

THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER
No. 78 December 1980
Greg Masters, Editor
St. Mark's Church
2nd Ave. & 10th St. NYC 10003

WEDNESDAY READINGS: at 8 pm, suggested contribution \$2. Hosted by Bernadette Mayer & Bob Holman: December 3 - Elinor Nauen & Anselm Hollo. December 10 - Joel Oppenheimer & Andrei Codrescu. December 17 - "Homage to Philip Guston" with Bill Berkson, MC. Invitees include: Musa McKim (Guston), John Cage, David McKee, Morton Feldman, Ted Berrigan, Fielding Dawson, Joel Oppenheimer, Clark Coolidge, Ross Feld, Sidney Janis, Philip Roth, Stanley Kunitz, Bill Corbett, Elaine de Kooning, John Ashbery, Rudy Burckhardt, Edwin Denby, Robert Creeley and others, plus a film by Michael Blackwood: "Philip Guston." December 24 - Closed for Christmas. December 31 - Closed for New Year's.

MONDAY READING & PERFORMANCE SERIES: at 8 pm, suggested contribution \$1. Hosted by Bob Rosenthal & Rochelle Kraut: December 1 - Open Reading. December 8 - Diane Ward & Bruce Andrews. December 15 - SUNBURY POETS including Virginia Scott, Victor Hernandez Cruz, Brenda Connor-Bey, Jana Harris, Zoe Anglesey and others. December 22 - Ruth Altmann & Johnny Stanton (with sign language interpreter). December 29 - COLLABORATIONS with Bernstein, Collom, Mayer, Friedman, Berrigan, Timmons, Wright, Notley, Weigel, Levine, Brodey, Hughes, and their respective others.

ANNUAL POETRY PROJECT BENEFIT FESTIVAL: January 1 & 2 in the Parish Hall, 8 pm.

2 SPECIAL WORKSHOPS with Allen Ginsberg, free, December 18 & 21 (in the Parish Hall) - On Sapphics and Other Measures.

FREE WRITING WORKSHOPS (held in the Faculty Lounge of the Third St Music School, 235 East 11th St.)

Tuesdays- with Maureen Owen at 7 pm.

Fridays- with Steve Carey at 7:30 pm.

COMMUNITY: Community elections for the Advisory Board will be held Saturday, December 13 in the Parish Hall, 11 am - 1 pm. A community meeting will begin at noon.

SPECIAL EVENT, Friday, December 5, 8 pm, \$4 suggested contribution, in the Parish Hall: TAMIA - "Senza Tempo". Cantata for voice only and magnetic chorus. "This voice, this song has been forged during meetings with jazz musicians, theater people or composers and above all, in a solitary practice. Senza Tempo created for Le Festival d'Automne in Paris, 1979, is composed on tape, "magnetic chorus" (recorded with Tamia's voice only, without any technical modification of the sound) and live, her soli more improvised, with a virtuosity always increased by her emotions."

Add to Magazines Received: Little Light 2, ed. Susan Cataldo, 52 E. 7th St, NYC 10003 (includes 20 pp. by Eileen Myles & Fyman, Landi, Summers, Cataldo, Levine, Weigel, Wright, Scholnick, Kotsiumbas).

We'd like to thank those readers who've sent in contributions for their subscriptions, much appreciated. But we must ask again those people who haven't yet mailed in a check to please do so. Paper costs, mailing costs, you know the story. \$5 from each subscriber would do it.

I don't want to wait till the last issue to thank & acknowledge the Project's hired hand, Gary Lenhart, for the production work he does for the NL. I get him the reviews & poems & am assured they'll be stencilled & mimeod with precision & care- with an editor's eye, too.

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BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED

The Diamond Noodle by Philip Whalen: Poltroon Press, 213 Carleton St., Berkeley, CA 94704, \$5 + \$1 shipping (inspired prose companion to On Bear's Head, written 1956-65: oddly Victorian Oregon childhood remembered, Sourdough Mt Lookout stint, dream look-ins, Beat Buddyhood escapades, plays, impertinences, Rhododendrons, flashes, Shakespeare criticism, et al. Finely printed)...Erstwhile Charms by Reed Bye: Rocky Ledge Cottage Editions, Wallstreet, Salina Star Route, Boulder, CO 80302, \$2...Audrey Hepburn's Symphonic Salad and the Coming of Autumn by Tom Weigel: Telephone Books, Old Chelsea Station, Box 672, NYC, NY 10011, \$2...from North Point Press, 850 Talbot Ave., Berkeley, CA 94706: A Part by Wendell Berry, \$12.50c, \$6p and The Metamorphoses of Ovid, A.E. Watts trans., \$9.50p...from New Directions, 80 Eighth Ave., NYC, NY 10011: The Cricket Sings by Federico Garcia Lorca, Will Kirkland trans, \$4.95p and New Directions 41, \$5.95... from Burning Deck, 71 Elmgrove Ave, Providence, RI 02906: Biography by Barbara Guest, \$2.50, With Sincerest Regrets by Russell Edson, \$2.50, Country Cooking and Other Stories by Harry Mathews, \$3.50, My Life by Lyn Hejinian, \$3.50, When They Have Senses by Rosmarie Waldrop, \$3.50, Water Runs to What is Wet by Heather S.J. Steliga, \$3.50, The Text's Boyfriend by Harrison Fisher, \$2.50, Alcatraz by John Engman, \$2.50, Half of the Map by William Doreski, \$2.50 (all of these are very nicely packaged & printed & some come in more expensive editions, signed, etc)...Alogon by Michael Palmer: TUUMBA Press, 2639 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94705, \$2...The Galley to Mytilene - Stories 1949-1960 by Iaul Goodman: Black Sparrow, PO Box 3993, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, \$7.50p, \$13.50c... The Singing Man My Father Gave Me by Edward Mycue: Menard Press, 23 Fitzwarren Gardens, London N19, England or Small Press Distribution Inc, 1636 Ocean View Ave, Kensington, CA 94707, \$4.50/1.80 pounds...Chosen Days by David Rosenberg: Doubleday, 245 Park Ave, NYC, NY 10017, \$14.95c (interpretive translations from original biblical Hebrew texts celebrating Jewish festivals & traditions)...

Rocky Ledge 6, eds Reed Bye & Anne Waldman, Wallstreet, Salina Star Route, Boulder, Co 80302, \$2 (Kraut, Fagin, Rosenthal, Noel, Myles, Brownstein, Hughes, Schuyler, Kashner, Weigel, Fox, Ferrari, Coolidge, Mayer translations of French guys & editors)...Hills 6/7, ed. Bob Perelman, 36 Clyde St, SF, CA 94107, \$5 (TALKS by Berkson, Bromige, Watten, Benson, Woolf, F. Howe, Silliman, Perelman, more)...Parabola, ed. D.M. Dooling, 150 Fifth Ave, NYC, NY 10011, \$4 (Obstacles theme)...Turkey Buzzard Review 2, ed. dotty LeMieux, PO Box 531, Bolinas CA 94924 (Welch, Sanders, Kyger, Hawkins, Levitt, Beltrametti, much more)...Poetry News, ed. Jocelyn Fisher, 681 Venice Blvd, PO Box 806, Venice, CA 90291, sub. \$7/yr (another Beyond Baroque publication, poetry, fiction, reviews, calendar of primarily southern CA writers & events)...Open Places, ed. Eleanor Bender, Box 2085, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri 65215, \$2 (Owen, K & R Waldrop, Cherry, Piercy, more)...

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At the Gotham book party for Maureen Owen's new book, Hearts in Space, George Schneeman told me he intended to write the newsletter a letter to the editor. He wanted to point out that Gary Lenhart's comment at the end of his review of Ted Berrigan's So Going Around Cities (last issue), that the George Schneeman drawings might have been used differently, showed insight. As it turns out the drawings were intended for different points in the book. Mr. Schneeman had carefully chosen specific pages with which to accompany specific poems and the publisher, without consulting the artist, rearranged them to satisfy his own lay-out needs. George just wanted to point out in this letter the disrespect that an artist's work can suffer in an editor/publisher's hands. Ron Padgett said George didn't know how to write and probably would never do it.

Awkward Song by Allan Kornblum (Toothpaste Press, West Branch, Iowa, 1980), \$5.00p.

The poems that make it through to our feelings are the ones that touch the bases we all touch: family, friends, lovers. Awkward Song is billed as a collection of poems, but it is more: it is a linked chain of poems, reflecting a series of moments in a life. It is almost an autobiography. The center of the book is Allan's love for and marriage with Cinda, the death of his mother, and the birth of his daughter. Somehow these events take on universal significance in his poems. They are the important happenings of his life. They touch our feelings because they remind us of the landmarks of our own past.

Using the language is like any other craft undertaken to a purpose. No matter how fine the workmanship, it is the result that we judge. With a poem, there is the craft itself, which requires a certain quickness and intelligence; and there is also the message, what it is the poet wants to leave with the reader. To tie these together well is the success of a poem, and it is a facility that comes only with practice. This book forms a record of the growth of a writer. The first poems are almost word-games, pleasant and tricky, but as we read through the book, his skill is matched by a growing willingness to take on complex emotional subjects in a way that is not artificial, and equally, not false. What Allan Kornblum thinks and feels about death and love, for example, is not simplistic, and is expressed clearly and honestly. The bright and quick sequence of words in his poems provides a background against which the sophistication and truth of his feelings can be seen.

At times he writes with a great deal of humor. Some poems join together various observations of life on this planet with the detached irony of someone playfully spinning the TV's dial on a Saturday afternoon. Other poems are more somber, particularly those in the "Awkward Song" section. Even while grieving, Allan Kornblum's viewpoint is like that of Auden's in his poem about Brueghel's Fall of Icarus: that tragedy is never alone in the world, but always co-exists with every other feeling of which people are capable. The simplicity of a poem like "Hot Water", with the poet surprised that he is crying in the shower, while his mother faces an operation for cancer, is a stunning example of depth of feeling clearly communicated.

It's difficult to choose a poem that illustrates everything of which this poet is capable. There are many very good longer poems in this book (such as "Three Days After Father's Day"), which, of course, can't be reproduced here. Instead it would be pleasant to leave you with one of the later poems:

CHIRP CHIRP

I write because my feet hurt

I write to avoid being stung by
the yellow black-banded bee
in the purple clover

I write because water always tastes
like the hand that hands me the glass

Thank you for passing the bottle of wine

In the distance a voice calls for Michael

If only we could write a message
in cloud language, no one would
ever have to shout

Can you hear this whisper?

-- review by Jim Hanson

No One Here Gets Out Alive by Jerry Hopkins and Daniel Sugeran, \$7.95.

The most remarkable thing about this book is that it could be sustained for over 300 pages. It's pretty obvious that a great deal of research and many interviews went into the final draft, but what emerges is more like a deafening scream of self-defeat and true-to-life anguish. Morrison, it would seem, was doomed from the start. His much publicized heavy drinking and excessive violent traumas, only served to transparently mask an incredibly fucked-up spirit of intense self-hatred. In the few moments of revelation and poetic lucidity he had, the massive publicity/hype given him by advisors, aides and his record company, were lost. If one reads his books of poems, you'll find very little originality. His ideas, chiefly taken from Rimbaud and Artaud, don't ever extend theirs; instead of being liberated by the latter's "Theater of Cruelty", Morrison seems to have been its servant, and slave. If you want to be saddened, frightened or just brought down, this testament to a truly wasted and lost existence, which in its most creative (musical) moments held such promise for further exploration of the known and unknown is just your cup of tea. Even though (most) of the New Wave and (dare I say it) Punks, of Today, are merely just posturing this sort of anguish, here's a thoroughly true testament, as what can happen if you really put anguish to work. Despite its length, one can get through this book in a few sittings. It's up to you whether it's worth it or not.

New Wilderness Letter #8 (edited by Jerome Rothenberg, New Wilderness Foundation, 365 West End Avenue, NY, NY 10024).

An anthropologic-poetic journal, both synonymous with ancestral and genetic connections of poetry, structures and language, the "old/new wilderness...remythologization of war as instrument of destiny." The main feature, for this reader here, are the poems of the amazing Rose Drachler. A genuine kabalist Jewish woman aged 60. Referred to by John Ashbery (in the editor's intro) as "a new canon." Also highly recommended is Charles Stein's essay on Charles Olson's use of the writings of C.G. Jung. Other contributors include Ferlinghetti, Economou, Knowles, Quasha, and composer Philip Corner's notational composition. Catch the beautifully true & simply nutty logic of Hugo Ball.

Each Next: Narratives by Kathleen Fraser, The Figures, Berkeley, \$3.

These works seem to be traveling poems and journal entries. Fraser's touchstone is a very personal and quite tender, though firm, music. A high sensitivity for life within and without her, stimulating and responsive to human affairs. An acute verve for language, which is crisp and mellow, by turns. This book perfectly defines her beautiful talents. The forms here span poems, prose-poems, and straight prose.

--The 3 reviews above by Jim Brodey

* * *

Guess Who?

I was always good at bullshitting.

Learned it at school.

When they called on me I would talk and wind up with something...

didn't even know what the question was...

That's how I won the Bible Prize.

-- Rose Lesnák

The Second International Festival of the Poets

Lots of people attended the Second International Festival of the Poets in Rome, Italy, and why not...it was held in beautiful Piazza de Sienna, a football-field-sized meadow in a larger park. The verdant expanse was framed with thousands of tiny light-bulbs that glowed in the dark under brilliant Roman stars seen all over the world. Behind the lights were natural stone bleachers where stray lovers and other individuals strolled for an occasional kiss, conversation or bladder release in the moist summer bushes.

On entering Piazza de Sienna, one was immediately drawn to a concession stand where soft drinks, sandwiches, beer, American bubble-gum and everything but cigarettes could be purchased. Books of artistic and/or political and/or social content, crafts, hash and arts were also available in this open market area, and it was at the other end of the field that one could view the large wooden stage and chance upon cocaine, opium and camera buffs.

The Festival included nights of music, comedy and science as well as poetry. Fantastic! To sit beneath the stars and watch slides of stars. Close-ups. Relatively. As one scientist talked, I leaned over to Alberto and said, "What did he say?" Alberto said, "He is talking about how everything in the universe is born and dies, and how in the birth of a star is present all the chemicals necessary for conscious life." I thought that was beautiful. I looked up into the blepharospasmodic sky. "What does he say now?" I asked Luca. "He says," says Luca, "that many of the stars we are now viewing are already dead." "I love science," I say. To myself I think, "Cause if it wasn't for science, I would have died last year of tuberculosis."

Lots of people turned out to be an energetic audience incapable of keeping their opinions to themselves. When pleased they applauded and shouted "Bravo!" When displeased they whistled and jeered and shouted "Stupid Americano!" and in a mood of real audience participation, watermelon rinds were thrown at the performers. Brigatta Melons attacked some Italian performers who obviously were familiar with their public peers and threw the rinds back into the masses or dodged them effectively without losing a beat. Alien performers attempted to maintain dignity, always a mistake, since dignity is a sitting duck. And though I didn't always agree with the Brigatta Melons' target decisions, I do love watermelon. My own performance with Tim Milk was positively brilliant, which is the rumor I spread soon after my return to the States.

These beautiful thousands of people milling around the area really made the Festival what it is; thousands of people milling around an area. While listening to poets, scientists, musicians and comedians from all over the known world except Iceland, Utah and Hunza. It's like I said to Maria. "Maria," I said, "this doesn't look like opium to me." "Go ahead, eat it," she answered, her eyes sparkling. "Is good." And I did. And I got sick. Then Alberto was kind enough to go to a farmacia and get me some anti-nausea suppositories so I wouldn't dry-heave all day. I mean it was very humiliating. I was an American and I was expected to be able to hold my drugs. I felt like the U.S. American.

But as much fun as it was running around Piazza de Sienna gobbling refreshments and verse, it was always comforting to get back to Hotel Isa where American friends Tom Carey and Mark Breeding, happy to see me, would greet me with encouraging words: "Hey, call Roberto and see if we can get more coke. He likes you." (By the way, Tom. Where's the chump-change you owe me?)

-- Barbara Barg

* * *

wheelchair racers ok'd for
marathon to the moon

-- Rose Lesniak

Mayor-to-be Speaks

David Rockefeller is the Rely tampon of international business. He soaks you for everything you've got then kills you. Not literally, of course, unless you happen to be from some area controlled by the Trilateral Commission. This cabal is headed by Rockefeller and includes many familiar chromedomes from North America, Western Europe and Japan.

Their stated purpose is to better business relations between the first world and second, third and fourth worlds; in Rocky's own words, "to some, the Trilateral Commission is a sinister plot by Eastern Establishment businessmen who will do anything--including going into cahoots with the Kremlin--for the sake of financial gain." (NY Times 8/25/80)

I wonder why they bother. Not bother ruling but formalizing a structure already so firm and virile. Perhaps it's a matter of finetuning ever more the engines of power.

What about the election? Did the Trilateral have a candidate? Sure--they're the house playing blackjack with a marked deck. Can't lose. Anderson, Bush, Carter and Mondale are all members. Some say Carter is our president now because he was handpicked and groomed by the TLC. A less sinister interpretation is that they wanted a liberal southerner on the Commission and chose the then-obscure Carter, who thereby made the contacts that fed and furthered his own ambitions. Or is he the patsy of more decisive men, but men who neither want nor could be elected? Would you vote for David Rockefeller? Or Henry Kissinger, Harold Brown, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Cyrus Vance, Robert Bowie (CIA)? In 1977 active or former TLC members headed every key agency determining US international strategy, 16 in all.

The 1975 Crisis of Democracy, "A Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission," mentioned some of the "antidemocratic trends in the 1960s: elitist discrimination against middle-class groups (and) the suppression of free speech (particularly on university campuses)" (p. 60); blamed youths, intellectuals and an "excess of democracy"; and concluded that when the president had only a few homogeneous special interest groups to satisfy he did a better job, therefore rising groups such as women and blacks should practice self-restraint.

So I'm running for mayor of New York. Anyone who votes for me is invited to a party line party at Gracie mansion after I'm elected.

-- Elinor Nauen

* * *

Sonnet Flanders Road

Today she cleaned up and left in red car
She said mist was caught in the mountains
Take all the lettuce you want from the garden
She said she was born in 1948 which makes
Her 32, what's the mist doing being caught
In the valleys so contiguous like overhearing
Neighbors quarreling I can almost touch the
Pot roast the man of the house made for once.

To think on too few strangers makes me blind,
Befogs the mind next door obscures my sanity
In the country, clouds what's bright in humankind.
I'll have a million neighbors in the city
All at once, below, above, it's easier to love,
Love demystifies the film before my eyes.

- Bernadette Mayer

The line formed at 6:15 outside the soot be-souled Westminster Abbey. In a tree nearby, adjacent to St. Margaret's Church, hundreds of amazing blackbirds gathered restlessly, screeched scrawlingly, sang, until some bloke knocking the trunk scared them off. This occurred 6:40. The line edged inwards and finding a busy Michael Horovitz enabled me a seat close-up to the evening's liveliness.

If there is one book a family should possess, Anne Stevenson being interviewed suggested, it should be The Complete Poems of William Blake. Poetry must begin in the streets and in the apples. Cheerio. The recorded voice of Dylan Thomas "himself" played in the atmosphere.

At 7:15 Dean Carpenter, who remained peaceful throughout the affair, welcomed all. Where his Government buried Chaucer, near where Shelley hid from his creditors, The Poets' Corner, after Samuel Johnson's entombment, was instituted. Of Poets said the Dean: "Their Prophecies should be therapeutic and truthful."

Frances Horovitz lead off "reading" William Wordsworth's "Lines Composed on Westminster, Sept., 1822"; great. Mark O'Connor (Australia); Dennis Lee (Canada); Anne Stevenson (Great Britain); Ed Limonov (Russian emigrant); Janine Pommy Vega (USA); Gregory Corso (USA); Linton Kwesi Johnson (Great Britain); and John Cooper-Clarke (England) followed.

There were several invited guests notably absent. Stephen Spender was involved in a minor car crash while in France and forwarded his thanks for being part of the idea. Faber Paperbacks recently published his Selected Poems. Bella Akhmadulina and Andrei Voznesensky couldn't obtain visas. In communicating their regret the Soviet Writers' Union expressed what it called a wish. They'd be more helpful and positive were it "left to them to ordain" who should attend. Interesting. And Derek Walcott is in N.Y. trying to raise cash for his son's study of architecture.

Linton Kwesi Johnson, who enchanted the audience with calm and assurance, and Ed Limonov, who translates his own work, were outstanding. The reading ended sharply, as agreed, by 9:30 so staff could get home to suburbs. "Will you make your way to the door, Please," cried out a guard. If the Dean was perturbed by anybody's language or by John Cooper-Clarke's wondering if there was something to drink, he didn't, as Michael Horovitz said later, admit it.

New Departures published an Anthology of the event, celebrating the 'initial detonation' of the Poetry Olympic Rocket.

-- Michael Scholnick

* * *

IN FEBRUARY I THINK by Elio Schneeman ("C" Press Publications, 101 St. Mark's Pl., New York, NY 10003). Covers by George Schneeman.

Few poets share Elio Schneeman's obsessions. Stranded upon a world without frontier yet he looks where none before have looked. Thus even the pavement tends somewhat to remain fresh as the taste of a vegetable or the glowing color of a room during sunsets. It is a world of shadows and drifting distances. And it is a surprisingly human world of singular fashions and shapes like faces blinking on the beach or words used about the sky. Nor is it, by far, a humorless world: "2 kings, 3 queens, and four aces/..." It is a world of time outside the poem perceived by Mr. Schneeman's attentive eyes.

Most consistent, divine & convincing is Elio's dealings with the attributes of "you." Whether it's the experiencing "I" addressing its fierce selections or the more circumspect rememberer provoking a campaign unto his reader, the poet's concerned inspirations enact something genuine. In "August" he concludes:

And now everything is fading,
the walls, the sky, the trees,
all vanish in the thin fog
that is springing up everywhere.

The poems, as literature, are tangible.

He will bring to the surface all of your memories.

--Michael Scholnick

Illegal Assembly by Karen Brodine (Hanging Loose Press, 231 Wyckoff St, Brooklyn, NY 11217), \$3.

Sometimes she will let go of her absolutist a priori political convictions and tell a story that is not a parable. Of course it's more interesting when the argument emerges from the facts. As a writer she is sometimes quite wonderful:

"A kitchen with green and yellow linoleum and the father and the girl. She has been sick. She is not supposed to jump around and get tired, but the radio plays some bagpipe music that sounds crazy to her. Crossed knives in each square of linoleum. She jumps around the kitchen waving her arms. Her father grins and laughs with her..."

Her project is difficult and admirable: as a writer who has not just an environmental awareness of political events but who posits institutional solutions, how not to become the poetic sloganeer of the San Francisco socialist feminist lesbian left?

Somehow Brodine's recognition of the autobiographic origins of her convictions mesh with her rhetoric. Her observations are more often sensory than analytic. And so a poem about unionizing her office comes to have as much integrity as a poem about her early childhood...in the book we see the two as being deeply connected.

Illegal Assembly deals mainly with the origins and initial expression of Brodine's political commitments. The book does not tell us how these commitments are shaped and changed through collisions with the world outside its frame.

Her artistic ideology is best summed up in a poem written to critique L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E:

"It's true I want things to mean
it's true I mean things
to change..."

The poem ends with a rebuke to formalists whom she thinks have no responsible relation to the real world (real, i.e. the prison of timeclock patriarchy) - a self righteous slap which exposes the flaw in her polemics. For all the eloquence of her articulated stance, Brodine seems unwilling to absorb an argument before negating it...

-- Chris Kraus

* * *

WHERE THERE IS NO THERE

OAKLAND by Robert Grenier (TUUMBA, 2639 Russell St, Berkeley CA 94705, 1980), \$2.

Had I not lived in Oakland myself and felt similar experiences, I might have thought differently of Robert Grenier's selection of local capsules.

SIX DARK HOUSES

must there be if the
streetlight out

porch lights too
houses are

three on two sides
flat on four sides

Oakland is like that: "I piss on such the like" or "the bus pulled out from

under the tree". Oakland is a very subjective experience -- there is no there there, but plenty of here. "I heard the wind in Oakland"; Grenier's apprehension of this experience in the form of poetry is like receiving radio signals from the man who fell to earth.

THREE
legged dog

Sometimes the reception is garbled or fragmented, partial, but always intriguing. It's a kind of cosmic graffiti.

PUKING INTO THE BATHTUB
two dogs echo barking

This kind of writing is a distillation, a concentration, a close attention to a sometimes overwhelming reality. What is said is said in passing and with such brevity that often the imagination is thrown off balance by this verbal jujitsu and is forced to follow through beyond what is on the page. It can be likened to falling through the mirror in Cocteau's Orpheus.

WHERE'S AMY
it's after four

There is a resonance, a tone that works to evoke. There is a suggested depth, the illusion of substance. It's language in the ear of an artist doing its work well.

-- Pat Nolan

* * *

In the last few months I've read some novels that, since I'm in this position able to, I'd like to recommend. Unfortunately, many of them are hard to find. The first is Troia: Mexican Memoirs by Bonnie Bremser which accounts, at its best in free flowing excited musical prose like Kerouac, the author's dusty days in Mexico - whoring and intimate days & nights with her man, Ray Bremser the poet. Even when she just writes it down straight her life & reflections are worth hearing. The Stecher Trilogy by William Carlos Williams (White Mule, In the Money, The Build-Up) amazed me. I'd never read anything so plain & objective & that doesn't mean flat. Williams was so obviously interested in this immigrant family he's chronicling - from crowded apartments & babies thru union battles & husband's rise to management & vacations to finally the big home in the country- & he uses this as a framework/a model for an American family from which is built this fully detailed expose & loving inside look (the family described is his wife's). His descriptions are devout. Moving On by Larry McMurtry has, too, a gentle narrative which like the Williams never makes judgements on the characters, rather lets us know what they're thinking & with dialog, which like the Williams too there is mostly, has us getting to know all these diverse folk- rodeo people, grad students, millionaire rancher maids, drugged out SF hippies & their parents. Beautiful. Mrs. W's Last Sandwich by Edwin Denby is a gothic romp, not the book I expected from this poet of fragility and landscape. A 30's adventure like it starred Mary Astor only it's set in exotic Mallorca and the plot involves hidden family treasure, caves, smugglers, bad guys with the added thrill of a few morphine addicts & of course, 2 brothers in love with the American out for more. The Executioner's Song by Norman Mailer is worth reading for the portraits of the divorcees & working people we don't find elsewhere, the look we get at a media as desperate as the murderer they're trying to buy rights & access to, courtroom drama & prison life. All brought together by someone who murdered in cold blood 2 guys he was robbing, which fact Mailer seems to neglect sometimes in his glorification-by-epic approach, obviously fascinated with this creep because he's 'man' enough to want to die. Mailer & his staff of researchers write the greatest magazine article of all time.

GIVEN TO AILING

Illegitimacy of something
a cloud, a baby
for which I said nothing
and went my way, working backwards
over the plots like cots
in a cheap hotel on the rue de something
bed & breakfast everyday. The rue
de sexuality isn't my name
but if you ever visit
that's where you'll stay.
And if boring sexuality releases tension
maybe you'll never leave
your heart on your sleeve
for the girl in the cave
half-free, half-slave.

- Lewis Warsh

St. Mark's Church In-the-Bowery
The Poetry Project
10th St. & 2nd Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10003

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