

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER
No. 89 March 1982
Greg Masters, editor
St. Mark's Church 674-0910
2nd Ave & 10th St NYC 10003
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WEDNESDAY READINGS: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$3, hosted by Bernadette Mayer & Bob Holman: March 3 - David Anderson & Steve Levine. March 10 - Reed Bye & Jonathan Williams. March 17 - Barbara Barg & CD Wright. March 24 - Ted Enslin & Diane Wakoski. March 31 - Hannah Weiner & Joanne Kyger.

MONDAY NIGHT READING/PERFORMANCE SERIES: at 8 PM, suggested contribution \$1, hosted by Bob Rosenthal & Rochelle Kraut: March 1 - REFRIGERATOR MADNESS "Not the Movie" "Not about Drugs" with Linda Hartinian & Bill Raymond + Vito Ricci & Byard Lancaster. March 8 - Open Reading. March 15 - Roland Legiardi-Laura & James Ruggia. March 22 - Rose Lesniak + SONOREXIA: Peter Cherches & Elliott Sharp. March 29 - Film Night: Ann Rower, Jack Collom, Chris Kraus, Connie Blitt, Rochelle Kraut, Gordon Ball and more.

On Friday, March 26 at 8 PM in the Parish Hall, Nancy Milford will speak about the biographer and her subject in a talk entitled "Edna St. Vincent Millay and Me". Nancy Milford is the author of Zelda and is currently working on a biography of Millay.

FREE WRITING WORKSHOPS (in Parish Hall, 2nd Floor)
Tuesdays at 7 PM with David Henderson (call for more info)
Saturdays at 4:30 with Hannah Weiner
Sundays at 7:30 with Steve Carey

And on April 1 at 8 PM a special workshop with Joanne Kyger

The 10:00 O'Clock Series, Saturday Nights, in collaboration with the Nuyorican Poets Cafe, 236 E 3rd Street, free, hosted by Eileen Myles & Ronnie Burk: February 27 - Lois Elaine Griffith & George Therese Dickinson. March 6 - Simon Ortiz & Ronnie Burk. March 13 - Jessica Hagedorn & Bernadette Mayer. March 20 - Tato Laviera & Richard Hell. March 27 - Eileen Myles & Pedro Pietri. Dancing and open reading follow.

A welcome to the newest members of the Poetry Project Advisory Board - Barbara Barg and Jeff Wright. And many thanks to Ed Friedman and Alice Notley whose terms expire.

A BOOT STOMPS IN THE HALLWAY

Young men laugh trying to sound tough
from inside it sounds ugly as puking
leather and grease
you'd be surprised
some of them really are tough

- Dick Barnes

BOOKS & MAGAZINES RECEIVED

Early in '71 by James Schuyler (The Figures, 2016 Cedar, Berkeley CA 94709 \$2) (entry for Jan 12: One thin cloud in the south like a scratch, and the reddish-violet of the highest elm twigs)...from Am Here Books, 2503 Medcliff Road, Santa Barbara CA 93109: THE MORNING LINE by Ted Berrigan and BLIND DATE by Lewis MacAdams (both \$3)...from Atlantic-Little Brown, Boston: George Orwell: A Life by Bernard Crick (\$17.95) and Bachelorhood: Tales of the Metropolis by Philip Lopate (\$13.95 - Here Lopate lucidly depicts solo male in modern Big City. His musings equate the solitary essayist and his bachelor status, but is this really a "genre"? What we do get is poignant hilarity and small lessons as we pitch with author into meditative turnouts, some of which ("Lives of the Poets") lose generosity of feeling for paragraph's point; others, especially childhood memories, spark completely. Learn more of Denby/Burckhardt cat star, Walter, too. - Bob Holman)...Light Up the Cave by Denise Levertov (New Directions, NYC \$13.95c \$5.95p)...from Black Sparrow Press, Santa Barbara CA: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. 3 by Robert Creeley & Charles Olson (\$7.50p \$20c) and Blast 1 and Blast 2 (each \$15p \$30c - reprinting of Wyndham Lewis' magazine which included Pound, Gaudier Brzeska, Ford Maddox Hueffer, + manifested Vorticism in bold typeface)...Bertolt Brecht in America by James K. Lyon (Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ 08540 \$19.75c)...Heinrich Heine: A Selected Critical Bibliography of Secondary Literature, 1956-1980 by Jeffrey L. Sammons (Garland Publishing Co, NYC \$30c)...The Furtive Wall by Daniel Haberman (Art Direction Book Co, 10 E 39 St NYC 10016 \$5.95)...The Last Magician by Stephen Corey (\$6.50) and SYMPATHETIC MAGIC by Michael Blumenthal (\$6.50 - both from Water Mark Press, 175 East Shore Rd, Huntington Bay, NY 11743)...Extra Footage by Rita Karman (Karmic Revenge PO Box 14, Guttenberg NJ 07093 \$3.50)...Anthracite Country by Jay Parini (Random House NYC \$5.95p \$10.50c)...Salvation on the Installment Plan by tony magistrate (Andrew Mountain Press, PO Box 14353, Hartford CT 06114 npl)

United Artists Fifteen, ed. by Lewis Warsh & Bernadette Mayer: 172 E 4 St NYC 10009, \$3/sub. rate \$10 for 5 (Scholnick, Berkson, Motley, Myles, Denby, Banks, Schneeman, Howe, Berrigan, Schiff, Friedman, Coolidge, Brodey + eds)...Telephone #17 ed. Maureen Owen: 109 Dunk Rock Rd Guilford CT 06437 \$7 for 2 issues (Bijou, Ferrari, Lewis, Nauen, Weigel, Cataldo, Abbott, Gitin, Reardon, Harris, Savage +++)...L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Vol. 4 ed. by Charles Bernstein & Bruce Andrews: 464 Amsterdam Ave NYC 10024 \$5 (MacLow, Seaton, Davies/Piambino, Perlman, Watson, Silliman, Rasula, Darragh, Eigner, Benson, Acker, Lansing, Grenier, Robinson, Mandel, Sherry, Watten, Gottleib + eds)...Reality Studios ed. Ken Edwards: 75 Balfour St. London SE 17 UK \$5 (Vol 3: Nos 3/4, Mottram, Sheppard, Hemensley, D. Miller, K. Edwards, P. Green)...Second Coming Vol. 10, No. 1 & 2 ed. A.D. Winans: PO Box 31249 SF, CA 94131 \$4 (H. Gold, J. Purdy, Bukowski, Reed, Micheline, +)...New Departures #14 Second Intl. Poetry Olympics ed. Michael Horovitz: Piedmont, Bisley, STROUD, Glos GL6 7BU, England £1.50/\$4 (Beckett, Laing, Voznesensky, JC Clarke, Patten, Weller, Gascoyne, Ginsberg, Yevtushenko +++ "the world's best multi-media jam...packed brimful with the songs, satires, polemics, blasts, screeches, poetry, prose...and illuminated manuscripts of...")...DAM Poetry International Documents ed. Martin Mooij & Adriaan van der Staay: Westersingel 20, 3014 GP Rotterdam Holland npl (Guillevic, Sanguinetti, Popa, Kunert, Lucebert, Buddingh, + many other foreign works w/translations)...Twelfth Key #3 enCHANTments ed. Penny Kemp: Pendas Productions, 14 Fourth St, Toronto Islands, Ontario M5J 2B1 (McCaffery, Enslin, Di Prima, Wilk, Uu \$3.50 +++)...# Magazine ed. Stephen Vincent (guest): 337 E 5 St NYC 10003 \$donation (Abbott, Brooks, Dahlen, Obenzinger)...Working Papers ed. Maureen Owen (Owen's workshop magazine from the Poetry Project, interesting journal works by P. Landi, J. Nostrand, L. Heineman, Owen +)...FLUE Vol. 2 #1 ed. Deborah Drier: Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St NYC 10013 npl (FF publication with artists pages by Lederman, Medvedow, Mandieta, Denes, Feldmann +++ articles & reviews)

Pure Notations by Steve Levine (Toothpaste Press, West Branch, Iowa, \$6)

These are crafted poems, elegant settings for the ideas and feelings they convey. Like his earlier collection, A Blue Tongue, they are characterized by articulate and implicit grace. The breadth of their concerns is much wider and the power of their sensations is stronger. They explore life in the city, love and relations of living with vital seriousness. They are pure notations. They are journalistic, inasmuch as they record the events of life reflectively. They are pure not only because they are clear and accessible, but also because each poem has been refined and distilled until nothing but the essential words are left.

In this suite two central matters occupy the forefront: the diversity of urban existence, and a careful depiction of love. These themes mirror the human world portrayed in these poems. An example of the first concern is "The Best of Friends", a luxuriant catalogue of a heroic underworld now vanished. More than just another list, this poem provides a cavalcade of teeming life, pictures room after room of lush turbulence, presents a world in all its variousness.

The love poems outline the details of lovers' lives together. "Before Going Out" finds the poet leaving his dreaming lover asleep of a morning:

I watched you dreaming, and
Saw the dream modified, though reasonably
So it seemed you should be left to lie. And lying
There, beside, I should watch.

Another poem, "For And To", speaks of the seriousness and courage that love requires. It is strongly, but delicately, expressed:

Fame, at home, in my spare time
I must walk out on, having no relation
to my affairs, clearly, and now
as before, and hidden
like the future, wish all my hopes
possible, and to be happy
with resolution and even weakness
with what landed me and hung around

The poet is surprised by love and thankful for its presence. The poem is a human reflection that emerges naturally from a life. Like other poems in this book, its apparent effortlessness belies the skill with which each poem was transformed from random thoughts to living and expressive verse.

These poems sing, they reflect, they make themselves felt. Their circumspection, care and concern, rare enough among poets devoted to the spontaneous and unrevised chronicling of experience, guide us forward to a poetry that remains true to experience, but that also attends carefully to the form of its language.

WILLIAMS FOR CREELEY SEMINAR, RE MACHO STANCE & INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM
HIM BY ME AS POET

I identify with his macho stance. Redefine "macho stance." Williams' "macho stance" very very female. Information: that poetry is open to your whole life, (most people's closes down), that your life is not this 2nd thing going on outside your poems. Ted needs Frank's literariness. Talking to your mate real-life male-female conversation quality of Williams: stole it all from Shakespeare. Very interested in Wms. layout line-break presentation on page---deliciously brutal--- don't know what use I've made of it---I hate musics.

I don't think I'd say "macho stance." I think he's very interested in & sensitive to the similarities differences overlappings between men & women & the way they act towards & talk to each other. One of his most consistent "subjects" & has made him be of great use to me as a poet. Politics economics cosmos philosophy, I think you have a better entrance into when you talk about the war between women & men---that's Shavian---at the same time you feel grounded in reality, at the same time you can be interesting & amusing, which is no small thing. Same thing if you're homosexual. Frank O'Hara: everything comes out in the way you address your mate or lover. There's no such thing as a world view or a philosophy formed in solitude, at least not a valid one--- how does that sound? dubious. But that's my sense of things---Pound & Olson lose me when they stop having someone to address. Nearly always someone there for Olson though---friendships---but I like the male-female thing better. What I'm trying to say is that Wms.' "macho stance" is a way of including woman. As well as a way of being able to give vent to his own "female" hysteria. It's also a way of defining how a man is forced to be. For me it was a very useful clue as to how to form a stance of my own. Also I'm a flower, keyed in with Wms.' other nature. Now I've been working on works in which both women & men talk---straight out of Wms. experiments I'd say as received also through Whalen Creeley etc. This stance of Wms. by the way when it doesn't infuriate is sexually attractive---one reason poets write is to be attractive or make something not themselves but like themselves that is attractive. It's Williams' technique & layout though that makes you feel that a very aggressive seduction is taking place here. That's how I see it anyway.

Information---poems open to the life part again---very simply the other "includers" of the 20th C didn't include the quotidian except as to make a point about something else, making points leads to not including enough & the poetry closes down there. I wasn't going to be a big thinker. Nor a Romantic. People aren't. I get a lot of information from seeing how Williams influences other poets. Williams lets Bob Creeley be a goof, Philip Whalen be obscure, lets Ron Padgett be morally upright in spite of being zany, let's Frank O'Hara be freed from having to be literary because he's homosexual. Williams gives you the moral strength to say I am the way I am, Popeye does too. He permitted Ted Berrigan to write a Wasteland. "Macho" is a natural sort of stance for people who write in isolation. I DIDN'T HAVE A MODEL!!! Not Gertrude Stein---I'm just a poet. I think Wms.' "male stance" when he's being that character in his poems includes a female, the person spoken to: I could identify with that person as well as with him. I think he "made room for women to be poets" by being this domestic man in his poems rather than another fucking solitary boring narcissistic speechmaker. "He got all that from

Shakespeare too. Because they all knew the queen was listening."

Williams the source of permissions because a) he'd let himself say anything, talk anyway, be anyone b) because he did so many different kinds of formal experiments. Sort of a logical approach to feeling like a first one---pioneer thing. Williams was like a first one---& I feel like I'm a first one too, because I'm a woman, I feel like I'm one of the first ones of that kind of person being an American poet. And like Williams I feel this need to try a lot of different forms & voices. The "American" part still overrides the "female" & "male" part. Because poetry is words. The idea has always been to write like a talking American, not a dead person in a book, so you can write like yourself.

- Alice Notley

nobility is the secret of my character,
my slight paunch a flowering of gentleness.
my poached-egg eyes contain the seed of wisdom.
my tantrums are keenly-perceived emotional arabesques.
my compromises are selflessness making love to the world,
my rotten teeth the restraint of brutality.
my shaking hands are joie de vivre.
my meanness is pure light.
my obscurity tantalizes everyone.
my blackouts are part of the music of time.
my cowardice is a beautiful dance.
my blandness is the space approaching God.
my murders are mutations of the unicorn.
my poems are bits of ice on the warm plains.

- Jack Collom

Ed Hogan is editing a selection of literary essays on nonliterary topics for the Summer 1982 issue of Dark Horse. "Especially of interest would be reflections on a larger concern based on the springboard of personal experience." Length 4000 words & mailed to (or any questions): Ed Hogan, 13 Robinson Street, Somerville MA 02145. SASE.

On March 27 at 8 PM at The Third Street Music School (235 E 11 St) there will be a concert of "Poetry in Song" with collaborations of Barber & Matthew Arnold, Schumann & Heine, Eluard & Poulenc, and Brecht & Eisler. Susan Gregory, soprano; Sean Barker, baritone; Julius Eastman, bass; the In-Residence Faculty String Quartet; Mimi Stern-Wolfe, piano. 777-3240.

DO-ALL

This is a billion bricks
in the afternoon flare
of housewives & blonds
made more stunning than
a funeral home by that
which is all I could do
to love you forever
you who are forever
a stranger no matter
what, "but sometimes
that's what it takes."

- Jeff Wright

New Directions #43 edited by James Laughlin (New Directions, NYC, \$5.95p)

"When you feel in collusion
With all the greens"

The above couplet, from a selection of poems collectively entitled "Elegies", is by the French poet Guillevic. They barely imply the full power and range of this man's work and are, thanks to the continuing discernment of Mr. Laughlin, among the pleasures in the latest New Directions anthology. Guillevic is a lapidary poet, a poet who uses language in much the same way Follain, and even Creeley uses it, through austere economy of line and breadth, he is helping to forge a clean path away from the dim cluttered fields currently presented by the majority of poets writing today. Guillevic has already terrained the woods, and seeks instead: "Our breathlessness/Is the tide's/Is the sun's/Towards his most brilliant." And from a poem entitled "The Charnel Houses": "You can tell their gender by their shoes./Their eyes probably drowned./They also preferred flowers."

Other noteworthy pieces include James Purdy's anti-war play, "What is it, Zach?", a sometimes censorious sometimes tender depiction of love between two men during that nightmare, and, as the nightmare is long over, the play is a little outdated, although, for the uninitiated reader, it offers a pellucid look into Purdy's rather especial mind. His novel, Narrow Rooms, is one of the most frightening and lyrical novels I've read in years. My godmother once remarked about Purdy: "I have never been able to understand exactly where he is going, or, for that matter why." Well, certain writers do leave us clutching for straws, wanting more. Anne Waldman is, thank God, not one of them. Her choleric, sometimes hysterical poem, "Putting Makeup on Empty Space" is a case in point. Waldman's work has always benefitted more from oral delivery than the written page, which is to her disadvantage. Still, it is good to see such a puissant poem in print. Just a few lines: "I bind the

power of 20 husky men/I bind the seductive colorful women/all of them/I bind the massive rock/I bind the hanging night, the drifting night, the/ moaning night, daughter of troubled sleep" and later, "there is talk of a feminine deity/I bind her with a briar/I bind with the tooth of a tiger". If some of these lines sound ritualistic, indeed, cabalistic, it is quite deliberate. There are, as always with anthologies, misses, near misses, and downright failures. Two prime examples are the poems of Joan Retallack and those of Lawrence Millman. Retallack opens a poem with the rather stupefying line: "The night thickens like marzipan" and quite disjointedly continues: "Your brioche smile". Mr Millman is rather more specifically egregious. His pieces, called "Origins" inform us that one, the telephone was actually invented by the brontosaurus, that Odysseus was stupid, and in one turgid mess juxtaposes God with Roy Rogers. I will not insult Mr. Millman nor our readers by quoting it. Suffice it to say the epithet so gracelessly given Odysseus more aptly belongs to Millman. But this is an international issue with international concerns and well worth your time and scrutiny.

- Kevin Jeffery Clarke

The Low-Tech Manual edited by Ron Kolm (30-73 47 St, Long Island City, NY 11103, \$5)

Snow melts and January sizzles on the occasions of two separate Benefits for one of the hottest little magazines to hit the stands in..... First some guys wearing Mickey Spillane trenchcoats & Raymond Chandler cravats, in various poses of jerking, inching woundedly, bopping backwards like a stiff, lifting off magically, bobbing, floating in air, playing dead. Then some shoes & panted legs disappearing midcalf, and one, just the heel visible, walking off to the left & two ankles going to the right in gabardine & Spanish leather in a window on a grid geometry & there's a chair too an ordinary chair except suspicious because it's reflected in a small mirror on the wall of the room & there's a grid reflected in the mirror too superimposed over the chair. Art Spiegleman's cover is right for this first issue of The Low-Tech Manual, it's tone of mystery and multitudinous detective guises. John Yau's Kafkaesque "Two Kinds of Song" fascinates & troubles in its analogy then steps up in the style of grid from mirror and postulates on its own metaphors. The reader comes to on strange shores, wiser, yet more confused. Wonder of language & disquiet of message surfaces repeatedly in this little volume. Peter Cherches' short prose pieces from a longer work "Bagatelles" reminds us of the awesome power of impossibilities between people as does Thomas McGonigle who signs himself aka Jackson Scrubber (what is he up to?). The mysterious staccato beauty of Jennifer Nostrand's works leave us to wonder in amazement how a poem can be so stark and so pastoral in the same moment. There's a terrifically funny number by Dean Heine on that infamous page we all remember from the classified section of our comic books of the skinny guy at the beach getting sand kicked in his face in front of his friends (everyone I ever knew identified with the skinny guy instead of the macho he-man, the girls & myself included). Another work by D.H. wings like a loose clue over the palms....

Highway Medians.
Dotted Lines.
All the words between two extremes.
Questions that sound like answers.

George Sideris' piece defies detection. It's like when the case you're working on throws you a sinker & you go back to the office with the glass door and the peeling gilt letters & smoke a Camel in your ratty stuffed chair watching the smoke for answers. Then along comes Michael La Bombarda with the most wonderful manner of throwing away the end of his poems you hope he never learns not to. And I see our hard-working editor, Ron Kolm, has taken the time to excerpt lines and rearrange them from Richard Kostelanetz's work "Epiphanies". I myself resisted the temptation when I received the huge MS, thinking a poet should write their own poems & I'd be damned if I'd write Kostelanetz's for him. But I'd tip my hat if I wore one to Ron's effort most admirable. The graphics most cryptic & wild of all herein I save for last & you should too. They make you decide to never solve this case, it's too meridian....& now I've forgotten to mention how much I loved the works of Janet Hamill my favorite writer of all! Her "Mass Media:2" superlative! And someone new to me K. Dillon who I liked a lot. Check this one out. As Rachelle Bijou once said about something completely else but so apt here I have to quote her: "It's worth the trip downtown."

- Maureen Owen

PHENOMENA

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Words meshed, hand-shake-like,
Mutually congratulating respective recoveries.

The past, affirmed, breathed Now.
They caught it.

*

A wind-governed-willow
bent, bowed and swayed
enduring marathons of March.

Climax meant: sleep,
Brewed-tea-and-bagel-breakfast
and good-bye.

*

Driving past the lake,
cattails exploding
thrust your memory through me.

- Judy Bonnaure

MIMEO OPUS

Both Sides of the Goat by Lenny Goldstein (Andrea Doria Books, 515 E 6 St, NYC 10009, \$2)

Stormy Heaven by Cliff Fyman (Misty Terrace Press, 437 E 12 St, NYC 10009, \$2)

I've never liked mimeo. Sure, it's fast and it's cheap but it doesn't look like a book. If you can do it yourself why bother. Why not just xerox your favorite new poems from time to time and hand 'em to your friends. Or better still, why not stylishly fold your latest into your back pocket and show it to the several people who matter. How many people's taste do you trust? I mean, who actually understands poetry?

I publish my poems in mimeo magazines. I like to see them breathe beyond my own typewriter though I'm much happier when they're type-set. And I have one, no, two mimeo books in print. There were 165 copies done of the first one. I've got one copy and there are 164 out in the world. Maybe you've got one. Somebody once described mimeo publication as "punk publishing" and that made it work for me for awhile. But not really. When someone asks me if I've got a book I say Yeah...but it's just mimeo. That usually means you can't get it. It's not available or else Sure, but I don't like it anymore. Was the 60's the Golden Age of Mimeo? That makes me think it's a dated idea. You go to the New York Small Press Bookfair and see endless publications, books & magazines in full glossy grandeur, nice commercial high-production values. You say Wow, don't these books look pretty! Pick one up & sniff the nice new cover--but don't look inside--pure dreck. Not everything, but a lot of it. Listen to a couple of printer-publishers talking. Grants, distribution, and a slick product is where it's generally at. Mostly these are the people who pick which books get published. A lot of editors are really dumb. Their minds are not cluttered like the minds of poets so they're able to get their projects off the ground. But I like these shiny books: they look commercial, real, they look American. If only the stupid publishers and the brilliant poets could get together. Mimeo skirts all that so the publisher is the poet's best friend or even the poet and that's that. Your family won't believe it's a book but so what. They also are unable to read your poems. So I have only set my hand once to mimeo publishing but it was an act of revenge in my heart--we did an anthology of poems ourselves in response to another slicker inferior one. Mimeo was effective in this case--fast & cheap. It wasn't like killing someone, it was like throwing a beer in their face. Mimeo. But I think it's too late for all that. The best poems should be well-packaged, I'm not even thinking about big-house books (oh, sure), it's not even like comparing cable to prime-time teevee, it's like comparing--there's no comparison, view-master to movies--no comparison. I just mean mimeo vs. a book-book. A nice shiny book-book. Doesn't money make money? Won't people take your poems more seriously in a great typeface with a far-out cover, expensive, in color. Wouldn't this here ratty publication be more "influential" (Influential on what--Genius critic Denis Donoghue says poetry now occupies a "marginal" place. Like the funniest lines in Mad magazine?) if it was type-set. Wouldn't I be more excited about writing for it?

These are Lenny Goldstein & Cliff Fyman's first mimeo books. See, it goes on anyhow. Notice I'm still writing though I know each word appears in a vulgar form of print.

Tom Weigel printed Lenny's book and Michael Scholnick published Cliff's. Lenny's collection's kind of jumpy. I wound up King (yeah!), ?ing ("almost") and no-commenting each poem as a way to get a hold on how consistently each poem from cover to cover pleased me. I graded him 11/23 fraction of hits compared to total number of poems in book and there were 2 unresolved "?"s. Good work Lenny, I thought and put Both Sides of the Goat down for several months. I've got a busy life. Meanwhile millions of my poems appeared in mimeo magazines everywhere. When I picked up Goat again I disagreed with which poems were good and bad. I began to blame Tom Weigel since he chose the poems which he put in the book. The collection is jumpy but so's Tom. Blame the editor. But I know when I first read the poems I really liked them. I went to the author. "My mind is basically shallow," said Lenny. He doesn't like these poems anymore. Or can't relate to them, doesn't write them, something like that. "I really don't think I've written anything yet that qualifies as a poem." That made his book take form for me, assume an aspect. This book had to exist. It's the only copy. He doesn't like it anymore and he doesn't write poems. I've got no dilemma I guess. We smoked some pot. I was really exhausted. We talked about the weather. "What is this Alaska or November," Lenny said, "--I mean it was so cold." He showed me this thing he wrote yesterday

Newly Arrived Immigrant Pawn

Newly arrived
immigrant pawns
almost crashing
flying saucer.

I liked it--of course I don't like it as much as I did at that moment...I believe in Lenny as a poet. Actually we've had 2 serious conversations about "poetry." One in June and the other just the other day. He admires Clark Coolidge and we all admired this shiny little red book of "prose" by Clark. Lenny showed me a new long poem. Lines that made me gasp and then I would get lost. I felt he really didn't know how to edit his stuff, I made some suggestions which he was entirely open to (Damn Tom Weigel!) and then I decided I was probably wrong and should keep my mouth shut. I didn't like the way he went from 'here' to 'here' but maybe he'll stop doing it. Or maybe he'll do it better. Probably since Lenny is a type-setter he'll do his own next book and it'll look nice. I don't think he mentioned any such intentions. He seems to be always thinking about Poetry. I mentioned Cliff and he said, "Cliff read some of my poems and he said he would like to see more of the personal."

I first heard Cliff read in a workshop reading at the Poetry Project and he read a poem about a hat which was sitting on his head. What a nut I thought. It was a good poem and it appears in Stormy Heaven.

Eileen Myles asked me to write a statement for her about my book, Stormy Heaven. Well, all right. It's my first collection of poems. My friend, Michael, helped me select and print it. Friends have asked me how I'd describe these poems. Asked the question, I guess I would say that they're serious and funny, as well. Some of the poems are angry, I suppose. Anger makes one's expressions very direct, and I like that. My father called tonight from Virginia and

said that he wished he'd been with me at the time some of those poems were written (he'd just been divorced from my mother in the 70s and he'd left the country for three years) because I seemed troubled. I said to him that trouble wasn't too bad, I guess, and there's information that in Japanese the word for a knot in the wood is "song". I'm thankful whenever a poem comes to me. I never know when the next poem will come. I'm on a stoop now. It's snowing outside. I'll go upstairs on Leonard Street and see if they've started. Thanks."

He wrote this at a reading we both attended but then he had to go home and think it over and we planned to talk in the morning and he'd read me what he wrote on the phone. He tried but it just didn't seem right. So he came over and he gave me this statement. And it seemed so perfect--I just couldn't imagine writing anything else. So I went around misquoting what he wrote, finally saying Well, you just have to read it. Done. We went on to talk about Rousseau and everyone thought he was dumb. The painter or the naive guy? The painter. And he would write defenses of himself in newspapers. And was he dumb? Well, he wasn't stupid.

But reading Cliff Fyman's book, when I read it, was very exhilarating and he was sitting there across from me with a bunch of books opened & arched, drying from a correction he was assiduously making, one by one, probably a tiny thing. "The first 9 pages are great, Cliff!" "Hope you like the rest..." he said politely, momentarily looking up from his liquid paper. Cliff has put together a book which demonstrates how many kinds of poems he can write. It's a pure book, it's a workshop book, I don't like some of his "endings" and others work great. His last poem is clearly a last poem and so is his first. A first poem. This is C. Fyman's first book. After that he went (is now) off to a cabin in the woods somewhere for a month. Now, if Cliff's book was perfect-bound you might say it could be shorter, or maybe he "wasn't ready" but as it is it's delightful & I'm glad it's 33 pages long. Why not? He's got that many poems.

Lenny's book wouldn't be any better or worse if it was glossy & glowing and "granted". He would be just as far away from them too. The main assumption people make when they criticize mimeo books (other than the physical fact that they do age real fast) is that since it's so cheap and fast poets don't consider their selections as carefully as they might in cases of costlier, classier-produced books. As if a little money would make the world stand still.

So what's the argument? One guy doesn't give a damn about what he wrote last year and the other has great reverence--would probably have even more, and might've selected differently if more money was involved in the undertaking. I still don't like mimeo books. They don't look like magazines, (I mean LOOK, LIFE, TV GUIDE) they don't look like comic books, annual reports, chamber of commerce brochures. They don't look like anything I ever saw except maybe workbooks in catholic schools--it was so degrading like we didn't matter so much as public school kids. So I want to go on record--Mimeo--I don't like it. All books should be bright & shiny and look like books. Yeah, and pigs should have wings, Eileen. But when I hear books, any books shouldn't exist--that economics so influence thought that some...younger, older, any poets should shut up

and wait (I must explain that some of this is in response to a conversation I had in a bar with L.J. Pedant, no, Fuss-budget...), that more expensively produced books would make poets think harder--Oof! Poets should think easier, of course. What is this, the middle ages? It all sounds terribly like the 'test of time'--whose time? Your time, my time, what time---Oh, I get it...like the test of time like I don't know if I believe a word of anything I just said or if it was ever a question of that. Let it rip.

- Eileen Myles

Marie

I pray dreams never
relent. I fly right. I bubble.

I crayon eels. I'll shake hands
and be tough like yellow dandelions.
I admire Kuwait's silver furniture.
I win the tug o'war.

It's pretty now the sun is out.
I tend to the popcorn. Wait.
I'm the Periwinkle Lady of Ferris wheels.

- Michael Scholnick

Aspiring fiction writer no longer willing to tolerate brick-wall view and the patronizing businessworld--seeks literary person in need of assiduous researcher, impeccable typist, eagle-eye proofreader to assist in works-in-progress, bake bread, tend to greenery, and enrich your life--in exchange for a roof, spare change, and goodwill. Glowing references. Cate Dolcater 212-924-0271.

The First Annual Spring Celebration of Poetry - an area wide Marathon reading - will be taking place in the D.C/Baltimore area at Grace Episcopal Church, 1041 Wisconsin Ave, NW Georgetown on Friday & Saturday, March 19 & 20 at 8 PM. Interested poets or those wishing to make reservations should call 301-345-8755 (evenings only). \$3.

Poet Jack Collom seeks responsible person to sublet his apartment (\$175 + utilities) on Ludlow Street for the months of July & August. 777-7316.

REVISION

All the animals came out of the rocks, and stick men

THE FAINT CALL OF THE KOOKOUBURRA BIRD

On land, overland, trees, free gifts, watery sky

- Steven Hall

SPIT IN THE OCEAN Number 6, "The Cassady Issue", edited by Ken Babbs (SITO, 85829 Ridgeway Road, Pleasant Hill OR 97401, \$5p)

When Ken Babbs decided to put together a book about Neal Cassady, Babbs determined to "show Neal in action: talking and driving; none of your psychological analyzations of why he was so great; instead, a recounting of the things he did that were great." So while "The Cassady Issue" of Spit In The Ocean has fewer facts than the biography of Neal by William Plummer, one gets a sense of what the man was like in Babbs' book, while there is no sense of the man in Plummer's Holy Goof. (When my wife typed the first draft of a review mentioning Plummer's book, she inadvertently referred to him as Bummer.)

The reader unfamiliar with Neal's legend might come away from "The Cassady Issue" wondering what it was that made Neal "great". His primary attribute, it would seem, was his ability to fast-talk people; and in these pages we see him convincing policemen not to ticket him, women to sleep with him, and a judge to dismiss twenty-seven moving violation citations that Neal had accumulated in the course of one month. While most of us would agree that none of these actions would make Cassady "great", the last one would seem to invalidate Larry McMurtry's claim that Neal was "a rather common Western type." Few people going to court would be able to convince a judge to dismiss so many offenses.

John Clellon Holmes, writing about Neal in the 1940's, said Neal was different from others because he had the capacity to "continually light out for the territory ahead, reminding us uncomfortably that we are self-prisoned by work and days, trapped in time and its demands, the body finally inadequate to the crazy hopes it houses." Some might say that Neal never grew-up, but it would be equally apt to say he never became society's slave; like Thoreau, he wanted to adjust to no one's vision but his own. Neal fought, as Kesey says in one of the outstanding pieces in the book ("The Day After Superman Died"), the "tyranny of inertia". And Neal's widow, Carolyn, says "He was a lovable rogue who dared to do things we'd like to do but are afraid to."

Yet the fact remains that Cassady produced little in the way of enduring art, his critics might still claim. Even if he was the match of "such giants as Allen Ginsberg and Ken Kesey," as Anne Murphy (one of Neal's girlfriends) claims, he produced no body of work. Perhaps the best answer to that comes from Jerry Garcia, head of The Grateful Dead, who says he felt that Neal had decided he wasn't "going to have a work," he was "going to be the work." Simply put, Neal's life was his art.

What kind of an artist was he, then? Those who knew him describe him as always talking, yet, paradoxically, they say he was also an excellent listener, knowing, almost, what one was going to say before it was said. Neal was psychic, or bordered on being psychic. He was also, given his enormous memory, his capability to make extraordinary mental leaps, so unlike other people -- "on" all the time, even when he was silent -- that he was one of the lonliest men alive. Kesey, certainly, saw this, and he felt "Someone should always ride shotgun with Neal and provide him an ear to address, otherwise with nobody listening, an edge of fear might enter his voice and draw the words on...into darkness." It is that darkness, that aloneness, that the "fastestmanalive" finally faced along the railroad tracks near San Miguel de Allende in the Mexican night. Mixing alcohol and drugs for days, in a state of exhaustion, Cassady's body finally couldn't meet the demands his mind made; lying on the railroad tracks, 64,928 steps from the nearest person, his "work" was finally done.

"The river flows." I see my face in the muddied tide. I see my Hudson here, in Torrington CT., on the Naugatuck River, the one thread linking the towns and cities, almost the same places, yet each themselves, like their own people.

Geography fascinates me. How can things be so similar yet so different. Likewise people. We watch them on the highway scurrying along like so many gerbils on threadmills; from nest to food, (or means to food) and heading back.

In this short collection Harry Lewis moves in sixteen directions, down the river, in the river, above and beyond the river, by and for the river, of the river. It is not as much Harry but the river and Harry is watching.

In Hudson #1 and #2 we see the male train riding the female river, or is the male river riding the female train? I think she is the river, hermaphroditic, the snakey worm, from life to death, or better, larva to butterfly.

In #3 we see the sheer cliffs of the Palisades, "it is shadows," Jersey seems a heart in darkness, pulsing, Thelonus Monk, "Coming on the Hudson."

In #4, the spider, we move from darkness into light, the peopled world. In #5, this light is ice, the water is hard, shards, glass, splinters. In times of flood they're left on the banks like rock candy, bluish water flowing through. #6 brings winter, the desolate outside world. We're warm inside the train which is yet another river flowing downstream seen from the air. The movement sucks me in.

The seventh poem leads into spring and brings to mind William Carlos Williams' Paterson, and as the seasons turn #8 goes toward summer where there is also a sense of the loneliness of the winter world. We also realize it's the rest of this world and its people coming out to see summer. #9 leads forward into the summer night in this humid east, a veritable jungle; engine noises, "green air". Night. #10 brings day.

The rest of the poems bring in the world. The next six sections stress this; the baby in the train is rocked and lulled in the movement of "imagination". People get closer and the river reflects, sleeping through the rain, and in #15 the river (him or her self) is personified, is the tribe; Spanish men fishing in the night in #16 proves this. Harry's river is the world, the peopled world and I haven't found this sense of America elsewhere in prose or poetry, this democratic river flowing through the states and:

"another time
has taken
this river"

another mind has captured the river in a time we need no clocks for, just ourselves on the river of mind.

- Peter Bertollette

.STILL HERE

The eunuch told me he would do what he could

ANOTHER MUSE

The young Eurasian prince also tap-dances, we learn

- Steven Hall

In The Bone

Hi

To hell with Turkey
We're ordering lasagna.

The best lasagna

30 dollars a pan

Two pans

And chopped up
octopus salad

You have to boil
the hell out of it
So it's not tough

We're getting shrimp
Big ones
Three dollars a pound

- Michael Scholnick

Danspace Project March Performances: Danspace & Movement Research are presenting The Studies Project. The program includes Dana Reitz and Judy Padow on Friday March 5; Simone Forti and Johanna Boyce on Saturday March 6; Jim Self and Kenneth King on Friday March 12; and Pooh Kaye and Mary Overlie on Saturday March 13. Participants will present their work, including their choreography and verbal analysis, followed by an exchange between the choreographers, a moderating panel and the audience. The performances will begin at 8 PM & suggested contribution is \$3. Gina Buntz and Deborah Gladstein will be presenting work on March 19, 20 & 21 at 8:30 PM in the Parish Hall. Suggested contribution is \$4 or TDF. Coming in April: Judson Dance Theater Reconstructions (April 15-18) in the newly opened Main Sanctuary. 674-8112

On March 7 at Club 57, 57 St. Mark's Place, at 9 PM, Jacob Burckhardt's new film THIS OBJECT (a new film of controlled passion and obscure disaster) will be screened. Music is by Alvin Curran and the script is by Edwin Denby, Jim Neu, John Nesci, Jose Rafael Arango & Burckhardt. Stars are Carol Mullins, Jim Neu & Arango. 45 minutes. Also on the bill will be Yoshiko Chuma's two latest works SPLISH SPLASH and COMMERCIAL ERUPTION. SS features Yvonne Jacqueline and Edwin Denby and CE is 30 ten second advertisements by 30 different artists including Taylor Mead & Bob Holman.

The Training Institute for Mental Health Professionals, 40 E 30 St, 11th Floor NYC 10016 will present on Friday, March 19 at 7:30 PM- Nick Piombino giving a talk entitled "Symbolic Forms in Art and Psycho-Therapy". Nick's collages were recently published in France in "Doc(k)s" and he's a practicing psycho-therapist.

FIVE MINUTES

Puppet poaching, plays for the deaf, miniature folding screens

- Steven Hall

"DECLARATION OF THREE" TO WORLD'S WRITERS
APPEALS FOR LIBERTY OF NICARAGUA

MANIFESTO WRITTEN BY EVTUCHENKO, GINSBERG
AND CARDENAL AT MANAGUA POETRY FESTIVAL
JANUARY 1982

The following text, composed together and signed by Eugenio Yevtuchenko, Russian poet, Allen Ginsberg, American poet, and Ernesto Cardenal, Nicaraguan poet and Minister of Culture, declares a common ground between the three cultures, and defines the prospect for a liberty for Nicaragua independent of ambitions by either Cold-War Superpower to dominate the Nicaraguan national scene. The occasion was a centenary meeting in Managua to celebrate the Nicaraguan poet Reuben Dario's Modernist proclamation of cultural independence.

- Allen Ginsberg, NYC, 2/4/82

Declaration of Three

We are three poets of very different countries. One of us is a catholic poet, son of a underdeveloped country. The other two are sons of Countries called superpowers: one - from a capitalist state, and the other - socialist. But we are all sure that the one superpower which must exist is the human spirit, that there is no state bigger than the human soul. The human soul must be the Church of all - religious, or non-theistic in all parts of the world.

We don't want to see Nicaragua become a puppet in anyone's hands. At this moment we are witnesses that here in Nicaragua, which suffered so much under tyranny, misery and ignorance, there is an intent on the part of the people to defend their economic and intellectual independence. Nicaragua is a big experimental workshop for new forms of get-together wherein art plays a primordial role. Many Nicaraguans - not only intellectuals - but also workers, farmers, the militia, write verse today, with hands tired of weapons. Let's give them the possibility to write poetry with ink and not blood.

We call the world's writers to come to Nicaragua to see with their own eyes the reality of Nicaragua and lift their voices in defense of this country, small but inspired. They'll be welcome and can acquaint themselves directly with the true character of this revolution, of the efforts of the people to create a just society exempt from violence, a revolution whose image is being consciously distorted by those who have an interest in destroying the alternative which it proposes.

The Damocles' sword of aggression now hangs in the air above these people.

We trust that if the writers of the world get together, their pens will be mightier than any sword of Damocles.

- Eugenio Yevtuchenko
Allen Ginsberg
Ernesto Cardenal

Anniversary of Ruben Dario Proclamation of Cultural Independence
Managua, Nicaragua January 26, 1982

(Practical arrangements: Ernesto Cardenal, Ministry of Culture, Managua, Nicaragua or Roberto Vargas, Nicaraguan Cultural Attache, San Francisco. Roundtrip Managua-Miami, Taca Airlines, approximately \$260.)

Essay on Benefit

As we know, a benefit for the Poetry Project happened at the opening of Larry Rivers' new show, "The Continuing Interest in Abstract Art," at the Marlborough Gallery this past Tuesday. Over 300 people came, a great admixture of types and indeed incomes such as does not take place very often and it was a great pleasure to present such an audience with a reading by Ron Padgett reading his famous salt and pepper shakers work, among others; Anne Waldman who performed her skin and bones piece plus a piece about Larry Rivers; Kenneth Koch giving a beautiful reading of "In Bed"; and Allen Ginsberg reading a new work about Nicaragua and performing the astonishing "Birdbrain". Yoshiko Chuma projected films on an object that looked much like a painting held in front of herself and danced on a table and on a chair, or rather danced on a chair and fairly flew about a table. Larry Rivers emceed and next introduced the East Thirteenth Street Band in which he plays with Jeff Brown, Myron Schwartzman, Howard Brofsky, Charlie Took, Howard Kanovitz and David Levy (and Garland Jeffries), and the band got it on for the rest of the night, playing sweet. When it was all almost over, Larry drew for the "door-prize", a lithograph - "Madame Butterfly 1978" - donated by him for the night, and shockingly the winner was Greg Masters! By this time the wine which was very good but had been denigrated by one contributor as being "shit, considering I paid thirty dollars to get into this thing," had run out and actually it was time to leave anyway. The Poetry Project made approximately \$3,000 profit (above costs which were about \$1700) to help us with our work (that's about 1½ workshops in a season). What the Project gained, in other senses, was the chance to present a reading and performance to an entirely different audience, plus the joy of collaboration of any kind (the acoustics in the Marlborough Gallery are very good and I suggested we have a weekly series there), and perhaps some helpful publicity & secret knowledge. I feel very strongly, and Larry said this too before his introductions to the poets, that the work of poets is taken much for granted and its relationship to money, being paid for one's work, etc. is all askew. Just the fact that the press will constantly list artistic events as "Music, Theatre, Dance, Film, TV..." and then put Poetry under "Talks" or "Miscellaneous" or even "et alia" (if Poetry gets mentioned at all), seems astonishing to me. Oddly, I didn't always even notice this till I began to work at the Poetry Project and to feel some fervor for fair fees and publicity consequent with the worth of our work. This benefit was an experiment about feeling. It's good (and I mean ethical) for people to do things. So then we cleaned up the gallery, took the leftover mineral water home, took the platforms that had made the stage lent to us by Danspace back downtown and the whole night involved the help of many workers and volunteers including Peggy DeCoursey, Bob Holman, Rochelle Kraut, Eileen Myles, Madeleine Keller, Helena Hughes, Ann Rower, Chris Bobin, Steve Levine, Jeff Wright, Johnny Stanton, Greg Masters, Linda Francis, Vicki Hudspith, Chris Kraus, John Godfrey, James Ruggia, Maureen Owen, Cynthia Hedstrom, John Dixon, Barry Kornbluh, Glen Sacks, Lewis Warsh, plus our Friends Committee -- Morris Golde, Ted Greenwald, Rudy Burckhardt, Yvonne Jacqueline, Paul Cummings, Madeleine Keller, Tim Dlugos, David Shapiro, Peggy DeCoursey and Graham Hodges. Plus Anne Miraglia and Pierre LeVa at the Marlborough Gallery, and Diane Molinari working with Larry Rivers, and of course Larry himself who is carefree enough to have partaken in our collaboration. When Yoshiko was leaving she was stopped by a guard wondering if the "canvas" she'd used in her work was a stolen work of art! Thanks to all, let's see.

RACKSTRAW COYNE AND BOYLE

He held in his hands
a sticky, stinking, meagre mess,
one briefcase full, but greed told him
there was something in it: the resonance
between his own greed and someone else's.
It was a billion billion easy rides, happy landings, safe sex
a new occupation for the Indies, fountain pens, blimps, combs,
gramophone records, a short job of work for Bertie Rodgers,
fake flesh, toy tractor treads, sockets, we'll never
in our time see the end of it, it was
rubber seeds but he didn't know it
all he knew was it was worth something,
a lot, to someone else, somewhere else, and so
greed took him to California
in his quest for a certain, hidden, exploitable need
when he had what it took to fill it.

- Dick Barnes

St. Mark's Church In-The-Bowery
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