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THE

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POETRY PROJECT

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newsletter



THE
POETRY PROJECT

December - January 2003

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THE POETRY PROJECT IN . ON . OR ABOUT THE PREMISES

POETRY IS NEWS

On Wednesday, November 6th, a couple of hours after we had opened the New York Times to read "G.O.P. COLLECTS KEY GAINS NATIONWIDE," the scholar and poet Maria Damon posed this question to the University of Buffalo Poetics List:

"Does anyone have any consoling thoughts, words, bromides, slogans, lines, epithets, for me and others today?"

The responses immediately began to pour in. Gabriel Gudding, warning that what he had to offer was "as consoling as a good slap in the face," quoted George Bernard Shaw: "Democracy is a form of government that substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few." David Bromige wrote to remind us that "We'll all be dead in less than a century, Maria." He continued, cheerfully, "Meanwhile, there are cartoons, lampoons, conjugal visits and full moons at the beach; and children (get your hands on as many as possible) to teach that it is wrong to steal elections, especially by murder, and that the symbolic elephant has been fired in favor of a leech." Our favorite response, if no more or less consoling than anything else posted to the List, was from Michael Magee, who wrote: "Maria, I have only the immortal words of football coach Bill Parcells to offer you. Asked what he does after a bad loss, he replied, 'Well, what I do is, I don't sleep all night, and then in the morning I puke in my mouth a couple times and get back to work.'"

What *is* there to be done? Lots, apparently, if Ammiel Alcalay and Anne Waldman gather enough True Believers to reach critical mass. The following e-mail popped into our mailbox a week or so prior to the election. As it appears to be for general circulation, we thought it appropriate to include it here.

"POETRY IS NEWS

"As citizens we demonstrate, write letters, and make known our discontent and



GARY SULLIVAN

outrage at government policies. As writers we constantly interact with different audiences in various contexts. We perform, read, teach, get interviewed, and curate public programs. But as more and more people are ready to commit acts of civil disobedience, we cannot continue appearing in public and pretend nothing is happening.

"POETRY IS NEWS, a forming coalition of poets, proposes to disrupt business as usual, at least within the spheres we have some control over. Some of us have been long active in various forms of political work, some of us are inexperienced but eager to find ways to make our voices heard. The mass public word has been corrupted past constructive use for political change. As word workers, we are calling an initial public meeting to find ways to exert our influence and expand our roles in taking back the word and making it part of public change.

"Whether we think of our mandate as a poll tax on poets or a bulletin board for agitation, our public activities as poets must first break down the boundaries we set for ourselves. Our goal is to create a body, a presence, and a point of reference that, if not considered when thinking of poetry, would simply cause embarrassment.

"Is this a good idea? Are there concrete proposals that we can begin implementing quickly, at readings, performances, in classrooms or public spaces? Can we form working relationships with each other in order to transmit different types of expertise, in dealing with the media, in looking for resources, in organizing events? Let us

know what you think.

"Ammiel Alcalay, aaka@earthlink.net

"Anne Waldman, awaldman@mindspring.com"

Any responses should be directed to Ammiel and/or Anne at the e-mail addresses above.

And speaking of responses, we'd definitely love to hear from any of our readers. Kudos? Gripes? Concerns? Don't be shy; write and let us know what you're thinking.

Here's what we've spent the last month thinking: "No war on Iraq!" Peace.

—Eds.

YELLOWMAN

In Dael Orlandersmith's first multi-character play after three one-woman shows she creates a Southern gothic in a rural black Gullah community. Lights up: two actors, two chairs—a man, a woman, one light, one darker—slowly sloping ramp hugging the scrim on the back wall of the stage—slides projected as background for the action—setting the scenes—wide swaths of light occasionally tightly focused to two warm spots cradling the actors' heads in the darkness floating—we hear their warring internal voices.

Opening slide of a huge ball of sun allowing us to distinguish light from darkness and all the shades in between. And in the beginning was Alma (Orlandersmith) talking of her mother and her mother's mother before her working in the hot sun as large sometimes larger and stronger than the men working beside them.

Her earlier solo pieces (recently published by Vintage) had backdrops of Harlem and the East Village with Orlandersmith easily shifting in and out of a series of vivid characters—her poems alternating from rich and fluid to stark, staccato rhythms.

Most of *Yellowman's* action takes place in Russellville, South Carolina, later moving to New York. Hilarious moments: playing Superman in the school yard, singing the Monkees theme song, training bras. Its full

palate also engages class struggle, alcoholism, violence against women and finally Alma's desire to leave an environment of limited choices and sure poverty for broader opportunities and a better education in the big city.

We hear her mother criticizing her for being too large, too dark. We watch Alma fall in love with her childhood sweetheart Eugene (Howard W. Overshown), the Yellowman of the piece. We watch as the world wrenches them apart.

The male and female characters divided between two actors highlight the play's major theme of opposites—difference—a separation not on racial lines but within a race, a community, a family. Not black against white but light against dark, dark against light, child against child, mother against daughter, father against son, husband against wife, and mother against unborn child.

Yellowman investigates the colorstruck phenomenon: antagonisms and preferential treatment based on skin color which have historically caused divisions within black families and communities.

Brings to mind phrases like: "high yella

gal" and "the blacker the berry the sweeter the juice"—stories about "the paper bag test" of some black social clubs (if you were darker than a brown paper bag you couldn't get in) outgrowth of the days of plantation "house Negroes" who had to be "light, bright, just about white" and "field Negroes" who did the hard back-breaking labor—internalized racism taught within families, through generations—a skewed legacy.

Yellowman takes on the barriers between them and us, self and other, mind and body, inside and outside—all the obstacles to non-duality. What lingers are the bold performances, the extended blues riff poetry of the piece as a whole, and its stories of struggle, tragedy and love.

Striking direction by Blanka Zizka—new blues by Elliott Sharp's Terraplane weaves in and out of the sound of Southern drawls—upping the warmth of labored Southern heat.

Yellowman: a Pulitzer Prize Award finalist developed at the Sundance Theatre Festival Lab—powerful, challenging—running at Manhattan Theatre Club through December 15th. See it.

—Wanda Phipps

IMPROV NOTES

Bodily energy—tradition—political violence—sound.

Is the physicality of words and speech the basis of music? Should one engage in an uncompromising pursuit of originality and creative liberation in the face of one's historical moment, as Harry Partch suggests? Can the mechanics of internalized political oppression be found in physical and sexual energy, as Reich suggests?

From *Slide Rule*, Jen Hofer:

Bees—at some point —in the noise—
you begin to coexist

From *Theoretical Objects*, Nick Piombino:

It is hard to resist becoming frightened in these times. Events toll by like a bell ringing repeated messages in your ears. How may they be described musically? First of all, they are shaped so they can't be confined. They are made to slip by drifting. Through rhythmic intervals of separation, they give names to the alchemy of changing the sound of cymbals to that of rushing water.

John Ashbery & Joe Brainard: *The Vermont Notebook* Commemorative Broadside



If I don't hear from you again, I shall wonder whether or not you got so wrapped up in your "canning and freezing" that you are either somewhere on a shelf full of preserves with a metal lid on your head or holing up with the frozen peas in your freezer compartment, from life to something else swiftly translated. Be of good cheer.

Beverly

Signed by
John Ashbery

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From *Genesis of Music*, Harry Partch:

Perhaps the most hallowed of traditions among artists of creative vigor is this: traditions in the creative arts are per se suspect. For they exist on the patrimony of standardization, which means degeneration. They dominate because they are to the interest of some group that has the power to perpetuate them, and they cease to dominate when some equally powerful group undertakes to bend them to a new pattern. It is not difficult for the alert student to acquire the traditional techniques. Under the pressures of study these are unconsciously and all too easily absorbed. The extent to which an individual can resist being blindly led by tradition is a good measure of his vitality.

From *The Function of the Orgasm*, Wilhelm Reich:

Since the emergence of patriarchy, the natural pleasure of work and activity has been replaced by compulsive duty. The average structure of masses of people has been transformed into a distorted structure marked by impotence and fear of life. The distorted structure not only forms the psychological basis of authoritarian dictatorship, it enables these dictatorships to justify themselves by pointing to human attitudes such as irresponsibility and childishness. The international catastrophe through which we are living is the ultimate consequence of this alienation from life.

From *Arrival*, Sarah Anne Cox:

One, it was said, was "taken out" euphemistic bombs from the sky because they don't make anti automobile missiles the anti aircraft type are used concurrent attempt to end violence the childhood game of repeating the same word over and over until it is unrecognizable at once an everyday occurrence

From *Theoretical Objects*, Nick Piombino:

Silence has a body and a voice—a soundless voice. In the heart of its constant listening, silence evokes not only words but memories of words, not only thoughts but their shadows and silhouettes, past present and future. Silence is also prayer. This takes listening of a certain kind, or silence brings it unan-

nounced, this most archaic of yearnings. Under certain circumstances, mostly ancient, it covered in a blanket of sudden faith all the chills of millennia of hurt and hate. Yet how firmly and kindly silence embraces such time in its knowing arms, or nod or handshake or embrace. It slowly drifts among the hills by day, or empty homes, only entering the city stealthily by night, as shy as any being of the sirens and the screams. Yet even these at last divide and melt away, removing even the greatest suffering from the grasp of time itself, sifting and sowing, shifting and showing.

Ornette Coleman, quoted in *Jazz Masters of the 50s*, Joe Goldberg:

(Charlie) Parker's melodic lines were placed across ordinary chord progressions. My melodic approach is based on phrasing, and my phrasing is an extension of how I hear the intervals and the pitch of the tunes I play. There is no end to pitch. You can play flat in tune or sharp in tune. It's a question of vibration. My phrasing is spontaneous, not a style. A style happens when your phrasing hardens. Jazz music is the only music in which the same note can be played night after night but different each time. It's the hidden things, the subconscious that lies in the body and lets you know: you feel this, you play this.

From *Comp.*, Kevin Davies:

If you want the manual, you've got to buy the program

...

It is necessary to fracture the logics of identity without however becoming a burden to one's friends

From *Genesis of Music*, Harry Partch:

We hear, but we do not vibrate. Now, we must vibrate ourselves with the instruments and voices, and be made to vibrate by them in order to have true musical sensations.



From *Slide Rule*, Jen Hofer:

reverb is you shattering into infinitesimal colors as a violence is done in particular accommodations. of the four bombs predicted this month, we have had two so far. can we choose our relations?

From *Arrival*, Sarah Anne Cox:

you breathe for the most part the other's part is listening for breathing

...

the fabulousness of hope surrounded in vellum wash

From *Comp.*, Kevin Davies:

I like the feel of experiencing myself making a decision that is itself deciding to experience the feel of welcome in me. That peppers might grow, and bats find crannies.

Passports glowing like gnosis in the crawl space

—Drew Gardner

THE DAYS OF OUR BLOGS

So it didn't appear in 18-point bold-faced type on the New York *Times* website, but "Silliman Has a Blog" has managed to change a few minds—mine, for instance—about the possibilities for this website format, once thought strictly the province of public diarists.

(A "blog"—short for weblog—is a site that is easily maintained via an application one downloads for free—**blogspot.com** has an easy, popular one, but the trend lately has been with **movabletype.com**, which creates a blog that accepts reader comments among other perks. Minimal HTML knowledge is needed, and each new entry requires merely filling in a field and hitting "publish." If you don't have a website, you can get free server space at **blogspot.com**.)

(And "Silliman" is short for "Ron Silliman.")

Silliman's Blog—yes, that's what it's called—is sure to be a big hit; it's already chock-full of his characteristically elephantine-remembered accounts of the strands, major but mostly minor, of literary influ-

ence in American poetry—Actualism, anyone?—not to mention his frank evaluation of the 50 or so books he's reading by the likes of Tan Lin, Besmilt Brigham, and Anselm Hollo.

Other blogs out there include Katherine "The Blog Queen" Parrish's *squish* www.meadow4.com/squish/, Rochesterian Brendan Barr's *texturl* cif.rochester.edu/~barr/texturl/, and my narcissistically titled *Free Space Comix: The Blog* www.arras.net/weblog/. *Lying Motherfucker* lyingmofo.ohskylab.com/amis.php boasts entries by writers as diverse as Martin Amis, Dr. Seuss and Ernest Hemingway: "Thursday, 21 february 2002: Went to bullfights. Matador a pansy; jumped in with a beachtowel and cocktail umbrella to show Ramon how it was done. Bull makes nice pet: more effective than dog at dissuading missionaries."

Let's open the mailbag ... an announcement from John Tranter that *Jacket 18 jacket-magazine.com/18/* includes the complete collected poems of Henry J.-M. Levet (1874–1906), translated by Kirby Olson, are now available in translation for the first time ever, news indeed—clicking through, I really liked this stuff, all the seemingly heady allusions of Nerval in sonnets and quatrains and, like his predecessor, an entire oeuvre limited to 11 pages of mature poems.

I'm very happy to inform you that it's not a joke—Ben Friedlander, Jacques Debrot and Kent Johnson did not cook him up over a bottle of Veuve Clicquot—and kudos should be aimed at Delhi, New York's own Kirby Olson for translating him. Rhyming "fiancé" with "ennui" might not be everyone's cup of tea, but Valery Larbaud idolized Levet, and Blaise Cendrars and Phillipe Soupault are said to have taken a major cue from him. I'm sure the detoured posters of Levet in jeans are only a few weeks in away, not to mention the movie starring Leonardo.

David Chan's "Alphanumeric"—a set of fonts that toss up constellations of Fouriest principles in diagram form with each letter, so that a sentence becomes an outline for a heady, hot utopian daydream—made a recent appearance in *Shark*, and can be downloaded for free at nationalphilistine.com/alternumerics/. And stephaniestruckland.com now contains the latest hypertext poem by the author whose name is cleverly embedded in the URL—she's one of the few with a significant print and hypertext reputa-

tion and one to watch!

But the one you will thank me forever for is the "Blonk Organ" www.bajazzo.com/blonkorgan.html a Flash application that puts you in the driver's seat of Dutch sound poet Jaap Blonk's incredible vocal chords, the bizarre things that he does with them, and the many many faces of thwarted semantic desire.

—Brian Kim Stefans

CELLULOID DREAMS

On the occasion of the sixth annual "Views from the Avant-Garde" film show, some cuts and splices.

Symphysistic sites of written and cinematic languages:

... film ... might be more characteristically thought of as having syntax as its subject matter.

—Tony Conrad

Cinema ... contains the elements of eternity: meaning poetry. Within the experimental film is ... an extraordinary language which eventually will be the basis of that language which shall be spoken in the future.

—Gregory Markopoulos

Duck-rabbit of word and image:

I think in pictures. Words are like a second language to me. I translate both spoken and written words into full-color movies ... when somebody speaks to me, his words are entirely translated into pictures.

—Temple Grandin, describing her autism

This film is hand-painted and is essentially about the interplay between hypnagogic vision and words, the effect of the one upon the other, the contest between the two ... words, such as "Subversive" and "Liberating," along with many which are unreadable, seem to struggle for an equality of viewer comprehension, almost as if the brain were coming to terms again with the origins of written language.

—Stan Brakhage

Looking. Looking and watching. Watching for the word reading. Reading the word reading. Looking at the picture of the word read. Reading the word picture.

—from Steve McCaffery's book of a film of a book, *Panopticon*

Structure and meaning as a matter of hinge and isthmus:

This is a talk about two grammars. Sex and film ...

The connectives of grammar modify, they tinge, all of discourse, all of thought, but with vagueness. The dark line between the individual frames of film, the breaths of sex, tinge life with its own faintness, its character, its depth. These lines between and among the mounting equations of viewing and of passion, are the interludes that make possible times. Connections separate, and in this separation is the permission for failure ... These are the conjunctions, the asides of punctuation, the ampersands, the prepositions, and the clauses.

—Alan Davies

The place of articulation is not so much in the realm of images as information, but in the response of the heart to the poignancy of the cuts.

—Nathaniel Dorsky

I have worked with ... caesuras as definite parts of the articulation of the line ... silences themselves as phrases ... charged with meaning ...

Caesuras ... separate parts of the utterance ... so that their syntactic bond becomes suspended.

—Robert Duncan

Separation lays between the furniture. A door opens
closes a body passes through.

—Diane Ward

Disrupting hegemony of linear time, causality, of word following word, frame following frame

a continuous present, a using everything a beginning again and again

everything is the same except composition and time

—Gertrude Stein

... its will to destroy narrative was an attempt to situate film in a kind of perpetual Present, one image or sequence succeeding another in rapid disjunction.

—from an Annette Michelson essay on Michael Snow

The image always contradicted memory.

For an image never moves into the past. It lingers until it disappears, universally present.

—Jacques Roubaud

Toward uses of language that expand perceptual and existential possibility:

It has been good to think about Harry Truman this Spring and Summer. After all, many a spoken You really means an it to which one merely says you from habit, thoughtlessly, this is called the photoelectric effect, Breaking through crust of habit to actual perception, seeing something continually for the first time, The river

—Rod Smith

Imagine an eye unruled by manmade laws of perspective, an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything but which must know each object encountered in life through an adventure of perception.

—Stan Brakhage

Scorpio Rising exemplifies what I mean by "moving hieroglyph"—a keenly edited critical phantasy in which a very specific image repertoire generates a constellation of a psychosexual microcosm and its communicative interface with the culture at large.

—Kenneth Anger

If we had the right sort of brains, we would receive a definite message from that figure, like dots and lines ticked off by one receiving station, received and translated into definite thought by another telegraphic centre.

We want receiving centres of dots and dashes.

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

—H.D., *Notes on Thought and Vision*

... from telephoto lengths to micromorphological understanding of cinema, and ... temporal modulation in what is ultimately an omnidirectional grammar...

—Paul Sharits

... William Carlos Williams' "No ideas but in things" ...

... Robert Duncan's take-off ON a quote: "The physical world is a light world. The real world, Thomas Vaughan wrote, is invisible."

... Jack Spicer's command "See through into" ...

—Stan Brakhage

This illusion of movement in depth ... tours imaginary landscapes. Impossible changes abound, the four dimensions turn outlaw. Perhaps more significant than what is seen are the shifts in perspective from where it is seen.

—Ken Jacobs, note on his Nervous Magic Lantern Performance

—Marianne Shaeen

KEEPING TIME

Been thinking a bit about time, and time is always about space, about ways of marking distances between now and then, here and there, beat and offbeat.

"Her vocal cords were overtaken by the sound of her own heartbeat." So reads the label on one photo in Lorna Simpson's "15 Mouths," a piece in which 15 photographs of variously expressive mouths are arranged in a 5 x 3 grid. Each of the photographs in the grid is labeled with text that might be considered descriptive or instructive of (or be considered an utterance from) the photographed mouth: *natural, deliberate, meaty, by heart*, etc. Or, on the other hand, the photos might be read as illustrations of their assigned words and phrases. Together, the photos of a body part and the printed language parts suggest simultaneously a kind of hyper-specificity (coordinates on a grid) and the generic. A specific moment in time and the (w)hole(s) of time.

On the wall directly across from Simpson are a couple of Adrian Piper pieces which also combine photographs and framed text. One effect of the combination in Piper's work is the sense of simultaneously standing still (and being enveloped by the large photographs) and pressing forward (through the framed (painted) text), one part of which claims "It was just a simple mistake. It doesn't mean anything. Nothing's going on." And everything's going on, including the viewer (but only for so long). To a new moment and to the museum's main galleries.

On display there: a survey of the past seven years of work by Gary Simmons. Known for his erasure drawings, Simmons samples icons and stereotypes of American popular culture to lay down new visual tracks. Simmons usually begins by drawing images in white chalk on walls and on chalkboards and in charcoal on vellum, and then proceeds to rub, smudge, erase the drawings. The result is images that seem uncertain, unstable and that suggest motion as in cartoons (where here and there, now and then can be contained in the

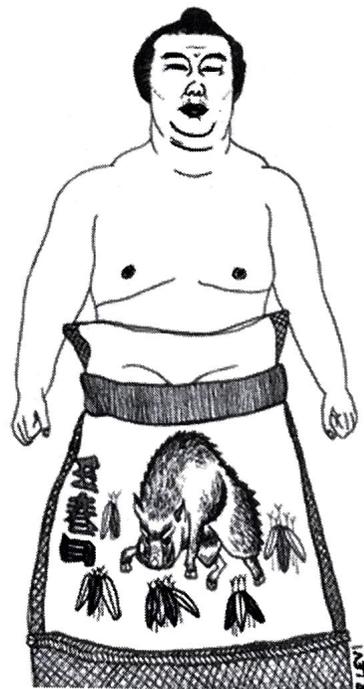
same frame). [How does one do that in a poem? Lines through words? (Technical) Contradictions? New Words?]

Many of the pieces seem to reflect this attempt to catch the tracks that an idea or feeling make, to suggest the gestural nature of seeing and making. Simmons describes being drawn to the idea of the trace or the ghost, "the information that blurs in and out—'Is it there? Is it not?'" The work is only trace evidence of a process of artistic performance, of memory, of cultural politics, of geographical identity. It is a process into which Simmons (as well as Piper and Simpson) draws the viewer. More aware of looking as movement through space, I began to think about time and about differences in how the visual and the written (which is also visual, except at readings) keep time. In printed text, I think, there is a temporal rigidity that the visual seems better able to call attention to.

When Harryette Mullen and Gregory Pardlo gave a late October reading at the Studio Museum of Harlem, I had to think again. They presented work related to ideas and themes in Simmons' work. Many of their poems' words, like Simpson's language parts, played off of Simmons' work in non-descriptive and interesting ways.

The Simpson and Piper pieces are a part of the Studio Museum in Harlem's lobby exhibit "Photography Past/Forward: Aper-ture at 50" until December 22nd. The Simmons show is up until January 5th.

—Tonya Foster



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CHARTING THE HERE OF THERE: French & American Poetry in Translation in Literary Magazines 1850-2002

GUY BENNETT & BÉATRICE MOUSLI

ISBN: 1-887123-63-6

Price: \$24.95

So there is a there there ... and now, here. Learned and lively, this handsome catalogue extensively and accurately documents a Franco-American poetic exchange started long ago and still gathering impetus ... What more could we ask, on either side of the poem or the Atlantic?

—MARY ANN CAWS

Charting the Here of There is a companion to the New York Public Library exhibition "Reviews of Two Worlds: French-American Periodicals, 1945-2000." This collection is fully illustrated with a bibliography, a timeline and interviews with translators including: John Ashbery, Jaques Roubaud, Ron Padgett, Rosmarie Waldrop and others.

(published with The New York Public Library in association with The Book Office, Cultural Service of the French Embassy in the United States)

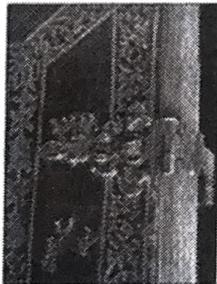
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BRENDA COULTAS

from THE BOWERY PROJECT

The Bowery Project is included in *Coultas' A Handmade Museum*, forthcoming from Coffee House Press in April 2003. Leroy Press is publishing a chapbook of The Bowery Project, along with a critical essay by Alan Gilbert.

Bowery Box Wishes

Film script for a home movie: 3 mins, b & w

Props. A silver foil covered or battered "Lottery" style box labeled "Bowery Wishes" mounted on street furniture or maybe wired to a chain link fence.

Directions: Film opens at 1st and Bowery. Film hands writing down wishes and then hands folding the paper into shapes, paper airplanes or elaborate angles then placing wishes in box. Also provide found stationery, as odd as possible. Film various hands, however they appear: some in gloves or with elaborately painted nails, or natural hands of different individuals. Some tramps, some yuppies and some poets. Do not film faces.

Observation Notes: Some began by clearing their throats and minds, by sitting down, selecting a pen, selecting paper in the color or in the best shape of their wishes. One wrote a very long wish wrote for a long time, but mostly the wishes were on the tip top of their thoughts, not buried or deeply buried but near the top accessible.

Many held the pen tightly, many wore bracelets. Some were black and some were white, both men and women. Some came from the mission where there was a hot food line so many of the wishers and dreamers came over. One man, his glasses held on by string, promised he'd bring more people over and he was good to his word. Some wrote as if I had the ability to make the wishes come true. A man in a 3 Stooges shirt said he had lived on the Bowery all his life, and he was looking for a girlfriend. Another said he had just yesterday gotten out of jail, and he was a poet, and then he recited a poem. Some women stopped, they were silent and diligent about their writing. They did not say if they were lonely nor say what they were looking for.

Then it was over and I had a box of wishes. "Are you going to read them?" Someone asked. "No," I said.

But I wasn't sure why, I felt that they had trusted me not to look although I had promised nothing, but maybe some of them hoped to be heard. Months later, I took the box down and realized that what I felt was the need to protect them. So I did.

*

Things I Found December 15, 01

Morning

Apartment sale notice, tore off pole and put in apurse in case I went in that direction. Spools of waxed leather-like-string on 2nd street. Earlier there were more, but I forgot about them, meaning to pick them up on my way home, but instead went a different direction, so went back later, only two spools left. Black and tan. Further east, a metal chair, brown, face down and folded.

Evening

From a box of books on 1st Street *In the Summer House*, Jane Bowles, 1954. An old nervous man on his way to the Catholic Worker for dinner stopped, said he collected books on airships, and were there any books on airships in the box? He said things were harder for people like himself since Sept. 11th, but thought the new mayor might be good. We shook hands and I couldn't think of any words to reassure him with.

Night

Then there were the things I wished I'd found: A Bowery flophouse at \$10 a night, Stephen Crane, and a rainbow, my grandpa's trick dog Minnie, long gone; Rusty, Dad's old dog; my pig Dogfood and my pony Soybean Saint. Wish I'd found my grandpa strolling the street, my grandmas and my dad. It was the dead I wished I could find on this mythological stretch of skid row. Oh, that and a tin of marbles.

*

Gumball

Aquamarine dumpster named Gumball, outside window, empty. Men from across the street filled it all day long. An eager man stood by taking what he could, he left an old model boat that was missing the sail. He took a small desk instead because he could sell it. He said they were cheapos, that the contractor and workers were destroying the furniture before it hit the street. He said if it were his job he'd put the furniture out, let people take it and then the dumpster would hold more. He had a great plan for how the dumpster should be filled, for he had studied on it. By day's end, Gumball was brimming, overflowing, and surrounded by the homeless. (75 E. 2nd St. April 11, 02)

*

Tenement Tour

Iwanted everyone to see how we lived and I had my own questions. Were we identical to other husbands and wives, to the other couples stacked above and beside us? Like Joe and Janice across the street or the wealthy European next door? I had been making a great effort to be like everyone else lately or else to be invisible. I couldn't afford new clothes and a dead rat lay in front of my winter clothes stored in the basement. So until I decided to face the rat, slide the dustpan under him and carry him away I would be invisible.

Had to tell the tourists that tenement life was much better these days, we're nearly middle class and that only 2 people lived in these 4 rooms. That poor people couldn't live in them anymore, no immigrants like in Jacob Reis' time. Tenements were now expensive and the truly poor live in a worse kind of projects or in Queens while hobos and bums live in Rockaway beach. We can barely afford this tenement life. We are not moving up socially or economically nor are we ambitious that way. We want to retreat or at least maintain the status quo until one day when we might have more than rent money ... then there would be woods, cabin or cottage.

So we wrote script, recorded it and customers listened as they toured each room.

*

Application

Found myself locked in Bowery mindset, settling for less, or the reality, that my dreams were just fantasies of success and that I didn't have the appropriate language for making things happen. The application asked me what would I do with the money, so I was trying to write a paragraph about what I would use free money for. "To buy time" I wrote "and a new camera," but there was more space, so I wrote "I might buy a new tablecloth and paint, I've been wanting to redecorate for a while or I might go to Gettysburgh with the money, everyone says its worth seeing. I might buy yoga lessons, and I'd like to take a gourmet cooking or a photography class, also get some pictures framed and a headstone for dad and get mom's cats neutered."

I wanted to buy a block of time thinking of a salt block, of how long it took the cows to lick it down into strange shapes, and once I licked the block myself, but can't remember the taste nor later, the taste of the cows, even the ones I named. I couldn't explain that although my project was inexpensive it was actually priceless, or that I would do it anyway, with or without it. Maybe slower or with more stress. Some things wouldn't get done, the things that took cash money, not time. Or maybe I would give up altogether, which was something I thought about regularly. I wasn't sure about what they wanted to hear. Since I didn't know, I became nervous. The free money had been won by many people who live on my block, and I thought if I could find the right speech the money would then be mine. (April 14, 02, 75 E. 2nd St.)

*

Revelation

The landlord pulled a dumpster up to our door, and into it went the contents of the basement. There were things of my own I had to retrieve and having no place for them, out onto the street they went. Mostly I gave up books, one called *I Love Adventure* with a zebra striped cover, a Warhol catalog; a leather suitcase, maybe rhino skin, circa 40s, beaten and busted up but of such exotic character that I had held onto for 5 years. It was odd that I wasn't interested in our very

own dumpster even though it was full of good things. Right away I saw a man rooting around and carting off a dusty garish print with a garish gold frame. Some punk girls were on top and very happily shouting "teeth." In the center of the dumpster were hundreds of white boxes, that I thought were empty gift boxes from a craft project or something, instead they were filled with teeth impressions from the 70s, whole uppers and lowers set in mostly yellow clay-like material, plus some single teeth, ivory colored, and possibly real.

A woman with baby carriage stopped to comment on the wonder of it. My friend called her sister so she could come down and take a look. One man, an artist, came back twice and said he could do a study of the dentistry of eastern European immigrants, that's whose impressions these were. Inside the hallway the landlord had set aside a box for himself.

Passing by later while it was still light, I saw that someone had lined up a row on the dumpster ledge. Gnarly, that's the best word to describe this forest of teeth and the roofs of thousands of mouths. Amazing. How primitive teeth are, right up there with alligators.

Still, I was not excited for myself, but I was happy for everyone else, and when people walked by I said "teeth" too. I knew it would make them happy to see a dumpster full of them. I thought about my lack of excitement, I never even kept a pair, only photographed a couple, and all this time, for years, I was literally sitting one floor above the mother lode, the site of a chapter into the history of dentistry, and I was not excited. I thought about it for a week.

I realized that the garbage had lost its appeal because I no longer had room. Our bedroom was filled with mismatched crippled furniture, some missing just a leg and propped up with a book or newspaper. A collection of lamps each with its own distinct dysfunction; one shaped like a Chinese junk that worked for a whole month and could never be coaxed to light up again. But I had bought it for my husband's birthday, so it was a keeper. Plus, I had gotten some clothes from my cousin, and I had books to read. Thus I was filled up and overflowing with things. Maybe the garbage would never again be interesting to me, I hoped that I would I get my enthusiasm back because there is, after all, a shit load in this world. (May 3, 75 E. 2nd St.)

CONTRADICTIONS?

We asked this issue's Forum participants the following two questions:

Are there any contradictions in your poetics? If so, how do they make themselves manifest in your writing?

JORDAN DAVIS

There's a boardwalk
 Closed-up t-shirt stores, miniature golf,
 Arcades, taffy and pizza,
 And I am compulsively
 And barefoot going from phone booth to phone booth
 Looking for quarters and
 On the basis of that I can claim
 When I have a little change in my pocket
 To be inspired. This is so long before I'm
 Wondering whether I can change
 Situations of my own choosing
 I am so far from reading *Our Inner Conflicts*
 I think *Rotation of Crops* is agronomy
 But Kierkegaard is international and trump
 And trap and I am happy
 To discover the concept of a 'tab'
 At the bookstore down the street
 As years later I think, yes, rush towards
 Love withdraw all at once
 This fight flight and sing all at once
 Like Lee Ann singing the alphabet backwards
 It's not witchcraft it's
 Standard George Washington Bridge levitation
 Kenneth get-out-of-townism
 And not fade away oh
 When your day care and your real estate broker
 Have practically the same phone number
 You can be grateful to have flunked out of
 Catholicism
 Two or three generations previously
 And therefore be native to the celesta
 The sister
 The flying tackle by Brown and Bard graduates
 Uniformly aware of the limits on laughter
 The imaginative possibilities of competition
 Which even now is making
 Whores shiver in the rain
 It's so difficult to feel for Bill Ford
 We find ourselves in Copenhagen

Rhymes with New Haven
 With cash in our pants and hearts
 While any understanding is a contradiction a contraction
 Of the wish to be experiencing
 Without crud in the carburetor or Morty Feldman
 Lost on Wall Street where the Germans mill
 Around the shoulders of the SUVs on the diagonal
 Or on the Ninth the hatchbacks with NYU stickers patrol
 Which way to Ground Zero?
 I feel a compulsion not to lose my balance
 And a wish to knock everybody else down
 A standing order for enthusiasms and
 Weekend duty among the Reserved
 Above all a need to oppose oppose oppose
 For example, what do you mean, "poetics"?
 Is that what you call the homunculus or robot
 Who writes the poems of people in Poetics programs?
 Is it the sum of attitudes anyone has toward a blank page
 Or an unindentured hour
 Or rather the quotient the point traveling
 Over the surface of the egg feels moving from
 Sephora to Toys 'R' Us to Virgin
 And then out and really free in the objects
 Pushed up against the ocean
 So oblivious to the difference between anything
 and smoke.
 If that's one then no there are no contradictions in mine,
 Only unrevealed evenings out across time

TYRONE WILLIAMS

I'm responding to the question concerning my poetics—do elements of my aesthetic values contradict one another and, if so, how. On a general level I do not subscribe to any particular "movement" and its attendant aesthetic values. I am interested in a wide range of poetic practices in practice today, but what links them all, for me, is the political axis. Specifically, I am interested in, drawn to, poetics that embody socialist and communist values without succumbing to mere agitprop. I am interested in so-called "working class" poetics as well as "academic" and "philosophical" poetics to this extent. In my own work I practice and utilize both narrative, lyric and philosophical modes—these

about surrealist, dadaist and abstract modes associated with certain segments of so-called "Language Writing." I find the work of Carl Phillips and Elizabeth Alexander as useful to me as that of Susan Howe and Liz Waldner. For me "contradiction" is an indirect reflection—refraction, I suppose—of our historical epoch.

KATIE DEGENTESH

Yes, there are contradictions in my poetics. There are contradictions in everyone's poetics, since people are contradictory by nature. But not really. Contradiction is the essence of everything; in fact, it doesn't actually exist, since equal forces in opposition will always cancel each other out, and for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

In the latest Harper's—you know, the overly ironic, supra-literary magazine that everyone loves to read—someone quotes Auden as having said, "Good writing is clear thinking about mixed feelings." Auden was always churning out aphorisms like that with complete authority and then contradicting himself ten minutes later. I like this one; it strikes me as true. Except when it doesn't, of course.

The whole point of even having a poetics is so that it can evolve, change, and/or reverse itself at any given moment, and you can stand back and laugh at the contortions you've done in order to keep yourself busy, and maybe get some perspective on where to go next. Hopefully, you're always pushing your own limits. It's kind of like a moral code. There are things you say you would never do, but there are always going to be circumstances that could cause you to justify doing those very things.

ALAN DAVIES

No, there are no contradictions in my poetics.

A contradiction is a mental construct. Contradictions do not exist outside of minds. For that reason, it would be possible (it would be possible) for there to be a contradiction in (in someone's) poetic theory (one of the meanings of poetics) but not in poetic practice (i.e., the poems (and the other meaning of poetics)). Once the poem exists the poem is just the poem. It actually has no relationship to the theoretical poetics that might otherwise be thought of as being behind it (influ-

encing it (causing it to happen)). Theory is theory. Poem is poem. To think that the theory in any way produces the poem is the basis of all of the stupid confusions that people bring to the reading of a poem.

This does not mean that a writer's ideas wouldn't change over time. Hopefully they would! (I can cite examples to the contrary (I deliberately restrain myself)). But there is no contradiction in change.

Contradiction is a lot like paradox. We don't see something and call it (and call it) a paradox or a contradiction. And I'm using the word "see" broadly here (we notice). We notice something and it is then (actually (whether we know it or not)) to our own mental response that we give the name of contradiction or of paradox. It's only because of a mental confusion that we think of the paradoxical or the contradiction as outside of our thinking.

KENT JOHNSON

Just recently, I have translated *The Miseries of Poetry: Some Traductions from the Greek*, with Alexandra Papaditsas, who suffered from the extremely rare cornuexcretis phalloides, a painful condition whereby a keratinous horn slowly grows from the human head. There was a terrible contradiction throughout our collaboration, a many-layered one, and the project has ended in tragedy. The Greeks, who joined the torsos of humans to the hindquarters of animals, knew something about poetics, contradiction, and tragedy. Now I am the subject of a criminal investigation conducted by the police of Greece, and defendant in a suit filed by a small religious order in that country.

I've tried, but I'm frankly too overwhelmed by the conflicts of this matter to talk very clearly about "contradictions" in my poetics. Better to let Alexandra speak, for what she has to say here, from a letter toward the end of her life, strikes me as quite apropos the topic. Furthermore, because we worked virtually as one, there is a sense (at least it seems this way to me) that I, too, am inside these words:

My Darling: On March 14, I did find a conceptual praxis whereby morphemes, these so crazy particles that are the source of All Contradiction in the World of Signified Appearances (mat is mat because it is not bat; the man you spoke of, Kasey Silem Mohammad is Kasey Silem Mohammad because he is not William Carlos Williams), may be accelerated at opposite directions through connecting worm-

holes in the poem*, and at so much unbelievably fantastic speed, so that when they smash against the other, the names of Samothracean gods become released and scattered in paragrammatic traces, dashes, and spirals across [the] flattened phase-face of the poem... Hooded Authors wander through cork-screwed streets there, serenely greeting other hooded Authors with a bow. The poets follow not what is outside the eyes, but what is within, "shimmering," as Althusser said in *Lenin and Philosophy*, "beneath the world." They are very dark from having gone out to the true edge ...

Thus, all manner of Contradiction goes away. I am quite confident that the poets of Patmos, a thousand years hence, their hardened hair pulled back by Sacred Law to a sharpened point three feet behind their heads, will assume this as second nature.

Now, does this mean that Paradox is vanquished, too? No not at all, nor could it be. For Paradox is a higher manifestation of contradiction, and it clearly transcends contradiction. She is a gowned, beheaded Nike, [and] the feathers of her outspread wings curl round the furthest reaches of every figure of speech, thus gathering all difference back into the center of a Truth that is so near we are always overlooking it in our great anxiety to be "relaxedly classical," "universally personal," "casually cosmopolitan," or "opaquely experimental," whatever the case, yes? To see her ecstatic, headless form appear in holograph inside the poem puts a new spin on everything.

Alas, Paradox could not save her. And that's 500 words. Sometimes, to paraphrase Emily Dickinson, all you can do is be a Sovereign-Poet and put out your deceiving eyes.

*Elsewhere, she writes: "These poetic wormholes are everywhere, actually, in any poem, regardless of the poem's contingent value or prosody, and at any phonemic point through whose tiny trumpet-like hole the whisper of lost, dead language puffs upward."



WHERE IN BRAINS?

As poets sharing work every day for more than six years, it's an amusing, if daunting, task to interview each other about our work. We decided to use science's latest pride, brain mapping, as a framework for exploring each other's work in a new way. If brain functions such as spirituality, obsession and fear can be assigned to particular areas of brain anatomy, then where in brains do the poems come from, and where do they go?

Jen Coleman: Could you talk about where the characters in your poems are speaking from and where they are speaking to in other people's brains?

Allison Cobb: In the One-foot poems I'd say the focus is the limbic system, the old or "reptile" brain. I wanted to explore the way that drives and instincts like aggression (hypothalamus) and fear (amygdala) get codified and justified within cultures through discourses that "normalize" things like war and conquest.

In the Polar Bear and Desert Fox poems I wanted to explore a love relationship (ours): the whole complicated matrix of fondness, fear, desire, even aggression, in such a relationship. I guess my poems are interested in the reptile brain, these basic drives.

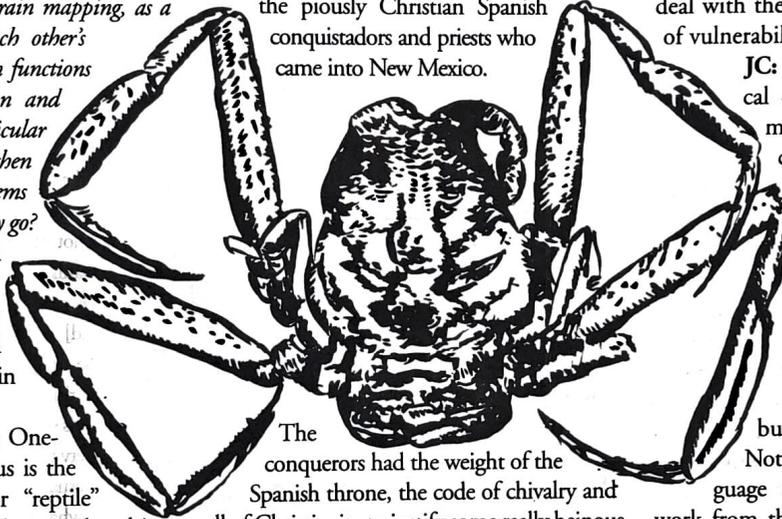
JC: Mine too! In One-foot, aggression, rage, desire, fear are like a character that surfaces across time and throughout cultures—you're giving a body, in a sense, to the limbic system. But what's important in your poems is not only the embodiment, but the interaction—in the force of one person or people coming into contact with another.

Are there places in One-foot or in the bear/fox poems where the communication system breaks down?

AC: Well, it's not too much of a surprise that we both address the lizard brain in our work—probably all poetry (all art?) does at some level address these drives and desires that in "civilized" society are repressed or displaced.

My poems deal with the social consequences of the cultural rationalization of aggression, desire and fear, and your poems present isolated speakers who can't get control

of their lizard brains—their drives are eating them. I wanted to get at some of this with the One-foot character also, who is modeled on the piously Christian Spanish conquistadors and priests who came into New Mexico.



The conquerors had the weight of the Spanish throne, the code of chivalry and all of Christianity to justify some really heinous violence—but I also wanted to suggest that it was One-foot's own insatiable, unloadable desire that drove him to violence. Thus, "One-foot eats off his own mouth," and the fact that One-foot is a kind of pathetic character. Rose, the World War II General character, is more terrifying and less human—he has so internalized the values of the aggressor that he has suppressed any of the emotion that might make him more "human"—thus he can sacrifice doughboys by feeding them into the German war machine—though this is not said explicitly, I hope there is a sense of it.

About the communication system breaking down, yes, I think communication is essentially a broken thing! The characters' communications, especially in One-foot, what they might stand for, is displacing the real motivation behind their actions—the old lizard brain drives elevated to a cultural system. Not that the characters are aware of this. In the One-foot poem dialogue sections the characters are a Chorus to say, "hey, there's something wrong here," and send off danger signals, and mourning.

The syntax of the Polar Bear and Desert Fox poems and the One-foot poems is slightly "off" to break down conscious communication and let more unconscious elements play. And play is key—to deal with and diffuse danger,

which is important to the One-foot poems and bear/fox poems, which deal with love in its raw, not so ideal aspects, and which also deal with the very basic, instinctual danger of vulnerability.

JC: That discussion of the historical context of One-foot reminds me of something I've seen change in your work in the last six years or so. Your conception of the projects is rooted in the cortex, specifically the temporal lobe—memory bestowed on your perceptions of history, news—so-called "factual" material.

That's always been true—but in your early Atomic Notebook poems, you used a language that asked for more cortical work from the reader—it asked Wernicke's language area to work for comprehension, as if written from the cingulate cortex, where emotion is already processed and conscious in order to be expressed.

There is a sea change in the Little Box Book, where language becomes more tactile, with simple syllables and repetition that trigger an emotional response, and images that trigger a directly limbic response—the language targets something more base.

What I'm wondering is whether there's a corresponding brain-change in your experience of creating the poems.

AC: Something fundamental did change in my writing process and intention—a desire to access language that was rhythmic, elemental, childlike, led me to attempt to get around my repressing frontal cortex, so that chance operations are more a part of my writing. Or this process: I write by hand every day in a notebook and then go back through and "glean" what might be useful. I intentionally misread what I've written by blurring my vision or running sentences together or reconstructing my illegible writing. This creates great surprises that my frontal cortex probably wouldn't allow if I let it get in there and edit.

I think my personality lends itself to control (duh) and even though I'm left-handed, my left brain, the logical brain, is I feel quite

prominent in some ways. I have this need to control and order my environment twinned with an unlocateable sense of worry or melancholy that comes from my right brain. This works pretty well for art production—I'm driven to write from my sense of dis-ease, and obsessive enough to want completion!

AC: In general, is there a place in other's brains your poems are speaking to?

JC: Well, I think one of my drives in poems is to try to stimulate parts of the lower brain by distracting the frontal cortex whose design is to rein in the lower brain. Within the voices of the poem are triggers for fear, rage, aggression, sex, hunger—coded in language that's just "off" enough to absorb the attention of Wernicke's area as it tries to figure out what the poem is trying to mean.

Anyway, that's one thing—you can see the rage/fear objective most obviously in a poem like "blue guy" that is giving voice to a threatening character. It's less obvious in a poem like "Shaney Sonnet" where I'm using words like lizard, feed, cop—things that are intended to go straight to the limbic system—but without the poem being "about" those words.

AC: I'm not completely sure what "Shaney Sonnet" is "about," but I do notice right away the driving rhythm, which is just a bit off, and the "popping" sounds, as in "surface pop p," do create a heightened feeling of anxiety—like explosions. Sound and rhythm are central to your poems. Do these also access the lower brain?

JC: It's a tough question, what the rhythm in my poems is trying to do. I think it is really important. I wrote an inconsequential poem once imitating the rhythms of my motorcycle when it was hard to start on a cold morning: "why dik a why dik a why dik a boom dika a boom boom boom!" That's an invigorating and pleasing sound. I guess that these pops and whirrs are a warning to the fear center to fight or flee—which triggers adrenaline, which feels kind of good. So I guess I'm a sucker for the "Boo" type fear—all adrenaline, no ugly anxiety.

AC: I'm also interested in "Blue Guy," and the voices your writing takes on. Some of your poems seem written from a quite literal autobiographical bent. In others you use collaged language, where the speaker is a voice from "outside" that has been brought in to be "exposed" in some way. Where do you think these speakers come from in

terms of your brain? Do you make a conscious choice when you write from a certain persona? Do you have the experience, like people who suffer from the "alien hand," where your speakers seem like strangers to you?

JC: Yes! Sometimes I'm surprised by the physical details of the characters I create—I use a princess, or an old drunk fireman, a doctor, or whatever—the characters in my poems seldom have my own physical manifestations (curly hair, big hips, pimples, etc). But they are all getting at the struggle to be heard in a primal way by using the trappings of the cortex's creation (language).

It's as if animals, who've lost the gift of communication through gesture, have had to improvise by creating words—what an unfortunate and silly way to communicate! And part of what I'm doing is showing that silly and clumsy side of language off, as it tries to get at stuff that's really made of electrical pulses. So my relationship to these characters is not as strangers, but more as parts of the brain, my brain, manifested and functioning oddly in others.

On the other hand, I definitely have an autobiographical project that keeps cropping up. I think I have a feeling of interconnectedness and spirituality that comes with mania in the cingulate cortex. I'm always trying to get at, either by describing or by simply giving in to (lo, a bee has spoken), this non-secular ecstatic experience that I feel, or see, mildly, quite often.

AC: Ah, yes, you and the ecstatic. Your ecstatic connection to the world is an experience that in some other brains is more repressed, but it doesn't seem to have the sense of inflated self—it seems to come from a kind of super-heightened attention, a self-dismissal that is attributed to an overactive cingulate cortex, the same source as mania. And the ability to "pay attention," to dismiss the self, is always one ingredient of the ecstatic.

How does this relate to your poetry? Well, there's a sense of "welling up" in your poems, of the ecstatic overflowing its rims, which creates a sense of formless spontaneity and "artlessness" that I think all art hopes to achieve. Yet usually the ecstatic experiences of your poems are couched in terror. For example the bee in "Lo, a bee has spoken," is so gorgeously and microscopically sensuous, it's almost grotesque—a hallucination. Also the tomblike store and the iron meat grinder create the presence of the vio-

lent, faceless outside world. Why do you think the ecstatic and the terrible work together in your poems like that?

JC: Huh—that's so funny—I'm always a little surprised when people say my poems have the grotesque or terrible in them, because I think of them as delicious. But yeah, there's the inescapably terrible there, too. Personally, I guess, I have a parallel—people have described me as jolly, accommodating, free of anxiety—at odds with my impression of myself as wicked, dirty-minded, twisted. I'm oversensitive to people's humiliation and disappointment, but undersensitive to other's pain or fear. I am inconsolable at romantic comedies, but enjoy a good cop show or horror movie. So maybe that's what makes me boldly explore confusion, horror, passion in my poems—because they are comfortable to me.

Maybe it's that durn cingulate cortex again—it triggers an uncomfortable loop, asking the questions, did you lock the door? Are you sure? Was that just now, or earlier that you locked the door? The same brain part causes people in depression to dwell on things that prevent them from feeling better. When I'm writing, all the complex symptoms of amygdala emotion never reach the cingulate cortex—which leaves me free to explore extremes that lead to heightened or distorted perceptions, which then come to the cortex for meaning.

And that's what I'm really interested in. Not the base emotion itself that feels icky, but the way that emotion puts glasses on perception. I'm interested in "truth," as created by perception, fueled by physical/chemical experience. Yeah—that's it. And it's true in history, that "truth"—its protection, its assertion, its perception—comes hand in hand with horror.

Allison Cobb is the author of The little box book (Situation), J poems (BabySelf Press), Polar Bear and Desert Fox (BabySelf Press), and co-author with Jen Coleman and CE Putnam of Communal Bebop Canto. Her first full-length collection, Born Two, is forthcoming. She is co-editor of Pom2 with Jen Coleman, Susan Landers and Ethan Fugate.

Jen Coleman's poems have appeared in Beloit Poetry Journal, Ixnay, and Tangent among other journals. She is former co-curator of the In Your Ear reading series in D.C. and co-editor of Pom2.

UNA AVENTURA AMERICANA

Black Mountain College: An American Adventure (Una aventura americana) at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, October 30, 2002 to January 13, 2003. Curated by Vincent Katz

Why Black Mountain College? Why now? Why in Madrid?

If you don't know Madrid (this was my first trip ever) there are now three extraordinary world museums within easy walking distance of one another along a broad Hapsburgian double-laned, tree divided boulevard, Paseo de Prado. Yep, the Prado is the centerpiece; Museo Thyssen-Bornemiszo, which everyone calls the Thyssen for ease, is up the way; and Spain's national museum of modern art, Reina Sophia, sits where the boulevard ends at baroque fountain number three, more or less opposite Atocha railroad station.

The building is the least ornate of the bunch, and the oldest, I'm guessing 16th century, with a past as a hospital and before that a monastery. Now, its stern pale tan hulk is served by two huge glass elevator stacks. As you come up the sharp pyramid of steps leading to the entrance you can see figures walking across glass passageways to enter the 3rd or 4th floor exhibition spaces. Little figures. This is one BIG building.

Three huge banners announce the temporary exhibitions: the architect Jean Nouvel*; Antoni Gaudi, represented by a drawing of a fantasy wrapped-mountain design for a building never built; and in the middle black on black (left)—and pink, reds, beige, and grays (right), an Anni Albers/Joseph Albers collaboration. It's her work, a mid-century tapestry in cool squares, declaring the mastery of space by edges and

*Nouvel designs massive public complexes, office towers, sports arenas. He put the glass elevators on Reina Sophia and otherwise converted the building to its current use. In New York, he has designed a very fancy small hotel, still under construction, at Gansevoort and Hudson Streets, with his signature colored glass and floating lights.



FIELDING DAWSON, "CHARLES OLSON," 1956

division, which is why I call it a collaboration. Joseph said, etc. Cool in its warm colors. Way cool in its balance and precision. With words added: *Black Mountain College: una aventura Americana.*

Please understand, this is a highly biased account: I went to Black Mountain College in the summer of 1955, about a year and a half before it died. I married Basil King who was a student there from 1951 off and on to the closing, although I didn't meet him there. I met him in 1958 in San Francisco because Bob Creeley told Baz to look for me. I was there because I'd heard a lot of Black Mountain people were regrouping there, drawn by Robert Duncan and the burst of energy from Allen Ginsberg, who had just published *Howl*.

We two went to Madrid to see this show, which includes two of Basil's oil paintings. One is a small oil on paper, done at the school when Baz was 21, in the middle of his abstract expressionist training. The other is a canvas done in 1996 from his ongoing "Mirage" complex. A layered abstract-surrealist portrait head, mirror images, peering out, peering across, merging. Forty years later. But we went to Spain partly in dread.

Why Black Mountain? Why now? Why in Madrid?

Personal memoirs aside, Black Mountain has been poorly served by its historians, at least to date. Self-serving and inchoate would be my adjectives. Moreover the history is romanticized all out of whack by the big-name recital. That recital is not to be avoided, and it IS a mind blower.

The Alberses, Walter Gropius, Buckminster Fuller, Ilya Bolotowsky, Ozenfant, Lyonel Feininger, Motherwell, Kline, two deKoonings, Jack Tworckov, Esteban Vicente, Ken Noland, Robert Rauschenberg, Cy Twombly, John Chamberlain, Dorothea Rockburne, potter Peter Voulkos, filmmaker Arthur Penn. Cage and Cunningham of course. The Cunningham Dance Company was founded at the college in 1953 with Paul Taylor, Carolyn Brown, Viola Farber. Composers Roger Sessions, Lou Harrison, Stefan Wolpe. *The Black Mountain Review* and Charles Olson's years: Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Ed Dorn, Fielding Dawson, John Wieners. And the more. And the many more.

And there lie the problems: What was this school beyond a collection of art stars? The list of disciplines represented is nearly as dizzying as the list of names. If you choose almost any slant on late 20th century aesthetics, you can twist Black Mountain's list of attendees to fit your theory. And yet you will still end up here, with all of us, at the far end of century 20, where self-mockery, displacement, and defacement are championed. Where even propaganda—narrowly cause-constricted art—has lost its authenticity. Can you think of any feminist, pro any-victim, anti-consumer recent agit-prop that's a patch on the conviction of the

(Cont. on p.19)

◆☆☆☆◆ POETRY PROJECT EVENTS ☆☆☆◆

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 2, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

A Special Open Reading

"Covers" readers will be asked to bring a poem by someone else to read as well as one of their own. An array of books will be available from which readers can choose poems. Sign-up at 7:30 p.m. [8:00 p.m.]

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 4, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Joel Lewis and Douglas Rothschild

Joel Lewis is the author of *Vertical's Currency*, *House Rent Boogie*, *Palookas of the Ozarks*, and *North Jersey Gutter Helmet* among other publications. His poems have been anthologized in books ranging from the *Outlaw Bible of American Poetry to Obelisk: Writing from the New Coast*. He has edited *Bluestones & Salt Hay* (1990, Rutgers University Press), an anthology of NJ poets and *AHNOI* magazine and has directed numerous reading series. He was a driving force in the initiation of the New Jersey Poet Laureate position, "The William Carlos Williams Certificate of Merit." Douglas Rothschild's *The Minor Arcana* will be for the first time at this reading. Earlier titles include *Tactical Queries* (1983), *Christmas Card: A Christmas Book* (1997) and *MatchBook* (1999). His work has appeared in numerous magazines including *The Baffler*, *oomph!*, *The World, Jacket*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Lower East Side Review* and is forthcoming in *Brooklyn Soap Cap Poems: An Anthology of Poetry About Police*. He is the energetic Coordinator and Master of Ceremonies at the Zinc Bar reading series and a former coordinator of the Poetry Project's Friday night series.

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 9, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

Ecopoetics Event

A reading to celebrate the new magazine, *Ecopoetics*—dedicated to exploring the creative-critical edges in writing, with an emphasis on poetry and ecology (the theory and praxis of deliberate earthlings). In conjunction with the release of issue number two, a party and reading with performances by contributors Bruce Andrews, Brenda Coultas, Marcella Durand, Joel Felix, Loss Pequeño Glazier, Kenneth Goldsmith, Robert Kocik, Paige Menton, Julie Patton, George Quasha, Jonathan Skinner and others.

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 11, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Sherman Alexie and Chuck Wachtel

Sherman Alexie has published 14 books to date, including his most recent collection of short stories, *The Toughest Indian in the World*. His several books of poetry include *One Stick Song* and *The Summer of Black Widows*. Alexie recently made a stunning debut as a director when he brought his title *The Business of Fantasyland* out as an independent film, which was voted Best Narrative Feature Film at the Durango Film Festival. Among Chuck Wachtel's books are the novels, *The Gates and Joe the Engineer*; a collection of stories and novellas, *Because We Are Here*; and five collections of poems and short prose including *What Happens to Me*. He is presently at work on a nearly completed new novel, *River of Stars*. His stories, poems, translations and essays have appeared in *Up Late: American Poetry Since 1970*, *110 Stories: New York Writes After September 11th* and numerous other anthologies and magazines both here and abroad.

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 13, FRIDAY ☆☆☆◆

The Best of Summer 2002 Rooftop Films

Rooftop Films Indoors was founded in 1997 by filmmakers who were interested in making, watching, and talking about good films in a relaxed, communal environment. It is a volunteer-run non-profit corporation which promotes low-budget filmmaking in New York City. This evening will be curated by Rooftop's Moira Griffin and will showcase the best shorts from the summer 2002 series. "Broken English" with DJ Brett Creshaw and other DJs, and open mike TBA. [10:30 p.m.]

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 16, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

Julian Semilian and Garrett Kalleberg

Julian Semilian is a poet, translator, novelist and filmmaker. Spuyten Duyvil Press has published a book of poems, *Transgender Organ Grinder* (2002) and Green Integer will publish a book of Semilian's translation of Paul Celan's Romanian poems this year. His work has appeared in: *Exquisite Corpse*, *Arbide*, *Callaloo*, *Romania Libera*, and *Vatra* (Romania). Garrett Kalleberg is the author of *Some Manic Daemons*, *Psychological Corporations*, and *Limbic Odes*. His work has appeared in *Sulfur*, *First Intensity*, *Denver Quarterly*, and in *An Anthology of New (American) Poets* (Talisman House). He publishes the online literary journal *The Transcendental Friend*, and audio CD imprint Immanent Audio. He is also a principal in the Brooklyn Drama Club, whose *The Situation Room* is premiering in New York in December.

◆☆☆☆◆ DECEMBER 18, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Robert Ashley and Emily XYZ

Robert Ashley is known for his work in new forms of opera and multi-disciplinary projects. During the 1970s, he produced and directed *Music with Roots in the Aether*, a 14-hour television opera/documentary about the work and ideas of seven American composers. Ashley wrote and produced *Perfect Lives*, an opera for television widely considered to be the precursor of "music-television." More recently, he has completed *When Famous Last Words Fail You* for the American Composers Orchestra and *Dust* for premiere at the Kanagawa Arts Foundation in Yokohama. He is at work on a new opera, *Celestial Excursions*, to be presented at the commissioned by the Berlin Festival, to be presented at the



BERNARD LORBER

wolves make it look easy

Hebbel Theater (Berlin) in March 2003 and at the Kitchen (New York) in April 2003. Emily XYZ has been creating verbal soundscapes for single and multiple voices since 1980. She has performed at the Sydney Arts Festival, Sydney Australia and the Ottawa Arts Center. Other performances abroad include Munich, Leipzig, Heidelberg and Berlin. In the USA appearances include the Green Mill in Chicago, the Hayti Arts Center in Durham North Carolina, and in New York at Alice Tully Hall, Jackie 60, the Nuyorican, CBGB, Dixon Place, MoMa, and the Bowery Poetry Club. Her online poetry store debuts in December 2002 at www.emilyxyz.com.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 1, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

The 29th Annual New Year's Day Reading 2003

Spend the first day of the new year with the best of downtown poetry, performance, dance, music, and multimedia with over 100 performers and readers and featuring such luminaries as Patti Smith, Pedro Pietri, and Jim Carroll. Tickets are available at the door for \$20, \$15 for Poetry Project members, students, and seniors. [2 p.m.-1 a.m.]

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 6, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

Open Reading

Sign-up at 7:30 p.m. [8:00 p.m.]

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 8, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Anselm Berrigan and Susie Timmons

Anselm Berrigan is the author of *Integrity & Dramatic Life* and most recently *Zero Star Hotel* from Edge Books. He is also co-author of *In the Dream Hole* with Edmund Berrigan (Man Press) and has a chapbook of poems from Dolphin Press in the works called *Strangers in the Nest*. He co-edited with Edwin Torres the first issue of *PO-ET*, an e-magazine, and has had recent work in *The Best American Poetry 2002*. Tom Devaney writes of Berrigan's poetry: "Just because it's difficult to say what he's doing doesn't mean he isn't doing it—and doing it as well as it's being done anywhere." Winner of the Inaugural Ted Berrigan Award, Susie Timmons is the author of *Locked From the Outside* (Yellow Press). An early collection of her work, *Hog Wild*, was published by Frontward Books. Her poems have appeared in over 40 small press magazines and anthologies, and her songwriting talents have graced the recordings *Speed Trials* (Homestead Records) and *Peripheral Vision* (Zoar Records). She was a co-founder of the *New York City Poetry Calendar*.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 13, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

Jonah Winter and Beth and Karen Zasloff

Jonah Winter's first book of poems, *Maine*, was chosen by David Lehman as the inaugural winner of the Slope Editions' book contest and was published in the Fall of 2002. His poem "Sestina: Bob" won the Cohen Prize from *Ploughshares* and was selected for the 2001 *Pushcart Anthology*. Beth Zasloff is a fiction writer and puppeteer. Her writing has appeared in *Jane* magazine and in the anthology *Third Mind: Creative Writing through Visual Art* (Teachers and Writers). She is also the author of shadow plays that she has performed with her sister Karen at PS. 1 Contemporary Art Center, the Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, and in a window on 42nd Street as part of the Chashama Oasis festival. Karen Zasloff is an artist and puppeteer. She has designed and built puppets and sets for plays at Here Arts Center, the Collective Unconscious, and the Looking Glass theater, along with her collaborations with Beth. She has also worked with the Bread and Puppet theater in Vermont and with puppet theater groups in Hungary and Romania.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 15, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Wanda Phipps and Pedro Pietri

Wanda Phipps is the author of *Zither Mood* (a Faux Press CD-Rom), and the titles *Your Last Illusion or Break Up Sonnets* (Situations), *Lunch Poems* (Boog Literature), and *After the Mishap* (Faux Press), as well as the co-author of *Shanar: The Dedication of a Buryat Shaman* (Parabola). Her poems have previously appeared in over 60 magazines and literary journals. They've been anthologized in *Voces that Hurt: Pleasure and Pain from the Poemfone Poets*, *Valentine*, *Obelisk: Writing from the New Coast*, *Unbearables*, and *The Portable Boog Reader*. Her website *Mind Honey* is at <http://users.rcn.com/wanda.interport>. The Rev. Pedro Pietri is a writer, poet, and dramatist whose work is known for its sociopolitical exposition of the circumstances of the Puerto Rican diaspora, especially with regard to New York City, home to his lyrical, surrealist and scatological language. He has published 12 books of poetry and plays: *Puerto Rican Obituary* (Monthly Review Press) is his most renowned book of poetry and has been translated into 13 languages. His most recent poetry title is a bilingual (English/Italian) anthology published in Milan, Italy.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 17, FRIDAY ☆☆☆◆

Hawley Hussey and Chris Ward

Hawley Hussey presents: Dear Lucilla Day, (Artist and Visionary 1914-1997). On a small island north of somewhere a mother convinced her daughter she had special gifts for living in this world. Storyteller Hawley Hussey and Musicians Robert Ross and Jon Loyd soulfully portray a day in the life of this girl, that rock on the sea, and the Mother that made it all worth while. Chris Ward presents a Night of Music and Video. Live music by art rock bands, Magnet City Kids, Robbers, + 1 more TBA. The Magnet City Kids are a large family of proto astronaut children forced to make do on earth; intense space rock. Robbers consists of visual artists Dave Dunn, Jeff Mott and Nick Kessler. The band's debut album OrphanEndorpinDolphin-DorsalFin has just been released. Video Projections by the bands and guest video artists will be played throughout the evening. This event is part of the Friday Night Video Series. [10:30 p.m.]

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 22, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Dave Brinks, Philip Good and Bernadette Mayer

Dave Brinks is a poet, editor, publisher (Trembling Pillow Press), and founder of The New Orleans School for the Imagination. His three collections of poetry are *The Snow Poems* (Lavender Ink, 2000), *Trial and Eros* (Indiana University Press, 2001), and *How Birds Fly* (Red Dot, 2001). His poems appear in various anthologies including *Thus Spake the Corpse* (Black Sparrow Press, 1999), and *Best Poetry on the Web* (Gray Wolf Press, 2001). Philip Good co-edited *Blue Smoke*, the last of the mimeo magazines. Good's poetry is published in magazines including: *Pome*, *Obelisk*, *Tool*, *Dromby Gin*, and *Brown Box and Holy Tomata*. His books include *Broken Bee Poems* and *Passion Come Running*. Bernadette Mayer, a former director of the Poetry Project, is the author of numerous books of poetry and prose including *A Bernadette Mayer Reader* (New Directions), *Studying Hunger*, *Midwinter Day*, and *Another Smashed Pinecone*. She is a former coeditor of *to 9 Press* with Vito Acconci and United Artists with Lewis Wash and has taught her legendary Experiments in Poetry Workshops at the Poetry Project since the 1970s.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 27, MONDAY ☆☆☆◆

Paisley Rekdal and Jeffrey McDaniel

Jeffrey McDaniel is the author of three books of poetry: *Alibi School*, *The Forgiveness Parade*, and most recently *The Splinter Factory*. His poems have appeared in *Best American Poetry*, *New (American) Poets*, and *New Younger American Poets*. He teaches at Sarah Lawrence College. Paisley Rekdal is the author of a book of essays, *The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee* (Pantheon, 2000, Vintage, 2002), and two books of poetry, *A Crash of Rhinos* (University of Georgia Press, 2000), and *Six Girls Without Pants* (Eastern Washington University Press, 2002). She received a *Village Voice* Writers on the Verge Award. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *Nerve*, and *The New Asian American Poets Anthology*.

◆☆☆☆◆ JANUARY 29, WEDNESDAY ☆☆☆◆

Gillian McCain and Jeni Olin

Jeni Olin is the author of *A Valentine to Frank O'Hara* (Erudite Fangs) and *The Hear's Filthy Lesson* (Angry Dog Press). Her most recent title is the e-book *Blue Collar Holiday* (fauxpress.com). She will be included in Owl Press's upcoming *Evidence of the Paranormal*. Gillian McCain is the author of two collections of prose poems, *Tilt* (Hard Press/The Figures) and *Religion* (The Figures). She is the co-author (with Legs McNeil) of *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk* (Grove Press/Penguin Books) and is currently at work on a novel. From 1991-94 she was Program Coordinator of the Poetry Project and is a former editor of the *Poetry Project Newsletter*.

THE POETRY PROJECT is at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, 131 East 10th Street, New York, NY 10003. All events are \$10.00, \$7.00 for seniors and students, \$5.00 for members and begin at 8:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Programs are subject to change. For information call 212-674-0910.

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*and yet say ayni w/lits soft implacable dove
of the beach. glittering volcanoes. voices of villanelles
this wd be Cecilia. the Quechua in Quark of the Three
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—KAMAU BRATHWAITE

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*No wonder the Symbolist poetics from which she takes her core
meaning is as integral to her poetry as it is: it is the way she thinks!
Her aphoristic plasticity is affirmative, affirmative in performing
imaginative acts on our behalf. —MARJORIE WELISH*

*We expect poets to give a first-hand account of what poetry is.
But some poets, when they write criticism, produce a kind of prose
that is itself on the verge of being poetry. Valéry, Stevens and Marianne
Moore belong to this "visionary company." And so does Barbara
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revolutionary Russian avant-garde in the 1920s?

Why Black Mountain now? People seem almost proud of being dispirited.

I feared for my own recollection of “what it was” being subsumed one more time. Black Mountain as fashion backdrop, as home of the famous, as fascist exercise, or worst of all as an inexpressibly sad collection of lost hopes, small scraps of nostalgic yellow paper, another viewing of (to me) classic photographs: Bucky Fuller and students with the geodesic dome that wouldn't; the Studies Building across Lake Eden (no hint of the chronic sewage problems).

Juan Manuel Bonet, poet, is director of the Reina. Enrique Juncosa, poet, is deputy director; Vincent Katz, poet, is curator of this show. “There's a poets mafia in charge at Reina Sophia,” Enrique cracked. When Frank O'Hara was a MOMA curator he was always a serious poet and on the museum staff, he was an oddity. Poet-art critics are not rare at all, but curatorial work involves not responding to or reflecting on—not reading/reviewing, but responsibility for conceiving an orchestration of physical things inherently as narrative. A very concrete writing. Beginning to end. And, to be any good at it, to do so without allowing the story to distort the integrity of the things that make it up. You have to permit things to be things in themselves. The more media involved, the more hairy the charge.

For Black Mountain College, the things have to be music, images of performances, pots, poems, necklaces, sculpture, graffiti, documents, paintings. And they may be famous (like Robert Rauschenberg's “White Painting”) or not at all famous (like Tom Field's “Kerouac Painting”).

Juan Manuel Bonet is a poet with a passion for conceiving literary exhibitions, shows that present the ideas in things, shows like the other two current shows at the Reina, that mix media to extend what a museum can do. Katz curated a small Rudy Burckhardt retrospective at the museum of modern art in Valencia while Bonet was director there, and Bonet asked him about his interest in Black Mountain.

Not a lot really, was the answer, but to follow Bonet's path of curating?...Vincent said yes.

“I grew up with the New York School

poets. The Beats were my background. I read Creeley and Wieners but not much Olson, Duncan, or Fielding Dawson. Kline, DeKooning, Rauschenberg, Twombly were already known to me,” he said, and so he seems to have started with my question, why Black Mountain?

Work on the exhibition (two and half years of it, punctuated by a Rome Prize fellowship to develop the second volume of his Sextus Propertius translations) led Katz to analyze large swaths of two Black Mountains, Albers' (from 1933-49) and Olson's (with overlap: 1948-56). He did this without becoming a partisan of either over the other and without providing—thank you!—representations of the feuds and betrayals, and there were many, and without swarmy reports on the dogma wars. (This was no sweet community of like-minded souls.) The who left, who stayed, who was glorified or shunned, who



thanked, who denounced—the whole fashion of presenting psychosexual gossip as aesthetic *raison d'être* stretches thin when applied finally to Black Mountain—or maybe anywhere. Katz offers instead a steady focus on what is there in the work that people did. To see, touch, listen, read. By putting that first, he has followed the real thread of it, which is not aesthetic, after all, although the show offers an illuminating look at the development of abstraction in America and many uses of it, including and extending out from capital “A” abstract formalism.

If you walked into the show you wouldn't need this verbiage. A flow of emotion and energy floods the six large halls the museum assigned to it.

These refugees, these refusees—remember, fame came to the now-famous among them much, much later. Both the students and their polyglot profoundly

unprofessional teachers, believed in efficacy and required freedom. The teachers were people who had no place else to work as they were able to work on the Black Mountain campus. We students came looking for something we knew we needed, even if we didn't know what it would be. We came for that only. Nothing else was offered. This wasn't a common choice then or now.

Even in the school's terminal hemorrhage, when the dining hall was closed, faculty paid in promissory notes, shoplifted food cooked up on hotplates, state accreditation lost and with it the precious G.I. Bill money, even at the very last, when 15-18 souls clung to the raft, those people worked at their art. The night tractor ground on with the craziest of optimisms: that making art is not easy but is possible. And worth doing. This passion has everything to do with freedom, but nothing to do with democracy. Everyone can't—and why should they?

So what do you see when you walk in?

First the book room, a corridor leading in, with BMC printshop books, Divers Press, Jargon, *The Black Mountain Review*. The shocking alignments of Creeley's “If You”:

a form of otherwise vicious habit/can have long ears and be called a rabbit// Dead. Died. Will die. Want. /Morning, midnight. I asked you// if you were going to get a pet/what kind of animal would you get?

I think the music playing is Roger Sessions. The opening is filling up—conversations in excited Spanish, footsteps, bodies all around me.

Then a view of Albers' use of Black Mountain—and his struggle to quarry a passionate but pure abstraction: to make the simplest elements possible carry emotional freight. The variety of his work is surprising. I tend to think only of “Homage to the Square” and of his demand to respect the laws of optics and the physics of light. Annie Albers' cheerfully dada hardware jewelry hangs opposite. And more tapestries.

Albers leads to “biomorphic” abstraction. A Motherwell watercolor, drawn out of Matisse: nut brown on unpainted paper, chrome yellow, and gray. A prayer. What was abstract art in 1945? Next to a nook of hard-edged Noland and Bolotowsky is a lovely lavender Feininger landscape, in

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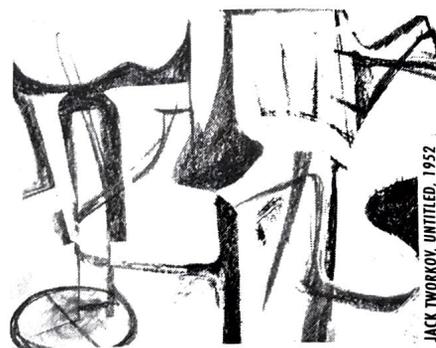
which tilting New York skyscrapers delicately bracket a black kite-like shape. "Manhattan Dawn." In the next hall where a chime piece with thunder drums is playing, Fuller's didactic demonstration "Closest Packing of Spheres" is set against Ray Johnson's "JOHN CAGE—A Shoe"—but it's two shoes. They are black & white saddleshoes, John and Cage. This is Vincent's section on chance operations, where Peter Voulkos's monumental pots face early Cy Twombly paintings, which take abstraction almost to the abstract/surrealism that so engages Basil King today.

Here is Rauschenberg's shocking "White Painting"—nothing to see but the six lines where the white panels meet. The presence. You have a question?

Four Ray Johnsons and then two video monitors. One displays a film of Cunningham's company, recreating dances created at the school. I watch standing next to Marianne Preger-Simon, who danced at the school but not in the company: I could feel her tense and release to the movements on screen. She was full of joy. "Your body never forgets," she said. An abstract color film, shot by Nicholas Cernovich in 1950?, runs on the other screen. Blonde Katherine Litz dances in the woods. Her dress is flat panels. Leaf shadows break up the forms. Her hair is gold string. The film is a collaboration, not a document, a work of abstract art on a work of abstract art. And all the while, I think it's Stephan Wolpe's music: spurts of energy; double crosses. It's his Symphony Number One and a piano piece called "The Battle."

On a long low table, one may pick up earphones to hear Wieners, Oppenheimer, Creeley, Duncan, Ed Dorn, Jonathan Williams, and Olson—Olson sounding a bit huckerish in the opening call-to-rebellion section of *Maximus*. The others—wow those Boston, New York, San Francisco accents, those vibratos that can't be faked. The last time a poetry reading gave me goose bumps like this was John Wieners memorial at the Project October 9, and for the same reason: Engagement. The poem is important.

That table was one of my favorite spots, perhaps because it was so much "my" Black Mountain. From the corner wall, Fielding Dawson's wonderfully funny ink rendering of Olson (it looks just like him) glares down the table where the ear phones are offered, past a brilliant abstract expres-



JACK TWOROK, UNTITLED, 1952

sionist painting by the late and unknown Tom Field (titled "Bird in Flight" and linking violence to lyric openness) and a set of tiny, intense, economically packed ink drawings by Dan Rice. They could be music. On to three standing tabletop sculptures by John Chamberlain—sturdy rusted steel wire, drawings in space. They defy their obdurate material and swing as swiftly as a crayon scribble. They look like dances.

How long ago was "modern" art anyway? Vincent told me how struck he was at the presence of Black Mountain. He kept meeting people who claimed pathways back to it. The show also reminds me how unknown, alien, and stiffly unusable abstract art was in America in the 1930s. When Albers arrived in America, his Bauhaus credentials could only net him a niche way out in the boondocks. Black Mountain was Dogpatch writ real. It would be 15 years before Yale University wanted him. By that time abstract art was blowing American jazz but still the Franz Kline Basil met in 1952 was being evicted from a 10th Street loft for lack of \$75. The history is a story, but not this exhibition's story. I'm floored by quite another revelation. For a school that has been assigned certain set sentiments—even to the point of being named a "school"—the almost 300 works of art assembled here are together remarkably flexible, diverse, open ended.

Will you see this show in New York? Alas no. It's in Madrid, where "sensation" has a sensual long-term connotation. But a book will be available. A huge catalog is due from M.I.T. Press this January. It has essays by Creeley, Katz, composer/music historian Martin Brody, curator/literary critic Kevin Power, previously unpublished poems by Wieners, Creeley, Olson, and pictures, pictures, pictures, and I don't dread opening it.

A TRUE STORY BECAUSE NO ONE SURVIVES TO TELL IT

On Archie Rand & John Yau's 100 More Jokes from the Book of the Dead

Two wayfarers
from the spiritual diaspora
set out to create
100 word-etchings
Yau takes brush & water
writes backwards-words
on paper,
slides them across
to Rand, who
glides his watercolors
over them—
each without pausing
or stopping to look—
“First scratch, best scratch”
etchings emerge
in the midst of the void.
Holding on to whatever
can be grasped from the
experience of living,
trolling the cultural detritus
of the heart-mind
spinning hidden treasures
into art:

Hollywood

myth

war

symbols of a century—

Iwo Jima, the Star of David
post-Euclidian sex (no need for a manual)
ergo: big penises like *shunga*,
scraps of meaning, gaping holes of
no-meaning
flies, pests, dogs,
etc etc etc and then some—
sand mandalas of word and image,
created in the moment
like the Zen brush painters of old.
Crazy marriage of
pathos and pathology,
life and death
("Book Jackets and Obituaries")
humor and teamwork,
"Homages to Yoshitoshi,
Fulcanelli, and Domenico Gnoli."
... Sonny Rollins
Joseph Stella
ghosts dancing
in the anti-machine.



They're a team beyond compare
(Rand's offerings: Gilbert and Sullivan
or Leiber and Stoller
or Rodgers and you know who ...)
Yau's counter—"Bottom of the barrel rag-
tag
(I mean tagteam)
wrestlers—Itsy Bitsy and Little Oahu.
Max Cement and Fly By Night.
Tonsil Trash and The Delirious Assyrian."
Rand's suggestion (or was it Yau's?)
"Horus and Gemini,
who called themselves
Ouroboros from the Outer Boroughs
and Cerebus Mephistopheles."
Or Marcus Indelibly and Maude Lynn Storey
"bit players in an ice storm
that swept over the empty
escabel ..."
But I digress.
While we're
resurrecting tag-teams
they're speaking in Dead Languages
like this:
It's an "alphabet for idiot savants,"
a word garden blooming perennially for
the global cemetery,
sad stories of existence

no one wants to hear.
Some of it is ugly. Some of it is vulgar.
Some of it is brilliant. Much of it
is beautiful.

Here, Henry Miller meets the Minotaur.
A violent struggle ensues.
They end up making love,
then killing each other.
They lick the bones,
draw their tales/tails
in the dirt.
Then they're reborn. Again.
100 More Jokes? We're always
on the brink of death. *Ha Ha Ha*.
Live fully! *Ha Ha Ha*.
Are we there yet?
(98 and counting).

Most popular joke topics in the world now:

Osama bin Laden Jokes

Blonde Jokes

Yo Mama Jokes

Tibetan Book of the Dead?

Didn't think of that.

The first Noble Truth:
recognition of the discomforts
and frustration of
normal human existence
will help set you free.

Number Two:

Distress rests in human desires.
Suffering can be eliminated
by clearing away the confusions
of modern life.

Aha!

If only we could.
(We wouldn't be here).

Back to the Death meditations.

Infinite Jest of the Living!

The balance is struck (Rejoice!)

tipped, struck again.

The world falls off the edge.

"How to tell a story

without the usual chains?"

Yau asks.

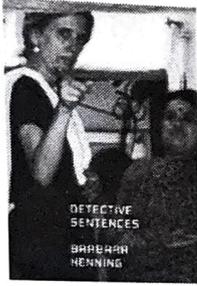
Do what they did.

Unbind it.

Ha Ha Ha.

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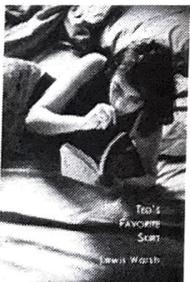
Detective Sentences is an exciting and challenging collection. Whether in prose or poetry, Barbara Henning's formal inventiveness has given her apparently autobiographical material a power never found in purely confessional writing. Her vision of an unreasonable world (our very own) is very intelligent, very intense, sometimes funny, always disturbing.

—Harry Mathews

This is, as the title suggests, a book of sentences, sentences that uncover with intelligence and grace the web of daily life, whether in the East Village's Tompkins Square Park or outside her mother's house in Detroit. Henning's surfaces are straight forward, yet her non-sequiturs and leaps are connected by an invisible web that links strands of ordinary uncommon humanity to the absurd and the cosmic. —Brenda Coultas

Barbara Henning's Detective Sentences are fastened with empathy. Lived sorrow for our failures to connect, and a tender knowledge of human potential is the larger sense these discrete and enigmatic sentences illuminate. The micro tales and poems never flaunt the whole situations from which they emerge. Like the outline of a body her phrases impart the residue, memory's investigative unveiling process here in this house inside a house / with a spider tattooed over your breastbone. —Kimberly Lyons

LEWIS WARSH *TED'S FAVORITE SKIRT*



207 pgs. \$14.00

The heroine is a hoops-shooting, Madame Bovary-reading American kid trying to figure it all out. As we follow Billie in and out of love, limning with her the edges of despair and hope, Warsh leads us deep into the "hum of human machinery", a territory where all but essentials are weeded out. Part bildungsroman, part commentary on American life in the 80's,

Ted's Favorite Skirt is a trenchant, lovely wonder.

—Laird Hunt

Lewis Warsh writes from a true and complex idea of experience, and does so in the certainty that we know what life is about. Ted's Favorite Skirt, remarkable for its steady luminosity and insight, reveals the mystery—though not its solution—of how someone's presence can weave itself into the fabric of our desire and remain there, long after the time shared with that person has passed, and thus become part of our fate. —Chuck Wachtel

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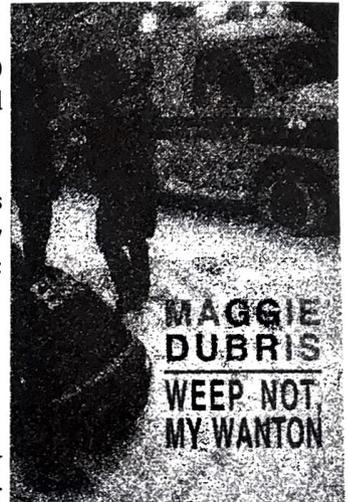
REVIEWS

WEEP NOT MY WANTON

Maggie Dubris

Black Sparrow Press, 2002, \$17.00

(Now Available Through David Godine Publishers)



Toilers of the Sea, Maggie Dubris's last work in *Weep Not My Wanton*, is dedicated to her parents:

Ann & Dave Staiger
who first showed me the
sparkle of vanished worlds

Rather than vanished, a *vanishing* world before the eyes—from our consciousness—its recalcitrant sparkle, is the underlying, obsessive theme of Maggie Dubris's poems, short stories and the yet-unpublished novel, *Skels*. *Vanished* is temporal, static (a here, and then); time in Maggie Dubris's writing is focal, geographic, visualized into depth, the hidden, invisible, extinct stratum in a city (*Willie World*) or in language (*Toilers*) or in poetic history (*Skels*).

Not remembered, but revived: how is the past turned into a dynamic present—time into a continuum where the past coexists as a present? In short, where is the secret power, logic of Maggie Dubris's writing?

All that survives yearns for all that is lost.

A great gray reservoir of dreaming.

Toilers of the Sea

Who will remember the strange ways of crows?

Or the small birds, how they papered their nests.

A pure spirit is all there is room for here.

Toilers of the Sea

The word bonfire is a softening of bone-fire, referring to the Bones of plague victims, or those burned at the stake.

Toilers of the Sea

The out-of-sight catastrophes of the present are not delineated as an observer or a participant, but a survivor. The secret of Dubris's writing is the survivor's guilt bent, on the deepest level, to undo (not remember) the past. So that one can find the bonfire in the bone. The space occupied by this writing is the "reservoir of dreaming" gouged by loss, its present spun in the eye of a dream.

Also, in this poetry of archaeology/etymology/paleontology/archivalogy, time is reversed, the past (lost bones) turned into a yearning, ferreting continuum into present (bonfire). Isn't looking

at starlight simultaneously experiencing a thing as moving infinitely away and infinitely towards us, past and present as simultaneous now? Conceptually, instinctually, one has here the allure of certain modern cinema—time as a panning progress of “pure spirit,” the only movement for which “there is room here”:

Perhaps it is things that are always there, but become visible, like stars, when the lights go out.

Is it strange to seek refuge in this black and white world? A light is either on or off. But underground, silver rings surround each bulb, and electricity becomes more fluid. When you hit the switch, the power goes off. But certain areas remain hot. Boxes filled with current that no one ever touches.

Willie World

Nothing reminds me of the above passage more than the first half of Jean-Luc Godard's last movie, *In Praise of Love*. A black and white “night” world lit by the penumbras of street lights, the disturbing, undefined fluidity of that space. Ghost-like voices talk about the only reality being that of youth and old age. Then in the middle a switch is hit, the screen is filled with hot, violent, brilliant, magma-like colors for the rest of the movie. There is an irreparable, tragic, satirical gash in that film; the hand which touches the hot current is split from the shadowy, glowing space of the first part; old age can not finally unite with youth, time not reversed.

Maggie Dubris's writing is a fluid series of embraces of these never-touched hot spots. Younger than Godard, maybe of a different nature, her writing has no split. The ultraviolet spots of the invisible, the extinct are lit up (*bonfire*) with meticulous, specific details, touched by a loving, almost maternal embrace (like a mother knowing every freckle and blemish of her baby and loving it unto death) where the human, animal, vegetal and even mythical exist as a continuum.

Extinction is redeemed by a dream language, naming, specifying, acknowledging. This occurs through unending linguistic variety, always darkness reflected in fiery light:

As structure: *Toilers of the Sea* is itself an act of reclamation. The title and each section heading of the Victor Hugo novel, *Toilers of the Sea*, a copy of which Maggie Dubris found in a shed, are reproduced, as title and section headings, in the poem; the skeleton rewritten into a bonfire.

As list:

The Reunion Solitaire (extinct c. 1780)

When captured made no sound, but shed tears

The Tanna Dove (extinct c. 1800)

Lived on wild nutmeg and had strangely yellow eyes

The Blue Dove of St. Helena (extinct c. 1775)

So little is known of this species, no name has yet been assigned

The Great Auk (extinct c. 1800)

Were slaughtered by being hurled alive into huge bonfires

Toilers of the Sea

As metaphor:

I had never seen a baby that small who wasn't floating in a toilet bowl.

The Dream Book

As critique of romanticism:

It was August in New York City and everyone who had money had fled for places with trees and wind.

The Dream Book

As narrative:

One skel that I like is Jean-Paul DiVersailles. He's a fifty-year-old bald black man who pretends to be blind, and also fakes seizures. The city has a resident population of people who throw fake seizures as a way to break up the day. ... Jean-Paul is the best, though. He drools and chews on his tongue and rolls around in the dirt like a total jerk. The only thing he won't do is pee on himself. ... He loves to go to the hospital. At least once a week we get a call and arrive in the midst of one of his “seizures.” ... I get out of the ambulance and say, “Jean-Paul DiVersailles, you stop that this instant!” He always opens one eye, sits up, and says, “you caught me again. She always knows where to find me,” he tells the crowd. “How come you always catch me, no matter where I hide?” I tell him I'm like Captain Hook's crocodile. Even when he sleeps he hears the click click click of my invisible teeth ...

Willie World

As light:

Times Square was beautiful to children. I watched them every night, hanging off their father's arms, staring at the lights. ... They were so entranced they barely even noticed the ambulance, which was a major childhood attraction in any other part of town. I drove slowly down Broadway, into the shower of neon. Vince stuck one arm through the little window ... the baby face up in his palm. Light fell through the windshield from the twirling spheres of the Reuters board. ... The baby's mud eyes stayed open, dyed red and orange and blue, as around us the street crackled and popped, ripe with the smells of shish kebab roasting, manure from the carriage horses, incense perfume from the Muslim oil stands.

The Dream Book

Historically, Black Sparrow has had the habit of publishing writers before they became, at least among readers of literature, household names. Its final publication, *Weep Not My Wanton*, is utterly in form, sustaining John Martin's proud tradition.

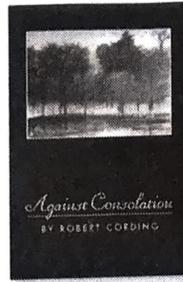
—Murat Nemet-Nejat



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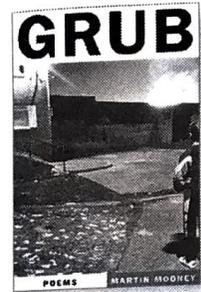
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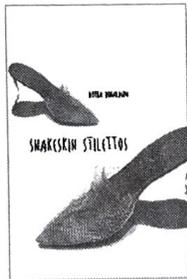
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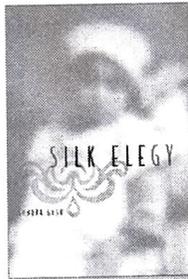
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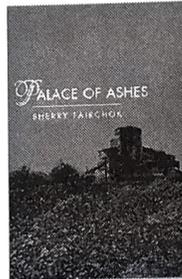
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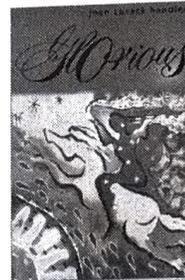
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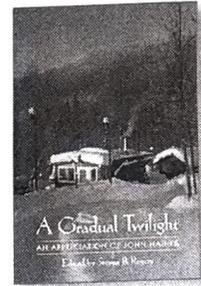
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LIGHTHOUSE

by M. Mara-Ann

Atelos, 2002, \$12.95

lighthouse, the debut book of poems by M. Mara-Ann, is actually shaped less like a slim, towering beacon and more like the sprawling stretches of seascape that the beacon is intended to illuminate. (It's fair here, I think, to consider *landscapes* as well as seascapes, for the sighting range of this lighthouse encompasses surface events in general—all the undulating micro-changes and shifts that transpire close to the skin of the earth.) With covers shut, the book is a quarter-length wider than it is high; lying flat and open, each page spread measures 20 inches from end to end, making for a uniquely panoramic reading experience.

It is also a physical reading experience, as the eye must cover greater distances than it's used to in order to take in all the words on the page. This is not to say that the words are scattered all over the page. Few compositions, in fact, could be more regularly arranged and spaced than the serial poems that make up the first and third major parts of this three-part book. The poems are approximately 50 percent text and 50 percent white space. The text flows in slender columns along the right-hand half of the page; the lines are left-justified and loosely double-spaced. The white space occupies the left-hand portion of each page and is trespassed on every now and then by a striking line of text that punches through the confines of its column and into the apparent void.

a habitual practice of moving around the object
looking toward possibilities
the presence of improvement uncertain
a race with dependability
against an extensive record of timeliness
hoping that effort might cause a chance difference
a cause for delay and an upward ascent
the illusive destination gaining distance
and an unexpected entrance into a restricted environment
the decision of retracing urgently enacted
reverting to a slippery backdrop
associations relating to a sidewise motion.
(section I from "tributary")

Subjective ego-consciousness is bartered away in exchange for a language of probing, reconnoitering exploration. Instead of projecting an I-centered moment out into the world, the poem pursues a clear awareness of the object-situation in the world that is shaping and shaped by the subjective moment, which itself is actually quite self-effacing and prefers to remain offstage. So the poem makes "a practice of moving around the object," getting attuned to the object's pacing and moods, its "cause for delay," "upward ascent," and "unexpected entrance"—all the subtle shifts and changes in the world that mark the influence of equally subtle shifts and changes in the one who is experiencing. Perhaps it's not a question of dialogue between subject and object here, but between human subject and cosmic subject, where the latter is infinitely objective, impersonal, prescient, and aware. Though the human subject also has some very nice qualities. Humble, inquisitive, and patient, the human that emerges from the book is an optimistic being, full of growth potential and capacity for enlightenment.

Because of their play-by-play, observational language, the compositions in *lighthouse* can seem less like poetry than like a finely calibrated journalism of the psyche. The investigative reporter is sent deep into the field, armed with a single searchlight to illuminate the murky contours of inner processes, emotions, and decisions in the very instant that they emerge and, just as quickly, dissipate. The resulting pieces have both a relaxed, organic rhythm—unlike the cultivated rigor mortis that intones much of what passes as conventional poetry—and a steady focus—unlike many dashed-off linguistic fragments that use the excuse of experimentation to mask their inconsequential nature.

Although it feels hard at times to define exactly what the "object" of each poem is, the difficulty vanishes as soon as one lets go of the desire to come away with a single impression from the reading. Rather, there is a multitude of impressions to be carried away, a multitude of changes and movements. The poems are dynamic to the point of not being made, but of simply and naturally happening. Yet the standard is set fairly high for these happenings. Mara-Ann does not want to merely unfold lines of consciousness; she wants to trace every inch of these lines in real time. Her poems record every physical specification of the "practice of moving around the object": the density of the resisting air, the quickening and slowing of actions, the intuitive propulsion of bodies through space, the arrival at certain resting points, certain turning points. The precise, descriptive language reads like a scientific log or (more willfully) like choreographic directions, with the dancer blinded to a visual sense of the experience. What's more important is the process of feeling one's way through the experience with trained attunement and awareness.

the logical mind can explain it as a matter of timing and patterns
but congestion is the metaphor
the physical manifestation of the difficulty
and the unavoidable process of the process of leaving
inch by inch, there's no fast way
the situation compounded by the presence of water
a looming deadline is insignificant when the prohibiting forces are omnipresent
the only way is to accept the limit
to find the compromise
it must have been luck
sneaking so vulnerably through the night
having broken free of the dense pressure
flying fast
carefully.

(section IV from "water rites")

This could explain why I often feel physically spent after reading just one or two sections of these poems. Like a beginner in a yoga class, I am guided into enacting the poem's intuitive movements, as the descriptive directions are deposited into the cells of my muscles and ligaments. In the end I feel stretched and even psychically enhanced, without really being able to say why. The ideas in *lighthouse* don't transfer cognitively, from word to brain; rather, they take up residence and remain held, like uncanny memories or prescient forethoughts, in the posture of the reader. The mind can seek improvement and enlightenment, but the body must be there first, opening itself to the microcosmic forces and dynamics of the natural universe. Detached awareness helps the mind to see what the

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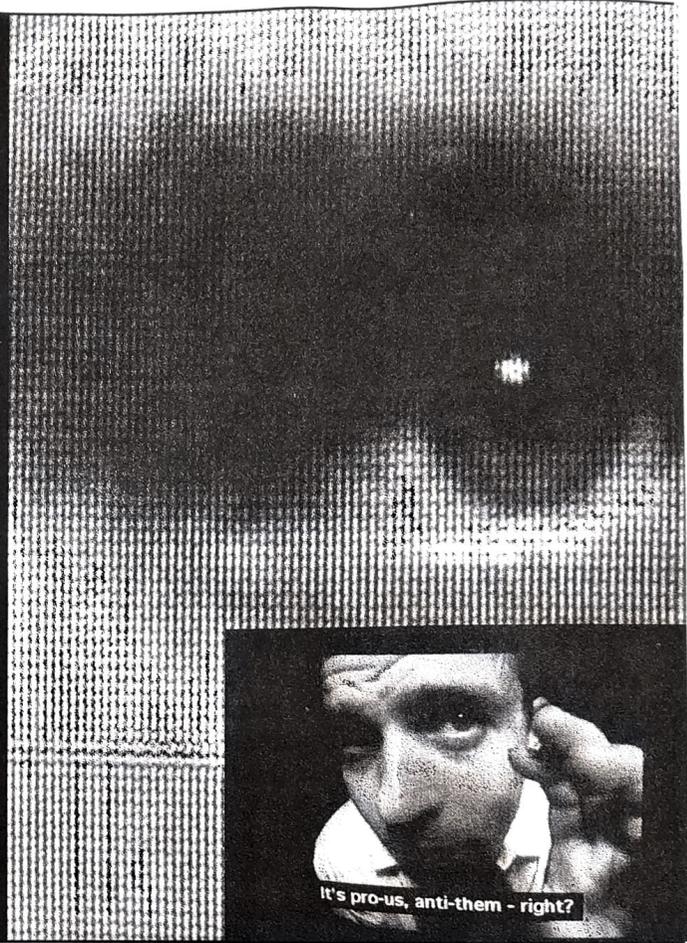
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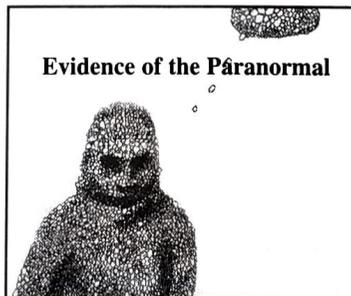
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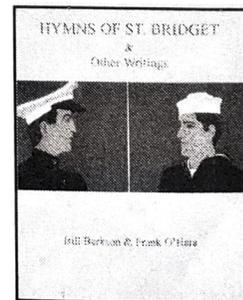
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body is getting involved in and how this involvement syncs up with a larger scheme outside oneself.

Meditative detachment also functions in the visual piece that makes up the second major part of *lighthouse*. Sparsely worded and easy on the eyes, the piece provides a sort of ambient intermission from the dense language of the poems in the first and third major parts. In part two, the experience of horizontal awareness is pictured as a gradient containing different shades of gray—from the lightest shade at the bottom to the darkest shade, nearly black, at the top. The bands of the gradient shift in thickness and weight from page to page, replicating the undulating patterns of meditation, at times exuding the sentient quality of a black-and-white, techno Rothko. Superimposed on (or emergent from) these gray levels are heightened realizations, sometimes in the form of short phrases or words—"revival," "the blackest part of the shadow"—and otherwise in the form of images—bright white rectangles, figures resembling dice, the rooftop of what looks like a Hindu temple.

lighthouse as a whole seems to reach toward the metaphysical, expanding the vocabulary used to describe subtle feeling-states and intuitions as they relate to events in physical space-time. Scanning some of the poem titles that appear in the table of contents, one can readily see how the language of psychic movement intersects with the language of divination and astrological forecast: "water rites," "temporal declination," "crescent," "entrance," "provident ascension," "ubiquitous intent," "preeminent sight." Except that this language wants not to predict the future but to examine comprehensively all the experiential and potential aspects of the present moment. Only then can the unseen power (which often gets identified with the metaphysical but may simply be a higher level of insight) locked inside ordinary moments fully come to light.

—Pamela Lu

THE MOTHER JOURNAL

Susan Cataldo

Telephone Books, 2002, \$8.95

At the age of nine, poet Susan Cataldo lost her mother to cancer. At the age of 48, Cataldo died of the same disease. With *The Mother Journal*, the first of two books of Cataldo's to be published by Maureen Owen's Telephone Books, Cataldo comes back to us again, giving us the words for grief and loss.

The present stopped
when my mother died.
Hope is finding her
in my food one day and
I will never have to eat
again.

Cataldo's language skirts everywhere on and around these feelings of anger, anguish, betrayal.

How
astonishing this broken house is.
I was going to write a book
about my mother. She
has become the unpaid bill in

my letter box, the push pin I use
to tack up a treasured postcard.
How expedient. And do we breathe
while we write? As if I might
expel her and lose her
in air.

The lost mother is everywhere, "she sees me through the eyes of everyone I love." Addressing the mother, Cataldo becomes the lost child again, wanting, needing:

I
know you want me to
know you are dying.
You just don't want
to have to tell me.

There is a pull and tug on the grownup poet to reveal and yet to hide the shame of her father's physical and sexual abuse, her sister's eventual suicide:

If anger
ever was the face of a broken
child, she wore it.

This is the true language of grief, seemingly never-ending.

Cancer. This is where the
mother journal takes root,
in the origin of avoidance,
and the first memory of
obsessing about what might
be under the surface of
the skin: the mind.

There is a quiet lyricism at work here coupled with a courageous raw nerve quality that is surprisingly lovely. The poem builds in intensity as the poet, overspilling with secrets, confronts and releases her demons. At the age of 15, Susan Cataldo ran away from that house of pain to try and make a new life. "I didn't understand ... that the time would come ... that I was able to forgive my mother for dying." With *The Mother Journal*, Susan Cataldo returns forever back to our sad broken world again.

I am
pretending all the trees
are women poets. I am
pretending I am a sapling now
and Bernadette Mayer is an oak,
with a thick dark bark and
Alice Notley is a maple, light and
very tall.

...
This morning I dreamt trees
I thought were dead were
sprouting new leaves.

—Bill Kushner



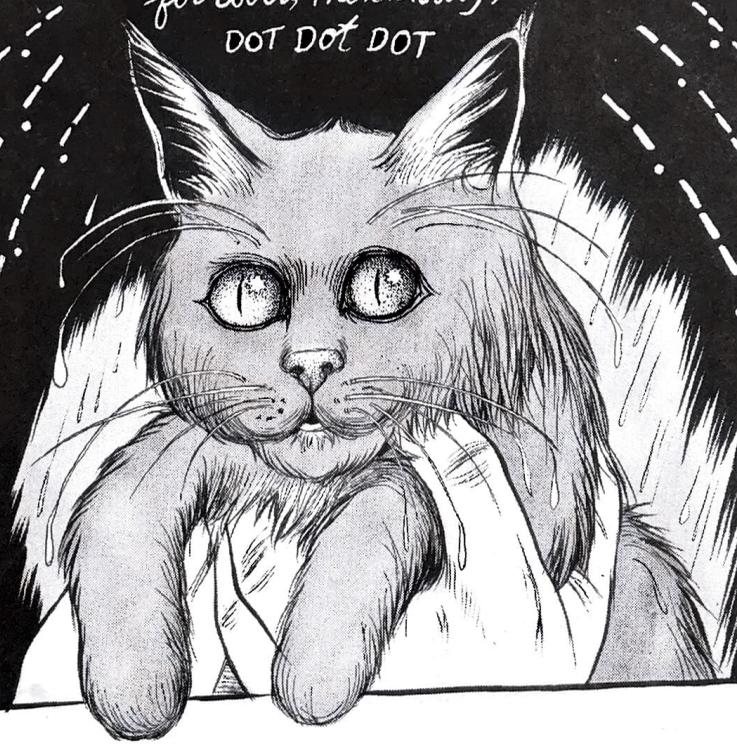
Tell me... with your paws tap out whose
bones are piled
on the inside of that dark drywall
wet now and stained with the blood of him

HIM WHOM I LOVED, WHOM I DON'T KNOW IF,
IF THOSE OLD BONES
MIGHT ONCE HAVE LIVED INSIDE HIS CASTLE OF

The castle of his skin, proud and stupid
moving in manifold directions, away
away from me, black cat, tell me...

tho' FIV slows your taps to pats, free me up

Out of this castle of him where he flew
for cover, then slowly;
DOT DOT DOT



MIXED MEDIA

BOOKS

- Ammiel Alcalay, *FROM THE WARRING FACTIONS*, Beyond Baroque Books, 2002, \$12
- John Ashbery, *CHINESE WHISPERS*, FSG, 2002, \$22
- Rick Barot, *THE DARKER FALL*, Sarabande Books, 2002, \$12.95
- Anselm Berrigan, *ZERO STAR HOTEL*, Edge Books, 2002, \$14, www.aerialedge.com
- Eula Biss, *THE BALLOONISTS*, Salt, 2001, \$15.95, www.saltpublishing.com
- Michael Brownstein, *WORLD ON FIRE*, Open City Books, 2002, \$14, www.opencity.org
- Alison Bundy, Keith and Rosmarie Waldrop, eds., *ONE SCORE MORE: THE SECOND 20 YEARS OF BURNING DECK*, 2002, \$15, www.burningdeck.com
- Ernesto Cardenal, *COSMIC CANTICLE*, Curbstone Press, 2002, \$21.95
- Paul Celan, *GLOTTAL STOP*, Heather McHugh & Nikolai Popov, trans., Wesleyan, 2002, www.upne.com
- Tina Celona, *THE REAL MOON OF POETRY*, Fence Books, 2002, \$12, www.fencebooks.com
- Allen Cohen & Clive Matson, eds., *AN EYE FOR AN EYE MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD BLIND: POETS ON 9/11*, Regent Press, 2002, \$18, www.regentpress.net
- Jayne Cortez, *JAZZ FAN LOOKS BACK*, Hanging Loose Press, 2002, \$14
- Joseph Donahue & Ed Foster, eds., *THE WORLD IN TIME AND SPACE*, Talisman House, 2002, \$25.95
- Brian Evanson, *DARK PROPERTY*, Black Square Editions, 2002, \$14
- Serge Fauchereau, *COMPLETE FICTION*, Ron Padgett & John Ashbery, trans., Black Square Editions, 2002, \$14
- Annie Finch & Kathrine Varnes, *AN EXALTATION OF FORMS: CONTEMPORARY POETS CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY OF THEIR ART*, University of Michigan Press, 2002
- Thomas Fink, *GOSSIP*, Marsh Hawk Press, 2002, \$10, www.marshhawkpress.org
- Carolyn Forché, *BLUE HOUR*, Harper Collins, 2002, \$24.95
- Cory Frost, *I FEEL PERFECTLY FINE*, Backwards Versions, 2001
- Frederick Glaysher, *THE BOWER OF NIL*, Earthrise Press, 2002, \$21.95, www.fglaysher.com
- Gary Mex Glazner, *EARS ON FIRE*, La Alameda Press, 2002, \$14
- Tony Gloegler, *ONE WISH LEFT*, Pavement Saw Press, 2002, \$12
- Allen Grossman, *SWEET YOUTH: POEMS BY A YOUNG MAN AND AN OLD MAN, OLD AND NEW 1953-2001*, New Directions, 2002, \$18.95
- Barbara Guest, *MINIATURES*, Wesleyan University Press, 2002, \$12.95
- James Baker Hall, *PRAEDER'S LETTERS: A NOVEL IN VERSE*, Sarabande Books, 2002, \$13.95, SarabandeB@aol.com
- Richard Howard, *TALKING CURES*, Turtle Point Press, 2002, \$16.95
- Frieda Hughes, *WAXWORKS*, Harper Collins, 2002, \$22.95
- Jeff Hull, *SPOOR*, Subpress, 2002, \$11
- Abbas Kiarostami, *WALKING WITH THE WIND*, Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak & Michael Beard, trans., Harvard Film Archive, 2002, \$19.95
- Denise Levertov, *SELECTED POEMS*, New Directions, 2002, \$24.95
- Ron Loewinsohn, *MAGNETIC FIELDS*, Dalkey Archive, 2002, \$13.50, www.dalkeyarchive.com
- Gian Lombardo, ed., *WHEN THE TIME COMES: A SELECTION OF BELGIAN PROSE POETRY*, Quale Press, 2001, \$12
- Chris and Jenn McCreary, *THE EFFACEMENTS / A DOCTRINE OF SIGNATURES*, Singing Horse Press, 2002, \$12.50
- Drew Milne, *THE DAMAGE: NEW AND SELECTED POEMS*, Salt, 2001, \$12.95, www.saltpublishing.com
- Pascal Monnier, *BAYART*, Black Square Editions, 2002, \$15
- Hoa Nguyen, *YOUR ANCIENT SEE THROUGH*, Subpress, \$12
- Kate Northrop, *BACK THROUGH INTERRUPTION*, Kent State University Press, 2002, www.kentstateuniversitypress.com
- Gil Ott, *PACT*, Singing Horse Press, 2002, \$14
- Maggie O'Sullivan, *RED SHIFTS*, Etruscan, 2001, \$14.95, 28 Fowler's Court, Fore Street, Buckfastleigh, South Devonshire TQ11 OAA
- Ron Overton, *PSYCHIC KILLED BY TRAIN*, Hanging Loose Press, 2002, \$13
- Oskar Pastior, *MANY GLOVE COMPARTMENTS: SELECTED POEMS*, Harry Mathews, Christopher Middleton & Rosmarie Waldrop, trans., Burning Deck, 2002, \$10, www.burningdeck.com
- David Petersen & Branson Reynolds, *CEDAR MESA: A PLACE WHERE SPIRITS DWELL*, 2002, \$13.95
- Clare Pollard, *BEDTIME*, Bloodaxe, 2002, \$15.95
- Amy Randolph, *COLD ANGEL OF MERCY*, Red Hen Press, 2002, \$11.95
- Stan Rice, *RED TO THE RIND*, Knopf, 2002, \$23
- Wendy Rose, *ITCH LIKE CRAZY*, U Arizona Press, 2002, \$15.95, www.uapress.arizona.edu
- Michael Ruby, *AT AN INTERSECTION*, Alef Books, 2002, \$15
- G.B. Ryan, *POEMS 12-16*, Elkhound Publications, box 1453, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028
- Elizabeth Schmidt, ed., *POEMS OF NEW YORK*, Knopf, 2002, \$12.50

Jono Schneider, "... BUT I COULD NOT SPEAK ...", O Books, 2002, \$12

Keith Shein, RUMORS OF BUILDINGS TO LIVE IN, O Books, 2002, \$12

Jordan Smith, FOR APPEARANCES, University of Tampa Press, 2002, \$20

Ken Smith, SHED: POEMS 1980-2001, Bloodaxe, 2002, \$23.95

Sparrow, YES, YOU ARE A REVOLUTIONARY! PLUS SEVEN OTHER BOOKS, Soft Skull Press, 2002, \$12

Eileen R. Tabios, REPRODUCTIONS OF THE EMPTY FLAGPOLE, Marsh Hawk Press, 2002, \$12.95

Esther Tellerman, MENTAL GROUND, Burning Deck, 2002, \$10

Jalal Toufic, UNDYING LOVE, Post-Apollo, 2002, \$13

PJW Tutt, AS I WATCH I TASTE YOU, Beaucagearts, 2000

Paul Violi, SELECTED ACCIDENTS, POINTLESS ANECDOTES, Hanging Loose Press, 2002, \$13

Keith Waldrop, THE HOUSE SEEN FROM NOWHERE, Litmus, 2002, \$15

Darren Wershler-Henry, THE TAPEWORM FOUNDRY, Anansi, 2000, www.anansi.com

John Wilkinson, EFFIGIES AGAINST THE LIGHT, Salt, 2001, \$15.95, www.saltpublishing.com

William Butler Yeats, THE YEATS READER, Richard J. Finneran, ed., Scribner, 2002, \$35

Matthew Zapruder, AMERICAN LINDEN, Tupelo Press, 2002, \$14.95

CHAPBOOKS

Dennis Barone, THE DISGUISE OF EVENTS, Key Satch(el), 2002, \$5

Robin Blaser & Meredith Quartermain, WANDERS, Nomados, 2002, \$10 + \$2.50 p&h, P.O. Box 4031 349 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6B 3Z4

Matthew Burgess, LIFTOFF, Blue Language Press, 2002

Zhang Er, CROSS RIVER * PICK LOTUS, Be(adonna, 2002, \$3

Dan Featherston, THE CLOCK MAKER'S MEMOIR 1-12, Handwritten Press, 2002, <http://handwritten.org>

Maureen Foley, EPILEPTIC, Dead Metaphor Press, 2002, \$5

Leah Maines, BEYOND THE RIVER, Kentucky Writers' Coalition, 2002, \$6

Bernadette Mayer, RED BOOK IN THREE PARTS, United Artists Books, \$6

Jennifer Moxley, THE OCCASION, Be(adonna, 2002, \$3

Martin Nakell, FOUND, Jahbone, 2002

John Wilkinson, SIGNS OF AN INTRUDER, Parataxis Editions, 2001

CDs & CD ROMs

Nicole Peyrafitte, MOSTLY POEMS, 2002, www.nicolepeyrafitte.com

COMICS

Dave Morice, POETRY COMICS, Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 2002

MAGAZINES

ANTENNAE, #3, 2002, \$6, Bob Harrison, Lyn Hejinian, Spencer Selby, etc. Jesse Seldess, ed. 851 N. Hoyne Avenue, #3R, Chicago, IL 60622

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SHARK, #4, 2002, \$10, "The Encyclopedic," Jimbo Blachly, Pamela Lu, Michael Scharf, Brian Kim Stefans, etc. Emilie Clark & Lytle Shaw, eds.

UR VOX, #2, 2002, \$10, Will Alexander, Maria Damon, Chris Daniels, etc. Lee Ballentine, ed. P.O. Box 9249, Denver, CO 80209

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