

THE THE NEWSLETTER OF
POETRY
THE POETRY PROJECT LTD. AT
P PROJECT
ST. MARK'S CHURCH IN-THE-BOWERY

April/May 1993
Volume #149

James Schuyler

JOURNALS

Allen Ginsberg

LAST CONVERSATION WITH CARL

Rudy Burckhardt

SOME PHOTOGRAPHS

Nathaniel Mackey

SONG OF THE ANDOUMBOULOU: 18

Prose Oh Pure Contradiction

LESLIE SCALAPINO, LORENZO
THOMAS, BERNADETTE MAYER, TOM
CLARK, LEE ANN BROWN 'N' MORE





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Art: Rudy Burckhardt

New York 1970scover

Arkansas, 1948below

Sicilycalend



Letters to the editor

Dear Jordan,

I was thumbing through the newsletter and saw you mention a collected poems of Ted. Sometime [soon] there should be a selected coming from Viking/Penguin press. The selection is somewhere around a hundred-fifty pages, and was made by Aram Saroyan with my mom getting the final say. If I remember this correctly, Aram brought up the idea, and among others, Allen Ginsberg and Robert Creeley wrote up blurbs and had them sent to Penguin.

It will be coming out in conjunction with a new book by Jim Carroll and a book by the lyricist of the Grateful Dead. With any luck, it should generate some interest in his work and lead to reprintings of some of the other books (*The Sonnets?*).

Sincerely,
Edmund Berrigan

Dear Editor:

I read Cynthia Nelson's review of Vyt Bakaitis' *City Country*

three or four times. But I failed to understand it. Then I read it from the other end, and it made a lot of sense. I would like to share it with you.

"Op. 23, Minor Sharp F in, example for, Consider. twist Kerouac a with, charming say even might one—lyrical is touch distinctive his, however, experiment to inclination his all for. poetry in modernism of version known every practically encompasses that exploration self of journey a on Country City in us takes Bakaitis Vyt, Brooklyn in now living and, Massachusetts and Germany in up growing, Lithuania in Born.

Nelson Cynthia

Sincerely,
Jonas Mekas

Editor's Note: #148 Issue in poem a published Nelson Cynthia. book Bakaitis' Vyt reviewed Sloan Benjamin Um

See LETTERS, page 29

THE WORLD 47

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The Journals of James Schuyler

July 28, 1985

I don't understand the motions of the sun: I thought it never shone into north-facing rooms, but every morning, soon after rising, it illuminates the recesses of my two French windows. But mostly I live, as I read in Diego Giacometti's obituary, "in a town into which the sun did not shine three months of the year."

How often I wake up feeling that I'd like to write a poem, but no words of my own come into my mind: those that do are Vaughn's:

*They are all gone into the world of light
And I alone sit lingering here
Their very memory is clear and bright
And my sad thought doth clear*

And I wonder how accurate is that? Me memory for poetry is zilch.

Yesterday is a day I'm not going to think about, much less discuss. Enough to say, I was as cross as two sticks.

Is it possible my favorite poem is Coleridge's "Frost and Midnight?" It may be true, and if it isn't, so what?

July 29, 1985

Yesterday I said I wanted to write a poem but couldn't. Later I took a nap (that great institution), woke up and wrote one, lay down to read and got up to write another. I suspect both of being stinkers and have no inclination to look at them right now. And yet, there are those pleasant, if rare, occasions when what had seemed designed by a Higher Power for the ashcan turns out not to be not so far below the norm as all that. It never hurts to keep one's hand in, and there have to be rifts before you start loading them with gold. Or is the word ore?

I'm still pissed off, but for different reasons—or for the old reasons plus new ones. Forget it.

I wish I could.

I wish I had one hundred brand new books to read.

July 30, 1985

Sweet Catullus' all but island, olive silvery Sirmio . . .

When he felt like it, Wystan could set the cat among the pigeons: I remember a review in which Desmond McCarthy foamed because W. had said—in print—that Tennyson was the most musical of English poets, and the stupidest.

I love Tennyson, and he is indeed most marvelously musical, but sometimes it seems a little Cecile Chaminade. Surely WS would not have stooped to guff about "the murmuring of immemorial elms"—or however it goes—elms which turned out not to be so immemorial after all.

For music, I prefer the vintage Keats bottled: "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness . . ." Bright star! Indeed.

Saturday, August 3, 1985

I was filled with delight last night—how disgusting, a rhyme—when I realized that anyone who ever wants to write my biography will have his/her work cut out for her/him, since virtually no documentation or juvenalia exist. There is The Birth Certificate, The First Grade Report Card (F in all subjects: I was a late bloomer), The Passport, and? No diplomas, no degrees, maybe some post cards and a letter or two . . . then I had three stories published in *Accent* along with Frank's Three Penny Opera, the poem behind my poem, Salute (it's the matter of where the line turns), met John Ashbery, Jane Freilicher, Fairfield Porter, Edwin Denby, Rudi Burckhardt (through his sister, Helen), and other geniuses and the rest is history

There is a hilarious piece in this week's *New Yorker* called "Yo, Poe." It concerns Sylvester Stallone's wish to play the real Poe who was not a kinky alcoholic—but the big stuff was Whitney Balliett's (why can't I spell that name?) piece on Peggy Lee, who is in town, around the corner, singing tonight, and I won't be there. You better believe I'm pissed off. But I am going to own and play her latest LP very, very soon. Goody. "The Sorcerer's Helper" begins to pall.

Virgil T. to Sauguet, issuing from a NY jazz club: "Elle n'est pas artiste," in definitive tones. They had been listening to Lady Day.

Edwin Denby told me that.

Sunday August 5, 1985

Brook Benton's "Do your own thing" is just the music I want right now, and the three Teddy Wilson discs with Mildred Bailey (who once spoke to me at Café Society Uptown: "Take it easy, Sonny," she said as I stumbled slightly on the stair [the can was upstairs] and swept down in a brown evening suit studded with brass nail heads and sang "Oh Mama Won't You Scrap Your Fat". And the boys stood up and joined her: it was a lively number and then things got a lot better)—nor will my day be ruined when Bill brings the latest Peggy Lee.

I watched "The Fabulous Dorsey Brothers" only because they were playing themselves. Imagine my surprise when the words "with Helen O'Connell", Ziggy Elman, Bunny Berrigan, and other wizards, and Art Tatum. Art Tatum! It was true the

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plot of the movie is about how to prevent the audience from hearing any music: mostly it succeeded. Then Poster: Art Tatum. Eventually, Art Tatum, and was it beautiful; then authentic musicians stood and jammed. It was worth it.

Wednesday Sept. 85

Yestereve the sunset shone briefly—a long while it seemed—causing an effect on loft-style stately building across the way: a glow that reminded me of what happens in Venice when buckets of rain, including hail, fall upon Istrian stone: an inner pinkness that goes on and on and on until . . .

The Mystery plant (gift of George Schneeman in entertaining Schneeman flower pot) is doing nicely as is the sprig of ivy. The nearly dead from neglect and non-watering ("I have watered the plants": like hell you did) parlor linden that Darragh grew from a cutting is recovering nicely. It shed so many leaves that its skeleton shows plainly and attractively—"the alphabet of the trees." It stands on one of the speakers and needs turning. Why not now? Yes, now, while Ida Cox is singing: "Don't let your whisky drive away your only friend."

I wonder what day it is

Yesterday all hell broke loose. Forget it. Helena came back from Maine, airsick from a bumpy ride. She told me many Maine-Burckhardt stories. She was taken to see Edwin's grave in the woods where his ashes lie: an unmarked stone of no great size. Period. That elegance, that genius, that strange lover: and, aged eighty—why spell it out? He wrote his own epitaph when he looked at a photograph of the beautiful and great Nijinsky standing, one arm encircling his head, eyes closed: to Edwin it was,

Mysterious as breathing in sleep...

Dear heart, rest well.

Sept. 19, 1985

Thursday

A sunny day and Peggy Lee is singing and I wonder how dramatic today will be and quite possibly no drama at all. Not great sleep but some, always better than none.

Finances bug me: need clock from around corner (\$15.00), need glasses with new frames (\$45.00) anticipate

Monday and Tuesday cabs to Hy Weitzen and Dr. Newman (more or less \$20). I suppose I can always give up food and live on air like an orchid. Oh. Well.

I like my new style poems very much—uncertain success of this morning's effort, a salute to Brook Benton. But I usually feel like that right after giving birth.

Thursday Sept. 27, 1985

Good Heavens! The piece I couldn't name that just ended of course turns out to be the Diabelli Variations—as John said, "With a theme like that, how could Beethoven fail?" Indeed: a nothing little waltz-like theme by the over-weaning Diabelli, a work I particularly love, and, as usual, since there are no words to it I can't name it. This happens with anything: of course I can name, less than instantly, *the Bizet* symphony, not because Balanchine created a great ballet to its tunes (he made it for the Paris opera where I first saw it with Bill in '47: called then Palais de Cristal with measly little crystal clusters by Leonore Fini: I haven't forgotten everything) no I recognize it because WNCN has drummed it into my head maddeningly, along with "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," Ravel's "Bolero," a little item called the "Entrance of the Queen of Sheba," Schubert's "Unfinished," and so on. No wonder I prefer playing my LPs. Where was I? Forget it.

It's still very dark: go to sleep too early, wake up too early. I don't mind, so long as the dawn in all its beauty is soon to arrive.

Friday Oct. 11, 1985

A brisk walk to the corner mail box: a gray-blue morning in the month that, today, I hope will go slowly on and on. Then I was musing on the bed when a beam of sunlight caused a line of brick to light up with a mellow red effect.

Perhaps I will see Tom today, perhaps I won't.

Eileen came by yesterday, which was delightful. She's so interesting and I like her so much. She still has vestiges of her Yucatan tan. The Yucatan in mid-summer? For Ei, I guess, not me.

Sunday Oct. 13 85

Across the street a window goes rather blue: earliest glimmer of dawn, at seven in the morning, so much later, it seems, than it recently was. I can't wait for daylight savings to end!



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WHERE GOOD BOOKS ARE BREWING

Last Conversation With Carl

Friday afternoon 2/26/93
VA Hosp Bronx: Carl Solomon

[re: Twin Towers Explosion on TV]
It's a real turn-on
to be well and functioning
in the middle of the mess.
It's hard to find
anything real because
the physical thing
changes so quickly
you don't know which way to turn
because...I'm incontinent
...don't know the proper way
to behave...
I hope my suffering
doesn't last too long.
So maybe pneumonia
will do it in like my mom
pain I haven't had
to deal with much
lately... they've got
me on the anti pain...
and they also insist
on the oxygen which
is no longer too meaningful
to me. no longer
effective
I feel like my mother's
way — go off into pneumonia
and heart failure... but
my heart is too damn
strong...
Allen: what do you think death is?
Death is a fading away —
which I'd like to go easily
like my mother... imitate
my mother... this last
year of grace has been
excessive — I just want
to get it over with —
I just want to say a
few words about (the literary time)
of Kerouac Burroughs etc.
There's not much more
for me to say anyway, but
it's been a lot of fun
At that time it was
very exciting to me —
I wasn't that mad,

I was intellectually adventurous
and interested myself in Artaud and
I was a loner — even
in my own family circles
I was a loner — intellectual
eccentric — How much
recognition I got from
my family? I got very little
I guess.
Coughing it's like
strangulation
For awhile I was very
serious about surrealism...
It was just another movement
I was serious about these
movements —
Allen: Do you feel I did the wrong
thing putting the spotlight on you
by using your name in "Howl"?
You gave me my first
outlet in Neurotica — for
some recognition... I guess
it went to my head
The life I spent was all right
I'm dying of lung cancer
an unusual thing — cant
bother to figure it out.
Too bad if I was foolish,
it wont matter much much
longer. I hope
I get out without too
much agony. For my mother
it was nice, she just waved
waved good-by.
I was there before
she died... (then) they notified
me about my mother
Then I felt my respons-
ibility was really over.
I spent the next year
just wandering about...
until this
It was a wonderful
year — wonderful and
meaningless with
my mother gone... I had
no responsibility... I had
a girlfriend Elaine... now
she claims she loves me...
marry me, all kinds of
things —
Allen: Kerouac stuck by his

mother

Carl: "Boys and their mothers"

The beats were kind of a
Cosmopolitan grouping, some from
the suburbs, some from the
inner city, and some people
wanted to be beats, some were
real beats, some made believe they
were and they weren't —
a mid-century

Cold War hang-up...

So I'm still somewhat
reluctant to say good-bye —

I don't know why I'm
hanging on so desperately...

It's just hard to let

go... you hang on

with a kind of bulldog

rapacity... I suppose

like people being executed ...

the animal in it is still

there

Carl to Allen: except

You really

look good...

Carl: You look younger

to me — spirits are young —

Rabbi was here — He said

he'd pray for me... that's

about it... the Jewish

thing is OK — I let it

pass — this is a formal

social status — against

which I make no challenge...

Back in room, with oxygen

mask.

Allen: does it help?

Carl: it relieves me a little,
makes it a little better.

Carl volunteered... one thing that
still interests me is sex.

gestures towards his lap

I looked at him grizzled

and thin, but calm, seemed to've

gained strength, up on pillow

bed head raised a bit so he

wasn't flat, a bed by window

in a two man room, other bed

leathery and empty.

"you mean even now, you have

enuf strength to be interested in that?"

"yes... my last sex was with ...

8 months ago — I had

the strength & acquitted

myself adequately. So I feel

I'd fulfilled my last responsi-

bility."

—Allen Ginsberg

[Ted Morgan (Burrough's Biographer

who celebrated the same birthday as

Carl, March 30.) visited the next day.

Carl said "I am expiring but I have life

insurance." Another friend visited

that night Carl with difficulty said,

"Awareness comes." Carl died

Sunday morning. He was given a Jewish

funeral with a flag draped coffin.

Allen Ginsberg read from these notes at

the service. He was buried in a plot near his

Mother in Farmingdale, Long Island.]

Peter Orlovsky

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&

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William Carlos Williams

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SONG OF THE ANDOUMBOULOU: 18

—ogou en dèz o—

Sat at the bar in the Long
Night Lounge. A cramped,
capacious room, alternately
so, simultaneously so . . .

Plopped
himself down beside me and
said, "So." Over and over
again said
only, "So." Gnostic stranger
I embraced as though it
was me I embraced . . .

Was.
Caught me unawares . . .

Thus it
was these words broke my sleep,
woke

me: *Heard it who seldom spoke,*
"No remedy," flamenco's gnostic
moan . . . Standing, I sank, felt
nothing, though the spun words
rocked my waking, shook me,
spun from when body caught soul,

body,

"Tongue too familiar with
tooth," I complained, blue

Davidic
harp, Ethiopian moan. Monophysite
lament, one we, Ouadada, that
we would include, not reduce to us . . .
He to him, she to her, they to them,

soul

opaque

pronouns, "persons" whether or not we
knew who they were . . .

Whoosh, what we
needed, movement, except the what-sayer,
obsessed, asking what. "Was it a woman
he once was in love with?" "Was it a lie
he'd long since put it all behind?"

Not

an earring, inimical star the spark
she lit, burn beyond imaginable burn, "were"
notwithstanding, this what would've
been meant by bought soul . . .

Ears hot
with what she took to be talk not of
her but of someone else. Numbed
he, numbed she, numbed we, numbed

affront. Feeling found in flames

obsolete

As though what they say was all we
had, that words be would, would
words, where they pointed
not beside the point though almost,

we

made of how many who could say?
No we of romance we contrived
coupling . . . No nation's
we, collectivity's wish . . .

Aberrant

sky, stone hoisted on stone . . .
Rethought what Andoumboulou

meant . . .

Squat world, squat fractious
allure, failed creation, angels
at the root of it, inept. Tossed
into ruins overlooking the city,

pocketed

rock, wordlike, wrestling with
sound, stir without end, voice
borne up by what ailed it, dreamt
articulation, dreamt wordless

rapport . . .

Dreamt entanglement, torn at the
roots. Dreamt entrenchment, not of
dream but inveiglement, voice,
thrown obliquity, bled. Sound so

abstruse

we struck our heads, "Where did it
come from?" Point song. Point-
lessness. Words wanting not to be

words...

Revelled in what once we lamented. What to
say but that we'd been that way
before? Every angle we'd have other-
wise arrived by blocked, going
more than getting there.

Though

the dense woods mocked our
waking, rocked us, robbed us
in flammable array . . . Groped our
way, said ready the water,
ta'wil said to've been sown
at the foot of a page,

flew

but for the weight of Ogun's
iron shoe, shod ghost we
imagined we rode, running

in place

Seven-sided
house said to've been left
in heaven. Bumped affect
only strife touches. Strummed
harp long ago let go . . .

Who'd
rather wash with blood
than with
water they had heard, sound
their adamant recompense, moot
solace what solace there
was . . .

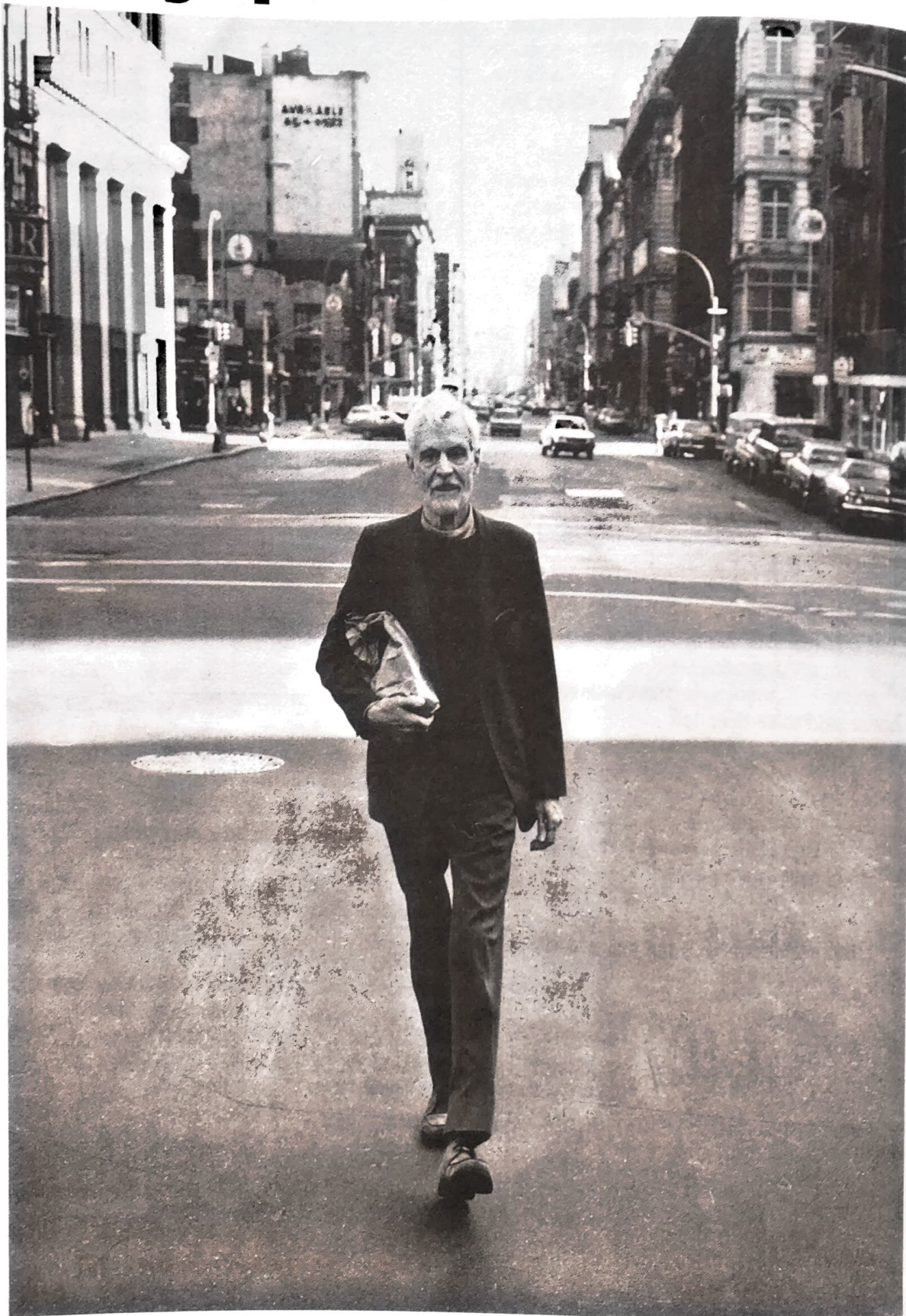
A martinete sung to drummed
accompaniment. Shoulders
bare,
chest wrapped in cloth.
Wasted breath, wind battling
wind, rekindling a Gypsy's
claims on Egypt . . .
Two initiates
locked in a cold room
shivering.
Remnants of an
alternate life

Sound
raveling sound calling itself
eternity. No known locale
though names accrue. A saeta
we heard whose head had been
chipped
from stone. Adamant ghost
inside a thick wrap of
skin, adamant arrow.
Remnant of an alternate
life . . .

So that Ogun of Two Waters
met me in my sleep, woke
me to my slumber, Sea of
Knowing, School of Nod . . .
Two
inebrates quibbling in a
dimly lit room. Knife
plunged in trenchwater.
Stone
hoisted on
stone

—Nathaniel Mackey

Photographs by Rudy Burckhardt



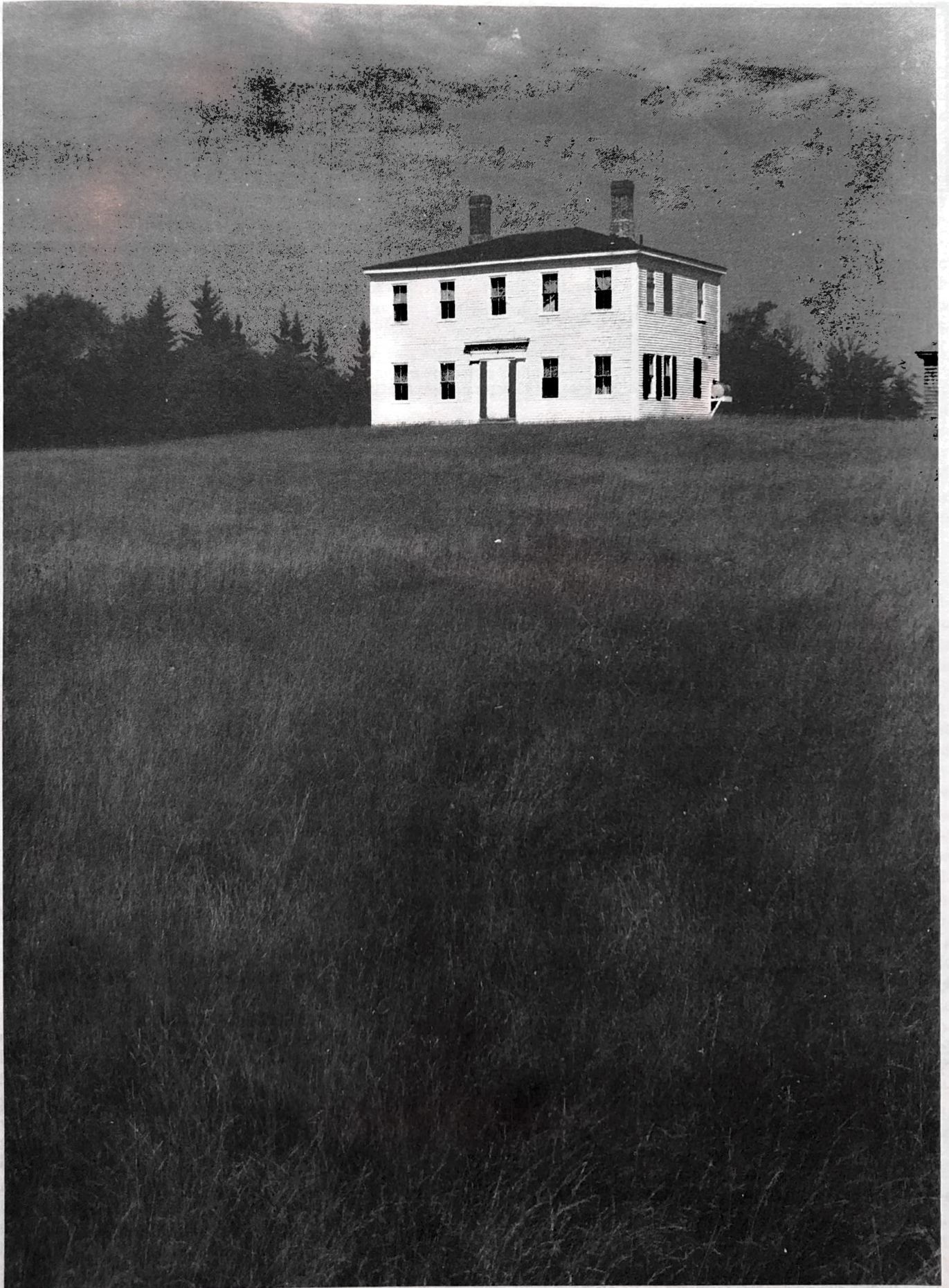
Edwin Denby, Sixth Avenue, 1980



21st Street (above right), 11th Avenue, 1980 (above)



Edith Schloss in Perugia, 1950 (above), Napoli, 1951



Deer Isle, Maine, c.1950

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED

BOOKS

Pieces O' Six, Jackson Mac Low; Sun & Moon, 1992. 183 pages. \$11.95 paper.

Saving History, Fanny Howe; Sun & Moon, 1993. 227 pages. \$12.95 paper.

The End, Fanny Howe; Littoral Books, 1992. 96 pages, \$9.95 paper.

Linen minus, Susan Gevirtz; Avenue B, 1992. 61 pages, \$8 paper.

Second Law, Elizabeth Willis; Avenue B, 1993. 63 pages, \$8.95 paper.

The Curious Builder, Paul Violi; Hanging Loose Press, 1993. 80 pages, \$10 paper.

The Elephants of Reckoning, Indran Amirthanayagam; Hanging Loose, 1993. 64 pages, \$10 paper.

Art in Its Own Terms: Selected Criticism 1935-1975, Fairfield Porter; Zoland Books, 1993. 288 pages, \$10.95 paper.

Travels, W. S. Merwin; Knopf, 1993. 137 pages, \$20 cloth.

Danger and Beauty, Jessica Hagedorn; Viking Penguin, 1993. 209 pages, \$14 paper.

Sphericity, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge; Kelsey St. Press, 1993. 42 pages, \$14 paper.

Selected Letters, Stephen Ratcliffe; Zasterle Press, 1993. 53 pages.

Smile, Denise Duhamel; Warm Spring Press, 1993. 97 pages, \$10.

MAGAZINES

And That Fritz Lang, #4. Ed., Sam Potts (545 East 12th Street, 4A, NYC 10009)

Poetry New York, # 5. Eds. Burt Kimmelman, Cheryl Fish, Tod Thilleman (P.O.Box 1384, Church Street Station, NYC 10008)

Ruh Roh, #1. Eds. Mark Ewert, Mitchell Watkins (available at See-Hear)

POETRY WORKSHOP

Taught by Maureen Owen. The goal of participants will be to complete a twenty page poem over the course of the workshop. Work will include researching subject matter for the text of the poem. There will be weekly assignments based on in-workshop writing, reading and discussions. Besides in-workshop readings of selected poets and discussions of their work, there will be a study of linked verse and Renga. Serious effort will be made in instructing participants on how to get their work published in small press magazines. **Saturdays at noon (February 6th through the end of April).**

EXPERIMENTS IN POETRY

Taught by Bernadette Mayer. **Thursdays at 7 pm. (Through the end of April)**

EDITING THE WORLD

Taught by Lewis Warsh. **Fridays at 7:30 pm. (Through the end of April)**

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration for workshops costs \$200/workshop or \$100/year for Poetry Project members. Annual membership in the Poetry Project costs \$50.

THANKS, VALENTINE'S DAY VOLUNTEERS!

John Fisk, Jo Ann Wasserman, Janice Johnson, Douglas Rothschild, Jordan Davis, Andy Alper, Vanessa Weiman, Eliza Gallaher, Dario Stipisic, David Cameron, David Vogen, Danine Ricereto, Peggy DeCoursey, Eliot Katz & Christine Kelly

THE POETRY PROJECT WILL RESUME REGULAR PROGRAMMING IN OCTOBER

THE DANSPACE PROJECT AT ST. MARK'S CHURCH IN-THE-BOWERY

Marlies Yearby/Movin' in the Spirit April 1-3

Food for Thought April 23-25

St. Mark's Sunday/Arts Projects Festival April 25

Sabatino Verlezza May 13-16

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John Jasperse May 27-30

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(at Broadway)
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WRITTEN BY THE DOOR

The poultry looks like a spoon at this distance

"What is the whiteness of a reminder becoming a pronouncement?" asks Meimei Berssenbrugge in "Ideal," the first poem in her near-perfect new book, *Sphericity*, from Kelsey St. Press. In the poem, the "new color" of the awareness of spaces and relations, of surprise, what some others may call the oldest color, i.e. beauty, is "more of an ideal than an anomaly." In the antepenultimate line she writes, "This is a description of the content of the apprehended space between objects on a patio table." The new color is probably either that description or the contact of the apprehended space—apprehension itself. At any rate, who ever said beauty in its pure state, the moving surprise, would be anomalous? Berssenbrugge goes back to the basic Romantic trope of odd bird (the second line of "Ideal": "The significance of a bird/flying out of grapes") to solve a mystery, or at least clarify the statement of the problem. The five other essays are of the manifest destiny of Emerson and Stevens, especially "Combustion" and "Sphericity," which, written way after Emerson's "Circles," are precise yet blurry especially at the ends, "like the surface of the earth," in Berssenbrugge's words. As with her ending for the title poem, "the lack of necessity between time and a collapsed star."

Stephen Ratcliffe's roll goes on with *Selected Letters* from Zasterle Press, the mysterious Canary Island outfit. The good idea in this case being a set of sonnets which flicker from intimate correspondence to belles lettres to critical apparatus. Parts of the book are like shavings of gold—"you think it is almost/physically impossible to leave" ends one sonnet, and "because you know the book by heart" ends another—from some vast misplaced silent literatus' marginalia. One quality of Ratcliffe's writing that I like very much is the dry sweetness, the pathos which obtains to almost nothing. It can arise from the more obvious textual devices (e.g. ending a sonnet with the line "[no signature]"), but also from the subtle, futzy, Schuyleresque (e.g. "(dated Sunday. What a long time everything takes)" from "apropos of nothing"). It's a very French book. It doesn't make too much

of its suppressed narrative.

The Strand has stacks of Yeats' *Letters to the New Island*, and one assumes they will not forever. *The Collected Poems of James Schuyler* arrives mid-spring.

That's Cool, a series of chess-by-mail collaborations between Sparrow and artist Blair Wilson, is \$2 from Blair Wilson, 4541 Stanford Avenue, NE, Seattle WA 98105. It's either another tiny chapbook or the next piece of evidence that New York is secretly becoming Vermont. Sparrow fans will recognize the texts, which Wilson "gets," speeding "It's Over" down with inserted panels; "I will never return to Devco Unlimited. They have treated me like shit one time too many" captions an angry pony-tailed man with little orphan Annie eyes, who, abed, emits three z's in the next panel, is seen in the next panel smiling and drooling, and in the last panel, glum, is captioned "I wish I could join the group 'Anthrax.'" The others, including "My Presidential Teeth," "The Bet," and "In Heaven," match up with Sparrow's punch-lines. Since George Bush made (and President Not-Sparrow has yet to unmake) the writing of checks for amounts any less than half rent undesirable, Sparrow fans may want to purchase extra copies to mail to impressionable teenagers.

Many many people love Chris Tysh's new book, *Coat of Arms*, and many many people love George Tysh's new book, *Echolalia*. Readers of the Newsletter will recall Lynn Crawford's interview with Chris Tysh in these pages last year. Tysh described her project in the book: to use the terms of the heraldic index, the coat of arms. "No control is exercised over the wording," writes Tysh (and it's interesting to quote this line mostly for the part deleted) but these poems do seem "to be in highly controlled circumstances all alone the basis/for representation, say eminently quotable body." What body? "Her breasts formerly little milk statues."

Coat of Arms ends as intertext? prelude to *Echolalia*—"further petal makes sex-foil"—pun on cinquefoil, rose of five-lobed leaves. Where Chris Tysh drops the names of bands—Violent Femmes, Bad Seeds—in context, George Tysh has trouble hearing the words. When "Funky Cold Medina" is on, he hears

"funky cold vagina." Kristeva/Sollers déjà vu?

Hail Sun & Moon! Classic Volumes 13 and 38 came out at once. L=A=N=G publisher! Total abandonment of the serial as a record of consecutive events! Wow! Now let us look at the new books. Reprints! Translations from the German! The possibility that these may properly bear the name "classic" survives a very superficial examination. The books have been out of print for years. Impending oblivion! Ha! Superficial becomes quizzical. Both books include two formerly separate texts. Consumer value! However!

At \$29.95 (and more ounces than my postal scale can count), Heimito von Doderer's *The Demons* is more of a murder weapon than a book. *Gradiva* by Wilhelm Jensen, b/w Delusion and Dream in Wilhelm Jensen's *Gradiva* by Sigmund Freud. Cover by André Mason (sic?). *That is the book.*

Other classics: Number 17, *Pieces O' Six* (by Jackson Mac Low, is classically radical, a 200-page notebook divided into 33 six-page essays—no, says Mac Low in his preface, "they are all poems" [italics his]—whose "only 'rules' were that they had to be prose and to occupy six notebook pages in longhand." The most cartesian piece starts off "For sure!" said the European man, assured it was colloquial American for 'certainly.' "Before long, the poem has gone from law as proscriptive vs. law as descriptive to Wittgensteinian analysis of the phrase "fuckin' A" to the doctrine of papal infallibility, and you, reader, are not unconvinced that those things belong together, in that order. The final piece, a discussion of the "I" in poetry ((lyric poetry)), comes down on the side of subjectivity, but favoring restraints. The piece does. Mac Low prefers the homophones of "former." It seems a sequel would be in order; aren't analyses of "I" always preludes to dialogues with "you?" Reader, what do I think?); Number 27, *Saving History* by Fanny Howe just came in now.)

Hanging Loose Press is a little different from Sun & Moon. New books from Paul Violi (*The Curious Builder*) and Indran Amirthanayagam (*The Elephants of Reckoning*) feature poems which previously
See BY THE DOOR, page 27

THE POETRY PROJECT

THE CALENDAR OF

THE POETRY PROJECT LTD. AT

ST. MARK'S CHURCH IN-THE-BOWERY

A P R I L

4 PETER ORLOVSKY

Reading by Peter Orlovsky to celebrate the reissue of *Clean Asshole Poems & Smiling Vegetable Songs* (Northern Lights Press). A short reception to follow. **Sunday, 8 pm**

12 MIEKAL AND & ELIZABETH WAS

Miekal Ard has published more than 20 books of poetry, visual-verbal lit, essays & fiction. Elizabeth Was's published works, incorporating visual imagery with syntactic & concrete experimentation, include *Onion Leaves Her Map Untended*. Both Elizabeth & Miekal direct Xexoxial Endarchy, an experimental intermedia arts organization which publishes visual/verbal literature & audio cassettes. **Monday, 8 pm**

14 ABIGAIL CHILD & JEAN DAY

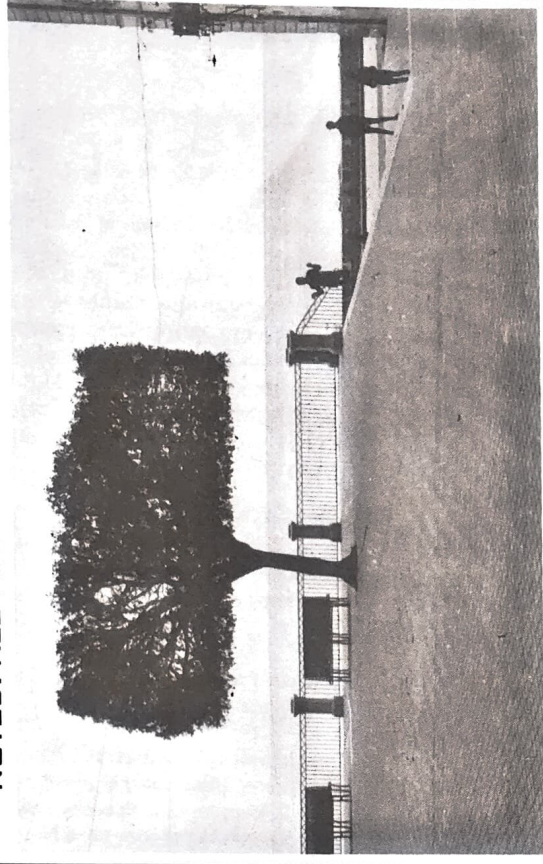
Poet & filmmaker Abigail Child is the author of *A Motive for Mayhem & Mob* (forthcoming from O Books). She has received a 1993 Fulbright Fellowship for study in Russia. Her new film, *Rubble*, is in production. Jean Day's books of poetry include *A Young Recruit & The I and the You* (Potes & Potes Press, 1992). Her translations of Nadezhda Kondakova's work appear in *Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry* (University of Michigan). **Wednesday, 8 pm**

16 DIANA HARTOG & HAAS MROUE

Diana Hartog's book of poems *Polite to Bees* (Coach House Press) is a bestiary that prides open animal dreams using writing that is sly, charming, wicked, & funny. Timothy Findley writes on her work "Hartog catches you off guard by

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ADMISSION \$5 (CONTRIBUTION) EXCEPT WHERE NOTED. ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.



3 OPEN READING

HOSTED BY WANDA PHIPPS

Sign-up, 7:30 PM. **Monday, 8 pm**.

5 KIMIKO HAHN & LYNNE TILLMAN

LECTURE ON "RACIALITY IN LITERATURE"

Founder of the Word of Mouth readings & workshop series in Lower Manhattan, Kimiko Hahn is the author of *Air Pocket & Earshot* (Hanging Loose Press). Lynne Tillman's books include *Absence Makes the Heart* (Serpents Tail Press) & *Cast in Doubt* (Poseidon). **Wednesday, 8 pm**

6 SHOPPING IN SPACE: ESSAYS ON AMERICAN "BLANK GENERATION" FICTION

A critical analysis of the Brat Pack & "Downtown" writers of the 1980s, this panel discussion with contemporary literary critics will be moderated by the books' authors, Elizabeth Young & Graham Caveney. Panelists TBA. **Thursday, 8 pm**

7 MEN & RACE

Evert Eden, Gavin Moses, Ed Morales, Tyto Antonio Davis, Alvin Eng. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

10 NICKY PARAISO & MAUDE DAVIS

Nicky Paraiso is an actor & performance artist who will read from a work-in-progress called *Asian Boys: Sleeping With my Brother* & excerpts from *Reckless Angels*. Maude Davis, sometimes known as Miss Flounder & Columbine the Combustible, is a performance artist who will present women characters exploring their secret erotic life. **Monday, 8 pm**

12 ALLEN GINSBERG & GALWAY KINNELL

Allen Ginsberg's recent projects include *Snapshots Poetics*, a book of photographs upcoming from Chronicle Books & a 4-CD set of four decades of recorded poetry from Rhino Records. Galway Kinnell's most recent book of poetry is *When One Has Lived a Long Time Alone* (Knopf). **Wednesday, 8 pm**

14 FEMALE ROCK WRITERS

include A Young Recruit & The I and the You (Potes & Poets Press, 1992). Her translations of Nadezhda Kondakova's work appear in *Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry* (University of Michigan). **Wednesday, 8 pm**

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Diana Hartog's book of poems *Polite to Bees* (Coach House Press) is a bestiary that pries open animal dreams using writing that is sly, charming, wicked, & funny. Timothy Findley writes on her work, "Hartog catches you off guard by injecting an element of pain that leaves you breathless." Haas Mroue's book of civil war poems, *Beirut Seizures*, has just been published by New Earth Press. He lives in the mountains of Colorado. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

19 KATHY MASCHKE & KRISTEN BIEBIGHAUSER

Poet & painter Kathy Maschke's work blends the abstract with emotion. A student in Bernadette Mayer's workshop, Kristen Biebighauser is the author of a chapbook, *Left Hand Write*. **Monday, 8 pm**

21 JACQUES ROUBAUD & JOSEPH GUGLIELMI

A member of France's Oulipo school of experimental, quasi-mathematical literature, Jacques Roubaud is a novelist & poet whose novel, *Hortense in Exile*, is filled with epentheses, anagrams, songs, references to fellow Oulipians & asides—from commentator, printer, publisher, author, reviewer & the novel itself. Joseph Guglielmi is a poet & critic whose books include *Dawn* & *Le Mouvement de la Mort*. **Wednesday, 8 pm**

23 WHITMAN'S WEATHER BEATEN KIDS

The raindate reading for Whitman's Latch-Key Kids. An evening of poets from New Jersey: Cheryl Clarke, Kathy Crown, Eliot Katz, Maria Mazzio Gellan, Joel Lewis, James Ruggia, Ed Smith, Madeline Tiger, Hershel Silverman & Nancy Mercado. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

25 ST. MARK'S DAY

In honor of Harold Edelman, a trustee of the St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund, this institution-wide day of celebration will include special programs by The Poetry Project, Danspace & the Ontological Theater. **Sunday, 10:30 pm**

26 MATTHEW COURTNEY & JASMINE

Matthew Courtney is a performance poet who is currently on a mission to demystify poetry. Jasmine is a chanteuse/ poet/ accordioniste extraordinaire. **Monday, 8 pm**

28 PAUL BEATTY & ED SANDERS

Paul Beatty's book *Big Bank Take Little Bank* (Nuyorican Press), was picked by *The Village Voice* as one of the 25 best books of 1991. Ed Sanders' latest book is *Hymn to the Rebel Cafe* (Black Sparrow Press). His musical drama *Cassandra* will be performed in Woodstock in the summer of 1993. **Wednesday, 8 pm**

30 BOB BROWN & LISA WALKER

Bob Brown will read from his work-in-progress *The Hollow Boy*, a chronology of abandonment, five foster homes, an orphanage & 26 years of imprisonment. He served as a senior investigator for the Mayor's office of mid-town enforcement for 11 years. Lisa Walker is the author of *Because of You* (Penguin). She is a contributor to the *New Yorker* & is currently working on a reporting project about family life in the military. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

their secret erotic life. **Monday, 8 pm**

12 ALLEN GINSBERG & GALWAY KINNELL

Allen Ginsberg's recent projects include *Snapshot Poetics*, a book of photographs upcoming from Chronicle Books & a 4-CD set of four decades of recorded poetry from Rhino Records. Galway Kinnell's most recent book of poetry is *When One Has Lived a Long Time Alone* (Knopf). **Wednesday, 8 pm**

14 FEMALE ROCK WRITERS

Deborah Frost, Ann Powers, Carol Cooper, Evelyn McDonnell **Friday, 10:30 pm**

17 CHRISTOPHER FUNKHOUSER & BONNIE FINBERG

Christopher Funkhouser is studying towards his Ph.D in poetics at SUNY Buffalo. He is the publisher of WE Press. Poet Bonnie Finberg's recent poems & prose have appeared in *Appearances*, *Cover*, *National Poetry Magazine of the Lower East Side* & *Three Mile Harbour Review Quarterly*. **Monday, 8 pm**

19 BARBARA & DENNIS TEDLOCK

Barbara Tedlock's books include *The Beautiful & the Dangerous: Dialogues with the Zuni Indians* (Viking Penguin, 1992). Among Dennis Tedlock's collections & translations is *Breath on the Mirror: Mythic Voices and Visions of the Living Maya* (HarperCollins, 1993). The Tedlocks' work is marked by a vibrant interweaving of anthropology, poetics & reportage. They have both been trained by the highland Mayans of Guatemala in the ancient art of dream interpretation. **Wednesday, 8 pm**

21 VIDEO BY ST. CLAIR BOURNE

Both *In Motion: Amiri Baraka & Langston Hughes: The Dream Keeper* will be shown. St. Clair Bourne has over 30 productions to his credit in his distinguished career as an independent filmmaker. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

24 ALICE NOTLEY & JOHNNY STANTON

Alice Notley's books include *Margaret & Dusty* (Coffee House Press) & *At Night the States* (Yellow Press). Along with her husband, Douglas Oliver, she published *The Scarlet Cabinet*. She currently lives in Paris. Johnny Stanton—Born in NYC during World War II, freely admits that Alice Notley & her two husbands have been the greatest inspirations of his life. Hip hip huray! **Monday, 8 pm**

26 ED FRIEDMAN & BOB ROSENTHAL

Ed Friedman's books include *The Telephone Book*, *La Frontera* (with Kim MacConnel), & *Humans Work*. His recent poems & prose have appeared in such journals as *Hanging Loose*, *Shiny*, *Instant Classics* & *The World*. Bob Rosenthal's recent poems have appeared in *The World* & *The Thinker Review*. His books include the cult classic *Cleaning Up New York*. **Wednesday, 8 pm**

28 THE ALBUM THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Richard Rhetto, Emily XYZ, Darren Ressler, Neil Strauss, Reggie Gaines, Star Black, Willie Perdomo, Michael Lydon & Beth Fein. **Friday, 10:30 pm**

M A R Y

REVIEWS

JOYCE MANSOUR,
TRANSLATED BY
SERGE GAVRONSKY
Cris/Screams
BIN RAMKE
Catalogue Raisonné
RENA ROSENWASSER

MIKE BASINSKI

**Moon Bok: petition, invocation
& homage**

J. BATTAGLIA

Skin Problems

TOM BECKETT

**Economies of Pure Expenditure: a
notebook**

ELIZABETH BURNS,

Letters to Elizabeth Bishop

PETER GANICK

... As Convenience

DREW GARDNER

The Cover

SUSAN GEVIRTZ

Domino: point of entry

JEFF HANSEN

gods to the elbows

LE ANN JACOBS

Varieties of Inflorescence

ROBERT KELLY

**Manifesto: For the Next New
York School**

ANN PEDONE

The Bird Happened

JOHN PERLMAN

imperatives of address

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

Nearings: two poems

PAM REHM

Pollux

JULIANA SPAHR

nuclear

BILL TUTTLE

Private Residence

KEITH WALDRUP

The Balustrade

MARK WALLACE

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Material**

NINA ZIVANCEVIC

I Was This War Reporter in Egypt

DODDIE BELLAMY

**Answer: From the Letters of Mina
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TINA DARRAGH

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CATHLEEN SHATTUCK

The Three Queens

JOHN BYRUM

Interalia: among other things

GALE NELSON

little brass pump

JENA OSMAN

balance

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LACE (EDS.)

Poetic Briefs

16 pp, \$8 for six issues

"I like the way LEAVE books appear outside the system, are minor even amongst the minor world of small press publishing (this issue is further complicated by the fact that LEAVE's monetary sources prevent the selling of any of the books—but this in itself is a great freedom, a freedom from accounts and invoices, a freedom from the pressure to produce a sellable product). They are a moment where the book is not being sold, a moment of the word as excess, a moment where poetry is not a commodity."

—Juliana Spahr

"I felt that self-publishing was the only way I'd be able to get my work out into the world."

—Bob Grumman

"Write your poems, and have a nice dinner."

—Elizabeth Burns

LEAVE books of Buffalo (357 Ashland Avenue, Buffalo 14222) has published more than 28 books since 1991 in conjunction with the publishing of two

poetry newsletters: *Poetic Briefs* (404 Jersey St. Rear, Buffalo 14213) and *Situation* (82 Fargo Avenue #3, Buffalo 14201-1138). The books are hand sewn with Irish linen thread. Each is usually one 12-25-page work or a poem series of that size.

To have such an independent publishing conglomerate in the United States now is a privilege for us all. For anyone to have objections to it, as some have, calling it effeminate, infantile, flimsy, insignificant, citing the books as slim darlings, is astonishing. *Situation* invites "formally innovative poetry that explores how writing creates, dismantles, or restructures the possibility of identity. A poetry of situation. Poetry involving questions of race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual preference are all encouraged." *Poetic Briefs* invites "a potpourri of impressionistic and informational reviews, prose poems on aesthetic theory, condensed criticism and theory, bibliographies of a specific terrain, and other stuff all coming from a wide variety of contingencies and contexts. This all-over-the-map approach will foster a dialogue among Buffalo poets and the wider world." LEAVE books invites "works of poetry and essays on poetry that are linguistically innovative" and of the 12-25-page size.

These poets working in Buffalo and sometimes with the university there are providing us with a lot of information. For instance in issues of *Briefs*, apart from fascinating dialogues and reviews of readings, performances and books, you can find: a forum invited on "Art and Food," strange stuff about MLA panels, exchanges on the speed of Tom Raworth's readings, talk about "marketing" in poetry, statements on Robert Duncan's place as a gay poet, how to read *The Cantos* as fiction, theories of chance-generated poetry, thoughts on Clark Coolidge and alienation, on red rain, on 1990s Mail Art, on the baffling phraseology of the "language poets" and the disqualification of the casual reader, on the gentle anti-assault on the militarily named avant-garde, on the uses of words and phrases with sexist histories, on the Samizdat relation, plus parts of Lorenzo Thomas's talk on Tolson and Baraka and suggestions of possibilities for reuniting poetry with the academic world.

burning deck



71 Elmgrove Ave #1A
Providence, RI 02906

ELIZABETH MACKIERNAN: *Ancestors Maybe*

A comic fantasy about the Pagano-Christian tradition as experienced in Connecticut. Three sisters, all named Marie, and their companion Hugo, probably a dwarf, entertain dead family members in a burlesque of the family novel and Irish-American traditions. 160 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, paper \$8, signed paper \$15

BRITA BERGLAND: *The Rebirth of the Older Child*

These poems fuse a sophisticated sense of language with a predilection for the "rural voice," the "whacky grandeur" of everyday life on a farm. 64 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, paper \$8, signed paper \$15

CLAIRE NEEDELL: *Not A Balancing Act*

In this first collection, language is delivered up with a sense of failure: a name that cannot reach its object. Images are replaced so rapidly that even the most concrete tremble as the physical is drawn into the abstract, and the abstract into a rich immediacy. 64 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, paper \$8, signed paper \$15

RAY RAGOSTA: *Varieties of Religious Experience*

Poems that explore the "margin" of our field of consciousness, the border toward the residual. "Ragosta is more participant than onlooker... He succeeds in penetrating to the unpredictable center of all experience."—*Northeast Journal*. 80 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, paper \$8, signed paper \$15

PAM REHM: *The Garment In Which No One Had Slept*

"Hesitation has been used 'to have something' to give back,' shyness has been used as 'a nerve into all circumstances.' What Pam Rehm has given in these poems is worthy of our intense and serious attention."—John Taggart 64 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, paper \$8, signed paper \$15

Serie d'écriture No.6: JEAN DAIVE, *A Lesson in Music* (trans. Julie Kalendek). 64 pages, offset, paper \$6

Serie d'écriture No.7: Dominique Fourcade, Isabelle Hovald, Jacques Roubaud, Esther Tellerman etc. translated by Norma Cole, Tom Mandel, Cole Swensen and others. 96 pages, offset, paper \$6

Burning Deck has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, and the Fund for Poetry.

New Books from Hanging Loose Press

Paul Violi

The Curious Builder

Pure pleasure from "the best satirical mind in contemporary poetry" (Andrei Codrescu). "I can't think of anyone who is writing better poems right now" —Charles North. "Deft, magical" —Paul Genega.

Paper, \$10. Cloth, \$18.

Indran Amirthanayagam

The Elephants of Reckoning

A first collection by a Sri Lankan who lives in Brooklyn, "one of the purest lyric poets I've come upon in many years" —Stephen Dunn. "There is grace in all that he writes" —Alastair Reid. "Powerful" —Eva Hoffman.

Paper, \$10. Cloth, \$18.

John Gill

Between Worlds: New and Selected Poems

Poems from four decades by the co-founder of The Crossing Press. "Warmly human poems that reward us with precise details, intense emotions..." —Brown Miller. "Original...perceptive...unmistakably fine" —Hayden Carruth.

Paper, \$12. Cloth, \$20.

Marie Harris

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Her prose poems are "tantalizing ... very imaginative and witty" —Maxine Kumin. "A delightful and original book" —Rosellen Brown. "Deserves an enthusiastic audience" —Colette Inez.

Paper, \$10. Cloth, \$18.

Mark Pawlak

Special Handling

"Poets like Charles Reznikoff, Ernesto Cardenal, and now, Mark Pawlak, dedicate themselves to a work whose value reaches far beyond the merely documentary" —Anselm Hollo. "Strange, haunting, luminous" —Hilton Obenzinger.

Paper, \$10. Cloth, \$18.

Hanging Loose Magazine

New work in #61 by John Yau, Archie Rand, Larry Zirlin, Mary Ferrari, Sherman Alexie, Chuck Wachtel, Jacques Servin, Hal Sirowitz, Colin Greer, Katharine Harer, Beth Bosworth, Denise Duhamel, Sam Kashner, and many others. \$5.

New York Times Notable Book of 1992

The Business of Fancydancing, Sherman Alexie

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These energetic geniuses of the Buffalo sphere are doing something inspiring. Norma Cole writes to *Briefs* to applaud "the swiftness implicit in the form and production means" of LEAVE books and the "crucial ephemeral exchange that continuously regenerates the context for further work/exploration. "This, in itself," she says, "is a position statement." In the same issue Elizabeth Burns gets more daily: "These pages came from Juliana's car trunk into our house, and they went to the kitchen table where the spines and holes were made, and they came to the living room and we sewed them up, and they left as books." She says she's loved sewing in the center of the book so that each book "flashes its open-nest part" and quotes some random center-of-the-book poetic stuff. I recognize that feeling from collating oolfoos (impossible-to-perceive numbers) of mimeographed magazines. It's a good way to

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telling and listening to anything or everything." "I see LEAVE," he says, "as trying to be both 'telling and listening.'" He goes on to discuss quietism and defend the EVERYDAY, "the voices and accents of the ongoing onwriting stories which institutionally and politically go unnoticed . . ."

And then Spahr saying, "But I also believe there needs to be a place for the 16-20 page work. This is a length that magazines traditionally avoid even though there are a lot of poems written in this length." Brava! And, quoting Kafka (via Deleuze and Guattari's *Towards a Minor Literature*): "What in great literature goes on down below, constituting a not indispensable cellar of the structure, here takes place in the full light of day, what is there a matter of passing interest for a few, here absorbs everyone no less than as a matter of life and death."

It's impossible to talk about each of the 28 LEAVE books I have; it's good that there are so many of them and I will list their authors: Mike Basinski, J. Battaglia, Tom Beckett, Elizabeth Burns, Peter Ganick, Drew Gardner, Susan Gevirtz, Jeff Hansen, Le Ann Jacobs, Robert Kelly, Gale Nelson, Jena Osman, Ann Pedone, John Perlman, Elizabeth Robinson, Pam Rehm, Juliana Spahr, Bill Tuttle, Keith Waldrop, Mark Wallace, Nina Zivancevic, Dodie Bellamy, Tina Darragh, Joyce Mansour, Bin Ramke, Rena Rossenwasser, Cathleen Shattuck, Kristen Prevallet, and I'm sure by now, others.

Some of the main perpetrators of these publications are Jefferson Hansen, Elizabeth Burns, Juliana Spahr, Brigham Taylor, Bill Tuttle, Mark

study poetry.

Bill Tuttle quotes Gertrude Stein identifying "being a genius" as "being one who is one at one and at the same time

Wallace plus I'm only alleging Robert Creeley, Deborah Ott, Peter Gizzi, plus all the writers who've come to read in Buffalo who're subject to the most detailed scrutiny in the pages of *Briefs*.

Part of the impression you get is of an enthralled anti-violent nearly violent or violet love of every available moment of poetry, of all the chances of hearing reading writing conversing in a not-school-of-poetry way. And through this wild conglomerate you get introduced to a myriad of new experimental writers, pursuers of poetry of all the persuasions and mainly of a series of new generations. People sometimes say they're worried there are too many poets now (in the U.S. I guess); I couldn't agree less. Also sometimes *Briefs* at least is a little academic too, which is good for us old-fogey Kerouacians and Steinians.

LEAVE books are free but asking donations of twenty dollars for a yearly series of fifteen books, perhaps more books. *Situation* asks eight dollars for four issues and *Poetic Briefs* six issues for eight dollars—"less than the price of *People* but more than *Family Circle*"—or an exchange of publications, or personal negotiation, or a donation you can afford.

"God save Cap'n Vere!"

—Bernadette Mayer

ROBERT DUNCAN

Selected Poems

New Directions, 143 pp., \$22.95 cloth, \$10.95 paper.

Five years after his death, with his verse variously scattered and out of print, and the long-planned University of California Press scholarly edition of his complete works still no more than a hopeful glimmer on the far horizon, this useful and portable compilation provides us the most comprehensive available look at the career of the Bay Area's greatest lyric poet, Robert Duncan.

Given up for adoption by his father after his mother's death in childbirth—"she died when I was born," he would write, "because my head was too big, tearing my way through her agony to life"—Duncan was brought up by a Bay Area couple whose theosophical beliefs inculcated in him an early and lasting disposition to engage the world as an essentially spiritual place, with life and

Solving Three

As practice, cadence
may resemble a ballroom dance
increasing in viscosity
through a distance
also called "little dipper."
To develop truth
the whole universe is a progression
of interrelated phenomena
of ornament, being filmy
passed through a filter
passed through eyelids
pinkish like crystals.
To bring forth a lamb
covered with laminate,
cook by inserting.
The tongue, folded over,
covered with bright overlapping scales
suspended in a liquid
pronounce the sibilants
discharging the indebtedness of
larval through the whole night,
the form of a woman
or half woman half fish
surface of vibrating body
free or relatively free.

—Kim Lyons

nature to be "read" as its sacred texts.

While deeply committed to the real in his poetry, Duncan never ceased to interpret reality allegorically, tirelessly searching both "the old stories" (as he lovingly called them) and everyday events for the underlying structures of a living mythology linking the human with the cosmic in one great chord.

Like his prophetic masters—Dante, Blake, Pound—whose ambitious epic or prophetic creations his own work increasingly came to parallel, Duncan found complex meaning everywhere in the universe, and passed through the study of classic and traditional myth to the inscribing of its contemporary figurations.

And like that of the very best poets, Duncan's work—as this "Selected" makes amply clear—has a way of sounding at once absolutely true to and new for its time, and utterly ancient, echoing some original voice of song and story that dates back to what he calls in one prose poem here the "everlasting cottage in the deepest part of the forest of the tales told by a fire."

Magic, the conjuring of hermetic meaning out of symbol and dream and secret sympathy, plays a prominent part in the image of Duncan's practice that comes through in this book, with himself as mage in his poet-persona. Indeed, the last poem in the "Selected" (and the last he published), "After a Long Illness," seems to confirm this role: "The magic has always been there, the magnetic purr/run over me, the feel as of cat's fur . . ."

But given its spiritualist/occultist tendencies, Duncan's poetry reflects equally an abiding communion with the concrete tactile existence around us. Here one finds him as much a poet of the hearth as of the aether.

"The joys of the household are fates that command us," Duncan wrote in the 1955-56 sequence "Letters." His prose poem, "Salvages: An Evening Piece," from the 1951-52 book, "A Book of Resemblances," shows him a master of the domestic intimacies of touch, and of the associations that accumulate in the surfaces of a life: surfaces as common as, say, "a grimy patina beautiful 1929 buffalo Indian head nickel," rubbed and darkened with use, commemorated for its "reversion" from economic value to magical substantiality.

The real American histories revealed through such daily private contacts—

"the beauty of where we have been living that is the poetry of the hour"—provide Duncan's work with a personal and physical immediacy that at once grounds, dramatizes and makes credible its concurrent trajectory of spiritual search.

"Where there is soul," Duncan once proposed in an early notebook summary of his poetics, "all the world and body become the soul's adventure and trial": "Psyche travels/life after life," he wrote in "A Poem Beginning with a Line from Pindar," "my life, station/after station/to be tried." He saw the historical world as a spiritual proving ground, his poetry as a narrative of his soul's progress through it.

Duncan's wings of Orphism and of Eros made him a poet of transformation and of love, but it was the enchainment of his gifts in history which brought about his most heroic and powerful verse.

I'm thinking here of such great elegiac historical testimonies as the mid-1950s "A Poem Beginning with a Line by Pindar," and the late-1960s sequence, "Passages," with its magisterial prophetic exorcisms of the Vietnam War.

Particularly impressive are the latter's twenty-fifth and thirty-fifth sections, "Up Rising" and "Before the Judgment," both included here. In these great, dark descents into the hells of history, Duncan mourned the loss of our national heritage of purpose, finding in the belligerence of Johnson and Goldwater a betrayal of the dreams of Adams and Jefferson, a "deep hatred for the old world that had driven generations of America out of itself,/and for the alien, the new world about him, that might have been Paradise."

Even in these difficult passages, however, Duncan discovered evidence of sustaining spiritual presence, clothing our humanity in a timeless world of radiant forms, "Hosts of the Word that attend our words." Seeds

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of wisdom loose in the cosmic winds, these Danteque forces of love seem to win out in Duncan's poetry over the Blakean Hydras of war and "deep violation."

—Tom Clark

STEVE LEVINE

To and For

Coffee House Press, 1992, 67 pp, \$10.95

Steve Levine's *To and For* is a collection of new poems and poems selected from three previous chapbook collections. It is a watershed book, as might be expected from a poet who turns 40 this year. It is also his first book without a blue cover.

Though Levine grew up on the East Coast and in the Midwest, his New York City tendencies in poetry showed themselves early. "June," in its list of the daily routine of life, echoes Ted Berrigan, who was an important influence in Chicago when Levine was in college there. Levine's sensibility, however, has more in common with Padgett's Okla-

• • •

After the hurricane

Walking out to shut the chickens up
stars stella worlds

no moon;
so bright
so many.

The chickens shuffle
mutter at my visit huddle back.

In the house the children sleep
by candle light
electricity cables blown clean away.

They are dense solidly asleep—
is no one as tired as me?

The oil lamps blaze
a strange car passes.

It would seem that
children dance to resolve the world.

We tired old ones
collapse on the sides
prepare ourselves for death,
too much knowledge leaves little room
and time for experience.

I will wave my flag and retire.

—Elaine Randell

homa-Paris polarity than Berrigan's expansive Irish. "The Best of Friends," a compendium of names of the turn-of-the-century New York demimonde, among others, could not have been written without Padgett's example, and "Poem (Red fit zen)" is related to Padgett's phonetic "translations" of Reverdy.

Levine's delight in words, their texture and their meanings, mismeanings, and mishearings, is a delight to the reader as well. His wordplay often involves what might be called pun as misprint: "Read Reverdy in the stifling heart"; "I heard two heels scrapping"; or his one-line poem "Summer"—"Fry in the ointment."

Levine's line has two basic modes: the terse three-or-four-word line, often used for satiric or ironic purpose, and the long let-it-all-hang-out ramble. His handling of the latter is especially impressive: that rush of words, fast, fast,

REVIEWS

like the manic guy in the Federal Express commercial, a race to the close, yet he gets it all in, as in the last stanza of "Epistle":

*Glaucous magnolia
Exquisite Indian, sailboat in the
snow, in flexible equilibrium all
soldier, all poet, all scholar, all
saint, all some one gift or meri-
torious success, one tough
gazooka which loves all
palookas, harmonious human
multitude!*

One glorious run-on, demonstrating a perfect ear, like Tennyson on speed. Yet the short lines have their music, too, as in "Homage to Kurt Schwitters," which reads like early T. S. Eliot cut with Vachel Lindsay and then compressed.

The selection of early poems is good. There are only three omitted poems that I miss: "Tiny Catullus," "Two Mr. Ed, Dead," and "Piss" (surely the best poem

ever written about the Poetry Project). "Now stop that/sort of/stilted talk," Levine admonishes himself in the poem that begins the New Poems section of the book, and he generally obeys his admonition. The lines are short, the poems spare. The tone is ironic when he confronts mad America or elegiac when he writes to his late father. Levine excels in tiny, imagistic poems that capture moments like snapshots:

*As the subway pitches
Into the tunnel, she appears!
Mirrored in the black window*

It is his joy in such small miracles that enables Levine to overcome what he calls in an elegy to Berrigan "miserable life" and to end in hard-won affirmation. This is a book that deserves to be known outside the East Village.

—Reagan Upshaw

MICHAEL STEPHENS

Jigs and Reels

Hanging Loose Press, 89 pp., \$18 cloth, \$10 paper

This is Michael Stephens' twelfth book. He has written poetry, short and long fiction, memoir, drama, and he has even done some translating. The fact of his diversity is imprinted, like a water mark in a sheet of paper, and can be read everywhere in *Jigs and Reels*. For writers, this book is valuable for what can be learned about craft. For any reader, the book is delightful in its wide range of subject and voice. Its discrete short pieces are united by a consistent music. Carefully worked, each explores undercurrents and background harmonies that usually go unobserved.

The book's back cover carries the classification "prose" on it. Yet each movement, each of the many "dances," the jigs and reels, is poetical and at times theatrical. Much contemporary writing takes no cognizance of generic distinctions, in part because of Stephens' efforts in all his work to dissolve the lines that ostensibly mark off, say, poetry and prose, and thereby to investigate the essential act of writing per se.

Stephens can go Pound (who was an early model, along with Oppenheimer and Blackburn) one better in creating excruciatingly delightful and therefore

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powerful half-rhymes that are set within a rhythmic counterpoint. Compare Canto LXXXI, where Pound is playing off Waller, and Lawes:

Lawes and Jenkyns guard thy rest
Dolmetsch ever by thy guest,
*Has he tempered the viol's wood
To enforce both the grave and the acute?
Has he curved us the bowl of the lute?*

Here, one might say, is a manual for writing poetry—that is, how to make use of every syllable to its fullest; all the fat's been pared away. This passage is the pure sound and meaning of a musical instrument, and self-aware in that the sounds of the passage are both "grave" and "acute," like the resonance of string and wood.

And now Stephens:

Solomon Says

You are fair, love, look how fair you are—you have dove's eyes in your locks, your hair is like a flock of goats, they appear on the mountain. Like a flock of sheep, your teeth, even shorn, after washing—let all twins be born, none barren. . .

Like Pound, Stephens situates himself within an artistic tradition; he defines himself through modulating a past text of words, and, likely enough, music. His revamping of the Old Testament is set within a pattern of rhyme and half rhyme in which slight changes in sound extend that pattern and simultaneously refer back to the pattern's origins; the effect is a comprehensive harmony that suggests the bringing together of lovers as well as the words they choose to speak to one another. The rhyme "steps out" from and turns back on itself through its inflection, which leads to the next rhyme, and so on. The bending of notes gets progressively bolder until the single syllable 'or' sound, coupled with the soft 'n', is flattened and extended ("mountain," "even shorn," "twins," "born," "none barren")—so that in the mutation plenitude is most apparent, to suggest the fecundity and chain of life the "Song of Solomon" proposes.

Stephens' music ultimately derives from his playfulness and the ambiguity it engenders. If his surfaces are at times daffy, we come to find out how very carefully they are made. His "play" has a dark undertone to it, moreover, a

sobriety. He knows how to use dissonance and he can walk the boundary that separates what is awkward and what is fine. This is a book of reflections, in middle age (though some of these pieces may have been first jotted down years ago). We see Stephens at what is perhaps a turning point in both his life and his career. The dances are elegant and fierce; the life is distilled.

—Burt Kimmelman



MAGGIE ANDERSON, ALEX GILDZEN & RAYMOND A. CRAIG

A Gathering of Poets

Kent State University Press

The introduction to this anthology asserts that two of the most important functions of poetry are to remember and to heal. I prefer the line from co-editor Alex Gilzden's poem. Poetry is "to pit craft against chaos." The gathering in the title refers to the events held at Kent State in May 1990 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the killings at Kent and later at Jackson State.

I'm too young to remember first hearing about the Kent or Jackson killings. For me, they always have been, like Kennedy, Lincoln and the Civil War. As a result I have a hard time relating to the selection of poems written shortly after the events in May 1970.

Jackson State receives few explicit references. However, the few poems that do mention the events there resonate throughout, even if only by contrast, as in Toi Derricotte's "For the Dead at Jackson State"

*whose names I don't know
because I am as ignorant as newspapers
because I block my ears of so many
sounds that
frighten, names I do not call out
names I cannot answer to
that in my heart keep
whispering their syllables*

The chaos being confronted here isn't only the question that Kelly Cherry asks



in "The Fate of the Children"; "what is poetic about the way we slaughter our children?"

All tragedies (World Wars, personal losses, and AIDS are explored along with the killings) are united in the needs they evoke. We have a need to remember. We desire to legitimate our own emotions in the face of confusion, cruelty and loss. Most importantly, we must react and take action.

Facing tragedy and chaos, *A Gathering of Poets* is a powerful celebration of the purpose and powers of poetry outside of its usual vacuum. The introduction warns that the book isn't always an easy or pleasant read, and it isn't. The poems are, however, consistently real and pertinent, making for one of the most affecting anthologies I've encountered.

—Jason Cruz



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Scarlet Fever

or, how some
writers respond to the request to write about
The Scarlet Cabinet, a collection of books by
Alice Notley & Douglas Oliver

Wars and Women

By Lorenzo Thomas

To ask an impertinent question, to question the putative source of Western civilization—as Alice Notley does in Homer’s *Art*—is a bold endeavor. Part of this boldness has to do with the fact that she phrases the question in a woman’s voice.

*To sing of wars, of captains, and of
kings,
Of cities founded, commonwealths
begun,
For my mean pen are too superior
things*

wrote Anne Bradstreet with typical Neoclassical irony in *The Prologue to The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650). But Notley’s word processor is equal to the task. Perhaps.

What, asks Notley, can reading *The Iliad* teach us “if one were . . . trying to write a poem having to do with the Vietnam War?” Well, two things: (1) In any and all events, war is “Stupid” —thus one war is just the same as any other; and (2) Nothing. Thus Notley’s poem “White Phosphorus” merely casts the Vietnam War back into the realm of anyone’s personal experience of that time frame:

*“Whose heart” “might be lost?”
“Whose mask is this?” . . .
. . . “Who went” “to Vietnam?”
 (“We know who died there”)*

This is simply about the result of living during a period of time known as the Vietnam War. Maybe that’s tragic, maybe not. But what makes an epic? The same stuff is found in Homer, except his scenes show different battlefields.

Rightly, Notley places her emphasis on questions of gender. How is war virtuous, i.e. manly? Why? Because it has

so been defined. In the extraordinary poems “You Haven’t Saved Me Any Time” and “What Does She Think” (from the sequence *TWELVE POEMS WITHOUT MASK*), Alice Notley quite effectively exposes the vampire state of things that we call Western Civilization. She depicts it (as it likes to see its own self) as a museum of time, wunderkammer stuffed with glorious and manly artifacts of triumph:

*the dead men’s cosmos imprisoned for-
ever for your very own pleasure*

And, of course, that pleasure—like all glory derived from war—is at someone else’s expense.

Notley’s *TWELVE POEMS WITHOUT MASK* and *HOMER’S ART* are both exquisite and pure efforts giving birth to an awakened consciousness. They are not the record of anything—but the motion itself.

Feminists might claim these lines, but Notley is engaging a larger discourse. She is not Helen and this is not really about “the prize” finally getting a chance to speak up. Notley is eloquent and sensitive, but this is not a woman thing. Owen Dodson raised the same crucial questions in “Sailors on Leave” (*American Negro Poetry* edited by Arna Bontemps, 1974):

history

days off

i’m a terrific gift man

personal people

i’m electric but i’m buried

and don’t let me down

a niche

i’m natural

i’m history’s heaven

*No boy chooses war
But then we go
And in a cause find causes
To regret the summer and
The easy girl or boy
We drift to exist
To battle for, to die.*

And that, of course, is the very subject of Homer’s *Iliad*, too. It isn’t new. But Alice Notley has framed the questions in a new way and insinuated the age-old answers with a mesmerizing intrigue of voices.

On the Scarlet Cabinet

By Leslie Scalapino

I’m sorry and I apologize to Doug Oliver (though I didn’t know this would occur) that my review of *The Scarlet Cabinet* came out by itself, giving the impression that I was failing to mention his contributions—when the plan was for the *Newsletter* to publish together a number of essays in which each reviewer of the book would consider other sections from it, by both Oliver and Notley. The task was considered to be too large for one reviewer.

The form of Oliver’s poem “Nava Sutra” seems to me to delineate his poetics, which is thought apprehending constant changes of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ phenomena. This process is what he calls the ‘soul.’ Minute social/political/material movement is the instant of time: “Absolutes of finite content but infinite possibility arise at each instant of relativity but only within the instant.”

The ‘soul’ is literally what we don’t know: “In essence, Spirit is the unknown.” This is open-ended and inclusive.

—Danine Ricereto

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Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, poems
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Sphericity is the first collection of poems by Mei-mei Berssenbrugge in several years. Berssenbrugge's first collaboration with artist Richard Tuttle, *Hiddenness*, was published by the Whitney Museum Library Fellows; it was exhibited at the New York Public Library, the National Gallery, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. In this new edition, light continues as the medium of small shocks of perception and revelation which boundaries only partly contain. The drawings and written lines are original and exploratory. Mei-mei Berssenbrugge is the recipient of two American Book Awards and a PEN West Award; Richard Tuttle first exhibited at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1965 and has shown widely in museums in Europe and the United States.

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The Poetry Project Newsletter
 New York artist Jennifer Macdonald has conceived a series of visual interventions

that take as their point of departure references to skin in the text. "Using photo technology on vellum, itself a skin, these images intersect the poetry by way of metaphor and movement." —JENNIFER MACDONALD
 Ms. Macdonald's work is in the 1993 Whitney Biennial.
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The germ of his writing is thus the conception of any starting and any ending recreating each other continually, and a hole (which itself is spirit) being found into what has not yet been seen. The form of "Nava Sutra" is the movement of its thought. Its form is a loose series of statements.

Regarding my criticism of Oliver's introduction: I didn't quote the passage because I was told to stick to two pages. Here it is; Oliver has just criticized academic poets and continues:

Of course, this is just one—the most socially pernicious and aesthetically narrow—of U.S. poetic power-bases. Acquired fame as a mainstream "Giant," a Beat, a leader of ethnic or sex/gender causes, a performance/song poet, a fast-rapper, a language poet, a regional or city-based poet . . . allows you to join other cliques, which foster other poetic styles. We, with our own power-bases, can't get free of these modern "careers" but we think they betray the poetic, spiritual, and political assumptions of our own work. What you can't do in the orthodoxies of present-day publishing is be too unusual within your clique, or publish what you think is important just because it's not in currently favored genre "A" or "B" . . .

Although I'm completely aware that Oliver's writing is entirely tuned to a social political vision (with a sincere concern and concentration, frequently satiric apprehension of the instant as it is being social construction), I read this passage in the introduction to mean he was excluding matters of gender/ethnicity/song etc. apparently by 'others' as they have self-interest and not a 'spiritual' poetics. Only later did it occur to me he means "U.S. poetic power-bases." Whether we are performance artists, language poets, or others, we all here have the same orthodox conservatism belonging to cliques merely for the sake of our careers and afraid to write what is real and crucial to us?

Oliver, who is British, should accept criticism for the view he does express—and the possibility the reader will view it this way—because his generalization there is inaccurate.

Its characterizations do not express his writing. His writing seems to express (as only one aspect in it) a conflict in him of acceptance of force of his own intellect and his own emotion, together. A melt-down. This crux is also a gener-

ating and constructive source of his writing: "In the body, incorporation of experience is achieved through physiological imprinting; in mind, incorporation of experience is achieved through cognition."

Dear Scarlet Cabinet

By Lee Ann Brown

You are no Scarletina. As I open each of your dresser drawers I'm delighted at the different books and compartmental chapters contained therein. You are a book that has it all! Alice Notley's opening remarks, "shiny-covered, same-looking books everywhere. To go into a bookstore & be made sick by all the books there, is almost the same as to be made sick by all the dead cars in New Jersey, seen from the train window, early in the morning" reminded me of the frustration we poets and publishers of poetry have in getting our slender volumes into these bookstores in the first place, only to disappear and never be reordered. Douglas Oliver and Alice Notley have hit upon the ingenious scheme to self-publish all of their books together (once you pay for the binding you've almost got it made), charge \$14.95 for one book instead of hoping people would pay \$9 for each of the five, and put a bright red cover on it so it will be heftily noticed in those unending racks of cyber-age info glut.

When I first heard and saw parts of *The Descent of Alette*, I had that rare, intense feeling of being in the presence of something altogether new. The use of the "quotation" marks is in the great Steinian lineage of remaking punctuation to fit one's needs. They stitch the piece together, quilt-like, their tiny feathery stitches hovering ubiquitously in the air over the words, eliminating the need for coathook commas that drag you down. The marks function to suggest new ways to phrase the words and highlight individual words: "because" "he had" "my skin" "I loved him for sharing" "my skin". I remember sitting with Alice in the 7th Avenue subway stop on the way back from the workshop at Sheila Alson's and first hearing of this epic tale unraveling in the subways under the one we were waiting for. I'm so glad to have my own realized copy of the completed astonishing work!

Reading Douglas Oliver's *Sophia*

Scarlet is a great pleasure with all of his adept Scottish dialogue, byzantine plot twists and conjuration of those beautifully scrofulous characters from the past. His *Penniless Politics* is a rare and radical political treatise that interweaves all kinds of languages, modes, and Voodoo speech acts in poems in the form of letters, resolutions and declarations of independence. It was pretty amazing to hear Doug read "White Crossroads" at Naropa with its refrain of "Ah'm to suck your asshole, stomp it,/ ain't mah style. You tell it baby,/ you tell it John, okay?/ This is the play-off boy, you know it, I know it."

Scarlet Cabinet, you are all of my summer reading packaged in one red volume. If I ever have children I will read you to them. Dealing with narrative, especially in poetry, is a very difficult task. Especially in these days of endless, dead academic slush. I was a little wary, I admit, when I heard of your parent's project to recover and work with the narrative mode, but *The Scarlet Cabinet* runs a lively gamut, utilizing allegorical epic modes in amazingly inventive and fresh ways. Read Notley's *Homer's Art* to get a take on the project. Sometimes we have to work in the whorehouse of storytelling to make ourselves clear. We might find we like it.

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BY THE DOOR (Continued from page 15)
ously appeared in the Newsletter. Obviously we can't recommend them enough.

Gilles Deleuze is just different. His reader, only the second I've ever liked (can you name the first?), is recent. Greatest hits include: *Rhizome versus trees*, *What is an event? Language: Major and Minor*, *Music and Ritornello*, and *Painting and Sensation*. Deleuze has a gift for metaphor. Let's leave it at that.

My first Ted Greenwald book was *Word of Mouth*, which I bought at Scribner's, the last day there was a Scribner's. The concatenations of phrases seemed too imposing to register as phrases, to be heard as speech, in this one voice. It made Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* seem clear and sensible. The next Greenwald book I found was *Licorice Chronicles*—I read it while reading *Ulysees* and the Asia travelogue coincided with the Gertie episode. Both books practically pole vault over those passages of parodic purple prose. Greenwald's last two books work differently. In "Normally," a poem to spring from 1991's *Looks Like I'm Walking*, he writes "How reasonable the spectacular seems technically/Appearing step by step." The poems in *Looks Like I'm Walking*, centered on the page, may use urn imagery and a formal potter's wheel, but aside from the "step by step" quoted above, and the incredible cleanliness of line, Greenwald's poems owe less to Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" than to Cleanth Brooks' reading of that poem, in which Brooks shows the poem to be a kind of object with strata of depiction, as if the poem is on the urn. (Sorry to bring back bad memories for everyone.) Greenwald says a big "sort of" to these ideas about his work, as he closes "These Are The Dreams For The Day" with:

*You imagine yourself subject
When the objects include your grasp
Around blue grecian to go container*

or as he closes "The Last Few Months Like Minutes" with

*The earlier vase is like an estuary
While the rest so liked is on our couch*

In "The Day As It Is Is a Vase Device", Greenwald writes out the problem of figure and ground, the optical illusion of the vase and the faces, and the electric moment when the brain flips aspects with Dickinsonian stealth. "Something's come up Nerves" leaves the em space's synaptic gap open between the two parts, the caesura a zone of action. The last line presents a double aspect—"a harbor between thumb and the index".

Greenwald's written that he doesn't think of poems as receptacles for good lines, but "Bright in a daughter light" and "For sound: memory fevers" are great lines well collected. In *You Go Through*, a series of untitled near-pantoums and not-sonnets, Greenwald starts out talking about the possibility of moving to the country, then gets involved with having a body, what used to get called proprioception. At his reading here this past fall, Greenwald read *You Go Through* in less than ten minutes (much thanks to *Poetic Briefs* for bringing the issue of speed to mind). The speed's effect was to make the lines repeated seem in stereo. You have to hear it.

—Jordan Davis

Dirt by Gillian McCain

Buy **Blown**. It's twenty-five bucks but worth it. **David Lanton** did the prints (all hand-colored) and **Todd Colby** wrote the text in a child-like scrawl. One of the highlights: *I have always taken three things for granted* 1) *I would never lose the use of my legs* 2) *I would live to see the child we created* 3) *I would never kill a man with a hammer*. There are 115 numbered copies, signed by the author and artist—act fast because I'm sure many of those have already been sold. Available from: **Evil Clown Books**, 275 Union Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231.

The highlight of my year was that the Friday Night Series landed on Page Six of the Post. Something about **Reno** screaming at Sassy editor **Christina Kelly**, "You're a fucking bitch" because her voice was too scratchy to talk about an article that appeared in **Sassy** five years ago on teenage lesbians. Who would ever know if it's actually true. I love how **Page Six** always states, "Our sources say ..." Whoever the sources were, it sure wasn't me, I was too busy stacking chairs and giggling over **Marjorie Ingalls'** piece on a teenage schizophrenic. "My God, he was a babe!" she'd exclaimed. And today I'm giggling that a band from my old dwelling, **Halifax, Nova Scotia**, is in **Sassy's CUTE BAND ALERT**. The Sassy connections are everywhere!

How can I write a column without mentioning **Sparrow**? He's finishing up a ten year project of translating New Yorker poems into plain english.

Buy Ann Arbor's own **MOTORBOOTY**. One of the editors is **Mike Rubin**, poet and writer for the *Village Voice*. Check out *Henry: the 100 years' "My War"*—a graph of poet laureate **Henry Rollins** and the amount of times he uses the following words in his books: "death"/"to kill", "hurt"/"pain", "lone-

ly"/"alone", "hate", and **Hubert Selby** Name-drop. Four Hubert Selby name-drops in *Black Coffee Blues*, one-hundred & thirty references to death or killing in *Bang ...* You get the picture. Also great in this Fall '92 issue—**Neil Strauss** reporting on the **Bootsy Collins** imposter; **Lloyd Dangle's** brilliant comic strip called "Detroit is for Voyeurs" (one of my favorite segments is a kid working at a golf course when three members of **Bob Seger's Silver Bullet Band** show up); an article called **Meet Camille Paglia**—"While **Naomi Wolf** has called Camille 'the nipple-pierced person's **Phyllis Schlafly**,' we like to think of her as 'the **Don Rickles** of the literati!' Her comments on such trendy subjects as rape ("Lighten up!"), feminism ("Fuck it!"), pornography ("Hubba hubba!"), prostitution ("If it doesn't cost money, it's not worth having!"), and of course sex ("I'm tri-sexual. I'll try anything, as long as its sexual") have struck a chord with regular people the world over!"; and the last thing I'm going to mention, a treatise on **The Motorbooty Generation**—"I've seen the best minds of my generation / Pedaling uphill with express-mail packages in their backpacks." Buy *Motorbooty*, the smartest fanzine ever. If you can't find it in your hometown, write: P.O. Box 7944, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

Speaking of really smart cultural criticism, look out for **Pagan Kennedy's** book on the 70s that should be published sometime in 1994 by St. Martin's Press. At the **Women of the Village Voice** reading she read a hilarious piece on Fashion & the Environment—all about the fashion boom of poptop clothing, polyester shirts with photographed landscapes embezzled into the fabric, and the angst of growing up during Carter's Save

LETTERS (con'td from p. 3)

This is a call to aid William Everson now 80, and ill with Parkinson's disease and bound to a wheel chair. He is being aided by friends across the nation. He requires constant personal care and his modest monthly income with some public aid is insufficient to maintain his independence. The William Everson Fund is under the auspices of the non-profit Native Images Inc., organization. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to:

The William Everson Fund
Coast Commercial Bank
720 Front Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
(408) 458-4500

Make checks payable to the William Everson Fund, account #01-50969-1. The bank has waived all account fees. Contributions of any kind are encouraged at this time. Future events include an art auction, a fund raising dinner and a poetry festival. There is no retirement fund for old poets. For additional information contact Steve

Sibley, Native Images Inc.
2539 Mission Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
(408) 425-0658

Thanks,
Paul Cummings

Dear Jordan,

After correspondence with Leslie Scalapino I now understand that her review's failure to acknowledge the two and a half books that I contributed to *The Scarlet Cabinet* was inadvertent: she had thought that my own work, and perhaps other of Alice Notley's work, were going to be covered elsewhere in the issue.

I have to state as firmly as possible that her statement that I do not think ethnic or gender causes are the proper concern of poetry entirely misreads my introduction to "the Cabinet". I could not possibly have said or intended to say any such thing: my whole lifework stands against such an interpretation and that is why I have to correct any such impression. I actually said that there is little place in current U.S. poetry publishing

for work that crosses over distinctions between the genres supported by the various publishing houses—by "crosses over" I do not mean "compromises between" or "attacks" those genres.

Sincerely,
Douglas Oliver

Jordan's note: *The collection of essays mentioned above appears on page 24.*

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2-3 pm

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Armband Schwerner
Wane Derringer
Clit Hymen
Dugout Rothschild
Joffrey Ballet
Carolina Geysler
Willie Predate
Jazz Man
Morsel Harm

3-4 pm

And Rower In Vitro Rice
Diva Chameleon
Josh Galled
Rodeo Fotter
Fed Robotson
Rot Koala
Elixir Noun
Don Juan Vasserwoman
Branded Deviance
Aurally Sheen

4-5 pm

Tulip Kupferberg
Pensive Arcane
Kumquat Ham
Mica Friedman
Patrician Spears June
Bill Hoshier
Bobolink Herself
David Vogue
Christopher Funk and Waggles
Vincent Chats
Daniel Creakier
Homerun Herodotus

5-6 pm

Kurt Lambskin
Sharon Messier

Simian Petted
Macro NASDAQ
Ed Moralize
Charnal Bernoulli Effect &
Bench Yarmulke

6-7 pm

Drooping Bottom
Muslim X. Junta
Ceilia Vicuna
Tom-Tom Savage
El Snowman
Steve Leaven
Shellac Arson
Don Forty
Wander Whips

7-8 pm

Ronald Einstein/Larry Shivers
Yo Shilelagh Chutney
Micrometer Brownstone
Harris Stiff
Anne Trades
Jackdaw Mackerel
Richer Foreskin
Petrol Gorgon
Browse Android
Mogul Algerian
Ian Gorgonzola
Gamine Moses
Cart Watts
Jim Gnu
Bobbin Dolman

8-9 pm

SDS Strawberry
Germ Salsa
Kimchee Lie On
Wild Thing
Elan Equipt
Pale Viola
Sushi Timings
Egg Friend Man

Maroon Owner
Pony Towel
Video Bodice
Allah Ginzu
Judith Rent-Lay

9-10 pm

Galleon Moccasin
Lynne Titman
Ricardo Help!
Fuss Puppets
Legs McNeil-Lehrer
MBA Mines
Edwin Taurus
Leeds Announcer Brunch with
Lizard Far Out, Bernadette
Peters & Catskill Gates
Padre Poetry
Judith Mania & Hanoi
Reznikov

10-11 pm

Las Vegas
Douglas Dung
Lorgnette Carsick
Carb Indiana
Jill Rapper
Jordan Advise
Mural Named-Negate
Saltpeter Sheepdip Wilson
Taylor In Need
Emily ABC
Strumwenches

11-12 pm

Liver Wordsworth
Kelvin Daffy

Upon Arrival:

Jim Crow Carpool
Low Greed
Gregorian Corpse

Many thanks to audio techni-
cian John Fiasco

This piece was collaboratively written by Lee Ann Brown & Lisa Jarnot on the afternoon of January 1, 1993 for the Poetry Project's 19th Annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading at St. Mark's Church.

Bernadette Mayer and Katie Yates were enlisted to announce the new list of readers, in turns by hours, with Lee Ann & Lisa

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