

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

No. 22

1 Feb. 1975

Bill Mac Kay, editor
St. Mark's Church, 2nd Avenue
& Tenth St., New York 10003

Queens meets Immaculate Conception in the first women's basketball game ever held at Madison Square Garden, Saturday, February 22, at 1:30 p.m.

The Axe Houghton Foundation has generously provided The Poetry Project with a grant to continue our reading series. We are deeply appreciative.

The Wednesday night calendar shows Douglas Woolf appearing February 5, followed by Reed Whittemore (February 12), Hannah Weiner & The Black Tarantula (February 19). Alice Notley & Anne Waldman share billing February 26, and the original Robert Bly will arrive March 5, robed, carrying sheafs of Neruda translations. The fun begins about 8:30. A dollar contribution.

Meanwhile, the Church was still reverberating from the January 1 benefit when Gary Snyder hit town January 29. The New Year's Day group reading packed St. Mark's for seven hours, filled the till with \$2091.37, left the Church strewn with spent flashbulbs. Seventy-two poets dancers musicians walked stumbled (in Kenneth King's case, swooned) towards the microphone; others couldn't even get in. Highlights were many: Patti Smith wore a bra, wooed her fans with hip-swivelling blues poems, her right arm outstretched, leading an invisible charge. William Burroughs ignored the pushy Time photographer, plunged grim-faced through a sardonic text about institutionalized genocide. Gregory Corso arrived late, without cab fare, then brought down the house with an elegant poem retrieved crumpled from his back pocket. Maniacal elements tried to stop the Sundance Kid repetitions of Robert Wilson & friend with eerie whistles, homicidal screams. Yoko Ono mesmerized the same throngs with a long mime of gradual speaking, reaching; Peter Orlovsky caught them offguard with straightforward talk. Anne Waldman rocked back and forth with the relentless incantations of "Battery"; for an instant, annual show-stealer John Giorno seemed ecstatically lost in his own soundings. John Cage, Jackson MacLow, Jackie Curtis, Ed Sanders, David Amram; it kept coming. Finally, Allen Ginsberg read, chanted, said good night. It had been.

Our man in Calcutta says that an experimental theatre group there is producing Rochelle Owens' The Karl Marx Play. Actors & actresses specializing in Urdu, take heed. Also, our highly-placed Polish sources report that secret performances there of Ms. Owens' Futz went off hitchless.

Erica Jong's recent celebrated non-reading at the Smithsonian was apparently only the last straw, the final chapter in the Institute's gradual realization that poets talk, i.e. make trouble. Now we learn that it all began long ago, with Allen Ginsberg chanting, and the Chief Justice and the erstwhile Vice President wincing, gagging, retiring to their respective typewriters to write short protesting notes to Smithsonian secretary S. Dillon Ripley.

In response, Allen composed his own letter to Mr. Ripley, parts of which we reprint with his kind permission:

"I am told that various government officials in Washington objected to my poetry on the grounds that it contained outrageous attacks on the C.I.A. etcetera, and that you received letters of complaint from Warren Berger and Spiro Agnew. Mr. Ripley, please be so kind as to send me a copy of these letters of complaint from Mr. Berger and Mr. Agnew. The subject is of direct concern to me, if these letters complain of my behavior or poetry. If in addition they served to discourage the presentation of poetry at the Smithsonian, they are of even greater concern to me... I assume that we may take it for granted that the poet has always been a strange person in many cultures, that his mind is his own, that his tongue may stray from the brow of God to the body of his beloved to the feet of his Prince to the heart of the Police State, i.e. no material in his consciousness is unworthy of representation in his poetic art."

At last, Helen Adam's Selected Poems & Ballads is available from Helikon Press. A long-awaited gift from a poet's poet singer muse white witch. Nothing in The Golden Treasury haunts one more than her "Limbo Gate". Seven dollars for this handsome cloth volume at select bookshops or from 120 W. 71 Street, New York City 10023.

Two new Rudy Burckhardt films will be screened in the parish hall of St. Mark's, Tuesday, February 25. Secret previewers rave about "City Pasture", a 45-minute epic collaboration with Ron Padgett, and "Sirroche", a travelogue filmed last summer in Peru. At 8:30 & 10. A contribution of a dollar.

Regina Beck would like to give piano lessons to poets and other primates. She can be reached at 982-7933.

"I want to keep it fresh and not too academic", George Butterick writes of his fledgling Olson: The Journal of the Charles Olson Archives. The evidence of #2 suggests that he has done just that, interspersing lists of Olson's reading with photographs, rediscovered poetry, a delightful letter from then-freshman Fee Dawson, even the minutes of a sometimes comic Black Mountain faculty meeting. Three fifty from the editor, c/o Special Collections Department, University of Connecticut Library, Storrs, Conn. 06268.

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Claude Pelieu & Mary Beach have decided to get married. In so doing, Claude becomes Charlie Plymell's father-in-law. Beyond that, one needs kinship diagrams.

Fast Speaking Woman, Anne Waldman's mini-modern classic, appears for the first time in book form as a Red Hanrahan offering. She steps out in style, too, with fancy paper, fine printing, pretty drawing by Ann Wilson. Numbered? But of course. Two fifty from Red Hanrahan Press, P.O. Box 03527, Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Britt Wilkie & his wispish beard have just returned from Nepal, points East.

Diane di Prima's Freddie Poems is the delicate record of a friendship love for dancer Fred Herko. Three dollars at the usual places (Phoenix, Gotham, etc.) or from Eidolon Editions, Point Reyes, California.

Duncan Hines recommends: Arm & Hammer products; Clifford Brown & Strings (Trip); baby's breath; Dennis Oppenheim at Gibson; Carrington by David Garnett (Ballantine); Sony Cassette-Corder TC-55; East/West Restaurant (105 E. 9 St.); Blood on the Tracks; Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (Bleecker St. Cinema, midnight); fruit & vegetable market at 221 First Avenue.

Maxine Groffsky has emerged as your friendly neighborhood literary agent, handling Jimmy Schuyler, Jim Carroll, Joe Brainard, to name a few.

Nearly everything you ever wanted to know about John Perreault, but were afraid to pry into is contained in the latest of The Serif: Quarterly of the Kent State University Libraries. The dossier contains interviews, recollections, poems, bibliography, gossip. Two dollars from Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio 44242.

Aram Saroyan appeared on "The Joe Franklin Show" the other night, looking a bit chubby (my T.V. screen?) and somewhat uncomfortable (wouldn't you be?). Nevertheless, he sang "When You're Thirty Years Old" a cappella and flogged his novel, The Street, which (rumor has it) is destined to be a movie, with Bob DeNiro playing Aram and Benny Goodman as Steve Allen. Honest.

Speaking of celluloid, some sensitive Hollywood mogul should snatch up the rights to Gilbert Sorrentino's Flawless Play Restored pronto. This "masque of fungo" is populated by such beings as Signorina Rigatoni, "a blazing-eyed gypsy lass", and Barnacle Bill, "a sailor". Priceless at any price, but at four dollars, downright cheap.

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Black Sparrow's other entry this month, Rochelle Owens' The Joe 82 Creation Poems, has a different resonance, consists of exuberant interlocking primordial poems. Also four dollars. Black Sparrow Press hides inside Post Office Box 25603, Los Angeles, California 90025.

Approximately 150 feet of Gordon Matta-Clark's scroll drawings created in the midst of the New Year's benefit riot are now for sale at the ridiculous price of \$5 a yard. That's right, \$1.66 a foot. And it's all beautiful. Call, write The Poetry Project for an appointment.

The Central Intelligence Agency in Peace & War: An agent reports, "Sometimes to run a good case involves quite a few people on our side. Because if you're going to meet the fellow, you have to have somebody watching you to see who else may be watching you and then watching him because somebody else may be watching him, so somebody has to be watching him to see who may be watching him when we make the meeting." (Washington Post, Jan. 5) We sleep sounder, knowing.

An exhibition of 24 drawings by Gordon Baldwin runs through March 2 at the Shepherd Gallery, 21 E. 84 St.

James Grauerholz (who, parenthetically, is not William Burroughs' son) is the author of Rusty Jack, a compelling little pamphlet from Cherry Valley Editions (Box 64, Cherry Valley, N.Y. 13320). Would-be readers serve best by sending a dollar posthaste to 306 E. 6 St. #3, New York City 10003.

A show of india ink and acrylic paintings by Henri Michaux is on view at the Lefebre Gallery (47 E. 77 St., RH4-3384) until February 15.

Want a job collecting two boys from Brooklyn Friends' School? Spend time with them from 3 p.m. - 7 p.m., five days a week. If so, call Anthony Russell, days at 255-0650.

Ted Berrigan, Maureen Owen, Ron Padgett, and Gerard Malanga will read aloud from their works the evening of Friday, February 7, at the Gotham Book Mart (41 W. 47 St.). Michael Brownstein will do the introductions. This Friday, January 31, the Book Mart Gallery presents four young poets (Thomas Lux, Cynthia Macdonald, James Reiss, Maura Stanton), to be introduced by Nathan Whiting. Dharmadhatu sponsors both readings & can be reached at 989-4792. A dollar fifty donation is asked. 8 p.m.

Creation
Imordial
Box 25603,

The nucleus of the Byrd Hoffman School has returned to this throbbing metropolis and will present the opera "A Letter for Queen Victoria" sometime in the spring at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. In the interim, the Byrds offers solo evenings with Bob Wilson (Sunday, February 2) and Chris Knowles (Sunday, February 9) at their Studio Loft, 147 Spring Street. Admission is \$3.00. Starting time is 5 p.m.

At the Kitchen, January 22 and 23, Jill Kroesen Fay Shism Ann R. Kism amazed audiences by presenting Robert Ashley alias Hashfish, the newest New York Guru, live. Anybody could ask him anything, and did. Ashley scratched his head. Meanwhile The Black Tarantula's in New York, and amazing everyone without having to do anything.

Workshoppers ferment three times weekly at St. Mark's; on Mondays, under the firm friendly hand of Charles North (8 p.m.); on Thursdays, led by gentle Lewis Warsh (8:30 p.m.); and on Tuesdays, under the auspices of a diverse and sordid cast of characters (8:30 p.m.). The workshop room is in the front of the Church, at the left. Free.

For Project information, call OR4-0910. Office hours are: Mondays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Tuesdays 2 - 8 p.m., Wednesdays 2 - 5 p.m., Thursdays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and 4:30 - 6 p.m.

Bernadette Mayer will read poetry and Ed Friedman will perform at the Book Gallery February 5, 240 West 72 Street, 8:30 p.m. Bring hankerchiefs.

Hart Book Shop (137 Sullivan Street, 533-3037) specializes in first edition poetry and fiction. Friendly, cozy, it deserves a visit. New hours are 5 - 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, noon to 6 p.m. Saturday & Sunday.

The University of Wisconsin Milwaukee hosts an international symposium on ethnopoetics, April 9 - 12, three days & four nights of free lectures, workshops, reading, chanting, and only god knows what else. Luminaries in attendance will include Gary Snyder, Jerome Rothenberg, Anne Waldman, Dennis Tedlock, Nathaniel Tarn, David Antin, and George Quasha. For a brochure & registration form write The Center for Twentieth Century Studies, Curtin Hall 929, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201, or call 414 - 963 - 4141.

Sandy Berrigan sends a review of "Alice's Show": "For me art is so rare on the West Coast. But this winter the sun shines, rain forgets to fall and I stroll under starlight to the back room of the Berkeley Public Library to see works by Alice Codrescu. They are small paintings of the landscape whose colors vibrate in a non psychedelic way, a movie of forms with color changes. Many were done in the car while driving by. Alice says, "I stopped sometimes." She also uses postcards and pictures to help her remember. These works catch all the moments you really want to keep. I want to keep a lot of her paintings. They are just as lovely moments in time as a rock formation or a tree.

When I was young I had a necklace of butterfly wings. These paintings are new butterfly wings for me. Fire in the ashes of the old books in the library."

A poverty stricken musician needs an inexpensive steel spring guitar, 6 or 12 string. Contact Maggie Staiger (416 E. 9 St., apt. 17, N.Y.C. 10009), giving name, phone number, details.

Kenneth King leads dance classes in improvisational/composition (Monday, 7 - 8:30 p.m.) and technic (Tuesday, 5 - 6:30 p.m.). For information, call The Exchange for the Arts (151 Bank St. at Westbeth) at 691-5035.

The Whitney Museum Art Resources Center (185 Cherry Street) spotlights "The Portae" and drawings and watercolors by Rosemary Mayer, January 30 - February 15. Noon through 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday..

The Natural History of the American Dancer will perform at St. Mark's on Tuesday, February 18, at 8 p.m. Contribution, a single bill.

Bill Zavatsky will lecture on "The Influence of Surrealism on American Poetry" at the Maison Francaise (560 W. 113 St., between Broadway & Amsterdam), Thursday, February 13, at 8 p.m.

High Jolly by David Garvin opens Thursday, February 6, at Theatre Genesis, and runs four weeks, Thursdays through Saturdays. For reservations to this Tony Barsha-directed play, call 533-4650 after 3 p.m.

Believe it or not, Joe Brainard's I Remember has been transformed into a ballet by the Louis Falco Company, premiered January 23 at N.Y.U.

Ed Friedman promises another full month of Monday night performances. February 3 is devoted to open reading, come as you are. Arthur Russell rock star, Rochelle Kraut (February 10); Mark Muhic, Patrick Conway, Alan Saret (February 17); Jim Raden & Paul Brown (February 24) all have parish hall appointments. Be there by 8:15 p.m.

Flash: Due this June, a Baxterette or Baxteroon; courtesy, Glen & Carole; their first.

The alternate staff incl Ed Sanders about Narop Instit

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library."

The Naropa Institute plans a summer "School of Spontaneous Poetics", alternately called "The Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics". Faculty staff include Allen Ginsberg, Anne Waldman, Ted Berrigan, Diane di Prima, Ed Sanders, Philip Whalen, and William Burroughs. Catalogues & information about Naropa's 2 - 5 week sessions can be obtained by correspondence to the Institute at 1441 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado.

John Wieners & John Ratti will read at the Donnell Library Center (20 West 53 St.), Tuesday, February 18, at 7:30 p.m.

The basketball adventures of Anne Waldman & Bernadette Mayer continue: last week, our heroines (accompanied by fellow-travelers Michael Brownstein & Larry Fagin) returned to the Nassau Coliseum to watch the Nets sneak by the Kentucky Colonels 112-110 on a back court foul in the final three seconds. Anne felt there was something morally ambiguous about winning on someone else's mistake, but rhapsodized about the victorious Dr. J anyway. "A genius," Bernadette agreed, kindly providing Erving's stats for the night: 42 points, 18 rebounds & 7 steals, 18 for 18 from the free throw line. "Artis Gilmore looks & moves like an antelope", Anne interloped.

The editor recommends A.R. Ammons' Spheres (Norton); The Pound Era (U.Cal.) by Hugh Kenner; More Goon Show Scripts (Sphere), ed. Spike Milligan; the Singing Tree reprint of Henry Morley's Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair; Dwarfs and Jesters in Art (Phaidon) by E. Tietze-Conrad; and Portrait of an Assassin (Simon & Schuster) by Gerald R. Ford and John R. Stiles.

John Marron has sweaty palms, hairy elbows, seems to be losing a grip on things, is secretive, will only say that he is gathering pieces about masturbation for an upcoming issue of Bad Breath. Self-abusers might contact John at 1609 S.E. 16th, Portland, Oregon 97214, or in the usual public places.

The Codrescus will be in New York during the last week in March and need a place to stay. They offer to lend their house in the California redwoods for one month (March 1 - April 1) in exchange for a mere one week in your humble N.Y. dwelling. Interested? Call 707 - 865-2698 or write Box 341, Monte Rio, California 95462. (P.S. Monte Rio is two hours from Bolinas and San Francisco.)

BALTIC STANZAS

less original than
penetrating
very often
illuminating

has taken us
300 years
to recover from
the disaster of

The White Mountain

O Manhattan!
O Saturday afternoons!
you were a room

& the room cried "Love!"
O Czechoslovakia!
I was a stove, & you
in cement were a dove

Ah, well, thanks for the shoes, god
I wear them on my right feet
since that bright winter when
rapt in your colors, O heat!

how we lay on your orange bed...
sipping iced white wine, & not thinking;
the blue sky outside exchanged blues while we were drinking.
Next day god sd "Hitler has to get hit on the head."

Ted Berrigan

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TO

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S.F. Ca.

