. Her work has appeared in some small magazines. She is currently working as a kind of journalist in and around New York City.

Lenora Champagne "works memories, dreams, actual artifacts of her past into the fabric of her pieces and the connections click; the resonances fly. She is a performer who can really write. Her life illuminates our lives, public and private." —Jim O'Quinn, *N.Y. Native*

### Wednesday Night Reading Series

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

#### May 2 - Tony Towle & Anne Waldman

Tony Towle is the author of *After Dinner We Take A Drive Into The Night*, *North*, *Lines For The New Year*, "Autobiography" and *Other Poems*, and now his selected poems recently published by the Kulchur Foundation.

Anne Waldman's most new most astonishing book is *Makeup On Empty Space* from Toothpaste Press; also an expanded edition of *First Baby Poems* has been published this year. She is working on a video version of her single, "Uh-Oh Plutonium!" and will be teaching at the Naropa Institute this summer.

#### May 9 - Ken Irby & Gerit Lansing

Ken Irby is the author of a dozen books of poetry, the newest being *A Set* from Tansy Press; his *Poems 1977-79* is in preparation. Among his many current projects is his editing, with a critical introduction, an edition of the poetry of the English prose writer Mary Butts.

Gerit Lansing's most recent work is "Analytic Psychology" or *The Soluable Forest Is Swimming Across*, published by the Institute of Further Studies.

#### May 16 - Kenneth Deifik & Kenneth King

Kenneth Deifik's first book has just been released from New Observations: *The Focus Puller*. Besides writing the music for several Kenward Elmslie compositions ("Bang Bang Tango" et al), he has also performed with such diverse artists as Laurie Anderson and Marty Robbins. A piece for harmonica was written for Mr. Deifik by Philip Glass.

Kenneth King is known for his wide variety of multimedia dance and performance works which connect signals and signs, ideas and concepts between disciplines and media. He has for 20 years written texts for his dances, performed, published and taught extensively. He will be reading and performing selections from his writings 1967-84 with actress Pamela Tait.

#### May 23 - Clark Coolidge & Geoffrey Young

Clark Coolidge is the author of *A Geology*, *American Ones*, *Quartz Hearts*, *Smithsonian Depositions & Subject to a Film*, *Research*, *Polaroid*, *The Maintains*, *Space*, *Suite V*, *Ing*, *The So*, *To Obtain the Value of the Cake Measure from Zero* (with Tom Veitch), *Mine and Own Face*. He's just written *The Crystal Text* and his collected poems will be published next year.

Late of Berkeley, Geoffrey Young now lives outside Great Barrington, Mass., with his wife and two children. His most recent book is *Subject to Fits* (1980). Besides editing *The Figures*, he is at work on a selected writings of Francis Picabia.

#### May 30 - Robert Creeley & Joel Oppenheimer

Robert Creeley is the author of books that know no bounds including, lately, his complete correspondence with Charles Olson and his collected poems and collected prose.

Joel Oppenheimer, the original director of the Poetry Project, presently teaching at Henniker's New England College, will be taking a leave of absence next year to accept the Caroline Werner Gannett Professorship at the College of Liberal Arts, Rochester Institute of Technology. His big new book of poems, *New Spaces*, will be published next fall by Black Sparrow. His latest book is *Poetry: The Ecology of the Soul*, from White Pine.

#### June 6 - 3 Films by Rudy Burckhardt

The 3 films will be: "The Automotive Story" (1953), text by Kenneth Koch; "Default Averted" (1975); and "Untitled" (1984), with lines by John Ashbery. Two shows at 8 and 9:30.

#### June 13 - The Annual Poetry Project Poetry & Music Benefit

The Benefit will be held at the Ritz, 11th St. between 3rd and 4th Avenues. The Project is running at a deficit this season, and the Benefit is most important to raise dollars. Last year's Benefit at the Church was a smash, with Lou Reed, Allen Ginsberg, Lenny Kaye, Jim Carroll, Willie Nile and others. This year's should be even more exciting. Show starts at 9.



**LECTURE:**

“The Desert Music”, a new work that sets the poetry of William Carlos Williams in a musical context, will be the object of a lecture by the composer **Steve Reich**, Tuesday, May 22 at 8 PM. Hosted by Joel Lewis. Suggested contribution \$3.

**Workshops:**

Poetry Workshops continue weekly with **Jack Collom** Fridays at 8 PM (final session June 8) and **Diane Burns** Saturdays at 2 PM (final session June 9).

Translation workshops conclude with “Philippine Writing,” Saturdays at noon through May 19 with **Luis Francia** and **Jessica Hagedorn**. “Shaded Character: Chinese Poetry”, led by **Elizabeth Rogers**, will be an examination of different forms of Chinese poetry, classical and modern, with a consideration of the specific problems involved in translating the Chinese language. This workshop will meet on Tuesdays in May.

The Poetry Writing for Children Workshop (ages 7 -13) continues on Saturdays at 10:30 AM, led by **Robbie McCauley**. Final session is June 9.

A workshop in Mimeo Book Production will be given in May led by **Maureen Owen**. Each participant will produce a book or magazine, run off on the Project’s historic Gestetner. Enrollment is limited — those interested should have a manuscript near completion and contact the Poetry Project office by May 7th for details.

A series of work sessions for Poets and Composers, coordinated by **Tom Savage** and **Russ Currie**, will be held in the main sanctuary on Sundays in May at 2:30 PM. The sessions will provide a chance for poets and composers to share work and discuss possible collaborations. The new grand piano will be put to use; thoughts of a concert are in the air.

On Tuesday May 8th at 7:30 PM the Honduran poet **Roberto Sosa**, author of *The Difficult Days* will present a special workshop at St. Mark’s, and on Thursday May 10 the Salvadoran poet **Claribel Alegria**, author of *Flowers from the Volcano*, will present a workshop at Cooper Union, also at 7:30 PM in the engineering building auditorium. Alegria, Sosa, **Zoe Anglesey** and **Caroline Forche** will read Friday May 11th at 7:30 PM at P.S. 41, 11th St. and 6th Ave., suggested donation \$3.

**Special Events:**

A Benefit reading for the New York City Poetry Calendar will happen Tuesday May 1 at 8 PM with the poets **Sara Miles**, **Frank Murphy**, **Bob Holman**, **Sharon Matlin**, **Jeff Wright**, **Cathy Cockrell**, **Robert Hershon**, **Louis Reyes Rivera**, **Maurice Kenny** and **Fay Chiang**. Suggested contribution \$3.



“Is There Literature for a World?/Is There a World for Literature?”: a taped reading by **Laura (Riding) Jackson**. Date to be announced.

Laura (Riding) Jackson, now approaching her 84th year, began her literary career as a poet, giving, at first, only a little attention to concerns of literary criticism. In the years she spent abroad (1926-1939) poetry, criticism, story as a serious literary form, and concern with language as the underlying moral ground of literature, were united in her work as strands of a necessarily central course of thought in the general field of the human mind’s understanding of its nature and function. First from the vantage of poetry, then from the vantage of literature as embracing comprehensively the mind’s potentialities, she explored its function as the function of *truth*. She has lived settled in the United States for over forty years, working on general and detailed studies of problems of language (a book on language in which her late husband collaborated awaits a publisher) and writings of broad concern that she would prefer to be regarded not as ‘philosophical’ but as research-work into the success-possibilities of the human intellectual and spiritual capacities, which she considers to be in present time in a state of mischievous enjoyment of failure. What she has recorded for our programme is a recent (yet unpublished) account of her view of the immediate sense of human activity as a whole, variedly intellectual and literary. Laura (Riding) Jackson is the author of *The Telling*, *Collected Poems* and *Progress of Stories*.

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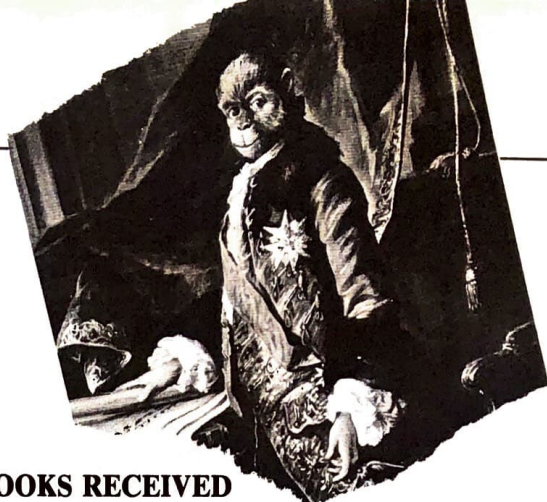
On Tuesday May 15th at 8 PM the Poetry Project and Ikon magazine are sponsoring a reading by the poet **Etelvina Astrada** at Central Hall, 386 West Broadway, 4th floor. **Etelvina Astrada** is the author of *Autobiography at the Trigger*.

**Monday, June 11 - Readings from the Translation Workshops.** Poems in the original and in English translation will be read by participants from the French section led by **Ron Padgett**, Spanish by **Miguel Algarin**, Classical Greek by **Vincent Katz**, German by **Daniel Krakauer**, Philippine by **Luis Francia** and **Jessica Hagedorn**, and Chinese by **Elizabeth Rogers**. A translation workshop magazine will be available at this reading.

**Tuesday, June 12 - The Annual Workshop Reading**, with poets from **Diane Burns’** and **Jack Collom’s** Poetry Writing Workshops.

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Anecdotes, reminiscences, collaborations, interviews, photographs, art works, and other memorabilia relating to the life and times of **Ted Berrigan** might be sent for consideration to **Anne Waldman**, who is editing an homage book to benefit the Berrigan family. Deadline: June 15. 33 St. Mark’s Place, Apt. 1, NYC, 10003.



The Committee for International Poetry will present An Evening of Polish Poetry on May 18, 1984, 8 PM, at The Writer's Voice, West Side Y, 5 West 63rd Street. Participants will include: Czeslaw Milosz, Stanislaw Baranczak, Henryk Grynberg, Richard Lourie, Tymoteusz Karpowicz, and others. Admission: \$4.50. Information: 855-3658. Reservations: 787-6557

On Monday, April 30th, 5-7 PM, Kulchur Foundation cordially invites everyone to attend a book party celebrating the publication of *Ping* by Yuki Hartman, at the Gotham Book Mart.

The celebration of the relationship of two beings, Jackie Curtis and Gary Majchrzak, will take place at The Poetry Project on Saturday, May 26th. Call for time.

The Poetry Project thanks the following people for their indispensable support:

**Patrons and Benefactors** Coburn Britton, Rudy Burckhardt & Yvonne Jacquette, John Chamberlain, Paul Cummings, Daniel Dietrich, Rackstraw Downes, Kenward Elmslie, B.H. Friedman, John Paul Fulco, Morris Golde, Sally Goldwater, Jr., Lita Hornick, Myron Kaplan, Ada & Alex Katz, Allen Katzman, James Laughlin, Dorothy & Roy Lichtenstein, Ellen Jo Myers, C.F. Terrell, St. Mark's Bookshop, and Mr. & Mrs. Harry Warsh; **Friends** Rudy Burckhardt & Yvonne Jacquette, Paul Cummings, Tim Dlugos, Peggy DeCoursey, Morris Golde, Ted Greenwald, Graham Hodges, Madeleine Keller, and David Shapiro; **Advisory Board Members** Barbara Barg, Jessica Hagedorn, Rochelle Kraut, Bob Holman, Gary Lenhart, Steve Levine, Maureen Owen, Michael Scholnick, and Jeff Wright.

Lorna Smedman thanks the following people for their unflagging support, and tireless volunteer work on *The Poetry Project Newsletter*: Susan Brooker, Greg Masters, Bernadette Mayer, Bob Holman, Beverly Donofrio, Myles Bellamy, Peggy Hong, Ed Smith, Nina Zivancivic, Mitch Highfill, Kimberly Lyons, David Borchart and *Paideuma*.

#### 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. This is the last issue for this season. Publication resumes in October.

The Poetry Project Newsletter is published by The Poetry Project which receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts, and also from the Dept. of Cultural Affairs of NYC, the New York Council for the Humanities and various foundations, corporations and private donors as well as support from its members.

Lorna Smedman, editor & production  
Susan Brooker, design & paste-up

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

from Black Sparrow Press (PO Box 3993, Santa Barbara, CA 93130): *Snooty Baronet*, Wyndham Lewis, \$12.50; *There's No Business*, Charles Bukowski, with illustrations by R. Crumb, \$4 *The Dead and the Living*, Sharon Olds, Alfred A. Knopf, \$6.95 *A Happy Childhood*, William Matthews, Little, Brown & Co., 34 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02106, \$8.95

*The Earth as Air*, Gustaf Sobin, New Directions, 80 8th Ave., NY, NY 10011, \$6.95

*Loose Arrangement*, Jeanne Lance, Smithereens Press, Box 1036, Bolinas, CA 94924, \$2

*Crayola Milk - Poetry & Drawing from Writers in the Schools*, edited by James Ruggia & Sharon Guynap, Mouthmind Press, 813 Willow Ave. 1S, Hoboken, NJ 07030, \$1

*The Bukowski/Purdy Letters, 1964-1974*, edited by Seamus Cooney, The Paget Press, PO Box 3993, Santa Barbara, CA 93130, \$8.50

*Afreeka Brass*, Mwatabu S. Okantah, Cleveland State Poetry Center, Dept. of English, Rhodes Tower 1834, Euclid Ave. at E. 24th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44115, \$3.50

*From Dream, From Circumstance (New & Selected Poems, 1962-1982)*, Douglas Worth, Apple-wood Books, Box 2870, Cambridge, MA 02139

*The Riverman's Wedding & Other Poems*, David Fratus, Supplement 7, Hiram Review, Box 162, Hiram, OH 44234

*Invasion at a Distance*, Christopher Johan Holds, Conversation Unlimited, 2322 W Eastwood, Chicago IL 60625

*Vacuum Tapestries*, David Gitin, BB Bks, 1 Spring Bank, Longsight Rd., Salesbury, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 9EU, \$1

*Translations*, Michael Stephens, Red Hanrahan Bks., Bronx NY

#### MAGAZINES RECEIVED

*Action*, no.1, PO Box 773, Adam's Basin, NY 14410 (Collom, King, McMonagle, Rodriquez)

*Sulphur 9*, 852 S. Bedford St., L.A., CA 90035, \$15/yr. (3 issues) (Ward, Artaud, S. Howe, Ashbery)

*Small Press Review*, vol. 16, no. 3, Dustbooks, PO Box 100, Paradise, CA 95969, \$14/yr.

*Giants Play Well in the Drizzle*, issue 4, Assembly Found., 199 E 4th St., NY, NY 10009 (Succop, King, Butterick)

*Exquisite Corpse*, Vol.2/no.1, PO Box 20889, Baltimore, MD 21209, \$1.50

*Small Press News*, no.22/23, Stony Hills, Weeks Mills, New Sharon, ME, \$2.50

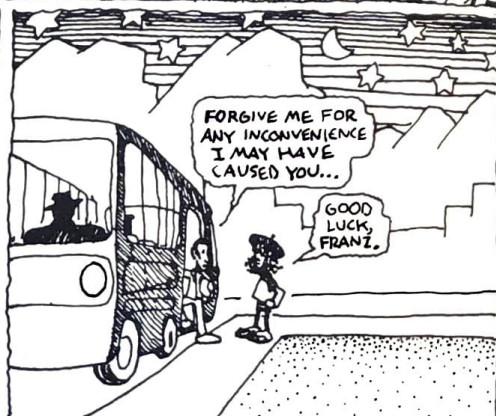
*The Hiram Poetry Review*, issue 35, Box 162, Hiram OH 44234, \$1

*Indiana Review*, vol.7/no.1, 316 N Jordon Ave., Bloomington, Indiana 47405, \$4

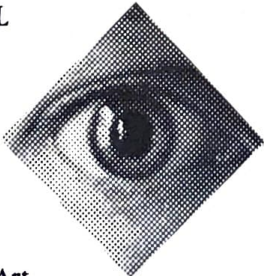
*New Age*, March '84, 342 Western Ave, Brighton, MA 02135, \$2

*The Beat Road*, edited by Arthur & Kit Knight, The Unspeakable Visions of the Individual, PO Box 439, California, PA 15419, \$10 (Kerouac, Ginsberg, DiPrima, Corso)

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# MAY-JUNE

At ST. MARKS POETRY PROJECT

2nd Avenue + 10th St. NYC

Monday Performance/Poetry Series  
8PM - \$2

May 7 - Open Reading May 14 Robert Peters  
Sal Salasin

May 21 - Rochelle Kraut  
Simon Peltet

May 28  
M 28

Susan Kougell  
James Ruggia

June 4  
Julie Erlich

Lenora Champagne



WHAMMA MONTH(S)  
WE'RE COOL



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Wednesday Reading Series 8PM \$3

May 2 - Tony Towle  
Anne Waldman

May 9 - Ken Irby  
Gerri Lansing

May 16 - Kenneth Deifik & Kenneth King

May 23 - Georren Young, Clark Coolidge

May 30 Robert Creeley + Joel Oppenheimer?

May 15 8 PM reading by Etevlino Astrado at Central Hall Co-sponsored by Ikon may

LECTURE!! Tues. May 22 8PM \$3 "The Desert Music" - STEVE REICH

Work Sessions for Poets + Composers, coord. by Tom Savage + Russ Currie Sundays in May 2:30 PM

Jack Cotton's workshop Fridays at 8 pm through June 8

## Workshops

- Mimeo Book Production w/ Maureen Owen (call for info)

- Children's Poetry Writing Workshop w/ Robbie McCoolley (ages 7-13) Saturdays 10:30 AM, thru June 9

- "Philippine Writing" w/ Luis Francis + Jessica Hageborn Saturdays at noon through May 19

Benefit Reading for NYC Poetry Calendar May 1-8PM \$3

May 8 - 7:30 PM Workshop Roberto Sosa (at St Marks)

Diane Burns workshop Saturdays at 2 PM through June 9

May 10th 7:30 PM Workshop by Claribel Alegria (at Cooper Union)

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

Is there a World for literature? Is there Lit-erature? = a tape by Laura (Riding) Jackson date to be announced.

## Also June:

June 6 - 3 Films by Rudy Burckhardt

June 11 - Readings from the translation workshop

June 12 - The annual Workshop Reading

June 13 THE ANNUAL POETRY PROJECT POETRY + MUSIC BENEFIT AT THE ROTZ