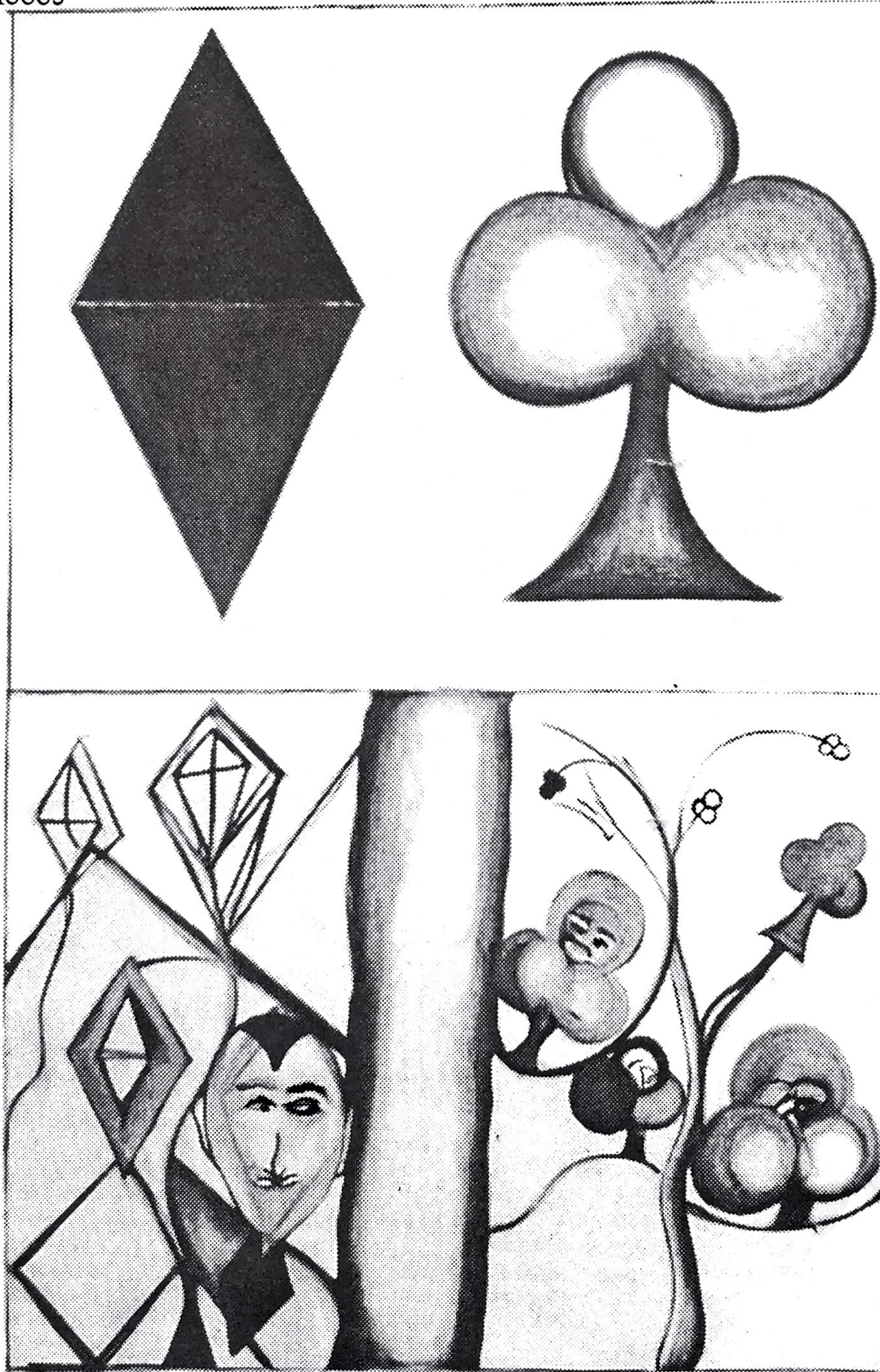


the poetry project newsletter

Dec./Jan. 1995

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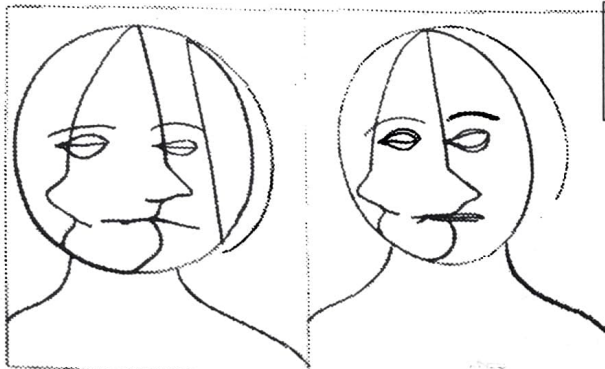
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Playing cards, trees, baseball players and portraits of other artists and writers occupy poet/painter Basil King. In 1992, he began a long documentary poem, *MIRAGE*, and several series of artworks including oil paintings, drawings and mixed media on paper. Selections from *MIRAGE* have been presented at Gotham Book Mart, Biblio's and venues in NYC and San Francisco; and in London, York and the Basil Bunting Poetry Center in Newcastle.

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The Politics of Accessibility

by Tracie Morris



...I'd like to make a comparative analysis between Green Eggs and Ham and, say, Hamlet, you know? It's like "I don't want green eggs and ham — my father is dead and you all killed him. I'm not trying to be your stepson."

I feel kind of funny about being on a panel even though I'm glad to be here. I consider myself a new jack autodidact, so it's not like I have schooling in this, and because of that I think my relationship to poetry is kind of different. I come from a cultural group that was prevented from reading and writing as a political act. That relationship to words and texts is something that can't really be dismissed because its ramifications today are pretty strong. As a writer, as a poet, and as a person, I was subjected to an extremely racist and hos-

tile school environment in which I was several times accused of being mentally unfit in order to prevent me from being in certain classes, including gifted classes I was qualified for, which I later got into because of political activism on the part of my mother. Within the context of this sort of forum I think it's important not to lose sight of what poetry really means to people and what writing really means to people every day and not just necessarily in the community. So I guess if Cecelia has machismo, then we have "nig-ation" in my community,

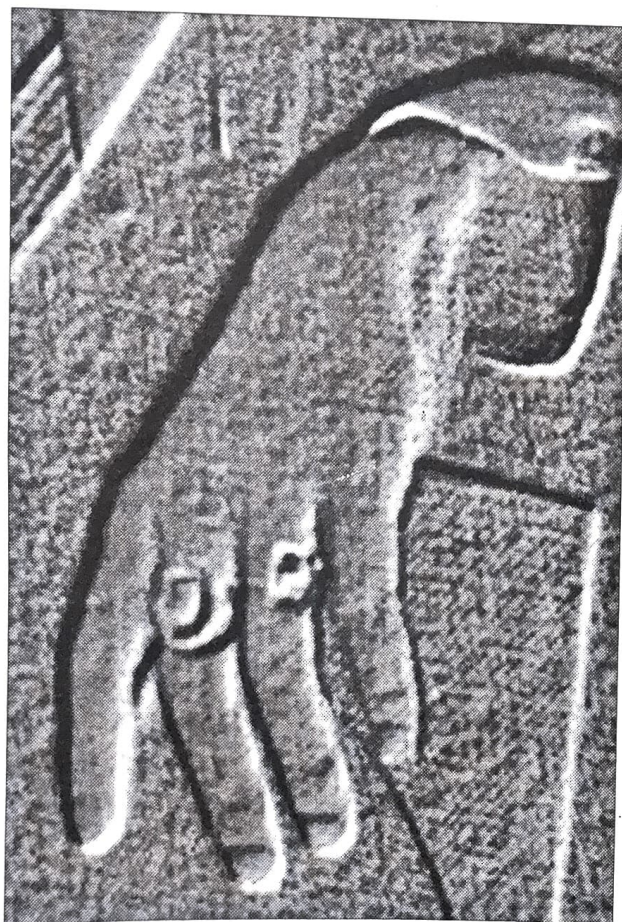
because it's not even like they're trying to hear about folks using art in a political sense. So what I can basically talk about is my point of view, and what I've learned in a very subjective way. When I work with young people one of my tools is subversion, to subvert Shakespearean supremacy and I try to promote Suessian accessibility. I think Dr. Seuss is probably the first person that most people would gain access from in terms of poetry, but somehow **Green Eggs and Ham** is sort of dismissed as a way to get to get to real writing. I'd like to make a comparative analysis between **Green Eggs and Ham** and, say, **Hamlet**, you know? It's like "I don't want green eggs and ham" — "My father is dead and you all killed him. I'm not trying to be your stepson". I think that this sort of relationship breaks down and demystifies Shakespeare. I mean he talked like he did because he was talking 300 years ago. It's not like he was erudite, he was an actor/playwright trying to get gigs and that's one of the first things I tell kids. Usually I work with children of color and they're basically taught that this is a smart white man and you're too dumb to figure out what he's saying. So my first thing is to get

them to Seuss off the bat and talk about the rhyme scheme of **Green Eggs and Ham** and then to start to look at Hamlet's morose self.

... I think it's important not to lose sight of what poetry really means to people and what writing really means to people every day and not just necessarily in the community.

Anyway so I think when we're talking about writing we need to talk about the relevance of words and how conservative traditional forms

can be used in new ways. So, I can talk about some of the things that I've done as a teacher and look at L.L. Cool J and I relate him to Shakespeare and the appropriation and usage of rhyme scheme — not because I have to prove that black people can read and write as well as white people, but just to demystify what poetry means, what its accessibility is, and try to take it to the next level. Usually when you get into these sort of school programs you have a month, one hour a week to go through poetry, its history, the Harlem Renaissance, imagery, rhyme scheme and hip hop, and then have the kids do a performance and make a book. That doesn't give you a lot of time and then, you know, that's assuming that these children have the same sort of problems with access that I had, namely, "Don't think, regurgitate" and don't try to read too well, because again there's this relationship to liberation. So hip hop — I don't consider myself a hip hop scholar, but I would be remiss if I didn't say that it influenced the way that I write. The options that it has explored in terms of rhyme scheme, simile, metaphor, the way that it's deconstructing popular culture is very sophisticated and it's something that



What a Strange Way of Being Dead

a poem trilogy by

Jack Collom

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"I been dead 56 years, so
I ain't got no body
to get in the way.
I've got an empty jug."

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when you put it in those terms, serves to do two things for people (either from seven to twenty-seven); one of the things it helps to do is to validate their own cultural experience; and the other thing is to use the type of technical language that allows them to have a handle on it (because they probably won't be taught technique in elementary or secondary school, but they will be expected to have knowledge of it in college). The other usage of hip hop is music, musical usage and flow and its relation to syncopation, rhyme and meter.

There's another issue to do with black accessibility, and that is you really shouldn't read or write, but if you do read and write, it has to be funny. It has to be entertaining, you know, it has to be minstrelsy, which relates to the business aspect of accessibility. A lot of people say "Well like rap is great, rap, you know, y'all can rap so that's good." You can also write and read, you know — but that can be a spurious thing because a lot of rappers in that whole music industry context can be a source of disempowerment. So the issue of rap, hip hop and its relationship to culture and reading and writing needs to be looked at a little bit more carefully than, "Oh gee that rhyme scheme is great" and "That was a very witty pun," ah, because as Ed Friedman said in our little pre-prep panel, a lot of the people who buy much of that music, even though it has a very urban (specifically African-American urban) feel, it's that consideration of who's buying the records, which is paramount. I think some of the stuff with gangsta rap has to be looked at in that context, especially in terms of misogyny and its reinforcing of safe black people who are going to shoot each other, and not you, in a riot. This leads to a couple of other points: one is that the black community and its relationship to activism in art is something that should be nuanced again. Not since the 1960s have you had this sort of potential in terms of what art can do in terms of liberation and political activism. But it has to be refined to the point that it's not as pedantic as it became, because what that does is it makes people feel that they have to choose between innovative art and art that's very conservative but is saying what people want to hear, and if you're trying to access different people, they kind of want both. They want De La

...I think some of the stuff with gangsta rap has to be looked at in that context — in terms of misogyny and its reinforcing of safe black people who are going to shoot each other, and not you, in a riot.

Soul, which doesn't get promoted as far as I'm concerned, because not only does their critique go to the rap industry but they go so far as to critique their own record label.

Finally in terms of accessibility, as a touring poet one of the most bizarre and interesting moments of my poetic career was being on

the Lollapalooza Tour. It just showed me how "out" things can get. I mean, here I am, probably one of twelve black people in West Virginia, but you know, that was weird. But the weirder thing was how Lollapalooza decided to contextualize poetry, which was that we would read between Spam-eating contests and human drag racing. I'm not joking, this is true, and it was kind of like the poetry can not stand on its own, even though as hip hop, it's being appropriated all over the world, but it's like we have to put it between Spam-eating contests to make sure people like it. Poetry can't stand on its own, and one of the headliners was a rap act? So what is poetry? What is entertaining? What is strong and what could possibly liberate people? I've never seen a context like that before. So in order to read for this thing for my two week gig, I would have to read and leave, because the context of it was so strange that I felt like I would have to get very political and not perform and break my contract if I stood around and watched people dress in skirts and stick grapes up their butt before it was time for me to read a poem. So it can get that out, and I don't know if that's accessibility, but if it is, I think I'd rather stay home.

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4 by Pansy Maurer-Alvarez

I DIDN'T MEAN TO GET YOU

into this but
when the apparition complete
with road maps to the mystic
mind stood
in an advantageous light
slowly rolling
up one sleeve of his cornflower blue shirt
while eyeing my pomegranate silk
shift with the long black
earrings you gave me wholly
and utterly out
of love and beckoned me
into the green background, I thought
I should leave you
this note

STARTING WITH MATISSE

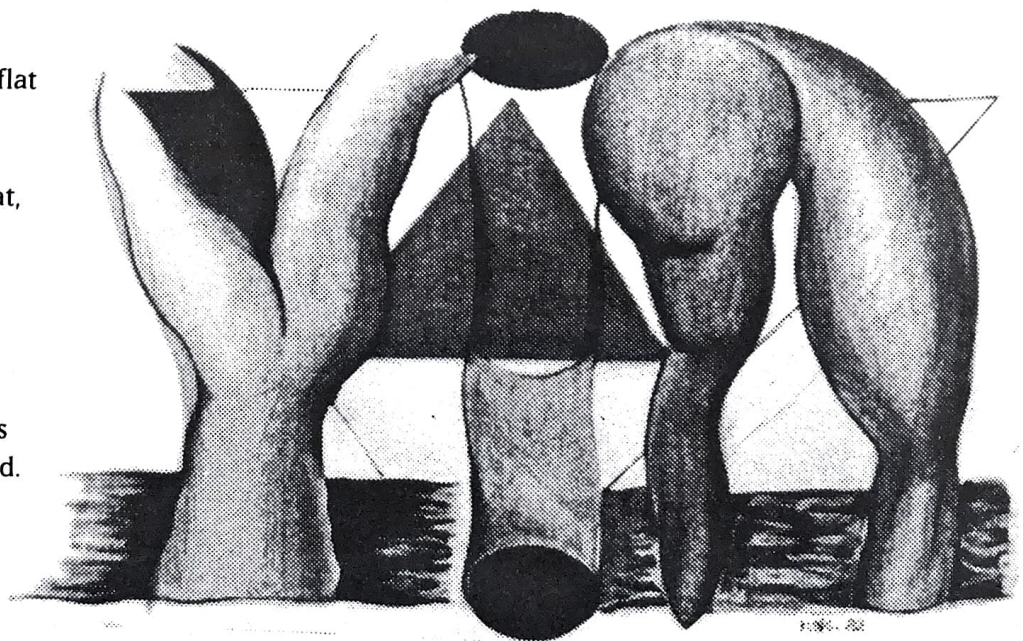
I've carried it a while, this gigantic
dance in me of women's haunches, flat
and almost the size of billboards.
The music of their dance, flattening
the circle into something like combat,
moves so close you feel
the dance of the individual line and
only that black line, be it shoulder,
breast or knee. The line
turns back on itself, without a note
missed or swerve passed, as it works
through its unhurried beat to the end.

LITTLE KIND OF LOVE POEM

You might take sand in your hands
and think you're making love to me.
You make vast dunes orange
and the water's edge is
brackish, blue, but I'm not there --
I'm nowhere near you.
Not yet.

THE IMMEDIATE PRESENT

Hoping in foreign subjunctives or caught
in one of the many conditionals is not
what I want to be doing with you.



Access & Context

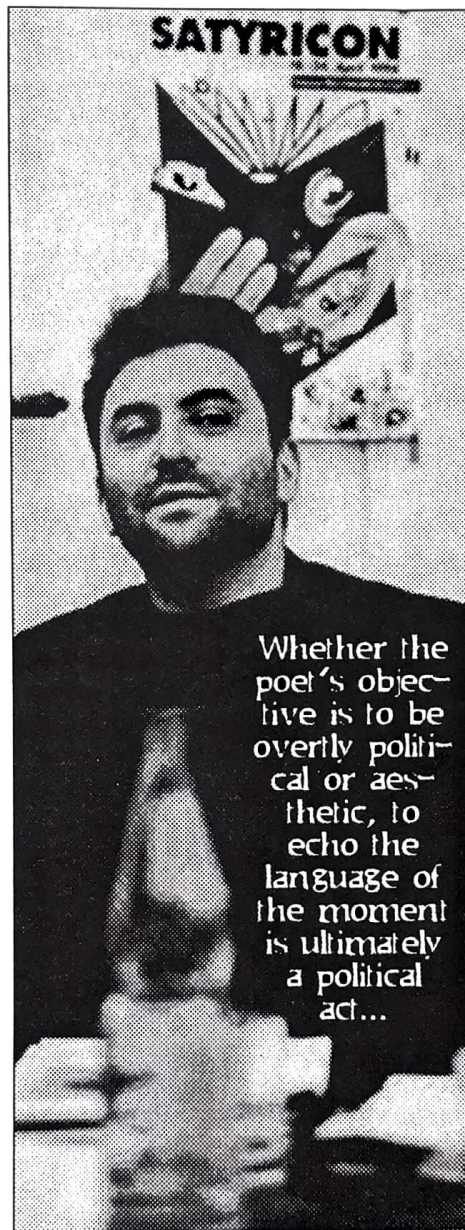
No age transmits its sensibility to the next; it merely transmits the intelligence of that sensibility. Through emotion we are ourselves; through intelligence we're someone else. Intelligence disperses us; that is why it's through what disperses us that we ourselves survive. Each age gives its successor only that which it is not...

The whole constitution of my spirit is one of hesitancy and of doubt. Nothing is or can be positive to me; all things oscillate around me, and I with them, an uncertainty unto myself. All for me is incoherence and change. All is mystery and all is meaning.

— Fernando Pessoa

To my way of thinking, there is only one issue in addressing accessibility in poetics: the politics of accessibility and the aesthetics of accessibility.

Whether the poet's objective is to be overtly political or aesthetic, to echo the language of the moment is ultimately a political act, and ultimately leads to inaccessibility. That is the paradox, because to be accessible usually means buying into an established set of formal guidelines and traditions. The very nature of establishing those forms defines the certainty that the moment of their relevance has already past. In other words, any form that's already defined comes from another age. As an inventor or creator, as an artist echoing the present, as someone bringing his/her lineage and sensibility out into new territory, the poet finds him



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or herself in the arena of inaccessibility as heard through the ears of the reader.

As such, the poet is not necessarily "new" or cutting edge because he or she wants to be inaccessible—instead the poet aims to be "relevant" in terms of expressing him or herself in the moment that the poet is writing in. I don't buy into Pound's dictum "make it new" as much as Mauberly's make it relevant. That relevance, historically, has led to a certain amount of inaccessibility and criticism from a reading public who says, "hey, we use the language too and we don't understand what you're talking about. What we want is poetry—something we recognize as poetry." E.g. Wallace Stevens' *The Man With The Blue Guitar: But play, you must, /*

A tune beyond us, yet ourselves.

Seventy-five years ago Pound complained that his work was not inaccessible but that the public was at fault for not doing their Greek and Latin homework. But even if they had (and many had), the audience still would have found *The Cantos* inaccessible because they had expanded and redefined the parameters of the art. An early 20th century audience would have been prepared for Greek and Latin references a la Keats, but for a disjunctive, multi-lingual appropriation of texts? And, of course, it's not just the difficulty or discontinuity that makes the poet inaccessible—an accessible poet is not necessarily simple, but safe—i.e. safely using forms of the past without questioning them.

The early Williams' poems serve as a good example of this progressive simplicity. But the fact that he was considered inaccessible at the time of his writing, and is no longer considered inaccessible, is central to the problem. Both Williams and Pound have been fully incorporated into the institutional canon—and in no other medium, I would argue, does the academy have such a stronghold on presenting accessibility (or creating it, or defining it, or promoting it). The poetry of Charles Reznikoff is another interesting example. His poetry is painfully simple, clear, straightforward (if, in fact, these are the qualities of accessibility) and yet the work threatens the boundaries of the canon. The work is *too* straightforward. So accessibility does not equal clarity or simplicity, but predictability.

When a poet moves into the present moment, the poet leaves behind a part of the tradition that got him or her there by the nature of the immediacy—this becomes a challenge, at best, or worse, a threat to the reader because the rules of access continue to change. Twenty years ago the claim for L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E writing, in part, was that inaccessibility was a necessary tool—to be accessible was to buy into a well-established, conservative and oppressive system—a system, or a literature, that hardly represented the fragmented post-Vietnam era. To inherit the voice and/or formal considerations of he **New American Poetry** wouldn't fit the

present—that poetry, in fact, very much echoed the fragmented despair of the post-World War II era. As Silliman points out in the 1982 essay *for Change*: "Both the writer and (any potential) audience found themselves displaced, their existence in jeopardy. In such a context, it is no accident that poets . . . should turn their attention to the origin of this displacement, the constituting mechanism of 'private life,' language itself."

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As a result of this call for change, for "language itself", the L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E poets found themselves very much in the lineage of experimental Modernism—the push of the language; to reinvent the landscape of the moment is not a new tendency. And "change" is the sister to inaccessibility; the act of writing and of using new forms—however slightly altered—is a political act which leads to inaccessibility. The work itself might even contain elements of more traditional forms—whether lyrical, narrative, etc.—but something must speak to the relevance of the moment if the poem is going to be progressive in any way.

Today, of course, the political landscape has changed, though one could say the fragmentation of the post-Vietnam era has only deepened. From what I've witnessed at the Ear Inn over the past 10 years (most of those years I was the coordinator) as the younger poets emerge on the scene, it is the pushing of the language towards relevance that identifies them, if even loosely, with L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E writing. Often that identification is by denial, but even in that case these younger poets have absorbed the permissiveness of L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E writing.

The connection to political change in new writing today by younger poets might not be as obvious, but that, too, is an accurate reflection of the present. The overlap from disjunctive poetics for aesthetic relevance and for political relevance is great, and the difference is perhaps indistinguishable—i.e. form is content. Perhaps the wedge that Barrett Watten strikes: "style has an ethical rather than aesthetic basis" has already been re-negotiated—have the ethics been absorbed in the aesthetic? L = A = N = G = U = A = G = E writing—as seen in the University's inclusion of it—has become an obvious heir to a particular brand of "Experimental" Modernism which includes Stein, Pound, Zukofsky, Olson, and others—all poets who at one time were considered inaccessible to a non-poet, non-academic audience. So does inaccessibility follow the context? Do poems that were once considered inaccessible become more accessible within an established context? If so, does this allow the poet to create more freely with the understanding that it isn't one individual poem or book of poems that the poet has to make understood, but instead, an entire context for the work to be understood?

And if context plays this role, is the poet suddenly getting off the responsibility hook? Is the poet responsible for reaching his or her reader? Should the reader be responsible—is a lot of the work out there so discontinuous and incoherent that the reader can't find a way in? Does a painter ask him or herself this same question before the creative act begins—will the audience understand my work? Did Pollack? I doubt it, and I certainly hope not, but are we to believe that the medium of poetry is somehow different because it uses a common language? I don't think so. Instead, I think that the audience for poetry, because of this academic stronghold, has been unwilling or unable to break itself away from the most rigid and effete formal traditions. And that the attitude that the medium of poetry does have special formal considerations has contributed to the medium's backwardness and conservatism, and ultimately its inaccessibility.

It is true, mostly, that only poets and teachers of poetry read difficult poetry today. But there are more poets writing today than I've ever seen before—more

readings, more publications, stronger communities and more jobs (curiously less funding!). So, as Steve Benson states in *for Change*: *the truism that the only people who read poetry are themselves poets is thus understood rather as potential than limitation: the reader is presumed not as a consumer of the experience sustained by the poet but as a fellow writer who shares contentiously in the work and can willingly answer the uses of the medium which the writer feels impelled to undertake (and so extend the generation of literary work without indulging the pretentious fireworks of avantgardism for validation, with its tendencies to shortsightedness of enthusiasm and blindness of shock effect.*

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If we take Benson's idea to heart, and we admit to ourselves that our most immediate audience is that of our fellow poets, we concede also that our circle has grown, and in this democracy or community the question of accessibility shifts. Also, by extension, to understand our lineage—in Benson's words "to extend our generation," is a way to offer an accessibility to more difficult work. With poetry that is not easily accessible in terms of traditional forms, meanings or narratives, a context is necessary to make the work more accessible—that context, in the immediate sense, is the poetry community, but that context in a larger parameter, for a larger audience, that context is context.

Five poems from Western Love

by Bill Luoma

The prairie gives off long
when we roam. You built
a fire to warm our socks.
Grateful night critters
blinked at the shadows.
The buttes got mangy.

The gray puffy clouds
roll in the afternoon.
We don't yield as much
to the gracious outline
of the sun. I've seen you
holding the rifles. You
learned about animal sex
from hunting. You can
empty shells.

The paper fan
delivers sweet air
to the back of your neck,
my angel. Your cowboy
wings fan the drafts
of the southwest. I
present to you my
newly-oiled chamber.
Are you ready for
the back country
of my love.

I would be careful
of that branding iron
if I were you, in your 50s
and sheepskin collar
jean jacket. The irons
are hot now. They'll
be blackened any minute.

Last night I ate mushrooms
in honor of the time
we tripped over the range.
I stepped in a cow patty
that reminded me of your hat.
Diamondbacks were
hanging from the scrub.
You dowsed the earth
and made the heavens roll.



The Charles Olson Festival

August 12, 1995 • Gloucester City Hall, Gloucester, Mass.

a report by Loss Pequeño Glazier



Seated from left to right: Robert Creeley, Vincent Ferrini, Ingeborg Lauterstein, Peter Anastas, Hettie Jones, Ed Sanders and Jean Kaiser.

This festival, which seemed to me under-advertised, certainly had no lack of attendance. The Grand City Council Chamber of the Gloucester City Hall was packed from its main floor to its balcony curving around three quarters of the high-ceilinged hall, despite nearly unbearable heat (David McArdle pointed out that the heat was not inappropriate: Olson himself had stood in this same room to argue for the preservation of Gloucester on some equally sultry nights). The hall bore a festival banner beneath a colorful mural of historic Gloucester emblazoned with the words, "Build Not For Today But For Tomorrow As Well" (to which Creeley added, "and for yesterday") and enormous prints of Lynn Swigart's photographs from *Olson's Gloucester* (Louisiana State University Press). Though some of the attendees had traveled some distance to the conference, what struck me most about this festival was its local presence.

Many of the 350 persons attending were people from the community, some of them older; my thought was that at least a 50% of the attendees were from the local community. Some of the people I spoke to had shown up because they remembered Olson or they had seen the festival announced in the local paper. One fisherman I spoke to felt it was a necessary civic act. A woman I met on the harbor ferry came because "my son used to play with

Charlie's son." Another man, dressed in work clothes and entering the hall just as Gerrit Lansing was reading from Olson's letter to *The Gloucester Daily Times* (Ten Pound Island) would say no more than "It's respects I have to pay."

Modest in scale but grand in sentiment, qualities of words, and the vista of Gloucester harbor from the stairway windows of City Hall, the Charles Olson Festival (presented by the Gloucester Lyceum and Sawyer Free Library) consisted of three events in one day to celebrate Olson's life and work twenty-five years after his death: an afternoon panel discussion, a reception at the library across the street, and a reading of Olson's works the same night.

The panel (consisting of Robert Creeley, Vincent Ferrini, Hettie Jones, Jean Kaiser, Ingeborg Lauterstein, Ed Sanders and ably and moderated by Peter Anastas) undertook a number of appreciative recollections and questions in the spirit of homage. The panelists all knew Olson personally, whether as student, friend, or peer. Following an opening welcome by David McArdle, director of the Gloucester library (a place where being "the librarian" resonates more than in most places),

questions such as the panelists' impressions upon first meeting Olson, thoughts about his work as a teacher, activist, and political poet were entertained, with Anastas (who cited Olson's advice, "Just live, the writing will take care of itself" as having been crucial to him personally) raising questions and querying panelists one by one.

Creeley, generously offering much thoughtful information, spoke eloquently on many issues. Given his extensive written contact with Olson and the number of Olson's works he has edited, his insights added a specific literary and personal grounding to the event.

One important issue raised by the panel was the context of Olson as an activist. Ed Sanders, given his own relevant activities in this area, was the first to elaborate on this issue. Creeley addressed the vast imagination of Olson's civic commitment (whether or not this could be considered "political" poetry was not investigated at length by the panel), noting Olson's distinction between "epicene poets—poets who do not enter the society" and the kind of poetic Olson engaged in Gloucester.

Vincent Ferrini, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and dark glasses, provided numerous opinionated comments, quirky at times. He read a poem written for the occasion. He also noted good-naturedly his contention with Olson about "who had Gloucester" for

poetry. Hettie Jones provided personal and valuable reflections about Olson and his engagement with *Yugen* (a distinctly supportive little magazine—with Hettie providing a crucial role—for Olson when he most needed it).

And size, yes, about Olson's size. (The best comment on this point was Ferrini's, who stated quite succinctly, "he lived his body as a poem".)

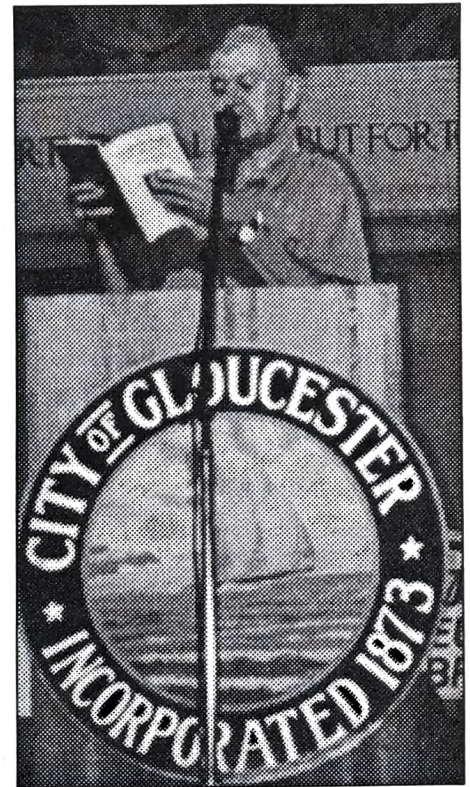
Ingeborg Lauterstein, a successful novelist who started out as an artist at Black Mountain until she became one of Olson's students, and Jean Kaiser, the sister of Olson's late wife, Betty, both provided important details and recollections about Olson. Ed Sanders, who seemed hesitant at times about such a panel format, never lacked in eloquence or opinion when prompted. Somewhat thorny, though bypassed for the most part, was Olson's relation to women. Of course the context was personal here, and in this regard, women on the panel spoke of their own interactions with Olson. The point probably was not any single resolution but some tangible public fact. It was similar when the issue of Olson's "readability" came up, especially given the local character of his work. It was a question I had

also asked of some Gloucester residents. Those that had tried to read his work had not had much success.)

What counted, in terms of the festival, were the contributions that Olson made to the community. Though many of the ecologically important locations Olson argued for have now been paved over or filled in and covered with condos, his efforts were specific; he intensively argued issues crucial to Gloucester. Gloucester was his polis and he lived his commitment to it, both in writing and in action. In Ed Sander's words, "He was imperfect but he was generous." It's safe to say, I think, that almost everyone there, panelists and audience (local and visiting), were motivated by that sense of generosity as detailed in the panel.

The question period was an event in itself and consisted of a number of unanticipated spontaneous individual testimonials about other personal (and life-changing) encounters with Olson.

The panel was followed by a reception at the library and included some film footage of Olson and greetings from the city by the Mayor, Bruce H. Tobey (This was an event I was unable to attend).



Gerritt Lansing reads from Olson's work.

burning deck



BRIAN SCHORN: Strabismus

An eye wanders off course because a visual stimulus has leapt from the picture frame, insisting on the journey into words. With one eye focused on an image and the other on words, the distinctions between interior and exterior dissolve, throwing amorphous shadows onto the retina, like so many "muscae volitantes" in the eyeball's vitreous humor. A first book of poems.

64 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, original paperback, \$8.

DAMON KRUKOWSKI: 5000 Musical Terms

The 5000 words in this collection include found texts because, the author says with tongue firmly planted in cheek, "statements, when repeated, gain a measure of truth." He is the publisher of "Exact Change" and has recorded with the rock bands Galaxie 500 and Magic Hour.

Poems, 36 pages, letterpress, saddle-stitched, \$5.

ELKE ERB: Mountains in Berlin [Dichten = No. 2; trans. Rosmarie Waldrop]

A selection from 3 volumes published in the GDR between 1975 and 1983. "Poetry as an attempt to dynamite petrified structures, poetry as incessant reflective effort, poetry as childlike utopia. Three irreconcilable impulses, perhaps. But great works come about in the meeting of the irreconcilable."—Urs Allemann. Poetry, 96 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, original paperback \$8.

MARCEL COHEN: The Peacock Emperor Moth [Série d'écriture No. 9; trans. Cid Corman]

The brevity of Marcel Cohen's stories is matched by their intensity. Each shows us a crack in what seemed the solid surface of ordinary days. These fissures widen into a complex geometry that resonates with the great human catastrophes of our century. By the author of *Galpa* and *Miroirs*. Stories, ca. 128 pages, offset, Smyth-sewn, original paperback, \$8.

CLAUDE ROYET-JOURNOUD: i.e. [Série d'écriture Supplement No. 1; trans. Keith Waldrop]

By the author of *Reversal* and *The Notion of Obstacle* (Awede, 1985) Poem, 20 pages, offset, saddlestitched, \$5

Burning Deck has received help from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fund for Poetry, the Charles Phelps Taft Memorial Fund, and the Services Culturels of the French Embassy.

Order from: Small Press Distribution, 1814 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702 (800-869-7553)

2.

The heat only seemed to intensify by evening but the main floor and balcony of City Hall were full again. The evening event, introduced by Schuyler Hoffman, was a reading of works by and about Olson, delivered by Gerrit Lansing, Hettie Jones, Robert Creeley, and Edward Sanders. Lansing read from Olson's letters to the Gloucester Daily Times, reflecting on Olson's method of working: that he might start writing a letter and it would turn into a poem, and end up an essay. Indeed, the letters read by Lansing were so intensely poetic at times, they must be considered part of Olson's poetic oeuvre. Hettie Jones read sections from her memoirs reflecting on Olson's visit to her and Amiri Baraka and their household in New York. Her warm and deeply personal account of the visit included interesting observations about her production labors in trying to prepare Olson's manuscripts for *Yugen*.

Creeley read some of Olson's work from Olson's **Selected Poems** with great acumen and feeling. Both Lansing and Creeley's readings emphasized the words themselves, Olson's words, and there was a particular pleasure in hearing them in the venue of the Gloucester City Hall.

Ed Sanders concluded the evening with

Lansing read from Olson's letters...reflecting on Olson's method of working: that he might start writing a letter and it would turn into a poem, and end up an essay...

a performance of some poems by Olson set to music by Sanders. Plucking a stringed instrument, the arrangement alternated between sections of sung text, which reminded me of Ginsberg doing Blake (and in fact I believe it was Sanders who made a point of placing Olson's work on a scale with Blake's) and brief inter-

ludes or bridges of spoken words. This careful interpretation provided an apt and festive conclusion to what was perhaps the most articulate segment of the Festival, the word itself.

3.

Back outside in the night, a few parting words, then groups of attendees began to disperse, mostly to cars or just in directions that seemed natural for them. This was my first visit to Gloucester and I was continually offered a new sight around every corner. The event seemed unusual compared to a lot of literary events because of the strength of its location and because of the participation by the people who lived there. And of course, for them, once it was over, they went home. Gloucester was home. For me, any direction would do—but I walked towards the harbor.

Great Books for Great Readers from McPherson

A Sacred Quest: The Life and Writings of Mary Butts Christopher Wagstaff, editor

The first monograph to detail this "lost" writer's remarkable place in Modernism. Essays by Bryher, Glenway Wescott, Robin Blaser, Duncan, Gerrit Lansing, many others; drawings by Cocteau; photos by Man Ray and others; selections from Butts's own writings; life chronology; extensive bibliographies.

277 pages, \$25 hardcover. *Just published.*

The Classical Novels (The Macedonian and Scenes from the Life of Cleopatra) by Mary Butts

"The advanced literary style Butts employed in 'The Macedonian' and 'Cleopatra' is enough to make them stand out among historical novels...In retrospect Butts deserves to be ranked with Ronald Firbank, Katherine Mansfield, D.H. Lawrence, Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf among the most important and original of English modernist fiction writers."—Harvey Pekar, *Chicago Tribune*

397 pages, \$14 paperback. Preface by Thomas McEvilley.

The Taverner Novels (Armed with Madness and Death of Felicity Taverner) by Mary Butts

"While *Armed with Madness* is more exciting formally, *Death of Felicity Taverner* combines all of Mary Butts's strengths into something relentless and wild—a tornado of female aggression, fag-haggling, *mariage blanc*, cruising, blackmail, real estate, threats of environmental devastation, murder, and the complexities of deceit and love—in short, it is a novel about the family."—Bruce Hainley, *VLS*

384 pages, \$15 paperback. Preface by Paul West.

From Altar to Chimney-piece: Selected Stories by Mary Butts

Fifteen tales of the powers of hidden things and things of hidden powers. "Mary Butts's work is a big Shut Up to much of modernism's nonsense and hush-hush.... Her stories [are] beautifully collected in *From Altar to Chimney-piece*, and brilliantly introduced by John Ashbery."—Bruce Hainley, *VLS*

295 pages, \$12 paperback

Available at all cool bookstores now. Or order directly from McPherson & Co. at 1-800-613-8219. We'll also send you a catalogue for the asking: books by West, Kelly, Eshleman, Brakhage, Gordon, Ortese, McEvilley, Molinaro, Kessler, Zoline, Ableman, Manganeli, Schneemann, Ascher/Straus, Dahlberg, Novalis, Castle, etc.

John Ashbery

Fuckin' Sarcophagi

And when they had mounted it on the flatbed,
the dogfish requested a lottery ticket. I'm no longer feeling
any of it. Generations of toppled heads
have come home to roost in my priory.
The smell of doughnuts frying offers them minimal
support.

All those years with the tree's rings growing around me,
the leaves in my face, branches obstructing others,
have learned me how one deaf animal forgets another
in the rush to light. And there on the threshold it forgets
its name, its very purpose. And allows septic deviance
to whittle away at the formatted intertext.
It's as well the hygrometer was swallowed
by a tusked creature, as we never came here at all.
All those suds on the porch and the front walk
only meant that baby likes to blow soapbubbles
when not involved in anything more strenuous,
such as teething. She sees through the holes in my coat
imaginable dapper Dans who one day will become part and parcel
of the astroturf.

When I wonder weather it's over between us, ever over,
why, a shy spiral announces your cue:
You too are to have nothing to do
for the next five hours.
Look, I've packed lunch ...

Betimes the betises fall where they may.

Letters

Two Degrees

To beat Olson with O'Hara is not to understand the whole landscape of U.S. poetry, and its connections and philosophical "places."

O'Hara is the poet of petty bourgeois avant urbanity, art as the anxious subjectivism of the flawed bright world of NY poets, intellectuals, painters, movie stars and his own fragile grandness in feeling and expressing it!

Olson (also petty b) is a historian of political anthropology and archaeology and language, who abstracts them to make music. Olson is innovative, often lyrical, as lecturer, speaker, orator poet—because he is outside. He is self marginalized, in the sense of "to get away from all this ... pejoracracy" & c (That's why he has to shout!)

O'Hara, on the other hand, is on the inside, the middle of the stuff. Hence he "reports" as he moves. Olson's formal reflection is what makes his form so expressive. His ideas expression is where the emotion is.

O'Hara sets out to feel. His thoughts must be extracted from the emotional witness of the poem, so he is only secondarily "serial," ie.. "consistent" as political statement. Though it, of course, exists to be analyzed, however ejaculated! (ie. class, class stand, what he extols or puts down, his work & study, likewise the "for whom" all our works answer).

They are two obvious capitals on the U.S. poetry map.

I've got a note on John Farris' big interview as well.

—Amiri Baraka

Dear PPNL,

I'm sure that this will be only one of hundreds of letters you'll get from outraged fans of Paula Prentiss, but I want to make my voice heard anyhow. The new issue of Poetry Project Newsletter (issue #157) contains a review of "What's New Pussycat?" by Amanda Bristow, which assigns the part played by Miss Prentiss to another actress (a "Nicole Karen").

Is this some kind of St. Mark's in joke? Paula Prentiss is one of America's greatest stars and to see her contribution to "What's New Pussycat?" denigrated in this way is to witness another spear plunging into Christ's side! Get it straight -- there's only one Paula Prentiss, and it is she who created the part of the stripper-poet in "What's New Pussycat?"! No one else!

Miss Prentiss should be on your cover, not Roman Polanski. I could list all the marvelous films she has given us the world, from "Man's Favorite Sport?" to "The Stepford Wives,"—and how about "Where the Boys Are"?—but I think I've proved my point. When you give short shrift to Paula Prentiss, you are committing an act of irrevocable violence on the world fabric/text/connubial body.

Thanks,

Kevin Killian

submit...

The New Hasty Papers is accepting submissions of poetry, fiction, plays, film scripts, musical scores, political essays, criticism, artworks and photographs. Length and subject are not restricted. The editor, Alfred Leslie, says the first issue will appear in August of 1996. Please include SASE. Send submissions to **Alfred Leslie, The New Hasty Papers, 313 East 6th Street, New York, N.Y., 10003.**

The Poetry Project Newsletter is interested in what you are reading. For a later issue of the Newsletter, please send us a list of your favorite reading so far this year. Entries should be no less than three titles, and no more than ten. If you feel the need to rank them, do so. If not, not. Send your recent reading lists to **Mitch Highfill, The Poetry Project Newsletter, St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, 131 East 10th Street, New York, N.Y., 10003.**

Bea Moss Productions offers to teach poets how to get the use of video equipment for free; how to get free airtime on public access TV; how to get funding and how to publicize productions. Write to **Bea Moss Productions, 385 Grand St., Suite 1407, New York, N.Y., 10002; or call (212) 673-1552.**

Florida State University's English Department Writing Program announces **The 1996 World's Best Short Story Contest.** The winner will receive \$100, and a box of Florida oranges, and will also be published in *Sun Dog* magazine. There is an entry fee of \$1 per entry. Manuscripts should be no more than 250 words long, double spaced on a single page. Include SASE. Deadline for submissions is February 15, 1996, and winners will be announced on May 15, 1996. Send entries to **Jerome Stern, Short Short, English Department, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, 32306-1036. For more info, call (904) 644-4230.**

The lively and entertaining magazine, **NOBADADDIES** is welcoming submissions for a special issue on Kathy Acker. Include SASE. Send submissions to **Doug Rice, B2D Publications, P.O. Box 95094, Pittsburgh, PA, 15223-0694. Internet address: Rice@Salem.Kent.edu**

Marilyn Hacker won the 1995 Lenore **Marshall Poetry Prize;** a \$10,000 Award for Most Outstanding Book, from the Academy of American Poets.

Poets on the line, the first continuing anthology of poems and non-fiction created especially for the internet, is now accessible to all Internet subscribers. This

from Linda Lerner, co-founder and co-editor. The Internet address is: **<http://www.echonyc.com/~poets>.**

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the poetry project

DECEMBER

1 Day Without Art

The Remember Project, in conjunction with Danspace Project at St. Mark's will present a 24 hour performance of Vexations by Erik Satie with Pianist Richard Cameron-Wolfe in the main sanctuary of the Church. Canon Lloyd Casson will deliver a special healing service at noon and members of the Ontological Theater and the Poetry Project will be assisting with pledge collection throughout the day. For information on participating, raising money, or to receive a pledge form, contact Dancers Responding to AIDS (212) 840-0770 ext. 236. [Midnight-Midnight]

2 Ron Padgett's New & Selected Poems Book Party [4-6 pm, Free]

4 Open Reading, sign-up at 7:30 pm [8 pm]

6 Andrei Codrescu & Anselm Hollo

Teacher, poet and award winning translator, Anselm Hollo is the author of several books of poetry including *Pick Up the House*, *Outlying Districts* and, most recently, *Corvus*. As an editor, translator and author Andrei Codrescu has published more than 25 books including *Comrade Past & Mister Present*, *Belligerence* and most recently a novel *The Blood Countess*. Codrescu's work has appeared in countless magazines newspapers and anthologies and he is the editor of *The Corpse* literary journal.

8 Chain Magazine Reading

Hosted by editor, Juliana Spahr and featuring Abigail Child, Stacy Doris, Maggie Dubris, Walter Lew and Kim Rosenfield. [10:30 pm]

JANUARY

1 22nd Annual New Year's Day Marathon Reading

Featuring over 120 poets, performer, dancers musicians and artists including Penny Arcade, Miguel Algarín, Maggie Estep, Nick Zedd, Ron Padgett, Richard Foreman, Todd Colby, Bob Rosenthal, Ed Friedlan, Wanda Phipps and many more! [2 pm-1 am, \$12, \$10 for Poetry Project Members]

8 Open Reading, sign-up at 7:30 pm [8 pm]

10 Gregory Corso & Herbert Huncke

"Corso is a poet's Poet, his verses pure velvet," Allen Ginsberg wrote in his foreword to Corso's *Mindfield: New & Selected Poems*. Gregory Corso's other collections of poetry include *Long Live Man*, *Gasoline* and *Vestal Lady on Brattle*. Fellow Beat legend, Herbert Huncke is the author of *The Crimson Sky* as well as the straightforward memoir *Guilty of Everything*. He has recently completed a reading tour in Europe.

17 Stacy Doris & Ray DiPalma

Editor, translator and poet, Stacy Doris produced two collections in collaboration with visual artists, *The Mop Factory Incident* with Melissa Smedley and *Implements (For Use)* with Anne Falcik. She is the author of *The French Revolution*, which appeared as an Abacus edition and *Kildare*. Ray DiPalma is the author of more than 30 collections of poetry and visual work including Raik and most recently *Motion of the Cipher*.

19 Barbara Henning, Mitch Highfill & Dennis Moritz

A program of readings by three authors recently published by United Artists Books. Barbara Henning is the author of *Love Makes Thinking Dark*. Mitch Highfill's latest collection of poems is entitled *Liquid Affairs*. Dennis Moritz' book *Something to Hold On To* is a collection of nine theater pieces. [10:30 pm]

11 Deb Margolis & Bridge Markland

Playwright, performance artist Deb Margolis

11 **Deb Margolis & Bridge Markland**

Playwright, performance artist, Deb Margolin, is a founding member of the Split Britches Theater Company. She premiered her solo performance piece *Carthieves! Joyrides!* at Here theater this past November. Bridge Markland is an interdisciplinary performer who lives in Berlin and writes poetry which explores issues of gender and culture through theater and performance. Markland has received grants from the Academy of Arts in Berlin and the Goethe Institute.

13 **Donna Brook & Mary Ferrari**

Donna Brook's *Notes on Space/Time* was heralded as "personally, politically and culturally significant and true." Brook's work has appeared in numerous journals including *kayak*, *Telephone*, *The Village Voice* and the *American Book Review*. Brook is the author of *What Being Responsible Means to Me*. Mary Ferrari is a poet and teacher whose work has appeared in journals such as *The World*, *Hanging Loose* and *The New York Quarterly*. She is the author of several collections of poetry including *The Flying Glove* and *Why the Sun Cannot Set*.

18 **A Jorge Brandon Christmas**

A commemorative reading to honor the tradition of Jorge Brandon, *El Coco Que Habla...*, *The Talking Coconut* and the father of New York/Puerto Rican poetry. Miguel Algarín, Sandra Maria Estevez, Barry Brown Jr., Jose Angel Figueroa, Sandra Garcia, Bob Holman, Tato Laviera, Ed Morales, Willie Perdomo, Pedro Pietri, Edwin Torres and others celebrate this important poet.

20 **An Evening of Short Films by Jem Cohen**

Multi-media installation artist and filmmaker, Jem Cohen, is a founding director of *Late City Final*, an omnibus documentary project on Times square. His recent projects include *Buried in Light*, a three channel film/video installation as well as *Lost Book Found*, a 16 mm film fused with short-wave radio sound and live music. Cohen's films have been shown at The Museum of Modern Art, The Brooklyn Museum, Anthology Film Archives and have appeared on the BBC in London as well as on WNET in New York.

22 **Thaddeus Rutkowski & Shut-Up Shelly**

Downtown performance artist and poet, Shut-Up Shelly once had a fight with the wife of the president of the Hell's Angels, and wrote a song about it. Thaddeus Rutkowski is the author of *Beautiful Youth*, *Desperate Measures* and *Super Nature*.

24 **Cheryl Fish & Arthur Sze**

Cheryl Fish is the author of *Wing Span* and *My City Flies By*. Her poems and short fictions have appeared in *New American Writing*, *Long News in the Short Century*, *B City* and elsewhere. Her work will be included in the forthcoming anthology, *Homemaking: Contemporary Woman Writers and the Politics and Poetics of Home*. Arthur Sze is the author of five books of poetry: *Archipelago*; *River*; *River*; *Dazzled*; *Two Ravens* and the *Willow Wind*. His poems have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies including *The Paris Review* and *Mother Jones*. Sze is a recipient of the 1995 Lannan Literary Award for Poetry.

26 **Alison Dorfman & Beth Bosworth**

Alison Dorfman is a poet, prose writer and editor whose work has appeared in *Bombay Gin*, *Abolish* and *Multiball*. From 1993-94 Dorfman's small press, BIG PAW, published *Nocturnal Missions: A Dream Anthology of the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics*, *Juice*, and *9: A Day of Poems*. Beth Bosworth's first collection of stories, *A Burden of Earth*, was described as "the debut of a gifted writer—someone to watch," by E.L. Doctorow. Bosworth's work has appeared in journals including *Hanging Loose* and *Calyx*. [10:30 pm]

29 **Bobby Miller & Marianne Vitale**

Bobby Miller is the author of *Beneffric Blond*, *Mouth of Jane* and *Rigmarole*. His work can be heard on Epic/Sony's Home Alive and with DJ Dimitri on the Electra recording label. Marianne Vitale is currently serving egg-creams at a part time job and creating poetry which strives to blend words, icons and cultural detritus into hyper-linked language constructs.

31 **Eric Bogosian & Dael Orlandersmith**

Eric Bogosian is the author of two plays, *Talk Radio* and *subUrbia* as well as three Obie award winning solos, *Drinking in America*, *Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll* and *Pounding Nails in the Floor with My Forehead*. Bogosian has published a novella, *Notes from Underground* and is currently working on a play and touring his new solo show, *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee*. Dael Orlandersmith's one-person show, *Beauty's Daughter* received critical and popular acclaim and won a Bessie Award in 1995. Orlandersmith is currently working on a book of fiction, *Lone Dancer Underground* and a play, *Monster*.

The Poetry Project is located at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery • 131 East 10th St., New York, NY 10003

All events \$6, beginning at 8 pm unless otherwise noted. Programs subject to change. For information (212) 674-0910.

Writing Workshops at the Poetry Project

Poetry & Writing Workshop

Taught by David Henderson • Tuesdays at 7 PM

For beginners to veterans, preferably with manuscripts in mind. With an emphasis on new writing on a weekly basis and on previous work only as it relates to the overall concept of the formulation of a manuscript. Not just limited to poets. Prose writers, fiction, non-fiction writers, letter and journal writers and artists in other disciplines are welcome. The emphasis is on the poetry that exists in all writing, in all art, in all endeavor.

David Henderson is the author of the best selling biography of Jimi Hendrix entitled **Scuse Me While I Kiss The Sky**. His Books of poems include **De Mayor of Harlem** and **The Low East**.

Alchemical Marriage: The Possibilities of Poetry, Performance, and Collaboration

Taught by Wanda Phipps • Fridays at 7 PM

We will explore the interdependent and transformative qualities of collaborative poetry and performance. By using simple awareness and documentation of dailiness, writing becomes the process of recognizing the randomly falling turns of the universe as the only trustworthy syntax. This workshop will include in-class writing experiments, collaborations, journal keeping, guest artists and field trips. Musicians, dancers, singers, visual artists and poets interested in writing and collaborating are welcome.

Wanda Phipps is a writer/performer/translator/dramaturg. Her poems have appeared in over thirty journals, including *Transfer*, *Exquisite Corpse*, *Oblek*, and **The Unbearables Anthology**. She has received a NY Foundation for the Arts Poetry Fellowship. Wanda is a founding member and dramaturg of Yara Arts Group at LaMama.

Poetry Workshop

Taught by Maureen Owen • Saturdays at 12 PM

Each session will focus on one poet's works. The workshop will read poems aloud and participants will discuss the works. If the poet used a particular poetic form, we will look at that and other examples of the form. Then using our reading/discussion as inspiration, we will have a "free writing" period. The assignment for the week will incorporate material from the free writing and is to be written inspired by the poet we have studied that session or poetic form we have been discussing. Each week participants will read their own assignment poem and entertain comments.

Maureen Owen is the author of eight books of poetry including, **Zombie Notes**, **Amelia Earhart**, **Imaginary Income** and **Untapped Maps**. She edited Telephone Books and *Telephone* magazine through thirty titles of the press and nineteen issues of the magazine.

Workshops cost \$150 which includes membership in The Poetry Project. This fee is good for one year and includes: the option of taking other workshops at no additional cost; free admission to most Poetry Project readings and events; and a subscription to *The Poetry Project Newsletter*. Participants may register in person at the Project office or via mail (The Poetry Project, 131 East 10th St., NYC 10003).



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The Poetry Project's 1996 Symposium

May 2-5 at St. Mark's Church

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Currently in the planning stages, the 1996 Symposium will include readings, lectures, workshops, panels and informal meetings/discussions.

We're inviting proposals for informal meetings and discussions. These gatherings enrich the symposium by broadening the subject matter of the four-day event and providing more avenues of participation for poets. The Poetry Project will be working with other local venues to increase the number of available meeting spaces for the informal meetings/discussions and thereby offer more such groups than we've been able to in previous years.

During recent symposia, there were meetings of translators, magazine publishers and poet-activists. There were discussions about: Middle Eastern poetry; poetry and new electronic media; poetry and class; and teaching revolutionary poetry in the schools.

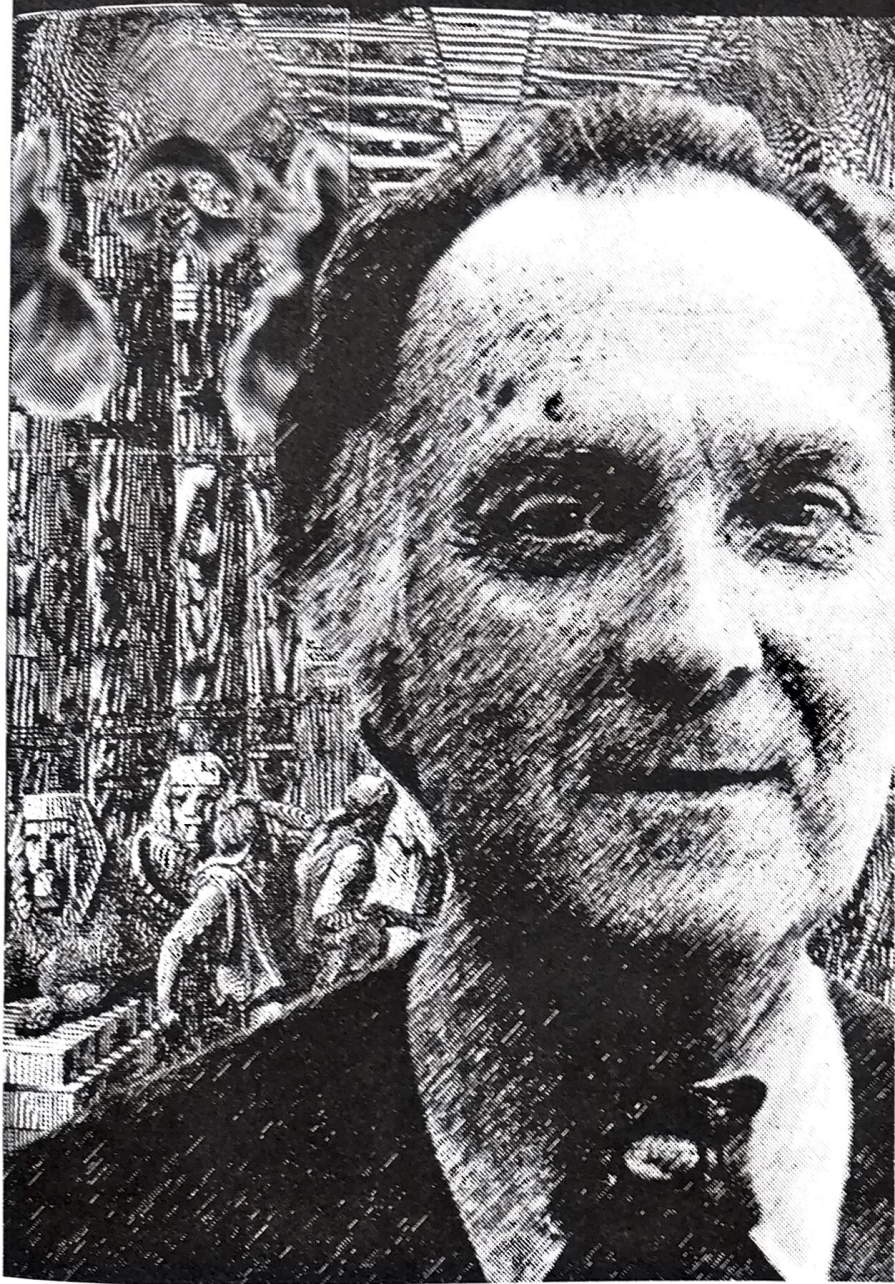
If there is a group you would like to convene or a topic you'd like to have discussed, please supply us with the following information:

- Title or focus
- Agenda
- The group(s) of writers you are hoping will participate.

Proposals should be received *by Jan. 15th*. Expect a response to your proposal by March 1st. If you are submitting material that you wish returned, please supply us with return postage.

The Poetry Project
ATT: 1996 Symposium
St. Mark's Church
131 East 10th St.
New York, NY 10003

reviews



A Selected Prose by Robert Duncan, Ed. Robert J. Bertholf, New Directions, 1995, 230 pages, \$24.95.

Robert Duncan was a poet who never came to a conclusion; once he got an idea he just kept going. In 1940, at the age of 21, he said in a notebook: "Why do I write, anyone write. I am trying to find something and this is my way of finding it, to write it all down and somewhere in it there will be discoveries, uncoverings..." Fifty-five years later with the publication of his **A Selected Prose** there is

little doubt that Duncan found out, discovered and uncovered many things. John Clarke once said that poets are "little way makers," and if that's true, then Robert Duncan was a major little way maker—something of a cross between Vergil and Beatrice. Like Dante, he embraced the use of language as a binding activity and he believed in communication as a collective and unifying force. For him, poetry was a grand event in language, full of potentialities and revelations. His essays are flooded with this sensitivity and, like his poems, are always more of a trip than a

task. **A Selected Prose** consists of three essays from *Fictive Certainties*, one chapter of *The H.D. Book*, several homages (introductions and afterwards) to the work of other writers, four statements on art, and three miscellaneous pieces—Duncan's early political essay "The Homosexual in Society," his statement of poetics ("Pages from a Notebook") from the Donald Allen Anthology, and "The Matter of the Bees" (a hypnagogic digression from *Caesar's Gate*).

While reflecting on the content of this new selection I couldn't help but think that **Fictive Certainties** (1985) is still Duncan's masterpiece collection of "discreet" prose. To a greater extent than **A Selected Prose**, **Fictive Certainties** provides a precise and sometimes orderly account of Duncan as a poet and as an individual. As a whole, it creates a coherent sense of the writer from his childhood reveries about parents who were "theosophical in their religion" to his adult ability to integrate all of the information around him into the creation of a household (which made him a domestic poet) and into the creation of a cosmology (which made him a visionary poet). But for the casual Duncan reader, all of his essays are incredibly informative when it comes to the working of the poems—because in addition to everything else that he liked to talk about, Robert Duncan took great pleasure in talking about himself. He never for a minute doubted his ability to explain his own work, and he never gave up an opportunity to do so.

"Towards an Open Universe," "Changing Perspectives in Reading Whitman," and "Ideas of the Meaning of Form," all from **Fictive Certainties**, appear in **A Selected Prose**. What's missing, and what's essential are two other essays—"The Truth and Life of Myth" (which Duncan calls "An Essay in Essential Autobiography") and "Man's Fulfillment in Order and Strife" (his musings on the existence of "new world orders" throughout history). Though I am curious as to how a chronological arrangement of the prose would have looked, I will not argue with the essay Robert Bertholf chooses to begin with, "Towards an Open Universe," which starts with the simple and elegant line "I was born January 7, 1919, in the hour before dawn, in the depth of winter at the end of a war."

When Robert Duncan spoke of his poetic lineage, he said he thought of himself as a conservative derivative poet. In the poem "Orders" (**Bending the Bow**, 1968), Duncan acknowledged his masters to be

Eliot, Williams, H.D. and Pound. Of them he would in other places acknowledge

Pound and H.D. as "parental" forces of a sort. But then there are the rest of Duncan's masters—Kantorowicz, Vaughn, Herbert, Whitehead, Joyce, Dante, Whitman, Rumi, Cassirer, Carlyle, Stein, Freud, Stevens, Lawrence, Sitwell, William James, Jung, Woolf, Perse, Plato, Blake and Boehme, to name a few. Robert Duncan had an admittedly Western orientation, but for what it was, it was spectacular. What I admire about Duncan is that he could talk about things like Albigensian gnosis, Stravinsky, and the Age of Reptiles in the same breath. It has often occurred to me that his own claim of "bookishness" is something of an understatement. Within the **Selected Prose** one finds several homages to the literary community. They are grouped in a descending generational order. First come Whitman, Pound, Marianne Moore, H.D. and Zukosfsky. They're followed by Duncan's peers Olson, Creeley, Levertov, and Spicer. Meter, measure, breath, form, vision—an entire mechanical universe of the contemporary poem comes to Duncan from and through his interactions with all of these writers.

The next part of the book consists of four essays on art—statements on the work of his long-time companion Jess Collins, on the works of Harry Jacobus, George Herms and Wallace Berman. The collection closes with two more recent essays—on Beverly Dahlen and Edmond Jabes. These later essays (particularly the one on Dahlen) show a side of Duncan that should not be overlooked. Duncan once complained to Robert Creeley about the Language School, "They have no story." Despite his flamboyant rivalry with certain Language writers, he was extremely generous to young poets on other fronts. At both the Naropa Institute and New College of California, he made himself available to students and thrived on the energy and enthusiasm they brought to him. His notebooks make it clear that he was intensely interested in the people who surrounded him—regardless of their status in a community, regardless of their publications, regardless of their age. Sometimes avidly and sometimes peripherally, he recognized, wrote about and included in his field of vision a group of writers ranging from Susan Howe to Tom Savage to Charles Bernstein to Norma Cole to John Taggart to Ted Berrigan.

The section of The H.D. Book included in this collection, "Rites of Participation," is Chapter Six of Volume One of that

book. I would have preferred to see Chapter Six of Volume Two of that book (unpublished to date). The H.D. Book is crucial to Duncan's work as a whole. Begun in 1960, Duncan spent 28 years composing various sections of the book which was, according to Jess Collins, to be a tribute not only to H.D. but also to other women who had been guiding forces in Duncan's life (such as theosophist Madame Blavatsky and his high school English teacher Edna Keough). The H.D. Book was never finished, partly because that's the way Duncan worked—in a never-endingness of information, expanding out. As he noted early in the project (1964), the book *may be like an old city...having most in mind to convey the life in the city, I continue to build and to take over wherever I see a new possibility*. Regardless, most of The H.D. Book does exist in various forms, in the two volumes which were published in bits and pieces in small magazines. Duncan's revisions of these volumes, as well as handwritten notes (which possibly make up a third volume) have yet to be published as a collection. While it's not hard to find a well-circulated bootleg copy of the first two volumes in the hands of various poets throughout the community, Duncan readers have been waiting for an authoritative publication for a long time.

This all may seem slightly off the track of the **Selected Prose**, but there are questions to be asked about the publication. The work presented in this volume is useful and beautiful, though all of it is available in other publications. Robert Bertholf is not simply the executor of Robert Duncan's estate, he is also a Duncan scholar and is more familiar with what exists of Duncan's writing than almost anyone else. The question then is, why another collection of Duncan's work that has all been published elsewhere? When I was an undergraduate student at the University of Buffalo, I worked at the Poetry/Rare Books Collection and took part in the initial stages of the project to publish eleven books of Robert Duncan's work which were distributed between two contracts with major academic presses. At that point, some months after Duncan's death, during the summer of 1988, it was the understanding of all involved that the project would be completed within three years. Several students, including myself, were recruited to organize the collection, transcribe tapes, and do research on existing Duncan texts. It's 1995 and I'm still waiting for those materials to be released—from the unpublished poems and plays, to the letters, to the interviews

and lectures.

Thus my disappointment with **A Selected Prose** which seemed like an opportunity to again unleash Robert Duncan on the world. I would like to know what Duncan had to say about Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, about Madeline Gleason's work, about John Wieners and Frank O'Hara and Czeslaw Milosz, about the composition of *The Opening of the Field*, not to mention (as Bertholf does in his introduction) essays about Joyce and Olson. I would even like to see at least an excerpt of Duncan's "juvenile" novel tentatively titled *The Shaman or Toward the Shaman* which is part of the manuscript collection at the University of California at Berkeley.

What Robert Duncan meticulously left for his readers exists in nearly one hundred notebooks. A fraction of that work was published in his lifetime. It's hard to tell if this has been an oversight on Robert Bertholf's part, if it's an act of carelessness, or if Robert Duncan's writings are being actively suppressed. Duncan spent his life raging against what he saw as the injustices of the commodification of art. While in the midst of composing an early section of The H.D. Book, he even dreamt about it—*A manufacturer had commissioned me to do a rug...going to the factory to see the reproduction of my work I found [that] they had "missed", thruout; maybe they had evaded...they had taken some aspect of my total design as if it were only a texture*. One can only hope that such an event will remain a part of Robert Duncan's overactive imagination.

— Lisa Jarnot

You Don't Miss Your Water by Cornelius Eady, Henry Holt and Company (New York, 1995); 33 pages, \$12.00.

Henry Holt and Company is laudably widening poetry's reach by currently publishing titles including the *Aloud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe* anthology, *The Collect Call of the Wild*, by Bob Holman, and **You Don't Miss Your Water**, by Cornelius Eady. Not the sentimental journey one might expect, Eady's book of 21 short poems fearlessly explores the sadness, frustration, anger, and relief he feels as his father lies dying, and mixes it with much beauty, some social commentary, and chilly realities of an estranged family as it faces the death of a difficult and dominating figurehead. All but one of these little jewels are prose poems—though when I heard them read this summer, I didn't think so—allowing us and



Cornelius Eady

the author, he says, to step more easily into this maddening, complicated situation. The form also encourages Eady's clear, soft-around-the-edges-but-sharp-as-steel voice to spin its story.

This small book is to be as closely held as its poems' understated, sometimes unsettling, straightforward strength allows. Although I was distracted at first by the book's title and the soft, warm drawing on the cover—both of which seem to be a tease (or a swipe) concerning urinary problems—make no mistake: these are serious, searching, and powerful poems, exploring uncomfortable truths about mis-communication—as well as communication that is missed—between son and father, (unwed) husband and wife, mother and son. The title of the book and the poem titles within are, in fact, song titles. When I met with Eady recently, he mentioned that since his parents didn't even have Langston Hughes as a model, their poetry was mainly found in popular songs—and so he used some of those songs to frame the poems. The clever melodic underscoring works, whether you know the tune or not.

And at last, I get the phone call.

Cardio-vascular collapse, the police voice is telling me, but later my cousin tells me he arrives on the ward before they shut my father's eyes and mouth to see the joy still resting on his face from the moment my daddy finally split his misery open.

(from *Travelin' Shoes*)

The above is not the book's final poem. **You Don't Miss Your Water** is presented not as a predictable, chronological

account, but the way the mind works: jumping back and forth in time, flicking a memory here, making a connection there. This gives a feeling of floating or of skimming the surface, but then a lightening bolt of a last line sizzles in, and we're grounded again, when he is confronting a bored social worker, he says: *She thinks she's the facts of life, a wall with no apparent handholds, the river referred to in the old spirituals: deep, wide, fraught with many sorrows, and her eyes dare me to become a nigger and kick over the table. Did Daddy ever take you out dancing? I ask my mother...Did the brothers sing my mother's favorite song, "Paper Moon"?* (from *It's Only A Paper Moon*)

That first line marks the first time Eady refers to his father as "Daddy", a warmth he allows in only after he's half-way through the book. There are many questions in these poems, most of which are left answered. Partly for that reason, these deceptively simple poems cast long shadows into and through many shades of grief, sharing—often with disarming honesty—some of the complexities of life's uncompromising reality: death. They are also a study of the intricate details and vagaries of a family keeping its distance from itself, like when Eady's father would mourn his son's lighter-colored baby skin:

You used to look read good, my father, a man of slightly lighter hue, would say to me, his son, his changeling. Maybe you ought to wash more.

(from *A Little Bit of Soap*)

There is no room here, as there wasn't in the book, to really confront the fallacy of "common law" and the cruelty of "spending down". But the message is clear: "Don't let this happen to you!" **You Don't Miss Your Water** is perfect for anyone who has felt, or is facing, the pain of losing a loved one. *Have you ever touched your father's back?* Eady asks in the first line of the book's first poem, *I Know (I'm Losing You)*. He's also asking each of us—whether our parents are dead or living, our families close or alienated—to take a moment, take stock, and get real.

—Carolyn Peyser

Selected Poems, by Barbara Guest, Sun & Moon Press (Los Angeles, 1994); 197 pages, \$22.95.

Long identified as a New York School poet, Barbara Guest in fact grew up in California, graduated from the University

in Berkeley and now in her eighth decade has come back to that East Bay town to make her home.

Guest's affinities with not only the poets but the atmospherics of the Atlantic seaboard—and for that matter too of the Mediterranean, where she's sometimes lived and written—have masked the second consciousness in her work, a California feeling for freedom, space and movement. An early piece from the late 1960s in this new book, *A Handbook of Surfing*—a breathless, rushing, oceanic invocation that deploys the landscape and ancient myths of Greece against the clashing post-Homeric confusion of the Vietnam War—takes its primal metaphor from the induplicable experience of a California girl who spent her adolescent years around big waves, waxed boards and six-packs.

From the first sprightly, excitable lyrics produced under the influence of New York/Long Island art-poet colleagues Frank O'Hara and James Schuyler, represented here in still-stirring samples from 1960s collections, *The Location of Things*, *Archaics*, *The Open Skies*, *The Blue Stairs*—titles that forecast with uncanny accuracy their author's enduring concerns with objects, antiquity, absence, and ethereal spaces—Guest's poems have swum with the tide of a buoyant modernity. But if the early work invites legitimate comparisons with that of her New York poet friends, in the later work, overtaken and borne down by a psychic undertow of symbol and myth, Guest moves off into a new, darker "haunted distance" to find her personal song.

A perfect illustration is *A Glass Mountain*, her elegiac lament for James Schuyler: a splintered, fairy-tale-like poetic fable about a magic king who controls destiny but finds in that prophetic role the "endlessly scattering" dispersion of self that is also a poet's fate.

One might speculate about the causes of this deepening in Guest's later work, its increasing descent into a "mythic quarry" where echoes of the collective unconscious bubble up. The turning point poems of the 1980s that form the heart of **The Selected Poems** reflect a remarkable development in her art, perhaps affected by life-facts of aging, personal loss, and long years of labor on a biography of the poet H.D. Ironically or not, Guest's H.D. work—in part an arduous revisit of the sources of a woman poet's habitation of the archaic—may have released the biographer into poetic depths even her subject never reached.

An *Emphasis On Reality*, from her magisterial 1989 collection, **Fair Realism**, is one of the finest as well as one of the most characteristic of Guest's poems. This piece, as the poet recently suggested to an interviewer, operates "on several levels and moves back and forth ... between levels as reality does."

*I was envious of fair realism
auto*

*I desired sunrise to revise itself
as apparition, majestic in evocativeness,
two fountains traced nearby on a lawn ...*

*The necessary idealizing of you reality
is part of the search, the journey*

where two figures embrace

*This house was drawn for them
it looks like a real house
perhaps they will move in today*

*into ephemeral dusk and
move out of that into night
selective night with trees,*

The darkened copies of all trees.

Here, the marvelous sensitivity and suggestiveness of Guest's manipulation of interchanging levels of sensation and state of mind permit the slight-shiver-of-surprise ending to create a curious affective mix, a subtle pull of soul-sadness tugging

against and weighing down the poem's dreamy, floating rhythm, its feeling of daylight plain-air spaces.

Barbara Guest's is an art of limpid evocation and darkening implication, a crystalline music of spaces and silences that seems to be carved or spun from some interior feel for tonality, an inside-sense of life's descending passage through time. Her poems are full of shadows, screens, veils, apparitions; unexpected joinings lead to surprising dislocations; bringing things together, breaking them apart, this consummate poet's craft mimes that tenuous, evanescent sense of shimmer or mirage life's splintered transparencies present us with in its mysterious passing.

—Tom Clark

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The Great Indoors by Terence Winch, Story Line Press, 1995; 108 pages, \$11.95

Terence Winch's new book of poems, **The Great Indoors**, is a collection of alternately witty, mysterious, tender and harrowing narratives about opaque negotiations between lovers; unsettling exchanges between boss and worker bee; and truces between workaday reality, fin de siecle Washington, D.C., and the poet's desire for some sort of transcendence.

Winch specializes in a flat diction that imparts a reportorial, measured reasonableness to even the most brutal accounts. He calmly sets things out, moves in for the kill and leaves you gasping. Example: *A Few Words About Myself*, a portrait of an industrialist/mover-and-shaker:

*It was twenty-five to eleven./ I put my hat
on./ The boys didn't recognize me./ I'm a
real aristocrat./ I went out to dinner./ pot
roast and baked potato./ I saw my wife and
asked her for a divorce./ . . . On Friday I got
a haircut./ I picked up a case of beer/ on the
way home./ I met this punk I hate/ on the
street and I kicked his fucking teeth in./ . . .
The clerks rearranged my new/ furniture. I
saw my dealer/ and settled our affairs./ . . . I
could still hear this/ voice saying to me /
kiss me goodbye kiss me/ goodbye.*

As with most ostentatiously hard-bitten types, there's tenderness lurking not too far below the surface. Midway through the poem *Naked Walls*, Winch apologizes for his sometimes mordant take on things: *People are always telling me/that they were scared of me when they first met me/ Last*

thing I want to do is spread fear...., then offers lovely lines on Ted Berrigan:

I worry about everyone I love/ but you were one of those people I didn't worry about/ I just figured you'd always be there/ like Niagra Falls a natural resource . . . But at least you died on the Fourth of July:/ brilliant, ridiculous, American

The Great Indoors' smooth, beautifully maintained surface is more often than not a thinly applied, slowly cracking varnish, a cosmetic gloss over roiling realities:

We glide over bridges past lovely parks./ How we would like to have a dog,/ and to be young again, and high on drugs, and out of work/ with no memory of buses burning in rush hour,/ the office door smashing into the file cabinet,/ our colleagues weeping in the corridor.

The steady stream of meticulously controlled misinformation places the reader in a pressurized locale. Winch's acute power of observation, combined with his vacillations between passion/dispassion and faith/cynicism paint a warts-and-all portrait of how human beings struggle to face the day, battle with each other, and steal small pieces of transcendence from mundane routines.

The Great Indoors is a sneaky book. In many instances, the poems are misleadingly easy to read, but they come back to haunt you—somehow reconstituted and more compelling. Winch's feat is one I've wanted to share. I first read these poems on the morning train to work. By lunchtime, I was sharing them with co-workers. By 8 p.m., I was reciting portions into the answering machines of friends in Philadelphia and Los Angeles. After I hung up, I started to worry. Were these poems a bit too intense to leave on tape, when the recipients were only expecting a quick recitation of name, date/time of call and a brief message?

—Peter Bushyeager

Strick: Song of the Andomboulou 16-25

by Nathaniel Mackey with Royal Hartigan and Hafez Modirzade, Spoken Engine Co. (Memphis, 1995). CD: \$17.95.

The late Ted Berrigan always advised young poets to make a point of going to the readings of poets that were important to them. *Once you hear a poet read from their works, he noted, you'll have their voice in your head when you later read them.*

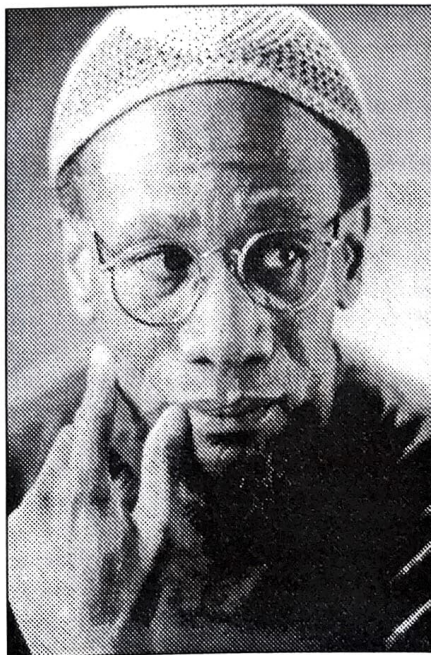
With the resurgence of poetry readings and poetry-in-recording there is again a focus on poetry in performance. This vogue for recorded poetry has something

to do with the CD format being an ideal medium for documenting poetry. CD's allow up to 80 minutes of recorded time and the format allows for selections to be programmed — making it ideal for classroom use.

Nathaniel Mackey's **Strick** is one of the finest poetry CD's I've ever heard. In following the lead of producers Harvey Kubernick and James Austin who approach recording poetry in much the manner they would a rock band, this recording is intended as a performance of poetry, rather than a documentation. For years, Caedmon Records, with their thin recordings of mostly tweedy, academic drips, established poetry-in-recording as a kind of austere sonic jury duty.

Conversely, Mackey's record is a delight and serves as a wonderful introduction to a major figure in American poetry. **Strick, Song of the Andomboulou 16-25** is the latest installment in an ongoing series that has appeared in his two major collections, **Eroding Witness** and **School of Udhra**. These poems have their origins in the music and mythology of the Dogon people of West Africa. The Andomboulou are mythological beings in the Dogon cosmology and are, as Mackey notes, *The spirits of an earlier, flawed or failed form of human being — what, given the Dogon emphasis on signs, traces, drawings, 'graphicity'; I tend to think of a rough draft of a human being...[T]he Andomboulou are in fact us; we're the rough draft.*

Props must be given to Mackey's



Nathaniel Mackey

accompanists; percussionist Royal Hartigan and saxophonist Hafez Modirzadeh. Members of the innovative

Fred Ho's Afro-Asian Music Ensemble, they underscore and spotlight Mackey's gumbo of world resources with music that suggests everything from a muezzin's cry from a minaret to Chinese opera music.

Unlike the often slapdash nature of too many jazz and poetry encounters, the participants in **Strick** obviously worked out these arrangements with care, grace and intelligence.

The delight I had with this recording, also brought up the realization of the hazard of documenting poetry recordings. There has been little recorded documentation of Frank O'Hara, John Ashbery, Robert Duncan and Clark Coolidge — to name a few — available in commercial distribution. And there is a real need to have new versions of 70's **Giorno Poetry System's** recorded anthologies that makes available the voices of our contemporaries. We need to hear the music in the poetry of our time. As Mackey has noted: *Poetic language is language owning up to being an orphan, to its tenuous relationship with the thing it ostensibly refers to. This is why in Kaluli myth (of Papua New Guinea) the origin of music is also the origin of poetic language.*

—Joel Lewis

What A Strange Way of Being Dead by Jack Collom, Rodent Press (Boulder, 1995), Three pamphlets, \$10.00.

This collection from Jack Collom entitled **What A Strange Way of Being Dead** comes in with a handsome letterpress broadside printed by Kenji Yuda. The package contains three chapbooks dictated by dead persons both channeled and alive in a holding pattern orbiting the earth. Though the books have an order, I accidentally read them in the wrong sequence and they still worked! Even read backwards one can tell that the writer is having a ball satirizing megalomaniacs and celebrating the blues. These books are crackling with wit, energy and merciless punning.

The first in this trilogy is *Jay Gould (Alive Again) Buys Up Biology*. Here we have the master of ceremonies Jay Gould, a 19th century robber baron addressing us on the subject of biology. Gould tells us that *predation is life*, and that he is only being true to his nature when he plunders the nest. He's espouses a sort of bell curve theory of nature, along with some social Darwinism thrown in. He sees in nature a reflection of his own values right down to the tiny goldfinch *...as he 'cracks the skulls' of endless infant flowers.*

The second book in this canon *My Birds!* was dictated by a certain noted statesman who didn't shoot himself in 1945 instead. No suicide victim, he was dropped by eagles onto a block of ice in the Antarctica where all this time he has been left to observe the habits of birds. Like Gould, he has been studying biology and finding his own agenda, inspired by nature. He focuses on the titmouse who's been stealing milk because, if a titmouse will go so low as to steal milk who knows it may *commandeer a rocketship from NASA & evacuate to another planet!* *Perhaps interfere with television!*

Like Gould he sees *Tyrannosaurus Rex* inside the eyes of "a snow white dove. Both disembodied narrators are emerging from purgatory; awakened in the right conditions and the need for human contact.

See *See Rider* is a delightful blues poem. With narrator Gertrude Melissa Nix Pridgett warning *I've got all kinds of voices in me.* She brings us the songs of Ma Rainey among others, *...here we are on a string/but if it swings on through it don't mean a thing/If we accelerate & eat ourselves right off the (map)/that means-/no dirt/ no breath-/a permanent nap.*

What A Strange Way Of Being Dead is a fine trilogy of satire, parody and the blues. It's good news for all Jack Collom fans.

It can be ordered from Rodent Press for \$10. at phone #303-440-8125.

—Brenda Coultas

Avenue of Escape by Lewis Warsh. Long News Books (New York, 1995), 95 pages, \$8.00.

If one wanted to boil a poet's work down to a single aesthetic, Lewis Warsh's may very well be intimacy, in all its condition and circumstance. In this way, **Avenue of Escape** takes many risks and succeeds by them. Autobiography, reminiscence and self-reflection enter the text by way of a letter from a former lover, combined with seemingly the dullest of the dull, flattened statements, and one thinks of abstraction in its literal meaning: removed from. It is in this equation that the declarative sentence seems to have been reinvented (see *Overture*, or *Open All Night*). Not only is Warsh going inward for "material," but he's also making use of found texts, juxtaposing all of these fragments with each other. A generalized mania for the latter has made for so much surface resemblance and gratuitous abstraction in the last twenty-five years of

American poetry. These methods still serve as so much cannon fodder for poetry fashions and poetry wars. But in Warsh's poems there is a true dialectic instead of endless opposition.

Five poems, of which the book's title is one, are especially fascinating. Deceptively autonomous lines of various lengths compound feeling and thought from several directions. You can almost see Warsh editing out loud. Their openness creates a vulnerability in the work such that a friend recently wondered if the poems "weren't doing much besides cataloging duty," but to my sense, this is what makes the poems walk their particular high wire. Each poem is one surface composed around multiple centers. They also contain some of the best dead-pan humor; *I know all the words of 'I've Got A Lovely Bunch of Coconuts' but no one ever asks me to sing it.* (Elective Surgery)

The numbered sequence of *Different Trains* shows Warsh at the center of two or more worlds at a time, to which the first stanza of section 13 declares;

All my words add up to a single thought, don't you know? But sometimes not thinking in words I lose sight of the meanings.

The great strength of this work is the way Lewis modulates the flat and declarative with the romantic and even sentimental, while the lines that deliver them never lose momentum:

The restaurant turned me away because I wasn't wearing a jacket and tie.

It wasn't as if I could tell what she was thinking, or wanted to, but it was like the sun had vanished behind a cloud, all the light faded from her eyes, & I didn't have to ask "What are you thinking" or "What's wrong?"; I could tell what was on her mind by the way she crossed her legs and tilted her head. (Avenue of Escape)

Several works in *Avenue of Escape* are related to Warsh's previous books (see Allegra's letters in *The Maharajah's Son*, and the circumstances of the characters in his two published novels; *Agnes and Sally & A Free Man*). Thinking of Rimbaud's "I is another," it's interesting to observe Warsh projected into by what he puts in his poems, then adding to that equation by refusing to completely relinquish his real-time presence as narrator. For Lewis Warsh, writing poetry isn't exclusive -- he wants it all. One of the questions this book raises is what does poetry do for us.

I believe many answers to that question are here.

—Eric Malone



Love Makes Thinking Dark by Barbara Henning, United Artists Books, 1995; 85 pages, \$7.00.

The subjectivist model of expression on the which the humanist institution of "literature" depends has to decide whether or not to accept Barbara Henning. **Love Makes Thinking Dark**, Ms. Henning's latest book, contains a strong subject which would otherwise never seek its own demise in favor of language; but alas, it's attention to language, to the very deadness of language that calls attention to itself and why it is speaking to us as an apostrophe, constantly turning to address some hidden audience whose gendered knowledge knows no bias but love, although this love is also sex, naturally

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exclusive of what it doesn't want, which is why its so hard to write about it effectively.

Thought comes after the cumbersome papyrus leaves are flattened and glued together, fragile, holding back the Nile. I stand on the stairs. To love is to accept defeat. He hypnotizes me anyhow. You are so nasty. A tyrant storming through my rooms. Everywhere we go, the talk is of other lovers, mother's untimely death, father's authoritarian structure. In a rocking chair, entombed in a blanket, laughter. Don't take the world too seriously, the poet of love writes the story much differently.

[from, "An Idea of Love"]

It is in the kinetic prose poems of **Love Makes Thinking Dark**, (some more narrative than others, recalling an earlier Henning book, **Smoking in the Twilight Bar** (United Artists), that a pleasure of the text emerges always within earshot of an almost gothic posturing and drama, as in *Resume* the book's most personal piece: *Held over father's legs — he cries and I await the spanking on my bare buttocks.* Often in Henning's work, catharsis and interiority are created—*Help, I'm born, I'm dying.*—only to be escaped with a statement, *You will be alright, he says. A statement of happening a well-proportioned sentence stillness breathing like someone surfacing after too long under water, testing the limits of self-expression by inferring a tautology of the statement.* The sheer repetition of this movement in the text, along with a recurrence of martial imagery (*Slowly shoot off a small piece of my body. After the heart, gun to temple Heavy on my sword My heart a rifle Might as well carry a gun*) suggests a radical aesthetic of self-cancellation, dark thinking, if you will.

So effective for its tough confessions and consciousness, Henning's is a late art that has the pride of both presupposing a century of writing in its objective approach to highly subjective material, and of the idea that confession can be a means of concealment, that confessional "truth" is often the most abstract requisition, a seduction of the senses for the self. The prose works are so strong in this sense, they often work to over-shadow the sonnets and couplets that make up the rest of the book. One longs for a collection, a novel-length or Augustinian working, even, of Henning's prose.

— Robert V. Hale

Something To Hold Onto by Dennis Moritz, United Artists Books, 1995; 126 pp., \$8 paper

George C. Wolfe's heartening production of *The Tempest* underscores an unfortunate fact of life: Late 20th-century theater suffers from Sitcom Syndrome. Flat dialogue nudges plots from Point A to B as carefully positioned one-liners satisfy the need for reassuring titters that began with *I Love Lucy*. The end result: an expensive evening of television in a red-velvet chair, without channel-surfing or nachos.

For twenty years, Dennis Moritz has created theater that flies in the face of sound-bites. A practitioner of what some call "poet's theater" and others term "theater pieces," he believes in the dark subconscious, juicy language, characters that become three-dimensional through sheer force of poetry, and a highly stylized, almost ceremonial approach similar to older theatrical forms such as miracle plays.

Something to Hold Onto brings to print nine of Moritz's pieces dating from 1976 to 1993. Seeing them on the page, one is struck by their shapeliness, orderly logic and astute observation. This may come as a surprise for those who have seen productions of his work in venues such as the Joseph Papp Public Theater, St. Marks Poetry Project or Nuyorican Poet's Cafe. Depending on actors and director, Moritz's pieces can strike audiences — particularly those new to his work — as rampant carnivals that leave audiences with ephemeral overtones of meaning, like unexpected humidity after a violent storm.

Thanks to the cool format of the page, **Something to Hold Onto** brings Moritz's meanings into sharp focus and showcases his literary qualities. You can read his plays as poems, if you like. And for those who have never seen a Moritz production, the book contains a number of interesting on-stage photos that document the "playability" of his oeuvre.

Male/female conflict is a major Moritz theme. Moritz loves to choreograph elaborate mating dances for an audience's delectation and put a bemused spotlight on self-destructive impulses, post-coital retreats and accusations. Often, Moritz's women roar with assertiveness while maintaining an edgy coquettishness. And his narcissistic male characters can be amusingly neurotic:

you know I can't get over it how wiped out and sick i feel after the coffee. pitter patter, flutter, flutter, my heart, a stroke nearly . . .

i prefer distilled water i can make myself in a large stainless steel machine that costs \$500 to \$1000 . . . i recommend distilled water enriched with the good minerals taken out, no i am not a believer in chlorine or the care and accuracy of public works . . . i have seen photographs of the people who manage the water and it does not ease my mind . . .
from "Adelaide in the Pilot House Talks About Love"

There's a lot of room in Moritz's theater for politics -- in both the specific and general senses. The particular politics of the gluttonous '80s infuse the monologue "Uncle" with a controlled intensity that always threatens to spill over. Victimized by the Reagan/Bush era, the Uncle character survives on the fringes, a surrealistically voracious "man who eats different odds and ends, leftovers, the cast-off bits and pieces of the social stew, a recycling machine . . .". As he pushes a shopping cart through the quintessential American supermarket, he questions the wares:

is this lamb chop fresh. do you see a green tint. is the meat still good on the date of sale . . . have you ever bought a best-selling book from this market. the one I bought sounded dictated. it did not sound like the written word. i prefer the music in the store a mile away, the music here is soft and not compelling. for that reason, i often shop here to keep my wits clean.

Frantically frying and eating anything he can grab — *polyester lint. vibrating jells. smashed-up urethane.* — Uncle reels off a series of increasingly angry and bad jokes:

why did the corporate lawyer with a hard-on go to the off-broadway theater? he wanted to bum out near the bowery and jerk-off in the audience like everyone else. why did the homeless man take off his clothes in the park and fuck a duck? it was the Bush years, honey. he knew nobody'd pay attention to him, no how!"

Quick, Fast and in a Hurry, which premiered at the Papp Theater in 1992, features a nasty imp called Sooky who serves as mediator of the subconscious for two would-be lovers. Much of Sooky's dialogue describes the pleasure Moritz obviously gains from his cut-to-the-chase takes on politics and human nature:

they hide their things, their real things. then they tell the whole thing out . . . lucky for them i look at it. their little fucking. those

little moves . . . they want witness. i am witness. suddenly it's all out. everything they want to say spills out.

In an article published in 1950, British playwright Christopher Fry advocated for this very brand of theater. After deriding the 20th century penchant for theater that's *subdued to a limited game of hit-or-miss stage dialogue in its pursuit of the surface reality*, he asked playwrights to *remember that we were born stark naked into a pandemonium of most unnatural phenomena, then we know how out of place, how lost, how amazed, how miraculous we are.*

Forty-five years later, most theater still opts for a tame, domesticated approach. But Dennis Moritz aims for the unnatural phenomena, for the lost place that leads to miracles. Because, as Fry concluded, *this reality is the province of poetry.*

—Peter Bushyeager

Two Poems by Kim Rosenfield, *Leave books* (Providence, 1995); 12 pages.

Poetry is not thought dressed up; poetry is the embodiment of thought. —Emerson

without phosphorus, there is no thought — Kim Rosenfield

Kim Rosenfield's chapbook takes on science by both assuming its vestments and challenging usual notions about it. This verse talks the talk and walks the walk, but does so on its own unsettling, often hilarious terms.

While the two subtitles, *Cool Clean Chemistry* and *Rx*, suggest an objective and germ-free environment, nothing could be further from the superstitious and delightfully foul domain of these poems. This work is chock-a-block with plague, contagion, elixirs, terrifying procedures, venom, spittle, vomit, autopsies, hatching octopi, skinned puppies, leeches, crude instruments, pimples, boils, pole-cats, incantations, vermin, snake medicine, and meals made of virgin cow uteri. Clearly, this is old-time science: one that sticks to things and stays close to the body and its (mal)functions. One imagines the author in a labcoat, perusing forgotten treatises for just the right line/specimen to be put on display in the poem/glasscase of her book/house of wonders/freakshow. Look at the amazing sword swallower! Look at the absurdities science used to believe and do! Here, of

course, the implication is that, if there's little that's clean and medicinal about the things and procedures of early science, the same may be true of its later version. Still a lot of hoo-doo and mayhem.

It turns out that one thing that's cool about this chemistry is its tone; a large dosage of irony is injected into the re-presentation of these 'found' materials. One thinks of how over-the-top gore in **Warhol's Frankenstein** has a festive effect; the audience howls (and groans) with laughter. Or the cool it takes to tell a real whopper. The straighter the better.

This revelry in the visceral is more than an expression of personal taste; it is part of this poet's overall response to a culture's dominant mode. If science disembodies thought so that thought can classify and rule the world of bodies, so that natural laws be obeyed and things step to, what happens when poetry re-embodies thought and thought becomes a thing again? In *The Sand Reckoner*, the line *Universe as Mathematical and Boundless* a few lines later devolves into *corpses breed worms/ dirt breeds vermin/sour wine breeds vinegar eels*. While these images are harsh, there is an exuberant, P.T. Barnum kind of come-one-come-all democratic spirit at play. Since thoughts are things, things and thoughts can rub elbows again. What a joy! All parts of the poem are equal. No recipes, only ingredients. It's not surprising that the abolition of the thought police results in a poetry of lists, one advantage of which is that items which seem dissimilar, which taxonomy would separate, now veer into each other, find common ground. *Wandering scholars/ lapidaries and herbals* and later on in the same poem *Mysterium Cosmographicum/Artichoke, coffee, lilac, musk*. The celestial and arcane nudge up against food, stones, odors. The book's last poem, *Magic Blasts*, ends with the line *three adverbial pills, quick, far, and late*. The comma instead of colon after "pills" removes hierarchy, gives equal footing to thing and thought. Here, words are not *like* pills, they *are* pills, and the poem, embodied, has performed its magic.

Rosenfield makes clear that this alchemy is political necessity as well as aesthetic thrill. If science places man as thinker outside and above the world of things, then his job is to name and control, a job that necessitates violence. *Animicula* begins *Man was born to conquer/ Man can hit back*. These two bald lines are programmatic rather than poetic, an operationalism whose whole aim is to persuade and rule. It's no coincidence that, while the rest of the poem, its body, is spent

defending/struggling with this premise, its head, the disembodied couplet, remains separated from the fray in a helmet.

"Defend head with hair, and eyes, forehead, tongue, teeth, and nostrils, neck and backside, veins, thighs, intestinal fat, and two hands to my cranium with hairs on top, a helmet of safety to my head."

One thinks of the relation of queen bee to drone, or officer on distant hill to footsoldier in trench. Order, the separation of thought and thing, ensures struggle not peace.

Similarly, *Cephalic Index*, a poem derived from a system that classifies according to head-types, evolves into an argument about real-estate. People with these heads live here; people with those live there. In addition to poking fun at taxonomic absurdity, Rosenfield's reductionistic method, in light of recent history, is making a real point about language. It's this kind of disembodied thinking that gives way to racist politics.

And it's this kind of book that's needed. Abundantly entertaining in its selection of materials and in its willingness to displease, these poems have focus and reach without being over-determined and noisy. They show us what poetry's up against and how strong choices in one's mode of writing can be apt and sustaining as well as cool.

—Joe Elliot

The Granite Butterfly by Parker Tyler, National Poetry Foundation (Orono, 1995); 142 pages, \$25.00.

One of the tragedies of canon-formation is that some marvelous and important works will always be left out. When the modernist canon was being selected, the obvious choices seemed to be Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, ee cummings, H.D., Wallace Stevens, T.S. Eliot and Robert Frost. This was all fine and good, but some of the most exciting poetry of that time was being written by Mina Loy, Abraham-Lincoln Gillespie, Bob Brown, Gertrude Stein, Else von Freytag-Loringhoven, Harry Crosby, Langston Hughes, Eugene Jolas and Parker Tyler. Most of the works of these poets are completely out of print (excluding Gertrude Stein and Langston Hughes, who are finally getting the recognition they always deserved).

Parker Tyler is a special case, since his writings on film are well-known to film critics, but his poetry is practically forgotten. For whatever reason, this is the fate that befell all of the American surrealist poets. It seems that the publishers of

poetry are content to deliver only continental surrealism, with a dash of Latin American or Caribbean surrealism thrown in to season the pot. Too bad, since a great many Americans worked in that vein between the wars (such as Charles Henri Ford), and not a few afterwards (Phillip Lamantia comes to mind).

In 1945, Bern Porter published a revolutionary long poem by Parker Tyler, entitled, *The Granite Butterfly*. The American poetry scene was just getting immersed in the new criticism, which had no tolerance for experimental writing, and so Tyler had to resort to reviewing his own book under several pseudonyms. Finally, Williams got around to reviewing it in *Accent* 6. The years have not been kind to this book. Until now. The National Poetry Foundation in Orono, Maine, have published a lavish edition of the poem in facsimile form. Prefaced by Bern Porter himself, with a scholarly introduction by Charles Boultenhouse, the actual text of the poem is printed on lavender paper in the center of the edition. And what a text it is. The poem is divided into nine cantos, beginning with *The Birth of Art*, in which *Now the verse is a wave, / Space the beach / On which I lay my tongue* gets said. The third canto is a play titled *Boredom*. The actors are He and She. Metaphysics becomes literary criticism when the third act is taken over by a character named Poet. The Poet delivers a two page essay, and at the end, the word Oedipus appears on the forehead of a grocery deliverer. The succeeding cantos explore racism, lust, murder and narcissism. Tyler is implicated negatively by his own narcissistic impulses, his own racism and his own rape fantasies. There is a reference to the start of the revolution in Russia, but it reads like a dream transcription embedded in the text. It's a strange poem, loaded with the ambiguities and mystical references common to the French surrealists of the day. Only the language is particularly American, and the concerns are distinctly those of Tylers' generation in the U.S.. There is a beautiful catalog section in the seventh canto;

Slow as the first long look of love
Slow as the last look
Slow as the music of a sigh
Slow as the moment after goodbye
Slow as the meaning of a dream
Slow, slow as the dream is quick
Slow as the puzzled gaze of the sick
Slow as the opposite of vertigo

After the poem, NPF provides a small section of photos. Included are two collages (one by Joseph Cornell), some man-

uscript pages and an amazing portrait of Tyler by Carl Van Vechten. The photos are followed by essays on the poem by Tyler (as himself, and as Everett McManus and M. Roy Mason), reviews of the book (by Marius Bewley, William Carlos Williams, Deane Mowrer, E.S. Forgotson, Waldemar Hansen and H.R. Hays), and Tylers' correspondence about the poem with Bewley, Kenneth Burke, Williams (including a letter from Williams to Pound), and Robert Duncan (who didn't like the poem very much). The book closes with a musical setting by Ned Rorem. This is truly a critical edition of a long lost modernist poem, and it is presented in the best possible format. The silver cover is adorned with a photo portrait of the author as a playing card by Maya Deren. If you see it in your local bookstore, pick it up. It's worth the price.

—ed.

Sphericity by Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge, Kelsey St. Press (Berkeley, 1994); \$14.

Sphericity is the second collaboration between Berssenbrugge and artist Richard Tuttle.

In Berssenbrugge's writing, change can sweep across the whole structure, is even retroactive.

In **Sphericity**, when a point is silent, it's not a vantage point. Really there's no vantage point, and the instant of apprehension is solely. The event horizon is so loaded, the horizon's everywhere: *the seam, my experience of your experience, a horizon at dawn, is the instant of apprehension*.

Where everything changes, where there is no vantage point or sound in writing, *she couldn't say the experience or absence is changing*— nor is such a point existence *per se*.

The content of phenomena is scrutiny, according to Berssenbrugge. Her comparison of objects, qualities as events is on a line (of her scrutiny) compared to "some other's" "event horizon" their line where events occur. The two lines are collaboration between Berssenbrugge and Tuttle here.

There is no stability of the structure (of the poem or visual aspect) except the line of occurrence, which is "their" apprehension.

The criteria are that an event is subject to its scrutiny only. Its apprehension *per se* is an event.

Berssenbrugge subjects "seeing" an event to language. Berssenbrugge's writing is drawing relations continually, on a

hypothesis that writing is other than, a different faculty from, vision. **Sphericity** subjects the comparison itself (Tuttle's and Berssenbrugge's) of language and vision to comparison. The "comparison itself" is Berssenbrugge's long line of the poems which as measure/shape that extends throughout the text, is as if there were one infinite line of "relation" that constitutes the "event horizon" of **Sphericity**.

That line as such is also an "illusion," spheres seen only by their extension on a plane that can't be seen.

"Nature" is seen, in Berssenbrugge's writing, by its being at the line of its occurring. There "it" is only "relations" to other phenomena, where "nature" and the object are occurring from being/absent.

Tuttle's minimal graphic shapes are at the bottom or side of a page, absent in the middle.

Comparisons melting on the line (horizon) are peaceful and interesting there.

— Leslie Scalapino

New Poetry from New Directions

Kamau Brathwaite • *Black + Blues*. "The printed word doesn't rise much closer to singing than in the work of Barbadian troubadour Kamau Brathwaite...." —VLS
\$9.95 paper

William Bronk • *Selected Poems*. Intro. by Henry Weinfield. "Bronk is an acquired taste. I recommend you acquire it." —*Library Journal* \$8.95 pbk. original

Anne Carson • *Glass, Irony and God*. "Fusing confession, narrative and classicism, Carson's poetry witnesses the collision of heart and mind with breathtaking vitality." —*Pub. Wkly* \$14.00 pbk. original

Allen Grossman • *The Philosopher's Window & Other Poems*. "I would like to crown Grossman one of the great new Low Moderns...." —Mary Karr, *Harvard Review*
\$12.95 pbk. original

James Laughlin • *Remembering William Carlos Williams*. "A lovely memoir of WCW. Pithy, elegant. I love all the letters, quotes, direct Williams details...." —Anne Waldman
\$7.95 pbk. original



New Directions, 80 Eighth Avenue, NYC 10011

BOOKS RECEIVED

Bruce Andrews, **Ex Why Zee** [Performance texts, Collaborations with Sally Silvers, Word Maps, Bricolage & Improvisations], Roof Books (New York, 1995); 109 pages, \$10.95.

These performance texts show Andrews in so many different contexts and genres that it is best to absorb them one piece at a time. One wants to see what the dancers are up to. The feel of performance abounds in a post-dada political soup of sharp observations and biting sarcasm. Highly Recommended.

Tim Atkins, **Folklore** (1-25), Heart Hammer (Paris, 1995); 35 pages.

Very lucid poems. Close reading and deep feelings. Recommended.

Dennis Barone, **Abusing the Telephone**, Drogue Press (New York, 1994); 81 pages, \$10.00.

A collection of ten short fictions, these works dangle in the precipice between narrative and essay, teasing out various kinds of meaning on the way. Recommended.

Dennis Barone, ed., **Beyond the Red Notebook: Essays On Paul Auster**, University of Pennsylvania Press (Philadelphia, 1995); 203 pages, \$17.95.

Very well done collection of critical views of the acclaimed novelist, poet and translator. Contributors include Norman Finkelstein, Madeleine Sorapure, Tim Woods and Motoyuki Shibata. Recommended.

Robin Blaser, **Bach's Belief**, The Institute of Further Studies (Canton, 1995); 27 pages, \$10.00.

Blaser's brilliant essay begins with Olson's take on Bach, then Boulez, Cage and Stockhausen. Here Blaser quotes liberally from Olson's poems and letters. Recommended.

Michael J. Bugeja, **Poet's Guide: How To Publish and Perform Your Work**, Story Line Press (Brownsville, 1995); 154 pages, \$12.95.

Far too many poets think they need such a reference book as this. If they must have one, this is probably a good example.

Vivina Ciolli, **Bitter Larder**, New Spirit Press (Kew Gardens, 1995); 20 pages, \$3.75.

Your face understands I am taking you. Your eyes become distant and ready.

Andrei Codrescu, **The Blood Countess**, Simon & Schuster (New York, 1995); 347 pages, \$23.00.

This page turner manages to tell two stories at once; that of the fictive protagonist and that of the bloody Hungarian Countess Elizabeth Bathory (16th Century). Spooky and fascinating, Codrescu's marvelous novel comes with the endorsements of William Burroughs and Tom Robbins. Highly Recommended.

Todd Colby, **Cush**, Soft Skull Press (New York, 1995); 91 pages, \$

Blinding, intensely driven poems by that master of meat poetics. Colby includes one of my favorites, *I've come to rip/the Hippie wind chimes down!* Highly Recommended.

Deborah Digges, **Rough Music**, Alfred A. Knopf (New York, 1995); 54 pages, \$20.00.

My shadow lies down with the memory of your shadow

Don Domanski, **Stations of the Left Hand**, Coach House Press (Toronto, 1994); 124 pages, \$11.95.

Dark, magical poems by this Canadian poet. Not for everybody, but certainly for some, essential. Recommended.

Sarah G. Epstein, **Five Hundred Thousand Lost Lives**, White Fields Press (Louisville, 1995); 12 pages.

Lecture on abortion rights and 500,000 carnations on the lawn at the United Nations.

Peter Gizzi, **Ledger Domain**, Timoleon (Providence, 1995); 16 pages.

This beautiful chapbook contains three gems from Gizzi and a lovely frontispiece by Trevor Winkfield. *The silence is undone by wind, is outside/(seeing nothing, nothing was seen), empty of speech.* Recommended.

Jesse Glass, **The Life & Death of Peter Stubbe**, Birch Brook Press (Delhi, 1995); 64 pages, \$12.00.

I want to rape you, reader. I want/you to hate me,/because, if I could, I would hurt you/in very special ways. Hmm.

Allan Grossman, **The Philosopher's Window and Other Poems**, New Directions (New York, 1995); 100 pages, \$12.95.

The speaker of this book is an old man compelled by the insistent questioning of the children to explain himself. As such, he does a pretty good job.

Mitch Highfill, **Liquid Affairs**, United Artists (New York, 1995); 64 pages, \$7.00.

Laird Hunt, **Pieces**, Rodent Press (Boulder, 1995); 31 pages.

We'll talk after we fuck, she said./The man nodded.

Beth Baruch Joselow, ed., **Writing Without the Muse: 50 Beginning Exercises for the Creative Writer**, Story Line Press (Brownsville, 1995); 86 pages, \$8.00.

A wonderful way to get people started, and not just beginners. Highly recommended.

Donald Justice, **New and Selected Poems**, Alfred A. Knopf (New York, 1995); 176 pages, \$25.00.

Oh, I don't know, they are crafted, and he is very clever, but too stiff for me. *Writhe no more little flowers. Art keeps long hours./Already your agony has outlasted ours.*

William Kistler, **Poems of the Known World**, Arcade (New York, 1995); 96 pages, \$14.95.

When doubt begins, everything else/is shifted into light.

David Lee, **My Town**, Copper Canyon Press (Port Townsend, 1995); 137 pages, \$12.00.

Winner of the Western States Book Award In Poetry, this one is a rough and tumble mix of plain speech and rural life. Not bad.

Michael Lydon, **Writing and Life**, University Press of New England (Hanover & London, 1995); 93 pages, \$9.95.

Four exemplary essays on reading and writing. Truly amusing and surprisingly inspirational. Lydon makes you want to read those novels you haven't gotten around to yet. Highly recommended.

Sianne Ngai, **My Novel**, Leave Books (Buffalo, 1994); 27 pages.

Humming softly under my breath I tip-toed through the sanitarium.

Valery Oisteanu, **Temporary Immortality**, Pass Press (New York, 1995); 56 pages, \$10.00.

Sharp and spacey at the same time, these post-surrealist blasts of verse startle the reader, which is exactly what Oisteanu intends. Check out *The Cycle of Ordinary Ecstasy*, on page 54. Recommended.

Michael Palmer, **At Passages**, New Directions (New York, 1995); 101 pages, \$11.95.

His first book in seven years, *At Passages* explores the mysteries of thought's measure. These poems propose a created world of language, ridden with

negation. Nobody writes like Palmer, a master of his form at the peak of his powers. Highly recommended.

James Ragan, **The Hunger Wall**, Grove Press (New York, 1995); 113 pages, #17.00.

A virtuoso collating pitch on broken strings, he plays the deaf-mute tapping thumbs to variations/on a theme.

Camille Roy, **The Rosy Medallions**, Kelsey St. Press (Berkeley, 1995); 69 pages, \$10.00.

Intense, lyrical autobiographical extravaganza of fresh language. Verse and prose alternate in this, what I would call crucial collection. Highly Recommended.

Leslie Scalapino, **Defoe**, Sun & Moon Classics (Los Angeles, 1994); 365 pages, \$

Thus huge (if difficult) novel is probably great, but I found it hard to get through. Recommended for the brave.

Brian Schorn, **Strabismus**, Burning Deck (Providence, 1995); 61 pages, \$8.00.

What I am trying to say is this: from now on we must enter the poem from its blind spot. We must force ourselves into the danger of not seeing in order to see the poem more clearly, to see it as clearly as the head of a giant pin being thrust through the walls of the mouth.

Barbara Sperber, **In the Garden of Our Own Making**, Papier-Mache Press (Watsonville, 1995); 96 pages, \$9.00.

I sip my Red Zinger, suddenly woozy on the sheer sofa/with its subtle greens and whites and garter belt pinks. ?

Hunter S. Thompson, **Better Than Sex: Confessions of A Political Junkie**, Ballentine Books (New York, 1994); 247 pages, \$12.95.

Better than the Colin Powell book, but not as good as Fear & Loathing On the Campaign Trail.

Patricia Traxler, **Forbidden Words**, University of Missouri Press (Columbia, 1995); 54 pages.

O dirt root ivy baby you.

Thomas Wright, **Human Emotions**, Aventura (Bradenton, 1995); 32 pages, \$4.95.

Should have been titled, **Lots of Clichés Strung Together**.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN JOURNAL, VOL. 4, NO. 1, Spring/Summer 1995 (New York, 1995); 135 pages, \$10.00.

Dynamite works by Luis Cabalquinto, Tina Chang, J.M. Gee, Anuja Mendiratta, Jinhua Emma Teng and others. Highly Recommended.

AUSTIN WRITER, VOL. 15, NO. 8, August (Austin, 1995); Monthly. 12 pages.

Featuring poetry by Mary-Agnes Taylor, & lots of data about what's happening down there.

AWP, VOL. 28, NO.1, September 1995 (Fairfax, 1995); Bimonthly. 36 pages, \$3.95.

Features an interview with Nikki Giovanni, a long article on Bernard Malamud and several lengthy articles of interest. Recommended.

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST, NOS. 27 - 34, Summer 1995 (St. Paul, 1995); Weekly.

This homemade collection of zines includes work by Debby Florence, Sarah Wash, Oona Peterson, Matt Siemonsen, Michael Mann, Michael Sawyer, Jenna Wilbur, Richard D. Houff and others.

CALYX: A JOURNAL OF ART & LITERATURE BY WOMEN, VOL. 16, NO.1, Summer 1995 (Corvallis, 1995); Tri-Quarterly. 128 pages, \$6.00.

Featuring Hannah Wilson, River Malcom, Sandra Kohler, Sandra Gillespie, Basha Faber, Nancy Dytman and others.

COUNTERMEASURES, NO. 2 (Santa Fe, 1995). Biannual. 40 pages, \$2.50.

Poetry by Lee Upton, Susan Sonde, Jorie Graham, Stephen Berg, Carol Snow and a great series of essays on Whitman by the editors. Recommended.

DHARMA BEAT, NO. 5 (Lowell, 1995). Biannual. 16 pages, \$2.50.

This is a newsletter from the Jack Kerouac subterranean Information Society, featuring a new unpublished piece by Kerouac. Also included are several articles about Kerouac & the Beats by Ann MacGibbon, Marc Kron and Stephen Ronan.

FARMER'S MARKET, VOL. 12, NO. 1. (Elgin, 1995); Biannual. 100 pages, \$6.00.

Poetry by Jeff Gundy, David Kurasch, Marry H. Perry, Edward C. Lynsnerz, John Bernard Ower, Walter Bargaen, John Bradley, Cory Brown, Beth Ann Fennelly, Charles E. Mann and Fiction by Heather K. Long, Paul Pekin, Patricia Landers, Sharon Nelson Kahn, Martha Witt and Larry Starzec.

FRONT, VOL. 7, NO. 1, Sept./Oct. 1995 (Vancouver, 1995); Bimonthly. 34 pages, \$5.00.

Vancouver's Western Front Society runs an artist centre, focusing on all arts. This is their magazine, featuring a conversation between Judith Copithorne and Maxine Gadd.

OPEN 24 HOURS, NO. 11, (Washington D.C., 1995); Triquarterly. 55 pages, \$4.00.

Snappy side-stapled job, featuring Jeff Conant, Dennis Barone, Sheila Murphy, Jeff Hull, Lynne Beyer and Laynie Brown. Recommended.

POETRY FLASH, NO. 263, September 1995 (Berkeley, 1995); Monthly. 40 pages, Free.

Features Bruce Isaacson's review of the ALOUD anthology from the Nuyorican Poet's Cafe, as well as an interview with Annie Finch. Also included are reviews of Thich Nhat Hanh and Donald Revell. The Flash has complete listings of poetry events in the Bay area. Highly Recommended.

PRIMARY WRITING, NO. 2 (Washington D.C., 1995); Broadside Format.

Featuring Rod Smith and Martina Hugli in an attractive foldout poster. Recommended.

PRINTED MATTER, VOL. 19, NO. 3 (Tokyo, 1995); Quarterly. 134 pages.

"Japan's International Review of Literature & the Arts." Featuring Lucien Styrk, Penny McCarthy, Iwakiru Naomi, Nina Zolotow, Charles Bernstein, Keith Abbott and many others. Recommended.

PSALM 151, NO. 5 (Paris, 1995). 64 pages.

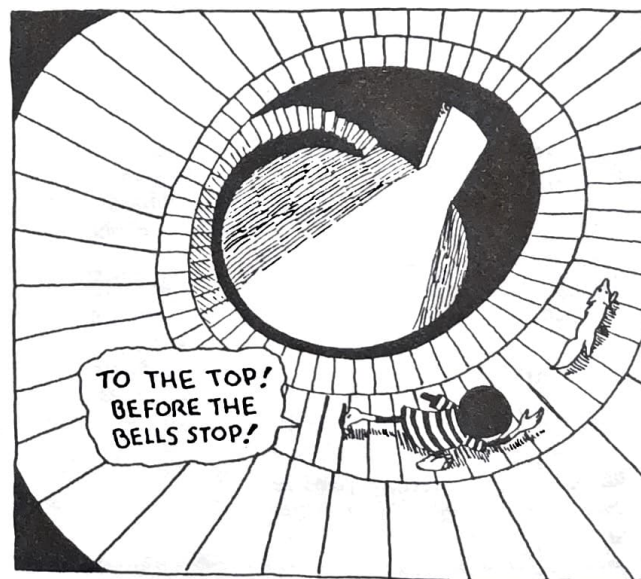
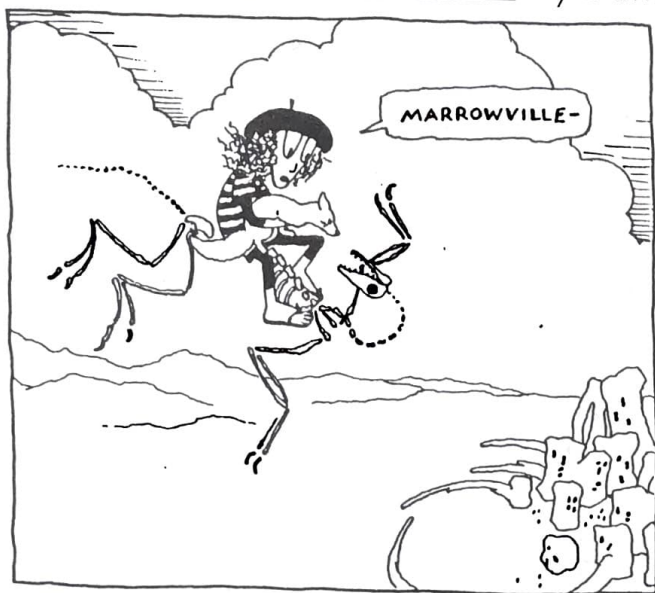
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