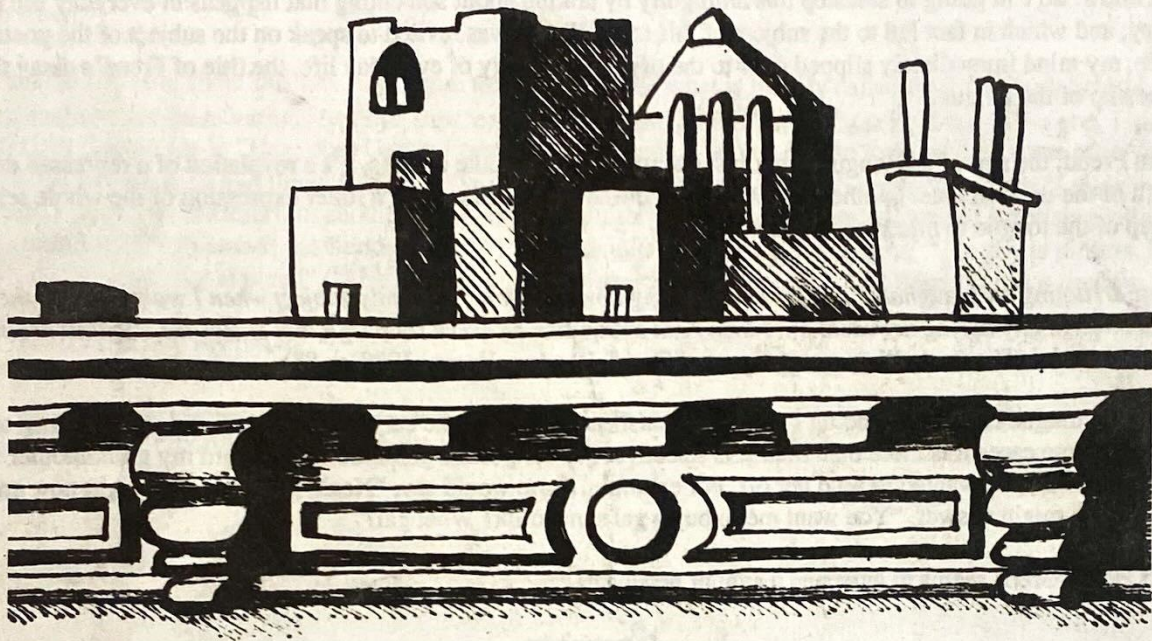


THE POETRY PROJECT

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M. Christensen '88

The 1988 Symposium

subtitled the Poetry of Everyday Life, took place from April 7th through the 10th this past spring, with 32 poets participating in a variety of readings, panel discussions, and lectures. In this issue we are publishing the talks given by Ron Padgett and Bernadette Mayer.

EVERYDAY OOPS

Slips In The Poetry Of Everyday Life

by Ron Padgett

The Poetry of Everyday Life. What does that mean? Does it mean the poetic quality of everyday life, or poetry *about* everyday life? I don't know. So I'm going to sidestep this ambiguity by talking about something that happens in everyday life that can lead to poetry, and which in fact led to the subject of this talk. When I was invited to speak on the subject of the poetry of everyday life, my mind immediately slipped over to the psychopathology of everyday life, the title of Freud's essay that discusses the slip of the tongue.

According to Freud, the slip of the tongue is not just a simple mistake. Like dreams, it's a revelation of a repressed desire, a breakthrough of the unconscious. In other words, the slip of the tongue allows for a fuller expression of the whole self. Freud likens the slip of the tongue to mistakes in reading:

Both irritating and laughable is a lapse in reading to which I am frequently subject when I walk through the streets of a strange city during my vacation. I then read antiquities on every shop sign that shows the slightest resemblance to the word....(The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, Random House, 1938, p. 88)

To the slip of the tongue and to misreading I would add mishearing (slip of the ear). Chronic mishearing is ascribed to partial deafness, but in some cases it is more than that. It is selective. My henpecked grandfather misheard my grandmother when he *wanted* to; that is, when he wanted to fend her off. For example, if she would say, "Noah, go to the store right now and buy a gallon of milk," he might answer, "You want me to buy a gal some milk? What gal?"

The novelist Henry Green seems to have had a similar penchant:

Interviewer

I've heard it remarked that your work is "too sophisticated" for American readers, in that it offers no scenes of violence — and "too subtle," in that its message is somewhat veiled. What do you say?

Mr. Green

Unlike the wilds of Texas, there is very little violence over here. A bit of child-killing of course, but no straight shootin'. [...]

Interviewer

And how about "subtle"?

Mr. Green

I don't follow. *Suttee*, as I understand it, is the suicide — now forbidden — of a Hindu wife on her husband's flaming bier. I don't want my wife to do that when my time comes — and with great respect, as I know her, she won't...

Interviewer

I'm sorry, you misheard me; I said, "subtle" — that the message was too subtle.

Mr. Green

Oh, *subtle*, how dull!

(In *The Paris Review*, No. 19, Summer, 1958, pp. 64-5. Interviewer: Terry Southern)

I suspect that Green, who earlier in the interview had claimed to be "a trifle hard of hearing," used his disability selectively, in this case as a "veiled" response to a "dull" question.

To slips of the tongue, eye, and ear we might add those of the hand. Blaise Cendrars' poem "Misprints" begins:

Spelling errors and misprints make me happy / Some days I feel like making them on purpose.

Cendrars takes a romantic poet's pleasure in the typographical error as renegade. Retyping this talk, instead of "slip of the tongue," I put "*lip* of the tongue" at one point and "slip of the *gongue*" at another, and I was tempted to leave them in. I have a particular weakness for typos that form a new and unexpected meaning. In one of my poems, I used this type of misprint in some of the lines:

*A rib hung from the marble bust of Robert Burns.
Maurice and Edmund tramped many miles over muddy rods.
They went bathing in the other broth.
Edgar divided the dainties among the fiends.
Maples, hemlocks, and elms grew on Mr. Miller's forearms.*

And so on. My taste for this type of word play comes partly from my being influenced by poets such as Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch.

When I started thinking about this talk, I was sure that the poetry of what is loosely called the New York School would yield abundant examples of these various types of slips, examples that had either "I mean" (as in "I fell like a god, I mean *I feel* like a god") or "oops" (as in "Hey, does Garcia Lorca have a hymen? — oops, I mean *hyphen!*") or some other form of self-correction. In Bill Berkson and Frank O'Hara's "St. Bridget's Hymn to Willem de Kooning," we find: "I think you are the nuts I mean I think you are nuts". In another poem, O'Hara wrote: "I hang from the mistletoe / of surprising indigestion, I mean indiscretion" ("3 Poems about Kenneth Koch"). An example from James Schuyler is: "The sky is pitiless. I beg / your pardon? OK then / the sky is pitted" ("The Dog Wants His Dinner"). In "A Dream," Ted Berrigan did it doubly:

*Love came into my room
I mean my life
the shape of a Tomato
it took over everything*

later:

*Forgive me, René Magritte
I meant "a rose"*

and he reversed the process in "so keep on the ball, buddy, i.e. / I mean 'the button' " ("Tambourine Life"). In "Chinese Creep," Kenward Elmslie wrote: "thought he said: attack of miasma. / Referring to my asthma." Elmslie calls this his "motor disturbance":

*I can't control my current motor disturbance —
so clicky, soppy, so picky — like the one that led me to assume
"disfunction" was Brooklynese for "wedding"*

("Motor Disturbance")

There are also unacknowledged variations on the idea of the slip. In John Ashbery's "Night," "We'll take sides" becomes "We'll make sides"; the word "shells" in "peanut shells" gets divided and expanded into "peanut ship well"; and what earlier might have been "Into the desert / Sand" becomes "Into the desert / The stand." In O'Hara's "Poem in January," the "battered bees" probably edged out "battered peas," and in his "Second Avenue" "the violet waves crested" becomes the violet waves crusted." [Apropos, the editor first mistakenly typed *violent* waves when preparing this piece for publication.]

The difficulty of finding these — and other — examples led me to realize that they were only signposts leading to what I shall call *the deeper oops*. These deeper oops are part of an aesthetic stance, a level of diction, and an attitude about the self and the presentation of that self in poetry. The aesthetic stance came partly out of surrealism and surrealism's welcoming the unconscious into art. In the America of the 1940s and '50s, surrealism was translated most beautifully into Action Painting, where the controlled accident played such a large role. Poets such as O'Hara and Koch got the excitement of the controlled accident into their work — sometimes through intentional mistranslation — but they rejected many of surrealism's less attractive features: its doctrinaire stridency, its inflated self-importance, its spiderweb creepiness, and ultimately its humorlessness. The down-to-earth tone of some of O'Hara's poems (I'm marvelous and extraordinary but I do this I do that, too) reflected this humanized, everyday- Joe surrealism. O'Hara's poetry is often chatty, associative, bold, and fallible. Without being a confessional poet, he's willing to let the reader see when he goes awry, or, rather than erasing the mistake, he uses it

to move the poem in a new direction.

Many of James Schuyler's poems are written from the point of view of a guy doing something ordinary like sitting at a window or strolling, and this dailiness is emphasized by sudden changes and veerings due to mistakes: "Smoke streaks, no, / cloud strokes" ("Growing Dark") or

*Hamlin Garland rose up from the Oklahoma powow and declared with spirit,
"I will write The Red Pioneer. President 'Teddy' Roosevelt shall hear,
I mean, Great Chief, read of the travail of the Polished-Stone-Age
Aboriginals adapting to the White Man's way. How."*

Kenneth Koch's long poem "When the Sun Tries to Go On" might be read as one massive slip of the tongue:

*Oh yes, the golf-balls! "We were three golf-balls
Yesterday until pilgrim milkman rhododendron
Pansy of navy gorilla...."*

His "Taking a Walk with You" is a brilliant and funny catalog of errors: "I though 'muso bello' meant 'Bell Muse' " and "I thought Axel's Castle was a garage." He goes on:

*I misunderstand Renaissance life; I misunderstand:
The Renaissance;
Ancient China;
The Middle Atlantic States and what they are like;
The tubes of London and what they mean;
Titian, Michaelangelo, Vermeer;
The origins of words;
What others are talking about;
Music from the beginnings to the present time....*

Kenward Elmslie's poetry is replete with words that give you the feeling that, in a previous incarnation, they were other words, or that, like enchanted toys, they take on another life as soon as you aren't looking. As he says in "Another Island Groupage," "we ate the Spear People syrup pear / and listened for 'twin' words." By "twin words" he means not only words that rhyme, but also those that seem to have some deeper connection ("gismo" and "Quiz Mo' "). In "Pavilions" the "twin words" reverberate back and forth:

*he who is split
windows in June
turn to mirrors in Jan*

*like milk in mid-air
windows in Jan
turn to mirrors in June*

At this point the head begins to reel: the slips slipping on each other.

It is interesting that the only book by John Ashbery that openly uses mistakes (*The Tennis Court Oath*) is considered by some to be a mistake itself, the black sheep of his canon.

I realize that, in the course of this talk, the simple idea of the slip of the tongue has brought forth a certain amount of hot air. In such small compass, it's necessary to use abstractions — the New York School, surrealism, the self, aesthetic stance, etc. — without defining them, but I beg your indulgence on the grounds that even this talk is a part of everyday life, oops and all.

THE POETRY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

By Bernadette Mayer

So up to the housetops the coursers they flew to the threshold the sublime more rapid than eagles there's the recognition of astonishing things. I love you and daily life, what life isn't daily? It's good that there's nothing to say, I feel so sorry for the city, what poetry isn't everyday

*As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly
When they meet with an obstacle mount to the sky*

I was always awed by being involved with other poets, look right here among the audience we have new poets geniuses perfect people scholar poets publisher poets editor poets artist poets outlaw poets inventor poets playwrights painters movie makers movie maker poets language poets art critics and art critic poets singers and composers and of course us lecturer poets. In a way there's nothing everyday about this

With my mother my sister and I always did laundry on Monday ironing on Tuesday tatting and crocheting on Wednesday novenas on Thursday cleaning and shopping on Friday changing of the sheets on Saturday and gardening and carpentry on Sunday with our father who art in heaven etc. Not counting picnics swimming comings and goings vacations visits to relatives big dinners at home when Aunt Phillie was invited and looking at the stars through a telescope in the backyard & all the regular cooking baking and washing and drying of dishes and pots and utensils. Baths were taken on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On periodic occasions we would clean and varnish the woodwork polish the furniture clean the blue glass spheres which existed in a bowl as a decoration on a low table with a blue glass top wash the wooden venetian blinds wash and starch curtains and stretch them on screens in the cellar and of course wash the windows. One day while doing that my sister fell out while eating a piece of swiss cheese and that was not everyday life nor was it an everyday phenomenon to find out that we were second cousins to the guy who played the video ranger on the Captain Video show

When everybody in our family began to die 30 years ago and then did die each within about two years of the other our everyday life began to seem like an extreme case since we didn't know then that hardly anybody knew about everyday death. We were the only people our age within miles to have seen so many dead bodies. People began to treat us funny & when I collapsed at my uncle's funeral a rouged relative of ours refused to risk admitting me to the hospital lest she too be tainted by this Aids-like scourge of meaning or coincidence rued especially by Catholics as a sign of some bitter-tasting unidentified guilty sin

évanescence it might've been death that made my sister want to send some works off that will not last long or forever, balloons sculptures of snow and wax and paper and glue and fabric (supported by wood) paintings of fruits vegetables fish and flowers, she does not work with oils often preferring the undeniable nature of the water color

In Europe's centuries when painters lost the church's support they stopped doing madonnas crucifixions and brought the scenery and the apples out of the background and did people

taking a music lesson
reading a letter
drinking a glass of wine

Images of just or unjust nature could appear without the figure or the figures could appear alone of the unknown citizens like in Raphael Soyer. Maybe now there should be paintings of tax and insurance forms maybe everyday death made me write time-structured works limited to one month one day or one hour's attitude to thought or the sonnet's closed conclusive system or the art of the thought without words or to concentrate on the ferocious aspects of dreams laundry and schools

Then for poetry there is politics love and sex even for extreme cases even for the everyday life of the lost narcissist writer there are these things even for the writer who abhors the subject these things exist that say like in a lecture that subjects and objects are drawn like in a dream around a silly Other who might turn out like the writer to perform the initiation or imitation of their unusual relationships unalienated from the dots that closely make up the forms of the fruits we select from the market garden or farm like our own existences look like only a part of one orange and not the whole thing our spherical dots & carrying so many things home at once a whole heavy bag full of vegetables and fruits we can't always make even pessimistic sense that the fruit of the extreme case of all our anguish is exactly the everyday thing since there's a lot that isn't needed like the recent loss of an hour's time just past April Fool's Day

Cutting the fruits and vegetables with a knife reaches at first no conclusion but color, then a banana in the fruit salad becomes as unwelcome as a grapefruit, even fresh spinach can get to the point of only being eaten by grownups though children love all kinds of sprouts. Carrots are good any way - sliced, steamed, diced, grated, raw, baked with ginger, made into juice and pureed. The

esoteric privileges of avocado and artichoke must be dealt with carefully. Fresh epiphytic pineapple is completely dangerous as is coconut milk not to mention the IRA or the CIA or the cutting of the coconut or the fruits and vegetables of the nightshade family for instance the deadly tomato and potato the tobaccos red peppers petunias and eggplants. Cars themselves are not as careless as the unreliable tastes of peaches in cities. Conclusive and sonnet-like eggs must be gotten completely fresh once a week from the Thursday store on 7th St. Though evil, red and yellow peppers are a bargain now on 1st avenue, often only 59 cents a lb. and with all their shapes they become like flowers in the bowl. Some cucumbers have the spirits of lily-like hyacinths or the weird cut carnations that cannot be looked at so changed in color are they. The folic-acidish broccolis are so in evidence we wonder about their absences of seasons and the pruned cauliflowers, nobody cares about them but the children who seem to like their absence of broccoli-ishness

To take ten tangerines and make fresh juice I often am by love induced not to speak of what you can do with the dictionary-like mango, since we're all human we all know everything, but all these fruits and vegetables are very heavy *Ars longa vita brevis*

(Quoted lines from Clement Moore's " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'")

*

*

Warm and Fragrant Mangos, Thirty Calla Lilies

Windows with warped glass make the sidewalk look like water.

Your blue silk dress lies on the shiny wooden floor.

You are splashing in the bathtub full of stolen flowers
and eucalyptus leaves.

I am walking out of our two octagonal rooms, up a ladder to the roof.

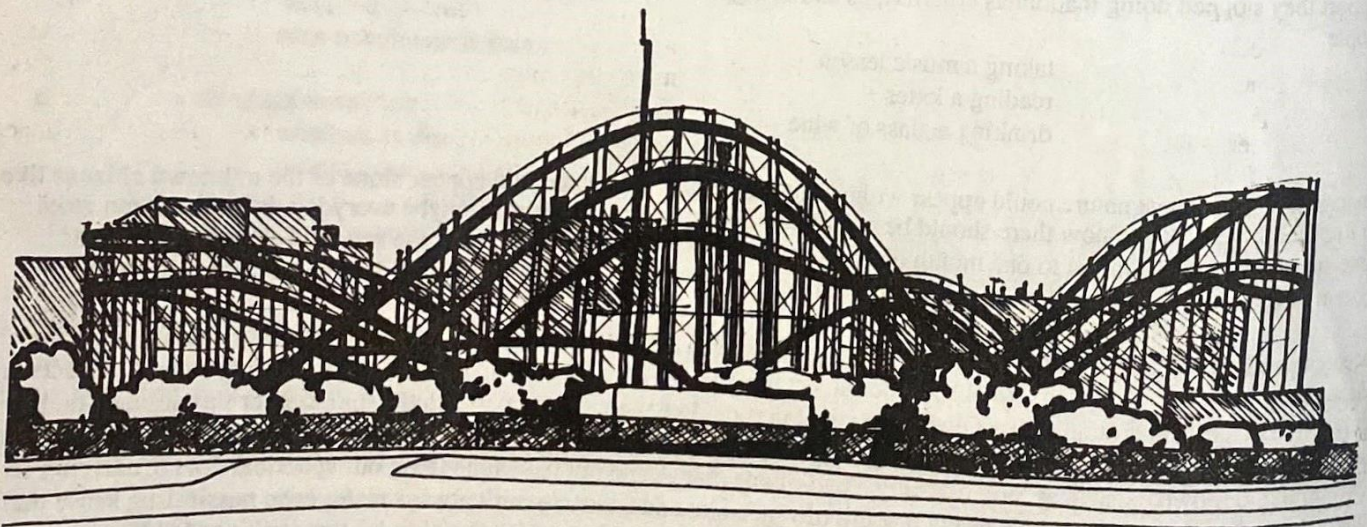
Even with so much immediate gravity, the pleasurable thinking of music
is folding down out of the wall.

Beyond new rice paper shades, the next door boy is rubbing the inside
of his window with a piece of cloth.

I'm raising your movie camera to my eye.

You are cutting up raw fish, accumulating paper, asking me to pin you
down and make you feel how words are placed in the air.

— Lee Ann Brown



Mary Christensen '88

Reviews

"Everything is a picture to the employing eye" **THE COLLECTED POEMS OF WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. Volume 1: 1909-1939**, edited by A. Walton Litz & Christopher MacGowan; New Directions, 1986. 579 pages. \$35, cloth. **Volume 2: 1939-1962**, edited by Christopher MacGowan; New Directions, 1988. 553 pages. \$37 cloth.

In 1973, I was a freshman at William Paterson College, a state school located in a suburb a few miles outside the city of Paterson. Due to lack of car, I found myself making a four-times-a-week, two-bus trip to the campus; usually with a long layover in front of the Carrere and Hastings City Hall that Allen Ginsberg mentions in "Kaddish."

The lack of wheels in a state where their invention seems coincident with its spidery system of Turnpikes and Interstates condemns the lackee to the psychic status of freak and marginal. As a result of my siege mentality, I became friendly with the small band of WPC-ers who got in line behind the elderly, poor and mentally retarded (a state "training" school was nearby the college) and we attempted to keep our conversations on the ride up to campus as lofty and elevated as possible, so as to keep in our minds the image of ourselves as hungry scholars.

One of my fellow *sans bagnoles* was Tim, who had an amazing Elvis-like black pompadour, lived at the Paterson "Y" and worked part-time at the drug rehab center located at (swear to God) the corner of Straight and Narrow Streets. One day, as the decrepit #86 Hamburg Turnpike wheezed up the Preakness Mountains, Tim showed me a copy of William Carlos Williams' *Paterson* — which he found at the Salvation Army Thrift Shoppe. Intrigued by the drawing of the Great Falls on the cover, I checked out this book of poetry. Although I had developed an antipathy to "po-et-tree" — thanks in part to grammar school teachers demanding memorization of massive chunks of Edna St. Vincent Millay — this "Paterson" looked unlike any poetry I had ever seen. Williams wrote in the vernacular, mentioned places and people I was familiar with, as well as admitting to the poem excerpts from letters and history texts. The next day I bought my own copy of the book at Meyer Brothers and started to read it while awaiting the #86 in the urine-puck-reeking Broadway Bus Terminal.

Ten years from that first encounter with Williams, I found myself onstage at the William Carlos Williams Center for the Performing Arts in his hometown of Rutherford, participating in a celebration of the centenary of his birth. "You could look it up!" is what (I think) Casey Stengel would say at a moment like that and I would concur. As with most poets of my generation, it is Williams' shade that we either engage or attempt to circumvent in the creation of a personal poetic stance, much as an earlier generation grappled with T.S. Eliot's bony visage. Although Williams' good friend Ezra Pound was the brains behind the Modernist project, it was Williams that provided a working model for many poets —

Pound's obscurity and questionable political preferences providing two boulders too much for many.

The two-volume *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams* brings together all of Williams' published poetry, excluding the book-length *Paterson*. Skillfully edited by modernist scholars A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan, these books are essential additions to the library of any serious student of Williams. In addition to adding nearly two hundred uncollected poems, Litz and MacGowan have untangled many textual and chronological discrepancies that have plagued the Williams canon for years.

These two volumes supercede the previously published *Collected Earlier Poems*, *Collected Later Poems*, and *Pictures From Breughel* (poems from 1950 to 1962). The first two volumes were prepared at about the same time, for publication in 1951. During this time, Williams had signed a contract with Random House (his first and only major publisher) and had embarked upon a frenzied schedule that would result in the publication of his *Autobiography*, his collected short stories, a selected poems, the fourth book of *Paterson*, and the last volume in the Stecher trilogy, *The Build-Up*. Never known as a scrupulous proofreader, he assembled these volumes rapidly, basing the manuscripts on published texts — rarely consulting typescript or magazine versions. And to add to this frantic scenario, the galley for the *Collected Later Poems* arrived at 9 Ridge Road just as Dr. Williams was to embark on a lengthy West Coast reading tour. In addition to missing many typing errors, Williams did not attempt to correct the mistakes in lineation or adjust the runovers that source publications imposed as a result of design or physical limitations.

The *Collected Early Poems*, edited a year later, have similar textual problems. This volume's basis was a combination of retyped poems and paste-ups from the earlier *Complete Collected Poems* (1938). However, in the preparation of the typescript of this arrangement, Kitty Hoagland, Williams' long-time friend, sometimes failed to include the author's pencilled corrections and she herself contributed a large number of typing errors. Again, mostly due to the dependence on published texts and lack of instruction to Ms. Hoagland, the same problems of arbitrary line-breaks and confusing lineation continued to crop up. Although both volumes of the *Collected Poems* were later revised, these emendations and additions were fairly cosmetic and did not begin to undertake the task of creating an accurate collected edition of Williams' poems.

Editors Litz and MacGowan based this text upon their examination of all known printings of the poems, in addition to examining all available typescripts, galley and page proofs. Based on these studies, many errors in spacing, lineation and syntax have been corrected. The copious and well-organized notes provide valuable background on the poems, including glosses, textual variations, and biographical data.

In organizing these two volumes, the editors chose to retain the integrity of Williams' books by printing them as separate sections in the order of their appearance. Between these volumes, uncollected poems of the period are gathered chrono-

logically. This editorial decision maintains the integrity of Williams' separate volumes, which were carefully put together, and makes for a truer reading of a poet than the linear collection — which often overwhelms the reader by a lack of a structure other than the timeline.

Certainly the greatest attraction of these volumes, beyond textual clarification, is the appearance of what amounts to the entire uncollected Williams. I'm sorry to report that there are no "major" finds or discoveries, but the appearance of anything "new" by a major poet is always of interest. "Invitation," published only in the December 1914 issue of *The Egoist*, is Williams in the process of creating his idiom:

*We live in this flat blue basin,
We and the meadow things, my townspeople,
And there beyond where the snow lies
In ochered patches float the smoke-grey towers.
Has it never struck you as curious
That we do not all leave this place?
Surely we are blest
With a noteworthy wisdom, my townspeople!
Let us be conscious and talk of these things.*

(Vol. 1, page 40)

The hard-edge romanticism characteristic of the mature Williams has not come into place. A line such as "In ochered patches...." would soon give way to more direct and concrete imagery.

Two years after the publication of "Invitation," Williams demonstrates his remarkable growth as a poet in a previously uncollected poem, "Night":

*Houses —
the dark side silhouetted
on flashes of moonlight!*

*The air — full of
invisible snow!*

*At the end of the street —
chrysanthemums in
a lighted window;
white and pink globes
clusters masses!
They grow clearer
nearer... nearer!
I will never reach them! !
(if I continue)*

*The window
is full of flowers —
more than I imagined...*

They are gone!

*The flower girl
has switched off the light.*

*Moon-shine
street lamps in my face.
"What do I care!"*

(Vol. 1, page 59)

It takes some effort for the contemporary reader to imagine what it was like to encounter a poem such as this in 1917, even as the furor over Imagism was raging in the literary journals of the day. Imagists, who often verged on the prissy, would never commit to paper something as "ungrammatical" as "Moon-shine / street lamps in my face." (And, further, is "street lamps" used as noun, adjective, or verb construction?) And who is saying "What do I care!" — the speaking subject? — the flower girl? And who would end a poem in such a way at that time? Williams applied the freedom and experimentation he saw in the Armory Show and at his friend Stieglitz's An American Place gallery and incorporated these permissions into his poetry. Williams may not have been the most scholarly or learned of the Modernists, but was gifted with an uncanny sense of what was on the cutting edge of the arts in his time.

From his listening post in the Jersey suburbs, Williams was able to accurately diagnose the temper of his time and place, befitting his training as a doctor. He was the first major poet to own and drive an automobile, and the daily kaleidoscope that the world appears to be from a moving car continually reappears in many of Williams' short poems:

*I just saw two boys.
One of them gets paid for distributing circulars
and he throws it down the sewer.*

(from "Details for Paterson," Vol. 2, page 24)

Williams was part of that generation that came of age during the Machine Age. The New York City he knew as an intern at French Hospital was beginning to transform itself from a mercantile and manufacturing center to its present role as the heart of the corporate empire. During that internship, the first subway cars began rolling beneath Broadway and the city's business district began the move towards midtown. The 1913 publication of his first mature book, *The Tempers*, coincides with the opening of the then-astonishing Woolworth Building. Williams may have been unable to precisely define his theory of the "variable foot," but his description of the poem as a "small (or large) machine made of words" serves well as the unifying element of his canon. Williams attempted nothing less than the creation of a kinetic portrait of a life in Twentieth Century America — which accounts, in part, for the career-long investigation of a new measure that could replicate that energy in a poem. Williams gets past the problematic bipolarity of Western culture, the split between subject and object, by understanding the poem to be merely just another existing *object* in the world. Throughout his poetry, Williams reiterates a continual and insistent message: that one can live in the world without the need to resort to mythology or mythologizing.

Looking up. of a sudden,

my old eyes saw
the new moon in the sky

But it was of my eyes,
a jiggling star.
No moon was in the sky

("Poem" Vol. 2, page 223)

The two volumes of Williams' *Collected Poems* can be read as one man's intellectual autobiography. To read these thousand pages is to follow the poet's mind mirrored in a pool that encompasses politics, culture, and art. Williams' work contains a subversive element in line with the many liberatory struggles of this century. He demystified poetry by privileging sensate experience squarely over scholasticism. He fiercely rejected the old forms and conventions in a manner not unlike the revolutionary ascetic casting a lizard eye against the rotting hulk of the old order. In the remarkable "This Florida: 1924," he even reevaluates his own experiments in meter: "And we thought to escape rime / by imitation of the senseless / unarrangement of wild things — / the stupidest rime of all—". Years later, we find him promoting his discovery of the variable foot and three-stepped line as major breakthroughs, yet by 1955 he had again returned to the stanzaic blocks that had served admirably for so long.

He was never a political radical, despite marginal flings with right-wing Social Credit economics and the writers connected with the leftist *New Masses*. He was, however, a fan of FDR and was overjoyed with John F. Kennedy's election, and advocated socialized medicine (a daring move for a doctor). Although traces of anti-Semitism and other related stupid suburban prejudices creep into his writings, he seems to have had a sincere affection for the oppressed and the underdog. His volume of short stories, *A Knife of the Times*, remains one of the best depictions of the struggle of the common person during the Great Depression. His liberal's faith in progress was no doubt shaken by the enormous losses of life resulting from World War II and by the detonation of the Atom Bomb. In the last years his poetry becomes a reverie for things and people close to him: the poems to his grandchildren, the friends who had survived along with him, the small events of his neighborhood and, of course, the many love poems to his wife, Flossie. Still, one of the last known poems he wrote, "Heal & Toe To the End," reaffirms his dogged optimism in the future that certainly must have spurred on his own work during decades of marginality. Incapacitated by numerous strokes and barely able to type, he nonetheless was so thrilled by the first manned orbit around the earth by Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, that on reading the headline on the front page of the April 14, 1961 *New York Times*: "I Could Have Gone On Forever" (quoting the cosmonaut), he went upstairs to his study and wrote a poem.

The *Collected Poems* reads like an encyclopedia of contemporary verse forms. Williams was constantly reinventing his poetry and was aware of the works of his contemporaries. Although he was uncomfortable with Allen Ginsberg's lifestyle and sexual orientation, he admired the work of the then-young poet enough to write "The High Bridge Above The Tagus River At Toledo" in the long lines characteristic of

"Howl." Poets with styles as varied as Clark Coolidge, Harvey Shapiro, Allen Ginsberg, Alice Notley, and Paul Blackburn can all equally claim an inheritance to the poetry of Williams. Although Williams has made it onto university reading lists, it is with some ill ease, given that the reading samples chosen from his work are consistently his most conversational pieces and, often, uncharacteristic works, such as "The Yachts" and "Tract." Sadly, Williams is isolated as the representative writer from a writing tendency that is regarded as marginal in the academy. The assumedly magisterial *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing* virtually ignores Louis Zukofsky, Charles Reznikoff, H.D., Mina Loy, and George Oppen — poets who represent an important continuum of Williams' prosody. It is somewhat understandable that the scholar might be drawn to Wallace Stevens or T.S. Eliot, given the layers of exegesis each provides in their texts. Williams' "subject" is the poetic act itself, whether it is directly addressed, in "Spring and All" and "Desert Music" or implied, in his many short samples of "native speech" such as "To Greet A Letter-Carrier":

Why'n't you bring me
a good letter? One with
lots of money in it.
I could make use of that.
Atta boy! Atta boy!

(Vol. 1, page 458)

which directly demanded to be taken as "serious" poetry and, indirectly, called into question the boundaries of the poetic and the poem. The durability and continuing importance of Williams' poetry is both his wonderful accessibility and a complexity that makes each reading another small rip into the rainbow of his imagination.

Williams, in a famous passage in his "Asphodel, that Greeny Flower," said: "It is difficult / to get the news from poems / yet men die miserably every day / for lack / of what is found there." Great stuff, but a bit of the poet's bravado — the writer facing the reader/jury, attempting to justify one's calling. For my own purposes, I much prefer the sentiment of the journal entry dated June 23, 1928, published nearly fifty years later in a volume of philosophic essays, notes, and fragments, "The Embodiment of Knowledge":

But poetry continues. Since it happens always justly, never lying, never in front of life but around it when it occurs, unlike anything else in existence: proven, just exact.

--Joel Lewis

* * *

11/2/48 -- I voted for the first time today, and I've been waiting to vote for so many years that I was quite excited. Maybe I'll become a social novelist, except that I probably couldn't think of anything to say, and would never be sure it was right, at that. And I'm not irresponsible enough to be successful at it, really.

-- Frank O'Hara

(from "A Journal" *Early Writing*, Grey Fox Press, 1977)

What Being Responsible Means to Me, Donna Brook; Hanging Loose Press, 1987. 60 pages. \$15 cloth, \$7 paper.

The poems in *What Being Responsible Means to Me*, Donna Brook's third and most recent collection, come in a variety of types. They run at different speeds like 33 and 45rpm records, they are delivered to the reader in different forms, and they are spoken in a voice with a wide and varied range. What they have in common is that each of them — the method of *making* each of them — were informed as much by what they are about, as by the prosodic lenses through which she perceived her subject matter. Even more so.

This is a good thing. It is what singles the book out, in the tide of recent books of poetry, that will carry it ashore: the poems in it are alive. They are made out of a life the reader participates in, and deliver it whole.

Some of the poems are linear narrations, formed around the single thread of ideas that caused them to exist. They are often about family and friends, and often about memory. The following is the last strophe of "Pink Diapers":

*Still I vividly remember
a man who had been with Trotsky in Mexico
grabbing my brother by the ears
and lifting him three feet off the ground.
He brought him straight
up in the air saying, "Jesus,
you're a carbon copy of your father.
You poor bastard, you look
just like him."*

Others are a series of self-contained fragments, each lending and borrowing a different poetic energy from the other. Their centers are less immediate and more metaphysical, and their meanings more constellatory than specific. The best of them can deliver a rich impressionistic blow that asks more questions than it answers, as in the following, from "Spring":

*ants, bees, collective
animals, original communists and
what did I mean to say about them?
nothing*

Most of the other poems in this volume are, in form, like the two examples cited above, or, like the tones in the mid-ranges of a spectrum, have characteristics, to varying degrees, in common with them both.

What Being Responsible Means to Me is a book of well-worked and generous poems. Although they vary in subject and form they create a larger context. Their human centers touch underneath like islands. Together they form a rich, unified whole.

— Chuck Wachtel

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"The real Peer Gynt is buried between Harpefoss and Vinstra."

— The Mermaids of Chenonceaux

More or Less Urgent, Nina Zivancevic, New Rivers Press, 68 pages. \$5 paper.

"A liberating thought at the future corner of your mind" reads one of her titles. There's positive anticipation in this. The author can lay true claim to a hard-won vantage point of perspective, as one who comes to us from an older, more patient culture: namely the East-West crossroads that is Yugoslavia. Yet her poems are better travelled than this and always manage to encompass all continents at one time.

Not so much a poet's poet in the way this fussy century approves specialty, be it geography or ethics, she is, more plainly speaking, a poetry lover's poet. Would it be too much of an imposition to say that the wisdom of her youth prevails upon us in this book? This brave post-beat pre-new life voice really has no peers for ready comparison. Rather, she is a continual reminder of what can be done when education and guts sit down together.

Zivancevic happily enough disproves Malcolm Cowley's proposition which suggests that tradition and sensibility are in conflict. No such conflict exists in this formidable collection of poems gleaned from Europe, America and Africa. Her patience and inner resourcefulness are not altogether quaint notions, for both her survival and her prominence keep close tabs on each other. There is classical sense in her curiously rich variety of evocations, as for example:

*Through the night through the keyhole's dim light
you take the mouth from a statue and then
you try to remember Love, washing your fingers
in a pool of blood, Aphrodite!*

(from "Jean Cocteau: Blood of a Poet")

An uncanny assortment of poems gathered on many stops from Belgrade to New York over at least a five-year period, *More or Less Urgent* is still calm and solidly assertive. Zivancevic promises more future adventures in living poetics and pleasantly enough there is this present volume, her first book published here, poems delivering a keen sensibility, grace, and wonder.

—Tom Weigel

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In the midst of my mother's packing, my sister Stella and my brother Virgil stormed into the house, having heard from many sources of the wild scene in front of the police station. My mother, never one to waste a dramatic improvisation in the presence of her children, promptly passed out on the kitchen floor, thus heading off the hasty and ill-conceived bus ride over the Sierras to Denver, a journey she would have found exceedingly difficult, for she suffered from backache and chronic urinary frequency.

— John Fante

(from *The Brotherhood of the Grape*, reprinted in 1988 by Black Sparrow Press)

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

October

5 Poet and translator **ANSELM HOLLO** is the author of *Pick Up the House: New and Selected Poems* (Coffee House Press) and the newly published *Outlying Districts (1)* (Smithereens Press, 1987)... **DICK GALLUP** is the author of *Above the Tree Line* (1976) and *Plumbing the Depths of Folley* (Smithereens Press, 1983) and other collections of poems.

12 A Tribute to **JOHN CLELLON HOLMES**. Holmes, the author of such jazz-flavored, Beat novels as *Go*, and *The Hom* died earlier this year. He is credited with being the first to describe the literary circle which included Kerouac, Burroughs, Ginsberg, et. al. as "The Beat Generation." Participating in this evening of readings and music will be Allen Ginsberg, David Amram, Larry Rivers, Peggy Brooks, Seymour Krim, Herbert Huncke, Rick Ardinger, Jay Landesman, Fran Landesman and others.

19 **DIANE WAKOSKI** is the author of over twenty-five books of poetry including *Emerald Ice: Selected Poems 1962-1987* and *The Collected Greed: Parts I-XIII*, both from Black Sparrow Press. **ELINOR NAUEN** is the author of *Cars and Other Poems* (Misty Terrace Press, 1980). For three seasons she coordinated the Poetry Project Theater Series.

26 San Francisco "language" poet, critic and performer **STEVE BENSON** is the author of several books including *Blue Book* (The Figures, 1988); and *Dominance* (The Coincidences, 1985). Forthcoming from Black Sparrow Press is **LAURA CHESTER's** *In the Zone: New and Selected Writings*. Her books include *Lupis Novis* (Station Hill) and *Free Rein* (Burning Deck).

November

2 **TERENCE WINCH's** *Irish Musicians/American Friends* (Coffee House Press) won the Before Columbus Foundation's American Book Award in 1986. Forthcoming from Line Press is a collection of short stories, *Contenders*. **JOE CERAVOLO's** books include *Millennium Dust* (Kulchur, 1982), *Transmigration* (Toothpaste), and *Inry*.

9 **CLARENCE MAJOR** is the author of novels, *My Amputations* (Fiction Collective, 1986); and *Such was the Season* (Mercury House, 1987). His most recent book of poems is *Surfaces and Masks* (1988). Poet, fiction-writer and critic **DOUGLAS MESSERLI** is the author of the poetic trilogy *River to Rivet*. He is the publisher of Sun and Moon Press.

16 A former Program Coordinator of The Poetry Project, **PATRICIA SPEARS JONES** is the author of *Mythologizing Always* (Telephone Books, 1981). **ANTLER** is the author of *Factory* (City Lights Books) and the critically acclaimed *Last Words* (Ballantine, 1987).

30 **LARRY FAGIN** is the author of *I'll Be Seeing You: Selected Poems 1962-1975* (Full Court Press) and the editor of *Adventures in Poetry* magazine and books. **CLARK COOLIDGE** is the author of over twenty books including *Mesh* (In Camera, 1988), *Melancholia* (The Figures, 1987) and *Solution Passage: Poems 1978-1981* (Sun and Moon).

MONDAY NIGHTS

October

3 OPEN READING

10 **MOLLY RUSSAKOFF** lives in Philadelphia "and somebody smart should publish a book of hers soon." A few of her poems have appeared in *The Paris Review*, *East Village Eye*, and in the latest issue of *CUZ* (#2). **VINCENT KATZ** studied music and classics in Chicago and England and is the author of *A Tremor in the Morning* (Peter Blum Eds., 1986) and the forthcoming *Cabal of Zealots*, from Hanuman.

17 **TIM MONAGHAN**, 19, has been published in a number of collections of young writers and is the founder and co-editor of *The Ledge* magazine. **TODD COLBY** has had poems in *Pome*, *Mudfish*, *B-City*, *Blue Smoke*, etc., and wrote *Amazing Secrets*. He is 25 and plays in the band *Drunken Boat*.

24 **ROGER ELY** is a British writer and performer currently living in New York, editing his short film of Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Among his many accomplishments are the compilation of anthology/tributes for William Burroughs and Georges Bataille, his own *Dream Fantasies* and *REcollections* (Writer's Forum, London, 1987), and an international series of performances with Ian Smith. **NANCY SWARTZ** is a young writer/performer who's appeared frequently at WOW Cafe, Dixon Place, and The Wah Wah Hut. Her last work, "Fanmail," tracked the exploits of an obsessive Madonna fan.

31 **NICOLE ZEDD** starred in Nick Zedd and R. Kern's film, *Totem of the Depraved*, Zedd and Jessica Jason's *Me Minus You*, and Zedd's performance, *She*, with Richard Hell. **GIA GENOCIDE** does telephone sex for a living, won this year's New York Tattoo Society award for her skin art, and is the co-author, with Nicole, of *Bleed*, due soon from Smut Publications.

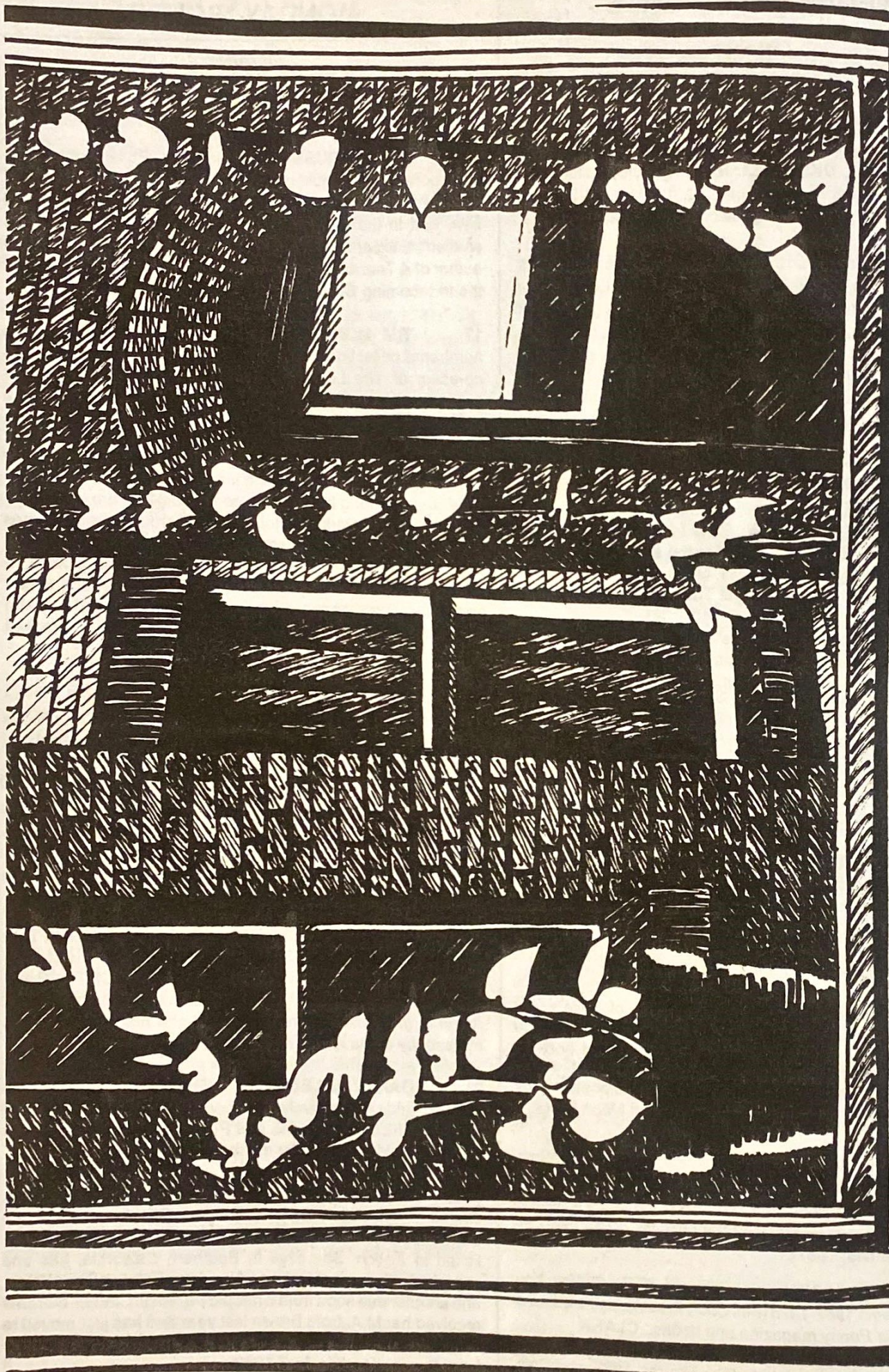
November

7 OPEN READING

14 **SARA MANNHEIMER** has just moved to New York from her native Sweden. She is 21 and spent portions of 1986 and 1988 at the Naropa Institute. **JENNIFER HECHT** is 22 and studying French Cultural History at Columbia. Her manuscript, *Alone in the Store*, is circulating and she has had poems in *Philosophy in the Arts*, *The Webster Review*, and *Fire*.

21 **BARRY SILESKY** and **SHARON SOLWITZ** are married and, respectively, the poetry and fiction editors of *Another Chicago Magazine* and Press. They have both been published widely in literary magazines.

28 **ELIZABETH ROBINSON** has had work in *Cleavage*, *Cleres tory*, *Giants Play Well in the Drizzle*, and won the Baxter Hathaway Award for a long poem subsequently published in *Epoch*. She lives in Southern California, has one pamphlet, *My Name Happens Also*, from Burning Deck Press, and another due soon from Entropic Paradigm. **JENA OSMAN** received her M.A. from Brown last year and has just moved to New York. A chapbook entitled *twelve parts of her* will appear from Burning Deck in April 1989.



Mary Christensen '88

THE POETRY PROJECT

ST. MARK'S CHURCH
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003

SECOND AVE. & TENTH ST.
(212) 674-0910

NOVEMBER

- 2 Joe Ceravolo & Terence Winch
- 7 Open Reading
- 9 Clarence Major & Douglas Messerli
- 14 Sara Mannheimer & Jennifer Hecht
- 16 Antler & Patricia Spears Jones
- 21 Barry Silesky & Sharon Solwitz
- 28 Elizabeth Robinson & Jena Osman
- 30 Clark Coolidge & Larry Fagin

OCTOBER

- 3 Open Reading
- 5 Dick Gallup & Anselm Hollo
- 10 Molly Russakoff & Vincent Katz
- 12 John Clellon Holmes Tribute
(See previous page for list of participants)
- 17 Tim Monaghan & Todd Colby
- 19 Diane Wakoski & Elinor Nauen
- 24 Roger Ely & Nancy Swartz
- 26 Laura Chester & Steve Benson
- 31 Nicole Zedd & Gia Genocide

Special Event

- 9 **A Celebration of Robert Duncan**
3 pm (in the sanctuary). FREE
(See next page for list of participants)

Lecture Series

- 30 **Jane Augustine, Michael Davidson, Richard Sieburth & Eliot Weinberger: Poet as Figure of Authority: Poets and Tyrants.** 7 pm.

All events begin at 8 pm, admission by contribution of \$5 except where noted. Programs subject to change.

WORKSHOPS

"Writing and Reading Writing," taught by Steve Levine, Tuesdays at 7 pm (October 18th through December 20th). Romanticism debunked! Readings in all sorts of all forms of modern poetry from all periods. Focus on reading a poem in an attempt to see how it was written; i.e., what the poet was thinking during the act and how those thoughts were used to shape and give impetus to a set of words. Imagine you are John Donne contemplating the end of the line! Words as discrete entities will be discussed, as well as the ins and outs of assembling them into heaps that will irrevocably alter the way humanity gulp envisions the world. Participants will keep notebooks, fulfill writing assignments.

STEVE LEVINE is a poet whose affiliation with The Poetry Project began in 1976. He has twice taught the Project's Children's Poetry Workshop. His books are A Blue Tongue, Three Numbers, Pure Notations, and The Cycles of Heaven.

"Exercises and Experiments in Poetry and Prose," taught by Bernadette Mayer, Fridays at 7 pm (beginning October 28, ongoing through May). Traditional forms, chance methods, other poets, dreaming, science writing, realism and surrealism, chaos and derangement, repetition. The uses of journals. Field trips to beyond the door and above the lintel. The translation of observation. Study of transitions. Long poems, experimental methods, creations of new forms. Unknowns of the possibilities of writing. Questions.

BERNADETTE MAYER is a former Director of The Poetry Project. Her books include Mutual Aid, Utopia, Midwinter Day, and Sonnets.

"Word!: Language, Signification, and Rhythm in New World Writing (Today)," taught by Kofi Natambu, Saturdays at 12 pm (beginning October 25). This class will concern itself with a theoretical and critical investigation of how vernacular and oral uses of language affect writing. Focus will be on modern and postmodern forms of poetry, fiction, and literary theory. Music, in a myriad of forms, will be featured as well as "sound-texts." Great emphasis will be put on READING in this workshop. SOURCE-TEXTS (AUTHORS): Jane Cortez, Amiri Baraka, Gayl Jones, Nathaniel Mackey, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Ishmael Reed, Arthur Brown, Houston A. Baker, Roland Barthes, Larry Neal, Henry Dumas, Jacques Derrida, Zora Neale Hurston, Lorenzo Thomas, David Henderson, Xam Wilson Cartier, Victor Hernandez Cruz, and Sonya Sanchez.

KOFI NATAMBU is the editor of Solid Ground, an interdisciplinary journal on the arts and Nostalgia for the Present, an anthology of writings from Detroit. He is the author of a collection of poems, Intervals, and has been published widely in literary magazines, including Obsidian, Hambone and The Black Scholar.

\$50 annual registration fee includes membership benefits and admission to all regularly scheduled Poetry Project events.

SPECIAL EVENT

A CELEBRATION OF ROBERT DUNCAN, on Sunday, October 9th at 3 pm (in the sanctuary). FREE.

A memorial reading of work by Duncan, poems, poems in tribute, and remembrances — with Robert Kelly, Jackson Mac Low, Armand Schwerner, Michael Rumaker, Bernadette Mayer, David Abel, Lee Ann Brown Clayton Eshleman, Robert Berhol, Eliot Weinberger Norman MacAfee, Tom Savage, David Levi Strauss, Barbara Guest, and many others. "Robert Duncan...A Life in Poetry will be screened.

LECTURE SERIES

Sunday, October 30th, 7 pm: Poet as Figure of Authority: Poets and Tyrants. A pre-election discussion with **JANE AUGUSTINE, MICHAEL DAVIDSON, RICHARD SIEBURTH** and **ELIOT WEINBERGER** on the notion and actuality of the poet as authority figure; the 20th-century poet's relationship to political tyranny and avant-garde formal strategies and ideology.

JANE AUGUSTINE is preparing a book on the poet H.D.'s late religious thinking. She is the author of a book of poems, *Lit By The Earth's Dark Blood* (Perishable Press).

MICHAEL DAVIDSON is the author of *The San Francisco Renaissance* (Cambridge University Press), and several books of poetry, including *The Analogy of the Ion* (The Figures) and *The Landing of Rochambeau* (Burning Deck).

RICHARD SIEBURTH is preparing a collection of Ezra Pound's writings on French culture and literature, forthcoming from *New Directions*. He has translated from the French M. Leiris's *Nights as Days/Days as Nights* (Eridanos).

ELIOT WEINBERGER is the author of *Works on Paper*, a collection of essays (*New Directions*). He has translated from the Spanish *The Collected Poems of Octavio Paz* (*New Directions*) and a collection of poems by Vicente Huidobro, *Altazor* (Grey Wolf). He is a contributing editor of *Sulfur*.

COMMUNITY MEETING & ELECTION

The annual Poetry Project **COMMUNITY MEETING** will be held **Saturday December 10th at 2 pm** in the parish hall. All are welcome. Admission FREE.

Simultaneous with the Community Meeting (from 2-4 pm) will be the election of a community member to the Board of Directors of The Poetry Project, Ltd. Candidates for this position must submit written self-nominations. Nominations are due in The Poetry Project office by 5 pm, November 10. Eligibility requirements and a description of the duties of Directors will be available at the Project office after October 10. Current members of The Poetry Project, writers who have participated in Project events and all those who have demonstrated an on-going interest in The Poetry Project are eligible to vote in the election. The election is conducted by written ballot.

The Corners of the Mouth, Elaine Equi; Iridescence (481 Woodland Drive, Sierra Madre, CA 91024). 70 pages. \$6; and *Accessories*; *The Figures* (5 Castle Hill, Great Barrington, MA 01230). 36 pages. \$4. *Against The Wind: Selected Poems*, Hanny Michaelis (translated from the Dutch by Manfred Wold and Paul Vincent); Twowindows Press (2644 Fulton St., Berkeley, CA 94704). 68 pages. \$8. *Selected Letters of Stéphane Mallarmé*, edited and translated by Rosemary Lloyd; University of Chicago Press. 272 pages. \$27.50. *Musicality*, Barbara Guest, with drawings by June Felter; Kelsey St. Press (PO Box 9235, Berkeley, CA 94709). 44 pages. \$9. *The Roominghouse Madrigals: Early Selected Poems 1946-1966*, Charles Bukowski; Black Sparrow Press. 256 pages. \$20 cloth, \$12.50 paper. *Selected Poems*, James Schuyler; Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 292 pp. \$25.

Elaine Equi makes an asset out of the interesting problem of being a poet of cosmopolitan talents stranded in that town of hog butchers and freight handlers, Chicago. Equi's two new collections reveal a sophisticated lyric-romantic sensibility obviously honed on New York, West Coast and international models. You'd think all that would set her at odds with the stormy, husky, brawling, notoriously unsubtle city which is her native place and subject. But Equi's clash of styles with her hometown is sidelong, not head-on: it ends up, after a few skirmishes, in collusion and alliance.

She gently chides Chicago's "Big Shoulders" masculinity, watching its men "dancing with tape measures, / Building things without any flowers / and commenting ironically: "when they're done they'll want to hire some woman"; and admits sympathy with satanist Aleister Crowley, who on his one visit to the city "was bored" (Equi spies the ultramundane satanist's ghost lingering in her neighborhood, idly tampering with a geranium).

Challenged, though, she's quick to Chicago's defense with a full post-punk Dorothy-Parkerish kit of weapons: arched-eyebrow barbs, nervy, catchy hooks of pop-conscious metaphor, and double-meanings stitched in lightheadedly "as if doodled there / with invisible ink." In "Gypsy Show," as defiant response to all those urbane New York School poems about the bracing air of Manhattan, Equi delights in Chicago's own special weather, its winter blizzards reminding her of "some long forgotten cartoon character whose boa/sparks a fit of giggles...the snow / is always hot-blooded and tells / the fortune of whomever / it falls on." And though the Monsters of the Midway aren't mentioned, she boasts in her "Ode to Chicago" with tongue only halfway in cheek that "in my city / dinosaurs are not extinct...Nowhere else will you find rocks that perspire, / trees that grow hair." Elaine Equi may be the enlightened laureate Chicago's always deserved to make up for Carl Sandburg.

Hanny Michaelis' *Against the Wind: Selected Poems* marks the debut in English of a modern Dutch poet of stirring power and depth. Drawn from five volumes covering Michaelis' work up to 1971, this selection develops themes of wartime personal tragedy and loss into a larger statement of the lonely

fate of the individual in the postwar mass-technological world. Michaelis' quiet, understated, elliptical style achieves surprising strength in its ironic counterpointing of love and feeling against the bleak lights of a thin present in which "life is all / gasoline smell and neon shine." This is a poet of hard truths, whose small, tense poems all seem to confront one paradox, the way "death blooms imperturbably / in the crown of life." Michaelis offers a haunting woman's vision of alienation in a dehumanizing society where the body becomes "an oblong factor / full of tubes and scaffolding and soft / machinery," and the self "a vacuous word." Often pessimistic in their existential revelation, these are poems of a persistent courage as well, keeping an eye out for small epiphanies of "awesome beauty" amid the post-industrial landscape's "irreversible disaster," and always searching, even in a "polar sea of discontent," for love's "islands of tropical well-being."

Rosemary Lloyd, distinguished Cambridge University French scholar and recent translator of another symbolist epistolary classic, the letters of Baudelaire, now edits and renders into English for the first time the *Selected Letters of Stéphane Mallarmé*. Lloyd's selection represents the gist of an eleven-volume French edition, the most essential epistles of a coolly aloof poet-aestheticist who claimed that in his letters it would one day be possible to "see into the depths of my heart." Writing to Verlaine, Zola, Valéry, Whistler, Redon, Manet, and Munch, Mallarmé in fact exposes less heart than an amazing mind, and full consciousness of his art-historical moment. A heady and expansive moment it seems to have been. "My spirit is moving in the eternal," Mallarmé at one point informs a friend, "and has experienced several intimations of it, if one may talk in such a way of the Immutable." The hard gem-like flame of the symbolist religion of poetry returns here for a last interesting flicker, as we tiptoe with the poet of dice and glaciers, ice and swans, out onto "cliffs pure of all existence," where everything aspires to the condition of music.

To capture the momentary essence of music like "a pearl snatched from its shell" is also the aim of *Musicality*, an elegant contemporary production much in keeping with the Mallarmé-esque high-aesthetic spirit. Here verse by Barbara Guest and drawings by June Felter are conjoined to catch that fugitive spirit-movement of the eternal, sketched in synesthetic landscapes and felt in poetry like a whispering rustle behind the gauze curtain of "a cloud / of Purcell muslin intimidating in / anxious-less moments when thoughts provoke." Music is both evoked and made in a hovering, coalescing, dissolving sort of way as "chromatically the structure unfolds / a formal delicacy."

"I don't write to communicate," Charles Bukowski once said, "I write because I have to... I write to save myself." Redemptive testament of his early days as flophouse saint and beer-bar martyr of the American dream, his *The Roominghouse Madrigals: Early Selected Poems 1946-1966* dredges up from out-of-print collector's editions and long-lost little mags the last-chance-saloon-of-life greatest hits of this original big daddy of all American poetic mavericks — little-honored in his own land, where his anti-academic posture (alternately belligerent and contemptuous) has kept him perpetually out of favor in the

ivory towers where poetry reputations are conflated. Bukowski, as these poems show, won his own writing name the hard way, by appealing less to professors than to assembly-line workers, prisoners, parking-lot attendants. But his wide popular audience has sometimes been held against him as a result, and unfairly. These early poems are more lyrical and romantic than his later work, but possess the same taut, spare storytelling qualities. They reveal a poet whose literary sources and ancestry lie proudly in prose, with the lonely starvation-artist of Hamsun's *Hunger* and the explosive black-comic nihilist of Céline's *Journey to the End of the Night*. And like the lack of polished music made up for by compressed prose-truths, the stubbornly unreconstructed attitude and raw loner's stance become long-run strengths. "I want you to draw like Mondrian," the poet's night-school art teacher tells him in one poem. "But I don't want to draw / like Mondrian," the poet replies. "I want to draw like a sparrow eaten by a cat."

After five significant-event collections in twenty years, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Morning of the Poem* in 1980, and the brilliant *A Few Days* in 1985, New York poet James Schuyler's *Selected Poems* ought to move him up from the status of cult-classic to classic pure and simple. Already justly famed among the cognoscenti for his painterly intimist's touch, his tonal control tuned in down to the smallest gesture of everyday speech, and his night-flyer's instinct for arriving at big emotional moments by deceptively rambling and discursive paths, Schuyler is a marvelous and disarming urban-pastoral master with more civilization, grace and wit in any ten lines than you'll find in six months' worth of *The New Yorker*, and considerable spirit and heart to go with all that talent.

His is one of those rare voices whose originality is all the better pointed up by its blending of many disparate sweet strains from the past. Echoes of seventeenth-century lyricist Robert Herrick linger somewhere in his poetry's backdrop, as do those of moderns William Carlos Williams and Elizabeth Bishop.

*So many lousy poets
So few good ones
What's the problem?
No innate love of
Words, no sense of
How the thing said
Is in the words, how
The words are themselves
The thing said: love,
Mistake, promise, auto
Crack-up, color, petal,
The color in the petal
Is merely light
And that's refraction:
A word, that's the poem.*

Schuyler's special joy in words and things is personal trademark stuff, finally. It's seen best in long, breezy conversational pieces like the above-quoted *The Morning of the Poem* and *A Few Days*, where the great mysteriousness of everyday life quietly builds in the accumulating sediment of small details. It's that rich swarm of details from life's "squandered minutes,

hours, days" that sets Schuyler's poems off. This is a writer who detects eternity in the most banal surfaces, comparing the "calm secret exultation" of Christmas to the taste of Sealtest eggnog, and predicting that when death comes for him it will find him with a jar of Yuban instant coffee in one hand, a can of Coleman's mustard in the other. In his art, words and things are simply "as mysterious as nature, as life."

— Tom Clark

(Tom Clark's most recent book of poetry is *Easter Sunday*, published by Coffee House Press, Minneapolis.)

*

STONY BROOK

Spartinas, mowed by water, stand
waist-high and bendable;
where the Sound curves uphill
beside the sandbar, the oncoming
water
niches it again and again, as
sand erodes the water. A child's
paper hat rides the flood,
caught but released, again and
again,
in cane-field thickets. A schooner
in a far off-channel irons out
the wakes of other craft. I accuse
you,
again and again, of harboring
me here,
against my ill-moods, and misfortunes,
where the water slowly floods
with sand,
along this beach, below these
cliffs,
opposite West Meadow and the
green shack,
beside the warm tide waters.

(for Alice)

—Richard Elman

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Melodramatic maybe, it seems to me now. But then it was like throwing a million bricks out of my heart when I threw the books into the water. I leaned over the rail of the S.S. Malone and threw the books as far as I could out into the sea—all the the books I had had at Columbia, and all the books I had lately bought to read.

—Langston Hughes

(opening paragraph of *The Big Sea*, the first of Hughes's two volumes of moving and intelligent autobiography (*I Wonder As I Wander* being the second), both recently re-issued by Thunder's Mouth Press)

Curriculum Vitae, Lawrence Joseph; University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988.

Begin with bio: Lawrence Joseph was born in Detroit, the grandson of Lebanese and Syrian immigrants. The family owned a grocery store in the ghetto. Joseph went to parochial school, was an altar boy, and came of age in the Sixties. He saw his father's store go up in flames during the riots, worked in automotive factories, and participated in the Vietnam protests at the University of Michigan, where he also won the Hopwood Award for poetry. In the classic immigrant tradition, he was pushed to succeed in education. He went on to Oxford, then to law school. As a new lawyer, he worked for a big Wall Street firm before leaving the business world. He now teaches torts at St. John's University.

As its title suggests, *Curriculum Vitae* draws heavily on the experiences of Joseph's upbringing. Coming from a recent immigrant background, he was early aware of his outsider status:

*"Sand nigger," I'm called,
and the name fits: I am
the light-skinned nigger
with black eyes and the look
difficult to figure — a look
of indifference, a look to kill —
a Levantine nigger
in the city on the strait
between the great Lakes of Erie and St. Clair*
(*"Sand Nigger"*)

Working in the family store, "Apron on, alone behind the cash register, the grocer's son / angry, ashamed, and proud as the poor with whom he deals," (*"There I Am Again"*) Joseph also acquired an awareness that the suburban kid doesn't get of the urban underclass. He sees them as both victims and victimizers (his father was shot in a hold-up), and he knows the power of money to buy people, a lesson reinforced from days as a teenage caddy, a sander on an assembly line, and a Wall Street lawyer.

The poems, written in a laconic, just-the-facts-ma'am style, come from three basic sources: Joseph's Lebanese-Arab heritage, his Detroit youth, and his current experiences in New York. The poems dealing with Lebanon itself are the farthest from the average reader's experience, but Joseph has the ability to convey some of the tortured history of the region and can summarize brilliantly, as when he describes himself as being:

*... Lebanese enough
to be against his brother,
with his brother against his cousin,
with cousin and brother
against the stranger.*
(*"Sand Nigger"*)

Joseph's Catholic education gave him a rigorous intellect, a wealth of theology, and the sense of guilt that broods over all

of his poetry. He writes well of adolescence, with its explosion of learning and lust:

*In the Jesuit School
the middle voice
of the optative mood,
cassocks, wooden
kneelers, pages
of cosines, syllogisms.
In the imagination
the blue cotton skirt
at Immaculata High School
lifted with both hands.*

(*"In This Time"*)

The guilt that the Church Fathers instilled carries over into Joseph's life today. He was a working class boy who by brains and luck raised himself from his roots; now he is a relatively affluent New Yorker who could, if he chose, be part of the establishment. He is in that world and not of it, yet some of its responsibilities and its sins must adhere to him. He walks the landscape of lower New York City, sees the homeless, sees what his country does and doesn't do, and knows himself judged. Lawyers in court argue guilt or innocence, and Joseph argues like a lawyer, contending with himself and with a God he no longer believes in. With this guilt, which can only be fought to a draw, goes bitterness. Joseph may be the bitterest poet since Weldon Kees, a poet he considers major, and overlooked today.

Black humor can provide some relief from the load, and Joseph's account of his law office days recalls Henry Miller's stint with the Cosmodemonic Telegraph Company:

*You put Byrdman on hold. Polen
wants you in his office immediately.*

*The lawyers from Mars and the bankers
from Switzerland have arrived to close the deal,*

*the money in their heads articulated
to the debt of the state of Bolivia.*

(*"Any and All"*)

Love, too, can lighten the days, though Joseph does not seem sure whether it can be a salvation or merely a placebo for the pain. In the end there is only the duty to tell the truth in court and a determination not to face the firing squad wearing a blindfold:

*I live in words and off my flesh
in order to pay the price.*

*When the ancient fury persists,
I pay the price.*

(*"I Pay the Price"*)

— Reagan Upshaw

Lyrical Poetry, by Simon Pettet; Archipelago Books, New York, 1987. 68 pages. \$5 paper.

I like *Lyrical Poetry* for its intelligent confidence. It's not afraid to be glib or, I guess, musical. There's something about the music of the lyre, when tuned well, that rings true.

*Love eats the heart up
and in the physical night
There is your real presence
That is, what you bring to it
Yourself and that is
Beautiful as the heart is
As love is as you are
Completely charming
As you wrap your legs around
my neck!*

I'm always lulled into forgetting about that last line, till it comes. There is a confidence in one's perception, that exactly what was seen and how will be enough, and more than enough. Trusting one's own syntax can be a scary thing, but Pettet seems happy, not nervous:

*We physical we humans we
like to take a walk
'long busy city-streets noisy-thoroughfare mid-winter
alone.*

*We physical we pause
in front of steaming mug of coffee
shop a little bell rings, the door opens
won't you, step inside won't you
sit down?*

The rhythm is timed to take us inside a whimsical mind, that can sing at the everyday pleasantness of things, yet can measure tragedies as well. Thus, a poem about a failed suicide attempt uses enjambment and a strange syntax to convey that faltered heartbeat:

*When your friend takes all the pills and more
Masochism I would do it all again but do it
Better so the end is sure and swift*

*I had wondered if she thought about
Recovering at all in spotless
Palace of St. Vincent no she tells me.*

And an "Elegy" on the death of singer Sandy Denny gains power from its cynicism, beginning "So well you're young and so you die" and ending, "No she was jovial and fat."

The book is divided into three sections: *An Enigma & Other Lyrics*, *Addenda*, and *Recent Music*, the first two of which have prose epigrams presumably written by Pettet, that whet the appetite for more prose by this poet. These passages give glimpses into a world that may be part of the background of the lyrics. Terse, localized description that brings to mind the British telly show *Coronation Street*, or Samuel Beckett.

I wonder what it was like to be in London in November 1976 (the dateline of one poem in the book). One, young, couldn't have helped being affected by the cultural revolution going on in the Marquee and other punk clubs (not to mention BBC1 and *Top of the Pops*). And yet, it's nice to read a poem written there and then that doesn't try to imitate that electric-volted savagery (as many later did). Instead, we find "Nocturne," a poem characteristic of Pettet in its brash humility, and genuine sense of (his) place, that evokes the feeling one gets (in England, and in other places), of being in a contained space, an uneasy kind of comfort, that makes it easy but not pleasant to stay in, and difficult but necessary to go out:

Nocturne

*The outside black
unknown
is waiting for exploration
this tiny rock
on which we stand
"scarce room enough to breathe"
the sense
that I have far to go
that we
will move from this
to something else*

Your walking shoes

My stick

leaving

the downstairs lights on.

The book comes with an equally lyrical cover photograph by Rudy Burckhardt.

—Vincent Katz

TED

*Illumined gloom
Agitated sides of streets
Smoke in each quarter*

*He walked in pain
gifted with peace and substance
Like a dove, pleasance
Distinguished his frequency*

*A pilgrim in concert
Differences matter*

*O irrecoverable yesterdays,
He's here now
He embraced, great man, love's friendships*

—Michael Scholnick

Books Received

Hymn for a Night Feast, John Brandi; Holy Cow! Press, 1988. (Distributed by Talman Co., 150 Fifth Ave, NYC 10011) 76 pages. \$6.95 paper. *Reshaped the poem / into pearls of black heat? / Retangle the metaphor every time / you make love.* (from "Early February, Moon in Neptune")

Desire (Selected Poems 1963-1987), David Bromige; Black Sparrow Press, 1988. 227 pages. \$20 cloth, \$10 paper. Winner of the 1988 Western States Book Award. *I've helped you in the past / Go ahead, help me in the past again* ("Precept")

Coping with Gravity, Maxine Clair; Washington Writers' Publishing House (PO Box 15271, Washington, DC 20003), 1988. 54 pages. No price mentioned. *Alert until midnight / my right brain languishes / in my left brain's perfect discipline.* (from "Moonlighting")

Mesh, Clark Coolidge; In Camera, Detroit, 1988. 50 pages. No price mentioned. *She is going to remove her clothes and prove that her / breasts were not there, as I had thought. / I do dream of conditional bodies, horizontal* (from "Movement On A Dream")

The Volcano Inside, David Dooley; Story Line Press (325 Ocean View Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062), 1988. 50 pages. \$8 paper. Winner of the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize. *He read the baseball scores out loud across the cereal bowls / because she didn't care, liquidly telling of Blue Jays and Tigers,* (from "The Lovers")

Selected Poems, 1933-1988, Gavin Ewart; New Directions, 1988. 128 pages. \$18.95 cloth, \$8.95 paper. *A complete new sex. Not those dreary old men and women, where the beautiful are so pleased to be beautiful / and the unattractive live in outer darkness;* (from "Sonnet: What is Needed")

Humans Work (Poems (1982-86), Ed Friedman; A Helpful Book (520 E. 14th St., #36, NYC 10009), 1988. 92 pages. \$6 paper. *Aboard my rocker I'm king / I wave and smile / I am in my undies / Raise me up / Over the pueblo / I'm making MY movie* (from "Headline Drawing 84")

Virtue and Annihilation, Jim Gustafson; The Alternative Press (3090 Copeland, Grindstone City, MI 48467), 1988. 70 pages. \$8 paper (plus \$1 shipping). *Day as dangerous as a wizard working / for chump change, as uncharitable / as the perpetual celebrant with bile / on his breath.* (from "31. Ominous Dayworld")

The Stillness of the World Before Bach (New Selected Poems), Lars Gustafsson; New Directions, 1988. (Edited by Christopher Middleton; translated from the Swedish by several translators, in collaboration with the poet.) 116 pages. \$9.95 paper. *You must imagine a storm, a real storm. / Only in a storm do the words scatter sufficiently. / And then sentences form.* (from "Concert for Mechanical Blowers")

Savings, Linda Hogan; Coffee House Press, Minneapolis, 1988. 74 pages. \$7.95 paper. *The floorboards creak. / The moon is on the wrong side of the building.* (from "The New Apartment: Minneapolis")

Surfaces and Masks, a Poem, Clarence Major; Coffee House Press, 1988. 92 pages. \$8.95 paper. *and who must remain / stuck with the idea / that the Byzantine is "unlovely" / or with the notion that / a "cultivated Negro" is necessary in a country / where one does not expect to find him,* (from section I)

Poems, Nick Piombino; Sun & Moon Press, Los Angeles, 1988. 88 pages. \$8.95 paper. *Yet no one knew to tell me / had one the time or place — and so / space portrays it — not the small / details, but edging outward / offers a resonant tone* (from "A Simple Invocation Would Be")

New Selected Poems, Stevie Smith [1902-1971]; New Directions, 1988. Replaces ND's earlier edition. Includes many of the poet's humorous drawings. 151 pages. \$7.95 paper. *This Englishwoman is so refined / She has no bosom and no behind.* ("This Englishwoman")

A Man in the Mood, Poems for Laughing, Loving, and Living, Joe Tanenbaum; Candle Publishing Company (PO Box 5009-136, Sugar Land, TX 77487), 1988. 186 pages. \$12.95 paper. The publisher's description of the cover reads (in part): "An enchanting silhouette of lovers invites the book buyer to 'touch me and take me home.' Enhanced by richly intricate silver-foil stamping, its customized aquamarine tones add a special cellophane effect on white, high-gloss...Kromecoat." *Spiders live a lonely life, / their beauty seldom seen* (from "The Lonely Life")

The Face of Creation. Contemporary Hungarian Poetry, translated and with a preface by Jascha Kessler; Coffee House Press, 1988. 186 pages. \$11.95 paper. An anthology of the work of 23 twentieth-century Hungarian poets in English. Photographs of most of the poets are included. Mr. Kessler has previously won the Hungarian PEN Club's Memorial Medal. *"Sound, majestic wind!" From an old notebook. / Might just come in handy. Never did though.* (from "Some Notes on the Wind" by Gabór Górgy [b. 1929])

Conduit, Barrett Watten; Gaz, 1988. (Distributed by Small Press Distribution, 1814 San Pablo, Berkeley, CA 94702; and by Segue Distribution, 300 Bowery, NYC 10009). 76 pages. \$8 paper. *Thus, no language can say that I am not a writer.* (from "Conduit" V)

Going To The Mountain, Dallas Wiebe; Burning Deck, Providence, 1988. 192 pages. \$10 paper (\$20, signed). Harry Mathews describes Wiebe's stories as "...smart, tough, elegant, and unsettlingly original...What are you waiting for?" *A good Frenchman thinks of history as a succession of witty sayings. He thinks of the march of events as a sequence of aphorisms, epigrams, bons mots. It's speech that makes history.* (from "At the Rotonde")

Kiss me I will betray all
 industrial secrets to you
 though after a long day at the office
 I would settle for sleep.
 And all my Thursdays are
 as Mondays,
 lighting fools the dusty way,
 etc.
 I'm making a living although
 capitalism is collapsing about my ears.
 It was the last spring before the war
 and all the trees were green.
 Care to broker a Faustian bargain?
 The international community watches
 with pity and concern.
 Every day the wind grows warmer except
 some days when it blows
 suddenly cold.
 Today the temperature will reach
 the high sixties and
 choppy seas.
 It's a wonderful day to export arms
 in big brown freighters moving
 out of New York Harbor
 into the Atlantic.

—Sal Salasin

* *

Solve the puzzle below and send in your answer as soon as possible. If nothing else, your brilliance will be acknowledged.

FROM BAD TO VERSE

I.
 Unscramble each
 word.

RETTORN
 O O O O O

VETACA
 O O O O O

LEARFIB
 O O O O O

OSCELEN
 O O O O O



II. Arrange the
 circled letters to
 form the answer.

Answer: O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O

Announcements

The editors of *Chelsea* have announced an annual award of \$500 for the best group of four to six poems or, in alternate years, for the best work of short fiction, to be selected in an anonymous competition. The first award will be for poetry. The winning entry will be published in 1989 in *Chelsea 48*, and all poems entered will be considered for publication in that issue. Deadline for entries is Dec. 31, 1988. For full information, write to Chelsea, Box 5880, Grand Central Sta., NYC 10163.

La Nuez is a new magazine of art and literature published in Spanish. Writers working in Spanish, as well as those working in English who would like to make submissions to be translated into Spanish are welcome to submit. *La Nuez*, 496 LaGuardia Place, Ste 379, NYC 10012.

The Poetry Society of America announces that now anyone can join. For \$30 PSA members are entitled to enter all PSA contests, which now exceed \$14,000 in annual cash awards, attend Peer Group Workshops, borrow books from the Van Voorhis Library of contemporary poetry, receive subscriptions to the Society's newsletter, and receive free copies of the William Carlos Williams Prize book. To receive their brochure send a SASE to The Poetry Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park, New York, NY 10003.

There will be a 27-hour performance marathon Hunger Benefit at Performance Space 122 on the weekend of November 5th and 6th. Proceeds will go to the Food and Hunger Hotline to help fight the growing problem of hunger and homelessness in New York. For further details contact A. Leroy, 133 Mercer Street, NYC 10012 (212-966-6794).

Avenue B

Raymond Roussel & Ron Padgett Among the Blacks

*The white letters on the bands of
 the old pooltable formed an incomprehensible
 combination...*

*I just cleared my throat
 as if I were about to say something aloud...* \$7.50

other titles:
Japan, Maxine Chernoff \$6.00
Distance, Stephen Ratcliffe \$6.00

P.O. Box 542, Bolinas, CA 94924

Magazines Received

AND, Literary News, Reviews & Interviews, Spring 1988 (Writers & Books, 740 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14607) Includes *A Tribute to Robert Duncan* by Robert Creeley, and a review of the Codrescu anthology, *Up Late*. 34 pp. Published quarterly at \$10 per year.

Brief 1 (Jim Hydock, PO Box 33, Canyon, CA 94516) In New York available at The Bridge bookshop. Includes poems by Larry Eigner. Unpaged. \$2.50

Contact III, A Poetry Review, Spring 1988. (Contact II Publ., Box 451 Bowling Green Sta., NYC 10004). Includes reviews of W.C. Williams, H.D., and Ed Sanders. 100 pp. \$6.

Crazyhorse, spring 1988. (Eng. Dept., Ballantine Hall, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, IN 47405). Poetry and prose. 148 pp. \$4.

Helicon Nine, The Journal of Women's Arts and Letters (PO Box 22412, Kansas City, MO 64113). Special Marianne Moore celebratory issue. 90 pp. \$8.

Journal of Irreproducible Results, Official Organ of the Society for Basic Irreproducible Research, Vol. 33/#4 (Box 234, Chicago Heights, IL 60411). Off the wall. 32 pp. \$1.80.

Mississippi Review, Volume 16, Nos. 2 & 3. (Univ. of Southern Mississippi, South. Sta., Box 5144, Hattiesburg, MS 39406). Includes a wonderful story by Thomas M. Disch. 288 pp. \$5.

New American Writing, Number 3 (Oink! Press, 2920 W. Pratt, Chicago, IL 60645). Includes *Fifteen Plays* by Kenneth Koch, poetry by Elaine Equi, Robert Creeley, and Paul Violi, and *Six Haikus with drawings* by Kenward Elmslie and Joe Brainard. 133 pp. \$6.

Parnassus, Poetry in Review, Vol. 14, No. 2. (41 Union Sq. West, Rm 804, NYC 10003). Includes Marjorie Perloff on Paul Blackburn. 360 pp. \$7.

Poetry New York #2, "a journal of poetry and translations" (c/o Ph.D. Program in English, CUNY Graduate Center, 33 W. 42nd St., NYC 10036). Includes poetry by Joel Oppenheimer. 54 pp. \$3.

The Portable Lower East Side, Vol. 5, Nos. 1 # 2 (463 West St., #344, NYC 10014). Special Latin Americans in New York issue. Includes Eduardo Galeano, Roberto Echavarren and Carmen Valle. 160 pp. \$6.

River Styx, Number 26 (14 South Euclid, St. Louis, MO 63108). Includes an interview with John Barth. 86 pp. \$14 /3 issues subscription. No single-issue price mentioned.

Tembler, No. 7 (Leland Hickman, Ed., 4624 Cahuenga Blvd #307, N. Hollywood, CA 91602). Includes Jackson Mac Low, Jerome Rothenberg, Rae Armantrout, and Bob Perelman. 180 pp. \$7.50.

CUZ #2

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CURRENT & FORTHCOMING TITLES FROM BLACK SPARROW

SPRING/SUMMER 1988

Charles Bukowski • THE ROOMINGHOUSE MADRIGALS: EARLY SELECTED POEMS 1946-1966

260 pages

Paper \$12.50 Hardcover: \$20.00

Bukowski writes poems in the key of life. They sing of the streets, the Laundromat, the corner diner, the bowling alley, the race track, the beer bars. They reach down into the blood of existence and they touch the reddest apples on the tree.

John Fante • THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE GRAPE

178 pages

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The Brotherhood of the Grape rounds out the series of novels which starts with *Wait Until Spring, Bandini* (1938, 1983) and extends through *The Road to Los Angeles* (1985), *Ask the Dust* (1939, 1980), *Dreams from Bunker Hill* (1982) and *Full of Life* (1952, 1988). "The brotherhood of the grape! You see them in every village, these old rascals, loafing outside the cafes, drinking wine and sighing after every passing skirt!"

Fielding Dawson • WILL SHE UNDERSTAND?

160 pages

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the cloud is
where the sea was
suns drown in it

swift climbing teeth
a squirrels' nest
remains a threat

new buds on wheels
the linden tree
the garden spins

in the sky's face
where your eye was
the light is

— Annette Hayn

KNOWING I COULD RETURN AT MOST ANYTIME

Questions cross
about balance
within the general nature of music
the wind sounds
moans on the same pitch
leaves scrape across
a feeling Webster didn't know
within the general nature of music
by providing a broad field from which
language between the listener
nearest, most distant
rests, no silence anywhere
the air and tires slap the road
the same time another door closed

— Stephen Ratcliffe

THE POETRY PROJECT WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR RECENT GIFTS:

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*

Cover and inside drawings for this issue by
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George Butterick

1942 - 1988

Anyone who ever had to do with George Butterick's immensely generous care will miss him, selfishly and expectedly, for that fact alone. He made, almost with his bare hands, a hearing for Charles Olson's work that I cannot think would otherwise have happened — certainly not as George so substantially managed it. Many people indeed owe him an incalculable debt in that respect, myself most of all because his editing of *The Complete Correspondence* of Olson and myself, now in eight volumes and continuing, was an unthinkable prospect without him to take on its responsibility. (It is characteristic that he specifically determined upon Rich Blevins to continue the work when he knew that he would not be able to.)

But most here I'd like to emphasize George Butterick's own singular powers as a poet — and to note that his *Collected Poems* will soon be published. He was able to oversee the final proofs, though he died too soon to have the literal book. Given what he had to endure, no one could wish him more of it, for any reason. But we can do something nonetheless in his respect, which is simply to read what he wrote and to take to heart the measure of life he offered. He gave us a lot.

— Robert Creeley

(Butterick's *Collected Poems* is available from Bob Bertholt, Special Collections, Room 420 Capen Hall, SUNY/Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14260)

* *

Miguel Piñero, known for his vibrant, searing, raw theatrical dialogue was in fact the gentlest of men. His tenderness enveloped those he loved, just as his anger burned those he fought. The streets of Loisada are now emptier, lonelier, and missing one of its major poet-dramatists. As we spread his ashes throughout the Lower East Side at the end of September 1988, let us pray he lies in peace.

— Miguel Algarín

*

In Memoriam

Morton Hornick

1921 - 1988

POETRY PROJECT 1988-1989 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONDAY NIGHT READINGS

October 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31
November 7, 14, 21, & 28
December 5, 12, & 19
January 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30
February 6, 13, 20, & 27
March 6, 13, 20, & 27
April 5, 12, 19, & 26
May 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

WEDNESDAY NIGHT READINGS

October 5, 12, 19, & 26
November 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30
December 7, 14, 21, & 28
January 4, 11, 18, & 25
February 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29
March 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29
April 5, 12, 19, & 26
May 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

LECTURES

October 30, December 18, January 15,
February 19, March 19, April 16, & May 21

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday October 9
Robert Duncan Memorial Reading, 3 pm

Saturday, December 12
Community Meeting, 2 pm

New Year's Day Marathon Reading
January 1, 7 pm

Benefit for the Tibet Fund
January 22, 3 pm

Valentine's Day Reading
February 14, 7 pm

Poetry/Dance Collaborations
Co-sponsored with Danspace
February 24-26

1989 Symposium, May 4-7

WORKSHOPS

Tues. evenings at 7 pm, beginning October 18.
Fri. evenings at 7 pm, beginning October 28.
Sat. afternoons at 12 pm, beginning October 29.

All programs subject to change

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No unsolicited materials will be returned without a SASE. Address correspondence to The Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church, 2nd Ave. & 10th St., NYC 10003.

Interested advertisers contact Kimberly Lyons at (212) 674-0910.

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